

Fifeville Neighborhood Plan

IN OUR BACKYARD



Acknowledgments

The 2006 Neighborhood Plans were developed through a collaborative effort of our neighborhood residents, city staff, the City Planning Commission, UVA students and a design team from the Charlottesville Community Design Center. Professional services were provided by Site Works. Facilitation and process design was provided by Becky Clay Christensen.

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Special Thanks to the Charlottesville Community Design Center,
Katie Swenson and John Semmelhack.

Fifeville Neighborhood Existing Conditions

The following is a brief profile of the neighborhood, including community facilities and demographics. The maps exhibit existing conditions of the neighborhood through the lenses of the Guiding Principles, as adopted by the Charlottesville City Council in the spring of 2005.

FIFEVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD SETTING

Major streets include Cherry Avenue and the 9th and 10th Street Connector. This road runs through the center of Fifeville and serves as a primary link to the University of Virginia Hospital and West Main Street.

Fifeville is primarily residential, but also hosts commercial activity along Cherry Avenue, including many locally-owned businesses. The housing types vary from multi-family to small and medium sized dwellings. Historically, much of the housing in Fifeville consists of large, early 20th century dwellings. Forest Hills Park and neighborhood were originally part of the Oak Lawn estate. While some of the housing in Fifeville was built in the early part of the 20th century, there are areas in the western section of the neighborhood where housing was built during the 1950's, as a subdivision called "Pincrest". Blue Ridge Commons (a privately subsidized housing complex), formerly Oak Ridge Gardens, was built in 1970 and Orangedale was developed in 1979. Both detached and attached units, meaning townhouses and stand-alone houses, are located in the Orangedale section.

The major educational and recreational facilities located in this neighborhood are Buford Middle School, Smith Pool, the Boys and Girls Club, and Fifeville, Tonsler and Forest Hills Parks.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Gardener-Mays Cottage
- Benjamin Tonsler House
- Oak Lawn
- Robert L. Updike House
- Large early 20th century dwellings

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Independence Resource Center
- Youth Alive Center
- Ronald McDonald House
- Buford Middle School
- Smith Pool & the Boys and Girls Club
- Fifeville Park

- Tonsler Park
- Forest Hills Park

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

- The Commercial area along Cherry Avenue is home to many locally owned businesses, such as the Korner Restaurant, Salvation Arm Thrift Store, and Ron's Garage.

TRANSPORTATION:

- Major Roads are Cherry Avenue and the 9th/10th Connector
- CTS Bus Routes 4 & 22 run through the neighborhood
- Bike Routes on 9th/10th connector

LAND USE

- Fifeville is mostly a residential neighborhood, with some commercial areas.
- The Cherry Avenue Corridor runs along Cherry Avenue and along the railroad tracks to the Amtrak station. It is a "Mixed-Use" district where people can live close to places of employment and shopping.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Fifeville Demographic Data			
	1990	2000	% Change
Population	3469	3247	-6.4%
Pop Density	13.73	12.85	-17.2%
Median Age	29.2	32.2	10.3%
Households	1262	1270	0.6%
Per HH	2.75	2.52	-.4%
Homeowners	n/a	n/a	n/a
Renters	n/a	n/a	n/a

Neighborhood Boundaries

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

Fifeville is the 252.7-acre neighborhood comprised of Blue Ridge Commons (a privately subsidized 202 unit housing complex), and the Forrest Hills and Orangedale neighborhoods. The neighborhood is adjacent to the West Main Street Corridor; the northern boundary is the CSX railway property. Its southeastern boundary is Ridge/5th Street from CSX to Rock Creek and the southwestern boundary is Valley Road Extended via Rock Creek.



centers

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Supporting safe neighborhoods with identifiable centers and strong social fabric.

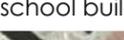
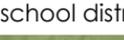
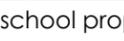
Valuing and providing quality education for all ages, vocations and abilities, promoting an intellectual climate that values the arts and culture.

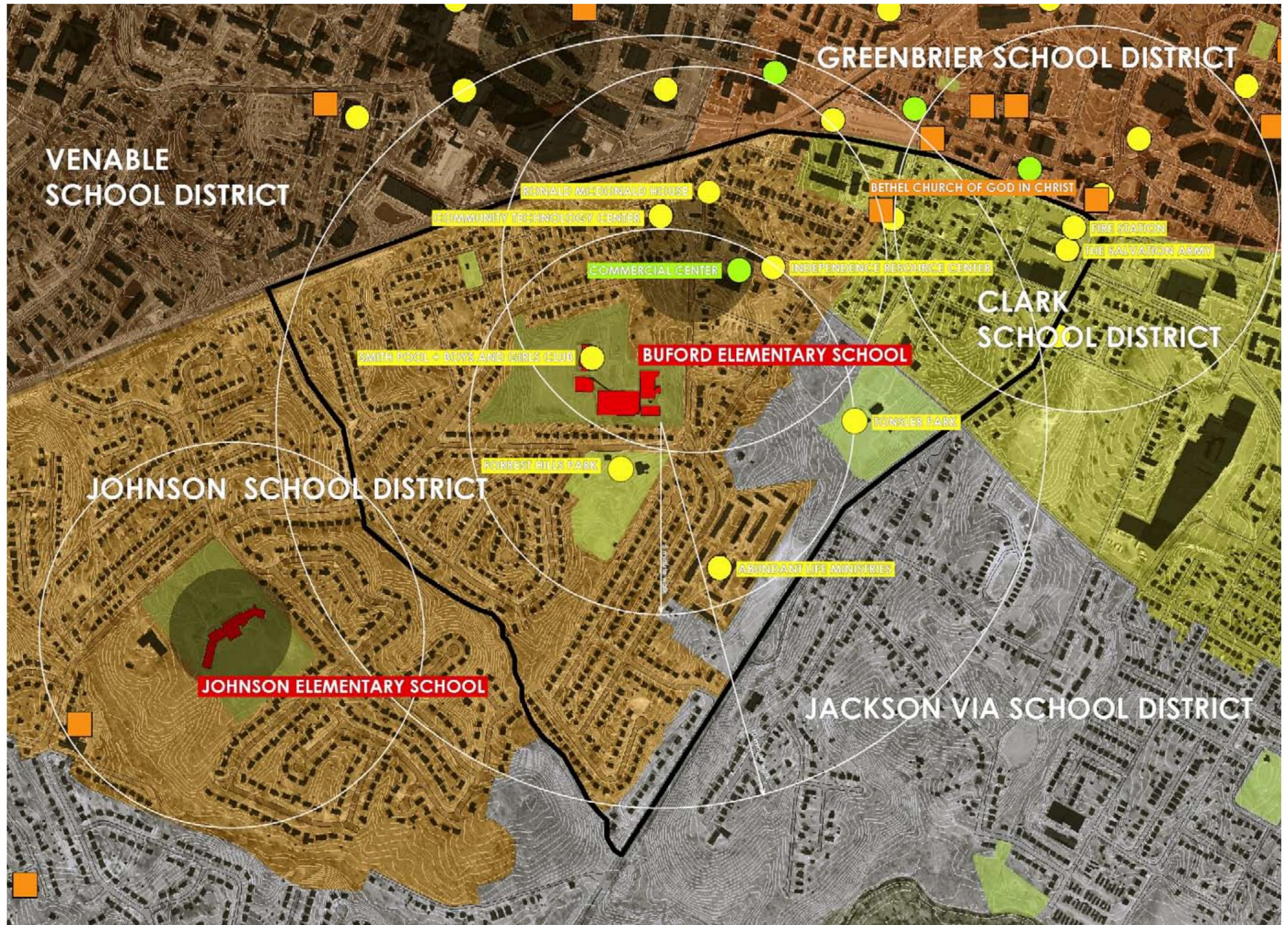
Enjoying a strong diversified economy with opportunities for entrepreneurship and a diversity of jobs.

What Are Centers?

Centers are spaces of concentrated activity that are highly utilized by residents within a neighborhood. Centers are places that provide services, employment, community support or recreational, cultural and educational opportunities. Examples of centers are schools, commercial areas, libraries, places of worship, recreational facilities, parks and pools.



-  neighborhood
-  community centers
-  community building
-  commercial area
-  place of worship
-  school building
-  school district areas
-  school property
-  park



connectivity

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Accessing safe public transportation, alternative modes of transportation and interconnected pedestrian and bicycle access.

Achieving mixed-use development that promotes 24-hour activity, pedestrian connectivity and transit use.

What Is Connectivity?

Connectivity refers to the network of pedestrian, bicycle, motor vehicle and transit systems. Connectivity determines how hard or easy it is to get from one place to another. Increasing connectivity includes incorporating bike lanes, sidewalks, traffic calming, transit options and pedestrian friendly spaces.



- neighborhood
- road edges
- bike routes
- bus routes
- bus stops
- school property
- park



housing

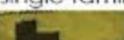
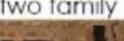
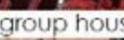
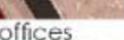
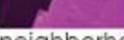
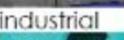
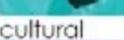
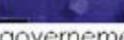
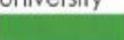
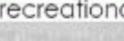
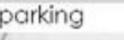
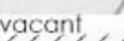
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Providing housing opportunities with a diversity of style, scale, price, financing and location.

What Is Housing?

Housing refers to the diversity of residential dwelling units, including their style, scale, price, financing and location. Housing types range from single to multi-family, duplexes, townhouses and mixed-use buildings in which housing is combined with commercial activity. There are a variety of approaches that make housing available to people of various income levels. The unique mix that is Charlottesville can also be protected through historic preservation and design control districts.



-  single family
-  two family
-  multifamily
-  group housing
-  offices
-  neighborhood commercial
-  commercial
-  industrial
-  cultural
-  government
-  educational
-  university
-  recreational/open
-  parking
-  vacant
-  historic district
-  new developments
-  landuse/zoning difference



environment

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Protecting and promoting trees, parks, green space, streams and biodiversity that add to the appearance and livability of the City.

Balancing the natural and built environments and practicing sustainability.

What Is Environment?

The environment includes the natural resources that support our daily living, such as water, air, energy and vegetation. The environment also provides recreational, social and green spaces, such as parks, yards, trails and wooded/vegetated areas. The protection and preservation of these resources is essential for sustaining diversity and quality of life.



- neighborhood
- vacant lots
- watershed boundary
- stream/river
- school property
- park



Fifeville Neighborhood Plan



NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DAY

On October 8, 2005, community residents and professional designers, planners and student volunteers participated in Neighborhood Design Day. The event was the kickoff for the five-year update of the neighborhood area plans.

The City's Neighborhood Development Services Department designed and facilitated the multi-location event in partnership with the Charlottesville Community Design Center. The City of Charlottesville undertook this new and innovative neighborhood planning process in order to allow residents to envision and design the future of their neighborhoods.

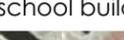
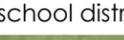
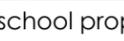
In order to help participants express their vision, they were provided with detailed maps representing the City's 11 guiding principles, broken into four major categories (Centers, Connectivity, Housing and Natural Environment), as well as a toolkit of creative solutions addressing each of these four areas.

The participants examined existing conditions to identify key ongoing issues, neighborhood assets, and future programmatic, policy and design opportunities. The following text and maps are the outcome of Neighborhood Design Day as reviewed and finalized by residents at various follow-up events.



centers

- **Tonsler Park is a great community resource (especially for some youth and elderly) but it is often underutilized. It has potential to be better if it were safer and had better amenities.**
- **Re-evaluate zoning in the neighborhood to meet the need for small/neighborhood-scale commercial businesses (i.e. laundry, daycare, grocery) in south Fifeville (Prospect/Orangedale).**
- **Rethink the zoning, scale, design and boundaries of Cherry Avenue mixed-use zone, and how it fits into the neighborhood --- does it meet the needs of the larger neighborhood.**
- **Rewrite citizen input and decision making into zoning- with real power and earlier input. Include block captains and design/character.**
- The neighborhood acknowledges that it has a variety of centers at different scales. However, the neighborhood looks outside of its boundaries for centers such as: Downtown, Corner, Fifth St, and Star Hill.
- Buford has potential to be a neighborhood center but it is visually and physically inaccessible.
- Forest Hills Park is a small center.
- Community Gardens can be potential centers.
- The neighborhood wants to focus on centers instead of boundaries.
- Treating neighborhoods and neighborhood associations as “states” with the city as “nation” is not an appropriate approach. The City should encourage more communication among neighborhoods and treat issues Citywide.
- Cherry Ave commercial district should be the center, but is now woefully underutilized. External centers and links to neighborhoods should be strengthened (especially through pedestrian corridors). The current development/zoning plans need to be revisited and public involvement needs to be a major force in that revision.
- The ability for residents to walk to the local commercial sector is very important.
- Cherry Ave mixed-use corridor is not well defined because it was a transition zone. Make it attractive to the residents specifically by improving the strip mall and the gas station. Needs attention as a center, including improved design.
- Current neighborhood boundaries are inappropriate and artificial to how people live and identify their neighborhoods. Potentially follow a “sphere of influence” rather than imposed political/physical boundaries. Ridge St bisects two neighborhoods, reinforcing an artificial fracture.
- Political structure of neighborhoods is a concern (i.e. City government communicates with the Neighborhood Associations and they communicate with Individuals.) Accountability and clarifications of issues between different entities should be revisited. Major overhaul needed.
- Hospital growth is an issue because of the potential for traffic, parking and other problems.
- The Boys and Girls Club also has potential to be a center but it is also hard to find or some residents are unaware of its presence.

-  neighborhood
-  community centers
-  community building
-  commercial area
-  place of worship
-  school building
-  school district areas
-  school property
-  park



connectivity

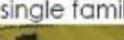
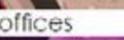
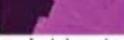
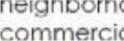
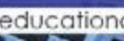
- **Pedestrian connectivity is important throughout the neighborhood (the neighborhood needs a fully connected sidewalk network).**
- **Residents question the appropriateness of neighborhood boundaries. Ridge neighborhood is divided (use census/data lines).**
- Mitigate impacts of the 9th/10th St. Connector, including University overflow parking.
- The bus route between Food Lion on 5th and Prospect Ave was discontinued and it is causing accessibility problems.
- Create a pedestrian bridge at Jones, 4th St, and Baker.
- There is a need for a pedestrian coordinator and bike specialist on staff at the City.
- Pedestrian access to Main St/Hospital (across RR tracks) would provide greater accessibility
- Provide safer pedestrian access between Prospect/Orange, Tonsler Park, across Ridge St at Cherry Ave and at other hot spots on Ridge and Oak St. There is desire for a crossing at Oak St. on Ridge st.
- Create a connection to Rock Creek near Prospect/Orange.
- Tie the neighborhoods to the Rivanna trail.
- Create a pedestrian plan for the city as a whole to include a systematic analysis of interconnected sidewalks. New Development should be made to deal with pedestrian and vehicular concerns. (i.e. address issues concerning sidewalks, parking, street trees, through-traffic, etc.)
- Sidewalks and trails are crucial to a systemic connection. Pedestrian connection to surrounding centers is very important. Create a more permeable edge with JPA, Starhill, and 10th & Page neighborhoods. The addition of an elevated pedestrian bridge to the hospital is a potential improvement. Another concern is the connection to Tonsler Park. Pedestrian crossings at roads and the train tracks should be evaluated and improved, especially those near school and park facilities.
- There is a safety issue because there is no street lamp at Buford (for evening use of school such as Boys and Girls Club and Smith Pool).
- There is a lighting consultant for the neighborhood being hired (funding was found)
- If feasible, create a bike path/trail running parallel to the railroad tracks. Interconnectivity of designated street routes that connect entire city as well as providing connections to Rivanna Trail.
- Automobile congestion, parking and speed are issues throughout the neighborhood. Specific roads are Cherry Avenue, Dice Street, 7th Street, Nalle Street, Grove Street and those routes used by cut-through traffic between West Main and Cherry Avenue.
- Encourage use of alternative modes of transportation by expanding access to the bus system, and creating facilities and lanes for bicyclists.
- Continue and enhance efforts in the areas of crime awareness and prevention

- neighborhood
- road edges
- bike routes
- bus routes
- bus stops
- school property
- park



housing

- **This plan needs to address concerns about social, economic and demographic changes in the neighborhood to balance gentrification and affordable housing.**
- **There needs to be more input from Prospect/Orangedale section of Fifeville.**
- **Use Commercial development to offset residential taxes instead of unnecessary development in Cherry Avenue Corridor.**
- To balance housing affordability with pending gentrification – there is a potential to freeze tax assessment/rate so that neighborhood gentrification will not price out long-time residents and renters. Providing tax incentives for long-time residents might keep properties affordable.
- Infill housing needs to be provided at a range of prices
- Ridge and Cherry property is not zoned well. Would prefer park space to development.
- Do not extend mixed-use zoning on either side of 10th Street.
- Work toward a better balance of renters and owners.
- Parking restriction is clogging streets. Parking requirements need to be addressed.
- Work with existing owners to establish off-street parking for properties that have the space.
- Promote development and policy that encourages alternatives to vehicle usage.
- Residents feel that the current mixed-use policy needs revisions. Generally residents seem to want to reduce density, especially in as far as it relates to increased parking and vehicular traffic. Higher density should be by Special Use Permit and mixed-use should be encouraged in other ways.
- Residents felt Estes St. should remain residential and current development designation as a commercial corridor is inappropriate. Commercial development on the east side of 9th was encouraged.
- Change zoning to single family on 9th St. and Estes.
- The renters' influence on the neighborhood should be recognized. Renters can often provide a more permanent presence than people who own because they have lived in the neighborhood while many property owners do not.
- Enforce property maintenance codes pertaining to the upkeep of properties as well as trash removal.

-  single family
-  two family
-  multifamily
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-  vacant
-  historic district
-  new developments
-  landuse/zoning difference



environment

- Enforce standards for different uses such as open space, tree removal and replacement, slopes, and water.
- Implement mosquito control.
- Provide incentives for more trees. Losing trees and current replacement is not appropriate.
- Historic designation seems to be the only way to protect design but does not seem to be friendly to environmental designs.
- Lower the density of the neighborhood.
- Find pockets for potential planting.
- Create formal requirement regarding environmental benefits connected to development burden on all new developers such as a green environmental analysis and requirements with all proposals.
- Address contaminated properties rather than cover them up.
- Strive to attain zero loss of biomass. Explore analysis of overall loss of biomass in the area. Loss of trees is not regarded in development approval process.
- Site approval process should include before and after analysis of the impact of existing conditions and proposed development. There should be formal requirements connected to site approval acceptance. The City can also provide incentives for development to include environmental issues in the process of design.
- Do not allow development on vacant land above a 25-degree gradient.
- Fifeville neighborhood has various watersheds that should be researched and protected in regards to impacts generated by new development.

- neighborhood
- vacant lots
- watershed boundary
- stream/river
- school property
- park



City of Charlottesville
Neighborhood
Development Services



SITWORKS



CHARLOTTESVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DAY