

10-24-2018 Town Council Meeting Responses

ITEM #7: Update on Kidzu Letter of Intent

Council Question: Does staff know when and from whom the town acquired the property?

Staff Response: *The site under discussion with Kidzu is part of a 28-acre parcel that the Town purchased from Ruby Hunt Merritt on March 12, 1990.*

Council Question: Does the land have any drainage/flooding history or other challenges to developing it?

Staff Response: *The property has an existing stormwater basin in the northwest corner (an image will be shown at the Council meeting presentation). Any new facility will need to include required stormwater treatment in its design and construction process. There is an anticipated connection to the Obey Creek pedestrian bridge over 15-501 along the northern edge of the site and sufficient area would need to be reserved for construction and use of that facility in the future.*

Council Question: Kidzu requests a lease "of sufficient length to justify ... construction." How long would that lease have to be?

Council Question: What is the admission price Kidzu charges families?

Council Question: How are low-income families served?

Council Question: What are the demographics of families who use Kidzu?

Council Question: How many parking spaces are being contemplated?

Council Question: What is the contemplated square footage of the proposed building?

Council Question: How many stories on the proposed building are being contemplated?

Council Question: Would there be any restrictions on parking after-hours?

Kidzu Response: *See attached responses from Lisa Van Deman, Kidzu Executive Director.*

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Additional Staff Follow-Up: We wanted to share some resources with the Council that relate to the letter Obey Creek Compass Committee letter (attached):

Town Properties Task Force May 26, 2017 minutes, which included a briefing on the Southern Village Park and Ride concepts:

<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showdocument?id=36196>

Consideration of Southern Village Park and Ride redevelopment, including the Dover Kohl draft scenarios (March 2015, attached):

<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/departments-services/planning-and-sustainability/southern-village-park-and-ride-lot-area>

Obey Creek Compass Committee page, including link to final report:

<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/departments-services/planning-and-sustainability/development-activity-report/obey-creek-development-agreement/obey-creek-compass-committee>

Chapel Hill 2020 (pages 74-77) which included principles for S. 15-501 focus area (attached):

<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/i-want-to/new-advanced-components/search?q=chapel%20hill%202020>



10/23/18

Responses to Town Council questions prior to 10/24/18 meeting respectfully provided by Lisa Van Deman, Kidzu Executive Director.

Kidzu requests a lease “of sufficient length to justify...construction.” How long would that lease have to be?

The typical land-lease language is something like “a 99-year lease”. This is the agreement that Kidzu initially had with the Town for the air rights on the Wallace Deck. In my experience, a 99-year land-lease is common for new museum projects.

What is the admission price Kidzu charges families?

Currently, Kidzu is \$8.50 per visitor over the age of 12 months. \$3.00 for EBT and WIC cardholders, \$7.00 for seniors 65+, \$7.00 for military families (Blue Star families free between Memorial Day and Labor Day). Memberships start at \$145 for one year of unlimited admission.

Additionally, Kidzu is accessible to all community members through numerous no-cost opportunities addressed below.

How are low income families served?

Kidzu is the proud recipient of the 2018 Chapel Hill Chamber’s “Community Impact Award” for its service to low-income and underserved populations in our wider community. Some of the ways Kidzu provides access and learning opportunities for all include:

- Kidzu is FREE to all visitors the first Sunday of each month. Currently, we serve nearly 5,000 visitors annually through Free Sunday programs.
- Kidzu’s Outdoor Learning Garden and its weekly interpretive programs are free and open to any and all visitors. Kidzu’s learning backpacks can be checked out at the Kidzu front desk and used in the Learning Garden by families whenever they wish.
- We offer heavily discounted admission rates to military families and EBT/WIC card holders.
- Kidzu is part of the Blue Star Museum program, which admits families of active military to the museum for free between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year.
- We provide upwards of 25 camp scholarships each year to local families with limited financial resources. Funding is provided through Kidzu’s Susan Ross Education Fund.

- We provide no-cost STEM (science technology, engineering and math) after-school programs at the S. Estes and Hargraves Community Centers (as well as Cedar Grove and Efland Cheeks Community Centers). Over 600 children participate each year.
- We provide no-cost STEM programming to teen audiences through collaboration with CH Parks and Rec.
- Kidzu provides free monthly Adaptive Play Dates so families with children with physical, learning or emotional challenges can enjoy the museum after hours in a quieter, more controlled environment. This is another program we run in collaboration with CH Parks and Rec.
- We run a no-cost STEM after-school program specifically for middle school girls, connecting them to real-world female scientists and engineers in both academic and research environments.
- We host and facilitate Family STEM Nights at the museum - and local elementary schools. This program encourages families to learn together and enjoy a no-cost evening at the museum. Each STEM Night has served over 150 children and caregivers.
- We open the museum early each month for immunocompromised children suffering from long-term illnesses, who can come enjoy the museum and its learning activities with their families in a controlled environment.
- We provide annual organizational memberships for 25 social service agencies. Like a library card, agencies can lend the card to families to come to Kidzu at no cost whenever they like. These organizations include groups serving teen mothers and families caring for foster children.
- We provide free and discounted field trips for local Head Start/Smart Start classrooms and Title 1 K-2nd grade classrooms.
- Kidzu works closely with Family Success Alliance to best serve low-income Orange County residents. Kidzu recently implemented admission policies for non-English speaking families involved with FSA (show WIC card on arrival to gain free access to Kidzu).
- We provide free access to the museum and its learning programs for Syrian, Burmese and Congolese refugees in partnership with the Refugee Support Center. Kidzu has distributed over 350 passes and several annual memberships to local refugee families.

More information on how Kidzu reduces the effect on poverty on learning can be found in the Kidzu “Imagine” booklet that was distributed to each Council member at the 2018 Council Retreat and through previous Kidzu presentations to the Mayor and Town Council.

What are the demographics of families who use Kidzu?

Like children’s museums everywhere, Kidzu serves an extremely wide variety of visitors. For our specific community, the most interesting statistic is that over 40% of Kidzu visitors self-identify as “minority”. Our interpretive materials are translated in both Spanish and Mandarin Chinese, reflecting the community we serve. Kidzu additionally offers Spanish language Story Times, Flip for Kids language programs and is in the process, through federal funding from the

institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), translating our learning backpacks into Spanish and Mandarin to be used by ESL visitors.

How many parking spaces are being contemplated?

It depends on the building size and hours of use. This will be touched upon in Wednesday's update.

What is the contemplated square footage of the proposed building?

It depends on a wide variety of factors, but Kidzu is looking at 30,000sf indoors and 5-7,000sf outdoor space. At this early stage, we are welcoming collaboration ideas that may or may not expand that footprint.

How many stories on the proposed building are being contemplated?

One again, it depends on a variety of factors, including collaboration opportunities with the Town or other synergistic entities. We are starting our work looking at a two-story building (with desired green roof), and approximately 15,000sf footprint.

Would there be any restrictions on parking after-hours?

At this point, not to my knowledge.

Amy Harvey

From: Susana Dancy <susana.dancy@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 24, 2018 9:40 AM
To: Pam Hemminger
Cc: Amy Harvey; Jeanne Brown
Subject: Fwd: Town-owned properties in Southern Area
Attachments: Southern Area Plan - Letter to Council.docx; ATT00001.htm

Dear Mayor Hemminger,

For clarification, the letter referenced below was intended as a Petition to Town Council, requesting Council's review of the Obey Creek Compass Committee recommendations and the work product from consultant Dover Kohl & Associates regarding the Southern Village Park & Ride lot. We ask that this be done before Council enters into negotiations over town property. Furthermore, we petition Council to evaluate the merits of creating a Southern Area Small Area Plan to guide Council decisions.

Since many on Council were not involved with the Obey Creek Compass Committee process, I think it is important to note that many of the individuals below represented Advisory Boards on the committee. Others were appointed to represent key perspectives (e.g. multifamily residents) or to act as champions on specific town-identified issues (e.g. transportation).

Please be aware that another OCCC member requested her name to be added to the petition, bringing the total petitioners to eight of the 17 OCCC members. The letter below has been amended to include the current list of signers.

Best regards,

Susana Dancy

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Dear Mayor and Town Council,

In December 2013, the council-appointed Obey Creek Compass Committee submitted recommendations regarding a large, mixed-use development proposed by East West Partners along 15-501 South.

Among the committee's recommendations were the importance of planning for the area as a whole rather than responding to projects or proposals in isolation, the need to plan for both sides of 15-501, and the significant opportunities for the Town when the Park & Ride parcels redevelop.

It has come to our attention that Council is currently considering at least five projects involving land use decisions and/or town-owned properties in the Southern Area:

- (1) the town-owned parcels adjacent to the fire house on Bennett Rd, for affordable housing,
- (2) a town-owned parcel south of Dogwood Acres drive, also for affordable housing;
- (3) the town-owned parcel adjacent to the Southern Village Park & Ride, for Kidzu Children's Museum,
- (4) the Obey Meadows subdivision for low-density housing south of the Obey Creek site, and
- (5) the South Columbia Annex project across from Merritt's Store.

In the absence of a small area plan with stated priorities, goals and objectives, these decisions will be made in isolation.

Prior to your consideration about the museum proposal on Wednesday night, we encourage you to take a look at the 2013 Compass Committee report to understand the vision that was set forth through a five-month public process and, also, to review renderings of the Park & Ride lot developed for council by Dover Kohl & Associates in 2014.

Additionally, we encourage Town Council to refrain from making any decisions regarding land use and/or town-owned properties in the Southern Area until it has updated the most-recent small area plan, which was adopted in 1992. This work is needed so that Council can make strategic decisions that serve the town's often-competing priorities and overall financial well-being. Big-picture goals should be considered, including the overall design and connectivity of the area, the economic opportunities for the town-owned sites, the traffic implications and the fiscal impacts/opportunities for the town and county.

Best regards,

John Ager, Kimberly Brewer, Dan Costello, Susana Dancy, Susan Lindsey, Alan Rimer, Danielle Spurlock and Polly van de Velde

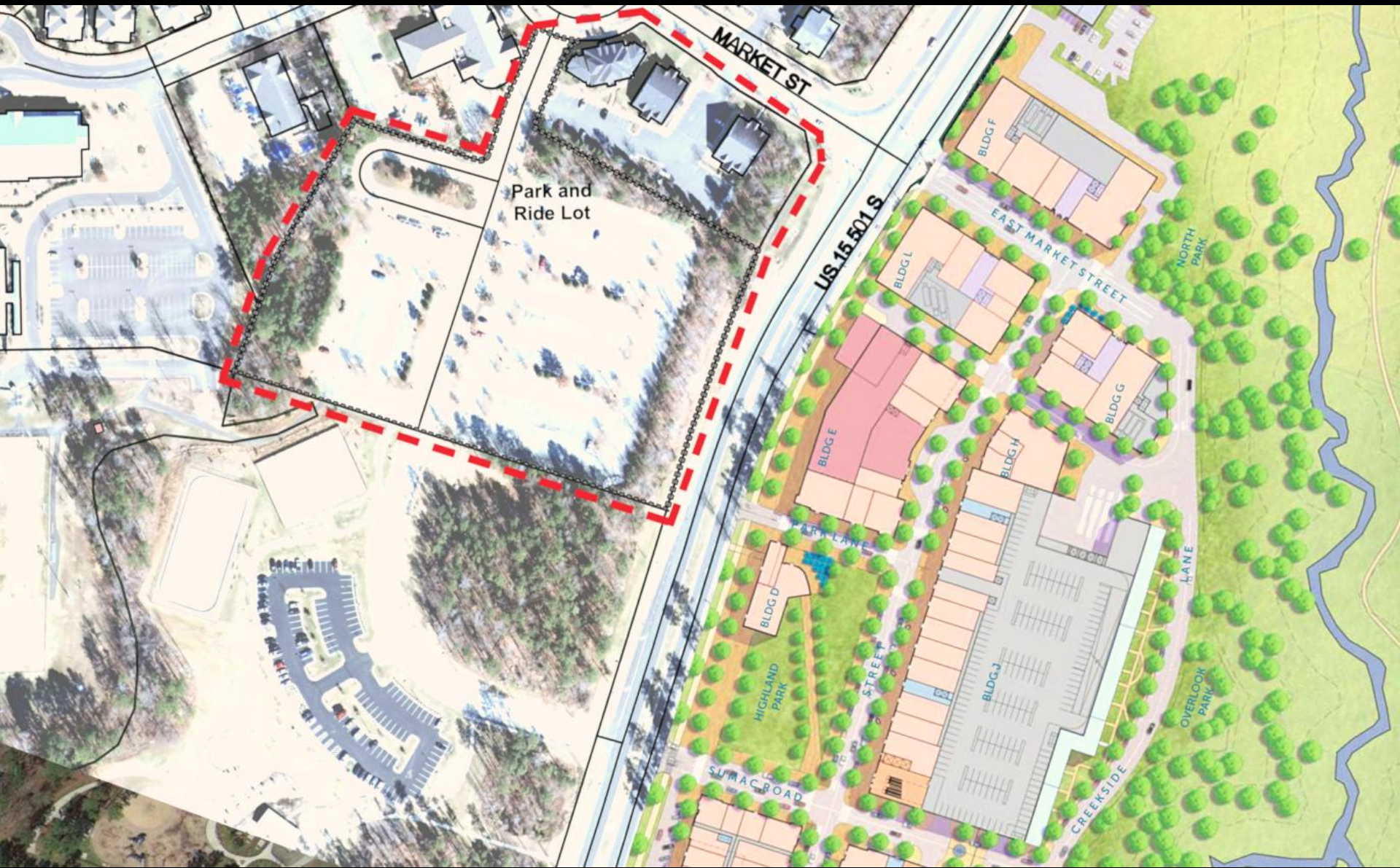
Members of the Obey Creek Compass Committee

Park and Ride Lot

Emerging Draft Scenarios

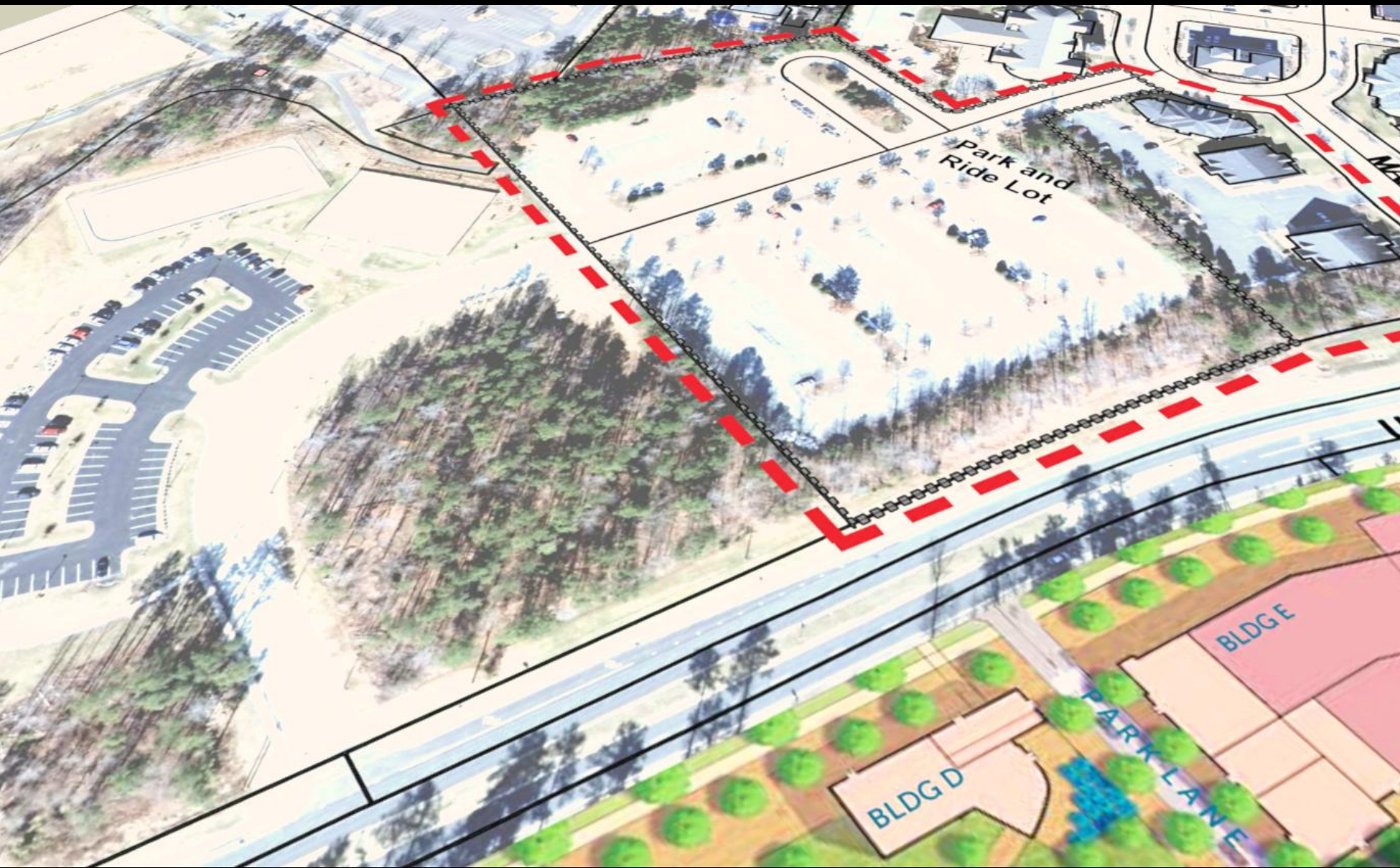
March 6, 2015

Existing Conditions



plan view

Existing Conditions



aerial view

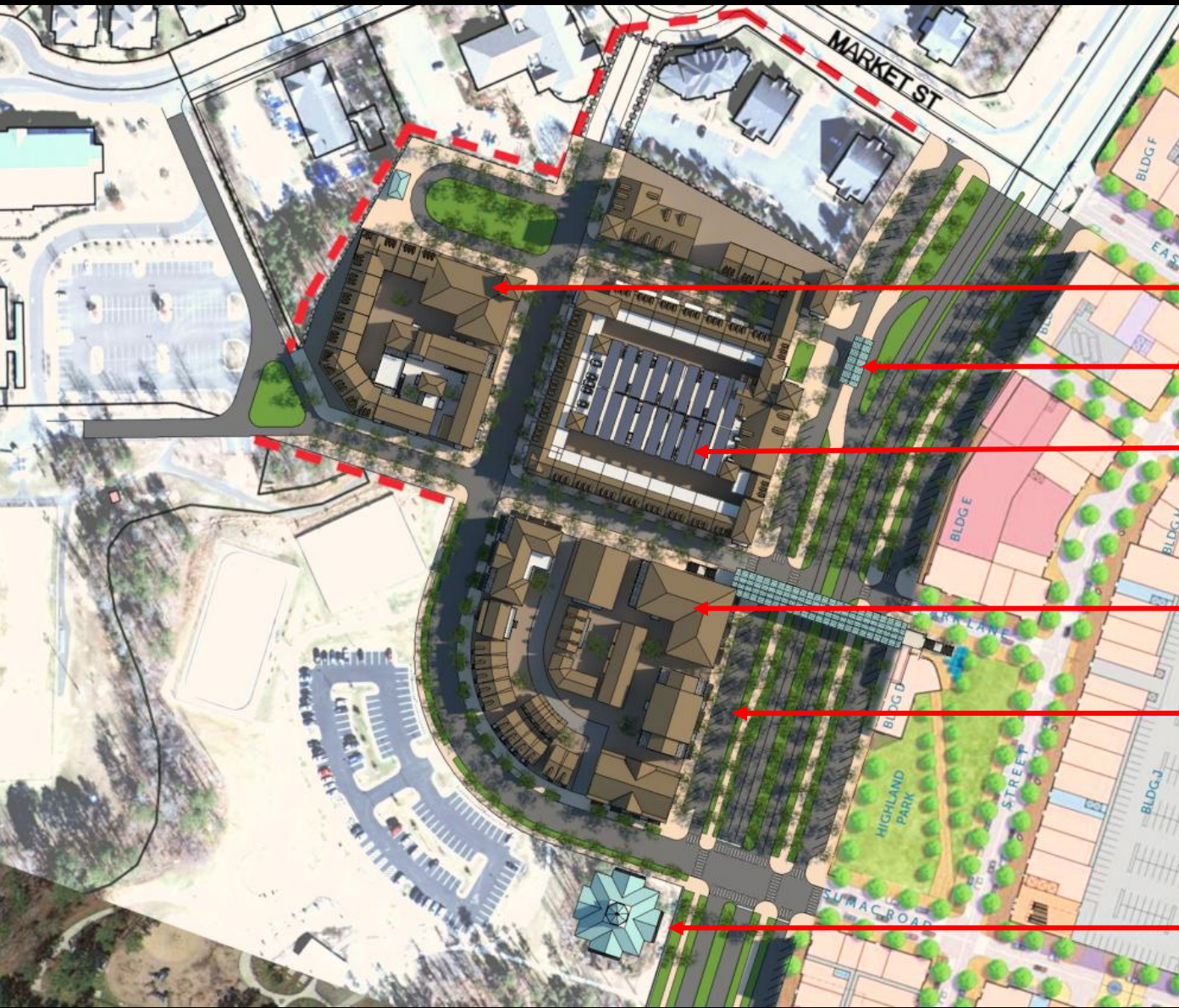
1

Emerging Draft Scenario: 1



plan view

Emerging Draft Scenario: 1



Potential Components:

- residential, office or hotel
- transit stop
- parking structure
- mixed-use buildings
- access lane with on-street parking
- civic buildings

plan view

Emerging Draft Scenario: 1



aerial view

2

Emerging Draft Scenario: 2



plan view

Emerging Draft Scenario: 2



Potential Components:

- residential, office or hotel
- transit stop
- parking structure
- mixed-use buildings
- access lane with on-street parking
- large format retailer
- civic buildings

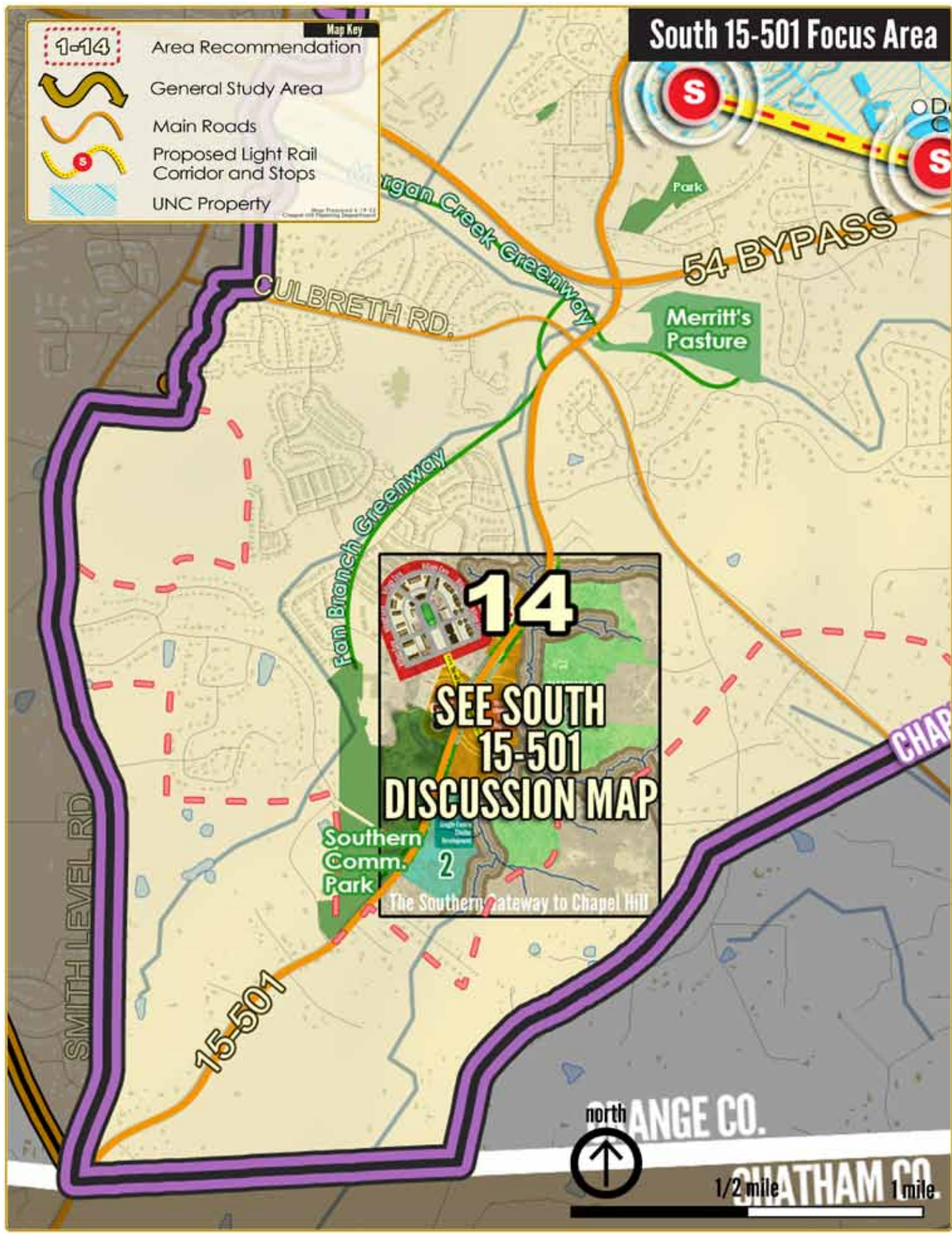
plan view

Emerging Draft Scenario: 2



aerial view

Area 6: South 15-501



Area 6: South 15-501

Approximately located between Bennett Road (north), Edgewater Circle (west), and the urban services boundary (south and east)

Area 6 Key Considerations:

- A discussion group met to identify principles for this area that should be considered in future development proposals.
- The area is identified as a retail development opportunity by the Town.
- Future growth must address traffic, connectivity, environmental, school, and design concerns.

Next Steps:

14. Projects requiring concept plan review should respond to the general principles and relevant area-specific principles and discussion group map identified by the 15-501 South Discussion Group.

South 15-501 Discussion Group Principles:

General Principles

- Preserve and enhance natural resources (make public) including water quality and stormwater
- Recognize and honor the spirit of the Southern Small Area Plan from the early 1990s
- Ensure that there is significant community process and community benefit in all future development plans
- Minimize traffic impact on neighborhoods surrounding the study area and along 15-501
- Minimize the impact of development on schools
- Plan collaboratively for the 15-501 corridor with Orange County and Chatham County (including transit planning)
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity among neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, parks, and across 15-501
- Plan for increased use of transit
- Preserve and enhance the “Green Gateway”
- Respond to demonstrated needs of the greater Chapel Hill community

Area-Specific Principles



- Meet community needs with new development (mixed use) focused on commercial rather than residential (Area 1)
- Promote architectural diversity and quality with design guidelines (Area 1)
- Emulate design principles of market area of Southern Village, including building height restrictions (Area 1)
- Promote greenways, particularly along and near creeks (Areas 1, 2, and 3)
- Utilize clustered, compact development to maximize open space preservation (Areas 1 and 2)
- Evaluate increased transit use at park-and-ride lot (Area 5)

- Promote possibility of workforce housing or accommodations for other identified community needs, such as senior citizen housing (Areas 4 and 5)
- Provide corridor buffer along 15-501, allowing for visibility and access to retail or commercial development (All areas)
- Encourage clustered retail development including any new development toward the county line (Area 1 and county line)
- Maximize permanent preservation of open space (Areas 2 and 3)