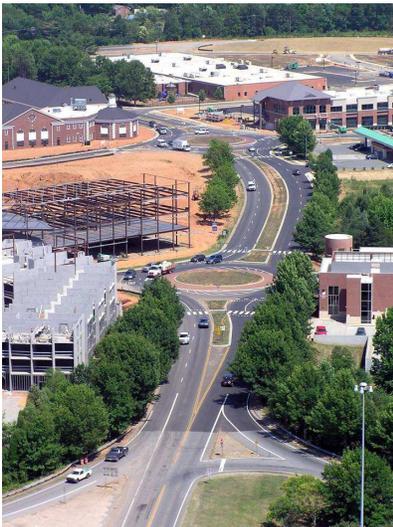


A Transportation Network for Trinity: Preserving the Local Character and Sense of Community

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Trinity, North Carolina

Trinity has a unique opportunity to define and create a City Center. Over the course of the next few weeks, a team of consultants will be working with the residents, Town officials, and stakeholders to define that Vision and understand how it becomes reality. It is anticipated that the City Center will be a place where citizens and visitors alike would meet, stroll the streets, eat at a café, shop, and watch the children play in the park. For all of these things to happen, the City Center must be served by a much different transportation system than the current conditions along NC 62. As we move into the charrette, the consultant team will be working with the stakeholders to develop a true “Main Street” concept for the City Center, a street that can be crossed by pedestrians and is comfortable for everyone who walks along its edges. The term “complete streets” will be used frequently, as it defines what we would envision “Main Street” to be: a street that serves all modes of transportation, whether motorized or not, and lends balance among those modes to create a place and not just a pass-through.



Very few communities have the opportunity to take a proactive position on growth and develop with intention. Like Trinity, Davidson, North Carolina has dutifully planned and has not caved into pressures to develop in a conventional manner. While Davidson’s neighbors were building commercial strip centers along busy, ever-widening highway corridors, Davidson turned away development that did not fit into the overall vision. Instead, Davidson planned its Town with close relationships among land use form, character, and transportation choices to facilitate the realization of the vision as a walkable, livable, and sustainable community.

Davidson preserved its natural and historic assets and has implemented growth on its own terms, with the goal of making a great place even better. One of the key elements that make Davidson a great place is the network of “complete streets” with bicycle and pedestrian amenities connecting with its core area. Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street. This type of smart and sustainable transportation network has proven time and time again to create the highest quality “place”.

Like Davidson, Trinity has a rare opportunity to put transportation infrastructure in place that preserves the local character and adds to the sense of community, effectively creating a transportation system that supports the desired buildout Vision. With Trinity’s Center City Master Plan, there are opportunities to take a sustainable approach to transportation that will provide convenient access and mobility for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers who are living, working and recreating in the new core area.

Trinity has already done a great job at planning an extensive network of greenway trails, and there are opportunities to build upon this good work and for these trails to interface with a network of sidewalks, multiuse pathways, and bicycle facilities throughout the Town. The vistas offered by the topography,

ponds, and floodplain areas make walking and cycling attractive modes of travel around the community. These new bicycle and pedestrian connections can provide more opportunities for interaction between residents of the community and even enhance “the small town feel”. The transportation network can also knit the Town together and provide a nexus between the Old Town and New Town areas.

Trinity is conveniently located along the I-85 corridor. The regional transportation network provides opportunities for Trinity to attract residents and businesses to the area, supporting new developments of both housing and jobs. The quality regional transportation system can provide a strong foundation for an attractive, economically viable, and sustainable area. It is important, however, for us to make sure that we know where the “highway” ends and the “Main Street” begins, and this can be accomplished through careful, collaborative design during the charrette process.

The collaborative “design charrette” to be held at Town Hall from May 11th to 15th, 2009 will engage residents and stakeholders of Trinity to envision “win-win” transportation solutions that work for the entire community. The type of community-led design process is the basis of “Context Sensitive design”. Context sensitive design philosophy can be utilized to create a smart and sustainable transportation network for Trinity that blend holistically with the landscape, environment, or surrounding community. In the same way that Trinity’s greenway plan is being tied into the new sewer line construction, using a collaborative approach we may be able to identify projects that can be implemented jointly with other projects to expedite their implementation and save money.



Transportation is a key tool in shaping the built environment. In these changing economic times, the future vitality of Trinity’s Center City hinges on how well it is positioned to create the highest quality “place” and take advantage of market forces to realize an ultimate sustainable vision for the future. Trinity’s City Center can be a place where people work, shop, play, and recreate. The needs of all of these types of travelers will need to be met and balanced as part of Trinity’s upcoming planning effort.

Trinity, Davidson, and other communities big and small in this country are embracing smart and sustainable growth principals and designing communities with mobility choices. Trinity has an exciting opportunity to take a proactive approach in designing livable, context-sensitive transportation solutions as part of the upcoming Trinity Center City Master Plan.