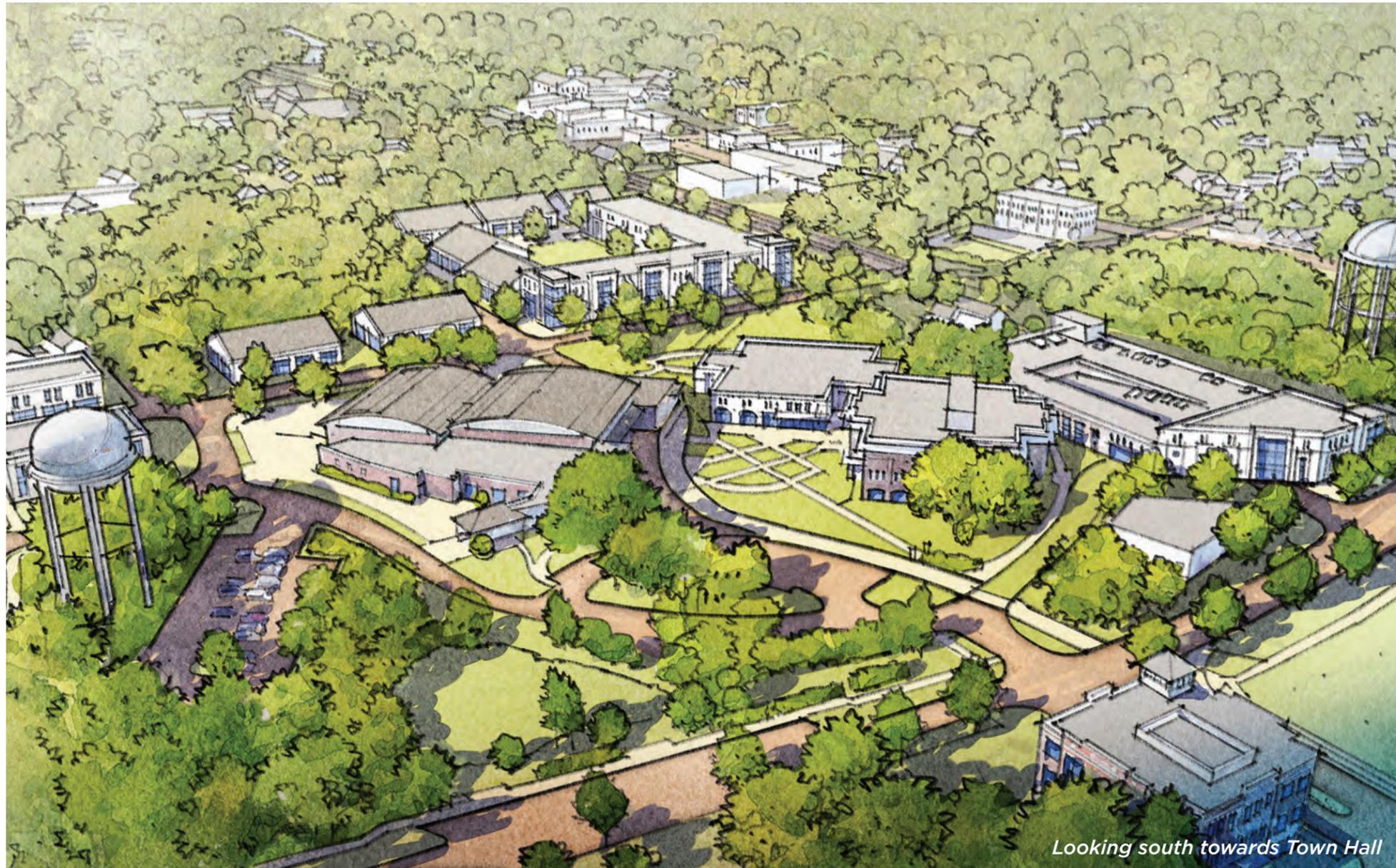


Apex

Typology: Downtown



Looking south towards Town Hall

VISION

Support a vibrant and growing downtown with new transit opportunities and high-density development that preserves and enhances Apex's existing neighborhoods and character.



MARKET READINESS

5 = Strongest; 1 = Weakest

Current Market Strength



Residential



Office



Retail



Hotel

The Apex study area is anchored by an active, walkable, downtown with low commercial vacancies surrounded by single-family homes. The Apex study area offers strategic infill development opportunities within the downtown core, near the Town Hall/Community Center, and along Williams St. The availability of land for commercial and multifamily development/redevelopment means that the market projections for office and housing may exceed the study area capacity.

Development Demand Projection (20 years)



700 units
(No-Build = 625 units)

Residential



230,000 sq. ft.
(No-Build = 170,000 sq. ft.)

Office



65,000 sq. ft.
(No-Build = 55,000 sq. ft.)

Retail



0 rooms
(No-Build = 0 rooms)

Hotel

The development demand projections are estimates of the development activity that may occur by 2042 if a passenger rail station is built in this study area. The demand projections are based on historic development patterns, pipeline development projects, and a qualitative assessment of the future real estate market dynamics for each study area. The projections are not calibrated to the actual development capacity of the study area as determined by current land availability, current local zoning regulations, etc.

TOD Vision Plan

Legend

-  Retail/commercial or office building
-  High-density office/commercial mixed-use building
-  Low-density multi-family residential building
-  Residential-based mixed-use building
-  Townhomes
-  Single-family residential
-  Existing building
-  Trail/greenway
-  Parks/open space

Potential shared use parking garage with new office uses fronting Hunter Street

BIG IDEA: A pedestrian bridge provides the parking facility and station access to downtown Apex.

Potential new mixed use building with retail on the first floor and office and/or apartments on upper story floors

BIG IDEA: Redevelop the Jordan Oil site and CSX maintenance yard as residential based mixed-use developments. Development combined with station access can create new connectivity between downtown core and Apex Town Hall.



BIG IDEA: Rebuild Elm Street north of Center Street outside of CSX right-of-way as a shared street/festival street that could serve as a gateway to the future transit station and additional public open space for festivals. Elm Street becomes an important north-south connection between the two hubs, connecting the town hall focus area and the southern station area.

Potential new residential uses can include medium density development (such as town homes), stepping down to single-family uses adjacent to existing neighborhoods

Integrate a variety of public open spaces as part of new development to serve existing residents

Capitalize on Williams Street Widening project by adding pedestrian connectivity across the tracks

Leverage proposed improvements along Williams Street to introduce new retail, commercial, and office that serve the neighborhoods

New multi-family residential uses, including 2 to 4 story apartments, stepping down to townhomes, duplexes, and cottages as they transition to existing single-family neighborhoods.

BIG IDEA: Introduce new mixed-use development anchoring a station area at Salem Street and Williams Street.

** This plan illustrates one potential development scenario that demonstrates principles of transit-oriented development. This concept does not demonstrate planned or programmed land development or infrastructure projects, unless otherwise indicated. "Some recommendations suggest redevelopment of private property, which will be dependent on the interest and willingness of those private property owners."*

Built Form & Development Recommendations - Apex

The below table summarizes the key elements of the built form that are best practices applicable to this typology. The table summarizes which of these elements are already in place within the current regulatory tools and zoning, what is not in place and which elements are in progress. For applicable elements, a policy recommendation or action item is recommended.

 Already in Place
  In Progress
  Not in Place

Built Form Needs	Status	Policy Recommendation/Action Item
Building & Architectural Character		
Ensure that building siting, massing, and architectural elements are consistent with and contextually sensitive to surrounding Downtown Apex architecture and historic character, specifically prevalent within the core Downtown blocks along Salem Street.		Follow the Town's Small Town Character Overlay District
Orient buildings close to and fronting streets along Williams Street in close proximity to transit station area, primary intersections and open spaces within Downtown, and adjacent transition areas to preserve the integrity of Downtown's character.		Revisit setback requirements, as recommended in the Downtown Master Plan implementation strategies
Focus highest intensity transit-oriented development closest to the station area. Target larger parcels for potential vertically-integrated mixed use development, specifically the Jordan Oil site as well as parcels along Williams Street.		Follow Comprehensive Plan guidance as well as site-specific recommendations in the Downtown Master Plan
Design the ground floors of buildings to engage the street with transparent façades (fenestration) and active uses.		Follow the Town's Small Town Character Overlay District
Outside of Downtown and immediate transition areas, encourage more variable building setbacks to provide space for front yards, open space, and a more expansive streetscape environment, specifically rebuilding Elm Street (north of Center Street) as a "festival street", which can act as community gathering and event spaces. Add special paving and streetscape materials to enhance the public realm.		Update the Downtown Master Plan to reflect this requirement in the station area.
Where appropriate, encourage building design that is complementary to, or takes design cues from, existing historic or culturally significant architectural features, including the scale and form of historical development patterns and the prevailing architectural styles of Downtown Apex (e.g., façade treatments, materials, roof and window treatments, etc.)		Follow UDO guidance
For buildings located on corners at primary intersections, incorporate distinctive form variations that accentuate the building's prominent and visible location and can serve as a gateway to the station area (e.g., additional building height relative to surrounding buildings, distinctive rooftops and rooflines, distinctive façade treatments, variations in building geometry, locating seating areas and outdoor dining spaces at street corners).		Follow UDO guidance
Discourage large-scale, auto-oriented commercial uses and strip center development within the Downtown area.		Follow UDO guidance
Height, Massing & Development Transitions		
Encourage building heights of up to 3 stories to complement the existing height and intensity of buildings in the Downtown area; consider heights of up to 5 stories on a case-by-case basis around the transit station and along frontages along Williams Street near the intersection with Salem Street.		Amend height requirements for the Small Town Character Overlay District
Provide transitions in height and massing between higher-intensity development and lower-scale residential neighborhoods, such that buildings "step down" in height and scale in the vicinity of smaller-scale residential neighborhoods.		Follow UDO guidance
Break up the horizontal and vertical massing of buildings through approaches such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • variations in façade elements, modulation of rooflines; • dividing single building masses into multiple buildings to create a diversity of building facades (similar to façade treatments of "downtown" Apex buildings) especially on long blocks; • variations in building form and massing, such as step-backs and terracing 		Follow UDO guidance
Distinguish the base, middle, and upper floors of building to create a human-scaled environment at street level. Incorporate changes in façade materials, cornice lines, and varied window treatments, as appropriate to the architecture and the Downtown Apex context.		Follow UDO guidance
Incorporate variations in form and massing into building design—such as step-backs and terracing—to create visual interest and variety, allow for sunlight at street level, and establish usable outdoor terraces.		Follow UDO guidance
Infill Development and Adaptive Reuse		
Promote and celebrate the Downtown's history by encouraging the preservation and/or adaptive reuse of historic structures, such as the Tunstall House, when they are within the core Downtown blocks in and around Salem Street, and the expanded downtown area of Williams Street and Jordan Oil Site redevelopment area. Encourage commercial and community-based uses within existing ground floor spaces and residential and/or professional office retrofits within upper floors.		Follow Downtown Master Plan guidance
Expand the downtown footprint to the south side along Williams Street as well as incorporate the redevelopment parcels of Jordan Oil site and adjacent sites. Allow for appropriately-scaled commercial/mixed-use as well as medium-density infill residential uses (townhomes, garden apartments, duplex, triplex, quadplex, etc.) within the expanded Downtown areas that are compatible with existing residential neighborhood character and use.		Follow Downtown Master Plan guidance
Encourage affordable housing options and a mix of housing types, including senior housing.		Follow Affordable Housing Plan guidance
Add neighborhood-serving commercial and community uses to frame the redevelopment parcels of the Jordan Oil site, as well as the sites adjoining the intersection of Salem Street and Williams Street, to act as the focal point of transit station areas.		Follow Downtown Master Plan guidance
Extend and connect the street network as new development occurs, including establishing an interconnected street grid within large parcels.		Follow Transportation Master Plan guidance
Incorporate courtyards, plazas, and other small green spaces as part of new development to serve existing and future residents as well as business needs.		Follow Downtown Master Plan guidance

[continue >>](#)

Built Form & Development Recommendations - Apex

<< continue

Built Form Needs	Status	Policy Recommendation/Action Item
Multimodal Transportation & Parking		
Provide on-street, parallel parking on streets in the vicinity of the mobility hub, including along N. Salem Street, Center Street, W. Chatham Street, Saunders Street, and N. Mason Street as identified in the Downtown Master Plan.	✓	Follow Downtown Master Plan and Parking Study guidance
Locate off-street surface parking area at the rear and side of buildings while meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for accessible parking.	✓	Follow UDO requirements
Where feasible, incorporate parking structures into new development, specifically within the existing off-street parking lot adjacent to the potential station. Parking structures should be wrapped and concealed by active building frontage, to foster a comfortable and active pedestrian environment. Require design considerations, such as architectural screening and/or landscaping, to conceal garage entrances where visible.	✓	Follow Downtown Master Plan guidance
Screen off-street surface parking and parking structures areas from surrounding land uses, utilizing trees, landscaping, and architectural treatments as visual buffers.	✓	Follow Downtown Master Plan guidance
Explore opportunities for shared parking arrangements between multiple lots, uses or buildings.	✓	Implement recommendations of the Downtown Master Plan
Consider shared and consolidated driveway access, where possible, for pedestrian safety, shared parking access, and to maintain the integrity of the streetscape.	⚠	Apply this requirement to the Downtown Master Plan and Parking Study
Incorporate improved spaces for mobility hub (bus pull-ins, shared mobility infrastructure, bicycle parking, EV parking, etc.) near the mobility hub.	⚠	Consider UDO amendments to require spaces for multiple modes of transportation adjacent to transit station areas.

Precedent Image Examples of Built Form Recommendations



Open Space

While Apex has limited opportunities for new open space, there are several concepts explored during this study that can be integrated into the Town's plans:

PEDESTRIAN-FOCUSED STREETS

A pedestrian-focused street is proposed on Salem Street in the heart of downtown and on North Elm Street between Center Street and Town Hall. This type of street is designed to give equal priority to all modes of transportation. Pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles may all use the space. These streets include wide sidewalks, street trees to provide shade, and often include a curbless design, with vehicular space delineated by bollards. These streets offer flexibility and versatility for the town, allowing the street to provide circulation for drivers that need to access the mobility hub or parking, while also allowing the street to be closed to host community events. Navigating this type of street requires drivers to slow down, which creates a safer environment for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. The Town is in the final design stage of converting Salem Street between Saunders Street and Chatham Street to a pedestrian-focused street.

The concept shown here focuses on North Elm Street. North Elm Street's proposed connection to Town Hall and Center Street are part of reimagining the future of the Jordan Oil site and creating strong links between downtown, Town Hall and neighborhoods to the north. This pedestrian-focused street would support the town's connecting across the tracks goals, local businesses, and potential future development. It also provides access to the proposed northern mobility hub option.

A NORTHERN GREEN
A redevelopment of the Jordan Oil site would create significant space for infill development in close proximity to downtown. The park space shown here is part of reimagining the future of the Jordan Oil site and adjacent private property.

B WEST STREET PARK
This park exists today, and should be preserved and enhanced as part of new development associated with the southern mobility hub option.

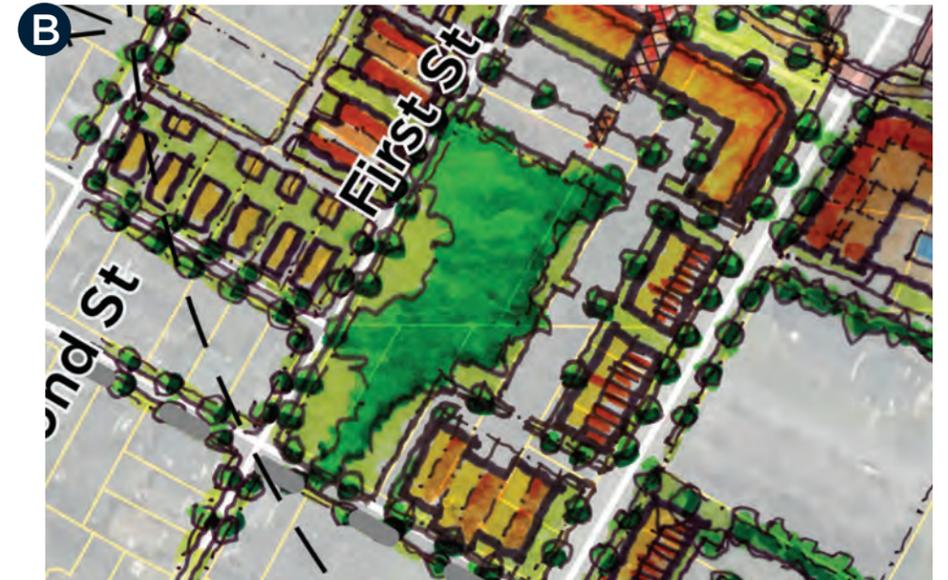
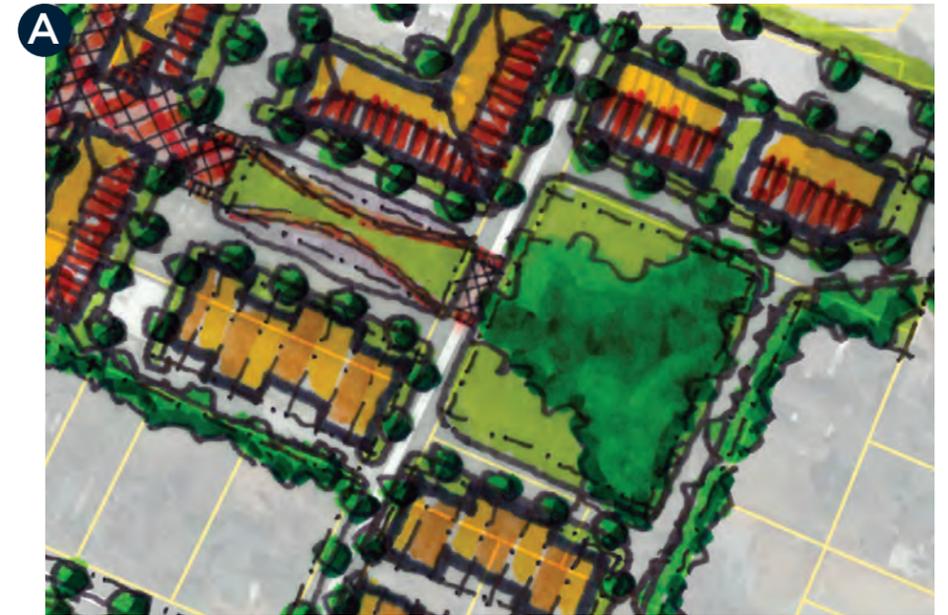
ELM STREET TO SALEM STREET PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE BRIDGE

Today a "Z-crossing" provides access for pedestrians across two sets of tracks between North Salem Street and North Elm Street. Maintaining access across the tracks is of critical importance to residents and business owners in Apex, so this concept explores a new grade-separated crossing. Because this section of the S-Line is outside of the 2015 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) study area, the proposed crossing will be further evaluated and vetted with NCDOT. Town staff will also need to coordinate on topics including feasibility, cost, funding, construction, and maintenance. The concept shown here illustrates a new, grade-separated pedestrian crossings between Salem Street and a newly constructed extension of North Elm Street.

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation across the S-Line can be provided with pedestrian bridges. These bridges are commonly used in North Carolina, and NCDOT has approved their construction in other locations, including Kannapolis and Charlotte. The primary advantages of a bridge are its more predictable cost and increased visibility. The design should also consider the area around the foot/landing on each side, as these spaces are opportunities to create inviting public plazas that are attractive to users. Bridges also create some challenges - notably they can function as a barrier due to the time it takes people and cyclists to ascend/descend using stairs and/or an elevator. The maintenance costs and responsibility for a public elevator would also need to be determined.

Key Project Elements

- Active and programmable multimodal pedestrian street
- Connections to community green space for community events
- Plaza space for people to interact with outside the mobility hub.



The street edges can serve as public gathering spaces in close proximity to the station.



Pedestrian-oriented Streets like this one in Burlington, VT can provide unique opportunities to create a public gathering place when closed for special events while maintaining daily parking and circulation needs.



The street should be well-designed with lighting and shade trees to improve safety and comfort for pedestrians.

Catalytic TOD Sites

Opportunity Sites

Seven sites within the Apex station area have been identified as strong candidates for supporting TOD. These sites are not listed in priority order.

A Hunter Street Park-1250 Ambergate Station
 This 12.3 acre, publicly-owned complex includes a small parking lot, baseball field, soccer field, skate park, small playground, and dog park. It is bordered by a large storage facility to the north and is surrounded by rail lines on both sides, with the S-Line on its east end. These border areas surrounding the recreational amenities are vacant and the building to land value ratio is 0.25. Due to its location and potential usage, Hunter St provides strong opportunity for added development.

Parcel numbers: 0742534216; 0742531455

B Apex Village-548 E Williams St
 This 5.7 acre, privately owned site contains seven standalone retail spaces surrounded by a lot of underutilized parking. It is located at a fork between two major roads (James St and E Williams St) and is proximate to a middle school, two single family neighborhoods, a church, and additional retail. Two bus stops connect the site to transit and, while it is a bit further from downtown and contains multiple open businesses, the Town has expressed interest in repositioning the site to support higher-density development.

Parcel number: 0741582328

C Jordan Oil-311 N Hughes St
 This 2.3 acre, privately-owned site sits between Hughes and Elm Streets just southwest of the Apex Town Hall/Government Center. The parcel includes Jordan Oil offices and storage facilities/tanks. Adjacent to this site is the CSX storage yard, which could be repurposed for development if a new site is found for these tracks. These combined sites will benefit from improved roadway connections to Center Street via the proposed North Elm Street extension and create an opportunity for new investment near downtown. Additional adjacent properties along North Hughes Street could also be assembled to expand the site footprint and potential development options.

Parcel number: 0742511722

D 308 N Salem St
 The privately owned, 0.6-acre site sits at the corner of N Salem and Center Streets and faces the S-Line to the east. It contains two small used car dealerships and a CSX office, but is mostly covered by underutilized parking and undeveloped space. It has been highlighted as a catalytic site by the Town of Apex due to the potential Center Street connection to the new Elm Street Multimodal Connection across the train tracks, but a major factor in spurring redevelopment will be relocating the CSX offices to a new site.

Parcel number: 0742416729

E West Street Park
 The 1.3 acre publicly owned site sits on three parcels bordered by West Street and First Street.. The site currently contains a smaller park with a playground but is mostly undeveloped and covered by trees. It is a block away from two churches to its east and a single-family residential neighborhood to its west. The park's expansion is seen by the Town as a potential growth opportunity and future community anchor. The park also provides an opportunity for reimagined residential development, with new multi-family development already in the pipeline just northeast of the site.

Parcel numbers: 70741297107; 0741296138; 0741298308



Catalytic TOD Sites - ACTION PLAN

In 2019, Apex adopted its Downtown Master Plan. The implementation strategies in this playbook for downtown Apex continue to build off of the recommendations of the plan, primarily to attract desired retail tenants and incentivize mixed-use TOD in the mobility hub's limited infill development sites.

Near-Term (12-18 months)

- Building on the recommendations outlined in the Apex Downtown Master Plan (2019), ensure that zoning provisions within the station area are able to support the Town's desired TOD typologies and uses.
- Continue discussions with Jordan Oil Property and other private landowners in the downtown core to identify relocation needs, timeline and begin land acquisition negotiations.
- Conduct feasibility study to explore the redevelopment potential of remaining publicly owned properties in downtown Apex, such as the Fire Station site.
- Establish retail tenaning strategic plan to identify existing retail gaps in the market and identify strategies to attract desired retail tenants and expand the presence of local businesses.

Mid-Term (2-5 years)

- Investigate implementing a business improvement or municipal service district in the downtown area to help fund streetscaping and preservation efforts in in the downtown area. Organizations such as the Apex Downtown Business Association can serve as stewards for these districts.
- Begin to market publicly owned sites and other key private sites, such as the Jordan Oil site, to engage private developers and leverage existing local incentives.
- Develop a suite of innovative financing and regulatory tools to incentivize private development in the downtown core.
 - Financing tools, such as bonds, grants, loans, and tax abatements, can offsetting predevelopment costs, as well as establish permanent financing for TOD.
 - Regulatory tools, such as reduction in parking minimums and expedited permitting, can be leveraged to support affordable housing and commercial uses in downtown Apex.

Long-Term (5+ years)

- Launch additional financing tools to supplement existing menu of incentives.
- Continue to monitor market conditions in order to reposition underutilized Town-owned sites to attract TOD-supportive uses and development typologies, such as multifamily rental and office.

Priority Infrastructure Projects

1

Salem Pedestrian Street

This project, which is currently in design, will reconstruct the central business portion of Salem Street to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle travel while allowing for vehicular circulation to access businesses and the potential mobility hub. The street design allows for increased space for pedestrians, and ample parking for businesses.

2

Jordan Oil New Roadway Connections

Access points across the potential development site are critical to circulation within the community and to connect to the station. This project will improve safety and comfortable experience for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers by providing wider sidewalks, ADA ramps, street trees, and bicycle facilities. Key intersection enhancements - notably at Center Street and the cross streets of Hughes St, Elm St, and Mason St

3

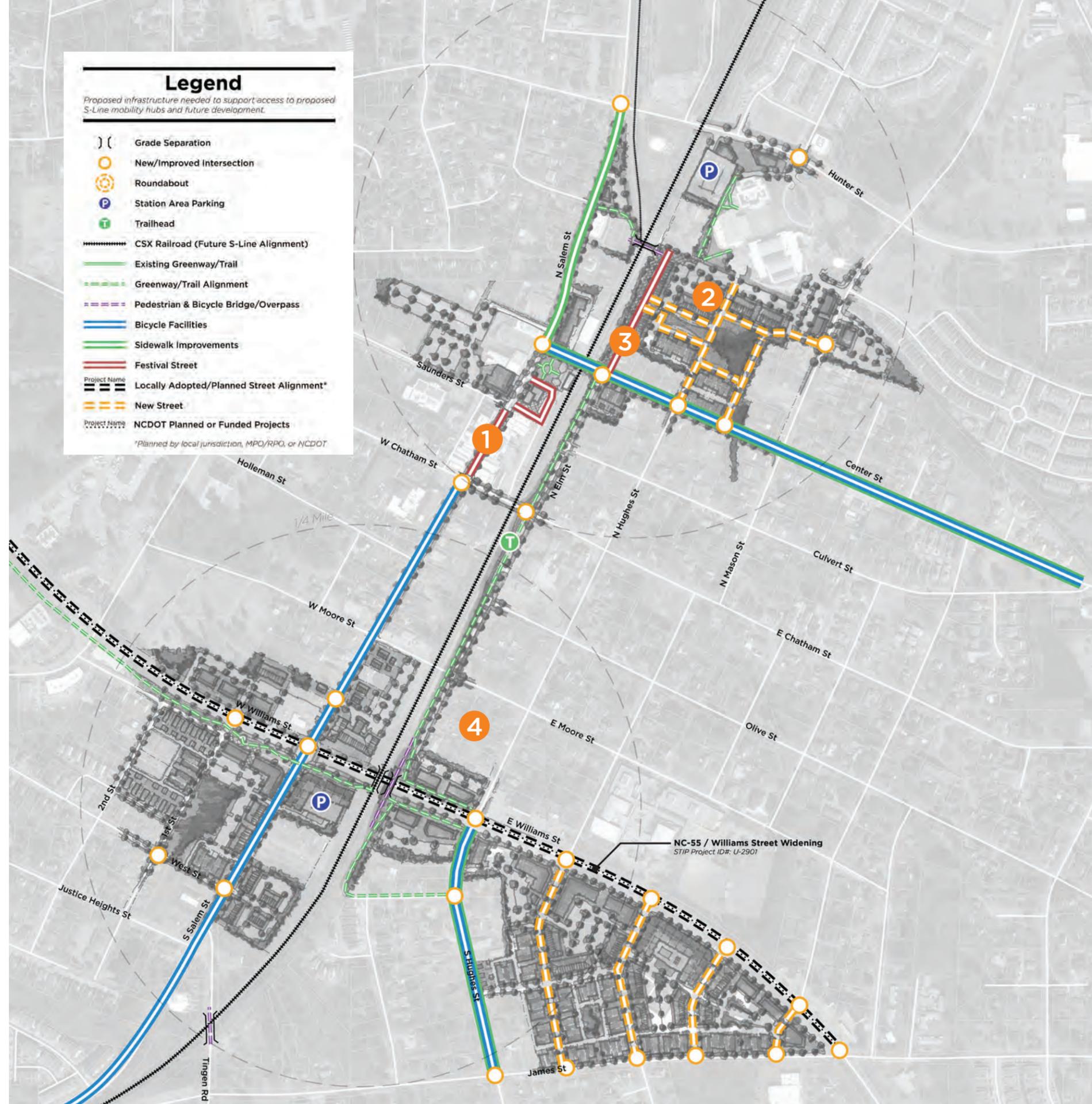
Elm Pedestrian Street and Safety Improvements

This project is critical to potential station access and will construct Elm Street east of the CSX ROW to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle travel while allowing for vehicular circulation to access new businesses and the potential mobility hub.

4

Elm Street Multimodal Connection

This project will install off-street shared-use path along Elm Street and make intersection improvements at Chatham Street to provide access into downtown for pedestrians and cyclists. The connection shown across East Williams Street is proposed to be a grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian connection only.



Grant Funding Database

Federal

- Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program
- Opportunity Zone
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) (includes Building Demolition funds)
- INFRA Grants program
- Federal Historic Tax Credits

State

- State Rural Grants - Building Reuse (includes Vacant Building and Existing Building grants)
- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits

Local

- Obligation Bond
- Capital Reserve
- Powell Bill



View the *Eligible Grant Dashboard* online
<----- (click here)

Apex Policy Recommendations

1. Amend the UDO to include policies for building placement, heights, and parking to support transit-oriented development in the downtown area, specifically near designated transit station areas.
2. Consider designating the station area as a mixed-use activity center in the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map, given future TOD potential.
 - Amend the UDO to allow for building heights up to 5 stories on a case-by-case basis around designated transit station areas.
3. Amend the UDO and Transportation Plan to:
 - Consider shared and consolidated driveway access.
 - Include spaces for additional modes of transportation (in addition to bicycle parking) in the vicinity of the mobility hub areas.
 - Plan for a future “festival street” along Elm Street.
4. Adopt policies that support existing, small, local businesses in the TOD areas.