

# Secrest Short Cut

## SMALL AREA PLAN

Prepared for

*Town of Indian Trail and Union County*

ADOPTED BY THE TOWN OF INDIAN TRAIL – SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

ADOPTED BY UNION COUNTY – OCTOBER 15, 2018



GRESHAM, SMITH & PARTNERS

201 S. COLLEGE STREET, SUITE 1950

CHARLOTTE, NC 28244



**Gresham Smith**

GS-NC P.C.

*An Affiliate of Gresham Smith*

# Table of Contents

---

Executive Summary .....	1
Project Overview .....	2
Key Facts About the Process.....	2
Study Area.....	2
Local Jurisdictions .....	2
Existing Conditions .....	2
Environmental Features .....	3
Transportation Plan .....	3
Current Zoning.....	3
Utilities.....	3
Issues and Opportunities.....	3
Summary of Findings of Public Engagement.....	6
Open House #1 .....	6
MetroQuest Engagement Software.....	6
Open House #2 .....	6
Land Use Alternative Scenarios.....	7
Employment Scenario.....	7
Mixed Use Scenario .....	9
Lower Density Scenario .....	10
Recommended Land Use Plan.....	11
Associated Issues and Opportunities .....	11
Recommended Land Use Scenario (Buildout potential).....	11
Recommended Land Use Plan Map .....	12
Plan Implementation/Implementation Strategies .....	13
Conclusion .....	14
Appendix.....	15

## Executive Summary

---

Union County and the Town of Indian Trail have developed a small area plan for the Secrest Short Cut area to guide future growth near the Monroe Expressway interchange at Unionville-Indian Trail Road. The plan aims to reflect community priorities and guide economic development opportunities in the changing landscape.

A final small area plan document was prepared through the nine-month study process, occurring between December 2017 and August 2018. The planning process studied existing conditions, regional growth projections and area plans to identify issues and opportunities for the study area. The process fully documented input received from the public open house engagement events and surveys, staff, the stakeholder committee and governing boards.

Three alternative land use scenarios; low density, mixed use and employment, were developed and presented to the public on May 31, 2018. The alternatives were also vetted through the stakeholder committee with modifications suggested by members.

The alternative land use scenarios represented buildout patterns focused on employment, mixed-use and low density residential. Clustering of development activity to both focus energy and to protect environmental features was encouraged in all scenarios. Each scenario offered alternatives to the issues and opportunities identified through the study to inform the plan framework and final recommendations.

As a result, a recommended final land use plan was developed that took ideas from each alternative to provide a framework for development in the Secrest Short Cut Small Area Plan study area. The final plan includes all necessary data, analyses and mapping to accurately convey the justifications for the Plan's conclusions and recommendations.

## Project Overview

---

Union County and the Town of Indian Trail conducted a small area study of approximately two square miles of land in the vicinity between Faith Church Road and Unionville-Indian Trail Road, straddling the Monroe Expressway. The intent of the study was to identify land use, economic development, and transportation recommendations within the study area considering the expressway's change to the physical environment. The small area plan started in the winter of 2017, and took approximately 12 months to complete. This project is jointly funded with Indian Trail and Union County local funds.

### Key Facts About the Process

- Monroe Expressway will be open in November 2018
- Union County and Indian Trail identified a need to revisit recommended land uses and other related issues in vicinity of interchange
- A joint plan has been developed with the assistance of Gresham, Smith and Partners; and Centralina Council of Governments. A Steering Committee provided local knowledge, recommendations, and review of the overall process
- The public was engaged through an online survey and two community meetings
- Indian Trail and Union County planning boards and governing boards were responsible for approving the plan

### Study Area (Appendix A. Study Area Map)

- 1,323 acres (approximately two square miles)
- Bisected by Monroe Expressway and Sardis Church/Unionville-Indian Trail Road
- Less than 10% is considered developed
- 99% of existing development is residential
- 25% is used for agriculture
- Approximately 230 parcels

### Local Jurisdictions (Appendix B. Local Jurisdictions Map)

Land use and transportation planning are challenging in a rapidly growing suburban environment like unincorporated Union County and Indian Trail. It is very important to assure that the appropriate attention is given to the effective management and integration of land use, transportation, placemaking and the establishment of a strong economic base. Mobility is key to serving a rapidly growing population. Introducing a controlled access toll facility in a small area which includes multiple jurisdictions is a somewhat complex equation that can make planning and consensus building that much more difficult.

## Existing Conditions

---

The project team reviewed existing municipal and county plans that included both Union County and Indian Trail comprehensive plans and other planning documents that speak to the planning area. The existing conditions and analysis for the small area plan were presented at the first community meeting to inform the public about the process and schedule, and receive any feedback needed for the area. A summary of existing conditions is included.



## Environmental Features (Appendix C. Environmental Features Map)

- Floodplains and streams are found throughout the study area

## Transportation Plans (Appendix D. Transportation Plans Map)

- Interchange at Unionville-Indian Trail Road with the Monroe Expressway is focal point for future growth
- Faith Church intersection will be improved, but no other improvements are funded
- Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) calls for multi-lane Secret Short Cut Road and Sardis Church/Unionville- Indian Trail Road

## Current Zoning (Appendix E. Current Zoning Map)

- Most land use currently zoned for residential uses on one-acre lots
- Very little employment/commercial zoned land exists

## Utilities (Appendix F. Utilities Map)

- Union County water and sewer are available in most parts of study area, although capacity to serve the full build out of the study area will not occur until the 2020s
- City of Monroe able to serve southern end of study area

## Issues and Opportunities

There are many issues and opportunities regarding the physical impact of the soon to open Monroe Expressway, particularly as they relate to existing and proposed land use, potential economic development and multi-modal needs, whether that's roadway, bike and/or pedestrian facility improvements, throughout the Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan study area.

Many of the issues in the area are quite evident. Others are a result of the construction of the expressway or its expected changes to land uses and mobility once it opens. Some issues are also opportunities as well. In the narrative to follow, both are discussed and summarized for the land use, economic development and transportation in the study area.

### Issues

#### Multiple Jurisdictions

Within the defined study area there are three local governments that control land use, zoning and other policies associated with their jurisdiction. These include Union County, the Town of Indian Trail and the Town of Hemby Bridge. Although Union County administers planning and zoning in Hemby Bridge, the policies that direct the administration are those of the Hemby Bridge Town Council. The multiple local governments in the study area results in separate plans that were prepared individually, sometimes with very different land development policies. An awareness of those policies and their influence on each other is necessary to achieve a plan that all can support and help implement.

The City of Monroe and the Village of Lake Park are both adjacent to the study area. Their respective plans, policies and

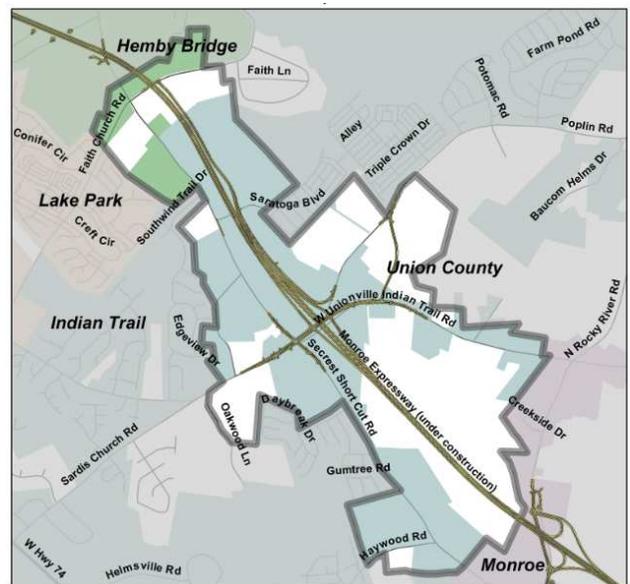


Figure 1. Multiple Jurisdictions in the Study Area

decisions on land development and infrastructure greatly affect the Secret Short Cut area. Therefore, it is also important that this plan take that into account in its development.

### Residual Parcels

The emphasis here is not the impacts during the construction of the Monroe Expressway, although there were many, but rather the physical effect of having an expressway facility where there once was none. One example was the creation of a strip of parcels that lie between the Monroe Expressway and Secret Short Cut Road as well as near Poplin Road. These newly formed parcels of land are shallow in their depth and are positioned between an Expressway facility and a proposed multi-lane facility. The physical shape of these properties and their proximity to these major roadway facilities will most assuredly affect their use and developability.



**Figure 2. Property between Secret Short Cut Rd and Monroe Expressway**

### Noise

This is another issue to consider for properties on both sides of the freeway. Not only will it affect existing land uses but future land uses should be compatible or include design measures that mitigate the impact of the noise generated from the Expressway.

### Mobility

While the introduction of a new roadway facility into an area can be viewed as an opportunity for mobility, it also creates issues for the movement of all modes through the area. The change in travel patterns and the increase in traffic associated with the interchange at Unionville-Indian Trail Road creates congestion and safety concerns on the roadways in the area. As frequently noted by comments during the input and comment periods, the need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities is increasing due to additional residents in the area. Walkability is desired in the mix of uses planned and increased development overall.

### Growth and Public Perception

Union County and Indian Trail have both experienced continued growth for some time, primarily in residential development. With growth has come inevitable increases in traffic, a change in community character, and a need for parks, gathering places and shopping. These issues were highlighted in many of the comments and survey responses yielded from the first Open House engagement for the small area plan. This input was considered carefully in defining the recommendations for the Secret Short Cut Road area.

### Opportunities

#### Regional Access

The opening of the Monroe Expressway will offer accessibility to this area of Union County as never before. What was once an area accessed only by limited two-lane rural facilities will now be easily connected to a much larger market area via a limited access highway. The interchange at Unionville-Indian Trail Road offers residents in the area a new commuting option through a different path and travelers on the expressway a new destination for goods, services and recreation. The expressway will spur growth by providing efficient access to employment markets.



**Figure 3. Aerial View of Monroe Expressway**

### Economic Development

The opportunity for economic development are consistent with the Town of Indian Trail’s Comprehensive Plan goals as well as those of Union County to achieve a more balanced tax base. According to the adopted Union County Comprehensive Plan, approximately 94 percent of the land in Union County are agriculture or residential land uses. The accessibility provided by the Unionville-Indian Trail Road interchange with the Monroe Expressway creates a new location for a mixture of land uses including office, flex space and retail. The ensuing development results in more local jobs, services, and places to shop and eat including an increase in the overall non-residential tax base.

### Housing Options

Residential development in Union County consists of mostly larger lot single family housing (homes on one acre lots or larger). The Secret Short Cut Road study area is an opportunity to allow for a mix of housing options to accommodate a wide range of housing types. This is also identified by the recent McKibbin demographic study for the school system as an issue in retaining residents in the County. This could include varying densities of small lot single family, attached single family including townhomes and a limited amount of multi-family (apartments or condominiums) units.



**Figure 4. Attached Housing**



**Figure 5. Multi-Family**



**Figure 6. Low Density**



**Figure 7. Mixed-Use**

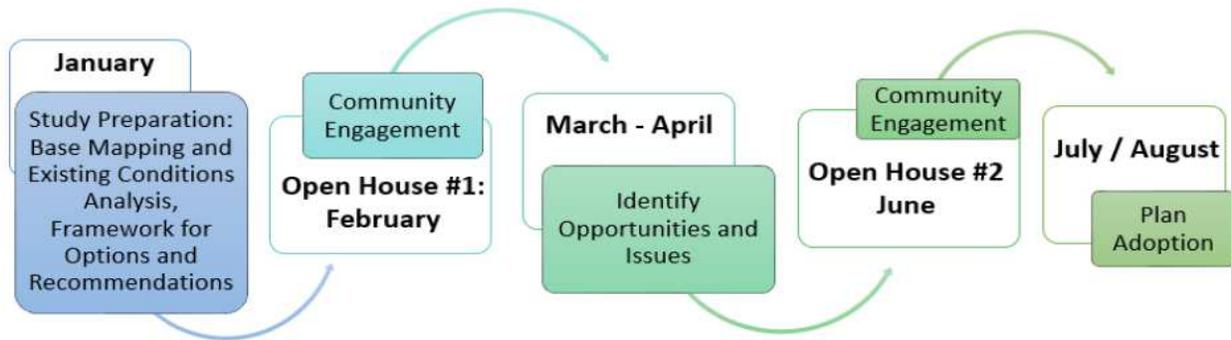
### Mixed-Use Center

Allowing a mixed-use center in the heart of the study area at the interchange with Unionville-Indian Trail Road can help to facilitate the creation of developments that will enhance the quality of life in the area by providing nearby shopping, entertainment and employment opportunities. Retail, office uses and a variety of residential development could be encouraged that are well integrated in their design. This will provide for walkable access to destinations within the mixed-use center for area residents and employees. This type of development will require density and a mix of uses seldom seen in Union County, and should be balanced with mitigations for traffic, and stormwater runoff, as well as appropriate buffering to adjacent land uses.

The issues and opportunities described above laid the framework for development of the Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan. In the following section of the report, alternative development scenarios for the study area are identified. These alternatives were presented to the public for feedback, which led to the adoption of a preferred development scenario for the Small Area Plan.

## Summary of Findings of Public Engagement

Public engagement ensured communication and quality throughout the study process via frequent interaction with staff and meetings with an informed stakeholder group. A public engagement plan was developed with stakeholders that utilized two community meetings to effectively gather feedback from citizens, property owners, elected and appointed officials. Input from residents was critical in helping guide the priorities and plan for the study area.



**Figure 8. Public Engagement Process**

### Open House #1 (Appendix G. Open House #1 Survey Results)

The first public open house was held on Thursday, February 22, 2018 from 6:00pm – 8:00pm. The event was held at the Carriage House, located at 6308 Secret Short Cut Road. Residents were encouraged to drop-in anytime to view planning opportunities, take a short survey, talk with staff, and collaborate with friends and neighbors. The open house gathered input about the types of development that are appropriate or needed for the Secret Short Cut area, such as residential, retail and entertainment, commercial, parks and greenways.

#### By the numbers

- 122 individual participants; not including staff
- 26 hard-copy surveys completed

### MetroQuest Engagement Software (Appendix H. MetroQuest Engagement Software Survey Results)

MetroQuest was utilized to provide an additional layer of opportunity to gather input from the community. This software was linked to the Town and County’s website, shared in newsletters and other communications and completed during the first Open House via an in-person work station. The software ensured maximum opportunity for engagement throughout multiple weeks, offering active participation from stakeholders impacted by the project.

### Open House #2 (Appendix I. Open House #2 Survey Results)

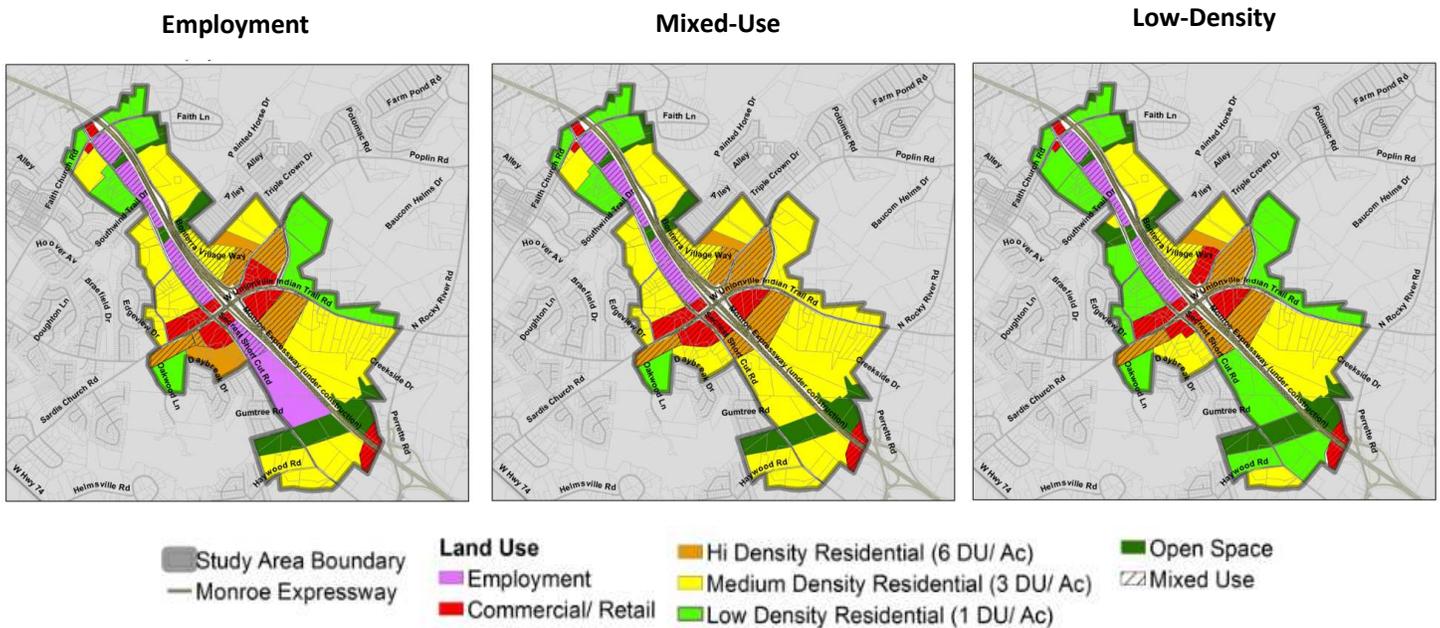
The second public open house was held on Thursday, May 31, 2018 from 5:00pm – 7:00pm. The event was held at the Indian Trail Town Hall, located at 315 Matthews-Indian Trail Road. Residents were encouraged to drop-in anytime to view these alternative land use plan scenarios for the area, give feedback on those plans, talk with staff, and collaborate with friends and neighbors. The open house gathered input about the three land use scenarios that identified locations for housing, retail and employment uses which were being considered for the study area.

#### By the numbers

- 50 individual participants; not including staff
- 22 hard-copy surveys completed

# Land Use Alternative Scenarios

Three land use plan scenarios were developed through the planning process. They represented buildout patterns focused on Employment, Mixed-Use and Low Density Residential. The Low-Density Scenario was relative, although densities were lower than the adopted plan recommendations. Clustering of low density residential was encouraged in all scenarios. The planning process consisted of the study of existing conditions, regional growth projections, area plans, and results of the public engagement work completed to date. Each scenario offered alternatives to the issues and opportunities identified through the study to inform the plan framework and final recommendations.



(Appendix J. Explanation of Land Uses)

## Land Use Scenario Comparisons (Buildout potential)

	Dwelling Units	Low Density Dwelling Units	Medium Density Dwelling Units	High Density Dwelling Units	Non-Residential Square Footage
Existing Zoning	1,497	1,186	192	119	237,000
Existing Land Use Plans	2,870	-	1,397	1,473	1,065,000
Low Density Land Use Scenario	2,128	418	1,008	702	1,340,000
Mixed-Use Land Use Scenario	2,816	107	1,953	756	1,360,000
Employment Land Use Scenario	2,364	201	1,383	780	2,250,000

Notes: Non-residential calculated at 10,000 square feet per acre. Dwelling units are based on gross acreage yields.

**Table 1. Land Use Scenario Buildout Potential Comparisons**

### Employment Scenario

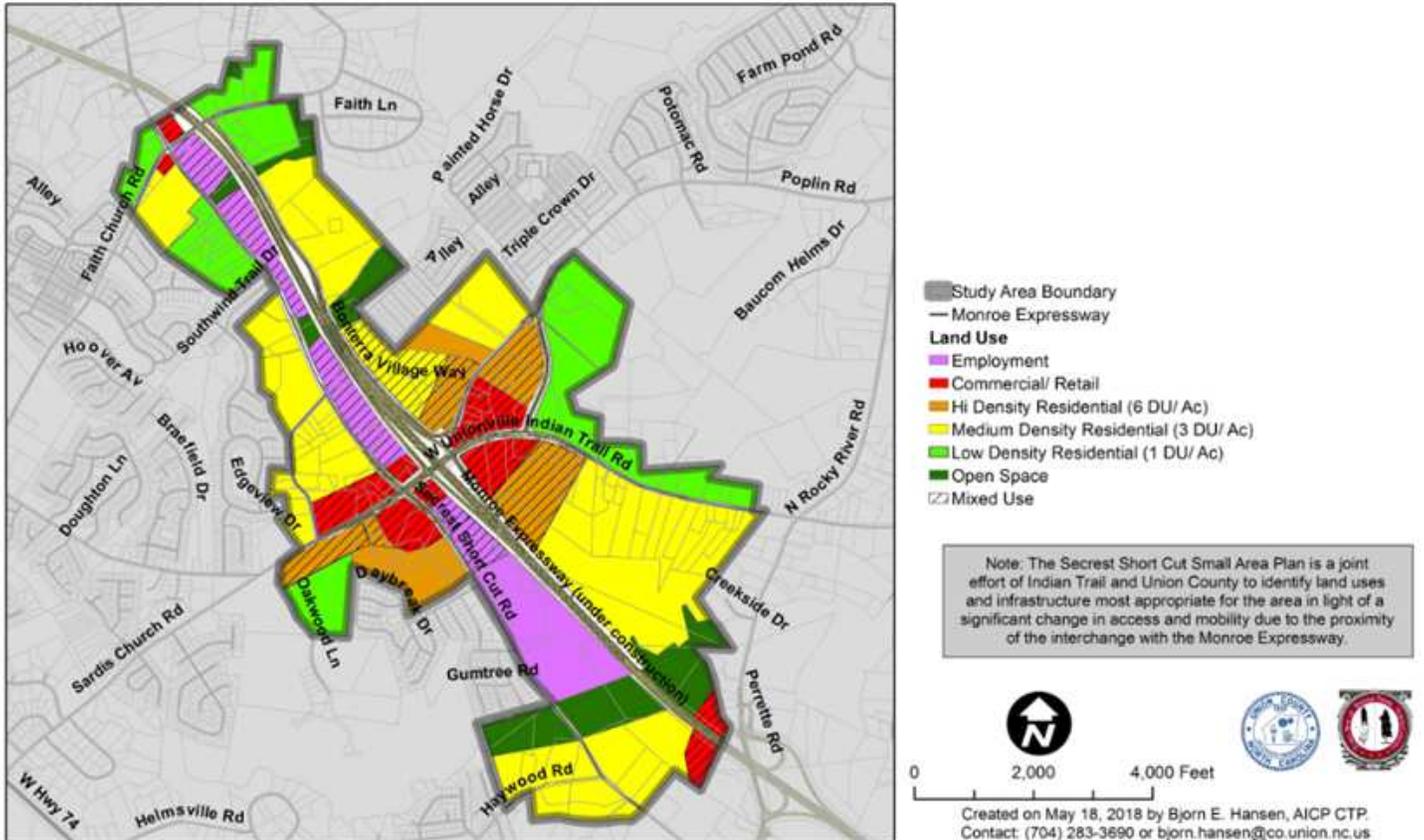
This alternative land use pattern for the study area emphasized locations for employment based uses. As identified in the issues section, the residual parcels that remain between Secret Short Cut Road and the Monroe Expressway provide a challenge for appropriate and buildable land uses. In this scenario, employment was recommended for most of those parcels with retail/mixed use located near the interchange. Additional retail was also recommended

on all quadrants of the interchange. Mixed use and higher density residential was focused in the interchange area and transitioned to medium and lower density residential, mostly adjacent to existing neighborhoods.

Nonresidential uses could potentially double to approximately 2.3 million square feet from the baseline (existing plans). Potential residential units would decrease by approximately 500 dwelling units in this scenario, to a total of 2,364 units.

### Associated Issues and Opportunities

- *Economic Development* – The accessibility provided by the Unionville-Indian Trail Road interchange with the Monroe Expressway creates a new location for a mixture of land uses including office, flex space and retail. The ensuing development will result in more local jobs, services, and places to shop and eat including an increase in the overall non-residential tax base.
- *Mobility* – For the employment scenario, the Monroe Expressway will allow for much greater regional accessibility to this area of Indian Trail / Union County providing greater opportunity for non-residential development. At the same time, changes in travel patterns and the increase in traffic associated with the interchange at Unionville-Indian Trail Road may create congestion and safety concerns on the roadways in the area. The need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities is also increasing due to additional residents and employment in the area. Walkability is desired in the mix of uses planned and increased development overall.
- *Regional Access* – The opening of the Monroe Expressway will offer accessibility to this area of Union County as never before while also providing efficient access for existing and future area residents to multiple employment markets.
- *Multiple Jurisdictions* – This plan is intended to ensure that multiple jurisdictions are on the same page regarding development type per area that would be supported, whether an applicant goes to Union County or the Town of Indian Trail to develop.

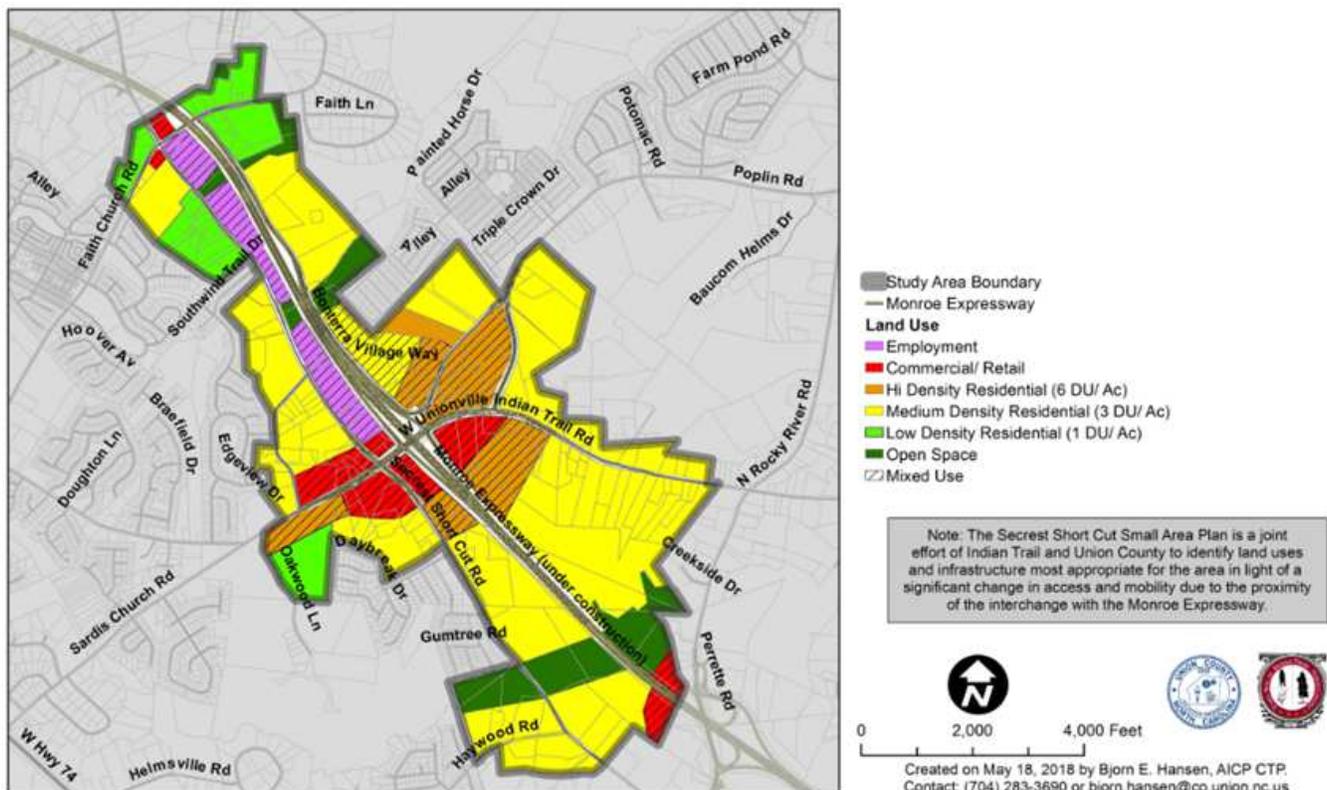


## Mixed Use Scenario

A mixture of land uses was recommended in this scenario focusing primarily at and around the interchange. This scenario decreased the potential residential units slightly (less than 60 units) over baseline while increasing the non-residential footprint by 300,000 square feet. A small employment corridor was proposed between Faith Church Road and Unionville-Indian Trail Road to take advantage of the residual lots discussed previously. This was consistent with the recently adopted Hemby Bridge land use plan. A mixture of medium and low density residential adjacent to similar existing developments complete the proposed land use pattern.

## Associated Issues and Opportunities

- **Economic Development** – The accessibility provided by the Unionville-Indian Trail Road interchange with the Monroe Expressway creates a new location for a mixture of land uses including office, flex space and retail. The ensuing development will result in more local jobs, services, and places to shop and eat including an increase in the overall non-residential tax base.
- **Mixed-Use Center** – Retail, office uses and a variety of residential development could be encouraged that are well integrated in their design. This will provide for walkable access to destinations within the mixed-use center for area residents and employees. This type of development will require density and a mix of uses seldom seen in Union County, and should be balanced with mitigations for traffic, and stormwater run-off, as well as appropriate buffering to adjacent land uses.
- **Housing Options** – There is an opportunity in the study area to allow for a mix of housing options to accommodate a wide range of housing types. This could include varying densities of small lot single family, attached single family including townhomes and a limited amount of multi-family units.
- **Residual Parcels** – The resulting physical shape of the properties, primarily north of Sardis Church Road between Secret Short Cut Road and the Monroe Expressway, dictate the land uses in that area to be non-residential.
- **Regional Access** – The opening of the Monroe Expressway will offer accessibility to this area of Union County as never before spurring an opportunity for mixed use development as an area destination.

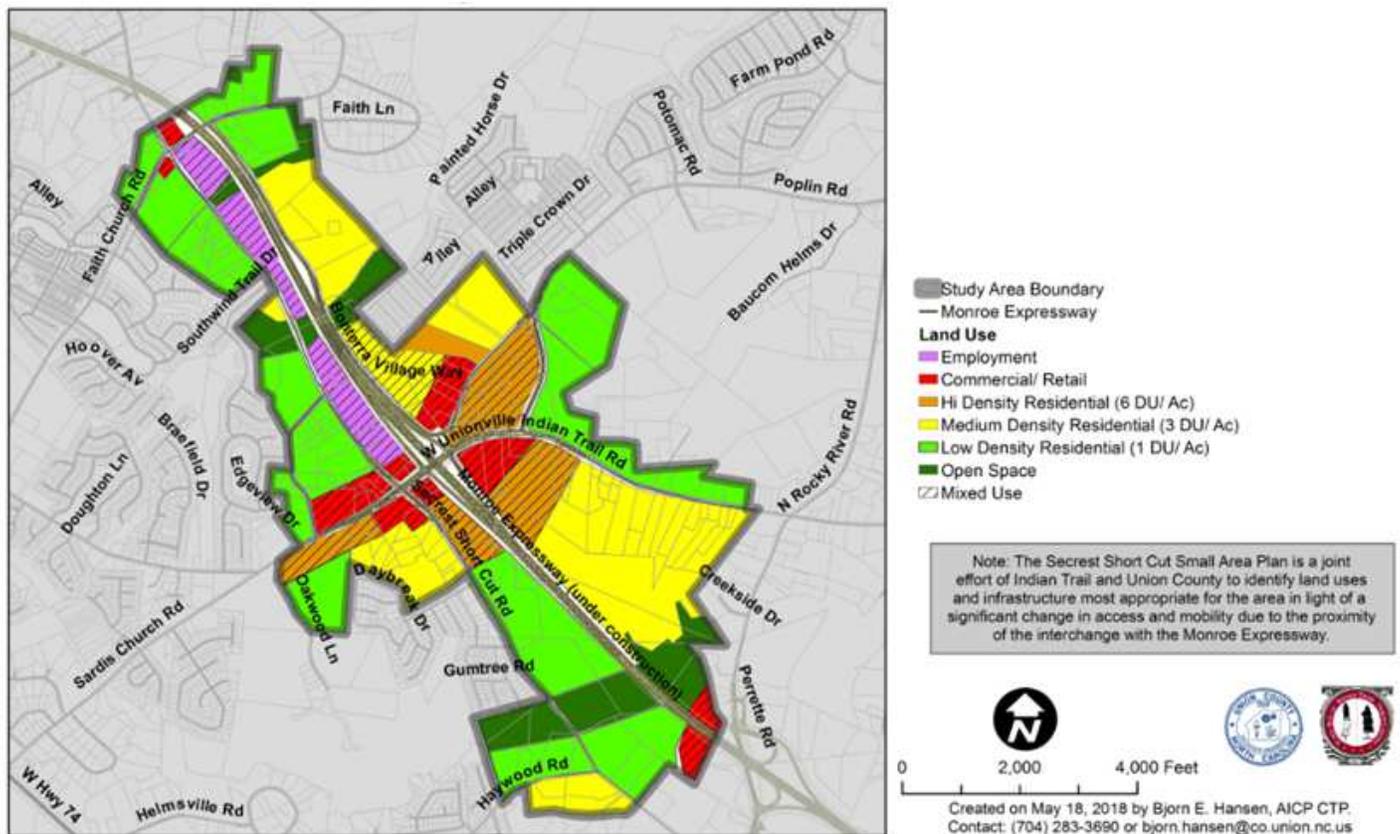


## Lower Density Scenario

Although some high density residential was included in this scenario adjacent to retail at the interchange, the overall potential dwelling units was 750 units less than the baseline. Lower density residential was maintained in proximity to existing adjacent developments. The low-density developments should be developed under the cluster provisions to preserve open space and to address citizen comments about maintaining a rural character. Limited employment was introduced in the northern section of the study area. As with all land use scenarios, additional retail was called for around the interchange with Unionville-Indian Trail Road which was consistent with the City of Monroe's recently adopted land use plan for the area near the Rocky River Road interchange.

## Associated Issues and Opportunities

- *Residual Parcels* – The resulting physical shape of the properties, primarily north of Sardis Church Road between Secret Short Cut Road and the Monroe Expressway, dictate the land uses in that area to be non-residential.
- *Growth and Public Perception* – With growth comes inevitable increases in traffic, a change in community character. These issues were highlighted in many of the comments and survey responses yielded from the first Open House engagement for the small area plan. This input was considered carefully in defining the recommendations for the low-density land use scenario for the Secret Short Cut Road area.
- *Housing Options* – Even in the low-density scenario, there is an opportunity in the study area to allow for a mix of housing options to accommodate a wide range of housing types. This could include varying densities of small lot single family, attached single family including townhomes and a limited amount of multi-family (apartments or condominiums) units.



## Recommended Land Use Plan

The three alternative land use scenarios, low density, mixed use and employment, were presented to the public at the open house held on May 31, 2018. Significant feedback was obtained from this event and summarized in the public engagement section and documented in the appendix. The alternatives were also vetted at the stakeholder committee meeting with modifications suggested by the committee members. As a result, a recommended final land use plan was developed that took ideas from each alternative to provide a framework for development in the Secrest Short Cut Small Area Plan study area.

### Associated Issues and Opportunities

- *Employment* – With approximately 70% of the residents in Union County currently commuting outside of the County to work and the current imbalance of the residential/non-residential tax base, the recommended land use plan recognized the need and opportunity for additional non-residential/employment based uses in the area. The overall buildout of the recommended plan compares favorably with that of the 2045 Metrolina Model projections, which utilized the CommunityViz growth allocation model.
- *Commercial/Retail* – Commercial and retail uses are recommended to balance the land use plan but also to take advantage of the opportunity the newly created regional access provides. Given the estimates that almost 25% of retail sales leave Union County, the recommended land use plan responds by recommending retail uses around the interchange and major intersection areas.
- *Residential* – Consistent with current zoning and plans, the majority of the land in the study area remains recommended for residential uses. Potential dwelling units of 2,759 is essentially the same as the current plans for the area. Lower densities are limited primarily to the areas within Hemby Bridge. Medium densities are focused adjacent to existing neighborhoods and north of the Monroe Expressway. Higher densities are concentrated near the center of the study area surrounding the interchange with Unionville-Indian Trail Road. This mix of densities including the provision for additional denser residential uses, including smaller lots, patio homes, townhouses, and condos, reflect the growing demand for more housing options that are more attractive to singles, baby boomers, empty nesters and couples without children.
- *Mixed Use* – Mixed-use is the core of the recommended plan and identified throughout the higher density and commercial uses in the interchange area of the plan. The mixed-use designation reflects a desire to integrate land uses to create a walkable and cohesive development which satisfies the demand for housing options with opportunities for employment, shopping and services nearby. Commercial may have residential on a second floor, or small scale “neighborhood” commercial may be located inside a master planned residential area.

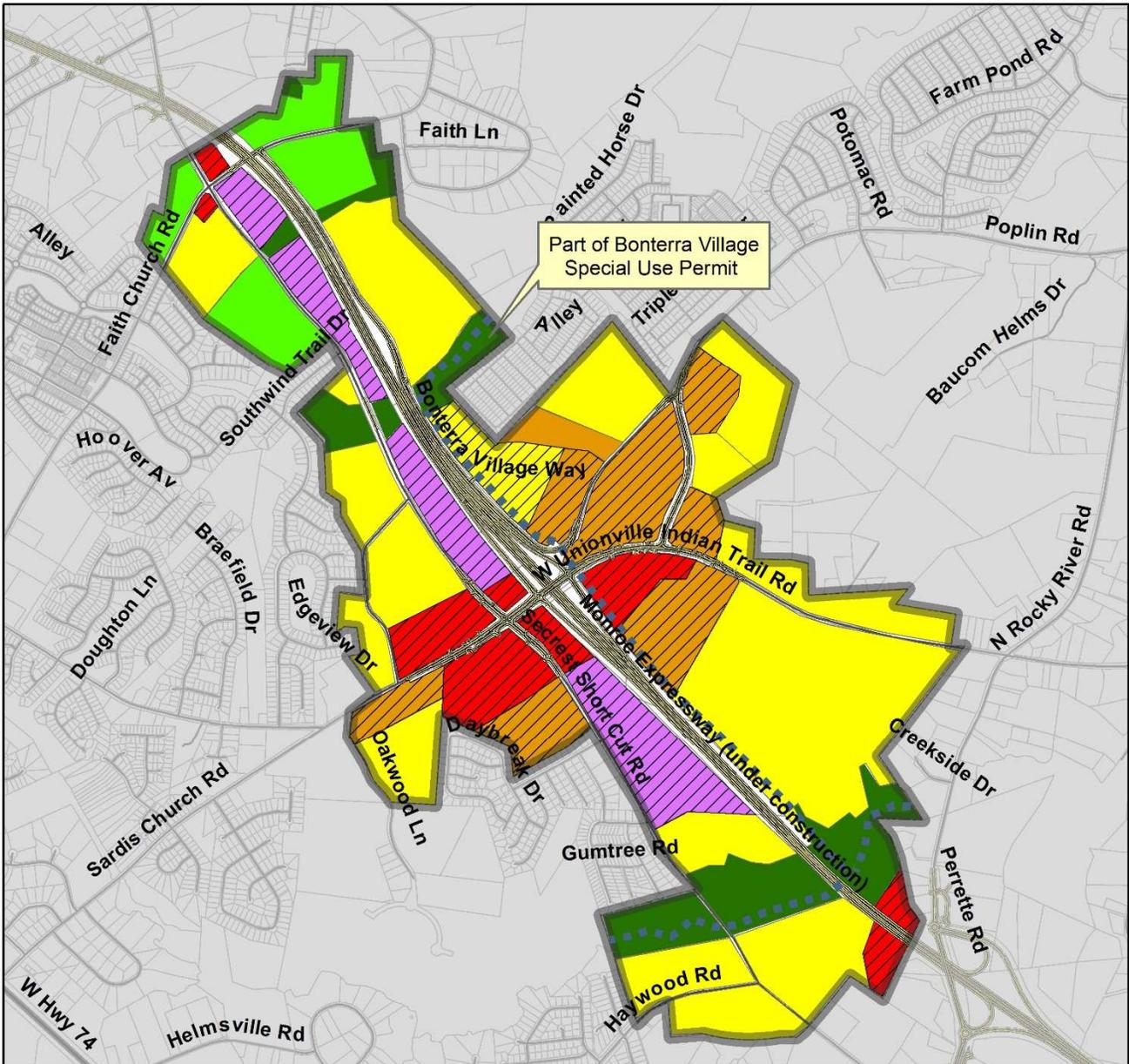
### Recommended Land Use Scenario (Buildout potential)

	Dwelling Units	Low Density Dwelling Units	Medium Density Dwelling Units	High Density Dwelling Units	Non-Residential Square Footage
<i>Existing Zoning</i>	1,497	1,186	192	119	237,000
<i>Existing Land Use Plans</i>	2,870	-	1,397	1,473	1,065,000
<i>Recommended Land Use Scenario</i>	2,759	122	1,683	954	1,979,000

Notes: Non-residential calculated at 10,000 square feet per acre. Dwelling units are based on gross acreage yields. On the recommended plan, low density is calculated at 1.5 du/acre to reflect bonus density for clustering

**Table 2. Recommended Land Use Scenario Buildout Potential Comparisons**

Recommended Land Use Plan Map



Study Area Boundary

Monroe Expressway

Trail

Mixed Use

**Land Use**

Employment

Commercial/ Retail

High Density Residential (6 DU Average/ Ac)

Medium Density Residential (3 DU Average/ Ac)

Low Density Residential (1.5 DU Average/ Ac)

Open Space/ Environmentally Sensitive

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



0 2,000 4,000 Feet



Created on July 11, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us

# Plan Implementation/Implementation Strategies

---

## **Goal 1: Create a livable, desirable community where a variety of housing options are available in the area.**

- **Strategy 1.1:** Support rezoning of properties in accordance with the plan recommendations to allow for attached single family and multifamily units.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Require the clustering of single family developments throughout the study area either through the rezoning and/or the subdivision process to preserve the environmentally sensitive areas, locations with hydric soils or forested areas.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Require connectivity for all modes within developments and to adjacent developable properties.

## **Goal 2: Accommodate commercial and retail opportunities per the recommended land use map to support the local population of the area and attract consumers traversing the County on the Monroe Expressway.**

- **Strategy 2.1:** Support rezoning of properties to retail uses as identified on the land use plan that are well designed within the mixed-use areas to complement the mix of uses and capture retail sales in the area.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Support service industry uses within the area to support existing and future residents and create local jobs. The location of these uses should be tied to the services they provide and their market area.

## **Goal 3: Provide for employment-based uses to bring new jobs to the area.**

- **Strategy 3.1:** Support rezoning for light industrial, flex space or office uses in the areas between the Monroe Expressway and Secret Short Cut Road.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Require project development to mitigate noise impacts from the expressway and to provide for an attractive viewshed from both the expressway and Secret Short Cut Road. This can be accomplished through building design, placement and appropriate landscaping measures.

## **Goal 4: Create a Sense of Place in Identified Mixed Use Areas.**

- **Strategy 4.1:** Encourage density and a mix of uses in identified mixed use areas.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Require community amenities and gathering places in identified mixed use areas.
- **Strategy 4.3:** Focus adjacent residential density close to mixed use areas.

## **Goal 5: Retain Natural Features and Environmental Protection.**

- **Strategy 5.1:** Utilize bioswales and other techniques to reduce runoff and control stormwater in all development types.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Mandate the use of the stricter Indian Trail stormwater standards, regardless of boundary.
- **Strategy 5.3:** Focus open space preservation on forested areas and areas with hydric soils.
- **Strategy 5.4:** Require enhanced setbacks and landscaping along areas of particular concern.

## **Goal 6: Provide incentives to developers to offset required improvements and create the vision called for in this plan through their respective developments.**

- **Strategy 6.1:** Allow a density bonus to residential developments that cluster to protect natural features.
- **Strategy 6.2:** Require consistent improvements (within both jurisdictions) to build sidewalks, multi-use paths or needed transportation improvements including ROW and/or construction.
- **Strategy 6.3:** Require traffic impact analysis for rezoning and development proposals to identify needed internal and external multi-modal improvements.
- **Strategy 6.4:** Indian Trail and Union County should jointly review and comment on proposed developments within the Secret Short Cut Road Small Area Plan Study Area. This continued coordination between the two jurisdictions will help address and coordinate improvements to traffic, stormwater and other issues common to both.

**Goal 7: Provide for Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements throughout the study area.**

- **Strategy 7.1:** Implement pedestrian and bicycle improvements through the development process and supplement where necessary with publicly funded capital projects for the following roadways.
  - **Tactic 7.1.1:** Secrest Short Cut Road sidewalks and multi-use path. Both sides of street separated from roadway by a landscaped strip.
  - **Tactic 7.1.2:** Unionville-Indian Trail Road sidewalks on both sides of the street separated from the roadway by a landscaped strip.
  - **Tactic 7.1.3:** Poplin Road sidewalks. Both sides of street separated from roadway by a landscaped strip.
  - **Tactic 7.1.4:** Faith Church Road sidewalks. Continue cross-section existing in Lake Park.
  - **Tactic 7.1.5:** Scott Long Road sidewalks. Both sides of street separated from roadway by a landscaped strip.
  - **Tactic 7.1.6:** Implement a multi-use path on the South Fork Crooked Creek Greenway.
  - **Tactic 7.1.7:** Extend proposed Crooked Creek Greenway with multi use path to Crooked Creek Park.
  - **Tactic 7.1.8:** Implement a multi-use path on north side of expressway connecting Bonterra Village area to South Fork of Crooked Creek. The proposed trail creates a better inter-connected recreational network by connecting neighborhoods to the Crooked Creek greenway and eventually the existing Crooked Creek Park.

**Goal 8: Provide an integrated, well-connected adequate capacity roadway system throughout the study area.**

- **Strategy 8.1:** Perform a traffic analysis of intersections and roadway segments in the study area and beyond approximately six months after the opening of the Monroe expressway. Updated traffic counts and turning movements should be conducted prior to the analysis to confirm the changes in travel behavior due to the new expressway facility.
- **Strategy 8.2:** Prioritize identified improvements needed as a result of the traffic analysis and seek funding for improvements through CRTPO, NCDOT, the Town of Indian Trail and Union County.
- **Strategy 8.2:** Continue to advocate for the widening of Secrest Short Cut Road through the study area. This roadway is identified as a boulevard that needs improvement on the CTP. As such it should be widened to multi lanes with a planted median and turn lanes where appropriate.
- **Strategy 8.3:** Advocate for the widening of Unionville-Indian Trail Road to a 4-lane boulevard cross section from Sardis Church Road to Rocky River Road.
- **Strategy 8.4:** Advocate for the widening of Rocky River Road to a 4-lane boulevard cross section from US 74 to Unionville-Indian Trail road.
- **Strategy 8.5:** Through the development process, require connectivity wherever possible with local roads that will supplement to overall roadway network.

## Conclusion

---

The Small Area Plan for the Secrest Short Cut area will guide future growth and coordinate multiple jurisdictions in the area in forming a livable community. The plan recommendations and implementation strategies will; 1) create a sense of place; 2) support a more balanced tax base with employment and retail; 3) capture local retail opportunities to support the local economy; and 4) connect parks and open space in the community. Through implementation of the plan, this area near the Monroe Expressway interchange at Unionville-Indian Trail Road will reach the goals established through public engagement, reflect community priorities and guide economic development opportunities in the changing landscape.

# Appendix

---

Appendix A. Study Area Maps

Appendix B. Local Jurisdictions Map

Appendix C. Environmental Features Map

Appendix D. Transportation Plans Map

Appendix E. Current Zoning Map

Appendix F. Utilities Map

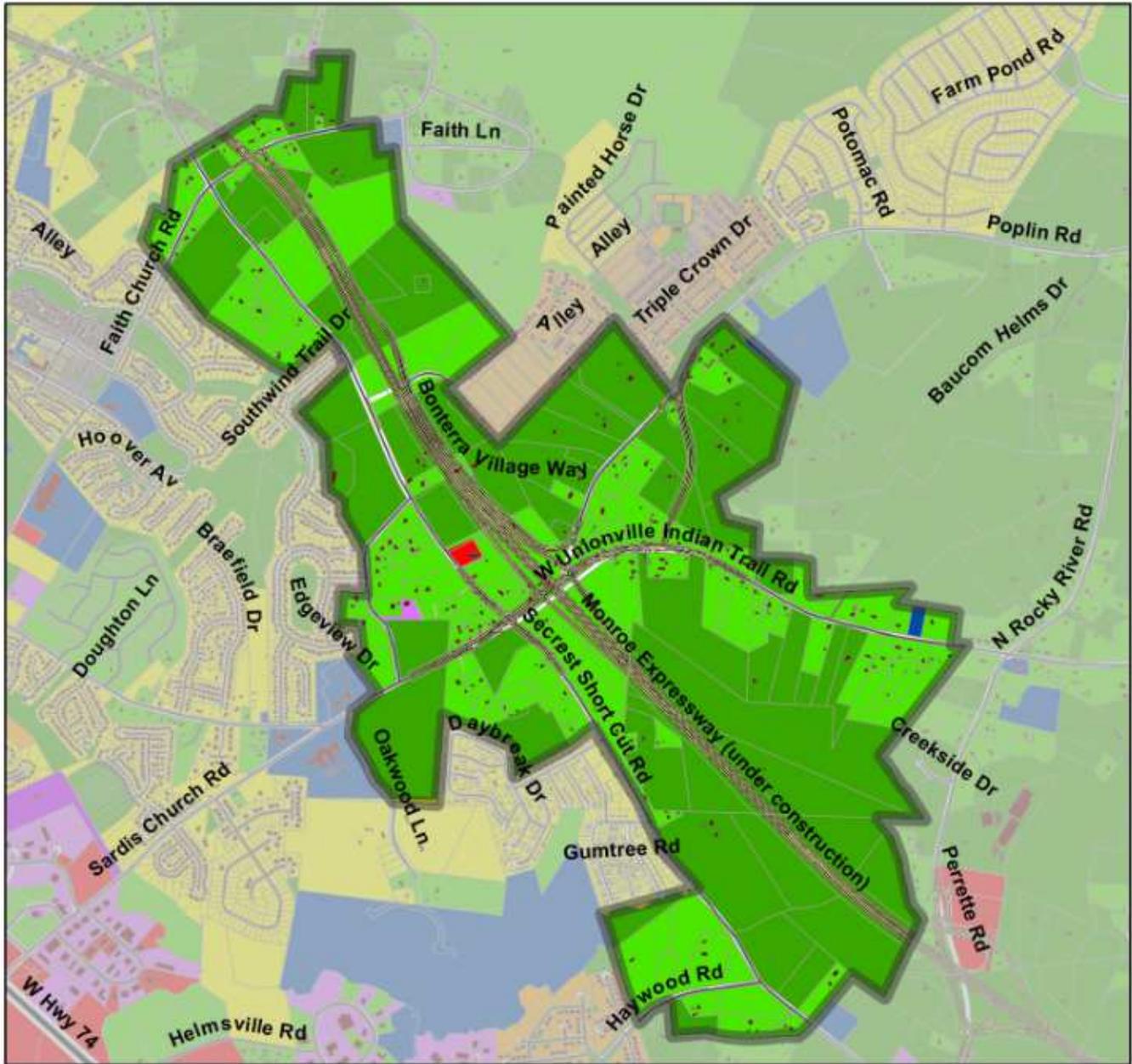
Appendix G. Open House #1 Survey Results

Appendix H. MetroQuest Engagement Software Survey Results

Appendix I. Open House #2 Survey Results

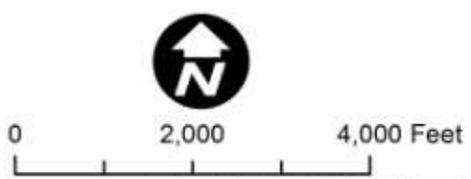
Appendix J. Explanation of Land Uses

## Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Current Land Uses



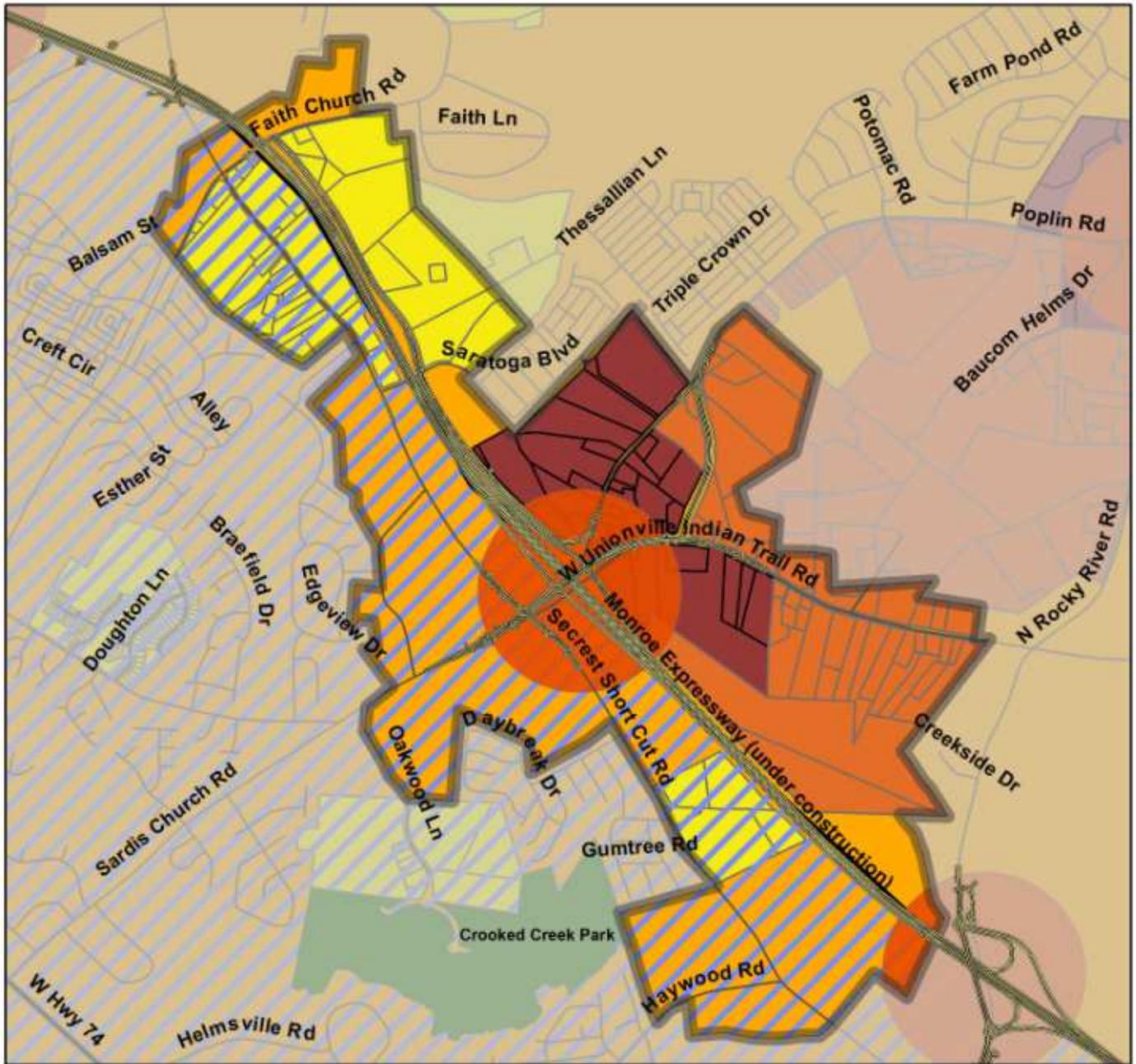
- Study Area Boundary
- Monroe Expressway
- Structures
- Current Land Use**
- Heavy Industrial/Airport
- Light Industrial
- Government or Institutional
- Commercial or Office
- Medium Density Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Rural Residential/Vacant
- Large Lot Res/Vacant/ Ag

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



Created on May 7, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us

# Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Land Use Plans



## Legend

- Monroe Expressway
- Study Area Boundary
- Neighborhood Center - Union County
- Employment Corridor - Union County
- Medium Density Residential - Indian Trail
- Mixed Use - Indian Trail
- Traditional Neighborhood Devt - Indian Trail
- Mixed Residential - Union County

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.

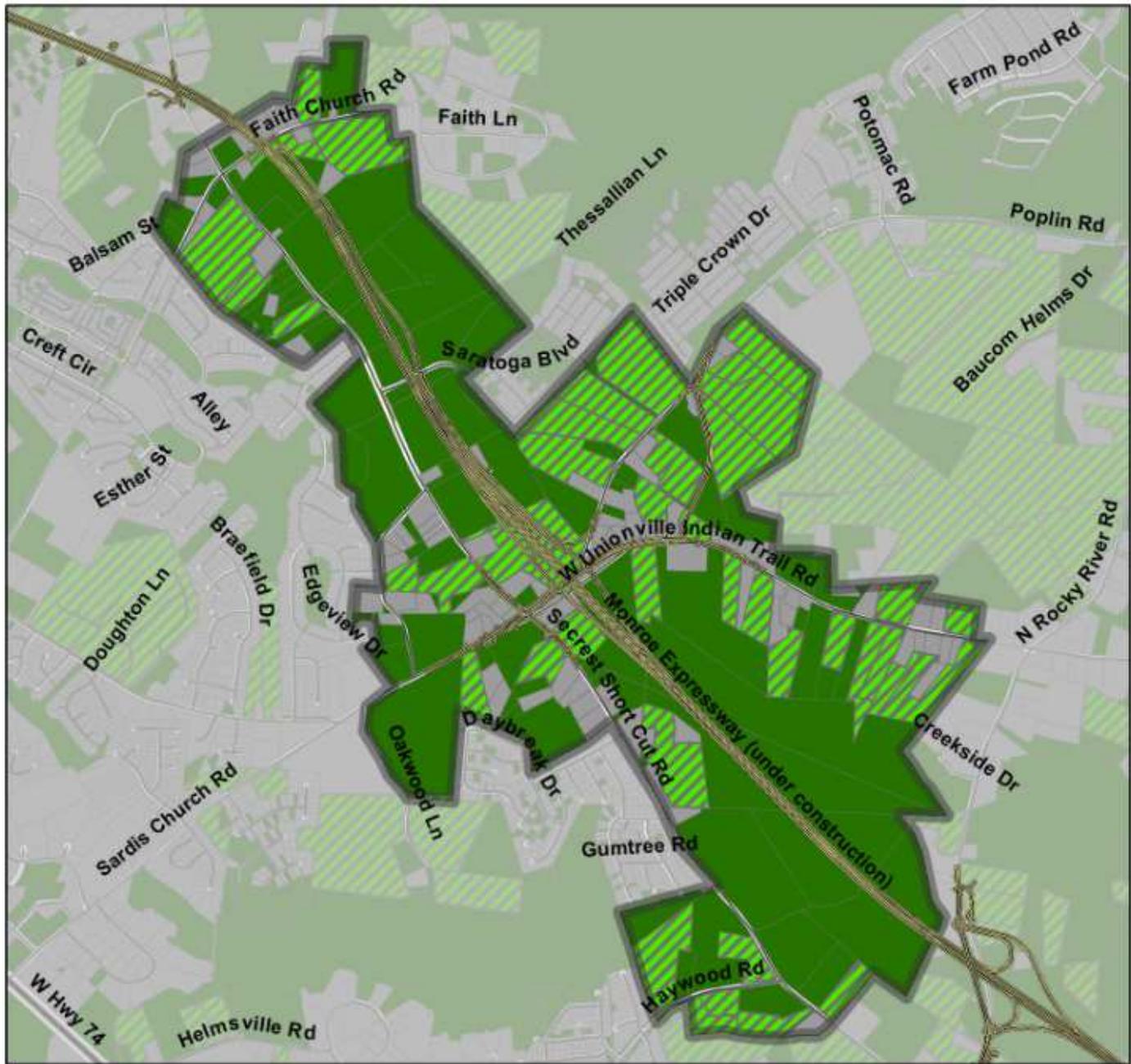


0 2,000 4,000 Feet



Created on January 4, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or [bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us](mailto:bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us)

# Secrest Short Cut Small Area Plan Development Status



## Legend

— Monroe Expressway

▭ Study Area Boundary

## Development Status

▭ Developed

▨ Underdeveloped

▭ Undeveloped or Agriculture

▭ Water

Note: The Secrest Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.

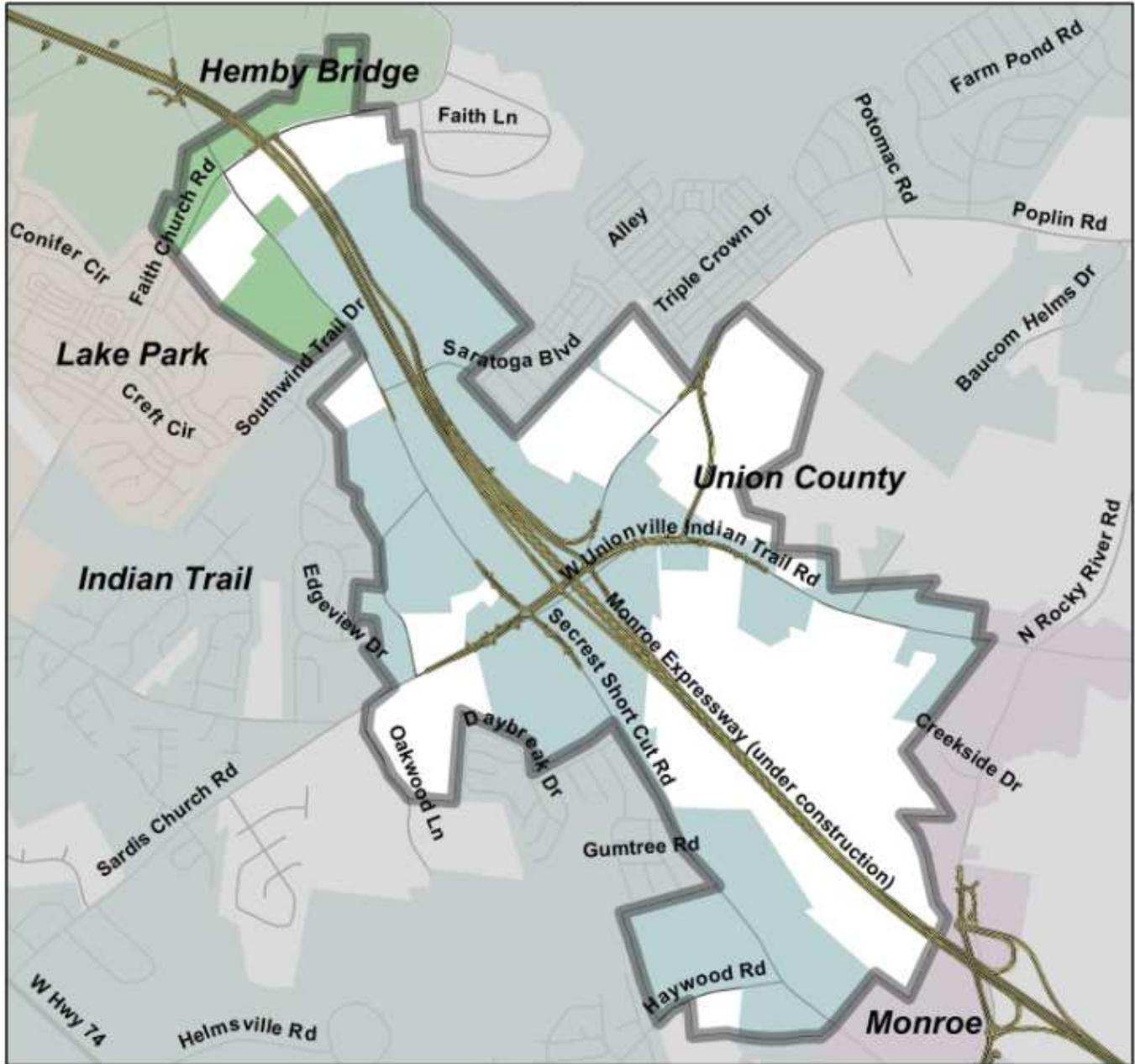


0 2,000 4,000 Feet



Created on January 4, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us

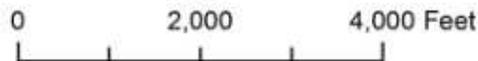
## Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Municipalities



### Legend

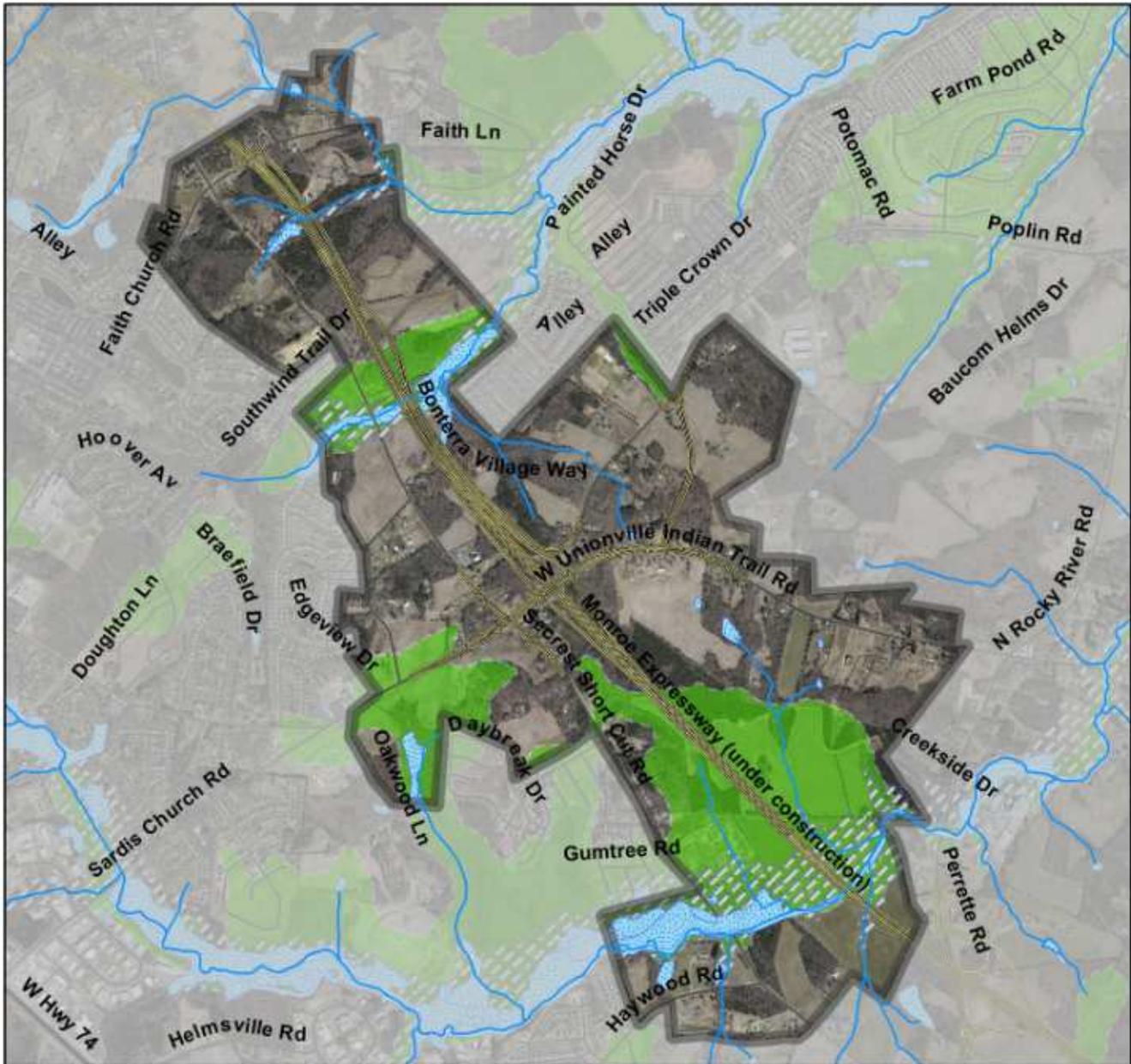
- Monroe Expressway
- Study Area Boundary
- Municipalities**
- Hemby Bridge
- Indian Trail
- Lake Park
- Monroe

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



Created on January 4, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or [bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us](mailto:bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us)

## Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Environmental Features



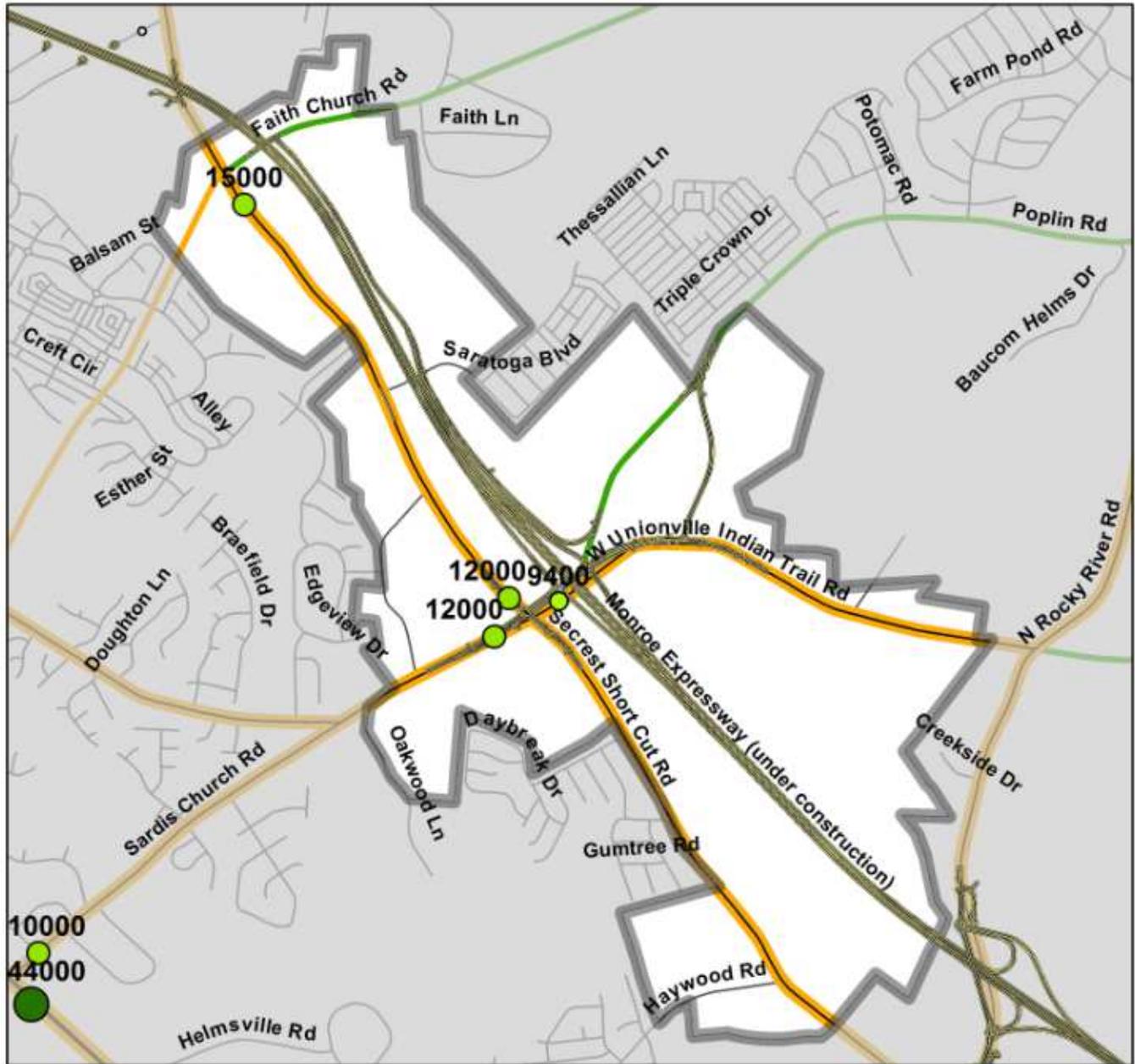
- Study Area Boundary
- Monroe Expressway
- Stream Buffer Areas
- Wetlands
- 500 Year Flood Plain
- Partially Hydric Soil
- Streams

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



Created on May 18, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or [bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us](mailto:bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us)

## Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Transportation



### Legend

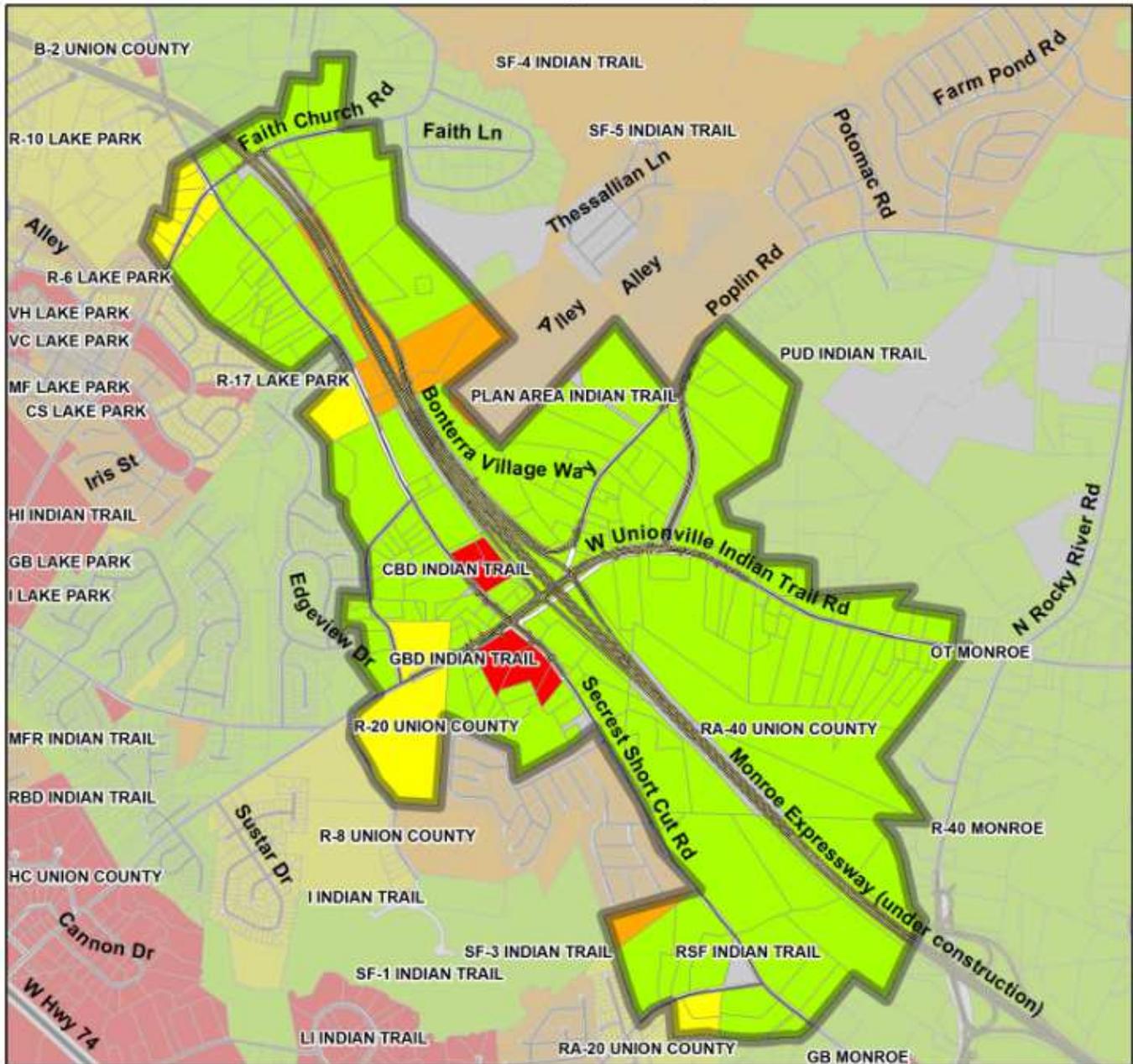
- Monroe Expressway
  - Study Area Boundary
  - CRTPO CTP Highway Layer**
  - Future Cross-Section**
  - 2 Lane with Curb and Gutter
  - 2 Lane with Paved Shoulder
  - 4 Lane with Curb and Gutter
  - 6 Lane with Curb and Gutter
- 
- 2016 AADT**
  - 40,000 and up
  - 10,000-19,999
  - 5,000-9,999
  - 100-999

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



Created on January 4, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us

## Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Existing Zoning



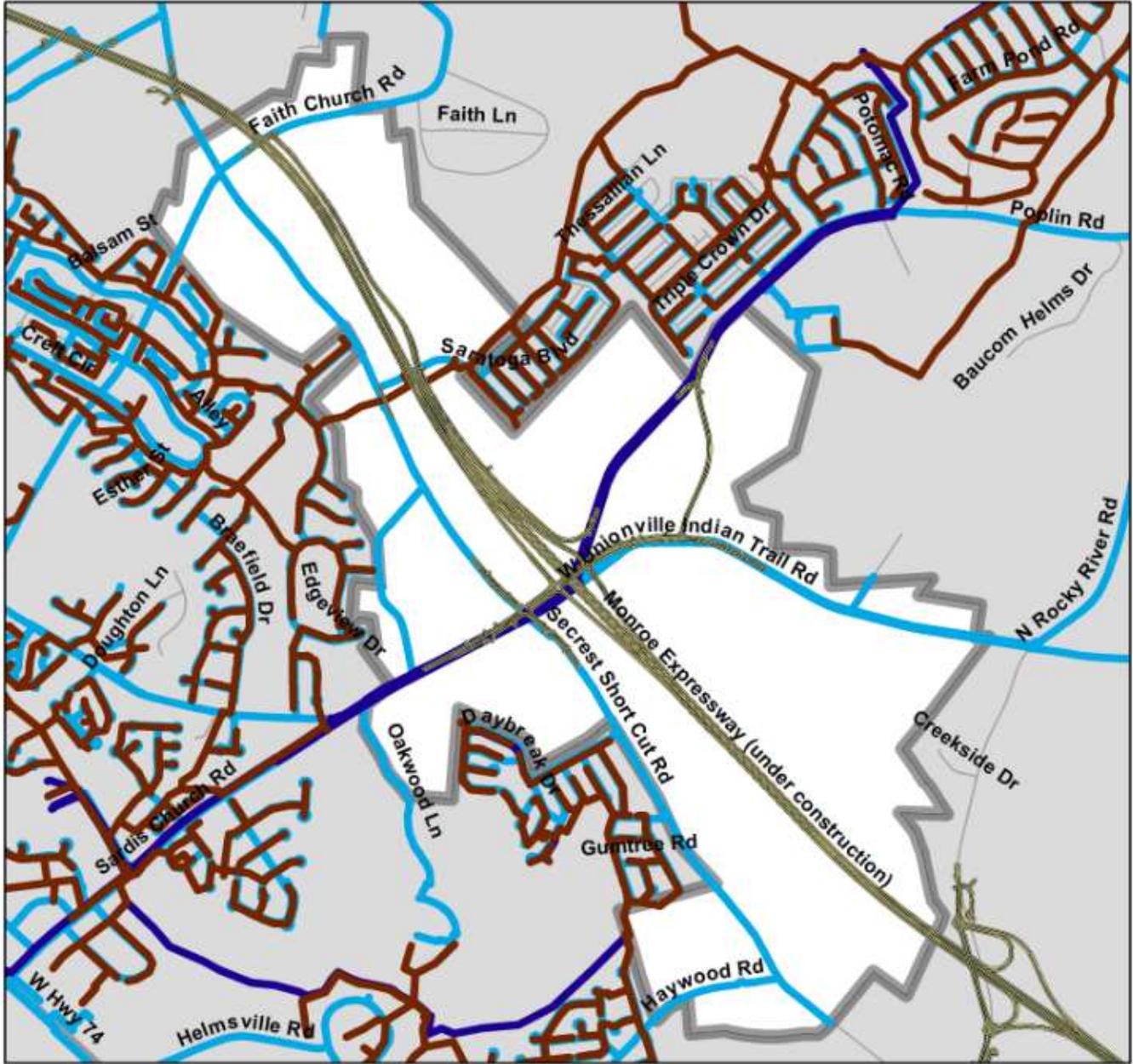
- Study Area Boundary
- Monroe Expressway
- Mixed or Planned Use
- Commercial
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



Created on July 11, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or [bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us](mailto:bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us)

## Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan Water and Sewer Lines



### Legend

- Monroe Expressway
- Study Area Boundary
- Gravity Sewer Mains
- Force Sewer Mains
- Water Mains

Note: The Secret Short Cut Small Area Plan is a joint effort of Indian Trail and Union County to identify land uses and infrastructure most appropriate for the area in light of a significant change in access and mobility due to the proximity of the interchange with the Monroe Expressway.



Created on January 4, 2018 by Bjorn E. Hansen, AICP CTP.  
Contact: (704) 283-3690 or [bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us](mailto:bjorn.hansen@co.union.nc.us)

## Appendix G. Open House #1 Survey Results

The following comments were collected through surveys completed at the first open house:

Desired Improvements	Mixed Comments (Positive and Negative)	General Concerns
Bike and pedestrian facilities	Industrial development	Safety issues including access to Crooked Creek Park
Connections to transit	More/Less parks and recreation	
Intersection improvements		
Office space		
Places to shop/eat		
Protect family farms		
Senior center		

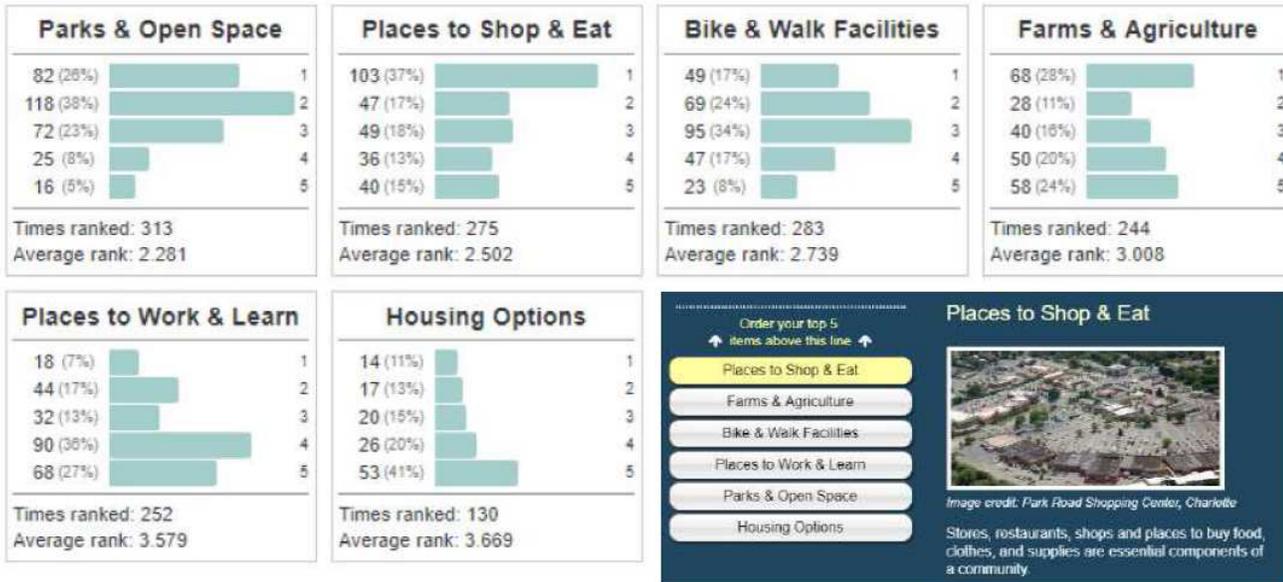
## Appendix H. MetroQuest Engagement Software Survey Results

### By the numbers

- Opened February 22, 2018
- Closed March 18, 2018
- 346 unique participants (188 mobile; 158 web-based)

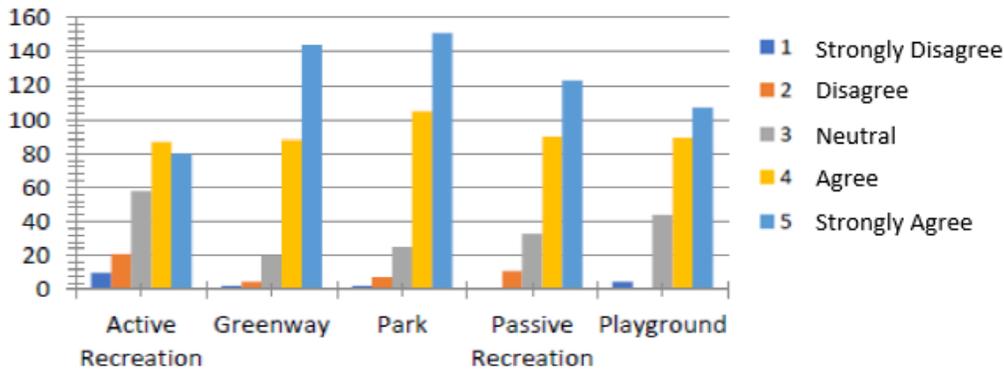
### Places to Shop & Eat

Scale: 1=Top Priority, 5=Lowest Priority

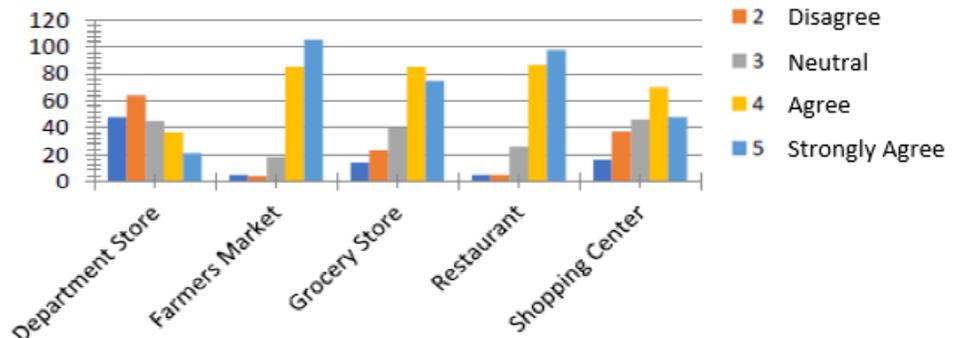


### What Kind of Places?

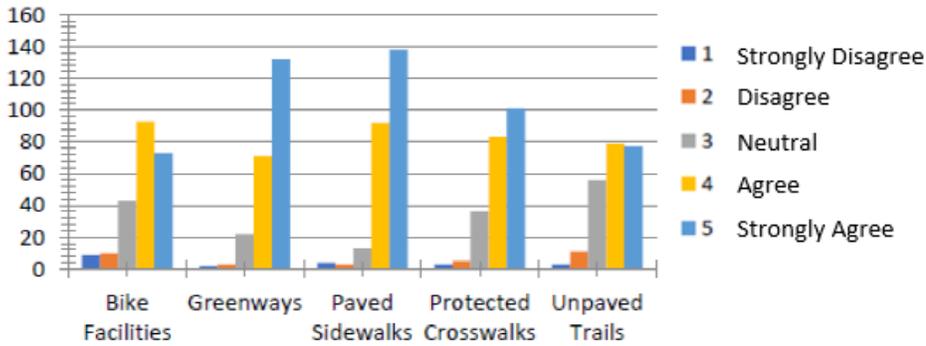
#### Parks Open Space



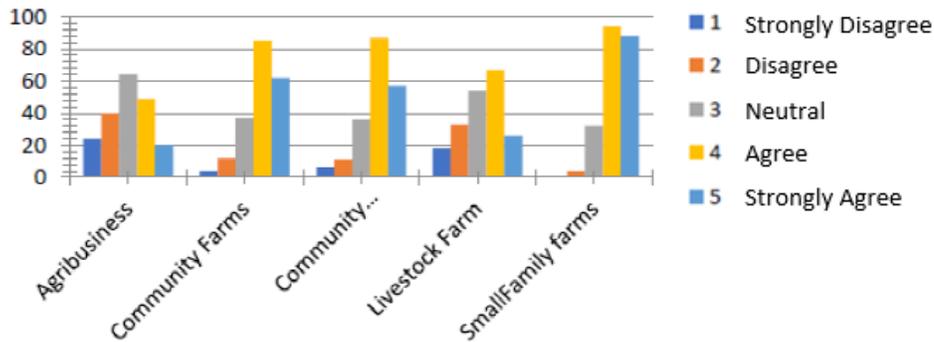
#### Places to Shop Eat



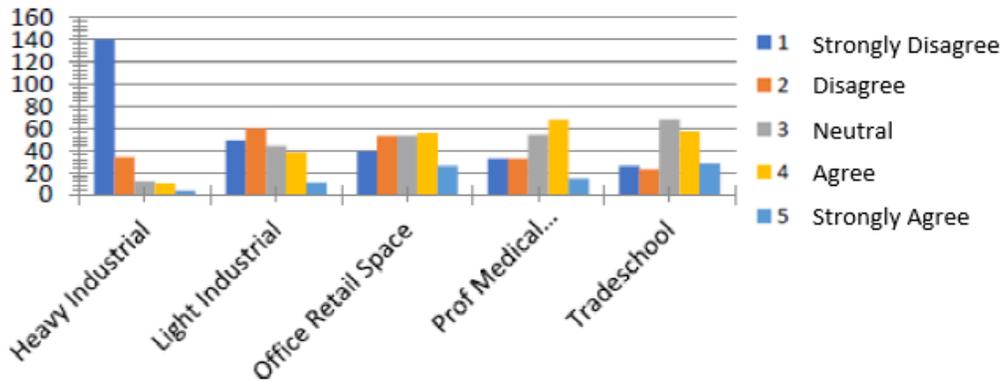
## Bike Walk Facilities



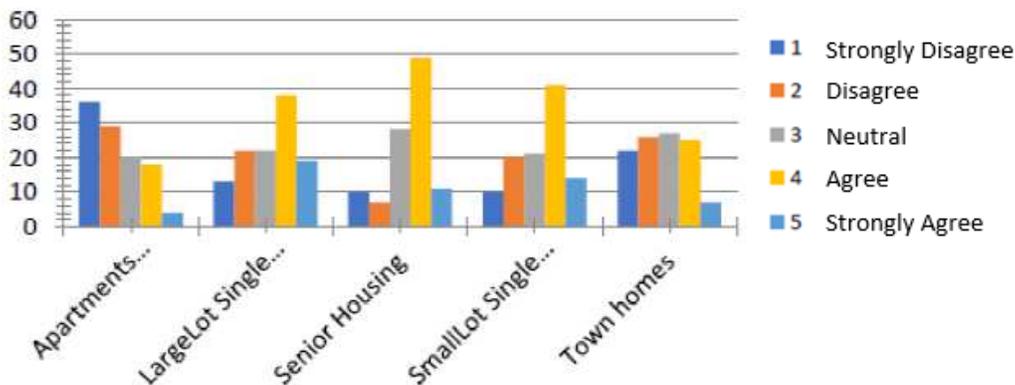
## Farms Agriculture



## Places to Work Learn



## Housing Options



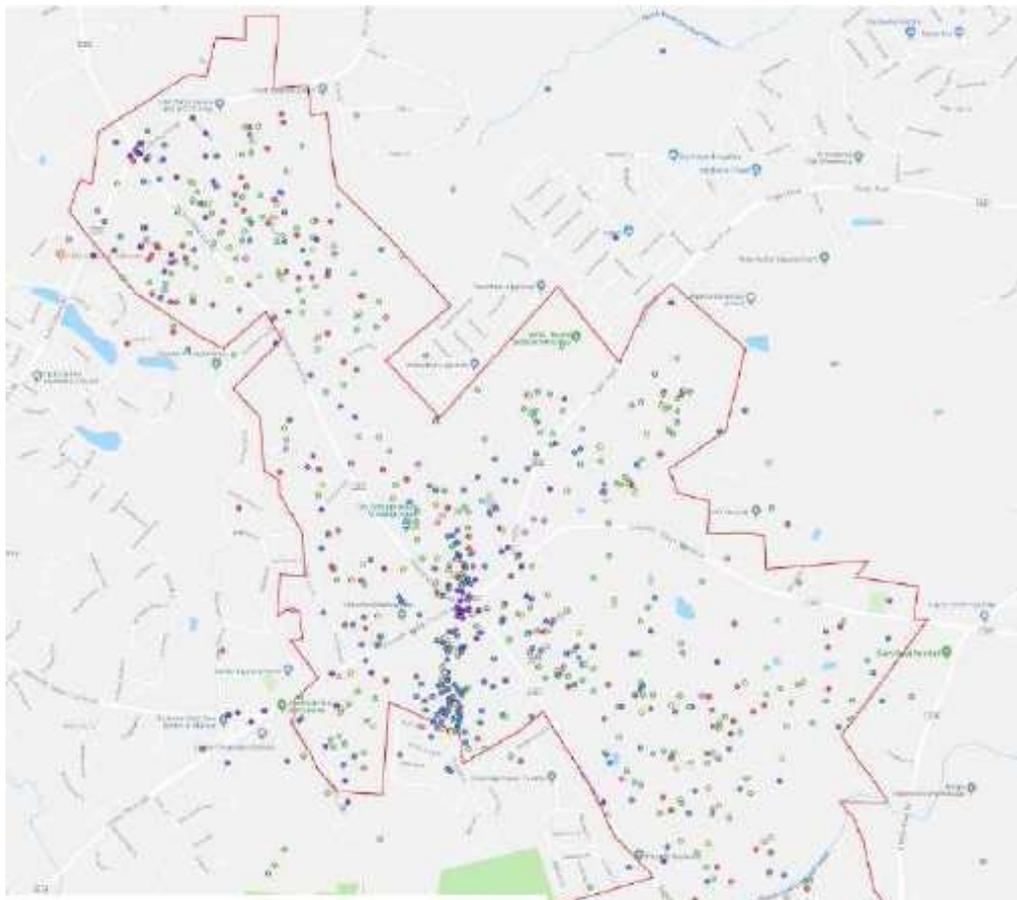
*Where to Build?*

Survey participants were asked to utilize place markers on an interactive map of the study to designate areas for the following categories:



Over 850 markers were placed on the study area map as follows:

Protect (271 Total)	Shop & Eat (232 Total)	Housing (122 Total)	Safety Concerns (97 Total)	Work & Learn (92 Total)	Suggestions (44 Total)
Park & Open Space (71)	Restaurants (80)	Single Family (31)		Trade School (39)	
Environment (37)	Mixed Use (49)	Townhomes/ Apartments (22)		Office & Retail (21)	
Recreational (29)	Retail / Shopping (51)			Industrial (3)	
Other (22)	Grocery Store (28)				



Data was used to create GIS maps to offer more detail to staff in generating land use scenarios.

## Demographics

### Age Range

- ~45% = 25-44 years old
- ~35% = 45-64 years old
- ~19% = 65 years and older
- ~1% = 18-24 years old

### Zip Code

- ~75% = 28079
- ~20% = 28110
- Others = 28104, 28111, 28173

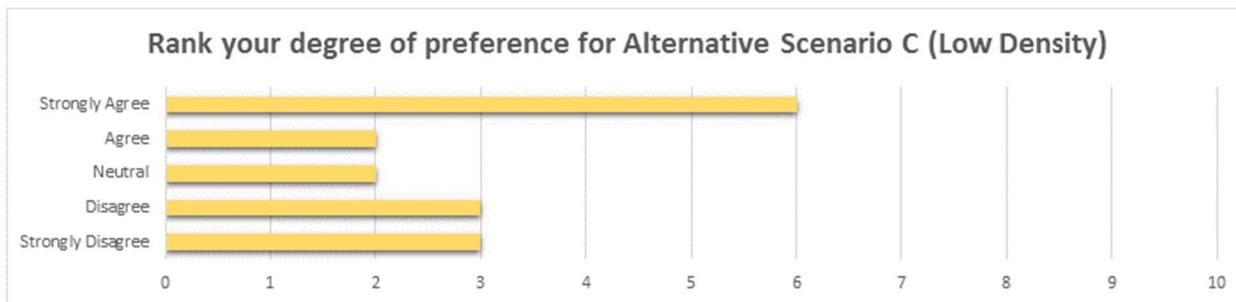
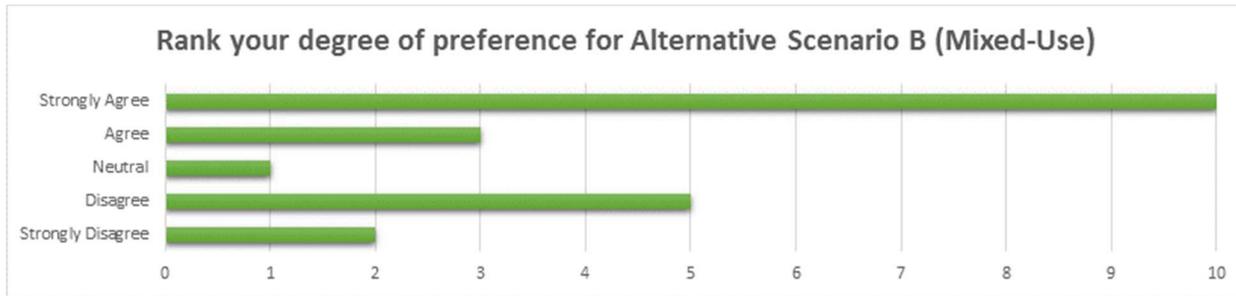
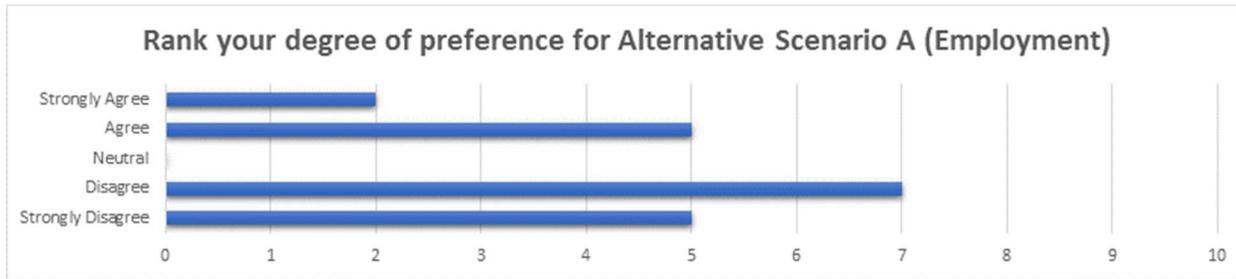
### Years of Residence

<b>How many years have you lived at the residence?</b>	
Less than 1 Year	2
Greater than 1 Year but less than 2 Years	24
Greater than 2 years but less than 5 Years	85
Greater than 5 years but less than 10 Years	50
Greater than 10 years but less than 15 Years	49
Greater than 15 years but less than 20 Years	25
Greater than 20 years	23

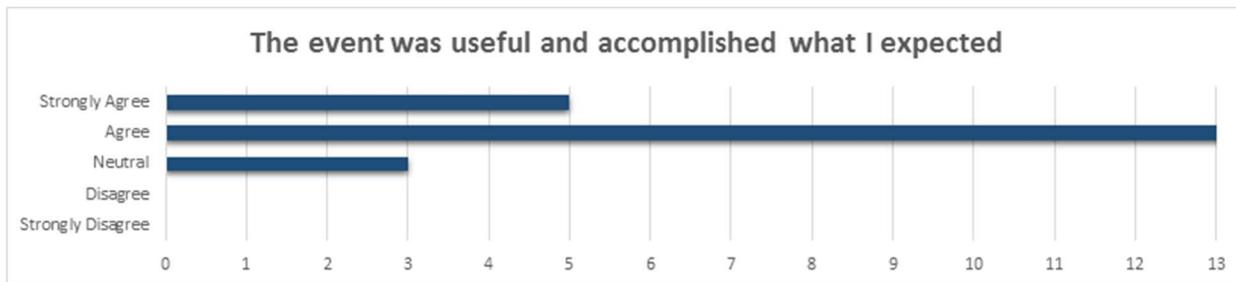
## Appendix I. Open House 2 Survey Results

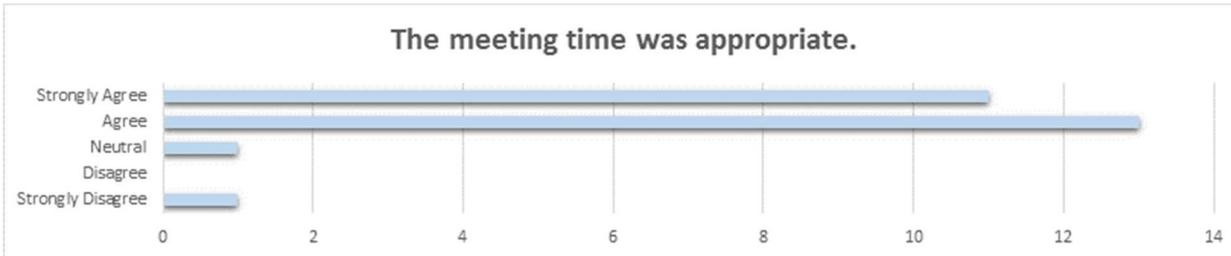
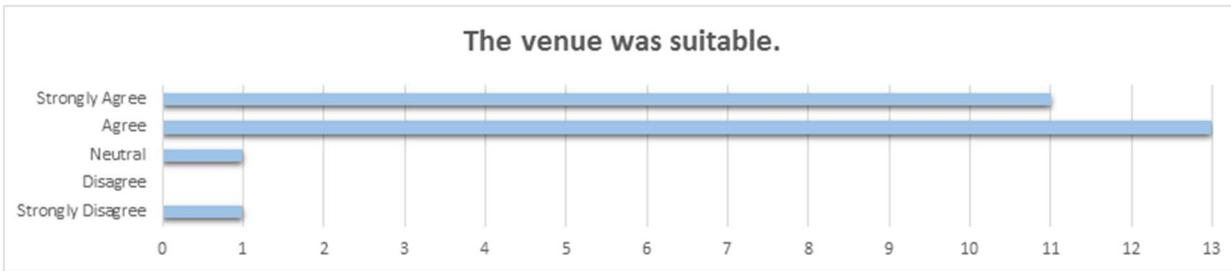
The following comments were collected through hard-copy surveys completed at the second open house:

### Comment Cards



### Feedback Forms





Open Ended Comments

**1. Rank your degree of preference for Alternative A**

	Commercial Zone Please
	I have a preference for as much green space as possible for nature and visibility from the road
	Very opposed..... Please don't add more ugly, unattractive businesses, retail to a very pretty part of the county. Too many already
	Prefer not to see as much high-density housing when infrastructure already overly taxed by traffic on Secrest Shortcut. Can't see that a great deal of additional employment opportunities will result from the proposed narrow office areas.
	If this alternative is selected, then higher density residential needs to be nearby. Otherwise, development will become auto-centric – need walkability!!!
	Concern over to much population growth and traffic is such a small 2-mile area.... Crime
	I believe this option takes away too much of the rural feel that IT has today. It will lead to too much traffic in an already unprepared infrastructure
	Codes over develop, too much emphasis on non-residential

**2. Rank your degree of preference for Alternative B**

	The area surrounding the properties in questions are all on pace to be commercial and high-density areas so our land should not pushback the development that will enable more people to live there
	Would love for Higher Density to be extended to Middle School
	Keeps most of Secrest Short Cut residential South of Unionville - Indian Trail
	Too much added density..... Indian Trail needs to keep its rural character as much as possible.
	Although looking forward to retail at intersection, I'm not in favor of increase the non-residential footprint. Moved to IT for a more rural atmosphere which is becoming increasingly unlikely
	Need both residential and business for both jobs, Stores --- and Affordable housing.
	I strongly favor higher density residential Poplin Road extending towards in Porter Ridge School. I DV/AC in lot area will provide housing for "work force." We need to provide "work force" housing will access to hew bypass.
	Both townhouses and apartments for multi-family. I think Bonterra type use has been beneficial to the area (Extra traffic though, but now new roads should help with that issue
	This seems to provide the best opportunity for a turn-center type interchange.

Our property is 5825 Poplin Road.... The turnpike bought 6 acres right through the middle of our land. You have different zoning for 1 side High Density & Med Density on the other side. We want both side to be high density. Providing some housing for all people
Concern over to much ..... Population growth with new housing and apartments also increase in local traffic..... Crime
While I see the benefit of more Med density residential areas, I feel this is still too populated and removes the rural environment.
I think this is a good balance of residential / commercial / rental

### 3. Rank your degree of preference for Alternative C

Make roads to accommodate traffic flow... build more schools
Allows significant development – residential and commercial but preserves as much as possible of rural character of current land.
Best of the three..... Keep India Trail green
This plan is appealing as it still preserves some of Union Co. history as agricultural with more rural space. It still allows an increase in med to high density housing, but not to such an extreme degree
Density residential will tend to perpetuate automotive travel – low density doesn’t belong near expressing / interchange
Concern over quality of life with too much population growth in such a small area, with so much new housing and apartments, concerns over traffic and increasing crime.
‘this my preference as it has as a good mix of open space mixed w/ residential & retail. It still allows for a central location for new commercial space near the expressway which will assist traffic concerns

### 4. Please share any general comment you might have concerning the land use alternatives

Extend higher density to give more options for mixed-use
We don’t want another Hwy 74 to evolve ----Too many former homes are now car lots. –Where are more parks in the plan??????
Glad to be given the opportunity to contribute some personal input
Our property is split by Poplin Road(NEW) We would like to mirror “Bontera”
It is important to increase residential density around Unionville IT Road exit all the way on Poplin Road strip towards schools. Will need Hwy access it very conducive to development and ??? workforce housing included multi-family and Single-family house... ??? is not ready for commercial development and needs to develop more workforce housing in this area and lieu commercial ???
I would appreciate input from people who have lived here for at least 25 years. Unfair for people who have lived here only few years now wanting us to not have any more houses; they loved having houses here for themselves but now want us to lock the “doors” for others..... I think the apartments in IT off Monroe Road offer nice options for people who don’t want to have responsibilities for ownership. Perhaps those would be something useful in this area as well.
I think you have washed long a hard making IT a wonderful place to live ..... Thank You!!!
I feel that developing this area to quickly will present its own set of unforeseen problems. Progress would be best if each step was measured. Thank you for the open house. I feel it’s critical to preserve given spaces, but businesses should not overwhelm d the area unless there is a demand for their services
Building along Secrest Shortcut is an improvement to the area, however without improvement expansion of Secrest Shortcut simultaneously. Traffic is still a concern. Local construction is also a concern to residents due to Nosie and arid deters.

**5. Of the information provided, what topic(s) did you find most useful?**

Information regarding the land use plans
The visual aids maps were really helpful and easy to understand... Thanks!!
Staff and Literature
Land use definition
The alternatives and how presented
Video, maps, staff
Seeing the map layouts
The 3-different plan. --- Video – I like being able to have a map to look at
Mapes of proposed 3 alternatives
Mixed use plan for development
Will informed staff of the planning dept.
The video was very informative
The overall land development
The film presentation

**6. Were there any topics not covered that you would like more information about?**

The location of the mixed-use development
I didn't see any parks or new open space in any of the alternatives
The intersection of Unionville. Indian Trail Road and Sanders Church needs addressed and publicized.
Examples of types of businesses that might inhabit designated for commercial/ retail and employment areas
How much \$ are town and county budgeting to assist with executing the selected alternative?
How is the going to affect traffic patterns going forward
Traffic impact with new housing
The only topic I wish was included is how the density can be applied to the overall use of planning/zoning office

**7. Please share any suggestions you might have improving this kind of public engagement.**

Video handout info although not feasible, info in video on paper would have been nice to have. Couldn't write that fast
Open space
The people representing the project need to be prepared for negative comments
Everyone we talked to was very helpful
Starting the menu off by introducing the public of how to read the maps and what the overall mission entails would be very helpful
Love the new building

## Appendix J. Explanation of Land Uses

Employment: This category represents employment-oriented land uses. This can include office, medical, light industrial, and service uses. Retail uses are appropriate, but as a secondary focus of land uses in these areas. These land uses were primarily located adjacent to the Expressway in order to buffer residential areas from traffic and noise.

Commercial/ Retail: This category represents shopping, entertainment and related land uses. This can include stores, offices, restaurants, personal services, movie theaters and other high-traffic uses. Employment uses are appropriate, but as a secondary focus of land uses in these areas. These land uses were primarily located adjacent to the two interchanges along the Expressway, and adjacent to high density residential areas.

High Density Residential: This category shows where the highest density residential uses should be located within the study area. High density is defined as an average of six units per acre, although densities higher than six would be appropriate immediately adjacent to commercial/retail areas, and lower than six when adjacent to medium or low-density areas. Apartments and townhomes are most appropriate, although single-family is a secondary use in these areas.

Medium Density Residential: This category shows where traditional single-family subdivisions should be located, with an average density of three units per acre. Townhomes and duplexes are also appropriate as a secondary use, although the overall density for the area should not be exceeded.

Low Density Residential: This category reflects the predominant existing zoning for the area, which is for one-acre lot residential development in unincorporated Union County and approximately half -acre lot residential development in Indian Trail. The overall density for this area is 1.5 units per acre, reflecting the impact of density bonus for cluster developments. Smaller lots, similar to what would be built in medium density residential areas, are appropriate when sited as a part of a cluster development and overall density does not exceed 1.5 units per acre.

Open Space/Environmentally Sensitive: This category is used in portions of the study area in flood plains or wetlands. There is limited development potential for these areas, and rezoning to more intensive uses beyond what the existing zoning would permit is not recommended.

Mixed Use: Mixed use designations on the land use map are overlays to the underlying recommended land uses. A mixed-use designation reflects a desire to integrate land uses in a more fine-grained manner, with less buffering between land uses. Commercial may have residential on a second floor, or small scale “neighborhood” commercial may be located inside a master planned residential area.