

Existing Conditions²

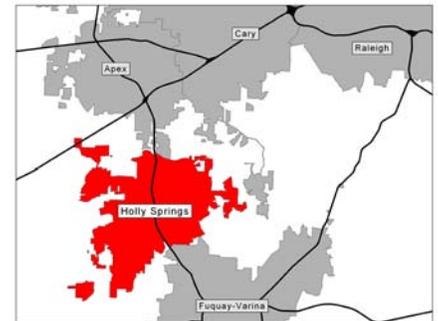
2.0 Overview

The Town of Holly Springs is located in southern Wake County, fifteen miles south of North Carolina's state capital. As Holly Springs experiences growth from the heavily populated Raleigh and RTP areas, it aims to preserve its small town atmosphere. The Town of less than 1,000 in 1990 grew to more than 9,000 in 2000. By 2006, the population was approximately 18,500.

In order to propose a comprehensive pedestrian system for the Town of Holly Springs, the existing conditions, such as existing pedestrian conditions, trip attractors, development activity, and land use characteristics are examined.

In addition, numerous plans, guidelines, and strategies have addressed issues related to pedestrian planning in Holly Springs such as connectivity, alternative transportation, land use, greenways, and other pedestrian-related initiatives on municipal, county, regional, state, and private levels. All of these documents represent important efforts, provide valuable insight and background, and have influenced the development of this plan.

The current plans are reviewed and summarized below only as they relate to pedestrian planning in Holly Springs. For further information on each plan, please consult the specific document in its entirety.



*Figure 2(a):
Context Map*

2.1 Existing Conditions

The Town of Holly Springs' geography and population characteristics have an overarching impact on the pedestrian planning process. They significantly affect transportation, the environment, local ordinances, and everyday decisions by motorists and pedestrians. Because of the even distribution of ages, increasing growth, and proximity to other municipalities and major transportation corridors, this Pedestrian Plan will recommend facilities that cater to these needs and take advantage of existing resources.



*Figure 2(b):
This intersection of Cayman and Holly Springs Roads features a well marked crosswalk but also showcases a sidewalk gap on the far side of the intersection.*



*Figure 2(c):
A pedestrian walking along North Main Street where a gap in the sidewalk network exists.*

To understand pedestrian conditions in Holly Springs, it is important to consider a number of specific factors that affect the overall character of the community. The findings are presented below.

Achieving overall pedestrian connectivity is a major goal for this Plan. Currently, there is a lack of connectivity between pedestrian facilities and trip attractors. Significant gaps in existing facilities are also present.

Sidewalks

The majority of sidewalks found within the Town of Holly Springs are concentrated in individual neighborhoods. The curvilinear streets of newer subdivisions have sidewalk along at least one side of the roadway, which are currently meeting the needs of the neighborhood residents for the purpose of walking within the neighborhood. However, pedestrian connections between neighborhoods/subdivisions, the downtown, and schools are inadequate with many gaps, or non-existent, particularly along arterial roadways. Sidewalk facilities are inadequate or non-existent within older, established neighborhoods and within town. Therefore, newer development networks tend to be isolated from each other and from trip attractors around and in town.

When the major arterial roadways through the Town of Holly Springs were constructed, pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks were not included. As arterial roadways were improved and development occurred, sidewalks were added in segments to serve any new development on the adjacent land. The following arterial roadways do not provide adequate or safe pedestrian conditions:

- Main Street
- Avent Ferry Road
- Bass Lake Road
- Holly Springs Road (west of Main Street)

Also, the schools located throughout Holly Springs do not have adequate connections to nearby neighborhoods. There is a concern for pedestrian safety to and from the schools, specifically along Holly Springs Road at Holly Springs Elementary School, Holly Ridge Elementary School, and Holly Ridge Middle School.

Additionally Holly Springs High School and Holly Grove Elementary School lack connections to the nearby neighboring developments.

As an obstacle for future pedestrian planning, the Highway 55 bypass is a significant barrier to pedestrian travel from the east to west side of town.

Intersections and Crossing Conditions

There is a need throughout Holly Springs for crossing improvements. Insufficient crosswalks exist, especially at signaled intersections. Safe crosswalks are important because there is much greater risk for a pedestrian when entering the roadway environment. Safe crossing conditions are a necessity at intersections and in high pedestrian activity zones such as schools and shopping centers. Many intersection crosswalks in Holly Springs have no markings and those that do are simple and not as noticeable with only two solid parallel lines. In some cases, sight distance is inadequate, curb radii are too wide, and curb ramps are not found. Crossing signals only exist in a few locations (along Main Street). Marked crosswalks are found across Holly Springs Road near the elementary and middle schools but could still be improved through additional pedestrian facilities. All key intersections within Holly Springs are described in detail in Chart 3.1.

Greenways

The existing greenway corridors within the Town of Holly Springs consist mainly of unimproved pedestrian facilities with only a few unconnected sections of paved trail. Existing greenway facilities are located in or near the following subdivisions:

- Braxton Village (unimproved footpath)
- Ballenridge (short section of paved multi-use trail)
- Bass Lake Park (crushed stone multi-use path)
- Arbor Creek P.U.D., along Middle Creek (unimproved footpath)
- Wescott (short section of paved multi-use trail and longer section of on-road sidewalk)
- Brackenridge Pointe and Carrington Estates
- Oakhall (Linear corridor/easement with no pedestrian



*Figure 2(d):
The Middle Creek Greenway, an
existing trail facility in Holly Springs.*

facility)

- Bridgewater
- Womble Park
- Holly Ridge Elementary and Middle Schools
- Fairhill
- Country Lane
- Scot's Laurel and Sunset Pointe

The greenway facility in Bass Lake Park is currently the longest, continuous greenway facility within the Town of Holly Springs.



*Figure 2(e):
The Bass Lake Park and Retreat Center is
an enticing trip attractor for Holly Springs.*

Underpass/Overpass Facility

Currently, a pedestrian culvert underpass exists at the Highway 55 and Utley Creek intersection near the edge of Ballenridge subdivision. This facility was constructed along with the Highway 55 Bypass in preparation for future pedestrian connectivity between the eastern and western sides of Holly Springs.

Trip Attractors

People currently walk to a variety of destinations across Holly Springs for various purposes. These destination points are referred to in this document as trip attractors. The most common categories of pedestrian trip attractors in Holly Springs include:

- Downtown Village District
- Schools (Holly Springs Elementary, Holly Ridge Elementary, Holly Ridge Middle, Holly Grove Elementary, Holly Springs High)
- Shopping locations (grocery stores, shopping centers, restaurants, Downtown)
- Parks (Womble Park, Jones Park, Bass Lake Park, Veterans Park)
- Community and recreation centers (Hunt Community Center, Bass Lake Retreat Center)
- Historic and other points of interest (Town Hall, Cultural Center, Library, Holly Springs Cemetery)
- Places of employment (business areas, industrial parks, Town offices)

Each of these categories of pedestrian trip attractors was considered when determining locations for the physical pedestrian improvements recommended in Chapter 3. They represent

important starting and ending points for pedestrian travel and provide a good basis for planning ideal walking routes.

Development Activity

Holly Springs is a rapidly growing community, with heavy development activity. Most development has occurred since 1990 along and around NC 55 (Main Street) and more recently extending outwards along Holly Springs Road, Sunset Lake Road, Avent Ferry Road, and the NC 55 Bypass. The city limits radiate out from Downtown with Main Street and Holly Springs Road being the central intersection.

Residential growth has been extensive in recent years, leading to numerous new subdivisions with others under construction or slated for construction. Because of the increase in population, commercial growth has also occurred especially along Main Street. Spotty commercial hubs and new shopping centers are found at other intersections including Holly Springs Road/Sunset Lake Road, with expected additional growth at the NC 55 Bypass intersections with Avent Ferry Road and Main Street.

The Downtown area, near the original springs of Holly Springs, has seen significant development over recent years. The Town Hall, and Mims Town Square. The Library and Cultural Center, under construction in 2006, are significant additions to the Downtown area of Holly Springs.

To provide for the increased population, a new high school and elementary school are being constructed in the southern end of Holly Springs off Avent Ferry Road. This adds to the existing two elementary schools and middle school along Holly Springs Road.

Land Use Characteristics

Current land use is a result of development activity over the past twenty years. Multiple land uses can be found across the Town of Holly Springs with distinct patterns emerging. These patterns and characteristics have a major influence on pedestrian transportation. Proximity of uses and types of uses matter in a person's choice to walk along with the quality of environment, ease of access, and safety.

Holly Springs is largely residential, with the roadway corridors of



*Figure 2(f):
The new Holly Springs High School will increase pedestrian activity along Avent Ferry Road.*

Main Street, Hwy 55 Bypass, Holly Springs Road, and Avent Ferry Road providing commercial and institutional (schools and offices) areas. The Downtown area, or Village District, is appealing and walkable for pedestrians with Town offices and some multiple-use sites. Businesses, fast-food restaurants, and shopping centers occur on Main Street north of the Village District. There are three significant shopping center destinations: 1) Oak Hall Shopping Center on North Main Street, 2) Holly Springs Crossing at Holly Springs Road and Bass Lake Road and 3) Sunset Lake Shopping Center at Holly Springs Road and Sunset Lake Road. The Holly Springs Business Park is a large industrial and office area west of the Hwy 55 Bypass providing a major destination for workers.

Due to area growth and demand, large residential areas are developing on the extreme eastern and western sides of town. These homes will reside longer distances from the center of Town resulting in reduced pedestrian connectivity to various land uses. Multiple uses within new development and pedestrian connections towards the center of Town should be considered.

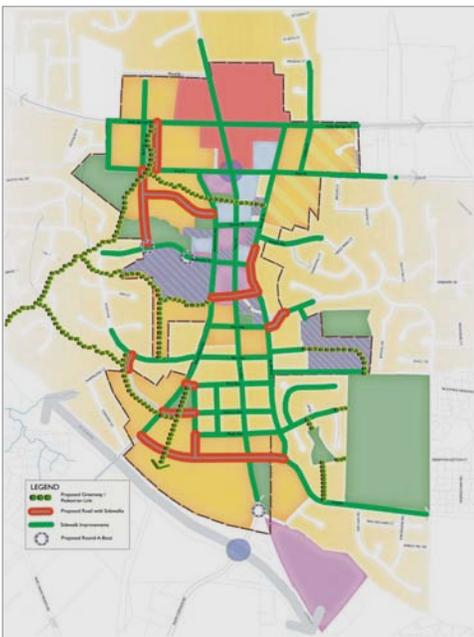


Figure 2(g):
VDAP Land Use map.

2.2 Existing Planning Efforts

The numerous plans, guidelines, and strategies that address issues related to pedestrian planning in Holly Springs are briefly summarized below. They address connectivity, alternative transportation, land use, greenways, and other pedestrian-related initiatives on local, regional and state levels. All of these documents represent important efforts, provide valuable insight and background, and have influenced the development of this plan. For a detailed analysis of pedestrian-related policies in Holly Springs, please refer to Chapter 4, Programs and Policies.

Village District Area Plan (VDAP)

The VDAP describes the Town's vision for downtown and is highly compatible with the goals of the Pedestrian Plan. One of the primary goals of the VDAP is to provide pedestrian connections to the district. Recommendations related to pedestrian connectivity are found within the following subsections: Land Use, The Core Area, Transportation, Access & Circulation, Streets and Streetscapes, and in Development Design/Form.

In the implementation section of the VDAP, a short-term step

includes the incorporation of greenway and sidewalk facilities that are identified in the VDAP into the “future pedestrian master plan”. The Holly Springs Pedestrian Transportation Plan incorporates said facilities and supports all VDAP pedestrian-related recommendations.

Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

The Town of Holly Springs’ Town Council adopted the UDO to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the Town and its extra-territorial jurisdiction. Its purposes that relate most to pedestrian planning include:

- Lessen congestion in the streets,
- Promote health and the general welfare,
- Facilitate the adequate provision of transportation and other public requirements promoting the public health and safety,
- Coordinate public facilities within proposed subdivisions with other existing or planned public facilities,
- Provide for the dedication or reservation of recreation areas within the subdivisions,
- Provide for the dedication or reservation of rights-of-way or easements,
- Provide for the construction of, or the payment of a fee-in-lieu of dedication for recreation, open space, and street facilities, and
- Distribute population and traffic in a manner that will avoid congestion and overcrowding and will create conditions essential to public health, safety, and the general welfare.

Sections of the Town of Holly Springs Unified Development Ordinance that most relate to pedestrian planning include the following:

Section 2.09	Development Options for Residential Districts
Section 3.02	Local Business District
Section 3.03	TV Town Village District
Section 3.05	CB Community Business District
Section 3.08	Architectural and Site Design

	Requirements
Section 5	Planned Unit Development District
Section 7.01	Landscaping Regulations
Section 7.06	Lot Design and Public Place
	Reservation
Section 7.06 F	Recreational Facilities and
	Open Space
Section 7.07	Street Design and Right-of-Way
	Reservation
Section 7.07 C 2	Walkway or Pedestrian / Bike Path
	Alternative
Section 7.07 C 3	Sidewalk, Walkway and Pedestrian
	& Bike Path Standards
Section 7.07 C 4	Pedestrian Access Easements'
Section 7.09	Pedestrian Circulation and
	Vehicular Area
Section 7.10	Open Space Regulations

The sections above are summarized in the policy section of Chapter 4, where recommendations are made for strengthening pedestrian-related policies.

Gateway Area Plan: Northeast Gateway Plan

This plan is a supplement to the Holly Springs land use plan and thoroughfare plans. It documents the town's vision and expectations for development in this gateway to Town and sets policies to guide future development. Sidewalks will be constructed along all roadways within the study area as development occurs and as funds become available for capital projects. A greenways system will also traverse the area and will connect to the sidewalk network. Pedestrian-related policy recommendations identified by the plan include the following: 1) Provide a pedestrian friendly environment, 2) Place parking to the rear and sides of buildings and bring buildings closer to the roadway 3) Mix of Uses –Office, Retail, Single Family, Multi-Family Residential, and 4) Provide interconnectivity through the use of shared driveways and limited curb cuts.”

Town of Holly Springs Open Space Master Plan

This plan represents a long-term open space preservation program that identifies open space parcels for uses such as water quality protection, recreation, wildlife habitat protection, and scenic

land quality. Among the attributes included in the evaluation of land parcels is connectivity. The plan outlines existing and proposed greenway trails, including proposed underpasses and regional connections. Sections most related to pedestrian planning include:

Section 2.11	Greenway Trails
Section 2.12	Utility Corridors
Section 3.2.1	Identified Trail Connections

These sections are discussed further in the Policy section of Chapter 4. The Holly Springs Pedestrian Transportation Plan has taken the Open Space Plan's recommendations into account in developing the proposed pedestrian network, along with other proposed greenways.

Ten-Year Comprehensive Growth Plan

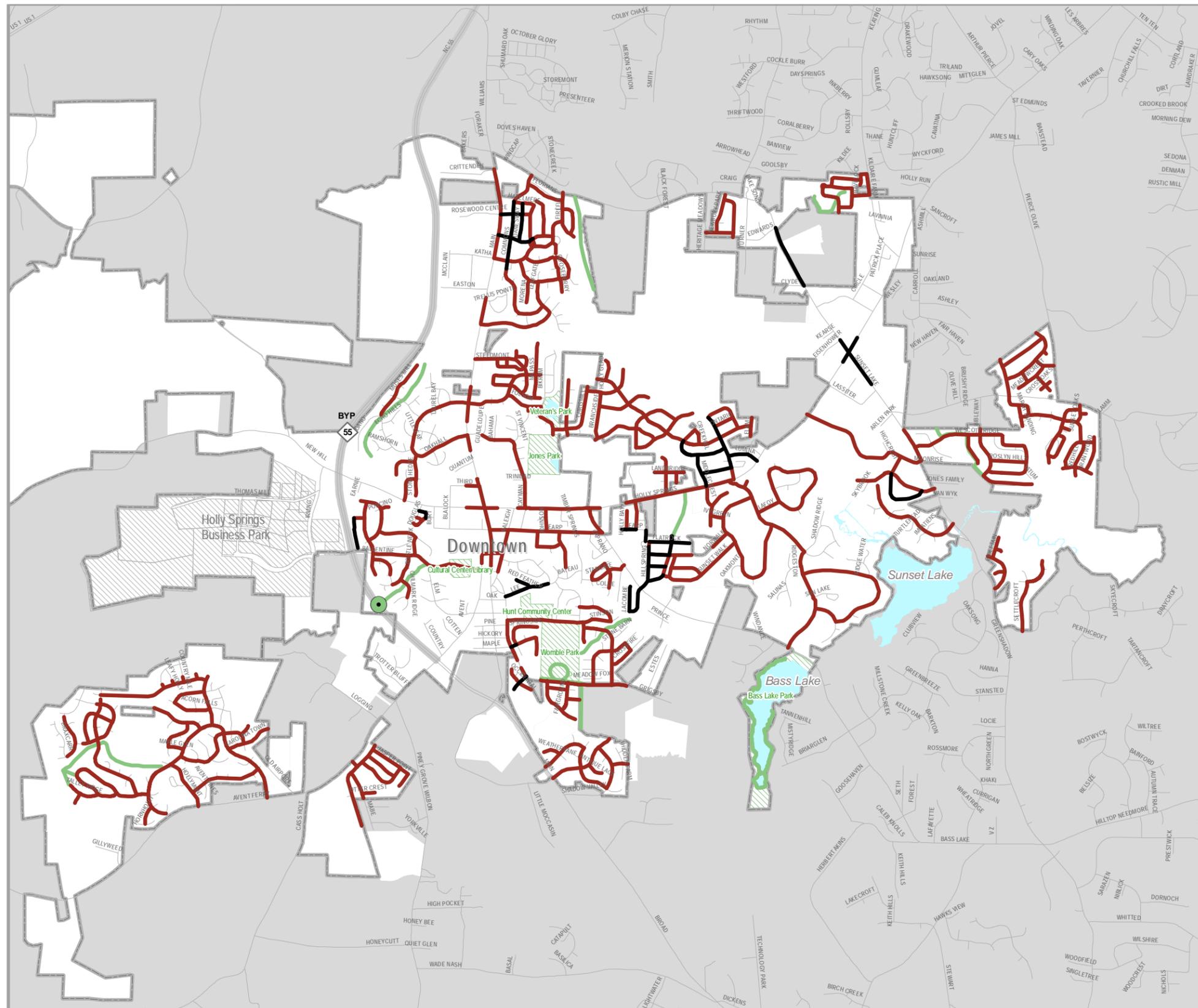
This Growth Plan is currently being updated and is scheduled for completion by spring 2007. The August 2005 update contains policies related to pedestrian connectivity in its sections on land use, parks and recreation, housing, transportation and environment.

Engineering Design & Construction Standards

The Town of Holly Springs Engineering Department relies on this set of standards for the development of construction plans for pedestrian facilities and traffic calming measures. These standards also reference the latest version of the Standard Specifications for Roads and Structures of the North Carolina Department of Transportation shall apply. The most applicable standards for this Pedestrian Transportation Plan include those for sidewalks, greenway trails, streets, traffic calming devices, and pedestrian facilities, such as pavement markings, pedestrian crossings, and street trees.

Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

The vision of the CAMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is to make bicycle and pedestrian travel throughout the metropolitan area convenient, efficient, viable, and safe. The goals of the CAMPO Plan are to:

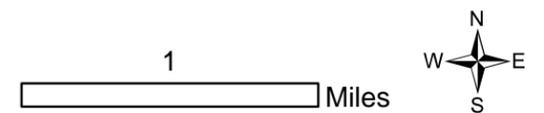


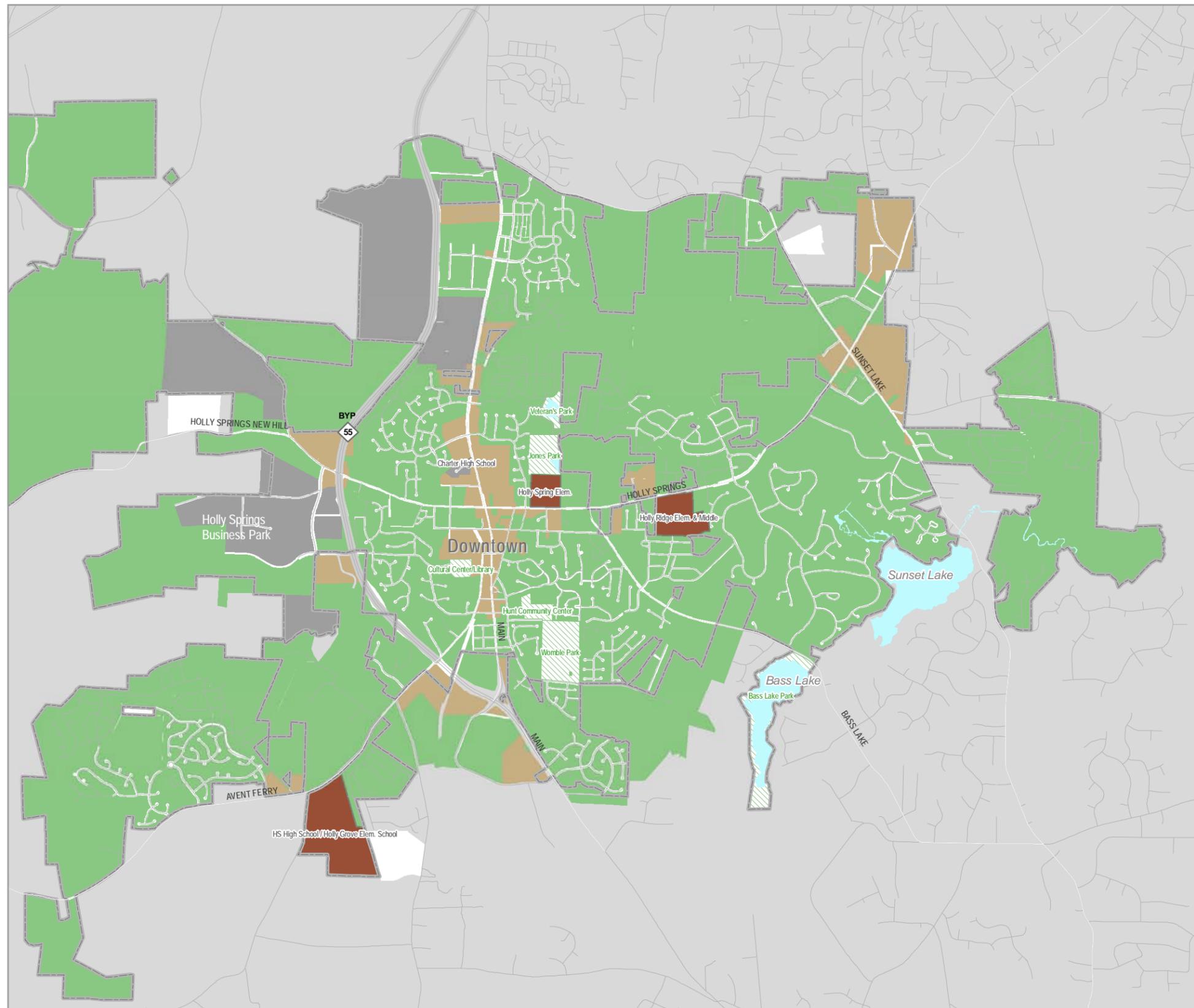
Existing Conditions



Legend

- Existing Grade Sep. Pedestrian Crossing
- Existing Sidewalk - One Side
- Existing Sidewalk - Both Sides
- Existing Greenway
- Road
- NC 55 Bypass
- Town Boundary
- Lake
- Park/Recreation Facility
- Business Park





Current Land Use



Legend

-  Existing Street
-  NC 55 Bypass
-  Town Boundary
-  Lake
-  Park/Recreation Facility
-  School
-  Residential
-  Commercial/Mixed Use
-  Industrial/Warehouse

