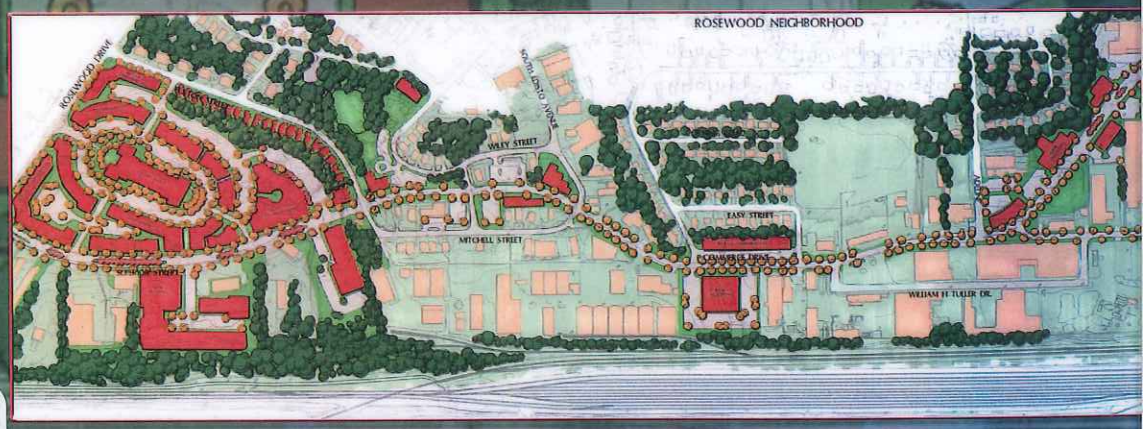
COLUMBIA OWENS MASTER PLAN

SOUTH COLUMBIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION & COLUMBIA EMPOWERMENT ZONE



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South Columbia
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Facing the Future Together
Columbia Empowerment Zone

AUGUST 2002

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Executive Summary

Purpose

Outline a plan to invest public infrastructure and other improvements needed to stimulate economic development in and around the Rosewood community.

Study Area

The study area is the commercial/light industrial corridor south of Rosewood Drive along Superior Street, South Edisto Avenue, and Commerce Drive to the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport.

Evaluation Process

Using a combination of technical engineering analysis, economic research and market analysis, and public and stockholder involvement, Wilbur Smith Associates identified the strengths and weaknesses of the study area and outlined a series of potential solutions. Stakeholder input was also obtained through announcements, newsletters, meetings, and workshops.

Weaknesses

The project team identified weaknesses in the study area as follows:

1. Lack of direct access into the commercial/light industrial area.
2. Poor storm drainage
3. Litter, neglect of properties, poor maintenance, and the perception of crime.

Strengths

The project team identified strengths in the study area as follows:

1. Good road access around the area (Rosewood Drive and South Beltline)
2. Airport and rail service
3. Vibrant neighboring communities (Shandon and Rosewood)
4. Abundance of marketable properties
5. Incentives for investing infrastructure and attracting businesses, education in infrastructure, etc.

Recommendations for Improvements

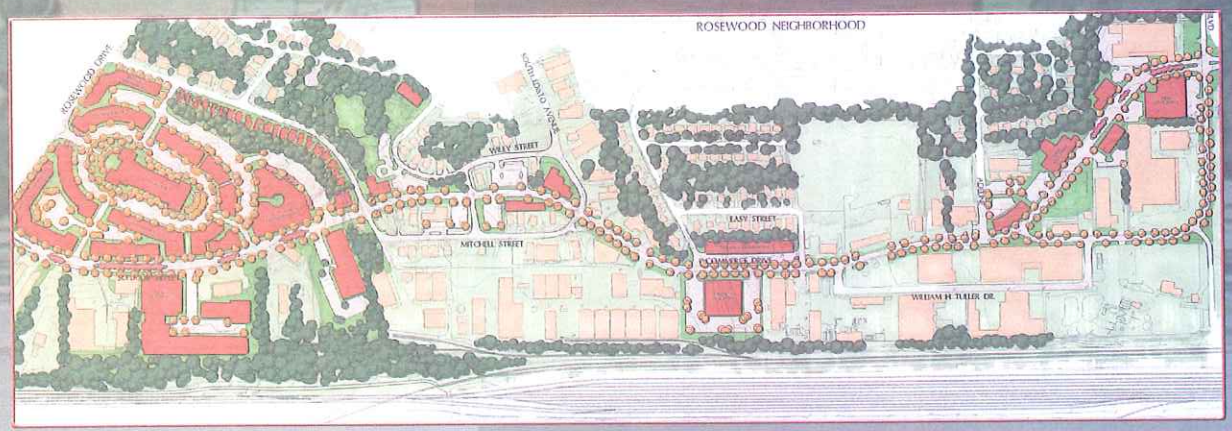
The following are recommendations to attract development to the study area:

1. An arterial spine route (2-lane) through the study area connecting Rosewood Drive and the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport.
2. Drainage improvements along the spine road to collect storm water.
3. Landscaping and streetscape improvements to improve the area's image.
4. A Master Plan outlining potential uses and development strategies.

Community Actions

1. Pursue an aggressive clean-up program.
2. Secure short term and longer term funding for infrastructure and other improvements.
3. Market incentives for attracting businesses.

1.0 Introduction



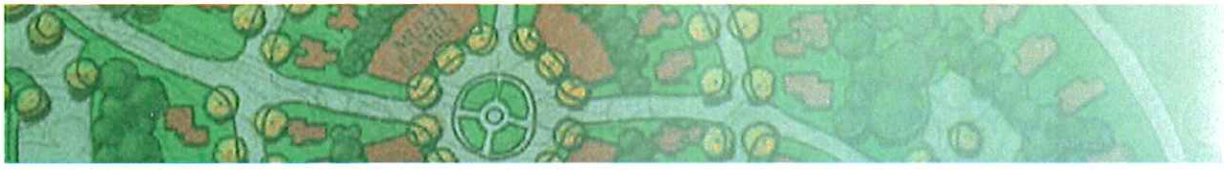
1.0 Introduction

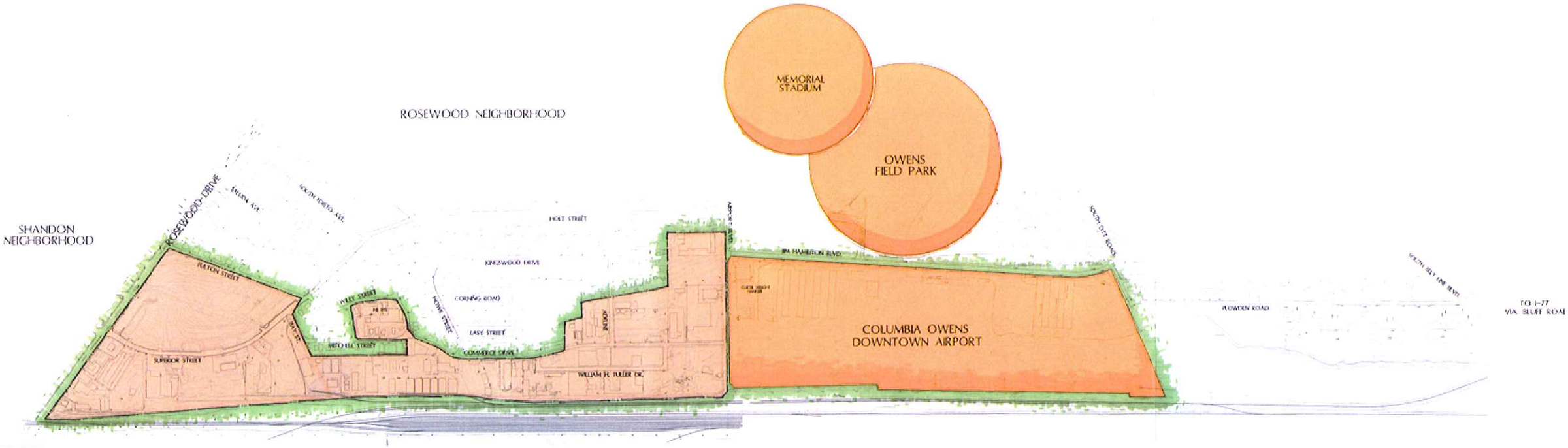
In an effort to improve development in the Rosewood Community near the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport, the South Columbia Development Corporation and Columbia Empowerment Zone tasked Wilbur Smith Associates, in association with the Landplan Group South, with obtaining public input and developing a Master Plan for the area. The purpose of the master plan was to give the Development Corporation and others a blueprint for how the area should grow with potential catalysts for stimulating growth. The growth was focused on developing the area to make it more attractive to prospective commercial developments that would infuse better jobs into the community, while not overshadowing the residential and existing commercial and industrial needs. Directed by a steering committee that included leaders from the Development Corporation, the City of Columbia, Richland County, the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport, the Columbia Housing Authority, and the community, the project team began the master plan process by listening to what the community was saying about the area. Wilbur Smith Associates initiated a community involvement and outreach process intended to offer opportunities for discussion and input to community stakeholders regarding the direction and intent of the Master Plan.

The initial public involvement portion of the Columbia Owens Master Plan consisted of consultation, a project announcement, a project newsletter, a news conference, and public meetings. Activities were coordinated with the South Columbia Development Corporation and members of the Rosewood community. From that public involvement, a profile of the existing area including its strengths and weaknesses was developed. Using this information, coupled with the project team's experience in other communities, recommendations for improving the area for commercial development were formulated. These recommendations were shared with all stakeholders including City, County, and State leaders and staff, community leaders, representatives of major private commercial stakeholders, the airport, and most importantly the community at large.

From all of this input, meetings, and experience, this Columbia Owens Master Plan was developed. It should be noted that this plan is a "living" document that represents only the first step in development in the Rosewood-Owens Field area. This document is intended to give community leaders a plan on how best to focus resources and attention to foster positive growth in the community. Like any such master plan, the ultimate success will depend on the implementation and subsequent revisions to the plan to meet an ever-changing environment.

The study area encompassed existing residential, commercial, and light industrial development between Rosewood Drive and the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport, north of the Norfolk Southern Railroad, as illustrated in Exhibit 1.





KEY:

- MASTER PLAN SITE
- STUDY AREA

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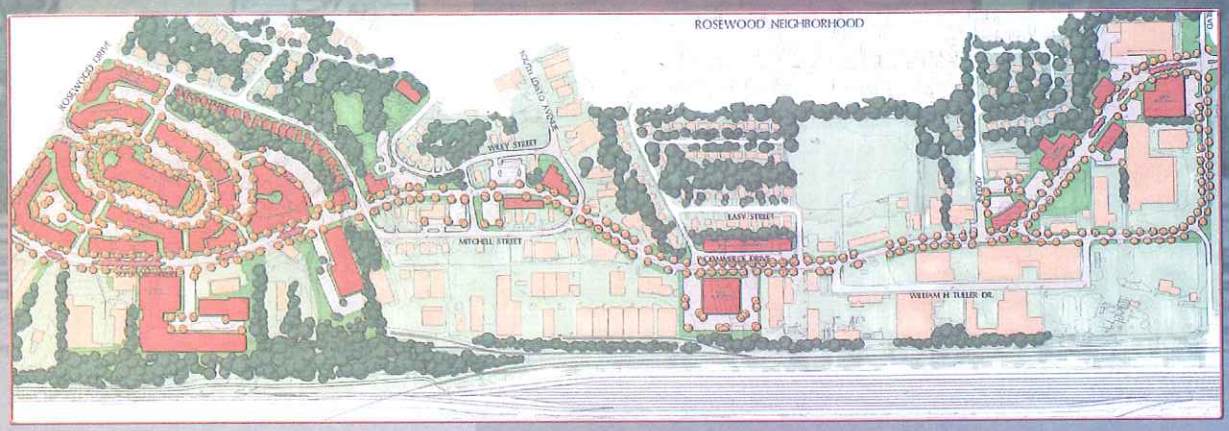
Exhibit 1 - Study Area Map

2.0 Stakeholder Input Process



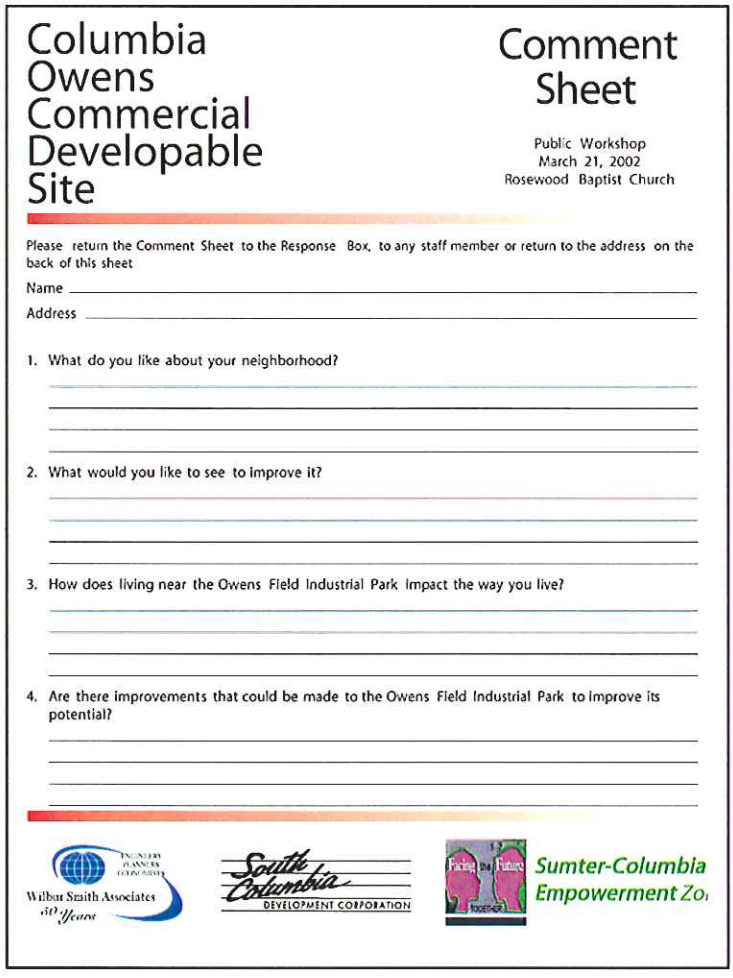
2.0 Stakeholder Input Process

Stakeholder input was essential to the successful development of the Columbia Owens Master Plan. Consultation about stakeholder involvement tasks was carried out internally with study team members as well as with the client and other interested parties. The South Columbia Development Corporation was consulted early during the study process and approved the overall tasks of the stakeholder involvement process. Consultation was held at major milestones, including the publication of a project newsletter as well as the initiation of workshops and meetings. The South Columbia Development Corporation invited community members, business owners, and public officials to participate in the consultation process.

Integral to the study process was ensuring that an optimal number of community stakeholders were given opportunities to express their opinions and thoughts. Toward this goal, multiple approaches were initiated to reach all segments of the community. Many business owners were visited and surveyed to elicit their opinions on the issues they felt confronted them within the study area. The survey process included:

- Columbia's leading real estate developers and agents involved in the area,
- Owners of properties that are up for sale,
- Owners of businesses that operate in the area,
- Rosewood Community Council,
- Residents of Rosewood and adjacent communities,
- New businesses recently locating in the area,
- Businesses who are considering locating in the area.

Stakeholders, the general public, and specifically those in the Rosewood residential community, were surveyed and had the opportunity to express their positions at community open houses and other meetings. Additionally, the Rosewood Community Council served as a forum to keep its members abreast of project activities through its web page and email activities and forwarded all comments to the consultant team. In short, the outreach process attempted to be as inclusive and as communicative as possible toward all members of the community.



Columbia Owens Commercial Developable Site

Comment Sheet

Public Workshop
March 21, 2002
Rosewood Baptist Church

Please return the Comment Sheet to the Response Box, to any staff member or return to the address on the back of this sheet

Name _____

Address _____

1. What do you like about your neighborhood?

2. What would you like to see to improve it?

3. How does living near the Owens Field Industrial Park impact the way you live?

4. Are there improvements that could be made to the Owens Field Industrial Park to improve its potential?

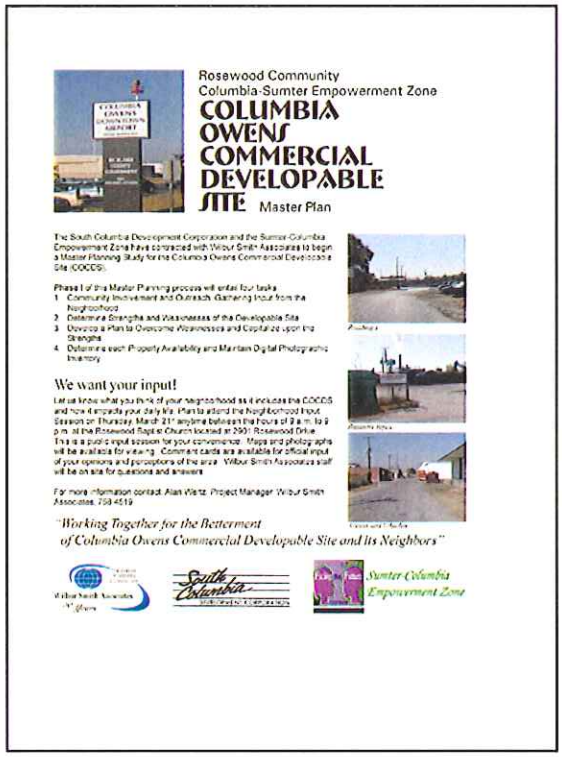
Wilbur Smith Associates 50 Years

South Columbia Development Corporation

Sumter-Columbia Empowerment Zo

2.1 Announcements

A project announcement letter for the Columbia Owens Master Plan was developed and mailed to over 60 public officials and community leaders. The letter informed the public officials and community leaders about the study process and invited their questions as well as participation. Public officials receiving the project announcement letter included City of Columbia elected officials and selected department heads, Richland County Council members, selected County department heads, and economic development organizations serving the greater Columbia area. The announcement letter was also sent to members of the local education community, including the University of South Carolina, Midlands Technical College, and Richland One School District, as well as the Richland County State House and Senate Delegation, and the U.S. House and Senate members representing Richland County.


Rosewood Community
Columbia-Sumter Empowerment Zone
COLUMBIA OWENS COMMERCIAL DEVELOPABLE SITE Master Plan

We want your input!

"Working Together for the Betterment of Columbia Owens Commercial Developable Site and its Neighbors"

Sumter Columbia Empowerment Zone

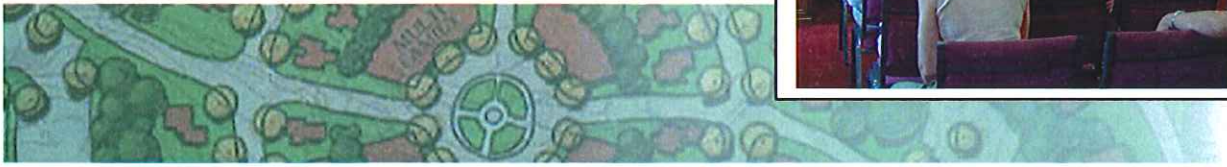
A project newsletter was developed, published, and was mailed first-class on March 8, 2002 to 1,960 businesses, homes, apartment dwellers, churches, and schools located within the Rosewood community. It outlined the outreach process and invited stakeholders and the public to participate in the March 21, 2002 workshop.

A news conference about the Columbia Owens Master Plan was held on March 19, 2002 at the Curtiss Wright Hangar at the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport. The purpose of the news conference was to announce the initiation of the study project and to publicize the workshop on March 21, 2002. Additionally, members of the South Columbia Development Corporation Board, public officials, and representatives of the study team were introduced to the public. The local press and television stations covered the news conference.

2.2 Workshops

A stakeholder workshop for the Columbia Owens Master Plan was held on Thursday, March 21, 2002, at the Rosewood Baptist Church from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM. The church, located at 2901 Rosewood Drive, is a landmark in the community. The church has been a part of the community for more than 50 years and is used often for meetings of community-wide interest.

Arriving participants signed in and were directed to a table where a large map representing the study area and the Rosewood neighborhood was displayed. Participants were encouraged to place symbols representing eight types of unique improvements on the map. The eight types of symbols included: road widening, maintenance, clean-up, planting trees, landscaping, build sidewalk, need fencing, and need traffic signal. Additionally, arriving



participants were given comment sheets and asked to respond to four general questions.

Supplementing the informal setting, three structured presentations were scheduled during the course of the workshop: 9:30 AM, 12:30 PM and 6:00 PM. Participants were encouraged to converse and interact with others around the map table as well as to write notes directly on the map.

Although detailed participant demographics were not collected, a total of 78 community members attended the open house. Participants included business owners, heads of households, developers, investors, local planners, and residents of adjacent neighborhoods. The elderly, minorities, and women were adequately represented in the mix of attendees.

2.3 Meetings

Stakeholder meetings for the Columbia Owens Master Plan were held on June 25, 2002 and July 2, 2002 at 9:00 AM, 12:30 PM, and 6:00 PM at Gilbert Memorial Baptist Church, 1918 Mitchell Street. The meetings were scheduled at various times of the day to accommodate the schedules of business owners and residents in the area. The meetings were also scheduled on two different weeks to accommodate those who may be traveling on summer vacations. Presentations outlining the project were given at each meeting by Wilbur Smith Associates team members and were followed by a period for questions and comments. Local residents of the Rosewood community, business owners, and City of Columbia representatives attended the meetings.

The overall attendance of the meetings was good and resulted in positive input towards the plan. Early evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of the area were presented along with several potential strategies for resolving the weaknesses. The presentations were met with both enthusiasm and a keen interest on specifically how the plan would affect different segments of the community both residential and commercial.

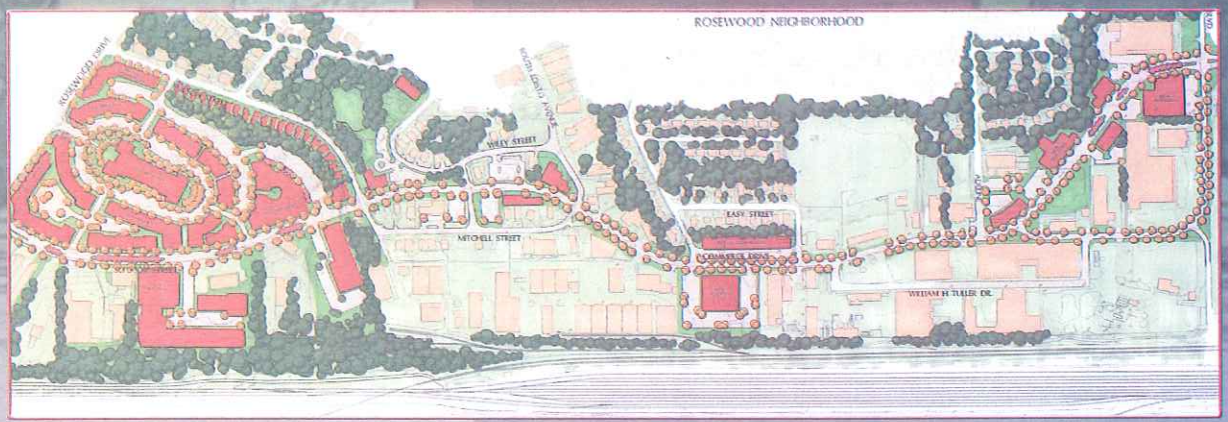
2.4 Individual Contact

Wilbur Smith Associates and the Landplan Group South team members also contacted individuals in the project area to discuss the development project and solicit input. These individuals included landowners, residents, business owners, City officials, and other affected parties. The commercial input ranged from future plans for expansion or relocation to what could be done in the area to enhance your business. Residential input included how would improvements to the road system effect your residence to how does the overall appearance of the area effect your quality of life.

Important individual contact was also made with the Columbia Housing Authority which controls the former Hendley Homes site, a 20 plus acre site located at the corner of Rosewood Drive and Superior Street. This area is a defining part of the study area and was a source of interest among most attendants of the public meetings.

In addition, individual contact was made with the Columbia Owens Downtown Airport, a major amenity to the area that is currently undergoing significant improvements.

3.0 Evaluation of Study Area



3.0 Evaluation of Study Area

Wilbur Smith Associates evaluated the study area to determine its strengths and weaknesses in attracting development. This included an evaluation of information obtained during the public input process and an evaluation of the existing infrastructure in the area, including roads, water and wastewater utilities, storm water utilities, electrical utilities, and communications. Infrastructure is crucial to commercial and light-industrial development. The following sections outline the results of the evaluation.

3.1 Weaknesses of the Study Area

The project team determined that specific weaknesses exist that currently constrains growth. In fact, if such weaknesses are not addressed, the study area will likely not redevelop. The following discussion focuses upon the identified weaknesses.

Lack of Access to the Study Area

Because the study area is predominantly light industrial, it generates a large volume of truck traffic. However, there is no direct access to the study area from Rosewood Drive (and S. Beltline) for trucks. Trucks are routed through the Rosewood neighborhood streets, predominantly S. Edisto Ave. Residential roads are not equipped to support heavy freight traffic. Exhibit 2 illustrates the non-residential traffic patterns in the study area. The following photo illustrates how a large freight truck attempting to exit the commercial area, exist through the residential road network. Clearly, this type of traffic not only has implications on residential road upkeep, but also detracts from the quality of life of the adjacent residential community.

The issue (or weakness) is not the existence of truck traffic. It is the fact that there are no access points for trucks to get to the study area other than through the Rosewood Neighborhood. Superior Street provides the most direct route through the study area, and is hence an alternate route for trucks (instead of using S. Edisto Ave. through the neighborhood). However, the intersection between Superior and Rosewood Drive is very steep, making it difficult for trucks to use. In addition, traffic from the park neighborhood and the Richland School District One Stadium could avoid driving through the study area and instead drive through the Rosewood neighborhood. This is problematic in that it causes concern about safety, especially during peak periods after football games and other events.

Roads in the study area are found to be circuitous making it difficult for freight to move at an acceptable speed and with a high degree of safety. In other words, once traffic (trucks and auto traffic) makes it onto the Site, they find it hard to get around. This issue suggests the need for a road realignment that directs freight traffic, and other non-residential traffic, away from the residential areas while providing efficient access to the Developable Site, the park and the stadium.

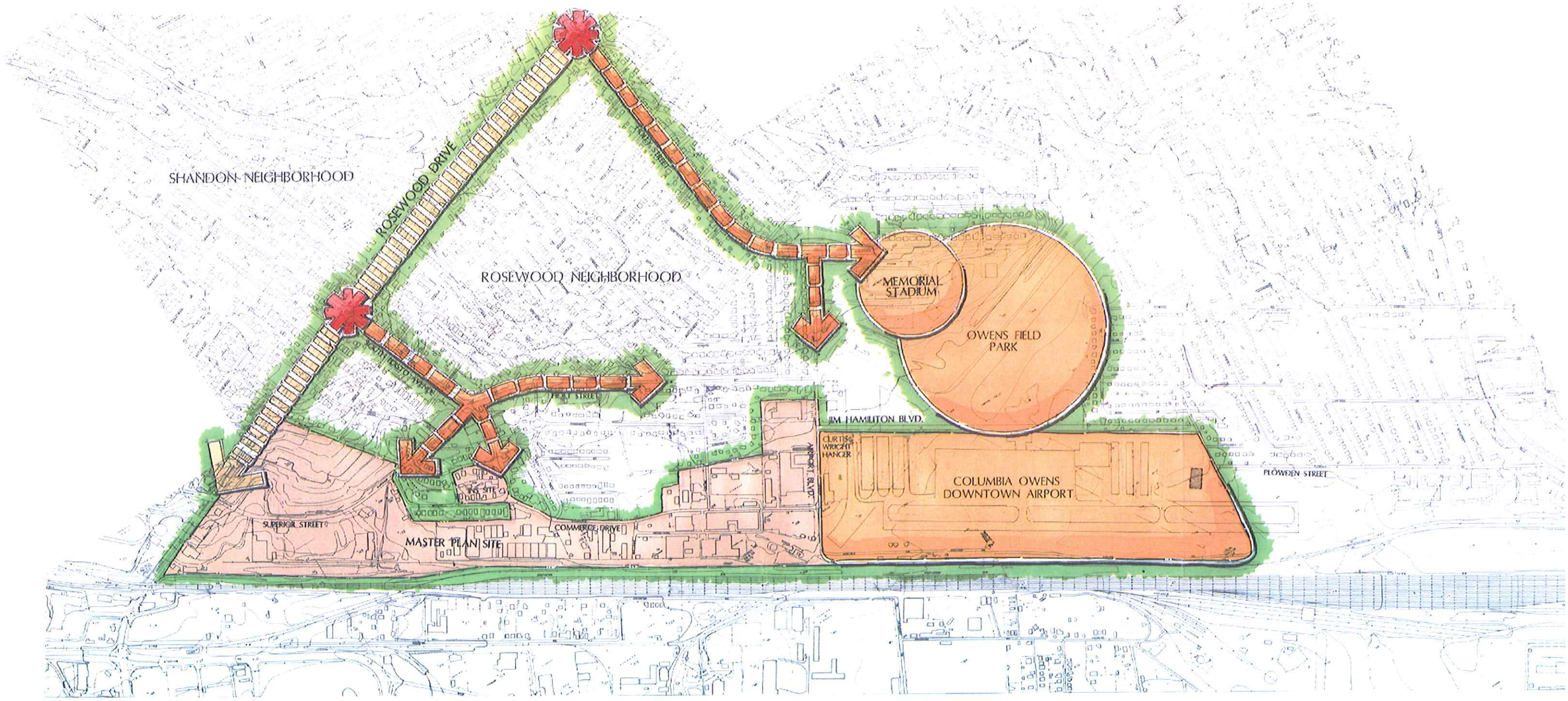


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Exhibit 2 – Non-Residential Traffic Patterns

Lack of Maintenance

As pointed out by residents at the public meetings, many properties are littered, full of debris and just generally "shabby." Of course this has economic development implications. Areas thus described don't give the impression that local tenants are successful. In short, the unfavorable appearance of the commercial zone does not present a vision of success and in fact may appear as a distressed area. Consequently, new and existing investors may be discouraged from creating new opportunities since they sense a general apathy from existing tenants.

Zoning Mismatches

As discussed in an earlier section, consistent zoning is a necessary prerequisite for successful business expansion and commercial development. Investors are hesitant to develop new businesses if they anticipate negative externalities associated with their business activities will create friction with their residential neighbors. Two areas of concern with regard to the existing zoning structure are as follows:

1. The bulk of the Rosewood Drive corridor is zoned for commercial use. However, the portion of the Rosewood Drive corridor through the former Hendley Homes site is zoned for residential. This essentially breaks the continuity of the commercial zoning along the Rosewood Drive corridor.

2. There are two pockets of RG - 2 (high density residential) zoning enveloped within the industrial zoned areas of the study area.

Residential development in these commingled areas will likely remain marginal in quality and appreciation. Of these two aforementioned, the first one (break in commercial zoning along Rosewood Drive) is not fatal, but should be addressed as part of any further analysis of the Hendley Homes site. The second issue (commingled uses) is also not fatal but does have an impact on the value of the residences in those specific pockets, and will continue to do so.

Environmental Issues

Although the scope of this study does not include an environmental analysis, our survey of the area, discussion with landowners and real estate professionals, and inferences based on past and present uses indicates that some properties within the study area may possibly have environmental related issues, particularly related to contamination of soil. This presents a weakness from a marketing standpoint because contaminants may have impregnated the grounds of an available property and the cost of clean-up may be prohibitive to potential new investors. Whether contamination exists or not, the perception that contamination exists could be a deterrent to development. This may not be a fatal flaw. Federal Superfund monies and brownfield incentives from the Empowerment Zone may be used to offset cost associated with clean-up. Further environmental analysis will need to be conducted to determine whether this conclusion is scientifically significant.

Security

Crime has historically been an issue in the surrounding neighborhoods and the study area. It is the conventional impression that the source of much of the crime originated from the Hendley Homes development, so expectations are that crime rates will now begin to improve in the area. But until such trends become common and publicized, the perception of the area as a high crime district will diminish the ability to attract new investment capital. It is important to point out that much of this market response is based on perception. And perception is not often based on fact. Regardless, perception is a very real factor in the market place. Therefore, until something is done to address the need for more robust security, investors may be hesitant to build and invest in the area. Often the feeling of security is based on a perception of the area. Poorly maintained ditches, uncontrolled vegetation, poor lighting, and other visual factors hamper this perception. A general clean-up of the area and encouragement to repair or clean individual buildings and lots will positively impact the perception of lack of safety. Until the study area's reputation and limited security is addressed, investors may view available sites as relatively "high risk."

Drainage

Businesses and residences in and around the study area have historically had a considerable amount of difficulty with drainage problems. And although the City of Columbia has done a considerable amount (invested several millions of dollars in drainage systems) to improve the situation, storm water drainage still remains a weakness for the study area. Exhibit 3 illustrates the existing drainage patterns in the area.

As illustrated, the study area is situated at the end of terrain that slopes down from the Shandon and Rosewood neighborhoods. Because of the impervious nature of the ground surface (roads, sidewalks, driveways, etc.), storm water quickly collects and flows down toward the railroad tracks. Furthermore, there is a large volume of impervious ground cover throughout the study area, creating even more runoff that collects in low-lying areas. Moreover, the rail lines to the west of the study area act as a dam that holds back much of the runoff. After periods of heavy rains, storm water runs off the Hendley Homes site and onto surrounding properties (to the west and southwest), flooding sites and improvements.

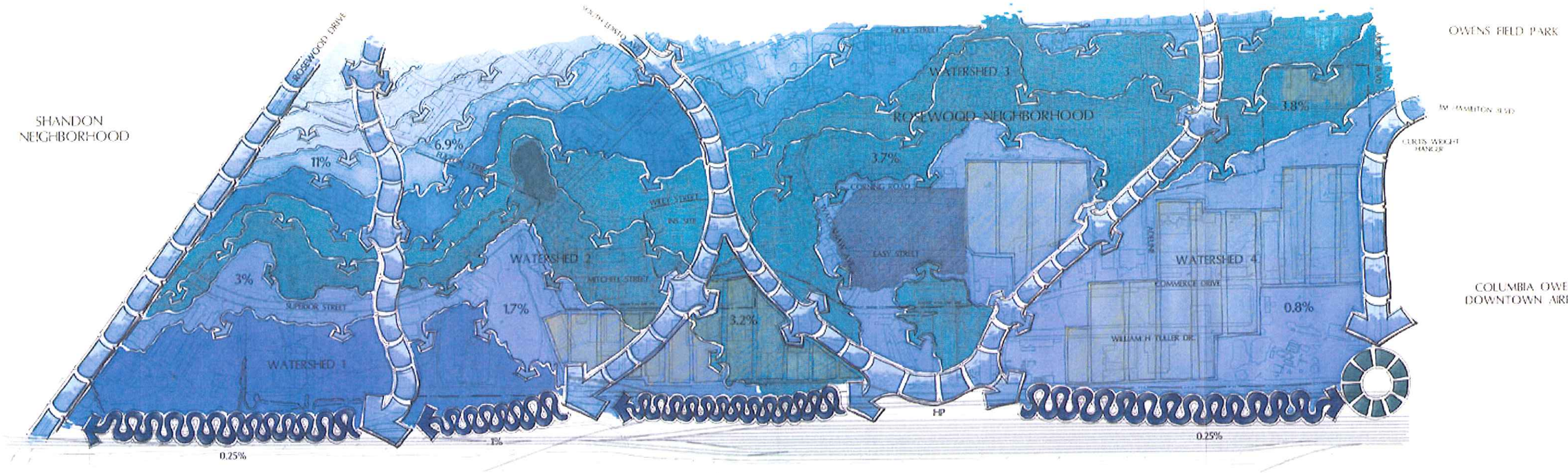

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Exhibit 3 – Drainage Issues

3.2 Strengths of the Study Area

The study area, for a variety of reasons, is comparatively under-developed and under-utilized from an economic and marketability standpoint. Therefore, the purpose of the Columbia Owens Master Plan is to produce a roadmap for stimulating development. However, in order for the plan to be meaningful, it needs to address specific issues, problems and weaknesses by recommending approaches toward reversing the current trend of the study area. Wilbur Smith Associates identified a set of strengths and weaknesses for the study area. These will provide the basis for identifying a series of solutions and development approaches, culminating into the overall Master Plan. The following discussion is the result of the analysis beginning with identified strengths followed by identified weaknesses.

The Rosewood Community

The Rosewood community has in recent years experienced a considerable degree of growth and market attention. A number of factors explain this, including its proximity to the City's center, providing opportunities for shopping, minimal work commutes, educational advancement and eating and entertainment venues. Based on anecdotal evidence provided by realtors who sell in the community, residential properties have in recent years appreciated at rates above historical norms. However, according to these same real estate experts, home prices in Rosewood continue to present a good /quality value for potential buyers relative to other Columbia neighborhoods. In short, Rosewood is viewed as livable, developing successfully and has the internal resources (parks, etc.) needed for further development and growth.

Ripple Effect

The Rosewood community also benefits from its proximity to the Shandon community. Long a haven for up-scale, in-town homes, growth and demand for housing in Shandon has in recent years begun to spill over into Rosewood. The "Ripple Effect" has sent homebuyers in increasing numbers to shop for homes in Rosewood, accelerating further home prices. Ironically, increasing home prices have generated additional interest in the area producing continued "buzz" regarding the improved quality of the community.

From a commercial perspective, both of the preceding strengths continue to reinforce renewed interest and prospects for Rosewood. What now exists is an environment where both quality job opportunities and quality living arrangements are contained in one area.

Property Turnover

Turnover, or the rate at which a property is resold over a specified time has increased in recent years throughout the developable site. This is true for both residential and commercial properties. Historically, commercial property in the study area was often vacant for extended periods. Additionally, owners and investors viewed the commercial properties as capable of returning only sufficient rents, and satisfying only modest investment criterion.

However, in recent months demand has gradually (although not at pace with other Columbia markets) grown for the properties and commercial structures. In our investigation of the study area, it is becoming increasingly clear that investors now perceive the commercial properties as capable of providing a return not only from tenant lease arrangements, but properties are appreciating more vigorously than the historical norm. Essentially, properties in the developable site are often now viewed as good investments.

Investors also recognize that these properties are just emerging from the trough of the development and growth curve. This presents speculative opportunities for investment.

It is important to note that the study area is not yet a burgeoning real estate market. In fact, it is still weak compared to other Columbia areas. However, the point being made here is that due to the aforementioned factors, the area is becoming more attractive, and properties are now more frequently sold than in the past. Turnover is increasing, and that is a strength.

Available Buildings and Sites

Several sites and buildings are available for acquisition or lease by investors and businesses. The fact that there is a significant stock of available buildings and sites is a significant strength, for several reasons.

- First, the area has something to market and sell (if general improvements can be made to the area). There are few other areas (with similar proximity to Columbia) with a comparable mix and concentration of developable properties.

- Second, the real estate prices for these available properties are depressed and therefore present a potential value, or upside potential.

- Third, any future upside in real estate values translate into increased property tax revenues for the local jurisdictions. Some of the additional value in property tax revenue could be captured to finance some portion of potentially needed infrastructure improvements.

- Fourth, the availability of properties opens up the opportunity of potentially attracting new business that can provide a fresh impact on the area. Argued differently, if the study area were in a depressed state, similar to what it has historically been, but without any available sites, there would be no opportunity for attracting new business that would lead to renewal.

Again, the availability of properties is viewed as a solid strength. This availability provides opportunities for targeted growth and job creation ventures. Existing businesses may be "mature" and offer less flexibility and opportunity for employment and investment opportunities. However, "greenfield" ventures may be attracted to the vacant and undeveloped sites and they potentially provide an opportunity for significant job impacts to the area.

Anchors/Attractors

A classic approach to stimulating an area's initial growth impetus is the attraction of one or more "anchor" ventures. This type of venture might be considered as at the forefront of positive growth investments in a distressed or marginal area. These types of investments are often viewed as high risk due to significant uncertainty regarding market size and demand. If successful, market signals are sent to providers of private capital that risk is acceptable and investment begins to follow.

Columbia has had several examples of this type of development. One of the original seed ventures in Columbia's Vista was the Blue Marlin. Interestingly, the train station was purchased by the South Columbia Development Corporation, refurbished and later became the Blue Marlin and other restaurants. This anchor served to rapidly propel the Vista towards its status as the premier entertainment district within the City.

Within the study area, two properties offer the potential to become attractors, or magnets to further investment:

1. Projected funding for the Curtiss Wright Hangar at Owens Field will provide facilities to promote interest in physics and mathematics in school age children through the study of flight, as well as other education training and community activities.
2. Depending on the ultimate use of the Hendley Homes site, this too has the potential to become a significant anchor for further development. In fact during the public meeting held in March in the Rosewood community, a clear message was sent by the community that this site is viewed as an important "anchor" piece in the study area.

Educational Infrastructure

Educational resources are often very important to employers. Business sectors that require specific skills and especially those that require periodic updating of skills often lean on the community and technical school

system and university systems to provide this service. Dense educational infrastructure suggests to a potential employer that a large skilled work force exist in the targeted area.

The Rosewood community has considerable educational facilities to be attractive to commercial investors and developers desiring availability of a skilled labor pool and resources to upgrade skills when necessary. The main University of South Carolina (USC) campus is adjacent to the study area. The Beltline Campus of Midlands Technical College, with its long-term workforce training resources, is in the immediate area. Other educational resources provide an attraction to potential and existing business enterprises. USC offers its Southeast Manufacturing Technology Center (College of Engineering) specializing in consulting to small manufacturing concerns. The USC School of Business provides consulting services to business through its Small Business Advisory Center and continuing education to business and industry through the Daniel Management Center.

The recent joint work between the City of Columbia and the University of South Carolina towards a proposed research park has heightened awareness of large tracts of land in close proximity to the main campus. The Rosewood community has several characteristics that make it attractive to this knowledge-based development. First, there are available large tracts (20 acres or more) close to the main campus of a major research university. There are no other locations in downtown Columbia that can be utilized for a research campus without converting the land from it current use. One potential plan for the research park is to relocate the existing athletics facility across Rosewood Drive (the Roundhouse, baseball, and track facilities) to a possibly vacated State Farmer's Market or Fairgrounds location. The realization is that both of these locations are currently occupied for other uses and moving these functions is possibly years away. While this area may not be the core of the research area, it could greatly benefit from the proximity and be an early location for a genesis project to jump-start development.

Defined Landuse Plan

Land use planning is a means to rationalize growth in accordance with community standards. Currently, Rosewood's landuse plan is expressed in the "Rosewood Neighborhood Conservation Plan" as amended in 1986. Zoning in the area is well structured and for the most part embraced by the community. Consistent zoning, that is, where large tract and areas are consistently zoned either residential or commercial, is a necessary feature when recruiting quality commercial enterprises. However, when zoning is vague (mixed), encouraging business investment becomes problematic. The bulk of the existing zoning throughout the study area allows for light industrial uses (M- 1). This is consistent with existing zoning in the area. The former Hendley Homes site is zoned for high density residential (RG - 2). A portion of the study area along Mitchell Street is also zoned RG - 2. The portion of the study area (west of the Hendley Homes site) adjacent to Rosewood Drive is zoned for commercial use (C - 3). The fact that the bulk of zoning allows for commercial and industrial oriented uses positions the area for attracting opportunities that attract new jobs, as well as expand the local tax base.

Transportation Access

Businesses rely upon local transportation networks and facilities to transport finished goods, parts, inventory, customers, and workers. The more robust the facilities, the larger the set of business types can be drawn to an area. The proximity of the study area to multiple modes of transportation places it at a comparative advantage

regarding attracting and stimulating business investment. Disregarding for the moment that freight movement is often routed through residential roads in the Rosewood community, the study area potentially has good access to a primary road network:

- The study area is sandwiched between two key local arterials, specifically Rosewood Drive and South Beltline Drive.

- The study area could potentially be accessed from I-77 via Beltline Drive(and Shop Road). However, access to this route is somewhat circuitous.

The point is that while there are certain weaknesses and challenges with transportation (particularly with regard to access to the study area), the fact is that the study area is situated within a well developed arterial road system, which is a considerable strength. This should be taken advantage of by directly linking the study area to the existing arterial system.

The study area also has excellent access to rail facilities. Rail access could be an advantage to specific types of businesses and many of the existing available sites provide the potential for rail access. And finally, the Owens Field Airport can prove as an attractant to those businesses that rely on just-in-time inventory, parts and finished goods logistical systems.

Available Empowerment Zone Incentives

The study area has all the advantages and incentives associated with an Empowerment Zone. These incentives include a broad array of wage and employment programs, capital availability and other developmental initiatives. A few of the programs that could be used to help market available sites:

- Neighborhood Economic Opportunity (NEO) Initiative
- Youth Economic Opportunity (YEO) Initiative
- Empowerment Zone Commercial Development Loan Fund
- Neighborhood Business Improvement Zone/Façade Improvement Program
- Small Business Financing Fund (Proposed)
- Small Business Development Center (In partnership with Benedict College)
- Burton Life Resource Center (Under Review)
- Other Tax Incentives and Credits:
  - E-Zone Employment (Wage) Credit
  - Work Opportunity Tax Credit
  - Welfare to Work Tax Credit
  - Environmental Cleanup Cost Deduction (Brownfield Cleanup Incentive)
  - Qualified Zone Academy Bonds
  - Enterprise Zone Facility Bonds

These tools are extremely useful in trying to:

1. Market available buildings and sites to attract new employers by providing incentives to such businesses.
2. Invest in capital infrastructure to improve the overall condition of public use facilities within the Site. Improving infrastructure is one of the most fundamental steps toward spurring development, particularly in an area with a clear set of advantages/strengths.

3.4 Evaluation of Infrastructure

Wilbur Smith Associates conducted an evaluation of the existing infrastructure in the study area. Due to its close proximity to downtown Columbia, most of the infrastructure in the area is adequate to accommodate commercial development or light industrial development. Each aspect of the existing infrastructure is briefly discussed as follows:

A. Roadways:

Currently, truck traffic from the commercial and light-industrial developments along Commerce Drive utilize the existing residential roads in the Rosewood Community. The existing roads do not provide adequate access from Commerce Drive with a direct route to Rosewood Drive. The existing roads are narrow, tree lined residential streets with residents utilizing the shoulders for on street parking. The grades, curvature, sight distances, lane widths, and pavement condition are a deterrent to future development in the area. There are significant desires of the residents to place more four-way stop signs in the community to further deter through traffic in the area. Upgrade to the overall transportation system is a must for continued development in the area.

B. Water:

Water service is currently provided by the City of Columbia along most roads in the study area. Sufficient line sizes and water pressure exist to provide domestic and fire protection for future commercial and light industrial development. No additional improvements are recommend at this time.

C. Wastewater:

The City of Columbia currently provides wastewater service. The routes of primary collection lines run along most roads in the study area. The wastewater service should be adequate to accommodate any additional commercial and light-industrial development.

D. Storm Water:

The City of Columbia currently maintains the storm drainage systems in the study area. The existing topography in the study area generally slopes rapidly from the north and becomes relatively flat in the area approaching the Andrews Rail Yard. When storm water is produced during a rainfall event, it quickly runs off and ponds in the low-lying areas. A large concentration of roof tops and paved areas in the lower portion of the industrial area adds to the run-off problem. Currently, the existing storm drainage system cannot accommodate the amount of storm water runoff resulting from the large quantity of

impervious areas. As storm water ponds in the area, debris becomes stranded along the roads and rodent and insect growth increases. Improvements to the drainage infrastructure will be required to handle both existing and future storm water needs. This is important to the eventually growth of the area.

E. Electrical:
Electrical service is currently provided by South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G). The electrical service should be adequate to accommodate any additional commercial and light-industrial development and does not need upgrades.

F. Communications:
Currently, the area is served along Rosewood Drive with limited fiber optic service. With the growth of high-tech and knowledge based businesses in the area, significant improvements in the communications for the area must be developed. If the area is to be part of the research development, fiber optic lines running through the middle of the site will be required to include communication connection at sufficient speed and capacity to attract potential developments.

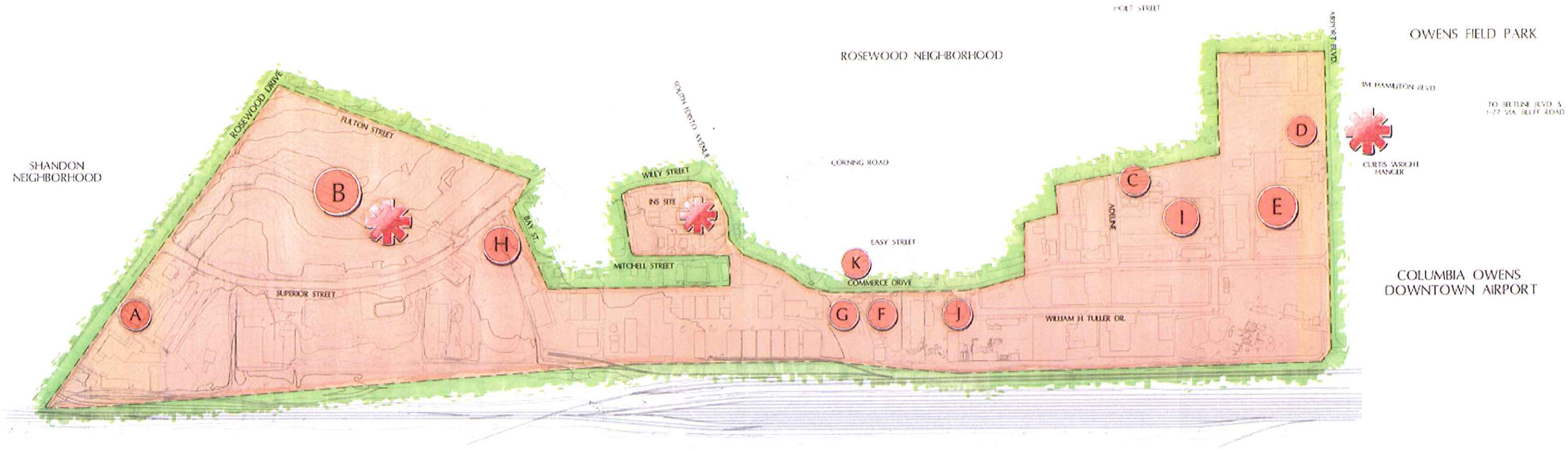
3.5 Evaluation of Developable Sites

Based on the Wilbur Smith Associates investigations of the area, several potentially developable sites were identified (Exhibit 4). The fact that there is a significant stock of available buildings and sites is a significant strength to the overall area. This gives the area a specific project to market with a good mix and concentration of developable properties. Also, the real estate prices for these properties present a potential value compared with land in other parts of the city. Currently, these properties do pay taxes which present a possible opportunity to capture any incremented tax increase as a result of development in the area to help pay for continued infrastructure investment in the area. The summary table presents the available sites identified in the study area.

3.6 Summary of Evaluation

Generally, the evaluation of the site yielded several strengths of the area. Most of the strengths breakdown to activities that are happening around the area, available property in the area, and available sources of capital to help the area. The area can greatly benefit by a tremendous growth in residential Shandon area and commercial growth in the Rosewood corridor. As property values in these areas continue to grow, the lower, compatible type property in the Study area will become more attractive. Likewise, the close proximity to downtown, the University of South Carolina, the Airport and other attractions will continue to help the area develop. Finally, the fact that the area is in the Columbia Empowerment Zone means that there is money available to build infrastructure, provide incentives, and help employee workers living in the empowerment zone.

On the surface the weaknesses discussed may seem insurmountable. However, we do not consider any of these as "fatal flaws." That is, with sufficient resources and stakeholder commitment, each problem can be overcome. With the exception of the zoning mismatch issue, the remaining weaknesses can be addressed and improved upon with an infusion of capital and meaningful efforts directed at solving each issue. Carefully



AVAILABLE SITES

A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			
I			
J			
K			

KEY:

- MASTER PLAN SITE
- SIGNIFICANT SITES
- AVAILABLE SITES
- MASTER PLAN SITE

PRELIMINARY FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

AVAILABLE SITES

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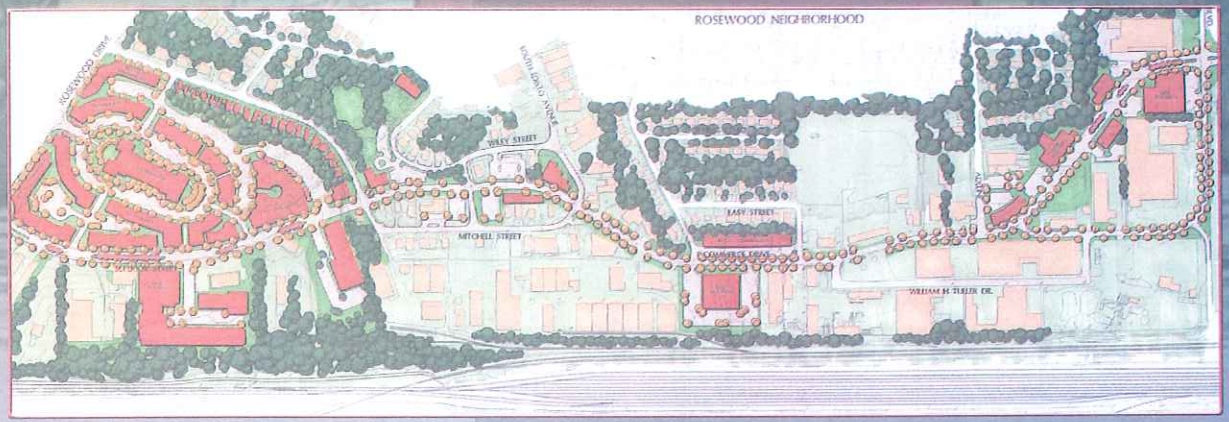
Exhibit 4 – Available Sites

selected investment and strategies may in fact turn most of these problem areas into positive attributes. Those strategies and recommendations will be explored in the following section.

Available Properties Within the Developable Site		
Property Location	**Map Code**	**Description & Background**
1014 Adeline Drive	C	Brick structure with potential for warehouse or light assembly. Unpaved road leads to loading docks (2) in rear of building.
1005 Airport Blvd.	D	Well groomed 2.6 acre vacant lot, no structures, contains ground contamination.
1009,1015,1019, 1023 Airport Blvd.	E	Six acres with parking lot, 55,000 sqft warehouse, 10,000 sqft office building.
2208 Commerce Drive	G	Acres (1.4) near intersection with Howe, gated entrance with 4,000 sqft warehouse setback . Potential for rail spur.
2218 Commerce Drive	F	Brick structure on street with fenced acreage.
S. Bull & Superior Street	H	Vacant and overgrown 5.66 acres with both paved and unpaved road entrances. Potential for rail spur.
1354 Rosewood Drive	A	Structure with potential as eatery and/or bar.
Rosewood Dr., Fulton St., Superior St.	B	Vacant former site of Hendley Homes.
2636 Commerce Drive	J	Structure with land
2200 Commerce Drive	K	Mini-warehouses with vacant land
1042 Adeline Drive	I	Vacant lot with office building

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS



4.0 Recommendations

After evaluating the existing features of the study area, and soliciting input from the public, Wilbur Smith Associates and the Landplan Group South has identified three areas of improvement: traffic, storm drainage, and aesthetics.

4.1 Traffic Improvements Via a Spine Road

In order to help alleviate truck and destination traffic in the residential areas, a spine road is recommended to improve the traffic flow from the light industrial area along Commerce Drive. The recommended alignment of the road would intersect Rosewood Drive at its current intersection with Superior Street and traverse through the developable area to the intersection of Jim Hamilton Boulevard and Airport Boulevard (Exhibit 5). The road would utilize the existing right-of-ways of Superior Street and Commerce Drive and avoid impact to existing property owners where feasible. The exact location of the road would need to be carefully determined to avoid negative impact to the community, while providing the direct route needed to help link the study area. The new road would be a two-lane road with 16-foot lanes to accommodate tractor-trailer truck traffic. A divided landscaped median is recommended at the "entrances" to the developable area at Rosewood Drive and Jim Hamilton Boulevards to provide an impact statement in these locations. The median would be removed in the middle section of the road where the existing right-of-way is smaller. In addition, the roadway will include concrete curb and gutter and sidewalks to improve pedestrian traffic in the area.

Two potential routes of the roadway where explored. Both routes make use of the Superior Street alignment between Rosewood Drive and Mitchell Street. From there, the route proceeds through a vacant lot around several single-family residences. The route then makes use of the Interstate Nuclear Services (INS) site that is currently being purchased by the City of Columbia. This site could be divided creating several developable sites for marketing. The route then utilizes the Commerce Drive alignment that is currently lined with several existing commercial developments. It is anticipated that these properties could then be converted to a higher use with access to a better, more attractive road. From here, two alternatives develop.

The first would be to continue along the Commerce Drive route to the intersection with Airport Boulevard. The advantage to this alignment is that it makes use of existing roadway and right-of-way. The distinct disadvantage is that it does not provide a direct route, instead forcing traffic and trucks to make a left turn to access Jim Hamilton Boulevard. It is a definite disadvantage to development and does not tend to help the Airport's mission to provide a grand access from Rosewood Drive to the terminal, without using residential streets.

The second alternative would be to break the alignment and run through the light industrial and commercial land along the rear of the properties. This would have some impact on the rear portions of many of the properties, but would provide the type of direct access to the Jim Hamilton Boulevard needed in this area.

Wilbur Smith Associates has contacted most of the property owners, both residential and commercial, affected by the potential road alignments. All are in support of the general alignment, but specific right-of-way plans

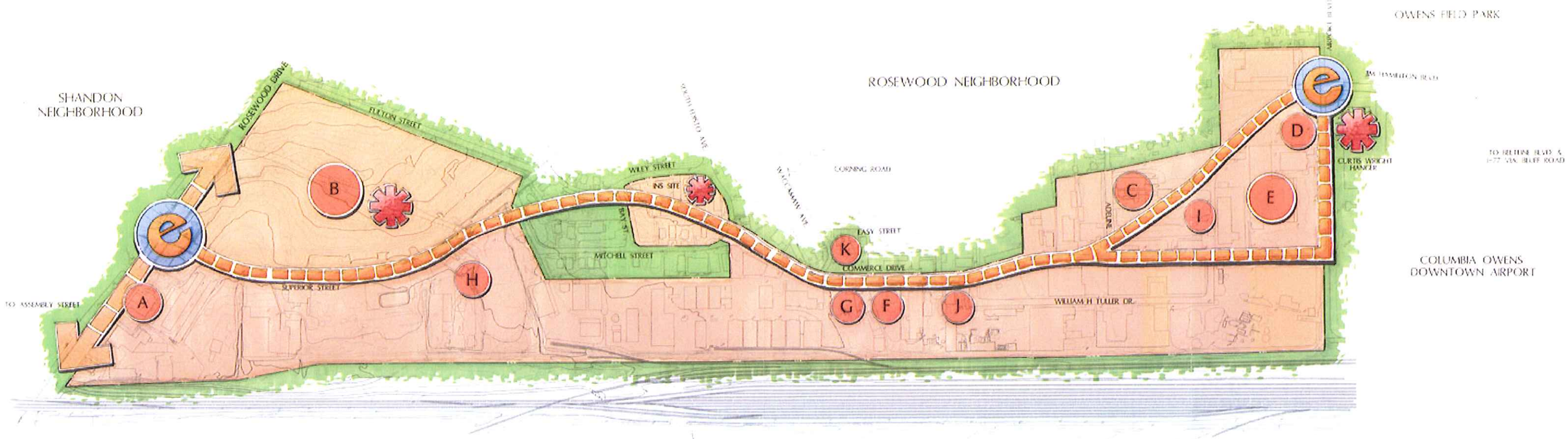


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Exhibit 5 - Roadway Alternatives

must be developed before this project proceeds. In addition, the South Carolina Department of Transportation owns most of the roads in the study area. Specific meetings with SCDOT staff indicated acceptance of the overall concept, but much work would need to be completed before the road is constructed.
The ultimate purpose of this road is not to provide a super highway connection from Rosewood Drive to I-77, rather to better provide accommodation of the truck traffic that uses the road network today. In addition, people wishing to access Owens Field, the Owens Field Park, and the Memorial Stadium could be better accommodated with this spine road than the current network. This road would also alleviate traffic congestion that has prompted Rosewood residents to request numerous four-way stop signs in the residential area adjacent to the study area.

In addition to alleviating traffic congestion in the community, the roadway would serve as a storm water interceptor. The roadway would be designed to include a storm drainage system that would collect storm water from the areas north of the road and divert them to outlets further downstream. The new storm drainage system would reduce the amount of ponding and flooding in the area, which will also reduce the amount of debris, rodents, and insects in the area.

4.2 Landscaping

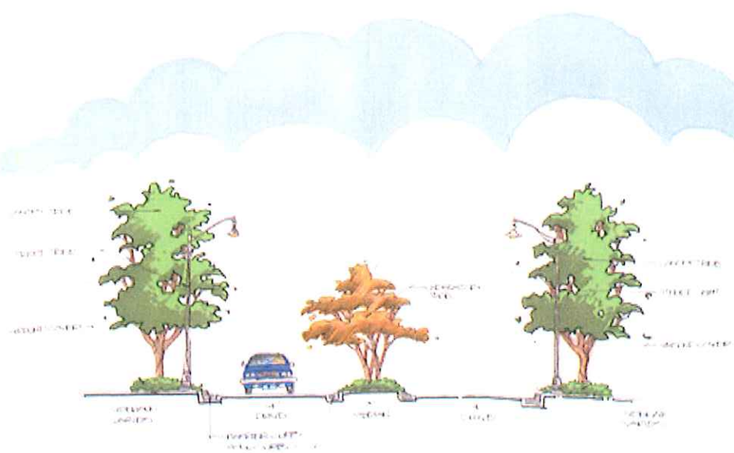
As indicated during the public input process, the study area has an unkempt appearance. Landscaping and streetscaping is recommended along the new roadway as well as at other locations throughout the project area to improve the overall appearance of the community. Landscaping will be achieved through the use of shrubs, trees, and flowers, signs, and lighting. The medians along the recommended spine road would be landscaped as well as the entrances to the developable area at Rosewood Drive and Jim Hamilton Boulevard. Park benches may also be included to present a "park-like" feel in the community. Signs will be placed at the entrances to the developable area to serve as a "point of arrival" and promote a sense of community. Exhibits 6, 7, and 8 illustrate landscaping concepts recommended to promote development in the study area.

In addition to the landscaping in the study area, pocket parks or other areas of isolated, intense landscaping could be developed along the route. A major request of the residents of the areas was the need for a park or gathering area within the study area. A potential location for that park could be at the intersection of Superior Street and Fulton Street. This site could be heavily landscaped including play areas and community gathering points that would improve the quality of life in the area. While not a direct effect on commercial development, the indirect benefits are undeniable.

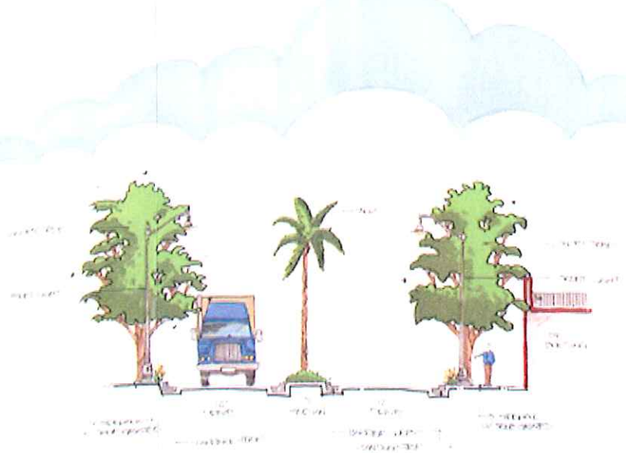
4.3 Business and Building Types

As with any area in need of development, most of the infusion of business will be driven by market forces. Still, the community can develop certain strategies aimed at attracting certain types of commercial and light industrial developments. Based on recently located new businesses in the information and technology field, this seems to be an attractive location for this type of venture. In general, employees of these types of businesses enjoy walking or biking to work which means they like to live near where they work. They also enjoy eclectic

Concept 1



Concept 2



Concept 3

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Exhibits 6, 7, and 8 - Streetscape Concepts

neighborhoods with varying levels of education, income, and ethnicity. This well describes the Rosewood community. As such, targeting these types of commercial development seems a good fit for this area.

Exhibit 4 illustrates the location of properties throughout the master plan site that are available for development. One approach that is commonly used to attract a "anchor tenant" so as to stimulate development is to develop a speculative property. There is a role for the public sector to develop a speculative property that is ready for market. This should be done in conjunction with the recommended road and streetscape improvements, and only if these infrastructure improvements are put in place. The term ready for market implies that the property be developed to meet market expectations. These expectations should be evaluated at the time a specific site location is studied. Sites labeled as D, H, F, and G are potential locations to be further evaluated for potential speculative development.

There are several types of potential development that may occur along the proposed spine road. The Rosewood side of the development (between Hendley Homes and the light industrial use on the other side of Superior) lends itself to a more commercial type development with eating establishments on the lower level and apartment or loft style residences on top like those shown in the attached rendering. These types of developments offer a good buffer between the area zoned residential and that zoned light industrial. Exhibits 9, 10, and 11 illustrate concepts of building facades that could be used in redevelopment and the implementation of spec buildings.

Along the Commerce Drive portion of the spine road would be a good place for service type office space such as a printing company, accountants, lawyers, or other service type office space. The converted warehouse look would be appropriate to blend into the existing building types. In deed, several of the existing developable sites could be modified to fit this building type. These building styles are depicted in the rendering shown.

A final type of business may be the larger office or technology based company. This may require a more multi-level space, perhaps with a higher per foot lease cost that the previous types of buildings. These scale businesses and buildings would be best constructed in vacant areas with sufficient room for parking, etc. This would mean those available sites such as the Hendley Homes site and others with several acres available would fit this scale.

Master Plan is the Beginning of a Long Process

This is the beginning of a long process, not the end. The Master Plan merely lays out a vision of the development potential for the area, and recommends potential approaches. The actual details of the implementation (how, when, how much, etc) is a function of the amount of support and involvement by stakeholders. And area residents and businesses can and should have a role in the Master Plan implementation process. A number of subsequent studies and analyses will still need to be done, that will shape the actual direction of the Master Plan, particularly the roadway improvement. Stakeholders will have a chance to provide input to shape the ultimate outcome. Federal and state regulations require that the community be involved during the feasibility analysis of projects of this nature. This Master Plan is not a feasibility study.

Concept 1

Concept 2

Concept 3

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4.4 Alternative Development Plans

As result of all of the data gathered, of all of the recommendations made, Wilbur Smith Associates and the Landplan Group South have developed two alternative development plans. Each plan makes use of the recommendations included in this plan. The primary difference is how the plans treat the former Hendley Homes site.

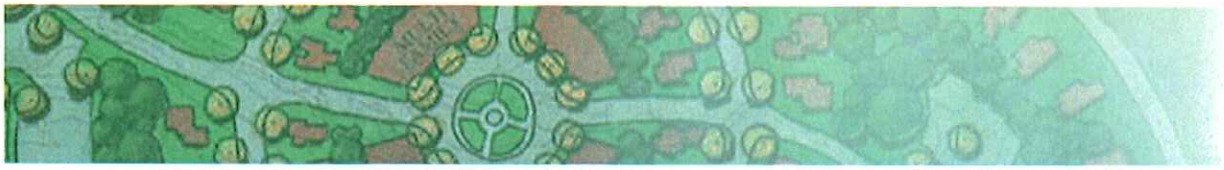
The first option, Conceptual Master Plan – Commercial/Research Option, is illustrated on Exhibit 12. The plan includes development of a new spine road along the route previously discussed. The development plan includes proposed streetscaping and lighting along the spine road and has shown what potential redevelopment buildings may look like. The development along the eastern portion of the road from the end of the existing Superior Street to Jim Hamilton Boulevard is will be redeveloped into retail and office space. If the alignment cuts through the rear of the existing commercial developments, this could spur conversion of this property to other uses such as higher end office or compatible light industrial space. At very the very least, those properties would now have the potential for dual front and rear entrances.

The Commercial/Research Option includes the development of a technology or information based complex on the former Hendley Homes site. The scale and arrangement of the buildings could either be a first stage, early start to the University's proposed research park, or be a complementary extension of that endeavor. The buildings are designed for good circulation throughout the park. The steep topography lends itself to underground parking and a campus of buildings at different elevations rather than one grade. In this concept, the Park helps buffer the residential neighborhood from the technology center. Condo/Townhouse development would also help buffer Fulton Street from the technology center. Retail would be located along Rosewood Drive in this concept.

The second option, Conceptual Master Plan – Residential/Research Option, is depicted in Exhibit 13. The goal was to provide residential lots extending the neighborhood into the former Hendley Homes site, while buffering this new area from the light industrial area with the live/work units shown. Retail unites added along Rosewood Drive would link to the existing retail currently on Rosewood Drive. Retail or Condo/Townhouses are located in the center of the circular residential area. This area could also be used as an open green space. A park is centrally located for the Northwest end of the Rosewood Neighborhood and takes advantage of existing open space. Generally this development of the Hendley Homes model is consistent with a residential model utilizing the "new urbanism" mix of retail, single and multi-family housing with generous amounts of green space. If the Residential/Research Option is selected, the development of a technology or information based complex should still be considered, either using a portion of the former Hendley Homes site or through development in the existing commercial/light industrial corridor.

4.5 Cost Estimates

Wilbur Smith Associates has prepared a preliminary estimate of the costs to implement the infrastructure necessary for the conceptual master plans. These costs are based upon the concepts illustrated and will vary once actual design is completed. In addition, costs may vary as dictated by current land values, construction costs, and unforeseen factors. A detailed construction cost estimate will be developed when detailed



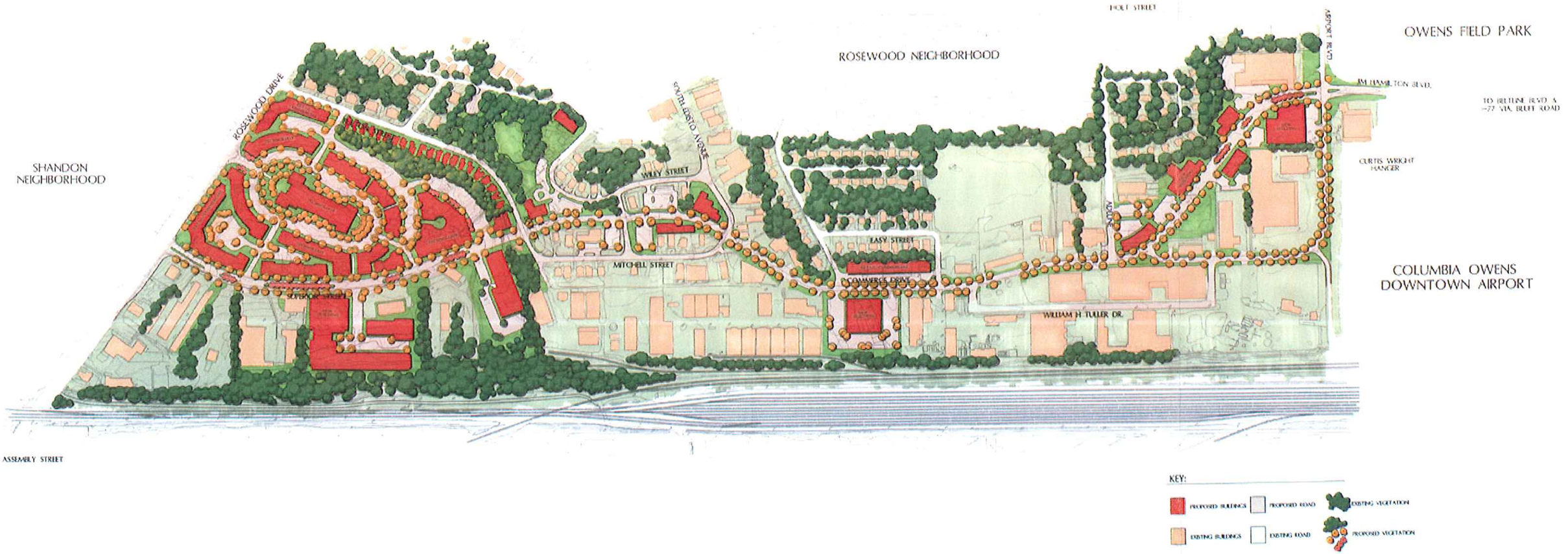


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Exhibit 12 - Conceptual Master Plan
Commercial/Research Option

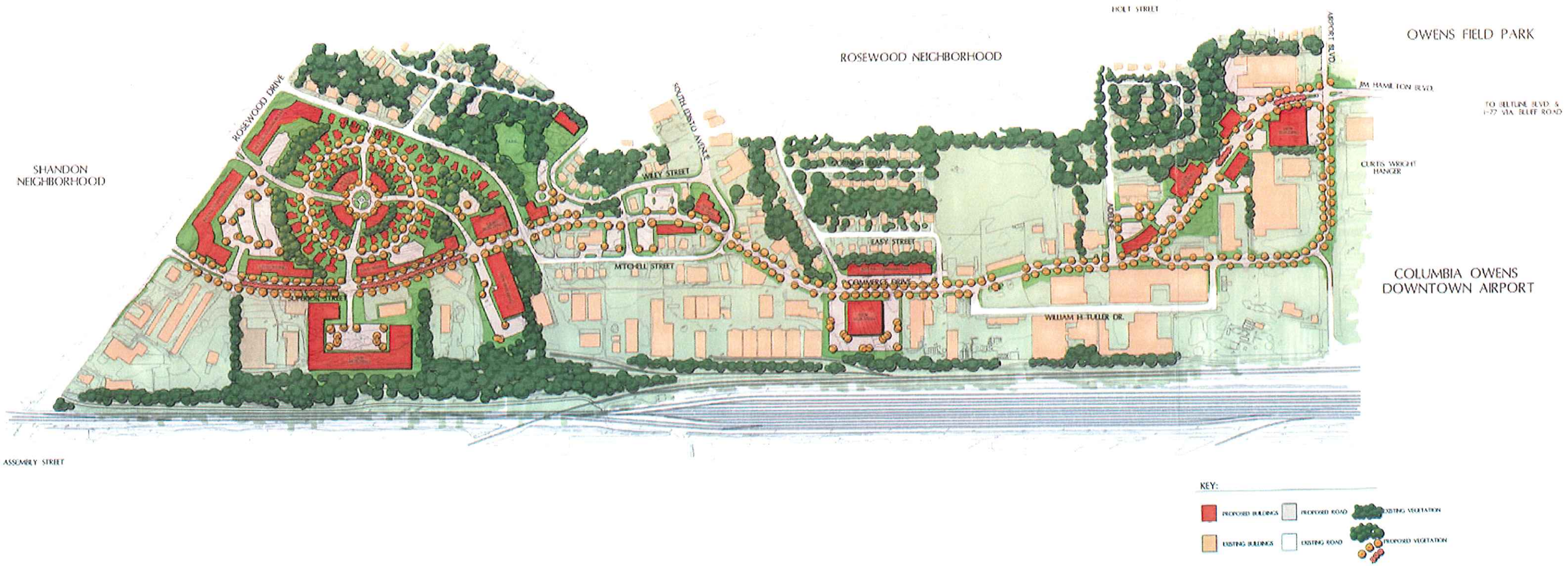

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Exhibit 13 – Conceptual Master Plan
Residential/Research Option

construction plans are developed for the infrastructure improvements. A summary table of the preliminary costs is as follows:

Conceptual Cost Estimate
August 2002

Right-of-Way	$1,146,000
Roadway Construction	$1,212,000
Storm Drainage System	$ 268,000
Landscaping & Lighting	$ 970,000
Engineering Surveying and Design	$ 242,000
Construction Administration/Observation	$ 367,000
Contingency	$ 367,000
TOTAL	**$4,572,000**

4.6 Economic Impact of Recommendations

Total economic impacts associated with the Columbia Owens Master Plan include impacts associated with the initial construction and daily operation and use. This economic impact overview considers the later, since the construction related impacts are short-term, one-time impacts. Comparatively, the operation impacts would be continual, with the job and expenditure impacts reflecting average annual impacts. To generate these impact estimates new available square-footage was tabulated for each option by anticipated use. This was then applied to a conservative job per square-footage ratio. Additionally, a multiplier-effect was also considered.

Square Footage Estimates – Anticipated businesses to locate in the commercial areas include light industry, business services and personal services. Additionally, a research-oriented businesses/technology park is also anticipated in both conceptual master plans. Review of the Columbia Owens Master Plan indicates that new industrial/business space under the Commercial/Research Option would total approximately 700,000 square feet, and 400,000 square feet under the Residential/Research Option, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Available New Square Footage, by Type and Option

Option/Description		Square Footage by Use: Residential	Bus./Ind.	Total
Area Total				
Both Options	Airport Blvd. to Royster St.	0	240,275	240,275
Commercial/Research Option	Royster St. to Rosewood Dr.	31,500	473,740	505,240
Residential/Research Option	Royster St. to Rosewood Dr.	116,750	166,750	283,500
Option Total				
Commercia/Research Option	Airport Blvd. to Rosewood Dr.	31,500	714,015	745,515
Residential/Research Option	Airport Blvd. to Rosewood Dr.	116,750	407,025	523,775

Job per Square Foot Ratios – To obtain a general idea of the associated impact average employee per square foot ratios are reviewed and applied to these estimated areas. Specifically, Urban Land Institute data indicates that a labor-extensive environment (i.e. low ratio of employees per acre) could expect an average of 1 employee per 1,250 square feet. These ratios indicate that in a full-build-out scenario direct, new employment to the area would total between 570 jobs in the Commercial/Research Option and 325 jobs in the Residential/Research Option.

Multiplier Impacts – Multiplier effects associated with these jobs also may arise if these jobs are new to the area; that is if they would otherwise not occur. If so, use of a Regional Input-Output Model System (RIMS-II) with multipliers specific to the Midlands area could be used to estimate the total economic impact in terms of jobs. Doing so, and using multipliers representative of anticipated industries likely to locate at the site indicates that for every direct, new job an additional 0.9 jobs would likely arise.

Inclusive of the multiplier effects, new jobs could surpass 1,000 if all property was developed and filled with jobs that would otherwise not arise in the area (i.e. full-build-out), as summarized in Table 2. The resulting increase in personal income would be expected to range between $27 million in the Commercial/Research Option to $15 million in the Residential/Research Option.

Table 2
Estimated New Jobs

	Commercial/Research Option	Residential/Research Option
New Direct Jobs	570	325
Multiplier Jobs	530	300
Total Jobs	1,100	625

Conclusion – These impact estimates reflect a full-build-out scenario, which would take a number of years to achieve. It should also be noted that the Job per square foot ratio used was the lowest provided by the Urban Land Institute. Use of an intermediate ratio, such as 1 employee per 480 square feet would generate a significantly higher job impact estimate (1,630 to 2,850, inclusive of the multiplier effect).

Prerequisites to Success

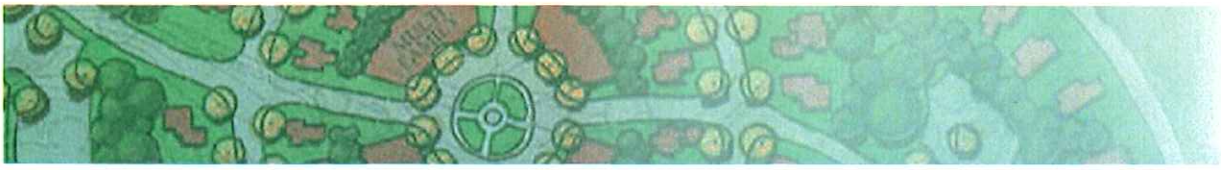
This Master Plan outlines an overall development vision for the study area. However, the ultimate success of the area will depend on the successful implementation of a series of improvements and other actions, all which are a prerequisite to success. The following are prerequisites for the successful implementation of the Master Plan.

- Partnering between the many entities which have jurisdiction, including but not limited to the City of Columbia, South Carolina Development Corporation, The Columbia Housing Authority, Richland County (Columbia Owens Downtown Airport), The South Carolina Department of Transportation, The Sumter-Columbia Empowerment Zone Authority, The University of South Carolina. Securing short term and long term.
- Short term and long term funding for capital infrastructure improvements.
- Proactive Marketing of Empowerment Zone incentives to businesses and to residents.
- Proactive enforcement of the City of Columbia's property maintenance ordinances.
- Redevelopment of the former Hendley Homes site, preferably by a third party developer.
- Successful development of the Curtiss Wright hangar.
- Public acquisition of the Unitech property, and clean-up of the property.
- Continued law enforcement presence in the area to dispel (reverse) perception of criminal activities.
- Development of community facilities in the Master Plan area.

4.5 Marketing Plan

An Columbia Empowerment Zone (EZ) incentive marketing plan is essential for the Columbia Owens Master Plan to realize its development potential. The marketing plan should consist of the following steps at a minimum:

- An integrated Marketing Team should be established to coordinate marketing strategies, communications and outreach. The Marketing Team should consist of members from:
    - Columbia Empowerment Zone
    - Community Development Corporations
    - City Of Columbia's Business Enterprise Office
    - City of Columbia's Community Development Office
    - Some type of Workforce Development Office like the One Stop, Midlands Workforce System or other similar State Agency



- The participation of some type of Workforce Development Office like the One Stop, Midlands Workforce System, State Employment Security Commission or other similar State Agency is critical to the implementation of the marketing plan. The importance of this group would be their ability to:

    - Inventory the available workforce within the EZ.
    - Identify training needs specific to targeted industry.
    - Ability to communicate with EZ workforce and bring to a potential employer who then receives employee wage credits and tax breaks.

- The marketing plan should have two targeted audiences:

    - Businesses
        - Existing businesses/entrepreneurs in the Developable Site.
        - New targeted businesses for the Developable Site.
    - Neighborhoods
        - Potential employees.

- Marketing tools for businesses should include, but not be limited to:

    - Websites.
    - Printed materials.
    - Direct mail pieces to targeted audiences such as commercial realtors and business/industry.
    - Trade shows.
    - Economic development meetings.
    - EZ incentive-plan descriptions applicable to the Developable Site.

- Marketing tools for neighborhoods should include, but not be limited to:

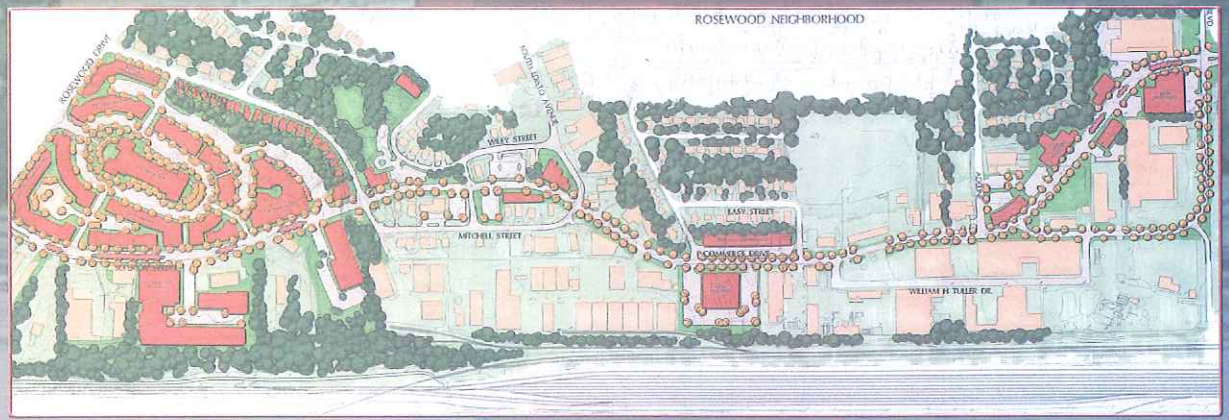
    - Websites.
    - Printed materials.
    - Direct mail pieces to neighborhoods in EZ.
    - Workforce Development Office.
        - Educate labor pool within EZ of their benefits as an employee to a business in the Developable Site in support of their skills and abilities.
        - Identify the businesses within the Developable Site for labor pool.

    - Provide printed "*wage credit coupons*" for EZ residences that can be used during the application process for employment at the Developable Site.

- Establish feedback mechanisms for the Marketing Team in order to:

    - Identify effectiveness of marketing efforts and their strengths and weaknesses.
    - Make necessary adjustments for maximizing marketing efforts and efficiencies.

5.0 Action Plan



5.0 Action Plan

The Columbia Owens Master Plan presented herein provides an overall framework towards the successful redevelopment of the Columbia Owens Master Plan area. However, the successful redevelopment is based upon on a series of short term and long term actions that must be followed through. The following is an outline of specific actions:

1. **Accelerate Proposed Improvements** - Work directly with the City of Columbia, Richland County (Columbia Owens Airport Authority), Central Midlands COG and the SC Department of Transportation to identify opportunities that may accelerate the proposed road project. This should be done in conjunction with Action No. 2.

2. **Short Term and Long Term Funding** – The fundamental basis of this Master Plan is the creation of jobs – this is an economic development Master Plan. This basis is precisely consistent with the mission and goals of the Sumter-Columbia Empowerment Zone Authority. The entire Master Plan presented herein is within the bounds of the Sumter-Columbia Empowerment Zone's Developable site. The Empowerment Zone Authority has a funded mandate to provide job opportunities in the so-called Developable site. Therefore, the next step is to work directly with the Authority to identify funding opportunities, which could include the following:
    a. Use of funds from the Empowerment Zone program to support the development of capital infrastructure improvements.
    b. Use of the Empowerment Zone Facility Bonds Program to fund capital infrastructure improvements, fund the development of key tenant facilities (including a speculative building or property), as well as potentially co-funding job development projects such as a Research Park or a Business Incubator concept.

3. **Evaluating/Observe** how other Empowerment Zone Authorities around the country have used their funding and incentives programs to stimulate redevelopment; particular examples are St. Louis and Cumberland, New Jersey.

4. **Communicate Site Advantages for Technology/Incubator** - Coordinate directly with the steering committee overseeing the current study of a research park/business incubator campus concept in Columbia near the University of South Carolina.

5. **Road Feasibility Study** – A feasibility study (consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act) of developing an arterial spine road should be conducted.

6. **Conduct and Site Selection Study** - Identify one or more potential locations for the development of a market ready speculative building or property so as to help attract a key tenant or tenants into the area.

7. **Raise Awareness of Empowerment Zone Incentives** - Create a joint initiative between the South Columbia Development Corporation, the Sumter-Columbia Empowerment Zone Authority, South Carolina Employment Security Commission (one stop shop), and Midlands Technical College to

provide a ready work force (with empowerment zone eligibility) for businesses to tap into. This program should aim to raise awareness among Empowerment Zone residents and Developable Site business of the advantage of the Empowerment Zone incentives.

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