

Parks and Open Space

The Parks Master Plan for Davidson recommended a system of public park areas within Davidson and its sphere of influence. The main new park areas proposed in the Parks Plan are an eastside community park to handle active recreation facilities and a greenway system. The Land Plan endorses such facilities.

Parks and open space should be key ingredients of neighborhoods within each planning area in Davidson. Public open space provides the communal structure of a neighborhood. A variety of open space types should be used within neighborhoods, and every home in Davidson should be within walking distance (1/4 mile) of at least one park or public open space.

Open space areas within neighborhoods can take a variety of forms (*illus. 5*). The village green at Main Street and Concord Road is a good example of an attached square or green where the open square is focused on a specific building - the new public library. Open space areas in McConnell provide examples of a detached square, an attached square, an informal green, and a playground. In new neighborhoods, such areas are likely to be owned and maintained by the local homeowners' association. The exception to this is when a particular park area is included on the Town Parks Plan, such as greenway areas. The Town cannot, however, require public dedication of open space without compensation to the landowner.

In rural neighborhood areas, the Town should encourage the conservation of significant open space and landscape areas. As development continues east of Davidson, critical areas of open land

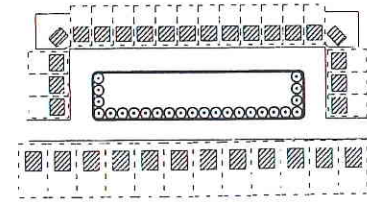
should be conserved. Farms and open space on Grey Road, Concord Road, East Rocky River Road, and Highway 73 should be protected. To the west, a wooded border on lakeshore property is essential. These areas are indicated on the Regulating Plan. As a means of preserving open space, the Land Plan Code includes incentives for significant open space protection. In addition, a local land conservancy should be established to acquire important tracts of land and maintain all conservation land. Land can be acquired fee simple or development rights can be purchased by a conservation group. The group could also manage large tracts of land set aside with new development.

The following recommendations apply to parks and open space:

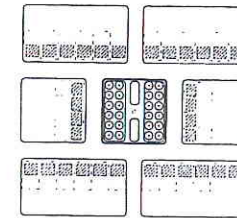
1. Pursue park facilities identified in the Parks Master Plan.
2. Encourage a variety of neighborhood park and open space areas. Such areas should be within walking distance of every home.
3. Encourage open space conservation in rural neighborhoods, using all available tools, including:
 - a. Incentive Zoning
 - b. Fee Simple Purchase
 - c. Transfer of Development Rights
 - d. Purchase of Development Rights
4. Establish a local land conservation organization (or affiliate with an existing organization) to acquire and manage rural open space.
5. Appoint a standing town committee to explore and initiate public/private strategies to conserve open land.

Davidson Land Plan Some Typical Open Space Types

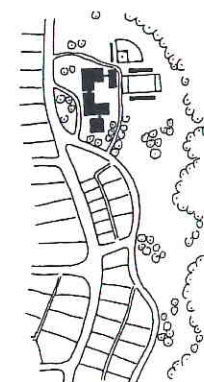
(*illus. 8*)



Forecourt



Detached Square



Greenbelt

Note: A full range of types is illustrated in Part III, The Land Plan Code.

Jurisdictional Growth

Huntersville and Cornelius are aggressively pursuing annexation of their entire spheres of influence. Concord and Kannapolis are pushing west in Cabarrus County, and plans to provide sewer in northwest Cabarrus County will likely result in future annexations by these municipalities over the next twenty years. Mooresville has annexed as far south as Faith Road in Iredell County and will probably pursue additional annexations in this fast growing area. Davidson is surrounded by rapidly growing jurisdictions.

Development in Mecklenburg, Iredell, and Cabarrus Counties dramatically affects the town. In order to ensure orderly growth and development in this area, the town should pursue expansion of the Davidson extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction (ETJ) and consider opportunities for future annexations.

Davidson already has zoning control of an area in southern Iredell County around the Ingersoll-Rand manufacturing plant. Other parcels of land in this vicinity offer good possibilities for industrial expansion with beneficial effects on the town's tax base.

The following policy recommendations apply to jurisdictional growth:

1. Pursue immediately expansion of the ETJ to cover Davidson's entire sphere of influence in Mecklenburg County. *(illus. 9)*

2. Pursue immediately a one-mile expansion of the ETJ into Iredell County.
3. Pursue the extension of the ETJ into Cabarrus County.

4. Complete an annexation study for southern Iredell County.
5. Annex within the sphere of influence as development occurs or by voluntary petition of property owners.

**Sphere of Influence Map
(Shaded Area)**

(illus. 9)

