

DOWNTOWN LOWELL Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

Submitted 12.22.2022

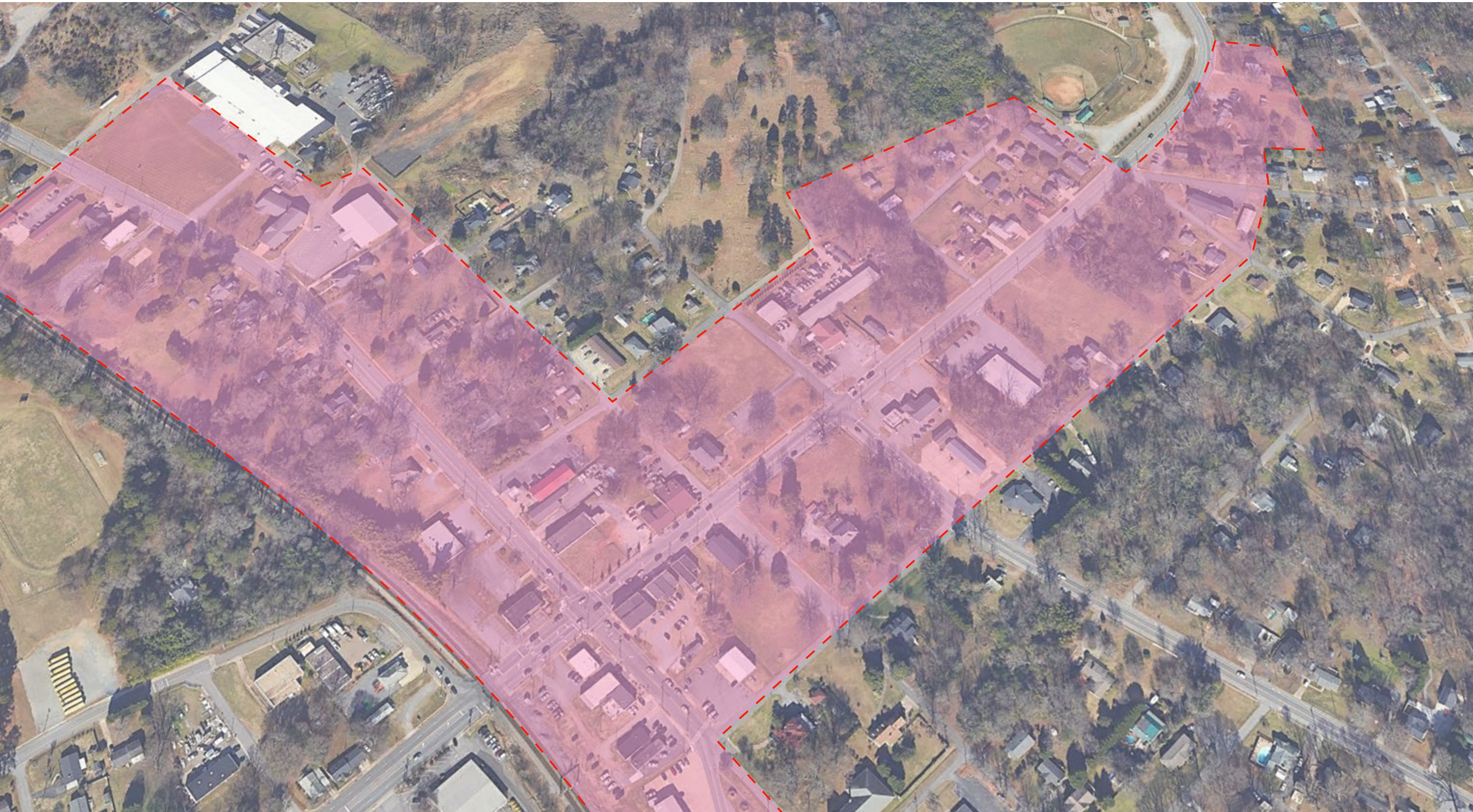


METROCOLOGY

DOWNTOWN LOWELL

Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

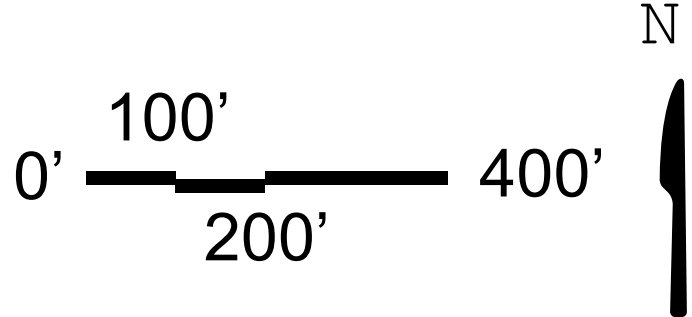
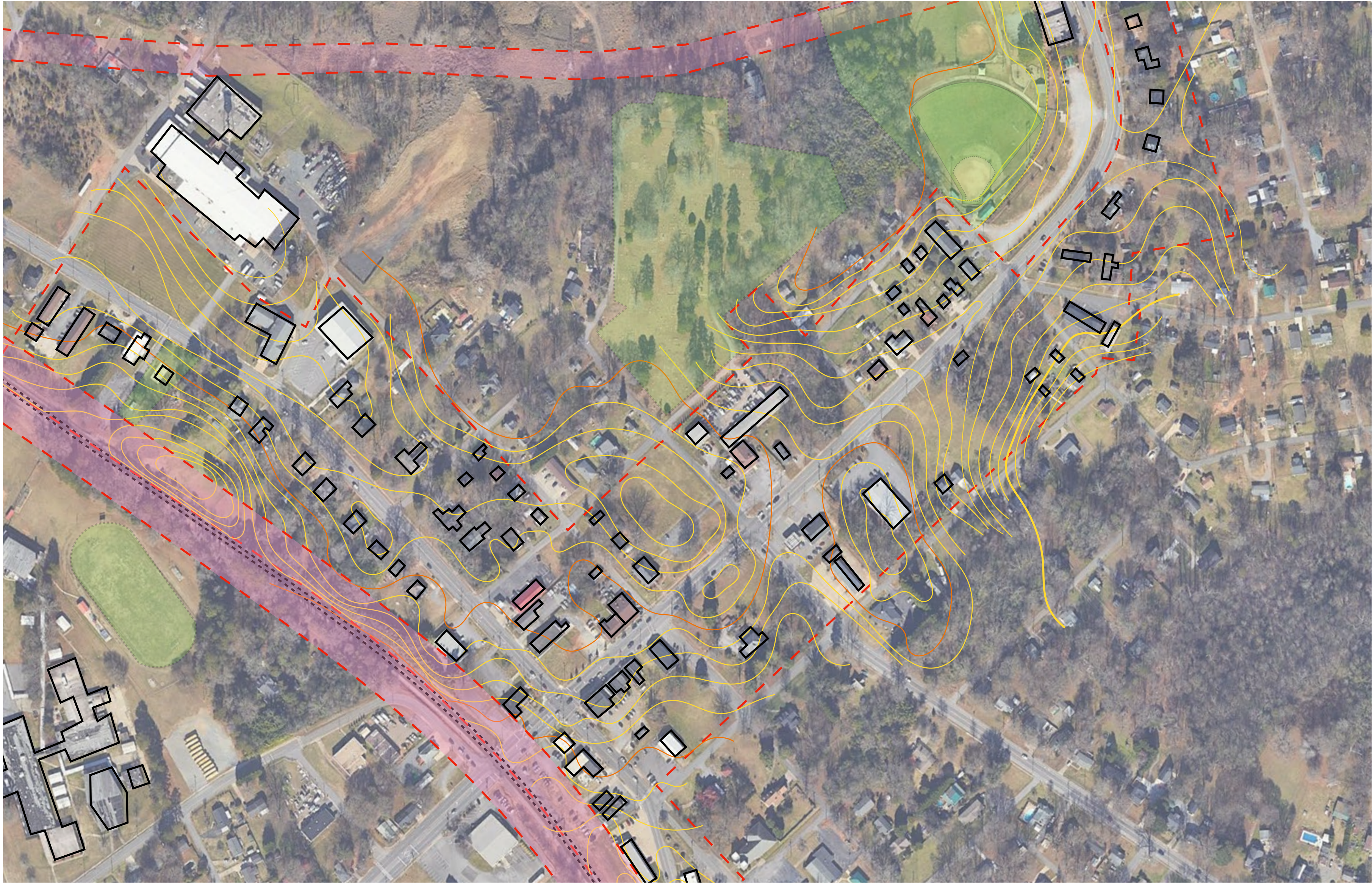


DOWNTOWN LOWELL Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

The Plan illustrated within this Document describes the optimum development of the Study Area. It is not intended to be an exact master plan for each parcel, but rather a comprehensive "Vision" providing the City, landowners, and residents a guide for how to zone, invest and build in the years to come. The market will allocate these investments on a property by property basis according to the individual actions of landowners and developers as they assemble and subdivide their holdings. By adopting the "vision" the City will be able to guide these actions to positively impact this important "gateway" into the Lowell.

The City may facilitate the vision through strategic investments in new streets, water, sewer, re-zonings, open space development and cycle/greenway improvements, when beneficial Private Public Partnerships present themselves. To that end, important Civic amenities such as parks, cycle ways, and pedestrian greenways are shown in their approximate locations.



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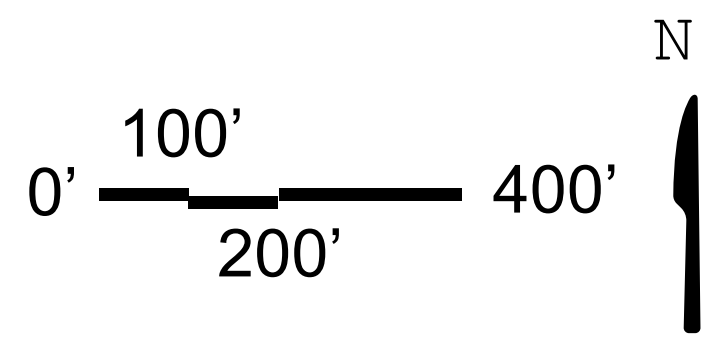
City of Lowell, NC

The N. Main St. and E/W. 1st St Corridors intersect just north of the railroad tracks. South of the railroad tracks along S. Main St., the City completed the Gateway Master Plan, guiding development from I-85 exits 23 and 24. The Downtown Conceptual Plan extends the master plan northward into Lowell's historic downtown.

Unlike the Gateway Master Plan, the boundaries of the Downtown Master Plan encompass an area that is fully gridded and infrastructure. While development remains low density and intermittent within the grid, there is potential for significant new development that would leverage the inherent walkability of the existing historic street and block pattern.



Holbrook Middle School

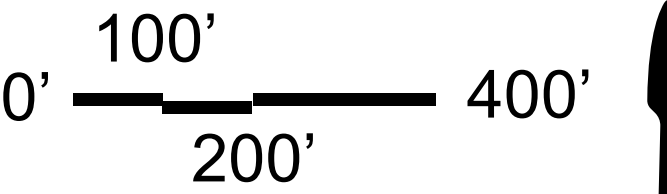
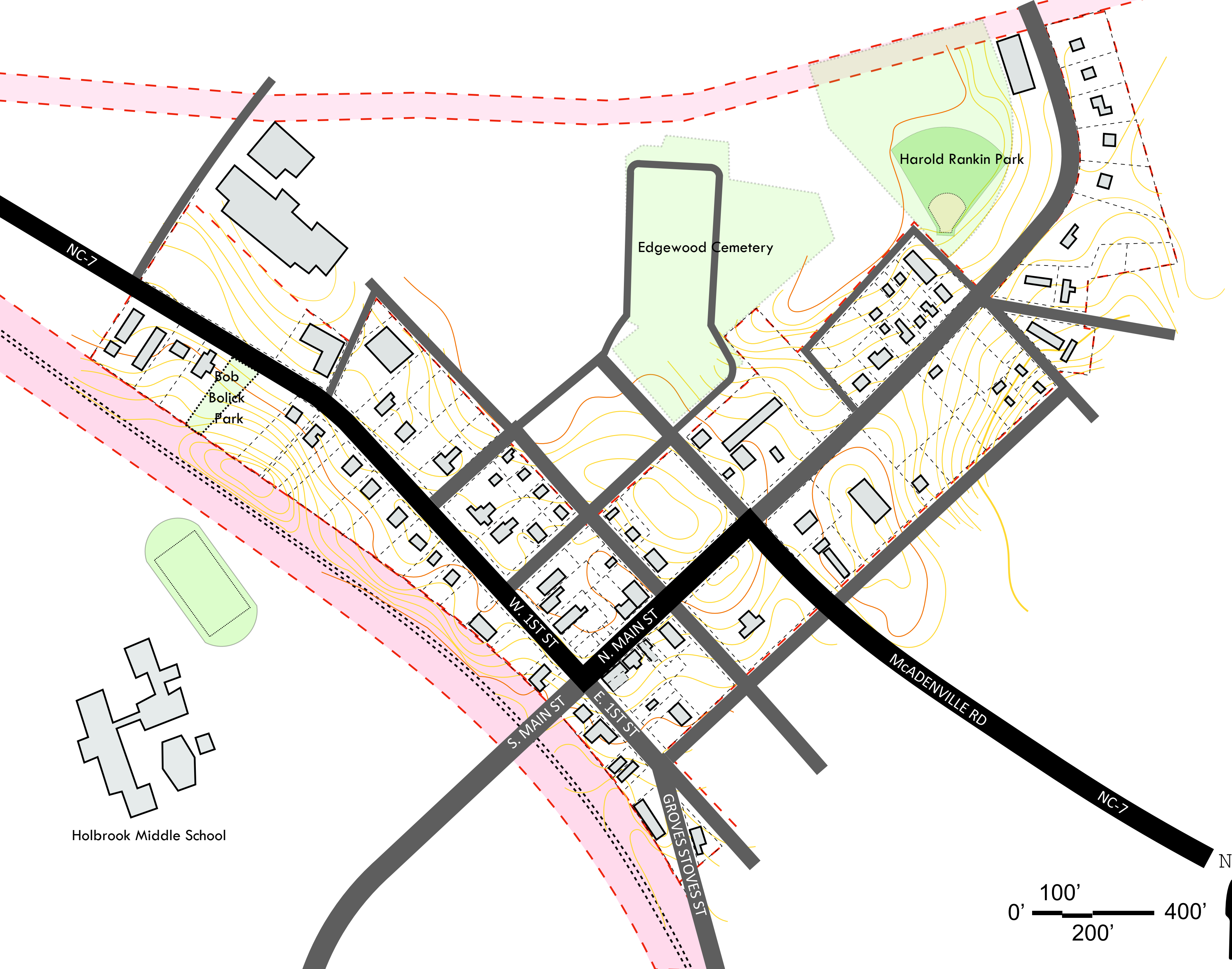


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City of Lowell, NC

State maintained NC-7 currently passes through downtown Lowell along McAdenville Rd, N. Main St, and W. 1st St. The State highway designation impacts the type of improvements that can be made to the character of these streets because of the added traffic capacity and truck routing placed on them.

S. Main St, McAdenville Rd, and Groves Stoves St provide direct access to I-85 and HWY 74.



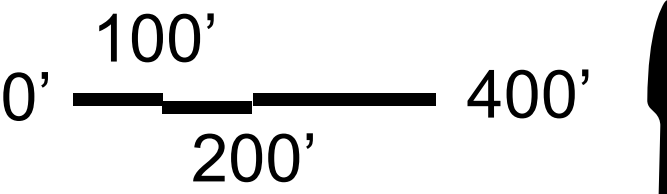
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City of Lowell, NC

Plans have been prepared by the NCDOT to redirect NC-7 to bypass downtown Lowell. The new route will include upgrading and extending existing W Third St, eventually looping southwest to intersect at a round-about with W. 1st St between Birch and Ash Streets. Truck and through traffic will bypass downtown.

These plans should be supported by the City. The bypass would open up new properties for development in support of the downtown's general growth, as well as remove the design constraints on the two main Downtown Corridors that the City wants to encourage pedestrian designed streetscapes.

Additional thoroughfares should be added to the street network as funding permits. These include High Street extension north of McAdenville Rd, N. Church St extension to cross N. Main St, Mill St and intersect with High Street extension, extending Mill St to intersect with Martha Ave, and closing Caroline Ave between Mill St and N. Main St, as well as Groves Stoves St intersection at Mill St. Groves Stoves St would be redirected further east to align with existing High Street. High Street would be renamed to Groves Stoves St between E. 1st St and McAdenville Rd.



DOWNTOWN LOWELL

Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

The new State routing system would remove truck traffic, and regional through traffic from the City's central core, freeing W. 1st St, and N. Main St to be redesigned with wider sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and on-street parking.

The elimination of truck and thru traffic will slow the speed of traffic reducing noise and encouraging better use of the sidewalks including outdoor dining, and installation of public art.

Portions of the newly pedestrianized streets could also be closed down to automobile use for special events.



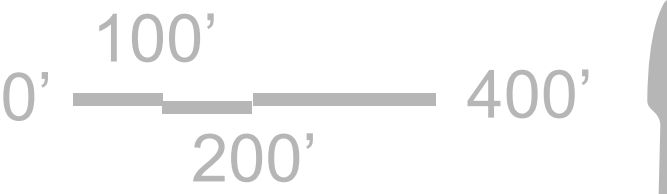
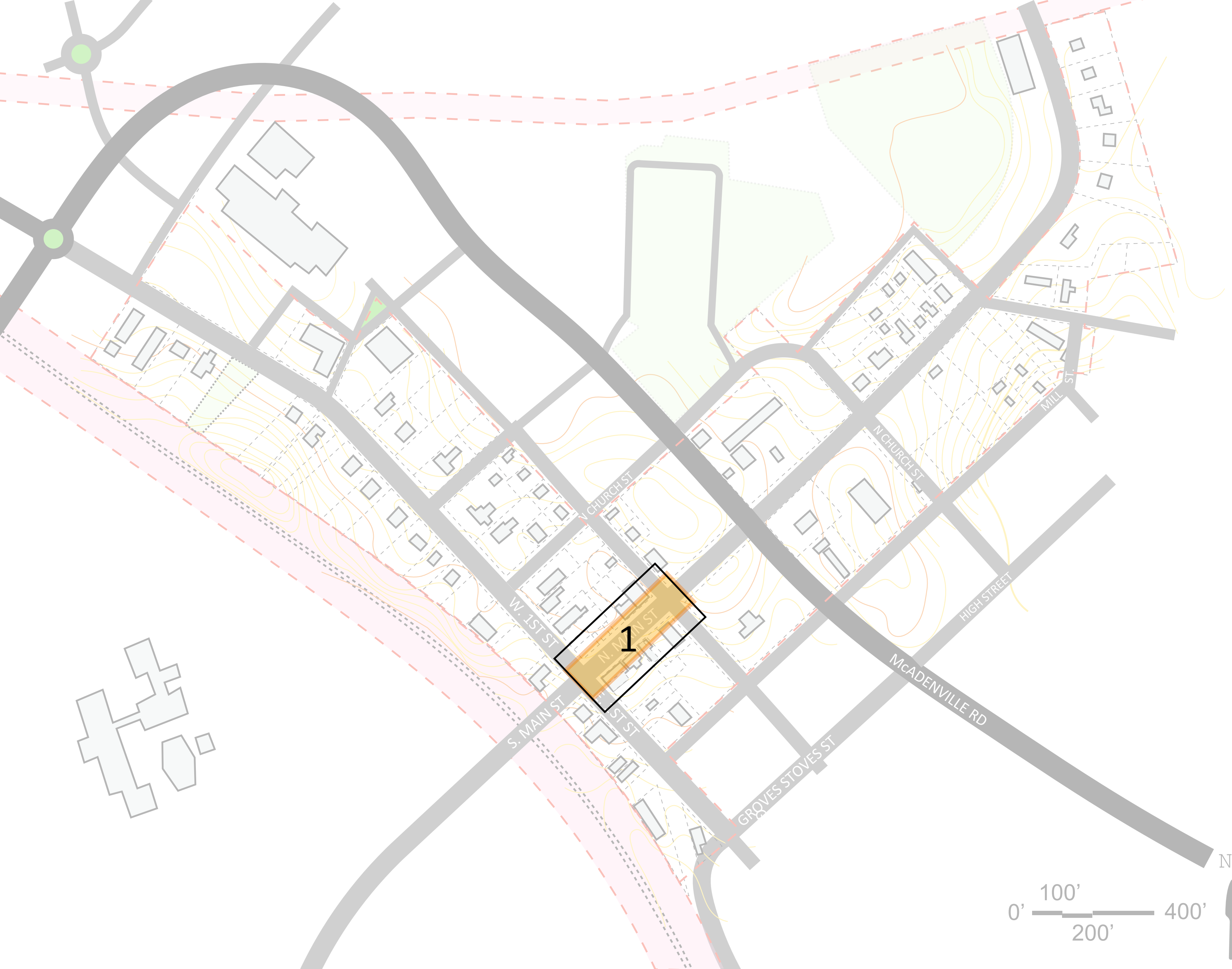
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City of Lowell, NC

Pedestrianizing the N. Main St and W. 1st St. Corridors will involve phasing of improvements to the street design. These would include widening sidewalks, providing dedicated and protected cycling lanes, on-street parking, and narrower lane widths.

The improvements would be phased, beginning with tactical modifications to the street ROW using paint, bollards, and signage. This pilot project with the NCDOT would help asses the impact on pedestrian activity, business improvement. If successful these would be made permeant through the reconstruction of the remaining blocks on both the N. Main and W. 1st St. corridors.

The following page illustrates the initial changes to the streets for submittal and approval to the NCDOT for authorization to proceed on a pilot project level.



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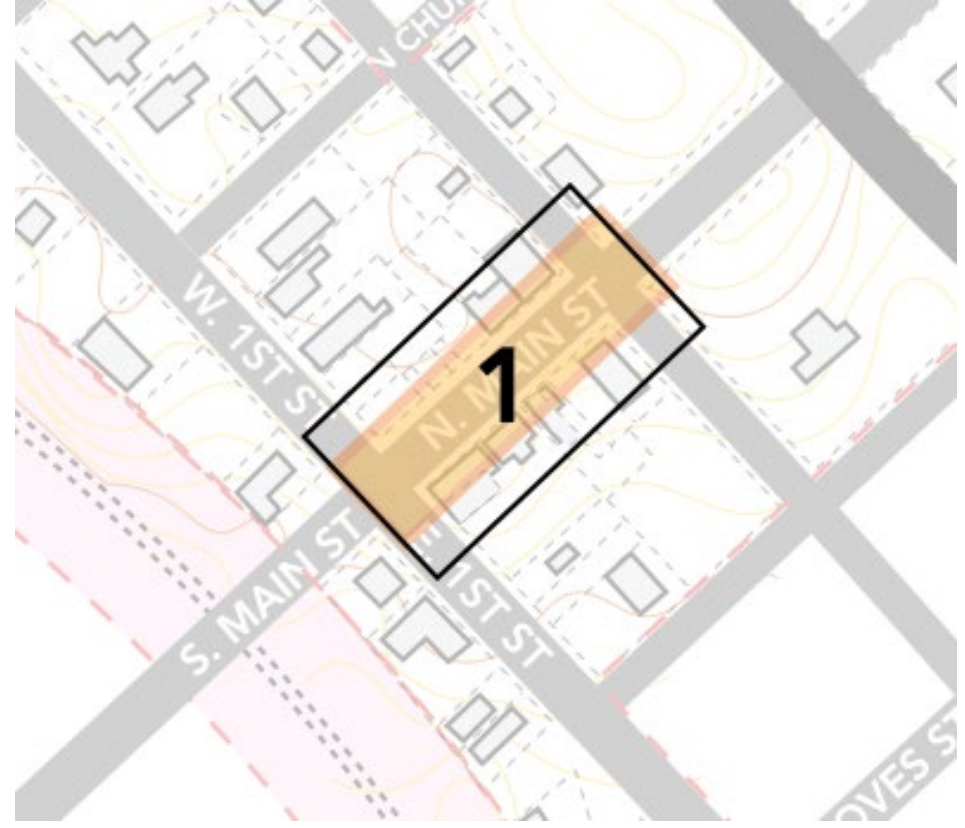
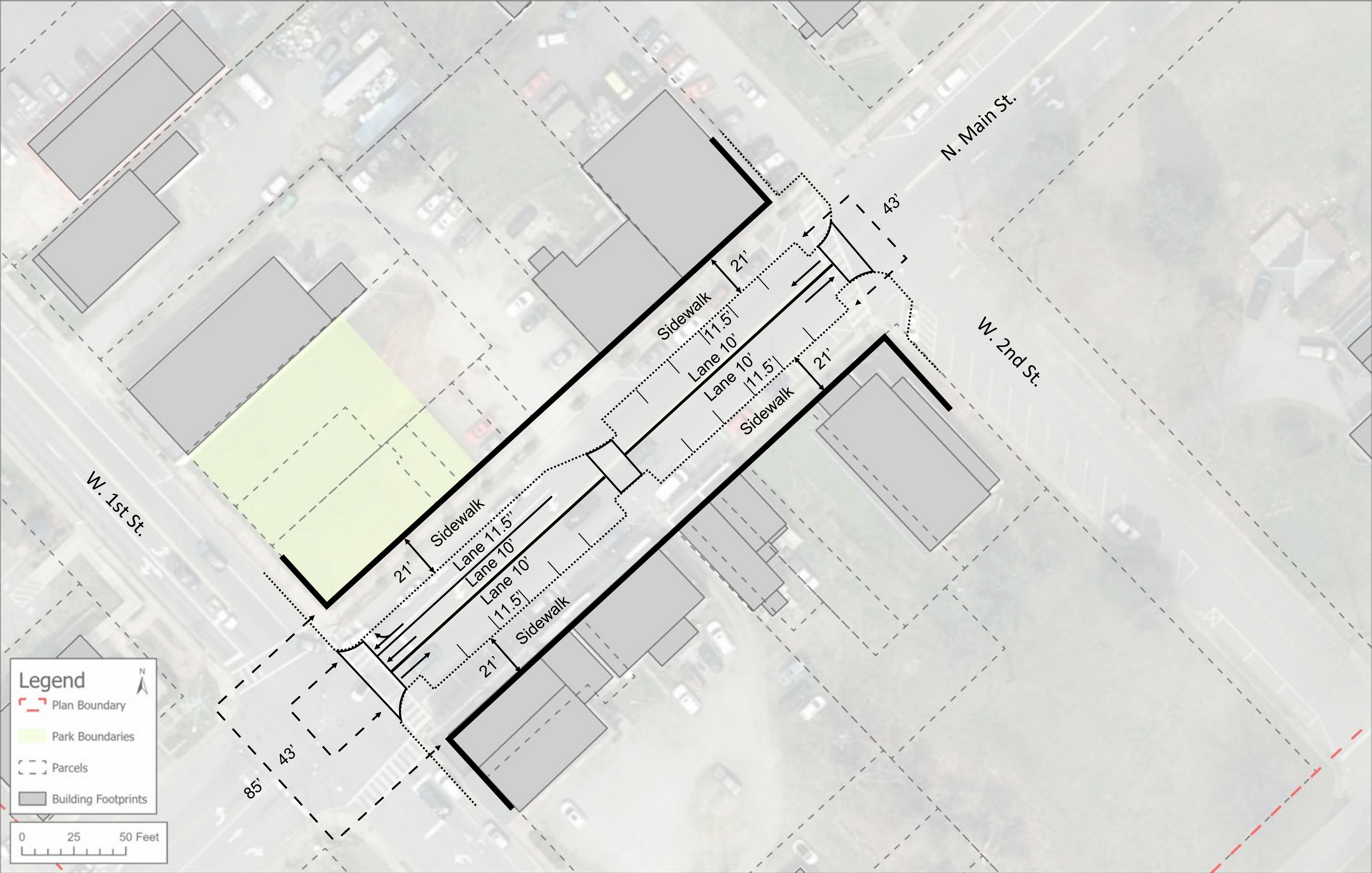


DOWNTOWN LOWELL Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

Pedestrianizing the N. Main St between W. 1st St. and W. 2nd Street would involve the reallocation of travel lane space to pedestrian use. The current ROW measures 85 feet, with close to 90% of that amount dedicated to travel lanes and parking.

The tactical intervention proposed by the Pilot Project with the NCDOT would increase the “pedestrian zone” to 50% of the ROW. On street parking lanes would be increased to 11.5 ft allowing for use by food trucks and other event vehicles during fairs and festivals that do not warrant closing off the street. A dedicated right turn lane onto W. 1st St. could be closed off at such times. Narrowing the travel lanes to 10 feet still provides plenty of room for even the largest vehicles, while slowing the speed of these vehicles down to increase the safety and walkability of the street for pedestrians.



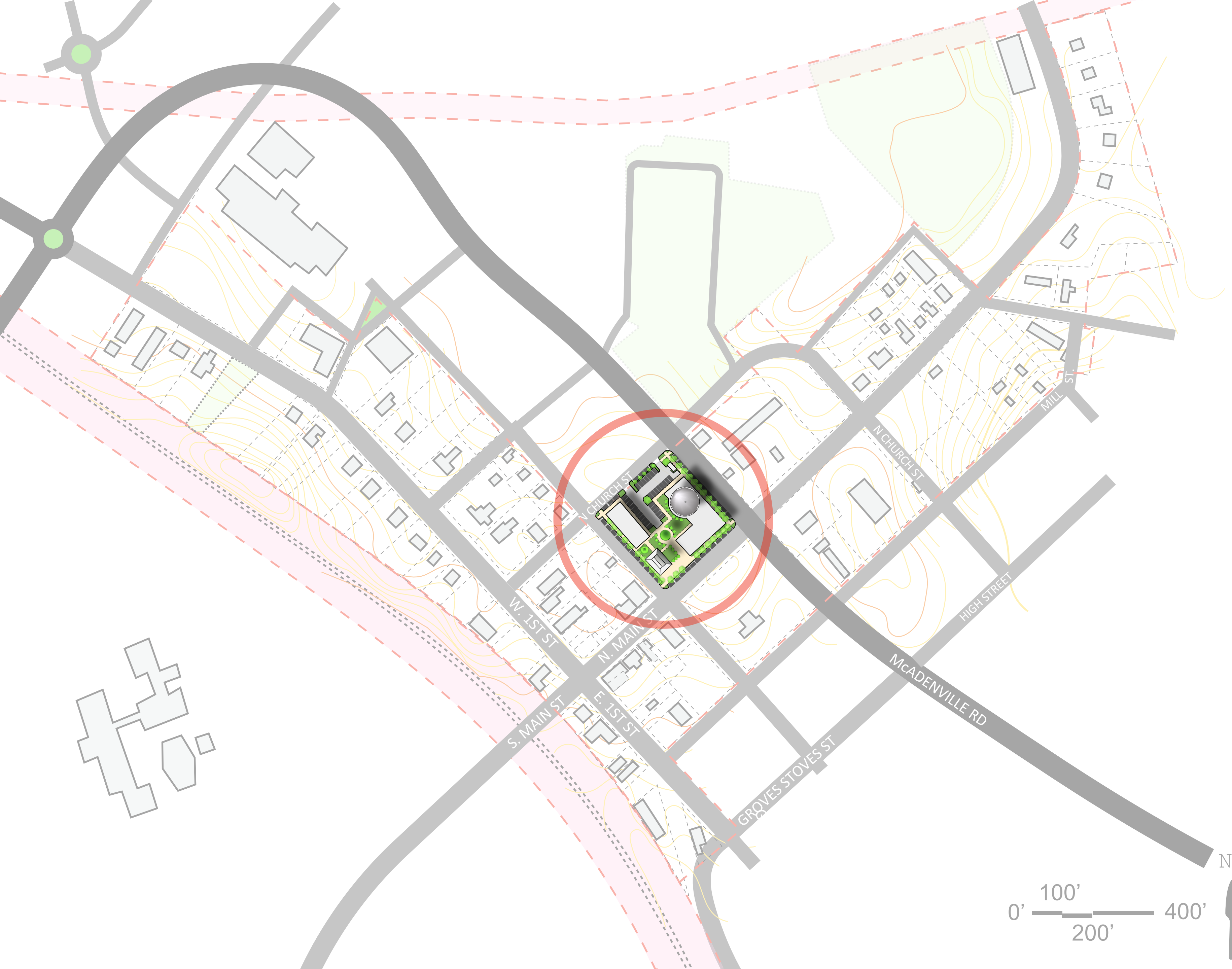
DOWNTOWN LOWELL

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City of Lowell, NC

The proposed site for the location of a new City hall complex, consolidating the Police, Planning, and Parks & Recreation departments.

The following three pages detail the phasing of the site plan.



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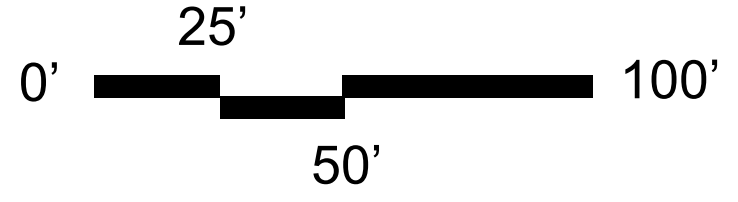
City of Lowell, NC

The initial phase would include the development of a two story 19,000 ft² to 21,000 ft² municipal building. The building would frame a city plaza and park that would incorporate the existing church.

Parking for the Church and City hall would be located at the rear and middle of the block, providing easy access to Church parishioners and visitors to City Hall. Additional parking would be accommodated along the perimeter of the block. In total over 72 spaces would be available for employees at City Hall and visitors during weekdays.



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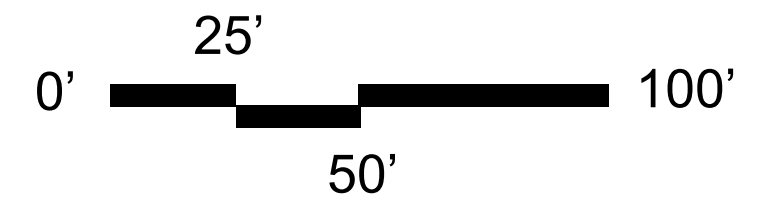
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City of Lowell, NC

The purchase and assembly of the two remaining properties on the block would expand the parking by an additional 22 spaces, and provide a site for future expansion of City Hall.



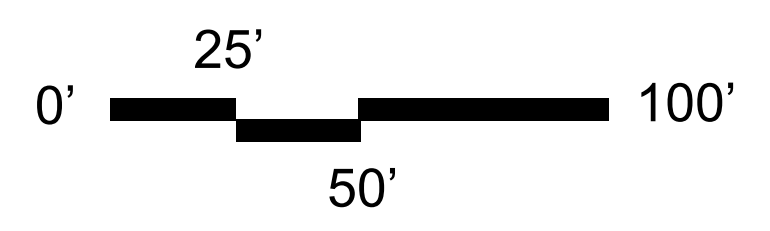
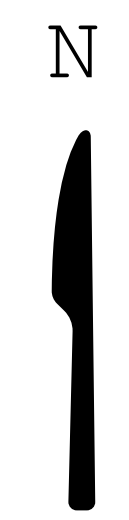
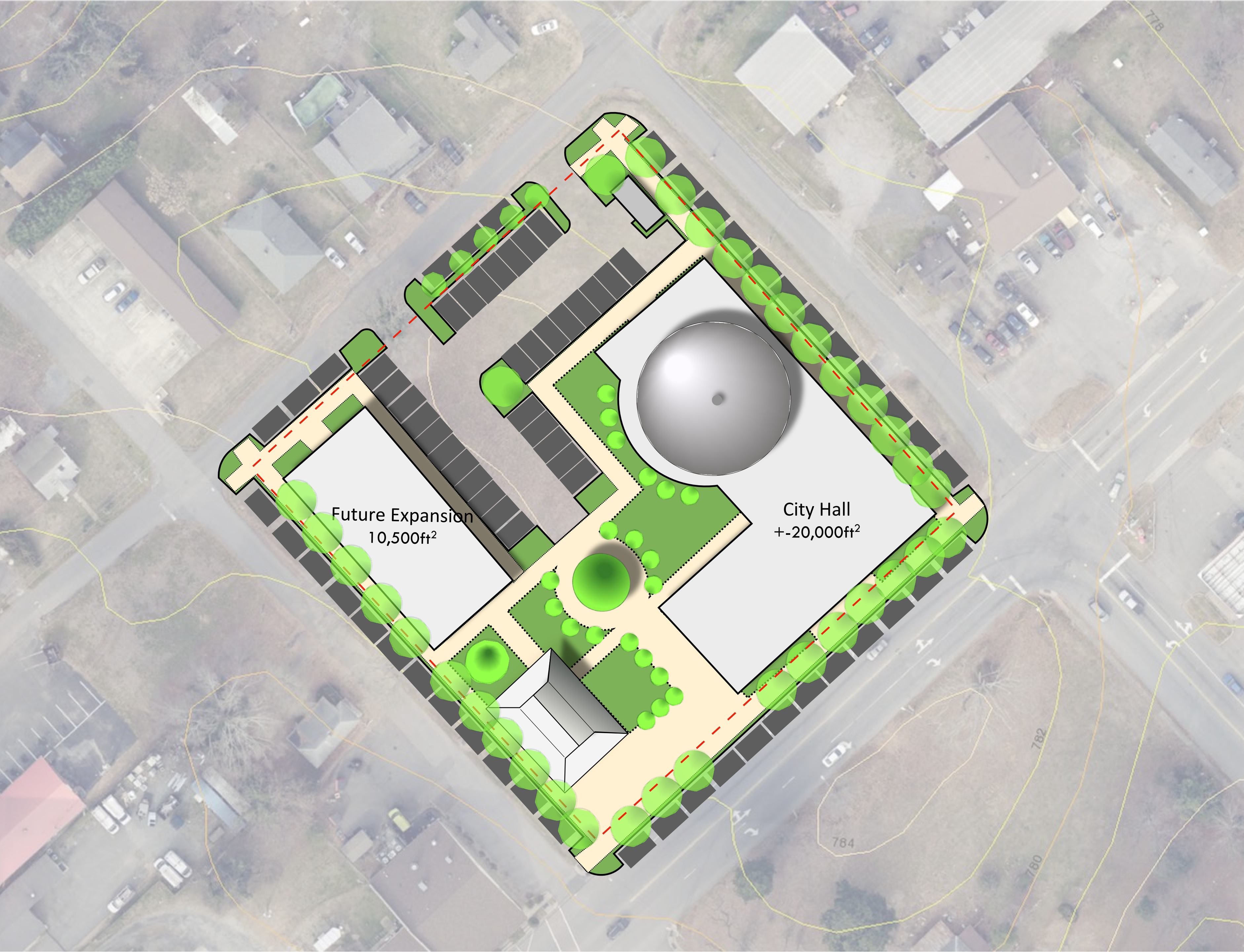
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DOWNTOWN LOWELL Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

The ultimate build out of the block would see a second building of approximately 10,000 ft² and the incorporation of the existing church into the complex, to serve as the City Council Chambers.



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Conceptual Plan

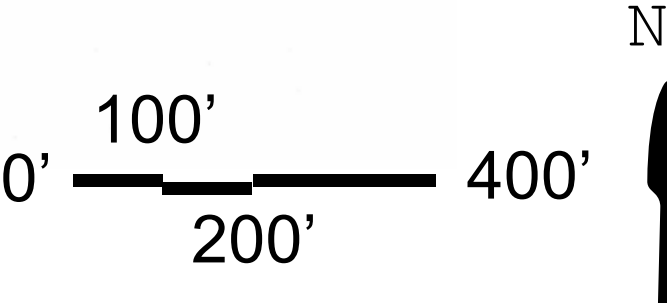
City of Lowell, NC

The proposed thoroughfare network including, rear lanes and alleys, and on and off street parking lot locations.



-  Streets
-  Street Diet
-  Rear Lanes & Alleys
-  Surface, +- 785
On Street Parking, +- 675

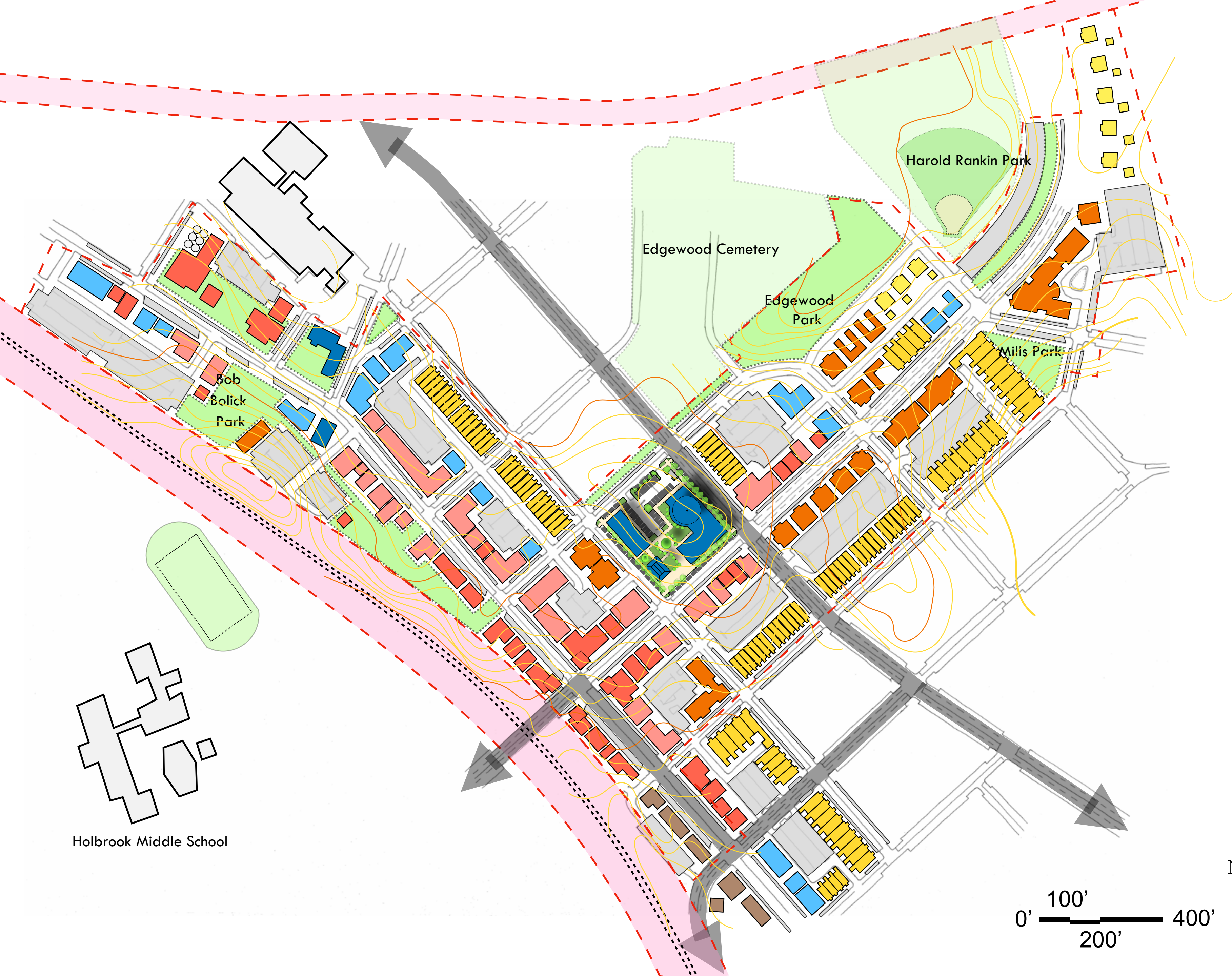
Holbrook Middle School



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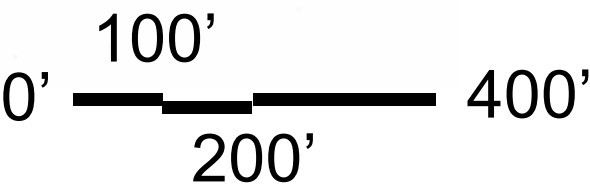
City of Lowell, NC

The redevelopment of Downtown Lowell would dramatically increase the City's tax base, employment and population. The densities illustrated by the plan are average for historic, small towns in the United States.



- 75,000 ft² - 125,000 ft² Retail
- 75,000 ft² / 200units Mixed Use Commercial/Residential
- 50,000 ft² - 100,000 ft² Office
- 40,000 ft² - 80,000 ft² Light Industrial
- Surface parking, on & off street
- Civic
- Open Space
- 400 - 800 units Multi-family
- 120 - 130 unites Single Family Attached
- 3 -10 units Single Family Detached
- Main Automobile Through Streets

Holbrook Middle School



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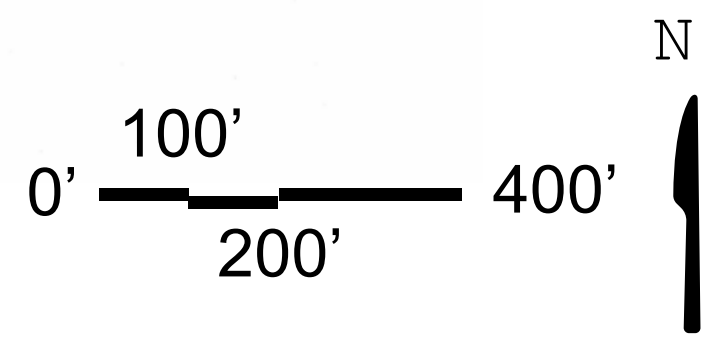
Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC

Illustrative Plan



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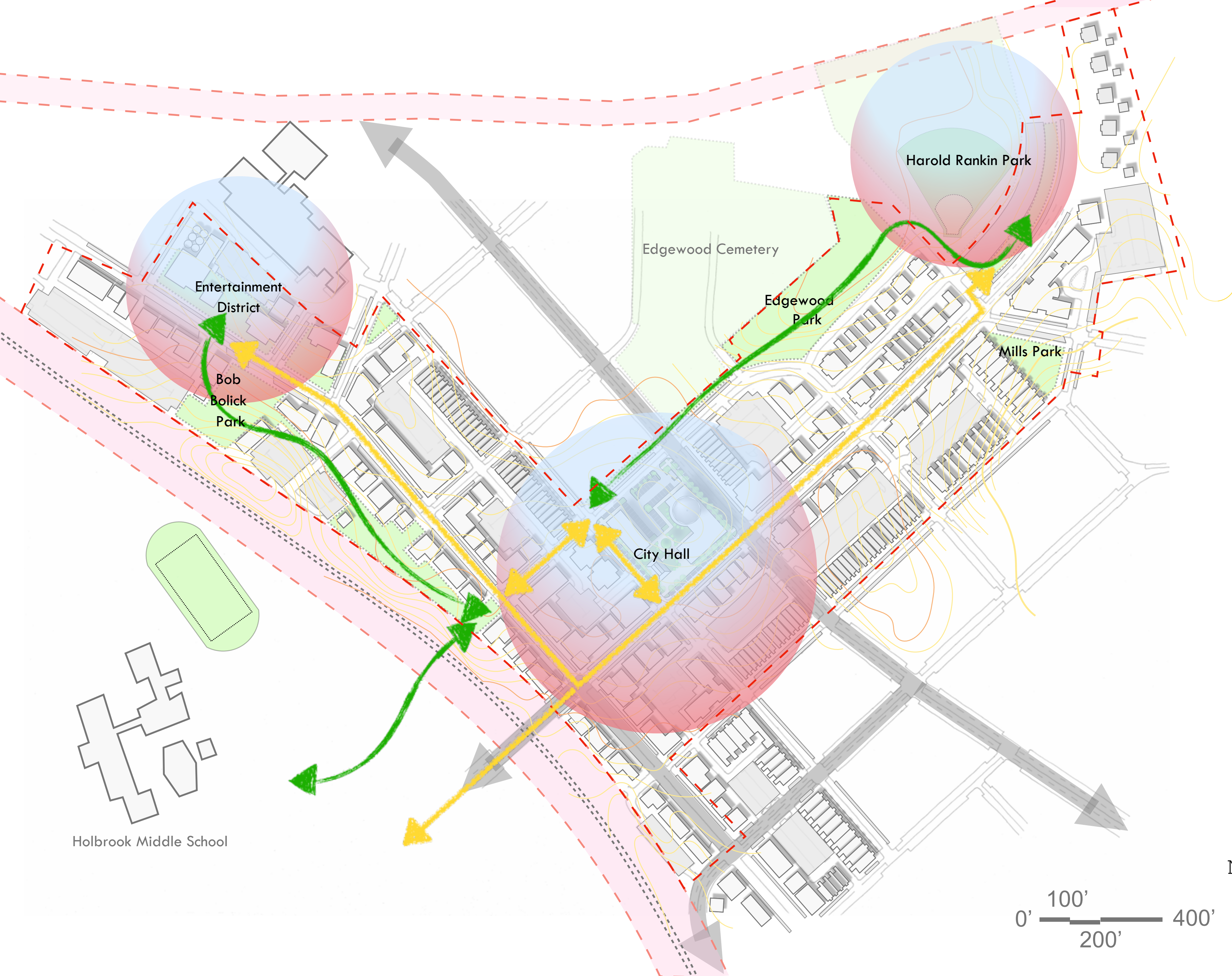
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City of Lowell, NC

In addition to increasing the tax base, employment and population of the City, the Conceptual Master Plan also creates a series of networked destinations that would draw visitors to the City. A two tiered pedestrian system would focus on a "Main Street" and "Park" experience.

The "Main Street" system would run along W. 1st St. and N. Main St., connecting a future Entertainment District with Harold Rankin Park. Shown in yellow, this walking option would offer pedestrian oriented retail shopping, dining, and entertainment activities for visitors as well as residents.

The "Park" system shown in green, would be created by adding to the City's park system along N. Church St., from Harold Rankin Park to the railroad tracks. At the tracks land adjacent to the rail corridor would be developed as a linear park activated by the businesses along W. 1st St. through outdoor open spaces, sidewalks and lawns. Retail and dining would be permitted along the walk. The Park system would connect to an expanded Bob Bolick park that would become part of a larger Entertainment District. The District would incorporate dining, food hall, a brewery, music hall and arts venues.



Holbrook Middle School



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DOWNTOWN LOWELL Conceptual Plan

City of Lowell, NC



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City of Lowell, NC

