Downtown Fayetteville Parking Recommendations & Future Planning

New Development:

16

It's Coming! And we better come up with a master plan before it gets out of control and we lose what we've come to love about this unique and special place we call home.

There are several projects near Fayetteville that will dramatically effect us in the next five to ten years. The Wolf Creek Project, Roaring Rivers, Bridgeview Estates, The Ledges, the Resort Property, Fayette Town Center with Super Walmart & Lowes, etc - and the adjacent property across the highway. There are several "pocket projects"- small housing projects, plans for 3 or 4 hotels, a new golf course and much more just under the radar. We could see more than 3,000 upscale homes and several high profile businesses coming to our area. How will this effect our town? How will we respond? Our decisions today will have a big impact on our future.

We are already experiencing a dramatic increase in traffic downtown. Almost everyday we see traffic backing up past the Visitor Center to access Rt. 19 and motorist have to wait through 3 or 4 light cycles to get out. Pretty soon it will start to backup past Keller Ave. When all these big housing developments start to fill up, the traffic will become a nightmare and people will start to avoid the downtown area altogether. Our tight narrow streets with limited parking will only emphasize our need to address this situation.

The Post Office will not be able to handle this increase - there just isn't enough parking and P.O. boxes. With more high end homes we will see an increase in commercial investment in the downtown area with more shops, restaurants and services. Without firm guidelines and ordinances on development we will face some hard battles to keep the historic ambiance. Maximizing space while maintaining and developing green space will be an art form. Signage will quickly become out of control with everyone fighting for visibility without an overall theme and smart guidelines. Our utilities and infrastructure will be pushed to their limits until they fail. The list goes on and on beyond this short letter and my thoughts.

Change is coming wether or not we want it. Good or bad, it is on our doorstep. The only question is how will we handle it. Were is the leadership to oversee an unifying vision of an ideal place to live, work and raise our kids. The development of this vision will require the input of everyone; it will require months and months of time; it will evolve and change and we will make mistakes. But to do nothing is not an option. Once we develop a plan of action we will have to come up with some creative ways to secure funds to help pay for it. This will require utilizing grants from the state and the federal government, as well as private investment. This process will most likely require professional help and direction. Once we develop a basic plan, we will need to focus on the details. We will need to create some kind of oversight committee to stay on top of it with a mandatory review system.

Parking

The downtown business district (currently there is no defined "business district") is facing hard times. Today there is more empty, underutilized and vacant space than ever before in recent history. There are many contributing factors for this dilemma, which can and should be discussed at a later time, but one of the key elements effecting this decline is the current parking situation. In the 1998 "Fayetteville Parking Feasibility Study" (1), the analysis, findings and recommendations pose some interesting short and long term goals.

Downtown parking is difficult. I can't speak for all areas of town, but it is especially true on South Court Street. Many potential customers will drive off, out of town, without easy access. There is a perception that during certain times of the day/season it is "impossible" to find a place to park and they avoid this part of town all together. Our business, Cathedral Café, sees a dramatic change between the peak summer months and the winter months. Many locals avoid the downtown area during the summer months only to return during the winter. Many businesses in this area, including us, must allow employees and delivery vehicles to park on the street for several hours at a time or even all day. During peak times one parking space may have a day value of

several hundred dollars to area businesses - with 5 or 6 parking spaces taken unnecessarily it could add up to more than a thousand dollars a day lost to area businesses. Another alarming trend to this area is the increase of residential/office parking on the designated streets. Since it is so difficult to keep businesses in commercial buildings, many landlords are converting these spaces into apartments. There are several examples of office spaces that are empty - only using the window space to promote land development projects, etc. Although this is the landlords option, it is critical that they understand that off-street parking needs to be provided. Recently the second floor of the Wendell-Janutolo Building (Healthy Harvest) was converted into six small apartments - there are two apartments in the basement already. There are three apartments above Nationwide Insurance and one above Studio B. Where will they all park? There are only twelve parking spaces on South Court Street between Maple Ave. and Fayette Ave. If this area becomes full time residential parking we are in big trouble. When there is a play at the Historic Fayette Theater people must park 1 or 2 blocks away - leaving no parking for the other businesses in the area and requiring patrons to walk long distances.

The overall appearance of the streets and open lots is terrible - dirt and trash collect without regular cleaning (due partly because there is no accountability, "tickets", to the owners of the property - this is especially true with vacant property). I would recommend that town council pass an ordinance that owners of vacant buildings and/or lots need to maintain a clean appearance at all times or they will be fined - these unsightly views distract from the overall town ambiance. The old Exxon Station is a prime example of this - it is falling down!. This part of town will never fully thrive without changes. Admittedly, some of these issues will require long term planning to solve, but here are a few suggestions that could be accomplished relatively quickly and with little cost. We have to start somewhere.

Immediate Actions

- 1.) Painting & Striping: (some of this has been done recently)
 - Remove existing markings and paint curbs correctly. The "new" blue handicap ramps on the street are already chipping away.
 - Paint curbs <u>vellow</u> at locations prohibiting parking at all times.
 - Repaint the <u>white</u> lines of the on-street spaces with standardized parking spaces (16?). Many areas have no or poorly-maintained lines on the street.
 - Maximize on-street parking by locating any new spaces.

2.) Signage:

- Provide new directional signing at locations marked with orange arrows on Map 1 directing
 potential customers to public parking areas (BOE & Court House Parking). The new signs should
 comply with MUTCD (Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices) and sign #D4-1.
- Available off-street parking should be clearly signed to indicate that parking is free, including evenings, weekends and holidays (seasonal).
 - On-street parking should clearly indicate 2 hour parking between 9 AM and 9 PM.
- Provide new regulatory signs for on-street parking, specifying 2 hour parking between 9 AM and 9 PM. The regulatory signs should comply with the MUTCD and sign #R7-5. Both of these signs have green lettering on a white backgrounds.
- Replace existing parking sign poles to comply with height code (72" high from the bottom of the Sign and 2 feet from edge of curb).

3.) Loading Zones:

- Designate loading zones large delivery vehicles come almost every day suggestions in orange on Map 1.
- Repaint with diagonal <u>yellow</u> striping and erect loading zone signs (red lettering on a white background). We could incorporate specific hours that helps the school buses make the tight Narrow turns.

4.) Pedestrian Access:

• Paint crosswalks white - suggestions in orange slashed lines on Map 1.

5.) Enforcement:

Hourly police enforcement between designated hours in order to ensure parking turnover and to discourage downtown businesses and residents from parking in designated areas all day.
 Note: Everyone should be informed of this enforcement policy before it actually occurs with warning tickets given first. Downtown landlords should be informed of their responsibility in supplying off-street parking for tenants and employees.

Common sense approach: We should not drive off customers who may spend money in our area with a 3-4 dollar parking ticket just because they park a half hour over the time limit. Enforcement should be directed more towards employees and owners who need to be educated in the importance of using off-street parking areas. If the theater is open, many shows will last more than 2 hours and we should use tolerance in these instances as well.

Seasonal Enforcement: Supply and demand. It is more important to enforce the parking regulations in the summer than the winter for obvious reasons - just as it is more important to Enforce them in the morning hours than the night hours (peek usage).

Long Term Goals

In order to maximize the downtown business areas, encourage investment, increase the B&O tax base and expand event possibilities, the available parking spaces must be expanded. The following examples are ideas that would require more detailed study, negotiations, business plans, etc. but we have to start to think this way. These examples are not presented in any type of priority.

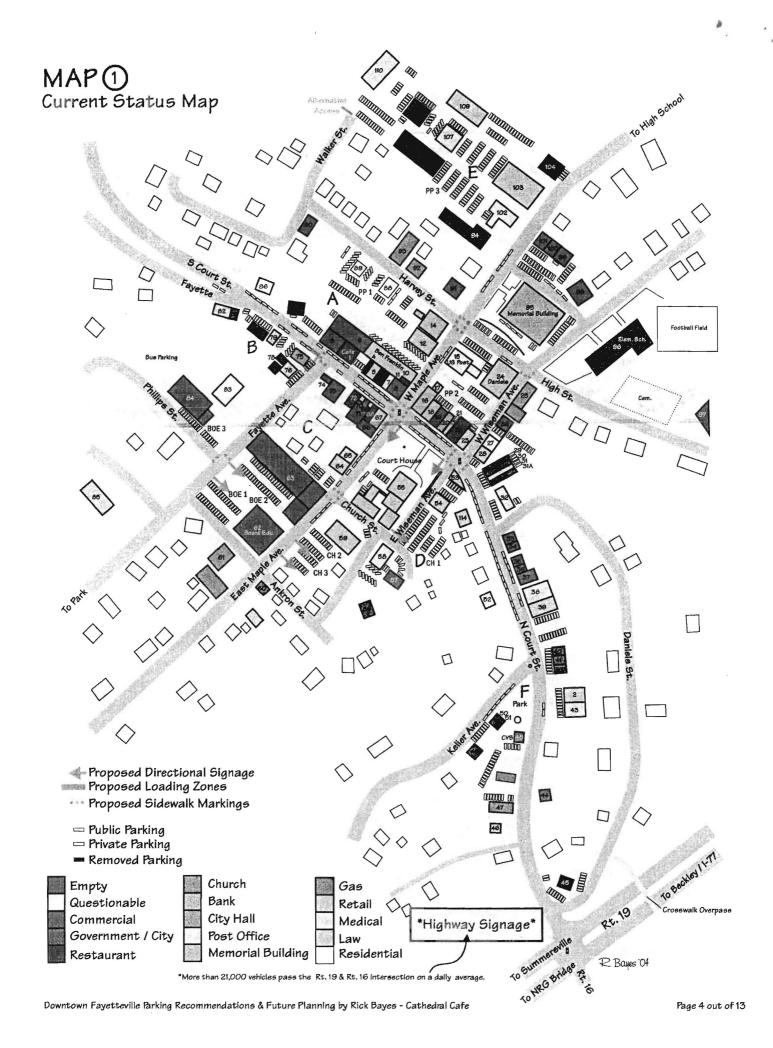
Map 1:

This map shows the current downtown parking situation, business demographics with empty buildings, etc. This map does change regularly.

Map 2:

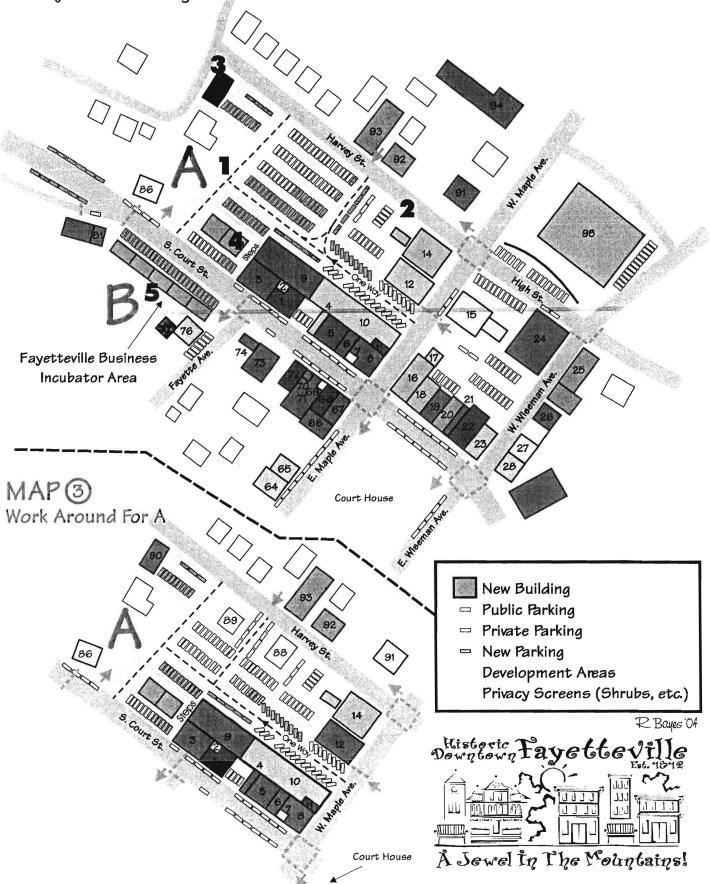
Area A: Harvey Street Parking Area (Recently Upgraded)

There already exists a small parking area at this location that is used mainly for church parking on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. There is some limited use by the downtown businesses. If done in stages as suggested in Map 3 the existing footprint of the area could gradually be expanded. In Map 2, full development, we would see more than 60 additional off-street parking spaces (many which could be rented by downtown businesses to help pay for the project) which exceed current business needs but allows town to expand downtown events and helps increase convenient access to the Memorial Building to increase its full potential. The area could be used as a place to have rides for children during the Heritage Festival, a flea market on Bridge Day, possibly a portable ice skating rink in the winter months, etc., we could even incorporate basketball 1/2 courts, hopscotch, etc. An access road (1) would allow easy access from Court St. (allowing drivers to turn back up into town instead of driving out of town when parking capacity is full on Court St.) and Harvey St. allowing an alternative driving patterns (Map 5) that would allow an expansion of town square events. The United Bank area (2) could be incorporated in this development to increase the parking and allow easier access to the drive through. Areas like the old church (3) - zoned commercial and currently vacant, building #86 (for sale) and the backside of Ben Franklin would receive a higher visibility and access with a better potential of development for specialty shops, increasing rent and tax base. In area (4), building #87 and the rough parking area could be developed into premium retail or office space. Next to this location a series of landscaped steps could be incorporated to allow a non-barrier access down to Court St. The biggest downside of this development area is the relocation or destruction of three buildings: #13 (destroyed), and 89 & 88 (the Tuggle & Cahoon cottages which are contributing historic buildings). In Map 2 we see how we can



MAP2

Harvey Street Parking Area - A & B



retain both historic buildings still increase access and parking spaces (40 plus). As mentioned in the "Immediate Actions" we would have to include proper signage to direct drivers and shoppers to this area.

Area B: Fayetteville Business Incubator

This area currently includes 2 buildings (#80 & #79) and church (#75). The 2 buildings are non-contributing and are in decaying conditions. The relocation of the church is a serious consideration (they could possibly relocate to the old church (#90) on Harvey St.) - but their relocation would allow for a much needed expansion of the intersection at Church St. & Fayette Ave., which currently creates traffic congestion, and allow for a complementing landscaped green space. This area could be developed in stages with the current shop relocating into the new buildings. The 4 or 5 buildings developed could be of block construction with a period facade (saving costs/low maintenance), a shared bathroom, etc. and pull in parking, allowing for lower rent (\$175 - \$250+) for small businesses to start up until they are successful enough to expand to a new location (hopefully to another development area downtown). We lose many of the small businesses that try to make a go downtown due to high overhead, poor visibility, access, etc. If the town (partnerships) were to develop this area, the moneys generated could help pay for the development and eventually go to help develop other areas. This development area would also enhance the eventual "Altamont Hotel Project" (#83) - which will occur someday. And lastly, we should look at expanding more parking areas at the south end of Court St. below Wisteria Gifts. 10 or more new parking spaces could easily be incorporated in this area. **Note:** All new construction should blend in with the historic ambiance so that they look like it they have always been here.

Map 4:

Area C: Church Street Parking Area

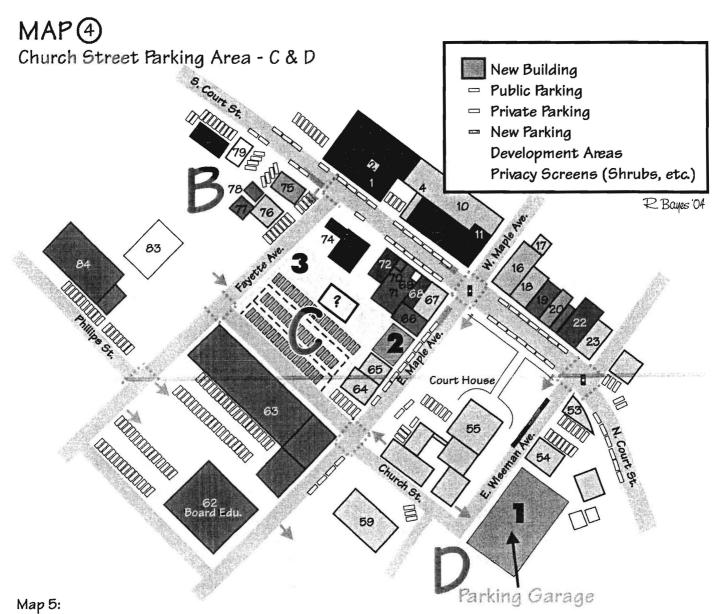
Similar to development Area A, a new road (lined with trees and landscaped - possibly one way) parallel to the BOE Garage (#63), connecting East Maple Ave. with Fayette Ave., to access this area. This would also allow for alternative driving patterns (Map 5) for town square events. This area could easily supply an additional 50 - 60 off-street parking spaces (allowing much needed parking for the court house and theater) with easy access to both Court St. & Maple Ave. Eventually new construction could occur at (2 & 3) supplying some much needed green spaces. This site could also serve as an alternative event location similar to Area A. Like Area A, it would require the removal of 3 non-contributing buildings and 1 small garage. Eventually, new construction at (2) and (3), and maybe rental parking, could help pay for this development. In a real long term goal this area could see even more development such as a half-block development.

This development could occur in stages. For example, with the removal of only 1 of the buildings and the 1 small garage, and leaving everything else, you could still construct a road next to the BOE building connecting Fayette Ave. & Maple Ave. having on-street parking (possibly reserved for a fee or metered to help pay for the eventual development of this site) of 12 - 24 spaces depending on whether the street is one-way or two-way. This idea could be easily adopted and help to alleviate some of the immediate parking issues.

BOE Garage & Bus Farking Note: At some point in the future these areas will most likely have to be removed to a different location due to the fact that the property value will increase dramatically with future growth. Buses already have a difficult time maneuvering downtown and the BOE will be able to use the money generated from the sale to build a state of art garage with easy access. If these areas become available it will require some carful planning to maximize their potential. They could move to the old WalMart building in Oak Hill - where there is plenty of parking and the potential for a huge office

Area D: Court House Parking Area

There has been some discussions in the past of creating a multi-level parking garage at this location. Capacity, cost, maintenance and overall town ambiance come to question with this project but it may be well worth studying. Currently there may be room to expand and redesign this area to create 15 or more new parking spaces if agreements can be reached with neighboring offices (#57) and land owners.



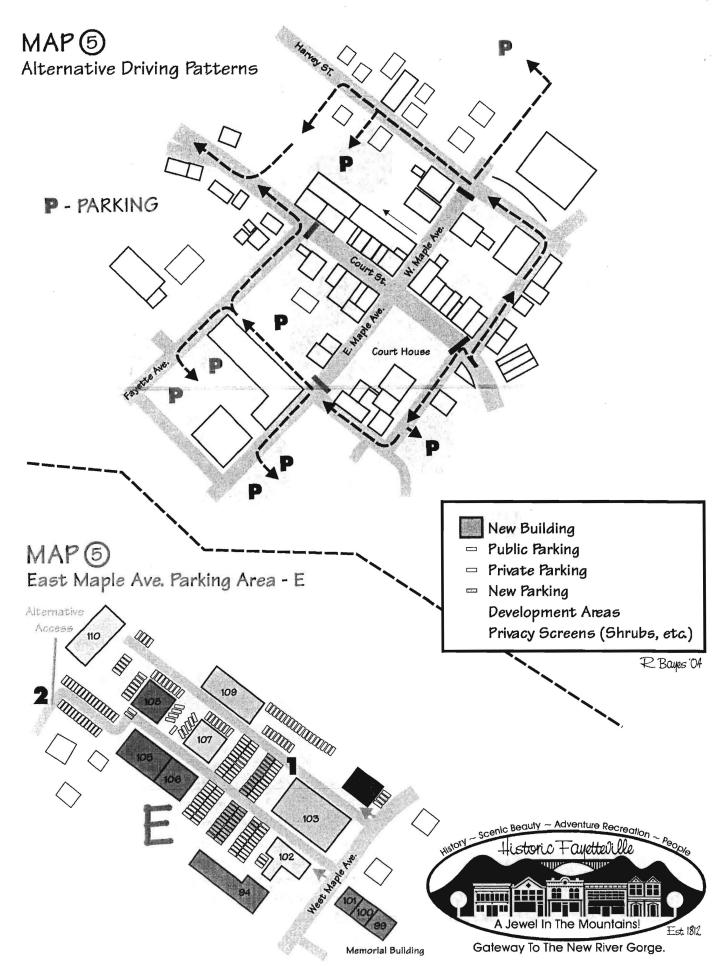
This map shows how the different development areas can effect the downtown driving pattern and how we could expand the town square activities (yellow - barriers in red). With the expanded areas on Court St. & Maple Ave. we could have some really big downtown events with all the parking space we would ever need located close to the events with little or no adverse effects on the core downtown ambiance.

Map 6:

Area E: East Maple Street Parking Area

By far the easiest way to increase additional parking downtown is to take the existing parking areas (1) at this location and combine them into one giant parking lot and redesign it into a more effective layout. This would require working out agreements with the nearby offices and businesses - putting up directional signage, with posted hours, to this location, but it could increase the off-street parking significantly (more than 60 parking spaces - 35 of which would be new spaces). This arrangement would benefit the Memorial Building, Bridge Day parking, and possibly other events, but it is so far removed from the downtown core business areas that it would provide little benefit to them with only the adventurous or determined customers willing to make the five or eight minute walk - most people are not up to this inconvenience.

It should also be noted that the alternative access (2) connecting Walker St. and the back parking area has been used to help with access issues in the past. This area could be upgraded, agreements reached, for



future use. While it is doubtful this could, or should, become an open access, we might be able to reach an agreement to use it more often during special events (having removable signage and barricade).

Other Areas Of Consideration

Security:

- Signage should be posted at each new parking area that states owners are responsible for the security of their vehicles' contents.
- The police should be encouraged to regularly patrol all parking areas, especially during events.
- As the town experiences more and more foot traffic with new developed areas we might want to consider having a police officer patrolling and helping visitors on a bike. This option would also allow our younger youths to get to know and trust our officers better.
- All parking areas should have adequate lighting/power supply access.

Maintenance:

- Adequate trash receptacles should be placed in parking areas with regular pick-up.
- Close attention should be given to adequate drainage. Some additional parking areas would actually help with some of the flooding problems downtown if planned correctly.
- The town should seriously consider updating their street sweeper or investing in a new one to keep the streets and parking areas clean hiring a service might be the best option..

Handicap Access:

• Handicap access should be one of the priorities for all new areas of development.

Ambiance & Landscaping:

- Close attention should be made to keep residential areas buffered from development areas with green zones (hedges, trees, etc.).
- Landscaping should be simple and low maintenance.
- Look into the possibility of having clubs, churches or businesses adopt new areas to help keep them clean and groomed (i.e. Adopt a parking lot, street or park).

Parking Management:

• Establish a task force of public and private sector representatives to monitor parking maintenance and modifications and address future parking issues and possible parking studies. This task force should meet on a quarterly basis, or more frequently, on an as need basis, advising the town on parking-related issues. This task force could investigate the potential of getting grants to help pay for some of these developments and maintenance.

Future Parking Studies:

• If we were a large metropolitan area I would advise having parking studies. But as a small town I believe they would be a waste of time and money. An effective task force should be able to meet our needs.

Fayetteville's Future ...

The map (Fayetteville Utopia?) on the last page shows our potential - or at least some key elements. The emphases being developing "smart zones" - green zones with positive new development, burying utilities, upgrading storm drains, etc.

1.) South Court Street & Bennett Way Intersection

A wide intersection that allows traffic to freely flow both ways. The landscaping would really depend on whether the building east of town stayed residential or became commercial.

2.) Steps

Winding stair steps, landscaping, benches and lights leading from the Harvey Street Parking Area to South Court Street.

3.) Harvey Street Parking Area

Map 3 showing the work around option (A) is much more realistic. Here we see a lot of new parking spaces and a lot of blacktop. This area needs more green space - maybe a simple playground or reading park in the south corner. It makes for a great event area and the green zones will buffer the residential areas.

4.) Bank Option

This shows how United Bank could be incorporated into the Harvey Street Parking Area to the benefit of more parking spaces and more business for the bank (ATM, etc.).

5.) Entrance Improvement

Green space can easily be added to this location to give the area more interest.

6.) Bank Parking Area

This area could be upgraded and shows additional parking could be added. Convenient free parking would really benefit business occupation on West Wiseman Ave.

7.) North Court Street & Maple Avenue Intersection

This intersection needs to be widened for easier access by removing only one parking space.

8.) Tree Lined Roads

If we add the needed additional off-street parking we would have the luxury to remove some existing on-street parking spaces (10 spaces in this example) to add some much needed trees downtown. The trees would need to be some kind of dwarf species (maybe Pyrus Calleryana 'Redspire' Pear) with shallow root systems that would add color and shade that would break up the stark high walls of stone, brick and windows without dominating everything. It would be nice if we had underground power to these locations so that we could put up Christmas Lights in the Winter and/or have night time ambiance lighting.

9.) Court House Lawn

I left the lawn original but the south corner is screaming for some kind of updating.

10.) Morton Park

Imagine a small walking park this close to town lined with interest and benches. At (10) it is currently a deep pit area that is wasted space and collects water and trash. It could be filled in during construction (there would be a lot of soil grading). If not this option, then a huge deck with plenty of seats around it would be a great addition for meetings, lunches, children's puppet shows, and my favorite - movies in the park (a permanent/removable screen could be added to the side of the building) every weekend in the summer. An arched bridge leading from the deck to the pathway would be charming. The pathways could be educational and interpretive with descriptions of plants and trees, bird habitat, etc.

11.) Morton Parking Area

I honestly believe this would be the ideal place to begin development. It would add the initial parking spaces we needed plus give us spectacular green space. The road could be one or two way and tree lined. It provides easy access to downtown and many of the spaces could be reserved for a fee to help pay for it. Note the important addition of **Tour Bus Parking** - this access alone could generate a lot of interest in tour companies stopping in Fayetteville.

12.) Fayetteville Museum

This building, Ankrom/Dickinson House (1870's), with such great access, could become a great addition to Fayetteville by becoming a Civil War Museum and/or part of the Coal Heritage Trail. With the addition of easy Tour Bus access we could draw more non-adventure tourists to town. Visitors could easily walk over to the Jail Museum and tour town. Grants would be available.

13.) Water Feature

We need water features badly! A large round, raised pond with a fountain would become a

favorite gathering place and add a new dimension to town.

14.) South Court Street & Fayette Avenue Intersection

This intersection needs to be widened and upgraded. The green space south of the intersection could include several benches.

15.) Mayor's Walkway

The current building standing here needs to be removed since it is a non-contributing building and in need of major repair. Instead of building another building we should give some thought to making it into a winding pathway to the back parking area landscaped with several benches - it would be a cool reprieve in the summer. The bricks could be incorporated into the walkway.

Note: This building has been newly renovated and is a positive addition to downtown. I still believe this building should be updated to maximize positive space. Imagine if it became a two -story building (currently a fake 2nd floor facade) in which the entire second floor was a large, modern meeting room attached to city hall for city council with large windows, skylights, etc.

Planned Development

As we look towards the future we should develop an overall master plan, a vision, of what we want our town to be. As money and space becomes available we should refer to this blueprint and incorporate these elements as possible. The blueprint should take into account overhead utilities, whether this means rerouting them out of the downtown main streets or burying them. Replacement of sidewalks should be done in cobblestone standards keeping in mind the future placements of gas lights, storm drains, etc. It makes no sense to replace or repair things that will have to be redone down the road to fit into the newest vision. This blueprint shouldn't be taken on lightly, it will require professionals and money to develop it. The town may not have the money or commitment now - but we need to start working in that direction. Here are a few of the things we might want to consider:

Sidewalks: Cobblestone! Colored concrete made with 3-D patterns to simulate bricks or flagstone. Lined with trees, cast iron simulated gas lights, access plates and new "period" street signs. As the sidewalks are replaced they should comply with this vision, taking into account the placement of future power lines, storm drains, etc. with the ability to be removed in large slabs to access utilities.

Utilities: I think everyone would agree that the tangle of overhead utilities is both dangerous and unsightly. A fire at the Historic Theater, with all those overhead lines, could cause us to lose a whole block of buildings and/or several lives.

Facade & Signage Codes:

Signage codes: will be discussed sooner or later. People claim that there are codes somewhere, but no one seems to be able to produce them. Signage codes need to be developed and adhered to. Off-site signage is a dangerous precedent currently allowed by town - what will our response be when real money comes in town and starts to put up giant signs advertising businesses miles away. Neon Signs - supposedly these signs are not allowed - currently there are more than a dozen neon signs around town. Shiny metal signs with no character covering entire walls - is that what we want? What about dimensions - is it really necessary for a business sign in this small of a town to be 4' X 8'? How many different signs does one building need - there is one in town that has more than six signs? Signage Codes are to involved to go into now but are so important that we need to take the initial steps to develop them.

Facade Codes: We are a National Historic District (2). ALL new construction should enhance this. The new church building on Harvey Street, while effective, is modern, gigantic and painful to look at in the current context of town - does this enhance the town or could more thought to the front facade been more beneficial? It makes no sense to penalize a historic building to fit into tight constraints while one block away we are allowing construction of these type of things. We should determine the era we want to represent - 1900's, 1920's, etc.? The town should have an overall color scheme. Limiting the type of colors and

combinations. When new construction on a historic building in necessary there should be some type of guidelines that allow a positive solution - not all construction on these sites is necessarily bad and they can fit in with the overall scheme of things. Window treatments need to be discussed. Some historic districts only allow 25 or 35 percent of the windows to be covered with advertisement, flyers, etc. In this town there are entire windows that are blocked with signs, stickers and flyers - is this attractive? Is the "Peace On Earth" sign above the Healthy Harvest building attractive or distractive? Note: This sign has been removed but it was allowed to remain up for over a year - we need to be able to address these type of things. Many businesses put up large banners for months or year round - attractive? Censorship and restrictions are an art form. Too much limits potential and not enough allows for chaos. Can we (businesses) or can we not police ourselves? Currently the answer is no and we need to discuss these things openly and honestly.

Business Recruitment & Support: Currently no one is trying to go out and recruit businesses to help fill all the open spaces downtown. Whether this should be part of the CVB role or that of a business organization I'm not sure, but we must become more pro-active in this area. We need to define what we want the downtown business district to be, what would actually succeed, and try to lobby some of those businesses to come here. We also need to set up a support system to help these businesses stay open. Business owners need to know coming in how difficult it is to operate in a small rural town with seasonal tourist business and how to budget, etc. for this. We need to work with landlords to help them understand what is realistically possible and find alternative solutions to keep spaces full (lower winter rates, tax incentives, etc.). For example I would think a fresh bakery would be a big addition to town. We, the Café, would be willing to buy all of our breads, bagels and other things from them to help keep them going. If other businesses in the area (outfitters, hotels, restaurants, school systems, etc.) were willing to do this also we might be able to attract someone to set up shop here. Business incubators (antique shops, artisans, etc.) are also a great way to attract businesses with low rent and shared costs. In order to generate enough foot traffic in town to keep businesses open we need enough diversity and mass to attract them.

It goes on and on ... Visions, Discussions and Planning needs to start somewhere ... sometime ...

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(1) 1998 Parking Study Information:

Study by: Kellerco, Inc., Robert E. Kuhns. Transportation Consulting Services, Professor Lesly L. Rosier of West Virginia University Institute of Technology and L. Alan Feinberg, FeinDesign Associates, Inc.

(2) Fayetteville Historic District (added 1990 - Fayette County - #90001845)

Roughly bounded by SR 16, Maple and Fayette Aves., Fayetteville (1150 acres, 126 buildings, 3 structures)

Historic Significance: Architecture/Engineering, Event

Architect, builder, or engineer: Multiple

Architectural Style: Greek Revival, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival
Area of Significance: Architecture, Social History, Military, Commerce

Period of Significance: 1825-1849, 1850-1874, 1875-1899, 1900-1924, 1925-1949

Owner: Private, Local Gov't, Federal

Historic Function: Commerce/Trade, Domestic, Government

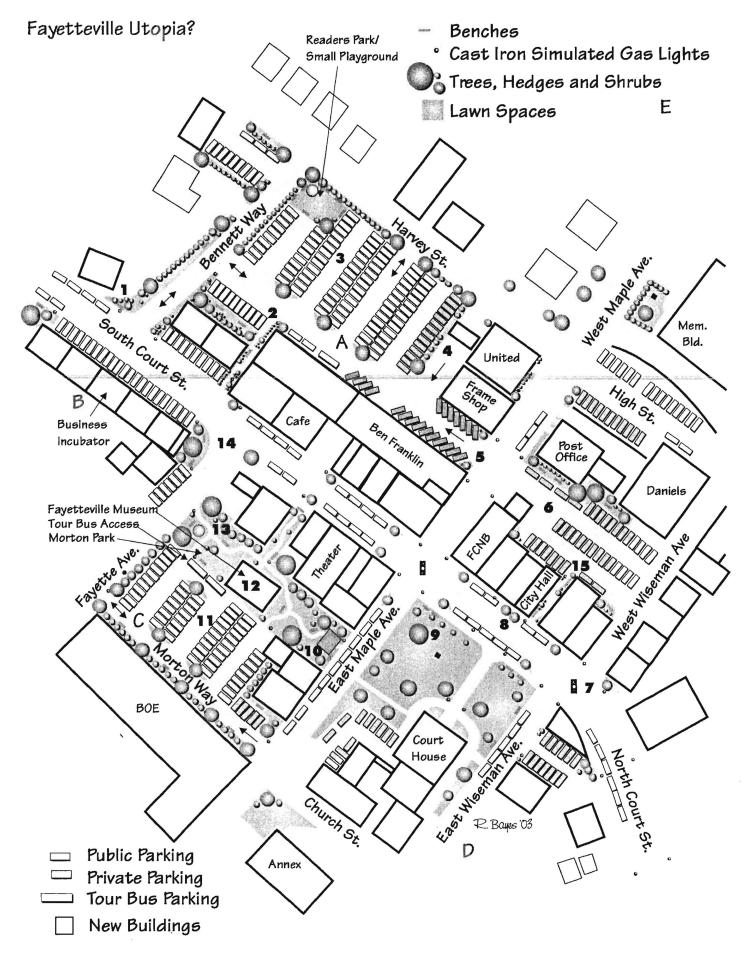
Historic Sub-function: Business, City Hall, Financial Institution, Multiple Dwelling, Professional,

Restaurant, Single Dwelling

Current Function: Commerce/Trade, Domestic, Government

Current Sub-function: Business, City Hall, Financial Institution, Multiple Dwelling, Professional,

Restaurant, Single Dwelling



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