



**The Center City - West Greenville Revitalization Plan**  
 Redevelopment Commission  
 City of Greenville North Carolina

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

In the Fall of 2003, the Redevelopment Commission of the City of Greenville retained the firm of BetschAssociates LLC in association with Holland Consulting Planners, Inc. and George Henry George Partners to assist with the preparation of a redevelopment plan for the Center City and the West Greenville neighborhoods.

Through a series of meetings to receive input from a diverse cross-section of stakeholders, the Redevelopment Commission has produced this **Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan**.

On behalf of our consulting team, City Of Greenville staff and all those who provided input on this Plan, we offer our sincere thanks for your cooperation and assistance. Our thanks to Ms. Candace Pearce and the East Carolina University Manuscript Collection as well as Mr. John Farkas of JKF Architecture for contributing images to this plan.

We especially would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their time and effort in this planning process:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Don Edwards</i>         | <i>Chair, Redevelopment Commission</i>        |
| <i>Minnie Anderson</i>     | <i>Vice Chair, Redevelopment Commission</i>   |
| <i>Melissa Hill</i>        | <i>Commissioner, Redevelopment Commission</i> |
| <i>Max Joyner, Jr.</i>     | <i>Commissioner, Redevelopment Commission</i> |
| <i>Britt Laughinghouse</i> | <i>Commissioner, Redevelopment Commission</i> |
| <i>Dennis Mitchell</i>     | <i>Commissioner, Redevelopment Commission</i> |
| <i>Bob Thompson</i>        | <i>Commissioner, Redevelopment Commission</i> |
| <i>Merrill Flood</i>       | <i>Secretary, Redevelopment Commission</i>    |
| <i>Don Parrott</i>         | <i>Mayor, Greenville City Council</i>         |
| <i>Mildred Council</i>     | <i>Mayor, Pro-Tem Greenville City Council</i> |
| <i>Ray Craft</i>           | <i>Greenville City Council</i>                |
| <i>Pat Dunn</i>            | <i>Greenville City Council</i>                |
| <i>Rose Glover</i>         | <i>Greenville City Council</i>                |
| <i>Chip Little</i>         | <i>Greenville City Council</i>                |
| <i>Larry Spell</i>         | <i>Greenville City Council</i>                |
| <i>Wayne Bowers</i>        | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |
| <i>Bill Richardson</i>     | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |
| <i>Carl Rees</i>           | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |
| <i>Chris Davis</i>         | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |
| <i>Harry Hamilton</i>      | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |
| <i>David Holec</i>         | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |
| <i>Gwen Turnage</i>        | <i>City of Greenville</i>                     |

Don J. Edwards  
 Chair, Greenville Redevelopment Commisison



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### INTRODUCTION

The City of Greenville is a thriving economic hub that is the center of commerce, healthcare, and education in the center of Pitt County in eastern North Carolina. It is also located only 80 miles east from the state capitol in Raleigh. See Maps 0.1 and 0.2. The City has enjoyed phenomenal growth and prosperity. However, while the suburbs prospered, the area that gives the City its identity, its center city, has declined economically as its image and infrastructure have deteriorated. The many years of decay, non-conformity, and lessening prominence of the area mandated a need for action.

In February 2001, Mr. Don Parrott, Mayor of the City of Greenville, Dr. Bill Muse, then Chancellor of East Carolina University, and Mr. Don Edwards, President of Uptown Greenville, recognized the need to focus their attention on the center city of their community. Based upon the strong personal relationships of these individuals, the need for the University to increase its enrollment by approximately 25% over the next 7 years, and the desire of the downtown businesses to reverse the declining image of the center city, these men decided to jointly fund an economic development plan between the East Carolina University Foundation and Uptown Greenville. They retained the services of Mr. Ken Betsch of BetschAssociates LLC to prepare this plan. They also enlisted the support of the local banks, Wachovia, First Citizen's Bank, and Bank of America to fund further phases of this redevelopment plan.

The renderings and presentations of the plan created new enthusiasm for a series of proposals geared towards the redevelopment of the center city. One of these proposals included construction of a new four-lane road to connect Farmville Boulevard with Tenth Street and to provide a clear distinct gateway entrance to the center city from Raleigh. Mr. Parrot then approached the Pitt County Memorial Hospital and East Carolina University to join the City of Greenville and provide joint local funding for a large portion of the cost of this new Tenth Street Connector. With this funding and a rendering of the proposed connector, he was able to secure state approval and funding of the project. The Greenville redevelopment effort was off to an impressive start.

Realizing that much additional work remained to carry out the economic redevelopment of the center city, the Mayor and City Council of Greenville created and appointed members to a newly established Redevelopment Commission in November 2002. The purpose of this Commission was to serve as a catalyst for economic development of the City. To meet this need, the commission's purpose was expanded to include the redevelopment of the blighted areas of the West Greenville neighborhoods adjacent to the center city.

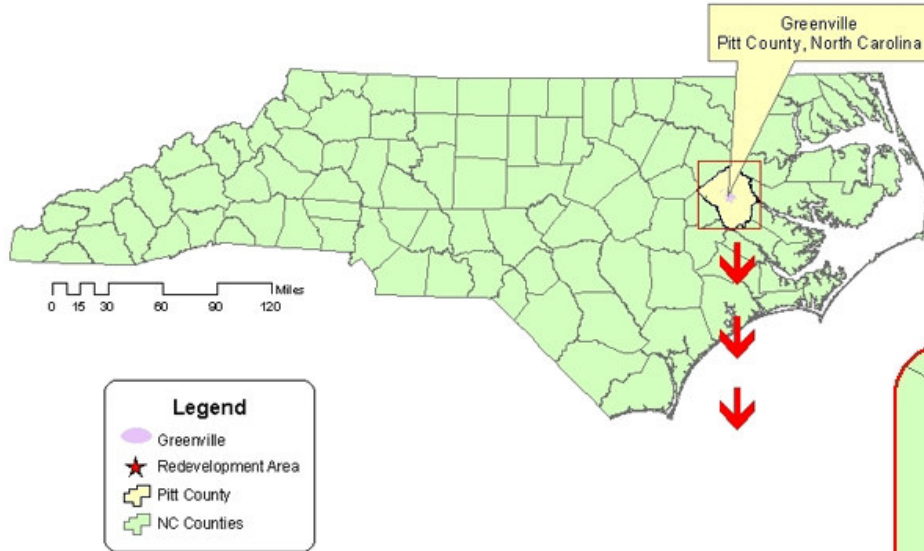
A Redevelopment Commission established under North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) 160A-504. generally has the authority to:

- Prepare redevelopment plans

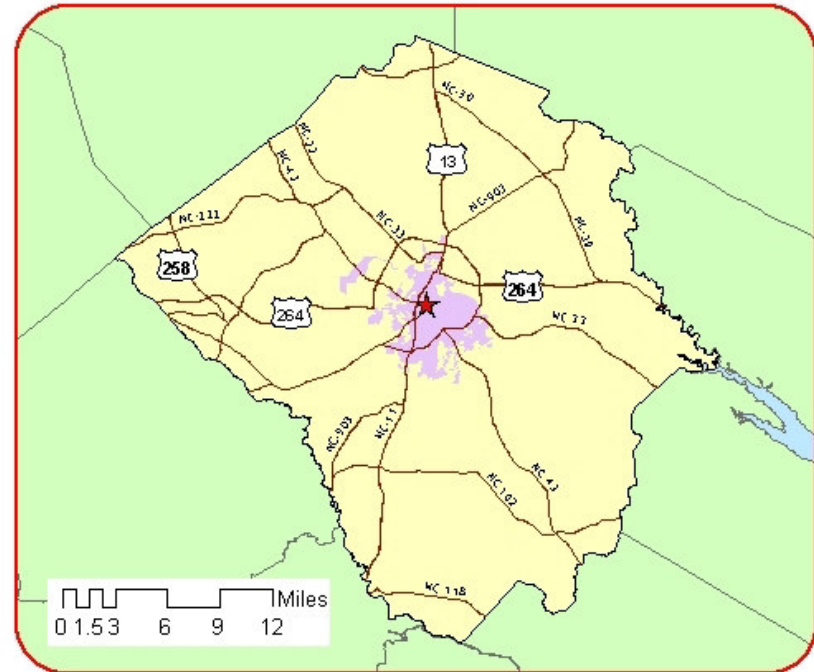


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Map 0.1 Location of Pitt County within the State of North Carolina



Map 0.2 City of Greenville within Pitt County



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- Undertake public works/utilities improvements
- Acquire and dispose of property
- Borrow money
- Perform redevelopment activities in certified redevelopment areas

The specific authority of a redevelopment commission is defined in NCGS 160A-512. Redevelopment commissions do not have any specific authority to act on or enforce any of the powers granted by NCGS 160A-504 outside of a certified redevelopment area, other than in an advisory capacity to the City Council.

The goals of the Redevelopment Commission have been established as follows:

- Coordination of the expansion of East Carolina University into the Uptown and adjacent areas and assistance in the assembly of property.
- Revitalization of the 14 neighborhoods in West Greenville and to maintain them as an African-American community. This area is generally located between Pitt Street, Memorial Drive, the Tar River and the Norfolk and Southern Railroad. This work will include acquisition of the dilapidated structures, demolition, relocation assistance, housing rehabilitation, street improvements, upgrading of utilities, and street lighting.
- Preservation of historic warehouses and older building through renovation and adaptive reuse
- Revitalization of the major corridors especially from

Uptown along Dickinson Avenue to Memorial Drive and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive to Memorial Drive to include rehabilitation of structures, acquisition and demolition of dilapidated structures, relocation assistance and new development through land assemblage

- Acquisition of property for the Tenth Street / Stantonsburg 4-lane connector between Uptown, East Carolina University Core Campus and Medical Area
- Coordination of the Redevelopment Commission's plans and activities so that they will not supplant existing plans and activities of the City particularly the Community Development Block Grant Program or other involved entities.
- Solicitation of persons/companies to make investments in new or renovated buildings
- Remove incompatible land uses from the area such as industrial uses
- Implement programs to increase home ownership
- Encourage public involvement in all activities of the redevelopment process

In November 2003, the Redevelopment Commission retained the services of DesignStrategies in association with Holland Consulting Planners and Hammer Siler George Associates to prepare this Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan.

### Project Initiation

Upon the authorization to proceed, the BetschAssociates





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planning team met with City staff to confirm the proposed scope of services, the goals of the study, and review potential boundaries for the redevelopment area. In general, the goals of the plan will be to review the market conditions for development potential, analyze existing land use, current zoning, and proposed land use, recommend proposed strategies for redevelopment, outline key projects, and provide an implementation plan with sources and uses of funds and a prioritized schedule of activities. The most important goal for the study is to create a redevelopment plan which complies with the requirements of Article 160A – 500, referred to as the Urban Redevelopment Law of the North Carolina General Statutes.

The planning team also reviewed background information including base maps, sensitive issues, key stake holder groups, and previously prepared plans and studies, including 45 Block Area Renderings prepared by John Farkas (CD); *the 2003-2007 Consolidated Plan for CDBG/HOME*; *the 2004/05 Program Resources for CDBG/HOME*; *45 Block Area Reporting Information*; Agreement for Consulting Services for the West Greenville Architectural Survey; *the Community Development Block Grant Program, 1975-1990*; *Community Development Block Grant Program, 1990-2000*; *Bonnors Lane Redevelopment Report*; *Bonnors Lane Area Clearance Cost*; Geographic Information System – Coverages for Center City Planning Area; *Bringing Back Main Street – A Downtown Plan of Action*;

*Status of Redevelopment, January 1, 1980 – Summary of Urban Renewal Programs*; *the Land Use Provision, Building Requirements and Covenants for Central Business District Redevelopment Project*; *Report on the Downtown Development Project, 1980*; *Report on the Shore Drive Redevelopment Project, 1962*; *Residential Data for 45-Block Area*; *Horizons, Greenville’s Comprehensive Plan and the Horizons Plan Update*, dated February 12, 2004.

BetschAssociates conducted a public meeting on January 14, 2004 at the public library with key stakeholders including the Redevelopment Commission, governmental officials, city staff, residents, merchants, business owners, property owners, and interested citizens to gain insight into issues to be incorporated in the redevelopment plan. The planning team also held key leadership interviews with representatives of the Redevelopment Commission including Don Edwards, Chairman, and Minnie Anderson, Vice-Chairman; City of Greenville including the Mayor; East Carolina University including the Chancellor and the Chief Financial Officer; Uptown Greenville; Pitt County Memorial Hospital; the School District; and Pitt County. From this public meeting and the leadership interviews, the planning team developed a summary outline which includes a mission statement for the redevelopment plan, a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) for the community, and four focus areas for the study with development goals for each: Neighborhoods, Urban Core, University, and Hospital. The summary outline from this meeting is included in Chapter 1, Existing Conditions.



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In conjunction with the planning staff of the City of Greenville, the planning team established the boundaries of the Redevelopment Area. This area is shown on Map 0.8. The land included in this area for the center city is bounded by the Tar River to the north; the property east of Reade Street, Charles Street, and Lawrence Street to the east; East Fourteenth Street and West Twelfth Street to the south; and the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad to the west. The land included in this area for the West Greenville neighborhoods is bounded by the land immediately north of Martin Luther King Drive and West Fourth Street to the north; the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad to the east; the land immediately south of the Tenth Street Connector and Farmville Boulevard to the south; and Memorial Drive to the west. This area is approximately 566 acres.

In addition, Chapter 1 outlines the Existing Conditions of the Development Area including traffic patterns and parking, existing land use, existing zoning, and existing building conditions. It describes opportunities and constraints for redevelopment.

### Economic and Market Analysis

Upon completion of the background work by BetschAssociates, George Henry George began a market analysis for the trade area associated with this portion of the City. This analysis included the following work tasks:

- Assessment of local development climate and identification of potential projects
- Analysis of residential potential
- Analysis of retail potential
- Analysis of entertainment potential
- Market analysis recommendations

The preliminary findings were presented to the Redevelopment Commission and the focus group for the West Greenville neighborhoods on March 16, 2004. The completed economic and market analysis is included in Chapter 2 of this plan.

### Redevelopment Plan

Upon receipt of the existing building conditions survey from City staff, the planning team discovered that only a portion of the Redevelopment Area had enough dilapidation, deterioration, and other conditions to qualify as a "Blighted Area" under the Urban Redevelopment Law. Therefore, a smaller area has been created within the Redevelopment Area and called the West Greenville Certified Redevelopment Area. The certified plan for this area is included in Chapter 4 as a stand-alone document. It is described legally in that chapter and delineated on Map 4.2.

The balance of the Revitalization Plan for the Center City and West Greenville is contained in Chapter 3. The plan has been coordinated and completed in accordance with



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the Management Actions for Vision Area H, Central, of the *Horizons Plan Update*, dated February 12, 2004. The financial review and implementation program is contained in Chapter 5 of this plan. It will prioritize proposed components of the redevelopment plan and describe methodologies for funding.

While this area faces many serious challenges, it is clear that a number of wonderful opportunities exist to build on the initial success of the Tenth Street Connector, particularly with the renewed interest and commitment from elected officials, the University, Uptown Greenville, Inc. and the neighborhoods of the center city. In addition, a physical redevelopment plan can create the context for social and economic improvement by:

- Laying the foundation for new and improved schools in the project area
- Creating and expanding cultural resources to include libraries, community theaters and performing arts centers
- Developing conditions that lead to new employment opportunities through the creation of new commercial districts and through improvements to existing districts
- Forging new partnerships where opportunities exist to improve education, health care and employment in the project area

- Bringing about physical change including streetscape improvements, design guidelines and recreational amenities to improve safety and liveability in the project area
- Working to develop quality, affordable housing for rental and ownership while maintaining neighborhood identity

With the recommendations of this plan as guiding principles and through the coordination and dedication of key stakeholders, it is easy to envision the rebirth of the Redevelopment Area including the continued growth of the University, new street connections, redevelopment of neighborhoods, new business opportunities for the City of Greenville, development of an arts and sciences district, greater, more diverse housing opportunities, and preservation of significant structures.



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