6-1-16

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2016

McGill ASSOCIATES

Town of Matthews™ North Carolina

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2.....Plan Purpose
3.....Objectives and How to use these guidelines
4..... Clarification of Planning Intent
5.....Downtown Limits & Districts Maps
6.....Alternative Transportation Paths Map
7.....Public Input
8.....Cross-section Locations Map
9.....Street Types Map
10.....Typical Arterial Street
11.....100 Block of North Trade Street
12.....100 Block of North Trade Street - Conceptual Improvements
13.....100 Block of North Trade Street - Photo Edit
14.....North Trade Street and Matthews Street
15.....North Trade Street and Matthews Street - Photo Edit #1
16.....North Trade Street and Matthews Street - Photo Edit #2
17.....North Trade Street and Matthews Street - Photo Edit #3
18.....North Trade Street and Matthews Street - Photo Edit #4
19.....North Trade at Center Park Drive
20.....South Trade at East and West John Street
21.....Trade Street and John Street - Photo Edit
22.....South Trade Street at First Baptist Church
23.....South Trade Street at First Baptist Church - Photo Edit
24.....West John Street at Trade Street (option #A)
25.....West John Street at Trade Street (option B)
26.....West John Street near Freemont Street
27.....West John Street near Ames Street
28.....West John Street - Photo Edit
29.....East John Street BBT to Trade Street
30.....E. John Street near Post Office
31.....Typical Downtown Collector Street
32.....East Matthews at Trade Street
33.....Typical Local Street
34.....Typical Urban Residential Street
35.....Proposed College Street
36.....McDowell Street
37.....Typical Woonerf
38.....Market Alley - Photo Edit
39.....Woonerf Precedent Images
40.....Typical Urban Lane
41.....Urban Lane Precedent Images
42.....Cotton Gin Alley
43.....Spot Improvements
44.....Proposed Interactive Fountain at Matthews Town Hall
45.....Proposed Pedestrian Path Between Trade and Ames
46.....Prposed Pedestrian Path - Photo Edit

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Matthews Town Hall and Public Library

Pedestrian Crossing at Matthews Station Street and North Trade Street

Purpose

This guide serves as an addendum to and expansion of the existing Town of Matthews Downtown Plan as adopted by the Matthews Board of Commissioners January 7, 2013 and updates the streetscape improvements portion of the 1998 Downtown Master Plan. Existing and proposed street cross sections and streetscape improvements are illustrated through sketches and photo edits of before and after images. General examples of typical street types are also provided. For each street type, there is a typical cross-section and in many instances a specific cross-section. As specific cross-sections are developmed for new or existing streets, they may be added to this plan over time.

The proposed streetscape improvements for the downtown area of Matthews include any combination of the following elements: proposed infill development, curb and gutter, sidewalks, multi-use paths, curb ramps, bicycle racks, street lighting, way-finding signage, and landscaping. Dimensions for streets, planting strips, sidewalks and building setbacks are provided. Some streets reviewed in this document are controlled by the Town and others may be controlled by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. It is recommended that property owners and businesses located within Downtown refer to the Matthews Downtown Plan and other Town planning documents for additional advice and direction on development issues.

The recommended style for all Downtown development should reflect basic principles of geometry and form while complimenting the existing rural North Carolina Piedmont vernacular of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Streetscape elements such as benches, street lights, sign poles, and landscaping should enhance, not conflict with those examples found within the Downtown Core District.

Objectives

This plan provides:

- An inventory of existing street-cross sections, transportation infrastructure, and land uses,
- A map indicating street types within the Downtown Area,
- Graphic examples of proposed street cross-sections,
- Photo-realistic before and after representations of how new streets should be developed/ redeveloped illustrating how buildings, sidewalks, and other streetscape elements should interact.

How to use these guidelines

Streetscape cross-section Guidelines help implement the recommendations in the approved and adopted Downtown Plan. They provide information on how plan recommendations and Unified Development Ordinances can be met, the area or district context for individual sites, and ideas about **best practices** in building and site design.

The planning process is structured in a hierarchy of decisions:

- The Downtown Plan recommendations provide the vision for a specific area,
- Unified Development Ordinance and other codes establish standards and regulations for development,
- Streetscape Cross-section Guidelines and concept images provide inspiration and suggestions to fulfill the Downtown Plan's vision, and serve as a problem-solving tool.

The streetscape guidelines are developed through work with property owners, residents, institutions, interest groups, and Town Staff. They are approved by the Town Board for use by planning staff in developing and evaluating proposed building projects and other applications. They will be revised and updated as necessary. With the exception of street standards and other specific recommendations included in the Downtown Plan, the guidelines are not regulations that mandate specific forms and locations for buildings and open space. They illustrate how plan recommendations and principles might be met, and encourage an attractive and successful public realm.

Traditional Streetscape on North Trade Street (Downtown Core District)

Contemporary Streetscape on North Trade Street (North End District)

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Clarification of Planning Intent

Applicability and Enforcement

These design guidelines apply to both new construction and buildings undergoing significant renovations within the Downtown Overlay District. The intent is to have new streetscape improvements constructed as new development occurs, as long as it will be connected to future improvements at adjacent sites. At a minimum, at least 5' of sidewalk and street trees should be provided at any site of new development or renovation.

The entire lot width associated with the new construction or significant renovation of a building or group of buildings, where no improvements exist or where improvements are substandard, shall be improved to the standard for that street which is shown in this document. Substandard is defined as not meeting the planned improvement specifications for that particular portion of street. If no standard exists for any portion of a street, the standard most closely associated with planned improvements in the general vicinity should be implemented. Significant renovation is defined as existing buildings where total construction and up fit costs exceed 40% of the taxable value of the structure. The exact cross section will be determined by the applicant and Town Staff. The Town Engineer or Public Works Director and members of the Planning Department will work with property owners or developers to determine the overall scope of required improvements and develop an infrastructure construction plan.

Appeals

Should the property owner or developer disagree with the scope of required improvements, a request may be made to the Town Board to render a decision on what improvements are mandatory.

Exemptions

1. Properties that received rezoning or site plan approval prior to February 2016 for which a building permit is issued prior to February 2018. (These properties may still be required to install basic curb and gutter, street trees and 5' sidewalks.)
2. Construction or renovation of an individual new single family detached home but not a new development of 2 or more new dwellings.

Fee In Lieu

1. When the Public Works Department determines that construction of public improvements are not feasible or that new improvements would otherwise be damaged or replaced as a result of future construction, a fee in lieu may be permitted or required. In general, a fee in lieu will not be permitted to delay construction of a minimum 5' wide sidewalk.
2. A fee in lieu may be allowed if one or more of the following circumstances exists:

a. When there are planned or anticipated future streetscape or road improvements with enough specificity to know where improvements will occur, and newly installed improvements such as sidewalk, curb and gutter and street trees would be be removed or destroyed, the owner/developer may elect to pay a fee in lieu.

b. When there is no existing curb and gutter on the subject property and/or adjacent properties.

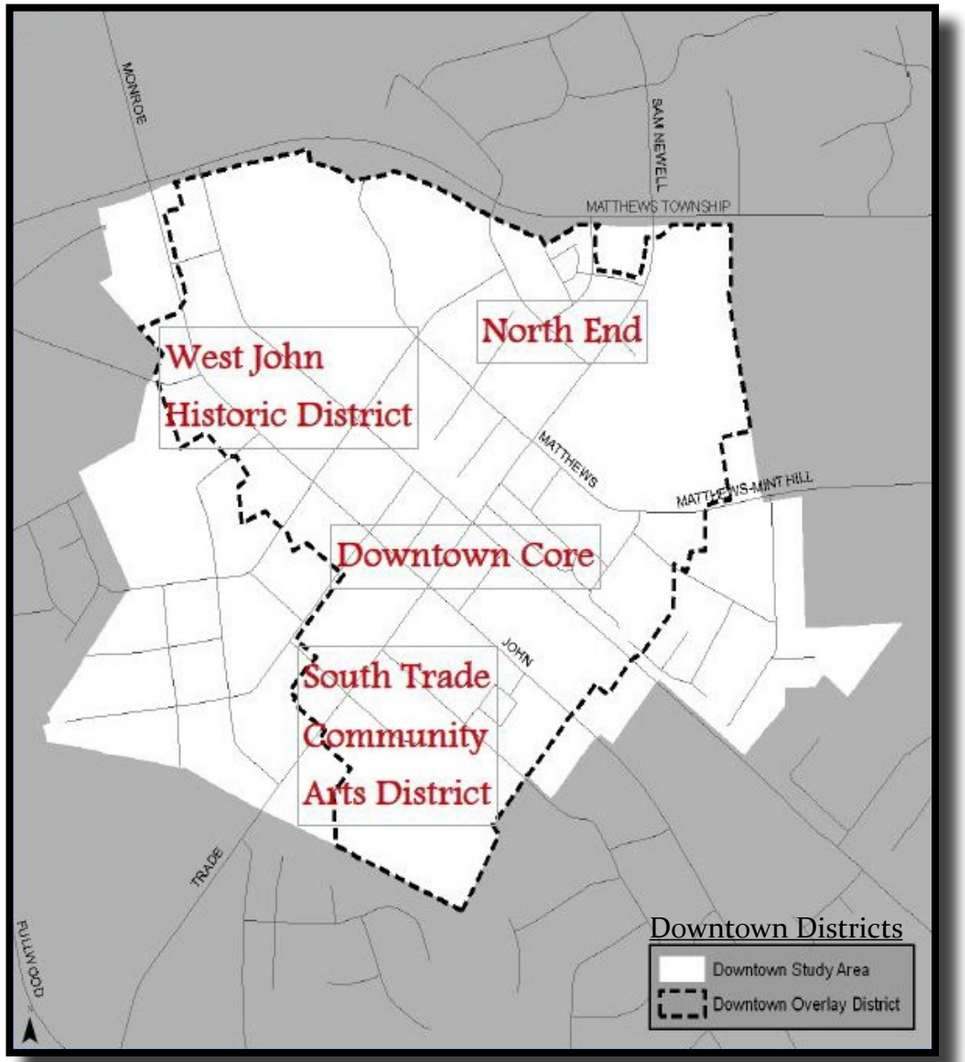
c. If existing street trees are determined to be healthy, and installation of other improvements would cause damage or removal of the existing tree(s).

d. Properties with less than 50' of road frontage.

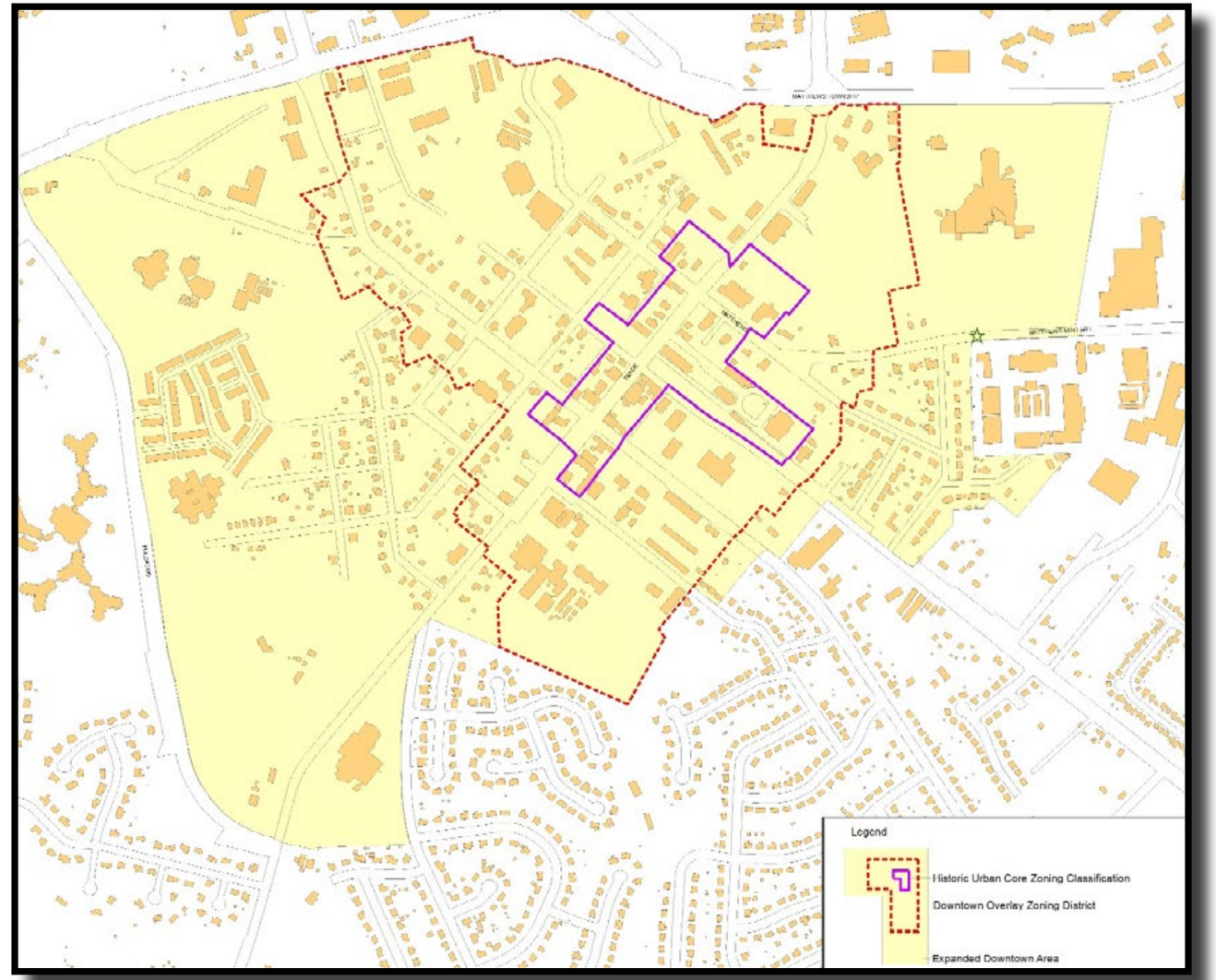
3. The calculation of the fee in lieu may be created by either the Town Public Works Department or the developer and shall be equal to 125% of the estimated cost of the installation of all the required improvements. Typical improvements required as a component of a streetscape construction plan may include but are not limited to sidewalk, widening of sidewalk, street trees, lighting, curb and gutter and on street parking. Fees in lieu are to be placed in a dedicated account for improvements within the downtown area.
4. All dedications of right-of-way and easements shall be recorded prior to obtaining building permits.

Process for Approval

1. An initial meeting with Public Works and Planning is required to determine scope of work.
2. Staff will determine the desired cross section based on Streetscape Improvement Plan.
3. Applicant will create draft infrastructure improvement plan and submit for review.
4. Public Works department must approve the infrastructure plan prior to issuance of building permits.



Downtown Districts



Map highlighting the Historic Urban Core, Downtown Overlay and Expanded Downtown Areas

Downtown Area

The recommendations presented in this guide refer to areas within the Downtown area as defined by the Town of Matthews Planning department. The above map delineates the area considered within the Downtown area.

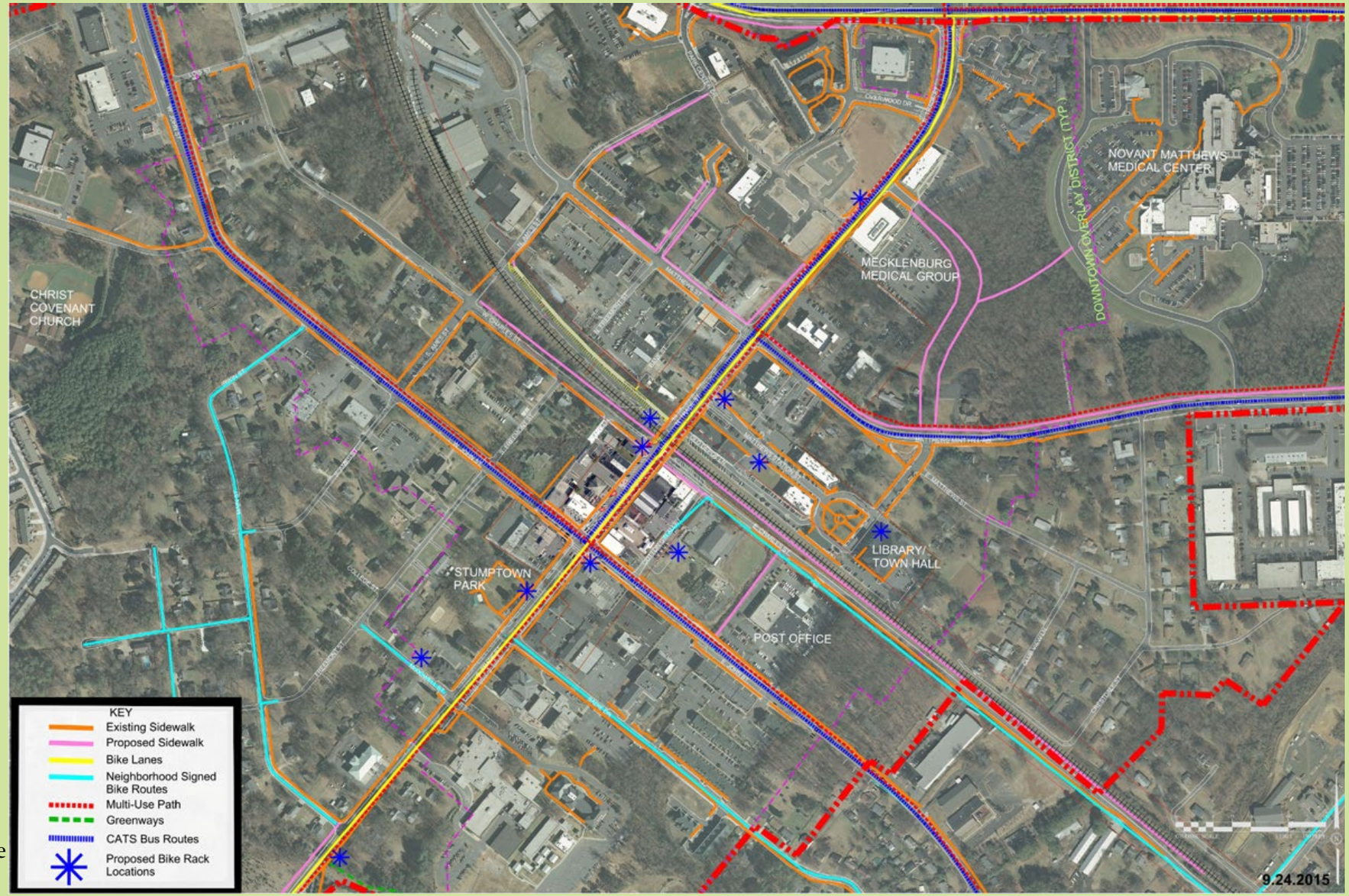
Alternative Transportation Paths Map (Walking Paths, Cycling and Bus Routes)

Bus equipped to accommodate cyclists needs

Bus stop location with bike rack

As the Town grows so will the need to provide pedestrian amenities. The map to the right displays existing and future alternative transportation routes.

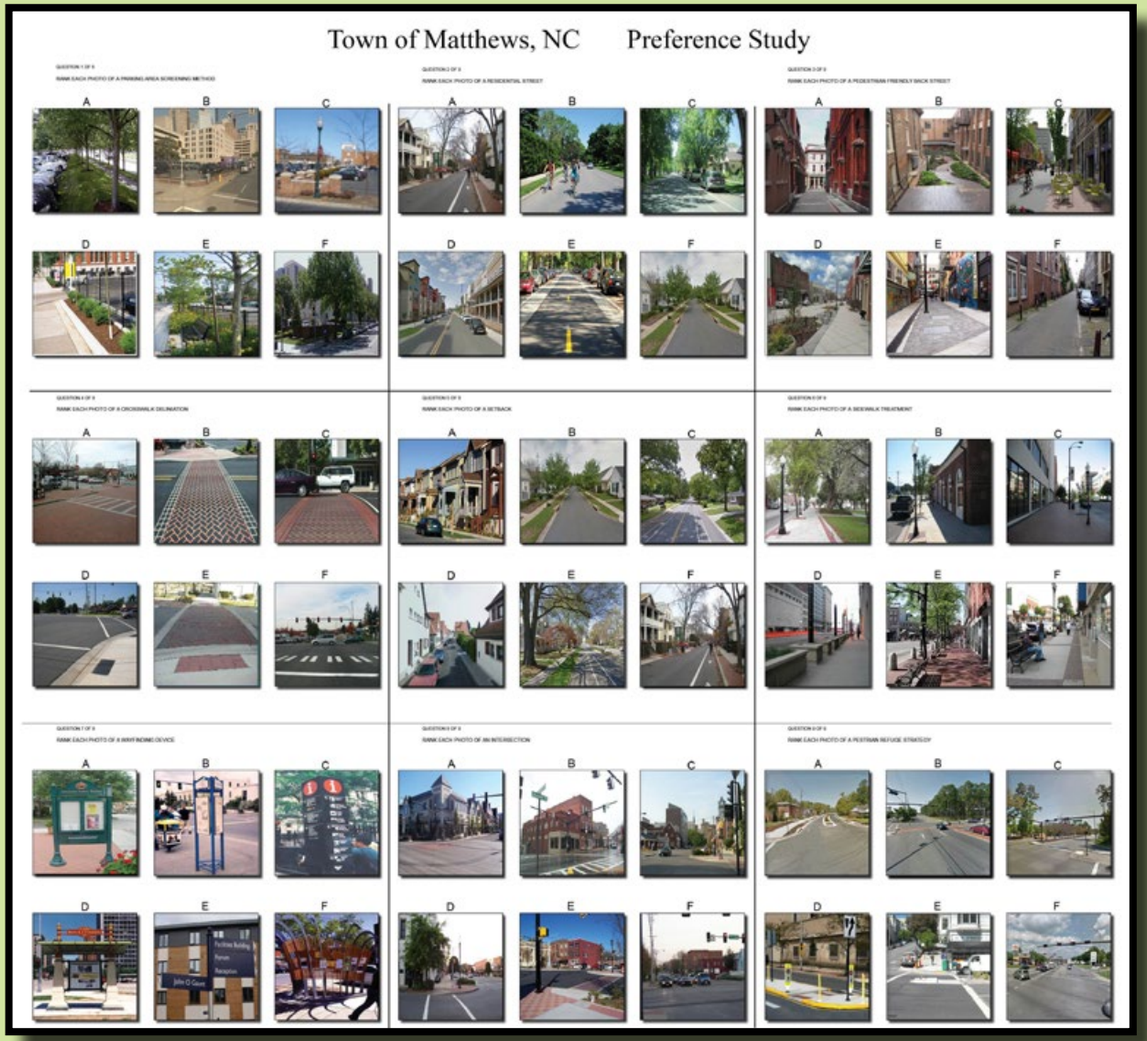
The town should follow the Matthews Composite Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.



Public Input

A Visual Preference Survey was conducted at the Food Truck Friday event held on September 18th, 2015. Public outreach included the preference exercise, review of proposed streetscape recommendations and open discussion. The survey was made available online via a link on the Town's webpage from September 18th thru October 6th. The survey consisted of different groups of images depicting potential streetscape treatments or urban environments. Participants were asked to rate each image in a given group according to their preference (***1** being most prefered - **6** least prefered*).

The participants' input can be used make inferences about visual preference as it relates to certain elements of streetscape design. Prioritized results of the survey participant's responses start with the highest preference and end with the least prefered image. There were 50 volunteer participants that provided input about their preferences. The results of the survey may be found below:



Results:

Q1: Preferences for "Parking Area Screening" method was as follows: **A, E, F, C, D, B**
Respondents favored wide, treed, green spaces over hardscape such as walls.

Q2: Preferences for "Residential Street" was as follows: **C, B, F, E, A, D**
Respondents favored streets that both accommodated pedestrians and provided vegetative screening between structures and the flow of traffic.

Q3: Preferences of a "Friendly Back Street" was as follows: **C, B, D, E, A, F**
Respondents favored back streets that incorporated vegetation and that offered places of respite.

Q4: Preferences for "Cross-walk Delineation" was as follows: **C, B, A, E, F, D**
Respondents preferred crosswalks with high contrasting colors and brick patterns over traditional, standard white striped designs.

Q5: Preferences for a "Setback" was as follows: **E, C, B, A, F, D**
Respondents preferred wide (20'-40'), suburban yard type setbacks that accommodate space for pedestrian paths and trees.

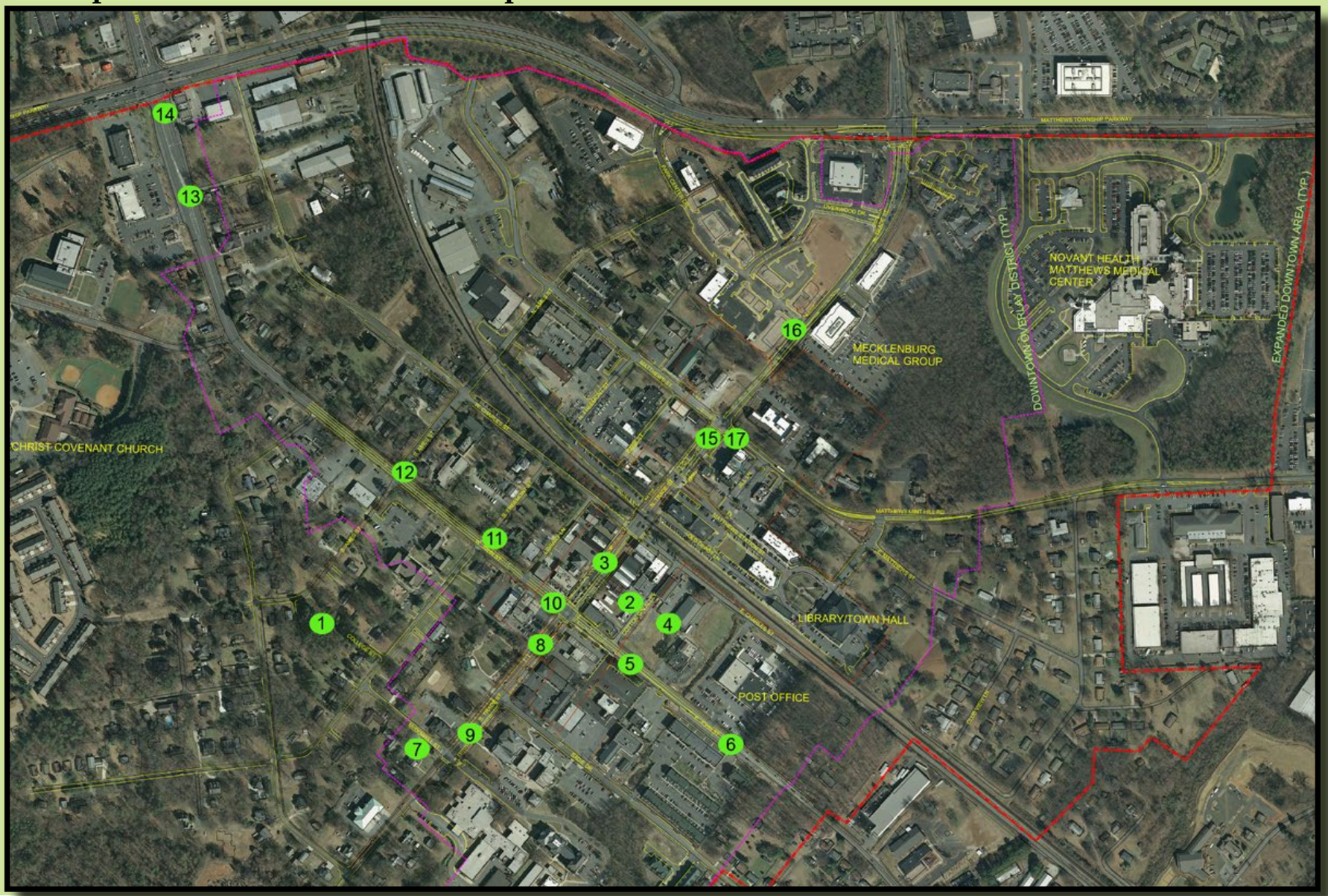
Q6: Preferences for "Sidewalk Treatment" was as follows: **A, E, F, C, B, D**
Respondents preferred brick accented, wide sidewalks that provide pedestrian amenities.

Q7: Preferences for "Wayfinding Devices" was as follows: **A, E, B, D, C, F**
Respondents preferred conservative, unobtrusive, traditional type wayfinding signage over larger, pretentious, landmark type signage.

Q8: Preferences for "Intersections" was as follows: **E, A, D, B, C, F**
Respondents favored decorative paving (distinct colors and materials), space for landscaping, and pedestrian oriented amenities. The look would be more "village" and less "city".

Q9: Preferences for a "Pedestrian Refuge Strategy" was as follows: **C, A, D, B, E, F**
Respondents favored those street crossings that provided a pedestrian refuge island integrated within the street median. Preference was for highly visible waiting areas within vegetated, well-marked, pedestrian oriented locations.

Example Cross-section Location Map

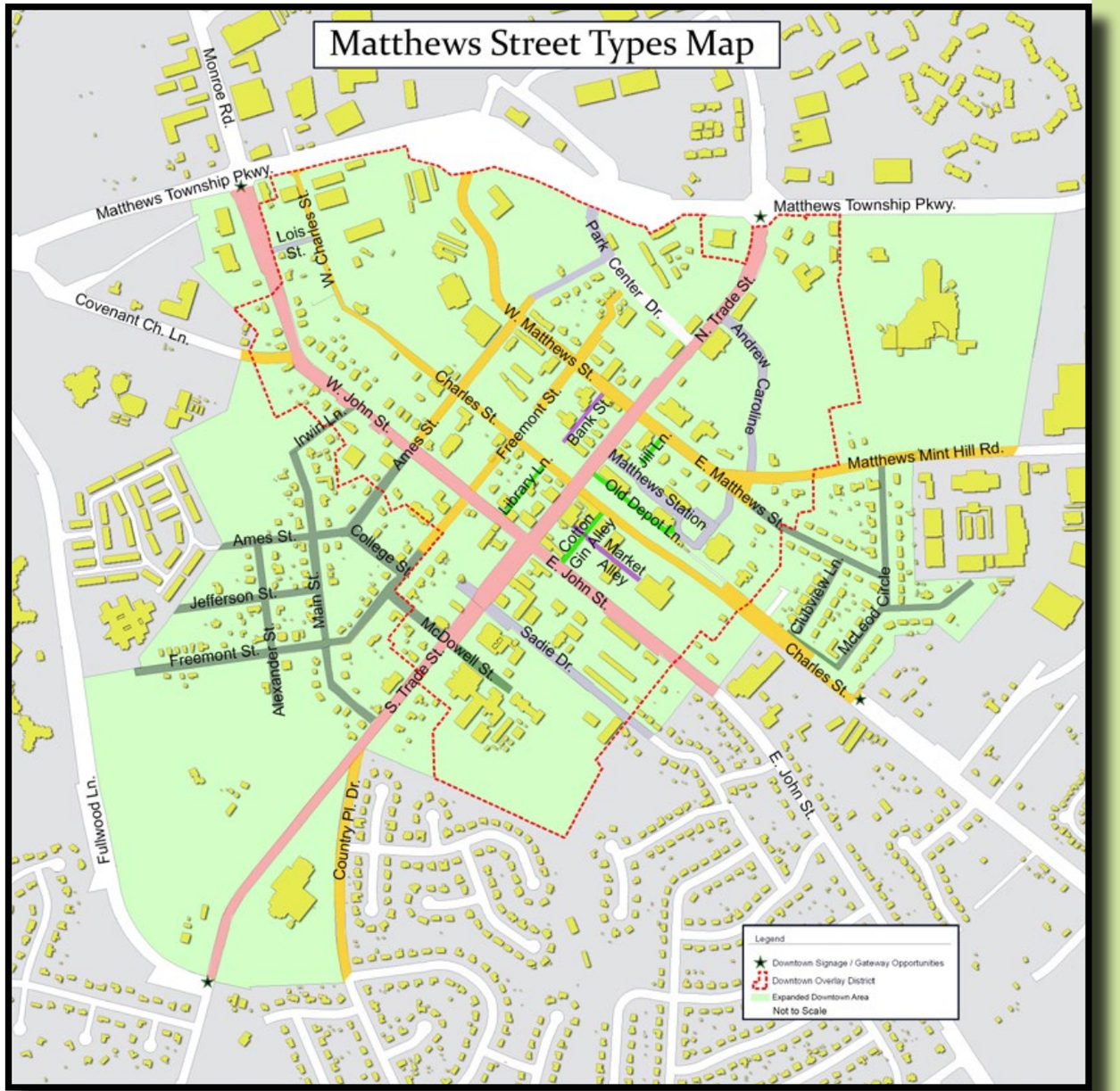


Please refer to the street types map on page eight (8) of this document for typical, recommended cross-sections for most Downtown streets. Locations/corridors with cross-section recommendations that deviate from the typical may be identified via this map.

Cross-section Locations

1. College Street
2. Cotton Gin Alley (John St. to Mid-Block)
   Cotton Gin Alley (Mid-Block to Charles St.)
3. 100 Block of N. Trade
4. Market Alley
5. E. John (BB&T to Trade)
6. E. John (Buckley Way to BB&T)
7. McDowell St.
8. S. Trade at W. John
9. S. Trade at Baptist Church
10. W. John at Trade (options A & B)
11. W. John near Freemont St.
12. W. John near Ames St.
13. W. John near Lois St.
14. W. John at Matthews Township Pkwy.
15. N. Trade at Matthew St.
16. N. Trade at Park Center Dr.
17. E. Matthews at Trade St.

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Street Types vary within the Downtown Area

Purpose

The Street Types Map displays corridors where typical minimum streetscape standards are recommended. Streetscape design features, and building-to-street relationships will support the development of Downtown as a focus of the community and a pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal transportation friendly area. Standards of design for each type of street are graphically illustrated within this document. Specific locations where variations to the typical minimum cross-sections are recommended can be identified via the Cross-section Locations Map on page 7.

Street Types

These Street Type designations will ensure consistent application of appropriate streetscape dimensions and treatments based on types of uses and levels of intensity throughout the different Downtown districts.

Arterial - Trade Street and John Street

Downtown Collector Street - Matthews Street, Country Place Drive, Part of (north) Freemont Street, Matthews-Mint Hill Road, Covenant Church Lane, Part of (north) Ames Street[1], Charles Street[1]

Local Street - Sadie DriveMatthews Station Street, Park Center Drive, Andrew Caroline, Lois Street

Urban Residential Street - Clubview Lane, Irwin Lane, College Street, McDowell Street McLeod Circle, Jefferson Street, Alexander Street, Main Street, Part of East Matthews Street, Part of (south) Freemont Street, Part of (south) Ames Street

Woonerf - Market Alley, Bank Street

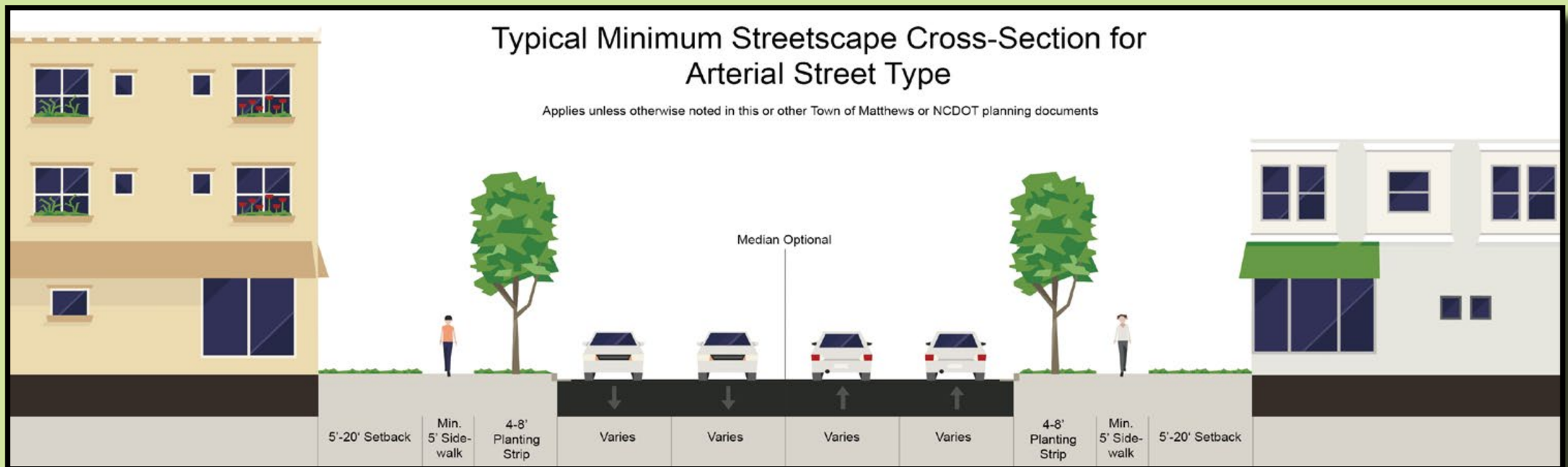
Urban Lane - Cotton Gin Alley, Old Depot Lane, Jill Lane, Library Lane

[1] A unique cross-section applies for this corridor

Arterial (Trade Street, John Street)

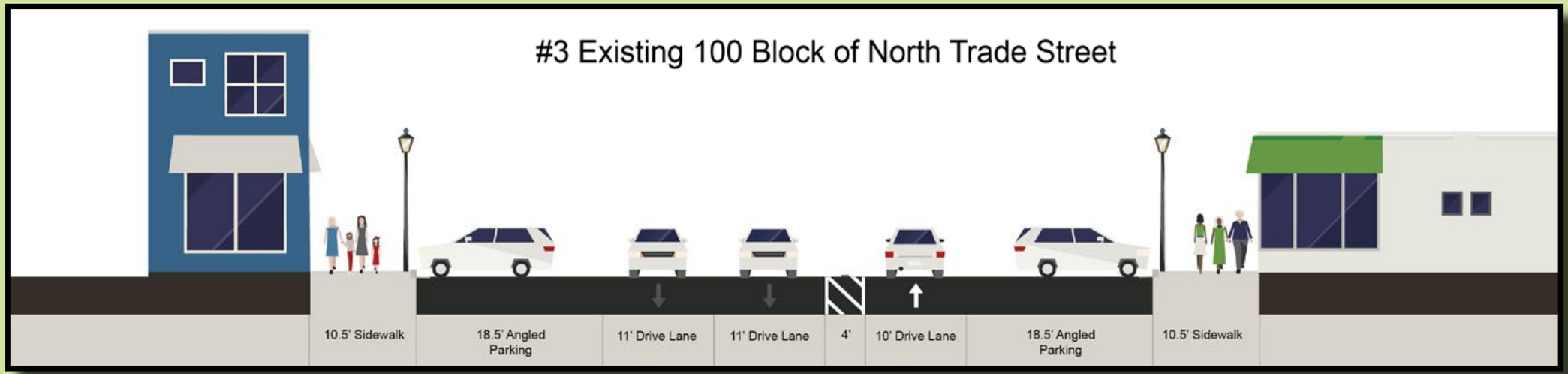
For the **Arterial** Street Type, all the following minimum Street Type Standards are recommended:

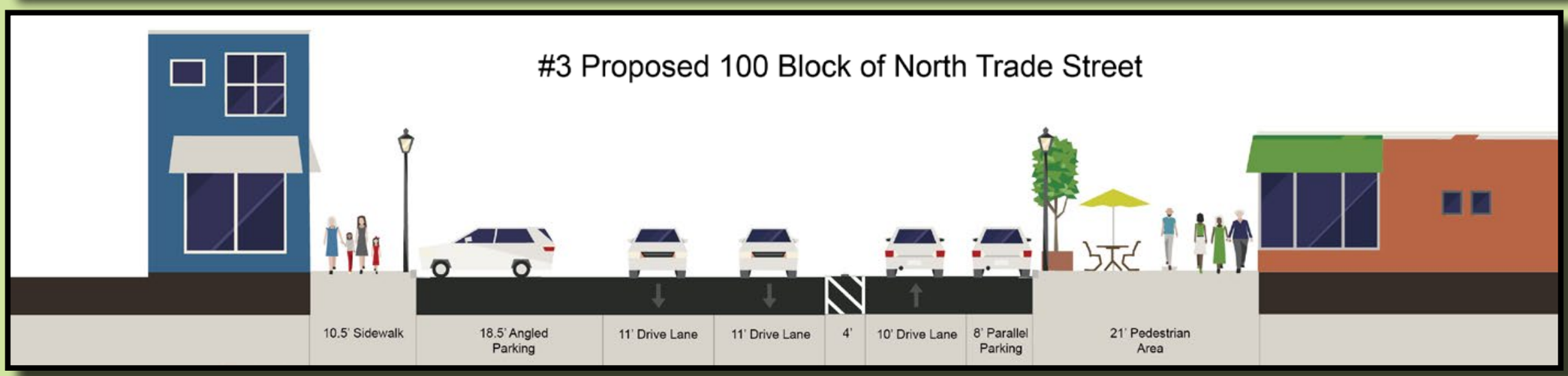
- A clear, accessible sidewalk with a minimum width of 5' is recommended. However, a multi-use path on one side of the street is encouraged.
- A planting strip is recommended between the sidewalk and travel lane. This amenity zone may consist of street trees, street lighting, landscaping and/or seating.
- On-street parking is not recommended for this street type, except on Trade Street.
- It is recommended that street lamp lighting be located within the planting strip area and be at least 2.5' from the face of curb or edge of pavement if curbing is not in place.
- Existing driveway cuts should be maintained and any new driveways must be approved by the Town of Matthews, and NCDOT prior to construction.



100 Block of North Trade Between John and Charles Streets (Looking South)

The proposed changes to the 100 block of North Trade Street predominantly consist of moving the face of curb on the west side of the street out 11' towards the center of the street thus eliminating the angled parking while establishing parallel parking in its place. This would affect the north half of this block up to the point where the existing parallel parking. This existing parallel parking shall remain. The advantage of this proposed change is that a wider pedestrian area is established.





100 Block of North Trade Between John and Charles Streets - Conceptual Improvements

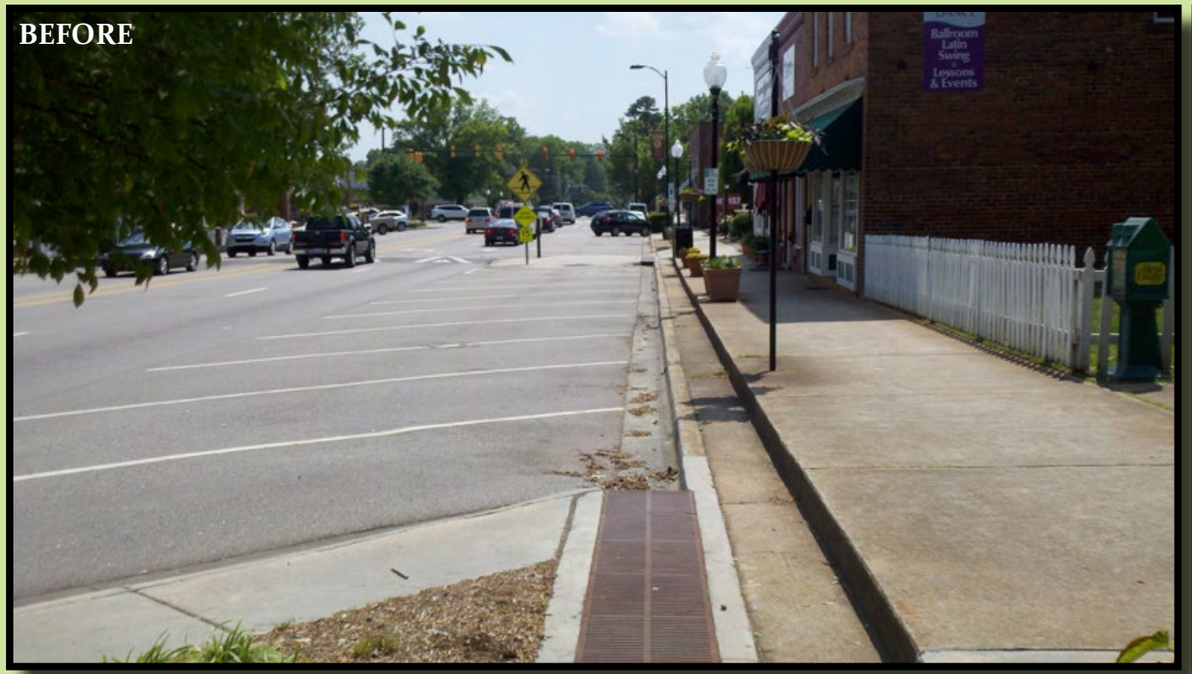
EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing 100 block of North Trade Street may be improved by the creation of pedestrian oriented spaces. Currently there is a lack of public seating and gathering areas. Parking is difficult to use because of its orientation and typical traffic volumes. Curb appeal is limited by the lack of typical streetscape elements such as vegetation, seating, art, etc.

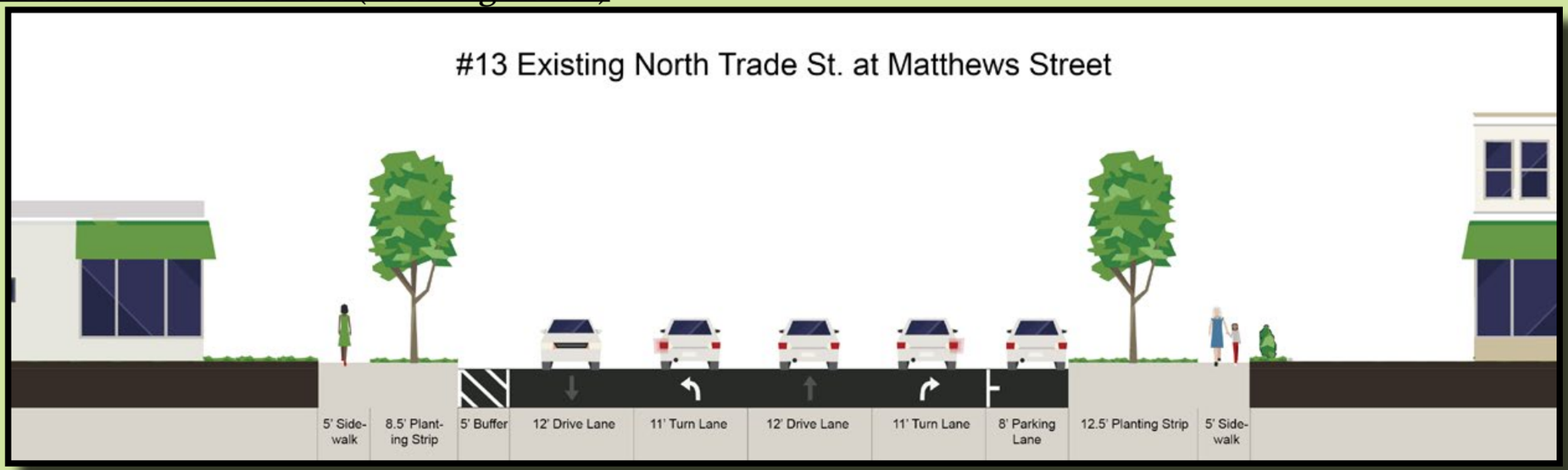
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

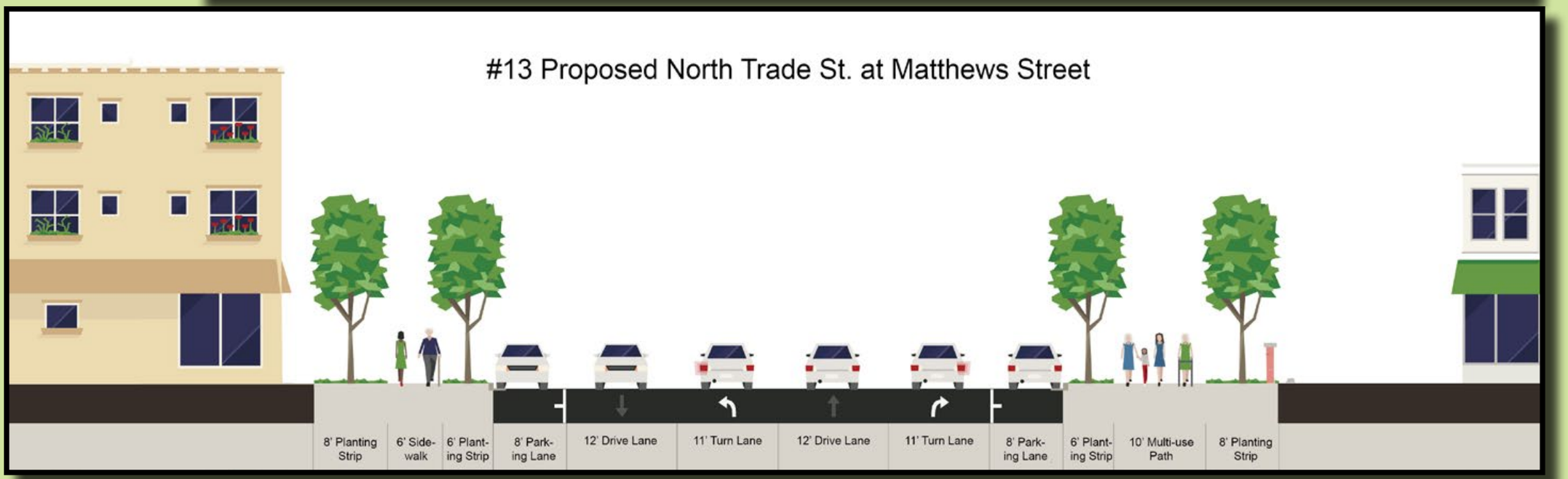
This concept consists of a public space created by widening the existing sidewalk. Existing angled spaces would be replaced by parallel spaces. Small street trees would be installed in tree pits where existing space currently exists.

100 Block of North Trade Between John and Charles Streets (Looking South)



North Trade Street at Matthews Street (Looking North)





Photographic Representations (Before & After)

The following "Before and After" images provide a graphical representation of how new and existing streets could be developed or redeveloped in the future. Many different streetscape elements such as sidewalks, multipurpose paths, traffic calming, street lighting, landscaping, buildings and parking configurations are explored.

The intent of the photographic representations is not to dictate specific design expectations or configurations but instead are meant to relay design possibilities intended to encourage an attractive and successful public realm.

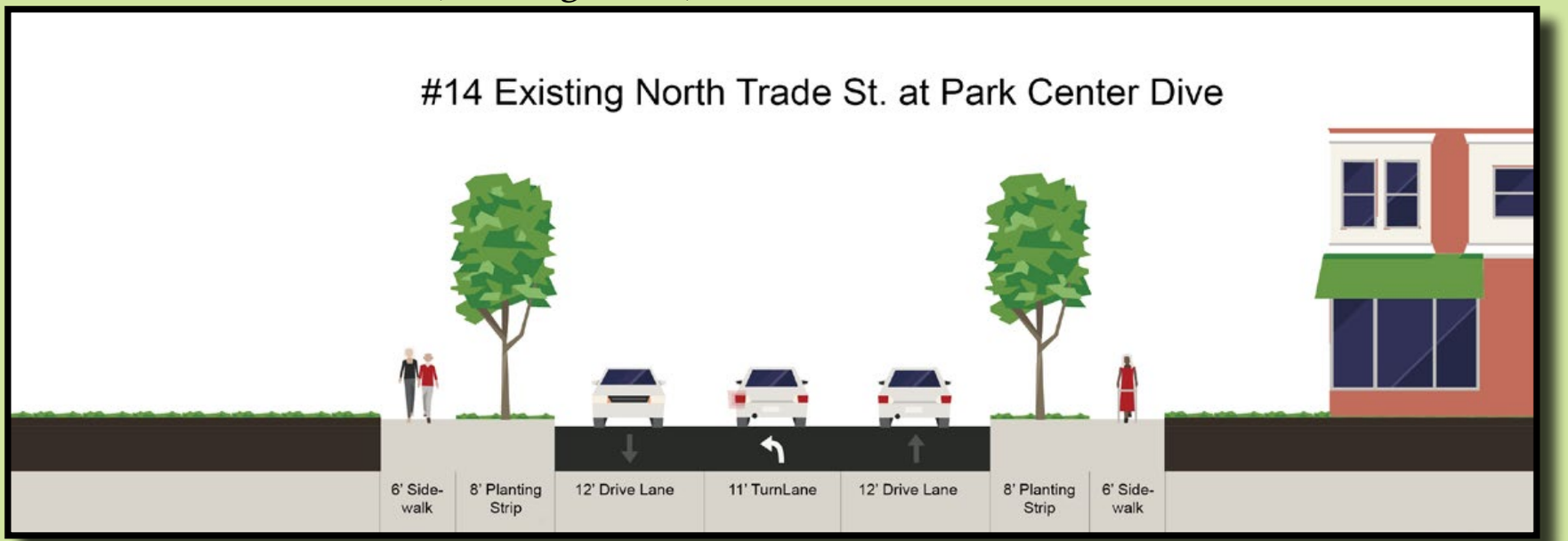
North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (1)

North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (2)

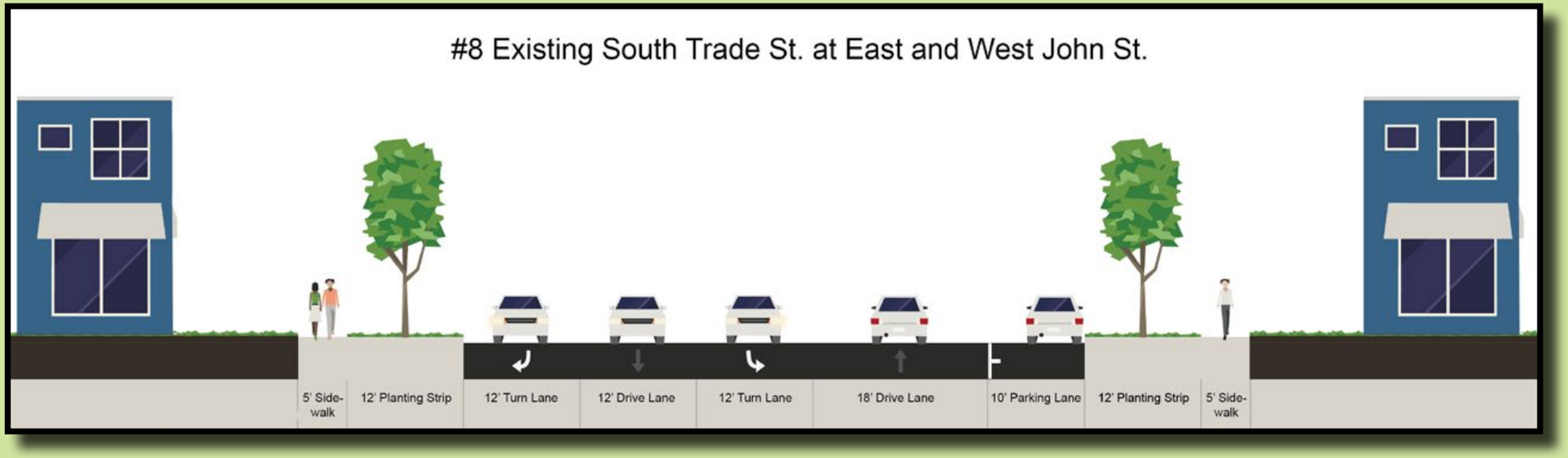
North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (3)

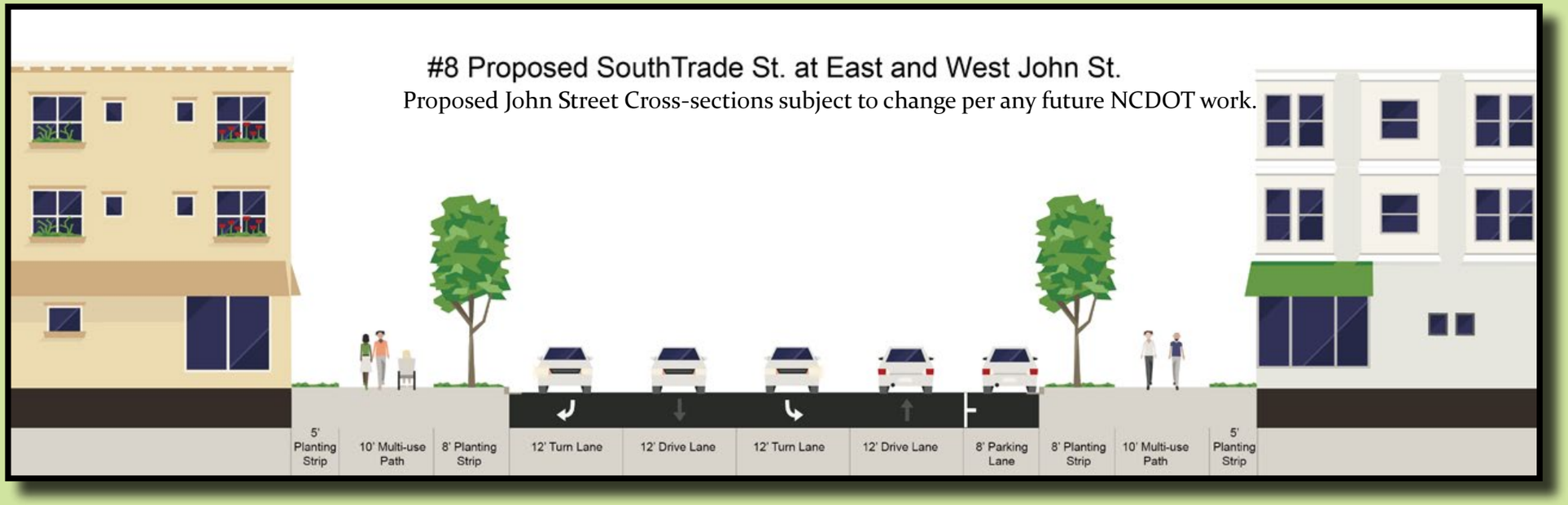
North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (4)

North Trade Street Near Park Center Drive (Looking North)



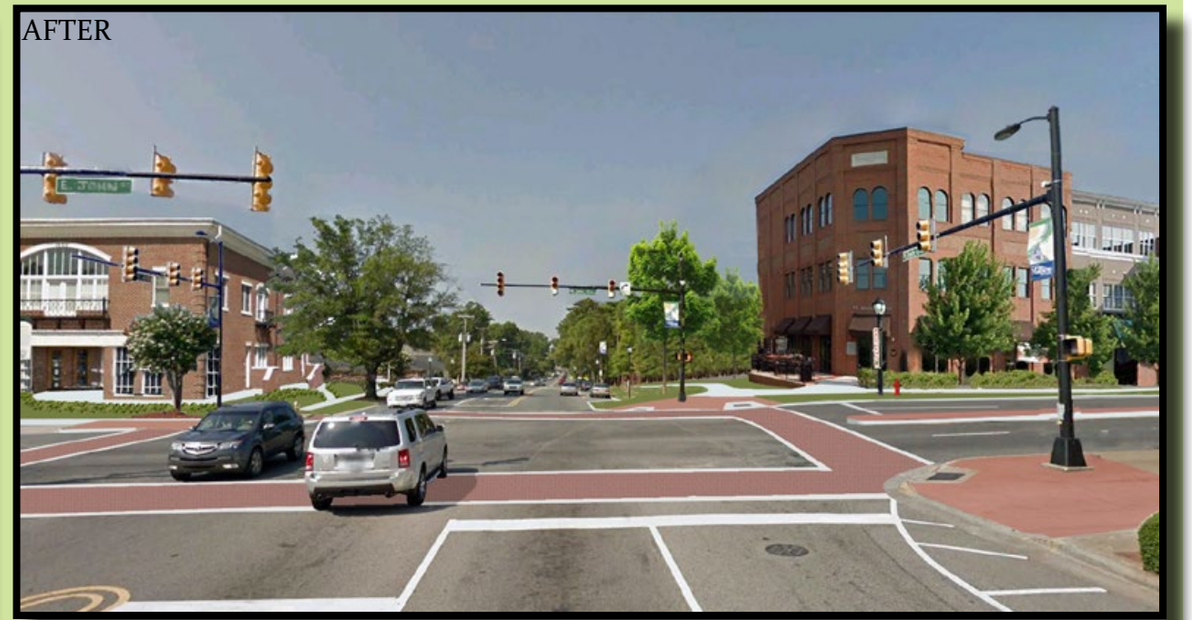
South Trade Street at East and West John Street (Looking South)



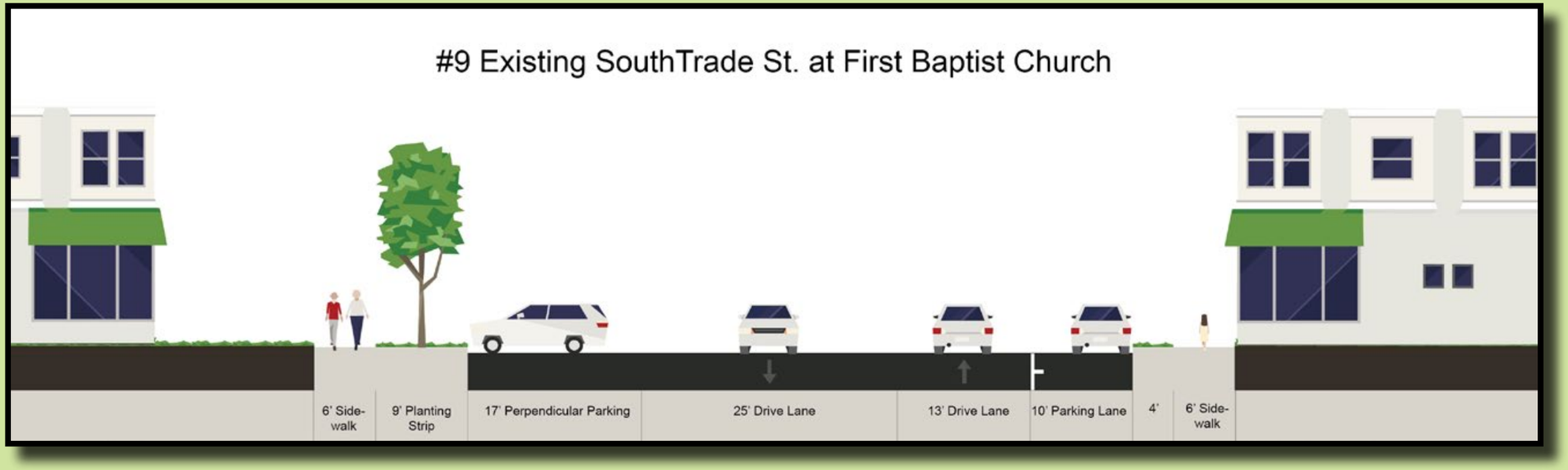


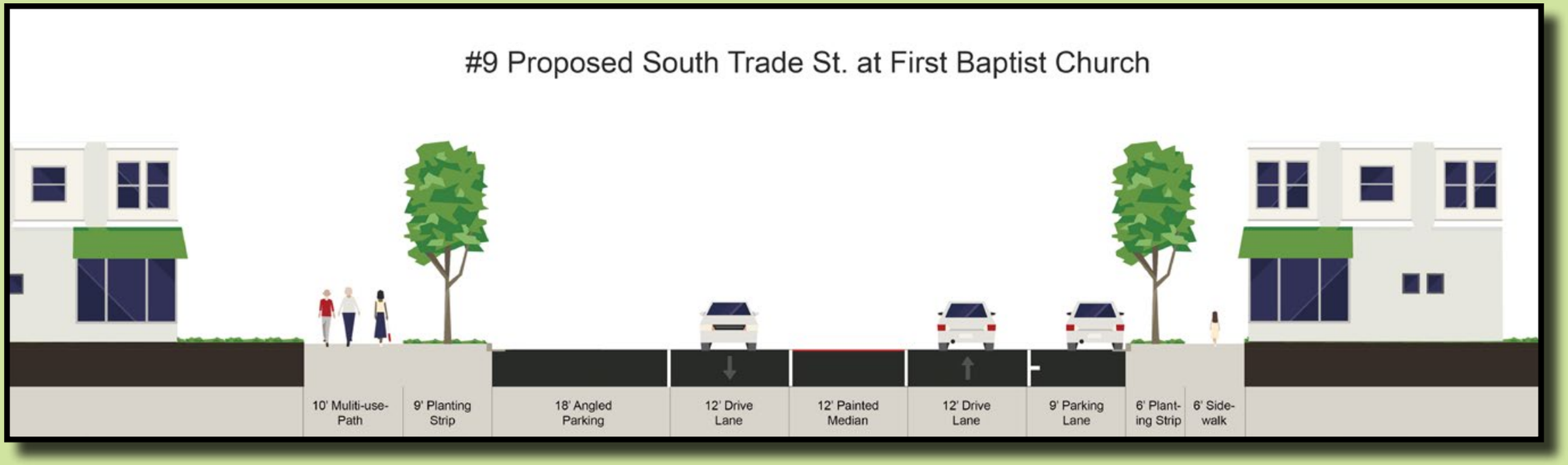
Concept for Trade Street and John Street Intersection

Proposed John Street Cross-sections subject to change per any future NCDOT work.



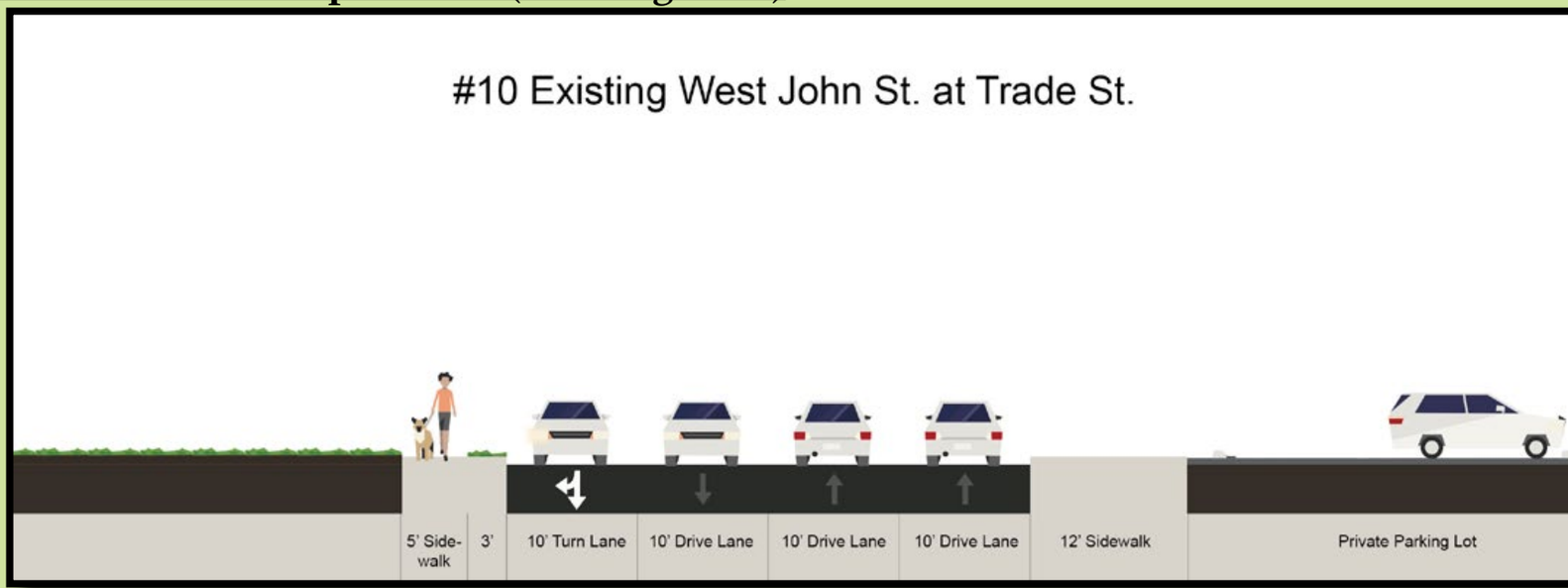
South Trade Street at First Baptist Church (Looking South)

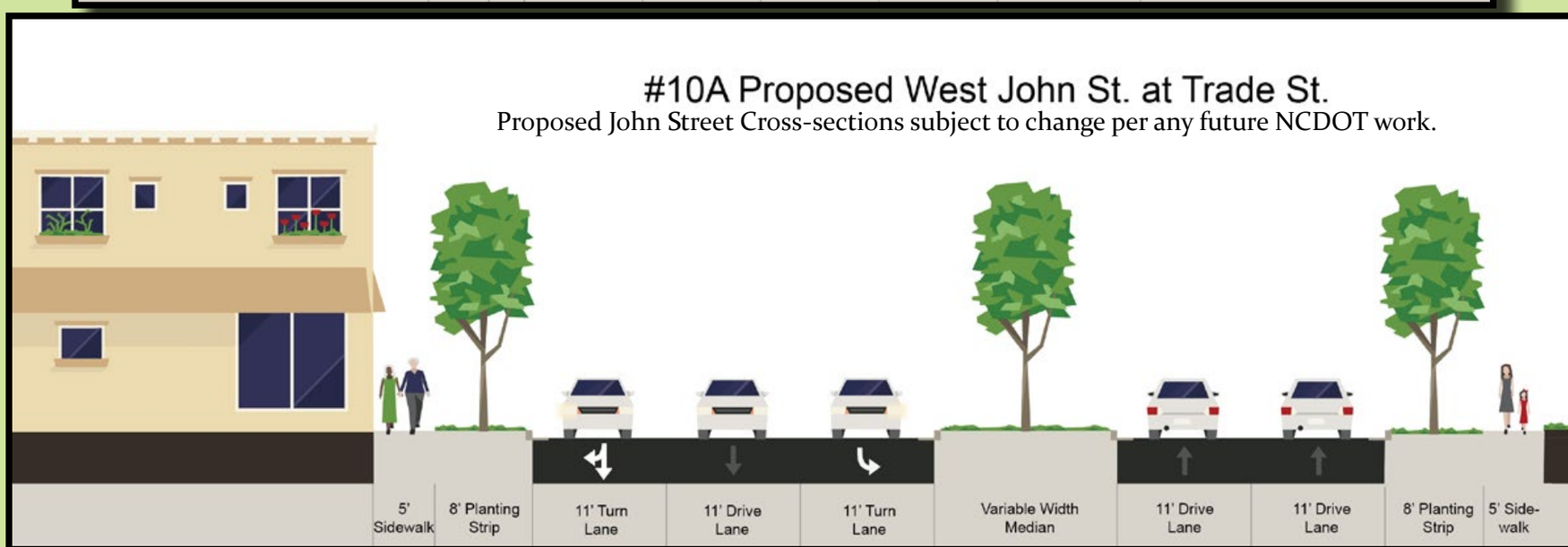




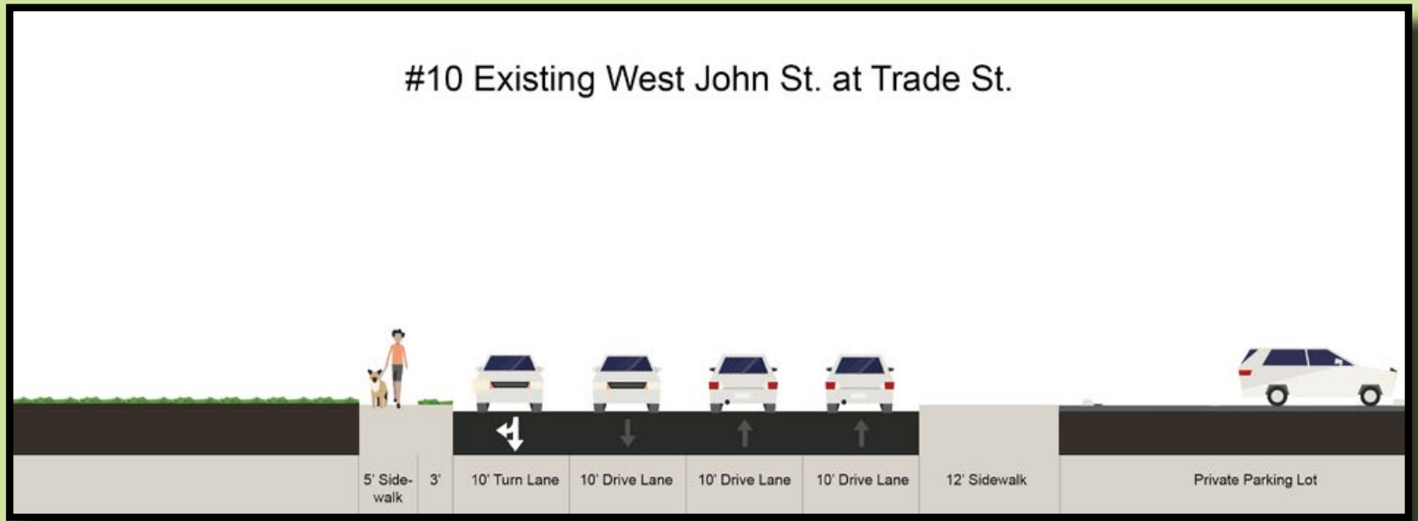
South Trade Street at First Baptist Church (Looking North)

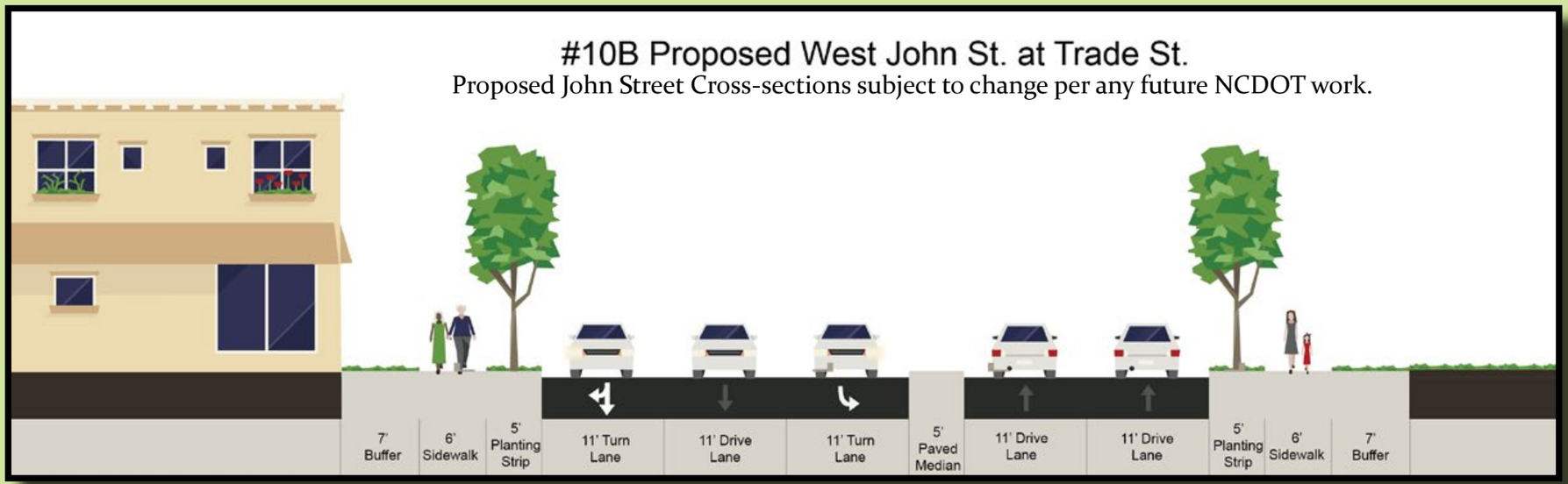
West John Street at Trade Street - Option 10A (Looking West)



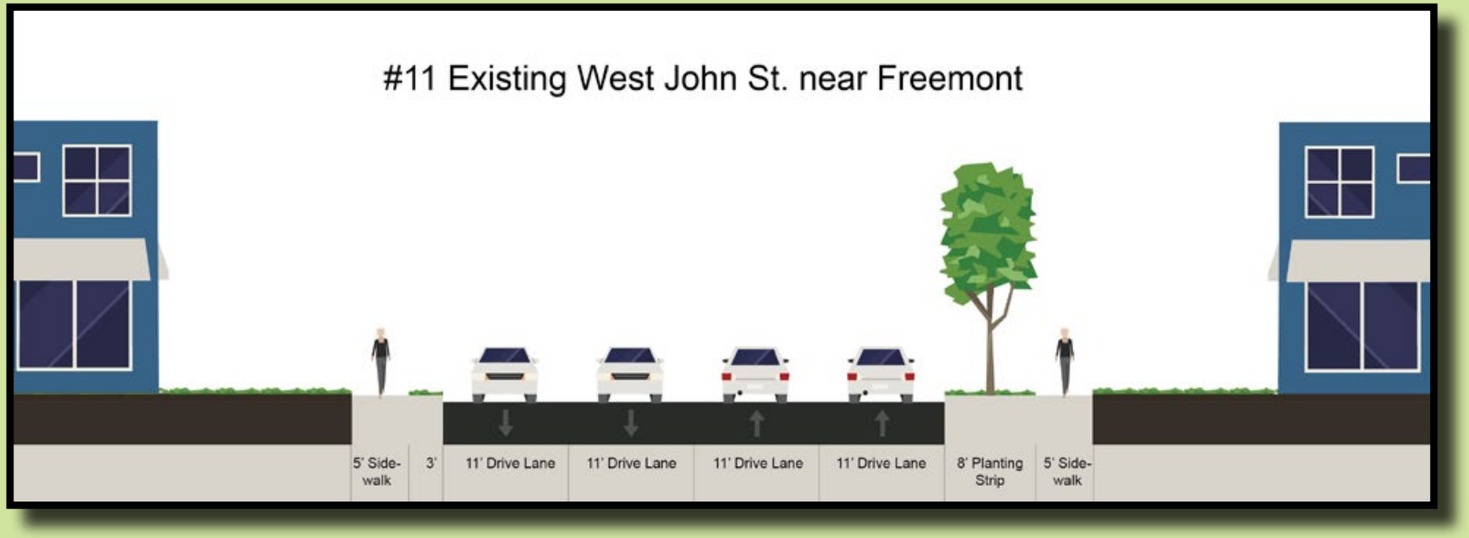


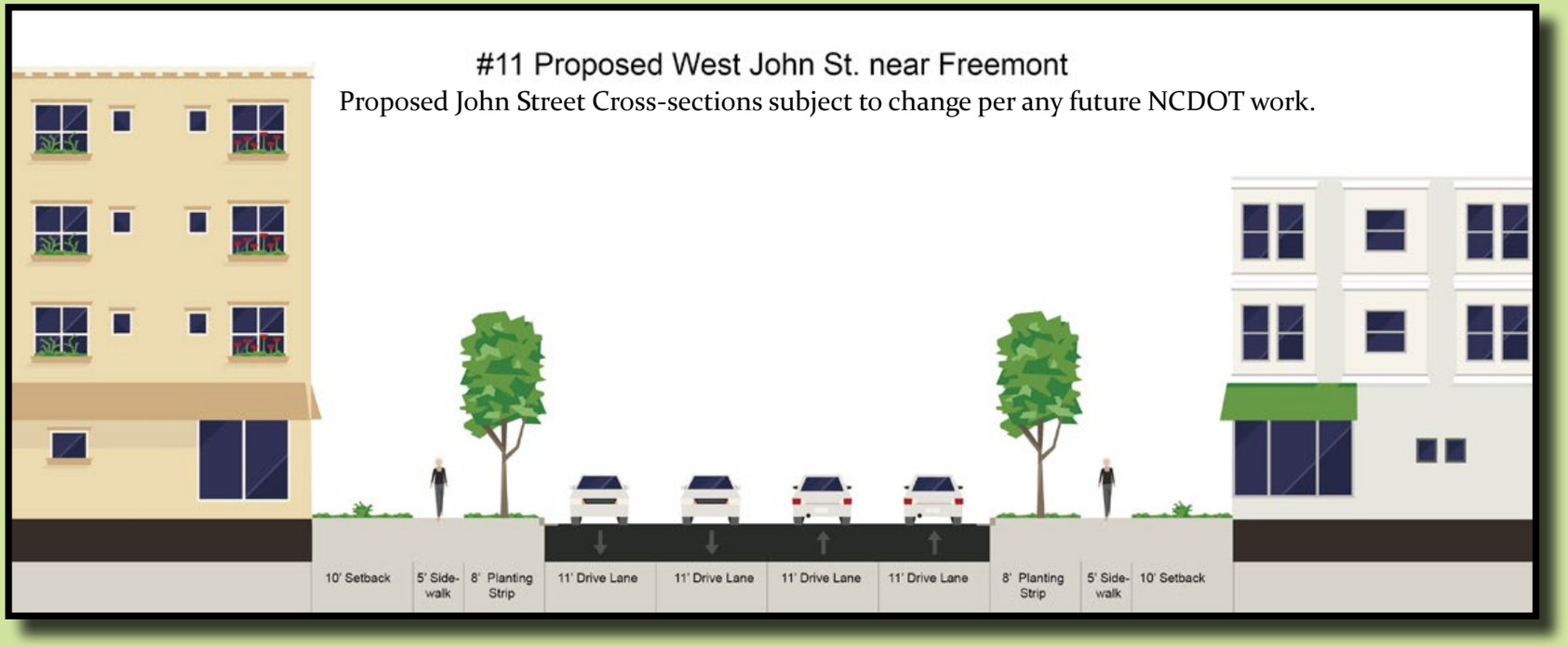
West John Street at Trade Street - Option 10B (Looking West)



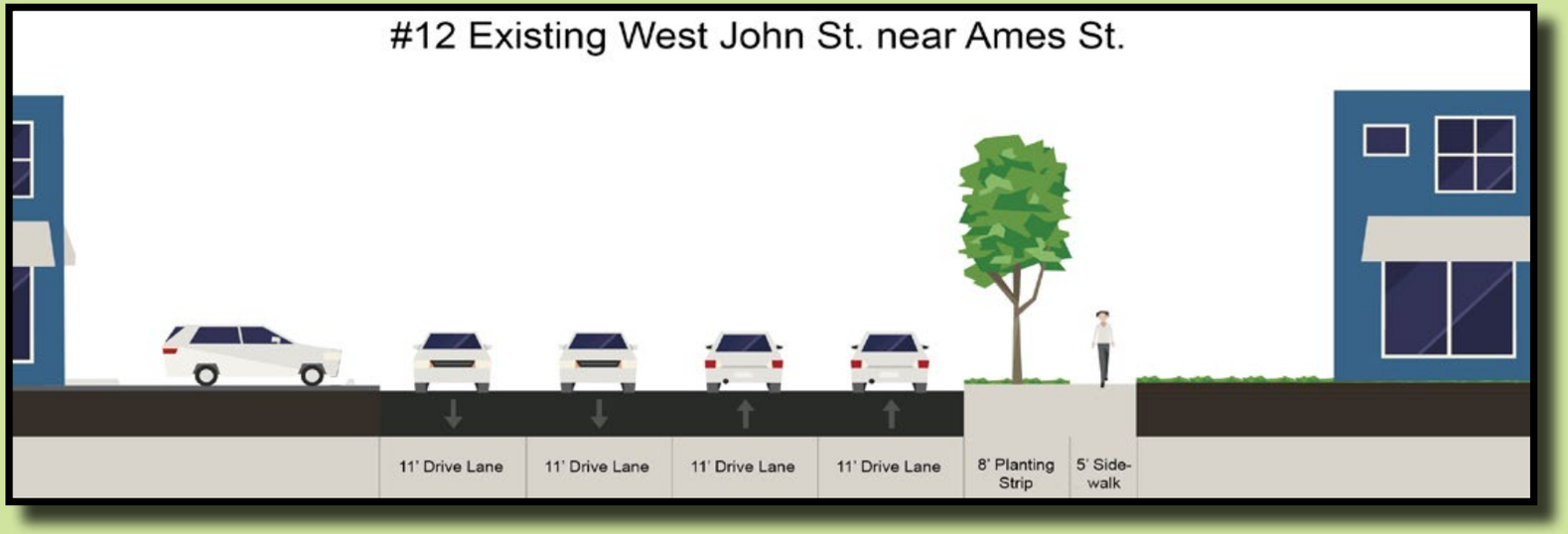


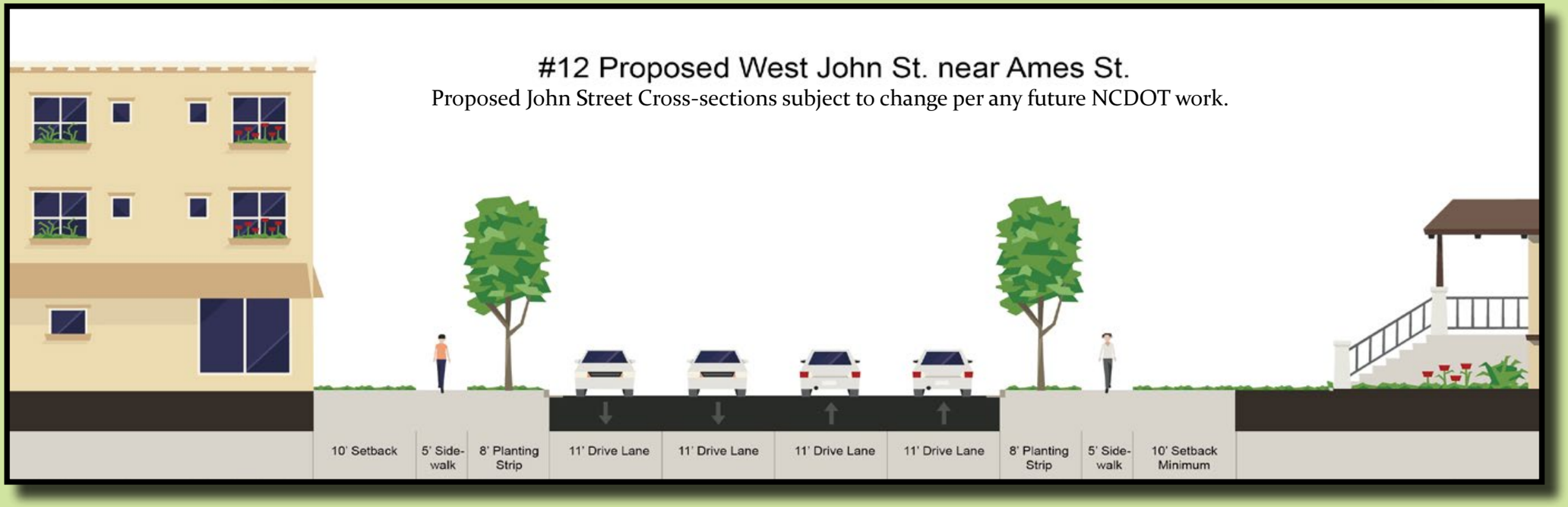
West John Street Near Freemont Street





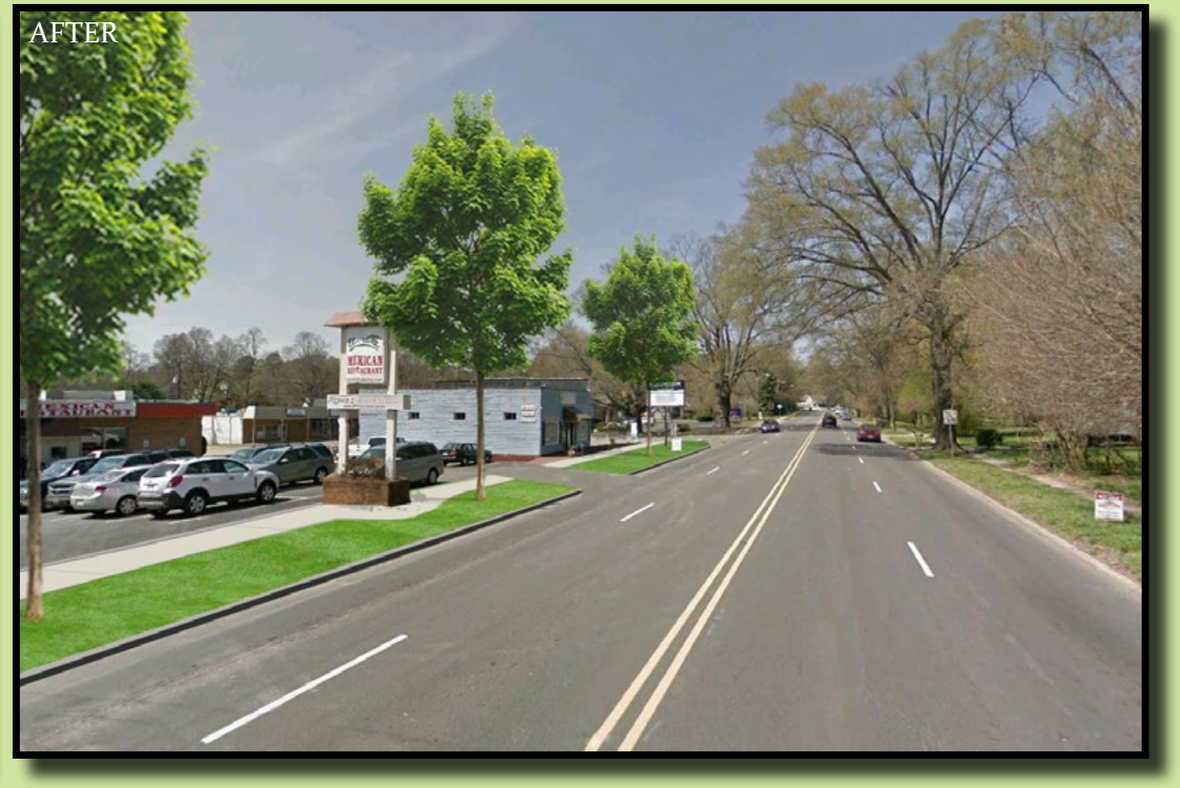
West John Street Near Ames Street



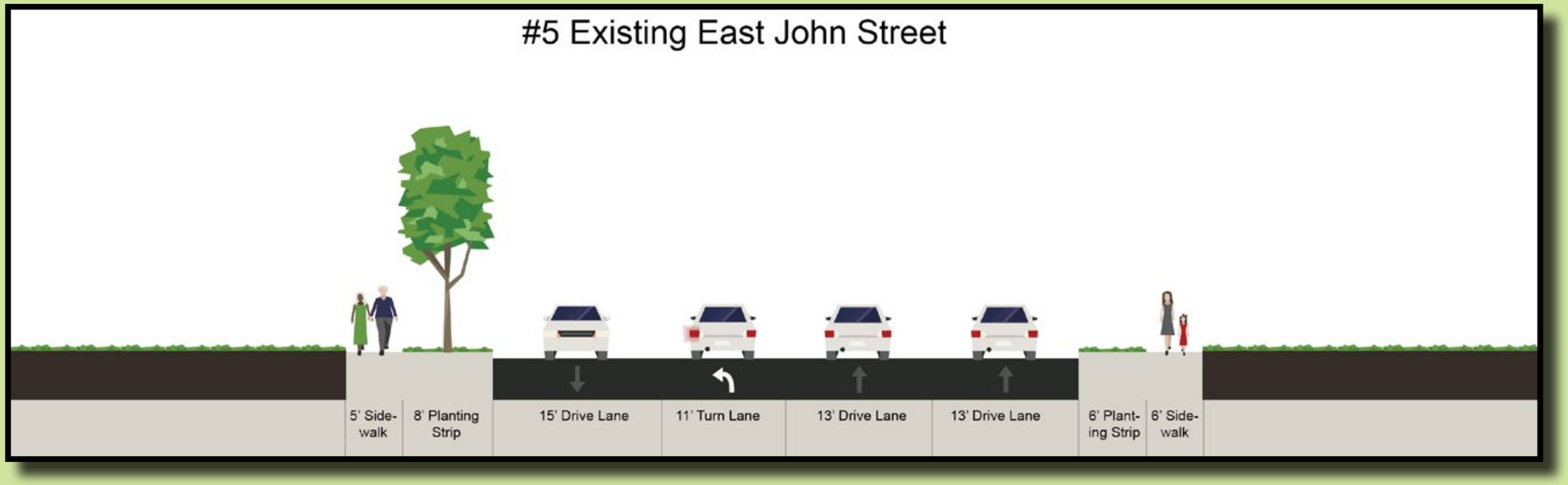


West John Street between Ames Street and Irwin Lane (Looking West)

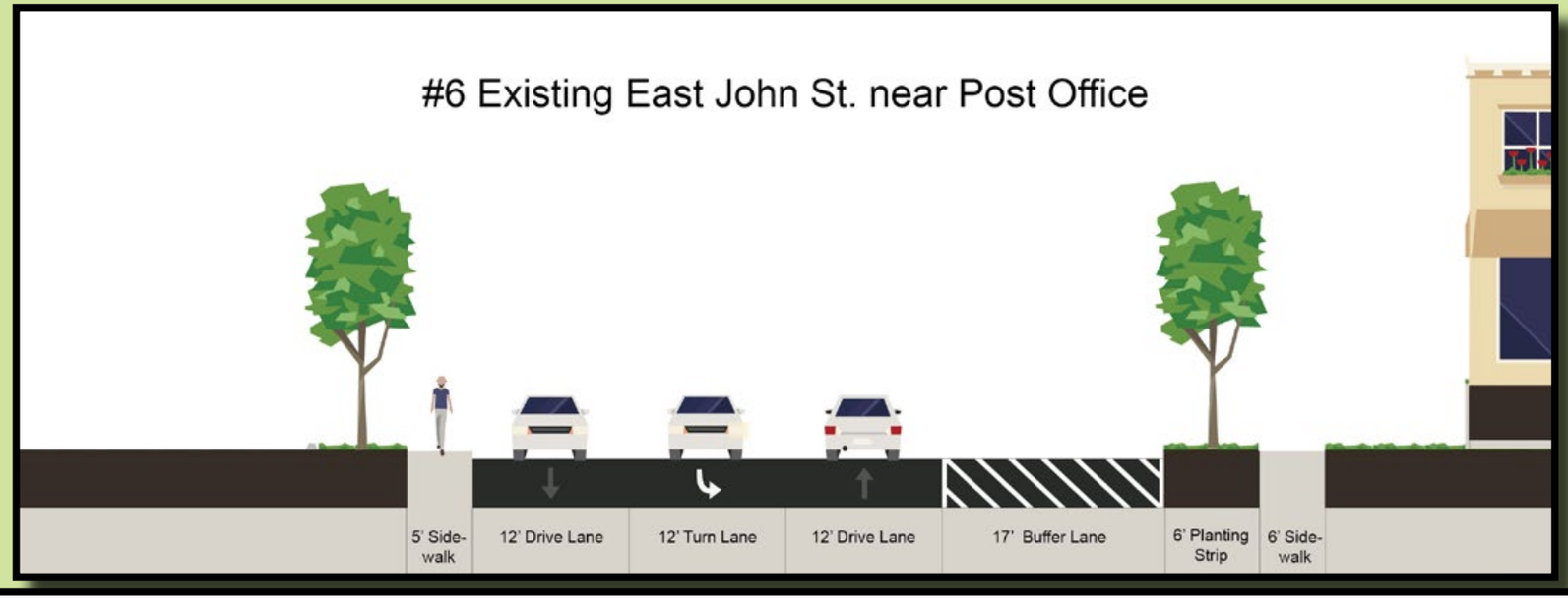
Proposed John Street improvements subject to change per any future NCDOT work.

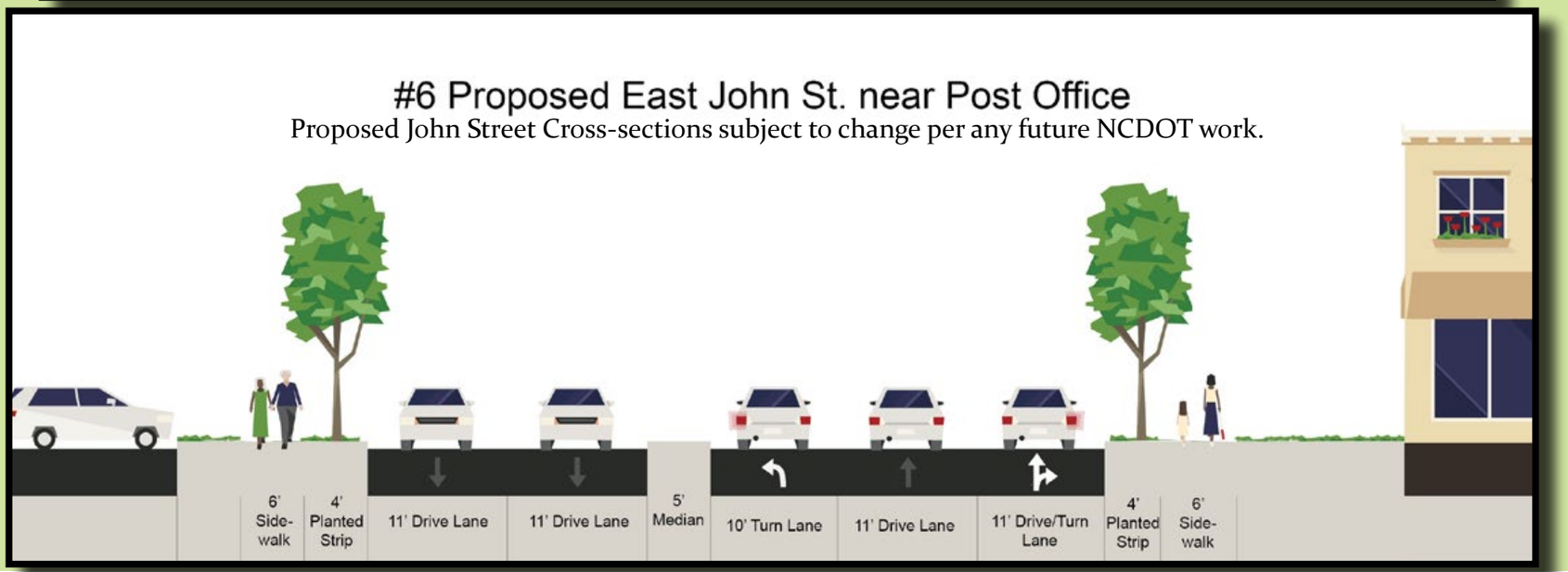


Typical East John Street from BB&T to Trade Street (Looking West)



East John Street near Post Office - From BB&T to Buckley Way (Looking East)

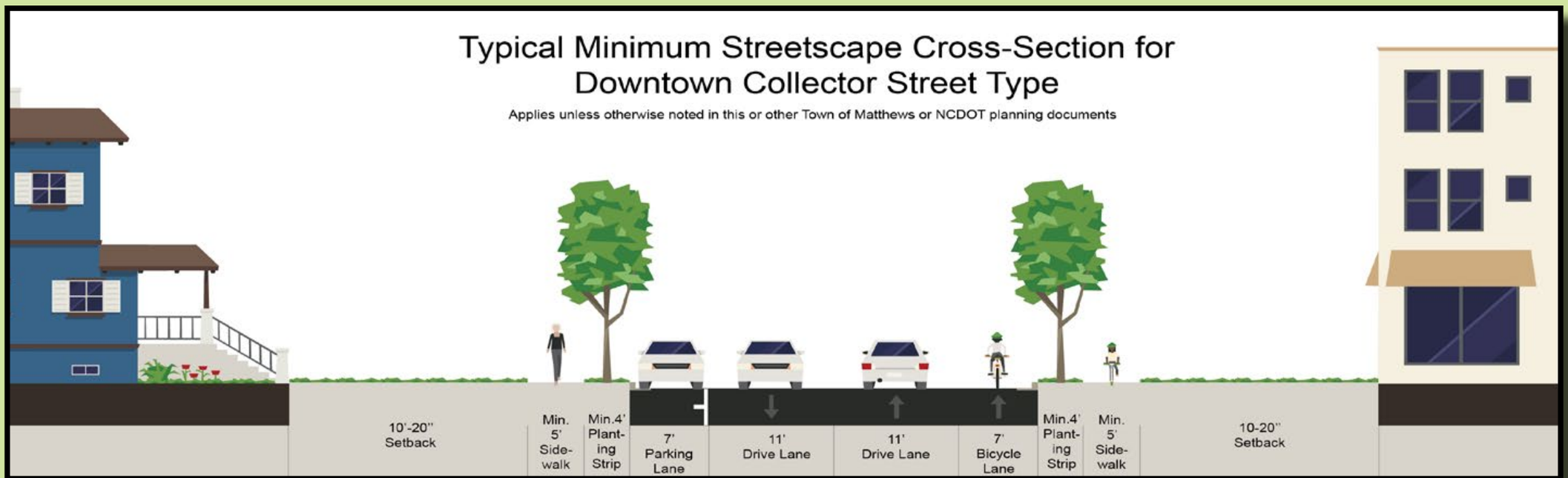




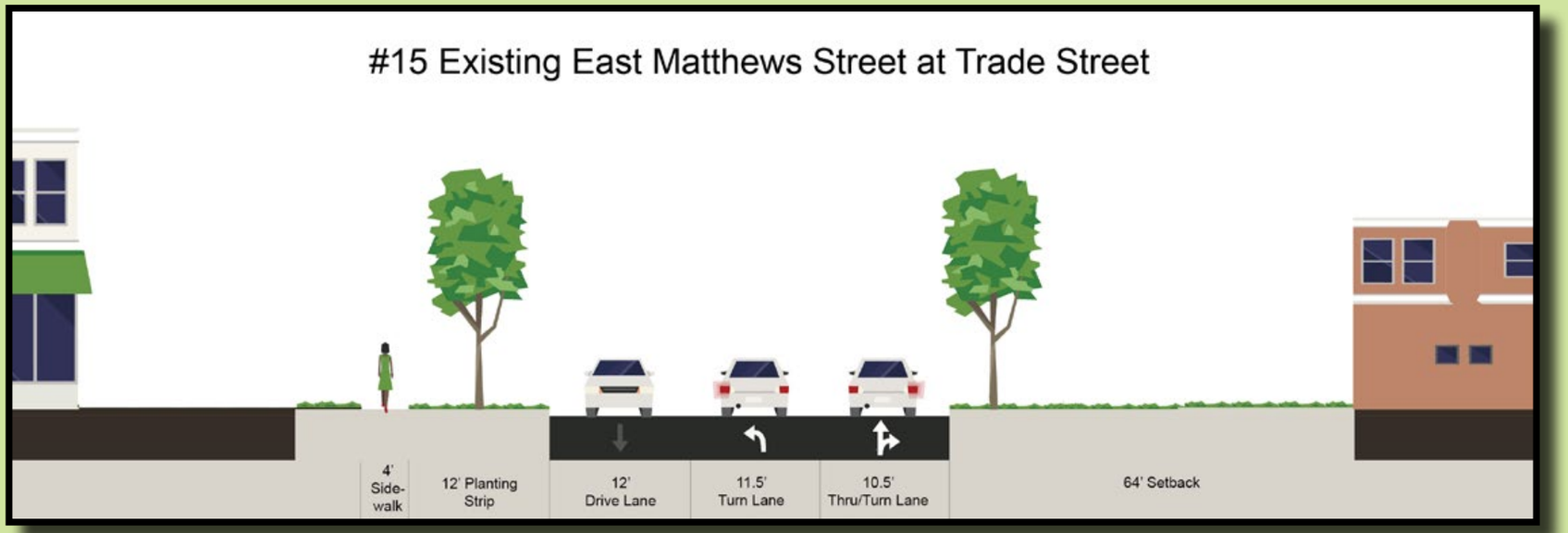
Downtown Collector Street **(Matthews Street, Country Place Drive, Part of (north) Freemont Street, Matthews-Mint Hill Road, Covenant Church Lane, Part of (north) Ames Street, Charles Street)**

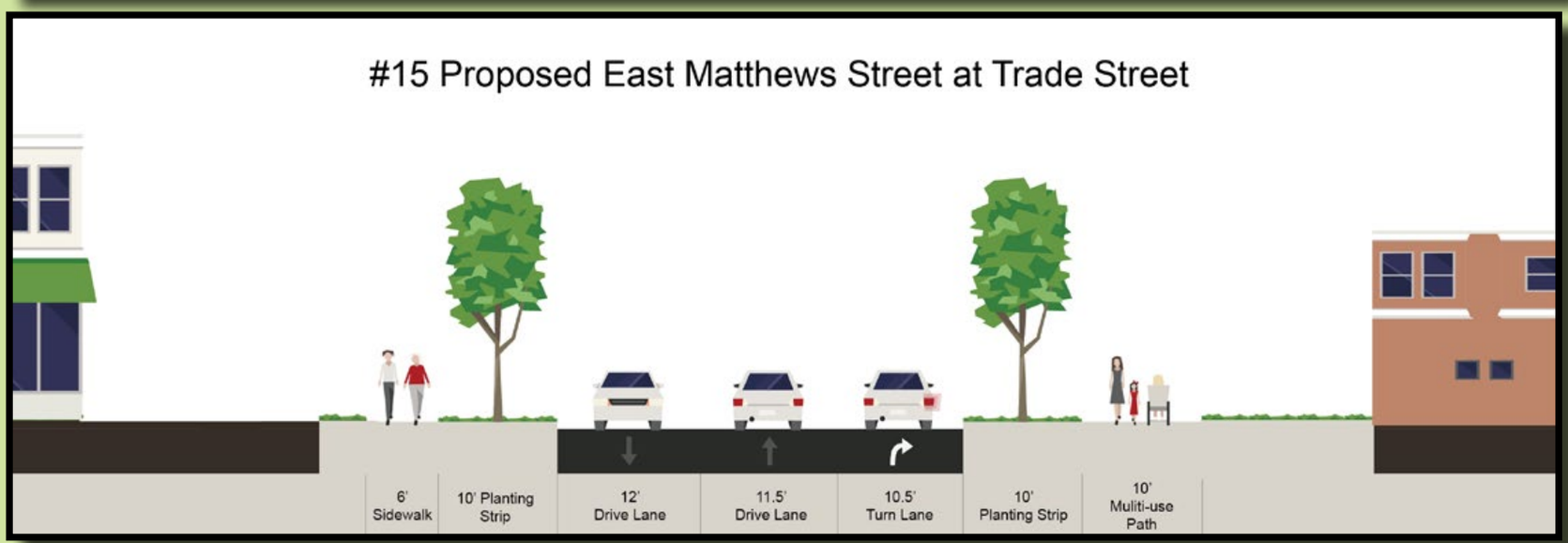
For the **Downtown Collector** Street Type, all the following minimum Street Type Standards are recommended:

- A clear, accessible sidewalk with a minimum width of 5' is recommended. However, a multi-use path on one side of the street is encouraged.
- A minimum 4-foot planting strip provided between the sidewalk and travel lane is recommended. Amenities within this strip may consist of street trees, street lighting, landscaping and/or seating.
- It is recommended that on street parking be included on at least one side of the street
- It is recommended that street lamp lighting be located within the planting strip area within 2' of the face of curb or edge of pavement if curbing is not in place.
- Existing driveway cuts should be maintained and any new driveways must be approved by the Town of Matthews, and NCDOT prior to construction.
- For streets not requiring on street parking, 7' bicycle lanes may be designated but must be on both sides of the street for two way traffic corridors and on the right side of the street for one way traffic corridors.



East Matthews Street at Trade Street (Looking West)

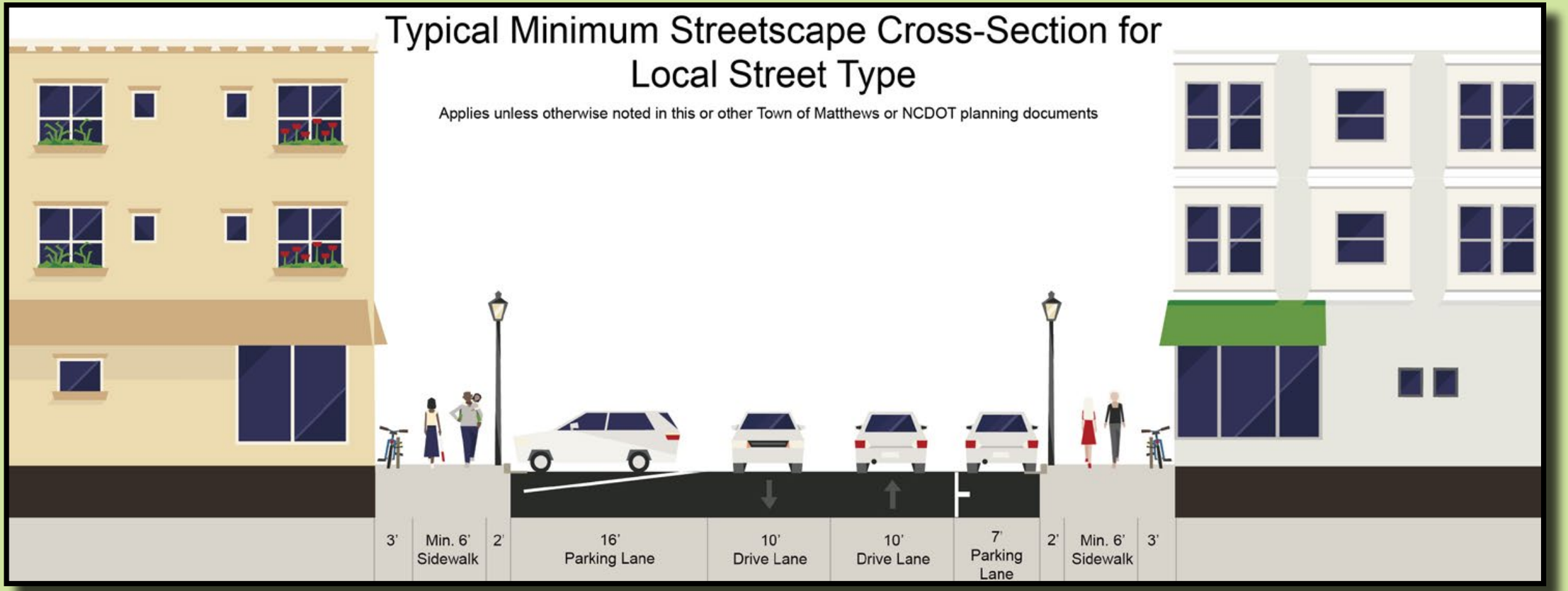




Local Street **(Sadie Drive, Matthews Station Street, Park Center Drive, Andrew Caroline, Lois Street, N. Ames Street at Park Center Drive)**

For the Local Street Type, all the following minimum Street Type Standards are recommended:

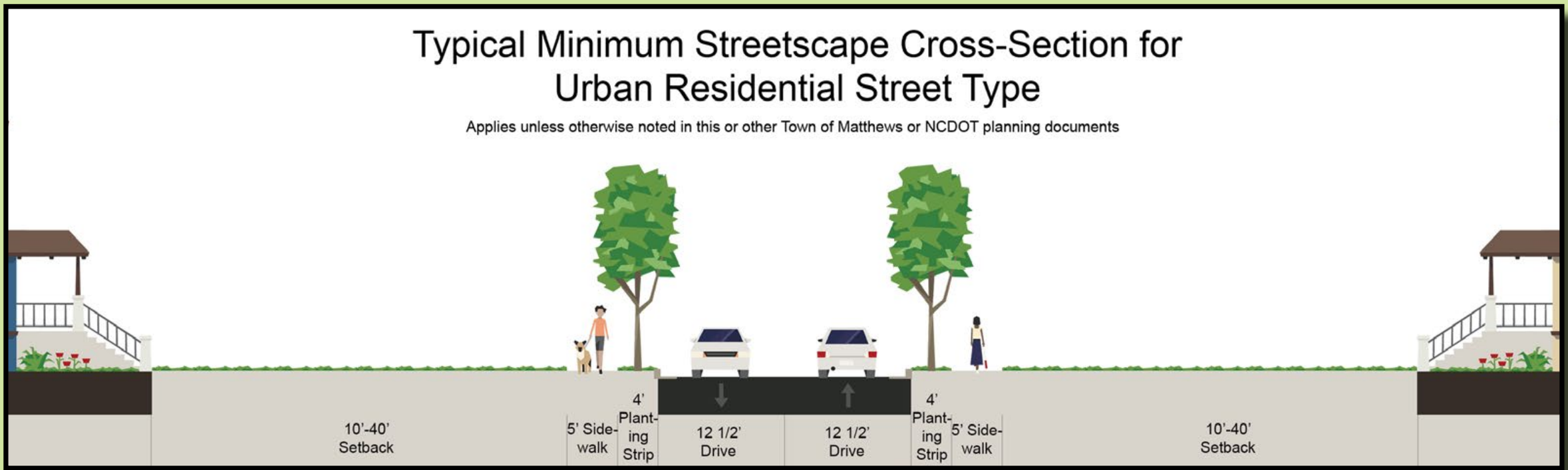
- A clear, accessible sidewalk with a minimum width of 6' is recommended.
- It is recommended that a 3-foot pedestrian amenity zone provided between the sidewalk and building facade. This amenity zone may consist of bike racks, seating, removable planters and temporary signage as approved by the Town of Matthews.
- It is recommended that on-street parking exist on at least one side of the street.
- It is recommended that street-lamp lighting be located within 2' of the face of curb or edge of pavement if curbing is not in place.
- Existing driveway cuts should be maintained and any new driveways must be approved by the Town of Matthews prior to construction.



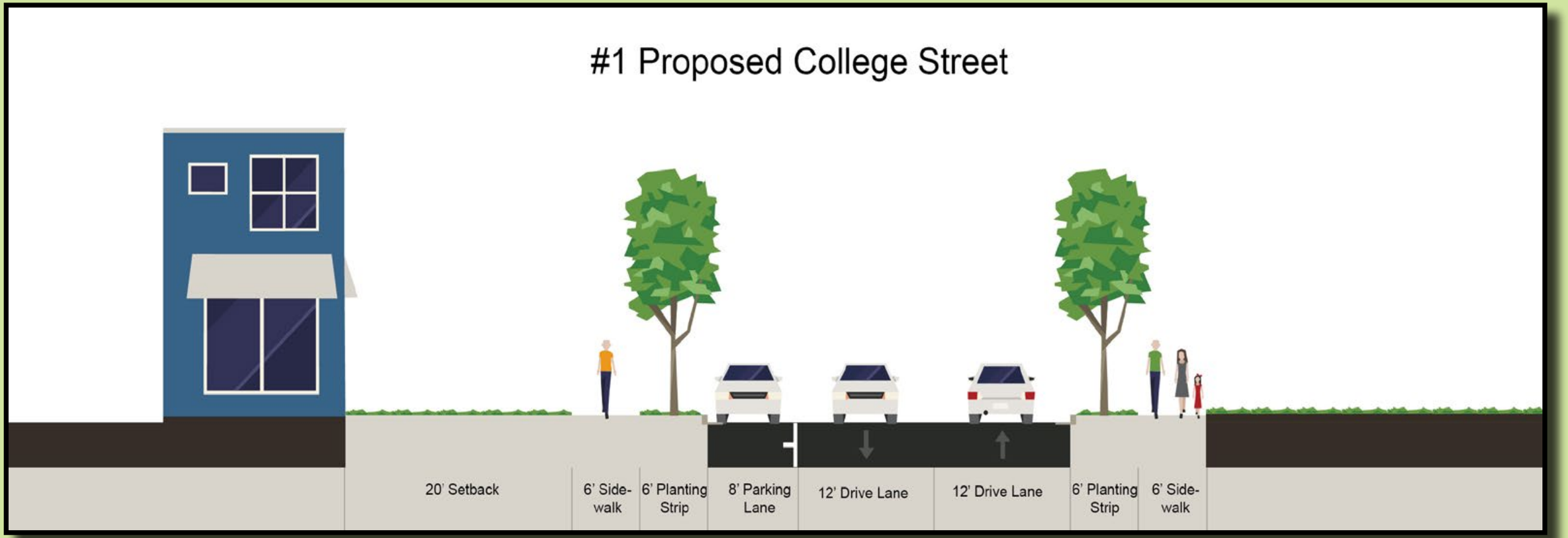
Urban Residential Street **(Clubview Lane, Irwin Lane, College Street, McDowell Street McLeod Circle, Jefferson Street, Alexander Street, Main Street, Part of East Matthews Street, Part of (south) Freemont Street, Part of (south) Ames Street)**

For the Local Street Type, all the following minimum Street Type Standards are recommended:

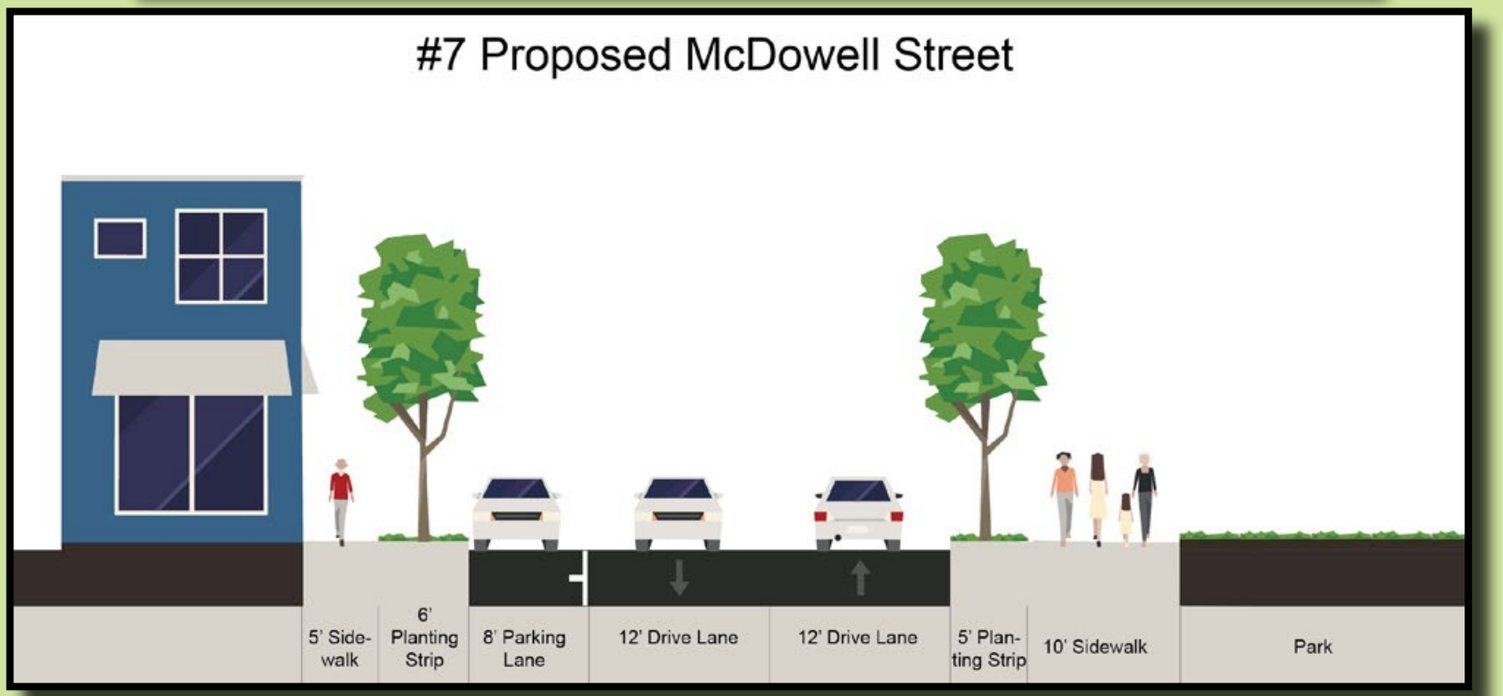
- A clear, accessible sidewalk with a minimum width of 5' is recommended. A 4' planting strip is recommended between the sidewalk and street.
- It is recommended that on-street parking be allowed on at least one side of the street
- Street lamp lighting is recommended within the planting strip and should be within 2' of the face of curb or edge of pavement is curbing is not in place.
- Existing driveway cuts should be maintained and any new driveways must be approved by the Town of Matthews prior to construction.



(Proposed) College Street (Looking North West)



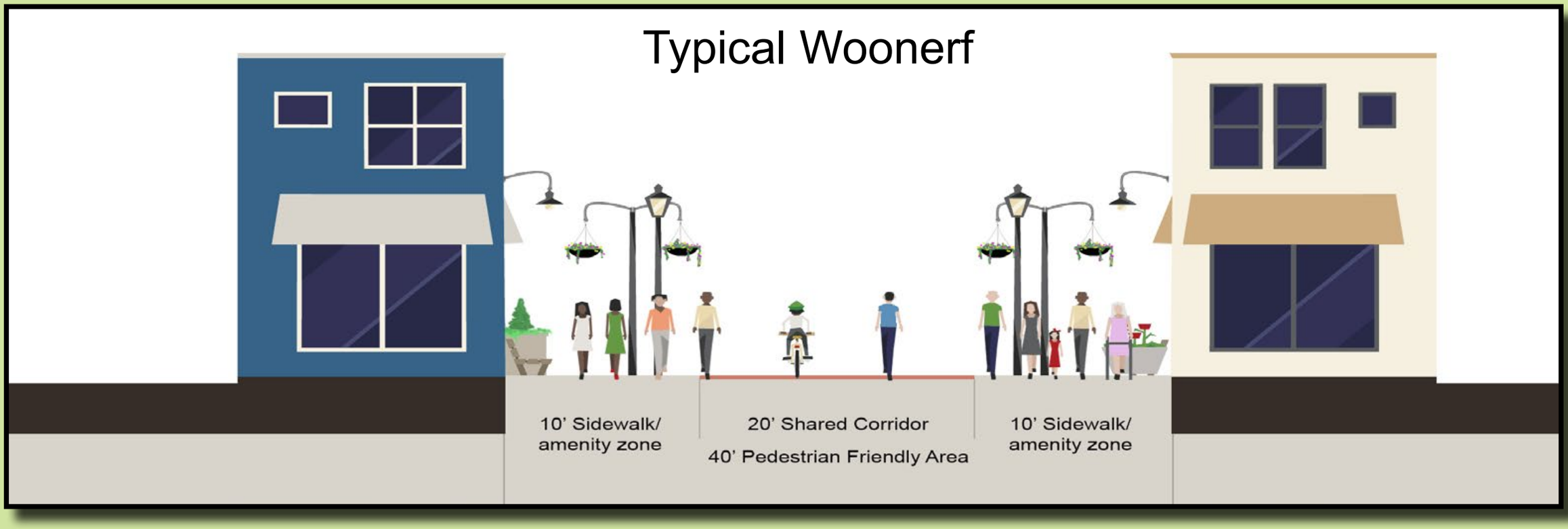
McDowell Street (Looking West)



Woonerf **(Market Alley, Bank Street)**

For the typical Woonerf, all the following streetscape elements are recommended:

- Limited vehicular traffic may be permissible per Town of Matthews and should be limited to speed limits of 5 m.p.h. or less.
- All seating, removable planters, temporary signage, bike racks and other pedestrian amenities, should be within 10' of building facades
- On-street parking should be limited to maintenance and delivery vehicles only
- Street lamp lighting should be decorative, as recommended by the Town of Matthews Downtown Plan
- Pavement should be decorative, such as stamped or stained asphalt/concrete, pavers, or stone



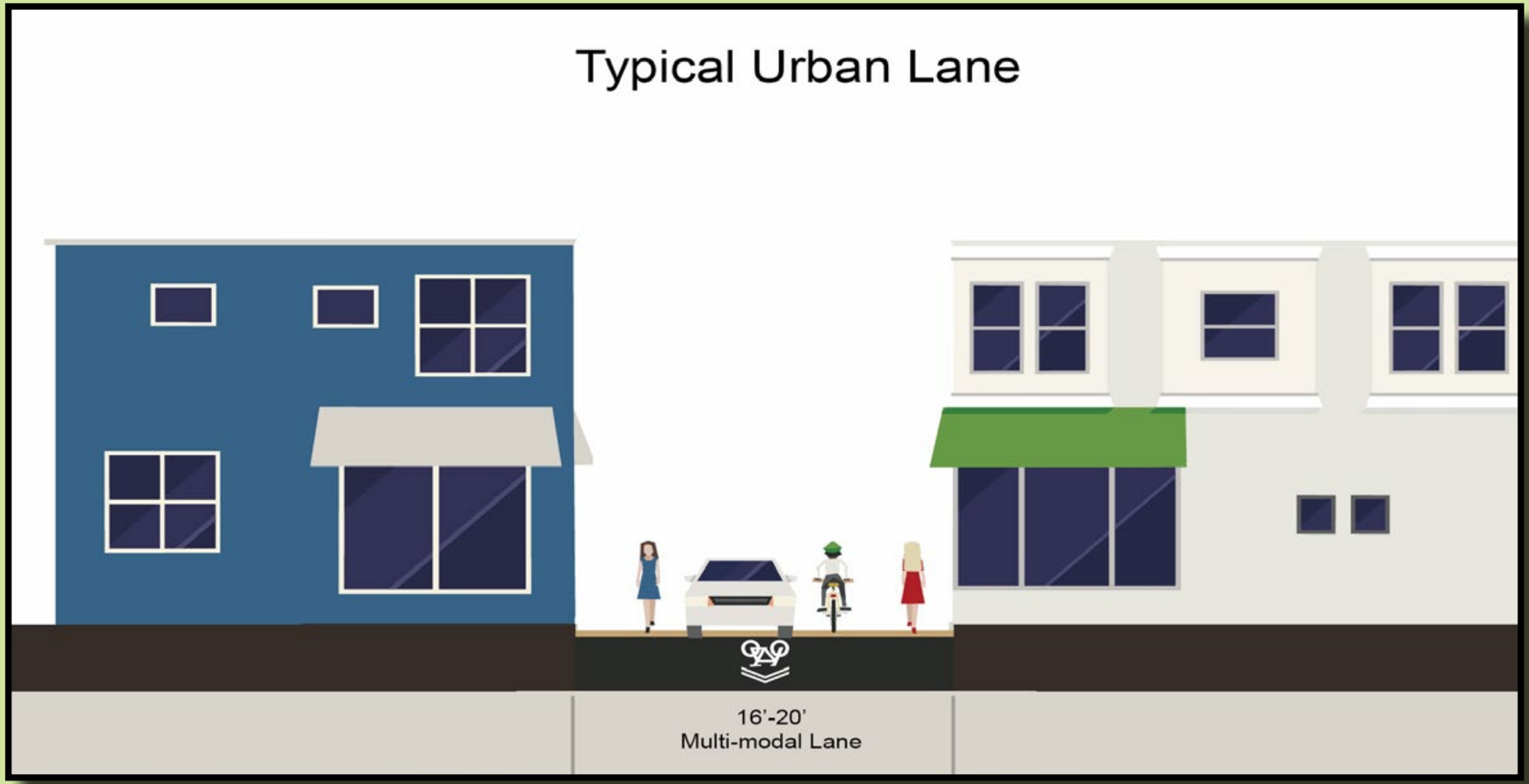
Proposed Market Alley (Woonerf)Photo Edit

Woonerf - Precedent Images

Urban Lane **(Cotton Gin Alley, Old Depot Lane, Jill Lane, Library Lane)**

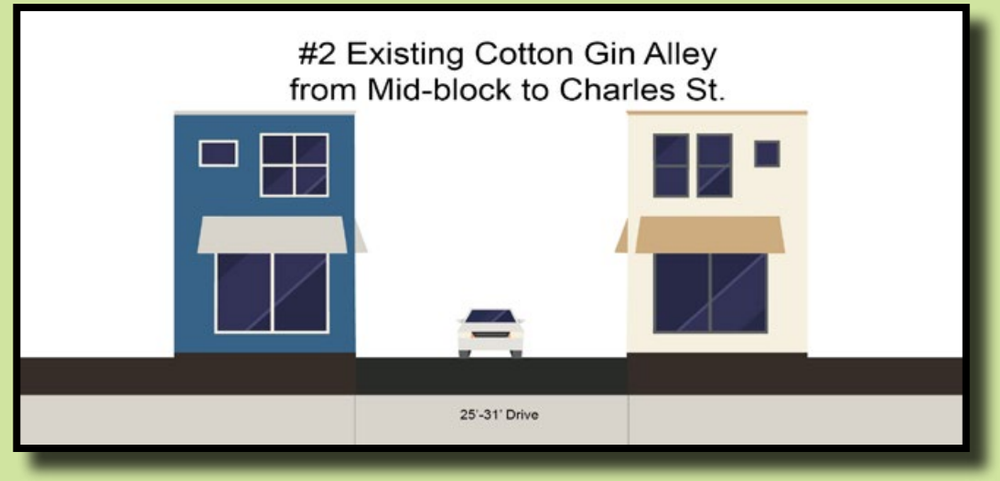
For the typical Urban Lane, all the following streetscape elements are recommended:

- Vehicular traffic should yield to pedestrians and bicyclists which share this multi-modal corridor.
- On-street parking should be limited to maintenance and delivery vehicles only
- Street lamp lighting should be decorative, as recommended by the Town of Matthews Downtown Plan
- Pavement should be decorative, such as stamped or stained asphalt/concrete, pavers, or stone



Urban Lane - Precedent Images

Cotton Gin Alley

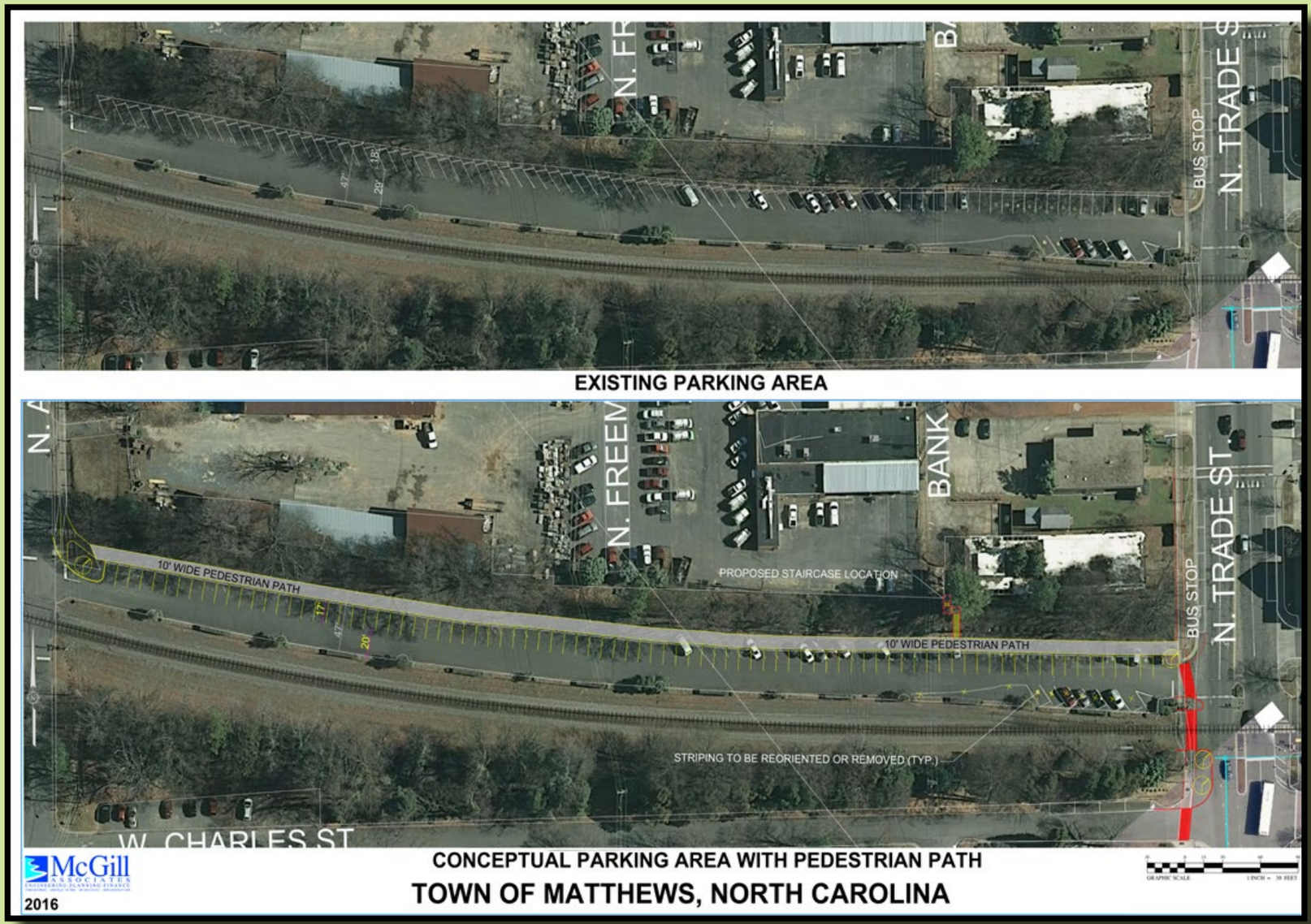
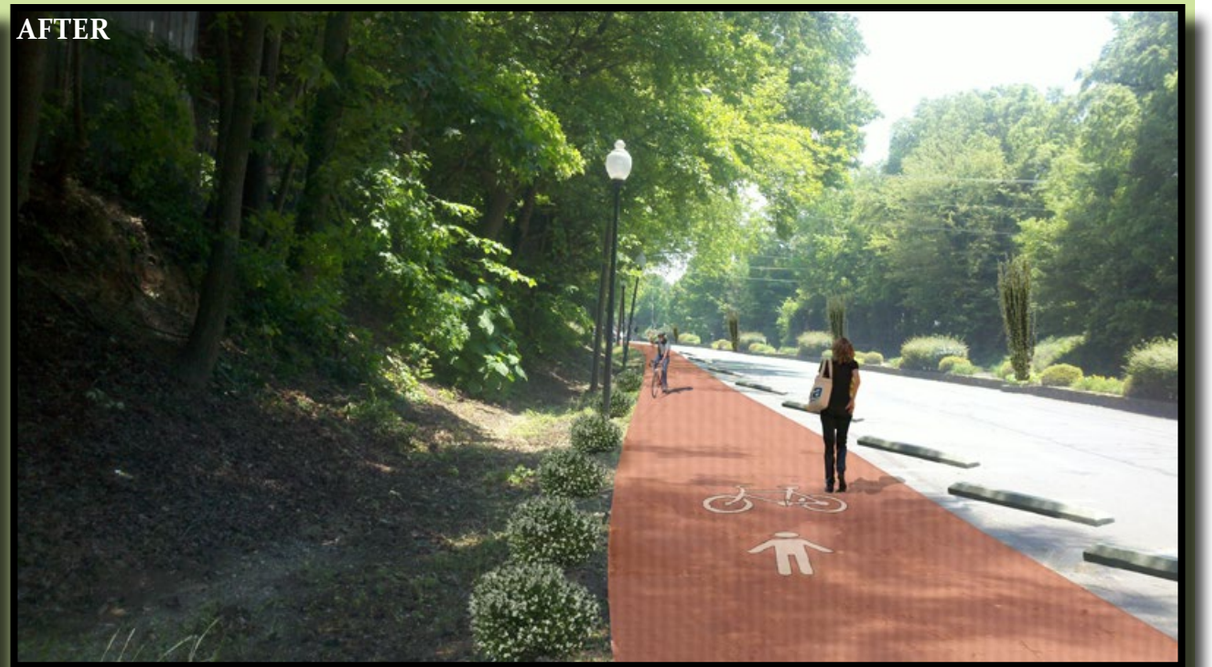


Spot Improvement Projects

Proposed Interactive Fountain at Matthews Town Hall

Proposed pedestrian path through parking lot between Trade Street and Ames Street

A conceptual sketch of how a revision to the parking lot layout may provide space for a 10' wide pedestrian walk can be seen below.



Proposed pedestrian path through parking lot between Trade Street and Ames Street