



# Town of Woodstock

**DRAFT Future Land Use Map + Categories**

**October 7, 2024**



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# Future Land Use

## What is "Future Land Use?"

Future Land Use categories are visionary descriptions of how areas of Woodstock should look and feel in the future. However, they are used for guidance rather than legal regulations on what a landowner can or cannot do with their property. They allow the community to describe how they'd like to see an area develop in the future to meet community needs. As projects are undertaken, such as new zoning ordinance updates, streetscape improvements, or other recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan, the future land use categories can be referred to for the desired outcomes of new development. The Future Land Use categories are also used by decision-makers, planners, and developers, when applying for rezonings or conditional use permits. Planners will review the Comprehensive Plan to see if the proposed project adheres to what the Town is envisioning in the future. Over time, the Future Land Use Map acts as an important tool through which the Comprehensive Plan is implemented. These categories do not necessarily line up with existing land use, or specific zoning districts, but rather describe where the Town wants to guide future trends. The Plan creates a scenario that will allow for a high quality of life in the Town by balancing infrastructure, environmental, social, or economic needs with future growth.

## Categories and Descriptions

Each future land use category will feature a description with the following elements:

### Intent:

A brief description of the "intent" of the future land use category.

### Development Style:

Description of how development shall look and feel in the area in the future. This will include a description of how ground floor elements of buildings should address the street, particularly in commercial or mixed-use developments, elements of how the community is expected to move around the area, and the overall "intensity" of lot sizes and general heights of buildings.

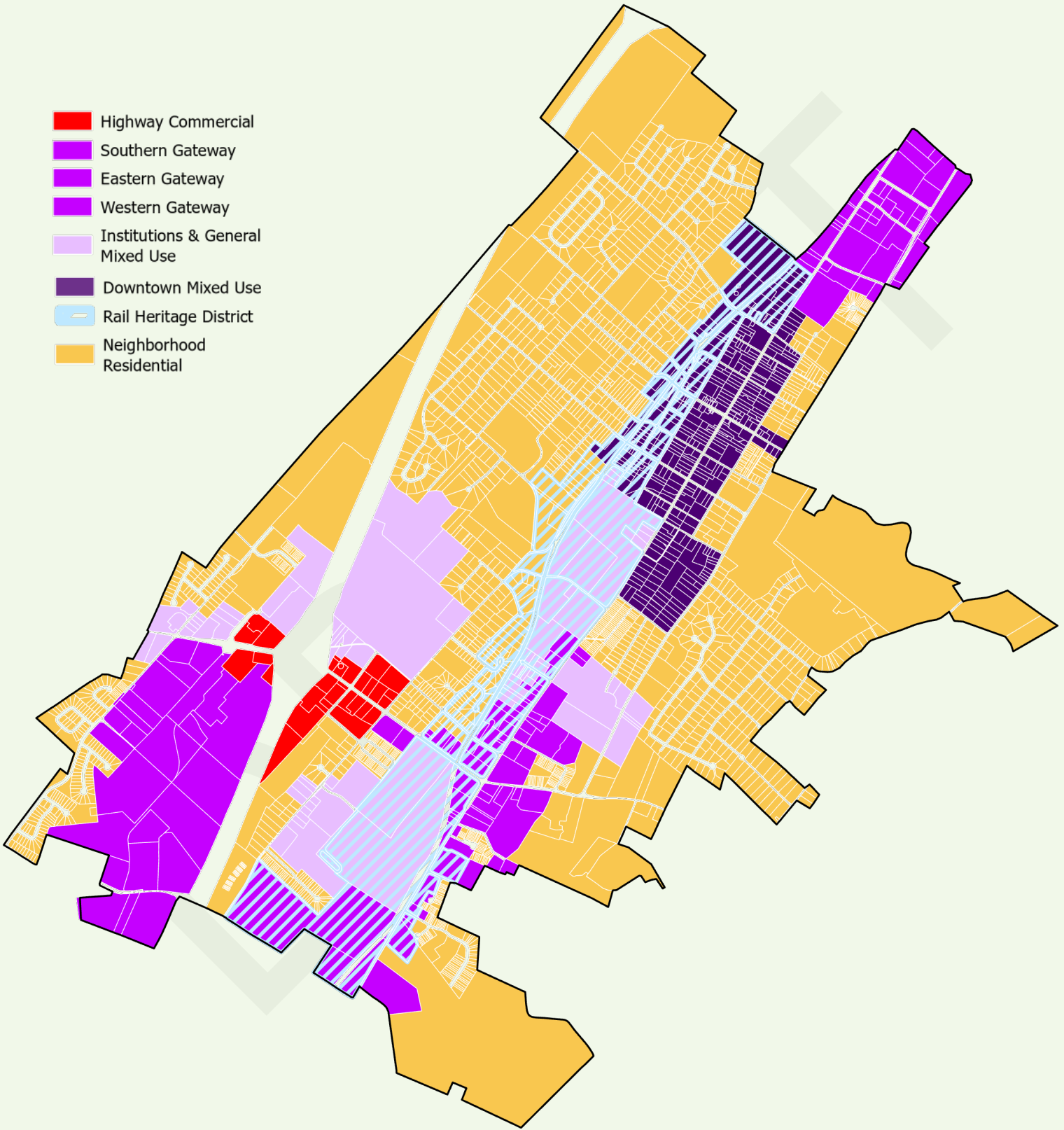
### Primary and Secondary Uses:

Primary uses are described as the predominant land uses that are desirable in the future of the area, as well as secondary supporting uses that can sometimes be found in the area in the future.

### Public Spaces:

Public Spaces describe the types of public parks, community facilities, and other public spaces would be most desirable for each future land use area.





# Downtown Mixed Use

## Intent:

The Downtown Mixed-Use category covers the existing downtown historic area of Woodstock along Main Street. Development in this area is intended to reflect the diversity of historic architectural features present in the Town and incorporate the diversity of uses that bring Main Street to life. This category allows for more flexible use of land across the area. Rehabilitation and renovation of existing historic buildings should comply with historic district guidelines, once created, with particular attention to how the buildings address the streetscape. Infill and redeveloped properties are encouraged to have a mix of commercial and residential uses on the same property or within the same building. The rear of commercial parcels with surplus parking areas should be considered for development of accessory commercial or dwelling units. Utilities, such as overhead powerlines, should be relocated underground when possible. The category seeks to enhance the existing walkable, historic downtown and provide greater access and development opportunities at the heart of the community to enliven it.

## Development Style:

Buildings should range from 2-4 stories, with ground floors and entrances addressing the streetscape, regardless of use, with features such as windows and door openings. Upper floors are preferred to be recessed or stepped back, respective of adjacent buildings. Depending on the context, front porches, elevated ground floors, or other features found throughout the area can be utilized to either provide privacy for residential uses or provide for innovative or architectural flexibility. Housing consisting of apartment units above retail, restaurant, or office uses, facing the sidewalk and street will provide greater housing and employment opportunities for residents of Woodstock. Additionally, other diverse types of housing may be developed, in keeping with the historic diversity of types found throughout the downtown district. For larger apartment buildings, parking should be structured off-street.

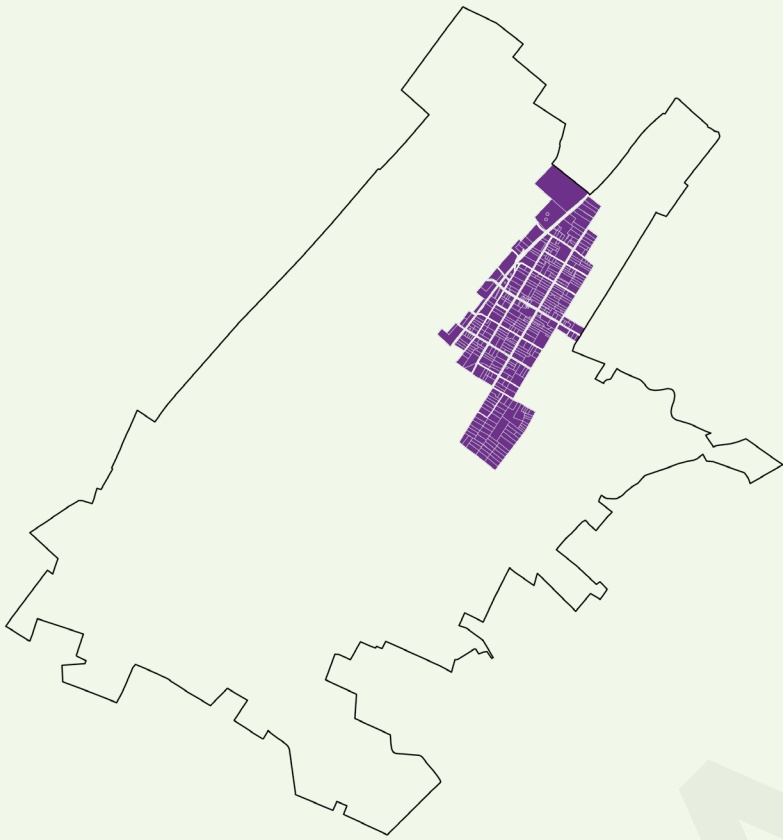
## Primary and Secondary Uses:

Mixed Commercial and Residential Structures or singular use single family homes, townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, apartments. Secondary uses may include accessory commercial or residential dwelling unit structures.

## Public Spaces:

Public spaces in the downtown area should be compact and accessible. Pocket parks should be designated within a block or two of homes, apartments, and businesses when possible. These parks should consist of seating in the form of benches, picnic tables, or other architectural components that allow and encourage sitting. For some pocket parks, it may be appropriate to install some low-impact play structures for children. Landscaping is encouraged to provide natural elements to space, ideally with native flowers, trees, or grasses that support pollinators, birds, or other wildlife and contribute shade and cooling to the streetscape. Plazas and courtyards provide a more built environment that encourages interaction. These spaces are encouraged to be used as small event spaces like artisanal fairs, popup tents for farmers, bakers, or other crafters, local musicians playing music, artists sketching, and street performances. For everyday use, plazas and courtyards are the perfect place for the community to sit and take a break or socialize.







# Rail Heritage

## Intent:

The “Rail Heritage” district is adjacent to downtown Woodstock along its historic railroad corridor. The district is encouraging of typical development styles that were once prominent along railroads in towns that developed at the time of rail expansion. This district is envisioned to extend the fabric of historic downtown Woodstock while capitalizing on the introduction of the bicycle rail-to-trail through the railroad corridor. By reusing the development styles of the past fronting on or alongside the rail-to-trail, Woodstock can provide a high-quality experience to visitors and residents alike. Uses in this district should be varied and diverse, allowing for a multitude and density of uses that generate activity.

In the days when passenger and cargo rail were once the primary modes of transportation between towns and cities across the country, rail stations were nodes of activity. These stations attracted development that relied on rail transit’s frequent influx of goods and people. The area mixed industrial uses in warehouses, small manufacturing, or retail uses like hotels, restaurants, and shops. Many of these buildings would feature ground-floor commercial uses with housing on the floors above, as many buildings were two or three stories high. These buildings typically shared walls and can have varied heights and uses on the same block. This will allow new visitors or residents in Woodstock to conduct many potential trips within a walkable or bikeable area.

## Development Style:

Development in the district should enhance the character of Woodstock by encouraging a mix of one-, two-, and three-story buildings that are built directly to or slightly set back from the sidewalk as well as the future rail-to-trail. These buildings should complement the existing development styles present in the area – warehouses, churches, single-family, and multifamily buildings by filling in vacant or underutilized parcels. Porches, courtyards, patios, and other sidewalks or trail adjacent spaces should be encouraged to increase the communal aspects of this area.

Larger buildings should have accessible parking through alleys and side streets to ensure pedestrians’ safety while promoting the rail heritage corridor’s form. Entrances to retail businesses and apartment buildings should address the same streets as their neighboring uses to generate more activity.

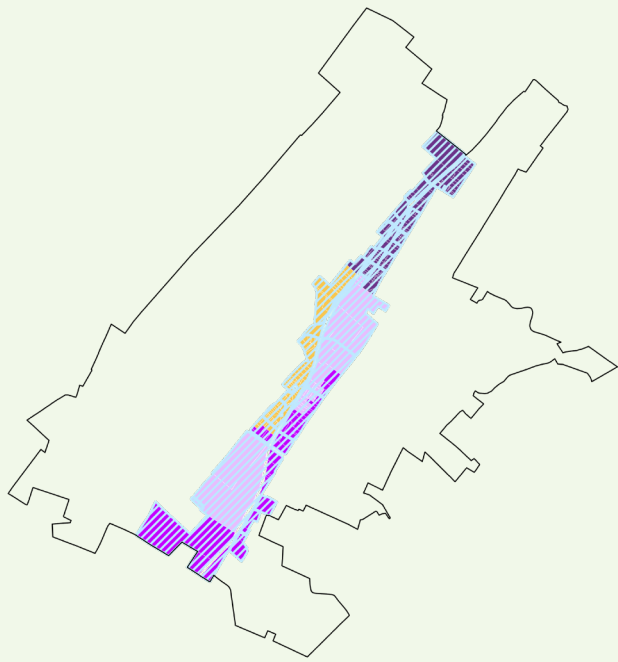
## Primary and Secondary Uses:

Historically and encouraged today, the uses adjacent to rail in small towns were commonly retail dry goods, restaurants and taverns, hardware stores, offices, and light industrial or warehousing. Most towns would maximize the usage of the area by allowing apartments or hotels above retail establishments to increase the density of their town center. The rail heritage district should replicate this style by encouraging a mix of uses adjacent to the rail-trail, encouraging walkability and generating activity for businesses and restaurants that choose to locate to the area. Also, low-impact manufacturing uses such as machine shops, craft spaces such as leatherworking, carpentry, or tailoring, office spaces, and warehousing would provide employment opportunities and enhance the district’s placemaking. Cultural uses could include galleries, art studios, performance and practice spaces, and others.

## Public Spaces:

The rail heritage district should account for the future rail-to-trail, as it will provide a useful public open space for the Town of Woodstock and for its visitors as well. Public open spaces should account for the surrounding uses – be it denser commercial or lighter neighborhood residential. Public open spaces should include pocket parks, plazas, ball parks, basketball courts, playgrounds, and tennis courts.







# Neighborhood Residential

## **Intent:**

The neighborhood residential future land use designation is for primarily residential uses, with small-scale neighborhood supporting uses and mixed housing types. These could include low-impact home-based businesses such as personal services, small scale craftsmanship businesses, or other uses that could operate out of an accessory structure or ground floor. Additionally, neighborhoods could benefit from the development of “corner” style developments such as boutique clothing stores, small office spaces, cafes, or small dry goods stores, such as those found in the historic downtown.

## **Development Style:**

The neighborhood residential future land use category encourages greater density of housing units that are more diverse in type than what is currently available to landowners in R-1, R-2, and R-3 districts. However, this change is expected to occur incrementally and through infill or redevelopment of the existing stock. This is also intended to coincide with the implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, reducing the need for automobile parking and usage. Homes and buildings should be built close together, creating a unified street wall to maximize the usage of parcels within these districts and permit residents to walk to corner destinations in a more expedient and efficient manner. Buildings should also feature street-oriented facades, windows, and entrances. Appropriate front setbacks should allow small gardens, porches, or stoops to promote interaction with the sidewalk and privacy. New driveways should be prohibited and vehicular access to homes and businesses should be confined to alleys and side streets.

## **Primary and Secondary Uses:**

Primarily residential uses are expected in these neighborhood areas. Diversifying housing types is encouraged, secondary uses may include neighborhood supporting “corner stores or

cafes” or other low impact home-based businesses that support local employment and livable neighborhoods. Additionally, low-impact cultural uses, such as galleries or art studios, should be encouraged to add to the character of neighborhoods. These uses are intended to exist as a small percentage of blocks, simply providing neighborhoods with small uses that do not conflict or overshadow the primary intent of the neighborhood residential district, which is to provide quality housing for residents. Secondary uses such as accessory dwelling units should be permitted and encouraged within the neighborhood residential districts. Accessory dwellings should also be allowed to operate accessory uses such as workshops, offices, artist studios, or other home-based businesses.

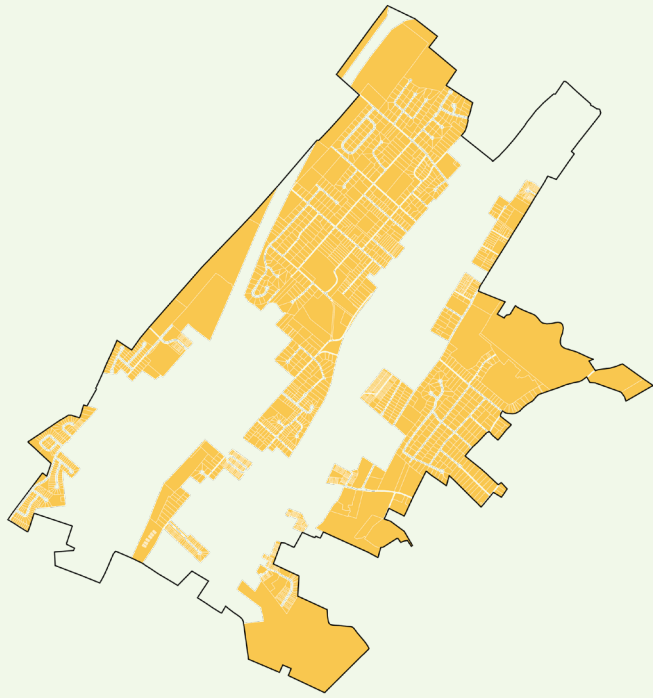
## **Public Spaces:**

Neighborhood residential districts should feature public open spaces within a five-to-ten-minute walk of residential units. Public open spaces should include ball parks and courts, pools or water recreation areas, trails, running tracks, playgrounds, community centers, and other public open spaces.

The size and character of public open spaces can vary – large parks such as Larry D. Bradford Fairview Park or the W.O. Riley Park can be further programmed with community amenities based on the public’s preferences. Pocket parks, dog parks, or ball courts could be dispersed to other corners of Woodstock, creating more opportunities for residents to walk to recreational amenities.

Trails and greenways should be considered as ways for residents to bike, jog, run, walk, or roll to their destinations such as workplaces, commercial uses, parks, or other amenities.







# Highway Commercial

## **Intent:**

The Highway Commercial category is designated for land immediately located near the Interstate 81 exit. This is expected to remain commercial uses that primarily serve the community and visitors traveling on the highway. As changes in the ordinance are adopted, better design, inter-connection, landscaping, and increased uses per parcel may be possible. Residential uses are discouraged from this area due to the noise and traffic patterns.

## **Development Style:**

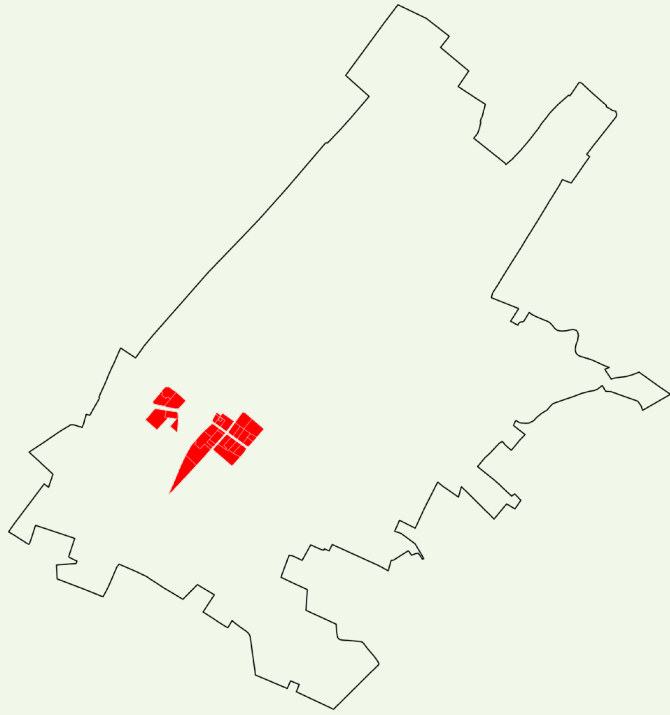
New development includes multiple uses on properties with inter-parcel connections allowing for access or parking a single time to access multiple uses. Pedestrians and bicycles may still pass safely through the area or access services; however, the primary means of access is expected to remain automobiles with businesses oriented towards serving travelers along the highway. Buildings should utilize high quality materials and allow for safe pedestrian bypass or access to the site.

## **Primary and Secondary Uses:**

Primarily highway-oriented commercial uses. Secondary uses: Supportive auto-oriented local commercial uses.

## **Public Spaces:**

The auto-oriented nature of the highway commercial future land use category does not directly support the addition of public open spaces. However, new and existing businesses should be encouraged to enliven the district with well-designed landscaping such as shade trees and native flora to foster a greater sense of place. Restaurants and eating establishments should have well-maintained patios or courtyards for patrons.



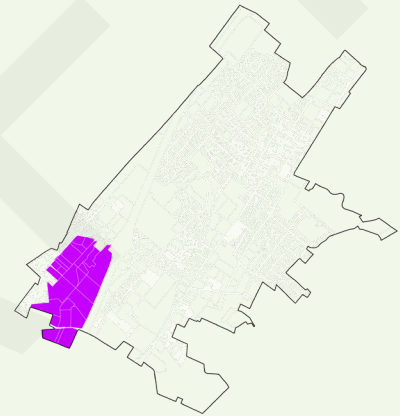


# Gateway Areas (draft)

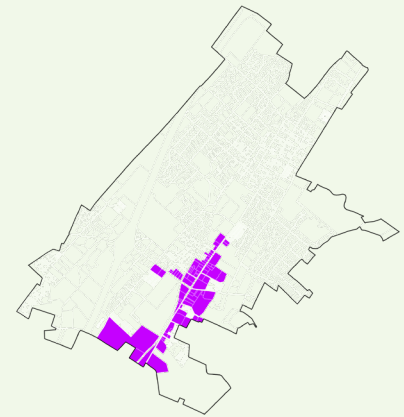
## Intent:

The intent of the gateway future land use category is to recognize the retail uses that are prevalent in these areas while recognizing their potential to redevelop into mixed-use centers in the future. Aging “strip-style” retail should be redeveloped with new mixed-use buildings that incorporate residential units either alongside or on top of commercial retail or restaurant spaces. This will create new opportunities for housing, commerce, and employment reflective of Woodstock’s role in the region. These areas have been separated to offer more specific guidance based on the specific area’s current conditions.

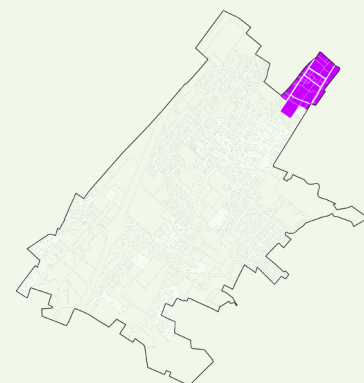
**“Western Gateway Area”** - In the future, the area is a new walkable destination in Woodstock, a place to enjoy and spend time. This area is currently somewhat isolated from the rest of Woodstock because of the interstate highway and highway oriented-commercial uses. There is a lack of sidewalk infrastructure, especially connecting the many residential homes to commercial buildings within the area and to the rest of Woodstock itself. This requires all residents in the area to drive to safely access the community. New mixed-use development can provide more of a sense of place to establish more opportunities and create a new destination within the Town. There are available properties along Henry Ford Drive that are suitable for new development. Existing businesses are built with a more “suburban” character including large parking lots and limited landscaping. New buildings should be built to better address the streetscape and mitigate the impacts of automobile circulation with safe and convenient access by other modes, such as bicycling or walking.



**“Southern Gateway Area”** - The area around the intersection of East Reservoir Road and Main Street features many properties could either be redeveloped or allow for infill on the same lot to increase the amount of mixed-uses. New diverse types of residential units should be built adjacent to, or in the same structure with commercial office, retail, or restaurant uses with a new local internal street system established with new public spaces. Safe bicycle and pedestrian access will provide safety and comfort accessing or traversing the area, particularly allowing students to reach the local schools safely.



**“Northeastern Gateway Area”** - New commercial and residential uses are developed as aging properties are given new life through revitalization. The local community is supported through new retail, restaurants, offices, and other employment opportunities and engaging public spaces that attract people through Woodstock and the surrounding region to spend their time.





**Development Style:**

Development in gateway areas should include many uses that are accessible on foot or by bicycle to surrounding neighborhoods. Currently, these service areas are primarily auto-centric, but service buildings in these districts should mimic the development style of the historic downtown by building to the sidewalks and having parking in the rear or in structured garages. The establishment of a street grid and public spaces should accompany new mixed-use redevelopment site designs.

**Primary and Secondary Uses:**

Retail and commercial should be encouraged to maximize the usage of their space and have hours of operation that allow shopping or dining outside of normal working hours. As Woodstock develops in the future, mixed uses should be encouraged, allowing residential units above retail ground floor to further increase walkability in the gateway districts.

**Public Spaces:**

Public open spaces for the service areas should follow similar patterns to the Downtown Mixed Use future land use category or the neighborhood residential future land use category whenever possible. Some areas may require more condensed public open spaces like pocket parks or plazas where others may require larger spaces like ball parks or playgrounds.



# Institutions & General Mixed Use

## Intent:

This future land use category details areas that are either developed with commercial or residential uses, or as long-time “institutional” uses, such as the Public School system, local hospital, or the fairgrounds. These are parcels of land that are expected to allow for mixed commercial or residential uses to help implement the Comprehensive Plan’s vision of connecting the “centers of activity,” identified by the Gateway Area future land use categories, with new diverse housing and business opportunities that attract further walking and bicycling through the community. Long-standing institutional uses are not expected to change but are included in this category to allow for flexibility of the sites for future usage if plans change.

## Development Style:

Depending on the size of the parcel and adjacent uses, buildings may range between 2 and 4 stories, with the fourth floor potentially recessed respective of adjacent properties. Apartment units over restaurant or retail spaces are desirable to “infill” under-utilized properties. Safe passage through bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is needed to facilitate connections to more dense service areas, although these uses are expected to require some parking. The bulk of parking should be located towards the side or rear, with limited spaces at the front. This is a shift away from the previous “highway commercial” patterns of development seen in previous decades, and incremental change is expected to take place over the next few decades.

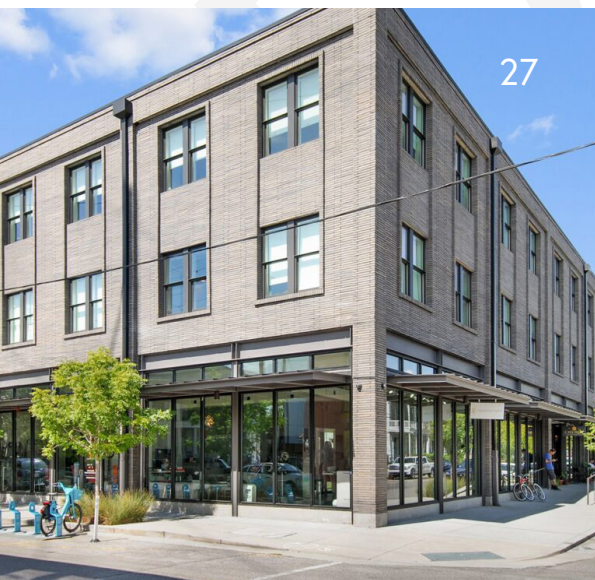
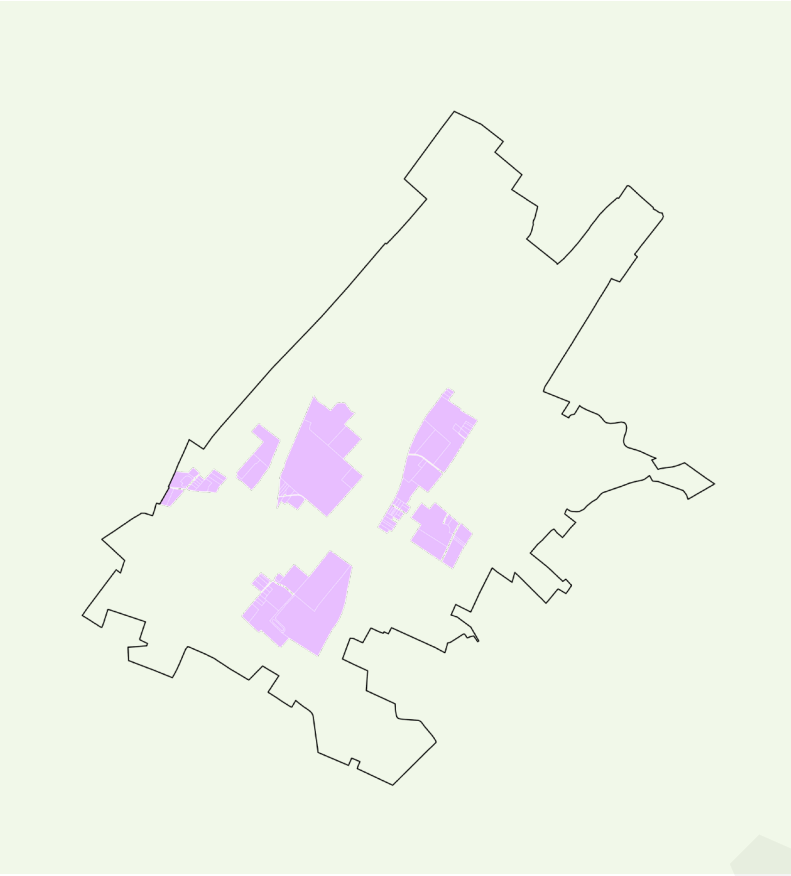
## Primary and Secondary Uses:

Primarily commercial restaurant, retail, or other stores with apartment units above, or residential apartment buildings and freestanding commercial units that are oriented to the street. Residential development that increases the diversity of housing types is also encouraged.

## Public Spaces:

The Institutions and General Mixed Use future land use category features large open space, though some of which are private or serve a more regional purpose. Institutional uses such as The Shenandoah Downs and the Massanutten Military Academy are defining features of this future land use category, these uses do have events that draw residents from Woodstock and beyond, but partnerships should encourage enhanced usage of the expansive greens of each. For example, a farmer’s market could expand its reach and presence to a more regional audience should it host harvest festivals or other events. Additionally, schools such as Massanutten Academy or public schools such as the High School, Middle School, or Elementary School should consider shared-use agreements that allow residents of adjacent neighborhoods to use ball fields or running tracks when not in use by the schools or students.

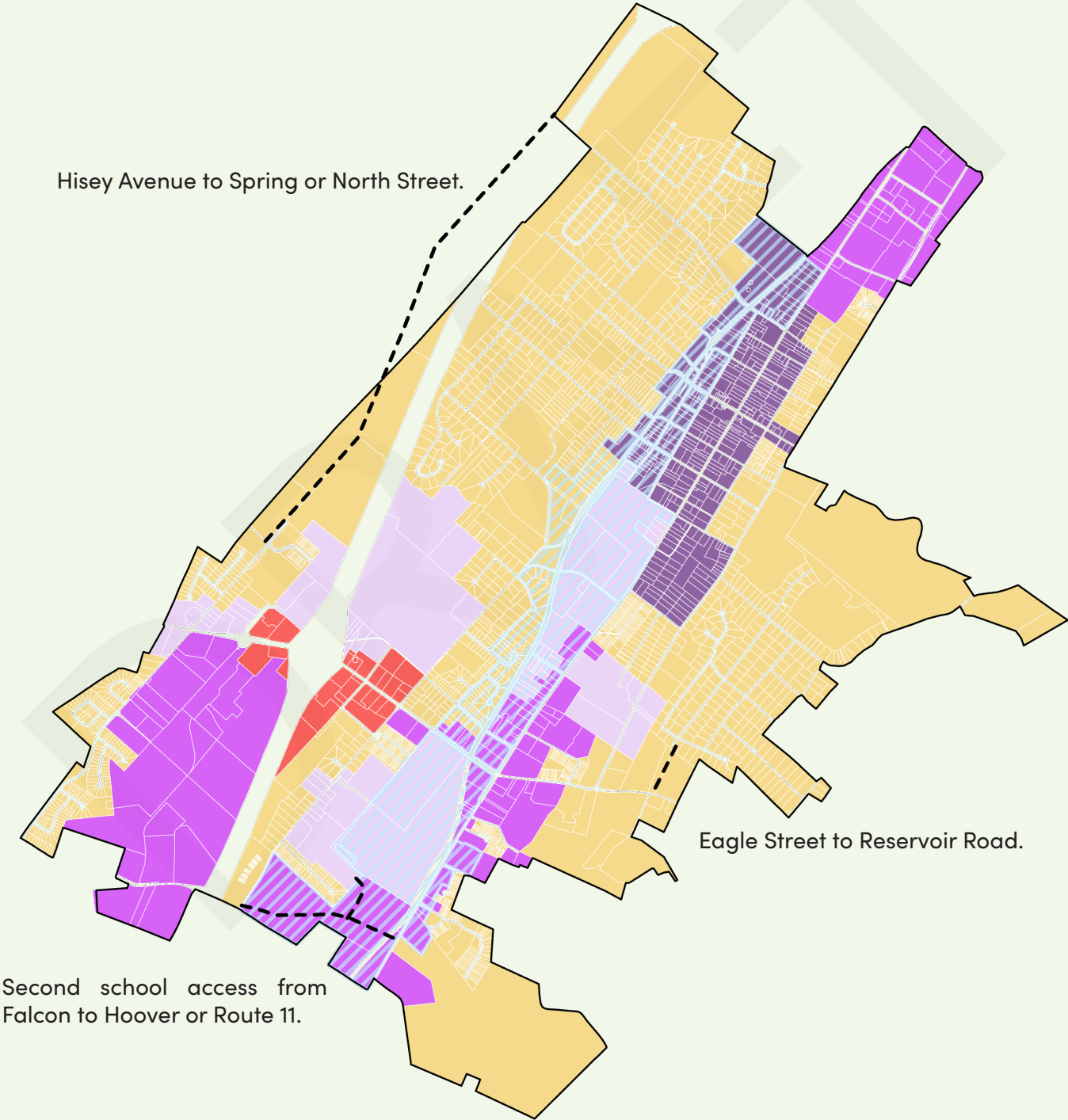






# Potential Future Connections

\*Town to remain open to the possibility of a future I-81 interchange at North Street.



\*Future connection to Seven Bends State Park to be determined.

# Photo Sources

All photos are considered illustrative and to be used for general guidance.

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