

**CITY OF MONROE
DOWNTOWN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
DOWNTOWN OFFICE – 120 N. MAIN STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
Wednesday, April 22, 2026 - 9:00
AM
AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. BRIG Grant - Bill Heisner
4. Downtown Director's Report
5. Main Street Assessment with State Comments
6. Downtown Event Sponsorship Program
7. Downtown Market Analysis
8. Work Plan, Sub-Committees, & Volunteer Discussion
9. Adjourn Meeting (Action Required)



STAFF REPORT

TO: Downtown Advisory Board

DATE: April 22, 2026

FROM: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager

PREPARED BY: Ashley Nowell, Downtown Director

SUBJECT: Downtown Director Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Each month, the Downtown Director provides an update on major projects, business openings or closings, and important updates in downtown.

REVIEW

Incentives Update

Business/Building	Stage	Amount
Bill Heisner – BRIG	DAB – 4/22	

National Main Street Conference Recap

Ashley attended the National Main Street Conference in Tulsa last week. I went to sessions including topics on accessibility, building trust through communications, incentives, redevelopment of vacant spaces, and business collaboration.

Additionally, on 4/20, downtown and preservation staff met with Preservation NC, where we furthered discussed historic renovations and how we can continue to encourage redevelopment.

Downtown Coordinator Position

Interviews were scheduled in April. Staff is currently working with HR to finalize an offer to a candidate.

Downtown Master Plan

A Steering Committee Meeting was held on 4/1. Downtown Property Owners met with Shook Kelley on 4/21. A technical team meeting with city staff will be held in early May. Staff and the steering committee have provided feedback on the master plan and opportunity redevelopment sites. The 7 potential sites will be narrowed to 3-4 over the next month.

Our next public input session will be scheduled in early summer. In May, staff will provide additional updates the General Services and City Council on the plan.

Leadership Union – Arts & Tourism Day – 4/23

The Chamber of Commerce’s Leadership Union Class will be downtown on Thursday, April 23 for Arts and Tourism Day. They’ll enjoy lunch at the Dowd Center Theatre, hear presentations from downtown, and get tours of the new arts council space, theatre, and Science Center. It’ll be a great time to invite people to join our downtown committees!

Antique & Vintage Market – 5/2

The Downtown Department is partnering with Murphy’s on Main and Lowe Country Estates on this year’s Antique & Vintage Market on May 2. 50+ vendors will line North Main Street with vintage and antique finds from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Staff may reach out in the next week for volunteer support.

Small Business Workshops with SPCC’s Small Business Center – 5/11 & 5/18

The Downtown Department will be partnering with SPCC’s Small Business Center to hold 2 workshops on May 11 and May 18 at Vetus Distillery at 5:30 p.m. SPCC will be booking the speakers talking about Google Business optimization and customer experience. Any small business is invited, but we are focusing the invites to downtown businesses. Staff will send calendar invites to the DAB.

America 250 – Serve Monroe 5/13-16

Community Mural was approved at the 4/14 City Council Meeting. Staff will order over the next couple weeks, with expected delivery in June. A lot of civic groups are excited about being involved in the process.

The Serve Monroe project is scheduled for May 13-16, with projects all over the city.

Tax Credit Workshop – 6/4

On Thursday, June 4, the City of Monroe will be hosting a tax credit workshop with the State Historic Preservation Office. Keri Mendler and I are working to nail down the time and location, which will be sent to the DAB once confirmed.

We’re also trying to schedule a couple of building visits while SHPO is on site, including the Overall Factory.

Business & Building Updates

Union County Arts Council is moving into the Sunflower Building!!

Two additional spaces are available in the Sunflower building.

Staff worked with Jessica Perry to build a website and put up window clings in available downtown buildings ahead of the 4/10-11 weekend. You can visit www.growindtmonroe.com to see what buildings are currently available.

Upcoming Events & Meeting Dates

Friday, April 24, 6:30 p.m. | Music Across Main

Saturday, May 2, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. | Antique & Vintage Market
Thursday, May 7, 4:15 p.m. | General Services Committee (Master Plan Update presentation)
Friday, May 8, 6-8 p.m. | Car Cruise-In
Monday, May 11, 5:30 p.m. | Small Business Workshops @ Vetus Distillery
Friday, May 15, 6:30 p.m. | Music Across Main
Monday, May 18, 5:30 p.m. | Small Business Workshops @ Vetus Distillery
Wednesday, May 20, 9 a.m. | Downtown Advisory Board Meeting

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for discussion.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Downtown Advisory Board

DATE: April 22, 2026

FROM: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager

PREPARED BY: Ashley Nowell, Downtown Director

SUBJECT: Main Street Assessment

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Monroe has received our Main Street Assessment back from NC Main Street with comments from the state staff. NC Main Street is recommending Affiliate Status for our work in 2025.

REVIEW

Staff completed our self-assessment in January, and the NC Main Street staff has completed their assessments and provided comments. As a reminder, communities must score an average of 3 on each standard in order to achieve accreditation. Below you'll see a comparison between our self-assessment scores vs the state's assessment scores on each of the 6 standards:

Standard	Monroe's Self-Assessment Score	NC Main Street's Assessment Score
Broad-Based Community Commitment to Revitalization	2.5	2.5
Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Capacity	1.89	2
Diversified Funding and Sustainable Program Operations	2.2	2.2
Strategy-Drive Programming	1.33	2.33
Preservation-Based Economic Development	3.25	2.75
Demonstrated Impact and Results	2.5	2.5

Many of the comments mirror the DAB's discussion on things to focus on. Recommendations for improvement included:

- Completion of the Downtown Master Plan
- Creation of a downtown website and social media pages
- Creation of a downtown brand
- Inclusion of diverse representation on board/sub-committees
- Implementation of volunteer recruitment initiatives
- Diversification of funding

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for discussion.

Attachments:
2025 MSA Report



[Baseline Requirements](#)

[Cumulative Average Scores](#)

[Additional Information](#)

[Explanation](#)

Baseline Requirements

	LP
1. A Board of Directors formed by a representative base of the district stakeholders and community members, dedicated to leading the district's Main Street program. Please upload your Board of Directors document.	Yes
2. Communities over 5,000 in population must employ an FTE program director. Communities under 5,000 in population must employ a 20-hour minimum per week program director.	Yes
3. Identified Transformation Strategy to direct the work of the program, based on community input and market understanding. What is your Transformation Strategy? Other Date Adopted by Board of Directors 01/15/25	Yes
4. Detailed work plans aligned with the selected Transformation Strategy that outlines programming across the Main Street Four Points. Work plans must include the project, expected (measurable) outcomes, specific tasks needed to accomplish the project, assignments of those tasks showing volunteer and staff responsibilities, timelines, and budgets. Please upload your Transformation Strategy Work Plan document.	Yes
5. A dedicated budget for the district's revitalization programming and the Main Street program's operations. Please upload your Program Budget document. What is your program's annual operating budget? 471864 What percentage of your funding comes from government sources? This optional question helps inform MSA's research and advocacy efforts! 81%	Yes
6. Demonstrated support from the municipality for the Main Street program. This can include leadership participation, funding, in-kind donations and philosophical support.	Yes
7. Reinvestment statistics are reported as required by the Coordinating Program (monthly, quarterly, or annually).	Yes
8. Be a member in good standing with Main Street America and appropriately use the Main Street America and Coordinating Program logos on the program's website and/or social media.	Yes
9. An Annual Report, Info-graphic, press release or other documentation to explain the progress of your program last year.	Yes

Cumulative Average Scores

Please refer to the [Explanation](#) section for more details about each standard.

	LP	CP	MSA
Standard I: Broad-Based Community Commitment to Revitalization	2.5	2.5	
I. Partnerships and Collaborations	3	3	
Indicator I	3	3	
II. District and Community Outreach	2	2	
Indicator I	2	2	
III. Communication and Public Relations	2.5	2.5	
Indicator I	3	3	
Indicator II	2	2	
	LP	CP	MSA
Standard II: Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Capacity	1.89	2	
I. Inclusive Organizational Culture and Diverse Volunteer Engagement	1.67	2	
Indicator I	1	2	
Indicator II	1	1	
Indicator III	3	3	
II. Active Board Leadership and Supporting Volunteer Base	1.67	1.33	
Indicator I	3	2	
Indicator II	1	1	
Indicator III	1	1	
III. Professional Staff Management	2	2.5	
Indicator I	3	3	
Indicator II	1	2	
IV. Effective Operational Structure	3	3	
Indicator I	3	3	
	LP	CP	MSA
Standard III: Diversified Funding and Sustainable Program Operations	2.2	2.2	
I. Balanced Funding Structure	3	3	
Indicator I	3	3	
II. Strategic Revenue Development and Fundraising	2	2	
Indicator I	2	2	
III. Budget and Work Plan Alignment	2	2	
Indicator I	2	2	
IV. Financial Management and Best Practices	2	2	
Indicator I	2	2	
Indicator II	2	2	
	LP	CP	MSA
Standard IV: Strategy-Driven Programming	1.33	2.33	
I. Planning Guided by Inclusive Community and Market-Informed Inputs	2	3	
Indicator I	2	3	
II. Defining Direction Through Transformation Strategy Identification and Development	1	2	
Indicator I	1	2	
III. Strategy-Aligned Comprehensive Work Planning and Implementation Across All Four Points	1	2	
Indicator I	1	2	

	LP	CP	MSA
Standard V: Preservation-Based Economic Development	3.25	2.75	
I. Preservation Ethics and Education on History and Cultural Assets	3.5	3	
Indicator I	4	3	
Indicator II	3	3	
II. Standards and Best Practices for Place-Based, People-Focused Design	3	3	
Indicator I	3	3	
III. Promotion of Historic, Heritage, and Cultural Assets	3	2	
Indicator I	3	2	
	LP	CP	MSA
Standard VI: Demonstrated Impact and Results	2.5	2.5	
I. Demonstrating The Value of Main Street	3	3	
Indicator I	3	3	
II. Measuring and Packaging Quantitative and Qualitative Outcomes	2.5	2.5	
Indicator I	3	3	
Indicator II	2	2	
III. Promoting Progress and Demonstrating Impact and Results	2	2	
Indicator I	2	2	

Additional Information

Date of last on-site visit
05/21/25

What year was your program started?
1998

Complete the North Carolina Main Street - 2025 Accreditation Assessment Supplemental Information
Yes

Standard I: Broad-Based Community Commitment to Revitalization

Standard One reflects that successful and sustainable revitalization efforts are not just the work of a single organization, but should be the result of a community-wide effort that brings the public and private sectors together with a strong sense of ownership in their downtown or commercial district. This Standard reviews the Main Street organizations' essential role in fostering a culture of inclusion, engagement, collaboration, and commitment from all sectors of the community. Launching a program, growing it incrementally from one year to the next, and sustaining success for the long run are only possible through a diversity of strong partnerships and collaborations, continued outreach, and communication.

I. Partnerships and Collaborations

Indicator I

LP

Monroe's Main Street has a strong partnership with the city, as it completely funds the program. Collaborations with city officials has increased over the last year through regular engagement at their meetings. Additional partnerships developed over the last year include the Union County Community Arts Council, the Heritage Room, local Rotary and Kiwanis clubs that all assist in downtown's revitalization.

Additional work is needed in collaboration with private sector groups and with engaging all partners in committees and workplans. The program is also working on stronger partnerships with other city and county entities located in downtown, including the Dowd Center Theatre, Science Center, and public library.

CP

We recognize that improvement has been made in this indicator.

MSA

N/A

II. District and Community Outreach

Indicator I

LP

Monroe's Main Street program needs to seek out broad and diverse input in 2026. It's downtown master plan is underway and will include several opportunities for public input. The input is being specifically designed to meet the community where they are and be inclusive of all residents and those who visit downtown.

CP

Once implemented, the new master plan will be a useful tool in shaping the future of downtown Monroe.

MSA

N/A

III. Communication and Public Relations

Indicator I

LP

Monroe Main Street promotes itself on a page located on the city's website. It includes the vision and mission of the program. The city's Communications Department also shares the success of downtown on the city's social media. In 2025, downtown staff often presented at city council meetings. Additional work is needed in speaking engagements and outreach.

CP

Progress has been made. Monroe Main Street would greatly benefit from implementation of a stand-alone website and social media pages.

MSA

N/A

Indicator II

LP

Monroe Main Street uses the City of Monroe brand with "Downtown" on it. Downtown Monroe could use a more distinctive and playful brand that reflects downtown. Additionally, social media platforms could be more utilized and an annual report could be produced sharing successes.

CP

New branding and a stronger social media presence would greatly help this indicator.

MSA

N/A

Overall Standard Notes

LP: Monroe Main Street has built a good foundation of partnerships, including the city and local civic groups. We are excited to continue furthering that engagement and collaboration, so that downtown projects like it is for all and created by all. Additional work in outreach and communications should significantly improve public engagement over the next year.

Standard II: Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Capacity

Strong, thriving communities don't just happen. They need effective leaders at all levels, from a broad base of committed volunteers to dedicated professional staff offering their time, talents, and passion for this work. Standard Two reflects the value we place on PEOPLE as Main Street's greatest resource and our belief that everyone in the community has a place in Main Street. This Standard encourages Main Street programs to place a strong priority on human capital and develop a clear operational structure and practices that increase the organization's capacity to engage all sectors of the community and leverage their participation in their revitalization efforts.

I. Inclusive Organizational Culture and Diverse Volunteer Engagement

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe's Main Street Program follows Monroe's Equity and Inclusion policies. Work is needed to be sure the board reflects the community in demographics.	We recognize that this is a work in progress. Main Street Monroe would greatly benefit from recruiting a board member that represents its robust Hispanic/Latino population.	N/A

Indicator II

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe does not have a volunteer program, other than those that sit on the Downtown Advisory Board. Work is needed to start volunteer committees, tie those committees to workplan projects, and building strong ownership and community in downtown.	Implementation of a volunteer recruitment initiative in the incoming FY plan of work would help this score greatly.	N/A

Indicator III

LP	CP	MSA
The Downtown Advisory includes district property owners, business owners, and local residents.	Identify stakeholders who can fill the roles not mentioned, such as institutional representation.	N/A

II. Active Board Leadership and Supporting Volunteer Base

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Board members met board attendance standards. One board member attended the NC Main Street Conference in 2025. In 2026, the board will receive a board training from NC Main Street.	Board members need to take an active role in the work plan implementation beyond routine board meetings. Board training and a new work plan should help this score in the future.	N/A

Indicator II

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe is a city funded main street program. The DAB has not been involved in ensuring funding goals are met or worked with budgeting.	Diversifying funds would greatly help the sustainability of this program.	N/A

Indicator III

LP	CP	MSA
Work is needed to complete a workplan and establish volunteer committees. The DAB will be involved in this process, setting goals for these groups.	The new master plan should help greatly in guiding the new workplan.	N/A

III. Professional Staff Management

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe has a full-time main street manager and is in the process of hiring support staff.	It's encouraging to hear that support staff is being added. It is needed for a town of Monroe's size.	N/A

Indicator II

LP

CP

MSA

As a city program, the board serves an advisory role. They have not been involved in reviewing staff. However, staff does work closely with the advisory board and receives guidance on projects.

We recognize that the board will take on a more active role as your program continues rebuilding.

N/A

IV. Effective Operational Structure

Indicator I

LP

CP

MSA

Monroe Main Street operates as a city program. We have a defined vision and mission, and follow city policies and procedures.

N/A

N/A

Overall Standard Notes

LP: Monroe Main Street has a great start at engaging volunteers with its Downtown Advisory Board. This board of seven is engaged and has energy to continue to rebuild the program. Developing a strong volunteer recruitment strategy that focuses on diversity will help with the rebuilding of the program.

Standard III: Diversified Funding and Sustainable Program Operations

A successful revitalization program must have the financial resources necessary to carry out its work and sustain its operations. Program sustainability relies on diversity of revenue streams as dependency on one primary or only source could jeopardize the program's operations. Through this Standard, Main Street programs demonstrate a priority for ensuring that the community is investing in the Main Street organization and programming efforts through a comprehensive and balanced funding structure that ensures successful and sustainable revitalization efforts.

I. Balanced Funding Structure

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Funding for the Main Street Program comes from the City of Monroe, in addition to the Municipal Service District. Additionally, some grants have been secured for renovations to the downtown office.	It's encouraging to hear that grant funds have been secured. If the city would consider the addition of a non-profit to your program, it could potentially open the door to more outside funding opportunities.	N/A

II. Strategic Revenue Development and Fundraising

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe's Downtown Advisory Board does not review the city's budget for the program. Additional work is needed to gather their input and diversify funding sources.	We agree that board buy-in on things like the budget and workplan gives them more ownership and follow through on implementation.	N/A

III. Budget and Work Plan Alignment

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
The annual budget comes from the City of Monroe and the Municipal Service District. It completely covers all operational expenses. Additional work is needed to align funding with work plans, transformation strategies, and goals.	We recognize that efforts are being made to improve this indicator.	N/A

IV. Financial Management and Best Practices

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
As a city program, Monroe's Main Street Program falls under the city's financial compliance standards. An area of improvement includes collaborating with the Downtown Advisory Board in requesting and overseeing the budget.	N/A	N/A

Indicator II

LP	CP	MSA
As a city program, the Monroe Main Street budget falls under the city's financial governance. The city's finance team provides oversight of expenses. Additional work could include regular reports to the DAB on financials for the program.	N/A	N/A

Overall Standard Notes

LP: Monroe Main Street is completely funded by the city's budget, including around \$90,000 from the Municipal Service District. The organization has opportunity to diversify funding sources and include the advisory board on financial reporting. Aligning a detailed workplan with budget requests will also help align the vision of the program with the actual work to accomplish the vision.

Standard IV: Strategy-Driven Programming

Main Street has built a strong track record for making change happen in communities across the country. Change is an important guiding principle for Main Street. But rather than letting change just happen, Main Street programs define and manage it from one year to the next through a strategy-driven work plan and aligned implementation process. Standard Four brings together all integrated components that must be in place to plan and successfully implement the revitalization work. Centered around Main Street's Four Point Approach, these integrated components are driven by a local Transformation Strategy(s) aligned through community participation and based on understanding of the district's unique and competitive market position.

I. Planning Guided by Inclusive Community and Market-Informed Inputs

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe has just started a downtown master plan in Fall 2025. Just a few months in, over 100 people have been involved in initial input and interviews. A market analysis has also been completed as a part of the master plan. Additional work is needed to gather input from the public, businesses, and other stakeholders. The building and business inventory is in progress.	We recognize that efforts are being made to incorporate community input and market analysis into a new work plan.	N/A

II. Defining Direction Through Transformation Strategy Identification and Development

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe Main Street has a vision and mission, but is not widely known or adopted by partner organizations. There is not a clear transformation strategy that all partners are working towards. Through the downtown master plan process, we'll gather input on assets, market, and needs and form a community-wide vision and economic development strategy for downtown.	The vision statement is lengthy and vague. We recognize that efforts are being made to improve this indicator.	N/A

III. Strategy-Aligned Comprehensive Work Planning and Implementation Across All Four Points

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
The City of Monroe currently directs the budget and workplan of the main street program. The Downtown Advisory Board does set some direction and advises on some projects. More work is needed to create a common vision and transformation strategy, then a work plan that aligns with our goals including budget, timeline, and responsible parties.	We recognize that efforts are being made to improve this indicator.	N/A

Overall Standard Notes

LP: Significant work is needed to align the work with a vision and strategy. Monroe Main Street is undergoing a Downtown Master Plan, which is a huge step in getting inclusive and market-driven input and developing a community vision for downtown. We are excited to take this input and direction and feed it into an actionable and detailed workplan to guide the work of the main street program over the next 5-10 years!

Standard V: Preservation-Based Economic Development

Successful Main Street efforts are built on the guiding principle that district economic development is obtained by leveraging and preserving its unique historic and cultural assets. Standard Five confirms our strong belief that a community's own place-based and diverse cultural assets reflect the richness and strength of its identity and establishes a competitive market advantage.

I. Preservation Ethics and Education on History and Cultural Assets

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe is a Certified Local Government and has a very active Historic Preservation Commission. The Downtown Advisory Board oversees a Building Re-development Incentive Grant available to those who follow the Secretary of Interior Standards of Rehabilitation when re-developing their buildings. This program was improved over the last year to make the process easier and improve accountability for those applying.	Progress has been made in this indicator. Using communication tools such as website and social media to inform the public about Main Street Monroe's commitment to historic preservation would help to improve this score.	N/A

Indicator II

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe is a Certified Local Government and has an active Historic Preservation Commission. There is a National Register Historic District and the map is available on the city's website. Additional work is needed to educate the public and downtown stakeholders of available resources.	N/A	N/A

II. Standards and Best Practices for Place-Based, People-Focused Design

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe's Downtown Advisory Board Oversees an incentive program that provides funds to rehab historic buildings according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards. This program was redeveloped over the last year to be more clear, supportive, and accountable when property owners are investing in their buildings and attracting new business.	N/A	N/A

III. Promotion of Historic, Heritage, and Cultural Assets

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Downtown Monroe's historic charm provided by the buildings and architecture is what makes downtown unique. All marketing and communications about the district highlights that charm.	Are there partners in the community that provide programming to promote the district's assets? How are property owners educated on Secretary of Interior standards?	N/A

Overall Standard Notes

LP: The City of Monroe has a strong preservation ethic that continues to improve as the years go on. The community values the historic charm of downtown and understands that the buildings, architecture, and design is what contributes to that. Over the last year, Monroe Main Street consolidated their grant programs to improve accountability and record-keeping. This also holds new businesses and property owners accountable for maintaining the historic character of their properties. Improving the partnership between the main street program and Historic District Commission will continue to improve the preservation ethic in the downtown residential and business districts.

Standard VI: Demonstrated Impact and Results

Main Street communities are part of a national network with a proven record for generating strong economic returns and strengthening the district's position within a highly competitive marketplace. Standard Six highlights the importance of tracking, packaging, and demonstrating the qualitative and quantitative impact of the program's revitalization efforts. It also provides the opportunity for the local Main Street program to tell their stories and advocate for resources needed for sustainability.

I. Demonstrating The Value of Main Street

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
The Downtown Department and Monroe Main Street Program has become a strong advocate for downtown over the last year. The department provides strong support for the district and downtown businesses seek out staff and volunteers for support. The department is included in projects with Planning, Engineering, and Parks & Rec.	N/A	N/A

II. Measuring and Packaging Quantitative and Qualitative Outcomes

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe Main Street tracks and reports statistics yearly, including businesses operating, jobs, employees, investment, yearly visitors, housing, etc.	We strongly recommend posting your next impact report on your website to communicate your successes.	N/A

Indicator II

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe Main Street tracks statistics on a yearly basis and reviews it with the DAB. Additional work is needed to complete a detailed workplan, track accomplishments, and long-term improvements.	A communications plan will be vital to publicizing the work your organization is doing.	N/A

III. Promoting Progress and Demonstrating Impact and Results

Indicator I

LP	CP	MSA
Monroe Main Street can improve by completing an annual report that shares statistics and improvements. This report could be shared publicly online, on social media, and in presentations to elected officials and community groups.	Agreed.	N/A

Overall Standard Notes

LP: Monroe Main Street tracks its progress, and can improve through packaging this progress into annual report. This should improve engagement among the public and partners as well.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Downtown Advisory Board
DATE: April 22, 2026
FROM: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager
PREPARED BY: Ashley Nowell, Downtown Director
SUBJECT: Downtown Sponsorship Program

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Over the last 6 months, the DAB has had several conversations about the Downtown Sponsorship Program. Staff has reviewed and will provide some recommendations. DAB members should review and bring feedback on the program.

REVIEW

Downtown Department currently budgets \$6,000 a year for [downtown event sponsorships](#). Events selected must:

- Host business must be in central business district
- Positively impact DT Monroe
- Encourage shopping at DT businesses
- Have all financial support needed for event
- Draw people from city and surrounding areas
- Invite DT businesses to participate (minimum of 10 participating)
- Located within central business district

Previously, the DAB has only selected 1 event per quarter for no more than \$1,500 in sponsorship. Applicant must submit an event description, DT business involvement, marketing plan, logistics management, and funding.

In the November meeting, DAB discussed the event sponsorship program. Primary takeaways included:

- Setting up an expense reimbursement program, not paying sponsorship outright without proof of expenses.
- Accepting more than 1 event per quarter
- Limiting how many times one business or event can apply

- Defining what an “event” is – award sponsorship to those events that bring the most visitors and economic impact.
- Set a timeline for how far ahead of an event someone needs to apply.

For FY26, DAB has only spent approximately \$2,000 (\$1,500 for 2025 Fall Fest, \$500 for 2026 Art Walk). Additionally, DAB decided to sponsor the 2026 Spring Fest by covering the cost of porta-johns and police officers. This is typically an extremely high cost for DT businesses. This worked well for this event as the Downtown Office started a new restroom contract for the Spring Fest and Antique Market events. And the Downtown Office negotiated with PD to pay officers time and a half for working downtown sponsored events. We estimate the cost of the restrooms and officers will cost approximately \$1,000 in the downtown budget.

After the first big event weekend, staff has considered the following improvements:

- DT Event Sponsorships could support restrooms and police officers. (Makes sense as we already have contracts and mechanisms that support this.)
- DT Event Sponsorships could support trash pick-up. (We will hopefully be adding trash services during events. We could add any special event dates that DT sponsors to this contract.)
- DT Event Sponsorships could support marketing costs. We could reimburse or cover printing costs up to a certain amount.
- Sponsored events must include/involve DT businesses and be located within downtown central business district.
- Timeline should be 60+ days ahead of event.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for discussion.

Attachments:

Sponsorship Application

Retail Promotions Sponsorship Application



The City of Monroe Downtown pursues an ever growing economic development initiative which emphasizes the need for new and exciting places, events, and people. If you have an event you feel could have a positive impact on the growth of Downtown, we want to help make that dream become a reality. Listed below are questions the City must consider to sponsor an event in Downtown:

All questions must be answered "Yes" for consideration

	Yes	No
Is your business within the Central Business District?		
Will the event produce a positive impact on the Downtown Monroe Community and coordinate well within the existing promotions calendar?		
Will the event encourage visitors to shop at the event and surrounding downtown businesses? (including street closures and new traffic/pedestrian patterns)		
Will the event have the financial support necessary to carry out operations of the event or will it require additional funding sources?		
Does the event generate enough interest to draw in people from within the City of Monroe and the surrounding area?		
Are all Downtown businesses offered to participate?		
Are there at least 10 Downtown, retail and/or restaurant businesses participating? <u>(Please Provide a List)</u>		
Will the event occur within the Central Business District?		

Please note that the sponsorship may not exceed \$500 per event and funds are limited to one per quarter. A person(s) may only apply for one sponsorship per year. The Downtown Advisory Board has the final decision on where these funds are to be allocated.

Contact Information

Name of Person Submitting Event:

Email:

Phone Number:

Description of Event

Event Name:

Brief Description below or add attachment:

What month(s), day(s), and time of the week do you see the event taking place?

How often do you propose the event will take place?

Is there a direct way to tie this event to the Downtown Monroe businesses? Explain:

Marketing

Who is the target market for this event?

Core message of the campaign:

Please describe how this event would be promoted.

Below describe each method of promotion in detail.

Medium or Channel	Length of Time	Start Date of Promotion	Specific Target Group

Pre-Planning Management

Please describe the steps involved in the actual pre-planning process- where, when, hours and time, activities involved, groups who will participate in planning.

Food: YES NO

Will the food be:

GIVEN AWAY SOLD

(County Permit Required if YES)

*Will the event require street or parking lot closings? YES NO (City Permit Required if YES)

NOTE: If yes, please provide a map showing which streets will need to be closed & exactly where barricades will need to be located.

*Will the event require a tent or temporary structure? YES NO (City Permit Required if YES)

*What is the square feet of the tent or temporary structure?

*Will the tent structure be used by 10 or more occupants? YES NO

NOTE: Building and fire permits are required for tents or other temporary structures erected for a period of less than 180 days and that has an area greater than 120 square feet or is to be used by 10 or more occupants.

Please describe in detail the labor needs on the day of the event. This could range from security, volunteers to clean up.

Funding

Please give a budget for expenses related to this event. Attach separate sheet if necessary. Income generators /revenue streams include such activities as ticket sales, vendor space rentals, beverage sales, sponsorships, etc.:

Description of Expenses	Amount
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Total Expenses _____

Description of Income Generators	Amount
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Total Income _____

Net Income (Total Income minus Total Expenses): _____

Have you included sponsorships as one of your income generators? If so do you have the ability to raise these sponsorships? YES NO

Thank you for taking the time to share your event idea with us. This information will be shared with the Downtown Department and City of Monroe Committees. You may be asked to attend the scheduled meeting of the committees to further discuss your idea. We appreciate your interest in bringing people to Downtown Monroe!



STAFF REPORT

TO: Downtown Advisory Board
DATE: March 18, 2026
FROM: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager
PREPARED BY: Ashley Nowell, Downtown Director
SUBJECT: Downtown Market Analysis

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Downtown Director provided the market analysis to the Downtown Advisory Board at the February meeting. This analysis was done by the Shook Kelley team as a part of the Downtown Master Plan. DAB and staff will review and discuss the findings.

REVIEW

The downtown market analysis was produced by the Shook Kelley team as a part of the Downtown Master Plan. The analysis shows what people are leaving the district to purchase. This can show us where Monroe has capacity to add businesses in different retail sectors.

By 2030, it is estimated that we will have a demand of 70,000 square footage of additional retail. That includes:

- 10,000 sf – apparel, jewelry, shoes
- 5,000 sf – electronic, recreation
- 10,000 sf – home, furniture, art
- 30,000 sf – grocery
- 15,000 sf - restaurants

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for discussion.

Attachments:

Downtown Market Analysis

Downtown Monroe, NC

Retail Market Analysis



Prepared For
The City of Monroe, North Carolina

Prepared By
Gibbs Planning Group

February 2, 2026



Monroe, NC
Downtown Retail Market Analysis
February 2, 2026

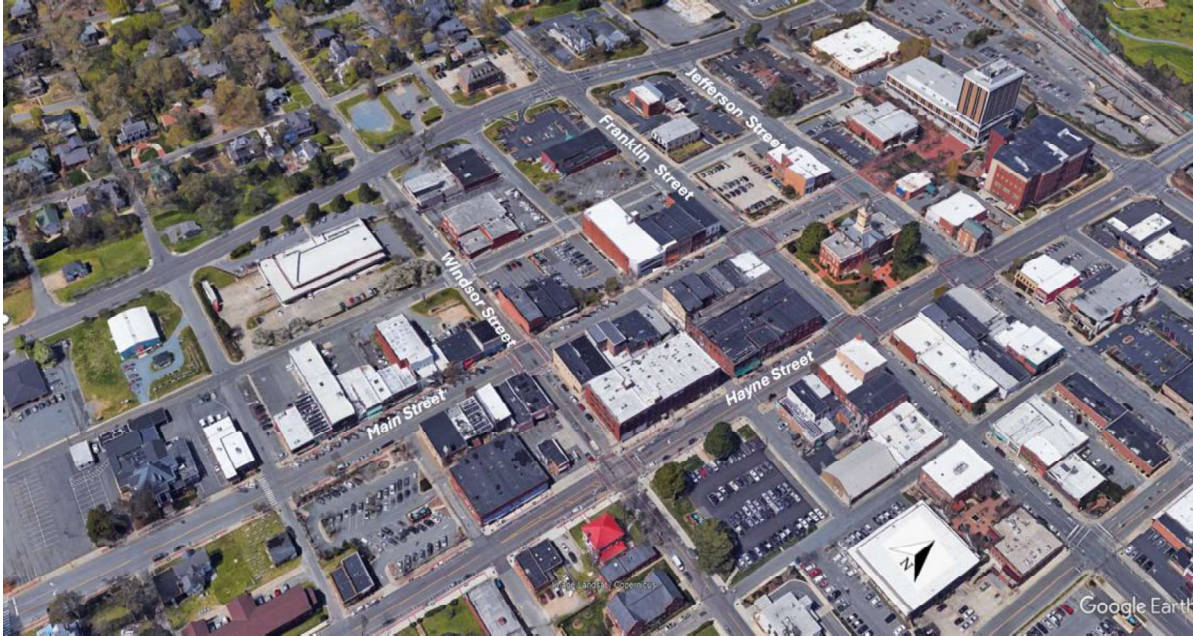


Figure 1: View of downtown Monroe looking west.

Summary

This study finds that downtown Monroe has a 2025 retail demand for 25 new or expanded stores and restaurants totaling 70,000 square feet. Combined, the new businesses could capture \$25 million in annual store sales currently leaving the Monroe market area.

The market demand includes 55,000 sf of apparel, art, furniture, gifts, sporting goods, a supermarket and specialty foods potentially generating \$20 million in total new retail store sales.

The downtown’s food and beverage demand is for 3 full-service and 2 quick-casual restaurants potentially producing \$5 million in food and beverage sales. Overall, the 25 new stores and restaurants could average up to \$340 per square foot per year in sales, higher than retail industry trends.

Monroe Downtown 2030 New Retail Demand	
10,000 sf	Apparel, Jewelry, Shoes
5,000 sf	Electronics, Recreation
10,000 sf	Home, Furniture, Art,
30,000 sf	Supermarket & Foods
<u>15,000 sf</u>	<u>Restaurants – Specialty Foods</u>
70,000 sf	Total 2025 New Demand

Summary

This study also estimates downtown Monroe’s retail market trade area extends 20 miles and includes 100,000 people and 40,000 households. In 2024, Monroe’s trade area households spent \$750 million on retail goods and restaurants. Existing stores located within the downtown trade area captured \$400 million of the spending, indicating \$350 million of spending taking place outside of Monroe. This study projects downtown businesses can capture up to \$25 million or an average of 7% of the spending gap.

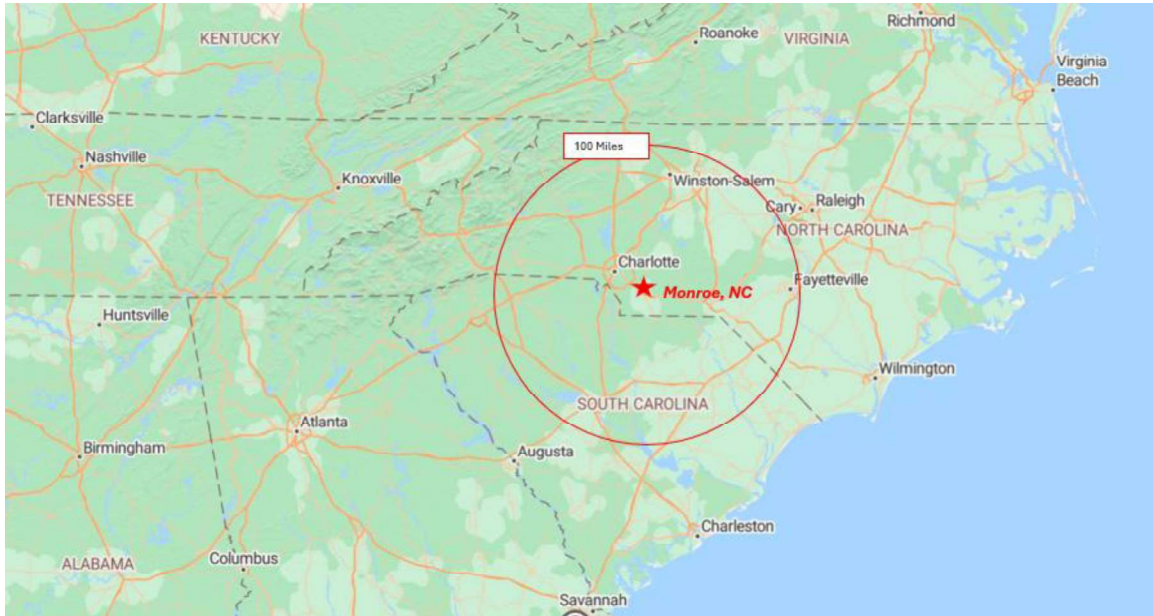


Figure 2: The City of Monroe is located in south-central North Carolina, 20 miles southeast of downtown Charlotte and 10 miles north of South Carolina.

Background

Gibbs Group has been retained by Shook-Kelley Architects to estimate the retail market demand for additional or expanded stores and restaurants for the downtown Monroe area. This research is intended to provide background data for Shook-Kelley’s downtown master planning process and as a resource for the city’s businesses.

This study’s projections represent GPG’s analysis of the 2025 statistical retail demand assuming best business practices and other conditions. This study does not necessarily reflect the downtown area’s land or building inventory’s capacity to accommodate 70,000 sf additional commercial development.

Monroe Overview

Monroe, NC is characterized as a friendly community with small-town charm and a strong employment base. The City is situated 20 miles southeast of downtown Charlotte and 10 miles north of the South Carolina state border. Monroe is the Union County Seat and houses the County courthouse and government offices.

Monroe Overview

Monroe's 43,000 residents reflect a high 20% growth since 2020. The median household income is \$67,000, and the average household income is approximately \$85,000. Unemployment in Monroe is consistently lower than the national average.

Compared to the greater Charlotte region, the Monroe's cost of living is also relatively affordable. Median home and rental housing prices are some the best values in the region and less than the U.S. average. Monroe features a historical downtown area, regional shopping centers, excellent schools, walkable neighborhoods and an 180-bed, acute care hospital, the Atrium Health Union.

As a part of the Charlotte region, Monroe has a steadily increasing economy with a mix of manufacturing, retail, and service industries, including a robust aerospace niche. Monroe also offers competitive commercial tax and real estate costs. Monroe has been named a Top 10 city in North Carolina for small businesses.



Figure 3: The greater Monroe area includes nearly 1 million square feet of retail space including Aldi, Belk, Best Buy, Food Lion, Lowes, Target, and Walmart. Downtown Monroe includes approximately 120,000 sf of ground floor commercial space.

Monroe Retail Trends

Retail and service sectors play a key role in the Monroe economy and is a major shopping destination for the outer southwest Charlotte. The greater Monroe area includes nearly one million square feet of retail space. Aldi, Best Buy, Food Lion, Lowes, Target, and Walmart represent some of the city's larger retailers.

Monroe Retail Trends

The 400,000 sf Monroe Crossing Mall is the City’s largest shopping center. Located one-mile northwest of the downtown, the mall includes Belk’s department store and 40 retailers and restaurants. The Crossing’s market catchment area is estimated at 800,000 people and 300,000 households.



Figure 4: Left, Wingate University, a liberal arts school with a 3,500-student body; Right, the historic Dowd Theater a 550-seat cinema and performing arts center.

Downtown Monroe

Downtown Monroe is an attractive historic city founded in 1844 and named after James Monroe, the fifth United States president. The 30-block downtown features 150 specialty stores and restaurants. Local stores include Murphy’s on Main, Boutique on Main, Monroe Florists, Jampac Records, Silver Lining boutique, and several antique and vintage shops.

The City also has bookstores along with a variety of downtown popular restaurants including Franklin Court Grill, Main Street Bistro, and Homebrew Taproom & Tunes. Furthermore, local cafes including Sorella Coffee, Alice Jules Coffee House, High Octane, and Cause for Tea function as community hubs of social activity, or ‘third places’, within and nearby the downtown core area. (Source City of Monroe)

The historic Dowd Theater is a major downtown and regional entertainment attraction. The 550 seat venue hosts art cinema, conventions, live performances, local and national artists, and community events. The Monroe Science Center and Aquatics Centers are also regional draws to the downtown. Monroe is a designated North Carolina Main Street Downtown Area supporting special events, community activities and small business assistance.

South Piedmont Community College

Located 5 miles northwest of downtown Monroe, South Piedmont Community College enrolls 1,300 students. The college offers 50 credit and certificate programs including agribusinesses, human resources, industrial manufacturing, nursing, and real estate.

Wingate University

Wingate University is a private school affiliated with Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Founded in 1895, Wingate offers over 45 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs. The school is noted for its health sciences, liberal arts programs, small class sizes and close-knit campus. The University enrolls 3,500 students and has 200 faculty members. Wingate's 400-acre campus is located 5-miles west of downtown Monroe. The University is a prominent institution in the Charlotte area and has a significant influence on local businesses.

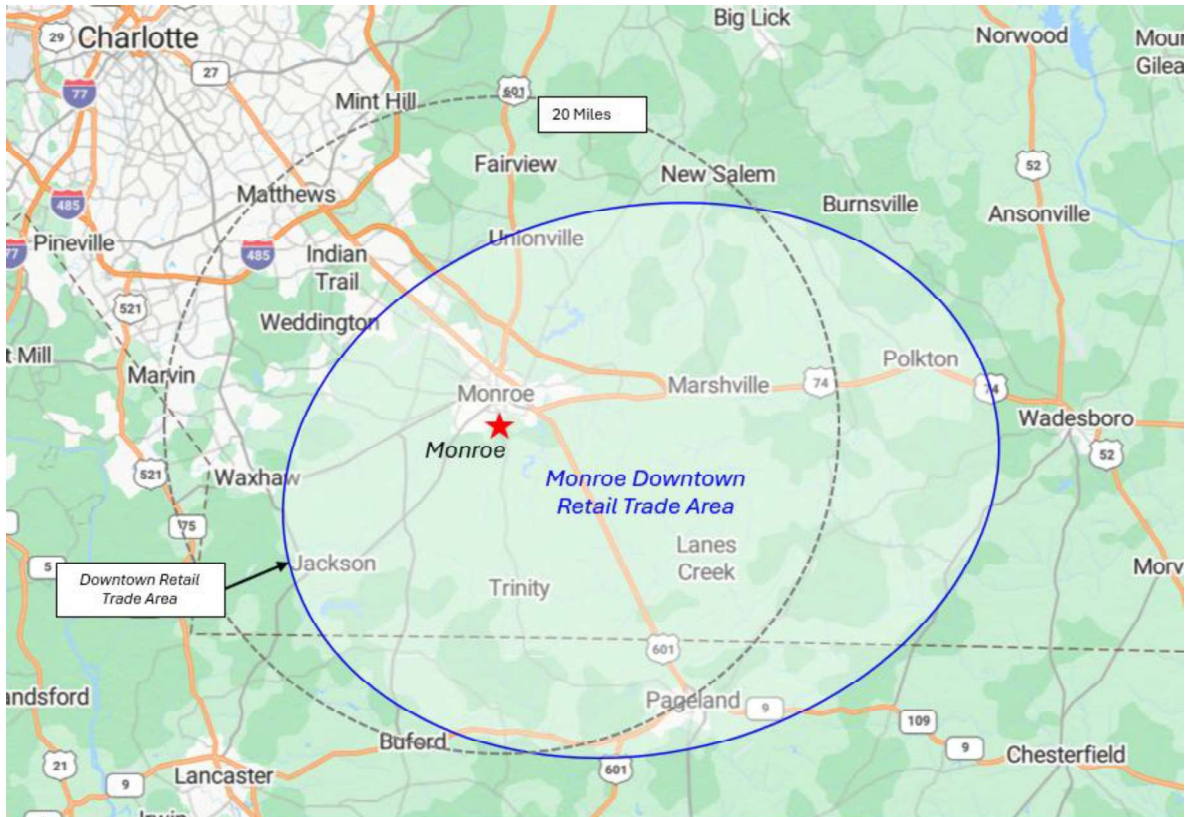


Figure 5: Above Blue: Downtown Monroe's defined primary retail market trade area, shown inside the blue circle above, includes 100,000 people and 40,000 households with \$100,000 average household incomes.

Retail Market Trade Areas

As a part of this analysis, GPG defined downtown Monroe's existing and potential retail trade areas geographically. The retail trade area includes locations where the commercial businesses will have a competitive market advantage because of favorable access, demographics, employment, growth, landuse patterns and other factors.

These market advantages equate to an opportunity for the downtown businesses to induce unmet spending and to capture new retail sales occurring in other shopping locations. The defined primary trade area households are projected to account for 40% to 60% of the total sales of Monroe trade area's stores and restaurants. The balance of the area's commerce will come from the tertiary trade area, online sales, visitors, and nearby communities.

Retail Market Trade Areas

This study projects that Monroe has a primary trade area equating to a 20 to 30-minute drive-time. Monroe’s Primary Trade Area Summary:

- 100,000 people and 40,000 households
- \$100,000 average household incomes
- 6,000 households with incomes over \$150,000

Figure 6 : Monroe Trade Area’s Demographic Profiles

2025 Demographics	5-Mile Ring	10-Mile Ring	15-Mile Ring	10-Min. Drivetime	20-Min. Drivetime	Primary Downtown Retail Trade Area
Population 2025	50,000	160,000	380,000	40,000	185,000	100,000
Households 2025	20,000	55,000	140,000	15,000	60,000	40,000 HH
Median HH Incomes	\$90,000	\$105,000	\$125,000	\$80,000	\$105,000	\$85,000
Average HH Incomes	\$105,000	\$130,000	\$160,000	\$100,000	\$135,000	\$100,000
Per Capita Income	\$35,000	\$41,000	\$52,000	\$32,000	\$42,000	\$38,000
HH Incomes 150,000 +	3,500	10,000	25,000	3,500	15,000	6,000

15-Mile Ring
 380,000 Population
 1,400,000 Households
 \$160,000 Ave. HH Incomes

20-Minute Drivetime
 185,000 Population
 60,000 Households
 \$135,000 Ave. HH Incomes

Primary Downtown Trade Area
 100,000 Population
 40,000 Households
 \$100,000 Ave. HH Incomes

Retail Market Demand

This study projects that downtown Monroe can support 70,000 sf of retail equating to 20 retail stores and 10 restaurants in 2025.

5,000 sf Apparel Stores: 2 to 4 clothing stores offering a moderately priced range of options for men, women and children’s clothing, including outerwear. 2030 projected sales:

- \$1,400,000/ year
- \$280 sf/ yr average store sales

1,200 sf Art & Design Gallery: A specialized art gallery offering curated painting, photography and sculpture. 2030 projected sales:

- \$360,000 / year sales
- \$300 sf/yr average gallery sales

1,500 sf Electronics & Phone Store: A store that offers electronics and phones. 2025 projected sales:

- \$900,000/ year
- \$600 sf/ yr average store sales

Retail Market Demand

4,000 sf Furniture: 2 to 5 stores offering art, antiques, bedding, design services, home furniture, lighting, textiles, and furnishings for home and office. 2030 projected sales:

\$2,000,000 /year

\$500 sf yr average store sales



Figure 7: Downtown Monroe has a 2025 market demand for 55,000 of additional or expanded apparel, supermarket, home furnishings and other retailers.

25,000 sf Grocery-Supermarket: A full-service supermarket offering baked goods, fish, meats, frozen foods, prepared foods, canned goods and other in-store ‘middle isles’ goods. Prepared foods and inside dining should be provided. 2030 projected sales:

\$9,000,000 / year

\$350 sf/ yr average store sales

1,200 sf Jewelry, Fine Gifts Store: A service-oriented, moderately priced jewelry, watch and fine gifts. 2030 projected sales:

\$800,000/ year

\$700 sf/ yr average store sales

2,000 sf Garden Center: A store dedicated to garden décor, flowers shrubs, landscape supplies, tools, trees and holiday furnishings. 2030 projected sales:

\$1,000,000/ year

\$500 sf/ yr average store sales

1,200 sf Shoes & Handbags: A footwear store, athletics, business, children’s and casual shoes and handbags. 2030 projected sales:

\$500,000/ year

\$380 sf/ yr average store sales

4,000 sf Meats, Produce & Dairy: 2 to 3 specialized markets selling fish, meats, poultry, produce and other food offerings. 2030 projected sales:

\$1,400,000/ year

\$350 sf / yr average store sales

Retail Market Demand

10,000 sf Full-Service Restaurants: 4 to 6 local, regional and national brand sit-down restaurants offering attentive service, and well-designed interiors. Restaurants should focus on a best -in-class theme food category, such as breakfast, family, seafood, and steak. Small 40-to 60-seat restaurants are recommended for some of the restaurants. The City encourages small, locally owned restaurant concepts over national brands in the downtown area.

2030 projected sales:

\$3,500,000/ year

\$350 sf/ yr average sales



Figure 8: 4,000-sf specialty foods and 5 restaurants are supportable in downtown Monroe in 2025.

10,000 sf Full-Service Restaurants: 4 to 6 local, regional and national brand sit-down restaurants offering attentive service, and well-designed interiors. Restaurants should focus on a best -in-class theme food category, such as breakfast, family, seafood, and steak. Small 40-to 60-seat restaurants are recommended for some of the restaurants. 2030 projected sales:

\$3,500,000/ year

\$350 sf/ yr average sales

5,000 sf Quick-Casual- Maker Restaurants: 3 to 4 moderately priced quick-casual restaurants offering breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals. Venues should focus on a single category such as bagels, burgers, chicken, sandwiches, pizza, subs, and other maker foods. Some restaurants should be regional and national franchise brands. Drive-through windows and curbside pick-up should be accommodated where possible. The City reports that it does not prefer drive-through window restaurants in the downtown. 2030 projected sales:

\$1,500,000/ year

\$300 sf/ yr average sales

Research Methodology

To estimate the amounts, sizes, sales and types of additional retail businesses supportable at the downtown Monroe. GPG defined its market trade areas using remote sensing, drive-times, and downtown shopping, residential and employment concentrations. Population consumer expenditures and demographic characteristics of the defined primary retail trade area residents and workers were also collected by census tracts from the U.S. Census, Claritas, CoStar, ESRI and other resources.

Research Methodology

GPG projected Monroe’s primary and tertiary-overall retail market trade areas of the gross consumer expenditure (business sales-supply) by retail category, less the current existing retail sales (supply) by retail category. GPG then calibrated the potential net consumer expenditure (gap) available to support new retail businesses.

The net potential captured consumer expenditure (gap) was equated to potential new retail development sizes by business categories based on published industry standards, consultations with commercial real estate professionals, and GPG’s in-house data resources. Spending and sales forecasts were qualitatively adjusted to fit the downtown Monroe development area’s characteristics, urbanism, and demographics.

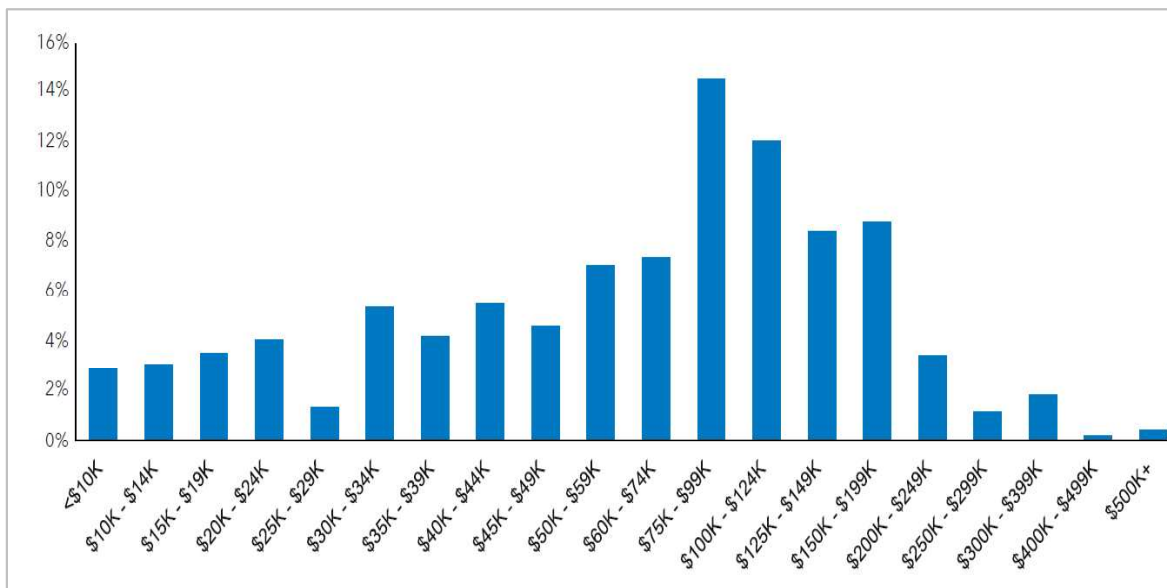


Figure 9: Monroe Area Household Incomes

Limits of Study

The findings of this study represent the Gibbs Planning Group’s best projections for the amounts new or expanded and types of retail businesses that could be supportable in the downtown Monroe, NC area. estimated by 2025.

The downtown Monroe area could support other types, sizes and store sales depending on a numerous market and non-market factors. Further research and analysis are recommended before implementing policy of investment initiatives based on this study.

Study Assumptions

The projections of this study are based on the following assumptions:

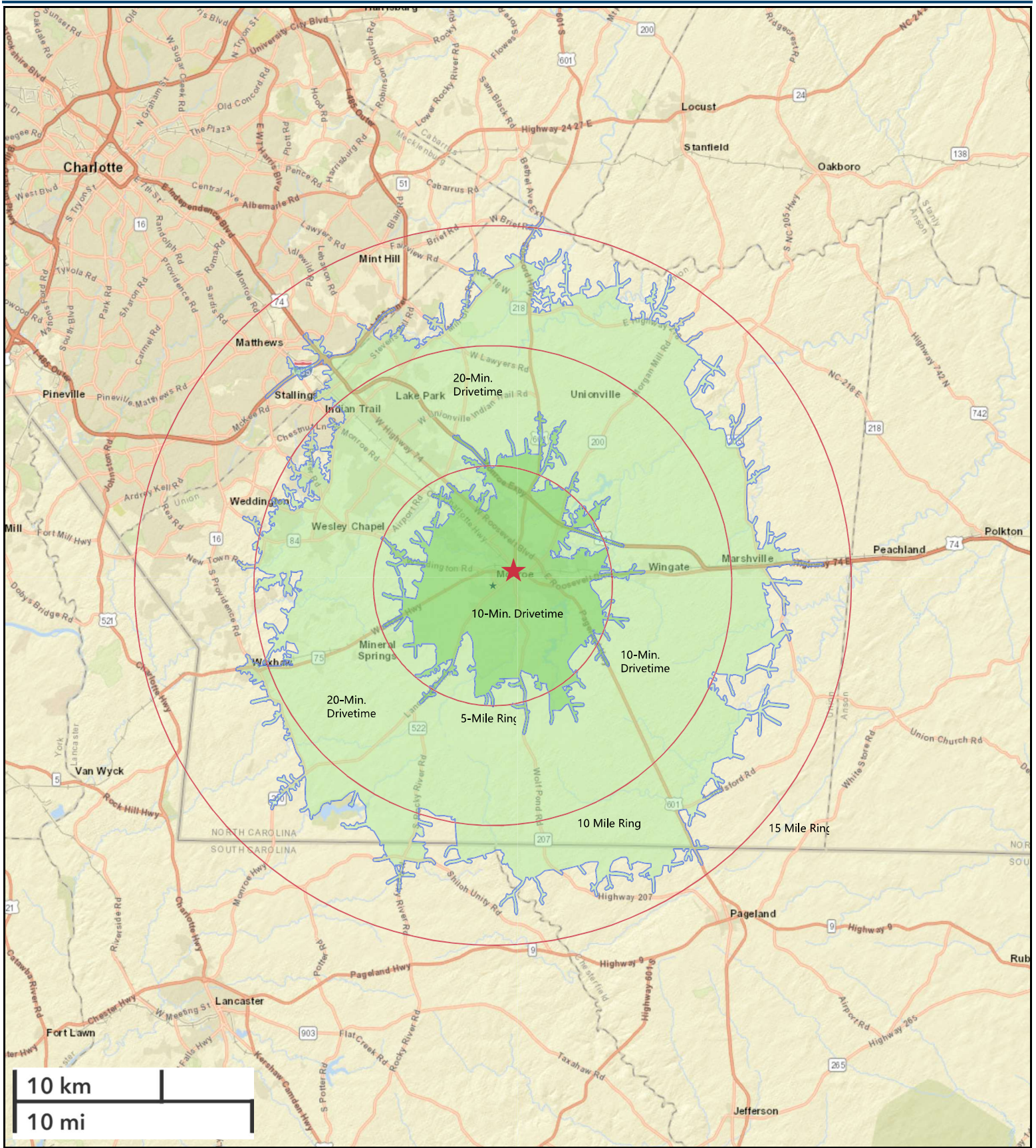
- No other major retail will be planned or developed within the defined Monroe development trade areas by 2030

Study Assumptions

- The Charlotte-Monroe regional economy will maintain or exceed 2025 economic market conditions of employment, inflation, growth, retail demand, real and other relevant conditions
- Retail businesses will adhere to best practices and complete with internet sales.
- The downtown area will continue to implement the Main Street program initiatives and practices

Figure 10: Downtown Monroe Estimated New 2025 Retail Demand

<i>Retail & Restaurant Categories</i>	<i>Total Trade Area HH Retail Spending 2024</i>	<i>Total Projected Each New Store Sales sf/yr 2030</i>	<i>New Monroe Store Sales Each sf/yr 2030</i>	<i>Size of Each New Monroe Stores</i>	<i>Number of New Monroe Stores</i>
Retailers					
Apparel - Children, Men, Women	\$80,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$300	5,000 sf	3
Art Gallery, Design Downtown	\$7,000,000	\$360,000	\$300	1,200 sf	1
Housewares, Kitchen	\$5,000,000	\$350,000	\$280	1,200 sf	1
Dept. Store Goods, Gifts	\$22,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$250	4,000 sf	3
Electronics & Phones	\$28,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$600	1,500 sf	1
Furniture, Art, Fixtures, Textiles	\$27,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$500	4,000 sf	2
Grocery – Supermarket	\$220,000,000	\$9,000,000	\$350	25,000 sf	1
Hobby, Toys, Crafts	\$13,000,000	\$500,000	\$300	1,500 sf	1
Jewelry & Fine Gifts	\$17,000,000	\$900,000	\$700	1,200 sf	1
Meats, Fish, Poultry, Produce	\$13,000,000	\$1,400,000	\$350	4,000 sf	2
Nursery - Garden Downtown	\$18,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$500	2,000 sf	1
Sporting Goods	\$21,000,000	\$700,000	\$350	2,000 sf	1
Shoes & Handbags	\$15,000,000	\$500,000	\$380	1,200 sf	1
Specialty Goods	\$8,000,000	\$420,000	\$350	1,200 sf	1
Retailer Totals	\$500,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$350 sf/yr	55,000 sf	20 Stores
Restaurants					
Full-Service Restaurants	\$140,000,000	\$3,500,000	\$350	10,000 sf	3
Quick Casual & Crafted Foods	\$110,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$300	5,000 sf	2
Restaurant Totals	\$250,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$330 sf/yr	15,000 sf	5 F-B
Retailer & Restaurant Totals	\$750,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$340 sf/yr	70,000 sf	25 Stores



Appendix A

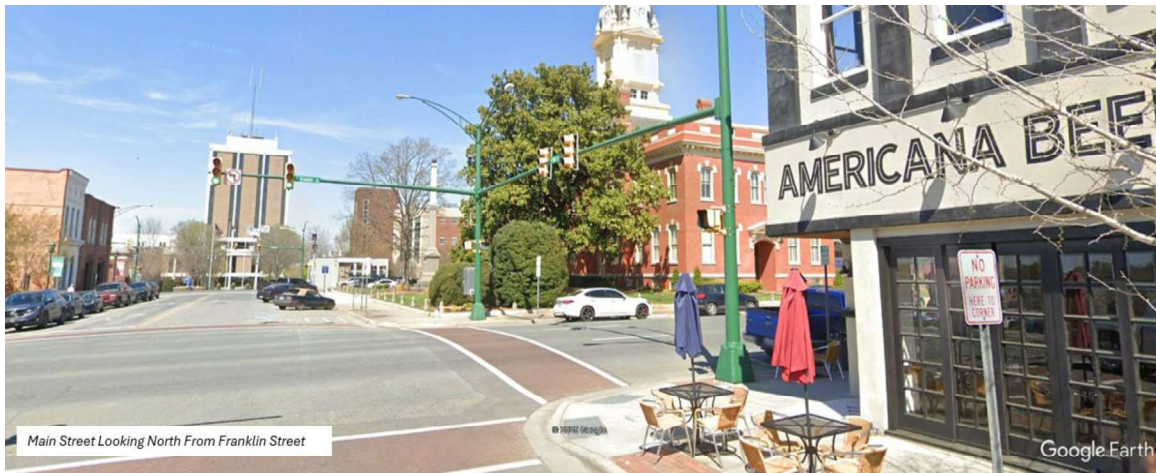


Figure 11: Downtown Monroe Main Street looking north from Franklin Street



Figure 12: Downtown Monroe Main Street looking south towards Windsor Street



Figure 13: View of W. Roosevelt Road - Hwy. 74, looking NW towards Roland - King Arthur Streets.

Appendix B

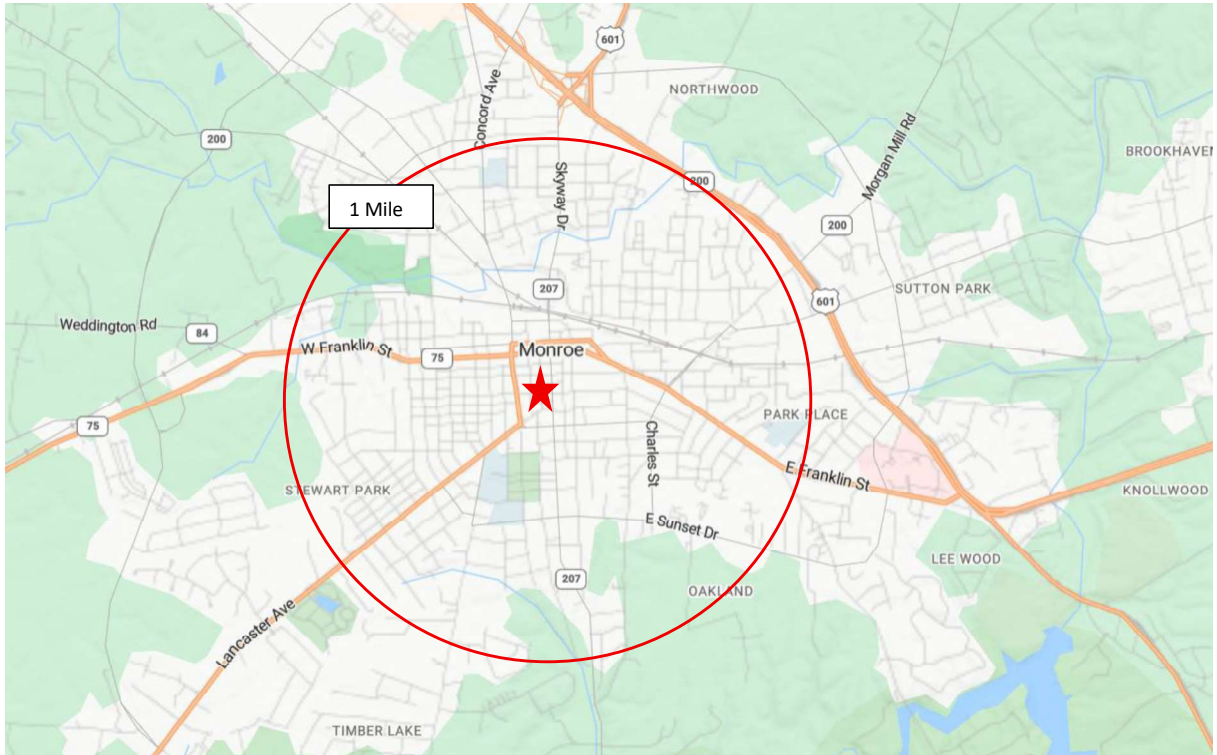


Figure 14: Downtown Monroe Area Map

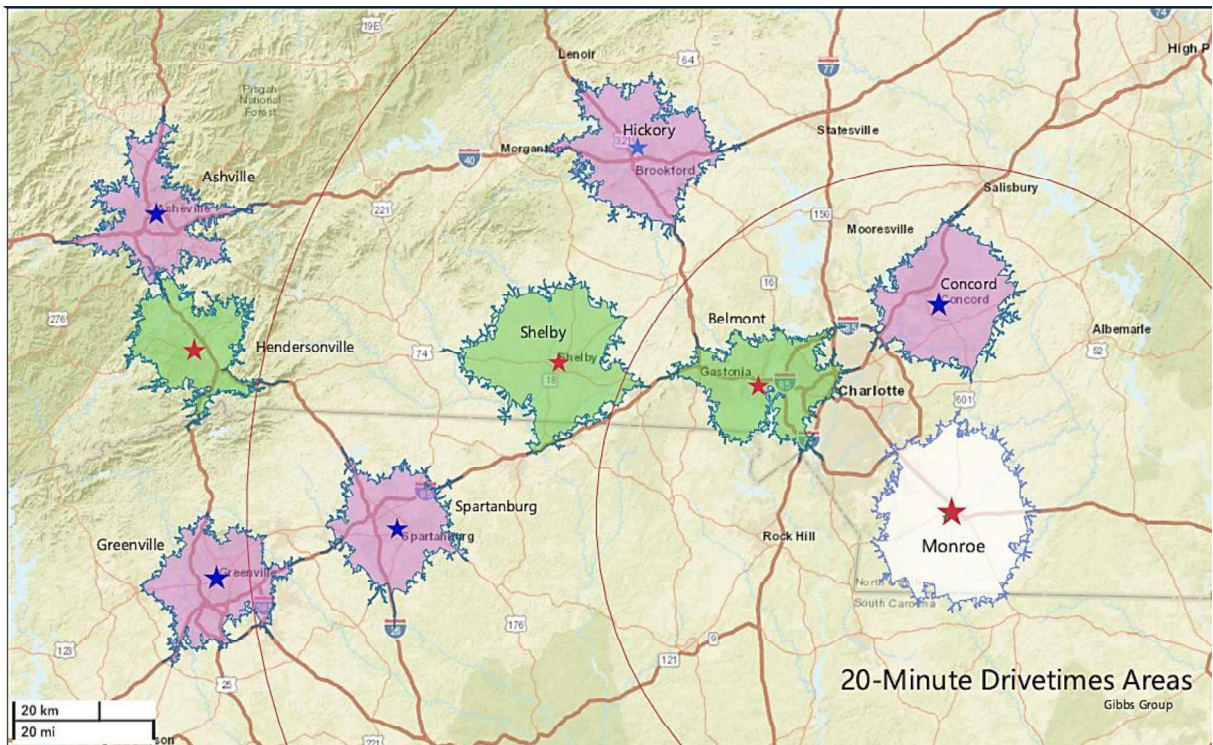


Figure 15: Belmont, Hendersonville, Monroe, Shelby and surrounding 20-minute drivetimes map.

Appendix C

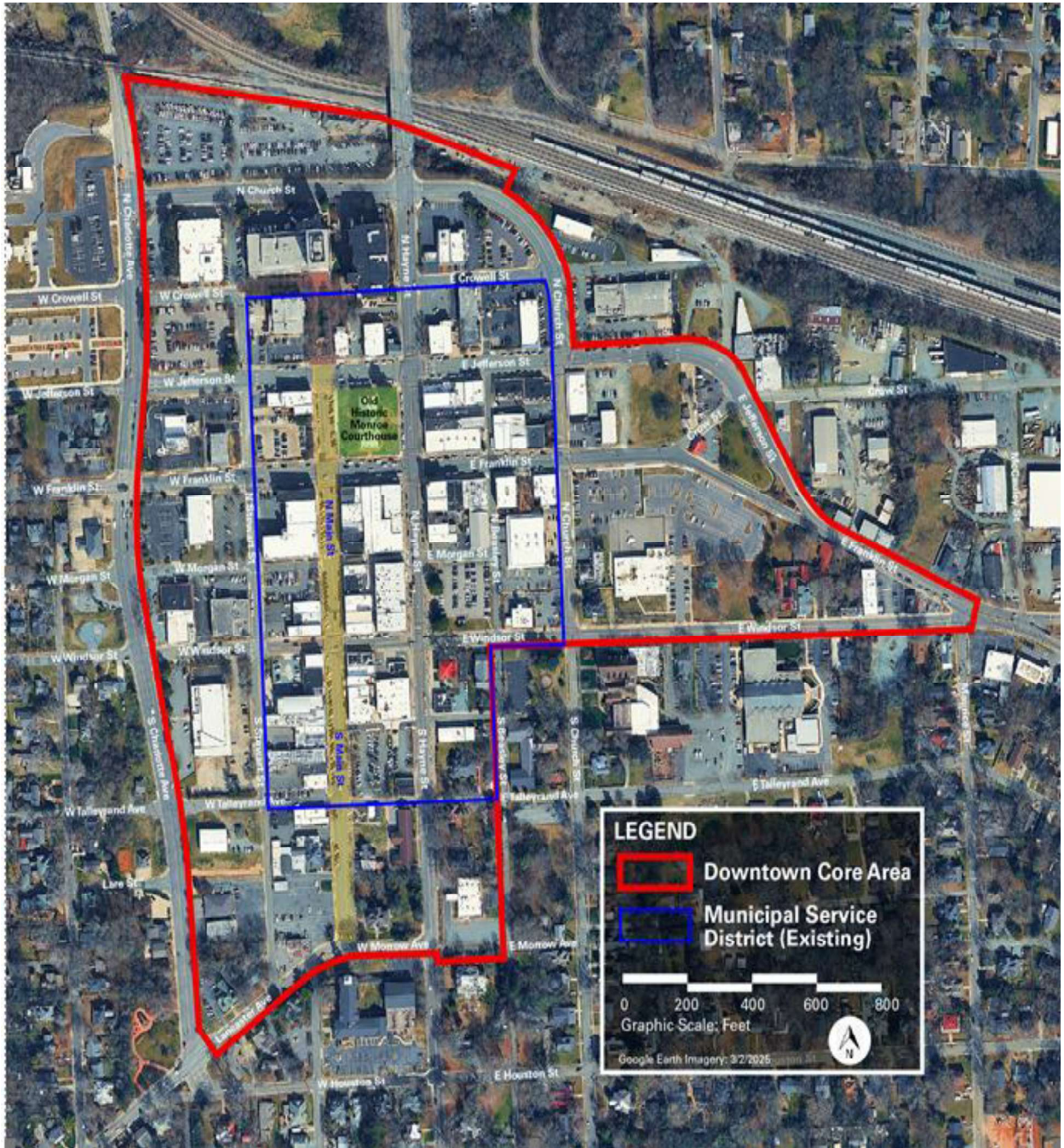


Figure 16: Downtown, Monroe, NC – Source Shook-Kelley

Demographic and Income Comparison

Union County Historic Courthouse



Rings: 5, 10, 15 mile radii

Census 2020 Summary	5 miles	10 miles	15 miles
Population	42,389	136,253	325,511
Households	15,129	46,612	113,068
Average Household Size	2.76	2.86	2.85
2025 Summary			
Population	46,291	151,151	355,712
Households	16,997	52,957	126,091
Families	11,782	40,019	97,127
Average Household Size	2.68	2.80	2.79
Owner Occupied Housing Units	11,185	41,285	101,172
Renter Occupied Housing Units	5,812	11,672	24,919
Median Age	37.8	38.3	40.3
Median Household Income	\$76,242	\$93,471	\$110,252
Average Household Income	\$92,435	\$117,104	\$145,814
2030 Summary			
Population	50,518	163,149	376,538
Households	18,840	57,942	135,178
Families	12,983	43,580	103,781
Average Household Size	2.64	2.77	2.76
Owner Occupied Housing Units	12,601	45,470	108,924
Renter Occupied Housing Units	6,239	12,472	26,254
Median Age	38.6	38.8	40.7
Median Household Income	\$87,524	\$106,072	\$125,680
Average Household Income	\$105,375	\$132,767	\$162,723
Trends: 2025-2030 Annual Rate			
Population	1.76%	1.54%	1.14%
Households	2.08%	1.82%	1.40%
Families	1.96%	1.72%	1.33%
Owner Households	2.41%	1.95%	1.49%
Median Household Income	2.80%	2.56%	2.65%

Demographic and Income Comparison

Union County Historic Courthouse



Drive time: 10, 20 minute radii

Census 2020 Summary	10 minutes	20 minutes
Population	33,271	154,820
Households	11,934	52,953
Average Household Size	2.74	2.87
2025 Summary		
Population	36,666	171,128
Households	13,517	59,997
Families	9,206	45,399
Average Household Size	2.67	2.80
Owner Occupied Housing Units	8,639	46,938
Renter Occupied Housing Units	4,878	13,059
Median Age	37.6	38.5
Median Household Income	\$71,519	\$93,310
Average Household Income	\$88,378	\$117,661
2030 Summary		
Population	39,966	184,150
Households	14,969	65,424
Families	10,134	49,271
Average Household Size	2.63	2.77
Owner Occupied Housing Units	9,780	51,573
Renter Occupied Housing Units	5,189	13,851
Median Age	38.5	39.0
Median Household Income	\$83,573	\$106,193
Average Household Income	\$100,918	\$133,439
Trends: 2025-2030 Annual Rate		
Population	1.74%	1.48%
Households	2.06%	1.75%
Families	1.94%	1.65%
Owner Households	2.51%	1.90%
Median Household Income	3.16%	2.62%

2020 Race and Ethnicity	5 miles		10 miles		15 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	21,356	50.4%	88,673	65.1%	227,756	70.0%
Black Alone	8,687	20.5%	19,144	14.1%	35,074	10.8%
American Indian Alone	420	1.0%	903	0.7%	1,458	0.5%
Asian Alone	438	1.0%	2,695	2.0%	17,024	5.2%
Pacific Islander Alone	31	0.1%	71	0.1%	161	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	7,832	18.5%	13,640	10.0%	19,017	5.8%
Two or More Races	3,625	8.6%	11,126	8.2%	25,022	7.7%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	11,650	27.5%	22,920	16.8%	36,940	11.3%

2025 Race and Ethnicity	5 miles		10 miles		15 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	22,114	47.8%	94,204	62.3%	239,070	67.2%
Black Alone	9,622	20.8%	21,987	14.6%	40,068	11.3%
American Indian Alone	488	1.1%	1,063	0.7%	1,693	0.5%
Asian Alone	671	1.4%	4,190	2.8%	22,357	6.3%
Pacific Islander Alone	36	0.1%	92	0.1%	195	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	9,216	19.9%	16,317	10.8%	22,743	6.4%
Two or More Races	4,143	8.9%	13,297	8.8%	29,586	8.3%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	13,662	29.5%	27,524	18.2%	44,345	12.5%

2030 Race and Ethnicity	5 miles		10 miles		15 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	23,392	46.3%	98,596	60.4%	245,298	65.2%
Black Alone	10,416	20.6%	24,094	14.8%	43,548	11.6%
American Indian Alone	538	1.1%	1,182	0.7%	1,857	0.5%
Asian Alone	832	1.6%	5,120	3.1%	26,045	6.9%
Pacific Islander Alone	40	0.1%	106	0.1%	222	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	10,597	21.0%	18,795	11.5%	26,074	6.9%
Two or More Races	4,703	9.3%	15,256	9.3%	33,494	8.9%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	15,639	31.0%	31,657	19.4%	50,719	13.5%

2020 Race and Ethnicity	10 minutes		20 minutes	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	15,687	47.1%	102,075	65.9%
Black Alone	7,199	21.6%	21,229	13.7%
American Indian Alone	361	1.1%	980	0.6%
Asian Alone	315	0.9%	3,507	2.3%
Pacific Islander Alone	28	0.1%	79	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	6,767	20.3%	14,453	9.3%
Two or More Races	2,914	8.8%	12,497	8.1%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	9,965	29.9%	24,603	15.9%

2025 Race and Ethnicity	Number		Percent	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	16,365	44.6%	107,973	63.1%
Black Alone	7,978	21.8%	24,336	14.2%
American Indian Alone	422	1.1%	1,149	0.7%
Asian Alone	488	1.3%	5,353	3.1%
Pacific Islander Alone	33	0.1%	102	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	8,043	21.9%	17,294	10.1%
Two or More Races	3,337	9.1%	14,922	8.7%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	11,790	32.2%	29,574	17.3%

2030 Race and Ethnicity	Number		Percent	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	17,310	43.3%	112,661	61.2%
Black Alone	8,573	21.4%	26,625	14.5%
American Indian Alone	463	1.2%	1,274	0.7%
Asian Alone	601	1.5%	6,486	3.5%
Pacific Islander Alone	36	0.1%	117	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	9,220	23.1%	19,897	10.8%
Two or More Races	3,763	9.4%	17,089	9.3%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	13,447	33.6%	33,987	18.5%

Eating Places

Union County Historic Courthouse (5 miles)
 Union County Historic Courthouse
 Ring of 5 miles

Gibbs Group
 Latitude: 34.98309
 Longitude: -80.54992

Union County Historic Courthouse

Ring of 5 miles



9

Bakers
(Retail)



10

Bars and
Pubs



10

Coffee
Shops



1

Juice
Bars



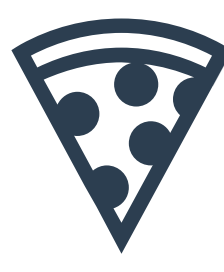
0

Doughnut
Shops



7

Ice Cream
Parlors



13

Pizza
Restaurants



118

Other
Restaurants

46,291

Population

16,997

Households

2.68

Avg Size
Household

37.8

Median
Age

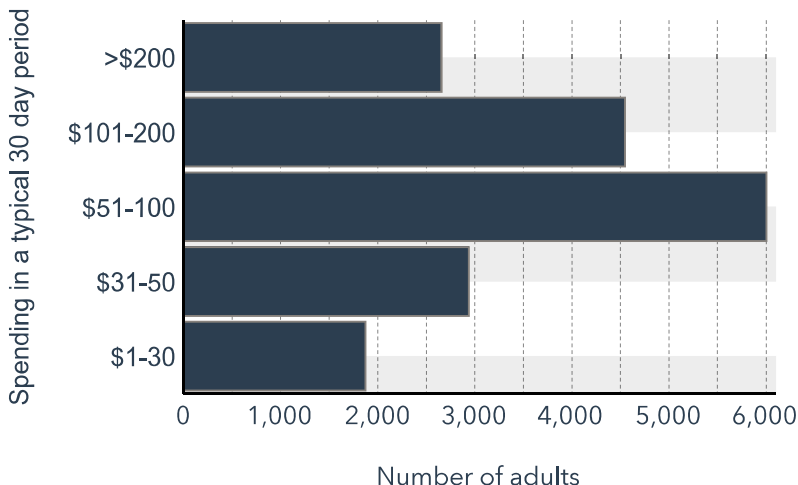
\$76,242

Median
Household Income

\$357,158

Median
Home Value

Family Restaurants Market Potential



Annual Household Spending

\$3,293

Meals at
Restaurants

\$651

Food & Drink
on Trips

Local Business Summary

2,072

Total
Businesses

24,667

Total
Employees



Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2025, 2030), Esri-MRI-Simmons (2025), Esri-U.S. BLS (2025), Esri-Data Axle (2025). Data Axle POI data updated 3 times per year. * Indicates the number of locations has reached the maximum. Note that the BLS has redefined Meals at Restaurants by removing the mealtime distinction: breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Where food purchases were made has been maintained. © 2025 Esri

Eating Places

Union County Historic Courthouse (10 miles)
 Union County Historic Courthouse
 Ring of 10 miles

Gibbs Group
 Latitude: 34.98309
 Longitude: -80.54992

Union County Historic Courthouse

Ring of 10 miles



27

Bakers
(Retail)



15

Bars and
Pubs



26

Coffee
Shops



3

Juice
Bars



4

Doughnut
Shops



10

Ice Cream
Parlors



38

Pizza
Restaurants



242

Other
Restaurants

151,151

Population

52,957

Households

2.80

Avg Size
Household

38.3

Median
Age

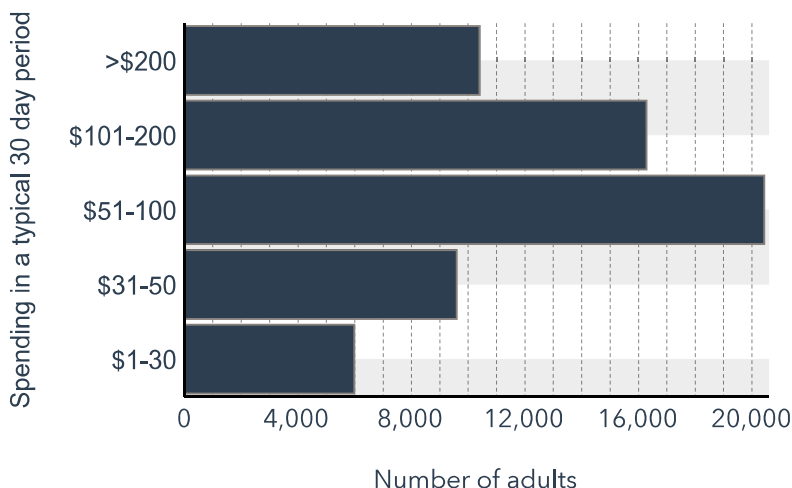
\$93,471

Median
Household Income

\$396,709

Median
Home Value

Family Restaurants Market Potential



Annual Household Spending

\$4,111

Meals at
Restaurants

\$844

Food & Drink
on Trips

Local Business Summary

4,694

Total
Businesses

50,136

Total
Employees



Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2025, 2030), Esri-MRI-Simmons (2025), Esri-U.S. BLS (2025), Esri-Data Axle (2025). Data Axle POI data updated 3 times per year. * Indicates the number of locations has reached the maximum. Note that the BLS has redefined Meals at Restaurants by removing the mealtime distinction: breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Where food purchases were made has been maintained. © 2025 Esri

Eating Places

Union County Historic Courthouse (15 miles)
 Union County Historic Courthouse
 Ring of 15 miles

Gibbs Group
 Latitude: 34.98309
 Longitude: -80.54992

Union County Historic Courthouse

Ring of 15 miles



75

Bakers
(Retail)



59

Bars and
Pubs



70

Coffee
Shops



12

Juice
Bars



13

Doughnut
Shops



34

Ice Cream
Parlors



81

Pizza
Restaurants



585

Other
Restaurants

355,712

Population

126,091

Households

2.79

Avg Size
Household

40.3

Median
Age

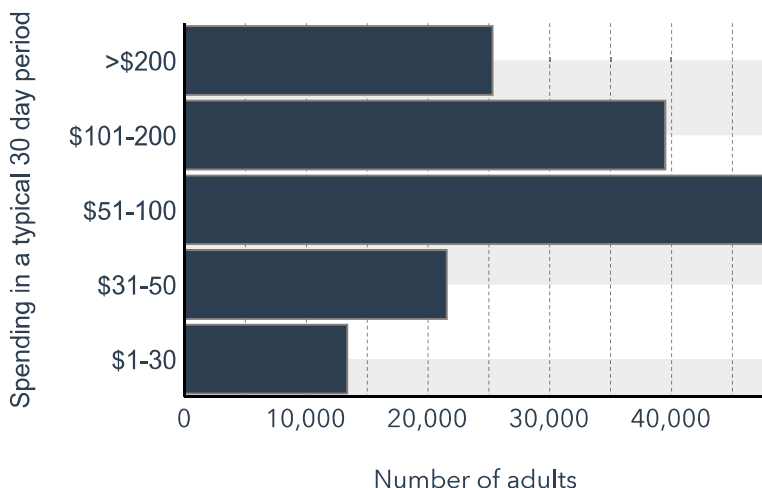
\$110,252

Median
Household Income

\$473,525

Median
Home Value

Family Restaurants Market Potential



Annual Household Spending

\$5,044

Meals at
Restaurants

\$1,067

Food & Drink
on Trips

Local Business Summary

10,782

Total
Businesses

105,894

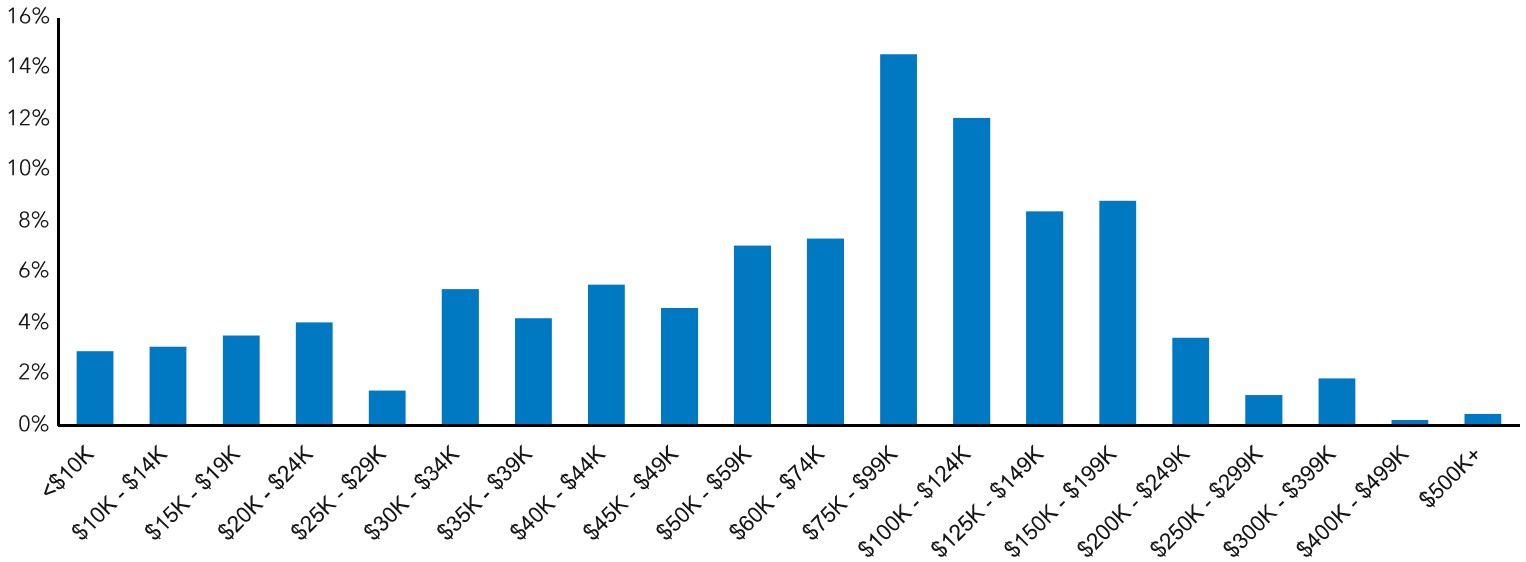
Total
Employees



Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2025, 2030), Esri-MRI-Simmons (2025), Esri-U.S. BLS (2025), Esri-Data Axle (2025). Data Axle POI data updated 3 times per year. * Indicates the number of locations has reached the maximum. Note that the BLS has redefined Meals at Restaurants by removing the mealtime distinction: breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Where food purchases were made has been maintained. © 2025 Esri

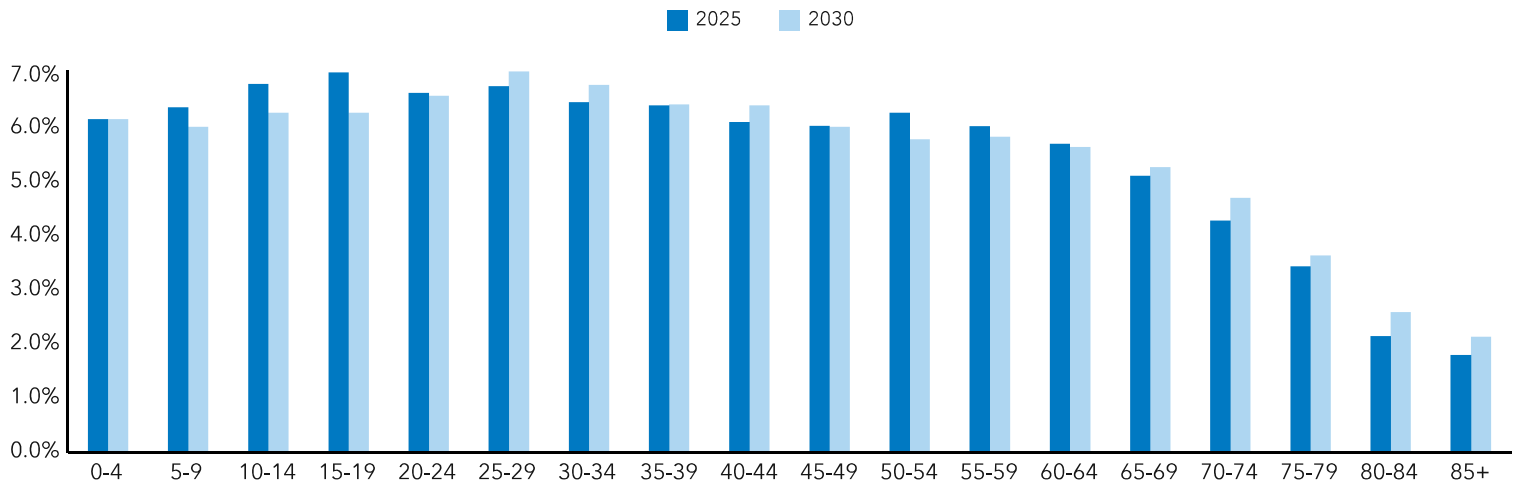
5 miles

2025 Households by Income



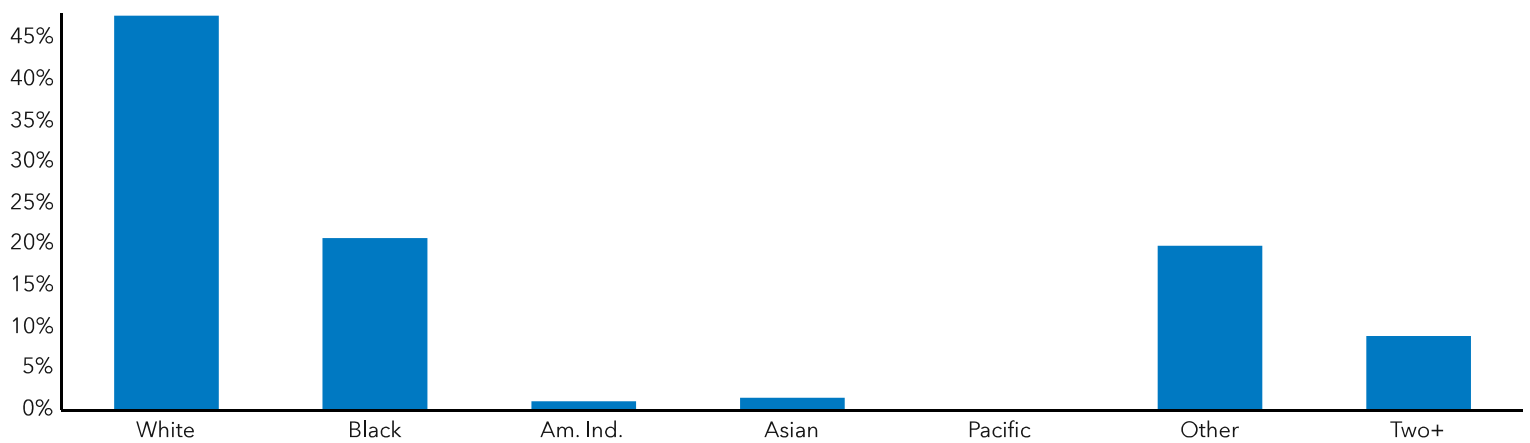
Population by Age

5 miles



2025 Population by Race

5 miles



Belmont, Hendersonville, Monroe, Shelby, NC
Downtowns Comparisons



Gibbs Planning Group
November 20, 2025

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study

Downtown Comparisons: Shelby, Belmont, Hendersonville, Monroe

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Shelby</i>	<i>Belmont</i>	<i>Hendersonville</i>	<i>Monroe</i>
City Population	22,000	15,000	15,000	35,000
15-Minute Drive Population	52,000	105,000 Population	75,000 Population	90,000 Population
15-Minute Ave. Household Incomes	\$90,000	\$120,000	\$95,000	\$110,000
Downtown Land Area	40 acres	15 acres	50 acres	50 acres
Downtown Retail Size	150,000 sf	350,000 sf	300,000 sf	150,000 sf
Total Parking Spaces Public/Private	1,100	800	1,900	1,350
Parking Structures	-----	-----	✓	-----
Parking Management	Free	Free	Metered	Metered Free surface lots
Steet Parking Design	Parallel on Lafayette St	Parallel on Main St	Parallel & Diagonal on Main St	Parallel & Diagonal on Main St
Streetscape Features & Width	Lafayette St: 20-foot-wide sidewalks; streetlamps, trees, fur Bulb-outs at intersections	Main St: 16-foot-wide sidewalks; streetlamps, trees, Bulb-outs at intersections	Main St: 16- and 20-foot-wide sidewalks; street-lamps, trees, furniture, Bulb-outs at intersections & midblock	Main St: 10-12-foot-wide sidewalks
Main Street Width	Building frontage to frontage width: 95-100 ft	Frontage to frontage width: 70-75 ft	Frontage to frontage width: 95-100 ft	Frontage to frontage width: 75 ft
State Highways Through Downtown	NC Hwy 74 & 18	-----	NC Hwy 64, 176, 335	NC Hwy 207
NC Main Street Program	✓	✓	✓	✓
Civic Anchors	Co. Courthouse/ Earl Scruggs Center City Hall First Baptist Church	City Hall	Historic Co. Courthouse / Heritage Museum City Hall	Historic Co. Courthouse Union Co. Judicial Center First Baptist Church
Recent Master Plans	2007, 2024 update ongoing	2007, 2023 update ongoing	2024 ongoing	2008, 2025 RFQ

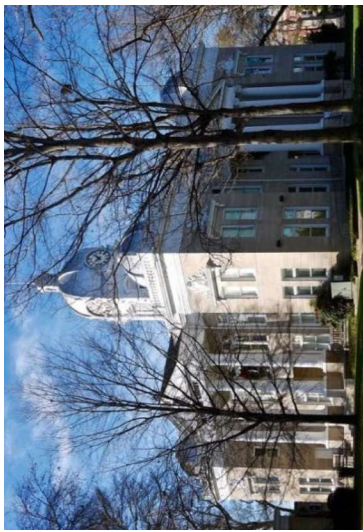
Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study

DOWNTOWN RETAIL: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND KEYS TO SUCCESS	
<p>BELMONT, NC</p> <p>Belmont incorporated Form-Based Codes into its zoning regulations in 1995, making the city one of earliest adopters of the TND (Traditional Neighborhood Development) codes intended to enable walkable, mixed-use development.</p> <p>Adopted TND code encourages higher density and includes infill development. Belmont Main Street Program: Four-Point Approach: Design, Economic Vitality, Organization, Promotion (committee for each).</p> <p>The Belmont Historic District complies with national historic preservation standards to preserve historic character of its buildings. Historic storefronts generally match best-practice guidelines for retail.</p> <p>In general, Belmont Historic Downtown's success can be attributed to ongoing support of city and county planning departments, non-profit agencies, community groups, commercial investment, and concerned private citizens</p>	<p>Strategic Planning and Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted Form-based Codes • Adopted NC Main Street Program • In an Historic District, applicable buildings adhere to its regulations <p>Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesigned Main St: widened sidewalks, "small-town" street furniture, pedestrian-scale streetlamps, street trees • Bulb-outs slow traffic and shorten brick-paver crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety and give identity • Ample free parking • Traditional storefront design: awnings, sign bands • Building heights give street spatial definition, a sense of place <p>Art and Cultural Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual slow art day and holiday festivals <p>Strong Public Private Partnerships and Community Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Belmont Development Association, Historical Society, citizen-run Planning and Zoning Board
<p>HENDERSONVILLE</p> <p>Since 1985 Hendersonville has been a "Main Street City" utilizing the National Trust for Historic Preservation's comprehensive process for economic development within the context of historic preservation.</p> <p>Key to revitalization was redesigning Main Street into a series of gentle curves with bulb-outs that slowed traffic, improved pedestrian safety, created space for dining, events, and landscaping, and provided angle parking for ease of access for shoppers.</p> <p>In addition to the city sponsoring numerous annual art and cultural festivals, there is a strong public-private partnership in business development and community involvement among city government, non-profits, local proprietors, and citizen volunteers.</p>	<p>Strategic Planning and Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated "Main Street City", National Trust for Historic Preservation • Comprehensive process for economic development • Zoning includes elements of Form-Based codes • In an Historic District, applicable buildings adhere to its regulations <p>Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create unique, cohesive streetscape to give identity • Redesigned Main St: "Serpentine" roadway creates mid-block and end-block bulb-outs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ slows traffic and shortens brick-paver crosswalks to enhance • Diagonal parking appeals to shoppers <p>Art and Cultural Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual art and music festivals, public art • Friends of Downtown Hendersonville, Downtown Advisory Board

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study

<p>SHELBY, NC</p> <p>The opening of the Earl Scruggs Center in 2014 in the renovated courthouse was pivotal to reviving Uptown commerce. The center became a cultural anchor, a destination for local residents and regional visitors whose increased foot-traffic stimulated spending at surrounding retailers and the opening of new ones.</p> <p>It served as the hub of an emerging, now established, vibrant arts and entertainment district that draws new tourism revenue into the economy. Along with other catalyst projects cited in the 2007 plan, such as the Gibson Theatre and Farmers Market, the center has transformed Uptown Shelby into an active cultural center attractive to new residents, businesses, and further investment.</p> <p>Adopted North Carolina's Main Street Program Four-Point Approach: Design, Economic Vitality, Organization, Promotion (Uptown Shelby Association).</p> <p>The Central Shelby District complies with national historic preservation standards to preserve historic character of its buildings. Historic storefronts generally match best-practice guidelines for retail.</p> <p>In general, Uptown Shelby's success can be attributed to ongoing support of city planning and related departments, non-profit agencies, community groups, commercial investment, and concerned private citizens</p>	<p>Strategic Planning and Policies Catalyst projects to transform Uptown Shelby into an arts and entertainment destination Earl Scruggs Center, Gibson Theater, Farmers Market NC Main Street Program In an Historic District, applicable buildings adhere to its regulations</p> <p>Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure Redesigned Lafayette St: widened sidewalks, "small-town" street furniture, pedestrian streetlamps, street trees; space for outdoor dining, art installations Bulb-outs slow traffic and shorten brick-paver crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety and give identity</p> <p>Ample free parking Traditional storefront design: awnings, sign, pedestrian signs</p> <p>Building heights give street spatial definition, a sense of place</p> <p>Art and Cultural Initiatives Annual arts and music festivals and public art: murals, Gibson "artistic" records</p> <p>Strong Public Private Partnerships and Community Involvement Uptown Shelby Assoc. Historic Shelby Foundation, Chamber of Commerce</p>
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Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study



Cleveland County Courthouse/Earl Scruggs Center



Belmont City Hall



Henderson County Courthouse

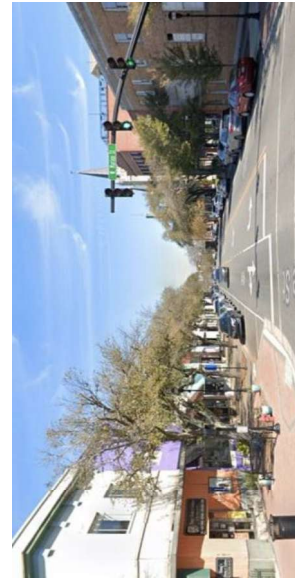
DEMOGRAPHIC AND URBAN AREA COMPARISONS

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
POPULATION	23,000	16,000	15,700
POPULATION DENSITY	950 people/sq mile (2025 est.)	1,900 people/sq mile	2,100 people/sq mile
MEDIAN AGE	41.2	37.8	50.3
HOUSEHOLDS	8,000	6,500	7,800
MEDIUM HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$50,700	\$86,000	\$52,000
CITY LIMIT LAND AREA	22 sq miles	12 sq miles	7 sq miles
DOWNTOWN/CBD LAND AREA	100 acres (Municipal Service District), includes Uptown Shelby	200 acres (3 districts comprise downtown: Historic Downtown, Chronicle, East End)	40 acres

STREET PATTERN, URBAN FORM, AND COMMERCIAL LAYOUT COMPARISONS

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
STREET PATTERN	Street grid	Radial plan	Street grid
PHYSICAL SETTING	On hill	On peninsula	On hill
MAJOR REGIONAL ACCESS ROADS AND GATEWAYS	US-74 bypass (1 mile south of Uptown Shelby) US-74 bypass north US-74 Business (thru city center) Recently completed, US-74 bypass reduces heavy truck traffic through town center. Reduces through-travelers, local retailers must adopt to destination-bound customers	US-74 (3/4 mile north central T-intersection) I-85 (1.25 mile north) Roads into Downtown Historic District: New Hope (NC 275), Park St (NC 273), Wilkenson Blvd, Main Street	Spartanburg and Greenville Hwys converge on S Main St US 64 (splits into 6th & 7th Aves) lead to N Main St, while Ashville Hwy splits onto N Church and N King Sts
RETAIL STREETS / CBD STREETS	Lafayette St (NC 18), Washington St, Warren St, Trade St, Campbell St, Marion St (US-74 Bus)	Main St and Catawba St	Main Street
PRIMARY COMMERCIAL AREA	Uptown Shelby (within Municipal Service District's 96.6 acres)	Historic Downtown District: 84 acres (Two other, more residential districts define downtown: Chronical District, 67 acres; East End District, 58 acres)	Main Street District: 16-block area centered on Main Street, between Church and King Streets, from 7th Ave to Allen: 40 acres
MAJOR BUILDINGS URBAN ANCHORS	Cleveland County Courthouse/Earl Scruggs Center (1907) US Post Office (1916)/Cleveland Co Arts Council Masonic Temple (1924) The Banker's House (1874) Don Gibson Theatre (1930s Art Deco) Rogers Theatre (1935) Hotel Charles (late 1880s) Foothills Farmers Market/Bobby Bell Pavilion First Baptist Church	Belmont City Hall Belmont Abbey College (1.5 mile north of city center) Belmont Abbey (on college campus) Belmont Hosiery Mill Old City Hall Old train station, Garibaldi Station, orig. township name	Main Street Local Historic Overlay District (2007) nearly all within the Main Street District, has 55 contributing structures. Henderson County Courthouse (1905) Henderson County Heritage Museum Mineral and Lapidary Museum People's National Bank building (1910)



Shelby: Lafayette St streetscape, view south at Marion St



Belmont: Aerial view of Main Street streetscape

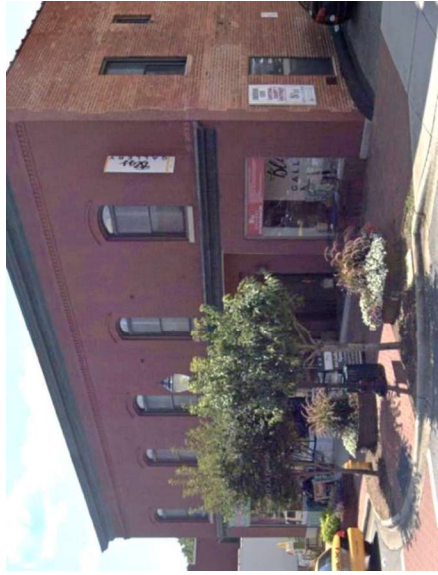


Hendersonville: Aerial view of Main Street serpentine road

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study



Shelby: NW corner bulb-out at Lafayette and Marion Sts



Belmont: Main St east side mid-block bulb-out

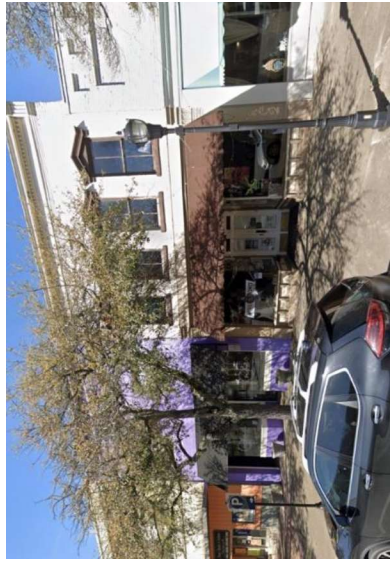


Hendersonville: Main St east side bulb-out between 3rd and 4th

BUILDING FRONTAGE AND STREETSCAPE COMPARISONS (ALL MEASUREMENTS AND RATIOS ARE APPROXIMATE)

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
PRIMARY RETAIL STREET ("MAIN STREET")	Lafayette St. from Graham to Sumpter, 1,500'	Main Street between Woodrow Ave and McLeod/Myrtle Aves, approx. 1,800 feet Core retail between Catawba and RR tracks, 500 ft.	Main Street between 7th Ave and Allen St: 2,400 ft
STREET DESIGN	2-way traffic, 2 lanes; 1 turning lane; parallel parking, both sides.	2-way traffic, 2 lanes, parallel parking on both sides.	2-way traffic, 2 lanes Serpentine, asymmetrical road placement; off-center then shifts to opposite side mid-block
TRAFFIC LANES	Street width: 55 feet, curb to curb	Street width: 45 feet, curb to curb	Asymmetry allows for parallel and diagonal parking on same street section, switching sides mid-block
PARKING	Sidewalk width: 18-20 feet	Sidewalk width: 16 feet	Roadway width: 22 ft
ROADWAY WIDTH	Frontage to frontage width: 95-100 ft	Frontage to frontage width: 70-75 ft	Roadway and parking width: 60 ft
SIDEWALK WIDTH			Sidewalk widths: 16 ft (parallel side), 20 ft (diagonal side)
FRONTAGE TO FRONTAGE WIDTH			Bulb-outs: 48 ft wide side, 25 ft narrow side Frontage to frontage width: 95-100 ft
TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES	Sidewalk bulb-outs at intersections around Courthouse Square and surrounding blocks Reduce crossing distance to 45 ft Clearly painted-patterns identify cross walks	Sidewalk bulb-outs slow traffic and reduce crossing distance to 28 ft Brick-pavers identify cross walks	Mid-block street curves slow vehicular traffic Sidewalk bulb-outs slow traffic and reduce crossing distance to 22 ft Brick-pavers identify cross walks at bulb outs and at mid-block

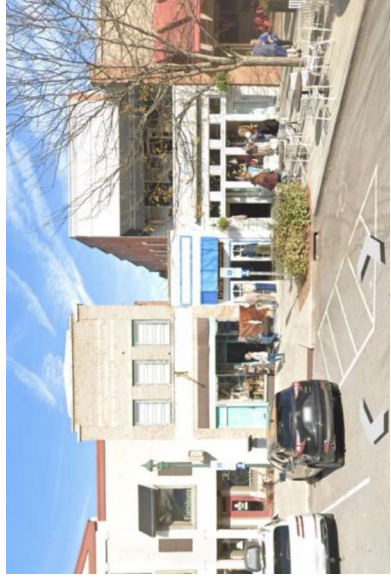
Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study



Shelby: Eastside storefronts at Lafayette and Marion Sts



Belmont: eastside storefronts, mid-block Main St



Hendersonville: Main St eastside storefronts bet 3rd and 4th Aves

BUILDING FRONTAGE AND STREETSCAPE COMPARISONS (cont.)

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
SIDEWALK MATERIALS	<p>Building frontage to curb (18 to 20 ft): concrete</p> <p>Pedestrian Zone (12 ft): concrete</p> <p>Buffer/Curb Zone (6 ft): concrete with trees planted in soil squares;</p>	<p>Pedestrian Zone adjacent building frontage (11 ft): concrete</p> <p>Buffer/Curb zone (5 ft): brick to curb. widened with bricks to curb; includes street trees, street lamps, and brick-formed planters.</p> <p>Concrete & brick sidewalks and brick crosswalks delineate and identify commercial Main Street between Woodrow Ave and McLeod Av</p>	<p>Gen H: Comprehensive Plan specifies 4 zones: Building Zone (adjacent building): outdoor dining, furnishings, accent plantings, small retail displays, art</p> <p>Pedestrian Zone: pedestrians only</p> <p>Amenity Zone: street trees, landscaping, public furnishings, waste receptacles, public art</p> <p>Edge Zone (adjacent street): street lamps, 6" curb</p> <p>Main St. sidewalks are concrete in a scored grid pattern from Building to Edge Zones</p> <p>Amenity Zone to curb includes street trees, street lamps, public furnishings, brick-formed planters, wayfinding signs, art work, outdoor dining chairs and tables</p>
STREET TREES (CAN INCREASE SALES 12 TO 20%)	Street trees, large summer canopy; placed at measured intervals	Street trees planted at regular intervals; most do not appear obstruct view storefront entrances	Street trees aligned in sidewalk
STREET FURNITURE	Metal street benches and trash receptacles in designs appropriate for a small town Single color identifies area	Metal street benches and trash receptacles in designs appropriate for small town Single color identifies area	<p>At bulb-outs trees are planted in brick planters and in sidewalk's grid pattern</p> <p>Some street trees obstruct view of entrances</p> <p>Metal benches, color-coded trash and recycling receptacles in designs appropriate for a small town</p> <p>Single color identifies area</p>

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study



Shelby: Lafayette view east at Arey St, Earl Scruggs Mural



Hendersonville: bear sculpture at NW corner of Main St and 4th Ave



Belmont: train way-finding kiosk at Stowe Park

BUILDING FRONTAGE AND STREETSCAPE COMPARISONS (cont.)

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
OUTDOOR DINING	Sidewalks wide enough for dining in Pedestrian or Buffer zones	Sidewalks wide enough for dining in Pedestrian zone, usually along building (Frontage zone) Tables in alleys and open lots	Sidewalks wide enough for dining in adjacent building and in bulb-outs, especially mid-block
STOREFRONT DESIGN	Historic frontages, many restored; clear glass windows; awnings on many	Historic frontages, restored; mostly clear glass windows; awnings on many	Historic frontages, restored; mostly clear glass windows; awnings on many
CIVIC ART / STREET ART	Numerous wall murals, none on Lafayette Notably of Earl Scruggs; Bobby Bell Don Gibson American Music Foundation sponsors LP Shelby, pubic arts program that places "artistic" records throughout city City has a Public Art Advisory Board Civic art produced through the collaboration of public, private, and non-profit sectors.	4 murals on Main St, 2 murals on Catawba St, 1 mural on Miller St.	Bearfootin' Artwalk: Bear statues placed along Main Street, which change annually Murals in the district but none on Main St: Murals installed to link Maple Street to the Historic Depot
STOREFRONT DESIGN	Historic frontages, many restored; clear glass windows; awnings on many	Historic frontages, restored; mostly clear glass windows; awnings on many	Historic frontages, restored; mostly clear glass windows; awnings on many

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Doughtowns Comparisons Study



Shelby: Marion St north view City Pavillion, Farmers Market Shelby streetscape, pedestrian signs near Gibson Theatr Belmont, tables in Main St west side alley at old RR station

URBAN ELEMENTS THAT CAN INCREASE RETAIL SALES COMPARISON

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS (+ 10%)	Downtown Shelby Fountain Park/Fallen Heroes Memorial at Lafayette and Graham. Shelby dog park 2 blocks from Lafayette. Shelby City Park (playgrounds, athletic fields, carousel): 1 mile east of Lafayette. No designated playgrounds near Uptown	Stowe Park borders Main St and faces its storefronts south of RR tracks. Stowe Park includes playgrounds, picnic areas, pavilion	None in the Main Street District.
LIBRARIES (+ 25 to 35%)	Nearest public library is about 1 mile east of Lafayette	None on Main St	None in the Main Street District
SPECIALTY/ FARMER'S MARKET (+25%)	Foothills Farmers Market (Bobby Pavilion within 2 blocks of Lafayette)	Farmers Market: Monthly (Stowe Park); Weekly (Glenway St)	Curb Market on Church St and Henderson County on King St, both a block from Main St Hendersonville Farmers Market held in Historic Train Station 1/4 mile from Main St
ART AND COMMUNITY FESTIVALS (+35% RESTAURANTS, -40% RETAIL)	Annual Festivals: Mush, Music & Mutts Festival Harvest Festival Carolina Pottery Festival Uptown Block Party (art & vendors) Uptown Christmas Parade	Annual Festivals: Slow Art Day (in Old City Hall) Annual Boo Fest Bavarian Holiday Fest Christmas Parade	Annual Festivals North Carolina Apple Festival (Music) Holiday Tree Lighting Art on Main Fine Art and Craft Show Bearfootin' Art Walk & Auction Rhythm & Brews (monthly)
ART AND CULTURAL CENTERS THAT SERVE AS DESTINATIONS	Earl Scruggs Center: hosts music, cultural events throughout year Gibson Theatre: films, music throughout year Dragonfly Wine Market: music throughout year	Belmont Abbey College (1.5 miles north of Historic Downtown) has a free concert series and is developing a new arts center. Daniel Stowe Conservancy offers walking trails of botanical art, and art workshop	Henderson County Heritage Museum Mineral and Lapidary Museum
SQUARES, COURTS, PLAZAS	Courthouse Square: centralized square facilitates pedestrian movement, easing access to surrounding retail.	No designated town square but there are open spaces/parking lots that serve as gathering	Historic Courthouse Square on Main St; location of the Historic Courthouse

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study



Shelby: Fountain Park, SE corner Lafayette and Graham



Belmont: plan for proposed development west of Main Street



Rendering of proposed Belmont expansion downtown

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
FUTURE PROJECTS	<p>Imagine Shelby, the current update to the Shelby Comprehensive Land Use Plan, is in the midst of adopting Form-Based Codes into its zoning regulation, which would enable more walkable, mixed-use development and increased densities.</p>	<p>In 2023, a 15-acre mixed-use development was proposed on vacant land west of Main St, an expansion doubling the size of downtown. The project proposed mixed-use, commercial, and residential buildings 2 to 4 stories high in an historic style inspired by Main St and other nearby precedents. An award-winning design, the project has yet to be approved.</p> <p>Future pedestrian, bicycle, and greenway connections are being planned to link downtown with areas like Belmont Abbey College.</p> <p>Belmont is included in the planned extension of Charlotte's light rail system, connecting downtown Belmont to uptown Charlotte by 2030.</p>	<p>Future projects include the South Main Street bicycle and pedestrian improvement by narrowing traffic lanes for bike lanes and sidewalk enhancements.</p> <p>Seventh Avenue Streetscape: new paving, landscaping, traffic signals, and pedestrian and stormwater infrastructure upgrades</p> <p>Improvements for outdoor dining, W-Fi, and public restrooms</p>

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study

BUILDING FRONTAGE AND STREETScape COMPARISONS (cont.)

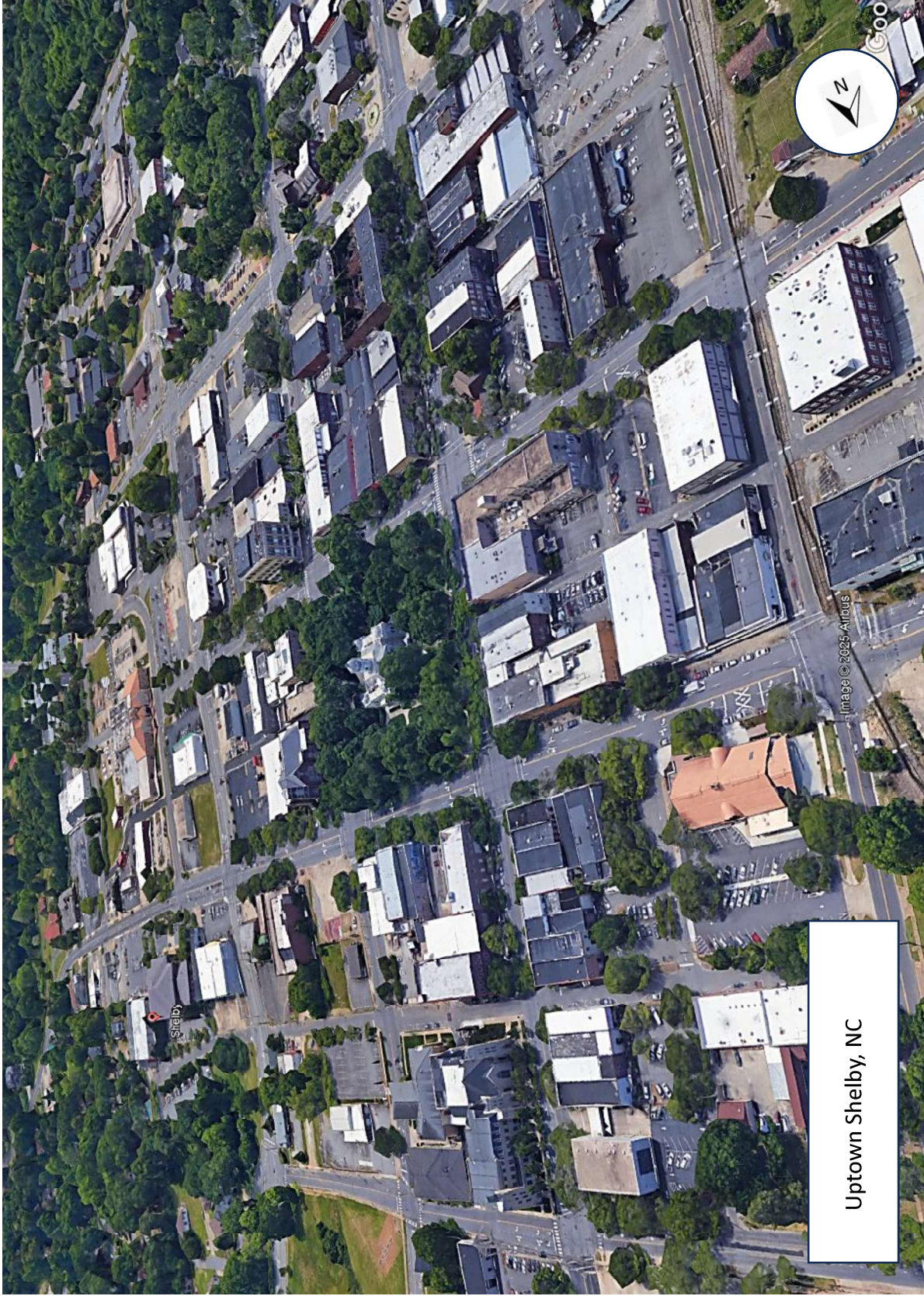
<p>STOREFRONT SIGNAGE</p>	<p>Store signage on a few awnings, as of 2023, none as bands Pedestrian signs projecting from buildings</p>	<p>Store signage on awnings or above as bands</p>	<p>Store signage on awnings or as bands</p>
<p>WAY-FINDING KIOSK OR SIGNAGE</p>	<p>Only signage for general navigation (motorist and pedestrian) to parking, general areas, and public destinations</p>	<p>2-digital wayfinding kiosks, at Stowe Park and at Catawba</p>	<p>General wayfinding signs at Main Street intersections (6th Ave)</p>
<p>PARKING</p>	<p>Free on-street parallel parking, and in Uptown surface lots On-street: 300 spaces Surface lots: 250 spaces</p>	<p>Free on-street parallel parking; multiple free surface parking adjacent or behind Main St buildings On-street: 200 spaces Surface lots: 400 spaces</p>	<p>300 on-street metered parking spaces on Main St and in Historic District, pay at central kiosk 400 spaces in metered surface parking lots behind Main St buildings, King St access 250 metered spaces in parking in The City of Hendersonville Parking Deck, Church St, one block from Main</p>
<p>BUILDING CHARACTER</p>	<p>Historic architecture and storefronts, some with more modern interpretations. Historic architecture includes Classical, Gothic and Egyptian Revival styles</p>	<p>Historic, traditional architecture and storefronts, a few with more modern interpretations</p>	<p>Historic, including Greek Revival, and traditional architecture and storefronts, a few with more modern interpretations.</p>
<p>SPATIAL DEFINITION (BUILDING HEIGHT (IN STORIES) SPATIAL DEFINITION (BUILDING HEIGHT TO STREET WIDTH RATIO DEFINES SPACE. IN GENERAL, THE TIGHTER THE RATIO, THE GREATER THE SENSE OF ENCLOSURE AND SENSE OF PLACE.)</p>	<p>Continuous frontages along Lafayette, 1 to 4 stories high Opposing 2-story frontages create 1:3 ratio, or spatial definition In places 2-story buildings equal 3 stories in height Lafayette between Graham and Warren: 1 story westside, 2-story east, provides spatial definition Buildings fronting streets surrounding Courthouse are mostly 2 to 3 stories; frontages and courthouse trees provides spatial definition, 1:3 ratio</p>	<p>Semi-continuous frontage with 1 to 2 story buildings creates spatial definition 1:3 ratio Gaps in street frontages lead to surface parking. South of the RR tracks, 1-story storefronts and street trees along Stowe Park offer summer spatial definition. North of Catawba, opposite free-standing single story buildings, street trees offer summer spatial definition.</p>	<p>Continuous Main St frontage between 1st and 6th Aves. Most buildings are 1 to 2 stories, with 1-story frontages nearly 2 stories Opposing 2-story frontages create a 1:3 ratio and spatial def. Opposing 1-story frontages create a 1:5 ratio, adequate for spatial def. 4 to 5 story buildings at 6th Above 6th and below Allen low, freestanding buildings cannot create spatial definition</p>
<p>STREETScape COHESION AND IDENTITY</p>	<p>Streetscape cohesive design, materials, trees, furniture, and lighting delineate and unify the "Main Street" retail zone and give identity to Uptown Shelby</p>	<p>Streetscape cohesive design, materials, trees, furniture, and lighting delineate and unify Main Street's retail zone and give identity to Downtown Belmont</p>	<p>Streetscape's unique serpentine roadway with alternating parallel-diagonal parking and three bulb-outs per block, complemented by compatible street furnishings, lighting, and trees delineate and unify the Main Street retail zone and help give--along with the historic architecture--identity to the Main Street Historic District,</p>

Monroe, Belmont, Shelby Downtowns Comparisons Study

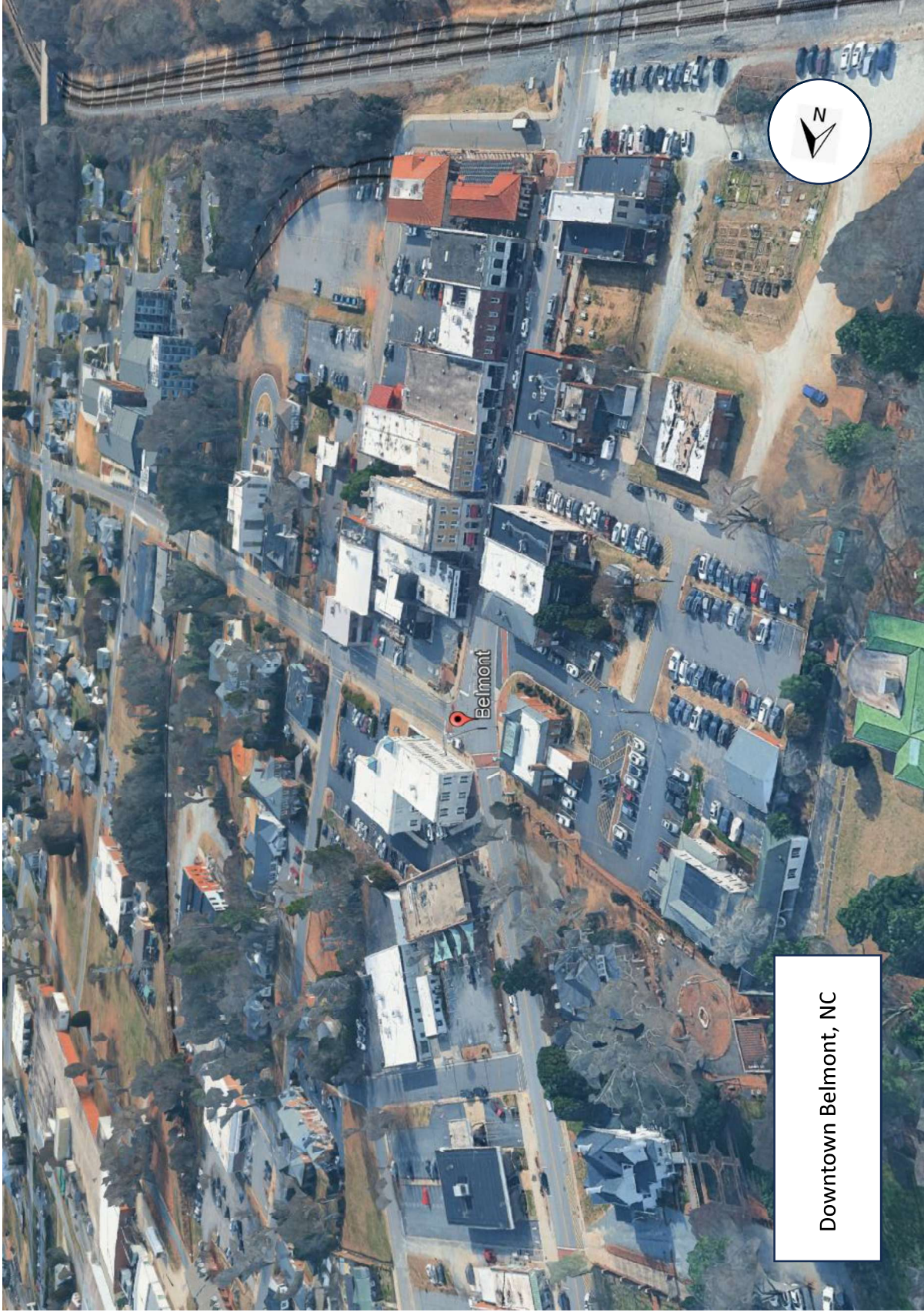
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AND SUPPORTING AGENCIES COMPARISONS

	SHELBY, NC	BELMONT, NC	HENDERSONVILLE, NC
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	City of Shelby, Planning and Development Services Municipal Service District Cleveland County Planning Department (Shelby is the county seat)	Belmont Planning and Zoning Department	Downtown Division of the City of Hendersonville Community Development Department Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission
CITY INITIATIVES AND GRANT PROGRAMS	Municipal facade grant program to encourage private investment in storefront facades. Prioritized restoring historic character while allowing sensitive modernization	Main Street Facade Enhancement grant program East End Rehabilitation (DBDA)	Main Street Program
DOWNTOWN SUPPORTING AGENCIES, NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATIONS, CITIZEN BOARDS	Uptown Shelby Association (Main Steet America Accredited; designated North Carolina Main Street Community) The Historic Shelby Foundation Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership	Downtown Belmont Development Association (DBDA) The Belmont Historical Society Main Street Program (Implements Main Street Four-Point Approach: Design, Economic Vitality, Organization, Promotion) Belmont Planning and Zoning Board (citizen advisors)	Downtown Advisory Board Friends of Downtown Hendersonville
RECENT MASTER AND COMPEHENSIVE PLANS	Shelby City Center Master Plan (2007) Shelby Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2009) City Center Master Plan Update (2017) Urban Forestry Management Plan Uptown Streetscape and Pedestrian Project (2019) Imagine Shelby: A Community Vision for the Future (2024-ongoing).	Belmont Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2007; update 2018; update 2023-ongoing) Pedestrian Transportation Plan (2009; update 2023) Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019) Bicycle Master Plan	Pedestrian Plan (2007) Hendersonville Comprehensive Plan Parking Study (2014) Hendersonville Bicycle Plan (2018) Henderson County 2045 Comprehensive Plan Hendersonville Comprehensive Parking Study (2014) Hendersonville Bicycle Plan (2018) Walk Hendo Pedestrian Plan (2023) Parks and Greenspace Master Plan (ongoing) Gen H: Hendersonville Comprehensive Plan (2024 ongoing)









Downtown Belmont, NC



STAFF REPORT

TO: Downtown Advisory Board
DATE: April 22, 2026
FROM: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager
PREPARED BY: Ashley Nowell, Downtown Director
SUBJECT: Work Plan, Sub-Committees, & Volunteer Discussion

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Staff will initiate a discussion about goals for the Main Street Program.

REVIEW

Downtown Monroe’s Vision (our goal for the future):

Downtown Monroe is the heart of our community – where life happens. By blending a **lively mix of retail, professional services, dining, and entertainment with upper-floor residential spaces**, we offer a distinct small-town identity. We **weave together our rich agricultural history and historic architecture with vibrant amenities to create an authentic experience that is safe, family-friendly, and uniquely Monroe.**

Downtown Monroe’s Mission (how we accomplish the goal):

To recognize, revitalize, preserve, and promote the historic, cultural, social, and economic significance of Monroe's Downtown.

Downtown Monroe’s Economic Development Strategies:

1. Create a lively mix of retail, services and dining businesses
2. Encourage more upper floor residential spaces
3. Promote history, unique architecture, walkability, and amenities that support diverse business mix and upper floor residential.

The board will be prompted to discuss SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound) Goals as we build our FY27 Workplan. The following questions will prompt the discussion:

- If a visitor walked downtown in June 2027, what do we want them to experience that proves that “life happens here”?

- What is one major win we want to celebrate by June 30, 2027? (don't think about how, just what)
- If 'life happens' downtown, what goals can ensure residents feel connected to downtown?
- What is a measurable goal that honors our farming/small-town roots? How do we weave our agriculture history into downtown?
- What's one experience we'd like a family to have when visiting our downtown over the next year?
- What's our goal for business/building occupancy by 2027?
- How do we turn a Science Center visitor or a Theatre-goer into a Downtown Monroe Shopper? What's a measurable goal to bridge that gap by 2027?
- What might encourage more upper floor residential spaces?
- What amenities support upper floor residential?
- What amenities support a family-friendly downtown?

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for discussion.

Attachments:

2025 Workplan

FY27 Workplan DRAFT

Monroe, North Carolina Economic Development Implementation Plan – 2024-2025

Our Vision

The success of Downtown Monroe will be due to a lively mix of quality retail shops, professional services, restaurants, entertainment, and upper-floor residential space, providing a variety of opportunities for a distinct cultural experience. Downtown will retain a safe, friendly, small-town pedestrian-oriented atmosphere for residents and visitors while engaging a positive spirit enhanced by its distinct sense of place built upon its rich agricultural history and architecturally significant buildings. The varied mix of retail and service businesses and continued expansion will strengthen Monroe's sense of community and quality of life through the cooperative marketing and promotion efforts of our Downtown

Our Mission

To recognize, revitalize, preserve, and promote the historic, cultural, social, and economic significance of Monroe's Downtown.

Vision/Economic Positioning Statement in YEAR: A vibrant and welcoming downtown that celebrates Monroe's rich heritage, historic character, architecture, and unique identity as a thriving culture and economic hub where residents and visitors can experience a unique blend of tradition, creativity, and economic vitality.

City Messaging:

Experience Authentic Monroe: Come for the History, Stay for the Growth, Monroe is waiting to welcome you!

Immerse yourself in the rich history, exciting growth, and the unforgettable experience of our vibrant city.

Where every block has a unique story to tell that blends the perfect mix of tradition and progress, all served with a generous helping of southern hospitality.

Implementation Strategy: Monroe is a designated NC Main Street community that is currently engaged with NCMS Staff in the rebooting the National Main Street Center's Four-Point Approach® which includes: organization, promotion, design and economic vitality to create and implement a downtown revitalization plan of work. This reboot will begin with a new Downtown Master plan for the city of Monroe. An RFQ is currently in development and will go out in January of 2025.

DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES	ECONOMIC VITALITY	DESIGN	PROMOTION	ORGANIZATION
Economic Development Strategy, Goal & Objective	Measurable Actions:	Measurable Actions:	Measurable Actions:	Measurable Actions:
<p>Strategy #1: Growth and development of quality retail shops, professional services, restaurants, and entertainment in Monroe that make it a destination for commerce, culture and creativity, while also retaining a blend of historic charm and modern infrastructure.</p> <p>Goal: Grow our visitation, foot traffic, and commerce in downtown.</p> <p>Strategy #2 Strengthen Monroe's beauty and sense of place.</p> <p>Goal: Encourage visible and impactful improvements in downtown that strengthen Monroe's sense of community and quality of life through place-making projects, cooperative marketing and promotion efforts</p>	<p>Actions for Economic Vitality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and install a data collection tool for downtown. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure foot traffic Time of day trends Location hot spots and underutilized places Year over year data analysis Monroe will complete a Master Plan in 2025-26 Update the Historic Downtown District boundaries and update the contributing buildings listing by 2026. <p>Upper Floor Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and improve our incentive grant programs by end of 2025. Develop a plan and incentive program that focuses on the redevelopment to the upper floors in downtown commercial buildings. Plan and host an informational event for property owners, business owners, developers, bankers, real estate agents, city council members and any administrative staff interested in upper floor development through historic tax credits. The event will also educate attendees in better understanding 	<p>Actions for Design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the Morgan/Windsor Alley furnishings so the alley can achieve its purpose becomes the place making opportunity it was envisioned to be. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seating for eating and gathering Adult and children outdoor activity elements. Implement Public Art Power stations Replacement of all light poles and banners hardware along Main Street in 2026. Design two new pole banner sets for installation on light poles in the spring and late summer 2025. Plan two additional public mural projects downtown in 2025. In partnership with the Heritage Room, Assemble a group of volunteers to build a collection of historic downtown photos to be placed on the downtown web page and available through the downtown office. Promote and communicate existing grant program opportunities, highlighting complete 	<p>Action to Promote Downtown Monroe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a promotional downtown video that highlights our city and the incentives we offer to new businesses, and developers. Grow our Downtown's Social Media Presence. RFQ going out in January 2025 to identify professional social media services (budget 25K) to grow our social media presence. Update and then maintain a database of downtown businesses on the city's downtown web page to keep public aware. Working with Monroe Public Communication, create and maintain a calendar of events happening in the downtown district. Coordinate the purchase of reusable tote bags to be distributed from our soon to be "Monroe Welcome Center". We will use this giveaway to grow our "Downtown Followers". <p>Retail Sales Focus for Downtown Monroe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a subcommittee within our advisory board to focus on Downtown Monroe Promotions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate training for this subcommittee through NCMS. 	<p>Action for our Organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reboot of the Main Street Program Establish a Main Street Office that has street access. This "Welcome Center" will provide much needed access to our downtown staff and informational materials. <p>Monroe Downtown Advisory Board improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill all vacant board positions in January 2025 Educate the new board on job duties, bylaws, etc. Expand the current 4x per year meeting schedule to a monthly meeting schedule beginning Jan 2025. Manage all documentation regarding board and volunteer terms and insure board operates program in accordance to bylaws, etc. Provide regular and timely communication to the board. Including sending meeting agenda's in advance Engage the DTAB in providing input to projects under consideration in Downtown.

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	<p>North Carolina Building Code for existing and historic building projects.</p> <p>Fill one vacant downtown building (Ideally on Morgan/Windsor Alley)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research ownership and plans for 111 W Franklin Street (Franklin 8 LLC) <p>Looking Ahead: <i>*Upon completion of Monroe’s Downtown Master plan and with cooperation with NCMS Staff and the Downtown Advisory board, develop an economic development action plan to be implemented in 2026 and 2027.</i></p>	<p>projects through informational sessions, open houses and email communications. (include testimonials and recently completed projects)</p> <p>Looking Ahead: <i>*Upon completion of Monroe’s Downtown Master create an updated building inventory of contributing buildings on the National Register of Historic Places buildings in the Downtown District.</i></p>	<p>- Work with this subcommittee to establish 2-3 goals that focus on building downtown retail/business awareness and growing downtown foot traffic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the NCMS Building Inventory Tool, update the downtown Monroe building directory to include square footage, current owner, tax values, etc. Review and update all materials currently provided on the Downtown Web page including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps and Guides Start a Business Technical Assistant
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NAME OF MAIN STREET PROGRAM’S ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE TASKS

Economic Development Strategy: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Goal: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Objective: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Economic Vitality Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Complete d ✓	Task	Name of Person Responsible	In-House or Outsourced	Cost/Time	Tools Needed	Partners/Assistance Needed	Date for Completion
✓	Break down the task into actionable steps	EV Committee Members Name	Internal to the organization or external?	How much cost? How much time?	What do you need to do this task?	Who Needs to Help You do it? Agency? Person?	Deadline for completion

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NAME OF MAIN STREET PROGRAM'S DESIGN COMMITTEE TASKS

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Goal: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Objective: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Design Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Complete d ✓	Task	Name of Person Responsible	In-House or Outsourced	Cost/Time	Tools Needed	Partners/Assistance Needed	Date for Completion
✓	Break down the task into actionable steps	Design Committee Members Name	Internal to the organization or external?	How much cost? How much time?	What do you need to do this task?	Who Needs to Help You do it? Agency? Person?	Deadline for completion

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Replace with the local Main Street Program logo

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Objective: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Promotion Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
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✓	Break down the task into actionable steps	Promo Committee Members Name	Internal to the organization or external?	How much cost? How much time?	What do you need to do this task?	Who Needs to Help You do it? Agency? Person?	Deadline for completion

Replace with the local Main Street Program logo

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Promotion Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

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Replace with the local Main Street Program logo

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NAME OF MAIN STREET PROGRAM'S ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE TASKS

Economic Development Strategy: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Goal: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Objective: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Organization Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

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NAME OF MAIN STREET PROGRAM'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE TASKS

Economic Development Strategy: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Goal: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Objective: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Economic Vitality Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Complete d ✓	Task	Name of Person Responsible	In-House or Outsourced	Cost/Time	Tools Needed	Partners/Assistance Needed	Date for Completion
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Replace with the local Main Street Program logo

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Promotion Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

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Organization Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB

Complete d ✓	Task	Name of Person Responsible	In-House or Outsourced	Cost/Time	Tools Needed	Partners/Assistance Needed	Date for Completion
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Replace with the local Main Street Program logo

Organization Action: Insert from IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TAB							
Completed ✓	Task	Name of Person Responsible	In-House or Outsourced	Cost/Time	Tools Needed	Partners/Assistance Needed	Date for Completion
✓	Break down the task into actionable steps	Economic Dev Strategy Committee Members Name	Internal to the organization or external?	How much cost? How much time?	What do you need to do this task?	Who Needs to Help You do it? Agency? Person?	Deadline for completion

Downtown Monroe Workplans FY27

Vision: Downtown Monroe is the heart of our community – where life happens. By blending a lively mix of retail, professional services, dining, and entertainment with upper-floor residential spaces, we offer a distinct small-town identity. We weave together our rich agricultural history and historic architecture with vibrant amenities to create an authentic experience that is safe, family-friendly, and uniquely Monroe.

Mission: To recognize, revitalize, preserve, and promote the historic, cultural, social, and economic significance of Monroe's Downtown.

Economic Development Strategies:

1. Create a lively mix of retail, services and dining businesses
2. Encourage more upper floor residential spaces
3. Promote history, unique architecture, walkability, and amenities that support diverse business mix and upper floor residential.

Economic Development Strategy	Goal/Objective (What do we want to do?)	Measurment (What does success look like?)	Projects				Budget
			EV	Design	Promotion	Organization	
1. Create a lively mix of retail, services, dining, and entertainment			Grow Monroe			Complete Downtown Master Plan	
			BRIG				
			Small business how-to guide				
2. Encourage more upper floor residential			Create building/business inventory				
3. Promote history, architecture, walkability, and amenities that support diverse business mix and upper floor residential	Create Online communication strategy			Host Historic Preservation Workshop	Small Business Saturday	Create brand for downtown Monroe	
				HDC Partnership	Downtown Event Sponsorships		
				Increase awareness of historic district and assets	Antique & Vintage Market		
4. Create strong sustainable foundation for Monroe's Main Street Program	Spur development in vacant upper floors					Start Main Street Committees	
	Increase private sector partners					Review financial standing quarterly	
	Increase community awareness and outreach					Annual Report	