

Commercial development should be a reflection of what we in the community of Garner need to have nearer to us, not only what the marketplace wants today. Recognizing changing trends in retail, workplace flexibility, and how work, home, and fun can be integrated are important to creating great places within Garner.



WORKING PLACES

- Attract Unique Commercial Establishments
- Align Development Code with Our Desired Ends
- Support Anticipated Increase in Office Needs
- Take Advantage of Work-in-Place Trends
- Understand Utility Demands Associated with Development

Perhaps no other facet of life is as fluid as workplace and consumer trends. Shopping center after shopping center struggles to keep customers and retain tenants while on-line retailing for some goods soars. The people working in those stores understand that a "living wage" is unlikely for them, and want to achieve a higher place in life through promotion, training, or returning to school. While traditional, four-year college students are declining in number, technical schools are seeing substantial increases in enrollment.

A shared economy translates sometimes into shared workspaces, commonly known as co-working arrangements, where the self-employed use rented space part-time for meetings and collaboration but don't need or can't afford a 24-hour space. Ironically, shopping experiences are mirroring this workplace trend, with the advent of "pop-up" retailing, where small companies or individuals showcase their wares, food, or services temporarily in the company of other like-minded entrepreneurs. The customer is also wanting an experience: walking, meeting people accidentally or on purpose, grabbing coffee or shopping is expected to happen increasingly all in the same physical space.

- **CO-WORKING**

- *NOUN*

- People employed in a single workspace with different employers to share ideas, knowledge, and resources

- *"Jay is really serious about his new business idea; he just moved into a co-working space for six months to dedicate himself full-time to making it happen."*

supports us		practice or policy	
			Support live/work arrangements in future UDO update, recognizing limitations imposed by traffic and parking.
			Ensure that existing regulations allow new kinds of hybrid office, retail, industrial, and even housing combinations in commercial areas of town.
			Don't wait for lightning to strike - proactively seek out the companies and businesses people want to see more of in Garner (e.g., restaurants, industrial)
			Partner with the Garner Chamber of Commerce for staff support to make some of the action items happen sooner.
			Light up the bridges - using side / underneath, colored lighting will open up dark spaces and create signature gateways out of bridge crossings.
			Work with the City of Raleigh to sponsor a bike share station in the historic downtown area.
			Consider formal restrictions on "formula businesses," those that operate as chains with nationally standardized decor and operations.
			Everyone - Chamber, Town, Economic Development, Public Works, appointed/elected officials - needs to have a consistent message on desired developments.
			Establish target measures that report on desired outcomes: three groceries within one square mile; number of non-chain commercial applications; etc.
			Report demand for utilities of new, proposed development at completion, full build-out, and in 20 years' time to ensure "no surprises" later on.

Benefits Available from Adopting Recommended Policy or Practice.


HEALTH
 supports community health and environmental quality


ELEVATE
 instills quality in appearance, design, or community


FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY
 adds value to people, businesses, and town



Create great space

Working with existing retailers can create opportunities for collaborative ventures - providing the streetscaping and partial facade financing in return for reuse of seldom-used parking is envisioned along Fifth Avenue.

Smaller, leaner, and cleaner manufacturing and industry, often mixed with offices and even ground-floor retailing, are becoming the most attractive options for many communities that want to have higher wages.

Industry as a gateway?

Park it in back

Requiring all or a high percentage of parking to be at the side or rear of buildings is preferred for creating enclosed spaces; limiting parking generally is increasing seen as an antidote to little-used commercial spaces.



COMMERCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Create One Co-Work Space

There are terrific examples like HQ Raleigh, Design Box, and The Underground nearby. In some cases, co-work also becomes "co-live," as ground-floor entrepreneurs live and work for limited tenures inside the shared space. Job training and experts in relevant fields come into the space periodically to help solve specific or general problems - even standard business management. A Garner version might be oriented towards members of the workforce that have great ideas and are stuck providing for themselves and others with low-wage jobs that consume their time and energies.

Identifying and leasing space is not the first step, but a necessary one. Co-locating in seldom-used office or retail space may be one option.



The Chamber of Commerce and community groups, as well as subject matter experts to help novices manage their business, are important partners.



Expect around \$12/square foot; perhaps \$60,000 per year, plus \$20,000 for maintenance. Tenants do pay a fee that will offset some costs.



Establish a Cooking Studio / Farmer's Market

Residents want more and better restaurants; workers want better-paying jobs; and the town wants a signature gathering place. Assembling all of this in the vicinity of downtown and Fifth Avenue in a revitalized space, part of which would be open-air, can check all the boxes. Although not easy, private sector partnerships can help reuse some of the languishing retail spaces and absorb some of the up-front costs as well.



The partnerships are the most important step here; learn from other markets and experiences like the one in Grand Rapids (downtownmarketgr.com).



The Chamber of Commerce and local retail-oriented landowners are crucial. Hiring someone to make this happen isn't unreasonable.



Costs vary from nothing if the right partnerships can be struck, to a more realistic negotiated purchase and redevelopment price of \$500,000 to launch.



Develop the North

North Garner is undergoing and will continue to experience a major renaissance as development pressures from downtown Raleigh move south. Investing in streetscaping, maintenance and parks, and seeking opportunities for redevelopment of commercial and residential properties has happened and should continue to occur. The Garner Revitalization Association conducts events, outdoor movies, and other attractions - people who participated in Garner Forward said that they want to see more of all these things in the future. This task is somewhat easy - increase the financial support for, and collaboration with, the GRA. Establishing a once-a-month event (e.g., solidifying the pop-up market), creating a new playground or new music venue, making US 70 overpasses more walkable and inviting are all great joint projects.

Prioritizing projects is the challenge: projects shouldn't just make downtown better, but draw attention to it from the outside.



The GRA is an obvious partnership, but other business owners are collaboration targets as well.



The costs will vary by project; an additional \$50,000 annually, to be matched from other sources, is a good starting place.



Revisit and Revise Parking...Comprehensively

The majority of parking spaces are under used and provide an opportunity to enhance land use decisions. A comprehensive parking study should be completed that considers the following, at a minimum:

- Parking maximums in some zones;
- Shared parking and relationships to transit;
- Technology impacts in the future;
- Opening up private and institution parking to metering;
- Revise the location of parking relative to buildings for new and modified developments;
- Offer incentives to encourage landscaping and low impact development (LID);
- A reduction in, or complete removal of, parking minimums entirely in some districts; and
- Allow for reductions in parking if other, multi-modal improvements are taken by the developer.

The first step is to undertake an internal review of parking-related issues and concession areas, then develop a scope of services tied to a budget amount and schedule.



Gathering input (not a steering committee) composed of developers and homeowners should happen early, even during the scoping phase, to get buy-in.



The typical study cost is approximately \$50,000 - \$75,000. Expect 8 hours of staff time on average per week for 8 months.

