

# Smith Reynolds Airport/Whitaker Park Strategic Area Plan



Smith Reynolds Airport/Whitaker Park  
Strategic Area Plan

# The Airport/Whitaker Park Area Is Poised For An Economic Transformation....

- Significant investment will be coming to Smith Reynolds Airport and Whitaker Park over the next few years
  - \$86 million in proposed improvements to the airport
  - \$120 million in proposed improvements to Whitaker Park
- This investment can help spur the surrounding area to become a prime location for economic development



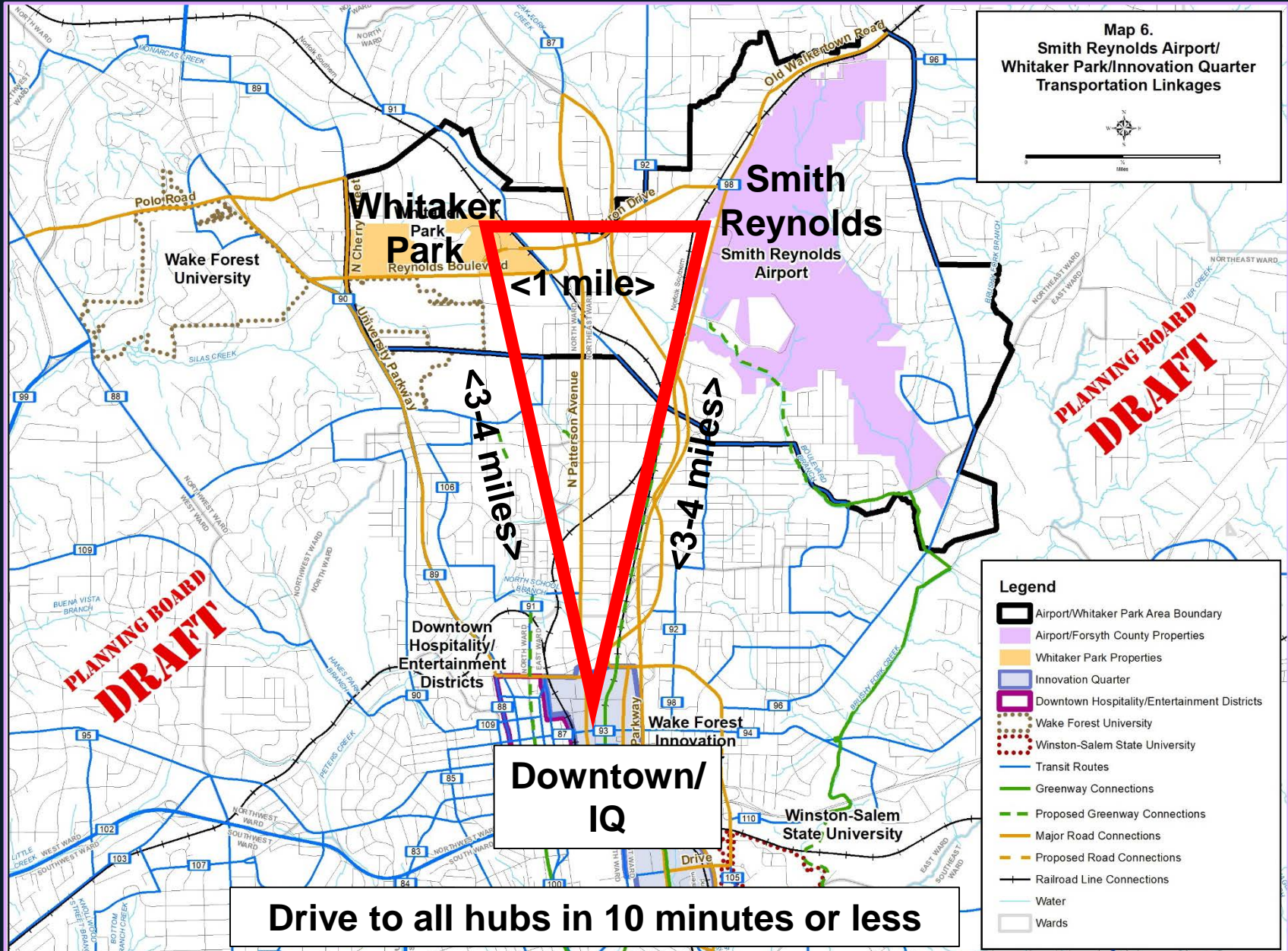
# This Plan Recommends Multiple Strategies for Transforming the Area

These strategies include:

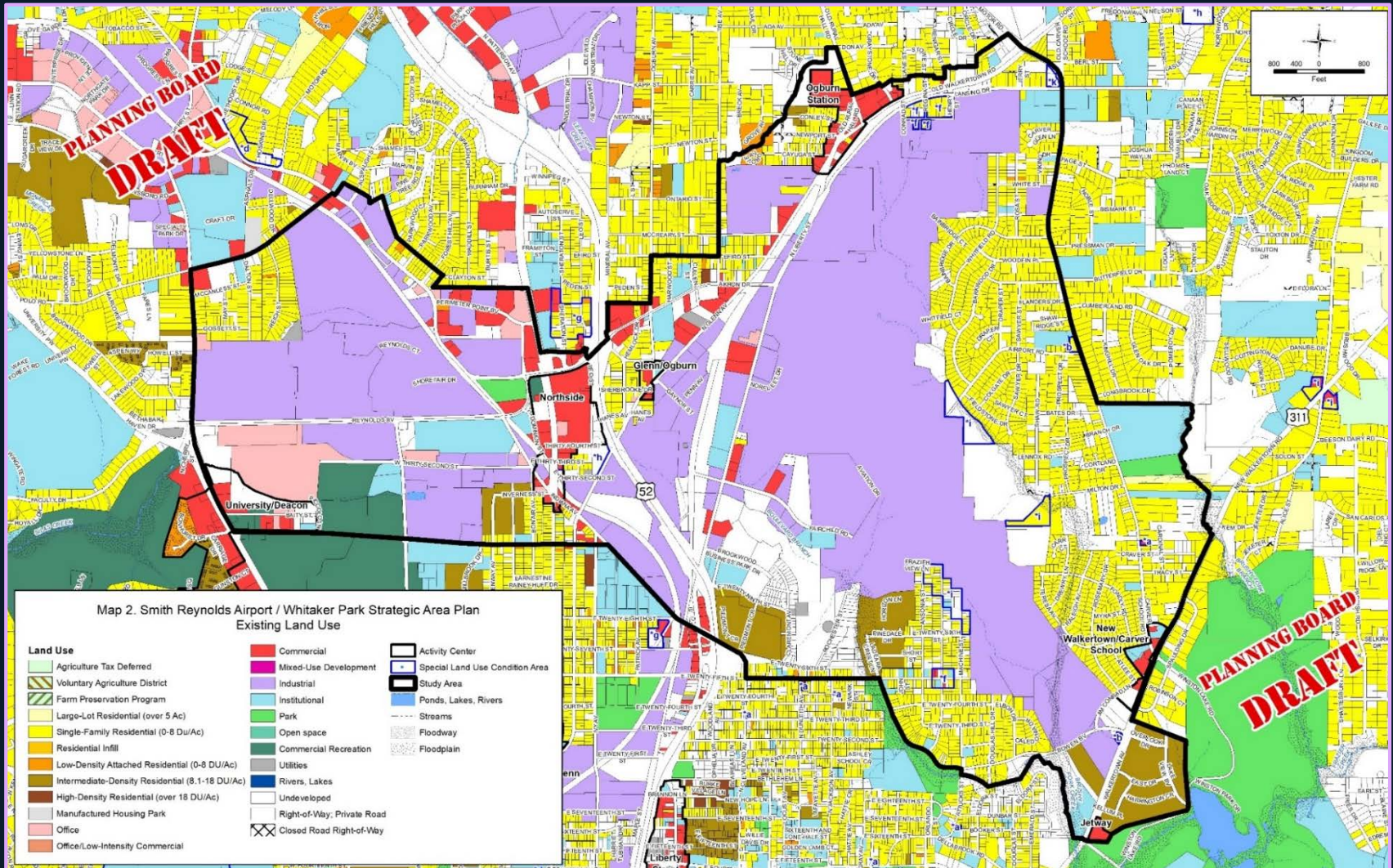
1. promoting economic development
2. improving area appearance, and
3. highlighting the connections between this area and the Innovation Quarter/ Downtown Winston-Salem



# Area Economic Development Triangle



# Existing Land Use in the Area is Primarily Industrial



46% Industrial/21% Residential; No land use changes

# Four Community Meetings Were Held to Gather Citizen/Stakeholder Input – 250 Attendees



# Example Citizen/Stakeholder Kickoff Meeting Comments

- **Attract aviation-related businesses that pay a living wage and employ area residents**
- **Provide education opportunities for residents**
- **Provide assistance to businesses that are already in the area**
- **Install sidewalks, street trees, and street lights**
- **Improve curb appeal/remove dilapidated buildings**

# Overview of Plan Recommendations

- Plan recommendations were developed based on citizen input; the 2017 Chamber Aerotropolis Study; and input with Greater W-S, Inc., City/County staff, the Airport, and Forsyth Tech
- These recommendations support 5 overall goals:
  1. **Strengthen transportation linkages between the Airport, Whitaker Park, and Downtown/IQ**
  2. **Make the airport/surrounding area an attractive gateway to the City**
  3. **Recruit aviation/aerospace-related businesses**
  4. **Cultivate the job skills of area residents**
  5. **Promote business assistance programs**



# Goal: **Strengthen Transportation Linkages Between the Airport, Whitaker Park, and Downtown/IQ**

**Conduct a Transportation/Telecommunications Assessment to:**

- **Determine locations for visitor wayfinding signs**
- **Ensure that transit routes coincide with employer shift changes**
- **Provide state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure**

# Goal: Make Smith Reynolds Airport An Attractive Gateway to the City

- Prepare a comprehensive streetscape plan for Akron Drive and Liberty Street
- Encourage development of 10,000 – 15,000 sf “flex space” buildings along Akron Dr. and Liberty St.



## Goal: **Recruit Aerospace-Related Businesses**

- Encourage local business recruiters to attend aviation-related trade shows
- Develop marketing materials promoting the Airport, Whitaker Park, and Innovation Quarter/Downtown
- Target start-up companies involving drones and similar technology to locate in the area



## Goal: **Cultivate the Job Skills of Area Residents**

- **Develop a coordinated School System/Forsyth Tech curriculum for aviation-related career training**
- **Offer scholarships allowing area workers over age 21 to attend Forsyth Tech for retraining and degree programs**
- **Encourage the recruitment of area residents to fill new jobs**
- **Use local incentives to attract employers that pay living wages**

# Goal: **Promote Local Business Assistance Programs**

- **City Building Improvement Rehabilitation Program**
- **City Small Business Loan Program**
- **City Business Training Program**
- **Urban Commercial Areas (RUCAs)**
- **Small Business Center at Forsyth Tech**

# Endorsements

- **Plan was unanimously recommended by the General Government Committee at its August 11, 2020 meeting**
- **Plan was unanimously recommended by the Planning Board at its March 12, 2020 meeting**
- **Plan was presented to the Airport Commission in March 2020**

**end of presentation**