

Introduction

Background

Downtown Cary, the “Heart of Cary,” has long been a place where the community has come together for celebrations, a glimpse into the Town’s past, and a taste of urban living. As a window into Cary’s small town heritage, the downtown area enjoys a character unique to the Triangle area. As the Heart of Cary continues to grow and change, ensuring it does so in a pedestrian-oriented and vibrant way while maintaining its unique character and charm was highlighted as a priority in the 2001 adopted *Town Center Area Plan* (TCAP). The Town has prepared this *Downtown Cary Streetscape Master Plan* to highlight the elements essential in creating a pedestrian-friendly environment where people can live, work, do business, and have a good time.

Cary adopted the Town Center Area Plan (TCAP) in 2001, staging a vision to make the Town center a unique, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly location — a regional destination and a place to live, work, and play. The TCAP focuses on multi-level, mixed-use buildings to make sure the downtown will include an exciting mix of shops, restaurants, entertainment, housing, and offices.

The TCAP has been a catalyst for additional downtown-oriented plans and studies, some of which are adopted and others that are ongoing. All of these documents can be found on the Town’s website and include the *TCAP Design Guidelines Manual* (adopted), *Community Appearance Manual* (adopted), *Public Art Master Plan* (adopted), *Town Center Civic and Cultural Arts District Study* (adopted), and *Picture Downtown Cary* (ongoing).

Downtown Cary Streetscape Master Plan

To address the vision identified in the TCAP, the Town prepared this master plan to guide future streetscape improvements. The Downtown Cary Streetscape Master Plan honors the TCAP’s vision while providing specific guidance for Cary’s streets and streetscapes. The planning process essential to the development of the master plan took close to one year. Extensive interaction with Town staff — including a walking tour of the downtown Durham streetscape project currently under construction — was key in the development of the plan. Significant contributions were made by downtown stakeholders who participated in a “pin-up” session in September 2005, in addition to an April 2006 community-wide open house in which participants viewed illustrations depicting proposed streetscape changes and expressed opinions on a series of alternatives. Following the open house in April, the streetscape illustrations and renderings were displayed on the Town’s project website as well as in the lobby of Town Hall, along with comment cards.

