

# Western Cary

## COMMUNITY MEETING

Engaging, Shaping, Serving  
and Moving

What's going on in western Cary



# Western Cary Community Meeting

## Introduction

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In partnership with Northwest Cary Community Connection, the Town hosted a community meeting for western Cary at Crosspointe Church on May 2, 2017. With approximately 300 people in attendance, the evening offered citizens the opportunity to browse information tables on different topics, such as mobility, sustainability, development, public safety and our parks and recreation offerings and interact with staff.

Council Member Robinson kicked off the meeting by sharing her perspective on the history of western Cary and her personal connection to the community.

I followed by introducing myself to the community and talking about how the Imagine Cary Community Plan is our guiding framework for the future. I also touched on the upcoming FY18 budget process being more than just an annual “event” and how the Town will be engaging with the entire community in a variety of ways in the future.

The main portion of the night featured Directors Doug McRainey and Jerry Jensen walking citizens through an overview of significant projects happening now or in the future in western Cary.

It’s important to recognize that this meeting marked the first time the Town publically live-streamed an event on the Internet and Cary TV. Over 200 people watched the meeting in real-time or in [recording](#).



The information contained in this report is the result of questions gathered before and after the community meeting. As we promised at the meeting, each question has been addressed.

We look forward to continuing to engage western Cary citizens, and all of Cary’s citizens, as we move forward.

Sincerely,

Cary Town Manager Sean R. Stegall

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## ENGAGE



### **MILLS PARK – PHASE 2**

The timeline for the Mills Park Phase 2 project is as follows:

- Construction: Summer 2017 – Winter 2020

Mills Park was slated as the last of the 2012 Cary Community Investment Bond projects to begin construction as it was not designed and “shovel ready” at the time bond funds were approved. Citizens were told that design would not start until 2014 on the project. This phase of the park is tracking with the Panther Branch Greenway project.

### **PANTHER CREEK GREENWAY**

To date, approximately 1.5 miles of this greenway has been constructed through work done by the Town in partnership with developers. This includes 0.5 miles running from the American Tobacco Trail east to Yates Store Road and 1 mile along the



northern side of Cary Park Lake. Two grade-separated crossings have been constructed with one running under I-540 and the other under Green Level Church Road.

Another 1.5 mile segment, extending from Cary Park Lake to the Cameron Pond neighborhood is currently in design. A 0.3 mile trail segment connecting the Panther Creek Greenway to Mills Park Elementary and Middle Schools is also included in this work. Construction of these segments is scheduled to begin in summer 2017 and be completed in winter 2020. Due to this project receiving over \$1 million in grant funding, the granting agency must review and approve of all design and easements needed on the project. The final step that we began last summer is easement approvals. The granting agency and Cary have been going back and forth on the specific documentation needed on this project and it has taken longer than expected. At the current time we are still planning on the project to be complete by winter 2020 and will update the schedule as we complete each step of the process.

### ***FUTURE PARK IN THE MORRIS BRANCH AREA & CAMERON POND NEIGHBORHOOD AREA***

A consultant is expected to be hired for both projects during the fall of 2017 to begin the master plan for the park in the area of Morris Branch (P-6) and Cameron Pond (P-10). A timeline for full design and construction of this project will be estimated once the first step is complete.

The FY 2018 Recommended Budget includes \$850,000 for master plan development and design. Construction funding, currently estimated at \$5,300,000, would be required once design is completed. This is currently shown on the Town's 5-year Capital plan.

### ***FUTURE PARK NEAR WHITE OAK CHURCH ROAD***

Cary has purchased and set aside property for a future park site in this area and it straddles the American Tobacco Trail. The 2012 Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources (PRCR) Facilities Master Plan identifies potential uses for this site including athletic fields and support facilities such as restrooms and parking. Cary has no development timeline associated with this land banked property.

### ***CARPENTER PARK***

Located at 4420 Louis Stephens Drive, Carpenter Park was completed in the summer of 2016. This neighborhood park is 16 acres and includes a 1.5 acre lake, playground, restrooms, basketball and pickle-ball courts, a 1/3 mile pedestrian path, a community garden and a 25 car parking lot. The park is also home to a privately funded memorial for American Eagle Flights 3378 and 3379, both of which tragically crashed in the vicinity in 1988 and 1994, respectively.



### **MILLS PARK COMMUNITY CENTER**

Funding was approved in the current budget to begin planning for a future community center. This first planning step will result in a concept plan outlining the amenities to be offered. A timeline for full design and construction of this project will be estimated once this initial step is complete.

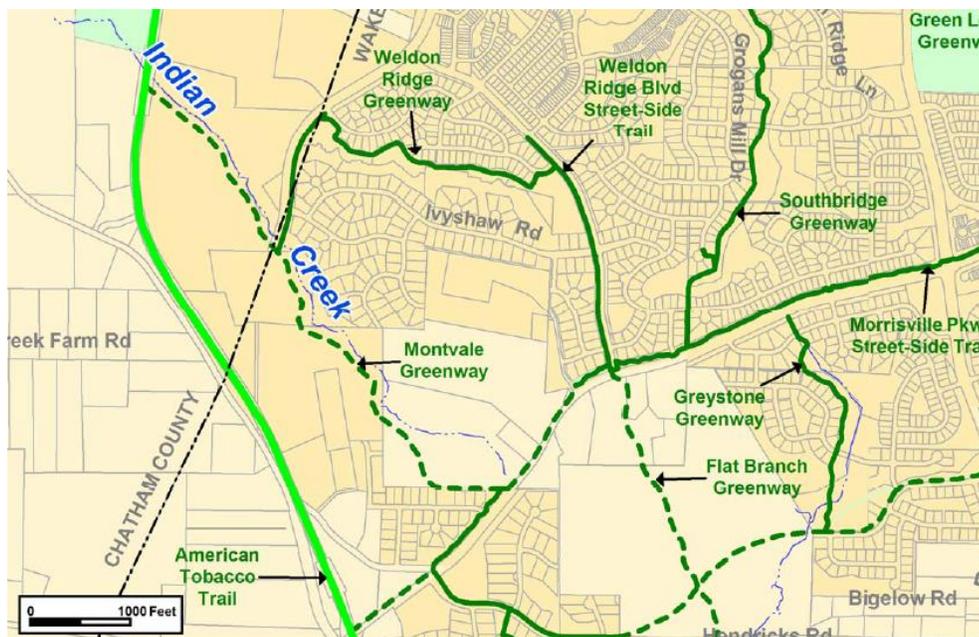
### **CONNECTIONS TO AMERICAN TOBACCO TRAIL**

In addition to the existing connection of Panther Creek Greenway, described above, the town plans to connect White Oak Creek and Montvale greenways.

White Oak Creek Connection from Green Level Church Road to the American Tobacco Trail

- Begin construction – Summer 2017
- Complete construction – Winter 2019

Montvale Greenway Connection – this greenway is located within the Montvale subdivision and is currently under construction by a private developer, Glennjan, LLC. Upon completion, it will provide a connection to the American Tobacco Trail and connect the Weldon Ridge, Morrisville Parkway and Southbridge greenways to Cary Park Lake. Given this work is being completed by a private developer, the Town cannot provide timeline estimates for completion. A pedestrian tunnel under Yates Store Road was previously installed to create a grade separated crossing.



### **BATCHELOR BRANCH GREENWAY EXTENSION**

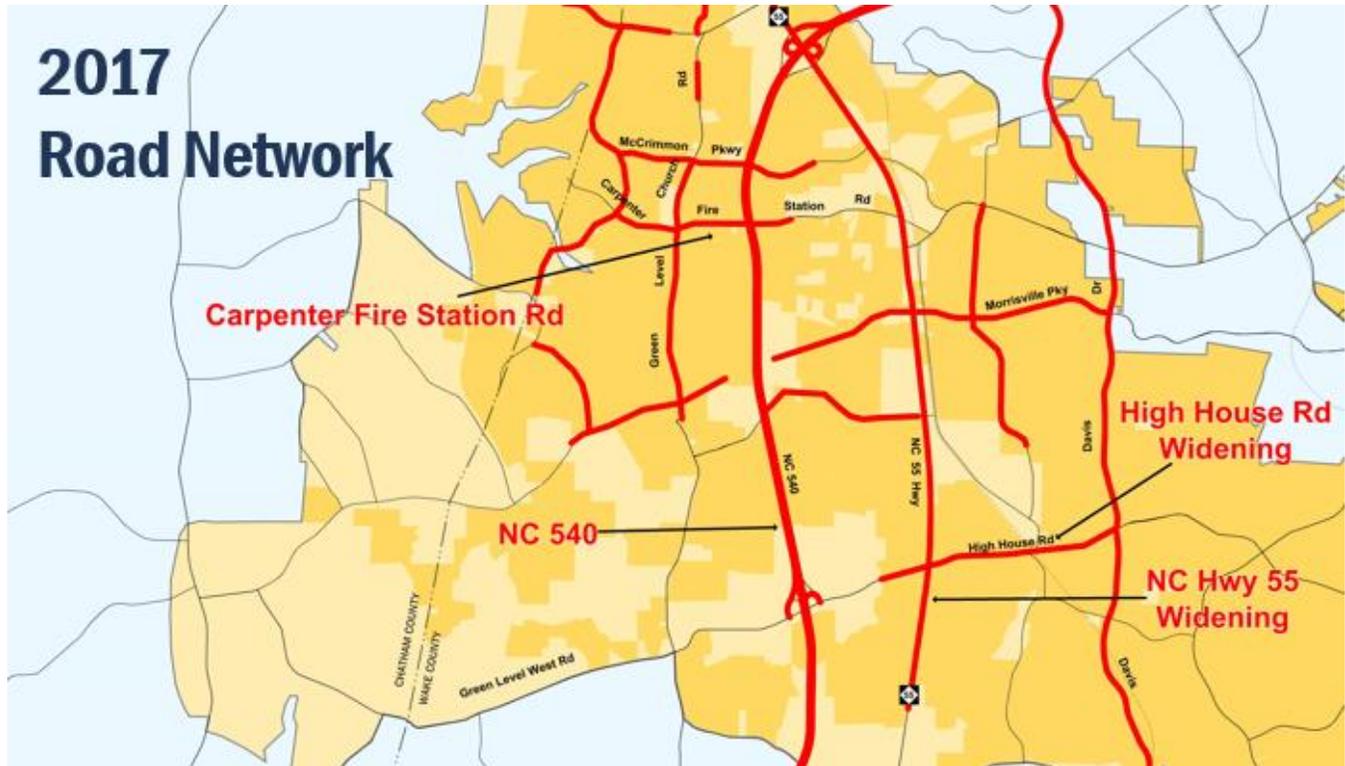
The Town applied for grant funding for this project last year but was not awarded any funding. There are currently no plans identified for the extension of this greenway to Thomas Brooks Park under I-540. Currently funding is shown in FY2021 to begin design.

### ***FUTURE PARK IN TWIN LAKES AREA***

Specific funding sources for this project have not been determined. Any future funding would be incorporated into the Capital Improvement Budget and Plan.

## **MOVE**

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### ***MORRISVILLE PARKWAY EXTENSION***

Cary was working on plans to complete a 2-lane extension of Morrisville Parkway between Green Level Church Road and NC-55, including tying to the existing 2-lane bridge over NC 540 when the North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) offered to provide funding to include the interchange with the extension project. Given the benefits of this proposal, the Town entered into an agreement with NCTA to include the interchange. This required substantial redesign, permitting, utility coordination and additional right-of-way acquisition that has delayed this project.

This project is planned for two lanes, instead of four, because project traffic demands do not warrant four lanes until at least 2035. Future configuration will likely depend on the adjacent development. In addition, environmental permitting agencies would only allow impacts to wetlands and streams based on current levels of traffic demand. Since the traffic demand did not justify a four-lane street until many years from now, we were only allowed to build a two-lane

street now. Developers of adjacent properties will be required to improve the road as part of their development projects. Right-of-way acquisition, permitting and utility work is consistent with the four-lane vision of the future.

Current timeline:

- Begin construction: Spring 2018.

### **CARPENTER FIRE STATION ROAD WIDENING**

This project will run from the NC 540 Bridge to NC 55, which includes the segment between Cameron Pond Drive and Highcroft Drive.

- Project status: funding to begin design is requested in the Town Manager's FY 18 Recommended Capital Improvement Plan.
- Grade Separation timeline: we have recently initiated right-of-way acquisition for the realignment and grade separation. Construction of the grade separation project is scheduled to begin in spring 2018 and completion expected in 2021.



### **O'KELLY CHAPEL ROAD TRAIN CROSSING**

Parkside Town Commons development was responsible for extending O'Kelly Chapel Road from NC 55 to the railroad. The developers also made improvements on the east side of the tracks to connect O'Kelly Chapel Road to Little Drive. The missing link is the small stretch that will extend over the railroad tracks.

Cary has provided notice to CSX for Parkside Commons to begin building the crossing. However, CSX will not allow opening the at-grade crossing until the Town awards the Carpenter Fire Station Road Realignment and Grade Separation Project (anticipated to be awarded in the first half of 2018.) This condition is part of the Town's agreement with CSX.

Unfortunately, the at-grade crossing will not be completed or opened prior to Horton's Creek Elementary school, which is planned to open in fall 2017. However, we do expect that the railroad crossing and street will be completed in advance of the new middle school planned at Alston, which is anticipated to be open in 2019.

### **GREEN LEVEL CHURCH ROAD WIDENING**

The Town has appropriated \$300,000 to widen the portion of Green Level Church Road along the frontage of Horton's Creek, just south of the development. In addition, the Town continues to work with developers to widen along their frontages and has identified a funding need in FY19 of

the capital improvement plan to begin planning and design to complete the remaining gaps along this section of Green Level to Durham from McCrimmon Parkway to O’Kelly Chapel Road.

Land has been cleared at O’Kelly Chapel and Green Level Church roads by a developer of a proposed office and daycare. The developer has encountered issues related to construction and is now evaluating options. Wake County Public School System is responsible for providing a right-turn lane on O’Kelly Chapel Road to turn onto Green Level Church Road towards Weycroft. That work is expected to take place summer of 2017.



### ***O’KELLY CHAPEL & YATES STORE ROAD INTERSECTION***

NCDOT is working with private development to install a traffic signal at this intersection. This signal will have signalized pedestrian crossings on Yates Store Road to help facilitate the crossing to and from the elementary school. The goal is to have this signal in place by the opening of the school. This signal allows for a signalized left-turn at both ends of the Stonewater neighborhood and provides a suitable alternative to the unsignalized left-turns at Clayston and Stonecroft.

Additionally, the elementary school is responsible for reviewing the traffic at the intersection of O’Kelly Chapel and Stonecroft Lane for potential signalization.

As for pedestrians, the elementary school is required to construct a marked pedestrian crossing on O’Kelly Chapel that includes a pedestrian refuge in the median. There are also going to be roundabouts and marked crosswalks on Hortons Creek Road to further provide lower speeds and safer crossings on the south side of the school.

### ***GOCARY SERVICE***

Public transportation in Cary is receiving attention through two different processes. Imagine Cary has helped to develop a long range plan for transit routes that demonstrate viability by 2040. Concurrently, the Wake County Transit Plan developed a vision for expanded transit service throughout the County – some of which would occur in Cary – beyond what exists on the road today. For western Cary, while routes are shown as planned options, they will not be implemented for at least two more years. Starting in the summer 2017, a study will be conducted county-wide to assist staff with planning and prioritizing new routes. This study will cover a 10-year horizon timeframe (through 2027) and create a ‘roadmap’ for municipalities and citizens alike to understand how and when a route in a particular area may in fact become a reality. There will be opportunities for the public to provide feedback to this plan and the Town encourages any and all citizens to review (once available) and comment.

## **BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

As a nationally recognized bicycle-friendly community, Cary takes the provision of alternative and safe modes of travel very seriously. Under North Carolina law, roads are shared facilities, and both motorists and cyclists have equal rights to use them.

Cary continues to promote education to all users on how to safely share these facilities using a multi-pronged approach. The Cary Police Department was one of the first partners on a statewide education campaign entitled "Watch for Me NC." This safety campaign's primary focus is to raise awareness and take a comprehensive approach to enforcement and education. To learn more, please visit <http://www.watchformenc.org>. Cary maintains a [website](#), bike map and mobile app that includes safety information, rules of the road and the most recent legislation on bicycling law.

The Town routinely works with local news and radio outlets to promote bicycle/motorist safety and the importance of sharing the road using public service announcements. Cary has produced a bicycle safety video that covers the rules of the road, the range of facilities in Cary and how to safely maneuver on them. The Town has brought in League Certified Instructors to conduct on-site training for our staff and Police on bicycle law, behavior and safety. And finally, the Town has a variety of bicycle facilities in place ranging from greenways, striped bike lanes and wide outside lanes to "sharrows" or shared use arrows and signage, recognizing we have a range of cyclists and their preference for facility type varies.

## **OTHER**

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### ***PROPERTY AT 7204 CARPENTER FIRE STATION ROAD***

The property owner has been operating Carden Auto Sales here since the early 1980s. When the business began, the property was not located in the Town's jurisdiction. It was added to Cary's extraterritorial planning jurisdiction (ETJ) in September 1995. Extraterritorial Jurisdiction is authority granted by the State of North Carolina to towns and cities which allows them to extend their planning and zoning regulations for up to three miles beyond their town limits. Since the business existed prior to the property coming into Cary's zoning jurisdiction, the business is "grandfathered" and may continue to operate. However, the business has expanded beyond its original boundaries, which is not allowed. Town enforcement officials are currently working with Mr. Carden to reduce the scope and intensity of the use and return the operation to its original size.

### ***HIGH DENSITY LAND USE***

High density building may mean different things to different people. The Town's 1996 Land Use Plan defined high density residential housing as anywhere from 8 to 30 units per acre, with typical uses listed as townhomes, condominiums, and apartments. The 1996 Land Use Plan carried us through two decades until the Town Council adopted the Imagine Cary Community Plan in January of this year. Specific densities of development are not a focus of the Community Plan. Instead, the character of residential development and achievement of Town goals and policies are critical elements.

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Chapter 6, SHAPE, includes the Future Growth Framework Map and Development Categories. This map replaces previous plan maps for the western Cary area including the 1996 Land Use Plan Map and the 2002 Northwest Area Plan Future Land Use Map. The 2002 Northwest Area Plan called for higher density residential development due to its proximity to the Research Triangle Park. However, with the northwest Cary area – now nearly built out – a Town study has shown that developers have only built about one-third of the housing units planned for under the Northwest area Plan. With the adoption of the Imagine Cary Community Plan, various areas of Western Cary are now designated as one of three neighborhood types, specifically “Mixed Neighborhoods”, “Traditional Neighborhoods” and “Suburban Neighborhoods”. You may read descriptions of these neighborhood categories starting on page 96 in Chapter 6 of the Community Plan.

These development category descriptions along with the policy statements included in the Imagine Cary Community Plan are used to evaluate rezoning requests submitted to the Town by land owners and developers. While the majority of land in western Cary is either developed or is under an approved development plan, there remains significant tracks of land available for development along Wake Road and in the Chatham County portion of Cary.

Additionally, the Town’s Zoning Map is available online. The Interactive Development Map shows projects around Cary.

## MORE QUESTIONS?

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***EMAIL: [FEEDBACK@TOWNOFCARY.ORG](mailto:FEEDBACK@TOWNOFCARY.ORG)***

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