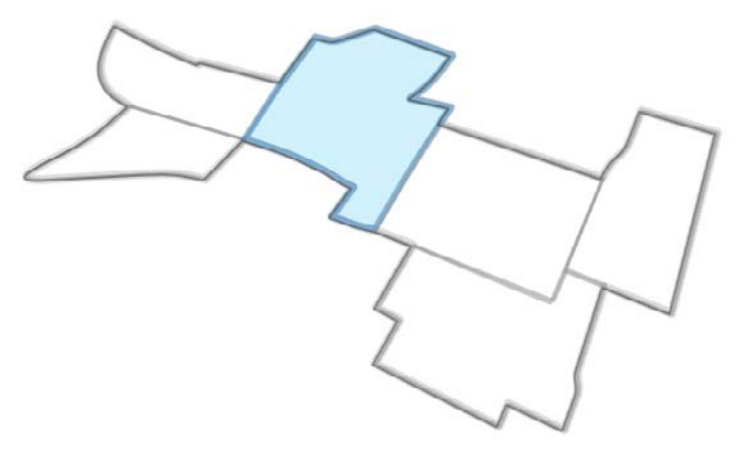
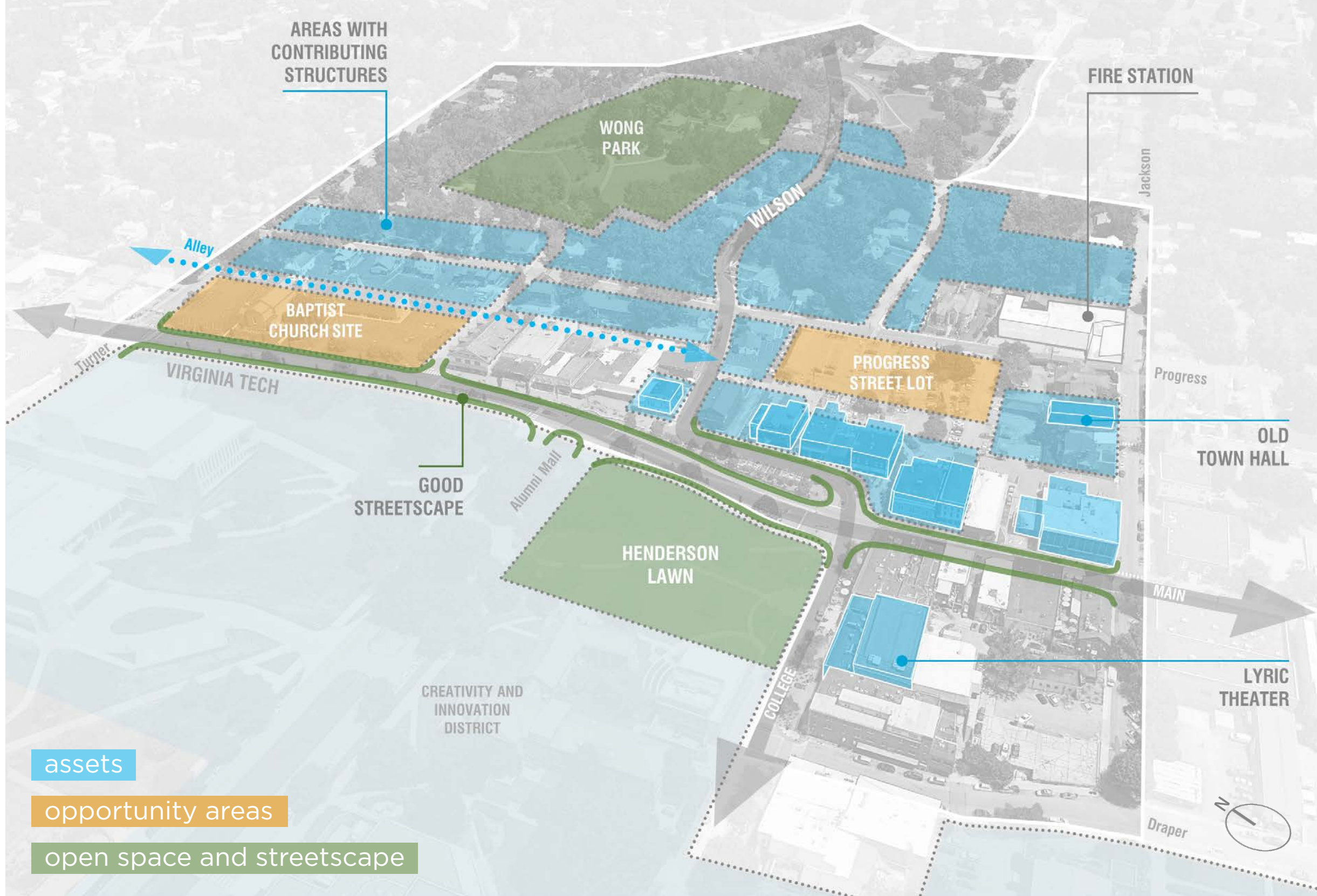


# CENTRAL DOWNTOWN

This district at the heart of Blacksburg is a dynamic nexus between the many parts of Downtown. Central Downtown has several development sites in key locations. The major opportunities are for the creation of a central streetside plaza to serve as a “front door” for the community, architecturally-sensitive redevelopment of sites for active retail and non-student housing, and new transportation facilities along Progress.



## CENTRAL DOWNTOWN TODAY



## 20-YEAR ILLUSTRATIVE VISION



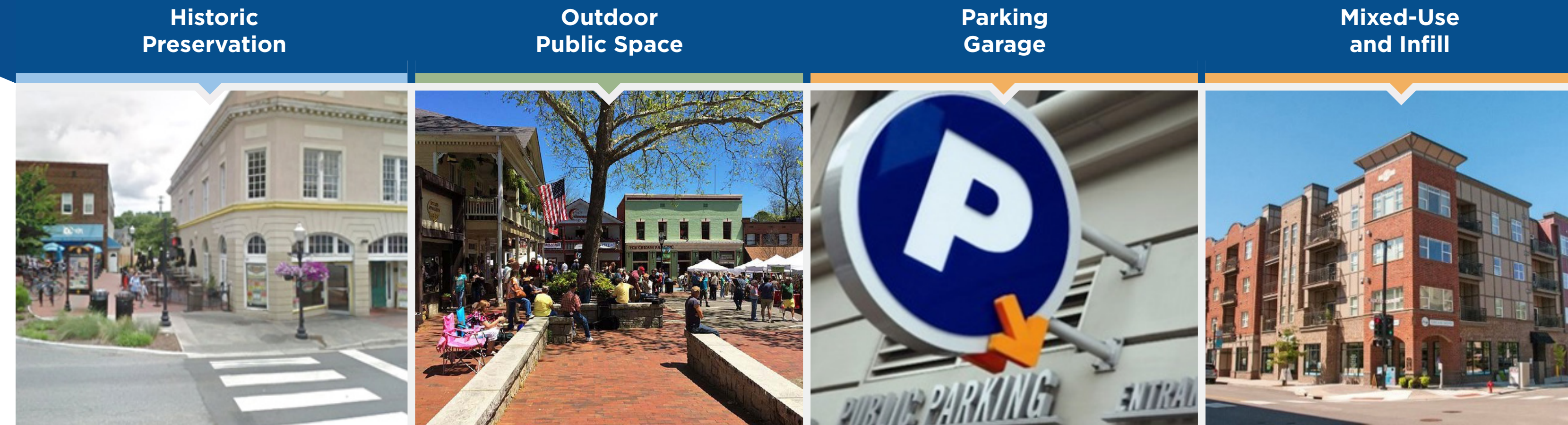
## POTENTIAL CATALYST



### CATALYST DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

40 units Graduate / Professional Housing	30 units Mid-Career Apartments	55k sq. ft. Office	25k sq. ft. Ground-Floor Retail	0.7 acres Streetside Plaza
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<b>MARKET</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Town's center of walkable retail traffic</li> <li>» Attractive location for non-student housing, as well as employment</li> </ul>	<b>PLACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Good pedestrian environment/walkability</li> <li>» Opportunity to better-connect to Wong Park</li> <li>» A mix of historic buildings and those of limited architectural significance</li> </ul>
<b>ECONOMY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Low-density townhome infill is not economically feasible</li> <li>» Redevelopment at higher densities is very viable</li> </ul>	<b>POLICY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Opportunity to enhance the interface between Downtown/VT Campus</li> <li>» Better address transportation challenges</li> <li>» Create a true mixed use environment that targets non-students</li> </ul>



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Central Downtown is **where Downtown truly comes together**. Improving it in ways that are sensitive to context and advance town goals will require great care. The **Baptist Church site** has great potential as a catalyst site. In the Central Main area on the side east of North Main Street, buildings south of Wilson Avenue are generally historic. Any new development north of Wilson would need to integrate elements of a Baptist Church development and historic buildings to the south.

The **College Avenue extension** provides limited utility as a street and parking area. A **town-owned lot** presents an opportunity to build structured parking. Progress Street has the greatest potential to provide non-motorized transportation **infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians**.

## CHARACTER & IDENTITY

- » Mixed-use, with a blend of historic and forward-thinking architecture
- » Places for local and distinctive national businesses
- » Enhanced public space, such as at College Avenue extension
- » Support employee attraction and retention
- » Investments in walkability and non-motorized transportation
- » Better links to Wong Park and Huckleberry Trail
- » Capacity for parking

## VISION

The vision for Central Downtown is for it to be the **activity hub of the entire Downtown**. New residential, office, and retail will help attract and retain young professionals. The College Avenue extension will be transformed into a **central gathering plaza**, complemented by **smaller spaces** with opportunity for **public art** highlighting the town's character. New **structured parking** on the Progress Street Lot will support businesses and enable visitors to “park once” when they come to Downtown. Improvements to Progress will help to form a **bike and pedestrian network**. New buildings will integrate **art, interesting materials**, and **street furniture** to ensure that development is distinctive. Central Downtown should continue to be enhanced as the **most vibrant part of Downtown**—a place that **belongs to everyone**.

## CATALYST

### CATALYST 1: DEVELOPMENT AT THE BAPTIST CHURCH SITE

With the church considering divestment of the property, the site offers **great potential for mixed-use development** and additional commercial space, **meeting part of the demand for Downtown housing**. Development along Main Street should serve as a transition point in height and scale from the north to south, with up to five stories

along Main, consisting of **ground-floor retail/restaurant space and upper-floor residential**. This plan envisions **preserving a space that functions as an alley**. Care should be taken to ensure the scaling and massing of development along Main and Progress Streets is varied, **transitioning to the existing fabric** north and east of Progress Street.