

# VISION STATEMENT

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Belmont is a small, independent city uniquely located on a peninsula, with a history as a textile mill town and a college town. The identity of Belmont extends beyond its City limits, to the peninsula, the west side of the South Fork, and north of Belmont Abbey.

While Belmont is becoming a part of a larger metropolitan area, the City will retain its historic sense of identity and community, even as it grows.

Belmont will continue to be an economically diverse city with employment opportunities for its residents. The strong neighborhoods that characterize the historic center will be reflected in new development. The City's existing neighborhoods and residents will receive the same attention as new development in the future of the community.





# INTRODUCTION

## 1 Section

The Belmont City Council approved the undertaking of a comprehensive land use plan for the City of Belmont in June, 2006. Like many communities within the Charlotte metropolitan area, Belmont is struggling to maintain its unique identity while coping with burgeoning urban sprawl from Charlotte. Belmont officials decided that they were at an important crossroads in the development of Belmont and needed to take charge of their future before the opportunity to manage and plan for development passed them by. They decided it was time to develop a comprehensive plan to guide the future growth of Belmont. HNTB North Carolina, P.C., a nationally recognized Architecture, Engineering, and Planning firm, was hired to assist Belmont throughout the comprehensive plan process.

“It is very important that citizens of Belmont be involved in helping create a plan that will allow the city to grow while remaining true to its unique character,” said Mayor Richard Boyce. “Belmont’s vision should be one of which the citizens can be proud, and which fosters a community in which people can live, work, and play.” Belmont residents will have the opportunity to devise its own land use plan scenarios through public meetings and interaction. Throughout this process, all participants in the plan must ask themselves the following questions in relation to the plan: Where are we now? Where do we want to go? and How do we get there?

Belmont is perceived by its residents as a small, independent town. It has a historical identity established by its unique location on a peninsula, bordered by Lake Wylie and the South Fork of the Catawba River. It has historically been a textile mill town, as well as a college town. The identity of Belmont extends beyond its City limits, with residents on the peninsula, on the west side of the South Fork around Stowe Botanical Gardens, and north of Belmont Abbey considering themselves to be part of “Belmont.”

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Belmont Downtown



# Section 1

## INTRODUCTION

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*Belmont Waterfront*



*Belmont Abbey*



*Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden*

Belmont is however, a City in transition. With the closing and downsizing of many of the City's textile mills and the growth of new suburban subdivisions south of the City limits, more and more residents are commuting to other parts of Gaston or Mecklenburg Counties. While it is becoming a part of a larger metropolitan area, there is a very strong desire to retain the strong sense of identity and community that has historically characterized Belmont, even as it grows.

The key to an effective comprehensive land use plan is to create a sense of involvement for the entire Belmont community. Accomplishing this can only be made possible through interaction with the general public, community stakeholders, public officials, and the willingness of those individuals to express their opinions about Belmont and its future. Through this process, residents should develop a vision statement that provides them with a goal to strive for over the next 10 to 20 years. The vision statement will provide a finite goal of where Belmont residents want to end up, but must be adaptable in order to meet ever changing trends in development and the desires of Belmont residents.

Once Belmont has decided upon a vision and established goals for future development, residents and public officials must determine the best methods to achieve those goals. Continued public involvement upon completion of the plan is important for success of the plan in order to keep the plan on track. Local officials will be able to implement various ordinances and strategic plans that can help insure the goals of the plan are met. Both the general public and local officials must remain flexible in their endeavors as land planning is a dynamic process. The path to achieving the goals set forth in the vision statement may be long and arduous, will require flexibility, and will also take time. Once the goals are reached, Belmont will have hopefully achieved its own personal sense of community and desired identity for its residents.



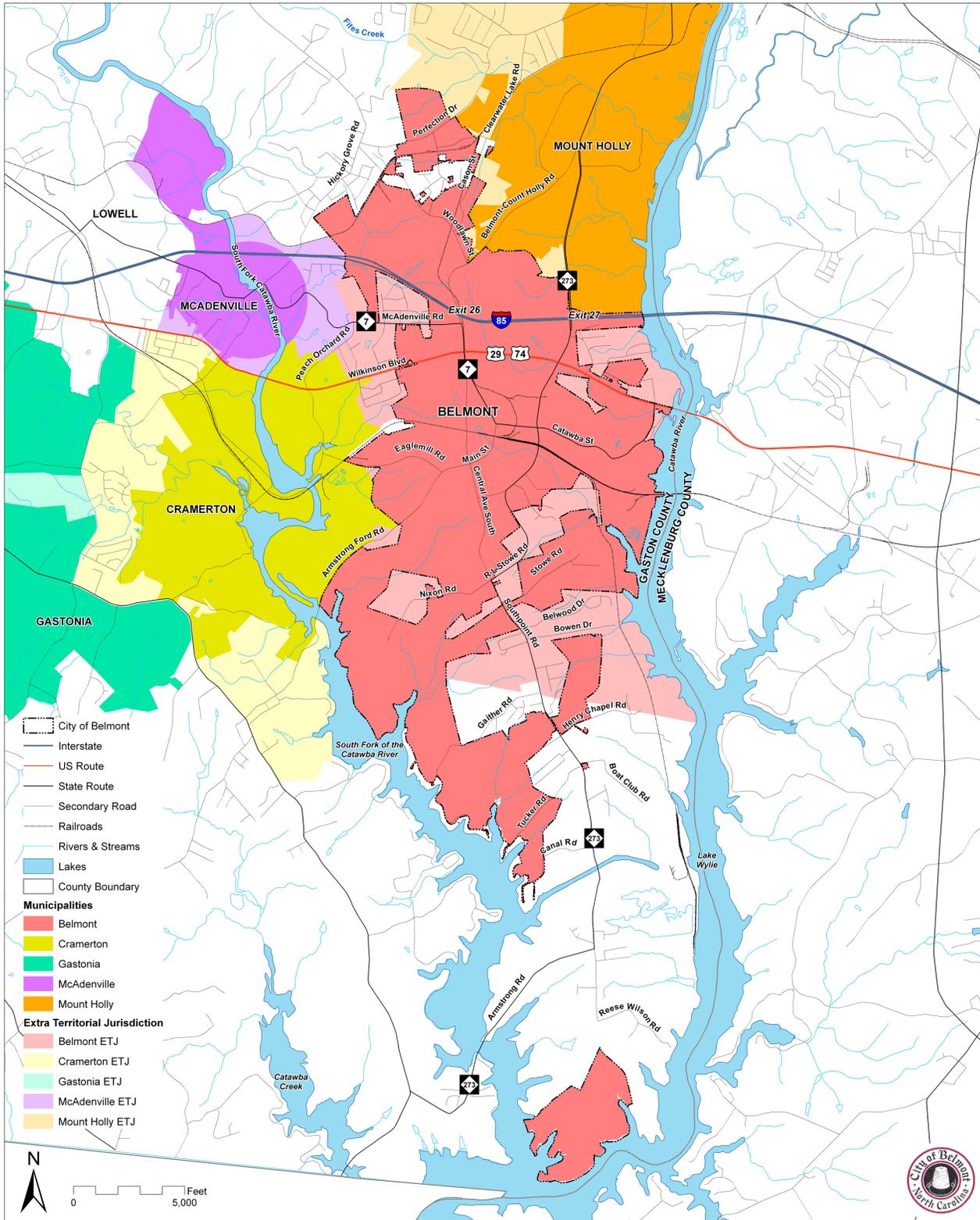


Figure 1: Belmont and Surrounding Area



