

## **INTRODUCTION**

Woodruff Planning is pleased to provide this Compatibility Analysis to Teramore Development, LLC, regarding property located in unincorporated Catawba County, North Carolina (hereinafter referred to as the subject property). The Compatibility Analysis hereby supports the requested rezoning application for a portion of property located at 5960 Sherrills Ford Road, and determines that the proposed use of a Dollar General store will be compatible with the surrounding development.

The request is to subdivide the 4.69-acre parcel into two (2) lots; and then rezone the 1.48-acre parcel fronting Sherrills Ford Road from Residential District (R-20) to Rural Commercial-Conditional District (RC-CD). The remaining 3.21-acre parcel, located to the north of the subject property, will retain the existing Residential District (R-20) zoning designation. The subject property is located within the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan. Additionally, the use will be developed to be compatible with the surrounding existing uses.

The consultant, Randy Woodruff, AICP, completed the following research in preparation of this report:

- Review of the Catawba County Tax Office data and maps
- Review of the Catawba County Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan
- Review of the Catawba County Land Development Code
- Review of the Catawba County Zoning Map
- Review of the Catawba County Thoroughfare Plan

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

Catawba County, North Carolina, is located in the western part of the state in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Catawba County's estimated July 1, 2019 population of 159,551 included the inhabitants of its eight cities and towns: Brookford, Catawba, Claremont, Conover, Hickory, Long View, Maiden, and Newton. Much of the property along Sherrills Ford Road is characterized by large agriculture and woodland tracts; including a few commercial nodes.

The subject property consists of approximately 4.69 acres and is located on the north side of Sherrills Ford Road; just above the intersection of East Bandys Cross Road and Mathis Church Road in unincorporated Catawba County, North Carolina; more specifically identified as Tax Record ID: 369901084445. The subject property is currently owned by Hamm Vollrea Osborne Heirs; and they have entered into an Agreement for Purchase and Sale of Real Property with Teramore Development, LLC per said agreement dated June 11, 2020.

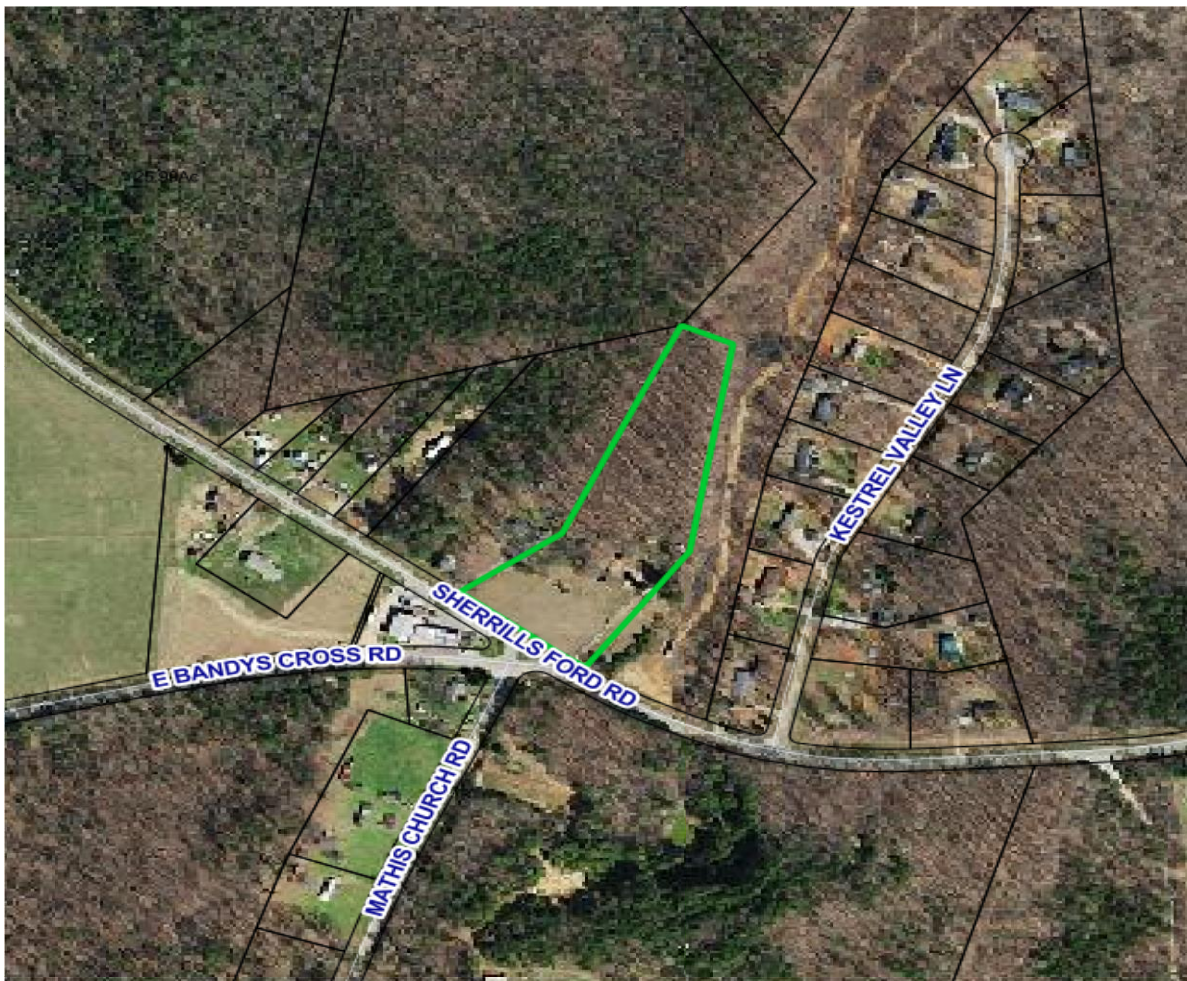
The applicant intends to subdivide the subject property into two (2) lots. The first lot will be approximately 1.48 acres in size and will have approximately 273 feet of frontage on Sherrills Ford Road. The request is to rezone the 1.48 acres from Residential District (R-

20) to Rural Commercial-Conditional District (RC-CD). The subject property presently has an existing 1,380 square foot single-family home that was built back in 1956 with well and septic utilities. Said home is to be demolished following zoning approval.

### Location Description

Surrounding the subject property in the general vicinity are primarily residential units on large lots and a few commercial businesses. The subject parcel is located just north of the intersection of two (2) moderately-trafficked thoroughfares, East Bandys Cross Road and Mathis Church Road. **Figures 1 and 2** provide both an aerial photograph and location map of the subject property.

**Figure 1. Aerial Photograph**



SUBJECT PROPERTY



**Figure 2. Location Map**



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### **SHERRILLS FORD SMALL AREA PLAN**

The subject property is presently located within the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan. Said plan serves as the long-range planning document for said region. The Board of Commissioners adopted the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan at its February 17, 2003 meeting. The Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan has been designed as a policy document to help guide community leaders (elected, appointed and private sector) in making decisions regarding the future growth and development of the area. It also serves as a tool for making decisions regarding public facility and service investments per the principles defined therein. The principles are statements of general direction and

fundamental considerations which are intended to be a basic guide for making development and public service decisions.

Much of the property along Sherrills Ford Road, Long Island Road, Little Mountain Road, Buffalo Shoals Road, and other centrally located roads is characterized by large agricultural and woodland tracts and commercial nodes. Commercial development within the area was based along the major transportation routes and was centered to support the community.

## Demographics

The Sherrills Ford area has experienced one of the highest growth rates in the County during the last decade as defined by U.S. Census data provided below.

UNITED STATES CENSUS DATA												
Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in North Carolina: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019												
Geographic Area	April 1, 2010		Population Estimate (as of July 1)									
	Census	Estimates Base	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
North Carolina	9,535,483	9,535,751	9,574,323	9,657,592	9,749,476	9,843,336	9,932,887	10,031,646	10,154,788	10,268,233	10,381,615	10,488,084
Catawba County, North Carolina	154,358	154,717	154,730	154,459	154,693	154,965	155,085	155,527	156,448	157,852	158,687	159,551

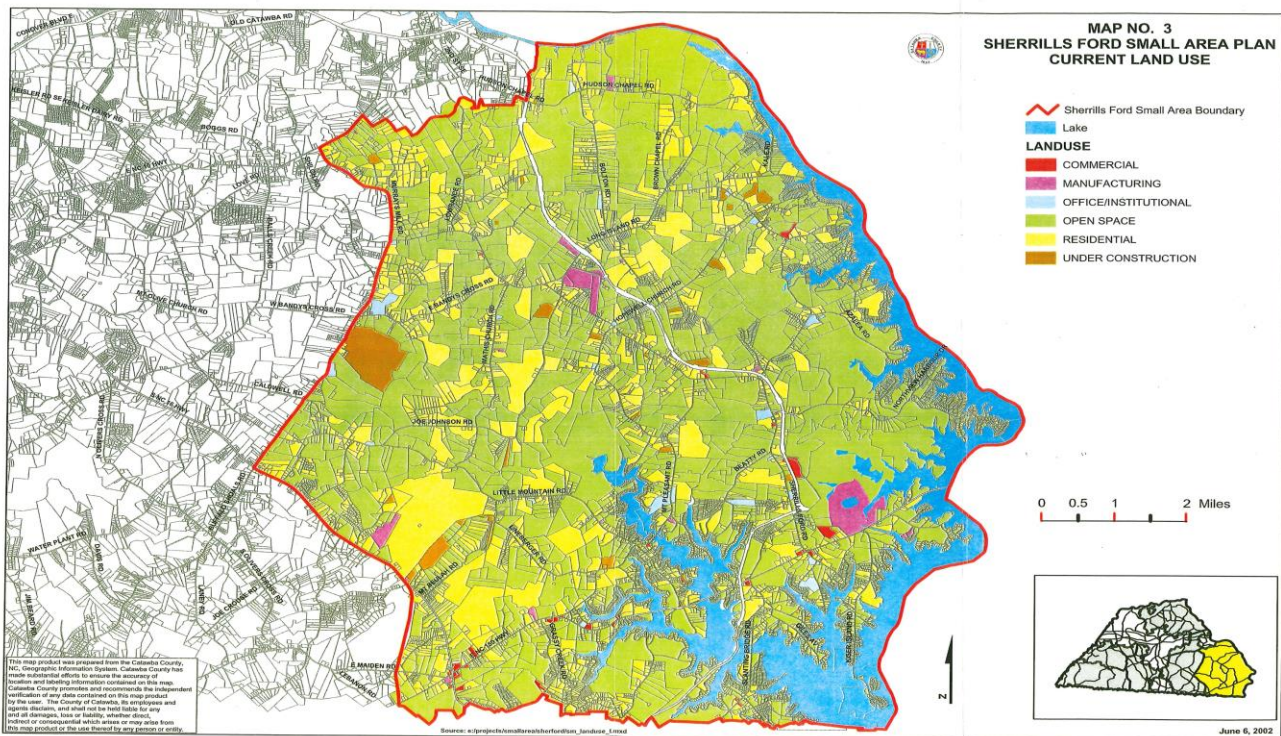
Annual Estimates of Housing Units for Counties in North Carolina: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019												
Geographic Area	April 1, 2010		Housing Unit Estimate (as of July 1)									
	Census	Estimates Base	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
North Carolina	4,327,528	4,327,553	4,334,128	4,360,685	4,386,498	4,427,718	4,472,159	4,515,185	4,567,285	4,621,314	4,683,620	4,747,943
Catawba County, North Carolina	67,886	68,044	68,065	68,111	68,131	68,142	68,212	68,379	68,650	68,867	69,249	69,865

### 2010 Census Tract: 011501

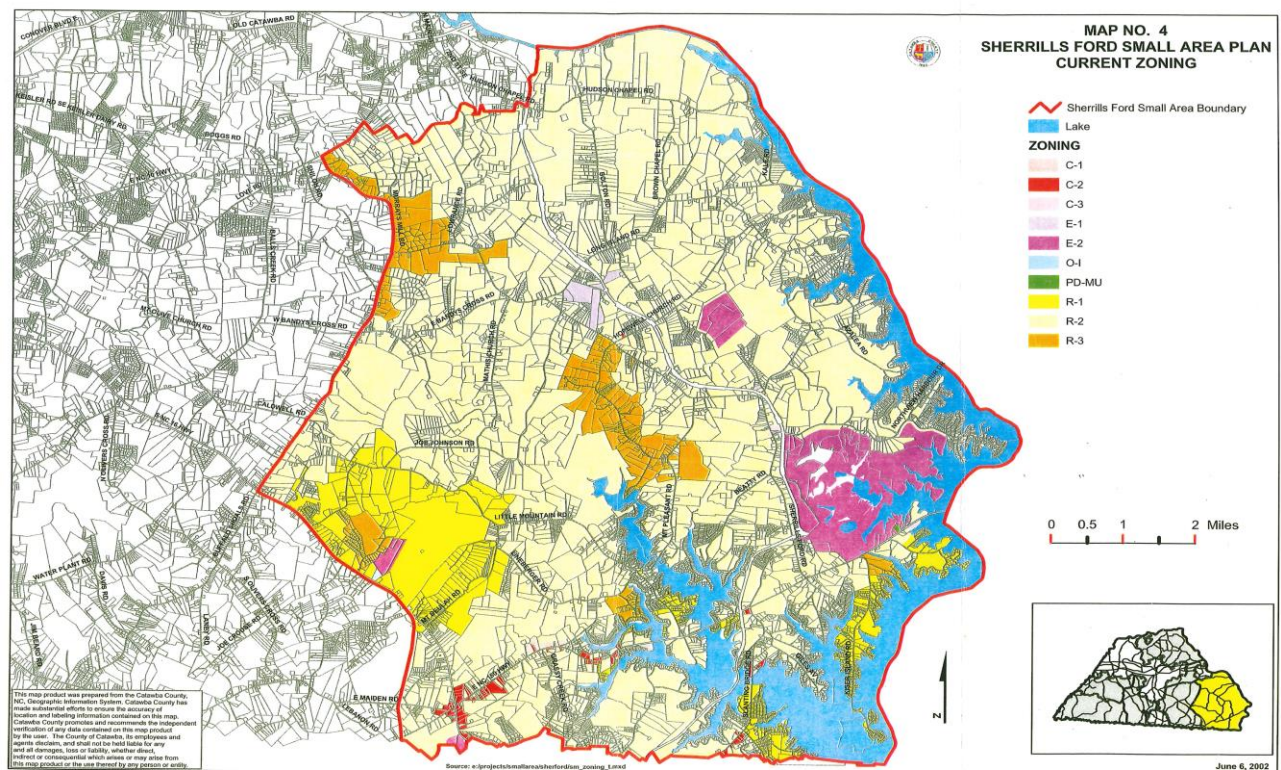
This District is significantly diverse in population, economics and land use patterns. Roads such as Sherrills Ford Road, Little Mountain Road and Hopewell Church Road are virtually untapped for new development. The majority of the Sherrills Ford district is rural. The commercial uses in the area tend to fit into one of three groups, small community stores that serve the local residents, larger businesses that serve the entire community, and highway businesses located on the major thoroughfares that serve the traveling public (see **Figure 3**. Current Land Use and **Figure 4**. Map 4, Current Zoning).



**Figure 3. Current Land Use – Map 3**



**Figure 4. Current Zoning – Map 4**

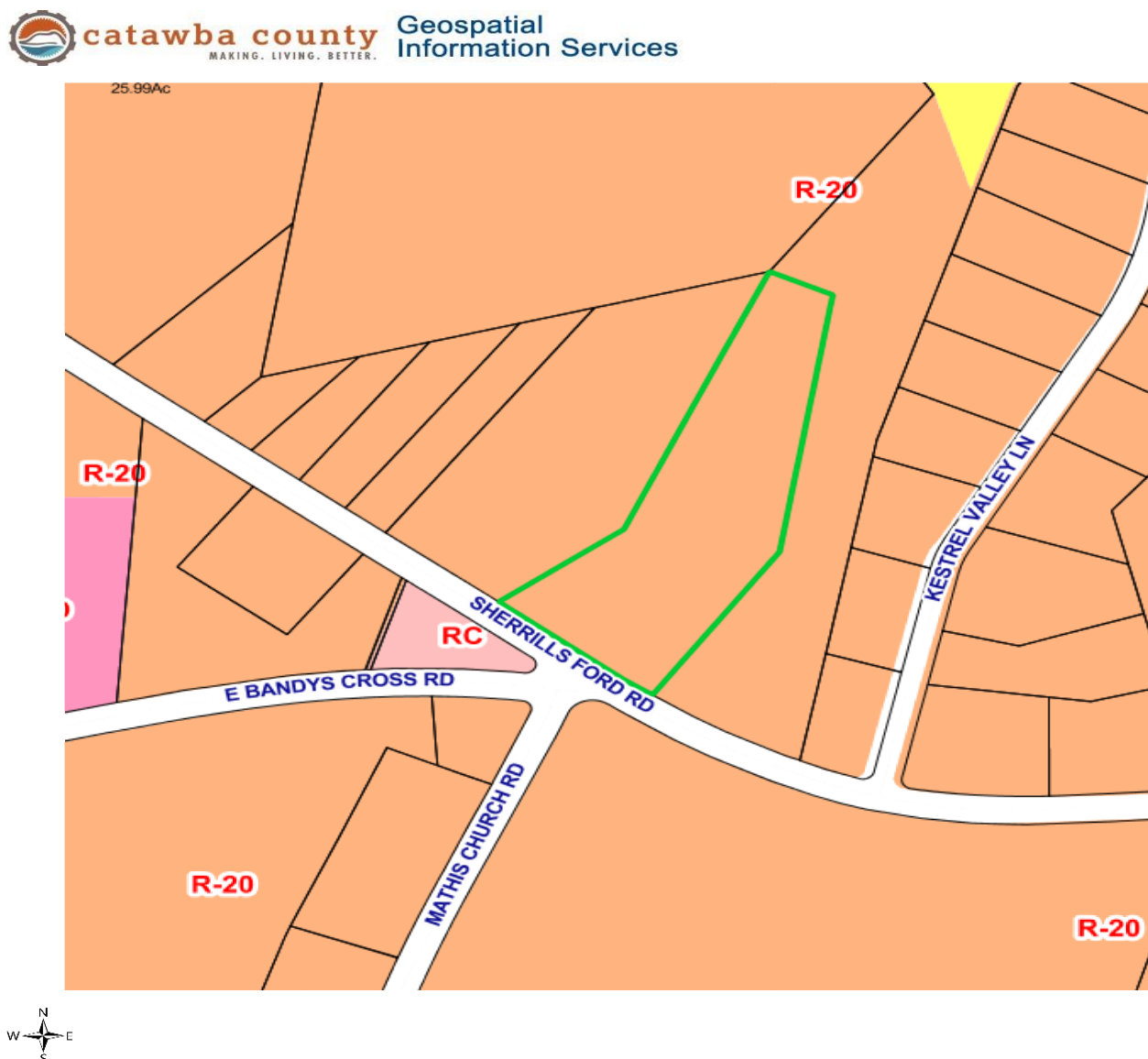


The smaller commercial nodes, like the existing gas station to the south of the subject property, are designed to serve the rural population. Other examples are found at the intersection of Highway 150 and Sherrills Ford Road, at the “Big V” at the intersection of Sherrills Ford Road and Long Island Road, and at the intersection of NC 16 and Buffalo Shoals Road, to name a few.

## **Zoning**

The Subject Property is presently zoned Residential District (R-20) which requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet (approx. 1/2 acre), and is considered a high-density “general use” residential district. Predominate uses in this district include single-family homes and agriculture.

**Figure 5. Existing Zoning Map**





The applicant proposes to subdivide the 4.69-acre parcel into two (2) lots; and then rezone the 1.48-acre parcel fronting Sherrills Ford Road from Residential District (R-20) to Rural Commercial-Conditional District (RC-CD) in order to provide a firm development proposal as defined with **Figure 10. Site Plan**.

The Rural Commercial (RC) district requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet and is considered a “general use” district. This district provides small areas for offices, services, and retail uses, all designed in scale with surrounding residential uses. The district regulations are designed to protect and encourage the transitional character of the district by permitting uses and building forms that are compatible with the rural areas of the county. This district establishes setback and area standards that are compatible with residential neighborhoods. The RC District permits a maximum leasable area of 15,000 square feet area per development. The applicant proposes construction of a retail establishment know as Dollar General, with approximately 9,100 gross square feet of building space on 1.48 acres.

### Location/Zoning

The property for which the rezoning request is being considered is identified by Parcel Identification Number 369901084445 in the Sherrills Ford Small Area Planning District, Catawba Township.

The surrounding parcels contain the zoning districts and uses described below.

**Figure 6. Subject Property & North** – The subject property and parcel to the north are presently zoned R-20 Residential District which requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet.



**Figure 7. South of Subject Property** – Directly to the south of the subject property lies an existing gas station which is zoned Rural Commercial District (RC).



**Figure 8. West of Subject Property** – Directly to the west of the subject property is an existing single-family residence currently zoned Residential District (R-20).





**Figure 9. East of Subject Property** – Directly to the east of the subject property lies vacant property currently zoned Residential District (R-20).



### Overlay District

The property is within the Watershed Protection Overlay (WS-IV) which establishes water sheds designed to protect sources of water supply for public water systems by regulating density and built upon area of non-residential and multi-family development projects. Non-residential development in the Protected Area is limited to 24% lot coverage if curb and gutter systems are installed or 36% lot coverage without curb and gutter systems. The proposed plan has been designed in accordance with the aforementioned lot coverage requirements and will include on-site parking for employees, parking landscaping, street trees, and vegetative screening on the west, east of the north side of the property.

### Utilities

Public water and sewer is available with the Town of Newton.

### Transportation

The proposed retail store will meet and maintain the adopted level of service standards for roadways, traffic safety patterns for ingress and egress. The applicant has been in contact with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). As such, the proposed access point has been moved to the west end of the property in order to get adequate sight distance (aligning with the paved driveway across the road).

## Land Use Plan

The Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan, adopted on February 17, 2003, serves as the current land use plan for this area. Map 5, titled "Future Land Use Recommendations," identifies a rural commercial node at the intersection East Bandys Cross Road, Sherrills Ford Road, and Mathis Church Road. The plan further states the node should include rural commercial nodes serving surrounding neighborhoods with limited commercial services and the nodes would comprise a maximum of 20 acres.

The subject property is currently within close proximity to other commercial nodes. Just south of the subject property is a gas station which is currently zoned Rural Commercial. Furthermore, on June 15, 2020 the Catawba County Board of Commissioners approved Rezoning 2020-05 for a rezoning from R-20 Residential to Rural Commercial-Conditional District (RC-CD) for a 7,200 square foot warehouse for Southeast Turf on property close to the subject property.

## Project Description

The applicant proposes construction of a retail establishment known as Dollar General, with approximately 9,100 square feet of building space on 1.48 acres (see **Figure 10, Site Plan**). The building will be oriented towards the south, facing Sherrills Ford Road. Parking will be located to the south and west of the structure. The proposed plan includes on-site parking for employees, parking lot landscaping, and vegetative screening.

The scale of the project will be that of a typical prototype Dollar General store. It will be one (1) story in height with a maximum height not to exceed twenty-two (22) feet, which includes any roof-type apparatus. Hours of operation will generally begin 8:00 am and close by 9:00 pm. These hours are based on consumer needs in the market. The hours of operation are conducive to general business hours with time in the evenings for local residents to shop for convenience needs.

Parking will be per the requirements of the Catawba County Land Development Code, Division 2 – Site Design. Specifically, Table 44-534-1 requires that Convenience Stores with or without gas pumps maintain four (4) parking space per 1,000 feet of gross floor area. The proposed 9,100 square foot retail establishment would require 36 parking spaces; and the site plan calls for 37 parking spaces which are to be located to the south and west of the retail building. The 12' x 18' dumpster enclosure will be located toward the back of the store, on the west side. This site will be served by a septic field located along Sherrills Ford Road just south of the proposed parking area. There will be no unordinary noise, smoke, glare, emissions, dust, vibration, or odors emitted from this use.

The proposed project will provide outdoor lighting. As such, the outdoor lighting fixtures will be installed in a manner to protect the street and neighboring properties from direct glare or hazardous interference of any kind.

**Figure 10. Proposed Site Plan**





## **Design Features**

As part of the requested rezoning to Rural Commercial-Conditional District, the proposed Dollar General will be designed to complement the existing rural-scale community and would match the architectural rendering provided herein.

**Figure 11. Proposed Façade – Photo 1**





**Figure 12. Proposed Façade – Photo 2**



### **Applicable Policies - Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan**

The Sherrills Ford area has experienced one of the highest growth rates in the County during the last decade. The Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan goes further by noting that the district is significantly diverse in population, economics and land use patterns. Roads such as Sherrills Ford Road, Little Mountain Road and Hopewell Church Road are virtually untapped for new development.

The following analysis of the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan is hereby provided in support of the request to subdivide the 4.69-acre parcel into two (2) lots; and then rezone the

1.48-acre parcel fronting Sherrills Ford Road from Residential District (R-20) to Rural Commercial-Conditional District (RC-CD).

#### LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **Diversity in Sherrills Ford.** Continue to recognize the significant variation in current and future land use patterns and growth demands in different parts of the Sherrills Ford Small Area.

Response: The requested rezoning enhances the current and future land use patterns in support of continued growth demands in this part of the Sherrills Ford Small Area. Additionally, the area residents will benefit from the location of this store with daily necessities and other common household items. This location may reduce vehicle trips and miles traveled on area roadways and reduce congestion by providing goods within a short driving distance to home.

2. **Balanced Land Use.** Establish a balanced land use pattern which includes a good mixture of housing, shopping, employment and civic uses (such as schools and religious facilities). Land devoted to residential, open space and agricultural uses should continue to make up the majority of all land.

Response: The requested rezoning further establishes a balanced land use pattern by providing rural commercial service to both the existing and future residential population within this part of the Sherrills Ford Small Area. The area residents will benefit from the location of this store with daily necessities and other common household items.

3. **Neighborhood Protection.** Protect and enhance the character of existing neighborhoods.

Response: The proposed Dollar General will be built in accordance with the enhanced architectural design features as defined with architectural renderings depicted within Figures 11 and 12.

4. **Retail Development.** Encourage development of well-planned integrated retail centers of varying sizes and functions where adequate traffic carrying capacity is available. Such centers should be limited to the intersection of major highways. Stand-alone strip commercial development between intersections should be discouraged in Sherrills Ford.



Response: The proposed Dollar General will serve the basic retail needs for the existing rural population. Additionally, the area residents will benefit from the location of this store with daily necessities and other common household items.

5. **“Livability” and Design Quality.** Encourage development designs that create a sense of place; distinct, cohesive, livable and walkable neighborhoods and communities; Promote quality of design in future public and private development which will contribute to the creation of a visually attractive environment and a distinct community identity.

Response: The proposed Dollar General will encourage development designs that create a sense of place; distinct, cohesive, livable and walkable neighborhoods and communities; Promote quality of design in future public and private development which will contribute to the creation of a visually attractive environment and a distinct community identity as depicted by the architectural renderings as defined within Figures 11 and 12.

6. **Screening and Buffering.** Ensure that incompatible land uses are separated by proper screening and buffering. Additionally, intensive public improvements should provide for the same protections.

Response: The project has been designed to include proper screening and buffering as defined within the Catawba County Land Development Code.

7. **Aesthetics.** Improve the aesthetic and functional character of development along the area's major corridors to create an attractive contemporary environment suitable for commercial, office/service, and higher-density residential use. To achieve this purpose, standards addressing signage, driveway access and buffering would be developed.

Response: The proposed Dollar General would be designed to complement the existing rural-scale community and would match the architectural renderings as defined within Figures 11 and 12. Upon consultation with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), it was recommended that the ingress and egress should be moved as close to the western property boundary for safety purposes. The proposed site plan has accommodated this request.

## LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### COMMERCIAL

1. Designate “rural commercial nodes” at the following intersections:

- Sherrills Ford Road/Long Island Road □ Sherrills Ford Road/E. Bandys’ Cross Road
- Hudson Chapel/Kale Road
- Long Island Road/Kale Road
- Slanting Bridge Road/Keistler Store Road
- Buffalo Shoals Road/Bandys Crossroad

Rural commercial nodes are designed to serve the surrounding neighborhood with limited commercial services. The maximum area would be 20 acres at the entire node.

Response: The requested rezoning seeks to accommodate the anticipated population expansion for this portion of Catawba County. Specifically, the request promotes an orderly growth pattern that efficiently respects the rural character of the community while reducing haphazard development. The goal here is to afford both existing and future residents the benefit of having daily necessities and other common household items nearby.

## TRANSPORTATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **Reduction of Trips.** Through job creation, commercial and mixed-use development, pedestrian improvements and other approaches, create an environment that facilitates a reduction in the number of vehicle trips per household and the number of miles traveled.

Response: The proposed Dollar General is a neighborhood store, which will offer daily necessities to surrounding residents. The individuals residing in those dwelling units depend on small-scale neighborhood commercial uses for daily goods. The purpose of the Rural Commercial-Conditional District is met as the proposed convenience store will serve as a small neighborhood service for the surrounding community.

The location of retail stores that provide such necessities in close proximity to residential areas is a great benefit in that residents in proximity are able to stop by the store on their way to and from home, which are known as ‘pass-by trips’. A higher percentage of pass-by trips equates to fewer long-segmented or multi-roadway vehicular trips. As residents are able to shop

for daily needs at a variety store such as a Dollar General, the demand for capacity on major thoroughfares are lessened. This is not only a benefit to local residents, but to the reduction of congestion on said roadways.

2. **Access Management.** The safety and functional capacity of major roadways should be maintained by strictly managing the access of new driveway and street connections.

Response: Upon consultation with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), it was recommended that the ingress and egress should be moved as close to the western property boundary for safety purposes. The proposed site plan has accommodated this request.

3. **Roadway Appearance.** Improve the visual image of the major roadways in Sherrills Ford through screening, buffering, landscaping, continual trash clean-up and right-of-way maintenance.

Response: The proposed Dollar General is designed to complement the existing rural-scale community as identified within the architectural renderings provided. Refer to proposed architectural renderings as defined within Figures 11 and 12.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **Economic Investment.** Facilitate and encourage new, clean, well planned economic investments in the Sherrills Ford Area.

Response: The requested rezoning seeks to accommodate the anticipated population expansion for this portion of Catawba County. Specifically, the request promotes an orderly growth pattern that efficiently respects the rural character of the community while reducing haphazard development. The goal here is to afford both existing and future residents the benefit of having daily necessities and other common household items nearby.

2. **Job Growth.** Provide more opportunities for a variety of job types in efforts to improve the employment base in Sherrills Ford and to reduce travel trips outside of the County.

Response: The requested rezoning could provide up to 10-20 more opportunities for a variety of job types; which further improves the employment base in Sherrills Ford region and reduces travel trips



outside of the county. Specifically, the request promotes an orderly growth pattern that efficiently respects the rural character of the community while reducing haphazard development. The goal here is to afford both existing and future residents the benefit of having daily necessities and other common household items nearby.

3. **Retail Opportunities.** In efforts to redirect a portion of day-to-day consumer spending to Catawba County and Sherrills Ford (from Iredell County, Charlotte, etc.) new retail development opportunities should be encouraged in Sherrills Ford.

Response: The proposed use is a neighborhood store, which will offer daily necessities to surrounding residents. The surrounding residents depend on small-scale neighborhood commercial uses for daily goods. This location may reduce vehicle trips and miles traveled on area roadways and reduce congestion by providing goods within a short driving distance to home.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Rural community commercial uses are directed to the intersections of the following roads:
  - Sherrills Ford Road/Long Island Road □ Sherrills Ford Road/E. Bandys' Cross Road
  - Hudson Chapel/Kale Road
  - Slanting Bridge Road/Keistler Store Road
  - Long Island Road/Kale Road
  - Buffalo Shoals Road/Bandys Crossroad

Response: The subject property is located at just north of the Sherrills Ford Road/East Bandys' intersections. The proposed use is a neighborhood store, which will offer daily necessities to surrounding residents. The surrounding residents depend on small-scale neighborhood commercial uses for daily goods. The purpose of the Rural Commercial District is met as the proposed convenience store will serve as a small neighborhood service for the surrounding community. The location of retail stores that provide such necessities in close proximity to residential areas is a great benefit in that residents in proximity are able to stop by the store on their way to and from home, which are known as 'pass-by trips'. A higher percentage of pass-by trips equates to fewer long-segmented or multi-roadway vehicular trips.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

The need for additional rural commercial nodes in this area of Catawba County is proven by the findings in this report. The proposed development of an approximately 9,100 square foot retail store on 1.48 acres located on Sherrills Ford Road just above the intersection of East Bandys Cross Road and Mathis Church Road will be compatible with the surrounding residential development. A rural commercial node at this location would help meet the development needs of the growing community. The proposed Dollar General will aid in the reduction of citizens drive time and alleviate additional congestions on surrounding roadways.

The agreed upon RC-CD conditions and architecture strive to preserve the rural character of the area. No adverse impacts will be generated such as noise, smoke, exhaust, emissions, dust, adverse lighting, vibrations, or odors that would be detrimental to the existing surrounding uses or would otherwise disturb the quiet enjoyment of adjacent residents.

The proposed Dollar General store is consistent with and not in conflict with the Guiding Principles and Plan Recommendations of the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan. It also complies with the adopted requirements of the Catawba County Land Development Code. The development of this store will not create a condition that will negatively impact the surrounding or area uses over time and is deemed compatible to surrounding uses. In conclusion, the Compatibility Analysis hereby supports the requested rezoning and finds that:

- The proposed rezoning is beneficial to the county and surrounding area;
- The proposed rezoning is consistent with the surrounding area and the adopted Guiding Principles and Plan Recommendations of the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan;
- The proposed rezoning will have minimal effect on service provisions, including adequacy or availability of facilities and services, and are compatible with existing and planned service areas;
- The proposed rezoning promotes the public welfare and will be consistent with the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan.
- The property has close proximity to other commercial property located at the intersection of East Bandys Road, Sherrills Ford Road, and Mathis Church Road.
- The specific plan and use of the proposal help maintain the rural character through the design of the building.

With the submittal of this analysis, the owner/applicant hereby submits a rezoning application for the subject property; and that this Compatibility Analysis be included as support for the aforementioned rezoning.