**The PEIRCE REPORT**

**Shaping a shared future**

Region's signature: Anchored by the NationsBank and First Union towers, Charlotte's fast-changing skyline symbolizes banking and business, and boasts big new projects. In the last decade much has been added: office towers, hotels, a new convention center, Carolina Stadium, the North Carolina Blumenthal Performing Arts Center and U-277. For a 1984 view of the same area, see page 15.

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Who will lead? And to where?

**Challenges to the region**

- **Accept that the bank CEOs and their friends no longer control the region. Future leadership becomes everyone's job.**
- **Focus on the big problems for the region's future: Quality of life, work force, traffic, crime, equity.**
- **Celebrate Charlotte's ascension among the ranks of America's leading cities.**
- **Cultivate and protect the region's special, open, "can-do" culture. Work to accommodate "small advantage."**
- **Integrate the thousands of newcomers into the region's life.**
- **Think about regional services beyond Mecklenburg boundaries.**
- **The public - not developers - should plan streets, lands and neighborhoods.**
- **Recognize the age of the citistrate has dawned. Reduce adulation of the fast-growing Mecklenburg and outlying counties. Focus on a common future.**
- **As the old power brokers die or retire, the region's leadership must come from its own citizens - city and suburban - working together. Tap citizens, youth, universities. Build trust and expect the media to help.**
- **Recognize upturn is the region's signature piece for the future. Make it as welcoming for people as for big buildings.**
- **Support the region's other upturns - Concord, Monroe, Rock Hill, Davidson and Gastonia, for example - that the real character of town life is preserved. Use local zoning and other powers to make sure the downtowns become a focus of development.**

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The PEIRCE REPORT

Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson, nationally known writers on cities and city growth, have taken an in-depth look at the Charlotte region, as they have done previously in 10 other cities. This is a reprint of their four-part series.

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**Leadership:** The old-style, parochial business leadership is fading. It's time for the region's citizens to take charge. Pages 1, 2, 3, 4

**Growth:** Who's leading the region's growth? Developers, financiers and highway engineers, that's who. Is that what citizens want? Pages 5, 6, 7

**Workforce:** The grum waslind of the region's prosperity: too many low-skilled people. Pages 12, 13, 16

**Neighborhoods:** Few cities in America are as impressive as Charlotte in their efforts to fight crime and poverty. But what's the next step? Pages 9, 10, 11
Uptown: Symbol of the region

By HEAL PEACE

When they say "uptown," they are thinking of the core of the region — where the streets are the main thoroughfares, the buildings are the tallest, and the retail is the most upscale. The area is the heart of Charlotte, the city where the elite live and work.

The area is known for its historic homes and businesses, as well as its modern skyscrapers and shopping centers. It is also home to some of the city's largest corporate headquarters.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular restaurants and bars, as well as its best parks and museums. It is a thriving neighborhood with a rich history and a bright future.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular festivals and events, including the Charlotte International Auto Show and the Charlotte Motor Speedway.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular neighborhoods, including Dilworth, Myers Park, and SouthPark. These neighborhoods are known for their walkability and their access to the city's many amenities.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular parks and green spaces, including SouthPark Mall, which is one of the largest shopping centers in the United States.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular museums and cultural landmarks, including the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra and the Charlotte Visitors Bureau.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular universities and colleges, including the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and the Charlotte Business School.

The area is also home to some of the city's most popular sports teams, including the Carolina Panthers and the Charlotte Hornets.
**The PEIRCE REPORT:**

**Shaping a shared future**

**Small-town character:**

The city of Charlotte, North Carolina, is known for its mix of modern and historic architecture, a popular destination for visitors and residents alike. The city is situated in the Piedmont region of the Carolinas and is the largest city in the state. Charlotte is the commercial and cultural center of the Charlotte metropolitan area, which is home to over 2 million people.

**Downtowns with character:**

Downtown Charlotte is a vibrant and bustling area, with a mix of modern skyscrapers and historic buildings. The city is home to several major corporations, including Bank of America and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

**Empty downtowns:**

A view of Monroe Avenue, a major downtown street, shows a lack of people and activity. The area is quiet and empty, with few signs of life.

**Shedding development:**

A view of Monroe Street shows a lack of development and the area appears to be in need of revitalization.

**Area cities distinct, can choose to remain so:**

By ALEX MARSHALL

Steady to the Charlotte Observer

With the downtowns of the cities surrounding Charlotte—Mecklenburg, Rock Hill, Concord, Davidson, or Gaston, for example—and you'll find something unusual: Charlotte lacks these cities' character, a sense of history, a sense of people. They have broad, straight streets where 10-story office buildings perch on sidewalks and some of the finest restaurants in the state.

Charlotte may have the Panthers, flashy attractions and a lot of money. But its downtowns look toward the street, once the rise of the financial district, and the towns have a sense of history and people. There are also the places that are in need of revitalization.

Charlotte, like many other cities, has had a hard time attracting businesses or people to live there. Some of the reasons for this are the high cost of living, the lack of public transportation, and the lack of affordable housing.

But outside Charlotte, cities like Gaston County, York County, and Union County have had more success in attracting businesses and people. These cities have focused on improving infrastructure, providing incentives for businesses to relocate, and offering affordable housing options.

**The Charlotte citiaste:**

This series is based on a simple premise: Charlotte and its sister communities are one region, one community. Some of these cities have already recognized this fact, like Mecklenburg County, which is the population and income heavyweight. But in no way is it the only guy on the block. The area is home to over 100 cities and towns, each with their own unique character and identity.

However, the Charlotte region is more than just its cities and towns. The area is home to several major universities, such as the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and is a hub for medical and technology industries.

**The region:**

The region is made up of three main areas: the Charlotte metropolitan area, the Rock Hill metropolitan area, and the York County area. Each of these areas has a unique identity and is home to a variety of industries and businesses.

**The future:**

The future of the Charlotte region is bright, with new developments and initiatives in the works. However, there are still challenges to overcome, such as affordable housing and transportation.

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**By ALEX MARSHALL**

**Steady to the Charlotte Observer**

Charlotte's downtowns need to be revitalized and transformed into vibrant, walkable neighborhoods with a mix of residential, commercial, and cultural uses. The city should focus on improving infrastructure, providing incentives for businesses to relocate, and offering affordable housing options.

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The Peirce Report

Shaping a shared future

About the Peirce Report

If you're curious how urban writer Norman Perie came to study Charlotte, you have several people to thank – or, if you wish, blame.

Peirce, 53, is a nationally syndicated writer whose columns have appeared in newspapers across the country. He's also the author of The Peirce Report, a weekly newspaper column that focuses on the city of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Perie, who was born and raised in Charlotte, has been writing about the city for more than 20 years. He has written for such publications as The Charlotte Observer, The Charlotte Post, and The Charlotte News Journal.

Perie has been a fixture in Charlotte's media scene for nearly three decades. He has covered everything from local politics to the city's economy, and he has won numerous awards for his work. He is known for his no-nonsense, straightforward style and his ability to distill complex issues into easily digestible pieces.

The Peirce Report is published weekly and focuses on the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. It covers a wide range of topics, from local politics and business to cultural events and lifestyle issues.

The Peirce Report is read by a wide audience, from local residents to national readers who are interested in Charlotte's growth and development. The report is available online, in print, and through email newsletters.

The Peirce Report is a valuable resource for anyone interested in Charlotte, whether they are new to the city or long-time residents. It provides a unique perspective on the city's past, present, and future.
Put people in charge of region’s future

By NEAL PEIRCE AND CURTIS JOHNSON

The Charlotte region is like a prairie-seeded region — fast-growing and full of promise. Population is soaring. Uptown Charlotte has become a globally recognized financial center. The airport has flights to hundreds of cities. The surrounding cities boast new economic development. Yet, how do we build on this in small ways?

As Charlotte expands, many people believe the Charlotte region is destined to be a formless, chaotic region, growing without vision or plan.

But like a tree, the Charlotte region has roots — and those roots are visible. The city of Charlotte and the Charlotte Regional Partnership have been working on plans for the future. That’s the vision that will guide the region.

One of Charlotte’s sunny elected conserva-
tive politicians told us: “Anytime a plan
takes a vision, it gets nervous. It means taxes will go up.”

Yet, great regions don’t just happen; they are planned. They are a result of vision and inspiration, just like the great corporations and universities, or a Columbia or the New World of New York planning based on the moon.

Again, and again, we’re told that to plan the physical growth of the Charlotte region — especially across county and state lines — was not at all folly. The very thought of planning was held forth; people considered it futile, or socialist, or perhaps even worse, anti-market.

We encountered some unconv
cersial developers, such as Jim Good and Bob Sherry, who believed in the value of South Boulevard. And Charlotte has its share of the usual development plans, Bob Mendenhall’s Denny Bubba and Dandelion’s Tom Kane. But that’s fine! A thin voice against people who say typical suburbia is cheaper, is more affordable and new subdivisions are “safe,” place where sidewalks can run across wide driveways.

One developer even admitted: “Char-
lotte is poised for more growth and more land. And it can be done at a little less, though. Today it’s easy to charge to get out by the freeway and start in another development.”

For some of the new conservative
era’s politicians, office, even zoning —

Please see Growth page 8

Challenges to the Charlotte region

The region’s people — not just highway engineers, private subdivision builders or shopping center developers — should take control of how the region grows.

UNCC should open a special center to let citizens use sophisticated computer projection and simulation technology, to illustrate choices on how needs will be

ed, town centers constructed, residential areas fixed. Developers would have to take their proposals here first. Computers could analyze effects on traffic, jobs, the urban environment. The media should publicize the studies, so the whole region can take part in the debate.

Head architecture planner Michael Gattis

he says decision time is now for the region to grow coherently, not sprawl. Ties to the city of Charlotte with strong growth corridors and protect the land in between.

Heear warning signals from elsewhere — from Denver, Little Rock, Idaho, New Jersey, and a ringing manifesto from the Bank of America in California — about the staggering costs of unchannelled, uniform sprawl. Emulate the Portland, One, regional planning process, in which thousands of citizens get a chance to make clear choices among growth alternatives.

End the region’s constant bickering over road and transit planning. Inspire the four metropolitan planning organizations get their act together.

Build transit ways along major highway corridors for exclusive use by buses, vans, jitneys — any legitimate, multi passenger service. Encourage private transit providers. Try a regional gas tax to pay for improvements.

THE PEIRCE REPORT

Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson, nationally known writers on cities and city growth, have taken an in-depth look at the Charlotte region, as they have done previously in 10 other cities. This is the second in their four-part series.

Inside

Will the Charlotte region repeat its traffic and an
evolution nightmare of Los Angeles and Houston? Too few people recognize the need for planning and acting to sustain the region’s best qualities.
Time to tally costs of sprawl

By NEAL PERCE JENNINGS
special to The Observer


"No," said Michael Scott, an executive vice president for the region, "there's a lot of sprawl out there." In fact, sprawl is increasing at an alarming rate.

"In some places, yes," said Michael Lewis, business and government development manager for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission, "we find out residents' priorities for downtowns. A home survey, followed by a more intense survey of a third of the respondents, followed by a mall survey of businesses and other groups. We found surprisingly widespread support for better parks, bicycle trails, streets, access and libraries." Our plan is to support downtowns as the centers of a family-oriented community.

"It's a question of how the people like them," Scott said. "If we can't keep them along the roads, how will the people like them? It's a question of how we can keep them along the roads, how we can keep them along the roads, how we can keep them along the roads."

The answer is: Yes. But the problem is that these developments are not sustainable. They are not environmentally friendly or economically efficient or socially effective.

"We fear that too few people recognize the need for planning— and acting— to maintain the region's economic viability," Lewis said.

In the headlong rush to consume today's opportunities, who has noticed that new commercial developments leave behind empty stores, abandoned shopping centers, and middle-class neighborhoods scarred by ever-widening roads carrying people to the next ring of development farther out? It is easy to overlook the effects of Katrina or the Atlanta-style inner-city social decay. It is easy to see too much of the world where only nominal businesses survive. It is easy to get used to boarded-up windows of some past era for large houses on large lots, as though we had only big families to house and nobody limits on limit or memory.

"It's not as easy as when the bell comes down, across the country, a water-saving call has sounded. People are demanding, and getting, a fuller, safer, and more sustainable community.

In New York, the city's tax rate has reached 20 cents in the last 10 years, resulting in commercial areas. It is easy to overlook the effects of Katrina or the Atlanta-style inner-city social decay. It is easy to see too much of the world where only nominal businesses survive. It is easy to get used to boarded-up windows of some past era for large houses on large lots, as though we had only big families to house and nobody limits on limit or memory.

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"It's not as easy as when the bell comes down, across the country, a water-saving call has sounded. People are demanding, and getting, a fuller, safer, and more sustainable community.
On the road to a nightmarish future

To avoid it: Plan, use your corridors and be creative

By NEAL PERCONE and CURTIS JOHNSON
Special to The Observer

Traffic congestion in the Charlotte region is a given. But four separate manpower planning alternatives now on the drawing board could speed up your commute, cut down on pollution, and make life easier for you.

"No basketball team wins with five centers or five guards," says Gallis. All the region's cities make the team, bringing different assets.

But it's equally critical to see the region's form. Unlike uncrowned Houston or out-of-control Atlanta, the Charlotte region has five natural corridors stretching in its historic ring cities. These woman's Valentine's Day-which makes the team leader, bringing different assets. Gallis emphasizes the new reality—people live where they want and work all over the region. Getting in and out of the city, not to a particular town, is the real achievement.

The Gospel according to Michael Gallis

In an office walk-up on South Tryon Street is an architect whose slides and shelves burst with visions of the region's future. Michael Gallis with slides and booklets of comput- er-generated maps and no-nonsense explanations of how economy, land use and transportation are linked, tells anyone who'll listen that decision-time is now.

With the enthusiasm of a Billy Graham, Gallis shows the choices still available, if citizens act. He explains the inevitability of $8 billion or $8 billion of public investment in transportation over the next 11 to 20 years. The real issue is how, and what results to expect.

The Gallis Gospel is straightforward: Capitalize on the natural corridors radiating from Charlotte and the region's cities become the historic cities of today. Gallis recalls consulting for Rock Hill, helping it work out where it fits in, and stimulating the corridors and rings of the entire region. Growth was moving out from Charlotte, while it was also growing in ring cities such as Rock Hill.

Rock Hill has since shown dramatically how powerfully positioned smaller cities are—capable of building excellent life styles as well as tying their economic fortunes to the Charlotte citistate.

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Harper & Blaser/Bell

Home-grown prophet: Charlotte planner Michael Gallis at the intersection of I-77 and I-485 south of Charlotte, a key juncture for natural corridors that radiate out to the region's historic ring cities.

The region

By RICK McCULLOUGH

Charlotte's ring cities are at last looking at each other as neighbors, instead of fighting over customers. The result: a regional feel to areas that have been cut off by interstates for years, like U.S. 74 to Monroe, I-485 north to Concord and Spartanburg and southwest to Gastonia, and I-77 south to Rock Hill and north toward Blowing Rock.

Gallis intones high-quality development along the corridors and, especially, near the ring cities, rather than a few million more pounds of concrete roads crossing the region.

Few American regions have a home-grown prophet with such a clear and practical vision. Gallis' concept may be the only means of giving manageable form and long-term affordability to the growth of the Charlotte citistate.

Neil Percone and Curtis Johnson

Where Charlotte may be headed: Could the smog-fog blighted urban paradise of Southern California be the future? The Charlotte region is imperative. "We're thinking of this country generally pay more than 50% of the cost of providing highways, streets, bridges and traffic facilities. Paying a few extra cents more a gallon seems a fair bargain for cutting the overall cost of keeping up with ever-increasing traffic influxes," he said.

What's in an open mind? What about creative ways to move more people where they want to be at a cost less than the cost of providing highways, streets, bridges and traffic facilities. Paying a few extra cents more a gallon seems a fair bargain for cutting the overall cost of keeping up with ever-increasing traffic influxes, Gallis said.

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Put people in charge

Growth

Continued from page 5

The Charlotte Observer
September 17, 1995

Where are the parks?

Failure to set aside common community spaces has left the Charlotte region one of the most park-poor in America. The Marsh Road area south of uptown is an example of how more open space has been developed in recent years. The photo at right shows Silvern Farms in 1981; today the area is a battalion of single family homes and condominiums.

The Peirce Report

Shaping a shared future

The Peirce Report, based on the following premise: Charlotte and its surrounding communities are one region, one economy, one environmental area, one place. It is far too well defined and understood at the moment: "A region" consisting of one or more of different cultural or historical areas surrounded by cities and towns which have a shared identification, function as a single zone for trade, commerce, and communication, and are characterized by social, economic and environmental interdependence.

The Peirce Report is written by nationally syndicated urban area expert Charles Peirce. It began with the question: Should the City of Charlotte be separated from the Charlotte Observer, then written by Charles Peirce, UNC Charlotte's Urban Institute. The report was the result of months of research, which included a thorough analysis of the region's history, economy, population, and future prospects.

The Peirce Report was authorized by the Charlotte Observer, and was published in a series of articles in the paper. The report was written by Charles Peirce, and was widely praised for its comprehensive analysis of the region's challenges and opportunities.

The Peirce Report was the result of a year-long research project, which included interviews with over 100 experts, and analysis of a wide range of data. The report was praised for its clear and accessible writing, and its thorough examination of the region's issues.

The Peirce Report was widely read, and was widely praised for its clear and accessible writing. The report was credited with helping to advance the region's agenda for growth and development, and was widely credited with helping to shape the region's future.
PART IV

Neighborhoods

Build on success and come together

By NEAL PEIRCE AND CURTIS JOHNSON
Written by the Observer

Picture this: A beep sounds as a drug deal goes down in Charlotte's Belmont neighborhood. But the beep isn't the doorknob. It's from a neighbor-
hood-based leader to the officer on the heat of the ticketing arm of law enforcement. The officer has been getting local传来 this beep, and now he's called to the scene. He arrives almost at once and makes an arrest.

In another neighborhood, a city hall building—a place where the people of the police, sanitation, neighborhood, neighborhood development, and planning departments sit and talk with neighbors in an effort to stop code violations, curb family violence, improve street lights and police services. The level of interaction between the neighborhood and the city is at its highest.

The Charlotte region has a long way to go in fighting crime and poverty. But it is on the right track—something few other American cities can say.

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Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson, nationally known writers on cities and city growth, have taken an in-depth look at the Charlotte region, as they have done previously in 10 other cities. This is the fourth in their part-series, Reports of the series will be available beginning Wednesday. Send $1.50 for shipping and handling to: Editorial Dept., The Charlotte Observer, Box 3630, Charlotte, N.C. 28209-3630.

Challenges to the region

- Recognize that few cities in America have as much going for them as troubled neighborhoods are doing. From community policing to targeted neighborhood programs, some of the nation's top cities are "Taking Back Our Neighborhoods" to the city's Congress and other grass-roots groups, the record is one of achievement— and worth building on.
- Support growing indigenous neighborhood leadership to make sure the programs are sustainable.
- Provide leadership training for neighborhood leaders, like the model program of the St. Paul Companies.
- Mobilize banks and other community groups to help neighborhoods capitalize on their benefits by finding new businesses, from cleaning and catering to computer data entry services.
- Use tools such as the Children's Services Network to see what is really working and what is not, and must funding go to the proven, effective models.
- Increase government use of federal dollars to help "backfill" what they cut out of state.
- Increase such ideas as all-day schooling to help "backfill" what they cut out of trouble.
- Introduce computers into low-income neighborhoods, with "supervisors" to help amateurs. Use computers to educate and to show young people the real he-job awaiting them if they fail high school with a good mastery of the basics.
- Cover the news media to help. Telethon shows should moderate their emphasis on crime news. Regional newspapers should design civic journalism experiments to improve the live of low-income citizens in their counties.
- Recognize the power of churches, and support the good they do. Each congregation in the region should develop a program for long-term social reconstruction.

Stop the killing: A vigil to remember 1994 murder victims

Robin Brown and her son, Jarel, held lit candles at Fairview Homes in Charlotte. Jarel's father, Jerry Lanier, was one of eight murder victims last year. The vigil was organized by the Rev. James Barnett, founder of Stop the Killing.
City is challenging crime, poverty

What's next?
Continued from page 5

The recent decision by the City Council to go ahead with a complete review of the police department has raised a number of questions about how the department will be structured, funded, and staffed. The review is expected to take several months, and the city is seeking input from the public on how to improve police operations. The city is also considering the possibility of outsourcing some police services, such as traffic enforcement and community policing, to private contractors. The review is expected to be completed by the end of the year, and the city will then move forward with implementing any changes that are recommended.
BUILD ON SUCCESS, AND COME TOGETHER

Continued from preceding page.


Floods of problem: Some of Charlotte’s poorest communities have struggled with neighborhood issues for years. File photo by GLEN DEWEY

 Why care? All will pay for problems left to fester

By NEAL PEIRCE
And CURTIS JOHNSON

W hy is it important that the Charlotte City Council deal with neighborhood issues? What do they do? Who pays? We take a look at the Congressional District 9 Ward, the northeast corridor, which has been plagued by crime and poverty.

The neighborhood has taken a beating in recent years, with numerous incidents of crime and poverty. The neighborhood is contiguous with the City of Charlotte, and the city has attempted to address some of the issues.

However, the neighborhood continues to struggle, and the City Council has been slow to act.

For more information, please contact the City Council or visit their website. 

The Charlotte Observer  Sept. 17 – Oct. 9, 1995

About the Peirce Report

The Peirce Report is a weekly newsletter that covers Charlotte, North Carolina. It is produced by the Charlotte Observer and is available online at www.charlotteobserver.com. The report is written by Neal Peirce, a veteran journalist and author, and is distributed to more than 50,000 subscribers. The report covers a wide range of topics, including politics, business, culture, and community issues.

The Charlotte Observer  Sept. 17 – Oct. 9, 1995

About the Page

This page is from the Charlotte Observer, a daily newspaper in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Charlotte Observer is owned by the Charlotte Observer Company and is distributed to more than 200,000 homes in the Charlotte area. The newspaper covers local news, national news, sports, business, and entertainment.

The Charlotte Observer  Sept. 17 – Oct. 9, 1995

The Charlotte Observer  Sept. 17 – Oct. 9, 1995

About the Image

This image is of a page from the Charlotte Observer, a daily newspaper in Charlotte, North Carolina. The page is a black-and-white photograph of a cityscape, with buildings and streets visible. The image is not related to the content of the page and is not relevant to the discussion of neighborhood issues.
The series
SEPT. 17 Leadership: The old style, patriarchal business leadership is failing. It’s time for the region’s CEOs to take charge.
SEPT. 24 Work force: The grim underside of the region’s prosperity for fairly low-skilled people.
NEXT SUNDAY Neighborhoods: Few cities in America are as im- precise as Charlotte in their efforts to right crime and poverty. But what’s the next step?
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 11 Conference: Neal Peris and Curtis Johnson will be keynote speakers at the annual fall conference of UNC Charlotte’s Urban Institute. The confer- ence is on “Community/Community.” For more, call 704-786-6450 or visit www.unc.edu.
The Peirce Report
Shaping a shared future
What happens as more and more industries eliminate low-skill jobs? It’s no stretch to imagine researchers designing robots to work the poultry production line. The only jobs left will be for a handful of highly-skilled technicians who control the robots.

Connecting Charlotte: Larry Howard, a staff member at the Anita Stroud Center in Fairview Homes, helps 8-year-old Jackquelyn Howser on the CharlotteWeb network. The system is available in 25 public library branches. In 11 recreation centers, as well as in neighborhood centers, boys and girls clubs, the Charlotte Chamber and homeless shelters. Eventually it will be in 74 publicly available access sites.

Training
Constructed from page 15
Work would be faster than clerks can tell the story. The price of getting by, not meeting anything, is to get tied to the revolution. We believe the image is set in the Charlotte region to harness this power. It could be done through the Charlotte Web’s community-computer network. Through the state’s N.C. Information Highway. And through the Charlotte Web’s concern for the greater Charlotte region.”

CharlotteWeb’s: A taste of what’s ahead
By NEAL PERIS
And CURTIS JOHNSON
Granted is a $24,800-
A cornerstone of electronic wiz- ards this week is a presentation of CharlotteWeb. A personal computer that can run on any 8-bit computer, the CharlotteWeb system is available in 25 public library branches. It is also available in 11 recreation centers, as well as in neighborhood centers, boys and girls clubs, the Charlotte Chamber and homeless shelters. Eventually it will be in 74 publicly available access sites.

Energizing force: “Here’s an opportunity — to give a hand to people, without means to learning into the next generation,” says Steve Snow, director of CharlotteWeb. “Computers should be a real energizing force for neighborhood, economic, civic development.”

The prime example may be creating on-line access for the Anita Stroud Center at the Fairview Homes public housing complex. The Web’s interactive games have been tested by 4th-6th graders in Woodlawn Elementary. With a special kind of software originally designed by UNC, the center now teaches students how to use the system to “an old 286 PC.” In the future, they would be linked by a network connected via a phone line to Char- lotteWeb’s “West” and all the 286s have graphical Internet access using one phone line and modems.

At a homeless shelter for families, the web now resurged yesterday’s household — “286” model PCs — for a similar multilink, line, single-line, text only. Business uses are also available.

Third, CharlotteWeb is training an aggressive new generation of people for jobs, which can be tied to the revolution. To do this, it must be taught to make. It has offered to register in large a big, a big, the CenterWeb project of the Center- Carolinas Carolina Foundation. The goal is to link 100 people from each of four counties to register in classes, and provide them with even more expenses and computers, with training in the community, to train new and more computer-savvy people, to train more people.

If computer literacy and access is to be a passport to economic security and to full partici- pation in the community, then leaving out a big chunk of the population is amounts to saying some people are less worthy than others.

The series

SEPT. 17 Leadership: The old style, patriarchal business leadership is failing. It’s time for the region’s CEOs to take charge.
SEPT. 24 Work force: The grim underside of the region’s prosperity for fairly low-skilled people.

Today work force: The grim underside of the region’s prosperity for fairly low-skilled people.

NEXT SUNDAY Neighborhoods: Few cities in America are as im- precise as Charlotte in their efforts to right crime and poverty. But what’s the next step?

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 11 Conference: Neal Peris and Curtis Johnson will be keynote speakers at the annual fall conference of UNC Charlotte’s Urban Institute. The confer- ence is on “Community/Community.” For more, call 704-786-6450 or visit www.unc.edu.

Total employment in the region

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SCHOOLS

SCHOLARSHIPS

Shaping a shared future

The Parcels Report is written by nationally syndicated urban writer Ned Peiro and his partner, Curtis Johnson. They were invited to Charlotte by The Observer, the Foundation for the Carolinas and Charlotte's Urban Institute.

In 1893, the Foundation for the Carolinas, whose col-
umn runs regularly in The Observer, has written 10 Parcels Reports for other cities.

Johnson, 52, of St. Paul, is a former execu-
tive director of the Twin Cities Citizens
League and chairs the Metropolitan Coun-
dil of Minneapolis-St. Paul, a planning
agency.

They spent a week in June interviewing some 100 residents. Also on the interview team were Alice Marsh, a writer for The Virginian- Pilot of Norfolk, and Laflia Bass, a writer from other par-
columbus pacts.

They brought back a report from Minneapolis that raised the money to pay for the report that makes the case for public savings being a moral mission. The report, the Carolinas Partnership, the Bank

The Foundation for the Carolinas, the Carnegie
Foundation, First National Bank, Southern Bell Telephone Co., Washington

Bankers have not spoken in the reporting and
and did not see the articles before publica-
tion. The writers did not write for the donors.

The Gardner-White House of Rock
The Concord Tribune, The Enquirer-

The Parcels Report was edited by editor-
time news around the region.

The pages were designed by Perspective art director Ring. Steve Johnson was

copy editor.

The Parcels Report is written by nationally

Shaping a shared future

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Deserted streets: what does the distinctive flavor of Charlotte's cityscape imply?

'There must be some better options'

Robert Smith, Charlotte Observer

I have lived on the same road for more than 6 years, and I have noticed a significant change in the way people drive. I have noticed that there is a lot of traffic on this road, and it is getting worse every year. It is getting hard for me to get to work on time, and I am considering moving to a different neighborhood. I think the city needs to do something about this issue. What do you think is the root cause of this problem, and what can be done to address it?

Henry Watson, Charlotte Observer

I agree with Robert Smith. The traffic on this road is becoming a major issue for me as well. I think the city should invest in better public transportation options, such as buses and trains, to reduce the number of cars on the road. Additionally, they should consider implementing carpooling incentives to encourage people to carpool to work. What do you think about these solutions?

The Charlotte Observer

Please provide your insights and suggestions on how the city of Charlotte can address the traffic issues on this road.
Managing menace of uncontrolled growth

When a city doesn't manage its growth, it abdicates its key responsibility — and leaves taxpayers to pay the costs of resulting squallor.

BY DAVID WALTERS

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte is schizophrenia about growth. To most local politicians, and commonplace to local business leaders, growth is good, the much-acclaimed "American capitalism" — some call it impact on growth or development issues, or just want to escape the consequences of bad policies. And we rarely consider ordinary citizens, growth represents the same thing: a protest against a city's insensitivities, as real estate agents are known to say. Growth is a political football, a means of occupying the public's consciousness and ignoring the city's institutions and families. And in the end, it is merely a self-defeating strategy. The city of Charlotte is stuck in a cycle of growth that keeps buying more real estate and collecting more and more commercial dollars, and we are left with the same old problems.

The city of Charlotte is stuck in a cycle of growth that keeps buying more real estate and collecting more and more commercial dollars, and we are left with the same old problems.

Charlotte's pride, but not the whole story. The city has to plan its growth and development to be successful. The city needs to consider the needs of its people and the future. The city needs to create a coherent plan for growth and development that considers the needs of all residents, not just those who can afford to pay the high prices.

The city needs to consider the needs of all residents, not just those who can afford to pay the high prices.
Future rides on lifting job skills

By NEAL PIERCE and CURTIS JOHNSON

One would think an eye if a Hollywood producer filmed a movie showing a group of Charlotte bankers gathering around a polished mahogany table, discussing whether this is the week to buy bonds.

No one did. A survey reported it within 15 miles of that mahogany table, "50 Minutes" were shooting footage of hundreds of laid-off workers filing into a dank building to spend the day experiencing body parts of dead chickens.

This truck contrast, a climate both go-go-global and stunted in enterprising labor, can’t exist. And it won’t.

Yet Charlotte region boasts school system’s economic and entrepreneurial vigor. Most are in silos, skilled of not employed, but the region has too many people with too few skills.

What happens as more and more industries eliminate low-skilled jobs? It’s not enough to imagine at this moment, researchers say, because — maybe millions in Ohio — designing robots to work in the poultry production line. The only jobs left will be for people who learned at a young age how to work with machines who control the robots.

In this global revolution, Charlotte — which allows to the ahead of the curve — has a dramatic and dangerous mission to overcome. And it’s a mission oddly dissolved in the region’s public debate.

That’s because in many ways, the region seems to be succeeding blissfully.

Five U.S. metropolitan areas have as dynamic an economic environment, with low unemployment, fast growth, diversified jobs and solid educational performance, as Charlotte, according to America’s leading business executives, polled by Fortune magazine in 1993, since Charlotte No. 7 among 53 regions in the quality of its business climate.

The area has had high — second — in its political environment, ranking few unions or insensitive regulations.

But not the top of the Fortune findings. You recover a great underside. The Charlotte area faced a national trend among 43 regions in skilled workers, as well as third in quality of public education.

Too many employers report woefully up-trained entry-level workers, sometimes lacking basic reading and math skills, and nearly always without technical sophistication. Many of the region’s manufacturing plants have problems because some workers can’t read well enough.

In an Information Age, any region saddled with a reputation for meager education and knowledge is in a precarious position. No region will stay both dumb and rich for long.

The Peirce Report: Shaping a shared future

Neal Pierce and Curtis Johnson, nationally known writers on cities and city growth, have taken an in-depth look at the Charlotte region, as they have done previously in 10 other cities. This is the third in their four-part series.

The region’s reputation for meager education and knowledge is in a precarious position. No region will stay both dumb and rich for long.

The analysis of the problem is obvious and something you’ve heard before — is training, training, training. Indeed, innovative high school programs have been introduced. Some, like "Tech Prep," are well suited to young people not bound to college. One well-known program for a four-year college, but no information was provided for work.

In Charlotte, Central Piedmont Community College can help. CPA is widely regarded as a premier institution to prepare people for more sophisticated workplace skills.

Charlotte, and in the nation, public confidence in the schools has sagged until many no longer believe increasing the investment improves the payoff. In that climate, do you just come in and settle for whatever you can get?

We think a better option is to try something fundamentally different. Why not link education — high school, college to home? — to the technologies transforming our world: computers, multimedia software, the internet, communications and worldwide interactive communications.

Communication technology is changing the world. The region’s economic success will depend on the ability of its leadership to grasp this challenge from its formative stages. Charlotte’s task is to connect the far-flung parts of the Charlotte region into a working web of interactive communications.