

A proposed concept plan for a formal park in Downtown Southern Pines seems to have hit paydirt. Mayor David McNeil likes it, Town Manager Reagan Parsons likes it and Council Member Chris Smithson predicts it will sail through the vetting process. Open space on Broad Street has been available since demolition in 2006 of the old municipal building. Previous architectural designs for a new municipal complex on the site were rejected as not in harmony with existing buildings and neighborhoods. Now a team of local architects, who donated their time, have come up with plans for a downtown park that includes plenty of green space and even a gazebo. One of the architects, Vince Zucchini, says local knowledge and experience were critical in coming up with just the right design.