

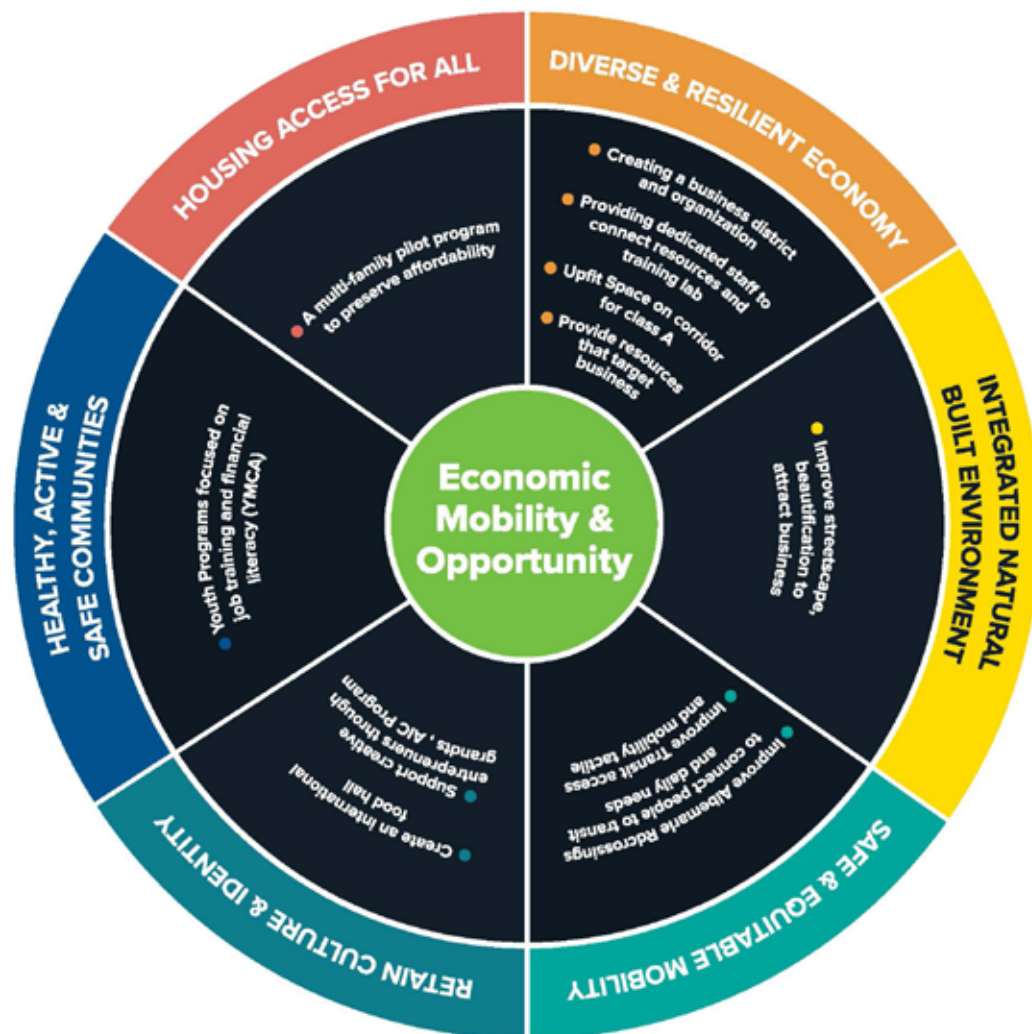


Albemarle Road Corridor

 CITY of CHARLOTTE

2022 | **Roadmap**

Strong and vibrant business corridors are the cornerstones of healthy neighborhoods.



Introduction

The primary goal is to establish a roadmap to implement the **Albemarle Road Playbook**, focusing on the first two years.

Playbook to Roadmap

On July 7-8, 2022, the City of Charlotte held an Albemarle Road Economic Mobility Workshop to create a two-year roadmap for the Albemarle Road Playbook. This was an interdepartmental and cross-disciplinary effort within the City of Charlotte and other stakeholders to collaborate on next steps. This roadmap aims to:

- Formulate a two-year roadmap, or implementation plan, based on projects, themes, and goals set by the Albemarle Road Playbook.
- Be an interdepartmental effort to build ideas and support throughout the City, County and among other stakeholders that best represent the community's needs.
- Concentrate on implementation and short-term goals to "get the ball rolling" for the Playbook.
- Focus on a few projects and efficiently allocate the City's resources and efforts.

The Roadmap is the first step in implementing the Playbook and provides a framework of projects and strategies for City investment. This framework will guide next steps and establish an incremental, two-year plan. The Playbook and Roadmap fall under the Corridors of Opportunity program and will be the strategic action plan for program funds.



Work Streams

Implementation projects fall into one of six workstreams. Each workstream has a dedicated team of City staff from at least two departments.

Diverse & Resilient Economic Opportunity	Providing opportunities for upward economic mobility through access to a diverse mix of jobs and careers that align with education and skill levels of residents and the economic strengths of the region.
Housing Access for All	Ensuring opportunities for residents of all incomes to access affordable housing through the preservation of naturally occurring affordable and workforce housing and increasing the number of affordable and workforce housing units through new construction.
Retain Culture and Identity	Retaining the identity of existing neighborhoods by intentionally directing redevelopment, limiting displacement and cultivating community-driven placemaking that elevates the importance, quality and design of places.
Safe and Equitable Mobility	Providing safe and equitable mobility options for all travelers regardless of age, income, ability, race, where they live, or how they choose to travel. An integrated system of transit and tree-shaded bikeways, sidewalks, shared-use paths, and streets will support a sustainable, connected, prosperous, and innovative network that connects all Charlotteans to each other, jobs, housing, amenities, goods, services, and the region.
Integrated Natural and Built Environment	Protecting and enhancing Charlotte's surface water quality, tree canopy, and natural areas with a variety of trees, plantings, green infrastructure, green building practices, and open space at different scales throughout the entire community as a component of sustainable city infrastructure that addresses the threat of climate change.
Healthy, Safe and Active Communities	Ensuring all residents can live and work in safe and resilient neighborhoods that enable healthy and active lifestyles by reducing exposure to harmful environmental contaminants, expanding and improving the quality of tree canopy cover, encouraging investment in walking, cycling, and recreation facilities, and providing access to healthy food options and health care services.



Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business navigator and hub • Hispanic-owned small business support • Targeted office space rehab incentives • Business district organization support 	Housing Access for All <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted multi-family property stabilization strategy • Staying in Place 	Retain Culture and Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placemaking & public art opportunities • International food hall 	Safe and Equitable Mobility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit stop improvements • Transit mobility hubs • Pedestrian crossing improvements 	Integrated Natural and Built Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart streetlight upgrades • Tree canopy and green infrastructure improvements 	Healthy, Safe and Active Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road to Hire youth employment program • Language access program
---	---	--	---	---	--

Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity

Description

The economic development strategy for Albemarle Road creates better access to wealth-building resources for the business community; makes the corridor more attractive to job seekers and providers and invests in the overall aesthetics and build environment. It is responsive, layered and aligns with existing programs and organizational structures. The approach is built on analyses of the local labor market, small business and entrepreneurship ecosystem, the real estate market, and a general economic and workforce development scan.

Budget

- \$3.5 - 4 million
- \$3 million for Business Navigator & Hub
- \$500,000 for commercial center redevelopment
- \$60,000 for business district organization support
- \$440,000 for hispanic-owned business support

Partners

- Charlotte Economic Development
- Mecklenburg County
- Community organizations including ECCON, Charlotte EAST, FENCO, Latin American Coalition
- Nonprofit organizations including YMCA, United Way of Central Carolinas, Legal Aid of NC, Prospera NC, LACCC, Carolinas Asian-American Chamber, UISAC
- Small Business Support Organizations
- Small and locally-owned businesses
- Local development and real estate community
- Commercial property owners

Timeline

- 0 months Identify Navigator & Hub partners
- 6 months Continue small business engagement
- 12 months Hire Business Navigator
- 24 months Establish business district organization

Projects

Business Navigator and Hub

Create a Business Navigator program to reduce barriers that underserved and underrepresented small business owners face in accessing programs and resources needed to recover, grow, stabilize or start their business.

Establish a “business hub” on the corridor that houses the Business Navigator; hire a staff person who acts as “boots on the ground” to connect small business owners to financial assistance, access to capital, contracts and procurement assistance, technical assistance and training, marketing, operations, business development and more

Next Steps

- Meet with business support partners to garner interest and refine project scope
- Identify potential spaces on the Corridor

Targeted office space rehab incentives

Create an office space rehab incentive that targets businesses interested in expanding or growing their presence in Charlotte. Rehab and redevelop existing office buildings to catalyze additional private investment and to attract businesses with higher-paying jobs.

Next Steps

- Create incentive structure and eligibility requirements
- Identify potential spaces on the Corridor
- Create marketing documents for business recruitment activity

Hispanic-owned business support

Build a strategy that lowers the existing barriers to accessing business resources for hispanic and ethnic-minority business owners located on the corridor. Existing businesses face challenges in accessing and benefiting from resources, training and public investments. This project builds off the existing engagement work conducted by Prospera NC and aims to increase wealth-building opportunities for the targeted businesses.

Business District Organization

Support the local business community’s efforts to create an Albemarle Road Business District Organization. The future organization could promote and market the corridor, host events for business owners and visitors and advocate for retail and business needs.

Conduct a needs assessment survey for potential BDO members



ERNESTO MORENO PHOTOGRAPHY, 2021

Housing Access for All

Description

Despite new construction, single-family permitting activity in the trade area has not returned to pre-2008 Recession levels while multifamily activity is closer to the previous pace. Single-family permits are most popular followed closely by duplexes. The goal for the Albemarle Road corridor is to develop recommendations that address housing options, affordability, community identity, and livability.

Budget

\$3.5 - 4 million

Partners

- HNS
- Affordable housing finance agencies
- Mecklenburg County
- Multifamily development owners

Timeline

0 months	Staying in Place is underway
6 months	Targeted multifamily strategy developed
12 months	Multifamily rehab scope created
24 months	Multifamily rehab underway

Projects

Targeted multifamily property stabilization strategy

Develop and implement a pilot strategy focused on stabilizing the existing multifamily and naturally-occurring affordable housing. Target a single large apartment complex in need of property improvements and unit renovations. Led by Housing and Neighborhood Services, staff will leverage existing programs and build on lessons learned from previous efforts to create this new approach in partnership with private and nonprofit owners and developers.

The goal is to protect the existing stock of affordable housing units and ensure the corridor continues to serve low-income families while also improving the quality of life for the residents in those units.

Next steps:

- Identify potential multifamily properties in corridor
- Reach out to property owners to gauge interest
- Prepare scope of work, identify funding sources, and develop affordability clauses

Staying in Place program

This existing pilot program is underway in the Winterfield neighborhood which falls in the Albemarle corridor Area of Influence. Staying in Place is a collaborative approach to provide opportunity for residents who want to stay in their neighborhoods to remain, while preserving housing affordability for future generations. The program provides housing support, utility support, neighborhood training and enhancement, and workforce and business development resources to residents in Winterfield.

Next steps:

- Winterfield residents and community members will continue community engagement activity.
- City staff is conducting visual surveys of the neighborhood which includes identifying areas where City service delivery may be needed (i.e. sidewalk repair, pothole repairs)
- Make referrals to other agencies that can assist with additional services



ERNESTO MORENO PHOTOGRAPHY, 2021

Retain Culture and Identity

Description

With over 50 languages spoken and over 60 countries represented from around the world, Albemarle Road is one of Charlotte’s most diverse corridors in the city. The goal for the corridor is to celebrate the character and diverse cultures through investment, support, and engagement.

Budget

\$1 - 1.5 million

Partners

- City of Charlotte departments (Economic Development, Urban Design Center)
- Small Business Support Organizations
- Mecklenburg County departments (Public Health, Park and Recreation, Economic Development)
- YMCA
- food retail and restaurant owners
- Artists, creative and cultural organizations, youth and cultural engagement programs

Timeline

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 0 months | Existing program funds open for applications |
| 6 months | Award funds and begin existing programming; begin Food Hall feasibility research |
| 12 months | Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan complete. Build the new artists-in-residence corridor program |
| 18 months | Public art master plan and food culture mapping |

Projects

International Food Hall

Create a food hall for international food retail and restaurants based in East Charlotte. The food hall space will provide emerging businesses with small business training and assistance. The space can also serve as a cultural hub for community events and programs. The City can lead the effort in developing the concept, recruiting minority- and women-owned food tenants, identifying a location and an experienced operator and underwrite rent and operational costs.

Next steps:

- Research best practices for public-private partnerships for food hall concepts
- Market study and feasibility analysis
- Conduct a food culture mapping exercise with a local arts and culture group

Placemaking and Public Art Opportunities

Develop youth arts programming with local artists and creative organizations

Support artistic and creative programming that reflects the arts and culture of Albemarle corridor.

Provide space and resources for artists and program coordinators

Create a public art master plan: Identify opportunities and locations for public art including temporary, semi-permanent and permanent installations. Look for opportunities to tie into the Cultural Trail concept.

Next steps:

- Implement an artists-in-residence cohort/program in corridor



Safe and Equitable Mobility

Description

Averaging a traffic volume of 37,000 per day and classified as a 45 MPH major thoroughfare, Albemarle is a state-maintained road that is designed to move traffic efficiently through the area and has limited multi-modal options. The goal for the Albemarle Road corridor is to implement projects that address multiple transportation modes, public transit, the built environment, and the connectivity between them.

Budget

\$2.5 - 3 million

Partners

- CDOT
- NCDOT
- CATS
- Property owners

Timeline

0 - 6 months	Inventory current priorities on corridor and potential funding sources (e.g. CRTPO)
6 - 12 months	Design and real estate
12 - 36 months	per location for microtransit mobility hub
30 - 48 months	per location for pedestrian crossing improvements

Projects

Pedestrian Crossing Improvements

Improve pedestrian crossings on Albemarle Road to connect residents in the large apartment complexes to daily needs. The City can install pedestrian hybrid beacon (PHB) crossings at key locations along the corridor. CATS can prioritize transit stops near the crossings for improvements. PHBs and other pedestrian improvements will provide safe and accessible connections to daily needs, services and destinations for all residents, regardless of access to a personal vehicle.

Next steps:

- Create cost estimates and project scopes for mobility and transportation improvements
- Identify potential funding sources

Transit Stop Improvements and Mobility Hubs

Invest in transit tactical solutions like Mobility Hubs that connect residents to key employment nodes within the area. Ensure all bus stops are ADA/PROWAG-compliant. The majority of residents in the corridor travel to jobs outside of the corridor. While opportunities are growing within the corridor the transit improvements will connect people more efficiently in the shorter term.

Next steps:

- Create cost estimates and project scopes for mobility and transportation improvements
- Identify potential funding sources



Integrated Natural and Built Environment

Description

Streetlight upgrades will improve safety and make the corridor look better. Tree canopy and landscaping maintenance in the right-of-way will reduce the heat island, improve aesthetics and reduce the carbon emissions.

Budget

\$250,000 - 500,000

Partners

- City of Charlotte departments (Urban Forestry, Charlotte General Services, Landscape Management, Trees Charlotte, Storm Water, Office of Sustainability & Resilience, CDOT, Charlotte Smart Cities Program, Charlotte Fire)
- Mecklenburg County Parks & Recreation
- NCDOT
- Private sector partners (e.g. Duke Energy)

Timeline

0 months	Promote Access Charlotte programs
6 months	Conduct lighting study and refine project cost for upgrading streetlights
12 - 24 months	Upgrade corridor street lighting and install affordable internet service at participating multifamily complexes



ERNESTO MORENO PHOTOGRAPHY, 2021

Projects

Smart Streetlight Upgrades

Improve safety and energy efficiency in the corridor by adding and upgrading lighting to smart LED fixtures, replacing streetlight poles where needed, integrating smart tech features that help disaster management (and preparedness), improving lighting coverage, and providing public Wi-Fi. A Smart City corridor partnership with organizations like Duke Energy can help achieve a low carbon future. Additionally the City can realize cost savings with smart upgrades and improves the streetscape.

Next steps

- Align smart city tech selection with the Smart City Strategic Framework guidance
- Conduct a lighting study to identify priority areas and the extents of the project for lighting improvement
- Refine scope to confirm confirm costs associated with pole upgrades and smart city technology
- Coordinate with Access Charlotte program to increase digital access and digital equity programs in the corridor

Tree Canopy and Green Infrastructure Improvements

Improve streetscapes with trees to improve the aesthetics of the corridor, reduce heat, reduce carbon emissions, and improve air quality. Beautification activity should also include regular litter clean up and Right-of-Way maintenance.

Well-maintained streetscapes with a healthy tree canopy and landscaping can increase property values and make the corridor more attractive to prospective tenants. It also reduces heat to create a more comfortable ped/bike experience for residents walking or biking to jobs, homes, or transit stops. Lastly, it sequesters carbon emissions to advance SEAP goals and curb the effects of climate change, as well as improve air quality and health outcomes.

Protecting and maintaining the tree canopy improves the aesthetics of the corridor and makes it a more attractive place to live, work, or locate a business.

Healthy, Safe and Active Communities

Description

Projects would include introducing young people to careers and mentorship through safe opportunities in the community. Provide pathways for youth to move into career-focused opportunities and learn applicable skills like financial literacy. Partner to implement youth programs that provide financial literacy, mentorship, and career pathways.

Improving the safety and attractiveness of the public realm will demonstrate City investment and focus along the corridor and help to bolster private sector confidence. The goal for the corridor is to create a sense of security for all who live, work, and play along Albemarle Road.

Budget

\$1.2 - 1.4 million

Partners

- Housing and Neighborhood Services (Youth Employment and Training programs)
- YMCA
- Youth service organizations based in the corridor
- Mecklenburg County
- Mecklenburg County Violence Prevention
- CMS

Timeline

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 0 months | Develop Corridor Ambassadors Program and support Youth Career Pathway Program |
| 6 months | Create program structure and operations plan for Ambassadors |
| 12 months | Language access protocol is utilized in project engagement |

Projects

Corridor Ambassadors Program

Engage residents, business owners and stakeholders through a dedicated team of corridor ambassadors. The program can use the City's existing youth employment and training program to hire corridor-based opportunity youth (youth ages 16-24) to conduct engagement, outreach, small business services, beautification efforts and other corridor activities. The program can be housed at the Business Hub to ensure a constant, welcoming presence on the corridor.

Language Access Program

Develop a language access plan that provides a protocol for project engagement and communications. The Language access program will make all Road Map projects intentionally more inclusive, engaging and accessible to all languages and cultures. The language access plan builds on the playbook engagement strategy and expands to include community-based facilitators.

Road to Hire Youth Program

Partner with a nonprofit partner organization to work with high school youth to introduce them to careers and mentorship. Road to Hire will provide support for high school seniors in Charlotte's highest-poverty high schools from their senior year, to and through college or apprenticeships and into their first two years in high-growth careers. The support includes paid summer internships, college application and admissions navigation, class credits and scholarships, and a paid summer bridge program.



ERNESTO MORENO PHOTOGRAPHY, 2021

Road Map Key

||||| Planning/Predevelopment

█ Active Program/Project

Road Map

