

FREEDOM/WILKINSON

CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY

A Letter of Shared Commitment and Acknowledgement

Issued by: SOL Nation and CleanAIRE NC

North Carolina is widely considered the birthplace of the environmental justice movement. This legacy was forged in a pivotal moment in 1982 in Warren County, when Black and low-income residents protested the state’s decision to build a landfill for soil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in their community, igniting a national conversation. It was during this time that Reverend Ben Chavis coined the term “environmental racism,” highlighting how environmental harms often disproportionately impact marginalized communities. These events helped to push leaders and researchers to pay closer attention to the connection between environmental policy and social justice.

GreenPrints is rooted in the unwavering commitment to Environmental Justice (EJ). EJ means ensuring that every community—regardless of race, income, or background—has a clean, safe, and healthy environment in which to live, work, and play. Yet many communities, especially those historically overlooked or underinvested in, face higher levels of pollution, fewer trees and green spaces, and greater risks from flooding, extreme heat, and other environmental hazards. These inequities harm public health and make communities less safe and resilient.

At its core, Environmental Justice is about building a future where all communities can thrive. It is about fairness, health, safety, and opportunity for everyone—now and for generations to come.



The Power of Community Engagement

To solve environmental justice problems, the first step is to engage the communities most affected. These are often neighborhoods that have faced decades of pollution, neglect, and limited access to opportunity. To succeed, solutions need to be supported and championed by the people who live in these areas. That means involving residents in decisions, respecting their lived experiences, and making sure they have the power and resources to help shape their own future.

GreenPrints embodies this principle by focusing on actionable steps, including:

- Cleaning up polluted areas and reducing exposure to harmful chemicals near homes, schools, and parks.
- Expanding access to green spaces, safe housing, clean air, and clean drinking water in underserved communities.
- Updating policies and zoning laws that once encouraged unhealthy land use.
- Providing clear and accessible public data about environmental risks.
- Investing in local leadership and community-led projects that improve public health and safety.

Acknowledging Our Partners in Success

The GreenPrints project is a testament to the power of cross-sector collaboration and shared commitment. We extend our deepest gratitude to the following partners, without whom this ambitious endeavor would not have been possible:

- **The Knight Foundation:** For providing the critical, enabling resources that allowed for deep, sustained research and robust community engagement.
- **The Residents and Stakeholders of the Freedom/Wilkinson Drive Corridors of Opportunity:** The true leaders of this work. Your participation, candid feedback, and dedication have ensured that this project is authentic, relevant, and directly addresses the needs and priorities of your neighborhoods.
- **Businesses, Researchers, and Dedicated Individuals:** For contributing your businesses for research, the essential data that was provided and collected, technical expertise, innovative solutions, and invaluable perspectives.

The success of GreenPrints belongs to every person who contributed their time, voice, and spirit to this collective effort. Thank you for making this project a powerful new blueprint for an equitable and resilient Charlotte.

PEOPLE FIRST

“

I appreciate this opportunity for my voice to be heard.”



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with funding support by The Knight Foundation.



Where Collaboration Meets Community:

A People-First Plan For Environmental Justice



What is a GreenPrint?

A GreenPrint is a community-informed environmental impact action plan highlighting projects, programs, and/or initiatives that tackle environmental injustice and climate inequities, recognizing the disproportionate impacts experienced by historically disinvested communities. The action plans target issues that directly affect the health and well-being of these communities and will essentially function as an addendum to existing Corridors of Opportunity Playbooks and/or Road Maps, benefiting from existing relationships, resources, and expertise within the partnerships created. These plans will align with the City's existing Corridors of Opportunity program to ensure that climate action goes together with economic development and community empowerment.

How did the project evolve?

Initially, the partnership between CleanAIRE NC, Sol Nation, and the City of Charlotte's Office of Sustainability & Resilience and Corridors of Opportunity started based on a federal grant opportunity. As such, the initiative was developed specifically to create a compelling grant opportunity that would allow all the partners to work together toward environmental justice in neighborhoods experiencing environmental inequities. While the initial intent was to secure a specific grant, the value of what was heard from the community,

and the needs that were shared, created the foundation for a program that was more than a one-time grant. For that reason, the partnership has continued, leading with community and developing a plan that would allow all participants the ability to memorialize the conversations, concerns, and work. Knowing what is needed and wanted by those that live in the community will aid in conversations, additional grant applications, and continued relationship building to realize the efforts of all participants.



SECTION 02

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IS

North Carolina played an important role in the early development of environmental justice. In 1982, residents of Warren County raised concerns about the planned location of a landfill containing PCB-contaminated soil in their community. This event brought national attention to the idea that environmental decisions can affect communities in different ways and helped shape early discussions about fairness, public health, and environmental protection.

Environmental Justice (EJ) means making sure that every community—no matter its location, income level, or background—has a clean, safe, and healthy environment in which to live, work, and play. Some communities continue to face higher levels of pollution, fewer parks and trees, and greater risks from flooding, extreme heat, and other environmental challenges. These conditions can affect health, safety, and quality of life.

Environmental justice is about improving conditions so that all communities can succeed, now and in the future. A key part of this work is listening to and working with the communities most affected, so that programs and investments respond to local needs and help reduce long-standing environmental and public health concerns.

For environmental justice efforts to be effective, they must be supported by the people who live in the communities most affected. This means involving residents in planning and decision-making, valuing their local knowledge, and providing opportunities for communities to help shape programs and investments that affect their neighborhoods.

Addressing environmental justice can include actions such as:

- Reducing pollution and limiting exposure to harmful substances near homes, schools, and parks.
- Expanding access to green spaces, safe housing, clean air, and reliable drinking water in communities with fewer resources.
- Updating land-use policies and zoning practices to promote healthier neighborhoods.
- Providing clear, easy-to-understand information about environmental conditions and risks.
- Supporting local leadership and community-based projects that improve public health and safety.

In Charlotte, one clear example of the city’s effort is in the Historic West End. This area was deeply affected by redlining, a discriminatory housing practice that denied Black residents fair access to mortgages, and services—causing long-term harm to health, wealth, and the environment. Today, the city and community are partnering to address those harms through initiatives focused on affordable housing, improved transit, green infrastructure, and environmental health. These efforts are part of the city’s broader commitment, outlined in the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan, to build an equitable, inclusive city for everyone. When we center communities in the process, we do not just fix environmental problems—we build trust, repair relationships, and create lasting change. That is what Environmental Justice is all about.

Summary: Major Contributors to Environmental Injustice

Targeted Redlining

Redlining denied services to racially targeted neighborhoods, leading to disinvestment from communities and forced displacement. Key players included banks, insurance companies, and government agencies like the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC), the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and the National Housing Act of 1934.

Harmful Industry in Low-Income and BIPOC Communities

Heavy-polluting industries often operate in low-income and BIPOC neighborhoods, increasing pollution exposures and health risks for these communities. Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color are 61% more likely to live in areas with unhealthy air compared to white communities (ALA, 2022).

Issues of Access to Healthcare, Healthy Food, and Green Spaces

Environmental justice highlights that impacted communities face limited access to essential services, hindering affordable healthcare and worsening health issues. These areas often lack healthy food options and greenspaces, which are vital for clean air, cooling during heat waves, and recreation.

Image credit: CleanAIRE NC - <https://cleanairenc.org/blog/2025/03/27/ej-storyboard/West End>

SECTION 03

CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

The following maps and infographs detail key environmental facts, figures and observations viewed through the GreenPrints lens of environmental justice. The data, presented graphically, illustrates the corridor’s strengths while identifying metrics that, if improved, may increase quality of life. As this section is dedicated to environmental conditions, if you would like to read more about this corridor and its strengths and opportunities, please see the Freedom Wilkinson Corridors of Opportunity Corridors of Opportunity website. Additional information about this area can also be found in the [West Middle](#) and [West Inner](#) Community Area Plans.

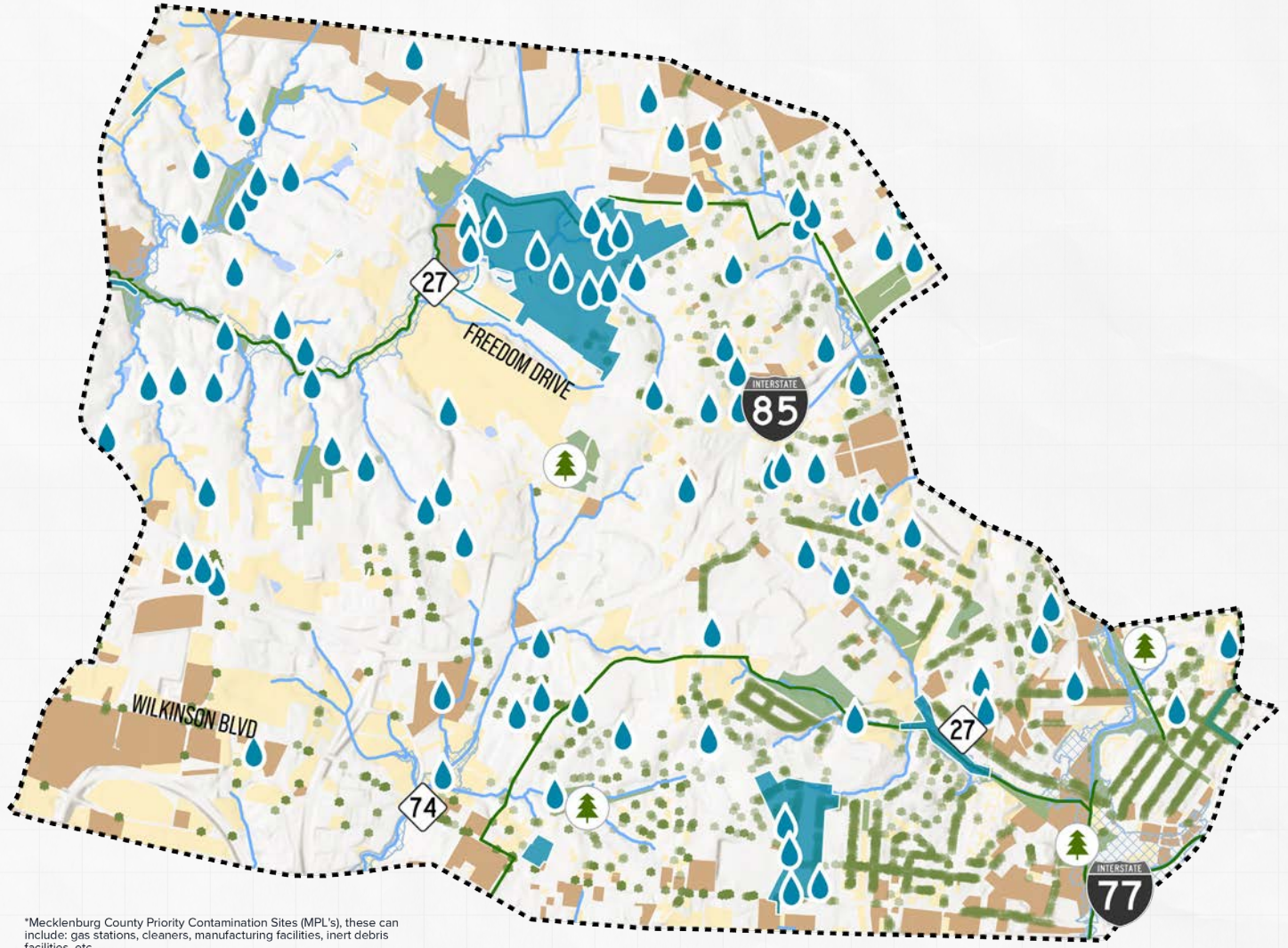
This map shows land and water features in a specific area, including parks, trails, lakes, and streams. The brown-shaded areas represent Mecklenburg Priority List (MPL) Sites, which are places identified by Mecklenburg County as having possible contamination, like old gas stations, dry cleaners, or industrial sites. These sites are important areas to review for legacy pollution, or sites where contamination may exist based on what the land has been used for in the past.

The Freedom/Wilkinson corridor is rich in water resources throughout the area, specifically creeks and streams. Having the abundance of waterways relates to the number of stormwater project sites within this corridor. These resources provide many benefits, and their presence also underscores the importance of addressing potential flooding and drainage in the area.

This corridor has major highway infrastructure (I-85, I-77, Hwy 74, and Hwy 27) and is in relatively close proximity to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport (just west of this corridor), all of which can impact this corridor in a variety of ways. There is a presence of Mecklenburg Priority Contamination (MPL) sites along the major transportation routes such as Wilkinson Blvd. as well as Freedom Drive, tied to the land uses along these routes. Knowing these sites and the patterns of development helps the community focus on cleaning up pollution and making the land safer overall for the community and environment.

At the same time, significant public investment is underway, such as the Urban Arboretum Trail, as well as three Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation projects in the southern portion of this corridor, as well as another one in the middle. Completed and planned stormwater projects, greenways, and urban tree initiatives signal a shift toward green infrastructure, environmental restoration, and community-centered revitalization.

Overall, the map tells a story of transition — from vulnerability to intentional resilience and reinvestment.



*Mecklenburg County Priority Contamination Sites (MPL's), these can include: gas stations, cleaners, manufacturing facilities, inert debris facilities, etc.

-  ROW Trees
-  Greenways
-  Urban Arboretum Trail
-  Creeks/Streams
-  Floodplain
-  Lakes & Ponds
-  Parks
-  Vacant Parcels
-  MPL Sites*
-  Park and Rec Projects FY24-29
-  Stormwater Projects, Completed and Planned

Here is a snapshot of environmental conditions, housing, and transportation in a specific community.



55% of housing units are single-family houses, 2023
(County: 53%)

54 years is the average age of single-family housing units, 2023 (County: 34 years)



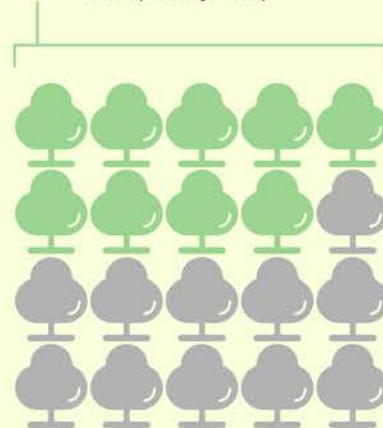
6% of housing units have development-based rental assistance, 2023
(County: 2.6%)

\$1,045 is the median gross rent of renter-occupied housing units, 2021
(County: \$1,276)

In terms of housing, 55% of homes are single-family, with the average home being 54 years old, pointing to aging housing stock that may require repairs and be good sites for energy efficiency upgrades. Currently, 6% of homes have received repairs through public programs, with an average investment of \$1,045 per home, suggesting limited reach of current housing support efforts.

Here is a snapshot of environmental conditions, housing, and transportation in a specific community. About 44% of the area has tree canopy, showing moderate green coverage, while only 25% of streets are shaded by trees, indicating a need for more street-level greenery.

44% of land is covered by tree canopy, 2012 (County: 45%)



25% of land surface is impervious, 2023 (County: 16%)



Bicycle
Friendliness
Index, 2023
(County: 1.6)



of paved streets
have sidewalks
(County: .4%)



The area has a low walkability score of 1.8 out of 3, and only 0.4% of streets have high-quality pedestrian infrastructure, which highlights a need for safer and more accessible walking and biking options. Together, these stats show both strengths and gaps in the area's sustainability, affordability, and mobility.



39 boardings

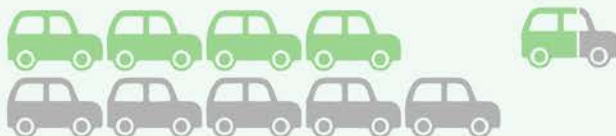
per stop on average a week or 7,433 weekly boardings, 2022 (County: 50 per stop for 154,458 weekly boardings)

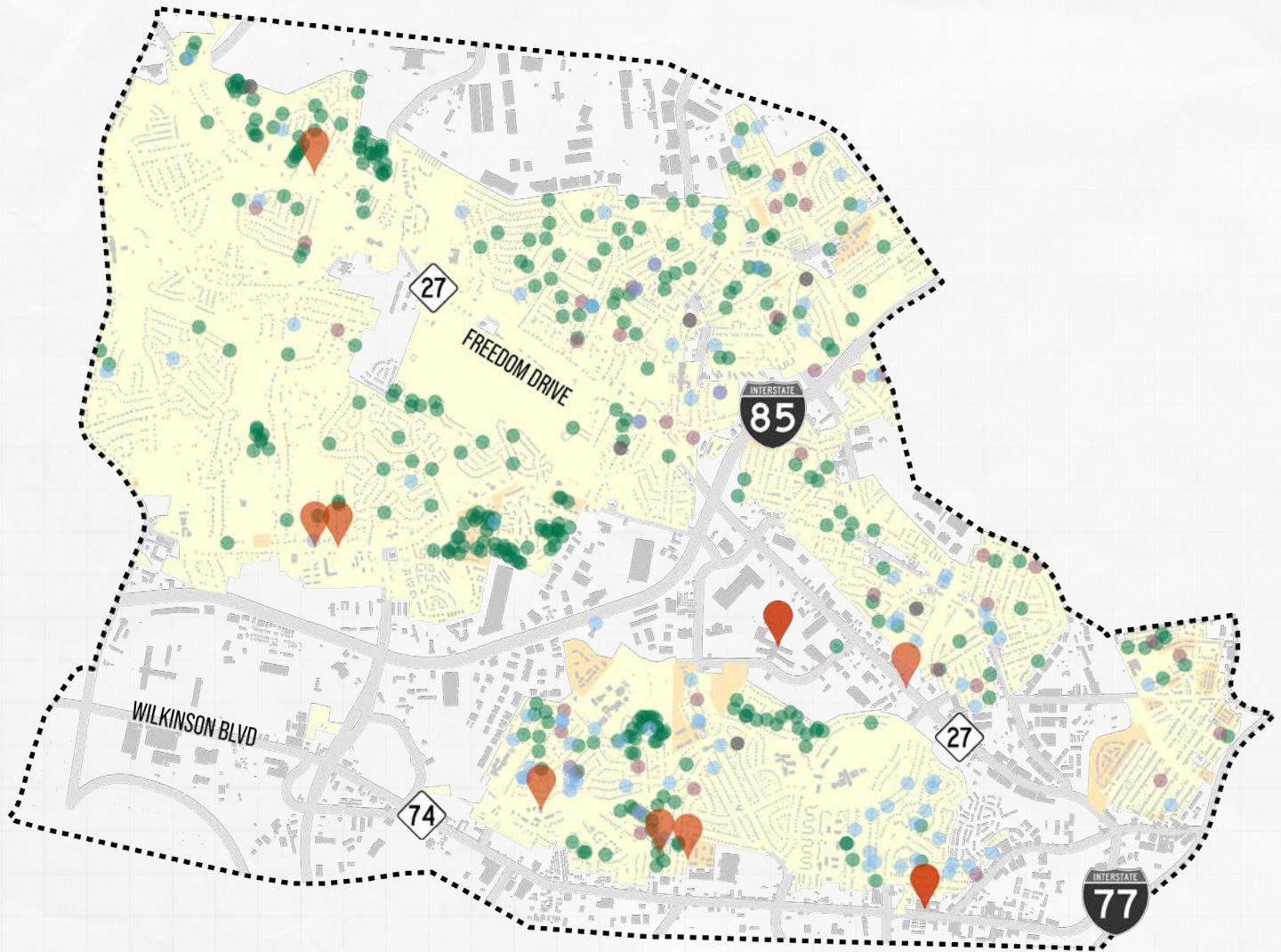


of homes are within a 1/2 mile of a transit stop, 2022 (County: 68%)

On the transportation side, 44% of households have commuters spend more 20 minutes or more for their daily commute. The area sees an average of 39 daily bus boardings, with 99.8% of those boardings happening within a 10-minute walk of homes. Walking or biking makes up less than 1% of all trips.

44% of auto commuters travel 20 minutes or more to work, 2021 (County: 59%)





Housing Programs 2016 - Present

- Emergency Repair
- House Charlotte
- Single Family Rehabilitation

Housing Trust Fund Investments

- Building Footprints
- Streets

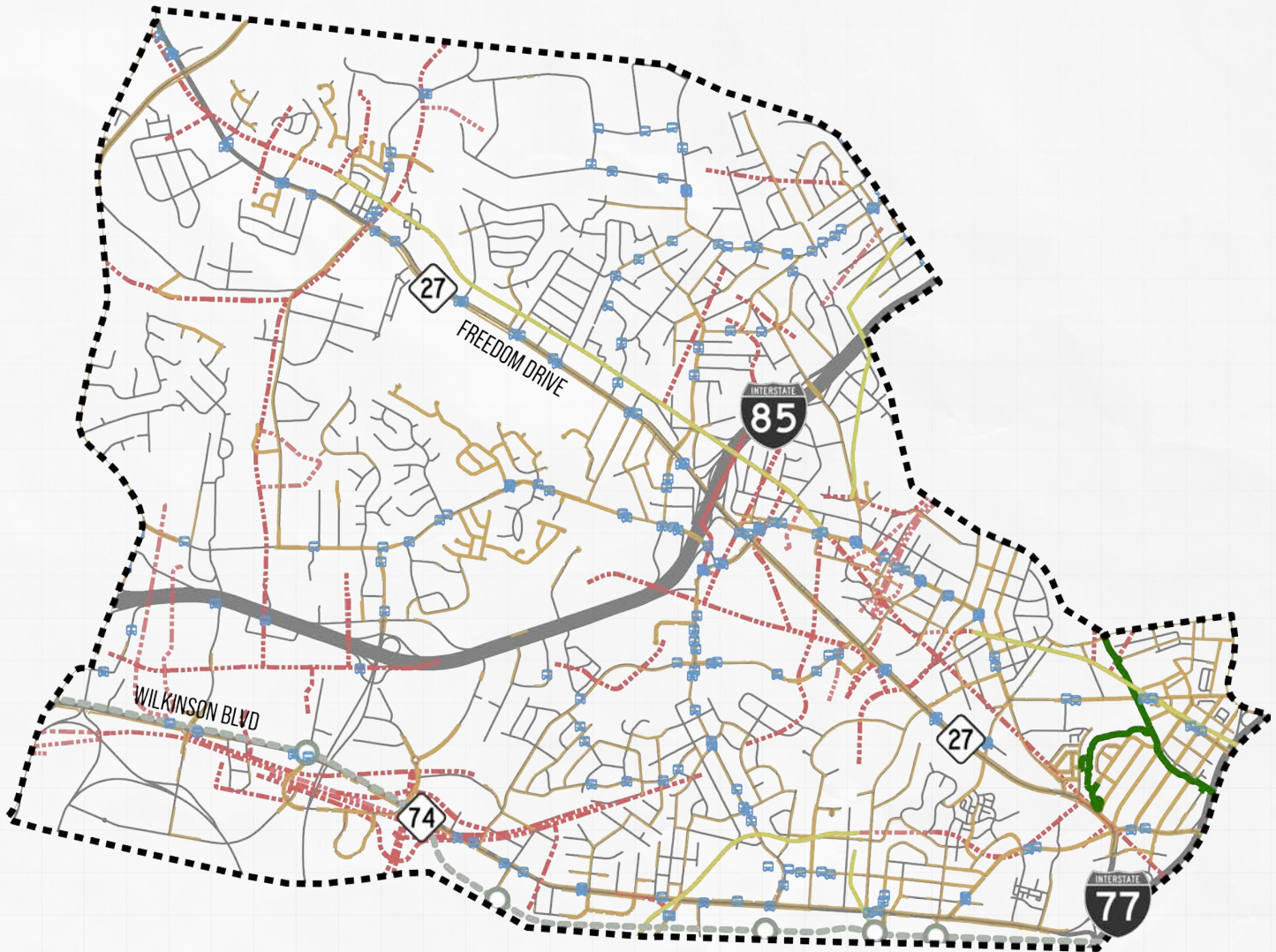
Residential Zoning

- Single Family
- Multi-Family



This map shows where housing programs and investments have taken place in the Freedom–Wilkinson area since 2016. The majority of this corridor has single family residential zoning, with pockets of multi-family located in between I-77 and I-85. There are clusters of home repair and rehabilitation programs being used across many of the single-family neighborhoods. This tells us that many homes in the area have needed repairs or upgrades to remain safe and livable.

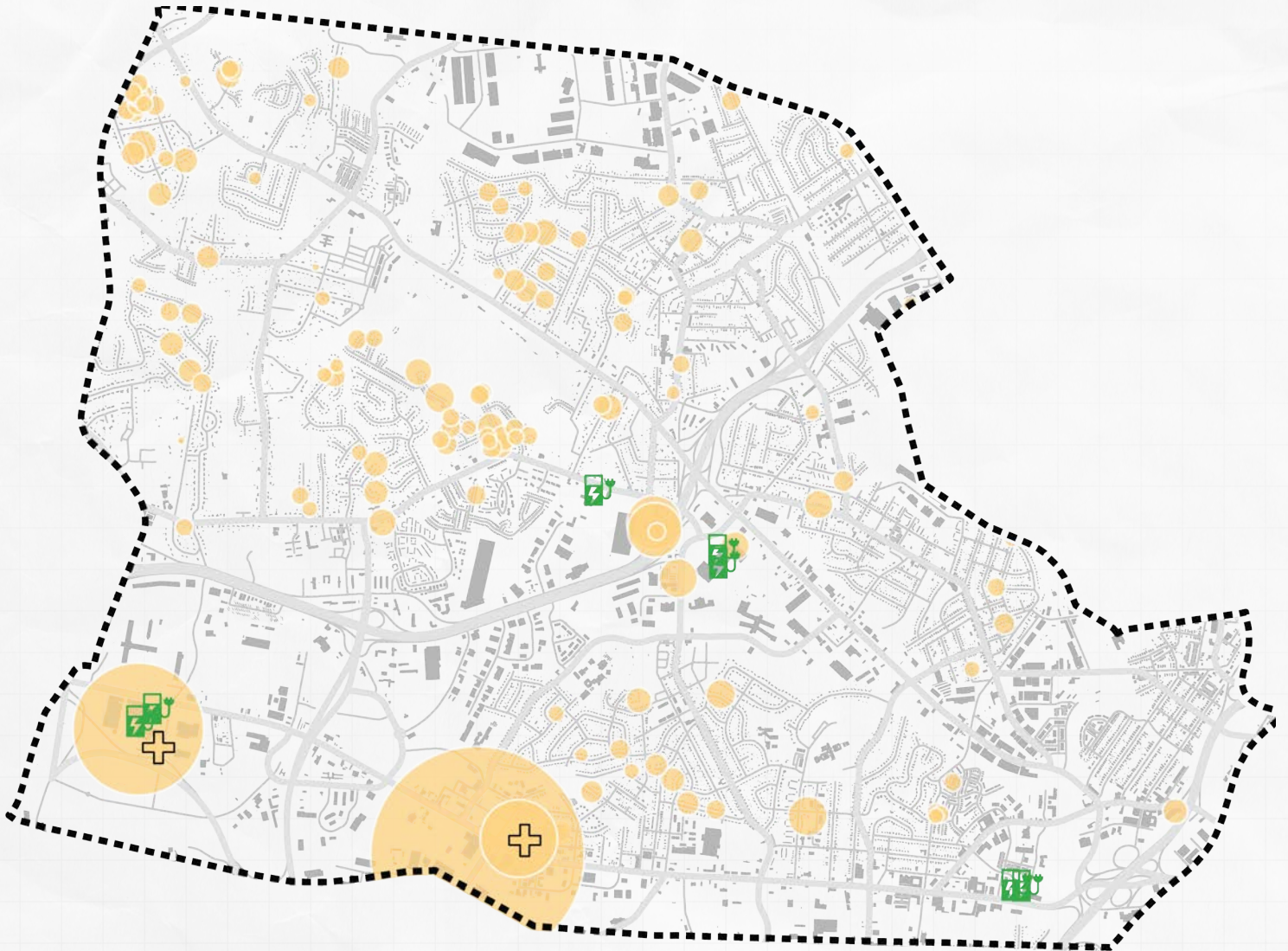
The map also shows where Housing Trust Fund dollars have been invested, mostly along major corridors like Freedom Drive and Wilkinson Boulevard. These investments are largely connected to multi-family or apartment-style housing. This map highlights areas where homes may be in need of investment and upgrades, where public money has already been spent, and how different parts of the corridor are experiencing different types of housing change.



- Freedom/Wilkinson Corridor
- Sidewalks
- Bike Lanes
- Greenways
- Streets
- LYNX Silver Line (Future)
- High Injury Network
- Bus Stops

This map shows how people travel through the Freedom–Wilkinson corridor and where transportation safety concerns are located. Existing sidewalks, bike lanes, greenways, bus stops, and the planned LYNX Silver Line are all identified alongside streets identified as part of the High Injury Network (dashed red line), where crashes are more likely to result in serious injuries. Major corridors such as Freedom Drive, Wilkinson Boulevard, and areas near I-85 and I-77 show a concentration of both transit

activity and serious crash history. Sidewalks and bike lanes are present in some areas, but connectivity is uneven across the corridor, with gaps between walking routes, transit stops, and key destinations. Overall, the map highlights patterns of movement, transit access, and areas where there are opportunities for future investment across the corridor.



City Solar Panel System Sites



Clean Energy Systems (kW)

5kW



Building Footprints



Streets



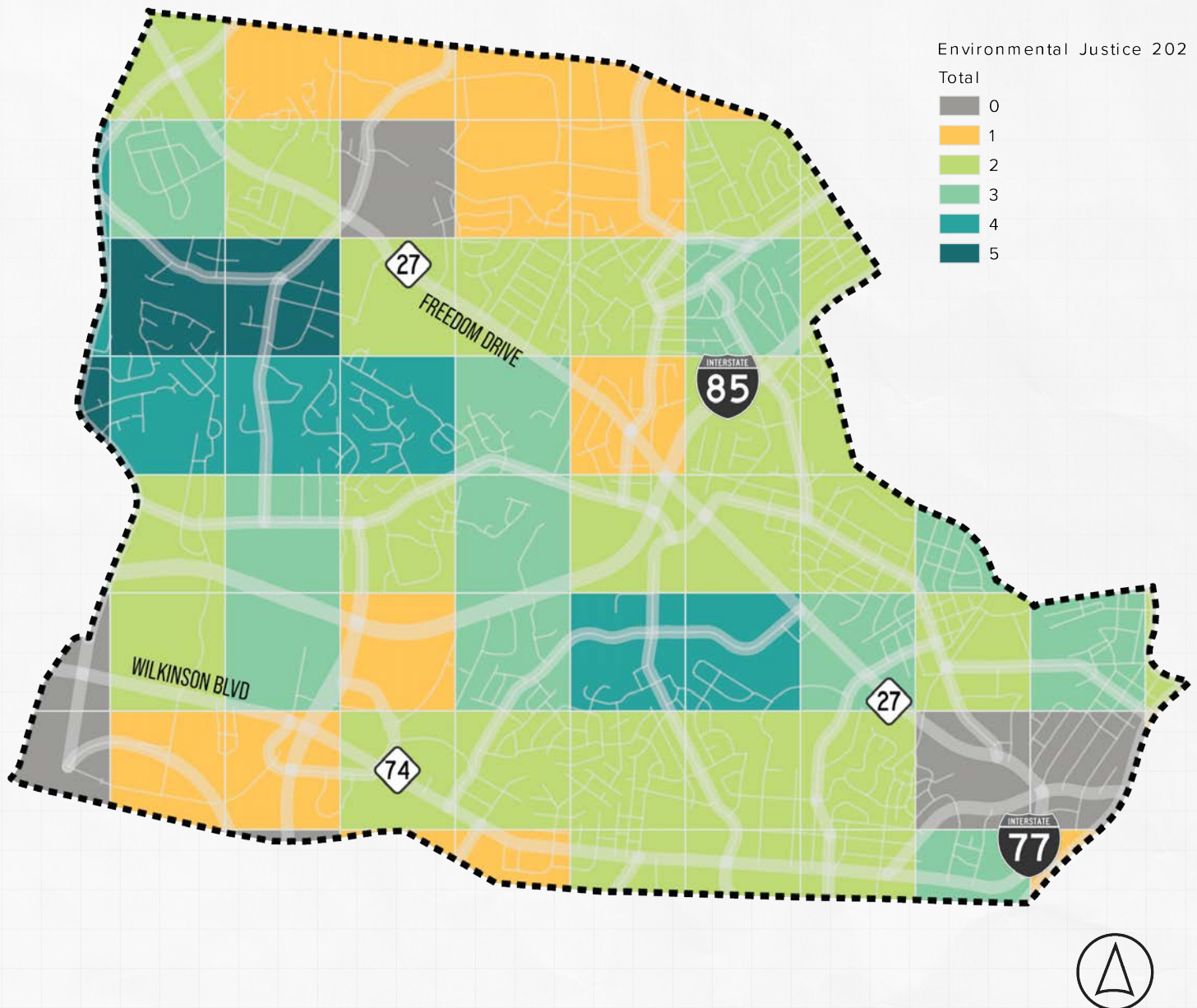
Major Roads



Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

This map shows the distribution of clean energy systems, solar panel sites, and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across the area. The orange circles represent clean energy systems, with larger circles showing higher energy capacity in kilowatts (kW). Clean energy systems are spread throughout the corridor, with noticeable clusters near I-85 and on Wilkinson Blvd. toward the Charlotte Douglas International Airport. EV charging stations are limited in number and appear concentrated in pockets

located around high-traffic areas. There are two city solar sites located along Wilkinson Blvd, one at CMPD Freedom Division Station and one at the CLT Center. Overall, the map shows where renewable energy infrastructure currently exists, how it is distributed, and where there may be gaps in access to clean energy and charging resources across the Freedom/Wilkinson corridor.



This map displays the Environmental Justice (EJ) metric from the Equitable Growth Framework, adopted as part of the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The EJ metric measures the cumulative environmental impacts of several factors, including tree canopy, impervious surfaces, proximity to heavy industrial areas, proximity to major transportation infrastructure, and floodplains.

The metric can be viewed at three geographic scales:

citywide in the Comprehensive Plan, at the community level in the West Middle and West Inner Community Area Plans, and at the corridor level, as shown here. Areas are shaded from teal (most just) to dark grey (less just) to represent combined exposure to air, noise, and water pollution. In this corridor, the lowest scoring areas, gray on the map, are in the southwest, southeast, and a pocket in the north of the corridor closer to major transportation infrastructure and heavy industrial uses.

The measures included within the environmental justice assessment focus on aspects of the built environment and were available during development of the Comprehensive Plan. The impact of these measures on environmental justice are outlined below:

Tree Canopy: Trees provide shade, help cool surrounding air, and reduce air pollution. A deficient tree canopy increases a community's exposure to heat and air pollution.

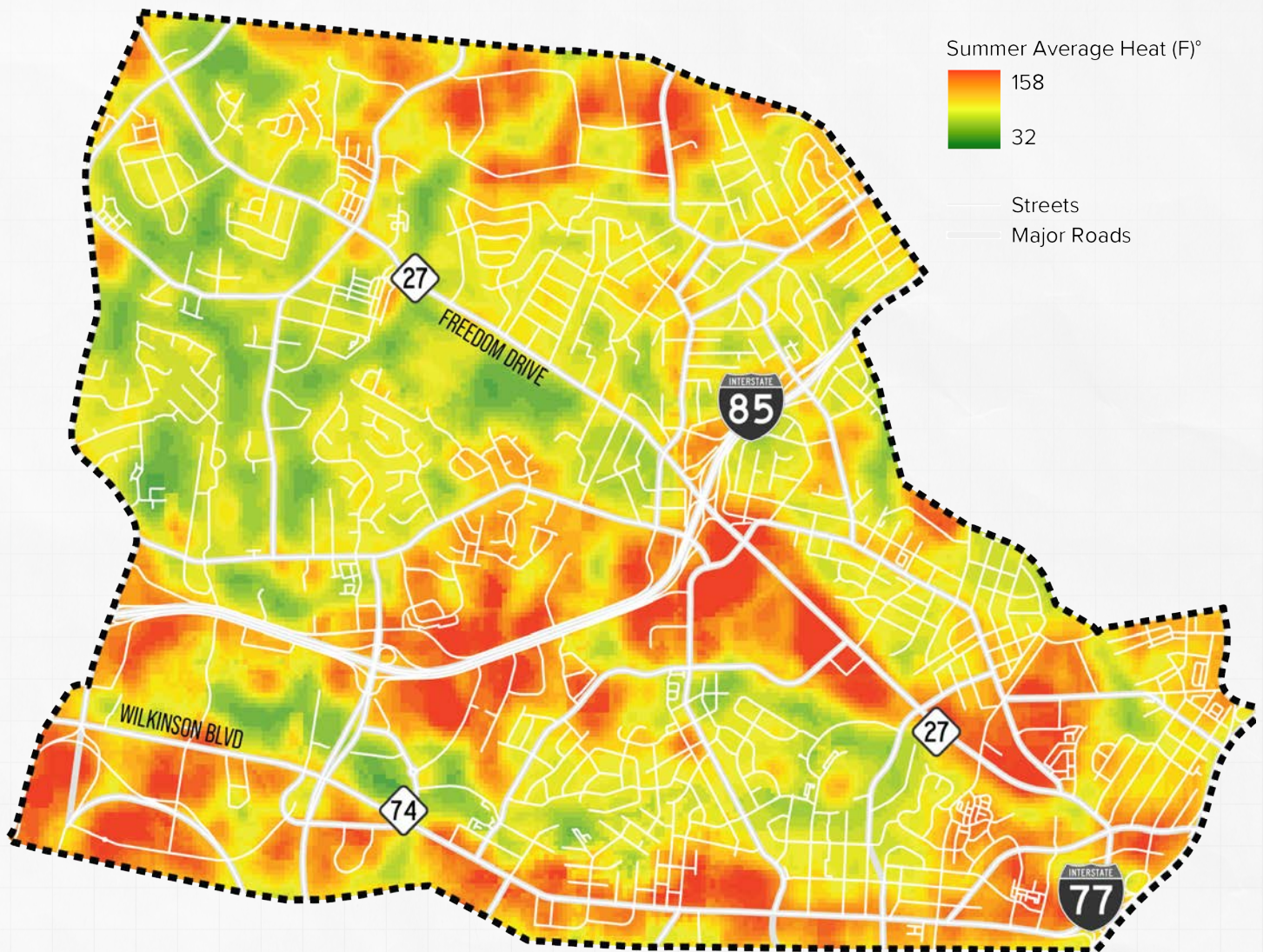
Impervious Surface: Hard surfaces that do not allow water to soak into the ground, such as asphalt and concrete, increase rates of flooding, pollute rainwater runoff, and increase urban heat. Excessive quantities of impervious surfaces increase a community's exposure to flooding, water pollution, and heat exposure.

Proximity to Heavy Industrial: The processing and manufacturing of materials/products from extraction of raw materials or the storage/distribution of hazardous materials can expose a community within proximity to air, water, or noise pollutants.

Proximity to Major Transportation Infrastructure: Road surfaces (see Impervious Surface) and vehicle emissions can expose a community within proximity to air and noise pollutants.

Floodplains: Flood-prone areas can expose a community to flood risks which are occurring more frequently due to climate change.





This map shows the average summer land surface temperature across the study area (an average of summer months between 2021 and 2023), using colors to represent the average temperatures. Green areas are cooler, while yellow, orange, and red areas are progressively hotter, with red representing the hottest zones. It is important to note that this data does not represent how it feels to people in the corridor, but rather the temperature of the ground. Hotter temperatures are concentrated along major roadways such as Wilkinson Boulevard, the

southeastern portion of Freedom Drive, and along I-85 and I-77 – this is consistent with larger areas of dark, asphalt areas absorbing more heat than vegetated areas. Large, paved areas and commercial corridors show higher heat levels compared to surrounding residential neighborhoods. Some sections of the corridor display cooler pockets, which may be associated with tree cover, open space, or less pavement and correspond in this corridor mostly with residential areas.

SECTION 04

Engagement is ...

...the heart of this process.

GreenPrints were developed based on the input of residents, as supported by the partnership team and spearheaded by the efforts of SolAIRE, a project-focused collaboration between CleanAIRE NC and Sol Nation. As this corridor is the first in the GreenPrints initiative, many of the engagement opportunities helped define the GreenPrints initiative and focus areas, as well as corridor-specific public concern and attention. Below you will see an overview of how this work has come together to inform this document.

Pre-Kickoff Meeting:

On June 6, 2024, the project team held a Pre-Kickoff Meeting with neighborhood leaders in the corridor. The focus of this meeting was to share the project overview, who has committed to working on this initiative, how the work will be completed, and request feedback on how best the project team can work with community to highlight concerns and co-create the solutions. That meeting helped ground ideas with the community and shared the integral nature of the conditions and proposed solutions – such as marrying the idea of solar panel installation with the need to ensure all homes have adequate roofing before evaluating for solar. Additionally, other areas of great concern centered around the transportation infrastructure and needs to increase access, include shading from heat and places to sit, having complete bike routes, etc.

This information helped inform the structure and the overall focus to highlight three overarching buckets of interest – Sustainable Housing,

Shade Strategies, and Clean Air + Transportation.

Public Survey:

In the fall of 2024, the Project Team created a short survey to gather information directly from the residents who live in the corridor. Emails, infographs, and in-person pop-ups commenced to gain some insight into major cares and concerns to relate back to the three buckets of interest generated from the Pre-Kickoff Meeting.

While we had a modest number of surveys, outcomes highlighted that these were the climate-related issues that mattered most to residents:

- Urban Flooding,
- Storms,
- Extreme Heat, and
- High Winds and Hurricanes.

The top two topics were Clean Air + Transportation as well as Sustainable Housing – consistent

with the Pre-Kickoff Meeting. Urban Cooling, Legacy Pollution, and Flood Mitigation rounded out the top interests.



TIMELINE

JUNE 2024

Pre-Kickoff Meeting

OCTOBER 2024

Public Kickoff

2024-2025

FALL 2024

Public Survey

WINTER 2024 - 2025

Targeted
Surveying: SolAIRE



Engagement is the heart of this process, and GreenPrints were developed based on the input of residents, supported by the partnership team and the efforts of SolAIRE.



Public Kickoff:

On October 19, 2024, the GreenPrints project team held the Public Kickoff for the Freedom/Wilkinson corridor. The meeting was facilitated as a workshop that included a graphic notetaker to capture the conversation. Topics covered included:

- Defining environmental justice;
- Emphasizing the importance of environmental justice to the community; and
- Highlighting key sustainability issues, new sustainability project ideas, and what the residents would like to see in their neighborhoods.

Key Issues important to Freedom Wilkinson residents include:

- Air quality
- Green spaces for kids to play
- Water and flooding with any little storm
- Sidewalk needs, repairs, and gaps

New sustainability project ideas include:

- Tree Canopy
- Solar Canopies at apartments
- Stream restoration
- Better waste management
- Protected bike lanes for all ages and abilities (including kids)
- Education on the connection between state-maintained roadways and black communities
- Wayfinding for bicyclists to move on and off bike lanes seamlessly.
- Long-term planning for highway congestion, emissions, and commuting patterns

Residents went on to share that they would like to see:

- New opportunities for green spaces with water features and Wi-Fi
- Litter pick-up at the following locations:

Camp Greene Spough Ln.

- Stream Restoration at Camp Greene
- Maintenance and support for new street trees along major roads
- Sidewalks on both sides of major streets and fill in sidewalk gaps, specifically mentioned on Garibaldi Ave and at the Bishop Spough entrance on Camp Greene
- Solar canopies to be integrated with current affordable housing

The feedback highlighted three project themes across all comments: sustainable housing, shade strategies, and clean air & transportation projects.

Targeted Surveying: SolAIRE

After the initial outreach, it was clear that this work would benefit from a more detailed survey to gather public feedback specifically

about what issues were the most pressing for residents. To do this, Sol Nation and CleanAIRE NC worked together, collectively called SoIAIRE, and developed a more community-centered approach to support sustainability in the Corridors, tying environment to the local businesses. The purpose of this effort was to:

- Inform the GreenPrints initiative,
- Refine priorities for residents of the corridor,
- Inform the existing work of Sol Nation and CleanAIRE NC, and
- Collect data to establish the foundation of future project implementation.

In order to accomplish this, SoIAIRE came up with a unique approach

to engagement reaching people where they actively shopped. Customers were asked to participate in the survey and would receive a gift card to the local business as well as SoIAIRE t-shirts. This model resonated with the residents as they did not have to take an additional trip in order to participate. This process encouraged shopping locally, building community, and learning more about how this initiative can better reach the community.

This model was successful, with a total of 394 survey responses across the Corridors of Opportunity zip codes. For this report, we are going to focus on Zip Codes 28214 and 28208 which cover the Freedom/Wilkinson Corridor of

Opportunity.

There were a total of 143 respondents specifically for this corridor, characterized by a high minority population response (90%+ across both zip codes) with just under half of all respondents renting their home.

Sustainable Housing (66%) and Energy Burden (56%) were ranked as the top community concerns of high priority, highlighting significant concern about affordability, displacement, and rising utility costs. Legacy Pollution (50%) also ranked highly, indicating strong awareness of long-lasting environmental harms that impact health and well-being. It is important to note that while legacy

TOTAL SURVEYS COLLECTED

394



CORRIDOR-SPECIFIC RESPONSES

143



MINORITY COMMUNITY REPRESENTED

90%

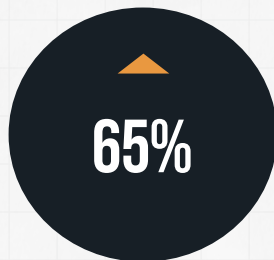


pollution refers to the persistent contamination by industry that continues to harm the environment, persistent issues with litter and trash were categorized within the legacy pollution bucket for the purposes of this plan due to similarity in impact.

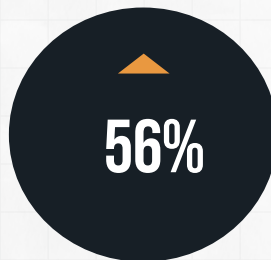
The fact that highest priorities were not consistent among both groups speaks to the difference of experiences across this corridor, while supporting the overall finding that all concerns measured were of a growing or high concern to 50%+ of respondents.

A closer look at the data showed that there were some differences in participant priorities based upon whether they were homeowners or home renters. The results for this corridor show that homeowners held long-term sustainability of housing and energy burden as the highest priorities, while renters emphasized extreme weather and storms as the highest priorities.

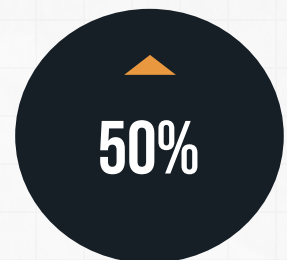
Top Three Community Priorities (High Priority) (All Issue Areas Rated as High or Growing Priority by 50%+ of Respondents)



SUSTAINABLE HOUSING



ENERGY BURDEN



LEGACY POLLUTION

Freedom/Wilkinson Corridor of Opportunity Survey Responses

	Tree Canopy	Sustainable Housing	Solar Power	Electrification	Energy Burden	Legacy Pollution	Extreme Weather	Storms	Urban Flooding
High Priority	46%	66%	30%	34%	56%	50%	41%	34%	29%
Growing Priority	29%	19%	34%	36%	32%	34%	38%	35%	36%
Low Priority	18%	10%	27%	17%	9%	12%	17%	23%	26%
No Priority	6%	5%	9%	12%	2%	3%	3%	8%	8%



Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church EDIBLE LANDSCAPE & ORCHARD

EST. 2021

We hope you enjoy the fruits and vegetables planted and tended by our community. This edible landscape is improving access to healthy foods and building Charlotte's tree canopy. Please read about the trees, learn how to get involved and feel free to sample the bounty.

Winner of the 2019 National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award

This Project is Made Possible by Generous Support From:
Office of Policy and Prevention - Mecklenburg County Public Health
Mecklenburg Extension Master Gardener Volunteers
Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church Parishioners
Camp Green Neighbors Association
Village HeartBeat

SUNDAY SCHOOL
WORSHIP SERVICE 10:45AM
BIBLE STUDY WED 7:00PM
REV DR C E THOMPSON JR PASTOR

“

I SUPPORT ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO USE LESS ENERGY, HAVE CLEANER AIR, AND SUPPORT SAFER GREEN SPACES.”

GREEN PRINT ACTION PLAN

Sustainable Housing

Urban Shade

Clean Air & Transportation

Information from residents has been integrated into three buckets that highlight similarly focused action items to help address environmental injustice in the Freedom/Wilkinson Corridor of Opportunity. Feedback that discusses the same type of project has been grouped together under each topical bucket. The initial key issues and new sustainability project ideas generated at the public meetings were curated against the community survey data to create the list of actions below. Please note that a full list of potential actions is included in the appendix.

Sustainable Housing: The sustainable housing bucket of projects includes those projects aimed to enhance the quality of housing in Charlotte through energy efficiency and sustainable upgrades, along with critical home repairs to enable these improvements. These projects aim to reduce energy burden, improve housing conditions, and enhance environmental sustainability for residents.

Urban Shade: Urban shade projects include those focused on enhancing urban living conditions in the city through strategic tree plantings and care and green space support. The aim of this bucket of projects is to create a cooler, greener, and more inviting environment for residents by increasing the urban tree canopy, particularly in areas with low tree canopy within the study area.

Clean Air & Transportation: Clean Air and Transportation projects are bundled together as the two are closely linked. The projects under this section focus on improving air quality, promoting sustainable transportation, and reducing the urban heat island effect in the study area by leveraging air quality monitoring, supporting the expansion and integration of sustainable modes of transportation, and promoting the electrification of facilities.

Sustainable Housing

Action	Definition
<p>Sustainable Housing Initiative: Tier 1</p>	<p>The Sustainable Housing Initiative is designed to enhance the quality of housing in Charlotte through energy efficiency and sustainable upgrades matched with critical home repairs. The program aims to reduce energy burden on homeowners who pay a disproportional amount on energy, improve living conditions, and promote environmental stewardship.</p> <p>Tier 1 of this initiative focuses upon basic home repairs and rehabilitation including roof repair, window and door repair, insulation, building envelope sealing, and/or other essential repair needs.</p>
<p>Sustainable Housing Initiative: Tier 2</p>	<p>Tier 2 of this Sustainable Housing Initiative focuses upon energy efficiency and beneficial electrification upgrades including replacement windows, heat pump HVAC systems, heat pump water heaters, induction stoves, heat pump clothing dryers, and/or other energy and water efficient appliances.</p>
<p>Sustainable Housing Initiative: Tier 3</p>	<p>Tier 3 of this Sustainable Housing Initiative focuses upon roofing, specifically focused on new roofing to support solar panel installations or cool roofing options for new roof projects where substantial tree canopy reduces the energy generation potential for a roof. This specific tier was highlighted as a new sustainability idea for this corridor.</p>
<p>Workforce Training and Business Expansion Opportunities</p>	<p>Residents want to ensure that when new green technologies are being utilized and invested in within the city, that workforce development opportunities also arise to support residents with gaining these skills. Additionally, this would include support for registering businesses with Charlotte as well as M/W/SBE registration.</p>

Action	Definition
One-Day Sustainable Housing Clinic(s)	<p>To support the Sustainable Housing Initiative, it is recognized that residents and businesses alike would like some additional support accessing city programs. The purpose of these clinics would be to have one-day focused workshops to support sustainability efforts within the home. Some topics in the sustainable housing space include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIY weatherization workshops for renters and homeowners.
Solar Canopy Installation	<p>Residents specifically asked that solar canopies be considered for integration at affordable housing developments and new developments within the corridor to offer sustainable energy access and additional shade for vehicles.</p>

Urban Shade

Action	Definition
<p>Tree Care and Maintenance</p>	<p>Residents shared various concerns about the trees, or lack thereof, in their neighborhoods. In communities lacking a tree canopy, residents are conflicted; some want trees planted, while others are nervous about property damage that could be caused by trees as well as maintenance costs for trees. There is also a concern for those neighborhoods that have a substantial tree canopy that is aging and wish to prevent canopy loss due to tree age/condition. This action would include education on tree benefits and care, and include support for the city’s Canopy Cares program.</p>
<p>Equitable Street Tree Planting Policy</p>	<p>Due to resident concerns about tree canopy, and the fact that tree canopy received 72% of survey respondents highlighting it as a growing or high priority, this action supports an update of the existing street tree planting program. The transition would move from planting street trees in City of Charlotte rights-of-way where requested by residents to planting street trees in city rights-of-way where shade and trees are needed the most. This would include education and outreach on the benefits of tree canopy.</p>
<p>Green Space Additions</p>	<p>Residents shared that they would like more green/open spaces in their corridor, especially including water features and with WiFi capabilities. This action specifically supports the efforts to preserve existing canopy and green spaces, while looking for opportunities to grow the existing park spaces throughout the corridor. Additional considerations would be to include improved crossings and connections to existing and new green spaces.</p>
<p>Shade in Hot Spot Area</p>	<p>Residents are concerned about urban heat and the impacts to their health. While related to many other actions, this action specifically looks at how to reduce urban heat captured and provide refuge from the heat via natural and other methods. This includes shading along sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus stops as well as supporting informal cooling centers and/or other options for heat refuge, etc.</p>

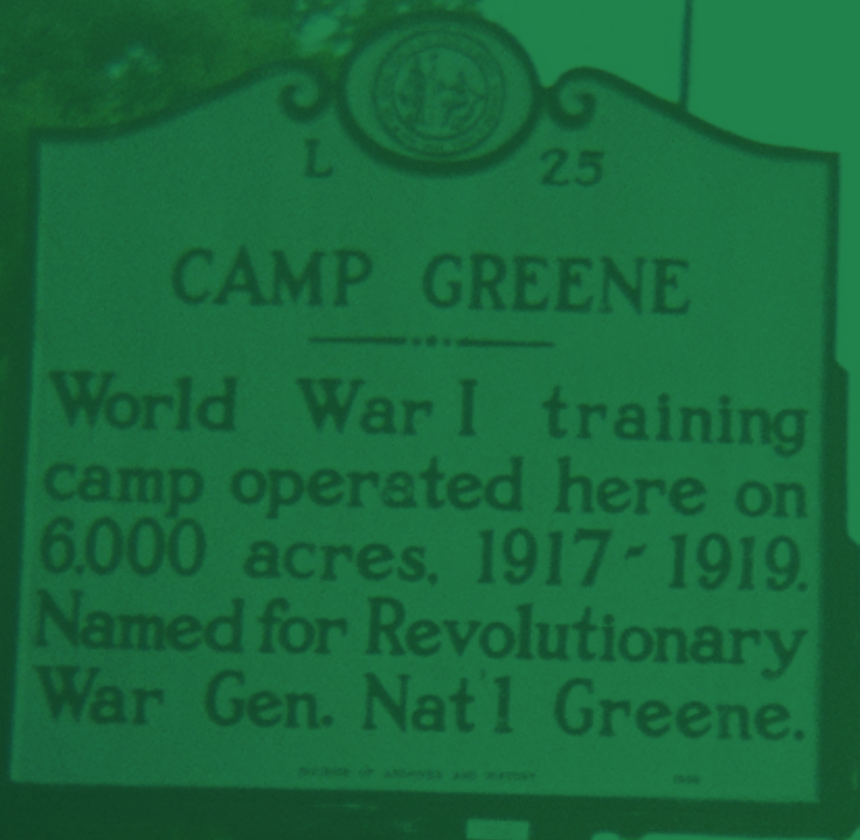
Clean Air & Transportation

Action	Definition
Indoor & Outdoor Air Quality Monitors	Environmental concerns discussed with community have both indoor and outdoor air quality implications. Having air quality monitors installed before projects begin help show trends and effectiveness of actions. Additionally, this action item includes education, such as the CleanAIRE Academy to fully understand air quality issues. Please note that while this is a separate action item, this action can be paired with any other action item to monitor associated air quality.
Roadway Maintenance Education	This item specifically refers to understanding what needs exist on city-maintained roads versus state-maintained roads. This is needed to help residents understand the differences between maintenance responsibilities, what is feasible, and help support resident advocacy for roadway conditions.
More educational resources about transportation options and greenways.	Residents feel more signage is needed, as well as information on potential transportation options from points A to B to highlight available options in this corridor.
infrastructure to close walkability gaps.	Residents expressed concerns over the ability to use sidewalks to get to and from places they live, work, and play. This action includes communication on and about sidewalk gaps and potential timelines to fill in those gaps.
Electric Vehicle Car Sharing programs	Residents highlighted overall connections to vehicle electrification and charging access. One program supporting improved access is EV car-sharing initiatives, such as the Carolina Carshare pilot at Peppertree Apartments.

Action	Definition
<p>Bicycle/E-Bicycle Infrastructure</p>	<p>Cycling infrastructure was brought up as a continued need in the area, specifically connected and shaded bike lanes, bike corrals, and charging for e-bikes as well as incentives for purchasing/receiving e-bikes with safety training.</p>
<p>Bus Stop Shelters/ Shade</p>	<p>While there are bus stops along Freedom Drive and Wilkinson boulevard, access to transit remains an issue residents have brought up, due to sheltering from heat, benches and seating, etc. at the bus stops.</p>
<p>City Clean Vehicle Projects</p>	<p>Residents shared overall concern about air pollution. The city is looking into anti-idling projects specifically for municipal operations within the corridor, including auxiliary power units for Charlotte Fire Dept. and Landscape Management vehicles that may need to run equipment off of trucks, as well as transitioning to electric vehicles where appropriate.</p>
<p>Emission Reduction Measures</p>	<p>An additional action related to overall air pollution concerns focuses on long idle lines typically experienced at grade schools during drop off and pick up. This action includes signs to turn off cars because students are breathing that air, students using air quality monitors to show the impact, fining cars for idling with money going back to the school, and having students holding signs during high traffic times. Specifically, residents discussed this as an issue for Oaklawn, West Charlotte High, and Northwest.</p>
<p>Trash/litter reduction</p>	<p>Many residents shared feedback about litter in their community and along the major transportation routes along with highlighting legacy pollution and related issues as one of their top three priority concerns to address. This includes issues such as litter and illegal dumping, which disproportionately burden residents and businesses. This action includes initiatives to clean up, empower, and green the Historic West End—such as the EcoRenaissance project—as well as other areas identified as needing targeted attention, focusing on environmental renewal and workforce development.</p>

Other

Action	Definition
Stormwater Management	Residents shared concern over flooding of roadways and stormwater management throughout the corridor. Additionally, the corridor analysis shows ongoing stormwater projects in the area. This action area, therefore, supports continued management and work to improve stormwater drainage and potential flooding areas throughout the corridor.



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**COMMUNITY-LED ACTION IS
NOT ONLY WELCOME—IT IS ESSENTIAL TO
THE SUCCESS OF THIS WORK.”**

Measuring Progress means . . .

It is time to get to work. Implementing this GreenPrint means taking the action plan and designing community-focused actions to improve environmental justice outcomes. The project team will continue to look for funding opportunities from the public and private sectors, philanthropy, and alignment of strategic priorities with GreenPrint actions to move this work forward.

The initial phase will focus on a select group of projects prioritized based on feedback throughout the engagement process. These will help show what it takes to move from planning to on-the-ground results. As the first group of projects progresses, more will be added in later phases.

Community-Driven Efforts

Community members and organizations are encouraged to take the lead in advancing projects that matter most to their neighborhoods. Throughout the engagement period, residents have shared that they may not feel that projects from other efforts have been “for them” to take action. The intent of this plan is to clearly remove those barriers. Community-led action is not only welcome—it is essential to the success of this work. The community does not need special permission to get involved — your

ideas and leadership are welcome. If you’re not sure where to start, you can reach out to the project team for help or tools to get things going. Additional outside funding opportunities will be shared when available to help grow local impact.

Timelines and Checkpoints

Each project will follow a structured timeline that outlines major steps from planning to completion. While the exact timing may vary, all projects will include:

- A launch window or expected start date
- Key milestones and checkpoints
- Community engagement or co-leadership goals
- Support needed from partners or city departments.

Annually, the project team will report out on:

- Projects started and completed
- Projects underway or delayed
- New projects scheduled for launch
- Community participation and leadership
- Total investment to date

Updates will be shared online, through community partners, in public meetings or events, and through the existing Corridors of Opportunity annual reporting to ensure transparency.

Success Indicators

Success will be measured through a mix of progress tracking and real-world outcomes. While some data points may be used, success isn’t only about data or charts — it’s about real progress. So here’s what will be used to ensure implementation is on the right track:

- Projects are moving forward,
- People are joining in,
- Money is being invested in communities,
- Community groups are leading their own efforts, and
- Barriers are coming down, and ideas are turning into action

All participants are encouraged to look for new funding opportunities along the way to help complete the work. Together, these indicators will show how the work is growing and how well it is serving the people and places most impacted.



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TO SUCCEED, SOLUTIONS NEED TO BE SUPPORTED AND CHAMPIONED BY THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THESE AREAS. THAT MEANS INVOLVING RESIDENTS IN DECISIONS, RESPECTING THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCES, AND MAKING SURE THEY HAVE THE POWER AND RESOURCES TO HELP SHAPE THEIR OWN FUTURE.”

APPENDIX

Throughout the community engagement process, all community input, comments, and concerns were documented by the project team. This appendix contains additional community ideas, projects, and programs identified during the engagement process.

Action	Definition
Consistent upgrades to rental homes.	Residents shared common concern that rental homes are not routinely maintained across the city. This action would include making sure leasing offices kept homes properly renovated.
Pollution & Odor Mitigation	Residents mentioned odor concerns associated with certain business types in the corridor. This action seeks to determine mitigation options for odors and emissions from nearby industrial uses (e.g., propane tank business).
Noise Pollution Mitigation	Residents requested further study and mitigation options to help with noise pollution. This action includes studying rail and traffic noise impacts, including train horns at key intersections.
Creek Restoration and Sewer Pipes	Residents would like to see more creek restorations in their communities to support improved environment and reduced flooding, knowing that this is also impacted by sewer lines in the area.

GREENPRINTS

CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY