



# Transformation Strategy Report

## *Beatties Ford/LaSalle Corridor*

Charlotte, NC  
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## Acknowledgements

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The Advisory Committee has met regularly since Fall 2018 to guide the National Main Street Center in developing transformation strategies for the Beatties Ford/LaSalle business district. We acknowledge these dedicated volunteers who are residents, business owners and community leaders and are grateful for their time and commitment to advancing the work:

- Aaron Sanders
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- William Hughes

The Steering Committee comprises of City of Charlotte staff, CMPD and funding partner Knight Foundation and have met since Fall 2018 to support the Advisory Committee and identify partnerships and city resources that can support the UrbanMain work at Beatties Ford/LaSalle.

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We would like to thank all the participants that committed their time and brilliance in interviews, workshops and trainings to help with the revitalization of the Beatties Ford/LaSalle commercial district over the past 15 months.

## Foreword

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In 2017, in collaboration with Historic West End community members and Knight Foundation, City of Charlotte Economic Development began researching the National Main Street Center (NMSC) program as a new model for commercial revitalization to be implemented in the City's business corridors. NMSC, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, partners with organizations and leaders at the local, city, state, and national levels to protect the historic character of cities and towns across the country. For more than 35 years, the NMSC has helped more than 2,000 communities create \$65 billion in public and private investment.

At the same time, NMSC had recently launched a new program, UrbanMain to respond to a growing need for specialized services, professional development, networking and advocacy for the field of urban commercial district practitioners. UrbanMain offers a new set of community-driven economic development services to help under-resourced, older and historic neighborhood commercial districts restore economic vitality and promote quality of life. UrbanMain was created to provide urban districts greater flexibility in how they use NMSC services and provides support for issues such as gentrification or security; challenges that may not be addressed through the traditional NMSC network.

City staff joined community members in touring established and emerging UrbanMain districts in peer cities to see the model in action. The UrbanMain model helps transform areas within a neighborhood through comprehensive work in four broad areas, known as the Four Points: economic vitality, design, promotion and organization. Commercial districts use this approach to guide comprehensive revitalization efforts that help communities identify their unique competitive advantage, leverage the power of residents and implement a series of short-and-long-term projects.

When selecting a pilot district to test the UrbanMain model in Charlotte, the City and community stakeholders identified Beatties Ford/LaSalle where the model could address ongoing issues that plagued the district and were hampering the current efforts of revitalization. Staff identified themes that could all be addressed by the UrbanMain model: criminal activity and loitering; sluggish commercial investment despite increasing development pressure in other parts of the corridor; blight and code violations; the need for safety and walkability; and better relationships between local businesses and the community.

Beatties Ford/LaSalle also has unique assets that can shape a successful UrbanMain district. The Main Street model is rooted in preserving culture and history and creating transformational strategies based on a district's assets. The entire Beatties Ford Road corridor stretches 15 miles from the historic halls of Johnson C. Smith University to the shores of Lake Norman. In the heart of that stretch, historic institutions such as the Excelsior Club, United House of Prayer and West Charlotte High School have become cornerstones in tradition and black African-American culture in Charlotte. Over the years, many long-time businesses located on the corridor and residents who live in the neighborhoods surrounding Beatties Ford/LaSalle have had a lasting impact on the City.

City staff engaged NMSC staff to use the UrbanMain model to help reimagine the area surrounding the intersection at Beatties Ford Road and LaSalle Street. In partnership with the Knight Foundation and driven by community input and vision, the city hopes to partner with the Beatties Ford/LaSalle community to build a highly competitive and vibrant urban business district. Together in this effort, we will highlight the district's rich history and culture, help improve quality of life, nurture equitable growth to minimize displacement, and extend economic opportunity to residents who live and do business in the district.

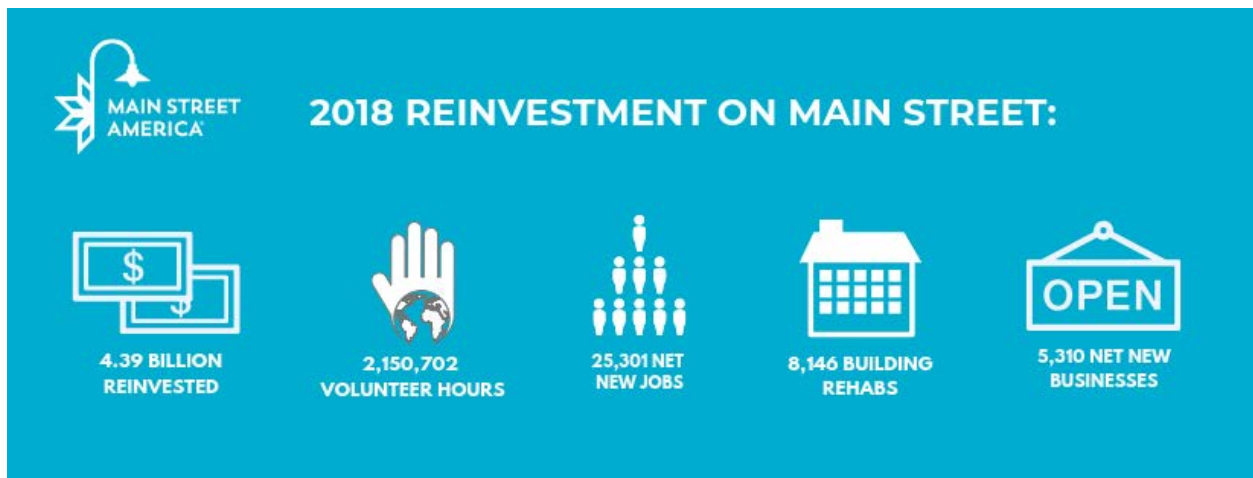
The strategies and work detailed in this report represent a significant amount of time and resources given by the Beatties Ford/LaSalle community to create a work plan that is achievable, authentic and exciting. The City is committed to continuing this partnership to create a vibrant and prosperous Beatties Ford/LaSalle UrbanMain district.

## About the National Main Street Center

Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for more than 35 years. Today it is a network of more than 1,600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Since 1980, over 2,000 programs have used the Main Street Approach, our time-tested framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization. The National Main Street Center conducts research to document our impact by annually collecting statistical information on the preservation, revitalization, and economic activities in local Main Street programs throughout the country.

More information about the Main Street Approach can be found at [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org)



## About the Main Street Approach

The “Main Street Refresh” initiative aims to rethink the traditional Main Street model, so the program is more responsive to economic context and its outcomes are directly measurable.



This philosophy is enveloped within the new Main Street Refresh. At the core of the Main Street Refresh are economically-grounded “Transformation Strategies.” These Strategies will serve as the foundation for the revitalization program’s work. Most of the activities within the organization’s annual workplan as part of the Main Street Approach should then be guided by the Strategies and aligned around an agreed direction and outcome. As part of the technical assistance, and as an aid to making the new format easier to adopt, the National Main Street Center developed nearly 20 “off-the-shelf” strategies that can be employed in a range of conditions seen across a variety of communities. These are, essentially, ready-made Transformation Strategies. They are a place to begin and can be customized along the way. We have called this initial set “Catalyst Strategies.”

Every community has a unique set of place-based assets, anchors, and consumer markets that help to define a healthy business district. Enhancing those efforts through a targeted economic development strategy requires a more thorough understanding of the marketplace. One of the best ways to help retain existing businesses and recruit new ones is by preparing information about the specific customers who are currently served or who could be served by the business district. The local commercial revitalization program provides a very important benefit by developing a comprehensive analysis of the district market that aligns vision and consumer data with transformation strategies that drive the organization’s revitalization programming. Most market analysis consultants perform their work and provide local community leaders simply with information. The Main Street approach is to work together with organization leaders to understand the market data and develop comprehensive and execution-driven strategies to deliver economic development results. This approach accomplishes several goals:

- Builds local knowledge and understanding of the district’s economy to create a foundation for successful revitalization
- Identifies current strengths of the business mix and existing business clusters
- Supplies relevant consumer data to the revitalization program so it can help existing businesses become stronger
- Identifies opportunities for future business attraction and business cluster expansion
- Builds a strategic framework for niche development, including real estate development, business development, promotions, marketing, branding, etc.

The goal of the provided service was to assist the Beatties Ford/LaSalle community and program leadership to identify the strategies that are the best fit by using information they already have in-hand or that can be easily obtained through data and survey collection.





## Executive Summary

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The National Main Street Center's (NMSC) UrbanMain Program and the City of Charlotte's Department of Economic Development have been closely working with the West End community to create an UrbanMain program in Charlotte's Beatties Ford/LaSalle district. Over the past 15 months, UrbanMain's Director Dionne Baux and City of Charlotte Department of Economic Development staffers have hosted several onsite meetings to gather direct input, build the capacity of local organizations, stakeholders and residents interested in learning and implementing the Main Street Approach, and the development of projects with local residents that they plan to implement in Charlotte's Beatties Ford/LaSalle commercial district. See an overview below of each workshop hosted in the community.



**October 23 – 24, 2018** initial program site visit and kickoff. The goals of the visit were to

- Highlight input received from a pre-survey distributed to the community and leadership, and
- Conduct on-site interviews with the City of Charlotte staff, political officials, property owners, business owners, and the community to gather input from people that have a long record of direct involvement with the corridor and hear their perception and attitudes about the district.

The visit further refined how the UrbanMain process could serve as the framework to revitalize the corridor, identify development strategies that best fit the needs of residents, and how best to gather community input. The visit helped highlight for the NMSC team how to best work with district leadership and produce an implementable plan to revitalize the district that both leadership and the community owns and can successfully fulfill.

The visit consisted of direct observations of the commercial district and focus group meetings. It also involved a community-wide meeting to discuss direct input received on issues facing the district, community attitudes about the district, and how-to best work with the community on small- and large-scale revitalization projects in the district. Specifically, the visit focused on the following:

- Introduce the Main Street planning framework through the UrbanMain program;
- Discuss desired revitalization outcomes, corridor assets and liabilities, as a starting point to develop the best path to revitalize the Beatties Ford/LaSalle Corridor and;
- Assist with the development of an Advisory Committee and agree upon the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee members – utilizing the Main Street framework.

**September 19, 2019** consensus building workshop. Over 60 advisory committee members, stakeholders and residents participated in a facilitated session to arrive at consensus on the following question:

*What steps can we take with the UrbanMain program to ensure it positively impacts the commercial corridor and improves the quality of our lives?*

The workshop question was developed with direct input from the Advisory Committee. The goal of the workshop was to engage all stakeholders, generate real excitement, commitment and ownership to revitalize the Beatties Ford/LaSalle commercial corridor.

**October 12, 2019** Main Street 101 training. Over 30 attendees participated in this full day workshop covered the fundamentals of Main Street's Four – Point approach:

- Organization
- Promotion
- Design
- Economic Vitality

The workshop featured practitioners from across the country (Washington DC and Birmingham, AL) currently implementing the approach. These managers shared on-the-ground examples, successes and challenges their individual programs have faced implementing the Main Street approach in an urban context. The training was designed for Charlotte's advisory committee members, interested volunteers, elected officials, municipal staff, commercial property owners, merchants interested in revitalizing the commercial district.

**November 9, 2019** Over 40 attendees participated in the workplan development workshop utilizing the Main Street approach. The half-day workshop worked with the advisory committee and volunteers committed to working on the Beatties Ford/LaSalle commercial corridor. The group decided on the committees they wanted to be part of (e.g. design, economic vitality, organization and promotion). Each committee created a detailed workplan with projects, priorities, and timelines to move forward the revitalization efforts on the commercial district – their projects are listed in the suggested activities section of this report.



## Key Observations

The following is a summary of observation based on our work in the district over the past 15-months.

- **Organization:** The Beatties Ford/LaSalle commercial corridor possesses the capacity in strong leadership, community, business and city resources needed to revitalize the corridor from the community and civic organizations. The following observations led the UrbanMain to this conclusion:

- Beatties Ford/LaSalle district leadership worked with the community to create an advisory committee including individuals representing the community and various community and civic organizations such as the city, financial institutions, historic preservation, and the university. Their roles have been to study the Main Street approach through on-site workshops, trainings, field visits to other main streets, attendance to the National Main Street Center conference, and move the effort through its early stages of inception.
- Identify or create managing organization: As the program matures and continues to grow over the next 12 months, identification of an existing organization in the community or development of an organization that will be responsible for managing the Main Street program, staff, preparing and approving annual budgets, keeping accounting and financial records, developing organizational policies and procedures, maintaining the board and committee structures. Additionally, this organization must be responsible for the external organization responsibilities of the Main Street program which includes planning and conducting fundraising activities, increasing the volunteer base, seeking public/private partnerships, developing broad-based community support through consistent communication and implementing a public relations strategy.
- **Staff capacity:** Beatties Ford/LaSalle corridor would benefit from hiring a staff person with deep partnerships and relationships in the corridor, basic understanding of economic development principles and the ability to outreach to community at-large. Specifically, the UrbanMain staff should focus on the following:
  - Organize and collaborate with community stakeholders in the Beatties Ford/LaSalle corridor (residents, block club leaders, property owners, businesses owners, etc.) and political leaders.
  - Effectively carry-out and manage joint economic development efforts.
- **Guiding Principles:** District leadership representatives and their partners have an economic development philosophy that is consistent with the National Main Street Center’s guiding principles of incrementalism, comprehensiveness, grassroots, partnerships, and a focus on existing assets.
- **Ongoing Training:** Integration of the Main Street approach, continued access to online and in-person professional development tools and trainings, access to current economic development trends and best practices for staff, board and volunteers will assist in the implementation of growth strategies of the UrbanMain program.
- **Promotion:** Gain publicity about the progress being made toward the establishment of the UrbanMain program and the positive happenings in the district.
  - Communicate positive messages about activities in the district and provide information on advisory committee projects as it works toward the establishment of a Main Street program. This can be accomplished by producing a simple newsletter. Such a publication will be very helpful in raising awareness in the community and can also serve to assist in fundraising efforts. Include regular stories on the district’s progress, its work plan to

revitalize the district, how the organization can assist district businesses and property owners, how the community benefits from the effort, and the ways in which residents can volunteer to help the effort. In creating this newsletter, think about developing a logo that signifies the uniqueness of Beatties Ford/LaSalle district.

- Keep the media informed of the advisory committee’s activities and progress. Continue to provide media releases, interviews, and one-on-one contact to keep media representatives apprised of the development of the UrbanMain program on a regular basis. It may be possible for one of the advisory committee’s members to write a regular blog post or column on corridor progression updates for the local newspaper.
- Develop a simple informational brochure to describe the Beatties Ford/LaSalle Corridor UrbanMain Initiative. The brochure should explain the structure of the program; identify what the program does in the areas of Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Vitality; describe the services provided through the program; explain who benefits from the organization’s work; and include some information on projects the organization will be undertaking. A simple brochure allows people to absorb the information at their own pace and lends credibility to the effort. The brochure can also be used as a tool for fundraising.

## How to Use This Report

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The National Main Street Center's Transformation Strategy Report aims to guide the reader through our refreshed Four-Point Approach. It is more responsive to the economic context, community input, and how outcomes are directly measurable to revitalizing the district. One of the best ways to understand how your district is performing, help retain existing businesses, and recruit new businesses is by preparing information about the specific customer base that is currently being served and who could be served by the main street district. This report looks at the following factors that help the main street program develop a comprehensive analysis of the district that aligns vision and consumer data with catalyst strategies that drive revitalization programming.

- Create a foundation for successful revitalization by tapping into local knowledge to understand the district's economy to;
- Identify current strengths of the business mix with existing business clusters;
- Supply relevant and up-to-date consumer data to the local revitalization organization so it can help existing businesses become stronger;
- Identify opportunities for future business attraction, district programming, and business cluster expansion;
- Build a strategic framework for market niche development, including real estate development, business development, promotions, marketing and branding, etc.

The transformation strategies can serve as the foundation of the revitalization program's work. Most activities in the local revitalization program should be guided by the recommended transformation strategies and aligned around an agreed direction and outcome.

Please remember the following:

- Stay on the same page
  - As new partners and volunteers come onboard, communicate how you got here.
- Understand the market
  - As the local revitalization program pursue new businesses and customer segments, refer to the market data.
- Vet new project ideas
  - Do they fit/reinforce identified transformation strategies?
- Inspire
  - Use this report and previous reports, case studies, and best practices to inspire when you get stuck!

## Engagement

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Community engagement is a critical component of developing a successful UrbanMain district. The program is structured to support community volunteer teams to envision and implement most of the district's work program. Throughout the pilot initiative, city staff have relied on the input of the Advisory Committee to determine the best methods and to define successful engagement for the district. As of December 2019, the UrbanMain initiative has had over 680 engagements, which consists of attendees at community meetings, Advisory Committee meetings, trainings and survey results.

### Advisory Committee

At the start of the UrbanMain initiative, city staff worked with community leaders and neighborhood stakeholders to form an UrbanMain Advisory Committee to provide high-level, community-based oversight and guidance for the work. The Committee's 21 members represent the neighborhoods adjacent to the UrbanMain boundary, business owners (both new and old), business leaders, nonprofit leaders and financial lenders active in the corridor, CMPD, HNS Community Engagement, and Planning, Design and Development.

Additionally, the City of Charlotte Steering Committee oversees the contract with UrbanMain and consists of staff from these departments: Economic Development; Housing and Neighborhood Services; CMPD; Planning, Design and Development; and Knight Foundation (funding partner).



### Survey

In September 2018 and August 2019, UrbanMain staff conducted community surveys to determine the community's attitudes and desires for the district. Available online and distributed on paper to over 500 residents and customers, we received over 300 results.

### Timeline

In October 2018, the City hosted a communitywide kickoff meeting – NMSC staff and consultants highlighted the survey results and market data. Staff also introduced the Main Street four-point approach. Before the meeting, the UrbanMain team visited Charlotte and conducted stakeholder meetings, a site visit and community/organizational assessment.

After the kick-off meeting, City staff conducted one-on-one meetings and presentations to neighborhood organizations and community members. Some Advisory Committee members attended a Main Street 101 training session at the national Main Street conference in March 2019. The committee also laid out a timeline for conducting in-person surveys and re-engaging the community at-large in visioning and workplan development.

In August, in response to a need for a more representative survey response rate, UrbanMain re-opened the online survey and distributed over 500 paper copies to neighbors and customers of local businesses. Advisory Committee members were instrumental in getting more results from a broader array of stakeholders.

The committee laid out a plan for a series of workshops throughout the fall. These workshops built consensus and led to a shared vision among stakeholders. On September 19, City staff hosted a community visioning and consensus workshop. The workshop, led by UrbanMain and with 60 attendees, engaged community stakeholders and generated creative project ideas for the district. When polled on if the initiative was on the right track, most participants responded “yes.”



On October 12, staff hosted a Main Street 101 training for any interested community stakeholder. The full-day session covered the fundamentals of the Main Street Four-Point Approach and practitioners from other UrbanMain districts (Birmingham and Washington DC) gave examples of how they tailored the program to fit their unique districts.

On November 9, staff hosted a community workplan development workshop, led by UrbanMain Advisory Committee members and volunteers created detailed workplans for each of the four points. Workplans identified projects, priorities, budgets and timelines to move forward revitalization efforts on the commercial corridor. Teams dedicated to each of the four points were formed and laid out their schedule of meetings to implement the work.

The four teams continue to develop projects to be implemented by December 2020 and work with city staff to identify resources, partners and coordinate implementation.

## Community Survey Results

For Beatties Ford/LaSalle district two surveys was employed to gather input from residents, businesses and key stakeholders from the community.

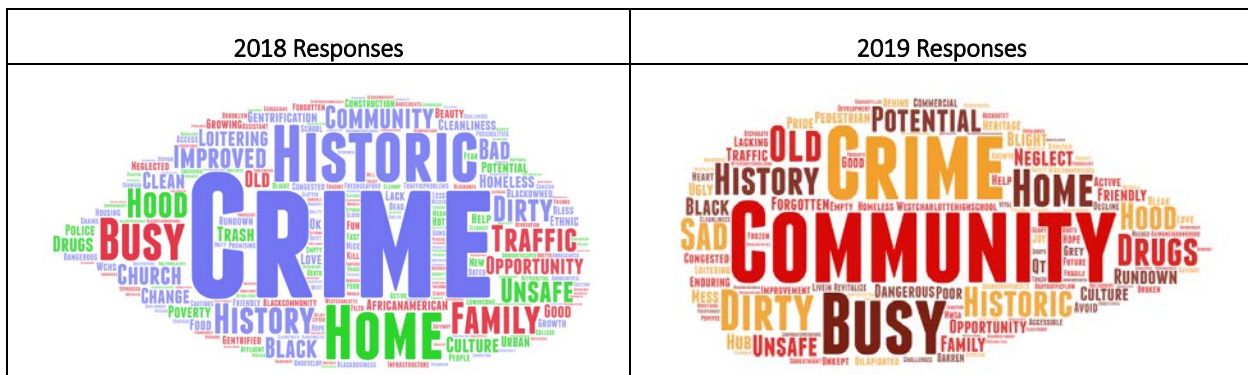
The first survey was administered in October 2018 and received 89 responses. The second survey was administered in September 2019 and received an additional 202 responses. In total, over 300 responses were received and collected using the online survey tool, Survey Monkey.

Questions were geared toward surfacing attitudes about the district, challenges and opportunities the district is facing, desired business types and attitudes and the community perceptions about Beatties Ford/LaSalle district. The following represents a breakdown of those responses. An excel spreadsheet with each survey response is provided in the Appendix section of this report.

### Why a survey?

- **Community Survey:** Open to anyone who might live, work, or visit the Beatties Ford/LaSalle district. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information, seek knowledge people possess about the district, understand community attitudes towards the district, find out shopping preferences, and learn when, why, and how often people visit the district.

What three words come to mind when you think about the Beatties Ford/LaSalle District?



### Analysis:

The top word for both years were, Crime; however, many see the district as historic and a place to call home with potential. This show that responders value the historic fabric and the sense of home the district provides; however, they don’t see it as a safe shopping district with goods and service they need. Continued efforts to clean up the district, attract investment that the community wants should be a chief priority to leadership as it continues to attract residents and visitors to the district.



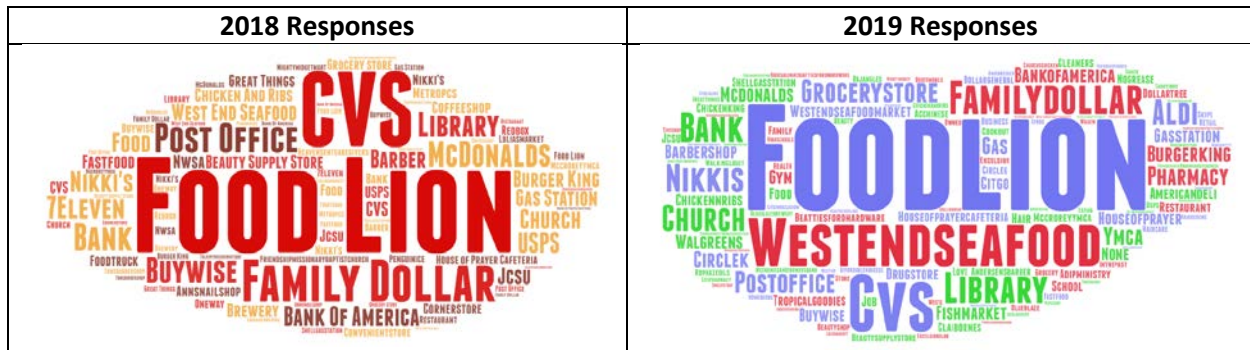
## What are the top three challenges facing the district?

2018 Responses				2019 Responses			
Rank	Challenges	#	%	Rank	Challenges	#	%
1	Cleanliness	42	47%	1	Crime	1	68%
2	Lack of commercial investment	42	47%	2	Cleanliness	2	33%
3	Crime	41	46%	3	Affordable Housing	3	33%

### Analysis:

Cleanliness and crime continue to show up as top challenges facing the district in both years. Patrons do not feel the district is appealing or safe to shop. Working with property owners and the city to rehabilitate buildings and working to change the perception of the district should be included as part of the main street strategy. Year two demonstrates an awareness on housing affordability, ensuring residents can remain in their homes should also be included as part of the main street strategy.

## Which businesses do you most often patronize in the district?



### Analysis:

It is important to understand what attracts people to the district, by understanding that Beatties Ford/LaSalle district leadership can begin to ascertain what kinds of businesses would succeed in the district – in part because they would likely share a similar customer base.

## What type of businesses would you like to see on the Main Street?

2018 Responses				2019 Responses			
Rank	Top three businesses desired in the district	#	%	Rank	Top three businesses desired in the district	#	%
1	Coffee Shop / Bakery	55	61%	1	Pub / Restaurant	66	32%
2	Pub / Restaurant	50	56%	2	Fine Dining	61	30%
3	Grocery	19	21%	3	Coffee Shop / Bakery	55	27%

### Analysis:

This data is telling us what types of businesses and amenities residents and non-residents alike desire to see in the Main Street.

# Demographic Characteristics Summary

The following represents a summary of key points that contribute to the development of the transformation strategies from demographics and psychographic review.

Psychographics is the study of personality, values, opinions, attitudes, interests, and lifestyles. Psychographic studies of individuals or communities can be valuable in the fields of marketing, demographics, opinion research, prediction, and social research in general. They can be contrasted with demographic variables (such as age and gender), behavioral variables (such as usage rate or loyalty), and organizational demographic variables (sometimes called firmographic variables), such as industry, number of employees and functional area.

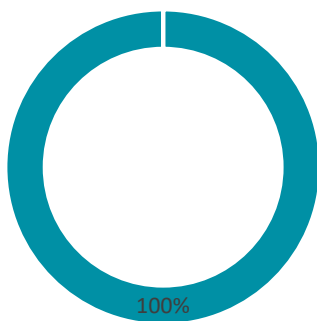


When a relatively complete profile of a person or group’s psychographic make-up is constructed, this is called a “psychographic profile.” Psychographic profiles are used in market segmentation, as well as in advertising. Some categories of psychographic factors used in market segmentation include:

- Activity, interest, opinion (AIOs)
- Attitudes
- Values
- Behavior

## Top Tapestry Segments

Tapestry psychographic data helps communities and businesses understand consumer lifestyle choices, what they buy, and how they spend their free time. Tapestry classifies US residential neighborhoods into 67 unique segments based on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. The following chart outlines the Beatties Ford/LaSalle Corridor top groups within a .5 mile of the district:



■ Modest Income Homes

## Transformation Strategies



### Neighborhood Goods & Services (Equitable Entrepreneurship)

Defined: Equitable Entrepreneurship development refers to unlocking the full potential of the local economy by dismantling barriers and expanding business opportunities (small business development, growth, retention) for low-income people and communities of color. A crucial component to aid in the success of these business types is the strategic alignment of a variety of public and private efforts – including government policies, funding and finance, human capital, and regulatory frameworks – to provide necessary financial, social, and human capital to foster entrepreneurship in innovative and creative ways. The value of place and the physical environment is important to creating and growing successful enterprises.

These enterprises are the key to future prosperity, so it is imperative that commercial district leaders understand their importance and support their growth. New businesses, especially those owned and operated by Millennials, immigrants, and minority groups, will bring new ideas, innovation, excitement, and jobs to communities. Beatties Ford/LaSalle Corridor desire to develop entrepreneurs to open businesses that fulfill day-to-day needs of nearby shoppers provides an opportunity to build a new crop of entrepreneurs that may be of and from the community and provides a cluster of retail and retail-service businesses that benefit the community.

It is important that Beatties Ford/LaSalle advisory committee or identified Main Street organization sees its role as a liaison or business connector to support and guide existing and aspiring entrepreneurs to opportunities that can aid in opening and or expanding their business (e.g. access to space, incentives, contacts, business support, networking events, etc.) and create a tailored program around Charlotte's minority entrepreneur unique environment needs. As the main street continues its work developing entrepreneurs the listed tenants below are necessary for the growth and sustainability of a healthy entrepreneurship development initiative:

- Operates in an environment with reduced bureaucratic obstacles
- Actively encourage and invite investment in new ventures
- Is relatively free from, or can change cultural biases on failure or operating a business
- Promote success, which in turn attracts new ventures
- Supported by dialogue and partnerships among various entrepreneurship stakeholders

The Neighborhood Goods and Services strategy pursues a cluster of retail and retail-service businesses that fulfill day-to-day needs of nearby shoppers. This typically includes grocery purchases, laundry and dry cleaning, drug store purchases, flowers, hardware, and similar items that people tend to buy close to home or work. Districts with a dominant convenience component tend to have relatively small trade areas since shoppers tend to go to the nearest location. In a walkable city, a convenience district may primarily serve customers who live or work within only a few blocks.

Historically, most traditional business districts excelled at meeting the needs of nearby shoppers. Today, because many convenience-type purchases have been consolidated in big-box stores and their smaller siblings (like chain drug stores), it has become unusual for a district to offer a complete range of convenience products and services. Still, a district with a full complement of convenience offerings is often highly desired by residents. It can offer a “hometown district” experience that many people seek for their community.

The Neighborhood Goods and Services strategy does not include specialized retailers, though sometimes the differences can be subtle: For example, groceries fall in the category of convenience purchases. But a specialty food store that sells 100 varieties of olive oil does not fit into the Convenience category, even though it is selling a food product. The goods and services sold in a convenience-oriented district are often undifferentiated from those sold in other convenience-oriented districts, but the places may be differentiated in other ways (such as attractiveness, historic setting, or customer service).

Benefits +	Tradeoffs —
<p>The Neighborhood Goods strategy offers what many people – especially residents – often say they want to be able to purchase in their own commercial district or downtown. The strategy helps to create a “full-service neighborhood” and, in many ways, serves as an amenity: It provides basic items nearby, so people don't have to travel far for everyday needs.</p>	<p>The main trade-off to the Neighborhood Goods and Services strategy is that it may offer a generic business mix and therefore may not be unique enough to draw customers from outside the local geography. In addition to the challenge of differentiation, certain systemic changes in retailing – especially the consolidation into larger general merchandise stores, drug stores, and supermarkets – have changed the nature of convenience-oriented districts where purchases are made at a handful of small, independent shops.</p>

### Activities (developed by residents)

There are many different activities that your organization and its partners might do to successfully implement this strategy. The activities listed below are those addressed by participants in the November 9<sup>th</sup> work plan session to address problems and opportunities that are specific to the Beatties Ford/LaSalle Corridor. The National Main Street Center encourages its Main Streets to start with activities that are relatively easy, then gradually tackle more challenging ones. Be sure to include activities in all Four Points of the Main Street Approach; this is essential!

Depending how you have chosen to organize your Main Street initiative and the resources in your community, projects and activities may be carried out by a single committee, by staff specialists, by a consortium of partner organizations, or by some combination of these. (For more information, see the Technical Bulletin, "[Organizing Your Main Street to Transform Your Community]")

Promotion Activities		
Status/Timeline	Activities	Partners
	Food Truck Rally: Build excitement for the UrbanMain program through food and entertainment. Show what's coming and what is possible through UrbanMain	
	Community Outreach: Connect community to existing resources. Host 2x per year, invite community resources and partners to share information and programs with neighbors.	
	Place Branding: Pole banners, and creation of a logos and swag materials.	
	Identify best venues for advertising and social media communication to reach a local audience	
	Help existing businesses establish loyalty programs (e.g., buy 10 sandwiches – or coffee or ice cream – and get the next one free).	
	Suggest businesses set out water bowls for dogs to encourage nearby residents to walk through the district regularly.	

Economic Vitality Activities		
Status/Timeline	Activities	Partners
January 2020	Survey of business owner interest / needs: eligibility for existing resources; identify resources that could be used	
	Meeting of financial institutions: education financial institutions on UrbanMain; Establish points of contact for businesses within each institution; develop digital and hard copy resource guide for businesses; figure out upfront capital strategies.	
December 2019	Understand property ownership: commercial and residential.	
December 2020	Coworking Space (Identify a location): Match operators with space	
	Identify specific products or services that businesses could add to their offerings that would help make the district's convenience offerings more comprehensive.  Help local businesses to add locally-produced products to their assortment	

Design Activities		
Status/Timeline	Activities	Partners
November 2019	Start a quarterly clean-up: Apply for a KCB grant; begin discussions with other corridors facing same issues; meet with HWEP and business owners; Link existing businesses to new funds/investment resources.	
	Design guidelines for businesses: Work with businesses to address loitering through design; Bring in KCB resources; Design standards/public space opportunities	
	Pop-up shop program	
	Conduct a parking survey to determine if the distribution of short-term, convenient spaces supports short, errand-type shopping trips.	
	Install bicycle racks to encourage nearby residents to pedal instead of drive to the district.	

Organization Activities		
Status/Timeline	Activities	Partners
	Coordination and Communication: Get to know and UM Advisory Committee: 1:1 meeting with existing organization on the corridor.	
	Organization community-wide meeting to share information: Increase capacity of communities, relationship building, volunteer recruitment.	
	Hire an UrbanMain coordinator by November 2020	
	Host a community meeting to solicit input on which products and services the community feels are most needed in the district	
	Set up a local listserv or e-newsletter to keep people informed of events or special programs in the commercial district.	

## Potential Products and Services:

The Neighborhood Goods and Services strategy encompasses many retail and services businesses. This list is not exhaustive but illustrates the range of businesses that can participate in the Neighborhood Goods and Services Strategy.



- Auto Repair
- Banks and credit unions
- Barbers and hair salons
- Bars
- Convenience store (e.g., 7-Eleven)
- Dollar Stores
- Dry Cleaners
- Fast Food and so-called “fast casual” restaurants
- Gas Station
- Hardware Stores
- Laundromats
- Office supplies stores
- Phone stores
- Pizza
- Prepared food stores
- Printing and shipping
- Restaurants (esp. moderate-price point and family-oriented)
- Supermarket / grocery store
- Tailors
- Take-out restaurants

## Measuring Progress

The following tools can be used to track your success in implementing the strategy and in measuring its impact on the commercial district as a whole:

- Conduct on-street surveys when you implement this strategy – then, conduct surveys one year, three years, and five years later, asking the same questions. Are more people patronizing the district for its convenience businesses? Are their impressions and perceptions of the district improving?

Your surveys should include questions in four specific categories:

- Attitudes and perceptions about the district
  - Current shopping habits
  - Additional products and services shoppers would like to be able to buy within the district
  - Demographic characteristics of those participating in the survey, including home zip code
- Track trends in the number of square feet of retail space devoted to neighborhood goods and services.
  - Ask the owners or managers of a representative sample of convenience-oriented businesses to keep an informal tally of foot traffic, average transaction amount, and gross sales. Interview the owners and managers at regular intervals and hold an annual focus group with them. Are the numbers increasing?



- Track the number of changes (in service offerings or product mix) that businesses have made to serve the convenience market.
- Choose several intersections or entry points in the district and count the number of people who walk by during 30-minute intervals. Do this at two or three key points in the day (e.g., morning, noon, and evening). Repeat the pedestrian counts at least twice a year, at the same times of day. Are the numbers increasing?

## Next Steps

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After you review the report and formalize the Transformation Strategies in a way that truly define the nuances of the Beatties Ford/LaSalle Main Street, it is critical that the city of Charlotte and its advisory board adopts the suggested strategy to focus on in the immediate future.

Build on the work sessions the National Main Street Center facilitated to further refine key goals and tactical elements within each of the Four Points that will further implement the selected Transformation Strategy.

- Align current projects with identified strategies
- Brainstorm new projects
- Set measurable outcomes for EVERY project
- Lastly, begin to outline who is responsible, budgets and timelines.

Review the following suggested additional resources that can serve as a tool to implement identified strategies; these documents can be found in the Appendix:

- *Cultivating Effective Leadership to Transform Communities*
- *Strategic Planning Through Transformation Strategies – Saline, Michigan.*
- Bronzeville Summer Nights. <http://bronzevillesummernights.com/>
- *Food Truck Rallies.*
- *Building Community Through Street Fairs: Identifying Community Assets.*

# Appendix

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1. Additional National Main Street References:
  - Ramirez de Miess, N. and Bowden, R. (2016). *Cultivating Effective Leadership to Transform Communities*. Retrieved from <https://www.mainstreet.org/search?executeSearch=true&SearchTerm=transforming+your+community&l=1>
  - National Main Street Center. (2016). *Strategic Planning Through Transformation Strategies – Saline, Michigan*. [Web blog post]. Retrieved August 7, 2019 from <https://www.mainstreet.org/blogs/national-main-street-center/2017/05/25/strategic-planning-through-transformation-strategies-saline-michigan>
  - Arts related events, Quad Communities Development Corporation: Bronzeville Summer Nights. <http://bronzevillesummernights.com/>
  - Schaffran, C. (2018). *Food Truck Rallies*. Retrieved from <https://www.parksandrecbusiness.com/articles/2018/12/food-truck-rallies>
  - Bayer, B. (2016). *Building Community Through Street Fairs: Identifying Community Assets*. Retrieved from. <https://www.mainstreet.org/blogs/national-main-street-center/2017/05/24/building-community-through-street-fairs-identifying-community-assets>
2. Survey Data from 2018 and 2019
  - Raw data from SurveyMonkey from 2018 and 2019 community survey distribution. Paper surveys were input into SurveyMonkey after collection
3. Demographics
  - Demographic Summary (Community Profile)
  - Infographics (.5, 1, 5-mile radius)
  - Psychographic Segmentation (.5, 1, 5-mile radius)
    - Modest Incomes
    - City Commons
    - Family Foundations
    - Enterprising Professionals
4. Site Map
5. Market Conditions
  - Retail Goods/ Services Expenditures Data Set
  - Retail Market Place Profile Data Set
6. Workshop Agenda / Overviews
  - Consensus Building workshop – September 19, 2019
  - Main Street 101 training – October 12, 2019
  - Workplan Development – October 26, 2019



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