



West Sugar Creek Road Corridor

 CITY of CHARLOTTE

DRAFT

March 31, 2022

2022 | Playbook

West Sugar Creek Road Corridor Playbook

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This “Playbook” is not intended to be prescriptive in nature and should not be seen or recognized as rigid requirements. This “Playbook” was prepared with the communities of the West Sugar Creek Road corridor by the City of Charlotte in 2022.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	1
Executive Summary	2
Introduction	13
Community Engagement	27
Planning & Investment Efforts	45
Corridor Profile	63
Recommendations & Implementation Strategies	77



“

The rich history and generosity, both past and present, continue to reinforce that the community is like family.”

“An Outsider’s View”

Written by: Samantha Rosado

Land nurtured by hands of Siouon speaking peoples.
Crops swayed to the melody of native tongues that filled the air from grass to sun.
Flowers, trees, and animals given life by the energy of a strong Catawba mother whose hands made art from the soil.
Warmth was born of this soil, a warmth that fuels resilience and life.
Life of those who live today to preserve the history of the land.
A land of family.
A land of two communities united.
A community who hopes to keep its value-value in life, and love, heritage, and education.
A community who aims to teach its children about the value of play with the trees and grass and leaves.
Giving back to a land that has given so much to all of what is known today.
Space for all to feel safe, seen, heard, CELEBRATED!
This land, a **black-owned land**, thrives to support the love shared in small business- in black and brown owned business.
A place nourished by community investment, faith and trust in each other that all will do, and share, and teach, and story tell, for the sake of gratitude to those who came before us, for the value in giving so that the history of the land will prevail
And with it,
its people.





Acknowledgments

Community Members

- Sylvia Cannon
- Keri Miller
- Shawn Ahmad
- Jack Brosch
- Theresa McDonald
- Leslie Clenney
- John Butler
- Mehl Renner
- John Wall
- Odell Witherspoon
- Floyd Cherry
- Charles Robinson
- Merritt McCully
- Gary Crump
- David Oliver
- Wanda Sinclair
- Greg Jackson
- Ebone Lockett
- Molly Willbanks

- Brent Jones
- Charlene Henderson
- Marjorie Parker
- John Miles
- David Ratcliffe
- Sarah Morton
- Marion McMahon
- Jill Stephenson

University City Partners

- Darlene Heater
- Tobe Holmes

City of Charlotte

- Monica Holmes
- Rachel Stark
- Jacob Huffman
- Erin Chantry

Blue Tide Creative

- Erin Breeden
- Eleanor Shell
- Jonell Logan

Kimley-Horn

- Laura Ornstein
- Jessica Rossi

This page was intentionally left blank.

Executive Summary

The West Sugar Creek Road Corridor studied in this Playbook stretches for 3.2 miles from North Tryon to Nevin Road.

This Playbook was commissioned as part of the Corridors of Opportunity program which outlines this corridor as one of six where the City will work with the community to identify strategic public investments.

The Playbook process includes four steps that led to the creation of this document:

- 1** a real estate market study,
- 2** broad public outreach and engagement,
- 3** co-creation with a focused stakeholder group to shape this document as their own tool for advocacy, and
- 4** facilitated conversations across departments to deliver coordinated implementation of the Playbook's recommendations.

The Sugar Creek Playbook builds from the Sugar Creek and I-85 Design Sprint that was completed in November 2020. The Design Sprint was needed to identify and initiate investments in the area as well as to advocate for a full Playbook process and the funding required for an in-depth study.

The Design Sprint focused on the I-85 interchange area covering about 0.2 square miles. The interchange context fosters high violent crime and has been identified as an area needing reinvestment for years. The Design Sprint was intentionally crafted to include a mix of key stakeholders operating in the area. The results of the sprint were several recommendations to address crime and three of those projects advanced into implementation: 1) a pilot program to work with businesses to improve security through cameras and site improvements (in implementation), 2) improved street lighting along Sugar Creek Road, Reagan Drive, and Equipment Drive (in implementation), and 3) the Corridor Playbook. The Corridor Playbook recommendation offered an opportunity to both strengthen and expand relationships in the area as well as better understand the realities of the market to achieve what is needed in the area.



A snapshot of varying perspectives around what people would like to see happen on the corridor was collected through two public meetings held in April and June, six external stakeholder meetings starting in March 2021, six internal stakeholder meetings, and individual interviews from a cross section of stakeholders by both the Market Study consultants, City of Charlotte Business INCLUSION team, Kimley-Horn, and Creative Community Engagement consultants, Blue Tide Creative. Over 150 participants who live, work, or visit the corridor were consulted during each phase of the process. The community input, recent past engagement results, and current data were used to inform the vision for the next 15 years presented in this document. It also informed priorities around timeliness and catalytic opportunities.

The community engagement process led to the definition of a vision and goals for the future of the corridor. It also helped define recommendations focused on three nodes in the study area: Derita, the I-85 Interchange, and Hidden Valley.

W. Sugar Creek Study Area, Area of Influence, and Nodes



A vision and shared goals were co-created with the community to guide the project's focus and the development of the Playbook.

Goals

Reduce violent crime

The I-85 interchange area is a hot spot for crime due to the presence of numerous inexpensive hotels and the proximity to the highway and other getaway routes. Resolving this issue is the number one priority for the community.

Build a shared sense of community

Members of the community would like to engage with more programming that will enable people of all ages to gather and build upon their shared identity.

Diversify commercial activity, create curb appeal, and support businesses with well-paying jobs for local residents

There are many favorite local establishments along the corridor and the existing franchises are frequented by area residents. The current automobile oriented nature of these commercial notes does not reflect the walkable scale desired in future commercial development. As development occurs in the corridor, the community wants to see employment opportunities increase as well.

Create viable transportation and mobility options

Personal vehicles are currently the most common means of transportation along the corridor. Community members would like to see multiple modes of transportation infrastructure expanded to enable more travel by foot, bike, and public transportation.

Vision

The W. Sugar Creek corridor will be a collection of strong businesses and neighborhoods that are safe, diverse, and walkable. Vibrant retail, viable transportation options, open spaces, and housing strategies will allow existing and new residents to benefit from the investments in the corridor.

Encourage walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space

Commercial nodes in Derita and Hidden Valley are at the heart of the community and bring people together. However, there are a lack of open spaces for them to meet. Increasing walkability between local businesses and new open spaces will create a Main Street atmosphere desired by the community.

Incorporate housing tenure strategies for longtime residents to enjoy new investments

Homeowners have indicated that retail market pressure is beginning to increase, and with this displacement pressure and gentrification. Residents would like support for remaining in place so they will be able to benefit from the new investments arriving in the corridor.

A Market Assessment was completed by Kimley Horn to determine the development readiness along the corridor. It presents strategies to maximize the market potential along the corridor.

Key Recommendations

Protect naturally occurring affordable housing stock

- Affected Segments: Downtown Derita, I-85 Interchange, Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Create NOAH inventory, support land acquisition and trusts, provide public subsidy, draft community benefits agreements
- Implementation timing: Short-term (1-3 years)

Support rehabilitation and reimagining of under-utilized shopping centers

- Affected Segments: Downtown Derita, Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Create business owners associations, connect neighborhoods and businesses, communicate existing economic development tools available, incentivize public-private partnerships
- Implementation timing: Short- to mid-term (1-5 years)

Enhance support for owners and reimagining of obsolete hotel/motel properties

- Affected Segments: I-85 Interchange
- Key Tools: Create business owners associations, increase communication on goals and projects, purchase key opportunity sites, expand public services to affected populations
- Implementation timing: Short-term (1-3 years)

Support strategies that combat against gentrification

- Affected Segments: Downtown Derita, Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Review zoning policy and place types, create strategy for land banking and housing trusts, purchase key opportunity sites, communicate existing tools
- Implementation timing: Short- to mid-term (1-5 years)

Leverage development momentum around transit

- Affected Segments: Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Plan for increased connection between existing neighborhoods and businesses, increase transit routes and frequency (last mile connectivity), improve streetscape and sidewalks
- Implementation timing: Mid-term (3-5 years)

The complete market study can be found in the appendix of this playbook.

A summary of the Issues and Opportunities as reflected from the April 2021 community engagement. This list coorelates to the recommendations and priorities.

Issues

- Lack of maintenance
- Outdated infrastructure and building stock
- Vacant buildings
- New development patterns causing displacement
- Noise pollution
- Lack of service options
- Crime
- Safety
- Lack of investment
- Lack of transportation options
- Insufficient parks
- Lack of social events
- Lack of sense of place
- Loss of natural space
- Inconvenient business hours
- Lack of jobs
- Traffic congestion
- Lack of walkability
- High traffic speeds
- Lack of cycling infrastructure
- Negative outside perception

Opportunities

- Park improvements
- Improved landscaping
- Expand natural areas
- Improved stormwater management
- Space for family events
- Space for youth events
- Improved public health
- Bolster community pride
- Provision social services for unhoused residents
- Increase community diversity
- Expand education opportunities
- Redevelopment opportunities
- Upscale development options
- Balanced growth and development
- Increase affordable housing options
- Enhance small business community
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure
- Mitigate traffic congestion
- Increase transit options
- Increase options for services
- Improve infrastructure maintenance
- Increase placemaking opportunities
- Facade improvements
- Increase safety and address crime
- Lighting improvements
- Create more pedestrian friendly development

The playbook recommendations were co-developed with the community along the corridor. Events, workshops, meetings, and interviews informed the project team.



Project Timeline





Stakeholder
survey
week from close
(June 4th)

June 15th - Hidden Valley
stakeholder sub-group
meeting on visioning and
project priorities

June 24th - Second public
meeting to discuss the
emerging vision and strategies



June 10th - Stakeholders
discuss responses completed
and review final survey results

June 17th - Stakeholder
meeting to review public
meeting materials

July 1st - Blue Tide Creative
launches one-on-one
interviews to expand
community engagement /
participates and hosts events
in Derita and Hidden Valley

The below further breaks down the issues and opportunities by node in the corridor: Derita, I-85 Interchange, and Hidden Valley.



I-85 Interchange

- Large number of economy hotels that are location of violent crime
- Large concentration of unemployment and concentrated poverty
- Need more well-paying jobs that reduce unemployment and concentrated poverty
- Support violence prevention



Hidden Valley

- Unsafe pedestrian infrastructure
- Need for placemaking elements and open spaces
- Lack of diversified service and retail options
- Improve maintenance of buildings and streetscape
- Assist homeowners who are vulnerable to displacement



Derita

- Unsafe pedestrian infrastructure including across the rail line
- Preserve unique character of historic retail buildings and rail line that represent history of neighborhood.
- Need for an open space that supports community events and activities in commercial core

Recommendations are organized into five main categories that need to be addressed or improved as part of the playbook implementation process.



From the many recommendations that resulted from an engagement process with the community and conversations with stakeholders, the following five priorities emerged.

1. Improve Community Safety through Reducing Transactional Crime Opportunities (Focus Area: 1-85)

Reduce the number of economy motels through enforcement, acquisition, or working with partners including property owners to transform their properties away from hotel use. Four strategies (that may be applied as options or as implementation phases) are:

1. Use enforcement (code & safety nuisance) and existing business support
2. Work with private sector to lead redevelopment
3. Work through existing leads and partnerships to provide a social framework
4. City of Charlotte to purchase property

2. Improve Pedestrian Safety (Focus Area: Derita & Hidden Valley)

Improve pedestrian safety by providing new sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals as well as alignment of streets to create safe intersections in the Hidden Valley Area. Three options to meet this priority:

1. Focus on Derita segments lacking sidewalks to connect destinations
2. Improve segments in Derita and Hidden Valley to provide space between pedestrians and cars
3. Work with development incrementally to connect pedestrian network, provide street connections and improve safety

3. Enhance Business Property (Focus Area: All)

Bring updates and retrofits to outdated properties that attract tenants who bring businesses that offer diversified and well-paying jobs, places to hang out, complementary retail and services, and attractive and well-maintained street frontage. Two options to meet this priority:

1. Use existing methods and tools but add funding (such as Business Matching Grants)
2. Retrofit existing methods and tools and add funding

4. Create Gateways with Improved Open Space (Focus Area: All)

Create community spaces in the commercial nodes along the corridor that can be programmed by the community to support businesses. Three options to meet this priority:

1. Focus on Derita's downtown lacking public open space
2. Improve Derita and Hidden Valley with gateway enhancements at the entrances to the community
3. Partner with private sector investments to achieve open space and gateway improvements

5. Create New Job Opportunities & Further Develop the Workforce (Focus Area: I-85)

Attract businesses that bring well-paying jobs that match local talent and/or build local talent to reduce unemployment and concentrated poverty. Two options to meet this priority:

1. Use existing methods and tools but add funding
2. Retrofit existing methods and tools and add funding

**An additional priority to the effort related to the corridor, but specific to the neighborhoods is displacement prevention.

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



SECTION 01

Introduction

The City of Charlotte has a history of investing in corridors to support the revitalization of businesses and adjacent neighborhoods.

In 2020, the City of Charlotte launched the Corridors of Opportunity program that invests funding in six corridors throughout the city, including West Sugar Creek Road. As part of this work, this Playbook was created in order to identify the issues, opportunities, and strategies facing the corridor today. Those are used to identify strategies and projects where funding will be invested.

This playbook not only will inform City of Charlotte leadership on transportation, housing, social and urban design issues. It can also serve as a road map for future funding decisions and investments.

Investment in corridors is not new to the City of Charlotte. Since the creation of the Business Corridor Revitalization Strategic Plan, the City has attracted private sector investment to grow jobs, businesses, and services, expand the tax base in the business corridors, and support the revitalization of the adjacent neighborhoods as safe, viable, and sustainable.

The primary goal of this Playbook is to establish a shared vision for West Sugar Creek Road as a vibrant corridor with a focus on improving public safety, improving pedestrian and multimodal connections, enhancing its overall appearance, and jump starting economic development.

As part of the City's continued efforts to focus on creating strong and vibrant corridors, the project team along with business owners and neighborhoods have developed strategies for implementing the strong vision the City and the community has for West Sugar Creek Road.



Process

The Playbook process built upon a design sprint addressing improvements at the I-85/W. Sugar Creek interchange.

The design sprint was a public process completed at the end of 2020. It was completed with the input of stakeholders to identify the largest issues and recommendations to improve the interchange.



Project Understanding

For the purpose of the project's success the planning participants started by setting a common understanding of the goals of the Playbook:

- The process is designed to engage the public: residents, merchants, and property owners.
- The project focuses primarily on public intervention. Public intervention is typically limited to capital investment, redevelopment of city-owned land, programs like small business support, zoning, and incentives such as facade rehabilitation funds, and tax credits.
- The project also focuses on the public realm: public property and the public right of way (streets, sidewalks, and required setbacks).
- The project identifies strategies to address socio-economic conditions that relate to upward mobility, crime and safety, access to daily necessities, and support of local businesses.
- The project includes recommendations that can realistically be carried forward.
- Capital improvement funds are limited and highly competitive. The City Council allocates capital improvements funds annually. While there are funds committed to the corridor through the Corridors of Opportunity funding, the result of the plan can also be used to generate projects to be considered for future public bond referendums.

Market Assessment

- The market assessment began with the identification of baseline market data and the identification of market influences. This includes identifying the unique advantages and weaknesses of the corridor.
- In addition to demographics, the market assessment collected data for employment trends, retail, housing, access to grocery stores, office and hospitality. A ten year forecast was completed.
- Develop recommendations and incorporate into playbook strategies.

Creative Community Engagement

- A comprehensive engagement plan was created that mapped out a strategy with events and check ins.
- Community stakeholders were an active part in guiding the playbook. Meetings and outreach occurred throughout the playbook process.
- Three public workshops occurred to engage the greater community of the influence area.

- In an effort to identify more community participants along the corridor, consultants developed a questionnaire campaign that included multiple surveys and interviews with additional stakeholders.
- Consultants incorporated art and placemaking into the engagement strategy

Playbook Development

As market driven research and creative community engagement was being completed the playbook process was developed through a series of steps:

- Policy and past visioning audit was completed to identify all past planning, transportation, and neighborhood projects and plans that set a vision for the corridor.
- The corridor and area of influence were mapped extensively to document conditions, such as development readiness, open space, mobility, employment, housing, and places of significance to name a few. Strategies, issues, and opportunities were also mapped as they were identified.
- Through engagement and analysis the identification of

issues and opportunities along the corridor were identified. These served as a foundation by which to identify what should be preserved, what should be changed, and what should be created for the corridor.

- Strategies for change that would be the most transformational in addressing issues and opportunities were identified.
- These strategies were then prioritized for implementation and presented to the Corridors of Opportunity leadership for implementation decisions.
- The playbook was drafted and completed to inform and guide future investment.

Project **Timeline**

MARCH 2020

Kick Off of I-85/Sugar Creek
Design Sprint

JUNE 2021

Workshop #2
Thursday, June 24

OCTOBER 2021

Stakeholders Thank You
Meeting
Thursday, October 21

2020

2021

NOVEMBER 2020

Completion of I-85/
Sugar Creek Design
Sprint

APRIL 2021

Playbook Kick Off Workshop
Thursday, April 29

SEPTEMBER 2021

Development of Playbook
Priorities

DECEMBER 2021

Final Report



All stakeholders involved in the playbook process identified five important issues including eliminating the violent crime at the I-85 interchange, creating a safer built environment for pedestrians and cyclists, providing alternative transportation options, and addressing the maintenance of buildings and public right of way along the corridor.

Project Context

Focus Areas

Key Issues

Project Area of Influence

The West Sugar Creek Road is home to historic, established neighborhoods including Hidden Valley and Derita. Each has a unique identity and character to experience along the corridor.

West Sugar Creek Road is one of Charlotte's primary and historic northern corridors and provides commercial services and transportation for the neighborhoods it serves. The Lynx Blue Line is located on the southern edge of the corridor and includes a station area. This recent transportation project is expected to attract future investment and development in the built environment. In addition to economic development, the corridor offers opportunities for housing redevelopment and preservation, streetscape and infrastructure improvements, and multi-modal transit improvements.

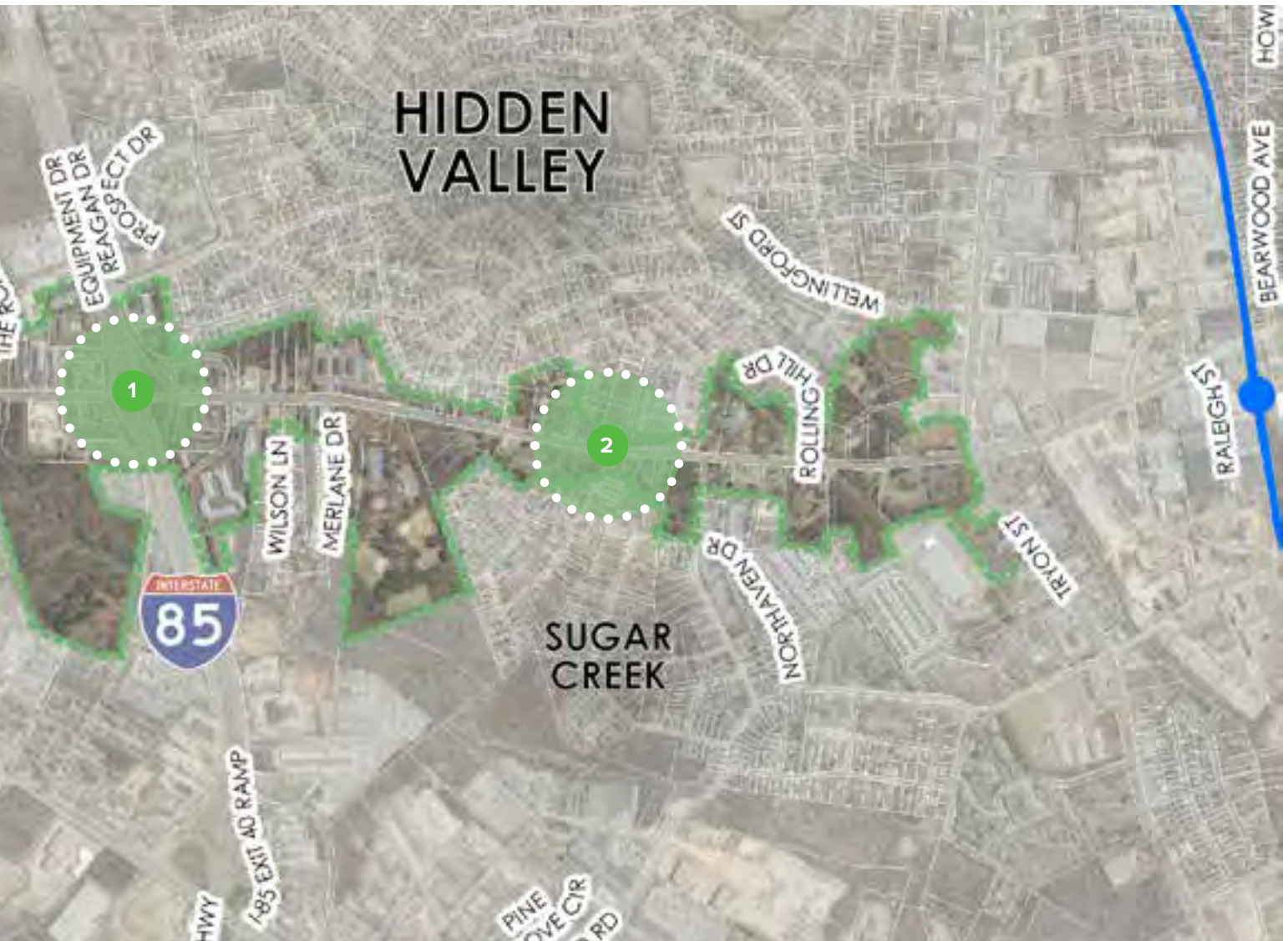
The corridor is the location of two historic neighborhoods: Hidden Valley and Derita. Both have very strong community identities and are important to the history of Charlotte. These two neighborhoods are separated by Interstate 85. The I-85/Sugar Creek interchange is a large commercial node that serves the community but also provides challenges of violent crime that need to be addressed. Economy hotels at this location also provide affordable housing options along the corridor. The two neighborhoods have historic and pedestrian-oriented retail that contribute to the identity of each.

As a way to present recommendations and provide the most transformational investment, this playbook will focus on three key areas: the I-85 interchange, and the historic retail areas of Derita and Hidden Valley.



Project Study Area

The Project Study Area, defined by the green boundary line on the map, includes all parcels fronting West Sugar Creek Road from South Tryon Street to the South to Nevin Road to the North. Other adjacent parcels are included in the boundary when they are adjacent to the same property owner or are part of the same development or institution.



The project will focus on the following key areas:

- 1 I-85 Interchange
- 2 Hidden Valley
- 3 Derita

Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 1: I-85

INTERCHANGE — This focus area includes the immediate parcels around the interchange. It has 12 economy motels that provide accessible housing and business space, but also provide a location for violent crime. There is highway and frontage road access, as well as multiple fast food establishments, restaurants, and strip office buildings.



FOCUS AREA 2: HIDDEN VALLEY

— This focus area includes the corridor from Sofley Road to Munsee Street. It includes service businesses, a large place of worship, and multiple strip office and retail buildings. These uses are interdispersed with single-family housing.



**FOCUS AREA 3: DERITA —**

This focus area is from Graham Street to Mallard Creek Road. It includes historic retail and service buildings, gas and service stations, a school campus, and other business. At the northern end is two strip commercial developments. It is a historic commercial center with a rail line adjacent on the east.

Key Issues

FOCUS AREA 1: I-85 INTERCHANGE

- Large number of economy hotels that are location of violent crime
- Outdated properties
- Large concentration of unemployment and concentrated poverty.
- Attract businesses that bring well-paying jobs that reduce unemployment and concentrated poverty
- Mitigate displacement of residents
- Support violence prevention



FOCUS AREA 2: HIDDEN VALLEY

- Unsafe infrastructure connections for pedestrians and cyclists
- Need for placemaking elements and open spaces
- Lack of diversified service and retail options and housing with mixed use
- Need to improve maintenance of buildings and streetscape and right-of-way improvements
- Assist homeowners who are vulnerable to displacement



**FOCUS AREA 3: DERITA —**

- Lack of safe pedestrian infrastructure including filling sidewalk gaps, crosswalks, signal timing and connections across the rail line
- Unique character of historic retail buildings and rail line that represent history of neighborhood.
- Need for an open space that supports community events and activities in Derita commercial core

Project Area of Influence

The West Sugar Creek Road is a historic corridor that extends from Eastway Drive in the Shannon Park neighborhood all the way to Hucks Road in Prosperity Village. The Corridors of Opportunity program focuses on the corridor from the Blue Line light rail extension to the edge of two historic neighborhoods: Hidden Valley and Derita. Projects can enhance connections between these two neighborhoods and the Blue Line and its future investment.

For the purpose of this Playbook, a greater area than just the area located within the project boundary was identified as the Project Area of Influence. The Project Area of Influence, depicted above in a dashed white line, is 10 square miles and includes the entirety of adjacent neighborhoods and census tracts.



The Project Area of Influence is relevant to the corridor and is comprised of many of the neighborhoods along West Sugar Creek Road. Analysis of this area is used to make projections for the corridor.



DRAFT - West Sugar Creek Road | Playbook | 25

“

**We have benefited
from the rich
relationships with our
neighbors and enjoyed
a sense of belonging.”**

SECTION 02

Community Engagement

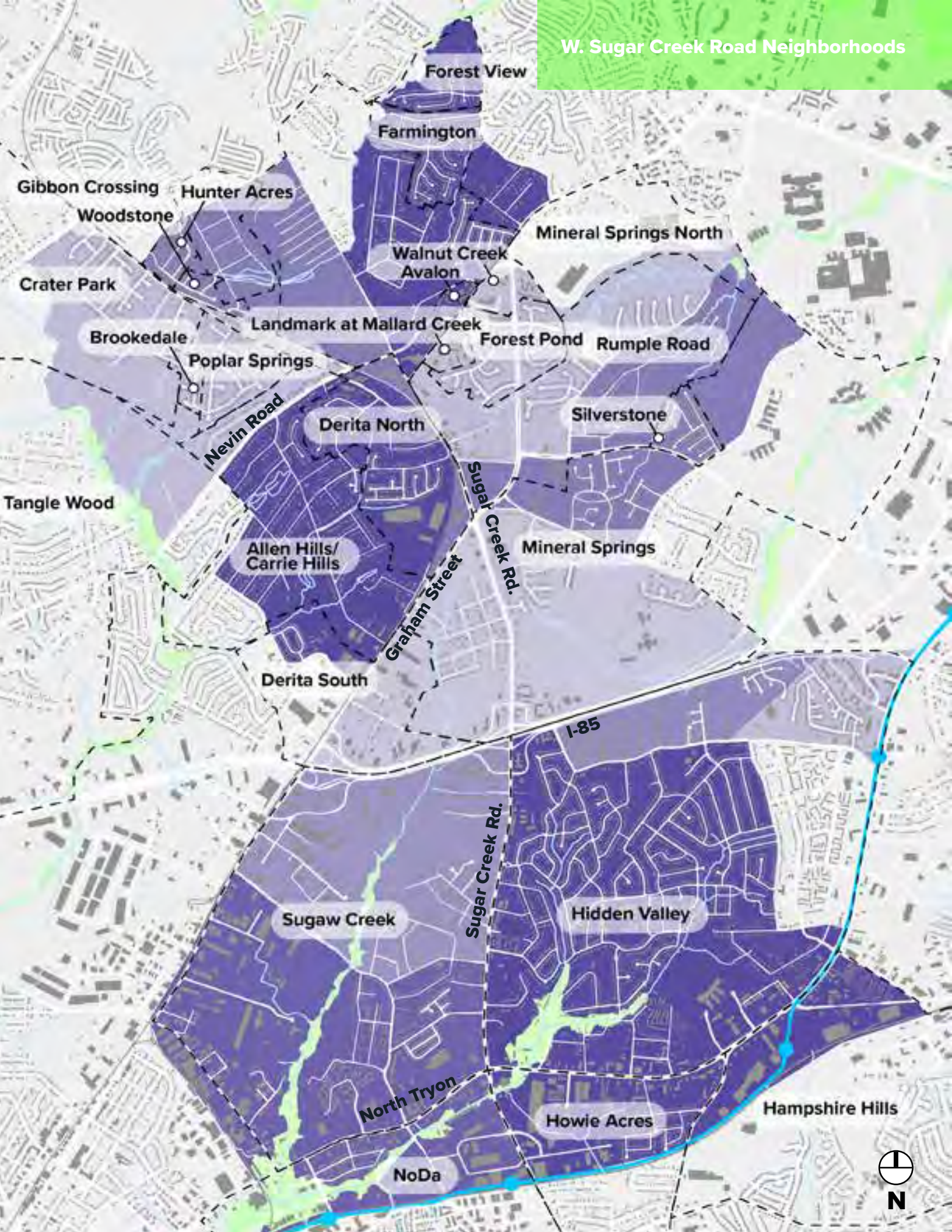
Engagement Goals**Timeline****Engagement Participation****Workshop Summaries**

To generate information on what the City can do to achieve the Corridors of Opportunity vision along West Sugar Creek road, an initial analysis of the corridor was conducted in conjunction with community engagement to understand the existing conditions and identify the community's priorities. Throughout the months of April through October 2021, workshops and meetings with residents and stakeholders along the corridor collected input from the community.

Engagement Goals

- 1 **Build more partnerships to promote a more balanced and holistic vision for the corridor**
- 2 **Create a vision for existing community nodes that have a shared future**
- 3 **Greater participation from more, diverse neighborhoods**
- 4 **Meet the unique needs of the different sub geographies: I-85 interchange, Derita commercial area, and North Tryon development**

W. Sugar Creek Road Neighborhoods



Kickoff Meeting: April 8, 2021

Engagement with stakeholders throughout the West Sugar Creek Road Corridor began on April 8. This first meeting introduced the scope of work to participants and clarified what their roles as stakeholders would be. These stakeholders were members of the community in the corridor area of influence. They were neighborhood association leaders, neighborhood residents, business owners, and owners of properties along West Sugar Creek Road. Staff continued to communicate with the stakeholder group throughout the month leading up to the public kickoff workshop. Stakeholders completed walks of three segments of the corridor. Those segments included parcels immediately adjacent to Sugar Creek between Nevin Road to The Roman Road, The Roman Road to Merlane Drive and Merlane Drive to North Tryon Street. Stakeholders photographed and recorded issues and opportunities within these segments and shared them with City staff. These were placed in the online platform Conceptboard with a map of the specific segment and a pin to identify the issue or opportunity on the map. This tool was used to initiate conversations in the kick off public meeting workshop.

Workshop 1: April 29, 2021

This virtual meeting introduced projects completed in the corridor to that point and discussed the state of the corridor. During the meeting, breakout groups were set up to discuss issues and opportunities along the corridor. In Conceptboard, workshop participants identified these in addition to those previously identified by stakeholder group participants and City staff.

Stakeholder Meeting

Between late May and Mid-June, the stakeholder group met several times to discuss survey results, the emerging vision for the corridor, and potential strategies to achieve the vision.

Workshop 2: June 24, 2021

The second workshop recapped what was discussed in the first workshop, what was learned in the public survey and introduced new information. This information included mapping analysis of corridor geography and statistics related to life on the corridor, as well as an overview of initial market analysis findings. Together these results help to frame expectations for the future of the corridor.

Engagement Timeline



An extensive public engagement process determined the goals, vision, and priorities for the West Sugar Creek corridor. Multiple workshops, stakeholder engagement sessions, and interview and stakeholder surveys were completed in the spring and summer of 2021.





Engagement Participation

APRIL – MAY

26



Stakeholders

71



Meeting Attendees

244



Survey Responses

150



Notifications

10



Interviews

JUNE – SEPTEMBER

21



Stakeholders

37



Meeting Attendees

82



Survey Responses

150



Notifications

102



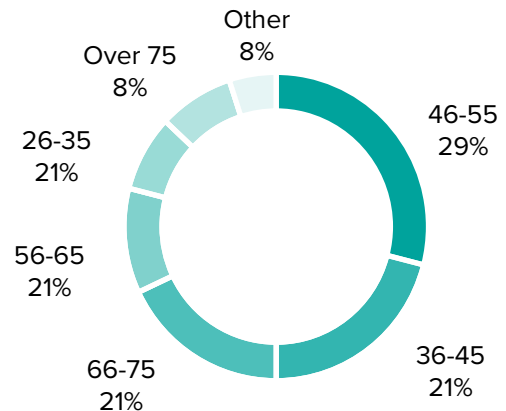
Interviews

Workshop Summaries

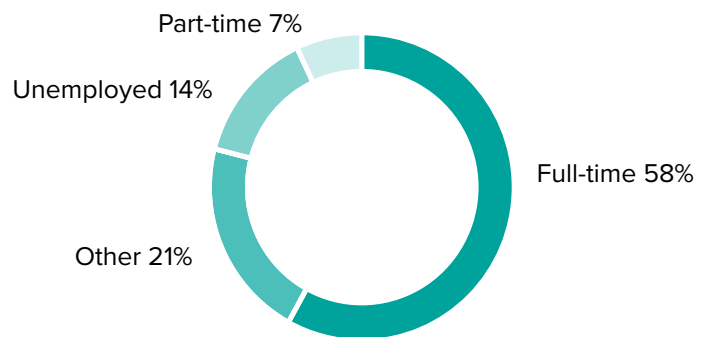
Following the second workshop and second survey, which followed up on feedback given in the first survey, the team determined there was still a gap of participation. This gap was mostly made of immigrant populations living in the area, as well as from areas that didn't have an engaged neighborhood organization or representative who frequently participated in City projects. To help close that gap, Blue Tide Creative was hired in June. They hosted and participated in several events, and connected with residents through one-on-one conversations. They tracked over 80 conversations in those population groups after the closing of the survey. The demographics of survey participants are included to the right providing a sense of who participated in these conversations, and what their concerns were with the corridor.



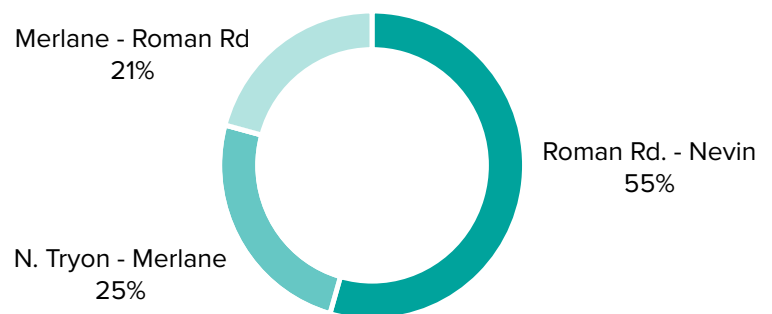
Respondant Age



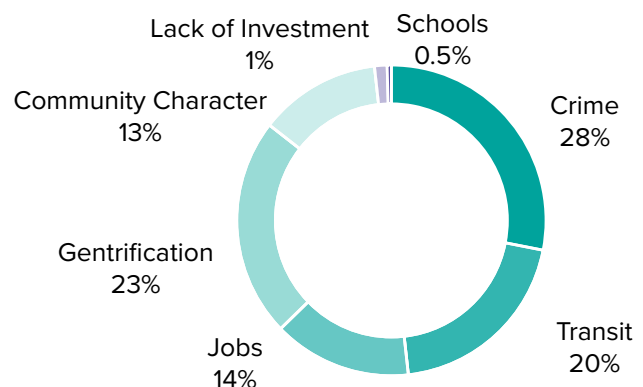
Employment Status



Area of Residence on the Corridor



Subjects Discussed



Corridor Workshop #1

What We Heard

Due to restrictions on gathering during the COVID-19 pandemic, community engagement was conducted through online services (Public Input, Conceptboard, and Zoom). City staff facilitated two public meetings and three stakeholder focus groups. Outside of these meetings, two surveys gathered feedback on issues, opportunities and residents' visions for the future of the corridor. There were a total of 326 respondents to these surveys, 108 public meeting participants and 26 stakeholders involved in this process.

Priorities that emerged from the first workshop included addressing crime, specifically at the I-85 intersection, addressing neglected properties, improving walkability, increasing transportation options, reducing traffic speed, preserving character, and preventing displacement. These conversations enabled the community to clarify needs and desires to guide the future transformation of the corridor.

The first of two workshops was hosted virtually and included facilitated small group discussion. Various City departments were in attendance including: Planning, Design, & Development (PDD); Economic Development (ED); Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT); Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS); and Housing & Neighborhood Services (HNS). Stakeholder participants "homework" assignment on corridor issues and opportunities were included to launch conversations in the small group sessions.

- Planning, Design, and Development discussed the results of the Sugar Creek Design Sprint in 2020, explained the process and purpose of the Playbook and contextualized the Sugar Creek Corridor within the broader effort of the Corridors of Opportunity.
- Economic Development provided an overview of the market analysis process, which would be

conducted by Kimley-Horn and presented in the second public meeting.

- Before sending participants to breakout groups, Planning, Design and Development shared work completed by the City in the corridor over the past five years.
- Participants were sent to breakout groups to discuss the three segments of the study area that stakeholders surveyed. In these groups, a facilitator and Conceptboard operator collected workshop participants perceptions around issues and opportunities.
- Results from these breakout groups were reported back to the whole group prior to the close of the meeting.



Segment 1: Hidden Valley



The three segments of the corridor where participants identified issues, opportunities for improvement, and missing amenities.

Segment 2: I-85 Interchange



Segment 3: Derita



Where do you spend most of your time on the corridor?

The responses varied, with many people identifying the retail along the corridor. Known community landmarks, like Maria's Grill, or services such as Food Lion, Walgreens, and the Post Office in Derita, and Sugaw Creek Rec Center, Compare Foods, and fast food restaurants in Hidden Valley, and places of faith along the corridor were mentioned frequently.

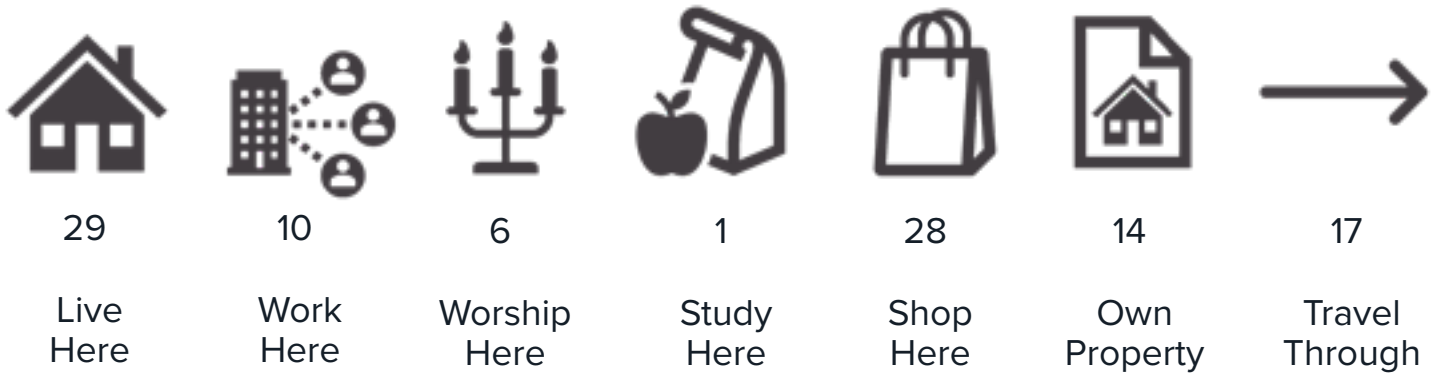
What parts of the corridor do you travel most often?

The responses were most varied in the segment between The Roman Road and Nevin Road (see map on following page). This is the northern end of the study area, where several main roads intersect with West Sugar Creek Road. South of The Roman Road, West Sugar Creek Road is primarily fed by neighborhood streets – excluding the intersection with I-85.

The remainder of the Conceptboard engagement focused specifically on the segments in which workshop participants were most invested. As participants gave input, Conceptboard operators identified missing amenities, opportunities for improvements and community assets on a map in conjunction with the stakeholder's previously submitted feedback.



What is your relationship to the corridor?



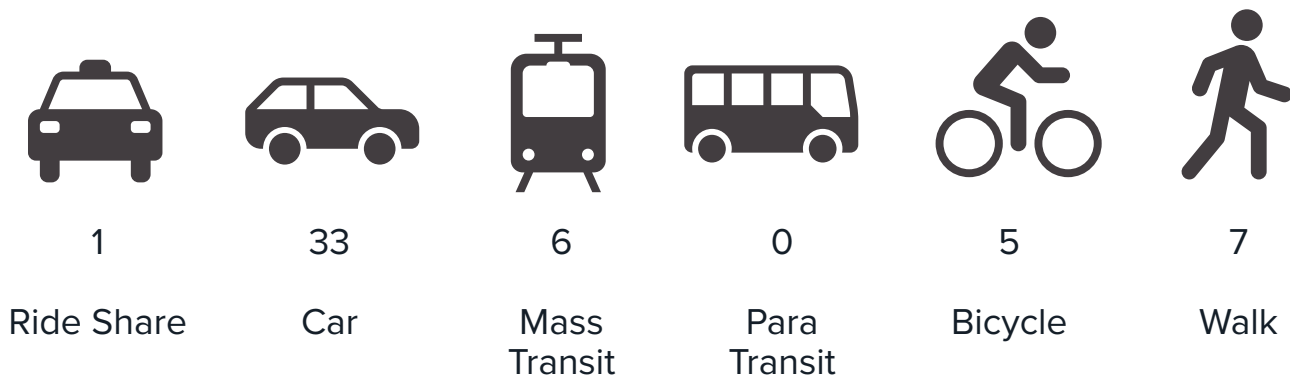
Where do you travel most often on the corridor?



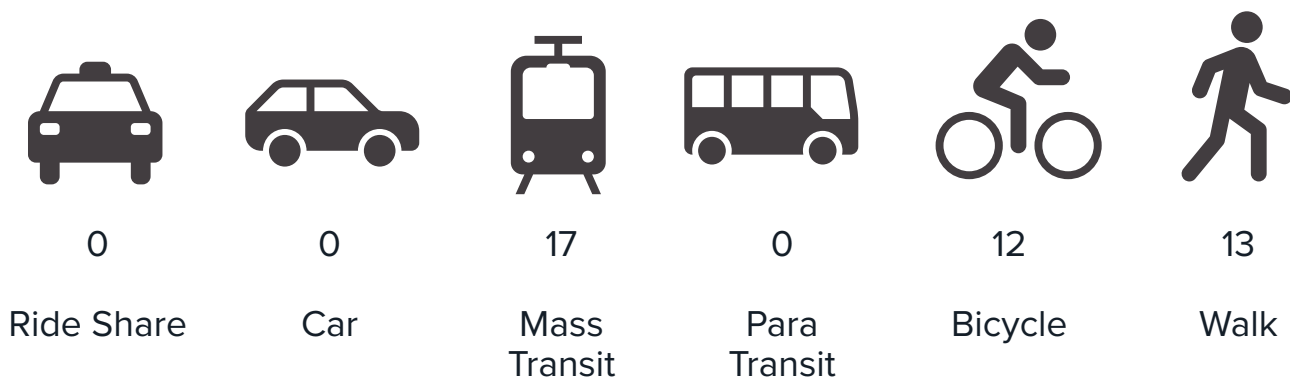
Where do you visit most often on the corridor?



What mode of transportation do you use most often?



What mode of transportation would you use if you could?



What are the best qualities of the corridor?



What are the biggest challenges on the corridor?

- **Crime**, especially around the I-85 intersection
- **High traffic speeds**, roads with dangerous curves and low visibility
- **Pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure** is unsafe and poorly maintained
- **Lack of landscaping** upkeep and lots of litter
- **Sidewalk and street lighting gaps**
- **Lack of grocery stores** and limited dining options
- **Lack of public space** in the corridor north of I-85
- **Limited resources** or activities for neighborhoods
- **Accessibility to/from Derita** is a factor in reaching parks, transit and other neighborhoods

What could be added to make the corridor stronger?

- Quality neighborhood schools with easy to access extracurricular activities for youth
- Sidewalk improvements and maintenance with increased pedestrian infrastructure (i.e. street crossings)
- Protected bicycle lanes and additional bicycle infrastructure
- Sidewalks that are protected by a planting buffer
- Traffic calming measures and increased accessibility to public transportation

- Improved accessibility to healthy food options through a community garden, farmer's market and grocery stores
- Public artwork at Graham Street and W. Sugar Creek Road
- Modernize community centers while maintaining a small-town feel
- Improved accessibility to greenways
- Attracting a coffee shop to the community
- Employment and entertainment opportunities

What are key social concerns on the corridor?

- Loss of shelter for long-term hotel stay residents
- Loss of familiar neighbors
- Loss of familiar businesses
- Lack of opportunity to purchase property in the neighborhood where one currently resides
- Property heirs not having the information they need to preserve ownership
- Rising rents
- Surrounding changes in development
- Shifts in neighborhood culture
- Real estate market pressure
- Lack of change/improvement/investment to address safety concerns
- Rising property taxes for homeowners on fixed or lower incomes
- Limited housing options where people want to live
- Limited savings
- Lack of information about housing options

- Limited banking support
- Household size compared to housing options
- Barriers to access to housing - like background checks and eviction records

What are some ways that Placemaking can be utilized on the corridor?

- Creating spaces and programs that bring diverse people together
- Creating flexible use public spaces
- Celebrating local culture through art and programs
- Celebrating the cultures of people who live here now
- Creating new iconic or landmark structures or art
- Storytelling of local history through design and art

Corridor Workshop #2

The second workshop was also held virtually. During this meeting, City staff and consultants from Kimley-Horn presented results from ongoing research and analysis. Sharing this information helped ground the discussions. During this discussion, six focus groups were presented with five questions related to the data presented. Various City departments were in attendance including: Planning, Design, & Development (PDD); Economic Development (ED); Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT); Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS); and Housing & Neighborhood Services (HNS). Kimley-Horn presented early findings from their market study.

- PDD gave a recap of the purpose of the project and shared the results from the last workshop, as well as survey inputs and data research.
- Consultants from Kimley-Horn presented early results from their market study.
- Participants and facilitators separated into breakout rooms using Zoom to discuss.
- The workshop then reconvened to report out from break out rooms and discuss next steps.

What We Heard

Were there any surprises in the data?

- Lower education and income levels
- The amount of grocery stores in the area (it feels like it's a food desert)
- The number of homes being built in the area
- The percentage of households without access to a personal vehicle

What was missing in the report or on the corridor in general?

- A vision to address issues around the hotels at the I-85 interchange
- Research and analysis of the upper Derita geography

- A higher level of development standards
- A vision for youth engagement to keep adolescents from getting into trouble
- A sense of safety in areas of the community that have fewer “eyes on the street”
- Businesses like Save-A-Lot leaving the community even though they are desired
- A market study that investigates how much money is circulating in the community

What questions do you have?

- Is a five-mile radius an appropriate metric for grocery stores?
- Will there be any planned development in upper Derita area?
- How can higher quality housing development be attracted?
- What are future plans for traffic along Sugar Creek Road?
- How does the neighborhood get a voice in proposed development?
- How do we balance growth with tree canopy preservation and water quality management?
- How do landowners, realtors and developers fit into this work?
- Are there any plans for improvement along the railroad tracks?
- Does the proportion of rent vs. ownership correlate to issues on the corridor?
- How is demography impacting the market estimates?
- Where are people spending their dollars on the corridor?
- How are people traveling through the community?
- Plan around people, not infrastructure.

Are there specific areas along the corridor that might need additional support to attract quality development?

- The shopping center at W. Sugar Creek Road and Mallard Creek Road is experiencing an increase in vacancies
- The Hidden Valley commercial / retail node needs more business support and motivation
- Upper Derita
- Sugar Creek between I-85 and Graham Street
- Sidewalk gaps throughout the corridor
- The bicycle transportation infrastructure is unsafe due to high traffic speed and volume
- Greenways are lacking in the corridor
- The intersection of Graham Street and W. Sugar Creek Street has crosswalks that are too long for slower moving pedestrians to cross in time
- Create better connections between recreational opportunities
- Vacant buildings are an eyesore
- North Graham is heavily industrial and unattractive for high-end businesses
- Improve aesthetics through infrastructure repairs and additional landscaping
- Attract businesses and dining, create more areas for work/play and create a main street vibe along Sugar Creek in Derita
- Increase access to grocery stores
- Address land banking at Asian Corners shopping center
- Address the crime at the

I-85 intersection and the overabundance of hotels

- Work with schools in the area and support them in order to attract families
- Provide small business grants to landlords willing to take a chance on the investment of a small, independent business (i.e. a coffee shop) in Downtown Derita
- Great development potential for startups and micro-businesses in Downtown Derita

How do we balance private development interests with public services and amenities along the corridor?

- For a true balance of public/private the City will really need to consider its stance on not owning land and being a “landlord” if you will. Otherwise the free market will always place risk mitigation above other considerations.
- The City could also reduce regulations. Some costs are related to the level of regulations, leading to unintended consequences and contributing to a lack of things like affordable housing.
- Development brings an economic benefit, but also adds a burden to the surrounding environment. School systems, traffic, infrastructure, etc. The city could ask businesses to share more of the burden that occurs by having them support the infrastructure needs.
- Through the adaptive reuse of industrial properties into retail and residential uses.

What trade-offs do you foresee in the strategy work based off the data shared tonight?

- Retail dollars are going elsewhere as people are traveling to other areas to shop.
- Land may be getting used up that could otherwise be devoted to recreational opportunities.
- So many of the vacant retail is car-centric. Its hard to see how this built environment can be converted to serve the needs of the communities without tearing it down and starting over.
- There will be a trade off between attracting investment and increasing displacement.

Creative Engagement

Between July and September, the City worked with Blue Tide Creative to be the boots on the ground in the community. It was essential to the process that we heard the voices of residence and business owners who were not ready to engage in formal workshops and events. Armed with surveys, the Blue Tide Team hit the streets to connect with community members, but they quickly learned that community members would not respond to surveys.

The Blue Tide Creative Team deployed a plan to have 100 conversations during July and August. Members of the Blue Tide Team became fixtures at Maria's, Food Lion, Compare Food, and Derita Dairy Bar. Building trust among the ownership, managers, and staff of these community gathers spaces, Blue Tide could have open and honest conversations with community members. Often these conversations took place in phases to build the trust needed for genuine openness. During these conversations, consultants collected valuable qualitative data regarding residents' concerns surrounding aspects of the corridor. Concerns shared include crime and policing; livable wage jobs, income and area businesses; gentrification, displacement, housing affordability; community spaces, building scale, history, environmental impact; and traffic and transportation options. In addition, consultants learned a critical key to success for the Playbook -- action. Residences felt their community had been part of many conversations in the past, but no real change or improvements have ever come. Interviews conducted during this part of the engagement process helps to shape the rollout of implementation by understanding the ideas to prioritize.

In addition to spending time in the community, Blue Tide Creative brought engagement opportunities to community events. Working with Bunny Gregory, community members drew what they would like to see in their community.



Groceries stores, pharmacies, community gathering spaces, activities for youth, and retail shops filled the pages.

Blue Tide Creative participated in the Hidden Valley and Derita events during the National Night Out Celebrations. Putting a twist on classic games, each block in giant Jenga and coin in giant connect four had a question attached. The youth in attendance were drawn to the fun and allowed the engagement team to hear their essential voice in the process.

Reporting Back to Stakeholders

To conclude the playbook process, the City hosted a final meeting on October 21, 2021 at the Sugaw Creek Recreation Center. In preparation for the final report to the Stakeholders, Blue Tide Creative partnered with DeOren Robinson to create a video to reflect the conversations had throughout the engagement. Stakeholders were invited to dinner with staff catered by Pollo Royal, a favorite local restaurant. Throughout the evening, staff from all participating departments were present to answer questions and continue conversations around subjects covered in the Playbook. During dinner, Bunny Gregory was present to do a final community vision drawing.

Local artist, Samantha Rosado, set up a live painting demonstration. The composition of her work featured themes overheard during conversations with corridor

residents. At the end of the evening, staff from Economic Development and the Planning, Design, and Development departments presented an overview of the Playbook information and shared the next steps. Samantha concluded the meeting with a reading of an original poem written about the people's character, the culture of the corridor, and themes of both natural and cultural history.

One of the things the community engagement team heard clearly from the community member on the Sugar Creek Corridor was, "We need to see action." The community wanted to see that there would be investments and improvements to their community this time, not just talk about possibilities.

The Blue Tide Team partnered with Wells Fargo, and Charlotte is Creative to have a workday in

the Central Business District of Derita. Working with the new business owner of Derita Dairy Bar and Grill, Devin McDaniel, and the long-established owner of Maria's Restaurant, Maria, we created a plan to transform the area into a vibrant main street retail district. On December 13, a team of local volunteers and artists went to work, cleaning the properties and giving new life to the businesses. Both establishments' parking lot and sidewalk areas were cleared and pressure washed by volunteers. Maria's windows were updated with window paintings representing all the goodness held in the wall. A new menu board, community board, planters, and paint were installed at the Derita Dairy Bar. The side of the Dairy Bar was prepped for a new mural to be established that represents the live painting completed at the Stakeholders Gathering in October.





“An Outsider’s View” Written by: Samantha Rosado

Land nurtured by hands of Siouon speaking peoples.
Crops swayed to the melody of native tongues
that filled the air from grass to sun.
Flowers, trees, and animals given life
by the energy of a strong Catawba mother
whose hands made art from the soil.
Warmth was born of this soil,
a warmth that fuels resilience and life.
Life of those who live today
to preserve the history of the land.
A land of family.
A land of two communities united.
A community who hopes to keep its value-
value in life,
and love,
heritage,
and education.
A community who aims to teach
its children about the value of play
with the trees and grass and leaves.
Giving back to a land that has given so much
to all of what is known today.
Space for all to feel safe, seen, heard, **CELEBRATED!**
This land, a black-owned land, thrives
to support the love shared
in small business-
in black and brown owned business.
A place nourished by community investment,
faith and trust in each other
that all will do,
and share,
and teach,
and story tell,
for the sake of gratitude to those who came before us, for the value in giving
so that the history of the land will prevail
And with it,
its people.

****The above poem was composed as part of the Corridor Playbook final community engagement event held in October 2021.**

“

**Our investment in our
neighborhood has
been a blessing for my
family.”**

SECTION 03

Planning & Investment Efforts

Recent Engagement & Planning Efforts

The recently completed I-85/W. Sugar Creek Road Interchange Design Sprint and the Sugar Creek/I-85 Market Analysis set the foundation for this Playbook.

Past Planning

City Projects & Programs

West Sugar Creek Boulevard has been included in planning efforts in the past. While multiple area plans have been done, none have been recent. However, the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive plan provides land use recommendations based on these past documents. Additionally, most recently neighborhoods, businesses, and property owners have gone through a planning process specifically for the I-85/W. Sugar Creek interchange. Also a market analysis was completed that documented the demographics and economy characteristics, real estate market considerations, and development opportunities and strategies. Both design sprint study and the market analysis informed playbook priorities and recommendations.

Recent Engagement & Planning Efforts

I-85/W. Sugar Creek Road Interchange Design Sprint

The I-85/ W. Sugar Creek interchange is one of the hotbeds of violent crime in Charlotte. City resources have been invested to improve conditions over time and in 2020 the City of Charlotte went through a creative design sprint process with stakeholders and community leaders to develop strategies and solutions.

The three-month stakeholder engagement design sprint was intended to be a starting point to arrive at a scope of work that

outlines both meaningful near-term action and broadly supported long-term direction. This was seen as the start of the work along the corridor that would lead into longer, deeper engagement of residents and stakeholders.

The design sprint revealed the current conditions that contribute to an unsafe area targeted for crime. This set the direction for projects to improve the safety of the area sustainably and holistically. The proposed projects used a public health approach looking at systemic, social, behavioral, and physical construct of the interchange study area. Proposed projects outline near-medium, and long term wins for the area. This work and these recommendations have been imbedded into this playbook process which is outlined in recommendation two. The following are a list of project objectives that this report defined and next steps for change.

The report can be viewed here: https://charlottenc.gov/corridorsofopportunity/Documents/I85_sugar_creek/SugarCreekI85_SprintReport_2020_Final_112020_MainReport.pdf

Recommendations

1. Stabilize crime-centered or delinquent properties

- Stabilize hotels and other business properties and work to reduce the number of hotels and hotel units. There are known properties that have on-going issues with crime and code enforcement. This is at least in part due to the oversupply and low-occupancy rates which make funding improvements, upkeep, and enforcing good behavior on properties a low priority. The impact is concentrated poverty. Reducing the number of hotels will help the hotels that remain be more viable and profitable which in turn will help address neglect and targeted crime. Extended stay residents at hotels will need improved, stable housing that continues or improves access to their places of employment.

2. Create a Sugar Creek Corridor Playbook to guide development

- Create a W. Sugar Creek Road Corridor Playbook to guide redevelopment

efforts that achieves community goals while promoting collaboration. This will build from the design sprint work to more deeply explore assets and community goals of the area by extending the study area to include other commercial nodes: Derita and Hidden Valley and surrounding neighborhoods. While there is a common understanding that the interchange area cannot sustain the number of hotels and some of the properties should be redeveloped, there is not much guidance on a sustainable solution which is needed to move the work forward. The playbook will examine the market capacity for redevelopment, outline desired development patterns, and set benchmarks for projects to achieve community goals.

3. Support redevelopment aligned with community goals

- Facilitate public-private partnerships in the Sugar Creek and I-85 interchange area to achieve goals to reduce hotels and hotel units, and redevelop properties into alternative uses that serve the community such as offices, grocery stores, sit-down restaurants, performance/culture venues, healthcare, childcare, job training, housing, and jobs paying living wages. Tools for these partnerships include: supportive permitting, rezoning, easements and encroachment agreements, streetscape and other infrastructure improvements, and gap financing. This area has not had redevelopment of these properties into other uses and there are limited trends that would otherwise attract redevelopment at this location. This method of redevelopment supports community goals and may help reduce displacement from gentrification.

4. Implement identified public space improvements

- The Corridor Playbook (Project 2) work of starting with an interdepartmental survey and walking tour will develop a shared understanding of needed public space improvements. This project is about initiating implementation of some projects while the Corridor Playbook planning process continues. Known needed interventions in the area can move forward in a collaborative manner without the Corridor Playbook being completed.

These projects include lighting improvements, new or improved pedestrian street crossings and pedestrian/bike access, co-created public art and branding. This timeliness will build stronger relationships between different agencies while achieving goals.

5. Increase use of business matching grants -

Enhance security of the area by drawing more businesses to participate in the Business Matching Grant Program through collaborative effort. The lack of both public and private reinvestment and better management has led to neglect and crime. Collaboration and shared accountability of keeping the area safe and maintained are needed to transform this area and sustain reinvestment. This work along with Project 6 “Public Space Implementation” can activate a coalition between the various community groups.

6. Support community-based programs for employment and housing access -

Connect extended stay hotel residents with improved, stable, and permanent housing and reliable, living wage jobs. This requires an organized effort to help residents receive effective training, find jobs, and be supported by housing programs. The hotels are currently used to fill a gap in housing with low barriers to entry, a roof and four walls but has little in the way of a kitchen, accessible healthy food, nearby concentration of jobs, and childcare. The hotels and interchange were not designed to support concentrated affordable housing and has limited employment opportunities currently. The impact is concentrated poverty and limited pathways for upward mobility for those who stay in the hotels. Instability of housing and employment is one of the stressors that can lead to crime. Connecting extended stay residents to housing and jobs will give families and individuals a way to get out of poverty and the context of crime. This support should be provided not only to families and adults, but also youth.

7. Build a coalition of businesses, community organizations, and residents -

Strengthen relationships between businesses, property owners, community-based organizations, and residents through collaborative work around informing the corridor playbook (Project 2), implementing quick wins such as business matching grants (Project 5), coordinated maintenance and litter pick up, and art on signal box wraps (Project 4). There are many different interests represented in this area which can bring focused investments, but it can also bring division and exclusion. It can be a challenge to implement ideas. The design sprint brought a cross-section of experiences and perspective to address safety holistically; that work and collaboration can continue through a coalition galvanized around active projects and grow to take on more by advocating, achieving community goals together through shared responsibility and accountability.



8. Pilot a community non-profit “One Stop”

wraparound services co-op - Build from past and existing efforts and involve more partners to model a wraparound services “one-stop” co-op (i.e. childcare, healthy food, school support, job training, housing resources, medical, social/mental healthcare, etc.). This project is intended to bring these services together in one location ahead of a campus development to grow, learn, and provide data to support the campus build out, potentially informing a larger health campus that is desired in the redevelopment of the area. This project could be joined with Project 6 “Employment and Housing Pipeline”. There are many local service providers scattered throughout the area and may go under-noticed though they provide a key link to providing balance to the area. Inconvenience and barriers may keep individuals from accessing available resources. Co-location of services could provide improved visibility, use, effectiveness, and impact of programs.

9. Pilot a mental/behavior/addiction health

emergency responder service - Pilot a mental/behavioral/addiction health emergency responder service. As of October 5, 2021, City Council approved a citywide program for lower risk violence 911 calls to go to clinicians or social workers with medical training. The interchange is host of illicit and harmful activities, such as violent crime, prostitution, drug use, and human trafficking. At the core of these issues are decisions made by individuals, and while a context can change, individuals may not change with it. Arrests and sentences alone do not change behavior in the long term; changing the context alone does not stop crime overall; solutions are needed to get to the heart of the issue in the near term. To make long lasting changes in the lives of those who see the interchange as an area for underground activity, a holistic approach is needed that combines enforcement with social services. Pairing health providers with first responders will provide an opportunity for people to make meaningful change in their lives.

Immediate Next Steps

The City should initiate the W. Sugar Creek Road Corridor Playbook, modify the Business Improvement Matching Grant, and implement public space improvements that can be completed in the near term over the next six to nine months.

The Community-Based Organizations including neighborhood associations and partnership groups should begin to meet regularly around implementing the City led projects particularly through the next steps and help find and support partners to implement the project direction while shaping the Corridor Playbook.

Economic Development Strategy

The Sugar Creek Corridor Playbook process relies on a baseline of demographic, economic, and real estate market data to inform thinking about strengths and weaknesses of the corridor from an economic vitality perspective. Through baseline information regarding real estate, community economic development, local labor market and small business trends, the project team can understand the dynamics of the local Sugar Creek corridor market today.

City staff developed the economic development strategy for West Sugar Creek Road to be responsive and layered to better align with existing programs and organizational structure. The approach includes analysis of the local labor market, small business and entrepreneurship ecosystem, the real estate market and a general economic and workforce development scan. Some of these analyses were conducted for geographies beyond just the playbook study area. The findings and recommendations of each of these unique studies, particularly findings related to the West Sugar Creek Road corridor, were incorporated into the overall playbook findings and strategic recommendations. This layered and holistic approach accounts for the relationship between jobs, real estate, transportation and housing.

UPDATE: While the Sugar Creek Playbook has been in development the following projects from the Design Sprint have moved into implementation:

- Street Lighting at Sugar Creek, Reagan Drive, and Equipment Drive
- A Pilot security camera program
- The Playbook process
- Two Business Matching Grants

Sugar Creek/I-85 Corridors of Opportunity Market Analysis

The real estate market study, conducted by Kimley-Horn, focused on the West Sugar Creek corridor study area and identified main industries and trends, defined trade areas for retail, hospitality, office and multi-family residential and identified future real estate opportunities. The study also made short-, mid- and long-term recommendations for public investment to encourage or catalyze new investment.

Market Study Process

The market study process started with an understanding of the external influences and regional positioning, coupled with the baseline demographic, employment, and commercial and residential real estate trends. Public and stakeholder engagement confirmed what the data showed and provided a better understanding of the perspective of residents, business owners, and employees in the corridor. All

of the data and engagement were incorporated into demand forecasts that highlight the key development opportunities for Sugar Creek corridor. The study conducted a specific analysis on the cluster of hotels located at the I-85 interchange and provided recommendations on their redevelopment viability. Ultimately, the market study created an actionable



roadmap that addresses West Sugar Creek Road's specific needs and goals while playing to its strengths.

Defining a Trade Area

The trade area shows real estate trends that influence the West Sugar Creek corridor. It includes surrounding neighborhoods, activity centers and job centers, including University City. Real estate demand forecasts for the trade area identify key market opportunities.

Demographic Characteristics

In the Area of Influence, population tends to be younger and more diverse than the Charlotte MSA. Over the past decade, population has grown at a slower rate when compared with the whole region. Homeownership is less prevalent with only 45% of all households being owner-occupied. Approximately 40% of all households have children and there tends to be more people living in each household when compared with the region. Almost 10% of households have no access to a vehicle, compared with only 5% across the entire MSA.

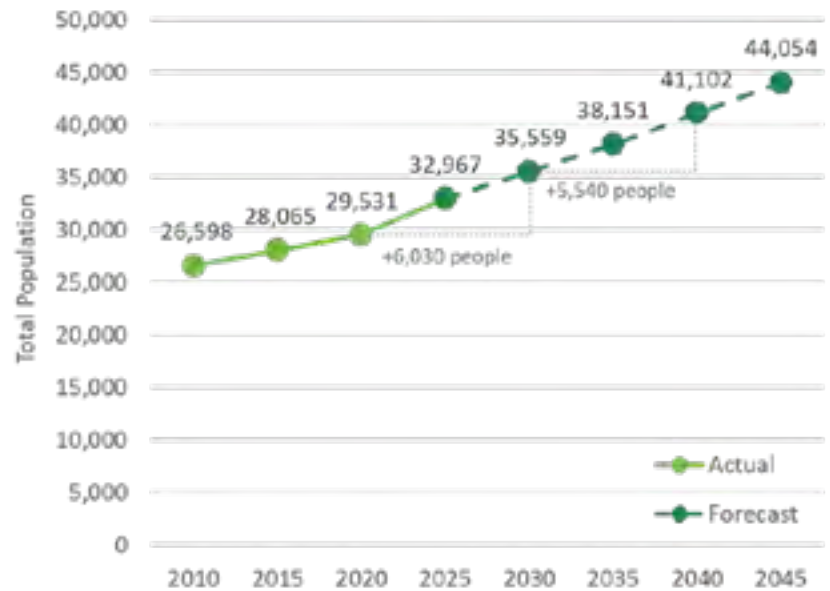
Population Trends and Forecasts

Over the past decade, the number of residents in the AOI grew by nearly 3,000 people or 11%. It is expected to grow another 50% over the next 25 years, reaching more than 44,000 people in the AOI. Over the next 10 years, a little over 6,000 people are expected to be added to the area.

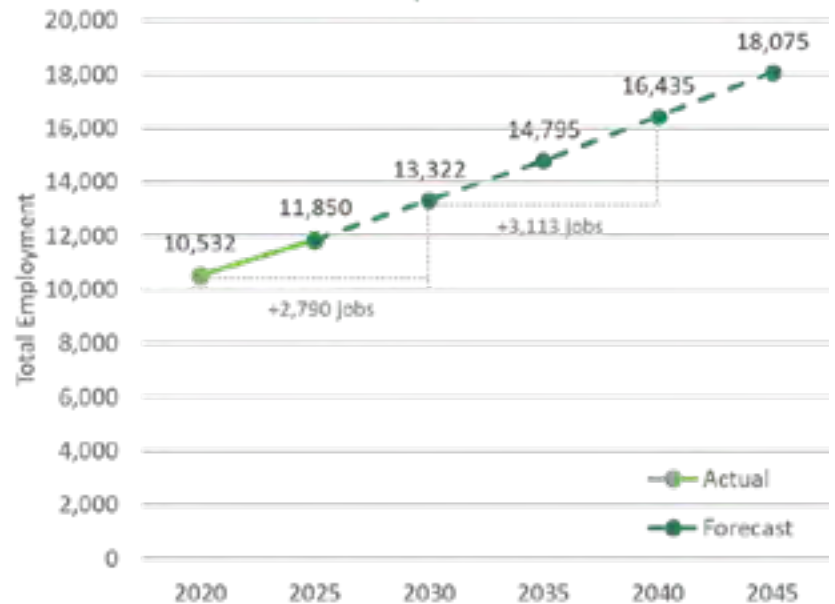
Economic Characteristics

Based on existing inventory, the market study identified a little over 1,000 businesses within the AOI. The industry with the most jobs is transportation and warehousing. There are fewer residents in white collar occupations and the median income is 33% lower than the citywide median household income. The rate of adults with bachelor's degrees is about half the citywide rate.

Area of Influence Population Forecast
ESRI BAO, CRTPO



Area of Influence Employment Forecast
ESRI BAO, CRTPO



Demographic Characteristics



Economic Characteristics



Employment Forecasts

Jobs in construction, health care and retail positions have grown the most the Area of Influence in the last five years. Looking forward, jobs in the Area of Influence are expected to grow nearly 72% between 2020 and 2045, and about 2,790 jobs over the next 10 years. Increases are expected in highway-oriented retail service jobs, e.g. gas stations and fast food restaurants.

Land Use

When considering land use by acreage, the most prevalent use in the Area of Influence is commercial, which comprises nearly half of the Area's property. Single-family residential represents the second largest amount of acreage, followed by multi-family residential. The number of acres categorized as office, open space/parks, and hospitality is limited at less than 1% each. While there is hospitality in the Area of Influence, the total amount of land is so minimal it rounds to zero.

Housing

There are approximately 12,050 housing units in the Area of Influence – 41.2% are owner-occupied and 47.0% are rental. Regional housing inventory is at an all-time low. The average closing price increased by 47.9% over ten years.

New single-family housing in the Area of Influence has been focused on infill opportunities within or near existing neighborhoods. Recent construction that is competitively priced has sold quickly.

There are 3,300 multifamily units in the Area of Influence. The Blue Line light rail extension has been a major driver of new multifamily housing supply but it is located mostly in the trade area, not the area of influence. Rent growth has been 4-6% annually. Multifamily in the Area of Influence has a current vacancy rate of 5.4%, lower than the Trade Area and the region. Garden-style developments are the predominant type, but TOD opportunities are introducing more intensity. Rents are comparatively more affordable than surrounding areas.

Retail

The Area of Influence has more 1.45 million square feet of retail space, primarily concentrated on North Tryon with a few clusters on Sugar Creek at the I-85 interchange and in the Derita area. There has been no

new multi-tenant retail space built in the Trade Area in more than five years. The retail sector is struggling nationally since before the pandemic and conditions are worsening. The trade area has higher vacancy rate than the City. The average rent rate, \$15.67/sf, is 20% below the market average.

Retail performance has been volatile in the Area of Influence. Rents are lower than market-wide averages and vacancy is higher. The comparatively older inventory of space may not be as attractive to modern tenants, but it could be a more affordable option for non-traditional leases. New construction will be challenging from a financial perspective.



Two main grocery stores anchor the Sugar Creek corridor: Food Lion and Compare Foods. There is a total of 64,100 SF of grocery between the two stores. There are 26 grocery stores within five miles of the center of the Area of Influence, indicating there is some access to grocery store options if transportation options exist.

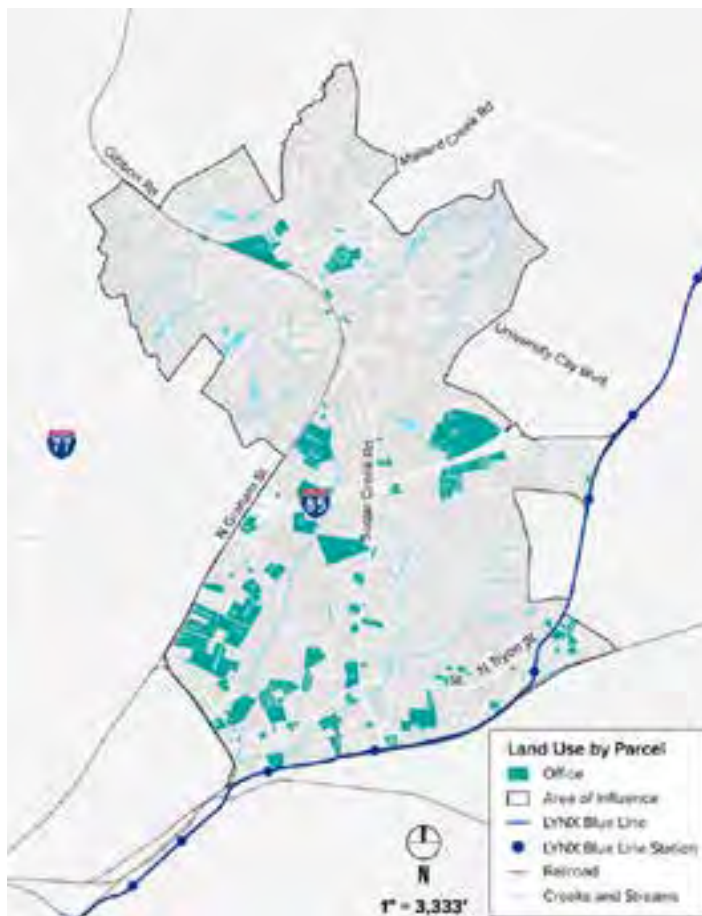
Office

The Area of Influence has 473,700 sf of office space, about half of which is Class A. 2019 was the only year with new office space completed during the last decade. The future of office space has some uncertainty coming out of the pandemic. The trade area has a notably higher vacancy rate than the Charlotte market. The average rent of \$24.79/SF is 9.5% below market average.

Market dynamics for office space in the Trade Area and Area of Influence are challenged with higher-than-average vacancy rates and lower rents. Opportunities for new office space in the Area of Influence will likely be focused on locations near transit stations, capitalizing on connectivity. Non-profit and government anchors could drive single-user demand.

Hospitality

The Area of Influence hosts approximately 415,000sf of hospitality, most of which was completed between 1970 and 1990. There are 14 hotels identified with 1,215 rooms. The hotels range in size from 40 – 151 rooms; three properties are classified as midscale and the rest are economy.



- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Rodeway Inn | 5 Baymont Charlotte | 9 Economy Inn |
| 2 Charlotte North Speedway Hotel | 6 Garden Inn & Suites | 10 Motel 6 |
| 3 Red Roof Inn | 7 Royal Inn Charlotte | 11 Quality Inn & Suites |
| 4 Super 8 Charlotte University | 8 Brookwood Inn | 12 Continental Inn |



Demand Considerations

Sector	Products	Demand Timeframe	Market Considerations
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached & attached SF Market-rate MF Senior Living Income Targeted 	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten-year demand: 2,000 – 2,200 units Strongest near-term potential at a variety of types, target markets and price points
Neighborhood-serving retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal services Food/dining destination Local entrepreneurs 	Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten-year demand: 35,000 – 50,000 sf Retail in a state of flux The station area development near the Blue Line light rail will drive demand
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional office Service office Medical office 	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten-year demand: 150,000 – 200,000 sf Sector experiencing continued recovery from pandemic Office demand will also be focused near transit areas
Industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-tech manufacturing Research warehouse 	Mid-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten-year demand: 125,000 – 150,000 sf Sector experiencing continued recovery from pandemic Located primarily near the North Graham Industrial cluster
Hotel			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current hotel supply is greater than traditional demand

The hotel sector experienced significant impact from the pandemic and recovery is still underway. Historically, hotels in Area of Influence consistently had lower occupancy rates than the Charlotte market. Post-pandemic, rates are comparatively higher driven by extended stay and value options.

The average daily rate in the Area of Influence is considerably lower than the Charlotte market. Hotels are still heavily impacted by the pandemic despite more wide-scale re-openings. Business and personal travel are still far behind pre-pandemic levels. Hotels in the Area of Influence represent low-cost options that were historically targeting highway travelers. New investment in hotels seeks areas that are connected to job centers, attractions and amenities.

Key Recommendations

Protect naturally occurring affordable housing stock

- Affected Segments: Downtown Derita, I-85 Interchange, Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Create NOAH inventory, support land acquisition and trusts, provide public subsidy, draft community benefits agreements
- Implementation timing: Short-term (1-3 years)

Support rehabilitation and reimagining of under-utilized shopping centers

- Affected Segments: Downtown Derita, Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Create business owners associations, connect neighborhoods and businesses, communicate existing economic development tools available, incentivize public-private partnerships
- Implementation timing: Short- to mid-term (1-5 years)

Enhance support for owners and reimagining of obsolete hotel/motel properties

- Affected Segments: I-85 Interchange
- Key Tools: Create business owners associations, increase communication on goals and projects, purchase key opportunity sites, expand public services to affected populations
- Implementation timing: Short-term (1-3 years)

Support strategies that combat against gentrification

- Affected Segments: Downtown Derita, Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Review zoning policy and place types, create strategy for land banking and housing trusts, purchase key opportunity sites, communicate existing tools
- Implementation timing: Short- to mid-term (1-5 years)

Leverage development momentum around transit

- Affected Segments: Hidden Valley/Farmcrest
- Key Tools: Plan for increased connection between existing neighborhoods and businesses, increase transit routes and frequency (last mile connectivity), improve streetscape and sidewalks
- Implementation timing: Mid-term (3-5 years)

The complete market study can be found in the appendix of this playbook.

Small Business Ecosystem Assessment

Over the past decade, Charlotte has benefited from an active economy in part due to a strong employment growth rate. With an employment rate more than double the national rate, strong population growth, and increasing wages, the city continues to evolve quickly. Within Charlotte, however, economic opportunity has not been shared equitably among all entrepreneurs and small business owners.

In 2021, the City's Economic Development Department began an assessment of the small business ecosystem in two of the City's six designated Corridors of Opportunity: Albemarle Road/Central Avenue and Sugar Creek Road/I-85. The purpose of this assessment is to understand the needs of the small business community in these corridors and develop actionable recommendations for support that can be provided by the City. This study had a larger scope.

West Sugar Creek Road

The study, while broader in scope, included findings and recommendations that are specific to the small business conditions on the West Sugar Creek Road corridor. The small business ecosystem in the Sugar Creek corridor includes more than 250 entrepreneurs and small business owners spanning over fifty

types of businesses, services, and resources for the community. Industry sectors include:

- Finance, insurance and real estate
- Retail trade
- Services
- Wholesale trade

To learn the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and challenges of existing small businesses in the corridor, the City's consultants, Raftelis and The Lee Institute, conducted a robust, grass-roots outreach and engagement process that included numerous individual interviews and focus groups with business owners, area connectors/influencers, and other stakeholders throughout the corridor. An online survey was administered in six languages - Spanish, Burmese, Nepali, French, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

Over the course of the engagement process, several common themes emerged from the feedback received. These themes include:

- Information and resources: Seek opportunities to connect businesses to the tools, resources, and organizations to help them start, grow, and sustain
- Communication and engagement: Creatively engage with the business community in ways that meet their specific cultural needs/goals
- Marketing and branding: Connect business owners with resources and training to effectively promote their small businesses
- Public safety: Implement strategies to support an environment where business owners and patrons feel safe doing business
- Business solutions: Connect businesses to relevant tools, training, and solutions that address the challenges and/or barriers they are currently facing

Increasing economic opportunity for businesses in the Sugar Creek corridor will require a multi-faceted approach involving multiple stakeholders. It will involve leveraging the skills of existing local and regional resources while also leveraging investment to create additional business development opportunities. There is an opportunity to meet small business owners where they are, provide them with services that have a transformational impact on their businesses, and foster a vibrant and resilient corridor in the City.

The consulting team concluded the community

outreach in January 2022, and detailed recommendations, based on the business input, will be incorporated into the Sugar Creek Playbook Implementation Table. The recommendations will provide opportunities to advance community vitality through new projects, programs or initiatives. An executive summary of this study can be found in the appendix of this playbook.

Industrial Market & Land Use Study

Cushman & Wakefield conducted an industrial land use and jobs analysis for the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County in 2021. While the scope was countywide, the analysis still has relevance to the West Sugar Creek Playbook because of the existing industrial cluster located along Graham Street and I-85; adjacent to the corridor study area. The analysis also informs stakeholders and the community on modern industrial operations, many of which are highly technical manufacturing operations or material moving driven by the rapid consumer adoption of e-commerce shopping and the highly synchronized activities to move goods to consumers' front doors.

Industrial users generally include manufacturers, transportation companies, warehousing, and some wholesale businesses. These users typically lease or own large facilities suitable for production or material moving operations. Some industrial facilities also include a customer-facing or business administration front office.

In general, demand in the industrial market is strong nationwide. Vacancy rates are low and are expected to remain low. The high demand has also led to a tight labor market with companies struggling to fill positions. The rapid growth in e-commerce and logistics has driven the strong demand for warehouse space. Industrial developers cannot keep up with the demand for industrial space and speculative development has increased nationwide and in Charlotte.

In Charlotte, the industrial market is growing quickly and mirrors the national trends. In 2020, Charlotte had record absorption and is on track to match or surpass that in 2021. As a result, rental rates are rising and vacancy remains low. Warehouse users make up most of the market activity, but smaller tenants are increasing as well.

The overall study organizes recommendations in three main categories: site selection and infrastructure needs; positioning for growth; industrial opportunity by geography.

West Sugar Creek Road

For the West Sugar Creek area, the existing industrial area around North Graham Street and Atando Avenue that reaches the western edges of the study area. The in-market location and access to the interstate makes this area an advantageous location for a variety of target industries.

The well-located submarket is proximate to the population center as well as the interstates. Despite the area's age and outmoded building features, the area still experiences high demand from a variety of users serving the area's population. Redevelopment activity should focus on smaller users <50,000 SF with last-mile distribution, wholesaling or other activities that have a minor public-facing element

and easy access to all parts of the region. A large redevelopment opportunity site at Irwin Creek would be highly preferred for most user types due to the area's geographic assets. Several modern buildings developed at this site would quickly lease and provide ample job opportunities for the area population.

The study recommends ensuring sites in this area meet environmental requirements, are properly zoned and have adequate infrastructure connections.

An executive summary of this study can be found in the appendix of this playbook.

Labor Market Study

The talent and labor market study conducted by EY explores the demographic composition, educational attainment dynamics, labor characteristics and potential barriers to opportunity present in four zip code-based geographies in Charlotte. The scope included the entire Corridors of Opportunity Geography, not just West Sugar Creek. For this study, EY defined a labor market geography for West Sugar Creek Road that included parts of zip codes 28206 and 28213 and captures the nearby neighborhoods.

The study evaluated the corridor through three lenses: workforce, real estate and target industries. The study included a quantitative analysis of the corridor from an employment perspective and identified barriers that current residents face when accessing quality jobs. The study recommendations are in strategic alignment with the City's larger employment and workforce programs.

Workforce Analysis

While Construction is the largest employment cluster in the combined 28206/28213 zip code area, the area is also home to several relatively concentrated manufacturing clusters, including Furniture, Industrial Machinery and Automotive. The area is also home to small but growing service clusters such as Back Office, Professional Services and Health Care.

Corridor residents, as well as those living in the combined 28206/28213 zip code area, are more



Source: LoopNet

likely to work in occupations such as Production, Maintenance and Repair, Material Moving, and Healthcare support compared to their counterparts living in other parts of Charlotte.

Target Industry Analysis

The target industry analysis evaluated industry clusters in the Corridors and city at-large. The analysis identified whether an industry is growing, has a presence in the Corridors, or matches the skills in the Corridor workforce. Throughout the process, potential targets were assessed through another filter: whether the industry could make the Corridors of Opportunity more economically diverse, resilient, and sustainable.

The analysis suggests West Sugar Creek corridor is a strong candidate for manufacturing, including food processing and medical equipment and supplies. These industries match the corridor's assets, have long-term growth potential, and can provide upward career opportunities for Corridor residents who have diverse skills but commute out for jobs.

Real Estate Analysis

A heavily industrial corridor, Sugar Creek has 617 industrial properties listed on CoStar, accounting for 14.1m sf. The Sugar Creek corridor also includes 2.4m sf of office, mostly in general office space, but there are also six medical offices, a few mixed use office and residential buildings, and an assisted living and rehabilitation center. Development is concentrated along North Graham Street and North Tryon Street.

Key Recommendations

The study concludes with three key recommendations for West Sugar Creek:

Opportunity Employers: Target opportunity employers to local and expand in the corridors.

1. Create an Opportunity Employers program.
2. Proactively attract target industry businesses into the Corridors of Opportunity.
3. Engage with employers already located in the corridors to hire more corridor residents.

Support Residents: Assist corridor residents with overcoming barriers to employment and accessing career and economic opportunities.

1. Launch an Opportunity Workforce initiative
2. Expand capacity of existing high-performance nonprofits that serve Opportunity workers
3. Expand entrepreneurship opportunities for aspiring business owners
4. Improve transportation solutions for corridor residents employed by Opportunity Employers
5. Support programs that help corridor residents overcome barriers to education, employment, and career advancement

Real Estate: Spark commercial real estate development and redevelopment within the corridors.

1. Promote sites and buildings within the corridors that are ready for commercial and industrial development.
2. Identify strategic sites within the corridors for public-private partnership.
3. Expand the City's communications platforms for enticing development into the corridors.
4. Empower public-private partnerships.
5. Create an equitable development program.

An executive summary of this study can be found in the appendix of this playbook.

Past Planning Area Plans

West Sugar Creek Road from North Tryon Street to Nevin Road is approximately 3 miles long, and there are four land use plans that address the area. The Central District Plan, the Northeast District Plan, and the Westside Strategic Plan, with W. Sugar Creek Road serving as a dividing line between the plan areas. These plans work together to describe the vision for the corridor. As part of this analysis, each plan was reviewed for policy recommendations and references to Sugar Creek Road and its surrounding neighborhoods. The policies and land use recommendations are summarized below.

Derita Small Area Plan (1985)

- Recommends improving the Derita "town center" - located between Nevin and Gibbon Roads with Mallard Creek as the primary intersection - through the promotion of specialty shops, allowing

additional office and business development, the introduction of active transportation and complete streets features, and creating landscaping along the railroad tracks

- Create design guidelines for the “town center” to include facades, signage, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and street amenities
- Provide a landscaped median in the center turn lane of Sugar Creek Road
- Single family + multi-family land use and zoning changes are captured in the recommended land use map included in the Northeast District Plan

Central District Plan (1993)

- Sugaw Creek (approximately between Craighead Rd and Sugar Creek Rd and Sugaw Creek Park) is identified as a stable neighborhood that should be maintained
- Preserve single family long Wilson Ln and Merlane Drive
- Expand Sugaw Creek Park

Northeast District Plan (1996)

- Recommends the continuation of the Derita Small Area Plan (1985)
- Land use recommendations summarized in the Derita Small Area Plan synopsis

Westside Strategic Plan (2000)

- This plan largely focuses on the area around Charlotte-Douglas International Airport and the addition of new runways being planned at the turn of the millennium
- General land use recommendations include revitalization and preservation of single family neighborhoods
- General transportation recommendations include the addition of complete streets features like sidewalks, bicycle facilities, street lighting, and improved railroad crossings

Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan replaces previously adopted plans, however, many of the core concepts of current plans are continued and expanded upon by the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Specific land use recommendations based on the goals, objectives, and policies based on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan were developed as part of the Place Types Mapping process completed in 2022. Existing neighborhood and community plan concepts and policies will be integrated into future community area planning processes over the next several years, along with actionable strategies for the city’s neighborhoods at a manageable and implementable scale.

City Projects & Programs

While there are many transportation, infrastructure, housing, and economic development projects that have happened on the West Sugar Creek Road corridor, the following are highlighted as significant investment by the City of Charlotte.



Transit Projects

- **2030 Transit Corridor System Plan** - CATS is updating the 2030 Transit System Plan while implementing rapid transit project improvements and strengthening the current bus network.
- **Envision My Ride** - Northwest Charlotte was impacted significantly in 2018 when CATS restructured several bus routes. This was done through Envision My Ride, CATS' initiative to re-imagine the bus system's structure, reliability and efficiency. CATS will continue the work of Envision My Ride to evaluate how to make all bus routes more frequent and efficient.
- **Lynx Blue Line Extension** - The Blue Line Extension is an extension of the successful LYNX Blue Line light rail service that was completed in 2018. The 9.3-mile alignment extends from 7th Street Station in Center City through the NoDa (North Davidson) and University areas, terminating on the UNC Charlotte campus.

Infrastructure Projects

Numerous infrastructure and capital improvements projects have been completed in the study area including:

- Stormwater Services Projects
- U-2507 Graham St. Extension
- Oneida Rd. Sidewalk
- NECI Sugar Creek Rd. Streetscape
- Future traffic signals
- NECI N. Tryon St. and Bennett St.
- Fiber Installation
- NECI Tom Hunter Rd. Streetscape
- Gibbon Rd. Sidewalk
- Gibbon Rd. at Nevin Rd. Intersection Improvements
- Sugar Creek Streetscape
- Hidden Valley South Water Main Replacement
- Street lighting upgrades

Cross Charlotte Trail (Orr. Rd. Connection) - The City of Charlotte is partnering with Mecklenburg County to create a 30+-mile trail and greenway facility that will

stretch from the City of Pineville through Center City and on to the UNC Charlotte campus and Cabarrus County line. Once completed, the Cross Charlotte Trail will allow residents to travel seamlessly from one end of Charlotte to the other. Approximately 140,000 residents and 130,000 jobs will be within walking distance of the proposed trail and the adjacent greenways that connect to it.

See the Sugar Creek Audit in the Appendix for more information on projects in implementation.

Housing and Neighborhood Services Projects

The following projects and programs that address community and socio-economic factors have been completed in the study area:

- **Community Engagement Grants** - This department provides programs, partnerships, and services that inform and empower communities to create the change they want to see in their unique communities. In the last decade community HNS has awarded 31 grants for a total of \$235,590.
- **Jump Start Microgrant** - This grant provides small programming grants to community based organizations to help jumpstart efforts around conflict resolution and mediation, crime fighting and prevention, opportunities for youth and/or parents, family stability, and addressing racial segregation.
- **Housing Programs** - City housing rehabilitation programs offers grants or low interest loans and focus on services for elderly or disabled homeowners.

Economic Development Initiatives

There are two grant programs offered by Economic Development that have been completed on the W. Sugar Creek corridor:

Business Matching Grant Program

Incentivizes business and property owners to improve

their properties located within the Business Corridor Revitalization Geography. This program is composed of four grant opportunities:

- Facade Improvement Grants remove blight by assisting business and commercial property owners through exterior architectural renovations and targeted site improvements.
- Security Enhancement Grants reduce the opportunity for crime and build relationships between corridor businesses and community police officers
- Brownfield Assessment Grants assist with overcoming the barriers to redeveloping brownfield sites by supporting site assessments and remediation activities.
- Business District Organization Grants support the collaborative work of business groups and merchants associations operating in the corridors to create positive changes that benefit the neighborhood business district.
- Recent demand in the Sugar Creek Area of

Influence is driven by the Blue Line Extension. There are 11 projects currently in station areas.

Opportunity Zones

The federal Opportunity Zone program provides incentives to investors with recently realized capital gains to invest in economically-distressed census tracts with long-term investment in property or businesses. Opportunity Zone program funds can invest in local businesses, real estate or development projects. Funds have the potential to direct financing to areas in Charlotte where access to traditional capital is difficult. The City aims to provide information about Opportunity Zones to developers, businesses owners and residents; connect unds with businesses and developments that align with community goals and values; and target strategic projects that create new opportunities to promote economic mobility.



“

**I love where I live, it is
the true definition of a
neighborhood.”**

SECTION 05

Corridor Profile

Housing**Safety & Social Network****Transportation & Mobility****Open Space****Development Readiness****Jobs & Business**

The Sugar Creek Corridor is home to over 33,000 people, with a wide diversity of place types, housing conditions and active land uses. Understanding the physical profile of the corridor helps guide community workshops and gather accurate information regarding where public investment should occur.

The core of the study area consists of three key commercial nodes: Derita, the I-85 interchange and Hidden Valley. Adjacent to these areas are several neighborhoods, which are predominantly characterized by single family structures. Multi-family housing is most prevalent in the Derita area, in proximity to the I-85 interchange, and in the area adjacent to Old Concord Station along the LYNX Blue Line. The southern portion of the corridor is predominantly single family housing, most of which is found in the Hidden Valley neighborhood.

Parks are present throughout the corridor at neighborhood and regional scales. The largest parks are the Sugar Creek Community Park adjacent to Hidden Valley and the Ribbonwalk Nature Preserve off of Nevin Road. There are several smaller parks throughout the corridor that are highly valued community assets.

Economic activity on the corridor is predominantly service-industry based. There is a concentration of industrial activity in the manufacturing and logistics sector along Graham Street which runs west to east through the corridor. Future economic growth will most likely concentrate around the light rail stations to the south, while low rent and higher availability overall makes the corridor appealing for non-profit and civic entities.

This chapter presents an overview of findings related to the physical, social and economic character of the corridor.

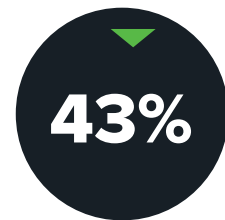
Housing

The average age of housing in the area is 32 years. Single family homes comprise the majority of the stock. Average home sales price is around \$173,000, compared to \$331,000 for Mecklenburg County as a whole. The area currently has a robust stock of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), which puts it at risk for gentrification and displacement. Residents of Hidden Valley have indicated that they are experiencing pressure from buyers in the real estate market.

New development follows a pattern of multi-family housing and higher-density housing, such as townhomes. Older housing stock is predominantly single-family.

Analysis Findings & Data

- 93% of housing units in the AOI are occupied
- The average square footage of homes in the area is 1,672 square feet
- The average cost of rent is \$1,068
- Housing is the only near-term market opportunity for the area
- The area has a density of 2 housing units per acre



**Homeownership
Rate**

Recommendations



CULTIVATE PROSPERITY

Land uses adjacent to light rail can foster higher density and desired mixed-use



STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

Encourage new development to be in the same character as existing neighborhoods

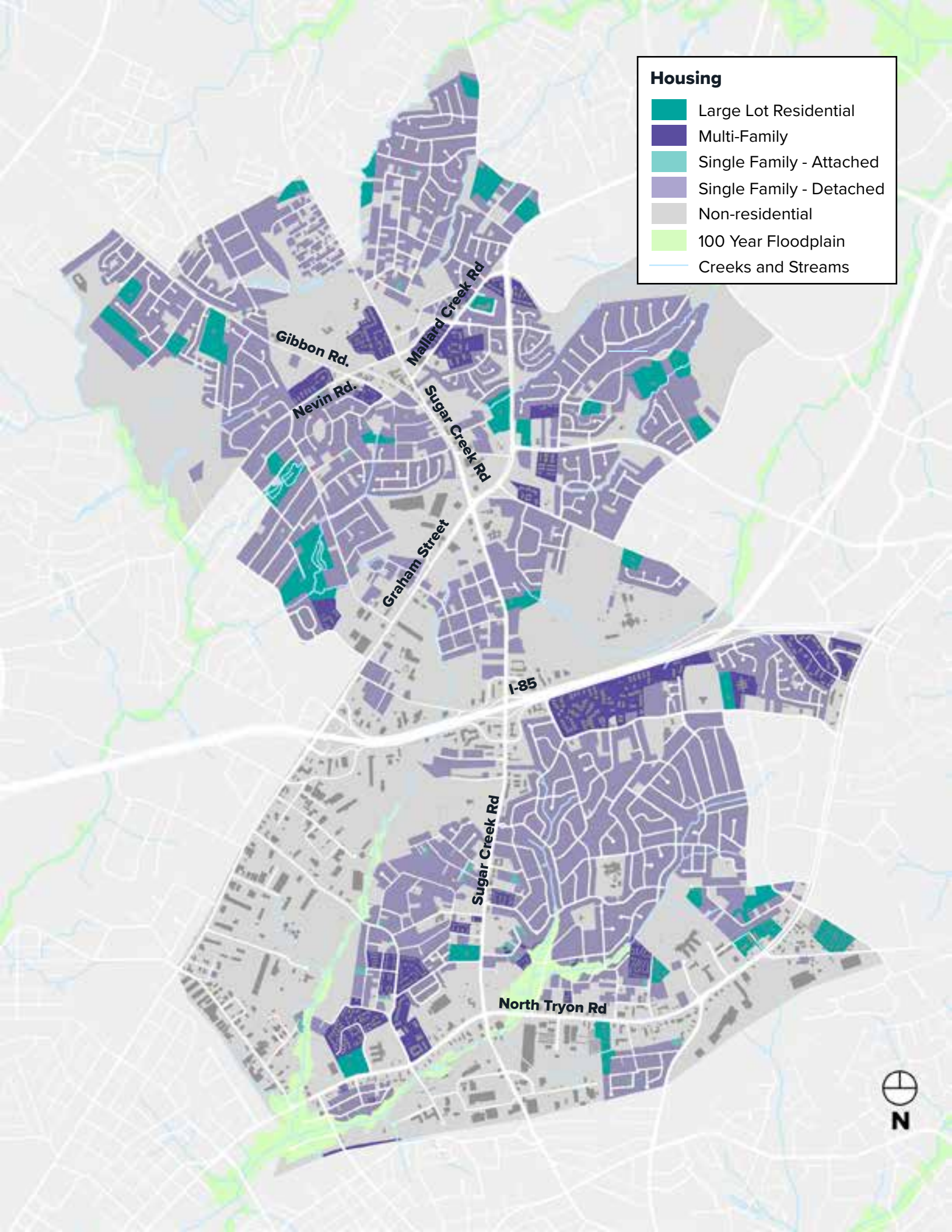


BUILD LEGACY

Pathways for residents to stay in their homes

Housing

- Large Lot Residential
- Multi-Family
- Single Family - Attached
- Single Family - Detached
- Non-residential
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Creeks and Streams



Safety & Social Network

The I-85 interchange is a site of high criminal activity. The map to the right illustrates the dispersion of violent crimes committed between 2017 - 2021. An overabundance of hospitality stay options in this area exacerbates this issue, as criminal activity frequently takes place in and around their premises. This activity is not strictly related to local crime, but regional crime as well given the presence of the highway. Resolving this issue is a high priority for the community, as well as law enforcement agencies.

Analysis Findings & Data

- In 2021 there were 22 violent crimes per 1,000 people around the interchange compared to the county-wide number of 5.5 per 1,000 people
- There were 88 property crimes per 1,000 people in the area surrounding the interchange in 2021 compared to 31.5 per 1,000 people for the county
- There were 452.5 disorder-related calls for service per 1,000 people in the area around the interchange as compared to 97 per 1,000 people for the county



**Violent crimes
reported between
2017-2021**

Recommendations



CULTIVATE PROSPERITY

Support families permanently living in hotels by providing resources



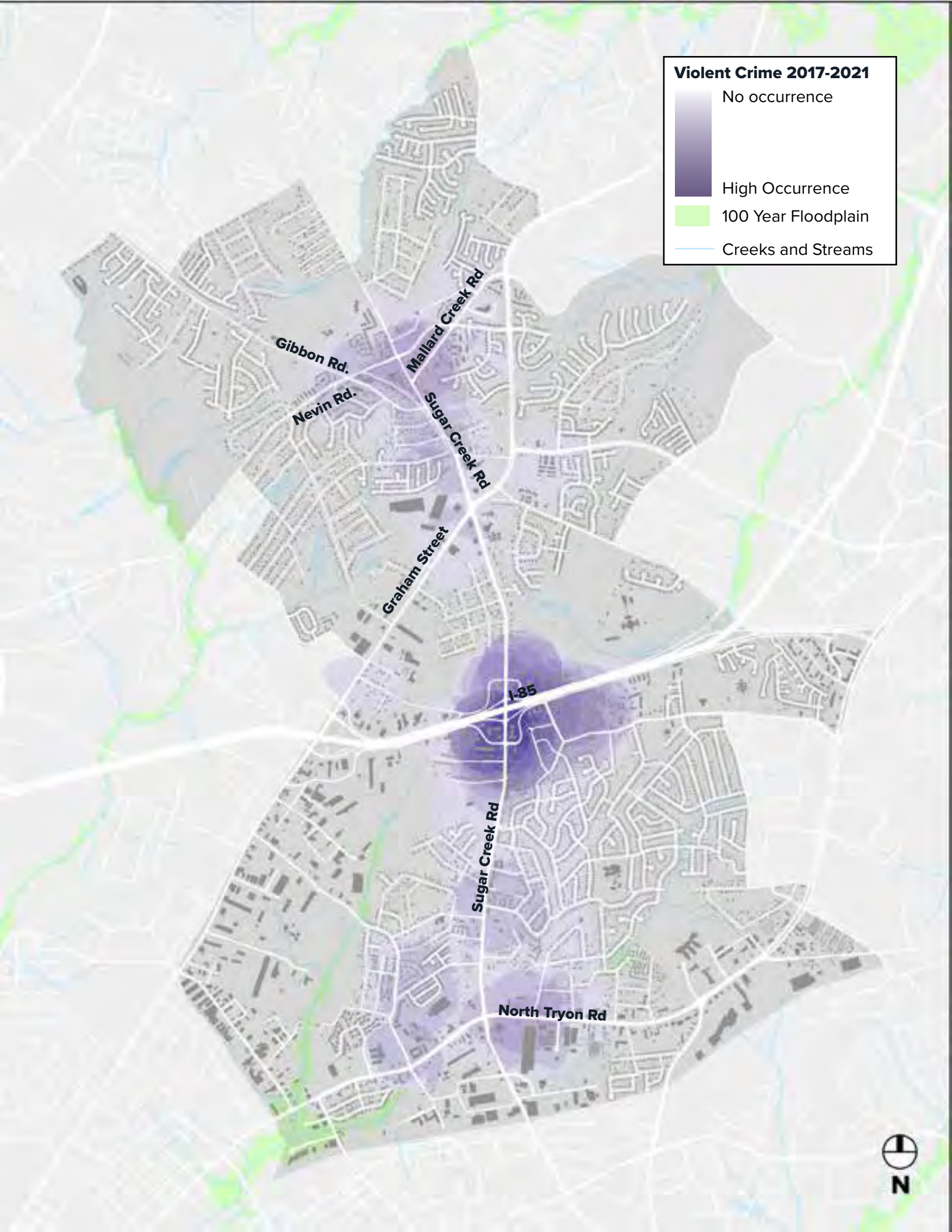
STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

Work closely with property owners of hotels to improve conditions



BUILD LEGACY

Consider purchasing hotels to encourage redevelopment



Violent Crime 2017-2021

- No occurrence
- High Occurrence
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Creeks and Streams



Transportation & Mobility

The corridor is accessible through numerous transportation options, but walkability is the largest challenge. During community workshops, residents throughout the corridor expressed a desire to see improvements in the pedestrian realm. The Old Concord Road and Sugar Creek Road LYNX Blue Line stations are located adjacent to North Tryon on the south side of the corridor. Bus routes provide access from Graham Street and Sugar Creek Road. I-85 crosses under Sugar Creek, which is a major

interchange. Personal vehicles remain the most frequent mode of transportation for residents of the corridor, but improved or additional infrastructure for walking and bicycling is desired.

Analysis Findings & Data

- Improve sidewalks to support pedestrian and outdoor dining/retail spaces
- Pursue traffic calming strategies throughout the corridor to improve safety all around
- Improve aesthetics along pedestrian routes by addressing litter and overgrown areas
- Establish more bicycle infrastructure and connect to the greenways



Miles of sidewalks

Recommendations



CULTIVATE PROSPERITY

Support transit investments and station areas



STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

Reduce the frequency of traffic incidents on the corridor

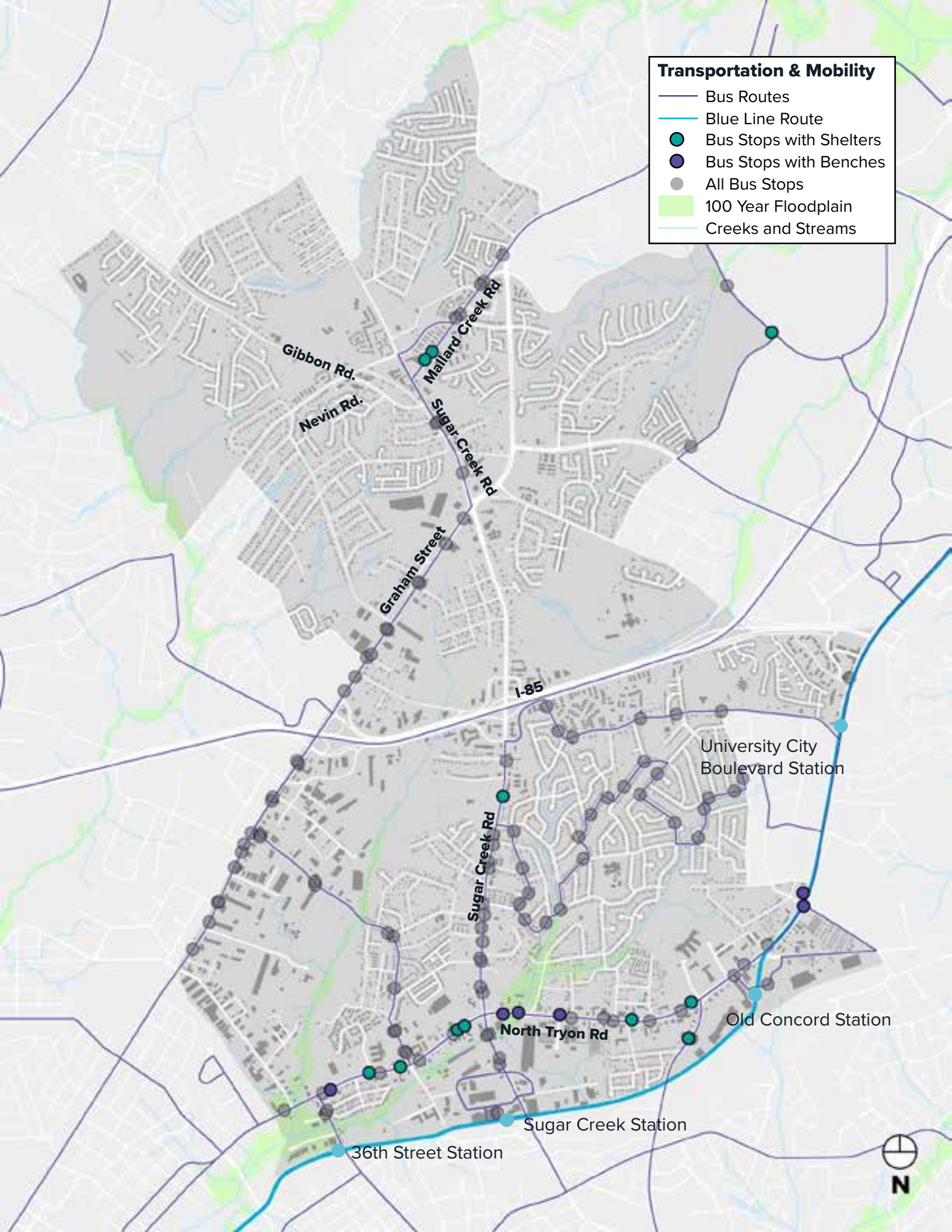


BUILD LEGACY

Create safe and reliable multi-modal options for mobility

Transportation & Mobility

- Bus Routes
- Blue Line Route
- Bus Stops with Shelters
- Bus Stops with Benches
- All Bus Stops
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Creeks and Streams



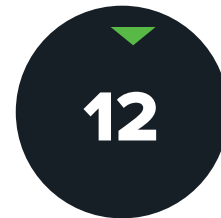
Open Space

Green space in the Area of Influence (AOI) includes programmed and unprogrammed parks, Ribbonwalk Nature Preserve (in the northwest of the AOI) and open space located on church and school properties. There are no greenways currently in the AOI or study area, but two will be implemented along the Irwin Creek tributary connecting to Derita and the Little Sugar Creek tributary connecting to Hidden Valley. The Cross Charlotte Trail will ultimately go through Hidden Valley along Little Sugar Creek to the south.

The community places high value on these open spaces, and desires an improvement in pedestrian infrastructure so that they can be better connected to neighborhoods. Increased walkability and bikeability in the corridor will be fostered by the planned greenway improvements. Many of these open spaces have a robust tree canopy, which the community wishes to protect and expand where possible.

Analysis Findings & Data

- There are 950+ acres of parks within the AOI
- 5 of these parks are fully programmed
- The tree canopy covers 3,000 acres within the AOI
- There are 25+ miles of creeks within the AOI



**Miles of Planned
Greenways**

Recommendations



CULTIVATE PROSPERITY

Improve pedestrian environments and connections to open space



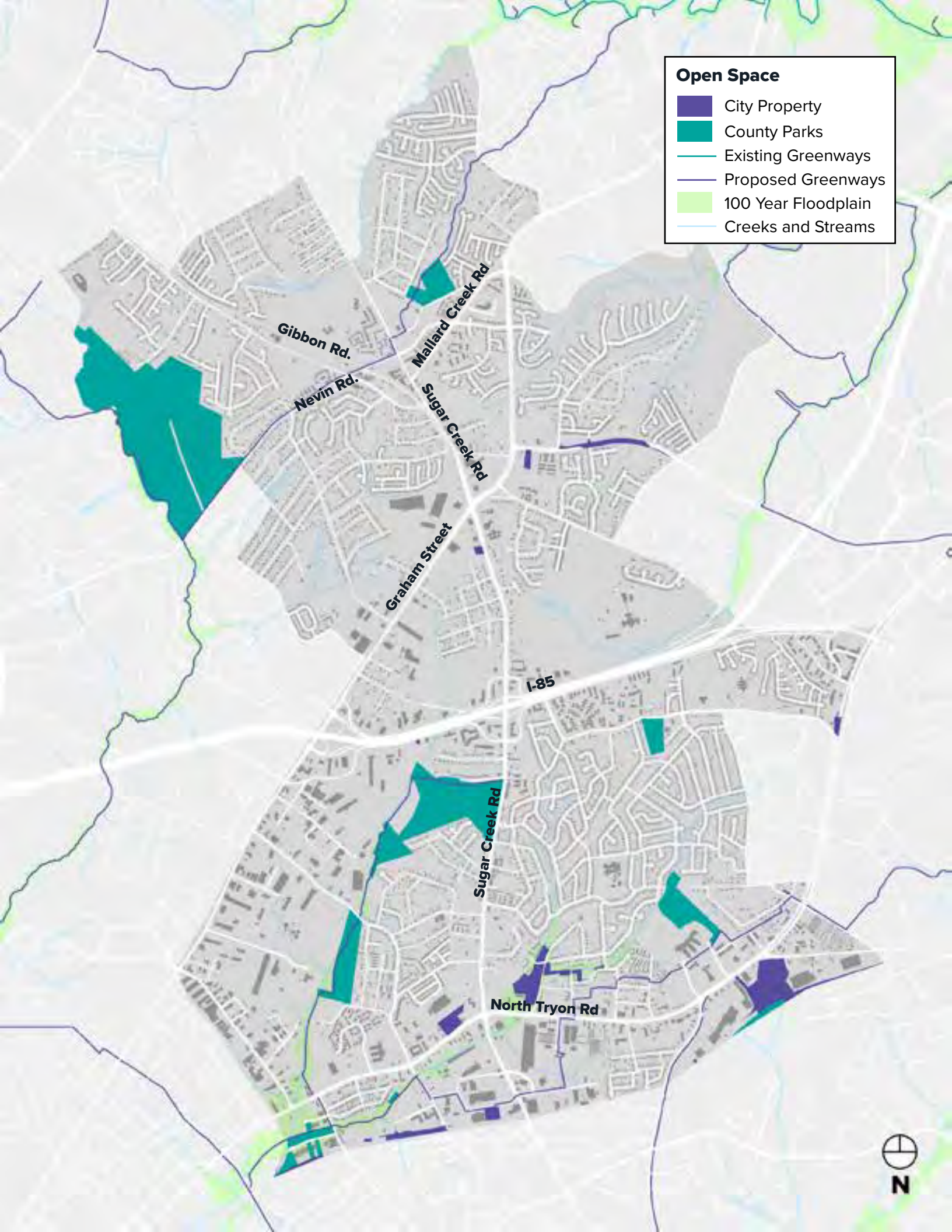
STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

Programming and events in parks for community to gather



BUILD LEGACY

Protect and grow the tree canopy



Open Space

- City Property
- County Parks
- Existing Greenways
- Proposed Greenways
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Creeks and Streams

Gibbon Rd.

Nevin Rd.

Mallard Creek Rd

Sugar Creek Rd

Graham Street

I-85

Sugar Creek Rd

North Tryon Rd



Development Readiness

There are three main commercial nodes identified along the corridor: Derita, I-85 and the Hidden Valley node. Derita currently is under-retailed, with a number of commercial properties sitting vacant. The I-85 interchange is over-served in the hospitality sector. These inexpensive hotels attract regional crime to the area. Hidden Valley has a smaller commercial footprint, the commercial spaces here are currently fully occupied. Graham Street, adjacent to the corridor, is a high concentration of manufacturing and logistics.

The market analysis shows that housing is the strongest near-term development opportunity. In the southern portion of the Area of Influence (AOI), the completion of the LYNX Blue Line can attract potential development of office and retail space immediately adjacent to the Sugar Creek and Old Concord stations. In other areas of the corridor, low rents and availability of existing retail and office space is a potential opportunity for non-profit and government entities to invest in the near-term.

Analysis Findings & Data

- Proximity to interstates and increase in e-commerce and other last mile distribution uses will drive near term demand
- Housing is the only market driven demand opportunity
- Current hotel supply is greater than demand; transition to other uses
- Workforce training education programs can make a successful strategy for redevelopment at Sugar Creek interchange
- Office demand will be focused at transit stations in near-term
- Retail demand will be focused at transit stations in near-term



**Expected
population
increase in the
Area of Influence
over the next 25
years**

Recommendations



CULTIVATE PROSPERITY

Protect and support existing local businesses



STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY





Transition over supply of hotels to other uses

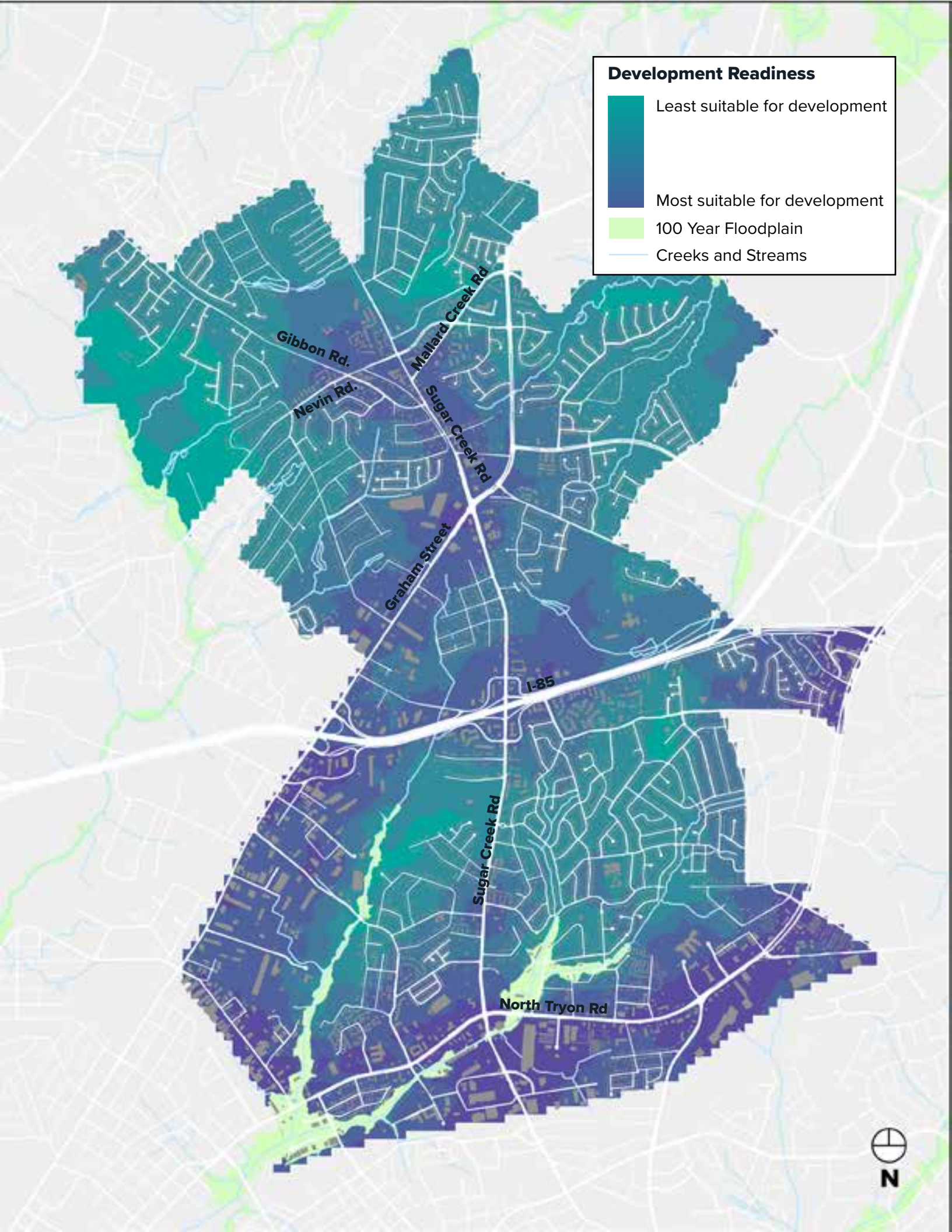


BUILD LEGACY

Encourage walkable commercial areas that attract local businesses

Development Readiness

-  Least suitable for development
-  Most suitable for development
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  Creeks and Streams



Jobs & Business

A mix of local businesses and national franchises comprise the majority of employment opportunities on the corridor. There is a portion of the Area of Influence (AOI) that encompasses the manufacturing and logistics district located on Graham Street. This area has high tenancy rates and low rent costs. North of I-85 there are a number of vacant commercial properties. The market analysis indicated that government and non-profit entities might be interested in the corridor due to the low rent and availability of commercial space.

Based on demand forecasts for the various real estate sectors, the Trade Area could support a variety of land uses through the 10-year planning horizon. Demand in the Trade Area is most heavily weighted towards residential and industrial opportunities in the short-term. The success of future retail and office development hinges on bringing more residents to the area to increase rooftops and consumer spending potential. Likewise, hospitality will also be dependent on the success in attracting other land uses to the area.

Analysis Findings & Data

- Manufacturing and logistics, hospitality, commercial retail and service industry are the primary economic sectors for employment in the AOI
- Proximity to the I-85 interchange increases the desirability for manufacturing and logistics to locate here
- Market driven development of future commercial and office space will be concentrated at the LYNX Blue Line stations, thus future job growth will be concentrated in these areas in the near-term



Employment Rate

Recommendations



CULTIVATE PROSPERITY

Support existing manufacturing and logistics land use



STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

Housing strategy to support market for desired uses

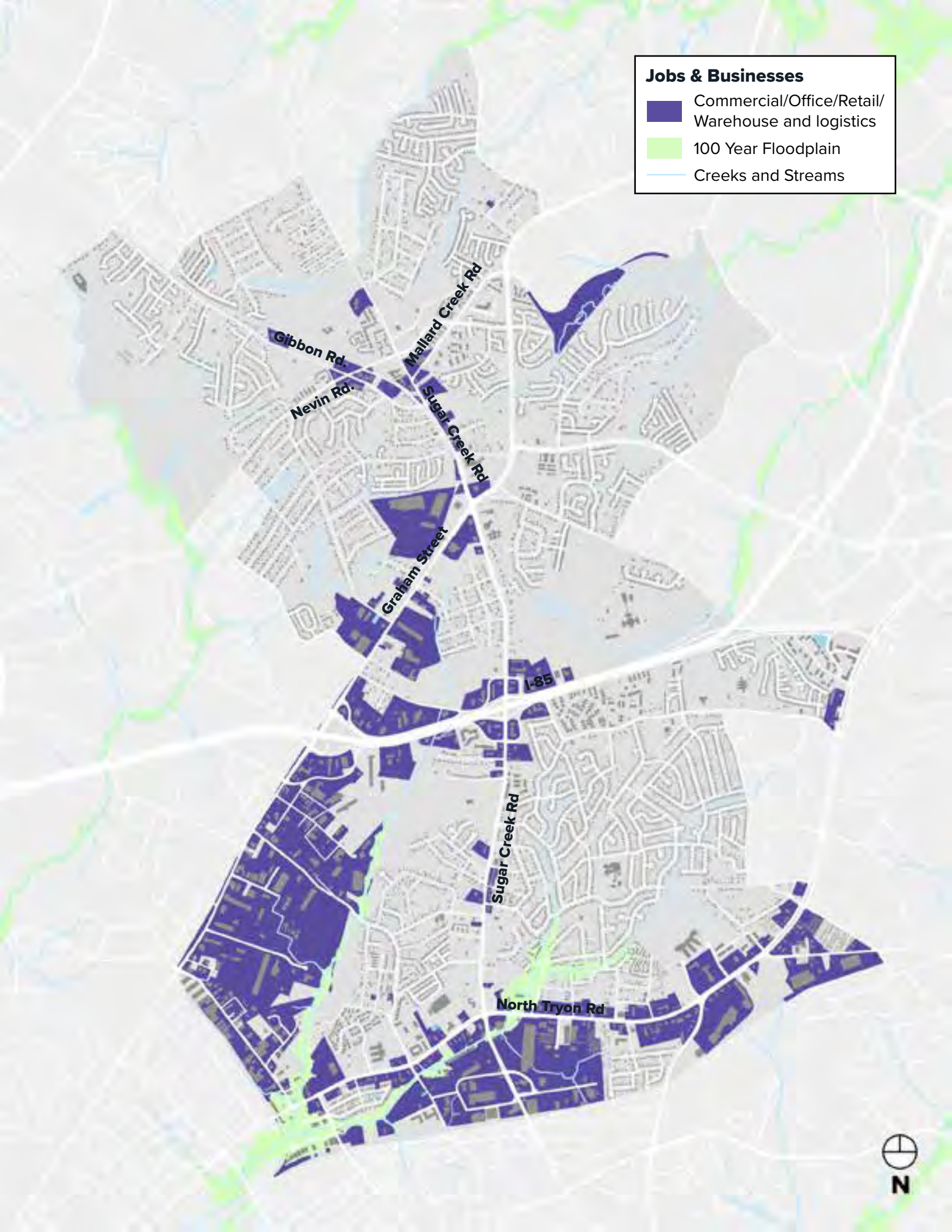


BUILD LEGACY

Create opportunities for people to access higher paying jobs

Jobs & Businesses

- Commercial/Office/Retail/
Warehouse and logistics
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Creeks and Streams



“

I dream of having a walkable community again...the amenities I enjoyed when I was younger.”

SECTION 05

Recommendations & Implementation Strategies

Goals**Vision****Recommendations****Priorities****Implementation Strategies**

The primary goal of the study is to establish a shared vision for West Sugar Creek Road as a vibrant corridor in the city. A result of community direction and input, the goals for the vision are:

1 Reduce Violent Crime

The I-85 interchange area is a hot spot for crime due to the presence of numerous inexpensive hotels and the proximity to the highway and other getaway routes. Resolving this issue is the number one priority for the community.

2 Build a shared sense of community

Members of the community would like to engage with more programming that will enable people of all ages to gather and build upon their shared identity.

3 Diversify commercial activity, create curb appeal and support businesses with well-paying jobs for local residents

There are many favorite local establishments along the corridor and the existing franchises are frequented by area residents. The current automobile oriented nature of these commercial nodes does not reflect the walkable scale desired in future commercial development. As development occurs in the corridor, the community wants to see employment opportunities increase as well.

4 Create viable transportation and mobility options

Personal vehicles are currently the most common means of transportation along the corridor. Community members would like to see multiple modes of transportation infrastructure expanded to enable more travel by foot, bike and public transportation.

5 Encourage walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space

New development and growth in the corridor should be designed to further support a walkable corridor and the surrounding community. Included in new development is a desire to reinvest in shared open spaces that serve as a gathering spot to build social capital and networks throughout the corridor

6 Incorporate housing tenure strategies for longtime residents to enjoy new investments

Homeowners have indicated that retail market pressure is beginning to increase, and with this displacement pressure and gentrification. Residents would like support for remaining in place so they will be able to benefit from the new investments arriving in the corridor.

Housing Mix in Neighborhoods

2 3 5 6



Enhanced Intersection

2 3 4 5



Safe & Improved Interchange

1 2 3 4



Vibrant Business District

2 3 5



MARIA'S

A Vision for W. Sugar Creek Road

**The
colle
neig
and
tran
hou
and
inve**



W. Sugar Corridor will be a section of strong businesses and neighborhoods that are safe, diverse, walkable. Vibrant retail, viable transportation options, open spaces, and housing strategies will allow existing and new residents to benefit from the investments in the corridor.



Recommendations

A. Housing & Code Enforcement

- 1 - 5** Promote a mix of housing options
- 6** Establish a campus that provides housing and wrap around services
- 7 - 8** Enforce code and security compliance

B. Safety & Social Network

- 1** Address trespassing, panhandling, encampments
- 2** Continued support and connection to social services for people in the area
- 3 - 5** Build relationships between neighborhoods and commercial nodes
- 6 - 9** Mitigate housing and business displacement from investments and development
- 10 - 11** Support the transition of extended stay residents into more stable housing
- 12** Bring in designated case workers to operate in this area and connect people with resources

C. Transportation & Infrastructure

- 1 - 8** Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people
- 9** Adapt and redevelop sites to improve visibility, vibrancy, and community ownership

- 10** Improve street lighting where needed

- 11 - 13** Make transit convenient

D. Design & Development

- 1 - 3** Enhance existing and create interim and new shared public open space for recreation and preserve natural resources
- 4** Create community open space in the Derita commercial node that can get art and opportunity for free, fun public events
- 5** Create connection between the Hidden Valley/ Farmcrest commercial node and the ecological park and Cross Charlotte Trail
- 6** Create community open space in the Hidden Valley/ Farmcrest commercial node that can get art and opportunity for free, fun public events
- 7 - 10** Purchase property at the I-85 interchange and the Derita and Hidden Valley commercial nodes
- 11** Rezone sites to promote desired transformation
- 12** Work with property owners to identify incremental improvements to public spaces along West Sugar Creek Road

- 13** Transform auto-centric development to support more community oriented goals through future development guidance

E. Workforce & Business Development

- 1** Redevelop 2-4 sites for business that matches local skills and reduces commercial footprint, particularly the amount of economy motels
- 2** Build innovative spaces that allow for businesses and housing
- 3** Support job skills training in the area in the trades, particularly small scale construction
- 4** Improve security at businesses
- 5** In the interim of redevelopment, activate street frontage in Derita and transform the commercial node with redevelopment
- 6** Preserve historic and interesting structures in the Derita commercial node
- 7** Work with neighborhoods and businesses in Derita and Hidden Valley/Farmcrest to establish a main street identity
- 8 - 12** Establish a Business District at the Interchange
- F - 11** Build Joint Venture Partnerships

The analysis of the market and existing conditions of the corridor identified the key issues and opportunities associated with W. Sugar Creek Road's strategic location between Uptown and University City.

How do we capitalize on the corridor's strategic location between economic generators?

Retail rents in the W. Sugar Creek Road Area of Influence are lower than market-wide averages and vacancy is higher. The area has an older inventory that may not be as attractive to modern tenants, but it could be a more affordable option for non-traditional leases. However, new construction may be hard to finance.

Opportunity lies in strengthening key nodes on the W. Sugar Creek Road corridor and improving connections to public transportation. Near-term opportunities should be focused at three key nodes:



Downtown Derita



The I-85 Interchange



The Hidden Valley Commercial Center

**The numbers and letters above key to the Implementation Table found starting on Page 90.

Priorities for the Corridor

From the many recommendations that resulted from an engagement process with the community and conversations with stakeholders, the following six priorities should be considered first for immediate funding.

1. Improve Community Safety through Reducing Transactional Crime Opportunities (Node: 1-85)

Short Term: Use enforcement (code & safety nuisance) and existing business support to keep pressure on problem hotels

- Time and community relationship cost: High (may take years, no guarantees on time frame to get hotels shut down/transition, enforcement has been pursued previously on a property and business type and issues persisted)
- Business cost: Moderate (cost of basics is high, but income is also high from weekly and daily lodgers)
- City's capital cost: Low, focus of spending is to support good behavior of businesses
- City Staff Trade Off: Moderate to High due to intensity and time required

Short-Medium Term: Find Private Sector Partners on social services and potential development of hotels

- Time and community relationship cost: Low to Moderate (depends on private sector and their interest in this area, particularly given difficulty of sites and context)
- Business cost: Low to moderate (cost of basics is high, but income is also high from weekly and daily lodgers and will likely make good money selling)
- City capital cost: Low, or not applicable, focus on supportive City role through existing tools for redevelopment
- City staff cost: Low to moderate, focus on supportive City role through existing tools for redevelopment

Short-Medium Term: Work through existing partnerships to implement action plan for hotel sites

- Time and community relationship cost: Low to Moderate (depends on partners readiness, start time, and agreed upon approach)
- Business cost: Moderate to High (reduced spending on maintenance, loss of income from weekly/daily lodgers, potential pressure to not sell at an inflated rate)
- City capital cost: Moderate (may need to help support purchase or expenses of redevelopment to ensure or expedite the process by private sector partners)
- City staff cost: Moderate (will likely start with higher levels, but as things get going will likely be reduced as private sector proceeds with their role in the process)

Long Term: City purchases hotel property

- Time and community relationship cost: Low to moderate (City-led, single party reduces time in the short term but with redevelopment other partners will be needed which will eventually slow down the process)
- Business cost: Moderate to High (reduced spending on maintenance, loss of income from weekly/daily lodgers, potential pressure to not sell at an inflated rate)
- City capital cost: High to very high
- City staff cost: Moderate to high

2. Improve Pedestrian Safety

Node: Derita & Hidden Valley

Improve pedestrian safety through improvements to and creation of sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals as well as alignment of streets to create 4 way intersections in the Hidden Valley Area.

How to to meet this priority:

- Focus on Derita segments lacking sidewalks along Sugar Creek
- Improve segments in Derita and Hidden Valley
- Lean on Private sector investments to achieve pedestrian safety

4. Create Gateways with Improved Open Space

Node: All

Create community spaces in the commercial nodes along the corridor that can be programmed by the community to support businesses.

How to meet this priority:

- Focus on Derita's downtown lacking public open space by focusing on vacant parcels and connections to the existing open space network
- Improve Derita and Hidden Valley with open space/gateway intersection enhancements
- Partner with development to include improvements with new investment

3. Enhance Business Property

Node: All

Bring updates and retrofits to outdated properties that attract tenants who bring businesses that meet community goals including those for diversified and well-paying jobs, places to hang out, complementary retail and services, and attractive and well-maintained street frontage.

How to meet this priority:

Leverage existing methods and tools, such as facade improvement grants, with additional funding.

Add tools to the toolbox that support programmatic elements of small businesses

5. Create New Job Opportunities and Further Develop the Workforce

Node: I-85

Attract businesses that bring well-paying jobs that match and build local talent to reduce unemployment and concentrated poverty.

How to meet this priority:

Develop opportunities for manufacturing, light industrial, and incubator business support in corridor.

Additional Priorities:

Mitigate displacement of residents

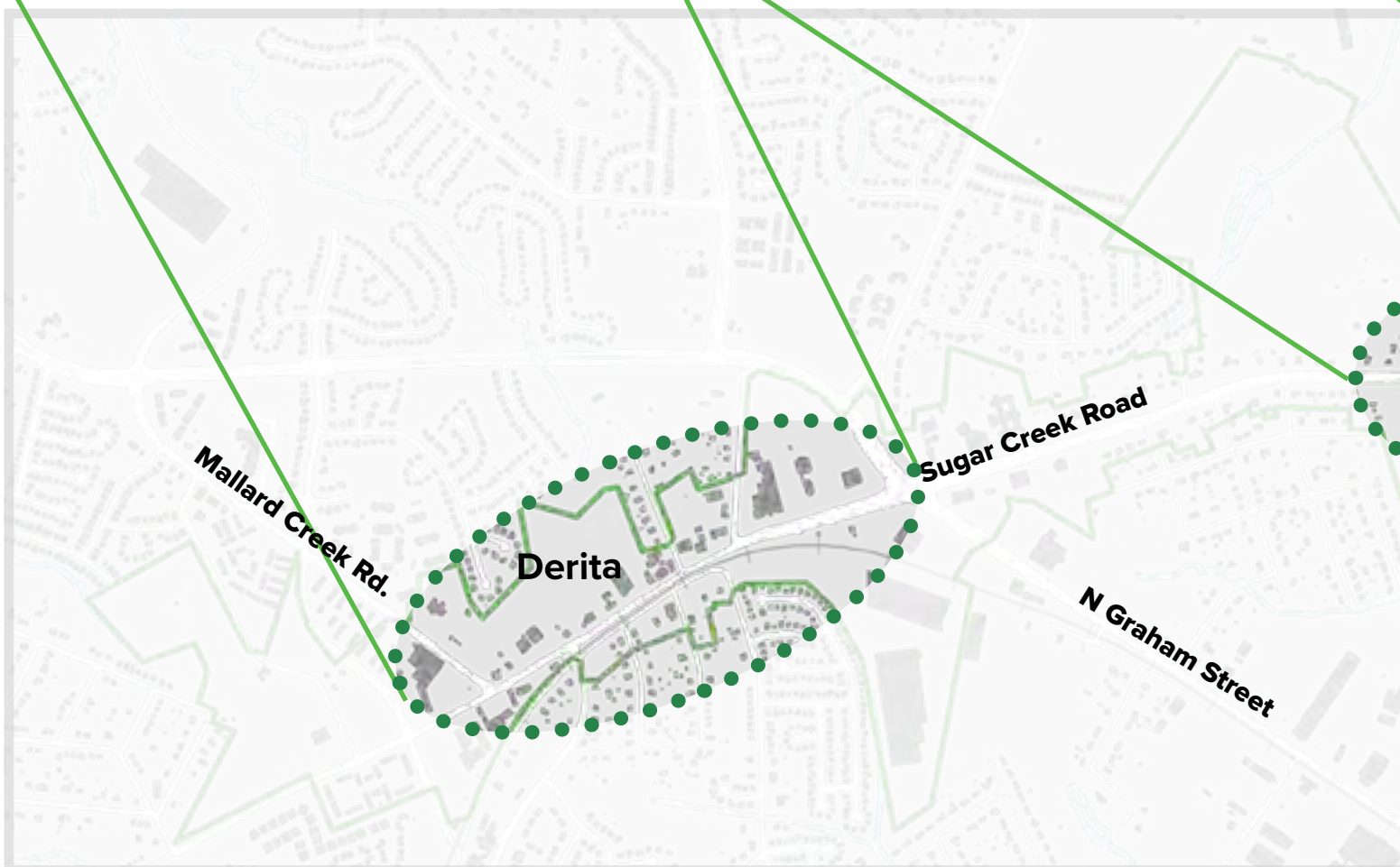
County Partnership Priority: Support violence prevention work by county focused on hotels.

Priorities for Derita

- Build sidewalks along Sugar Creek Road
- Build open space and enhance park connections
- Enhance gateway intersections
- Enhance local businesses
- Program small businesses
- Provide programming for small businesses

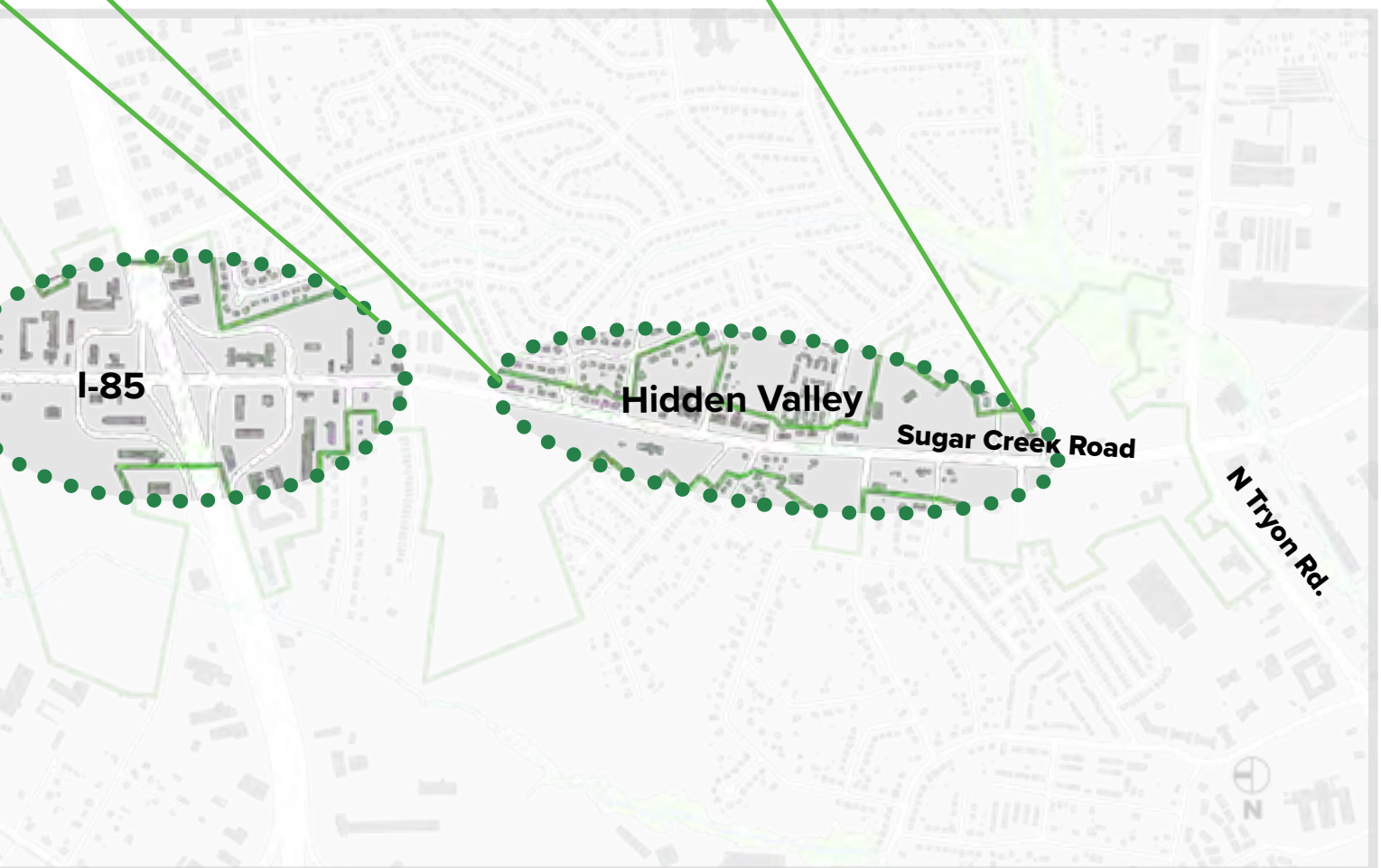
Priorities for I-85 Interchange

- Improve gateways with private development partnerships
- Increase community safety through reducing transactional crime opportunities
- Enhance local businesses
- Provide programming for small businesses
- Develop manufacturing, light industrial, and incubator business support in corridor



Priorities for Hidden Valley

- Build sidewalks along Sugar Creek Road
- Build new open space and connect to existing open space in corridor
- Enhance gateway intersections
- Enhance local businesses
- Provide programming for small businesses
- Develop manufacturing, light industrial, and incubator business support in corridor





Implementation Strategies

Implementation is how we achieve the goals and vision. It is the foundational elements in the strategy for each corridor and an imperative component of the Playbook. The Implementation Matrix should be a living document that can be modified based on changes within priorities, funding, and community goals.

The Playbook's robust set of recommendations are all linked to comments (issues, opportunities, goals, etc.) and data collected through the Playbook and Design Sprint process.

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
A	Housing and Code Enforcement		
A.1		Promote a mix of housing options	Redevelopment of sites for housing should include a mix of housing types with ownership and rent options
A.2		Promote a mix of housing options	Improve Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) through appropriate strategies as determined by partners and HNS
A.3	Y	Promote a mix of housing options	Provide Staying in Place resources for homeowners who are vulnerable to displacement
A.4		Promote a mix of housing options	Create resources and opportunities for homeownership to connect long time rental residents in the area with connections to stay in the area and build wealth
A.5		Promote a mix of housing options	Townhomes, apartments, and condos should include shared public amenities such as community spaces and active frontage for retail.
A.6		Establish a campus that provides housing and wrap around services	Convert a hotel site into SRO housing with all required services help people transition into more stable housing
A.7		Enforce code and security compliance	Get an updated structure value assessment for motels that have the highest number of complaints and code or call for service issues. This will help determine if repairs are cost efficient to bring the property up to health and safety requirements.
A.8		Enforce code and security compliance	Acquire a thorough evaluation of lodging and housing (with hotels that also list eviction issues) code compliance needs for these same properties and evaluate it against updated structure valuation to determine next steps for health and safety
A.9		Enforce code and security compliance	Issue an injunction for CMPD worst nuisance hotels.
B	Safety and Security		
B.1	Y	Address trespassing, panhandling, encampments	Add specially trained and dedicated enforcement to the I-85 & Sugar Creek interchange area
B.2	Y	Continued support and connection to social services for people in the area	Connect area residents loiters to jobs, housing, education, childcare, healthcare, substance abuse resources.

DRAFT - West Sugar Creek Road | Playbook | 91

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
B.3		Build Relationships between Neighborhoods and Commercial Nodes	Bring businesses and community leaders together to outline assets, challenges and goals using framework similar to the Main Street initiative and introduce tools and resources available. Work should focus on commercial nodes of Derita and Hidden Valley, including the intersection of North Tryon and Sugar Creek.
B.4		Build Relationships between Neighborhoods and Commercial Nodes	Identify a resource/method to work through to develop a strategy to attract businesses and investments that meet community goals for goods, services, and jobs. Examine the UrbanMain Program as an example used in the Beatties Ford Corridor.
B.5		Build Relationships between Neighborhoods and Commercial Nodes	Establish a collaborative group of businesses and residents who advocate for Community Benefit Agreements, capital investments, grants, develop social media presence to share community values, and design and program public open spaces for community events benefiting commercial nodes (in Derita and Hidden Valley).
B.6		Mitigate housing and business displacement from investments and development	Include those who are vulnerable to housing or business displacement in the processes to strengthen strategies and shape the changes
B.7		Mitigate housing and business displacement from investments and development	Neighborhoods to develop Community Benefits Agreements that support strategies to prevent displacement during rezonings
B.8		Mitigate housing and business displacement from investments and development	Connect people with existing information and resources to prevent displacement
B.9		Mitigate housing and business displacement from investments and development	Work directly with households vulnerable to displacement to provide resources that meet needs and work with them to address program barriers to use of the resources as part of the Staying in Place Program.
B.10		Support the transition of extended stay residents into more stable housing	Use existing case workers to build an understanding of the experience of residents living in extended stay hotels to get them into more stable and healthy environments. McKinney Vento counselors are a good example of this.

Project Type: Infrastructure, Policy, Code Enforcement, Zoning Code, Pilot, Real Estate, Development, Programming	Cultivate Prosperity	Strengthen Community	Build Legacy	Reduced Violent Crime	Commercial activity/ Curb appeal/ Support businesses	Create viable transportation and mobility options	Build a Shared Sense of Community	Walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space	Housing tenure strategies for residents to enjoy new investments	0-3 years	4-10 years	> 10 years	Hidden Valley / Farmcrest	I-85 Interchange/ Reagan Drive	"Downtown" Derita	Existing Program Retooled or Targeted	New Program	City Partner Guided	Already In Play
Programming	•	•	•		•		•			•			•		•				
Programming	•	•	•		•		•			•			•		•				
Programming	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•		•				
Programming		•	•	•			•												•
Programming		•	•	•			•			•			•		•	•			
Programming	•	•		•			•									•			
Pilot	•	•	•	•			•												•
Programming	•	•	•	•	•					•				•			•		

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
B.11		Support the transition of extended stay residents into more stable housing	Connect extended stay residents to the tools they need to break barriers to access stable housing, income, health care, and more.
B.12		Bring in designated case workers to operate in this area and connect people with resources	Develop a pilot program that provides social service case workers who build relationships in the area by being present, visible, and reliably present and actively engaging. Use examples such as Woodruff Park in Atlanta as a model.
C	Transportation and Infrastructure		
C.1		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Work closely with NCDOT to redesign the interchange and raise it as a priority to support pedestrian, bicycle and transit movement through the interchange.
C.2		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Work with NCDOT to reimagine Reagan Drive between Tom Hunter and I-85 extension so that it is no longer used as a place for speeding or getaway by building in traffic calming and improving pedestrian connections.
C.3		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Create planted medians in strategic locations along Sugar Creek to improve streetscape and establish a maintenance strategy and partnerships to ensure long term sustainability of investment.
C.4		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Build safe connections and infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists at main street spaces and programmable open spaces and to key destinations (crosswalks, signal timing, space in ROW, condensed parking lots and driveways)
C.5		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Create shared parking to allow for creation of wider, safer, treed sidewalks and frontage access in the Derita and Hidden Valley Nodes.
C.6		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Create safe multi use path along Sugar Creek Park frontage between Merlane and Munsee area, including improvements to the intersections.
C.7		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Create a new drive and sidewalk to enter park at the Hidden Valley intersection with traffic light, improve crosswalk and signal timing for pedestrians

IProject Type: nfrastucture, Policy. Code Enforcement. Zoning Code. Pilot. Real Estate. Development. Programming																			
Cultivate Prosperity	•	•	•	•	•					•				•					
Strengthen Community	•	•	•	•	•														
Build Legacy	•	•	•	•	•														
Reduced Violent Crime	•	•	•	•	•														
Commercial activity/ Curb appeal/ Support businesses	•	•	•	•	•														
Create viable transportation and mobility options																			
Build a Shared Sense of Community																			
Walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space																			
Housing tenure strategies for residents to enjoy new investments																			
0-3 years	•																		
4-10 years																			
> 10 years																			
Hidden Valley / Farmcrest																			
I-85 Interchange/ Reagan Drive	•																		
"Downtown" Derita																			
Existing Program Retooled or Targeted																			
New Program	•																		
City Partner Guided																			
Already In Play																			

Infrastructure	•		•	•	•	•				•	•			•		•			
Infrastructure		•	•	•		•	•			•	•			•			•		
Capital Investment		•	•		•	•	•				•		•	•		•			
Capital Investment	•	•	•		•	•	•				•		•		•				
Capital Investment	•	•	•		•	•	•			•			•		•		•		
Capital Investment		•	•			•				•			•	•				•	
Capital Investment		•	•			•	•			•			•	•				•	

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
C.8		Transform streets to improve security of the area and safety of people	Create new sidewalk along western edge of Derita Avenue between Hunter & Gibbon and crosswalk at Hunter and Gibbon intersections.
C.9		Adapt and redevelop sites to improve visibility, vibrancy, and community ownership	Redevelopment should provide wide sidewalks and active frontage as an urban streetscape with parking in the back.
C.10		Improve street lighting where needed	Assess all of the older street lighting sections of West Sugar Creek and identify strategy to improve lighting
C.11		Make transit convenient	New bus line along West Sugar Creek road linking Derita to the Blue Line Sugar Creek Station, incorporate stop amenities for waiting passengers and high frequency option to connect. Key destinations to connect include: the Derita/ Mallard Creek area, Reagan Drive, the Food Lion, Sugar Creek Park, the Hidden Valley Commercial Area, the Sugar Creek Blue Line Station and the new Community Resource Center.
C.12		Make transit convenient	Test out alternatives to improve convenience, frequency of service delivery - First Mile Last Mile in the Hidden Valley area. A potential pilot project could include connecting Hidden Valley to the Tom Hunter Station and Reagan Drive to the Sugar Creek Station.
C.13		Make transit convenient	Build a mobility hub in Derita that provides access to micromobility options to serve the first mile/last mile connections in the area. This includes a smooth transition between bus, train, ride share, and park/ride.
D	Design and Development		
D.1		Create interim shared public open space for recreation and preserve natural resources	Partner with CMS on Rumble Road site to create park space in the central area of Derita near Sugar Creek Road.
D.2		Create new shared public open space for recreation and preserve natural resources	Build a new park to preserve ecological services while also creating vibrant open space for the community in Derita commercial area

Project Type: Infrastructure, Policy, Code Enforcement, Zoning Code, Pilot, Real Estate, Development, Programming	Cultivate Prosperity	Strengthen Community	Build Legacy	Reduced Violent Crime	Commercial activity/ Curb appeal/ Support businesses	Create viable transportation and mobility options	Build a Shared Sense of Community	Walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space	Housing tenure strategies for residents to enjoy new investments	0-3 years	4-10 years	> 10 years	Hidden Valley / Farmcrest	I-85 Interchange/ Reagan Drive	"Downtown" Derita	Existing Program Retooled or Targeted	New Program	City Partner Guided	Already In Play
Capital Investment	•	•	•		•	•	•			•					•	•			
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•				•		•		•			•	
Capital Investment	•			•		•							•	•	•	•			•
Capital Investment	•	•	•		•	•	•			•			•	•	•	•			
Pilot	•	•	•			•				•			•	•			•		
Development	•	•	•		•	•					•				•		•		
Programming		•					•			•					P				•
Capital Investment	•	•	•		•	•	•				•				•			•	

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
D.3		Create shared public open space for recreation and preserve natural resources	Build out Doby Creek to Ribbonwalk/ Irwin Creek connection
D.4		Create community open space in the Derita commercial node that can get art and opportunity for free, fun public events	Look at the intersections at Nevin, Mallard Creek, Gibbon Road, and Maple Street
D.5		Create connection between the Hidden Valley/ Farmcrest commercial node and the ecological park and Cross Charlotte Trail	Work through redevelopments to build a trail connection through the Hidden Valley neighborhood
D.6		Create community open space in the Hidden Valley/ Farmcrest commercial node that can get art and opportunity for free, fun public events	Look at the intersections at Rutgers/Gondola or Cushman/ Argyle to create community open space for programming with community events and supporting local businesses
D.7	Y	Purchase property at the I-85 interchange	Support the purchase of a property at the I-85 interchange to support new employer hiring local talent and/or housing development. Work with partners to identify appropriate site for development.
D.8		Purchase property in the Derita Commercial Node	Purchase a strategic property near the Derita "downtown" area for a new park/community open space and opportunity for greenway connection
D.9		Purchase property in the Derita Commercial Node	Work with partners to identify a strategic property near the Derita "downtown" area for shared parking options where lots are narrow to be developed later and improve pedestrian safety and streetscape
D.10		Purchase property in the Hidden Valley Commercial Node	Work with partners to identify a strategic property near the Sugar Creek/Rutgers intersection area for shared parking options where lots are narrow to develop later improve pedestrian safety and streetscape

Project Type: Infrastructure, Policy, Code Enforcement, Zoning Code, Pilot, Real Estate, Development, Programming	Cultivate Prosperity	Strengthen Community	Build Legacy	Reduced Violent Crime	Commercial activity/ Curb appeal/ Support businesses	Create viable transportation and mobility options	Build a Shared Sense of Community	Walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space	Housing tenure strategies for residents to enjoy new investments	0-3 years	4-10 years	> 10 years	Hidden Valley / Farmcrest	I-85 Interchange/ Reagan Drive	"Downtown" Derita	Existing Program Retooled or Targeted	New Program	City Partner Guided	Already In Play
Development	•	•	•			•	•				•				•	•			
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•								•	•			
Development	•	•	•			•	•				•		•			•			
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•				•		•					•	
Development	•	•	•	•	•		•			•				•				•	
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•			•					•			•	
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•								•		•		
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•								•		•		
Development	•	•	•		•	•	•						•				•		

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
D.11		Rezone sites to promote desired transformation	Support rezoning on identified strategic properties to shrink the commercial footprint and support more jobs, housing, and services around the interchange, reducing the number of economy motels. In the nodes, reducing traditional commercial development patterns promotes a safe, walkable area with a diversity of services and retail.
D.12		Work with property owners to identify incremental improvements to public spaces along West Sugar Creek Road	Identify key locations and partnerships to evaluate sites for parking requirements and opportunities for outdoor dining and pedestrian improvements along the corridor.
D.13		Transform auto-centric development to support more community oriented goals through future development guidance	Update future Place Types map bring in in more walkable places, active ground floors, diversity of jobs, community open space, and accommodates housing demand. Modify key locations in the Future Place Types Map along Sugar Creek to integrate new uses.
E	Workforce and Business Development		
E.1		Redevelop 2-4 sites for business that matches local skills and reduces commercial footprint, particularly the amount of economy motels	Pursue joint ventures or partnership to support the redevelopment of key sites in areas of the interchange that make the most sense for business in the interchange area.
E.2		Build innovative spaces that allow for businesses and housing	Pursue joint ventures or partnership to support the development of businesses and housing at the various commercial nodes on the West Sugar Creek Road Corridor.
E.3		Support job skills training in the area in the trades, particularly small scale construction	Work with partners to develop a construction trades training course in the area to connect residents to jobs in Charlotte and meet growing need for small-medium scale development.
E.4	Y	Improve security at businesses	Increase surveillance and security of parking lots of fast food restaurants and offices through a partnership with CMPD that connects to a real time Crime Center.
E.5		In the interim of redevelopment, activate street frontage in Derita and transform the commercial node with redevelopment	Target strip centers at the Sugar Creek and Mallard Creek interchange for upfits with a small building or kiosk and other areas for long-term redevelopment. This includes utilizing partnerships with private/public sector.

Project Type: Infrastructure, Policy, Code Enforcement, Zoning Code, Pilot, Real Estate, Development, Programming	Cultivate Prosperity	Strengthen Community	Build Legacy	Reduced Violent Crime	Commercial activity/ Curb appeal/ Support businesses	Create viable transportation and mobility options	Build a Shared Sense of Community	Walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space	Housing tenure strategies for residents to enjoy new investments	0-3 years	4-10 years	> 10 years	Hidden Valley / Farmcrest	I-85 Interchange/ Reagan Drive	"Downtown" Derita	Existing Program Retooled or Targeted	New Program	City Partner Guided	Already In Play
Zoning Code	•	•	•	•	•		•			•	•		•	•	•	•			
Design Guidance	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•			•	•	•		•		
Policy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•			•	•	•	•			
Development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•			•		•			
Development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•		•	•			
Programming	•	•	•	•	•		•				•			•	•		•		
Pilot	•			•						•				•					•
Programming	•	•	•		•		•			•	•			•	•				

	Priority Project	Recommendations	Description
E.6		Preserve historic and interesting structures in the Derita commercial node	Promote adaptive reuse of older buildings and bring spaces up to safety code. This includes opportunities with the Business Matching Grants.
E.7		Work with neighborhoods and businesses in Derita and Hidden Valley / Farmcrest to establish a main street identity	Identify assets and identity and projects that build collaboration, branding, and strategy to create main street identity and working to strengthen neighborhoods and corridor businesses relationships.
E.8		Establish a Business District at the Interchange	Invest in projects for shared security/maintenance/litter management/district branding and beautification. This includes a combination of BDOP, Business Matching Grants, Keep Charlotte Beautiful and Placemaking Grants.
E.9		Establish a Business District at the Interchange	Advocate for and attract investments to sustain the district through the use of the Playbook and future planning/design efforts.
E.10		Establish a Business District at the Interchange	Work with hotel owners in less stable locations to understand their business needs and long term goals as part of the Small Business Study and means of business capacity building
E.11		Establish a Business District at the Interchange	Attract and market to business owners with long-term commitments that fit the market and long term needs of the area to participate in the business district organization and contribute to its sustainability
E.12		Establish a Business District at the Interchange	Establish business district organization - provide training, introduce BDOP program - start with owners in more stable locations. This could include modifying the BDOP Program to leverage partner support and help establish organization.
E.13		Build Joint Venture Partnerships	Identify appropriate developer to purchase and develop properties at the Hidden Valley Interchange build Argyle/ Chushman intersection alignment and Gondola/Rutgers intersection alignment

Project Type: Infrastructure, Policy, Code Enforcement, Zoning Code, Pilot, Real Estate, Development, Programming	Cultivate Prosperity	Strengthen Community	Build Legacy	Reduced Violent Crime	Commercial activity/ Curb appeal/ Support businesses	Create viable transportation and mobility options	Build a Shared Sense of Community	Walkable development that supports commercial nodes and improves open space	Housing tenure strategies for residents to enjoy new investments	0-3 years	4-10 years	> 10 years	Hidden Valley / Farmcrest	I-85 Interchange/ Reagan Drive	"Downtown" Derita	Existing Program Retooled or Targeted	New Program	City Partner Guided	Already In Play
Development	•	•	•		•		•			•	•				•		•		
Programming	•	•	•		•		•			•			•		•	•			
Pilot	•	•	•	•	•		•			•				•			•	•	
Programming	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•		•				•	
Programming	•			•	•					•				•			•		
Programming	•		•	•	•		•			•	•	•		•				•	
Programming	•		•	•	•		•			•				•			•	•	
Programming	•	•	•		•	•	•						•		•				

Downtown Derita

Existing Conditions



Downtown Derita

Future Place Types



Downtown Derita Activation

The rendering below highlights potential business improvements with a future tenant and intersection improvements.





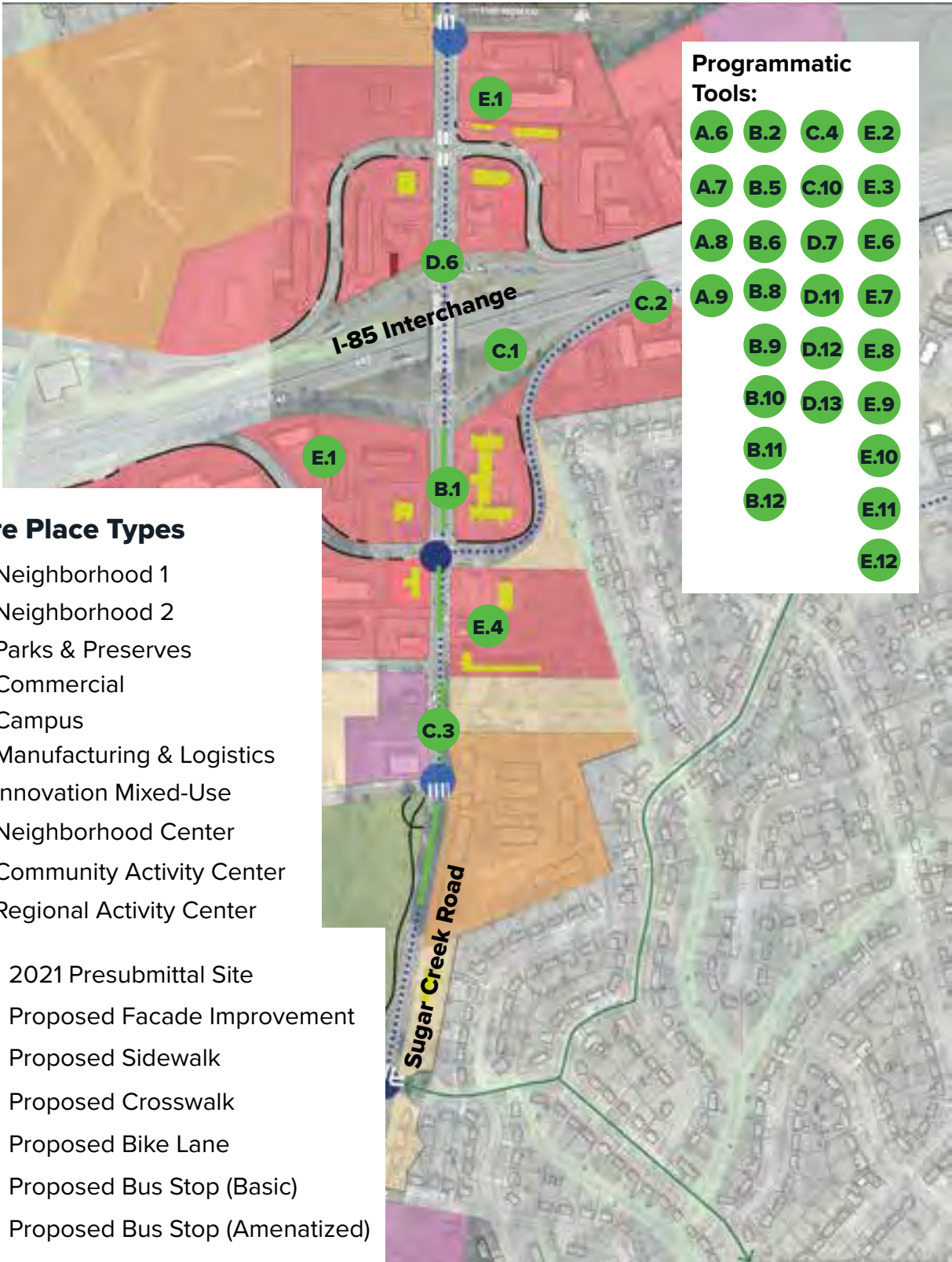
The I-85 Interchange

Existing Conditions



The I-85 Interchange

Future Place Types



Improvements to Hotels

The rendering below highlights incremental improvements to a hotel property as part of reinvestment.





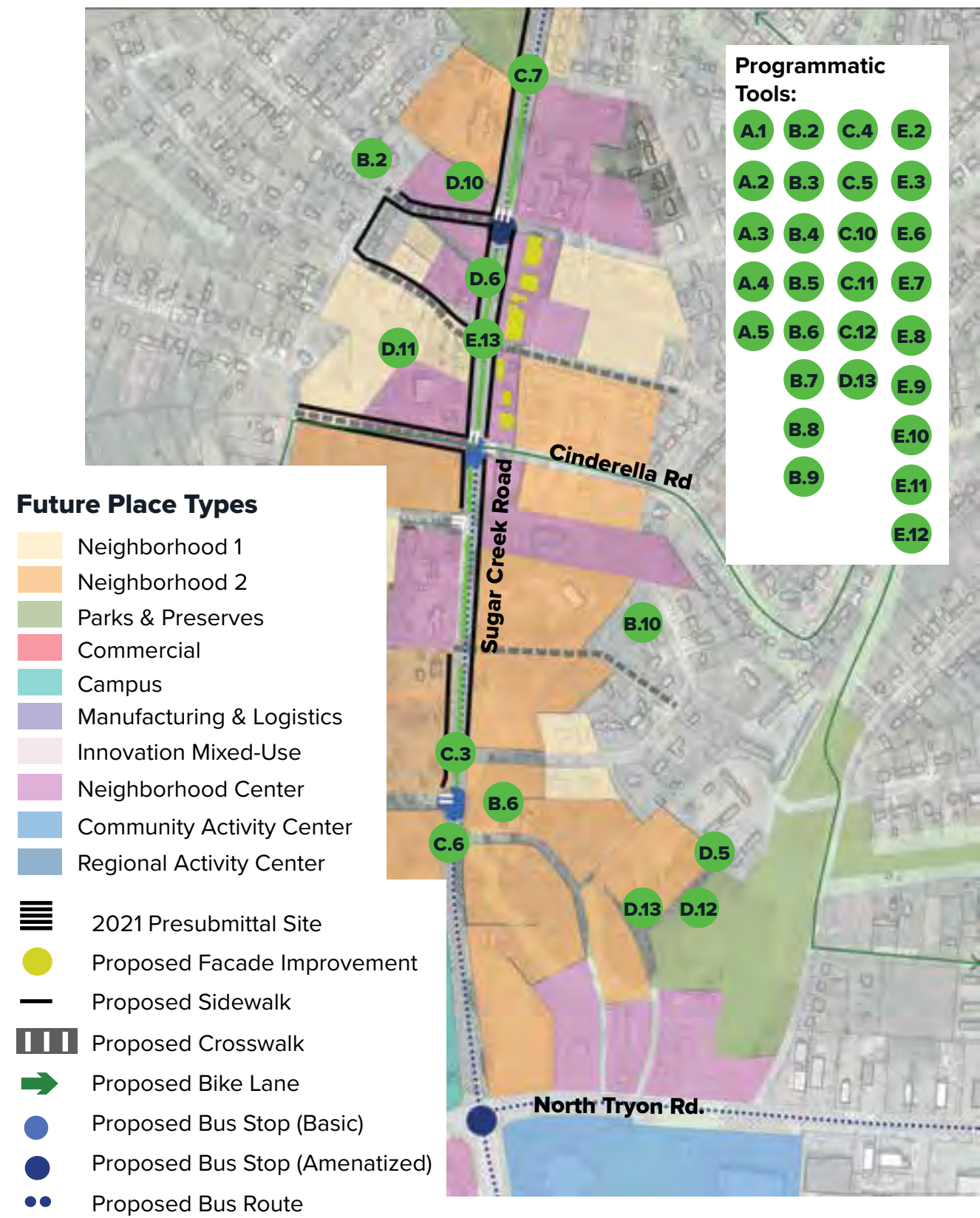
The Hidden Valley Commercial Center

Existing Conditions



The Hidden Valley Commercial Center

Future Place Types



Multi-Use Path and Pedestrian Infrastructure in Hidden Valley

The rendering below highlights pedestrian safety improvements in the corridor that include additional crossings, signals, and public art.





