



# NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN

July 30, 2019



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# **SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a strategic plan to guide future decisions regarding properties along the New Garden Road corridor, between Battleground Avenue and Friendly Avenue. The City of Greensboro has engaged in neighborhood and corridor planning since the late 1970's, giving property owners, neighbors and businesses an opportunity to shape the characteristics and physical features that enhance the living environment and quality of life directly around them. The City initiated the New Garden Road corridor planning process not to encourage or discourage rezonings. Instead, it interpreted the many and contentious rezoning requests as an indicator of the need for a plan that better expresses desired outcomes, in contrast to allowing the implementing tool (zoning) to become the plan itself.

The New Garden Road corridor is neither uniform in character nor use. It includes several distinct neighborhood clusters, at least three separate commercial districts, and many institutional uses including Guilford College, the American Hebrew Academy, the Jefferson Elementary School and Price Park. It is influenced by historic elements that predate the City of Greensboro, including early settlements around a Quaker Meeting and the Revolutionary War Guilford Courthouse National Military Park. The thread that weaves these distinct uses and activities together is the nearly 4-mile long New Garden roadway itself, a significant vehicular thoroughfare with multiple roadway configurations.

The City of Greensboro executed a strategic planning process that begins with stakeholder interviews and an online survey, and includes a series of advisory committee meetings, open house forums, follow-up surveys, and focus group interviews with property-owners and with corridor developers in May of 2018. A summary of the results of those interviews, initial research, evaluation of current conditions and the trend of development were presented to the Advisory Committee in June of 2018. On July 12, 2018, the City of Greensboro conducted an open house to solicit community perspectives, concerns, observations and to initiate participation in the planning process. Over 150 neighbors and property-owners attended. The Advisory Committee prepared a Vision Statement and a draft set of goal and strategies that were reviewed at a second

open house in November of 2018. A follow-up online survey allowed those stakeholders who were unable to attend the open house to provide their comments and evaluations. The City also conducted additional stakeholder and developer/property owner interviews to ensure a broad range of perspectives and input to the plan. The City held a final open house on June 27, 2019 at Jefferson Elementary School. This final draft reflects the community's desire to distinguish between the predominantly residential portions northeast of Jefferson Road from the more mixed-use environment to the southwest.

This strategic plan is not a land-use plan, nor a picture of what the corridor will look like in some distant future. Instead, the plan recommends five primary strategies for neighborhood and corridor enhancement, that will:

1. Refine the control of land uses to better manage change and development
2. Diminish the impact of vehicular traffic on quality of life
3. Increase neighborhood interconnectivity without increasing neighborhood through-traffic.
4. Enhance the corridor character and sense of place
5. Build stronger community relations among the neighborhoods and within community leadership.

The Plan includes recommended actions that the community, in conjunction with the City, may pursue in an effort to implement these strategies.

The Plan neither calls for radical change nor a rigid maintenance of the status quo. Instead, it recommends a context sensitive response to existing neighborhood and corridor character, public improvements that interconnect neighborhoods without increasing vehicular traffic or congestion, and, support for reinvestment in the existing mixed use activity centers in an effort to establish walkable, attractive and sustainable business environments that serve the needs of corridor residents and institutions.



# SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

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NEW GARDEN ROAD CORRIDOR

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WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN

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GREENSBORO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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CORRIDOR BACKGROUND

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LAND USE

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INFRASTRUCTURE + MOBILITY

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COMMUNITY CHARACTER + FACILITIES

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COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

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## BACKGROUND

# NEW GARDEN ROAD CORRIDOR



### INTRODUCTION

We define the study area as those properties, on either side of the New Garden Road rights-of-way, that are directly or indirectly served by New Garden Road for primary vehicular access, between Battleground Boulevard on the northeast and Friendly Avenue on the southwest.

The entire New Garden Road study area is within the boundaries of the City of Greensboro; but it wasn't always. The incorporation of Greensborough in 1808 occurred well after settlements within the study area had been established in the mid 1700's. In 1754, 40 Quaker families were granted approval to establish New Garden Monthly Meeting.<sup>1</sup> The 1781 Battle of Guilford Court House, recognized by historians as pivotal to the war of American independence, occurred within and adjacent to the study area where New Garden Road intersects Battleground Boulevard. The area was settled in scattered homesteads in unincorporated Guilford County and was not annexed into the City of Greensboro until what is understood as the third, fourth and fifth wave of annexations of the 19's through the 1990's.

Those annexations and the subsequent commercial and residential development changed this northwestern quadrant of the City of Greensboro from a mostly rural and sparsely settled area outside the City to a mixed-use arterial corridor well within the overall City boundaries. The north and northwestern areas of the City of Greensboro have experienced the majority of post-WWII growth and development of the City.

The City of Greensboro has engaged in neighborhood and corridor planning since the late 1970's, giving property owners, neighbors and businesses an opportunity to shape the characteristics and physical features that enhance the living environment and quality of life directly around them.

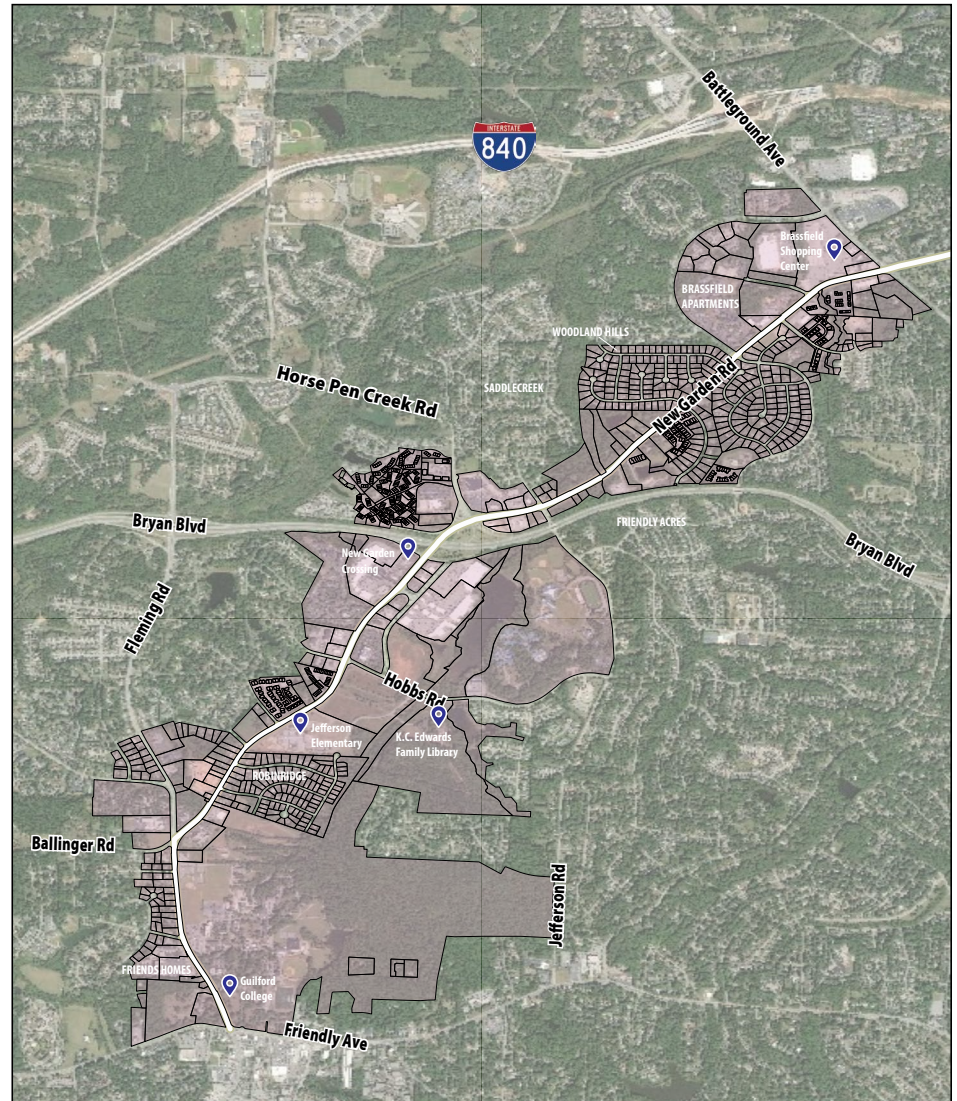
1. Hinshaw, William Wade; (Marshall, Thomas Worth, compiler) (1991). "New Garden Monthly Meeting, Guilford County, NC". Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, vol. 1. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co. pp. 487-488. ISBN 0806301783.

# WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan establishes a long range vision for a city, with attention paid to the balance and interrelationship of all of the parts which work together to build a strong and sustainable whole. Most comprehensive plans emphasize the big picture, consistency and equity in policy applications across the city, and high level views. The City of Greensboro recognizes the need for more neighborhood and community level planning that reflects the special characteristics of smaller, cohesive subareas and special places. The City supports the development of such neighborhood plans and corridor plans consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive plan, with an emphasis on implementation.

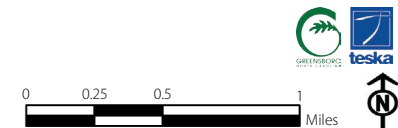
A strategic plan process allows community stakeholders to work together to establish a community-specific vision for the future, consider alternative strategies to achieve the vision, and make recommendations for the most important tasks that the City and the community will use to implement the selected strategies.

If New Garden were a single, well-defined neighborhood, or a single business district, or a clearly defined historic district, this would be a “neighborhood plan” or “business district plan” that emphasized a single consistent theme or community character, preservation, or community revitalization. But, The New Garden Corridor touches on several commercial districts, and several residential communities. It is nearly four miles long, includes approximately 950 residences, and a wide range of office and commercial businesses. The New Garden road is a spine that runs along these residential areas and business districts, providing access to properties and a connection to the rest of Greensboro. This strategic plan aims at enhancing those characteristics and elements that are consistent and of high quality, without forcing uniformity across the length of the corridor.



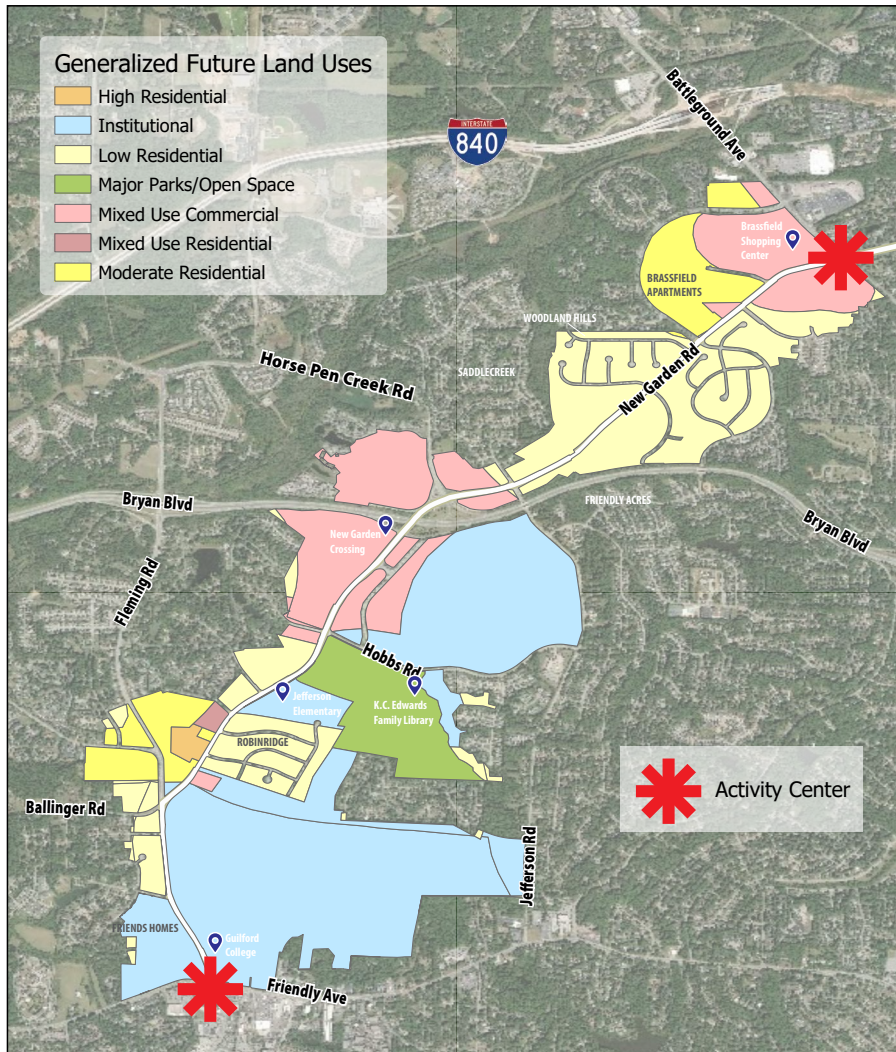
New Garden Road Corridor Map

## NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN





# GREENSBORO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**CONNECTIONS 2025:**

The Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan did not characterize the New Garden Road Corridor as a growth area. In fact, because much of the area had already experienced significant growth, the Comprehensive plan did not depict the area within the active growth area designations in its “growth strategy”.

By the early 2000’s, New Garden Road corridor was no longer at the forefront of the growth at the fringe of the City. The City’s boundaries had moved far enough out from the original “center of town”, and the corridor and most developable land had been built upon, if at a low intensity, before the “Connections 2025” was adopted in May of 2003. Few properties within the corridor would be described as undeveloped, though many properties were not developed to the maximum intensity allowed by existing zoning.

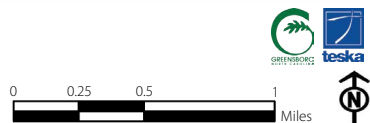
The Connections 2025 plan describes “Activity Centers” as: “...existing or anticipated future concentrations of uses that function as destinations or hubs of activity for the surrounding area.” Typically located in areas of mixed use shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, (GFLUM) such centers are intended to include features such as a mix of higher intensity uses (housing, retail, office, etc.), compact development patterns, and pedestrian and transit linkages. A one-half mile radius (considered the limit of a comfortable walk) is shown around each activity center except for the Downtown, which functions as an activity center for the entire City.

Connections 2025 did anticipate changes within the New Garden Corridor at the time of adoption, perhaps the most significant of which were the two “Activity Centers”: 1) Located in proximity of the intersection of New Garden Road and Friendly Avenue, and 2) Located in proximity of the intersection of New Garden Road and Battleground Boulevard.

The future land use map within the Plan has been amended in many locations since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. During the preparation of this New Garden Road Strategic Plan, the City initiated the process of a comprehensive update to that Connections 2025 plan.

Generalized Future Land Use Map from Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan

**NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN**



## CORRIDOR BACKGROUND

**NEW GARDEN ROAD CONTEXT**

Subsequent to the adoption of Connections 2025, the New Garden Road Corridor area experienced a series of GFLUM amendments, rezonings and the redevelopment of property (see map in Appendix B). After Plan adoption and prior to the dampening of development pressure caused by the credit crisis and Great Recession in the spring of 2008, the City of Greensboro approved twelve rezoning requests, covering just over 50 acres of land. As the City emerged from the recession, development pressure again increased in pace.

The rezoning of property, particularly from the mid-century single-family homes that had once lined the corridor, to commercial and multiple family development began to generate considerable unease among residents of the neighborhoods along the corridor, and several contentious public hearings. The rezoning of a 7.63-acre property in the 1300 block of New Garden, from R-3 (relatively low-density single-family homes) to a Planned Unit Development accommodating 193 dwellings encouraged the City to consider the preparation of a strategic plan for New Garden Road.

The City conducted a study in the spring of 2017 to identify where the development pressure was likely to drive future rezoning and redevelopment. They found some 27 properties, most of which were concentrated within a mile of the New Garden Road and Bryan Boulevard intersection that, due to age of the existing building/use, street frontage, property condition, land use patterns, and proximity to intersections or existing non-residential development areas, made them likely candidates for property-owner driven requests for rezoning or sale to development interests.



Sampling of properties identified in 2017 as those likely to experience development pressure

**PLANS VS. ZONING**

The City's comprehensive plan is intended to provide the policy guidance upon which development decisions, including zoning, can be based. A corridor strategic plan is a supplement to the comprehensive plan and, once adopted, becomes the guide for development decisions within the corridor.

The goal of community planning is not zoning. Zoning is one tool used by communities to implement the goals documented in the comprehensive plan. The number or rate or similarity of rezoning requests in an area is not a measure of success or failure of the planning process. It is, however, indicative of the pressure that market forces are having on the use and development of property, and it can be an indicator of changes within a corridor that induce stress and unpredictability, and a diminishing authority of the comprehensive plan.

The City of Greensboro initiated the New Garden Road corridor planning process, not to encourage or discourage rezonings. Rather, it interpreted the many and contentious rezoning requests as an indicator for the need for a plan that better expresses the desired outcomes, in contrast to allowing the implementation tool (zoning) to become the plan itself.



## BACKGROUND

# LAND USE

### LAND USE HISTORY

A mismatch of public and private expectations, and the friction that ensues in the course of the development approval process, has been a primary motivator in the desire for the establishment of a New Garden Road corridor strategic plan. The community seeks to establish a balance that protects the rights of individual property owners without diminishing the value and enjoyment of nearby properties for the public at large.

It is important to consider the area's history. The New Garden Road Corridor is in the later part of a wave of development. There have been several development waves: the first being settlements dating back before the founding of the City of Greensboro, while successive waves have followed post-civil war, post-world war, and most recently, coincident with the diversification of employment and the decline of textile milling.

The earliest growth on large properties that were mostly wooded gave way to smaller lot splits and subdivisions supporting the growth and expansion of neighborhoods and commercial districts out of the core of Greensboro. These more recent annexations and subdivisions of the 1980-1990-2000's were fueled by extended and expanded roadways, regional employment growth and dispersion, and the City's policies which encouraged development with zoning, utility extensions, and community facilities. A substantial number of the homes and businesses that drive the current character and vitality of the corridor resulted from these subdivisions.

The by-product of subdivision and development has been the creation of "remainder" properties, many of which have direct access to New Garden, but which are isolated from the subdivisions and roadways around them. These remainder properties, which may have been very attractive, functional homes prior to being surrounded with newer development, have become more valuable for land uses other than their original single-family purpose, and demonstrate economic obsolescence. As their owners choose to sell these properties, developers may have ideas about reuse of these sites at odds with the historic use and/or with the expectations of nearby property owners.

### FUTURE LAND USE

The following planning principals, as applied to this New Garden Road Corridor, form a basis for developing strategies to enhance community character, vitality and quality of life:

**1. Strong, Walkable Activity Centers.** Activity centers present the best opportunity for commercial activities that generate walkable environments and retail "places" that can compete with internet retailing. The two "ends" of the corridor (the land uses near the intersection of New Garden Road and Battleground Avenue (US220), and the land uses near the intersection of New Garden Road and Friendly Avenues) were designated and are planned, intended and remain viable as "Activity Centers" in the Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan. They are endowed with regional accessibility, a critical mass of existing retail and commercial uses, and trade-area demographics that can support a sustainable commercial district.

Within the limits of what roads, bikeways, and bus routes can support, the intensification of these activity centers serves the interests of neighborhoods along the New Garden Corridor, and the City of Greensboro as a whole, without lining the corridor itself with commercial uses that generate unwanted traffic and conflicting turning movements. These are regional activity centers that draw from and serve a much larger trade-area (5-15 miles) than just the neighborhoods within the New Garden Road Corridor.

**2. Community Retailing.** The business district in the middle of the corridor was anticipated to be a community retail center that didn't compete with the activity centers on the ends of the corridor. This is a mixed-use commercial district lying on both sides of New Garden Road and north and south of Bryan Boulevard is not currently designated as an Activity Center in the GFLUM. There are several retail centers within this district: the "neighborhood" shopping center anchored by Lowes Foods sits across New Garden Road from the "community" shopping center, anchored by Target, Michaels and The Fresh Market grocer; both have several out-lot retailers.<sup>2</sup> A third center, north of New Garden Road at Horse Pen Creek Road, adds an additional supermarket, Harris Teeter, and other neighborhood retailing. Together, they address a trade area of between 3-6 miles and serve the study area for daily/weekly and convenience retailing. Growth and development in the New Garden Corridor and the adjacent Horse Pen Creek Corridor, if left solely to market forces, may unintentionally drive this area to function as a regional activity area, increasing congestion, and competing with other activity centers for a regional market.

2. The International Council of Shopping Centers defines a Neighborhood Center as convenience oriented, typically between 30,000-125,000 sq.ft., with a supermarket anchor; and a Community Center as a general merchandise and apparel center, typically between 125,000 and 400,000 sq. ft., with a discount store, supermarket, drug store anchors.

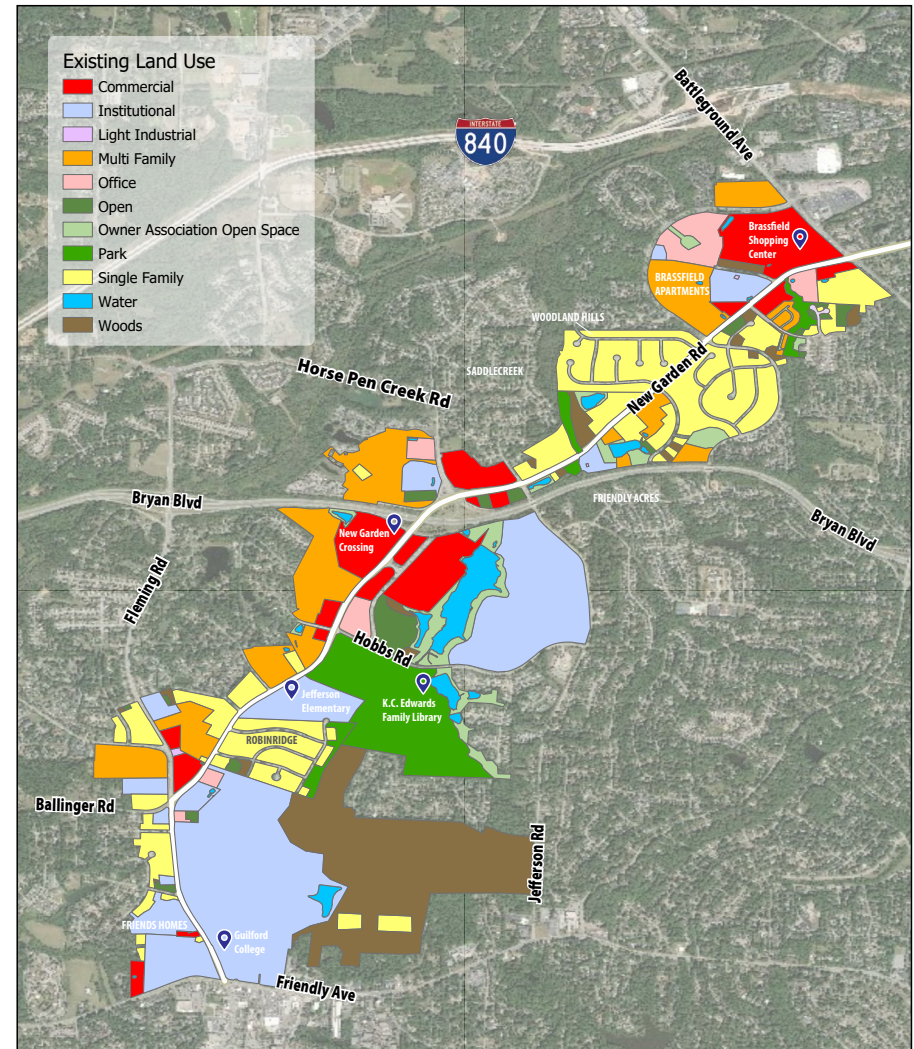
**3. The Balance of Uses.** The City benefits, generally, by business development. Businesses provide employment, goods and services that sustain residents, as well as additional tax base that shares the burden with residential property owners. But business development does not always follow and serve elastic markets; in some cases, businesses may open and compete within or near the trade area occupied by competitors who already serve the market, and as a result, may draw away the disposable income and market demographics that support existing business districts. The result has been seen in most metropolitan areas, (exacerbated by a shift toward internet retailing,) as dangerously high vacancy rates or failure of close-in business districts in favor of the newer outlying business districts.

**4. Sustainable Retail Economics.** In evaluating potential land-use changes, particularly the redevelopment of existing “remainder” properties, the City may consider the impact on existing retail centers. Not simply: “is this compatible with the adjacent uses,” but “does the net result contribute to the public welfare and the aggregate value of properties?” In effect, “is this change in the best interest of public health, safety, and welfare?” As perceived by many residents that attended public open houses as part of the preparation of this plan, the use of property for professional offices was not a threat to the character of the corridor, and would not undermine the sustainability of existing retail centers to the degree that additional personal services and small site retail uses posed.

The City may choose to compare the existing mix of land uses to some ideal balance of future land use mix, which furthers the interest of both economic development and quality of life. This strategic plan encourages the continued development and enhancement of the existing commercial centers and would discourage redevelopment of individual “remainder” properties for retail use.

**5. Compatible Residential.** The alternative reuse of properties need not be commercial or high density residential. A more compatible reuse, consistent with the densities and character of adjacent properties may be lower density multi-family uses. Among the existing multi-family residential developments perceived by many residents as attractive and compatible are:

- The “Villas at New Garden” on Linden Lane,
- Portico Heights on Morehead and Strathmore Drive.
- The townhomes in Seven Gates, Greene’s Crossing, and New Garden Park
- The Cotswold Park Apartments



Existing Land Use Map

NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN



## BACKGROUND

# INFRASTRUCTURE + MOBILITY

### ROADWAY CHARACTERISTICS

The existing automobile and truck traffic on New Garden Road is characterized by stakeholders as being “excessive” and “dangerously fast”. Comments in surveys and at the open houses pointed to the difficulty drivers have in safely entering New Garden from side streets, particularly at morning peak hours, and the difficulty of pedestrians to cross the corridor at any hour.

The City conducted a “speed study” on May 22/23 of 2019 near Greenlee Road where the posted speed limit is 35 mph, and found that average vehicular speeds were 37 mph northbound, and 32 mph southbound. The study also indicated that the “85th percentile speed” (85% percent of vehicles travel slower than/15% travel faster than) was 42-44mph. These data reinforce neighbors perception that drivers are traveling too fast.

New Garden Road, from Battleground Avenue to the Fleming/Ballinger Road intersection, is designated a Minor Thoroughfare. New Garden Road south of the Fleming/Ballinger Road intersection to Friendly Avenue is designated a Major Thoroughfare. This later segment forms a portion of a major access route between the core of Greensboro to Bryan Boulevard, the Interstate Loop and the Triad Airport, among other destinations.

Traffic volumes on New Garden Road vary from segment to segment, with an average daily volume between 18,000 vehicles per day just east of Fleming, to a high of 28,000 vehicles per day at the Bryan Boulevard interchange (according to 2015 Traffic counts). Existing and projected peak hour traffic counts at the Bryan Boulevard/Horse Pen Creek exchange with New Garden Road suggest the benefit of planned interchange improvements that would eliminate the need for left turns onto the Bryan Boulevard westbound ramp.

The New Garden roadway is four travel lanes with a painted two-way center turn lane from Friendly Avenue north to Pinehaven Drive. Between Pinehaven Drive and the Timber Oak/Strathmore Drive intersection, New Garden Road is 4 lanes with a landscaped median (with the exception of the ¼ mile segment either side of the interchange with Bryan Boulevard). North and east of Timber Oak/Strathmore Drive intersection, New Garden Road returns to 4 lanes with a painted center median.

### TRAFFIC / SPEED OF TRAVEL

The volumes of traffic noted above are well within the design capacity of these roads, based on National Transportation Research Board’s Highway Capacity Manual. The capacity of the road was designed to accommodate economic development and residential growth in this quadrant of the City, and may contribute to attracting additional development. Though technically, the roadway does not present safety issues or congestion that would induce residents to declare traffic as “excessive” and “dangerously fast,” the City’s recent speed test confirms that the traffic on it no longer suggests a “breezy” country road that used to serve this area. Increasing road capacity will not reduce the perception of traffic or speed of vehicles, nor of the ability to enter or exit the roadway safely. Reducing capacity here would serve to increase the perceived congestion. Instead, efforts should be made to slow average and top speeds on the road, consistent with the City’s Vision Zero program, that may decrease the actual or perceived speed of traffic. In considering potential changes to the designation and function of the roadway, the City must consider safety, access and maintenance, in addition to the effect on roadway character. The traffic calming measures appropriate for the New Garden corridor include various approaches to street width reduction, such as corner extensions, bike lanes, and additional landscaping in medians and boulevard areas.



The above image depicts a traffic calming treatment at an intersection. This corner extension, also known as a pedestrian bump-out, forces drivers to slow as the road narrows and also reduces the distance for pedestrians to cross the street.

### MULTI-MODALISM

Roads should serve more than just cars and trucks. Greensboro's Transit Authority (GTA) bus routes use a hub and spoke system that provides very few circumferential interconnects between the spoke routes, and no service at all running on or parallel to New Garden Road. Both Friendly Avenue and Battleground Avenue are served by multiple bus routes. The lack of bus transit, and the lack of bike lanes or other non-auto modes contributes to the automobile load using New Garden as an interconnect between commercial districts and between homes and employment. A transit route along New Garden Road is currently GTA's most requested route. The "Get on Board 2040 Plan, GTA's Mobility Plan includes a planned interconnect bus route named the "New Garden Connector" which will run between the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park on the northeast and West Wendover Ave. on the southwest. The plan notes that this planned route would serve a population of more than 10,000 residents and more than 7,100 jobs within a quarter mile of New Garden Road.

### PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

New Garden Road has extensive sidewalks but lacks a comprehensive network. Most of the length of the corridor, 5' residential sidewalks exist on one or both sides of the right-of-way. From Friendly Avenue north to Fleming Road, sidewalks exist on the East side of the road; sidewalks exist on both sides of New Garden from Fleming east to the interchange ramps of Bryan Boulevard, at which point no sidewalks exist on either side of the Bryan Boulevard overpass. Just east of Horse Pen Creek Road, sidewalks parallel both sides of New Garden Road east to the intersection of Stratton Hills Drive. From Stratton Hills Drive east to Battleground Avenue, the sidewalk on the north side of New Garden is continuous, but the sidewalks on the south side of the road are intermittent.

Complete and continuous sidewalks on both sides of New Garden Road would be ideal. Shy of a complete system, at least one side of the gap on either side of the Bryan Boulevard interchange should be considered the minimum, and crosswalks on either side of such a one-sided system should be constructed to assure that pedestrians can cross New Garden to safely use the sidewalk over that interchange. Several of the side streets and entry drives from larger commercial and residential properties that

bring pedestrians to New Garden Road do not have sidewalks that connect or are present on both sides of the street. The City has requested sidewalks and crossing improvements across the Bryan interchange area under the project NCDOT U6008 interchange improvement project. This is a critical improvement based on land use, community needs, safety, and the fact that the current interchange area blocks pedestrian traffic.

The need for a complete sidewalk network that serves pedestrians (with or without mobility limitations), parents with strollers, and all the residents and employees of business on the corridor is not simply a matter of equity and accessibility, but may lessen the load on traffic and increase the use of retail and service businesses on the corridor.



The existing New Garden roadway primarily serves vehicles, as the sidewalk network is incomplete and there are not any bike facilities or transit routes along the corridor.



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER + FACILITIES

### **STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM**

The character of the New Garden roadway is an important element in its overall functionality. When the street environment and public realm is attractive, inviting, and accommodates multiple users, all transportation modes (pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles) are able to use the roadway more efficiently.

Landscaping along the length of the corridor is a primary contributor to its character, the business or residential environments, and the overall sense of place. The landscaping takes three forms in sub-areas within the corridor: the private property improvements and the natural landscaping on property along the corridor; the landscaping that creates a buffer between (primarily) commercial uses and parking areas and the road right-of-way; and the landscaping within the right-of-way, either along the sidewalk edge or within the landscaped median between Pinehaven Drive and Strathmore Drive. Rarely do all three landscaping influences exist in the same segment of corridor.

Street lighting is sparse, intermittent, and only occasionally illuminates the sidewalk. East of Bryan Boulevard, several neighborhood streets that intersect with New Garden do not have overhead street lighting, making it difficult to see pedestrians as they cross at the intersections.

Spanning 4 miles, the New Garden Road corridor is long and therefore significant, consistent streetscape and lighting improvements may be very expensive. Still, these roadway elements are important to factor into future planning.

### **PARKS**

Though anchored on both ends and the middle by commercial centers, the majority of property within the corridor is residential homes in subdivisions and neighborhoods. The quality of life in these communities—and, to a significant extent, the value of property—reflects the quality and accessibility of amenities, particularly, parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities.

Adopted in February 2019, Plan2Play is the City's Parks and Recreation's Master Plan that provides a framework for the use and development of the Greensboro park system for the next 20 years. The document describes a vision that is framed around three themes: “enhance the Department’s existing assets, expand offerings by strengthening partnerships and creating transformative programs, and connect communities into a vibrant, healthy and equitable park system.”

While Plan2Play does not provide details on plans for future new park/ open spaces specific to the New Garden Road Corridor, it does discuss Price Park, located just northeast of Jefferson Elementary School off New Garden Road. Price is classified as one of the City’s 14 Community Parks, a category of parks which “should be evaluated for strategic additions such as unique playgrounds, fitness loops, and active play areas for basketball or other pick-up spots.” Price Park is an asset for the corridor, as it is home to the Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library, a Butterfly Garden, Meadowlark Sanctuary, and also contains walking trails and a picnic shelter.

Opportunities for new parks, open space, and trails near the corridor should be considered, keeping in mind the overall system needs and priorities identified in Plan2Play. The Park System Needs map (shown to the right) indicates that portions of the New Garden Road Corridor have a “medium need” for additional park and open space facilities.

Discussions with Park Department staff suggest that the active play use of Price Park and the potential for significant facility enhancements are limited by the deed restrictions placed on the property at the time of its donation. As such, the City may need to identify additional park space to serve active use needs of residents within the corridor.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The corridor is served by other community facilities, including Fire Station 18 at the southwest corner of New Garden Road and Ballinger Road, the Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Public Library adjacent to Price Park, and the private Hege Library within Guilford College.

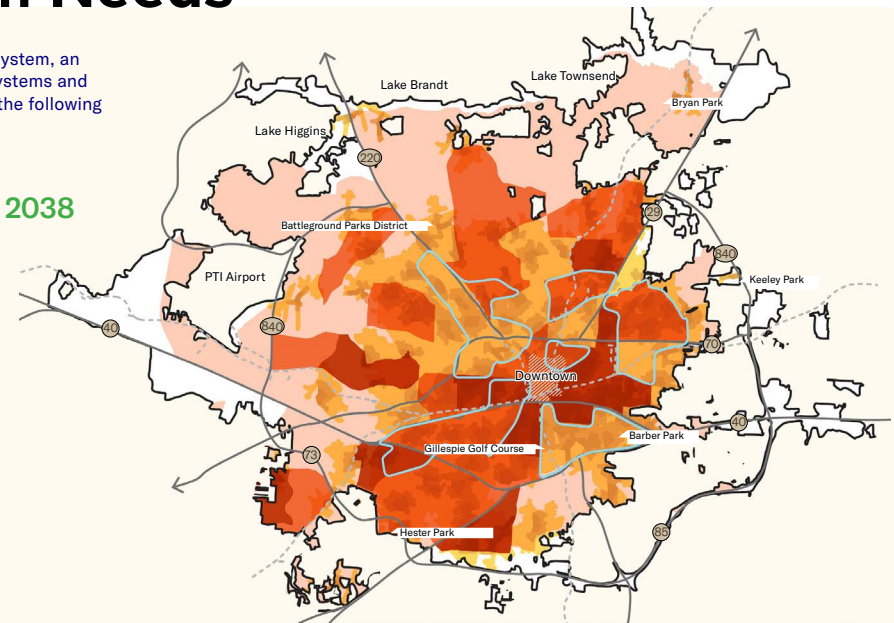
The majority of elementary school students attend Jefferson Elementary School, while some may attend Claxton Elementary School. Western Guilford Middle School and Kermodle Middle School are just outside the corridor, as is Western Guilford High School. These schools do not currently report any capacity issues that would affect the marketability of residential uses along the corridor.

# Park System Needs

Based on a careful analysis of the system, an overview of comparable peer city systems and projected growth, we can estimate the following future needs:

**Have Today | Need by 2038**

- 2,937 | 3,328**  
ACRES
- 148 | 186**  
STAFF
- 98 | 201**  
TRAILS
- 1 | 2**  
SENIOR CENTER
- 67 | 76**  
TENNIS COURTS
- 6 | 9**  
FITNESS CENTERS
- 38 | 53**  
OUTDOOR MULTI-PURPOSE FIELDS



Population Growth from 2010 to 2016 and Zones with High Need and Access to Park Spaces

**LEGEND**

Growing Population (2010 - 2016)	High Need	1/4 Mile Access
	Medium Need	1/2 Mile Access
	Low Need	1 Mile Access

Greensboro Park System needs, as identified in the 2019 Plan2Play document.



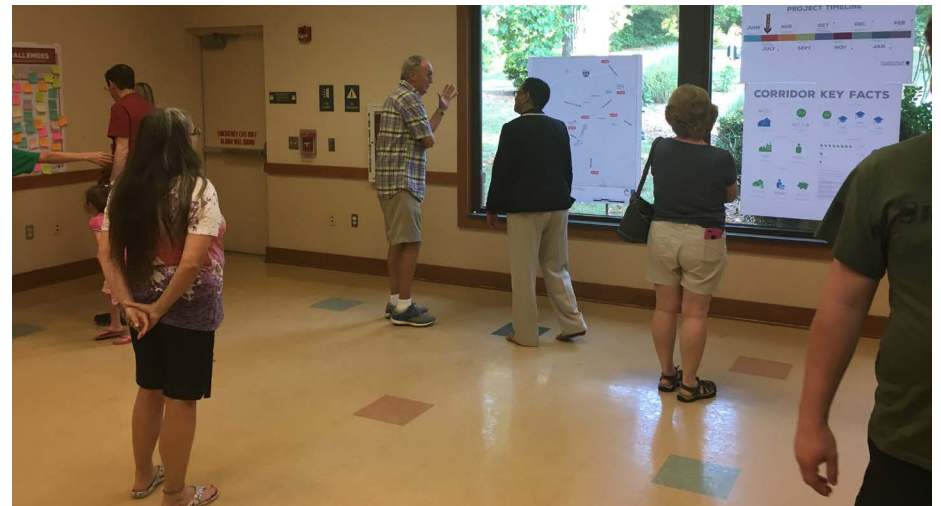
## BACKGROUND

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### ADDRESSING CHANGE

Change can be difficult to accept, especially when it is unanticipated. Change that is accompanied by a perceived injustice can have lasting damage to community relations. This Strategic Plan was born in response to stressful public meetings and the zoning and redevelopment of property along the corridor. Some members of the public were offended by the experience and result of the City's development review and approval process. With this plan, the participants seek to describe a positive vision for the future of the corridor, to be able to better anticipate changes, and have a more effective voice in approval of those changes.

This planning process established and benefited from an advisory committee comprised of corridor stakeholders. The nearly 4 mile-long corridor includes several clusters of independent subdivisions that may not be "neighborhoods" per se, but which are linked through shared public facilities and shared interests. Upon adoption of the plan, community leadership should determine whether the formation of one or more neighborhood associations would be in the best interest of the community and would lead toward the implementation of this plan.



Images from the community open house

# **SECTION 3: PLANNING PROCESS**



# PLANNING PROCESS

## A PLAN TO PLAN

The City of Greensboro has a relatively long history of establishing neighborhood and corridor plans. Its objectives, in addition to providing the basis for good and predictable land use decisions, also include the establishment or advancement of dialogue, transparency, and mutual respect among neighbors and property-owners, and between the community and the City.

With the assistance of a planning consultant, the City of Greensboro has executed a strategic planning process that begins with stakeholder interviews and an online survey, and includes a series of advisory committee meetings, open house forums, follow-up surveys, and focus group interviews. The City includes, within the process, opportunities to evaluate the needs of property-owners within the corridor, but also the perspectives of commercial and residential developers, larger institutions like Guilford College, places of worship, and City departments (transportation, park and recreation).

The planning process includes the establishment of the Corridor Advisory Committee comprised of residents, business owners, and other corridor leaders that provide advice, guidance, and helpful review of intermediate

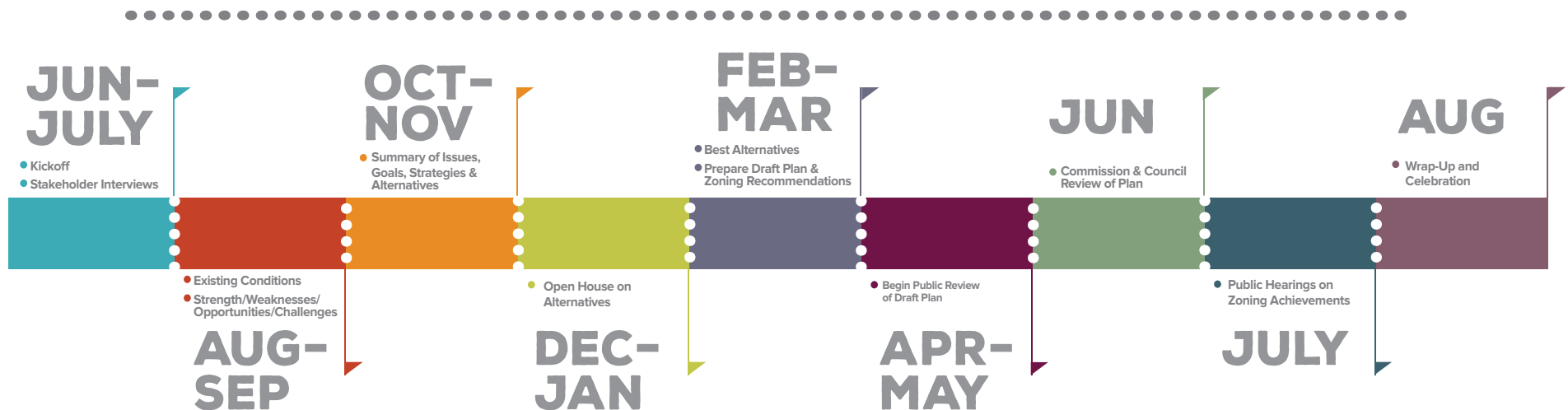
products before they are published for public review and comment. Members of the New Garden Road Corridor Advisory Committee were nominated by the two City Council members whose wards cover the corridor.

The consultants conducted a series of interviews with property-owners and with corridor developers in May of 2018. A summary of the results of those interviews, initial research, evaluation of current conditions and the trend of development were presented by the Consultant to the Advisory Committee in June of 2018. The Advisory Committee also provided input and suggestion for the forum for the first community open house.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

On July 12, 2018, the City of Greensboro conducted an open house to solicit community perspectives, concerns, observations and to initiate participation in the planning process. Over 150 neighbors and property-owners attended, and from their ranks a corridor advisory committee was selected to assist with the preparation of materials in advance of a wider public engagement.

## 2018-2019



In addition to maps of the corridor, and informational posters on the planning process, background of the corridor, and traffic information, four posters, representing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges were prepared to invite neighbors and property-owners to weigh-in on their perspective. The City seeded the posters with some of the observations made at the initial stakeholder interviews. Attendees were invited to contribute to a growing list of observations regarding the corridor by placing their sticky-note comments on the posters. The four posters that follow, below, summarize the comments from the open house attendees and from the open/online survey of the same issues, available to those unable to attend the open house:

## STRENGTHS

Initial observations from Stakeholder Interviews

- ➔ Physical attractiveness of the corridor
- ➔ Good roadway capacity for the existing traffic conditions
- ➔ Special places along or near the corridor
- ➔ Strong residential enclaves
- ➔ Diversity of retail and commercial services

- ➔ Houses of worship
- ➔ Open Space and natural features
- ➔ Neighborhood Associations
- ➔ Demographics and wealth that supports strong retailing
- ➔ Access to Interstate highway/ Airport/downtown

**Your thoughts go here!**

attractive area

Price Park

Highway access

Convenient Shopping

Guilford Woods

Single-family homes

Nice neighborhoods

good retail space, foot traffic, quality housing

close to amenities (grocery, physician, retail, parks)

Lots of trees!

good balance of residential + retail

nice, thriving neighborhoods (4)

Bryan Blvd is a natural boundary for residential areas

Quality of life in family oriented way

Library and trails

width of road

lots of green space + sidewalks

medical facilities used frequently

beauty of low-residential oasis (4)

NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN

## WEAKNESSES

Initial observations from Stakeholder Interviews

- ➔ Lack of connections between communities/neighborhoods
- ➔ Bryan Blvd as a barrier/divide

- ➔ Isolated residential properties along corridor
- ➔ 4 ½ mile long corridor
- ➔ Uneven street lighting

**Your thoughts go here!**

do not need more massive complexes (8)

Not enough parking

Need more sidewalks + better lighting (2)

Commercial encroachment on residential (4)

need for higher-end, independent restaurants

Too much traffic, retail will cause more (6)

Commercial trucks on Brasfield should be on Battleground

Need real bike paths (not shared with cars)

Traffic speeds are too high, not controlled (7)

Area of vulnerable populations (children and 55+)

unpleasant to walk

No bike paths, need connector for Biennial Trail

enough high-density apartments

Spot zoning/ piecemeal infill

Need coordinated zoning plan

Should be more walkable

loud, large vehicles on roads, before daylight

Need bike/pedestrian bridge to cross Battleg and

Brasfield Shopping Center is largely unused (2)

need narrower zoning

poor traffic control through neighborhoods

Parhanding is out of control

Need connections between neighborhoods

Strathmore + sew development are not connected

too much commercial (2)

Unwelcome rental apartments and commercial

NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN

( ) indicate the number of people in agreement with this comment



# OPPORTUNITIES

Initial observations from Stakeholder Interviews

- ➔ Strong neighborhood reputations
- ➔ Desirable schools
- ➔ Strong intra-city street network
- ➔ Potential to interconnect neighborhoods and greenway system
- ➔ Traffic relief posed by the extension/completion of I-840
- ➔ More walkability with a complete sidewalk system

Your thoughts go here!

NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN

# CHALLENGES

Initial observations from Stakeholder Interviews

- ➔ Disconnected parcels along the corridor under development pressure
- ➔ Trend of development and demand for multi-family dwellings
- ➔ Decline of brick and mortar retailing
- ➔ A complicated planning and development review process

Your thoughts go here!

NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN

# **SECTION 4: VISION + GOALS**



## VISION + GOALS

### DEVELOPING A VISION

Despite property-owner concerns about the pace, quality and trend of development in the corridor the overwhelming perception of residents who attended the first open house was positive about the character of the neighborhood within which they live. Those that attended the open house generally appreciate the existing character of the corridor as a whole.

The comments from many attendees suggested that the corridor represented a premiere choice for living within Greensboro. The open house was primarily attended by residents, not developers. Only a few comments were received reflecting the development-community's interest in locating more commercial uses or multiple family residences along New Garden Road.

The City prepared an initial vision statement, brought it to the members of the advisory committee for refinement, and then to the second open house for community comment. As amended in response to committee and community suggestions, the following became the working Vision Statement for the plan and the process:

***VISION STATEMENT:** The New Garden Road Corridor is the thread that connects terrific neighborhoods, with places to shop, work, and play. The New Garden Road Strategic Plan informs residents, property-owners, and the City of Greensboro about the steps necessary to protect the community character, property values, and the quality of life that makes this area a desirable place.*

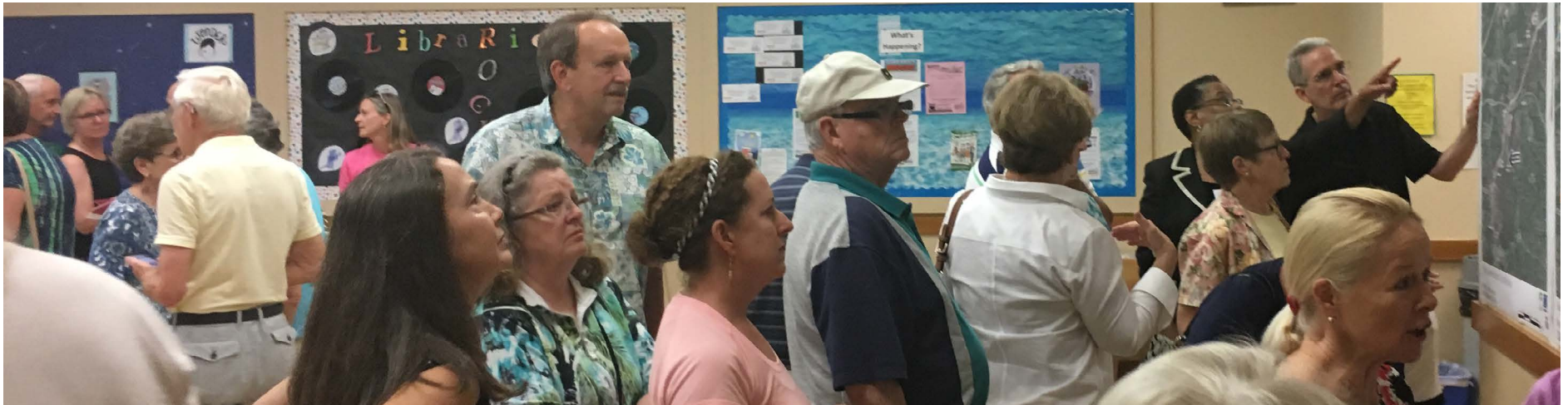
### DEVELOPING A SET OF GOALS

There were three primary sources for the draft goals of this strategic plan: the Advisory Committee; open house attendees; and suggestions made online on the project website. These three sources do not describe the corridor as having a uniform character, a single cohesive area, or a static condition. Rather, it was generally accepted that there are, and should continue to be, multiple uses along the corridor.

Understanding that this mix of uses exists, the vision statement describes a more attractive corridor, with fewer conflicts between uses, greater pedestrian and vehicular mobility, and more compatible and cohesive sub-areas. These aspirational attributes would maintain and enhance the value and desirability of the mixed-use character of New Garden Road.

### DEVELOPING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE GOALS

A second open house was held in November of 2018 to stimulate feedback on a set of strategies to address the Draft Goals. In addition to conversations about the issues and the draft vision/goals/strategies, the attendees were encouraged to provide their comments and evaluation of whether the strategies could successfully implement the vision. A follow-up online survey allowed those stakeholders who were unable to attend the open house to provide their comments and evaluations. The Goals and Strategies listed on the following page reflect the comments and suggestions made at the open house and the subsequent survey.



# VISION

*The New Garden Road Corridor is the thread that connects terrific neighborhoods, with places to shop, work, and play. The New Garden Road Strategic Plan informs residents, property-owners, and the City of Greensboro about the steps necessary to protect the community character, property values, and the quality of life that makes this area a desirable place.*



**Goal:** The balance between residential and commercial environments is enhanced, and the natural environment is part of daily life.



**Goal:** New Garden Road is not just a “through-route” for automobiles, as it supports the use of property, contributes to an attractive corridor character, and sets a high priority on accessibility by all modes including bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles.



**Goal:** The community is linked through non-vehicular interconnections.



**Goal:** The Corridor has a consistent, high-quality level of design, construction and maintenance without being uniform across the entire corridor nor indistinguishable from other corridors.



**Goal:** The Community has an effective voice in the decision-making process about the future of the Corridor.



# SECTION 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

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LAND USE

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INFRASTRUCTURE + MOBILITY

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COMMUNITY CHARACTER + FACILITIES

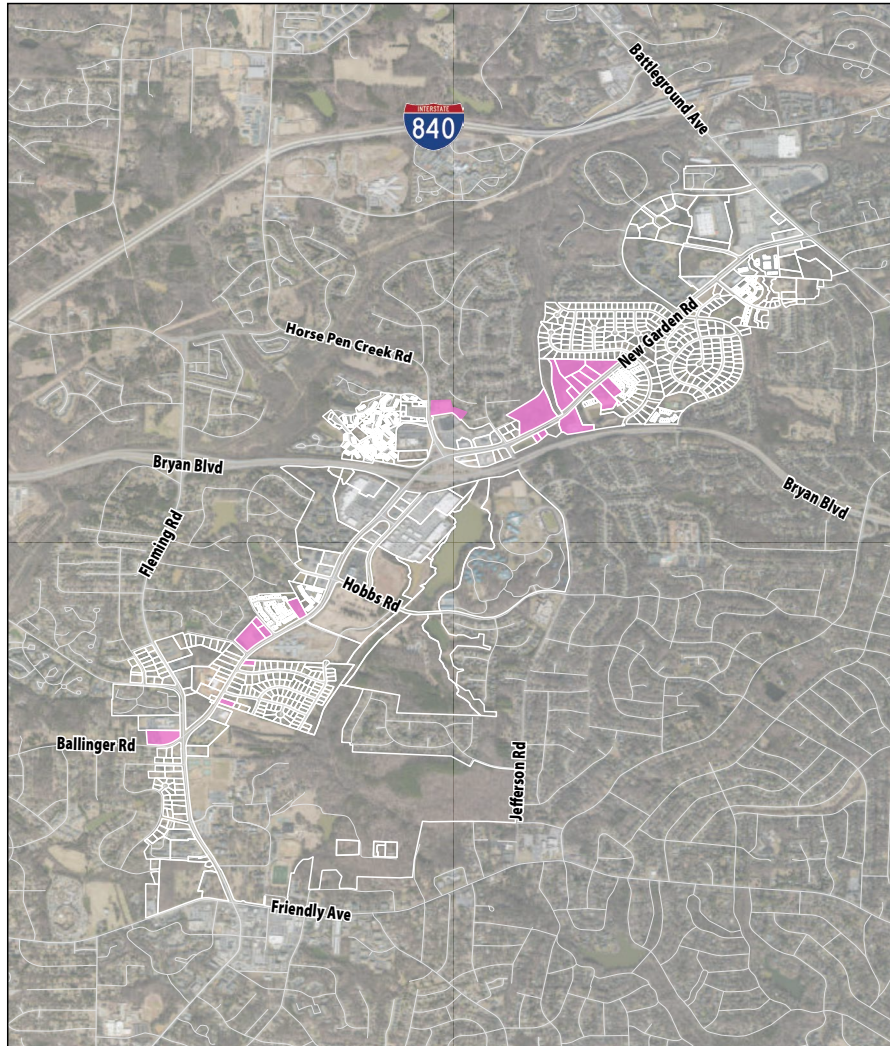
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COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

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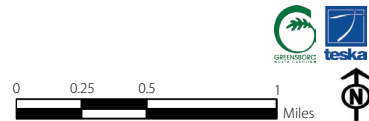


# LAND USE



Sites Facing Development Pressure

## NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN



### DETERMINING FUTURE LAND USES

Land within and near the New Garden Road Corridor is within existing developed neighborhoods and business areas. A few “remainder” properties had been used for single-family homes and have potentially become more attractive for reuse or redevelopment for something other than single-family uses. The remaining properties that had not been used for residential or commercial activities are not “green-grass” sites, blank slates, or without the context and influences of their surroundings. All properties carry a land use designation on the Generalized Future Land Use Map (GFLUM) that was adopted as part of the Connections 2025 comprehensive plan and amended thereafter. All properties are also subject to zoning designations that were adopted with the intent of implementing the comprehensive plan as suggested by the GFLUM.

During the planning process and preparation of this New Garden Road Strategic Plan, the City initiated and is pursuing the preparation of a comprehensive update to the Comprehensive Plan, including the plan for future land use. This Strategic Plan, then, presents the opportunity for the community to influence the comprehensive planning process and the regulatory decisions that implement the plan, or in response to future property-owner requests for modification of plans or zoning designations.

Where the existing uses remain economically and functionally viable, no change in the “future land use” designation should occur. However, when changes to the surrounding neighborhood/corridor context, combined with changing market conditions induce property-owner requests for an amendment to zoning it triggers a public approval process that allows for community input into the decision.

### LAND USE DECISION FACTORS

What should be considered in the re-designation of future land use? The process of amending the comprehensive plan or an adopted neighborhood plan for a zoning map amendment must balance and protect property rights. The rights of the property owner requesting the amendment, nearby property owners, and the general health, safety, and welfare of the public must be considered. The following land use decision factors should be considered by the Corridor Advisory Committee (or its successor representatives) and the Greensboro Planning Board or Zoning Commission in their consideration of amendments to the corridor plan or the Comprehensive Plan of the City.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Physical Site Features

Many properties are not level, rectangular, dry, stable, or without trees or other major impediments to development. Where physical features enhance the potential for one use over another, or are limitations on the use of the site, the physical features are a primary filter for which land uses “fit” the site.

## 2. Access

How is the site served by public roadways? With the exception of the Bryan Boulevard interchange, New Garden Road has more than adequate capacity to carry the traffic that will be generated by potential development or redevelopment of properties along the corridor. But there is a difference between roadway capacity and accessibility of property. Properties served only by direct frontage on New Garden Road may have more limited accessibility than those served by local roads (side roads or intersecting roads) or shared access points. Only large or deep sites may be able to accommodate the on-site parking and on-site vehicular stacking (waiting for an opening to directly egress from the site to New Garden Road) generated by commercial or higher density residential uses.

## 3. Connectivity or Isolation from Adjacent Uses

Uses which create fewer vehicular “ins and outs” from the public roadway generate less negative impact on the corridor as a whole and on adjacent uses. Larger, multiple use developments with internal circulation between uses/buildings are generally more compatible with the corridor than small independent uses with their own driveway and parking area and which lack interconnection with adjacent uses. This is true for traffic impact as well as stormwater impact. In cases where two or more properties can share a single access and on-site stormwater management, a cross-access easement can allow for greater utility of each site. Disconnected, or isolated uses also diminish the value and attractiveness of each site for retail uses, as many shoppers prefer to park once, and visit several business without driving out on the road to get to their next destination.

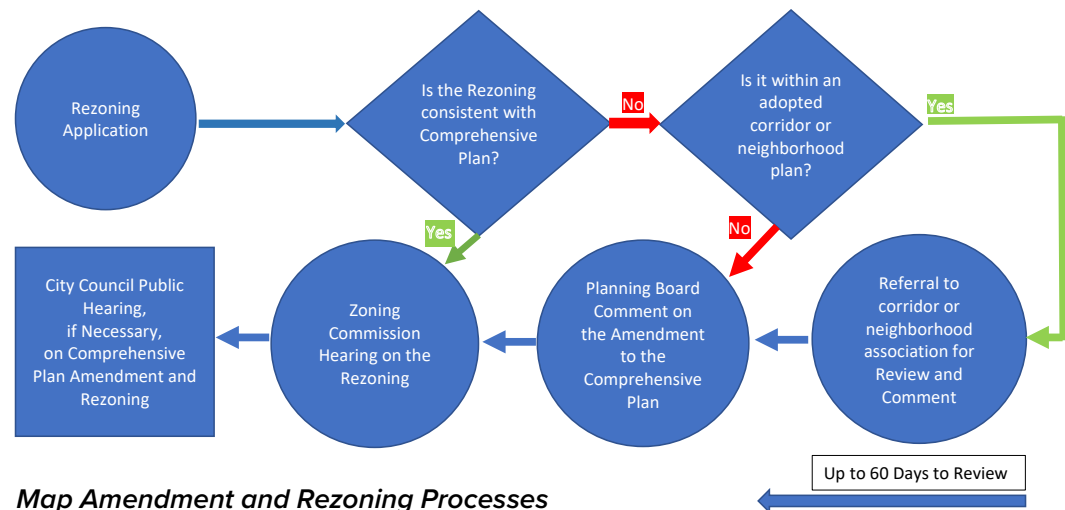
## 4. Off-site Impact and Transitions to Adjacent Properties

A high priority is given to those uses which generate no perceivable impact to the use and enjoyment of adjacent properties. Some impacts, such as on-site parking of vehicles, outside storage, noise, vibration, odor, or other emissions may be regulated so that they do not lessen similar uses within a zoning district. Buffering (through physical separation, solid fencing, heavy landscaping, etc.) may mitigate the impact of uses on properties of dissimilar zoning. Small sites may have little room for buffering, and as such make them difficult to allow more intense uses adjacent to less intense existing uses.

## 5. Corridor Character and Scale

Buildings along a given corridor should have neither too much uniformity nor have too much disparity: both can be visually uncomfortable, and neither is desirable. Without establishing rigid rules for architecture or building siting/improvements, the City and neighbors must rely on zoning regulations and the development review process to deliver a strong and attractive corridor character.

The Corridor has no single overarching character across its 3 ½ miles. Rather, from east to west it has: retail shopping, office and institutional, medium-density residential (apartments and townhomes), single-family (in subdivisions and “remainder” properties), open spaces and landscaped private areas, retail shopping either side of Bryan Boulevard, and a mix



Map Amendment and Rezoning Processes





Examples of various land uses along the corridor

of institutional, commercial, low-density residential, some higher-density apartments, and public open spaces. Most of the commercial uses are in strip centers or neighborhood/community centers with shared access and limited “storefronts” facing the road. Most residential areas have side-yards and rear-yards with heavy landscaping and, in some cases, landscape or wall enclosures. Since the range of uses, architecture, building siting, and density of landscaping is so wide, it is not difficult to stay within the existing spectrum for redevelopment sites. It will be, however, important to assure that any redevelopment is respectful of the character and scale of the uses that are immediately adjacent.

### 6. Carrying Capacity of Public Services, Public Facilities

Every use makes some demand on public services and public utilities. Some uses generate more students and therefore more demand for schools and parks (three and four-bedroom residential units). Some generate more demand for ambulance conveyance (senior housing), or police patrols (retail uses), or fire equipment/personnel (office and warehouse). The choice of future land-uses should consider any existing limitations or cumulative impacts on the demand of public services and facilities.

### 7. Balanced Growth

In implementing the comprehensive, long range plan for future land use, the zoning for any site should not be so narrow or so unsympathetic to changing conditions that no rational use of the site may be made under the zoning. However, the premature rezoning of property to uses where demand is speculative and disruptive—and contrary to the existing plan—is not healthy for the property or the corridor. Participants in this corridor strategic planning process expressed support for limited forms of attached single-family development and office development where aging and isolated single-family homes are no longer viable uses.

The long term health of neighborhoods relies in part on the City encouraging balanced growth that supports community needs without undermining the other neighborhoods elsewhere within the City. The City’s long range plans recognizes the differences between and among neighborhoods, but must also recognize the interrelatedness of the land uses, evolving market economics and activities of the City as a whole.

Within the New Garden Corridor, the focus of commercial reinvestment and additional development should be on strengthening the balance between viable and distinct commercial centers (Friendly Activity Center, Bryan Blvd/



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Horse Pen Creek centers, and Battleground Activity Center), and the residential communities that support and separate these commercial districts.

The land uses designated in the GFLUM of the current comprehensive plan are the land uses adopted for this plan, until they are superseded by amendment or succeeded by adoption of a new comprehensive plan. This strategic plan does not call for changes to the GFLUM. However, development pressures are likely to pose potential map amendments. As indicated in the flow chart of the Map Amendment Process shown on a previous page, once the City formally adopts a neighborhood or corridor plan, the corridor or governing neighborhood association is given the opportunity to review and comment on proposed amendments to the GFLUM that are inconsistent with the comprehensive plan, prior to the City's Planning Board or Zoning Commission's review of the matter.

The following recommendations are based on the planning principles identified in the land use section of this plan, beginning on page 8, and provide guidance to the corridor community regarding how to consider map amendments and subsequent rezoning:



### RECOMMENDED STRATEGY #1 **Refine the control of land uses to better manage change and development.**

- Using the seven “Land Use Decision Factors” identified page 24-26 of this plan as the basis for evaluating proposed land use modifications, the City and corridor stakeholders should work to maximize the importance of consistency with this strategic plan and the City’s Comprehensive Plan.
- The sections of the corridor which are predominantly residential in use and character, particularly between Jefferson Road northeast to Stratton Hills Drive, are most likely to be compatible with medium density residential uses similar to those of the “Villas at New Garden, Portico Heights, Seven Gates, Green’s Crossing, New Garden Park, and the Cotswold Park Apartments nearby. This area is not likely to be compatible with commercial or office uses.
- Southwest of Jefferson Road, the corridor transitions into a mix of neighborhood commercial centers, office and institutional uses, and residential uses, with potential for office uses not exceeding 50 feet in height and medium to higher density residential uses where, after having been reviewed in context of the Land Use Decision Factors identified on page 24-26, are shown to be compatible.
- Land use designations and supporting zoning should recognize the difference in scale and mix of uses that are compatible with “community retailing” near Horse Pen Creek Road/ Bryan Blvd. and a “walkable, mixed use district” at the Battleground Avenue activity area.
- If amendments to the plan and rezoning to non-residential districts occurs, the City and developers should work together to choose the zoning district or conditions that contains the narrowest list of uses necessary to accommodate those business uses that contribute to the potential for enhancing and expanding adjacent business properties as a walkable, sustainable business district.
- The land uses designated in the GFLUM of the current comprehensive plan are the land uses adopted for this plan, until they are superseded by amendment or succeeded by adoption of a new comprehensive plan. A future rezoning request that is not consistent with the City’s adopted comprehensive plan or this strategic plan should be considered an amendment to this plan. Amendments should not be considered for adoption until the community has had an opportunity to consider the proposal.
  - o The City will advertise and conduct a public meeting in or near the planning area in coordination with the applicant to review the proposed changes with residents. If an adjoining neighborhood has a neighborhood association that meets regularly, the City will ask for their input on the proposed plan amendment and rezoning, giving them up to 60 days to respond.
  - o The Planning Board will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation on the proposed plan amendment to City Council.
  - o The Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation on the proposed rezoning to City Council.
  - o City Council will hold a public hearing and make the final decision on the Plan amendments and rezoning.

# INFRASTRUCTURE & MOBILITY

## ROADWAY CAPACITY

New Garden Road, as a Minor Thoroughfare (from Battleground Avenue to the Fleming / Ballinger Road intersection) and as a Major Thoroughfare (south of the Fleming/Ballinger Road intersection to Friendly Avenue) serves a regional capacity need as a bridge between local access roads and other high capacity roads. With the exception of the Ballinger/Fleming/New Garden intersection and the interchange with Bryan Boulevard, the corridor does not demonstrate capacity and intersection design issues. Additional engineering studies, leading ultimately to intersection/interchange improvements, including NCDOT project U-6008, is warranted for these two exceptions.

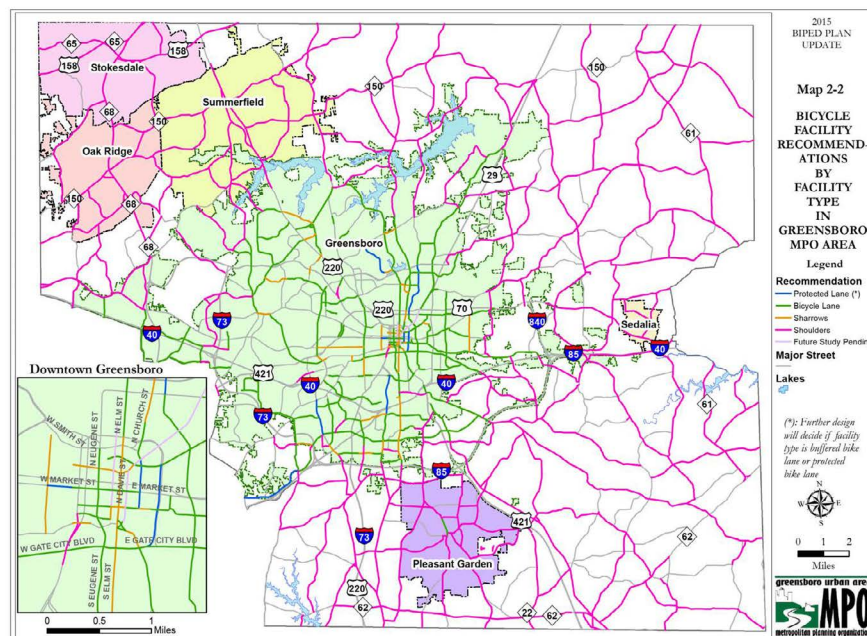
However, road capacity and property access are often at odds, as evidenced by resident complaints about the difficulty entering New Garden from driveways and side streets; adding road capacity likely compounds such conflicts. Some right-of-way improvements may have a traffic calming effect. These may include landscaping along the right-of-way edge and additional landscaped center median sections to enhance the enclosure of the corridor.

## BICYCLE IMPROVEMENTS

The existing non-motorized pathway system is incomplete in this subarea of the City. There is no existing on-road or off-road bike network to link parks, open spaces, schools, or commercial districts along the New Garden Road Corridor. The designation of an on-road bike route from Horse Pen Creek Road to West Friendly Avenue would provide an exceptionally useful connection in the bike network in this part of Greensboro. The planned Horse Pen Creek Road widening project will add 4.4 miles of bike lanes from New Garden Road to Battleground Avenue, and 1.1 miles bike lanes have recently been installed on West Friendly Avenue, from Henderson Road to New Garden/Guilford College Road. Additionally, Greensboro Bicycle Route 6 follows Hobbs Road for 3.8 miles, from New Garden Road, past Friendly Center, to Wedgedale Place.

The section of New Garden Road from Horse Pen Creek Road to West Friendly Avenue is relatively level and provides access to many destinations that could benefit greatly from the addition of bicycle lanes, including: Price Park, Kathleen Clay Edwards Library, Jefferson Elementary, American Hebrew Academy, Garden Creek Shopping Center, New Garden Crossing Shopping Center, Jefferson Village Shopping Center, NC State Employee's Credit Union, Guilford College, New Garden Friends School, New Garden Friends Homes, Quaker Village Shopping Center, and the Shops at Guilford College. Given the narrow width of the pavement, and existing traffic volumes, on-street bike lanes on New Garden may be best introduced along with more comprehensive system-wide improvements. In addition, an evaluation should be made of parallel pathways or alternative bike routes to serve the needs of the community.

Making New Garden Road bicycle friendly, through the addition of bike lanes, would vastly improve the connectivity of the bicycle network in western Greensboro and make bicycling a realistic option for many trips in this otherwise highly auto-oriented area. Furthermore, the addition of designated bike lanes or shared lanes has been shown to have traffic calming effects. Automobile and truck drivers are often vocal in their opposition to the introduction of bike lanes or shared lanes. Sharing the road is perceived by some drivers as an affront to the authority of their mode of travel, but in fact, the awareness of a shared roadway often results in a safer road for all users. However, the introduction of on-street bike lanes in one corridor of the City may not be accompanied by the change in driver behavior that assures bicyclist safety.



Bike Facility Recommendations Map from the BiPed 2015 Plan

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Bicycle Facility Recommendations within the 2015 Bicycle and Pedestrian and Greenways Master Plan (BiPed) addresses the immediate and long-term needs for bicycling and walking in the Greensboro area. The plan anticipates on-street bicycle lanes along the entire length of the New Garden Corridor Study area (between West Friendly Avenue and Battleground Avenue) and sharrows (also known as shared-lane markings) extending east to the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park.

### PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Independent of the need for bicycle network improvements, the sidewalk system on New Garden should be completed to assure a continuous connection, from one end of the corridor to the other (the south/east side of the street at a minimum). This will require improvements on the Bryan Boulevard overpass/bridge. The street lighting and walkway lighting along this pedestrian route should be improved to eliminate the dark sections that make the route suspicious and uninviting at night.



Because New Garden is a thoroughfare, not a local road, common traffic calming measures such as speed bumps may not be appropriate, and the physical changes to the thoroughfare are more limited. Rather, federal guidelines suggest that street width reduction via road diet is more appropriate for roads like New Garden. Around the country, there has been some success in reducing the perceived and actual speed of travel by way of introducing protected bike lanes or striped shared lanes, or lanes marked with “sharrows.”



Sidewalks are present along some sections of the corridor but not all.



### RECOMMENDED STRATEGY #2

#### Diminish the impact of vehicular traffic on quality of life.

- Calm traffic through landscaping and corridor improvements.
- Improve the function and capacity of the Bryan Boulevard interchange and the connections to the interstate/urban ring as a means of diverting through-traffic away from New Garden.
- Evaluate the feasibility of intersection improvements at New Garden/ Fleming Rd that simplify the intersection, improve safety and enhance the accessibility to nearby properties.



### RECOMMENDED STRATEGY #3

#### Increase neighborhood interconnectivity without increasing neighborhood through-traffic.

- Map neighborhood and local bike route connections to Citywide bike routes and pursue the construction of these physical links with both public and private property improvements.
- Complete the sidewalk system throughout the neighborhood, with particular attention to early completion of links to Price Park, K.C. Edwards Library, schools, and other amenities and resources.
- Coordinate with Guilford College, American Hebrew Academy, and Public and Private schools to establish safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to their campuses.



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER & FACILITIES

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Though the New Garden Road corridor is surrounded by ample parks and open spaces (shown in the map at right), park space directly along the corridor is lacking. Price Park remains the most significant public open space along New Garden, but the deed restrictions that accompany its acquisition make it unlikely it will serve any demand for expanded active recreation facilities. The same is true for Guilford Courthouse National Military Park or the significant wooded undeveloped property held by Guilford College.

Active recreation sites should be pursued, including undeveloped or underutilized properties on or adjacent to the corridor.

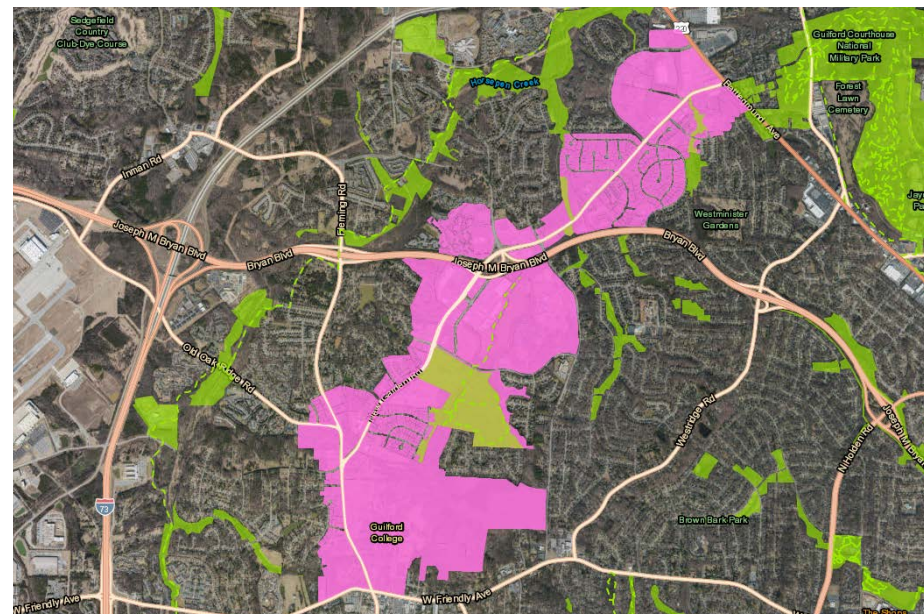
## STREETSCAPE & CHARACTER

The corridor is home to a mix of uses and, as a result, subareas that serve different purposes. It is neither realistic nor advisable to create one uniform character across the 4 miles of New Garden Road, but the City should focus improvements on those sections which are deficient in character elements such as landscape amenities, pedestrian comfort and safety amenities (i.e. lighting and crosswalks), pedestrian-oriented way-finding, and corridor identity and gateway features.

While a landscaped median is present in some sections of the corridor, other sections have a raised curbed/paved median or a striped asphalt median and do not offer any elements or features that enhance roadway user experience or traffic calming. Rather, the pleasant environment that characterizes many sections of New Garden Road can be attributed to landscaping along private properties and the character these properties contribute to the corridor. Extension of the landscaped median and the addition of greater landscaping density within the median can contribute to the sense of enclosure that leads drivers to a more neighborhood-respectful speed of travel. For example, the area near Horse Pen Creek Road has no landscaped median and crosswalks are quite wide. This stark character of roadway could be softened with lighting improvements, pedestrian crosswalk amenities, wayfinding signage, and other streetscape/beautification elements.

Entry into the corridor is not currently celebrated. The City and the corridor communities should consider banners or gateway features that announce the special environment of the corridor, and lend a visual thread that ties the several subareas into a more cohesive “district.”

NEW GARDEN ROAD STRATEGIC PLAN



Parks and green space in proximity to the New Garden corridor



### RECOMMENDED STRATEGY #4

#### Enhance the corridor character and sense of place.

- Evaluate the need for safer and more attractive roadway lighting.
- Plan for more median and right-of-way plantings, especially where buildings do not closely frame the roadway.
- Develop a gateway (entry features) sign and wayfinding signage plan to set the tone for the corridor and provide helpful guidance to its amenities and historic sites that contribute to its character.
- Identify appropriate additional open space opportunities along or adjacent to the corridor as part of the implementation of the Greensboro Parks Master Plan.

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### COMMUNITY-BASED DECISIONS

The adoption of this New Garden Road Strategic Plan offers the opportunity to translate the negative reaction to the series of rezoning requests along the corridor into a more positive, opportunity to implement jointly held goals and objectives. In short, this is a plan, not a regulatory document. Yet, by establishing its vision, goals and strategies, the communities and property-owners served by New Garden Road will have set a foundation for better decision-making.

The stakeholders who played a role in this plan must continue to work together toward its implementation. Incorporating the elements of this strategic plan into the decision-making and planning activities of the City of Greensboro will result in a New Garden Road Corridor that closely resembles the vision for which the community strives.

The recommendations contained in this Plan should be used by the stakeholders, developers, civic and business organizations, and individual citizens when giving their viewpoints to City Boards, Commissions, and Council. These goals and strategies should be referenced on issues such as rezoning, provisions of services, capital improvement planning, economic development opportunities, environmental quality, housing and the equitable provision of resources.

While this Plan provides for considerable flexibility, to have relevance over time, it should not be subject to continuous revision. The Plan may, however, be subject to occasional revisions or amendments.

Rezoning requests not consistent with the Generalized future Land Use Map designations follow the procedures below, which is consistent with other adopted neighborhood plans. The public meeting responds to a need for broader outreach in the study corridor area since there is not a single neighborhood association to provide a recommendation.

- The City will advertise and conduct a public meeting in or near the corridor in coordination with the applicant to review the proposed change with residents and property owners.
- The Planning Board will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation on the proposed plan amendment to City Council
- The Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation on the proposed rezoning to City Council
- City Council will hold a public hearing and make the final decision.



### RECOMMENDED STRATEGY #5

#### **Build stronger community relations among the neighborhoods and within community leadership.**

- Through regular meetings of a formal New Garden Corridor Advisory Committee, and neighborhood associations, build the community's capacity to work together toward shared goals and objectives.
- Work with the City of Greensboro, Guilford College, the West Friendly Avenue Alliance, and other partners that can support implementation of the adopted plan.
- The City will maintain a list of active neighborhoods, neighborhood leadership, and stay current with the technology being used to communicate.
- The City will continue to engage with residents in close coordination with the Departments of Transportation, Planning and Parks and Recreation to pursue plan elements including intersection and pedestrian/bicycle improvements

# SECTION 10: APPENDIX

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CURRENT CONDITIONS

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RE-ZONING HISTORY

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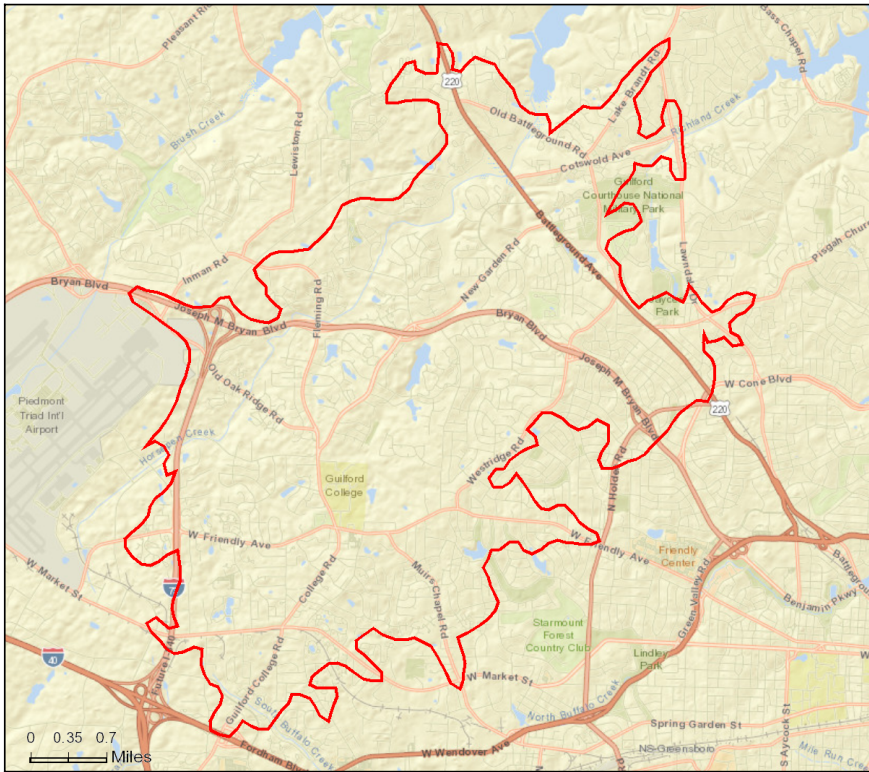
DRAFT PLAN PUBLIC INPUT

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# CURRENT CONDITIONS

Figure 1. Custom Market Area Map



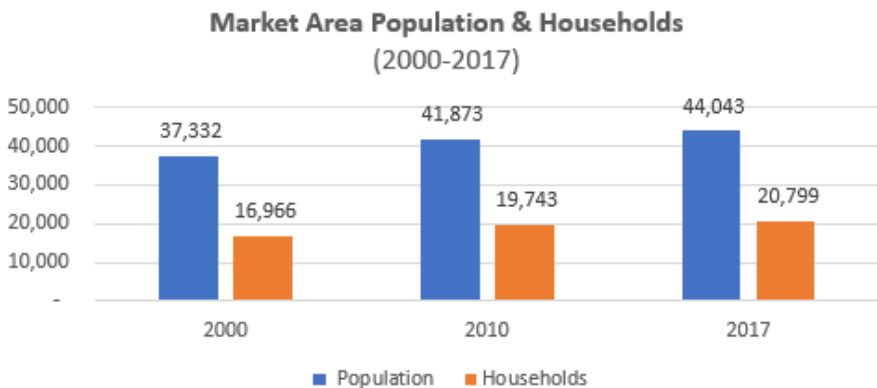
## INTRODUCTION

A review of current conditions and demographic data is necessary to understand existing realities along the New Garden Road corridor. For this analysis of current conditions, the corridor was considered using a Custom Market Area shown in Figure 1. This 18-square mile area captures places that are within a 5-minute drive time from the study area (the New Garden Road corridor).

## DEMOGRAPHICS

There are approximately 44,043 residents living in the New Garden Road Market Area. Both the population and the number of households have increased steadily since 2000 (Figure 2). The daytime population includes 16,038 workers and 21,153 residents. The median age in the Market Area is 39, which is older than the City of Greensboro median age of 35. The Market Area’s median household income is \$55,263; this is over \$13,000 greater than the citywide median of \$42,192.

Figure 2. Market Area Population & Households



# CURRENT CONDITIONS

In terms of Race and Ethnicity, residents of the Market Area are predominantly White (71%), followed by Black (19%), Asian (5%), and Some Other Race/Two or More Races (6%) (Figure 3). This breakdown indicates there is less racial and ethnic diversity in the area than at the citywide level, where the population is 46% White, 41% Black, 5 % Asian, and 7% Some Other Race/Two or More Races (Figure 4). 6% of residents in the Market Area are of Hispanic origin, compared to 9% in the City of Greensboro.

Residents of the Market Area generally have higher levels of education than residents across the City of Greensboro. 31% of Market Area residents hold a Bachelor's Degree and 22% hold a Graduate or Professional Degree, compared to the citywide rates of 24% and 14%, respectively (Figure 5).

Figure 3. Market Area Race & Ethnicity

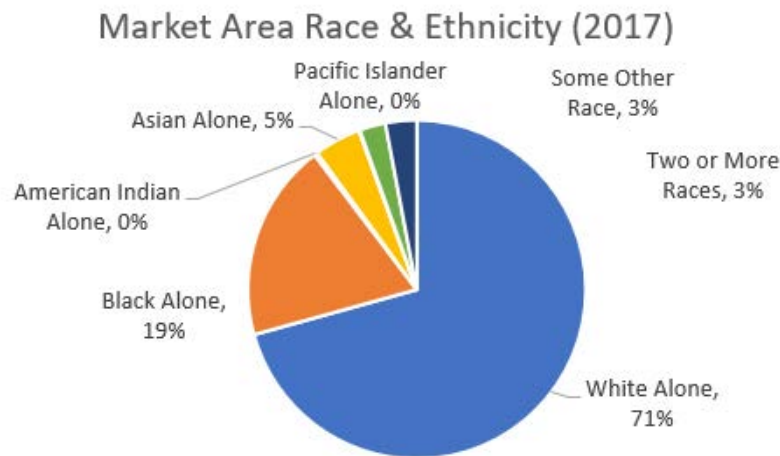


Figure 4. Citywide Race & Ethnicity

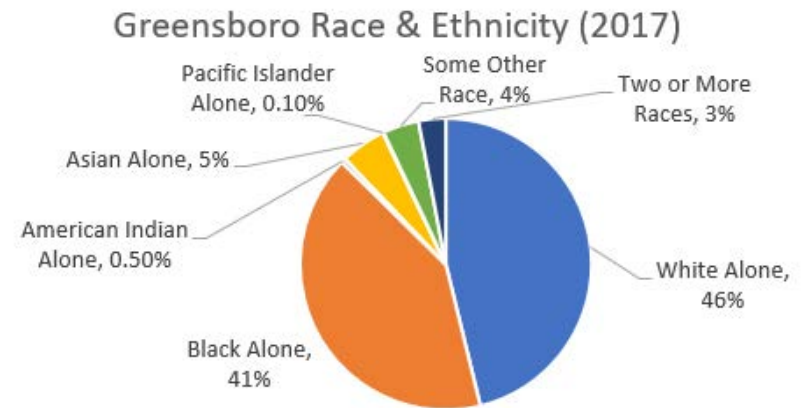
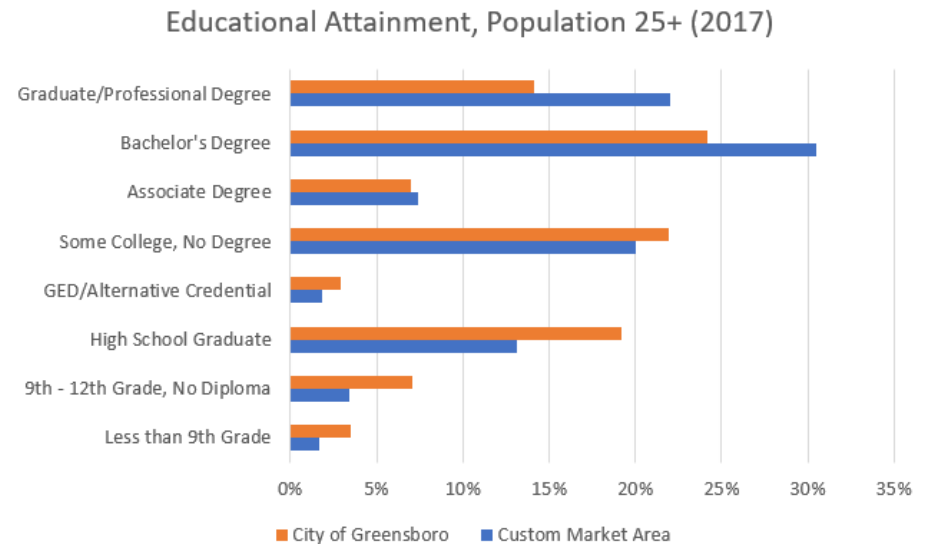
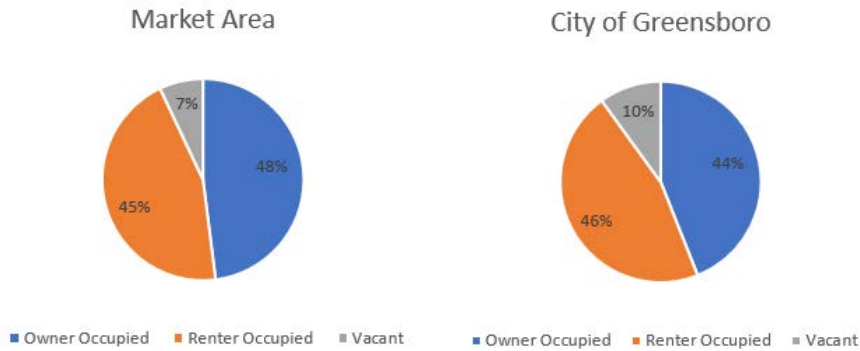


Figure 5. Educational Attainment, City vs. Market Area



# CURRENT CONDITIONS

Figure 6. Housing Tenure, Market Area vs. Citywide



## HOUSING

As of 2017, there are 22,325 housing units in the Market Area. Of these units, 48% are owner occupied, 45% are renter-occupied, and the remaining 7% are vacant. Compared with the citywide housing supply and tenure, there are fewer vacancies and a greater proportion of owners to renters (Figure 6). The median home value in the Market Area is \$199,126 compared to the citywide median of \$158,983.

## RETAIL MARKET

The median disposable income of residents in the Market Area is \$45,467. This number represents household income after taxes, which is an estimate of a household's purchasing power.

Figure 7. Market Area Leakage and Surplus Industries

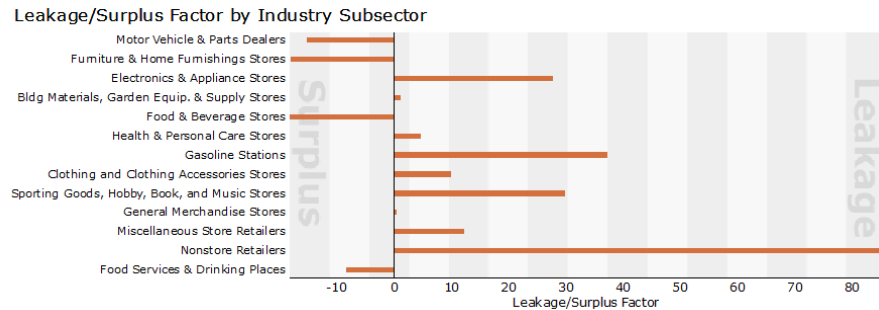
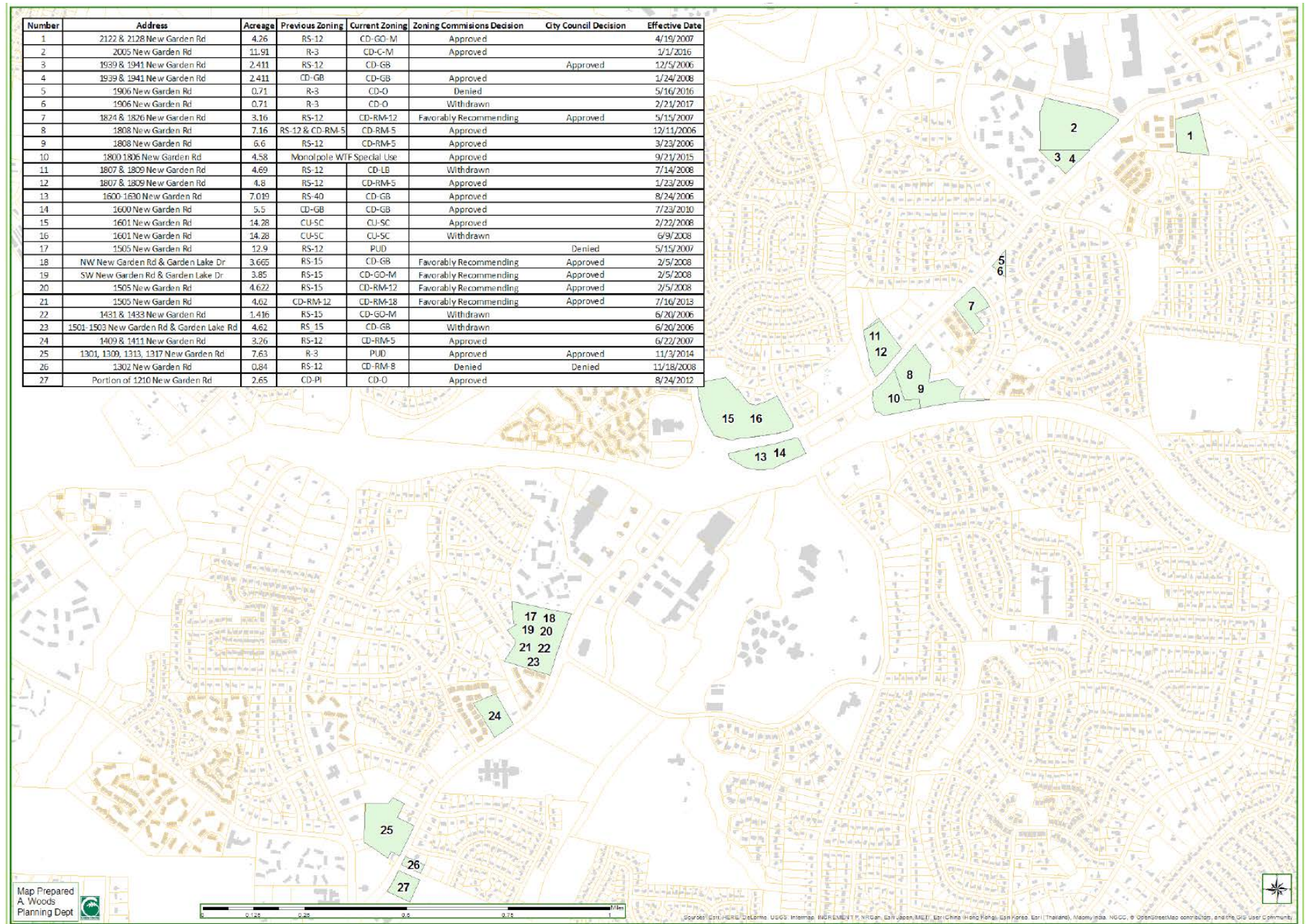


Figure 7 displays the leakage and surplus factors within the Market Area, indicating industry subsectors in which demand exceeds local supply (a leakage), or subsectors in which local sales exceed the Market Area's spending potential (a surplus). The numbers indicate that, in all but four sectors, Market Area industries are facing market leakage. This signals potential opportunities for additional businesses in the area.



# REZONING HISTORY

Figure 8. New Garden Road Rezoning History



# DRAFT PLAN PUBLIC INPUT

The following comments are from a Public Meeting that took place on June 27, 2019 at Jefferson Elementary School in which the community had the opportunity to review and provide input on the Draft Plan's Vision and Strategies.

## VISION

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"The few imposing on the many."

"The community has no effective voice. The City is too supportive of the developers."

"Corridor should not be a high traffic cut through! New by pass. Once complete, this should help with traffic."

"Residential & Non-residential – what is right balance for this corridor"

"No more apartments or businesses!"

"I am disappointed that plan for the Battleground-Jefferson Road stretch calls for more commercial development and less single-family residences. There are enough stores here already. We don't need another High Point Road here!"

"The plan doesn't enhance the balance of residential and commercial. Instead, it keeps encouraging commercial development over residential by pushing out single-family homes in favor of commercial development in between Battleground and Horsepen Creek."

Eliminating traffic will be a tough challenge as a goal – to make it less than it is now. With all the new growth, how will traffic diminish? Difficult challenge!"

"Recognize that the corridor is still in the suburbs and not the urban center – doesn't need densities that urban center has."

"Please do not allow future communities facing change end up like Hobbs/ New Garden intersection at Guilford College Road. There is a church, bank, and apartment complex very close to one another – major traffic concerns. Peace Haven Road has only one way out – with a school and traffic to the left, and major developments to the right. Hopefully, other communities facing this change will learn from this area's plan"

"How is this possible? From Hobbs Road intersection to Guilford College Road. One community will have great difficulty turning left with school traffic and large population moving at the Lofts. New Garden and intersection at church will also be difficult."

## STRATEGY 1

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"How is a 3 story bldg compatible w/ Surrounding structures? No more buildings like the Lofts!"

"A Few New Garden homeowners with Developal Land + City Officials Looking For Tax Revenue = Bad outcomes for homeowners in subdivisions"

"My concern is the apartments across from Belvedere. Almost Hit from people exiting there. Also stuck for long time turning left. People hit 50 miles. Also STORMWATER DRAINAGE!"

"The City wants tax revenue"

"Concerned about stormwater drainage causing erosion. The Creek now floods frequently"

"The "Office" zoning is Very similar to commercial."

"R-12 Too dense, R-8 (Townhome) acceptable"

"Don't Rezone. No more Apartments"

"This is not the "urban core" and should not be zoned as such"

"More Townhouses"

## DRAFT PLAN PUBLIC INPUT

“Please make sure that the whole neighborhood is notified when a zoning change occurs not just 600”

“GSO has a number of vacant office complexes and does not need more”

“Notice how so many people say the same thing like it was rehearsed”

“Limit the height of office buildings adjacent to or facing residential areas to 2 stories”

“No more commercial development between Jefferson and Brassfield.”

### STRATEGY 2

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“Police are not helping the speeding issue”

“Need police crackdown on speeding”

“Please increase public transit”

“Better pedestrian Xing”

“No more commercial on new garden!”

“Make Battleground and New Garden a “no turn on left” light; cars do not yield to pedestrians when we have signal”

“Build a pedestrian crossing over the Bryan Blvd interchange”

“Extend the sidewalks from New Garden and Battleground to Military Park. I walk or bike to the park frequently and it’s crazy that there isn’t a safe path to such a great park.”

### STRATEGY 3

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“NO sidewalks on side streets”

“Need Sidewalk connectivity ASAP”

“No Bike Path-- Road too Dangerous now”

“What will happen with Hebrew Academy”

“Traffic around school campuses gets worse EVERY YEAR”

“Benches or exercise stations around the bike path would be great”

“Small parcels on of land could have exercise stations and benches for walkers and bikers to exercise or rest”

### STRATEGY 4

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“BURN THE OVERHEAD WIRES!”

“Please add more public transit”

### STRATEGY 5

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“Need leaders that engage a community”

“Will the remaining watershed be protected?”

“The Few are speaking for the many!”

“Concerned about increased storm water run-off flowing into Horsepen Creek - already experiencing significant erosion of stream banks which causes tree loss along the banks - blocks stream, etc.”