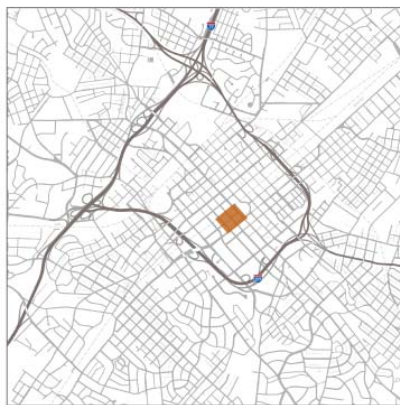


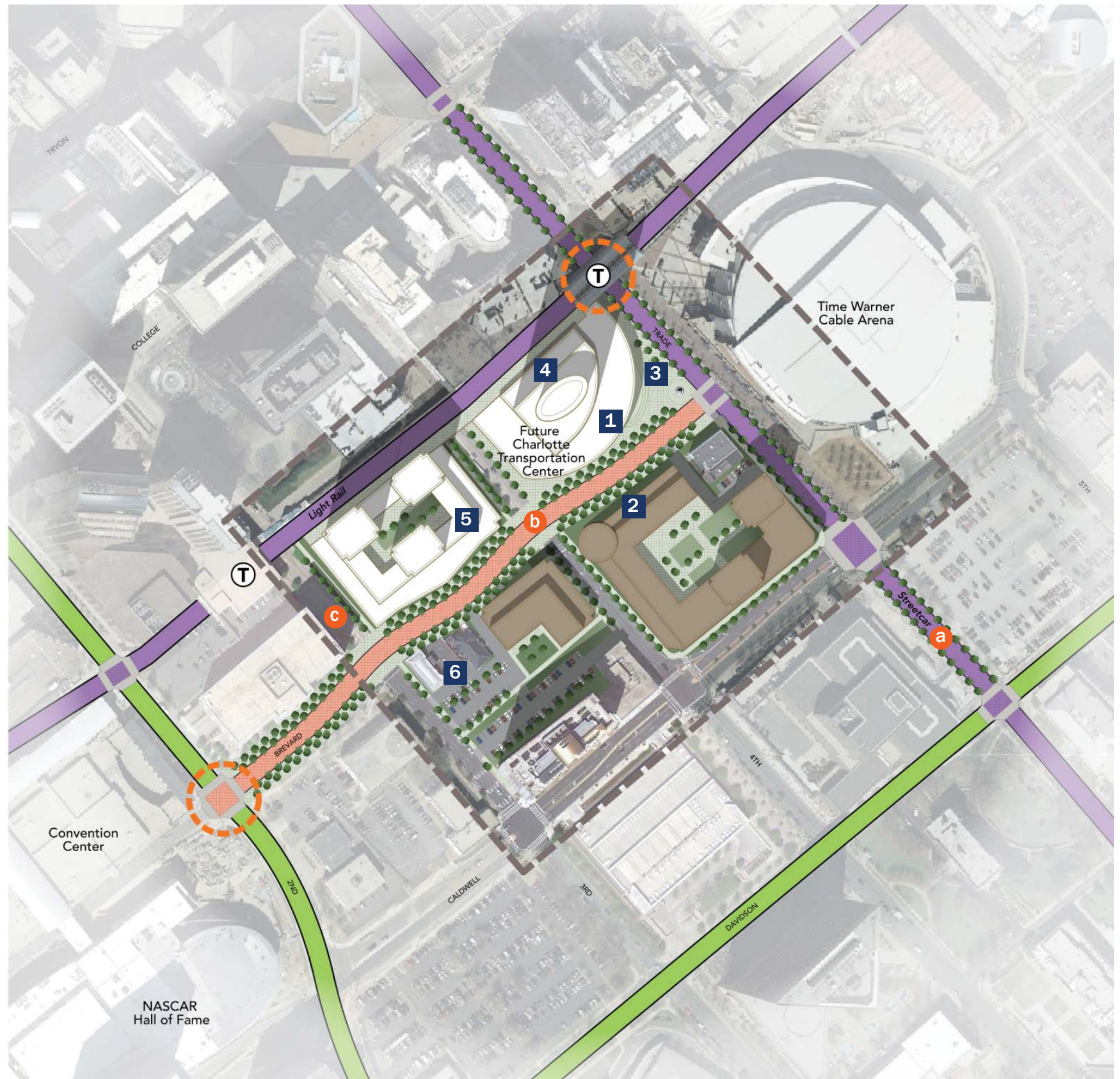
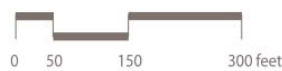
charlotte transportation center illustrative concept

The concept illustrates key recommendations related to connections, development opportunities and catalyst projects, which are highlighted on the following pages.

-  Focus Area Boundary
-  Connection/Linkage
-  Development Opportunity
-  Catalyst Project
-  New Development
-  Local Transit Connection
-  Signature Street Connection
-  Ward Loop Connection
-  Gateway
-  Plaza/Promenade
-  Transit Station
-  Freeway/Ramp
-  Rail



KEY MAP



charlotte transportation center recommendations



Walkable streets with wide sidewalks, festive landscaping and outdoor dining should be developed along Brevard Street to link Time Warner Cable Arena, the CTC and the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

Recommendations

Although creating a new world-class transportation center may take a decade or more to come to fruition, there is a range of key recommendations that can advance change in this Focus Area in the coming years. These include developing strong **connections and linkages**, capturing **development opportunities**, and embracing specific design principles.

CONNECTIONS AND LINKAGES

Redevelopment of the CTC and several adjacent blocks provides a great opportunity to make critical transit connections, create a unified district around Charlotte's major transportation hub, and maximize the tax revenue captured by private development (see Integrated Transportation Network section in Chapter 3: Transformative Strategies for more detail).

Specific recommendations include:

- a Establish a Streetcar on Trade Street.** A streetcar line utilizing modern vehicle technology should be constructed along Trade Street through Uptown. This would provide critical connections to West End and Midtown. A major stop along the alignment should be located at the CTC.

- b Create a Signature Pedestrian Street on Brevard Street.** Brevard Street is envisioned as a signature pedestrian street with wide sidewalks and an exciting streetscape environment, including art, lighting and sculptural elements. A minimum 22-foot setback should be established from the back of the curb to the primary building façade along Brevard in order to provide sufficient room for pedestrian activity, outdoor dining and a continuous street wall along Brevard.
- c Develop Additional Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections.** Strong east-west pedestrian and bicycle connections should be along 3rd and 4th streets to connect the CTC and Brevard Street to College and Tryon streets; linkages should also be established to Caldwell Street to strengthen the eastern edge of the Focus Area and connect to First and Second wards.

charlotte transportation center recommendations

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

With three contiguous blocks of surface parking lots adjacent to the CTC, there are opportunities to expand the station's footprint, integrate transit modes and create significant new mixed-use development rising above the transit center.

Specific recommendations include:

- 1 Develop a Bold New Charlotte Transportation Center.** Redevelopment of the CTC site would integrate the transit center function with other uses. While there would be an emphasis on facilitating ease of passenger transfers between modes, improving operations and circulation in the area, decreasing noise and exhaust and improving the pedestrian experience, the CTC site is located on prime real estate near the urban core. Redevelopment should be coordinated with design of the Charlotte Gateway Station. Further study is required to ensure right-sizing of operations at the CTC and Gateway Station and to further explore operations as a dual hub system.
- 2 Ensure a Substantial Employment Concentration.** A sizable concentration of office space should be located on the upper floors of the CTC and other nearby development. This will fully leverage the Focus Area's great transit connectivity, support retail and dining along Brevard Street, and activate the streets and open spaces.

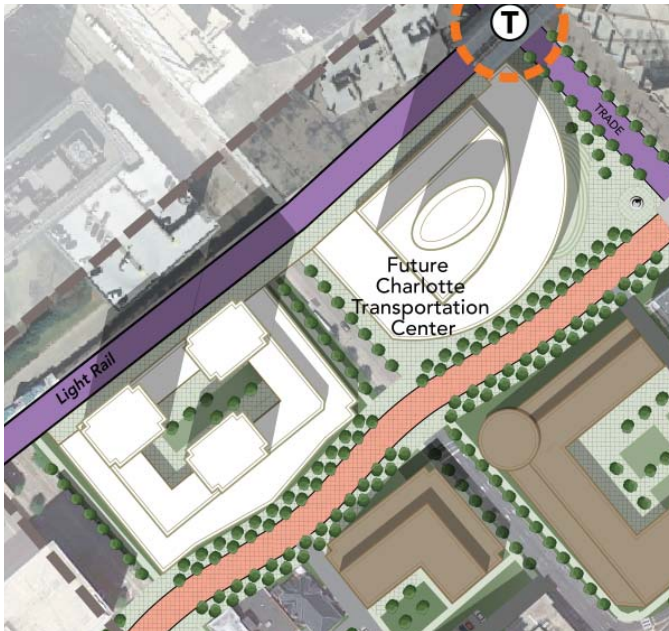
- 3 Integrate Destination Entertainment, Retail and Dining.** Ground-floor entertainment, retail and dining should border Brevard Street. Retail uses on the first floor of all new buildings should account for a minimum of 50% of the first floor area and a minimum of 75% of the street edge. Other commuter- and business service-oriented retail such as hair salons, tailors and print shops can be located on second floors. Additional actions as outlined in the Brevard Street Land Use and Urban Design Plan should be implemented.
- 4 Create a Large Civic Plaza.** An "urban living room" should be located at the intersection of Brevard and 3rd streets. This plaza should be activated by the new CTC and the diversity of uses along Brevard. The space should accommodate informal gatherings and flexible uses such as kiosks and retail vending while also serving as a venue for large civic events.
- 5 Incorporate New Residential and Hospitality Opportunities.** High-density residential and/or hotels should be developed on upper floors. Housing should include a mix of ownership and rental opportunities with reduced parking provisions to promote transit ridership and lower per-unit costs. Hospitality development would cater to visitors who are in town for business or pleasure and prefer to use transit during their stay in Charlotte.

- 6 Respect Historic Buildings.** Development in the Focus Area should complement remaining historic structures, including the Grace Events Center and Mecklenburg Investment Company Building. The 60-foot height limit along Brevard Street should also be enforced within 20 feet of existing historic structures. Beyond the 20-foot setback, building heights along Brevard may extend above 60 feet to unlimited heights.



The CTC should feature large setbacks and civic plaza space to accommodate commuters as they enter Center City by rail or bus.

charlotte transportation center recommendations



CATALYST PROJECT

Redevelopment in the Focus Area will build from public improvements along Brevard Street, as well as streetscape enhancements and the new streetcar alignment along Trade Street. However, a bold and fully redeveloped **Charlotte Transportation Center** would elevate the area to new heights as an urban center.

The CTC is bounded by the LYNX Blue Line light rail and Brevard, Trade and 4th streets. The facility is owned and controlled by a non-profit corporation, Charlotte Transit Center, Inc. The non-profit was formed by the City of Charlotte and Bank of America in 1994, with board members now from both the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) and Bank of America. The CTC currently functions as the primary bus transportation hub for CATS, with some growth constraints on its operations. With the recent introduction of the LYNX Blue Line light rail and the planned streetcar line, the CTC is underutilized as a development site. Several key elements and design considerations are important to ensure that development of this public asset can set the Focus Area on a new course.

- The new CTC design should be dramatic and impressive, establishing it as a major gateway and visible feature of the skyline. Some architectural cues may be taken from Time Warner Cable Arena and the NASCAR Hall of Fame to ensure that the area's major facilities complement one another.
- A new civic plaza should be created to accommodate formal and informal gatherings and events. The plaza should be located at the building's southeast corner to maximize exposure to sunlight throughout the year; retail and restaurants should open onto the plaza to help activate the space.
- Rail platforms should be designed with high-quality architectural elements, lighting, landscaping and pedestrian amenities.
- The rail platform design should explore opportunities to link to and integrate the 3rd Street/Convention Center and Charlotte Transportation Center/Arena stations.
- As required by the Brevard Street Land Use and Urban Design Plan, the new CTC building should be no taller than 60 feet along Brevard Street and along the edge of the new plaza space, with a minimum stepback of 20 feet before rising above the 60-foot height limit.
- Bus access and service functions should be minimized along Brevard or Trade streets; necessary ingress and egress for buses should be consolidated to the extent possible without impeding operations.

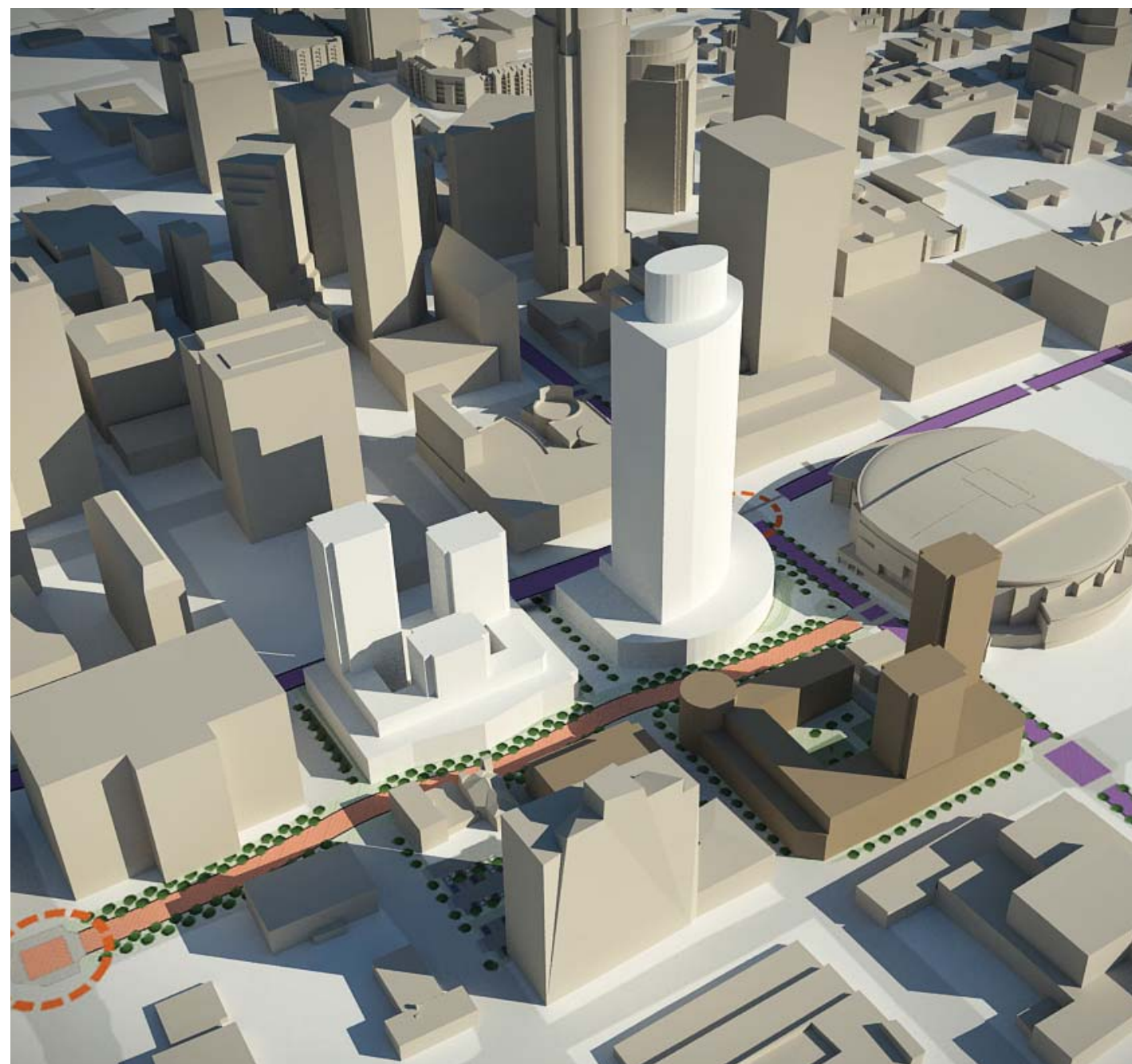
charlotte transportation center recommendations



The CTC should have a large atrium space with ticket purchasing, information kiosks and commuter-oriented retail.



Outdoor plaza space at the CTC should be flexible enough to accommodate special events but intimate enough for eateries and gathering.



The focal point of the Charlotte Transportation Center Focus Area should be a large mixed-use CTC, with tall office and/or residential towers; an impressive terminal atrium space; internal and external ground-floor retail; prominent civic plaza spaces; and bus operations.

west trade corridor

Situated just west of the urban core, the West Trade Corridor holds great opportunity to link to the energy of Uptown, develop a unique University-oriented village and create a focal point for the historic Five Points area.

The Focus Area strategy concentrates new uses and improvements along West Trade Street to create a critical mass of activity and economic development opportunities. The corridor will be lined with appropriately-scaled mixed-use development and strong streetscape linkages to the Uptown core. It will be anchored on either end by two of Center City's premier educational institutions—Johnson C. Smith University (JCSU) on the west and Johnson & Wales University (JWU) on the east. It will also include a wide range of urban uses and spaces including retail shops, restaurants, offices, housing and cultural venues.

Leveraging the resources and capital of the educational institutions, the West Trade Corridor strategy focuses on an area that generally includes the Trade and 5th streets corridors, from Five Points on the west to Gateway Village and the future Gateway Station on the east. To better activate the area and make it more walkable and economically vibrant, the Focus Area approach builds upon expansions at JCSU and JWU, the West End Land Use and Pedscape Plan, the Third Ward Neighborhood Vision Plan, and a planned streetcar line along West Trade Street.

Opportunities and Challenges

In the West Trade Corridor Focus Area, the primary opportunity is to grow the universities. Additional **opportunities** include:

- Leverage the activity, programming and intellectual capital of JWU and JCSU's campuses to further West Trade Street's economic and physical development.
- Build upon the success of Gateway Village to create additional jobs and provide more destinations and amenities that will attract youth to Uptown.
- Provide transit connections along West Trade Street to link the Five Points neighborhood and Gateway Village to both of Center City's transportation centers, the core of Uptown and beyond to Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) and Presbyterian Hospital.
- Capitalize on campus efforts at JCSU and JWU to build facilities that interface better with the street and their neighbors.

Potential **challenges** in the West Trade Corridor Focus Area include:

- Vacant lots and auto-oriented uses dominate much of the landscape between JCSU and JWU.
- The pedestrian environment is relatively fragmented and made less inviting by fast-moving traffic, insufficient lighting, a general lack of street furnishings, an abundance of off-street surface parking, and buildings with relatively large setbacks along the sidewalk.

- The streets are arranged in an irregular pattern; consequently the relatively long blocks contribute to longer trip distances and poor connectivity.
- There is a lack of sufficient retail to serve neighborhood residents and students, faculty and staff of JCSU and JWU.
- The I-77 freeway and associated ramps occupy a large amount of land near the center of the corridor, creating a significant physical and psychological barrier between Uptown and West End.

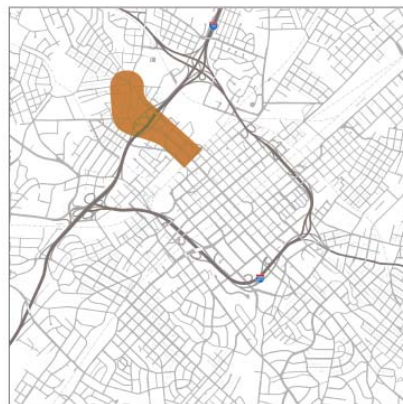


Five Points/Biddleville is a key neighborhood anchoring the western end of the West Trade Corridor Focus Area.

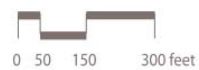
west trade corridor illustrative concept

The concept illustrates key recommendations related to connections, development opportunities and catalyst projects, which are highlighted on the following pages.

-  Focus Area Boundary
-  Connection/Linkage
-  Development Opportunity
-  Catalyst Project
-  New Development
-  Regional Transit Connection
-  Local Transit Connection
-  Green Street Connection
-  Gateway
-  Plaza/Promenade
-  Transit Facility
-  Freeway/Ramp
-  Rail



KEY MAP



west trade corridor recommendations



A modern streetcar would create a strong connection and stimulate economic development on West Trade.



High speed rail connections may be a part of the West Trade Corridor's future at Charlotte Gateway Station.

Recommendations

Lasting change in the West Trade Corridor Focus Area will depend upon strong partnerships between the major private institutions and developers that own much of the land, and the public agencies that can impact the streetscape and transit opportunities in the corridor. There are several key recommendations that will help ensure the area's success. These include creating strong **connections and linkages**, capturing key **development opportunities**, and developing a specific **catalyst project**.

CONNECTIONS AND LINKAGES

Redevelopment of the West Trade Corridor area provides an opportunity to strengthen the connections between Uptown and West End.

Specific recommendations include:

- a Establish a Streetcar on Trade Street.** The planned streetcar line should be built along Trade Street through the West Trade Corridor Focus Area with comfortable and attractive stops at JCSU, Five Points, Wesley Heights Way, Frazier Park, JWU and Gateway Station. Recommendations included in the Streetcar Urban Design Plan should be integrated throughout implementation to make the corridor pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.
- b Create Additional Local and Regional Transit Connections.** The planned streetcar line along Cedar Street extending south from Trade Street should also be constructed. Regional rail connectivity (including future high speed rail) should be centered at Gateway Station. Strong pedestrian connections, such as widened crosswalks, modernized cross signals, upgraded lighting and street trees, should be prioritized along West Trade Street from Five Points to the Gateway Station. Bus stops must also be improved throughout the West Trade area. Establishing regional transit connections from the Charlotte Douglas International Airport to Uptown via light rail or streetcar extension should also be considered.

west trade corridor recommendations

- c Reconfigure the I-77 Freeway Interchange.** The I-77 freeway ramps at Trade and 5th streets should be reconfigured to consolidate access, improve east-west connectivity through the area and make land available for redevelopment. The existing configuration inefficiently utilizes a large amount of land. Reclaiming a portion of the land for new development would help improve the pedestrian environment and create significant economic development opportunities. Improvements to the freeway ramps should also include enhancements of the pedestrian environment at the approaches to and beneath the I-77 underpass with improved lighting, artwork, landscaping and structural elements. The design treatment should incorporate the reconfiguration of the freeway ramps and could include active retail spaces.
- d Prioritize Pedestrian and Bicycle Connection on 5th Street.** This street should have an appropriate landscape and materials palette that creates an attractive street design and utilizes stormwater management techniques. Pedestrian and bicycle amenities—such as wide sidewalks, bike parking, path lighting, designated and/or “sharrow” lanes, bike route signage—should link the West Trade Corridor area to Fourth Ward Park, Irwin Creek Greenway and public spaces at Five Points.
- e Create Additional Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections.** As part of the Gateway Station development master plan, a specific urban design plan should be undertaken to recommend and outline bicycle and pedestrian connections with safe, inviting pedestrian crossings throughout the West Trade Corridor Focus Area. Emphasis should be placed on links to public transit, residential areas and the Irwin Creek Greenway.



Improvements must be made to the I-77 underpass to create a comfortable connection for pedestrians and bicyclists.



5th and West Trade streets are primary corridors for the improvements that will better connect bicyclists between Five Points and Uptown.

west trade corridor recommendations



The Johnson & Wales University and Gateway Village area should be expanded with additional urban mixed-use development.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The vacant and underutilized land of surface parking lots and freeway infrastructure provides many development opportunities. Gateway Village will continue to revitalize and densify the east end of the corridor with a mix of ground-floor retail and dining, educational uses, offices and housing. The combination of streetcar along Trade Street and freeway interchange reconfiguration can help make the land west of I-277 attractive for new development. Medium-density mixed-use residential should be developed along Trade from Frazier Avenue to Montgomery Street. Five Points should be a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood center anchored by new JCSU facilities. Ground floors along Trade should include restaurants and shops to support area residents and workers.

Specific recommendations include:

1 Expand Gateway Village. The success of the Gateway Village development should be built upon to encourage additional office, institutional, hospitality, retail, dining and housing development between the high speed rail and Irwin Creek Greenway. Active uses for ground floors (e.g. culinary laboratory space) should be encouraged on sites that have remained vacant since adopting the Gateway Village Master Plan.

2 Establish a “Restaurant Row.” The concentration of restaurants along West Trade Street should be further strengthened through additional eateries that have a wide array of cuisines, dining atmospheres and price points. This destination area can integrate JWU’s culinary program with ground floor laboratories, test kitchens and incubator restaurant spaces.

3 Create an Activity Node at the Five Points Intersection. A student-oriented activity node should be developed at the Five Points intersection. A mix of destinations should primarily target students and neighborhood residents. Public open space for outdoor events should be activated by institutional uses, office and small-scale retail uses, as well as multi-family residences. JCSU should site civic and neighborhood-oriented uses (such as a performance hall and a school bookstore) at or near the Five Points intersection. Gateway elements should mark the entrances from the West Trade Street corridor and integrate elements that relate to the neighborhood’s history and culture.

4 Increase Employment Opportunities. Office uses should be established that support and benefit from the area’s proximity to institutions and the Uptown core. Gateway Station should anchor a high-density employment node on the east end of the corridor. In addition, medium-density employment uses could be developed on land created by the freeway interchange reconfiguration.

west trade corridor recommendations

5 Create New Residential Opportunities. High-density mixed-use housing (approximately 35-40 units per acre) should be developed along Trade Street between Frazier Avenue and Montgomery Street to serve nearby employees, students, faculty and staff. Medium-density housing (approximately 20-30 units per acre) should be developed along Trade between Five Points and I-77, with building heights stepping down toward existing neighborhoods. Housing should include a mix of ownership and rental properties with a large proportion comprised of studios, one-bedroom units and suites. Partnerships should be facilitated between the universities and developers to provide student housing. All new development should be sensitive to the historic character of West End.

6 Develop Neighborhood Retail. Ground-floor retail, restaurant, entertainment and other active commercial uses should be developed along Trade Street, as well as along 5th Street inside the freeway loop. Retail should primarily cater to employees, residents and students working, living and studying in the Focus Area.

7 Improve the Streetscape. Streetscape enhancements should be prioritized along Trade Street, 5th Street and perpendicular streets that connect residential areas to transit and neighborhood retail. Explore the potential for mid-block crossings with curb extensions and/or pedestrian activated signals between Wesley Heights Way and Five Points.

8 Establish Gateways Along Trade Street. Gateways should include artwork, improved lighting, signage and other sculptural elements. These features should mark the entrances at each end of the West Trade Street corridor and at the freeway ramps. They should integrate historic and cultural elements related to the neighborhoods and JCSU.



Future streetcar could be combined with residential opportunities for students, faculty and staff, such as this example in San Diego.



Neighborhood and student-oriented services, retail and gathering places should be developed along West Trade Street, particularly near the university campuses.

west trade corridor recommendations



West Trade Street looking toward gateway to Johnson C. Smith University (Existing)



West Trade Street looking toward gateway to Johnson C. Smith University (Proposed). The Five Points intersection should be improved with stronger crosswalks, pedestrian enhancements, mixed-use student housing, and new university buildings that come to the street edge and engage the neighborhood.

west trade corridor recommendations

CATALYST PROJECT

Establishing a strong anchor around **Five Points** at the west end of Trade Street will have the greatest impact on the Focus Area. Development and redevelopment should create a distinct identity and catalyze private investment, including institutional projects.

Five Points is generally defined as the intersection of Trade Street, Beatties Ford Road, Rozelles Ferry Road and 5th Street. Land surrounding the intersection is under both public and private ownership. JCSU controls a significant portion of land located at the northeast corner of Beatties Ford, 5th and Martin Street.

Several key elements and design considerations are important to ensure the appropriate development of Five Points:

- Development of the JCSU land located at the northeast corner of Beatties Ford, 5th and Martin should include semi-public and civic uses such as performance space, galleries, and a school store and dining annex.
- New construction on the JCSU land should be designed to attract pedestrian-oriented uses that relate to the street with primary entrances at the Five Points intersection. At the same time, any new construction should complement the historic character and existing buildings of the campus.

- High-density mixed-use development should be concentrated on the land not under JCSU ownership, with office and residential uses above ground-floor retail space. The university should be encouraged to purchase and redevelop additional land at the Five Points intersection.
- Development should attain a high level of design and sense of entry; the intersection geometry creates opportunities for unique “flat iron”-like buildings.
- The entire intersection and adjacent plazas should be upgraded with distinctive paving, lighting, landscaping, and streetcar and pedestrian amenities that relate to the surrounding buildings.
- Service access and parking solutions should be shared between buildings and located at least 100 feet from corners to limit the visual dominance of parked vehicles along the corridor. Such a development pattern would also serve to preserve land to accommodate future market demand.



west trade corridor recommendations



A strong node at Five Points (foreground) would act as an anchor of the community that is strongly connected to the Uptown core via 5th and Trade streets.



Future institutional uses at JCSU, such as a new performing arts center, should be brought out to the street to increase pedestrian activity in Five Points. New civic uses would attract citizens from other parts of the city to Five Points.

south end

Over the next 10 to 20 years, South End will flourish as the “Creative District of the Carolinas.” It will continue to grow as a dynamic urban neighborhood, enriching the lives of the entire community through its many recreational, historical and commercial offerings.

This Focus Area will continue to be home to a uniquely Charlotte shopping experience. Nowhere else in Charlotte can one find a mix of arts, home furnishings, interior and architectural design firms, and consumer goods shops so well-integrated into residential neighborhoods of single-family homes, townhomes and apartments. South End will be a regional destination, supported by a wide variety of visitor amenities. As the LYNX light rail system continues to expand, the area will become even more accessible. The growing transit network and the roads that accompany it will bring more people to the district.

Recommendations for South End focus on specific areas that build upon the approximately \$600 million of investment already made by the public and private sectors. The Focus Area is bounded by Bland Street to the north, South Tryon Street to the west, Tremont Avenue to the south, and South Boulevard to the east. This section builds upon design principles, concepts and policy articulated in the South End Station Area Plan, adopted in 2005, as well as supportive transit-oriented-development zoning policies.

Opportunities and Challenges

In the South End Focus Area, there are **opportunities** to:

- Develop new projects on infill sites and reuse existing, adaptable buildings to preserve and enhance the strong historic character.
- Build upon the cluster of creative industries and activities to support the new economy and the Applied Innovation Corridor.
- Extend and improve access to the Rail Trail paralleling the LYNX Blue Line light rail.
- Celebrate the distinctive architectural character complemented by a well-articulated street pattern that is easy for pedestrian navigation.
- Leverage well-organized residents and property owners committed to neighborhood improvement.
- Market the accessibility provided by the LYNX Blue Line light rail, I-77/I-277 and major thoroughfares.
- Improve connections to nearby neighborhoods and Uptown businesses and amenities.
- Calm wide streets by adding on-street parking, further enhancing the attractiveness of eclectic retail areas and restaurants.

Potential **challenges** in the South End Focus Area include:

- The area has many main thoroughfares, with heavy traffic volumes that are inhospitable to pedestrians and hinder the growth of a more robust shopping experience.

- A lack of recognizable neighborhood gathering places, parks or recreation facilities for residents.
- Insufficient neighborhood services to support a growing population.
- Uncoordinated and dispersed arts, cultural and entertainment destinations.
- Small parcels with multiple owners make it difficult to assemble underutilized or vacant land for new development.
- Some buildings—especially older, vacant structures—are in poor condition.
- A general lack of a tree canopy, street furnishings and pedestrian amenities.
- Inactive spaces adjacent to the LYNX Blue Line light rail that detract from the urban environment.











New mixed-use development characterizes several parts of the South End Focus Area.



South End Illustrative Concept

The concept illustrates key recommendations related to connections, development opportunities and catalyst projects, which are highlighted on the following pages.

-  Focus Area Boundary
-  Connection/Linkage
-  Development Opportunity
-  Catalytic Project
-  New Development
-  LYNX Light Rail Transit
-  LYNX Transit Station
-  Plaza / Promenade

south end recommendations

Recommendations

South End's continued transformation will focus on creating a well-connected, full-service neighborhood with an identifiable center that has a concentration of activities. Specific recommendation areas include creating strong **connections and linkages**, capturing key **development opportunities**, and developing a corridor-oriented **catalyst project**.

CONNECTIONS AND LINKAGES

Surrounded by I-77 and I-277 and crossed by the LYNX Blue Line light rail and three major thoroughfares, South End is one of the most accessible areas in Charlotte. Pedestrian connections also have significant importance. Enhancing connections for all modes is key to South End's evolution.

Specific recommendations include:

- a Enhance the LYNX Blue Line "Rail Trail."** Paralleling the LYNX Blue Line light rail from New Bern Street to Morehead Street is a path known as the "rail trail." This paved pathway is used by joggers and pedestrians and connects galleries and neighborhood amenities. However, the "rail trail" could be much more. Its connection to Uptown is severed by I-277, and this lack of continuity reduces its role as an important pedestrian and bicycle link. Requirements should be enhanced to include amenities such as landscaping, benches, decorative lighting, orientation signs, exercise areas, art and

pocket parks. This could make the rail trail not only a great urban greenway trail but also a destination, similar to the High Line that was developed in the industrial West Side neighborhood of Manhattan in New York City. Furthermore, the trail should connect to improvements already made on South Boulevard at Carson Boulevard and to Tryon Street headed into Uptown. This pathway should be branded throughout South End and beyond as a place to visit and recreate. Urban design guidelines should be created and adopted so future private and public sector development could help implement proposed improvements. The South End portion of the rail trail could act as a pilot project that could be applied to the remainder of the Blue Line and to other rapid transit corridors in Charlotte.

- b Overcome the Barrier of South Boulevard.** South Boulevard is a major thoroughfare on the eastern edge of South End. While it is used by thousands of vehicles per day, the road is a barrier between Dilworth, South End and Wilmore. Building upon the recommendations of the South End Station Area Plan, a comprehensive streetscape and infrastructure implementation effort should be conducted to help retrofit the roadway and create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Improvements would help spur economic development and retail opportunities similar to the development at the corner of Park Avenue and South.

- c Improve the Environments of South Tryon Street and West Boulevard.** These thoroughfares are also major connectors that help South End relate to the surrounding neighborhoods. They bring vitality and economic life to the district and could contribute even more to this Focus Area's vibrancy. As gateways into South End, these roadways could be the focus of pedestrian improvements, public art and future development.
- d Boost Connections to Other Neighborhoods.** South End is fortunate to have a well-established pattern of streets that provides convenient connections for vehicles and pedestrians to neighboring Wilmore, Dilworth and Uptown. Moreover, many of these streets connect South End to nearby amenities such as parks, schools and businesses. However, pedestrian-friendly crossings and streetscape amenities are lacking on many side streets. Streets such as West Boulevard and Park, Tremont and Kingston avenues could benefit from improved tree canopies, wayfinding signage, decorative lighting and wider sidewalks. Creating and implementing a larger streetscape improvement plan would enhance pedestrian connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods.

south end recommendations



The Design Center of the Carolinas should be leveraged with new development to further cultivate South End's identity as a destination for arts, design and creativity.



A neighborhood square should be developed in South End similar to South Park in San Francisco, which is a central gathering space in the middle of a creative, design and technology district.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Stimulating future growth in South End includes identification of appropriate locations for specific types of development. Building on the historic, industrial and design character of the area, new development will fill in gaps in the urban fabric and further support transit-oriented development.

Specific recommendations include:

1 Focus Development Along Camden Road.

Camden Road is a pedestrian-friendly, walkable street that could be lined with shops, galleries and eateries. It is uniquely situated adjacent to the LYNX Blue Line light rail and between South Boulevard and South Tryon Street, with easy connections to all three. In the other direction, Camden intersects with East/West Boulevard. It is the geographic center of South End and has been the focus of recent development. Leveraging this location is critical to the Focus Area's continued evolution. The street has the potential to provide the neighborhood with a center for activity and a sense of structure.

2 Attract an Art and Design School. The City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Charlotte Center City Partners, and the Arts and Science Council should partner to recruit an existing art and design school pursuing expansion opportunities. Locating this school in South End would complement the existing creative firms, galleries and design studios and would energize the neighborhood with the addition of students living, studying and working in the area.

3 Create a "Neighborhood Square." One of the challenges facing South End is that it lacks a recognizable place that allows the community to gather, and which could also act as a recreational space. Establishing a neighborhood square in South End would address these needs and also help stimulate new development. This space should be located near the corner of Park Avenue and Camden Road, enhancing the importance of Camden as a focal point for the Focus Area. Just as Independence Square is the central gathering space and recognizable center of Uptown, the neighborhood square at Park and Camden could become the heart of South End.

4 Cultivate a Unique Destination for Creative Arts. South End is home to an attractive mix of old warehouses, stores, studios, industrial buildings, apartments, townhomes and restaurants that reflect its eclectic character. Efforts to reuse existing and historic buildings would help solidify this identity. In addition, South End is home to a wide array of art galleries, design studios, live music venues, dining and nightlife establishments. It is home to the Charlotte Trolley and Powerhouse Museum, a facility that pays homage to the neighborhood's past. Attracting other unique destinations that complement the existing creative arts and cultural focus would help South End's status as a regional destination. A task force should be assembled to explore ways to accomplish this goal.

south end recommendations

CATALYST PROJECTS

While significant change has occurred in the South End Focus Area over the past decade, new development should spur further evolution of this distinct district.

Three areas along Camden Road hold the most potential to catalyze future change in the neighborhood and along this important corridor. These areas extend along five blocks, adjacent to the LYNX Blue Line light rail and the rail trail. Consolidated, they can function as the heart of South End. These catalyst sites will provide an identifiable center and will help organize development in the broader district.

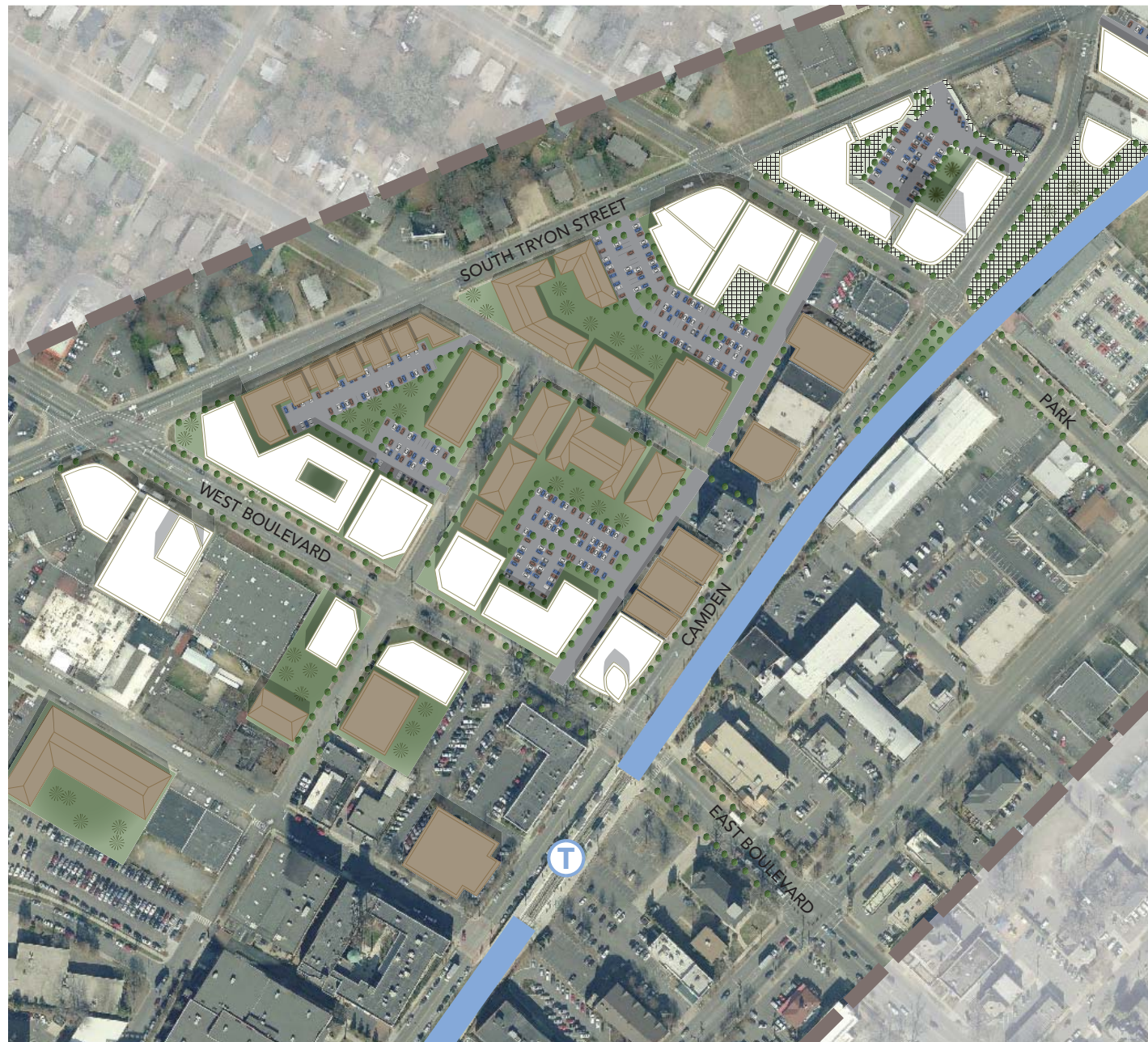
- **Camden Road/Park Avenue/Summit Avenue.** Development along this stretch could become the northern anchor for Camden Road. New projects should integrate with existing uses, enhancing the identity of this area. There are galleries, restaurants and housing as well as the Charlotte Trolley and Powerhouse Museum already located within this block. Growth would be triggered by the Bland Street rail station and the close proximity to South Tryon Street. Development at this end of Camden should be assisted by and organized around the new neighborhood square.

- **West Boulevard between Camden Road and South Tryon Street.** The intersection of these streets presents a great opportunity for development. It should connect to the Wilmore neighborhood and also build upon the energy of East Boulevard in the direction of Dilworth. The properties on either side of West Boulevard between Camden Road and South Tryon Street are currently underutilized or vacant parcels. Redevelopment of this area would help stimulate development toward South Tryon and help create the density of activity to make Camden the center for South End.
- **Camden Road and Tremont Avenue.** The southern end of Camden Road already has a significant amount of development. The intersection with Tremont Avenue should act as the southern anchor for this catalytic development along Camden. The LYNX Blue Line light rail station at East/West Boulevard provides the benefit of public transit service to these developments. The redevelopment of underused properties in the vicinity should integrate with the existing uses. The close proximity to major thoroughfares and the provision of safe and inviting crossings would be key factors in providing an improved pedestrian experience along Camden.



Light rail and associated transit-oriented development should continue to play a major role in South End's evolution, particularly around Camden Road and Tremont Avenue.

south end recommendations



Catalyst projects should be created in South End to spur further development. New buildings (shown in white) would fill in vacant lots to strengthen the urban fabric. Mixed-use projects should include multi-family housing, retail, office and design studio space, and potentially a boutique hotel. New development should have scale and architecture that augments the historic character of South End and supports the district's identity.

Several key elements and design considerations are important to ensure the appropriate development of these catalyst areas:

- Interesting and attractive ground-floor uses should be developed along Camden Road, connecting South Tryon Street to South Boulevard and including coffee shops, restaurants, galleries and craft vendors.
- Retail spaces at the ground floor should include neighborhood services that are currently lacking, including a grocery store, dry cleaners and banks.
- Pedestrian movement should be enhanced by incorporating public spaces, such as the neighborhood square, and through the use of pocket parks and other streetscape elements.
- Primary uses for infill development should include multi-family housing, retail and a boutique inn with conference space. South End does not currently have any hotel properties and has limited conference space. Parking for the new facilities should be located underground or in the interior of the development.
- Use of iconic and memorable landmarks along Camden Road should be developed to aid in marking gateways and providing orientation.