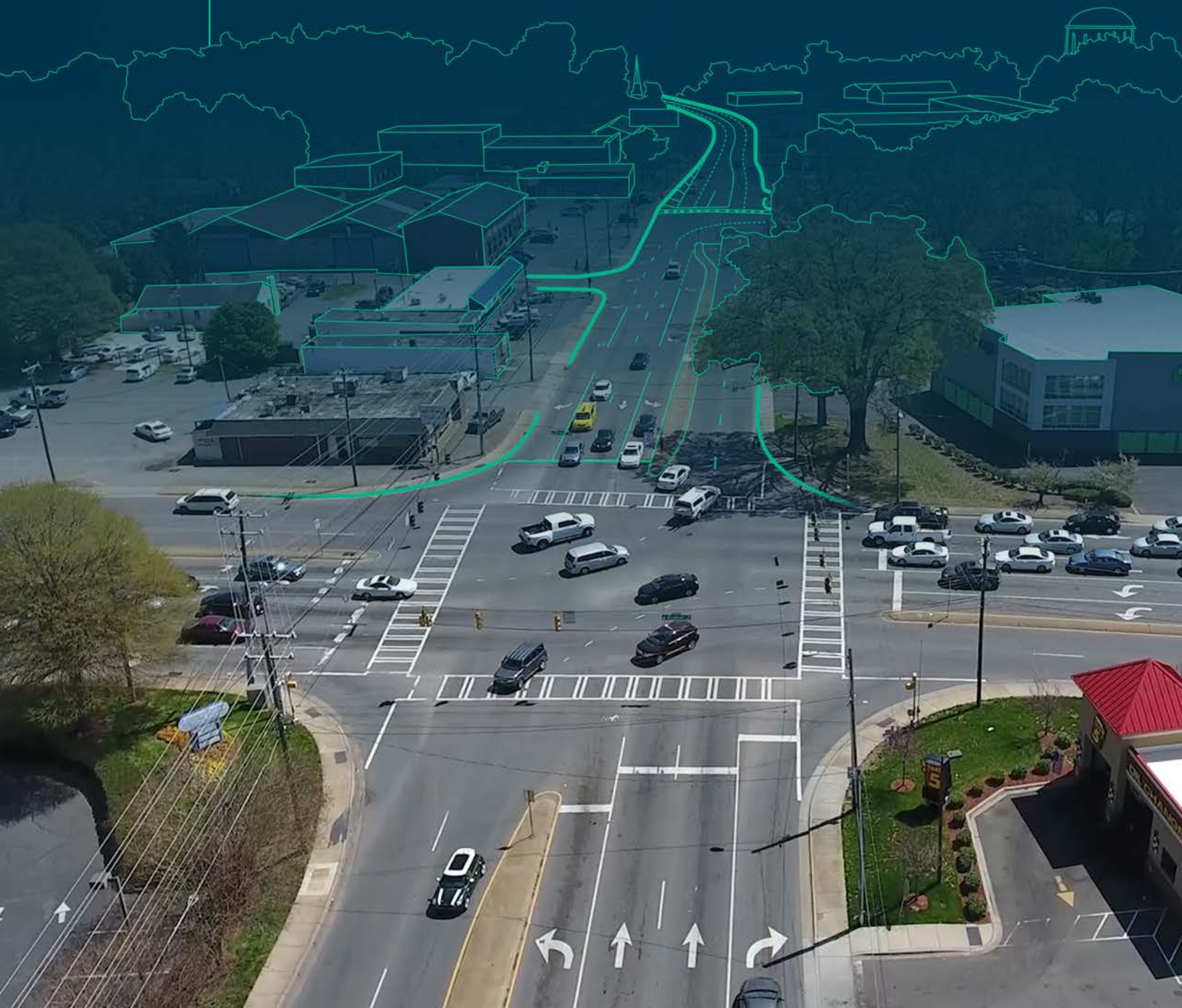
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN

Monroe Road Streetscape Planning Report

August 2019



Monroe Road Streetscape Planning Report

August 2019

Prepared by:

RS&H

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Executive Summary

The City of Charlotte (City) Engineering and Property Management (E&PM) Department contracted with RS&H Architects-Engineers-Planners, Inc. (RS&H) to provide planning and design services for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project. This project is part of the City's Community Investment Plan (CIP). The overall mission of the City, and the foundation for the CIP, is to improve the quality of life for its citizens by maintaining or replacing high priority infrastructure in order to enrich economic development.

The Monroe Road Streetscape Project is one of 29 programs and projects in the CIP. Visit CharlotteFuture.com for more information.

Monroe Road is a parallel alternate route to US 74 for commuters traveling to Uptown Charlotte from suburban areas to the southeast (Matthews, Stallings, Indian Trail, and Monroe). While Monroe Road will remain an important route for commuters, its mix of land uses and proximity to Uptown Charlotte and residential neighborhoods increase its appeal as a destination. To enhance this appeal and make the corridor more than just a pass through for commuters, it must achieve a greater balance of transportation modes.

The Monroe Road Streetscape Project will create a more pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use development corridor along an approximately two-mile stretch of Monroe Road from Briar Creek Road to Sharon Amity Road.

Project goals include:

- To make the area more pedestrian-friendly
- To improve green connections
- To drive business investments
- To create an additional point of pride for the neighborhood

Potential project improvements include:

- Widening or replacing existing sidewalks, separating them from back of curb with a planting strip wherever feasible
- Removing sidewalk obstructions including fire hydrants and utility poles
- Improving existing bus stops
- Creating a pocket park
- Adding/upgrading pedestrian crossings
- Introducing streetscape elements such as pedestrian-scale lighting, planters, and seating areas

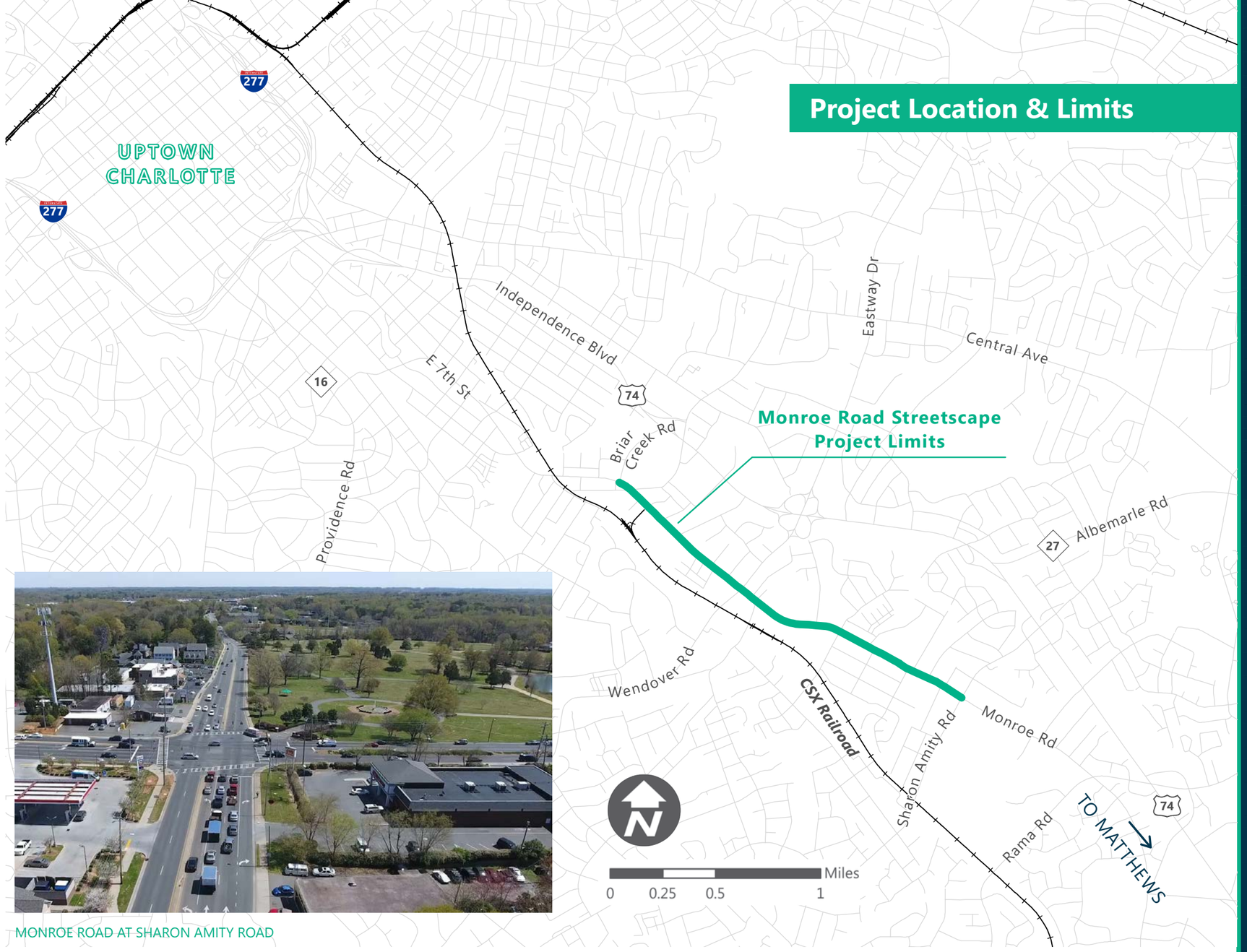
These improvements will provide the following benefits:

- Enhanced safety and comfort for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- Improved neighborhood access
- Enhanced economic development potential

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the findings and recommendations of the planning study performed for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project. This project is part of the City of Charlotte's Community Investment Plan (CIP), intended to improve livability, accessibility, and job growth by addressing infrastructure needs in the community. The Monroe Road Streetscape Project is one of several projects planned in the area. These projects have been closely coordinated to ensure consistent recommendations that seamlessly integrate proposed infrastructure improvements in this area.

RS&H Architects-Engineers-Planners, Inc. (RS&H) was contracted by the City of Charlotte (City) to assist with the planning and design efforts for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project. RS&H first evaluated existing conditions along the corridor (through field work and desktop review of available GIS data) and reviewed approved plans, studies, and projects in the area. Small group meetings, public workshops, and business owner meetings were held to obtain input from area residents and business owners. Existing conditions data and public input were carefully considered by a Project Team comprised of staff from City of Charlotte Engineering & Property Management (E&PM), Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT), Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), City of Charlotte Planning/Urban Design, and RS&H staff. The Project Team used the information gathered to develop recommendations for improving the corridor.



MONROE ROAD AT SHARON AMITY ROAD

In support of the Transportation Action Plan (TAP) adopted by the City, this planning study followed the Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG) six-step planning and design process. The USDG six-step process is summarized herein and serves as the outline and organizational theme of this report.

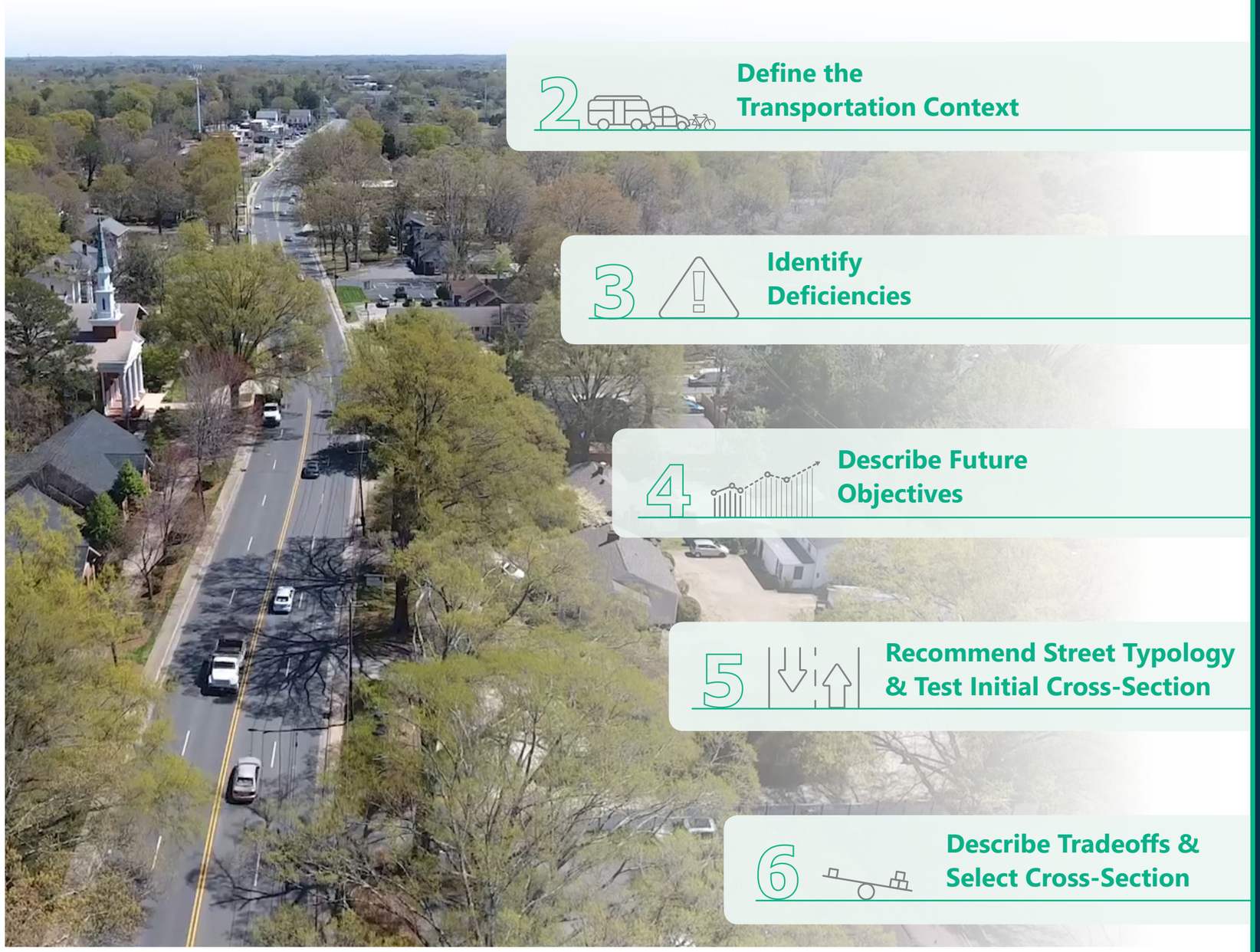
The project is located roughly two (2) miles southeast of Uptown Charlotte, along an approximately two-mile stretch of Monroe Road that runs west-east from Briar Creek Road to Sharon Amity Road. Monroe Road is bounded by the CSX railroad to the south and US 74 (Independence Boulevard) to the north. The project is primarily focused on properties with frontage on Monroe Road, but considers a larger study area to account for projects planned and underway in the area, as well as potential impacts to side streets.

Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG) Six-Step Process Overview

The Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG) consist of a six-step planning and conceptual design process intended to redefine and standardize the approach used to design City streets. The process was adopted by the Charlotte City Council on October 22, 2007 and is now administered by the City to develop a "complete street" network. The principles guiding the USDG six-step process are:

- Streets are a critical component of public space;
- Streets play a major role in establishing the image and identity of a city;
- Streets provide the critical framework for current and future development;
- Streets will be designed to provide mobility and support livability and economic development goals;
- The planning and design of streets will consider the safety, convenience, and comfort for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and neighborhood residents; and
- The planning and design of streets must be a collaborative process, to ensure that a variety of perspectives are considered.

These guiding principles of the USDG were used throughout the six-step planning and conceptual design process for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project. This stepped process has accommodated many different stakeholders ranging from private citizens to governing agencies, and has met the multimodal objectives set forth in the City's Transportation Action Plan (TAP). The following sections of the report will better define and elaborate on the six-step process (shown in the graphic to the right), and how it was applied to the Monroe Road Streetscape Project.



Define the Land Use & Urban Design Context

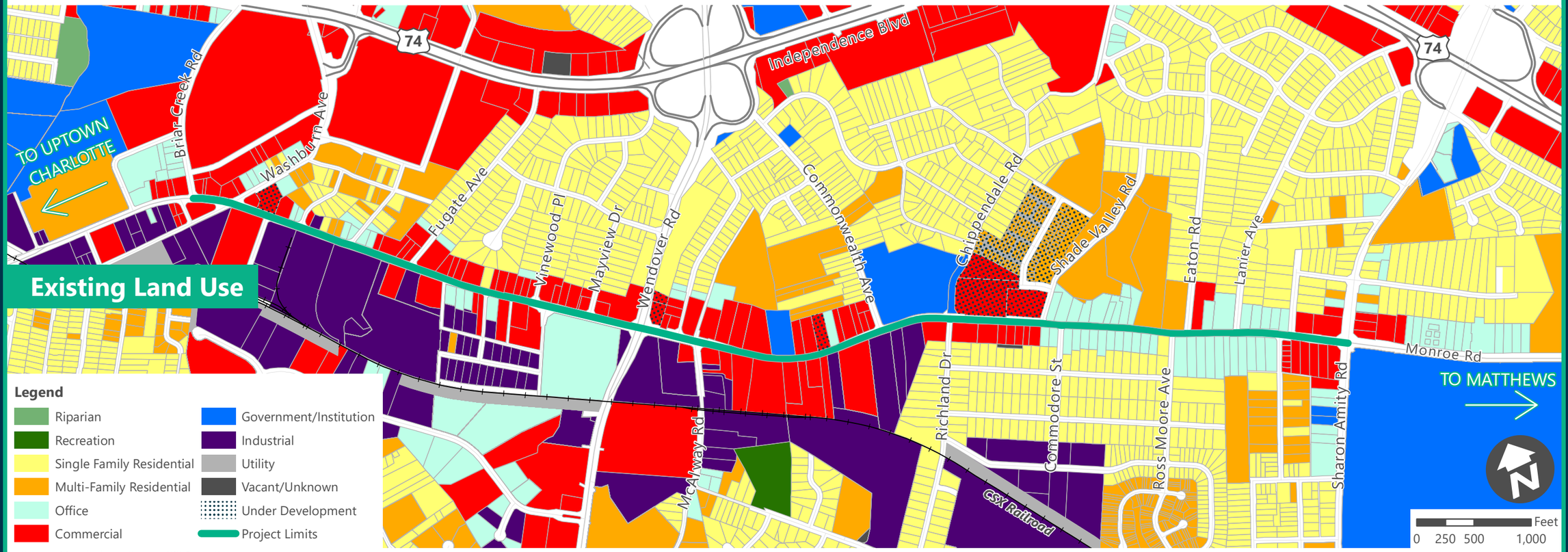
The first step in the USDG six-step process is identification of existing land uses and environmental features in the study area; definition of the urban design context; and review of future land use designations and planned development.

Existing Land Use & Urban Design

A mix of existing land uses is found within the study area, including retail, office, commercial, industrial, civic/institutional, and residential. Commercial uses are a mix of freestanding buildings, strip centers, and former residential homes that have been converted to businesses. The corridor is largely developed leaving very few vacant parcels. The largest vacant tract lies between Chippendale Road and Shade Valley Road, and is currently under development. While the majority of buildings along the corridor are occupied, some vacancies exist – particularly toward the northern end of the study area. Beyond the uses directly adjacent to Monroe Road, the study area is largely surrounded by established residential neighborhoods, namely Oakhurst, Echo Hills, and Amity Gardens. Currently, the corridor is focused predominantly on automobile travel. The majority of buildings are stand-alone, single-story structures separated from the road by parking areas and accessed from individual driveways. The corridor lacks an inviting pedestrian experience. Sidewalks are narrow and located directly adjacent to the roadway, and pedestrian amenities, such as street trees, street furniture, pedestrian-scale lighting, and public spaces are absent.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT NEAR RICHLAND DRIVE

TIME OUT YOUTH CENTER AT BUFORD AVENUE



Source: Mecklenburg County GIS Data Center

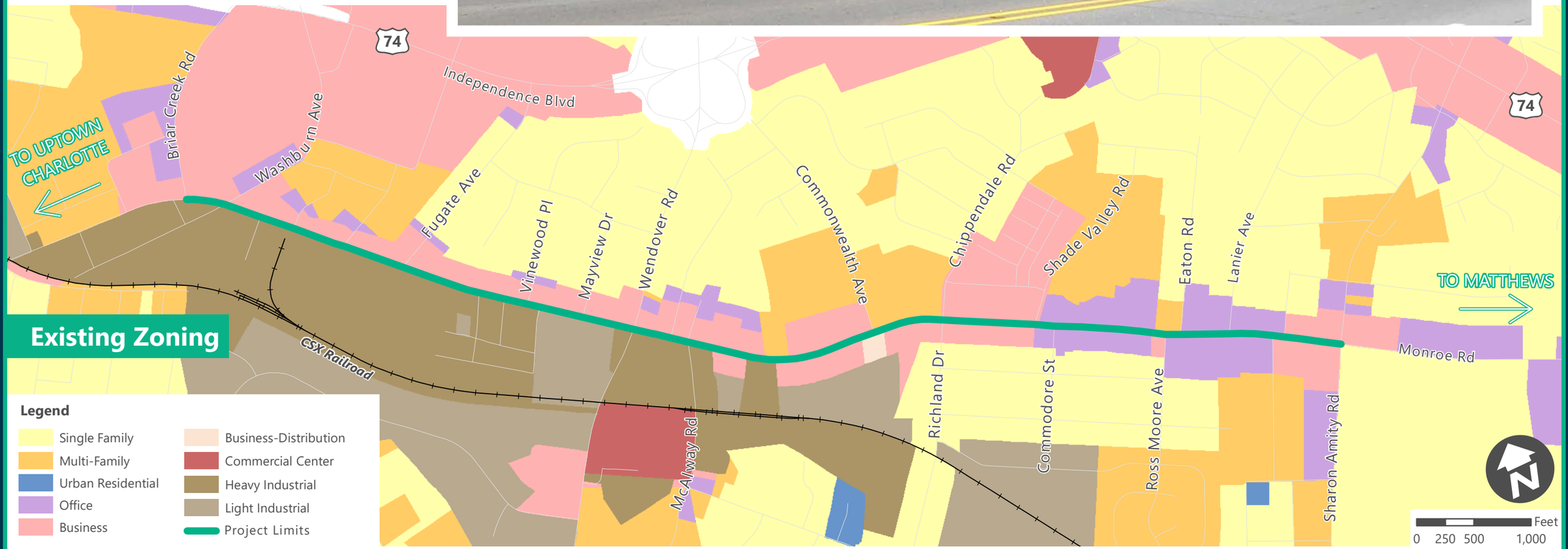
Existing Zoning

Zoning is largely uniform on the western portion of the project area from Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road. All parcels on the south side are zoned heavy industrial, with the exception of two parcels that are zoned light industrial. All parcels on the north side are zoned business.

Zoning is more variable on the portion of Monroe Road from Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road. Properties on the south side are a mix of business, office, and industrial zoning districts, while properties on the north side of Monroe Road are a mix of multi-family residential, business, and office zoning districts.

The majority of properties just off the corridor are zoned single-family residential.

CONVERSION OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES TO COMMERCIAL USES ALONG MONROE ROAD BETWEEN COMMODORE STREET & ROSS MOORE AVENUE



Source: Mecklenburg County GIS Data Center

Future Land Use & Urban Design

The City studied Monroe Road as a part of the 2011 *Independence Boulevard Area Plan*. The plan recommends nodes of neighborhood-scale mixed-use along the corridor, with retail and office uses in between nodes. It emphasizes that future land uses should support a vibrant pedestrian environment and that people should be able to move comfortably along Monroe Road via all transportation modes.

INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD OVERALL CONCEPT PLAN

RENDERING OF PEDESTRIAN-RELATED IMPROVEMENTS ALONG MONROE ROAD

Source: Independence Boulevard Area Plan (May 2011)

MONROE ROAD NEAR COMMONWEALTH AVENUE

Environmental Resources

Carolina Wetland Services (CWS) conducted an environmental screening to identify obvious environmental concerns and potential impacts requiring potential mitigation, permits, consultations, or other agency coordination. This information will help delineate areas to avoid, enhance, or preserve. The screening is based on a desktop review of available GIS data, aerial photography, and a natural resource field survey.

Protected Species

As of June 27, 2018, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists six federally-protected species for Mecklenburg County:

- Schweinitz's sunflower *(Helianthus schweinitzii)*
- Michaux's sumac *(Rhus michauxii)*
- smooth purple coneflower *(Echinacea laevigata)*
- Carolina heelsplitter *(Lasmigona decorata)*
- Rusty patched bumble bee *(Bombus affinis)*
- Bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)*

Additionally, the project area is within the habitat range of the northern long-eared bat *(Myotis septentrionalis)*.

No records of any of these species exist within the project limits or within a one-mile radius of the project site. While it was determined that some community types considered potential habitat for federally-protected species could occur within the project limits, field reconnaissance revealed no potential habitat for threatened or endangered species within the project area.

Waters of the United States

CWS's review of available data and field reconnaissance indicated no jurisdictional streams, wetlands, or ponds within the project area.

Historic & Cultural Resources

According to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as well as a review of available online resources, there are no architectural, historic, or archeological sites listed on, or eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places that could potentially be affected by the project. Additionally, no part of the corridor is located within an identified Local Historic District.

Complete supporting documentation, including the Field Reconnaissance Report, Jurisdictional Delineation Report, and Natural Resources Data Review, are available under separate cover.

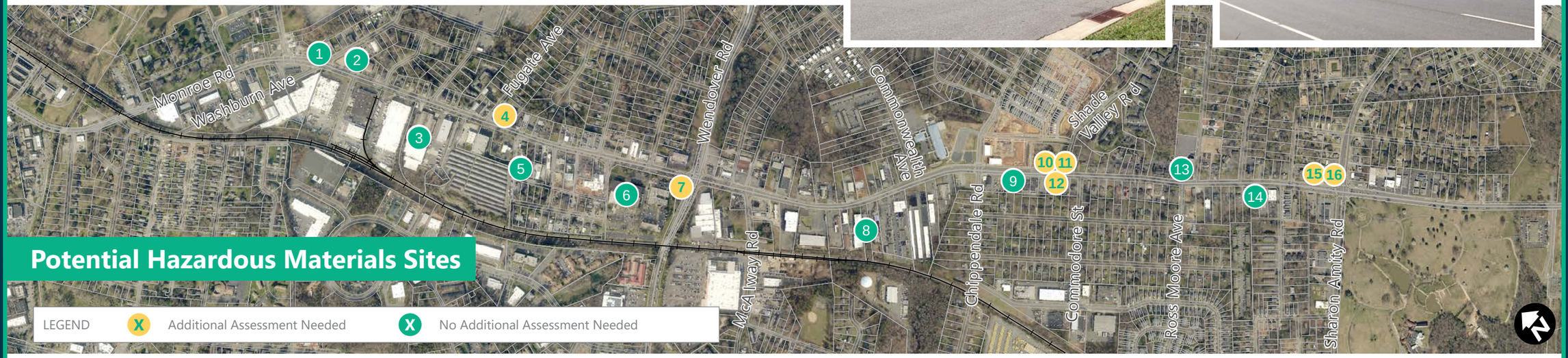
Hazardous Materials

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted by Terracon Consultants, Inc. in November 2018 under separate contract to the City.

Nine (9) Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) and seven (7) Controlled RECs (CRECs) were identified within the project area (see definitions in box below); no Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions (HRECs) were identified. The Phase I ESA recommends additional assessment of the documented releases at seven (7) of these sites as proposed roadway construction activities and improvements could encounter potentially impacted soils or groundwater. As the project progresses, additional investigations will be necessary to determine the presence of hazardous materials prior to construction. The full Phase I ESA is available under separate cover.

CLARIANT CORPORATION (MAP NO. 3)

ENERGY MART GAS STATION (MAP NO. 9)



Potential Hazardous Materials Sites

LEGEND (X) Additional Assessment Needed (X) No Additional Assessment Needed

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPAIRMENTS DEFINED

REC

A Recognized Environmental Condition (REC) is "the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: (1) due to release to the environment; (2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or (3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment."

CREC

A Controlled Recognized Environmental Condition (CREC) is "a recognized environmental condition resulting from a past release of hazardous substances or petroleum products that has been addressed to the satisfaction of the applicable regulatory authority (for example, as evidenced by the issuance of a no further action letter or equivalent, or meeting risk-based criteria established by regulatory authority), with hazardous substances or petroleum products allowed to remain in place subject to the implementation of required controls (for example, property use restrictions, activity and use limitations, institutional controls, or engineering controls)."

Source: ASTM E1527-13 Standard

Map No.	Impairment Description	Impairment Classification
1	Chlorinated compounds detected in groundwater	REC
2	Petroleum impacted groundwater and soils, release incident closed with a NORP	REC
3	Open LUST incident and operations	CREC
4	Open LUST incident	CREC
5	Potential impacts and lack of information regarding former gasoline station	CREC
6	Open LUST incident	REC
7	Open LUST incident with impacted soils	CREC
8	Chlorinated compounds in soils and groundwater	CREC
9	Petroleum impacted soils and groundwater incident closed with a NORP and public notification	REC
10*	Petroleum impacted groundwater closed with public notification	REC
11*	Petroleum impacted groundwater closed with a NORP	CREC
12	Petroleum impacted groundwater closed with a NORP and public notification	REC
13	Petroleum impacted groundwater and soils closed with a NORP and public notification	CREC
14	Closed LUST incident with NORP	REC
15	Chlorinated compounds have impacted groundwater, site maintained within NC Brownfields Program	REC
16	Petroleum impacted groundwater closed with a NORP	REC

LUST: Leaking Underground Storage Tank

NORP: Notice of Residual Petroleum

Note: Shaded cells indicate sites where additional assessment is recommended.

Note: Conditions along the corridor are likely to have changed since the date of this report. The City should undertake additional research or assessment before construction.

**These sites are included in the Oakhurst Square development and it is assumed that any additional investigation of these sites would be conducted as part of that development project.*

Recent and Planned Development

Private investment has occurred along the corridor in recent years including demolition of a former residence for construction of a lighting business, additions to the Animal Medical Hospital and Atlantic Self-Storage, and redevelopment of and addition to an existing building for a pet hotel and daycare.

Planned projects include development of a new convenience store/gas station as well as a new mixed-use development – Oakhurst Square. Oakhurst Square is a 19-acre mixed-use development at the corner of Chippendale Road and Monroe Road which is approved for up to 70,000 square feet of mixed-use retail and 120 two- and three-bedroom townhomes.

LIGHTING & BULBS UNLIMITED UNDER CONSTRUCTION

RECENT & PLANNED DEVELOPMENT IN PROJECT AREA

Map No.	Name	Project Description	Project Address
1	7-Eleven/Exxon	Remodel of existing gas pumps	3301 Monroe Road
2	Atlantic Self-Storage	Development of an additional self-storage building and a dry detention pond	3434 Monroe Road
3	Pantazis Law Office	Construction of new office building and expansion of parking lot	3501 Monroe Road
4	Daily Mews Cat Café	Façade Improvements	3748 Monroe Road
5	Social Pet	Redevelopment of existing building and new addition for commercial use	3814 Monroe Road
6	Animal Medical Hospital	6,200 ft² building addition, 27 new onsite parking spaces, 24 parking spaces on adjacent parcels	3832 Monroe Road
7	Convenience Store w/ Gas	Develop new convenience store with gas pumps at each site	4101 Monroe Road
8	Fligel's Image Apparel	Façade Improvements	4229 Monroe Road
9	Lighting & Bulbs Unlimited	Demolish existing residence and drives; Construction of a new 2-story lighting retail business	4335 Monroe Road
10	Oakhurst Square	Construction of new mixed-use development (retail shops and townhomes)	4731 Monroe Road
11	State Employees' Credit Union	New branch building and teller outpost building with drive through canopy	4733 Monroe Road
12	Energy Mart	Redevelopment of existing gas station [includes reconstruction of the streetscape and a small building addition (less than 300 ft²)]	4712 Monroe Road
13	Minor Subdivision	5-lot minor subdivision	5300 Monroe Road

Note: Table shows development activity between Sept. 2015 and May 2019

Recent & Planned Development

OAKHURST SQUARE

CITY OF CHARLOTTE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Façade Improvement Grant Program seeks to remove blight by assisting businesses and commercial property owners with improving building appearance and by bringing signs, parking, and landscaping into conformance with current codes. The program is available to businesses located within a designated Business Corridor Revitalization area.

Maximum Awards

The program provides up to 50% reimbursement to commercial or industrial businesses or property owners for eligible renovation costs [up to 60% on a case-by-case basis for utilization of certified Minority, Women, or Small Business Enterprise (MWSBE) firms].

Maximum grant awards are based upon building square footage and range from $20,000 (up to 3,000 sq. ft.) to $130,000 (shopping centers >30,000 sq. ft. with four tenants).

Eligible Expenses

- Approved architectural renovations to the building facade
- Improvements to bring grandfathered signage, parking and landscaping into conformance with current codes
- A 50% reimbursement of eligible architectural fees up to $3,000, in addition to maximum award amount
- Infrastructure improvements in the public right-of-way for change of use permits

Eligible Applicants

- Owners or tenants of for-profit commercial buildings (use must conform to all current codes and ordinances)
- National/regional chains headquartered in Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area
- Owners of vacant buildings if the owner's purpose is to rehabilitate the structure to attract eligible businesses

Prohibited businesses include adult businesses, gambling including sweepstakes and cyber/ internet cafes, new construction projects, businesses operating from residential property or residential uses, property owned by non-profit entities, and any non-conforming uses. If a portion of a building is occupied by an ineligible business, the entire building is ineligible for program funds.

For details on how the program works, contact Lori Lencheski at 704-336-3285 or lori.lencheski@charlottenc.gov.

Two properties in the project area that have taken advantage of façade improvement grants are pictured below – Daily Mews Cat Café and Fligel's Image Apparel.

DAILY MEWS CAT CAFÉ (3748 MONROE RD)

FLIGEL'S IMAGE APPAREL (4229 MONROE RD)

Utilities

Utility Coordination Consultants (UCC) completed reviews of existing utilities along the project corridor.

Utility coordination notifications were sent to potential utility owners via letters and e-mail. These utility owners were notified of the proposed improvements and asked to verify if they had utilities within the project limits.

The following utility owners were identified as having utilities within the project limits:

- Power (Distribution) – Duke Energy
- Communications – AT&T
- Communications – Spectrum
- Communications – Level 3
- Communications – MCI
- Communications – DukeNet
- Communications – CDOT ITS
- Natural Gas (Distribution) – Piedmont Natural Gas
- Traffic Signals – CDOT/NCDOT
- Water and Sewer – City of Charlotte

ABOVE GROUND UTILITY LINES

Details of this coordination and of the potential utility conflicts associated with the recommendations of this study, are summarized under separate cover. Further utility coordination will be required during the design phase of the project.

STORMWATER DRAIN AT LANIER AVENUE

Drainage

DRMP, Inc. completed an evaluation of the existing stormwater drainage conditions within and around the project area. The existing drainage system consists of 19 sub-basins. Overall, the drainage system functions well and inlets are meeting current design standards. Of the 164 structures and more than 12,000 feet of stormwater pipe evaluated in the project area/ limits, eighteen (18) inlets exceed minimum spread criteria and approximately 800 feet of existing pipe was found to be undersized or creating low flow conditions. Additional details on the existing drainage system can be found in the Drainage Summary Memo available under separate cover.

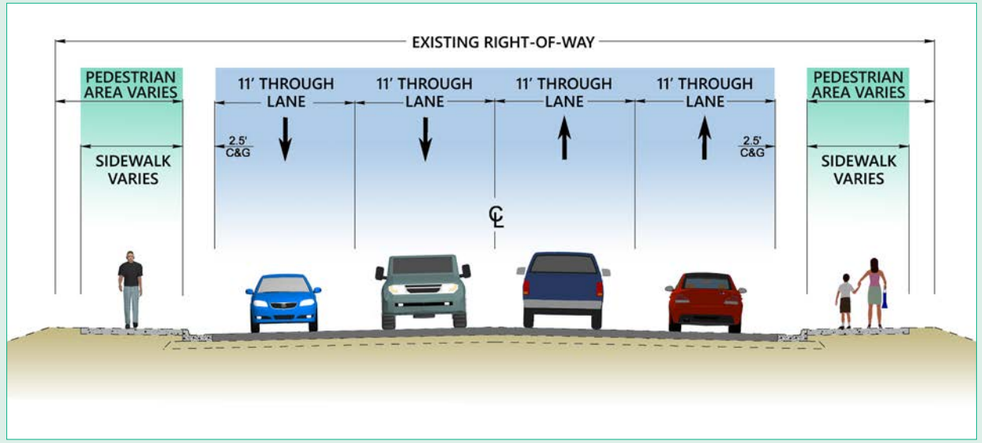
Define the Transportation Context

Defining the transportation context is the second step of the USDG six-step process. This step includes consideration of both the existing and expected future transportation conditions. This is valuable in ensuring the recommended design reflects the entire transportation context including function, multimodal features, and form.

Existing Transportation Conditions

Monroe Road is a four-lane, undivided thoroughfare owned and maintained by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The road is generally 49' wide from back of curb to back of curb (four 11' travel lanes with 2.5' of curb and gutter on each side) with turn lanes added at some intersections.

EXISTING CROSS-SECTION



Existing Transportation Conditions

Existing Bike/Ped Conditions

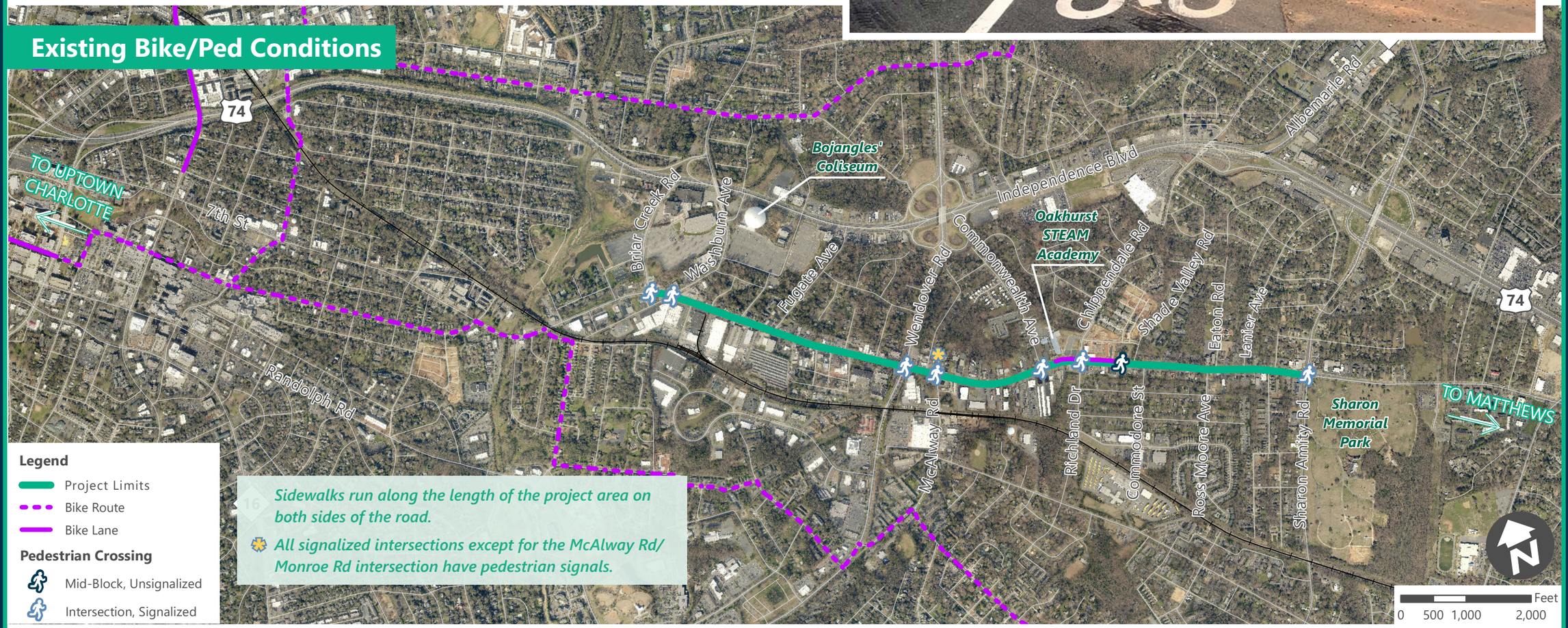
The posted speed limit through the study area is 35-40 miles per hour (mph). The corridor is primarily auto-oriented, moving vehicles between Uptown Charlotte and suburban areas to the southeast. NCDOT 2017 annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes range from 20,000-25,000 vehicles per day (vpd). As a result of the small-lot, suburban commercial development along the corridor, many driveways are present. There are approximately 97 driveways along Monroe Road within the project limits, with all but six of these serving commercial uses.

There are twenty-six (26) roadway intersections within the project area: seven (7) signalized and nineteen (19) stop-controlled. All signalized intersections include crosswalks and pedestrian signals (except for the McAlway Road at Monroe Road intersection which only has crosswalks). Cross streets are a mix of arterials (other principal and minor), collectors (major), and local streets.

One Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) bus route serves Monroe Road – Route 27. The route runs between the Charlotte Transportation Center (CTC) in Uptown Charlotte and Independence Pointe Parkway in Matthews. Eighteen (18) bus stops are located within the project corridor.

Sidewalks run along the length of Monroe Road through the project limits on both sides of the road, and are generally located at back of curb. The project area's only on-street bicycle facility runs along the north side of Monroe Road traveling westbound from Shade Valley Road to Oakhurst STEAM Academy. Two signed bike routes are in proximity to the corridor. The first runs parallel to the study area to the south, connecting with Monroe Road west of the study area just south of the railroad tracks. The second runs parallel to US 74 along Commonwealth Avenue on the north side of US 74.

ON-STREET BICYCLE LANE IN FRONT OF OAKHURST SQUARE



Anticipated Future Transportation Conditions

The project corridor is anticipated to continue to function as a thoroughfare, with the addition of complete streets principles to make it more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Several other planned transportation projects in the area will support the improvements planned for the Monroe Road corridor, as described below.

Independence Area Sidewalk and Bikeway Improvements

Like the Monroe Road Streetscape Project, bicycle and pedestrian projects within the Independence Boulevard area are part of the City's Community Investment Plan (CIP). The purpose of these projects is to enhance neighborhood mobility and accessibility to transit, and provide community and economic resources throughout the Independence Boulevard corridor.

Projects along Briar Creek Road/Television Place/Washburn Avenue as well as Eastway Drive/Wendover Road propose to enhance bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes or sharrows and possible pedestrian/bike paths. The improvements will provide better connectivity across Independence Boulevard and improved connections between area neighborhoods.

Oakhurst-Amity Gardens Connectivity Projects

The Oakhurst-Amity Gardens Connectivity Projects consist of two projects: the Oakhurst-Amity Gardens Multi-Use Path and the Shade Valley-Oakhurst Commons Roundabout and Intersection.

OAKHURST-AMITY GARDENS MULTI-USE PATH

This project will construct a multi-use path that will serve as a connection between the Oakhurst and Amity Gardens neighborhoods. The path will include connections to Chippendale Road, Erickson Road and Pierson Drive.

This project is scheduled for construction in late 2020.

OAKHURST-AMITY GARDENS MULTI-USE PATH

Source: https://charlottenc.gov/Projects/Documents/Multi-use%20Path%20Board%20for%20Public%20hearing-48x36%204.pdf

RENDERING OF SHADE VALLEY-OAKHURST COMMONS ROUNDABOUT & INTERSECTION

Source: https://charlottenc.gov/Projects/Documents/Roundabout%20Drone%20Board%20for%20Public%20hearing-34x22.pdf

SHADE VALLEY-OAKHURST COMMONS ROUNDABOUT AND INTERSECTION

This project will realign Shade Valley Road to intersect Monroe Road across from Commodore Street to improve neighborhood access on both sides of Monroe Road. A roundabout will also be constructed at the intersection of Shade Valley Road and the entrance to Oakhurst Townhomes to improve traffic flow and aesthetics.

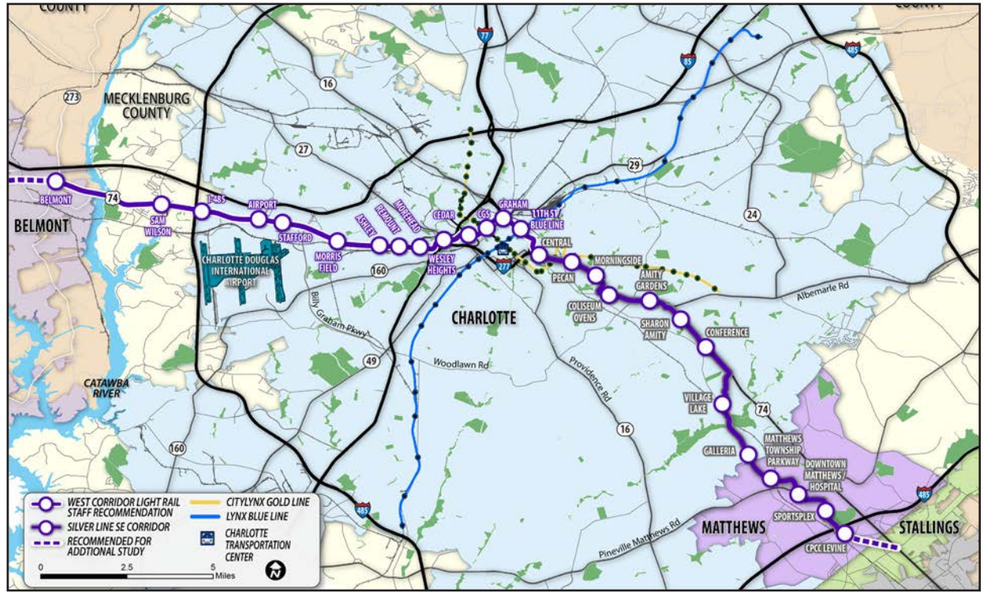
This project is scheduled for construction in late 2020.

LYNX Silver Line

In February 2019, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) amended the Southeast Corridor/LYNX Silver Line to include the West Corridor locally preferred alternative – light rail. This amendment resulted in the LYNX Silver Line being defined as one continuous light rail corridor from the Town of Matthews to the City of Belmont. It is proposed to run adjacent to the south side of US 74 near the Monroe Road Streetscape Project and the nearest stop is the Coliseum Ovens stop.

Construction of the LYNX Silver Line is anticipated to occur beyond 2030.

PROPOSED LYNX SILVER LINE CORRIDOR



Source: https://www.charlottenc.gov/cats/transit-planning/Pages/silver-line.aspx

Identify Deficiencies

The third step of the USDG six-step process is to identify deficiencies. This allows the Project Team to determine any deficiencies that could or should be addressed by the project. All modes of transportation are considered in this step including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit.

Roadway Deficiences

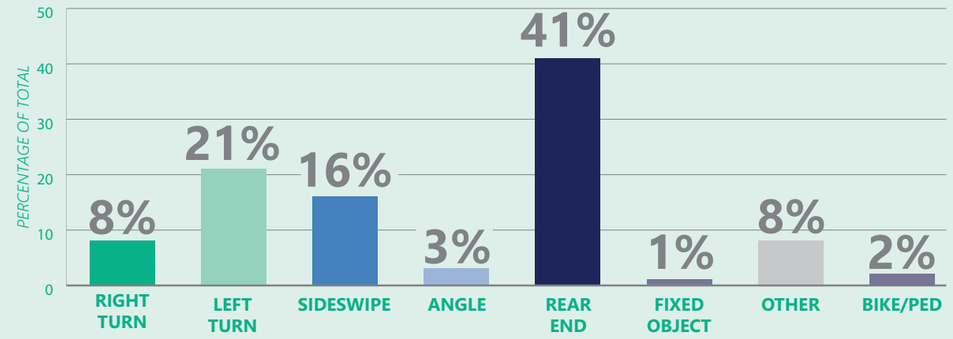
Crash History

Crash data was collected for the project corridor for a five-year period spanning January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2017. Of the 663 crashes within the project limits, nearly 80% occurred within the eastern portion of the study area between Wendover Road and Sharon Amity Road, and more than half of all crashes occurred at intersections. The most common types of crashes were rear-end collisions (41%) followed by left-turn collisions (21%) and sideswipes (16%). The majority of crashes occurred during peak hour traffic times and involved property damage only.

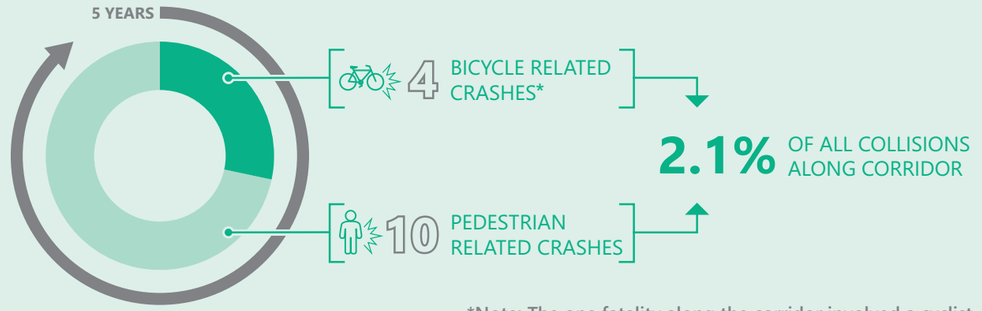
Over the five-year period analyzed, there were fourteen (14) crashes involving a bicycle or pedestrian: four (4) involving bicycles and ten (10) involving pedestrians. Bicycle and pedestrian collisions accounted for 2.1% of all collisions along the corridor. The only fatal crash reported over the five-year analysis period involved a bicyclist.

According to the NCDOT Equivalent Property Damage (EPDO) Severity Index, the area does not have a disproportionate number of severe or life-threatening collisions. However, the Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) considers portions of the project corridor to be on the High Injury Network (HIN) for having

CRASH TYPE SUMMARY ALONG PROJECT CORRIDOR (2013–2017)

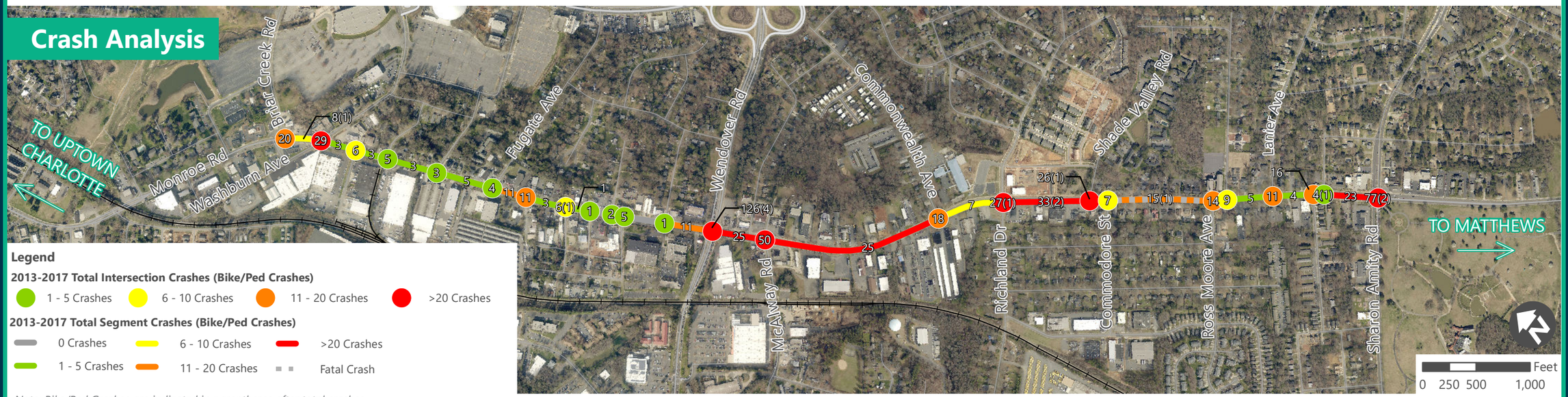


BIKE/PED CRASHES ALONG PROJECT CORRIDOR (2013–2017)



*Note: The one fatality along the corridor involved a cyclist.

Crash Analysis



Note: Bike/Ped Crashes are indicated in parentheses after total crashes.

a statistically higher occurrence of severe and fatal crashes. One fatal crash and four serious injury crashes occurred in the project area during the five-year period.

Increasing the capacity of the roadway or implementing access management is beyond the scope of this streetscape project; however, proposed multimodal enhancements should help to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians in the project corridor. In addition, as requested by CDOT, right-turn channelizing islands are recommended for all approaches at the intersections of Monroe Road with Wendover Road and Sharon Amity Road (with the exception of the southeast quadrant of each intersection due to existing constraints). These islands will improve safety by shortening pedestrian crossing distances and improving driver compliance for yielding to pedestrians.

Intersection Capacity Analysis

Existing and future traffic operations at study area intersections were evaluated as a part of this project. The results are summarized here and the full analysis is available under separate cover.

Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative measure used to relate the quality of motor vehicle traffic service. LOS ranges from A to F, with A being free-flowing traffic and F being stop-and-go traffic. An acceptable rate of flow is a LOS D or above. Based on existing conditions (2018), three intersections are operating at a LOS E:

- Wendover Road at Monroe Road (at AM peak hour)
- Shade Valley Road/Commodore Street at Monroe Road (at PM peak hour)
- Sharon Amity Road at Monroe Road (at PM peak hour)

The future year traffic operations analysis (2045) shows that without intersection improvements, LOS will decline at the majority of intersections within the project area. The following intersections will operate at a LOS E or worse in 2045:

- Washburn Avenue at Monroe Road (LOS E during AM peak hour)
- Wendover Road at Monroe Road (LOS F during AM and PM peak hour)
- Shade Valley Road/Commodore Street at Monroe Road (LOS F during AM and PM peak hour)
- Sharon Amity Road at Monroe Road (LOS E during AM peak hour and LOS F during PM peak hour)

Substantial traffic capacity and operational improvements would be needed to improve

Legend

Control Devices

Traffic Signal Stop Sign

Level of Service (LOS)

A-D, Below Capacity E, At Capacity F, Above Capacity

XX% Traffic Volume as Percent of Total Capacity

Note: Shade Valley Rd and Commodore St expected to be realigned in future year 2045.

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Source: Monroe Road Streetscape – Traffic Operations Analysis Memorandum (Final Aug. 2019)

LOS at these intersections, which is outside the scope of this streetscape project. Improvements to these intersections should be studied in more detail as a separate project(s).

As a part of the traffic operations analysis, the Project Team considered the City of Charlotte Pedestrian Crossing Committee's mid-block pedestrian crossing requests. Of the three requests within the project area, the Project Team recommended further study of a crosswalk with pedestrian hybrid beacon crossing Monroe Road near Buford Avenue.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Deficiencies

While sidewalks run the entire length of the corridor, they are narrow and located at back of curb, directly adjacent to vehicular traffic. Additionally, the majority of sidewalks are older, cracked, and in generally poor condition. The combination of narrow, cracked sidewalks and proximity to heavy vehicular traffic creates an uncomfortable environment for pedestrians along the corridor.

There are several locations along the corridor where obstructions restrict pedestrian mobility on the sidewalks:

- Fire hydrant in sidewalk at the intersection of Monroe Road and Chipley Avenue
- Fire hydrant and utility pole in sidewalk at the intersection of Monroe Road and Fugate Avenue
- Building and utility pole in sidewalk at 3415 Monroe Road

Street lighting is provided, but the corridor lacks pedestrian-scale lighting and several comments were received from the public requesting additional lighting.

While there are seven (7) signalized intersections with pedestrian facilities, the crossings are not evenly spaced. No designated crossing opportunity exists between Washburn Avenue and Wendover Road, a distance of over 0.7 miles. Several pedestrians were observed jaywalking within this section of the project area. One mid-block crossing with pedestrian refuge is located between the Energy Mart and Oakhurst Square (near Chippendale Road), but this crossing is not striped or signalized, and there are no warning signs for vehicles.

Lastly, the project area lacks landscaping and green space. As expressed in comments at community engagement events, the public feels the lack of green space diminishes the appearance of the area, discourages socializing and community gatherings, and contributes to speeding. A pocket park was the most desired new improvement listed by attendees at the public meeting.

Bike facilities are limited along the project corridor and surrounding area. An on-street bicycle lane runs along the north side of Monroe Road traveling west from Shade Valley Road to Oakhurst STEAM Academy. The bike lane is roughly 750 feet in length and is not connected to any other bicycle facility. As discussed in Section 2, several sidewalk and bicycle projects are proposed in the area to help improve bicycle and pedestrian conditions.

BUS STOP NEAR MCALWAY ROAD *(NOTE PEDESTRIAN WAITING IN SHADE UNDER BILLBOARD)*

Describe Future Objectives

Describing future objectives is the fourth step in the USDG six-step process. These objectives will form the basic principles to be used in the street classification and design for this project.

In order to meet the intended goals of the project: to make the area more pedestrian-friendly; to improve green connections; to drive business investments; and to create an additional point of pride for the neighborhood, the City will focus on:

- Widening or replacing existing sidewalks, separating them from back of curb with a planting strip wherever feasible;
- Relocating sidewalk obstructions including fire hydrants and utility poles;
- Improving existing bus stops;
- Creating a pocket park;
- Adding / upgrading pedestrian crossings; and
- Introducing streetscape elements such as pedestrian-scale lighting, planters, and seating areas.

These improvements will provide the following benefits:

- Enhanced safety and comfort for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders;
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity;
- Improved neighborhood access; and
- Enhanced economic development potential.

POTENTIAL POCKET PARK CONCEPT

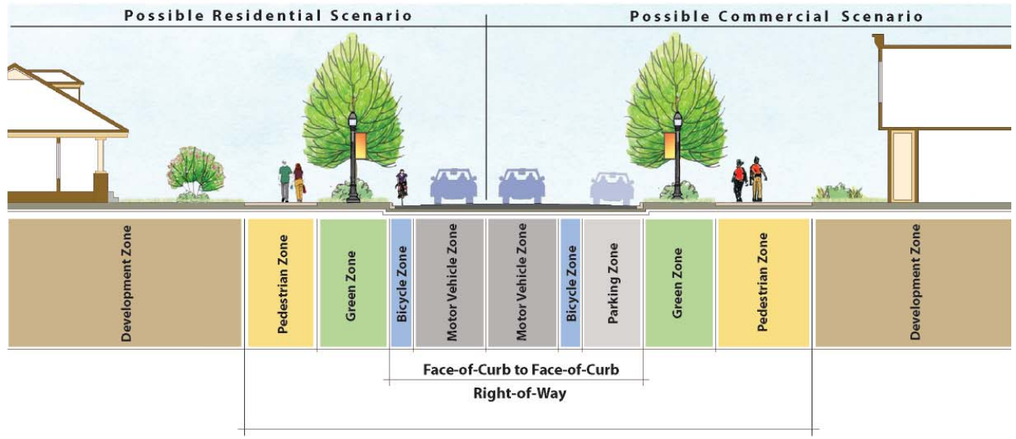
(A) Bench, (B) ADA Walkway, (C) Seat Wall, (D) Unique Pavers, (E) Brick Columns, (F) Public Art, (G) Gathering Plaza, (H) Garden Swing

Recommend Street Typology & Test Initial Cross-Section

The fifth step in the USDG six-step process is recommending a street classification and preferred cross-section for the project area.

In order to meet area goals and objectives, including becoming more pedestrian friendly and spurring business investments, the Project Team recommends transitioning the project corridor from a Boulevard to an Avenue as defined in the USDG and described below.

USDG RECOMMENDED CROSS-SECTION FOR AN AVENUE



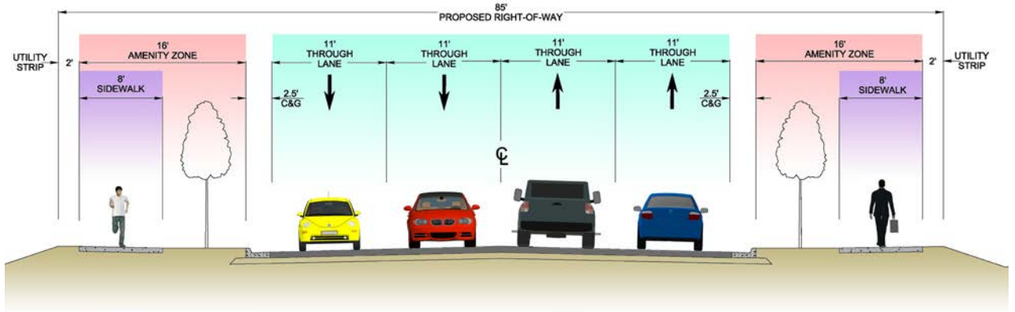
The Project Team determined early on that it is not feasible for the project area to lose all of its Boulevard characteristics. The corridor will continue to move a significant amount of vehicles in and out of Charlotte. As such, no changes are recommended to the posted speed limit or number of through lanes, and adding on-street parking is not recommended.

Some of the Avenue characteristics that are viable along the corridor include wider sidewalks and planting strips, removal/ relocation of sidewalk obstructions, improved bus stops, and pedestrian-scale lighting. These improvements, when combined with some existing Avenue characteristics present within the project area, such as development oriented to the street, safe pedestrian crossings, and mix of uses, can help the Monroe Road corridor function more like an Avenue than a Boulevard.

Guidelines for the Avenue street type recommend an 8' wide unobstructed sidewalk and an 8' wide planting strip in areas that are currently or are planned to be pedestrian-oriented retail or mixed-use development. Guidelines also encourage consideration of an exclusive bicycle zone.

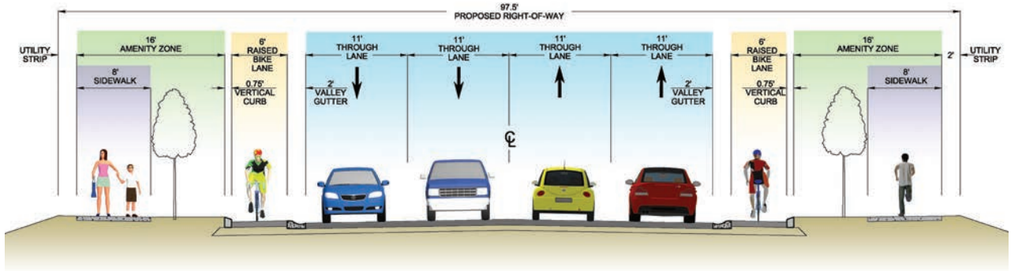
Based on this information, the Project Team considered the following variations on the recommended Avenue cross-section:

POTENTIAL CROSS-SECTION 1



Potential Cross-Section 1 maintains the existing four 11' travel lanes with curb and gutter, but adds a 16' amenity zone comprised of an 8' sidewalk and 8' planting strip. Compared to the existing cross-section, the sidewalk and planting strip would be wider and more uniform along the corridor. This cross-section would require approximately 85' of right-of-way. It meets minimum Avenue guidelines for the green zone and pedestrian zone, but does not include an exclusive bicycle zone.

POTENTIAL CROSS-SECTION 2



Potential Cross-Section 2 includes all the elements of Potential Cross-Section 1, but adds an exclusive raised bike lane on each side, and would require approximately 97.5' of right-of-way. It meets minimum Avenue guidelines for the green zone and pedestrian zone, while also providing an exclusive bicycle zone.

The following table provides dimensional information for the various cross-sections:

Cross-Section Comparison*

Cross-Section	Right-of-Way	Pedestrian Zone	Green Zone	Bicycle Zone	Parking Zone
Existing	varies	varies	varies	none	none
USDG Recommended for Avenue	varies	6' - 8' (min) sidewalks[1]	8' planting strip (min)	4' (min)	varies
Potential 1	85'	8' sidewalks	8' planting strip	none	none
Potential 2	97.5'	8' sidewalks	8' planting strip	6' raised bike lane	none

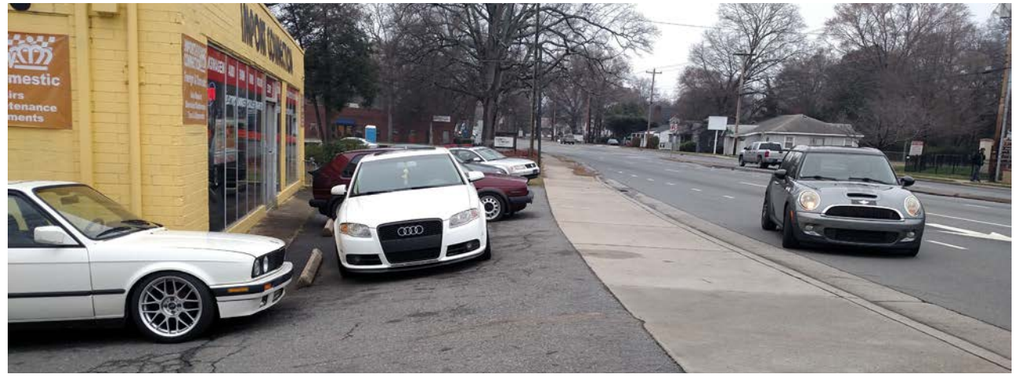
[1] 8' (min) in pedestrian-oriented retail or mixed-use areas
** All cross-sections recommend 11' travel lanes*

While testing these potential cross-sections against the land use and transportation contexts and defined objectives for this project, the Project Team identified several constraints that would make it difficult to construct either potential cross-section along the entire project corridor. Identified constraints include:

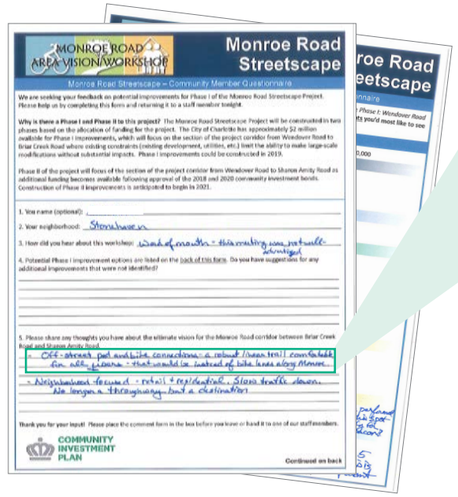
- Limited existing right-of-way,
- Existing utilities, buildings, and parking adjacent to roadway,
- Topography, and
- Location and number of driveways.

(BOTTOM LEFT) A BUILDING AT 3415 MONROE ROAD SITS VERY CLOSE TO THE ROAD, MAKING THE SIDEWALK VERY NARROW, *(TOP RIGHT)* LAND SLOPES DRASTICALLY AT THE BACK OF THE EXISTING SIDEWALK, MAKING IT DIFFICULT AND EXPENSIVE TO WIDEN OR RELOCATE, *(BOTTOM RIGHT)* SIDEWALK CANNOT BE WIDENED AND/OR RELOCATED WITHOUT IMPACTING UTILITY POLES

ADDING A PLANTING STRIP AND WIDER SIDEWALKS WOULD IMPACT PARKING AT SOME BUSINESSES

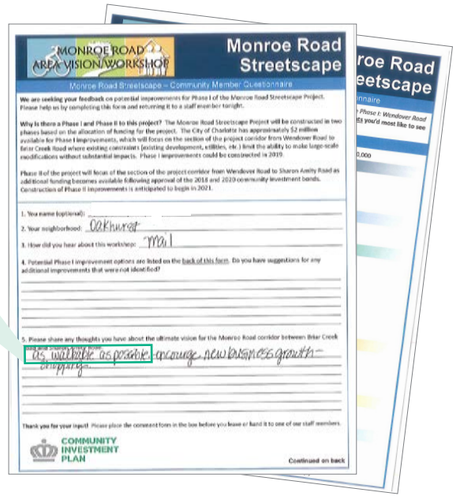


Additionally, these potential cross-sections were shared with business owners and the public. Business owners were concerned about impacts to existing parking and signage. The public had a strong interest in connecting neighborhoods, beautification and landscaping, adding public spaces, and making the area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. The proposed on-street bike lane received mixed reviews. While some attendees supported a bike lane, others had safety concerns based on traffic volumes and speed, and most attendees prioritized sidewalk improvements over bike lanes.



"Off-street ped and bike connections – a robust linear trail comfortable for all users – that would be instead of bike lanes along Monroe Road."

"As walkable as possible."



Describe Tradeoffs & Select Cross-Section

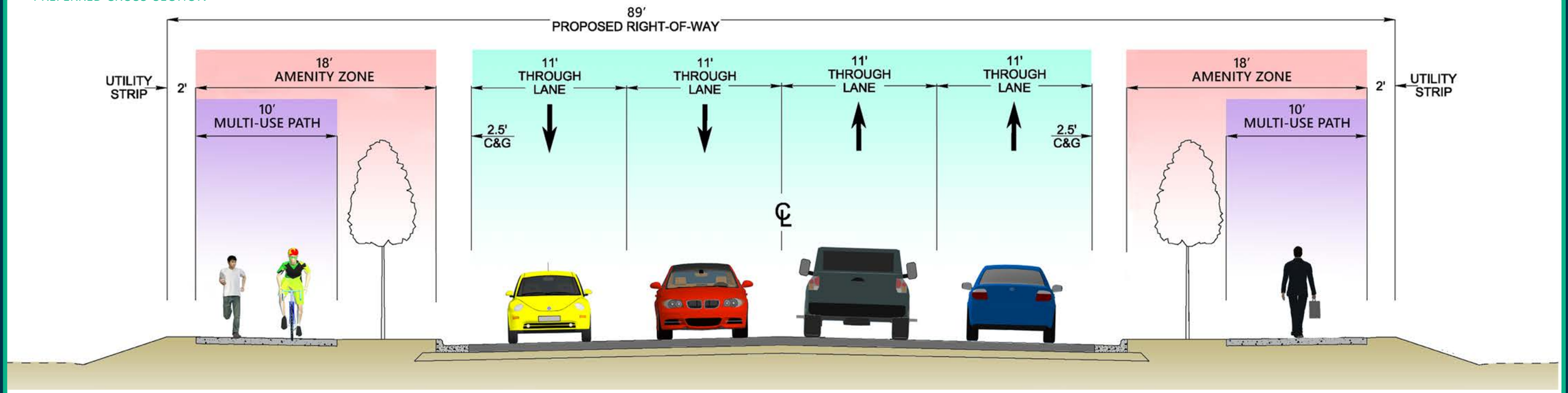
In the sixth and final step in the USDG six-step process, the initial cross-section is refined as needed to address land use and transportation objectives given the project constraints and public input.

Preferred Cross-Section

After reflecting on project objectives, testing potential alternatives, and considering public input and tradeoffs, the Project Team developed a preferred cross-section (shown below) for the project corridor. The preferred cross-section is a hybrid of the two potential cross-sections discussed previously.

The proposed right-of-way for the preferred cross-section is approximately 89', slightly wider than Proposed Cross-Section 1, but 8.5' narrower than Proposed Cross-Section 2. The preferred cross-section will maintain the existing curb line. The dedicated raised bicycle lane from Potential Cross-Section 2 was eliminated to minimize right-of-way impacts to businesses and to address safety concerns of the public and Project Team. As a tradeoff, the 8' minimum sidewalk was increased to a 10' multi-use path (MUP). Although the City standard is 12'-16' and MUPs are not typically recommended along corridors with a high number of driveways, the project team felt that a MUP is the only form of bike infrastructure that could feasibly be built due to the constraints of existing buildings, parking, utilities, and project budget. Additionally, other planned bicycle improvements in the area will offer alternate routes and options for cyclists.

PREFERRED CROSS-SECTION



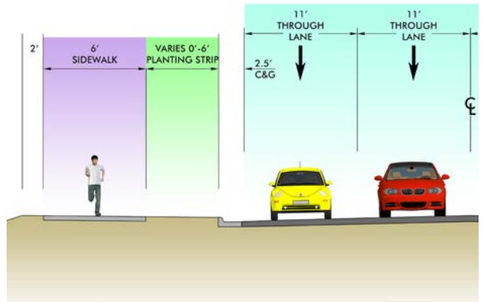
The City plans to use community investment bonds to construct the preferred cross-section wherever feasible in the near-term. In the long-term, property owners will be required to construct the preferred cross-section as development/redevelopment occurs along the corridor.

Interim Improvements

While the preferred cross-section has been identified as a long-term vision for the corridor, many of the constraints identified in Step 5 make it challenging to implement this ultimate cross-section throughout the entire corridor in the near-term.

Specifically, due to the existing constraints along the western section of Monroe Road between Briar Creek Road and Wendover Road, the impacts associated with improving this section to the preferred cross-section would outweigh the benefits of the improvements (e.g., relocating businesses to provide a wider sidewalk would not advance the project's goal of driving business investments). However, even though it is not feasible to achieve the ultimate cross-section for this section of the corridor at this time, the Project Team agreed that the project's goals could still be advanced by providing some level of improvement while minimizing impacts to properties along the corridor.

INTERIM CROSS-SECTION



NOTE: The interim cross section would be the same on both sides of the centerline.

As a result, the Project Team recommends an interim version of the preferred cross-section from Washburn Avenue to Wendover Road that includes 6' sidewalks with a variable planting strip as indicated above (a 6' planting strip is preferred; however, it varies anywhere from 0'-6' to minimize property impacts). No improvements are recommended between Briar Creek Road and Washburn Avenue due to recent intersection improvements at the Washburn Avenue intersection.

Recommended Improvements - Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road

In addition to implementing the interim cross-section between Washburn Avenue and Wendover Road, the Project Team recommends relocating sidewalk obstructions, improving bus stops, adding a mid-block pedestrian crossing, adding side street crosswalks, providing a pocket park (the pocket park could be anywhere along the corridor), and adding pedestrian-scale lighting.

1 Construct New Facilities

Sidewalks are older and in need of replacement. New 6' sidewalks will be installed along almost the entire length of this portion of the project area. A planting strip will be added wherever feasible. The width of the planting strip will vary from 0'-6' based on constraints.

INTERIM PREFERRED 6' SIDEWALK & 6' PLANTING STRIP

2 Relocate Sidewalk Obstructions

There are several locations along the corridor where obstructions, including fire hydrants and utility poles, restrict pedestrian mobility along the sidewalk. These obstructions will be relocated to the planting strip or utility strip.

FIRE HYDRANT WEST OF CHIPLEY AVE

3 Improve Bus Stops

Several bus stops within this portion of the study area only have a pole sign. These bus stops lack shade, shelter, benches, lighting, and garbage cans. While several of the bus stops cannot be improved without impacts to existing businesses, additional amenities could be added at some stops with minimal impacts. In coordination with CATS, it is recommended that these bus stops be improved to include additional amenities.

4 Add Pedestrian Crossing

No signalized crossing opportunities exist between Washburn Avenue and Wendover Road, a distance of over 0.7 miles. Pedestrians often jaywalk to get from one side of the road to the other. A hybrid pedestrian beacon is proposed in proximity to the intersection of Buford Avenue and Monroe Road. This area has a high concentration of pedestrians due to the Time Out Youth Center and the bus stop with service to Uptown Charlotte.

5 Add Crosswalks

The majority of unsignalized intersections along the corridor lack crosswalks across the side streets. Adding crosswalks at these locations will help alert drivers to pedestrian activity in the area.

6 Potential Pocket Park

A goal of the streetscape project is to create an additional point of pride for the neighborhood. Of all of the improvements proposed for this portion of the project area, the community was most in favor of a pocket park. The pocket park would provide a space to gather and relax. While one possible location for such a park is identified along this portion of the project area, all vacant tracts within the project area should be evaluated as potential park locations.

EXAMPLE BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS

1 Construct New Facilities | 2 Remove Sidewalk Obstructions | 3 Improve Bus Stops | 4 Add Pedestrian Crossing | 5 Add Crosswalks | 6 Potential Pocket Park

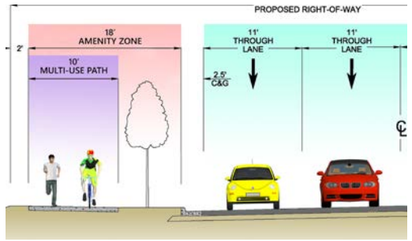
Recommended Improvements – Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road

With a few exceptions, the preferred cross-section is feasible to implement along the section of the project corridor from Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road. As a result of recent development activity, the amenity zone in front of Oakhurst STEAM Academy and the Oakhurst Square development has recently been improved. While it does not meet the preferred cross-section, the sidewalks are in excellent condition and have additional separation from the street by the bicycle lane and planting strip; therefore, no additional improvements are recommended here in the near-term. In addition to implementing the preferred cross-section along this portion of the study area, the Project Team recommends implementing the following improvements between Wendover Road and Sharon Amity Road.

1 Construct New Facilities

Similar to the western portion of the study area, sidewalks are older and in need of replacement. A new 10' multi-use path will be installed (except for in areas where the amenity zone has recently been improved) to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists. To create a more inviting pedestrian experience, sidewalks will also be separated from the back of curb by an 8' planting strip.

PREFERRED CROSS-SECTION AMENITY ZONE



2 Improve Bus Stops

Only one bus stop in the project area, in front of Oakhurst Square, has all of the desired pedestrian amenities including shelter, seating, and trash receptable. While several of the bus stops cannot be improved without impacts to existing businesses, additional amenities could be added at a few bus stops with minimal impacts.

IMPROVED BUS STOP
NEAR OAKHURST SQUARE

3 Upgrade Pedestrian Crossing

While crosswalks exist on two legs of the Monroe Road intersection with McAlway Road, the crosswalks are standard crosswalks and the markings are faded. These crosswalks should be restriped to match the newer crosswalks planned for the project area. Additionally, the McAlway Road at Monroe Road intersection is the only signalized intersection in the project area without a pedestrian signal. The Project Team recommends adding pedestrian signals for the two existing pedestrian crossings at this intersection.

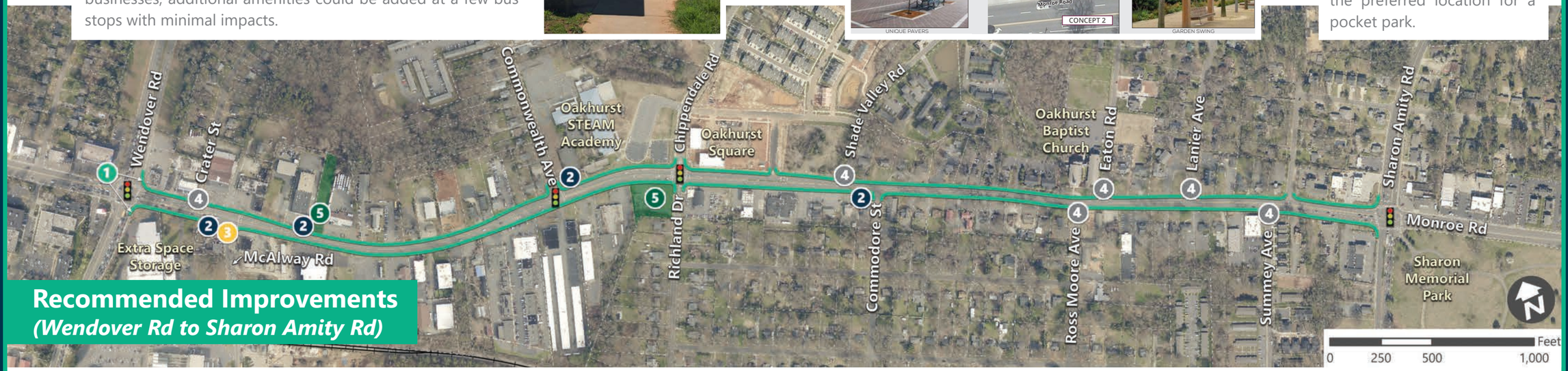
POCKET PARK CONCEPT BOARD SHOWN AT THE PUBLIC MEETING

4 Add Crosswalks

The majority of unsignalized intersections along the corridor lack crosswalks across the side streets. Adding crosswalks at these locations will help alert drivers to pedestrian activity in the area.

5 Potential Pocket Park

As stated previously, a goal of the streetscape project is to create an additional point of pride for the neighborhood. The community was most in favor of a pocket park. Two potential locations for a pocket park (in addition to the location indicated in the western portion of the study area) are shown on the map below. The City should evaluate all available tracts within the project area to determine the preferred location for a pocket park.



Recommended Improvements
(Wendover Rd to Sharon Amity Rd)

1 Construct New Facilities
2 Improve Bus Stops
3 Upgrade Pedestrian Crossing
4 Add Crosswalks
5 Potential Pocket Park

Storm Drainage

In addition to the existing system deficiencies identified earlier in the report, DRMP also analyzed potential impacts of the project on the drainage system. The preferred cross-section is expected to conflict with 17 existing inlets and one open ended pipe (four inlets from Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road and the remaining conflicts from Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road). These structures will need to be relocated. According to the City of Charlotte's Storm Water Services, all sidewalk removed or replaced as a part of the streetscape project is considered new Built Upon Area (BUA). This project will add 2.27 acres of new BUA (0.69 acres from Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road and 1.58 acres from Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road). Additionally, this project is within the Business Corridor Revitalization Geography (BCRG) and must provide for 10-year and 25-year peak detention of new BUA and one of the following options:

1. Provide 85 percent total suspended solids (TSS) removal from first inch of rainfall for entire project;
2. Provide one-year, 24-hour volume control and ten-year, six-hour peak control for entire project; or
3. Pay the City a mitigation fee for the pre-project BUA and any additional impervious area not to exceed five acres.

The Project Team recommends option 3, payment of the City mitigation fee. All estimated costs and fees associated with drainage are included in the cost estimates section of the report. Drainage conflicts will be assessed further and specific best management practices (BMPs) will be developed during the design phase.

UTILITIES AND DRAINAGE IN CONFLICT

Utility Conflicts

In addition to reviewing existing utilities along the project corridor, UCC also identified utility conflicts that will arise from construction of the project. The preferred cross-section is expected to conflict with nine utility poles (three from Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road and six from Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road) and 58 guy lines (18 from Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road and 40 from Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road).

All estimated costs associated with utilities are included in the cost estimates section of the report. Utility conflicts will be assessed further during the design phase.

Project Cost Estimates & Funding

Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road

Cost Estimates

As discussed in Step 6, the Project Team recognizes that the potential impacts associated with improving this section of the project corridor to the preferred cross-section outweigh the benefits of the improvements. The Project Team recommends implementation of an interim cross-section and a series of other recommendations summarized in Step 6.

The majority of the associated costs can be attributed to real estate acquisition associated with the recommended improvements. Project cost estimates for this section of the project corridor are summarized below.

Cost Estimates - Monroe Rd (Briar Creek Rd to Wendover Rd)	
Planning Phase	$364,000
Design Phase	$435,000
Real Estate Phase	$3,603,000
Construction Phase	$2,509,000
Project Subtotal	$6,911,000
30% Contingency	$2,073,300
TOTAL (rounded up to nearest $10,000)	**$8,990,000**

NOTE: Estimates were calculated by RS&H using the City of Charlotte Engineering Services Cost Estimate Spreadsheet. Pedestrian lighting, bus stop improvements, and public art are included in the construction phase.

Funding

In 2016, voters approved $2.08 million in transportation bonds for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project. The City intends to fund as many recommendations for this section of the project as possible through these bonds. Pending NCDOT approvals and final plans, the City plans to begin implementing these recommended improvements as soon as possible after approval of this planning report.

Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road

Cost Estimates

As discussed in Step 6, the Project Team recommends implementation of the preferred cross-section along the majority of this section of the project corridor in addition to a series of other recommendations summarized in Step 6. Implementation of the preferred cross-section results in higher costs in all project phases. Project Cost estimates for this section of the project area are summarized below.

Cost Estimates - Monroe Road (Wendover Road to Sharon Amity Road)	
Planning Phase	$588,000
Design Phase	$697,000
Real Estate Phase	$7,200,000
Construction Phase	$3,993,000
Project Subtotal	$12,478,000
30% Contingency	$3,743,400
TOTAL (rounded up to nearest $10,000)	**$16,230,000**

NOTE: Estimates were calculated by RS&H using the City of Charlotte Engineering Services Cost Estimate Spreadsheet. Pedestrian lighting, bus stop improvements, and public art are included in the construction phase.

Funding

The City intends to use $1 million in approved 2018 transportation bonds as well as future 2020 transportation bonds to fund improvements along this portion of the corridor. Based on funding or pending approval of the 2020 bonds, the City will implement these recommended improvements after the improvements from Briar Creek Road to Wendover Road have been implemented.

Pocket Park

Of all the recommendations proposed, the community was most in favor of a pocket park within the study area. As such, the Project Team recommends construction of one pocket park along the project corridor. While two (2) potential locations were identified in Step 6 (locations were in both the western and eastern portions of the project area), all vacant tracts should be evaluated. Cost estimates for the pocket park are provided below. More detailed cost estimates will be developed once a location is finalized.

Cost Estimates - Pocket Park	
Property Acquisition[1]	$300,000-$500,000
Construction[2]	$125,000
Park Amenities[2]	$225,000
TOTAL	**$650,000-$850,000**

[1] Conservative estimate after review of July 2019 land values of vacant tracts in project area.

[2] Estimate is based on a pocket park functional level cost estimated provided by the City of Charlotte from February 2019.

Overall Cost Estimate Summary

Together, all of the recommendations outlined in this report will help the City achieve the project goals for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project.

Project Cost estimates for the recommended improvements are summarized below and total $26,050,000-$26,310,000.

Overall Summary Table: Monroe Road Project Area	
Planning Phase	$952,000
Design Phase	$1,132,000
Real Estate Phase	$10,803,000
Construction Phase	$6,502,000
Pocket Park[1]	$650,000-$850,000
Project Subtotal	$20,039,000-$20,239,000
30% Contingency	$6,011,700-$6,071,700
TOTAL (rounded to nearest $10,000)	**$26,050,000-$26,310,000**

NOTE: Estimate calculated by RS&H using the City of Charlotte Engineering Services Cost Estimate Spreadsheet. Pedestrian lighting, bus stop improvements, and public art are included in construction phase.

[1] Pocket park is a conservative estimate based on July 2019 land values of vacant tracts in the project area and a pocket park functional level cost provided by the City of Charlotte from February 2019.

Community Engagement

Numerous meetings were held during the planning phase of the project to capture the input of the community. Initially, small group meetings were held in October 2016 to introduce the project and gather public comments. At these meetings, a presentation was given to introduce the project, followed by an open discussion. A large map of the project corridor was displayed, and attendees were invited to post written comments on the map to identify areas of concern, neighborhood assets, or improvements they would like to see.

Using comment forms, attendees were asked to answer open-ended questions about what improvements they would like to see on the Monroe Road corridor. The following is a summary of responses received:

- Revitalize the area
- Provide destinations such as restaurants, retail shops, and grocery stores
- Provide a safe place to walk, buffer between sidewalks and road
- Make it safer to bike to work
- Transition to a corridor that promotes biking and walking
- Better lighting
- Need crosswalks
- Need turn lanes

MORA OPEN HOUSE

ECHO HILLS/OAKHURST NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

AMITY GARDENS NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Next, the City hosted a Vision Workshop on June 3, 2017, where community members documented assets, ideas, and issues within the study area. Approximately 100 people attended this three-hour workshop held at Oakhurst STEAM Academy.

MONROE ROAD STUDY AREA MAP WITH PUBLIC COMMENTS

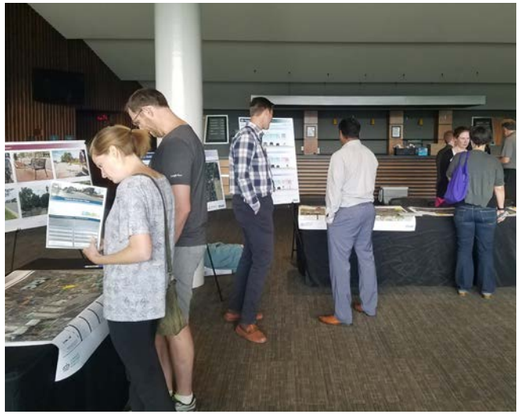
On July 24, 2018, the City hosted a public meeting for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project in conjunction with other area projects (Oakhurst-Amity Gardens Connectivity Projects and Independence Area Sidewalk and Bikeways Improvements) to provide project updates and gather public feedback. Attendees were invited to review project maps and displays, view proposed typical sections and potential improvements, and engage the project team. The following information was presented specifically for the Monroe Road Streetscape Project:

BREAK-OUT GROUP DISCUSSION AT MONROE ROAD VISIONING WORKSHOP

- Monroe Road Streetscape Overview Map – provided an overview of the project corridor and other area projects.
- Monroe Road Streetscape Typical Section Board – provided artistic renderings of the existing typical section as well and two potential roadway typical sections – one with planting strip and sidewalk and the other with planting strip, sidewalk and raised bike lanes.
- Phase I: Wendover Road to Briar Creek Road Map – this map focused on potential improvements that could be implemented in the section of the corridor from Wendover Road to Briar Creek Road, including wider sidewalks, planting strips, replacement of existing sidewalk, adding pedestrian crossings, and improving bus stops. The map also included insets with renderings of potential improvements. An estimated cost range was included for each proposed improvement.
- Monroe Road Streetscape Idea Boards – these boards showed images of potential streetscape improvements, such as pedestrian lighting, seating, wider sidewalks, and raised bike lanes. Additional boards showed renderings of potential pocket parks that could be developed along the corridor.

While 90 people attended the July 2018 public meeting, few business owners attended. In order to ensure the City received feedback from the business community along Monroe Road, a Business Owner Meeting was held on November 7, 2018. Lunch was provided, followed by a short presentation by the Project Team. The presentation was followed by an open Q&A session where City staff and the Project Team were available to answer questions regarding the project. Maps and project boards were also on display for business owners to review before the presentation and after the Q&A session.

PUBLIC MEETING



BUSINESS OWNER MEETING

The Project Team reviewed all of this input before finalizing the preferred cross section and recommended improvements for the corridor. Additional neighborhood meetings and public meetings will be held as the project progresses to present the detailed design plans and construction schedule updates.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES TO DATE

Date	Meeting/Group Name	Meeting Location	Total Attendees
10/12/2016	Monroe Road Advocates	East Mecklenburg High School	9
10/18/2016	Amity Gardens Neighborhood	Eastern Hills Baptist Church	11
10/25/2016	Echo Hills and Oakhurst Neighborhoods	St. John's United Methodist Church	16
06/03/2017	Monroe Road Visioning Workshop	Oakhurst STEAM Academy	~100
07/24/2018	Public Meeting	Ovens Auditorium	90
11/07/2018	Business Owner Meeting	St. John's United Methodist Church	30
		TOTAL	**256**

Next Steps

This planning report establishes goals and objectives for the project area; develops a conceptual design and recommends improvements to meet identified goals and objectives; and outlines the associated costs.

Before construction of improvements recommended in this plan, a number of additional steps need to be completed. The Project Team will develop final design plans that balance implementing recommended improvements and minimizing impacts. The City will continue coordination with property owners, utility companies, and other public agencies. Additional public meetings will be held with area residents, neighborhood associations, and business owners to present detailed plans and updated schedules.

COORDINATION ONGOING

- **Develop Preliminary Design Plans** — *Fall 2019*
- **Public Meeting** — *Fall 2019*
- **Develop Final Right-of-Way Plans** — *Spring 2020*
- **Begin Implementing Interim Project Recommendations** — *Fall 2020*
- **2020 Transportation Bond Vote** — *Nov. 2020*
- **Implement Remaining Project Recommendations** — *2021–2022*

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Visit CharlotteFuture.com/Monroe or text the phrase *charmeck mrs* to 468-311 to receive updates on this project.

CHARLOTTE.

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