



DOWNTOWN PLAN

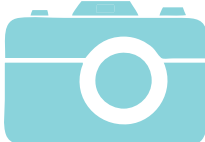
THE NEXT 10 YEARS



Final Report
September 15, 2015



City of Raleigh
Downtown Raleigh Alliance
Sasaki Associates, Inc.
HR&A Advisors
Kimley-Horn and Associates
Jacobs Engineering Group





This plan would not have been possible without the efforts of all the citizens who took part in the process and contributed their ideas and insights. We thank the dedicated Downtown Plan Advisory Committee, appointed by City Council, sponsors who helped fund the effort, and the consultants who brought their expertise and creativity to bear. The City of Raleigh interdepartmental team, including the Urban Design Center and Downtown Raleigh Alliance staff, worked seamlessly with the consultant team to collect the vast inventory, create the public engagement strategy, and organize and facilitate the public events that attracted more than 1,000 Raleigh stakeholders. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed creating it.



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Nancy McFarlane, City of Raleigh Mayor
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Wayne Maiorano, Council Member, District A
John Odom, Council Member, District B
Eugene Weeks, Council Member, District C
Kay C. Crowder, Council Member, District D
Bonner Gaylord, Council Member, District E

City Manager

Ruffin L. Hall

Assistant City Managers

James Greene
Marchell Adams-David
Tansy Hayward

Chief of Staff

Louis Buonpane

Design + Planning Consultant Team

Sasaki Associates, Inc.,
Fred Merrill, Brie Hensold, Stephen Gray, Jill Dixon

HR&A Advisors,
Kate Collignon, Kyle Vangel, Conor Muldoon

Kimley-Horn and Associates,
Richard Adams, Clarence Eng

Jacobs Engineering Group,
Dan Douglas

Downtown Plan Advisory Committee

Chair: Scott Cutler, Vice President, Clancy & Theys
Co-Chair: Anne S. Franklin, Community Organizer
Brooks Bell, CEO and Founder, Brooks Bell, Inc.
Jim Belt, Co-founder & President,
Downtown Living Advocates
Philip Bernard, Owner, Landscape Design and
Consultation, Founder, Person Street Partnership

Pam Blondin, Owner, Deco Raleigh

John Boylan, President, Spectrum Properties

Ann-Cabell Baum Anderson, President and Sales
Manager, Glenwood Agency

Ashley Christensen, Chef and Owner,
Ashley Christensen Restaurants

Marty Clayton, Manager, Community Relations,
Duke Energy - Northern Region

David Diaz, President & CEO, Downtown Raleigh
Alliance

Denny Edwards, President, Greater Raleigh Convention
and Visitors Bureau

Sally Edwards, Executive Director, Marbles Kids Museum

Ed Fritsch, President, CEO, and Director, Highwoods
Properties, Inc.

Greg Hatem, Founder, Empire Properties and
Empire Eats

John J. Healy Jr., Co-founder and CEO, Hyde Street
Holdings, LLC

Aly Khalifa, Owner, Gamil Design, Designbox

Charles Leffler, Vice Chancellor for Finance and
Business, North Carolina State University

Dan Lovenheim, Owner, Cornerstone Tavern

R.W. (Bill) Mullins, Member, Centennial Authority and
President, DSM, Inc.

Sarah Powers, Executive Director, Visual Art Exchange

Jason Queen, Real Estate Developer and Founder,
Raleigh Restoration Group, LLC

Karla Salgado, Student, Broughton High School

Harvey Schmitt, President,
Raleigh Chamber of Commerce

Nate Spilker, Sr. Director, Customer Care,
Citrix Systems, Inc.

Bill Spruill, Founder, Global Data Consortium

Sumit Vohra, Owner, Lonerider Brewery

Gregg Warren, President & CEO, DHIC, Inc.

Lloyd Williams, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Computer
and Information Sciences, Shaw University

Lonnette Williams, Chair,
Central Citizens Advisory Council

Ed Wills, Owner, Partners MCD

Downtown Plan Management Team

Ken Bowers, AICP, Director,
Raleigh Department of City Planning

Grant Meacci, PLA, Planning + Design Manager,
Urban Design Center

David Diaz, President and CEO,
Downtown Raleigh Alliance

Trisha Hasch, Urban Planner + Project Manager, Raleigh
Department of City Planning

City of Raleigh Project Team Communications / Graphics

Sharon Felton, Communication Manager

Jorge Gao, Senior Communication Specialist

David Langley, Communication Specialist

Aaron Sheppard, Web Content Manager

Stephanie Currier, Web Content Manager

Beth Nooe, Urban Designer

Luke Wallenbeck, Urban Designer

Carter Pettibone, AICP, Urban Planner

GIS Support

Ray Aull, GISP, Planner II

Land Use, Transit, & Transportation

David Eatman, Manager

David Walker, Transit Planner II

Eric Lamb, PE, Manager

Tim Bender, Senior Planner

Jason Meyers, Planner II

Jennifer Baldwin, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

Public Utilities

Robert Massengill, PE

Aaron Brower, PE

Public Works, Stormwater Management

Mark Senior, PE

Kevin Boyer, Stormwater Engineer

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources

Stephen Bentley, Superintendent

Grayson Maughan, Parks Planner

Ivan Dickey, Assistant Parks Superintendent

Jerry Bolas, Executive Director, Office of Raleigh Arts

Kim Curry-Evans, Public Art Coordinator, Office of
Raleigh Arts

Historic Preservation

Martha Lauer, Senior Planner

Tania Tully, Planner II

City of Raleigh Department of City Planning, Public Meeting Facilitators

Dhanya Sandeep, AICP, Urban Planner

Luke Wallenbeck, Urban Designer

Beth Nooe, Urban Designer

Eric Hodge, AICP, CZO, Assistant Code Administrator

Bynum Walter, AICP, Senior Planner

Vivian Eckstrom, Planner II

Dieva Vowels, Administrative Assistant

Downtown Raleigh Alliance Project Team

Kimberley Jones, Assistant to the President

Lacie Lindstaedt, Director of Communications and
Membership

Carla Laird, Social Media Manager

Mike Stephens, Operations Director

Bill King, Planning and Development Manager

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1. THE VISION	9
INTRODUCTION	10
THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN RALEIGH	12
PLAN FRAMEWORK	12
IMPLEMENTATION	13
ENGAGING THE PUBLIC	15
BOUNDARY MAP	17
2. FRAMEWORK THEMES	19
INTRODUCTION	21
BREATHE	22
MOVE	26
STAY	30
LINK	34
3. CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS	37
DISTRICT MAP	39
INTRODUCTION	40
GATEWAY CENTER	41
NORTH END	46
MOORE SQUARE	48
NASH SQUARE/RALEIGH UNION STATION	50
GLENWOOD GREEN	52
4. FINANCING + BUILDING PLAN: AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	55
INTRODUCTION	57
NASH SQUARE/RALEIGH UNION STATION	58
GATEWAY CENTER	60
RETAIL STRATEGY	62

For additional information about the Raleigh Downtown Plan see the [CHALLENGES + OPPORTUNITIES REPORT](#) on raleighnc.gov.

The Raleigh Experience



1

THE VISION

CHAPTER ONE

THE VISION

INTRODUCTION

Downtown Raleigh is thriving. The empty sidewalks of a decade ago are now abuzz with workers, residents, and visitors. Restaurants, nightlife, street markets, and cultural events fill the city streets. Exceptional employment opportunities have created a robust and entrepreneurial spirit that permeates our daily lives. Cyclists and pedestrians populate our streets, and glimpses of artistic expression can be found in unexpected places. Year after year, Raleigh continues to garner national accolades for livability. But it wasn't serendipity or luck that got us here, and we can't be complacent with our achievements to date.

Much of Raleigh's current success resulted from passion, hard work, vision, and planning. In 2003, our community created the Livable Streets Plan, with major goals that led to the transformation of downtown. Within a decade, Fayetteville Street Mall opened to traffic and is now the focus area of downtown. The convention center allows Raleigh to attract events and visitors worthy of a state capital. Keen attention to the pedestrian experience has reinvigorated the sidewalks and businesses downtown. The residual impact of this plan is immense, and its success has paved the way for new visions that extend far beyond Fayetteville Street.

This is a time like no other for Raleigh. We have laid a foundation for success, and we have the ingredients for our city to be truly extraordinary. Our population is creative and visionary. Our distinction as the state capital offers unique resources and opportunities. And the landscape of our city offers a palate of opportunities for all kinds of development.

The alignment of all of these resources and opportunities requires a renewed vision and direction for downtown. This document, the Downtown Plan, sets the vision for our downtown's growth and development for the near term as we become the great city we imagine in the long term. A great city belongs to the people. Over the course of one year, hundreds of people shared their perspectives with ideas and dreams for the future of Raleigh. Open community meetings, brainstorming sessions, debates, and online dialogue led to many of the goals and action items outlined here. From the practical to the truly audacious, every contribution was valued and considered.

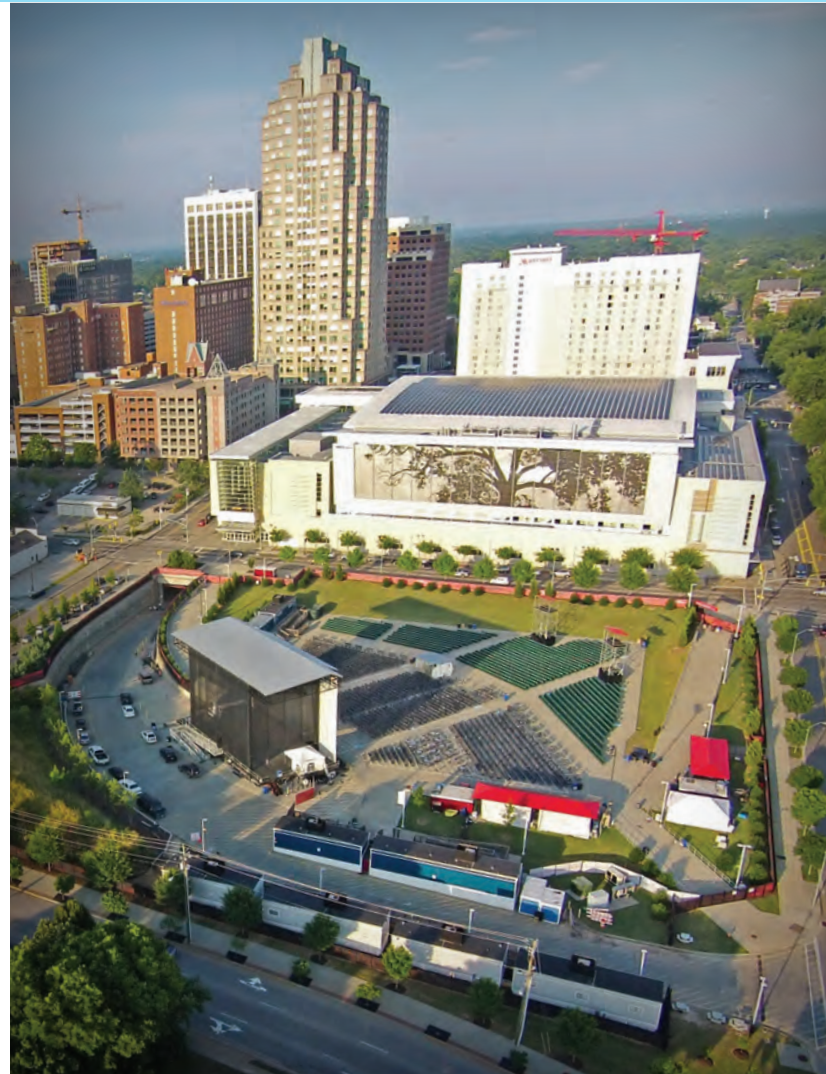
While the range of ideas was broad, several clear themes emerged to become the basis for this plan. How do we go from great ideas to a better downtown? Translating the goals and actions of this planning document into an improved

THE VISION

downtown experience for residents, workers, and visitors can start with a series of projects. These catalytic projects will help bridge downtown's districts, improve the pedestrian experience, create new and improved green space downtown, and encourage partnerships between the many different organizations, institutions, businesses, and residents who call downtown Raleigh home. We want an inclusive city that is authentic, and we want to capitalize on our extraordinary assets. We want parks and public transit to be prominent and accessible. We want a city that is walkable, bikeable, and well-connected. We want to shine a spotlight on creativity, design, innovation, and entrepreneurship. We want to bring together institutional, public, and private partners in the shared vision. We want a city that is truly unique, truly "Raleigh."

Now we begin the next phase. This plan lays out goals and strategies for realizing our collective vision. Some goals encompass projects already underway, including Raleigh Union Station, the major renovation of Moore Square Park and the Moore Square Transit Station, Devereux Meadows Park and Greenway, and the extension of West Street north and south. Other goals start the ball rolling on long-range visions, still others tackle critical challenges or difficult locations. While the focus areas are not exhaustive in terms of every block or district of downtown, the project areas establish a set of implementation priorities. These are the places where new development, public investments, and strengthened partnerships will have the greatest impact. Enhancing the downtown experience begins here!

This is where we begin the work of realizing our vision with ideas that become concepts and concepts that begin discussions. This plan adds some significant new ideas to the mix, including the transformation of Nash Square and its surroundings, creating new north-south green corridors, rethinking the street network in the south end of downtown, and facilitating a bold new development vision in the area adjacent to the Duke Energy performing arts complex. Catalytic projects anchored in each of downtown's major sectors will transform Raleigh's urban core.



A thriving city is more than the sum of its parts; it is a machine for generating abundance. As downtown Raleigh fills in the gaps and creates new connections, it will create an abundance of opportunity, interaction, choices, and experiences. It is this abundance that makes downtown special and worthy of such attention and foresight. With boldness and vision, we have the opportunity to create a cityscape that will outlive us all. This is Raleigh's renaissance.

"Growth is inevitable and desirable, but the destruction of community character is not. The question is not whether your part of the world is going to change. The question is how."

-Edward T. McMahan, The Conservation Fund

Contributor: Pam Blondin, Owner, Deco Raleigh and member of Downtown Plan Advisory Committee

THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN RALEIGH

Throughout many public meetings, workshops, and online interactions, several consistent themes emerged. These included an emphasis on creating authentic experiences; focusing on inclusion so that downtown benefits everyone, not just a few; and innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship as the foundation for future downtown success.

The Downtown Plan vision statement incorporates these themes and is the foundation for our recommendations:

“*Downtown Raleigh is an economic engine for the region and a hub for arts, innovation, and creativity. It provides the physical spaces and places to support the activities of entrepreneurs, artists, and businesses large and small. It is a destination where people from around the region come to experience culture, entertainment, commerce, and community. Downtown Raleigh is an urban neighborhood providing opportunities for households of varied age and incomes, from singles to families, to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives. The streets, buildings, and public realm of downtown are a proving ground for integrating nature and environmental stewardship into the urban environment, using the latest innovations in transportation and green infrastructure.*”

PLAN FRAMEWORK

This vision statement is ambitious. How to make it real is the focus of the remainder of the report. Four Framework Themes have been developed which elaborate on the vision and contain specific goals and actions necessary to implement the theme. The Framework Themes are detailed in Chapter 2 and summarized below:

BREATHE: A Greener Raleigh - *Create public open spaces where people can pause and breathe, gather, and relax within the city.* This theme supports the vision for an urban neighborhood and environmental stewardship.

MOVE: Create Connections - *Make walking, biking, and transit the preferred ways to get in and around downtown Raleigh.* This theme supports both the goal of greater sustainability along with the vision for a thriving center of commerce and innovation by emphasizing transportation access and modes that promote urban density, serendipity, and interaction.

STAY: Revitalization & Redevelopment - *Realize downtown's potential as a dynamic city-center neighborhood anchoring tourism, entertainment, and culture.* This theme supports the vision for downtown as a regional destination for great experiences, arts, and culture.

LINK: Network & Partner - *Align with institutional, public, and private partners to bring downtown's shared vision to life.* This theme supports the entire vision by putting partnerships at the center of implementation.

The elements of the vision statement and Framework Themes are given physical form through a series of five Catalytic Project Areas, which are illustrated in Chapter 3. These five areas were chosen as the most strategic locations where public and private interventions could have a transformative impact on downtown Raleigh. The five Catalytic Project Areas are as follows:

GATEWAY CENTER: *A large-scale convention, tourism, employment, and entertainment destination.* Leveraging the Raleigh Convention Center, Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts, and growing hotel infrastructure makes the south end of downtown the ideal location for civic and destination uses that welcome large numbers of visitors. This is also the only area where sites exist that can accommodate large-footprint uses.

NORTH END: *Completing an urban neighborhood.* In contrast to the large-scale redevelopment contemplated on the South End, the vision for the North End fills the gaps between existing assets to create a complete neighborhood that combines new housing options with unique local retail and dining along North Person Street and in Seaboard Station.

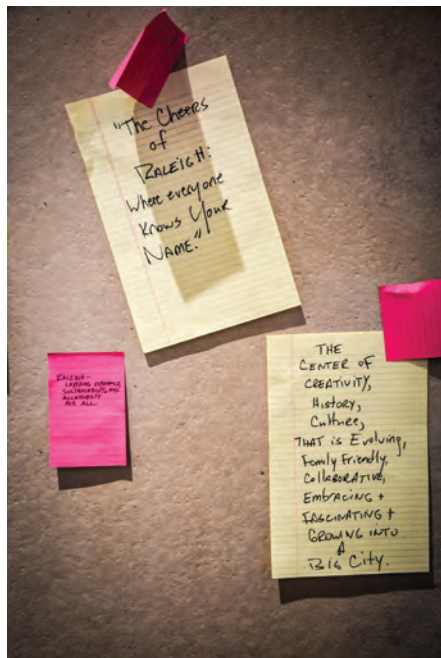
MOORE SQUARE: *Great civic spaces in the heart of the city.* Moore Square's assets, already unique in the city, will grow even stronger after the square is renovated. With the Marbles Kids Museum and IMAX theater, the north side of the square is already among the top destinations for families. To the west, the soon to be redesigned and rehabilitated Moore Square Transit Station will deliver thousands of riders a day to the area each day. To the south, the revitalized City Market will provide one of the region's most unique shopping experiences. To the east, new mixed-use development will anchor the square and make it a premier address in downtown.

NASH SQUARE/RALEIGH UNION STATION: *Where transportation, innovation, and gracious public space connect.* The Warehouse District is organically emerging as downtown's innovation hub, driven by entrepreneurs and artists operating at a scale from the small startup (HQ Raleigh), to the growing company (Raleigh Denim), to the major employer (Citrix). The Contemporary Art Museum (CAM) and a plethora of galleries make it an arts destination. It will be bookended by two major civic amenities. Nash Square, the other historic downtown square, will evoke the stately poise of historic Raleigh, while Raleigh Union Station will create a new 21st century gathering space.

GLENWOOD GREEN: *Downtown's first well-known district gains connections.* The thriving Glenwood South district is mostly clustered on Glenwood Avenue, and the commercial uses are heavily tilted towards nightlife. Reaching across the tracks to West and Harrington Street, this area is ideal to accommodate significant new residential development, leveraging two significant public improvements: (1) the replacement and redesign of the Capital and Peace interchange and bridge; and (2) the creation of a new linear park and greenway trail along the Pigeon House Branch in Devereux Meadows.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Framework Themes and Catalytic Project Areas cannot come to fruition without extensive public-private partnerships and a commitment for funding and financing those improvements necessary to catalyze and support new development. Chapter 4 lays out the implementation strategy for the Downtown Plan. It focuses on three key areas: (1) activating the Warehouse District around a revitalized Nash Square; (2) developing a framework for building out the Fayetteville District at Gateway Center; and (3) strengthening downtown Raleigh's retail environment. Under each of these are specific actions regarding funding, governance, roles and responsibilities, and tools to recruit key uses to downtown.



ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

An extensive public engagement process combining new and trusted techniques was utilized to encourage a diverse group of citizens to contribute to the plan. Public meetings and workshops, a robust online presence, and an Advisory Committee all offered valuable input to help guide the process. Public meetings and workshops included an initial kick-off meeting, a downtown-wide visioning meeting, six district visioning meetings, and a presentation of the draft report and recommendations. It is estimated that over one thousand individuals attended these meetings, contributing vital ideas and insight.

Online participation was equally extensive and captured a younger audience that doesn't typically attend public meetings; 36% of the participants were 25-34 years old. PlanningForRaleigh.com, the city's social media application, garnered

more than 18,000 views and 6,000 unique visits during the process. More than 625 individuals registered with the MindMixer site, contributing 343 ideas which were short listed through a popular process of online voting. Lastly, regular updates were delivered to the 10,000 subscribers to the Downtown Raleigh Alliance's monthly newsletter.

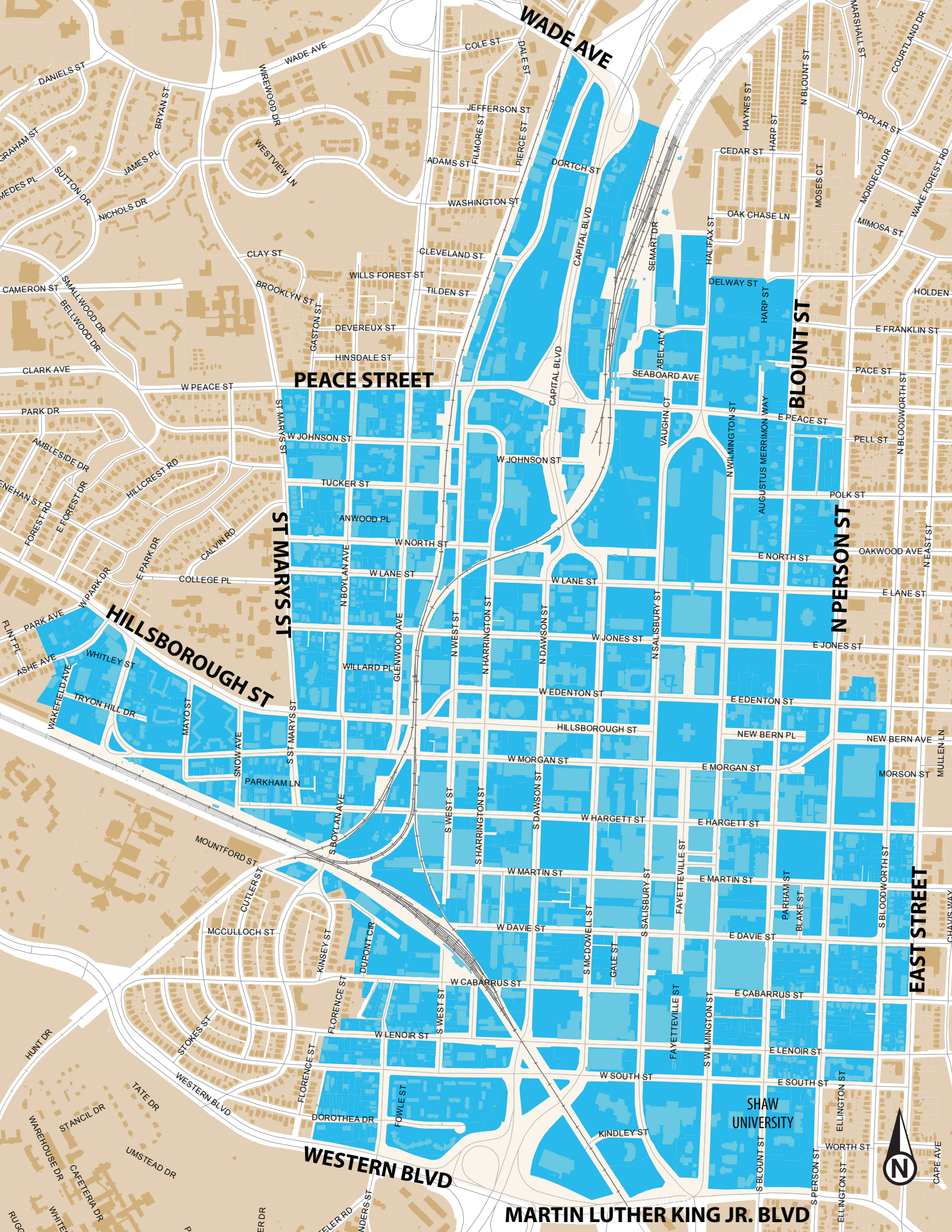
Members of the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee, appointed by the Raleigh City Council, advised the city government and the Downtown Raleigh Alliance (DRA) on the Downtown Plan formulation. Its 33 members represented a broad cross-section of downtown stakeholders. The committee met at key points in the project to review progress, interim documents, and presentations.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

- **1,000+ attendees** at public and stakeholder meetings:
 - Public Kick-off
180 people
 - Downtown Visioning meeting
200 people
 - District Visioning meetings
325 people
 - Draft Downtown Plan presentation
250 people
- **18,000+ views** on PlanningForRaleigh.com, the city's social media application
- **6,000+ unique visitors** on PlanningForRaleigh.com
- **10,000 subscribers** to the DRA newsletter

DOWNTOWN PLAN Boundary Map





WADE AVE

PEACE STREET

HILLSBOROUGH ST

ST MARYS ST

WESTERN BLVD

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BLVD

BLOUNT ST

N PERSON ST

EAST STREET

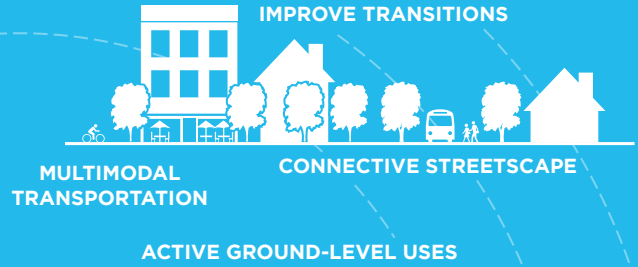
SHAW UNIVERSITY



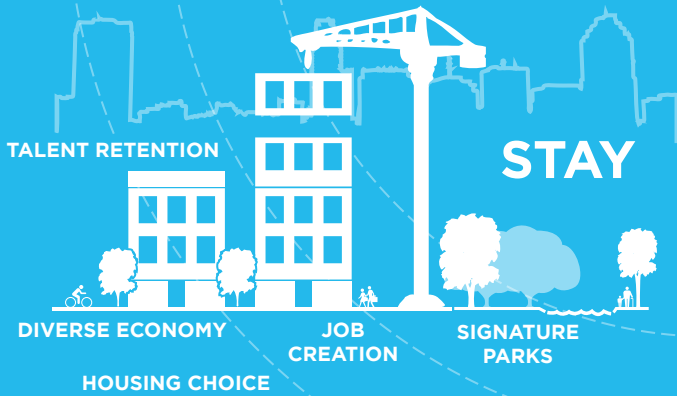
BREATHE



MOVE



Raleigh Experience



2

FRAMEWORK THEMES

BREATHE

A Greener Raleigh

Create public open spaces where people can pause and breathe, gather, and relax within the city.

MOVE

Create Connections

Make walking, biking, and transit the preferred ways to get in and around downtown Raleigh.

STAY

Revitalization & Redevelopment

Realize downtown's potential as a dynamic city-center neighborhood anchoring tourism, entertainment, and culture.

LINK

Network & Partner

Align with institutional, public, and private partners to bring downtown's shared vision to life.

CHAPTER TWO

FRAMEWORK THEMES

INTRODUCTION

The Framework Themes of the Downtown Plan advance the vision statement by building on historic and contemporary development patterns and the city's underlying topography and environmental opportunities. Focusing on the public realm, infrastructure, and partnerships, the Framework Themes seek to organize public open space, development, and connectivity throughout downtown Raleigh. For each theme, a small set of key goals and a larger set of implementing actions are identified.

The Framework Themes of Breathe, Move, Stay, and Link capture these four key ideas:




- Improve, expand access, and connect the public open space network.
- Enhance walkability and connectivity, both within downtown and to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Cultivate new development and activity that enhances the character and community of downtown.
- Strengthen partnerships and collaborations with diverse stakeholders and institutions.

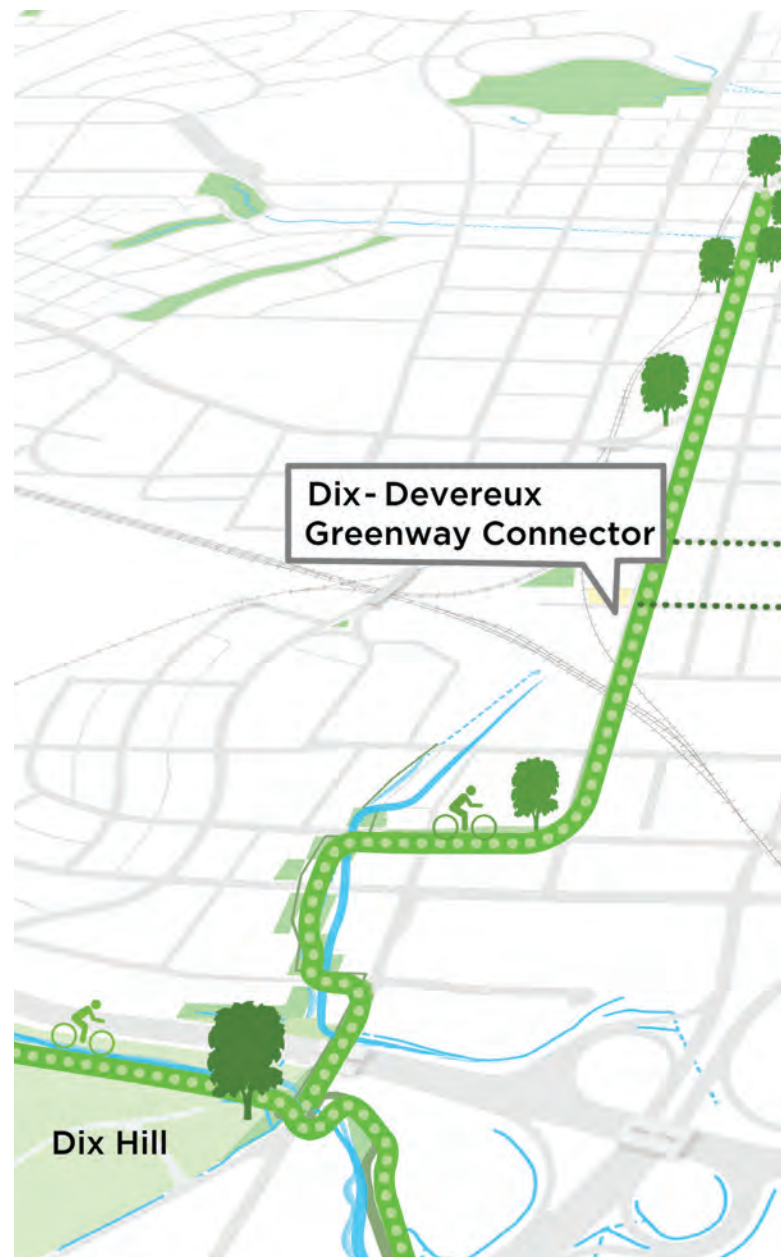
BREATHE

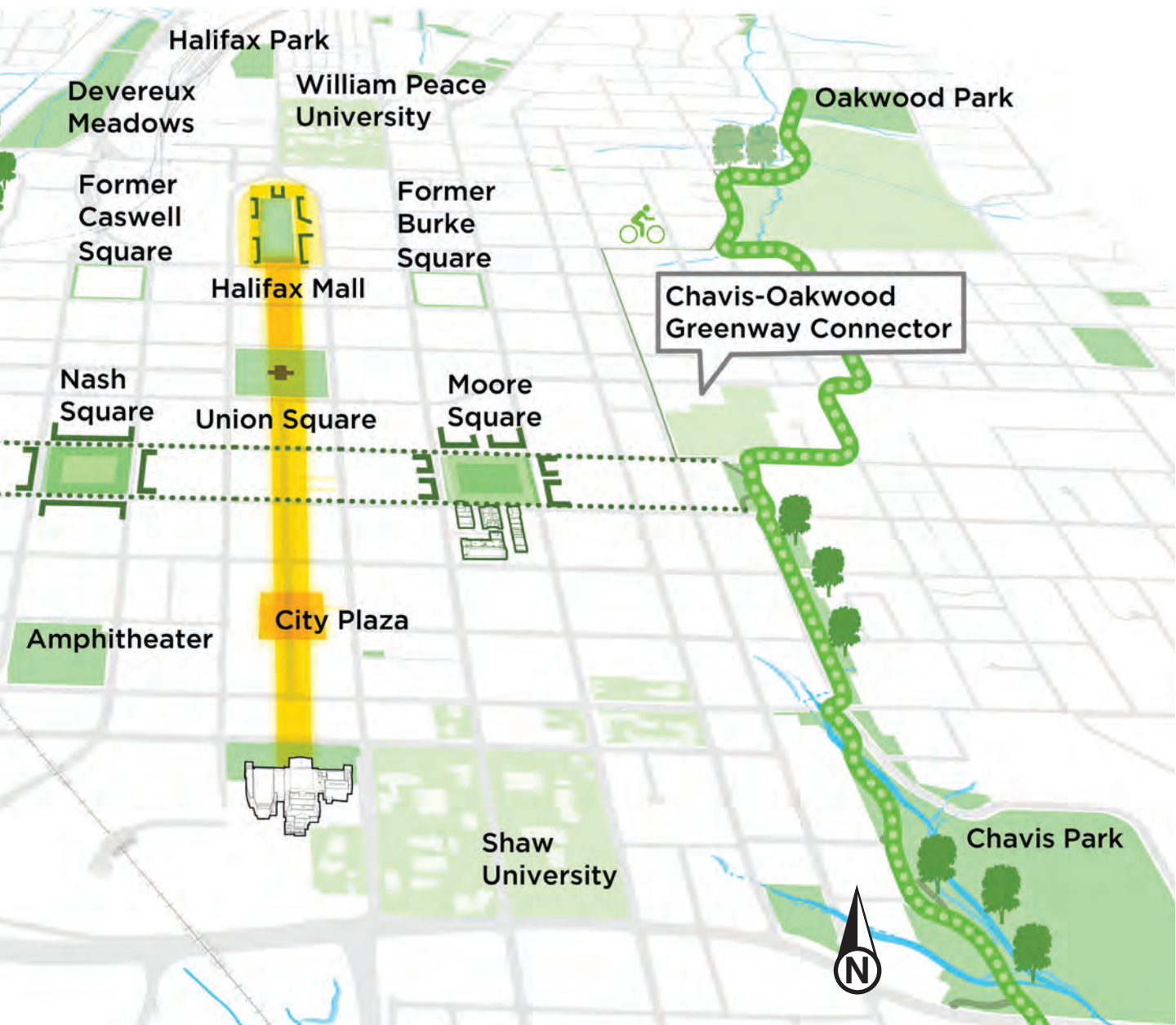
A Greener Raleigh

Create public open spaces where people can pause and breathe, gather, and relax within the city.

Sometimes referred to as the “lungs” of a city, public open spaces, including urban parks, greenways, plazas, and squares, play a critical role in downtown. Some urban parks are quiet respites, offering a chance to pause, gather, and relax within the city. Other public spaces are more social and include spaces for gatherings, playing, and events. Together downtown’s public open spaces form a green network that helps environmentally by cleaning air and absorbing stormwater. Public open spaces are urban necessities that attract people to live, work, and visit downtown. Greenways and green streets (streets that combine enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities with natural stormwater treatments) can connect downtown’s open spaces. They support the cultural life of the city by providing spaces for public art installations as well as arts-related events. The goal of “Breathe” is to transform downtown Raleigh into a center for innovative and appealing public open spaces connecting the network, improving and activating existing spaces, and expanding access to underserved areas of downtown.

-  Primary green street or greenway connector
-  Civic / symbolic spine
-  Key bicycle connection





PUBLIC OPEN SPACE NETWORK

GOAL

BG-1 Reposition and refurbish downtown's existing parks and green spaces to reflect the growing demand and changing uses for urban open spaces and plazas.

ACTIONS

BA-1 Implement the Moore Square Master Plan to reposition the park for the next generation of park users and better attract new development to the district.

BA-2 Complete the renovations of Exchange and Market Plazas.

BA-3 Complete a cultural landscape report for Nash Square prior to initiating a design study.

BA-4 Undertake a design study to re-envision Nash Square as an urban green that supports the growth of the Warehouse and Fayetteville Street Districts and to strengthen their connection.

BA-5 Implement the results of the Nash Square design study.

BA-6 Inventory downtown public spaces available for activities and develop a programming strategy for these spaces.

BA-7 Work in partnership with state government to activate Halifax Mall; explore amenities like a rubberized running track around the mall perimeter (approximately a third of a mile) as a healthy amenity for downtown residents and workers.

BA-8 Study Lichtin Plaza, in front of the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts, to establish programming and facility improvements to increase its vitality.

BA-9 Implement the John Chavis Memorial Park Master Plan and invest in the redesign of the Chavis Greenway to better connect the core of downtown to East Raleigh neighborhoods.

BA-10 Study incorporating play facilities for children in public open spaces. Ideas might include a merry-go-round under the City Council chamber, climbing structures in Market/Exchange plazas, skate parks under parking decks, climbing walls on blank parking deck walls, swings along greenways, and slides into public spaces.

GOAL

BG-2 Create new parks and green spaces in downtown, both large and small, to serve the growing population. Ensure a variety of spaces are available for residents of all ages.

ACTIONS

BA-11 Implement the Devereux Meadows project, including the Pigeon House Branch restoration, which will bring needed green space to Glenwood South and the North End.

BA-12 Identify underutilized sites in the Glenwood South and Warehouse Districts that would be suitable for acquisition and conversion into pocket parks.

BA-13 Explore the conversion of traffic islands and other under utilized portions of right-of-way into green infrastructure or pocket park amenities.

BA-14 Position Raleigh Union Station plaza as an important asset for the Warehouse District through its funding, design, programming, and public art.

BA-15 Work in partnership with state government to explore reclamation of all or a portion of Caswell Square for public use and open space.

BA-16 Create a plan for significant open space, with public art, on the Dix Hill property.

BA-17 Redesign the intersection of West and Peace Streets to remove the slip lane and convert it to open space.

BA-18 Study the feasibility for the creation of a dog park and the accommodation of dogs in downtown public open spaces.



GOAL

BG-3 Extend the greenway system into downtown and use it to connect and integrate downtown's public open space resources.

ACTIONS

BA-19 Develop two parallel greenway connectors that connect within downtown and to existing and planned trails/parks: Pigeon House Branch to Rocky Branch and Dix Hill and John Chavis Memorial Park to Oakwood Park (growing the existing Chavis Way Greenway to the north).

BA-20 Convert vacant properties between West Street and railroad tracks (adjacent to the proposed Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor) into a greenway connector to accommodate landscape amenities and a multiuse walkway, connecting Devereux Meadows park and Raleigh Union Station Plaza.

BA-21 Complete the planned Rosengarten Greenway connection to Rocky Branch.

BA-22 Improve bicycle and pedestrian access points from downtown to the Rocky Branch Greenway and the Dix Hill property.

BA-23 Extend the Pigeon House Creek restoration south of Peace Street by exploring the opportunity to daylight the creek and make it an amenity in future redevelopment projects.

BA-24 Connect Chavis Park to downtown through a streetscape project along Martin Street.

GOAL

BG-4 Create a sustainable and transparent funding and governance structure to ensure the long-term acquisition, creation, and maintenance of downtown public open spaces, parks, and plazas.

ACTIONS

BA-25 Develop a strategy and funding plan for land acquisition and capital funding. Consider directing the proceeds from the disposition of city-owned sites into land acquisition and public realm improvements.

BA-26 Develop an operations and maintenance funding approach for downtown open space to adequately cover the increased needs of heavily used public open spaces.

BA-27 Investigate alternative governance structure strategies for downtown public open spaces.

BA-28 Capture value from parks and public improvements by coordinating disposition of city-owned sites nearby public open spaces such as Moore Square, Nash Square, and Devereux Meadows.

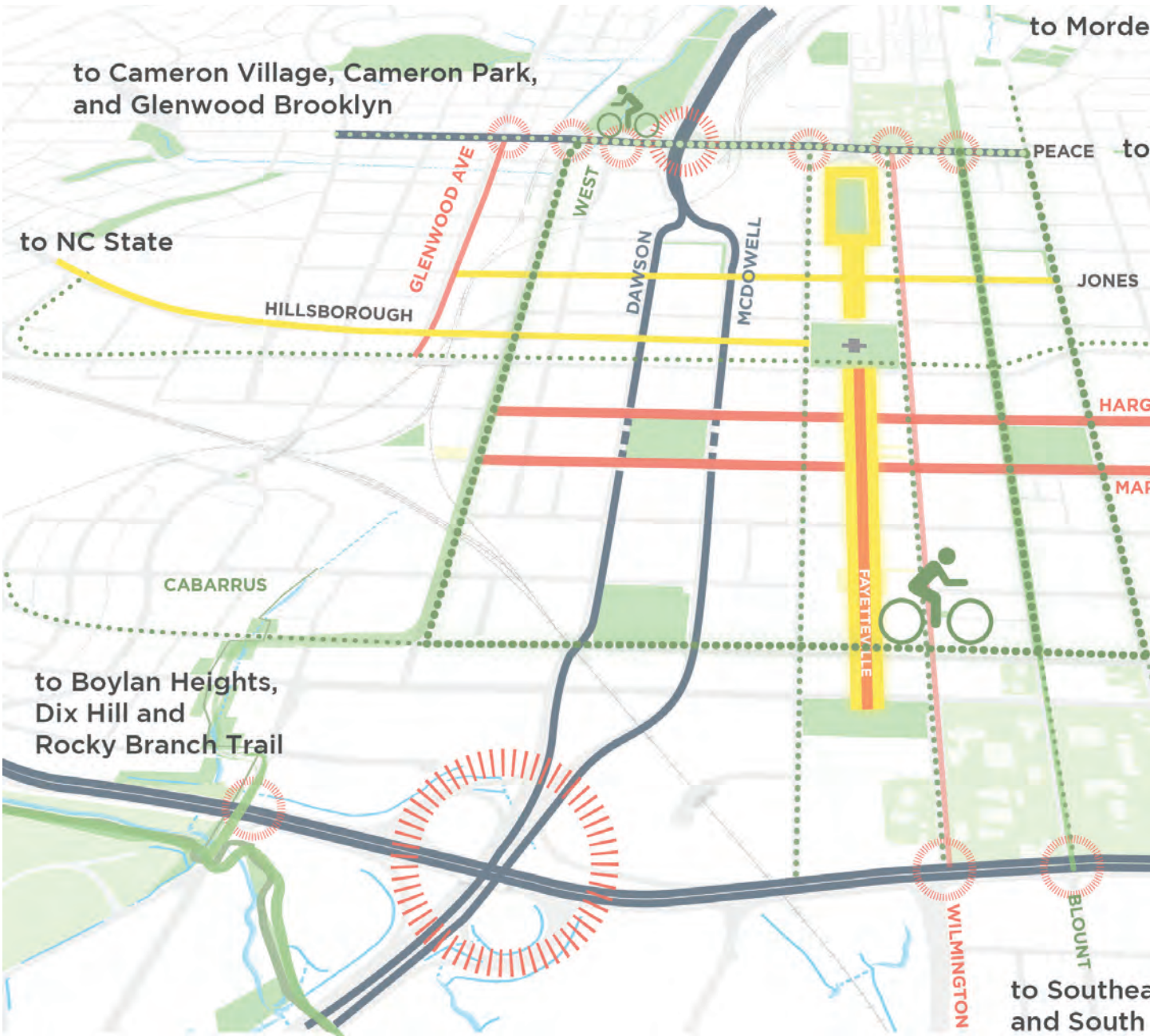
BA-29 Incorporate sustainable practices like recycling, renewable energy, and low-impact development strategies into public open space and park amenities and facilities.

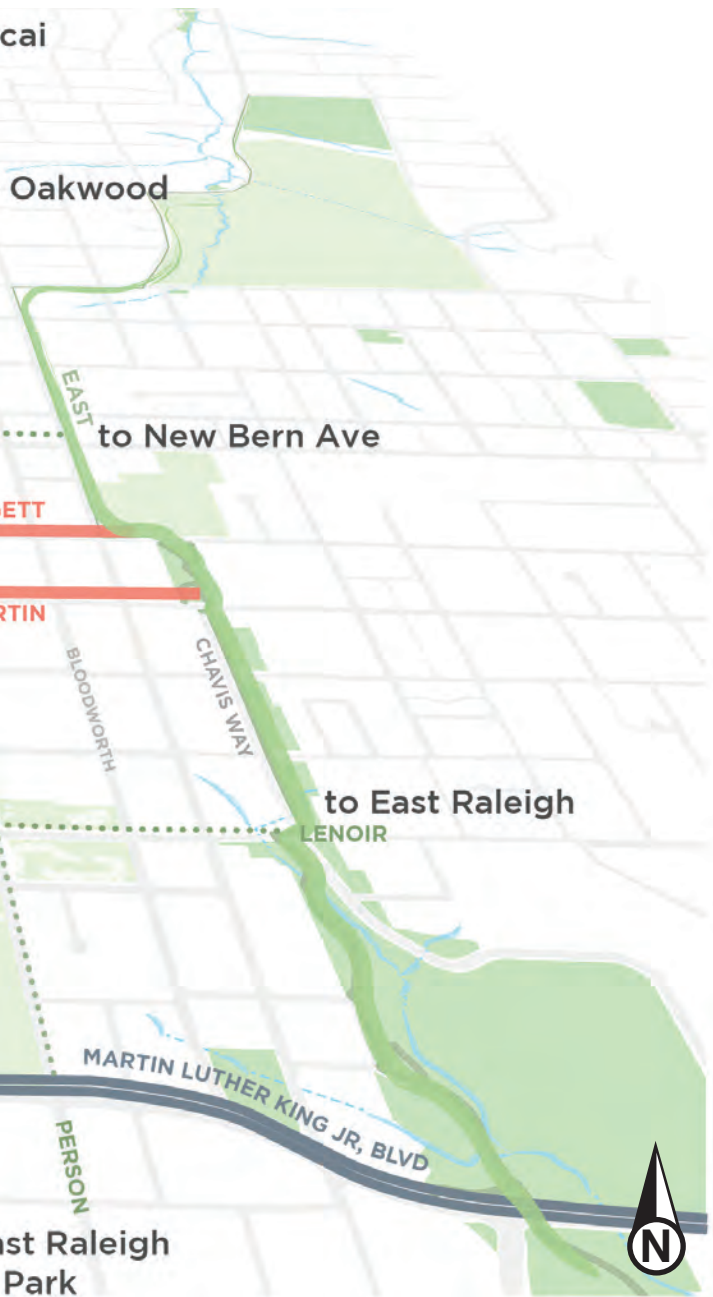


MOVE

Create Connections

Make walking, biking, and transit the preferred ways to get in and around downtown Raleigh.





With a compact size and well-connected street grid, downtown Raleigh is physically well-suited for walking and bicycling. The goal of “Move” is to enhance the character and uses along key streets to make walking, biking, and transit the preferred ways to get in and around downtown, while still accommodating automobile traffic. This includes increasing bike infrastructure throughout downtown, improving the pedestrian realm, upgrading transit service and passenger amenities, and ensuring downtown is accessible to people of all abilities.

The energy of Fayetteville Street from the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts, in the south, extends north to Halifax Mall, creating a civic spine through downtown. Hargett and Martin Streets, for example, like Glenwood Avenue, continue to evolve as key pedestrian-oriented retail streets. West, Blount, and Person Streets have become primary cycling streets; coupled with Peace and Lenoir Streets which create a downtown bicycle loop. Dawson, McDowell, Peace, and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard/Western Boulevard remain high-capacity vehicular streets but include improved intersections to provide safe and inviting pedestrian crossings. The circulator bus service compliments enhanced GoRaleigh service to provide easy transit access to downtown destinations.

Together, these overlapping networks connect downtown’s distinct districts and encourage visitors, residents, and workers to explore downtown by foot, bicycle, or on a bus.

- Pedestrian-oriented street
- Safe intersection for all modes
- Primary green street or greenway connector
- Civic / symbolic spine
- Major vehicular street
- ⋯ Key bicycle connection

GOAL

MG-1 Create a complete pedestrian network—one that is well lit, fully accessible, generously sized, and visually attractive—to make accessing all of downtown on foot as safe, inviting, and convenient as possible.

ACTIONS

MA-1 Improve east-west pedestrian connections to enhance connectivity to adjacent districts, focusing on trouble spots such as Peace Street, Lane Street between McDowell and Harrington Streets, and the Hillsborough-Edenton merge.

MA-2 Pursue the connection of West Johnson Street between West and Harrington Streets in conjunction with redevelopment.

MA-3 Focus on downtown streets like Hargett and Martin Streets to create a great walking and retail environment from Raleigh Union Station to Moore Square and beyond.

MA-4 Identify a strategy and investigate routes to better connect Raleigh Union Station to the Warehouse District southwest of Cabarrus Street at the Wye.

MA-5 Establish a dedicated Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding stream and/or special assessments for downtown streetscapes.

MA-6 Prioritize and fund the design and implementation of the Peace Street East streetscape from West to Person Streets.

MA-7 Improve the Glenwood Avenue streetscape to better accommodate the number of pedestrians.

MA-8 Address “dark spaces” in downtown through a comprehensive lighting strategy, and include standards in the city’s Street Design Manual. Use LED lights wherever possible.

MA-9 Expand the pedestrian scale wayfinding system.

GOAL

MG-2 Provide on- and off-street bicycle facilities and infrastructure that link all the districts to each other and to the major cycling routes into and out of downtown. Use public art as a way to brighten corridors, connect neighborhoods, and provide interest to pedestrians and bicyclists.

ACTIONS

MA-10 Implement pedestrian and bicycle improvements along Person, Blount, and Peace Streets to connect downtown to planned greenway connectors along Pigeon House Branch and Capital Boulevard.

MA-11 Prioritize West Street as a north-south greenway connector that will eventually connect to greenways north and south of downtown.

MA-12 Study creating a cycle track along West Street north-south from future park-to-park.

MA-13 Increase bike lanes throughout downtown, notably along Wilmington and Salisbury Streets.

MA-14 Implement a BikeShare program in downtown.

MA-15 Reimagine the Capital City Trail into a multicultural historic bike trail circumnavigating downtown.

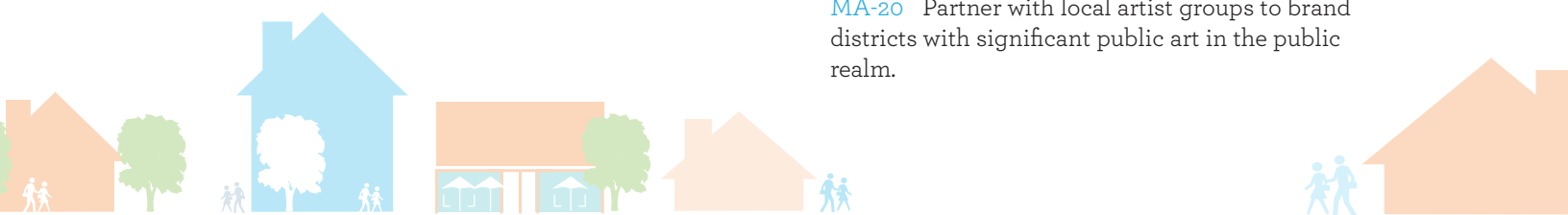
MA-16 Install additional bike corrals in downtown as demand for bike parking grows.

MA-17 Implement specific design and graphic standards to identify and distinguish the Art to Heart Trail (a six-mile route that gives cyclists a safe ride from downtown to the N.C. Museum of Art).

MA-18 Fund the implementation of the South Park Heritage Trail redevelopment strategies and connect the walking route portion of the trail to other planned trails, including the proposed Blount/Person Streets Heritage Walk, creating multiple loop options.

MA-19 Study the use of public art on greenways and bicycle/pedestrian corridors throughout downtown.

MA-20 Partner with local artist groups to brand districts with significant public art in the public realm.



GOAL

MG-3 Enhance transit accessibility in downtown through service improvements. Look for opportunities to enhance transit facilities with public art.

ACTIONS

MA-21 Conduct a follow-up study to the 2015 Wake County Transit Investment Strategy that refines and finalizes transit operation and infrastructure investment details in downtown Raleigh.

MA-22 Provide high-quality transit amenities such as shelter, seating, and system information at all downtown transit stops.

MA-23 Modify the R-line route in the short term to allow more direct and efficient routes to the most frequently used locations.

MA-24 Amplify the use of technology through signage that shows people bus arrival times (either LED live-time signage or a QR code/link to the online app).

MA-25 Identify and direct transit users to transit network nodes with enhanced amenities and increased wayfinding and passenger information.

MA-26 Implement a high quality, aesthetic, safe, and functional renovation of the Moore Square Transit Center.

GOAL

MG-4 Accommodate vehicles using a multi-modal grid of complete streets, as well as on- and off-street parking facilities located in areas of high demand.

ACTIONS

MA-27 Implement the recommendations of the Blount Street/Person Street Corridor Plan.

MA-28 Establish a low-impact development (LID) strategy for downtown streets.

MA-29 Restore two-way traffic on Jones and Lane Street in collaboration with N.C. Department of Administration.

MA-30 Study the realignment of South Salisbury Street at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

MA-31 Redesign intersections at South Boylan, South Saunders, South Dawson, South Wilmington Streets, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, and the intersection at Peace and Halifax Streets to improve pedestrian safety and reduce barriers to north-south travel.

MA-32 Improve Peace Street's accessibility for all modes of travel both along it and through safe intersections across it.

MA-33 Encourage smaller but more numerous public parking facilities in a greater variety of locations downtown by creating a program to partner with developers to add public parking to private developments.

MA-34 Work with N.C. Department of Transportation Rail Division to maintain street connectivity associated with the proposed high-speed rail.

MA-35 Examine the parking policy for additional efficiencies, revenue, and shared options.

MA-36 Evaluate the demand for structured parking.

MA-37 Study Wilmington and Salisbury Streets to consider the restoration of two-way traffic.

MA-38 Implement Phase 2 of Raleigh Union Station.

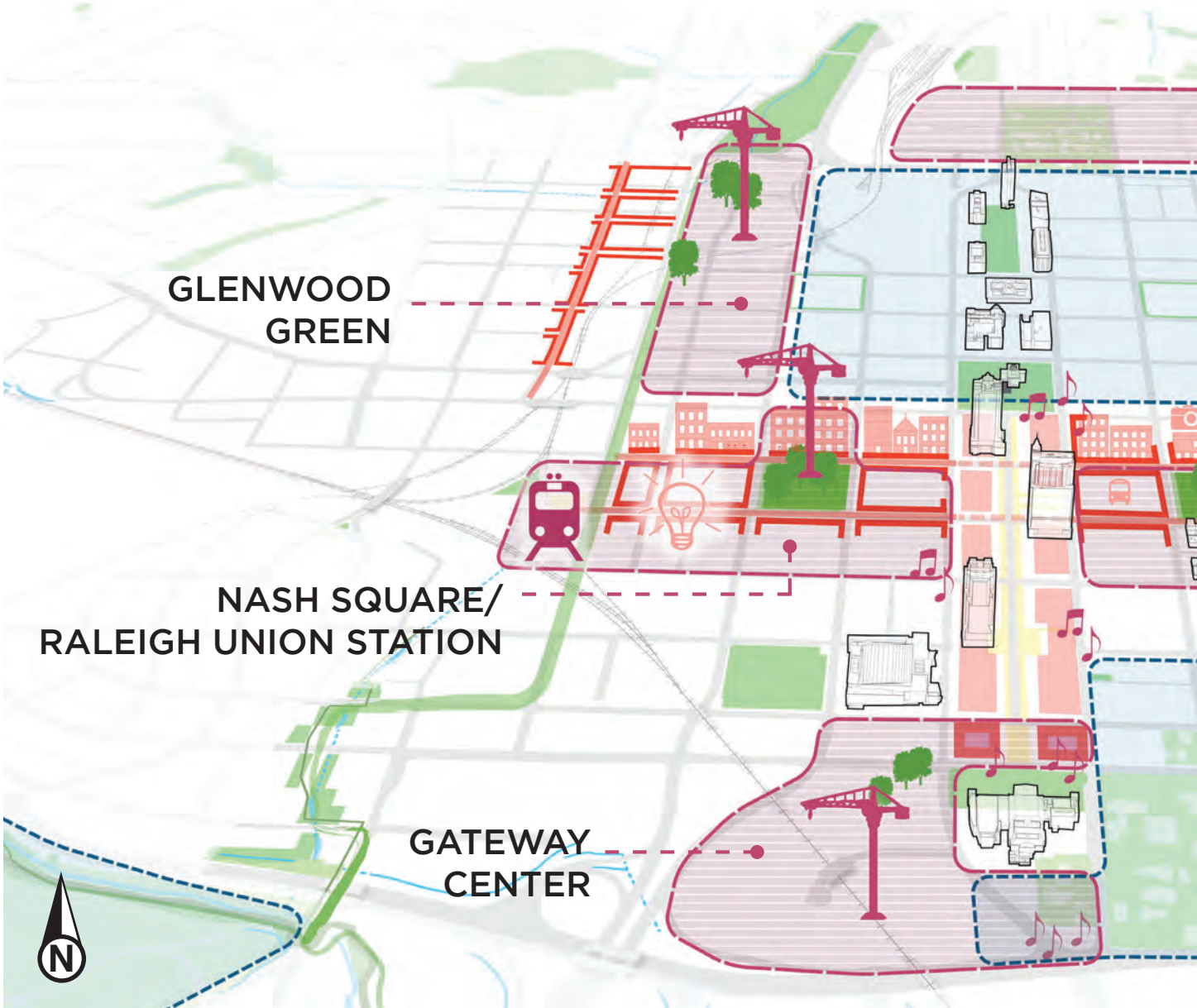
MA-39 Ensure all city investments in new construction, sidewalks, and streetscapes are ADA-compliant. Monitor funding availability to retrofit legacy infrastructure and buildings.



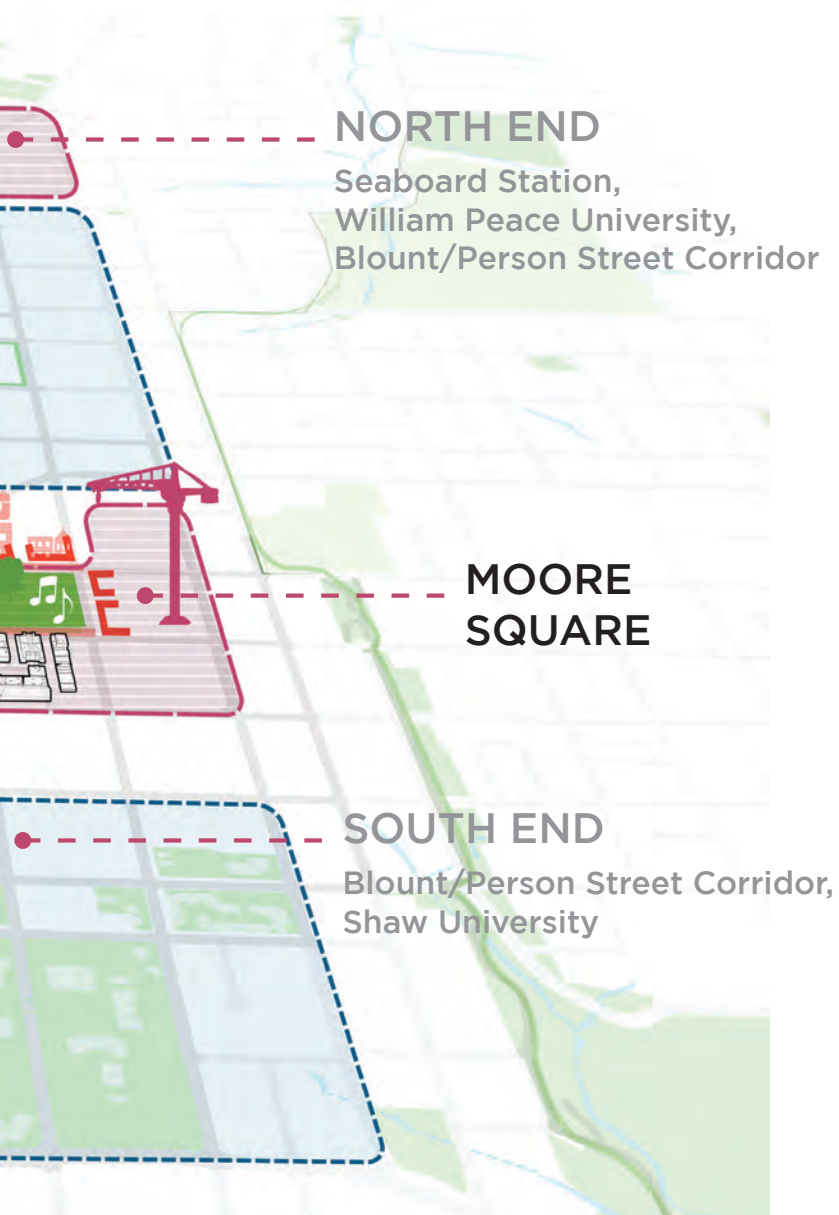
STAY

Revitalization & Redevelopment

Realize downtown’s potential as a dynamic city-center neighborhood anchoring tourism, entertainment, and culture.



FUTURE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES



New development will support and enhance downtown Raleigh as a dynamic regional center offering diverse retail amenities and residential options anchored by tourism and culture with appeal across generations. The goal of the “Stay” theme looks to make downtown an attractive place to live, visit, and do business. Downtown Raleigh is already home to a growing residential base, restaurants, entertainment, a vibrant arts scene, office uses, and retail. Additional service retail and a downtown grocery store were top requests from participants in the planning process. Ensuring downtown has a variety of housing opportunities that are affordable to residents was another common topic of discussion. The unique identities of each of downtown’s different districts will seamlessly blend from one to another, allowing different uses to compliment each other and enhance the downtown experience.

GOAL

SG-1 Keep downtown authentic and full of character through historic preservation and adaptive reuse, public art, and high-quality new construction.

ACTIONS

SA-1 Explore incentives to preserve important architecture.

SA-2 Establish design guidelines for districts, such as the Warehouse District, to guide architectural character of infill development.

SA-3 Use historic and adaptive reuse strategies to expand development while preserving downtown's historic identity and areas of unique character, such as the Warehouse District.

SA-4 Revisit the local historic Depot District south of Martin Street.

GOAL

SG-2 Ensure that downtown remains a clean, safe, and hospitable place to live, work, and visit.

ACTIONS

SA-5 Update standards for Private Use of Public Spaces (PUPS) to incorporate growing hospitality-related issues.

SA-6 Increase funding to expand the Clean and Safe program.

SA-7 Establish a clear strategy and guidelines for special events that utilize downtown streets and open space to minimize the impact to business owners and residents.

SA-8 Explore the adoption of a hospitality management district in other areas of downtown, or modification of the existing amplified entertainment permit program.

SA-9 Ensure funding for a sufficient number of police officers commensurate with the growth of downtown.

GOAL

SG-3 Encourage the development of vacant and underbuilt sites so that the entire downtown fills in with active uses over time.

ACTIONS

SA-10 Capitalize on Raleigh Union Station with transit-oriented development in the Warehouse District.

SA-11 For each city-owned site, develop priorities for development, identify the most appropriate disposition method, and create a program for proactively marketing the site.

SA-12 Promote a more efficient use of land by studying appropriate zoning height designations; amend the zoning map accordingly.

SA-13 Remove parking requirements for development sites under 10,000 square feet and buildings under 40,000 square feet to incentivize infill on sites too small to accommodate off-street parking. Revisit the parking requirements for hotels.

SA-14 Identify infrastructure needs necessary to support downtown growth and create a plan for implementation.

SA-15 Redevelop the Municipal block.

GOAL

SG-4 Create a robust retail environment in downtown that diversifies beyond nightlife to include a complement of local and destination retail.

ACTIONS

SA-16 Redevelop the Municipal block.

SA-17 Expand on the existing Downtown Raleigh Alliance retail strategy to target authentic retail services that support downtown's growing residential, employee, and tourist population.

SA-18 Identify a toolkit for retail recruitment, such as a retail-specific fund that functions as a below-market interest loan or grant program that assists with construction and up-fit costs.

SA-19 Explore public-private partnerships to recruit a grocery store and other neighborhood services.

FRAMEWORK THEMES

SA-20 Target specific locations for a retail incentive area with streetscape improvements, improved wayfinding, public art installations, and parklets.

SA-21 Encourage pop-up cafes and shops, galleries, food trucks, and mobile vendors to activate more isolated parts of the retail corridors.

GOAL

SG-5 Ensure downtown has a diversity of housing opportunities at different price points.

ACTIONS

SA-22 Purchase land with the intent to develop it for increased housing diversity downtown.

SA-23 Commit to setting aside a share of future downtown land sales to fund affordable housing.

SA-24 Coordinate with the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) in the development of future Qualified Allocation Plans to make downtown locations for Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects more competitive and feasible.

SA-25 Develop specific development plans for appropriate city-owned parcels and issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for affordable or mixed-income housing for homeownership and rental.

SA-26 Study the creation of a downtown housing benefit district, which would commit a percentage of the tax increment from new luxury housing to underwrite the construction of affordable units in and near downtown.

SA-27 Issue Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for the disposition of appropriate city-owned properties downtown with the requirement that affordable/workforce housing be included in the development or provided nearby.

GOAL

SG-6 Partner with non-profits and Wake County to address homelessness and work to facilitate housing for the homeless population.

ACTIONS

SA-28 Identify sites in close proximity to the future homeless services facility suitable for expanding the supply of affordable permanent housing options in collaboration with Wake County.

SA-29 Examine possible sites and alternative facility designs for a long-term homeless services facility.

SA-30 Explore Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing for a downtown site.

GOAL

SG-7 Develop a Gateway Center to support a major, regionally-significant mixed-use development, tourist attraction and/or convention center expansion.

ACTIONS

SA-31 Create a bold urban design plan for a cultural/entertainment district that encompasses the Convention Center, Red Hat Amphitheater, and the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts.

SA-32 Transform the Red Hat Amphitheater into a high-quality, long-term open space and entertainment asset for downtown in the existing location or a new location downtown.

SA-33 Develop a plan for the development, marketing, and disposition of two sites flanking the southernmost block of Fayetteville Street, as well as other significant city properties.

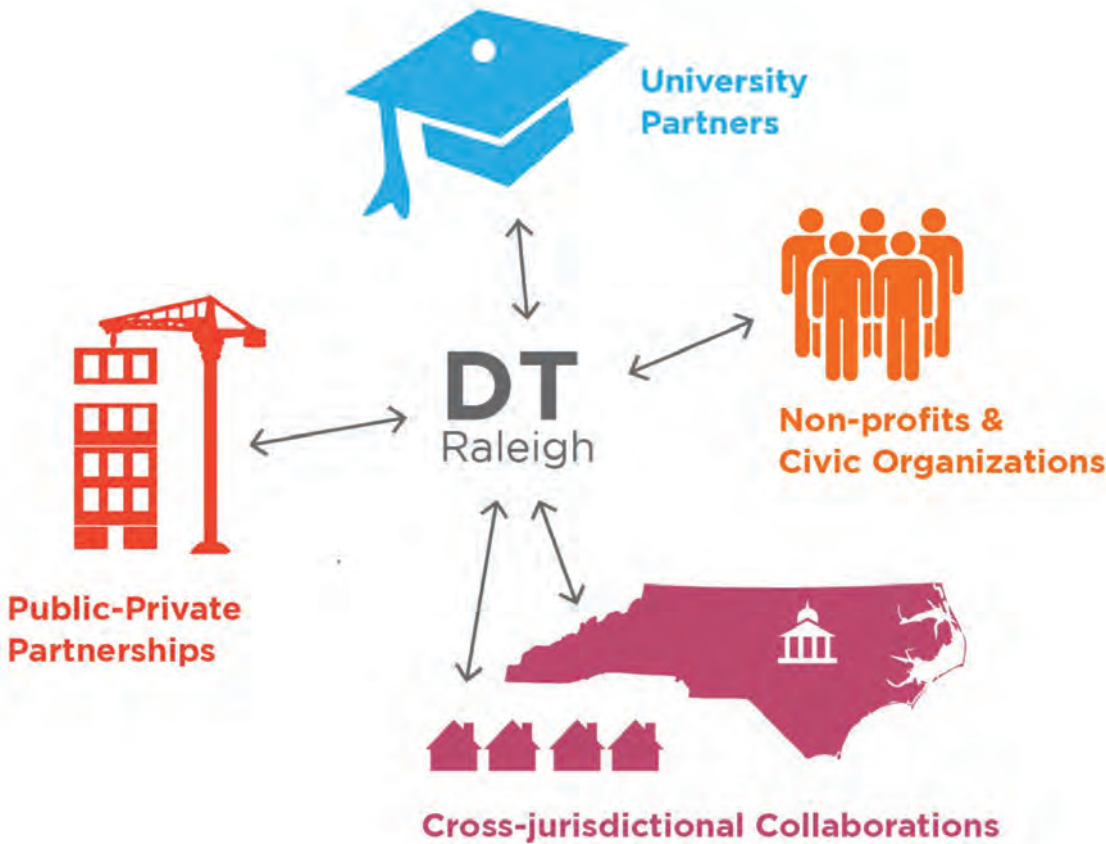
SA-34 Develop a public-private partnership and a plan for the mega-block between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and South Streets that includes a shared vision, development phasing, and financing mechanisms.

SA-35 Attract additional hotels, preferably full-service hotels, to meet the demands of expanding tourism.

LINK

Network & Partner

Align with institutional, public, and private partners to bring downtown’s shared vision to life.



The next generation of downtown development, parks, and connectivity will require teamwork from many different groups. The goal of “Link” is to bring together institutions, the private sector, and public partners to accelerate the implementation of the downtown vision. Developers, universities, nonprofits, city departments, the state government, local businesses, and startups can all help enhance the “Raleigh Experience.” All will have a hand in determining how the character of downtown can reflect the innovation and culture in Raleigh while remaining “real” to its cultural roots.

FRAMEWORK THEMES

GOAL

LG-1 Create strong partnerships with allied public agencies to accelerate implementation of mutually beneficial projects that enhance livability in downtown.

ACTIONS

LA-1 Create a collaborative city and state partnership to assist the N.C. Department of Administration in developing a plan and program for the Capital District that will transform it into a vital connected mixed-use area.

LA-2 Assist the N.C. Department of Administration by contributing to a master plan for the Capital District.

LA-3 Contribute to the reformation of the Capital Planning Commission and assign a staff member(s).

LA-4 Provide event and programming services to the state that will help manage and encourage increased public use of Halifax Mall.

LA-5 Assist N.C. Department of Administration (in collaboration with Preservation NC) in revising or removing the Blount Street Commons Planned Development District to achieve/promote redevelopment.

LA-6 Partner with N.C. Department of Transportation and Rail Division to maintain key connectivity across railroad corridors in advance of future rail projects.

LA-7 Complete the Peace Street bridge replacement project.

GOAL

LG-2 Partner with downtown colleges and universities to enhance their campuses and create a better built environment for faculty, staff, and students.

ACTIONS

LA-8 Work with Shaw University to attract retail development on campus property south of Moore Square.

LA-9 Assist William Peace University with the master plan for Seaboard Station and surrounding properties also owned by William Peace University to maintain a local business emphasis and allow for future growth vitality of this retail area.

LA-10 Work with Wake Tech and the Culinary School to enhance their campus.

GOAL

LG-3 Establish partnerships with local nonprofits and Citizen Advisory Councils to promote and implement the Downtown Plan.

ACTIONS

LA-11 Provide staff resources that can focus on implementation of the plan.

LA-12 Create a task force of city staff, including RHDC, Downtown Raleigh Alliance staff, and Advisory Committee members that focus on the implementation of the 10-year plan.

LA-13 Partner with Downtown Raleigh Alliance to update the brand for downtown in a way that is consistent with the vision of the Downtown Plan.

LA-14 Encourage daytime traffic through continued targeted promotions and other advertising strategies in districts where it is lacking.

LA-15 Design a downtown economic development strategy partnering the city, Downtown Raleigh Alliance, and the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce.

GOAL

LG-4 Partner with local businesses, landowners, and developers on key private property improvements that will advance the implementation of priority projects.

ACTIONS

LA-16 Work with AT&T to transform the facade of their building on McDowell Street into a site for public art.

LA-17 Partner with the property owner to reactivate City Market as an eclectic retail anchor.

LA-18 Explore the expansion of the downtown municipal services district north into the North End District, and west into the east side of Saint Mary's Street.

LA-19 Partner with the property owners to create a development strategy for the Gateway Center mega-block between South Saunders Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, and Salisbury and South Streets.

LA-20 Partner with local artist groups to brand districts with significant public art in the public realm.

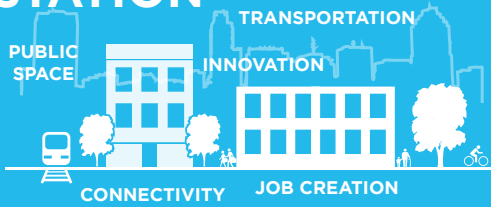
GLENWOOD GREEN



NORTH END

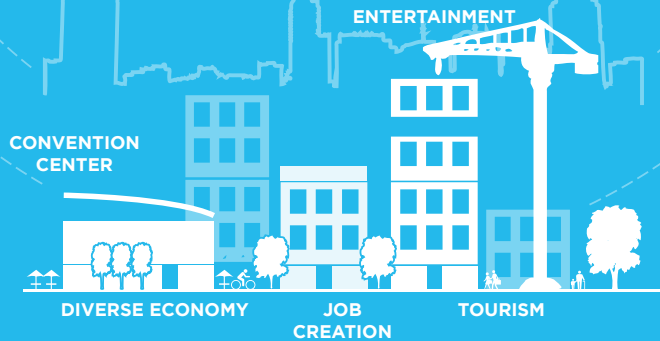


NASH SQUARE | RALEIGH UNION STATION



Raleigh Experience

MOORE SQUARE



GATEWAY CENTER

3

**CATALYTIC
PROJECT
AREAS**

GATEWAY CENTER

A large-scale convention, tourism, employment, and entertainment destination.

NORTH END

Completing an urban neighborhood.

MOORE SQUARE

Great civic spaces in the heart of the city.

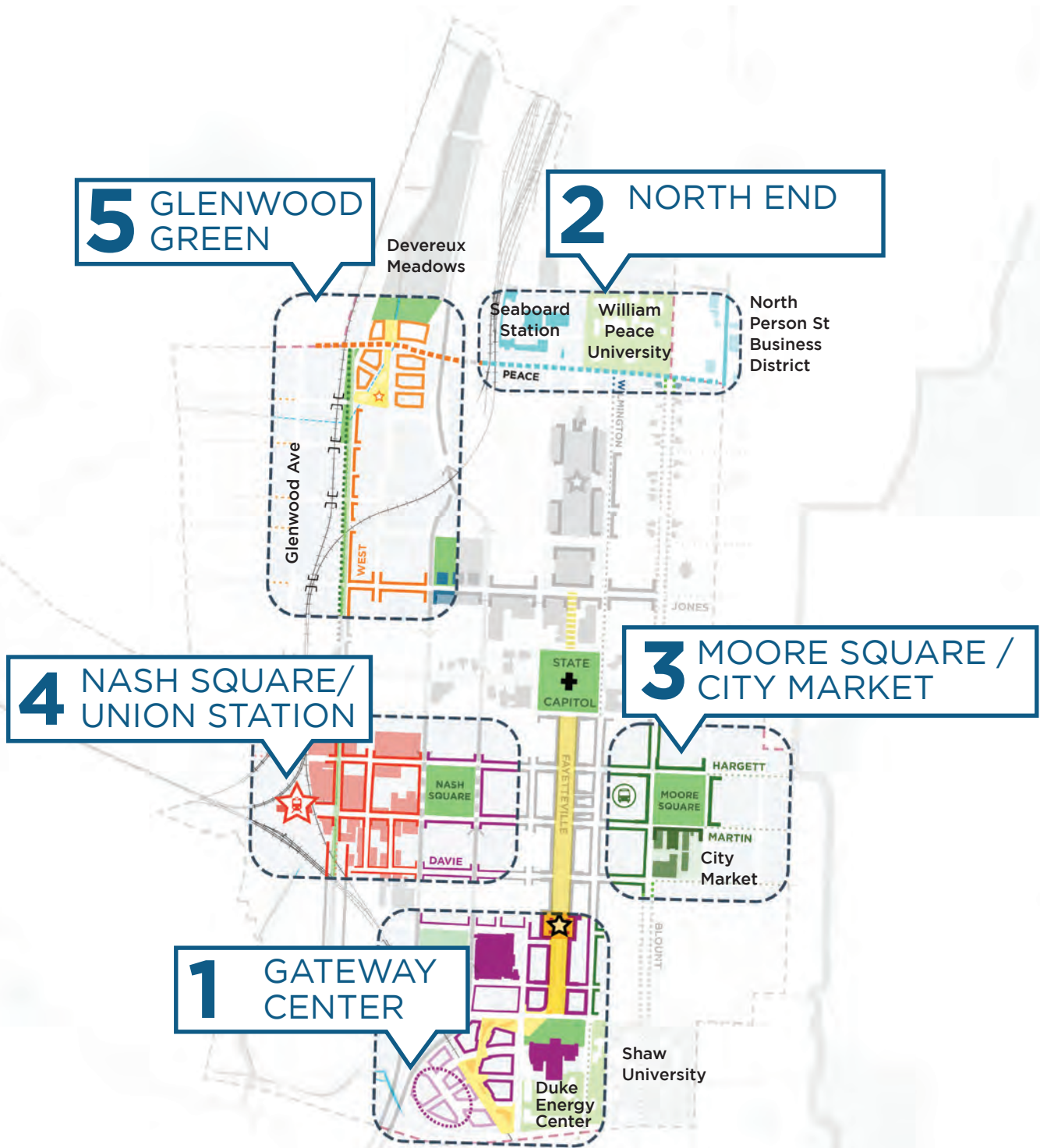
NASH SQUARE/ RALEIGH UNION STATION

Where transportation, innovation, and gracious public space connect.

GLENWOOD GREEN

Downtown's best-known district gains connection.

CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS



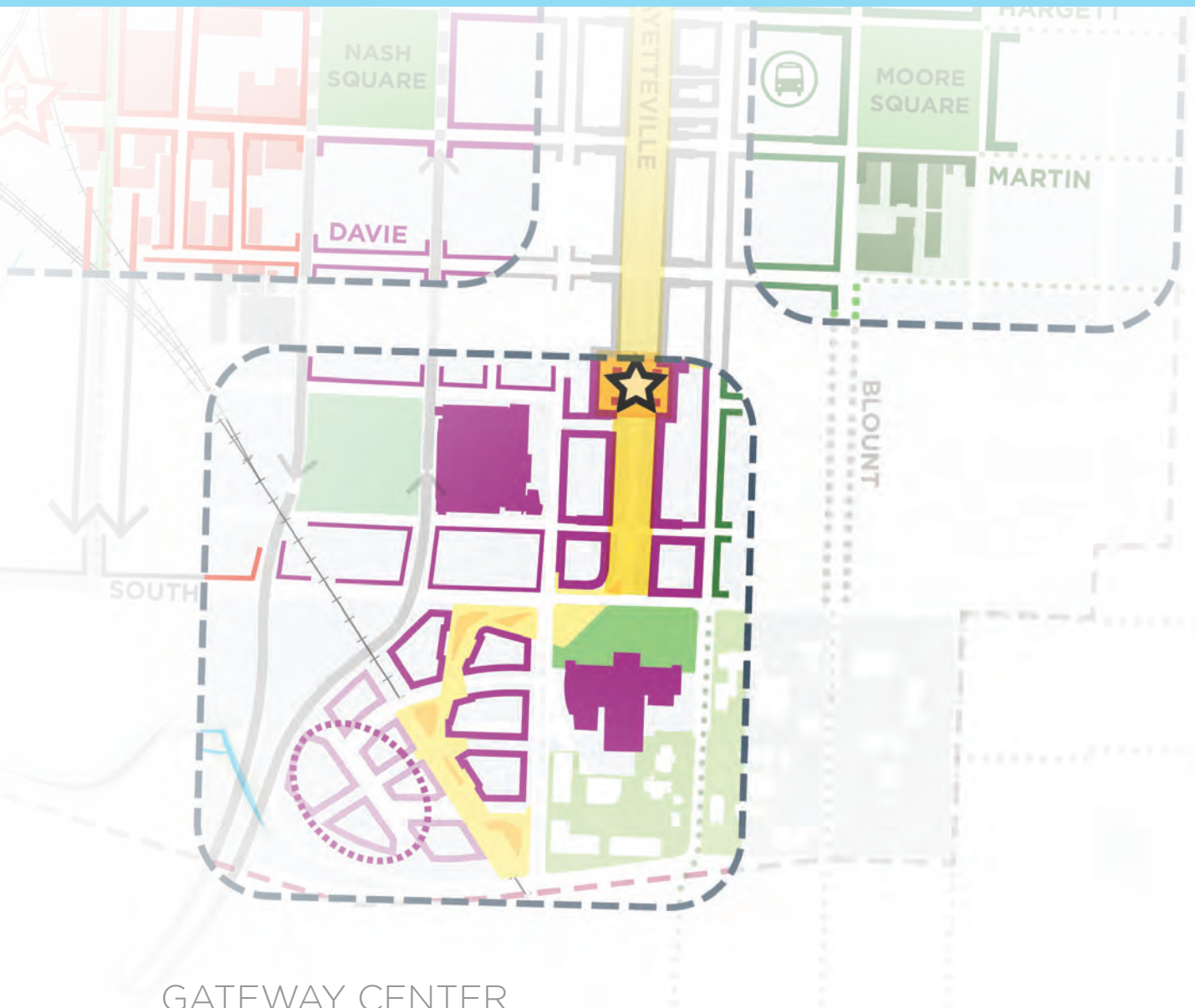


CHAPTER THREE CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS

INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Plan has established a long list of goals and resulting actions, but it is important to illustrate how these diverse actions blend to create a built environment that aspires to meet our vision for downtown. Five areas of downtown have been identified to serve as an example of how the actions translate into physical form. While these focus areas are not exhaustive in terms of every block or district of downtown, these five project areas establish a set of implementation priorities. Note that all illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.

CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS



GATEWAY CENTER

The Fayetteville Street spine is the historic cultural and commercial axis of downtown Raleigh. This plan imagines extending Fayetteville Street's energy further south. The goal is to create a new gateway for downtown with a vibrant urban district.

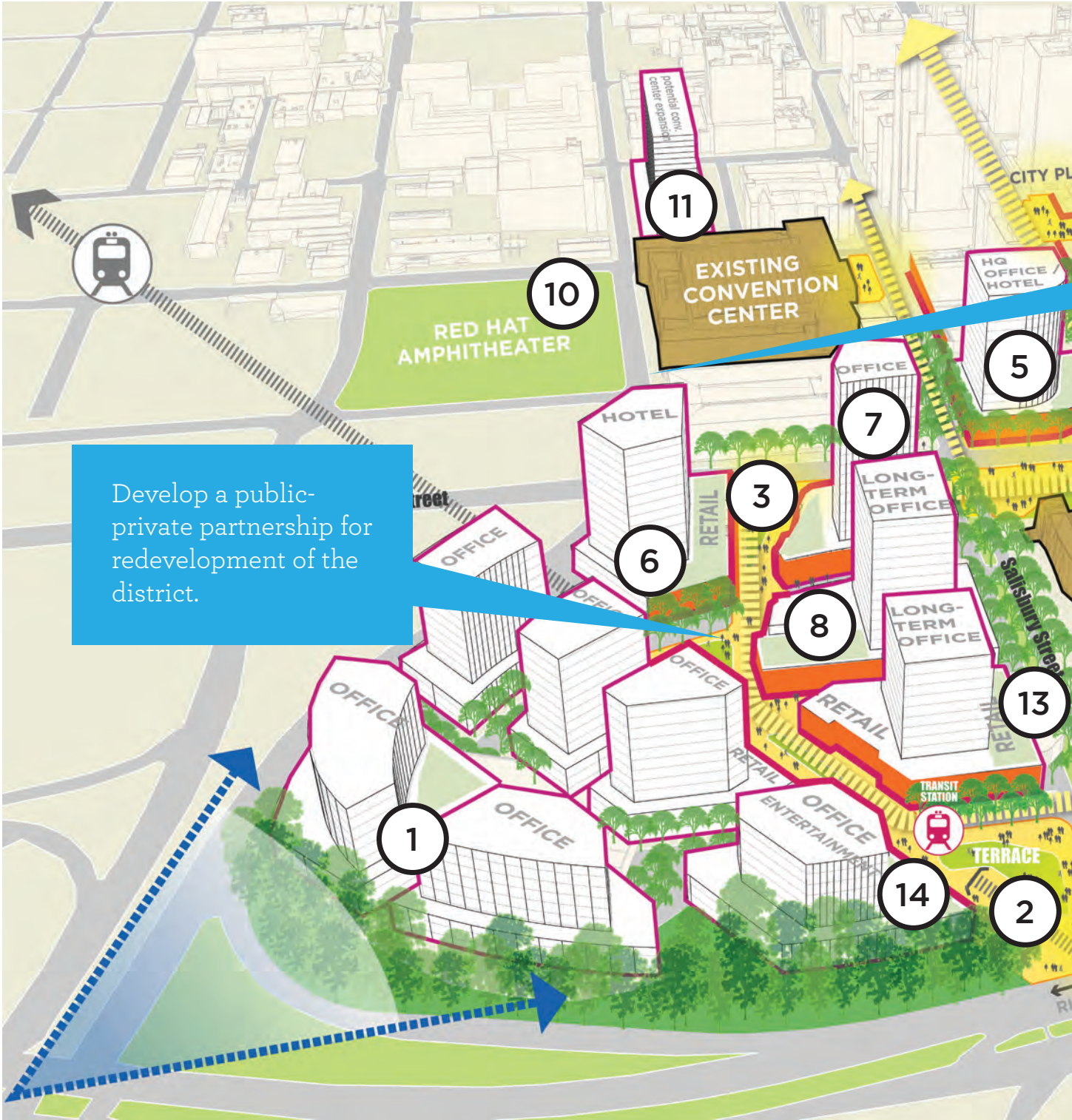
On most of its edges, downtown borders existing stable and historic neighborhoods. Accordingly, downtown must primarily expand up rather than out, through the incremental redevelopment of parking lots and underutilized parcels, of which there are many. However, on downtown's southern edge the opportunity exists to extend downtown development by several city blocks, facilitated by large parcels, consolidated ownership, and city-owned property. Development in this area could be a bold addition to the city's skyline.

Coined the "Gateway Center," this area is the only part of downtown capable of accommodating multiple blocks of large-footprint mixed-use development. Its proximity to the Convention Center and Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts will naturally lend its future to expanding tourism and entertainment-related uses, such as a large-scale sports and/or cultural facility, additional hotels, or a campus of related businesses.

Two different options for how this district could look in the future are shown on the following pages. Concept 1 imagines the district becoming an "Urban Innovation Center characterized by mixed-use buildings and public gathering spaces."

GATEWAY CENTER

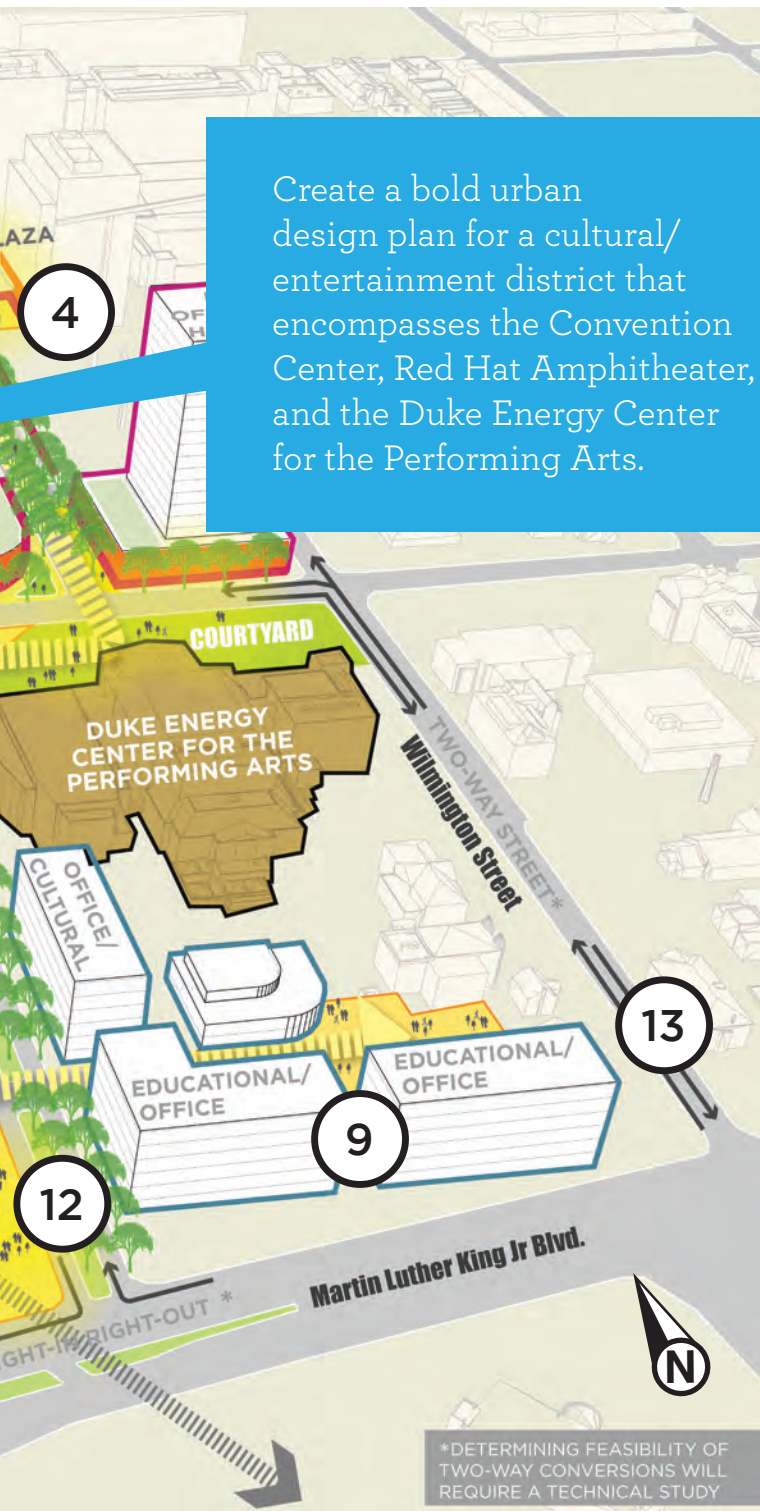
Concept 1: Urban Innovation Center



Develop a public-private partnership for redevelopment of the district.

These illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.

Create a bold urban design plan for a cultural/entertainment district that encompasses the Convention Center, Red Hat Amphitheater, and the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts.



Concept 1

This concept imagines space to develop an Urban Innovation Campus for a new anchor employer or cluster of businesses. With easy access to several forms of transportation and close proximity to Fayetteville Street, the Warehouse District, and the heart of downtown Raleigh, this location has much to offer. New landmark structures provide the missing link between the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts and the rest of Fayetteville Street. These buildings could be linked to the Urban Innovation Campus, home to another employer, or even a hotel.

In contrast, Concept 2 is anchored by a large-scale cultural, entertainment, or sporting center. In either option, the downtown expansion has the potential to improve the public realm, and street and transportation network, as well as create a new visual gateway to downtown from the south. Both options imagine an extended street grid, which flows from the termination of Fayetteville Street through the new district. A series of small plazas or pocket parks creates sight lines from Fayetteville Street into Gateway Center, reinforcing the connections between the areas.

LEGEND

1. Urban Innovation Campus
2. Plaza improves gateway to realigned Salisbury Street
3. Central plaza/pedestrian mall through new downtown cultural, tourism, or innovation district
4. Headquarters office space or other significant use
5. Ground-floor design improves pedestrian flow from Fayetteville Street towards new district
6. Potential hotel location, with ground floor active-use
7. Potential office development, with ground-floor active-use
8. Long-term office, with ground-floor active-use
9. Educational campus or additional office development
10. Improvements at Red Hat Amphitheater
11. Potential Convention Center expansion site
12. Realigned Salisbury Street
13. Potential conversion to two-way street
14. Potential transit station location within development

GATEWAY CENTER

Concept 2: Cultural/Entertainment/Sporting Center

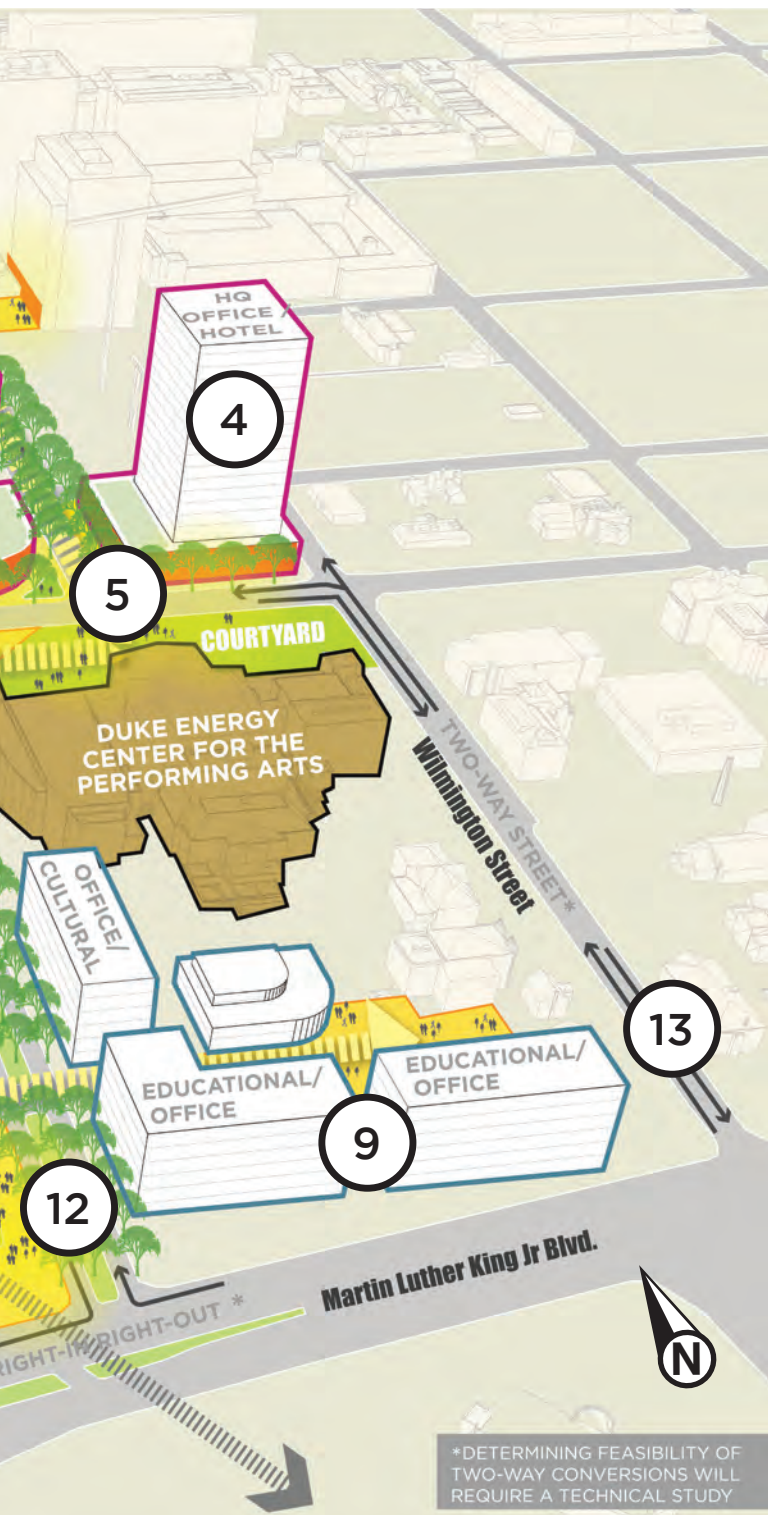


These illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.

Concept 2

In this concept, the heart of the district is a new citywide destination. Either cultural, entertainment, or sporting in nature (or a mix of all three), the center anchors the district and provides a new draw for the city as a whole. The specific location for this use in the southwest corner of the district is advantageous for several reasons. Positioning any large-footprint building towards the southwest corner of the district allows its architecture to frame the new southern gateway. The rest of the site is arranged into walkable city blocks that link the new district back to Fayetteville Street. In this way, a single entertainment or cultural use acts as a magnet to draw visitors to and through the district without becoming a barrier to walkability. Siting the largest development at the edge also capitalizes on the site's natural topography, allowing the potential for underground parking easily accessed from main roads around downtown. Throughout the district, active ground-floor uses and building setbacks help break down the scale of larger buildings.

A connection to potential rail-based transit is where the existing rail corridor passes through the area. A realignment of South Salisbury Street and the potential conversion of South Salisbury and South Wilmington Streets to two-way traffic will greatly increase the area's connectivity improving some of the most unsafe intersections by opening up safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access from the Rocky Branch Greenway and South End neighborhoods.



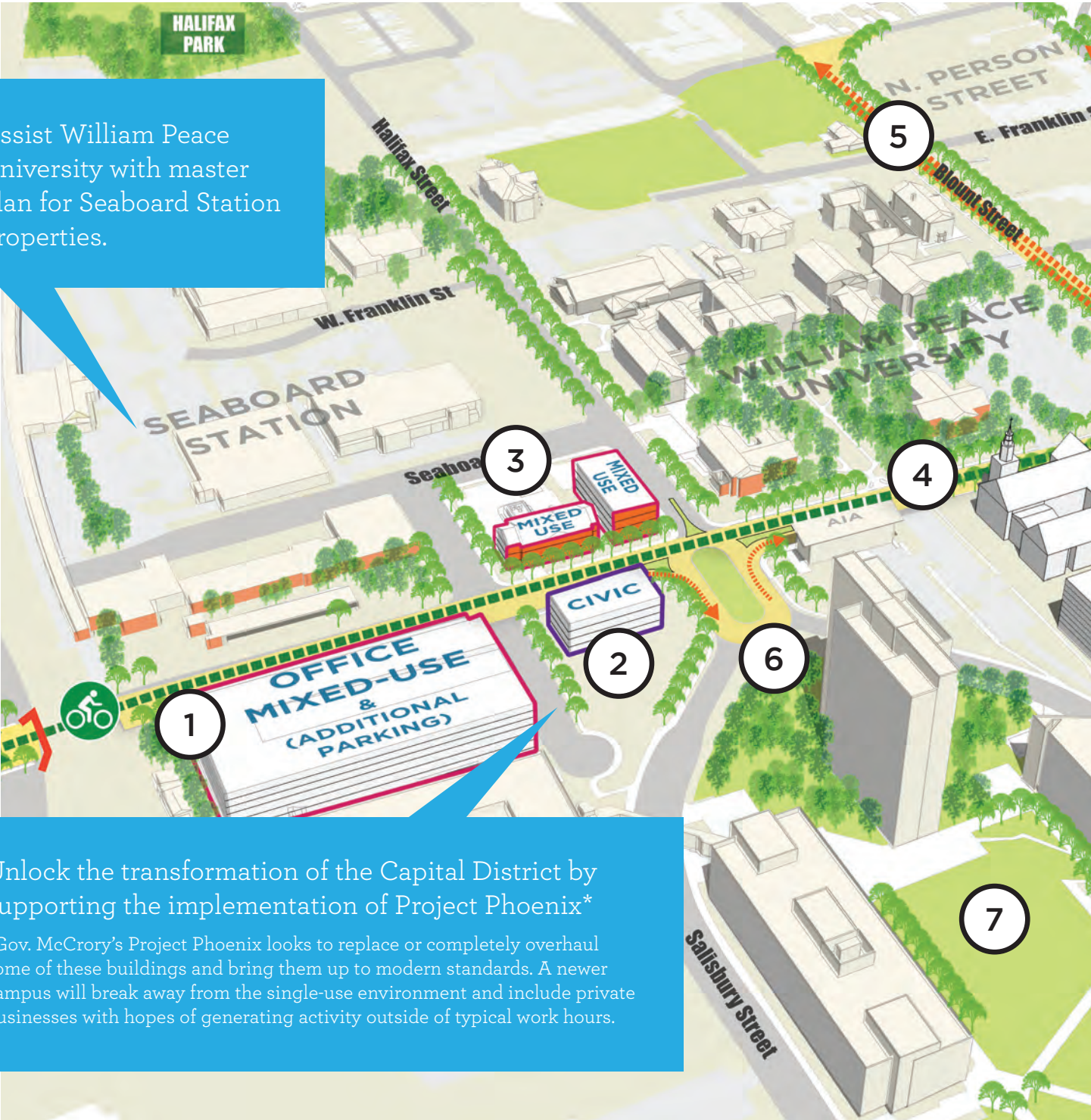
LEGEND

1. Cultural/entertainment/sporting center
2. Plaza improves gateway to realigned Salisbury Street
3. Central plaza/pedestrian mall through new downtown cultural, tourism, or innovation district
4. Headquarters office space or other significant use
5. Ground-floor design improves pedestrian flow from Fayetteville Street towards new district
6. Potential hotel location, with ground-floor active-use
7. Potential office development, with ground-floor active-use
8. Long-term office, with ground-floor active use
9. Educational campus or additional office development
10. Improvements at Red Hat Amphitheater
11. Potential Convention Center expansion site
12. Realigned Salisbury Street
13. Potential conversion to two-way street
14. Potential transit station location within development

NORTH END

Completing an Urban Neighborhood

Assist William Peace University with master plan for Seaboard Station properties.



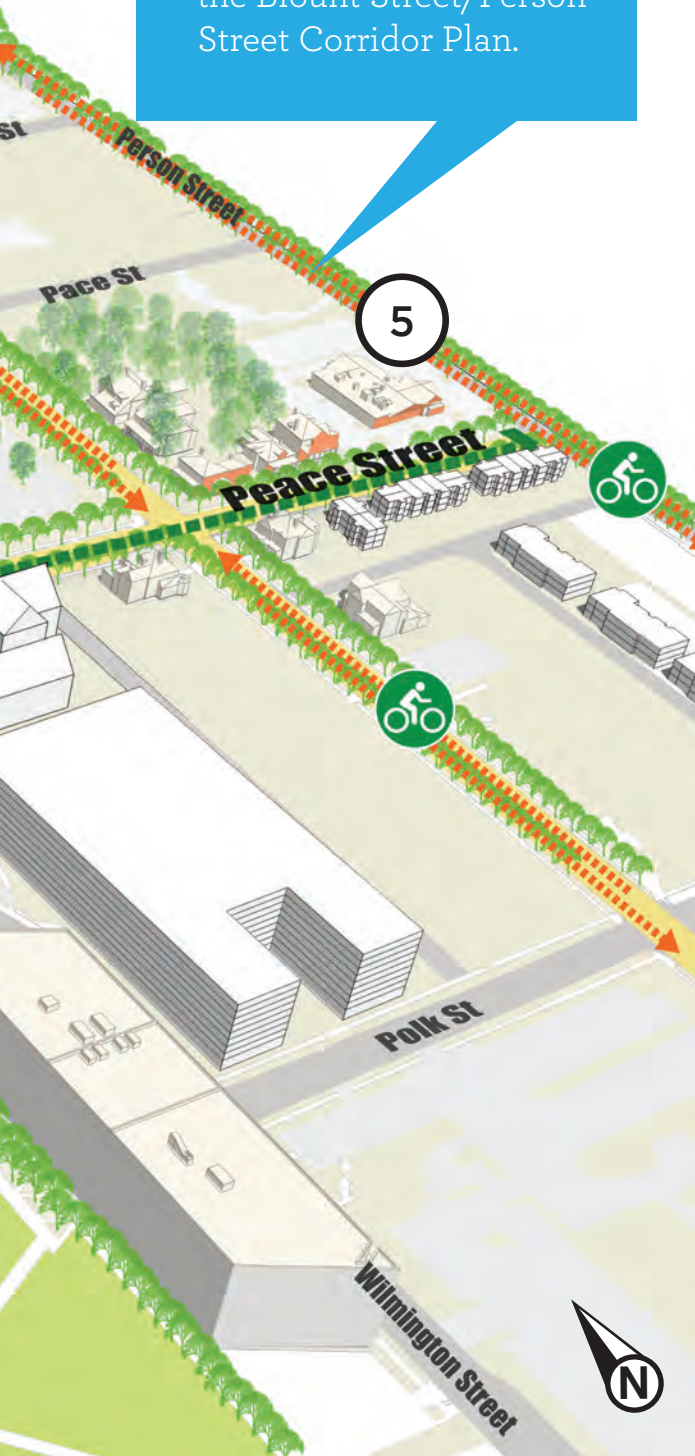
Unlock the transformation of the Capital District by supporting the implementation of Project Phoenix*

*Gov. McCrory’s Project Phoenix looks to replace or completely overhaul some of these buildings and bring them up to modern standards. A newer campus will break away from the single-use environment and include private businesses with hopes of generating activity outside of typical work hours.

These illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.

CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS

Implement the recommendations of the Blount Street/Person Street Corridor Plan.



At the northern end of downtown, a growing neighborhood is seeking better connections internally and to the rest of downtown. Improved connectivity is the greatest need for the North End, and key public realm and urban design investments can make it easier to walk and bicycle comfortably and safely to, from, and through the district.

In contrast to the large-scale redevelopment and expansion of downtown envisioned with Gateway Center, the vision for the North End of downtown, comprised of the Seaboard and Person Street commercial centers, is more on the scale of incremental improvements—small, sensitive adjustments to the existing neighborhood fabric.

The North End is home to the historic anchor institution William Peace University as well as contemporary landmarks like the AIA Center for Architecture and Design and the new Holy Trinity Anglican Church, with Blount Street Commons and the North Person business district gaining momentum. Change in the North End will be focused on transforming its main streets to create a complete and connected urban neighborhood. The spine of this district will be a renovated Peace Street, where pedestrians and bicycles will connect along a street lined with new buildings and generous sidewalks, rather than parking lots and dark bridge underpasses.

Peace Street will finally provide an inviting, multimodal link from historic Oakwood to Glenwood South, a distance of only a few blocks but only lightly used today because of the poor pedestrian environment. Perhaps even more importantly, safe and accommodating places for pedestrians to cross Peace Street will make it easier to walk from the North End to other parts of downtown.

A second major change to how people move around the North End will come in the road diet and streetscape improvements—and possible two-way conversion—planned for North Person and North Blount Streets. Capitalizing on the momentum generated by the main street character of North Person Street, these streetscape projects will better link an important and growing district of our downtown.

LEGEND

1. Potential office development, with ground-floor active-use
2. Potential expansion site for government-related development with ground-floor active-use
3. Potential mixed-use development with active ground-floor design to further support the street
4. Multimodal streetscape improvements along Peace Street
5. Approved streetscape improvements including the potential conversion to two-way traffic on Blount and Person Streets
6. Realigned intersection at Peace and Wilmington, Salisbury, and Halifax Streets
7. Activate Halifax Mall with programming and amenities for downtown residents and workers

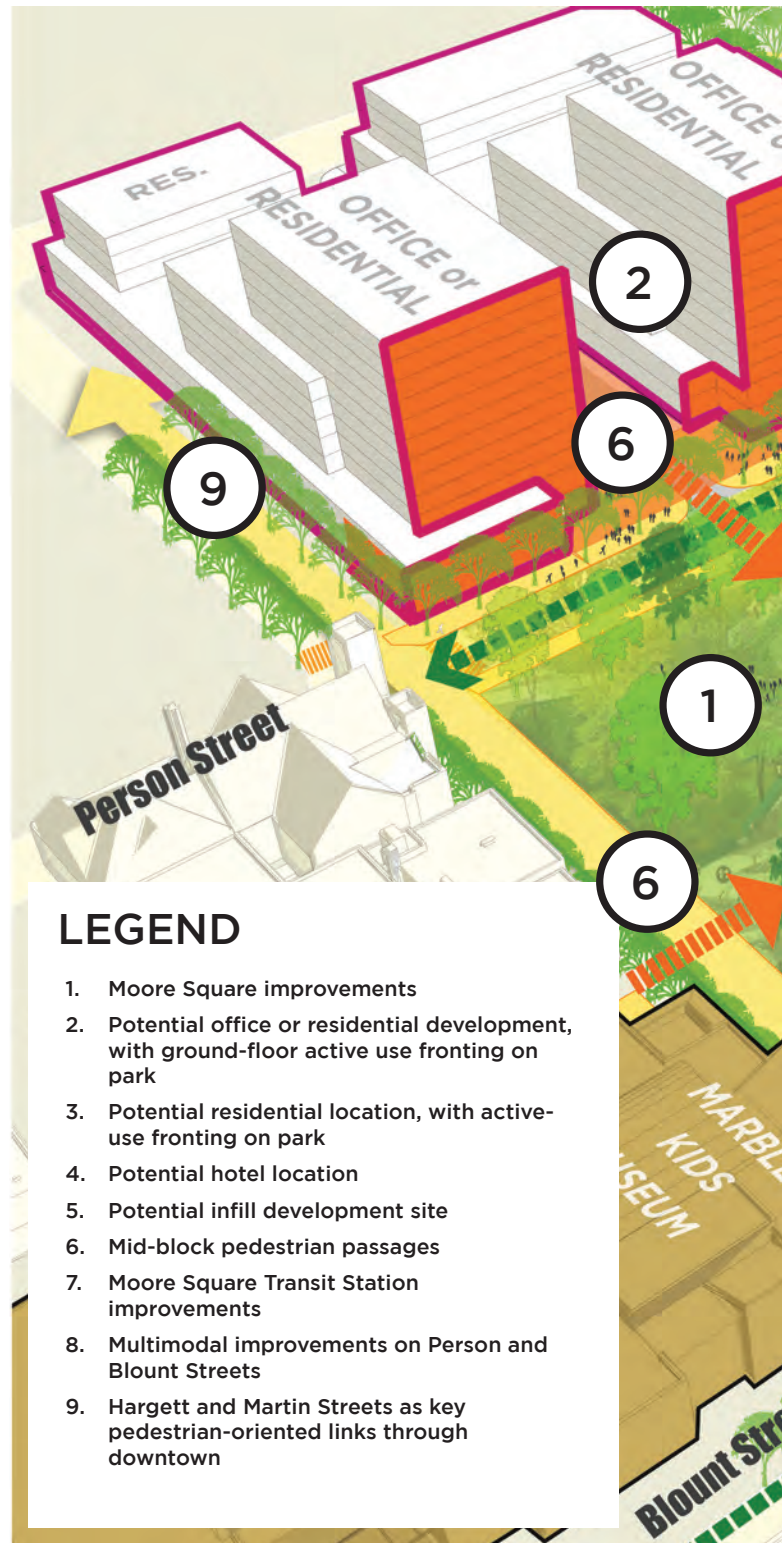
MOORE SQUARE

Great civic spaces in the heart of the city

The east side of downtown is the cultural heart of the city but declining public infrastructure investment has diminished its desirability. The goal of this area is to rejuvenate a historically significant part of downtown Raleigh and balance its historic character with new development. With two major civic infrastructure improvements, Moore Square and the Moore Square Transit Station funded and in the process of development--two of downtown's most used public spaces--will receive a jolt of public investment. The transformation of those spaces will energize the surrounding blocks, adding diverse opportunities to recreate, connect, and traverse the district.

A renovated Moore Square will accommodate children and adults alike, strengthening one of the district's most successful anchors, Marbles Kids Museum. The renovated Moore Square Transit Station will incorporate new public spaces and improved circulation that will create an inviting mid-block passage linking Fayetteville Street and Exchange Plaza to Moore Square. In conjunction with the public investment in its public space, the redevelopment of city-owned parcels to the south, east and west of the square will add new restaurants, neighbors, shops, and businesses to the district. Through creativity and public-private coordination, a rejuvenated City Market--one of Raleigh's most cherished areas--will become the destination anchor for the district that links the future to Raleigh's unique past.

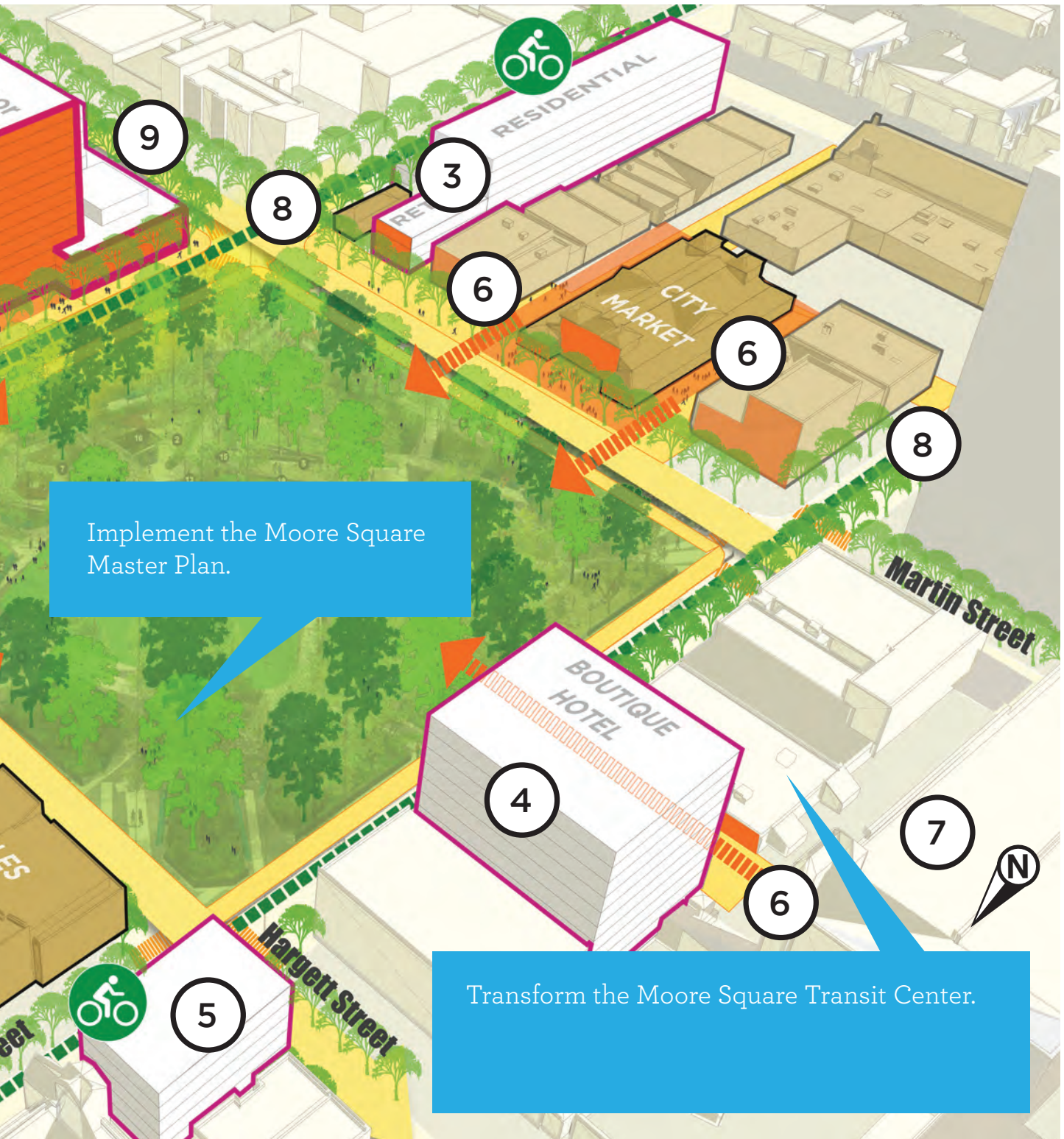
Public investments in Moore Square's civic square and transit hub will help lay a foundation for the district that allows new uses in the area to complement the existing district architecturally and socially. For instance, preserving the district's pattern of mid-block pedestrian links as parcels are redeveloped with greater density will help ensure that new buildings also contribute to the small-scale, walkable, and eclectic character of the district. As downtown's eastern gateway, the Moore Square neighborhood can welcome newcomers and established residents alike.



LEGEND

1. Moore Square improvements
2. Potential office or residential development, with ground-floor active use fronting on park
3. Potential residential location, with active-use fronting on park
4. Potential hotel location
5. Potential infill development site
6. Mid-block pedestrian passages
7. Moore Square Transit Station improvements
8. Multimodal improvements on Person and Blount Streets
9. Hargett and Martin Streets as key pedestrian-oriented links through downtown

CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS



These illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.

NASH SQUARE/ RALEIGH UNION STATION

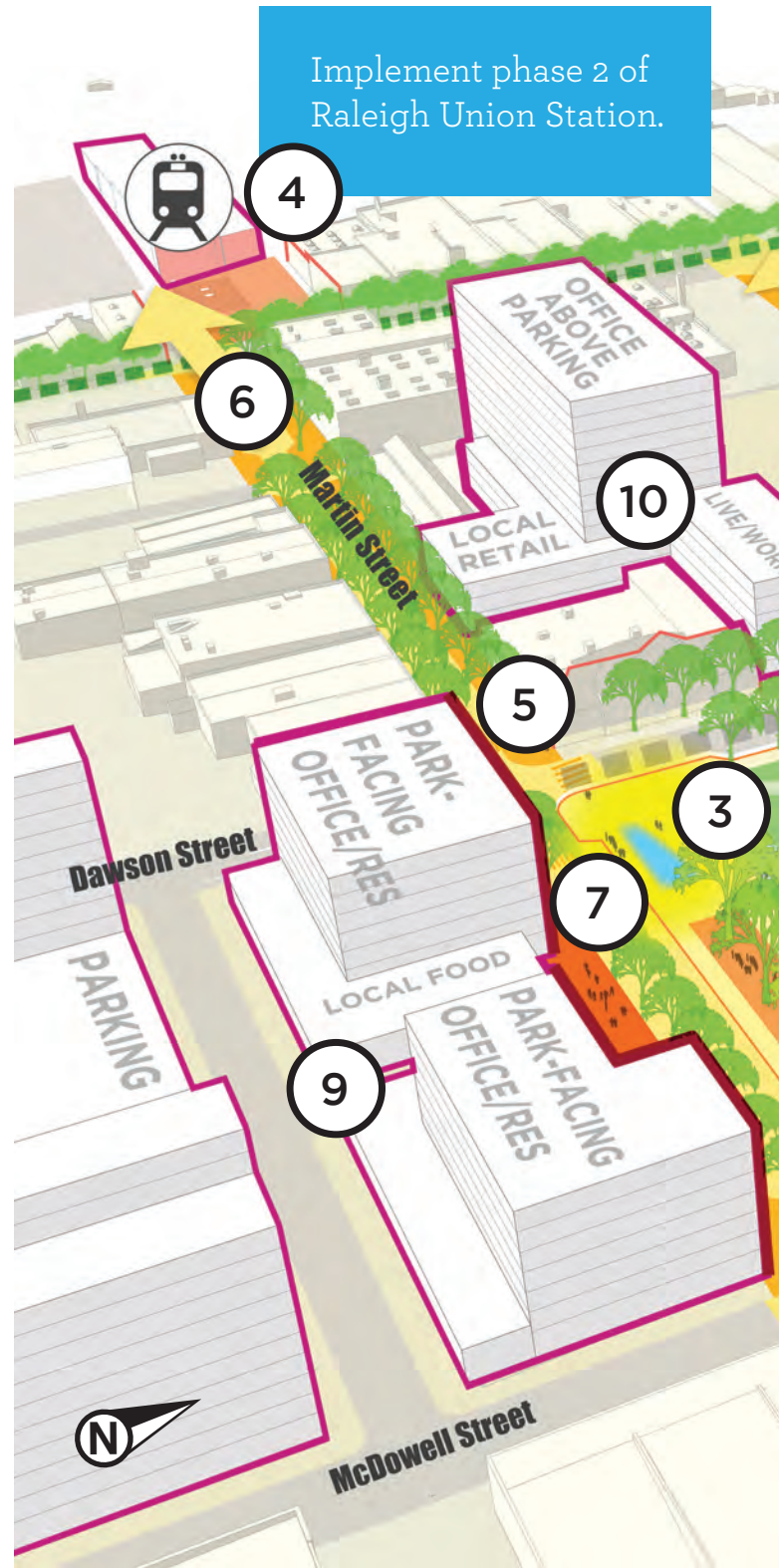
Where transportation, innovation, and gracious public space connect

Rehabilitation of historic warehouse spaces in the historic “depot district” has accommodated some of Raleigh’s burgeoning technology cluster while also reinforcing a center of a grassroots design and arts culture. While there has been much activity west of Dawson Street, the area centered on Nash Square has not experienced the same level of reinvestment. The Nash Square/Raleigh Union Station project area capitalizes on Raleigh’s future transportation hub, the other extant historic square, and the city-owned properties to the north and west of the square.

A thoughtful renovation of historic Nash Square can add a more contemplative public space to the downtown. Where Moore Square will attract activity to its center, a renovated Nash Square will seek to keep its center a peaceful respite, instead focusing energy and programming on the Hargett and Martin Street edges. It will be a space where tech workers, residents, and local artists can relax at lunch or unwind at the end of the day. Hargett and Martin Streets will be designed as the prime pedestrian-oriented retail streets connecting Raleigh Union Station to Moore Square. Key elements of the district redesign will be additional outdoor seating, wider sidewalks, and new street life, by prioritizing Hargett and Martin as locations for restaurants and shops. A new vision for existing city facilities located on the block north of Nash Square will bring a more vibrant mix of uses and street level activity to Hargett Street. These investments in major public infrastructure will help spur private redevelopment on the blocks south and east of Nash Square. The future Raleigh Union Station will act as an anchor at the western edge of the district, bringing people to and through the Warehouse District daily.

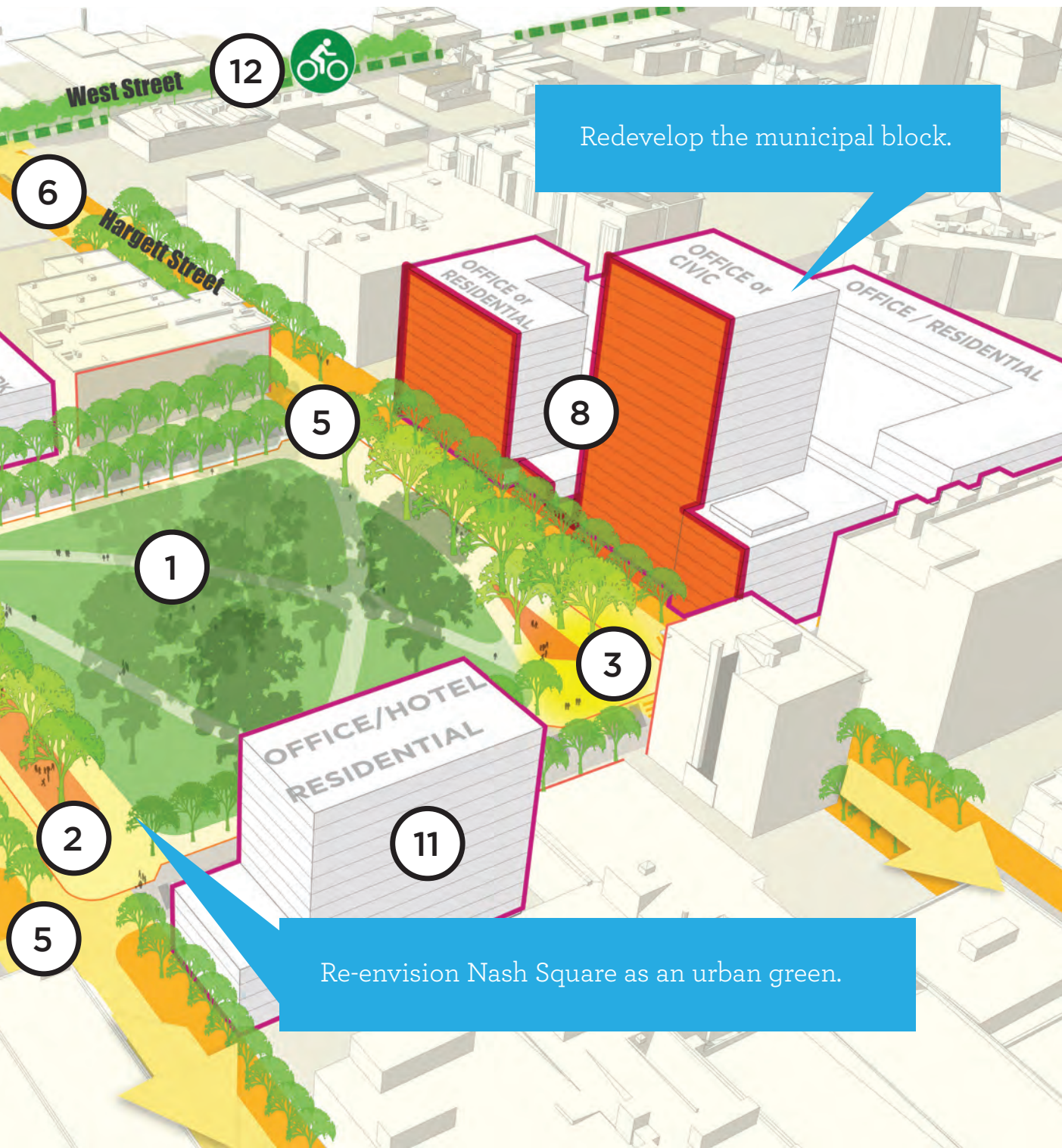
The goal of the project is to continue the evolution of the district in a way that builds upon its special past and existing character. Renovating Nash Square to become the green heart of the district will strengthen the connection from the Warehouse District to Fayetteville Street.

These illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.



LEGEND

1. Reconfigured paths to create welcoming, more open interior
2. Outdoor seating along active edge
3. Entry plaza
4. Raleigh Union Station
5. Improvements to make intersections more pedestrian-friendly; traffic-calming along park edges
6. Hargett and Martin Streets as key pedestrian-oriented links through downtown
7. Building setback for outdoor dining
8. Redevelopment opportunity
9. Office or residential redevelopment opportunity, with active ground-floor uses along park
10. Infill redevelopment opportunity
11. Hotel or other infill development opportunity
12. West Street Greenway Connector and cycle track



GLENWOOD GREEN

Downtown's best-known district gains connections

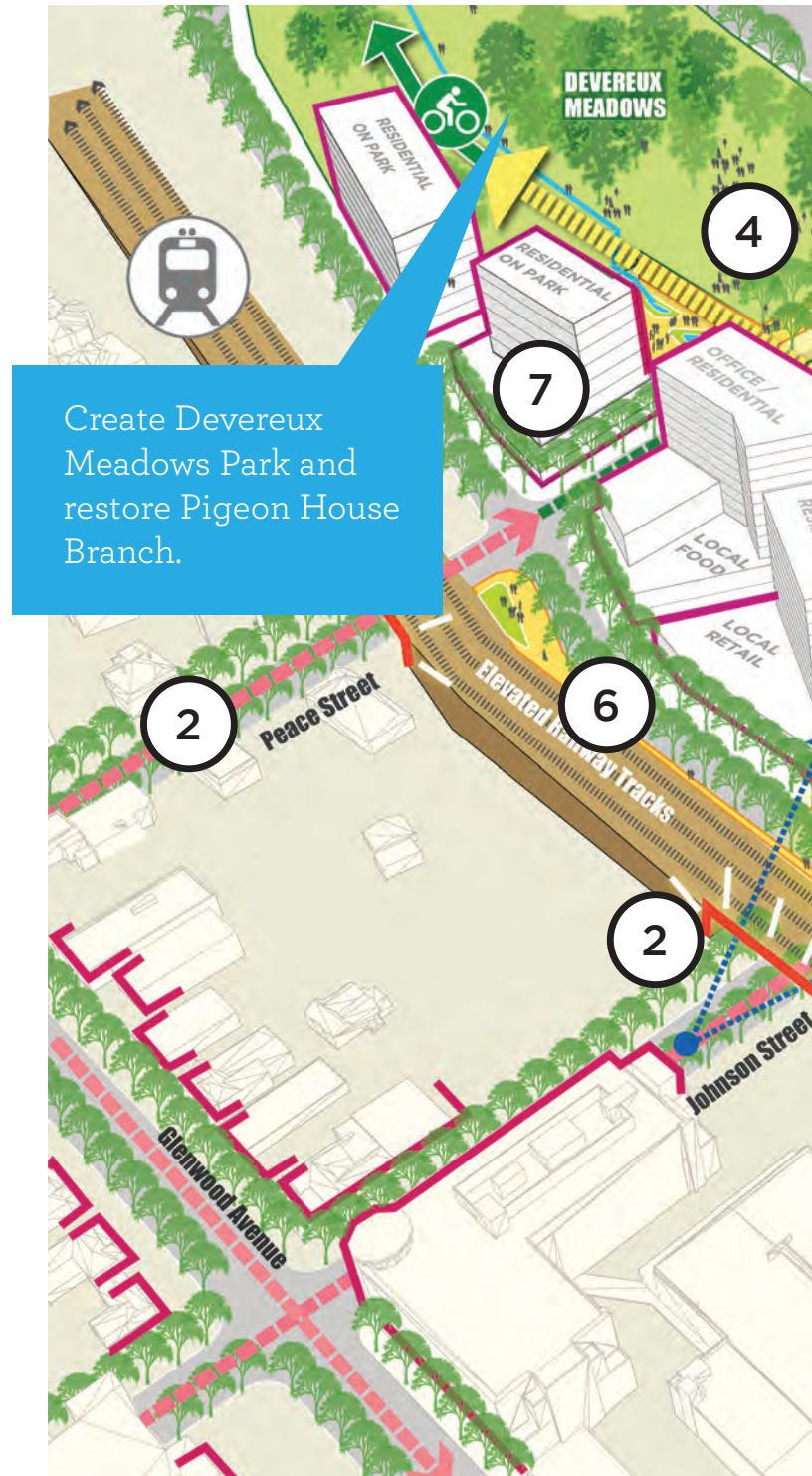
Glenwood South's success is poised to spill over into adjacent areas and this catalytic project area imagines spreading its energy to the east. The district today draws residents from across the city, but lacks a walkable, inviting feel at its edges. Recent projects have clustered along North Boylan Avenue, but by far the most significant development opportunities are found to the east along West and Harrington Streets.

To capitalize on these opportunities, the Glenwood Green project begins by establishing Harrington Street as a new main street for the district. Harrington Street will link south to the Warehouse District and extend north to a new urban park, Devereux Meadows, centered along a restoration of Pigeon House Branch. The daylighting of this forgotten urban stream will become the civic spine organizing future private development on the eastern side of the district. A central plaza provides public space for the district, anchored by a new civic building. An improved block pattern resulting from the Peace Street bridge replacement project will create new, better connected development sites.

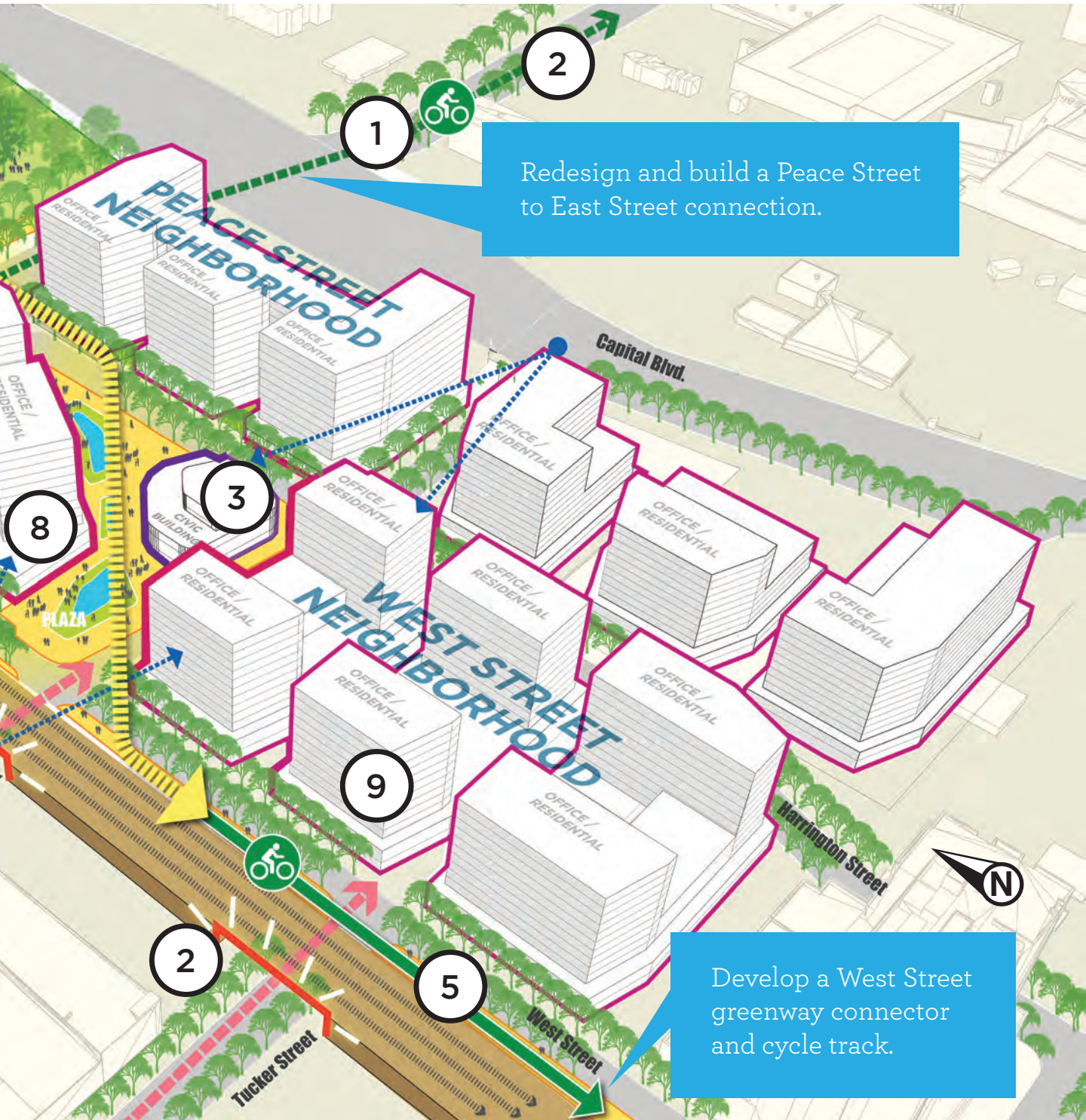
A new urban greenway connection will run through the district starting from Crabtree Creek Greenway in the north, running through Devereux Meadows, then following the rail corridor along West Street, and ultimately linking to Raleigh Union Station and the Rocky Branch Greenway farther south. With these improvements, getting to and from this district by walking, cycling, or driving will be safe, convenient, and inviting from any direction.

LEGEND

1. Peace Street improvements will enhance safety and allure bicyclists and pedestrians to the area
2. Special lighting or other features for gateways
3. Civic building
4. Link to Devereux Meadows
5. West Street cycle track
6. Linear park
7. Residential buildings facing onto new park
8. Mixed-use development: ground-floor active-use with residential above
9. New residential buildings



CATALYTIC PROJECT AREAS



These illustrations are intended to inspire new development but should not be seen as dictating use, height, or form.

NASH SQUARE/ RALEIGH UNION STATION



GATEWAY CENTER



RETAIL
STRATEGY



4

FINANCING + BUILDING PLAN:

**An Implementation
Strategy**

CHAPTER FOUR

FINANCING + BUILDING PLAN:

An Implementation Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Plan has established a vision for the next decade and outlined a series of small and large action items that will accomplish its aspirational goals, but as with any plan, its success will depend on a solid plan for how to get it done.

The implementation framework outlined in this section identifies strategies that will help us advance the key actions in three initiatives essential to the plan:

1. Activate the Warehouse District around a revitalized Nash Square.
2. Develop a framework for building out the Fayetteville Street District at Gateway Center.
3. Strengthen downtown Raleigh's retail environment.

The remaining actions and initiatives that have been described and illustrated in the plan are no less important but will be initiated through the amendment of existing adopted plans, more discrete and pinpointed initiatives, and financing mechanisms that are in place, such as the Capital Improvement Program.

NASH SQUARE/RALEIGH UNION STATION

The Nash Square/Raleigh Union Station area envisions a reconfigured square with a restful interior but actively programmed edges. New mixed-use buildings with over one million square feet will surround the square. Successful implementation of this vision will require careful phasing, innovative financial structures, and deliberate programming and design.

PARK IMPROVEMENTS, PROGRAMMING AND FUNDING

Action 1: Clarify Function of the Square

The centerpiece of the Nash Square/Raleigh Union Station Catalytic Project area is the revitalization of the square into a more active space while recognizing its historic character. A community planning process should be initiated to generate ideas and design concepts for re-purposing the square. A variety of interventions, including public art and programming, could be appropriate. A cultural landscape report should be a part of the due diligence phase of the planning process.

Action 2: Develop Public Open Space Capital Funding Approach

The design process will produce a cost estimate for re-purposing the square. [The cost may be significant, yet even a significant investment can produce a positive return.] An option to fund the capital improvements is likely to include funding for Nash Square in a future general obligation bond referendum, supplemented by developer contributions garnered through the potential disposition of adjacent city-owned property; and corporate grants, and philanthropic contributions.

Other avenues for funding capital costs include the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund; exploring an open space assessment for downtown whereby developers could pay into a fund to support capital improvements to parks in downtown Raleigh; or value capture mechanisms whereby the city could harness future increases in property tax revenue to fund capital improvements. These sources, however, are not expected to provide a significant source of funding.

Action 3: Develop Operations and Maintenance Funding Approach for Public Open Space

A cost estimate for operating and maintaining the square must be prepared. To fund Nash Square's ongoing operations and maintenance, the city should look to a combination of baseline city parks funding; earned income from concessions, private events, and other leases; and contributed income from corporate sponsorship and individual philanthropy. Value capture mechanisms, whereby property tax revenues generated by the revitalized square are captured to fund ongoing costs, could be explored, but are not likely to be significant revenue generators.

Action 4: Determining the Public Open Space Governance Structure

The revitalization of the square will generate responsibilities—such as programming, fundraising, and marketing. A spectrum of governance structures are available to handle these functions. Options to consider are: a special parks district led by public officials; a quasi-public municipal development corporation; and an independent not-for-profit management corporation with oversight from the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources (PRCR) Department that supplements ongoing PRCR management. With Moore Square's pending revitalization, an opportunity exists for the creation of a new special-purpose entity covering the needs of both squares, including programming, community volunteering, and fundraising.

DISPOSITION OF CITY-OWNED REAL ESTATE

A full assessment of the opportunity associated with city-owned property surrounding Nash Square requires determining both redevelopment options and optimal locational alternatives for city uses currently located there. Permanently locating the city's functions in new development within the district would provide a critical anchor tenant and continue the area's legacy as the home of municipal government. On the other hand, relocating municipal functions to another district would free land for more private development in the area. Multiple actions will need to be coordinated, including developing a temporary or permanent relocation strategy for city operations, crafting a developer solicitation process, phasing development in step with the revitalization of Nash Square, and build-out of Raleigh Union Station.

Action 1: Refine Vision for Future Uses of the Sites

Several aspects of the mixed-use development program should be further considered. The city cannot achieve its objectives for city-owned sites until it defines what those objectives will be. In addition to potential government and office uses, a large percentage of the space should be allocated to residential uses. Dedicated affordable or workforce housing units should be strongly considered for inclusion. Ground-floor retail is also strongly encouraged to compliment the active edges of Nash Square.

Action 2: Determine Development Framework and Zoning

The public sector's level of responsibility and control in the redevelopment process is tied to its disposition strategy. In this instance, it is advisable to phase the disposition of city parcels sequentially to individual developers. This strategy would allow the city greater control over the timing of development, and could also enable a significant return to the city for later phases. Coordinating disposition of municipal and privately-owned land with a master developer makes less sense given the manageable number of parcels and limited infrastructure needs.

The city should also implement a zoning amendment to codify its development goals for the district. A Planned Development Conditional Use Overlay District would offer regulatory certainty to guide the type of development sought on the parcels.

Action 3: Dispose of Land

The city could either dispose of its land to individual developers through an upset bid process or it could conduct a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process leading to a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the parcels. An upset bid process is generally appropriate when there is high probability that the product generated by market forces will align with public sector priorities. The right zoning can encourage certain development outcomes. An upset bid process will also typically yield the highest financial return for the taxpayers. It would not, however, enable the city to craft a public-private development structure for project implementation.

An RFQ would allow the city to set clear expectations for development in the district, to formulate a public-private development structure, and to specify developer contributions to capital improvements for Nash Square. However, the city's historic lack of capacity to direct this process as effectively as it should, constrains the potential benefit. The city should explore options for establishing this capacity, such as an economic development function specialized in real estate transaction services.

Action 4: Deploy Necessary Incentives

Should they prove necessary in the course of negotiations, several tools are available to address funding gaps in the preferred plan, including accepting lesser land payments in return for accomplishing public goals—e.g., affordable or workforce housing—and funding pre-development activities such as site demolition. Synthetic tax increment grants that would be repaid by incremental property tax from the development could also be explored, but would only generate modest revenue for improvements.

GATEWAY CENTER

The Gateway Center envisions a significant new precinct at the southern end of downtown Raleigh. Sites 2 and 3—the existing surface parking lots for the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts at the terminus of Fayetteville Street—are planned to be major commercial or, potentially, hotel uses. Land south of the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts would potentially be developed to accommodate additional Shaw

University expansion or additional office, governmental, cultural, or hospitality-related uses, accompanied by large mixed-use development pads created to the west. The district has the potential to accommodate a stadium, arena, or other transformational and civically important use. The plan identifies the potential for 3.9 million square feet of development in the district.

Action 1: Cooperate on Future Vision

A joint vision for the district should be produced that involves the landowners in the district, including Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts, the North Carolina Association of Educators, Wake County, Shaw University, and the City of Raleigh. While proactive site assembly is not a prerequisite to redevelopment, a project of this magnitude will require buy-in from other stakeholders that builds momentum for an eventual joint development agreement. The city should begin discussions with other landowners to gauge their interest in participating.

Action 2: Determine Development Phasing

The Gateway Center includes two discrete opportunities, which are sites 2 and 3. The quantity of development planned in the larger area calls for a timeline likely to extend over multiple phases and even decades.

Sites 2 and 3 represent the final major development opportunities on Fayetteville Street and should be retained for a significant corporate relocation

or other catalytic use. Corporate relocation incentives like Business Investment Grants and Job Development Investment Grants should be considered for deployment. These sites can be redeveloped independent of the disposition of the remainder of the district.

Disposition of the larger parcels that comprise the Gateway Center would be timed around the emergence of a catalytic use on the western portion of the site, such as a sports stadium, arena, or convention expansion. Mixed-use buildings on the eastern portion of the site should complement the catalytic use and potentially provide cross-subsidizing revenue.

Action 3: Identify Infrastructure Financing Mechanism

A significant level of infrastructure and site work, including grading, extension of the street grid comprising the final block of Fayetteville Street, and utilities, will be necessary. The creation of a new Development Financing District is advisable on the southern parcel. Also known as tax increment financing, a Development Financing District enables future tax increment to fund public improvements. Under a standard Development



Financing District, for up to 30 years, all incremental tax revenues that would otherwise go towards local governments' general expenditures would both securitize the loans and also be pledged to amortizing bonds taken out to finance infrastructure improvements. Under a "synthetic" Development Financing District, the city would implement an installment finance agreement and pledge the infrastructure improvements themselves as security for the loan. In pursuing a Development Financing District, the City of Raleigh should partner with Wake County so that both city and county tax revenues are available for infrastructure. Although this tool does not have a track record of use in Raleigh, the significant potential for value creation and complexity of site infrastructure calls for its exploration as an implementation tool.

Other potential financing mechanisms include a special assessment district, whereby a supplementary tax on property in the district and potentially nearby property could be used to help fund infrastructure, and a joint development agreement with a private partner, whereby a developer would agree to fund infrastructure investments in return for public subsidies in the form of tax abatements or a lower purchase price for the land.

RETAIL STRATEGY

A goal of the Downtown Plan is to establish authentic retail that builds on the vibrant restaurant and entertainment cluster. The plan calls for vibrant corridors along Hargett and Martin Streets, anchored on the east and west by City Market and Raleigh Union Station respectively. This will require strategic application of public sector assistance and direction.

Action 1: Identify a Retail Toolkit

Additional public support could help businesses succeed in downtown locations. Several incentives could assist local entrepreneurs:

- [Recapitalizing the Downtown Loan Pool Program to benefit emerging local retailers lacking access to capital. A new retail-specific fund could achieve greater impact employed in conjunction with a retail strategy. The revitalized fund could function as a below-market interest loan or grant program assisting with construction and fit-out costs. Threshold requirements should be established to ensure funds are targeted to viable businesses.](#)
- [Expediting the permitting process by waiving business license fees and expediting applications. The city could provide flexibility to uses such as pop-up shops and other temporary activation efforts.](#)

Action 2:

Target Specific Locations for Retail

The city should build upon downtown's existing energy by focusing on blocks in the immediate vicinity of Fayetteville Street, Nash, and Moore Squares and on east-west connections with heavy pedestrian traffic.

The city should encourage retail development along targeted corridors through streetscape improvements such as identifiable street lighting, street furniture, and improved wayfinding. The public sector should also introduce creative small-scale urban interventions such as public art installations and parklets along portions of the retail corridors lacking in vibrancy. Allowing pop-up cafes and shops, food trucks, and mobile vendors will also activate more isolated parts of the retail corridors.

Action 3: Attract Authentic Retailers

The community has voiced a preference for unique, local retail that contributes to an authentic sense of place. When the city disposes of municipally-owned property, it should stipulate a preference for smaller retail spaces, roughly 1,000 to 3,000 square feet, that can accommodate these types of tenants. Organizations like the Downtown Raleigh Alliance can also help build a distinctive retail environment downtown by coordinating a tenanting strategy with property owners. In Kendall Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for example, a broker-led strategy helped convince property owners that more authentic retail would add long-term value to neighborhood real estate. A unified approach to local tenanting can drive increased values for upper-floor uses that benefit from proximity to vibrant retail. Close coordination with the broker community and major downtown property owners will be required to overcome the inclination to select tenants based purely on rent maximization. Given that the amount of upper-floor space in a downtown is vastly larger than ground floor-space, even modest increases in upper-floor rents can more than offset reduced rents at the ground-level.

Action 4: Recruit a Grocery Store

Attracting an urban neighborhood-sized grocery store is a key component of the retail attraction strategy. The success of grocery stores is dependant on a critical mass of residents and office workers. While residential development is growing exponentially, a good retail strategy should also complement the attraction of new companies to downtown that will attract more workers.

Rather than simply waiting for a critical mass of residents to arrive, the public sector could pursue one of two strategies for attracting a downtown grocery store. The first option would be to incorporate the preference for a grocery store into property disposition. An urban-format grocer should be located on a parcel accessible to existing downtown residents and workers, as well as developments in the pipeline. The city could help facilitate development by accepting a lower offer for the publically-owned land than would be tendered with more profitable ground-floor uses.

Potential locations for a grocery store using this method include:

- One of the underutilized or city-owned parcels surrounding Nash Square.

- Hillsborough Street parcels north of Nash Square.
- One of the underutilized or city-owned parcels surrounding Moore Square.

The Moore Square parcels likely represent the best opportunity for an urban grocery. With the delivery of the residential projects in the pipeline, the Moore Square area will have the highest residential density of about 6,500 residents within one-half mile versus 5,000 in Nash Square. Other factors that favor Moore Square include the vitality that will result from the square's redevelopment; its greater distance from existing grocery options in Cameron Village; and its ability to serve existing established neighborhoods east and south of downtown.

The second option is to activate an underutilized property, such as City Market or Stones Warehouse, as a public market, similar to Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia or Eastern Market or Union Market in Washington, D.C. This option would require the existing landowner to either reposition the property for lease or sell to an entity that would reactivate the space. A non-profit operating corporation could then be established by the city to manage the market.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The City of Raleigh is committed to the implementation of the ideas and actions described in this plan. Many, if not all, of the actions require considerable collaboration between multiple departments within the city, as well as, partner organizations, other governmental units and private organizations, landowners and residents. A timeline and responsible party will be identified for each action and consolidated into an easily accessible matrix. In order to coordinate this diverse group of organizations, we will create a team of city staff, individuals from allied organizations, and residents to regularly guide the implementation of this plan.

A PLAN CRAFTED FOR RALEIGH

Over the course of 12 months, hundreds of people passionate about the future of downtown have come together to craft a compelling vision for our city center, all focused on how each resident, worker, maker, and visitor will experience the place we love. Our aspirations have been set high in this plan, because we cherish the authenticity of what we have built and nurtured into the successful downtown we enjoy today. We are determined to successfully guide its evolution into a model of hospitality, vitality, and prosperity for the City of Raleigh.

Please continue to show your support as we develop the actions in this plan to create a downtown "of its PLACE and for its PEOPLE."



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