



# AUGUSTA ROAD CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN



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# OVERVIEW & JUSTIFICATION

By invitation of Councilman Ennis Fant, Greenville County Long-Range Planning Staff conducted a strategic planning process for the Augusta Road Corridor study area. The study area exhibits significant levels of blight regardless of proximity to Downtown Greenville and large employment centers like SCTAC. There is a shortage of restaurants and retail offerings, which in combination with lack of a grocery store on Augusta Road, creates a food desert in the area. The only grocery store is an Aldi across Pleasantburg Drive, which is difficult to access without a car. Numerous old motels and hotels in the study area provide housing to people who need it, though quality of the housing here is low. Non-housing uses in these properties bring high rates of crime to the area.

The location of this study area offers great potential, which is only bolstered by the established neighborhoods, major thoroughfares, and interstate that surround and define it. Based upon the conclusions of a market analysis, stakeholder feedback, and ongoing City planning efforts along Augusta Road, Greenville County planning staff has developed a set of policy recommendations to guide County Council and its partners toward the area's highest and best use.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Greenville County would like to thank participants for their participation in the planning efforts for this project.

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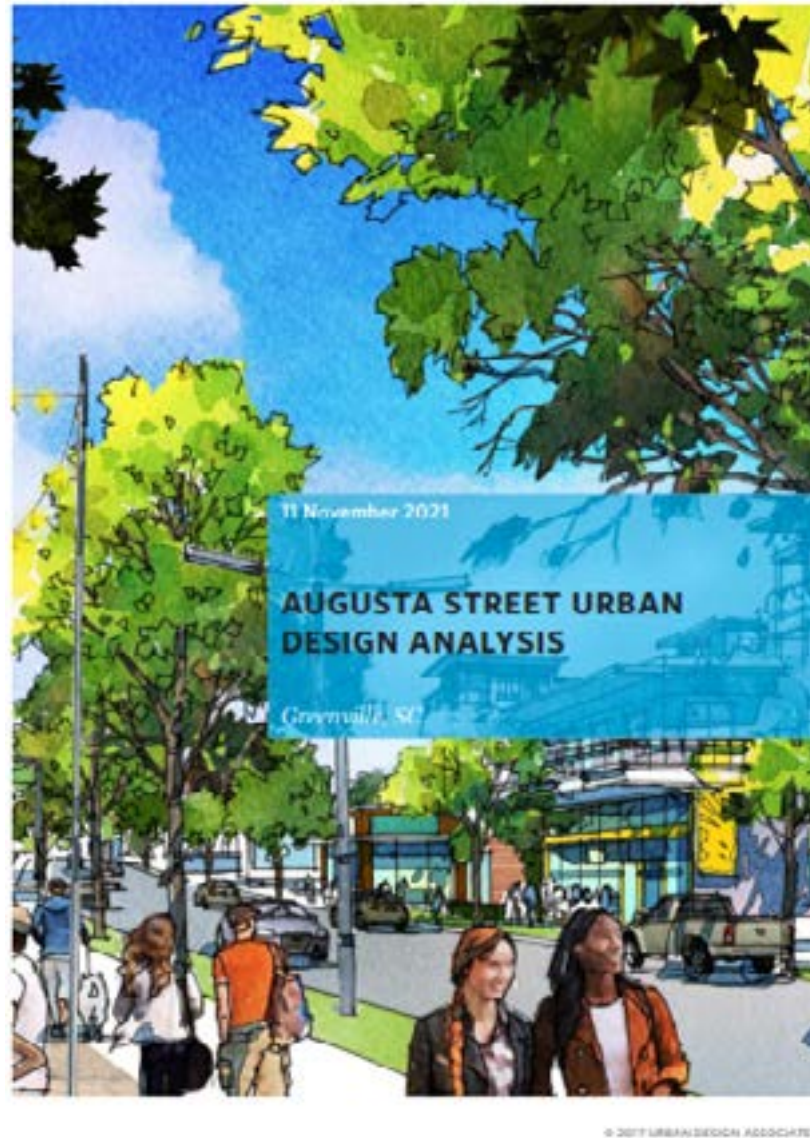
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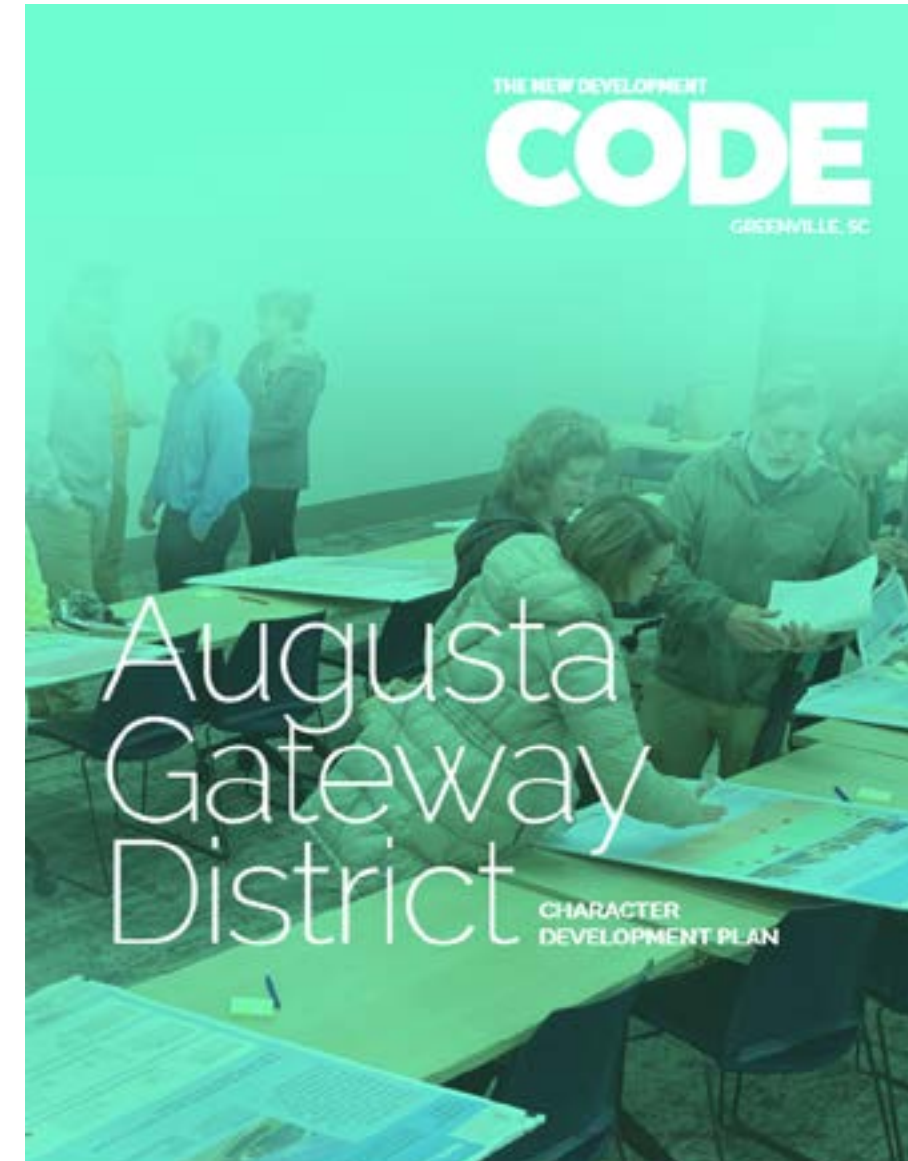


## PLANS REFERENCED



The 2021 Augusta Street Urban Design Analysis provides recommendations for improved street infrastructure along Augusta Road from downtown to the Mauldin Road intersection. The analysis recommends streetscape enhancements such as a road diet along portions of Augusta Road, wider planting buffers to protect pedestrians, and bike lanes where appropriate. The plan

considers the Augusta Gateway District the least defined section of the corridor in regards to character, access, and safety elements and recommends setting new standards for development. Recommended standards to address included planting buffers, limited curb cuts, parking, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and access management.



The Augusta Gateway District Character Development Plan was spurred by the City's Greenville2040 Comprehensive Plan. Greenville2040 identified the need to develop specific character areas with a special need for personalized standards to accommodate growth while maintaining character. The Augusta Gateway District is five character areas identified through that process. The City

is now addressing area-specific development standards for each area, including specifications for things like setbacks, building orientation, parking, public open space, and pedestrian and vehicular infrastructure. Greenville County and City staff have been collaborating during this process in order to produce products that work together in harmony to create a like-minded vision.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 328



0.72%

Projected Annual Population Growth Rate



73

Total Businesses



785

Total Employees



61%

White Collar



19%

Blue Collar



18%

Services

21%

No High School Diploma



42%

High School Graduate



28%

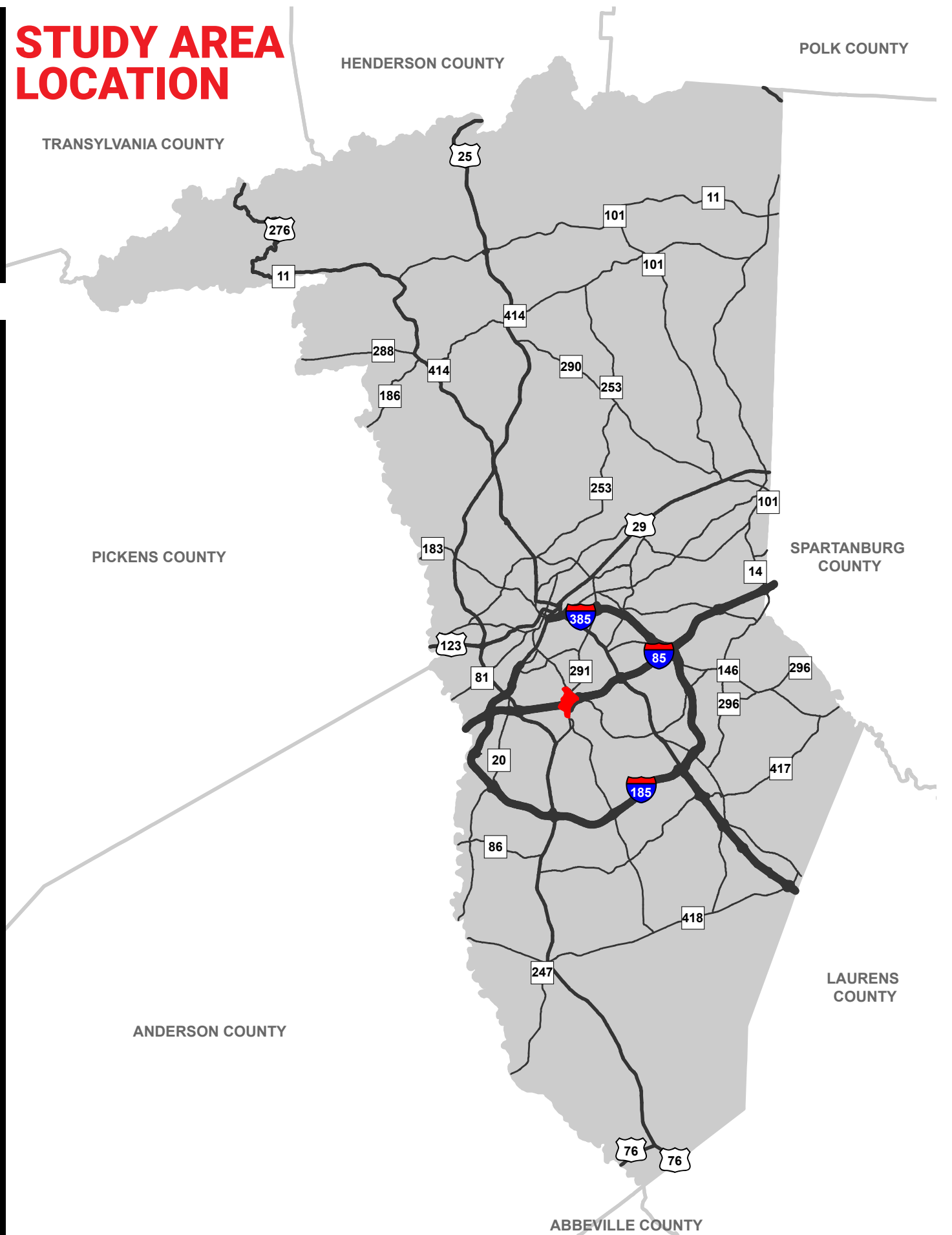
Some College



9%

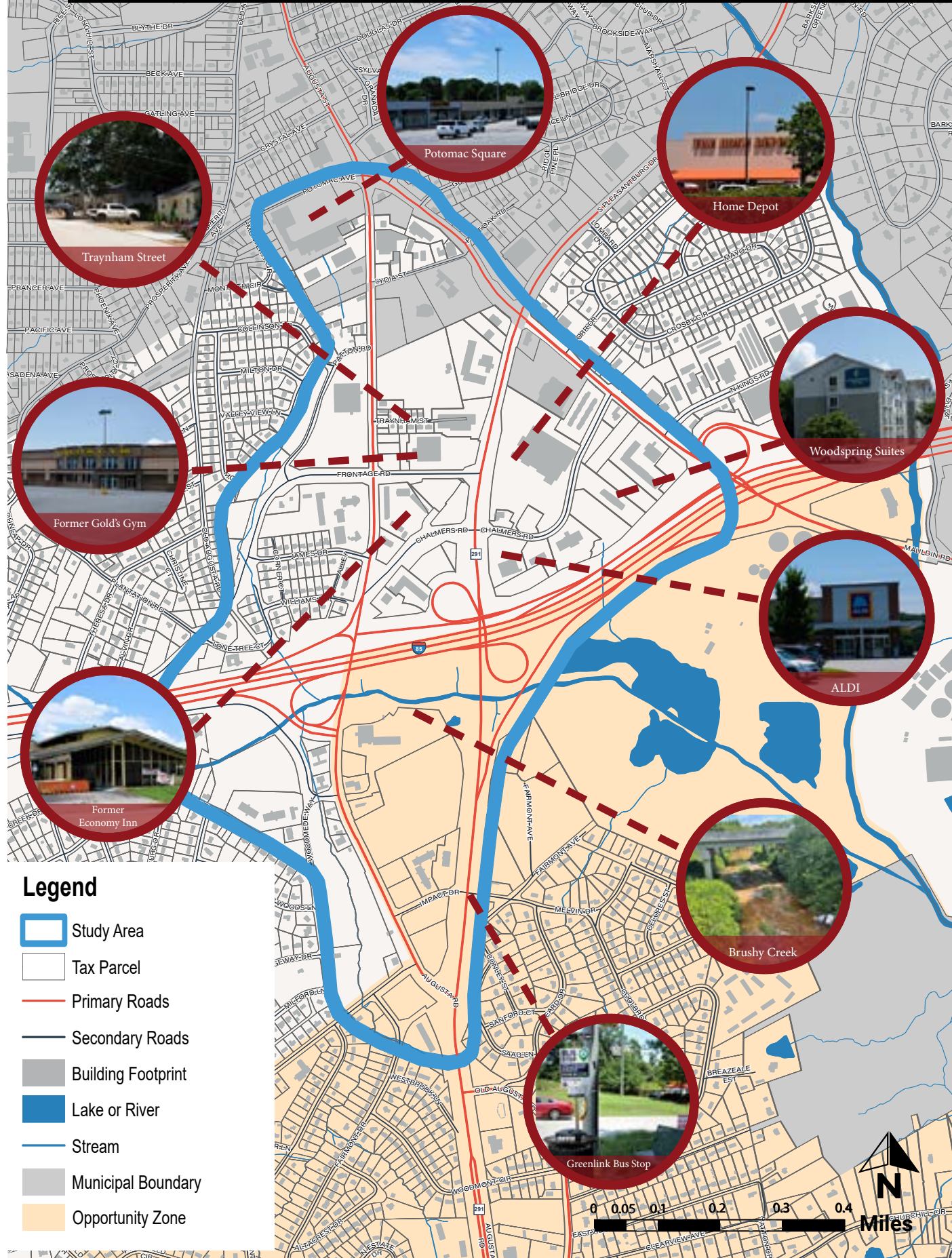
Bachelor's/Grad/Prof

## STUDY AREA LOCATION

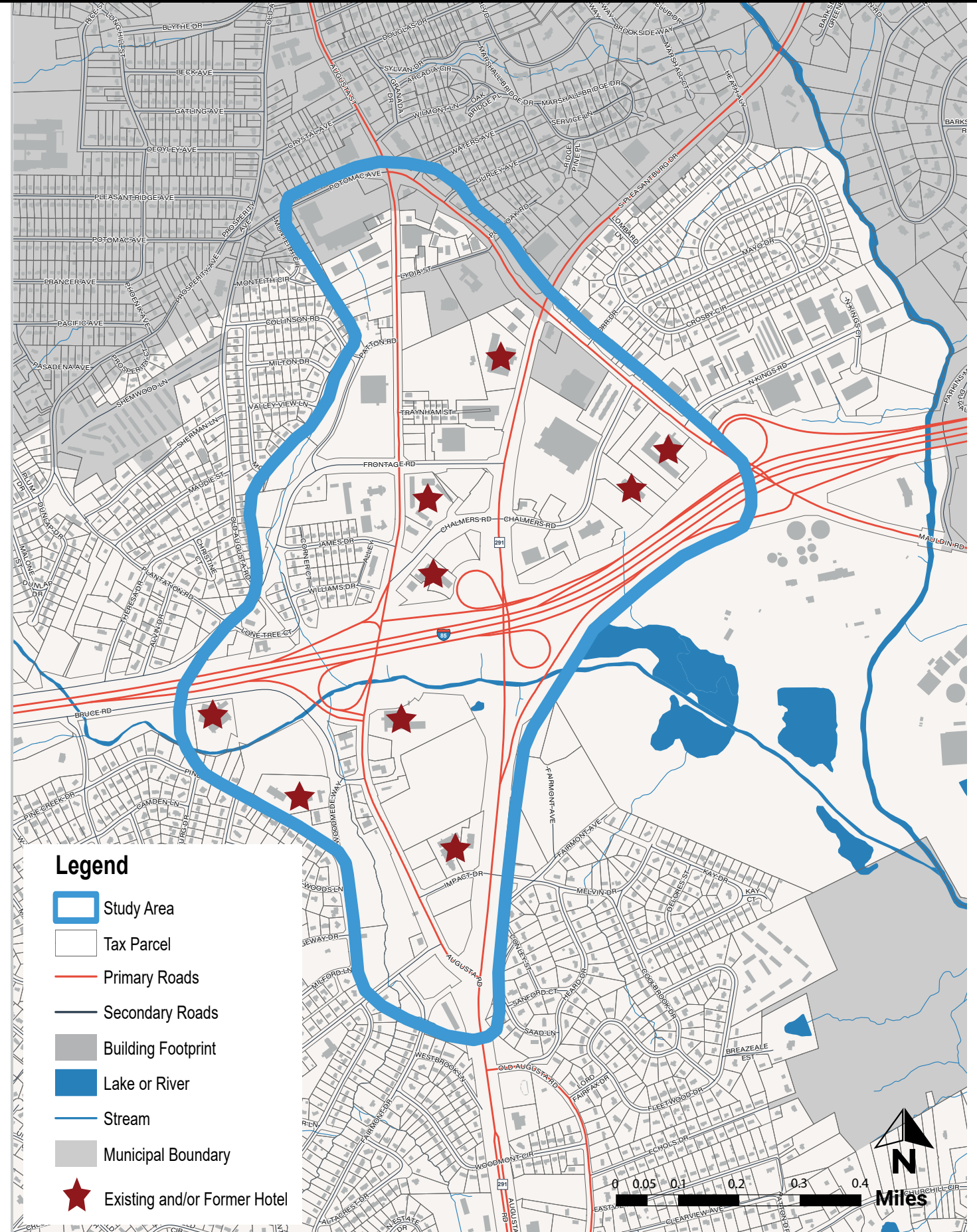




# CONTEXT



# CURRENT OR FORMER MOTELS/HOTELS





# FUTURE LAND USE

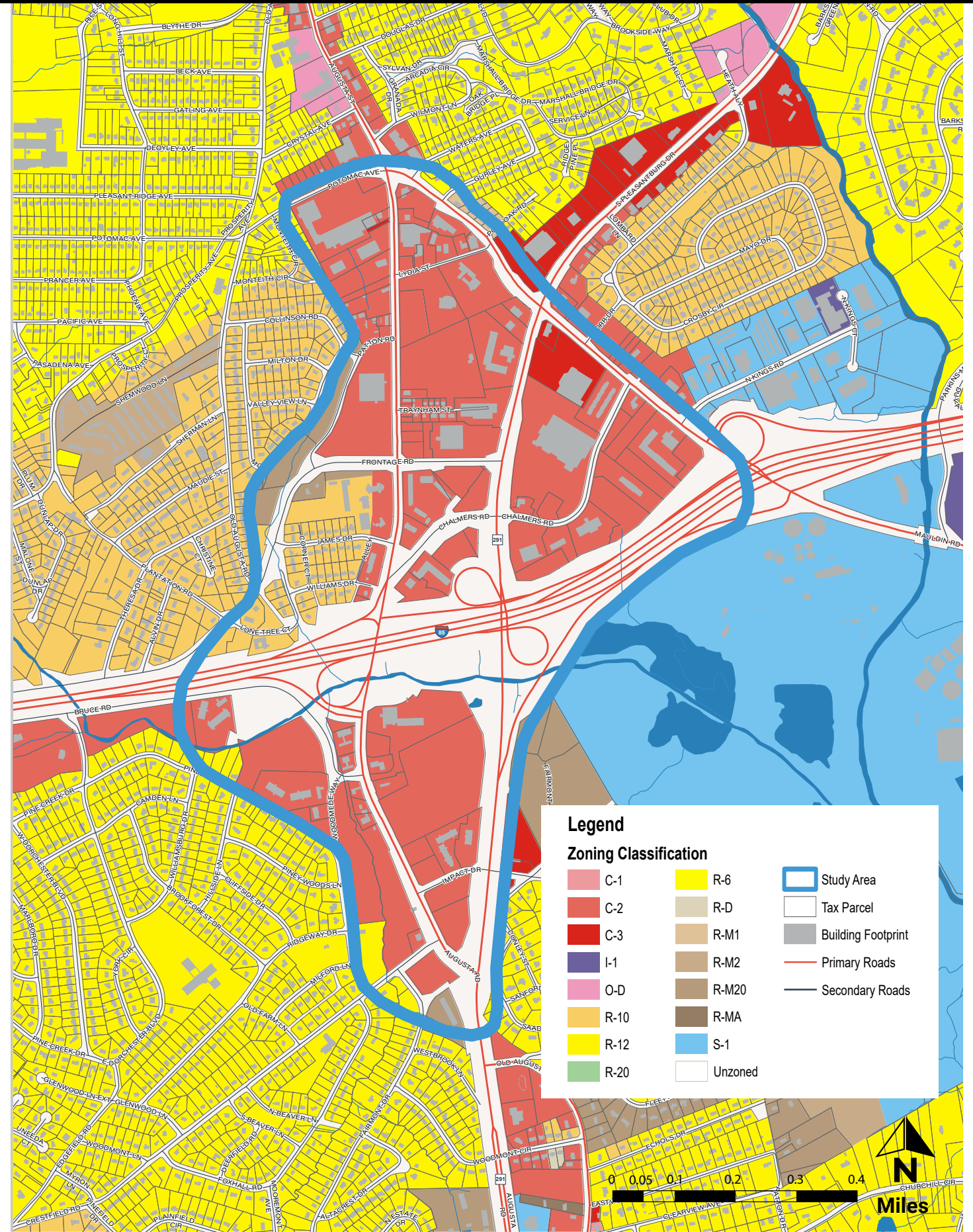


**Legend**

**Future Land Use**

- Open Space
- Flood Plain
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Transitional Corridor
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Mixed Employment Center
- Industrial
- Right of Way
- Study Area
- Tax Parcel
- Building Footprint
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads

# ZONING



**Legend**

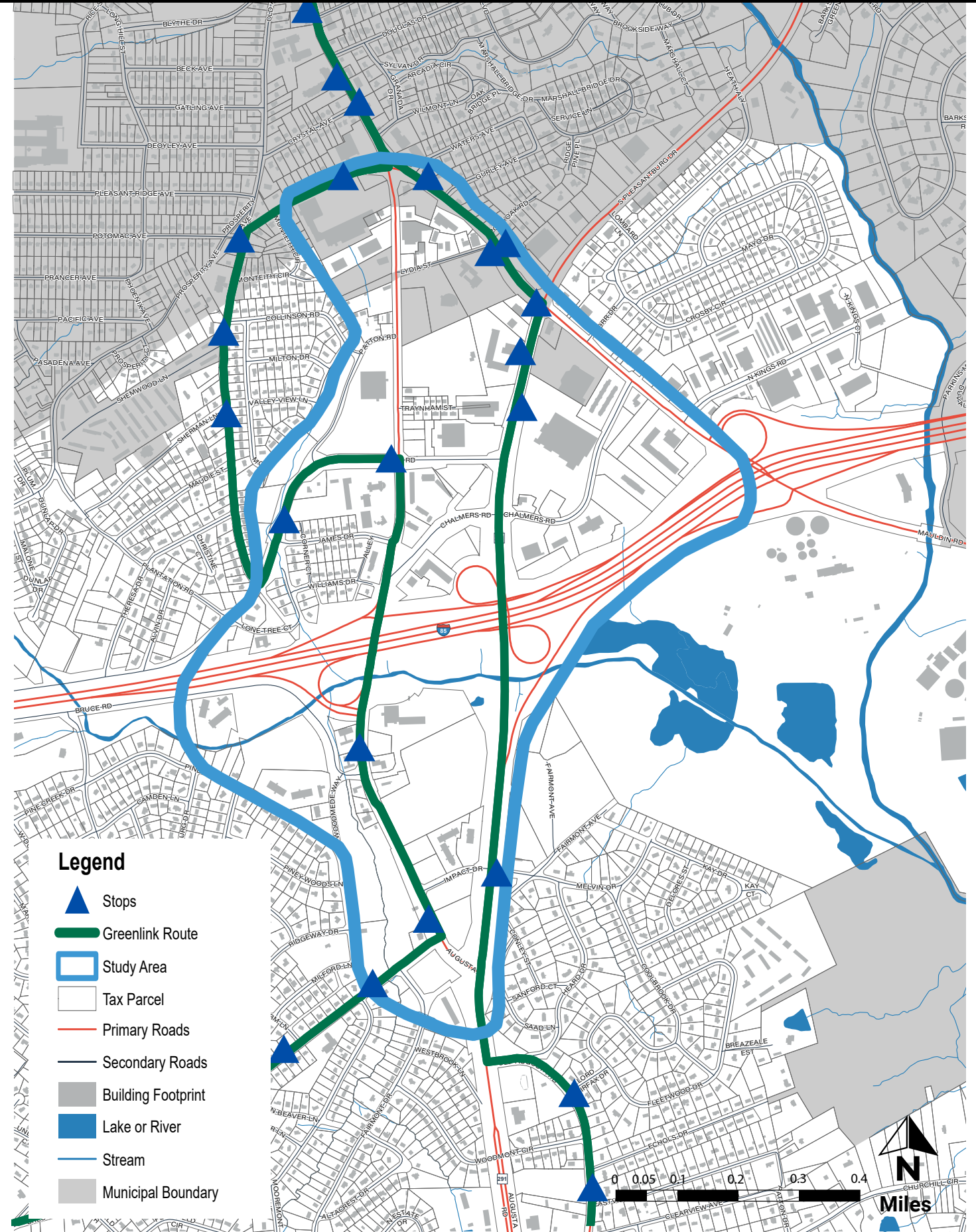
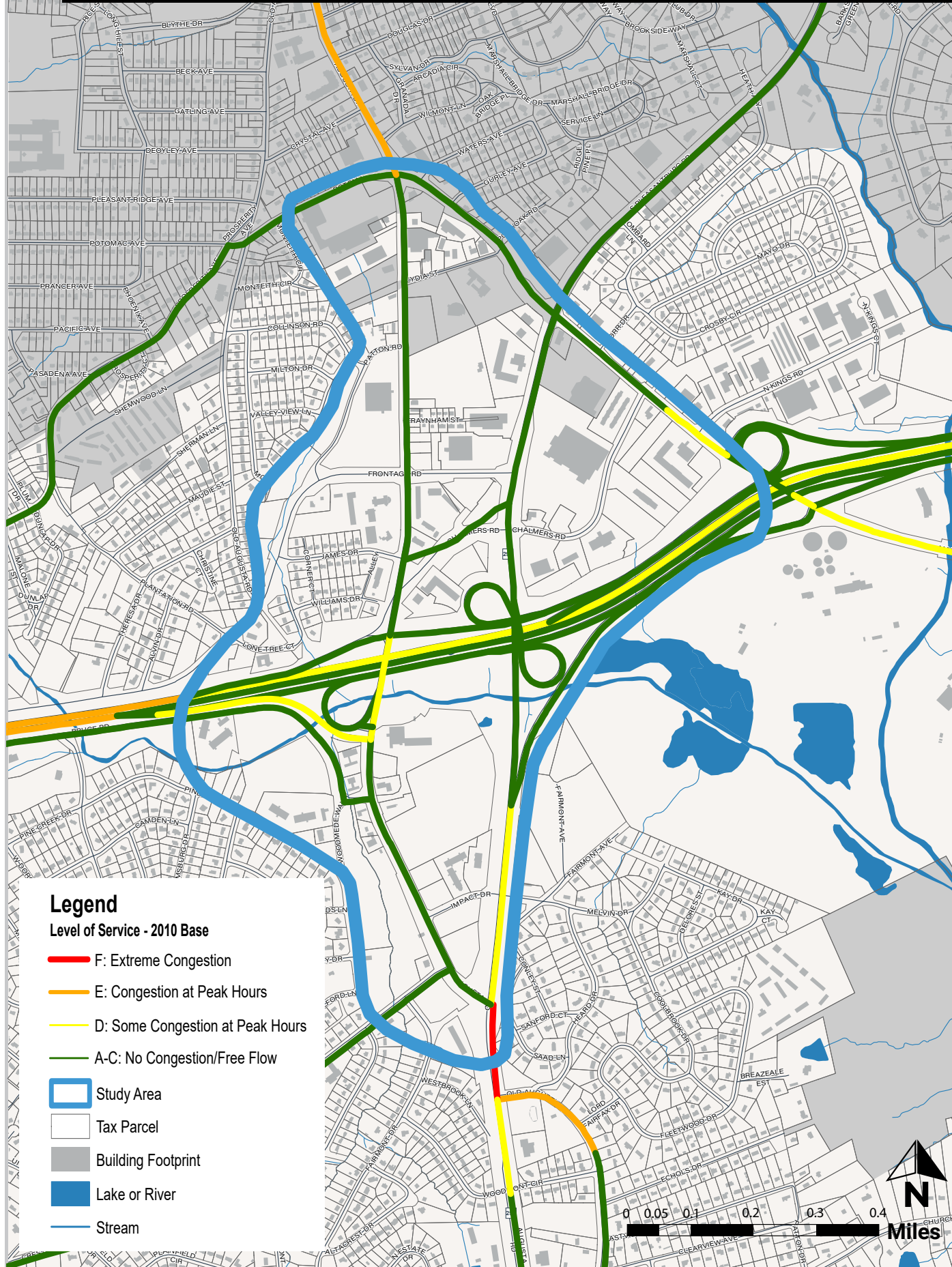
**Zoning Classification**

- C-1
- C-2
- C-3
- I-1
- O-D
- R-10
- R-12
- R-20
- R-6
- R-D
- R-M1
- R-M2
- R-M20
- R-MA
- S-1
- Unzoned
- Study Area
- Tax Parcel
- Building Footprint
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads



# ROADWAY LEVEL OF SERVICE

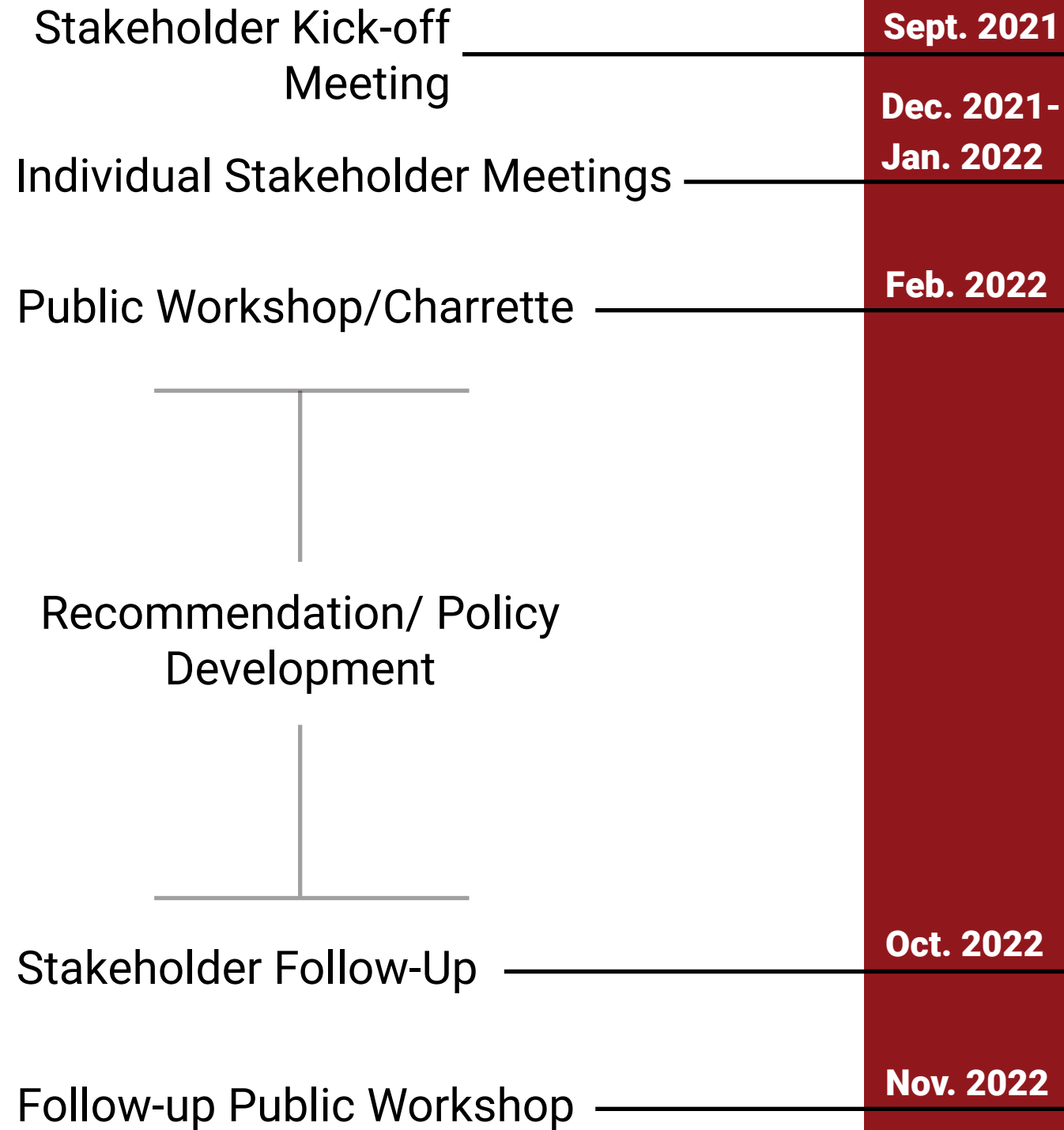
# TRANSIT SERVICE





# PUBLIC OUTREACH

## Public Meetings



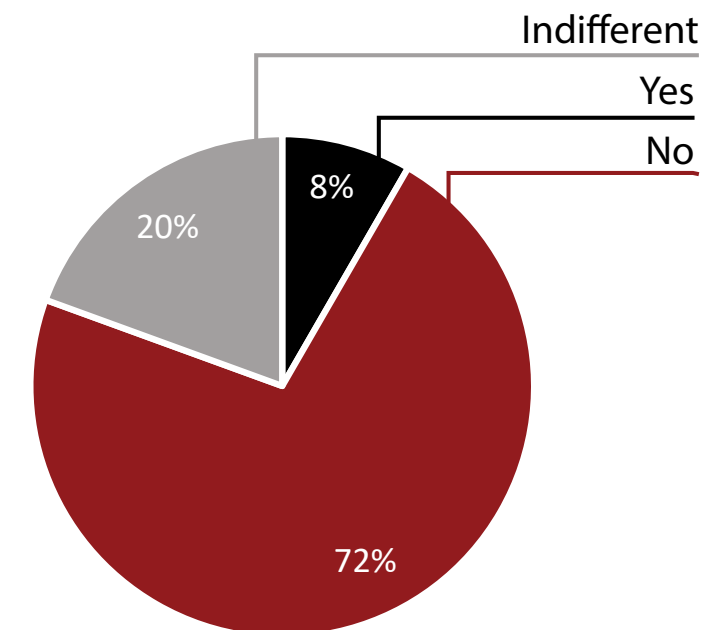
## Findings

### Common Areas of Concern

- Corridor / Interchange appearance
- Vacant properties
- Blight

### Common Areas of Opportunity

- Provision of variety of quality housing
- Full-service grocery
- Medical facilities
- Beautification



When asked if the corridor met their needs, **72%** of survey respondents said the corridor does not meet their needs.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## VISION

The Augusta Road Corridor will reclaim its status as the **signature gateway** into the City of Greenville and as a center of urban life and **community pride** for its neighbors.

A re-imagined **multimodal corridor** will connect people to goods and services, housing options, and job centers, including the SC Technology & Aviation Center.

Public and private investment will **reinvigorate this corridor** and bring energy and vitality back to this crossroads of Greenville's growth.

## STRATEGY

Following a series of individual stakeholder meetings and the public workshop/charrette in February 2022, Greenville County planners and designers, in partnership with designers from the City of Greenville, identified a strategy moving forward to achieve the study area's best use. This strategy consists of two signature transportation projects and dozens of land-use recommendations. The transportation projects include a streetscape improvement project along Augusta Road and beautification efforts along I-85. To best make use of these improvements, potential land uses are outlined in the bubble map to the right. The following spread illustrates a general vision for build-out of the recommended land uses, utilizing the recommended transportation projects as the spine for new development. This master plan is conceptual in nature and is subject to change contingent upon stakeholder engagement.

# CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM







This master plan is conceptual in nature and is subject to change contingent upon stakeholder engagement. See subsequent pages for enlargements.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**CHARRETTE CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN**



Proposed Trail Connection  
Existing Buildings  
Proposed Buildings



# CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN | NORTH OF I-85

## Park & Trailhead

The Ramsey Family Library, located off Augusta Road at 100 Lydia Street, is a wonderful asset to the community. Greenville County owns the property in front of the Library on the corner of Lydia Street and Augusta Road and sees an opportunity to add more community value to the site and library. The lot in question is large enough to provide an outdoor space to read, eat, grill etc. It can also serve as a trailhead for a new line of the Swamp Rabbit trail that could branch off and loop through this study area. A covered outdoor patio could be installed with access from the sidewalk on Augusta Road and the library, providing a recreational space for library goers and those living and working in the community.



## Neighborhood Trail Connections

The Augusta Road study area currently lacks recreational amenities. Proximity to Brushy Creek paves the way to create greenway connections throughout the Study area that can link small parklets and connect to the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail network. This is an opportunity to connect the northern and southern portions of the study area with a multi-use trail as well.



## Mobility Hub

The study area is located a short distance from downtown Greenville and several major employers, including the SC Technology and Aviation Center, and features frontage and multiple interchanges along I-85. To leverage this centrality, a mobility hub is recommended, which could provide several multimodal transit options. This hub could feature a variety of publicly accessible amenities such as a bus transfer station connecting Greenlink routes, park-and-ride services, electric vehicle charging stations, public restrooms, a small cafe or coffee shop, and more.





# CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN | SOUTH OF I-85

## Brushy Creek Swamp Rabbit Trail Extension

Brushy Creek travels along I-85 within the Augusta Road Corridor study area and is nestled within the right-of-way of SCDOT and ReWa. What does this mean for the community? It is a chance to add a new leg to the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail and connect it to Connestee Nature Preserve. Right-of-way acquisition, while a long process, would not be nearly as expensive as if acquiring it from many different property owners. Additionally, being in close proximity to a commercial thoroughfare would provide trail users access to various businesses.



## Supportive Housing Campus

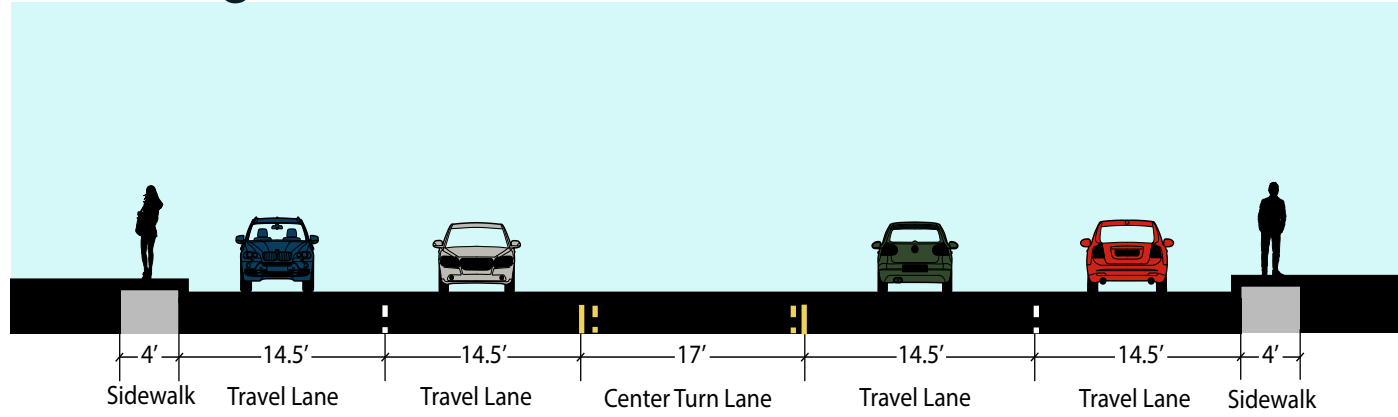
The area south of I-85 is primarily undeveloped, offering immense opportunity to incorporate mixed-income housing supporting every step of getting back on one's feet after facing various challenges, medical services, childcare services, job and industry training, and minority business incubator services. Having a campus-like setting where all of this is available within walking distance, with transit access, will be game changing for those using these services and industry leaders looking to scout talent. This is a model that has been successfully embraced in markets across the country.



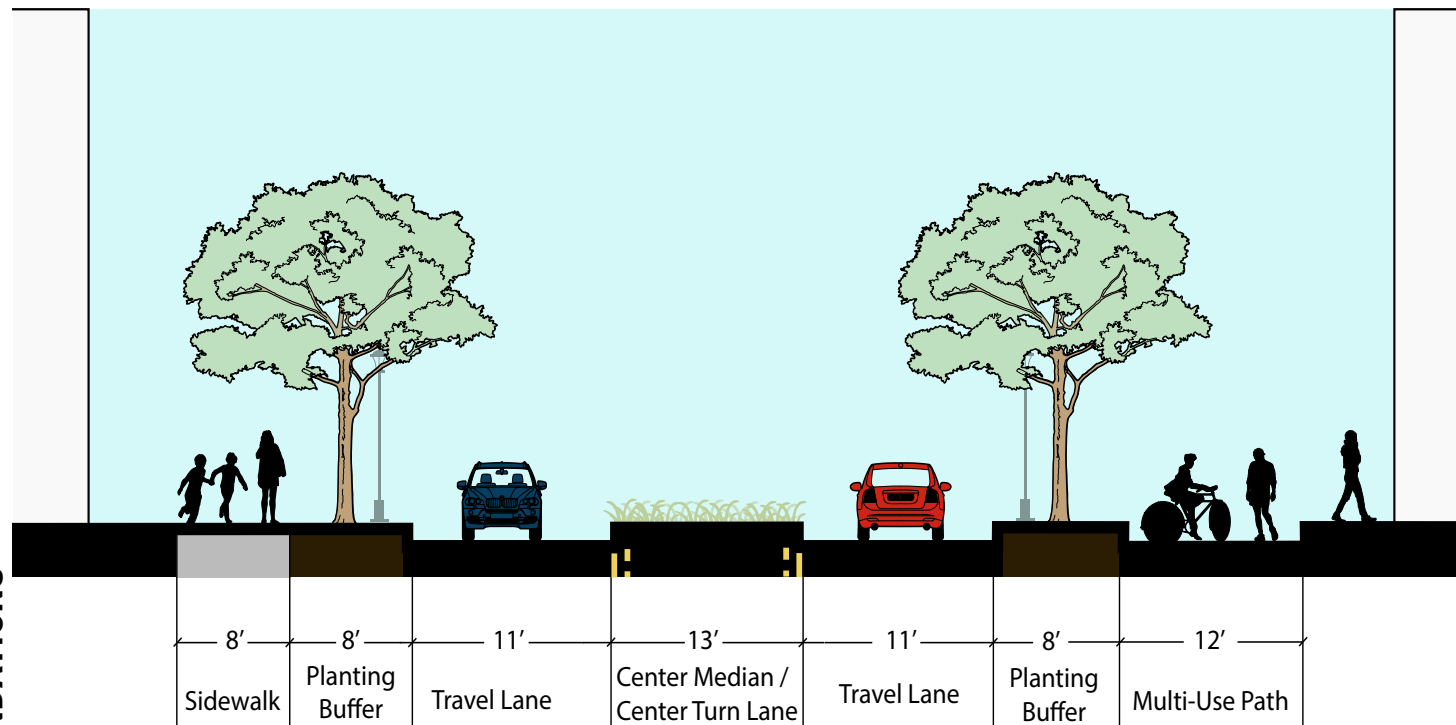


# Augusta Road Streetscape

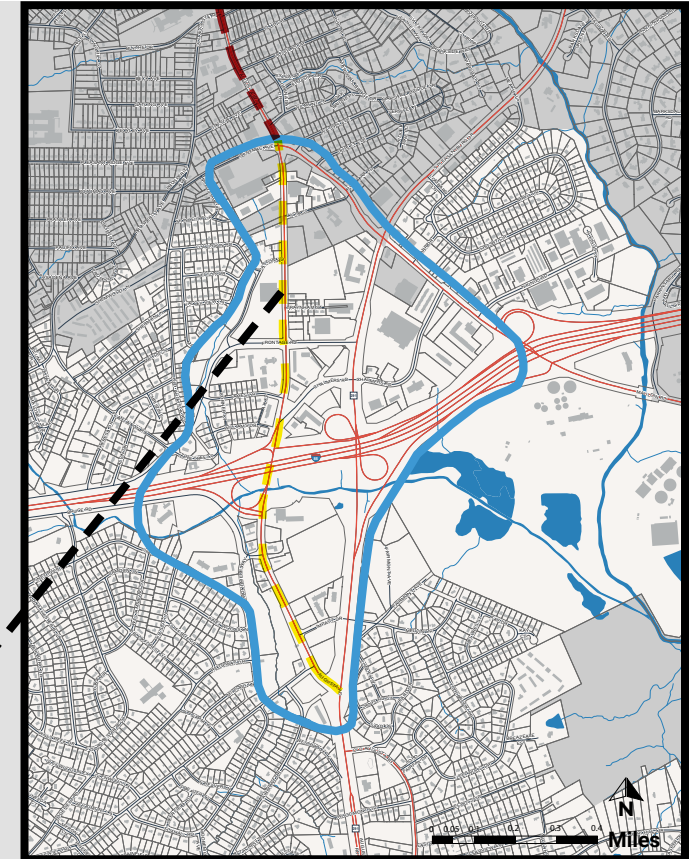
## Existing Conditions



## Proposed Enhancements



The City of Greenville has already begun this effort by implementing a new streetscape project along Augusta Street within the City limits, called the Augusta Street Safety Improvements Project. City and County of Greenville designers agreed that it would be beneficial to continue this streetscape into the County all the way to where Augusta Road intersects with Pleasantburg Drive. This would extend the multi-use path on one side of the road and widen the sidewalk on the other. Augusta Road would be reduced to a two lane road with a center turn lane and planting buffers between the sidewalks and travel lanes.



Before After





## Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail Connection

The Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail currently remains unconnected on the northern and southern sides of I-85. The Augusta Road Corridor Study area falls very close to that existing gap, presenting an opportunity to incorporate the study area into the Swamp Rabbit Trail network through a new line that connects into the gap as it is completed.

Greenville Country Club

Sara Collins Elementary

Hughes Academy

Library

291

85

ReWa

291

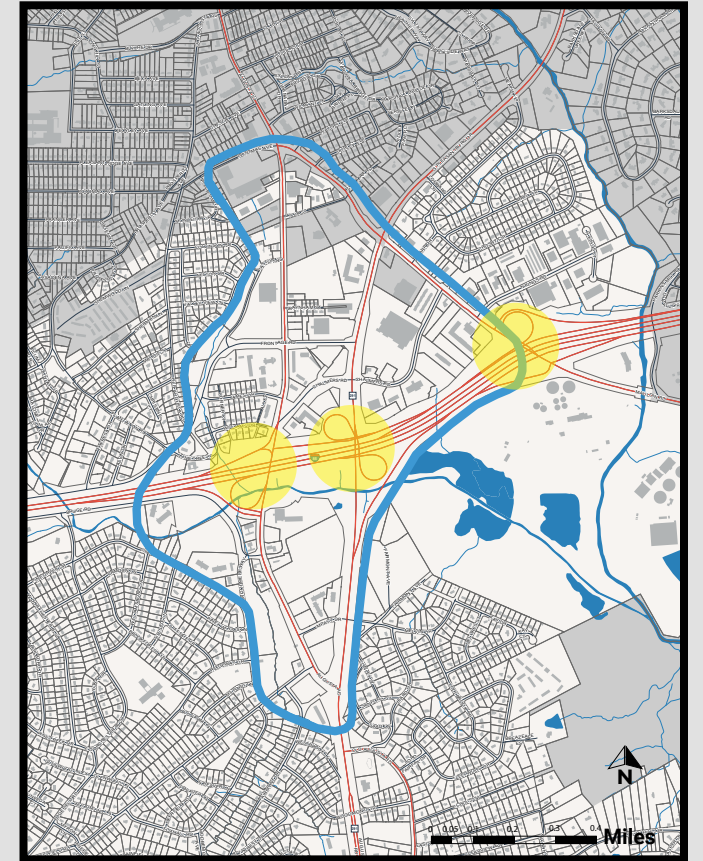
### Legend

- Study Area
- Swamp Rabbit Trail
- Proposed Trail Connection

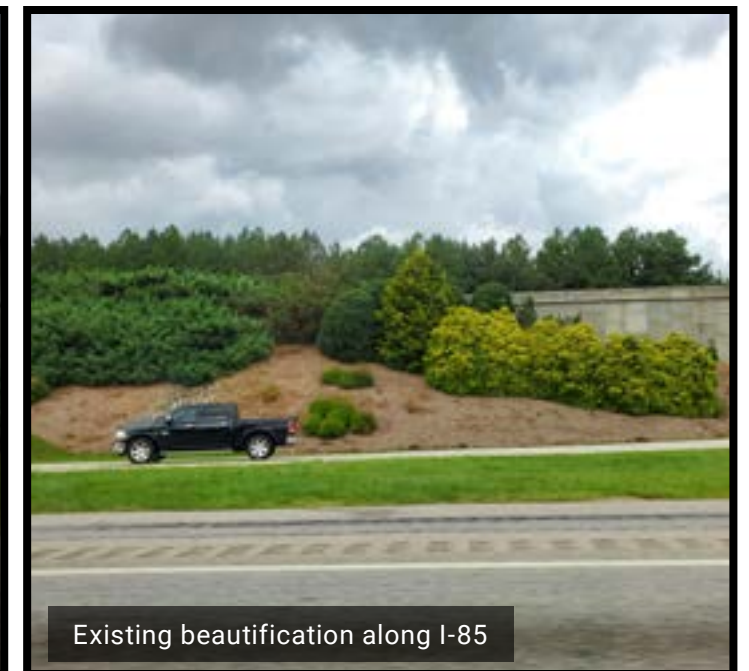
## Interstate Beautification Improvement Program Along Interchanges

The other transportation project highlighted by the charrette team after considering stakeholder and public input is interchange beautification along I-85. The study area contains three interchanges: one at Augusta Road, one at Pleasantburg Drive, and the other at Mauldin Road. Future beautification efforts could include signage and landscaping.

This effort would help create an identity for the area, directing interstate users attention to the presence of Greenville County's businesses and other attributes. Implementation could be established through the creation of a County-wide program to address interchanges across the County as a whole.



Existing beautification along I-85



Existing beautification along I-85

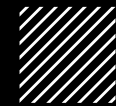


# IMPLEMENTATION

## Commercial Corridor Standards

Greenville County will include a section within the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) for Commercial Corridor Standards. The UDO is an effort to combine the County's Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations into one single document, with the Comprehensive Plan as a guide. Standards necessary to accomplish the goals set forth in this plan may require

additional regulations, so Greenville County staff will be creating an overlay zone to address many of the form-based requirements desired by the community within and surrounding the study area, such as building heights and lighting specifications. This overlay would also incorporate other incentive programs for the region, like those for mixed-income housing.



### LANDSCAPED ROADSIDE BUFFER

Augusta Road would benefit from designating a roadside buffer of 15 feet to guarantee room for the continuation of the streetscape project currently being implemented in the City limits. This could include stricter tree spacing recommendations and approved planting list, or recommendations for areas with overhead power lines.

### SCREENING

Screening is recommended where any non-residential use is adjacent to a residential use or district. Fencing, however, should not be implemented within the landscaped roadside buffer along Augusta Road.

### OFF-STREET PARKING & LOADING

It is recommended that off-street parking and loading areas not be allowed along Augusta Road in the front of buildings and instead be located to the side or rear.

### SIGNAGE

The corridor might benefit from stricter signage standards to create a more unified flow between the City and County. This could include addressing window, wall, awning, projecting, and freestanding signs. Some recommendations include limiting wall, awning, and projecting signs to one per tenant and use of complementary sign materials.

### AUTOMOBILE/ PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Improving access for all users within the study area should be prioritized by requiring a reasonable effort to provide at least one ingress/egress point into properties utilizing avenues other than Augusta Road, such as side streets and cross-parcel connectivity. Requiring pedestrian amenities should also be a priority.

### TRANSPARENCY

Transparency, or the percentage of clear glass windows, doors, and other architectural elements, is recommended to take up at least 70% of the public facing façade surface area between 3 and 8 vertical feet from grade.

## Mixed-Income Housing

### Incentive Program

Encouraging mixed-income housing within the Augusta Road Study area will involve layering incentives. The southern half of the Study Area is in an Opportunity Zone, which presents opportunities for developers. The use of Low-income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) is another option developers

may pursue on the State level. Beyond these measures, Greenville County could establish incentives within an overlay zone for the Augusta Road corridor. This district could include incentives such as the ones listed below.

### DENSITY BONUSES

Developers can often be incentivized to implement various best practices if there is an opportunity to increase their return on investment through an increase in density. This could be used to incentivize including a set percentage of mixed-income housing to get the density incentive.

### BAILEY BILL PROVISIONS

The SC Bailey Bill allows for rehabilitation of historic buildings, updates to building systems like electrical and plumbing, and architecturally sensitive additions. Greenville County adopted an ordinance that maintains that if a minimum of 100% of the pre-renovation income producing building's assessed value, or 50% for non-income producing, is invested back into the building on approved enhancements, then the property will continue to be taxed at the pre-renovation rate for 10 years, with an option for additional years with council approval. There are options for affordable housing as well, but would involve Greenville County adopting additional provisions into the Ordinance.

### PUBLIC/ NON-PROFIT FUNDING

Greenville County can further incentivize mixed-income housing if it offers supplemental funding to developers who provide a set percentage of mixed-income units. This funding can come from a variety of partners, such as the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority and United Housing Connections.

### PUBLIC/ NON-PROFIT/ PRIVATE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY

Ultimately, property owners control their property's use. Greenville County can introduce certain regulations that help guide development, but it does not regulate the use of a property beyond the base zoning of that property. In order to enact pieces of this plan that extend beyond those traditional powers, public and non-profit organizations might benefit from acquiring strategic properties.

### RELAXED PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Parking requirements can sometimes pose problems when trying to adaptively reuse properties. Parcels might be too small to add additional parking needed to meet code requirements without drastic changes or grading. Greenville County can use this as an incentive for mixed-income housing by relaxing parking requirements or allowing use of existing parking if they meet a set percentage of mixed-income units on site.

### HEIGHT BONUSES

The same rule of thumb discussed under density bonuses can apply to height bonuses as well. If the County were to set a maximum floor count for the Augusta Road Study Area, a developer could be incentivized to add more mixed-income housing units if a certain percentage unlocked an ability to add extra floors, increasing their return on investment.



# Beautification Program

## Public/Private Partnership

Spartanburg County's "Eyes on 85" model is a grassroots approach. Local employers and community groups start an initiative to kick off a beautification effort in a given location and sometimes fund the initial landscaping. If Greenville

County initiated a program with a similar model, the County could then pick up maintenance and/or assist with and streamline the permitting process as much as possible.

### Next Steps

#### PROGRAM FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

The framework of how this program will function needs to be developed, including who would be the program manager, where it is housed within the County, and the steps involved.

#### MAINTENANCE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Design and implementation of landscaping efforts is only one element of a program like this. An implementation plan will need to be developed to clearly illustrate who will take on this responsibility, potentially on a case by case basis.

#### LAUNCH OF PROGRAM & WORKSHOPS

When the program launches, County staff could consider having public workshops explaining the process for those interested in participating. These could be scheduled on a regular basis or by request when interested parties reach out.

#### BUSINESS/STAKEHOLDER RECRUITMENT

As the program launches, County staff will reach out to business owners and stakeholders who have previously mentioned being interested in beautification projects to see if they would like to get involved.

# Funding Opportunities

Below is a list of several funding tools that could be used alone or in combination to help implement this strategic plan. These tools range from public and private sector grants to various tax districts. Ultimately,

decisions about which tools would be used to implement this plan would be chosen by community stakeholders and Greenville County Council.

#### PUBLIC WORKS IMPROVEMENT ACT

Governing bodies may establish an improvement district, and implement and finance an improvement plan within the district, if the improvements may be beneficial within the designated area, would preserve or improve property values, property values might decrease without the improvements, and a majority of property owners owning 66% of the assessed value of real property within the district consent in writing.

#### TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) DISTRICT

Public finance tool local entities use to revitalize an area that has become, or is becoming, blighted. The tool allows a designated area to spend money up front to redevelop and enhance the area and pay off the enhancements using any additional property taxes that are generated within a designated timeframe. A cap is set at the pre-renovation tax level, and then any additional revenue goes towards the debt.

#### SALES TAX

Establishing a penny sales tax with revenue funneled directly towards priority infrastructure projects would create a funding source for streetscape projects.

#### STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING

There are many forms of federal and state funding available to leverage for projects like the ones proposed in this plan. This includes funding from organizations like HUD, the EPA, FHA, and FTA. These are often competitive grant programs, which have certain rules attached to them should the grant be awarded.

#### TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) PROGRAM

The TA Program is a competitive grant program for jurisdictions across the State wishing to implement pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Greenville is located in a Transportation Management Area (TMA) and therefore competes with jurisdictions within the GPATS MPO, rather than the State as a whole. The GPATS MPO receives an allocation of \$1.3 million annually, which can be allocated to grantees by the GPATS Policy Committee.

#### RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (SCPRT) administers the RTP program under the approval of FHWA. It is a federally funded grant program for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects. Grants can range from \$10,000 to \$100,000, unless it is a motorized project. These projects do not have the \$100,000 limit.

#### SC TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE BANK

The SC Transportation Infrastructure bank was established in 1997 to assist financing major infrastructure projects across the State. The bank awards both grants and loans to local jurisdictions across the State through a competitive application process. The bank has awarded up to \$5.9 billion to 100 projects to date, including the Woodruff Road Parallel.

#### PRIVATE SOURCES

As there are many grants available from public sector entities, there are also many private entities offering grants for projects proposed in this plan. These grants are often smaller in amount, though not always, but can still be leveraged wisely when combined with other funding sources.

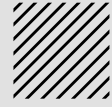


# Goals & Strategies

| Goals                | Strategies   | Partners  | Tools                                 | Timeline (Years) | Cost Estimate |
|----------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Connectivity         | + Cross-access for automobiles   | Property owners, Greenville County, City of Greenville, SCDOT           | + Overlay Zoning District             | + 1-2            | \$\$\$        |
|                      | + Cross-access for pedestrians   |   | + Transportation Alternatives Program | + 6-10           | \$\$          |
|                      | + Transit access   |   | + Various grants                      | + 3-5            | \$            |
| Form Based Standards | + Clearly delineated crosswalks, streetlights, and other multimodal amenities                        | Greenville County, City of Greenville                                   | + Overlay Zoning District             | + 1-2            | \$0           |
|                      | + Adopt overlay zoning district with form-based design standards complimentary to those of the city. |   |                                       |                  |               |
| Mixed-Income Housing | + Adopt mixed-income housing incentives  | Greenville County, City of Greenville, GCRA, TGHA, UHC, Property owners | + Overlay Zoning District             | + 1-2            | \$0           |
|                      | + Create funding pool for developers investing in mixed-income housing                               |   | + Funding Pot                         | + 1-2            | \$            |
|                      | + Non-profit and government property acquisition   |   |                                       |                  |               |
| Streetscape          | + Corridor beautification through landscaping and wayfinding   | Greenville County, City of Greenville, GPATS, SCDOT, Local Stakeholders | + Public Works Improvement Act        | + 6-10           | \$\$\$        |
|                      | + Implementation and improvement of multimodal infrastructure  |   | + Transportation Alternatives Program | + 6-10           | \$\$          |
|                      |  |   | + Various grants                      | + 3-5            | \$            |
|                      |  |   | + GPATS Guideshare                    | + 10+            | \$0           |
| I-85 Beautification  | + Corridor beautification through landscaping and wayfinding   | Greenville County, City of Greenville, SCDOT, Local Stakeholders        | + Public Works Improvement Act        | + 6-10           | \$\$\$        |
|                      |  |   | + Various grants                      | + 3-5            | \$            |
|                      |  |   | + Public                              | + 1-2            | \$            |

GCRA: Greenville County Redevelopment Authority  
 TGHA: The Greenville Housing Authority  
 UHC: United Housing Connections  
 GPATS: Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study  
 SCDOT: South Carolina Department of Transportation





# Implementation Process

## Adoption Process - Dates TBD

- Planning & Development Committee Initiate Process for Adoption
- Public Hearing
- First Reading
- Planning Commission
- Planning & Development Committee
- Second Reading
- Third Reading
- Effective Date of Adoption

## Further Implementation

### Adoption of Augusta Road Mixed-Use/ Mixed-Income District

To ensure that proper regulations are in place to promote growth and connectivity within the study area in a manner that supports the vision illustrated in this Strategic Plan, design standards and mixed-income housing incentives will have to be established and adopted for the corridor in the form of an overlay zone.

An adoption date has not been established at this time, but it will occur after this Strategic Plan has already gone before Council. The adoption process, explained on the page before this, is approximately a three-month process.

### Trail Implementation

The trail segment being proposed in this Strategic Plan is a spur off the main line, and therefore would likely not fall high on the original priority list. This could change, however, if grant funding were used in assistance, or if the trail segment was part of a larger initiative. This Strategic Plan can serve

as such an initiative, especially as development comes to the southern half of the study area. Pairing the trail with stream restoration practices is a great way to find alternative funding sources.

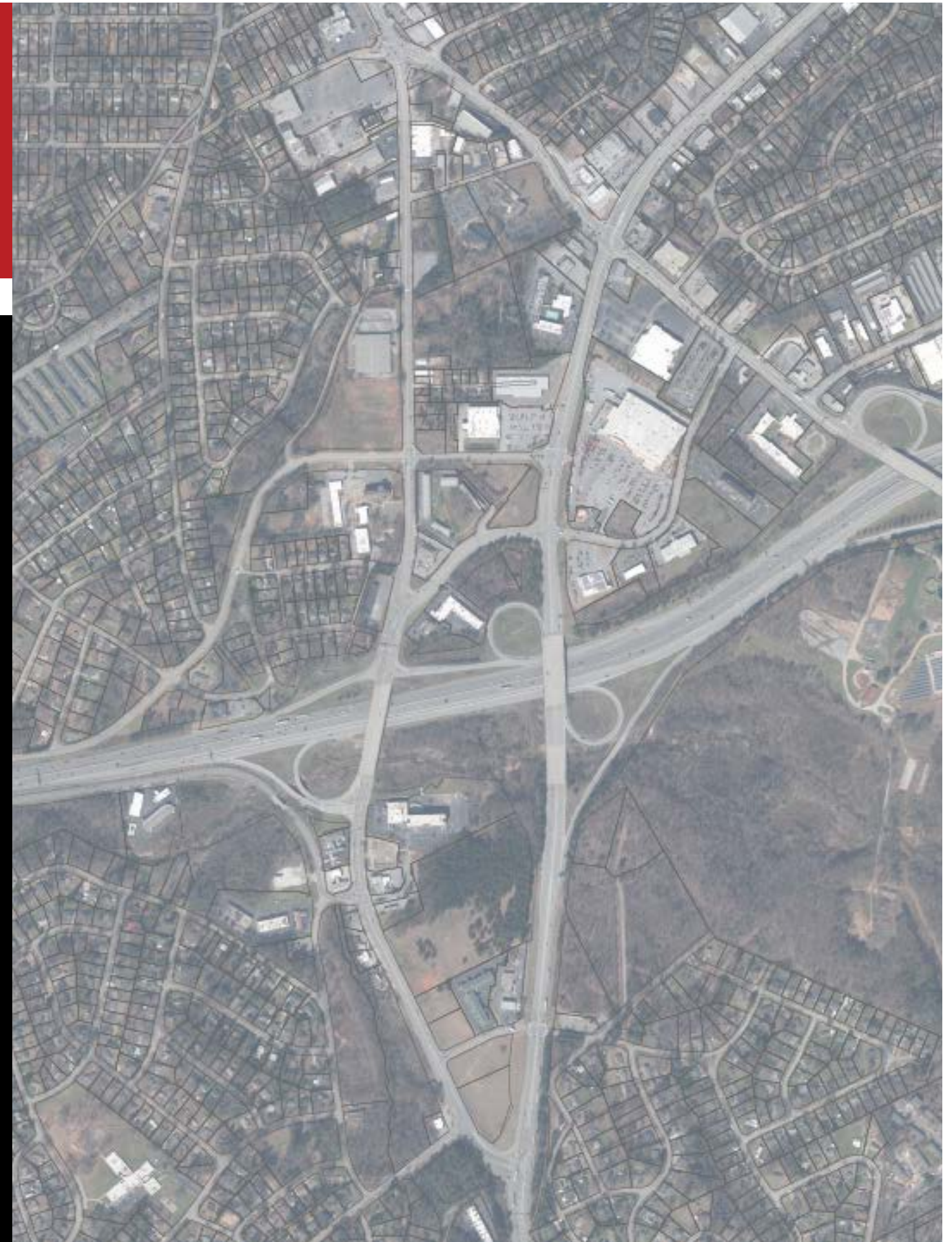


## Conclusion

The Augusta Road corridor is unique compared to many other commercial corridors within Greenville County. It is surrounded by residential housing, with nine hotel or motel sites in various states of occupation and repair. These sometimes serve as alternative forms of housing for those without many other options. That being said, the quality of this housing along with the services provided within the study area leave a lot to be desired.

There are many approaches to bring this study area to its full potential. The first approach is through infrastructure enhancement. The corridor is currently over-engineered and can be reduced to a lane in either direction with a center turn lane and better multimodal facilities. This could be accomplished by continuing the streetscape project the City of Greenville has begun in other sections of the Augusta Corridor. Streetscape enhancements open up avenues for beautification, and when paired with landscaping and signage at I-85 interchanges, the corridor could generate a great sense of place.

The second factor needed to successfully recognize the vision of this plan is land use distribution that offers community services. Zoning within the study area already allows for everything recommended in the document, so it will only take the right people to come in and recognize the potential. If done well, Augusta Road could be a community hub offering a variety of housing along with services that give the public resources they need to realize their own potential.





GREENVILLE COUNTY  
**AUGUSTA RD CORRIDOR  
STRATEGIC PLAN**



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