

# CHERRY ROAD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

December 8, 2014



Prepared by the City of Rock Hill  
Planning & Development Department



# Acknowledgements

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# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014



Historically, Cherry Road served as the major north-south artery for the eastern portion of York County. During the 1950's and 1960's the nation began to experience a movement of retail activity from the downtown to more suburban areas. In Rock Hill, the majority of retail activity flocked to Cherry Road. Over the next three decades, a combination of public and private investments resulted in the north part of Cherry Road emerging as the City's (and larger region's) dominant retail area.

In the 1990's, the City's shopping nexus began to shift to the intersection of I-77 and Dave Lyle Boulevard and other major corridors. This shift initiated a gradual disinvestment in parts of the Cherry Road corridor. In the late 1990's/early 2000's the City invested in streetscape improvements along Cherry Road from Faith Boulevard to Cherry Park in an effort to spur private investment in the area. The public investments improved the appearance of the roadway, but only spurred a minimal amount of investment by the private sector.

The City realized that more would need to be done to revitalize the Cherry Road corridor. The importance of revitalization was stressed in several City policy documents, including the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan, the FY2013-15 Strategic Plan, and the College Town Action Plan. The City undertook the *US-21/Cherry Road Market Feasibility Study* in 2012 and developed six small area plans for different areas along the corridor between 2012 and 2014:

- ◆ Heckle Boulevard
- ◆ South Cherry Road
- ◆ Cherry Park
- ◆ Mt. Gallant/Anderson Road
- ◆ Hospitality District
- ◆ North Cherry/Riverwalk

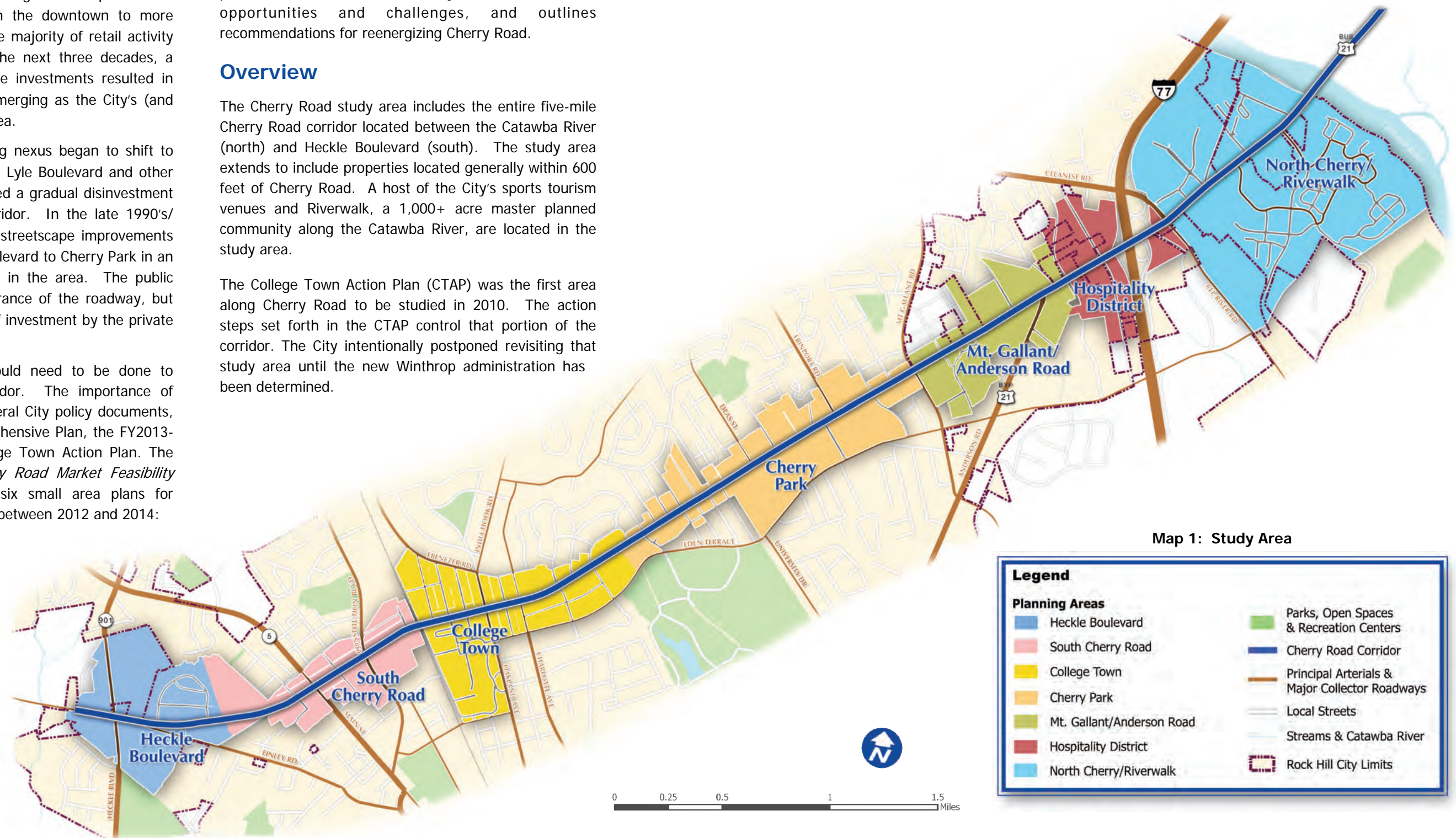
This plan, the *Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy*, is the culmination of all previous planning efforts. The plan provides an overview of the study area, documents its opportunities and challenges, and outlines recommendations for reenergizing Cherry Road.

## Overview

The Cherry Road study area includes the entire five-mile Cherry Road corridor located between the Catawba River (north) and Heckle Boulevard (south). The study area extends to include properties located generally within 600 feet of Cherry Road. A host of the City's sports tourism venues and Riverwalk, a 1,000+ acre master planned community along the Catawba River, are located in the study area.

The College Town Action Plan (CTAP) was the first area along Cherry Road to be studied in 2010. The action steps set forth in the CTAP control that portion of the corridor. The City intentionally postponed revisiting that study area until the new Winthrop administration has been determined.

**Map 1** shows the extents of the study area as well as the boundaries of each small area plan.



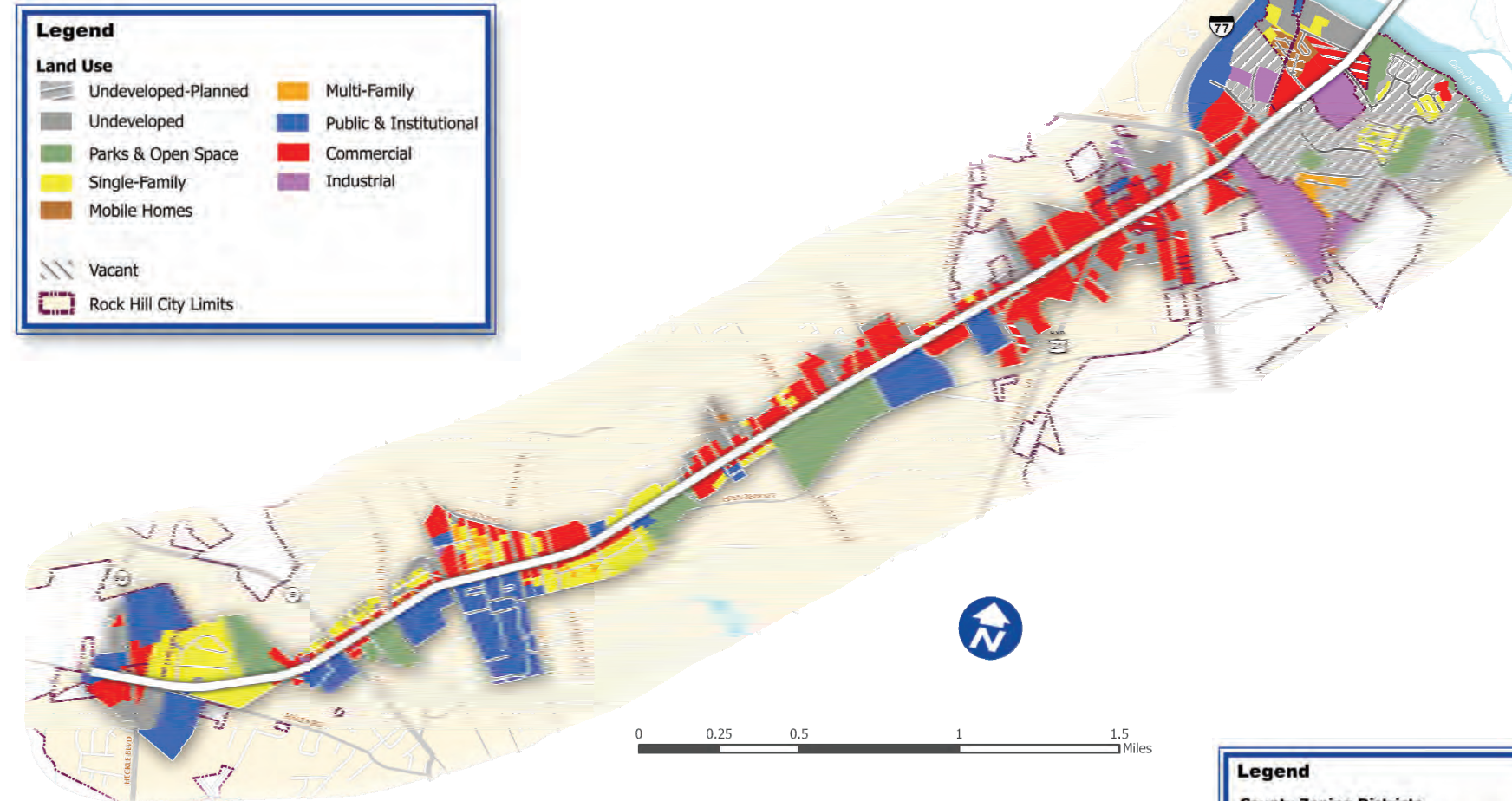
Map 1: Study Area

# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014



Map 2: Existing Land Use



## Existing Conditions

A total of nearly 4.8 million square feet of building space in more than 900 buildings is located in the study area. The total tax value of the study area (including College Town) is approximately \$263 million (August 2014). Commercial is the prominent use along the corridor, comprising 30.0 percent of the overall uses. About 17 percent of land is undeveloped; 6.2 percent of which will be developed as a part of Riverwalk. **Table 1** details the type and amount of land uses found in the study area.

**Map 2** illustrates the existing land use pattern in the study area.

Table 1: Existing Land Use

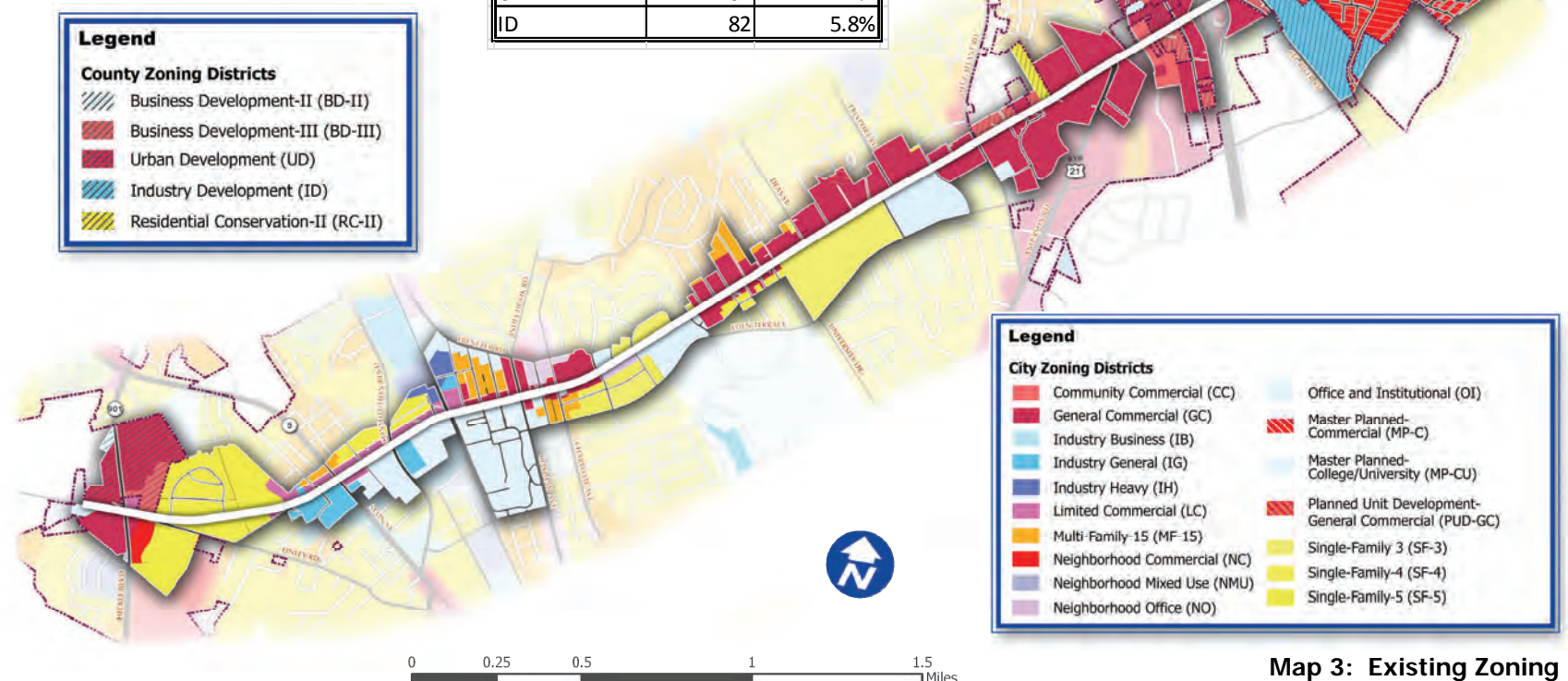
Land Use	Acreage	% of Total
TOTAL	1410	100.0%
Parks & Open Space	175	12.4%
Single-Family	164	11.6%
Multi-Family	20	1.4%
Mobile Home Park	16	1.2%
Public & Institutional	276	19.6%
Commercial	423	30.0%
Industrial	99	7.0%
Undeveloped - Planned	88	6.2%
Undeveloped	149	10.6%
Total # of parcels	729	
Vacant land (acres)	60	
# of vacant parcels	152	
% of vacant land	21%	

Table 2: Zoning

Zoning District	Acreage	% of Total
TOTAL	1410	100.00%
CITY		
SF-3	88.9	6.3%
SF-4	16.1	1.1%
SF-5	131.4	9.3%
MF-15	34.1	2.4%
NO	10.2	0.7%
OI	73.2	5.2%
IB	29.1	2.1%
NC	7.9	0.6%
CC	13.0	0.9%
GC	403.5	28.6%
LC	29.3	2.1%
NMU	0.3	0.0%
IH	9.0	0.6%
IG	26.5	1.9%
MP-C	141.0	10.0%
MP-CU	107.6	7.6%
PUD-GC	2.8	0.2%
COUNTY		
RC-II	8	0.6%
BD-II	13	0.9%
BD-III	23	1.6%
UD	161	11.4%
ID	82	5.8%

The majority of City property in the study area is zoned General Commercial (GC). Other prominent zoning districts include Master Planned – Commercial (MP-C) and Single Family 5 (SF-5). About 20 percent of the study area is located in the County. The majority of County property is zoned Urban Development (UD) and Business Development-III (BD-III). **Table 2** provides a breakdown of City and County zoning.

**Map 3** illustrates the zoning districts in the study area.



Map 3: Existing Zoning

# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014



The Cherry Road corridor has tremendous development and redevelopment potential. First the corridor offers excellent access, exposure, and visibility. Traffic count and regional accessibility are greatest near I-77, but all portions of the road carry high traffic volumes and are easily accessible from other major roads and key destinations (see **Transportation Map**). Additionally, many of the City's sports tourism enterprises are located on Cherry Road including Cherry Park's softball and multi-purpose fields, Hargett Park's softball, baseball and multi-purpose fields, the Rock Hill Tennis Center, Winthrop's Recreational and Research Complex, District Three Stadium, and the Rock Hill Outdoor Center. Cherry Road is also in close proximity to Riverwalk and the Catawba River, an area receiving regional and national attention for its major sports tourism venues and ecotourism opportunities.



Recent investment along Cherry Road

turnover rates are low. All of these factors will likely grow confidence in the marketplace and encourage other property owners to invest in the area.

The City has supported the corridor by 1) implementing a signage amortization program which required property owners to bring nonconforming signs into conformance by January 2010, 2) eliminating the addition of new title loan and check cashing businesses since 2007, and 3) undertaking streetscape enhancements in the north Cherry Road area between 2002-2004 (burying of power lines, street trees, and sidewalk improvements).



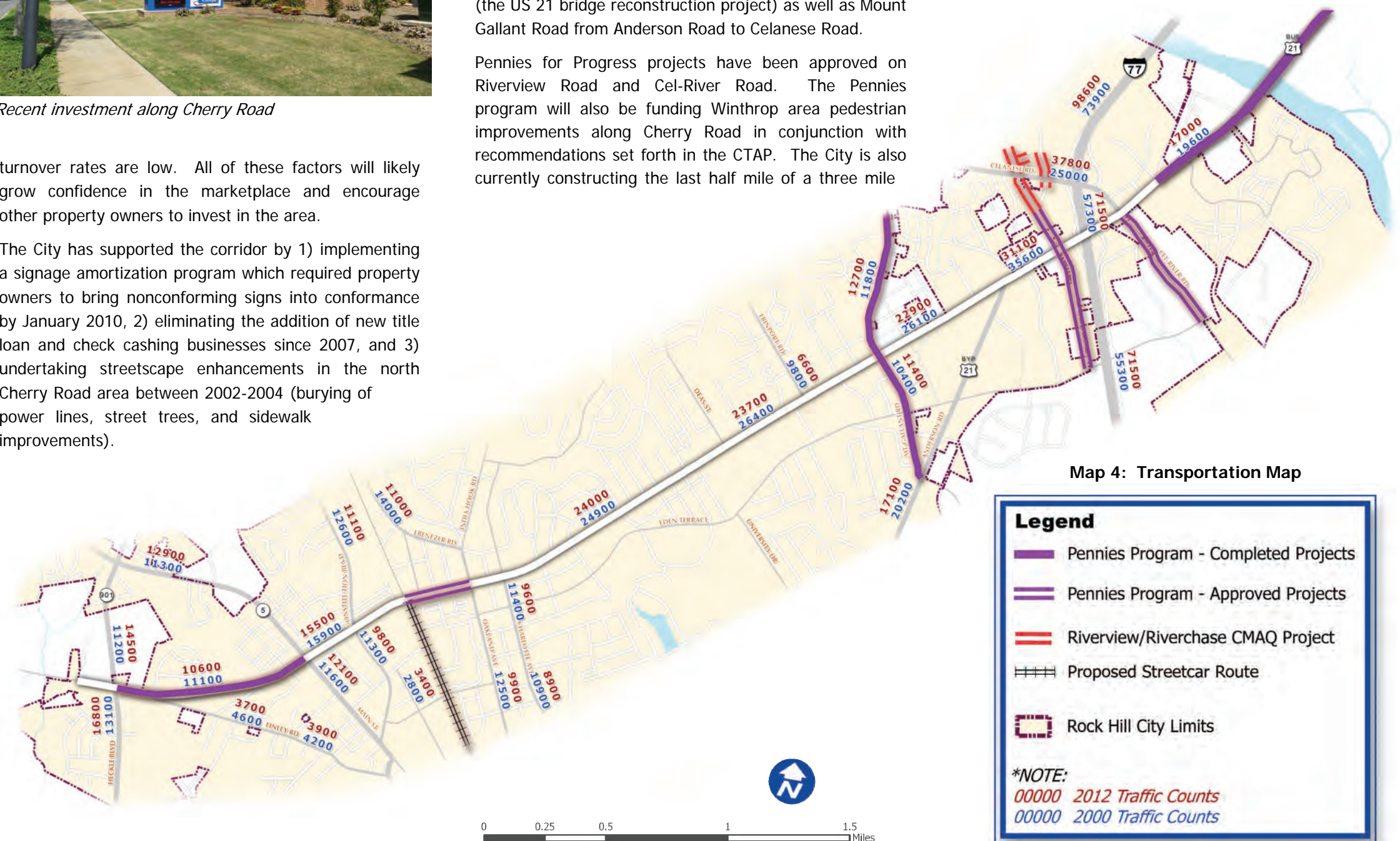
Mighty Casey statue in Cherry Park

The corridor also contains a number of stable public uses, including Winthrop University, Sullivan Middle School, the York County Natural Gas Authority, York County government offices, and the City's Water Filter Plant. Additionally, several private developers have recently invested in the corridor. Dollar General, a car wash facility, medical office buildings, QuikTrip and Popeye's have all been built in the past few years. Businesses in the Heckle Boulevard and Mt. Gallant/Anderson Road areas are thriving and vacancy and

Lastly, a number of roadway projects have taken place in the area in recent years, several additional projects are funded and proceeding to construction in close proximity to the study area, and other projects are under consideration (see **Transportation Map**). Pennies projects have been completed on Cherry Road from Main Street to Heckle and from Faith Boulevard to Sutton Road (the US 21 bridge reconstruction project) as well as Mount Gallant Road from Anderson Road to Celanese Road.

Pennies for Progress projects have been approved on Riverview Road and Cel-River Road. The Pennies program will also be funding Winthrop area pedestrian improvements along Cherry Road in conjunction with recommendations set forth in the CTAP. The City is also currently constructing the last half mile of a three mile

trail along the Catawba River that will connect to existing trails at River Park. Finally, Rock Hill Economic and Urban Development conducted a Streetcar Feasibility Study that proposes a streetcar route that includes a connection to Cherry Road. If built, the project will further catalyze development in the Cherry Road corridor.



## Challenges

The Cherry Road corridor is struggling to reposition itself in the marketplace and reemerge as a competitive corridor. The key challenges facing the area are Beautification/Image, Land Use/Zoning/Codes and Connectivity/Access. In some instances, the challenges are corridor-wide. In cases, the challenges are isolated to a specific subarea(s). The key challenges are documented below:

### Beautification/Image

#### *Corridor-Wide Challenges*

A significant amount of development occurred along Cherry Road between 1950 and 1990. Some properties have been demolished and rebuilt (as either the same or different uses) and others have undergone renovations. Many structures; however, are unimproved and have reached or are near the end of their life cycle. Additionally, many of the original land uses in the study area (industrial complexes, gas stations, vehicle maintenance facilities) increase the likelihood of site contamination which may deter property owners or potential property owners from redeveloping these sites. Lastly, building codes have changed over time sometimes making it cost-prohibitive for many owners of older buildings to retrofit and meet today's standards.

Like many of the properties in the study area, water and sewer infrastructure along much of the corridor is also often dated. The infrastructure is adequate to serve current uses; however, it may need to be replaced or upgraded as properties redevelop.

Building design and site configuration can be outdated and out of context with surrounding properties, with many buildings setback substantially from the roadway separated by large parking areas.

The study area as a whole also has high vacancy and turnover rates which contribute to lack of investment and maintenance by existing business and property owners and may deter potential developers and business owners from developing in the area.

Currently, there is no marketing effort associated with the Cherry Road corridor in the City. Unfortunately, the name



*Vacant property*

Cherry Road is often used in the area to signify an older area whose time has passed. The corridor as a whole, and its distinct sub-areas, lack an updated identity and associated branding to counteract this image.

#### *Area-Specific Challenges*

Streetlight conditions in the South Cherry Road area make pedestrians and customers feel unsafe and deter them from visiting the area at night. Additionally, the two major intersections in the study area, Main Street and Constitution Boulevard, are of older design and could benefit from safety and aesthetic improvements. Sidewalks in many areas south of Cherry Park are located directly against the street, leaving no safety buffer between the street and sidewalk for pedestrians.

Crime rates are high in the Hospitality District. Police regularly patrol the area and have partnered with the hotels on a crime reduction program called Rock Hill-York County CONNECT; however, the area remains a top five crime area in the City. Litter is prevalent along the road right-of-way, in undeveloped lots, and on vacant property in the Hospitality District. Utility lines on Riverview Road are located above ground, which are a visual eyesore. Riverview Road lacks sidewalks, consistent street lighting, and street furniture which makes the area uninviting and limits pedestrian activity.

## Land Use/Zoning/Codes

#### *Corridor-Wide Challenges*

Cherry Road was one of the first areas of the City outside of the historic City core to develop. As a result, many properties were developed before zoning or were adopted under old zoning requirements that have since been revised. In 2003, the City implemented a signage amortization program which required property owners to bring nonconforming signs into conformance by January 2010. On many properties, other elements such as screening, landscaping, and parking, remain nonconforming.

In addition to the inconsistencies between properties due to changes in zoning regulations, about one-fifth of land in the study area is located in the County which has its own zoning code requirements and code enforcement measures that do not always align with City requirements. This produces a lack of consistency in landscaping, signage, and design standards and is confusing to property owners trying to determine which regulations they need to adhere to.

According to the 2012 *US-21/Cherry Road Market Feasibility Study*, the study area lacks a balanced mix of land uses and has an over-supply of retail space. As the corridor has transitioned from a regional center to community center, it cannot support as much retail as it



*Main Street/Cherry Road intersection*

did in the past which reduces the normal synergy to create convenient shopping areas. There are a limited number of employment-related uses along the corridor such as office, institutional, research and development, and light industrial. Additionally, the retail mix is not aligned with market demand. There is an oversupply of convenience and shopper's goods and an undersupply of dining and entertainment uses and personal services. Businesses tend to be single-destination uses rather than specialized clusters of retail or service industries that serve similar interests (such as medical uses, neighborhood services, offices, light manufacturing, or contractor/distributor showrooms). Lastly, residential densities in the surrounding area are low and do not adequately support existing or potential businesses and future transit services.

#### *Area-Specific Challenges*

In the South Cherry Road area, current zoning does not support existing land use. Nine percent of properties in this area contain uses considered "non-conforming" in their respective zoning district, including warehouse (LC), adult entertainment (LC), check cashing (LC), and retail sales (IG). Several single-family homes are located adjacent to intense business and light industrial uses. Retail uses are spread out along South Cherry Road instead of being concentrated at highly visible areas (making it difficult to introduce new uses to the corridor). The parcel sizes and configurations in this area do not meet current standards which hinders rehabilitation, development, and redevelopment.

Hospitality experts felt a convention center was necessary to avoid losing revenue to Fort Mill and Charlotte. Although there is an oversupply of retail uses in the majority of the corridor, the Hospitality District also lacks destination retail such as shopping and sit-down restaurants to support area hotels and pedestrian activity. Residents felt additional restaurants were needed in the South Cherry Road and College Town areas as well.

### Connectivity and Access

#### *Corridor-Wide Challenges*

When properties originally developed along Cherry Road,

significant access control and circulation requirements were absent from development regulations. As a result, most properties have poor internal circulation patterns and do not provide cross access to adjacent parcels. The lack of connectivity forces customers to get back in the car and onto the main arterial roadway to travel from business to business instead of being able to drive between adjacent businesses or even park once and walk between businesses. This configuration forces unnecessary additional trips on Cherry Road which increases traffic congestion.

While some streetscape improvements have occurred in the last decade, the pedestrian environment is still not optimal. Many existing crosswalks along the corridor are in need of upgrades including restriping, high visibility markings, additional treatments, and ADA compliant curb ramps to ensure the safety of users.



*Faded crosswalk at the Cherry Rd./Richmond Dr. intersection*

Most businesses do not have connections from the public sidewalk to their front doors, making it difficult and uncomfortable for pedestrians to safely access businesses. Many properties along Cherry Road have multiple driveways directly from Cherry Road which increase traffic congestion and pedestrian and vehicular conflicts. Sidewalks along parts of Cherry Road are old and many areas are in need of maintenance. Many older neighborhoods in proximity to Cherry Road also lack sidewalks, making it difficult to travel to Cherry Road by foot.

### **Area-Specific Challenges**

There is no pedestrian connection between Hargett Park and Cherry Park, where activities and events are often programmed together. There is also limited bicycle and pedestrian access at the Heckle/Cherry/McConnells intersection and North Cherry/Riverwalk areas, where the potential for bicycle and pedestrian traffic is high.

Lack of sidewalks along Riverview Road will be resolved during the planned expansion of the roadway associated with the Pennies for Progress project. There is a sidewalk gap between Cel-River Road and Hospitality Drive in the North Cherry/Riverwalk study area that impedes the continuity of the sidewalk network.

Despite recent improvements to the intersection of Mt. Gallant Road and Cherry Road, it remains one of the top five locations for vehicular accidents in the City.

A lack of trails and an interconnected trail network limits pedestrian activity. Portions or all of four trail facilities proposed in the Trails and Greenways Master Plan (adopted in 2003 and updated in 2008), including two trails that have been designated as high priority by Council, are located in the study area or in close proximity, but no funding sources have been identified for their construction: extension of the Catawba Riverfront Trail to the north of Riverwalk, the Eden Terrace Trail, the Hearn Street Trail (from Cherry Park to Hargett Park), and the Heckle Trail.

Stakeholders in the Hospitality District felt that the lack of lighting under I-77 discourages customers from walking between restaurants and hotels located on opposite sides of I-77 at night.

### **Recommendations**

Although Cherry Road faces a number of challenges, it has the potential to again become a thriving, competitive corridor. The right mix of public and private investments focused on its three core challenges will help the corridor reemerge as a dominant area for activity in the City:

- ◆ Beautification/Image
- ◆ Land Use/Zoning/Codes
- ◆ Connectivity/Access

### **Beautification/Image**

The Cherry Road corridor suffers from disinvestment. The City could incentivize private investment by offering assistance to business and property owners for needed improvements. Staff has taken Council's recommendation and proposed a **Landscape Incentive Program** to improve the appearance of commercial properties along the corridor. Although the program is designed to be open to all existing, occupied, noncomplying businesses throughout the City, priority should be given to businesses along Cherry Road who have expressed an interest in participating in the program. The program would offer a match for street front landscaping, replacement of excessive pavement with landscaping, or installing landscaping in bare, unimproved areas.



*Example of reducing excessive pavement*

### **Area-Specific Challenges**

The City should also consider developing a **Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Grant Program** to stimulate business and property owners to improve the physical appearance of their businesses. This program would involve more funding and administration than the landscape incentive program, so it is recommended that the City measure interest in and success of the landscape program before moving forward with such a program.

The City has also begun initial conversations with SCDOT to explore opportunities for **additional landscaping improvements and public art around the Cherry Road/I-77 interchange**. The City is exploring erecting

a gateway art feature(s) or structure similar to those located at the Dave Lyle Boulevard interchange to help the area stand out and elevate its prominence. The City could also explore painting a mural on the retaining wall near the Home Depot as drivers head north onto I-77 to leave visitors with a lasting impression of the area and on other retaining walls throughout the corridor to add visual appeal.

Staff highly recommends that the City **capitalize on the planned Pennies for Progress project on Riverview Road**. Although York County has secured funding for roadway improvements including construction of sidewalks and curb and gutter, standard lighting, undergrounding of utilities, and intersection improvements, City enhancements could further improve the area's image. Upgraded lighting that compliments the lighting in Riverwalk could enhance the area's sense of place. Installation of garbage cans, which business owners have agreed to maintain if installed, could help reduce the amount of litter found along the roadway. Enhancements to Riverview Road would also provide connectivity and access benefits to residents and visitors. Enhancements could also help deter crime by helping hotel owners justify room rate increases.

These enhancements, coupled with a **continued police focus** in the area, can help reduce crime. In addition to the enhancements, the Police Department should continue to regularly patrol the area and develop statistics and strategies for reducing crime. They should continue to encourage and assist hotel owners and staff to report and share criminal information with one another and the Police Department via Rock Hill-York County CONNECT. Finally, the Police Department should continue the DDACTS initiative of Data Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety partnering with State and County agencies to reduce crime and enhance traffic safety within the identified area.

The City could work with the community to **develop and promote an identity for the corridor** (and sub-areas where appropriate). The City could design and install additional banners at major intersections for further promotion. The City should work with local realtors and economic development agencies to **develop marketing materials** that promote Cherry Road to potential business

# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy



owners and residents. Initial materials should be targeted toward business owners and residential developers and highlight why Cherry Road is an ideal location to do business and live. Future marketing materials could be directed at visitors and could cover Cherry Road's ample shopping and recreational opportunities.

The City should also continue to **promote Riverwalk as a destination for tourism and river-based recreation** because of its unique combination of specialized sports facilities, river-based recreational opportunities, and emerging mixed-use town center. The development has the potential to set Rock Hill apart from other communities and should be a marketing focus in the City.



Kayakers on the Catawba River

Other efforts that will help beautify and improve the image of the corridor include:

◆ **Extend streetscape improvements south of Cherry Park.**

Continue streetscape improvements south of Cherry Park, consistent with improvements made to the north, to enhance the pedestrian environment and visual appeal of the area. Streetscape improvements could include upgraded lighting, sidewalk repairs, adding a grass strip between the road and sidewalk, street trees, and underground utilities.

◆ **Upgrade the Main Street/Cherry Road and Constitution Boulevard/Cherry Road intersections to include underground utilities and improvements to the traffic signals.**

Two major intersections in the South Cherry Road area, Main Street and Constitution Boulevard, are of older design and are in need of safety and aesthetic improvements including new mast-arm traffic signals, decorative banners, and upgraded crosswalks.

◆ **Offer CPTED reviews and incorporate CPTED principles into the design review process.**

The Police Department can better market their free Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) reviews on private property to property owners in the Hospitality District. Several City officers are trained to conduct these reviews that educate property owners on strategies they could employ to reduce crime on their property.

The Planning & Development Department will continue to consult the Police Department regarding development and redevelopment proposals in order to determine how the physical design of properties could be altered to deter criminal activity. CPTED principles should be incorporated into development plans wherever possible.

**Land Use/Zoning/Codes**

Implementation of the beautification/image recommendations will encourage private investment along the corridor. The land use/zoning/codes recommendations suggest that the right mix of uses at the appropriate locations, combined with new development standards, will foster development appropriate to the corridor and its goals.

The high number of undeveloped and vacant properties and oversized parking lots present an opportunity for redevelopment and infill along the corridor and ultimately a better mix of land uses. To ensure that the corridor can support new land uses, the City should **proactively assess water and sewer infrastructure** along the corridor to identify future improvements that would need

Existing Main Street/Cherry Road Intersection



Main Street/Cherry Road Intersection with Upgrades





# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014



to be made if densities and intensities were to increase in the area. The City should also **conduct a brownfield assessment** along Cherry Road, similar to the 2008 assessment in the Old Town area, to inventory and prioritize all the sites that may contain contaminants. The assessment would allow the City to communicate actual site conditions to interested developers and position them to apply for EPA cleanup grants to remediate contaminated sites.

To help encourage the right mix of uses in the right locations along the corridor, the City should **support owner-initiated rezonings to mixed use or higher densities** as the corridor evolves (see Map 5). These land uses will help with the oversupply of retail along the corridor, promote walkability, and provide the rooftops necessary to support area businesses and the transit corridor designation. The City should also **rezone midblock properties in the South Cherry Road area to Industry Business (IB)** as indicated in Map 5. Stakeholders in the South Cherry Road area were strongly in favor of this rezoning because it would concentrate commercial uses at key intersections and allow for more employment-generating uses such as office, institutional, research and development, and light manufacturing in other areas where these uses are already prevalent. The City should entertain the commercial rezoning of residential properties that abut properties with frontage on Cherry Road to increase depth making development and redevelopment easier. Lastly, the City should **expand the Old Town Overlay** to include South Cherry Road to allow more flexible urban development standards in this area. The overlay includes reductions in land use buffers, landscaping, and open space set-aside requirements as well as design standards that would help to facilitate rehabilitation, development, and redevelopment.

The City should also amend the zoning ordinance to **allow options for flex warehouse and light industrial uses in commercial zoning districts** to help reduce

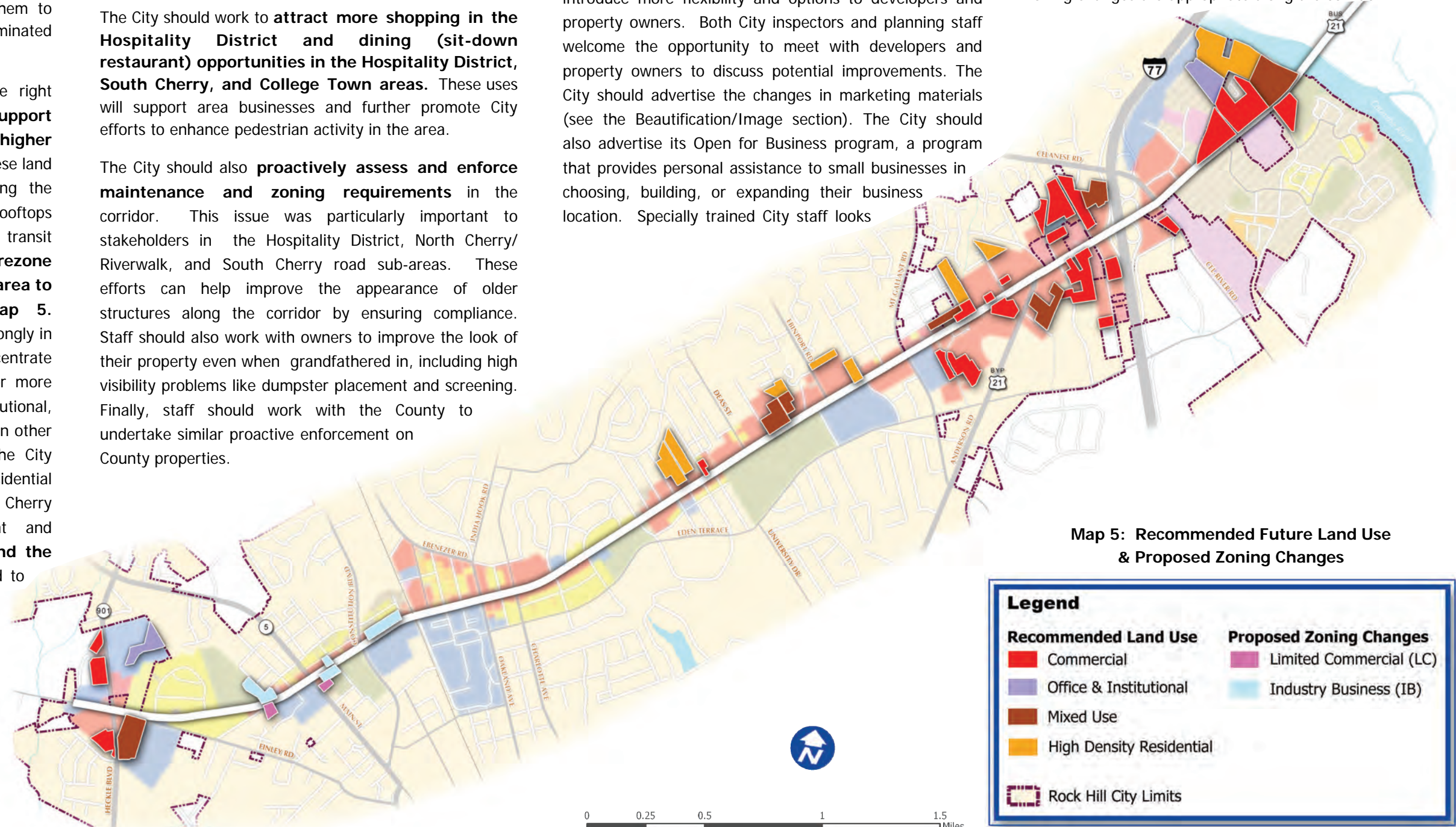
the oversupply of retail commercial along the corridor. The City should also **add incentives for greater density/flexibility for property owners who demolish properties that reach the end of their life cycle.**

The City should work to **attract more shopping in the Hospitality District and dining (sit-down restaurant) opportunities in the Hospitality District, South Cherry, and College Town areas.** These uses will support area businesses and further promote City efforts to enhance pedestrian activity in the area.

The City should also **proactively assess and enforce maintenance and zoning requirements** in the corridor. This issue was particularly important to stakeholders in the Hospitality District, North Cherry/Riverwalk, and South Cherry road sub-areas. These efforts can help improve the appearance of older structures along the corridor by ensuring compliance. Staff should also work with owners to improve the look of their property even when grandfathered in, including high visibility problems like dumpster placement and screening. Finally, staff should work with the County to undertake similar proactive enforcement on County properties.

The City should continue to **promote the flexibility of building and zoning code requirements and the benefits of the Open for Business program to the business community.** The City has adopted building code provisions and zoning code requirements that introduce more flexibility and options to developers and property owners. Both City inspectors and planning staff welcome the opportunity to meet with developers and property owners to discuss potential improvements. The City should advertise the changes in marketing materials (see the Beautification/Image section). The City should also advertise its Open for Business program, a program that provides personal assistance to small businesses in choosing, building, or expanding their business location. Specially trained City staff looks

comprehensively at the proposed site and building layout and notify the potential investor of any zoning, building, and/or fire code restrictions that will affect or limit their plans which saves business owners and landlords time and money. **Map 5** illustrates the areas where land use and zoning changes are appropriate along the corridor.



Map 5: Recommended Future Land Use & Proposed Zoning Changes

# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014



The City should also **encourage realtors and landlords to focus their recruiting efforts on securing non-retail uses** to help balance the oversupply of convenience and shopper's goods in the marketplace. Such non-retail uses could include professional services, office, dining, daycare, health services, and flex industrial and warehouse uses (once the ordinance is amended). Non-retail uses are less dependent on traffic visibility and do not need as much exposure from the roadway so they could be more successful in some less visible retail centers along the corridor.

Another major issue facing the corridor is inconsistencies in City and County development standards and code enforcement. About 20 percent of land in the study area is located within unincorporated York County and is subject to different design, landscaping, and signage requirements than properties within the City. Undeveloped parcels and select developed properties will likely be annexed into the City as new development occurs, minimizing inconsistencies. However, this change will be incremental and may not include all County properties in the study area as soon as desired. **The City and County should explore ways to reduce or eliminate inconsistencies in development standards and code enforcement**, especially those that affect the most visible aspects of day-to-day business operations.

## Connectivity and Access

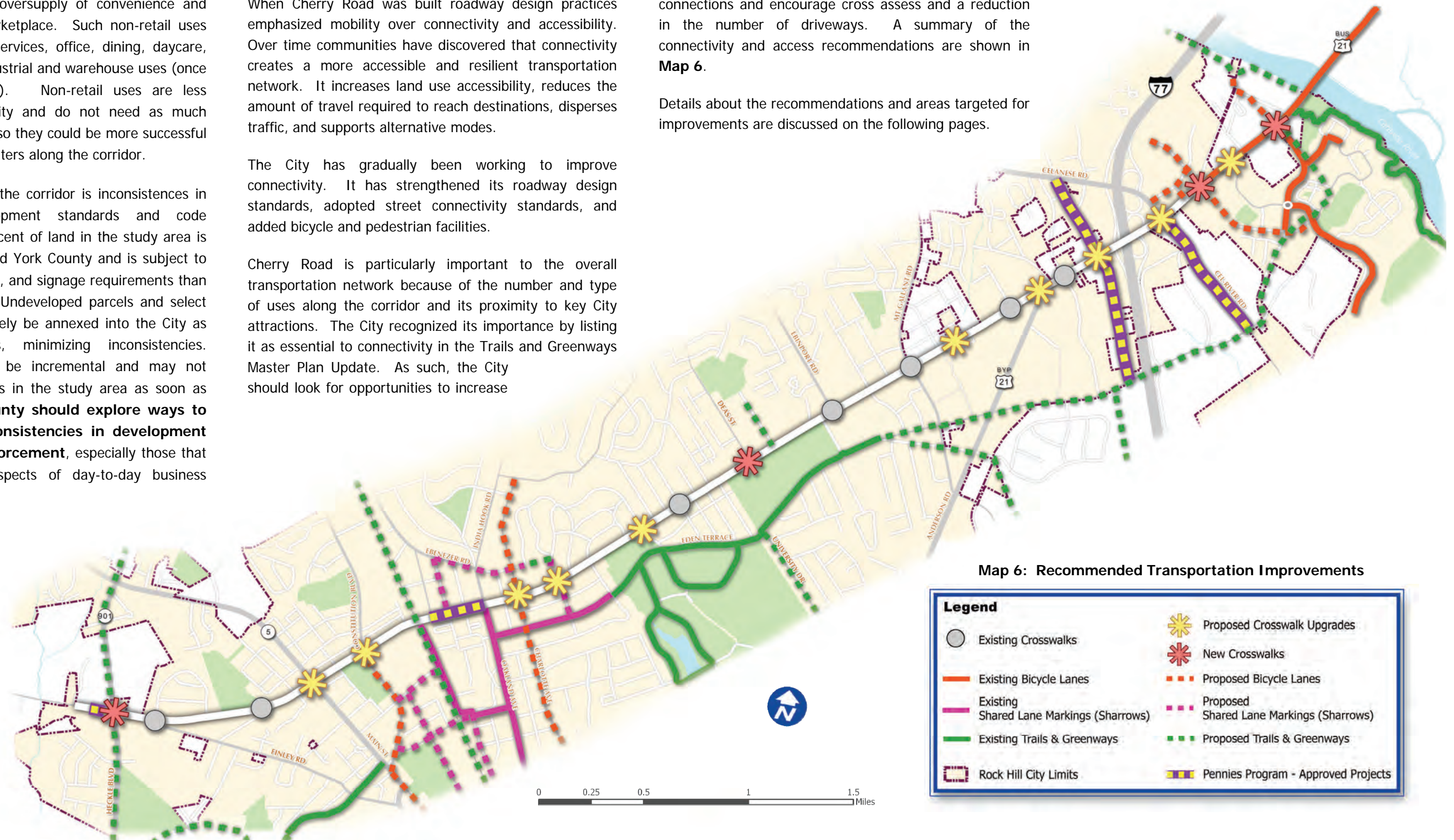
When Cherry Road was built roadway design practices emphasized mobility over connectivity and accessibility. Over time communities have discovered that connectivity creates a more accessible and resilient transportation network. It increases land use accessibility, reduces the amount of travel required to reach destinations, disperses traffic, and supports alternative modes.

The City has gradually been working to improve connectivity. It has strengthened its roadway design standards, adopted street connectivity standards, and added bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Cherry Road is particularly important to the overall transportation network because of the number and type of uses along the corridor and its proximity to key City attractions. The City recognized its importance by listing it as essential to connectivity in the Trails and Greenways Master Plan Update. As such, the City should look for opportunities to increase

connectivity along the corridor through new and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, amenities, and connections and encourage cross access and a reduction in the number of driveways. A summary of the connectivity and access recommendations are shown in **Map 6**.

Details about the recommendations and areas targeted for improvements are discussed on the following pages.



**Map 6: Recommended Transportation Improvements**

Legend	
	Existing Crosswalks
	Proposed Crosswalk Upgrades
	New Crosswalks
	Proposed Bicycle Lanes
	Proposed Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows)
	Proposed Trails & Greenways
	Pennies Program - Approved Projects
	Existing Bicycle Lanes
	Existing Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows)
	Existing Trails & Greenways
	Rock Hill City Limits

# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014

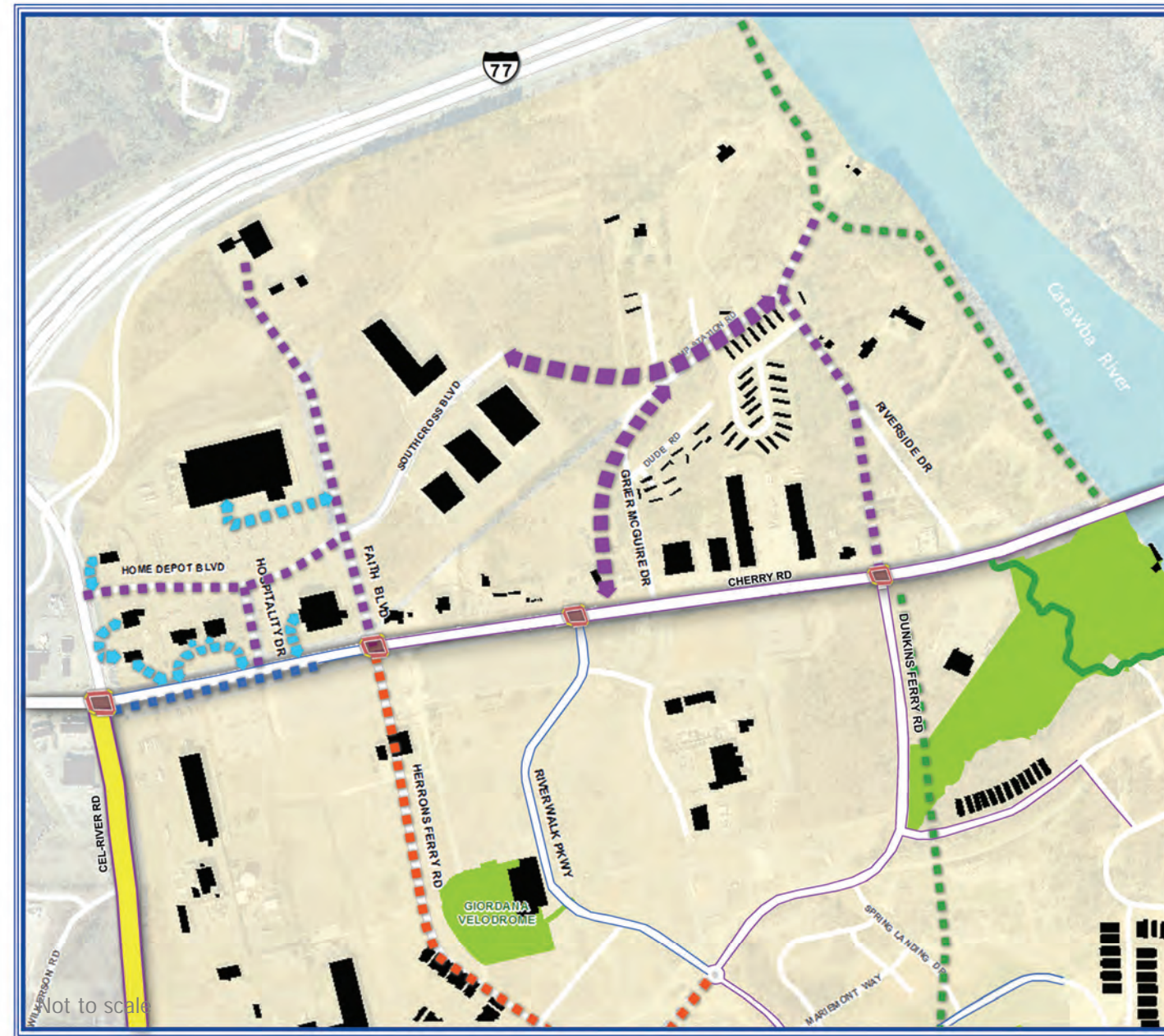


First, the City should **assess the condition of sidewalks** along Cherry Road. Areas identified as in disrepair or impeded by poorly maintained landscaping should be reported to SCDOT for **timely sidewalk maintenance**. The City should **fill in critical gaps**, like the one on the south side of Cherry Road between Cel-River Road and Hospitality Drive, to ensure connectivity of the sidewalk network.

It should also **encourage all property owners to construct pedestrian connections between the sidewalk and their front doors**. In areas with the potential for high bicycle and pedestrian traffic, the City should encourage property owners to **provide safe bicycle and pedestrian connections for visitors and workers**.



*Pedestrian connection between sidewalk and front door*

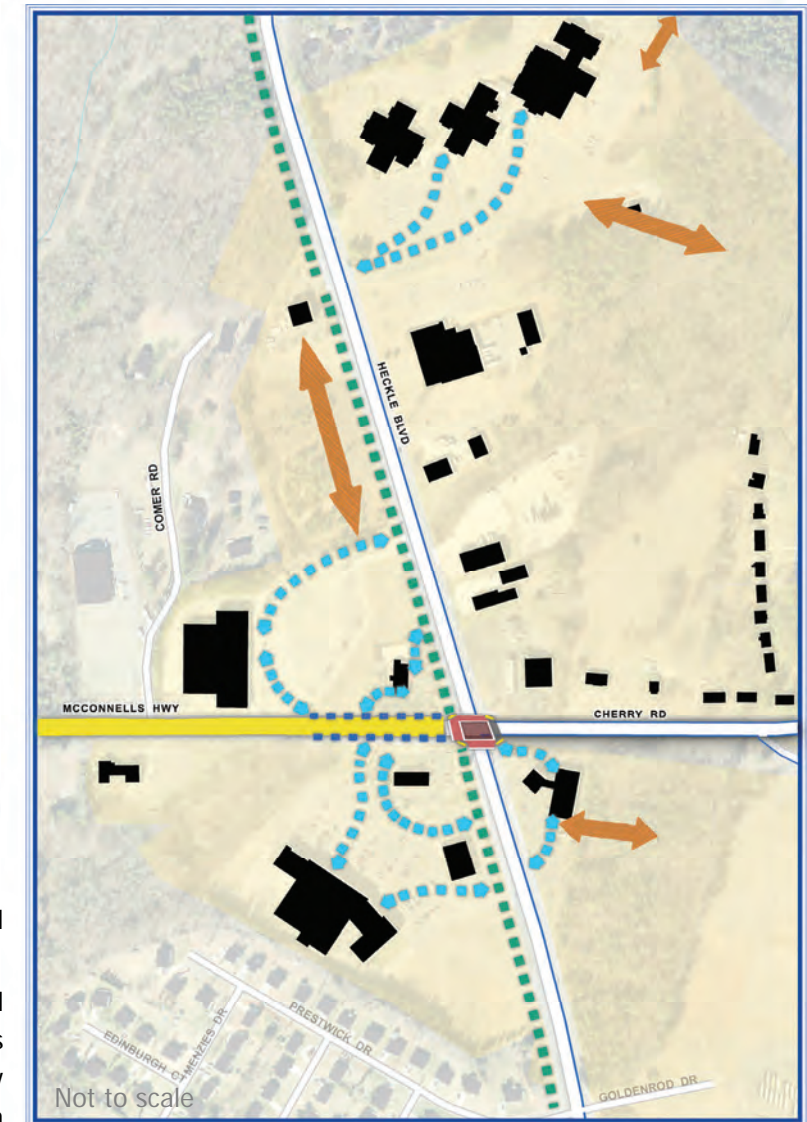


**Map 7: Recommended Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements—North Cherry/Riverwalk Area**

One location where bicycle and pedestrian connections is needed is on Home Depot Boulevard, Hospitality Drive, and Faith Boulevard. Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is in place along most of Cherry Road in the North Cherry/Riverwalk area and a strong network is being developed at Riverwalk, but the Home Depot and other retail and restaurant development in that area does not provide any

bicycle and pedestrian connections at their individual sites.

Another area with a high potential for bicyclists and pedestrians is along Heckle Boulevard and McConnells Highway in proximity to the Heckle/McConnells/Cherry intersection. The addition of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure could boost activity in this area.



**Map 8: Recommended Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements—Heckle Boulevard Area**

# Cherry Road Revitalization Strategy

December 2014



The majority of signalized intersections along the corridor include marked crosswalks. Many of these crosswalks were marked years ago; however, and the stripes are severely faded. Some of the crosswalks, like at the intersections of Cel-River Rd./Cherry Rd. and Riverview Rd./Cherry Rd. will be updated in association with approved Pennies Projects. Others, like Cherry Rd./Main St. and Cherry Rd./Constitution Blvd. could be upgraded in association with larger intersection improvements recommended in this plan.

The City should work with SCDOT to **restripe the remaining crosswalks that are in poor condition**. The City should study each intersection to prioritize the restripings and determine if upgrades, such as high visibility markings, additional signage, truncated domes, or other treatments are warranted.

Additionally, there are a few signalized intersections, including Heckle/Cherry/McConnells and Cherry Rd./Deas St./Cherry Park that have no crosswalks. Crosswalks should be added at these intersections in conjunction with other needed intersection improvements at these key locations.

Additionally new crosswalks will be marked as signalized intersections are completed at Faith Blvd./Cherry Rd. and Dunkins Ferry Rd./Cherry Rd. Although additional crosswalks in the South Cherry Road Area would help improve connectivity and access, there is not enough pedestrian activity to warrant crosswalks at uncontrolled crossings in this area based on SCDOT standards.

Existing and new crosswalk locations are shown on **Map 6**.



Recommended crosswalk upgrades

The City should **upgrade the crosswalks at the I-77 on and off ramps at Cherry Road with high visibility markings** to make it safer for pedestrians to travel between lodging, restaurants, and area attractions located on opposite sides of I-77. The crosswalks would alert drivers that there is pedestrian activity in the area and require drivers to yield to pedestrians. The City should also **install lighting under the I-77 bridge** to resolve safety concerns and encourage people to walk between lodging, restaurants, and area attractions located on opposite sides of I-77.

Midblock crosswalks should be added to Riverview Road in conjunction with the planned Pennies project so people crossing Riverview can do so safely. Midblock crosswalks are part of a package of enhancements being proposed to **enhance pedestrian activity along Riverview Road**. Other recommended enhancements include street trees and additional landscaping, wayfinding signage, banners, upgraded lighting, garbage cans, and street furniture. The City should coordinate with the County to influence the design of the roadway and advocate for separation of the sidewalk from the curb and consideration of bicycle facilities during the roadway design phase.



Existing conditions on Riverview Road



Proposed enhancements on Riverview Road

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The City should also **construct the Hearn Street Trail connecting Cherry and Hargett Parks** as outlined in the Trails and Greenways Master Plan Update. The trail would provide a much needed connection between Hargett Park and Cherry Park and compliment the crosswalk improvements recommended for Deas Street. This plan also supports the construction of other trails listed in the Trails and Greenways Master Plan Update in proximity to the Cherry Road corridor, including the Eden Terrace Trail, the Heckle Trail, and the remaining sections of the Catawba Riverfront Trail. Construction of the trails would improve connectivity, enhance tourism and recreation activities, and promote economic activity in the study area and beyond by linking key amenities and providing residents and visitors way to reach key attractions without an automobile.



Hearn Street trail

Other efforts that will help improve connectivity and access in the corridor include:

- ◆ **Encourage cross access between properties as they are improved or redeveloped.**

The City should identify locations for future connections between properties and require construction of the connections during the development or redevelopment process. This will encourage a “park once” mentality and walking between uses as well as help to spread traffic.

- ◆ **Reduce or close the number of driveways off Cherry Road as properties redevelop.**

The City should work with SCDOT to enforce access management strategies on Cherry Road where feasible. Reducing the number of driveways will reduce congestion and accidents as well as improve the pedestrian environment.

- ◆ **Evaluate signal timing along Cherry Road.**

Several participants stressed the need for signal synchronization along Cherry Road. Signal retiming optimizes the operation of signalized intersections, improving traffic flow and safety and reducing delays and fuel consumption. Signal timing was studied in 2008, but Utilities should determine if an updated study is needed.

- ◆ **Encourage property owners to install bicycle racks on their properties.**

Although bicycle racks are required for new development, many existing businesses do not have them. Bicycling continues to grow in popularity with the addition of bicycle lanes, signed bicycle routes, and the bicycle facilities at the Rock Hill Outdoor Center. Adding bicycle racks at businesses will entice those bicycling for recreational purposes to tie in shopping trips by bicycle. The City should educate property owners on the benefits of bicycle parking and encourage property owners to install bicycle racks on their properties.



Bicycle rack at Earth Fare

## Implementation Program

The implementation program on the following pages outlines a strategy for accomplishing the recommendations set forth in the plan. The recommendations are organized by priority, with the highest priority projects being listed first with a rating of 1. All recommendations with a priority of 1 should be completed within three years, priority 2 projects should be completed within 7 years, and priority 3 projects should be completed within 10 years of plan adoption.

Projects are color-coded by core challenge: beautification/image, land use/zoning/code enforcement, or connectivity/access. Some recommendations may address multiple challenges. These recommendations will typically be of high priority.

The implementation program also assigns a responsible party charged with implementing the recommendation. Several City departments including Planning & Development, Economic and Urban Development, Parks, Recreation, & Tourism, Utilities, Public Works, Housing and Neighborhood Services, and Police will all play a role in ensuring that the ideas described in the plan come to fruition. All recommendations were shared with and

supported by other City departments. The City is also relying on property and business owners and outside agencies (like SCDOT) to help implement plan recommendations.

Additionally, the implementation program includes planning level cost estimates associated with each recommendation. Detailed cost estimates will need to be done before a budget is finalized and approved and costs can be expected to increase over time. Some recommendations either do not have costs associated with them or can be done “in house” by City staff. These recommendations are indicated by an “n/a” in the cost estimate column.

Finally the program includes potential funding sources that could cover the costs of implementation. Many times there is more than one funding source that could be used for implementation.

## Implementation Program

Recommendation	Core Challenge	Priority	Responsible Party	Planning Level Cost Estimates (in 2014 dollars)	Potential Funding Source
Develop and implement a Landscape Incentive Program to reduce excessive pavement and beautify the streetscape.	Beautification/Image	1	Planning & Development	\$10K-\$15K annually for City match	General Fund
Upgrade the Main Street/Cherry Road intersection to include improvements to traffic signal.	Beautification/Image	1	Public Works	upgraded crosswalks/ramps: \$22K-\$66K new mast arm/signals: \$200K-\$250K	General Fund; Utilities
Develop marketing materials for Cherry Road and encourage local realtors and economic development agencies to promote Cherry Road to potential business owners and residential developers.	Beautification/Image	1	EUD; Planning & Development; local realtors and econ. dev. agencies	\$3K-\$5K	General Fund
Explore additional landscaping improvements around the I-77 interchange and look for opportunities to add public art throughout the corridor.	Beautification/Image	1	Planning & Development, SCDOT	TBD	General Fund; Hospitality Tax
Offer incentives for property owners who demolish properties that reach the end of their life cycle.	Land Use/Zoning/ Codes	1	Planning & Development; City Council	n/a	n/a
Expand Old Town District overlay to allow greater flexibility in certain dev. standards in the South Cherry Road area.	Land Use/Zoning/ Codes	1	Planning & Development; City Council	n/a	n/a
Rezone midblock properties to Industry Business (IB) in the South Cherry Road area.	Land Use/Zoning/ Codes	1	Planning & Development; City Council	n/a	n/a
Amend the zoning ordinance to allow certain non-retail businesses like warehouse and flex industrial in commercial zoning districts.	Land Use/Zoning/ Codes	1	Planning & Development; City Council	n/a	n/a
Assess the condition of existing water and sewer infrastructure in the Cherry Road corridor.	Land Use/Zoning/ Codes	1	Utilities	n/a	n/a
Restripe crosswalks and upgrade where appropriate.	Connectivity/Access	1	Public Works; Planning & Development; SCDOT	\$2K per crosswalk restriping (upgrades additional)	SCDOT (thermo \$); Hospitality Tax; General Fund
Assess the condition of the sidewalks along Cherry Road and work with SCDOT to conduct repairs where needed.	Connectivity/Access	1	Public Works; SCDOT	n/a	SCDOT
Upgrade the Heckle/Cherry/McConnells intersection to include marked crosswalks and traffic calming.	Connectivity/Access	1	Public Works	\$24K-\$70K	General Fund; SCDOT
Add lighting under the I-77 bridge.	Connectivity/Access	1	Property Maintenance; SCDOT	\$8K-\$12K	General Fund; Hospitality Tax
Upgrade the I-77 on and off ramps at Cherry Road with high visibility crosswalks.	Connectivity/Access	1	Public Works	\$10K-\$28K	General Fund; SCDOT
Fill the sidewalk gap between Cel-River Road and Hospitality Drive to ensure continuity of the sidewalk network.	Connectivity/Access	1	Public Works; SCDOT	\$15K-\$25K	General Fund
Construct the portion of the Catawba Riverfront Trail from Cherry Road to I-77 to support tourism and river-based recreation activities in the City.	Connectivity/Access	1	Public Works; PRT	\$330K-\$350K plus the cost of easements and ROW acquisition)	Developers, Hospitality Tax
Upgrade the Constitution Boulevard/Cherry Road intersection to include improvements to traffic signal.	Beautification/Image	2	Utilities; Public Works	upgraded crosswalks/ramps: \$22K-\$66K new mast arm/signals: \$200K-\$250K	General Fund; Utilities
Enhance streetscape improvements as part of Riverview Road Pennies project to beautify the roadway including street trees, benches, trash cans, and banners.	Beautification/Image	2	Public Works; Planning & Development; PRT	street trees: \$15K benches and trashcans: \$16K-\$26K banners: \$7.5K	Hospitality Tax; Palmetto Pride Grant; Community Pride Grant
Work with the community to develop and promote an identity for the corridor and sub-areas where appropriate.	Beautification/Image	2	Planning & Development; EUD	\$5K per area	General Fund
Construct the Eden Terrace Trail.	Connectivity/Access	2	Public Works; PRT	\$2 million (plus the cost of easements and ROW acquisition)	Hospitality Tax; Pennies

## Implementation Program

Recommendation	Core Challenge	Priority	Responsible Party	Planning Level Cost Estimates (in 2014 dollars)	Potential Funding Source
Enhance streetscape improvements planned for Riverview Road to improve the pedestrian experience including wayfinding signage, upgraded lighting, midblock crosswalks, and upgraded intersection improvements.	Connectivity/Access	2	Public Works; Utilities; Planning & Development; Parks, Recreation, & Tourism	wayfinding signage: \$15K-\$20K upgraded lighting: \$40K(burying of power lines will be covered by Pennies) midblock crosswalks: \$17K-\$18K upgraded intersection for Riverview Rd./Cherry Rd: \$31K-\$35K upgraded intersection for Riverview Rd./Riverchase Blvd.: \$12K-\$14K	Hospitality Tax; SCDOT
Consider development of a Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Grant Program.	Beautification/Image	3	Planning & Development	TBD	General Fund
Extend streetscape improvements south of Cherry Park (beautification, undergrounding utilities, street trees, wider sidewalks, grass strips).	Beautification/Image	3	Utilities; PRT	\$4 million - \$5 million ( electric utilities) sidewalk modifications and other improvements (TBD)	General Fund; Palmetto Pride Grant
Conduct an inventory and assessment of brownfields along the Cherry Road corridor.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	3	EUD	\$200K	EPA
Construct the portion of Heckle Trail from the Highland Creek neighborhood to Main Street (SC 5) to connect neighborhood residents to the major retail centers along Heckle Boulevard.	Connectivity/Access	3	Public Works; PRT	\$660K-\$675K (plus the cost of easements and ROW acquisition)	Hospitality Tax
Promote Riverwalk as a destination for tourism and river-based recreation.	Beautification/Image	ongoing	PRT;EUD; Planning & Development	n/a	n/a
Maintain an increased police focus in the Hospitality District.	Beautification/Image	ongoing	Police Department	n/a	n/a
Offer CPTED reviews and incorporate CPTED principles into the design review process.	Beautification/Image	ongoing	Police Department; Planning & Development	n/a	n/a
Seek consistency between City & County development standards and code enforcement.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	ongoing	Planning & Development; York County	n/a	n/a
Promote the flexibility of new building and zoning code requirements to allow for property redevelopment.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	ongoing	Planning & Development	n/a	n/a
Support owner-initiated rezonings to mixed-use and multi-family in the study area.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	ongoing	Planning & Development; EUD	n/a	n/a
Attract more shopping in the Hospitality District and dining in the Hospitality, S. Cherry, and College Town districts.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	ongoing	Planning & Development; EUD	n/a	n/a
Encourage realtors and landlords of vacant or underutilized commercial retail space to recruit non-retail uses.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	ongoing	Planning & Development; EUD	n/a	n/a
Conduct proactive code enforcement, particularly in the Hospitality District, North Cherry/Riverwalk Area, and South Cherry Road areas.	Land Use/Zoning/Codes	ongoing	HNS; Planning & Development	n/a	n/a
Encourage property owners in areas with the potential for high bicycle and pedestrian traffic to provide safe bicycle and pedestrian connections for visitors and workers (i.e. Heckle/McConnells/Cherry intersection and the North Cherry/Riverwalk area).	Connectivity/Access	ongoing	Planning & Development; Property Owners	n/a	n/a
Encourage cross access between properties and reduce or close the number of driveways off Cherry Road as properties are improved or redeveloped.	Connectivity/Access	ongoing	Planning & Development; SCDOT	n/a	n/a
Encourage all property owners to construct pedestrian connections between the sidewalk and their front doors.	Connectivity/Access	ongoing	Planning & Development; Property Owners	n/a	n/a
Encourage property owners to install bicycle racks on existing properties.	Connectivity/Access	ongoing	Planning & Development; Property Owners	n/a	n/a