



NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Transportation

I-77 South Express Lanes

Charlotte City Council: Transportation, Planning & Development Committee

May 4, 2026

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina

Agenda

- Key Project Updates
- Community Engagement Updates
 - Where we are
 - What we are Hearing
 - What we are Doing
- Existing Conditions and Opportunities
 - Opportunities to Reconnect the Corridor
- Next Steps

Key Project Updates

KEY PROJECT UPDATES

Since the Last TPD Committee Meeting

- ✓ Responded to 49 council questions, 6 outstanding
- ✓ 439 public comment questions answered from website, 6 outstanding
- ✓ Collaboration with CDOT has continued to address local needs
- ✓ Tunneling, Cap and Cover Expert Visited and Toured Corridor on April 7, Analysis Pending
- ✓ Environmental Analysis Progressing
- ✓ CEC fully staffed daily and sees steady activity
- ✓ Community Benefits Listening Sessions Launched in Community and at CEC
- ✓ Formation of the Community Advisory Group in Progress
- ✓ Documenting Community Feedback
- ✓ Added a Reconnecting the Corridor Design Summit
- ✓ Workforce Training and Small Business Trainings Scheduled

This represents a snapshot of activity. More details on several of these to follow.

Community Engagement Updates

WHERE WE ARE

This Phase: Listen, Inform, Connect

The intent of this phase is deliberate and ensures community feedback is reflected in the process.

LISTEN

Listen and document

Capture community concerns, priorities, and design feedback through structured sessions, surveys, canvassing, and one-on-one conversations.

INFORM

Build Shared Understanding

Help residents understand the NEPA process, the design process, the procurement timeline, and where the windows of influence remain open through final design and beyond.

CONNECT

Community Voice to Process

Ensure broad range of options for community feedback, that community voice is included and informs each step of the process, from design to community benefits to the environmental record documented with FHWA.

WHAT WE ARE HEARING

Themes From the Community

Drawn from multiple engagement channels: events, stakeholder interviews, CEC appointments, 1:1s, neighborhood meetings, direct outreach across the corridor, as well as community feedback from elected officials and community leaders

Questions about design

Residents are challenging design assumptions, asking for alternatives that minimize displacement and protect neighborhoods that have already absorbed the cost of past infrastructure decisions.

Congestion must be addressed

People are frustrated with worsening congestion on I-77 and are ok with the managed lanes solution.

Memory of past projects

The original I-77 construction and the displacement of Brooklyn remain present in this conversation. Communities want this process to be visibly different.

Interest in tangible benefits

Workforce, small business, and neighborhood-level investments that residents and corridor businesses can see, be prepared for and access.

Comparison to other projects

Comparisons to other express lanes and widening projects.

Concerns about displacement and impacts

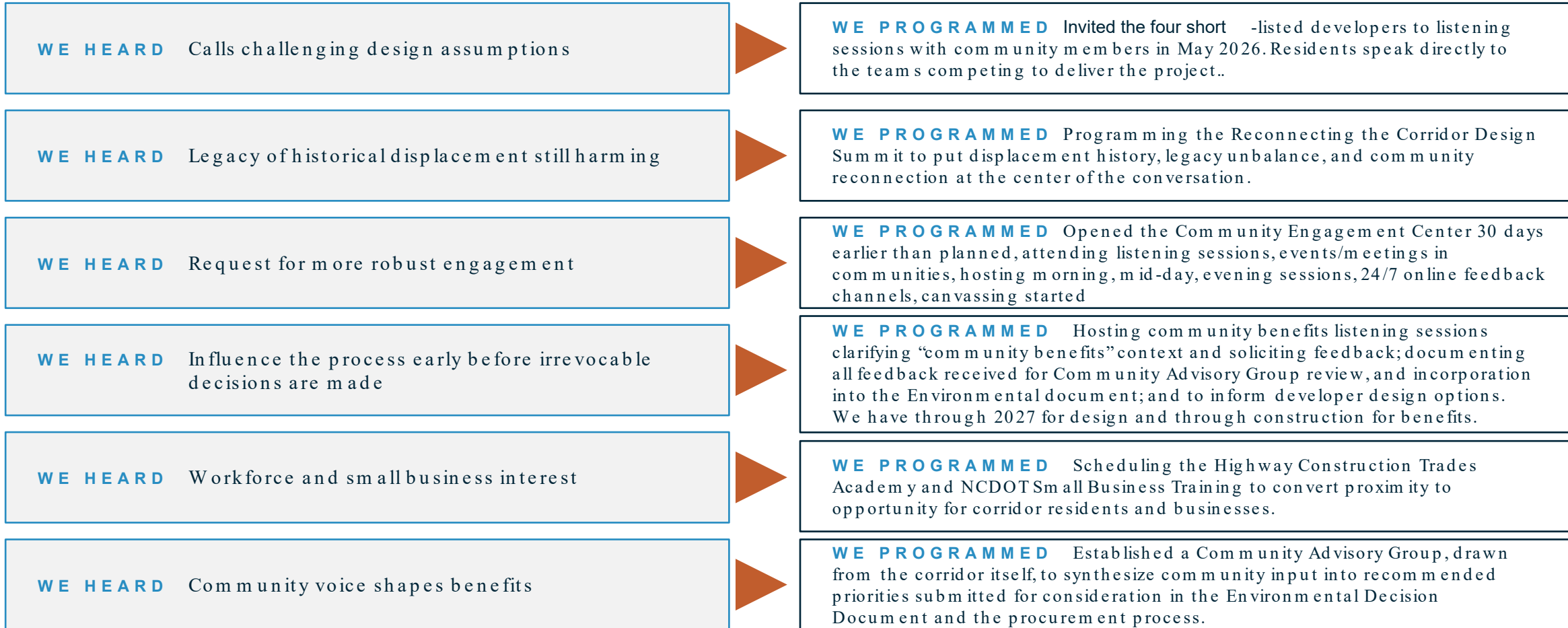
Direct questions about whose homes and businesses are affected, and what protections and supports will be in place for those impacted.

Need for clarity

Plain-language explanations of the NEPA process, the procurement timeline, and what “community benefits” means in this context.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Specific Responses to Community Feedback



COMMUNITY BENEFITS, CONTINUED

Listening Sessions Are Also Helping Shape the Framework

Community Benefits Listening Sessions are running right now. They are designed to do three things:

1

Record

Capture community priorities verbatim and on the record so they enter the Environmental Decision Document and the procurement record, not just project memory.

2

Unpack

Walk residents through what NEPA benefits and Bonus Allocation actually mean, so people can shape investments with full understanding of the tools available.

3

Form

Help communities translate concerns and aspirations into concrete, fundable, fitting benefit proposals that move into the synthesis work of the Community Advisory Group.

The listening session deck includes a slide dedicated to unpacking what "community benefits" means in this project.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS, EXPLAINED

Three Distinct Sources of Benefits

Three specific, formally defined sources are in play. All are real, all have rules, and all have extended windows of influence that the community can shape through 2027 and through construction. These tools are in addition to 15 Key Priority Terms committed by the CRPTO.

NEPA-Driven Benefits

Embedded in the federal environmental review

What it is: Mitigations and commitments documented in the Environmental Decision Document and binding through the protections of the Federal Highway Administration.

What it covers: Direct project impact mitigations: noise, air quality, displacement supports, neighborhood reconnection, accessibility, safety.

Window of influence: Through the Formal Public Hearing in September 2026 and the documentation period that follows, ahead of the Environmental Decision Document in April 2027.

State Bonus Allocation

State funding the city has a path advise CRTPO

What it is: A state -level pool of funds that can be directed toward highway -related and corridor -connected investments.

What it covers: Bonus allocation funds beyond the project itself, with a path for partnership between the state and the city to direct investment into priorities along and adjacent to the corridor.

Window of influence: Now through construction.

Developer Competition

Benefits proposed by procurement scoring

What it is: Commitments offered by short -listed developer teams as part of their bids, where proposing meaningful community benefits earns higher scores in the selection process.

What it covers: Design enhancements, neighborhood -level investments, workforce commitments, small business participation, and other corridor -connected proposals that distinguish one bid from another.

Window of influence: Now through final design (2027) - where community priorities shape the scoring criteria that developers respond to in their proposals; then through construction.

EXAMPLE

Housing Stability and Affordability

NCDOT is committed to ensuring that corridor residents — whether they own or rent — are protected throughout this process. Federal law provides meaningful protections, and the community benefits framework creates an opportunity to go further with commitments tailored specifically to this corridor.

CONTEXT

NEPA requires NCDOT to analyze and mitigate impacts on residential communities. The **Uniform Relocation Act** guarantees fair compensation and relocation assistance for any directly affected property owners or tenants.

These are legal floors — the benefits framework is how we build above them.

WHAT IS POSSIBLE

Affordable housing investment funds and provisions for any displaced households, construction-period housing stability partnerships, and preference for current corridor residents in any new affordable units created as part of the project. This presents an opportunity for residents to maintain affordable housing through partnerships developed with local organizations.

COMMUNITY QUESTION

What housing stability commitments would give you and your neighbors confidence in the future of this community over the next 10 years?

(Write your answer on the session card or share aloud.)

EXAMPLE

Transit Access and Multimodal Connectivity

Not everyone in the corridor drives. Transit-dependent residents, seniors, people with disabilities, and those who simply do not to own a car deserve improved mobility from this project.

CONTEXT

The corridor serves major transit routes connecting S/SW/SE/West Charlotte to Uptown. Any project that reconfigures the highway also reconfigures the transit network. This project will create improved transit mobility.

EXISTING COMMITMENTS

Buses use express lanes for free, HOV 3+ Toll-Free, modernized pedestrian and bicycle facilities on cross streets, ramp intersections.

WHAT IS POSSIBLE

Improved transit stop infrastructure along the corridor, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity improvements at interchange points, and first-mile / last-mile access investments.

COMMUNITY QUESTION

What transit and mobility improvements would make the biggest difference for people who do not drive or choose other transportation modes ?

(Write your answer on the session card or share aloud.)

Engagement Summary

Community Interactions

- Across the first five weeks of operations (March 30 May 1, 2026), the Community Engagement Center and its expanding portfolio of activities with over 300+ individuals engaged
- Five resource programming sessions reached 59 attendees, supplemented by a 75 -person off -site panel with the Barringer Drive Initiative.
- Additional channels included hotline interactions, surveys, and proactive outreach to neighborhood associations and civic leaders, including the West Boulevard Neighborhood Coalition.
- Engagement evolved from a walk -in -driven model into a multi -channel strategy spanning scheduled one -on -ones, Community Benefits Listening Sessions, piloted Map Deep Dives, planned door -to -door canvassing in Wilmore and Westover, and forthcoming virtual segment -specific sessions.

Sentiment

- • Corridor sentiment shifted measurably from cautious skepticism and demands for alternatives toward a more "positive and engaged" posture.
 - Community focus has turned more towards shaping community benefits, green space and pedestrian connectivity, embedded technology, and workforce inclusion.
 - Responding to community members and elected officials is a continual priority for all efforts. To date 90% of community questions have been responded to.

Snapshot of Key Dates

DATE / MILESTONE	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
April 2026	Environmental Analysis Continues	NCDOT Environmental Analysis work continues.
April 2026	Neighborhood Association Meetings/ Engagements Begin	At the CEC and In Communities.
April 2026	Community Benefits Listening Sessions Kickoff	Series of structured listening sessions launched to gather resident input on potential community benefits associated with the project.
April 2026	Community Pulse Check Survey Launches	Corridor-wide survey released to capture baseline community sentiment, awareness, and priorities.
April 2026	Community Advisory Group (CAG) Applications Open and Close	Application window for the Community Advisory Group opens and closes during April to support timely member selection.
May 2026	Environmental Analysis Continues	NCDOT Environmental Analysis work continues.
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May 1	Canvassing of Tentatively Impacted Neighbors Began	Door-to-door canvassing initiated with residents of properties tentatively identified as impacted by proposed corridor improvements.
Wk of May 4	CAG Selection Committee Application Review Begins	Selection committee begins formal review of Community Advisory Group applications.
May 7	Corridor Map Deep-Dive: <i>Woodlawn, Nations Ford, Arrowwood, South Tryon</i>	Virtual map deep-dive session focused on these corridor segments to walk residents through proposed alignment and impacts.
May 12	Corridor Map Deep-Dive: <i>Clanton, Remount, West</i>	Map deep-dive session focused on these corridor segments to walk residents through proposed alignment and impacts.
May 11	Highway Construction Trades Academy	Workforce Development: 10-week construction training with interviews for placement opportunities at the end.
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May 14 (<i>tentative</i>)	Community Advisory Group Members Announced	
May 15	Community Advisory Group Initiation and Onboarding	Inaugural CAG meeting featuring orientation, charter review, role expectations, and team-building .
May 19 5:00pm	Wilmore Listening Session and Map Deep-Dive (2 of 2 in May 2026)	At the CEC.
May 19 5:30pm	Reconnecting the Corridor Summit	Corridor-wide summit focused on reconnecting communities historically divided by I77 and shaping benefits for residents.
May 20 1:00pm	Reconnecting the Corridor Summit	Continuation of the Reconnecting the Corridor Summit programming.
May 20 5:30pm	Reconnecting the Corridor Summit	Continuation of the Reconnecting the Corridor Summit programming.
May 21	Corridor Map Deep-Dive: <i>McCrorey Heights</i>	@Federico Rios here we have a community instead of a section of the corridor?
Wk of May 25	CAG Meetings and Training Begins	Recurring CAG meetings and member training cycle commences.
May 26	Corridor Map Deep Dive: (<i>Morehead, 5th Street, Brookshire</i>)	Map deep-dive session focused on these corridor segments to walk residents through proposed alignment and impacts.
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July 2026	NCDOT Small Business Training	Bid readiness training for corridor small businesses to support participation in upcoming procurement opportunities.
July 16, 2026	Community Benefits Summit	Corridor-wide summit consolidating community input on benefits to inform the final benefits framework.
Aug 2026	Environmental Analysis Continues	NCDOT Environmental Analysis work continues.
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Sept 2026	Formal Public Hearing: Important Environmental and Procedural Milestone	Includes initial review of community benefits proposed for the final Environmental Decision Document.
Sept 2026	Begin Documentation of Community Feedback for the Final Environmental Document and Submission to the Federal Highway Administration	Formal documentation of community feedback compiled for inclusion in the final Environmental Decision Document and submission to FHWA.
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April 2027	Environment Decision Document Complete	Formal documentation of impacts.
Q3 2027	Highway Construction Trades Academy	Workforce Development: <i>10-week</i> construction training with interviews for placement opportunities at the end.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

What We Want Council to Take From This Update

- 01** We are listening, and the engagement plan demonstrably reflects what we have heard. The CEC opened early, design is being challenged in deep -dive sessions, developers are meeting with residents, we are meeting with residents weekly and the Reconnecting the Corridor Summits is on the calendar
- 02** This phase is purposeful. We listen, we inform, and we prepare the community to participate meaningfully in the formal milestones still ahead.
- 03** We are unpacking community benefits. NEPA -driven benefits and the State Bonus Allocation are distinct tools with distinct rules. The community is being equipped to shape both with clarity, not assumption.
- 04** Listening sessions are doing real work. They record priorities for the formal record, unpack the technical landscape, and help residents form proposals that the Community Advisory Group will synthesize for submission to NCDOT.
- 05** The window of influence for community benefits is open and time -bound. The next 19 months, through the Public Hearing and into the Environmental Decision Document, is when this community shapes the project's commitments. However, benefits will continue to be included through developer design and construction - through 2027 and beyond.

Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The state's most congested corridor has Charlotte stuck in traffic

1 I-77 South has the *highest interstate congestion* in North Carolina.

- Over 160,000 vehicles on I-77 South daily.
 - With or without the project, traffic volumes will exceed 200,000 (25% increase) by 2050.
- Crash rate is over 2.8x the statewide average.
- I-77 is a layered economic system:
 - Commuter route, freight network, corporate location factor, residential growth catalyst, cross state economic integration mechanism.
- Without Express Lanes, congestion on the corridor will worsen and ultimately constrain regional economic growth and opportunity.

NCDOT 2024 Maintenance Operations Performance Analysis Report (MOPAR)

- **#1 CONGESTED CORRIDOR IN NC**
- 9 of the State's top 10 most congested sections of interstate are in Charlotte on I-77 South

Rank	Route	Location	Exit #	Direction	Avg Congested Hours/Day
1	I-240	US-19/US-23	3	SB	15
2	I-77	Arrowood Rd	3	NB	13
3	I-77	Remount Rd	8	SB	11
4	I-77	Nations Ford Rd	4	NB	10
5	I-77	I-277/US-74	9	SB	10
6	I-77	Tyvola Rd	5	NB	10
7	I-77	US-521/Woodlawn Rd	6	NB	7
8	I-77	Tyvola Rd	5	SB	6
9	I-77	Clanton Rd	7	NB	5
10	I-77	I-485/J G Martin Fwy	2	NB	5

NCDOT 2024 MOPAR

Additional Project Facts

- 1 I-77 South has the **highest interstate congestion** in North Carolina; 9 of the top 10 in the state are in Charlotte.
- 2 **\$600 million** programmed in the STIP for the I-77 South Express Lanes project.
- 3 **\$100 million** in Bonus Allocation.
- 4 Opportunity to **reconnect communities**.
- 5 Opportunity for additional millions of dollars in **community benefits**.
- 6 **Small Business Opportunities**.
- 7 Opportunity to contribute to **Silver Line costs**.
- 8 NCDOT has a strong partnership with the City & CRTPO to deliver projects submitted for this region.
- 9 Fast Lanes Study identified a **managed lanes network** for the region.
- 10 CRTPO first submitted the I-77 South Express Lanes project to NCDOT in **2014**.

Opportunities to Reconnect the Corridor



Reconnecting Communities Examples



Reconnecting Communities Examples



Reconnecting Communities Examples



Reconnecting Communities Examples



Reconnecting Communities Examples



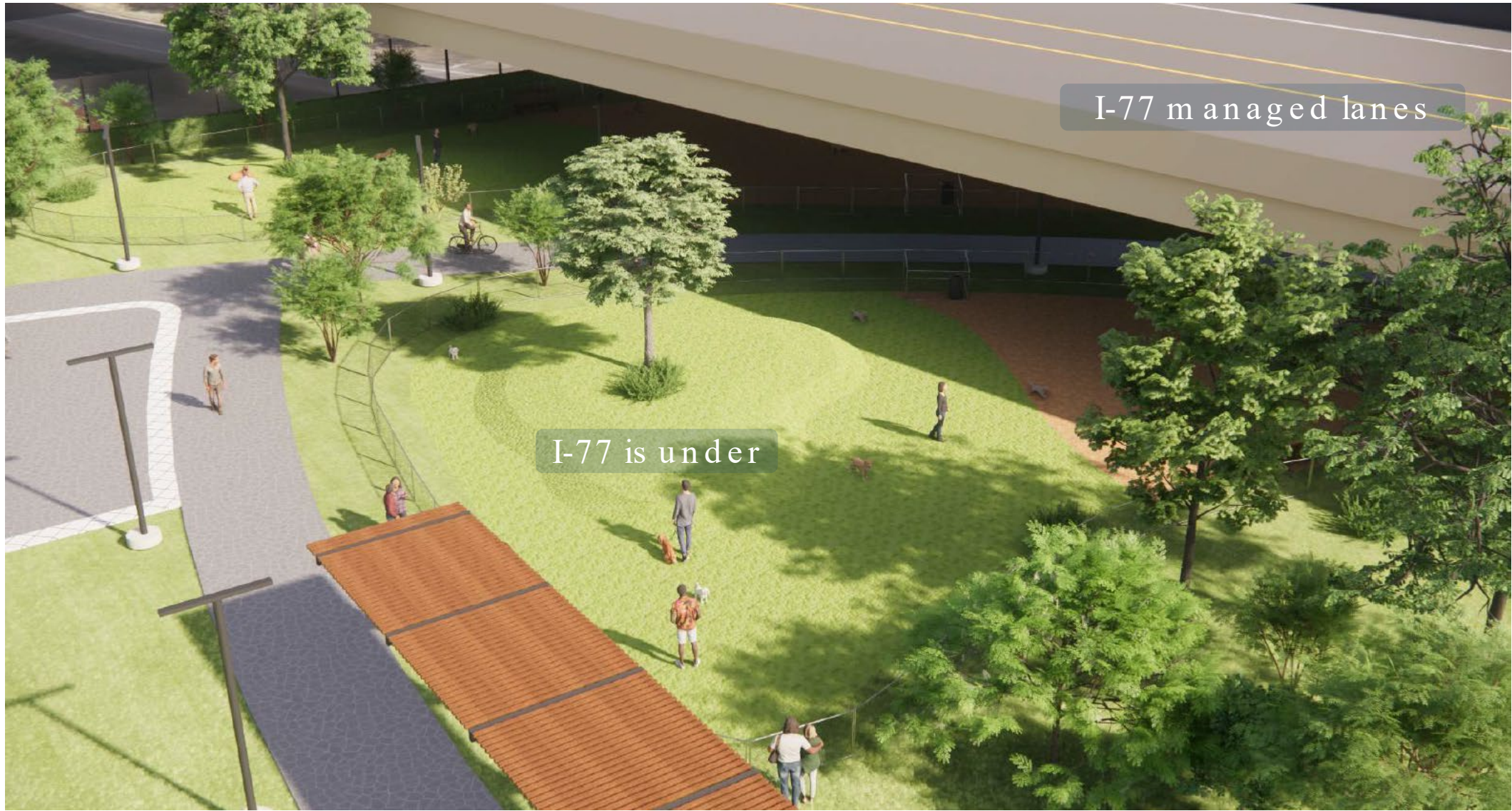
Reconnecting Communities Examples



Reconnecting Communities Examples



Reconnecting Communities Examples



5th Street Towards Uptown (At N Summit Ave)



Without



With

4th Street Towards Uptown (East of S Summit Ave)



Without



With

Madison Ave Towards 77 (McCrorey Heights)



Without



With

Wesley Heights Greenway Towards Uptown (East of S Summit Ave)



Without



With

Next Steps

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Questions and Thank You

Appendix



COMMUNITY BENEFITS, CONTINUED

The Community Advisory Group

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) is the deliberative body that synthesizes community input into a recommended benefits framework submitted for consideration in the federal record and the procurement process.

WHO SERVES

Members are drawn from across the 11 corridor segments through an open application process and a structured selection rubric. Composition prioritizes residents who live with the project's impacts, including homeowners, renters, faith leaders, small business owners, and youth and student voices.

HOW THEY OPERATE

Members are onboarded with project context, NEPA fundamentals, and procurement timing. They meet on a recurring cycle to synthesize input gathered across the corridor into a coherent set of recommended priorities, which are submitted to NCDOT for consideration in the Environmental Decision Document.

SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Liz Babson - Deputy City Manager, Mobility, Planning, Transit and Transportation for the City of Charlotte
- LeShaun Carter - Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer, Mecklenburg County
- Leslie Johnson, PhD - Deputy County Manager for Sustainable Communities, Mecklenburg County
- Virginia Keogh - Founder and President, Southwest Area Neighborhood Coalition
- Meko McCarthy - Biddleville Development Initiative
- James Mitchell - Mayor Pro Tem, City of Charlotte
- Wilhelmenia Rembert, Phd - Community At Large
- Jack Williams - Wilmore Neighborhood Resident

WHY IT MATTERS

The CAG carries synthesized community voice into the rooms where decisions are made.

- Synthesizes corridor-wide input into a recommended benefits framework submitted to NCDOT for consideration in the Environmental Decision Document
- Informs the community benefits language in the First Draft RFP, where developers are scored and incentivized to respond to community priorities
- Provides the corridor with a sustained seat at the table, not a one-time hearing
- Transitions to a construction-phase advisory role after the Environmental Document in April 2027

Key Project Facts

2

*The I-77 South Express Lanes project scored as one of the top projects in the Statewide Tier for Prioritization 7.0 (P7.0) and **\$600 million** was programmed for the project.*

- P 7.0 Funding Availability
 - Statewide: \$1.033 billion
 - Region E (Divisions 8 & 10): **-\$799 million**
 - Division 10: **-\$229 million**
- Following state law:
 - NCDOT is delivering the I-77 South Express Lanes project as originally submitted and scored in the Statewide Tier for highway funding.
 - **If the project does not move forward, the \$600 million will be moved back to the Statewide Tier and available for other projects across the state.**

Key Project Facts

3

*CRTPO is eligible to receive **\$100 million** in Bonus Allocation funding.*

- Bonus Allocation is the additional funding that an MPO can receive by implementing a toll project, as defined in NCGS 136-189.11(f)(3).
- \$100 Million in Bonus Allocation is in addition to the \$600 million in STIP funding.
- Use of funding:
 - CRTPO determines project priorities.
 - Funds must stay in Mecklenburg County.
- **If the project does not move forward, CRTPO will not receive \$100 million in bonus allocation funding .**



Bonus Allocation Funding for I-77 North Express Lanes

Project	County	BA Funds
SR 1305 (Oates Road – Midnight Lane) Widening	Iredell	\$2.1 M
Fairview Road Flyover and parallel roads	Meck .	\$3.0 M
NC 115 & Potts Street Intersection Improvements	Meck .	\$4.4 M
SR 2112 (Lakeview Road) Upgrade	Meck .	\$9.1 M
SR 2112 (Lakeview Road)/NC 24 (Harris Blvd) & SR 2112 (Lakeview Road)/US 21 (Statesville Road) intersections	Meck .	\$3.0 M
SR 2195 (Torrence Chapel Road) / SR 5544 (West Catawba Ave) intersection	Meck .	\$7.4 M
Potts -Sloan -Beatty Connector	Meck .	\$4.7 M
NC 115 Two-way Pair Widening and Realignment	Meck .	\$10.0 K
NC 115/Realigned Main Street & NC 115/SR 2004 (Mount Holly -Huntersville Road) Roundabouts	Meck .	\$3.5 M

Project Continued	County	BA Funds
Lakeview Road Roundabout	Meck .	\$1.0 M
US 21 & Catawba Ave Roundabout	Meck .	\$3.0 M
I-77 / Griffith St Ramp Roundabouts	Meck .	\$3.3 M
Bethlehem Road Relocation	Iredell	\$0.5 M
I-77 / Lakeview Road Managed Lane Direct Connects	Meck.	\$40.6 M
I-77 / Hambright Road Managed Lane Direct Connects	Meck.	\$34.6 M
NC 150 Widening (Bike & Ped Enhancements)	Iredell	\$5.0 M
Northcross Drive Extension	Meck .	\$1.8 M
US 21 & Catawba Ave Roundabout	Meck .	\$3.9M
US 21 (Statesville Road) Widening	Meck .	\$0.5 M

Key Project Facts

4 The P3 delivery offers the opportunity to *reconnect communities*.

5 The P3 delivery offers the opportunity for millions of dollars in *community benefits*.

- Reconnecting communities aligns with the City of Charlotte's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
- Feedback from Community Listening Sessions will be incorporated into the multiple draft RFPs.
- Developers will be scored on having additional community benefits in their proposals.
- These community benefits are in addition to the \$100 million bonus allocation CRTPO will receive.

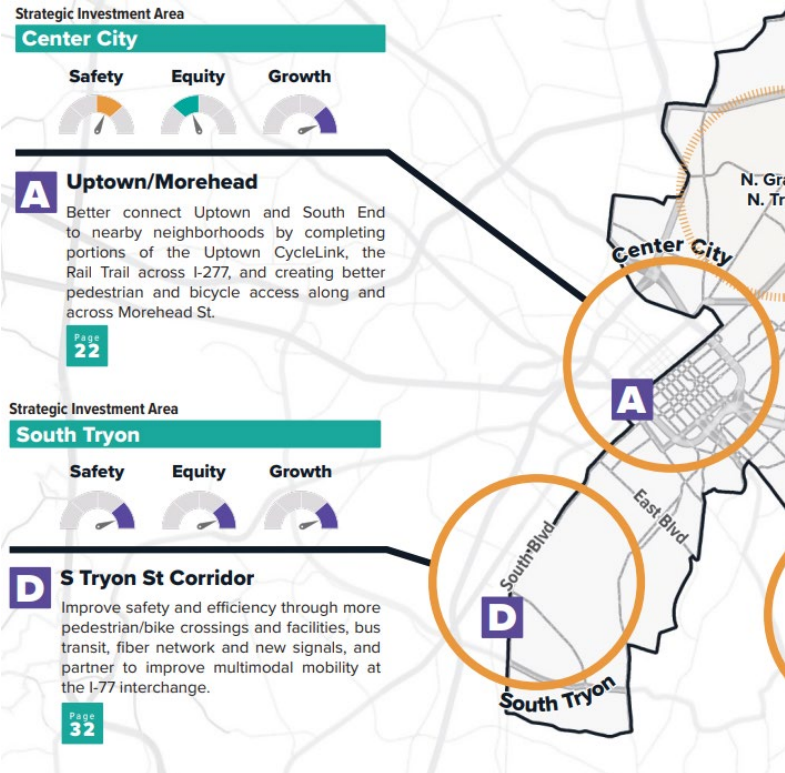


\$700+ MILLION

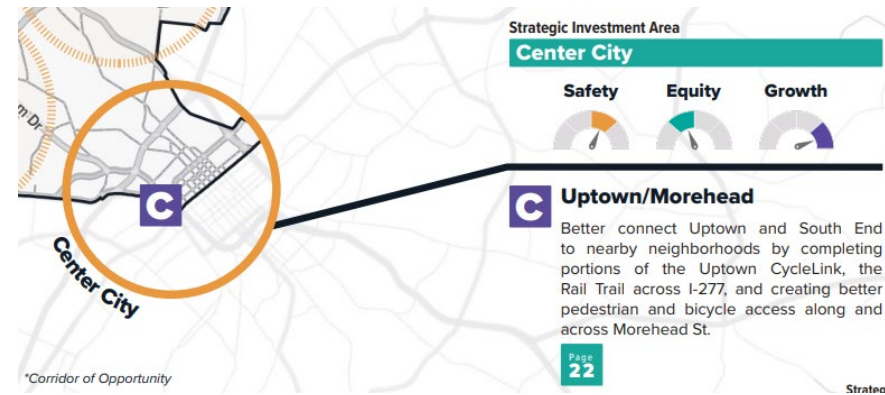
Community Benefit Examples

Charlotte Strategic Investment Areas

District 1 STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AREAS



District 2 STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AREAS



Community Benefit Examples

Charlotte Strategic Investment Areas

District 3 STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AREAS

Strategic Investment Area

Arrowood



A Arrowood Rd Corridor

Create a "complete" east-west corridor anchored by activity centers at the Blue Line, Nations Ford Rd, and Berewick by improving intersection capacity and safety, providing more multimodal crossings, and expanding the Bike Priority Network.

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Strategic Investment Area

Steele Creek



D Rivergate/S Tryon St Corridor

Improve access from nearby neighborhoods to transit, greenspaces, Rivergate Activity Center, and other commercial areas by providing more and safer multimodal connections along and across S Tryon St.

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Strategic Investment Area

Center City



B Uptown/Morehead

Better connect Uptown and South End to nearby neighborhoods by completing portions of the Uptown CycleLink, the Rail Trail across I-277, and creating better pedestrian and bicycle access along and across Morehead St.

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Strategic Investment Area

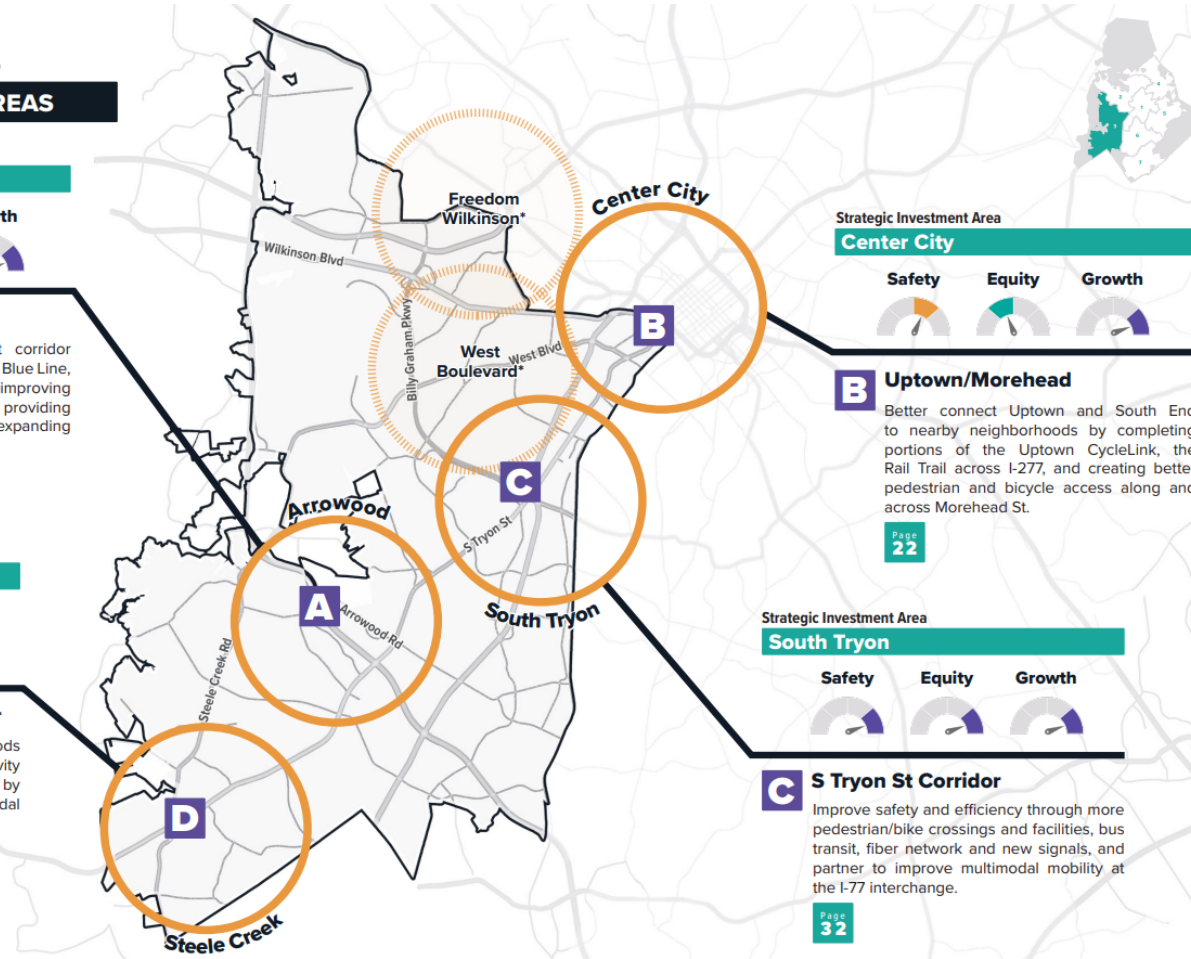
South Tryon



C S Tryon St Corridor

Improve safety and efficiency through more pedestrian/bike crossings and facilities, bus transit, fiber network and new signals, and partner to improve multimodal mobility at the I-77 interchange.

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Key Project Facts

6

Small Business Opportunities

- The I-77 South Express Lanes project is expected to generate more than **\$8 billion** in **total economic** output across the project timeline.
 - More than **\$3 billion** in **labor income** is expected to flow to workers in direct construction, supplier, and consumer -spending categories.
 - The project could support approximately **5,700 jobs per year** of construction.
- **NCDOT anticipates several hundred million dollars in small business participation for this project.**
- Since 2021, hundreds of firms have participated in NCDOT's Saturday outreach events.
- NCDOT will continue to engage small businesses at the Community Engagement Center.
- A CRTPO priority key term requires the developer to prioritize DBE outreach and participation.
- **Center for Employment Opportunities – First NC contract** with vendor to **hire formerly incarcerated population**

Key Project Facts

- 7** *Opportunity to partner with CATS to contribute to Silver Line costs over the I-77 South corridor*

 - Agreement in place for the I-77 South Express Lanes project to cover the design of the Silver Line bridge.
 - CATS/MPTA will not have to pay to design the bridge.
 - Initial discussions have taken place for the project to also include the bridge construction.

- 8** *NCDOT has a strong partnership with the City of Charlotte and CRTPO to deliver projects submitted for this region.*

 - Additional partners FHWA, USDOT, etc.
 - **If the I-77 South project does not move forward, the multi-modal improvements in the corridor developed in coordination with the City will not be completed.**

Key Project Facts

9 *The Fast Lanes Study, initiated in 2007, identified a managed lanes network to provide reliable travel times for drivers in the growing Charlotte Region.*

- We cannot build our way out of congestion.
- Without the project, there will be a gap in the managed lanes network.

10 *CRTPO first submitted the I-77 South Express Lanes project to NCDOT for Prioritization 3.0 (P3.0) in 2014.*

- **Project Submitted:** widen the I-77 South corridor with the addition of express lanes from I-277 (Brookshire Freeway) to the South Carolina state line.
- No alternate transportation solution exists for the I-77 South corridor.

