



Blount St · Person St

Corridor Study

Corridor Plan Report - Executive Summary





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Acknowledgements

Prepared for:

City of Raleigh, North Carolina
Raleigh Urban Design Center

The Honorable Mayor

Nancy McFarlane

Raleigh City Council

Eugene Weeks, Mayor Pro Tem
Mary-Ann Baldwin
Thomas G. Crowder
Bonner Gaylord
John Odom
Randall K. Stagner
Russ Stephenson

Prepared by:

AECOM
Alta/Greenways
Susan Hatchell Landscape Architecture, PLLC

Adopted:

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ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report is organized into the following sections that document the process, design development and technical analysis of the corridor study. Each section functions as a stand-alone document and as part of the overall report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -

Provides an overview of the vision, design, evaluation, and implementation

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SUPPORT DOCUMENTS -

Blount St-Person St Corridor Study - Traffic Capacity Analysis Report
Blount St-Person St Corridor Study - Road Diet Conceptual Design Plan
Blount St-Person St Corridor Study - Opinion of Probable Cost

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Vision

The Blount St.-Person St. Corridor can be seen through multiple lenses: as a major urban thoroughfare, as a commercial and business street, and as a neighborhood address. The corridor extends over five miles from Capital Boulevard to Interstate 40, including Wake Forest Road, Blount Street, Person Street, and Hammond Road, with the core of the corridor being the one-way pair of Blount Street and Person Street. It runs through distinct communities with strong histories, different priorities and a range of needs. Yet it strives to serve each of these communities in different capacities, just not always successfully.

The community's vision dictates change in the corridor. Through the public process hundreds of ideas were collected about the community's values, vision, and desired change for the Blount St.-Person St. Corridor. This collective "voice" has been sorted into a set of themes and translated into a practical vision for the corridor. These themes are critical to the process, guiding the proposed street design and serving as the touchstone for evaluating potential alternatives and making future decisions.

Theme: Walkable + Multimodal

Vision: A Complete Street...

The corridor has the potential to encourage and serve a wide range of users, accommodating motor vehicles is just one. The community sees a future corridor that is safe and highly attractive to pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. A complete street balances the range of mobility needs by providing a place for all users.

Wake Forest Road

The road diet for Wake Forest Road balances the function of the street to serve a range of users. The new street section integrates cyclists, and provides safe and attractive pedestrian crossings, while appropriately accommodating vehicles.



Theme: Traffic + Mobility

Vision: A Functional Street...

The corridor provides valuable and needed access to Downtown Raleigh, adjacent neighborhoods, and major regional destinations such as the State Capital. Providing this important access is a fundamental role of the corridor yet, the speed and behavior of vehicle traffic can be managed without significantly reducing accessibility or capacity. A functional street provides needed access and yet calms traffic.

Blount & Person Street (Person Street Business District)

The three-lane to two-lane road diet accommodates traffic while integrating bicycle lanes and additional on-street parking. Landscaped bulb-outs visually narrow the roadway, provide needed tree canopy, and create added sidewalk space for street-oriented businesses.



Theme: Business + Economic Development

Vision: A Vibrant Street...

The corridor connects existing neighborhoods, retail districts, downtown offices, and a growing number of new mixed-use and residential places. The community envisions a thriving corridor with a wide range of housing, shopping and working opportunities. A vibrant street attracts a range of users and development as a place to go "to" and not just "through."



Theme: Neighborhood + Historic Character

Vision: A Beautiful Street...

The corridor is a unique link to Raleigh's rich history and urban character, and is home to many historic and neighborhood resources. Strengthening and protecting this character is a primary goal of the community. A beautiful street is the result of continued investment in streetscape, tree planting, and street character.

Blount & Person Street (South Park)

Narrowed travel lanes serve to better manage vehicle behavior through the South Park Neighborhood while integrating space for on-street parking and bicycle lanes. The redefined street provides landscaped bulb-outs for street trees and shorter pedestrian crossings. The result is a more valuable address for existing homes and future investment.



Alternatives Summary

The Choice

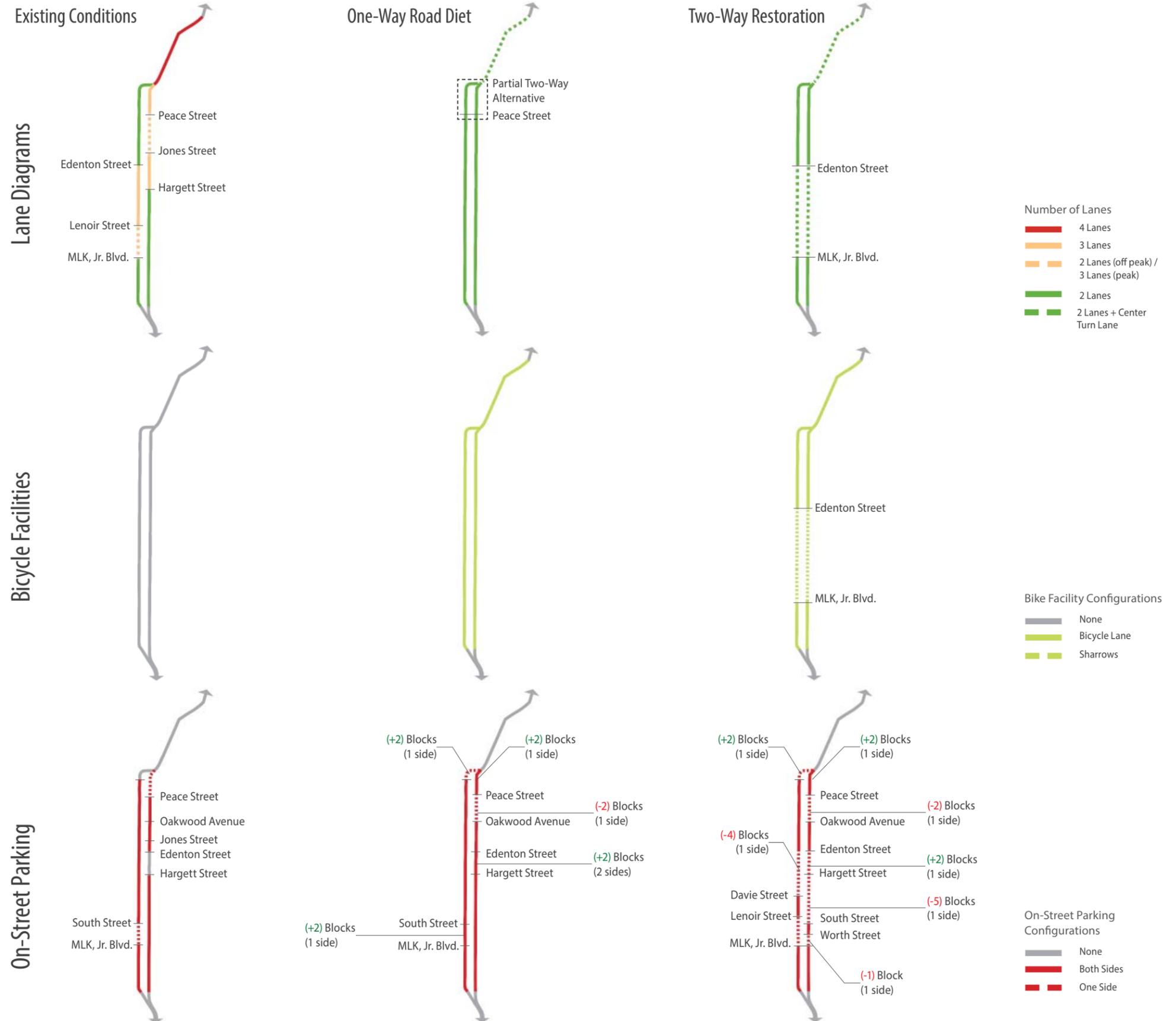
Real change will require rethinking and repurposing the role and function of the roadway.

The corridor's issues and opportunities and community vision have uncovered two basic design alternatives; (1) a one-way road diet and (2) a two-way restoration. The design process focused on developing these alternatives in order to understand their traffic implications and urban design opportunities. The strategy that emerged was to view these alternatives not as mutually-exclusive but rather as steps in a longer-term process to reshape the corridor to fit the community's vision. Each step will require a choice. The choices initially are relatively clear, while later steps (such as potential two-way restoration) will require more investigation and the setting of new priorities.

A Framework for Decision-Making

In order to make informed choices the alternatives have been developed, tested, and compared to each other based on the stated themes and vision for the corridor; business and economic development, neighborhood and historic character, traffic and mobility, and walkable and multimodal. For each theme a set of measures has been summarized and compared. Some are easily measured and quantified while others are more subjective. For each measure, their relative impact has been color coded for summary purposes: dark green – positive, light green – neutral, and orange - potentially negative.

The resulting implementation strategy is based on viewing the full range of alternatives (existing conditions, one-way road diet, two-way restoration) as a continuum that describes the corridor's ultimate evolution. Achieving the vision is possible through a series of small steps and critical choices. Some initial steps will be relatively easy, requiring only action and investment. Some choices, namely committing to two-way restoration, will be more challenging, requiring a collective agreement that the community benefit outweighs the transportation trade-off. Not every choice needs to be made immediately; each step has been designed to be stand-alone, achieving small parts of the vision's goals, while being part of the long-term vision that keeps open future choices.



A Framework for Decision-Making

		Existing Condition	One-Way Road Diet	Two-Way Restoration
Business + Economic Development	Property & Development Value	One-way access and vehicle speeds constrain adjacent property value, particularly in residential areas.	One-way access effects adjacent property value, particularly in residential areas. Reduced speeds associated with the road diet will improve street-level pedestrian comfort.	Strengthens property value and residential attractiveness.
	Business Access & Visibility	One-way operation limits business visibility & access.	One-way operation limits business visibility & access. Reduced speeds associated with the road diet will improve street-level pedestrian comfort/retail environment.	Maximizes visibility & access.
	On-Street Parking	No changes in on-street parking. Lack of physical definition and areas of off-peak parking result in lack of clarity.	Potential net gain in parking with some loss on one side of Person St from Oakwood Ave to Peace St. Bulb-outs create physical definition and parking aisle clarity.	Net loss of on-street parking due to needed left turn lanes and limited curb-to-curb dimension. (Key areas of parking loss include one side of Blount St from Edenton to Davie St, and Person St from Hargett St to South St)
Neighborhood + Historic Character	Streetscape & Aesthetics	Some streetscape/bulb-outs possible, limited to existing 2-lane sections of Blount & Person.	Median Islands on Wake Forest Road, Streetscape/bulb-outs on Blount & Person.	Median islands on Wake Forest Road, streetscape/bulb-outs on Blount & Person, and roundabouts as designed gateways.
	Vehicular Speeding	Speeding promoted by: 4-lane section of Wake Forest, one-way sections of Blount & Person.	Speeding reduced by: 3-lane road diet on Wake Forest, Lane reduction/road diet of Blount & Person.	Speeding reduced by: 3-lane road diet on Wake Forest, 2-way restoration of Blount & Person.
	Neighborhood Compatibility & Value	One-way operation has negative effect on neighborhood compatibility (vehicle speed and access) and value.	More neighborhood compatible: 3-lane road diet on Wake Forest (reduced speed, easier to cross) Lane reduction/road diet of Blount & Person.	More neighborhood compatible: 3-lane road diet on Wake Forest (reduced speed, easier to cross) 2-way restoration of Blount & Person (better access).
Traffic Mobility	Total Network Delay	Efficient vehicular access to downtown.	+ 14% increase in delay (in PM peak). No significant difference in AM peak.	+ 30% increase in delay (in PM peak). No significant difference in AM peak.
	Average Corridor Travel Time	Efficient vehicular access to downtown, Limited intersection delay except for MLK Jr. Blvd.	+ 9% (47 seconds) in PM peak, northbound. + 5% (40 seconds) in PM peak, southbound.	+ 10% (55 seconds) in PM peak, northbound. + 13% (98 seconds) in PM peak, southbound.
	Vehicular Crash & Safety	Blount & Person Street have crash rates 4-5 times higher than state-wide average. Rates of angle and sideswipe, same direction crashes 2 times higher than city-wide average.	Reduced crash rate anticipated by: Narrowed roadway, reduced speeding, redefinition of appropriate lane widths (in 3-lane sections).	Reduced crash rate anticipated by: Narrowed roadway, reduced speeding, redefinition of appropriate lane widths (in 3-lane sections), and restoration of two-way operation.
Walkable + Multi-Modal	Bicycle Facilities	No bicycle facilities in corridor.	Establishes dedicated bike lanes on Wake Forest Road, and a bike lane northbound on Person Street and southbound on Blount Street.	Establishes dedicated bike lanes on Wake Forest Road, and a bike lane northbound on Person Street and southbound on Blount Street. (Downtown section from Edenton to MLK is limited to sharrows).
	Pedestrian Comfort	One-way operation provides reduced conflicts between pedestrians & vehicles (over 2-way), allows for progressively timed signals that create gaps for pedestrian crossings.	Pedestrian comfort strengthened by: 3-lane road diet on Wake Forest, lane reduction/road diet of Blount & Person, bulb-outs and streetscape.	Pedestrian comfort strengthened by: 3-lane road diet on Wake Forest, lane reduction/2-way restoration diet of Blount & Person, Bulb-outs and streetscape.
	Transit	Some routing options limited by one-way operation.	Some routing options limited by one-way operation, more pedestrian-friendly (narrowed, reduced speed).	More routing options available by 2-way operation, more pedestrian friendly (narrowed, reduced speed).

How Do We Get There?

The phasing plan outlines the basic steps and choices, identifying the first actions and a logical sequence of implementation. Because these are conceptual plans, changes should be anticipated and a wide range of unanticipated variables will ultimately shape the path to implementation. This phasing plan simply organizes key initial actions and focus.

Phase 1 | Road Diet Restriping

The Road Diet restriping has been organized into a series of smaller steps that could be implemented separately or together corridor-wide. The intent with this phase is to target quick actions that will not require a large investment but will have an immediate effect on traffic behavior and consequently pedestrian comfort and corridor quality-of-life.

1.1 South – South Park (Person & Blount)

Description – Defines the lane configuration of Blount Street and Person Street from Hoke Street to MLK Jr. Boulevard, better defining the existing two travel lanes, adding a bicycle lane northbound on Person Street and southbound on Blount Street, and defining on-street parking on both sides.

Intent – Serves to immediately redefine the street helping to calm traffic through the South Park Neighborhood, and implements the first segment of corridor-wide bicycle facilities north-south.

Choice – Requires no change in traffic operation, simply better defines the existing curb-to-curb space and two travel lanes to calm traffic.

Cost – \$65,000

1.2 North - Wake Forest Road

Description – Converts the four-lane cross section of Wake Forest Road into the proposed three-lane section (one lane in each direction with a center turn lane), and adds bicycle lanes on both sides.

Intent – Serves to calm traffic along this neighborhood section of the corridor, incorporates bicycle facilities, and makes pedestrian crossings easier and safer.

Choice – Analysis suggests this change will have little effect in traffic operation.

Cost - \$245,000

1.3 Partial Two-way Restoration (Person Street – Delway Street to Peace Street)

Description – Restores Person Street from Delway Street/ Mordecai Drive to Peace Street to two-way operation. This is achieved by making the western-most lane southbound and keeping the remaining two lanes northbound. Partial two-way restoration will require new traffic signals at the Franklin Street and Peace Street intersections to facilitate two-way functionality.

Intent – Serves to provide increased access, ease of wayfinding, and visibility to businesses along this predominantly retail section of Person Street.

Choice – Analysis suggests this change will have little effect in traffic operation and is consistent with both road diet and potential corridor-wide two-way restoration. However, limits on-street parking to one side and restricts the inclusion of a bicycle lane until future corridor-wide two-way restoration.

Cost - \$135,000

1.4 Central – Downtown (Person & Blount)

Description – Defines the lane configuration of Blount Street and Person Street from Peace Street to MLK Jr, Blvd. to a consistent two travel lanes, adding a bicycle lane northbound on Person Street and southbound on Blount Street, and on-street parking on both sides.

Intent – Serves to calm traffic, provide appropriate lane width (in existing areas with three lanes), and complete a connected bicycle facility north-south through the corridor.

Choice – Analysis suggests this change will have some effect on traffic operation and will require acceptance of some additional vehicular travel delay.

Cost - \$285,000

Phase 2 | Streetscape

An important component of the vision is the physical transformation of the corridor. The road diet restriping sets in place a framework for focused streetscape and bulb-out investment intended to enhance the corridor’s physical character and improve the pedestrian environment. The initial streetscape investments are targeted on the north and south sections where the investment is most needed and will have the greatest impact.

2.1 South – South Park (Person & Blount)

Description – Inserts landscaped bulb-outs at intersection corners and selected mid-block locations (MLK Jr. Blvd. to Hoke St.) to better define the on-street parking aisle, narrow pedestrian crossings, add street trees and landscaping, and visually narrows the road to support traffic calming. This phase should include the completion of missing sidewalks on east side of Person Street from Hoke Street to Bragg Street.

Intent – Serves to calm traffic, provide additional streetscape and tree canopy enhancement, complete sidewalk network and make safer pedestrian crossings.

Choice – Requires final streetscape design, more detailed cost estimate and decision on timing and inclusion in capital budget.

Cost - \$1,645,000

2.2 North – Wake Forest Road (to Peace Street)

Description – Inserts landscaped medians and pedestrian crossings at select locations along Wake Forest Road from Brookside/Automotive Way to Delway Street. This phase should include the completion of missing sidewalks on the west side of Wake Forest Road from Sycamore Street to Cedar Street. This phase includes landscaped bulb-outs at intersection corners and selected mid-block locations on Blount Street and Person Street (from Delway Street to Peace Street).

Intent – Serves to calm traffic, provide additional streetscape and tree canopy enhancement, complete sidewalk network and make safer pedestrian crossings.

Choice – Requires final streetscape design, more detailed cost estimate and decision on timing and inclusion in capital budget.

Cost - \$1,755,000

2.3 Central Streetscape – Downtown (Person & Blount)

Description – Inserts landscaped bulb-outs at intersection corners and selected mid-block locations (Peace Street to MLK Jr. Blvd.) to better define the on-street parking aisle, narrow pedestrian crossings, add street trees and landscaping, and further visually narrow the road to support traffic calming. This streetscape phase can occur before a decision is made on two-way restoration (the proposed design is not dependent on two-way operation).

Intent – Serves to calm traffic, provide additional streetscape and tree canopy enhancement, and make safer pedestrian crossings.

Choice – Requires final streetscape design, more detailed cost estimate and decision on timing and inclusion in capital budget.

Cost - \$4,070,000

Phase 3 | Two-Way Restoration

The ultimate two-way restoration of the Blount Street and Person Street sections of the corridor is part of the long-term vision. Preliminary traffic analysis suggests there are no fatal flaws to this scenario; however, there is further analysis necessary and a future choice to be made regarding the level of additional traffic delay acceptable for the community benefits gained.

3.1 Refined Traffic Analysis (roundabouts and new corridor signal timing)

Description – The preliminary analysis has identified several key intersections (Edenton/New Bern, South/Lenoir) with increase delay caused by the restoration of two-way

traffic operation. This initial analysis was limited by the assumption of the corridor’s existing timing (designed for one-way traffic). Further analysis should be conducted to test alternative signal timing scenarios and their effect on the corridor and adjacent downtown street network. In addition, further engineering design and traffic testing is needed to refine the design and operational analysis of the proposed roundabouts.

Intent – Analysis will allow a more accurate picture of the traffic effects and allow a more informed decision.

Choice – To continue to work with City staff and elected officials to gain a better picture of the benefits and trade-offs of two-way restoration.

Cost - \$50,000-100,000

3.2 Two-Way Restoration (Wake Forest to Hammond Road)

Description – Based on the results of the additional two-way restoration analysis, potentially restore two-way operation. The implementation will require roundabouts at the transitions with Wake Forest Road and Hammond Road, and new traffic signals at all signalized intersections on Blount Street and Person Street to facilitate two-way functionality.

Intent – Maximize routing options and access to the downtown, calm traffic on the corridor, increase business visibility, strengthen the corridor’s neighborhood vitality, and support walkable, street-oriented development.

Choice – The acceptance of additional traffic delay to gain community benefits.

Cost - \$2,720,000

3.3 Capital Boulevard Roundabouts

Description – Inserts two potential roundabouts north and south of Capital Boulevard on Wake Forest Road as part of the long-term plan for Capital Boulevard. This project is independent of the Wake Forest road diet and can occur based on the development and timing of the proposed Capital Boulevard improvements.

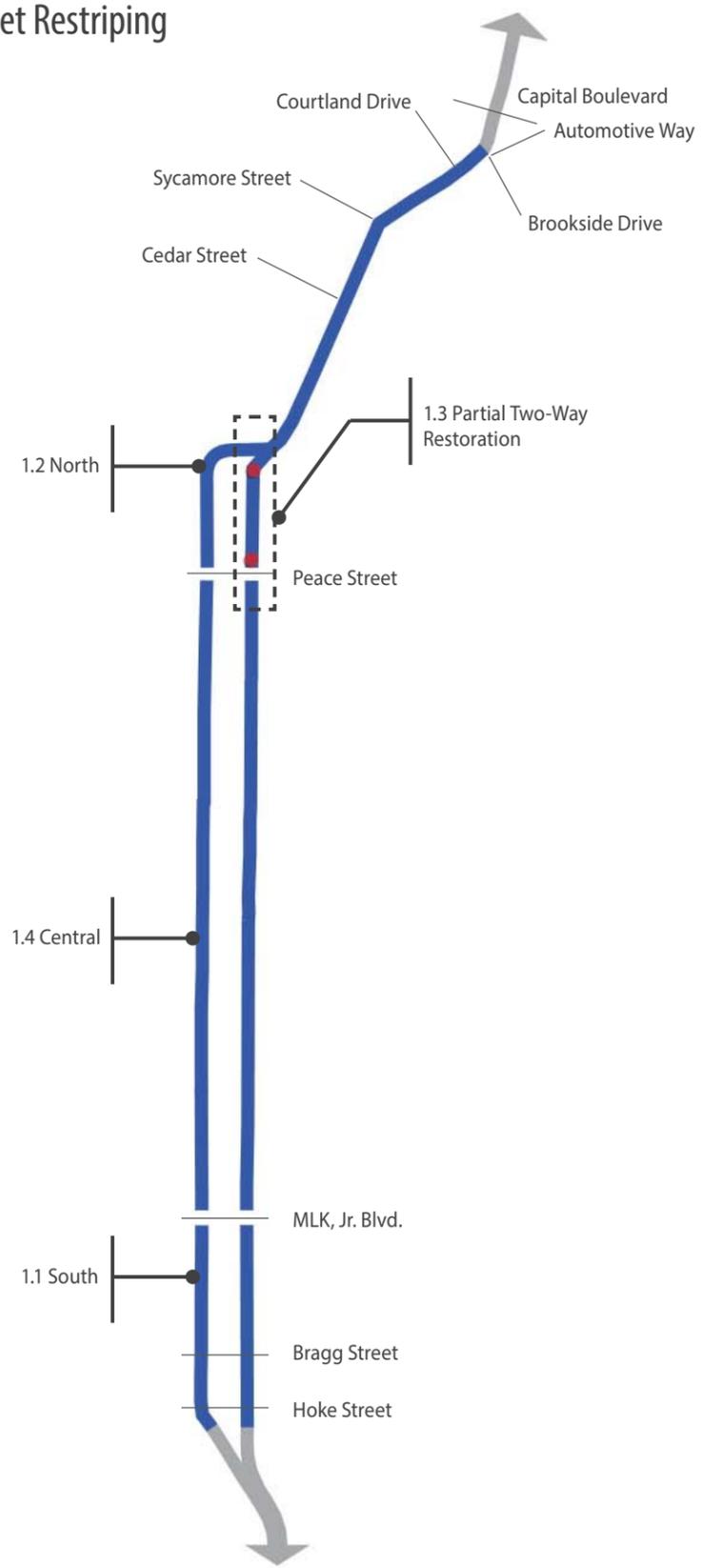
Intent – Serves to redesign the intersection of Wake Forest Road/Automotive Way/Brookside Drive, supports the recommendations of the Capital Boulevard Study, and helps create a stronger pedestrian link for the planned Pigeon House Branch Greenway.

Choice – Requires final design, more detailed cost estimate and decision on timing and inclusion in capital budget.

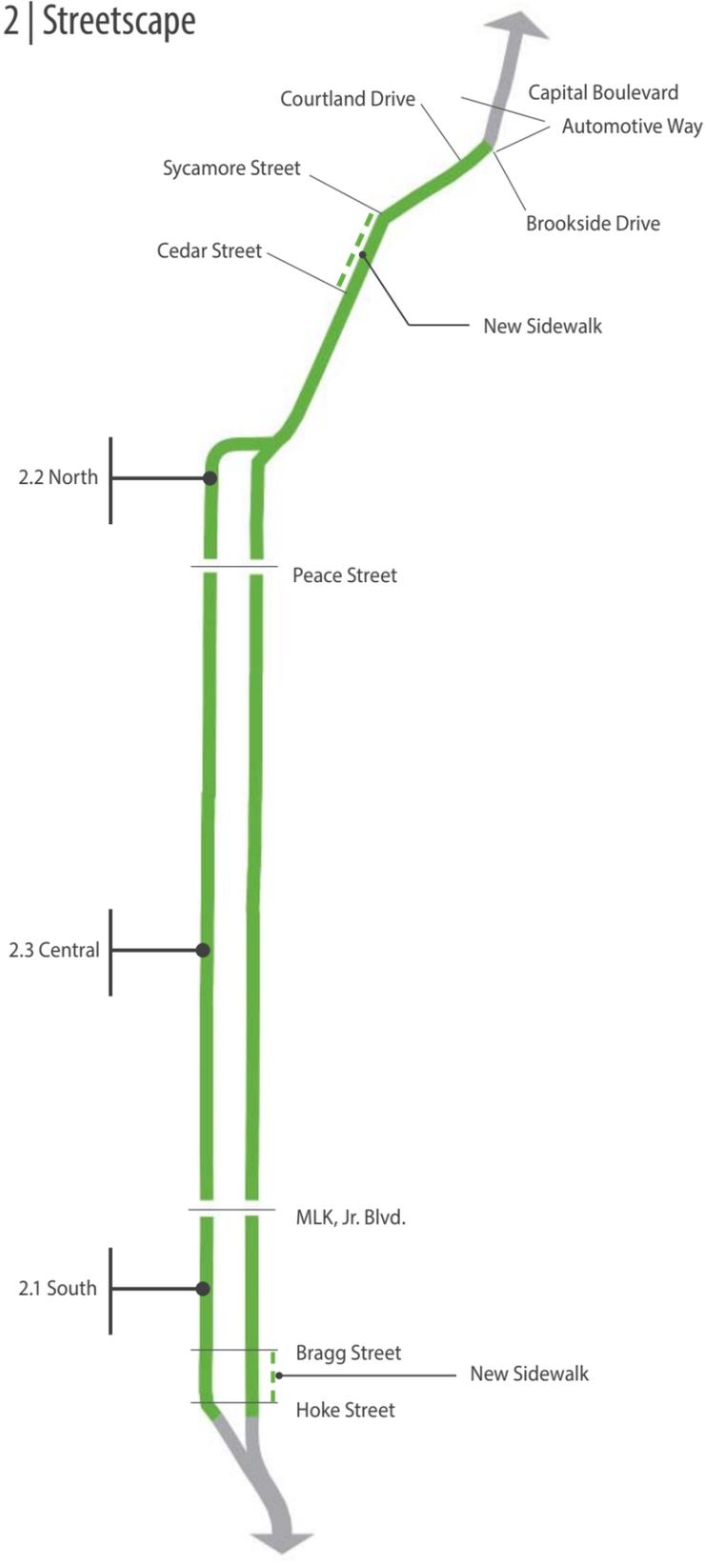
Cost - \$1,350,000

Phasing

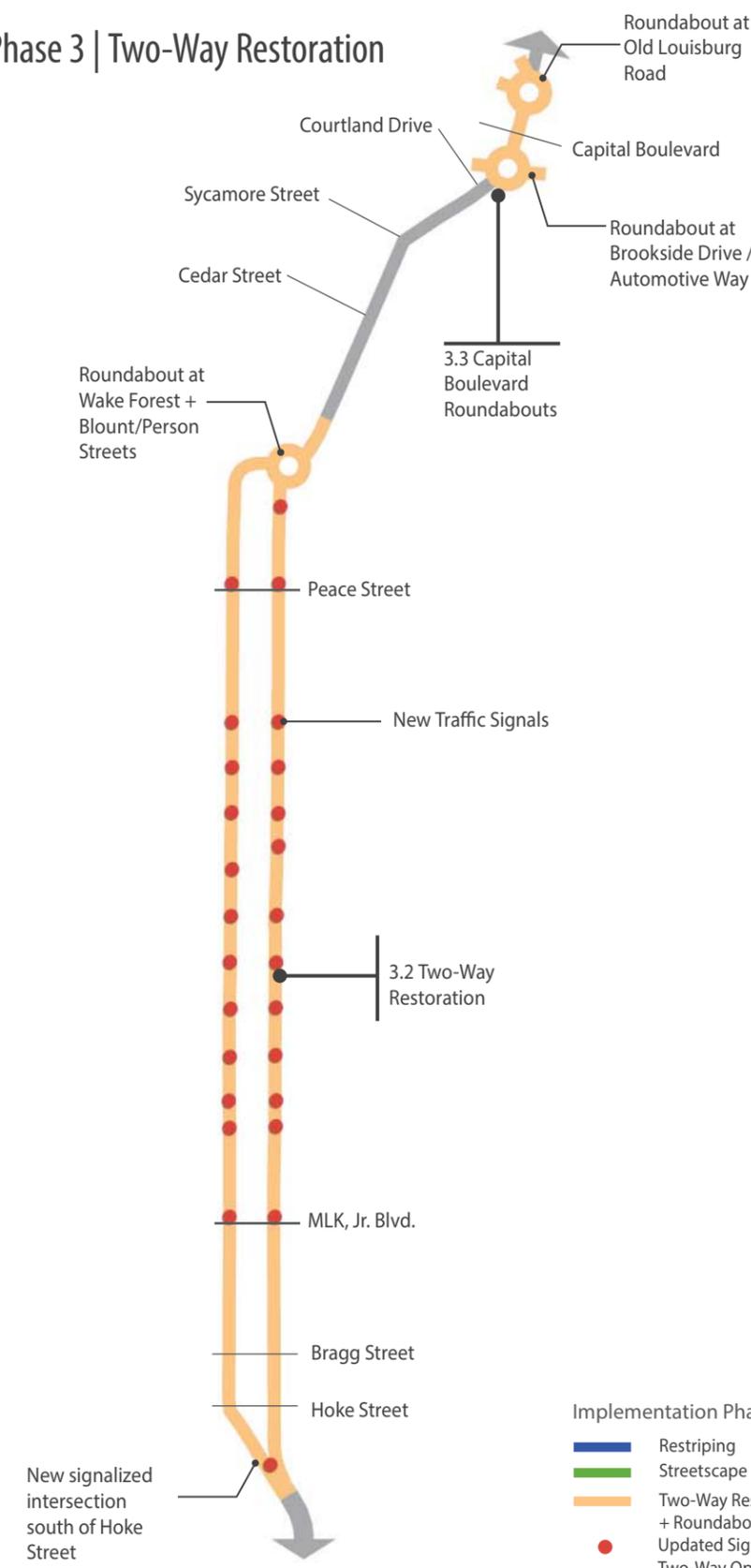
Phase 1 | Road Diet Restriping



Phase 2 | Streetscape



Phase 3 | Two-Way Restoration



- Implementation Phases**
- █ Restriping
 - █ Streetscape
 - █ Two-Way Restoration + Roundabouts
 - Updated Signals for Two-Way Operation



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