



RALEIGH, NC | AUGUST 2012

Blue Ridge Road District Study



Blue Ridge Road District Study

Prepared by *Urban Design Associates*
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North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)

North Carolina Department of Water Quality (NCDWQ)

Raleigh Arts Commission

Raleigh Business Owners

Raleigh Citizen Advisory Councils

Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC)

Raleigh Property Owners

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FOREWORD

“Real estate developers and deal makers salivating like fairgoers over funnel cakes about prospects for a mini boom town in the once-sleepy western gateway to Raleigh. In the place of pine trees and agricultural land, they envision a bustling entertainment district brimming with restaurants, hotels and stores, along with new office buildings and townhouses to accompany a smattering of developments already there. Business interests looking to open hotels, restaurants, and shops are angling for a slice of arena patrons’ spending money. Along the way, they’re hoping to establish profitable niches in what could become a vibrant commercial district and office setting on Cary’s doorstep. Within a few years, some predict the area — bounded by the Wade Avenue Extension, Interstate 40, Hillsborough Street, and Blue Ridge Road — will be hard to recognize. “I think it’s going to be one of the most sought after addresses in the Triangle,” said one developer. “It really is a hot area, and the arena is what’s driving it.”

Some local leaders insist that a new comprehensive plan be developed to govern growth within several miles of the arena. They fear that approving projects piecemeal could bring strip malls and congestion to a part of the Triangle that has largely escaped the grasp of suburban sprawl. Visions of revamped West Raleigh are nothing new. Over the years, as plans for building the arena gradually came together, a variety of master plans have emerged, but most have simply gathered dust.”

News and Observer October 20, 1999

Well, some of you may remember the arena small area plan from 2001 that was forward thinking but also, ultimately, has gathered dust. Some piecemeal development of the corridor has indeed occurred since that time. So why are we here again developing comprehensive planning for the Blue Ridge corridor? After all, Einstein said insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

Of course the world has changed over the past 13 years, and has begun to catch up with the visionaries. As urbanist James Howard Kunstler has pointed out, “The 20th century was about getting around. The 21st century will be about staying in a place worth staying in.” We have been fortunate locally to retain a strong quality of life and continued although diminished

rapid growth in the face of the realization of limited resources. However, the sustainability of our approach to growth is now in greater question. In 2002, the State of North Carolina was ranked 49th in the nation in terms of overall planning commitment by the American Planning Association. The General Assembly has since formed the NC Sustainable Communities Task Force in view of the need to plan for a sustainable future.

During the course of our discussions, the Blue Ridge Road stakeholders group realized that this district could serve as a State-wide model for 21st century urban planning. This has been confirmed by the first place ranking of the Corridor on the recent Sustainable Communities Task Force grant award. In parallel with the goals of the Task Force, the Corridor offers the potential to bring together the components of land use planning, transportation, and affordable housing while preserving open space and the environment, optimizing public health, and enhancing economic development. The Corridor can serve as a pilot for NCDOT's new Complete Streets policy to collaborate on multi-modal transportation options needed to serve the community and complement the context of the area. Another indication of the Corridor's significance Statewide is the funding of North Carolina's first comprehensive Health Impact Assessment by Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation to be conducted in parallel with the planning process.

We now have an outstanding team led by the Raleigh Urban Design Center with the support of area stakeholders. As most of the land in the Corridor is State-owned, the need for interagency and multi-jurisdictional cooperation is essential to move this process forward. Looking around the room, I think today is a good start in that context. Our goal has always been to have bottom-up planning to engage as many stakeholders as possible in order to have a successful outcome. As we welcome Urban Design Associates to the planning team today, our focus will ultimately be on implementation of their recommendations.

As the native American proverb says, "We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children." Please do not lose this window of opportunity. Thank you for your interest and support.

Dr. Stuart Levin
Chair, Blue Ridge Road Advisory Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE BLUE RIDGE ROAD DISTRICT STUDY

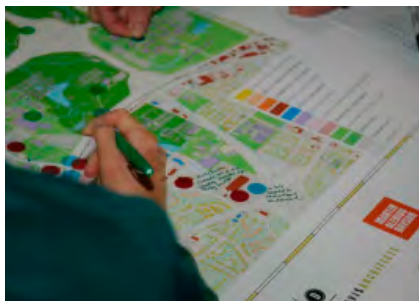
- » The public and property owners are consulted up front to establish a vision, define the study area, identify key questions, and refine the scope.
- » The plan contents will work backwards from implementation to ensure that the recommendations can realistically be carried forward.
- » Intra- and inter-governmental (and business interests) coordination is built into the process given the overlapping jurisdictions along the corridor, public ownership patterns, and the interrelated nature of the issues.
- » The result is the identification of realistic, actionable recommendations and the assignment of responsibility to participating organizations.

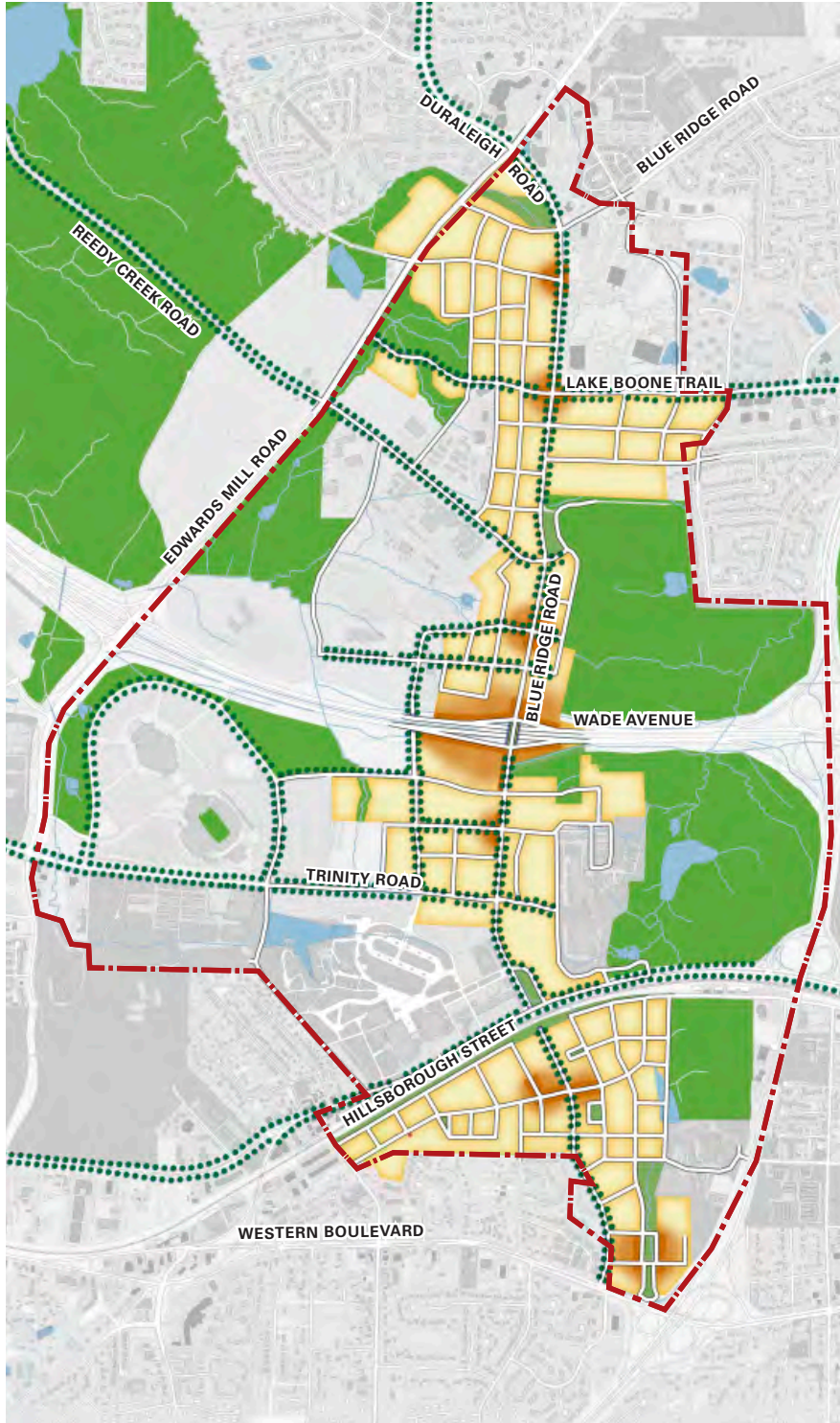
The Blue Ridge Road District Study looked at a two-mile stretch of Blue Ridge Road that is flanked by many of Raleigh's greatest attractions: the North Carolina Museum of Art, the PNC Arena, Carter-Finley Stadium, and the North Carolina State Fairgrounds. With the additional support of major employers and institutions like the various State departments that are headquartered here, the NC State University Centennial Biomedical Campus, and Rex UNC Health Care (Rex Hospital), this area hosts well over 6 million visitors a year.

Even with all of these assets, the Blue Ridge Road District struggles to support these visitors with limited local road network, poor pedestrian access, a lack of entertainment and service uses, and a very car-centric, suburban character.

The Raleigh Urban Design Center administered this effort, supported and directed by a representative advisory group of major stakeholders, land owners, and tenants. This study seeks to provide a coordinated blueprint to guide future development within this District that will be implemented over time, reverse the trend of anemic economic development, and establish a true sense of place. To this end, the project team utilized a series of stakeholder, focus group, and public meetings to seek input, foster consensus, and identify future opportunities for the Blue Ridge Road District.

The overall vision plan is a combination of the three major framework elements: (1) Transportation, (2) Green Infrastructure, and (3) Development. The following pages give a brief overview of the recommendations coming out of this study, and the full final report will be used to inform zoning amendments, comprehensive plan amendments, and transportation-related design improvements. Ultimately, this information will help to establish design guidelines for mixed-use zoning districts, heights, edges, public art, and urban design, thereby aiding large property owners in the realization of this district's vision.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NEAR TERM

- » Extend Lake Boone Trail over to Edwards Mill Road
- » Evaluate options for a more compact interchange at the Wade Avenue Bridge to provide better access and maximize developable land
- » Maintain a signalized intersection at Trinity Road and Blue Ridge Road
- » Provide a transit circulator serving the area between the Arena and the Stadium
- » Depress Blue Ridge Road under Hillsborough Street, railroad tracks, and Beryl Road per the NCDOT underpass project
- » Upgrade and improve Macon Pond Road to be a front door and a proper connection from Rex Hospital to Edwards Mill Road
- » Upgrade Ligon Street connection

MID TERM

- » Connect the Arts District to the Entertainment District via a new connection across Wade Avenue
- » Improve intersection at Blue Ridge Road and Forest View Road
- » Connect the NCSU campus to the facilities across Blue Ridge Road via a new east/west street pedestrian connection
- » Establish a street pattern between NCSU and the east edge of the Stadium /Arena parking that facilitates expansion

LONG TERM

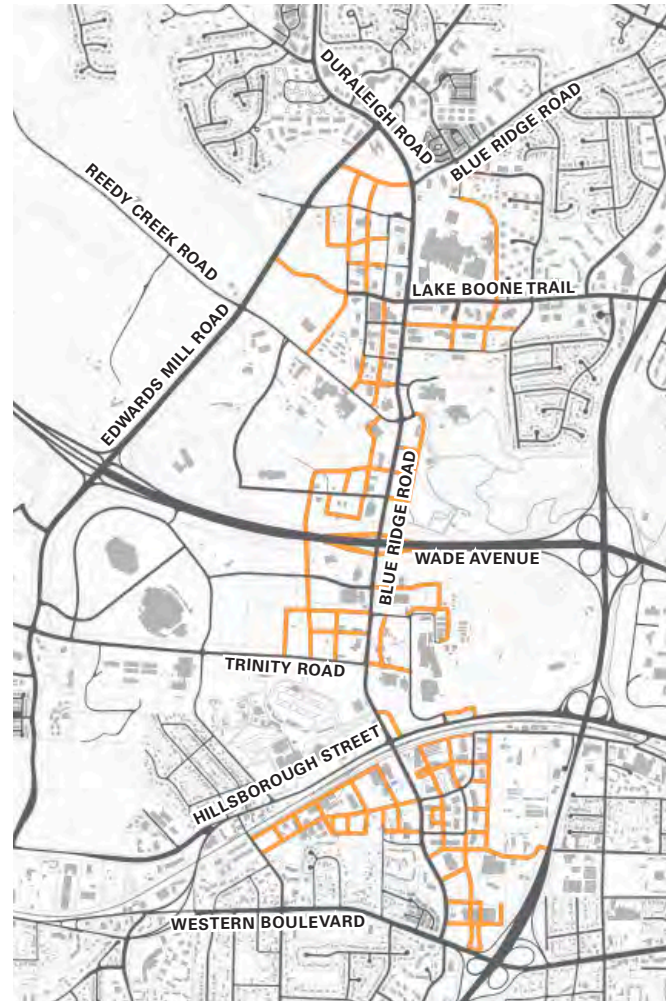
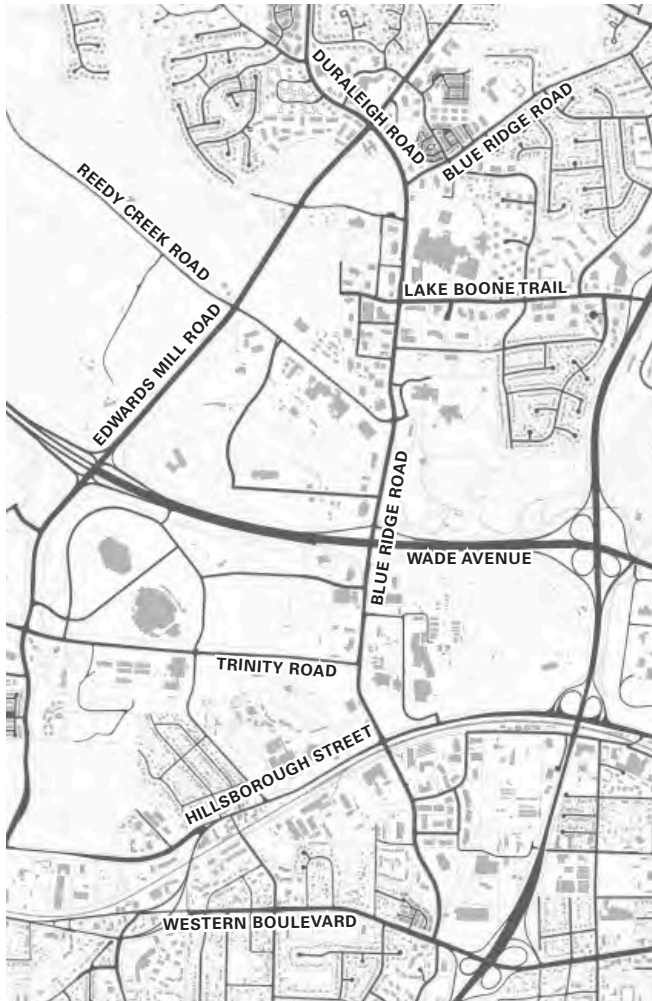
- » Reconfigure street connections to accommodate an interconnected and pedestrian-friendly district as redevelopment occurs
- » Improve connectivity with additional north/south streets parallel to Blue Ridge Road

TRANSPORTATION

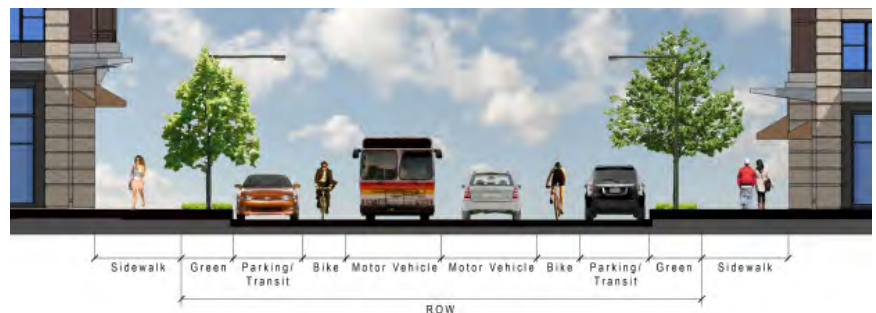
It is impossible to talk about the image, character, and function of the Blue Ridge Road District without addressing the impact of the road itself. Throughout this vision study, we heard about not only the ugliness of the road, but the dangers and inconveniences associated with traffic congestion, rate of speed of cars, the lack of safe and wide sidewalks, the lack of safe crossings, the lack of bicycle lanes, and the deficiencies in transit service. Amend applicable public and private facilities master plans.

In order to address these concerns, key improvements are recommended:

- » **Blue Ridge Road Improvements:** Blue Ridge Road, in its various recommended cross sections, will serve as a pilot project for the North Carolina Department of Transportation Complete Streets program.
- » **Wade Avenue Bridge Improvements:** The Wade Avenue Bridge does not currently have enough dimension to provide safe pedestrian and cycle passage. This structure needs to be widened to accommodate these while the ramps to and from Wade Avenue should be evaluated for a more compact and urban configuration.
- » **Secondary Street Network:** In order to facilitate positive change in the district a secondary street network should be developed to improve mobility and reduce isolated development parcels and expansive parking areas. This concept includes the exploration of an additional north/south street connection under Wade Avenue to better link the District's existing facilities to each other and to new mixed-use development and services.
- » **Blue Ridge Road Transit:** We encourage the planned extension of the Wade County Transit Plan's Creedmoor Road / PNC Service. In addition to this, we also recommend a District-serving bus line that runs at a fairly high frequency (every 10 minutes) to connect Crabtree Valley Mall at the northern end down to the intersection at Western Boulevard to the South and additional stops to existing local and regional bus routes.
- » **Hillsborough Grade Separation:** This project is already underway, and should continue. It is crucial that the pedestrian and cycle connections be improved as part of the strategy to improve vehicular flow.
- » **Light Rail Transit:** This area would most certainly benefit from future light rail service. Combined with the other bus transit improvements, secondary street network, and cycle connectivity, the District will truly embody multi-modal transit.



The existing street network (above, left) does not provide enough network to a walkable and sustainable district. The proposed framework (above, right) adds a secondary network of streets to support the development and increase connectivity. A typical street cross-section (to the right) will provide ample facilities for pedestrians, transit, bicycles, and cars.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NEAR TERM

- » Protect the existing wetlands
- » Provide an improved loop on the NCMA greenway
- » Prepare comprehensive, District-wide trail map for way-finding, and theme loops based on the district served
- » Incorporate a comprehensive public art program to unify the District
- » Provide wide sidewalks near the State Fairgrounds, PNC Arena, and the Carter-Finley Stadium, as well as along the thoroughfares that link these institutions with parking resources

MID TERM

- » Connect the existing trails to the north around the Rex Hospital expansion and west to Schenk Forest
- » Implement a pedestrian connection at the NCMA under Wade Avenue to NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine campus
- » Capitalize on linkages to the JC Raulston Arboretum as a neighborhood amenity

LONG TERM

- » As development comes on line, evaluate recreation needs of new population and incorporate localized green spaces

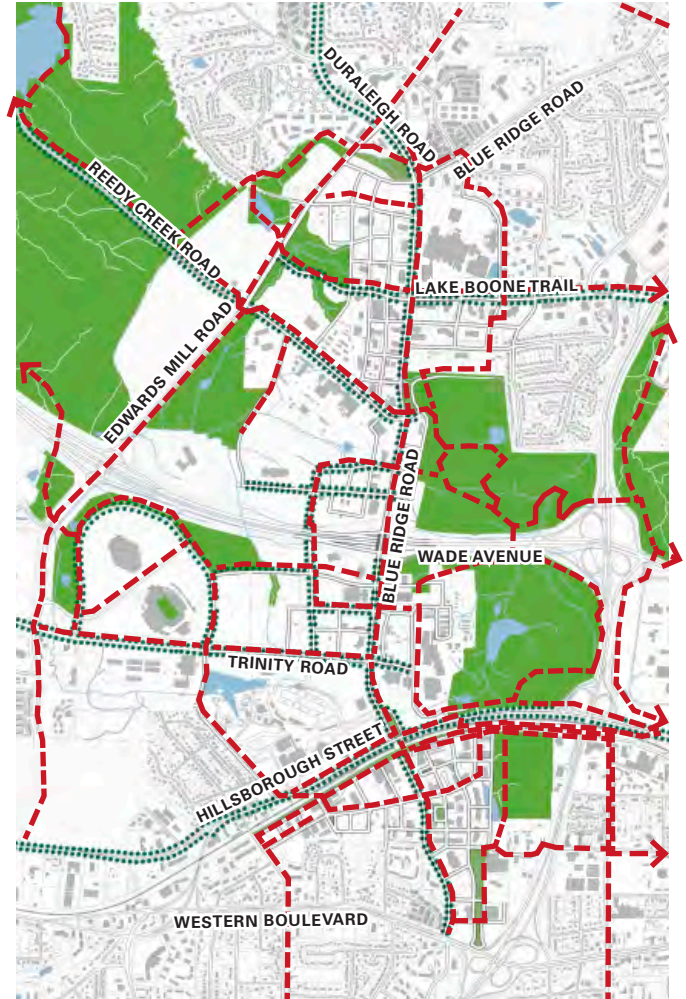
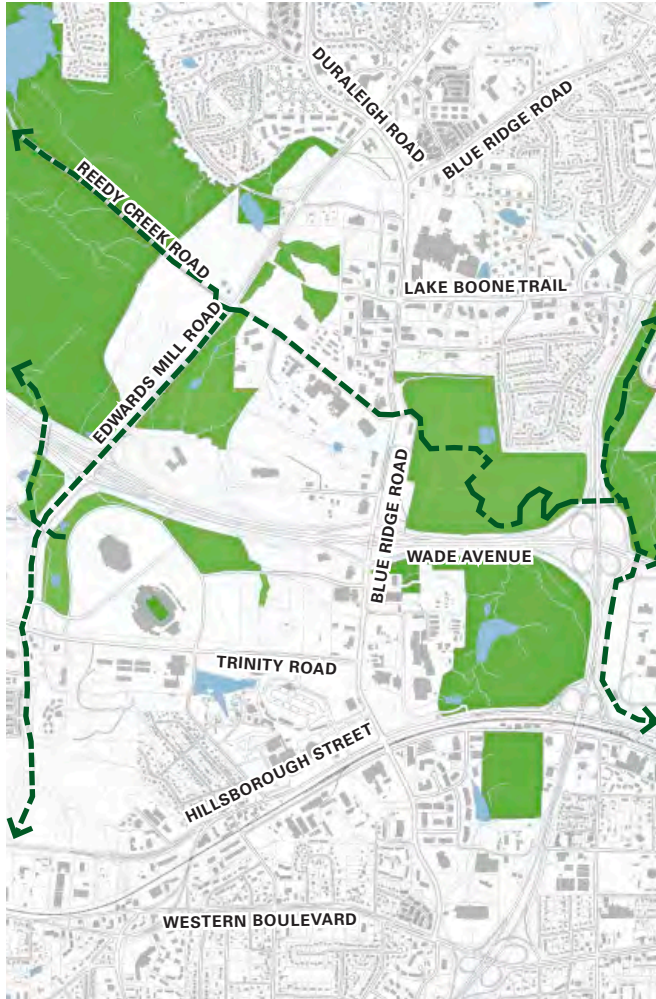
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the greatest assets of this part of Raleigh is the green space surrounding the District. The North Carolina Museum of Art and Museum Park, Carl Alwin Memorial Schenk Forest, William B. Umstead State Park, the JC Raulston Arboretum, and even the pastures at NC State's Centennial Biomedical Campus all stand in stark contrast to the concrete and asphalt expanse of Blue Ridge Road.

Many of the participants throughout the process described with great affinity the trails and recreational attractions for cyclists, runners, and hikers, but they all complained of the same frustration: the public open spaces and facilities are not well-connected to each other, and the nature of development in the District further aggravates this phenomenon. Amend applicable public and private facilities master plans.

The recommendations of this study concentrate on providing better connections and better access to the existing open space resources:

- » Implement Additional 'Connector' Linkages: Explore the possibility of a pedestrian connection under Wade Avenue in order to link the NC State Centennial Biomedical Campus with the NCMA trails and pedestrian bridge.
- » Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure: All new and existing roads within the District should be improved over time to provide broad, safe sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes. This is especially critical along Blue Ridge Road itself as it functions both as a spine and front door for the entire District.
- » Create Walkable/Bikable Loops within the District: By improving key road linkages and access to open spaces while using streets and crossings to link facilities, an interconnected system of multi-use trails and sidewalks within the District is created which is a benefit to recreational users and commuters alike.



*The existing public/private open space and trails diagram (above, left)
The proposed public/private open space, trail and improved sidewalk framework (above, right)*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NEAR TERM

- » Develop branding and theming for districts
- » Create a mixed-use development on the NCMA side of Blue Ridge Road with potential for a hotel
- » Locate NCSU practice facilities to take advantage of parking access during non-event hours and activate Entertainment District
- » Add a hotel conference facility associated with the Fairgrounds that can serve as an economic generator

MID TERM

- » Expand Rex Hospital
- » Locate potential DHSS offices along Blue Ridge Road adjacent to the National Guard site
- » Locate mixed-use development along Blue Ridge Road
- » Complement existing neighborhoods with residential uses

LONG TERM

- » Redevelop K-Mart® site as a mixed-use center coupled with restored and protected streams/wetlands in the low-lying riparian areas of the site
- » Site larger office and commercial footprints more closely to the proposed station




DEVELOPMENT

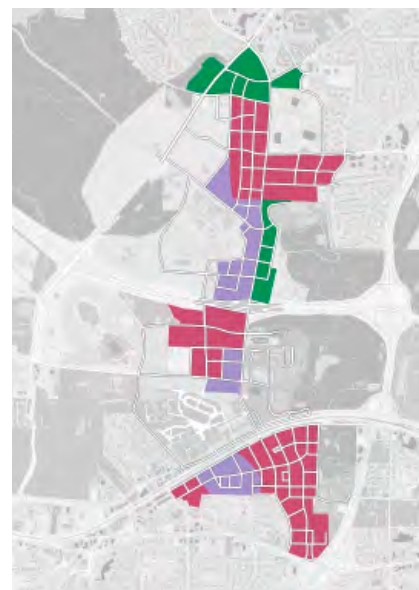
The current development pattern in the Blue Ridge Road District is car-oriented, suburban, and, relatively, low-density. In order to achieve the vision that this plan has captured, densification of development must occur over time. Additionally, the area would greatly benefit from a more diverse range of uses. Currently restaurants, service retail, and residential are either non-existent or under-represented. We believe that the market would support these uses immediately if the character of the existing infrastructure were improved and properly entitled land was readily available. Amend applicable public and private facilities master plans.

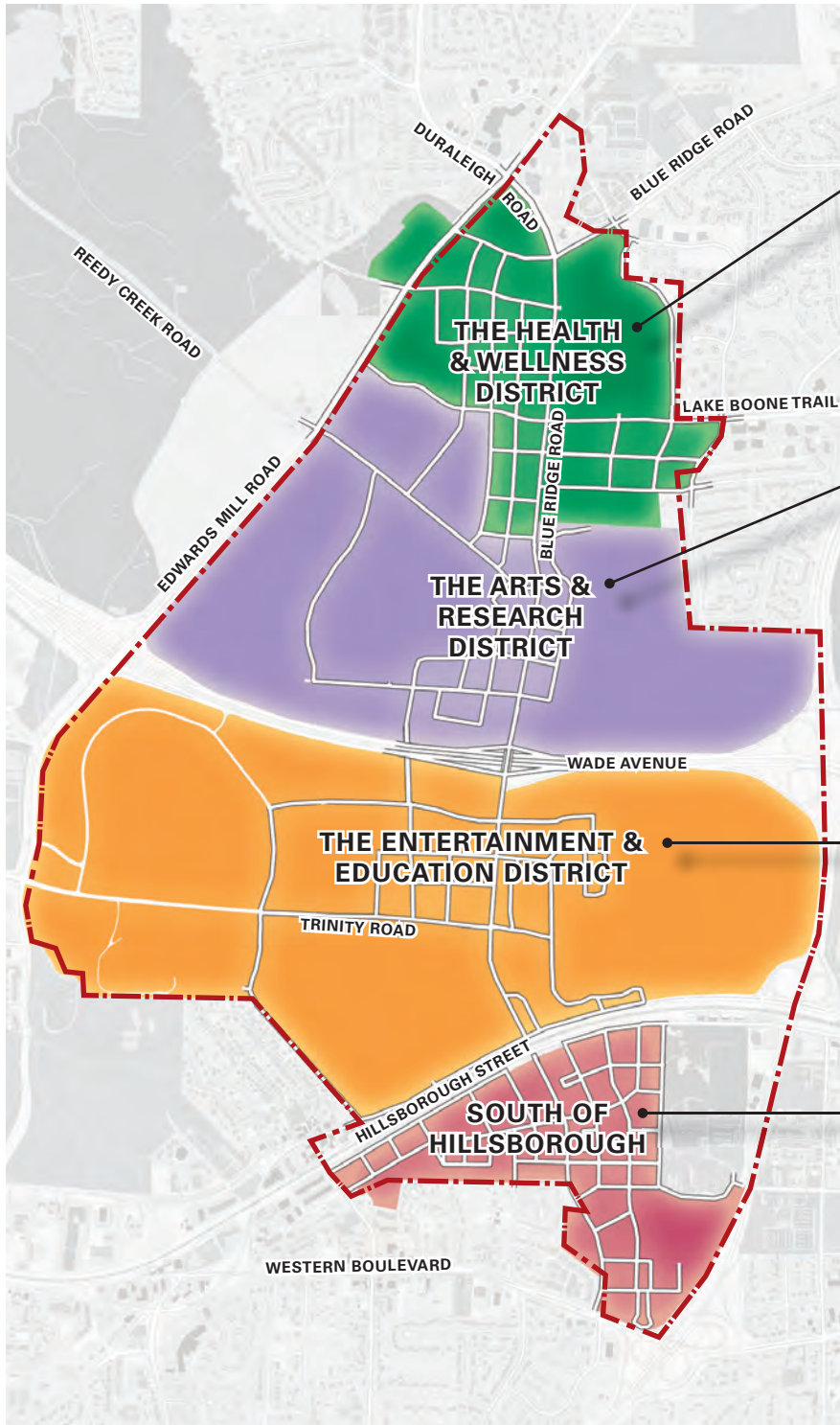
These following items summarize the development recommendations for the Blue Ridge Road District:

- » **Develop Distinct, Walkable Sub-Districts:** The two-mile-long corridor of Blue Ridge Road divides nicely into four walkable districts. We are recommending that each sub-area be programmed and designed to relate directly to the attractions and employment centers that anchor them, such as the NCMA being one of the anchors for the Arts and Research District.
- » **Focus Density Around Mixed-Use Nodes:** Each sub-area should possess a mixed-use nucleus that aggregates service, retail, and entertainment uses to create vibrant hubs and easily serviced transportation nodes.

PRIORITY SITES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

-  EARLY ACTION SITES
-  PRIVATELY HELD- TO BE DEVELOPED AS MARKET/ZONING ALLOWS
-  STATE PROPERTIES- TO BE DEVELOPED AS RELOCATION RESOURCES BECOME AVAILABLE



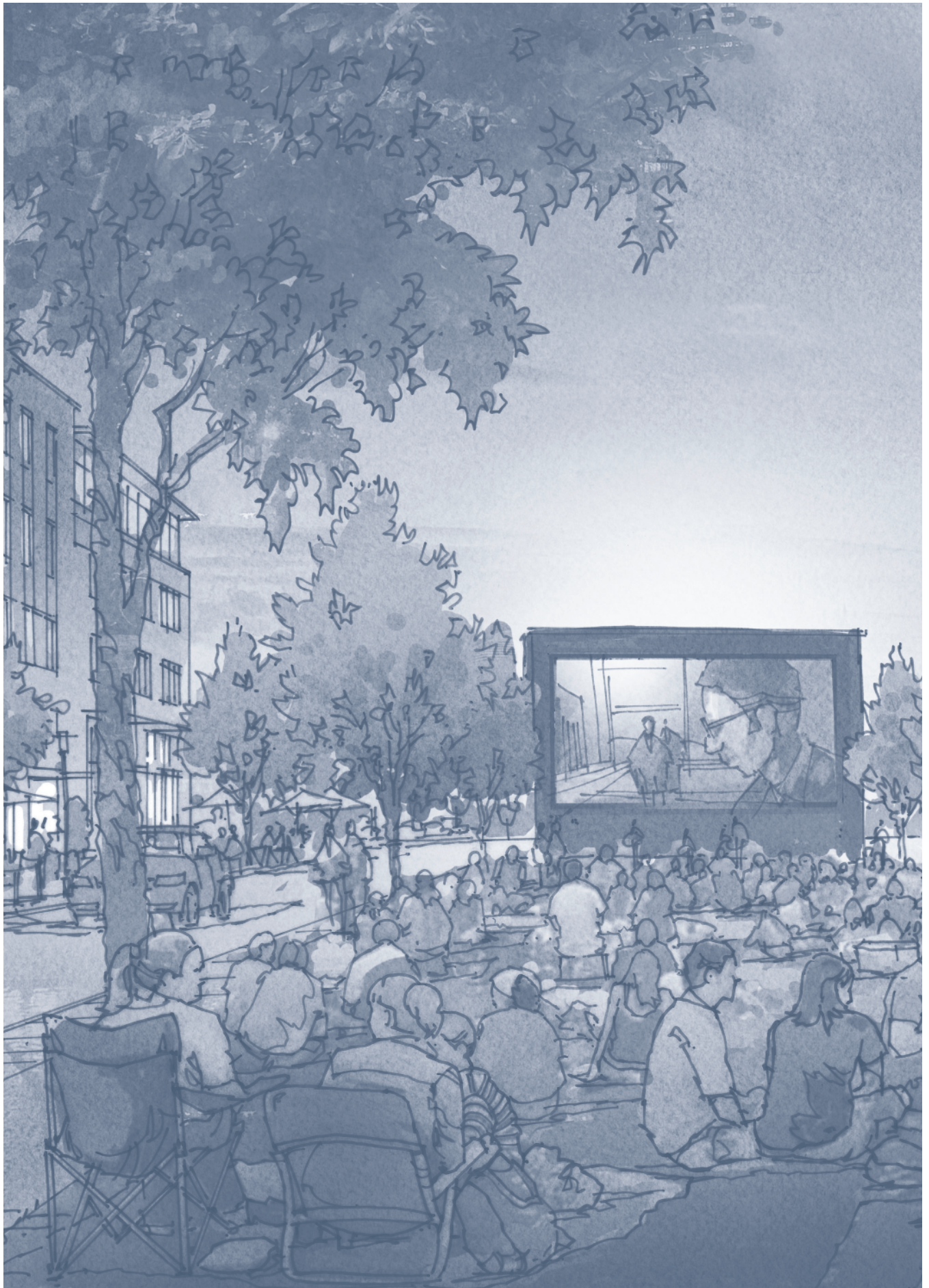


*Above: District Character Sketches
To the right: District Diagram*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACTION PLAN					ENTITY
	NEAR TERM	MID TERM	LONG TERM		
TRANSPORTATION					
» Extend Lake Boone Trail over to Edwards Mill Road	x				City of Raleigh
» Evaluate options for a more compact interchange at the Wade Avenue Bridge to provide better access and maximize developable land	x				NCDOT
» Maintain a signalized intersection at Trinity Road and Blue Ridge Road	x				NCDOT
» Provide a transit circulator serving the area between the Arena and the Stadium	x				City of Raleigh
» Depress Blue Ridge Road under Hillsborough Street, railroad tracks, and Beryl Road per the NCDOT underpass project	x				NCDOT
» Upgrade and improve Macon Pond Road to be a front door and a proper connection from Rex Hospital to Edwards Mill Road	x				NCDOT & City of Raleigh
» Upgrade Ligon Street connection	x				NCDOT & NCSU & City of Raleigh
» Connect the Arts District to the Entertainment District via a new connection across Wade Avenue		x			City of Raleigh Urban Design Center & City of Raleigh
» Improve intersection at Blue Ridge Road and Forest View Road		x			NCDOT
» Connect the NCSU campus to the facilities across Blue Ridge Road via a new east/west pedestrian connection		x			NCSU & City of Raleigh
» Establish a street pattern between NCSU and the Stadium /Arena that facilitates expansion		x			City of Raleigh Urban Design Center & City of Raleigh
» Reconfigure street connections to accommodate an interconnected and pedestrian-friendly District as redevelopment occurs			x		City of Raleigh Urban Design Center & City of Raleigh & Private Developers
» Improve connectivity with additional north/south streets parallel to Blue Ridge Road			x		City of Raleigh & Private Developers
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE					
» Develop comprehensive District Stormwater Strategy that is integrated into infrastructure and development in innovative ways	x				City of Raleigh
» Provide an improved loop on the NCMA greenway	x				NCMA
» Prepare comprehensive, District-wide map for way-finding, and theme loops based on the District served	x				City of Raleigh Urban Design Center & City of Raleigh
» Incorporate a comprehensive public art program to unify the District that integrates the natural resources, water features, and other environmental assets of the area	x				City of Raleigh & NCMA

ACTION PLAN, CONT.				
	NEAR TERM	MID TERM	LONG TERM	ENTITY
» Provide wide sidewalks near the State Fairgrounds, PNC Arena, and the Carter-Finley Stadium, as well as along the thoroughfares that link these institutions with parking resources	x			City of Raleigh & NCDOT
» Connect the existing trails to the north around the Rex Hospital expansion and west to Schenk Forest		x		City of Raleigh
» Connect greenway at the NCMA under Wade Avenue to NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine campus		x		City of Raleigh & NCMA & NCSU
» Capitalize on linkages to the JC Raulston Arboretum as a neighborhood amenity		x		NCSU & City of Raleigh
» As development comes on line, evaluate recreation needs of new population and incorporate localized green spaces and facilities for active pursuits, such as trails, playgrounds, indoor multi-purpose spaces, and open-turf areas			x	City of Raleigh & Private Developers
DEVELOPMENT				
» Develop branding and theming for districts	x			City of Raleigh Urban Design Center & Core Stakeholder Advisory Team
» Create a mixed-use development on the museum side of Blue Ridge Road with potential for a hotel	x			NCMA
» Locate practice facilities to take advantage of parking access during non-event hours and activate Entertainment District in the near term	x			NCSU & Centennial Authority
» Add a hotel conference facility associated with the Fairgrounds can serve as an economic generator as well as serve a crucial need into this area	x			Fairgrounds & Private Developer
» Expand Rex Hospital to the west		x		Rex Hospital
» Locate potential DHSS offices along Blue Ridge Road adjacent to the National Guard sfite		x		NCDOA
» Locate mixed-use development along Blue Ridge Road		x		Private Developers
» Complement existing neighborhoods with residential uses		x		Private Developers
» Redevelop K-Mart® site as a mixed-use center which could also include a regional storm water management facility			x	Private Developers
» Site larger office and commercial footprints more closely to the proposed transit station			x	Private Developers



ANALYSIS

PUBLIC PROCESS

Overview

The public engagement process for the Blue Ridge Road District Study actually began in April of 2011 with stakeholder meetings conducted by the Raleigh Urban Design Center that resulted in the agreement to procure a design team to establish a vision plan.

In order to develop a consensus vision for the Blue Ridge Road District, we followed a three-phase process that started by asking questions and gaining a better understanding of the existing conditions within the District. The second phase, where design ideas were tested and explored, took place primarily in an open workshop format, called a charrette. The design team, core stakeholders, and the general public were all invited to contribute ideas and respond to emerging ideas in an iterative way. In the final phase, the full breadth of input was distilled into the final vision plan and recommendations for moving forward.

In each of these phases, the stakeholder group as well as the broader public were invited to participate in meetings and work sessions in order to fully vet ideas and steer the vision in a consensus direction. The following page illustrates the schedule and milestones for this project.

CORE STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY TEAM

- » Blue Ridge Reality
- » Centennial Authority
- » Highwoods Properties
- » North Carolina Department of Administration (NCDOA)
- » North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
- » North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA)
- » North Carolina State Fairgrounds
- » North Carolina State University (NCSU)
- » North Carolina Sustainable Communities Task Force
- » Rex UNC Health Care



During the design charrette, the community members worked together to shape the plan for Blue Ridge Road.

Schedule of Events



2 APRIL, 2011
Public Visioning Workshop



12 JANUARY, 2012
Kick-off with Stakeholders



6-9 FEBRUARY, 2012
Design Charrette



12 APRIL, 2012
Design Options Presentation

PUBLIC PROCESS

Summary of Feedback

The first meetings with stakeholders and Blue Ridge Road District sought to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the District as well as the goals for the vision plan. To this end, the design team asked participants three questions:

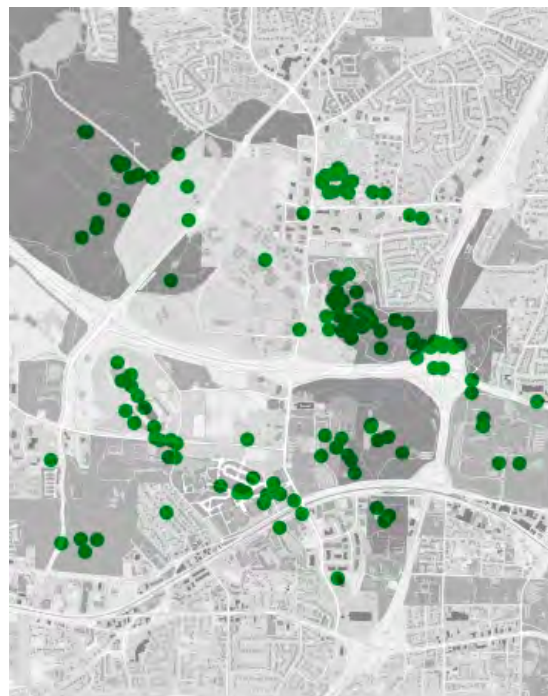
- » What are the strengths of the Blue Ridge Road District, and what draws people to the area?
- » What are the District's weaknesses or impediments to development?
- » What is your vision for the District? In 5 to 10 years, what do you see here?

We then asked participants to mark their answers on a map of the District. In addition to their notes and ideas, people were asked to place three green dots on the three best places in the District, the red dots on the worst places, and, finally, three blue dots on the areas that needed to be most urgently fixed.

The pattern of green dots illustrates the strengths and attractions in this District and are all dispersed around its edges.

STRENGTHS

- » Cluster of great destinations
- » Large employment base
- » Surrounding open space
- » Regional location and access to major thoroughfares
- » Future light rail access and stop at Hillsborough Street and Blue Ridge Road





In contrast to the pattern of green dots the weaknesses in the District are all focused along Blue Ridge Road itself. This further divides the District and blocks connectivity from east to west and from attraction to attraction.

WEAKNESSES

- » Congestion at major intersections
- » Lack of continuous sidewalks and safe pedestrian connections
- » Lack of bike lanes
- » Lack of bus services/transit within the District
- » NCDOT Motor Fleet Management Division garage, vehicle yard, and other NCDOT facilities
- » Aesthetics
- » Lack of streetscaping or other landscape strategy



The greatest concentrations of blue dots are focused on Blue Ridge Road between Wade Avenue and Reedy Creek Road, with the Wade Avenue interchange being a popular concern. The second concentration was along Blue Ridge Road from Trinity Road to Hillsborough Street, incorporating the Hillsborough grade separation and highlighting the need for safe sidewalks during events.

VISIONS

- » Redevelop unattractive or underutilized sites: K-Mart® site, Motor Fleet Management Division site
- » Incorporate public art within the District
- » Potential uses: residential, mixed-use, restaurants, hotel
- » Improve pedestrian environment and intersections
- » Increase public transportation
- » Make Blue Ridge Road a destination for urban entertainment, medical care, sporting events, arts, education, and more
- » Create a “Recreational Mecca” and art corridor
- » Include mixed-income housing to serve a broad variety of new residents in the district

PUBLIC PROCESS

Previous Plans



In order to better understand the context, we had individual organizations describe their own future plans and aspirations for their lands. What was revealed in this effort was that while there was a substantial amount of development planned over the next 20 years, the roads that serve the District were all seen as edges, rather than critical spines for access and experience within the District. As a result, it has become one of the goals of this plan to reconceive the image and character of Blue Ridge Road, while improving the pedestrian facilities along Trinity Road, Hillsborough Street, Reedy Creek Road, Lake Boone Trail, and Macon Pond Road, among others. There are conflicts among master plans. This study serves to reconcile differences that may exist. See the implementation strategy chapter for more information.

A. Rex UNC Health Care Vision Plan:

Rex UNC Health Care is projected to spend over \$300M on expansion projects within the Corridor over the next 5 years. Facility expansions for the main campus will include a new cancer center, and patient bed tower, as well as an ambulatory surgery center and medical office building located on the 17-acre parcel at Macon Pond and Edwards Mill Roads.

B. 2007 State Government Facilities Master Plan:

Prepared in 2007, this master plan provides a comprehensive plan for all State owned and administered properties in the Blue Ridge Road corridor. The plan addresses future growth and envisions the opportunity for a potential DHHS office complex of 850,000 square feet between District Drive and Reedy Creek Road. The plan identifies and designates Special Development Districts for select State owned properties along Blue Ridge Road.

C. NC Museum of Art Campus Development Zones:

The North Carolina Museum of Art hopes to be a leader in future urban development of the Blue Ridge Road corridor with quality design and an appropriate mix of uses along its street-front, with an emphasis on cultural and recreational facilities connecting the Museum Park and its art program to the community. The District Framework contained herein sets the direction for the NCMA's planning to complete the Park and activate the street with a blend of urban and cultural amenities. NCMA also supports and will accommodate multiple means of access to the site, including non-vehicular transportation. The NCMA envisions further development of the Museum

Park land in support of the NCMA's mission for public art and open space. The 2007 State Government Facilities Master Plan earmarks the Park property fronting Blue Ridge Road as a Cultural Arts Center.

D. Centennial Biomedical Campus Development:

This 2010 master plan expands and communicates university standards and facilitates the development and design of campus buildings and facilities for the 200-acre campus. Guidelines seek to grow the campus from its current size of 600,000 gsf to 1,800,000 gsf in 2025. The plan envisions a reorientation of the campus entry and focus toward Blue Ridge Road and incorporates the pastures and woodland as a permanent visual resource.

E. NC State Fairgrounds Master Plan:

The 2009 Master Development Plan recommends new facilities in support of the Fairgrounds' overall mission. Significant physical improvements for pedestrian circulation during major events are a priority. Consolidation of facilities and entrances along Trinity Road along with program expansion of the Campground facilities on the western fairgrounds property are also part of the plan recommendations.

F. NC State Fairgrounds Campground Parking Expansion

G. Triangle Transit/Wake County Alternatives Analysis:

Completed in July 2011, the Alternatives Analysis recommends station locations and rail technology for a fixed guideway transit system connecting Downtown Cary through Downtown Raleigh and north to Triangle Town Center. Recommendations include a light rail station in the vicinity of the State Fairgrounds with a park-and-ride and feeder bus accommodations.

H. Arena Small Area Plan

A Transit Oriented Development District plan depicting conceptual development prospects for the area around the future transit station was prepared by the City of Raleigh. The Blue Ridge Road District Plan has generated a companion concept development program to assist the City of Raleigh's future effort to envision a Station Area Plan in support of zoning classifications and the City's new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Introduction



The Blue Ridge Road District Study recognizes that the planning of urban districts requires the inventory and analysis of many layers of urban complexity. Key topic areas included transportation, green infrastructure, implementation, market analysis, and character. This section of the report addresses:

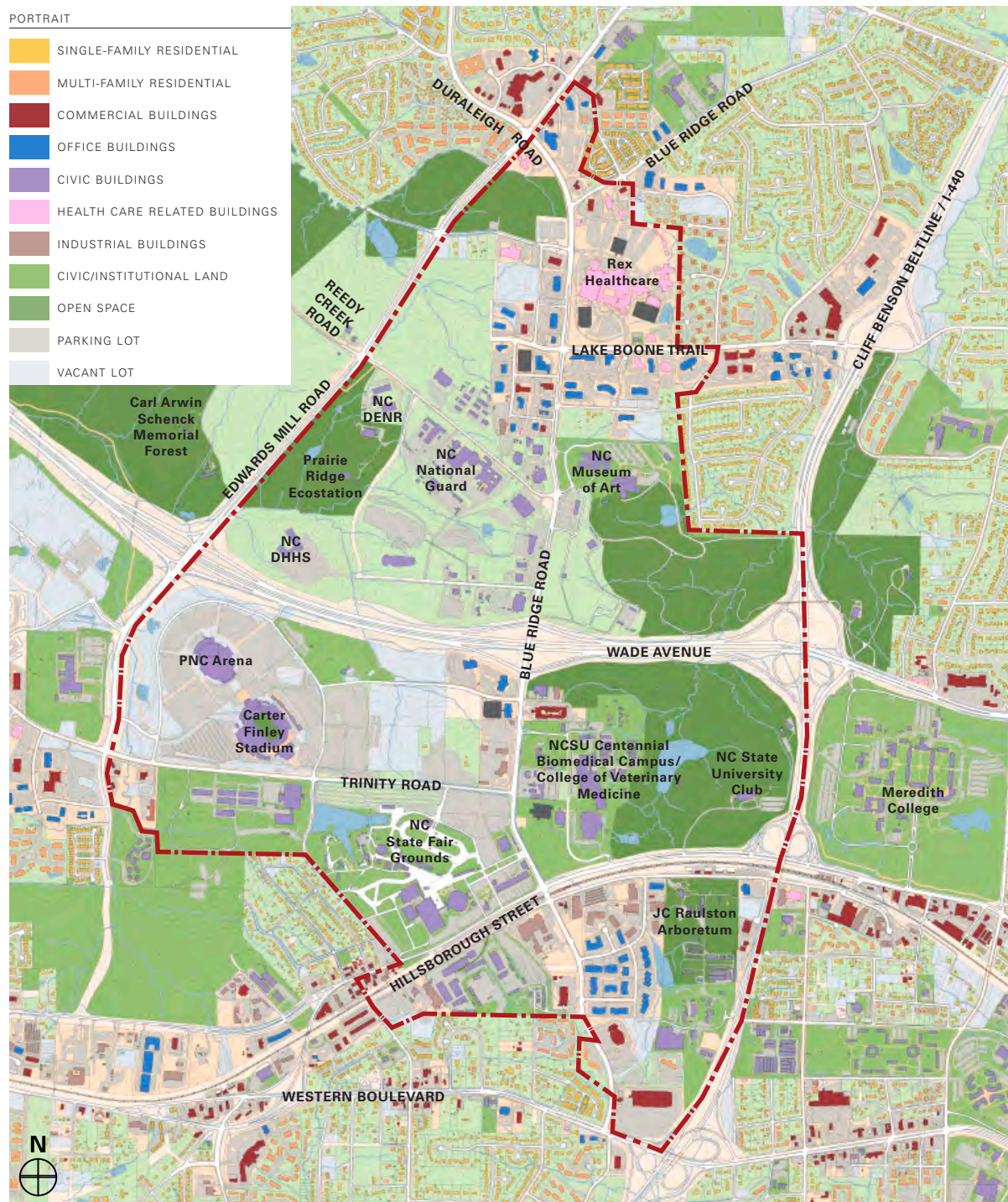
- » Assets and constraints of the District related to the key topic areas.
- » Analysis of the existing conditions of the District to better understand the context for planning;
- » Principles and opportunities for a vision moving forward.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

PORTRAIT

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
- OFFICE BUILDINGS
- CIVIC BUILDINGS
- HEALTH CARE RELATED BUILDINGS
- INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS
- CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL LAND
- OPEN SPACE
- PARKING LOT
- VACANT LOT



EXISTING CONDITIONS

ASSETS

- » Strong regional transportation infrastructure and accessibility
- » North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) planned roadway improvements
- » Planned light rail line
- » Extensive greenway system

CONSTRAINTS

- » Lack of local roadway connectivity and an established street grid
- » Large land holdings constrain finer street system
- » Localized heavy traffic congestion at times, including major events
- » Event parking
- » Limited north/south access by alternative modes, including pedestrian connections, bicycles, and buses
- » Unsafe intersections for pedestrians and cyclists
- » Wade Avenue Bridge has no pedestrian or bicycle facilities
- » Hillsborough Street railroad forms a barrier for all modes

Transportation

The following pages address the current conditions of the various transportation facilities and modes serving the District. The District has a high level of regional automobile access. However, other modes of travel, such as public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities are not adequate enough to provide access and circulation within the area.

ROADWAYS

Traffic has ready access to the District from all directions, directly or indirectly via numerous major roads that include I-40, I-440, Wade Avenue, Edwards Mill Road, Glenwood Avenue, Western Boulevard, and Hillsborough Street. Blue Ridge Road, the transportation spine within the District, is a 4- to 5-lane arterial. While some of these roads can experience stop-and-go traffic during peak periods (and major events and games at the various venues within the District), they generally provide uncongested access at most times. Wade Avenue is a major expressway which connects the center of Raleigh to the District. Highway 40 offers high visibility and accommodates roughly 60,000 vehicles a day through the center of the District.

However, the large land holdings within the District have constrained the development of secondary connecting roads, essential for opening up the district for the development of mixed land uses, and pedestrian and bike accessibility and mobility. Existing roads are also wide, and travel by any mode other than the automobile is currently impractical.

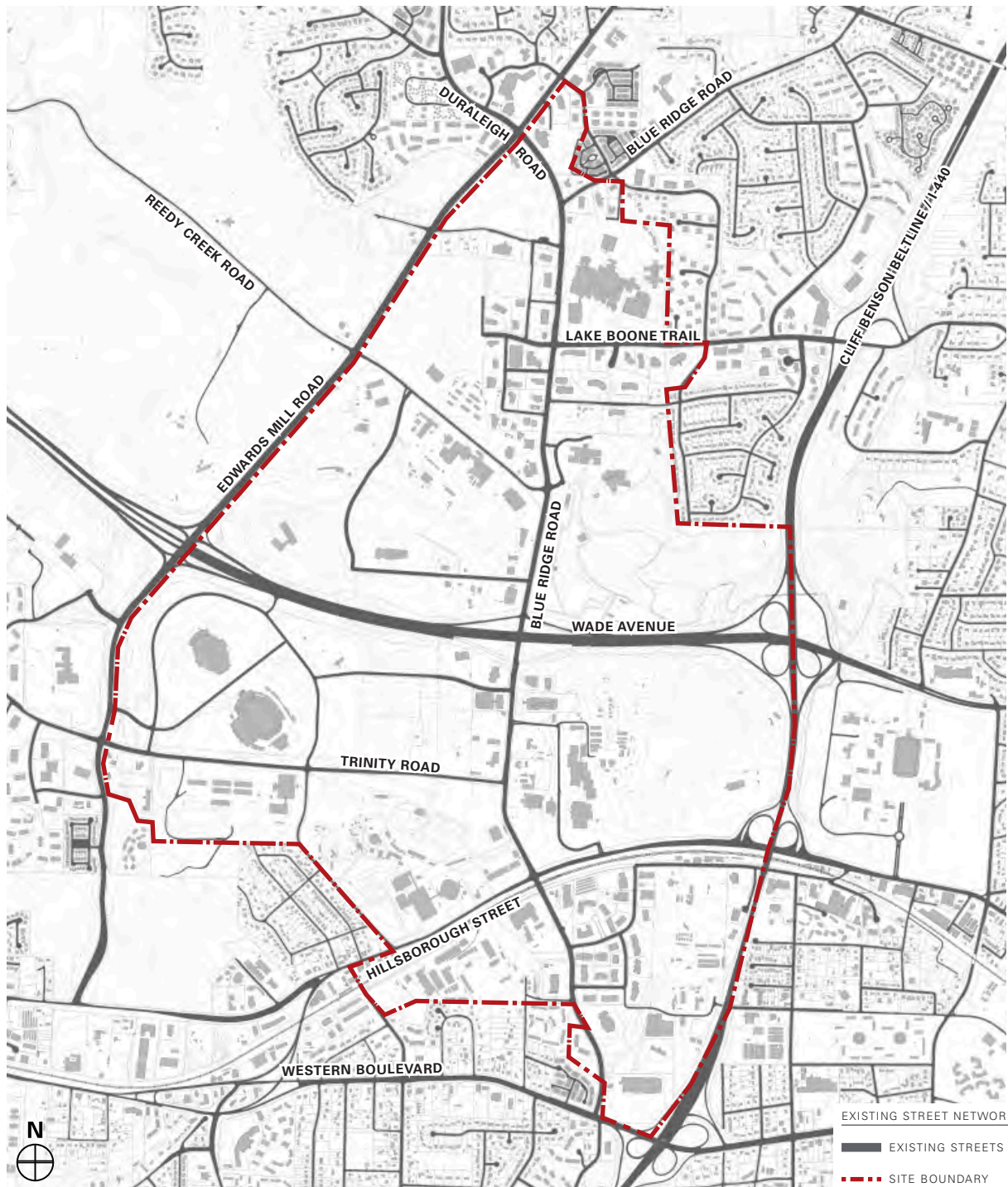
Blue Ridge Road

The configuration and right-of-way width of Blue Ridge Road varies greatly from north to south (right-of-way ranges between approximately 90 and 110 feet). The roadway is divided into the following sections beginning from the north:

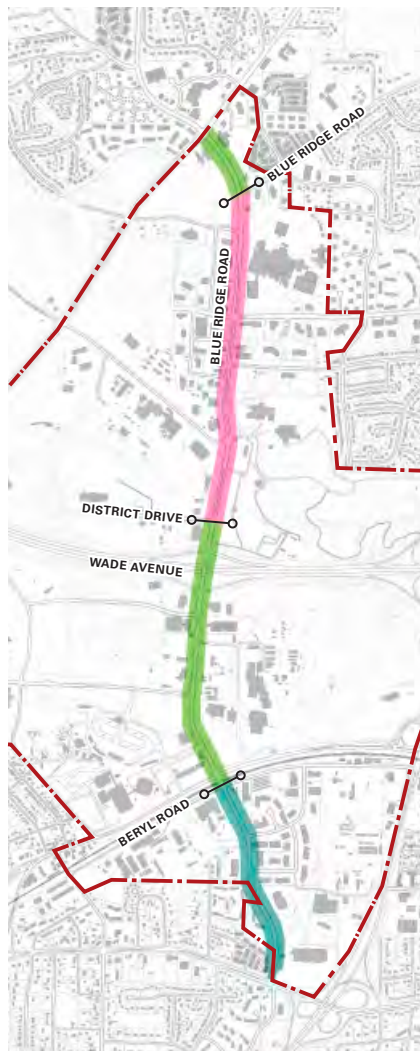
Edwards Mill Road to the intersection of Blue Ridge Road/Duraleigh Road: The typical cross-section is 5 lanes undivided (center turn lane), with curb and gutter, and sidewalks along both sides. The center turn lane is 14 to 16 feet wide, and travel lanes are 12 feet wide. There are additional right-turn lanes at intersections. The sidewalks are a standard 5-foot width, but there are no bicycle lane facilities.

Blue Ridge Road/Duraleigh Road to Reedy Creek Road: The typical cross-section changes to a 4-lane median-divided roadway, with curb

EXISTING STREETS



EXISTING CONDITIONS



The above diagram indicates the existing condition of how the Blue Ridge Road street section varies.

and gutter, and sidewalks along both sides of the roadway, with minimal sidewalk gaps. The raised concrete median is 14- to 16-foot wide, with the same 12-foot wide travel lanes. Sidewalks are 5-foot wide, and there are no bicycle facilities.

Reedy Creek Road to Wade Avenue: The 4-lane median divided roadway continues through this section, however sidewalks are not present.

Wade Avenue Bridge: The intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Wade Avenue is a conventional diamond interchange with a bridge over Wade. The bridge is approximately 70-foot wide, serving 5 lanes of traffic, and minimal shoulder widths. The bridge itself is 250 feet in length, and the distance between on/off ramp intersections is roughly 650 feet.

Wade Avenue to Beryl Road: The roadway continues south as a 5-lane undivided (center turn lane) facility. Curb and gutters are present in some locations near the Wade Avenue Bridge, however these also transition to ditch and swale. Sidewalks and bicycle lanes are not present in this section.




Beryl Road to Western Boulevard: Blue Ridge Road south of the railroad tracks and Beryl Road is again a 5-lane undivided (center turn lane) facility, however bicycle lanes have recently been painted by the City of Raleigh. These were accommodated by narrowing the travel lanes and center turn lane to 11-foot wide. Sidewalks exist along this section with few gaps.

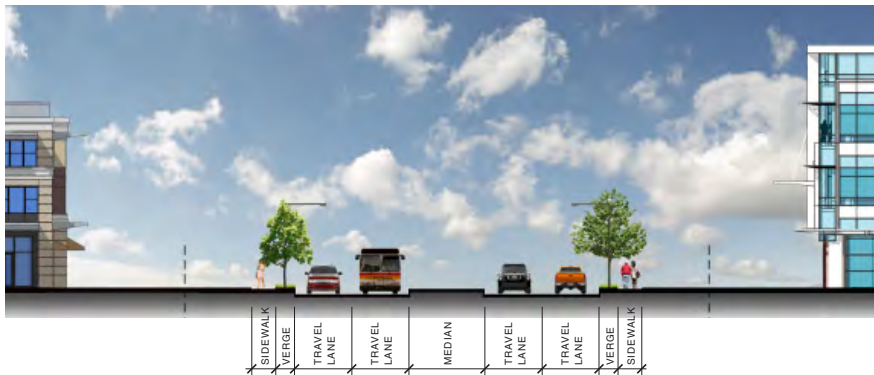
PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

Overall, the pedestrian environment within the District is very poor. Sidewalks are severely lacking in most of the District, with the exception of the Rex Health Care area where connectivity is good. Blue Ridge Road south of the NCMA has very limited sidewalks, with none between the NCMA and Hillsborough Street.

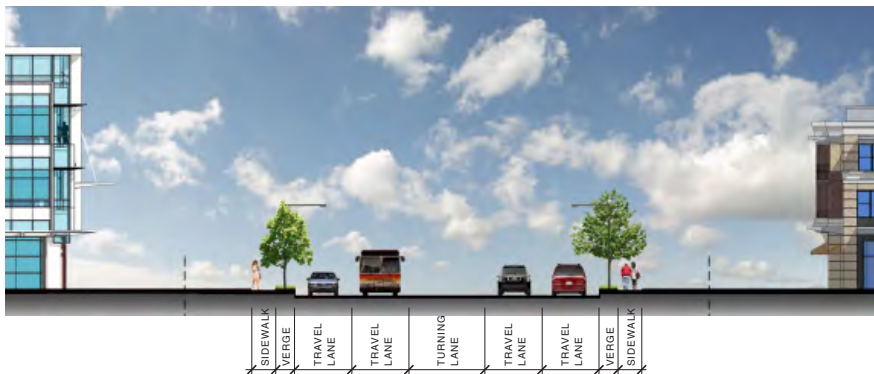
Blue Ridge Road north of the railroad tracks is unsafe for cyclists. While only Edwards Mill Road has provisions for cyclists for the entire north/south length through the District (Blue Ridge Road has bike lanes south of the railroad only), the District is traversed by the very popular Reedy Creek Trail which passes through the NCMA grounds and extends beyond the Beltline to the east and Umstead Park to the west. The House Creek Trail currently under construction will eventually provide a connection to the extensive Crabtree Creek Trail and other trails in North Raleigh, greatly

BLUE RIDGE ROAD EXISTING CROSS SECTIONS

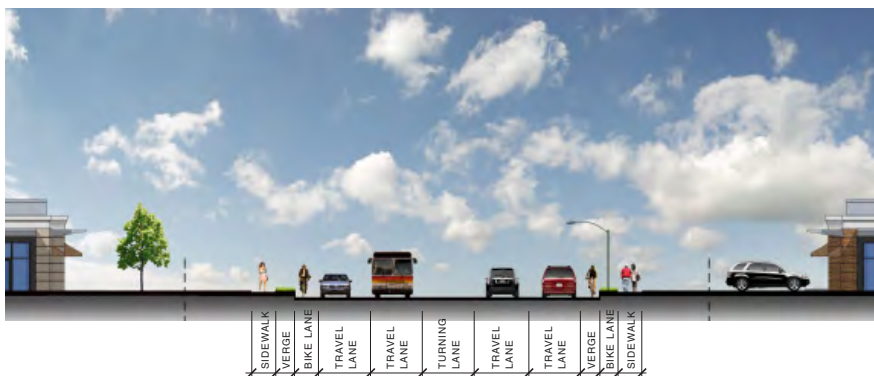
SECTION	# OF LANES	MEDIAN	BICYCLE LANES	PARKING
	4	Vegetative Median	No	No
	5	Center Turn Lane	No	No
	5	Center Turn Lane	Yes	No



*Blue Ridge Road Section
north of District Drive*



*Blue Ridge Road Section
from District Drive to Beryl Road*



*Blue Ridge Road Section
south of Beryl Road*

EXISTING CONDITIONS

enhancing bike accessibility to the study area. The greenway plan for the District offers the opportunity to enhance the existing greenway system so that cycling and walking can become significant modes of travel.

Currently, specific safety and access problems areas are the Hillsborough Street/Blue Ridge Road intersections with Hillsborough Street; Reedy Creek Road and Edwards Mill Road; and the Wade Avenue overpass. A comprehensive pedestrian and bike system will need to be incorporated into any recommendations.

EXISTING TRANSIT

- » City of Raleigh CAT System: centered on the Downtown
- » Triangle Transit: Regional service
- » NCSU Wolfline: Connections for the campus to the southern end of the Corridor
- » Cary C-Tran: Connection between Cary and southern end of the Corridor

TRANSIT

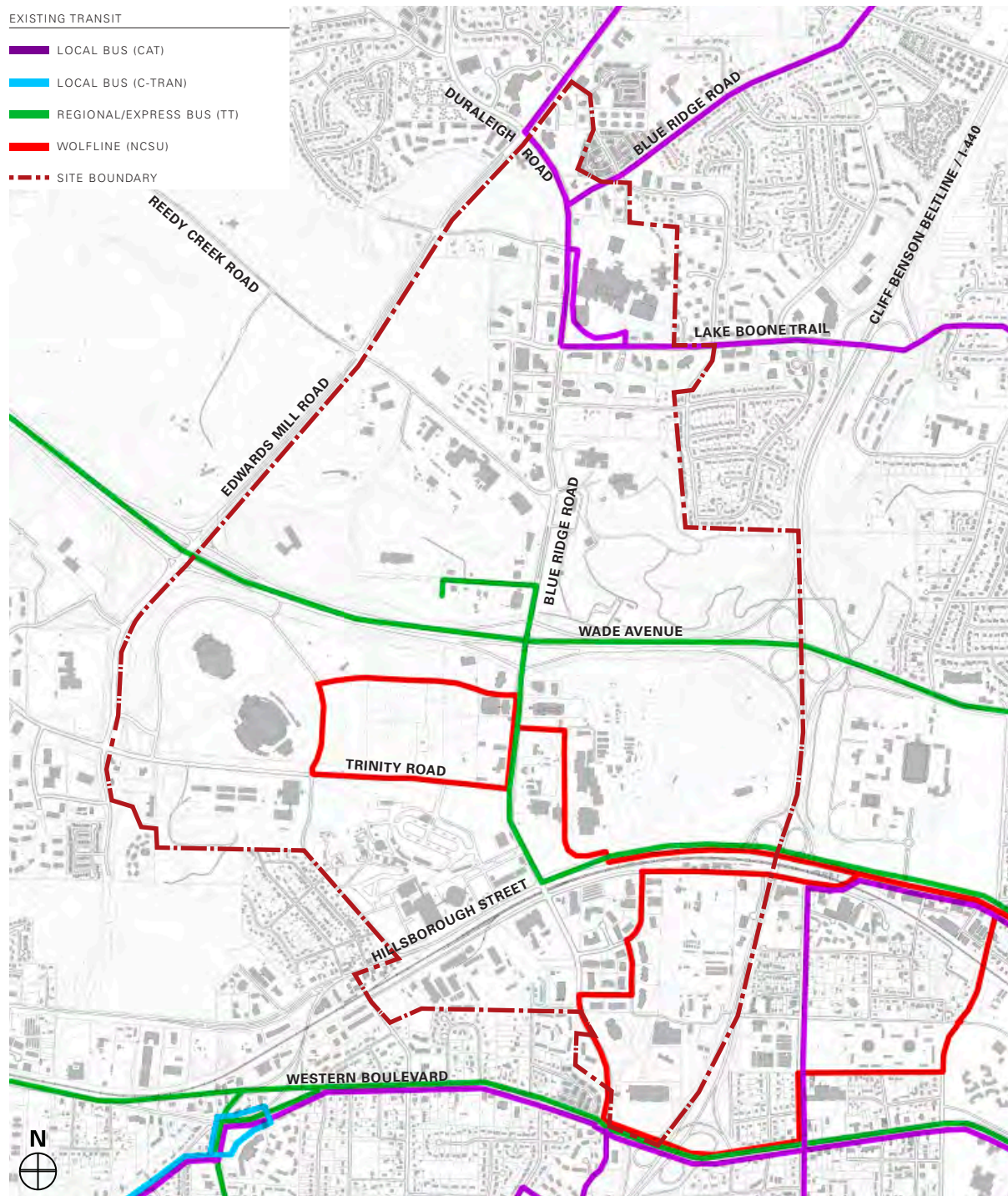
Transit services within the District generally operate in an east/west direction across the area, with no service along the full length of the District in the north/south direction. The current services cater primarily to travelers coming to the area (e.g., Rex Health Care employees). Most routes generally run every 30 minutes. Specific services, shown on the right, include:

- » The City of Raleigh CAT system, mainly a hub and spoke route structure centered on the Downtown, serves Rex Health Care and surrounding developments at the north end of the corridor (and connecting to a transfer station at Crabtree Valley Mall), with routes extending as far south as Lake Boone Trail. Three routes run along a portion of Western Boulevard at the south end of the corridor.
- » Triangle Transit provides regional service through the District between Downtown Raleigh, Downtown Cary, Downtown Apex, and locations to the west of the Triangle. Designed to serve daily (regional) commuters, these routes use Wade Avenue, Hillsborough Street, and Western Boulevard. A heavily utilized Triangle Transit park-and-ride is located on District Drive that primarily serves two express routes (Durham and Chapel Hill).
- » Two NCSU Wolfline routes serve the southern section of the corridor, connecting to the main campus approximately two miles to the east. One route, running every 15 minutes, serves main campus park-and-ride located adjacent to the Carter-Finley Stadium, and the Centennial Biomedical Campus. The second route loops through an area south of the railroad tracks, providing service to a second park-and-ride (every 30 minutes), student apartment housing, in addition to other venues. All Wolfline routes are fare-free and open the public, not just NCSU students.
- » The Town of Cary operates a C-Tran route that stops approximately 0.5 miles short of the southern end of the corridor, but does provide for transfers to CAT or Triangle Transit routes at this location.

EXISTING TRANSIT

EXISTING TRANSIT

- LOCAL BUS (CAT)
- LOCAL BUS (C-TRAN)
- REGIONAL/EXPRESS BUS (TT)
- WOLFLINE (NCSU)
- SITE BOUNDARY



EXISTING CONDITIONS

ASSETS

- » Access to William B. Umstead State Park and Carl Alwin Memorial Schenck Forest
- » Extensive greenway trail system that is being expanded as part of the Capital Area Greenway Plan (note: some trails are pedestrian only)

CONSTRAINTS

- » Incremental use of large spans of open space without a comprehensive open space plan
- » Lack of strong north/south pedestrian bike facilities
- » Lack of sidewalks and pathways to link greenway trails

Green Infrastructure

A dominant feature in the study area is the presence of several important open space systems. The area benefits greatly from the access to open space and also the visual character it provides for the District. Still, opportunities remain to connect these spaces with additional pedestrian and multi-use trails and sidewalks. Elements of the existing network include:

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM

The study area offers the greatest concentration of public/private open space assets in Raleigh including Carl Alwin Memorial Schenck Forest, William B. Umstead State Park, Museum Park at the NC Museum of Art, JC Raulston Arboretum, and the College of Veterinary Medicine pastures. However, the District lacks the secondary linkages necessary to connect to the major open space assets, the major destinations, and surrounding neighborhoods.

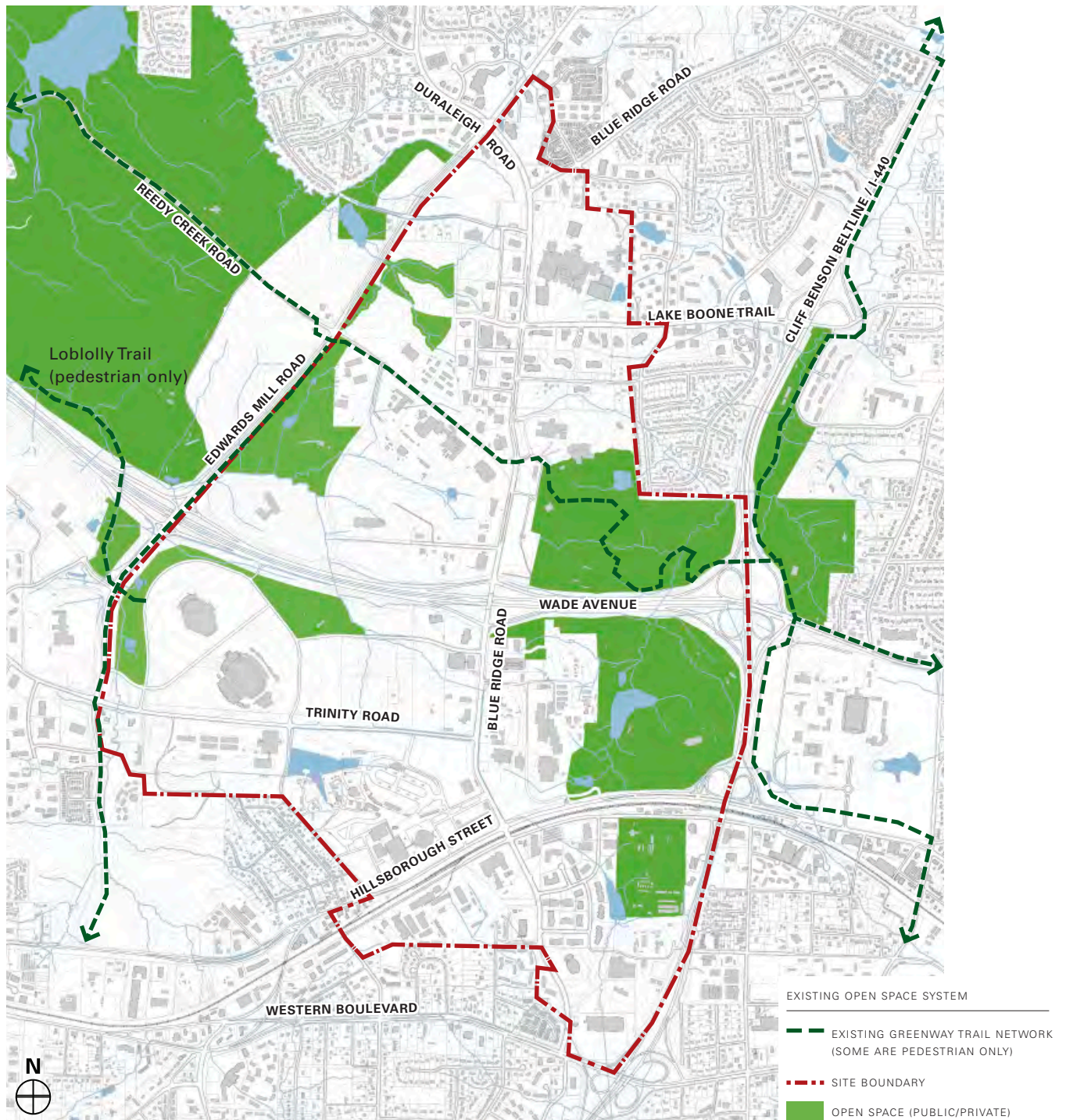
Strengthening the public realm along the Blue Ridge Road corridor would help link these regionally-significant public gathering spaces and help strengthen them individually, creating a cohesive district.

The other occasional open spaces include the parking lot at the Fairgrounds that is used for the Saturday flea market, as well as the parking lots at the PNC Arena and Carter-Finley Stadium which are heavily used for pre-game and pre-event tailgating. There are also many fields and secondary open spaces in the study area. Some of these, such as the grazing fields on NCSU's property, contribute to the semi-rural character of the area.

PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

Safe and efficient pedestrian and bike facilities are severely limited and constrain effective use of the corridor by anything other than automobiles. A goal should be to establish pedestrian and bike interconnectivity between large open space systems and the District's major destinations.

EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Character

ASSETS

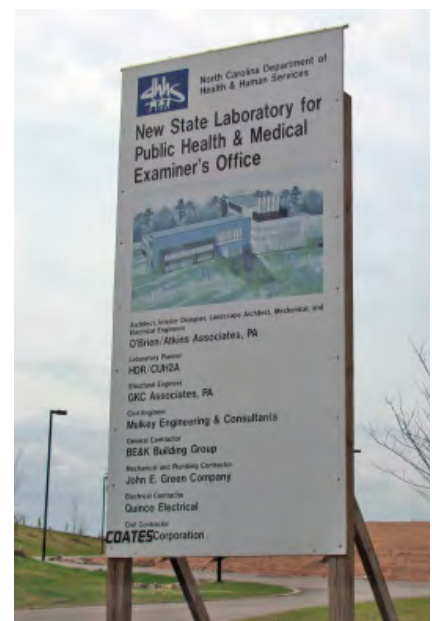
- » Strong economic drivers
- » Major public institutions and venues

CONSTRAINTS

- » Lack of identity
- » Little connection to adjacent neighborhoods
- » Oversized blocks with few secondary connections
- » Buildings are not oriented towards the street
- » Scattered and underutilized existing land uses on State and public properties

The character of the Blue Ridge Road District is mostly suburban with low-rise buildings set back from the property lines. The buildings on the southern portion of the Blue Ridge Road from Western Boulevard to Hillsborough Street are pulled relatively close to the street but are still separated from the sidewalk by parking fields. In the Fairgrounds area, there are mature stands of trees. From Hillsborough Street to Wade Avenue, there is little edge definition. The northern area from Wade Avenue to Rex Hospital include street trees, sidewalks, landscaping which give some spatial definition, but it lacks the feel of a complete urban realm.

There are several notable employers and significant destinations in the District, but each of them represent an individual institution, therefore the District lacks a common unified identity. Due to the large parcel size and predominance of State and institution-owned land, there are few residential communities. There is generally little or no vehicular or pedestrian connection to and from the surrounding neighborhoods.



HISTORICAL ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The Blue Ridge Road District study area includes a few historically significant places, such as:

- » Dorton Arena, 1950 – National Register of Historic Places, 1970.
- » NC State Fair Commercial and Educational Buildings (including Flea Market buildings) – National Register, 1987.
- » Small family graveyard at corner of Blue Ridge Road and Reedy Creek Road, located on in the northwest corner of the intersection, including several mature cedar trees.
- » William B. Umstead State Park is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is part of the NC State and Histori Nature Reserve

Additionally, there are several potentially historic resources in the vicinity of the Blue Ridge Road, including:

- » The auditorium at Meredith College.
- » Greek Revival period plantation house behind Hillsborough Street across from Meredith Campus.
- » Royal Bakery on Hillsborough Street, listed on National Register and Raleigh Historic Landmark.



*Meredith College Entrance from
Hillsborough Street*

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ASSETS

- » Strong partnerships
- » New Unified Development Ordinance and City's support
- » Blue Ridge Road Corridor partnership

CONSTRAINTS

- » Independent and incremental master plans of State and institutional properties
- » Bureaucratic hurdles for redevelopment

Implementation Issues

In order to encourage development in the District, one must also address implementation issues related to development. Currently there are a few factors that serve as a challenge to meeting the vision for a 24-hour, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly district. Existing factors that can help overcome these challenges include:

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

The District is fortunate to encompass the finest sports, cultural, and entertainment destinations in the State, each with its own master plan and singular initiatives for the future. A collaborative partnership between these entities will need to be sustained to secure a common vision for the District, which will in turn, inform the City's support through the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

NEW UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AND CITY'S SUPPORT

The study should orient recommendations for future vision of the District to inform the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The City is generally supportive of the necessary actions required to realize the Blue Ridge Road Corridor District Study Vision.

BLUE RIDGE ROAD CORRIDOR PARTNERSHIP IS ESTABLISHED

Maintain and grow the current support and involvement of key Blue Ridge Road Corridor stakeholders. Create an operational framework for long-term partnership between the stakeholders and with the City.

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT UNDERWAY IN THE DISTRICT

The University of North Carolina and the NCMA have initiated a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) funded by the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Foundation of North Carolina. The HIA covers the entire Blue Ridge Road Corridor area, but focuses on quantifying health benefits of improving pedestrian connectivity from various activity centers to the NCMA. Collaboration on this effort will bring insights into urban design issues and valuable post-occupancy data to quantify the effectiveness of corridor improvements.

MASTER PLANS FOR MAJOR DESTINATIONS

Link and integrate current land uses and future master plans prepared by institutional and State entities as well as private development master plans.

Market Issues

STRONG ECONOMIC DRIVERS

The District enjoys strong economic drivers already in place. The presence of large institutional land holdings in the corridor have constrained the opportunities for strong mix of uses necessary for a fully functioning mixed-use district. Creative strategies are needed to provide opportunities to increase retail, residential, office, restaurant, and office uses in a concentrated mixed-use development.

LACK OF URBAN SERVICES

The study area lacks the breadth and depth of urban services needed to support a high performing mixed-use district with the restaurants, retail, and hotels needed to engage and retain visitors, employees, and residents.

LIMITED RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Residential opportunities are now limited, particularly affordable housing near the economic job generators. There is a need to promote a mix of housing opportunities to attract and sustain a new mix of services-oriented land uses.

ASSETS

» Strong economic drivers

CONSTRAINTS

» Lack of urban services

» Limited residential opportunities

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Market Analysis

CONSTRAINTS

The greatest constraint for the Blue Ridge Road District has been the limited availability of land. The area benefits from excellent access to major thoroughfares, an in-town location with proximity to a significant base of employees, strong traffic counts, and multiple regional points of destination (i.e. Rex UNC Health Care, PNC Arena, NCMA, and the State Fairgrounds). Market forces would have dictated private development on the land in this area; however, it has largely been unavailable for development. Of the private development that has occurred, it is most heavily concentrated in office space. Much of that space is related to health services and benefits from proximity to Rex UNC Health Care. A summary of the current allocation of uses is shown in Table 1. It should be noted that hospital space, civic, and government uses are not included in these numbers.

OPPORTUNITY

An assessment of the Blue Ridge Road District suggests the opportunity for additional development across virtually all land use categories, with varying degrees of demand in the short-, mid-, and long-term. A summary of the opportunity by land and hierarchy of current residual value is shown in Table 2.

An explanation and summary of opportunity for each land use follows:

MIXED-USE

This category spans multiple land uses including residential (both rental and for-sale), office, retail, and potentially civic uses. A mixed-use development is one where there is a combination of land uses that allow people to live, work, shop, and eat within one development. National examples have shown that mixed-use developments have the potential to act as catalysts and be transformative in redefining and branding an area, such as the Blue Ridge Road District. In addition, RCLCO research has shown that retail, office, hotel, and residential uses within a mixed-use development benefit from the diversity of product, typified by enhanced absorption, and achievable rates. From a residential perspective, housing within mixed-use infill developments tends to attract young, professional singles and couples as well as empty nesters and retirees. Office users seeking mixed-use developments can include small, professional serving users; however, larger corporate users can also be attracted depending on the scale, location, and execution of the

TABLE 1: ALLOCATION OF CURRENT USES IN THE BLUE RIDGE ROAD DISTRICT *

USE	SQUARE FEET / UNITS
Total Retail Square Feet	241,841
Total Office Square Feet	2,971,407
Total Hotel Rooms	205
Total Industrial Square Feet	349,107
Total Housing Units	310
<i>Apartment Units</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Single-Family and Condo Units</i>	<i>262</i>

* Based on 2011 information provided by the Raleigh Urban Design Center
(note: hospital space, civic and government uses are not included in these numbers)

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF MARKET OPPORTUNITY BY LAND USE

	CURRENT RESIDUAL LAND VALUE			MARKET DEMAND IN STUDY AREA		
	HIGH \$\$\$	MID \$\$	LOW \$	SHORT TERM (0 TO 2 YRS)	MID TERM (2 TO 5 YRS)	LONG TERM (5+ YRS)
MIXED-USE	√			XXX	XXXX	XXXX
HOTEL	√			XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
RETAIL	√			XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
APARTMENTS	√			XXXX	XXX	XXXX
MEDICAL OFFICE	√			XXX	XXXX	XXXX
OFFICE (INITIALLY SURFACE PARKED)	√			XX	XXX	XXXX
TOWNHOUSE		√		XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
SINGLE-FAMILY (7+/ACRE)		√		XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
INDUSTRIAL		√		XXX	XX	X
CONDOS			√	X	XX	XXXX

KEY	
x represents likeliness of occurrence at this stage	
X	NOT LIKELY
XX	SOMEWHAT LIKELY
XXX	LIKELY
XXXX	MOST LIKELY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

project. Conversations with multiple brokers in the Raleigh market have indicated an overwhelming preference for mixed-use environments from employers moving to the area, however, there are limited options in the market to choose from. Retailers that fare well in mixed-use environments span a spectrum and range from small inline retail tenants to large, big-box tenants.

HOTEL

In Wake County, the relationship of hotel rooms to employees is 28 employees per hotel room. In the City of Raleigh, this number drops slightly to 25 employees per hotel room. In strong tourist destinations such as Orlando, this number can drop even more significantly to 7 employees per hotel room. Due to both the strong employment base and regional tourist destinations within the study area, a lower employee per hotel room ratio is justifiable. Conservatively, using the City of Raleigh's employee to hotel room ratio of 25 employees/room, 524 hotel rooms are supportable in the area. Using a more aggressive metric of 15 employees per room to account for the regional uses results in over 800 supportable rooms. If we account for the existing supply of rooms in the District at the Ramada, the remaining supportable room count is conservatively 320 rooms and aggressively 600. It should be noted, that the addition of hotels along the edge of the District could impact the stated demand opportunity. Average daily rates of hotels in the study area could range from \$120 per night for limited service to \$185 per night for an upscale, full-service hotel.

RETAIL

Currently, the area is underserved for certain retail categories including specialty food stores, clothing and shoe stores, home furnishings, general merchandise stores (such as Target), restaurants, sporting goods, book, and hobby stores. Retail rates could range from \$25 per square foot for space in an anchored, free-standing center, to \$35 per square foot in a lifestyle and/or mixed-use development. These rates are largely based on rates being achieved in Cameron Village and the surrounding area.

Future retail opportunity will be site specific (i.e. access, visibility and adjoining uses), however, the District overall has strong fundamentals. Strong drive-by traffic, destination uses, employment, an established base of surrounding households, and proximity to students and faculty at NC

State are all supportive of future potential. At present, the ratio of retail per household in Wake County is 65 square feet per household. This number includes all retail from local serving convenience stores to department stores and can be used as a metric to determine additional supportable retail as more households are added to the area. Mid- and long-term retail opportunity in the study area is heavily tied to the addition of households in the area as well as commercial users. Simply put, future retail opportunity will be dependent on the land availability and other uses developed. It should also be noted, due to the long-range view of the District, the applied ratio is meant to provide a guideline of the overall retail opportunity, however, there is certainly the potential for retail to be absorbed at a faster rate than 65 square feet per household based on additional households added outside the area, anchor retailers attracted, and employees added.

RESIDENTIAL

Relative to the number of jobs in the area, the Blue Ridge Road District is particularly undersupplied in housing. Nationally, there are 1.15 jobs per household (jobs to household ratio). The ratio in the Raleigh MSA is relatively similar at 1.09 jobs per household. However, in the Blue Ridge Road District, there are 11.09 jobs per household, suggesting a significant imbalance between employment and housing. Over 10,000 additional households would need to be added for the jobs to household ratio to be more reflective of the MSA and the nation. Demand opportunity suggests the potential to absorb over 250 rental units and over 400 for-sale units, annually. While it may not be realistic to add that many additional households due to land availability and competitive opportunities for other uses, it underscores the need for additional housing in the area.

Based on current land values, apartment, townhomes, and dense single-family housing (7 units per acre or greater) are the most financially viable housing products from a development perspective. As the housing market continues to recover, we also anticipate demand opportunity for condo units. Currently, the cost to construct this type of housing and the achievable rates make this a less viable opportunity than the aforementioned housing products.

Demonstrated sales and leasing suggest the supportable market rate for apartments is \$1.35 per square foot to \$1.60 per square foot, depending on

EXISTING CONDITIONS

configuration and orientation. For instance, apartments built adjoining or adjacent to retail would command the highest rents; however, new, garden-style apartments without a retail orientation would command \$1.35 per square foot. In the short-term there may be a risk of apartment oversupply in the in-town market due to a significant amount planned, but over the mid- and long-term, apartments present a strong level of opportunity in the study area.

Actively selling communities in the surrounding area such as Inside Wade have had significant success with for-sale housing. Buyers have been young professional singles and couples; many relocating to the area seeking in-town housing options. Estimated market rate for townhomes would likely range from \$175,000 to \$250,000, and dense single-family homes (at a minimum of 7 per acre) would likely command \$250,000 to \$350,000. If condos were to be offered, they would likely range from \$135,000 to \$225,000. Each of these ranges is based on the values currently being achieved and the types of product offered. The ranges are meant to serve as a base and could certainly be higher for each of the products listed depending on design, market orientation, and amenities. In addition, as the residential market continues to strengthen, values are anticipated to increase as the demand pool grows.

OFFICE

As mentioned, office currently represents the most significant private land use. The presence of Rex Health Care as well as strong access to major thoroughfares and a large executive household base within a 15-minute drive has made this an attractive location. However, the excess supply in the regional market has slowed the delivery and absorption of space. The most recently constructed office building in the study area was in 2007. The study area lies in the West Raleigh office submarket, which currently has 11.5% vacancy, compared to 18.5% in the region overall. The current office spaces in the District are a combination of surface and structured parking developments. While office with structured parking would allow for greater density, it may be challenging to deliver in the short-term given market rates and costs to construct. Over the mid- and long-term, we anticipate that office will continue to be a strong use in the District; particularly medical office. In the short term the opportunity for non-medical office may be more limited until excess supply burns off; however, in the next two to five years, with the addition of retail, the office opportunity is likely to grow. Employment

projections and demonstrated captures suggest an average annual opportunity of 50,000 to 70,000 square feet per year in the District from 2014 and beyond. Currently, office rates in the area range from \$20 to \$24 for newer full service, stand-alone buildings, and \$23 to \$28 for space in higher density office buildings integrated in to a mixed-use project. In addition, medical office space rates for newer space ranges from \$23 to \$26 per square foot.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial users typically seek locations with strong access and moderate land values. While the area has excellent access, the limited land availability and demand opportunity among other, higher value land uses suggests this is a less-preferred development opportunity as the area begins to re-develop and land values continue to climb. Of the industrial uses, warehouse is likely to present the greatest short-term opportunity. However, as stated, achievable rates and land costs will likely make it cost prohibitive. Current rental rates for industrial range from \$8 to \$13 per square foot, on a triple-net basis.

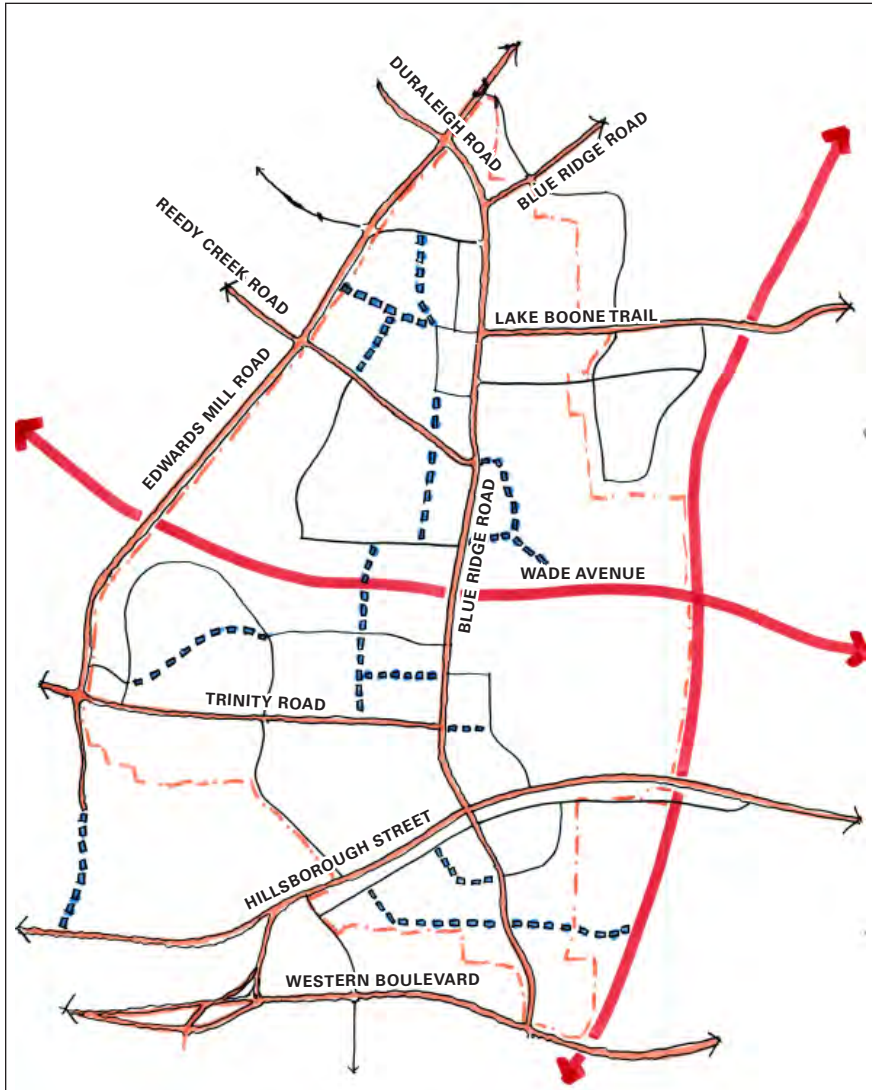
DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

Design Principles

The analysis shown previously revealed a series of opportunities throughout the District which evolved into design principles to guide the plan. The key themes that emerged are as follows:

- » Improve Connections
- » Transform Blue Ridge Road
- » Overcome the Transit Gap
- » Connect Natural Features and Existing Activity Nodes
- » Create Distinct Districts

Improve Connections



The above diagram illustrates an early analysis of potential connections. This was later refined as the plan framework evolved.

A key to providing a framework for development is to enhance local connections which improve pedestrian safety, multi-modal circulation, and provide options for vehicular traffic to alleviate pressure on a corridor. The following opportunities exist to build on the existing network:

Create strong regional transportation infrastructure and accessibility

The creation of key roadway linkages and a localized street grid can reduce congestion, vastly enhance pedestrian and bicycle movement, and provide a local roadway and street network supportive of mixed-use development.

Embrace North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) planned roadway improvements

Embrace the NCDOT initiatives for grade separated intersection of Blue Ridge Road, the Rail line and Hillsborough Street, as well as potential bridge replacements at Wade Avenue.

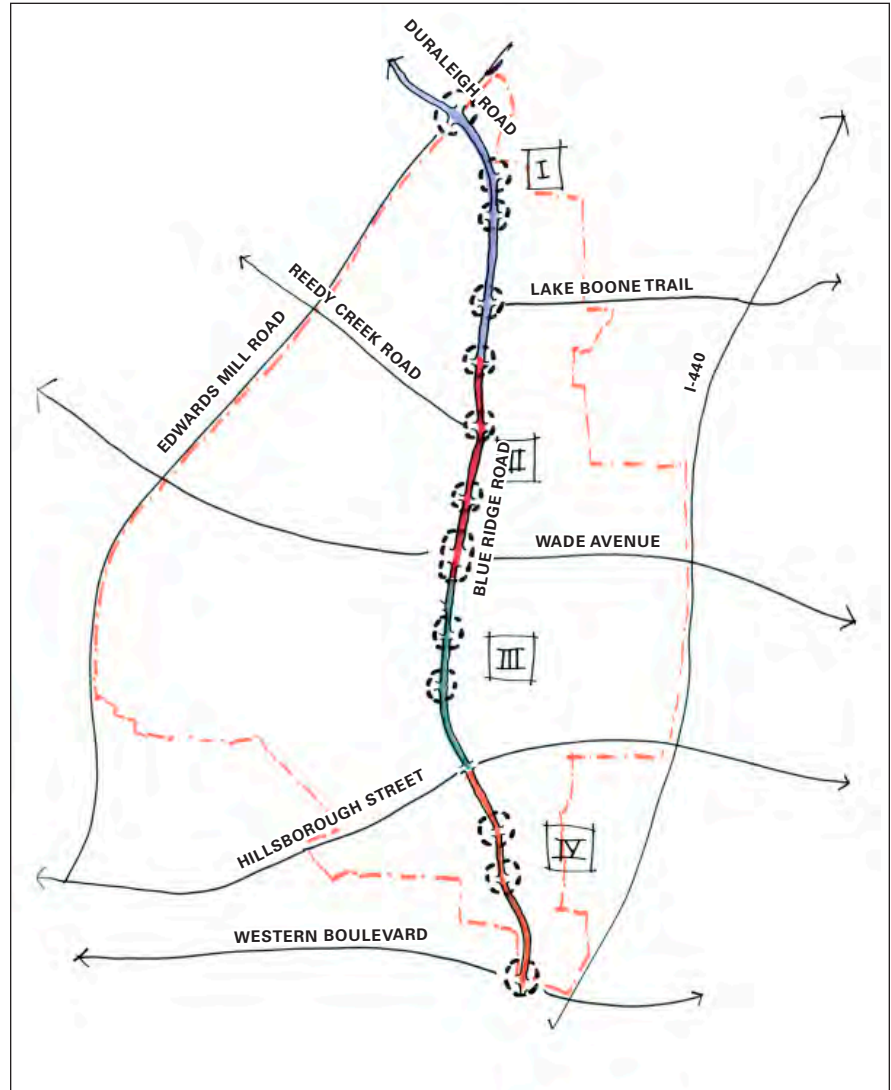
DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

Transform Blue Ridge Road

The existing configuration of Blue Ridge Road prohibits the development of a greater intensity of uses along it. Therefore design solutions must address improvements to the aesthetics of the corridor including streetscaping, lighting, and street furniture. Other elements include:

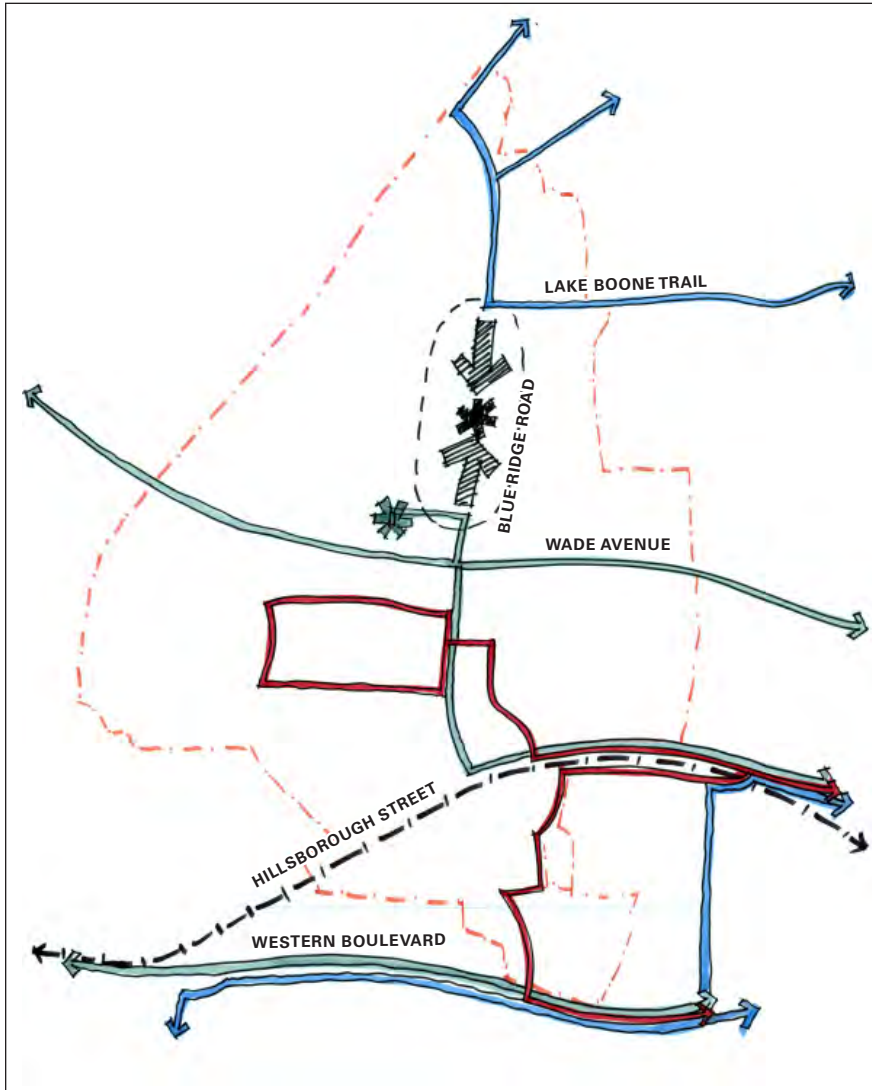
Complete Streets Program planned for the Corridor

The NCDOT has identified the corridor as a demonstration project for its Complete Streets initiative. This initiative will address interdependent, multi-modal transportation networks that safely accommodate access and travel for all users.



The above diagram illustrates how the character may vary along the length of the corridor. The circles identify key intersections to address for pedestrian mobility.

Overcome the Transit Gap



The above diagram illustrates existing transit lines, and highlights the existing transit gap between Lake Boone Trail and Wade Avenue.

Currently there is strong east/west transit throughout the area which is provided by various entities. Yet it has become clear that there is a 'transit gap' in the north/south direction along the corridor. Therefore efforts must be made to study the existing systems and see how this can be rectified. Potential considerations include:

Leverage light rail and long range multi-modal plans

Leverage the potential long-term plans for light rail station with existing multi-modal transit opportunities, either planned or in place. Special emphasis on connections between NCSU, Downtown and the Crabtree Retail Area and the Blue Ridge Road District.

Provide a North/South Shuttle

Implement a shuttle bus service along the entire length of the corridor, from Western Boulevard to Crabtree Mall.

Explore enhancements to existing transit Service.

Investigate the cost and applicability of enhancing both regional and local bus service through the extension of existing routes and adding additional bus service to existing routes.

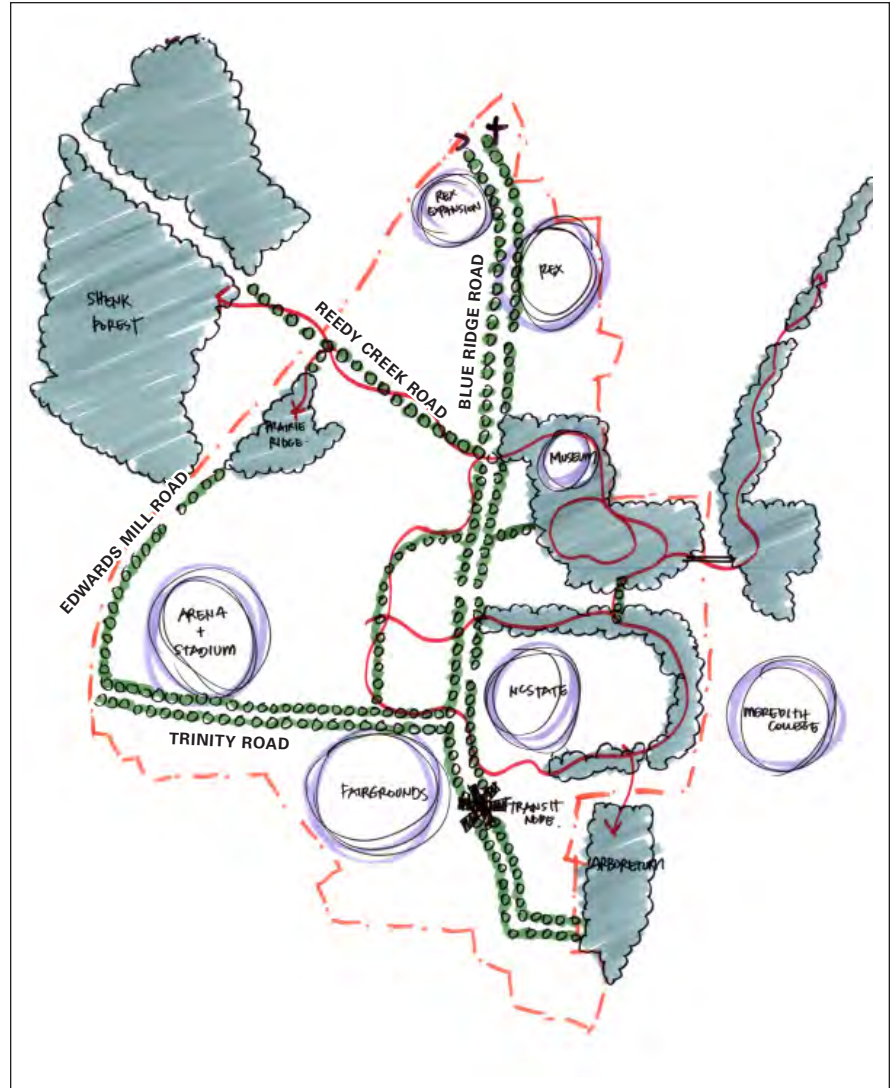
DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

Connect Natural Features and Existing Activity Nodes

There are several significant open spaces in the area; however the link between them is inadequate. Strengthening the public realm along the corridor would help connect these regionally significant spaces and help strengthen them individually while creating a cohesive District. Elements of this approach include:

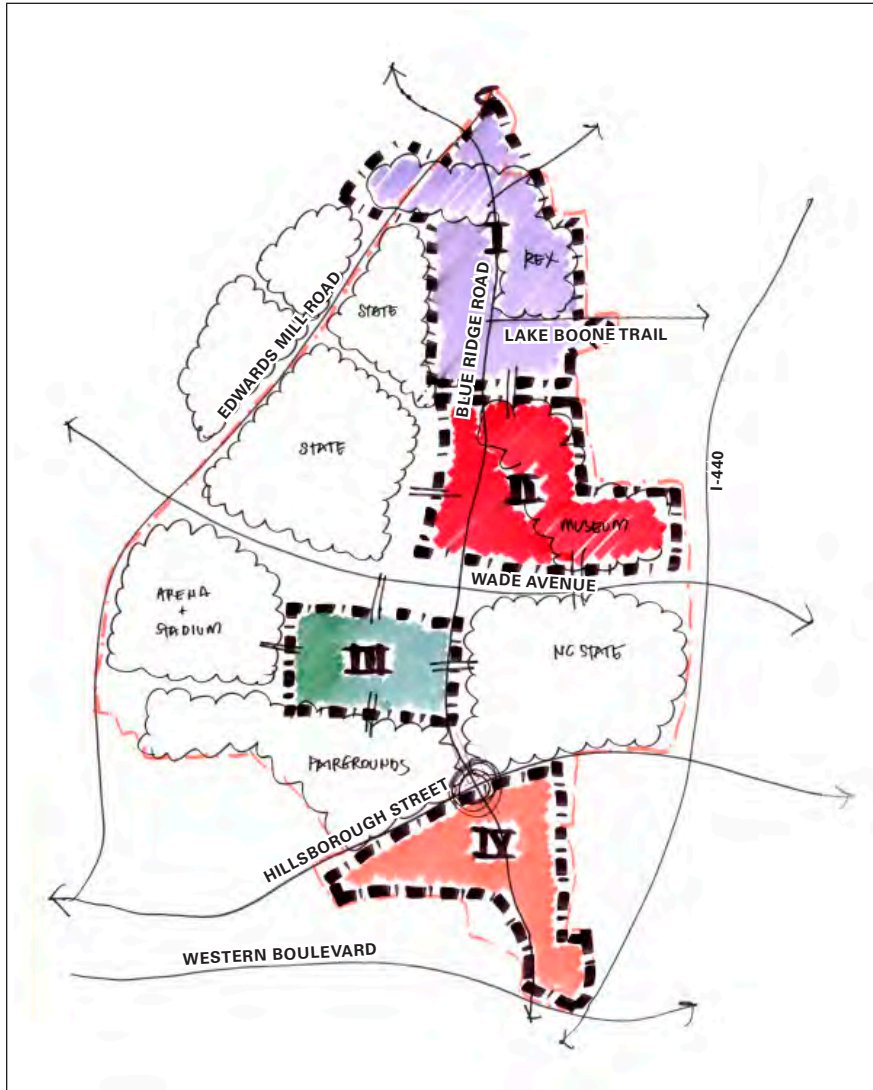
An established local pedestrian and bikeway system

Establish local pedestrian and bike interconnectivity linkages between large open space systems and the District's major destinations to augment and connect to existing regional systems.



The diagram above illustrates significant open spaces including Schenck Forest, the NCMA, the JC Raulston Arboretum, and Prairie Ridge, and the opportunities that exist to connect them together.

Create Distinct Districts



The diagram above illustrates the notion of considering the corridor as a series of distinct districts tied together by Blue Ridge Road.

Currently Blue Ridge Road is lined by diverse uses and facilities, resulting in a lack of unifying character or identity for the District. Given the presence of strong anchors such as Rex Health Care, the NCMA, and NCSU, the opportunity exists to create a series of distinct districts, each with their own unique character and amenities. The length of the corridor lends itself to this approach, using streetscape and signage elements to unify the corridor as a whole. Elements of this approach include:

A concentration of regional and Statewide visitor destinations

The NCMA, PNC Arena, Carter-Finley Stadium, State Fairgrounds, and JC Raulston Arboretum coupled with the economic/job generators of Rex Health Care, NCSU, and State Government provide a strong opportunity to establish a thriving 24/7 district.

Emerging market trends support mixed-use districts

The projected growth of Raleigh and the emerging market demands for transit, higher density housing options and mixed uses combine to give the District a distinct opportunity.



PLAN FRAMEWORKS

INTRODUCTION

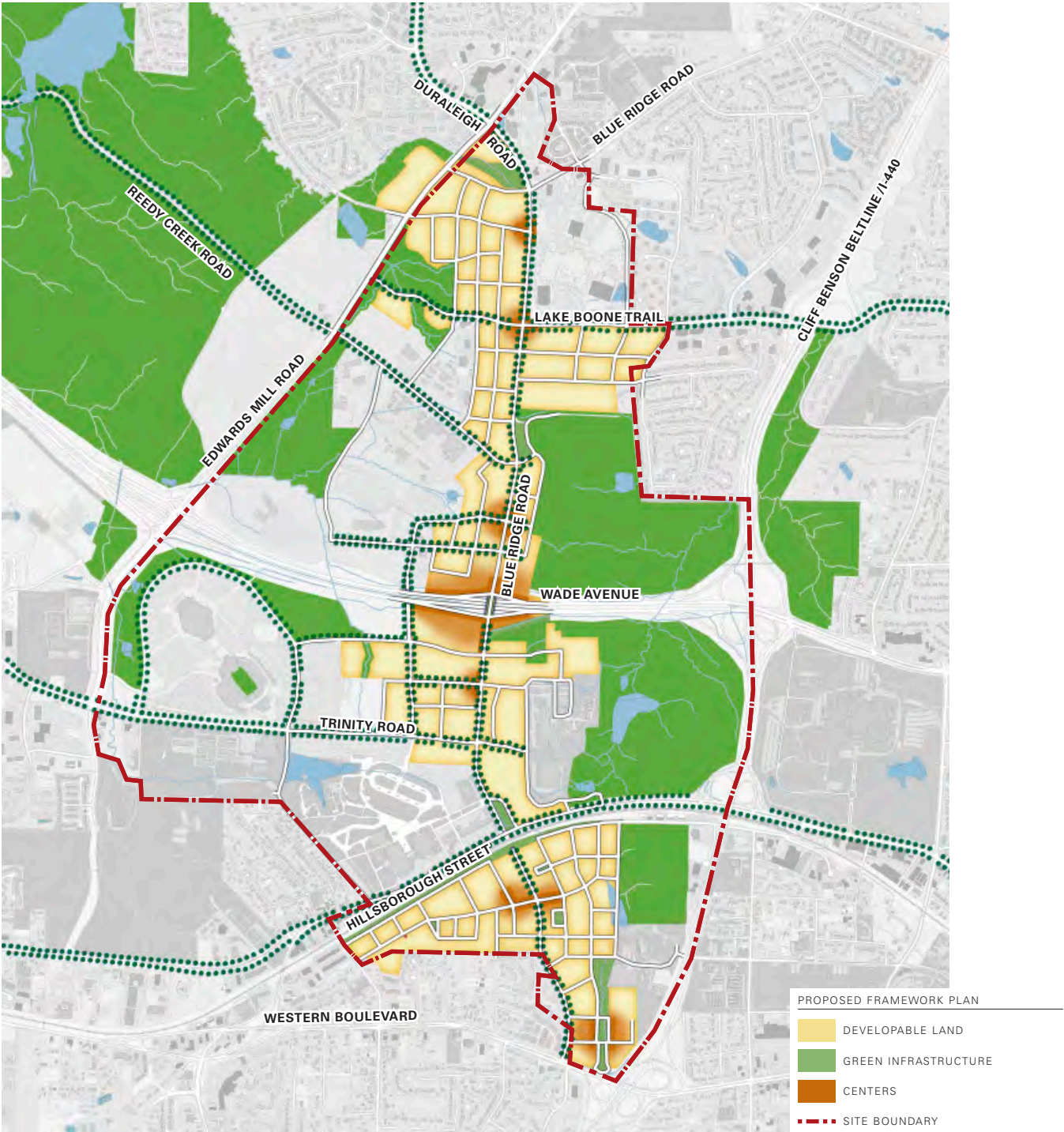
The goal of this study was to provide a coordinated blueprint to guide future development in the Blue Ridge Road corridor. Given the scope of this undertaking and the size of the study area, these ideas are, to some extent, conceptual, however, the recommendations attempted to focus on realistic and actionable recommendations.

The public process involved identifying what the current challenges were, and, subsequently, identifying key issues to address. These discussions revealed a set of priorities for the District, elaborated in the following Design Themes:

- » Provide local connections to improve safety and circulation while providing a framework for future development.
- » Transform Blue Ridge Road's character while improving its function.
- » Overcome the "gap" in transit to complete the north/south connection.
- » Connect existing natural resources and attractions with an improved network of sidewalks and multi-use trails.
- » Target uses and development patterns to reinforce the idea of distinct districts and character areas.

These themes reinforce the early visioning work that foresaw a beautifully landscaped Blue Ridge Road, a walkable district that supports mixed-use development, and a vibrant, transit-oriented, 24/7 community. The framework approach that follows identifies key district-wide design moves that will support the vision, while providing enough flexibility to allow development to respond to market fluctuation and changing needs over time.

FRAMEWORK PLAN



TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

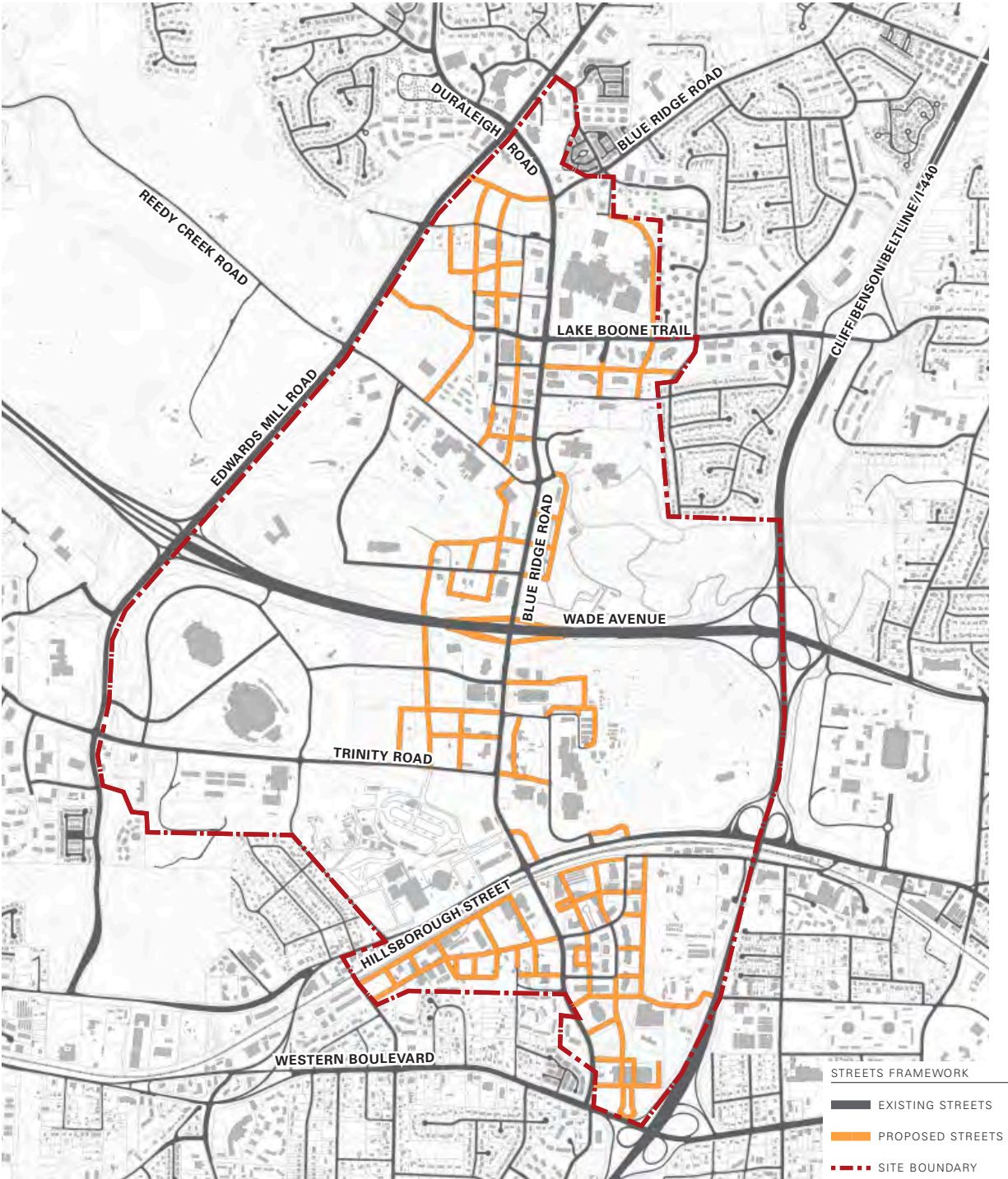
- » Implement Complete Street (CT) principles along Blue Ridge Road
- » Reduce the speed limit on Blue Ridge Road to a speed limit more appropriate to the character or the function of the street
- » Desired items already included in DOT's Complete Streets Guidelines:
 - › Add parking on Blue Ridge Road north of Wade Avenue
 - › Upgrade or replace the Wade Avenue bridge to include bike lanes and sidewalks
 - › Plant trees or tall grasses in the Edwards Mill Road median that are consistent with its rural character
- » Redesign the bridge as a landmark for the district
- » Upgrade existing or design new secondary roads to CT guidelines
- » Identify opportunities to add bike lanes on Lake Boone Trail
- » Add a sidewalk to the north side of Hillsborough Street
- » Assess the feasibility of greenway connections to the Centennial Biomedical Campus in the long term
- » Run a District circulator service along Blue Ridge Road from the Crabtree Valley Mall transit hub to Western Boulevard
- » Extend Lake Boone Trail to Edwards Mill Road

The success of this District relies largely in addressing the character and connectivity of the existing street framework. It is clear that today this corridor is largely auto-dependent, yet it is envisioned to be a pedestrian friendly street with a unique character. The public process and analysis of the District revealed the following key initiatives to address:

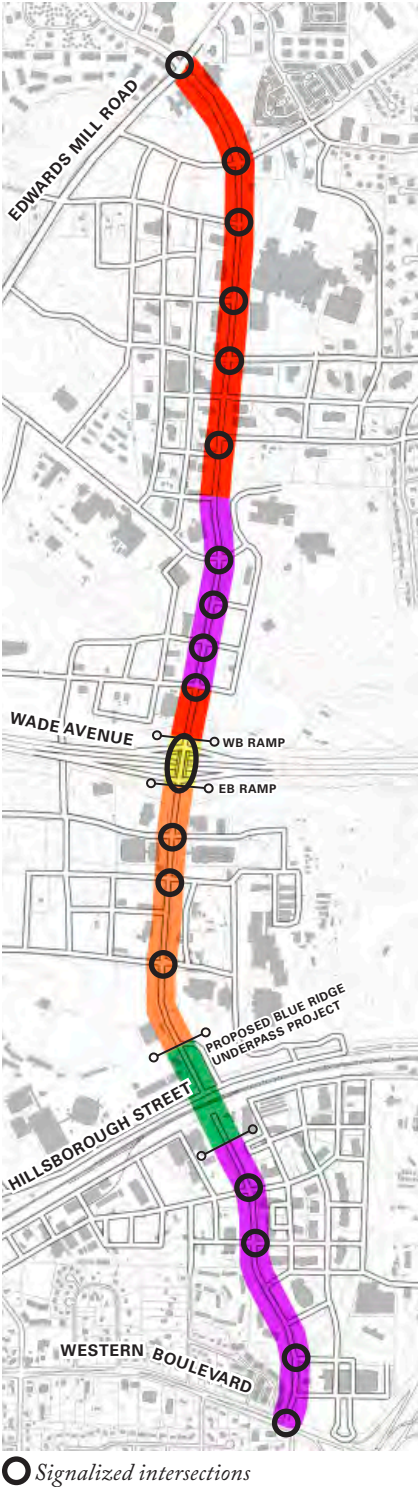
- » Address the character and function of Blue Ridge Road.
- » Enhance north/south transit connectivity.
- » Study the Wade Avenue bridge to accommodate pedestrians.
- » Consider a secondary street network to enhance connectivity and relieve congestion on Blue Ridge Road.

The pages that follow describe each of these initiatives in greater detail. The streets framework diagram (shown on the right) illustrates the existing network and the potential future secondary network that can enhance mobility through this area.

STREETS FRAMEWORK



TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS



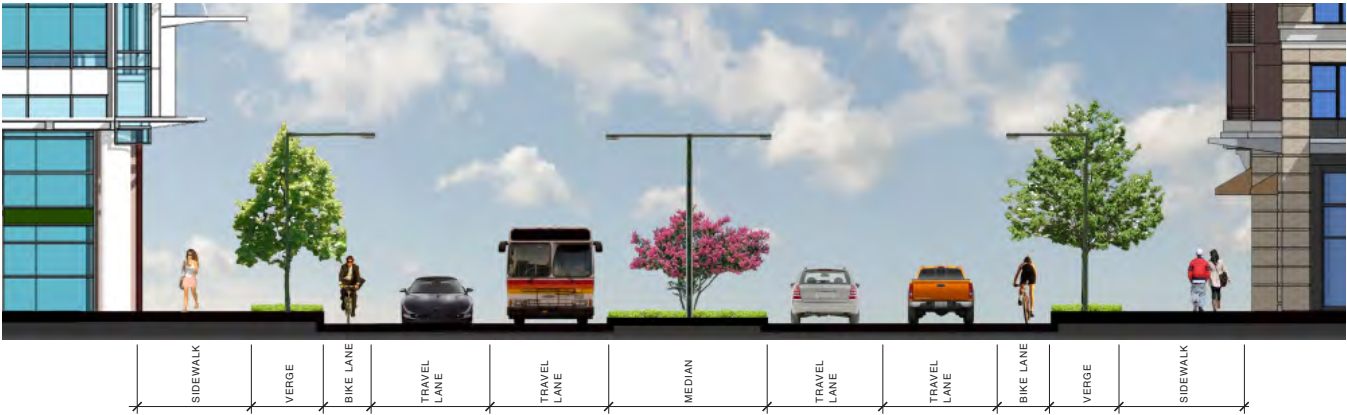
BLUE RIDGE ROAD

Blue Ridge Road will continue to be the primary transportation spine through the District. The design of Blue Ridge Road will adhere to Complete Street principles to vastly improve conditions for pedestrian and cyclists.

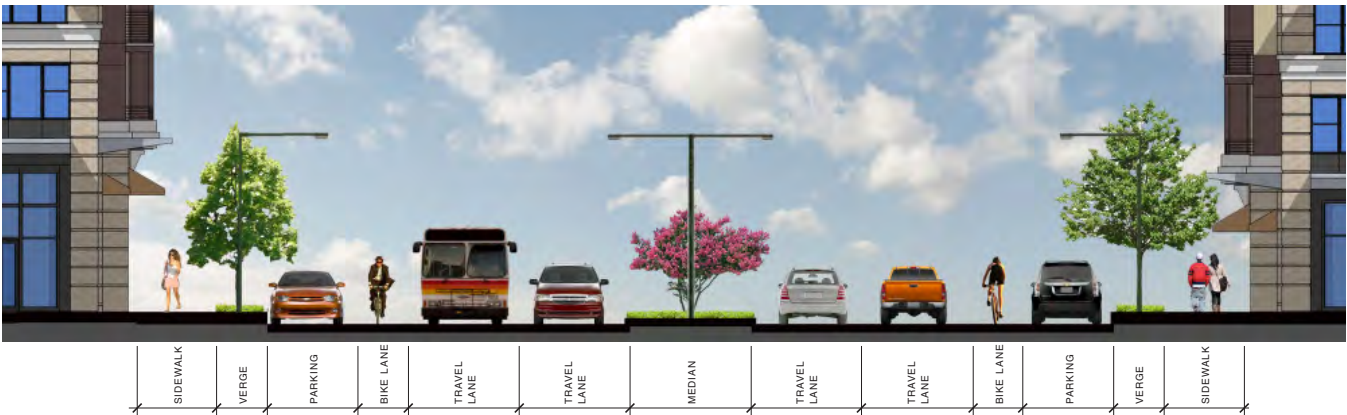
- » The proposed roadway cross-section is generally a 4-lane divided facility with a landscaped median, 11- to 12-foot travel lanes (ideally 11 feet), and 5-foot bicycle lanes.
- » Sidewalks are proposed to be 8- to 12- feet wide (as practical) along the entire corridor.
- » On-street parking is proposed for portions of Blue Ridge Road near the NCMA and Rex Health Care. Intersections will be designed to safely continue the on-road bicycle lanes for all movements.
- » Signalized intersections are spaced between 450 to 900 feet to allow safe pedestrian crossings and moderate traffic flow and speed.
- » Instead of a landscaped median, the center (5th) lane is retained between Wade Avenue and Hillsborough Street to accommodate special event traffic if necessary (to be determined by future, more detailed studies). However, it may be feasible to install a landscaped median in some locations. Regardless the option of using specially-treated pavement where the center lane must be retained is recommended for consideration. One potential treatment is stamped and painted pavement, which is occasionally used at intersections.

BLUE RIDGE ROAD PROPOSED CROSS SECTIONS				
SECTION	# OF LANES	MEDIAN	BICYCLE LANES	PARKING
	4	Vegetative Median	Yes	No
	4	Vegetative Median	Yes	Yes
	5	Turn Lane	Yes	No
	5	Turn Lane	Yes	No
	Subject to Hillsborough Street Underpass Design			

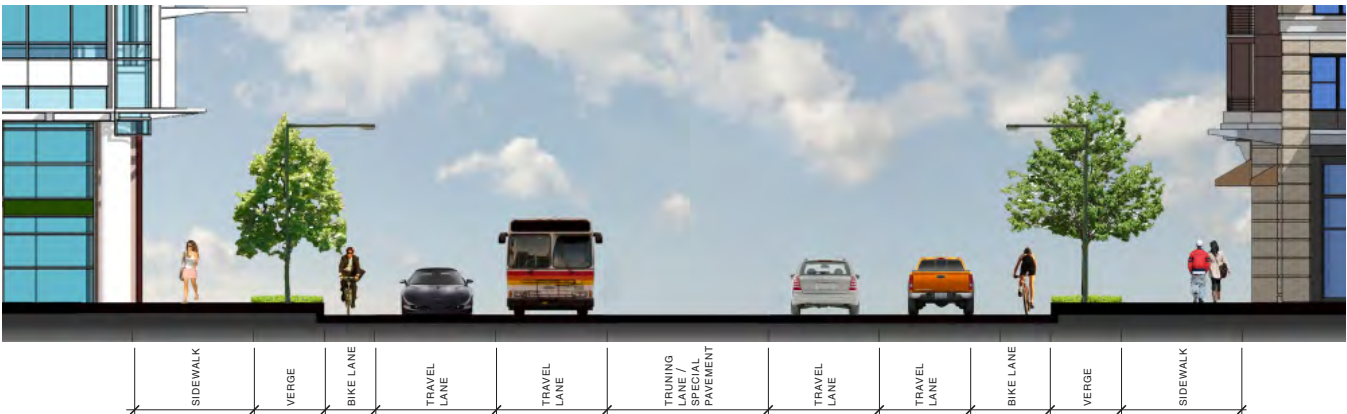
PROPOSED BLUE RIDGE ROAD SECTIONS



Section between Duraleigh Road and the NCMA (parking on 2 sides)



Section between the NCMA and Wade Avenue, and Beryl Road and Western Boulevard



Section between Wade Avenue and Hillsborough Street

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

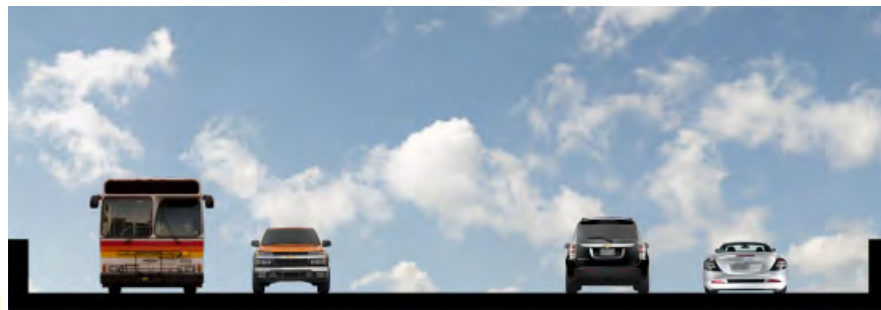
WADE AVENUE BRIDGE

The Blue Ridge Road Bridge over Wade Avenue represents the geographical center as well as the primary gateway to the District. An attractive and boldly redesigned, or new bridge (potentially arched) can present a strong visual element for the District. Functionally the future bridge will feature on-road bicycle lanes as well as raised pedestrian sidewalks along both sides, in addition to four travel lanes and a center turn lane to carry the high volumes of traffic turning onto Wade Avenue.

The proposed future bridge will include:

- » On-road bicycle lanes.
- » Raised pedestrian sidewalks along both sides and that tie into the buildings along Blue Ridge Road.
- » Pedestrian-oriented details such as ornamental railings and human-scaled street lighting.

*To the right: Existing
Wade Avenue Bridge
Below: Proposed Wade
Avenue Bridge*



The future bridge cross-section would therefore be expanded (or replaced) to meet a 96-foot minimum width. The existing 70-foot width can be re-striped to provide four 11- to 12-foot travel lanes, a 11- to 12-foot center turn lane, and 5-foot bike lanes. This would roughly match Blue Ridge Road on either side of the bridge (the 12-foot lanes on the bridge would ideally be reduced to 11 feet). The bridge would still need widening to add sidewalks.

It is also possible to consider redesigning the Wade Avenue intersection in order to shorten the crossing and redevelop the underutilized land at the edges of the bridge.

NEW STREET CONNECTIONS

The plan shows several additional interconnected local streets in three sub areas on the west side of Blue Ridge Road. These break up the large land parcels into a finer grid to accommodate a more human scale and walkable development. As illustrated by the typical street section, these streets also will be designed according to Complete Street principles with a greater emphasis on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel. The extension of Lake Boone Trail will provide a new access from Edwards Mill Road, thereby relieving Blue Ridge Road of some traffic in that area.

A new crossing of Wade Avenue is proposed between Blue Ridge Road and Edwards Mill Road to improve local circulation and provide an alternative to the Blue Ridge Road bridge. A preliminary analysis suggests that while an underpass would be more feasible, an overpass would be preferable for pedestrian comfort and safety.

WADE AVENUE - POTENTIAL CROSSING LOCATIONS

PROS FOR "A"

- » Development opportunities on both sides of Wade Avenue
- » Topography supports underpass
- » Direct connection to crowd generating uses

CONS FOR "A"

- » Proximity to National Guard

PROS FOR "B"

- » None

CONS FOR "B"

- » Remote from development
- » Adjacent to recreation facilities
- » Adjacent to sensitive uses at NCSU
- » Constrained by 440 Interchange



Wade Avenue - Potential Crossing Locations

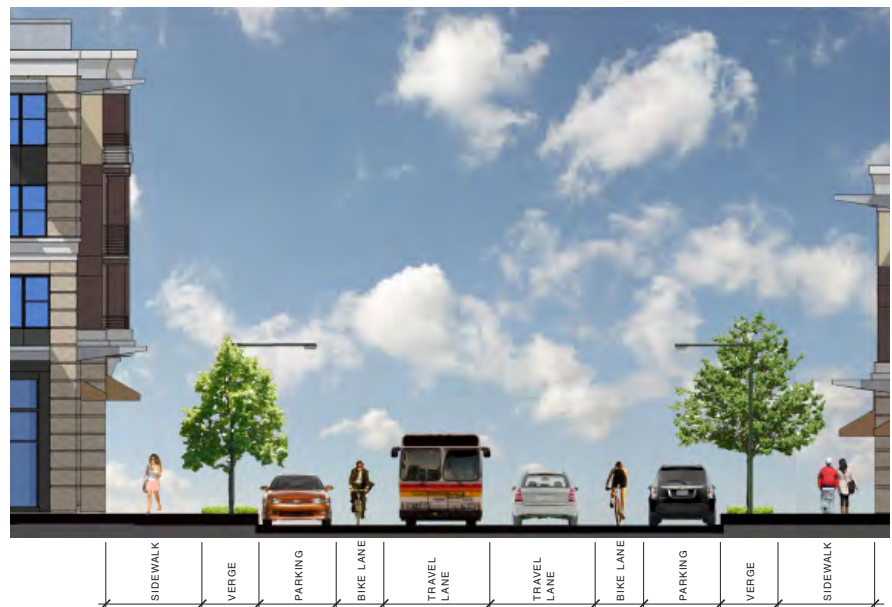
TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

OTHER MAJOR ROADS

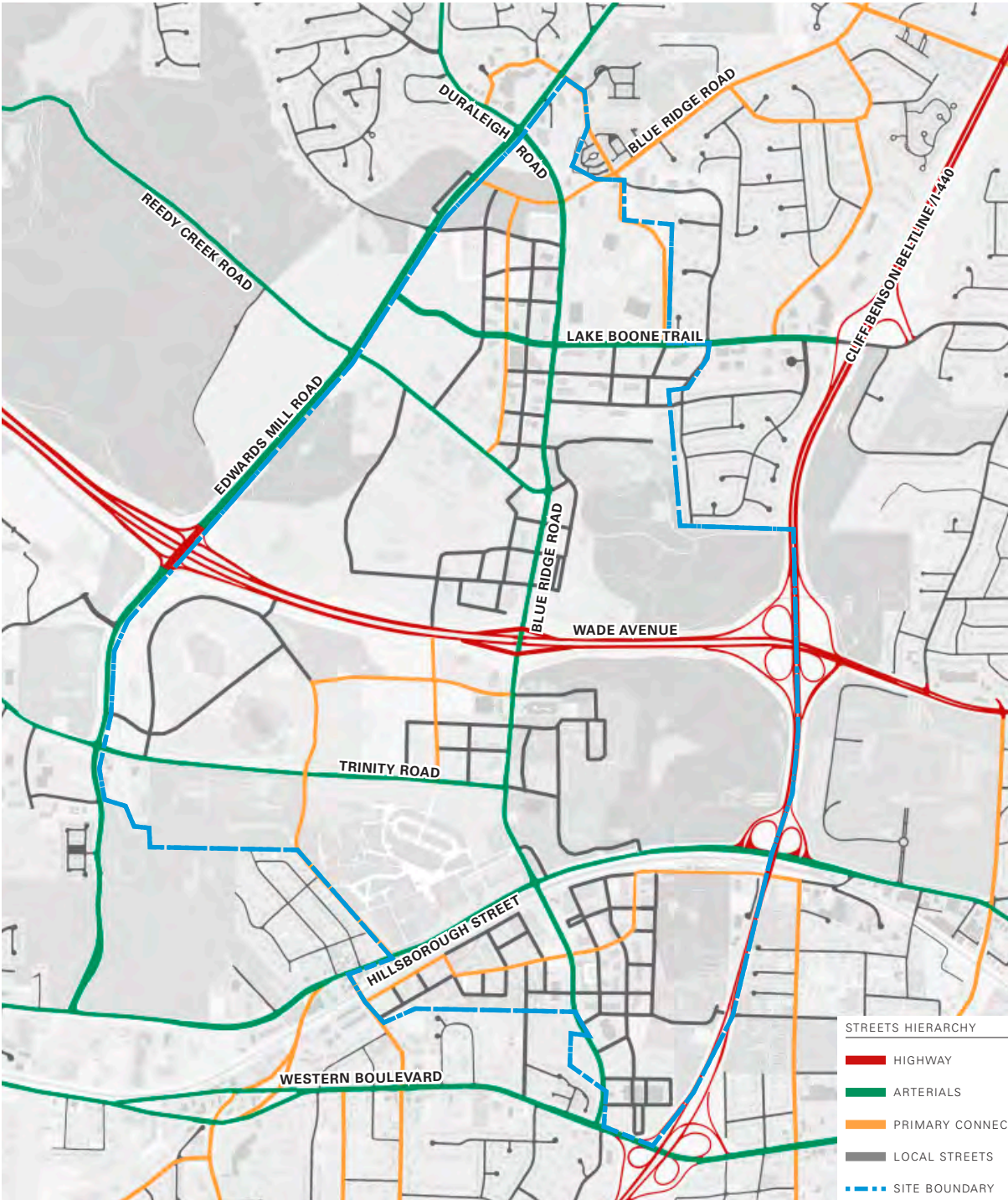
Improvements that should be considered for other major roads in the District include:

- » A preliminary review suggests it may be feasible to narrow the traffic lanes on Lake Boone Trail to accommodate bike lanes. This option, as well as/or introducing a median in select places, should be assessed in future studies.
- » The wide median on Edwards Mill Road should be planted with trees or tall grasses that reinforce the rural character of that area.
- » Future improvements to Hillsborough Street should include the addition of a sidewalk on the north side of the road.

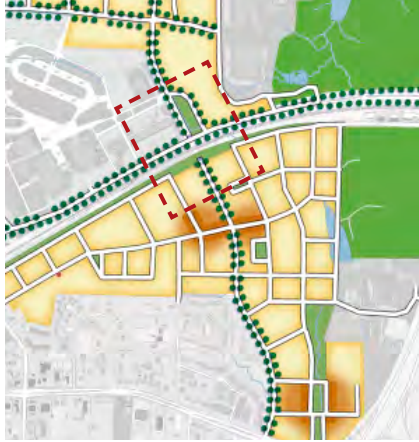
Proposed Local Connector



PROPOSED STREET HIERARCHY



TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS



Future NCDOT Underpass Project Location

FUTURE NCDOT UNDERPASS PROJECT

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is proposing a Blue Ridge Road underpass of Hillsborough Street/NC-54 and railroad tracks. This crossing is just east of the planned light rail station. Visualizations of the proposed project are displayed below. The purpose of the project is to:

- » Reduce traffic congestion at the intersection,
- » Reduce train-related conflicts, and
- » Improve future pedestrian crossing conditions.

The proposed design would include a 4-lane median divided roadway facility, with sidewalks along both sides of Blue Ridge Road. A connector street would also be constructed (north-east of the existing intersection) to provide vehicular access to Hillsborough Street/NC-54.

The project (U-4437) is currently scheduled for right-of-way acquisition in 2015, and construction beginning in 2018 pending any future re-prioritization.



U-4437 Alternate 12 South



U-4437 Alternate 12 West



U-4437 Alternate 12 East



U-4437 Alternate 12 North

TRANSIT

As the District grows there will be a need for both increased transit service for people traveling to the District, as well as high-quality service for travel within the area. Higher density, mixed-use development in conjunction with transit-oriented design as proposed in the plan will enhance the cost-effectiveness of both types of services. Improved transit has the potential to provide a convenient alternative to driving to popular places such as Downtown Raleigh (less than five miles away), the NCSU campus, and the Crabtree Valley Mall area. Located on the west side of Raleigh, the District also is easily accessed by existing and planned regional transit services from the western side of the Triangle (including Durham, Chapel Hill, and the Research Triangle Park). Recommended services are shown in the diagram on the next page.

Rail Transit

A significant transit enhancement in the corridor is a long-term proposal to install light rail and commuter rail service in the North Carolina Railroad (NCRR) corridor that parallels Hillsborough Street in the southern portion of the corridor. Feasibility studies recently completed by Triangle Transit for several corridors in the region (referred to as Alternatives Analyses) recommended the following rail projects for Wake County:

- » Light rail transit operating between Morrisville and North Raleigh via Raleigh. The plans include a station at the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street/NCRR corridor. Service would operate all day.
- » Commuter rail running between (east of) Garner on the eastern side of Wake County to Durham. This is being proposed as a peak period service for commuters. Current plans do not include a stop at Hillsborough Street, however this could be considered once demand in the Blue Ridge Road District warranted a stop.

Both services must be supported by shuttle (feeder) buses from areas surrounding the station, including the District. Implementation and the timing of the two services are dependent on approval by local governments and funding.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Regional Bus Transit

Triangle Transit buses will continue to provide the current regional connections. Within the Blue Ridge Road District routes follow Wade Avenue, Hillsborough Street, and Western Boulevard. Service frequency can be expected to increase as the region grows.

Local Bus Service

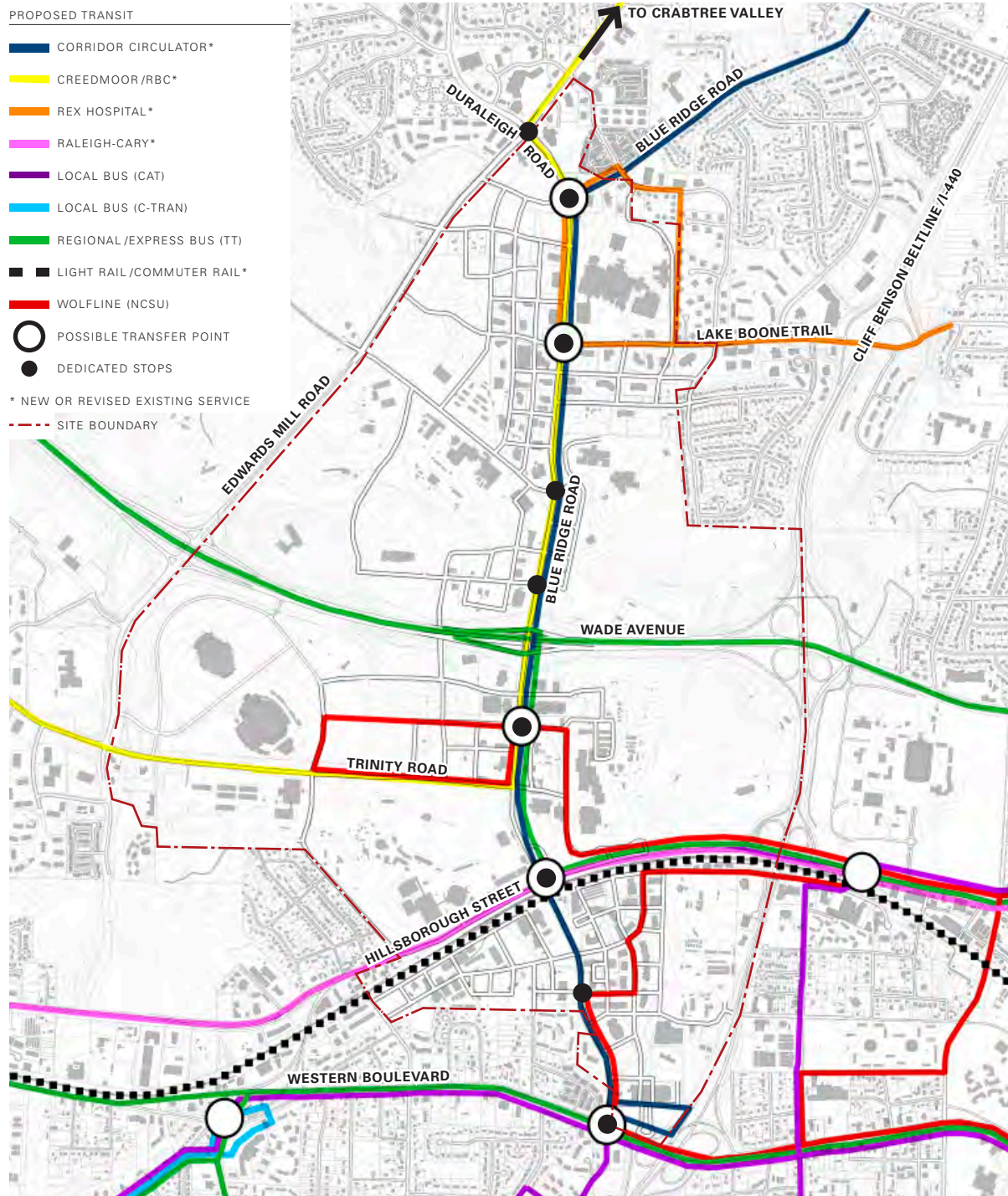
Local bus service addresses locations primarily within the City of Raleigh. The Wake County Transit Plan (Draft, November 2011) provides long term recommendations for the District. This consists of slight modifications to two routes currently focused on Rex Hospital, including extending one route further south along Blue Ridge Road and Trinity Road to serve the PNC Center and locations southwest of the District. A new Raleigh-Cary connection service is proposed along Hillsborough Street/Chapel Hill Road/NC-54.

While service is provided to much of the District, the Wake County Transit Plan did not specifically anticipate major growth in this area. Ideally a single bus route from the transit hub in Downtown Raleigh would (over time) serve the entire length of Blue Ridge Road, thus avoiding transfers within the corridor. Alternatively, or in addition, a high frequency service (similar to the free R-Line Downtown Raleigh Circulator) is recommended to run the entire length of Blue Ridge Road from Crabtree Valley Mall to Western Boulevard. The District circulator, shown on the right, should run every 10 minutes so that riders would, on average, have to wait only five minutes. This all-day service would connect the various activities within the corridor, enabling employees, residents, and visitors to conduct business, go dining or shopping, or visit educational and entertainment venues without the need to drive between places. The service can also facilitate transfers from local or regional services at key intersect points, particularly the future rail station at Hillsborough Street and the transfer hub at Crabtree Valley Mall.

NC State Wolfline

It is anticipated that Wolfline will continue the current Biomedical Campus park-and-ride services between the District and main campus.

PROPOSED TRANSIT



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS



Schenck Forest

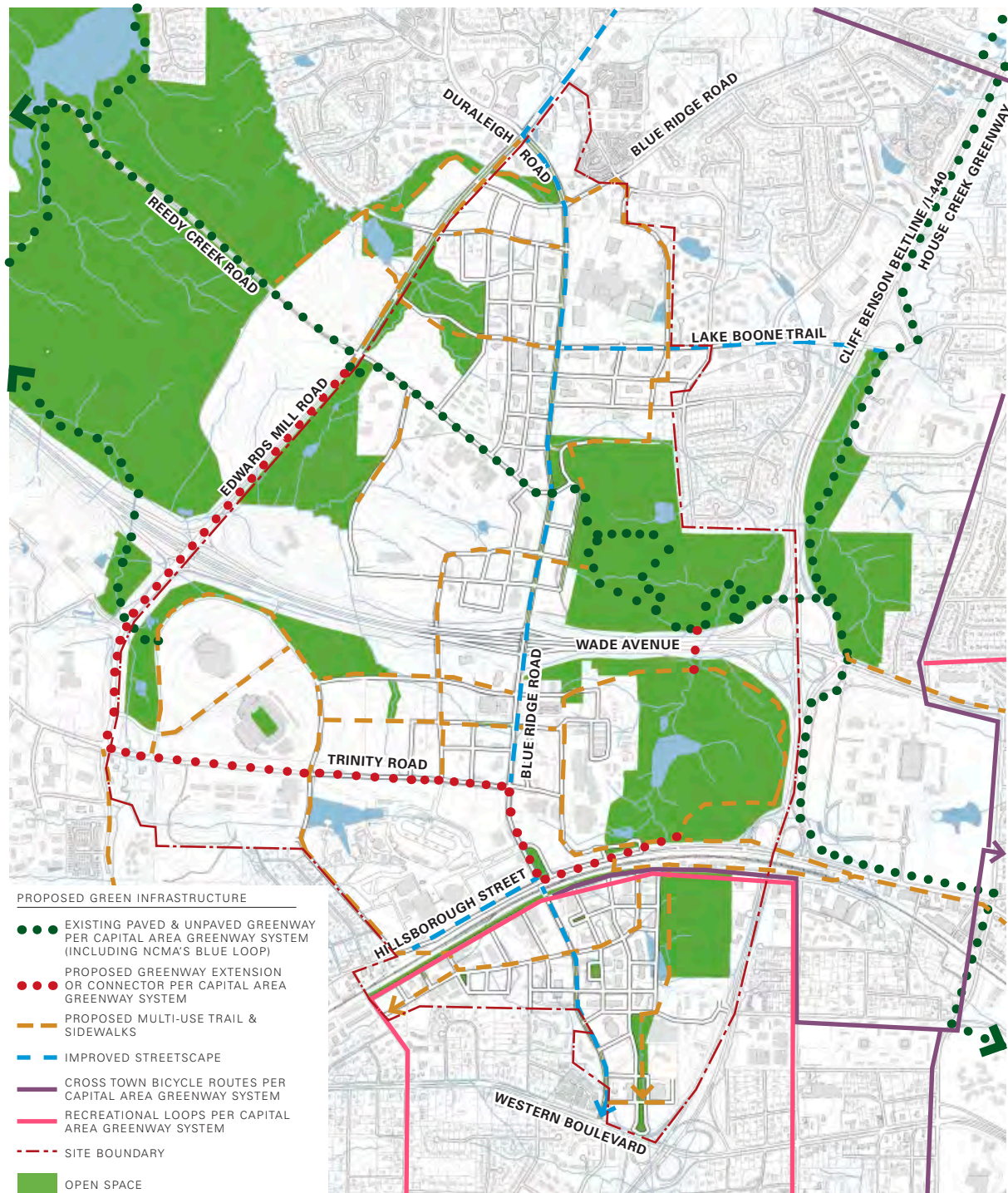
The District possesses a strong open space system anchored by Umstead State Park and Carl Alwin Schenck Memorial Forest (Schenck Forest) and supported by passive and active institutional open space exemplified by NCMA, College of Veterinary Medicine, and JC Raulston Arboretum. The broad scope of state government properties, much of which is undeveloped forest or pasture land, establishes much of the District's west side with a rural suburban character. The plan recommends the conservation of existing public open space and the creation of new passive and active open space amenities throughout the District. A strengthened and enhanced district-wide pedestrian and bike system will serve to link these open space amenities. Once resident density and population numbers are significant, additional park facilities within the District should be provided for residents, employees, and visitors. Park and public spaces will be complemented by small-scale, private public greens, recreational space, and other spaces associated with private commercial and residential development as the District grows.

CONNECTING EXISTING AMENITIES

The District supports major destination attractions and employment centers. These District amenities are readily accessible by automobile through a strong regional transportation system. Each attraction is adequately served by a strong internal pedestrian circulation system. However, many of the facilities, particularly those which generate peak event pedestrian flow such as the State Fairgrounds, PNC Arena, and Carter-Finley Stadium must rely on a very weak surrounding system of sidewalks. As a result, safe and effective pedestrian linkages between the existing amenities are currently very limited, preventing quality pedestrian access between the major destinations. With the prospect of a light rail stop and a transit-oriented development (TOD) district, the demand for a quality district-wide system will be amplified and critical to the District's long-term success.

The District currently enjoys an exceptional regional greenway trail network which provides an excellent framework in which to build a more complete District wide pedestrian and bike network supportive of the major assets and future development. Two regional greenways, Reedy Creek Greenway and House Creek Greenway, provide strong regional bike and pedestrian accessibility to the District and also provide access between Downtown, NCSU campus, Crabtree Valley Mall, and Cary.

PROPOSED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan envisions the development of an integrated multi-use trail network and circulation strategy. The network will include two components:

1. An enhanced sidewalk and bikeway system developed along the primary and secondary district streets.
2. An independent greenway/trail system.

Initiative 1: Sidewalks and multi-use paths

The sidewalk and multi-use path system will focus on Blue Ridge Road enhanced by implementation of NCDOT's Complete Street principles with future roadway improvements. Establishment of a strong north/south pedestrian/bike corridor along Blue Ridge Road will provide the backbone or framework to build connections between the major district destinations and adjacent city areas. This system will also serve to strengthen the implementation of a strong public realm along Blue Ridge Road supportive of the desired urban street form. An internal trail loop that links NCMA, NCSU, PNC Arena and Carter Finley Stadium will provide connectivity throughout the District.

Initiative 2: Greenway/Trails

The greenway/trail system will complement the street oriented pedestrian and bike network by providing regional greenway access to and through the District. Much of the planned Capitol City Greenway Trail System has been constructed within the District, including the Reedy Creek and House Creek Greenway trails. The City plans to implement, over time, a series of key greenway trail connector facilities.

This plan also envisions the development of a strong street network and a transit circulator, both of which when combined with the pedestrian and bicycle system, will provide enhanced travel options between the major destinations.

NEW INTERNAL MULTI-USE LOOP

The District will benefit from a new internal loop providing access to employment centers, services, open spaces, and major amenities for visitors, employees, and residents. The open space plan recommends building upon the existing regional greenway/trail system to develop a district-oriented multi-use loop, mostly independent of the District roadway system.

Elements of a new loop include:

- » This pedestrian/bike loop would be anchored by the existing Reedy Creek Greenway Trail from Meredith College via the NCMA campus to Edwards Mill Road.
- » The existing Edwards Mill greenway/trail would form a strong north/south connection to the Arena District.
- » To complete the loop, the plan recommends that a dedicated multi-use trail linkage be developed between Edwards Mill Road and Blue Ridge Road. One facility could be routed through the PNC Arena and Carter-Finley Stadium and extend west along Westchase Boulevard. The second connection would be a greatly enhanced and amenitized multi-use trail along both sides of Trinity Road (The Trinity Road Connector). Both connectors would link to a wide sidewalk on the west side of Blue Ridge Road and south to the Hillsborough Street/Blue Ridge Road intersection. A newly formed linear park would be developed along the full length of Beryl Road and continue east to Faircloth Road where it would terminate at the intersection of the Gorman Street Greenway Connector.

Furthermore, the plan calls for an additional linkage between NCMA and NCSU either over or under Wade Avenue in order to complete this district-wide, multi-use trail system. This has incredible potential to tie, way-finding and programming for residents, employees and visitors into the District.

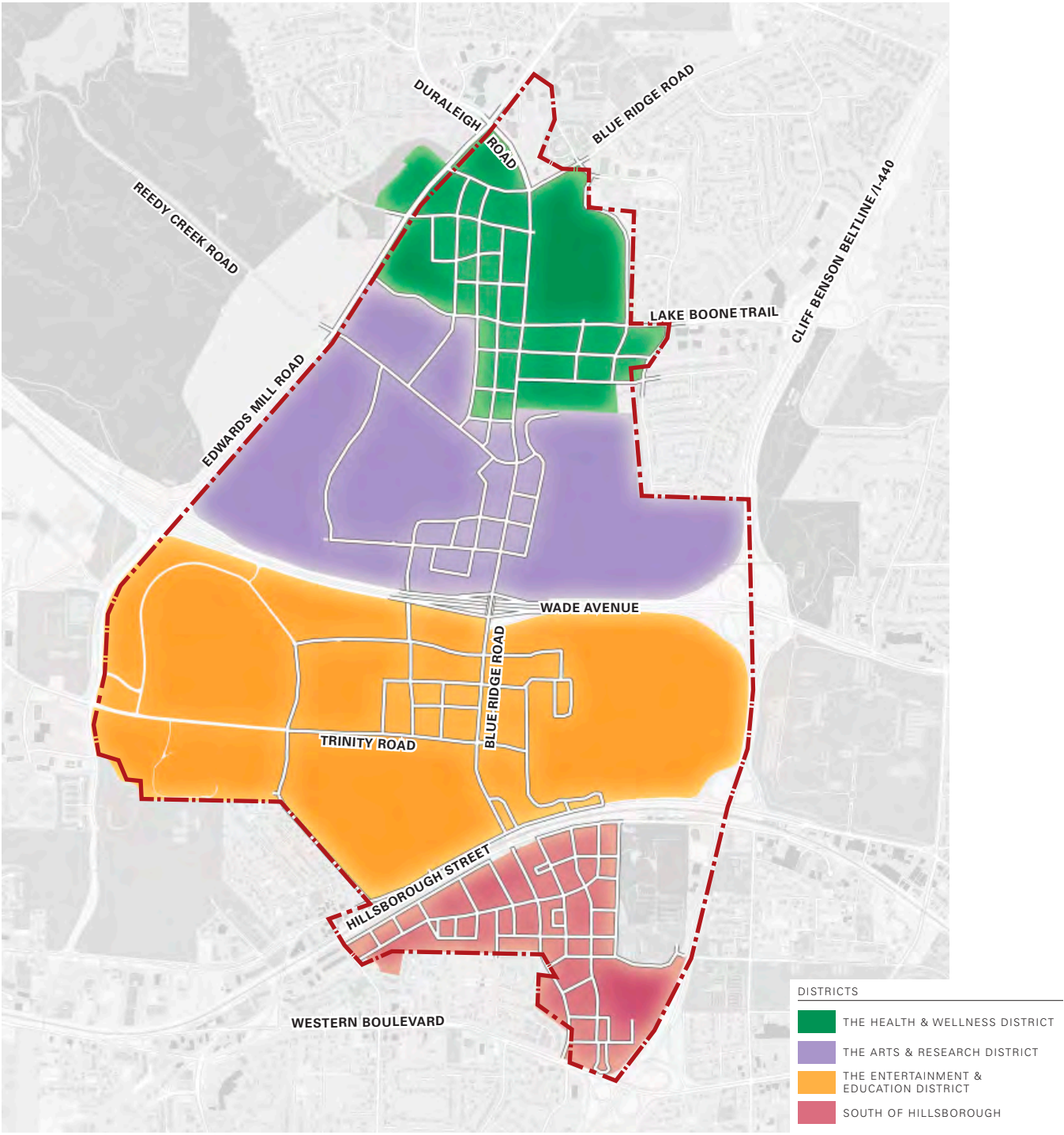


DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

A key goal of the visioning process was to determine the character of Blue Ridge Road and thereby establish a distinct district. After evaluating the character and the uses in the area, it became clear that the length of the corridor lends itself to treating it as a series of connected, yet distinct districts. Unlike other redevelopment areas, the study area already has a series of well established anchors which can drive redevelopment. Therefore, the notion is to build on those anchors and use them as centers for each district. The districts proposed can be defined as follows:

- » **The Health & Wellness District:** This zone extends from the Dura-leigh Road and Blue Ridge Road split down to the NCMA. It is anchored by Rex Health Care and includes support office, medical services, and some potential residential. Blue Ridge Road and Reedy Creek Road are calmed through this area to ensure safe crossings and encourage connectivity to existing trails.
- » **The Arts & Research District:** This district is anchored by the NCMA. It extends from the NCMA south to Wade Avenue. Mixed-use development is encouraged along Blue Ridge Road, along with some potential development on the NCMA property that complements its current mission.
- » **The Entertainment & Education District:** The blocks between NCSU and Carter-Finley Stadium offer the opportunity to establish a vibrant, mixed-use district with commercial uses that thrive on event traffic and visitors to the Fairgrounds.
- » **South of Hillsborough:** The properties south of Hillsborough Street offer huge potential for transit oriented development given the proposals for light rail and regional rail. This District may be primarily residential in nature with some small mixed-use development at key intersections.

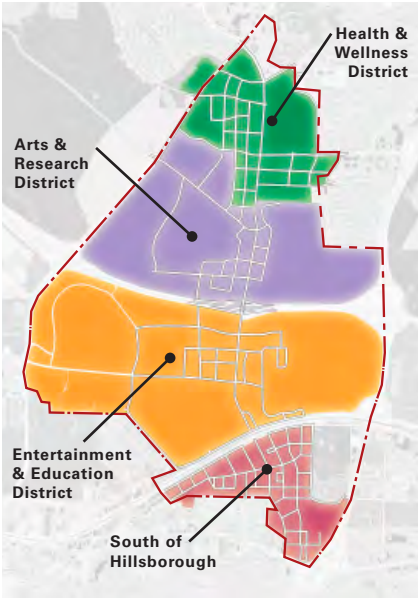
DISTRICTS





DISTRICT PLANS

INTRODUCTION



The design of each district reinforces the guiding principles set during the charette.

- » Add new local connections to improve circulation in the District.
- » Create a distinct character for Blue Ridge Road in each district.
- » Create active destinations through strategic building placement and architectural expression to reinforce nodes.
- » Attract transit to activity nodes.
- » Retain and cherish existing assets, such as existing natural resources, attractions and employers in future planning.

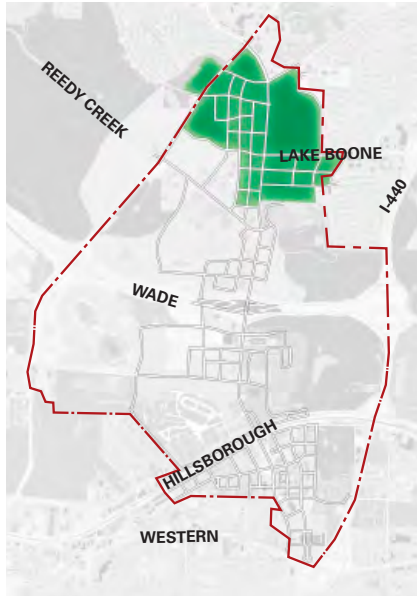
In addition to design considerations for each district, we also looked at the potential market demand for a variety of uses, given the district creation, anchors and needs. The chart below summarizes the main findings.

	HEALTH & WELLNESS DISTRICT	ARTS & RESEARCH DISTRICT
HOTEL	MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY (2-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Other sites in the area present a greater opportunity in terms of visibility and access	SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Excellent visibility and drive-by traffic» Hotels are actively seeking land in this area» Regional anchors and employment provide strong support
OFFICE	SHORT-/MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Strong medical office location; medical office will have greater demand opportunity in the short term» Demand for conventional office will grow in the mid term	MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY (2-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Visibility and access desired by larger users» Current rents are not supportive of structured parking; a 25% increase in rents is needed
RETAIL	SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Opportunity to provide convenience retail in the short term to existing employees in the area; in the mid term provide additional retail that ties in to the “health village”	SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» Excellent visibility, and drive by traffic» Wade Avenue and Blue Ridge Road corner is likely to attract national users» Potential for structured parking in the next year or two
RESIDENTIAL	SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» As the “health village” grows, residential for a variety of users (i.e. seniors housing, apartments to accommodate workforce) could be supported	SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">» In-town location, NCMA, and potential mix of uses make this an attractive site for housing» Given the opportunity for other uses and underlying values, greatest level of fit is for multi-family housing

Generally, the market analysis found pent-up demand for development in the District and each of these uses is immediately viable. The one possible exception in the next five years is privately developed office, however, the State anticipates new office development which would be built to suit their immediate need.

ENTERTAINMENT & EDUCATION DISTRICT	SOUTH OF HILLSBOROUGH
SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Strong access » Presence of Arena and limited competitive supply make this an attractive hotel location 	MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY WITH TRANSIT (2-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » While there is demand for additional hotel rooms in the area, other “districts” (i.e. Arts & Research) are a better fit for this use, given access and visibility » If transit is added, it will significantly strengthen the opportunity for hotel at this site
MID-/LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITY (2-5+ YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » As the mixed-use district develops it will become an increasingly desirable office location for smaller, professional serving employers » In the short term, the opportunity for office is more limited to parcels closest to Blue Ridge Road 	MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY (2-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Proposed light rail station would have a significant impact on the desirability of this location for office uses » In addition, there is an opportunity to provide space for smaller, professional serving users in a mixed-use redevelopment of the K-Mart® site
MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY (2-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Arena on its own will not support a significant amount of retail (approximately 15k to 20k square feet), however, as additional uses are developed onsite and in the surrounding area (particularly residential), the retail opportunity will grow 	MID-TERM OPPORTUNITY (2-5 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Opportunity to be integrated in to a mixed-use redevelopment of the K-Mart® site » Users could be a combination of local and national retailers
SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Relative proximity to the overall NC State University campus makes this a desirable location for residential 	SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY (0-2 YEARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Existing residential in the surrounding area to tie in to » Transit station will further enhance the desirability of this “district” for residential » Residential could be a combination of rental and dense for-sale

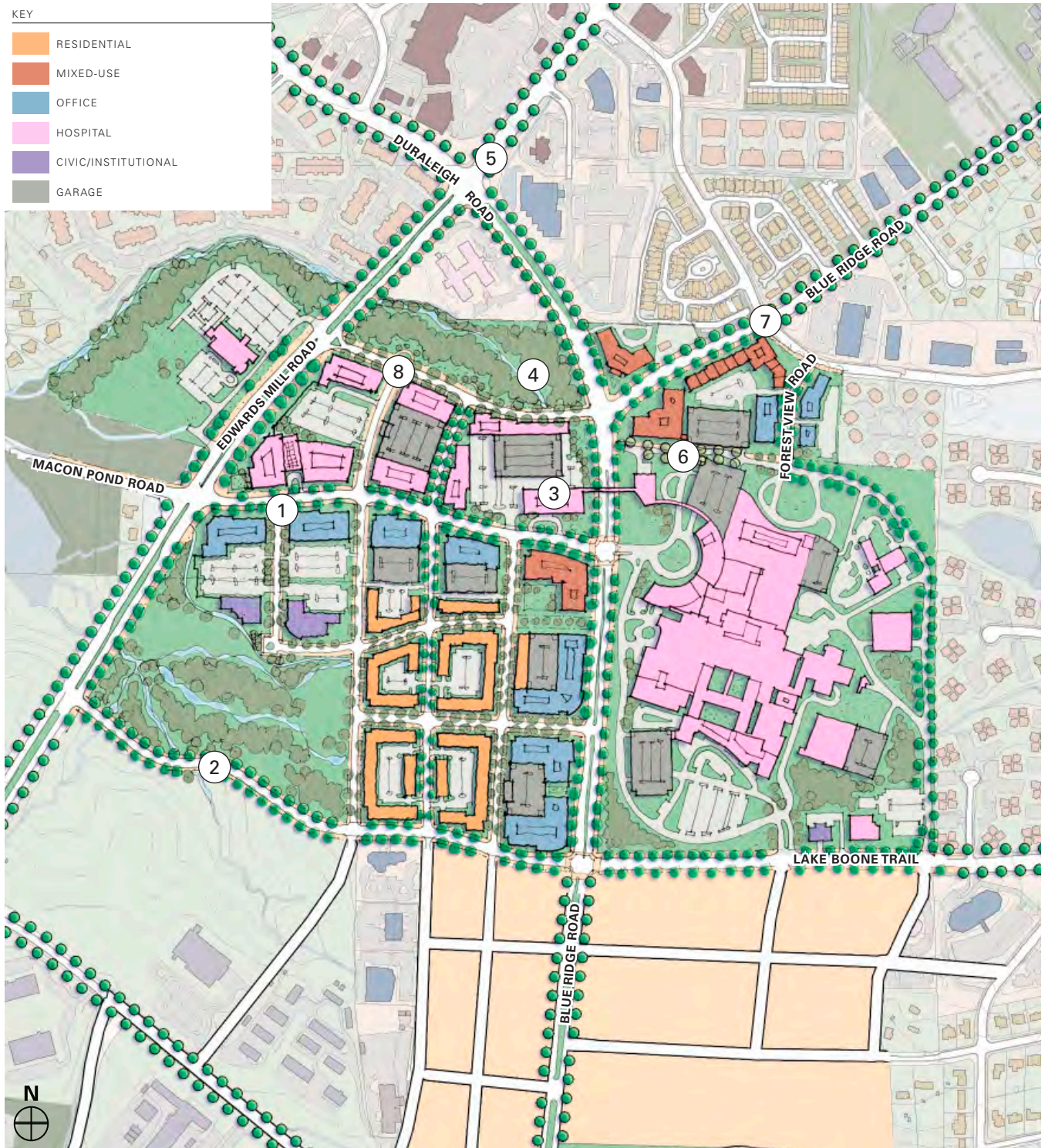
THE HEALTH & WELLNESS DISTRICT



The northern portion of the District is anchored by an important asset — Rex Health Care and supportive medical services. The future plan envisions a District centered around wellness, health, and connections to the environment, capitalizing on the proximity to Schenck Forest and local waterways by providing multi-use trail connections. Additionally, it is crucial to attract health and wellness services and businesses to round out the mix of uses, such as: alternative medicine, fitness training and facilities, physical therapy, yoga, local/organic restaurants and shops — all in addition to the mix of medical office already attracted to this area.

Key elements of the plan are keyed to the adjacent map and include:

1. Upgrade and improve Macon Pond Road to be a front door and a proper connection from Rex Health Care to Edwards Mill Road.
2. Extend Lake Boone Trail over to Edwards Mill Road and improve connectivity.
3. Expand Rex Hospital west.
4. Protect the existing wetlands.
5. Connect the existing trails to the north and west.
6. Extend trail to connect the Health District to Schenck Forest.
7. Improve intersection at Blue Ridge Road and Forest View Road.
8. Reconfigure street connections to accommodate an interconnected and pedestrian-friendly district as redevelopment occurs.



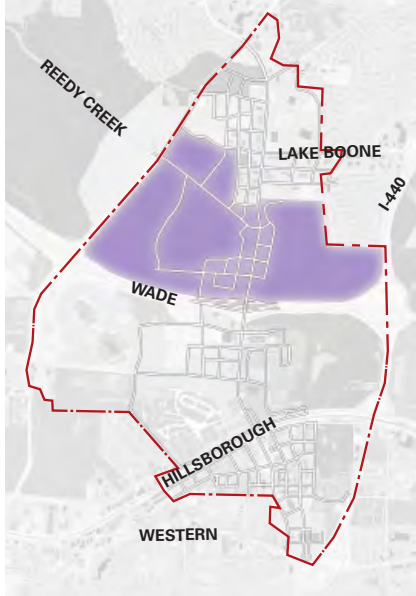
THE HEALTH & WELLNESS DISTRICT

View of proposed mixed-use development along Blue Ridge Road looking south. Mixed-use, medical office, and hospital expansion can all be accommodated in a beautiful, cohesive and pleasant way.





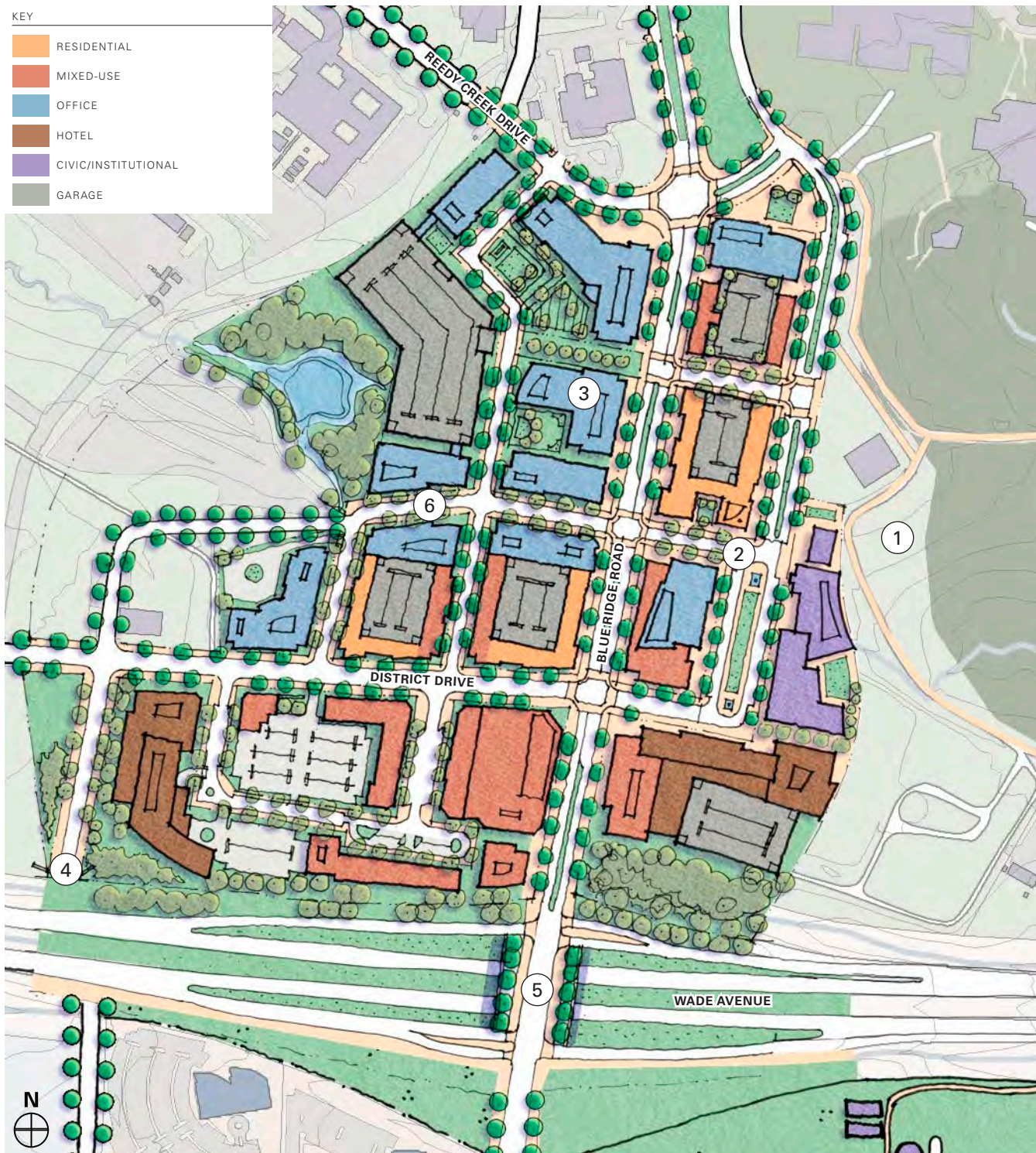
THE ARTS & RESEARCH DISTRICT



This area is envisioned as a vibrant, mixed-use district centered around the arts, the natural landscape, and the agricultural research facilities. The North Carolina Museum of Art is a core attraction for artist studios, a performing arts center, and a walkable district where every space and streetscape can be an “urban gallery.” Opportunities exist for some redevelopment on the NCMA frontage along Blue Ridge Road, along with redevelopment of some of the state lands in a more urban, walkable format. Existing State research facilities and proposed State office functions would form a research campus West of Blue Ridge Road. Moreover, mixed-use development on the southern edge of both parcels could capitalize on visibility from Wade Avenue.

Key elements of the plan are keyed to the adjacent map and include:

1. Provide an improved loop on the NCMA greenway.
2. Create a mixed-use development on the NCMA side of Blue Ridge Road with potential for a hotel.
3. Locate potential DHHS offices, west of Blue Ridge Road on NCDOA property.
4. Provide complete street connection south across Wade Avenue and down to Trinity Road to link the Art District to the Entertainment District.
5. Evaluate options for the Wade Avenue Bridge at Blue Ridge Road in order to provide better pedestrian and cycle access and regain developable land by creating a more compact interchange.
6. Improve connectivity with additional north/south streets parallel to Blue Ridge Road.



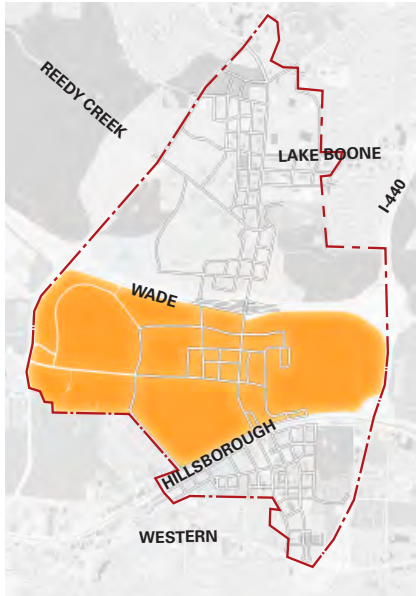
THE ARTS & RESEARCH DISTRICT

View of the proposed public open space on the NCMA parcel, illustrating the potential for linking the existing art park and its programmed function into the fabric of new mixed use and cultural arts developments.





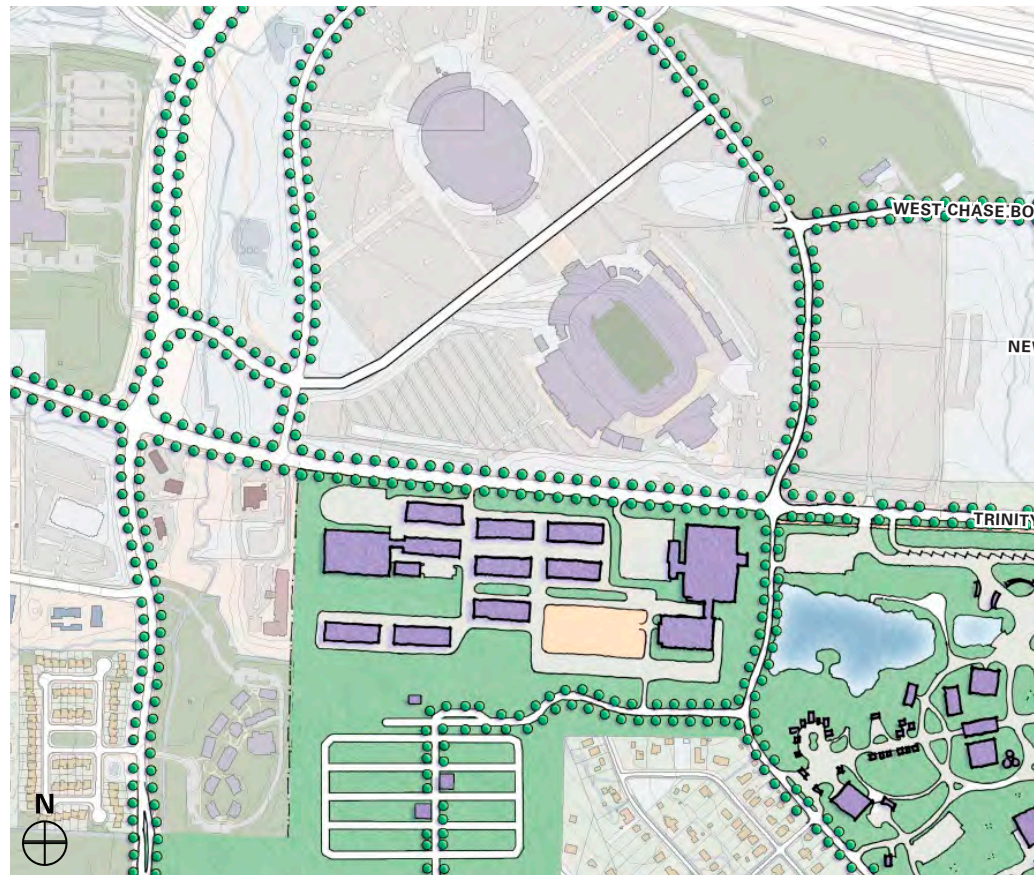
THE ENTERTAINMENT & EDUCATION DISTRICT



The State Fairgrounds, PNC Arena, and Carter-Finley Stadium present the opportunity to create a 24-hour, mixed-use district, anchored by a commercial main street. It should be designed to attract and retain event patrons — bars, restaurants, and sports-related entertainment are a focus, including a practice/public-use ice rink. Offices and support retail are also compatible to provide a year-round population in this district.

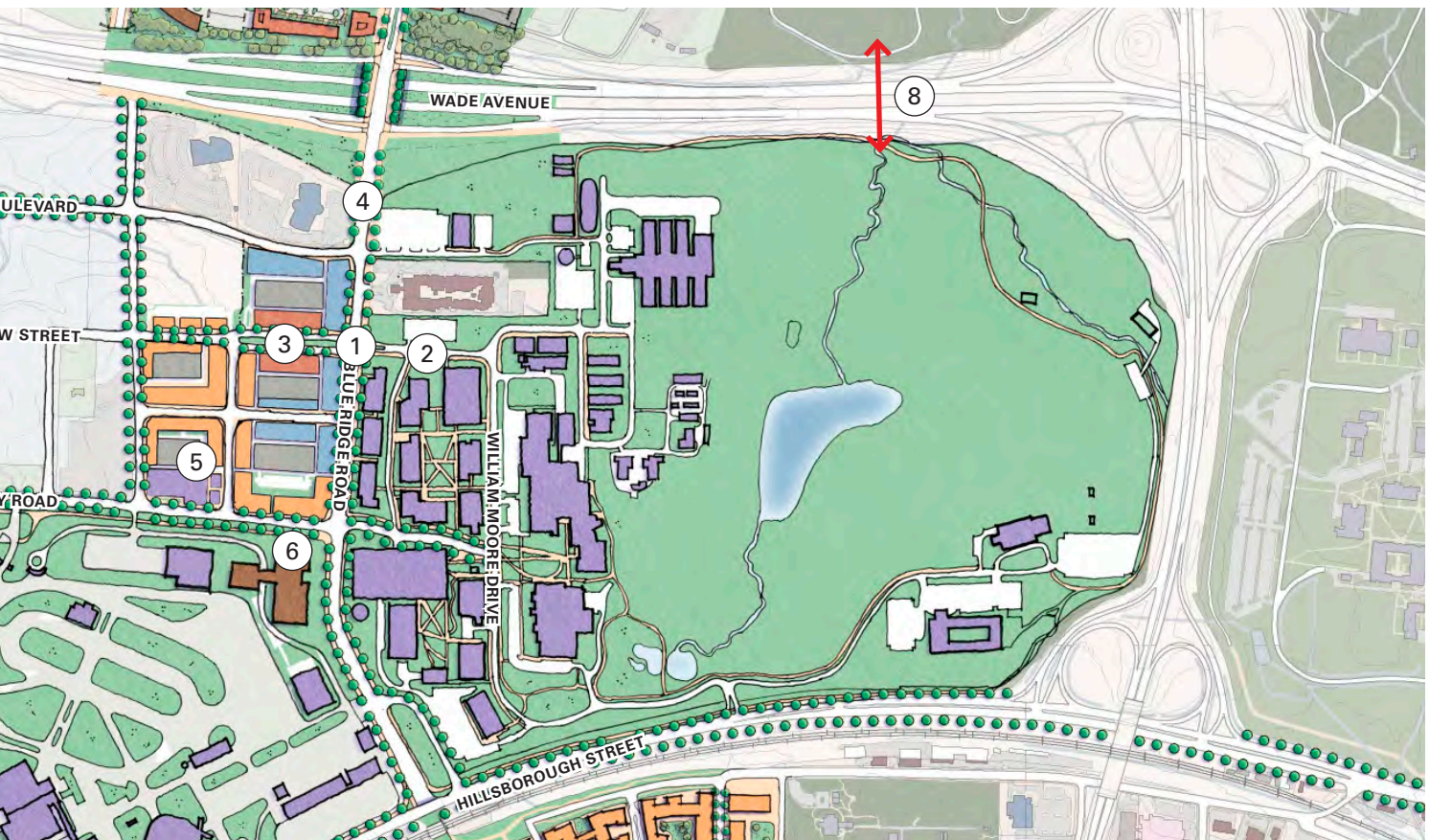
Key elements of the plan are keyed to the adjacent map and include:

1. Maintain a signalized intersection at Trinity Road and Blue Ridge Road
2. Tie together the NCSU campus and facilities to the west with an enhanced east/west pedestrian connection
3. Design new roads west of Blue Ridge Road between the NCSU Centennial Campus and the Stadium/Arena to align with future NCSU expansion plans



KEY	
	RESIDENTIAL
	MIXED-USE
	OFFICE
	HOTEL
	CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL
	GARAGE
	PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

4. Locate mixed-use development along Blue Ridge Road
5. Locate practice facilities to take advantage of parking access during non-event hours
6. Add a hotel/conference facility associated with the Fairgrounds can further accommodate their annual visitors while also providing an additional income stream
7. Include a transit circulator for the District that could access the road between the Arena and the Stadium in order to facilitate access to events
8. Connect greenway at the NCMA over or under Wade Avenue to NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine campus



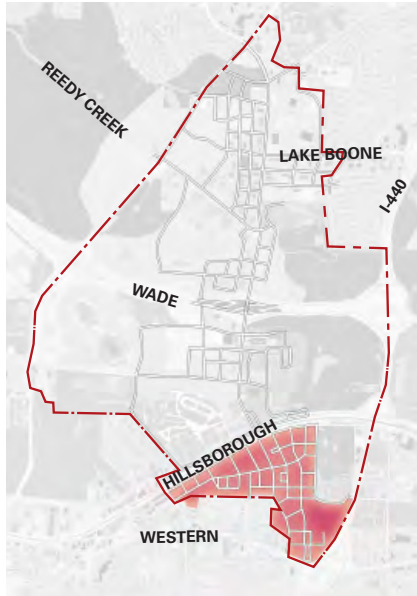
THE ENTERTAINMENT & EDUCATION DISTRICT

Aerial view looking over the NCSU Centennial Biomedical Campus toward a mixed-use district that creates an anchor during events, while also activating this part of Blue Ridge Road during non-event days.





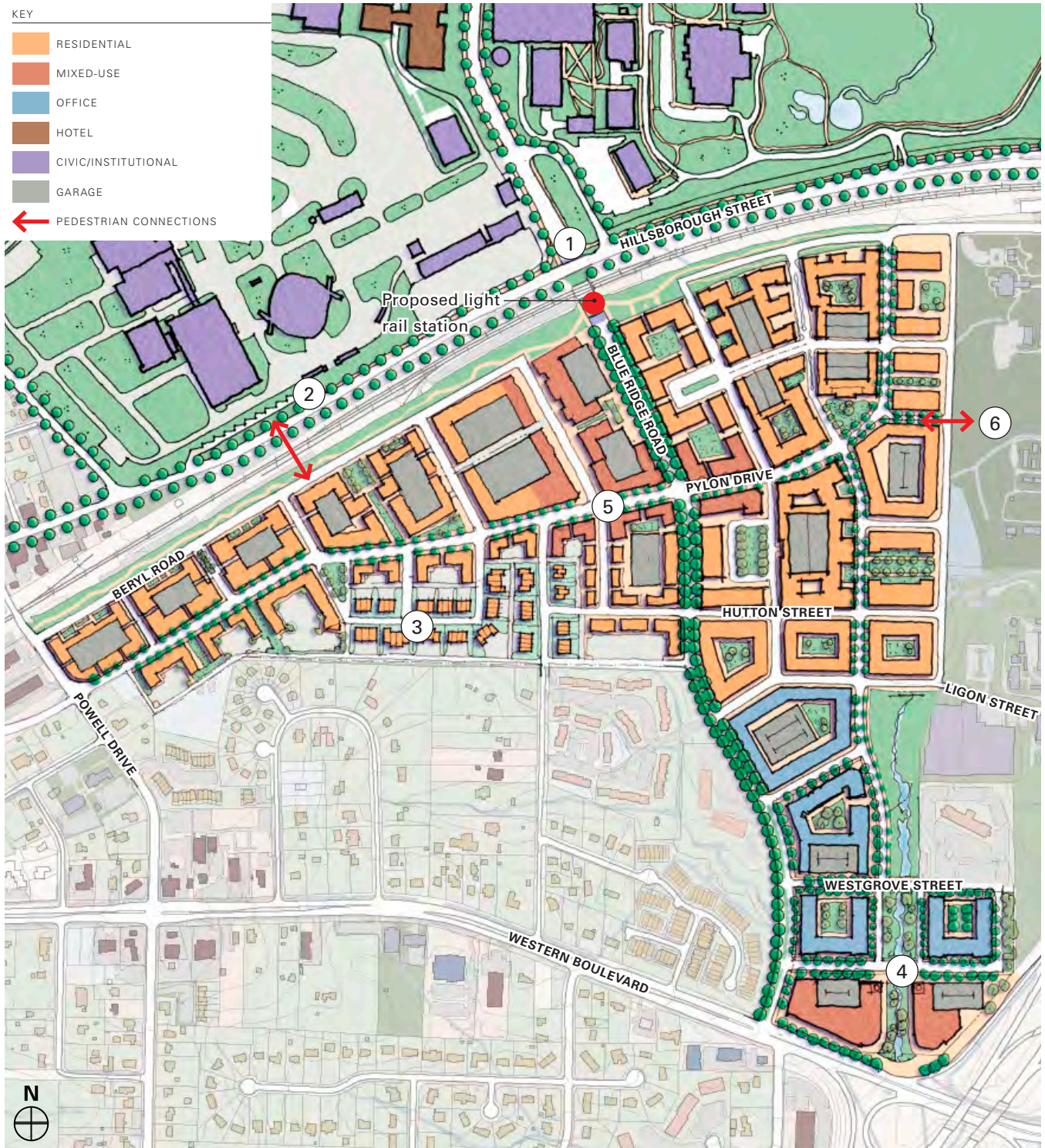
SOUTH OF HILLSBOROUGH



The blocks south of Hillsborough Street are currently occupied with various state facilities, light industrial, and office complexes. Yet the future proposal for light rail and commuter rail indicates a strong desire for transit-oriented development here. The future market for this area is predominantly residential with neighborhood-serving commercial and employment opportunities. These non-residential uses have increased market for ability when/if located adjacent to a transit node. A gateway development could be generated at Western Boulevard and Blue Ridge Road to replace under-utilized commercial properties while serving as a southern anchor to the District.

Key elements of the plan are keyed to the adjacent map and include:

1. Depress Blue Ridge Road under Hillsborough Street, railroad tracks, and Beryl Road per NCDOT underpass project.
2. Provide wide sidewalks near the State Fairgrounds, PNC Arena, and the Carter-Finley Stadium, as well as along the thoroughfares that link these institutions with parking resources.
3. Complement existing neighborhoods with residential uses.
4. Redevelop K-Mart® site as a mixed-use center.
5. Site larger office and commercial footprints more closely to the proposed station.
6. Capitalize on linkage to the JC Raulston Arboretum as a neighborhood amenity.



SOUTH OF HILLSBOROUGH

*View of proposed transit-oriented development
along Beryl Road, adjacent to the proposed
light rail station*





