



# **STAFF REPORT – CASE CP-1A-19**

## **Avent Ferry Corridor Plan**

### **Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

### **Area Specific Guidance and Streetscape**

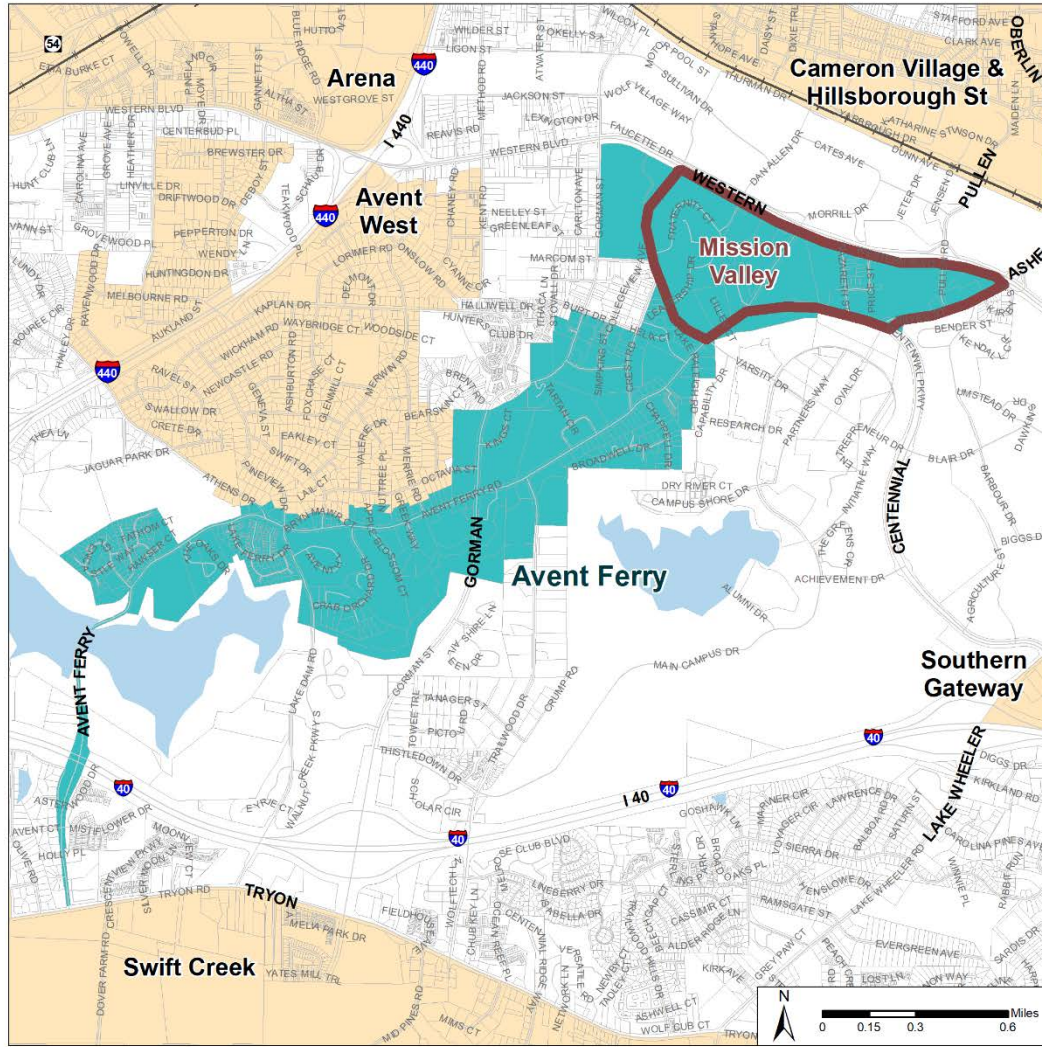
### **Improvement Plan**

## **OVERVIEW**

This is a city-initiated amendment to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan to incorporate new area specific guidance. The proposed amendment creates a new section called AF Avent Ferry Corridor Plan which incorporates the recommendations of the Avent Ferry Corridor Study. The amendment will add the Avent Ferry Corridor Plan to Map AP-1 Area Plan Locations and remove the Mission Valley Small Area Plan. The relevant policy guidance regarding urban form and focused growth from the Mission Valley Small Area Plan have been maintained in the Avent Ferry Corridor Plan. The existing Avent West Area Plan will remain unchanged.

The policies in the Avent Ferry Corridor Plan are intended to provide guidance for rezoning and redevelopment. The plan also includes streetscape design recommendations that are intended to inform the Streetscape Capital Program. The project priority list for the program ranks Avent Ferry Road as number 10 out of 36 projects.

## Amendment to AP-1: Area Plan Locations



- Area Plan Removed
- Area Plan Added
- Other Area Plans

Map created 2/1/2019 by the Raleigh Department of City Planning

The new area plan section would read as follows:

### **AF Avent Ferry Corridor Plan**

This plan addresses the area shown in Map AF-1. The plan area extends from Western Boulevard to Tryon Road along Avent Ferry Road and encompasses retail and recreational destinations such as the Mission Valley Shopping Center and Lake Johnson Park. The vision for the Avent Ferry Road Corridor was developed with community input received over a multi-year planning process and represents policy solutions to community concerns regarding current transportation infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and perceived redevelopment pressures.

A critical component of this plan is the streetscape design recommendations. The design incorporates enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and maintains efficient travel for transit users and motorists. User safety is at the core of these recommendations. The design of the streetscape is intended to inform city's Streetscape Capital Program which identifies Avent Ferry Road among a prioritized list of streetscape improvement projects. Alternatively, portions of the recommended streetscape improvements may also be implemented through the development of private property.

The northern end of the plan area abuts Western Boulevard, a corridor identified in the Wake County Transit Plan as the western route for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Properties in this area, specifically those closest to a potential future BRT Station, should be considered for application of Transit Overlay District (-TOD) zoning.

#### **Policy AP-AF-1 Future Zoning**

*Rezoning petitions should be evaluated for consistency with the policy guidance of this area plan.*

#### **Policy AP-AF-2 Pedestrian Crossings**

*Where warranted, signalized pedestrian crossings should be deployed in accordance with Map AP-AF-1 to ensure the highest level of safety for users of the corridor.*

#### **Policy AP-AF-3 Greenway Connections**

*The greenway connections identified in Map AP-AF-1 should be provided in any redevelopment scenario and should include easement dedication and trail construction. This guidance should be used to inform conditional use rezoning requests and Planned Development (PD) rezonings.*

#### **Policy AP-AF-4 Streetscape Improvement**

*Establish "Complete Streets" that accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists to provide multimodal transportation options to the corridor's many users. The recommended streetscape design should be used to guide a streetscape improvement plan.*

**Policy AP-AF-5 Network Connectivity**

*Support transportation network modifications that enhance connectivity, including new public streets at Mission Valley Shopping Center, Avent Ferry Road Shopping Center, and throughout the multifamily developments along the corridor between Chappell Drive and Gorman Street.*

**Policy AP-AF-6 Mission Valley Building Frontages**

*The Mission Valley Shopping Center should be rezoned to have an Urban Limited Frontage. Suburban and auto-oriented frontage types, such as Parking Limited, should not be considered.*

**Policy AP-AF-7 Mission Valley Building Height and Open Space**

*Building height at the Mission Valley Shopping Center should not exceed seven stories along Avent Ferry Road and Centennial Parkway. Taller buildings should be considered internally to the shopping center in exchange for public amenities, such as parks, plazas, or pedestrian promenades. Rezoning requests that exceed the recommendations of Table LU-2 Recommended Height Designations should only be considered in exchange for the highest quality of public amenities. Reference Figure AP-AF-1, Figure AP-AF-2, Figure AP-AF-3, for appropriate design concepts to achieve the intended level of public amenities that warrant increased building height. Rezoning requests that deliver high quality public amenities as intended in this policy shall not be considered inconsistent with the recommendations of Table LU-2. This guidance should be used to inform conditional use rezoning requests and Planned Development (PD) rezonings.*

**Policy AP-AF-8 Avent Ferry Shopping Center Building Frontages**

*The Avent Ferry Shopping Center should be rezoned to have a Green Frontage.*

**Policy AP-AF-9 Avent Ferry Shopping Center Building Height**

*Building height at the Avent Ferry Shopping Center should not exceed three stories along Avent Ferry Road. Building heights of up to five stories should be considered on portions of the property that do not abut Avent Ferry Road. This guidance should be used to inform conditional use rezoning requests and Planned Development (PD) rezonings.*

**Policy AP-AF-10 Transit Overlay District**

*Properties at the northern end of the plan area, specifically those at the intersection of Avent Ferry Road and Western Boulevard and those closest to a future Bus Rapid Transit Station, should be rezoned for application of Transit Overlay District (-TOD). The mapping of this overlay should be coordinated with the implementation of the Wake County Transit Plan.*

**Action AP-AF-1 Streetscape Improvement Plan**

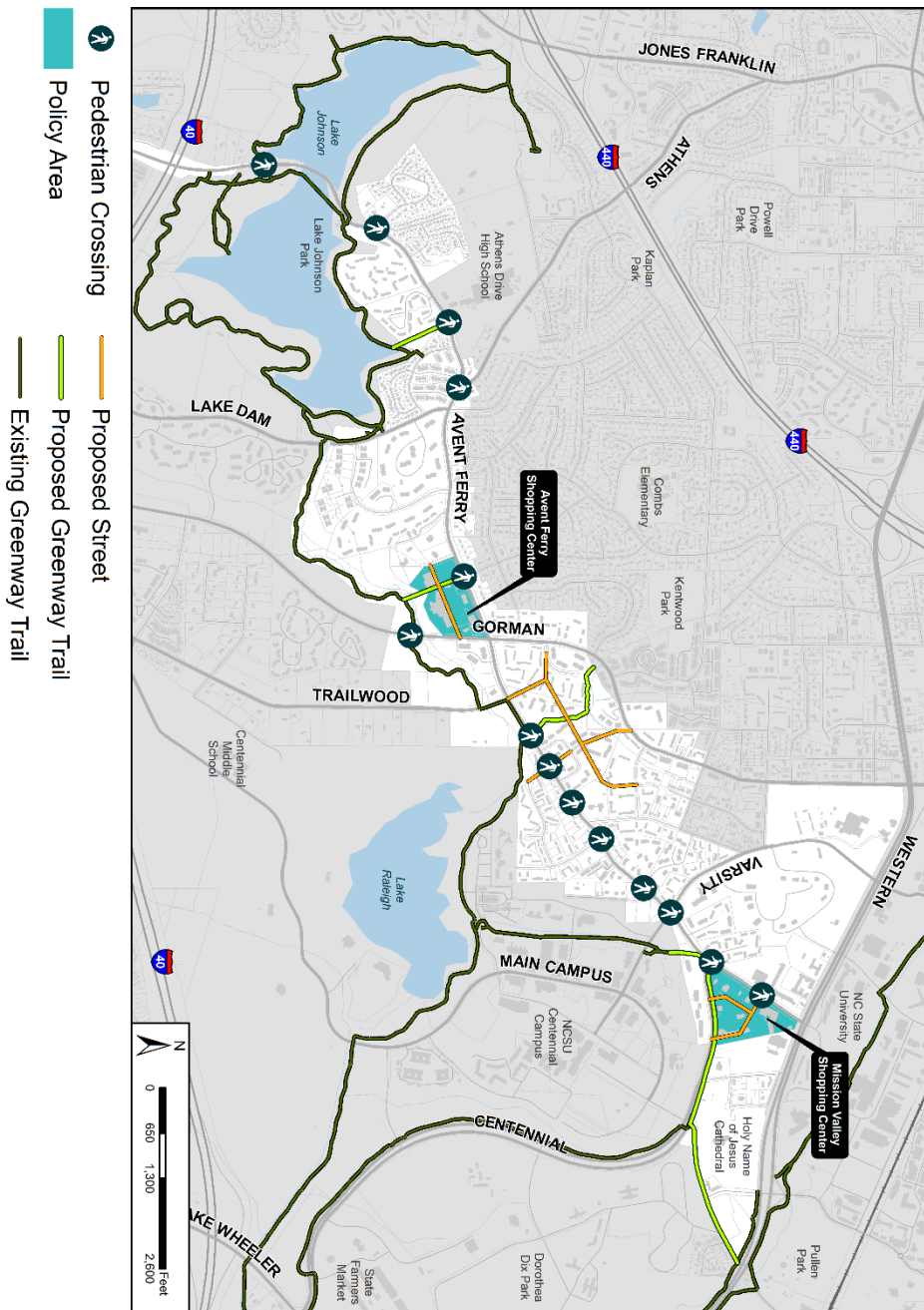
*Adopt the recommendations of the Avent Ferry Corridor Study as a streetscape improvement plan in accordance with Resolution No. 2013-851.*

**Action AP-AF-1 Pedestrian Crossings**

*The pedestrian crossings identified in Map AP-AF1 should be individually analyzed for enhanced safety improvements.*

Map AP-AF-1: Avent Ferry

Adopted: TBD



Map created 2/1/2019 by the Raleigh Department of City Planning

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER’S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION:**

The following list of considerations for the Planning and Development Officer’s review and recommendations regarding a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment are not all-inclusive. Review and recommendations of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments may consider whether:

**1. The proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend or fact;**

The proposed amendment incorporates the recommendations of the Avent Ferry Road Corridor Study into the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The corridor study was undertaken in anticipation of the growing development pressures along the corridor and in response to citywide growth trends.

**2. The proposed amendment is in response to changes in state law;**

N/A

**3. The proposed amendment constitutes a substantial benefit to the City as a whole and is not solely for the good or benefit of a particular landowner or owners at a particular point in time;**

The proposed amendment provides policy guidance to an area in the city that is anticipated for increased redevelopment pressure. These recommendations represent community generated policy solutions for the perceived impacts of redevelopment and provide predictability in the rezoning process to the neighborhoods closest to the study area and to the city at large.

**4. The proposed amendment is consistent with other identified Plan policies and adopted area plans;**

**A. Area Specific Zoning Guidance**

This section of the staff report analyzes 2030 Comprehensive Plan policies relevant to proposed area specific guidance section AF Avent Ferry Corridor.

**Policy IM 4.1 Area Planning Studies**

*Prepare area-specific planning studies for parts of the City where detailed direction or standards are needed to guide land use, economic development, transportation, urban design, and other future physical planning and public investment decisions. The focus should be on areas or corridors that offer opportunities for revitalization or new residential, commercial, and mixed-use development and redevelopment, areas with challenges or characteristics requiring place-specific planning actions and public interventions, and areas designated “special study area” on the Future Land Use Map.*

**Policy IM 4.3 Existing Area Plans**

*As part of the update and re-examination process, remove existing, adopted Area Plans from the Comprehensive Plan as they become fully implemented, or if they are superseded by future area planning studies.*

**Policy LU 2.7 Future Studies in High Density Areas**

*As necessary, undertake detailed studies and plans for growth centers, mixed-use centers, and transit station areas (rail or bus transfer nodes) to identify areas appropriate for higher-density mixed-use development*

- This amendment incorporates a community generated vision resulting from a multi-year planning process for the Avent Ferry Corridor. The study was initiated anticipating increased development pressures and represents area specific policy solutions to guide the redevelopment of mixed-use and neighborhood centers and multifamily developments along the corridor. The policies included in this amendment provide land use, urban design, and transportation guidance that are intended to address unique challenges and preserve the character of the Avent Ferry Corridor. The adoption of this amendment will also remove the Mission Valley Area Plan, while maintaining its recommendations for targeted growth and urban design at the shopping.

### **Policy LU 2.1 - Placemaking**

*Development within Raleigh's jurisdiction should strive to create places, streets, and spaces that in aggregate meet the needs of people at all stages of life, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity, and maintain or improve local character.*

### **Policy LU 2.2 Compact Development**

*New development and redevelopment should use a more compact land use pattern to support the efficient provision of public services, improve the performance of transportation networks, preserve open space, and reduce the negative impacts of low intensity development.*

### **Policy LU 2.5 Healthy Communities**

*New development, redevelopment, and infrastructure investment should strive to promote healthy communities and active lifestyles by providing or encouraging enhanced bicycle and pedestrian circulation, access, and safety along roads near areas of employment, schools, libraries, and parks.*

### **Policy LU 5.1 Reinforcing the Urban Pattern**

*New development should be visually integrated with adjacent buildings, and more generally with the surrounding area. Quality design and site planning is required so that new development opportunities within the existing urban fabric of Raleigh are implemented without adverse impacts on local character and appearance.*

### **Policy LU 7.6 Pedestrian-Friendly Development**

*New commercial developments and redeveloped commercial areas should be pedestrian-friendly.*

### **Policy LU 6.1 Composition of Mixed Use Centers**

*Mixed-use centers should be comprised of well-mixed and integrated developments that avoid segregated uses and have well planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for active living and interaction.*

### **Policy LU 8.9 Open Space in New Development**

*New residential development should be developed with common and usable open space that preserves the natural landscape and the highest quality ecological resources on the site*

- The Avent Ferry Corridor plan establishes a policy framework that is intended to produce great urban places with accessibility for all modes of travel through a more compact land use pattern. Urban form guidance for building frontages will create pedestrian-friendly urban environments. The conceptual design figures for redevelopment at the shopping centers are intended to guide the high-quality development with improved access and well-planned public spaces. The proposed streetscape plan will incorporate enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to promote healthy and active lifestyles by improving safety and user comfort of the corridor. The plan also identifies thirteen points along the corridor for safer pedestrian and bicycle crossings that will enhance movement across Avent Ferry Road.



### **Policy LU 5.2 Managing Commercial Development Impacts**

*Manage new commercial development using zoning regulations and through the conditional use zoning and development review processes so that it does not result in unreasonable and unexpected traffic, parking, litter, shadow, view obstruction, odor, noise, and vibration impacts on surrounding residential areas.*

### **Policy LU 7.1 Encouraging Nodal Development**

*Discourage auto-oriented commercial “strip” development and instead encourage pedestrian-oriented “nodes” of commercial development at key locations along major corridors. Zoning and design standards should ensure that the height, mass, and scale of development within nodes respects the integrity and character of surrounding residential areas and does not unreasonably impact them.*

### **Policy LU 7.2 Shopping Center Reuse**

*Promote the redevelopment of aging and high vacancy shopping centers into mixed-use developments with housing and public recreation facilities.*

### **Policy LU 7.4 Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses**

*New uses within commercial districts should be developed at a height, mass, scale, and design that is appropriate and compatible with surrounding areas.*

- The new policies in this amendment are intended to promote redevelopment that allows for increased development capacity while maintaining local character and appearance. Building height recommendations for Mission Valley maintain a reasonable height at the edges of the shopping center and allow for greater internal height and recommends the shopping center be rezoned to have an Urban Limited Frontage. This will require new buildings be located closer to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The guidance for Mission Valley is intended to produce greater intensity pedestrian- and transit-oriented development in an area of the corridor that is furthest from low-density residential neighborhoods. Height guidance for the Aventura Shopping Center suggests a three-story limit along Aventura Road and recommends a Green Frontage. This frontage type would guide future redevelopment to compliment the adjacent neighborhoods by requiring greater building setbacks and intervening landscaping. This frontage type also maintains walkability by prohibiting parking between new buildings and the street. These new policies are intended to mitigate unreasonable impacts of potential redevelopment on surrounding residential areas.

#### **Policy LU 4.6 Transit Oriented Development**

*Promote transit-oriented development around planned transit stations through appropriate development regulation, education, station area planning, public-private partnerships, and regional cooperation.*

#### **Policy LU 4.9 Corridor Development**

*Promote pedestrian-friendly and transit supportive development patterns along multi-modal corridors designated on the Growth Framework Map, and any corridor programmed for “transit intensive” investments such as reduced headways, consolidated stops, and bus priority lanes and signals.*

#### **Policy LU 6.2 Complementary Uses and Urban Vitality**

*A complementary integration and mixture of land uses should be provided within all growth centers and mixed-use centers and developments to maintain the City’s livability, manage future growth, and provide walkable and transit accessible destinations. Areas designated for mixed-use development in the Comprehensive Plan should be zoned consistent with this policy.*

- The Wake County Transit Plan identifies Western Boulevard as the western route of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. At the northern end of the plan area, this high frequency service will provide residents and commuters with the best transit available in the state. The policies in the plan are intended to focus the most intense and urban mixed-use development in this area and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access.

#### **Policy LU 8.3 Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods**

*Recognize the importance of balancing the need to increase the housing supply and expand neighborhood commerce with the parallel need to protect neighborhood character, preserve historic resources, and restore the environment.*

#### **Policy LU 8.5 Conservation of Single-Family Neighborhoods**

*Protect and conserve the City’s single-family neighborhoods and ensure that their zoning reflects their established low-density character. Carefully manage the development of vacant land and the alteration of existing structures in and adjacent to single-family neighborhoods to protect low density character, preserve open space, and maintain neighborhood scale.*

- The building form and height guidance in this amendment are intended to preserve the existing character of adjacent neighborhoods. New policy guidance for the Avent Ferry Shopping Center recommends a three-story height limit and a Green Frontage, which maintain the integrity and character of adjacent neighborhoods by limiting building height and requiring generous setbacks and intervening landscaping. This policy framework will also enhance the adjacent neighborhoods by improving access and walkability with enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and prohibiting parking between new buildings and the street. The intersection of Merrie Road and Avent Ferry Road is also identified for an improved pedestrian crossing.

## **B. Streetscape Plan**

This section of the staff report analyzes 2030 Comprehensive Plan policies relevant to the proposed streetscape improvements as called for in the new policy *AP-AF-4 Streetscape Improvement*.

### **Policy AP-AF-4 Streetscape Improvement**

*Establish “Complete Streets” that accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists to provide multimodal transportation options to the corridor’s many users. To guide these improvements, the recommended streetscape design should be adopted as a streetscape improvement plan in accordance with Resolution No. 2013-851.*

### **Policy T 2.1 Integration of Travel Modes**

*Promote and develop an integrated, multimodal transportation system that offers safe and attractive choices among modes including pedestrian walkways, bikeways, public transportation, roadways, railways, and aviation.*

### **Policy T 2.16 Assessing Changes in Road Design**

*Subject all proposed changes to the treatment of existing vehicular rights-of-way, such as changes to the number and type of travel lanes, to a study prior to implementation to determine the impacts on the larger network and the level of service of all relevant modes*

### **Policy T 3.1 Complete Street Implementation**

*For all street projects and improvements affecting the public right-of way, consider and incorporate Complete Street principles and design standards that provide mobility for all types of transportation modes (pedestrian, bicycle, auto, transit, freight) and support mutually-reinforcing land use and transportation decisions. Work with NCDOT to implement these design standards for state-maintained roads within the City’s jurisdiction.*

### **Policy T 3.2 Accommodating Multiple Users**

*Ensure that all new roadway projects and major reconstruction projects provide appropriate and adequate right-of-way for safe and convenient movement for all users including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists. Manage the use of rights-of-way to best serve future travel demand (e.g., Multimodal Streets—incorporate wider sidewalks where appropriate).*

- The recommended streetscape design establishes an enhanced street that accommodates pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit riders. The design was the product of a multi-year planning process that incorporated community input and technical expertise to create a custom streetscape that improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure while maintaining an efficient level of service to motorists.

### **Policy T 5.1 Enhancing Bike/Pedestrian Circulation**

*Enhance pedestrian and bicycle circulation, access, and safety along corridors, downtown, in activity and employment centers, at densely developed areas and transit stations, and near schools, libraries, and parks.*

### **Policy T 5.2 Incorporating Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements**

*All new developments, roadway reconstruction projects, and roadway resurfacing projects in the City of Raleigh's jurisdiction should include appropriate bicycle facilities as indicated in the Recommended Bicycle Network of the 2008 City of Raleigh Bicycle Transportation Plan.*

### **Policy T 5.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility**

*Maintain and construct safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle facilities that are universally accessible, adequately illuminated, and properly designed to reduce conflicts among motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.*

### **Policy T 5.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity**

*Continuous pedestrian and bicycle networks should be provided within and between existing and new developments to facilitate safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel free of major barriers and impediments such as cul-de-sacs and large parking lots.*

### **Policy T 5.13 Pedestrian Infrastructure**

*Ensure that streets in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity (e.g., employment centers, residential areas, mixed-use areas, schools) support pedestrian travel by providing such elements as frequent and safe pedestrian crossings, large medians for pedestrian refuges, bicycle lanes, frontage roads with on-street parking, and/or grade separated crossings.*

- The proposed streetscape design significantly enhances the pedestrian and cyclist experience along Avent Ferry Road. Sidewalks are recommended along the corridor from end to end, including generous fourteen-foot urban scale sidewalks from Western Boulevard to Varsity Drive, an area anticipated for the highest levels of pedestrian activity. This enhanced and continuous pedestrian infrastructure will increase mobility and connectivity and improve walkability. The streetscape design is also consistent with the adopted Bicycle Transportation Plan which recommends a *Separated Bikeway* along Avent Ferry Road between Western Boulevard to Gorman Street, and a *Bicycle Lane* from Gorman Street to Tryon Road; this guidance is reflected in the proposed streetscape.

### **Policy T 3.4 Pedestrian-Friendly Road Design**

*Design Complete Street amenities with the pedestrian in mind, avoiding the use of traffic control and safety devices that favor vehicles.*

### **Policy T 3.5 Medians**

*Limit the use of undivided multi-lane streets and utilize raised or landscaped medians, where feasible, to improve safety and vehicle throughput while providing opportunities for pedestrian refuges and landscaping.*

### **Policy T 7.1 Safety Improvements**

*Work with all parties necessary to improve the multi-modal transportation system so that safe routes for motorists, transit riders, bicycles, and pedestrians are provided.*

### **Policy T 7.2 Traffic Calming**

*Incorporate traffic calming techniques and treatments into the design of new or retrofitted local and neighborhood streets, as well as within school, park, and pedestrian-oriented business areas, to emphasize lower auto speeds, encourage bicycling and walking, and provide pedestrians with a convenient, well-marked, and safe means to cross streets.*

- The proposed streetscape design will enhance pedestrian safety and comfort by improving the sidewalk infrastructure, applying planted medians, and implementing signalized pedestrian crossings where warranted.

## **5. The impact the proposed amendment has with regard to:**

### **A. Established property or proposed development in the vicinity of the proposed amendment;**

While this amendment does not change existing zoning entitlements on any property, it does establish new policy guidance in the event of future rezoning and redevelopment.

### **B. Existing or future land use patterns;**

The intent is to alter future land use patterns and guide the form of future development.

### **C. Existing or planned public services and facilities;**

The amendment takes into consideration planned public services and facilities. It is not anticipated that the development pattern envisioned in this plan would put undue stress on public services and facilities.

### **D. Existing or planned roadways;**

The amendment takes into consideration existing and planned roadways and identifies new public streets.

**E. The natural environment, including air, water, noise, stormwater management, wildlife and vegetation;**

This area of Raleigh represents a diverse landscape from high intensity shopping centers to suburban natural refuges like Lake Johnson Park. To address this diverse character, the plan enhances the natural beauty of the corridor by providing street trees and planted medians from end to end, enhanced landscaping at the Avent Ferry Shopping Center, and well-planned public open space at Mission Valley. The streetscape improvement plan provides the opportunity to integrate enhanced stormwater management measures in planted medians. Noise from redevelopment will be mitigated by concentrating development away from low density residential areas. The policy changes proposed here are anticipated to alter the existing and forecasted impacts.

**STAFF FINDING:**

The request is consistent overall with identified Comprehensive Plan policies.

**STAFF COORDINATOR:**

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