

Capital Boulevard North: Draft Policies and Actions

The products of the Capital Boulevard North Corridor Study will be combined in a final study report in late 2020. This report will be presented to the City Council for review and adoption. One part of the final study report will be a set of written policies and actions. These policies are intended to become part of Raleigh's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. That means they are official city policies for guiding public investments, new development, and community amenities. The actions give City departments, other agencies, and community organizations specific goals for putting the policies into effect. This list is a draft of the policies and actions to be included in the final study report. It is organized according to the four Vision Themes created at the beginning of the study process. Each Vision Theme and its description is shown above the policies that reflect it. [Note: Some policies or actions refer to maps that are not shown. For information about the maps, please visit the study web page at www.raleighnc.gov/capital-boulevard-north-study. Numbering of policies and actions may change in the final study report.]

Vision Theme: Flow

Capital Boulevard will be a safe, direct, reliable, and high-capacity connection for travel by all modes of transportation to centers of employment and economic activity in Raleigh and the surrounding region.

Topic: Vehicular Transportation

Policy 1.1: Accommodate the traffic volume projected in 2045 by the Triangle Regional Model while also maintaining access to land uses along the corridor.

Policy 1.2: To the maximum extent possible, preserve existing mature trees along Capital Boulevard during road construction, particularly in the area between Spring Forest Road and Oak Forest Drive

Policy 1.3: Ensure that stormwater impacts to private property and natural systems from new transportation projects are minimized. Include vegetation and green stormwater infrastructure in new transportation projects to the maximum extent feasible.

Topic: Transit

Policy 1.4: Interchange design should anticipate future incorporation of bus rapid transit stations.

Topic: Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Policy 1.5: For capital projects that implement an interchange, grade separation, or improved street section based on this plan, select and seek funding for implementation of bicycle facilities on adjacent and/or parallel streets to be constructed in a similar time frame as the street project, as called for in the Bike Raleigh plan.

Action 1.1: Amend the BikeRaleigh plan to add or revise bicycle facilities as shown on the Bicycle Facility Map. Transitions between different types of bicycle facilities on the BikeRaleigh map should be constructed as shown in the Bicycle Design figures.

Action 1.2: Pursue quick-build bicycle projects for some locations near the corridor. Consider temporary, low cost, and low maintenance options that can be constructed quickly and serve as interim facilities until more permanent facilities are constructed.

Action 1.3: As part of the Capital Area Greenway Master Plan update, consider the creation of off-road trail facilities which may not be connected with greenway trail facilities. If pursued, explore use of these facilities in the Capital Boulevard North area. Example locations include the unbuilt right-of-way such as Pine Knoll Drive between Mayflower Drive and Old Buffalo Road and the utility easements/stream corridor between Starmount Drive and Oates Drive.

Action 1.4: Encourage the I-440/Capital Boulevard interchange improvement project to include a safe, direct, and convenient pedestrian connection through the interchange.

Vision Theme: Go

Capital Boulevard will provide for safe and accessible local travel for all modes of transportation. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities will connect transit, parks, neighborhoods, shopping, and employment while reducing conflicts with vehicle traffic. Local streets should be designed with all users in mind and help to activate nearby land uses.

Topic: Access to Transit

Policy 2.1: Increase pedestrian/overall safety through grade separation, parallel street network development, or other capital projects.

Policy 2.2: Encourage reservation of land on both sides of Capital Boulevard between Sumner Boulevard and Old Wake Forest Road for the construction of a pedestrian bridge in this location.

Policy 2.3: Where an existing through street is converted to right-in/right-out or grade separation without access to Capital Boulevard, identify appropriate locations for facilities to maintain a similar or better level of pedestrian access across Capital Boulevard, including pedestrian bridges. Any reduction in pedestrian level of service for crossing Capital Boulevard should be minimized in magnitude and duration.

Action 2.1: Construct improved pedestrian crossings as shown in the Pedestrian Facility Map. Explore the possibility of a pedestrian crossing at Baugh Street and Buffalo Road to connect with the Raleigh Housing Authority (RHA) development on the north side. If a crossing is installed, improve the sidewalk through the RHA development to a multi-use path.

Topic: Street Connections

Policy 2.4: Through the rezoning process, encourage the dedication and construction of streets identified as "Secondary Streets" on the land use vision maps.

Policy 2.5: Consider allowing greater height and density than what is recommended by Table LU-2 for sites that contain streets on the Street Plan Map. Construction of new public streets should take precedence over the need for affordable housing, open space, or retail space when evaluating rezoning and redevelopment of these sites. Carefully balance additional density with appropriate neighborhood transitions.

Policy 2.6: Allow the "Blueway" street section to be used as an alternate for Secondary Streets identified on the land use vision maps.

Policy 2.7: Evaluate the operational feasibility and potential benefits of creating new types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that fill small gaps in the existing network, can be constructed quickly, or have been difficult to implement in the past due to divergence from adopted facility types. Consider incorporating this work into the Greenway Master Plan update process.

Action 2.2: Identify and pursue opportunities to acquire land, including as part of capital projects, for the implementation of the Marsh Creek Greenway between Brentwood Park

and N. Raleigh Boulevard. Identify and seek to implement connections between the Marsh Creek greenway and Hill Street Park as well as with civic spaces in the Highwoods/Westinghouse land use vision area.

Topic: Business and Neighborhood Circulation

Policy 2.8: Explore the acquisition of property for the creation of a pedestrian connection between Stonybrook Road and the Marsh Creek Greenway, on the south side of Brewton Place. Integrate this connection with on-road bicycle facilities on Brentwood Road and Skycrest Road, possibly through implementation of the Hill Street Master Plan and Greenway Master Plan update.

Policy 2.9: New interchanges should be designed such that local vehicle lanes are constructed as close as possible to the existing grade of adjacent developments where they abut the street. Where this policy conflicts with the desire for site access as described in Policy 1.1, this policy should be given priority.

Policy 2.10: Encourage active uses, as opposed to loading and refuse areas, in areas adjacent to and facing neighborhoods and where commercial uses transition to residential uses.

Policy 2.11: Improve the safety, appearance, and connectivity of transition areas between commercial and residential uses.

Action 2.3: Seek novel ways to utilize underused spaces, such as vacant retail outlets and existing public right-of-way, in the corridor for public benefit. Consider the installation of small-scale park facilities and amenities that attract positive, healthy activity and raise visibility of out-of-the-way areas. Explore this concept in the parks master plan update.

Action 2.4: Explore the feasibility of installing lighting, "blue light" emergency phones, cameras, and public Wi-Fi networks along the proposed bicycle and pedestrian network, including in the form of "safety refuges" that combine all four elements listed. If pursued, integrate these items with the "loops" described in Action 4.9.

Vision Theme: Grow

A mixed-use corridor that provides residential choices, economic opportunity, and a variety of goods and services for Raleigh's residents and workers.

Topic: Activity Centers

Policy 3.1: Interchange design should minimize and mitigate impacts on nearby development. Impacts to be considered should include access, visibility, and future development potential.

Policy 3.2: As existing commercial areas redevelop, encourage urban form and land uses that support transit ridership and create a comfortable and accessible public realm on secondary streets near Capital Boulevard.

Action 3.1: Once the TOD overlay district is applied to the land use vision areas, amend the UDO to state that build-to requirements do not apply to Capital Boulevard within the TOD overlay district.

Action 3.2: When large commercial sites are rezoned, encourage the inclusion of office and employment uses, including through zoning conditions that limit the square footage of single-story retail.

Action 3.3: Amend the Urban Form Map as shown in the land use vision area maps.

Action 3.4: If BRT stations are planned for Capital Boulevard North, initiate zoning map amendments to apply the TOD Urban Form designation to Capital Boulevard and the TOD overlay zoning to areas surrounding stations. Where the TOD Urban Form designation would overlap with a City Growth Center or Mixed Use Center, retain the existing designation.

Action 3.5: Draft new provisions in the UDO to prevent Capital Boulevard from being designated as a primary street within the TOD overlay district.

Action 3.6: Create zoning code language to allow additional density by-right in return for inclusion of additional vegetation, particularly in the form of "green walls" facing Capital Boulevard.

Topic: Housing Supply and Neighborhood Character

Policy 3.3: Facilitate a high level of design quality for large commercial sites such as Triangle Town Center through staff assistance in planning of infrastructure, building orientation, landscaping, and open space.

Policy 3.4: Support the accessibility of housing in the study area for residents of all income levels through preservation of existing affordable housing units and creation of new affordable housing units. Affordable in this policy may mean naturally occurring, market-rate affordable housing as well as subsidized housing.

Policy 3.5: Through the rezoning process, encourage all new development 7-stories or greater and containing a residential component to reserve as affordable units (as defined by

Raleigh Housing & Neighborhoods or adopted City policy) EITHER 5% of the total number of residential units OR one-half of the number of units lost through demolition of existing housing, whichever is greater.

Action 3.7: Investigate the potential for modifying zoning requirements or awarding grants to encourage existing commercial buildings to be retrofit or internally subdivided to allow for low cost residential units or small-scale retail spaces.

Action 3.8: Explore the creation of a dedicated fund or grant program for repairs and rehabilitation of multi-family buildings that are affordable at market rate for low- and middle-income households. Funding should be contingent on the buildings remaining in good repair and affordable for a specified period of time.

Action 3.9: Organize at least one workshop per year for at least two years, led by City staff, to educate existing residents of Brentwood, Starmount, and other neighborhoods with high rates of home ownership about homeowner repair programs, down payment assistance programs, the Accessory Dwelling Unit development option, National Historic Register listing, and other resources that can help homeowners maintain their homes.

Action 3.10: Evaluate the feasibility of using traditional or synthetic Tax Increment Financing to pay for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, safety stations, and micro-parks in the corridor area with any surplus proceeds dedicated to increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Action 3.11: Evaluate the feasibility of a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase ordinance in the City of Raleigh.

Topic: Business Development

Policy 3.6: Expand opportunities and resources that will alleviate detrimental or inequitable impacts to residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations related to new infrastructure and redevelopment.

Action 3.12: Create a database of organizations operating in the corridor that may qualify for Community Enhancement Program grants. Invite the organizations to at least one meeting each year for at least two years to share information about the grant program.

Action 3.13: Create a database of small, local businesses in the corridor. Provide this information to owners/lease agents of new mixed-use or commercial developments to encourage them to fill new retail space with existing businesses.

Action 3.14: Create a grant program to assist small, local businesses with the cost of leasing commercial space. Consider making the grant renewable on an annual basis for a limited number of years.

Action 3.15: Provide training and educational resources to small businesses in the corridor about strategic planning, finance, marketing, and other topics to help improve businesses' economic sustainability.

Action 3.16: Conduct an economic development study of the area on the west side of Capital Boulevard between Oak Forest Drive and Durant Road and east of the railroad corridor. The study should investigate the potential for this area to be marketed as an industrial technology corridor, including identification of sites where there are constraints on development or redevelopment for industrial, manufacturing, or research users.

Action 3.17: Seek to establish a First Source agreement for city-funded construction projects in the corridor.

Action 3.18: Evaluate the City's ability to offer low- or no-interest and/or forgivable loans to property owners who wish to renovate existing shopping centers. Loan forgiveness should be contingent on some portion of space in the shopping center being reserved for local businesses

Action 3.19: Explore the feasibility and effectiveness of modifying development regulations to encourage infill of low-density shopping centers rather than complete redevelopment, particularly when existing businesses are local, emerging, or provide specialized goods or services to a nearby community. Specifically, investigate prohibitions on national chain retailers occupying more than a certain percentage of floor space in commercial or mixed-use developments.

Action 3.20: Investigate the addition of a new grant program or new criteria to city economic development grants that give preference for small, local, or ethnic businesses within older shopping centers.

Vision Theme: Show

Capital Boulevard North will be an inviting gateway, corridor, and destination that expresses Raleigh's best qualities as well as the local character of the people and geography in the corridor.

Topic: Appearance and Public Spaces

Policy 4.1: Invest in community facilities, infrastructure, and amenities that improve the appearance and quality of life of the Capital Boulevard North area. Seek partnerships with property owners, businesses, and non-profit organizations to identify solutions that leverage existing community assets.

Policy 4.2: Identify appropriate sites for murals or other public art to be incorporated into new transportation facilities including bridges, retaining walls, medians, and bus stops. Work with businesses, neighborhoods, and civic groups to identify artists who can be contracted to produce artworks.

Action 4.1: Place public art and signage on new interchanges in the corridor so that it is visible to vehicles travelling south on Capital Boulevard to create an attractive and welcoming gateway into Raleigh.

Action 4.2: Support the inclusion of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) elements in capital projects where possible.

Action 4.3: Conduct a CPTED audit of the study area.

Action 4.4: Explore modifications to the neighborhood grant program to allow registered neighborhoods to sponsor public art in commercial areas.

Action 4.5: Create a streetscape design to be applied on cross streets where new interchanges are proposed. Allow for design of some elements, particularly vertical items such as light poles and benches, to be customized according to the character of the nearby area. Include residents, businesses, and civic organizations from the adjacent neighborhoods in the design and/or selection of these items.

Topic: Community Identity

Policy 4.3: Seek opportunities for improving outdoor amenity areas, opening public streets, or adding multi-modal facilities in return for exemptions or reductions to site review requirements. Consider the use of an overlay zoning district for this purpose.

Action 4.6: Encourage activation of under-utilized surface parking lots through events such as cultural festivals, food truck rodeos, or temporary markets. Identify regulatory barriers to such activities and investigate revisions that would allow them while avoiding or minimizing impacts to other properties.

Action 4.7: Consider the creation of a Municipal Service District (MSD) for the study area. Convene a meeting of major property owners every other year for six years (three meetings)

to discuss and evaluate interest in the idea. Explore the establishment of an ongoing working group of these property owners that may be in addition to or substituted for a MSD.

Action 4.8: Investigate opportunities for branding of districts within the corridor based on neighborhood and business identity as defined by community stakeholders. If possible, incorporate branding into capital projects such as streetscapes, bridges, and BRT stations (if planned).

Action 4.9: When enough interchanges are constructed, organize a run or bike ride within the corridor area that crosses at least two interchanges. Use this event to promote the use of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as the amenity network.

Action 4.10: Support the development of neighborhood- or district-branded "loops" within the proposed bicycle and pedestrian network. Loops should use wayfinding markers and maps to encourage the use of these dedicated facilities for walking and cycling between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and transit stops.