

# BUILDING BRIDGES

## Collaborative Strategies for Housing Attainability



***Craig Logan***  
***Executive Housing Fellow,***  
***Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce***

**95,000**

Households in the region  
experienced housing cost burden (2022)

**48%**

Renter-occupied households  
experiencing housing cost burden (2022)

**21%**

Owner-occupied households  
experienced housing cost burden (2022)



START >



# How It All Started



**Regional Housing Coalition was formed in 2021.**

**Mission: Be a convener of community members, governments, for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations to unify the region's efforts to provide attainable housing to all people, regardless of neighborhood or individual characteristics.**

## Key Players: Truist Investment of \$200k





# The Challenges of Growing Cities

As the Charleston metro area welcomes an average of 33 people a day, demands and pressures grow on all sides to meet the region's needs as it expands.



No Collaboration



Regionalism was not a concern until...



Rising traffic congestion and emissions



Rising rent and home prices



Wetlands, storm water, and heir property



As South Carolina's first bus rapid transit system comes to the Lowcountry, we have an opportunity to not only preserve, but to establish parameters and guidelines that focus on improving quality of life for communities and residents.



**Preserving Existing Communities:**

Ensuring that existing residents and communities are not negatively impacted by growth

**Mixed-use Development:**

A blend of housing, jobs, shopping, social venues and other land uses within walking distance

**Quality Public Transit:**

Reliable, safe and affordable public transportation options

**Pedestrian & Bicycle Connectivity:**

Safe and easy to use pedestrian and bicycle resources



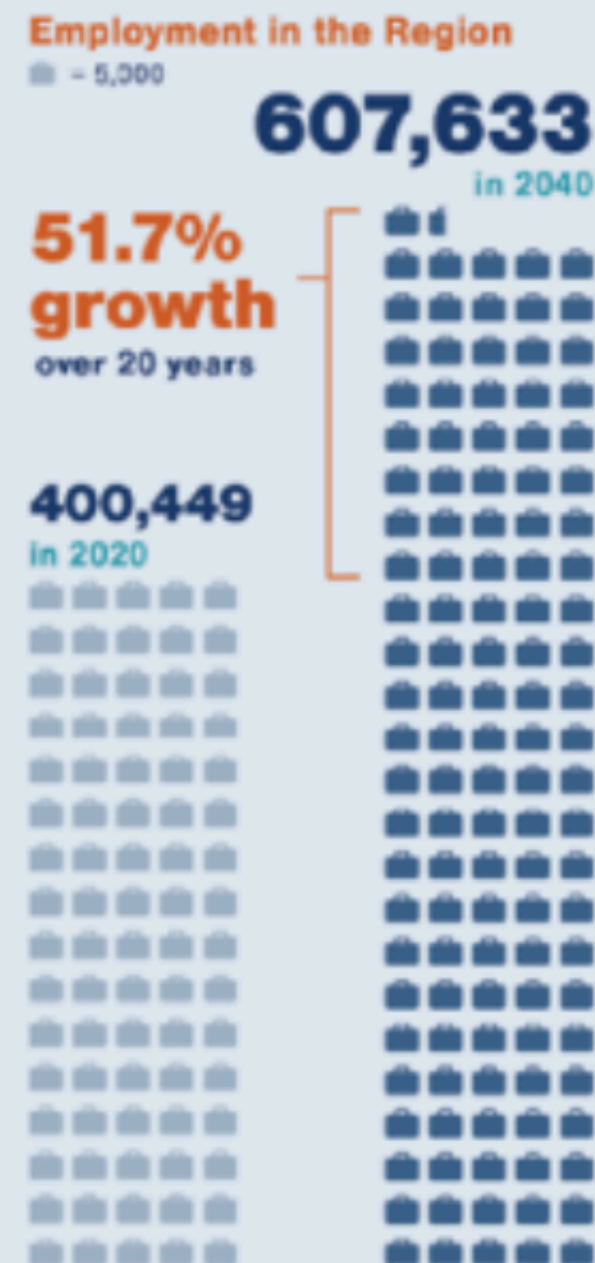
# Market Demand

Rapid Growth = Rapid Transformation

The Lowcountry Rapid Transit Corridor will inherently capture **23%** of the projected regional growth



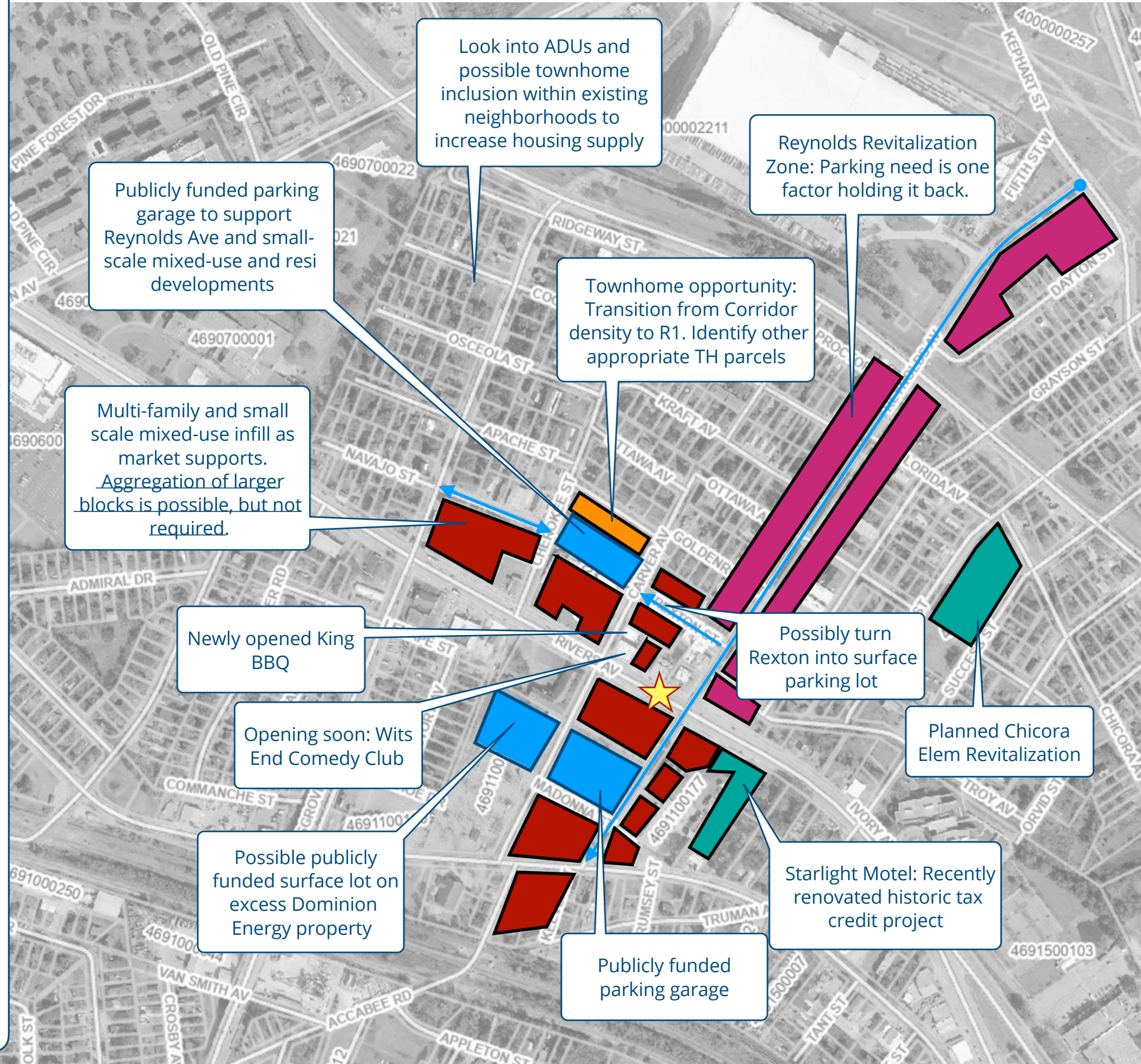
Source: BCDODG Charleston Area Transportation Study; CoStar (data as of 08/01/19-12/2019); Buri, LEHD; SB Friedman





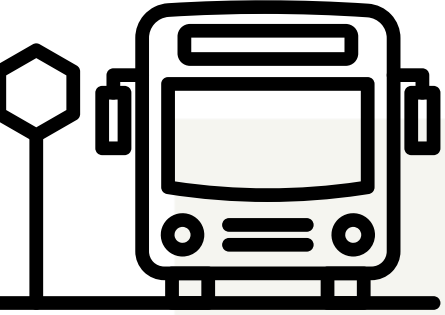
### Reynolds Stop Focus Area

- Two parallel goals work hand in hand: 1) Revitalization of Reynolds Avenue corridor with shops and businesses. 2) Public investment in parking to accelerate densification.
- Protect existing single family lots which are already small scale, and already relatively dense from a single family land use perspective
- Current rents do not support structured parking per SB Friedman report. Currently requires at least \$2.75 to \$3.00/sf, levels only seen in peninsular Charleston and certain areas of Mt. Pleasant. Rents in lower N Chs are closer to \$1.50/sf. This works against the idea of densification.
- There have been no privately funded parking decks in North Charleston, except the Top Golf deck.
- Accelerate Densification around Rivers Ave Corridor and Reynolds Avenue with several strategic parking decks and surface lots to be subsidized or publicly funded
- Start in this focused area to achieve some small wins and then encourage ripple effect.
- New Cosgrove entry into Navy Yard will be important connection.
- A poor quality streetscape, regardless of whether there's the LCRT will not deliver positive results. Skimping on the streetscape will limit the effectiveness of the LCRT and ultimately leave Rivers Ave as a place that people do not want to spend their time. A "less bad" Rivers Ave (ie: just a 10' wide multimodal path) won't make a difference, it must be transformed, at least near the stops with street trees and fixtures.
- Possibility to provide stormwater capture under parking decks or on first floor under the ramps. Example was brought up of this occurring on the peninsula.
- Parking decks to be rectangular, and freestanding for cost efficiency.



Combined notes from two breakout groups including property owners, architects and engineers. Both groups focused on Reynolds Ave stop and came to similar outcomes

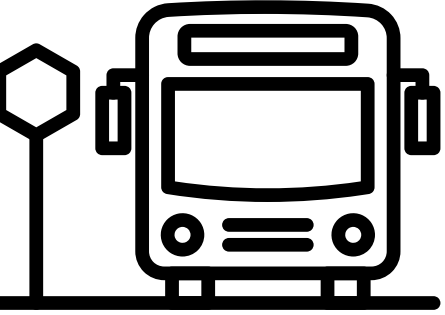




# NATURALLY OCCURRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING







## SUMMERVILLE

The majority of affordable units are not legally restricted. Strategies need to focus on preserving affordability of existing units while improving public perception of both affordable housing and density.

### KEY RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES:



- Start a Revolving Loan / Grant Rehab Program
- Create a Down Payment Assistance Program
- Leverage Publicly-Owned Land
- Establish Entitlement Incentives
- Leverage TIF Districts
- Improve Public Perception of Affordable Housing through Media/Branding Opportunities

450 LRAH UNITS  
3,700 NOAH UNITS  
1,160 HIGHER COST UNITS

780 LRAH UNITS  
7,100 NOAH UNITS  
3,160 HIGHER COST UNITS

## NORTH CHARLESTON

A high percentage of rental units within North Charleston are NOAH units without tenant protections. Recommended strategies primarily support the rehabilitation and long-term affordability of these units.

### KEY RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES:

- Establish Entitlement Incentives
- (Re)-zone For Residential Uses
- Create a Community Land Bank
- Start a Revolving Loan / Grant Rehab Program

## CHARLESTON

This Corridor segment includes the most legally restricted affordable housing units and the most market potential. Strategies to expand the number of affordable units on the Peninsula build on the existing workforce housing zoning and fee-in-lieu programs currently in place.

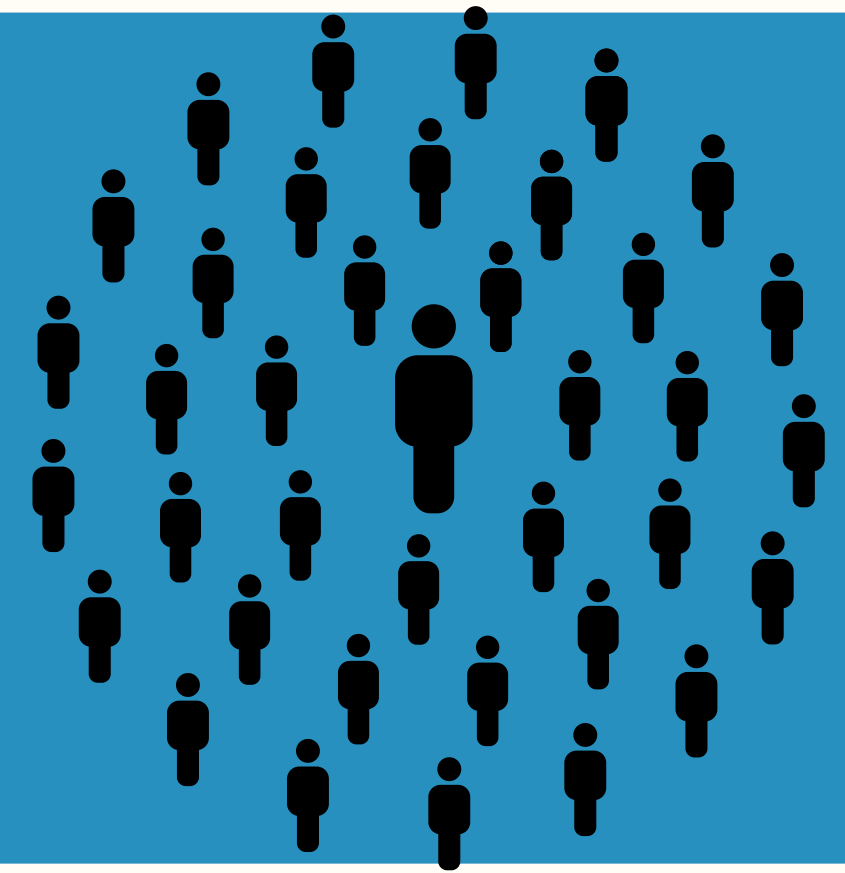
### KEY RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES:

- Establish a Permanent Affordable Housing Trust Fund Source
- Amend Workforce Housing Zoning District – Increase Fee In Lieu & Focus Affordable Housing Units in Station Areas
- Promote Accessory Dwelling Units
- Streamline Development Process

2,950 LRAH UNITS  
2,400 NOAH UNITS  
4,400 HIGHER COST UNITS



# Local Leaders Are Driving Housing and Infrastructure Solutions



Charleston County, the City of Charleston and the Town of Summerville have all taken proactive steps to address the attainable housing and infrastructure challenges in our region.



The City of Charleston approved the Housing Impact Analysis to help with data-driven decision-making.



Charleston County announced the establishment of the Local Housing Trust Fund, which will support development and preservation of attainable housing.



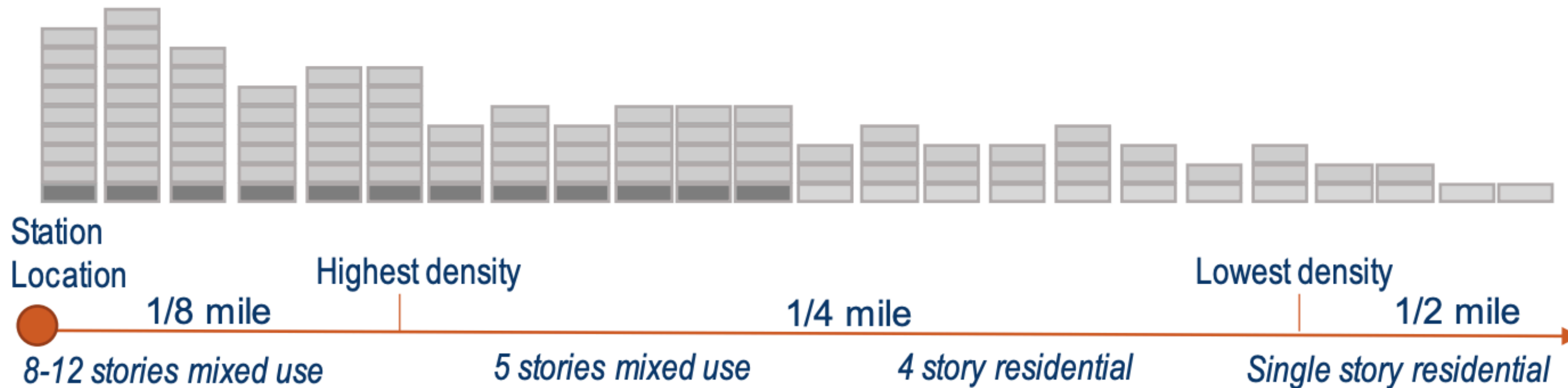
The Town of Summerville announced they are one year ahead of schedule on the Berlin G. Myers Parkway expansion and expect completion by May 2025.

# What are we doing?

**MAXIMIZE BUILDING HEIGHTS AND DENSITY NEAR STATIONS:**  
Vertically integrated, mixed-use, higher density uses immediately adjacent to transit stations foster stronger transit ridership and promote active streetscapes with ground floor retail, cafes and restaurants, and public spaces.

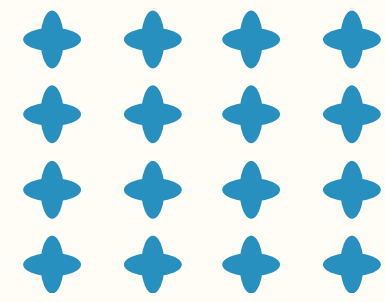


*Buildings with varying heights and mix of uses transitioning into lower density residential buildings*





# BUILDINGS FRONTING THE STREET WITH STRONG PEDESTRIAN REALM

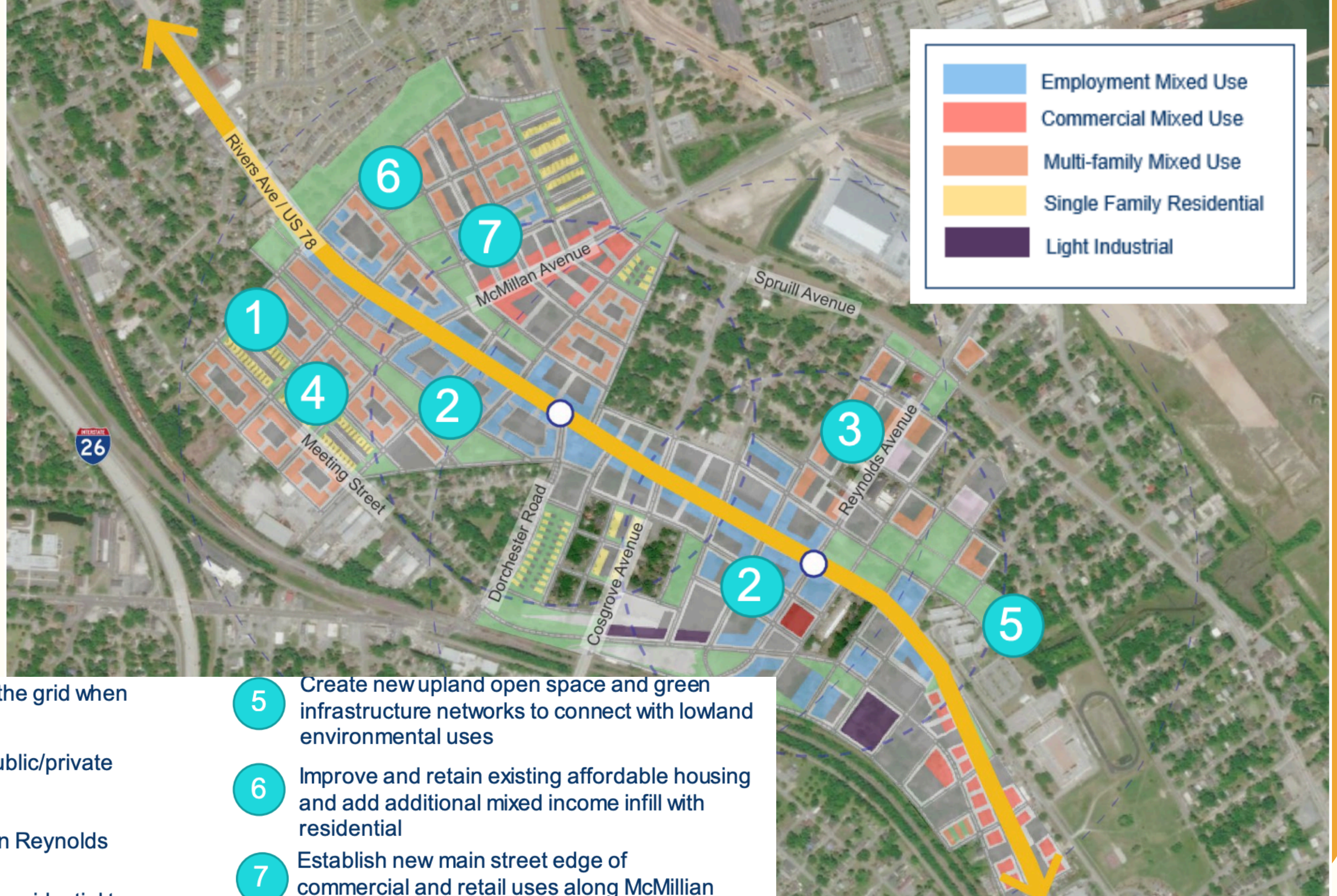


Priortizing primary building façades and building “front doors” being oriented to the street with ample sidewalks and other streetscape features that encourage pedestrian use and activity





# Reynolds Avenue and Dorchester Road Station Area







Effective policies and investments are critical for fostering transit innovation. Governments and private sectors must collaborate to fund infrastructure, develop cutting-edge technologies, and ensure that public transit remains sustainable and accessible to all.

- Government funding boosts research
- Public-private partnerships drive innovation
- Policies support green, accessible transit




# The Role of Policy and Investment








# CORRIDOR HOUSING PRIORITIES & TARGET STRATEGIES

## HOUSING PRIORITIES

- **Increase** supply of legally restricted housing units
- **Preserve** existing NOAH units
- **Improve** housing conditions and quality for residents

## TARGET STRATEGIES

				
LEVERAGE PUBLIC LAND FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING	STRENGTHEN FEE-IN-LIEU OF ON-SITE HOUSING	MULTICOUNTY BUSINESS PARK (MCBP) + FEE IN-LIEU OF TAXES (FILOT)	REVOLVING GRANT/LOAN FUND	BUILD AMERICA TIFIA/RRIF LOANS
Activate publicly owned land for affordable housing	Adjust fee-in-lieu requirement in City of	Place development sites into MCBP to unlock	Develop a grant/loan program that provides	Pursue federal funding sources that can help



TOD Policy/Strategy	Lead Organization		
	North Charleston, Charleston and Summerville	BCDOG and SCDOT	Other Entities and Private Sector
<b>1 - TOD Overlay Districts.</b> A zoning regulation that applies to the one-quarter to one-half mile walkshed of a transit station to encourage a mix of uses and minimum levels of density. Overlay districts can be applied on top of existing zoning standards.	X		
<b>2 - Street Connectivity and Complete Street Standards.</b> Street connectivity and street design standards can be applied to encourage the establishment of a street grid (walkable blocks) and the prioritization of street features that prioritize walking, biking and slower moving traffic within station areas.	X	X	
<b>3 - Parking Management.</b> Regulations that reduce the amount of land dedicated to parking uses within the station areas. Includes creation of parking maximums, shared parking, on-street parking and parking pricing policies. Additionally, surface parking can be utilized as a strategy to land bank parcels in advance of market feasibility. Doing so at the site scale would include regulations that allow for surface parking that would eventually be converted to building uses over time.	X		
<b>4 - Form-Based Codes.</b> An alternative to traditional zoning that focuses on creating strong urban forms. Regulations emphasize the relationship between building frontages and the public pedestrian realm and how those relate to the scale and types of streets and blocks.	X		
<b>5 - District Level Stormwater Management and Open Space.</b> Regulations and public sector investments that shift the creation, provision and management of stormwater and passive/active open space from a site-by-site approach to a larger subarea or district level approach. Results in more contiguous and efficient use of scarce land resources within station areas and can help to encourage green infrastructure features that support stormwater management, provide amenities and create a sense of place.	X	X	

# The Role of Policy and Local Leadership



TOD Policy/Strategy	Lead Organization		
	North Charleston, Charleston and Summerville	BCDOG and SCDOT	Other Entities and Private Sector
<b>6 - Creating A Sense of Place.</b> Regulations, public sector and private sector investments that establish and reinforce a unique and authentic sense of place. Can include requirements for distinguishable signage, public art, landscaping features, architectural standards, and other features of the built environment. Also includes a strong community-informed visioning and planning at the station area scale to articulate sense of place goals.	X	X	X
<b>7- Multimodal Performance Measures.</b> Encouraging alternatives to auto-oriented measures such as congestion (e.g. Levels of Service (LOS)) to determine transportation needs and management strategies. Can include innovative measures such as people throughput, multimodal accessibility, bicycle comfort, etc. to help elevate the role of transit, walkability and biking in the movement of people within a region. Often results in elevating alternative modes of transportation and traffic calming measures.	X	X	
<b>8 - Catalyst Joint Development.</b> Catalyst projects can create new momentum for TOD within station areas. A key strategy for doing so is to leverage public land assets within each station area to encourage new private sector investment that reflects the fundamentals of TOD. This strategy can help create momentum for TOD in locations where the market for density has yet to materialize.	X	X	X

# The Role of Policy and Local Leadership

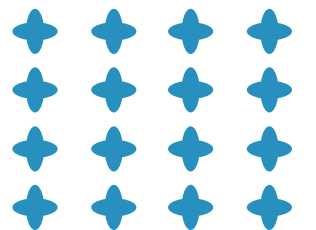


TOD Policy/Strategy	Lead Organization		
	North Charleston, Charleston and Summerville	BCDOG and SCDOT	Other Entities and Private Sector
<b>9 - Equitable TOD.</b> Ensuring that existing long-term businesses and residents' benefit from LCRT and the eventual increase in real estate values within station areas is one goal of Equitable TOD. A secondary goal is to ensure affordability of housing within the station area walkshed. Accomplishing all the above requires a range of policies and strategies as described in the LCRT's Affordable Housing Assessment & Strategies Report and highlighted in Chapter 1 of this report.	X	X	X
<b>10 - Monitoring Success and Best Practices.</b> Successful TOD implementation at the corridor and regional scale benefits from regularly monitoring implementation and refining/adapting implementation strategies. Doing so requires the establishment of a GIS-based data tracking platform to annually report on development activity and transit ridership within each station area. Doing so can also serve to foster inter-jurisdictional and public-private sector discussions to determine what specific TOD policies and strategies are working well and where. It can also reinforce and elevate success that can be used by the region in advancing TOD in other corridors around premium transit.	X	X	

# The Role of Policy and Local Leadership

# Policies for Change

- Mixed-use Zoning - from MU 1 to MU2 Workforce Housing District
- TOD Overlay District for each LCRT station
- Improved Parking
- Expand creative funding options
- Identify catalyst projects to encourage a public-private partnership that results in TOD-like development project
- TOD working group
- TOD implementation Monitoring
- Right-size parking codes/ordinances/policies







**People**  
**FIRST**  
SHAPING THE LEGACY FOR 2040

**1. Attainable Housing:** Lowcountry residents can afford to buy or rent a home and have money left to save, enjoy vacations, and put their kids through school.

**2. Future-Ready Education:** Every Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties student receives a high-quality education that prepares them for success in our region's workforce. Students graduate with a plan for their future and a path to contribute positively.

**3. Multi-Faceted Regional Transit System:** The region features a reliable, accessible and streamlined regional transit system. Cars are not required for people to have active economic, social, civic and cultural lives in the region.

**4. Affordable, High-Quality Childcare:** Parents don't have to choose between participating in the economy and providing childcare. Young families rate high-quality childcare services at reasonable costs as a top attractor to the region.

**Imagine if...**  
going to work and traffic  
weren't synonymous.



## Multi-Faceted Regional Transit System

### Plans on Track for Completion

I-526 is on track for completion. Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT) is on track for 2029 completion and the CHATS 2045 plan on Long Range Transit has been adopted.

**By 2025**

### Expanding How We Get Around

Transportation planning includes water-based transportation (ferries and water taxis). 100% of the region's electrical and battery charging infrastructure is in place for an entirely battery electric bus plan.

**By 2030**

### LCRT Extensions & Transit-Oriented Development

Significant transit-oriented development has occurred near each LCRT stop in North Charleston and Charleston. Extensions of the LCRT beyond the original line are actively being planned for construction.

**By 2035**

### A Better Way to Travel Our Region

Cars are not required to have an active economic, social, civic or cultural life in Greater Charleston. The region's bus rapid transit and CARTA systems are fully integrated, connecting every community and major centers. We are on track to launch water taxi transportation.

**By 2040**

# Political Will

- Advocate for equitable land use.
- Political will ensures consistent leadership to push policies through.
- Political leaders must have the courage to prioritize walkability and TOD goals over car-centric demands.



Political will turns ideas into action. Without it, these technically sound policy proposals risk being stalled, watered down, or ignored.

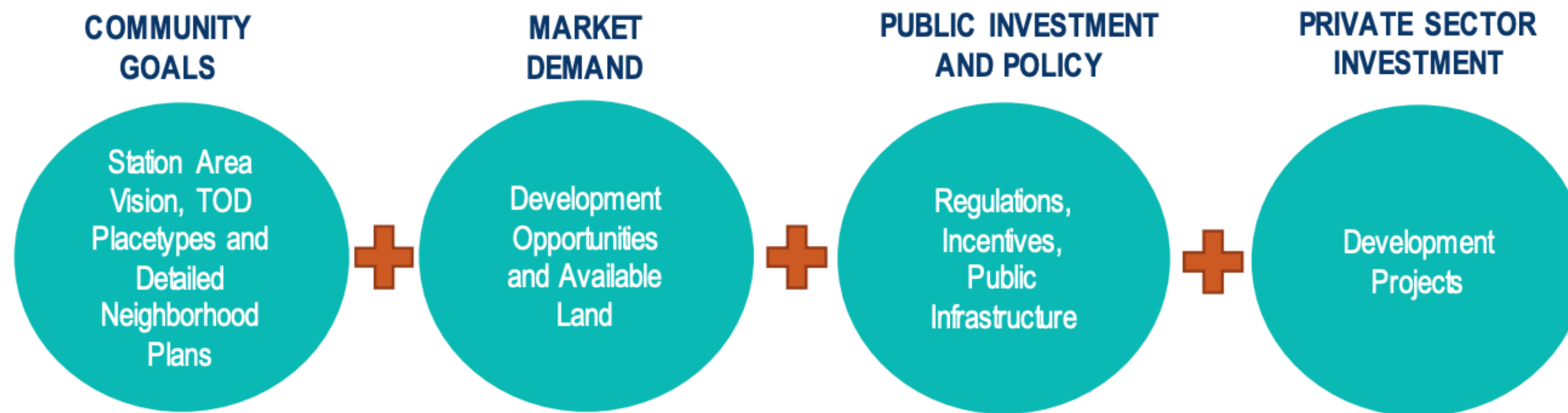
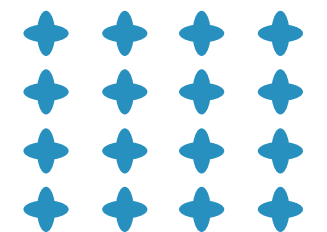


Figure illustrating key ingredients for successful TOD implementation

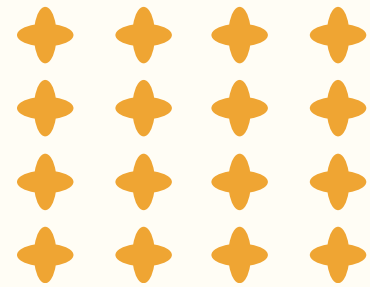








# THANK YOU



 [clogan@charlestonchamber.org](mailto:clogan@charlestonchamber.org)

