COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSISTANCE TEAMS

East Gateway

Greensboro, North Carolina
Final Report | May 2018

The American Planning Association provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to effect positive change.

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For more information on the Community Planning Assistance Teams program: planning.org/cpat
This report and other information on the Greensboro CPAT is available at: planning.org/communityassistance/teams/greensboro

Cover image: East Greensboro residents participated in a Place It! exercise during the CPAT's visit in December 2017. Photo by Ryan Scherzinger

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The Purpose of the CPAT Program

The purpose of the Community Planning Assistance Teams program is to serve communities facing limited resources by helping them address planning issues such as social equity and affordability, economic development, sustainability, consensus building, and urban design, among others. By pairing expert urban planning professionals from around the country with residents and other stakeholders from local communities, the program seeks to foster education, engagement, and empowerment. As part of each team's goals, a community develops a vision that promotes a safe, ecologically sustainable, economically vibrant, and healthy environment.

APA staff works with the community, key stakeholders, and the host organization(s) to assemble a team of planners with the specific expertise needed for the project. The team meets on-site for three to five days, during which time a series of site visits, focused discussions, and analyses are performed. On the final day, the team reports their results back to the community. A more detailed report is issued to the community at a later date.

Guiding Values

APA's professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), is responsible for the CPAT program. Addressing issues of social equity in planning and development is a priority of APA and AICP. The CPAT program is part of a broader APA Community Assistance Program, which was created to express the value of social equity through service to communities in need across the United States.

Community assistance is built into the professional role of a planner. One principle of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct states that certified planners shall aspire to "seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration." Another principle is that certified planners should aspire to "contribute time and effort to groups lacking in adequate planning resources and to voluntary professional activities."

Program Background

In recognition of the key role urban and regional planners play in shaping vibrant, sustainable, and equitable communities, the APA Board of Directors established the Community Planning Team initiative in 1995. This initiative resulted in a pro bono effort to assist an economically struggling African-American community in the East Market District of Greensboro, North Carolina. APA has continued to develop a pro bono planning program that provides assistance to communities in need.

In 2005, program efforts were increased after Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast region to include a number of initiatives, including planning assistance team projects in the affected cities of Henderson Point, Mississippi, and Mandeville, Slidell, and New Orleans in Louisiana. Another Gulf Coast recovery project included the Dutch Dialogues, which brought American planners together with Dutch experts to transform the way that Louisiana relates to and manages its water resources.

AICP broadened the scope of the CPAT program with its 2009 project in Buzzard Point, a neighborhood in Southwest Washington, D.C. Completed projects since the program's official relaunch in 2011, including Matthews, North Carolina; Story County, Iowa; Unalaska, Alaska; La Feria, Texas; Lyons, Colorado; Brooklyn/Baybrook, Baltimore; Germantown, Philadelphia; and others are all important landmarks in the development of the CPAT program as a continued effort. That list now includes the Yarborough neighborhood of Belize City, Belize, which marks the first international project for the CPAT program. CPAT is an integrated part of APA's service, outreach, and professional practice activities.

More information about the CPAT program, including community proposal forms, an online volunteer form, and full downloadable reports from past projects, is available at: planning.org/cpat.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The city of Greensboro submitted a proposal to the American Planning Association's (APA) professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and their Community Planning Assistance Teams (CPAT) program to develop a "plan for planning" for a study area provisionally named the Innovation Village. The study area, located on the city's urban fringe, has experienced the addition of many assets in recent years. It has the potential to transform into a vibrant community, offering new business opportunities, jobs, shopping, and community services, as well as serving as a major gateway. However, these assets are not well connected to each other or to the rest of the city, and there is no unifying vision for the area's future development.

The study area is identified in the Greensboro *Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan* as a future Activity Center. The city requested a CPAT to help develop a framework for a successful planning process. Key components of this "plan for planning" include:

- a detailed and innovative strategy for building public awareness and engagement, tailored to the unique characteristics, needs, and preferences of the range of stakeholder, particularly area residents
- a strategy for establishing sustained, on-message media coverage
- preliminary recommendations on opportunities for enhancing the area's built form, including "quick wins," as well as longer term recommendations
- recommendations for housing and economic development
- a governance structure to guide implementation efforts

The CPAT benefited from the considerable study of the area that has already taken place, both by the Greensboro Planning Department and an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP). Team leader Jeff Taebel, FAICP, and CPAT programs manager Ryan Scherzinger, AICP, conducted an advance visit in May 2017. They toured the study area and surrounding communities and met with stakeholders. Jeff Taebel returned to Greensboro in September to participate in a presentation and discussion with area residents on the ULI TAP report.

The full CPAT, including Jeff Taebel, Ryan Scherzinger, Kimberly Bares, Triveece Penelton, AICP, and Joanne Shelly, AICP (see Appendix C for more on each team member), convened in Greensboro December 7–11, 2017. The team visit included a series of stakeholder discussions, and a community meeting where area residents expressed their wishes for future community development through a Place It! exercise and proposed ideas for a new name for the study area. A second community meeting for residents to hear a preliminary report from the CPAT was canceled due to inclement weather. Instead, team members recorded a video in which they outlined their findings and preliminary recommendations, which the city shared with the community.

The CPAT Project Report is organized into four main sections:

Public Engagement

- results of community and stakeholder discussions
- strategies for identifying and communicating with stakeholders and appropriate messages and tools tailored to different groups
- metrics for evaluating communication and engagement efforts

Economic Development and Housing Strategies

- analysis of retail market leakage in the study area
- short- and long-term strategies for attracting/incentivizing commercial development and promoting minority entrepreneurship
- strategies for reducing the negative impact of abandoned properties, assistance for low-income and senior residents to repair and remain in their houses, and promoting new housing development for seniors, students, and new families

The Built Form

- recommendations for the following elements:

- o   gathering places
- o   excitement generators
- o   look and feel of development
- o   connections
- o   phasing: "quick wins," mid-term, and aspirational projects

Governance Structure

- •   recommendations for establishing a core leadership group to guide implementation efforts and other key partners to be engaged

PROJECT REPORT

Introduction

Project Overview

The East Gateway area has been defined in the *Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan* as a future Activity Center. The area is recognized by most residents and other stakeholders as holding tremendous unrealized potential for which there is not, as yet, a shared vision or a pathway forward. The upcoming Activity Center Plan represents an opportunity to fill this void and serve as a rallying point for the many stakeholders to work together in forging and pursuing a shared vision.

The CPAT was asked to provide recommendations for the city to use in designing the scope and selecting a consultant team for an effective planning process with emphasis on the following areas:

- a robust community engagement program to ensure that the wishes of neighborhood residents are reflected in the plan
- initial recommendations regarding placemaking, area branding, connectivity and accessibility, and economic and community development
- identification of low-cost, short-turnaround initiatives to build early momentum—"quick wins"
- a governance structure for moving forward with implementation

Study Area Context

The East Gateway area has a number of relatively new, but strong assets, including the Gateway University Research Park (GURP), Gateway Gardens, and the Hayes-Taylor YMCA. It also has interstate access and is thought by many to be a key gateway to Greensboro for travelers arriving by car from points east.

In addition to the future transformative effect of the buildout of the GURP campus, there are also several undeveloped tracts of land that could be sites for catalyst projects. However, these parcels also have development constraints including restrictions on institutional owners, topography and wetlands. Additional viable development sites exist in the area around the freeway interchange, as well as south of the freeway in unincorporated Guilford County.
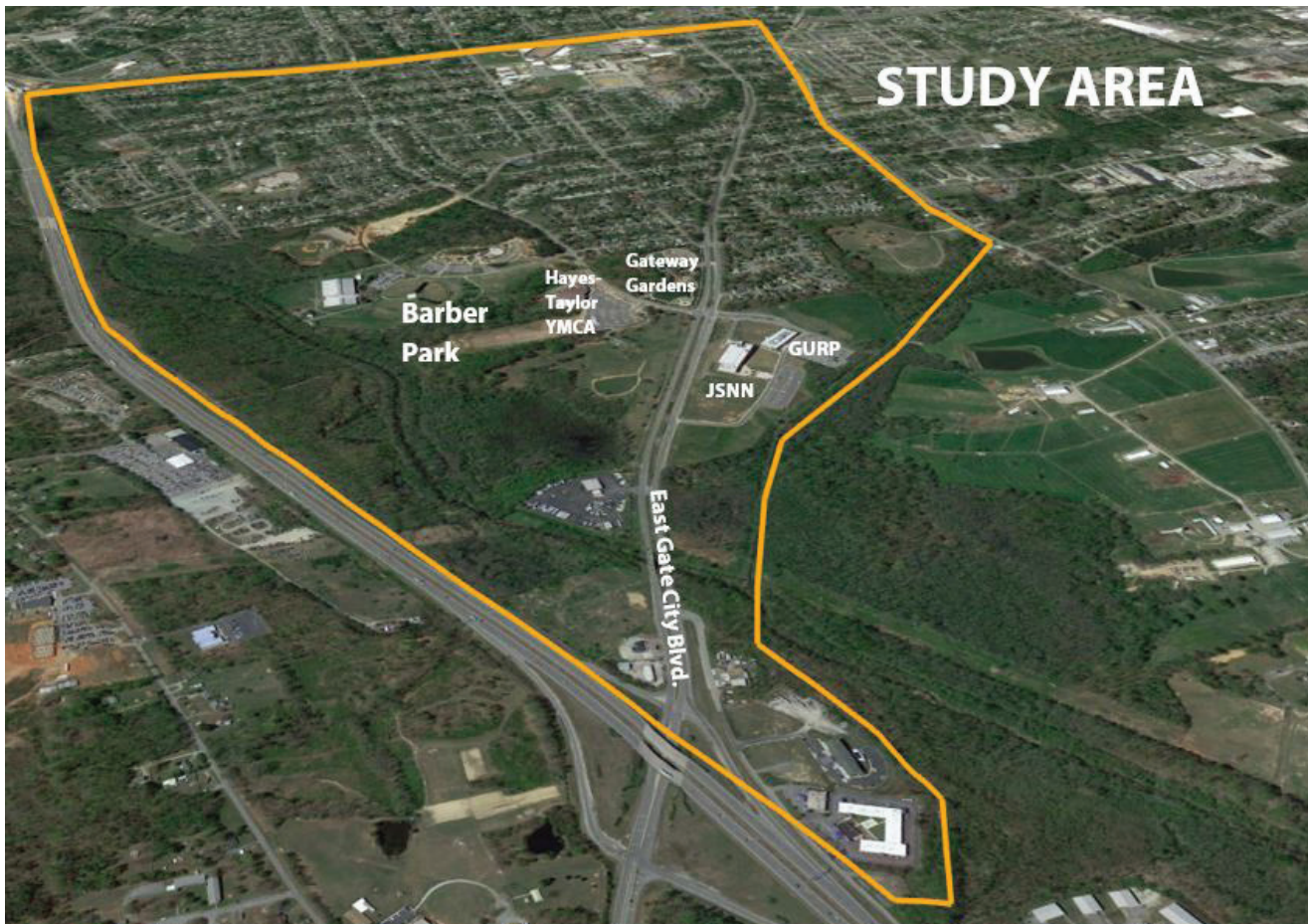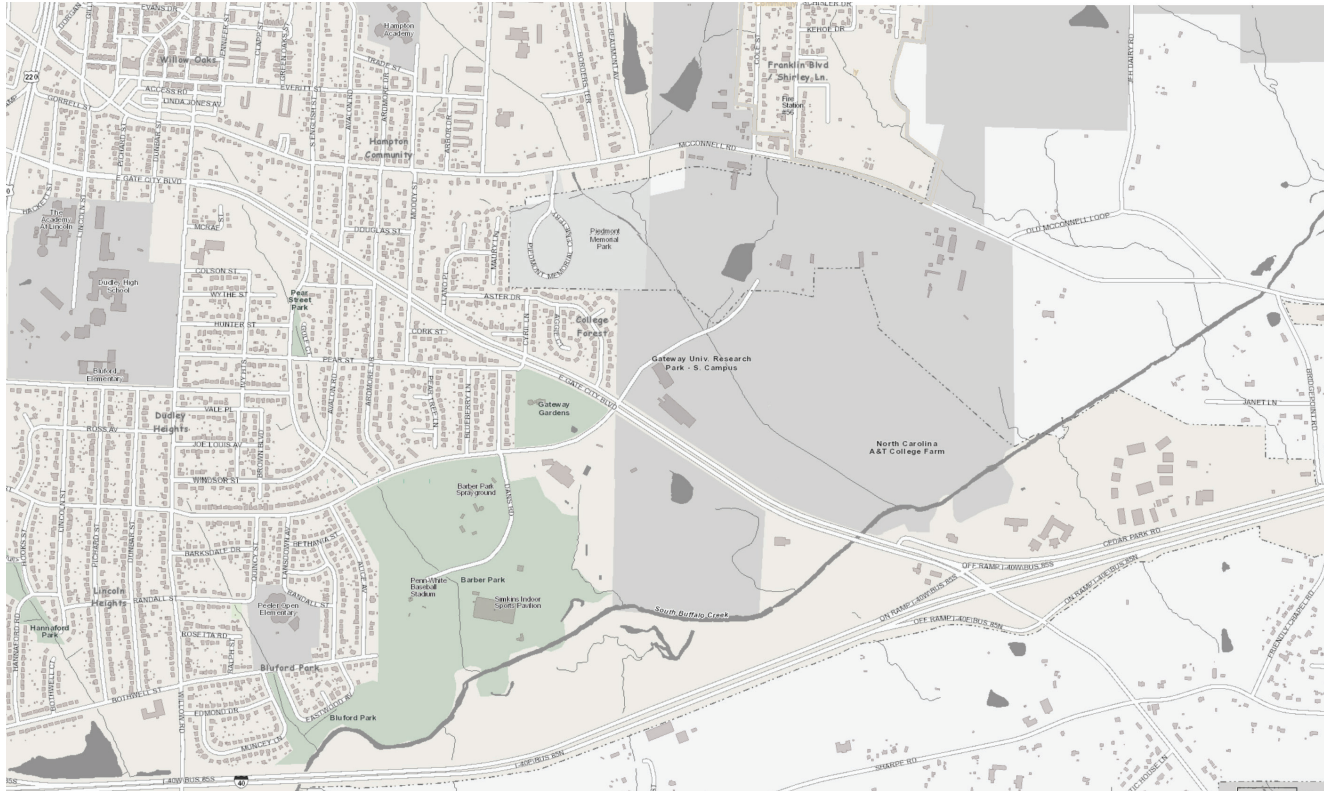
In addition to physical constraints, there are also two major challenges that must be addressed in the planning process. The first, which is relevant for all stakeholders, is building trust with residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, who were not core partners in past decision making regarding some of the area's current assets. It will be crucial that they are included on both the takeoff and the landing of this project and that the implementation partners can deliver some early successes to build support and momentum for "heavier lifts" down the road.

Secondly, the institutional partners who must come together to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts do not have a framework for regular communication. Hence, their efforts in the area are largely siloed. Getting decision makers from these institutions on the same page regarding future direction and a shared implementation agenda will be a critical measure of a successful planning process.

Community Engagement

During a five-day process that began on December 7 and ended December 11, 2017, the city planning department and CPAT members met with a broad range of stakeholders to develop a potential path forward for the East Gateway area.

Day 1-3
- Stakeholder interviews
- Community conversations

Day 4-5
- Plan for what could happen next
- Determine how to develop and share the outcomes

Stakeholder Meetings

The city and the CPAT held more than a dozen stakeholder interviews during the process, specifically meeting with:

- Greensboro officials and staff
- Guilford County planning staff
- Hayes-Taylor Memorial YMCA
- East Greensboro NOW
- Greensboro Community Development Fund
- Gateway University Research Park
- Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering
- Chamber of Commerce

CPAT asked stakeholders a variety of questions, but three were common among all the groups. See the questions and responses in the chart on the next page.

What does innovation village/campus mean to you?

Can't see "me" in that	Exclusive (don't see the neighborhoods)	Technology	Out of the box	Unknown–we may be left behind
Incorporate new ideas and develop good foundation	Research and development	Vital	High energy	Branding–No other city in the nation has as many colleges/university
Established technology and young ideas that coexist well	Different opportunities for people of all ages	Sharing common spaces and uses	University	Higher Education

What word or phrase would you use to describe the community TODAY?

The Gateway	Conservation	Traditional	Separated	Isolated
Amazing potential	Opportunity	Creative	Possibility	Fertile ground
Edge	Forgotten	Slow Progress	Promising	Potential
Boring	Technology	Sad	Truck stop	Food desert
Beautiful	Good place to prepare for tomorrow		Juxtaposed	Underserved

What word or phrase would you like to use 10 years in the FUTURE?

The Gateway	Connected	Opportunity for residents to enjoy benefits		Connected Community
Plagued with challenges	Destination	Vibrant	Utilized	Big future
Technology Innovation start up	Success	Cyclical	Creative Corridor	High energy
Well-connected	Vital	Activity–Actually see people	Recognizable	Cutting edge
Vibrant	Active	A success with more investment	Harmonic	Achieving
Traditional neighborhood design with sidewalks and more				

Community Conversations

In addition to stakeholder interviews, city planning staff and CPAT members organized a community conversation at the George C. Simkins Sports Pavilion to talk with residents and property owners about needed improvements. They also held a "pop-up" meeting for students and faculty of the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering (JSNN) to learn more about the elements in the community that could be improved. Responses related to:

- transportation options (sidewalks, bus)
- restaurants (sit down, variety)
- more services (day care, medical, dry cleaning, grocery)
- shopping center
- housing fixes and options
- activities and programs for youth
- employment opportunities
- open spaces with benches, lighting
- safety
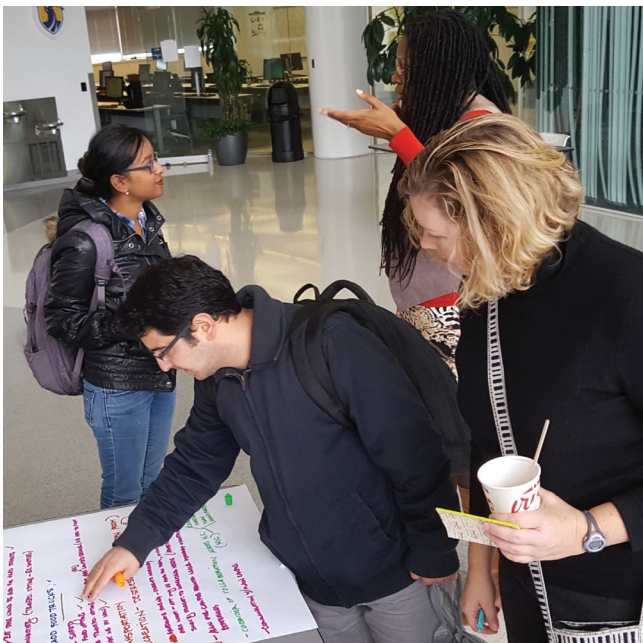
CPAT members and city staff set up at the JSNN to speak with students and faculty. They also held a community conversation where residents participated in a creative Place It! activity to envision new futures for the area. Photos by Ryan Scherzinger

Residents also provided direction on how they would spend $5,000 in the community:

- boarding up abandoned houses
- community garden
- beautifying neighborhood
- sidewalk improvements
- access to free youth programming and activities
- beautifying neighborhoods
- landscape and decorate
- program for kids/youth and resources to help with awareness and improve behavior/keep off streets
- physical: demolish liquor store
- Economic driver: trade school, apprenticeships to use neighborhood residents (paint, bricklaying, industrial arts)

Additionally, residents participated in a Place It! activity during their meeting that yielded suggestions for a new name for the community (listed below). The city could gather additional feedback on them via opinion survey.

- Paradise
- East Gateway Community
- Utopia
- Ivy Heights
- Dudley Heights
- Name after a local historic figure who's done something for the neighborhood (Jimmie I. Barber)
- Gateway Village
- Gateway to the City of Greensboro
- Renaissance
- Gateway Center or Village
- Innovation Corridor
- Innovation Gateway
- Vitality Center
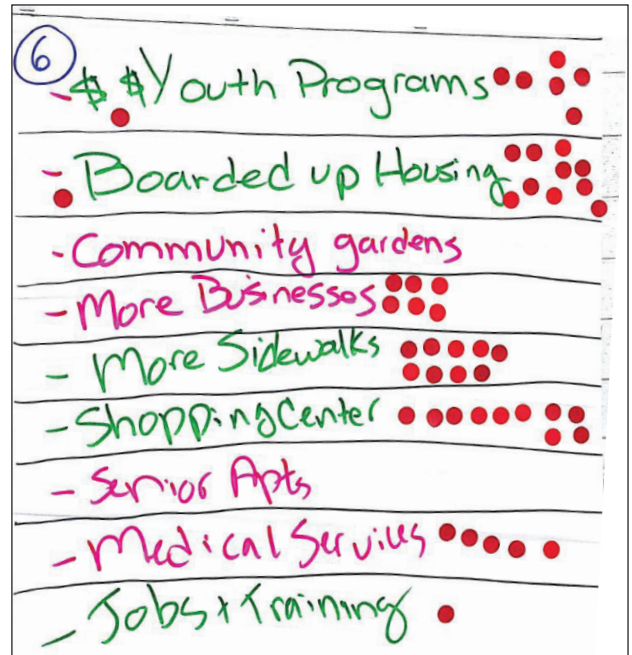
After listing ideas, individual residents voted for their top priorities with red dots. Photo by Ryan Scherzinger

An Approach for What Should Happen Next

The results of the stakeholder and community engagement activities indicated there were several stakeholders working in the community as separate entities. They included anyone—residents, advocates, institutions, officials, and others—with a vested interest in the area. All have a vision for the area. Moving forward, the city could utilize a communication and engagement approach that touches as many stakeholders as possible and complements future planning activities. It should include the following elements:

A focus on building awareness of and gathering feedback related to:

- big ideas
- improvement concepts
- recommendations
- city processes and priorities (e.g., for plan adoption, capital improvements, and more)
- implementation activities

Compiling a comprehensive list of stakeholders that is representative of the community and analyzing it to understand:

- Who is a decision maker, supporter, critic, and/or has general interest? Examples may include:
  - Grassroots
    - Black Lives Matter (Irving Allen)
    - Race and Equity Institute (Deena Hayes or Monica Walker)
    - Other Voices (Mary Kendrick or Joy Gorham Woresly)
    - Democracy Greensboro (Hugh Latham)
    - Beloved Community Center (Rev. Nelson Johnson)
  - Churches (near the Joint School on East Gate City and less than one mile away)
    - New Jerusalem Cathedral (Dr. Kevin Williams)
    - Mt. Zion Baptist Church (Pastor Pierce)
    - New Light Missionary Baptist (Dr. Cardes Brown)
    - Sung Eun Presbyterian (no contact)
    - Vietnamese Baptist Church (no contact)
    - Sharpe Road Baptist Church (no contact)
  - Government-affiliated volunteer groups
    - International Advisory Committee (Franca Jhallo or Adamou Muhammed, past president)
    - Human Relations Commission (Samuel Hawkins)
    - Commission for the Status of Women (Deborah Goddard)
  - Stakeholders' key issues and preferences
  - Best ways of reaching stakeholders
  - What stakeholders can do (amount of decision-making power)
  - How they can help advance the planning effort

Development of a central message and customizing it as needed to address specific stakeholder groups

Utilization of a short, catchy promise statement, e.g. "Get Together and Grow," and incorporating it into the central message

Enhancing the central message with topic focused key messages related to:

- Creating connections that develop relationships and foster improvements (social and physical)
- Community development that strengthens the neighborhood and leverages available programs, e.g., those for entrepreneurship and housing
- Beautification possibilities, e.g., landscaping, wayfinding, and identification signage for neighborhoods and institutions
- Youth activities, programs, and mentoring opportunities

Drawing by CPAT member Joanne Shelly

Strategies for building awareness and communicating the message and promise, which should:

- Be proactive
- Be inclusive
- Avoid technical or "planner" jargon
- Use a common vernacular
- Be upbeat and inspiring
- Be sharable
- Express milestones

Development of fictional personas that represent a broad cross-section of the community's diversifying population and incorporating them into communication and engagement tools to help make planning ideas and concepts relatable. Fictional personas provide a "face" to members of the community, which helps create empathy and understanding about their needs and wants. Personas are helpful when there are multiple stakeholders with different ideas about what needs to be developed or improved first by walking everyone through each persona's common interactions with the built environment. They are also more compelling and easier for people to remember when working together toward solutions. Example personas include:

- Mrs. Harris is a retired Greensboro employee and grandparent who has lived in the corridor community for 30 years. She enjoys cooking and trying new foods, especially Greek and Indian dishes. She loves spending time with her 15-year-old grandson and his mentor Yoshi. Mrs. Harris hopes her grandson will become a Greensboro business owner when he grows up.

- Caroline is a school teacher who has lived in the neighborhood for 20 years. She drops off her son and daughter at day care in the morning before going to work; her husband Emmett picks them up each evening. On the weekends, she and her family enjoy the activities happening at the YMCA and walking along the neighborhood sidewalks and trails near campus.

- Michael and Priya are new to the community, having recently moved into a home near Gateway University Research Park. Priya spends lots of time working at the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering on her research projects. When she can take a break, she enjoys the campus's food truck festival or takes a LimeBike to eat at a nearby restaurant. Priya always reminds her husband to pick up the dry cleaning and buy healthy snacks for their kids from the shopping area near their neighborhood.

Evaluation of communication and engagement efforts to determine if identified strategies and tools are reaching targeted audiences within the planning area. Example metrics may involve:

- analytics for websites, videos, social media, and email marketing
- media coordination efforts and corresponding results
- number of meetings held
- number of meeting participants
- comments received
- other

Communication and Engagement Tools to Consider and Explore			
PRINT	**IN PERSON**	**DIGITAL**	**NEWS MEDIA**
• fliers • posters • postcards • illustrations • handouts, e.g., fact and status sheets • comment forms • opinion surveys	• one-on-one and small group stakeholder meetings • leadership group or steering committee • interactive community conversations, e.g., workshops, charrettes, "pop-ups", and/or special events coordinated in partnership with willing stakeholder groups (Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering, East Greensboro NOW, and/or the YMCA) • working groups • briefings for public officials • neighborhood association meetings • speakers bureau • canvassing • informal coffees	• video • website or web page • social media (plus targeting) • email marketing • online town hall meetings (e.g., nextdoor, mysidewalk) • opinion surveys	• press releases • radio ads • radio programs (*The Bottom Line*) • government channel

Develop and Share Outcomes

Working together with stakeholders and community members to improve the East Gateway area, the city could employ a five-step, iterative planning process that frames a range of anticipated outcomes and how they will be developed. It should allow participants to express ideas, develop concepts, suggest refinements, review and prioritize recommendations, and begin implementation. A sample process is described in the table below. It could be incorporated into communication and engagement materials as a project timeline or process graphic.

Five-Step Planning Process			
STEP	**FOCUS**	**TIMING**	**STATUS**
1 – Learn	Big ideas developed during the five-day CPAT process plus all previous planning activities and meetings, such as the *East Gate City Boulevard Innovation Corridor* report from the Urban Land Institute (November 2016)	November 2016 December 2017	Complete
2 – Explore	Concepts based on the big ideas explored during the previous round	2018	To be determined
3 – Define	Revised versions of the concepts developed during previous round plus priority recommendations	To be determined	To be determined
4 – Adopt	Initial and final draft planning document reflecting the results of the previous rounds	2018	Fall 2018
5 – Go	Communication of anticipated improvements; implementation of the adopted plan, especially prioritized quick wins	Ongoing	Ongoing

Implementing the five-step process should involve multichanneled communication and multipronged engagement activities. The city, via a staff-level project manager, could lead it with help from a leadership team or steering committee that consists of stakeholders representing a broad cross-section of the community, including elected officials, neighborhood residents, institutions, business and economic development organizations, and others. Team or committee members would leverage their contacts to help reach and gather feedback from community members during the process.

Working groups of stakeholders and community members could also be organized to focus on the key types of corridor improvements, including community connections, community development, beautification opportunities, and youth, which the initial and final drafts of the planning document are anticipated to address. Such working groups may be especially helpful during the "Go" step. The city could begin to gauge and build interest in them early in the planning process, such as at Step 2 – Explore.

Large group community conversations and events would happen at the variety of available spaces in the planning area, such as the YMCA, Gateway Gardens, and the Joint Schools of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering. Alternating locations rather than holding all of them in one location during the planning process would expose meeting participants to new spaces and people previously viewed as unfamiliar or inaccessible.

To keep the momentum of the planning process going, quick wins, such as approved sidewalk projects, should be communicated and shared with the news media and via community newsletters or other outlets from initiation through completion. They should also be celebrated at locations throughout the planning area. Doing so will continue to help break barriers and demonstrate to the East Gateway community that the planning area is a priority and activities are happening within it.

A certain amount of grassroots neighborhood coordination, organization, and education will be necessary to ensure that community members understand city priorities and project timing, e.g., for participatory budgeting, so they can help shape them based on the improvements described in the East Gateway planning document that they help develop.

The Built Form

Gathering Places

Gathering places serve as an opportunity for members of the community to meet and exchange ideas. Outdoor gathering places take many forms and serve many purposes in a community.

- Some gathering places are more formal and some are informal. Formal spaces are typically designed to accommodate specific event types. Informal spaces are places where a chance encounter happens during a break in activity, a small group gathers for lunch, or a classroom takes advantage of nice weather to be outside. Well-designed spaces can accommodate both types of activity; people identify that location as a meeting point.
- All gathering places should have a few basic elements:
  - o easy physical access for all ages and abilities
  - o seating that allows for conversations to occur
  - o visibility (you can see the destination before you arrive)
  - o appropriate lighting levels
  - o sense of safety (created by good visibility and lighting)

Top: Urban plazas offer seating for outdoor lunches and relaxing. Bottom: A community book-lending nook and an artful pathway with seating and vegetation make unusual and inviting gathering places. Photos by CPAT member Joanne Shelly

- Adding layers of elements makes a space more inviting and desirable as a destination. Increasing this factor directly increases the probability that members of the community will meet, get to know each other, and exchange ideas. Additional elements could include:
  - landscaping that changes with the seasons, such as a vegetable garden or a perennial garden
  - a feature that provides an identity (e.g., artwork).
  - shelter from common weather (sun and rain)
  - wifi
  - waste receptacles
  - power source/charging station
  - movable seating

Amenities and landscaping help gathering places feel like a destination. Creative storytelling features help connect visitors to the place. Photos by CPAT member Joanne Shelly

Excitement Generators

Excitement generators are the components that attract people to a place and then make them want to return. An excitement generator might be as simple as free wifi, or something more complex like Thursday afternoon jazz concerts or Friday food truck rodeos. Artwork can also provide interest to a space or along a path. Artwork should convey a sense of the place and preferably be produced by local artists. Artwork can be a single installation such as a mosaic in the ground or an artistic sun shade; it can also be a fountain or a wind sculpture. Like landscaping, pieces that change with the seasons or hours of sunlight provide an opportunity for people to engage more fully with the outdoor environment. Artwork should visually appeal to children, provoke young adults to interact with it, and be a catalyst for discussion at all ages.

Food trucks and public art both create interest and excitement for gathering spaces. Photos by CPAT member Alan Levine and WiNG

Look and Feel

The look and feel of a gathering space, like the excitement generators, should provide a sense of place and be inviting, comfortable, and have an atmosphere of safety. The site layout of the basic elements, choices of materials, and color selection are important. Additional layers of elements should provide context, so a first-time visitor knows something about where they are, and repeat visitors want to return. Location of the space could dictate the formality of design, but the space should feel well kept; all the elements should be selected so as to ensure ease of care and maintenance. Disorganized spaces, broken furniture, and a weedy landscape create the perception of an unsafe place, which deters the engagement we are trying to encourage by creating gathering spaces. A simple design is often the most successful.

Gathering spaces should be well maintained and create a sense of place. Photos by CPAT member Joanne Shelly

Connections

Connections are an important part of a gathering space; as we all know, it is not always about the destination—sometimes it's about the journey. As with the space itself, the connections should be accessible to all ages and abilities; they should be easy to follow and have appropriate wayfinding elements. Pathways should include basic elements such as a resting place for longer distances, and lighting and visibility for a sense of safety. Materials selection should provide context but not impede progress. While standardized materials are typically selected for major pathways, some locations should use unique materials to emphasize points along the journey, whether it is an intersection, the crossing of paths, or an opportunity to take in a vista. Connections that intersect modes of travel—whether pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle—need to provide clear indications of who has priority and how crossings function. Signage should clearly indicate in advance upcoming intersections, so the traveler can easily negotiate the crossing or stop. At locations with the potential for high conflict, such as crossing East Gate City Boulevard, additional assistance should be employed to reinforce safe behavior until pedestrian and vehicle patterns can be established.
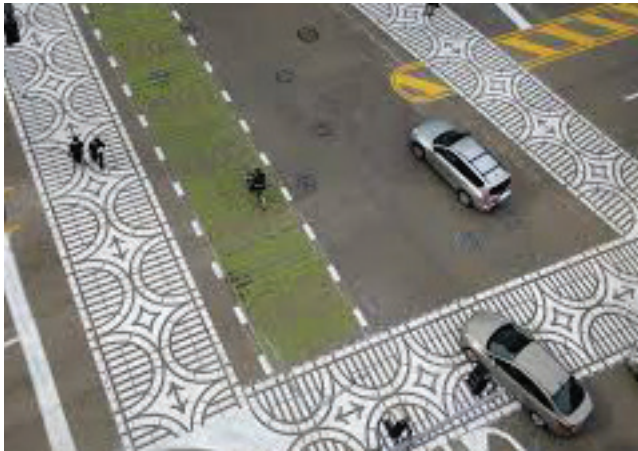
Safe, clearly marked, and attractive pathways to gathering places and other area destinations are important considerations. Photos by CPAT member Joanne Shelly and Adam Coppola

Phasing

Phasing is a way to understand a time frame or schedule that does not have specific durations or dates. We have identified three phases of development to provide context to the timing of recommendations without attempting to set deadlines. Each project will have its own schedule determined by the stakeholders as part of the scope.

Quick wins can b e implemented quickly with small budgets or no funds at all, a loose coalition of stakeholders, and a short approval process. Examples of potential quick wins are:

- o **Energizing the Gateway:** Placing signs, banners, flags, or street art at entry points and intermediate crossroads to develop a public awareness about this community as a destination. Naming and graphics should represent and celebrate the residents, the research campus, and the public facilities.
- o **Enhanced Pedestrian/Bike facilities**: Graphics should be enhanced for visibility and safety, such as signs or pavement markings at points of intersection between vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians. Use colorful crosswalks with intermediate waiting zones, quick-activated crosswalk lights, and an appropriate length for timed crossings. There should be seating and shelter at bus stops and accessible connections to the bus shelters.
- o **Food access**: Improved cross-community connections would also help facilitate the increased foot traffic that would support food truck days. Food trucks are often the first step in establishing the level of demand necessary for permanent restaurants. High-end vending machine franchises would also provide data regarding food preferences.
- o **Community gardens**: Gardens could be established in the Gateway Gardens, but also on the JSNN campus. Those could be used to engage campus staff and students mentoring residents (children and adults). Young adults should be the focus of this mentoring, to give them insight into career opportunities in their neighborhood. Specific garden locations can be temporary until the community decides to make them permanent.
- o **Status Updates:** Increase the frequency and expand the content of status updates between community members and public officials. This provides an opportunity to exchange information. Community members can report on issues, such as a blighted house. Campus and public leaders can inform community members about future development or implementation status, such as installation of bike lanes.

Left to right: Gateway signage could take many forms, but should be representative of the community and welcome visitors; community gardens could bring together many area residents and get youth involved. Photo by CPAT member Joanne Shelly

Community-led projects could help coordinate beautification initiatives and other projects in the area. Photo by CPAT member Joanne Shelly

- o **Action teams:** Status updates should result in a plan of action to resolve an issue or take advantage of a new resource. An action team could coordinate a work crew to clean up or paint a blighted house, or research bike-share expansion to the neighborhood.

Mid-Term projects will require coordination between the various community entities, involving more formal agreements and larger budgets that will require exploring funding resources and formal approval and build-out processes. Stakeholders need to begin now to form the committees and connections, and identify the roles responsibilities, tasks, and initial funding, etc., in order for these opportunities to be implemented.

- o **Bike-share expansion:** Community residents might ride the bikes through the research campus or other destinations; staff or students might ride the bikes to the YMCA. Expansion of the LimeBike service in the community would take some cross-community support and coordination in order to establish locations for routine stocking of LimeBikes, operations, maintenance agreements, and path designations.
- o **Transportation:** With the Mobility Greensboro 2040 plan in development by the Greensboro Transit authority, planning for expanded mobility service should begin in the short-term phase. The first step would be to

understand what mobility needs are being met by on-demand services such as Uber. The second step would be to identify which modes would best meet the needs now and in the later aspirational phase (see below).

- o **Cultural Paths:** This is an opportunity to tell the story of the community—past, current, and future. The idea can begin with a simple concrete or asphalt path. Community members can add feature elements such as a mosaic in the walk, made by the local children; or a sculpture of Jimmy Barber, the first black council member from the neighborhood; or a landscape made up of some of the advanced agricultural products being developed in the Nanoscience Research Lab.
- o **Restaurant cluster:** As noted previously, vending machine and food truck demand can be an indicator for permanent restaurant opportunities. Locating appropriate parcels, ensuring the public infrastructure is in place, attracting desirable restaurants, and budgeting economic development funds would be first steps towards this mid-term opportunity.
- o **Commercial Services:** Stakeholders were asked to identify services they would like to have in the community (see Community Engagement section). Commercial services would complement a restaurant cluster development.
- o **Housing:** There are two aspects to housing in the community; the first is managing the problems created by blighted housing, and the second is the need for clean, affordable homes built to 21st-century building standards. Programs should be enhanced to remove or refurbish blighted houses. Where houses are removed, infill housing incentives should be put in place to promote rapid rebuilding on the empty parcel.

Aspirational projects are those that community members have identified as desirable, but that lack the stakeholder or financial resources available at the level necessary to be implemented in the mid-term phase or, in the case of private development, may not have current market demand. Like mid-term projects, community members should begin now identifying the tasks necessary to move aspirational projects to the mid-term project list.

- o **Housing variety:** On larger parcels or in situations where several blighted houses are removed from adjacent parcels, small-scale "missing middle" housing types should be considered. Options for infill development could be as simple as a duplex or triplex or as elaborate as a retirement/continuing care facility.
- o **Transportation:** Multiple mobility modes should be supported due to increases to density (more residents, increased campus buildings and occupancy, more local commercial services). Having laid the framework with a transportation study in the mid-term phase, public and private service providers should be ready to implement improved transportation service options.
- o **Restaurants and commercial services:** In the mid-term phase, services were clustered to take advantage of proximity of location. In this phase, restaurants and services should be able to spread out along the Gate City Boulevard corridor as parcels become available and transit options expand.

Economic and Housing Investment Strategy

Business Attraction
Goal: Identify and recruit businesses to meet the needs of the current residents, employees, and visitors.
At the community meeting held at Barber Park, the community identified a desire to have the following types of businesses and services located in the community:
- fast, healthy casual eateries
- sit-down restaurants
- health care services (i.e., pharmacy and urgent care)
- grocery store

Market retail leakage describes a condition where demand exceeds supply. In other words, retailers outside the market study area are fulfilling the demand for retail products; therefore, demand is "leaking" out of the trade area. The condition, where it exists, highlights an opportunity for new retailers or for existing retailers to extend their marketing outreach to accommodate the excess demand. A retail market leakage report was generated from Esri's Business Analyst tool as of December 8, 2017, for the specific study area, as shown in the map on page 25.
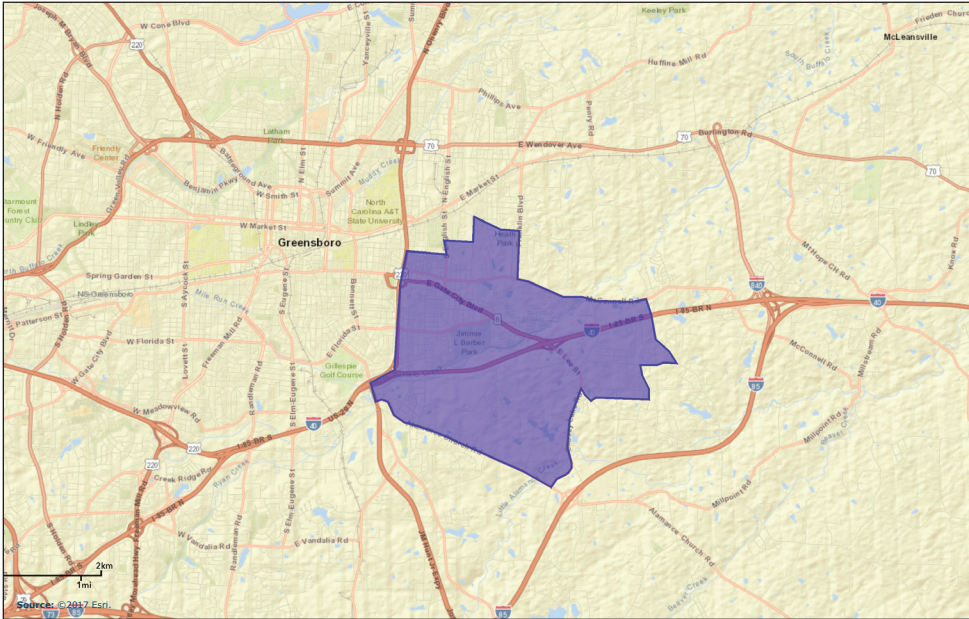
The purple highlighted area represents the market area for which a market retail leakage report was generated through Esri's Business Analyst tool for the East Gateway study area. Source: Esri.

	City of Greensboro	East Gateway Study Area
Population	286,435	9,519
Number of Households	118,403	3,719
Median Disposable Income	$35,959	$28,790
Per Capita Income	$27,716	$18,708

While median and per capita incomes are lower than that of the city, there remains substantial retail and food and drink demand due to the lack of local commercial options in the area.

The area's total retail trade and food & drink demand (retail potential) is $83,909,837, with supply (retail sales) of $23,251,282, resulting in unmet demand or leakage of $60,658,555.

A more detailed breakout of the report shows that there is substantial spending opportunity that can be captured in the following areas:

Type	Demand	Supply	Unmet Demand/ Leakage	Leakage Factor	Existing Businesses
Grocery Store	$12,418,520	$7,758,925	$4,659,595	23.1	3
Health & Personal Care	$4,755,146	$462,561	$4,292,585	82.3	1
Food Services & Drinking Places	$8,111,876	$2,051,129	$6,060,747	59.6	3
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	$7,492,865	$2,051,129	$5,441,736	57.0	3

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

1. Develop business attraction materials that clearly outline the market demand for new retail, service, and professional enterprises.
2. Develop a long-term strategy for securing a full-service grocery store, perhaps as part of a larger commercial shopping center development located near the intersection of Interstate 40 and East Gate City Boulevard, and look for opportunities to collaborate with the Guilford County Economic Development Alliance. See the PolicyLink/LISC Bay Area publication "Grocery Store Attraction Strategies" as a potential resource for strategy development.
3. Coordinate initiatives and programs of East Greensboro NOW, Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Greensboro's Economic Development Business Services, and the Greensboro Community Development Fund to provide workshops and training for minority entrepreneurs and assist with recruitment and support of new business operators.
4. Meet with local commercial developers to discuss and explore commercial development opportunities to determine what, if any, incentives are needed for development.
5. If needed, develop and/or allocate economic incentives from the city of Greensboro, the Greensboro Development Fund, and foundations to support recruitment and establishment of new commercial enterprises in the East Gateway area.
6. Locate a cluster of new food eateries/restaurants on the Gateway University Research Park near East Gate City Boulevard. To ensure commercial success, encourage students, faculty, staff, tenants, and community residents to patronize the establishments.
7. Provide immediate food options for students of the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering, employees of the Research Facility #1 building, and community residents and visitors through:
   a. Rotating food trucks two days per week, offering a selection of entrees that meet the dietary needs and interests of students and tenants, such as halal, kosher, and vegetarian, and are at a mid-price point. The food trucks can also serve residents and foster interactions between the students, employees, residents, and visitors to anchor institutions, such as the YMCA, Barber Park, and Gateway Gardens. As a best practice note, the Research Triangle Park (RTP) has a daily food truck on campus and a "food truck rodeo" every Friday that features three to four different food trucks. The RTP also hosts special events on campus, such as the Mistletoe Market.
   b. Improve vending options for building users to offer a wider variety of healthy food options as well as lunch and dinner entrees. Install a full-service coffee machine and provide a microwave for heating up vending purchases. Expand beverage choices to include a larger selection of drink options. Specifically target franchise opportunities for minority entrepreneurs.

With food options currently limited, food trucks could bring diverse dining opportunities to area residents before permanent restaurants locate in the area.
Photo by Bianca Reyes

8. Improve neighborhood housing and expand housing options.
   a. Maintain and improve housing for current neighborhood residents.
      i. Map the neighborhood's current housing inventory and identify houses that are abandoned, have overhanging tree limbs, are in need of repair, cleanup and/or other services or support.
      ii. Identify housing ownership to track rental versus ownership rates.
      iii. Encourage strong tenant screening from landlords.
      iv. Enforce current building ordinances.
      v. Fast-track abandoned houses by returning the properties to productive use or scheduling demolition if they are beyond repair, to reduce negative impacts on the community.
      vi. Consider implementing a receivership program to transfer property ownership of foreclosed and nuisance buildings to a nonprofit developer for affordable housing development. See Center for Community Progress as a resource on receivership.
      vii. Provide information to residents about current city services available through the Neighborhood Division and encourage reporting of nuisance properties through the city's Action Center or 311.
      viii. Provide home repair assistance for low-income and senior residents and develop additional programs that address housing deterioration and abandonment.
      ix. Explore a property tax freeze for senior citizens or a property tax exemption to help ensure continuing affordability for those on fixed incomes.
      x. Actively encourage services that provide support for seniors to age in place.
9. Explore new neighborhood housing options for neighborhood residents and GURP faculty, staff and students.
10. Undertake a housing study that investigates market demand for:
    a. Senior housing apartments
    b. Multifamily rental housing with a variety of bedrooms (one-, two-, and three-bedroom units) and amenities for GURP staff and students
    c. Single-family infill development that is larger in square footage than current single-family housing stock (current stock is likely in the 900–1,200 square-foot range) for new young families
       i. Develop strategy to promote infill single-family housing in the neighborhood as lots become available and as supported by the housing study results.
       ii. Develop strategy to promote senior housing options in the neighborhood as supported by the housing study results.
       iii. Develop strategy to promote new multifamily housing developments near the I-40 interchange as supported by the housing study results.

Healthy vending options are available and may present an entrepreneurial opportunity for area residents. Photo by HealthyYOU Vending

Governance Structure

Core Leadership Group

To realize the promise statement, "Get Together and Grow," many partners are needed. The core group responsible for moving implementation forward and their potential roles are listed below.

City of Greensboro
- Convene the planning process.
- Maintain communication with residents and other partners.
- Design and implement policies and capital improvements and address dilapidated housing issues.

Hayes-Taylor YMCA
- Facilitate involvement of community leaders.
- Enlist new partners.
- Coordinate programs and events to help build momentum and support.

East Greensboro NOW
- Facilitate partnerships.
- Aid in the development of commercial property and housing.
- Promote business development and minority entrepreneurship opportunities.

GURP/JSNN
- Host community events and involve students and tenants in the planning process and volunteer opportunities.
- Enhance educational and mentorships programs provided in surrounding neighborhoods.
- Coordinate planning and development strategies for the GURP site.

Neighborhood Residents
- Help spread the word to neighbors about opportunities for engagement.
- Contribute ideas to working groups, advocate for implementation through participatory budgeting, and communicate regularly with elected officials.
- Come to events and participate in volunteer opportunities.

Other Important Partners

The following entities will also play important roles in realizing the vision of a vibrant East Gateway area.

Guilford County
- Coordinate a plan for unincorporated area south of the interstate.
- Help build awareness and involvement of area residents, businesses, and faith-based institutions.

North Carolina A&T State University
- Explore potential partnerships for trails and programming of activities on the university-owned farm.
- Consider potential development of land parcel on south side of East Gate City Boulevard.
- Promote Involvement of students, faculty, and alumni in the project.

Greensboro Chamber of Commerce
- Engage the business and philanthropic community.
- Help market and promote development opportunities in the East Gateway area.

Greensboro Beautiful
- Host community events and other programming to engage neighbors, other Greensboro residents, stakeholders, and visitors in the planning process and "quick wins."
- Coordinate the organization's long-range plans with those of other area stakeholders.

Area Schools
- Coordinate with other area institutions on programs for their students, including service-learning opportunities, mentorships, after-school programs, and career pathways.
- Host meetings and community events to support the planning process.

Faith-Based Organizations
- Help spread the word in their congregations about opportunities for engagement.
- Help build relationships with surrounding communities and with other leaders and organizations citywide.

As the Activity Center planning process unfolds, other key partners and implementation roles will likely be identified and will need to be included in the governance structure for implementation efforts.

Approach

To ensure communication, coordination, and accountability for keeping implementation actions on track, the Core Leadership Group described above should be established. Representatives in this group should be as high up as possible on the "ladder to yes" regarding decisions and approvals necessary to execute implementation actions.

This working group should meet regularly, at least on a quarterly basis, in the early phases of implementation. The location of the meetings should be rotated among the participating entities so that all the partners become more familiar with what's going on outside their own institutions and neighborhoods. The structure can be somewhat informal and non-hierarchical, but a lead entity will need to be identified to prepare meeting notices, agendas, and follow-up reports.

The focus of the group should be information sharing and problem solving pertaining to the Activity Center plan's implementation. This will be especially important when moving forward with "quick wins." However, this group should also work to lay the groundwork for longer-term projects that will require significant buy-in from larger institutions. Progress reports gleaned from information shared at these meetings should be distributed to the broader partners network. Over time, more formalized agreements and governance structure may prove necessary. If so, it will have the benefit of an established relationship among equally well-informed partners.

Implementation Process

Establish Core Leadership Group

Hold Quarterly Meetings

Share Information & Work to Solve Problems

Focus on Quick WIns

Distribute Information & Progress Reports to Broader Network

Lay Groundwork for Longer-Term Projects

More formalized agreements and governance structure
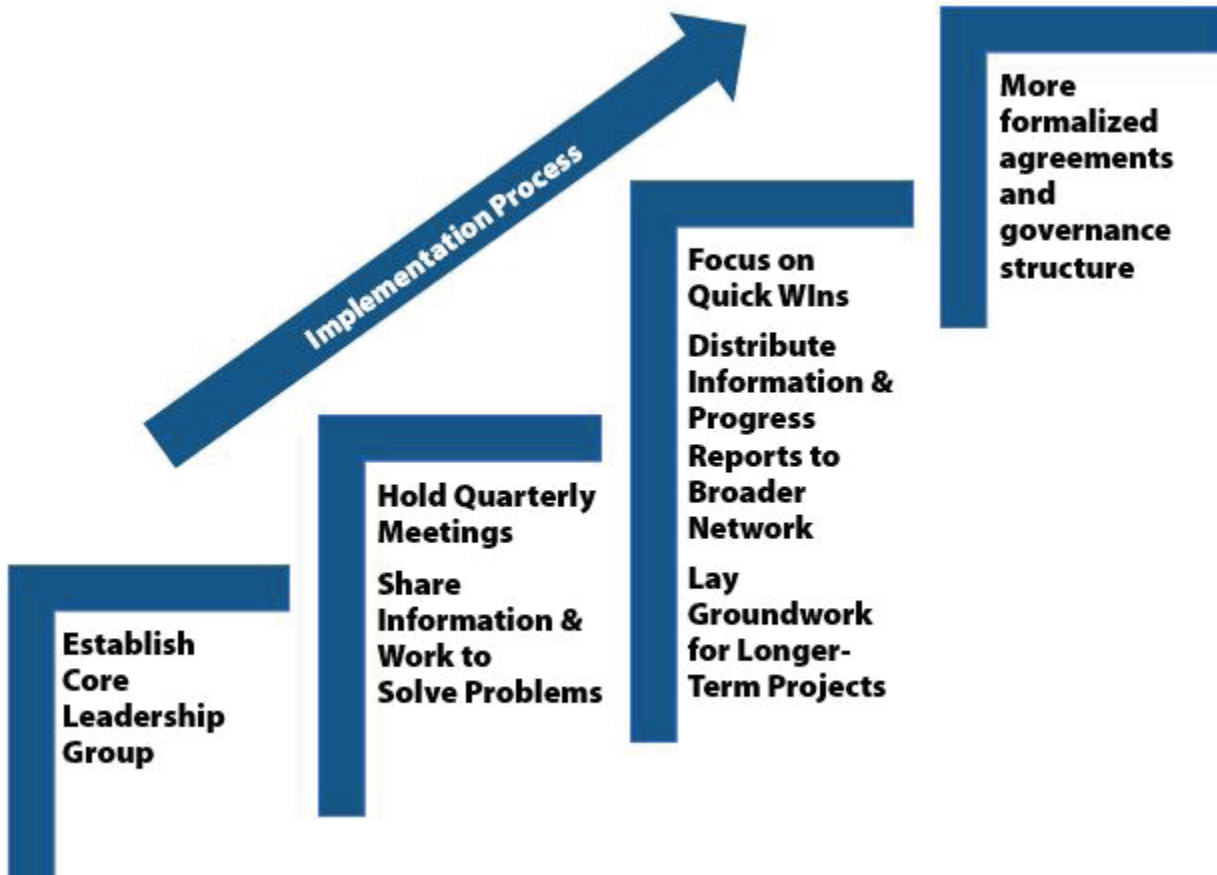
Appendices

Appendix A: Picture Gallery

Above: On the Saturday of the CPAT's visit in December, snow forced the city to cancel the scheduled public meeting where the team was to present its findings and preliminary recommendations. The city arranged for the team to video-record the presentation so it could be shared with the community. Photo by Ryan Scherzinger. Below: CPAT members, including Triveece Penelton (middle), enjoyed working with the community members during the Place It! activity. Residents chose objects from a box to place on a map to help think through and visualize the study area. Some great conversations and ideas emerged during the activity, including common agreement on short-term priorities and potential new names for the area. Photo by Ryan Scherzinger

Above: Triveece Penelton (right) and other CPAT members at the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering as they prepared a "pop-up" meeting with students, faculty, and local entrepreneurs. The team members engaged people as they passed by in the atrium of the school to talk about what they'd like to see in the neighborhood, where they live, and how they commute, among other experiences, thoughts, and ideas they have for the area. Photo by Ryan Scherzinger. Below: Team leader Jeff Taebel and other team members presented their findings and preliminary recommendations to the city's department heads on the final day of their visit. They also met separately with council members Sharon Hightower (District 1) and Goldie Wells (District 2), who represent residents in the study area. Photo by Ryan Scherzinger

Appendix B: Project Schedule

Time		Thursday, Dec. 7		Friday, Dec. 8	Saturday, Dec. 9	Sunday, Dec. 10	Monday, Dec. 11
		**Community Planning Assistance Team Schedule	Greensboro, NC	Dec. 7–11, 2018**					
a.m.	8:30	CMO @ CMO Meeting Room	CPAT tour of study area	Love Crossling (City human relations director)	CPAT Working Session (community conversation cancelled due to inclement weather)	CPAT Working Session (recorded video presentation of team's analysis and preliminary recommendations for later viewing)	Presentation to city department heads and CMO @ Plaza Conference Room
	9:00						
	9:30						
	10:00	Pop-up event w/JSNN students @ GURP atrium	Meet w/ EDBS/ CDFI @ planning conf. room	GURP board, tenants, and partners @ GURP Board Room			Council members Hightower and Wells @ Plaza Conf. Room
	10:30						
	11:00						
	11:15	Guilford County planning staff @ Eng. Conf. Room		EGN @ Planning Conference Room			
	11:30						Team departs
	12:00						
P.M.	12:30	Lunch meeting w/ city department heads		Lunch			
	1:00				Lunch	Lunch	
	1:30			Hayes–Taylor YMCA staff and board @ YMCA			
	2:00	Meet w/council member Hightower			CPAT Working Session	CPAT Working Session	
	2:30						
	3:00	CPAT Working Session		Chamber of Commerce staff @ Chamber			
	3:30						
	4:00						
	4:30			CPAT Working Session			
	5:00						
	5:30						
	6:00	Community Conversation @ Simkins Mts. Room					
	6:30						
	7:00						
	7:30						

Acronym Guide:
EDBS–City Economic & Development Services
GURP–Gateway University Research Park
JSNN–Joint School Nanoscience and Nanoengineering
CMA–Community Development Financial Institution
EGN–East Greensboro NOW (Nurturing Opportunities & Wealth)

Appendix C: Meet the Team

Jeff Taebel, FAICP | Team Leader

Jeff Taebel is director of community and environmental planning at Houston-Galveston Area Council, where he oversees the agency's community enhancement, environmental planning, disaster recovery, economic development, socioeconomic modeling, and sustainable development initiatives. He has 34 years of experience in urban and regional planning, including 29 in his current position. Actively involved in community service, professional development, and planning education, Taebel is a former president of APA's Texas Chapter, and in 2008 was inducted as a Fellow of AICP. Taebel holds a Master of Urban Planning degree from Texas A&M University and a BS in Life Sciences from the University of Nebraska.

Kimberly Bares

As president and founder of PLACE Consulting, Kimberly Bares draws on her community and economic development experience to design and implement urban revitalization strategies and tools. Bares's expertise in development, tax increment financing, business improvement districts, commercial district planning, governance, and strategic planning make her an engaging speaker on the future of America's urban areas. Bares is a sought-after interim leader and executive leadership consultant, having transformed 10 organizations on an interim basis since 2012. Before forming PLACE Consulting, she was the executive director of several organizations, focusing on economic development, community organizing, and housing development in Baltimore and the Chicago area. She has a Master of Urban Planning and Policy degree from the University of Illinois–Chicago and a certificate in nonprofit management from Northwestern University.

Triveece Penelton, AICP

Triveece Penelton is a city planner and public involvement innovator at Vireo. She is also the creator of the Digicate® software application for community engagement, which Vireo powers and uses as part of its community engagement services. The local, county, state, and regional projects that she manages blend community planning with intensive public engagement, education, information sharing, and messaging. Prior to joining Vireo, Penelton served as a long-range planner with Kansas City, Missouri's Planning and Development Department in its Planning, Preservation and Urban Design Division. While there, she was responsible for planning activities happening in Kansas City's urban core (approximately 21 square miles in size).

Joanne Shelly, AICP, RLA, LEED BD+C

Joanne Shelly has worked in A/E design and development for over 20 years and has a range of project experience, from master planning to site design and construction. She has led project teams in-house, across town, and internationally. She is currently completing her master's degree in community and economic development because she enjoys facilitating the collaboration between communities and development professionals and empowering stakeholders to promote sustainable growth. The triple bottom line has been the basis of her design and development work. Shelly understands the challenges of balancing scope, schedules, and budgets and has been able to do so without sacrificing the components (economics, environment, and culture) of a sustainable design. Her current mobility study has provided an opportunity to study, design, and develop transportation projects with a sustainable impact. Shelly believes in mentoring young professionals and is currently a member of the Urban Land Institute's Women in Leadership Initiative.

Ryan Scherzinger, AICP | APA Project Manager

Ryan Scherzinger is programs manager for APA's professional practice department and is based in Chicago. He manages and has worked extensively on the Community Planning Assistance Teams program, providing direct technical assistance to communities around the country and abroad with multidisciplinary teams of experts. He has managed myriad programs and special projects for APA for over 10 years, including community workshops, case studies, federal grants, symposia and lecture series, study tours, international events, allied outreach and coalitions, and interactive public exhibits. He holds a master of arts degree in public anthropology from American University.