



Planning by Doing

*A Three-Part Approach to Corridor
Design on Newton Bridge Road*

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Why Newton Bridge Road?

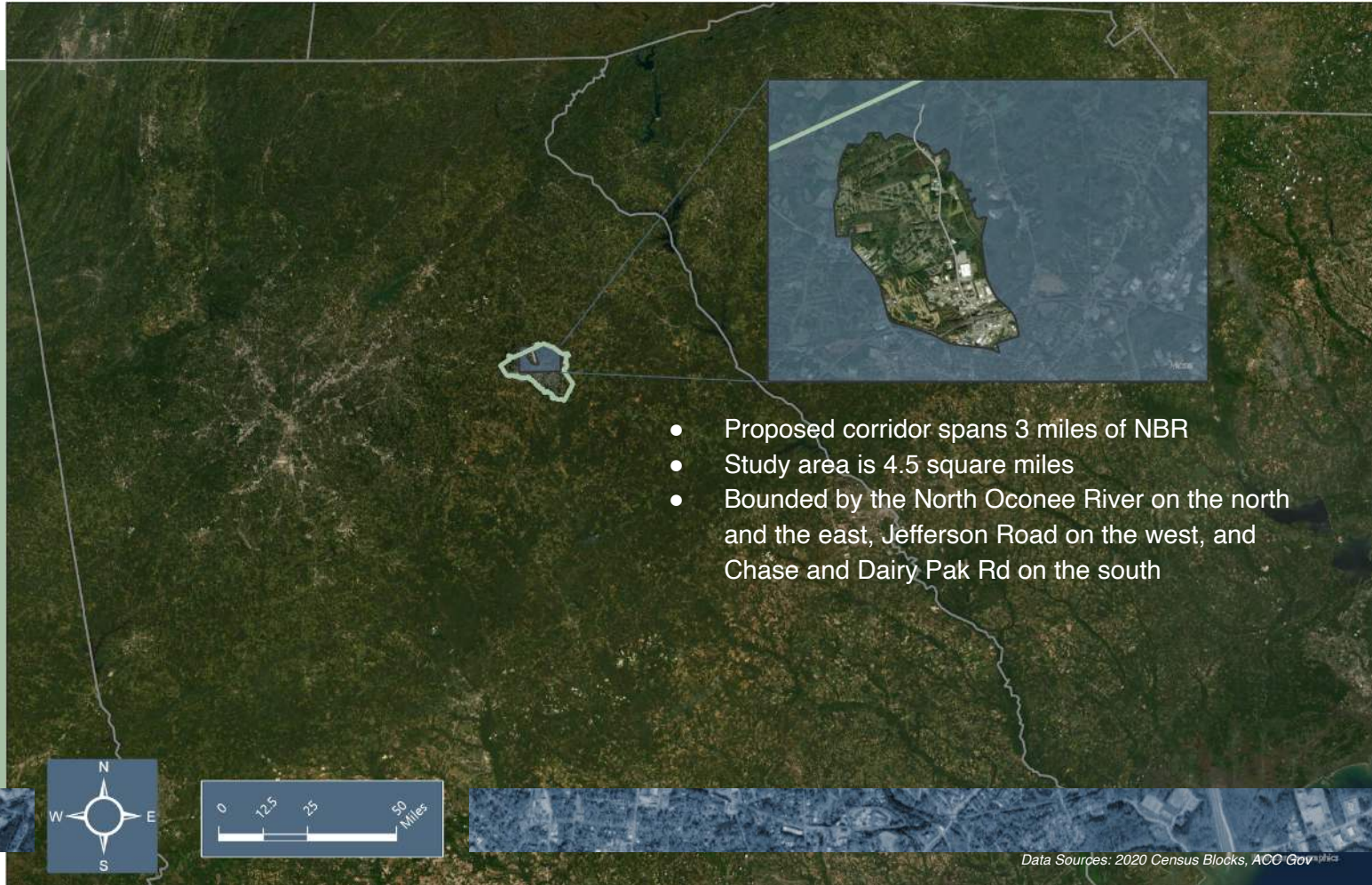
Newton Bridge Road is a multi-functional community corridor that is currently designed as a high-speed rural road. This design-use discrepancy will increase with future developments already in process.

...and I drive this road almost everyday.

The Site



Context Map: Location



History

- Industrial background
 - Textile and jean factories
- Holland Youth Sports Complex founded in early 1990s
 - Named after former Clarke County Commission Chairman Jim Holland
- Significant residential development between 1999 and 2005
- Westclox Factory operated on NBR from 1954-2001



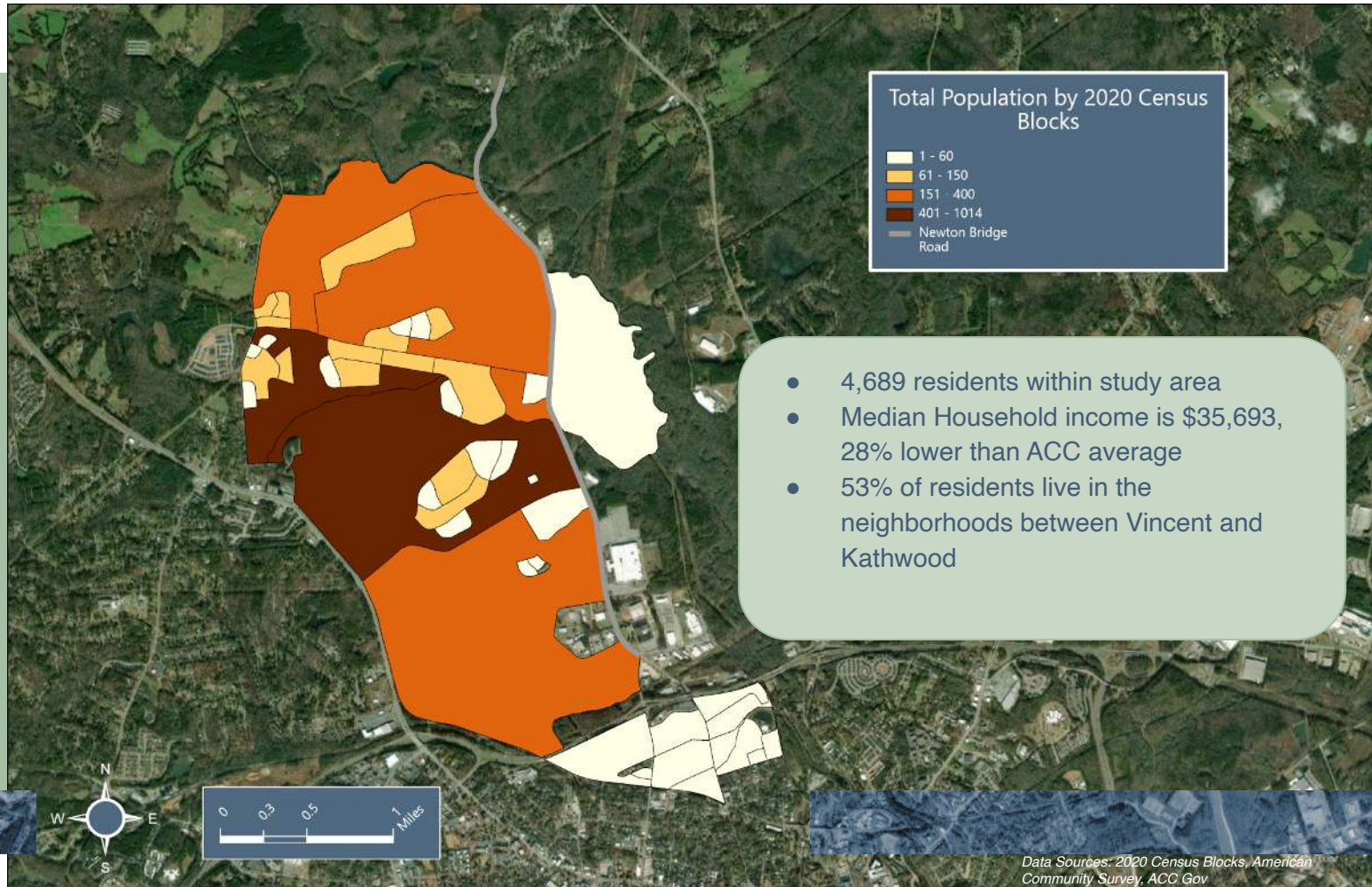
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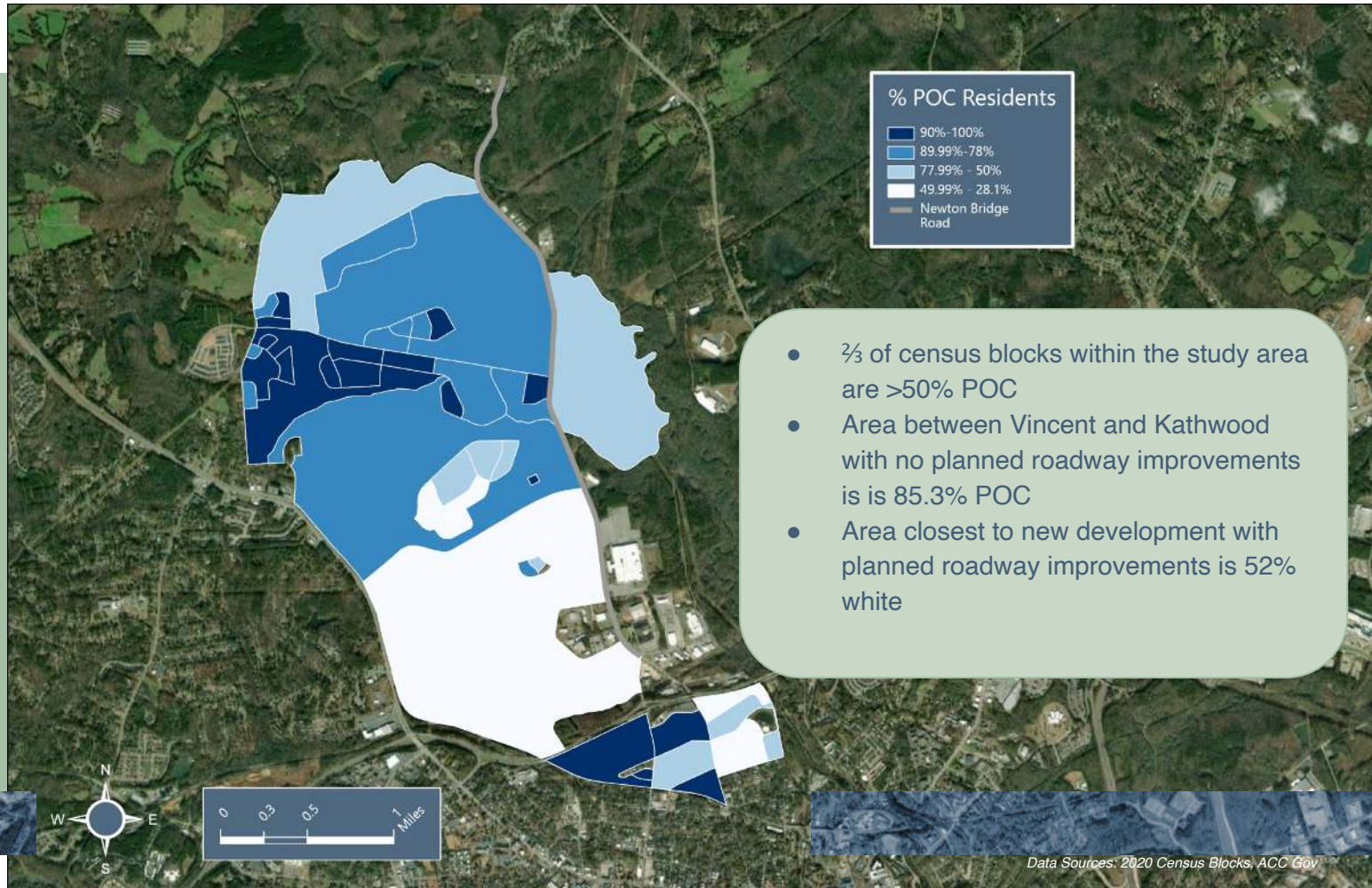
Dagmar Nelson



Context Map: Total Population



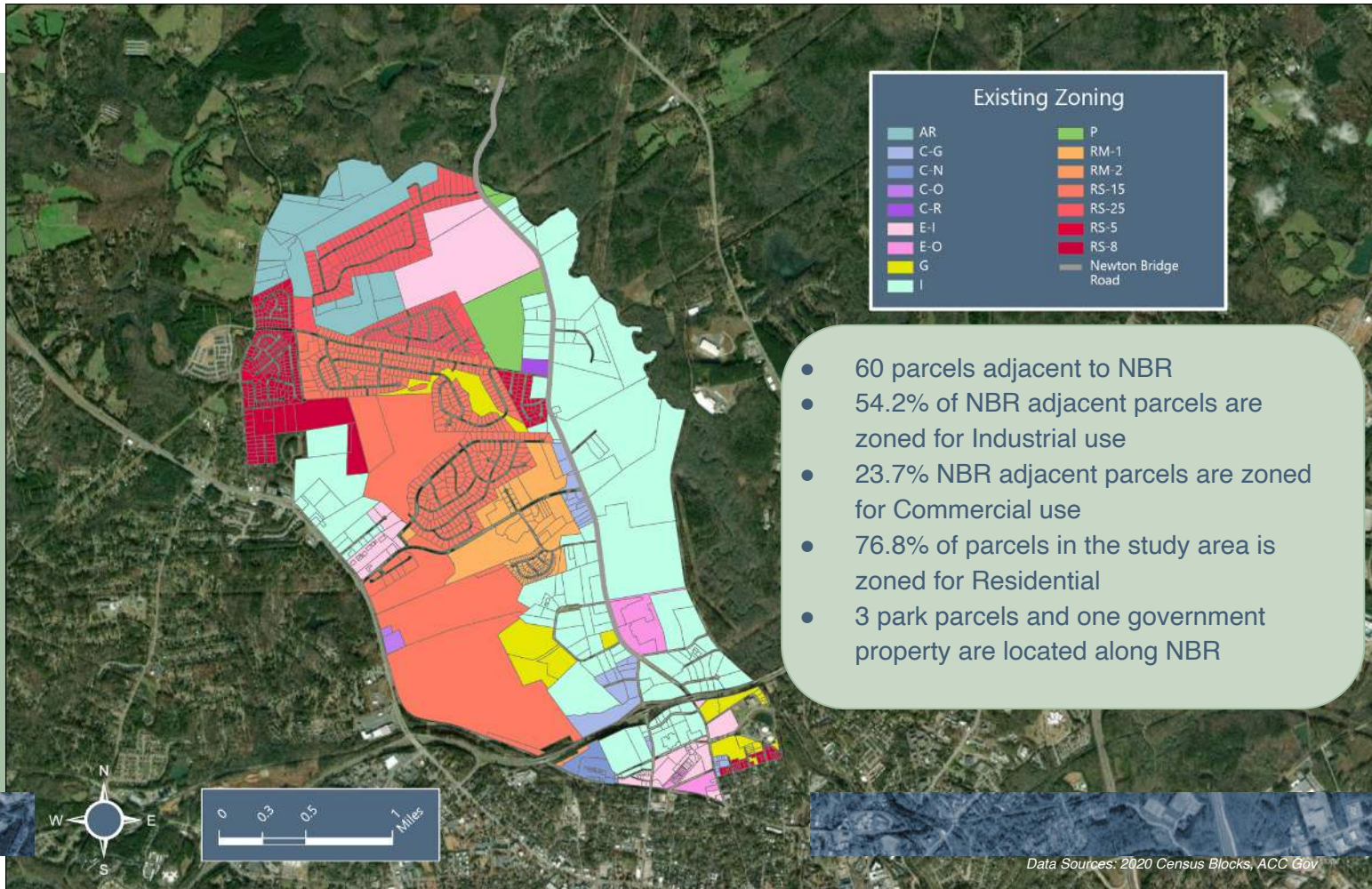
Context Map: Racial Demographics



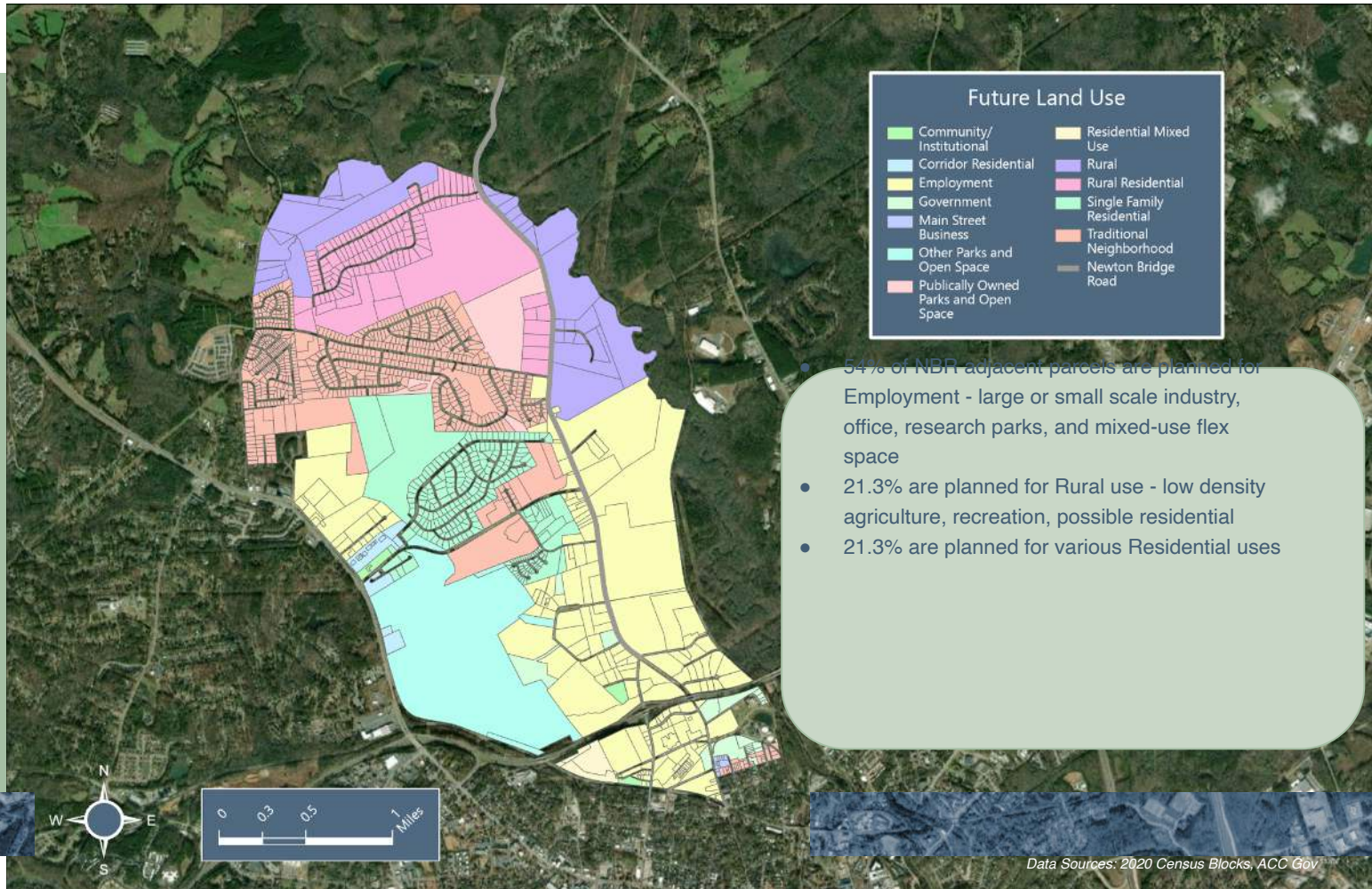
Context Map: Transportation



Context Map: Existing Zoning

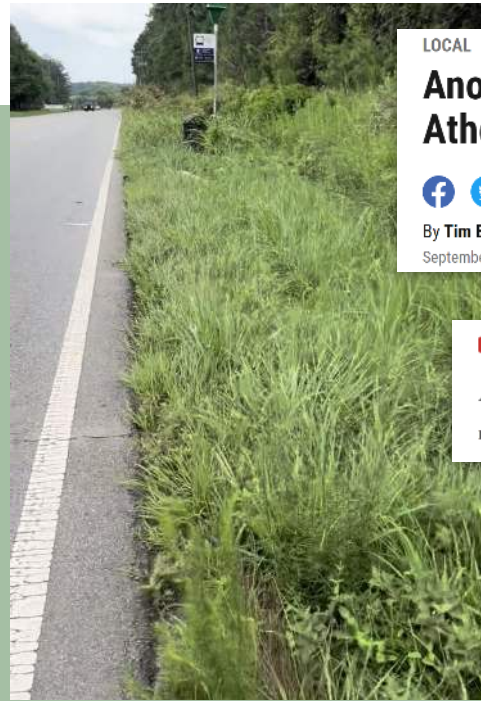


Context Map: Future Land Use



Road Conditions

- Classified as 4U, Minor Arterial (urban)
- No shoulder or curb
- Sidewalks only along one parcel
- Overgrown ROWs + bus stops
- Illegible lane transition at Kathwood Drive
- Speed limit is 45 mph but traffic flow is higher
- Two fatalities in the last 3 years
- Wide clear zone in some areas
- Pavement in good condition



LOCAL

Another pedestrian killed in Athens accident



By Tim Bryant

September 10, 2019 at 4:42 am EDT

ALERT

Athens teen killed in fatal crash

Lucinda Warnke Jul 20, 2021 Updated Sep 1, 2021



In the Works

- General Time mixed-use development project
 - New Wayfair call center with 500+ jobs
 - Terrapin Beer Co as warehouse tenant
 - “General Time is a new mixed-use development that has the unique potential to become a social and commercial hub for Athens, Georgia.” – General Time website
- Named a Tax Allocation District in 2022
- Significant commission redistricting goes into effect Jan 2023
- Barber Street + Chase Street intersection improvements approved 2021



Google Earth



Smith Planning Group



Smith Planning Group

SWOT Analysis

S

*Connection to GA-10 Loop,
Hwy 441, and Downtown via
Barber St*

*Residential, industrial,
recreational, and commercial
areas*

Good pavement condition

W

“Stroad” syndrome

Kathwood intersection

*10 week gap in ROW
maintenance*

*No active transportation
connectivity*

O

Community corridor

Public transit ridership

General Time development

Tax Allocation District

T

Displacement risks

*Pedestrian, cyclist, and other
non-motorist safety*

Design Problems



Street User Safety

Enable residents to access and use a variety of mobilities along NBR



Illegibility

Improve travel speeds, intersections, and lane transitions to minimize accidents and maximize user clarity



Visual Identity

Celebrate both history and current experience of the people that live and work along NBR



The Approach



Three Planning Strategies



Placekeeping + Placelistingening

*Equity-centric process valuing
history and perspectives of
existing communities*



Public Art for Public Safety

*Creative interventions for safety
and legibility*



Tactical Urbanism

*Low-cost, temporary installation
to solve design problems +
increase resident participation*

Placekeeping + Placelisting

- Arts and culture planning + open space planning and management
 - Alternative to placemaking
 - Values communities already established in a place as key stakeholders in development and design
 - Equity “table” analogy → the conversation isn’t complete unless these communities are present and able to participate
- “Keeping the cultural memories associated with a locale alive.” (Roberto Bedoya, 2014)
- “Place-keeping is not simply about the physical environment, its design and maintenance, but also encompasses the interrelated and non-physical dimensions of partnerships, governance, funding, policy and evaluation.” (Dempsey and Burton, 2011)
- “A durational and open-ended approach to the development of the practice, and...an embodied and sensory engagement with a place.” (Speight, 2016)
- The how of the project is just as important as the why – and both of those need to incorporate the people who live and work where the project is taking place

Public Art for Public Safety

- Bloomberg Philanthropies Asphalt Art Safety Study (April 2022)
 - Asphalt art = “public art projects coupled with improvements to transportation infrastructure” p.6
 - Intersection murals, crosswalk art, painted plazas, sidewalk extensions
 - Findings (p.7):
 - 50% decrease in rate of crashes involving vulnerable users
 - 37% decrease in rate of crashed with injuries
 - 17% decrease in total crash rate
 - 27% increase in frequency of drivers immediately yielding to pedestrians with the right of way
- Regulatory difficulties due to design standards
- Opportunity for more projects in a variety of environments to better understand how and why these design interventions work

Case Study: Durham, NC



Bloomberg Philanthropies
Durham, NC

Impacts:

- Crossing conflicts between drivers and pedestrians decreased by 30%.
- The percentage of people who felt unsafe crossing fell from 85% to 6%.
- Community members who felt positively about the site rose from 4% to 77%.

Costs:

- Design: \$8,750
- Labor: \$8,335
- Supplies: \$6,030
- Community Coordinators: \$750
- Security/Transportation Traffic Control: \$5,585

Total cost = \$29,450



Case Study: Lancaster, PA



Bloomberg Philanthropies
Lancaster, PA



Impacts:

- The average speed at the intersection has dropped by 20%.
- The rate of drivers yielding to pedestrians with the right of way increased by 10%.
- Bike ridership has increased by 12%.

Costs:

- Design + Community Engagement: \$5,000
- Labor: \$5,695
- Supplies: \$2,000
- Maintenance: \$3,000

Total cost = \$15,695

Tactical Urbanism

- Basic characteristics:
 - Neighborhood scale
 - Low cost
 - Agile/emergent/adaptive
 - High level of resident engagement
- “The project can bring immediate benefits while providing the opportunity for qualitative and quantitative data to be collected and integrated into the project design before large capital expenditures occur” (Lydon + Garcia, p. 16)
- Language matters
 - *Tactical Urbanism* vs. *pilot projects* vs. *planning by doing*
- Newest articulation of a longstanding practice

The Proposal

Corridor Design

- Re-examine FHWA functional classification
- Multi-modal paths
- Street light + turn lane at Kathwood Road
- Asphalt art installations at General Time/Terrapin and Kathwood Road
- Bus stop improvements
 - Art Shelter at Northbound NBR + Paradise
- Greenway connections
 - Bridge and river access



ACC Gov



ACC Gov

Table 2-1: Relationship between Functional Classification and Travel Characteristics

Functional Classification	Distance Served (and Length of Route)	Access Points	Speed Limit	Distance between Routes	Usage (AADT and DVMT)	Significance	Number of Travel Lanes
Arterial	Longest	Few	Highest	Longest	Highest	Statewide	More
Collector	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Local	Shortest	Many	Lowest	Shortest	Lowest	Local	Fewer

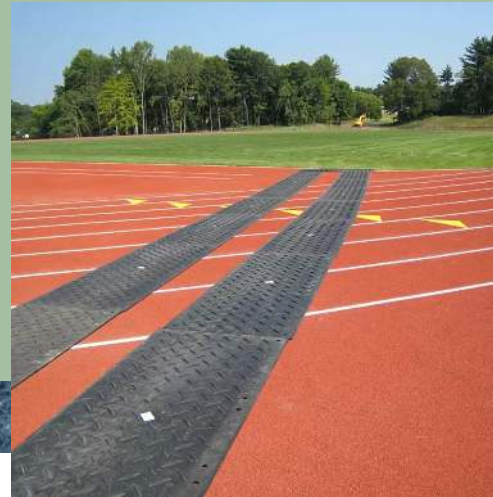


Temporary Sidewalks

- Pedestrian mats used on construction sites/beachfronts
 - Identify install site based on use + visibility
- Not a lot of precedent
- Scaling potential
 - Reusable asset for future pilot projects
- Road safety is an equity issue
 - Location and timing matters



Greatmats.com



Community Participation

- Informal postcard and QR surveys
- Walk audits in collaboration with Athens in Motion
- Participation in public art projects
- Temporary sidewalk installation
- ROW mow-a-thons or local business adopt-a-ROW
- Public works petitions to increase mowing frequency
- Resident led TSPLOST proposal



Athens in Motion



Bloomberg Philanthropies



Sources

- *Asphalt Art Safety Study*, Bloomberg Philanthropies, 2022
- “Asphalt Art Initiative: Explore Our Projects”, Bloomberg Philanthropies, 2022
- *Athens in Motion: Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*, Athens-Clarke County Unified Government, 2018
- *City of Atlanta Tactical Urbanism Guide*, City of Atlanta DCP and DOT, 2022
- *Confessions of a Recovering Engineer: Transportation for a Strong Town*, Charles L. Marohn, Jr., 2021
- “Defining place-keeping: The long-term management of public spaces”, Nicola Dempsey + Mel Burton, 2011
- *Emergent Strategy: Shaping change, Changing Worlds*, adrienne maree brown, 2017
- *General Time Master Planned Development Report*, Smith Planning Group, 2021
- *Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures*, USDOT FHWA, 2013
- “Listening in certain places: public art for the post-regenerate age”, Elaine Speight, in *The Everyday Practice of Public Art: Art, Space, and Social Inclusion*, ed. Cameron Cartiere + Martin Zebracki, 2016
- “Placemaking vs. Placekeeping: Steps to Doing More Equitable Art Interventions”, Allentza Michel, 2022
- “Spatial Justice: Rasquachification, Race and the City”, Robert Bedoya, 2014
- *Tactical Urbanism: Short-term Action for Long-term Change*, Mike Lydon + Anthony Garcia, 2015
- *Tactical Urbanism Program Project Guide*, City of Snellville DOP+D, 2018

Questions + Ideas?

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Let's collaborate!