



Envision Nolensville Pike II

Recommendations for achieving inclusive development



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TO BENEFIT FROM A RISING TIDE, YOU NEED TO BE IN THE BOAT

As one of the fastest growing regions in the country, Nashville has to make intentional decisions about its future. Nolensville Pike, an auto-oriented corridor ripe for infill development running south out of the city, is ideally situated to meet the booming demand for more housing and small business space close to the urban core. But doing so without careful planning could displace the unique immigrant communities and long-time residents that have been living there for years.

This analysis offers recommendations to help decision-makers in the city and region make the corridor safer for everyone, improve the economic prospects (and equity) of the area, and provide new opportunities for adding housing and jobs — all while avoiding displacement of the vital communities of residents and businesses that call the Pike home today.

The Middle Tennessee region, anchored by the city of Nashville, is one of the fastest growing regions in the entire country. The city and region's current population of 600,000-plus and 1.8 million respectively are projected to increase rapidly over the next 25 years, growing by 185,000 in the city and 1 million in the region. In order to accommodate its new residents, Davidson County will need 113,000 new housing units constructed at a rate of about 3,800 units per year, putting pressure on current residents and driving up prices in existing neighborhoods.¹



Traffic stacks up on Thompson Lane near the Pike, a busy intersection with just one crosswalk where several people walking have been struck by drivers in recent years.

One factor driving up prices is that demand for housing is mismatched with available supply — there is growing, unmet market demand in Nashville for well-connected neighborhoods in close proximity to jobs, services, and good schools that have safe streets for walking or cycling, and/or public transportation. But there are only a small number of neighborhoods that fit the bill regionally, and they are mostly within Nashville's urban core. Some of the neighborhoods most attractive to new residents are the same neighborhoods that are currently home to those most in need of affordable housing, and community tension has been rising as a result.²

► **Nolensville Pike: a typical “stroad”**

Nolensville Pike, one of the many spokes connecting downtown Nashville with suburban areas, is a typical arterial state highway funneling traffic in and out of the city — an average of 60,000 automobile trips a day — while also serving adjacent commercial uses and residential neighborhoods.³ The road itself is clearly auto-oriented with wide, straight lanes and intermittent sidewalks immediately adjacent to fast-moving traffic that make walking an unpleasant and often dangerous experience. But it's also filled with traffic lights and scores of local uses that slow down the thru-traffic. As a result, it's neither fish nor fowl, neither a street nor a road; it's a street/road “stroad” hybrid that does a poor job of either efficiently connecting two distant places or serving as a framework for creating lasting value and encouraging local trips.⁴ Nolensville Pike is also the anchor of the most diverse area of the city. It is home to the largest number of immigrant families in the Nashville region: 80 percent of Latino families are foreign-born, the largest Kurdish community in the country is centered around the corridor, and large numbers of Somali and Ethiopian immigrants also reside here. Nolensville Pike is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse corridors in the state of Tennessee and has been diverse for decades.

1 NashvilleNext, Vol. II, Housing, p. 184, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/PlanVolumes/next-volume2-Elements_Housing.pdf.

2 “Equitable Development: Promising Practices to Maximize Affordability and Minimize Displacement in Nashville's Urban Core,” Community Research and Action Program at Vanderbilt University for NashvilleNext, 2014, p. 7, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/ResourceTeams/Housing_Gentrification_EquitableDevelopment.pdf.

3 In general, this paper focuses on the section of Nolensville Pike that is currently served by Nashville MTA's express bus service between the Fairgrounds and Harding Place. However, relevant information from other parts of the Pike is included in some places, and reference materials cited define their study areas in various ways. As noted on p. 18, Metro government will need to clearly define the corridor for data collection and other actions recommended in this study. In addition, residents and business owners often refer to the corridor as Nolensville Road.

4 Charles Marohn of the Strong Towns organization coined the term “stroad” to describe a typical arterial street/road hybrid that typifies much of American suburban development today. www.strongtowns.org/journal/2013/3/4/the-stroad.html

Rather than attempting to prevent new development along Nolensville Pike, which could bring jobs, increase the tax base, and improve quality of life for existing and new residents alike, the goal should be to ensure that improvements to the corridor include housing and commercial opportunities for immigrants, minorities, low-income households, and long-term residents who have called the neighborhood home or operated businesses there for many years.

► Preventing displacement in the corridor

Given its location just a few miles south of downtown Nashville, redevelopment pressures can already be felt along Nolensville Pike, though not yet to the extent of other parts of the city. The neighborhoods along Nolensville Pike are still relatively affordable and thus attract younger, educated workers who want the convenience of close-in locations but can't afford more expensive neighborhoods like East Nashville. As a result, housing prices are beginning to rise. As the region continues drawing new residents, Nashvillians new and old will be looking for affordable homes, access to jobs, health care, and strong schools, walkable shopping and entertainment districts, and more alternatives to sitting in traffic. Nolensville Pike could be an important part of meeting the coming demand and has several important assets that Nashville can and should build upon.

The numerous assets of the Pike



Cultural diversity

Nolensville Pike is bordered by some of the most diverse neighborhoods in Nashville, and its businesses and restaurants provide a wide variety of international food and goods. The unique character of the corridor as an International District makes Nolensville Pike a potential regional destination for economic activity, including shopping and recreation.

Affordability

At present, Nolensville Pike remains more affordable for residents and businesses than other rapidly developing neighborhoods like East Nashville.



Close-in location

Nolensville Pike provides easy access to downtown, the airport, and Interstate 440, making it more desirable for new Nashvillians than areas further out.

Available space

Nolensville Pike is primarily developed with single-story, small commercial buildings and car lots, providing the potential for significant infill development to create walkable, mixed-use districts along the corridor.

Gojo Ethiopian Café and Restaurant, left, and evening rush hour near the Fairgrounds on Nolensville Pike

Challenges to overcome



A lack of transportation options

Trips are overwhelmingly taken by car, and even those who live in the neighborhoods adjacent to Nolensville Pike are unable to safely walk or bike to any local destinations due to the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, poor lighting, and other design aspects unfriendly to people on foot or bicycle. While bus service exists, it's not well-connected to regional destinations, and many people who might otherwise take the bus do not feel safe walking along the busy Pike to the bus stop.



The infrastructure doesn't serve any of its necessary functions particularly well

With wide, straight lanes, cars can travel along Nolensville Pike at high speeds during off-peak hours, but this raises safety concerns for pedestrians (and drivers) alike. During the morning and evening rush hours, traffic slows to a crawl, with commuters heading into or out of downtown, making local travel painful (as well as thru-travel). The Pike does not presently build a strong framework for creating lasting value through efficient, smart development, nor does it efficiently move people all throughout the day.



Auto-oriented design and land uses

Buildings along Nolensville Pike are mostly set back from the street, with parking lots located in front. The sidewalks that do exist are punctuated by dangerous, frequent curb cuts and driveways. In some stretches, more than one-third of the businesses are car lots, auto mechanics, or tire repair services. These existing features increase the degree of difficulty to convert the Pike into a walkable, mixed-use corridor.



Potential for greater displacement

As Nolensville Pike becomes a more desirable location, property values will rise, making it unaffordable for current residents and businesses — many of them minority-owned — to stay. As a result, the corridor risks losing its unparalleled cultural diversity — one of the very things that made it desirable in the first place.

Clockwise from top left, a pedestrian crosses the Pike after walking through the Fairgrounds to reach an inbound bus. The International District is close to downtown but is clogged by congestion. La Hacienda is a popular Mexican restaurant in Woodbine. (photo by Alex Macias / Conexión Américas.) Missing sidewalks abound between Little Kurdistan and the zoo.

Metro Nashville along with a number of other regional agencies have developed several plans to address these challenges and help Nashville remain a desirable place to live, work, and play, including NashvilleNext, nMotion, WalknBike and Middle Tennessee Connected, among others. **None of these plans, however, focus specifically on the issue of displacement.**

As the region works to make improvements in transportation, walkability, and open space, it is essential that steps be taken to ensure that all Nashvillians – of all backgrounds and income levels – can share in the results.

This study of displacement risk along Nolensville Pike makes four key findings:

Better data is needed

To better understand the risk of displacement along Nolensville Pike and to track the progress in combating it, everyone involved will need access to better data, which will also involve gathering new data.

Existing businesses are at risk of displacement

The region should take action now to increase the stability of independent businesses on Nolensville Pike.

Action is needed to preserve affordable housing

Denser, mixed-income housing would indeed help support the corridor's businesses by bringing in new residents, but proactive steps must be taken now to preserve and expand affordable housing.

There is no silver bullet

Nolensville Pike needs a suite of strategic solutions, coordinated across numerous agencies and stakeholders. A one-size-fits-all, singular approach will not be the solution, no matter how well-intentioned the efforts.



*Francisco Carillo, owner of The Dollar Club on Nolensville Pike.
Photo by Alex Macías / Conexión Américas.*

► Recommendations

Reducing the risk of displacement for both residents and businesses along Nolensville Pike will require a coordinated approach among multiple actors, including Metro Nashville agencies, the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority, and the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and private sector entities including community organizations and foundations. *These recommendations are examined in greater detail in the full body of this report.*

Coordination and community engagement

- ▶ Create a Nolensville Pike Business Alliance
- ▶ Explore creation of a foundation-led collaborative
- ▶ Assess the potential for redevelopment districts and/or a corridor-based tax-increment financing district along Nolensville Pike

Data collection

- ▶ Conduct a community assessment
- ▶ Establish performance goals and measures

Transportation improvements

- ▶ Implement traffic calming measures and safety improvements
- ▶ Conduct a parking inventory
- ▶ Continue to pursue transit improvements
- ▶ Restore/establish the street grid in key locations

Business support

- ▶ Develop pathways for business owners to purchase commercial property
- ▶ Preserve and expand affordable commercial space
- ▶ Increase access to capital for small business growth

Affordable housing

- ▶ Increase production of affordable homes
- ▶ Preserve existing affordable homes
- ▶ Provide a property tax abatement for low-income homeowners
- ▶ Support job training and related services

Now is the time to take proactive measures to prevent displacement and preserve the unique identity of the area, while simultaneously making Nolensville Pike safer for everyone, improving the economic prospects (and equity) of the area, and providing new opportunities to add housing and jobs. By tackling these issues now, before development pressures have driven large-scale business closures or widespread displacement of current residents, the region will have the best chance of seeing its future growth occur in an equitable way, shared by all.



I. BACKGROUND



Metro Nashville departments, Mayor Megan Barry's office, the Nashville Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority are developing solutions to address the traffic problems on the heavily used, often congested Nolensville Pike corridor and encourage more trips to be taken by walking, bicycling, and transit. The plans under consideration include intersection improvements, more sidewalks and bike lanes, and a fixed-guideway transit line, which could greatly improve safety, traffic flow, and quality of life along Nolensville Pike. These improvements can bring impacts beyond those directly related to transportation. Other communities have seen adjacent property values rise and new economic development activity after improving their transportation infrastructure. While these results can be positive for the city as a whole, they may also adversely impact households and businesses in the affected corridor, who may not be able to afford to stay.

The purpose of this analysis is to assess displacement risk for residents and businesses along the Nolensville Pike corridor between downtown Nashville and Harding Place, in the context of the region's plans for transportation improvements in the area. This section briefly defines displacement and its potential effects relative to the current and future land use and transportation context along Nolensville Pike.

Without safe bicycling infrastructure, this bicyclist walked through the intersection of Thompson Lane and Nolensville Pike to bike against oncoming traffic on the Pike.

Displacement and its effects

Displacement occurs when public or private investment in a corridor or neighborhood forces existing residents or businesses to leave the area. The displacement may be a direct result of the investment, such as when a city uses eminent domain to acquire property for a new road or transit line. More often, displacement is an indirect result of public or private investment in a neighborhood. When a project such as a new transit line, convention center, or major redevelopment makes an area more desirable, higher-income households move in, followed by national chain stores and restaurants, in a process known as gentrification.¹ Often — though not always — gentrification is followed by displacement, as the increased desirability of the area drives up rents and cost of living, making it unaffordable for lower-income residents to remain and for small businesses to maintain operations.



*Flatrock Coffee Tea & More on Nolensville Pike.
Photo by Alex Macias / Conexión Américas*

While economic development brings the benefits of increased tax revenues and more jobs, displacement can result in negative impacts both to those who must leave and the community as a whole. As neighborhoods with transportation options, jobs, and desirable amenities become unaffordable, low-income households must move further away, often to areas where jobs are scarce and transportation options even scarcer. Dispersing low-income families to distant suburbs can increase costs and other stresses for those families, as low-income workers must drive longer distances to reach job centers. Displacement also diminishes diversity and equity in the neighborhood that remains, and the benefit of the investments made in that community are not shared equally by members of that community.

While most research on displacement has focused on residential displacement, business displacement is also a risk that should be addressed. Small, independent businesses play an important role in the regional economy, particularly in low-income and minority neighborhoods. Small businesses provide a path to wealth-building for local entrepreneurs, and local businesses often provide products and services to communities that large, national chains cannot, particularly for new Americans and minorities. They help to create and preserve neighborhood identity and can serve as a support system for members of the community.

Independent businesses also have an outsized impact on the local economy. A study of independent and national businesses in New Orleans found that locally owned businesses generate two to three times as much local economic activity as chain stores do.² This is because local business owners tend to out-perform national chains in four ways:³

1 Gentrification can also result from other factors; public investments are one example of the types of activities or projects that can act as a catalyst for gentrification.

2 "Thinking Outside the Box: A Report on Independent Merchants and the New Orleans Economy," The Urban Conservancy, 2009, p.2, https://www.independentwestand.org/wp-content/uploads/ThinkingOutsidetheBox_1.pdf.

3 Ibid. at 3.

1. Labor costs paid to local residents.
2. Profits retained in the community by local residents.
3. Purchase of goods and services from other local businesses.
4. Charitable giving within the local community.

These findings have been reflected in studies of other cities as well.¹

Not all public infrastructure investments create displacement. In some cases, the real estate market does not respond to new investments and rents remain low. In others, sufficient space exists for neighborhoods to absorb new residents without adversely affecting existing property owners. Not every household or business that leaves an area is displaced; businesses sometimes close and people move for reasons other than affordability. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that increase the risk of displacement to determine whether public intervention is needed to prevent it. Researchers who have studied displacement have identified risk factors that generally fall into the three following categories:

- **High percentage of renters (applicable to both residential and business displacement).** Renters tend to be more susceptible to rapid changes in property values as leases are renegotiated on a regular basis and can even be terminated if a property is sold. In contrast, property owners will see the impact of increasing real estate values only when their properties are reappraised for property tax purposes. A sudden increase in property taxes can be a burden to some property owners, but in general renters are at greater risk.
- **High percentage of low-income residents.** Low-income residents are disproportionately renters and thus are more likely to be subject to the pressures described above. Moreover, those with limited means will be less able to afford increased rents or taxes, whereas those with higher incomes may be able to absorb the higher costs while remaining in the neighborhood.
- **High demand for land.** Property values and rents respond to the market. With little demand for land, prices will remain low and affordable. Even when a neighborhood becomes “hot,” prices may remain stable if there is enough available land to absorb the new demand. A hot development market with a limited supply of land will result in increasing property values.²

Characteristics of Nolensville Road

	Nolensville Rd. Corridor	Davidson County
Homeowners	36.2%	54.1%
Residential renters	63.8%	45.9%
Residents in poverty	30.7%	18.2%
Unemployed residents	9.8%	7.2%

Nolensville Road has a higher percentage of renters, a higher percentage of families living in poverty, and a higher unemployment than Davidson County as a whole. Nolensville Road is the corridor starting 1/2-mile north of the Fairgrounds and running to four miles south of Harding Place, including a 1/2-mile buffer on either side of the road. Source: Nashville Area MPO from 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

¹ See Main Street America's list of studies comparing independent and chain businesses: www.mainstreet.org/main-street/resources/public/independents-vs-chains.html.

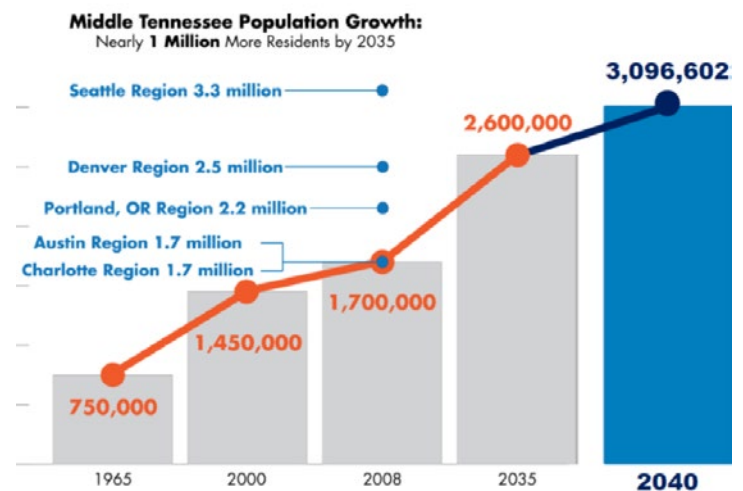
² See, e.g., “Maintaining Diversity in America’s Transit-Rich Neighborhoods: Tools for Equitable Neighborhood Change,” Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy, 2010, https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/trn_equity_final.pdf; “Promoting Opportunity through Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD): Barriers to Success and Best Practices for Implementation,” Enterprise Community Partners, 2015, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/promoting-opportunity-through-etod-barriers-to-success-web.pdf>; and studies cited on pp. 16-17 of “Equitable Development: Promising Practices to Maximize Affordability and Minimize Displacement in Nashville’s Urban Core,” Community Research and Action Program at Vanderbilt University for NashvilleNext, 2014, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/ResourceTeams/Housing_Gentrification_EquitableDevelopment.pdf.

Other factors mentioned in studies of displacement include education levels (those with less education tend to be more at risk of displacement) and racial/ethnic identity.¹ Taken together, a preponderance of these factors in a neighborhood suggests that infrastructure improvements could lead to displacement of existing residents and businesses. Many cities around the country have recognized the risk or reality of displacement in their communities and are taking steps to mitigate its effects. With targeted programs and incentives, strong outreach and communications, and supportive land use decisions, displacement risk can be minimized while still allowing for redevelopment and growth in underserved neighborhoods. As the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency explained in its guidebook for equitable development, “A proactive and comprehensive approach to minimizing displacement encompasses affordable housing, commercial stabilization, economic and workforce development, supportive land use policies, and community engagement.”² Examples of various city programs will be discussed later in this paper.

The current environment along Nolensville Pike

The Middle Tennessee region is growing, with an increase of 185,000 expected in Nashville alone over the next 25 years.³ The dynamic created by this influx of new residents is described in NashvilleNext:

In Nashville, few neighborhoods meet the increasing market demand for places with diverse transportation options – sidewalks, safe routes for cycling, transit – and proximity to jobs, services, and good schools. These places exist mostly within Nashville’s urban core. These neighborhoods often do not have the housing types for people seeking these places. In these areas, suppliers are trying to keep up with market demand through infill development. Older housing is being replaced with new housing, and community tension associated with change is rising.⁴



From the nMotion 2016 MTA/RTA Strategic Plan, p. 1.
<http://nmotion2015.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/1-Introduction-161222.pdf>

Put another way, some of the neighborhoods where new residents frequently look for housing are also where those most in need of affordable housing currently live.⁵ In order to accommodate new households, Davidson County will need 113,000 new housing units constructed over 25 years (a rate of

1 Ibid.

2 “Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities: Strategies for Advancing Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development,” U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2013, p. 14, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/equitable-development-report-508-011713b.pdf>.

3 NashvilleNext, Vol. II, Housing, p. 184, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/PlanVolumes/next-volume2-Elements_Housing.pdf.

4 Ibid. at p. 188.

5 “Equitable Development: Promising Practices to Maximize Affordability and Minimize Displacement in Nashville’s Urban Core,” Community Research and Action Program at Vanderbilt University for NashvilleNext, 2014, p. 7, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/ResourceTeams/Housing_Gentrification_EquitableDevelopment.pdf.

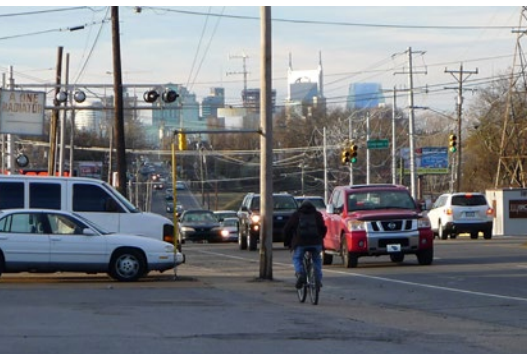
about 3,800 units per year.)¹

Nolensville Pike is one of the many spokes connecting downtown Nashville with suburban areas. Today, Nolensville Pike is an auto-oriented corridor that sees an average of 60,000 automobile trips a day.² During peak periods in the morning and afternoon, traffic slows to a crawl; during other times, the road is a fast-moving throughway in and out of downtown. Although there are sidewalks along much of the route, there is no buffer between pedestrians and traffic, and the sidewalks are frequently interrupted by curb cuts. There is no median, and cars can turn into parking lots on either side of the street at any point along the road, often blocking a lane as they wait to turn left.

Much of Nolensville Pike between the Fairgrounds and Harding Place is lined with single-story commercial buildings, most built in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s with parking in front or at the side.³ Many of these buildings are leased by small and immigrant-owned businesses, representing the diverse community that lives in South Nashville. There is also a high proportion of light industrial uses, used car lots, and auto-related businesses. In fact, 31% of all businesses between the Fairgrounds and the Zoo are auto-related retailers (new and used cars, tires, auto supplies) — and there are yet more auto-related service businesses not included in that figure.⁴



Looking north toward downtown Nashville and the Cumberland River, Nolensville Pike runs north-south and crosses major interstates, bisects residential neighborhoods, and anchors commercial & light industrial uses. Imagery by Google Maps.



Typical scenes at various points on Nolensville Pike.

1 Ibid.

2 "Nolensville Pike Market Analysis," Randall Gross/Development Economics for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Vol. 1, 2011, p. 2, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/VOLUME1.pdf.

3 NashvilleNext, Vol. III, South Nashville Community Plan, p. 15, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/CommPlans2015/next-vol3-South%20Nashville.pdf.

4 "Nolensville Pike Market Analysis," Randall Gross/Development Economics for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Vol. 2B, 2011, pp. 35, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/VOLUME2B.pdf.

There are few trees along the route except for the land surrounding the Nashville Zoo, and little open space. According to the Nashville Open Space Plan, Southeast Nashville does not currently have an anchor park, or even a series of smaller parks, that could link it to Nashville’s developing green infrastructure network.¹ Just a block or two off the main road are residential neighborhoods with primarily single-family homes. Because the neighborhoods and commercial areas lack safe and easy connections, few residents choose to walk from their homes to the commercial area.

Given its location just a few miles outside downtown, redevelopment pressures can already be felt along Nolensville Pike, though not yet to the extent they exist in other parts of the region. The neighborhoods along Nolensville Pike are still relatively affordable and are thus attracting younger, more educated workers who want the convenience of a location close to the city’s core without the expense of other higher-demand areas in the city, like East Nashville. As a result, housing prices are on the rise. Average home prices in portions of Wedgewood-Houston have risen 55 percent since 2013, among the highest increase in the region.² Property owners are beginning to capitalize on this trend, redeveloping older single-family homes into 3-4 unit multifamily homes.



A sampling of the new, renovated, and older homes or units for sale in early 2017 in neighborhoods along the Nolensville Pike corridor. Photos from Redfin.com.

1 “Nashville Open Space Plan,” Nashville Naturally, 2011, p.6, www.conservationfund.org/images/projects/files/Nashville-Naturally-Green-Infrastructure-Plan-The-Conservation-Fund-2011.pdf.

2 “Final reappraisal: Nashville property values soar by record 37 percent,” The Tennessean, April 21, 2017, www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/04/21/final-reappraisal-nashville-property-values-soar-record-37-percent/100704912/. Note that the Wedgewood-Houston neighborhood is north of the Fairgrounds.

Commercial areas are also being redeveloped. The 117-acre Fairgrounds site is slated for conversion into a mixed-use development that may contain office space, housing, and/or entertainment and sporting venues. Further south, a former strip mall is being converted into Plaza Mariachi, designed to look like a Mexican town square with restaurants, shops, and services targeted to Nashville's growing Latino population. Several intersections are scheduled for improvements to make them safer and easier for pedestrians to navigate, and a new express bus service along the corridor started in 2016.

These developments are consistent with Metro Nashville's future plans for Nolensville Pike. Over the past several years, various entities in the region have conducted studies and developed plans for the corridor. These include:

- **NashvilleNext**, a comprehensive plan for the entire Nashville region that establishes goals and strategies in seven categories: land use, transportation, and infrastructure; arts, culture, and creativity; economic and workforce development; education and youth; health, livability, and the built environment; housing; and natural resources & hazard adaptation. The plan was adopted by the Planning Commission in June 2015 following three years of community outreach and discussion.¹
- **South Nashville Community Plan**, adopted as part of NashvilleNext. The plan proposes adding additional density and a mix of uses along Nolensville Pike, as well as transportation improvements to improve walkability along the corridor, while maintaining the single-family neighborhoods adjacent to the road.²
- **nMotion**, a strategic plan by the Metropolitan Transit Authority and the Regional Transportation Authority. The goal of the plan is to simplify and integrate multiple means of transportation to develop a seamless regional network, increase access to opportunity, and significantly increase transit ridership. The plan calls for a frequent transit network that would include light rail along Nolensville Pike and three other corridors.³
- **Envision Nolensville Pike**, a community visioning effort led by Conexión Américas in 2016. Residents and businesses identified priorities including continuous sidewalks, intersection improvements, and increased transit service, among other improvements.⁴
- **Nolensville Pike Market Analysis**, conducted for the Metro Government in 2011 by Randall Gross/Development Economics. The analysis examined the housing, office, retail, and industrial markets along Nolensville Pike from downtown to the Zoo, and provided recommendations for redevelopment with an appropriate use mix.⁵
- **“Placemaking through Infill and Corridor Redevelopment,”** an Urban Land Institute Rose Center Advisory Services Program Report from 2010 focusing on the area between Franklin Pike and Nolensville Pike south of downtown Nashville. The advisory panel recommended zoning flexibility, public infrastructure investment, and economic assistance to spur redevelopment in the area.⁶

1 www.nashville.gov/Government/NashvilleNext/The-NashvilleNext-Plan.aspx.

2 www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/CommPlans2015/next-vol3-South%20Nashville.pdf.

3 <http://nmotion2015.com/the-plan-document/nmotion-transit-plan/>.

4 www.civicdesigncenter.org/projects/envision-nolensville-pike-community-creativity-and-imagination-in-placemaking.2079977.

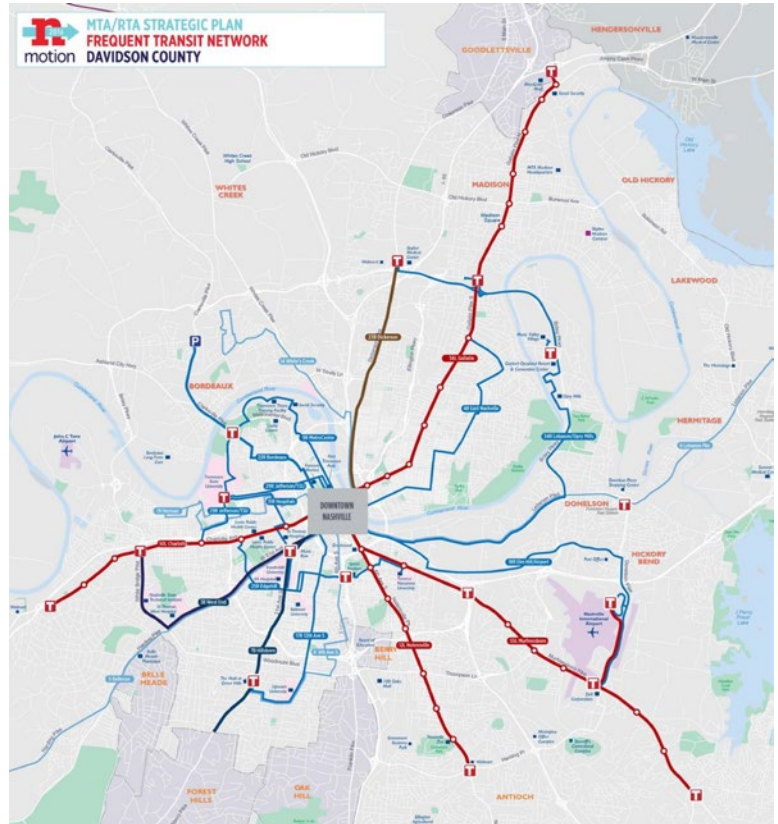
5 Volumes 1, 2A, and 2B can be downloaded at www.nashville.gov/Planning-Department/Community-Planning-Design/Community-Plans/South-Nashville.aspx.

6 www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/NashvilleULIstudy.pdf.

- **Healing the Pikes**, a case study of Nolensville Pike by the Nashville Civic Design Center and the Nashville MPO. The report provides a detailed examination of key intersections along Nolensville Pike and proposes redevelopment strategies and infrastructure improvements that would better balance the needs of all roadway users.¹

While the specific recommendations in these plans and reports vary, they agree on several key points.

- **The Nolensville Pike corridor is ripe for redevelopment.** Its location close to the city's core and affordable prices are likely to increase demand in the area.
- **The current mix of land uses is not optimal for the corridor.** The auto-oriented nature of the businesses is not well-suited for future economic growth, and current densities are not high enough to support the level of desired economic activity and transit service.
- **Improvements to transportation infrastructure are necessary** to help Nolensville Pike become safer and more attractive for pedestrians and bicyclists and to connect its businesses with adjacent residential communities.



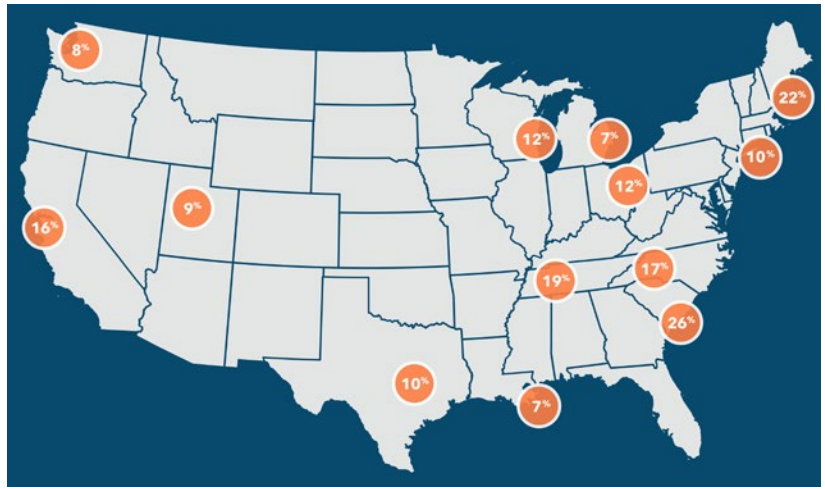
From the nMotion MTA/RTA 2016 Strategic Plan. Red lines indicate planned light rail. <http://nmotion2015.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/3-The-Plan-161221.pdf>

While many of these studies acknowledge the importance of preserving independent businesses, particularly those that are immigrant-owned or cater to immigrant customers, they offer few specific recommendations on how to prevent business displacement. This paper is intended to fill that gap.

Some business owners in the corridor already report feeling pressure. Most do not own their property and are therefore entirely subject to property owners' decisions regarding rental rates and even termination of leases. As more attention is focused on Nolensville Pike as a redevelopment opportunity, business owners are becoming increasingly concerned that their buildings will be sold and they will be forced to move. One business owner interviewed for this study noted that she receives frequent letters and calls from people trying to find out whether the building in which she operates is for sale.

¹ <https://www.civicedesigncenter.org/projects/healing-the-pikes.1476963>.

Business owners – and the banks that lend them money – thrive on certainty. They recognize that returns on their investments do not materialize all at once, but rather over time. An environment of uncertainty stifles business growth and development. The rumors and realities of redevelopment along Nolensville Pike are already stoking a climate of doubt among business owners. If their building may be sold and the business forced to move or even close, why would the business owner invest in new inventory, new technology, or additional employees?



Increase in commercial rents in selected cities, 2015-2016. Nashville is shown at 19%. From the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. <https://ilsr.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/04/ILSR-AffordableSpace-FullReport.pdf>

Now is the appropriate time to take proactive measures to prevent displacement.

Several of the plans cited above call for development of an International District along Nolensville Pike, taking advantage of the diverse nature of the community, which includes large populations of Latino, Kurdish, Somali, Ethiopian, and other immigrants. Should economic development displace these groups, the corridor stands to lose its unique identity and many of its local businesses.

Small businesses, particularly those owned by new Americans or other minority groups, play an important role in Nashville's economy. As pointed out in NashvilleNext, "local businesses rely more on other local business for their support services, such as accounting, banking, and other back office work. National firms typically centralize these functions outside of Nashville at their own company headquarters. ...Local business owners often have a stronger commitment to Nashville's success, supporting local charities, neighborhood events, and community efforts. They also provide distinctiveness to Nashville's neighborhoods and activity centers."¹ Immigrants also play a key role in Nashville's small business economy. "While 9% of Nashvillians were born in a foreign country, immigrants represent 29% of Main Street business owners (defined as retail, food services and accommodation, and neighborhood services such as nail salons, beauty shops, and gas stations)."²

Given the pace of redevelopment, proactive measures have time to prevent displacement. To be clear, the goal of these measures should not be to prevent development along Nolensville Pike, which could add jobs, increase the tax base, and improve quality of life. The goal should be to ensure that improvements to the corridor include housing and commercial opportunities for immigrants, minorities, low-income households, and long-term residents who have called the neighborhood home for generations.

1 NashvilleNext: A General Plan for Nashville and Davidson County, Vol. II, Economic and Workforce Development, p. 6, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/PlanVolumes/next-volume2-Elements_EWD.pdf.

2 Ibid. at p. 11. As of 2015 13.3 percent of Davidson County's population was foreign-born, according to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2015 estimate."

II. FINDINGS

This section discusses the key findings that underlie the recommendations in the subsequent section. They are based on a review of the relevant literature as well as a site visit to the Nolensville corridor and interviews with business owners and residents.

Better data is needed

To better understand the risk of displacement along Nolensville Pike and track progress in combating it, everyone involved will need access to better data, which will also involve gathering new data.

Existing businesses are at risk of displacement

The region should take action now to increase the stability of independent businesses on Nolensville Pike.

Action is needed to preserve affordable housing

Denser, mixed-income housing would indeed help support the corridor's businesses by bringing in new residents, but proactive steps must be taken now to preserve and expand affordable housing.

There is no silver bullet

Nolensville Pike needs a suite of strategic solutions, coordinated across numerous agencies and stakeholders. A one-size-fits-all, singular approach will not be the solution, no matter how well-intentioned the efforts.



A woman waits for the bus at a stop for the new "BRT lite" service on Nolensville Pike

1. On-going data collection is needed to better understand the risk of displacement along Nolensville Pike and to track progress in combating it.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends a “community assessment” as the starting point for addressing displacement risk. According to the EPA, “[p]lanners can use demographic data to understand who lives and works in a neighborhood and how this may change over time. Key indicators measured at the Census block or block group level, such as rent as a percentage of household income and combined housing and transportation costs, can help identify residents that are particularly vulnerable to displacement.”¹ The research team at Vanderbilt University that studied equitable development on behalf of NashvilleNext reached a similar conclusion, recommending that Nashville “[m]onitor neighborhood demographics and resources including use of a data-informed typology of neighborhood displacement risk.”²

A key component of these recommendations is that data collection should be ongoing, not a one-time exercise. By monitoring changes in demographic and economic data over time, Metro agencies can assess the effectiveness of their programs and strategies and adjust them as needed.

Metro government should begin by defining the corridor at issue. Roughly speaking, the corridor runs from the Nashville Fairgrounds south to Harding Place, about four miles away, but Metro government may choose to focus on one or more segments within that length. The area of interest adjacent to the road must also be defined. A half-mile buffer on either side may be appropriate, as that is considered to be the maximum distance people will walk from their homes to access a transit stop and could define the focus area for walkable redevelopment.³

The following is an initial list of the types of data to collect and monitor. Many of these indicators, or similar ones, should be readily available to Metro agencies and would simply need to be compiled for the desired geographic area. A few, such as the inventory of commercial leases, could require a new data collection effort.

Business-related data:

- Percent of business owners who rent vs. own their buildings. A higher percentage of renters leads to greater displacement risk.
- Number and location of property owners. Having a larger number of property owners can keep rents more competitive, but can also make large-scale redevelopment more difficult. On average, owners who live in the community are more committed to supporting local businesses than those who live far away.

1 “Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities: Strategies for Advancing Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development,” U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2013, p. 14, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/equitable-development-report-508-011713b.pdf>.

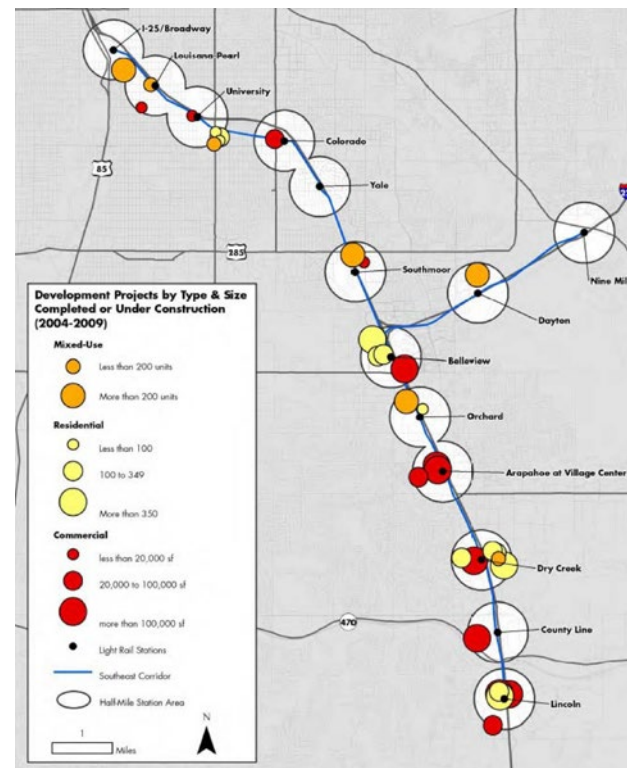
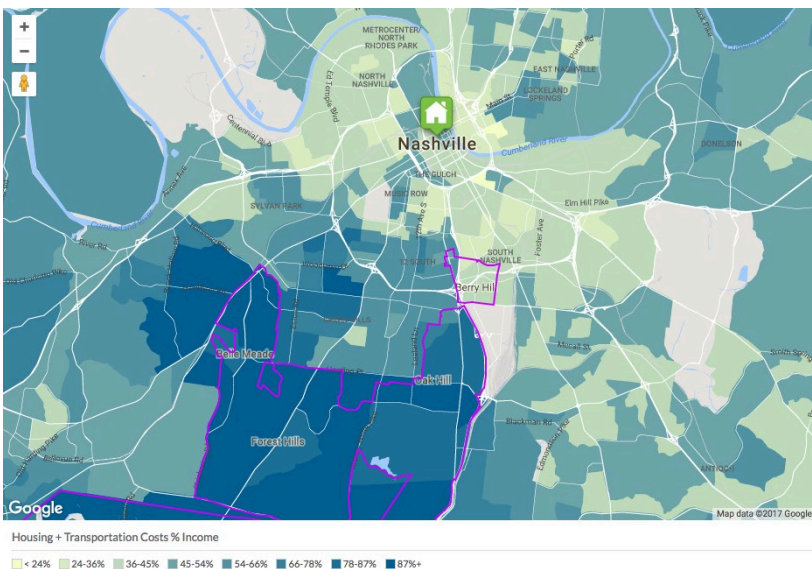
2 “Equitable Development: Promising Practices to Maximize Affordability and Minimize Displacement in Nashville’s Urban Core,” Community Research and Action Program at Vanderbilt University for NashvilleNext, 2014, p.6, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/ResourceTeams/Housing_Gentrification_EquitableDevelopment.pdf.

3 See, e.g., Dittmar, H., and G. Ohland, eds. *The New Transit Town: Best Practices in Transit Oriented Development*. 2004. Island Press. Washington, D.C. p. 120; and “Envisioning Neighborhoods with Transit-Oriented Development Potential,” Mineta Transportation Institute, May 2002, <http://transweb.sjsu.edu/MTIportal/research/publications/documents/01-15.pdf> The Federal Transit Administration uses a ½ mile walking distance and a 3-mile biking distance as the standard for federal transit law. See “Final Policy Statement on the Eligibility of Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements under Federal Transit Law,” Federal Transit Administration, Federal Register Vol. 76, August 19, 2011.

- Lease terms. For renters, a shorter lease can lead to more frequent rent increases, raising the risk of displacement.
- Age of commercial building stock. Older buildings may need more capital investment to fit in with a redeveloping neighborhood. Most of the commercial buildings along Nolensville Pike are 40-60 years old.¹
- Size of commercial lots. Smaller parcels can make major redevelopment more difficult, which can lessen displacement risk but harm revitalization efforts. The Urban Land Institute's study of Nolensville Road found that "[w]idely fragmented ownership, with many small and varied parcels, makes land assembly for major initiatives difficult."²

Residential data:

- Percent of residents who rent vs. own their homes. As with businesses, a greater percentage of renters indicates higher displacement risk.
- Number and type of housing units, including federally-subsidized affordable units, to identify any gaps in housing types or loss of affordable units.



The H+T Affordability Index shows that South Nashville is more affordable to current residents than other neighborhoods to the west and east. Still, there are neighborhoods along Nolensville Pike where residents are cost-burdened (blue areas indicate housing and transportation costs higher than 45% of a family's income). From the Center for Neighborhood Technology's Housing + Transportation Affordability Index. <http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>.

Construction projects along Denver's Southeast Rail Line, showing $\frac{1}{2}$ mile buffer around station areas. From Reconnecting America and Mile High Connects. www.milehighconnects.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Enhancing-Economic-Opportunity-Through-Transit-3-4-13.pdf.

1 NashvilleNext, Vol. III, South Nashville Community Plan, p. 15, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/CommPlans2015/next-vol3-South%20Nashville.pdf.

2 "Placemaking through Infill and Corridor Redevelopment," Urban Land Institute Rose Center Advisory Services Program, 2010, p. 12, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/NashvilleULIstudy.pdf.

- Number of residents who meet regional definitions for low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income. A higher percentage of lower income residents is an indicator of displacement risk.
- Housing and transportation costs as a percentage of household income. Housing and transportation are considered affordable if they total no more than 45% of a family's income. Higher cost burdens are an indicator of displacement risk.
- Any history of redlining, which can still impact stability of a neighborhood.¹

Economic data:

- Demand for housing, office, retail, and industrial space along Nolensville Pike (e.g. vacancy rates, absorption rates, property values), compared to the rest of Nashville. As demand increases relative to other neighborhoods, displacement risk also increases.
- Inventory of publicly-owned, vacant, and underutilized land, to identify locations where the corridor could absorb new development or where land could be preserved for community needs such as affordable housing or small business space.
- Development trends, e.g, through construction permit applications.

¹ See, e.g., this overlay of 1930s redlining with areas of poverty today, by Evan Tachovsky, "The Legacy of Redlining in Rust Belt Cities," Belt Publishing, March 19, 2015, <http://beltmag.com/the-legacy-of-redlining-in-rust-belt-cities/>.



Small, independent businesses and proprietors along Nolensville Pike. Photos by Alex Macias / Conexión Américas.

2. The region should take action now to increase stability of independent businesses on Nolensville Pike.

Small businesses require targeted solutions to prevent displacement. Now is the time to put those programs and activities into action. With development pressures already raising property values in certain neighborhoods along Nolensville Pike, some business owners are concerned that their landlords may sell buildings and terminate leases. Other business owners see the possibility that their customers who live in the adjacent neighborhoods will be priced out and newer, wealthier households may not frequent the same establishments. Still others worry that new development will bring more traffic congestion, further dissuading people from coming to shops and restaurants along the corridor. The common feature of all of these concerns – expressed in different ways by the business owners interviewed for this study – is the sense of uncertainty. In such an uncertain environment, business owners will hesitate to invest in their businesses, whether that means forgoing a technology upgrade or failing to hire additional employees. To ensure that these businesses can remain in the area and continue to grow, increasing business certainty should be a priority in plans for the future of Nolensville Pike.

One of the key risks for business owners is the future cost of their physical space. There are a variety of ways that Metro agencies or other actors such as nonprofits can help to stabilize those costs. Programs that support tenant purchases, low-interest loans for buying commercial space, or incentives for developers to include small business space in their buildings are among the options, and are discussed further in the recommendations section.

Equally important is the establishment of a unified business alliance to share information and strengthen networks along the corridor. As one business owner interviewed for this study put it, “People need information; the more information they get, the calmer they are about changes.”¹ Uncertainty and fear flourish in the absence of reliable information and regular communications. Informal networks do exist, particularly among business owners from the same ethnic or national background, but there is currently no single entity that can serve as a clearinghouse of information for the business community along Nolensville Pike about programs or plans that Metro government or private developers may have. Such an entity could determine the most effective ways to disseminate information to business owners, many of whom do not have time to attend public meetings or browse websites.

1 Interview with Karen Estevez-Gill, co-owner of the Flatrock Coffee, Tea & More, at 2640 Nolensville Pike, February 16, 2017.

The traffic challenge

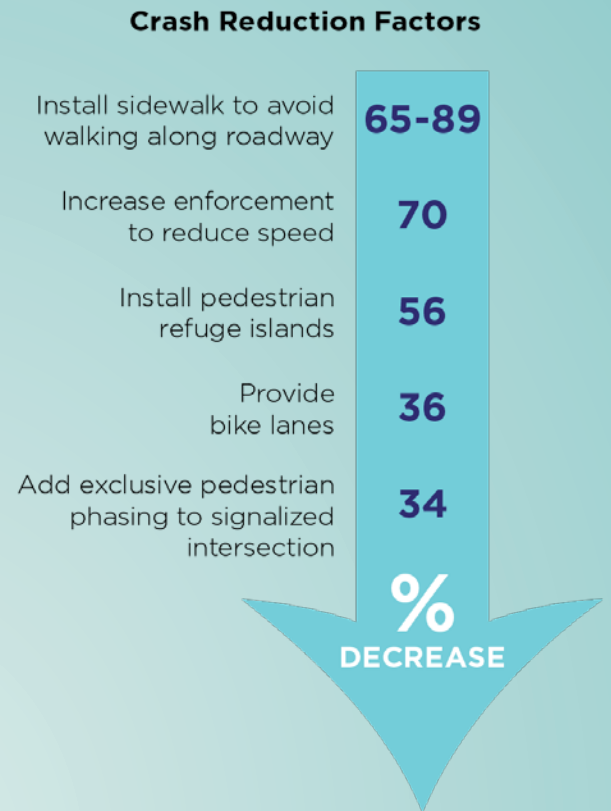
Nolensville Pike sees an average of 60,000 automobile trips every workday, making it one of the most highly visible corridors in the region. Yet far from being a boon to businesses located along the road, car traffic is a major concern. In fact, it was the number one issue raised by the businesses interviewed for this study. Fast-moving cars and unsafe intersections were cited as key reasons why few customers walk to local businesses. Virtually all customers drive, making parking a challenge.

Metro Nashville and the State of Tennessee should take steps to calm traffic on Nolensville Pike and provide more transportation options. Improved walkability is a goal in every one of the plans listed on p. 14. Some of the necessary changes will be the responsibility of property owners and developers (perhaps with support from the city), who can move parking lots to the side or back of buildings and create façade improvements and signage that will attract walkers and encourage drivers to stop and shop.

But many improvements fall within the public space.

These include more crosswalks, better crosswalk markings, extended crossing times, adding pedestrian refuge islands to major intersections, widening sidewalks and limiting curb cuts, and adding street trees and landscaping to provide a buffer between the street and the sidewalk. Over the longer term, walkability could be improved by recreating the street grid at key intersections to allow both vehicle and pedestrian circulation to and from businesses without always having to use the main road.

Plans for Nolensville Pike call for increased density in key locations. In time, that density could support a major transit investment in the corridor, such as a light rail line. Until that time, however, additional density will exacerbate traffic concerns unless alternatives to driving are provided. While the new express bus line has improved bus service along Nolensville Pike, buses remain underutilized in Nashville as a whole. Encouraging more transit and bicycling along the corridor and improving walkability from the surrounding neighborhoods to local businesses could help to expand the customer base without creating additional traffic.



From the Federal Highway Administration, as shown in Nashville WalknBike Draft Plan. http://nashvillewalknbike.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Nashville_WalkBike_Draft_forWeb.pdf.

3. Denser, mixed-income housing would support the corridor's businesses, but steps must be taken now to preserve and expand affordable housing.

The saying goes, retail follows rooftops. In other words, the more households (“rooftops”) in an area, the more retail the area can sustain. Additional housing along Nolensville Pike would bring new customers to the area’s existing businesses and potentially support new businesses. The market analysis conducted in 2011 found that the corridor between the Fairgrounds and the Zoo could potentially support another 550 rental and for-sale units by 2020 and another 94,000 square feet of retail space.¹

Housing for a mix of income levels will broaden the tax base of the area and support a more diverse mix of businesses. It could also bring the increased density needed to support future plans for light rail along the corridor. But new housing can change the character of neighborhoods, potentially driving out lower-income families. If affordable homes are lost, an important customer base for many of the area’s businesses could disappear, not to mention an important ridership base for any new transit line.²

Not all businesses would experience the same result if lower-income households were displaced. Some types of businesses, such as ethnic restaurants, furniture stores, and specialty coffee shops, would likely benefit from an influx of higher-income residents. Others, like discount stores or markets specializing in international foods or goods, could see business fall. Again, the goal of Metro’s efforts along Nolensville Pike should not be to prevent development of new housing, as that could limit the customer base for all of the shops and restaurants in the corridor, but rather to ensure that development includes affordable homes accessible to recent immigrants as well as long-time residents who have helped make the community what it is today.

As with business displacement, the time for action is now, before redevelopment occurs and affordable homes are lost. Anecdotal evidence from the interviews conducted along Nolensville Pike suggests that some families are already moving out to more affordable neighborhoods like Antioch, which exacerbates traffic problems as they must drive longer distances to reach jobs and services. There are a wide variety of strategies to preserve affordability, including developer incentives, nonprofit land ownership, and property tax abatement for at-risk homeowners, which will be discussed in the recommendations section.

1 “Nolensville Pike Market Analysis,” Randall Gross/Development Economics for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Vol. 2B, 2011, pp. 32 and 51, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/VOLUME2B.pdf.

2 Low-income individuals are more likely than higher-income individuals to take transit (15% of people earning under \$30,000 take transit regularly, compared to 11% overall.) Foreign-born residents are more than twice as likely to take transit regularly as people born in the U.S. See “Who Relies on Public Transit in the U.S.,” Pew Research Center, 2016, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/.

4. Nolensville Pike needs a suite of solutions, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Although this paper generally refers to Nolensville Pike as if it were monolithic, in fact it is made up of a number of adjoining segments, each with unique aspects and character. Some portions of the corridor have primarily single-story, small commercial buildings, while other parts have more strip malls. The diverse international mix spans most of the corridor, but different nationalities tend to concentrate along different parts of the route. Some neighborhoods, such as close-in Woodbine and Wedgewood-Houston, are already seeing housing prices rise, while others are not yet experiencing the same demand. Parts of the corridor may have developable land that can absorb demand for affordable space, while other parts may lack vacant space, making it more important in those locations to focus on preserving existing affordability.

As discussed above, not every small business is in the same position when it comes to displacement. Some types of businesses can adapt more readily to a changing clientele. Similarly, immigrant groups themselves may be in different positions when it comes to resisting displacement. Some groups have extensive networks that can support each other, financially and otherwise. For example, the Kurdish community has a strong informal support system, with 250 business owners. Others may lack such networks; for example, there are few Ethiopian business owners in Nashville. These differences will be important to keep in mind as strategies are identified to prevent business and residential displacement.

Gojo Ethiopian Café and Restaurant near Nolensville Pike.



Case study: Seattle's Rainier Valley



Photo of Othello Station on Sound Transit's Link light rail system via <http://rvcdf.org/>

Transit improvements like light rail construction can be very disruptive to small businesses along the route, and cities and transit agencies often provide temporary support to affected businesses such as marketing, signage, and alternative parking arrangements. In some cases, the efforts begun during construction can be a catalyst for long-term programs that continue even after construction is complete. Seattle's Rainier Valley provides a good example. Light rail construction occurred in that area from 2002 to 2009. During construction, the city funded small business loan forgiveness and other community improvements. Even before construction began, the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund (RVCDF) began serving businesses in the area with loans and legal assistance to mitigate the impacts of construction. According to RVCDF's website, "due in part to more than \$15 million in mitigation funds we provided, 85% of pre-construction businesses are still around today."¹ The RVCDF continues to operate today, as a certified community development financial institution (CDFI) with a revolving loan fund that supports businesses in the area with low-interest loans and technical assistance.

Another organization that grew from the construction period is the MLK Business Association, which formed in 2008 to promote and support the businesses along the light rail's route. Among other activities, the MLK Business Association maintains an online directory of its members and runs the annual "Plate of Nations," in which participants can sample food in Rainier Valley's many ethnic restaurants.

Despite the efforts of these and other organizations, displacement pressures continue to be felt in some parts of Rainier Valley, as rapid population growth in Seattle outstrips the housing available near light rail stations. Recognizing this challenge, the City of Seattle is working to identify neighborhoods at greater risk of displacement so that it can develop solutions. As Seattle's experience shows, combating displacement is a multi-year process and early support for community institutions can yield long-term results.

1 <http://rvcdf.org/about/history/>



III. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is intended to complement the many recommendations that have already been made in studies and plans for Nolensville Pike. In general, those recommendations provide strategies for achieving desired redevelopment along the corridor. While those plans acknowledge the need to preserve the current diversity of residents and businesses, few of their recommendations focus specifically on preventing the displacement that can result from public investments in transportation infrastructure.

The following recommendations are intended specifically to address displacement concerns. They are not intended to replace strategies for redeveloping Nolensville Pike, as redevelopment could significantly improve economic activity, safety, and quality of life along the corridor. Rather, they are intended to ensure that as transportation and infrastructure improvements are made, current residents and business owners will be able to share in the benefits of the resulting changes.

Artist Jairo Prado (not pictured) led a community mural for the Casa Azafrán pocket park groundbreaking in June 2015.

1. Coordination and community engagement

Create a Nolensville Pike business alliance

Currently, Nolensville Pike business owners are either members of Nashville-wide organizations or are not part of any formal alliance. Yet many of the business owners along Nolensville Pike are facing similar issues and would benefit from an opportunity to share information and ideas with other business owners in the area, regardless of national origin. Building an alliance that crosses ethnic boundaries will take time, but ultimately could develop into an effective advocate for small businesses along the corridor.¹ The Nolensville Pike business alliance would not replace the value of membership in Nashville-wide organizations, but would complement them, serving as a place-based forum that would focus on concerns and issues specific to Nolensville Pike businesses.

One example of this approach is the MLK Business Association, discussed on page 25, which formed in response to light rail construction in Seattle's Rainier Valley and provides marketing and networking opportunities as well as advocacy on behalf of the businesses along the light rail route. In Arlington, VA, businesses along Columbia Pike, a suburban "stroad" that has much in common with Nolensville Pike, joined with residents (with public support from the county) to form the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO). CPRO provides business and community input into development plans for the Pike and helps coordinate corridor-wide events. CPRO's stated vision is to contribute to Columbia Pike's development into "Arlington's oldest and newest Main Street, where authentic diverse neighborhoods connect to the world."²

The business alliance would fill multiple needs specific to the corridor, such as facilitating the sharing of information about city programs, construction projects, and local events as well as the development of unified, multicultural neighborhood positions on current issues. The business alliance could also develop coordinated marketing materials or corridor-wide events that introduce neighbors and regional visitors to the wealth of businesses along Nolensville Pike.

Among its other roles, the business alliance could help provide information to local businesses about available business support services, while also identifying ways to fill any gaps. Small businesses need technical advice and education to help them navigate legal and regulatory requirements, as well as marketing and business development assistance. While there are already a number of providers of these services, interviews with business owners along Nolensville Pike suggest that the demand for this type of support currently exceeds the supply. Because businesses with easy access to supportive, low-cost services will be more resilient to displacement pressures, it is important for these types of programs to be available to Nolensville Pike's small businesses, and for mechanisms to be in place to ensure that those business owners in need of support are aware of where to find it.

¹ As discussed in the previous section, a first step will be to determine the boundaries of the corridor, which may result in the creation of several smaller sub-corridors to begin with.

² See <http://columbia-pike.org/>.

An early step that the business alliance could take is to conduct an inventory of programs currently being offered that are accessible to Nolensville Pike business owners, either in terms of physical location or cost (some existing programs are offered free of charge, while others charge a fee that may be difficult for a small business to absorb). The inventory can help to identify which programs are oversubscribed and any gaps in current offerings. Based on the inventory, a plan can be developed to grow existing programs and develop any new ones that may be needed to fill gaps.

As one example, IRS reporting was mentioned by several business owners interviewed for this study as a major concern, one that can take an inordinate amount of time and in extreme cases, ultimately result in a business having to close. Moreover, some businesses are able to afford legal advisors on issues such as negotiating a lease, while others are not. An inventory by the business alliance could determine the extent to which such services currently exist and whether additional offerings are needed.¹

In time, the corridor would benefit from a formal Business Improvement District (BID) that could take responsibility for both marketing and certain maintenance and beautification tasks, such as picking up litter and maintaining flower beds.² Most BIDs are supported at least in part by assessments on businesses in the area. While there are some national businesses along Nolensville Pike, such as car dealerships and pharmacy chains, many of the businesses are small and would struggle to pay a BID assessment. An assessment could be structured to be proportional to a business' size, with the smallest businesses (and perhaps those still in their first few years of operation) paying nothing. However, care should be taken to structure the BID to ensure that independent business along the Pike will have the opportunity to participate in activities, decision-making, and policy-setting regardless of their ability to pay.

The first step is development of a projected annual operating budget for a Nolensville Pike BID coupled with an inventory of businesses along Nolensville Pike by size. This information could be used to determine whether a direct assessment system could adequately fund a BID or whether philanthropic or public support would be needed (as was the case for the Fruitvale BID in Oakland, CA, which began as a nationally funded pilot and converted to a merchant assessment several years after it was established³).

1 If it is determined that additional tax and legal services are needed, one potential solution is development of a "preferred provider" list, where interested lawyers and tax advisors would offer a reduced fee in exchange for being on a list that would be given to all of the businesses along Nolensville Pike. This would operate like the federal General Services Administration (GSA) schedule, where vendors offer favorable rates in order to gain access to the multitude of procurement offices across the federal government. This could help independent businesses keep up with national chains, which have back offices that provide these types of services.

2 BIDs can take a variety of forms and play many roles. The following studies of BIDs in New York City and California provide a number of examples and best practices: "Streetwise and Business Savvy: Best Practices and Accomplishments from New York City's BIDs," New York City Dept. of Small Business Services, www.cdfa.net/cdfa/cdfaweb.nsf/ordredirect.html?open&id=savvybidnyc.html, and "Business Improvement Districts: Best Practices in Policy, Structure, and Collections: Summary Findings from Interviews," California Travel and Tourism Commission, 2010, <http://industry.visitcalifornia.com/media/uploads/files/editor/Business%20Improvement%20District%20Interviews%20Summary-%20Final.pdf>.

3 "Fruitvale Economic Development and Commercial Corridor Strategy," The Unity Council, http://unitycouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/201401023_Fruitvale_Technical_Report-min.pdf.

Explore creation of a foundation-led collaborative

Nashville leaders should determine whether there would be sufficient support among philanthropic and corporate interests, including both local and national entities, to establish a formal partnership to create a plan for and facilitate equitable development along Nolensville Pike. As part of the discussion, the potential role of community development corporations (CDCs) and community development financial institutions (CDFIs) should be examined, as these entities have been instrumental in many cities' redevelopment efforts. Privately-funded collaboratives have put successful anti-displacement programs into place in cities such as St. Paul and Denver. In the case of St. Paul, 14 local and national foundations came together as the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, which pooled contributions totaling \$12 million to provide coordinated support for small businesses and low-income residents along the route of the future Green Line light rail. Many of these businesses received loans with the condition that they would be forgiven if they stay at their current location. Other programs included grants for façade and parking lot improvements.¹ The Funders Collaborative also served as a forum for discussion with city staff. A similar effort is underway in Denver where the Mile High Connects coalition brings together both corporate and philanthropic partners to support equitable development along that region's light rail system. By pooling corporate and foundation support into a single entity, publicly-funded programs can be complemented with private-sector initiatives and anti-displacement efforts can be coordinated to have the maximum impact.

Assess the potential for redevelopment districts and/or a corridor-based tax-increment financing district along Nolensville Pike

As property values increase, some of that increased revenue could be dedicated to meeting the infrastructure, commercial, or residential needs along the corridor. Many communities have used tax-increment financing (TIF) to finance capital improvements in changing neighborhoods. ULI's Nashville study highlighted Indiana's Housing Tax Increment Financing District (HOTIF), which "not only allows the capture of a new property tax increment from new investment but also permits the capture of the existing tax base to be used for property acquisition and infrastructure investment. The capturing of the existing tax base provides an instant funding source for improvements to an area in need."² Adopting a TIF approach for Nolensville Pike is a cross-cutting solution that could help to fund many of the recommendations that follow. TIF districts could be focused around particular areas targeted for redevelopment or for particular segments along the corridor anchored by major redevelopments.

1 "The Train Line that Brought the Twin Cities Back Together," Politico Magazine, March 16, 2017, www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/03/train-line-minneapolis-st-paul-streetcar-light-rail-214920.

2 "Placemaking through Infill and Corridor Redevelopment," Urban Land Institute Rose Center Advisory Services Program, 2010, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/NashvilleULIstudy.pdf.

Maximizing opportunities through Nashville's Promise Zone

In 2016, Nashville received the federal Promise Zone designation, one of nine cities nationwide to receive the designation in that year. The designation lasts for 10 years and gives the city access to technical assistance and preference when applying for federal grants for projects within the boundaries of the Promise Zone. A cross-cutting group of federal agencies recognize the Promise Zone designation in their programs, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Education, among others.

Nashville's Promise Zone encompasses some of the area's poorest neighborhoods, including South Nashville. The poverty rate within the Promise Zone is 37.61%, and unemployment stands at 14.08%, well above the region's average. As the zone captain for South Nashville, one of five sub-zones, Conexión Américas can help lead efforts to leverage the Promise Zone designation to assist in garnering federal support for anti-displacement work along Nolensville Pike. Coordination of these efforts will help to maximize the opportunity the designation presents for improving access to opportunity and quality of life in South Nashville.

For more info, visit: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=Nashville_Zone_3rd.pdf.

2. Data collection

Conduct a community assessment

This should include data of the types identified on pp. 19-20, as well as an inventory of businesses and community services (e.g., child care, health care, and financial services) in the target area to identify any that may be missing. The community assessment will provide the data needed to target strategies appropriately and allow for on-going monitoring of progress. The City of Seattle developed a Displacement Risk Index for its neighborhoods to help determine optimal strategies for managing future population growth. The Index includes three broad categories (Vulnerability, Amenities, Development Capacity and Rent) and 14 specific factors.

Table 2 Displacement risk index indicators

Indicator	Description	Source
Vulnerability		
1 Communities of color	Percentage of population who are persons of color	2010 Census
2 English-speaking ability	Percentage of population 5 years and older who speak English less than "very well"	2008–2012 American Community Survey
3 Educational attainment	Percentage of population 25 years or older who lack a Bachelor's degree	2008–2012 American Community Survey
4 Housing tenancy	Percentage of households that are renters	2010 Census
5a Housing cost-burdened households	Percentage of households with income below 80% of area median income (AMI) that are cost burdened (paying > 30% of income on housing)	Consolidated Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) (based on 2007–2011 American Community Survey)
5b Severely housing cost-burdened households	Percentage of households with income below 80% of area median income (AMI) that are or severely cost burdened (> 50% of income on housing)	
6 Household income	Percentage of population with income below 200% of poverty level	2008–2012 American Community Survey
Amenities		
7 Proximity to frequent bus service	Number of bus trips within a quarter-mile walking distance	King County Metro General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS)
8 Proximity to current or future Link light rail and streetcar	Within walking distance to current and future light rail stations and streetcar stops	King County GIS
9 Proximity to core businesses	Within walking distance to supermarket/grocery (0.5 mi), pharmacy (0.5 mi), and restaurant/café/diner (0.25 mi)	ReferenceUSA
10 Proximity to civic infrastructure	Within walking distance to a school, community center, park, or library	King County GIS, City of Seattle
11 Proximity to already-gentrified or affluent neighborhood	Below-median income areas adjacent to above-median income areas	2008–2012 American Community Survey
12 Proximity to job center	Travel time to designated King County urban centers outside Seattle (not including manufacturing centers)	King County GIS
Development capacity and rent		
13 Development capacity	Parcels that allow residential uses identified as likely to redevelop in City development capacity model	DPD development capacity model
14 Median rent	Ratio of rent per net rentable square foot by tract to the Seattle average for rent per net rentable square foot	Dupre + Scott

Excerpt from the City of Seattle's Displacement Risk Index. https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2273984.pdf.

Establish performance goals and measures

These could include small business retention, residential and commercial affordability, new independent businesses, etc. These should be regularly measured to assess the effectiveness of anti-displacement efforts.

The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative in St. Paul, Minnesota, described above on p. 29, established three overarching goals – access to affordable housing, strong local economy, and vibrant transit-oriented places – for development along the Green Line. To measure progress, they identified 13 indicators, including household income, residential stability, home values, number of jobs, number of small businesses, and access to services and amenities. For each indicator, they used specific measureable data and benchmarks to enable them to track changes over time. The Collaborative’s final tracking report, in June 2016, shows strong progress in keeping the area affordable to low-income households, and mixed results for businesses, with mid-size businesses showing strong growth while the smallest (fewer than five employees) continue to struggle.¹ Though the Collaborative has concluded its work, it encourages city leaders to continue monitoring development along the Green Line and adjust strategies accordingly.

Sample of data collected along Minneapolis-St. Paul light rail corridor

Indicator	Baseline	Year 6	Mpls/St.P. Benchmark	Comments
Strong Local Economy				
9 Businesses of all sizes thrive here				Overall employment up but fewer establishments
Percentage change in number of establishments since Baseline (by workforce size)				The Corridor lost 4% (or 252) of business establishments since the Baseline, down to 6,654. However, overall employment has increased (see 10). Overall change in Minneapolis/Saint Paul since Baseline was -1%.
< 5 employees	3,394	-9%	-4%	
5-19 employees	1,948	-1%	0%	Corridor tends to mimic Benchmark trends but with less percentage gain and greater percentage loss.
20-99 employees	1,146	5%	7%	
100 - 250 employees	248	10%	16%	Businesses with fewer than 5 employees remain below baseline levels, most notably in Downtowns (-11% Minneapolis, -19% St. Paul). Mid-size businesses have seen net gains.
250 + employees	170	-4%	1%	
Total all establishments	6,906	-4%	-1%	
10* Number of jobs on the Corridor is growing				Job picture shows mixed gains along the Corridor
Downtown Minneapolis	127,815	134,337		Overall job growth is up 3% for the Corridor since Baseline. M/SP has experienced 7% job growth since Baseline.
UMN	29,714	30,971		
Midway West	22,096	22,804		Since 2009 job growth has been uneven along the Corridor, with strong growth in Downtown Minneapolis and Midway East; Midway Central and Downtown St. Paul have seen losses.
Midway Central	9,473	8,333		
Midway East	7,744	8,915		
Downtown St. Paul	51,648	50,887		
Corridor Total	247,861	256,246		
Minneapolis/Saint Paul Total	447,877	478,804		
11 Residents can access workplaces via transit				Modestly improved access to workplaces
% of low- to moderate-income workers employed within a 45-minute transit commute	59%	64%	-	Green Line startup has coincided with modest increase in the share of workers in the Corridor able to reach their current job within 45 minutes by train/bus routes (from 59% of workers "pre-train" to 64% of workers "post-train"). On average Corridor residents can reach far more jobs via walking or transit than is the case for M/SP residents overall.
*Average number of jobs reachable within 30 min by transit or walking	n/a	125,220	73,950	

The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative tracked demographic and economic data over six years to monitor the impact of light rail construction in the Twin Cities. From the Central Corridor Tracker: Progress Beyond the Rail by the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative.

www.funderscollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/CCFC2016Tracker-Web.pdf

1 "Central Corridor Tracker: Progress Beyond the Rail," Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, June 2016, www.funderscollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/CCFC2016Tracker-Web.pdf.

3. Transportation improvements

Implement traffic calming measures and safety improvements

The region's future plans for Nolensville Pike as a high-frequency transit corridor with walkable shopping districts and neighborhoods requires conversion of the current auto-focused traffic pattern into one that balances the needs of cars, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians. As a first step, the city and state should prioritize traffic calming measures and safety improvements including:¹

- Adding additional crosswalks, better marking of existing crosswalks, and extended crossing times at key intersections;
- Adding medians to the roadway at key locations;
- Providing continuous, uninterrupted sidewalks;
- Placing street trees or furniture to provide a buffer between pedestrians and passing cars;
- Identifying hot spots for collisions and addressing the causes with better lighting, lane markings, pull-out lanes, or other improvements;²



The project on this street in Seattle, WA added a new curb, street trees and a buffer between traffic and pedestrians. Photos courtesy of the National Complete Streets Coalition.



With wide lanes and excess capacity, Sherman Ave. in Washington, DC was unsafe for everyone who used it and was retrofitted to add a median, crosswalks, and bulbouts to improve safety and functionality for all. Imagery via Google Maps.

¹ Because it is a state road, the state must approve improvements on Nolensville Pike.

² This work has already begun in the Public Works Department's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Pilot Project, http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wpln/files/201507/pedestrian_and_bicycle_safety_study-final_report_11-14.pdf?_ga=1.206310743.572309678.1491336265.

- Better connections between commercial and residential areas by bicycling/walking;
- Traffic calming; and
- Wayfinding signage to direct people to culturally significant places and businesses on foot, bicycle and transit.

Nashville has adopted a complete streets strategy, which these improvements will support.

Conduct a parking inventory

Parking is unevenly distributed along Nolensville Pike, with some businesses sharing a small lot and others seemingly surrounded by parking. Parking is an important element of business success along Nolensville Pike at the present time, though in the future more customers will arrive on foot, by bike or by transit than arrive by those means today. While essential, parking has a cost; it occupies land that could otherwise be put to more productive use, it creates unsightly areas adjacent to the road, and it often requires curb cuts to allow cars to access it across sidewalks.



Parking structure at 15th & Pearl in Boulder, CO is wrapped by retail, creating a more vibrant pedestrian area. Imagery via Google Maps.

Matching parking supply with demand should be part of the redevelopment plans for Nolensville Pike. In some areas, more parking may be needed, though it may be possible to locate it behind buildings or in a shared lot, in order to minimize its impact on sidewalks. In others, less parking may be needed, allowing underutilized lots to be converted to new commercial or mixed-use space.



Parking supply (left) and parking demand (right) in downtown Portsmouth, NH at noon on weekdays. Images from the City of Portsmouth. www.cityofportsmouth.com/transportation/reportdowntownparkingfinalreport.pdf

Other communities that have looked at addressing parking mismatches have started with an inventory of current supply and demand. These studies typically map or count available spaces within a defined area (including whether they are time-restricted and publicly or privately provided), as well as analyzing actual utilization of spaces at various times of day, including weekdays, evenings, and weekends. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council in Boston has guidelines on its website for local communities on how to do a parking study.¹

Continue to pursue transit improvements and multimodal connections

NashvilleNext calls for more places in Nashville to become walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods.² Nolensville Pike has the potential to support several higher-density, mixed-use districts along the corridor. In order to prevent this new development from choking the corridor with car traffic, transit solutions must be put into place. Residential neighborhoods must also be connected with safe bicycling and walking pathways to the commercial areas on Nolensville Pike, which will allow residents to get where they need to go without driving, whether to access the businesses along the corridor or transit services to go elsewhere in the region.

The strategic plan of the MTA and RTA, nMotion, focuses on improving access to opportunity, expanding travel options, and significantly increasing transit ridership.³ nMotion identifies light rail as the preferred transit option for Nolensville Pike. Before light rail is implemented, however, there are steps that can be taken to improve transit service and encourage additional ridership. Better signage and branding of the existing express bus route on Nolensville Pike could help to distinguish it from “ordinary” buses. More comfortable waiting areas, with a shelter and bench, could also improve the customer experience.



Metro Nashville Public School students board the Nolensville Pike bus at Antioch Pike.

Most importantly, improving pedestrian safety along Nolensville Pike is critical to increasing transit ridership, as every transit rider is a pedestrian at some point in their trip. Since low-income and minority residents are more likely to ride transit, it is also important to address the need for affordable housing along the corridor (discussed in recommendation #5, below), so as not to lose an important ridership base for the planned rail line.⁴

1 “How to Do a Parking Study,” MAPC, www.mapc.org/resources/parking-toolkit/parking-study-howto.

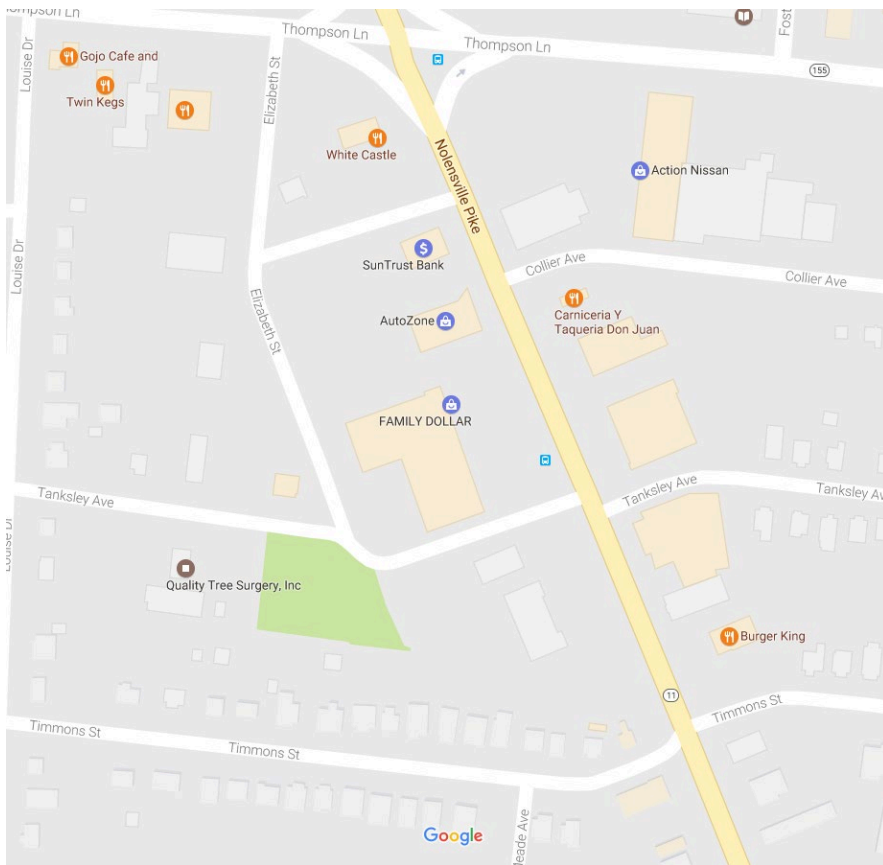
2 NashvilleNext, Vol. II: Land Use and Infrastructure, p.44, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/PlanVolumes/next-volume2-Elements_LUTI.pdf.

3 “nMotion: Transit Plan Recommendations,” Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority, 2016, http://nmotion2015.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/MTA_RecommendedPlan-Draft.pdf.

4 See “Who Relies on Public Transit in the U.S.,” Pew Research Center, 2016, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/.

Restore/establish the street grid in key locations

Future plans for walkable mixed-use districts along Nolensville Pike would benefit from improvements to the street grid at major intersections. In some places, the street that crosses Nolensville does not go all the way across, but requires drivers to turn onto Nolensville itself before turning onto the cross street on the other side of Nolensville Pike. Moreover, there are few alternative roads along the Nolensville Pike corridor, meaning that drivers must use Nolensville Pike to travel even just a short distance. Redeveloping the street grid is becoming a common action to support walkable development, as it allows pedestrians and bicyclists better access to shops and restaurants in a commercial corridor without forcing them to use the main arterial.



Section of Nolensville Pike with disconnected cross streets. Imagery via Google Maps.

4. Business support

Develop pathways for business owners to purchase commercial property

Uncertainty over the future of rental rates and lease terms is one of the biggest barriers to growing a business. When business owners along Nolensville Pike were asked about their goals for the future, owning their property was among the top responses. As property owners, small business owners would be less susceptible to rising rents.

Small business owners often have difficulty accessing bank loans to purchase property. The U.S. Small Business Administration offers long-term, low-interest loans for a variety of purposes, including purchase of commercial property. The city can supplement this program by encouraging private lending to small businesses, such as by offering down payment assistance or low-cost loan guarantees to qualifying business owners. Loan guarantees in particular can be a cost-effective way to support small businesses, as they do not require a cash outlay upfront and payment is made only in cases of default.

Before determining which combination of these approaches is most suitable for Nolensville Pike, the city should inventory available sources of financing for purchasing commercial property and identify any gaps. That is the process Salt Lake City is currently undergoing. The city's goal is to create a "Buy Your Building" program for small business owners that can supplement the financing offered by the SBA. The city plans to partner with regional banks to encourage them to lend to local businesses that would otherwise be considered too risky.¹ City financial support would backstop or supplement private lending to make it more accessible for business owners, and city programs will be targeted to fill gaps in existing programs.

The cost of financing is only one barrier to property ownership for small businesses. Another is the availability of appropriate commercial space for sale. Several cities have experimented with requirements that property owners provide notice to affected tenants and give them an opportunity to purchase the property before selling it. For example, Washington D.C. enacted the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA); though focused on housing, TOPA provides a useful example to consider in the business context. TOPA requires landlords wishing to sell a property to provide notice to tenants and specifies deadlines for tenants to indicate their interest in buying and to acquire financing. The deadlines and other requirements vary depending upon whether the property is a single-family home, 2-4 units, or five or more units. The TOPA process is clearly spelled out on the website of D.C.'s Office of the Tenant Advocate, and may, if necessary be enforced in court.² For larger properties, TOPA requires formation of a tenant cooperative organization if tenants are interested in purchasing the property. While TOPA has enabled a number of tenant groups to purchase their properties, in general these types of programs have seen mixed results, as the time required for tenants to put together enough capital to purchase a building tends to exceed the required period.

¹ "Affordable Space: How Rising Commercial Rents Are Threatening Independent Businesses, and What Cities Are Doing About It," Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 2016, p.14, <https://ilsr.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/04/ILSR-AffordableSpace-FullReport.pdf>.

² See TOPA Process Charts at <https://ota.dc.gov/page/tenant-opportunity-purchase-act-topa>.

One emerging idea that may be helpful in addressing this is the formation of investment cooperatives by residents or business owners in a particular area (which may be as small as a neighborhood or as large as a whole state), which can bring additional resources to the table beyond just those of the building’s tenants. The Northeast Investment Cooperative allows residents of Minnesota to purchase ownership shares in the cooperative — which is structured as a for-profit entity (although potential for profit-making is small) — and reinvests those funds into purchasing commercial buildings in underserved areas in Northeast Minneapolis.¹ The successful creation of an investment cooperative depends in part on securities and tax laws, which differ by state, so the first step in pursuing this approach in Nashville will be a review of Tennessee law.²

Another innovative idea is separating ground-level retail space from upper floors and converting it into condominiums. This would allow small businesses to purchase just the space they need, not an entire multi-use building. This approach would also address a limitation in the Small Business Act’s 504 loan program, which only allows businesses to purchase property if 51% of the building is used as part of the business. If retail spaces can be separated into individual condos, the business owner is likely to use 100% of the condominium space. In Manhattan, the borough president has suggested that landlords could be incentivized to create ground-floor condos by rewarding them with reduced fees for city services.³

Preserve and expand affordable commercial space

Even with programs like those discussed above, some business owners will not be in a position to purchase their space. Ensuring that these businesses can afford to rent commercial space along Nolensville Pike will help increase their stability and ensure that they can remain in the area. The following strategies can help expand the supply of affordable commercial space:

- Updating zoning codes to encourage inclusion of affordable commercial space as part of new developments;
- Supporting development of commercial space by nonprofit, community-oriented landlords or a community land trust; and
- Providing property tax abatements for commercial property owners who meet certain condition related to providing affordable space.

Zoning, building, and land-use codes should be amended to incentivize the creation of affordable commercial space, with density levels, building types, sizes, and uses, and parking standards that reflect the desire to support independent businesses. According to the EPA’s guidebook on equitable development, a city can “create a special use district to encourage small, neighborhood-serving businesses or permit developers to build at greater densities in commercial districts if they provide retail space set-asides or other benefits for locally owned businesses.”⁴ The extent of Nashville’s ability to impact these types of changes through the zoning code may be limited by state law, in which case an effort to identify and amend such barriers may be necessary.

1 See www.neic.coop/.

2 For more information, see “Investment Cooperatives,” Institute for Local Self-Reliance, <https://ilsr.org/rule/community-ownership-commercial-spaces/investment-cooperatives/>.

3 “Affordable Space: How Rising Commercial Rents Are Threatening Independent Businesses, and What Cities Are Doing About It,” Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 2016, p.14, <https://ilsr.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/04/ILSR-AffordableSpace-FullReport.pdf>.

4 “Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities: Strategies for Advancing Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development,” U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2013, p. 14, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/equitable-development-report-508-011713b.pdf>.

In addition to formal codes, many communities planning a major transit investment develop transit-oriented development (TOD) guidelines to help shape development along the route. While the focus of these guidelines tends to be physical design (such as those issued by the Utah Transit Authority¹), they may also contain specific guidance regarding land uses, density, and affordability. For example, the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority adopted policies to accompany its TOD guidelines that specify the agency's goal that at least 20 percent of the units in residential or mixed-use TOD projects should be affordable to workforce households, seniors with low, moderate, or fixed incomes, and persons with disabilities.² As Nashville is planning for light rail to eventually serve Nolensville Pike, adopting TOD guidelines in the near term could help shape forthcoming redevelopment efforts so that they are transit-oriented, but such guidelines should also incorporate policies related to affordability for both residents and businesses along the corridor.

Many of the businesses along Nolensville Pike require a fairly small footprint.³ The zoning code should encourage developers to retain small spaces in their new development projects, rather than creating the much larger retail footprints that are typically occupied by national chains. The cost of providing such space and keeping its rent at affordable levels could be offset by allowing for an increase in building height or reduced set-back requirements, or supported directly by city subsidies. The San Francisco Planning Commission recently adopted a suite of strategies to combat the rapid transformation of the Mission District into a highly gentrified, affluent area, one of which was to set a target in their zoning code for the preservation of light-industrial uses in the district, which can be a good source of jobs for area residents.⁴

When zoning codes are updated to allow increased density, a significant amount of value is created for property owners who can now redevelop older properties into larger, more

Community benefits agreements

In cases of large-scale redevelopment such as the Fairgrounds, the community should consider a formal community benefits agreement (CBA). CBAs are “private contracts between a developer and a community group that establish the benefits the community will receive from a development project. These agreements can be vehicles for resident involvement in decision-making and can ensure that the project incorporates workforce development, including local hiring and training programs and living wages, as well as other community priorities such as affordable housing and green buildings. It is important to ensure that the economic benefits for existing residents continue after redevelopment efforts are complete and that high-quality, permanent jobs are created. Municipalities can collaborate with developers to recruit small businesses and other commercial, office, and industrial tenants that will hire locally.”

Source: “Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities: Strategies for Advancing Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development,” U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2013, p. 16, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/equitable-development-report-508-011713b.pdf>.

1 “Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Design Guidelines,” Utah Transit Authority, 2014, www.rideuta.com/uploads/TODDesignGuidelinesFinalDraft2014125HiRES.pdf.

2 “Transit Oriented Development Guidelines,” MARTA, 2010, p. 48, https://www.itSMARTA.com/uploadedFiles/More/Transit_Oriented_Development/TOD%20Guidelines%202010-11.pdf.

3 “Nolensville Pike Market Analysis,” Randall Gross/Development Economics for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Vol. 2A, 2011, p. 24, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/VOLUME2B.pdf.

4 “Mission Action Plan in San Francisco Seeks to Curb Displacement of Residents and Businesses,” The Registry, March 14, 2017, <http://news.theregistry.com/mission-action-plan-in-san-francisco-seeks-to-curb-displacement-of-residents-and-businesses/>.

valuable ones. The city could recapture some of that value to be shared with local business owners by asking developers to contribute to a small business support fund. Small businesses could access the fund, for example, to pay for façade improvements to match the new neighborhood look or to pay for moving expenses into newly created affordable space.

The corridor would also benefit from having more nonprofit land owners to provide commercial space at affordable rates. One model is a community land trust (CLT) – typically a nonprofit organization that may receive some public support – that purchases parcels and preserves them for nonprofit use.¹ There are more than 250 community land trusts across the United States. Most are focused on providing affordable housing, which they do by purchasing land and leasing it to a housing developer with specified restrictions on prices or rents. The CLT remains involved in oversight of the property as they still own the land.² CLTs and other nonprofit landowners use funding and financing from public sources as well as private contributions. CDCs and CDFIs can also be an important source of capital for this purpose.

For example, Durham Community Land Trustees (DCLT) is a nonprofit organization started by community members in 1987 to purchase land left vacant in struggling neighborhoods in Durham, N.C. DCLT's portfolio now includes more than 200 housing units, with both rental and homeownership opportunities. DCLT is working with a broader collaborative in Durham's West End to provide additional quality of life improvements such as bus shelters, street lighting, and community clean-ups. A committee of area residents provides guidance to the land trust on its activities.³ DCLT has also worked on commercial projects. It first purchased commercial property in 1998, using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds as well as a low-interest loan, and redeveloped it into a community center (which ultimately closed when their grant support ended). Since that first experience, DCLT projects have included other commercial buildings with a variety of uses, including both office space and a hair salon.⁴ In general, commercial projects that CLTs undertake tend to have larger budgets and a smaller variety of possible funding and financing sources than residential projects.⁵

Nonprofit land owners (whether a CLT or other type of nonprofit organization) can offer traditional storefronts as well as business incubators to small business owners who would not otherwise be able to afford the cost of commercial space. Casa Azafrán is an existing example of how nonprofit ownership can yield benefits for entities seeking affordable space. Conexión Américas, a nonprofit organization serving Latino and other immigrant families in Nashville, used federal grants and private fundraising to purchase a building originally designed as a strip shopping center and transformed it into a community center that houses nine nonprofit organizations that



Casa Azafrán

1 A variety of tools and resources related to starting a community land trust are available from the National Community Land Trust Network at <http://cltnetwork.org/tools/>. Stakeholders interested in this model should review Tennessee state law to identify any applicable requirements or barriers to establishing a CLT.

2 See, e.g., "Community Land Trusts," Community-Wealth.org, <http://community-wealth.org/strategies/panel/clts/index.html>.

3 See www.dclt.org/aboutDCLT.cfm.

4 "Community Land Trusts and Commercial Stewardship," National CLT Network, 2012 (slide presentation), <http://cltnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CLTs-and-Commercial-Stewardship-course-ppt-slides-9-2012.pdf>.

5 Ibid.

would otherwise be challenged to find affordable, high quality space. Casa Azafrán is home to a variety of services including health services and counseling, adult education and after-school programming for children and youth, a pre-K center, legal and financial services, entrepreneurship, community organizing, and visual and performing arts. It also includes Conexión Américas' culinary incubator, discussed on the following page.

The city should also identify publicly owned land that it can make available for small businesses, either directly as a landlord, or indirectly, by selling it to a CLT or other nonprofits for affordable redevelopment. In Seattle, the city is seeking local businesses as tenants for new retail space in its renovated King Street Station. To ensure the spaces are affordable to the types of businesses they want to attract, the city is open to flexible lease terms, options to extend, assistance with improvements to the space, and limiting rent increases.¹ An inventory of publicly owned land could also support citywide efforts to develop a “transfer of development rights” program, which is designed to focus redevelopment in certain areas while preserving open space or affordable buildings in other areas. Whether such a program would be effective along Nolensville Pike would depend on the extent to which there are large-scale redevelopment opportunities and the amount of city-controlled, underutilized land.

Property tax abatement or tax credits for commercial property owners could also reduce pressure on rents. For existing property owners who are not redeveloping their properties, increasing values along the corridor will result in higher property tax bills, which in many cases will be passed on to tenants. Freezing tax bills for a specified period of time would help both property owners and commercial tenants adjust to the change in property values. In Silver Spring, Maryland, the county offered a tax credit to businesses that made certain capital investments into their property. The tax credit was for 80% of the assessed value of the improvement, remaining at that level for five years and then decreasing 10 percentage points annually for the next five years.² In San Francisco, the city offers a tax credit to property owners who offer 10-year leases to “legacy” businesses, generally those that have been in the same location for more than 30 years.³ This model could be expanded to apply to any property owner that extends a long-term lease to a small business or caps rent increases. As with zoning changes, state law may impact Nashville's ability to adopt a tax credit or tax abatement policy along these lines.

If the amount of affordable commercial space can not only be preserved but also increased, some of the pressure on rents will likely be mitigated, as supply stays closer to demand. The Nolensville Pike corridor should have plenty of opportunities for expanding affordable commercial space as underutilized lots are redeveloped into larger single-story or multi-story buildings.

1 “Affordable Space: How Rising Commercial Rents Are Threatening Independent Businesses, and What Cities Are Doing About It,” Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 2016, p.22, <https://ilsr.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/04/ILSR-AffordableSpace-FullReport.pdf>

2 “Minimizing Displacement in a Revitalization Zone: The Case of Silver Spring,” Economic Development Seminar 2005, Urban Studies and Planning Program, University of Maryland, p.12, [http://stage.arch.umd.edu/sites/arch.umd.edu/files/attachments/projects/Small_Business_in_Silver_Spring\(1\).pdf](http://stage.arch.umd.edu/sites/arch.umd.edu/files/attachments/projects/Small_Business_in_Silver_Spring(1).pdf)

3 “Mission Action Plan 2020: Phase I Status Report,” March 2017, p. 20, http://default.sfplanning.org/Citywide/Mission2020/MAP2020_Plan_Final.pdf

The success of business incubators in Nashville

For entrepreneurs who plan to make a tangible product, such as food, clothing, or household wares, one of the most challenging aspects of starting a business is the capital investment needed for equipment and supplies. For those considering service-based businesses, office space and equipment can also be a barrier. Food preparation may require larger ovens, stronger mixers, or other special items not typically found in a household kitchen. Metal and wood workers need expensive saws, drills, lathes, and other tools, while clothing designers may need heavy-duty sewing machines and silk-screening materials. A marketing or graphic design entrepreneur may need specialized computer software and a professional space to meet with prospective clients. The cost of these items is often prohibitive for an individual and bank loans can be difficult to get, inhibiting entrepreneurship and business creation, particularly among new Americans or low-income individuals.

A promising approach to addressing this challenge is the growth of business incubators, which provide shared office or manufacturing space, materials, and equipment to help entrepreneurs test ideas and make products without requiring them to make an upfront capital investment. Business incubators can be run by nonprofits, or on a fee-basis, to help cover some or all of the costs. In addition to the physical elements, incubators may also provide business classes and mentorship programs.

At Casa Azafrán, Conexión Américas runs a culinary incubator called Mesa Komal. Lack of access to affordable, licensed food prep, processing, and storage space is a major barrier for food entrepreneurs. Opened in 2013, Mesa Komal offered such space, along with cooking and business classes, to 25 local entrepreneurs. In November 2016, the kitchen was expanded to accommodate 50 people, who benefit from the shared space as well as mentoring and coaching. Incubator graduates have gone on to open storefronts, food trucks, and catering businesses. The expansion also allowed for the creation of the Center for Microenterprise, which includes common space with basic office infrastructure – such as desks, wifi, a printer, and other resources needed to run a business – available for Mesa Komal members and other budding entrepreneurs.

Other examples of business incubators include the Nashville Entrepreneur Center, located downtown, which offers space as well as mentorship to small businesses in a five-year program. Fort Houston, in the Wedgewood-Houston neighborhood, provides entrepreneurs access to a wood shop, metal shop, and print shop, as well as classes and events. Programs that reduce start-up costs for small businesses and support their growth for a period of time can lead to increased financial strength and greater resilience among program graduates, who may then be better able to withstand redevelopment pressures.



Photo courtesy of Mesa Komal and Conexión Américas.

Increase access to capital for small business growth

Small business owners along Nolensville Pike have also reported difficulty in accessing capital for other purposes than purchasing property. Banks are often reluctant to lend to small businesses, but businesses need money to invest in their facilities, equipment, and people. A suite of funding and financing programs to support small business growth would assist Nolensville Pike businesses in meeting the demands of the future.

Upgrading technology was mentioned several times by business owners along Nolensville Pike as a challenging issue. Modern invoicing, inventory, and accounting systems can save time and money, but they represent an expense not all business owners can afford. Upgrading to more energy-efficient appliances and other systems can reduce long-term costs of operating a business, but the upfront cost of purchasing that equipment can be prohibitive. Most grants available for technology or energy-efficiency upgrades are provided to nonprofits or social service agencies, rather than small businesses.¹

While financial assistance programs are available in numerous forms, grants and loans are the most common. Several of the financing programs discussed above in the context of property purchases are also available for other purposes such as facility improvements and equipment purchases. A variety of funding sources are used to support these programs, including federal grants such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) as well as state, local, corporate, CDFI, and foundation funds. Besides those discussed above, examples of business support programs from around the country include:

- **Oakland, CA:** façade improvement matching grants, available to both property owners and tenants, as well as grants to merchants associations for marketing and events, funded by the city.²
- **Salt Lake City, UT:** small business loans for capital investments in buildings, machinery, moving expenses, energy efficiency improvements, landscaping, and other purposes, offered by the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund, originally capitalized two decades ago with funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and recently recapitalized with contributions from six major banks.³
- **Seattle, WA:** The Rainier Valley Community Development Fund was funded by the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to provide grants to businesses placed at risk by light rail construction, provide job training to local residents, and create a revolving loan fund for business development and site acquisition.⁴

1 E.g., state grants for libraries to upgrade computer systems (<http://sos.tn.gov/news/library-and-archives-awards-technology-grants>); foundation grants to local nonprofits for technology upgrades (<http://fristfoundation.org/technology-grant-recipients-2014>).

2 See Oakland Business Assistance Center website at http://oaklandbusinesscenter.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=19&Itemid=86.

3 "City Re-Launches Small Business Loan Fund," Press Release, City of Salt Lake City, August 26, 2014, www.ci.slc.ut.us/city-re-launches-small-business-loan-fund; "Salt Lake City Economic Development Loan Fund: Loan Options," Salt Lake City Economic Development Office, www.slcdocs.com/ed/EDLFOptionsandUses.pdf; "Salt Lake County Chooses New Firm to Lead Startup Loan Fund," Desert News, September 26, 2016, www.deseretnews.com/article/865663353/Salt-Lake-County-chooses-new-firm-to-lead-startup-loan-fund.html.

4 "Somerville Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Strategy," Reconnecting America, 2008, p.26, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/somervilletod.pdf>.

Along these lines, Nashville Mayor Megan Barry has proposed establishing a Zero Interest Loan Fund to provide low-cost capital to independent businesses. The Fund would be capitalized with contributions from people who live in Nashville and want to support local businesses. In partnership with Seattle-based nonprofit Community Sourced Capital, the Fund would make use of an online interface that allows Nashvillians to buy shares, which would provide a new source of capital for businesses in need of assistance.¹

1 “Zero Interest Loan Fund for Nashville Main Street Businesses,” Nashville Mayor’s Office, www.nashville.gov/Finance/Public-Investment-Plans/FY-2018-Public-Investment-Plan-Proposals/Zero-Interest-Loan-Fund.aspx.

5. Affordable housing

Increase production of affordable homes

An increase in the supply of affordable homes will help to mitigate the rise in property values. Some property owners are already redeveloping single family homes into multi-family buildings. As property values increase in neighborhoods adjacent to Nolensville Pike, more of this type of redevelopment is likely. To ensure that lower income families can remain in the area, the city should explore all possible incentives to encourage developers to include affordable units in any new developments. Nashville adopted an inclusionary zoning policy in 2016 that would have used voluntary incentives to spur more developers to include workforce housing in their developments. However, the state legislature subsequently took action to overturn Nashville's ordinance, which significantly limits Metro's ability to ensure affordability in redeveloping neighborhoods. Once homes are redeveloped and prices rise, it will be next to impossible to retroactively add affordable units to already-constructed buildings. The San Francisco Planning Commission recently adopted a proposed zoning change to allow for increased height and density in the gentrifying Mission District to create space for more affordable units.¹ Zoning changes to allow infill development such as accessory dwelling units can also increase the supply of affordable units.²

Nashville should also review its regulatory processes to ensure that development of affordable homes is as streamlined as possible, thereby reducing barriers to the private market producing the needed supply of affordable units. A report by Enterprise Community Partners, a national community development organization, cites common issues in city processes that can raise costs for developers and make production of affordable housing more difficult, including “[l]imits on by-right development, notably density, building height, and unit-size restrictions; overly restrictive and/or prescriptive building codes; excessive permitting and impact fees; drawn out and/or unpredictable timeframes for the permitting and entitlement process; poorly-managed public-engagement processes; and excessive parking requirements.³ A reasonable impact fee, however, could help to support anti-displacement efforts. As was recommended for commercial property development, residential developers could be asked to share the value they expect to receive from new developments by contributing to a neighborhood stabilization fund that could be accessed by current residents to help them remain in the neighborhood.⁴

1 “Mission Action Plan in San Francisco Seeks to Curb Displacement of Residents and Businesses,” The Registry, March 14, 2017, <http://news.theregistrysf.com/mission-action-plan-in-san-francisco-seeks-to-curb-displacement-of-residents-and-businesses/>.

2 This was one of the draft recommendations of the Neighborhood Council on Affordable Living, representing residents of Wedgewood-Houston. See p. 14 of the Council's draft report at: www.scribd.com/document/237457366/Neighborhood-Committee-on-Affordable-Living-DRAFT-REPORT#.

3 “Promoting Opportunity through Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD): Barriers to Success and Best Practices for Implementation,” Enterprise Community Partners, 2015, p. 23, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/promoting-opportunity-through-etod-barriers-to-success-web.pdf>.

4 A neighborhood stabilization fund was one of the draft recommendations of the Neighborhood Council on Affordable Living in Wedgewood-Houston. See p. 14 of the Council's draft report at: www.scribd.com/document/237457366/Neighborhood-Committee-on-Affordable-Living-DRAFT-REPORT#.

In addition to development on the private market, the city can work with community organizations to preserve land for affordable homes. CDCs or a community land trust, such as that described above for commercial space, could be utilized to provide affordable residential space. The city can also provide public land for that purpose. While the initial leg of their light rail system was being built, the city of Charlotte, North Carolina created a \$5 million land acquisition fund to purchase land near planned transit stations for affordable housing. The fund, along with other sources, supported the purchase of 17 acres of land near the Scaleybark Station to support a mixed-use, mixed-income walkable development with 80 affordable units. The city also has a voter-supported Housing Trust Fund that provides financing to private developers to support affordable units.¹ Nashville has a similar structure in place — the Barnes Affordable Housing Trust Fund — but it lacks a long-term funding source.

Preserve existing affordable homes

To help keep up with the demand for affordable housing, the city should take steps to preserve the affordability that exists today. For rental units, if there are federally subsidized properties with expiring contracts, the city should identify those owners and begin to negotiate with them so that existing affordable units can be preserved. The city should take an inventory of affordable housing stock along Nolensville Pike and identify the current programs and incentives available to identify any gaps in their applicability to gentrifying neighborhoods.

Provide a property tax abatement for low-income homeowners

For low-income households who own their homes, rising property values lead to higher property tax bills. The specter of higher tax bills can also serve as a disincentive for homeowners to maintain or improve their property. To assist low-income homeowners who may struggle to pay higher bills, the city could offer a property tax abatement program to freeze property taxes at current levels for a period of time, allowing them to rise slowly in order to give property owners time to adjust, although changes to state law may be needed to allow such a program. The city already has programs of this type for some homeowners who are elderly or disabled, which could be expanded to include homeowners below, for example, 200% of the poverty level. This tool could be used for multi-family properties as well. Portland, Oregon's Multiple-Unit Limited Tax Exemption provides property owners in targeted areas with a 10-year property tax exemption on structural improvements to their properties, as long as at least 20 percent of the units are for households earning 60% or less of AMI.²

1 "Maintaining Diversity in America's Transit-Rich Neighborhoods: Tools for Equitable Neighborhood Change," Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy, 2010, pp. 43-44, https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/trn_equity_final.pdf.

2 "Promoting Opportunity through Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD): Barriers to Success and Best Practices for Implementation," Enterprise Community Partners, 2015, p. 45, <https://todresources.org/app/uploads/sites/2/2016/06/promoting-opportunity-through-etod-barriers-to-success-web.pdf>.

Support job training programs and supportive services such as child care

The presence of easily accessible and affordable services such as job training and education, child care, health care, and financial services is also important to keeping a neighborhood affordable for low-income households. As part of the community assessment described in recommendation 2, Nashville should map these types of services to ensure they are accessible to households along Nolensville Pike and to identify any gaps.

The Fruitvale Transit District in Oakland, California has so far been successful in mitigating displacement pressures, in part by supporting Hispanic businesses and in part by including social services in its district plans. According to a market analysis of the Fruitvale Business Improvement District, “a distinguishing feature of the district is its rich network of social services, including health centers, schools, and social service organizations, which serve as major employers, draw additional customers to the area, and provide services that help stabilize the surrounding community.”¹

1 “Fruitvale Economic Development and Commercial Corridor Strategy,” The Unity Council, http://unitycouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/201401023_Fruitvale_Technical_Report-min.pdf.

Action plan

As the Urban Land Institute put it in its Nashville study, “Nothing breeds success like success.”¹ While encouraging appropriate redevelopment and preventing displacement along Nolensville Pike will be a long-term process, it is critical that the Metro government and other local leaders demonstrate momentum in addressing the situation with a few early “wins.” These could include creation of a private-sector collaborative, creation of a Nolensville Pike Business Alliance, establishment of a new small business financing program, publication of a “community assessment,” announcing funding for a beautification program for Nolensville Pike (such as lighting, landscaping, and signage), etc. The chart below identifies potential first steps for implementation of the recommendations in this paper.

Recommendation	Next step
Coordination and community engagement	
Create Nolensville Pike Business Alliance.	Survey business owners to identify interest and develop draft workplan, budget, and funding sources for the Business Alliance.
Explore creation of a foundation-led collaborative.	Identify possible corporate or foundation participants, including local CDCs and CDFIs.
Assess the potential for redevelopment districts and/or a corridor-based tax-increment financing district along Nolensville Pike.	Review state law to determine eligible uses of TIF districts and model potential scenarios using different boundaries for possible redevelopment areas.
Data collection	
Conduct a community assessment.	Determine length and width of corridor to focus on; identify and collect needed data.
Establish performance goals and measures.	Identify goals and measurable outcomes; establish baseline for future comparison.
Transportation improvements	
Implement traffic calming measures and safety improvements.	Continue to implement planned improvements and assess whether others are needed.
Conduct a parking inventory.	Map existing parking and current demand.
Continue to pursue transit improvements.	Continue improving service along Nolensville Pike, with stronger branding, better signage, and more shelters.
Restore/establish the street grid in key locations.	Identify priority intersections and possible sources of federal, state, or private funding.

1 “Placemaking through Infill and Corridor Redevelopment,” Urban Land Institute Rose Center Advisory Services Program, 2010, p. 24, www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/subarea11/NashvilleULIstudy.pdf.

Business support

Develop pathways for business owners to purchase commercial property.	Inventory available funding and financing programs to identify gaps and design programs or incentives to fill those gaps.
Preserve and expand affordable commercial space.	Review zoning code to determine what amendments are possible within the state law context; identify funding sources such as CDBG or CDFI funds to support nonprofit ownership, potentially through a community land trust or CDC.
Increase access to capital for small business growth.	Inventory available funding and financing programs to identify gaps and design programs or incentives to fill those gaps.

Affordable housing

Increase production of affordable homes.	Assess feasibility of impact fee or other incentives to support neighborhood stabilization fund in light of state law; in coordination with efforts to expand affordable commercial space, identify funding to support start-up costs for possible community land trust or other type of nonprofit ownership structure.
Preserve existing affordable homes.	Include inventory of affordable units in community assessment.
Provide a property tax abatement for low-income homeowners.	Amend existing property tax assistance policies to include low-income homeowners to the extent allowed by state law.
Support job training and related services.	Include inventory of community services in community assessment and identify any gaps.

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Conexión Américas is a Nashville-based nonprofit organization established in 2002. Its mission is to build a welcoming community and create opportunities where Latino families can belong, contribute and succeed. Every year, we assist more than 8,000 individuals and their families in their desire to start businesses, buy homes, improve their English, help their children succeed in school and go to college, and become an integral part of Nashville's social, cultural and economic vitality. Conexión Américas is the lead partner of Casa Azafrán, a nonprofit collaborative at the gateway to Nashville's International District that is home to Conexión Américas and nine partners. To learn more, visit www.conexionamericas.org.

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