

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_**

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. CRA25-001**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA, ACTING IN ITS CAPACITY AS THE LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, ADOPTING THE MEMORIAL BOULEVARD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN; MAKING FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission of the City of Lakeland, Florida, as the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Lakeland (the “CRA”), recognizes the economic and historical significance of Memorial Boulevard as a critical commercial corridor and gateway into the City of Lakeland; and

**WHEREAS**, the CRA has identified the Memorial Boulevard corridor as a key area for revitalization through public infrastructure investment, private redevelopment, and economic planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the CRA, in collaboration with Ayres Associates, and with funding support from a Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant, has developed the Memorial Boulevard Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan (the “Strategy”) through a robust, community-driven process involving corridor assessments, stakeholder engagement, economic and land use analysis, and a multi-phase planning approach; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategy outlines clear economic development themes, including enhancing the corridor experience through design and aesthetics, targeting redevelopment areas for mixed-use infill and commercial nodes, improving connectivity

to City assets and neighborhoods, and updating policies and programs to support investment and housing; and

**WHEREAS**, the implementation framework provides specific short-term, long-term, and ongoing actions, responsible parties, and potential funding sources to ensure effective execution, including development of an urban design master plan, public realm improvements, infill and catalyst redevelopment site opportunities, housing initiatives, multi-modal connectivity programming, and corridor branding with promotion; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategy reflects the aspirations of residents, neighborhood leaders, business owners, and the City of Lakeland in re-creating a thriving environment that connects neighborhoods and community assets; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lakeland CRA Advisory Board reviewed the Memorial Boulevard Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan at its regular meeting on June 5, 2025 and recommended its approval; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lakeland City Commission received a presentation of the Memorial Boulevard Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan on June 13, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, adoption of this Strategy will support economic revitalization, promote walkability and safety, encourage job creation and workforce development, enhance housing opportunities, and uplift the overall quality of life for residents and businesses along the Memorial Boulevard corridor;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA, ACTING IN ITS CAPACITY AS THE LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, AS FOLLOWS:**



**SECTION 1.** The foregoing findings are true and correct and are hereby adopted and incorporated herein by reference.

**SECTION 2.** The Memorial Boulevard Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan is hereby adopted.

**SECTION 3.** If any word, sentence, clause, phrase or provision of this Resolution, for any reason, is held to be unconstitutional, void or invalid, the validity of the remainder of this Resolution shall not be affected thereby.

**SECTION 4.** This Resolution shall become effective upon passage.

**PASSED AND CERTIFIED AS TO PASSAGE** this 7th day of July, A.D. 2025.

**CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF  
LAKELAND, FLORIDA, AS THE  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND**

\_\_\_\_\_  
H. WILLIAM MUTZ, MAYOR

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
KELLY S. KOOS  
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CORRECTNESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PALMER C. DAVIS  
CITY ATTORNEY

An aerial photograph of Memorial Boulevard in Lakeland, Florida, showing a wide intersection with multiple lanes of traffic. The road is flanked by green spaces, trees, and some commercial buildings. In the background, Lake Meade is visible under a clear sky.

# MEMORIAL BOULEVARD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

JUNE 2025



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Memorial Boulevard Economic Development Strategy is a transformative roadmap for revitalizing one of Lakeland's most vital corridors. Stretching 6.1 miles from I-4 to East Lake Parker Drive, Memorial Boulevard is a major commercial and transportation artery, home to a diverse mix of businesses, residents, and commuters. To unlock its full potential, the City of Lakeland, in partnership with Ayres, has developed a comprehensive strategy that aligns targeted economic initiatives with upcoming infrastructure improvements and long-term growth objectives. This strategic effort was made possible through support from the Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) Grant.

Anchored by anticipated investments, such as a new bridge and pedestrian overpass in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), the strategy leverages public infrastructure to catalyze private development and guide sustainable, coordinated growth. It addresses both East and West segments of the corridor, each with distinct opportunities for redevelopment, improved mobility, and enhanced land use.

The project was delivered in two phases. Phase 1 focused on data collection, economic and site analysis, and identifying priority redevelopment areas. Robust community engagement ensured that local voices shaped the vision. Phase 2 builds on that foundation to establish a clear economic vision, branding strategy, and implementation plan. This includes identifying anchor development sites, encouraging mixed-use investment, and recommending policies, zoning updates, and infrastructure priorities to support a resilient economic future. Through this process four economic development strategy themes were identified: corridor experience, redevelopment areas, corridor connectivity, and city policy updates.

Driven by data, guided by community input, and aligned with Lakeland's broader goals, the strategy provides a clear path forward promoting inclusive growth, attracting investment, and enhancing quality of life along the Memorial Boulevard corridor.



Second Public Meeting



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## CITY OF LAKELAND

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**Jason Willey** – Assistant Director of Economic Development

**Jonathan Rodriguez** – CRA Project Manager

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# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION







## PROJECT BRIEF

### PROJECT CONTEXT

The City of Lakeland is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in the nation. Memorial Boulevard extends 6 miles between I-4 and East Lake Parker Drive in the northern part of the City. As public infrastructure investments are being made here, the City aims to improve the Memorial Boulevard (US 92) corridor to attract investments, strengthen the adjacent residential communities, enhance pedestrian safety, boost the local economy, and increase employment opportunities.

### EXPECTED OUTCOME

The City is undertaking an Economic Development Strategy study in collaboration with Ayres, a planning, design, and engineering firm to take a proactive and cohesive approach to revitalizing the corridor. The main objectives of the study are:

- Formulate an economic development vision through a community-driven process.
- Draft innovative strategies that align

local planning efforts and planned infrastructure improvements.

- Outline robust implementation steps for action

### PROJECT PROCESS

The project was undertaken in two stages over 20 weeks:

Phase 1: Corridor Studies and Data Assessment

Phase 2: Redevelopment Strategies



MILESTONES



AARP Walk



Focus Meeting



Public Meeting 1



Public Meeting 2

PHASE 1

Corridor Studies and Data  
Assessment

PHASE 2

Economic Development  
Strategy

November  
2024

Project Kickoff

February  
2025

Online Survey  
(3 Weeks)

Public Meeting 1

April  
2025

Public Meeting 2

CRA Team Workshop

July  
2025

Plan Adoption

January  
2025

Focus Meetings with  
Department Heads

March  
2025

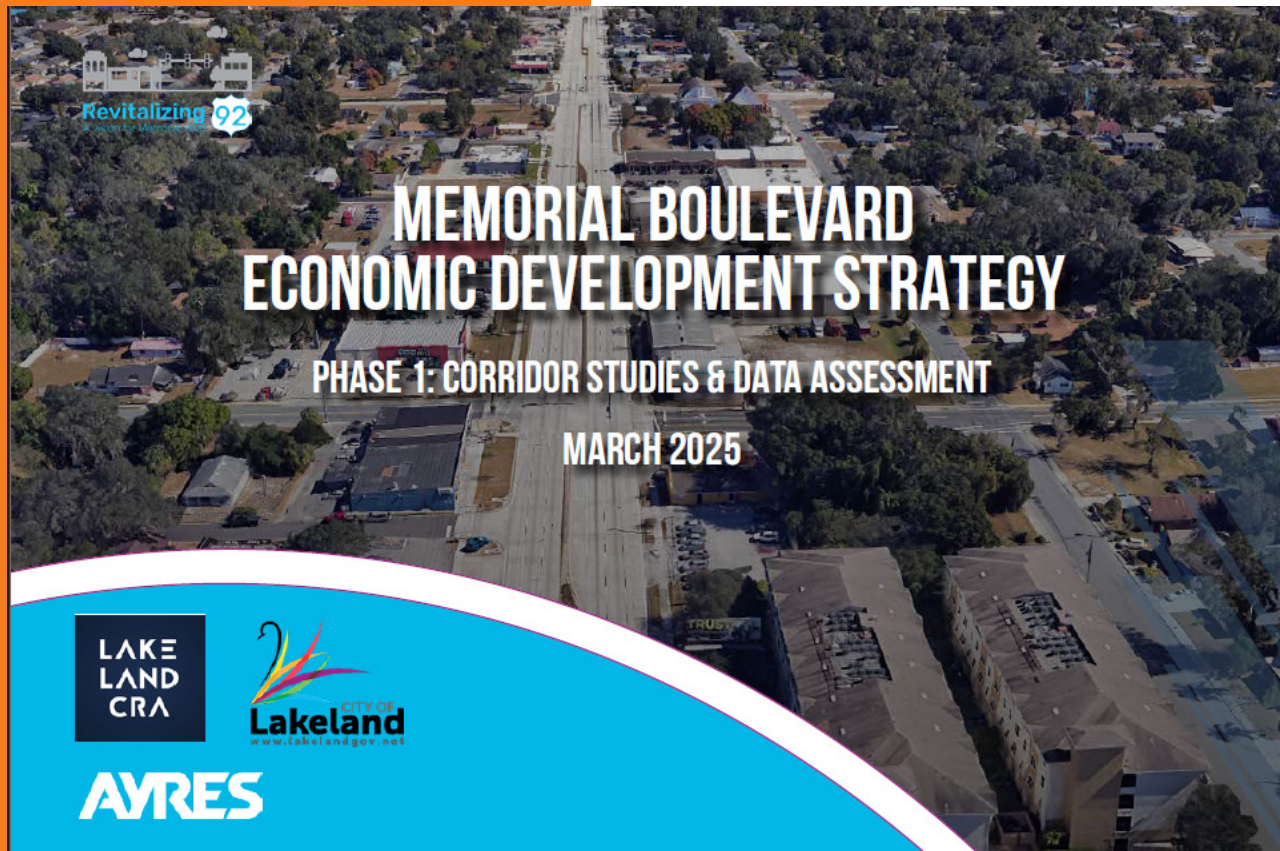
Phase 1  
Report/Presentation

June  
2025

Phase 2 Report  
CRA Board Presentation







## SUMMARY OF PHASE 1 STUDIES & ASSESSMENTS

Phase 1 of the strategy focused on corridor studies, data assessment, and community engagement to establish a foundation for strategic revitalization. This initial phase involved a comprehensive analysis of infrastructure conditions, economic and demographic data, land use, housing trends, and stakeholder feedback to inform Phase 2.

The Phase 1 findings revealed a corridor that plays a critical economic and mobility role in Lakeland but faces significant challenges. Traffic volumes range from 20,000 to over 41,000 vehicles daily, and the corridor is marked by fragmented zoning, aging infrastructure, and limited pedestrian and bicycle amenities. Despite its historic role as a commercial and tourism corridor, Memorial Boulevard now contends with underutilized parcels, aging structures, and shifting market dynamics. The area also reflects socioeconomic disparities, with a median household income of \$36,009,

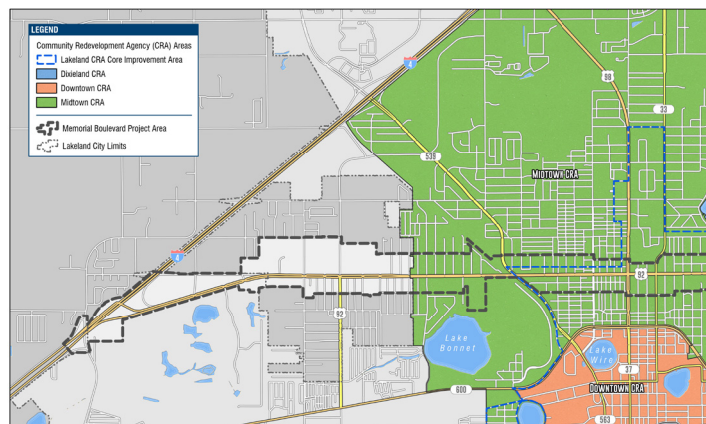
significantly below the citywide average of \$57,131, and a 56% renter-occupied housing rate, indicating a transient and economically vulnerable population.

The housing stock along the corridor includes a mix of small single-family homes and motels functioning as long-term, low-income residences. These informal housing arrangements highlight the need for more transitional, affordable, and mixed-income housing options. Community feedback underscored issues such as limited access to fresh food, the prevalence of predatory businesses, crime hotspots, and concerns related to homelessness. Opportunities exist to repurpose existing motels, encourage mixed-use and workforce housing, and strengthen partnerships with local organizations to address housing insecurity.



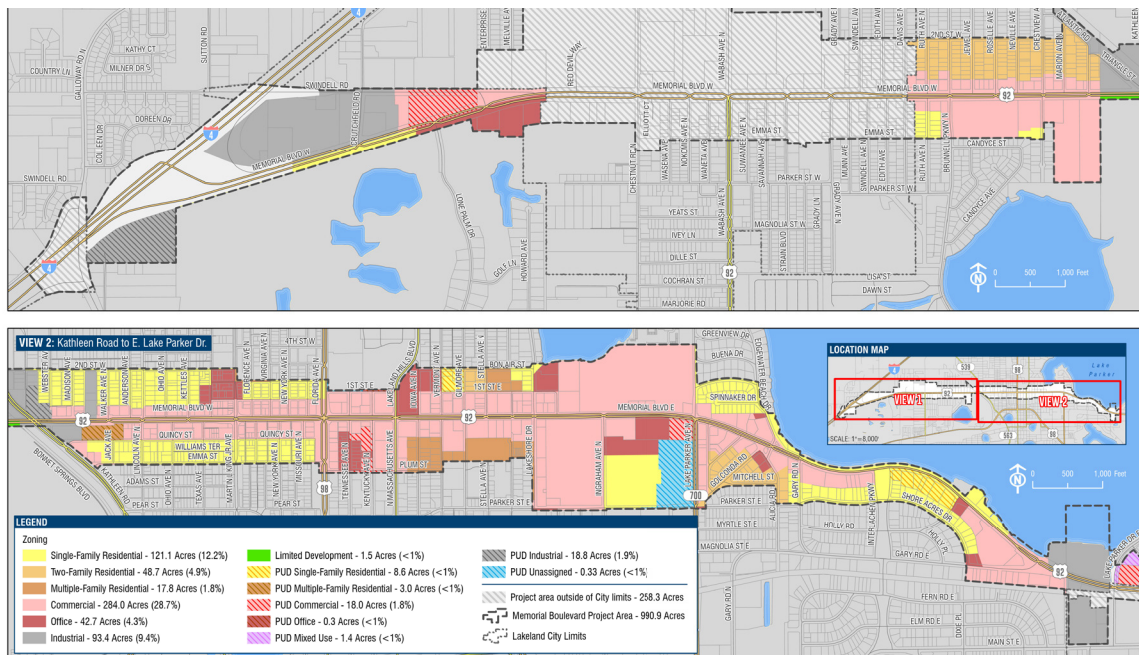
Memorial Boulevard



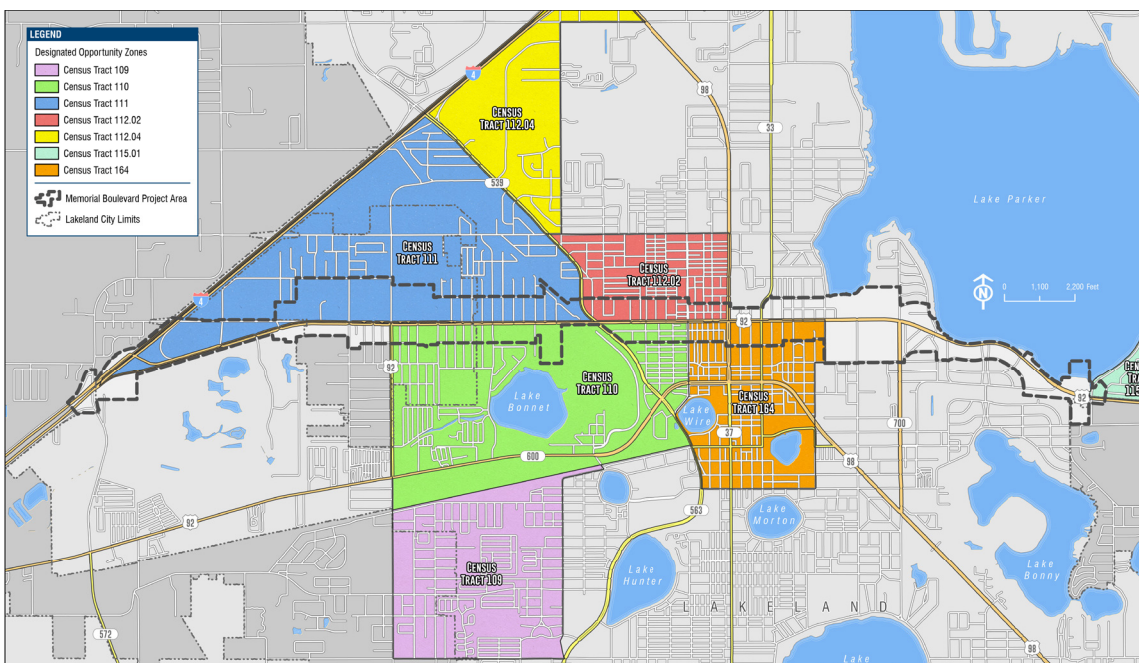


Special Districts - CRA Area Map

Economically, Memorial Boulevard has strong redevelopment potential due to its designation as a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) and its inclusion in federal Opportunity Zones. While traditional retail sectors have declined, growth in healthcare, logistics, and service-based industries, particularly anchored by major employers such as Lakeland Regional Health and Watson Clinic, continues to sustain economic activity. In addition, regional attractions such as Bonnet Springs Park and the Detroit Tigers spring training facility draw significant visitor traffic, although the corridor has yet to capitalize fully on this tourism potential due to limited connectivity and underinvestment in supporting infrastructure.



Zoning Map



Opportunity Zones Map

The corridor suffers from poor walkability and safety concerns. An AARP Walkability Audit revealed broken sidewalks, non-ADA-compliant curb ramps, faded crosswalks, and inadequate pedestrian lighting, all contributing to a poor safety rating. FDOT's Lakeland Area Alternatives Analysis and upcoming Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study propose Complete Streets upgrades to improve safety, multimodal access, and corridor functionality. Anticipated infrastructure investments, including bridge enhancements and pedestrian trails, are projected for implementation with design beginning in FY 2027.

Overall, Phase 1 establishes that Memorial Boulevard's revitalization requires a coordinated strategy that addresses economic, infrastructural, and social challenges. There is a clear need for investment in mixed-use development, walkable infrastructure, housing diversity, and workforce integration. Phase 2 builds on these insights by defining a comprehensive economic development vision, identifying anchor redevelopment sites, proposing actionable implementation strategies, and aligning public and private investments with the city's broader goals of inclusive, sustainable growth.

See Appendix A for the full Phase 1 report.

*Q 11 Survey Respondent #258*

*Lakeland has a unique opportunity to turn this area into an attractive commercial and residential neighborhood via mixed use should it choose that in time will bring the value of the surrounding area up and help solve some of the current problems associated with the area...*



Memorial Boulevard





# SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

This memorandum provides an economic analysis of the Memorial Boulevard corridor in Lakeland covering demographic trends, market performance, and real estate conditions across retail, commercial office, multifamily housing, hospitality, and industrial sectors. The findings are intended to inform the City of Lakeland's redevelopment strategy.

## Demographic and Market Profile

The primary trade area is defined by 5-, 10-, and 15-minute drive times from the Memorial Boulevard and Florida Avenue intersection. ESRI Tapestry segmentation shows a population that is largely cost-conscious, with lower-than-average spending and employment concentrated in service and blue-collar sectors. The three largest market segments are:

- Senior Escapes (14.7%): Older, seasonal residents with low discretionary spending.
- Hometown Heritage (12.1%): Diverse, renter-heavy population with higher unemployment.
- Down the Road (7.2%): Younger, outdoor-oriented households that prefer discount retail.

## Retail Market

Retail demand is strong with falling vacancy rates, down from 8.8% to 6.4% year-over-year. Asking rents average \$16.26/SF, which is lower than the broader Lakeland market. The sales price of \$206/SF and 7% cap rate suggest investor confidence and healthy performance.

## Commercial Office Market

The office market is soft, with no recent investment or new construction activity. Despite a vacancy drop from 8.8% to 5.3%, rents are modest at \$23.25/SF and the average sales price is \$133/SF. The segment lacks momentum and could benefit from repositioning strategies.

## Multifamily Housing

The multifamily sector shows weak demand with a 7.8% vacancy rate and limited new supply with only three units delivered in the past year. Rents remain low at \$1,019/month or \$1.35/SF, making new development financially challenging. Opportunities may exist for workforce or affordable housing, though feasibility hinges on achieving higher rents or sales prices.

## Hospitality Sector

Hospitality properties in the corridor are mainly mid-scale or budget hotels. Occupancy rose 17.9% year-over-year to 57.4%, though it remains below the regional average. The Average Daily Rate (ADR) is \$88, with a RevPAR of \$51,

indicating gradual recovery and potential for reinvestment or repositioning.

## Industrial Market

The industrial sector is the corridor's strongest performer. Net absorption totaled 108,000 SF in the past year, with no new deliveries. Vacancy dropped to 4.2%, and the lease renewal rate is high at 97.8%. Market rents continue to rise (\$9.07/SF), reflecting tight supply and consistent tenant demand. No sales were recorded in the past 12 months.

## Strategic Implications

The report suggests targeting reinvestment in the retail, industrial, and hospitality sectors. Industrial or infill development is particularly promising given supply constraints. Office space may be repositioned for medical or mixed-use purposes, addressing a lack of healthcare facilities. Streetscape, infrastructure, and signage improvements are recommended to enhance corridor appeal and attract private investment.

Further details and data collected for the Economic Conditions Assessment are included in Appendix B.



## Tapestry Segmentation Profile



LifeMode Group: Middle Ground  
**Hometown Heritage**

8G

Households: 1,507,700  
Average Household Size: 2.66  
Median Age: 32.4  
Median Household Income: \$28,200



LifeMode Group: Senior Styles  
**Senior Escapes**

9D

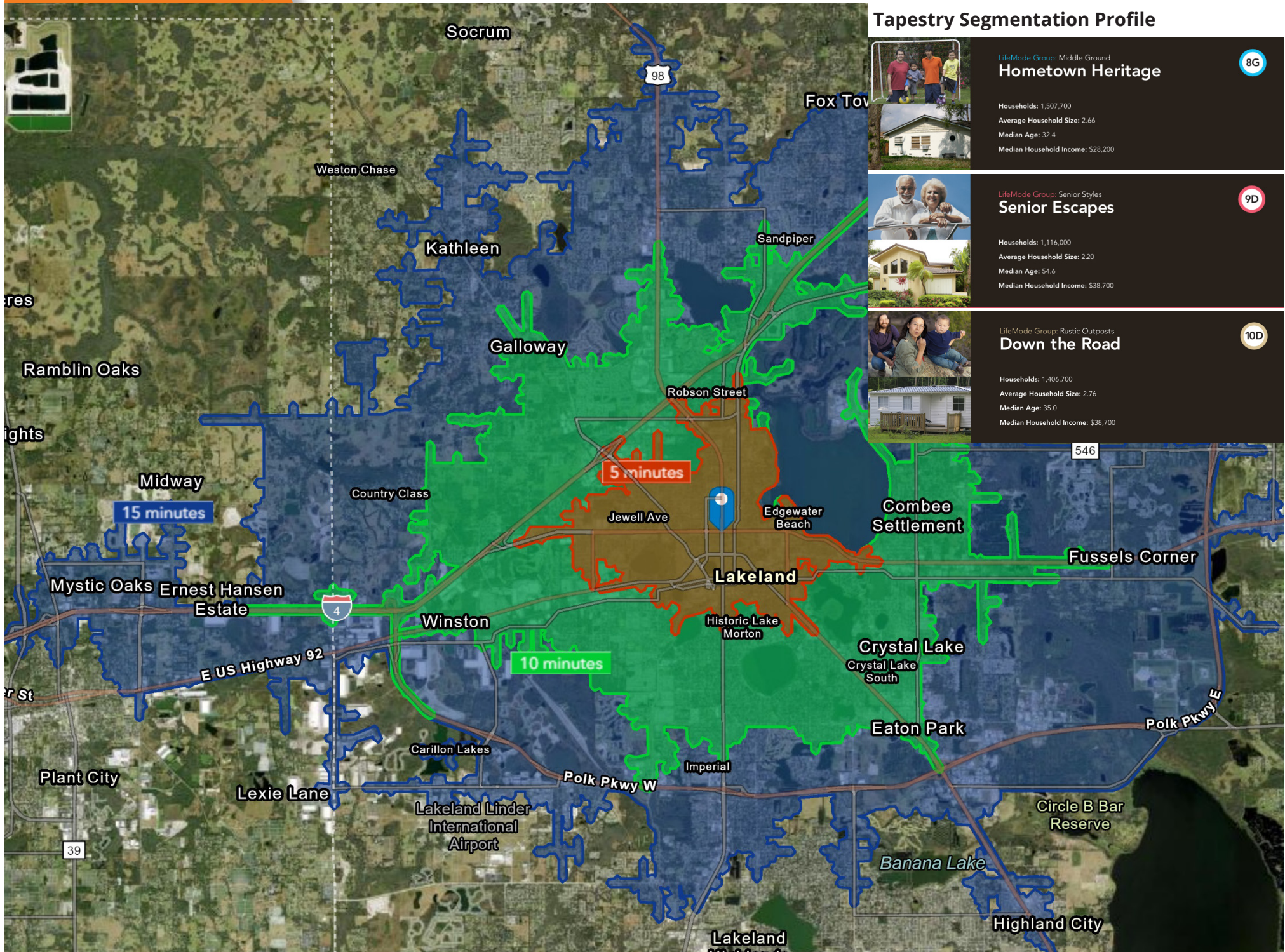
Households: 1,116,000  
Average Household Size: 2.20  
Median Age: 54.6  
Median Household Income: \$38,700



LifeMode Group: Rustic Outposts  
**Down the Road**

10D

Households: 1,406,700  
Average Household Size: 2.76  
Median Age: 35.0  
Median Household Income: \$38,700





# CITY AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



First Public Meeting

Two public meetings were held to gather community input on the revitalization of Memorial Boulevard. The first meeting took place on February 20th, followed by a second meeting on April 24th, which attracted a combined total of over 75 attendees. These meetings provided a platform for residents to share ideas and discuss potential improvements, including desired amenities, programming, businesses, and further enhancements along the corridor. During the sessions, an area market analysis, the results of community engagement efforts, and a shared community vision for the future of Memorial Boulevard were also presented.

Key components included the need for improved infrastructure, economic reinvestment, safer streets, mixed-use development, and stronger community services. Community feedback emphasized



## Q 11 Survey Respondent #32

*It has the potential to be a point of pride for Lakeland...*

Second Public Meeting

walkability, neighborhood identity, and support for small businesses and vulnerable populations.

The project team presented findings and gathered input across four stations, each focused on distinct aspects of the corridor's revitalization. The primary sentiments expressed by the public throughout the engagement process were:

### Community Calls for Revitalization with Basic Infrastructure Fixes First

Residents voiced strong support for revitalizing the corridor but emphasized that addressing aging infrastructure, including water, drainage, and sewer systems,

along with improving safety, should be top priorities. Concerns about speeding, traffic accidents, and crime were also frequently raised. Moreover, the community highlighted the excessive accumulation of trash as one of the critical issues needing immediate attention.

### Desire for Walkable, Mixed-Use Development with Neighborhood Character

The community expressed broad support for medium-density housing and mixed-use development that incorporates contemporary design while remaining sensitive to local character. Residents



emphasized the importance of balancing increased density with livability and a strong sense of place. There was a clear preference for developments that integrate different residential typologies (apartments, single-family homes) and commercial uses, creating vibrant, walkable environments. Additionally, the community supported vacating unused alleyways and repurposing underutilized land to utilize space more efficiently.

### **Need for Improved Safety and Code Enforcement**

Several key intersections along the corridor have been deemed hazardous, leading residents to advocate for safety improvements, which include traffic calming measures, surveillance cameras, and enhanced sidewalks. Concerns were also expressed regarding hotels, loitering, and the necessity for anonymous code enforcement to address ongoing issues discreetly. The heavy traffic congestion, along with a lack of traffic-calming features, accessibility, and street lighting, has contributed to the corridor being unsafe for pedestrians. Residents suggested solutions such as speed bumps, wider lanes, and roundabouts to manage traffic flow better and improve safety. A frequently mentioned priority was the construction of an overhead pedestrian bridge to connect to Bonnet Springs Park, particularly to ensure the safety of children crossing the busy road.



Second Public Meeting

### **Connectivity and Access are Crucial to Economic Growth**

Residents expressed strong support for improving connectivity, particularly by enhancing access to Kathleen Road to help ease traffic congestion and enhance north-south mobility. There was also a clear demand for expanded public transit options, including trolleys, as well as the establishment of safe and accessible bike and pedestrian networks. The community highlighted the importance of preserving views of Lake Parker, maintaining visibility for local businesses along the corridor, and attracting reputable businesses that positively impact the local economy. Additionally, there was support for low-density commercial development and improved trail connectivity along Lake Parker, aimed at increasing recreational opportunities and community access.

### **Demand for Community-Centered Services and Identity**

Community suggestions included establishing a resource hub to support social services and entrepreneurship, as well as implementing consistent branding, such as adopting the name “Midtown”, to foster a cohesive identity for the corridor. Residents also expressed interest in amenities like parks, boardwalks, and the preservation of historic landmarks to help reclaim and celebrate the heritage of Memorial Boulevard. While there is a strong desire to address homelessness, the community opposed placing a homeless shelter along the corridor due to concerns about safety, public perception, and potential impacts on future investment. Instead, residents advocated for the creation of a dedicated task force to manage the issue more effectively.





Second Public Meeting

*Q 11 Survey Respondent #9*  
*Please do any redevelopment with sensitivity, responsibility, respect, and honor for the residents and neighborhoods along the corridor. Redevelopment in and of itself is not necessarily bad, but I have seen it tear up neighborhoods and do real harm to communities and populations in the name of "progress"...*

See Appendix C for the details and summary of the feedback from the second public meeting.



First Public Meeting



Second Public Meeting



First Public Meeting

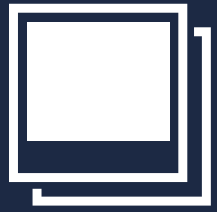


First Public Meeting



Second Public Meeting





# SECTION 2

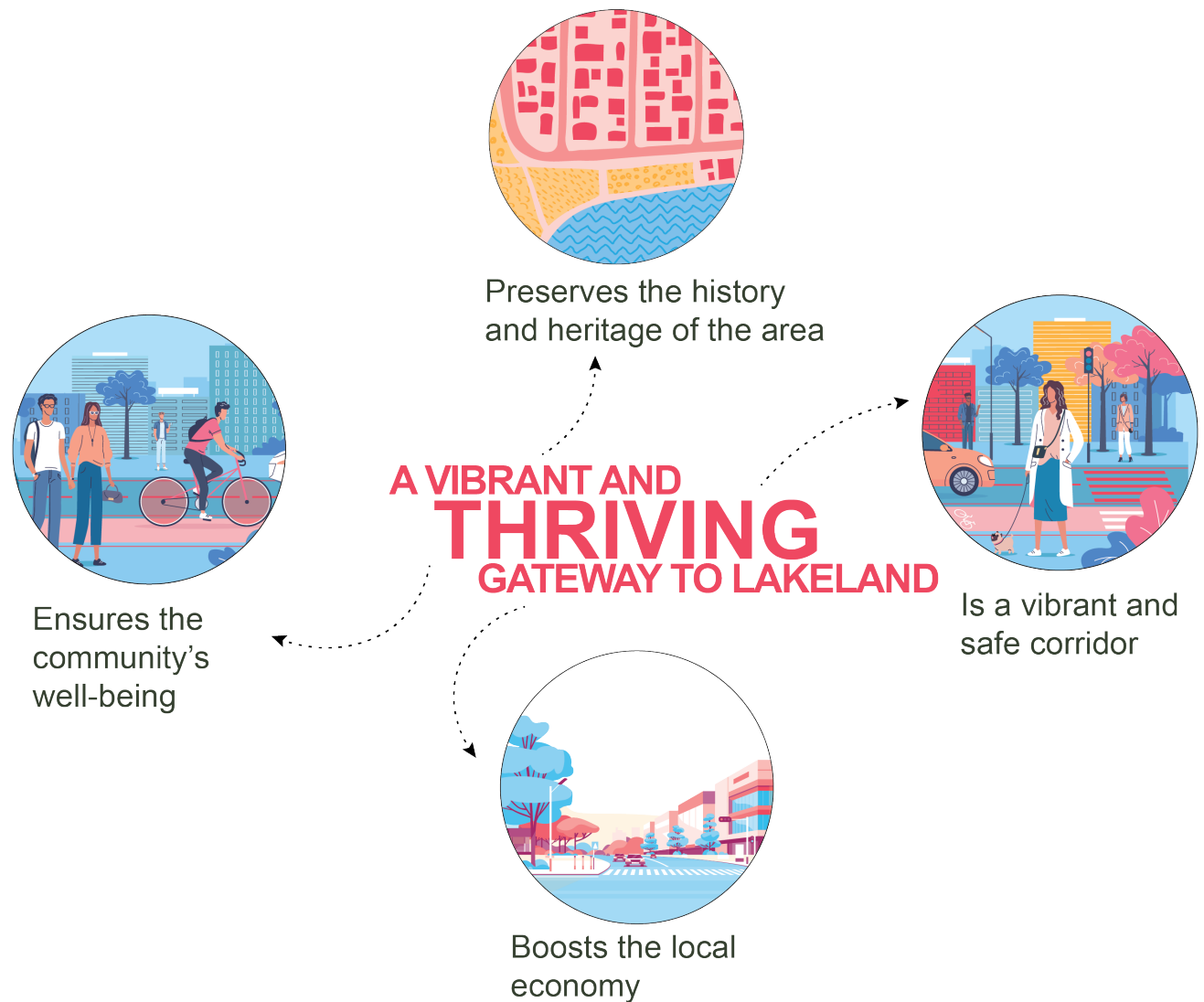
## CORRIDOR VISION & BRANDING



This vision emphasizes strategic infill development, zoning alignment, and the adaptive reuse of underutilized parcels to enhance commercial visibility and reinforce the economic vitality of the corridor.

A central objective of the revitalization strategy is to stimulate employment growth, support entrepreneurial activity, and expand housing options. The plan prioritizes attracting high-wage employment sectors and cultivating a supportive environment for small businesses, thereby catalyzing mixed-use development that integrates residential and commercial functions. This approach aligns with Lakeland's broader goals of fostering a resilient, inclusive, and accessible local economy.

Enhanced multimodal connectivity through investments in public transit, pedestrian infrastructure, and bicycle facilities will improve access to businesses and increase workforce mobility, contributing to a more livable and economically dynamic urban environment. Importantly, all revitalization initiatives will be undertaken with a commitment to historic preservation, ensuring that economic development is balanced with the protection of Lakeland's cultural heritage and urban identity.



## VISION STATEMENT

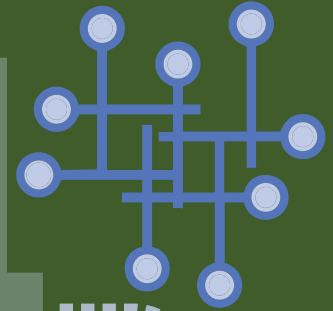
Memorial Boulevard will be a **vibrant, safe, and thriving corridor** that fosters economic growth, enhances community well-being, and preserves its rich history. Through strategic revitalization, the corridor will be a dynamic **mix of locally owned businesses, essential services, and attractive public spaces and homes** that serve residents, businesses, and visitors alike. Investments in infrastructure, safety, and accessibility will make Memorial Boulevard a welcoming, **walkable, and connected** destination for the community. Strategic investments will support diverse housing, business expansion, and a strong healthcare presence, transforming it into a **resilient gateway** to Lakeland.

# PRINCIPLES

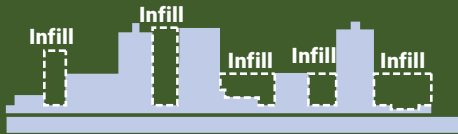
2  
ENHANCE THE CORRIDOR EXPERIENCE  
TO PROMOTE LIVABILITY



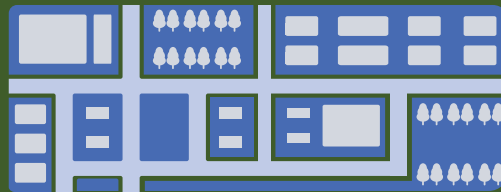
4  
INCREASE CONNECTIVITY TO ADJACENT  
NEIGHBORHOODS, NEARBY CITY ASSETS,  
PARKS, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES



1  
PROMOTE MIXED USE & HOUSING  
CHOICES FOR INFILL REDEVELOPMENT



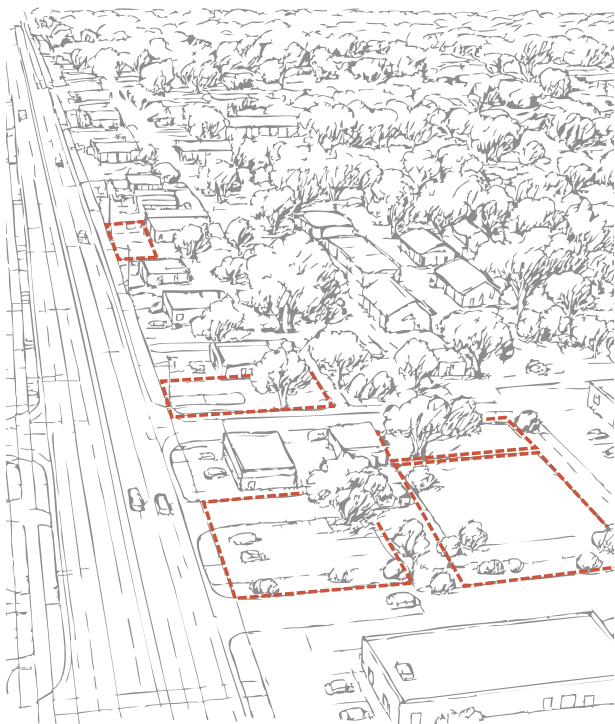
3  
REDEVELOP ANCHOR SITES (ACTIVITY  
NODES) FOR SHOPPING AND EMPLOYMENT



5  
LEVERAGE THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE  
CORRIDOR'S HISTORY BY BRANDING AND  
IMPROVING PERCEPTION



The following principles were developed through meetings with City Staff and feedback from the community and is further defined in the following pages.



## PROMOTE MIXED USE & HOUSING CHOICES FOR INFILL REDEVELOPMENT

Encourage mixed-use development in the core of Memorial Boulevard to help transform the corridor into a vibrant, walkable district where people can live, work, and shop in proximity. Infill redevelopment can increase housing diversity by integrating commercial, residential, and retail spaces, providing options for various income levels, lifestyles, and demographics. This approach will also maximize underutilized properties, replacing vacant lots and deteriorating buildings with productive spaces contributing to the local economy.



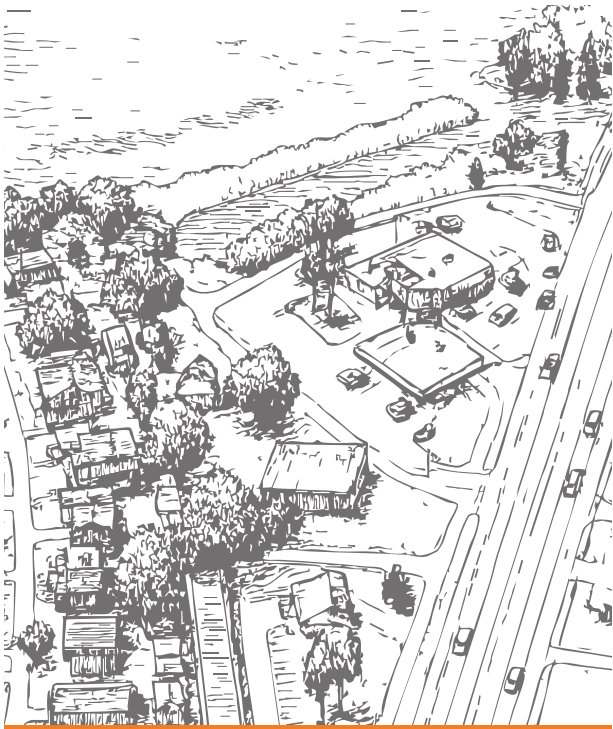
## ENHANCE THE CORRIDOR EXPERIENCE TO PROMOTE LIVABILITY

A well-designed corridor fosters a sense of place, safety, and engagement, making it more attractive for residents, businesses, and visitors. Improving the streetscape, public spaces, and pedestrian infrastructure will help create a corridor that is more than just a transportation route; it will become a destination.



## REDEVELOP ANCHOR SITES (ACTIVITY NODES) FOR SHOPPING AND EMPLOYMENT

Anchor sites such as large retail centers, vacant commercial properties, and public spaces should be reimagined as activity hubs that attract shoppers, workers, and entrepreneurs. These sites play a critical role in defining the economic vibrancy of the corridor and can serve as catalysts for further investment.



## INCREASE CONNECTIVITY TO ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS, NEARBY CITY ASSETS, PARKS, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Enhancing connectivity ensures that Memorial Boulevard becomes seamlessly integrated with the surrounding city assets, allowing residents and visitors to access parks, trails, schools, transit stations, and other amenities with ease. Strong connections will improve quality of life, encourage physical activity, and enhance business accessibility. They also function as a gateway to the neighborhoods that front the corridor.



## LEVERAGE THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE CORRIDOR'S HISTORY BY BRANDING AND IMPROVING PERCEPTION

A well-designed corridor fosters a sense of place, safety, and engagement, making it more attractive for residents, businesses, and visitors. Improving the streetscape, public spaces, and pedestrian infrastructure will help create a corridor that is more than just a transportation route – it will become a destination.



Second Public Meeting







# SECTION 3

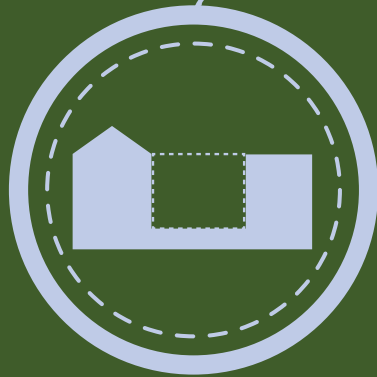
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THEMES



**CORRIDOR  
EXPERIENCE**



**REDEVELOPMENT  
AREAS**

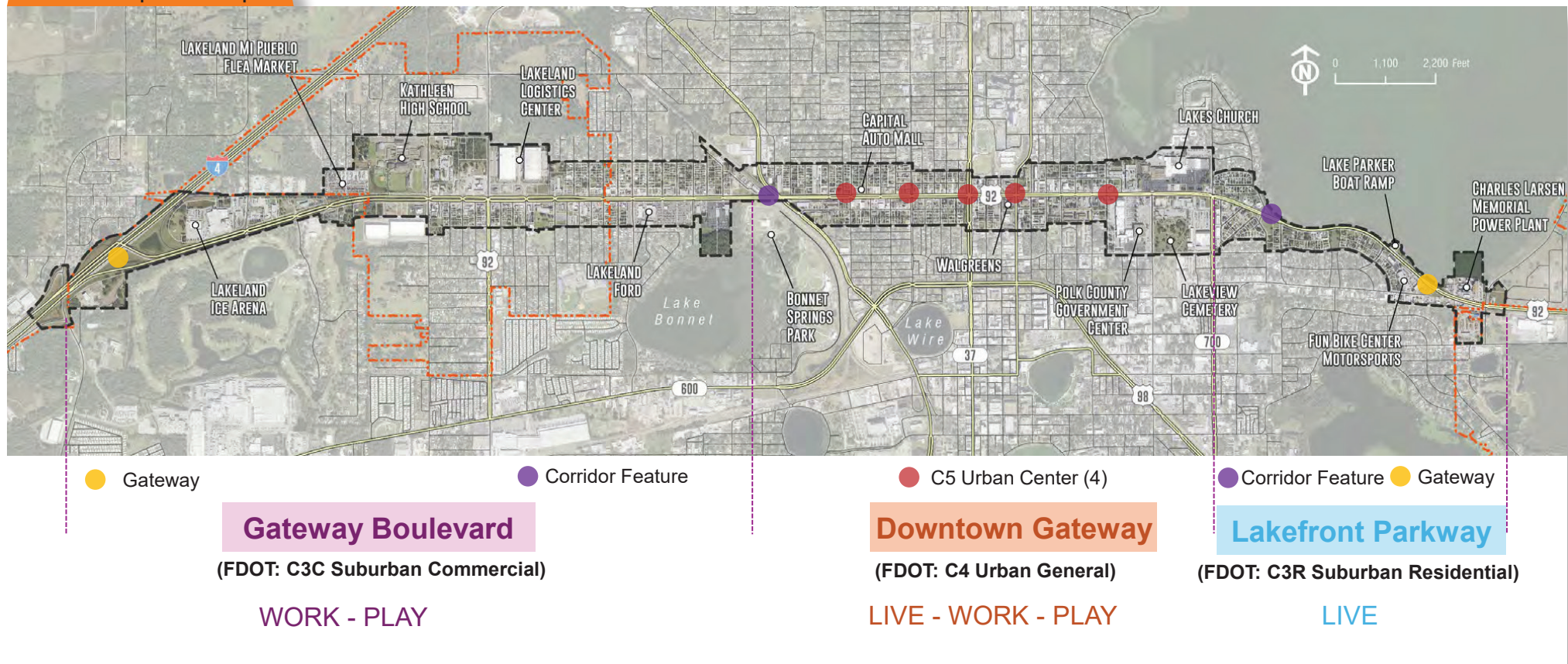


**CORRIDOR  
CONNECTIVITY**



**PROGRAMS AND  
POLICIES**

The following strategies were developed through meetings with City Staff and feedback from the community and is further illustrated in the following pages.



## CORRIDOR EXPERIENCE: DESIGN AND AESTHETICS

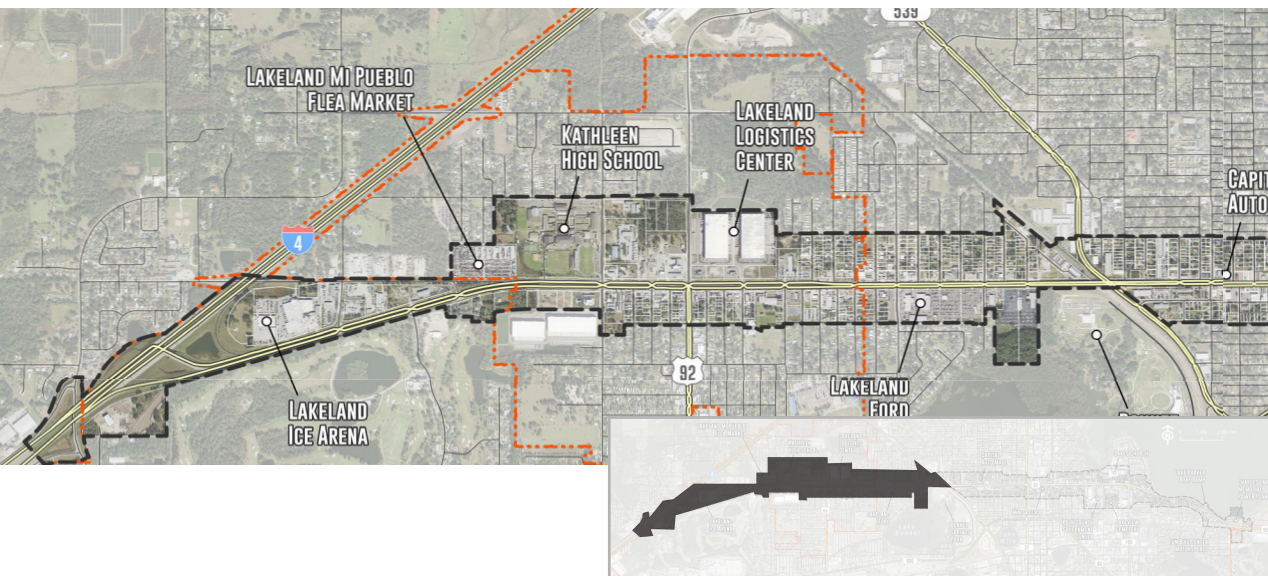
Memorial Boulevard has the potential to become one of many destinations in Lakeland, serving as the City's gateway. The corridor experience focuses on enhancing the design and aesthetics of Memorial Boulevard through thoughtful and culturally sensitive interventions that prioritize pedestrian safety with strategic design, beautification efforts through collaborative partnerships, and consistent architectural theming along the corridor that contributes to the area's history. It includes improvements to existing infrastructure and the expansion and integration of more greenways.

The following pages provides visual examples of the three segment treatments along Memorial Boulevard and provides an explanation defining the characteristics of the Gateway Boulevard, the Downtown Gateway, and Lakefront Parkway. The visual examples provided are for illustrative purposes only and are not concrete design improvements.



# GATEWAY BOULEVARD

WESTERN GATEWAY: Where Industry & Innovation Meet Opportunities



The Gateway Boulevard is where Lakeland's strong industrial roots meet fresh opportunities for innovation. Here, old warehouses and factories sit side by side with new infill projects, creating a dynamic backdrop for makers, entrepreneurs, and light industrial ventures. This corridor buzzes with potential: Underused motels invite creative reuse as live/work studios, and the nearby Bonnet Springs Park beckons cyclists once the bike link is improved. By expanding makerspaces and light industry, improving the bike connection to Bonnet Springs, and reusing old motels for live/work units, we can turn this gateway into a place where every innovation finds room to grow.

## KEY STATS

- **20-30K** vehicles/day
- **12** vacant parcels identified
- Opportunity Zone incentive
- **45%** renters cost-burdened

## Place Characteristics







## DOWNTOWN GATEWAY

CENTRAL SHOPPING HUB: From Drive-Through to Walkable Main Street



The Downtown Gateway is where wide drive-through strips can evolve into a friendly Main Street for everyone. Today, big-box stores and faded parking lots rule the scene, but with a few key moves, this stretch can welcome people back on foot and bike. By activating underused lots with pop-up markets, we'll bring fresh energy and local flavor. Highlighting historic motel signage as public art will celebrate our past and spark curiosity. And by painting high-visibility crosswalks, piloting protected bike lanes, and widening sidewalks, we'll make Pedestrian Priority more than just a goal, it'll be the heart of every block.

### KEY STATS

- **18** pedestrian incidents/year
- **30-40K** vehicles per day
- **25%** commercial vacancy
- Auto-oriented frontage dominates
- **8** mid-block gaps
- **5** new mid-block crossings

### Place Characteristics







# LAKEFRONT PARKWAY

## EASTERN NEIGHBORHOOD EDGE: The Heartbeat of the Community

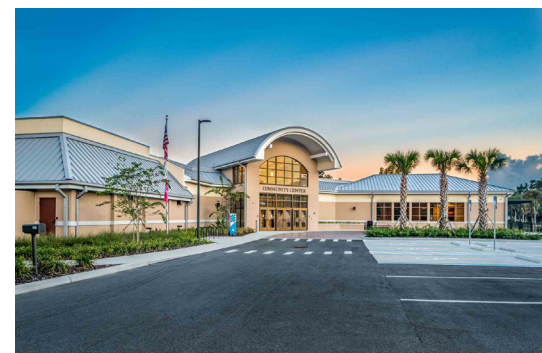
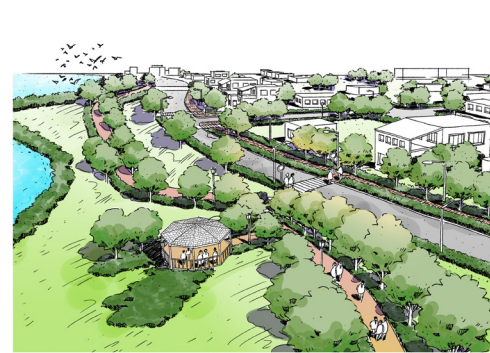


The Lakefront Parkway feels like home at first step off your front porch. Here, oak-lined streets connect cozy bungalows to corner cafés and small shops, blending “small-town charm” with “big-city convenience.” With a Pedestrian First mindset, we’ll kick off short-term fixes, repairing sidewalks and ramps, to make every stroll safe. Longer term, updated zoning will allow two- to three-story mixed-use buildings, bringing affordable housing retrofits right into the heart of the block. This is the Neighborhood Heartbeat, a place where you truly live, work, and play just steps from your door.

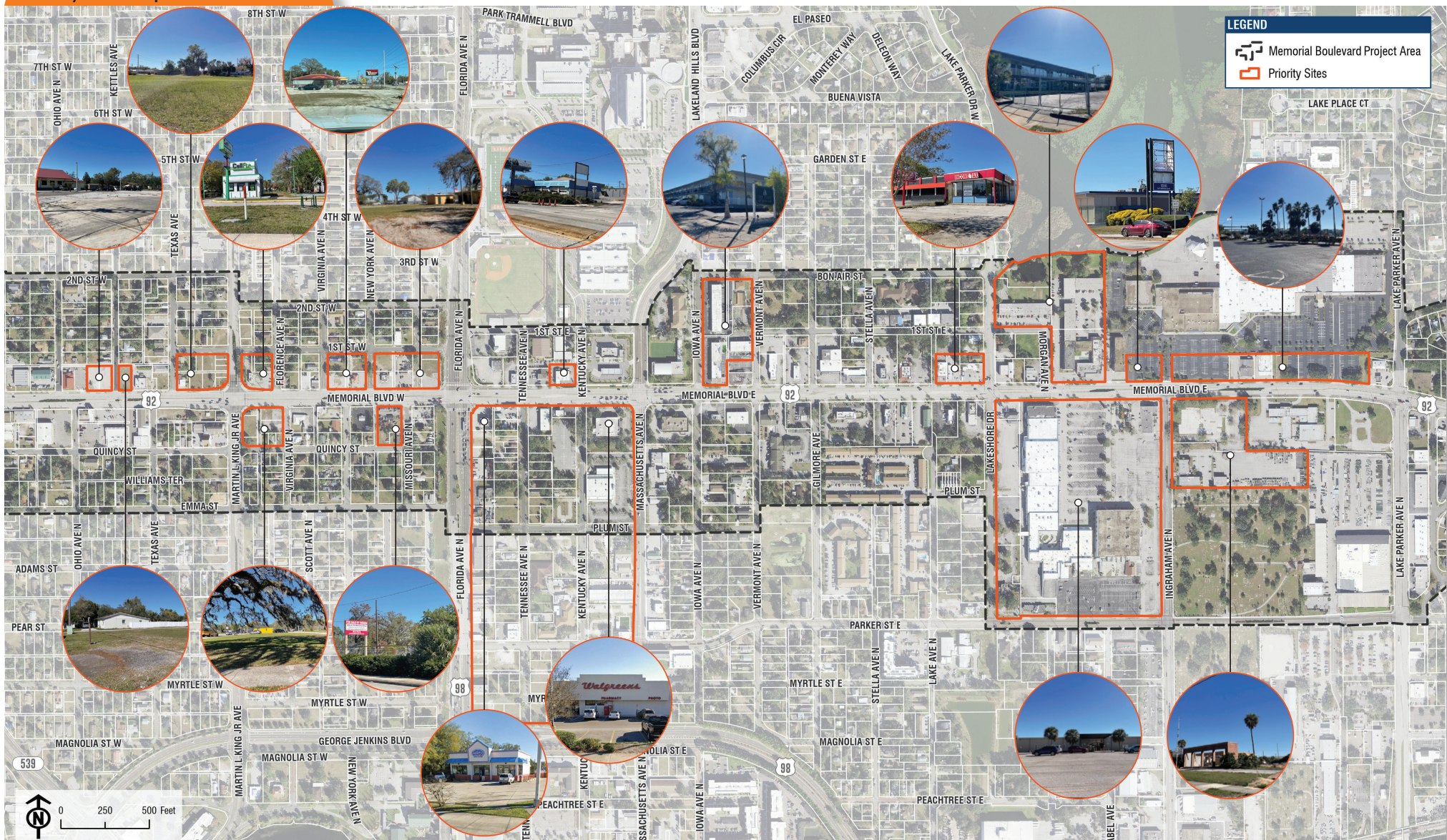
### KEY STATS

- **40%** of households cost-burdened
- **15** potential infill sites
- High AARP walkability needs

### Place Characteristics



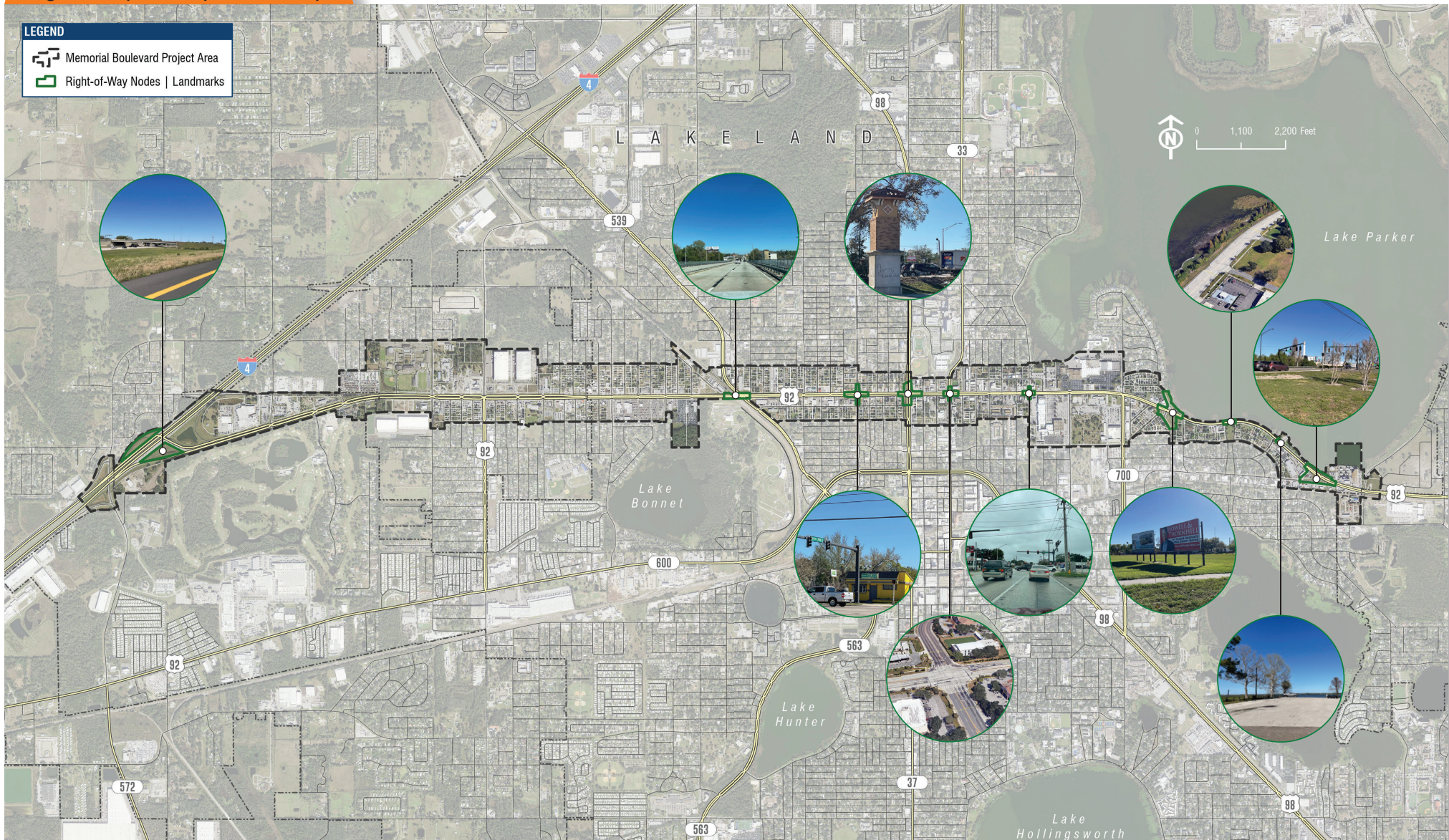




# MIXED-USE INFILL, RESIDENTIAL UPGRADES, AND COMMERCIAL NODES

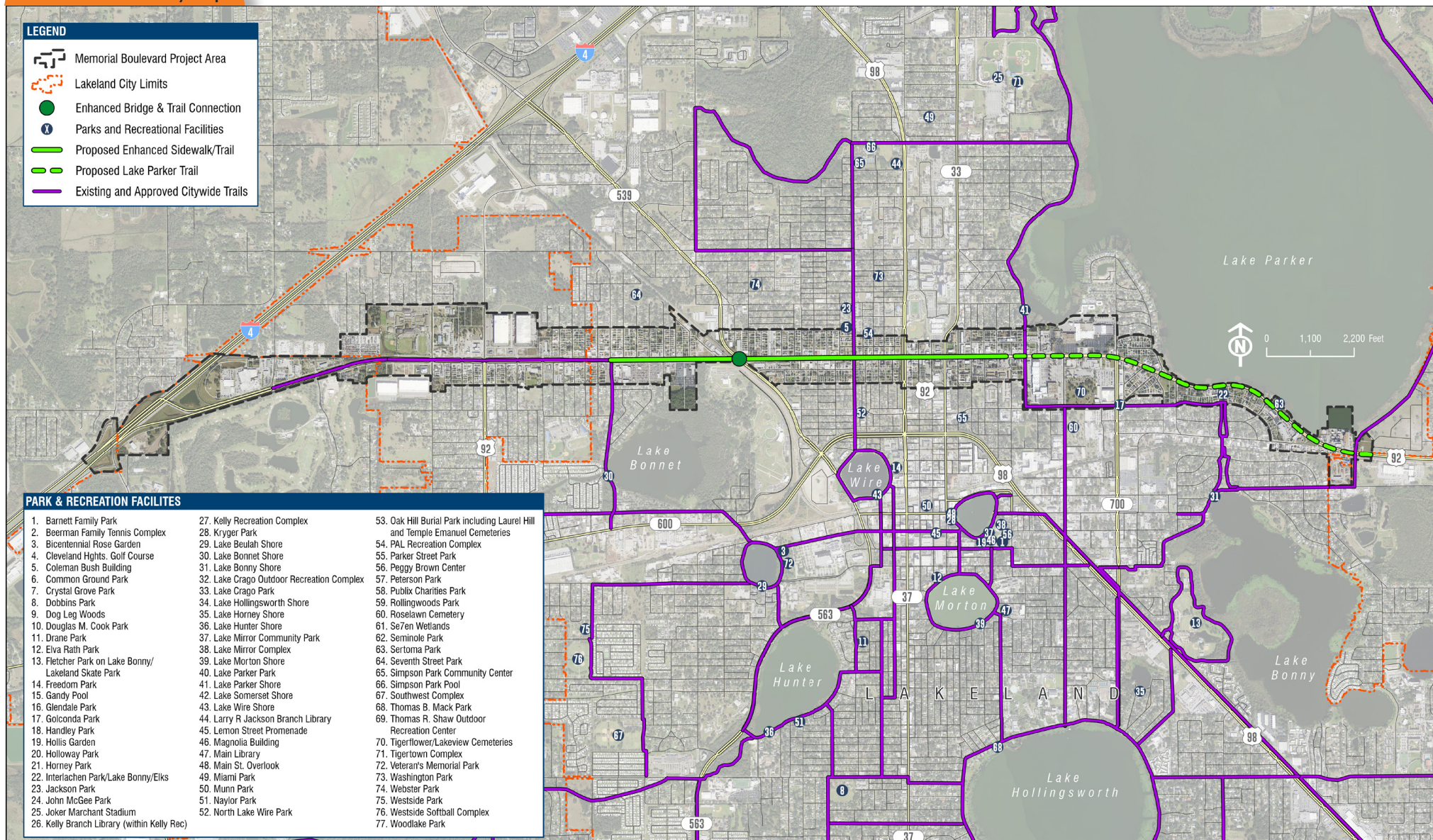
The corridor is a major transportation route, which serves as a gateway between I-4 to the west and East Lake Parker Drive to the east. The redevelopment of Memorial Boulevard offers a great opportunity for neighborhood-serving commercial revitalization and mixed-use development that leverages underutilized land for new reinvestment and growth opportunities. The City can also revitalize existing developments for improved residents' quality of life, equitable and sensitive neighborhood preservation through anti-displacement strategies, and redevelop environmentally sensitive sites for potential development expansion. Reference the separate Appendix for redevelopment potential and infill site maps found in Appendix D.





Key nodes along the rights-of-way were identified as opportunities for enhancements, including the addition of landmark features and traffic-calming strategies, such as roundabouts, to improve safety, support operational efficiency, and enhance the corridor's character. Reference the separate Appendix for all right-of-way node maps found in Appendix E.





## CORRIDOR CONNECTIVITY TO CITY ASSETS

Memorial Boulevard is a central datum connecting to different corners of the City. Corridor connectivity seeks to improve upon the existing transportation network to address service gaps, offer micro transit opportunities, enhance pedestrian safety through data-driven strategies and strategic partnerships, revitalize major corridor nodes through active participation with the community, and create pedestrian linkages through greenways that are accessible for all.



# PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The revitalization of Memorial Boulevard cannot be successful without first addressing the underlying issues that hinder the corridor's success.

City policy updates focus on the creation of and expansion of regulatory codes and zoning policy, the designation of a core group focused on improvements to the corridor, corridor branding, and promotion to help attract investments, social services intervention through strategic partnerships, improved food access, improved transit opportunities, workforce development, acquisition of critical funding, small business support, and community-wealth building.

# CORRIDOR URBAN DESIGN CHARACTER



## DESIGN GUIDELINES



# DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICES

## A CASE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT

The American Planning Association outlines the historical context, purpose, and urban planning implications of decentralized neighborhood service facilities. The concept is rooted in the settlement house tradition, early municipal decentralization, and administrative efforts to improve efficiency in urban governance.

Neighborhood service facilities aim to enhance the delivery of municipal and social services by relocating them directly into communities. The report outlines four key objectives of decentralization: improving administrative efficiency, increasing accessibility for residents, fostering responsiveness between government and citizens, and encouraging innovation in service delivery.

Types of facilities covered include:

Branch City Halls (e.g., Los Angeles, San Antonio) to decentralize government functions and improve civic access.



City of Phoenix Neighborhood Resource Center & Police Substation

Neighborhood Health Centers, often federally funded, to provide integrated, preventive care within underserved areas. Information and Advisory Centers offering housing, legal, and employment guidance through locally rooted staff.

Multipurpose Centers that consolidate education, employment, health, and housing services in one location for greater efficiency and user impact.

The report also highlights other neighborhood-centered approaches, including decentralized welfare offices, storefront police stations, and service hubs in public housing projects. These aim to embed services directly within the communities they serve, fostering trust, improving access, and encouraging resident participation.

From a planning perspective, the report underscores the importance of location decisions, recommending centers be placed in well-traveled, accessible areas near public transportation. Reuse of existing facilities like schools or storefronts is encouraged to reduce costs and enhance community presence. Zoning issues are minimal but require consideration during planning.

The report concludes by identifying a need for new evaluation methods for these facilities. While effectiveness is easily measured for traditional services like fire stations (e.g., response time), metrics for social service centers are more complex and may involve qualitative indicators such as trust and participation.

Image Source: <https://imirzian-architects.com/projects/neighborhood-resource-center/>



## A CASE FOR UTILIZING UNTAPPED MARKETS

According to recent studies, providing shelter or supportive housing for individuals experiencing homelessness saves taxpayers an average of \$20,000–\$30,000 per person per year by reducing emergency service use. When coupled with job training or maintenance crews that visibly improve commercial corridors, these programs stimulate local spending, support workforce development, and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive local economy.

### **Supportive Housing Saves Money and Improves Outcomes.**

A comprehensive study by the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative found that chronically homeless individuals cost public systems over \$30,000 annually, mostly due to emergency room visits, ambulance rides, police interventions, and incarceration. By contrast, permanent supportive housing costs an average of \$13,000–\$18,000 annually per person, creating a net public savings of up to \$17,000 per individual per year.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness reinforces this, citing the Moore Place Permanent Supportive Housing Evaluation Study reporting



San Jose, CA, Downtown Streets Team

reductions in hospitalizations (by 78%), emergency room visits (by 79%), and jail stays (by 84%) when individuals are placed in stable housing.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development released “Housing First: A Review of the Evidence.” This review highlights that Housing First programs, which often include supportive housing and wraparound services, are associated with improved neighborhood stability when services are integrated into community infrastructure.

While the report focuses on health and cost outcomes, it also notes that well-managed supportive housing does not negatively impact surrounding property values, and in some cases, contributes to neighborhood revitalization. The Brookings

Institution found that integrating housing and social services into urban planning is essential for sustainable revitalization and economic inclusion.

### **Workforce Development Creates Economic Multiplier Effects.**

Cities that integrate job training and employment pathways into shelter systems see measurable economic returns:

- Denver’s “Social Impact Bond” supportive housing program (2016–2020) reduced jail stays by 34% and shelter use by 40%, while connecting over 300 people to stable housing and job supports. The program delivered \$2.4 million in annual savings to the city.

Image Source: <https://www.streetteam.org/>

- Downtown Streets Team (San Jose, CA) pays homeless individuals stipends to clean commercial corridors, leading to visible community improvements and employment placements. Over 80% of participants reported improved job readiness; 46% secured permanent employment within six months.
- The Workforce First Program, established by the Other Ones Foundation, which the City of Austin, TX, partially funds, pays individuals daily wages for beautification work. The program has reduced visible homelessness, decreased littering, improved business perception, and reduced emergency service usage.

### **Employment Lowers Recidivism and Enhances Housing Stability.**

The HUD Family Options Study found that families provided with housing vouchers plus employment support saw a 41% reduction in repeat shelter use. Another study from the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness report that combining housing with employment services increases housing retention rates and reduces returns to homelessness.

### **Strategic Public-Private Partnerships Spur Corridor Investment.**

Revitalizing Memorial Boulevard with embedded shelter-to-work programs

presents an opportunity for mutually beneficial partnerships:

- Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and local chambers of commerce can partner with service providers to create transitional job placements in landscaping, corridor cleaning, retail, and hospitality.
- Shelters can serve as recruitment hubs for businesses needing part-time, flexible, or seasonal labor, especially in retail and maintenance.
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) incentives reward businesses up to \$2,400 per hire for employing individuals facing barriers to employment, including homelessness.

### **Benefits to Business Owners**

- Improved foot traffic: Clean, vibrant corridors attract more pedestrians and patrons.
- Reduced operating costs: Less need for private security or litter removal.
- Reliable labor supply: Job seekers from shelters are pre-screened and often supported by case managers.
- Positive PR and community goodwill: Businesses seen supporting housing stability can build stronger customer loyalty and neighborhood identity.

### **Public Safety, Property Value, and Tax Gains**

- New York's Pathways to Housing program saw a 60% drop in arrests for participants placed in supportive housing.
- Revitalization anchored by human-centered infrastructure is indirectly linked to increased property values.
- Local sales tax revenue increases when foot traffic and neighborhood retail activity improve. LISC MetroEdge's Corridors of Retail Excellence (CORE) Program has shown that revitalizing commercial corridors through physical improvements, business support, and community engagement can lead to increased retail sales, improved tenant mix and occupancy rates, enhanced public space and private property conditions. These efforts are often part of larger community revitalization strategies, which include housing and social services.

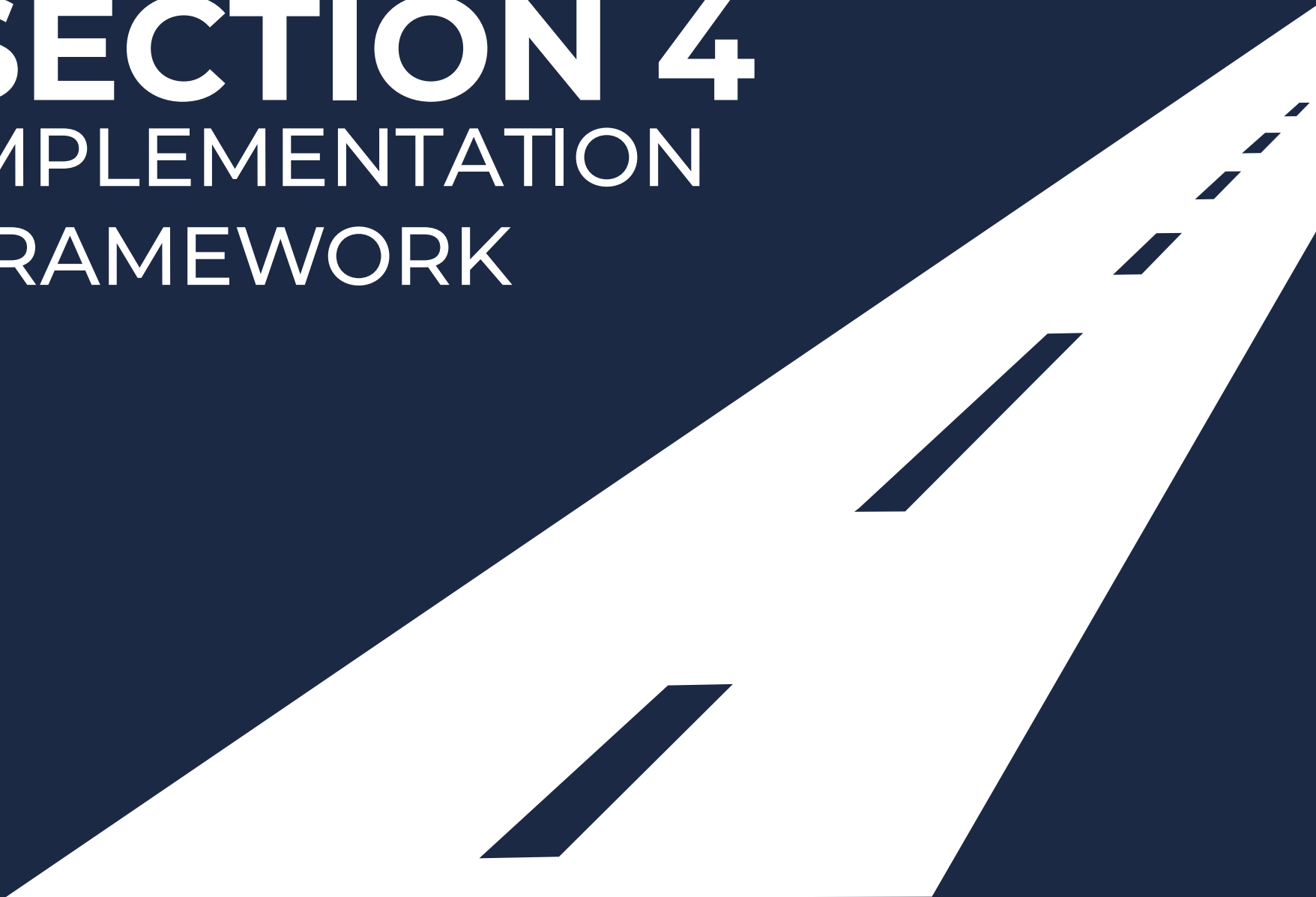
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# SECTION 4

## IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK





Memorial Boulevard

The implementation framework is based on corridor assessments, economic conditions analysis, community engagement, and discussions with City staff. It is organized under the four categories: Corridor Experience, Programs and Policies, and Collaborations and Partnerships. Initial timeline, responsible party, and potential funding sources associated with each action are outlined in the table on the following pages.

### Time frames

- Ongoing
- Immediate
- Short-term (0 to 5 years)
- Long-term (Beyond 5 years)

### Responsible Parties & Funding

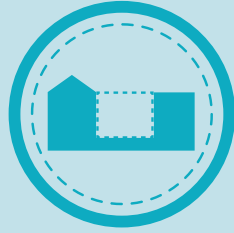
- LGF – City of Lakeland General Fund
- LCRA – City of Lakeland CRA
- LPW – City of Lakeland Public Works
- LPRCA– Lakeland Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts
- LCED – Lakeland Community and Economic Development
- LPD – Lakeland Police Department
- FDOT – Florida Department of Transportation District One
- FDHS – Florida Division of Historic Resources
- COLHO – City of Lakeland Housing Office
- FCC – Florida Chamber of Commerce
- PC – Polk County
- CFRPC – Central Florida Regional Council
- CC – Citrus Connection
- LDBG – Lakeland Downtown Business Group
- POD – Private Owners/Developers
- CDFI – Community Development Financial Institutions
- GRA – State and Federal Grants





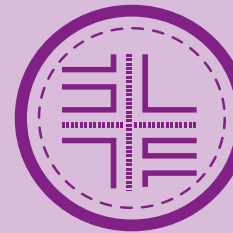
## CORRIDOR EXPERIENCE

- Urban design master plan and design guidelines
- Corridor planning, design, construction coordination, and management
- Corridor beautification program
- Safety improvements and walkability
- Negative crime perception mitigation
- Bridge visual enhancement and bike-ped facilities
- Public open space program and alleys
- Stormwater and Infrastructure network expansion



## REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Collaborative relationship with commercial real estate professionals and Opportunity Sites database
- Identify at-risk housing units and developments that can be preserved and enhanced
- Priority sites for redevelopment and expansion
- Targeted property acquisition, studies and marketing
- Brownfield redevelopment and funding opportunities



## CORRIDOR CONNECTIVITY

- Bike-ped and trail network expansion
- Martin Luther King Jr Complete Street
- North Florida Avenue connection
- Lincoln Avenue improvements
- Massachusetts Avenue connection
- Lakeshore Drive connection
- Enhanced pedestrian crossing in City Gateway area
- Community Connector shuttle pilot



## POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

- Memorial Boulevard Redevelopment Technical Advisory Team
- Regulatory land development codes and zoning policy changes
- Social Services providers management and stewardship
- Multimedia branding and promotion
- Events and activities programming
- Marketing City- acquired properties, business recruitment and technical assistance
- Private funding and collaboration
- Health equity and food access initiative
- Transit programming
- Grant opportunities



# CORRIDOR EXPERIENCE: DESIGN AND AESTHETICS

## 1. Urban design master plan and design guidelines

- a. Initiate an urban design master plan based on this study process including but not limited to the three thematic areas proposed, FDOT context classification, safety features, roundabouts, enhanced landscape, street amenities, and signage/wayfinding in conjunction with redevelopment. Refer to Corridor Experience Plan for initial recommendations and thematic areas: Gateway Boulevard, City Gateway, and Lakefront Parkway.

Timeline

Immediate

Responsible  
Parties

- Lakeland Community and Economic Development
- City of Lakeland Public Works
- City of Lakeland CRA

Potential  
Funding

City of Lakeland  
CRA

## 2. Corridor planning, design, construction coordination, and management

- a. Continue ongoing coordination with FDOT and Polk County to coordinate the corridor design, construction, and funding.
- b. Initiate a Complete Streets Plan with FDOT based on opportunity for all constituents and integrate accessibility retrofits and ADA compliance across all public infrastructure.
- c. Incorporate green infrastructure standards to manage stormwater and landscape design to expand the urban tree canopy.
- d. Prioritize Memorial Boulevard in Lakeland's Vision Zero Action Plan to include SARS in crash data analysis and priority network identification and use Vision Zero's systemic safety principles to select SARS capital investments and *bundle projects*.
- e. Establish a process for corridor management and upkeep post and construction.

Timeline

Ongoing

Responsible  
Parties

- Lakeland Community and Economic Development
- City of Lakeland Public Works

Potential  
Funding

City of Lakeland  
General Fund

3. Corridor beautification program	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. In coordination with the corridor design, incorporate elements including public art, murals, plazas, knee walls, historic character theming, gateway features, and markers.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>City of Lakeland CRA</li> </ul>	City of Lakeland General Fund
4. Safety improvements and walkability	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prioritize safe pedestrian crossings in all areas and barriers in the median in the City Gateway.</li> <li>b. Install speed control measures especially in the Lakefront Parkway section.</li> <li>c. Install high-visibility crosswalks with HAWK signals or RRFBs at key intersections or mid-block crossings, especially near future transit stops and other high-traffic areas.</li> </ul>	Ongoing / Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li> </ul>
5. Negative crime perception mitigation	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Coordinate with LPD to continue community outreach and enforcement in coordination with social service providers, businesses and residents.</li> <li>b. Consider improved lighting and public cameras in the City Gateway section to improve safety perception.</li> </ul>	Ongoing / Immediate	City of Lakeland CRA	City of Lakeland General Fund
6. Bridge visual enhancement and bike-ped facilities	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Enhance the bridge over Kathleen Road for improved bike-ped trail connectivity.</li> <li>b. Add gateway design features and lighting for visual appeal so the bridge serves as an “arrival” landmark to downtown.</li> </ul>	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li> </ul>



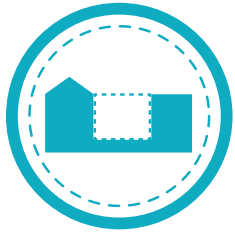


# Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge Enhancement



7. Public open space program and alleys	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Require public open spaces, pocket parks, and plazas as part of the development review process for private development and within public areas along Lake Parker.</li> <li>b. Promote activated alleys on vacated ROWs in redevelopment priority sites and areas.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> </ul>	City of Lakeland CRA
8. Stormwater and Infrastructure network expansion	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Undertake a comprehensive stormwater infrastructure study network and expansion extending to the surrounding neighborhood in conjunction with the roadway improvement design and construction.</li> <li>b. Consider dual-purpose parks and retention ponds.</li> </ul>	Long-term	City of Lakeland Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>





# REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS: MIXED-USE INFILL, RESIDENTIAL UPGRADES, AND COMMERCIAL ANCHORS

## 1. Collaborative relationship with commercial real estate professionals and Opportunity Sites database

- a. Build a collaborative relationship with commercial real estate professionals who are actively working within the corridor. Commercial brokers often serve as early indicators of change within a corridor, much like a canary in a coal mine. They tend to have a deep understanding of market dynamics and are closely attuned to activity in the area. Their insights can reveal which property owners may be looking to sell, identify potential new tenants or investors, and highlight businesses that are considering relocating. As a result, commercial brokers represent a valuable source of real-time information and should be actively engaged as part of any corridor revitalization or development strategy.
- a. Create a database of categorized opportunity areas noted in this study process and potential uses for discussions with specific property owners and commercial brokers.

Timeline

Ongoing

Responsible Parties

- City of Lakeland CRA
- Private Owners/ Developers

Potential Funding

- City of Lakeland CRA
- City of Lakeland General Fund

## 2. Identify at-risk housing units and developments that can be preserved and enhanced

- a. Consider the creation of a preservation toolkit and database/registry to track at-risk (aging) affordable housing in the corridor boundaries and possibly expand to the wider CRA.
- b. Align the City's current Affordable Housing Incentives Program with targeted grants tied to historic preservation and weather resilience for properties within the corridor.

Timeline

Short-term

Responsible Parties

- City of Lakeland CRA
- City of Lakeland Housing Office

Potential Funding

- City of Lakeland Housing Office
- City of Lakeland General Fund
- Polk County



# Activated Alley



3. Priority sites for redevelopment and expansion	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initiate discussions with priority sites property owners noted in this process including Lakes Church and the Lakeland Town Center and other priority sites identified through this study process.</li> <li>b. Match site sizes with economic development priorities. For example, a medium-size grocery store, like a Trader Joe's, would require around 15,000 to 20,000 square feet excluding parking.</li> <li>c. Initiate targeted discussions with private property owners with opportunities for infill redevelopment sites through this study process. These are underused properties within already developed areas that present opportunities for new investment and growth.</li> <li>d. Expand the business incentive program to other commercial sites like Tapatio's that are mission-aligned businesses.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• Private Owners/ Developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Polk County</li> </ul>
4. Targeted property acquisition, studies and marketing	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Continue strategic property acquisitions by the CRA in the areas around North Florida Avenue and Memorial Boulevard, Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Memorial Boulevard, and Massachusetts Avenue (Mass Market).</li> <li>b. Explore a joint-use detention basin with recreational function (e.g., wetland park or stormwater plaza near Lake Parker's edge).</li> <li>c. Prepare preliminary code studies that include a high-level market analysis and conceptual design to test fit redevelopment options for the sites to market for investment.</li> <li>d. Engage with commercial brokers to understand opportunities and potential tenants and marketing. Prior to marketing any sites, determine the level of public participation.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• Private Owners/ Developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland Housing Office</li> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Polk County</li> <li>• State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>
5. Brownfield redevelopment and funding opportunities	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pursue brownfield redevelopment funding perceived contaminated sites or area.</li> <li>b. Pursue remediation and reuse of brownfield sites identified in this process.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>

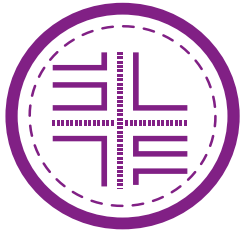




Existing corner condition on Memorial Boulevard and Florida Avenue

Artist Illustration of a redevelopment option on Memorial Boulevard and Florida Avenue





# CORRIDOR CONNECTIVITY: CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND CITY ASSETS

1. Bike-ped and trail network expansion	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
a. Study the feasibility and plan for trail and enhanced sidewalk connection along the Lake Parker waterfront and lining to the proposed SUN Trail extension along Lakeshore Street and extending along Memorial Boulevard and connecting to the County's trail in the Gateway Boulevard section as noted in this study process.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li><li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li><li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li><li>State and Federal Grants</li></ul>
2. Martin Luther King Jr. Complete Street	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
a. Work with the community to educate and coordinate the complete streets linkage between the North Lake Wire Neighborhood and Memorial Boulevard.	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li><li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li><li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li><li>State and Federal Grants</li></ul>

3. North Florida Avenue connection	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Study and initiate design enhancements on North Florida Avenue between Memorial Boulevard and Bartow Road to match the land use changes associated with the proposed Mass Market project..</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>• State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>
4. Lincoln Avenue improvements	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initiate the study and design for intersection improvement on Lincoln Avenue and enhanced bike-ped connections to the historic neighborhoods in the north along North Lincoln Avenue.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>• State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>
5. Massachusetts Avenue connection	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initiate the study and design for intersection improvement on Massachusetts Avenue and enhanced bike-ped connections to the proposed Mass Market and Downtown.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>• State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>



6. Lakeshore Drive connection	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
a. Initiate the study and design for intersection improvement on Lakeshore Drive and enhanced bike-ped connections to Lake Parker, the Publix Field/Marchant Stadium, and surrounding residential areas.	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>
7. Enhanced pedestrian crossing in City Gateway area	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
a. Study and evaluate the option of a north-south pedestrian bridge or enhanced at-grade crossing across Memorial Boulevard within the City Gateway activity area.	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>State and Federal Grants</li> </ul>
8. Community Connector shuttle pilot	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
a. Partner with Citrus Connection to launch a flexible route micro transit in underserved areas. And establish transit-oriented development (TOD) zones tied to affordable housing commitments.	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>City of Lakeland Public Works</li> <li>Citrus Connection</li> <li>Central Florida Regional Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>Florida Department of Transportation District One</li> <li>State and Federal Grants</li> <li>Citrus Connection</li> </ul>



# Cross Walk with barrier in the median







# POLICIES AND PROGRAMS: CITY POLICY UPDATES, PROGRAM SUPPORT, AND PROMOTION

1. Memorial Boulevard Redevelopment Technical Advisory Team	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Establish a core technical planning and design team within the City to champion coordinated redevelopment and corridor design.</li><li>b. Pursue the annexation of the County areas along the corridor into the City.</li></ul>	Short-term	Lakeland Community and Economic Development	City of Lakeland General Fund
2. Regulatory land development codes and zoning policy changes	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Prepare and adopt public realm and private properties design standards for Memorial Boulevard design. Consider a mid-century style with contemporary features portraying the “dynamism and movement” aspects of this corridor. This could be initiated through Special Public Interest (SPI) Overlay. Include Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles as part of the development standards or guidelines.</li><li>b. Modify zoning to allow mixed-use, higher density, and vertical housing in the City Gateway section.</li><li>c. In the Gateway Boulevard section on the west side, introduce hybrid zoning allowing clean tech, food production, or artisanal manufacturing to promote employment.</li><li>d. Modify zoning for the three hotel/motel sites for repurposing.</li><li>e. Use zoning to incentivize fresh food outlets and disincentive predatory retail (liquor stores, payday lenders).</li><li>f. Create an affordable housing preservation ordinance for the corridor and possibly extend to the wider City to combine affordability, tenant protections, and mixed-use incentives.</li></ul>	Ongoing/ Short-term	Lakeland Community and Economic Development	Lakeland Community and Economic Development

### 3. Social Services providers management and stewardship

- Establish a City committee to address homeless issues with service providers to facilitate their active rehabilitation, workforce development, and job training.
- Develop a quarterly Corridor Impact Scorecard showing economic activity, jobs placed, housing outcomes, and highlight success stories of reintegrated homeless individuals and recognize participating businesses across City communication platforms to help shift public perception.
- Establish a City-endorsed stewardship program that offers stipends or transitional employment to homeless individuals for corridor maintenance, beautification, and economic support. Pilot a Memorial Works crew (cleaning, landscaping, façade assistance) in partnership with CRA and local shelters. And collaborate with City's Public Works and Parks Departments for supplemental staffing.
- Formalize partnerships for co-located social services in City facilities and wraparound services (food pantry, mental health, etc.) in underused City assets such as the Simpson Park Center.

#### Timeline

Immediate

#### Responsible Parties

- Lakeland Community and Economic Development
- City of Lakeland CRA

#### Potential Funding

City of Lakeland General Fund

### 4. Multimedia branding and promotion

- Pursue branding and promotion through the City's Communications initiatives. Consider building on the "Vibrant and Thriving Gateway to Lakeland" theme. Use this platform for marketing properties to developers and investors.
- Consider Florida Main Street Designation.

#### Timeline

Short-term

#### Responsible Parties

- City of Lakeland CRA
- Private Owners/ Developers
- Florida Division of Historic Resources

#### Potential Funding

- City of Lakeland General Fund
- Florida Division of Historic Resources



# Urban Plaza





5. Events and activities programming	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Program City-initiated events or festivals associated with the corridor history and culture in key areas. Consider collaboration with Black History Festival, Cemeteries Tours, Bonnet Springs Park, Mi Pueblo Flea Market, Lakes Church, Lakeland Town Center, and Lakeland Regional Hospital for events.</li> <li>b. Host regular cultural markets, art installations, and food truck festivals at Sertoma Park to make Lake Parker a destination.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• Lakeland Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts</li> <li>• Polk County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts</li> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Lakeland Downtown Business Group</li> </ul>
6. Marketing City- acquired properties, business recruitment and technical assistance	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Collaborate with property and professional real estate services companies to market assimilated properties to developers and investors to meet the community aspirations for the area and site(s).</li> <li>b. Proactively engage with the local/downtown business organizations. Lakeland Area Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to attract small and medium business investment in the corridor.</li> <li>c. Prioritize the corridor for design technical assistance and cultural preservation currently offered under CRA umbrella.</li> <li>d. Establish policies that reward and incentivize local businesses along the corridor that hire homeless individuals, provide job mentorship, or co-sponsor corridor improvement activities by offering wage subsidy or local tax credits to businesses along the corridor that participate in workforce reintegration efforts. Create a specialized Corridor Champions fund for participating businesses with a recognition campaign and plaque award.</li> <li>e. Partner with CDFIs and local credit unions to provide flexible capital for entrepreneurs and homeowners.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• Lakeland Downtown Business Group</li> <li>• Florida Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Florida Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Community Development Financial Institutions</li> </ul>

7. Private funding and collaboration	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pursue funding and sponsorship for corridor activities and design through naming rights of activated areas, landmarks, and other public features.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> <li>• Private Owners/ Developers</li> <li>• Lakeland Downtown Business Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• City of Lakeland CRA</li> </ul>
8. Health equity and food access initiative	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Collaborate with Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center and produce vendors from the Mi Pueblo Flea Market to launch and deliver mobile clinics and food as medicine programs.</li> </ul>	Short-term	City of Lakeland CRA	City of Lakeland General Fund
9. Transit programming	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Coordinate with Citrus Connection for premium transit service along Memorial Boulevard linking key destinations in conjunction with the proposed corridor improvements.</li> </ul>	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakeland Community and Economic Development</li> <li>• Citrus Connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Lakeland General Fund</li> <li>• Polk County</li> </ul>
10. Grant opportunities	Timeline	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assess and pursue grant opportunities available at the local, state, and national levels for corridor improvements. Grants include U.S. DOT RAISE Discretionary Grants, FDOT Transportation Alternatives Program, and U.S. EPA Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment or Coalition Grant.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Lakeland Community and Economic Development	City of Lakeland General Fund





# Gateway Signage









# The Planning Process





