

Urban Applications of Innovative Intersection Designs

Best Slides from Research Effort, Pt 1: Rational for the Work

Chris Cunningham, PE (Principal Investigator, NCSU-ITRE)

Celen Pasalar, Ph.D. (Co-PI, NCSU-College of Design)

Michael R. Brown, PE, AICP (Co-PI, Urban Innovators)



February 10th and 13th, 2023



Meet the Pl's



Chris Cunningham, PE



- Director, Highway Systems Group
- NC Professional Civil Engineer
- Co-author of ITE's *Manual of Transportation* Engineering Studies



Celen Pasalar, Ph.D.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY College of Design

- Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
- Urban Design, Smart Cities, Community Design



Mike Brown, PE, AICP



- UT and NC Professional Civil Engineer
- TRB Intersections Committee
- Founder of Urban Innovators
- Creator of below websites





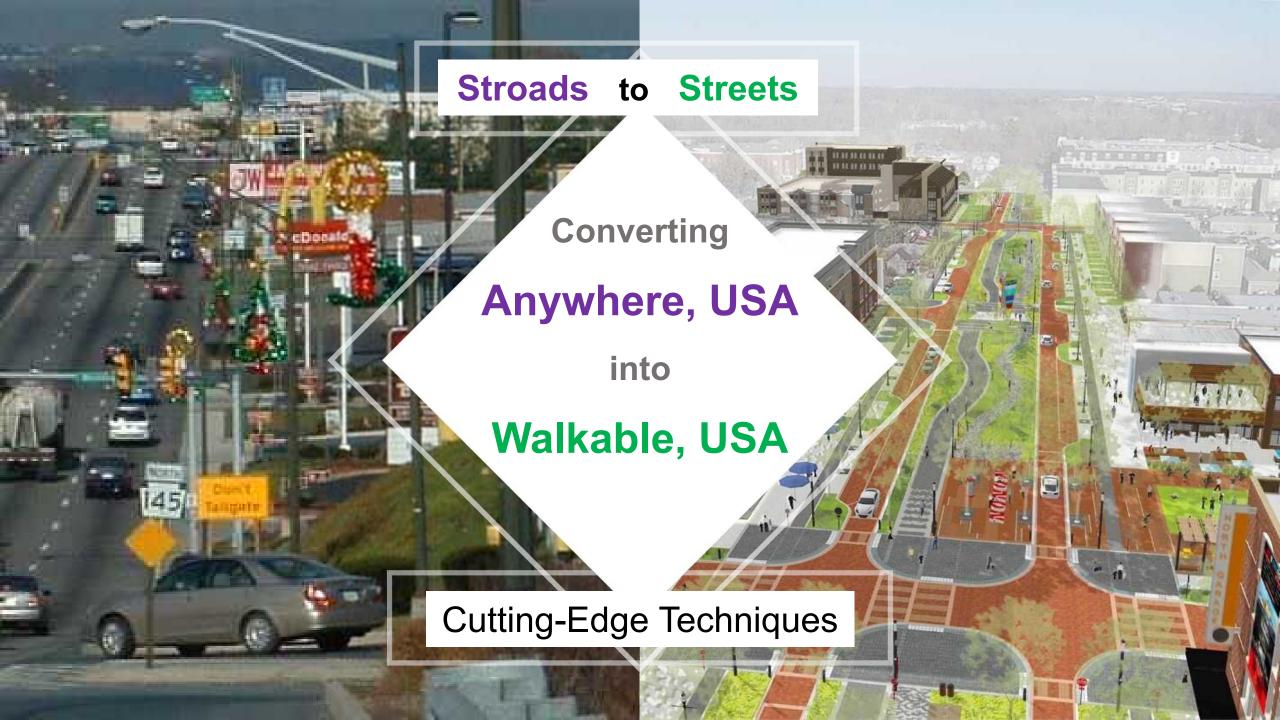
Innovative





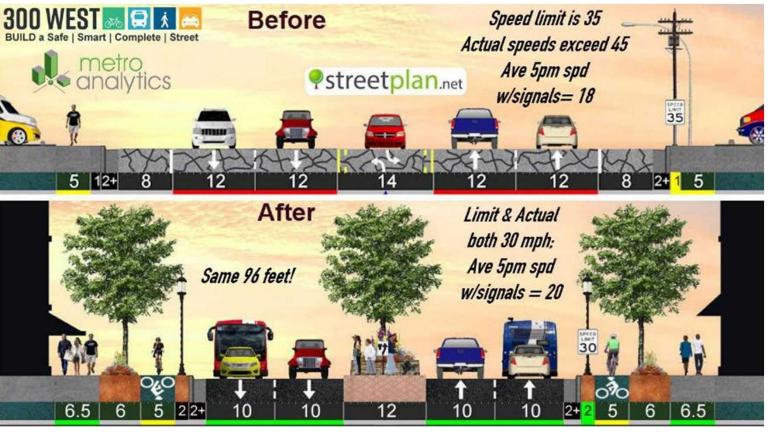


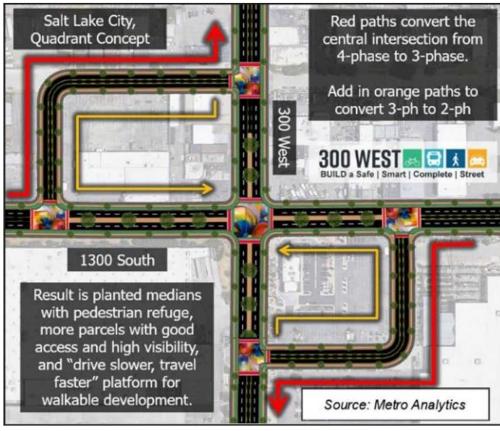
Diverging Diamond Interchanges.org





Managing High Volumes <u>and</u> Creating Great Places

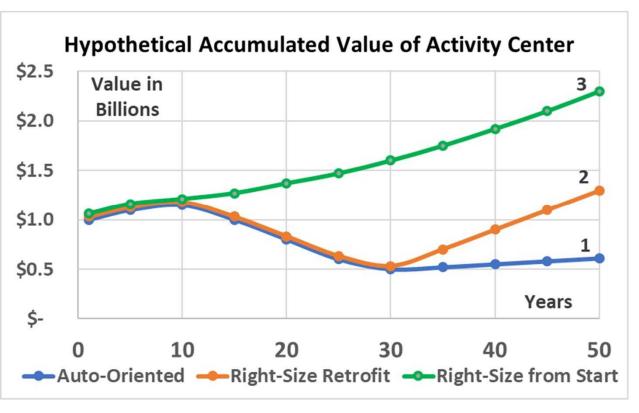






Stroads Create Greyfields Greyfields Create Duplicative Infrastructure

- 1. Cheap retail center emerges but degrades by year 30. It then struggles forever to recover, as there is no mechanism
- 2. Yeah! A recovery mechanism is discovered! (This research!) Never as good as if planned well from start, but far better!
- 3. How future Greenfield centers will emerge, now that they have better mechanisms for securing value.



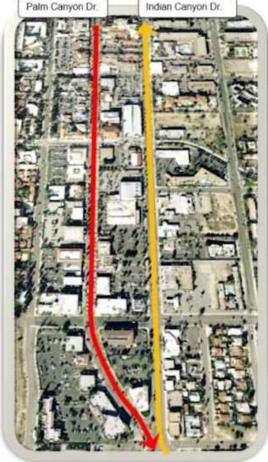




Typical? (One-Way Splits)

Palm Springs Town Center







Courtesy: Metro Analytics

Courtesy: Metro Analytics

Task 2: Literature Review





State-of-the-Practice of T4+ walkable examples of corridors that include Als



Best practices of T4+ for Complete Streets and Place Making



NCDOT Complete Street guidelines and NCHRP Right-Sizing guidebook



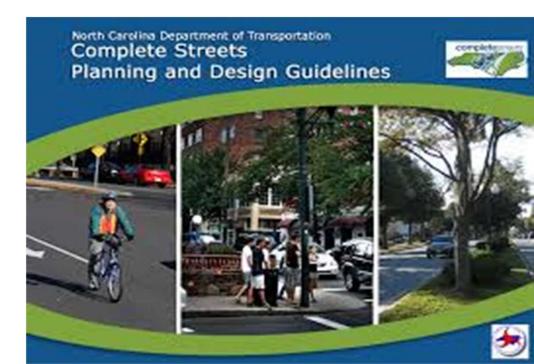
Insights on adapting Als to Complete Streets



NCDOT Complete Streets Guideline

- Complete Streets Policy (2009)
 - Consider and incorporate multimodal alternatives when designing new projects or making improvements to existing infrastructure
- Complete Streets Planning and Design Guidelines (2012)
 - All users should be considered during the planning, design, construction, funding, and operations of the state's transportation system

- The <u>NCDOT Roadway Design Manual</u> as the authoritative reference for Complete Streets design
- The <u>AASHTO</u> and the <u>NACTO</u> guides for street design
- The <u>FHWA guidance</u> for selecting appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities





NCDOT Complete Street Evaluation

- Based on 43 stakeholder interviews
- Performance Metrics
 - Safety (stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian crashes, vehicle crashes)
 - Congestion (multimodal level of service)
 - Inventory (updated pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure network geodatabase)
 - Economic Development (stimulate commercial and recreational trips)

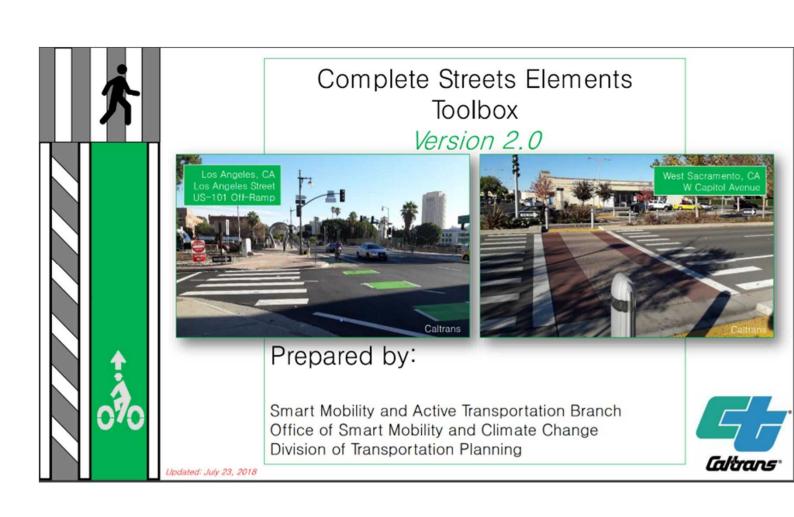
Practical Recommendations

- Clearly establishing roles and responsibilities for better accountability
- Improving the project prioritization, funding and tracking process
- Regularly updating the design guidelines
- Communications with internal and external stakeholders



Caltrans Complete Streets Elements Toolbox

- Technical guidance on the implementation of Complete Streets:
 - Bicycle Elements
 - Pedestrian Elements
 - Road Space Reallocation
 - Transit Related Elements
 - Landscaping Elements





COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

M2D2: Multimodal Development and Delivery

December 2015



The Florida Department of Transportation and Smart Growth America















FDOT Complete Streets Implementation Plan

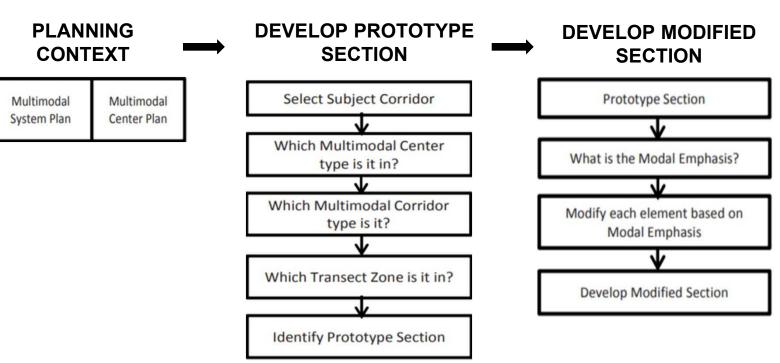
- Incorporate Complete Streets into the planning, design and construction of all projects in urban and suburban areas
- Revising guidance, standards, manuals, policies and other documents
- Updating decision making
- Modifying approaches for measuring performance
- Managing communication and collaboration during implementation
- Education and Training



VDOT Multimodal System Design Guidelines



Multimodal Corridor Design





2017 State of New Jersey
Complete Streets
Design Guide



NJDOT Complete Streets Design Guide

Integrating Complete Streets into the Planning and Design Process

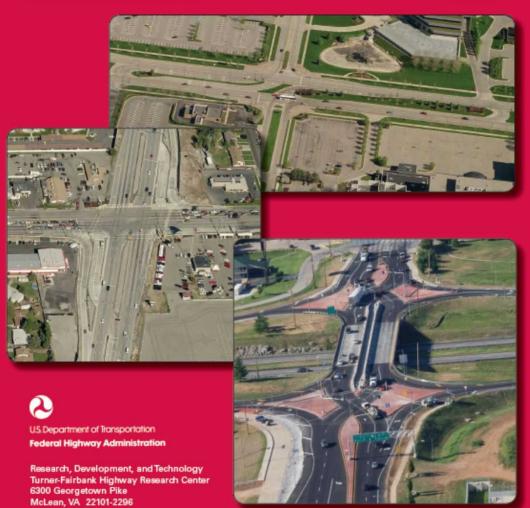
- Sidewalks
 - Sidewalk zones, Street trees, Furnitures, Bus shelters, Lights, Stormwater, Parklets, etc.
- Roadways
 - Design speed, Traffic calming, Road diet, On-street parking, Design vehicle, Bikeway, etc.
- Intersections
 - Accessibility, Gateways, Corners, Curb, Islands, Raised crossings, Channelization, etc.



Alternative Intersections/Interchanges: Informational Report (AIIR)

PUBLICATION NO. FHWA-HRT-09-060

APRIL 2010



FHWA - AIIR

- Four Alternative Intersections
 - Displaced Left-turn Intersection (DLT)
 - Median U-Turn Intersection (MUT)
 - Restricted Crossing U-Turn Intersection (RCUT)
 - Quadrant Roadway Intersection (QR)
- Guidance on Accommodation of Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Transit Users:
 - Pedestrian refuges
 - Wayfinding signing
 - Right-turn channelized islands
 - Accessible devices to disabled pedestrians



NCHRP

Project Number 07-25

Guide for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety at Alternative and Other Intersections and Interchanges

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD NAS-NRC

PRIVILEGED DOCUMENT

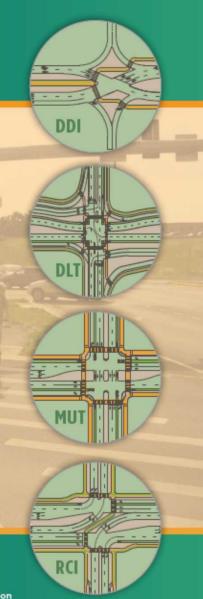
This report, not released for publication, is furnished only for review to members of or participants in the work of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP). It is to be regarded as fully privileged, and dissemination of the information included herein must be approved by the NCHRP.



Prepared by: Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

In association with: Institute for Transportation Research and Education at North Carolina State University

Toole Design Group
Accessible Design for the Blind
Advanced Transportation Solutions



NCHRP 07-25

- Three Alternative Intersections
 - MUT, RCUT, DLT
- Pedestrian Accommodation
 - Wayfinding
 - Street crossing
 - Pedestrian routing and delay
- Bicyclist Accommodation
 - On-street/ Separated/ Shared bike lanes
 - Bikeway selection
 - Bicyclist routing and delay
- Assessments & Elements Design







Right-Sizing Transportation Investments: A Guidebook for Planning and Programming



The National Academies of SCIENCES - ENGINEERING - MEDICINE

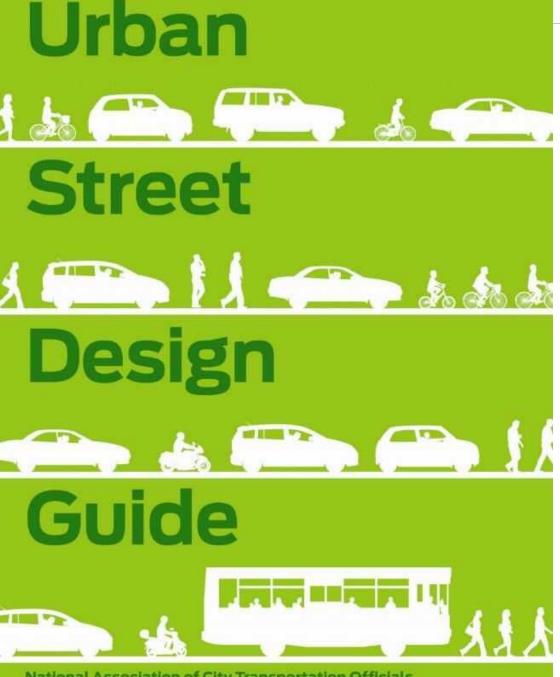
TANGE OF A DOWN HOS AND A DOWN TO A



NCHRP 917, Right-Sizing

- Matching infrastructure to emerging uses
- Value-capture, Economic Analysis
- Urban catalytic techniques, (Als, etc.)
- North Carolina, Utah, Georgia, Iowa





Urban Street Design Guide

- Complete Streets
 - Vision
 - How to bring them to fruition
- Toolbox and Tactics
 - Safer, more livable, and more economically vibrant streets



Keeper Slides from Interim Meetings



Discussion Items

- NCDOT Research Update
- NSF CIVIC Update
- Shared Goals/Outcomes Survey
- Discussions
- Schedule Update





NC STATE UNIVERSITY

URBAN Innovators

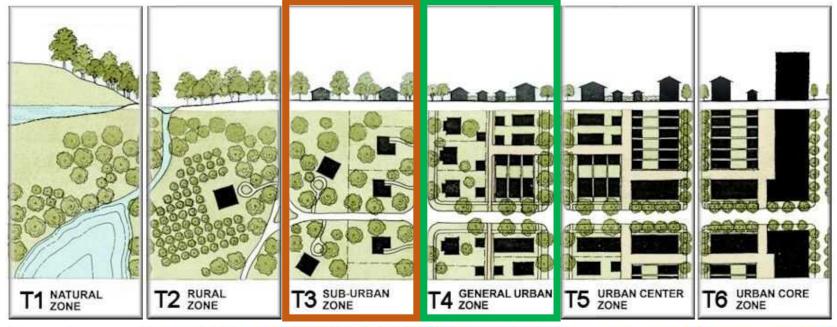
I think I can! I think I can!



Courtesy: Urban Innovators



TO here





Almost Nothing

Small

Towns



1-story

Mostly



Mostly

2-3 story







Many 5+ stories

"Mount Stroad" blocks languishing suburban commercial from becoming walkable. Can we get over this hump?



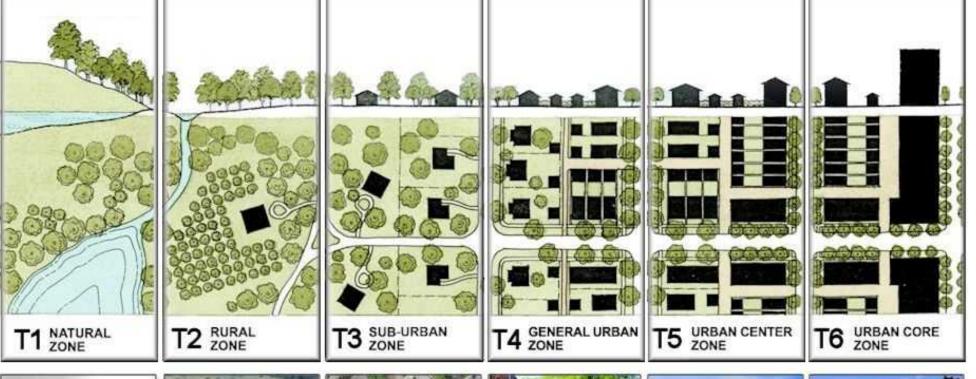


There aren't many tools that address both Traffic and Placemaking.

> This research creates such tools.



Arterials and the Evolution Adjacent Land



Stuck in T3!

Land gets stuck in T3 suburban and even goes backward!

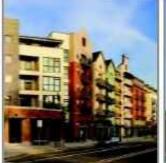
Goal: stabilize T3 with pockets of successful T4 and T5.













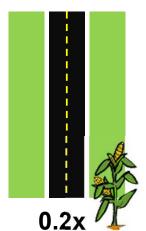


Arterials and the Story of Value

1x is a "New and Shiny Built out suburb," with a density or cash value of "1x".

Rural Highway

T2

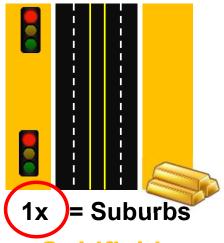


Greenfield

Phase 1

Max: 65 mph Ave: 55 mph Rare stops Shiny "Stroad"

T3, Early

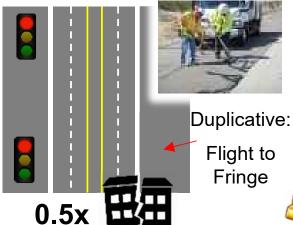


Goldfield

Phase 2

Max: 45 mph Ave < 25 mph frequent Red Lights Ugly "Stroad"

T3, Collapsing



Greyfield

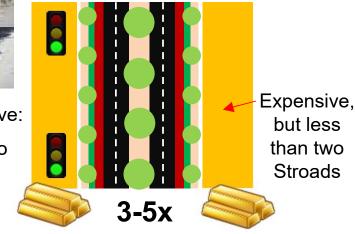
Phase 3

Max: 45 mph Ave: 30 mph frequent Red Lights



Goal: Reclaim as Complete Street

T4, T5: Stable



Golden Opportunity

Phase 4 (our work)

Max: 35 mph
Ave ~25 mph
many Green Lights!



What is NCDOT Hearing?

- Communities are frustrated with "Stroads"
- Communities want more walkable "Places"



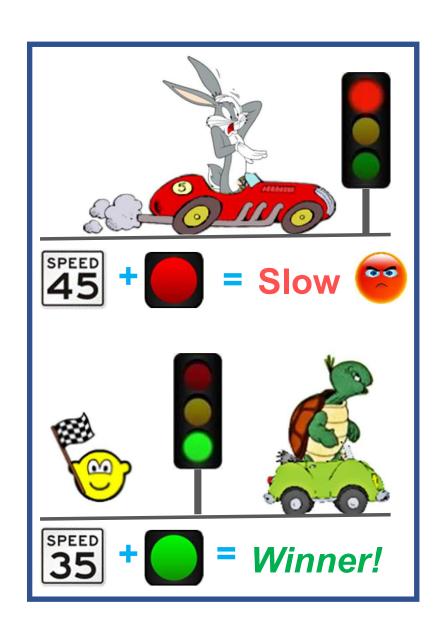
Almost walkable?

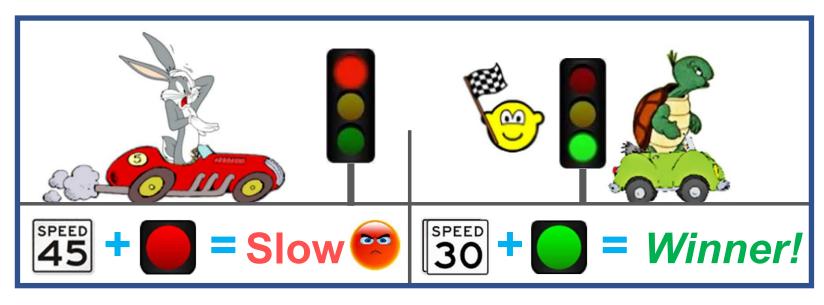


He's walking... but is it "walkable"?



These are all "Stroads"





Delete one or the other depending on how you need to use the rest of the space.







With so much car dependency, guess who usually wins?



Instead of Win-Lose, we're discovering Win-Win-Win!

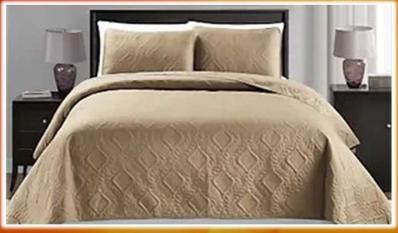
Why wrestle for the upper hand, when there are good ways to shake hands!



Great Couch



Great Bed



uncomfortable couch, **Futon** AND uncomfortable bed



Great Street

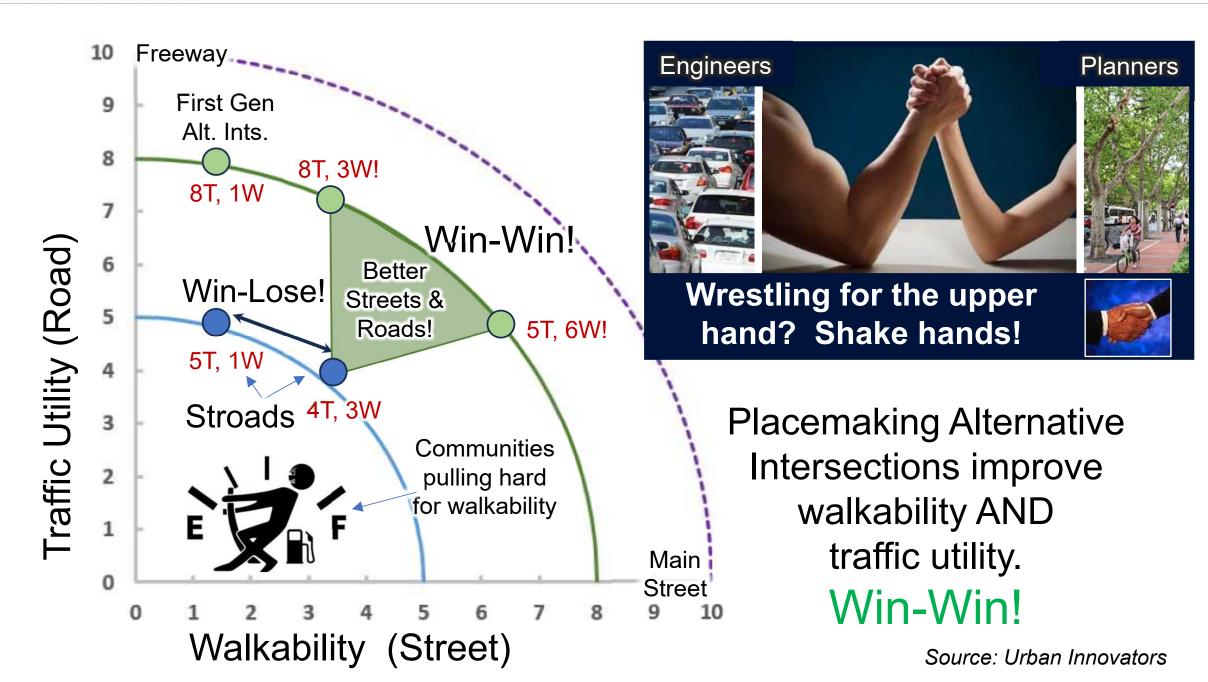


Great Road



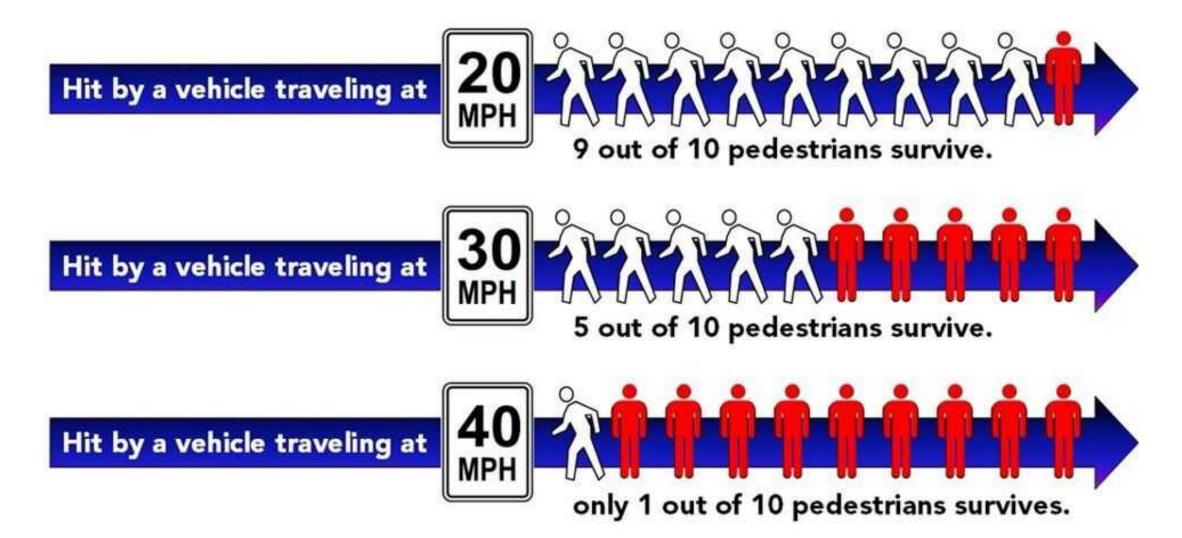
Stroad <u>tries</u> to be vibrant, AND <u>tries</u> to be fast, but fails







Drive Slower, Travel Faster - Why does it matter?



Stroads have inefficient Four-Phase signals.

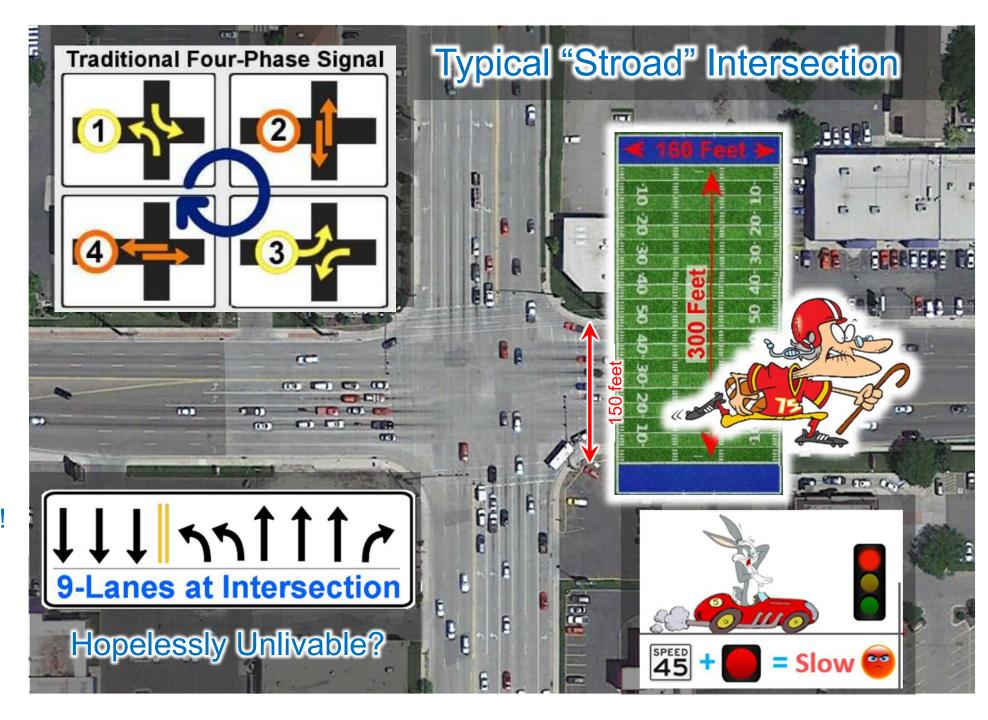
Engineers

"Solve inefficient" by adding more lanes & higher speed limits!

This is 150 ft wide, or half a football field!
Imagine Grandma making a run like that!

Overloaded!



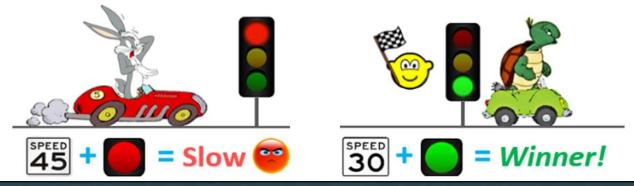




Four-phase signals are SLOW!

Left turn arrows cause delay.























4 movements, 1-spot

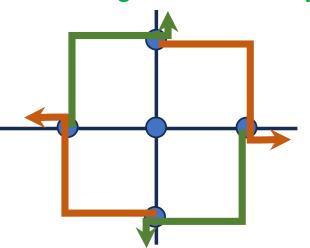




Excellent!



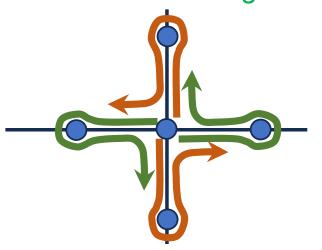
Lefts go to secondary



Excellent!



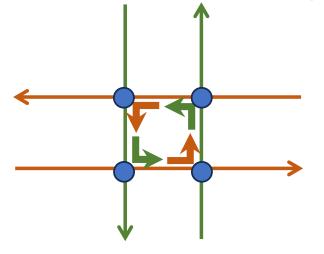
Left = U + Right



Excellent!



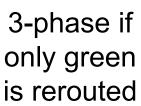
Four small beats one big

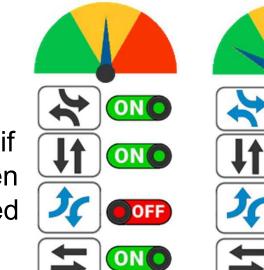


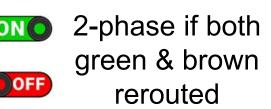
3-phase if only green redirected. 2-phase if both green & brown.

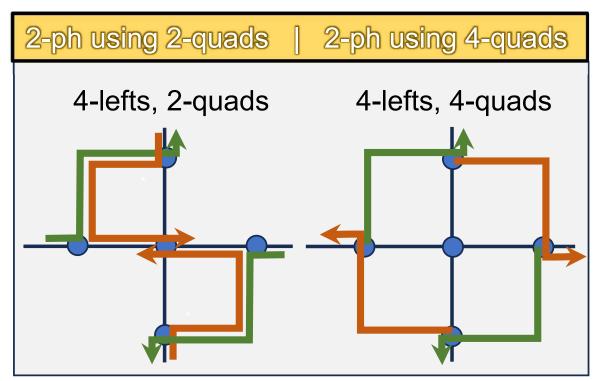


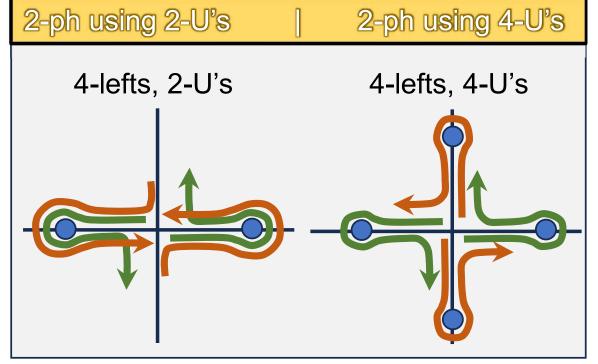








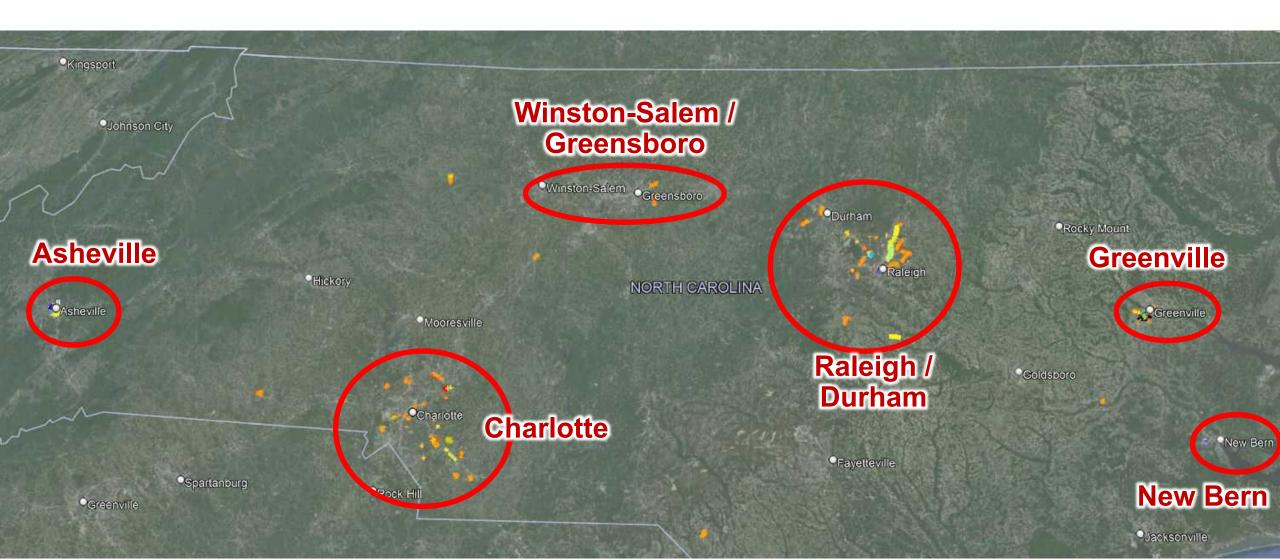


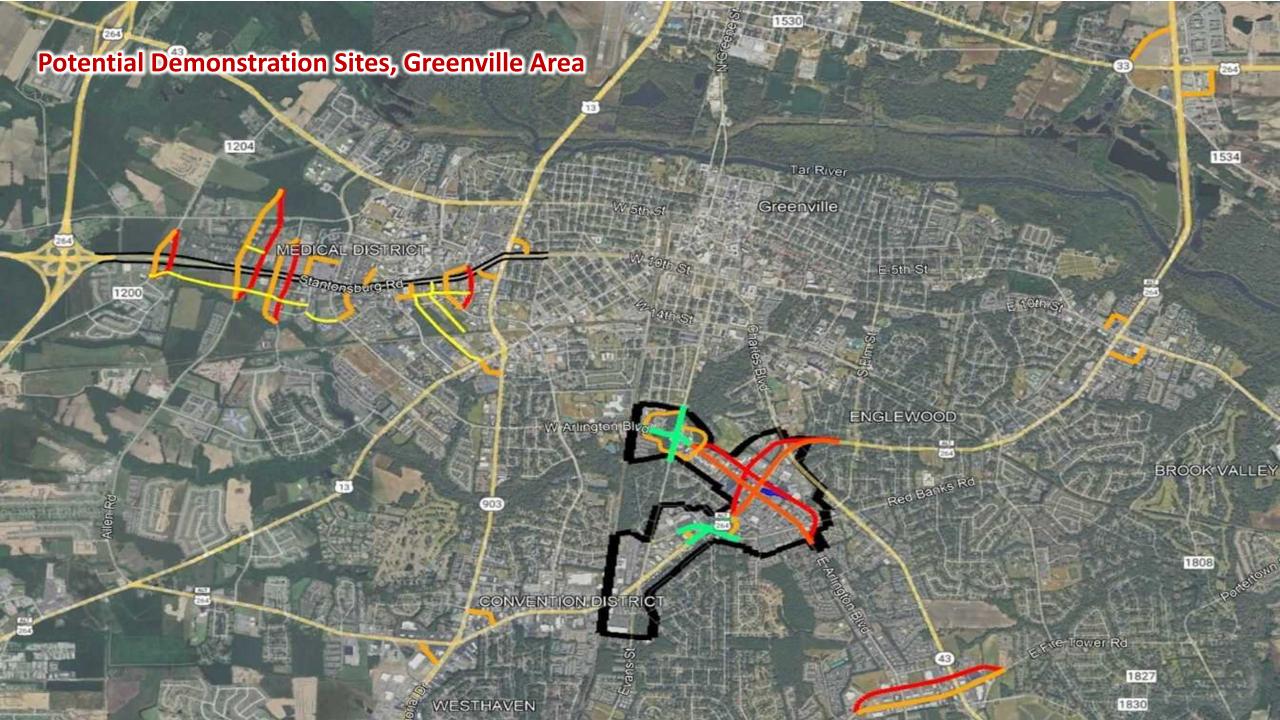


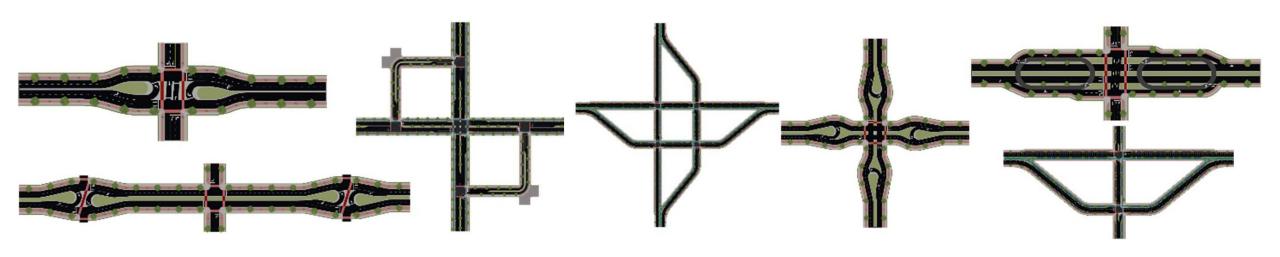
Both designs can be 3-phase (green only) or 2-phase (green+brown)



Over 100 potential applications discovered very quickly. Certainly, far more yet to be discovered!







From our library of "Legos," which can be overlayed in Google Earth for corridor study concept development.

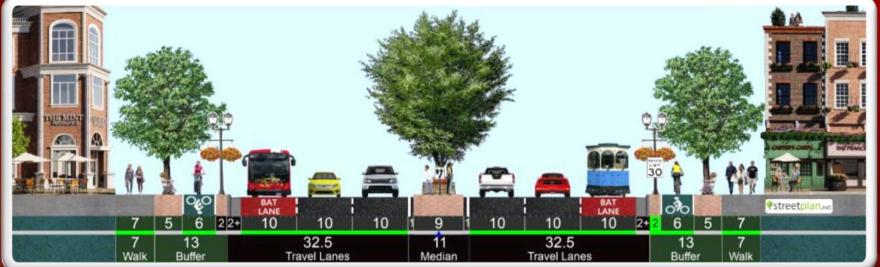






Drive Slower, Travel Faster Techniques for Converting Stroads into Complete Streets





Placemaking Alternative Intersections









NCDOT's Dilemma

- Lots of Traffic: Many Stroads do and <u>always will</u> carry huge amounts of traffic
- Concern over delay: Engineers worry that slowing traffic for walkability may also exacerbate delay and congestion.
- Lack of Tools: Even when engineers are on-board with supporting walkable development, they don't know what to do.
 - NCDOT sponsored this research to expand their toolbox of techniques



Do Stroads Contribute to Blight?

- Probably... How much? Hard to say.
- If we reinvent Stroads, can we bring back prosperity?







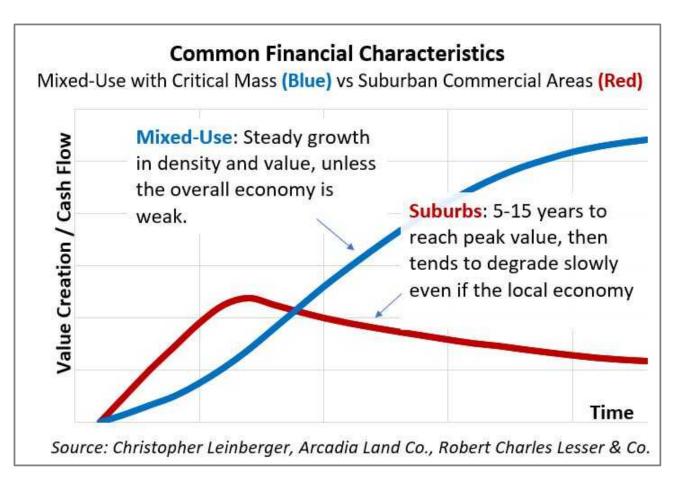






Our Expert Focus Groups and Research Below Agree:

Stroads are Major Contributors to Declining Commercial Real Estate Value





Cheaper per Mile vs Cheaper per Square Mile



Cheaper per Mile, but...



Expensive per Mile, but...



Few to pay for it





Many to pay for it



What are the Realities of T3 Auto-Oriented Suburban Commercial and T4 Walkable Mixed-Use Environments?

Feature	T3 Suburban	T4 Urban
Street Trees	Random, Private, Pathetic	Uniform, Public, Many
Arterial Streets	40-55 mph, few ped crossings	25-35 mph, many ped crossings
Off-Street Parking	Too much: Underutilized	Shared, right-sized
On-Street Parking	Non-existent or barely used	Significant, heavily used
Sidewalks	Token 4-5 feet, weeds	6ft+, buffered, trees & furniture
Bikes, Low-Speed Vehicles	For Athletes & the Fearless	Increasingly Desirable Facilities
Transit	30-60 min, if at all	15-min is common
Block Sizes	8 to 50 acres per block	4 to 8 acres per block
Network	Disconnected: Congested at low densities	Connected: congests after high densities
*FAR (100 acres+), Zoning	.10 to .25, Segregated Uses	.26 to .50, Form-Based Zoning
Land Use Opportunities	Repels Residential	Big Market for Mixed Use

^{*} FAR = Floor Area Ratio

DOTs can help provide excellent Street Trees, reduced speeds, frequent pedestrian crossings, onstreet parking where appropriate, good sidewalks, better biking or "slow lanes" (for bike-like fourwheelers).

They can also provide "Placemaking Alternative Intersections!"

All else usually requires a city to make it happen. NCDOT investment to catalyze walkable mixed uses only makes sense if the city is doing all they can to reduce obstacles to mixed-use development. Without most of this, it may not work well.

Higher density mixed-use areas help offset more expensive suburban residential and commercial.

MIXED-USE MAKES MONEY! LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA Mixed-Use Suburban **Districts** Shopping Centers Single-Family Areas Areas that Areas that contribute more consume tax base than more they consume than they in infrastructure contribute maintenance Source: Urban3, StrongTowns Also featured in APA's Planning Magazine, Aug / Sept 2020



Website with Research Summaries, Before/After Sliders

urbaninnovators.com/pr-ncdot-ai-research

Or just go to UrbanInnovators.com and find "Projects"





Our "Big Ideas" for Converting Stroads into Complete Streets & Catalyzing Mixed-Uses

- "Slow Lanes" for Bikes, Cars, Transit anything going "Bike Speed"
- Convert private parking into on-street public parking
- Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (aka, "Tiny Cars" or "Glorified Golf Carts")
- Placemaking Alternative Intersections: Quadrants, U-Turns, One-Ways











Planetizen

The Disruptive Power of 'Minimobility'

Small, lightweight vehicles similar to golf carts could eliminate many Americans' need for a second car and make roads safer for all users.

Read Time: 1 minute

November 9, 2022, 6:00 AM PST

By Diana Ionescu @aworkoffiction



Planetizen

Why Golf Carts Could Quietly Revolutionize Transportation

More communities are catching on to the benefits of golf carts as a safe, low- emissions mode of transport for neighborhood trips.

Read Time: 2 minutes
August 16, 2022, 8:00 AM PDT
By Diana lonescu @aworkoffiction





Neighborhood Electric Vehicles









Battery improvements are making "tiny cars" affordable and practical for short neighborhood trips – the majority of all trips.

"Moving Sidewalk" shuttle, and two tiny cars fit in one parking space, at "The Villages" in Florida



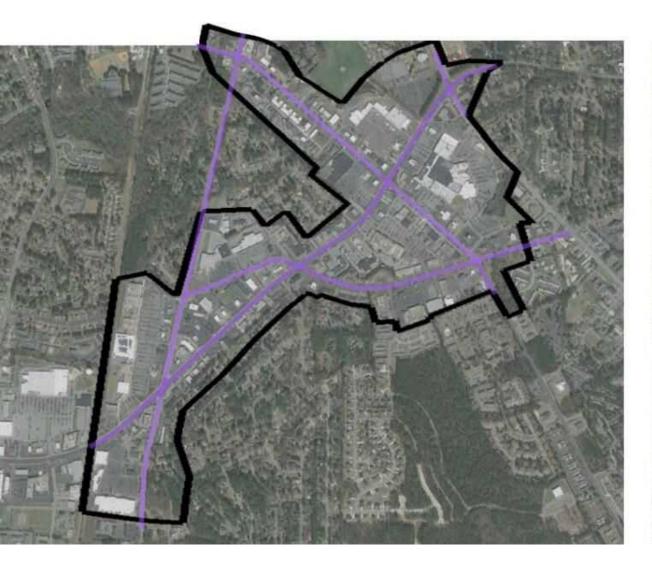
Golf carts and tiny cars are popular at McIntosh High School in Peachtree, Georgia. "2-car households," are becoming "1-car, 1-cart"



Square Foot Analysis, Percentage Use Analysis

- The following slides were developed by creating polygons in Autocad of the entire Greenville study area, and a walkable block in New Bern.
- The square feet in each category were totaled, and converted into "acres of ____, per hundred acres" (i.e., percent).
- A cool spreadsheet was created using a "Waffle Chart" technique. Search for:
 - "Greenville_NewBern_SqFt_WaffleChart_Analysis.xlsx"

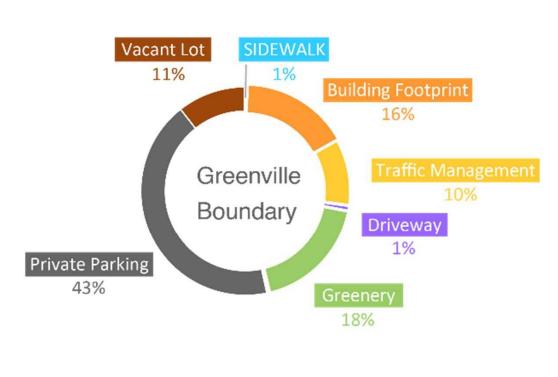
Greenville Boundary





Greenville Boundary





Building Footprint

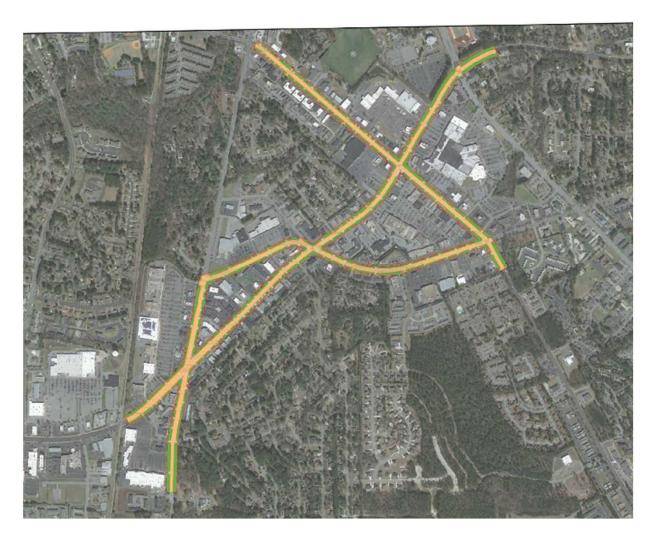
■ Public Parking

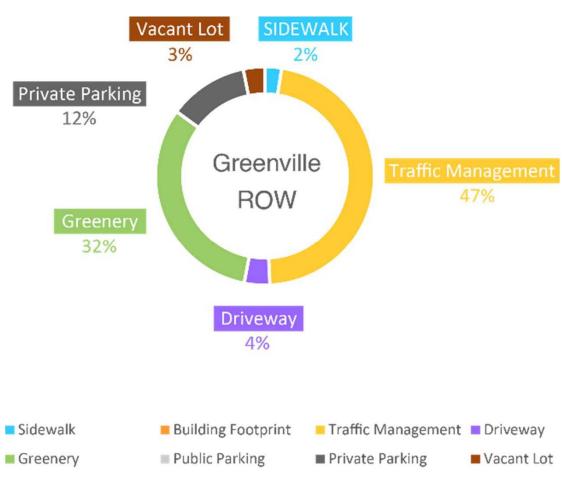
■ Traffic Management ■ Driveway

■ Vacant Lot

■ Private Parking

Greenville Potential ROW







Greenville Potential ROW





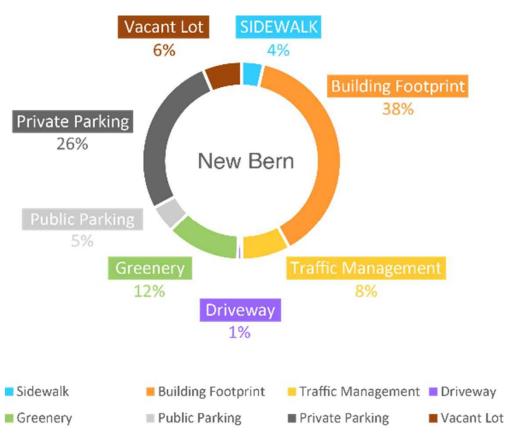
Downtown New Bern, NC





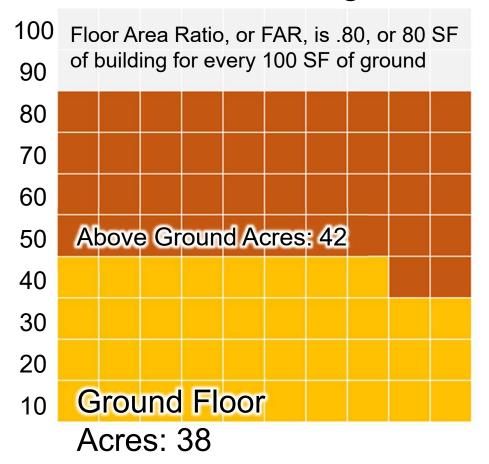
Downtown New Bern, NC



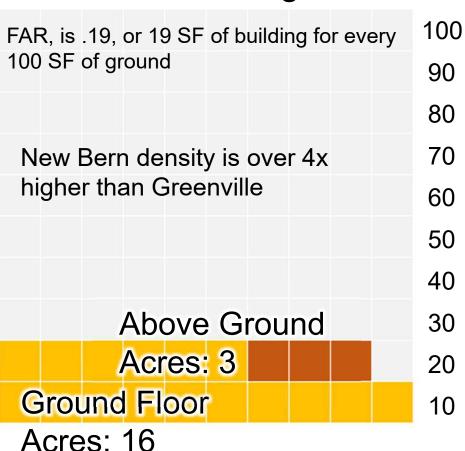




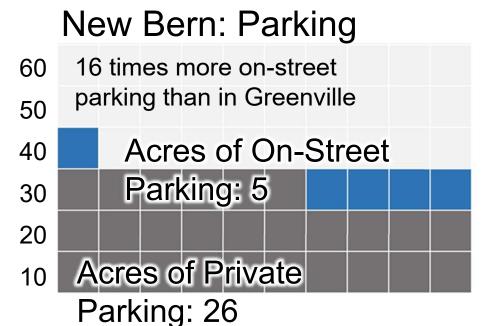




Greenville Buildings







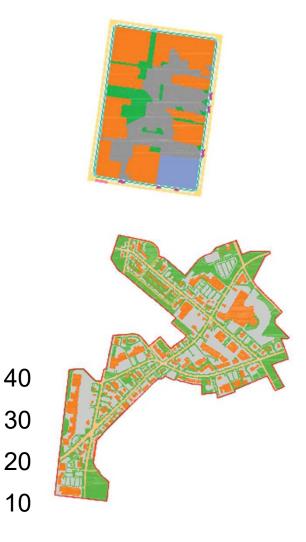


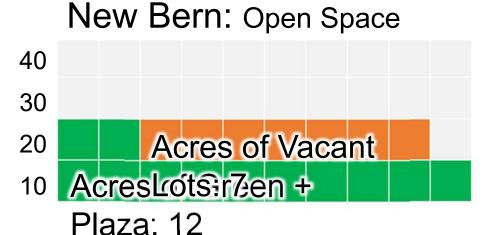


20 10

Parking: 43









Greenville: Open Space

Plaza: 19





7x, more space for quality pedestrian experience. 30

4 Acres for Pedestrians 20





40

30

20

10



New Bern: Traffic Management



Greenville: Traffic Management



8x more left-turn space



For every 100 Acres of Pavement for Traffic

New Bern Left Turn Lanes

2 Acres dedicated to left-turns

Greenville Left Turn Lanes

17 Acres dedicated to left-turns

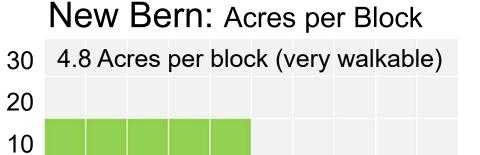
8x more left-turn space





Comparing Block Sizes







Comparing Block Sizes





6 blocks, 29 acres ~= 5 ac/block



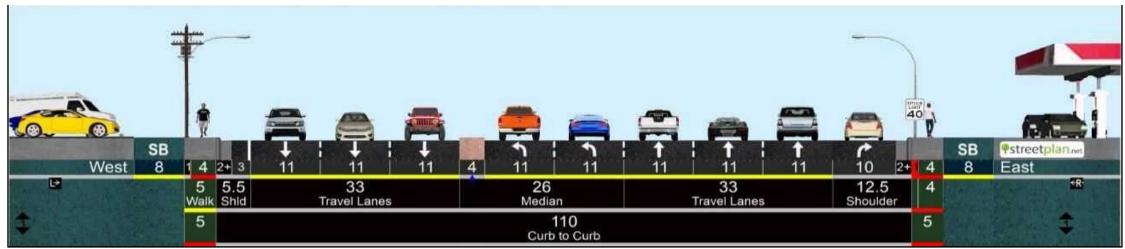
Traffic Engineering 101

Target: 5-min

- Why are Stroads both Fast and Slow?
- Overview of Placemaking Alternative Intersections
 - Designs with potential to make things slower and safer, but also faster.



Looks Fast and Furious, but is Slow and Sad

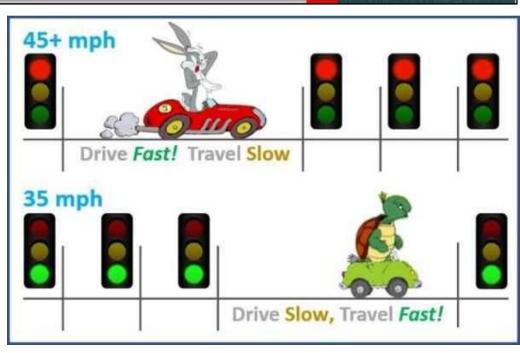


"Drive Fast, Travel Slow"

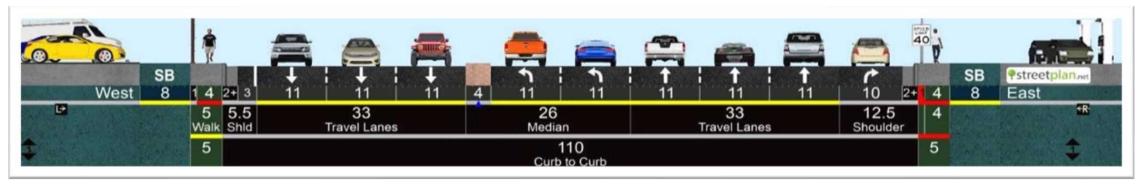
Defines "Anywhere, USA"

"Drive Slow, Travel Fast"

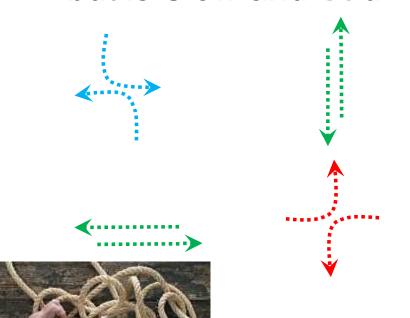
- Is that an option?
- With more green time, yes!



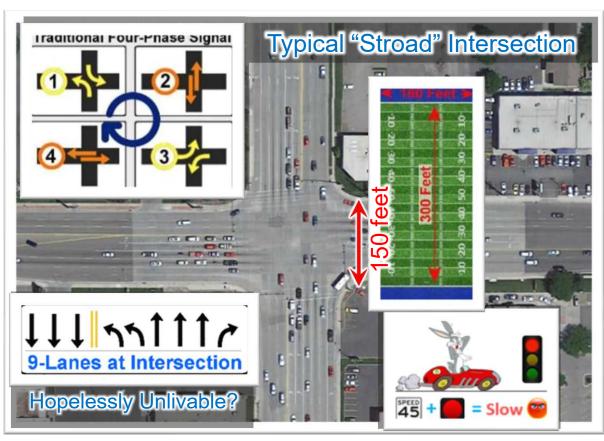




Looks Fast and Furious, but is Slow and Sad

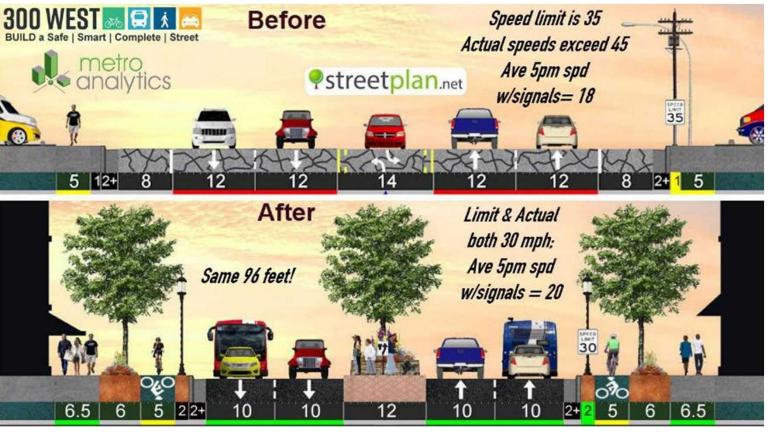


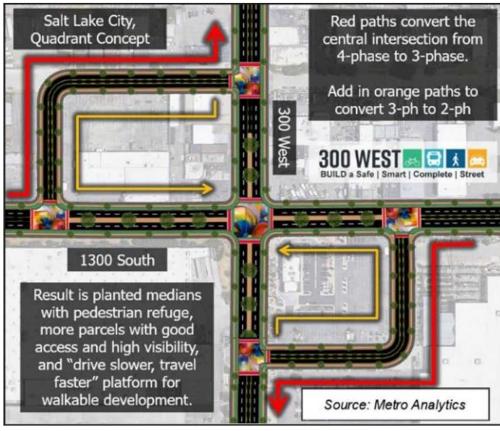
This is why you can't get through the light!





Managing High Volumes <u>and</u> Creating Great Places









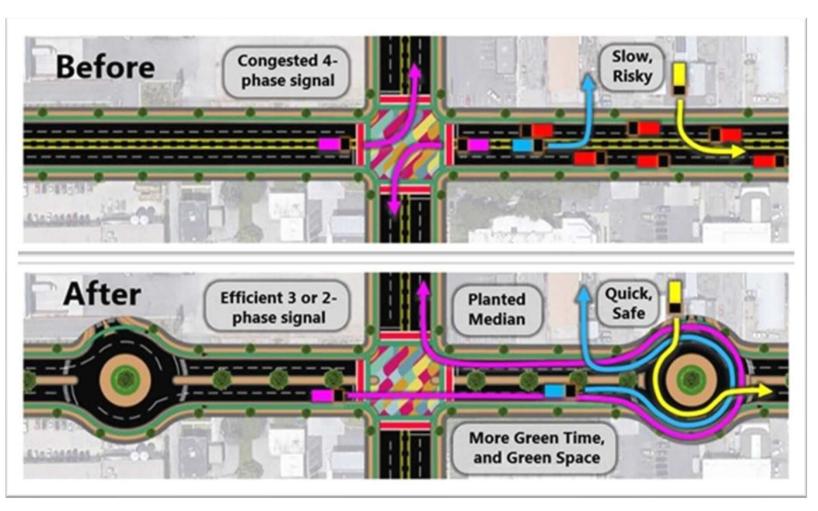
What is a Quadrant Intersection?







What is a U-Turn Intersection?





What is a One-Way Split Intersection?



- Four small intersections better than one huge!
- Right-on-red AND Left-on-red





Completed Town Center Intersection: Elfin Forest Hwy & San Elijo Rd., San Marcos, CA



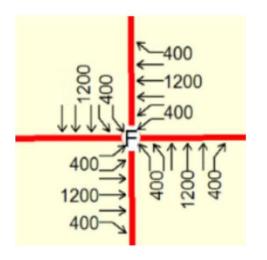
Which handles more traffic?

One gargantuan intersection?

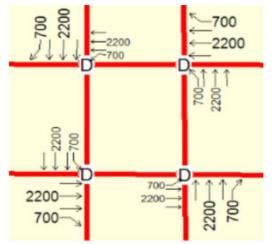


oFour human-scale intersections?





8,000/hr at LOS F

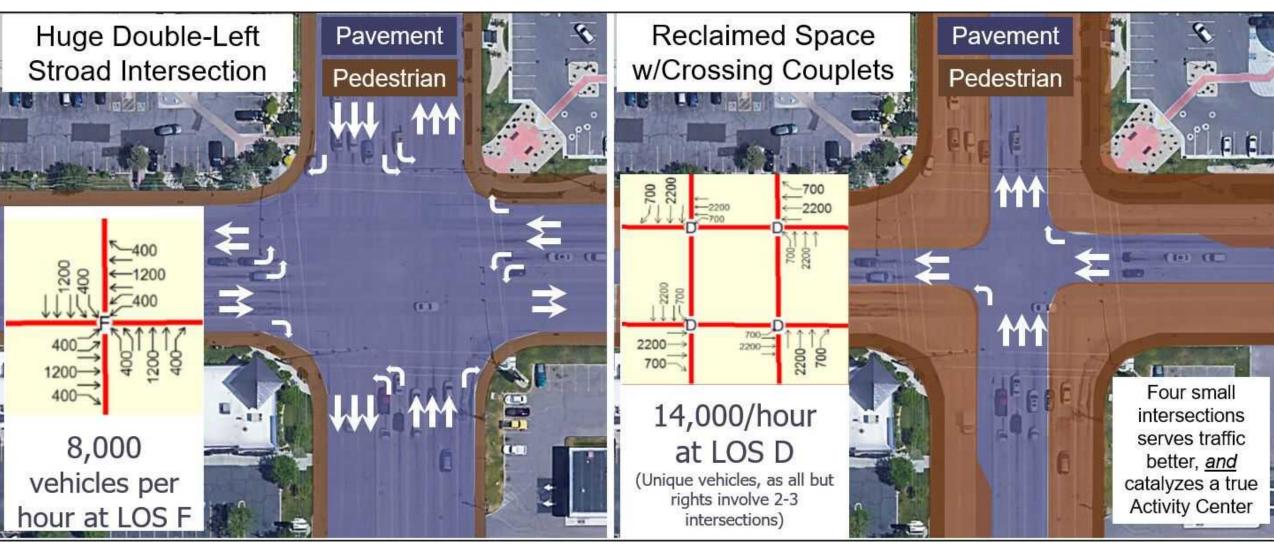


14,000/hr at LOS D

(Unique vehicles, as all but rights involve 2-3 intersections)

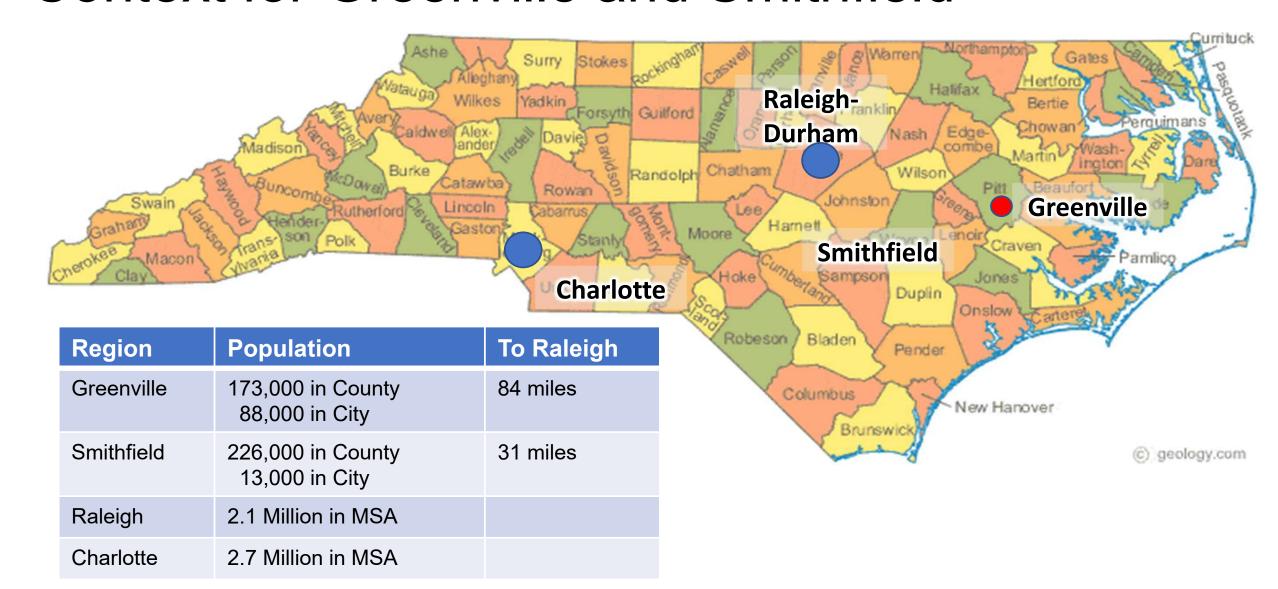


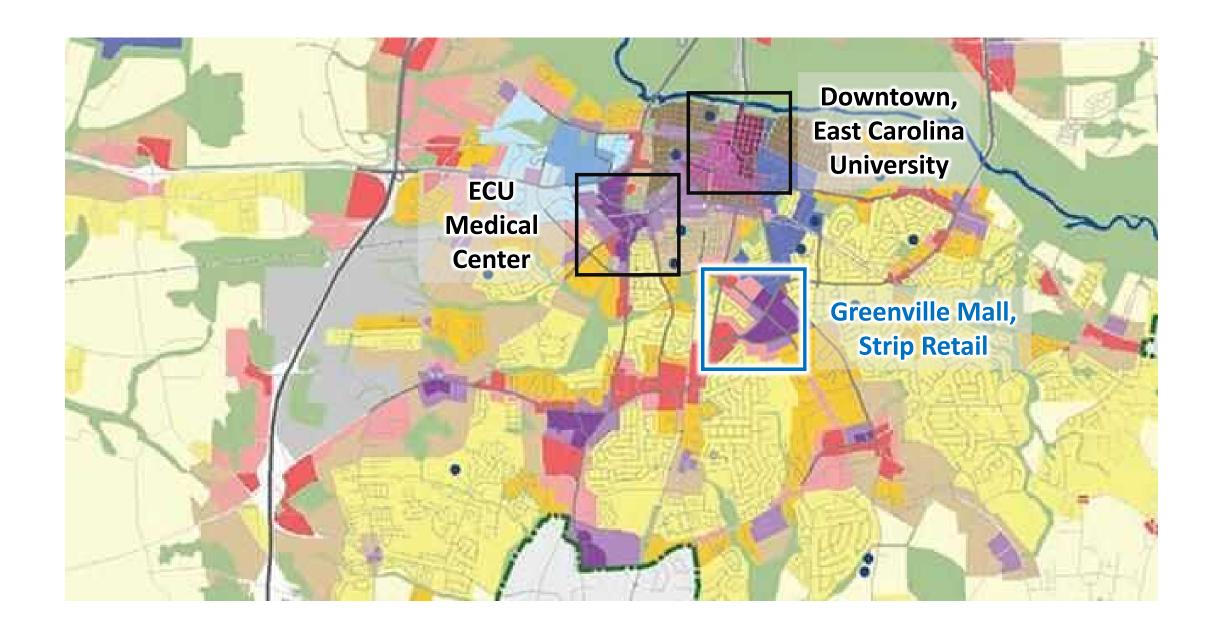
Search for OneWayVsTwoWay_Footprint.JPG





Context for Greenville and Smithfield







Traffic Performance Measures

- Operational Improvements in terms of Weighted Average Travel Time
 - ✓ Assuming no fundamental change in number of lanes and traffic demand
- Additional Capacity
 - Additional traffic flow that AI designs can accommodate at Level of Service (LOS) E without adding lanes
- Maximum Capacity
 - ✓ Maximum flow at LOS E by adding additional lanes within the available Right-of-Way (ROW)

Simulation Scenarios

- Scenario A: Current Design
 - Set traffic demand to generate 60s average delay per vehicle (i.e., average travel time 110s)
- Scenario B: Alternative Design
 - Attempting to match current design in lane configuration, <u>same</u> traffic demand as Scenario A
- Scenario C: Alternative Design
 - Attempting to match current design in lane configuration, <u>increase traffic demand</u> until get back to similar travel time as Scenario A
- Scenario D: Alternative Design
 - Max number of lane, increase traffic demand until get back to similar travel time as Scenario A









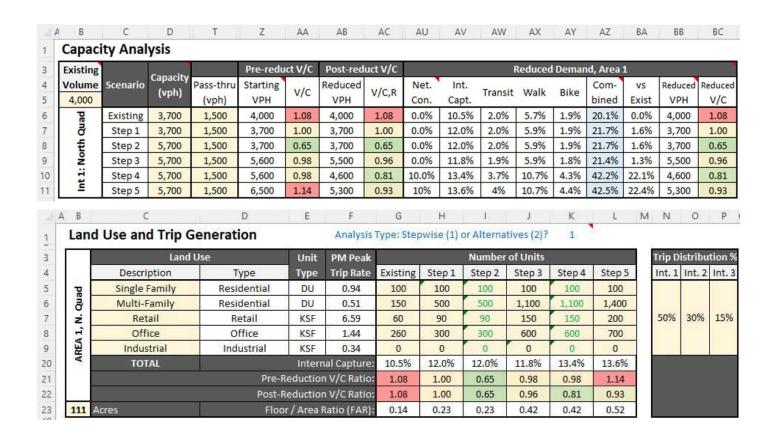






Economics Analysis

Microsoft Excel Tool "Development Scale Calculator"



Planning-level tool that determine how much walkable development they can support before similar congestion and delay return



RCI U-Turn Design



- U-Turn increases vehicle capacity from 3,800 to 6,000 per hour 58% more
- Before / After travel time is 100 seconds, despite lowering speed limit from 45 to 35
- System can support 3 to 3.5 times the existing density (FAR) at same travel time

Proposed AI Design	Measure	Existing A: Capacity at 60-sec	Alternative Design	
			B: New Des, Same Vol	C: New Des, Add Vol
RCI / U-Turn	Speed Limit	45	35	35
	Travel Time (sec)	100	90 (-12%)	100
	Vehicles per hour	3800	3800	6000 (+58%)



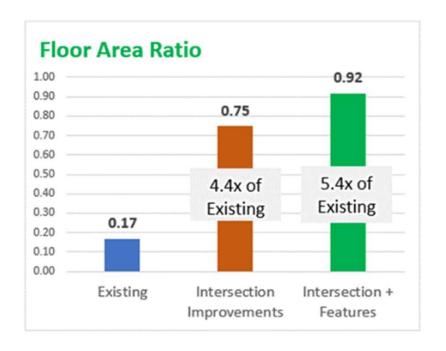


One-Way Split Design



- Crossing one-ways increase vehicle capacity from 3,700 to 7,100 per hour 91% more
- Before / After travel time is 100 seconds, despite lowering speed limit from 45 to 35
- System can support 4 to 5 times the existing density (FAR) at same travel time

Proposed AI Design	Measure	Existing A: Capacity at 60-sec	Alternative Design	
			B: New Des, Same Vol	C: New Des, Add Vol
One-way Couplet	Speed Limit	45	35	35
	Travel Time (sec)	100	60 (-41%)	100
	Vehicles per hour	3700	3700	7100 (+91%)





Quadrant Design



- Quadrant increases vehicle capacity from 3,600 to 5,700 per hour 58% more
- Before / After travel time is 110 seconds, despite lowering speed limit from 45 to 35
- System can support 3 to 4 times the existing density (FAR) at same travel time

Proposed AI Design	Measure	Existing A: Capacity at 60-sec	Alternative Design	
			B: New Des, Same Vol	C: New Des, Add Vol
Quadrant Roadway	Speed Limit	45	35	35
	Travel Time (sec)	110	90 (-17%)	110
	Vehicles per hour	3600	3600	5700 (+58%)

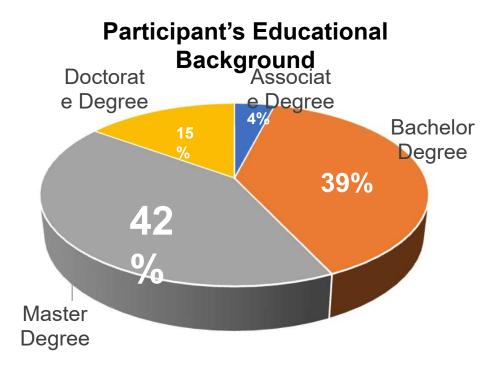




Focus Groups

Participants

27 participants from NC, CO, TX, SC, KS, NY, and British Columbia



Occupation and Specialty

- Non-profit advocates for bike/pedestrians and road safety
- ✓ Traffic engineers
- ✓ Transportation planners and consultants
- ✓ City planners and land use experts
- University professors and researchers
- ✓ City engineers
- ✓ Urban economist
- ✓ Transit planner and manager
- ✓ Real-estate economics specialist
- Developer, mixed-use and shopping centers



Opening Focus Group Questionnaire

Question A: Will the cost of housing across North Carolina continue to increase substantially?

Question B: Is there a need to rezone / redesign commercial areas to attract a mix of uses?

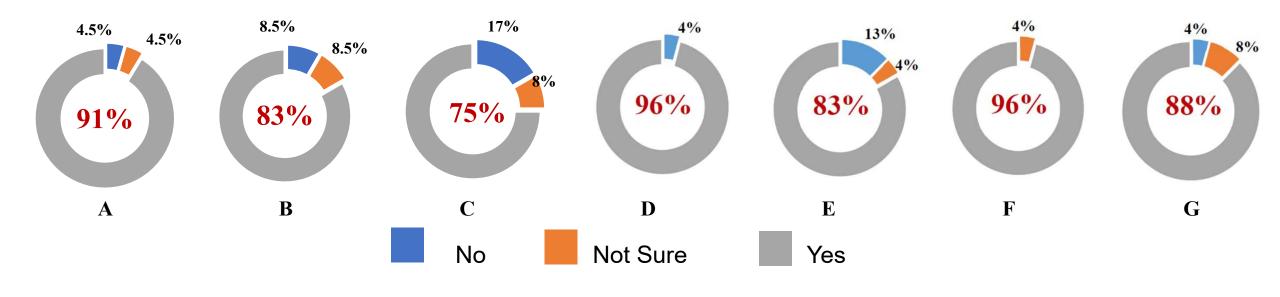
Question C: Will demand for high-density development increase substantially in the future?

Question D: Will demand for alternatives to driving increase substantially?

Question E: Are suburban highways too fast, unsafe, and unappealing for walkable development to take root?

Question F: Are well-maintained street trees and streetscape critical for catalyzing mixed-use development?

Question G: Is it important to reduce maximum traffic speeds for walkable areas to emerge?





Discussion – Stroad vs Complete Street



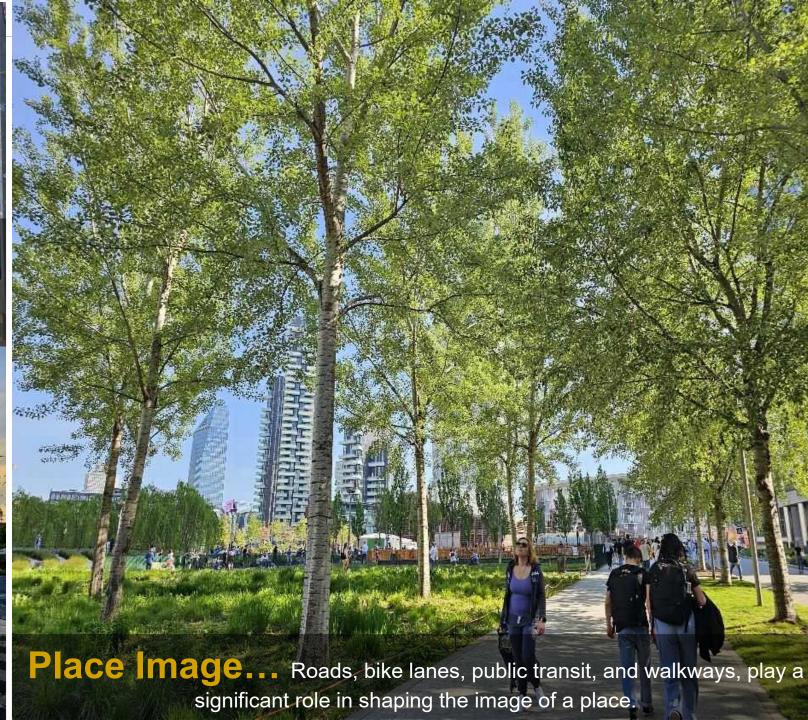
Stroad vs Complete Street













systems. These factors shape traveler's experience. The relationship between human mobility behavior and climate (weather and environmental conditions) can influence of comfort.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY



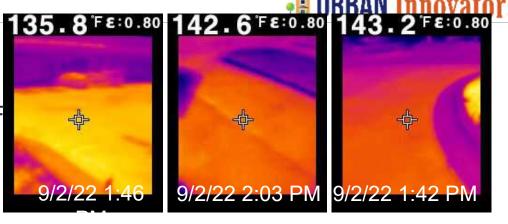
Another reason why
compact development
with Great Street
Trees matters!



Asphalt

Range: 135.8°F - 143.2F

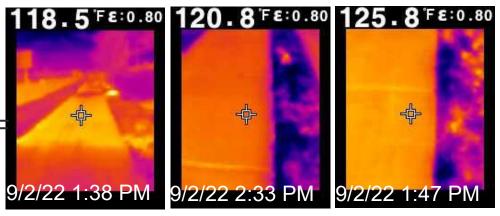
Average: 141° F



Concrete

Range: 118.5°F - 125.8°F

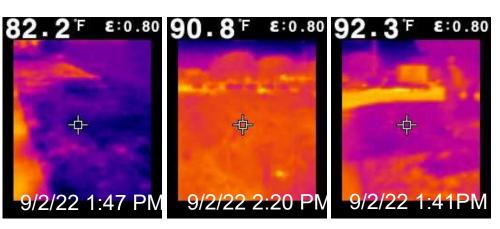
Average: 122° F



Vegetation

Range: 82.2°F - 92.3°F

Average: 88°F



^{*} Temperature readings from Greenville, September afternoon, 2022.



Thank You!

We hope you drive home slowly, and safely, but also travel faster!





