

Proposed Innovation District Plan

Council Work Session

October 28, 2021



What is an Innovation District?

- Focuses visible innovation efforts to drive job creation and retention
- Includes walkable, mixed-use spaces that connect universities and established institutions with business start ups and other entrepreneurs
- Bridges gaps and build partnerships across public and private institutions and employers
- Builds on strong, existing innovation hubs and university drivers

Innovation District Working Group: Creation and Members

- Greensboro selected as “Smart Gigabit” Community in 2020 by US Ignite, a nonprofit that promotes “smart city” technological advancement and job creation
- Three-year grant from Segra allowed for project partnership
- Working group developed with following partners:



City of Greensboro



NC A&T



Greensboro



Launch Greensboro



Chattanooga case study = 5,000 jobs, 120 startups, and ~\$700 million in real estate investment

- Deep levels of partnership
- Fiber-backed entrepreneurship
- Strong partnership for economic development
- Established culture of inclusion and equity
- Initial district expanded to foster innovation and jobs in surrounding areas



St. Petersburg is also adding 100s of jobs in key industries

- 520-acre District
- Users connected within the district with surrounding and supportive uses
- Coordinated transportation infrastructure and shared gathering spaces
- Governance, branding, and info sharing increases programmatic coordination

INNOVATION DISTRICT

SPC edc ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

NOAA USGS

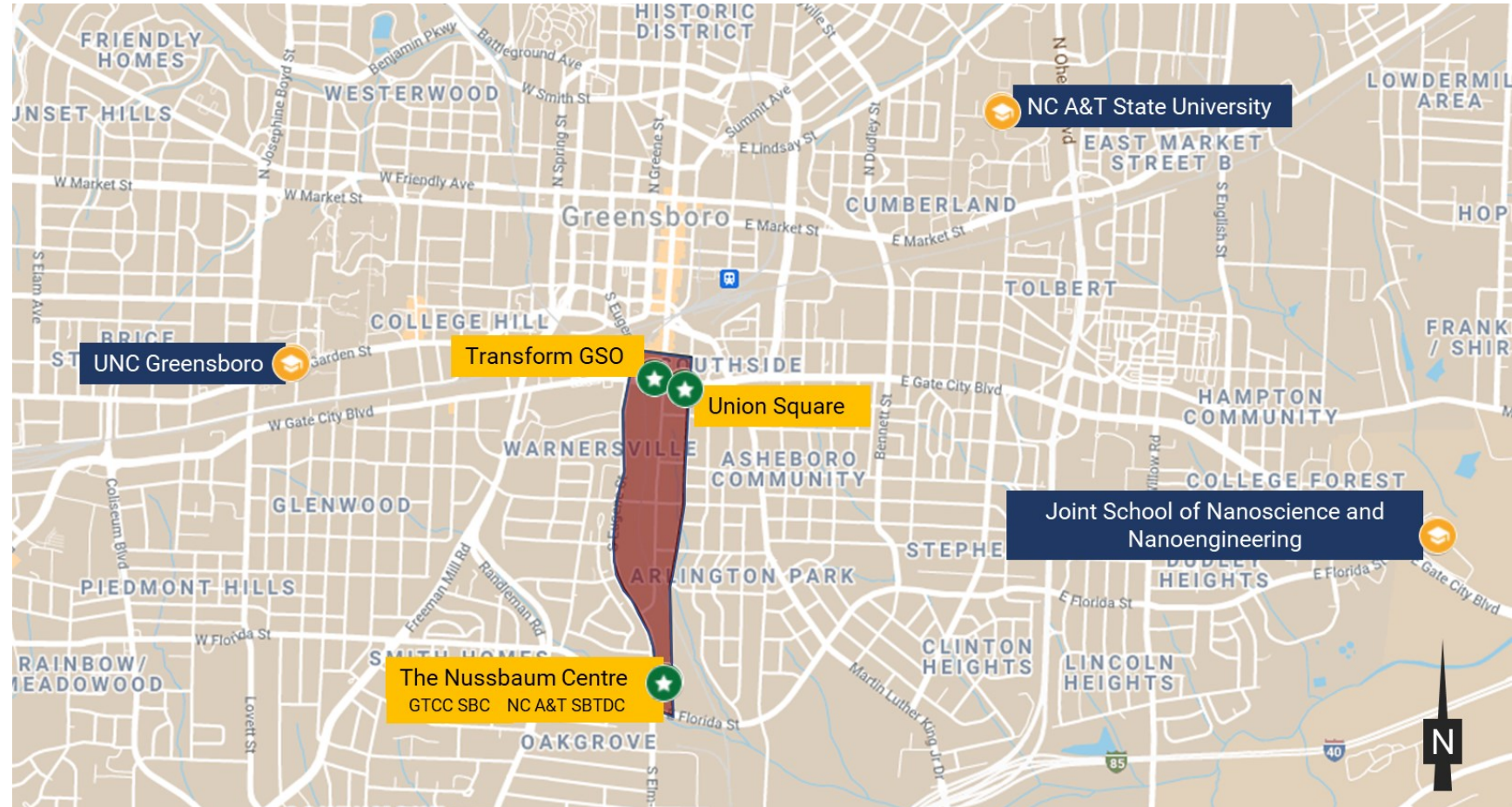
SUNCOAST DEVELOPMENT

BOLD

PureMolecular

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Proposed District = 2.7 sq miles, 125 acres



Targeted Industries

- Innovative advanced manufacturing
- Supply chain logistics
- Specialized business services
- Represent current regional and University strengths plus opportunities for high-paying, technology-focused jobs
 - North Carolina A&T Engineering School
 - UNC Greensboro Bryan School; Information Systems and Supply Chain Management
 - GTCC Supply Chain Management Program
- Each targeted industry has been identified in economic development strategy plans such as those adopted by City of Greensboro and the Guilford County Economic Development Alliance

Innovation District Benefits

- Job creation/retention and re-birth of a vibrant commercial corridor
- Opportunities for broadband expansion in surrounding neighborhood
- Neighborhood participation in Innovation District events and programs
- Training opportunities:
 - Youth programs
 - Job training
 - Reskilling opportunities
- Other infrastructure investment in the community
- University and community college involvement (NC A&T, UNCG, GTCC)
- Targeted federal funding opportunities

Neighborhood responses to plan

Staff met with neighborhood representatives on three occasions, including Asheboro Square, Ole Asheboro, Warnersville, and Arlington Park

Neighbors expressed hope that the proposed Innovation District will help:

- Bring more amenities like youth activities and library access
- Provide training and educational opportunities
- Add new businesses, particularly restaurants and grocery stores
- Consider housing needs
- Connect to universities and other parts of the city
- Re-establish an identity, drawing on strong culture and history
- Keep residents involved in the District design process

Support for other City investments and plans

- Supports **GSO2040** Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies:
 - ✓ Filling in our Framework
 - ✓ Growing Economic Competitiveness
 - ✓ Becoming Car Optional
 - ✓ Creating Great Places
- Intersects with Downtown Greenway
- Supports adjacent Redevelopment Areas and neighborhoods
- Supports South Elm Redevelopment area development

Actions Requested

- Approval to work toward Area Development Plan in partnership with residents and businesses
- Approval to pursue funding sources:
 - ✓ American Rescue Plan (State/Local Fiscal Recovery Fund)
 - ✓ EDA (e.g., Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance, Build to Scale 2021 funding)
 - ✓ Earmarks/Community Project Requests
 - ✓ Other local funding from working group to support District leader and other operating expenses
- Approval to begin to publicize plans via branding, promotion, and community engagement