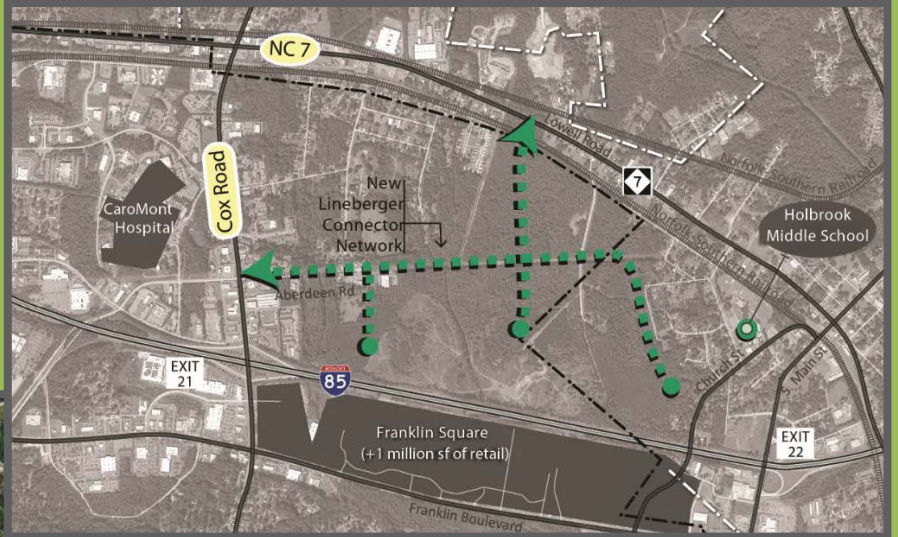




LINEBERGER CONNECTOR BUILD 2020

Executive Summary





LINEBERGER CONNECTOR

The Lineberger Connector Project is the construction of a new roadway network from Cox Road to the west to NC Highway 7 to the north that opens up access to approximately 400 acres of infill property with superior access to the I-85 corridor. As a part of this project, an improved at-grade crossing over the Norfolk Southern Railroad will be implemented just south of the proposed connection to NC 7. In addition, utility connections will be made and carried throughout the proposed roadway network.

The City of Gastonia, in conjunction with the City of Lowell and Gaston County, seek \$18,110,358 (60%) in BUILD Discretionary Grant funds to complete the \$29,934,938 package needed to implement the **Lineberger Connector Project** between the two communities. The City of Gastonia has committed a combination of matching funds from both local and private sources in the amount of \$11,824,580 (40%).

There is no question the Lineberger Connector Project will be an important economic engine for this region of North Carolina. Given the devastating impacts that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has had on the region through the loss of textile businesses, it is easy to understand why the cities of Gastonia and Lowell and Gaston County have placed so much emphasis on making the Lineberger Connector a priority as a solution to improve the economic vitality in this region.



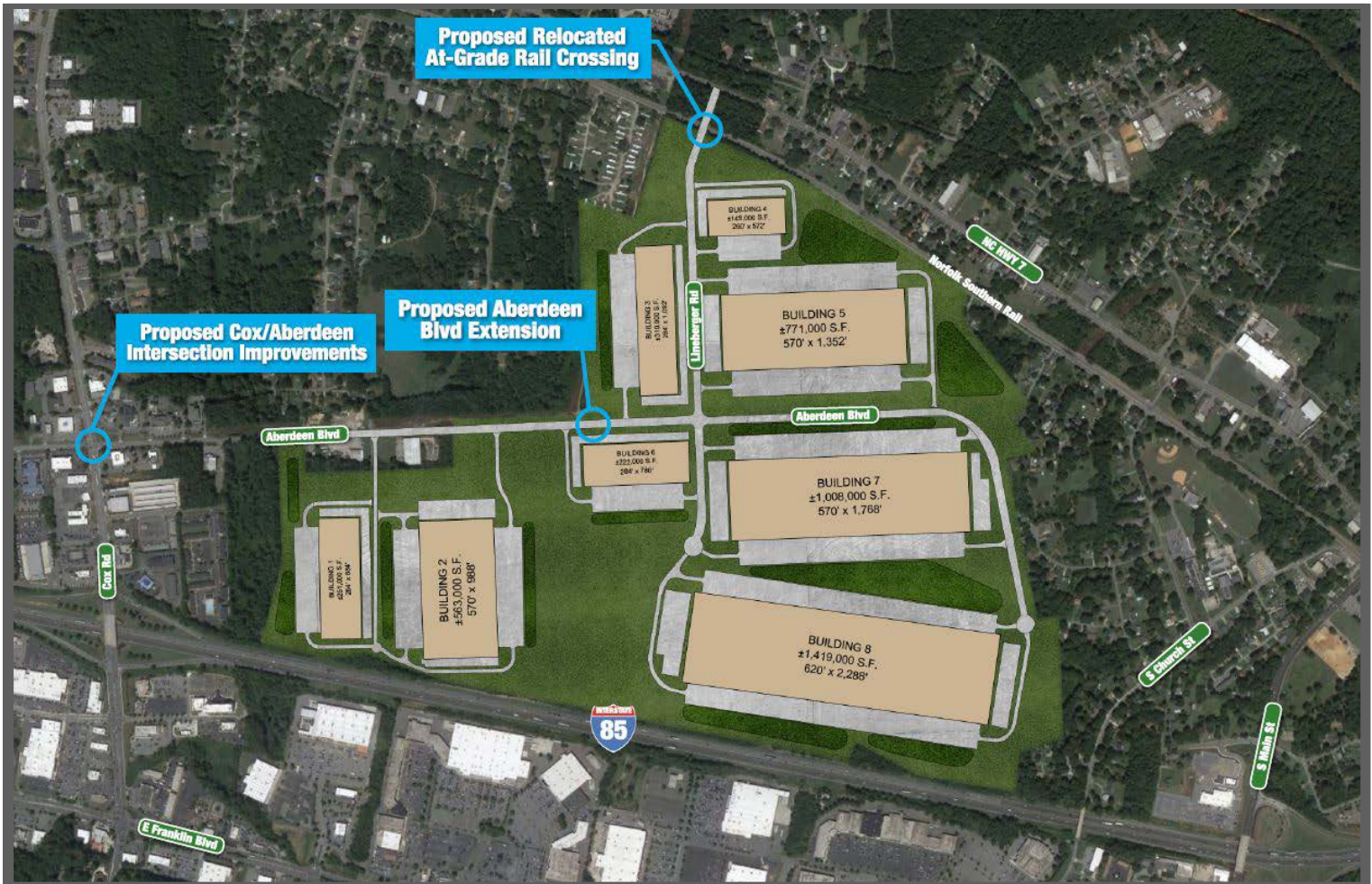
Between 1995 and 1999, NAFTA caused the closing of the seven (7) largest industrial utility customers (textiles) and a total of 54 manufacturing plants that resulted in the loss of more than 7,500 jobs. In 2000, additional plant closures impacted local tax and utility revenues even more, resulting in more than \$70 million in lost revenues just in water/wastewater. At the end of 2000, Gaston County had lost more than 13,000 jobs. To date, Gaston County's economy has only been able to recover to 45% of its pre-NAFTA economic glory in the early 1990's, leaving the county far behind what it once was.

Key Benefits—A Recovery Opportunity

Grows Economy, Creates Jobs, Improves Supply Chain, Saves Lives:

- Located **completely within a federally designated Opportunity Zone**, the Lineberger Connector Project will **unlock ~400 acres of property** that is prime for local and regional development.
- The **Lineberger Connector Project will stimulate approximately \$322.5 million in project value** for the Greater Gaston area, assisting these communities to recover from the negative impacts of NAFTA and loss of textiles .
- **Over 10,000 permanent new jobs** will be created, with a total **annual compensation of over \$462.5 million**, increasing the total number of jobs in Gaston County more than 10%.
- The Lineberger Connector Project will allow for the construction of **over 4,693,000 square feet** of manufacturing, distribution center, industrial, and warehousing facilities.
- With the current events of **COVID-19** highlighting just how critical our nation's **supply chain** is, this project will create an opportunity for distribution and manufacturing to be directly connected to the **CLT Airport** and **Intermodal Center** via I-85.
- With the proposed land use around the Lineberger Connector attracting local traffic to and from Gaston County and away from Mecklenburg County, a **reduction in the total VMT** is calculated to be nearly **38,000 miles**.
- As a part of this project, an **improved at-grade crossing** over the Norfolk Southern Railroad will be implemented just south of the proposed connection to NC 7, **improving safety**.

The Lineberger Connector project will be an economic transformation for the region.



There is a strong partnership between the cities of Gastonia and Lowell, Gaston County, and the property owner, and **NorthPoint Development** is under contract to purchase ~400 acres that will be unlocked by the construction of the **Lineberger Connector Project**. The proposed development will include **over 4,693,000 sq. ft.** of manufacturing, distribution center, industrial, and warehousing facilities in a **federally designated Opportunity Zone**.

With the current events of **COVID-19** highlighting just how critical our nation's supply chain is, the proposed development will provide modern warehouse space that will support growth and development for several sectors including e-commerce, manufacturing, reshoring companies and anticipated changes in the supply chain.

For more information, please contact:

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