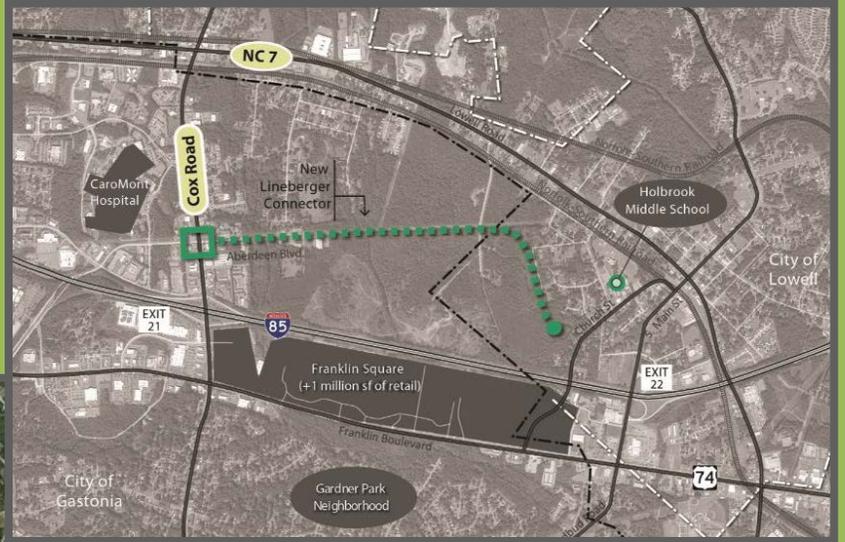




LINEBERGER CONNECTOR RAISE 2021

Executive Summary





LINEBERGER CONNECTOR

The **Lineberger Connector Project** is the extension of Aberdeen Boulevard from Cox Road to the east that will open up access to approximately 400 acres of infill property with superior access to the I-85 corridor. Major improvements to the intersection of Aberdeen Boulevard and Cox Road are also included in the project and 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 \$18,192,385 (58%) in RAISE Discretionary Grant funds to complete the \$31,318,535 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 \$13,126,150 (42%).

There is no question the Lineberger Connector Project will be an important economic engine for the surrounding communities and 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 boost the economic vitality in this part of the county.



The recession in the late-1990's had a detrimental impact on this region of North Carolina. Between 1995 and 1999, the seven (7) largest industrial utility customers (textiles) and a total of 54 manufacturing plants closed, resulting 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, 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** and an **Area of Persistent Poverty**, the Lineberger Connector Project will **unlock ~400 acres** that is prime for local and regional development. The development of this area will provide opportunities for **upward mobility** through proximity to well-paying jobs.
- 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 still being felt after massive job losses, specifically in the textile industry, in the 1990's.
- **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 3,560,000 square feet** of manufacturing, distribution center, industrial, and warehousing facilities.
- With the ongoing impacts 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**.
- The **total safety cost savings** with the implementation of the Lineberger Connector with the quadrant left are calculated to be **over \$26.7 million**.

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



There is a strong partnership between the City of Gastonia, City of Lowell and Gaston County, and **NorthPoint Development** has recently purchased 365 acres between NC Highway 7 to the north, I-85 to the south, Cox Road to the west, and South Main Street to the east for **Gateway85**. The proposed development will include **over 3,560,000 ft²** of manufacturing, distribution center, industrial, and warehousing facilities in a **federally designated Opportunity Zone and Area of Persistent Poverty**.

With the ongoing impacts 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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