

Newtown Thriving Collaborative Action Plan

Update to Core Team

May 21, 2025



Actionable Strategies

Arts and Culture Activations (Short-Long Term)

[Build off the theme “Newtown Thriving” to provide short and long-term opportunities to develop and offer exciting events and programs throughout the corridor.](#)

Smart Growth Through Nodal Development (Mid-Long Term)

We believe the best way to achieve controlled growth along the MLK Way would be to pursue an activation and nodal development strategy that allows local businesses to flourish, while Newtown Business Council or NBC-aligned organizations develop the capacity to build on land-banked properties.

Activation Steps

Step 1 – Outreach - Grow Your Network

- Facilitate communication with local businesses
- Engage local small business development organizations to provide technical assistance to existing and aspiring entrepreneurs. Focus on arts-based businesses among other business types.

Step 2 – Brand – Make Newtown a Destination

- Develop a branded decal with QR Code to be displayed in shops and businesses in Newtown.
- Develop “*Newtown Thriving: Exciting Events and Spectacular Programs*” Series; Ensure that the events are properly branded and businesses are trained to promote through cohesive efforts that will support all Newtown businesses.

Step 3 – Activate Spaces, People, Places, and Events

- Identify and inventory vacant lots that can be cleaned, cleared, and activated as spaces for performances (music, dance, art) and festivals (food themed events, movie nights, etc.)
- Curate monthly speak speakeasies, [book readings](#) (i.e., [Newtown Alive:: Courage, Dignity, Determination](#)), [oral history presentations](#), plays and reenactments, and similar activities with local authors, artists, etc.; Hold quarterly (a taste of Newtown - [people](#), culture, [places](#)) events that will culminate into semi-annual and a minimum of two big annual events (i.e., [Big Momma Collard Greens Festival](#), Others TBD).
- Help coordinate special events; Work within the local small business ecosystem to develop participation drives to ensure local businesses are primed and ready for special events.

Note: Steps 2 and 3 may happen at the same time.

Stewardship, Coordination, and Training (Short-Long Term)

With limited site control and a volunteer staff, the Newtown Business Council has the ability to steward revitalization along MLK Way by activating existing and vacant lots. NBC is also well positioned during the activation period to provide aggregated input and curated influence impacting branding for Newtown and MLK Way.

As the marketing and branding strategy is finalized, the NBC can easily transform and position its services to providing or facilitating training and technical assistance to micro-businesses and entrepreneurs.

Finally, NBC, in collaboration with other organizations (e.g., Newton Nation, Newtown Alive, etc.) can serve a coordinator/advocacy role developing, curating, or coordinating, festivals and events along the corridor.

Nodal Development Opportunities

Activation Opportunities:

- Intersection of MLK and US 31
- Intersection of MLK and NUt at MLK Park

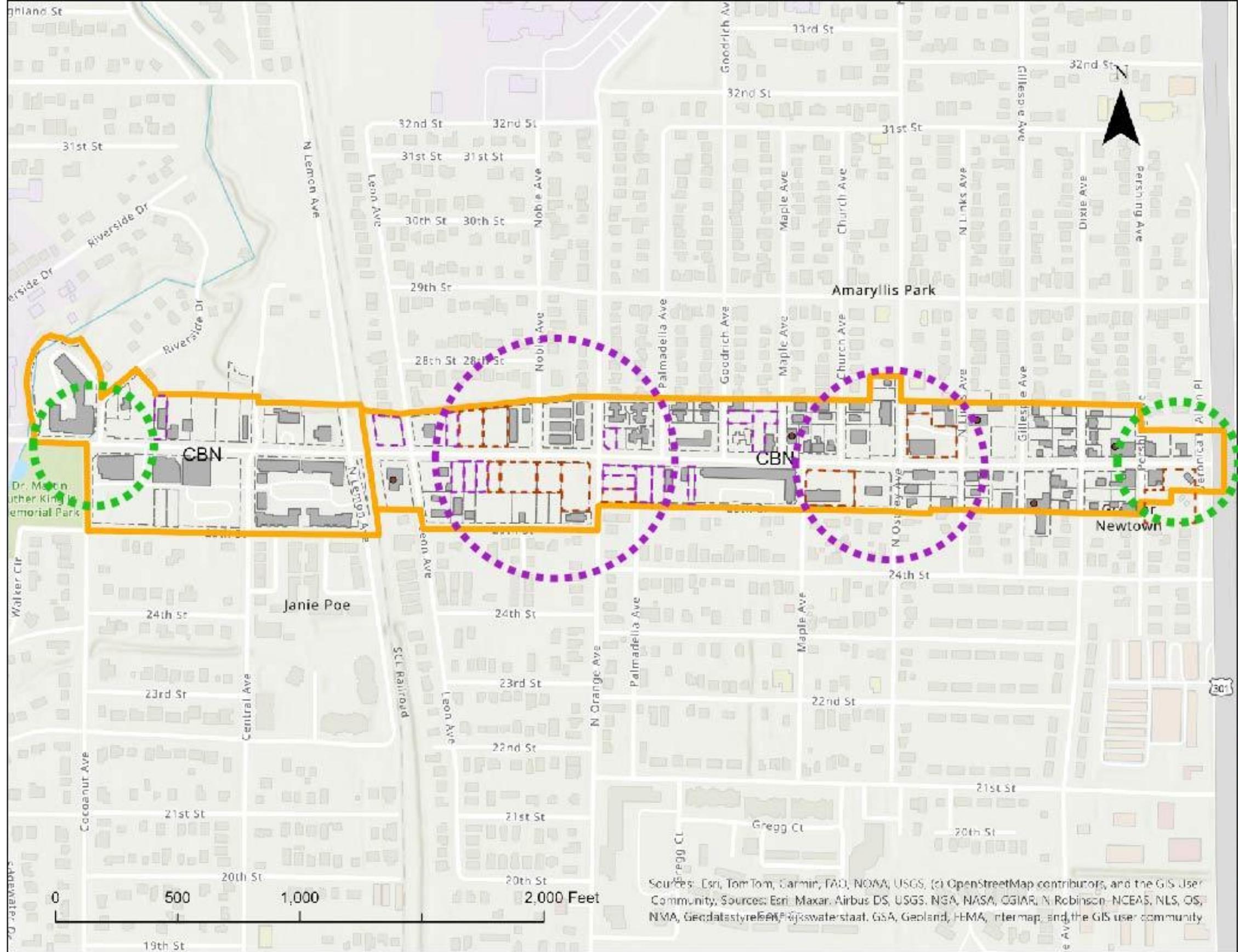
Nodal Development Opportunities:

- Intersection of MLK Way and Osprey Ave
- Intersection of MLK Way and Orange Ave

Nodal Development (Mid -Long Term)

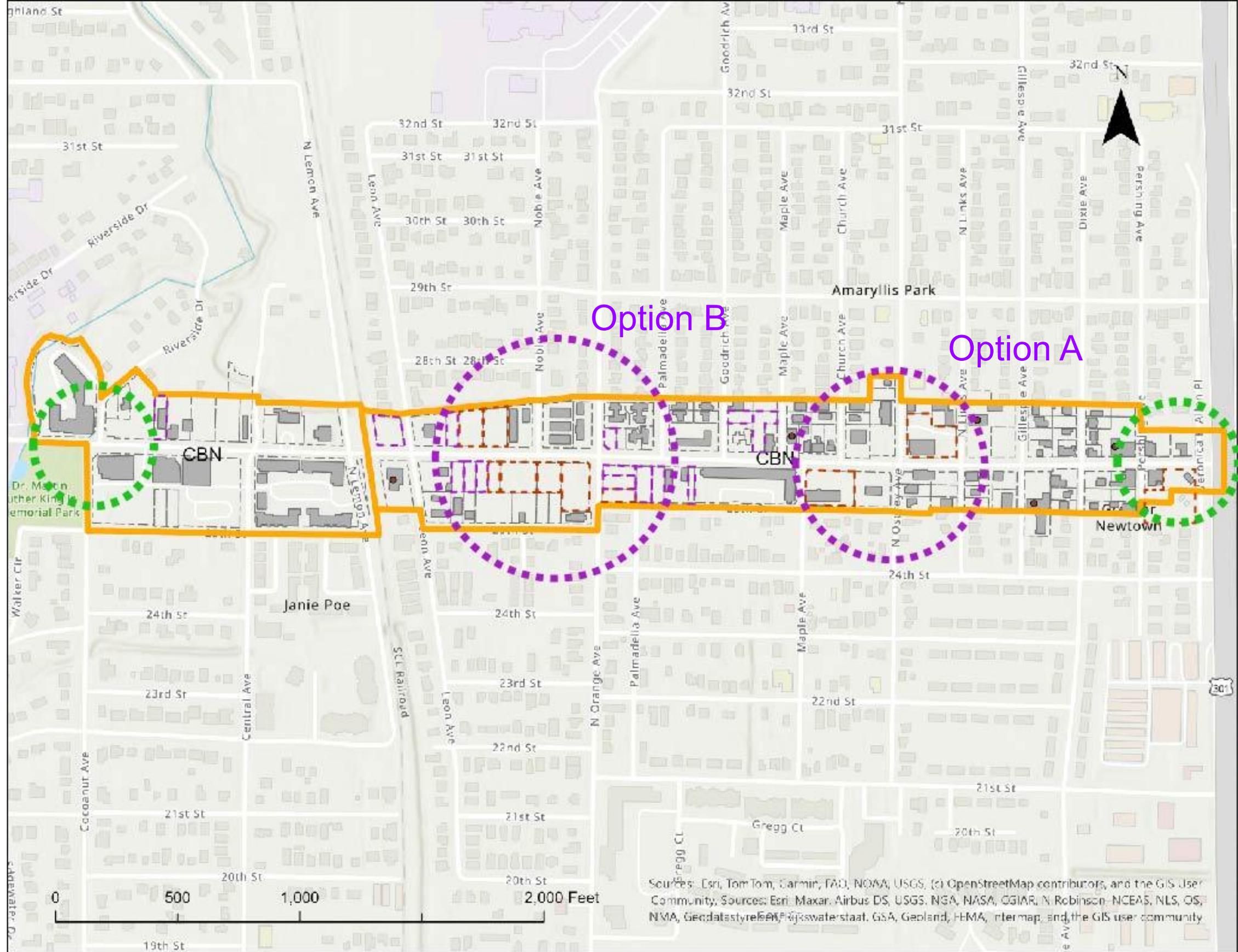
Nodal Development is a smart growth strategy that concentrates mixed-use development (residential, commercial, retail, and institutional) around key intersections or "nodes," typically designed to be walkable, transit-accessible, and community-focused. These nodes act as catalysts for economic activity and urban vitality, often located at key transportation corridors, intersections, or community focal points.

- **Small Business Incubation**, as a smart growth strategy within the context of nodal development, NBC in concert with the NBCRA and other stakeholders should encourage developers to include private offices, co-working, and training spaces within strategic mixed-use projects at proposed nodes. Initial emphasis should be on supporting arts and culture-based and professional services businesses. However, focus should simultaneously be on scalable businesses.
- **Organizational Capacity Building** - In order to maximize these opportunities, NBC will need to develop operational capacity to support, coordinate, and facilitate development in an 'owner representative' capacity. The role for this staff person will be to coordinate development along the MLK Way in collaboration with City/County representatives, property owners, and private developers.



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community. Sources: Esri, Maxar, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, GGIAR, N Robinson-NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Gyswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, and the GIS user community.

-  Privately Owned
-  City Owned
-  Development Opportunity
-  Activation Opportunity



Option B

Option A

CBN

CBN

Newtown

-  Privately Owned
-  City Owned
-  Development Opportunity
-  Activation Opportunity

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community. Sources: Esri, Maxar, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, GGIAR, N Robinson-NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Gyswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, and the GIS user community.

Option A - Intersection of MLK Way and Osprey Ave

BayFirst Bank owns the parcel adjacent to the Osprey intersection and the City owns the adjacent parcel to the West.

Options:

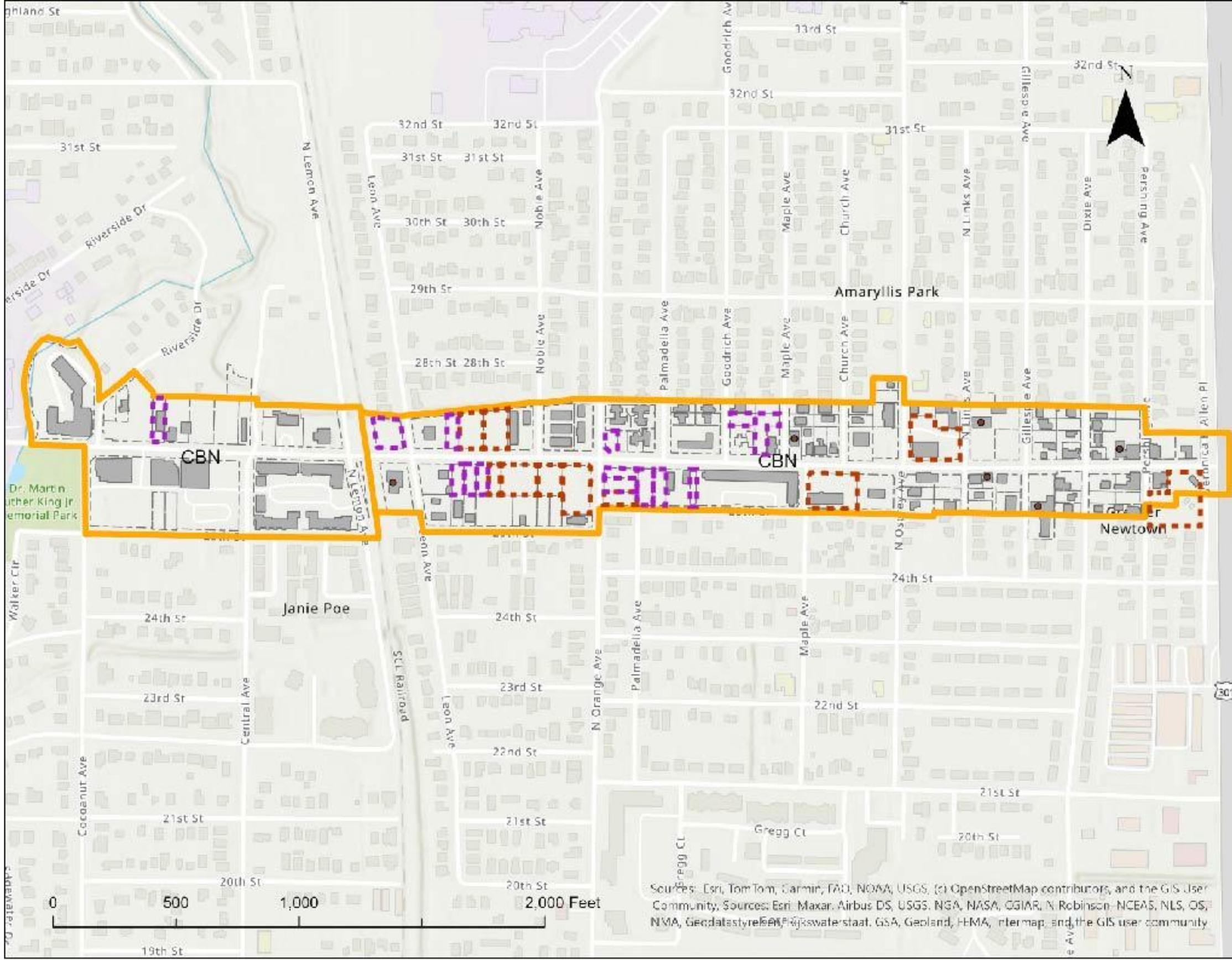
- The bank partner with a developer to consider anchor redevelopment at this location?
- Create a trust on behalf of the Newtown Business Council and develop capital campaign to purchase and secure site control

Option B - Intersection of MLK Way and Orange Ave

The intersection of MLK and Orange Avenue is closer to the middle of MLK and has a significant amount of vacant lots, several controlled by the City..

Options:

- Create a trust on behalf of the Newtown Business Council and develop capital campaign to purchase and secure site control
- Activate these lots for Arts & Culture and micro business events that can help in making the area a destination; the most successful can become brick and mortar facilities as new mixed-use development is brought to the avenue
- Emphasize development of neighborhood-serving retail
- Use the historic site to justify creation of design guidelines that set the standards for the physical redevelopment on these sites



- Privately Owned
- City Owned

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Organizational Alignment, Partnership Development, and Capacity Building

Benchmarks of Success

- Design an inclusive engagement framework that:
 - Utilizes respected, neutral facilitators to create safe spaces for discussions
 - Honors the past
 - Makes discussions accessible
- Establish COLLABORATIVE processes to formally and strategically inventory key primary and secondary stakeholders who function as “neighborhood quarterbacks” - One that sets clear actionable goals and is forward leaning; Develop processes to advocate for public investments in neighborhood quarterback organizations that are currently driving outcomes
 - Bring stakeholders to the table
 - Newtown Business Council (*Mary Butler, Chair*); Amaryllis Park Neighborhood Association
 - [Newtown Nation](#) (*Valerie Buchand, CEO/Danette Williams, Vice President*)
 - Newtown Entrepreneurs Business Association (NEBA) - (*Lance Shabazz*)
 - Newtown Community Ministries United (??)

Organizational Alignment, Partnership Development, and Capacity Building

Benchmarks of Success

- Encourage mixed-income housing throughout neighborhood; advocate for neighborhood-based attendance zones for schools within Newtown/Amaryllis Park
- Continue to align actions with community priorities; Monitor, measure, shape, and share impact against evolving needs and aspirations of impacted stakeholders - this will be an ever-evolving process
 - Where do we want Newtown to be when the actions are fully implemented?
 - How will we keep the public informed, engaged, and updated?
- Seek to build organizational capacity across all stakeholders; enhance civic infrastructure; continue to trumpet and tell the stories (old and new) of Newtown; Put processes in place to build and maintain momentum
 - How do we align varying groups for constructive contribution to the work - Through merging organizations?? Through committee responsibilities?? Other??
 - Are local, state, or other resources available to assist?
 - What role can and should outside consultants play?