

AGENDA
BIRMINGHAM DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING
MUNICIPAL BUILDING-COMMISSION ROOM-151 MARTIN STREET
WEDNESDAY – February 19th, 2020
******* 7:15 PM*******

- 1) Roll Call**
- 2) Approval of the DRB Minutes of February 5th, 2020**
- 3) Public Hearing**
- 4) Design Review**
- 5) Sign Review**
- 6) Study Session**
 - A. Canopy Signs**
 - B. The Birmingham Plan (2040)**
- 7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication**
 - A. Staff Reports**
 - 1. Administrative Sign Approvals**
 - 2. Administrative Approvals**
 - 3. Action List - 2020**
- 8) Adjournment**

Notice: Individuals requiring accommodations, such as interpreter services for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) at least on day in advance of the public meeting.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

A PERSON DESIGNATED WITH THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS
MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING.

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2020**

Municipal Building Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Design Review Board ("DRB") held Wednesday, February 15, 2020. Chairman John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:27 p.m.

1) ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman John Henke; Vice-Chairman Keith Deyer; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Student Representative Klea Ahmet

Absent: Board Members Joseph Mercurio, Natalia Dukas; Alternate Board Member Alexander Jerome

Administration: Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner
Laura Eichenhorn, Transcriptionist

01-08-20

2) Approval Of Minutes

Ms. Debbrecht noted that 'Ms. Deyer' should be corrected to 'Mr. Deyer' on the first page of the minutes.

Motion by Ms. Debbrecht

Seconded by Mr. Deyer to approve the DRB Minutes of January 15, 2020 as amended.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Debbrecht, Deyer, Henke, Lang, Willoughby

Nays: None

01-09-20

3) Public Hearing

None.

01-03-20

4) Design Review

None.

01-10-20

5) Sign Review

None.

01-11-20

6) Study Session

None.

01-12-20

7) Miscellaneous Business And Communications

A. Staff Reports

City Planner Dupuis presented the City's current canopy sign guidelines. He asked that the DRB begin thinking about feedback for possible changes to the canopy sign guidelines since the style of canopies are moving from canvas to metal and other more contemporary materials, and the guidelines largely pertain only to fabric canopies at this time. Preliminary research into other cities' canopy ordinances show that some cities distinguish between hard canopies and soft canopies in their zoning ordinances.

Mr. Willoughby suggested that the shape of a canopy could be part of what distinguishes one type from another. He said that if a canopy has a slope and a valence the sign could go on the valence, and if the canopy does not have a valence then it would go on the band.

City Planner Dupuis ventured that canopies without valences could be called overhangs, which would need to be defined in the ordinance.

Mr. Deyer noted that the television monitors on the pumps at the Birmingham Speedway had been updated, and asked whether that change would have required City approval.

City Planner Dupuis said that if an item is a same-for-same swap, administrative approvals are not required. If they are upgrades, or change the dimensions, administrative approvals are required. He said no administrative approval request came in for the television monitors.

1. Administrative Sign Approvals

Per Mr. Deyer's recommendation, City Planner Dupuis said he would verify whether the text reading "Welcome to Stateside Deli & Restaurant" was window signage or window coverings for construction. City Planner Dupuis noted that the latter would be permissible under ordinance, whereas the former would need to be reduced or removed.

2. Administrative Approvals

01-13-20

Adjournment

No further business being evident, the board motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Nicholas Dupuis
City Planner

DRAFT

DATE: February 13th, 2020

TO: Design Review Board

FROM: Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner

SUBJECT: Canopy Signs – Study Session

The City of Birmingham currently defines canopy sign as “a sign attached to or hung from a marquee, mansard, canopy or other structure projecting from and supported by the building and extending beyond the building wall, building line or street lot line.” Additionally, the amount of canopy signage permitted is based on the size of the canopy valence, which is defined as “that portion of a canopy consisting of short strips or bands of material hung at the lower edge of the canopy.” Elements of Birmingham’s canopy sign definition can be found in other cities, which offer a wide variety of approaches to canopy signage (see attached chart for various definitions).

At this time, the Planning Division would like to update the City’s approach to canopy signs to differentiate approaches to canopy or awning design. As it is currently written (and graphically displayed in the ordinance), the definition and subsequent regulations seem to apply to standard angled *awnings* (either fabric or rigid) that contain a true valence. However, awning/canopy design has varied, and has often reacted to trends in architecture and building design.



In the City of Birmingham, these trends have taken form in many ways to include more than just typical awnings. Decorative and functional canopies, traditional canopies, marquee-styled canopies, and more cantilevered and modern style canopies are all present in the City. This has created a gap in the Sign Ordinance for those with canopies (not awnings) to be able to place signage upon them due to the lack of a true valence, at least as the City's Sign Ordinance defines it.



The signage issue that is perceived with canopies (i.e. canopies that do not have a clear valence area as defined by the Sign Ordinance) is that many canopy designs have "valence areas" that are greater than 9 inches in height, which would disqualify an applicant from using that area for signage. Although the "valence area" for canopy signs can intuitively be assigned to the "flat" or "parallel" area of the canopy, the City's definition of canopy valence does not accurately describe these areas on canopies as it would with *awnings*. Additionally, some canopies in the City currently (and some recent proposals) contain signage *on top* of the "valence area" of canopies, which seems to side step the intent of placing a limit on canopy valence height in the first place.

Furthermore, considering these signs as name letter signs or wall signs instead to "avoid" the canopy sign restrictions often proves unfruitful or inappropriate, as name letter and wall signs must be placed in the buildings sign band. Canopies and/or canopy valences are often lower than the sign band due to the nature of their function.

Thus, the Planning Division proposes a minor change to the Sign Ordinance to attempt to address some of the perceived issues to differentiate between awnings and canopies, and thus, awning and canopy signage that is considered across the City. The attached ordinance amendments

propose a change in the City's current definitions, permanent business sign standards, and Table B: Permanent Business Sign Standards.

Suggested Action:

To recommend approval to the City Commission the proposed amendments to Articles 1 and 3 of the Sign Ordinance to adjust the definition of canopy sign and canopy valence, add definitions for canopy, awning, awning sign, awning valence, awning shed, and entry awning, and to amend the Permanent Business Sign Standards and Table B.

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ORDINANCE NO. _____

THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM ORDAINS:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE SIGN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM:

TO AMEND ARTICLE 1, SECTION 1.05, PERMANENT BUSINESS SIGN AND BROADCAST MEDIA DEVICE STANDARDS, TO AMEND CANOPY SIGNS AND ADD AWNING SIGNS.

1.05 Permanent Business Sign and Broadcast Media Device Standards

This Permanent Business Sign and Broadcast Media Standards section applies to the following districts:

PP O1 O2 B1 B2 B2B B2C B3 B4

The following permanent business sign and broadcast media device standards apply:

A. Awning Signs.

- 1. See Table B for specific requirements.**
- 2. Materials:** The awning shall be constructed of a durable fabric or metal over a triangulated or curved metal frame and maintained to continue its original appearance and provide proper safety to the persons and property it may affect.
- 3. Design:** Awnings shall be open on the underside, and may be open or closed on the sides. Awnings shall be designed to a shape and scale that shall relate to that of the building architecture and features. Entry awnings are permitted on private property, and are subject to lease agreement if extended into the public right-of-way.
- 4. Location:** Awnings are not permitted above the first floor. Building faces with multiple tenants and/or window/doors shall coordinate awning design and integrate one awning per window, rather than a single awning spanning multiple windows/doors.
- 5. Height:** Awnings may not extend from the wall at a height of less than 8 feet above a public right-of-way.
- 6. Signs:** Awning signs shall be placed on the awning valance only. Awning signs placed on the awning shed are not permitted.

B. Broadcast Media Devices.

1. See Table B for specific requirements.

C. Canopy Signs.

1. See Table B for specific requirements.
2. Materials: The canopy shall be constructed of durable material, maintained to continue its original appearance and provide proper safety to the persons and property it may affect.

3. Design: Canopies shall be compatible with the architectural integrity of the building to which it is attached. **Canopies shall be flat, projecting perpendicular from the building wall, and may be bracket mounted, cable-stay mounted, cantilevered, or attached in a similar rigid fashion.**
4. Location: Canopy signs are not permitted above the first floor.
5. Height: Canopies may not extend from the wall at a height of less than 8 feet above a public right-of-way.
6. **Signs: Canopy signs shall be placed on the canopy valence or on the top of the canopy only, but not both. Canopy signs placed on the top of the canopy shall conform to the same height and area requirements as signs placed on the canopy valence.**

D. Ground Signs.

1.

ORDAINED this _____ day of _____, 2020 to become effective upon publication.

Pierre Boutros, Mayor

Cheryl Arft, Acting City Clerk

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ORDINANCE NO. _____

THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM ORDAINS:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE SIGN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM:

TO AMEND ARTICLE 1, TABLE B, PERMANENT BUSINESS SIGN STANDARDS, TO AMEND THE SIGN TYPES AND SUBSEQUENT STANDARDS FOR CANOPY SIGNS, AND TO ADD AWNING SIGNS.

TABLE B: PERMANENT BUSINESS SIGN STANDARDS					
Type of Sign	Permit Required	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Illumination (see also Section 1.03)	Maximum Number
Awning Signs	Yes	No more than 33% of awning valence area.	The awning valence shall not be more than 9 inches in height. Awnings may not extend from the wall at a height of less than 8 feet above a public right-of-way.	Non-Historic District: Permitted. Historic District: Only halo type backlighting or architecturally compatible exterior light fixtures.	Limited by Combined Sign Area.
Canopy Signs	Yes	No more than 33% of canopy valence area.	The canopy valence shall not be more than 9 18 inches in height. Canopies may not extend from the wall at a height of less than 8 feet above a public right-of-way.	Not Permitted. Non-Historic District: Permitted. Historic District: Only halo type backlighting or architecturally compatible exterior light fixtures.	N/A Limited by Combined Sign Area.

ORDAINED this _____ day of _____, 2020 to become effective upon publication.

Pierre Boutros, Mayor

Cheryl Arft, Acting City Clerk

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ORDINANCE NO. _____

THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM ORDAINS:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE SIGN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM:

TO AMEND ARTICLE 3, SECTION 3.02, DEFINITIONS, TO AMEND THE LIST OF DEFINITIONS TO INCLUDE NEW DEFINITIONS FOR AWNING, AWNING VALENCE, AWNING SHED, CANOPY, CANOPY VALENCE AND ENTRY AWNING.

3.02 Definitions

Awning: A fabric or metal covered structure mounted on the face of a building above a window, entrance, or storefront opening, providing weather and/or sun protection.

Awning Shed: The sloped face of an awning, extending from the attachment point on the building to the valance.

Awning Sign: ~~See Canopy Sign~~ **A sign attached to an awning or entry awning. See Awning Valance.**

Awning Valance: The vertical front face of an awning, parallel to the face of the building to which it is mounted. Also referred to as a skirt or apron.

Canopy: An architectural structure made of permanent materials, mounted on the face of a building above a window, entrance, or storefront opening, providing weather and/or sun protection.

Canopy Sign: A sign attached to or hung from a marquee, ~~mansard~~, canopy or other structure projecting from and supported by the building and extending beyond the building wall, building line or street lot line. See Canopy Valance.

Canopy Valance: ~~That portion of a canopy consisting of short strips or bands of material hung at the lower edge of the canopy.~~ **The vertical front face of a canopy parallel to the face of the building to which it is mounted.**

Entry Awning: A large awning structure projecting over the entrance of a building, passage or via, supported with posts.

ORDAINED this _____ day of _____, 2020 to become effective upon publication.

Pierre Boutros, Mayor

Cheryl Arft, Acting City Clerk

Birmingham	<p>Canopy Sign: A sign attached to or hung from a marquee, mansard, canopy or other structure projecting from and supported by the building and extending beyond the building wall, building line or street lot line. See Canopy Valance.</p> <p>Canopy Valance: That portion of a canopy consisting of short strips or bands of material hung at the lower edge of the canopy.</p>
Royal Oak	<p>Awning: An ornamental overhanging structure or frame covered with cloth or metal or other material, designed to provide shelter from sunlight or the elements, and which structure or frame is affixed to an exterior wall of a building in such a manner that the structure or frame may be raised or retracted to a position against the building or retracted so as to be within a container or device for storage.</p> <p>Canopy: A permanent ornamental overhanging structure or frame, covered with canvas, cloth or other material, affixed to and extending from the exterior wall of a building, designed to provide shelter from sunlight or the elements.</p>
Rochester Hills	<p>Awning End Cap Sign: A pedestrian-oriented sign that is applied to the vertical portion of an awning that projects perpendicular to the building.</p>
Berkely	<p>Awning Sign: Any sign that is a part of or attached to an awning, canopy, or other fabric, plastic, or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area.</p>
Southfield	<p>Awning Sign: A shelter projecting from and supported by an exterior wall of a building, covered with fabric or vinyl on supporting framework, upon which a sign is directly applied.</p>
Hazel Park	<p>Awning: A roof-like structure made of canvas or similar materials, stretched over a frame and attached to a wall of a building (aka canopy) that may or may not include a sign.</p> <p>Canopy: a permanent roof-like shelter extending from part of or all of a building face over a public access area (aka awning). Canopies can be constructed of cloth, metal, wood, or other materials.</p>
Clawson	<p>Awning: A roof-like structure made of canvas or similar materials, stretched over a frame and attached to a wall of a building (aka canopy) that may or may not include a sign.</p> <p>Canopy: A permanent roof-like shelter extending from part of or all of a building face over a public access area (aka awning). Canopies can be constructed of cloth, metal, wood, or other materials.</p>
Pontiac	<p>Awning: A retractable or fixed shelter projecting from and supported by the exterior wall of a building constructed of nonrigid materials on a supporting framework.</p> <p>Canopy: A permanent roof-like shelter that extends from part or all of a building face and is constructed of non-rigid material, except for the supporting framework.</p>

	<p>Awning or Canopy Sign: A sign painted on, printed on, or attached flat against the surface of an awning or canopy.</p> <p>Marquee Sign: A display sign attached to or hung from a marquee, canopy or other structure projecting from and supported by the building and extending beyond the building wall, building line or street lot line.</p>
Farmington	<p>Awning Sign: A sign affixed flat against the surface of an awning. An awning is a retractable or fixed shelter constructed of nonrigid materials on a supporting framework that projects from the exterior wall of a building.</p> <p>Canopy Sign: A sign affixed flat against the surface of a canopy. A canopy is a fixed shelter constructed of rigid materials on a supporting framework that projects from the exterior wall of a building. A canopy may also be a freestanding structure over gas station pump islands.</p>
Grosse Pointe	<p>Canopy: A suspended covering, often movable, placed above a door, window, or other entranceway. Canopies can be constructed of cloth, metal, wood, or other materials.</p> <p>Marquee sign: A sign attached to or hung from a marquee, canopy or other covered structure projecting from and supported by the building.</p>
Grand Rapids	<p>Awning Sign: A sign affixed flat against the surface of an awning.</p> <p>Canopy Sign: Any sign that is part of or attached to a canopy over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area. "Canopy" is not included in the meaning of the terms marquee or awning.</p>
South Lyon	<p>Awning or canopy sign: A non-rigid fabric marquee or awning-type structure which is attached to the building by supporting framework, which includes a business identification message, symbol and/or logo.</p>
Marquette	<p>Awning: An architectural projection or shelter projecting from and supported by the exterior wall of a building and composed of a covering of rigid or non-rigid materials and/or fabric on a supporting framework that may be either permanent or retractable.</p> <p>Awning Sign: A sign displayed on or attached flat against the surface or surfaces of an awning.</p> <p>Canopy (Attached): A multi-sided overhead structure or architectural projection supported by attachment to a building on one or more sides and either cantilevered from such building or also supported by columns at additional points. The surface(s) and/or soffit of an attached canopy may be illuminated by means of internal or external sources of light. Similar to a Marquee.</p> <p>Canopy (Freestanding): A multi-sided overhead structure supported by columns, but not enclosed by walls. The surface(s) and/or soffit of a freestanding canopy may be illuminated by means of internal or external sources of light.</p> <p>Canopy Sign: A sign affixed to the visible surface(s) of an attached or freestanding canopy. May be internally or externally illuminated. Similar to a Marquee Sign.</p>

New Haven	<p>Canopy Sign: A sign attached to, painted or printed on a canopy, awning, marquee or other similar type of structure. All awnings which have backlighting shall constitute signs for purposes of this section.</p>
Grand Haven	<p>Awning: A retractable or fixed shelter constructed of non-rigid materials on a supporting framework that projects from the exterior wall of a building.</p> <p>Awning sign: A sign affixed flat against the surface of an awning.</p> <p>Canopy: A freestanding roof-like structure built on one (1) or more support posts, designed to offer protection from the weather.</p> <p>Canopy Sign: A sign painted or attached directly to and parallel to the exterior face of a canopy roof and extending no greater than twelve (12) inches from the exterior face of the canopy to which it is attached.</p>
Plymouth	<p>Awning Sign: A sign which is printed or otherwise affixed to an awning which may be rolled or folded up against the wall to which it is attached.</p> <p>Canopy Sign: A sign which is part of or located on a canopy or awning which is attached to the building or structure they are intended to serve. Canopy signs shall also include internally illuminated translucent fabric awnings or fabric canopies which advertise goods or services.</p>



MEMORANDUM

Office of the City Manager

DATE: February 7, 2020

TO: City Boards, Commissions & Committees

FROM: Joseph A. Valentine, City Manager

SUBJECT: Request for Board Review of First Draft of The Birmingham Plan

Let us hear from you! Over the past year, the DPZ team hired by the City to update our comprehensive master plan has been conducting information gathering sessions with members of the public. The team conducted multiple surveys and stakeholder meetings during 2019 to **solicit detailed input on the City's needs, specific concerns and recommendations for the future vision of the City.**

While many board/commission/committee members may have participated individually in one or more of the public engagement activities noted above, at this time the City is asking each group to participate together as a board/commission/committee in the review of the first draft of the **master plan, entitled "The Birmingham Plan" and provide your collective comments.**

Specifically, each group is requested to place a review of The Birmingham Plan on an upcoming agenda and to conduct a public discussion and review as a board/commission/committee at a meeting within the next two months. Each board/commission/committee is asked to review the draft plan with regard to all concepts, findings and recommendations within the scope of their review authority and to use their specific experience and expertise in this area to provide collective comments as a board/commission/committee on the first draft of The Birmingham Plan. For example, the Parks Board should review the findings and recommendations related to City parks, the Advisory Parking Committee should review the findings and recommendations related to parking standards and parking initiatives, and so on. **Each board/commission/committee is requested to provide collective comments to Jana Ecker, Planning Director, on or before April 10, 2020 through your respective staff liaison.**

To assist each board/commission/committee, enclosed you will find a summary of the review process; a detailed list of all recommendations in the draft plan; and key illustrations from the plan. Also enclosed you will find the schedule of meetings dates when the Planning Board will be reviewing specific sections of the plan.

Board/commission/committee members can also go to TheBirminghamPlan.com website and review the full version of the draft master plan for further details.

Thank you for your participation in shaping the future of Birmingham.

Meeting Dates	Areas of Review
February 12, 2020	Master Plan Premises The Future City (Vision)
March 11, 2020	Neighborhood Components
April 7, 2020	Neighborhood Plans
May 13, 2020	Mixed Use Districts Maple & Woodward Market North
June 10, 2020	Haynes Square South Woodward Gateway Rail District

INTRO

Residents of Birmingham have recognized the value of planning since 1929, when Birmingham was still a village. The very first master plan was primarily concerned with land use and zoning, but subsequent plans reflected the changing landscape of Birmingham as downtown development, growing neighborhoods, parks and mass transit drew increased focus from planners and residents. In 2020, as we engage in comprehensive planning for Birmingham, input from our residents is essential to success.

The Planning Board has scheduled a series of meetings on key aspects of the master plan draft. Beginning in February with an overview of the City's vision, five meetings will be held to solicit resident input. We invite you to join us for one or all of the meetings. If you are unable to attend in person, all Planning Board meetings are broadcast on the BCTV government access channel and posted to the City's website. You can get full information on the plan and the planning process at www.thebirminghamplan.com. The site includes relevant data, surveys and documents and an email communication option that allows residents to send comments directly to the planning team. Please make sure your voice is heard.

THE FUTURE CITY – February 12, 2020

The first meeting seeks input around the overall vision for Birmingham, its downtown and commercial centers and its neighborhoods. A key concept is the establishment of the **"Neighborhood Unit"** as a structural guide for the City. Neighborhoods are defined and areas within are designated low-, medium- and high-density based on the fabric of the neighborhood, which includes an assessment of housing, residential and "collector" streets, and major arteries. Planning will use the designations to maintain and strengthen the character and appeal of each neighborhood.

The proposal also calls for discussion around the establishment of three land-use categories high-intensity mixed-use (Maple and Woodward), medium-intensity mixed-use (Haynes Square) and low-intensity mixed use (Market North and the Rail District).

Transit proposals include a Neighborhood Loop bicycle boulevard, a potential internal Birmingham bus circulator and a connector to the Troy Transit Center. Automobile traffic proposals under discussion include: adjustments to the Woodward and Old Woodward intersection at Haynes Square, adjustments to both Adams and Elm, and traffic interventions at Maple and Woodward.

There are several proposals around parks and public spaces concerning splash pads, public art and dog runs. The plan proposed that all parks improvements would promote environmentally sustainable best practices, while engaging residents and neighborhood stakeholders in the design and selection of park elements. The plan also recommends that Birmingham develop and implement a master plan for the Rouge River ecosystem in cooperation with Bloomfield and Beverly Hills.

Finally, the overall program outlines a selection of environmental programs including: composting, increased availability of recycling bins, and potential programs to encourage businesses to reduce use of plastics and Styrofoam.

FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE AT www.thebirminghamplan.com.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMPONENTS – MARCH 11, 2020

The Neighborhood Components discussion will focus on establishing standards and processes to maintain the unique character of each Birmingham neighborhood. Proposals include aligning zoning districts and regulations, incentives to encourage additions to existing homes rather than new builds, increased setbacks and other requirements to ensure new construction better matches existing homes and new requirements around accessory dwelling units (ADU), multi-family units and cottage courts.

Also included under neighborhood components are consistent parking permitting, evaluating open spaces, potential zoning for Neighborhood Commercial destinations to ensure alignment with the character of each neighborhood and establishing a City position of Neighborhood Coordinator to assist and support neighborhood associations.

FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE AT www.thebirminghamplan.com.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS – APRIL 7, 2020

The Master Plan envisions each Birmingham neighborhood as a community with park and civic spaces and transit options designed to encourage connectivity within the neighborhood and with adjacent neighborhoods. This meeting will discuss the neighborhood components outlined in the March meeting as they apply to individual neighborhoods. Neighborhood components include a variety of topics such as zoning, commercial centers, lighting, parking, green spaces and street improvements.

The Neighborhood Plans discussion will consider each Birmingham neighborhood in the following order: 1) Quarton 2) Holy Name 3) The Ravines 4) Poppleton 5) Derby 6)

Pembroke 7) Torry 8) Kenning 9) Pierce 10) Barnum 11) Crestview 12) Birmingham Farms 13) Lincoln Hills 14) Linden 15) Seaholm.

FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE AT www.thebirminghamplan.com.

DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE DISTRICTS, MAPLE & WOODWARD, MARKET NORTH – MAY 13, 2020

Birmingham is fortunate to have several, vibrant mixed-use districts in the City. These districts enhance our quality of life, but growth and utilization must be carefully managed to ensure the district functions for all users. In May, discussion will involve the two Downtown mixed-use districts Maple & Woodward and Market North.

Issues for discussion include: branding, signage and streetscape elements to clearly define the districts, new retail frontage and dining deck requirements, park improvements, expanded downtown housing with functional parking solutions and additional public parking solutions. Proposed plans also call for numerous new amenities such as café service in Shain and Booth Parks, a Farmers Market pavilion, additional public art and pedestrian safety and traffic-calming measures.

FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE AT www.thebirminghamplan.com.

HAYNES SQUARE, SOUTH WOODWARD GATEWAY, RAIL DISTRICT – JUNE 10, 2020

The three additional mixed-use districts in the City – Haynes Square, Woodward Gateway and the Rail District – are still emerging and will benefit from intelligent planning and development. Residents will be asked to review funding recommendations and siting for additional public parking, zoning standards to encourage development at Adams Square, shared-use alleys, potential access to the Troy Transit Center and the activation of the lower Rail District as an incubator for new and innovative businesses. A number of amenities are outlined in the plan including creating a public square at Haynes Square, enhanced streetscape and landscape improvements, and new pedestrian walkways to improve walkability and connectivity to other mixed-use districts.

FULL DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE AT www.thebirminghamplan.com.

CLOSE

All Planning Board meetings are broadcast on the BCTV government access channel and are available on the City's website. Please visit www.thebirminghamplan.com for complete information on the plan and planning process, and an email option that allows residents to

provide comments directly to the planning team. The City will likely host additional round-table discussions and a multi-day drop-in clinic in the months ahead. We encourage residents to attend the meetings whenever possible and we welcome your comments at any and all points of the process. Please sign up for email alerts through the City's Enotify system at www.bhamgov.org/enotify/.

*Summary of The Birmingham Plan 2040 (Draft) Recommendations
and Dates of Planning Board Review*

The Future City (Vision) – February 12, 2020

Adopt an official neighborhood map and names	A.2-03
Adopt official boundaries for each center	
Discuss and evaluate the appropriateness of policies and proposals based upon neighborhoods, centers, and their interactions	
See additional recommendations in Chapter B.1, Associations and Representation	
Adopt the Neighborhood Unit as a structural guide for neighborhoods.	A.2-07
Adopt the following Future Land Use categories: a. Neighborhood Fabric i. Identified as low, medium, and high intensity, neighborhood fabric consists of single-family housing within a narrow range of size and character, arranged in blocks bounded by low speed, pedestrian and bicyclist-centric roads, lined with mature street trees. Neighborhoods may be mapped with a single fabric intensity, protecting its overall character. ii. Low Intensity Fabric includes R1-A and R1 zoning districts. iii. Medium Intensity Fabric includes R1 and R2 zoning districts. iv. High Intensity Fabric includes R2, R3, and R4 zoning districts. b. Neighborhood Seam i. Identified as low, medium, and high intensity, neighborhood seams consist of a variety of single-family and multi-family housing types, limited according to intensity, home-based businesses, and some size-limited businesses in high intensity seams. Neighborhood seams are located along the edges of neighborhoods, typically at collector and arterial roads like Lincoln, Fourteen Mile, Southfield, Maple, Cranbrook, and similar roads, and along the edges of mixed-use districts where they meet neighborhoods. The intensity of Neighborhood Seams is directly related to the Neighborhood Fabric intensity and the size of the adjacent roadway. High Intensity Seams are very limited in application, only appropriate adjacent to mixed use centers and the intersections of major and Sectionline roads. ii. Low Intensity Seams include the TZ-1 zoning district, as amended in this plan. iii. Medium Intensity Seams include the TZ-2 zoning district, as amended and defined in this plan. iv. High Intensity Seams include the TZ-3 zoning district, as amended in this plan. c. Neighborhood Destination i. A low intensity commercial center providing services, dining, and places to gather for surrounding neighborhoods. Neighborhood Destinations are limited in total square footage, the size of individual businesses, allowable business types, and the location and size of off-street parking. ii. A new zoning district is proposed for Neighborhood Destinations, to be completed in later drafts of the master plan.	A.2-07
Define, sign, and market three distinct Downtown districts: Market North, Maple and Woodward, and Haynes Square.	A.2-13

*Summary of The Birmingham Plan 2040 (Draft) Recommendations
and Dates of Planning Board Review*

Adopt the following land use categories: a. High intensity mixed-use district (Maple and Woodward) b. Medium intensity mixed-use district (Haynes Square) c. Low intensity mixed-use district (Market North and the Rail District)	
Issue an RFP to overhaul the zoning code, focused on brevity, clarity, and graphics, aligning with the new Future Land Use categories.	
Collapse uses into the broadest categories possible, with detailed use specification only provided where absolutely necessary, and in limited areas.	
Combine the business, office, Downtown, Triangle, and mixed-use districts into a single set of mixed use districts shared between all mixed-use areas. Low intensity mixed-use districts would only include the lower intensity mixed-use zones, and high intensity mixed-use districts the higher intensity zones.	A.2-15
Consider zoning district modifications for residential districts following the character descriptions and analysis for the City's neighborhoods, described in the next chapter of this plan.	
Ensure new zoning language is considered for simplicity and expediency, achieving regulatory goals in a manner clear to the general public	
Issue an RFP to design the Neighborhood Loop bicycle boulevard attributes, like signage and diverters, and pedestrian improvements, like complete sidewalks and crosswalks.	
Prioritize Neighborhood Loop improvements in the next Capital Improvement Plan cycle.	A.2-18
Add benches along the loop where the loop crosses major roads, like Maple, schools, and parks, like Linden Park.	
Add bicycle destination signage along the loop and routes with bike lanes.	
Add bicycle parking and maintenance kiosks like those found in Shain Park to all parks.	
Establish a committee and plan a monthly event along the loop in the summertime which closes the route to traffic and organizes family friendly activities in parks along the route. This will require City funding, but over time it will help solidify social interactions in the community. As with many events of this type, the first few may see fewer participants, but over time participation should grow, provided it	
Study the potential of operating an internal Birmingham Circulator. This should not be a full scale bus, but would require zero entry opportunities. Autonomous circulators currently operating in places like Downtown Las Vegas are appropriate models.	A.2-20
Improve bus stops with shelters along big Woodward.	
Improve bus stops with shelters along Old Woodward (completed in part with Phase 1 streetscape).	
Improve bus stops with shelters along Maple, including stops outside of Downtown.	
Improve bus stops with shelters along Coolidge Hwy. 6. Improve bus stops with shelters along Adams Rd.	
Improve bus stops with shelters along 14 Mile Rd.	

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Invest in public parking within the Triangle District / Haynes Square to encourage development	
Adopt policy changes to encourage more housing in Downtown and the Triangle District / Haynes Square	
Secure a connection to the Troy Transit Center from the Rail District for pedestrians and cyclists	
Enhance and expand streetside bicycle parking with parking areas for micro-mobility devices.	
Pilot a shared use street along Merrill Street first from Old Woodward to Shain Park, and in a later phase connecting to the Rouge River trail system through Martha Baldwin Park.	
Increase the number of streetside bicycle and micro-mobility parking spaces throughout Downtown, especially near transit stops.	
Install or convert bicycle lane signage to mobility lane when alternative micro-mobility devices become prevalent.	
Install signage informing micro-mobility users and cyclists of where they are and are not permitted to ride (e.g. not on sidewalks).	
Provide mobility education during summertime activities along the Neighborhood Loop.	
Pursue a speed reduction on Woodward to 35mph within Birmingham through legislative means. (short term)	
Move signage at Lincoln which obscures pedestrian countdown timers. (short term)	A.2-22
Add a signal for the Brown Street crosswalk along the northbound lanes of Woodward. (short term)	A.2-22
Install ADA-compliant ramps at intersections that are not in compliance. (short term)	A.2-22
Review pedestrian crossing times for MUTCD compliance, some may need to be lengthened. (short term)	A.2-22
Continue enhanced median planting beyond Maple and Woodward. (short term)	A.2-22
Add a protected only left turn signal for northbound left turns to Old Woodward. This may be omitted if the Haynes Square street reconfiguration occurs quickly. (short term)	
Reconfigure the Woodward and Old Woodward intersection at Haynes Square as described in later Chapters. (mid-term)	A.2-26
Improve pedestrian and bicycle crossings along Woodward at 14 Mile, Emmons, Lincoln, Haynes, Brown, Maple, Oakland, and Oak. (mid-term)	A.2-22
Divert Adams traffic onto Haynes by angling Adams to intersect perpendicularly with Haynes, taking a portion of the parking lot of The Plant Station. (mid-term)	A.2-26
Adjust Adams to meet Woodward perpendicularly at Ruffner. (mid-term)	A.2-26
Adjust Elm to meet Woodward perpendicularly per the Triangle District plan. (mid-term)	A.2-26
Adjust Worth to meet Woodward perpendicularly per the Triangle District plan. (mid-term)	A.2-26

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Study the traffic intervention proposed at Maple and Woodward in coordination with MDOT, including alternates. (mid-term)	
Participate in a traffic study along Woodward, with MDOT, once I-75 reopens fully to determine whether the road can be reduced to 3-lanes in each direction. (mid-term)	
Pending verification of potential lane reductions and an agreeable design, pursue the circle at Maple and Woodward. (long term)	A.2-24
Pending verification of potential lane reductions, fund and implement restriping on Woodward, between 14 Mile and Oakland, potentially to Quarton, converting the outside lane to a buffered bicycle and transit lane. (long term)	
Invest in new facilities for Next. This should be located centrally, potentially part of a public parking investment in the Triangle District or in Barnum Park. Facilities should be combined with other community rooms as a broader community center.	
Revise parking requirements to allow housing in mixed-use districts to park in shared garages (addressed in more detail in a later Chapter).	
Adopt zoning updates to enable Neighborhood Seams.	
Provide sidewalks, trails, and play equipment in all neighborhood parks.	
Add kid-oriented splash pads to community parks.	
Encourage businesses with more informal gathering spaces.	
Pilot a shared use plaza at Bird and Woodward	
Adopt a neighborhood destination zoning district.	A.2-34
Rezone properties identified as neighborhood destinations on the Future Land Use Map to the neighborhood destination zoning district.	
Build a cafe in Booth Park.	A.2.-39
Build a model neighborhood destination at the northeastern corner of Lincoln and Eton.	
Install paved walkways and other necessary enhancements to enable universal access to designated parks (See Reference A).	
Install bicycle racks, civic art, park monument signage, seating, shaded areas, dog runs and way-finding maps and signage in all city parks, open spaces, and nature preserves. Organize park neighborhoods and stakeholders to participate in the design and selection of these elements.	
Implement a community garden program to encourage flower or vegetable gardens in neighborhood parks. Provide an organizational platform to expedite the formation of garden clubs and to help individuals establish gardens near their homes. Install fencing, soil enrichments, sheds, water sources, and other necessary infrastructure for community gardens in designated parks (See Reference B).	
Improve park conditions and management to promote environmentally sustainable best practices.	
Add cafes to community parks and some neighborhood parks where neighborhood destinations are too remote. (See Reference C)	
Retain environmental scientists to inventory and analyze the Rouge corridor's wildlife, ecology, natural systems, and pollution sources.	

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Develop and implement a reforestation master plan to restore the Rouge River ecosystem to its natural and sustainable conditions. Establish a phased enhancement timeframe to stabilize riverbanks, remove invasive species, reintroduce native groundcovers, wildflowers, understory and canopy tree species.	
Identify and mitigate potential pollution or chemical sources, including the existing Springdale snow storage dumping area.	
Install pedestrian linkages to the park's surrounding neighborhoods and commercial districts.	
Purchase or secure easements of additional key properties to expand the park area and improve its walkability, for complete ecological restoration, and universal accessibility.	
Extend pedestrian linkages to Quarton Road.	
Work with Bloomfield and Beverly Hills to develop a Rouge River master plan and to expand walkway access.	
Establish a "Friends of the Rouge" foundation to oversee, build support, and raise funding for the park's enhancements. Consider securing corporate or philanthropic funding in exchange for special recognition.	
Provide funding for city staff and resources to permanently preserve and manage the Rouge ecosystem.	
Install an environmentally sensitive, hard-surfaced, and well-lit pathway for pedestrians and cyclists along the Rouge River. Install bridges, ramps and other enhancements to enable access by all ages and abilities.	A.2.-43 A.2.-44
Install bicycle racks, lighting, markers, seating, signage, and comfort stations.	
Implement an overlay building and zoning policy to ensure that private property construction, fencing, landscaping, lighting, etc., are compatible with the park's ecology, its restoration master plan, and overall public welfare.	
Conduct public surveys on a quarterly basis regarding decisions being made in order to obtain a greater accuracy of public opinion.	
Establish a system by which residents are requested to attend meetings where important decisions are made, modeled on the civil jury system.	
Establish a subsidiarity policy by which decisions can be made at the most local level as is appropriate.	
Increase garage restrictions to provide greater setback from the building's primary facade, ideally 15 feet, and a maximum width along street frontages of 3 bays to supplement the existing 50% width restriction.	
The requirement 4.82.A.1 and .2 should be applied to all zoning districts, requiring a pedestrian door facing the front lot line and restricting blank walls.	
Minimum facade glazing requirements should be added for residential districts, similar to 4.82.A.5, ensuring some windows face towards the street for public safety.	
Require adherence to LEED standards within the City's mixed-use districts.	
Consider increasing energy standards for new construction above those of the state energy code, ideally implementing 2030 District goals.	

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Investigate the potential to provide food waste compost service for homes and businesses.	
Increase the availability of recycling bins in public spaces like parks, public buildings, and along streets with high pedestrian traffic.	
Consider the best path towards business operations changes to reduce plastics and styrofoam, either through ordinance or first through a voluntary shopping district program which leads to a future ordinance.	
Adopt an action plan to reduce environmental impacts of municipal operations.	

Neighborhood Components – March 11, 2020

Retain the structure of neighborhood fabric, seams, and destinations as Future Land Use categories.	B.1-01 B.1-04
Adopt the terms neighborhood fabric, neighborhood seam, and neighborhood destination in decision-making processes, helping determine the appropriateness of uses, intensities, and lot divisions and combinations.	B.1-01 B.1-04
Align zoning districts and regulations to differentiate neighborhood fabric, seams, and destinations.	B.1-01 B.1-04
Revise neighborhood associations to align with the neighborhood map.	B.1-05
Add a City position of neighborhood coordinator that supports neighborhood associations.	
Re-assign parking restrictions citywide, allowing each neighborhood to select one of the following options: a. No restriction b. 2-hour parking from 9am to 4pm, except by permit (this addresses daytime parking issues from students and downtown workers) c. Parking by permit only, 5pm to 10am (this addresses nighttime parking issues from food service) d. Neighborhood Parking Benefit District, used in association with (b) or (c) above.	B.1-07 B.1-08
Establish a consistent residential permit system to service those neighborhoods that choose to use such a system which includes permit fees to cover costs, decals, and visitor rear-view mirror tags purchased separately from the residential permit. The existing permit systems may suffice to operate more broadly. Adopt policy and establish the process for administering Neighborhood Parking Benefit Districts, ensuring that fees collected benefit neighborhood facilities and activities, after covering administrative costs.	
Complete sidewalks where gaps exist in the continuous pedestrian network.	
Along neighborhood seams, establish a minimum 6 foot sidewalk width within the Residential Street Standards.	
Adjust the Residential Street Standards to implement Future Land Use categories.	
Provide a bike facility on Lincoln per the Future Transportation Plan.	
Locate streetside areas where stormwater can be cleaned through bioswales prior to entering the Rouge River.	

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Reduce residential speed limits to 20 mph.	
Continue the City's street tree planning and maintenance policies.	
Infill missing street trees where needed in neighborhoods.	
Prevent existing, healthy trees from being removed due to new construction.	
Establish a streetscape improvement program for the Triangle District and Rail District.	
Select large canopy species native to the region, including Basswood, Elms (disease resistant), Horse Chestnuts, Maples, Oaks and Sycamores, along streets and within parks.	
Minimize overly-used or exotic species, such as Crab Apple, Honey Locust and Pear Trees.	
Follow the recommendations of the Unimproved Streets Committee	B.1-20
Review and update site, building, and design codes to prevent increased rainwater runoff and other negative impacts from new house construction.	
Expand the inspection process for new house construction to ensure that they are built per approved plans to minimize negative impacts on surrounding properties.	
Increase required residential setbacks for new construction to better match existing housing in each neighborhood.	
Reduce permitted residential building heights for new construction to better match existing housing in each neighborhood.	
Develop incentives, such as increasing allowable square footage, fast tracking, fee waivers, and tax incentives that promote the expansion of existing houses rather than the construction of new houses.	
Identify and implement preservation protection, such as a historic designation for landmark houses.	
Implement an approval process to review the exterior design and materials for single-family residential additions and for new house construction.	
Add minimum and maximum lot width standards for each zoning district. The current standard based on minimum lot size is not a sufficient measure.	
Revise the Zoning Code and zoning district boundaries to better align with the existing character and scale of houses and their lot size.	
Revise Articles 3 and 5 of Chapter 102 of the Subdivision ordinance to allow for lot combinations and splits as are necessary to implement Neighborhood Seams and Lot Enlargement Areas.	
Once the above recommended zoning changes are made, repeal Articles 3 and 5 of Chapter 102 of the Subdivision ordinance, the intent of the articles having been integrated into the Zoning Ordinance and Future Land Use Map.	
Establish lighting standards for R1A through R3, neighborhoods generally, including maximum intensity and color temperature, shielding and direction, and spillover. Consider the International Dark Sky Association model standards. Lighting intensity restrictions should be associated with the Future Land Use categories for Neighborhood Fabric intensity where High Intensity Fabric justifies higher lighting intensity and Low Intensity Fabric justifies lower lighting intensity. Dark Sky LZ1 may	B.1-21

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be appropriate in Low Intensity Fabric and Medium Intensity Fabric areas, LZ2 in High Intensity Fabric areas, and LZ3 in the City's mixed-use districts.	
Prevent healthy, mature trees from being removed due to new construction.	
Permit ADUs where the property owner lives on-site, in the primary home or ADU.	B.1-23
Prohibit two-rental structures on any single-family property.	
Require ADUs to be designed and built to match or exceed the quality of the primary structure.	
Require adequate landscape screening between ADUs and adjacent properties	
Do not require parking for ADUs.	
Increase accessory structure setback requirements when there is a dwelling within it to 5 feet in R2 and above, 10 feet in R1, and 15 feet in R1A.	B.1-23
Increase the allowable height for accessory structures to allow 2 stories when there is a dwelling within it above a garage.	
Exempt the area of interior staircases from the maximum area of accessory structures when there is a dwelling within it.	
Allow accessory structures when there is a dwelling within it by right in MX, TZ1, TZ2, TZ3, and R4 through R8.	
Permit six packs in high intensity neighborhood seams.	B.1-30
Permit quadplexes in high and medium intensity neighborhood seams.	B.1-41 B.1-38
Permit triplexes in high and medium intensity neighborhood seams.	
Permit duplexes in all neighborhood seams.	B.1-42
Permit cottage courts in all neighborhood seams, requiring a minimum site area per unit to ensure a gentle intensity.	B.1-46 B.1-49
Permit townhouses in high and medium intensity neighborhood seams.	B.1-42
Require design review for new housing within neighborhood seams to ensure compatibility and diversity of character.	
Allow by-right Neighborhood Commercial Destinations of up to 10,000 square feet where identified in the Future Land Use Map.	
Adopt a zoning district for Neighborhood Commercial Destinations, ensuring they are designed in a walkable manner, limited in scale, and of a character befitting their surroundings, including the following:	B.1-50 B.1-52 B.1-53 B.1-54
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Limit uses to bakeries, banks, bicycle shops, cafés, carry-out foods, coffee shops, exercise studios, florists, hardware, ice cream parlors, mail centers, personal care, medical offices, pharmacies, real estate offices, financial services, small groceries, specialty shops, and other small local service-businesses. Housing should be permitted above the ground floor. i. Where located in parks, limit uses to bakeries, cafes, and coffee shops. b. Nationally branded chains should be permitted when designed to look local. c. Limit evening hours and prohibit excessive noise, including music in the late evenings, and early or late truck deliveries should be restricted. d. Larger restaurants and other potentially intensive commercial should be permitted as special uses, with 	

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<p>appropriate design, management, and operational conditions geared to minimize their potential impact on surrounding properties.</p> <p>e. Drive-thru windows should be prohibited.</p> <p>f. Loading docks should be minimal or not required.</p> <p>g. The neighborhood centers should be well-landscaped and screened from adjacent properties where necessary.</p> <p>h. Height. These centers should be allowed to build three floors, provided they match the scale of a two and one-half story structure.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. For buildings with 3 stories, the upper floors must be residential.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. For buildings with 2 stories, the upper floor may be office or residential.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Where located in parks, limit height to one story.</p> <p>i. Parking. Parking for these centers should be as minimal as possible, or in some cases provided entirely by the surrounding on-street spaces.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Parking provided, if any, should not exceed 3 cars per 1,000 square feet of non-residential uses and 1 car per bedroom of residential uses.</p>	
Planning Board review should be required to ensure lighting, signage, trash containers, and all other necessary, but potentially disruptive elements are carefully designed and managed to minimize their impacts to the neighborhood	
Develop Worth Park as quickly as plausible to provide a portion of the needed open space access for Torry.	
Attempt to purchase part of the Adams Square parking lot for park space, and if unsuccessful ensure that redevelopment would require that open space be provided at Adams and Bowers.	
Investigate the potential to replace the post office with a neighborhood park for Torry.	
<p>Evaluate the current open space inventory and 2018 Parks Master Plan, and augment as needed to provide access and activities in or near each neighborhood for:</p> <p>a. Young children requiring play equipment;</p> <p>b. Teenagers requiring autonomy and places to gather;</p> <p>c. Younger adults requiring active uses like running and basketball;</p> <p>d. Older adults requiring active and passive uses like pickleball and places to rest in open spaces and along the way;</p> <p>e. People with disabilities requiring accessible paths and routes to open space, as well as specifically designed amenities;</p> <p>f. And dog owners requiring places for their dogs to run and socialize.</p>	B.1-57
Maintain and support existing civic uses throughout the community.	B.1-60
Require new civic uses to be planned and built as aspirational buildings and landscapes.	
Continue the tradition of designing and constructing Birmingham's civic buildings and parks as iconic structures and landscapes to the highest standards and at a civic scale. This includes authentic durable materials, oversized windows, high ceilings, and Tudor design and detailing	

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Develop Worth Park and other civic places in the Triangle District as quickly as plausible.	
Ensure the Community Foundation / Fund is established in a timely manner.	
Develop civic programming as part of the monthly neighborhood loop events.	
Develop additional regular civic events to continue engaging the community throughout the year	

Neighborhood Plans – April 7, 2020

Quarton	B.2-1
Holy Name	B.2-2
The Ravines	B.2-3
Poppleton	B.2-4
Derby	B.2-5
Pembroke	B.2-6
Torry	B.2-7
Kenning	B.2-8
Pierce	B.2-9
Barnum	B.2-10
Crestview	B.2-11
Birmingham Farms	B.2-12
Lincoln Hills	B.2-13
Linden	B.2-14
Seaholm	B.2-15

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**Mixed Use Districts, Maple & Woodward, Market North –
May 13, 2020**

Release an RFP to brand the City's multiple mixed use districts, especially concerning signage and wayfinding, but extending also to elements of the streetscape like tree grates, lights, trash and recycling cans, and public art themes like the recent popcorn painting of a utility box on Old Woodward at the theater.	
Define, sign, and market three distinct Downtown districts: Market North, Maple and Woodward, and Haynes Square. (as identified in Chapter A)	C.1-01 C.2-01 C.3-01
Install business directory and way-finding signage for pedestrians and cyclists throughout all shopping districts, beginning with Maple and Woodward, Market North, and Haynes Square.	C.1-04
Install smart and elegant parking wayfinding signage in Downtown.	C.1-04
As part of a Zoning Code overhaul, collapse zoning within the City's mixed-use districts into as few zoning districts as can meaningfully regulate the intent of the Code and the City's plans.	
Expand activities and special events to attract office workers and residents to shop and dine downtown, including weekly food-truck events at Shain Park.	
Encourage new housing downtown, discussed in a subsequent section.	C.2-12
Reduce the number of permitted dining decks in the Old Woodward, Hamilton, Merrill, Pierce, West Maple area to improve parking for retail shoppers and sidewalk space. Limit restaurants to one deck each, and limit the number of decks to two per block.	
Require a minimum 6 foot sidewalk be retained where dining decks are installed.	C.2-03
Expand the distance of corner curb extensions at street intersections and midblock to accommodate seated dining for restaurants not fronting onto wide sidewalks.	
Install 6-foot-long benches with backs and armrests throughout the downtown area.	
Implement a program to report, regularly inspect, and replace non-working street lighting.	
Increase bike parking within the public streetscape throughout the Maple and Woodward district, especially at corner and midblock bulb-outs where multiple racks can be installed.	
Reserve space for future micro-mobility storage at corner and midblock bulb-outs along with bike parking.	
Pursue a shared space streetscape retrofit for Merrill between Old Woodward and Shain Park.	
Add liner buildings along the south edge of the City Hall property to activate Merrill, housing small and lower cost incubator retail spaces and a few apartments on the upper floor.	

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Further study and then adopt the proposed retail frontage plan. a. Establish two categories of retail frontage: i. Primary Retail Frontage (purple) requires a minimum of 70% clear glazing along the sidewalk. Retail or food service must occur within a zone 20 feet deep along the frontage. ii. Secondary Retail Frontage (blue) may be exempted by waiver of the City Commission to allow other commercial uses.	C.2-05
Increase the amount of seating in Shain, Booth, and the City's pocket parks with traditional English garden benches, as specified in the 1996 master plan.	C.2.06
Expand portable café seating in Shain and Booth Parks, in all pocket parks, and on all widened sidewalks.	
Open a café in both Shain and Booth Parks, each with public restrooms and limited food and beverage offerings, per the 1996 master plan's recommendations.	
Expand the civic art program into all parks and implement a timetable for the regular rotation of art.	
Implement an art-mural program for large blank wall surfaces in key locations.	
Expand the Oakland – Old Woodward pocket park by removing the south vehicular lane, per the 1996 master plan recommendations.	
Add paths and seating to the Pierce-Brown pocket park.	
Improve the Library's entrance plaza with seating and murals.	C.2-09
Integrate the Birmingham Museum into the Rouge River trail and park system, including more connections and signage at Maple and Woodward and with wayfinding along trails.	C.2-07
Immediately pilot unbundled residential parking in Downtown and study its progress over a 5-year period (adjusted as necessary for recessions). a. Offer a limited supply of 500 permits for Downtown housing which is not required to provide on-site parking. b. Tie this to an average rental or sales rate of 150% of Area Median Income or less, calculated on a per-building basis to allow for a range of prices. c. Establish a residential permit program for Downtown housing, with pricing tiered according to the number of vehicles per residence, increasing in price for each vehicle, and the parking garage residents are permitted to park within.	
Evaluate the outcomes of the unbundled residential parking pilot, evaluating the average number of vehicles per unit and price incentives over the pilot period as well as usage rates in Downtown structures.	
Establish permanent unbundled residential parking in Downtown.	
Establish permanent unbundled residential parking in other mixed-use Districts as municipal garages are built.	
Build a parking deck in the Triangle District as soon as possible. Ensure that the decks are flat, not sloped, and ceilings are sufficiently high that the structure can be reused should demand fall.	

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Study the Bates Street Extension elements that are not parking related, specifically the additional street connections and a plaza and trail connection to the Rouge River trail.	
Study opportunities for expanding downtown parking capacity with the APC, BSD, Planning Board, and City Commission.	
Accommodate more monthly permit users as capacity becomes available.	
Pursue recommendations noted in the mixed-use districts parking section, especially directional and informational signage.	
Pursue technological improvements to ease parking usage, such as parking space occupancy indicators (green and red lights above spaces) to more easily direct users through the garages.	
Use tiered parking meter prices to achieve an average maximum 85% occupancy along district streets.	
Increase monthly parking pass fees.	
Study a tiered parking rate system across all garages, once monthly fees have been increased, to supplement assignment-based management.	
Study opportunities to accommodate secure bike parking and electric vehicle charging stations within parking garages as capacity becomes available.	
Continue pedestrian safety and traffic-calming measures along North Old Woodward and in surrounding neighborhoods.	
Reinforce the distinctive character of the Market District with branding; unique architectural design; and special signage, seating, and streetscape elements that distinguish it from the City's other commercial districts.	
Install additional café and pedestrian seating along Old Woodward.	
Enforce or expand storefront design and signage standards.	
Install street and business way-finding signage throughout the district.	
Install additional pedestrian seating throughout the district.	
Construct a permanent, open-air farmer's market pavilion with public restrooms on the portion of Lot 6 that is along Old Woodward.	C.3-06
Establish a plaza with curb extensions, mid-block crossings, consistent paving, and ample seating at the front of the pavilion, crossing Old Woodward.	
Install ample benches in Booth Park.	
Install a small café and public restrooms in Booth Park along with moveable tables and chairs	
Extend D2 zoning to the multi-family properties along the west side of Old Woodward up to Quarton.	C.3-08
Make streetscape improvements to support additional pedestrians as discussed in the Street Life section	
Make park and plaza improvements to support additional residents as discussed in the Public Space section.	
Research constructing a parking garage in the Lot 6 parking lot.	
Provide additional on-street parking along Old Woodward, north of Harmon including the area north of Oak.	

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**Haynes Square, South Woodward Gateway, Rail District –
June 10, 2020**

Create a parking assessment or incremental tax district as necessary for land purchases and for financing the development of parking structures. Decades ago, a similar process was used to build downtown's five structures.	
Reconfigure the streets around Haynes Square to create the square and fix the acute intersection between Woodward and Old Woodward.	C.4-03
Build the public square with a cafe and trees to block noise from Woodward, seating, a kids play area, and other compelling civic features.	C.4-04
Purchase properties and implement Worth Park and other public realm enhancements, including civic art, streetscaping, traffic calming, and way-finding.	
Build a public parking deck on the east side of Haynes Square, in the Walgreens parking lot as has been negotiated.	
Build Worth Park.	
Create a brand for the Haynes Square, reinforced with special signage, landscaping, street furnishings, and building design standards.	
Install enhanced streetscape and landscape improvements along Bowers, Haynes, and Webster.	
Develop Worth Street as a shared-use streetscape.	
Improve pedestrian linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, especially along Adams.	
Trade developable land and install a public surface parking lot along the south Old Woodward alley.	
Create a parking district for Haynes Square which allows residences to purchase parking passes in public garages, as discussed for Maple and Woodward.	
Install metered, on-street parking along Adams and Lincoln Roads.	
Create subdivision and zoning standards to encourage redevelopment of the Adam's Square shopping center, offering significant development capacity in exchange for a public open space and public parking.	
Implement pedestrian-walkway improvements along Woodward to improve the walkability to both downtown and the market districts.	
Identify an alley segment to use as a pilot project. This segment should have generally underutilized parking and intermittent buildings, like the segment between Humphrey and Bennaville on the east side, or underutilized parking and businesses that may be willing to open rear entrances, like the segment between Bennaville and Chapin on the east side.	C.5-04
Pilot a shared-use alley at the selected segment by re-paving the alleyway and working with property owners to infill housing along the triangular parcels and open existing buildings to the alley. Power poles should be relocated underground during the alley development.	C.5-04 C.4-05-08

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Incentivize redevelopment through increased zoning capacity and reduced parking requirements	
<p>Establish a zoning district to allow for and incentivize redevelopment in this format, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Requiring storefronts along neighborhood streets. b. Requiring parking be located midblock. c. Requiring storefronts along the alley. d. Requiring housing along the neighborhood-side of the alley, limited to 2 stories. e. Permitting townhouses and mixed-use housing along the neighborhood-side of the alley. f. Permitting multi-family housing on the commercial properties. g. Permitting 2 stories along the alley and 3 or 4 stories between Woodward and 50 feet of the alley. h. Reducing parking requirements and allowing shared parking. 	
<p>Pilot the Neighborhood Sleeve option where the shared-use alley is implemented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Striping on-street parking. b. Constructing chicanes on the neighborhood side of the alley. c. Revising the streetscape between the alley and Woodward, paving the planter with pervious pavers and providing seating, trash and recycling cans, pedestrian-scaled lighting, bike racks, and other streetscape elements typical in commercial districts. 	<p>C.5-13 C.5-17 C.5-18</p>
Create an Overlay District for the Lower Rail District that implements the zoning adjustments discussed above and activates more lenient development review decision making.	C.6-08
Construct a shared-use street section along Cole and Commerce Streets.	
<p>Update the 1999 Eton Road Corridor Plan of 1999 for the area south of Palmer Street by including the following:</p> <p>So long as the buildings--existing or new--are one story, eliminate all requirements of Section 5 of the Site Design Guidelines p 41-46. of the Eton Road Corridor Plan. These include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminating building frontage and sidewalk requirements. Eliminating parking requirements, except as the on-street parking shall be as determined by the "Immediate Neighbors" of the adjacent Torry or Kenning Neighborhoods. Eliminating the signage and landscaping requirements. Eliminating building use and aesthetic requirements. 	
Zoning should be modified such that the MX District is exempt from LA-01 (E) and (F), as is true in Downtown, or at a minimum that plantings in the MX District are only required within the streetscape and within open areas of the property, but not based on a minimum number of trees per residential unit as currently defined.	
MX District zoning should be carefully analyzed by contracting two or more architects to complete preliminary building designs for mixed-use buildings on existing sites, small and large, with and without on-site parking, attempting to achieve capacity. The architects should be requested to discuss and present challenges and constraints that	

*Summary of The Birmingham Plan 2040 (Draft) Recommendations
and Dates of Planning Board Review*

are faced in the process. While some challenges are part of code design, others may be unknown without testing.	
Update the 1999 Eton Road Corridor Plan for the area south of Palmer Street by including the following: ♦ At the termination of Holland Street, creating a connection to the rail station by purchasing a 30 ft wide corridor or easement.	
Acquire access to the Troy Transit Center from the School District.	C.6-15
Acquire access to the Troy Transit Center from remaining property owners using through negotiation, failing which through eminent domain.	C.6-15
Pursue development of a public parking structure in the Rail District on a site with adequate access to the Lower Rail District and the future connection to the Troy Transit Center.	

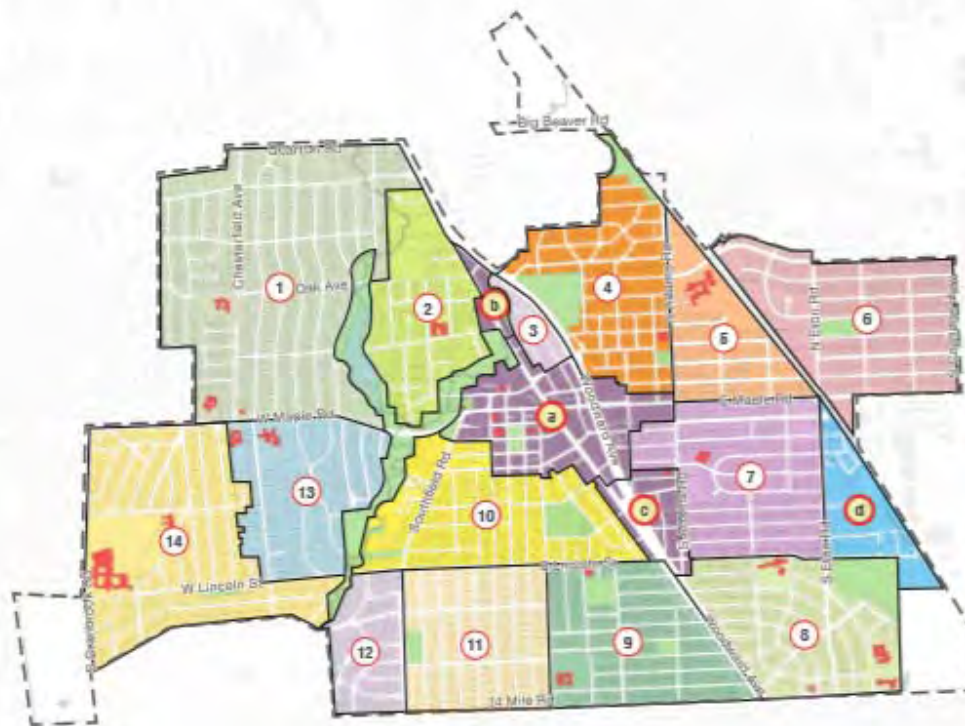


Figure A.2-03.

BIRMINGHAM NEIGHBORHOODS AND CENTERS

Neighborhoods

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1 Quanton | 8 Kenning |
| 2 Holy Name | 9 Pierce |
| 3 The Ravines | 10 Barnum |
| 4 Poppleton | 11 Crestview |
| 5 Derby | 12 Birmingham Farms |
| 6 Pembroke | 13 Linden |
| 7 Torry | 14 Seaholm |

Centers

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| a Downtown | c South Woodward |
| b North Woodward | d Railroad District |

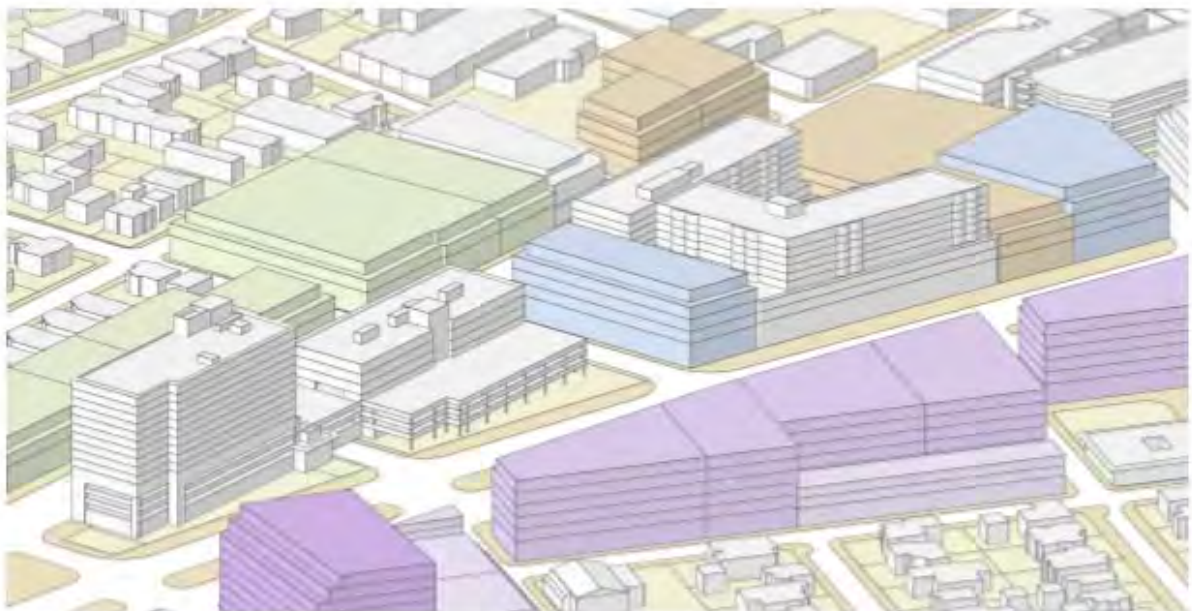


- Neighborhood Fabric
- Commercial Destination
- Neighborhood Seam
- Recreational Destination

Figure A.2-07. neighborhood structure.



Figure A.2-13. Three districts of downtown.



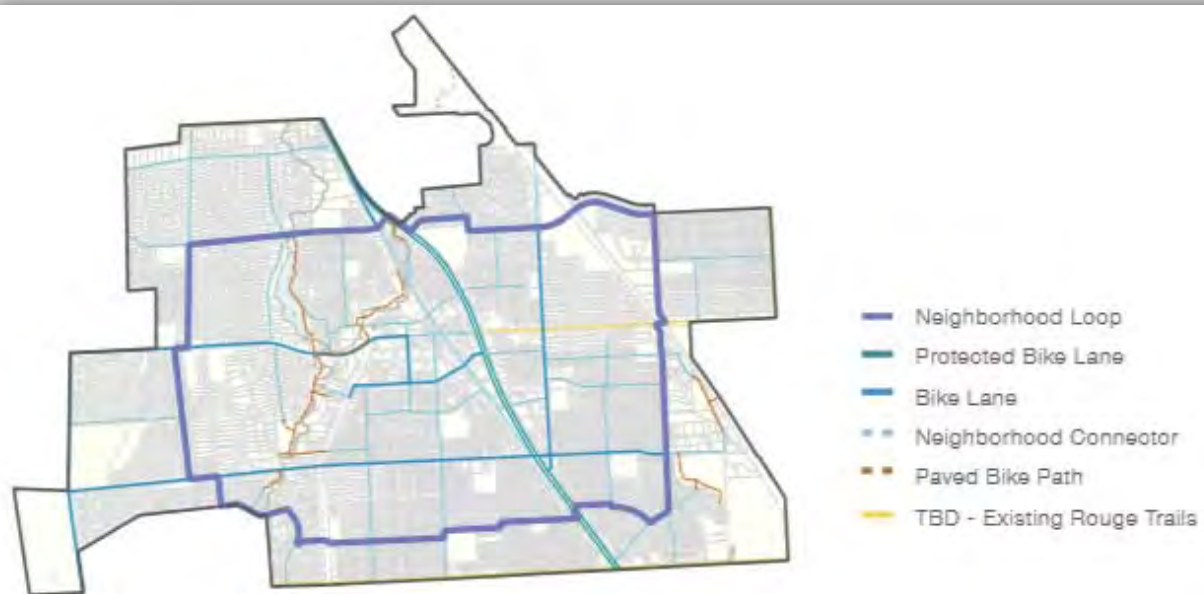
Max allowable heights:

- D2 3-story development - 56'
- D3 4-story development - 68'
- D4 5-story development - 80'

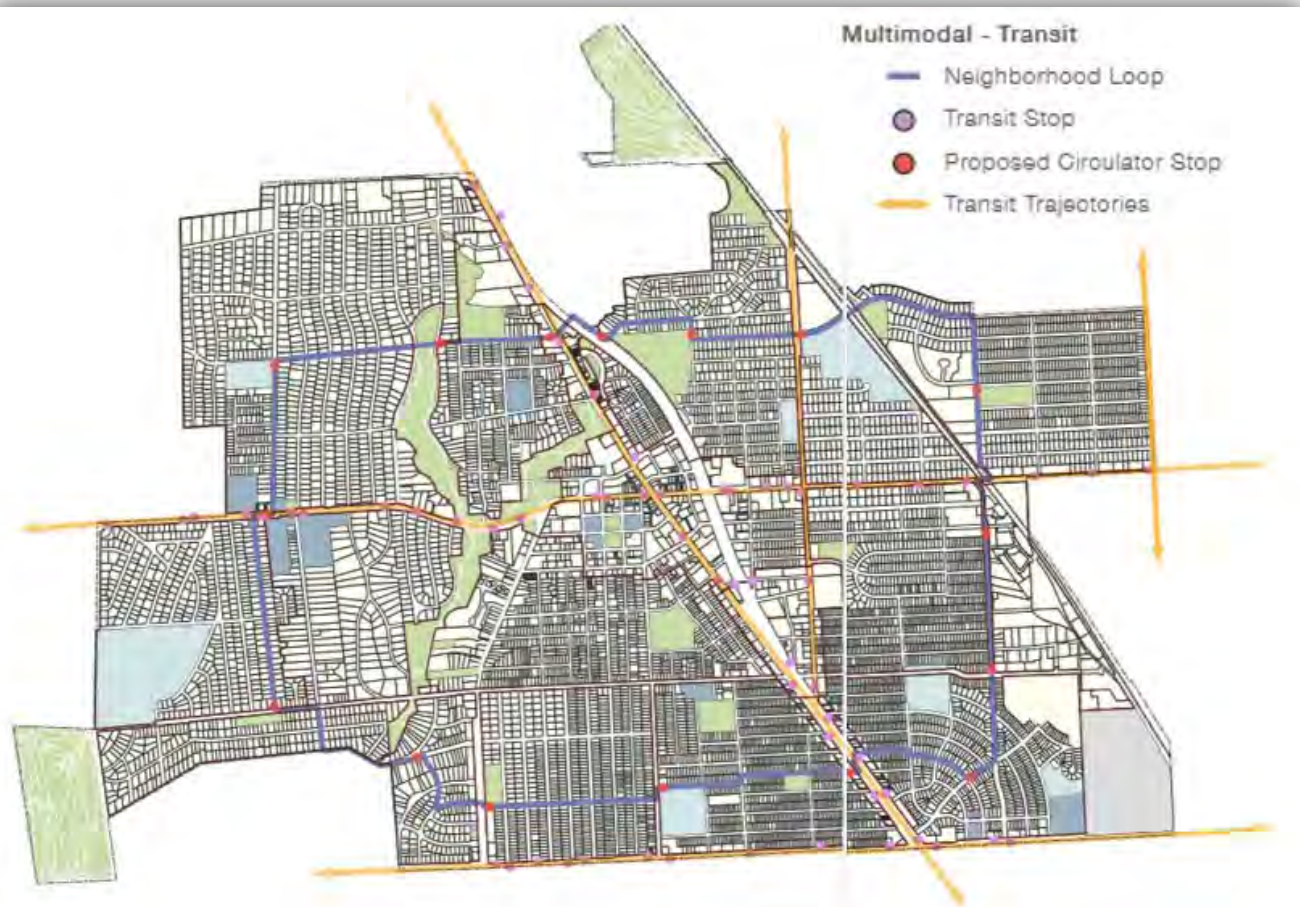
Max allowable heights:

- MU-3 MFR 6-story development - 60'
- MU-5 SF 6-story development - 82'
- MU-7 9-story development - 118'

Figure A.2-15. Future potential massing in Triangle district and Downtown.



Neighborhood Loop - Figure A.2-18.



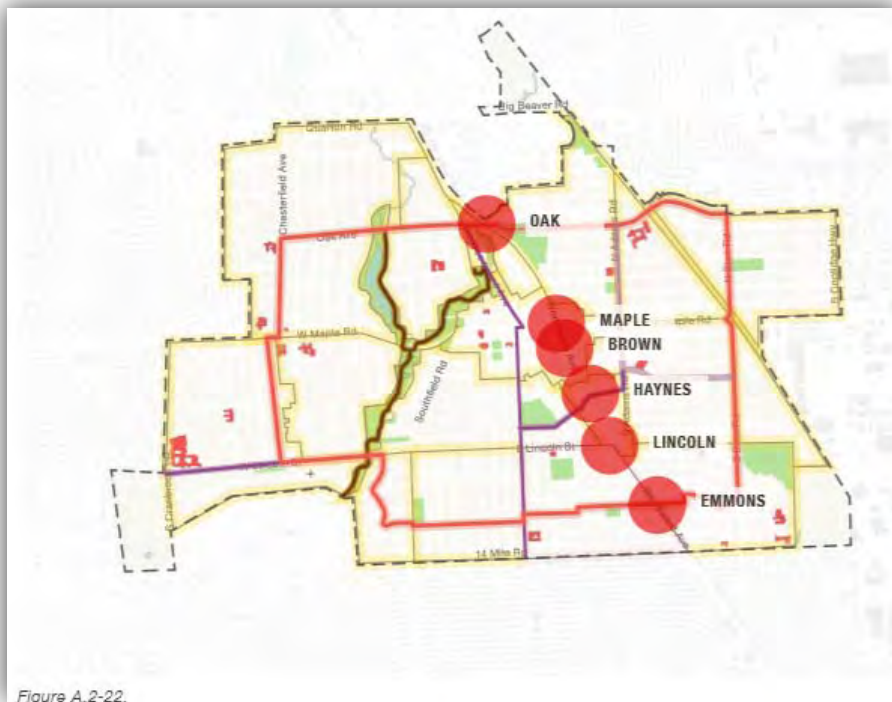
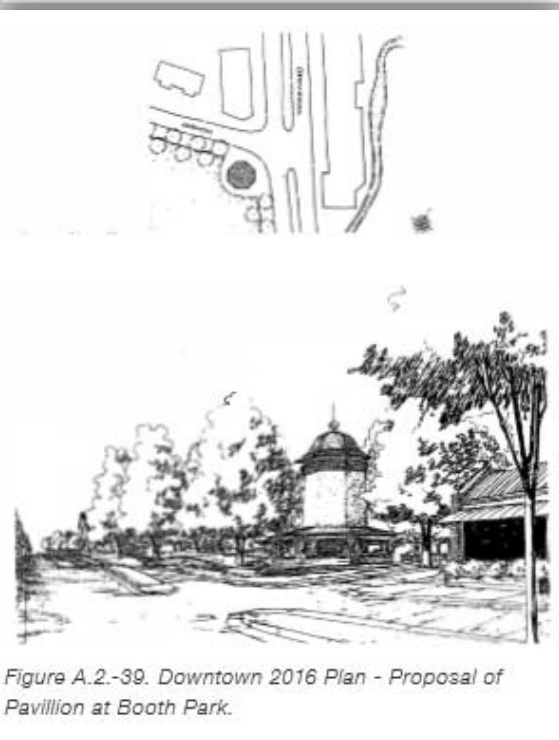


Figure A.2-22.
KEY CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

- Key Crossings
- Neighborhood Loop
- Special Connections
- Shared Use Trails
- Proposed Neighborhood Boundaries
- Civic Institutions



Figure A.2-24. Elliptical traffic circle proposed at Woodward crossing at Maple.



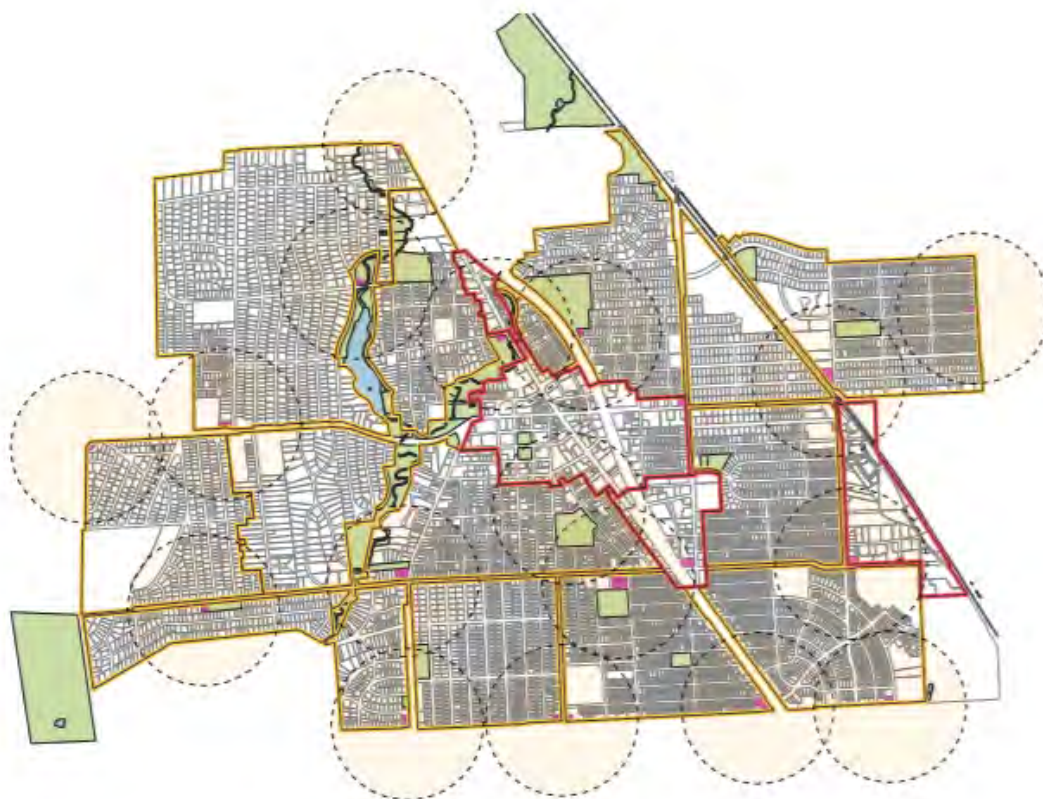


Figure A.2-34. Proposed Neighborhood Destinations.

Neighborhood Destinations

- Commercial Destinations
- Recreational Destinations
- Pedestrian Shed



Image A.2-43. Rouge Walk.



Image A.2.-44. Rouge Walk.

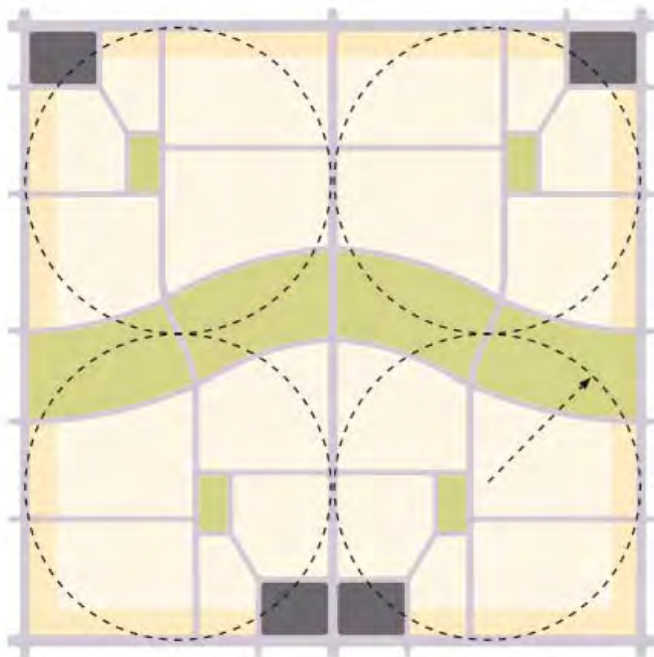


Figure B.1-01. Multiple neighborhood units together forming a larger fabric of the city.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Neighborhood Fabric | Neighborhood Destination |
| Neighborhood Seam | Recreational Destination |



- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Neighborhood Fabric | Commercial Destination |
| Neighborhood Seam | Recreational Destination |

Figure B.1-04. Neighborhood structure.

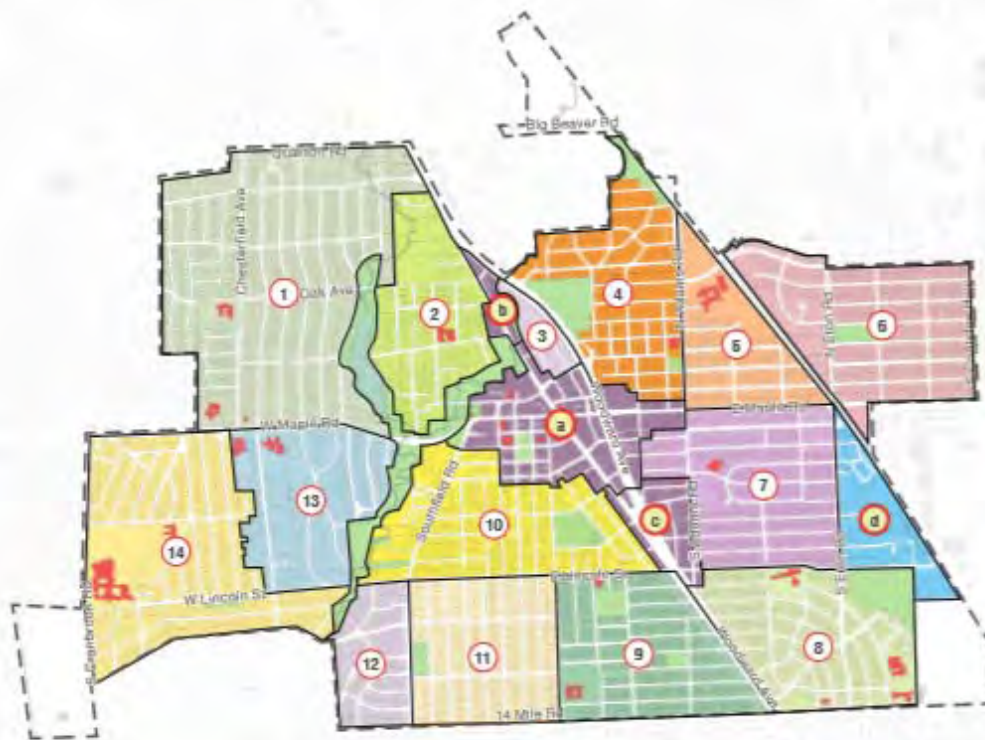


Figure B.1-05.

BIRMINGHAM NEIGHBORHOODS AND CENTERS

Neighborhoods

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1 Quanton | 8 Kenning |
| 2 Holy Name | 9 Pierce |
| 3 The Ravines | 10 Barnum |
| 4 Poppleton | 11 Crestview |
| 5 Derby | 12 Birmingham Farms |
| 6 Pembroke | 13 Linden |
| 7 Torry | 14 Seaholm |

Centers

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| a Downtown | c South Woodward |
| b North Woodward | d Railroad District |



Figure B.1-07.

EXISTING RESTRICTIONS: TORREY NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE RAIL DISTRICT

- 15 Min Parking 8am-9am Except Sun. & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking 8am-4pm Except Sat, Sun., & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking 8am-6pm Except Sun. & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking 9am-6pm Except Sun. & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking Limit
- No Parking Anytime
- Parking Allowed, All Times
- Permit Parking Required at All Times

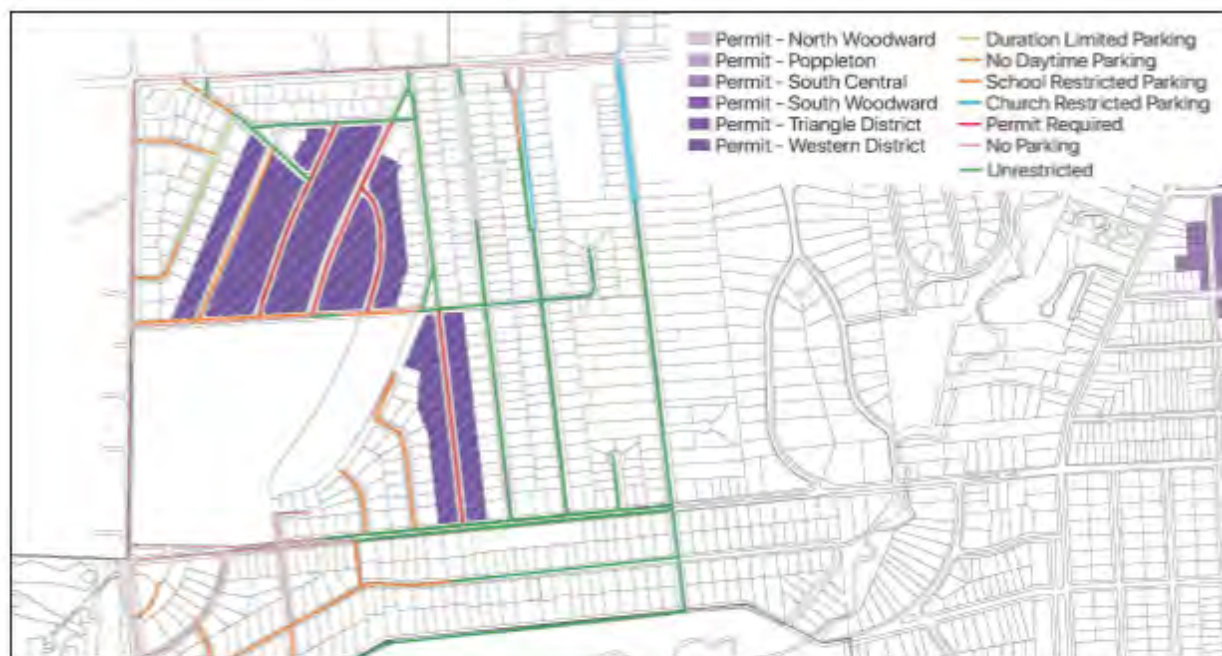


Figure B.1-08.

EXISTING RESTRICTIONS: SEAHOLM AND LINCOLN HILLS NEIGHBORHOODS

- 2 HR Parking 9am-6pm Except Sat, sun, & Holidays
- No Parking 8am-6pm
- No Parking, 7am-9am Except Sun. & Holidays
- No Parking, 8am-6pm Except Sat., Sun. & Holidays
- No Parking, 8am-6pm Except Sun. & Holidays
- No Parking, M-F 7am-2pm
- No Parking, School Days 7am-3pm
- No Parking, School Days 8am-10am
- No Parking, Sunday 7am-1pm
- Parking Allowed, All Times
- Parking Permit 7am-4pm School Days
- Residential Permit Parking

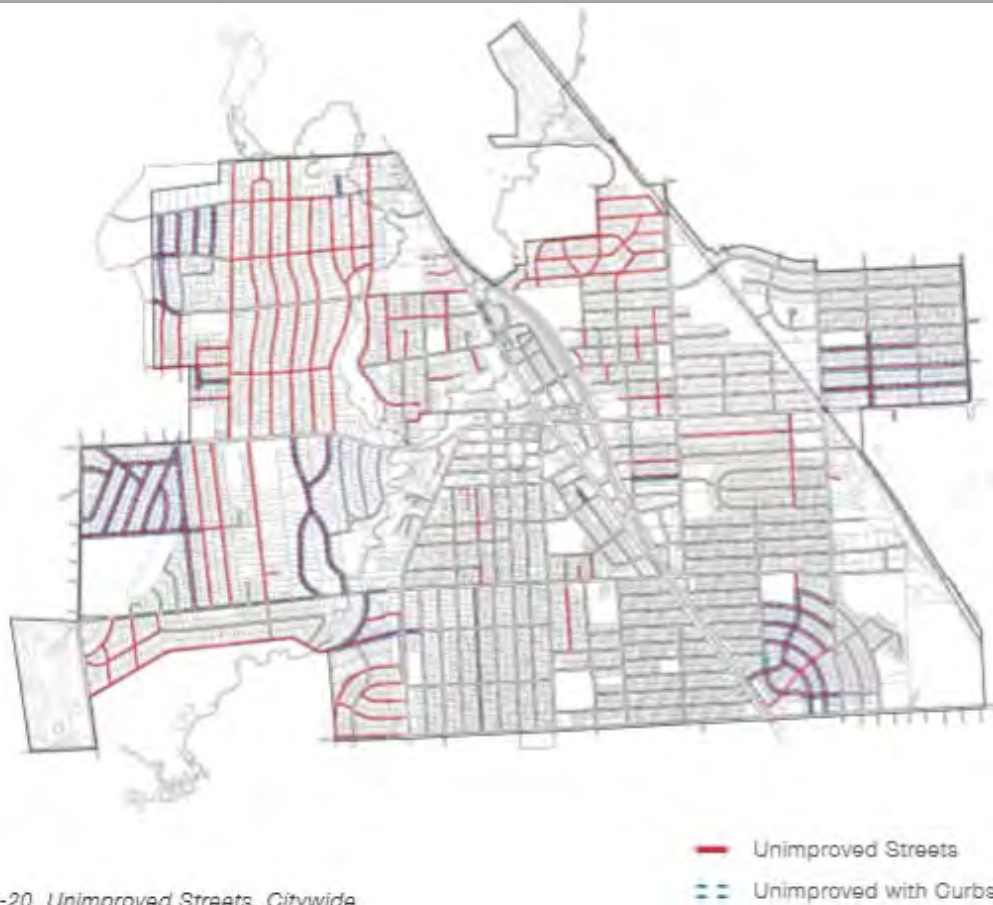


Figure B.1-20. Unimproved Streets, Citywide.

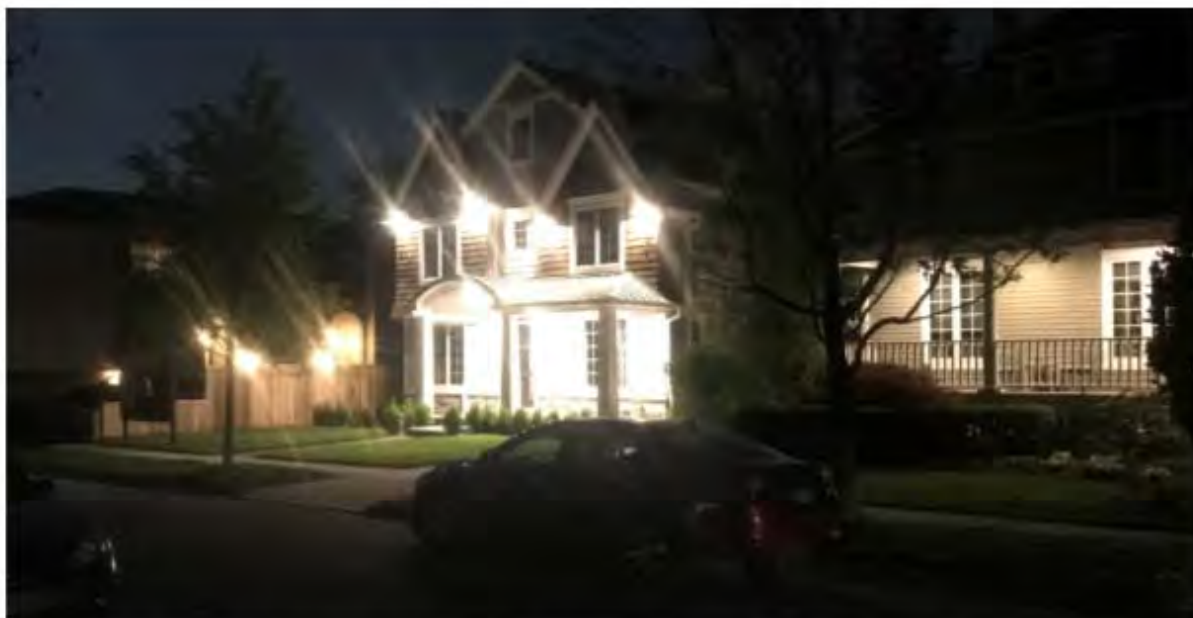
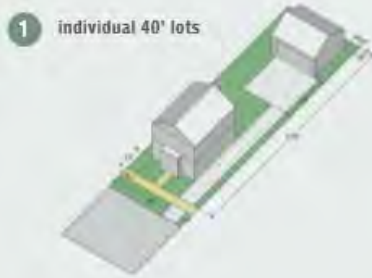


Image B.1-21. A new home too brightly lit, degrading neighborhood character, next to which an appropriately lit porch demonstrates preferred lighting levels.

TYPICAL CONDITION



1 - Small Single Family lots

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,600 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION



2: Over-garage ADU & 3: Attached ADU

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 ft
Lot Coverage	2: 40% 3: 60%
Unit Size	1,600 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

Figure B.1-23. Proposed ADU conditions.

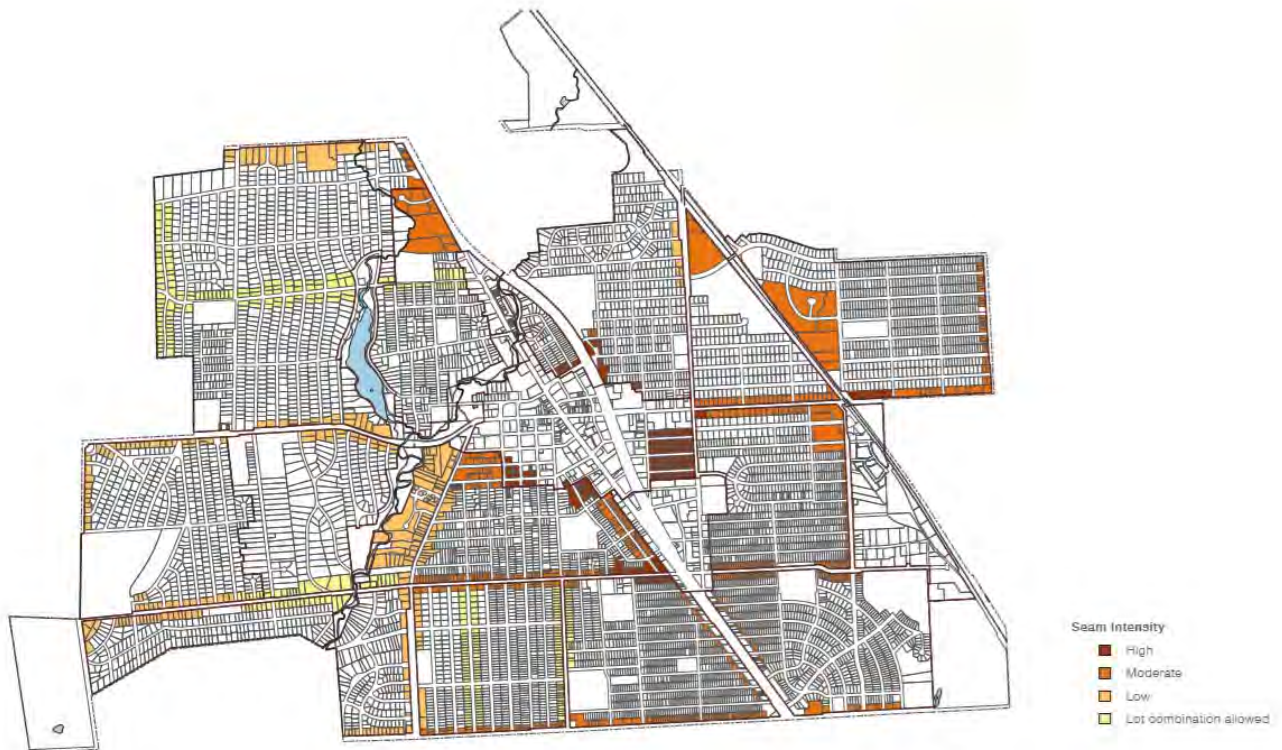
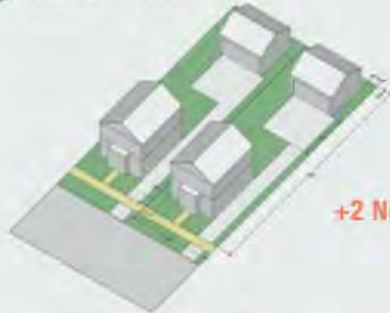


Figure B.1-30. Neighborhood Seams

TYPICAL CONDITION

1 Individual 40' lots



+2 Net Units

1 - Small Single Family lots

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,600 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION

2 combining two lots to build a 4-plex apartment building



2 - 4-Plex Apartments

Lot Width	80 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	9,600 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,200 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	4
Tot Residential Density	20 du/ac

Figure B.1-38. Proposed Small Multi-family buildings.

TYPICAL CONDITION

1 Individual 60' lots



+2 Net Units

1 - Medium Single Family lots

Lot Width	60 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	6,000 ft
Lot Coverage	30%
Unit Size	2,000 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	9 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION

2 combining two lots to build a 4-plex apartment building



2 - 4-Plex Apartments

Lot Width	80 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	9,600 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,200 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	4
Tot Residential Density	18 du/ac

Figure 1-41. Proposed Small Multi-family buildings.

TYPICAL CONDITION

1 Individual 40' lots



1 - Small Single Family lots

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,600 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION

2 combining three lots to build five townhouses



2 - Townhouses

Lot Width	120 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	14,400 ft
Lot Coverage	60%
Unit Size	1,360 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	5
Tot Residential Density	16 du/ac

+2 Net Units

Figure B.1-42. Proposed Townhouses and Duplexes.

TYPICAL CONDITION

1 Individual 40' lots



1 - Small Single Family lots

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	2,000 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION

2 combining three lots to build a cottage court

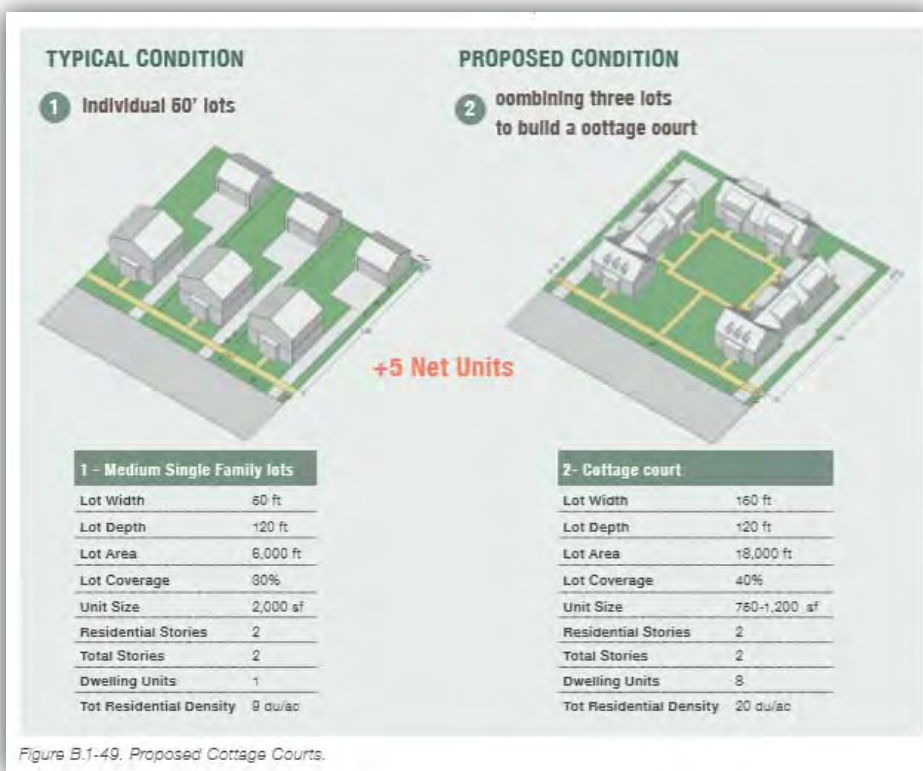


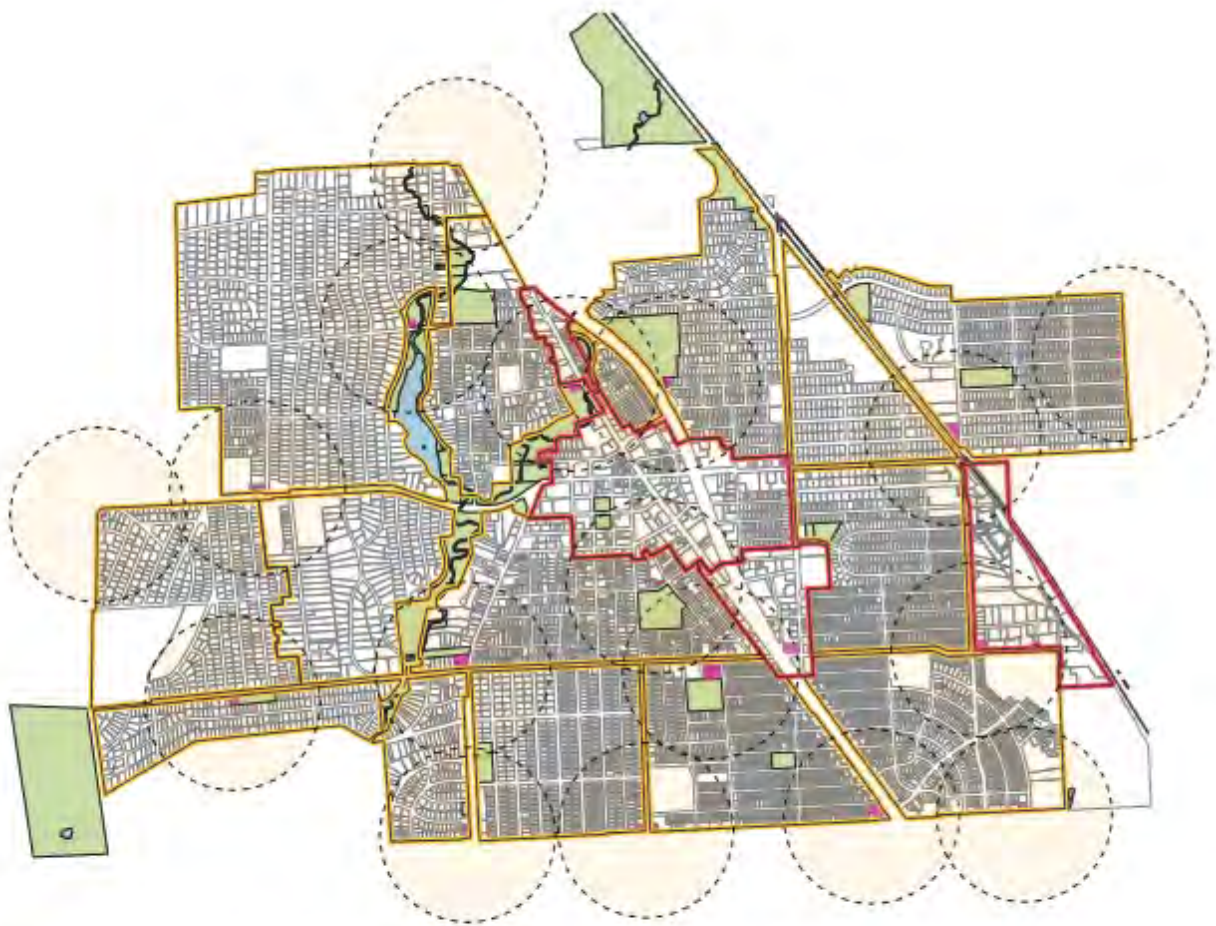
2 - Cottage Court

Lot Width	120 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	14,400 ft
Lot Coverage	60%
Unit Size	750-1,600 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	7
Tot Residential Density	23 du/ac

+4 Net Units

Figure B.1-46. Proposed Cottage Courts.





FigureB.1-62. Proposed Neighborhood Destinations.

Neighborhood Destinations

- Commercial Destinations
- Recreational Destinations
- Pedestrian Shed



Figure B.1-53. Mills Pharmacy destination improvement.

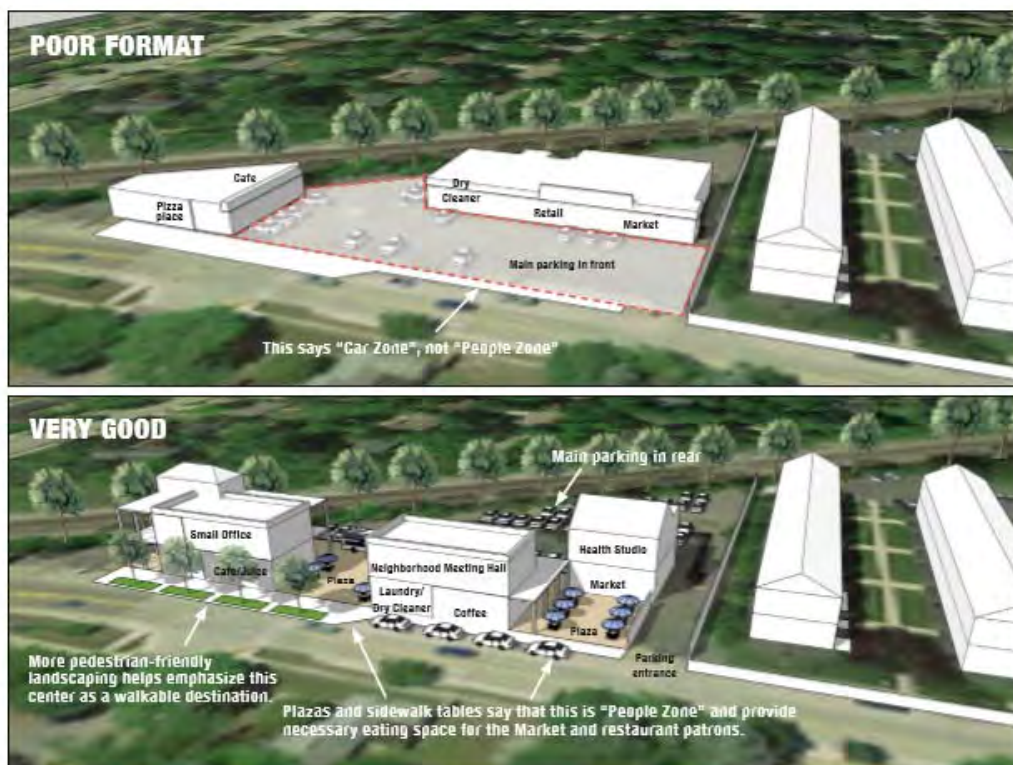


Figure B.1-54. Eton Market destination improvement.

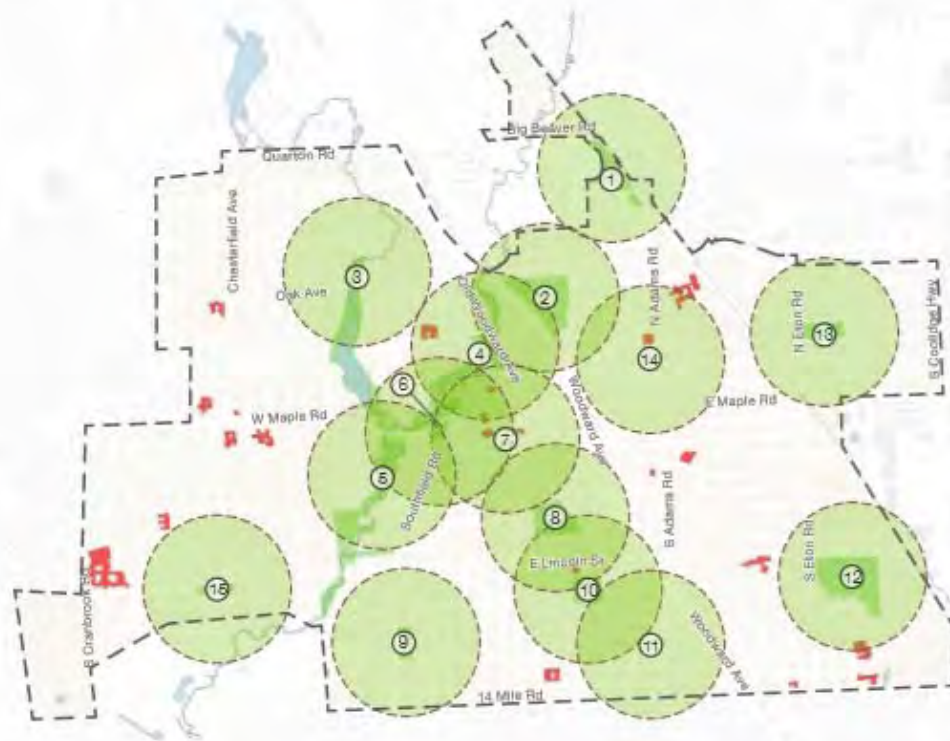


Figure B.1-57. Recreational Destinations.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| ① Manor Park | ⑧ Barnum Park |
| ② Poppleton Park | ⑨ Crestview Park |
| ③ Lower Baldwin Park | ⑩ St. James Park |
| ④ Booth Park | ⑪ Howarth Park |
| ⑤ Linden Park | ⑫ Kenning Park |
| ⑥ Martha Baldwin Park | ⑬ Pembroke Park |
| ⑦ Shain Park | ⑭ Adams Park |
| | ⑮ West Lincoln Well Site |

- Civic Institutions
- Recreational Destinations
- Pedestrian Shed

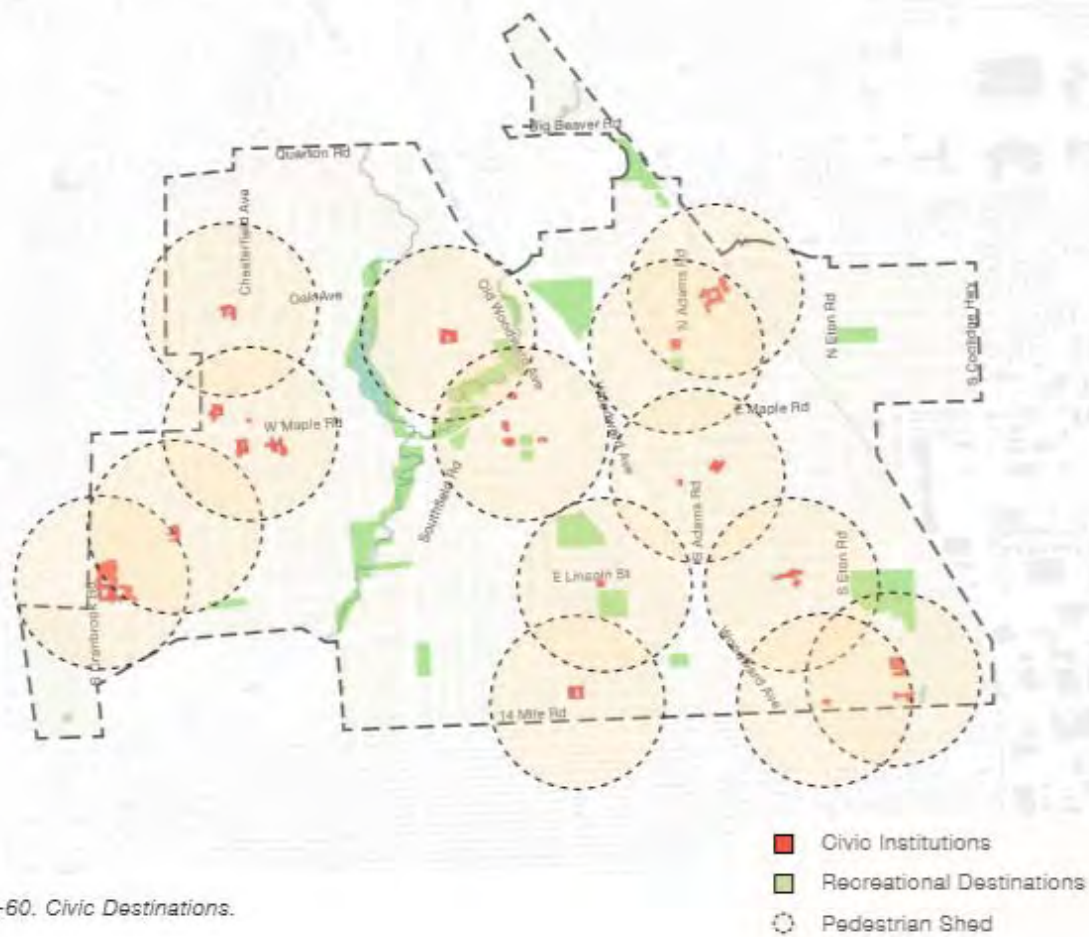


Figure B.1-60. Civic Destinations.

- Multimodal**
- Neighborhood Loop
 - - Neighborhood Connector
 - Protected Bike Lane
 - Bike Lane
 - - Paved Bike Path
 - Proposed Circulator Stop
 - Transit Stop
 - Pedestrian Improvements
 - Crossing Island
 - Crossing Island with RRFP

Civic Uses

- Civic
- School
- Parks

Neighborhood

- Fabric - Medium Intensity
- Fabric - Lot Enlargement Area
- Seam - Medium Intensity
- Seam - Low Intensity
- Destination

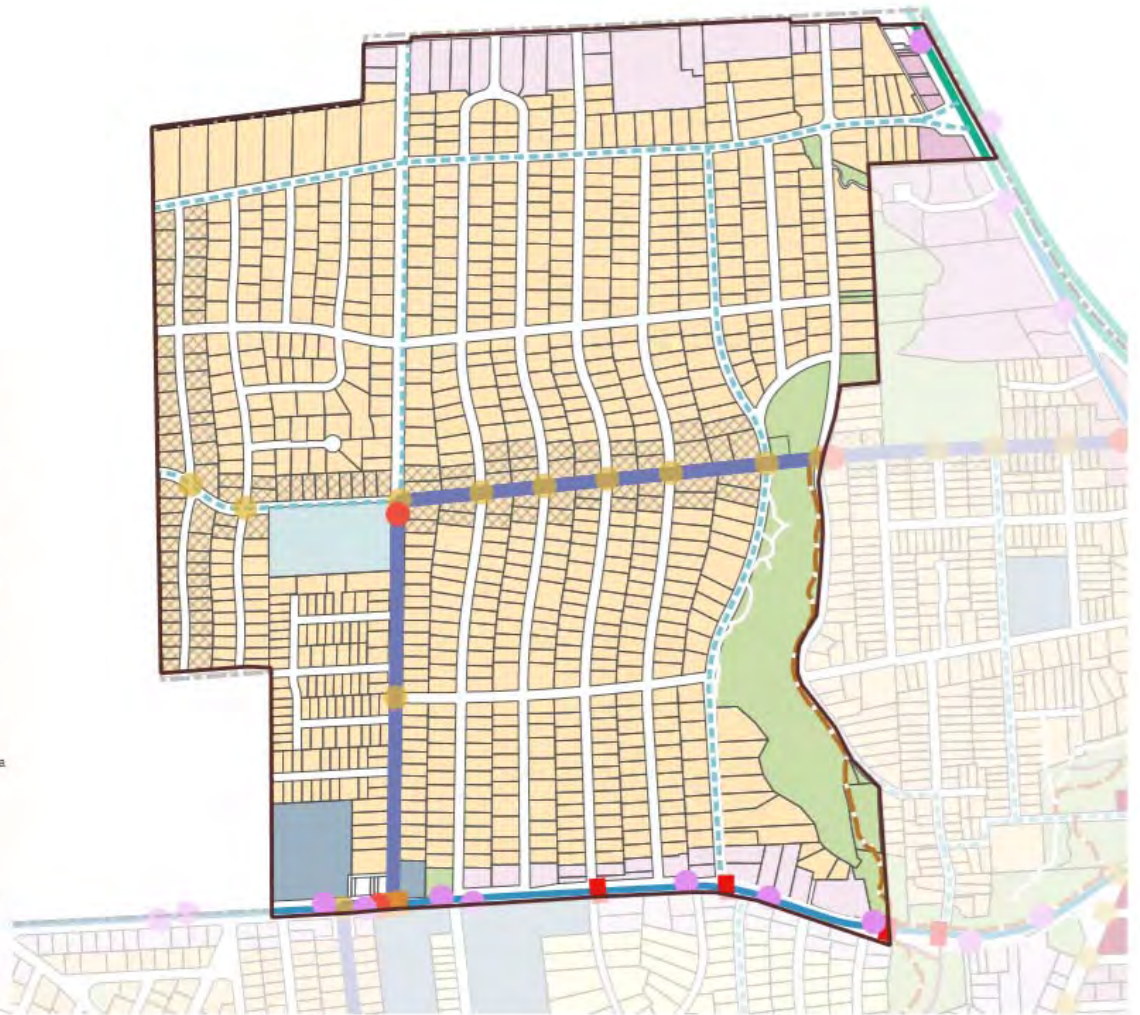


Figure B.2-1. Quarton Neighborhood.



Figure B.2-2. Holy Name Neighborhood.

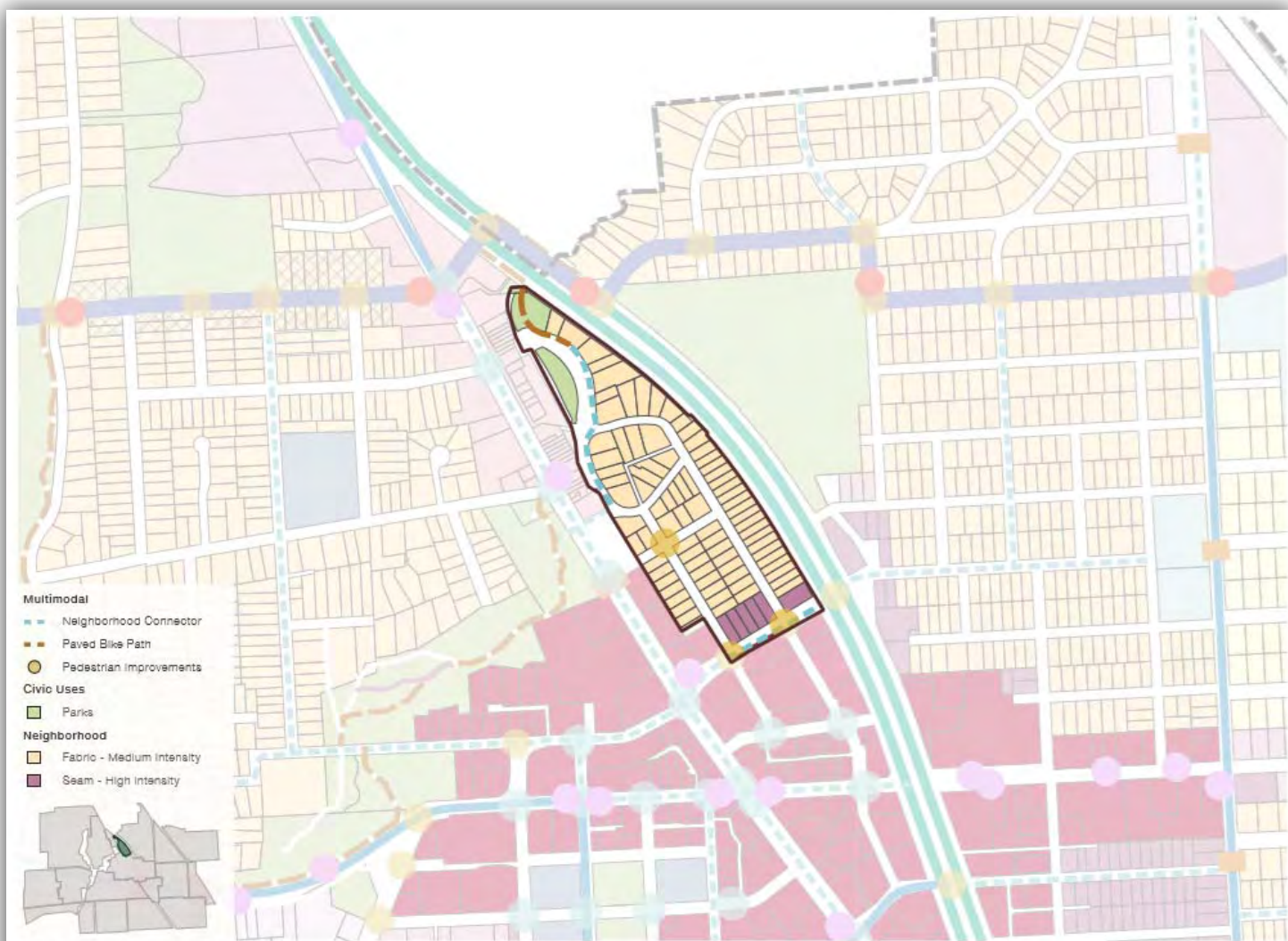


Figure B.2-3. The Ravines Neighborhood.

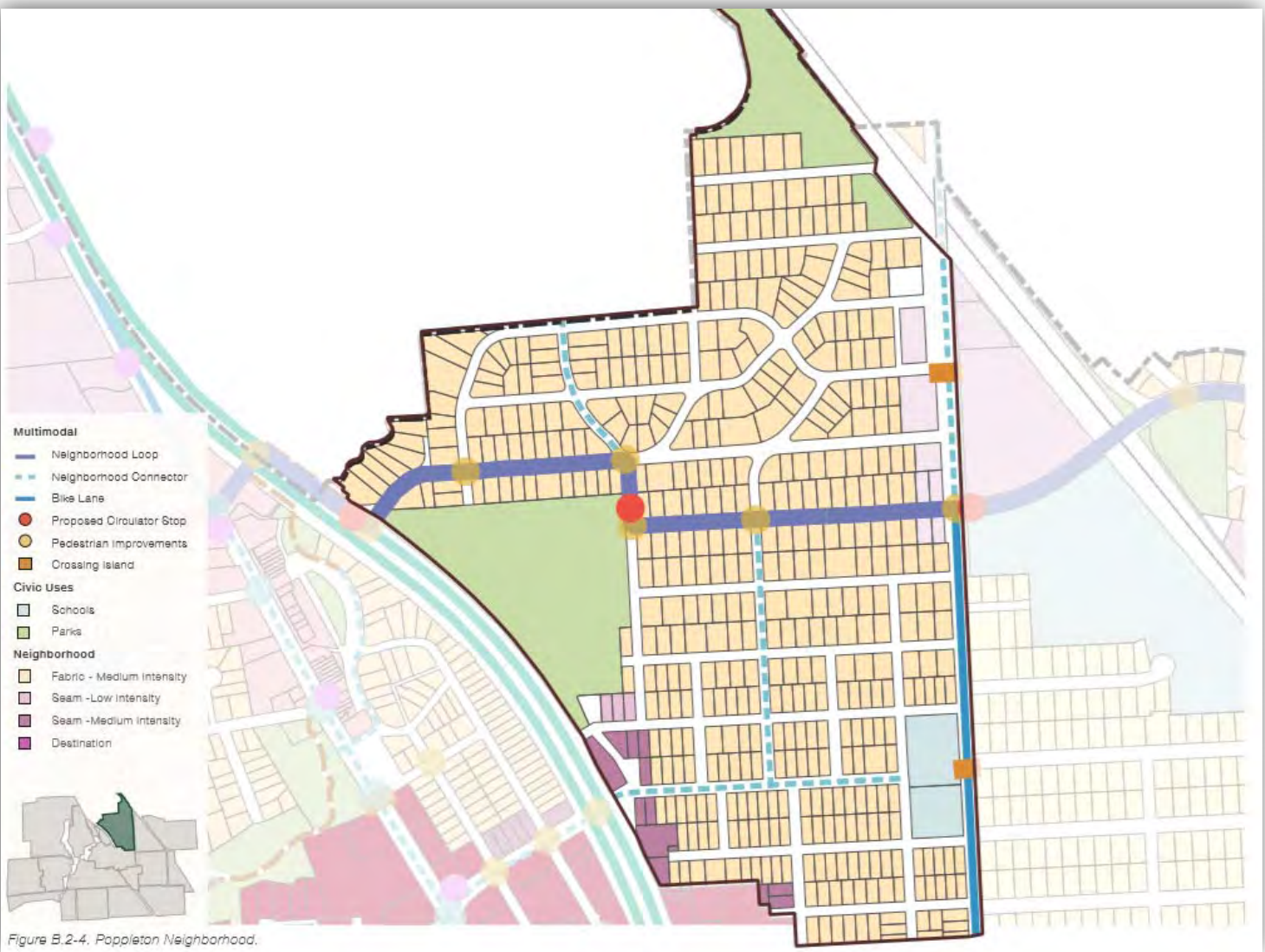


Figure B.2-4, Poppleton Neighborhood.



Figure B.2-5. Derby Neighborhood.

School
Cemetery



Figure B.2-6. Pembroke Neighborhood.

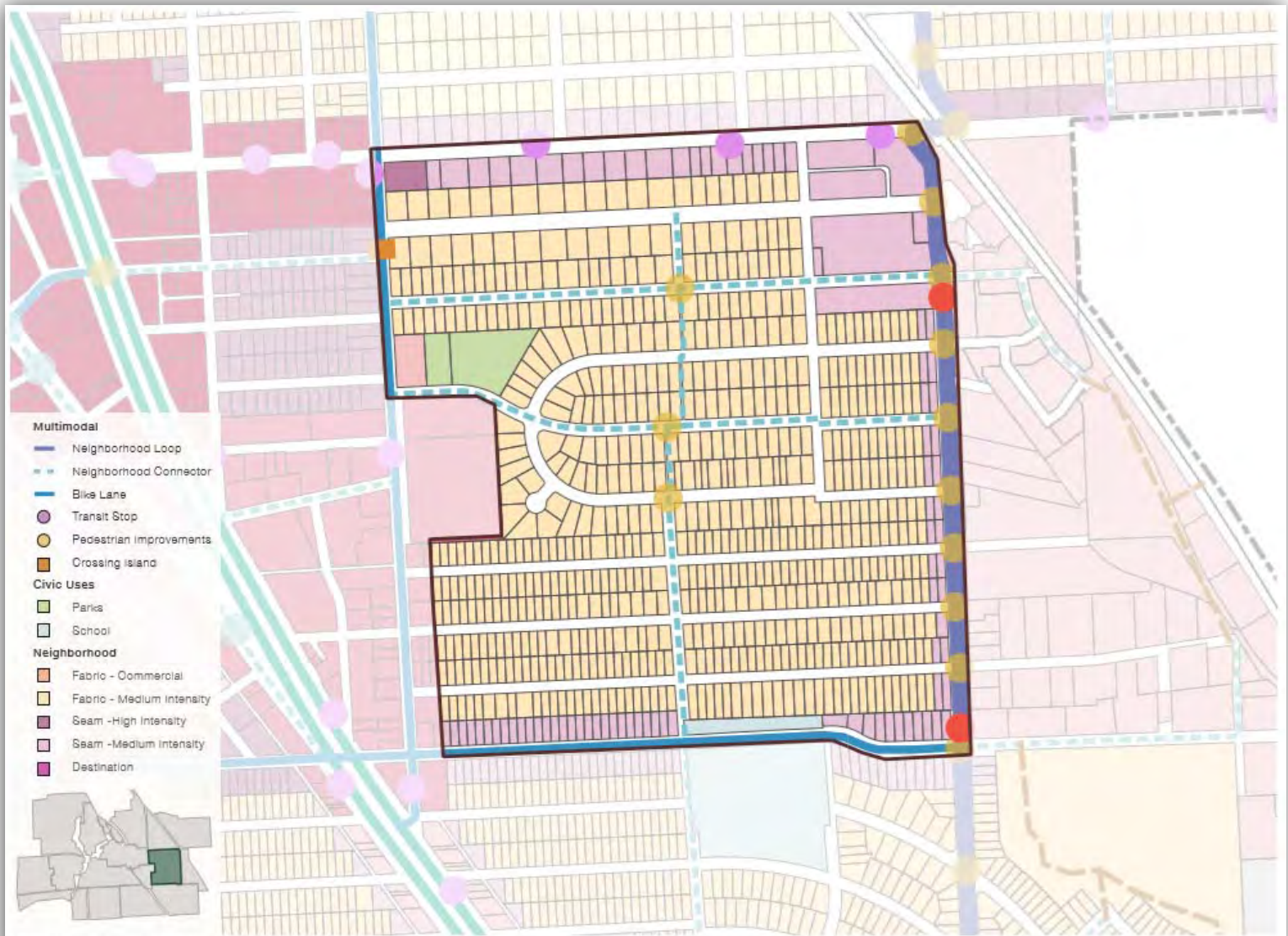


Figure B.2-7. Torry Neighborhood.

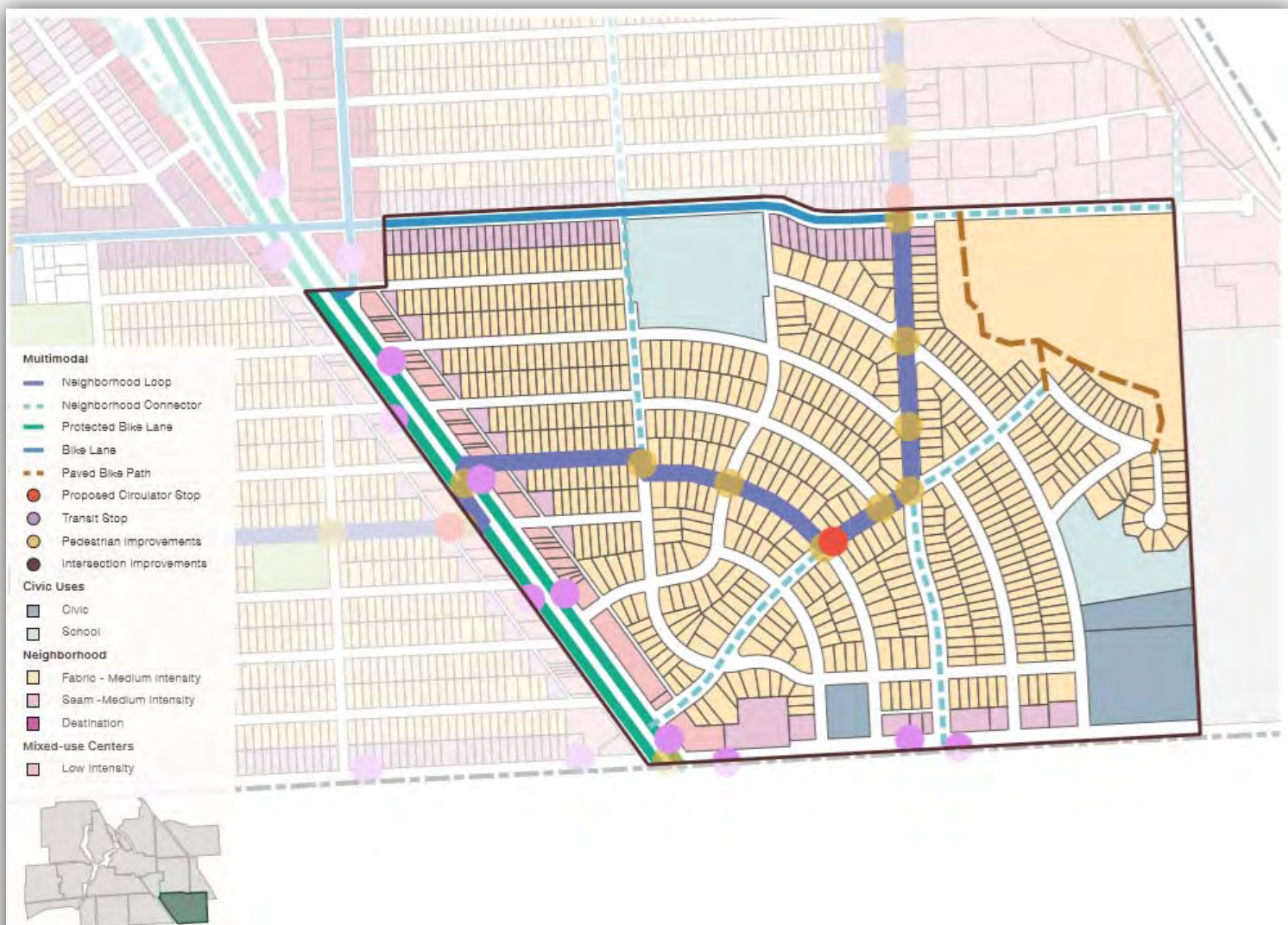


Figure B.2-8. Kenning Neighborhood.

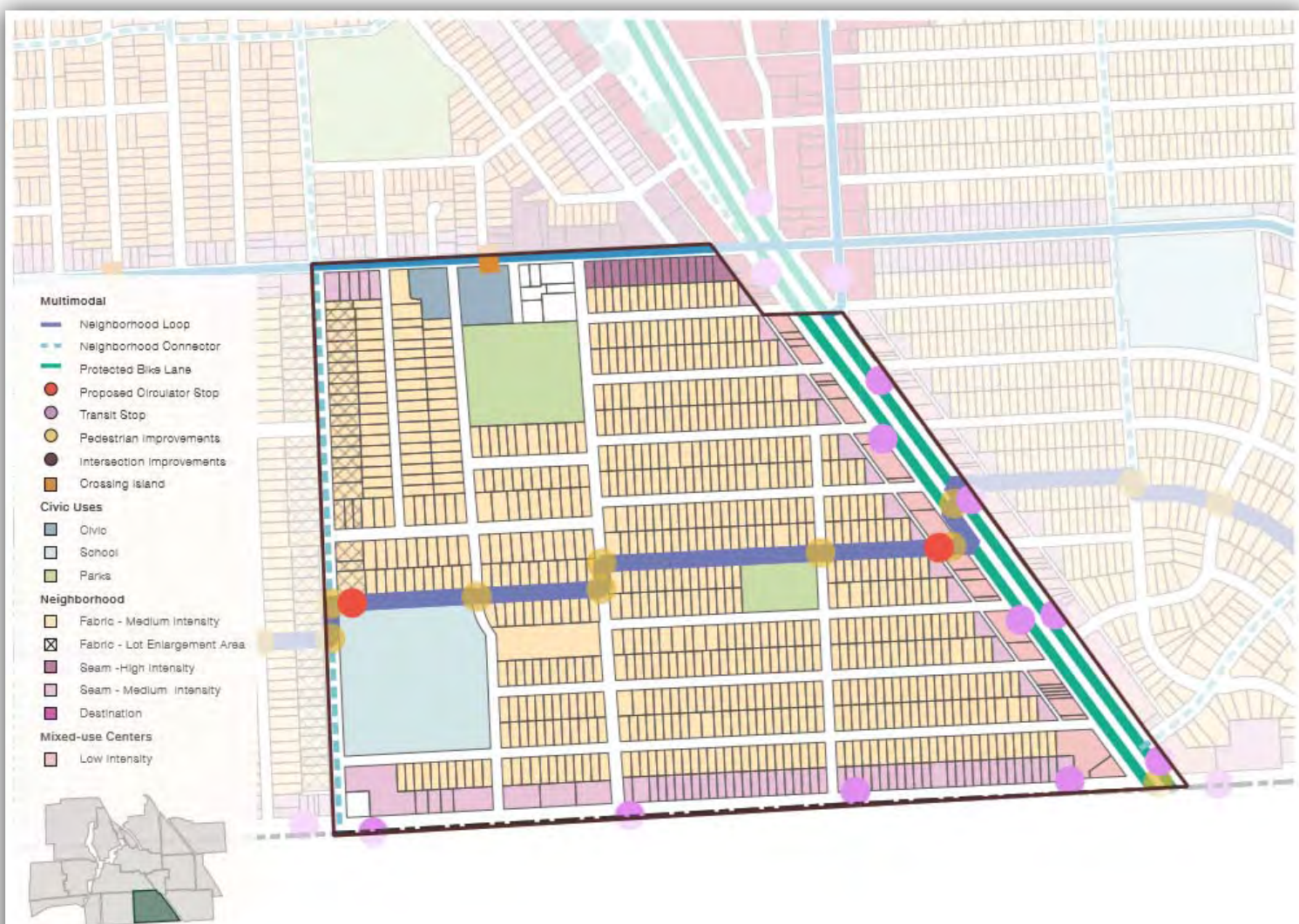
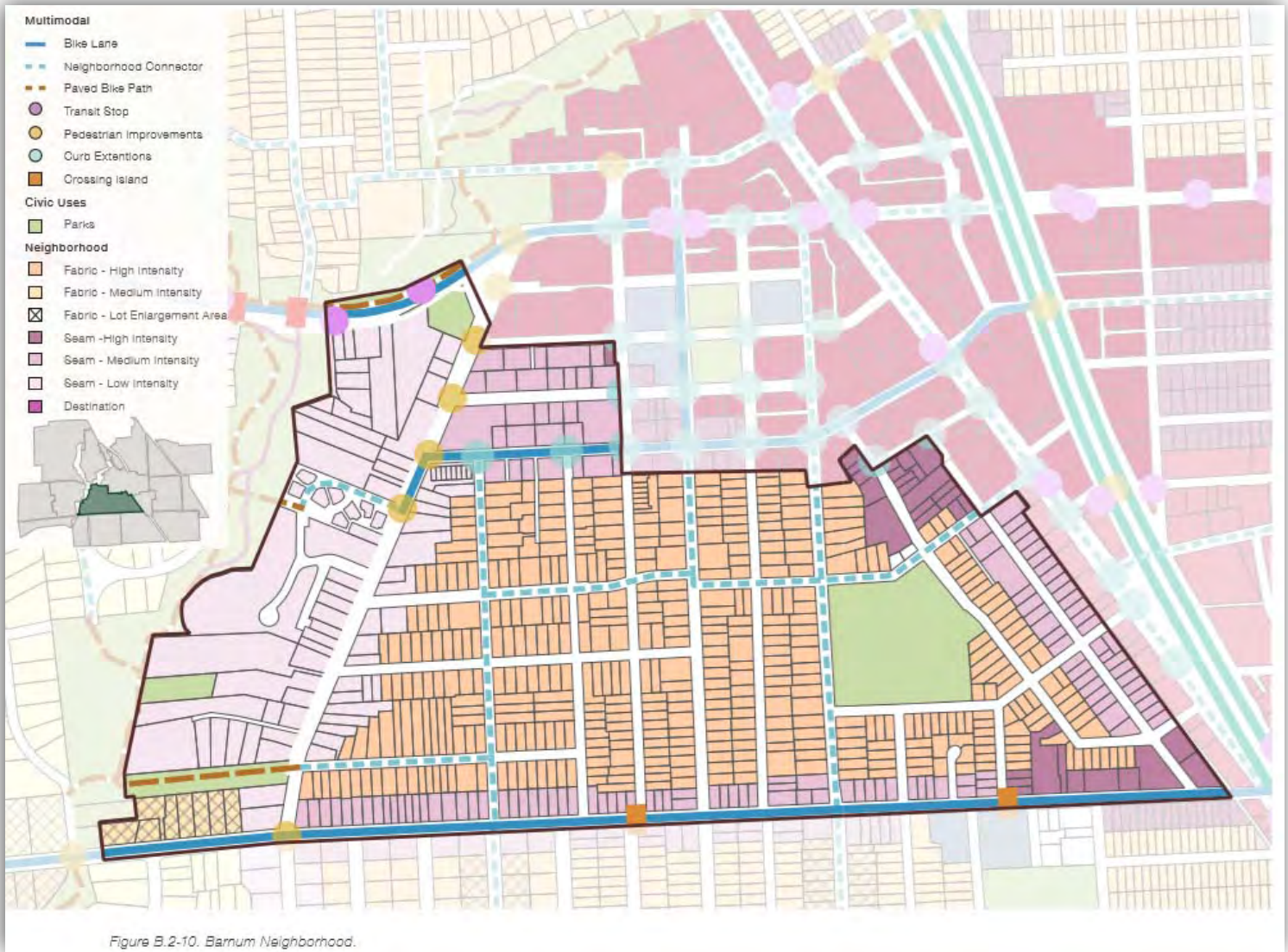


Figure B.2-9. Pierce Neighborhood.



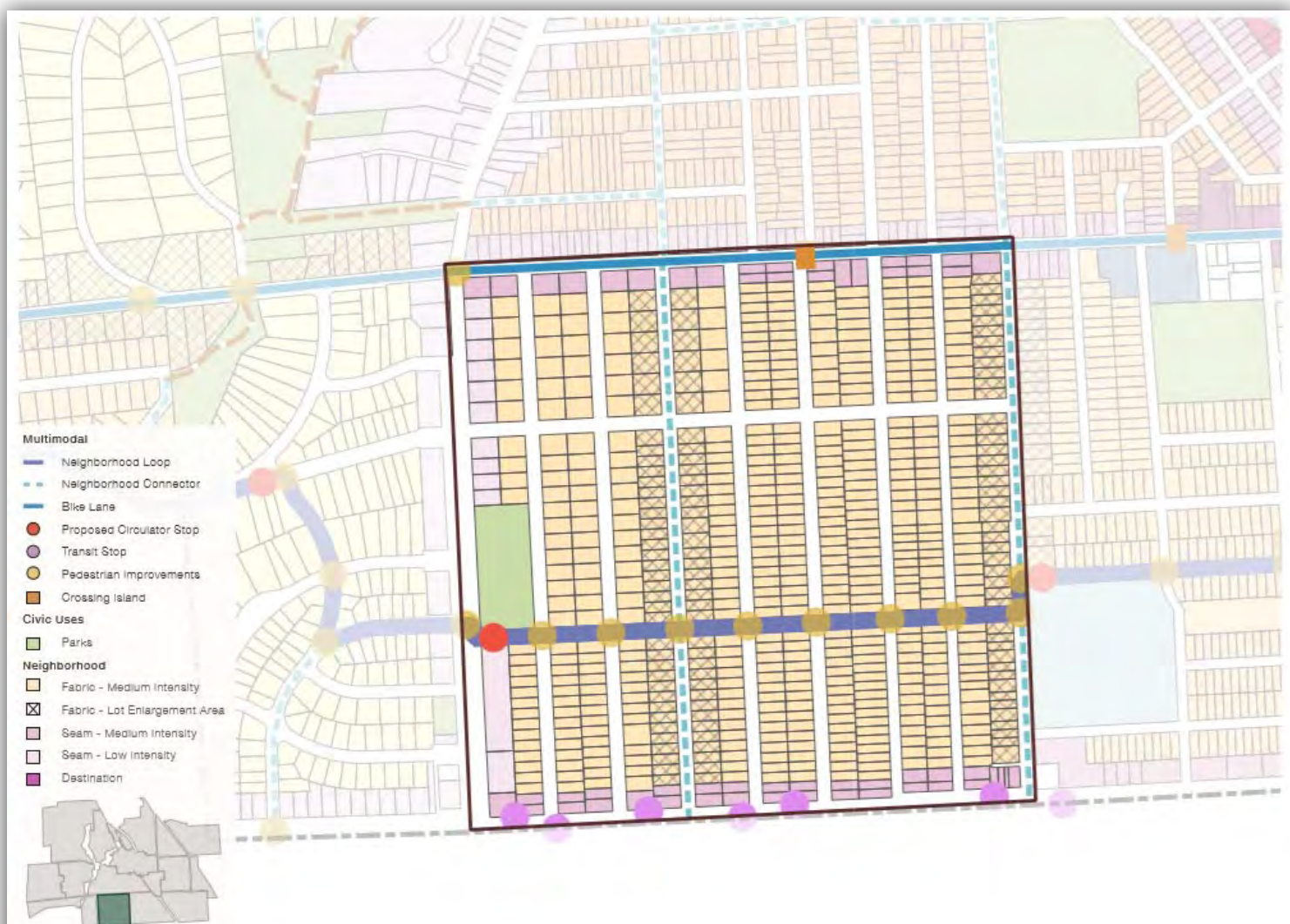


Figure B.2-11. Crestview Neighborhood.

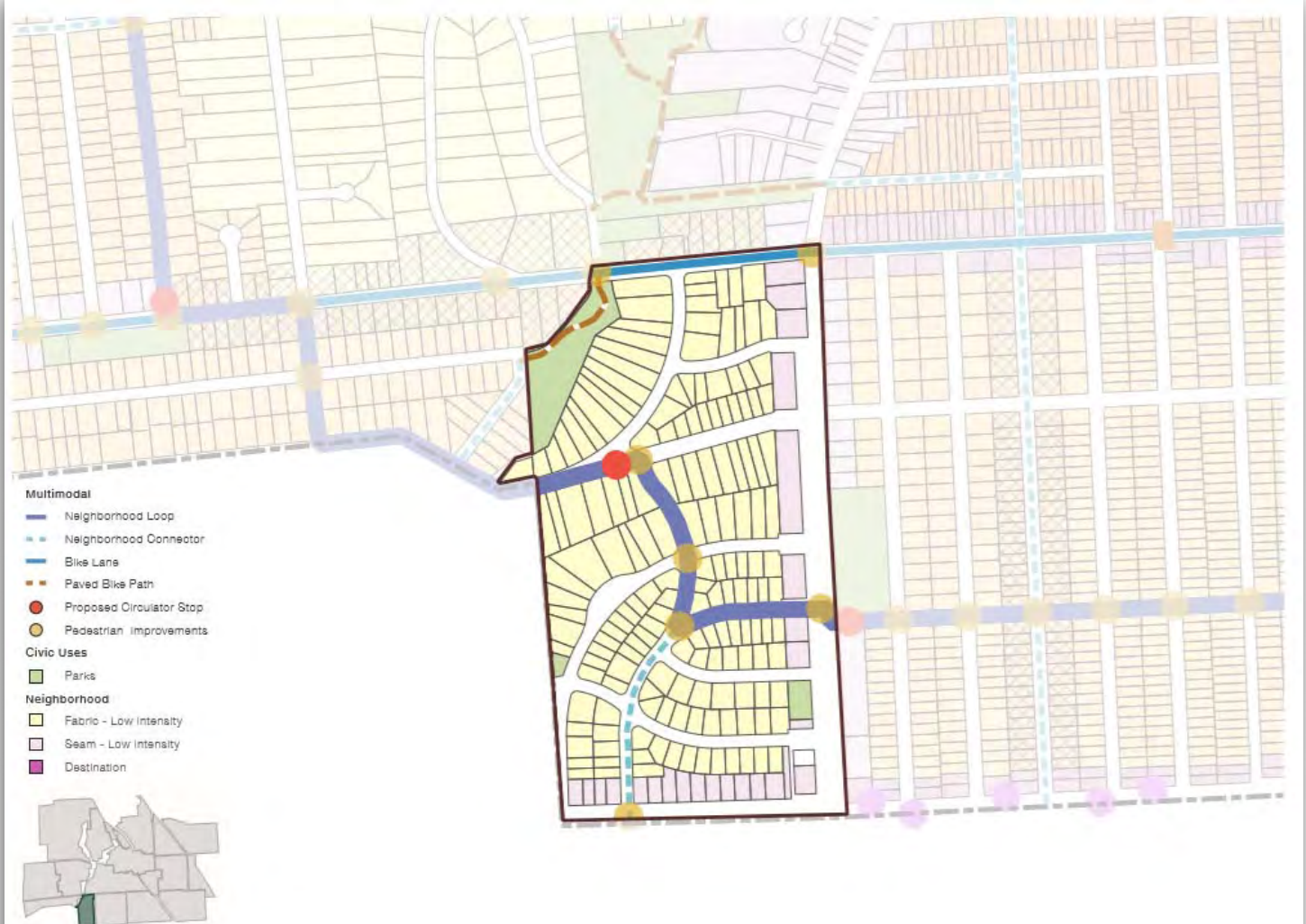


Figure B.2-12. Birmingham Farms Neighborhood.

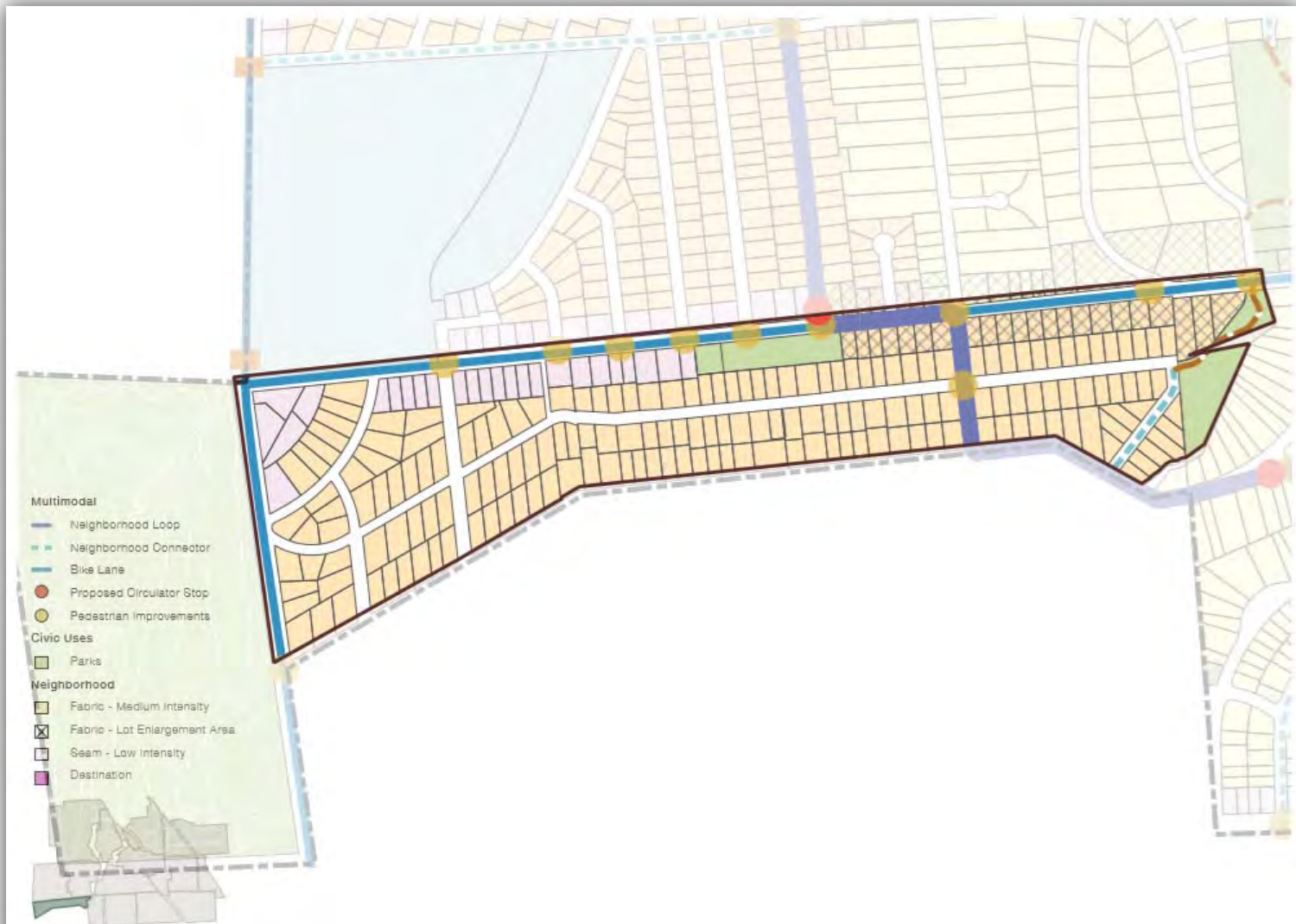


Figure B.2-13. Lincoln Hills Neighborhood.

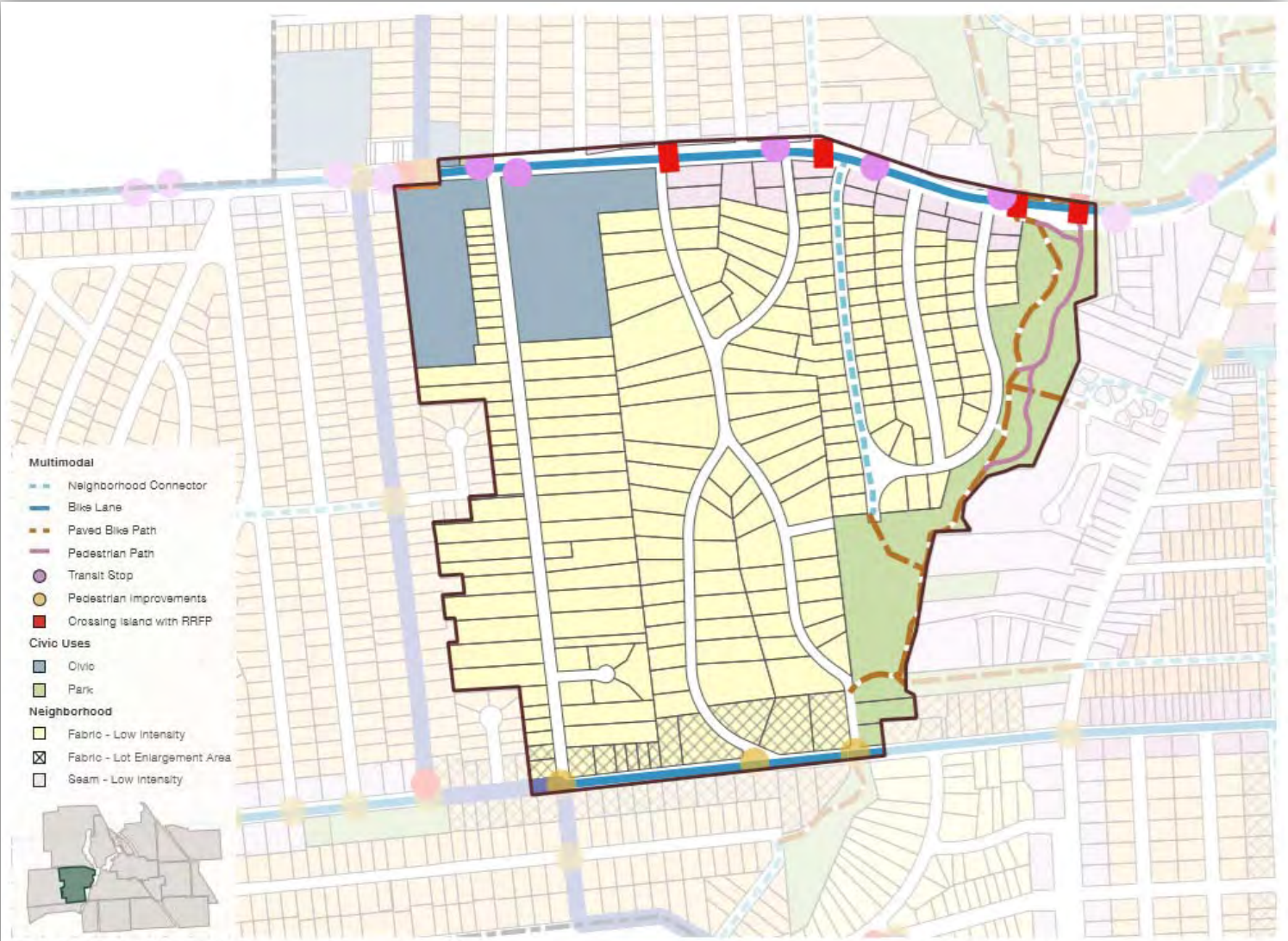


Figure B.2-14. Linden Neighborhood.

- Multimodal**
- Neighborhood Loop
 - - Neighborhood Connector
 - Bike Lane
 - Proposed Circulator Stop
 - Transit Stop
 - Pedestrian Improvements
 - Island Crossing
- Civic Uses**
- School
- Neighborhood**
- Fabric - Medium Intensity
 - ▣ Fabric - Lot Enlargement Area
 - Seam - Low Intensity
 - Destination

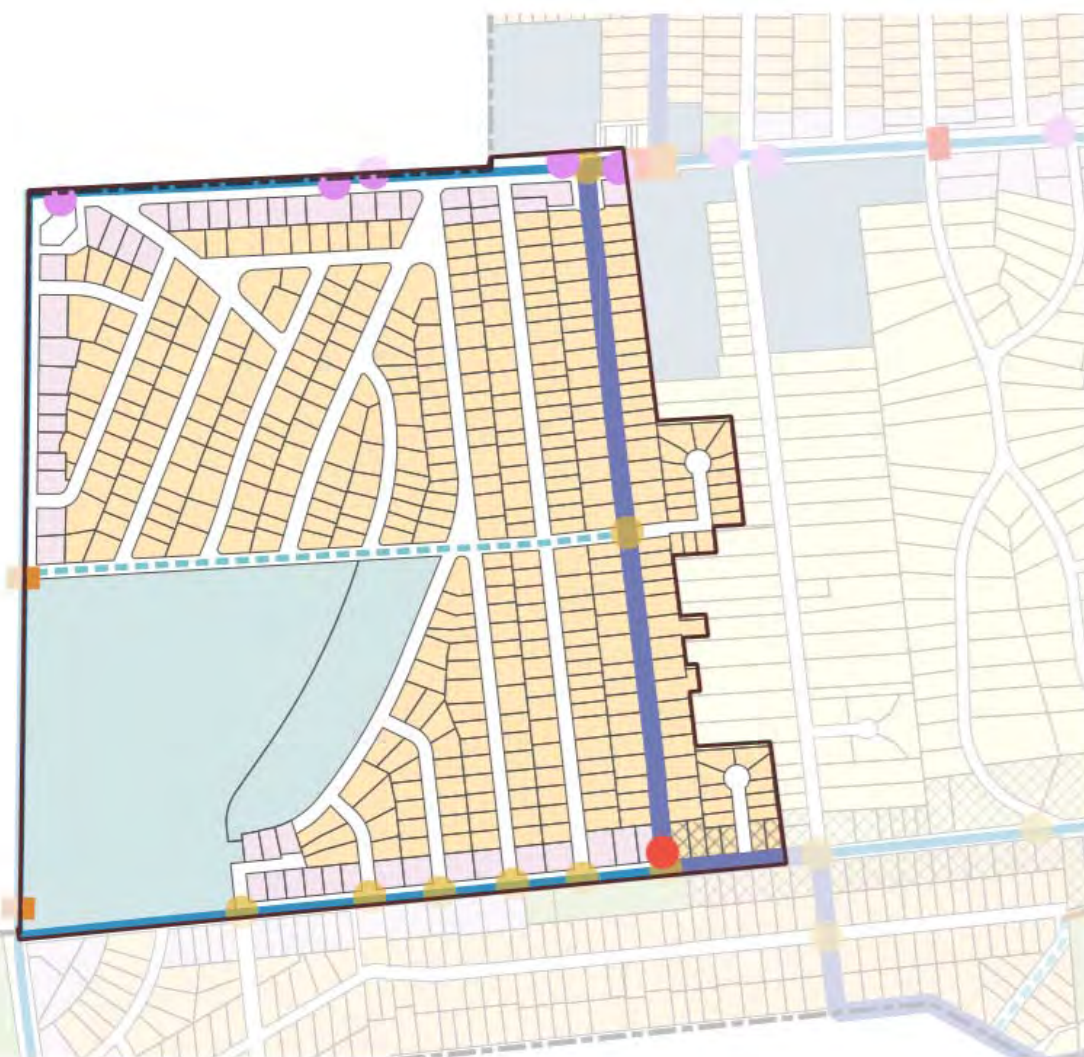


Figure B.2-15. Seasholm Neighborhood.

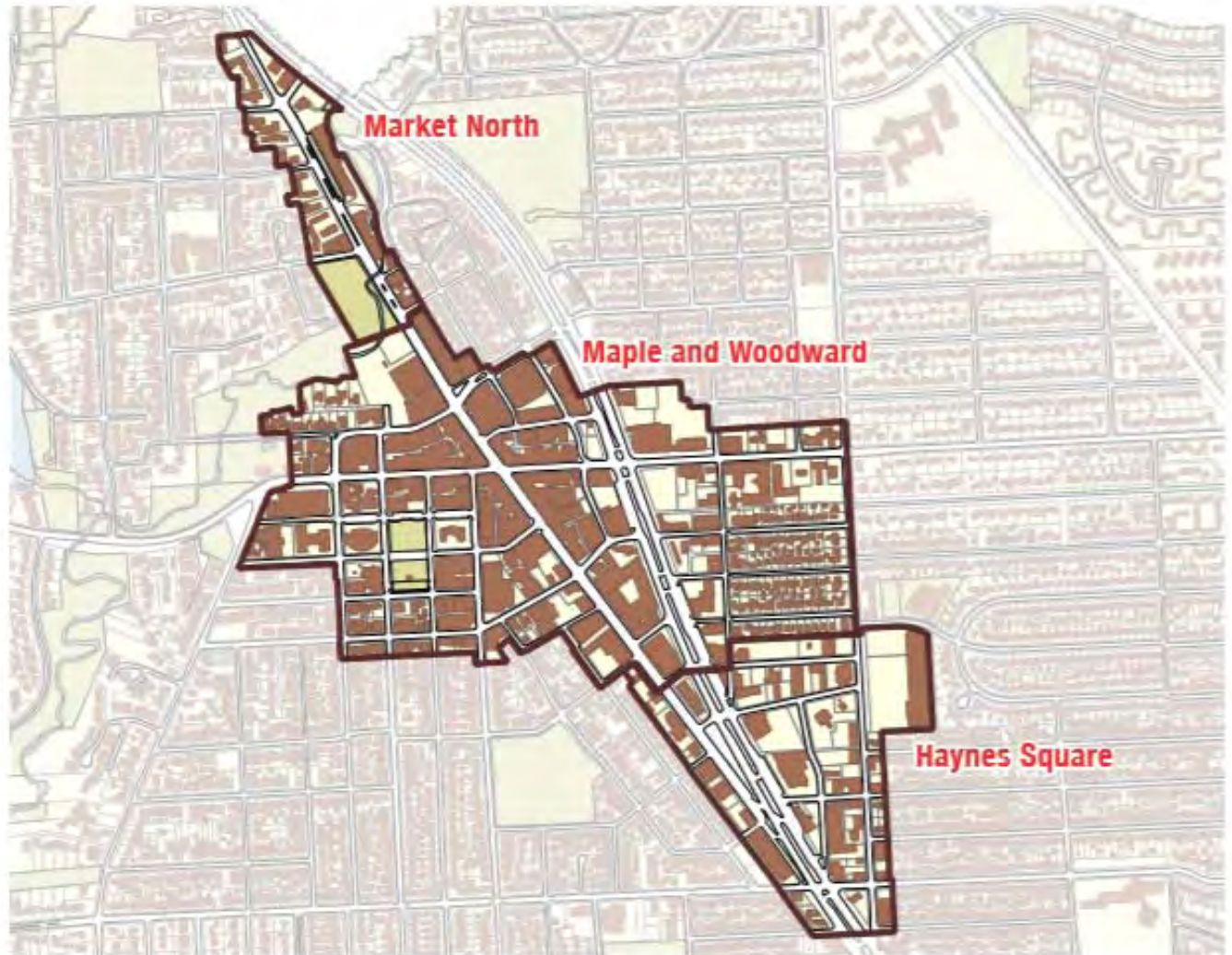


Figure C.1-01. Three districts of Downtown Birmingham.

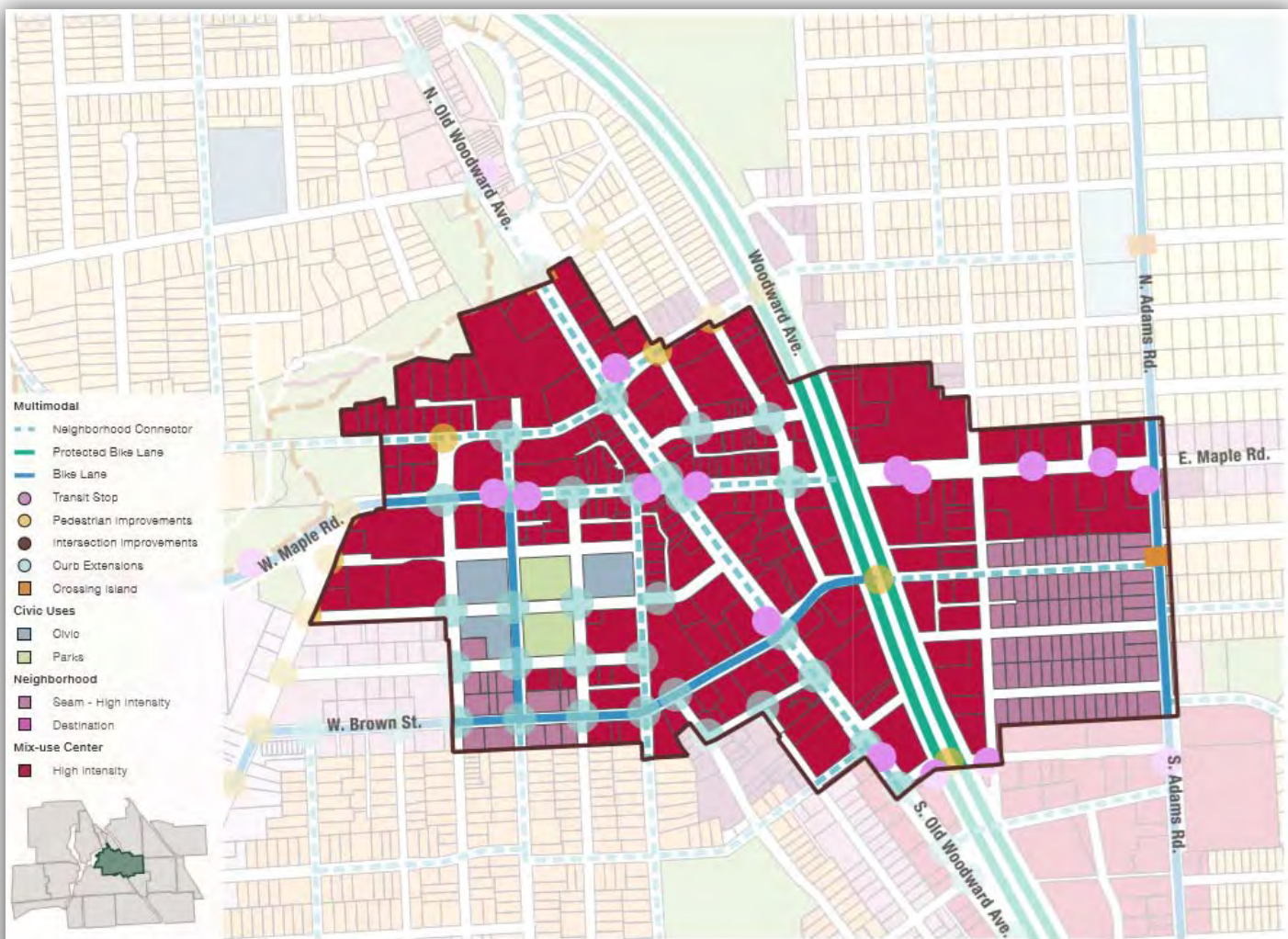
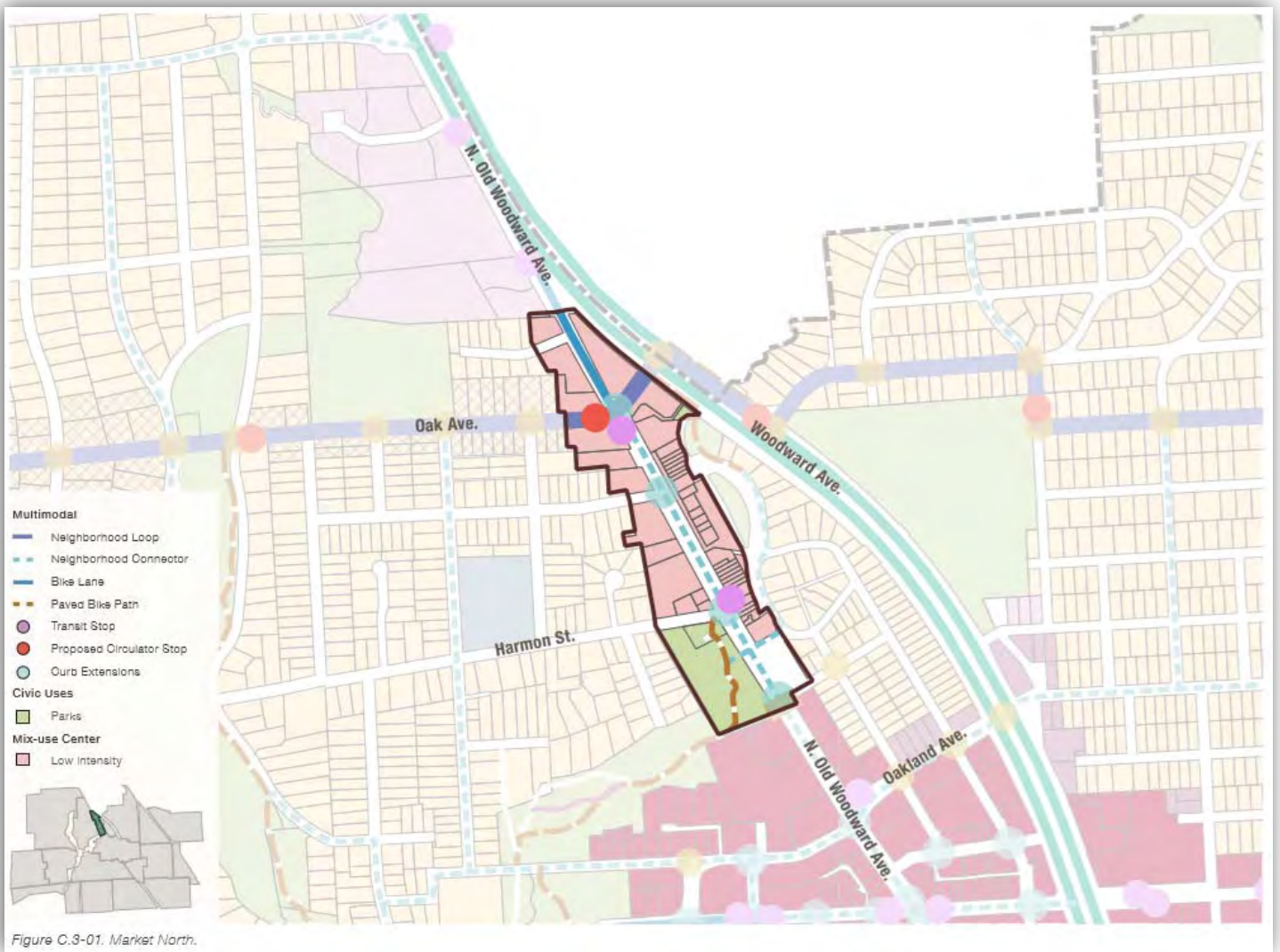


Figure C.2-01. Maple and Woodward district.



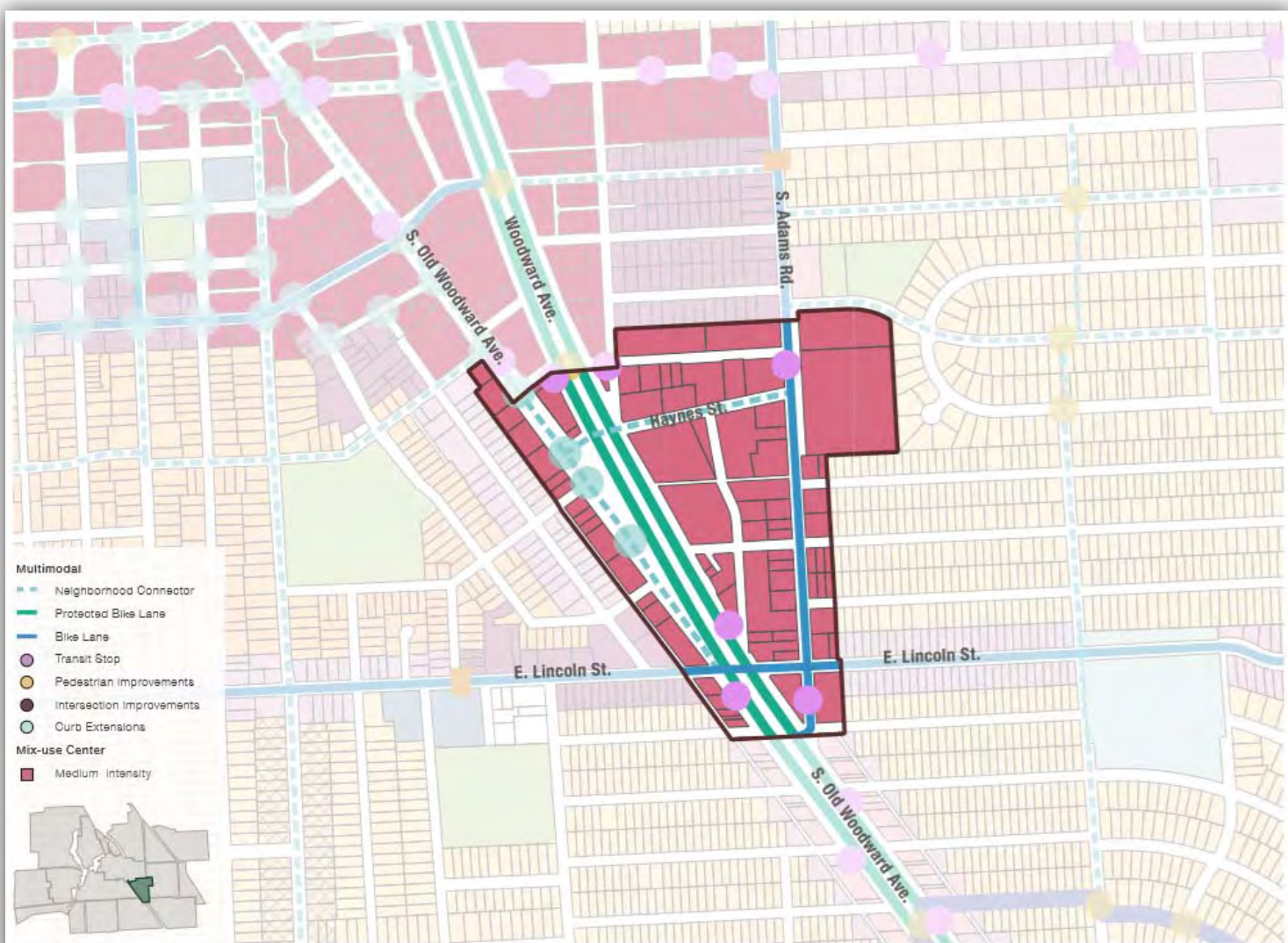


Figure C.4-01. Haynes Square.



Images C.1-02-C.1-04. Wayfinding signage. Business directory signage on the left, general wayfinding at center, and dynamic parking wayfinding on the right.



Image C.2-03. The dining deck at Dick O' Dow's leaves insufficient sidewalk space.

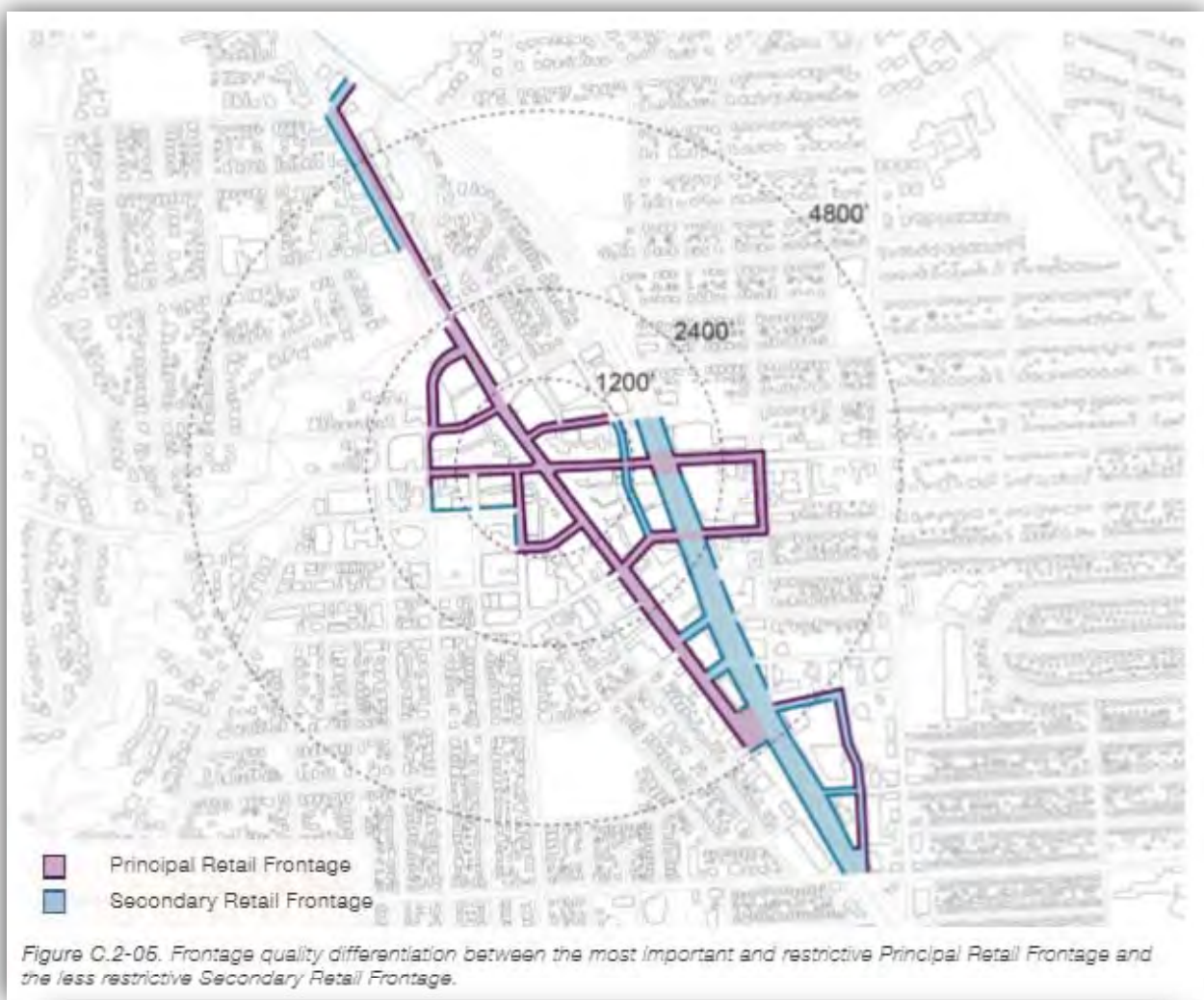


Image C.2.06. Booth Park's underwhelming entrance is the ideal place for a corner plaza with a cafe and ample seating.



Figure C.2-12. Growth capacity West of Woodward on sites with 1 and 2 story buildings.



Figure C.3-06. Proposed open air market pavilion on municipal parking lot 6.

CURRENT ZONING WITH OVERLAY



Downtown Overlay Zoning

D2 3-story development

D4 5-story development

Zoning

R2 single family residential

R6 single family residential

PROPOSED OVERLAY EXTENSION



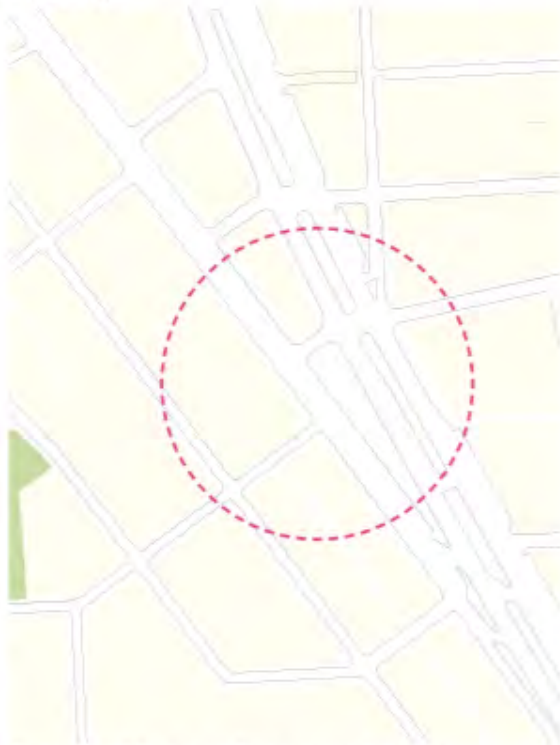
B2 general business

O office commercial

P parking structures

Figure C.3-08. Extension of D2 zoning in Market North.

EXISTING



PROPOSED

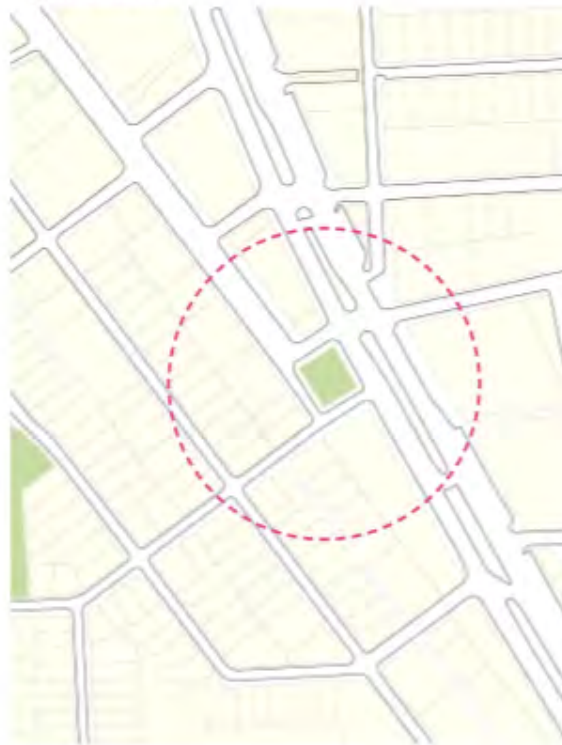


Figure C.4-03. Haynes Square reconfiguration.



Figure C.4-04. Redevelopment of Haynes Square.



Figure C.6-04. Shared-use alley space.



Images C.4-05-08. Shared-use paving examples from the 2013 Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan.



Figure C.6-13. Neighborhood Sleeve block configuration which consolidates parking mid-block and creates small neighborhood-focused nodes along the east-west streets.

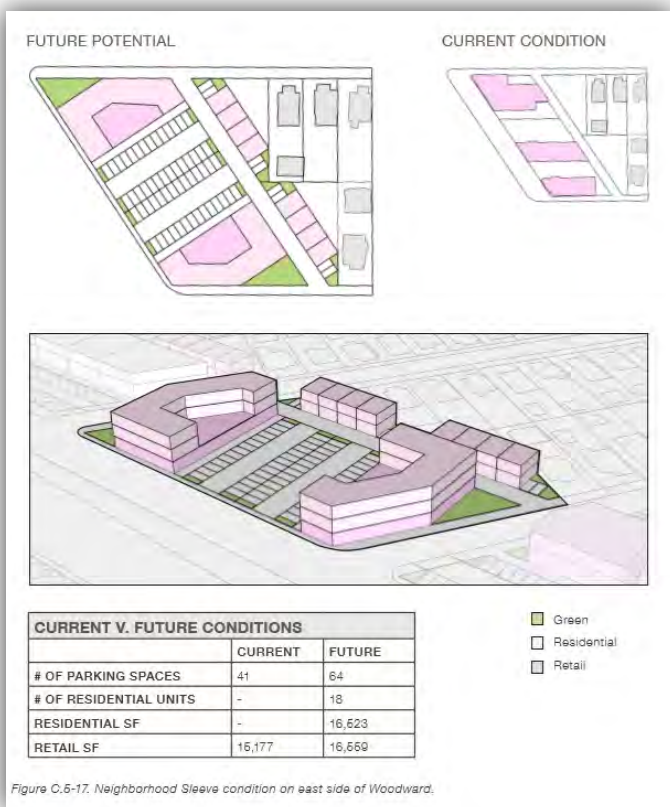
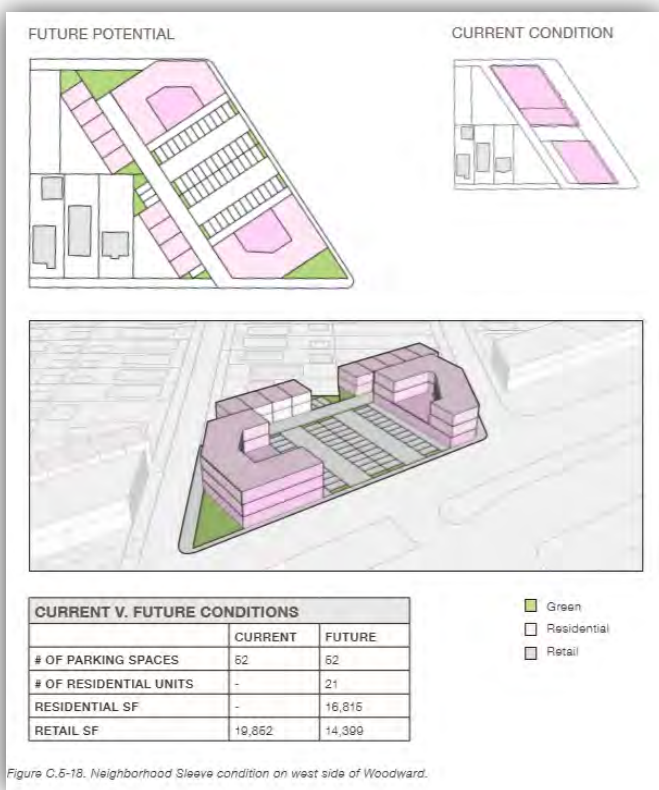




Figure C.6-08. The Lower Rail District.

Future Potential



- Location of train station addition
- Property blocking connection
- Future road extensions

Existing Conditions



Figure C.6-15. Existing conditions and future potential of access to Troy Transit Center.



The Birmingham Plan

Draft 1 | 10/03/19

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A. Vision

A. Vision

Preamble

Preamble

Planning for the future of a successful City holds an intriguing set of challenges of which our interactions with the residents, workers, neighbors, and leaders in Birmingham bring forth. All too often the act of planning is encumbered by an obsession with the present and past. However, we've met with many people who look forward with hope; a successful future is in the hands of those with hope and optimism. Even among the hopeful, a broader concern for our deteriorating social connectivity rang clear. While Birmingham has long supported a series of close-knit communities within its borders, our greater culture has shifted towards increasing isolation. This comes not at the fault of individuals - who remain bright, engaged, loving and caring members of families and civic and social groups - but due in large part to changes in the structure of our regions and technology's role in bridging social gaps created by our increasing physical isolation.

Structurally our regions have spread the fabric of our daily lives apart, few places as completely as Metropolitan Detroit. People have been spread further from each other, and from their workplaces, social spaces, entertainment, and the staples of daily life, forced to spend an increasing amount of their time driving from place to place, often alone. In the early days of this change it didn't seem so bad. But as our population grew, our orbits expanded along with relentless traffic congestion, leaving little time for family or friends, and especially little time for engaging civically in our communities. Eventually technology stepped in to help, only to exacerbate the problem. Many people now move about the region not seeing each other as community members but as an inconvenience.

Birmingham is rare. It has been a place built heavily upon community, weaving together neighbors, schools, churches, civic clubs and institutions, and businesses. We heard a great deal of nostalgia for the City's former social structures. For some residents, the loss of strong social spheres is manifest in the changing character of homes and business districts. For others blame is placed on greater societal issues. We heard the loss expressed especially strongly from the City's civic institutions which

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are trying to build and support community but feel that they are increasingly unknown as society has forgotten their critical role. Some feel that downtown's more recent intensity of activity has further eroded its' culture. Yet at the same time we heard a great deal of optimism from new and younger residents. They moved to Birmingham in order to find community, an increasingly rare opportunity. We heard their hope for the kind of life others waxed nostalgic for. And in opposition to those who are nostalgic, invigoration from the increased activity of downtown and growth within neighborhoods. Those optimistic new residents believe that they can achieve this in Birmingham, though many also recognize how society overall creates a barrier, even here.

Birmingham is rare because it did not deconstruct itself like most historic places in Metropolitan Detroit. Had other cities remained intact, Birmingham would be special, but not rare. As a rare place, it is desired after. Desire is manifest in growth pressure which continually increases property values. Many stories exist as a result. New residents are willing to pay for the lifestyle that Birmingham offers, many stretched thin to do so. Plenty of people desire to live in Birmingham but cannot afford it. Some residents prefer that the City become increasingly exclusive while others feel that it is antithetical to the community's history. Many residents are dismayed that the demand to live in Birmingham has resulted in a significant number of demolitions while many people have purchased the resulting homes for the quality of life offered in the City and its neighborhoods. Some residents would like to downsize and remain in the community but can't afford the move or can't find the apartments and condos they desire. No single group is in the majority.

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Through conversations with residents and leaders we've been exposed to these divergent desires. When we've surveyed residents however, responses overall have been more optimistic for the City's future than less. Younger residents show a clear and significant optimism and older residents an increasing pessimism. The demographics of survey respondents and their positions reflected that which we heard in person, exceptions noted. We find this situation to be prevalent everywhere, some would say its simply in our nature. To look to the future we must do so with a guarded optimism. Change and evolution are good but too much change too fast destabilizes. Similarly change that is too little and too slow also destabilizes.

A broader story also needs to be told, which affects Birmingham and the surrounding region. This story is of change that is too little and too slow. The story is common to most US cities during the 1980's. Following the social unrest of the 1960's and 70's and the severe economic recession of the 1970's and early 80's, many smaller cities locked themselves in. Change at that time was seen as detrimental and smaller cities wanted to avoid the fate of big cities which burned and depopulated. Across the country, zoning codes and plans were adopted which aimed to make the present condition permanent. Downtowns were strangled. Any non single-family housing was locked down. And businesses were removed from neighborhoods. At the same time, malls and sprawl were on the rise - alternatives to the unsafe city whose roots lay in the industrial revolution and were accelerated by World War 2. As a result, City values dropped and main streets shuttered. Those who tried to compete destroyed themselves trying, razing their main streets and downtowns, while other Cities went dormant. City populations became poorer and aged, schools declining as a result.

Rather than evolving, Cities spent much of the late 1980's and 90's slowly contracting. Change came in the late 1990's and early 2000's with a slight amount of renewed interest in city life that had been lost. As society increasingly spread out and became isolated, the situation in cities began to reverse as people sought after something they had lost. The hope and romance of sprawl turned to rejection and opposition for many who grew up there. Some cities were

aware of the change early on, reinvesting in their downtowns and main streets. Others remain unaware today. Yet even those cities that began to change early could only focus on their commercial districts.

With decades of stagnation and a lingering fear of non single-family housing, price pressure has surged as the supply of desirable places pales in comparison to demand. Within this unbalanced condition, another severe recession in 2008 halted housing construction and shut down the construction industry. Just prior to this recession, growth had begun to return to city neighborhoods and downtowns more broadly. The recession further exacerbated the supply and demand imbalance at the same time that more of society became interested in cities. In reaction, some cities and states have taken the drastic measure of ending single-family zoning. That is the present, and the impact of this reaction is unknown.

In all, this story is one of increasing reaction and instability. Lack of change creates excessive pressure. Excessive change creates instability. Birmingham weathered these reactions rather mildly. While the City locked down zoning in the 1980's, the downtown remained mostly intact. Birmingham began reviving its downtown ahead of many other cities. Yet the neighborhoods have seen more severe consequences with a construction boom leading into the 2008 recession, and a recent construction revival moving at a similar pace. The region has had a significant impact on Birmingham's neighborhoods, just as its lack of active downtowns has helped fuel Birmingham's downtown success. Both represent milder cycles of pressure and instability than in surrounding communities, yet impact the City significantly nonetheless.

Our proposals are not radical. Too often people want bold proposals from plans while others want to see nothing changed. Just as Birmingham has progressed with cautious optimism in the past, it should continue today. Cities evolve, and Birmingham will continue to evolve as

...we heard a great deal of optimism from new and younger residents.

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it has throughout its history. These proposals are steps along the way of re-establishing the natural evolution of place which has been disrupted by policies at the local, regional, and national level. Some feel that future visions must be radical. Others that radical change is bad. We feel that it is visionary to be practical.

We also proceed with caution and humility. Birmingham's present success includes a healthy dose of ignoring plan recommendations, especially its' earlier plans. In 1929, the regional obsession with "superhighways" led to recommendations including diverting Maple to the south, passing under Southfield Road and over Woodward. The 1963 Plan called for a substantial one-way conversion of streets, bypassing Downtown, and removing cars from the Maple and Old Woodward intersection. Some of the loop road built from this plan was later removed by the 2016 Plan. Yet other important recommendations were not acted upon to their detriment, like the park proposed for the Torry neighborhood, north of Lincoln, in 1929 (See Figs. A.1-02 and A.2-03). It is with this view of our greater history, the region's history, Birmingham's history, and the present trajectory at these levels that we put forth this Master Plan and its' recommendations, aimed at improving the City's neighborhoods and centers, and supporting a high quality of life for residents into the future.

1. The Region is becoming poly-centric.

PRINCIPLES

1. Birmingham is part of a larger region which influences the City and the City influences in return.
2. Birmingham should cooperate with regional planning and initiatives, doing its part to complete natural and mobility systems that should pass through the community.
3. Birmingham should lead by example, demonstrating successful mixed-use districts, vibrant neighborhoods, innovation in pedestrian and micro-mobility, and a focus on sustainable practices, all supported by a strong community spirit.

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DISCUSSION

Birmingham has always existed as part of a larger, regional system. It's location along Woodward and regional rail emerged as a means of serving surrounding farming communities with goods and supplies. The City was reliant upon its position between Detroit and Pontiac, and the needs of smaller communities in its environs. Little has changed from this perspective, as the City provides to the region and the region supports the City. However, the region has changed substantially through the centuries.

Poly-centricity is the notion that city-regions consist of more than one center, which are reliant upon each other for the overall success of the region. By distributing centers, much of the regional population can live near where they work, shop, and recreate. At one time, Metropolitan Detroit had been established in this format, supported by the inter-urban streetcars and regional roads and rail. Following World War 2, the region changed, growing substantial areas of single family housing with relatively few centers for business and commerce among them. A portion of this growth came from natural population growth and in-migration, and much of it came from the depopulation in Detroit and Pontiac. Through this, the region has lost much of its poly-centricity as roadways were designed to move people in and out of Detroit quickly, and the interurban system was dismantled. While some major employers grew jobs outside of Detroit, they were created within isolated business-parks, disconnected from other supporting industries, businesses, houses, and civic services.

Presently, poly-centricity is re-emerging, albeit slowly. Most cities in Metro-Detroit, including those nearby Birmingham, have planned to revive their downtowns and main streets, diversify their housing options, and to add downtowns and main streets where none have existed previously. Across the state, numerous cities are following the same path,

Downtown supports much more than just Birmingham; it is a destination for jobs, commerce, and entertainment for people living many miles in any direction.

Leading by example will elevate pride in community and increase residents' and the region's quality of life.

hoping to see their dead malls converted to downtowns, or their tired commercial strips into main streets. The Metro-Detroit region remains an economic powerhouse for the state, and as such is seeing more progress being made towards poly-centricity. Evidence is clear just south along Woodward in the revival of Royal Oak and Ferndale. Even areas more strictly suburban in format like West Bloomfield, Sterling Heights, and Southfield have put supportive plans and policy in place.

Birmingham is influenced by the regional condition, and in turn influences the region. Most direct is the region's influence on Downtown Birmingham. Downtown supports much more than just Birmingham; it is a destination for jobs, commerce, and entertainment for people living many miles in any direction. As a result, Downtown's success contributes to the community as both a place for services and activities and as a funding source for citywide capital improvements and City services. In turn, this comes at a cost of increased traffic congestion and the need for reinvestment in Downtown to maintain its' success. Similarly, the City's other mixed-use and commercial areas draw customers and employees from the wider region, yet contribute to Birmingham's success.

Surrounding Birmingham are neighborhoods and districts which similarly support and rely upon Birmingham for their success. Beverly Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Clawson, Royal Oak, and Troy border Birmingham, providing services to the City's residents while the City provides services to their residents. With the exception of the rail corridor, each city connects seamlessly and supports one another. Without Birmingham's businesses and civic institutions, surrounding neighborhoods would have lower quality of life. Without the support of surrounding neighborhoods, Birmingham's businesses and civic institutions would be less successful. When considering Birmingham's future, its border should be a blurry line.

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Increased regional poly-centricity will help to alleviate some of the pressures affecting Birmingham.

Beyond access to services, neighborhoods are generally less impacted by the regional condition, however Birmingham's neighborhoods have seen incredible price and growth pressure due to regional conditions. There are very few walkable neighborhoods with good schools that are proximate to a thriving downtown. The region had other such places historically, but nearly all have declined in either their school quality, downtown activity, walkability, or safety. Birmingham has retained all of these qualities, which in turn have made its' neighborhoods sought after. The price and growth pressures are both threats to the City's future, which will be discussed in more detail later.

Similar to the rare condition of Birmingham's neighborhoods, the Downtown is equally rare regionally. Demand for office space in a walkable downtown, with opportunities for lunch and high quality, nearby neighborhoods has heavily impacted the parking supply. And with its authenticity, not found in newly constructed mixed-use centers, demand for retail space in the Birmingham Shopping District has lead to increases in commercial rent. With higher rents, stores that offer services desired by nearby neighbors and reasonably priced restaurants are priced out.

Increased regional poly-centricity will help to alleviate some of the pressures affecting Birmingham. Increasing the number of neighborhoods that are safe, with good schools, walkable, with nearby active downtowns or main streets will help Birmingham sustain the quality of life and diversity of its neighborhoods. Increasing the number of mixed-use centers that are walkable and proximate to quality neighborhoods will help Birmingham's Downtown and mixed-use districts balance between regional and local services. But the region has few examples of similar successful places.

Birmingham should lead by example. Continuing to invest in its neighborhoods and mixed-use districts establishes models for surrounding communities. Building progressive pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and extending to surrounding communities encourages a regional focus on non-automotive mobility. Establishing a commitment to sustainability supports the activities that surrounding communities are already trying to gain support for. Leading by example will elevate pride in community and increase residents' and the region's quality of life.

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2. Birmingham should continue to define and support its neighborhoods and mixed-use districts.

PRINCIPLES

1. Birmingham should have a legible and defined city structure.
2. Birmingham's neighborhoods should have clear and celebrated identities.
3. Birmingham's neighborhoods should increase in sociability and mobility.
4. Birmingham's mixed-use districts should develop as neighborhoods that mix businesses and residences.
5. Birmingham's mixed-use districts should have unique identities yet function together as a mutually supportive system.

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DISCUSSION

Birmingham's early growth occurred incrementally, initially unplanned. By the time of the 1929 Plan, most of the City's structure was already established, either constructed or recently platted. The 1929 aerial (See Fig. A-1.01) shows Downtown, the Ravines, and the present Barnum Park areas well defined, with Holy Name and Poppleton in early stages of development. Some cities are structured by a strong plan defined early in their history, like Detroit, New Orleans, and Savannah. Other cities grew unplanned but were re-designed after fires or natural disasters, like Chicago and San Francisco. The remainder of cities grew incrementally, influenced by topography and transportation systems, like Boston, Charleston, and Columbus. Birmingham followed the latter trajectory, growing incrementally without significant influence from a city plan. Some aspects of Birmingham's structure are the result of the Jeffersonian grid system which established the mile and half-mile roads. Others from mistakes like the mis-alignment of Woodward's original trajectory when Detroit was first

platted, an interesting tale which includes a bend at the Royal Oak tree. And lastly natural conditions like Maple's deflection through Birmingham or Woodward's bend to avoid curves in the Rouge River and its tributaries.

By the time the 1929 Plan arose, it was in reaction to the significant growth Birmingham had recently experienced, for which parks, playgrounds, and more major roadways had not been provided. Nearly all of the land had already been platted, the Village Planning Commission at the time recommending acquisition of platted properties to provide for these needs. While open spaces were proposed in certain areas, and playgrounds mainly at schools, very little focus was given to structuring neighborhoods or defining the extent of Downtown or other commercial districts.

Of the City plans following 1929, only the 1980 Plan addressed structural elements of neighborhoods and commercial districts. Interestingly, when describing neighborhoods, the plan defined them by the roads that bound them rather than by a name. The scale used for many of the neighborhoods discussed by the 1980 Plan is similar to that which this plan has defined. Yet properly defining and controlling the extent of commercial districts and their effect on residential neighborhoods is clear. Through this process of defining residential areas and establishing permanent extents to commercial areas, the 1980 Plan began to identify a city structure, including recognition of the positive role that neighborhood commercial centers play.

Decision making is encumbered without a clear city structure. While prior plans have dealt with issues pertinent to the success of the City and its neighborhoods, these plans have lacked the necessary descriptive language that clarifies where and why land uses should be allowed. Allocating parks is the clearest example. Today the Torry neighborhood, north of Lincoln, clearly lacks park space yet the 1929 Plan (See Fig. A-1.02) identified a large park for this neighborhood which was not acquired (See Fis. A.2-03 and B.1-57). The purpose for locating the park in 1929 was in finding land yet to be fully platted and built upon. Today we can more clearly specify that the Torry



Figure A.1-01. Aerial view of Birmingham in 1929.

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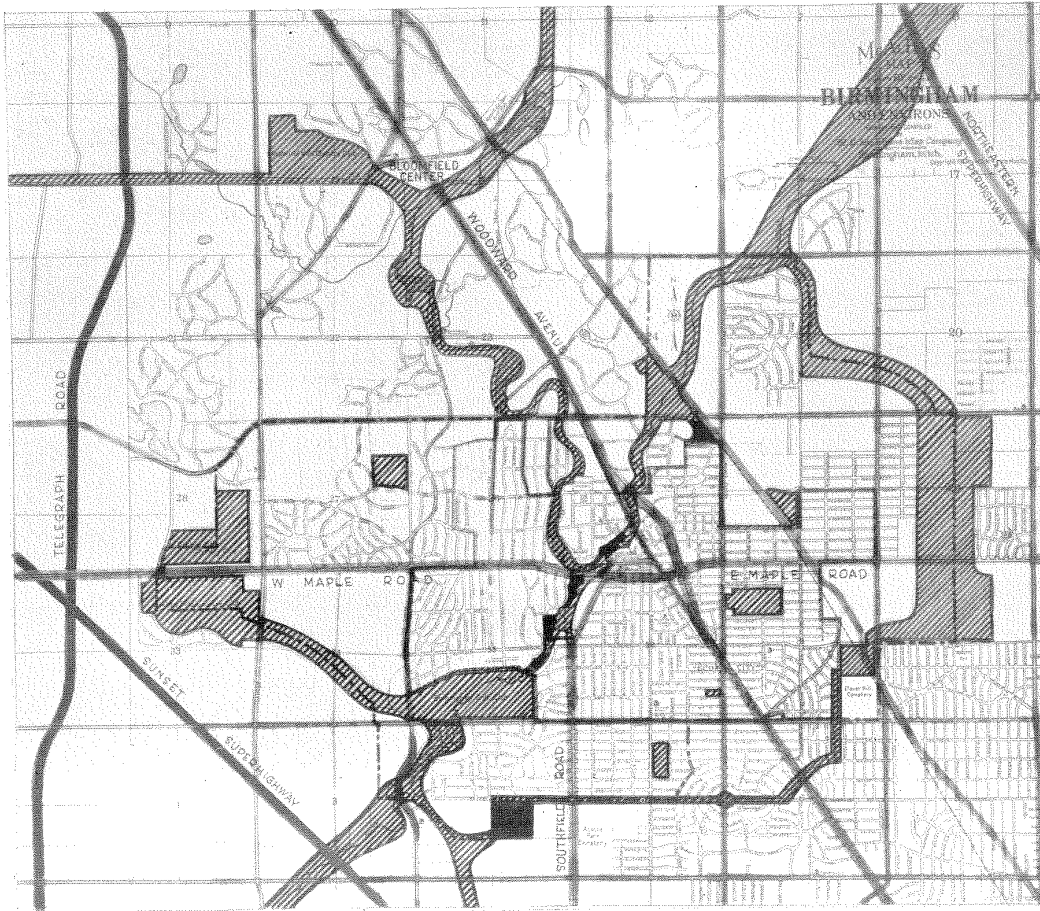


Figure A.1-02. 1929 Plan of Birmingham and Vicinity - the shaded areas indicate proposed future parkways.

neighborhood needs park space, which is a more actionable proposition. Similarly, the 1980 Plan makes park space recommendations based upon objective, numerical analysis. Yet acquiring land for the neighborhood's future quality of life is an emotional appeal which requires a name and identity.

Defining the extent and characteristics of each neighborhood and district is required for future decision making. Once mapped, neighborhoods clearly differ in overall character and adjacency. Aspects like block size and orientation, which affects walkability and the speed of traffic, can be analyzed at the neighborhood scale. And importantly, the interaction between mixed-use districts and neighborhoods of differing character is clarified.

At the outset of this plan, the City Commission clearly and repeatedly emphasized that it should focus on neighborhoods. Through initial discussions with City staff and an investigation into historic mapping and neighborhood associations, the lack of a structured identity to neighborhoods became clear. While many identify strongly with the present names of associations and their histories, far more people we surveyed responded that parks, schools, major roadways, and the distance to Downtown were defining factors of their mental neighborhood. Like the term region, neighborhood is rather amorphous, relating more to peoples' varied daily experiences than to a physical boundary.

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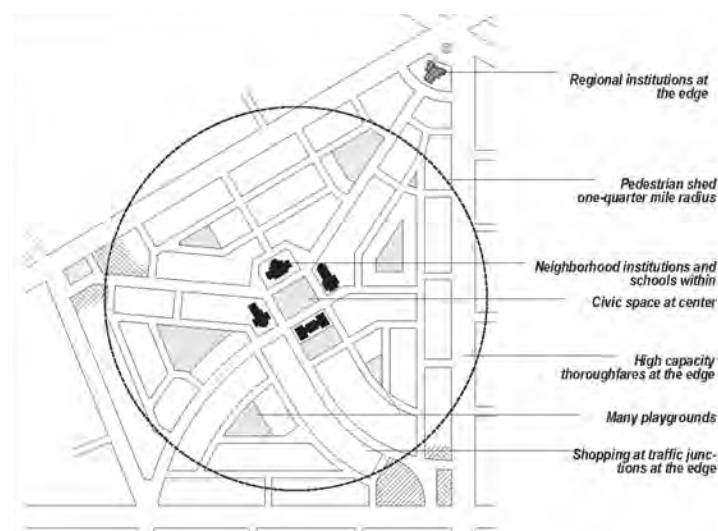
As the City continues to invest in its' future, decisions and analysis are best aided by consistent definition of neighborhoods, districts, and corridors.

Defining the physical boundaries and characteristics of neighborhoods led us to rely upon the early 20th century concepts of the Neighborhood Unit (See Fig.'s A.1-03-04), established during Birmingham's first period of rapid growth. To support, or possibly challenge this notion, Professor Emily Talen from the University of Chicago was invited to discuss her recent book, *Neighborhood*. Emily helped to frame the context of the 1920's Neighborhood Unit, its misuse and misapplication through the 1960's, and its re-establishment as a measure of planning in the 1990's where walkability, sociability, and neighborhood quality of life emerged as concerns. Professor Talen also identified the way that larger roadway-derived seams between neighborhoods can either divide people or serve as a social lubricant when there are shared destinations. Lastly, among other interesting points, Emily discussed the need for age, income, and housing type diversity within neighborhoods, and the concept was misused in the 1960's to segregate population groups.

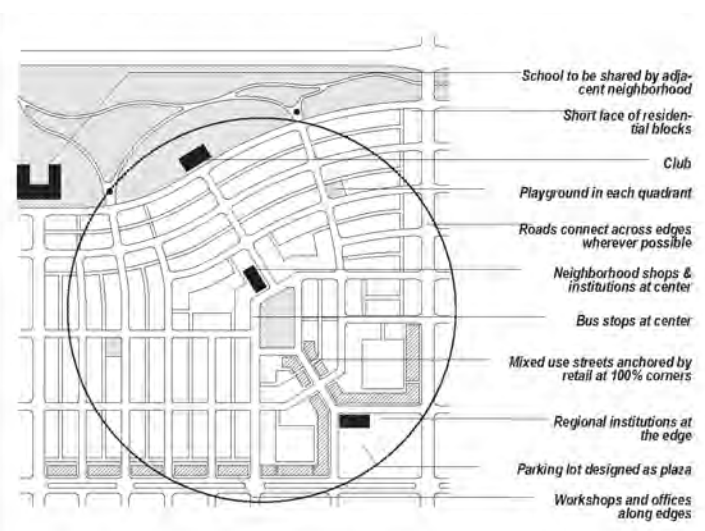
To address issues of future neighborhood sociability, mobility, and housing diversity raised by the public, neighborhood boundaries and the neighborhood unit provide a means of analysis. Neighborhoods should have a relatively similar scale, except where natural features, major roadways, or City boundaries interrupt. They should have civic destinations within them, such as schools, parks, civic and religious institutions. And they should have access to neighborhood service destinations towards their edges. Neighborhoods have distinct edges, some of a higher intensity and others of a lower intensity than the majority of the neighborhood fabric. And neighborhoods have a variety of housing options, even if they are within a narrow range.

Mixed-use districts also have consistent characteristics that differ from those of neighborhoods. However these districts should also be considered neighborhoods themselves. Ideally a mixed-use district includes a daytime population primarily of workers and shoppers, and a nighttime population primarily of residents and diners. Whether a mixed-use district includes a mix of population depends upon a definite district boundary. Downtown could theoretically have a significant residential population if the boundary were drawn far enough to the south. But Downtown in fact suffers from a lack of integrated residential population.

1920's Neighborhood Unit



TND Neighborhood Unit



Figures A.1-03 & A.1-04. *Neighborhood Units - The Lexicon of New Urbanism* by DPZ.

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Similarly, district definition is needed between mixed-use areas of distinct character. Presently, Downtown extends into areas north and south which have a different character. When compared to the area around Maple and Old Woodward, the further areas may seem to underperform. In some cases that is true, but they are also of a character distinct from Maple and Old Woodward. Together the districts function as a greater Downtown, and individually they should express their own character. This is similar to the way that Greektown, Bricktown, Fort/Cass, and other sub-districts of Downtown Detroit are distinct yet work together as a greater downtown.

Birmingham has been concerned with the success of its neighborhoods and mixed-use districts throughout its' history. Many of the issues raised and policy written would benefit from clarifying the boundaries and characteristics of each. As the City continues to invest in its' future, decisions and analysis are best aided by consistent definition of neighborhoods, districts, and corridors.

3. Birmingham should build upon its' successes.

PRINCIPLES

1. Birmingham should retain its' age and family diversity in order to support schools which play a key role in the City's success.
2. Birmingham should invest in its existing parks and find opportunities for new parks for neighborhoods which lack them.
3. Birmingham should continue to invest in Downtown while also investing in the Triangle District to alleviate excess pressures in Downtown and provide diverse experiences for residents and the region.
4. Birmingham should maintain its tree canopy and invest in its future resiliency to protect resident health, property values, and the environment.
5. Birmingham should maintain its narrow residential street standards which contribute to the safety of all roadway users and support the tree canopy.
6. Birmingham should invest in multi-modal infrastructure to support roadway users of all types and abilities, and to reduce traffic and parking pressure.
7. Birmingham should retain diversity in age and family composition to increase neighborhood activity and sociability.
8. Birmingham should encourage and support high quality maintenance of residential, commercial, institutional, and City properties.
9. Birmingham should allow more diverse housing options in locations specifically chosen to enhance neighborhood character and identity.

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DISCUSSION

Life is good in Birmingham.

Overwhelmingly, Birmingham residents are happy with life in the City (See Fig. A-1.05). And most feel that the City is improving. On a neighborhood basis, residents feel strongly about where they live and their quality of life. They feel that their neighborhoods are stable or improving, overwhelmingly. Very few people overall feel that their neighborhoods are becoming worse. This is exceedingly rare.

A great deal of what makes Birmingham unique and successful comes from the pride and care of its' residents. While many other communities have seen substantial declines in their downtowns and neighborhoods from the 1960's through the 1990's, Birmingham saw relatively minor dips. Residents remained in the City and invested in their homes, neighborhoods, and local businesses. Why? The City has continued to offer a high quality of life, which builds community social ties, and engenders pride.

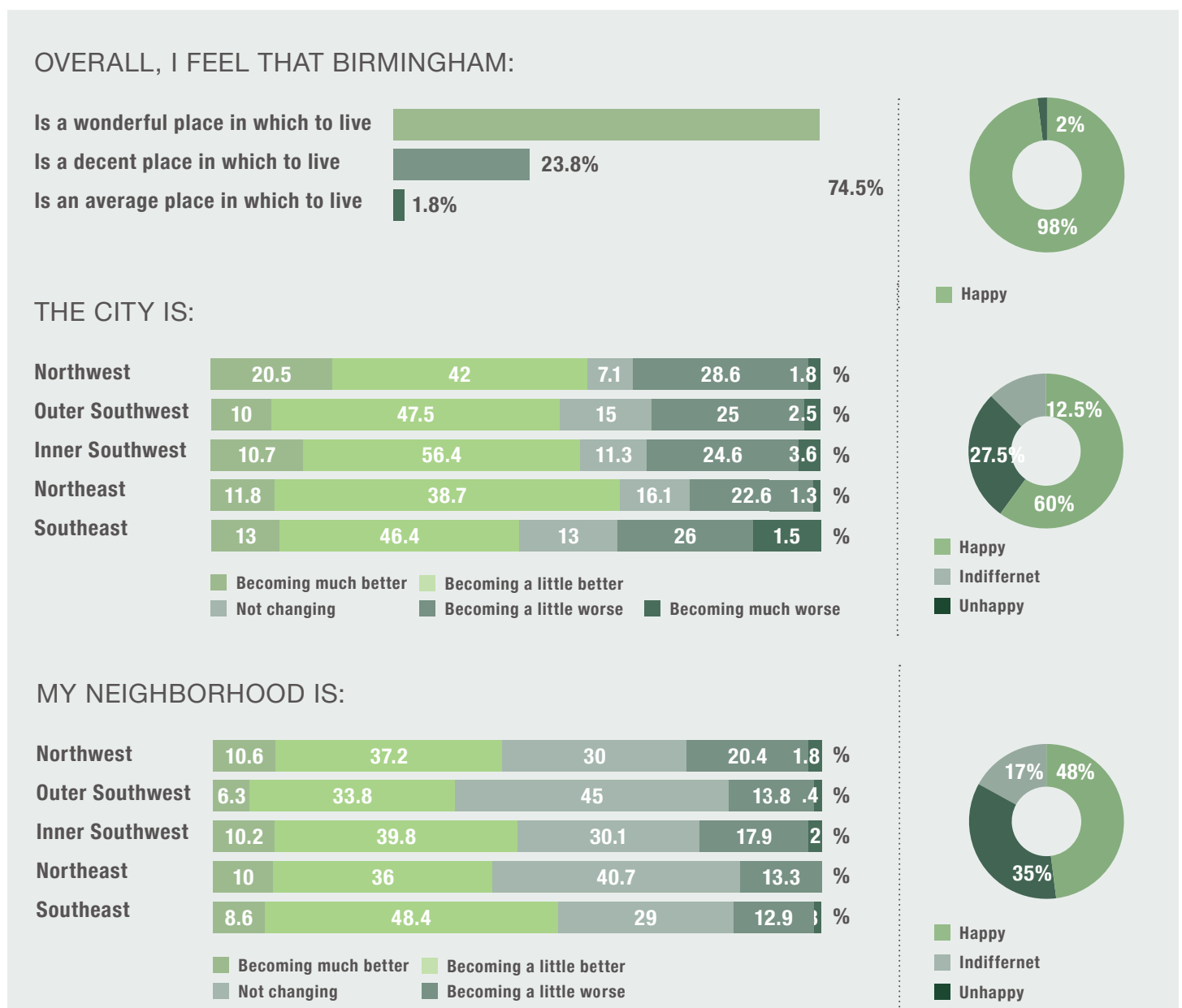


Figure A.1-05. City of Birmingham survey results (May 2019).

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The City has continued to offer a high quality of life, which builds community social ties, and engenders pride.

Birmingham's high quality of life comes from a number of relatively mundane characteristics. But the City differs from others in that it has retained all of these characteristics while others have lost many. Just as quality of life has a positive feedback loop with resident pride and local investment, it also does with fiscal viability. The City is fiscally successful because it invests in itself, residents invest in the City, and overall that maintains a high quality of life. Elements key to that quality of life are:

1. School quality and locations
2. Park quality, access, and diversity
3. Downtown success and access
4. Tree canopy
5. Narrow streets
6. Walkability

7. Age diversity
8. Property maintenance
9. Housing diversity and quality

Individually each of these elements is rather mundane, but they work together to make places feel safe, comfortable, friendly, and relaxed - like home. While not an element above, good governance is and has been key to maintaining these individual qualities and the City's overall quality of life.

While schools are controlled by the school district, outside of the influence of City policy, they are a key component of neighborhood success. Birmingham's schools are a major draw for families. Across the country, very few school districts have remained active and successful within traditional, walkable neighborhoods and generally urban areas. In most places, new schools are sought after, which drives demand for housing in new areas. Over time the schools closer-in to regional centers drop in quality and attendance. Birmingham's schools are rare. The City



Image A.1-06. Vibrant tree canopy in Birmingham.

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does influence schools, however, by continuing to provide housing types, prices, and proximity to attract families. Continuing the current rate of property value increase is a threat to attracting new family residents and subsequently school quality.

Park quality, access, and diversity is a major draw for residents. The recently completed Parks Master Plan provides a guide to future improvements. However funding for parks maintenance and improvement needs to remain a high priority for City budgets. Additionally, there are a few neighborhoods which lack a neighborhood park (See Fig. B.1-57). Effort should be made to correct this. Birmingham has parks of many types, the characteristics of each should be accentuated. In particular, the Rouge River trails through Linden Park, Baldwin Park, and Booth Park are a rare asset for the City, which should be protected and enhanced.

The proximity of Downtown Birmingham to the City's neighborhoods is an increasingly desirable asset which many other cities have lost. Despite loud opposition to concerning encroachment, most people we surveyed have little concern on the subject, vocally benefiting from access to Downtown's businesses, services, and activities. But rather than grow in size towards the south, the Triangle District / Haynes Square can provide room for growth to the west. Success here will not happen without further investment from the City in public parking, street improvements, and public space. In both locations, growing Downtown residential population will help diversify businesses and retail price points, which we've heard have become out of touch with neighborhood needs. Parking and traffic will continue to be an issue as the region relies upon and supports Downtown. Investment in multi-modal options throughout the City may help reduce that impact, along with housing in Downtown which can reduce vehicle trips.

Birmingham's tree canopy is impressive, even in newer portions of the City (See Img. A.1-06). Street trees and trees in public spaces support human wellbeing, encourage walking, and benefit the environment. Some of the City's trees will soon begin to decline, and a warmer future climate may be appropriate for different species. The City has begun to proactively identify at risk trees and diversity species, which will require ongoing funding.

The proximity of Downtown Birmingham to the City's neighborhoods is an increasingly desirable asset...

Narrow streets keep neighborhoods safe. While some residents dislike queuing along yield streets, overall they reduce vehicle speeds and provide more space for trees and sidewalks. A few streets are excessively narrow, however charming at the same time. But new streets should not be built wider. Some of the largest vehicles available are 6.5 feet wide, yet most typical travel lanes are 10. In many cities, narrowing streets is difficult, and accepting yield streets nearly impossible. Where cities have widened streets, tree canopy has been lost, walkability decreased, and neighborhoods have declined. Birmingham already has narrow streets, and they contribute to public safety and beauty. Street size is an issue separate from the quality of maintenance, which is addressed elsewhere.

Walkability is a term that is now considered mundane, thankfully. Across the country it has taken decades to convince people that walking is good for their physical and mental health, socialization, and the environment. While Birmingham has pride in its' walkability, there is room for improvement with more proximate destinations, access to other non-car modes of mobility, and sidewalks and crossings enhanced in a targeted manner throughout the community. While long time residents of Birmingham understand the value of walkability, it is still an uncommon asset elsewhere.

Age diversity has been lost in many cities where neighborhood populations age over time. In the neighborhood's hey day, it would have children playing free range and adults outside socializing. Over time, if the whole neighborhood population grows older in their homes, vibrancy is decreased. Additionally, studies have found that children benefit from access to older adults just as older adults benefit from access to children. Birmingham lacks sufficient housing opportunities for older adults who want to downsize, often into condos or accessory dwellings. A number of older adults we've interacted with hope to

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downsize and remain in Birmingham. Providing diverse housing options allows a neighborhood to remain diverse in age, and retain residents within the community.

Property maintenance expresses resident pride and care, which is contagious. Most neighborhoods that have declined elsewhere can be easily revived by painting and repairing houses, caring for landscapes, and improving tree canopy. Birmingham residents, businesses, and the City have successfully maintained a clean and pleasant City.

Housing quality is a contributor to a high quality of life, yet it is not at the top of the list. Diversity of housing contributes more substantially, yet both aspects are important. At one point, Birmingham's housing quality declined, with new houses presenting garage doors to the sidewalk

Birmingham residents, businesses, and the City have successfully maintained a clean and pleasant City.

rather than their front doors (See Img. A.1-08). There are a few key rules to ensure housing contributes positively to street life and the neighborhoods overall. However, maintaining a high quality of design is exceedingly difficult and controversial. Birmingham is a rare place that, in general, accepts individual expression and taste in peoples' homes. While there are a few homes that stand vastly out of character, overall the variety is respectful. Yet there are many concerns about the scale of new housing, and its' impact on neighborhood character.

Birmingham's housing is diverse within the narrow range of housing generally permitted between 1950 and today. Like most places, its plans and policies have made most non single-family housing illegal. Many people have expressed support for new, small apartments, townhouses, cottages, and accessory dwellings. Yet as it typically occurs, when they are asked where that housing should go, few viable options emerge. This subject is extremely sensitive. This plan identifies limited locations along with key design



Image A.1-07. Streetscape of mixed historic and contemporary homes.

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restrictions which would allow increased housing diversity. It does not propose more intense housing within neighborhoods, rather at edges along larger roads, and controlled in intensity. In the recent past, the City has accepted the idea of housing diversity with Transition Zones, yet avoided selecting locations. As a result, there is fear that these zones could land anywhere. Within the Future Land Use Map, this plan clearly identifies locations, not without some controversy, and criteria for where increased housing diversity should occur. As the legal justification for zoning decisions, the plan preserves the vast majority of neighborhoods as single-family at their current intensity. While a difficult subject, the City needs to be resolute in supporting this approach to allow aging in community, reasonably priced housing, and retain age and family diversity.

Beyond elements contributing to its' high quality of life, Birmingham is not without problems. We heard the most complaints, in person and through surveys, concerning pressures from the outside due to speeding and traffic

Providing diverse housing options allows a neighborhood to remain diverse in age, and retain residents within the community.

congestion, and historic maintenance issues with roads and stormwater. Common were also complaints concerning the size and character of new housing, and the speed of growth and change within neighborhoods. Some of these items have a regional aspect - traffic and the speed of growth. Woodward is also a significant concern, whose source is regional. Others are more local - maintenance and new housing character. Everyone agrees that the quality of road and stormwater maintenance is a significant problem, and out of character with the community overall. But housing character is a difficult and mixed issue. Overall, addressing these and other community concerns is also important to maintaining the City's success.



Image A.1-08. Newly built home with garage facing sidewalk.

4. Birmingham should focus on its' future resilience.

PRINCIPLES

1. Birmingham should provide more housing options to retain its age and family diversity and ensure an enduring social ecosystem.
2. Birmingham should provide space to incubate less established civic organizations and support its' older adult population.
3. Birmingham should encourage and support a diverse business environment of established, young, and emerging companies and sole proprietors.
4. Birmingham should provide space to support businesses of different sizes and price points throughout its mixed-use districts.
5. Birmingham should locate recreational, civic, and commercial destinations within walking distance of most homes to support community physical and social health.
6. Birmingham should provide places for people to live, work, recreate, relax, and be entertained, within relatively close proximity to each other.
7. Birmingham should improve the quality of the Rouge River watershed.
8. Birmingham should support and invest in its citywide tree canopy.
9. Birmingham should reduce the broader environmental impact of its homes, businesses, transportation systems, and municipal operations.
10. Birmingham should gather input from a citywide constituency in addition to those who normally show up in opposition to change.
11. Birmingham should provide more ways for residents to voice their opinions in regular decision making.

A. Vision

A.1. Premises

Cities thrive where people build roots and interconnections, the physical social network.

DISCUSSION

Resilience is an important quality for any community to possess. As the world changes, Cities need to withstand those changes and emerge strong. Birmingham has fared well in this regard throughout its' history, despite the disastrous blows many cities have endured through the 20th Century. Resilience is derived from social, physical, environmental, and governmental systems. Each of these areas influences the other; a healthy and resilient community must understand the balance and interaction of its systems, that decisions and initiatives should be weighed by their impact in all of these areas.

Social. Ultimately, cities are social ecosystems for people. Cities thrive where people build roots and interconnections, the physical social network. Neighborhood social networks build, support, and retain a high quality of life. Citywide social networks build, support, and retain civic

services such as schools, parks, libraries and historical resources, support organizations for seniors, impoverished residents, and others, extracurricular educational, skills, health development, and community building activities. Business social networks build innovation and local economies. Each scale of physical social network needs a means for people to observe each other in the city, places for them to meet and interact, and support structures which help them develop. For instance, people who enjoy observing nature need places to do so alone and together, and an advocacy organization for ecological preservation. Similarly, business innovation needs space for creative and driven people to interact, and buildings with inexpensive rent or shared facilities where they can incubate new ventures.

A key component of all three social realms is diversity. When cities become too narrow in their diversity of age, race, family structure, background, experience, civic institutions, and businesses, they eventually decline. Residents have discussed the needs of the older adult population extensively, many of which are not currently being provided for. Discussed less frequently are the needs of middle aged and younger populations. While many point to the

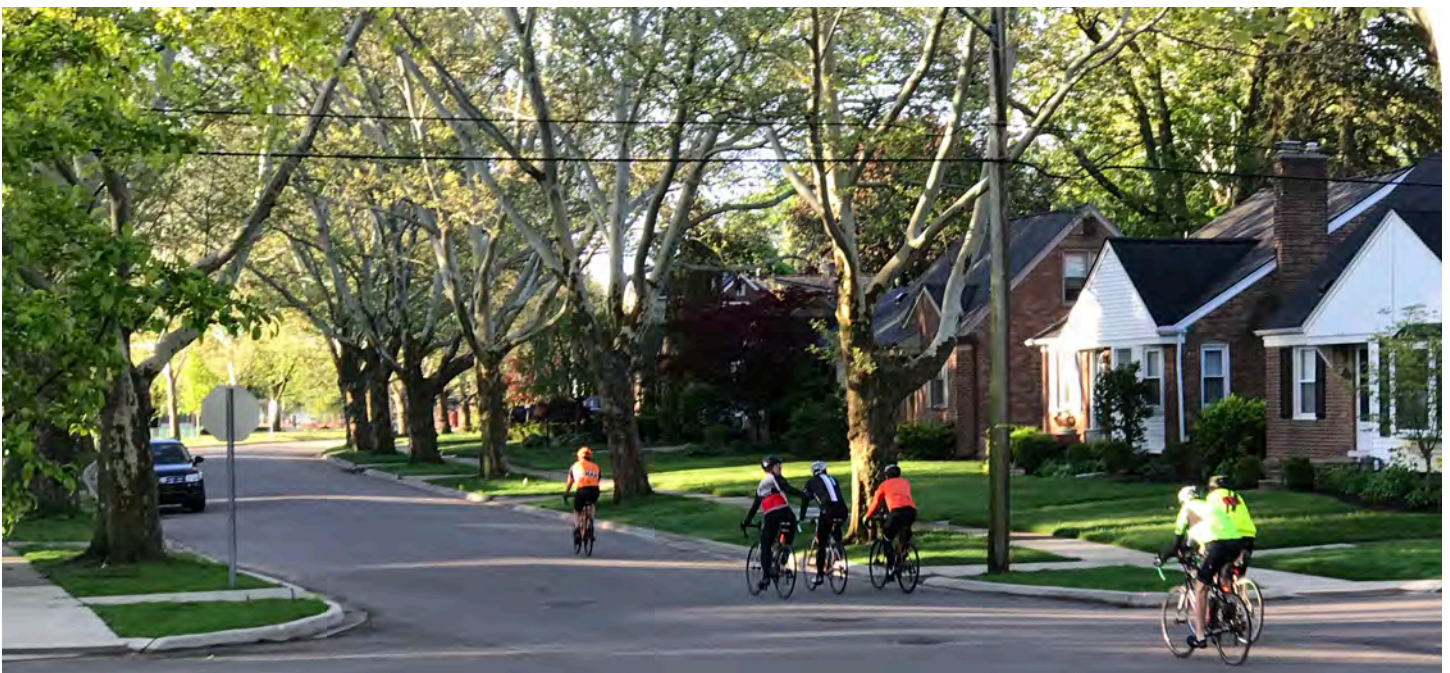


Image A.1-09. Residents biking in Birmingham.

A. Vision

A.1. Premises



Image A.1-10. Birmingham Hometown Parade (May 2019).

size of the baby boomer population, they tend to ignore that the millennial population is larger. Focusing too much on one group over another is a distraction of the present; cities need to provide for and retain a population that is diverse in age. This brings forth difficult issues of housing types that are missing in much of the community and increasing prices. Similarly, businesses must be diverse in their sizes, areas of focus, and age. Cities need well established businesses along with new and innovative businesses. To achieve this, buildings are needed which differ in the size of space provided, rental cost, and location in the community, and zoning needs to allow for a broad and ever-changing range of business types. Just as diversity is important for natural systems, human social systems are derived from natural systems, which thrive with diversity and decline without it.

Physical. As places where people exist in physical space, cities must be supportive of peoples' physical needs and abilities, and provide the spaces necessary for physical social networks to thrive. At a basic level, people need food, shelter, exercise, and access to nature. To exist as a broader society, people need access to a marketplace and places to gather. While food and shelter are often

discussed, exercise and access to nature have only more recently been studied. The form of a city significantly influences one's likelihood of daily exercise. If much of a day's trips can occur by walking and biking, then on average people are physically healthier (See Img. A.1-09). When a city maintains a vibrant tree canopy, parks, and natural areas, combined with opportunities to walk, people are mentally healthier. At the broader societal level, people need a marketplace for jobs and to acquire goods. Ideally this should be near to where they live to achieve the physical and mental advantages of walking and nature. And places to gather are also key social requirements, which should be varied in type and distributed throughout the community, typically in the form of plazas, parks, and preserves, but also in the form of cafes, markets, and social clubs.

Environmental. Care for the environment and it will care for you in return. Since the industrial revolution, cities have done a poor job of caring for the natural environment upon which they are built. Eventually those natural systems react in a way that makes places less hospitable. Foremost, Birmingham straddles the Rouge River and has a direct relationship with the watershed. The river and watershed are important for the region and for peoples' daily life in

A. Vision

A.1. Premises

...caring for the City's local environment and lessening its impact on the broader environment will in turn support the City's future health.

the City. Similarly, caring for the City's soils, water quality, and street design and maintenance impacts the health and longevity of street trees. In addition to elements of mental health, street trees clean the air of pollutants and keep the City cool during the hot months. Beyond the immediate environment of Birmingham, choices made within the City have a broader impact. Buildings can use less energy or generate their own, driving can be reduced, recycling opportunities can be expanded, composting opportunities can be added, and choices being made concerning material use in homes, businesses, and municipal operations can be less impactful. Overall, caring for the City's local environment and lessening its impact on the broader environment will in turn support the City's future health.

Governmental. All of these other aspects of resilience rely upon good governance. Yet in a dynamic City, and a distracted society, governance is difficult. Too often difficult decisions are put off and important ones not made to avoid conflict. And as part of this ethos, new and innovative ideas are also pushed aside. Those in office are not the only ones to blame; moreover it is society's disconnection from their civic life that causes this condition. Rather than regularly voicing their desires for the City's future, those who support change don't get involved while those who oppose it show up in force and ferocity. In the leadup to the master plan's charrette process, the digital survey of residents painted a very different picture in some regards than what was heard in person, representing nearly 10 times the number of people. Some of these opinions supported work that the Planning Board and City Commission have considered in the past but had not fully committed to. This is a key point where the physical and social structure of the City should better support its' governance. When working well, broad participation helps a city remain resilient. When working poorly, the loud voice of the minority weakens a city's ability to adapt to the future.

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A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

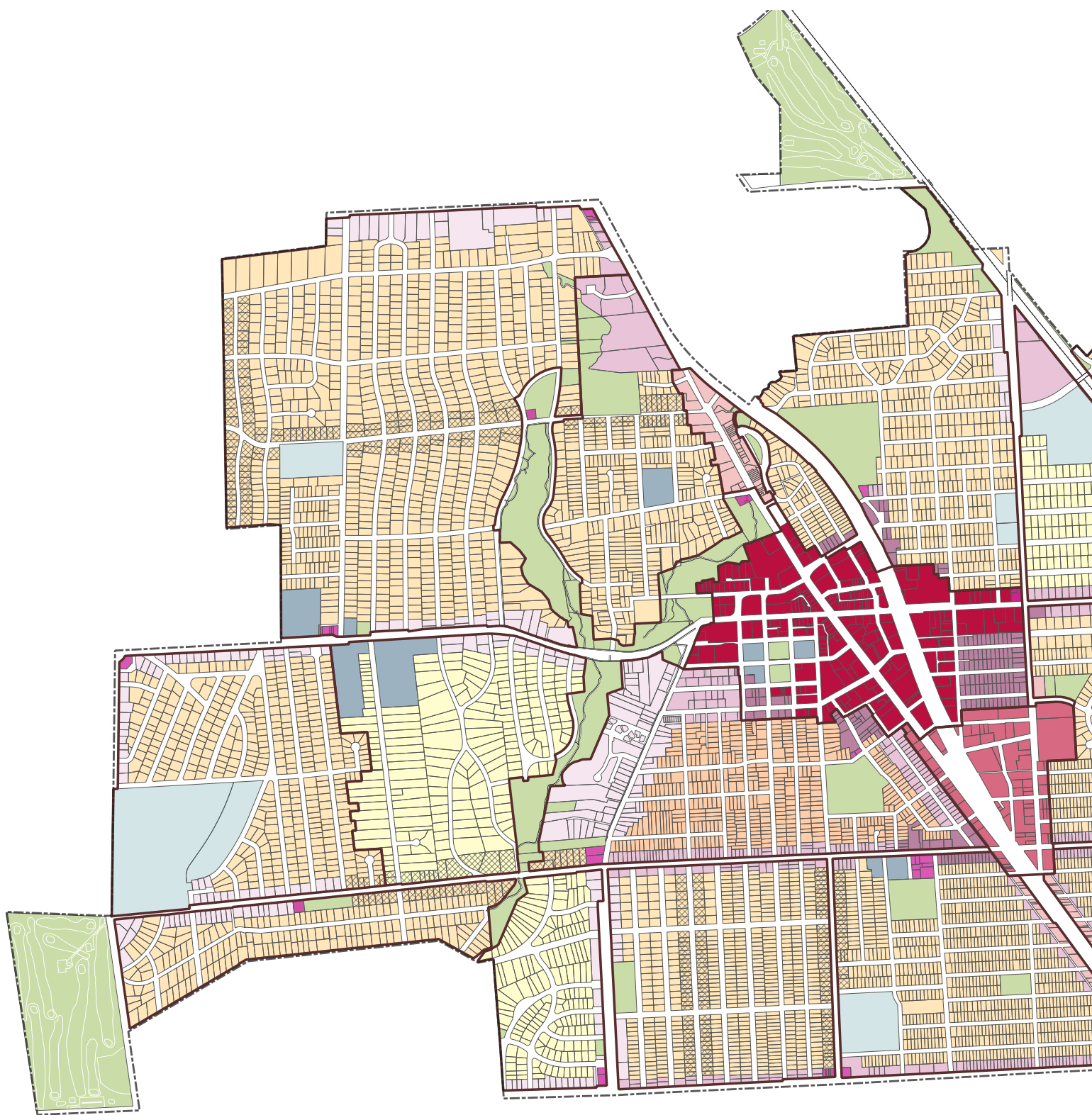


Figure A.2-01. Future Land Use Map.

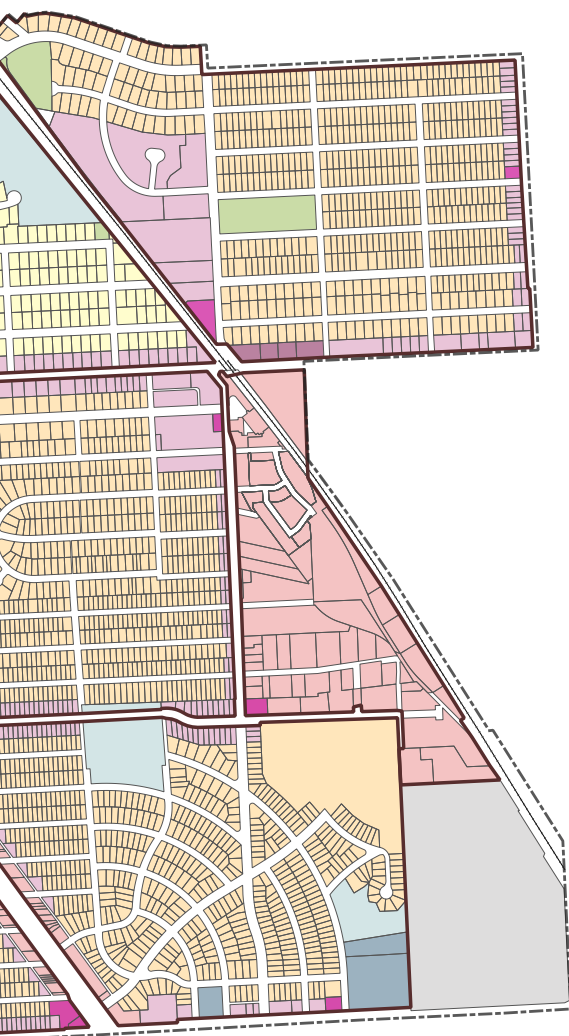
A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Future City structure

Throughout its' history, Birmingham has grown and evolved without stepping back to establish a clear physical structure and vision. To establish and maintain a future vision for the City, this plan (See Fig. A-2.01) first clarifies and solidifies Birmingham's physical structure and attributes. While this act may appear insubstantial, a City's structure is directly linked to decision making concerning growth, circulation, parks, activities, and investments in the community. This is not only pertinent to the City overall, but in deciding what character or type of improvement may be appropriate for one area of the City and not for another.

The City's structure is embedded in the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). This map serves as the basis for decisions concerning zoning - where different uses and intensities are appropriate throughout the City. Because the FLUM is derived from the structure, decisions concerning land use category allocation are made more clearly and precisely. While some states limit a city's opportunity to define land use categories, Michigan is quite lenient. As a result, the FLUM is able to avoid common pitfalls where land use categories correspond too closely with zoning districts. This Future Land Use Map aims to identify, sustain, and strengthen Birmingham's neighborhoods and mixed-use districts.



Boundaries

- Downtown Neighborhood
- Neighborhood Boundaries

Civic Uses

- Civic
- School
- Cementary
- Park

Destinations

- Neighborhood Destination

Mixed Use Centers

- High
- Medium
- Low

Neighborhood Fabric

- High Intensity
- Medium Intensity
- Low Intensity
- Lot Enlargement Area

Neighborhood Seams

- High
- Medium
- Low

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Neighborhoods and Centers

OBSERVATIONS

Cities are made up of neighborhoods and centers, some including corridors as well. Neighborhoods and centers are individually distinct, each with their own characteristics, and function together collectively as a city. Birmingham's structure has not been formally established and as a result decisions that are influenced by place character or the interaction between centers and neighborhoods are difficult to explain and justify. With a lack of clear structure, neighborhood associations are inconsistent in size and level of activity, and many newer residents are unaware of the associations.

DISCUSSION

Birmingham initially developed in an unplanned fashion, receiving its first master plan in 1929 once nearly all of it was platted or built upon. This is discussed at greater length in Premise #2. The master plan of 1980 dealt extensively with the interface between the downtown and major roads with the City's neighborhoods. In that plan, it identified parts of the City by their bounding roads such as the Forest-Chestnut-Hazel Residential Area and the Woodward-Fourteen Mile-Pierce-Lincoln Residential Area. The plan was speaking of neighborhoods but without the name. Business districts were more easily identified by name, but their boundaries not clearly set, like the southern boundary of Downtown.

Centers occur in various intensities, from Downtown at the high end to small neighborhood markets at the low end. The term center is often used in planning to describe places where people will gather from surrounding areas. Downtown gathers people from Birmingham, surrounding communities, and the region overall. Neighborhood markets gather people from directly surrounding neighborhoods. Like the primarily residential neighborhoods, Birmingham's centers need more clear definition and a

This Future Land Use Map aims to identify, sustain, and strengthen Birmingham's neighborhoods and mixed-use districts.

language to specify their different intensities in order to clarify discussions of appropriateness.

A number of issues that the City has tried to address recently beg stronger neighborhood boundaries. Foremost is commercial encroachment and transition zones. While the concept of transition zones that buffer between higher intensity uses and roads and single family neighborhood fabric is rational, there are few structural clues in the City concerning where and to what extent transitions may be appropriate. The issue of new housing in neighborhoods has a surprisingly similar issue. Once a neighborhood is defined, its overall character can better be verbalized, compared to that of other neighborhoods within the City. New residential infill may be in character with some neighborhoods and not with others. Providing definition and boundaries clarifies discussions of appropriateness.

At the outset of the master plan, we attempted to identify neighborhoods based on records of associations and their boundaries (A-2.02). Upon further discussions and investigation, it became clear that some associations have been active while others have dissolved over time. The present set of associations closely resembles clusters of houses of a similar size and character, and the City's original subdivisions. As a result, the associations are all different sizes and many areas have no established or historic association. During early public engagement, established neighborhood associations were invited to participate in round-table discussions. A small percentage of participants indicated that they attended at the invitation of their neighborhood association, with Poppleton turning out the most participants. Following the round-table discussions, the plan's first survey asked a number of questions concerning neighborhood associations, with further questions in the second survey. Through these surveys we learned that for the most part, the associations as currently established don't always align with what people perceive as their neighborhoods. When asked directly about restructuring associations, there is strong support with the exception of the northeast portion of the City. However the northeast portion would see little change through restructuring. As an approach to restructuring associations based upon a traditional neighborhood structure was formed,

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

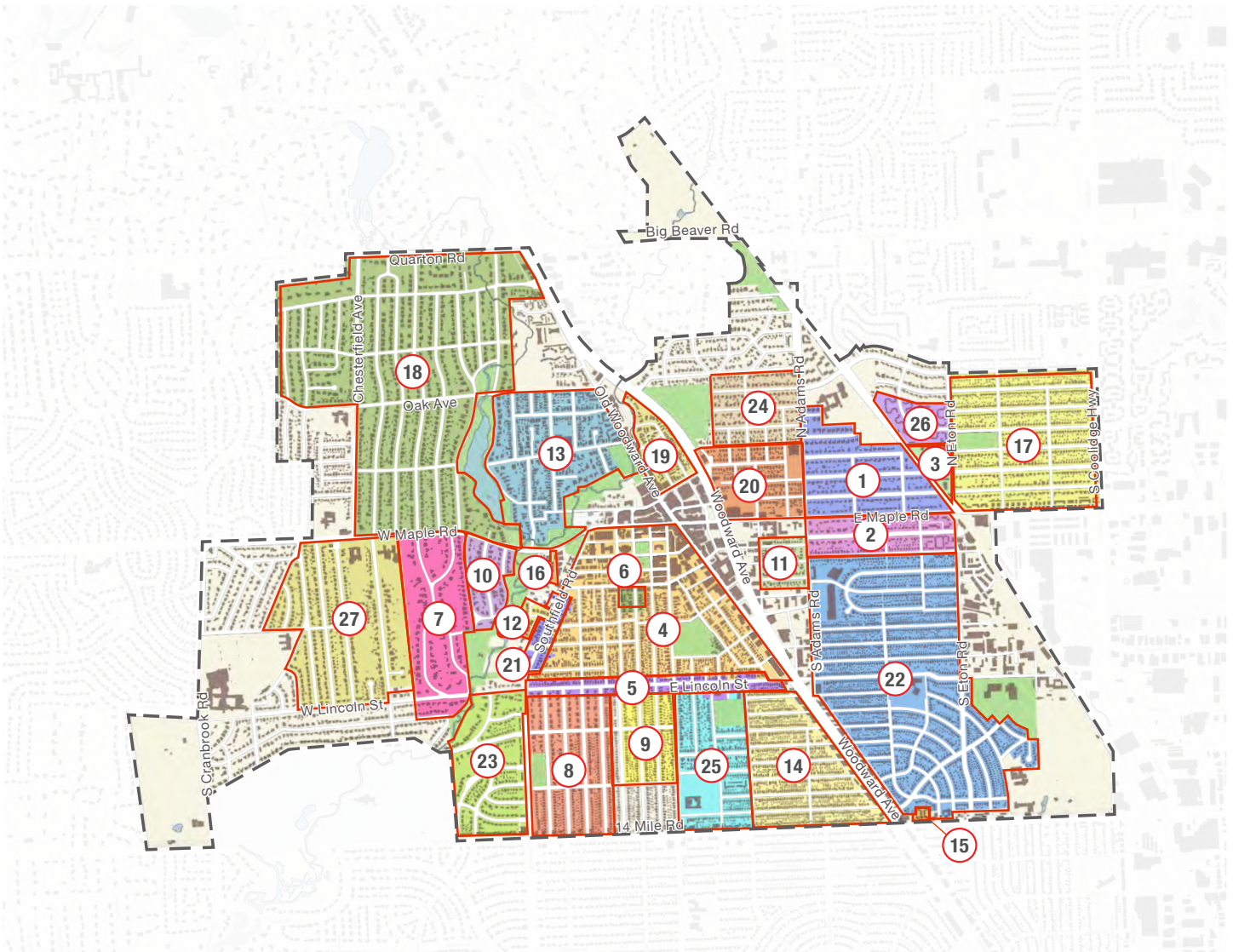


Figure A.2-02.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 Birmingham Estates Assn. | 10 HAL Neighborhood Assn. | 19 Little San Francisco Neighborhood Assn. |
| 2 Birmingham Villas HOA | 11 Hazel/Chestnut/Forest Assn. | 20 South Poppleton Subdivision Assn. |
| 3 Buckingham Village Condo Assn. | 12 Hidden Ravines Assn. | 21 Southfield Road Residents Assn. |
| 4 Central Birmingham Resident Assn. | 13 Holy Name/Mill Pond Neighborhood Assn. | 22 Torry Estates Assn. |
| 5 Central Lincoln HOA | 14 Howarth Neighborhood Assn. | 23 Birmingham Farms HOA |
| 6 Cinderella Patch Assn. | 15 Manors of Birmingham Assn. | 24 Highland View Assn. |
| 7 Coryell Park Assn. | 16 Maple Village Condo Assn. | 25 Pierce / St. James Assn. |
| 8 Crestview Subdivision | 17 Pembroke Manor Assn. | 26 Williamsburg + Graefield Assn. |
| 9 Fairfield HOA | 18 Quanton Lake Neighborhood Assn. | 27 Midvale |

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

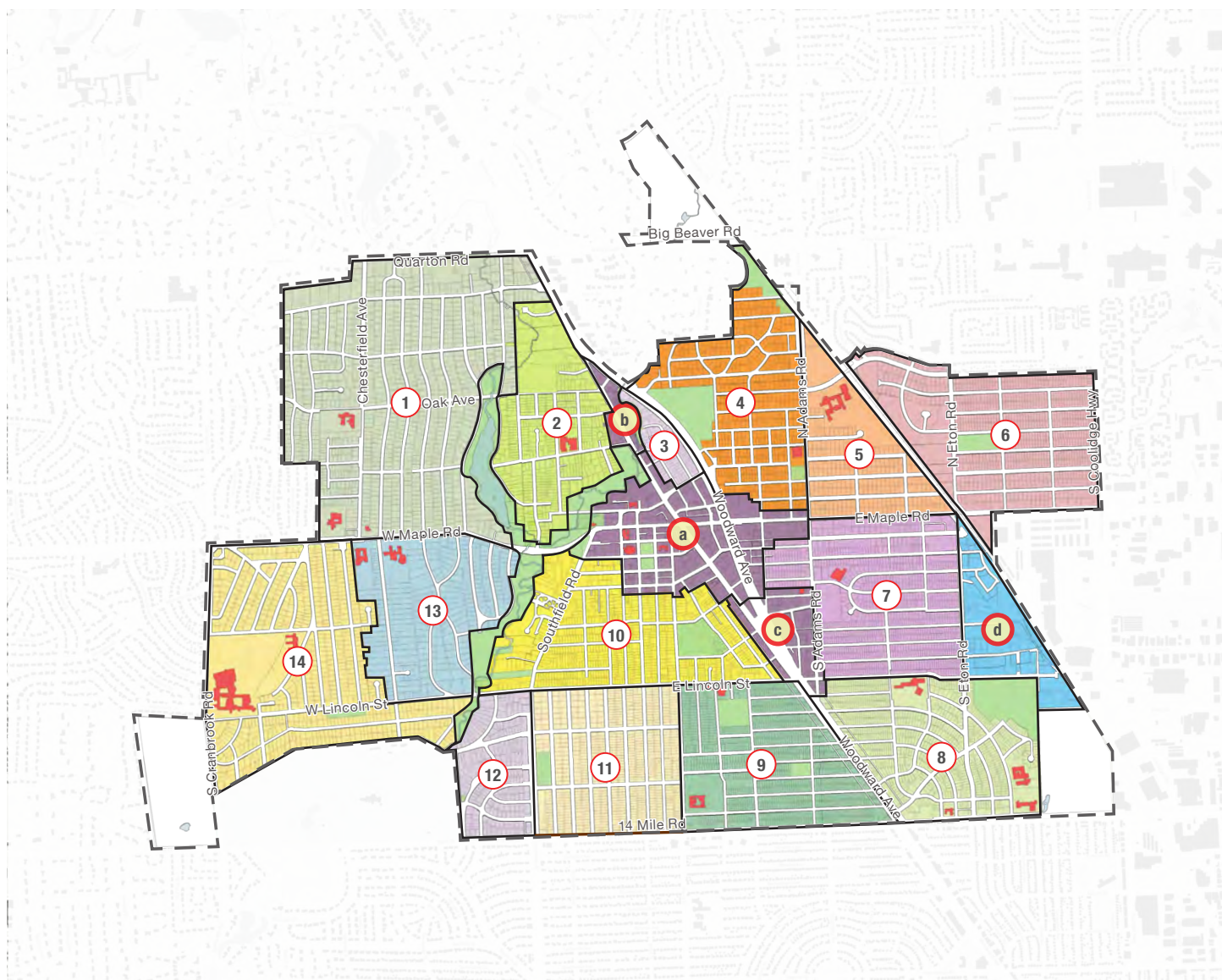


Figure A.2-03.

BIRMINGHAM NEIGHBORHOODS AND CENTERS

Neighborhoods

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1 Quanton | 8 Kenning |
| 2 Holy Name | 9 Pierce |
| 3 The Ravines | 10 Barnum |
| 4 Poppleton | 11 Crestview |
| 5 Derby | 12 Birmingham Farms |
| 6 Pembroke | 13 Linden |
| 7 Torry | 14 Seaholm |

Centers

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| a Downtown | c South Woodward |
| b North Woodward | d Railroad District |

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

we discussed the ideas in person during the charrette process, drop-in clinic, and with the Presidents' Council of neighborhood associations. All of these interactions were generally supportive of the concept and the maps drawn and presented here (See Fig. A.2-03).

Using the Neighborhood Unit as a guide, discussed in the following section, a neighborhood map and City structure map were developed (See Fig. A.2-04). These have been further detailed, creating the Future Land Use Map.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt an official neighborhood map and names (See Fig. A.2-03).
2. Adopt official boundaries for each center (See Figure A.2-04).
3. Discuss and evaluate the appropriateness of policies and proposals based upon neighborhoods, centers, and their interactions.
4. See additional recommendations in Chapter B.1, Associations and Representation.

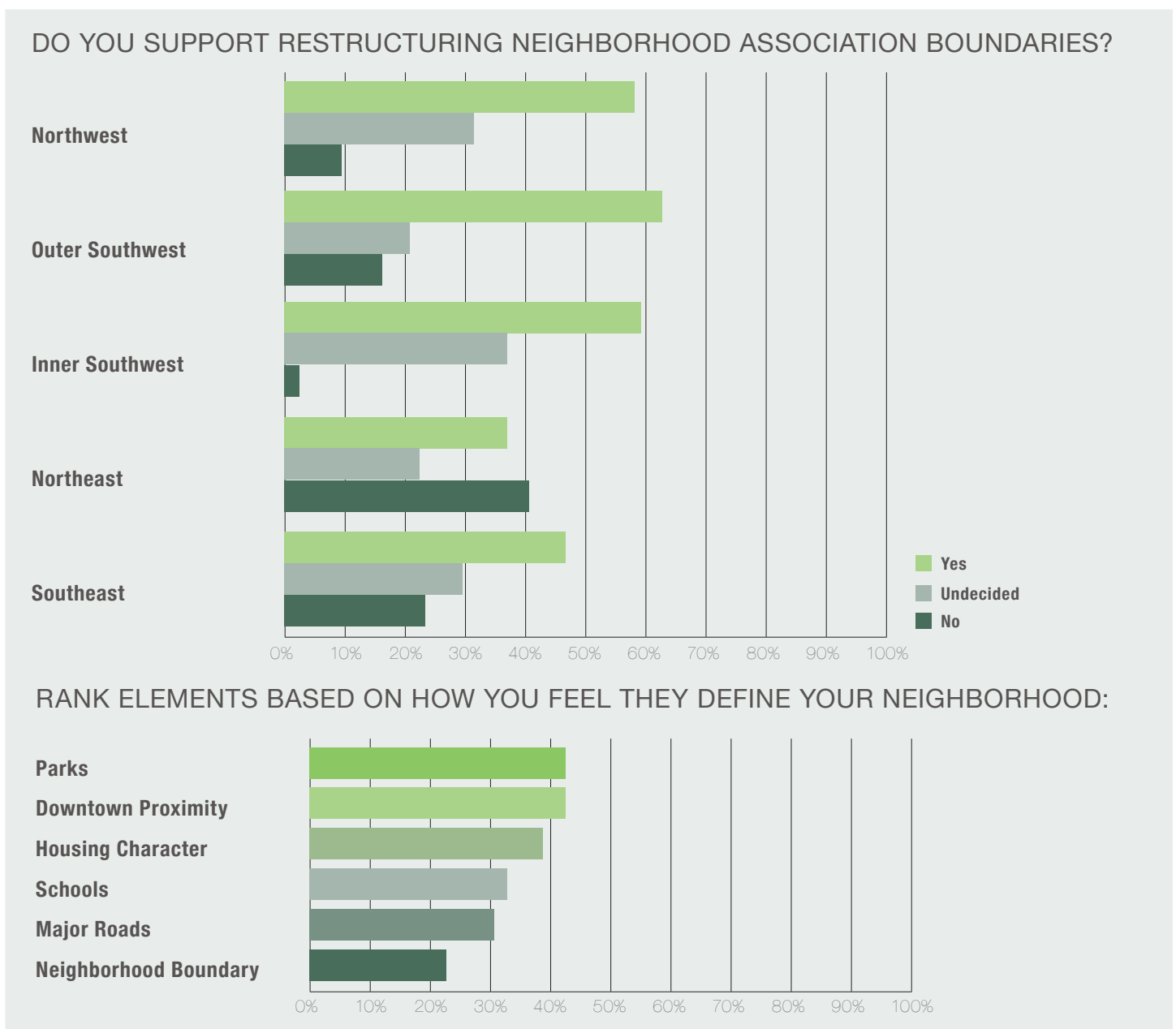


Figure A.2-04. Survey results (May 2019).

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Neighborhood Destinations, Seams, and Fabric

OBSERVATIONS

Neighborhoods have a diverse fabric consisting of a variety of housing types, have distinct edges, and contain or are influenced by shared commercial, civic, and recreational destinations. Lacking clear definition, the appropriate location for housing diversity, parks, and neighborhood commercial destinations cannot be objectively determined.

DISCUSSION

The neighborhood unit of the 1920's discussed previously in the preamble and Premise #2 provides the building blocks of an ideal neighborhood structure. As also previously discussed, neighborhoods should be clearly defined so decisions concerning character, infill, larger and smaller homes, parks, and commercial destinations have clear and objective standards. Since the majority of Birmingham was constructed around the period that the 1920's Neighborhood Unit was established, it provides a timely reference for Birmingham's neighborhoods, many of which already resemble the diagram or did previously.

As Professor Emily Talen discussed, the Neighborhood Unit has been more recently revived and adjusted to account for the growth of neighborhoods which followed the model. Famously, Chicago provides some of the clearest examples due in part to studies and competitions held by the Chicago City Club in and around 1918 (See Fig.'s A.2-05-06). The more recent model, as illustrated in The Lexicon of the New Urbanism, illustrates how the Neighborhood Unit functions in a gridded city fabric. The 1920's diagram clearly resembles the Kenning neighborhood, while the 1990's diagram resembles most other neighborhoods, such as Quarton, Poppleton, and Crestview.

Neighborhoods have a diverse fabric consisting of a variety of housing types, have distinct edges, and contain or are influenced by shared commercial, civic, and recreational destinations.



Figure A.2-05. Plan for Development of a Quarter-Section within the limits of the City of Chicago - Competition Plan: Second Prize Plan by Arthur C. Comey

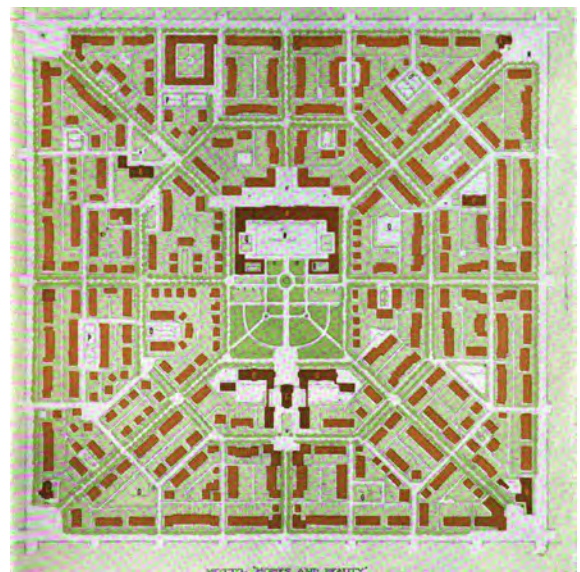


Figure A.2-06. Plan for Development of a Quarter-Section within the limits of the City of Chicago - Competition Plan: Third Prize Plan by Albert Lilienberg & Mrs. Ingrid Lilienberg

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Broadly, these models identify three distinct subsets of a neighborhood: the destination, the edge, and the fabric. Neighborhoods include commercial, recreational, and civic destinations, which promote sociability. Neighborhood edges were more astutely described by Professor Talen as seams where neighborhoods meet. These tend to be located along higher speed roads or natural features, where housing intensity may increase by the roads and decrease by the natural features. The remaining majority of the neighborhood is its fabric. As Professor Talen warned, too frequently there is a tendency to limit neighborhoods to one type of housing, but that removes the diversity needed for neighborhood longevity. The fabric is diverse, within a limited range. Most housing diversity occurs towards the edges with larger roads.

The Future Land Use Map identifies the categories of Neighborhood Seam, Neighborhood Destination, and Neighborhood Fabric to support this structure, in addition to the two other destinations of Parks and Civic Institutions. Further detail is provided in the following chapter.



Figure A.2-07. neighborhood structure.

Neighborhoods include commercial, recreational, and civic destinations, which promote sociability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt the Neighborhood Unit as a structural guide for neighborhoods.
2. Adopt the following Future Land Use categories:
 - a. Neighborhood Fabric
 - i. Identified as low, medium, and high intensity, neighborhood fabric consists of single-family housing within a narrow range of size and character, arranged in blocks bounded by low speed, pedestrian and bicyclist-centric roads, lined with mature street trees. Neighborhoods may be mapped with a single fabric intensity, protecting its overall character.
 - ii. Low Intensity Fabric includes R1-A and R1 zoning districts.
 - iii. Medium Intensity Fabric includes R1 and R2 zoning districts.
 - iv. High Intensity Fabric includes R2, R3, and R4 zoning districts.
 - b. Neighborhood Seam
 - i. Identified as low, medium, and high intensity, neighborhood seams consist of a variety of single-family and multi-family housing types, limited according to intensity, home-based businesses, and some size-limited businesses in high intensity seams. Neighborhood seams are located along the edges of neighborhoods, typically at collector and arterial roads like Lincoln, Fourteen Mile, Southfield, Maple, Cranbrook, and similar roads, and along the edges of mixed-use districts where they meet neighborhoods. The intensity of Neighborhood Seams is directly related to the Neighborhood Fabric intensity and the size of the adjacent roadway. High Intensity Seams are very limited in application, only appropriate adjacent to mixed-use centers and the intersections of major and Sectionline roads.

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A.2. The Future City

- ii. Low Intensity Seams include the TZ-1 zoning district, as amended in this plan.
 - iii. Medium Intensity Seams include the TZ-2 zoning district, as amended and defined in this plan.
 - iv. High Intensity Seams include the TZ-3 zoning district, as amended in this plan.
- c. Neighborhood Destination
- i. A low intensity commercial center providing services, dining, and places to gather for surrounding neighborhoods. Neighborhood Destinations are limited in total square footage, the size of individual businesses, allowable business types, and the location and size of off-street parking.
 - ii. A new zoning district is proposed for Neighborhood Destinations, to be completed in later drafts of the master plan.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Mixed-use Districts

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham's mixed-use districts are defined circumstantially by their areas of historic growth and the division caused by Woodward. However, the Downtown area in particular contains multiple sub-districts which require their own character and definition to become active and competitive.

DISCUSSION

This discussion does not focus on the Rail District, which is already well defined by its boundaries at Eton, Maple, the railroad, and Lincoln. However there is some use to specify differences between the lower and upper rail district, which have different physical aspects, adjacencies, and business interests.

Consideration for boundaries and characteristic differences between Downtown's sub-districts arose from a number of discussions concerning the south Old Woodward business area. Most people wonder why it is less successful than the

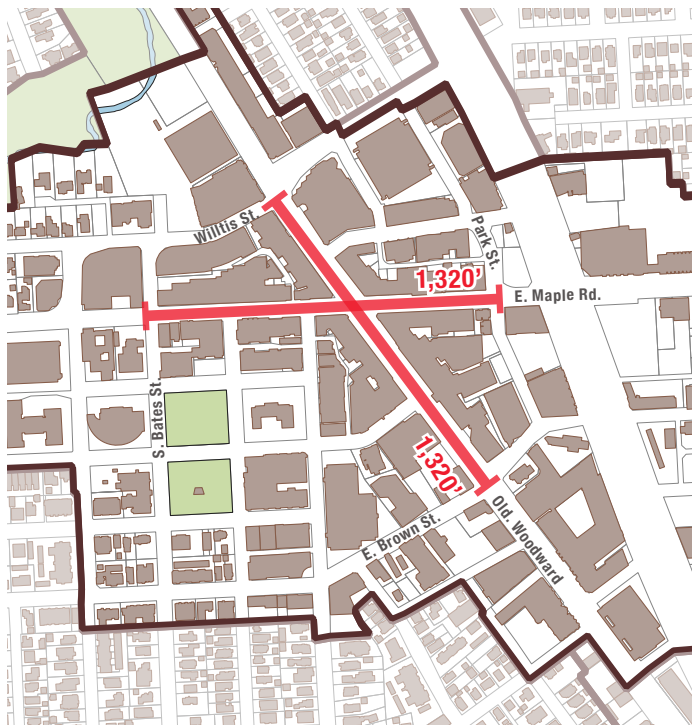


Figure A.2-08. Typical main street length superimposed on Maple and Woodward.

area around Maple and Old Woodward. However, a major issue is readily apparent from a planning perspective: Old Woodward is too long to sustain a consistent main street. Most traditional main streets, and shopping malls which have modeled themselves from traditional main streets, are ¼ mile in length. This is the distance from Willits to Brown, the most active section of Old Woodward, and Bates to Park, the most active section of Maple (See Figure A.2-08). Beyond this distance, activity and retail quality declines. But once downtowns are successful enough, they can expand beyond this distance by establishing additional districts.

Larger downtowns contain multiple districts with their own distinct character. For instance, Downtown Detroit contains Bricktown, Greektown, Hudson, and other smaller districts. Together they make up the greater downtown, but they each have an individual character. Similarly yet at a more relatable scale, Ann Arbor has a downtown district along Main Street and a university district along State Street. Both are distinct yet interconnected.

North to south, Downtown Birmingham includes three distinct districts. At the center, Maple and Woodward, Downtown is at its most intense and successful. This is referred to as the 100% corner. Maple and Woodward is clearly the center of an identifiable district. No distinction is made between Woodward and Old Woodward, for a reason discussed later.

To the north, walking along Old Woodward from Maple, the topography and building scale clearly changes after Oakland, becoming clearly distinct by Euclid. North of Euclid is a distinct Downtown sub-district which would benefit from recognizing its' distinct character. This Market North area (See Fig A.2-09) is now most clearly defined by the Farmers' Market and Booth Park, as well as a scale that is less intense than Maple and Woodward. Presently zoned for 4 story buildings, some under construction and some in the pipeline, the Market North area is growing and should establish a character of its own, part of the greater Downtown, yet distinct.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

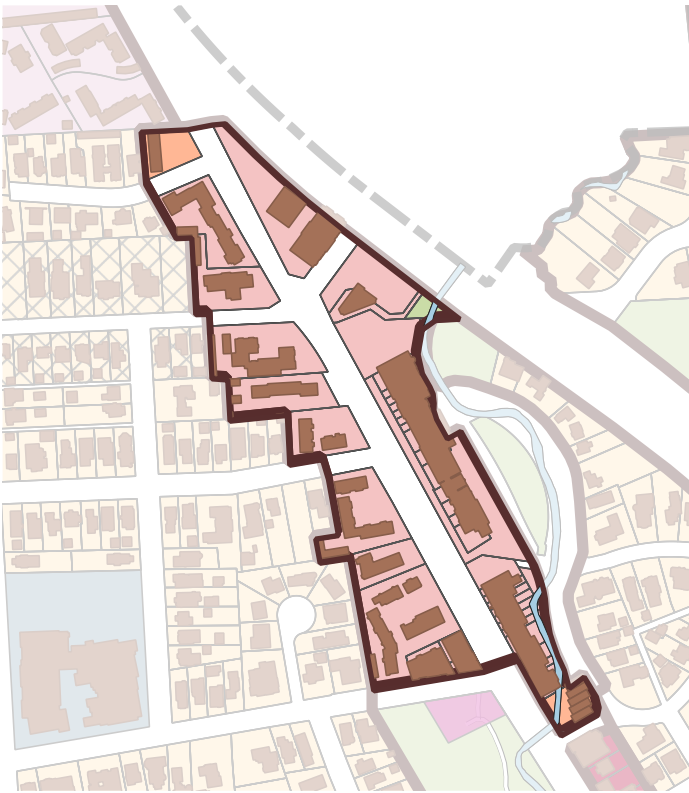


Figure A.2-09. Market North.

To the south, walking along Old Woodward from Maple, the street activity clearly changes after Brown. Some see the area south of Brown as less successful, others see it as providing services that are needed yet not appropriate at Maple and Woodward. Reasons aside, this area is different and requires an identity. But the area is heavily constrained by the intersection of Woodward and Old Woodward. This condition led us to reconsider Woodward's role in dividing the community.

Up to now, Downtown Birmingham has been considered as only west of Woodward. This perpetuates the mental divide that Woodward cuts through the community (Fig. A.2-10). When reviewing the Triangle District plans, the housing along Forest, Chestnut, and Hazel appear as a strange anomaly, which has a significant impact on the district's zoning which retreats intensity from those residences (Figure A.2-11). As such, the Triangle District is an odd district, attempting to line Woodward with the height that it deserves given the roadway's intensity. But taking a mental step back to consider Downtown and the Triangle

North of Euclid is a distinct Downtown sub-district which would benefit from recognizing its' distinct character.

District together, as interdependent areas paints a different picture. The northern portion of the Triangle District, north of Chestnut, relates to the main, Maple and Woodward district of Downtown. This is why we describe the area as Maple and Woodward, because both Woodwards should be included in the district's center (Fig. A.2-12). Kroger and the new All Seasons should be considered as part of Maple and Woodward, which spans big Woodward, providing part of this district on the east and west.

Spanning Woodward mentally makes the most significant impact south of Brown where the west side is constrained just at the point that the east side, the southern Triangle District, is at its widest and most substantial. This Haynes Square area, centered on Haynes Street, is cohesive when it spans Woodward. Later proposals in following master plan chapters detail how traffic modifications can create a public space, Haynes Square, which gives the district a focus and identity. With its own identity, Haynes Square can go from being the fringes of Downtown Birmingham, to a distinct and important sub-district of Downtown.



Figure A.2-10. Woodward divide.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

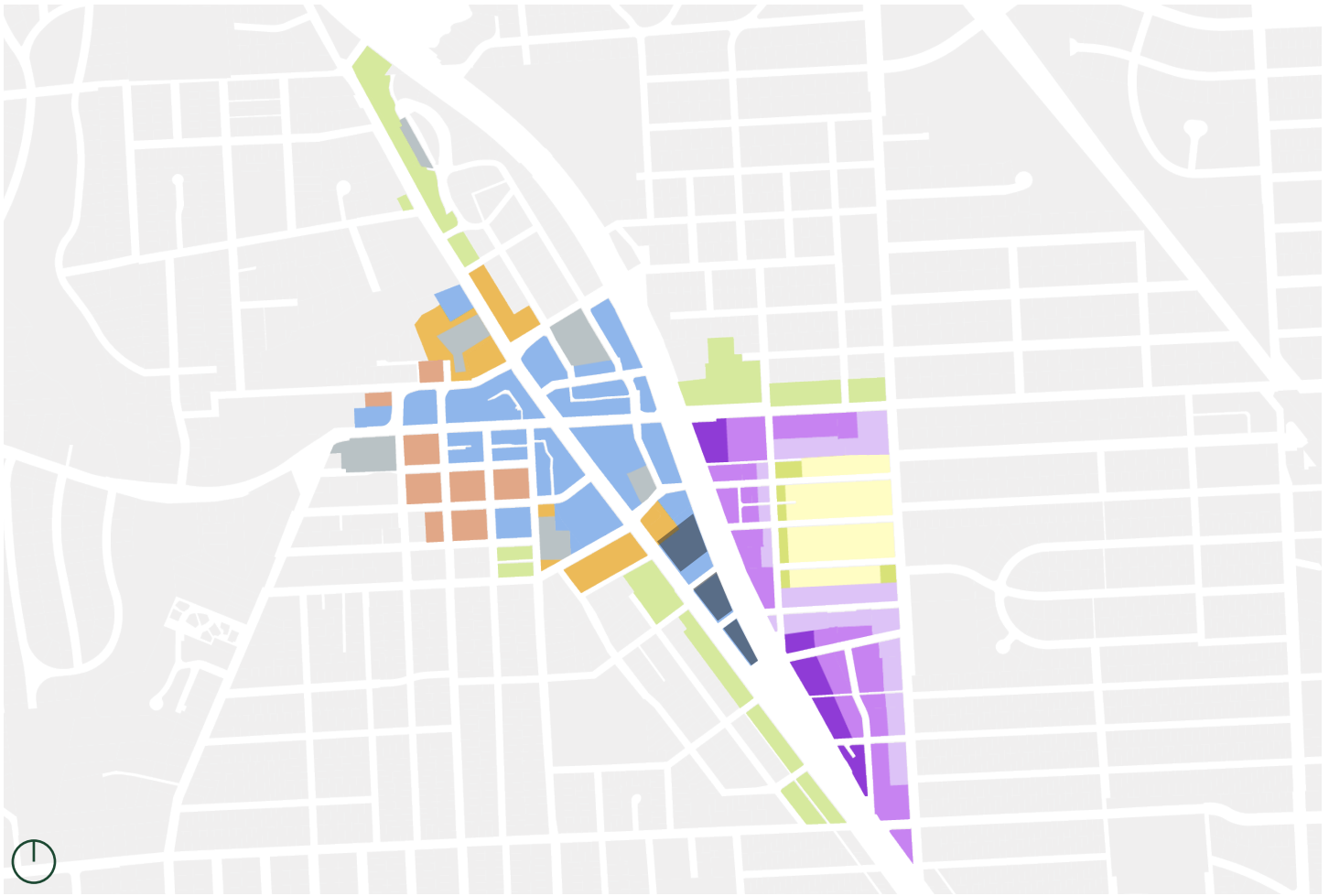


Figure A.2-11. Existing Downtown and Triangle District Overlay Zones. Zoning.

Downtown overlay

- **C** community use
- **D2** 3-story development
- **D3** 4-story development
- **D4** 5-story development
- **D5** special land use
- **P** parking structures

Triangle overlay

- **ASF-3** SFR 3-story development
- **R2** MFR 2-story development
- **MU-3** MFR 5-story development
- **MU-5** SF 6-story development
- **MU-7** 9-story development

A. Vision

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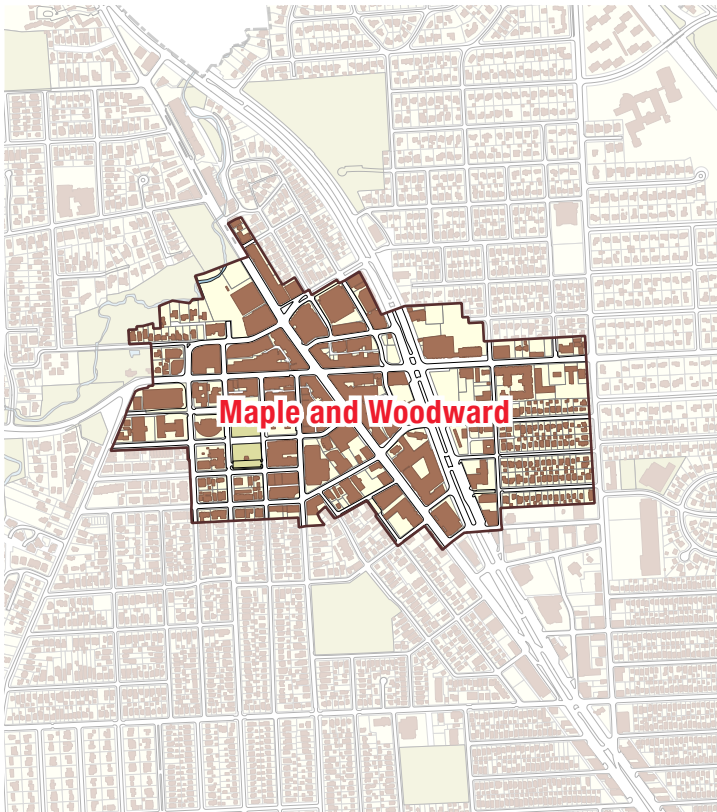


Figure A.2-12. Maple and Woodward district.

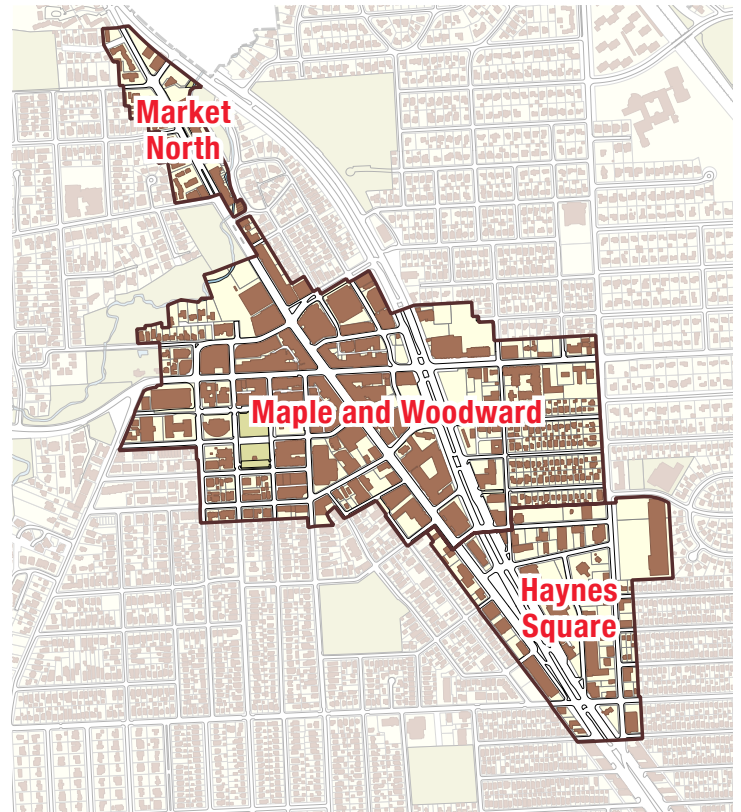


Figure A.2-13. Three districts of downtown.

Taking a step back from current perceptions, Downtown and the Triangle District should both be considered part of the greater Downtown area. Further consideration finds a key means of bridging the Woodward divide is to erase the divide from how Downtown's districts are defined. And finally, the northern and southern portions of Downtown are in need of their own identities yet part of the greater Downtown. The result is three districts - Market North, Maple and Woodward, and Haynes Square - (See Fig. A.2-13) which erase the Woodward divide and provide distinct character for greater Downtown Birmingham's three districts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Define, sign, and market three distinct Downtown districts: Market North, Maple and Woodward, and Haynes Square.
2. Adopt the following land use categories:
 - a. High intensity mixed-use district (Maple and Woodward)
 - i. To be defined in following drafts
 - b. Medium intensity mixed-use district (Haynes Square)
 - i. To be defined in following drafts
 - c. Low intensity mixed-use district (Market North and the Rail District)
 - i. To be defined in following drafts

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Zoning

OBSERVATIONS

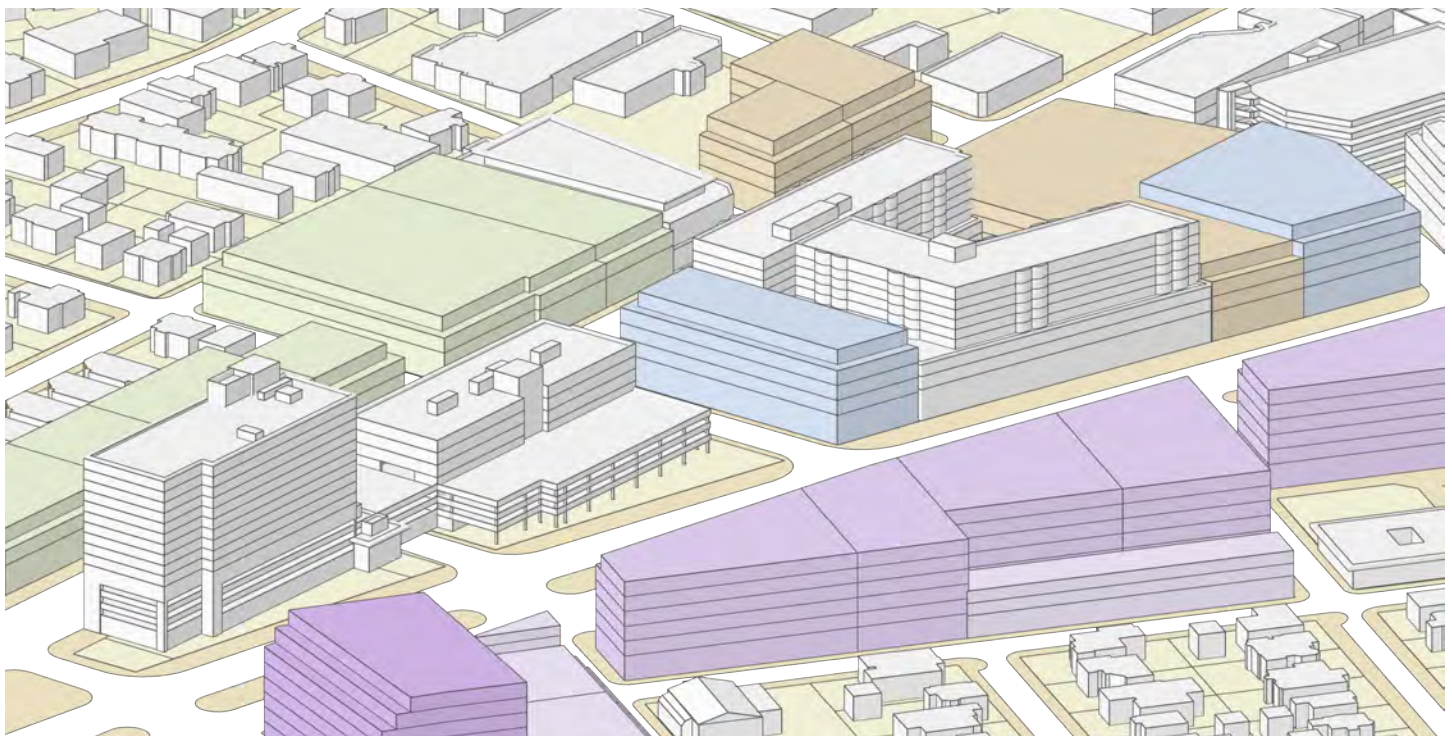
Birmingham's Zoning Ordinance is difficult to understand and has been adapted for recent districts, like Downtown and the Triangle District, through overlays which are essentially a patchwork over code elements that no longer function for the City's goals.

DISCUSSION

Birmingham's Zoning Code is due for an overhaul. While it is certainly better than many other codes for cities of a similar size across the country, the code no longer aligns with best practices. Zoning codes should be legible and comprehensible for residents and professionals alike, including graphic exhibits to clarify text-based concepts. Zones should be minimized (See Fig. A.2-14), combining

those which may be very similar but in different parts of the city (See Fig. A.2-15), like the Downtown Overlay, Triangle District Overlay, and the Mixed-use district established for the Rail District. Ideally the residential districts should also be examined for their appropriateness and some collapsed, especially towards the higher end - R6 through R8. The existing Business and Office districts should be converted to the appropriate mixed-use district.

Clarity and simplicity in zoning helps residents understand the implication of the zoning code, which is otherwise opaque to most. Additionally, collapsing zones and standards can simplify the review process and make new revisions easier to implement.



Max allowable heights:

- D2 3-story development - 56'
- D3 4-story development - 68'
- D4 5-story development - 80'

Max allowable heights:

- MU-3 MFR 5-story development - 60'
- MU-5 SF 6-story development - 82'
- MU-7 9-story development - 118'

Figure A.2-15. Future potential massing in Triangle district and Downtown.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

Downtown overlay

Triangle overlay

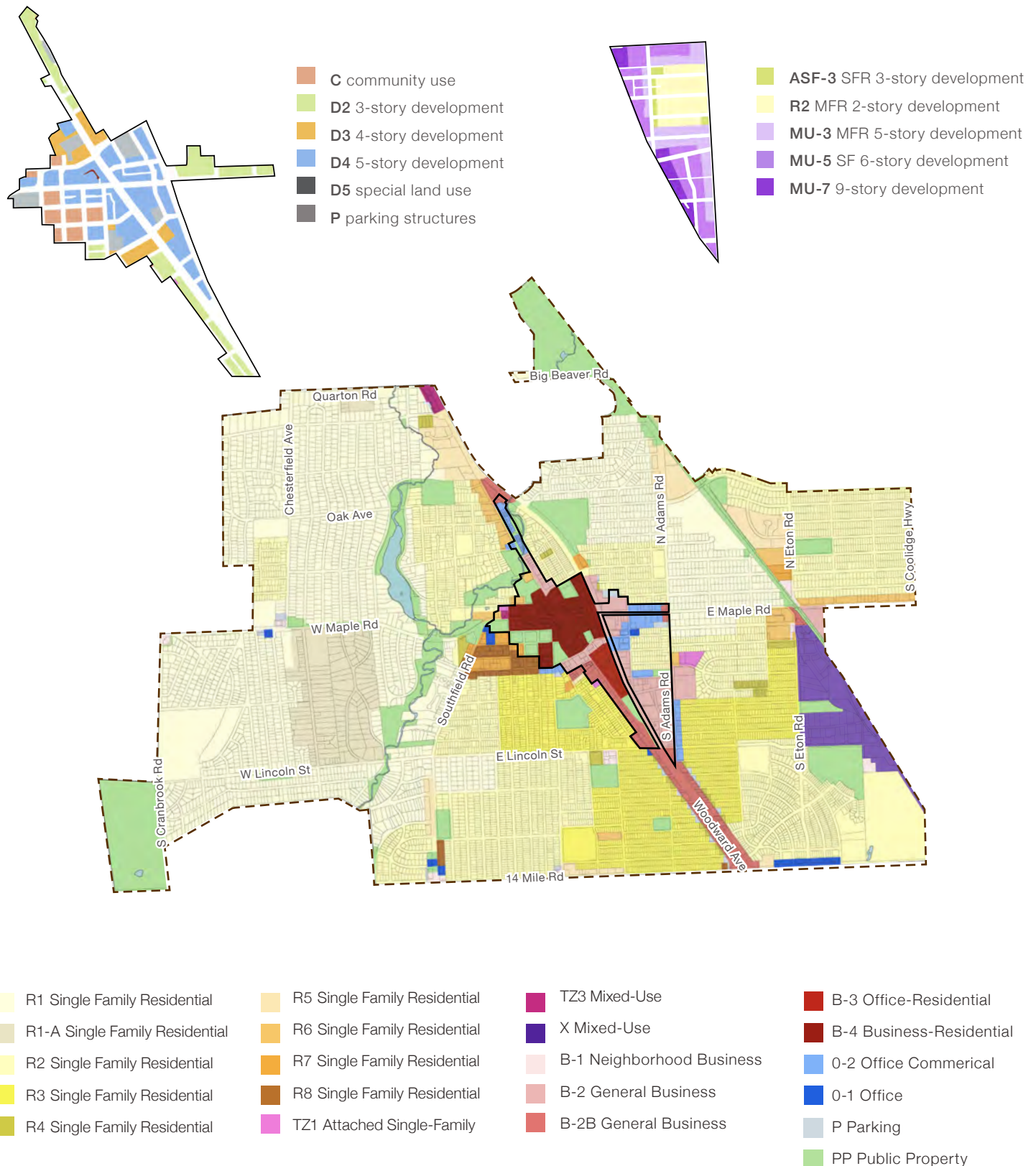


Figure A.2-14. Zoning Districts.

The Future Land Use Map of this master plan recommends structures for neighborhoods and mixed-use districts which would benefit from adjusted zoning, particularly for the mixed-use districts, neighborhood seams and destinations. Along with these, use categories should be collapsed to the broadest categories practicable. Overlays remain a useful tool, but they are best used to apply more stringent standards for an area, rather than overriding the majority of the code. At Maple and Woodward, for instance, the overlay is a good means of limiting ground floor office uses, which may be appropriate in other mixed-use districts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Issue an RFP to overhaul the zoning code, focused on brevity, clarity, and graphics, aligning with the new Future Land Use categories.
2. Collapse uses into the broadest categories possible, with detailed use specification only provided where absolutely necessary, and in limited areas.
3. Combine the business, office, Downtown, Triangle, and mixed-use districts into a single set of mixed-use districts shared between all mixed-use areas. Low intensity mixed-use districts would only include the lower intensity mixed-use zones, and high intensity mixed-use districts the higher intensity zones.
4. Consider zoning district modifications for residential districts following the character descriptions and analysis for the City's neighborhoods, described in the next chapter of this plan.
5. Ensure new zoning language is considered for simplicity and expediency, achieving regulatory goals in a manner clear to the general public.

A. Vision

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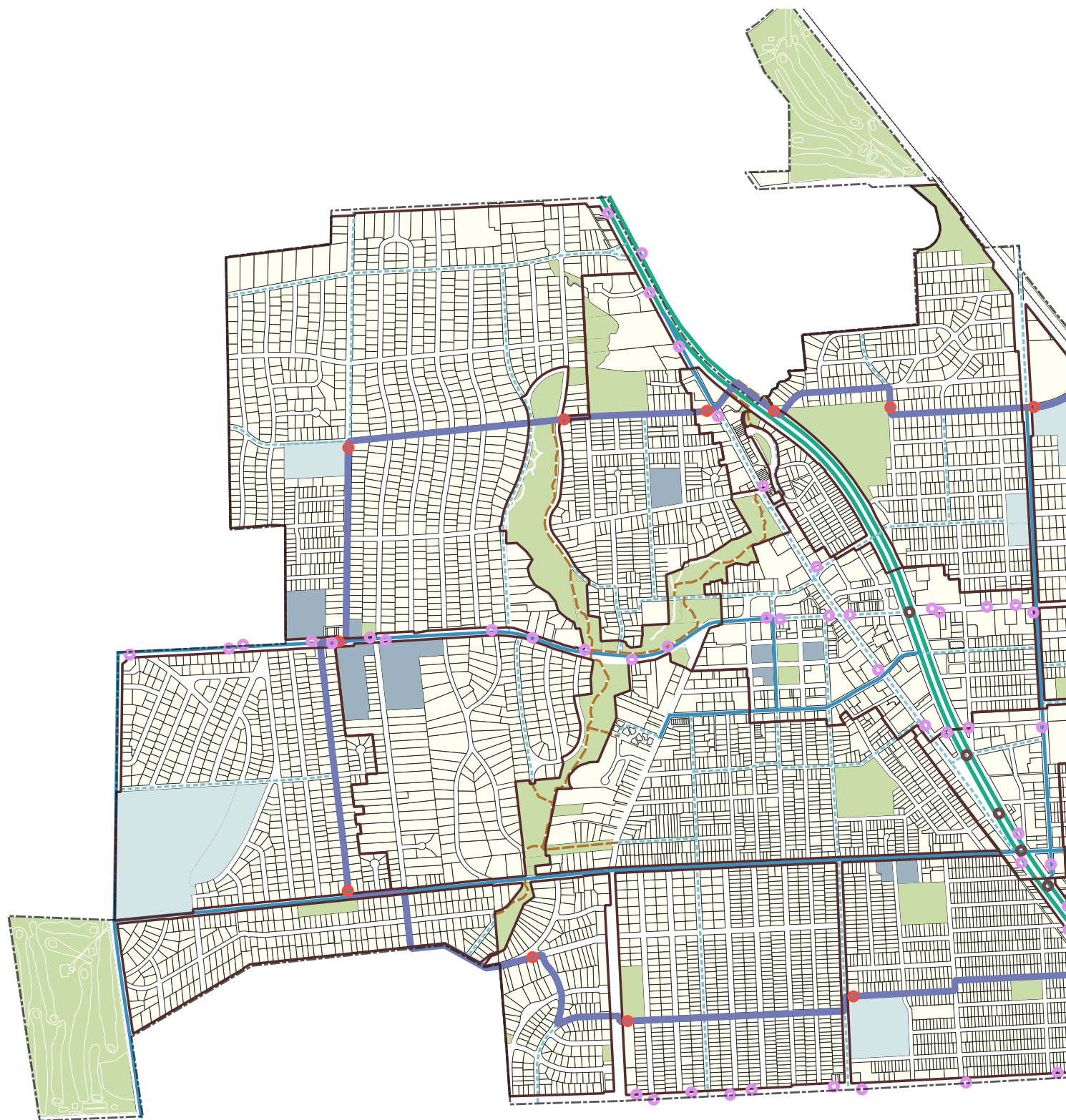


Figure A.2-16. Future Transportation Plan: Transit, Cycling, and Micro-mobility.

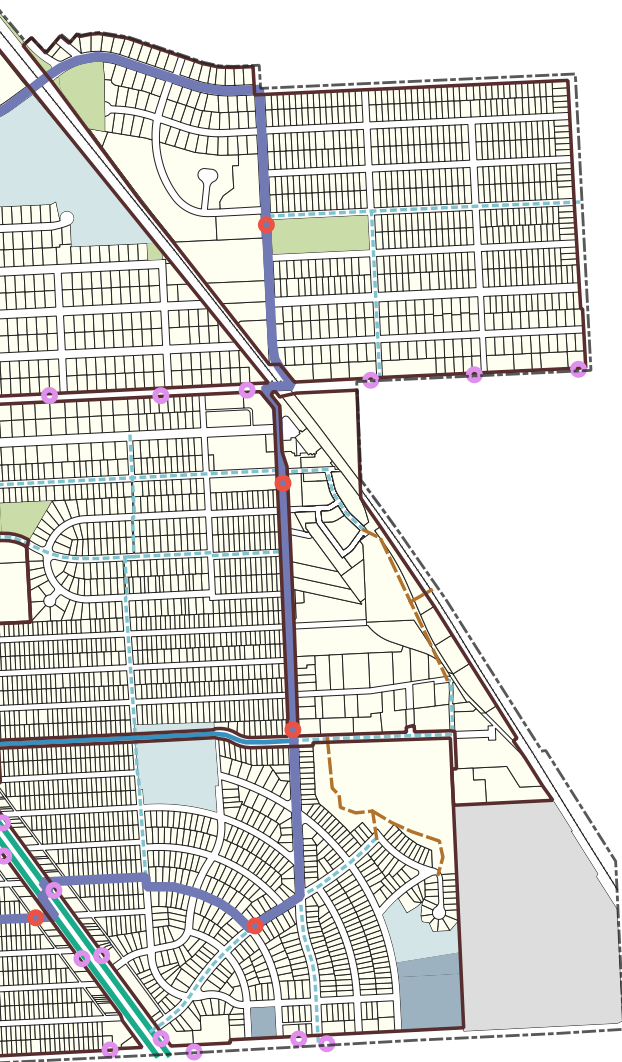
A. Vision

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Future City Transportation

The Future Transportation Plan (See Fig. A.2-16) includes and builds upon the 2013 Multi-modal Plan with adjustments to account for the Future Land Use Map's neighborhood structure. The citywide view is presented in this section, with detailed views in the next chapters, where they are more easily understood for each neighborhood and mixed-use district. This plan focuses primarily on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, secondarily on transit, and lastly on personal vehicles.

Much of the congestion that Birmingham experiences is due to the larger region, which the City has little direct opportunity to influence. Residents have voiced concern that traffic congestion reduces their quality of life, and it is particularly bad crossing Woodward and along Adams. While a few recommendations are provided to deal with this issue, cut-through traffic in particular, providing viable alternatives for getting around the City without a personal vehicle is the most effective strategy. We also stand at the cusp of automotive change, with autonomous vehicles



Multimodal - Bike

- Neighborhood Loop
- Protected Bike Lane
- Bike Lane
- Neighborhood Connector
- Paved Bike Path

Multimodal - Transit

- Transit Stop
- Proposed Circulator Stop

Multimodal - Intersections

- Intersection Improvements

Civic Institutions

- Civic
- School
- Cemetery
- Parks

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

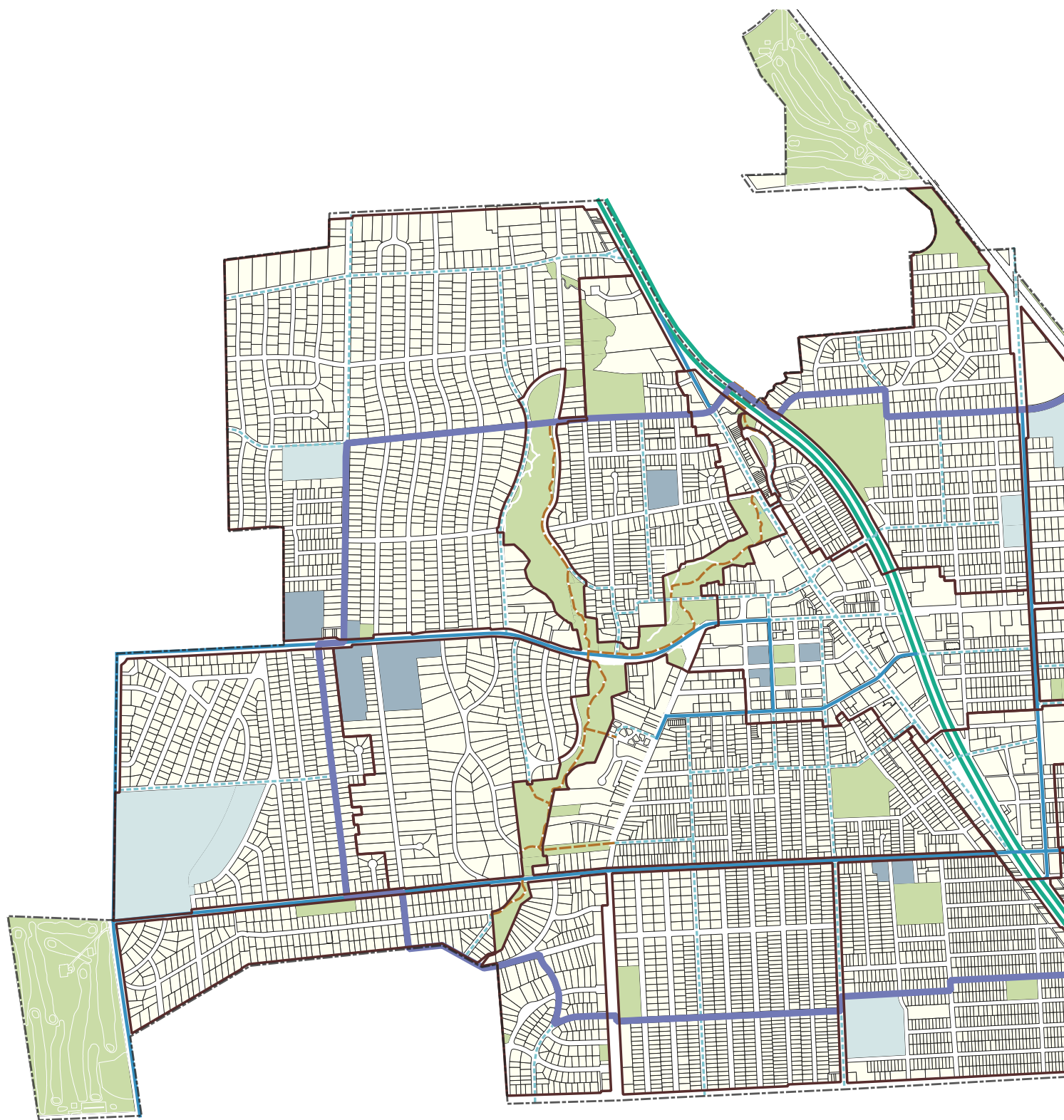


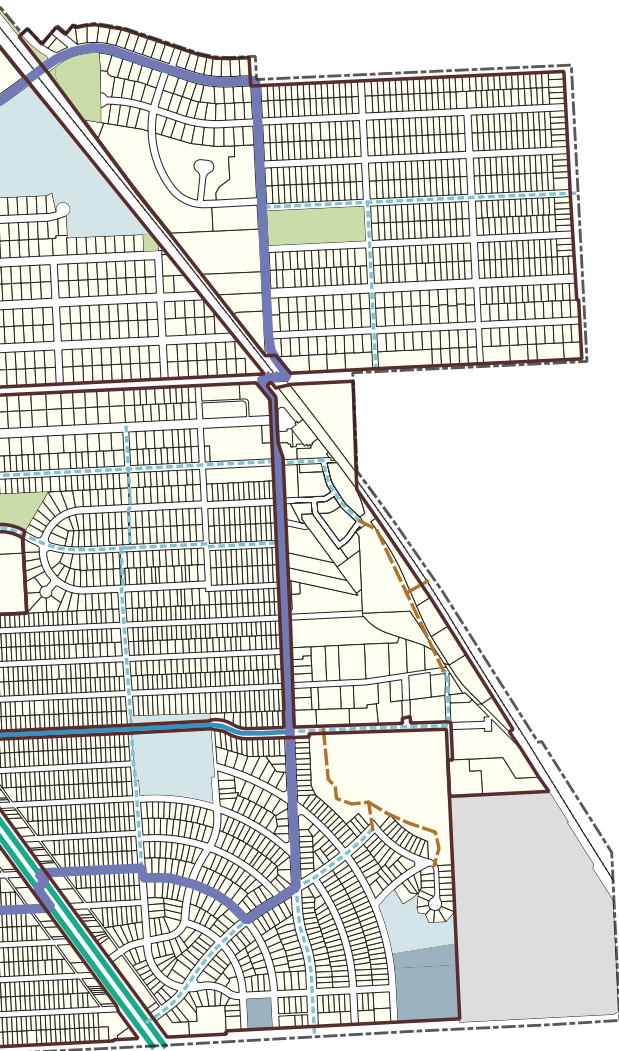
Figure A.2-17. Future Transportation Plan: Cycling.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

on the horizon. However, their widespread application is not likely to occur until the later years of this plan's life. At present there is only speculation concerning their impact and opportunities. To remain effective and conservative, this plan anticipates their adoption to parallel present usage patterns. In an optimistic future, these vehicles will reduce the amount of roadway necessary for cars and reduce parking. And in an alternative view they will increase congestion.

With a focus on pedestrians and bicyclists, the Future Transportation Plan intends to increase access and sociability across the City. A citywide circulator, driven or autonomous, is an important consideration to accommodate residents with difficulties walking. It would also tie-in directly with regional transit, should future investments come to fruition. Together pedestrian, bicycle, and circulator would benefit from the Neighborhood Loop proposed, creating a viable internal circulation system for the City with minimal changes.



Multimodal - Bike

- Neighborhood Loop
- Protected Bike Lane
- Bike Lane
- Neighborhood Connector
- Paved Bike Path

Civic Institutions

- Civic
- School
- Cemetery
- Parks

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

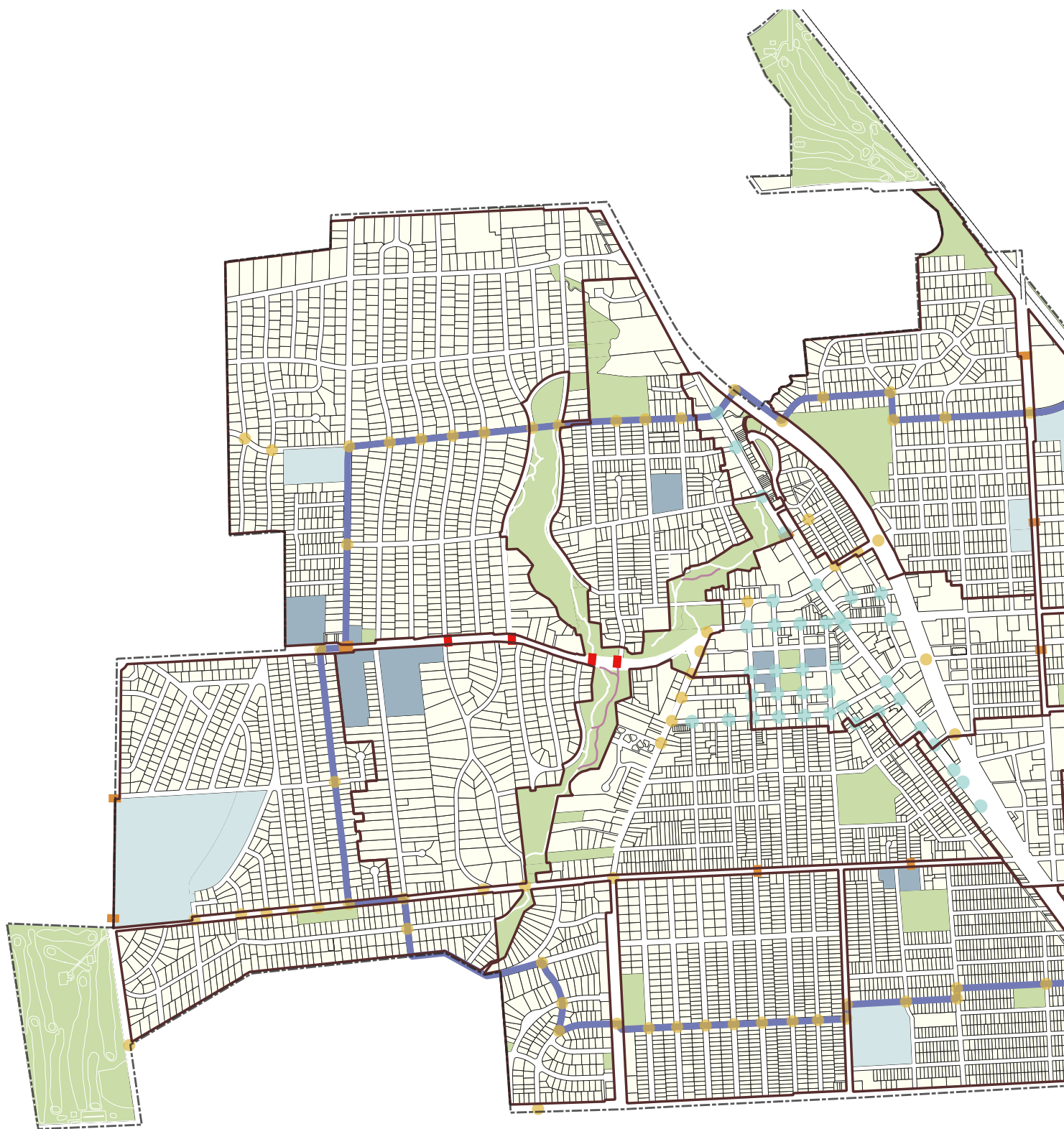
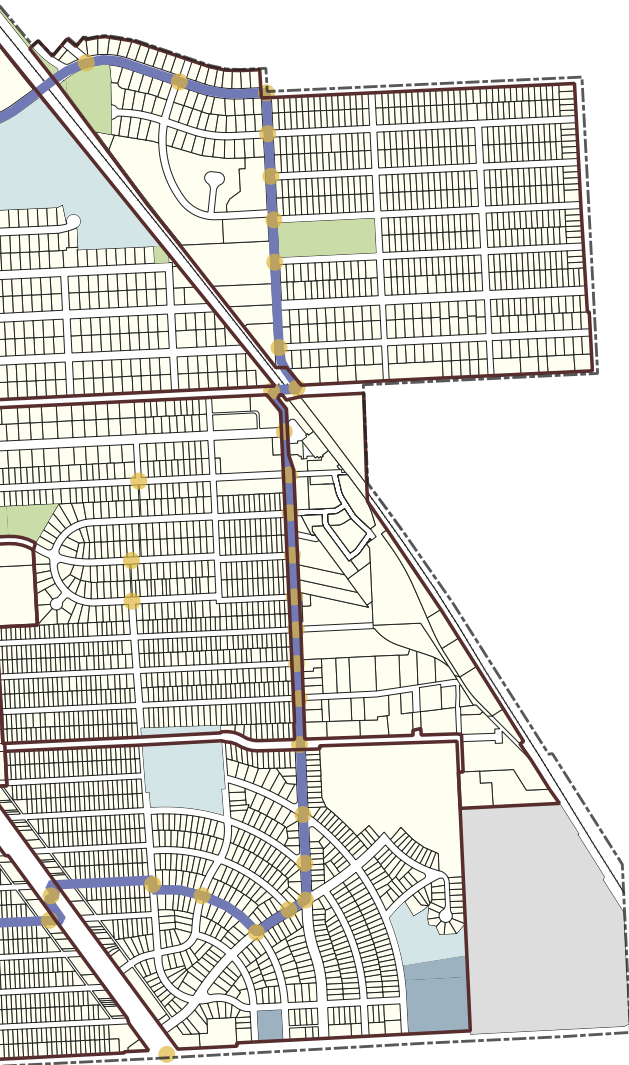


Figure A.2-18. Future Transportation Plan: Pedestrian Mobility.

A. Vision

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Multimodal - Pedestrian

- Neighborhood Loop
- Crossing Island with RRFP
- Crossing Island
- Curb Extensions
- General Improvements

Civic Institutions

- Civic
- School
- Cemetery
- Parks

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

The Neighborhood Loop

OBSERVATIONS

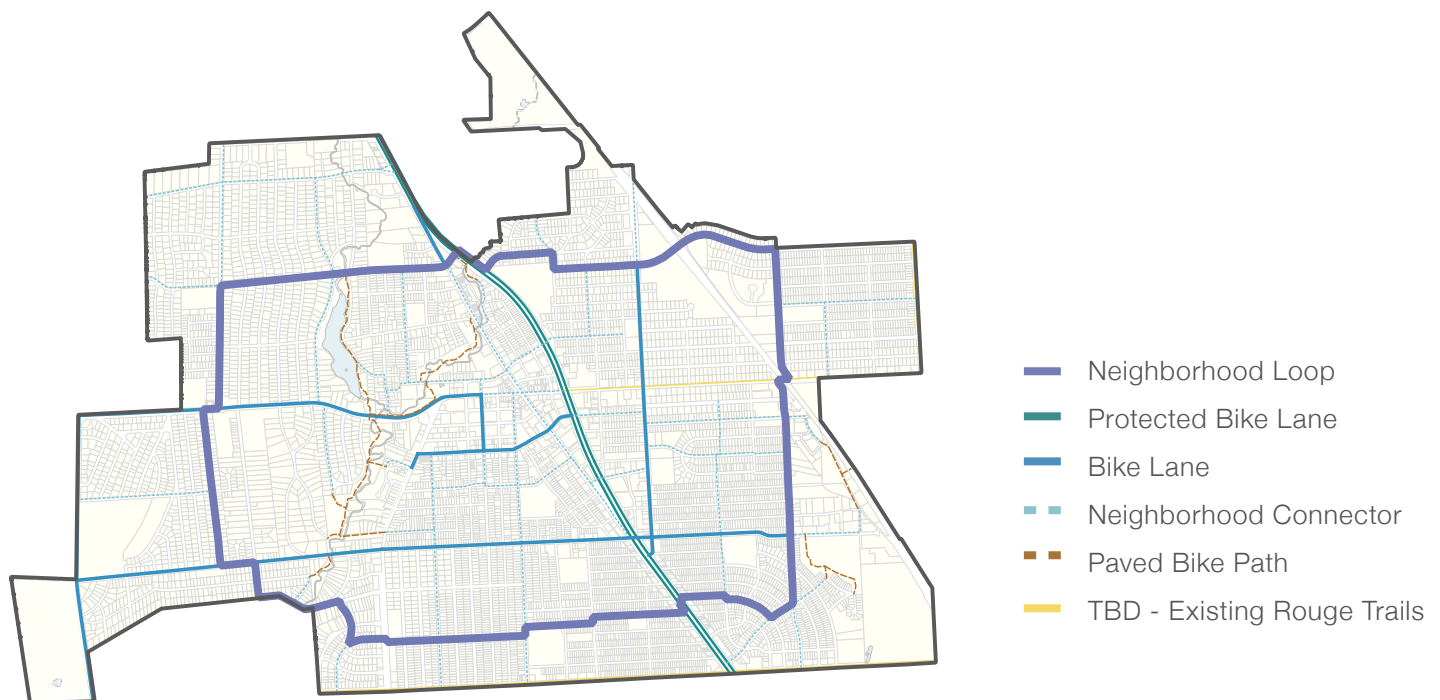
Presently, the City's transportation structure runs primarily between neighborhoods which is efficient for cars and long-distance movements, but less convenient and safe for walkers and cyclists. Additionally, many neighborhoods experience cut-through traffic when congestion is high on major roads.

DISCUSSION

This plan is heavily focused on increasing neighborhood sociability. To jump-start increased sociability, this plan proposes a Neighborhood Loop (See Fig. A.2-18), which is a pedestrian and bicycle priority route through most of Birmingham's neighborhoods, avoiding larger roads where possible. Some portions of the loop exist in the 2013 plan. This plan recommends that improvements occur first along the loop and then elsewhere as in the 2013 plan. The loop is also an opportunity for a future internal circulator for the City, to provide mobility options for those who cannot walk long distances or cycle.

The loop is intended to be a bicycle boulevard system which also focuses on pedestrian accommodations and comfort. Bicycle boulevards are routes that are designed for bicycle access while discouraging through access for cars. As such, the loop can serve to reduce cut-through traffic by diverting cars to provide better bike access. Pedestrian accommodations include sufficient sidewalks, marked crosswalks, shading, and benches.

Beyond physical accommodations, the Neighborhood Loop is intended to be a social concentrator for the City's neighborhoods. Once established, at least by signage, activities should be planned along the loop to encourage pedestrian and cyclist use, especially families. During the summer, a monthly program should close the loop to traffic one day per month, and parks along the path programmed with family-friendly activities. Where the Hometown Parade brings people to Downtown, activities along the loop are intended to connect neighbors with each other and get residents walking and riding through other neighborhoods they don't normally experience. Additionally, the loop is



Neighborhood Loop - Figure A.2-18.

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A.2. The Future City



Image A.2-19.

intended to make pedestrians and cyclists more visible throughout the City, especially across the major roadways. The culture of Metro-Detroit is heavily car centric and while many people walk and bike in Birmingham, the broader culture pervades. We've observed cyclists of all types - families, cautious riders, commuters - throughout the community, but their presence and needs are not widely known.

Bicycle destination signage is currently lacking throughout the City. While the 2013 Multi-modal Plan recommended signage, this plan establishes a number of more clear destinations with neighborhood boundaries and multiple downtown districts. Signage should be installed along the Neighborhood Loop and other routes with bike lanes initially. Signage may be expanded to secondary connections and routes at a later time. Bicycle signage provides significant wayfinding assistance to riders who may be unsure of how to use the bike network.

...the Neighborhood Loop is intended to be a social concentrator for the City's neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Issue an RFP to design the Neighborhood Loop bicycle boulevard attributes, like signage and diverters, and pedestrian improvements, like complete sidewalks and crosswalks.
2. Prioritize Neighborhood Loop improvements in the next Capital Improvement Plan cycle.
3. Add benches along the loop where the loop crosses major roads, like Maple, schools, and parks, like Linden Park.
4. Add bicycle destination signage along the loop and routes with bike lanes.
5. Add bicycle parking and maintenance kiosks like those found in Shaine Park to all parks.
6. Establish a committee and plan a monthly event along the loop in the summertime which closes the route to traffic and organizes family friendly activities in parks along the route. This will require City funding, but over time it will help solidify social interactions in the community. As with many events of this type, the first few may see fewer participants, but over time participation should grow, provided it

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

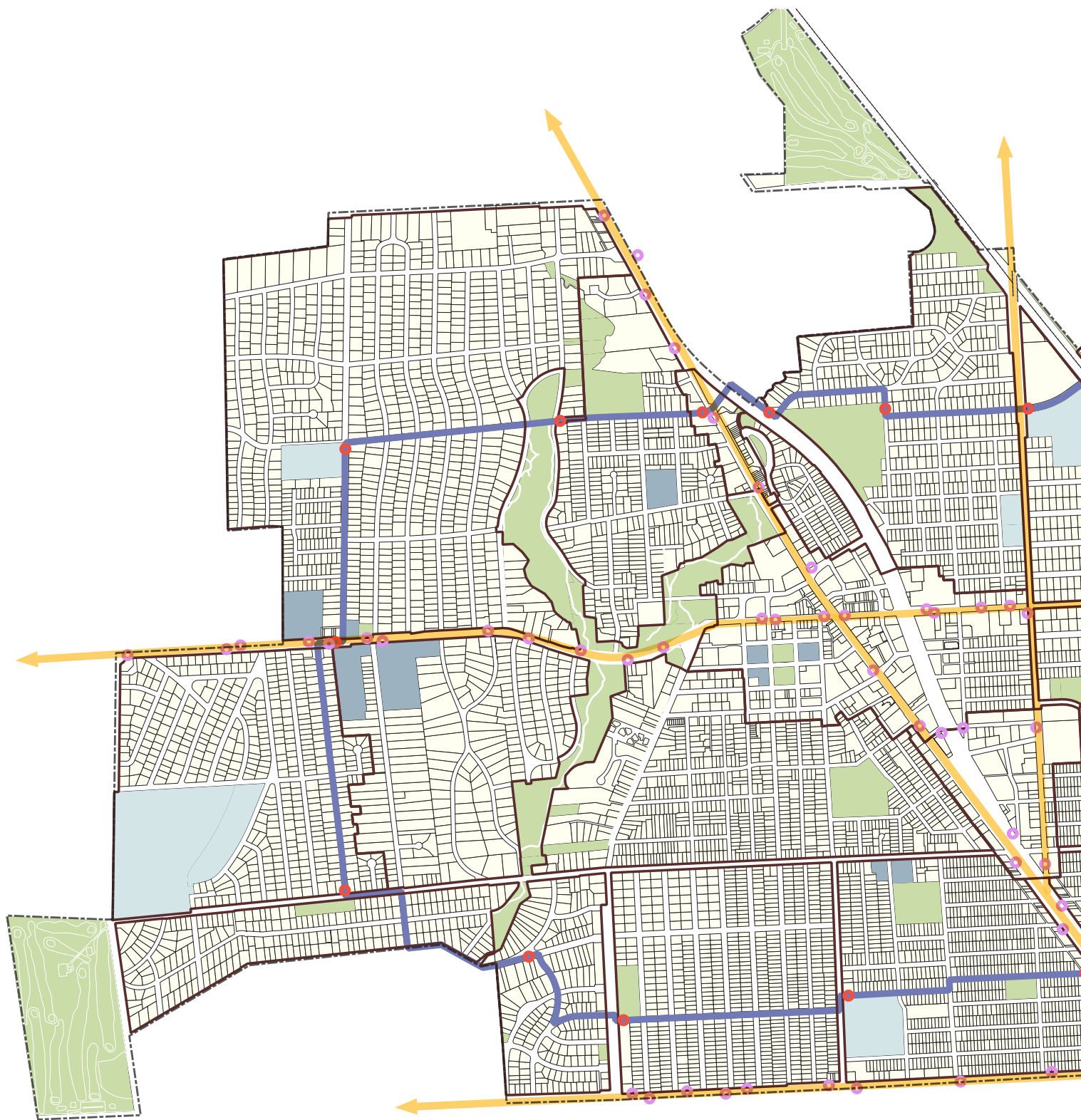


Figure A.2-20. Future Transportation Plan: Transit.

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is well advertised and occurs regularly.

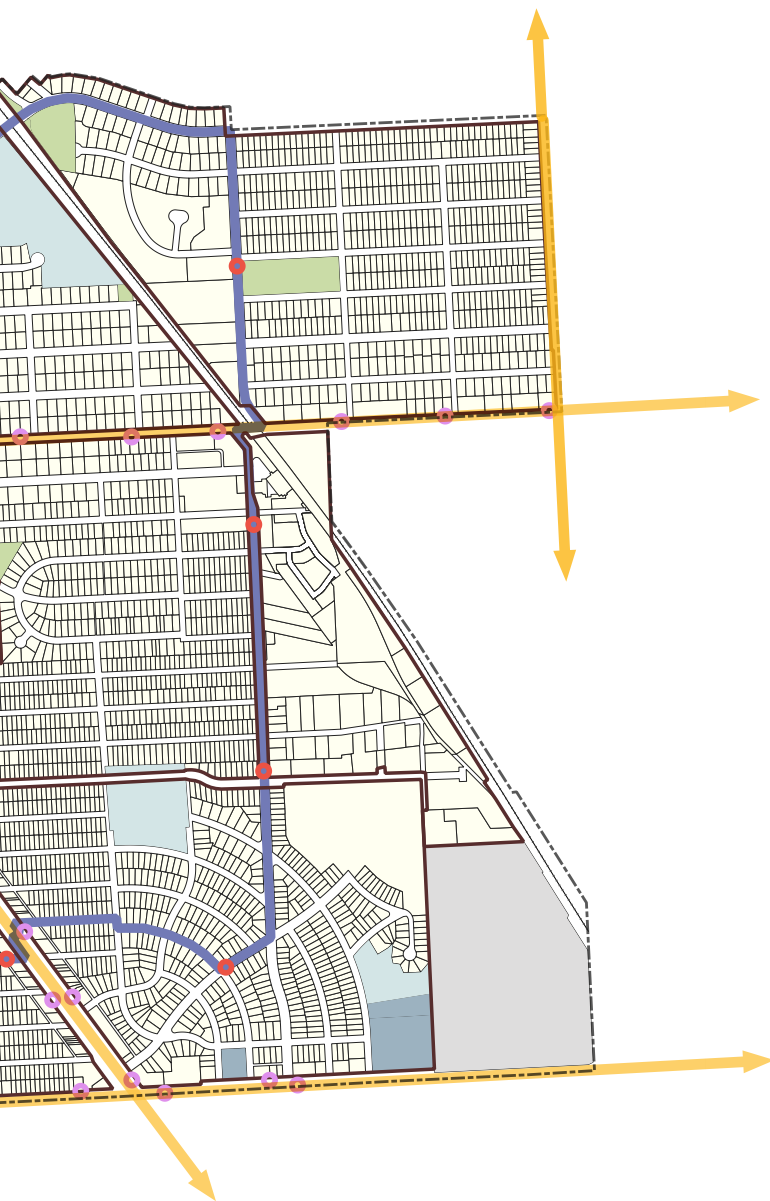
Regional Transit

OBSERVATIONS

Transit ridership is increasing nationwide among younger demographics, as the percentage of teens getting drivers licenses is dropping. Regional transit in Metro-Detroit has a difficult history yet efforts continue. The City is already 90% of the way to being transit supportive, with few steps remaining.

DISCUSSION

Regional transit will increase in importance as long as the transit authorities invest in the system, and residents support that investment. As one of a number of Cities and mixed-use centers along Woodward, Birmingham would benefit significantly from improved bus or rail along the corridor. For the Downtown areas, this would reduce the parking needs for employees, provide greater employee access, and bring more customers to businesses. For residents, it would connect them to other experiences



Multimodal - Transit

- Neighborhood Loop
- Transit Stop
- Proposed Circulator Stop
- Transit Trajectories

Civic Institutions

- Civic
- School
- Cemetery
- Parks

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

in the region as well as job centers. While this has been projected for decades, there is still hope that it will occur.

To support transit, Birmingham has relatively little work to do, already having a well established downtown along Woodward. Most significantly, Birmingham needs to add residents to Downtown, which is proposed in greater detail in following chapters. Residents Downtown would also be located along the regional transit corridor, more readily users of that service and able to reduce car dependency as a result. The Rail District also needs to secure a connection to the Troy Transit Center and add residents and businesses. This is also discussed in later chapters. Physically the City needs to improve transit stops to be covered and include real-time information, along with nearby long-term covered bike parking.

For Birmingham, regional transportation will mean relatively little for residents who are further from Downtown without an internal circulator. A circulator would also improve access around the City to residents who have difficulties walking and biking during the winter months. Transit systems vary in type, flexibility, access, and frequency. In sprawling suburban areas, no transit system can be effective. But in a place structured by walkable neighborhoods, transit can effectively stop at one or two places within a neighborhood (See Fig. A.2-20), retaining a frequent

To support transit, Birmingham has relatively little work to do, already having a well established downtown along Woodward.

schedule. A circulator within Birmingham should run along the Neighborhood Loop, with a few diversions to high-frequency destinations like Seaholm. Overall this would provide greater access to residents and reduce some parking issues Downtown and also at Seaholm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Study the potential of operating an internal Birmingham Circulator. This should not be a full scale bus, but would require zero entry opportunities. Autonomous circulators currently operating in places like Downtown Las Vegas are appropriate models.
2. Improve bus stops with shelters along big Woodward.
3. Improve bus stops with shelters along Old Woodward (completed in part with Phase 1 streetscape).
4. Improve bus stops with shelters along Maple, including stops outside of Downtown.
5. Improve bus stops with shelters along Coolidge Hwy.
6. Improve bus stops with shelters along Adams Rd.
7. Improve bus stops with shelters along 14 Mile Rd.
8. Invest in public parking within the Triangle District / Haynes Square to encourage development (detailed in a later Chapter).
9. Adopt policy changes to encourage more housing in Downtown and the Triangle District / Haynes Square (detailed in a later Chapter).
10. Secure a connection to the Troy Transit Center from the Rail District for pedestrians and cyclists (detailed in a later Chapter).

Changing Image and Role of Mobility

OBSERVATIONS

Across the country and even in Metro-Detroit, mobility has evolved from a relatively singular focus on personal automobiles to a wide variety of solutions. Birmingham has considered some technologies yet needs a strategy as options increase.

DISCUSSION

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A.2. The Future City

The present is an exciting and frustrating time where new mobility options are being rapidly developed. Some of these are likely to gain traction, like electric scooters, while others may fade away. Preparing for unknown future mobility devices is difficult to predict but important to allow for increased access throughout the City, which may reduce traffic congestion. While these new mobility options provide benefits for travelers, they should be adopted carefully to mitigate concerns such as safety issues and a clear understanding and respect for the rules of the road. Safety and rule following are issues that are paramount for drivers as well, many of whom ignore pedestrian and cyclist rights at intersections and crosswalks.

Improved practices in bicycle facility design, such as protected bike lanes (e.g. separated bike lanes or cycle tracks), buffered bike lanes, bike boulevards, and various intersection design treatments have increased the accessibility of biking for many people. These improvements increase the comfort and safety of biking, expanding mobility choices and increasing ridership. Implementing these facilities in Birmingham will allow bikes to be used for more trips such as commuting, trips to entertainment, and for recreation. The City has begun to implement a few bike facilities, including piloting a cycle track along Eton through the Rail District. But there remains a long way to go in order to achieve the goals of the 2013 Multi-modal Plan, which increases with importance every year.

Respect for rules of the road and safety concerns are inter-related issues, where following rules is a major component of overall safety. Riders of bicycles, scooters, and other modes must be aware of where they are expected and allowed to ride, whether safety equipment is required, and how right-of-way is determined. In addition to awareness, the City should understand that most frequently violations occur where people feel that it is unsafe or very inconvenient to ride where directed. But equally importantly, drivers need to respect the rights of other roadway users, including pedestrians, bikes, and other emerging modes. The infamous Metro-Detroit car culture and prevalence of high-speed roads in the region have a significant impact on other roadway users throughout Birmingham and especially Downtown where pedestrians should dominate.

Numerous times during the plan process, members of the consulting team were endangered while in crosswalks by aggressive drivers Downtown, while following proper rules for pedestrians.

Within neighborhoods, accommodation for new mobility modes is relatively easy. The recommended Neighborhood Loop, consisting of a series of bicycle boulevards, provides safe and convenient access for multiple modes, beyond bikes. The greatest issue properly organizing traffic and managing speeds to ensure that interactions between drivers and vulnerable users are predictable and safe.

Within Mixed-use Districts, accommodation for new mobility modes should be considered more carefully. On streets with larger volumes of car traffic, improved bicycle accommodations such as protected bike lanes are more necessary to ensure comfort and safety for riders of all ages. However, with width of many streets in Birmingham cannot accommodate both bike lanes and on-street parking. These mixed-use districts often also experience the highest parking usage rates, making removing parking for bike lanes more difficult. Studies have shown that commercial streets which remove some on-street parking in favor of improved bicycle infrastructure saw an increase in sales as travelers were slowed and the street was made more welcoming. Difficult decisions must be made in these districts concerning where to prioritize alternative mobility options or where to maintain vehicle operations.

Another recommended initiative is to convert key streets to shared-use streets where materials, signage, and the street edge are not designed to accommodate any single user group over another. Presently all streets are designed to accommodate cars ahead of any other user. Shared-use streets are streets where the sidewalk and main travel space are integrated by removing curbs and carefully choosing materials. This integration results in a more multi-modal space where pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and other travelers share space without clear boundaries. These shared use spaces have been used historically in the design of European streets and have replicated in the US, notably recently in Chicago along Argyle Street.

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Merrill Street is an excellent location to pilot a shared use street in Birmingham, connecting Old Woodward with Shain Park and the Library, potentially extending to Martha Baldwin Park and the Rouge River trail network. With success, Worth Street in Haynes Square / the Triangle District could pilot the form as a future main street, along with Cole Street in the Rail District. Over time a series of shared use streets should be assembled, better accommodating a changing mobility outlook. Proposals along the South Woodward Gateway discussed in a later Chapter implements this strategy within the existing alley.

Mobility innovation has also come to bikes themselves in the form of electric bikes. These e-bikes allow new users to move to bicycles who could not previously: those unable to put forth the effort to pedal due to health conditions or physical abilities, people living further from Birmingham who want to bike there, and families where hauling one or more kids on a bike is no longer a burden. These have come online in recent years, tracking with an increase in ridership.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhance and expand streetside bicycle parking with parking areas for micro-mobility devices.
2. Pilot a shared use street along Merrill Street first from Old Woodward to Shain Park, and in a later phase connecting to the Rouge River trail system through Martha Baldwin Park.
3. Increase the number of streetside bicycle and micro-mobility parking spaces throughout

Downtown, especially near transit stops.

4. Install or convert bicycle lane signage to mobility lane when alternative micro-mobility devices become prevalent.
5. Install signage informing micro-mobility users and cyclists of where they are and are not permitted to ride (e.g. not on sidewalks).
6. Provide mobility education during summertime activities along the Neighborhood Loop.

Connecting the City

OBSERVATIONS

Woodward divides Birmingham physically and mentally. Crossing Woodward as a pedestrian or cyclist is dangerous and inconvenient, causing more people to drive than otherwise necessary. Woodward's current design is dangerous for all roadway users.

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DISCUSSION

Woodward is an extremely fast, high volume, and divisive roadway for the community. While it provides regional connections that support Downtown activities, Woodward divides the City's neighborhoods. Particularly for older adults and children, Woodward can be an impenetrable barrier to mobility.

A complete street plan for Woodward has been produced by the Woodward Avenue Action Association, and has been well supported but not yet implemented. The state department of transportation (MDOT) indicated that their current preference for major roadways such as Woodward is to provide greater accommodation for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit, and to stitch together those communities historically divided by state routes. However, implementing those changes are currently well beyond the department's ability to fund directly. Funding aside, they are likely to support City-led initiatives to improve crossings and the character of Woodward. In the short term, small key changes to Woodward should be targeted, especially with a focus on pedestrian and bicyclists at crossings. In the long term, larger changes should be studied and advocated for at the county and state levels. The simplest changes to have a significant impact are to improve key crossings by providing sufficient crosswalk time at signals, better signage, more substantial crosswalk and bike lane striping, pedestrian activated signals, and pedestrian refuges. Presently, there are too few crossings, and most of those that exist are uncomfortable for pedestrians and cyclists.

An initial set of key crossings is selected from those major Sectionline and Quartersection roads, crossings necessary to implement the Neighborhood Loop, and crossings that already exist but are insufficient. These include: Sectionline crossings at 14 Mile and Maple, Quartersection crossings at Lincoln and Oak, Neighborhood Loop crossings at Emmons and Oak, and existing crossings at Brown and Oakland. Additionally, the intersection of Old Woodward and Woodward is proposed for redevelopment, as detailed further in a later Chapter. Development of this intersection would include adding a crossing at Haynes St.

Notoriously, Woodward has been an extremely fast, high volume, and destructive roadway for the community.

The Woodward crossing at Maple occupies what should be the heart of Downtown's central district. In order to span the notion of Downtown across Woodward, an elliptical traffic circle is proposed. This is intended to better accommodate pedestrian and bicycle crossings; the expanded central area can include seating and structures that are not break-away where those people crossing may wait for the following signal cycle. This circle serves as a marker along Woodward for the center of Birmingham, with

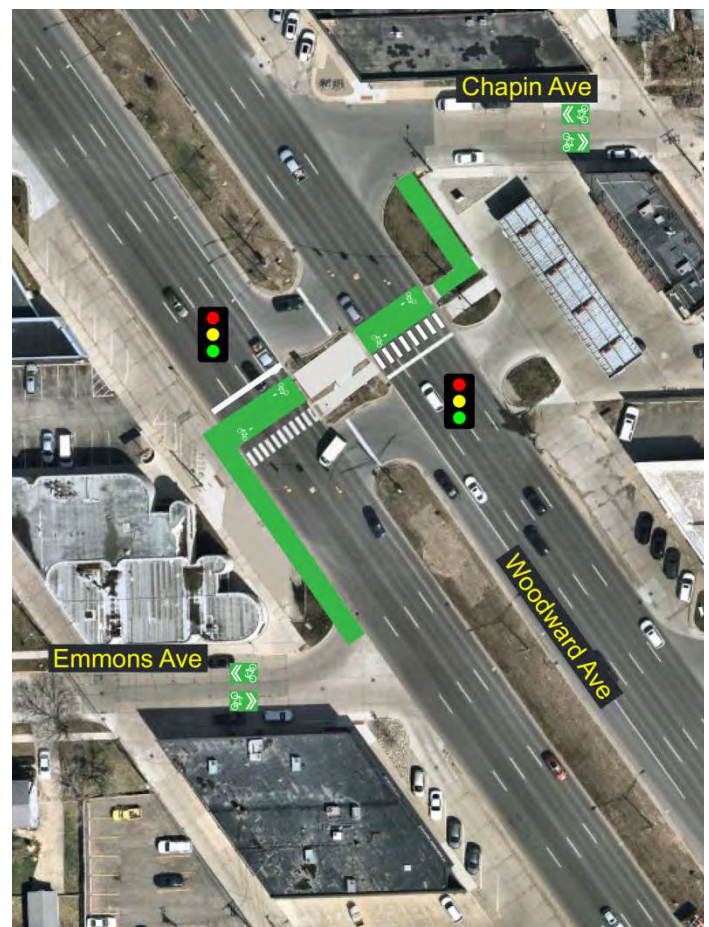


Figure A.2-21. Neighborhood Loop Crossing at Emmons.

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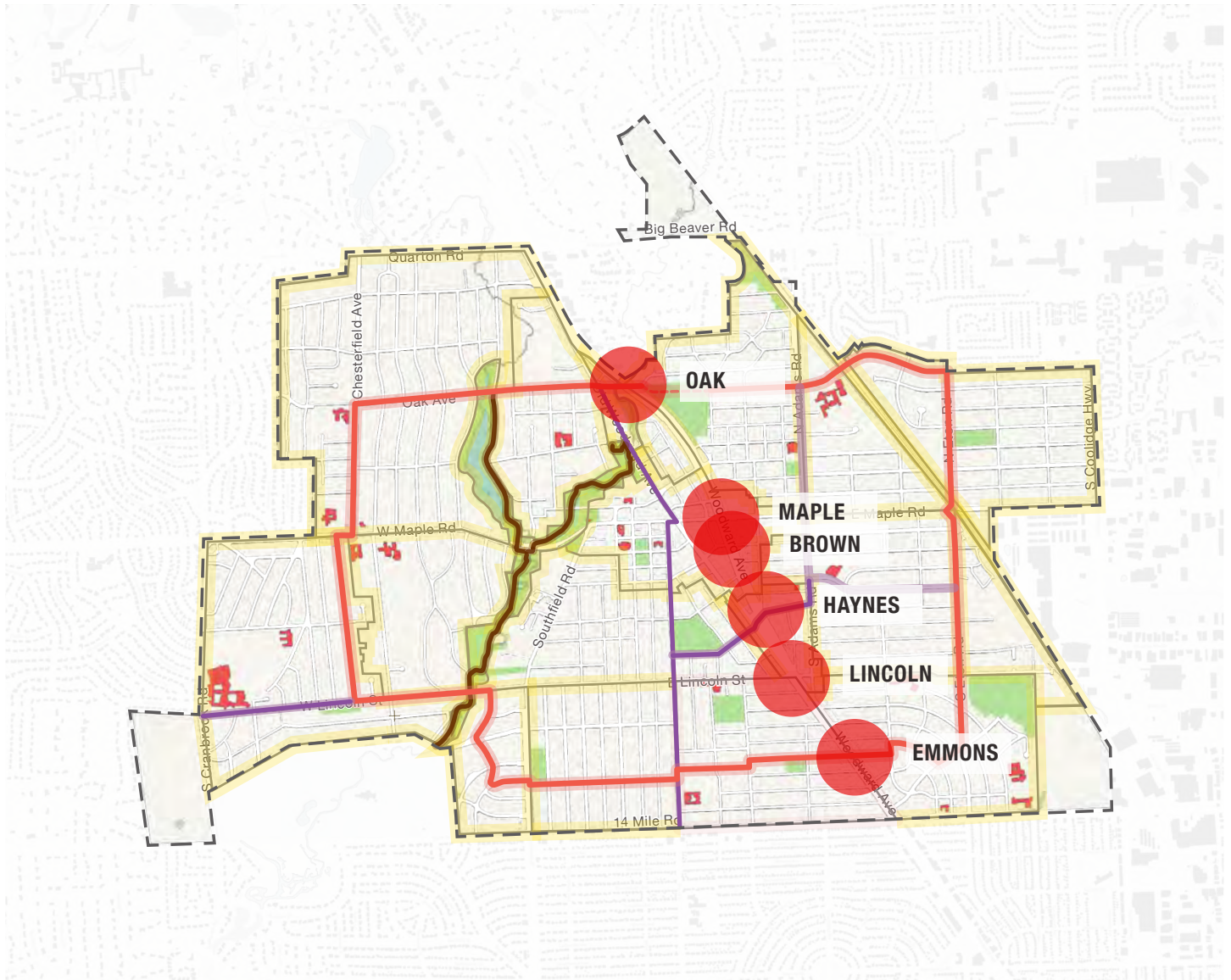


Figure A.2-22.

KEY CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

- Key Crossings
- Neighborhood Loop
- Special Connections
- Shared Use Trails
- Proposed Neighborhood Boundaries
- Civic Institutions

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Woodward passing through the City rather than passing it by. However this intervention would cause decreased traffic performance, especially for trucks, a trade-off that must be weighed. Over time the adjustment may discourage through movement along Maple, but overall this proposal requires more analysis including updated traffic counts and a feasibility study for the proposed roadway geometries. At present, with four lanes of traffic in each direction along Woodward, the circle will not function. However, MDOT indicated that once I-75 reopens fully, that they believe Woodward will be able to be reduced to three lanes of traffic in each direction. This change may bring the circle's design to sufficient compliance. The circle's large internal area should be designed as a civic space, like many such circles in Washington DC. Currently crossing Woodward at Maple is difficult to do in one signal phase. All but the fastest-walking pedestrians are forced to cross each direction of Woodward separately. Adding this circle intersection would increase the total crossing distance and split the crossing into two phases for all pedestrians. However, this proposal would make up for this by making the time in the median of Woodward as pleasant as possible. Already a backed-up intersection,

Woodward's speed perpetuates the City's disconnection, creates dangerous conditions accessing businesses along the corridor, and threatens the safety of all roadway users.

this proposal requires careful consideration. There are long-term advantages to improving pedestrian crossings and creating a symbol for the City. But this comes at the cost of some further inconvenience, a situation that has been dealt with along Maple in the past.

Apart from the Maple intersection, should Woodward be justifiably reduced to three lanes in each direction, reconfiguring the roadway still remains prohibitively expensive. However, as a lower cost option, the City could re-stripe the outside travel lane, currently 11.5 feet to the face of curb, to a substantial protected bicycle lane. Within the 11.5 feet of width, the lane could provide a 7.5 foot bike lane with a 4 foot buffer or barrier along the adjacent travel lane. A barrier would be necessary for safety and comfort.



Image A.2-23. Intersection at Woodward and Worth Street.

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Figure A.2-24. Elliptical traffic circle proposed at Woodward crossing at Maple.

Woodward’s high travel speeds perpetuate the City’s east-west disconnection, create dangerous conditions accessing businesses along the corridor, and threaten the safety of all roadway users. Overall the Woodward corridor varies in its speed and context along its trajectory, from a low speed urban context in downtown Detroit to a high-speed highway-like context in Bloomfield Hills, before slowing down again at Pontiac. Along its trajectory, Woodward’s speed and design changes in a number of contexts. Through Ferndale, the posted speed is 35 mph and on-street parking is permitted. Birmingham presents a more urban context to Woodward than Ferndale, which

Crossing Woodward as a pedestrian or cyclist is dangerous and inconvenient, causing more people to drive than otherwise necessary.

should warrant lower speeds, however the large clear zone and curb separation gives visual clues to drivers that Woodward is a high-speed roadway. Unfortunately MDOT is forced by state law to use the 85th Percentile Rule when attempting to lower speeds, which measures the typical speed actually traveled on the roadway and can result in increased posted speeds instead. Changing the speed along Woodward may be accomplished through legislative means, but is unlikely to be successful following existing requirements imposed upon the DOT.

Traffic problems caused by Woodward spill into surrounding streets in a few key locations. Due to Woodward’s angle, Adams, Worth, and Elm streets intersect at obtuse angles in the northbound direction allowing soft-right turns at high speeds. When streets intersect at extreme

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Image A.2-25. Intersection at Woodward and Adams Rd.

angles, pedestrian crossing distances increase and vehicle speeds increase, leading to safety and operational issues. Additionally, these intersections occur close to east-west streets: Ruffner, Lincoln, and Haynes, further complicating operations there. Elm and Worth should be realigned to intersect Woodward perpendicularly, as shown in the Triangle District Plan.

The intersection of Adams with Woodward is especially complicated due to its traffic volume and existing median breaks, making it particularly dangerous for pedestrians. To address this issue, when the Haynes Square intersection redevelopment occurs, traffic along Adams should be rerouted to access Woodward at Haynes, which is already a near-perpendicular intersection. Additionally, the median break on Woodward at southbound Adams closed. The Haynes Square intersection would allow southbound Adams traffic to turn left onto Woodward at a new traffic signal. This will reduce traffic at Adams and Lincoln. At the Woodward intersection, Adams should be realigned to intersect perpendicularly, as is proposed for Elm and

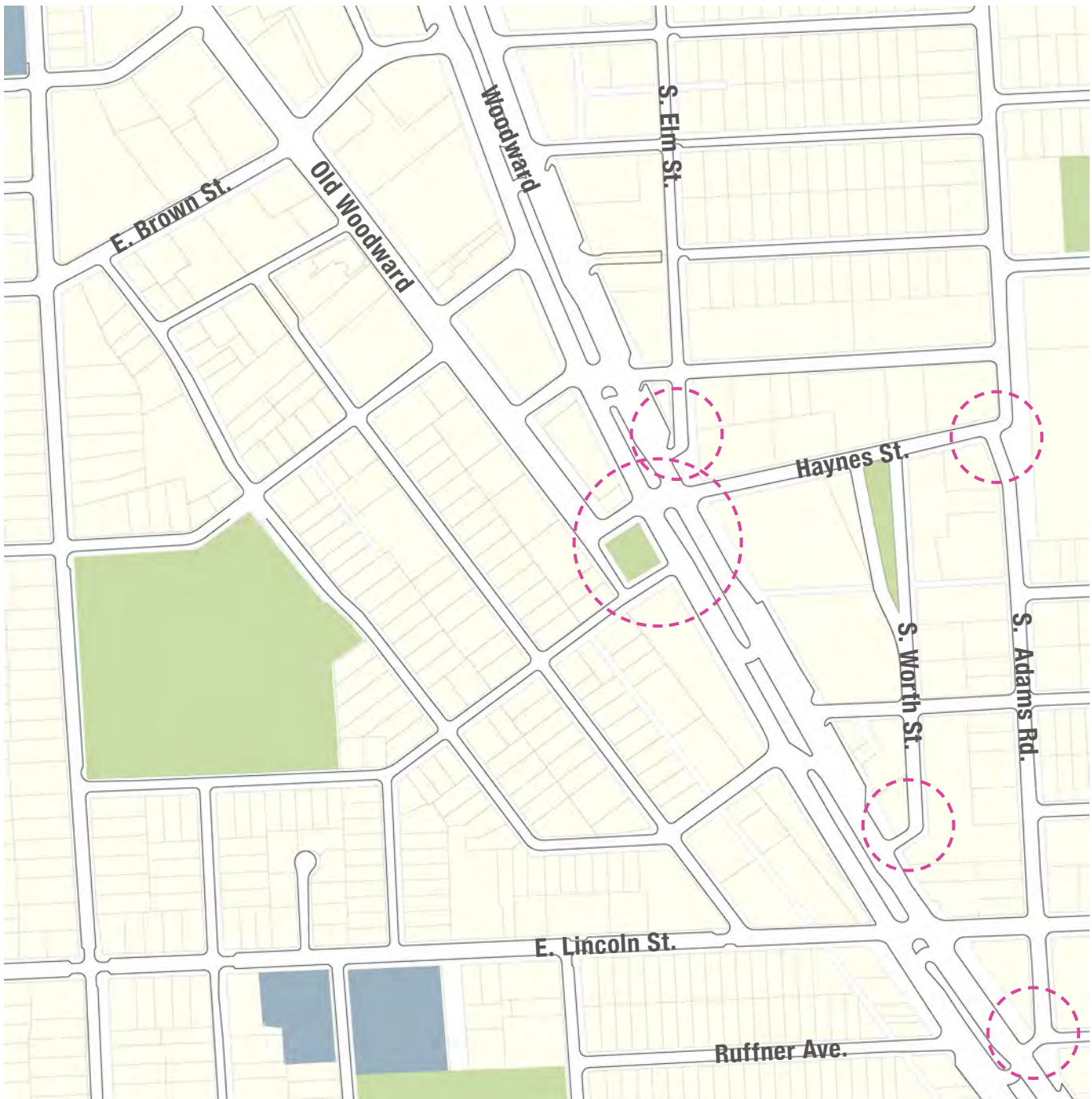
Worth. Where Adams meets Haynes, the street should turn to the left slightly, to intersect perpendicularly with Haynes, which may also be accomplished through signage encouraging southbound Adams traffic to use Haynes for Woodward access. Additionally, this movement will help provide momentum to future retail in the Haynes Square / Triangle District area. To accommodate this, Haynes between Woodward and Adams should receive a streetscape redevelopment similar to Maple through Downtown, which has the same width.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Pursue a speed reduction on Woodward to 35mph within Birmingham through legislative means. (short term)
2. Move signage at Lincoln which obscures pedestrian countdown timers. (short term)
3. Add a signal for the Brown Street crosswalk along

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 Intersection adjustments along Woodward and Adams.

Figure A.2-26. Intersection redevelopment to alleviate traffic issues at Adams and Lincoln.

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the northbound lanes of Woodward. (short term)

4. Install ADA-compliant ramps at intersections that are not in compliance. (short term)
5. Review pedestrian crossing times for MUTCD compliance, some may need to be lengthened. (short term)
6. Continue enhanced median planting beyond Maple and Woodward. (short term)
7. Add a protected only left turn signal for northbound left turns to Old Woodward. This may be omitted if the Haynes Square street reconfiguration occurs quickly. (short term)
8. Reconfigure the Woodward and Old Woodward intersection at Haynes Square as described in later Chapters. (mid-term)
9. Improve pedestrian and bicycle crossings along Woodward at 14 Mile, Emmons, Lincoln, Haynes, Brown, Maple, Oakland, and Oak. (mid-term)
10. Divert Adams traffic onto Haynes by angling Adams to intersect perpendicularly with Haynes, taking a portion of the parking lot of The Plant Station. (mid-term)
11. Adjust Adams to meet Woodward perpendicularly at Ruffner. (mid-term)
12. Adjust Elm to meet Woodward perpendicularly per the Triangle District plan. (mid-term)

13. Adjust Worth to meet Woodward perpendicularly per the Triangle District plan. (mid-term)
14. Study the traffic intervention proposed at Maple and Woodward in coordination with MDOT, including alternates. (mid-term)
15. Participate in a traffic study along Woodward, with MDOT, once I-75 reopens fully to determine whether the road can be reduced to 3-lanes in each direction. (mid-term)
16. Pending verification of potential lane reductions and an agreeable design, pursue the circle at Maple and Woodward. (long term)
17. Pending verification of potential lane reductions, fund and implement restriping on Woodward, between 14 Mile and Oakland, potentially to Quarton, converting the outside lane to a buffered bicycle and transit lane. (long term)

Future City Resilience

Discussed at length in Premise #3, resilience is an important quality for any community to possess. Resilience is derived from social, physical, environmental, and governmental systems, all aimed at sustaining a City's success and quality of life into the future. This section addresses aspects of the master plan related to

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the City's resilience from a broad perspective, with greater detail provided in the following Chapters.

The Role of Population Diversity

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham's population is surprisingly diverse in age both overall and in its distribution across the City (See Fig. A.2-28). As regional growth pressure continues, promoting and retaining population diversity is necessary to support the future of area schools and a functional social structure.

DISCUSSION

As discussed in Premise #3, when cities become too narrow in their diversity of age, race, family structure, background, experience, civic institutions, and businesses, they eventually decline. Many Birmingham residents discussed the availability of appropriate housing types and cost of housing as a barrier to purchasing and aging within the City. While this does not represent all residents, many of whom indicated that available housing works well for them, housing types and cost are important in retaining both younger and older demographics.

These issues affect both the younger and older demographic groups. Younger people are often interested in rentals or in establishing their equity through a lower-cost entry product in the market. They also tend to be interested in housing near active areas. Older people are often interested in housing that is smaller, single-level, and without a yard, adjusting their housing situation to reflect evolving needs. Cost is also an issue, with most older adults living on a fixed income.

Housing type limitations affect housing cost, however they aren't the only cost drivers. Overall, Birmingham has a small percentage of smaller homes, townhomes, and small

Birmingham's population is surprisingly diverse in age both overall and in its distribution across the City

...housing types and cost are important in retaining both younger and older demographics.

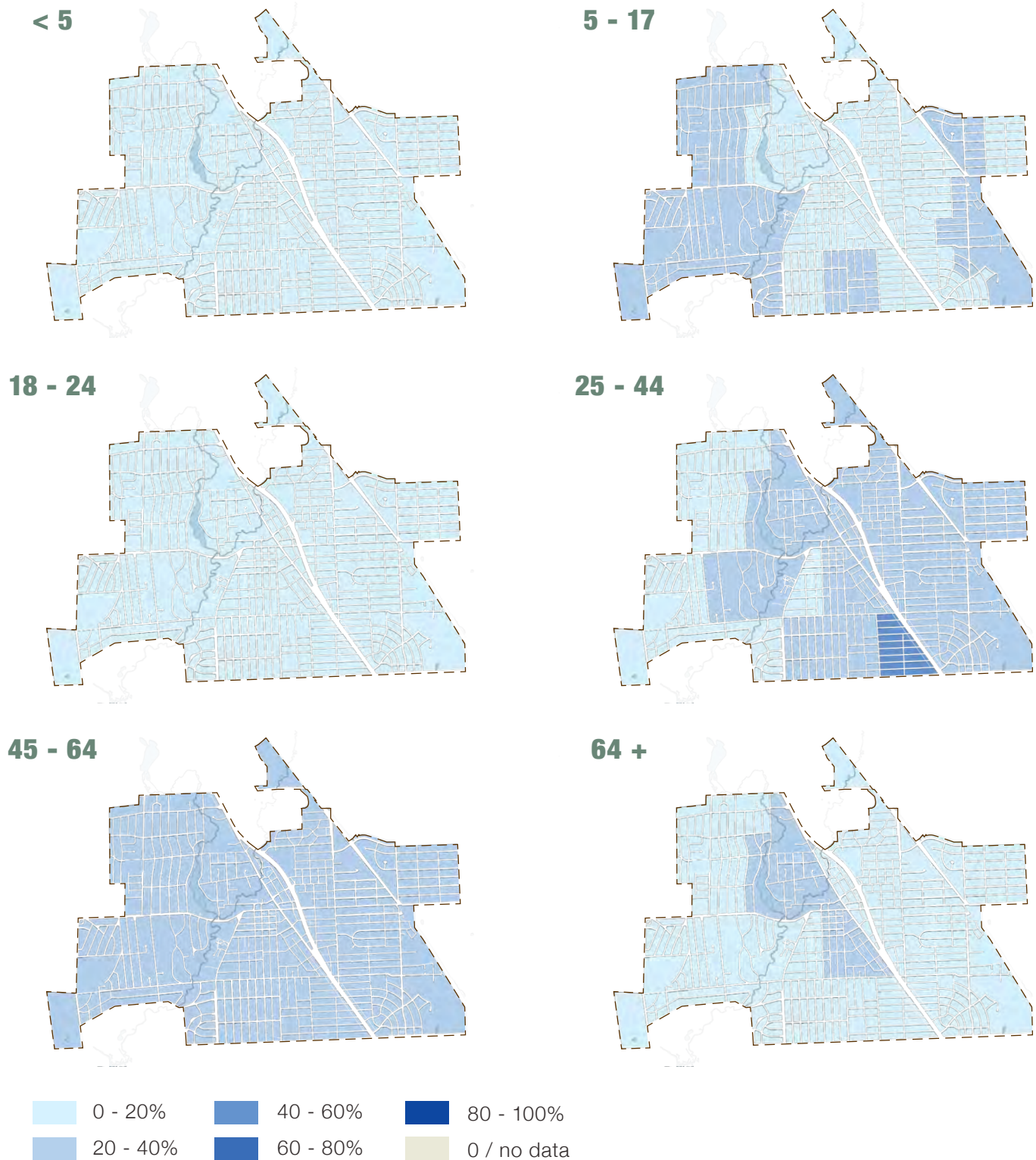
multi-family buildings (See Fig. A.2-29). While some react aggressively against broadening housing types, the small multi-family building recently constructed at St. James Park has been well received, due in part to its limited size (See Img. A.2-30). Smaller units and multi-family housing spreads the initial cost of land across multiple units, which reduces the cost of individual units. In addition to current prohibition of housing type variety, minimum lot area per unit requirements negate any cost efficiencies gained by building smaller units. Regulatory adjustments should be made to allow for greater diversity, with limitations on size and appropriate locations throughout the community.

Much though not all of the need for housing type diversity can be provided within Downtown's 3 districts and the Rail District. These areas are currently zoned for mixed-use, which can provide a significant amount of multi-family housing within current zoning. However, parking management is manipulating the market, discussed in more detail in a later Chapter. Regulatory changes are needed to allow the market to react, providing the needed housing. Residential units in these districts need the ability to park in shared structures, and the City needs to invest in structured parking to encourage the construction of needed housing.

Beyond housing, population diversity is supported by civic amenities and opportunities for activity. Younger children need safe and convenient access to parks which have diverse play equipment. The number of kids playing at Booth Park is astounding, including teenagers gathering at the play equipment. Young families also need complete sidewalks of sufficient width to fit strollers, along with safe crosswalks. Young adults need places to gather where

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Source: Urban Footprint and the US Census 2016 Planning Database (PDB) - a database of U.S. housing, demographic, socioeconomic and operational statistics based on select 2010 Decennial Census and select 2010-2014 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. Data here is provided at the census block group level of geography.

Figure A.2-28. Age Groups.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

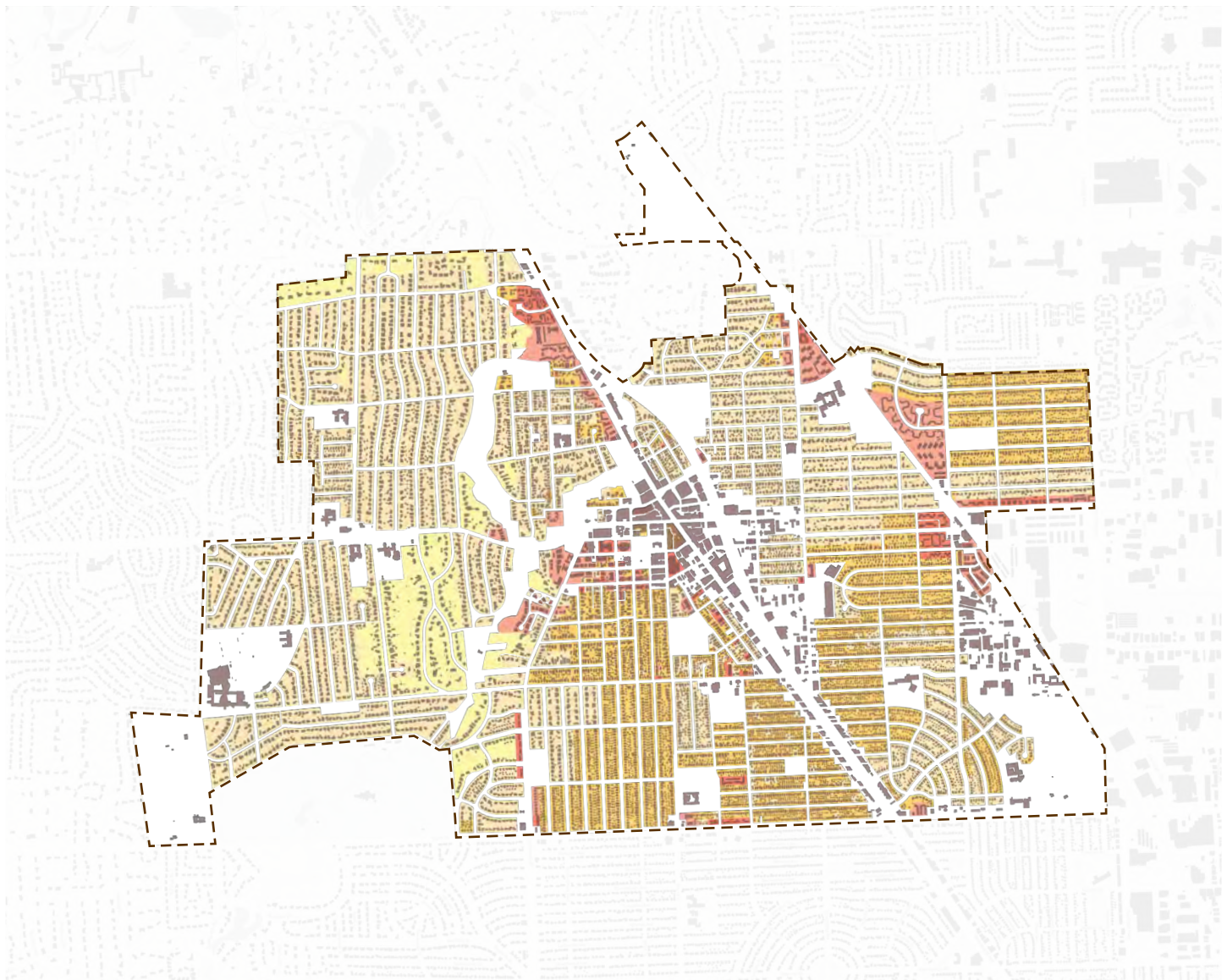


Figure A.2-29.

HOUSING

- Large Single Family Lot
- Medium Single Family Lot
- Small Single Family Lot
- Single Family Attached
- Multi-family

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City



Image A.2-30. Small multi-family building recently constructed at St. James Park.

they won't be kicked out, both in public spaces and in civic establishments or businesses. Early adults need places to socialize that are informal, like the new addition to Dick O' Dow's, away from too many kids. While young families also need informal places to socialize where kids are welcome, like the Griffin Claw. Both of these groups, as well as middle aged adults, look for opportunities to exercise in the community as well, through trails and running groups as well as fitness clubs. Both are also interested in informal outdoor spaces on public property and at businesses. The tables and chairs in Shain Park are a successful example, as is the proposal to create an informal plaza at Bird and Woodward. The middle aged adult crowd also looks for more formal places to socialize, along with smaller, informal places nearer to their homes.

Older adults look for a lot of things, the group representing a lifetime of interests and experience. In addition to some of the things mentioned for younger crowds - parks, trails, spaces to socialize over food and drink - older adults look for social spaces of learning and activity, like that provided by Next (See Img.'s A.2-31-32). While Next's programs and staff are great, we heard quite often that their facilities are insufficient, and that surrounding communities boast substantial seniors facilities. Beyond the senior focus, we also heard that some younger adults use Next's facilities and that they have attempted to broaden their appeal. Improved facilities for Next would contribute to both older and younger adult populations. To capitalize on its' potential, such facilities should be located closer-in to the community's center, potentially part of a public parking facility in Haynes Square / the Triangle District.

Overall, the City must provide housing and activities for

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City



Images A.2-31 & A.2-32. Seniors at Next's facilities.

people of all ages in order to retain population diversity. As previously discussed, schools are also an important component to continue attracting families. They are best supported, given their independent structure, by ensuring the population remains diverse in age.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Invest in new facilities for Next. This should be located centrally, potentially part of a public parking investment in the Triangle District or in Barnum Park. Facilities should be combined with other community rooms as a broader community center.
2. Revise parking requirements to allow housing in mixed-use districts to park in shared garages (addressed in more detail in a later Chapter).
3. Adopt zoning updates to enable Neighborhood Seams.
4. Provide sidewalks, trails, and play equipment in all neighborhood parks.
5. Add kid-oriented splash pads to community parks.
6. Encourage businesses with more informal gathering spaces.
7. Pilot a shared use plaza at Bird and Woodward.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

The Role of Neighborhood Destinations

OBSERVATIONS

Walkable neighborhoods and districts have resurged in popularity. While Birmingham is more walkable than most cities in Metro-Detroit, accessing daily destinations still require a car. City structure and the distribution of daily destinations is the greatest determinant of the transportation mode people will choose and its impact on sociability and the environment.

DISCUSSION

Most reasons to focus on neighborhood structure have been addressed already in this master plan. This section addresses the impacts of highly functional neighborhoods. Comparisons between the neighborhoods of Birmingham with immediately surrounding communities are stark - Birmingham's neighborhoods are more consistent, cohesive, and complete. But there is still room for improvement in the City's neighborhoods. Housing character and quality is generally unmatched, with little change needed. The most significant modifications concern accommodating nearby, daily destinations, means of accessing the City's mixed-use districts more easily, and accommodations provided at neighborhood parks.

Birmingham's natural areas, parks, recreational facilities, and schoolyards are vital resources for its neighborhoods and surrounding communities.

Residents near Downtown have easy access to activities and report fewer problems with parking and mobility. Residents further from Downtown still value the destination but experience more frustration accessing by car. And we've heard from residents who feel that Birmingham's Downtown does not provide the services they need on a regular basis - markets, reasonably priced dining, cleaners, and cafes. Due to the regional draw of Downtown, its price point is too high to provide normal neighborhood services, and its location is inconvenient regarding driving and parking. Historically, the City had a number of smaller, neighborhood businesses that provided more frequent offerings to nearby residents. In the country's period of car-fueled expansion, many such neighborhood destinations have been lost. Birmingham retains a few which serve as models - Maple and Chesterfield, Maple and Eton, and 14 Mile and Southfield. Small, neighborhood commercial



Images A.2-33. Intersection at the Northeast corner of Lincoln and Eton.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

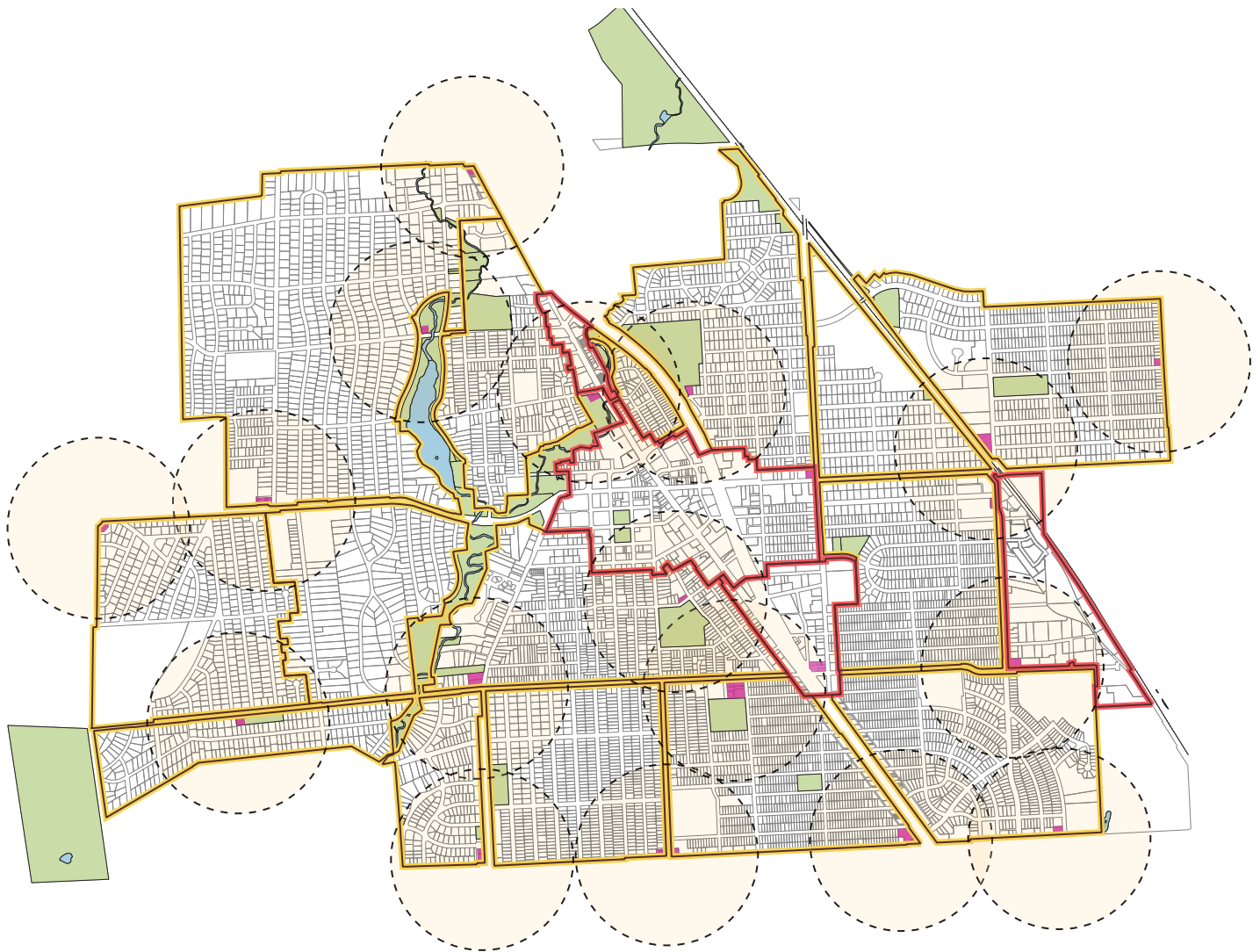


Figure A.2-34. Propsed Neighborhood Destinations.

Neighborhood Destinations

- Commercial Destinations
- Recreational Destinations
- Pedestrian Shed

centers like these serve as regular, nearby destinations for residents and social connectors as a result. More discussion is provided on this subject in later Chapters.

Parks, civic institutions, and commercial destinations create common and nearby destinations that most residents can walk to on a regular basis. With meaningful destinations, more neighborhood residents will use sidewalks, interacting with neighbors. In the 2016 Plan, a cafe was proposed for Booth Park. Observing intense activity in Booth Park from kids of all ages further supports the need for a place where parents and caregivers can get a snack, juice, wine or beer. The community's most successful parks should be places where residents wish to spend much of their day. Over time, nearby destinations, recreational and social, repair the social fabric of neighborhoods. Environmental impact is also reduced by converting trips that would otherwise be by car to walking and biking. Overall, this type of environment is highly desirable, rare in most cities, and especially rare in Metro-Detroit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt a neighborhood destination zoning district.
2. Rezone properties identified as neighborhood destinations on the Future Land Use Map to the neighborhood destination zoning district.
3. Build a cafe in Booth Park.
4. Build a model neighborhood destination at the northeastern corner of Lincoln and Eton.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City

The Role of Parks

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham’s natural areas, parks, recreational facilities, and schoolyards are vital resources for its neighborhoods and surrounding communities. The City’s parks and open spaces offer residents recreational and social experiences both essential and enriching to modern urban living. However, some of these parks lack the basic features required for easy access and enjoyment by those with limited mobility, and sufficient facilities to address neighborhood recreational and social needs (See Img. A-2.35).

DISCUSSION

Many neighborhoods are identified by their parks, which are often located near the center of a neighborhood or along its edge. Parks offer neutral areas for chance encounters and planned meetings of neighbors which are key in supporting the social fabric of the City. However, many residents expressed dismay about the lack of a sense of community and that they would like to know more of their neighbors better.

A middle-aged Barnum Park couple shared that they knew only two people on their block after living in their home for over five years. They urged the proposed citywide plan to include enhancements and management practices that promote greater socialization among neighbors. Parks play a vital role in this. At issue is the excessive territoriality of some residents regarding their neighborhood parks, who try to limit their use and access by nonresidents. For instance, some residents have expressed serious frustration that dog runs have been excluded from neighborhood parks. The single run at Lincoln Hills Golf Course is an insult to residents who would like to socialize with their dogs. Dog owners often establish a stronger social bond and fabric than other residents as they are constantly walking neighborhood streets.

Many neighborhoods are identified by their parks, which are often located near the center of a neighborhood or along its edge.



Image A.2.-35. St. James Park with lack of pedestrian facilities.



Image A.2.-36. Barnum Park with pedestrian facilities.

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Image A.2.-37. Playgrounds at a Pembroke park.



Image A.2.-38. Kids playing in Booth Park.



Figure A.2.-39. Downtown 2016 Plan - Proposal of Pavillion at Booth Park.

Community parks like Shain, Booth and Quarton Lake are popular destinations for people living in and around Birmingham. In both neighborhood and community parks, cafés, community gardens, dog runs, playgrounds, plazas, seating clusters, and walkways offer places for neighbors to socialize.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Install paved walkways and other necessary enhancements to enable universal access to designated parks (See Reference A).
2. Install bicycle racks, civic art, park monument signage, seating, shaded areas, dog runs and way-finding maps and signage in all city parks, open spaces, and nature preserves. Organize park neighborhoods and stakeholders to participate in the design and selection of these elements.

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Image A.2.-40. Reference A - Path in nature.



Image A.2.-41. Reference B - Community Garden - Community gardens provide education and sociability. Photo: USDA



Image A.2.-42. Reference C - Cafe in Park - Campus Martius park is activated by a number of activities, including cafes. Photo: PPS

3. Implement a community garden program to encourage flower or vegetable gardens in neighborhood parks. Provide an organizational platform to expedite the formation of garden clubs and to help individuals establish gardens near their homes. Install fencing, soil enrichments, sheds, water sources, and other necessary infrastructure for community gardens in designated parks (See Reference B).
4. Improve park conditions and management to promote environmentally sustainable best practices.
5. Add cafes to community parks and some neighborhood parks where neighborhood destinations are too remote. (See Reference C)

The Role of Natural Areas

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham's 2.5 mile long segment of the Rouge River occupies a unique place in southeast Michigan's geography. Birmingham's Linden and Quarton Lake park 50-acre network combined with the Springdale and Lincoln Hills golf courses comprise one of the few remaining vestiges of natural riverfront in an otherwise predominantly urban region. Much of the river has been piped and paved over south of Birmingham. Birmingham's Rouge River frontage represents an extraordinary opportunity to link eight of the city's neighborhoods while offering access to rich, natural ecological systems with habitats for diverse wildlife species.

DISCUSSION

The Rouge River frontage has been recognized as an important walkway by the City and Oakland County since the 1920s, part of a planned but not fully executed regional park system. The park area is an asset to the City, including diverse wildlife habitats and ecosystems, including wooded uplands, prairies, and wetlands. The Rouge

borders Barnum, Holy Name, Linden, Ravines, Poppleton, Quarton, Seaholm, and West Crestview neighborhoods as well as the Downtown district. Approximately 10,000 (48%) of Birmingham's residents live within a five-minute walk of the Rouge parks and 11,500 employees work within a five-minute walk of the Rouge. A midday walk in the summertime along the Rouge trail includes workers, joggers, families enjoying opportunities to get near the river, and diverse wildlife. Many people use the park and recent studies have shown that access to trees, wildlife, and naturalistic settings is important for mental health.

However, the Rouge River natural areas require better management, maintenance, and accommodations for the diverse set of users who value it. The park's natural ecosystem is challenged by invasive plant species, minimal forest management, landscape chemical runoff, and roadway storm-water runoff. Active management of

The Rouge River frontage has been recognized as an important walkway by the City and Oakland County since the 1920s...



Image A.2.-43. Rouge Walk.

A. Vision

A.2. The Future City



Image A.2.-44. Rouge Walk.

the area is needed, along with stormwater management interventions to clean water before it enters the Rouge.

The Rouge's relatively flat topography is ideal for pedestrians and cyclists of all ability levels. However the condition of trails and access severely limit its use. The existing woodchip and crushed-stone hiking trails are unstable surfaces and sections of the existing Rouge trail traverse steep grades or waterlogged soils. In fact, the Rouge hiking trail is often entirely unusable during heavy rain or freezing conditions. Where the river comes close to property lines, the trail often becomes steep and difficult to traverse. A properly designed paved and lighted walkway could provide an easy alternative to West Maple's steep hill between Baldwin and Southfield Road, as well as link Linden, Seaholm, Quarton and Beverly Hills residents directly to Booth Park and the North Woodward-Market District's restaurants and shops. And due to the trail's trajectory, much of the park is completely inaccessible. Additionally, many of the trail heads are unmarked and hidden.

Birmingham's Rouge River frontage represents an extraordinary opportunity to link eight of the city's neighborhoods...

Numerous attempts to expand pedestrian access and usage of the Rouge ecosystem have been thwarted by adjacent property owners seeking to maintain it as a nature preserve for their own enjoyment and to protect their privacy. But the river trail is of both community-wide and regional importance. Access and accommodations are necessary for the health of all Birmingham residents.

Many sections of the Rouge trail lack benches, bicycle racks, lighting, wayfinding maps, educational placards, and other basic pedestrian and cyclist amenities. The trail should be accessible to all users. Benches are convenient for the enjoyment of the natural area, but also for many older adults who need places to rest along long walks. Lighting and forest management are important for security. Regular surveillance of the trail is difficult for the police and public due to insufficient access, and emergency response vehicles have limited or no access to many segments of the trail.

The needs of pedestrians and cyclists are often aligned, but in the natural areas, multiple facilities are merited. By adding pedestrian and bike bridges at key locations, much

more of the natural area would be accessible, and the trail able to avoid steep areas. Opening up access to the far side of the river would allow for a paved pedestrian and bicycle trail, along with a smaller pedestrian walkway that may be more naturalistic in design and access the river more intimately. Care is needed in designing upgraded trails. Presently the wider portions of the trail, through Linden Park, are approximately 8 feet wide. AASHTO's minimum size for a multi-use trail is 10 feet wide. The design of trails should endeavor to remain as narrow as practical for the effective use of the facility, in order to minimize the visual and actual impact on the natural area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Retain environmental scientists to inventory and analyze the Rouge corridor's wildlife, ecology, natural systems, and pollution sources.
2. Develop and implement a reforestation master plan to restore the Rouge River ecosystem to its natural and sustainable conditions. Establish a phased enhancement timeframe to stabilize riverbanks, remove invasive species, reintroduce native groundcovers, wildflowers, understory and canopy tree species.
3. Identify and mitigate potential pollution or chemical sources, including the existing Springdale snow storage dumping area.
4. Install pedestrian linkages to the park's surrounding neighborhoods and commercial districts.
5. Purchase or secure easements of additional key properties to expand the park area and improve its walkability, for complete ecological restoration, and universal accessibility.
6. Extend pedestrian linkages to Quarton Road.
7. Work with Bloomfield and Beverly Hills to develop a Rouge River master plan and to expand walkway access.
8. Establish a "Friends of the Rouge" foundation to oversee, build support, and raise funding for the park's enhancements. Consider securing corporate or philanthropic funding in exchange for special recognition.
9. Provide funding for city staff and resources to permanently preserve and manage the Rouge ecosystem.
10. Install an environmentally sensitive, hard-surfaced, and well-lit pathway for pedestrians and cyclists along the Rouge River. Install bridges, ramps and other enhancements to enable access by all ages and abilities.
11. Install bicycle racks, lighting, markers, seating, signage, and comfort stations.
12. Implement an overlay building and zoning policy to ensure that private property construction, fencing, landscaping, lighting, etc., are compatible with the park's ecology, its restoration master plan, and overall public welfare.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is acknowledged that this proposal to expand access to the Rouge area and to restore its natural ecology may seem unreasonable and, undoubtedly, will be challenged by numerous well-meaning individuals. One might ask: Why alter such a beautiful natural setting and build paved walkways? Why make the river easily accessible to so many? Some residents will object to having strangers walking near their backyards, foreseeing both a loss of privacy and declining property values. During one of the focus-group meetings, a pleasant couple observed, "We don't need to make the park accessible for disabled people because Birmingham doesn't have many...I haven't seen any handicapped people near Booth Park..."

These enhancements may incite deep-seated emotions that render their implementation unworkable within the current climate of political divisiveness and excessive, at times abusive, social media critique. However, the benefits of restoring the river's ecology and improving its access, especially for the young and old, profoundly outweighs any potential adverse impacts. When completed, the improved Rouge park system will enhance the quality of life for the entire community and foster the stewardship necessary for its long-term preservation and enjoyment.

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The Role of Policy and Decision-making

OBSERVATIONS

It has been difficult and time consuming at the level the City to arrive at decisions for any but the least controversial issues. Effective decision-making is necessary for the City’s continued evolution and resilience.

DISCUSSION

Decision-making is often at a standstill in Birmingham. The reason is that all issues are decided at the highest possible level which is the Commission. Another is that only the immediate neighbors, who reside within 300 feet of the issue, are notified to attend. These specialized cohorts severely distort what should be a representative democracy that takes into account the community as a whole. In addition, those who speak in opposition at meetings are disorganized and repetitive, which wastes a great deal of time of both the elected officials and the citizens who are present. This discourages both from further participation.

Cities must continue to evolve, dealing often with complex and controversial issues. The act of not making decisions which are important for the City’s future because they are

Effective decision-making is necessary for the City’s continued evolution and resilience.

unpopular is a threat to the City’s future success. While we heard from some people who feel that any change is bad, nostalgic for the City’s past, we also heard from many people who are optimistic for change and the future. The latter group tends to be relatively younger, though not entirely, and are often unable to attend meetings or keep up with the City’s decision-making queue (Fig. A.3-45). Some expressed a desire for change to happen as soon as possible, tired of Birmingham’s slow and cautious evolution.

Reform is needed in order to better determine the impact of decisions on the community as a whole, not just immediate neighbors or those who are ideologically opposed to change. To achieve this, a version of the “The Civil Jury System” used in Perth, Australia should be considered. This consists of two areas of reform parts: organizing participation according to the issue, and organizing the meeting protocol.

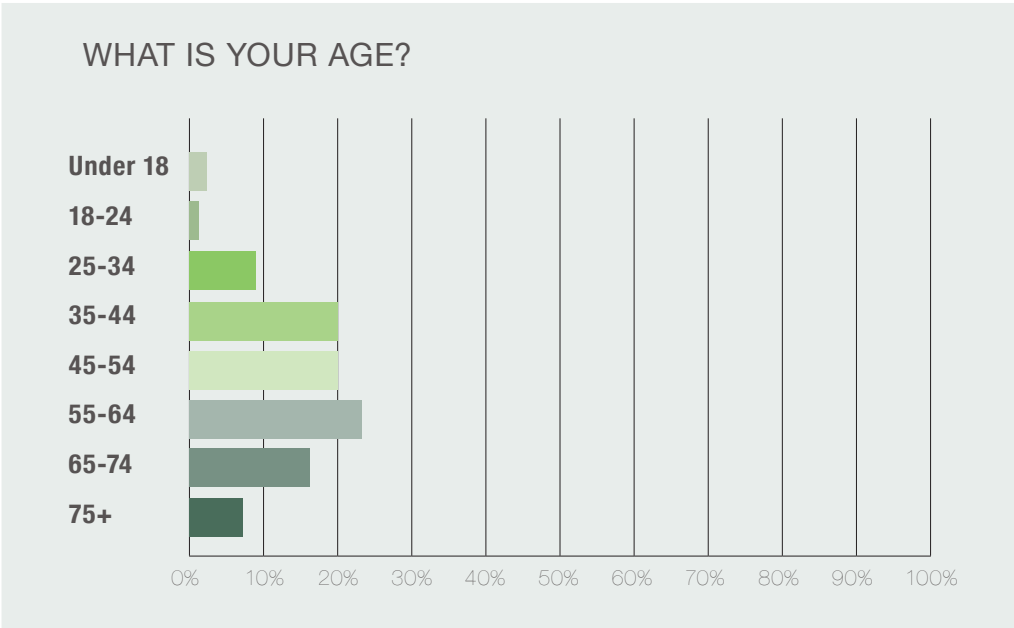


Figure A.2.-45. Age Distribution survey results (May 2019).

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Each neighborhood should organize and periodically convene a Neighborhood Council to make decisions regarding issues affecting the neighborhood. This is not directly associated with the regular informative role that neighborhood associations play, but an official process, though it should include those active in the association. The Council's decisions should be advisory to the Planning Board and City Commission. Board and Commission meetings should be organized and supported by dedicated City staff in outreach towards the following cohorts:

1. Immediate Neighbors (within 300 ft of the issue in question)
2. Residents within the Pedestrian Shed (within 1500 ft of the issue in question)
3. Neighborhood Council Delegates
4. The City as a Whole (Birmingham residents, business owners, etc.)

Each of the cohorts above should designate and brief three speakers to represent them at Board and Commission meetings, in addition to the Neighborhood Council Delegates. These speakers may present up to five minutes, and remain available for questions by the Board and Commission. While this system requires greater lead-up to decision-making, it properly informs the process.

The survey outcomes were very informative and helpful - most people are generally in support of change.

Yet clearly not all decisions need to be made with such broad representation. The goal of reform is to move towards a system of Subsidiarity, which is the theory that a decision is to be made at the most local - or lowest - level that can competently make it. Some decisions can be made by immediate neighbors, and some by the neighborhood. Part of subsidiarity is allowing decision-making to occur at levels lower than the Board or Commission.

The Subsidiarity System

- Parking decisions are to be made by the "Immediate Neighbors".
- Decisions regarding the Neighborhood Destinations are to be made by the "Pedestrian Shed" or neighborhood.
- Civic Art and Park matters are to be decided at the "Pedestrian Shed" or neighborhood level.
- Housing decisions are to be made at the Board and Commission level.
- Decisions regarding the three commercial districts shall be made at the Board and Commission level.

To supplement decision-making and active recruiting of representation, the City should take advantage of polling

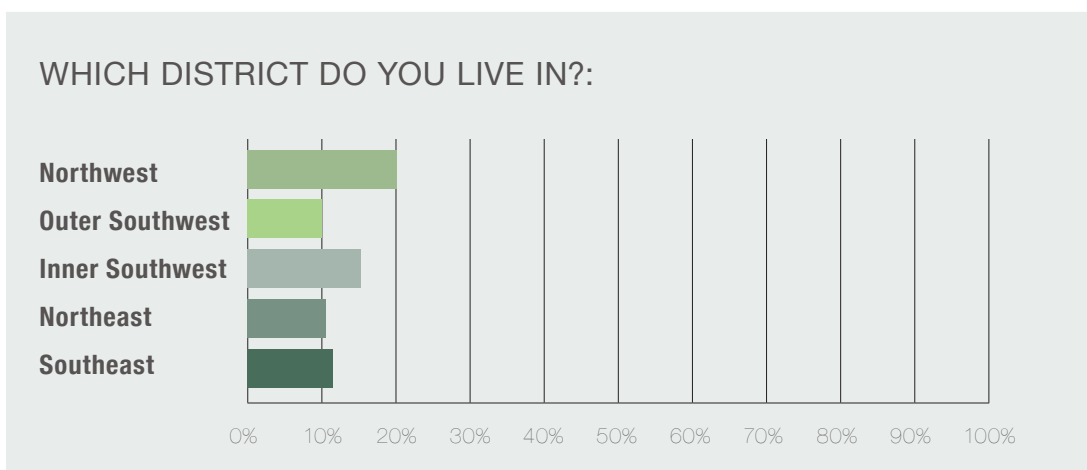


Figure A.2.-46. Location survey results (May 2019).

A. Vision

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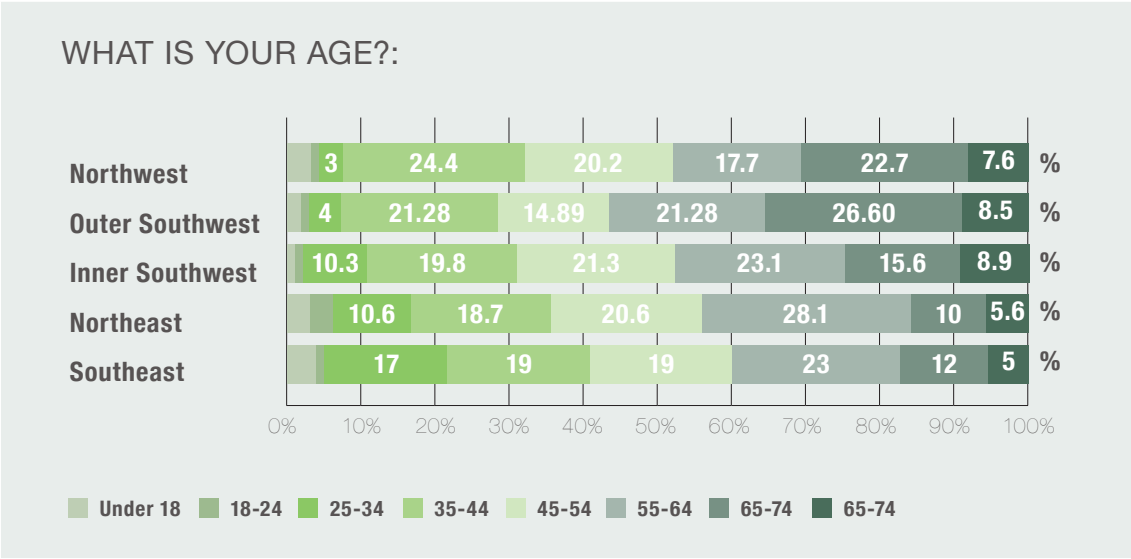


Figure A.2.-47. Location survey results (May 2019).

technology on a regular basis. Prior to and during the design charrette, a survey was conducted which attracted far more responses than the number of people who attended charrette meetings and presentations. From a location and age diversity standpoint (Fig. A.2-46), the survey was far more representative, including people from nearly all age groups and from across the City (Fig. A.2-47). The survey outcomes were very informative and helpful - most people are generally in support of change. Some issues are clearly common, like traffic congestion and speed. And some quite divided, like the character of new housing. On a regular basis, once per quarter, the City should survey residents concerning topics that are being decided. While this is not a means of decision-making directly, it should inform City leaders of resident preferences. Using a regular schedule for surveys, participation will increase over time, especially as it affects and assists decision-making.

1. Conduct public surveys on a quarterly basis regarding decisions being made in order to obtain a greater accuracy of public opinion.
2. Establish a system by which residents are requested to attend meetings where important decisions are made, modeled on the civil jury system.
3. Establish a subsidiarity policy by which decisions can be made at the most local level as is appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Role of Buildings and Their Uses

OBSERVATIONS

Buildings and their site design contribute to the quality and activity along streets, affecting walkability and the success of commercial areas. Building design and business practices also contribute to the City's local and regional environmental impact.

DISCUSSION

Buildings frame the City's most pervasive public space, its streets. Pedestrian comfort along streets is heavily influenced by building design, second only to the City's tree canopy. Buildings with windows and entries along streets, and interior activities that are visible, encourage pedestrian activity or street life. In neighborhoods, street life contributes to sociability. In commercial areas, street life is vital for business success.

Presently, zoning requirements address most of the issues necessary to support active streets, though they are limited to only a few districts, like MX and the TZs. As described in a previous section, the code is also very difficult to navigate. In addition to overall code recommendations, a few small adjustments should be made to further ensure that buildings support active streets.

Buildings and the uses within them, the majority of peoples' daily lives, are also contributors to the overall environmental impact of the City. Most of this plan addresses the way people get to and from buildings, and other sections address building character, here we want to discuss energy, recycling, and composting.

Elsewhere in the country, building energy use and production is moving slowly towards neutrality, with some states far ahead of others. Michigan has residential and commercial energy codes which comply with federal mandates,

Pedestrian comfort along streets is heavily influenced by building design

Buildings and their site design contribute to the quality and activity along streets, affecting walkability and the success of commercial areas

yet leave room for improvement. Detroit and Grand Rapids have adopted 2030 Districts with district goals of reaching net zero energy usage by 2050. With a significant amount of new construction in Birmingham, there is room to incentivize movement towards net zero and use of LEED standards within the City's mixed-use districts.

Recycling and composting have been targets of recent policies across the country, aimed at reducing the use of plastics and styrofoam, and reduce the volume of compostable waste in landfills. For residences, recycling programs have been available for some time, but municipal compost has not. Currently yard waste compost is collected in the fall, which may be able to expand to food scraps, which is especially important for restaurant and grocery store waste. Composting potential should be investigated. Concerning normal recycling, commercial standards should be considered along with a greater number of recycling bins in City parks and public spaces. Many area businesses use plastic utensils and styrofoam carryout, along with plastic bags. All of these could be reduced or eliminated either through ordinance or through a Birmingham Shopping District program. Around the country, legislation that bans plastic and styrofoam carryout and plastic bags is becoming common. Straws have been included in a few municipalities as well. Overall there is a cost to businesses to comply, which is more easily absorbed at higher price points. If ordinance language were pursued, which is the more impactful option, it may be rolled out first in the Maple and Woodward district, where the price point is higher, and later through other districts which have lower price points. An alternative approach is to establish a voluntary program through the shopping district, where businesses that comply are recognized with a window display, encouraging other businesses to similarly comply. This is less impactful being voluntary, but a viable option nonetheless. The voluntary district program could also be used as a pilot program before adopting an ordinance.

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A.2. The Future City

In impact, the City should lead by example. Municipal buildings and operational choices should align with environmental goals. New buildings should meet LEED standards. Recycling should be a focus within and around municipal properties. Plastic and styrofoam bottles and containers should not be purchased by the City. Municipal fleet fuel efficiency standards can be increased. And the City may require its contractors to adopt similar policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase garage restrictions to provide greater setback from the building's primary facade, ideally 15 feet, and a maximum width along street frontages of 3 bays to supplement the existing 50% width restriction.
2. The requirement 4.82.A.1 and .2 should be applied to all zoning districts, requiring a pedestrian door facing the front lot line and restricting blank walls.
3. Minimum facade glazing requirements should be added for residential districts, similar to 4.82.A.5, ensuring some windows face towards the street for public safety.
4. Require adherence to LEED standards within the City's mixed-use districts.
5. Consider increasing energy standards for new construction above those of the state energy code, ideally implementing 2030 District goals.
6. Investigate the potential to provide food waste compost service for homes and businesses.
7. Increase the availability of recycling bins in public spaces like parks, public buildings, and along streets with high pedestrian traffic.
8. Consider the best path towards business operations changes to reduce plastics and styrofoam, either through ordinance or first through a voluntary shopping district program which leads to a future ordinance.
9. Adopt an action plan to reduce environmental impacts of municipal operations.

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B. Neighborhoods

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Neighborhoods Components

Neighborhoods are one of two fundamental building blocks of a city, like cells in organisms. Just like cells, neighborhoods are not themselves singular constructs, rather they are composed of a number of interrelated components. This section discusses neighborhood components overall, and the main structural hierarchies of fabric, seam, and

destination, and details relating to those. Neighborhood fabric consists of the neighborhood's overall backdrop of streets, blocks, and houses. Neighborhood seams are where neighborhoods meet, typically along higher-trafficked streets. And neighborhood destinations are the parks, institutions, markets, and cafes that bind together the social fabric of the neighborhood.

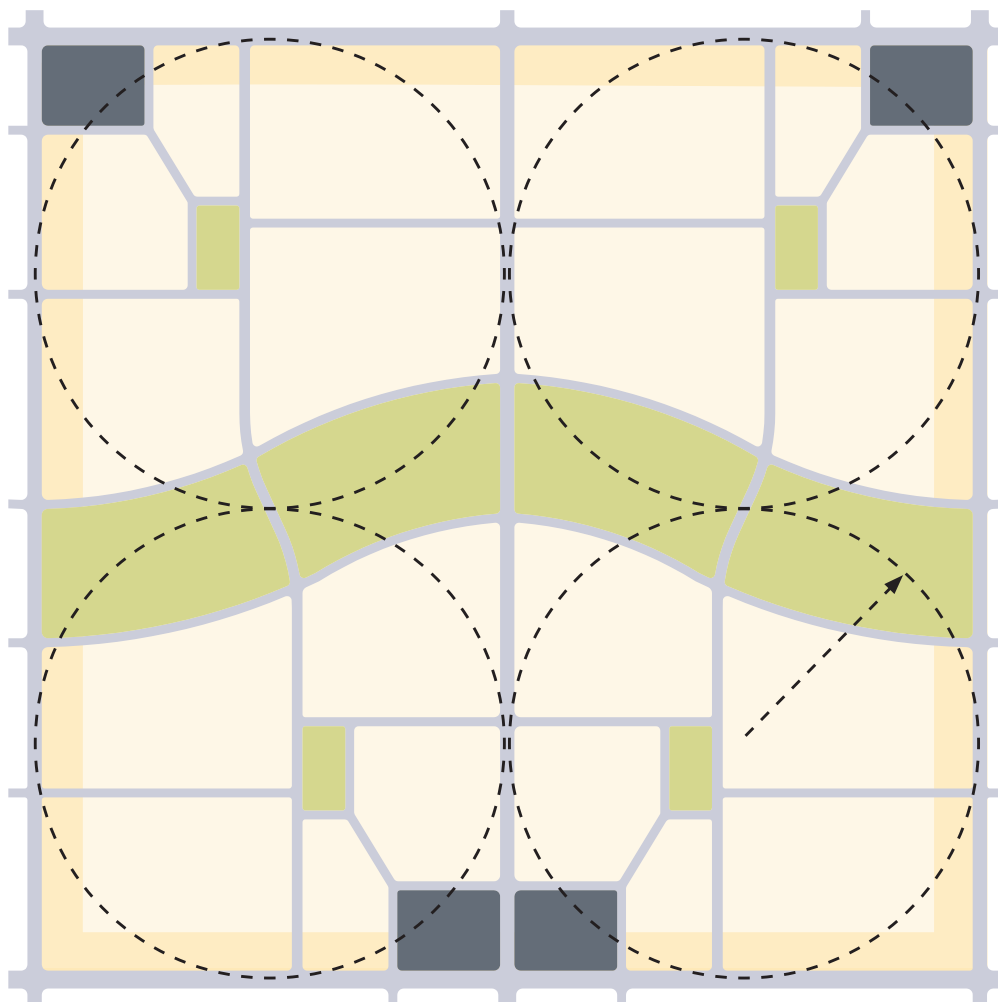


Figure B.1-01. Multiple neighborhood units together forming a larger fabric of the city.

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Neighborhood Fabric |  Neighborhood Destination |
|  Neighborhood Seam |  Recreational Destination |

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Neighborhoods in General

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham's neighborhoods are generally structured in the American town building tradition. Traditional neighborhood structure should frame decision-making concerning the appropriate allocation of use and intensity, parks, streets, and other physical elements that make up a neighborhood.

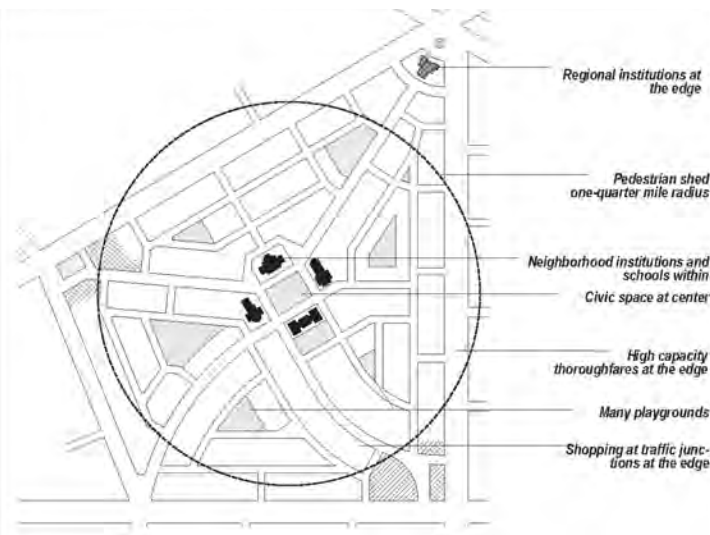
DISCUSSION

As discussed in the first Chapter of this plan, neighborhoods are composed of three primary parts: neighborhood fabric, neighborhood seams, and neighborhood destinations. The 1920's Neighborhood Unit provides the basic framework for analyzing neighborhoods. And the 1990's Neighborhood Unit (See Fig. 2.1-02) applies many present day considerations to that structure, especially in a society that has become heavily automobile-dependent. For instance, in the 1920's the appropriate size and location of roads was of a lesser concern, with little negative impact from traffic, noise, and pollutants.

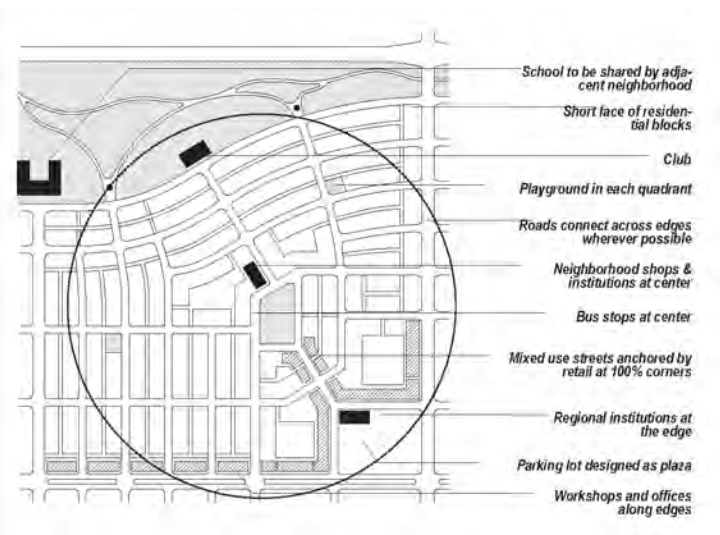
...neighborhoods are composed of three primary parts: neighborhood fabric, neighborhood seams, and neighborhood destinations.

Prior to World War II, the location of townhouses, duplexes, multi-family housing, and small neighborhood-serving businesses were market-driven. As cities grew, higher intensity land uses were built along larger roads that provided more convenient access to centers of employment and trolley lines. Neighborhood-serving businesses were located near to residents, typically at trolley stops on the edge of neighborhoods. The advent of zoning, as discussed in the 1929 Plan, locked the form of cities in place. A few decades later, national lending standards and planning standards manipulated the market in order to increase the production of single-family homes and civil works to remedy the great depression. Following World War II, a surge in new zoning and planning standards came about along with focused increases in housing production to help deal with the employment needs of the country as it came out of the war. Today, these forces of market manipulation remain in place and are being slowly dismantled.

1920's Neighborhood Unit



TND Neighborhood Unit



Figures B.1-02 & B.1-03. Neighborhood Units - The Lexicon of New Urbanism by DPZ.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Figure B.1-04. Neighborhood structure.

In this interim period, the traditional American Neighborhood Unit (See Fig. B.1-04) provides the most appropriate model for how cities can evolve in the face of growth pressure without dismantling the fabric that make neighborhoods great places to live. Since Birmingham was laid out in the era that the neighborhood unit was established, the City's neighborhoods are generally structured according to it. Historically, neighborhood commercial destinations were common throughout the City, some still active today and the traces of others evident. Birmingham adopted zoning limits before most could develop clear seams, but they are evident in some places along Brown, Lincoln, North Old Woodward, and Maple.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Retain the structure of neighborhood fabric, seams, and destinations as Future Land Use categories.
2. Adopt the terms neighborhood fabric, neighborhood seam, and neighborhood destination in decision-making processes, helping determine the appropriateness of uses, intensities, and lot divisions and combinations.
3. Align zoning districts and regulations to differentiate neighborhood fabric, seams, and destinations.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Boundaries and Names

See Chapter A.2, *Neighborhoods and Centers*. The revised neighborhood boundary map is repeated here for reference.

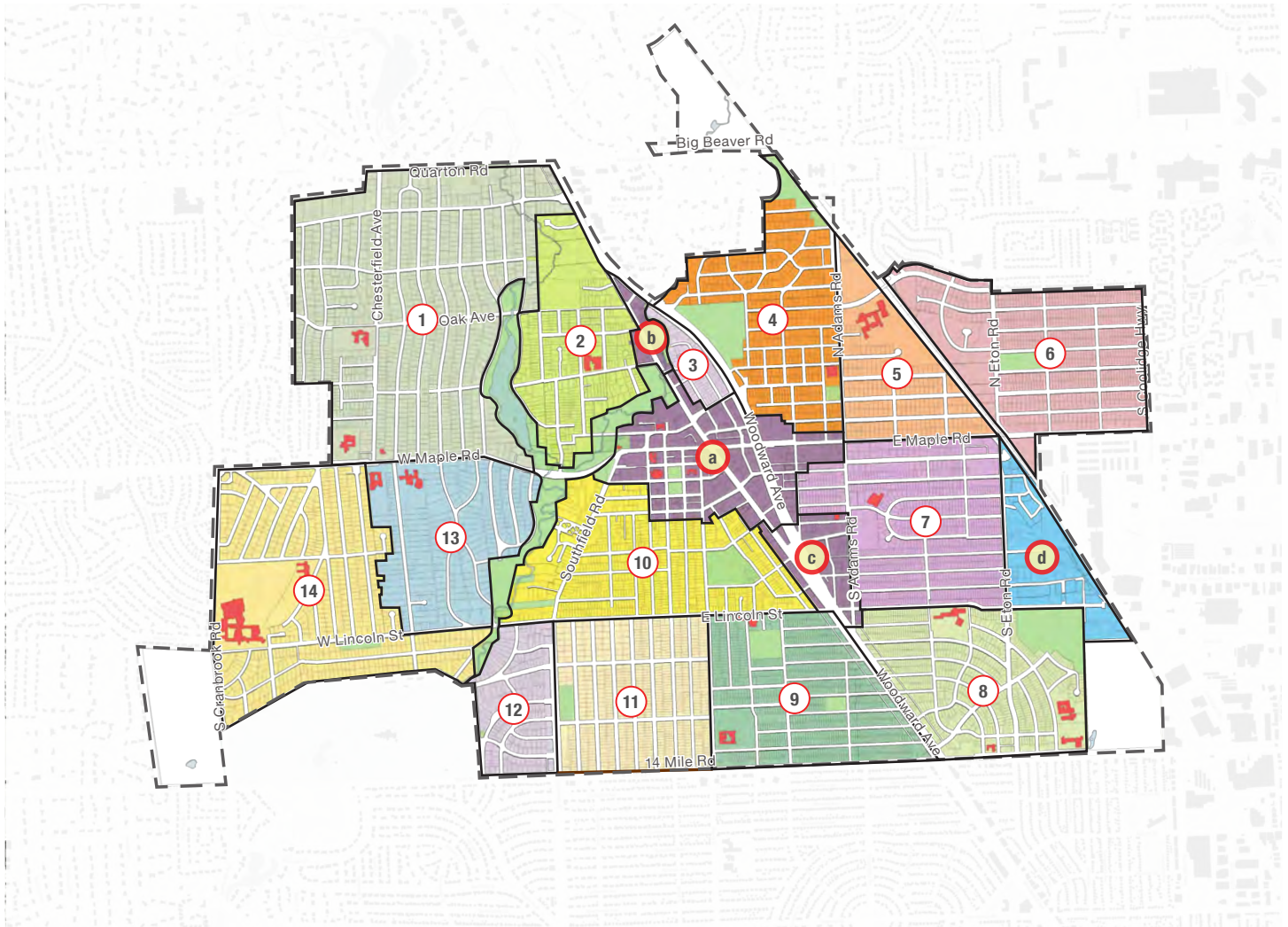


Figure B.1-05.

BIRMINGHAM NEIGHBORHOODS AND CENTERS

Neighborhoods

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1 Quarton | 8 Kenning |
| 2 Holy Name | 9 Pierce |
| 3 The Ravines | 10 Barnum |
| 4 Poppleton | 11 Crestview |
| 5 Derby | 12 Birmingham Farms |
| 6 Pembroke | 13 Linden |
| 7 Torry | 14 Seaholm |

Centers

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| a Downtown | c South Woodward |
| b North Woodward | d Railroad District |

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Associations and Representation

OBSERVATIONS

Not all neighborhood associations are active. Many neighborhood associations cover very small areas. Association organization and leadership is a burden on volunteers, yet associations are of value to a well functioning city.

DISCUSSION

Our experience finding, mapping, and contacting neighborhood associations is discussed in Chapter A.2, Neighborhoods and Centers. In summary, associations are inconsistent in terms of level of activity and size, and do not cover all of Birmingham. Many new residents are unaware of associations. And most residents consider their neighborhoods to be defined by parks, schools, and major roads and not the established associations.

The facts discovered concerning neighborhood associations is not to suggest that associations are bad or that leadership needs to change. Quite the opposite. In order to strengthen neighborhood identity, pride, and sociability, associations should be better aligned with the physical structure of the City and supported by staff.

In order to strengthen neighborhood identity, pride, and sociability, associations should be better aligned with the physical structure of the City...

The structure of Birmingham's neighborhoods has been discussed extensively in Chapter A. This structure aligns closely with those elements that residents responded (See Fig. B.1-06) define their neighborhood: parks, schools, and major roads. Revising associations to align with the updated neighborhood boundaries has been discussed with the Presidents' Council of Neighborhood Associations, who agree in concept. In most cases, the result would be an association that combines two or three current associations. In rare instances, like Torry Estates, the result divides the association in two. And quite often, the revision expands associations to include areas currently lacking an association. While the process of combining or dividing associations has not been determined, giving the Commission's preference for being apolitical, combinations are relatively simple, provided the City support to be discussed. However for Torry Estates (existing) and Lincoln Hills (no association currently), this will require new leadership.

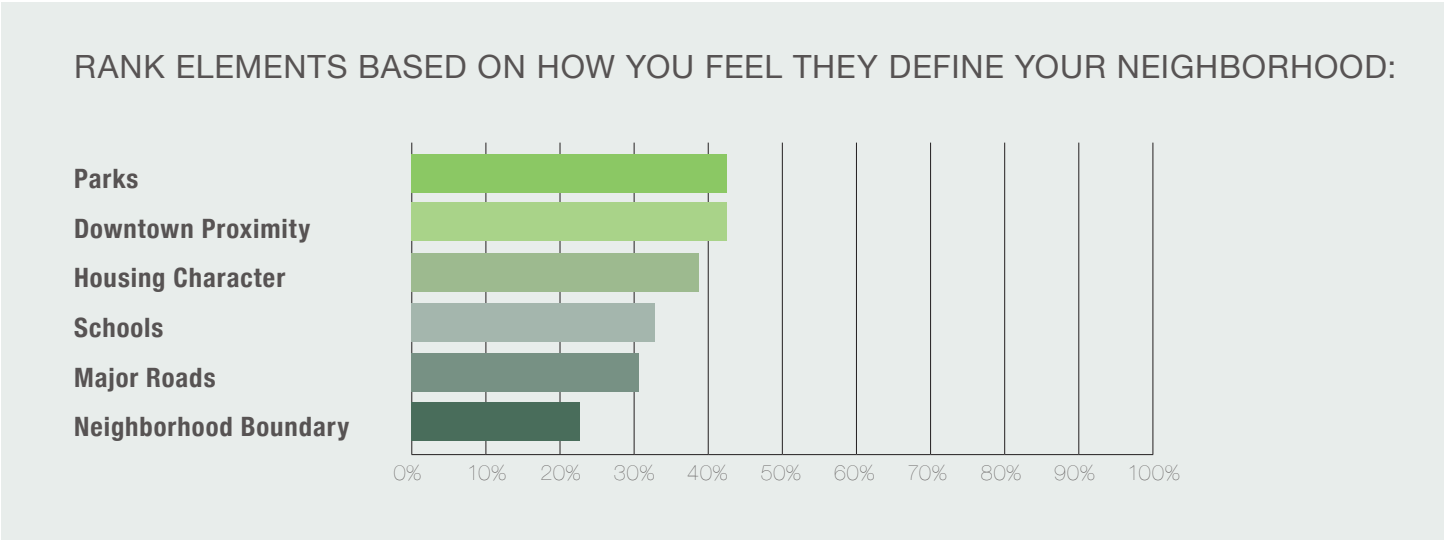


Figure B.1-06. City of Birmingham survey results (May 2019).

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Initially, we proposed a process of establishing official representation and decision-making through neighborhood associations as a step in the System of Subsidiarity. In discussions that followed, the Presidents' Council stated that their goal as associations is to inform, not to take political action. As a result, we have removed recommendations for a system of official representation, relying instead on occasionally organized Neighborhood Councils which do not retain an active role. For the neighborhood associations, the chosen informative role retains merit, and provided staff support from the City, will still help improve communication between the City and residents, and improve other forms of official representation.

Assistance from the City is recommended to avoid the current situation, particularly associations that are inactive, areas without associations, and a lack of new resident knowledge concerning their association. In an optimal condition, the neighborhood association is a means of regular and direct communication with residents where they are able to be informed, ask questions, and form independent opinions, outside of a political environment. To enable this, the City should establish a Neighborhood Liaison position in the City Manager's office. This position should be strictly apolitical, charged with: organizing meeting times and locations; providing notice of meetings by email, online, and in City publications; maintaining a membership directory; fielding neighborhood-based queries at the City; taking notes at association meetings; and informing associations of the City's current and planned projects and upcoming Board and Commission agendas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Revise neighborhood associations to align with the neighborhood map.
2. Add a City position of neighborhood coordinator that supports neighborhood associations.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Parking

OBSERVATIONS

Parking policies within Birmingham neighborhoods confuse visitors and residents and are difficult if not impossible to enforce.

DISCUSSION

Current posted requirements differ substantially throughout the City to such an extent that the Police Department can only enforce by complaint. Decades of block-by-block modifications has eroded the public nature of streets. The source of resident requests are real problems created by parking overflow in key areas of the City, but there is a mismatch between the conditions creating problems and the number and location of solutions.

The consultant team was alerted early to parking issues, particularly in areas adjacent to Downtown, the Rail District, and Seaholm. Issues were identified both by City staff and residents, representing two opposite sides of a complex issue. Residents are understandably concerned with parking spill-over from nearby non-residential uses. City staff is concerned that removing parking exacerbates parking spill-over, the complexity of regulations is difficult to enforce, and that street parking is a public good.

Observations in the Rail District corroborate all of these concerns (See Fig. B.1-07). Regulations have clearly been created to limit nighttime use of on-street parking to ensure residents have available parking. To solve this, the small area diagrammed below includes 8 different standards, some with very minor differences. This is difficult to enforce as this area is a microcosm of the City as a whole; the Police use a much more simplified set of rules to enforce yet enforces mainly through complaints. Some areas have entirely removed parking, which encourages speeding - another issue of concern to residents. And lastly the perception of insufficient parking in the Rail District is not

Decades of block-by-block modifications has eroded the public nature of streets.

in step with the actual availability of parking. However, the complexity of restrictions contributes to violations.

Observations around Seaholm corroborate all of these concerns (See Fig B.1-08). Regulations have clearly been created to limit student use of on-street parking. The issue at Seaholm is especially difficult because the City has no regulatory control over the School District. The obvious solution is to add parking on Seaholm's campus, yet this cannot be enforced. As a result, parking restrictions along surrounding neighborhood streets are extremely complex, when they should be solving for a simple problem. This very small sample area includes 12 different conditions, the specifics of which are too complex to effectively enforce. Like the Rail District, enforcement is done by complaint. While the problem here is real, there is no solution available with the institution at fault. However, an anecdotal clue was offered: some residents have charged students a small fee to park in their driveways. At issue is mainly that parking spill-over provides no benefit to the neighborhood, only a negative impact. This leads to a consideration detailed on the following page, which is providing an option that results in benefit to the immediate surrounding community.

To reduce excessive complexity that leads to enforcement difficulties, and to solve for the real issues of spill-over parking, we recommend that the City simply begin anew. There is far too much variation in existing restrictions to adjust them one-by-one. Each neighborhood would be allowed to choose from 3 conditions, outlined below in recommendations. A 4th condition would be available for select neighborhoods, as described below. Parking conditions are further discussed on a per-neighborhood basis in the Neighborhood Plans section. This should be done at the neighborhood level in order to enable a viable system of residential permits should that choice be selected. While residential permits may seem to be the obvious answer, these systems require management, which means that permits come at a fee, and it is inconvenient to have visitors.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Figure B.1-07.

EXISTING RESTRICTIONS: TORREY NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE RAIL DISTRICT

- 15 Min Parking 8am-9am Except Sun. & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking 6am-4pm Except Sat, Sun., & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking 8am-6pm Except Sun. & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking 9am-6pm Except Sun. & Holidays
- 2 HR Parking Limit
- No Parking Anytime
- Parking Allowed, All Times
- Permit Parking Required at All Times

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

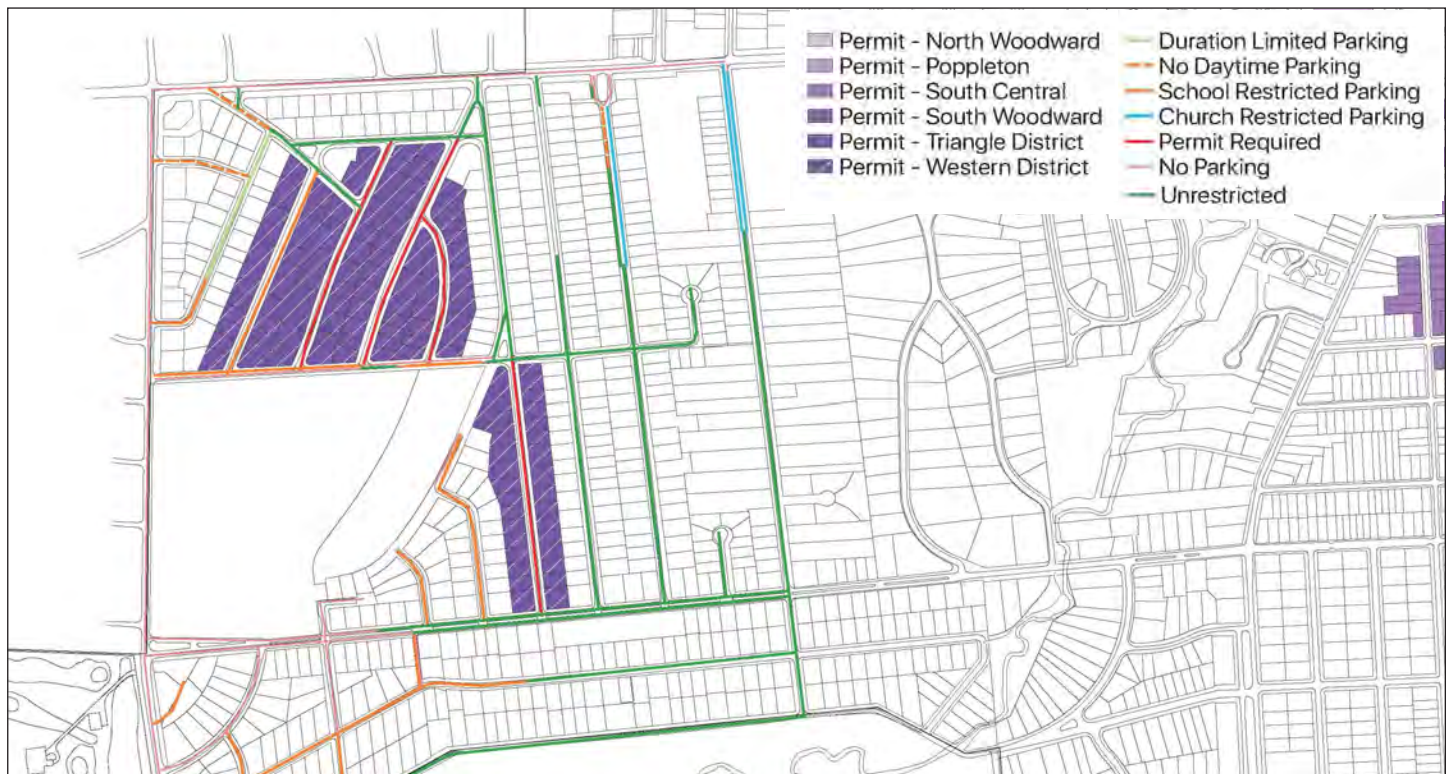


Figure B.1-08.

EXISTING RESTRICTIONS: SEAHOLM AND LINCOLN HILLS NEIGHBORHOODS

- 2 HR Parking 9am-5pm Except Sat, sun, & Holidays
- No Parking 8am-6pm
- No Parking, 7am-9am Except Sun. & Holidays
- No Parking, 8am-6pm Except Sat., Sun. & Holidays
- No Parking, 8am-6pm Except Sun. & Holidays
- No Parking, M-F 7am-2pm
- No Parking, School Days 7am-3pm
- No Parking, School Days 8am-10am
- No Parking, Sunday 7am-1pm
- Parking Allowed, All Times
- Parking Permit 7am-4pm School Days
- Residential Permit Parking

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Neighborhood parking benefit districts are recommended in order to provide additional parking while investing revenue from that parking into the immediate neighborhood. This is particularly applicable to downtown-adjacent neighborhoods and the Seaholm area. Parking would be restricted by permit, however permits would be sold to non-neighbors for on-street parking, in limited quantities. Revenue from permit sales is re-invested in the neighborhood to improve streets and support neighborhood social programming. As a result, employee and student parking issues are alleviated and the neighborhood directly benefits. Permit sales would be managed through the existing systems in place within the Downtown parking district and limited in number to ensure on-street parking remains available for residents.

These are neighborhood-level decisions.

A specific issue of lawn care crews and parking was raised a number of times in stakeholder group discussions. Some residents have worked to limit neighborhood parking specifically to avoid lawn crews parking their trucks on the street. Yet many of these same people use lawn crews to maintain their yards. Restricting lawn crew parking only leads to parking violations and other disruptions. The only real solution to this issue is encouraging neighbors to use the same lawn care service, which would reduce the number of trucks and equipment parked in any given area. The city is large enough to support the same number of crews currently in operation, simply with different client portfolios. This is not an action that the City can lead nor a recommended policy. This recommendation should be addressed as much as possible by neighborhood associations.

Residential parking requirements play a part in the ecosystem of neighborhood parking. Requiring too few parking spaces can cause excess spill-over to surrounding streets, and too much parking comes at a cost and results in more impervious surface on each lot. Current residential parking requirements are reasonable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Re-assign parking restrictions citywide, allowing each neighborhood to select one of the following options:
 - a. No restriction
 - b. 2-hour parking from 9am to 4pm, except by permit (this addresses daytime parking issues from students and downtown workers)
 - c. Parking by permit only, 5pm to 10am (this addresses nighttime parking issues from food service)
 - d. Neighborhood Parking Benefit District, used in association with (b) or (c) above.
2. Establish a consistent residential permit system to service those neighborhoods that choose to use such a system which includes permit fees to cover costs, decals, and visitor rear-view mirror tags purchased separately from the residential permit. The existing permit systems may suffice to operate more broadly. Adopt policy and establish the process for administering Neighborhood Parking Benefit Districts, ensuring that fees collected benefit neighborhood facilities and activities, after covering administrative costs.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Neighborhood Fabric

Neighborhood fabric constitutes the majority of each neighborhood, and as a result most of the City overall. This is the blocks, streets, and lots upon which houses are built. Neighborhood fabric is often discussed in terms of block structure, which is its framing element. Across Birmingham, block structure varies substantially. Most of Quanton Lake Estates has long blocks, oriented north-south, with the exception of the western portion which has a variety of shorter blocks, some that change direction. Holy Name has principally square blocks. Interestingly, Crestview and Pierce have similarly sized blocks but in different orientations. Kenning and Birmingham Farms have many curvilinear blocks. The structure of a neighborhood's blocks establishes a great deal of its character. Deep blocks support deeper properties. Short blocks are more easily walkable. Curvilinear blocks deflect views. Very straight blocks give long views. No pattern is better or worse, they simply provide a structure for the neighborhood fabric.



Figure B.1-09 - Crestview neighborhood.

- Large Single Family Lot
- Medium Single Family Lot
- Small Single Family Lot
- Single Family Attached
- Multi-family

Variety of lot sizes in a neighborhood contributes to the visual interest of pedestrians...

Upon the structure of blocks, a pattern of lots is overlaid. In each neighborhood, the size of lots varies while often occupying the same structure of blocks. For instance, Crestview has larger lots to the west and smaller lots to the east. The same is true in Pembroke, with smaller lots to the north and larger to the south. Variety of lot sizes in a neighborhood contributes to the visual interest of pedestrians, with houses of different types and sizes. This also supports a diversity of resident types in terms of family structure, age, and income.

Knitted into the fabric of each neighborhood are recreational, civic, and commercial destinations, and seams along their edges. And between these, streets form the glue that connects residents with each other and their destinations.

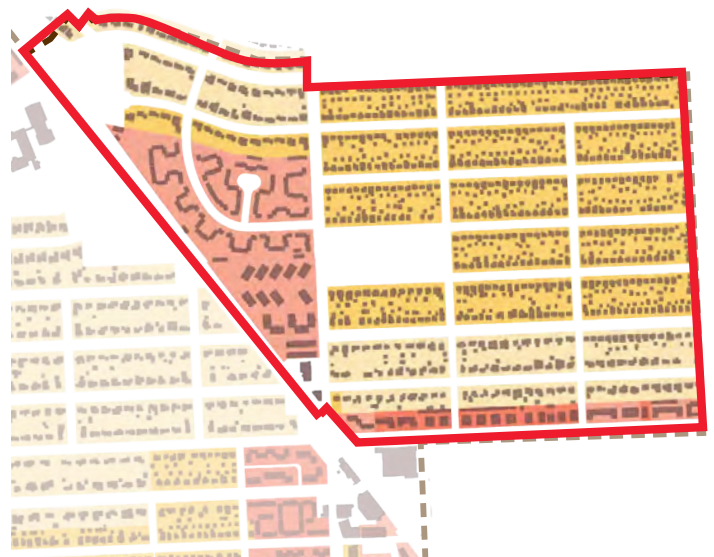


Figure B.1-10 - Pembroke neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Street Standards

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham's streets are exceptionally beautiful and pleasant, despite the state of repair of their pavement. In recent public discussions regarding unimproved streets, a number of residents have requested roadways be designed wider than the current standard.

DISCUSSION

Streets are the most pervasive public space in a city. Too often, the role of moving cars is considered the default role of streets. Movement equates to commerce, opportunity, and social connectivity. Streets have historically defined trade routes, which were instrumental in establishing cities like Birmingham. But as cities grow outward from the trade route, streets take on a primary role of social connector. They surround our daily experience in a city, allow us to meet neighbors, friends from afar, access food and other goods, get to school and work, and access civic institutions.

Streets are the most pervasive public space in a city.

Fortunately, Birmingham has bucked the national trend, resisting calls to widen streets for the movement of cars. The 1929 Plan made such recommendations, as did a number of following plans. Because these calls for wider streets were mostly ignored, Birmingham retains a wonderful tree canopy and streets that are pleasant to walk along, bike along, and not too difficult to drive along. Yet today, calls for wider streets continue to surface. All too often our job as consultants is concerned with reducing roadway pavement and adding trees; making streets more like those found in Birmingham. We've found that the quickest way to erase real estate value and quality of life is to widen street pavement.

Calls for wider streets remain pervasive, yet there is a central contradiction in these requests. Most people who want wider streets also complain about cut-through traffic



Image B.1-11. A pleasant, right-sized street in the Quarton neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

and the speed of cars. These are directly related. Once streets are widened, cars will move more quickly and then drivers will find faster streets and use them to cut around areas of congestion. This being true, we can't ignore the reality that people have not been trained to drive along narrow streets. But lack of training and comfort is not a sufficient reason to lessen the quality of the street experience for all of the street's users, nor to reduce the value of the City's real estate.

Some streets in Birmingham are quite narrow; this fact must be recognized. Westchester Way is a clear example, with a pavement width of approximately 16 feet. Unimproved streets impact this issue, and Westchester Way is such a condition. In these cases, the lack of curbs obscures the location where cars should be driven, parked, and the tree lawn. Assuming this street were curbed, 16 feet is not too narrow to drive along, but it is too narrow for a parking lane and a yield travel lane. 18 feet is an absolute minimum for this condition, allowing 7 to 8 feet in which to park and 10 to 11 feet for cars to move. Geometrically 16 feet functions, however in a yield condition cars that pull into parking lanes do not pull all of the way in. But this narrow width does allow two cars to pass one another with 9 feet of space each. Given that most cars are less than 6.5 feet wide, 18 feet is certainly sufficient to pass, and passing at slow speeds is safer for other roadway users. Often, 20 feet is used as an ideal minimum roadway width for yield movement conditions.

As in this narrative, too often focus is given to accommodate cars without discussing the needs of other roadway users and the daily experience of people in general. The tree lawn is critical for the health of street trees. Sufficient root area results in greater canopy. Broad and continuous canopy is a regular occurrence in Birmingham, but mostly unheard of in other cities with walkable neighborhoods and an active downtown. Canopy health is very closely

Canopy health is very closely related with the health of residents, mental and physical...

related with the health of residents, mental and physical, and the success of children in school. In fact, the Annie E. Casey Foundation runs the Casey Trees program in Washington, DC to re-establish the urban tree canopy with a goal of improving the health outcomes of children. Too often roadways are widened to accommodate cars without consideration for the downstream impacts, and we haven't even touched on the stormwater implications.

Only in the sixth paragraph of this discussion do we get to sidewalks, unfortunately. In a city like Birmingham, by far the vast majority of streets serve neighborhood residents who want to walk or stroll to nearby parks, shops, markets, cafes, religious establishments, to each others' houses, to walk dogs, or just to move around a bit. Sidewalk sufficiency is universally ignored. Birmingham's historic neighborhood standard was a minimum 4 foot sidewalk. This barely accommodates two fit individuals side-by-side, and maybe some European model strollers, single baby only. 4 feet is insufficient. In most neighborhoods, sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet wide, if not 6. The recently passed Residential Street Design Standard specifies a 5 foot minimum, which works for most places.

Sidewalks should be continuous, and access all parts of the community. Today sidewalks are not universally provided. Sidewalk width should also increase in places that pedestrian frequency increases - along major roads and closer to the City's mixed-use districts. Sidewalk needs should at least be equally balanced with car needs but too often sidewalks are sacrificed. While sidewalks and accessible ramps are important for older adults, they need places to rest and shade. Luckily Birmingham has a great tree canopy in most places, but benches are not frequent. Like sidewalks, the need to rest is often not accommodated, but should be on a regular basis.

Bikes and micro-mobility are yet another often ignored user base of streets. Increasingly, bikes are being accommodated, but overall this occurs at a remedial level. In most situations, narrow and slow streets provide all of the access and accommodation needed for bikes and

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Image B.1-12. An insufficiently sized sidewalk in the Triangle District, due to fencing and planter barricades. Without these elements the sidewalk is well sized for its urban context.

micro-mobility. But more so than cars, frequent stopping is extremely inconvenient. Bicycle boulevards, a slight misnomer, solve this issue and serve bikes, pedestrians, and micro-mobility generally. By arranging intersection control to prefer through movement without interruption and diverting cars to avoid cut through, bicycle boulevards support a broad range of non-car roadway users. The Neighborhood Loop is aimed at these groups.

All of these variables in mind, the ideal roadway width will depend upon the right-of-way width and what the street should best accommodate. Lincoln is perhaps the most difficult decision point in Birmingham. Does Lincoln need on-street parking? It is the most obvious route for cyclists. Certainly Lincoln needs to sustain its tree canopy. And Lincoln, as a neighborhood seam, also needs to support

a good number of pedestrians. But many people will think of the car congestion problem at Lincoln and Woodward, demanding more lanes for cars. If nothing more comes of this plan, equipping the populous and decision-makers with an understanding of the trade-offs is an accomplishment. Professionally, Lincoln remains a difficult condition, especially as a series of recently installed curb extensions interrupt potential bicycle facilities. After serious contemplation, Lincoln should have bike lanes, replacing parallel parking, at least on one side, at the cost of changing the recently installed curb extensions. Multiple residents have brought up the lack of safe facilities on Lincoln, discouraging them from biking. If the Birmingham community is to continue moving towards more walking, cycling, and micro-mobility then the facility must be provided.

Standards were set for residential streets by the Multimodal Transportation Board and City Commission due to recurring resident requests for wider streets when they are

Sidewalks should be continuous, and access all parts of the community.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Image B.1-13. Bike commuter at the Lincoln and Woodward intersection.

improved. The current policy sets a standard residential street at 26 feet from curb-to-curb where the right-of-way is 50 feet or greater and 20 feet with parking along one side where the right-of-way is less than 50 feet. The policy provides for modifications where on-street parking is heavily utilized. This is a good reason to provide an exception to narrow because in reality, most residential streets do not have high on-street parking use, and widening the street will result in speedier traffic. Exceptions are also provided for school bus routes, frequent emergency routes, and high traffic volumes for widening, and high speeds for narrowing. Generally these standards are progressive from a transportation design standpoint and aimed to protect property values. They will also keep traffic moving slowly through neighborhoods, increasing safety.

We generally recommended that the standards be retained. However, provided this plan's focus on Future Land Use structure, the standards could be adjusted to follow that

Bicycle boulevards, a slight misnomer, solve this issue and serve bikes, pedestrians, and micro-mobility generally.

structure for some of the conditions which the current ordinance's anticipates the need for increased widths. Minor modification is also needed to accommodate wider sidewalks for Neighborhood Seams. As discussed in Chapter A, the Future Land Use structure provides a means of clearer decision-making and allocation of standards. The residential street standards provide a modification of roadway width from 26 feet to 28 feet where on-street parking is in more active use, requiring measurement of parking usage. But we know that on-street parking will be more actively used in neighborhoods with high intensity fabric. In these neighborhoods, the standard may default to 28 feet. Similarly, save extraneous circumstances, neighborhoods with low intensity fabric will have low on-street parking usage. Here it would be less justified to allow wider

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Image B.1-14. Lincoln Street.

streets except in the other cases provided for like school bus routes. Neighborhood Seams also play a role here in that they are located where there is increased traffic and a higher future intensity of housing. These locations should default to a 28 foot standard with allowances up to 30 feet.

Additionally, provided the typical narrow width of streets, the typical residential street posted speed should be considered to be lowered to 20 mph. The Michigan Vehicle Code 257.627(2)(e) states that the maximum speed in city neighborhoods is 25 mph unless another speed is fixed and posted. The main remaining issue with streets is parking beyond the roadway on unimproved streets as it encourages cut-through traffic and speeding. Once streets are improved this issue will be resolved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Complete sidewalks where gaps exist in the continuous pedestrian network.
2. Along neighborhood seams, establish a minimum 6 foot sidewalk width within the Residential Street Standards.
3. Adjust the Residential Street Standards to implement Future Land Use categories.
4. Provide a bike facility on Lincoln per the Future Transportation Plan.
5. Locate streetside areas where stormwater can be cleaned through bioswales prior to entering the Rouge River.
6. Reduce residential speed limits to 20 mph.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Street Trees

OBSERVATIONS

Birmingham's downtown and neighborhoods benefit from a rich tree canopy.

DISCUSSION

Trees increase both house values and the public well-being. While many other communities have lost their tree canopy due to road widening or disease, Birmingham's canopy remains full. As a significant driver of health and property values, the street tree canopy should be protected and well maintained. At present, the City works to diversify tree species, which is important in avoiding disease. Considerations should also be made to select species that will sustain the City's future climate.

Trees increase both house values and the public well-being.

Much of the community is well stocked with trees but there are areas without. Some streets, like Brown and 14 Mile, have gaps in the street tree canopy, sometimes spanning an entire block. Most substantially, the City's commercial districts have severe street tree gaps, including entire streets without trees. Maple and Woodward (downtown) has more consistent trees than elsewhere, with limited gaps such as Willits. Though streets like Merrill appear to have insufficient root area, resulting in small and ineffective trees (See Img.'s B.1-15-16) . New plantings with the recent Woodward and near future Maple streetscape projects have extended the root area. Other key areas are in need of adjustment to follow suit. The Triangle District (east Maple and Woodward and Haynes Square) has very few street trees, which is similar to the Rail District. Plantings are especially needed in these areas to fight the urban heat island by shading sidewalks and roadways, and to provide relief for pedestrians.



Images B.1-15 & B.1-16. Examples of inappropriate and overly used street trees.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue the City's street tree planning and maintenance policies.
2. Infill missing street trees where needed in neighborhoods.
3. Prevent existing, healthy trees from being removed due to new construction.
4. Establish a streetscape improvement program for the Triangle District and Rail District.
5. Select large canopy species native to the region, including Basswood, Elms (disease resistant), Horse Chestnuts, Maples, Oaks and Sycamores, along streets and within parks.
6. Minimize overly-used or exotic species, such as Crab Apple, Honey Locust and Pear Trees.



Images B.1-17 & B.1-18. Examples of trees ideal for use in the community, including along streets.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Unimproved Streets

OBSERVATIONS

Many neighborhood streets in Birmingham are in disrepair. Residents are confused about the process to improve streets, which is exacerbated by unique situations in two parts of the community.

DISCUSSION

As is readily apparent, many neighborhood streets are in very poor condition. Numerous residents have complained about the situation, noting that it is especially out of character for a wealthy city to have such poor streets. The condition is historic, related to the standards in place as far back as each neighborhood was initially developed. It has been incumbent upon neighbors to choose to improve their streets, and pay into that improvement based upon how much lot frontage they have along the street. To date, a significant number of residents have done just that, yet it

leaves nearly 26 linear miles of streets unimproved. Most unimproved streets are easily recognizable in that they do not have curbs. Yet, to confuse the matter, there is a small section of unimproved streets that have historic curbs. And lastly, there is a section of Birmingham where sewer service is located at the rear lot, not in the street, which requires special consideration when improving streets.

The City has heard the issues, understands the confusion, and is considering solutions with a committee. This action is being undertaken at the same time that this plan is being written. Clearly something should be done as the condition reflects poorly upon the City. We trust that the committee will determine a reasonable course of action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Follow the recommendations of the Unimproved Streets Committee.



Image B.1-19. Example of an unimproved street.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

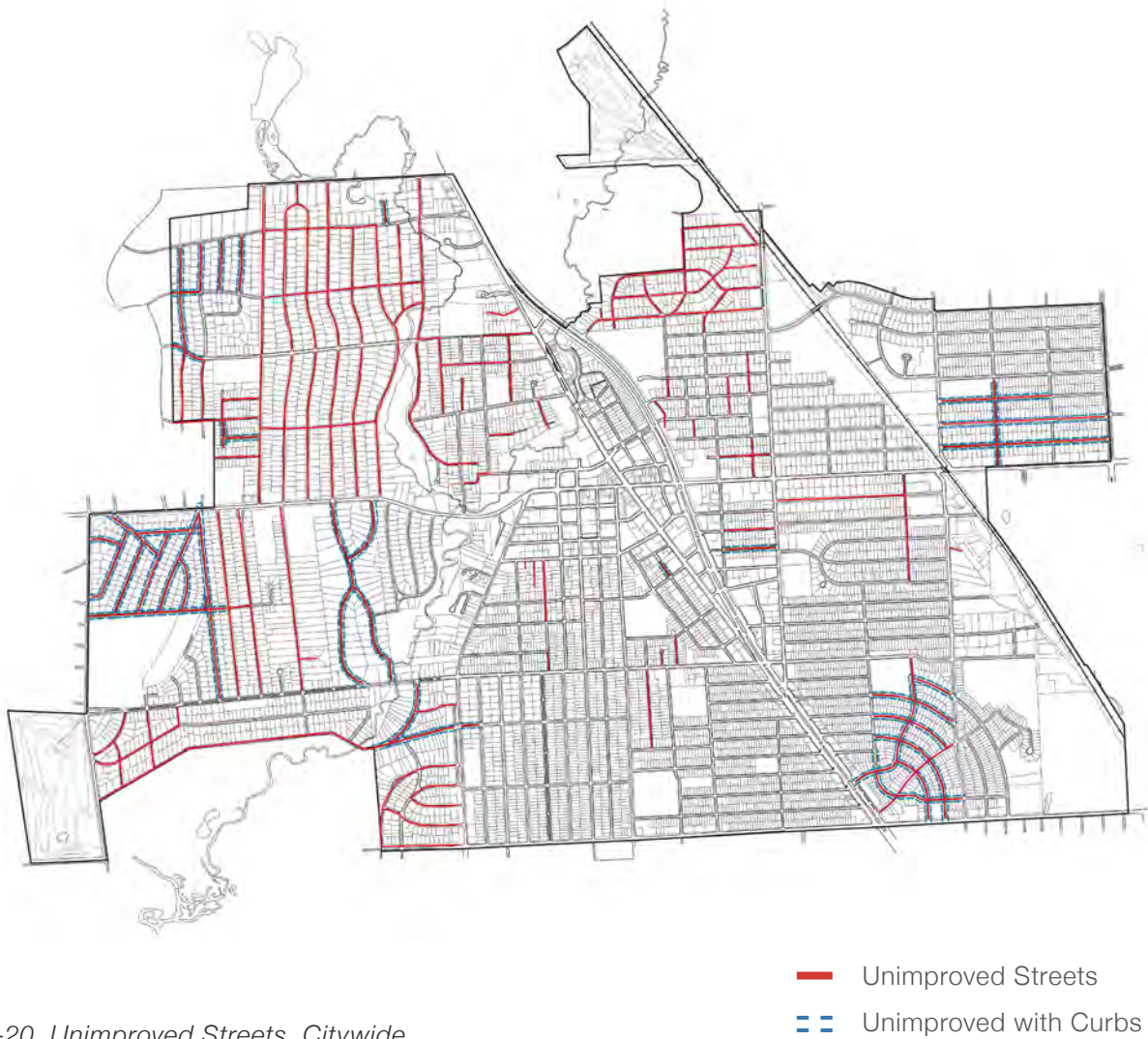


Figure B.1-20. Unimproved Streets, Citywide.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Character of new housing

OBSERVATIONS

The value of properties in Birmingham has risen such that the cost of purchasing and demolishing existing homes is viable. Some parts of the City have already been significantly rebuilt and the trend is moving into other neighborhoods. Many residents feel that the scale of new homes are overwhelming and out of character with their neighborhoods.

DISCUSSION

Birmingham's neighborhoods are rapidly changing and losing much of the charm and scale that originally made them attractive. Houses, many of them local landmarks, are being razed in every neighborhood. The overwhelming concern expressed by many residents who participated in

planning discussions was with the development of new, ever-larger houses and the consequent loss of their neighborhood's unique character. Numerous residents recounted the adverse effects such large houses have had on their properties and their quality of life. Many residents viewed these new houses as poorly designed and completely out of character and scale for their neighborhoods. While the City has implemented progressive design standards for garage placement and overall construction management, many of the new houses are, in fact, oversized for their lots and often negatively impact surrounding households.

Except in the Downtown Historic District, proposed new houses in Birmingham are never evaluated for the appropriateness of their architectural design or building materials by a review board or committee. New house plans are only reviewed for compliance with building codes and



Image B.1-21. Historic home in excellent condition with a sign marketing it for demolition to build a larger home.

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required site engineering regulations. House design and consumer preferences have changed since Birmingham's neighborhoods were first developed. Recession-era, prewar houses were usually modestly designed and downplayed the home-owners wealth or lack thereof: second floors were tucked under the roofs; garages were located to the rear or side of the lot; colors were regionally inspired; applied and structural materials were regionally sourced field stone, local brick, and wood siding. At the time, cultured stone and synthetic materials from overseas were simply unavailable. Large houses and manors were broken up into a series of smaller volumes, including wings or ells, which effectively disguised their overall volume and, with commensurate architectural details, gave them the appearance of matching the scale of neighboring houses. Most of Birmingham's original houses were constructed with quality craftsmanship and designed with architectural massing and details intended to blend into the neighborhood rather than command attention.

Following trends in today's housing market, developers endeavor to exaggerate the size of houses, making even the most modestly sized house appear as large as possible. Ceilings are high, even on second floors; roofs are steeply pitched; elevations are replete with multiple gables and "look-at-me" details. These houses are designed to stand out and be noticed, rather than harmonize with and complement neighboring houses. Blending into the neighborhood, even with houses on adjacent lots, is rarely the goal for today's builders and architects. As a result,

Most of Birmingham's original houses were constructed with quality craftsmanship and design with architectural massing and details intended to blend into the neighborhood rather than command attention.



Image B.1-22. High quality design for a contemporary replacement, remaining in scale with the neighborhood fabric.

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Blending into the neighborhood, even with houses on adjacent lots, is rarely the goal for today's builders and architects.

many new houses become the focal point, for better or worse, of the street. Even the landscape is frequently overzealous, with extravagantly designed shrub beds, lighting, and sculpture in the front yard. Historically, these trophies were relegated to the backyard, where they could be enjoyed in private.

Once built, many new houses seem too large for their lots. They tower over adjacent side and backyards, reducing their neighbors' available sunlight while encroaching on their privacy. Many homeowners reported that their backyards regularly flooded from the rainwater runoff produced by new houses adjacent to their lots. Constantly running generators and water pumps have become common in some neighborhoods, especially in the Derby neighborhood northeast of Adams and Maple Roads. To maximize house size and price, many new houses include elevated first floors to allow their "basements" to become finished, marketable spaces. These tall houses often overlook their neighbors' once private backyards. As one Quarton Lake resident explained: "We have stopped dining on our patio and we seldom use our backyard because of the large

modern 'Escalade' house recently developed behind us... It's living room and kitchen are raised and they tower over our home... its awkward knowing my neighbors can look directly into my yard and windows from their family room. We keep our curtains closed... We are considering moving into Bloomfield Village, where the lots are larger and the house designs are more predictable."

While many residents expressed objections to large new houses during round-table interviews, when asked to make suggestions for regulatory change, they often became reflective. They became concerned that if the city increased building setback requirements and reduced allowable building sizes, it would adversely affect the value of their own property. One outspoken neighborhood activist asked if the city could "...impose new codes to significantly reduce the sizes of all new house construction, except for the houses of people presently living in the city, such as himself".

The Planning Board and City Commission have both recognized this problem. Recently, lot combinations have been restricted, reacting to the increasing trend of very large houses being built upon multiple existing lots. Article 5 of Chapter 102 in the Subdivision ordinance, Combination of Land Parcels, addresses the issue by limiting lot combinations to a maximum size of twice that surrounding,



Images B.1-23 & B.1-24. Infill housing in the Torry neighborhood on two sides of one street, older homes on the left and new homes on the right.

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“We have stopped dining on our patio and we seldom use our backyard because of the large modern ‘Escalade’ house recently developed behind us...”

and similar standards to provide for greater compatibility, which are generally well written. In other parts of the City, namely but not limited to Poppleton, lot splits which result in two houses being built in place of one has similarly raised controversy. As a result, Article 3 of Chapter 102 in the Subdivision ordinance, Division of Platted Lots addresses the issue by limiting lot sizes to the average in the surrounding area. As discussed in the Preamble to this plan, these actions lock the City into its present form and will be a significant barrier to implementing pieces of this plan. However, the concern is real and must be dealt with.

The issues being raised with both lot combinations and splits, as well as setbacks and height, are all related to insufficient or misallocated standards in the zoning ordinance, or incongruence between the zoning district assigned and neighborhood character. At the outset of this process, we completed a series of 40 Synoptic Surveys, which are catalogued in Chapter E. Context (to be included in the second draft). The compiled data, while not comprehensive, illustrates that the assignment of zoning districts is not necessarily a good predictor of the houses found in those districts, particularly concerning lot widths, the height buildings are elevated, side setbacks, and front setbacks. (See Fig. B.1-20) Zoning standards need to be better aligned with the lot sizes and housing characters within each neighborhood, including the fact that neighborhoods have multiple zoning districts. This may necessitate more residential zoning districts in order to better align with historic character, but doing so allows zoning standards to more tightly control compatibility.

1. DORCHESTER ROAD @ RUGBY STREET



Average Block Dimension	355' x 875'
Average Units per Acre	3 units
Average Lot Size	80' x 142'
Average Lot Coverage	20%
Average Parked Cars per Acre	0.6 cars
Average Trees per Acre	10.2 trees

2. PUBLIC FRONTAGE



Public Frontage Type	Yield Street
Spatial Width	145'
Posted Design Speed	25 MPH
R.O.W. Width	75'
Moving Lanes	2 at 10' Two Way
Parking Lanes	Both sides at 8' unmarked
Pavement Width	22'
Curb Type	Raised
Curb Radius	15'
Median	N/A
Sidewalk Width	5'
Planter Type	Individual
Planter Width	15'
Planting Pattern	Regular 40'-60' o.c.
Primary Tree Type	Locust
Bike Way Type	N/A
Bike Way Width	N/A

3. PRIVATE FRONTAGE



Private Frontage Type	Common Lawn / Porch
Principal Building Height	2.5 stories max.
Outbuilding Height	1.5 stories max.
First Floor above Grade	21" min average
Building Disposition	Edgeyard
Lot Width	80'
Lot Depth	142'
Lot Coverage	20%
Buildout Percentage at Setback	62% of lot width min.
Front Setback	35'
Side Setback	5' min.
Rear Setback	55'
Outbuilding Setback	2' min.
Front Encroachment	6'
Side Encroachment	6'
Ground Level Function	Residential
Upper Level Function	Residential
Entrance Access	Front Walkway

Image B.1-19. Synoptic Survey - Existing Medium Single-family home in zone R1 of Buckingham neighborhood.

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ID	Pattern	Current Zoning District	City Division	Private Frontage Type	Principle Building Height	Outbuilding Height	First Floor Above Grade	Building Disposition	Lot Width	Lot Depth	Lot Coverage	Frontage Buildout	Front Setback	Side Setback
1a	Large Single Family	R1	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	14 in.	Edgeyard	215 ft.	340 ft.	5%	20%	50 ft.	20 ft.
12a	Large Single Family	R1	District 2	Common Yard	2 stories	2 stories	12 in.	Sideyard	75 ft.	240 ft.	11%	53%	40 ft.	6 ft.
1b	Medium Single Family	R1	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	20 in.	Edgeyard	70 ft.	152 ft.	26%	50%	35 ft.	20 ft.
4a	Medium Single Family	R1	District 4	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	14 in.	Edgeyard	76 ft.	140 ft.	25%	45%	40 ft.	6 ft.
5a	Medium Single Family	R1	District 4	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	21 in.	Edgeyard	80 ft.	142 ft.	20%	62%	35 ft.	5 ft.
7a	Medium Single Family	R1	District 5	Common Lawn / Porch	1 stories	1 stories	20 in.	Edgeyard	100 ft.	140 ft.	31%	75%	40 ft.	5 ft.
11b	Medium Single Family	R1	District 2	Common Yard	2 stories	2 stories	24 in.	Sideyard	110 ft.	120 ft.	25%	50%	35 ft.	7 ft.
10b	Medium Single Family	R1	District 2	Common Yard	2.5 stories	2 stories	24 in.	Sideyard	80 ft.	135 ft.	33%	60%	30 ft.	7 ft.
11c	Small Single Family	R1	District 2	Common Yard	2.5 stories	2 stories	24 in.	Sideyard	65 ft.	130 ft.	30%	75%	40 ft.	7 ft.
10a	Large Single Family	R1-A	District 2	Common Yard	2 stories	2 stories	18 in.	Sideyard	112 ft.	450 ft.	15%	40%	75 ft.	15 ft.
2b	Medium Single Family	R2	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	21 in.	Edgeyard	102 ft.	122 ft.	27%	58%	40 ft.	9 ft.
3a	Medium Single Family	R2	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	35 in.	Edgeyard	94 ft.	137 ft.	43%	58%	22 ft.	8 ft.
6a	Medium Single Family	R2	District 4	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	14 in.	Edgeyard	75 ft.	139 ft.	15%	40%	38 ft.	5 ft.
12b	Medium Single Family	R2	District 3	Common Yard	2 stories	1 stories	18 in.	Sideyard	100 ft.	230 ft.	22%	65%	40 ft.	10 ft.
14a	Medium Single Family	R2	District 5	Common Yard	2 stories	1 stories	18 in.	Edgeyard	54 ft.	135 ft.	28%	65%	24 ft.	5 ft.
1c	Small Single Family	R2	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	1 stories	14 in.	Edgeyard	50 ft.	125 ft.	40%	70%	35 ft.	6 ft.
2c	Small Single Family	R2	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	2 stories	14 in.	Edgeyard	60 ft.	100 ft.	37%	50%	33 ft.	5 ft.
3b	Small Single Family	R2	District 1	Common Lawn / Porch	2 stories	1 stories	35 in.	Sideyard / Edgeyard	50 ft.	120 ft.	36%	70%	20 ft.	3 ft.
4b	Small Single Family	R2	District 4	Common Lawn / Porch	2.5 stories	1 stories	28 in.	Edgeyard	54 ft.	135 ft.	23%	60%	32 ft.	6 ft.
6b	Small Single Family	R2	District 4	Common Lawn / Porch	1.5 stories	1 stories	28 in.	Edgeyard	50 ft.	149 ft.	20%	55%	30 ft.	5 ft.
8a	Small Single Family	R2	District 5	Common Lawn / Porch	2.5 stories	2 stories	14 in.	Edgeyard	50 ft.	120 ft.	34%	56%	34 ft.	3 ft.
9c	Small Single Family	R2	District 3	Common Yard	2.5 stories	2 stories	24 in.	Sideyard	50 ft.	143 ft.	38%	70%	30 ft.	5 ft.
12c	Small Single Family	R2	District 3	Common Yard	2.5 stories	2 stories	18 in.	Sideyard	40 ft.	110 ft.	40%	66%	20 ft.	2 ft.

Image B.1-20. Synoptic Survey - Excerpt of summary data, organized by current zoning district.

The issues of lot combinations and splits are also related to the need of a physical city structure such that there are areas where larger lots are allocated and areas where smaller lots are allocated. This plan identifies areas for both. Neighborhood Seams identified in the Future Land Use Map specify where lot splits which result in more homes are appropriate. Neighborhood Seams also require lot combinations, but only those which result in a relative increase in the number of homes. Lot Enlargement Areas identified in the Future Land Use Map specify where lot combinations resulting in larger homes are acceptable, reinforcing neighborhood structure and the overall rhythm of the city.

The beginning of this section discussed the need for review of single family dwellings beyond simple compliance with building codes and the minimal zoning standards. This is a significant change that should not be used to impose stylistic requirements, rather to review the scale and massing of buildings and their impact on the neighborhood overall. Doing so will slow the construction process in neighborhoods, which is a desirable consequence that should be understood for its advantages. While change should occur and cities should evolve, fast and relentless change within neighborhoods is seriously destabilizing to social fabric. Beyond the complaints of constant construction, when

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neighborhoods are mostly rebuilt in their entirety, they lose history and the key diversity of established residents alongside new ones. This aspect of neighborhood diversity preserves social bonds and allows them to evolve. There are secrets, or intangible unknowns, about how the social fabric of a neighborhood works. Here the speed of change should be turned down a bit, while the speed of change in the City's mixed-use districts, and even Neighborhood Seams, could progress more quickly.

Additions to existing homes should be considered as a way to accommodate changes that the market desires without eroding neighborhood character. A number of residents brought up this consideration, in group discussions and through survey and website comments. Often the driver of new construction is market demand for additional bathrooms, a master, closet space, larger kitchens, and larger garages which tend to be lacking in older homes. While it is often easier to tear down an existing home and build a new one, this is a destructive process that creates significant waste material. Renovation and addition could be encouraged through a number of policies such as: a fast-tracked approval process (requiring a slowing down

of new construction approvals), waived fees for review and inspection, increased lot coverage allowances at the ground level (not second story), and tax incentives. One public comment discussed the opportunity that additions provide for accommodating older adults with ground floor masters. They may also be used to accommodate accessory dwelling units, as discussed elsewhere. While additions and renovation cannot be required, they can certainly be encouraged.

Lastly, we noticed that lighting found in some new homes is too intense. This observation was later supported by public comment on the project website. Excessive light degrades the calm character of Birmingham's neighborhood fabric. Lighting should be subdued generally, avoid spillover onto neighboring properties, and be oriented downward not outward. Luminaires should be shielded to

While change should occur and cities should evolve, fast and relentless change within neighborhoods is seriously destabilizing to social fabric.



Image B.1-21. A new home too brightly lit, degrading neighborhood character, next to which an appropriately lit porch demonstrates preferred lighting levels.

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eliminate glare. Color temperature is also keenly important. Light that is towards the blue end of the spectrum, higher color temperature, disrupts natural human cycles when used at nighttime. Color temperature should not exceed 3200 Kelvin after dusk. Currently the Zoning Ordinance uses Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) standards as a baseline, Zone E4 for everything R4 and above. Neighborhood illumination is not regulated, which is clearly in need. Additionally, International Dark Sky Association model standards are recommended in place of IESNA standards. These standards should be evaluated for use in neighborhoods as well as for adjustment or replacement of existing zoning requirements concerning lighting in R4 and above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review and update site, building, and design codes to prevent increased rainwater runoff and other negative impacts from new house construction.
2. Expand the inspection process for new house construction to ensure that they are built per approved plans to minimize negative impacts on surrounding properties.
3. Increase required residential setbacks for new construction to better match existing housing in each neighborhood.
4. Reduce permitted residential building heights for new construction to better match existing housing in each neighborhood.
5. Develop incentives, such as increasing allowable square footage, fast tracking, fee waivers, and tax incentives that promote the expansion of existing houses rather than the construction of new houses.
6. Identify and implement preservation protection, such as a historic designation for landmark houses.
7. Implement an approval process to review the exterior design and materials for single-family residential additions and for new house construction.
8. Add minimum and maximum lot width standards for each zoning district. The current standard based on minimum lot size is not a sufficient measure.
9. Revise the Zoning Code and zoning district boundaries to better align with the existing character and scale of houses and their lot size.
10. Revise Articles 3 and 5 of Chapter 102 of the Subdivision ordinance to allow for lot combinations and splits as are necessary to implement Neighborhood Seams and Lot Enlargement Areas.
11. Once the above recommended zoning changes are made, repeal Articles 3 and 5 of Chapter 102 of the Subdivision ordinance, the intent of the articles having been integrated into the Zoning Ordinance and Future Land Use Map.
12. Establish lighting standards for R1A through R3, neighborhoods generally, including maximum intensity and color temperature, shielding and direction, and spillover. Consider the International Dark Sky Association model standards. Lighting intensity restrictions should be associated with the Future Land Use categories for Neighborhood Fabric intensity where High Intensity Fabric justifies higher lighting intensity and Low Intensity Fabric justifies lower lighting intensity. Dark Sky LZ1 may be appropriate in Low Intensity Fabric and Medium Intensity Fabric areas, LZ2 in High Intensity Fabric areas, and LZ3 in the City's mixed-use districts.
13. Prevent healthy, mature trees from being removed due to new construction.

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Accessory dwelling units

OBSERVATIONS

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are a low impact way to provide additional housing, particularly for older adults and lower income individuals. The City currently allows accessory structures but has restrictions to prohibit their use as dwellings.

DISCUSSION

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are small homes typically located in the rear yard of a single-family or attached townhouse lot, frequently over a garage but often a small secondary unit within the primary home. ADUs can provide housing sought by many young renters, single-person households, and older adults. Birmingham has had historic ADUs for decades.

Presently, there is considerable market demand for ADUs in the city, but accessory structures are not permitted to include kitchens and bathrooms, and if they include bedrooms, they must be used by a relative of the primary household. The primary advantage of an ADU, if properly regulated, is that the property owner must also live on the property, providing oversight by the owner. For older adults looking to downsize but avoid a spike in property tax by selling, they can build an at-grade ADU to live in and rent their primary home.

ADUs should be permitted in the City broadly, provided the restrictions are added as specified in the following Recommendations.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are a low impact way to provide additional housing, particularly for older adults and lower income individuals.



Image B.1-22. An existing ADU equivalent in Birmingham.

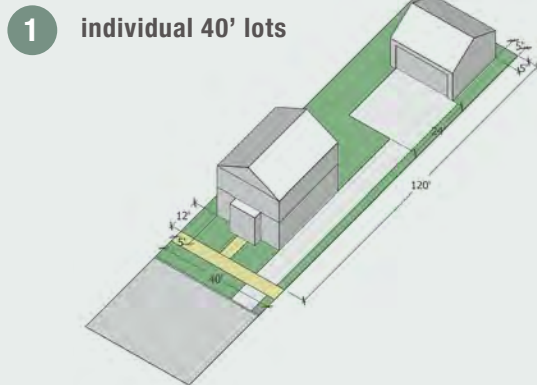
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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Permit ADUs where the property owner lives on-site, in the primary home or ADU.
2. Prohibit two-rental structures on any single-family property.
3. Require ADUs to be designed and built to match or exceed the quality of the primary structure.
4. Require adequate landscape screening between ADUs and adjacent properties
5. Do not require parking for ADUs.
6. Increase accessory structure setback requirements when there is a dwelling within it to 5 feet in R2 and above, 10 feet in R1, and 15 feet in R1A.
7. Increase the allowable height for accessory structures to allow 2 stories when there is a dwelling within it above a garage.
8. Exempt the area of interior staircases from the maximum area of accessory structures when there is a dwelling within it.
9. Allow accessory structures when there is a dwelling within it by right in MX, TZ1, TZ2, TZ3, and R4 through R8.

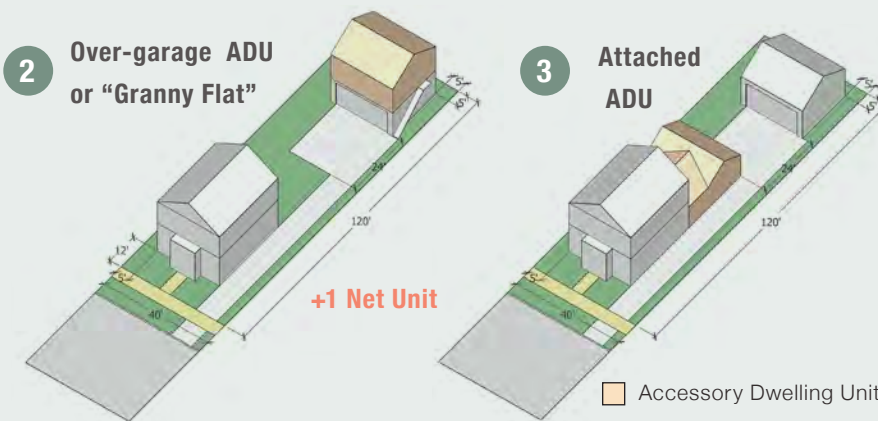
TYPICAL CONDITION



1 - Small Single Family lots

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 sf
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,500 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION



2: Over-garage ADU & 3: Attached ADU

Lot Width	40 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	4,800 sf
Lot Coverage	2: 40% 3: 60%
Unit Size	1,500 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	10 du/ac

Figure B.1-23. Proposed ADU conditions.

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Neighborhood Seams



Figure B.1-24. A diversity of housing types that can help support appropriate neighborhood seams while enriching a neighborhood's distinction.

Birmingham's neighborhoods are surprisingly diverse in population age and family composition. This type of diversity supports neighborhood longevity, where the population overall is at different points in their life cycle. Housing is always available and children span school classes rather than concentrate within a few years. Increasing housing costs threatens future age and family diversity. This is evident in recent Birmingham public school enrollment, which has been dropping. That has both to do with reducing family diversity and an increasing affluence of residents who may be inclined to select private education. Continuing to out-pace surrounding communities with an increasing gap in property value, Birmingham could lock itself into a primarily aging population and eventually

significant declines in value. As with other markets, a slow and steady increase is healthy while rapid increases lead to rapid decline.

Most major and secondary metropolitan areas in the country are currently facing affordability crises. Metro-Detroit is a rare and complicated condition in this regard, retaining a significant stock of housing that is reasonably priced. But

Increased housing diversity is necessary, but it should be allocated to strengthen cities and their neighborhoods...

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the area also demonstrates a less known trend, which is a change in housing preference towards walkable communities. In Metro-Detroit, there are very few walkable communities that have retained an active downtown, parks, and good schools. Birmingham is a rare commodity, increasingly unaffordable as a result.

Affordability solutions beyond subsidy is a subject being dealt with across the country. Just this year public policy has begun to hone-in on a need for greater housing diversity. Increasing townhouses, duplexes, and small multi-family buildings with smaller units reduces the construction and land cost for each unit individually, and as a result increases public tax revenue. These housing types are described as Missing Middle Housing (See Img.'s B.1-25-28). However the solutions being pursued elsewhere aim to eliminate single family neighborhoods; they are overreaching. Increased

housing diversity is necessary, but it should be allocated to strengthen cities and their neighborhoods, not divide them. Neighborhood seams are ideal receivers of housing diversification, which further define neighborhood identity.

By 2040, Birmingham needs to grow by nearly 2,000 homes. Half of this can be accommodated in the Downtown, Triangle, and Rail Districts, limited by the speed of construction and regional demand for downtown development. The remaining 1,000 homes need to be accommodated elsewhere in the community. Cost is an important consideration, often debated. We recommend defining “reasonably priced” housing by the average salary of municipal employees. At present there is demand for about 600 reasonably priced homes in Missing Middle formats; that is beyond the additional demand of 2,000 homes.

MIDDLE MISSING HOUSING



Image B.1-25. Danielson Grove, WA: Cottage Court

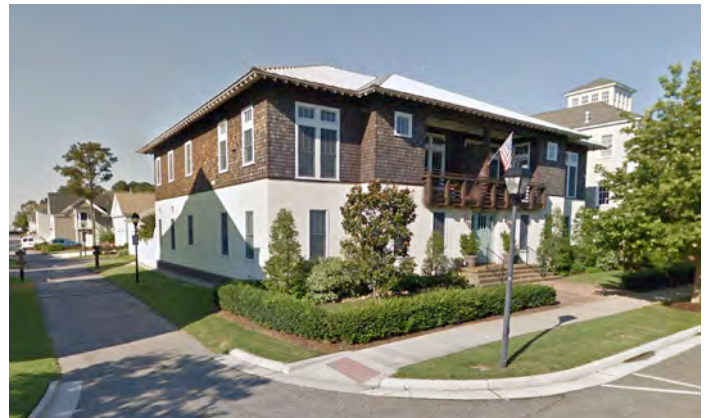


Image B.1-26. East Beach, VA: 4-Pack



Image B.1-27. Hampstead, AL: Townhomes



Image B.1-28. Habersham, SC: Townhouses

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Age of Householder	2017 Birmingham			2040 Birmingham			Percent Change		
	Own	Rent	Total	Own	Rent	Total	Own	Rent	Total
15-24	40	70	110	20	50	70	-50.0%	-28.6%	-36.4%
25-34	670	650	1,320	600	1,030	1,630	-10.4%	58.5%	23.5%
35-44	1,190	400	1,590	800	20	820	-32.8%	-95.0%	-48.4%
45-54	1,560	470	2,030	1,670	530	2,200	7.1%	12.8%	8.4%
55-64	1,490	340	1,830	1,490	940	2,430	0.0%	176.6%	32.8%
65-74	1,080	150	1,230	1,800	290	2,090	66.7%	93.1%	69.9%
75-84	440	120	560	180	720	900	-59.1%	500.0%	60.7%
85+	240	80	320	320	240	560	33.3%	200.0%	75.0%
Total	6,710	2,280	8,990	6,880	3,820	10,700	25%	67.6%	19.0%

Figure B.1-29. Projected housing change by age group, 2017-2040.

Each time residents brought up new housing formats we asked them where they should go. Allocating housing at an increased intensity will always anger the immediate neighbors, yet the community overall needs this type of housing to maintain diversity and future population. Neighborhood seams are a reasonable target for new housing types which preserves the overall character of the neighborhood while allocating change towards its edges. Together, accessory dwelling units and neighborhood seams could easily absorb Birmingham's growth for the coming decades while helping to control cost and strengthening neighborhood identity.

This plan maps neighborhood seams along the edges of neighborhoods, principally at major roadways, transitioning to protect the lower-intensity single-family neighborhood fabric. This is an important decision which is politically difficult, yet it is necessary. The present set of transition zone standards illustrate this need: because the zone mappings were not adopted by the City Commission, transition zones have become a political football. Neighborhood Seams are very similar to transition zones, except that the term specifies definite location, along the edges of neighborhoods,

Neighborhood seams are a reasonable target for new housing types which preserves the overall character of the neighborhood...

not within them. Certainty of the location and extent is established by the following location criteria: seams are located along the edges of neighborhood that coincide with highly trafficked streets and commercial districts. This is embedded in the Future Land Use category definition.

Figure B.1-30. Neighborhood Seams on the following page includes the recommended seams, further differentiating them by their need for neighborhood compatibility. High intensity seams occur where non-residential uses have already established neighborhood edges. These require limitations on the size and type of business, and restrictions on the amount of parking that can be provided. Moderate intensity seams are located along regionally significant streets with high traffic, in locations where a primarily multi-family housing stock can be absorbed. Low intensity seams are located where nearby neighborhood fabric is most sensitive, defining a neighborhood edge but limiting the increase of intensity at the seam.

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Figure B.1-30. Neighborhood Seams

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Seam Intensity

- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Lot combination allowed

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CITY EMPLOYEE

\$63,300

MEDIAN INCOME

\$950 / MO

REASONABLY PRICED RENT

\$185,000

REASONABLY PRICED FOR-SALE

Figure B.1-31. Attainable housing based upon the median salary of City employees.



CITYWIDE

\$114,500

MEDIAN HH INCOME

\$1,750 / MO

REASONABLY PRICED RENT

\$405,000

REASONABLY PRICED FOR-SALE

Figure B.1-32. Attainable housing based upon the median household income citywide.

HOUSING CHANGE

Projections anticipate significant growth in the older adult population with a significant decline of the 35-44 age bracket. This reflects a decline in family households which is a threat to Birmingham's character. Providing reasonably priced housing can help young families locate in Birmingham. Getting to this price point will require more modestly sized housing and diverse housing types.

REASONABLY PRICED HOUSING

The terms affordable and attainable housing have been endlessly debated, a distraction from solving real problems. We recommend using "reasonably priced" housing,

defined by the average salary of city employees, and "moderately priced" housing, defined by the city's median income. Available housing for rent and sale for both ranges is needed to retain a diverse population. To achieve this, policies must address both the types of housing that can be built and incentives that the City may offer to keep costs down.

MEETING PROBLEMS OF REGIONAL ORIGIN

Regional housing demand puts pressure on Birmingham's existing market position at the higher end of the region. This pressure is at odds with the need to provide reasonably priced housing. The region has a significant deficit of housing in the range that Birmingham currently

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provides. As a result, housing values have been rising quickly due to a lack of supply. This is a regional problem whose only solution is for Birmingham to have more high quality competition. Historically, Metro-Detroit had numerous neighborhoods, villages, towns, and cities that were similar in character to Birmingham. Unfortunately most were severely damaged during Detroit's suburban expansion.

Figure B.1-35 illustrates a number of surrounding communities that could grow to absorb this regional demand. Until more of these communities grow their downtowns and main streets, and diversify their housing, Birmingham will receive significant housing pressure which threatens its future diversity, a direct link to long term success.

AMI Thresholds	Median Incomes	Number of Owner Households	Fee Simple Home Price	Owner-Occupied Units	Surplus/Deficit
30% AMI	\$20,780	84,710	\$72,788	209,039	124,329
50% AMI	\$31,950	75,339	\$111,915	115,610	40,271
80% AMI	\$51,050	133,980	\$178,819	203,591	69,611
120% AMI	\$76,575	165,128	\$268,228	168,197	3,069
200% AMI	\$127,625	214,666	\$447,046	137,149	-77,517
Greater than 200% AMI	\$127,626	214,264	\$447,047	54,501	-159,763

Source: HUD, ACS, and RKG Associates

Figure B.1-33. Owner households and housing units falling under HUD levels, 2016.



Figure B.1-34. Michigan Homeowners study.



Figure B.1-35. Regional communities

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Housing Types and Diversity

OBSERVATIONS

Current demand for diverse housing types is significant and will continue to grow into the future, with a current deficit of 570 units of moderate and reasonably priced housing (See Fig. B.1-36).

DISCUSSION

Birmingham once provided more diverse housing, which was halted following poor quality townhouse and multi-family construction in the 1970's and increasing zoning restrictions. Beautiful historic examples of each Missing Middle Housing type can be found throughout the community. Presently there is a deficit of 570 moderately and reasonably priced housing units in the community, based upon current household incomes in Birmingham. This does not account for projected growth in Birmingham and the region overall. Permitting more of this housing is important for the future of the community. To meet the current and future demand, the following types should specifically be allowed and allocated:

- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Duplexes
- Triplexes
- Quadplexes
- Six packs
- Townhouses
- Cottage Courts

Beautiful historic examples of each Missing Middle Housing type can be found throughout the community.

The design of higher intensity housing within Neighborhood Seams has a significant impact on their ability to integrate. The 6-unit (six pack) multi-family building designed by Wallace Frost in the Poppleton neighborhood demonstrates how design and massing can work to integrate higher intensity housing with minimal impact to neighborhood character (See Img. B.1-37). While stylistic requirements are not palatable locally, a few minor, style-agnostic, requirements may be added to avoid the problems of the 1970's. Design review should also be required for new housing within Neighborhood Seams, to ensure character and massing are compatible with the neighborhood, that high quality materials are used, and that parking is appropriately located and screened.

Concern among residents is understood as many multi-family housing complexes in the City are impactful to the surrounding neighborhood in negative ways. These occur in two formats: very large multi-family complexes, endless rows of multi-family housing. The first issue is solved by limiting the number of units on each property to 6 in High Intensity Neighborhood Seams, 4 in Medium Intensity Neighborhood Seams, and 2 in Low Intensity Neighborhood Seams. Cottage courts are an exception, which require a minimum site area per unit. These limitations will ensure large complexes are not built.

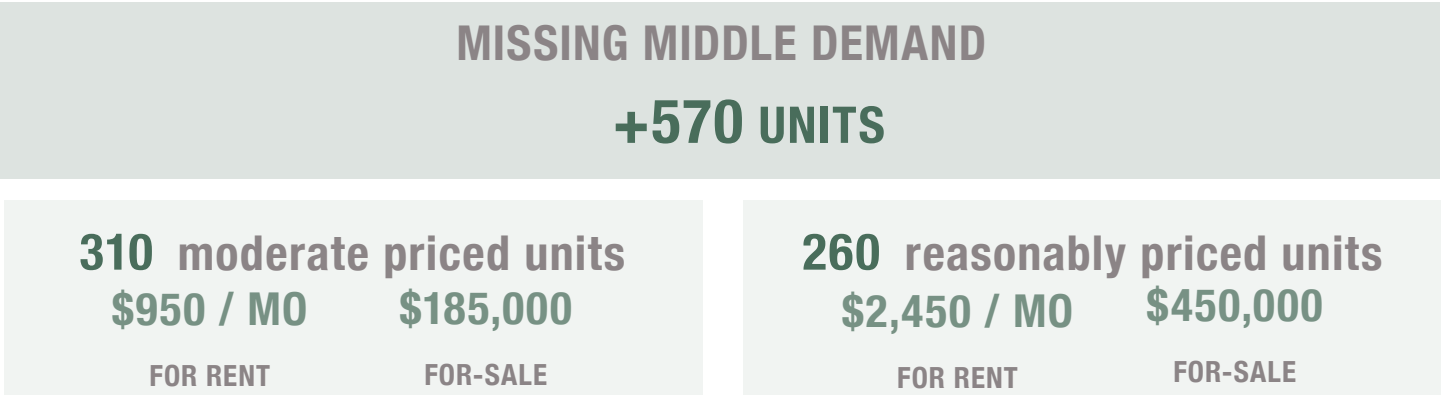


Figure B.1-36. Under-served local demand.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Image B.1-37. Contextually appropriate multi-family housing in the Poppleton neighborhood, designed by Wallace Frost.

Endless rows of single character housing is the next potential issue. A number of these conditions already exist in Birmingham. Initially, this condition is naturally discouraged due to the existing ownership patterns. While Neighborhoods Seams increase the intensity of housing, the increase, especially for Low Intensity Neighborhood Seams, is not that substantial so mass reconstruction is unlikely. Rather, change is likely to occur more slowly over time as properties are put up for sale. Because different types of housing units are allowed, the result should be a mix. But the design review process should also be employed to restrict repetitiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Permit six packs in high intensity neighborhood seams.
2. Permit quadplexes in high and medium intensity neighborhood seams.

3. Permit triplexes in high and medium intensity neighborhood seams.
4. Permit duplexes in all neighborhood seams.
5. Permit cottage courts in all neighborhood seams, requiring a minimum site area per unit to ensure a gentle intensity.
6. Permit townhouses in high and medium intensity neighborhood seams.
7. Require design review for new housing within neighborhood seams to ensure compatibility and diversity of character.

Samples of potential property redevelopment are provided on the following pages, illustrating the potential increase in housing units by different types of Missing Middle Housing, and how they align according to lot width.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

SMALL MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS

1. Multi-family at 6 and fewer units per lot have little impact
2. Significant amounts of rental housing already exists in every neighborhood
3. Design standards are required to ensure compatibility

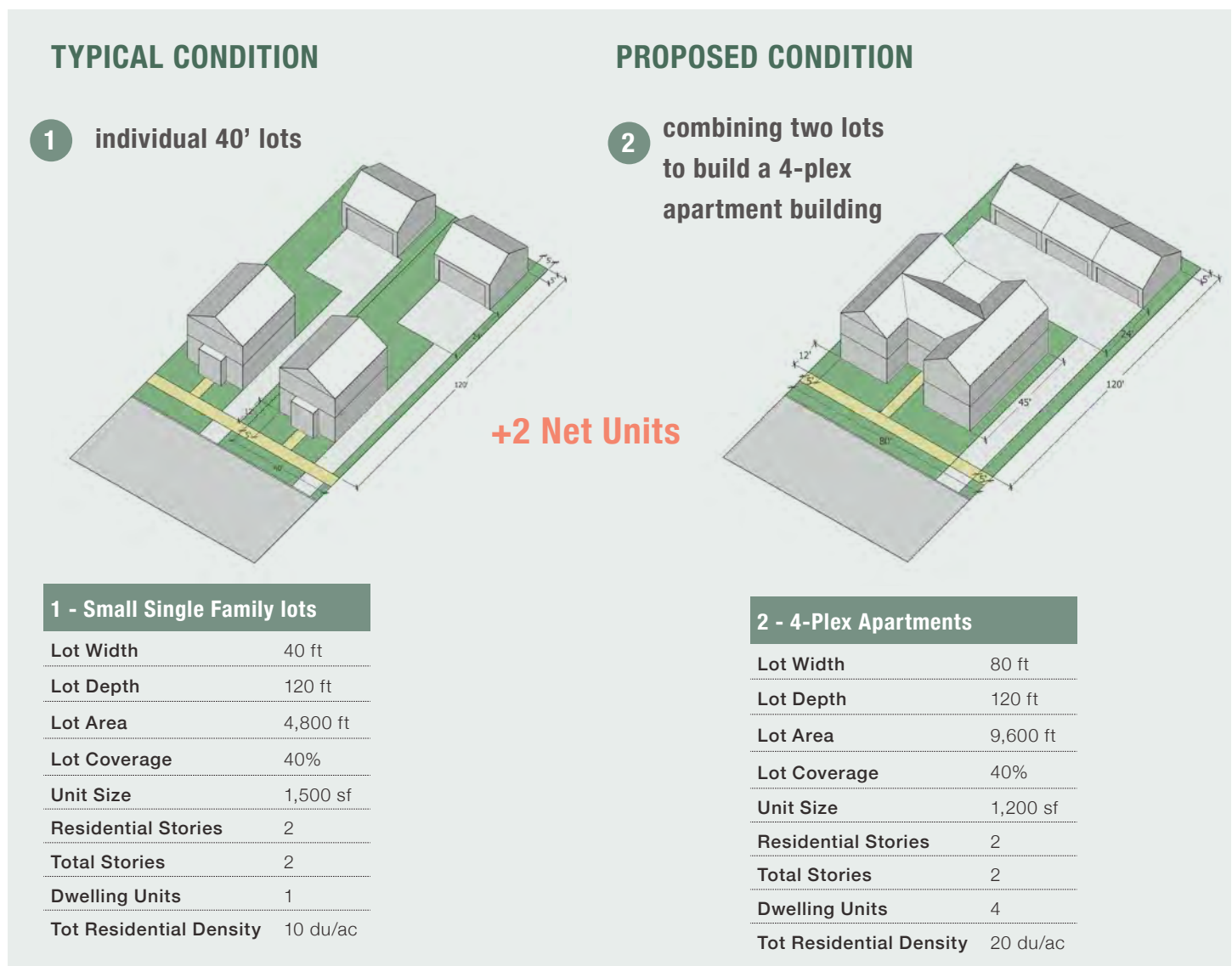


Figure B.1-38. Proposed Small Multi-family buildings.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

SMALL MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS



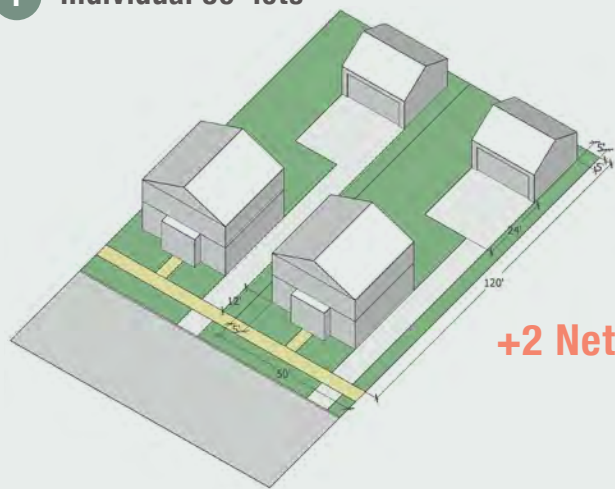
Image B.1-39. Example of a 4-Plex.



Image B.1-40. Example of a Duplex / 4-Plex.

TYPICAL CONDITION

1 individual 50' lots

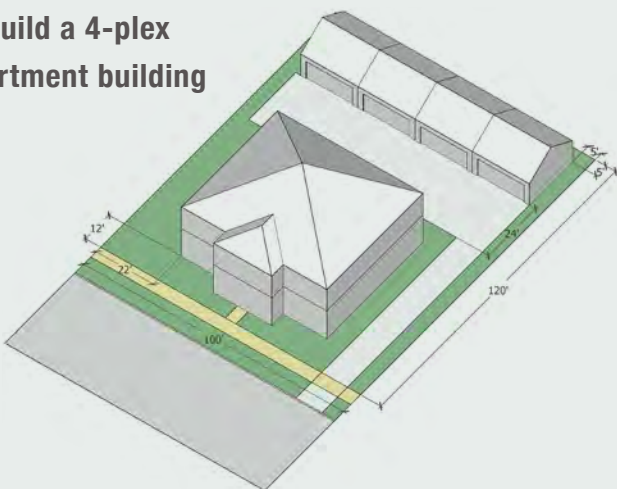


+2 Net Units

1 - Medium Single Family lots	
Lot Width	50 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	6,000 ft
Lot Coverage	30%
Unit Size	2,000 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	1
Tot Residential Density	9 du/ac

PROPOSED CONDITION

2 combining two lots to build a 4-plex apartment building



2 - 4-Plex Apartments	
Lot Width	80 ft
Lot Depth	120 ft
Lot Area	9,600 ft
Lot Coverage	40%
Unit Size	1,200 sf
Residential Stories	2
Total Stories	2
Dwelling Units	4
Tot Residential Density	18 du/ac

Figure 1-41. Proposed Small Multi-family buildings.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

TOWNHOUSES AND DUPLEXES

1. Increases housing with very little overall impact
2. Creates beautiful streetscapes
3. Existing townhouses near the Community House provide a model
4. Duplexes exist in many neighborhoods already
5. Design standards are required to ensure compatibility

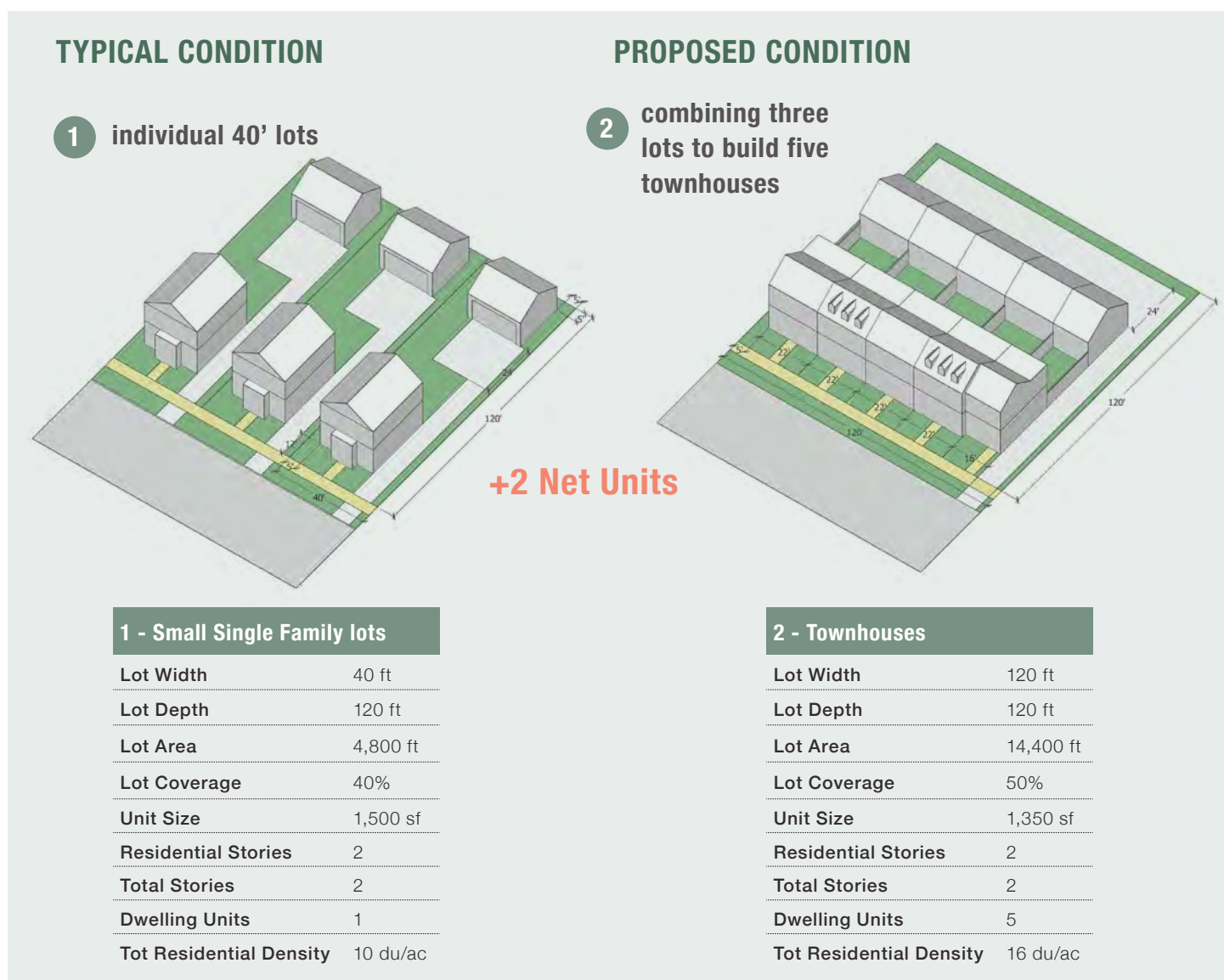


Figure B.1-42. Proposed Townhouses and Duplexes.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

TOWNHOUSES AND DUPLEXES



Image B.1-43. Example of Townhouses - Hampstead, AL.



Image B.1-44. Example of Townhouses - Prospect, CO.

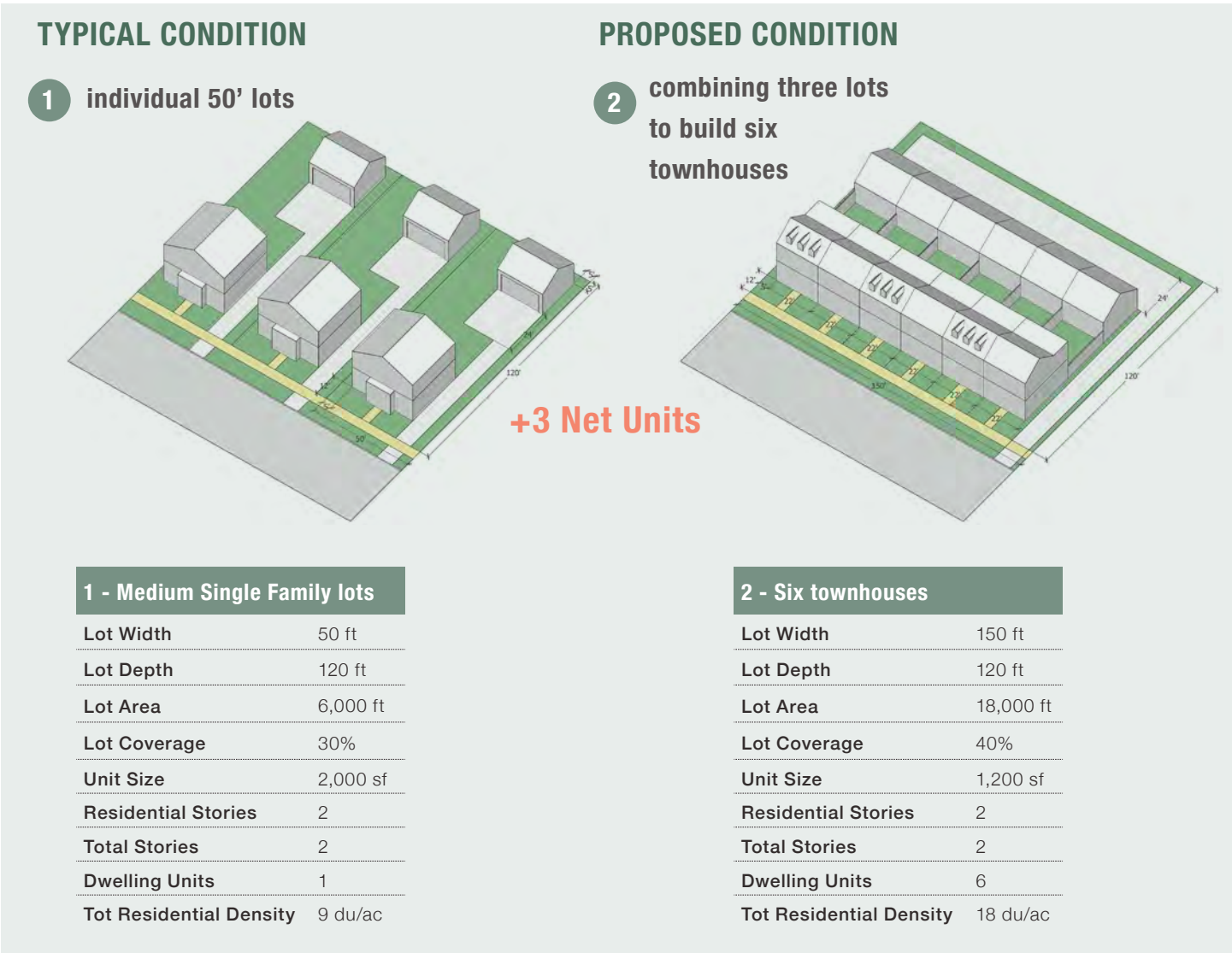


Figure B.1-45. Proposed Townhouses and Duplexes.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

COTTAGE COURTS

1. Significant increase in housing with very low impact
2. Severely under-served category of small single family
3. Current housing cluster allowances are overly complicated
4. Design standards are required to ensure compatibility

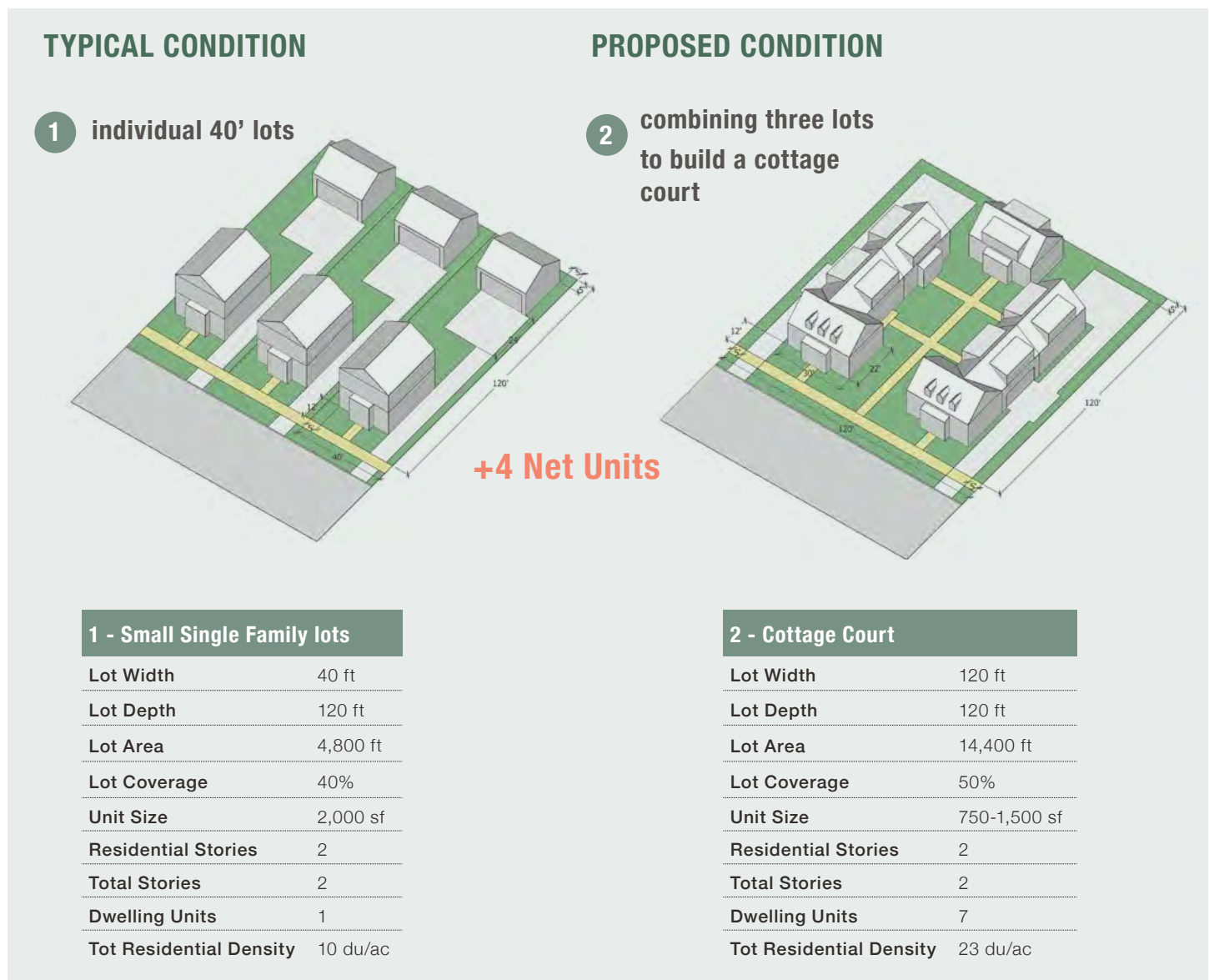


Figure B.1-46. Proposed Cottage Courts.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

COTTAGE COURTS



Image B.1-47. Example of a Court Court.



Image B.1-48. Example of a Cottage Court -Danielson Grove, WA.

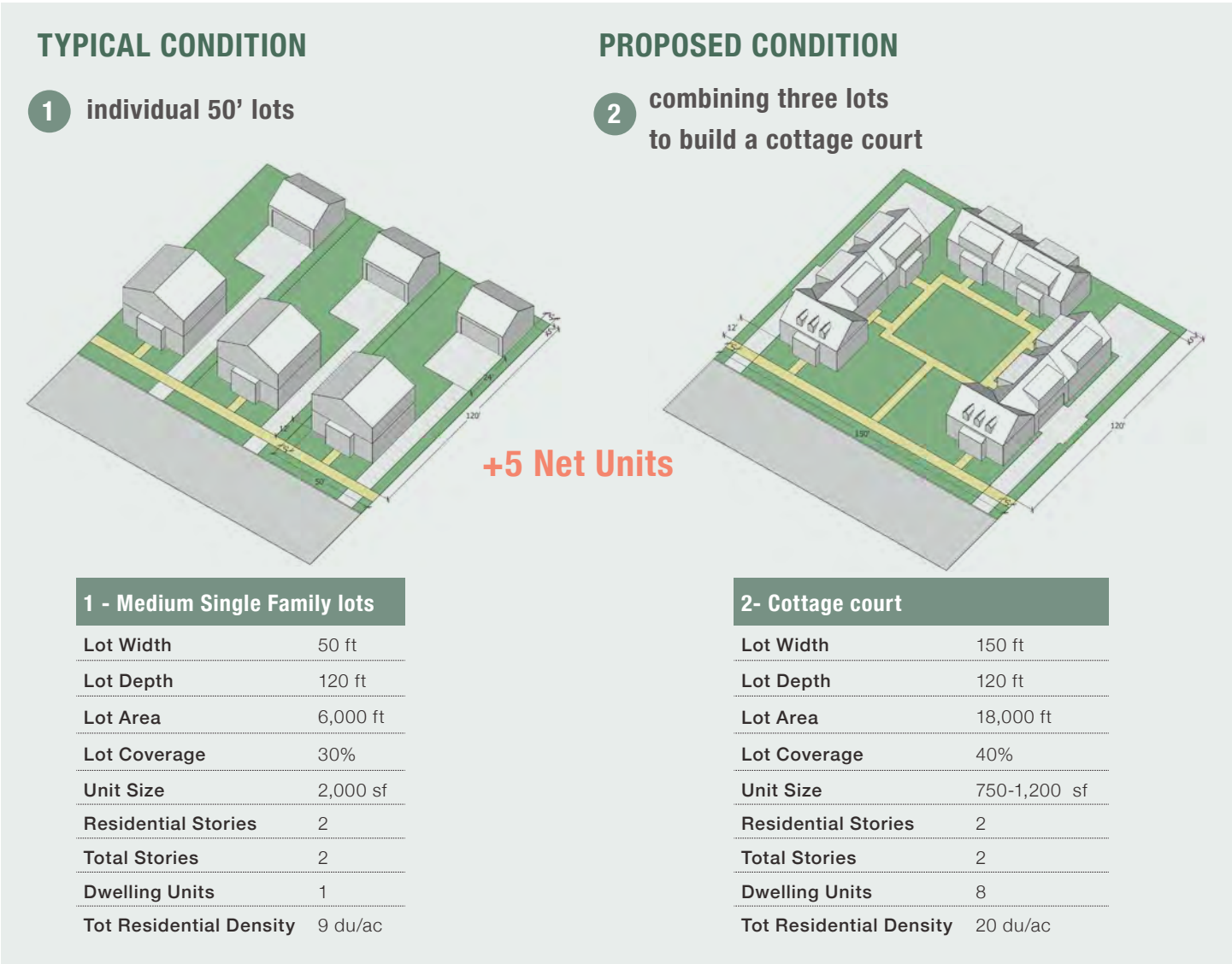


Figure B.1-49. Proposed Cottage Courts.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Neighborhood Destinations



Figure B.1-50. A neighborhood destination consisting of a mix of uses and small gathering spaces can greatly enhance the character and identity of a neighborhood, while providing convenient, walkable access to services and amenities.

Birmingham's neighborhoods are distinguished from the region's suburbs by their embedded parks, retail clusters, and schools. Nearly all of Birmingham's households live within an easy ten-minute walk to a park, a school, or a market selling basic goods such as bread, milk, and coffee. Although once common, such convenience is increasingly rare, and reflects a lifestyle highly sought by people of all age and income levels.

Neighborhood Destinations are the glue for neighborhood and community social structures. At destinations, neighbors meet and interact, and the act of walking or rolling to nearby destinations builds familiarity between neighbors on the street. They fall into 3 categories: Commercial Destinations like markets and cafes, Recreational Destinations like parks

and trails, and Civic Destinations like schools and religious institutions. As much of the country has lost these structures, neighbors are increasingly isolated, exacerbated by ever busier work lives and schedules being chauffeur to children.

Birmingham has lost a number of its Commercial Destinations, but it has retained a vast collection of parks and civic institutions, distributed widely throughout the community. These Recreational and Civic Destinations have sustained the City's social fabric. But as we heard from many residents, neighborhood cohesion has been lessening. Strengthening Neighborhood Destinations will help rebuild lost networks.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Commercial Destinations

OBSERVATIONS

A handful of Neighborhood Commercial Destinations remain active in Birmingham. Historically, many more Neighborhood Commercial Destinations were distributed throughout the City. Frequent destinations near homes increase neighborhood social interaction and neighbor familiarity. There is often fear that any new commercial businesses near homes will gradually increase in size, encroach on the neighborhood, and generate traffic and parking issues. However, existing Neighborhood Commercial Destinations are important pillars of neighborhood life for those living nearby.

DISCUSSION

Local bakeries, specialty markets, coffee shops, brew pubs, dry cleaners, hair salons, pharmacies, and even service stations comprise neighborhood scaled amenities that are unique to Birmingham among surrounding communities. Easy access to these amenities, especially by walking, contribute to the City's comfortable lifestyle and high property values. Recent studies indicate house values dramatically increase when located within a ten-minute walk of a coffee shop, green grocery, micro-brewery, park,

or school. Local realtors have reported a direct correlation between the value of properties and their proximity to Downtown Birmingham. But some city residents live beyond a comfortable walk or must cross a busy street to reach a local market or cafe.

This plan (See Fig. B.1-52) aspires to find potential locations to fill these voids in access to neighborhood-serving commercial destinations with carefully designed local goods and services, where desired by its nearby community. We acknowledge that not all of our proposed neighborhood commercial destinations will be welcomed now, but this is a 20-year plan, and preferences may change with the next generation. But we are encouraged by survey responses, which indicates that nearly everyone wants to be near active areas, half very close and the other half nearby but not too close. A slight age trend is clear in the responses as well, where younger residents want to be closer to activity and older residents further away.

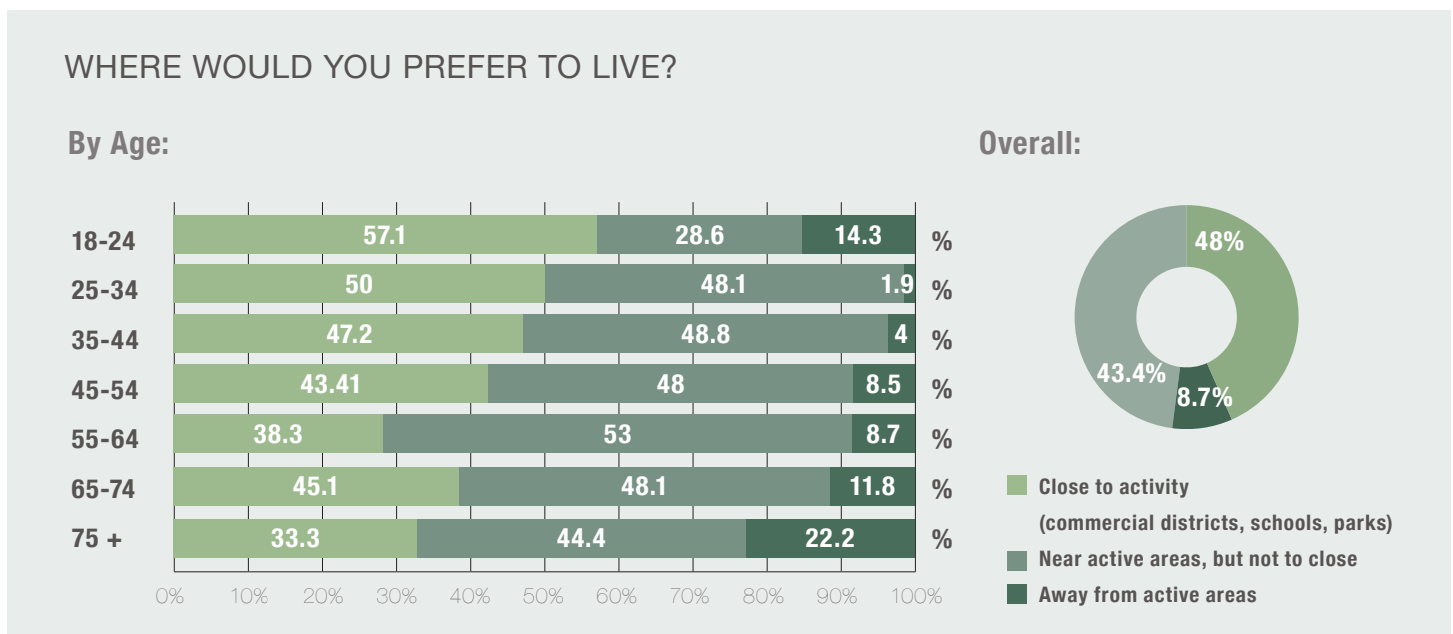
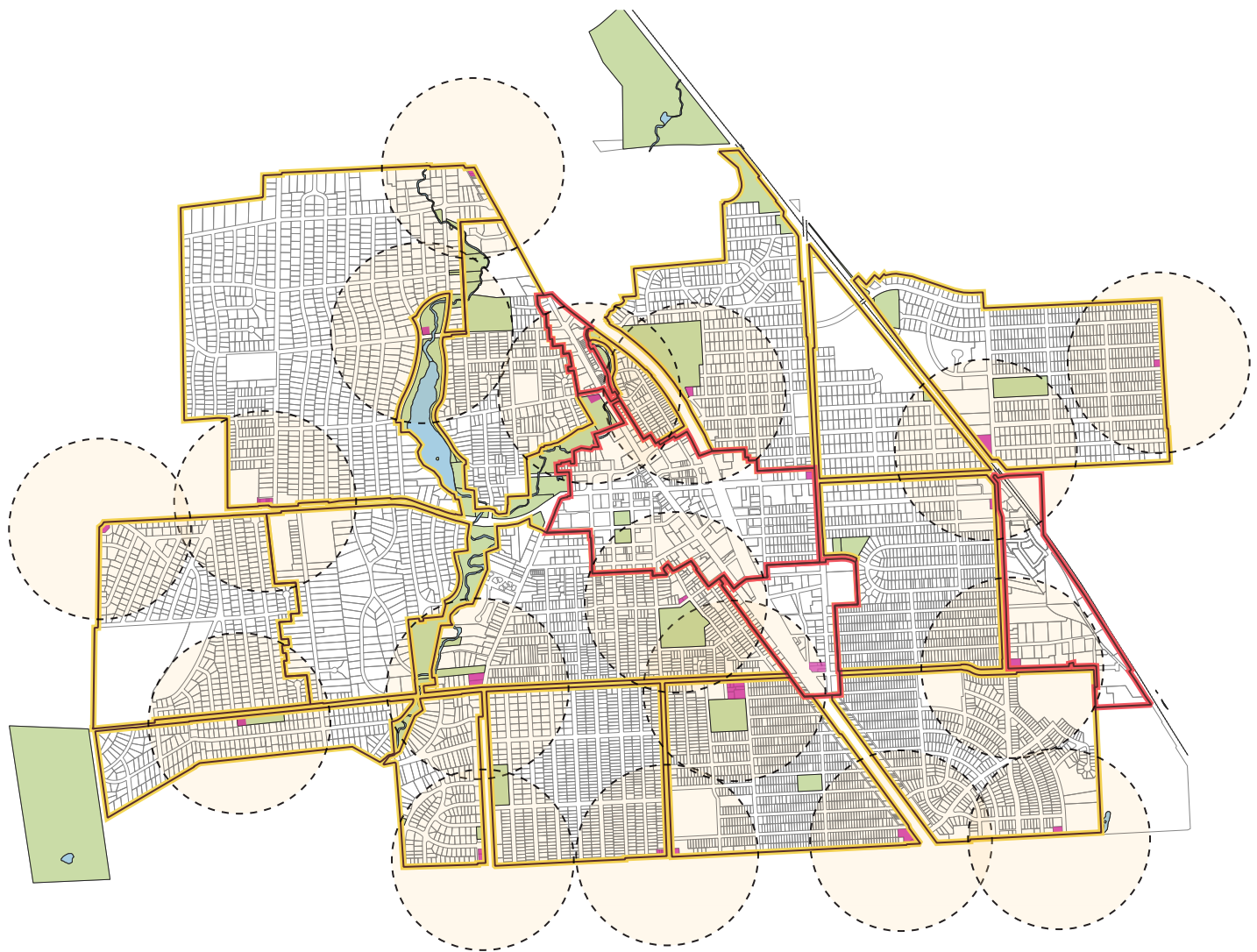


Figure B.1-51. City of Birmingham survey results (May 2019).

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



FigureB.1-52. Propsed Neighborhood Destinations.

Neighborhood Destinations

- Commercial Destinations
- Recreational Destinations
- Pedestrian Shed

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

This plan identifies locations that are along Neighborhood Seams, preserving the single-family nature of Neighborhood Fabric which remains in majority of the City. They are also targeted to provide walkable access to neighborhoods, but not be so close to one another that they become a larger district. A few instances include a recommended cafe within an existing park, to serve as a social destination for the surrounding neighborhood, such as the one serving Lincoln Hills and Seaholm, and one in upper Baldwin Park for Quarton and Holy Name.

Would Quarton Lake residents embrace the development of the Mills Pharmacy–Holiday Market center at Maple and Chesterfield Roads if it were proposed today? (See Figure B.1-53) The center's existing bank space was originally a gas station with auto repair services. Yet this commercial cluster is beloved.

CONFIGURATION OF THE MAPLE AND CHESTERFIELD NEIGHBORHOOD DESTINATION

- Single level commercial
- Built on the equivalent of 4 residential lots
- 6 Businesses
- 14,000sf of retail
- Main parking in rear
- Convenience parking in front



Figure B.1-53. Mills Pharmacy destination improvement.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Would the Rail District's popular Big Rock or Griffin Claw brewery be supported by those living nearby if proposed today? How would they respond to the increased traffic and parking, to the outsiders parking in front of their houses or walking down their residential sidewalks? Yet Griffin Claw is known to be completely overrun with young families, the stroller brigade, who desire this experience in their community.

Would Crestwood or Linden residents welcome the Market Square grocery located at Southfield and Fourteen Mile Roads if proposed in 2019? Although it was cited as one of their favorite destinations, some residents sharply opposed the grocery's proposed café and patio overlooking adjacent city open space. The café, if opened, likely would have become a favorite local gathering place, providing an opportunity for socializing with neighbors and, yes, outsiders as well. Unfortunately, the proposed café was denied because of local opposition.

CONFIGURATION OF THE ETON MARKET NEIGHBORHOOD DESTINATION

- Single level retail strip mall
- 4 Businesses in multiple buildings
- Main parking in front
- Built on the equivalent of 4 oddly shaped lots
- 11,600sf of retail

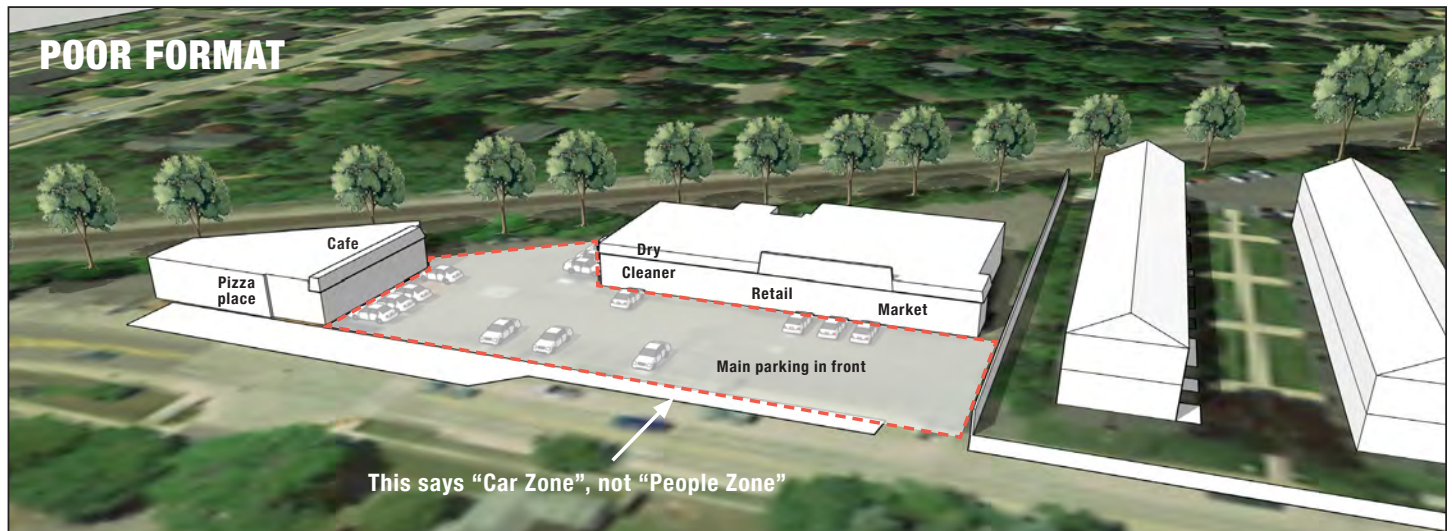


Figure B.1-54. Eton Market destination improvement.

B. Neighborhoods

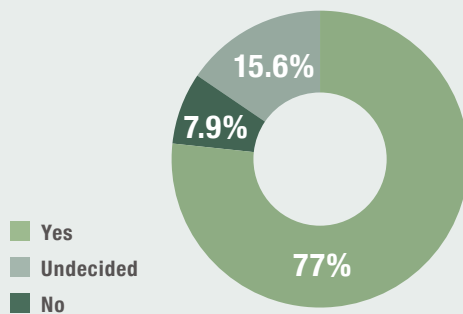
B.1. Neighborhood Components

In most places, ask any group of homeowners if they would like to have a retail center or restaurant open in their neighborhood and you will almost always be told, “HECK NO!” In contrast, most millennials would respond, “Yes, how soon?” During the public engagement periods of this plan, we heard great enthusiasm from younger residents, as expected, but also a great deal of support from older residents, provided the scale and character are modeled upon what is already working in the community. When asked about this in a second survey, respondents overwhelmingly supported neighborhood commercial destinations, and the City’s active role in making them successful, though they were nearly split when asked about potential financial incentives.

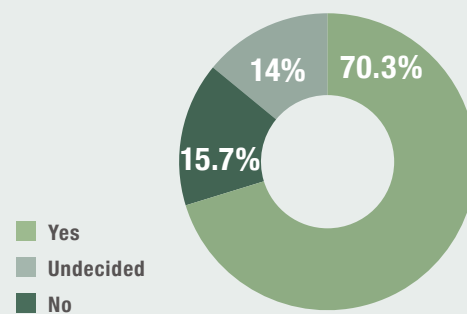
Neighborhood Commercial Destinations should be allowed and encouraged in the limited locations specified by the Future Land Use Map. These locations provide easy walking access for surrounding residents while keeping commercial encroachment out of the main Neighborhood Fabric. Their scale and businesses should be limited, along with operating hours and noise, to keep their impact minimal.

...existing Neighborhood Commercial Destinations are important pillars of neighborhood life for those living nearby.

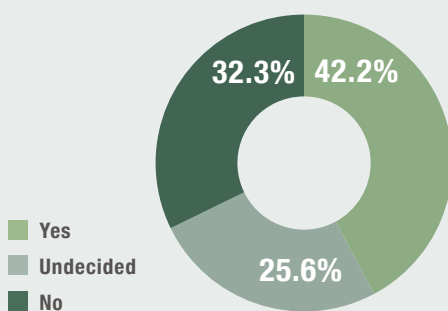
Do you support additional neighborhood destinations?



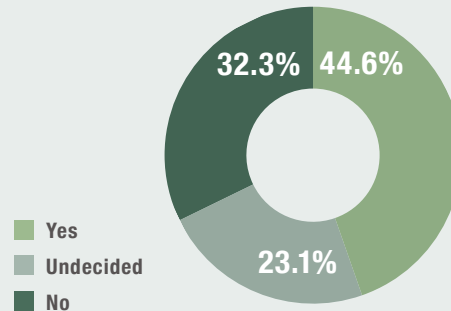
Should businesses be recruited to neighborhood destinations to ensure neighborhood-focused services?



Should the City offer rental assistance to neighborhood-focused services in neighborhood destinations?



Should the City offer tax incentives to neighborhood-focused services in neighborhood destinations?



Figures B.1-55. City of Birmingham survey results (May 2019).

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

As part of the Neighborhood Seam, these destinations should also be allowed to provide residential uses above the ground floor, which will help their success by providing immediately adjacent customers and allowing the residential units to offset some of the operational costs of managing the buildings. Scale and character should remain compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, reviewed by the Planning Board. Where Neighborhood Commercial Destinations are proposed within parks, they should be limited to small scale food and beverage service, a cafe, without other uses or housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Allow by-right Neighborhood Commercial Destinations of up to 10,000 square feet where identified in the Future Land Use Map.
2. Adopt a zoning district for Neighborhood Commercial Destinations, ensuring they are designed in a walkable manner, limited in scale, and of a character befitting their surroundings, including the following:
 - a. Limit uses to bakeries, banks, bicycle shops, cafés, carry-out foods, coffee shops, exercise studios, florists, hardware, ice cream parlors, mail centers, personal care, medical offices, pharmacies, real estate offices, financial services, small groceries, specialty shops, and other small local service-businesses. Housing should be permitted above the ground floor.
 - i. Where located in parks, limit uses to bakeries, cafes, and coffee shops.
 - b. Nationally branded chains should be permitted when designed to look local.
 - c. Limit evening hours and prohibit excessive noise, including music in the late evenings, and early or late truck deliveries should be restricted.
 - d. Larger restaurants and other potentially intensive commercial should be permitted as special uses, with appropriate design, management, and operational conditions geared to minimize their potential impact on surrounding properties.
 - e. Drive-thru windows should be prohibited.
 - f. Loading docks should be minimal or not required.
 - g. The neighborhood centers should be well-landscaped and screened from adjacent properties where necessary.
 - h. Height. These centers should be allowed to build three floors, provided they match the scale of a two and one-half story structure.
 - i. For buildings with 3 stories, the upper floors must be residential.
 - ii. For buildings with 2 stories, the upper floor may be office or residential.
 - iii. Where located in parks, limit height to one story.
 - i. Parking. Parking for these centers should be as minimal as possible, or in some cases provided entirely by the surrounding on-street spaces.
 - i. Parking provided, if any, should not exceed 3 cars per 1,000 square feet of non-residential uses and 1 car per bedroom of residential uses.
3. Planning Board review should be required to ensure lighting, signage, trash containers, and all other necessary, but potentially disruptive elements are carefully designed and managed to minimize their impacts to the neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Recreational Destinations

OBSERVATIONS

Parks and trails are important to residents and improve the value and health of the community. Recreational users have a variety of needs and abilities, which requires access to diverse open spaces.

DISCUSSION

Open space amenities are often high on peoples' list of priorities in the places that they live. Compared with surrounding communities, Birmingham has a high number of parks and open spaces, with variety in their format and offerings. Open space amenities are typically thought of from a citywide perspective, which was discussed in Chapter A, but they are important for successful neighborhoods as well. Recreational Destinations are both important for public health and as places where neighbors interact. With a goal of retaining age diversity within Birmingham's neighborhoods, a broad set of activities need to be supported for a broad range of ages and abilities.

While some neighborhoods are well served with parks and open spaces, when analyzed from a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, many lack sufficient services. The 2018 Parks Master Plan addresses many needs at each of the City's parks. But a neighborhood-based analysis should be completed to ensure that each neighborhood can supply diverse activities to its residents.

Birmingham is lucky to have retained much of the Rouge River access. Experiencing natural settings is hard to come by in many built-up places. This is something that can only be provided at the citywide scale, with some neighborhoods benefitting from adjacency. Ensuring access to this natural area for the broader community is important, as addressed in Chapter A.

Of all neighborhoods, Torry is most notably lacking park space. Already built-up there are few easy solutions to providing new open space. In Birmingham's past, the City



Figures B.1-56. Kids playing in Booth Park.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

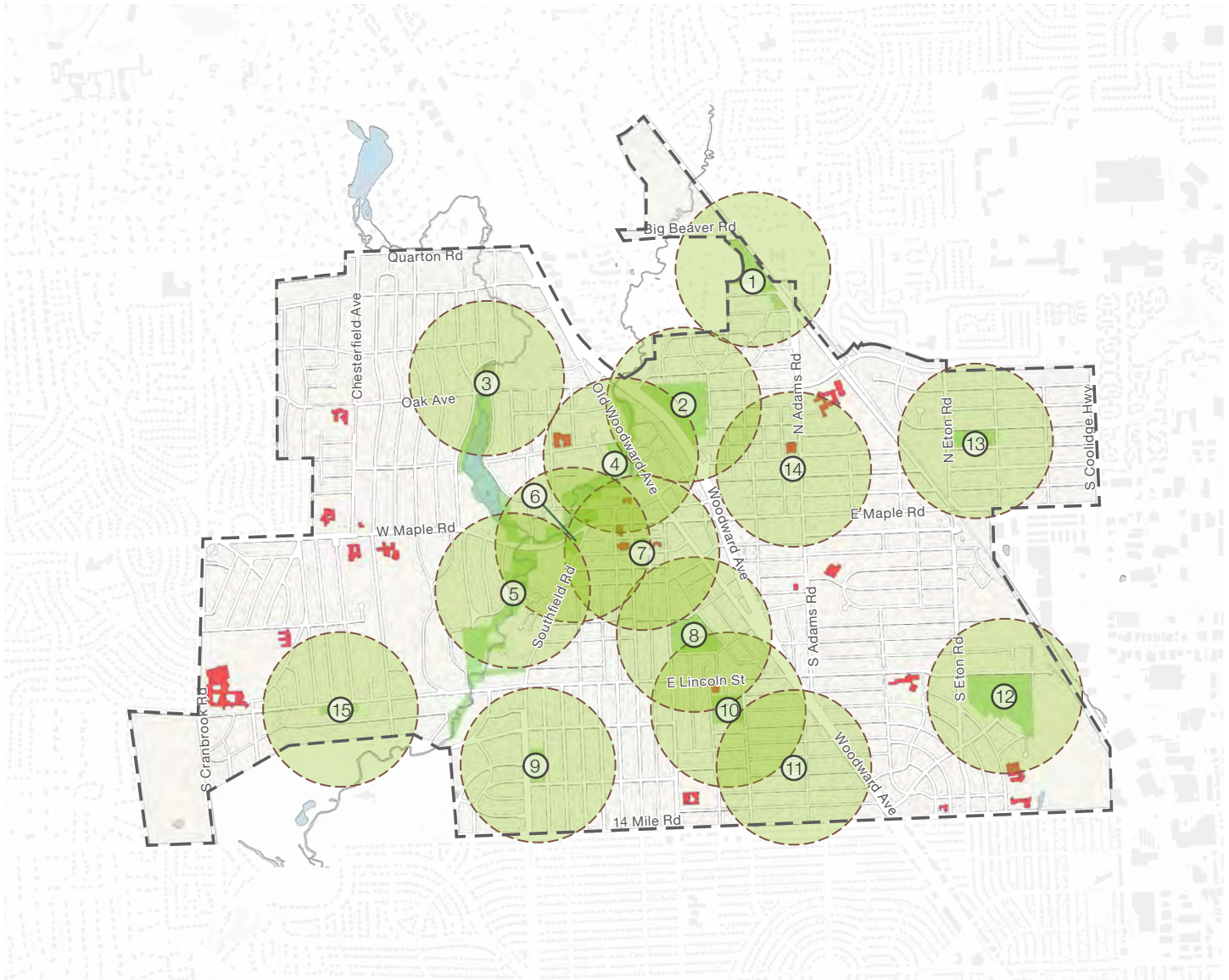


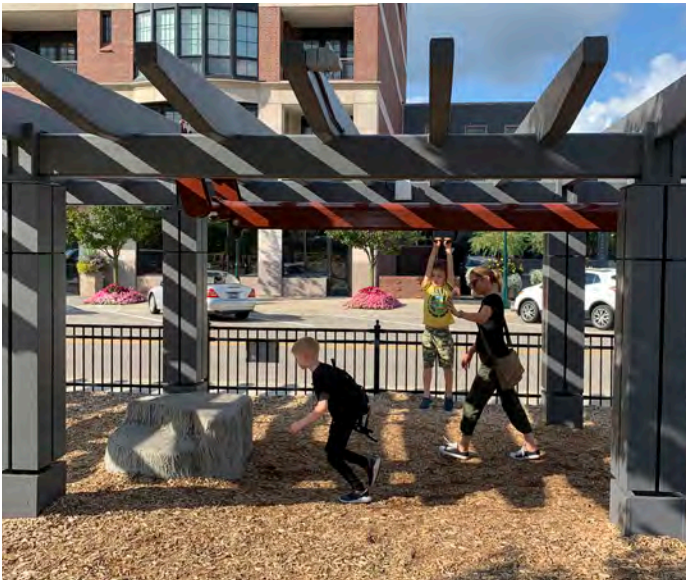
Figure B.1-57. Recreational Destinations.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| ① Manor Park | ⑧ Barnum Park |
| ② Poppleton Park | ⑨ Crestview Park |
| ③ Lower Baldwin Park | ⑩ St. James Park |
| ④ Booth Park | ⑪ Howarth Park |
| ⑤ Linden Park | ⑫ Kenning Park |
| ⑥ Martha Baldwin Park | ⑬ Pembroke Park |
| ⑦ Shain Park | ⑭ Adams Park |
| | ⑮ West Lincoln Well Site |

- Civic Institutions
- Recreational Destinations
- Pedestrian Shed

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components



Figures B.1-58 & B.1-59. Kids playing in Shain Park.

Parks and trails are important to residents and improve the value and health of the community.

has acquired houses to provide parks and civic space, but it is not likely a possibility at present. Two clear opportunities exist around Torry looking further to the future. Open space may be required as a condition for redevelopment of the Adams Square shopping center. Given that site's recent history, it is not likely to occur in the near future, however, and the City may instead attempt to purchase a portion of the parking lot for open space, at Adams and Bowers. Alternatively, the current post office site would accommodate a well-sized park. In 20 years, the post office may vacate the property. Both of these opportunities are part of an area of Torry that was identified for a park in the 1929 plan, unfortunately not capitalized on. As both options are difficult, the planned Worth Park in the Triangle District / Haynes Square could be developed more quickly. Worth Park is reasonably accessible for the Torry neighborhood, but it would not fulfill all of the neighborhood's needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop Worth Park as quickly as plausible to provide a portion of the needed open space access for Torry.
2. Attempt to purchase part of the Adams Square parking lot for park space, and if unsuccessful ensure that redevelopment would require that open space be provided at Adams and Bowers.
3. Investigate the potential to replace the post office with a neighborhood park for Torry.
4. Evaluate the current open space inventory and 2018 Parks Master Plan, and augment as needed to provide access and activities in or near each neighborhood for:
 - a. Young children requiring play equipment;
 - b. Teenagers requiring autonomy and places to gather;
 - c. Younger adults requiring active uses like running and basketball;
 - d. Older adults requiring active and passive uses like pickleball and places to rest in open spaces and along the way;
 - e. People with disabilities requiring accessible paths and routes to open space, as well as specifically designed amenities;
 - f. And dog owners requiring places for their dogs to run and socialize.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

Civic Destinations

OBSERVATIONS

Nearly all of Birmingham's neighborhoods include one or more civic uses within a short walk for most of their residents. Neighborhood Civic Destinations increase neighborhood sociability and cross-neighborhood relationships.

DISCUSSION

Civic buildings house city, state, and federal governmental institutions; community centers; cultural institutions; educational facilities; and places of worship. Each of these functions is a destination to city residents, but when grouped into an architecturally coherent assemblage, such as in Birmingham, civic buildings can be a compelling destination. Such a center serves as a landmark that comes to symbolize and identify the city. Birmingham has a long tradition of investing in civic buildings and landscapes, which began with the construction of its first library and the build-out of its civic center in the 1920s. This civic center is centrally located downtown, with its constituent buildings grouped around Shain Park. The center occupies five blocks that once housed privately owned houses, which the city purchased and razed as part of the 1929 City Beautiful master plan.

Outside of the City's primary civic cluster in Downtown, nearly all of Birmingham's neighborhoods include one or more civic uses within a short walk for most of their residents. This relationship is relatively rare in postwar suburbs and contributes to Birmingham's desirable quality of life. The city's Neighborhood Civic Destinations include fire stations, meeting halls, museums, places of worship, post offices, schools, and specialized civic institutions such as Next and the YMCA. The 1929 plan proposed anchoring each of the city's neighborhoods with a civic center, a school, or a park. Largely implemented, this plan resulted in the numerous schools and parks that now exist in most of Birmingham's neighborhoods.

Civic buildings offer neutral, aspirational places for citizens and community leaders to exchange ideas, form community associations, or simply socialize. Located

in a neighborhood setting, these institutions encourage neighborhood interaction. They also tend to draw people from other nearby neighborhoods, cross-pollinating the City's social structures. Civic buildings and landscapes should be grand and iconic, and be distinct from residential construction to avoid confusing public and private uses. Birmingham's prewar civic buildings—the City Hall, library, post office, and train station—were built of brick and stone in an English Tudor style, with the exaggerated scale and exceptional quality befitting signature civic buildings.

Throughout the community, Civic Destinations should be maintained and supported. During the planning charrette, some of the City's civic institutions discussed their great variety of programs. We also heard that some struggle to reach residents and new generations who are not familiar with the role that civic institutions play in the community. At one of the round-table discussions, a resident suggested that there should be a way for herself and other residents to contribute funding towards parks in order to accelerate their improvements and support their role in the neighborhood. This led us to consider that a community like Birmingham should have a Community Foundation or fund that can help support and strengthen civic institutions and parks, and help market their programs and services to residents. When discussed at the charrette's civic institutions meeting, the Chamber of Commerce representative indicated that they are in the process of establishing such a fund. The recommended monthly events held along the Neighborhood Loop, discussed in Chapter A, are a valuable means of connecting civic institutions with the surrounding community. The Community Foundation or fund should contribute to these events, provide booth space in parks that are part of the loop events, and involve civic institutions along and near the event route who would benefit by holding mini-events in coordination. Regular events such as these are an important means of gaining visibility among community members, engaging them, and strengthening community's social and civic structure.

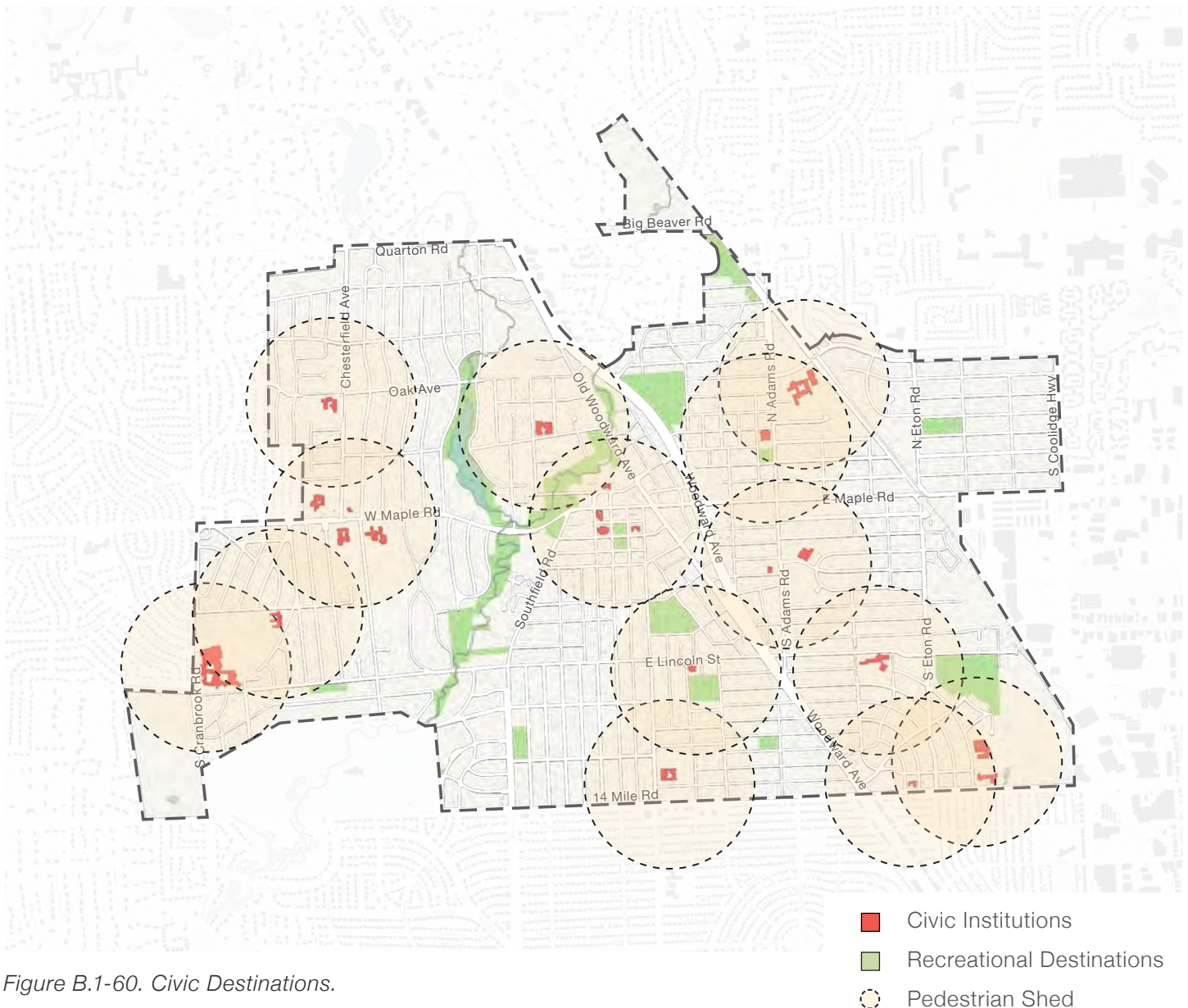
Neighborhood Civic Destinations
increase neighborhood sociability and
cross-neighborhood relationships.

B. Neighborhoods

B.1. Neighborhood Components

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Maintain and support existing civic uses throughout the community.
2. Require new civic uses to be planned and built as aspirational buildings and landscapes.
3. Continue the tradition of designing and constructing Birmingham's civic buildings and parks as iconic structures and landscapes to the highest standards and at a civic scale. This includes authentic durable materials, oversized windows, high ceilings, and Tudor design and detailing.
4. Develop Worth Park and other civic places in the Triangle District as quickly as plausible.
5. Ensure the Community Foundation / Fund is established in a timely manner.
6. Develop civic programming as part of the monthly neighborhood loop events.
7. Develop additional regular civic events to continue engaging the community throughout the year.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

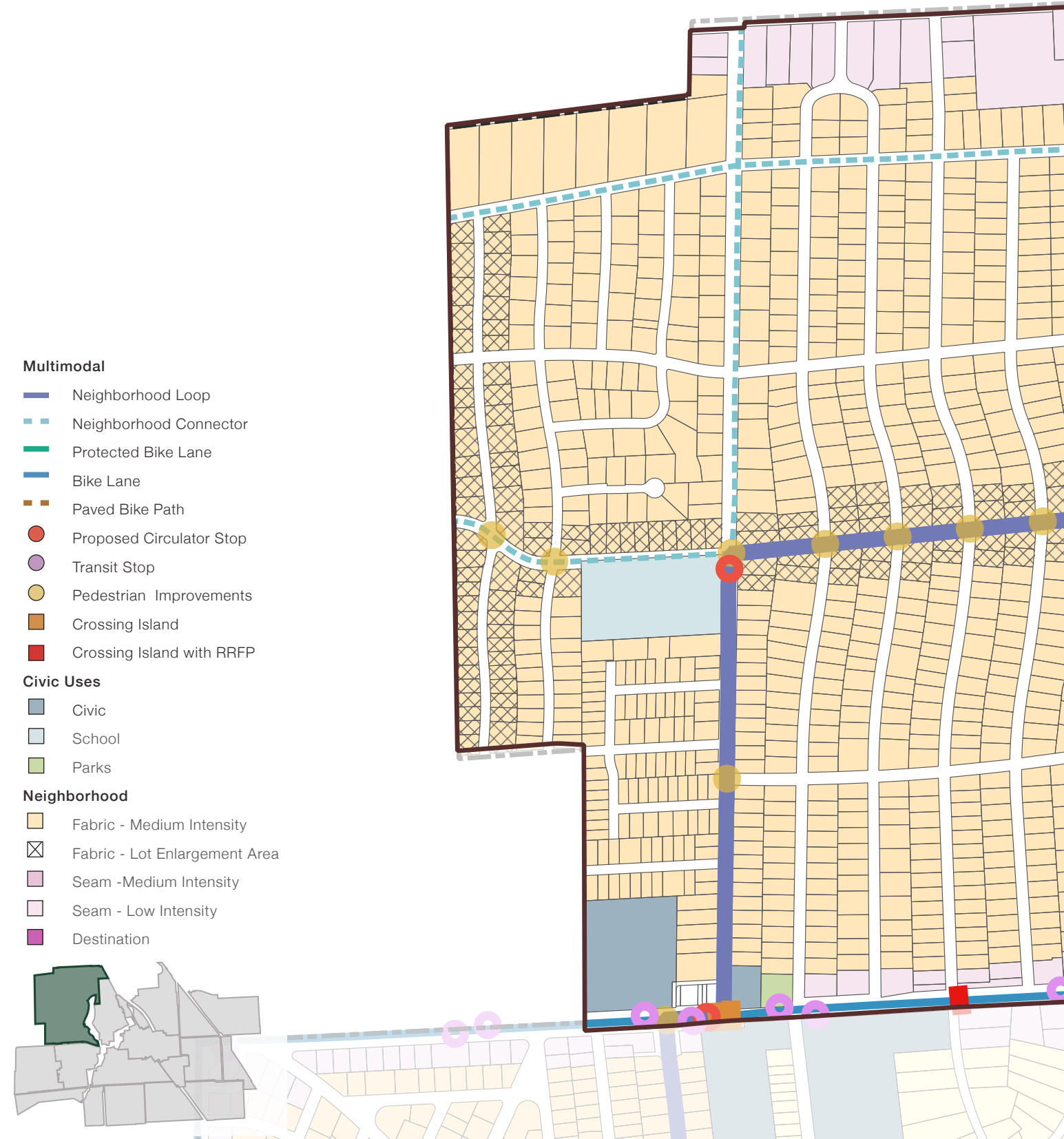


Figure B.2-1. Quarton Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Quarton

The Quarton neighborhood is Birmingham's largest in terms of size and population. Spanning over 400 acres, the area was first developed in the 20s and 30s, though most of the original homes were built in the late 40s and early 50s. A notable number of homes have been rebuilt over the last 30 years, generally doubling in size. Most of the houses are 2-2.5-stories on 50- to 70-foot wide lots. They generally occupy 25-40 percent of the lot, except for a few larger lot estates in the northwest corner of the neighborhood. Garages or outbuildings range from simple one-story structures to furnished two-story habitable buildings accommodating multiple cars and accessory activity space.

Comprised of gently curving streets, the neighborhood block structure ranges from 300- to 400-feet in width and 600- to 1,200-feet in length. The neighborhood streets are generally narrow and unimproved in favor of generous planters and front lawns; some opportunistic on-street parking is incorporated into the planter. A variety of tree species are planted throughout and the average of 14 trees per acre results in a mature tree canopy.

Lower Baldwin Park is the primary open space for the neighborhood and a connected sidewalk enables an ambient walk around Quarton Lake. A small collection of one-story buildings along Maple Road provides neighborhood commercial destinations including a small grocery market, pharmacy, bank, dry cleaner and chocolate shop. To the west of this, a Lutheran church is one of a cluster of shared neighborhood civic destinations on Maple. Within the neighborhood, the Quarton Elementary School provides the neighborhood's centrally located civic destination, with a playground, tennis courts, and unstructured open space.

There are an estimated 2,540 residents in the Quarton neighborhood living in 880 households for an average density of 2.1 homes per acre. Approximately 40 percent of the households have children, 91.7 percent of the adults are college educated and the median age is 48.2. The median household income is \$200,000 and the median home value is \$730,000; each the highest of Birmingham's neighborhoods.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans



Figure B.2-2. Holy Name Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

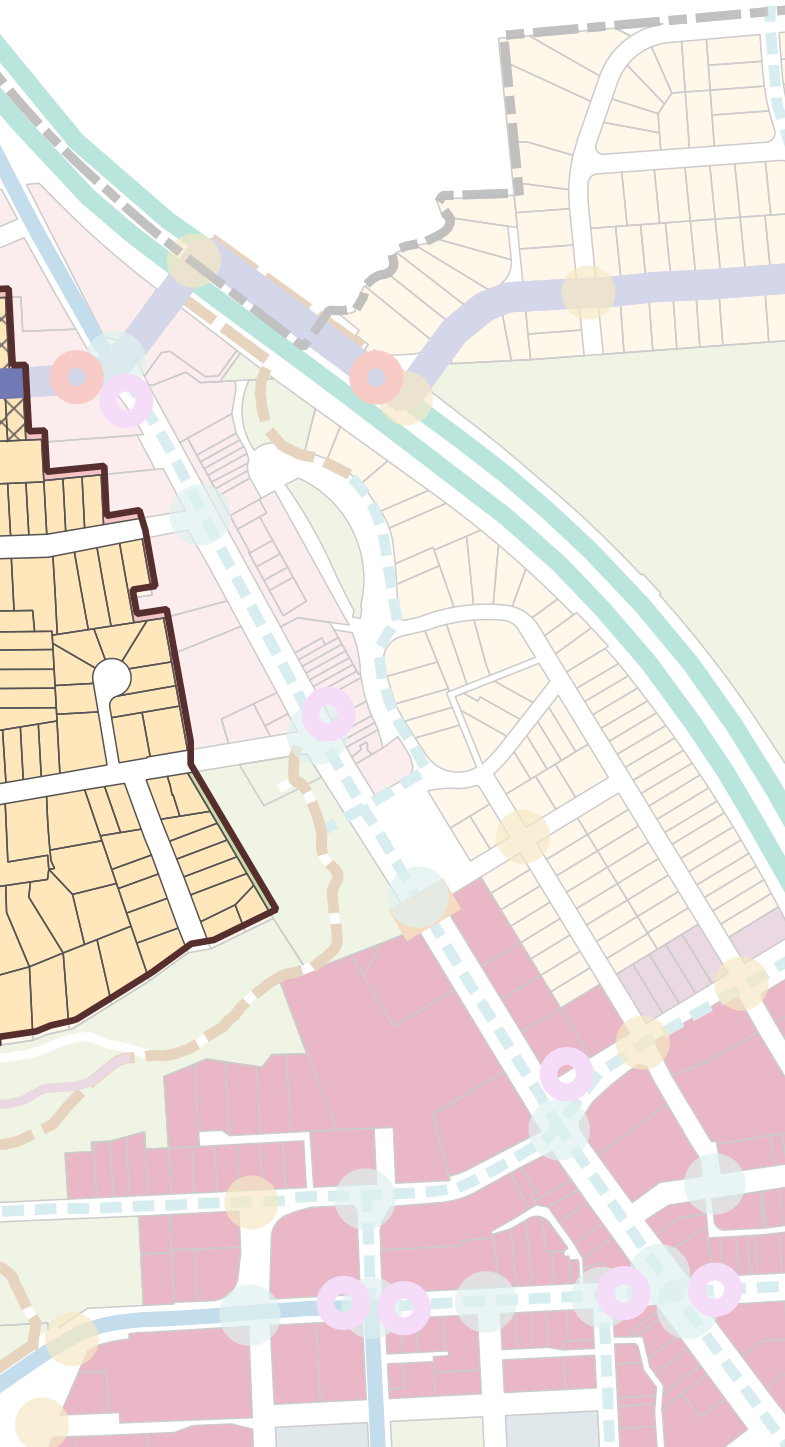
Holy Name

Containing some of the oldest homes in Birmingham, the Holy Name neighborhood continues to evolve with homes built in every decade since the start of the 20th century. As such, lot sizes vary considerably with some as narrow as 45-feet ranging up to 100-feet wide. Homes are similarly represented by a variety of styles and sizes; most are between 1.5- to 2.5-stories with 30- to 40-percent lot coverage. A small number of lot combinations have produced large estate homes contrasting the more nuanced scale of the neighborhood.

Bound by Quarton Lake to the west and Booth Park to the south, a fairly regular street grid accommodates the changes in topography as it approaches the Rouge River. The blocks are generally 400-feet wide and 700- to 800-feet long, though some shorter blocks and cul-de-sacs maximize the buildable area within the neighborhood; Holy Name is among the most densely developed neighborhoods with 5.5 homes per acre. This is also due to a series of multi-family buildings on the east end of the neighborhood along Old Woodward. Maples are the prevalent tree species occurring frequently with an average of 12 trees per acre.

Recreational amenities abound with Lower Baldwin Park and Booth Park at the edges of the neighborhood. There are several neighborhood commercial destinations along Old Woodward and the heart of downtown is within a half-mile walk for most residents. Holy Name Catholic Church and School are the neighborhood's centrally located civic destinations.

There are an estimated 1,330 residents in the Holy Name neighborhood living in 640 households. The oldest neighborhood by resident median age (51.0), household size is commensurately smaller at 2.06 persons per household and 23.3 percent of households contain children. Well-educated, nearly 90 percent of adult residents have a college education and the median household income is \$141,000. The median home value is \$640,000, among the highest in the city.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans



Figure B.2-3. The Ravines Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

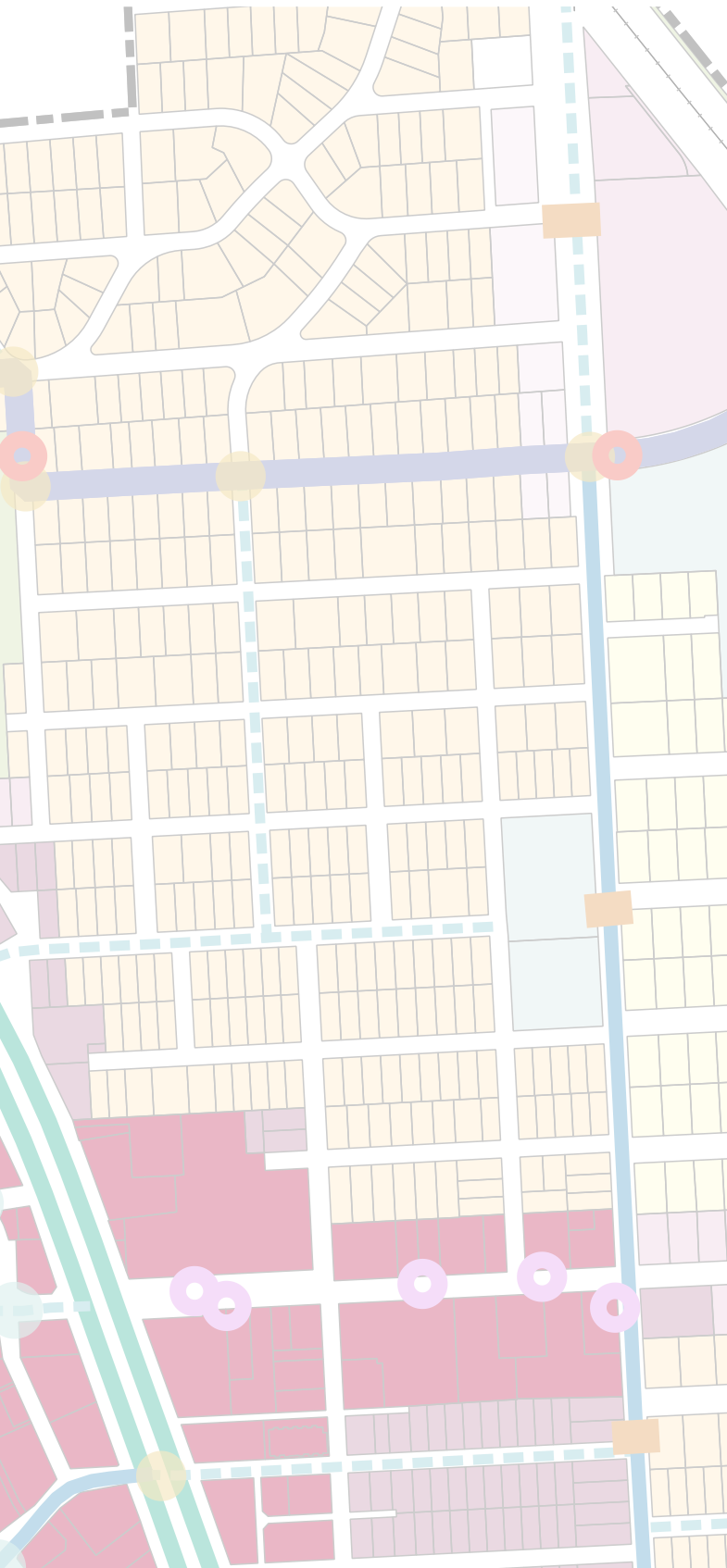
The Ravines

Birmingham's smallest neighborhood, covering just 20 acres, Little San Francisco is also one of the nearest neighborhoods to downtown. Homes are generally preserved from their 1910s and 20s vintage or rebuilt within the last 20 years. Predominantly 2-story homes with some bungalows intermixed, most lots are 40- to 50-feet wide though irregular lots are common as the neighborhood conforms to the Rouge River and Woodward Avenue to the north. Detached garages are commonplace however some newer homes have rear attached garages and others have unique designs responding to the topography.

To the east, the North Old Woodward area is the proximate neighborhood commercial destination as is Booth Park for recreation. A number of office buildings along the southwest of the neighborhood serve as a transition to downtown's development intensity, while the transition is more abrupt along Oakland as single-family homes are adjacent to the Park Street parking structure. The backyards of Park Street's homes and an unmaintained planter strip serve as a poor buffer to the eight-lane Woodward Avenue.

Smaller lots sizes and an average of 20-foot front setbacks give this neighborhood an urban disposition. Lot coverage averages 40-percent and side setbacks are limited to the space required for driveway access to detached garages. Abutting the Rouge River, parts of the neighborhood are better treed than others with density ranging from 13 to 19 trees per acre.

There are just 170 residents in Little San Francisco. An average household size of 2.1 persons occupy 80 households and 41 percent of the households include children. The median age is 45 and 83 percent of adults are college educated. The median household income is \$168,000 and the median home value is \$505,000. Little San Francisco's density approximates 4.1 homes per acre.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

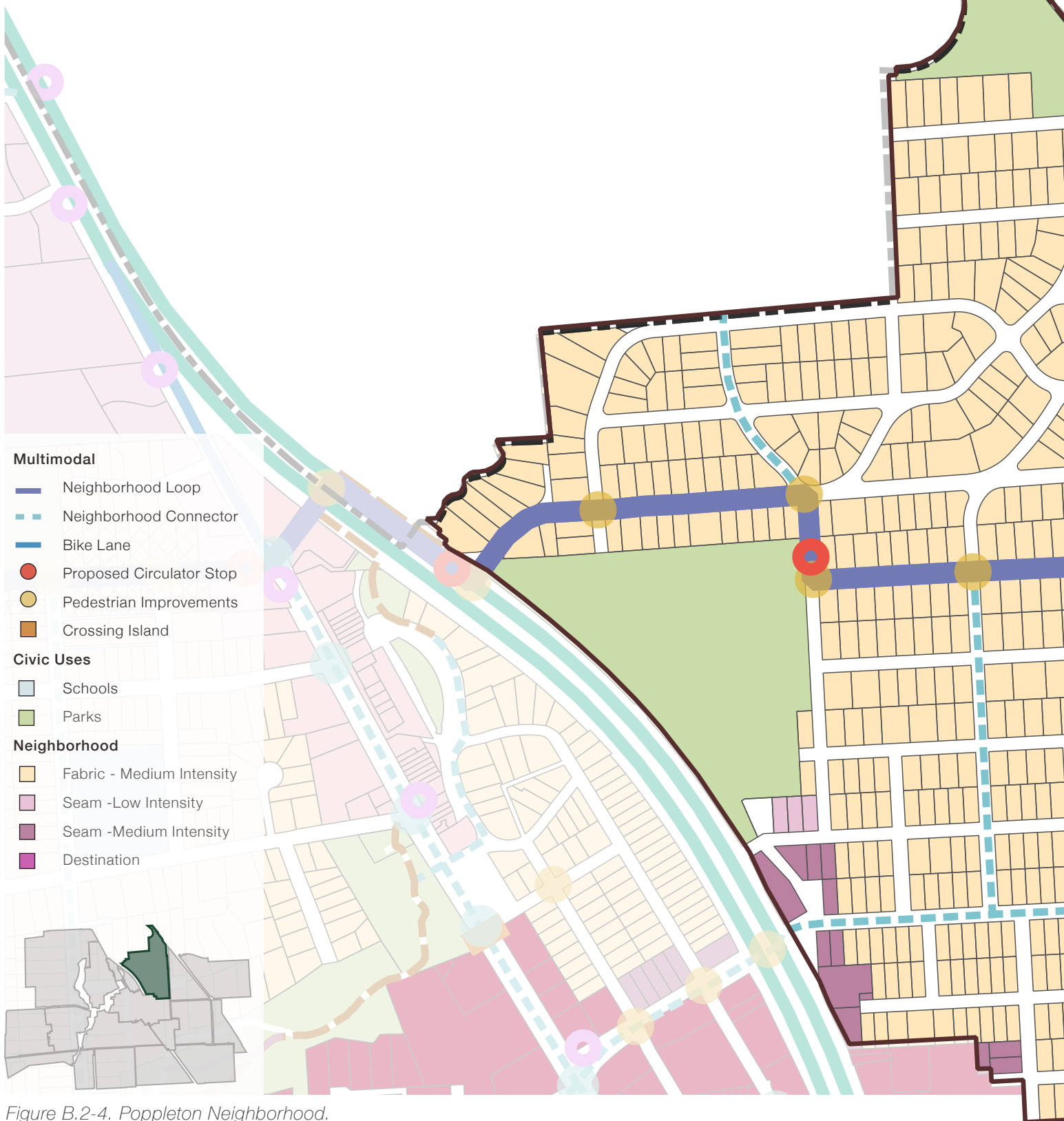


Figure B.2-4. Poppleton Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

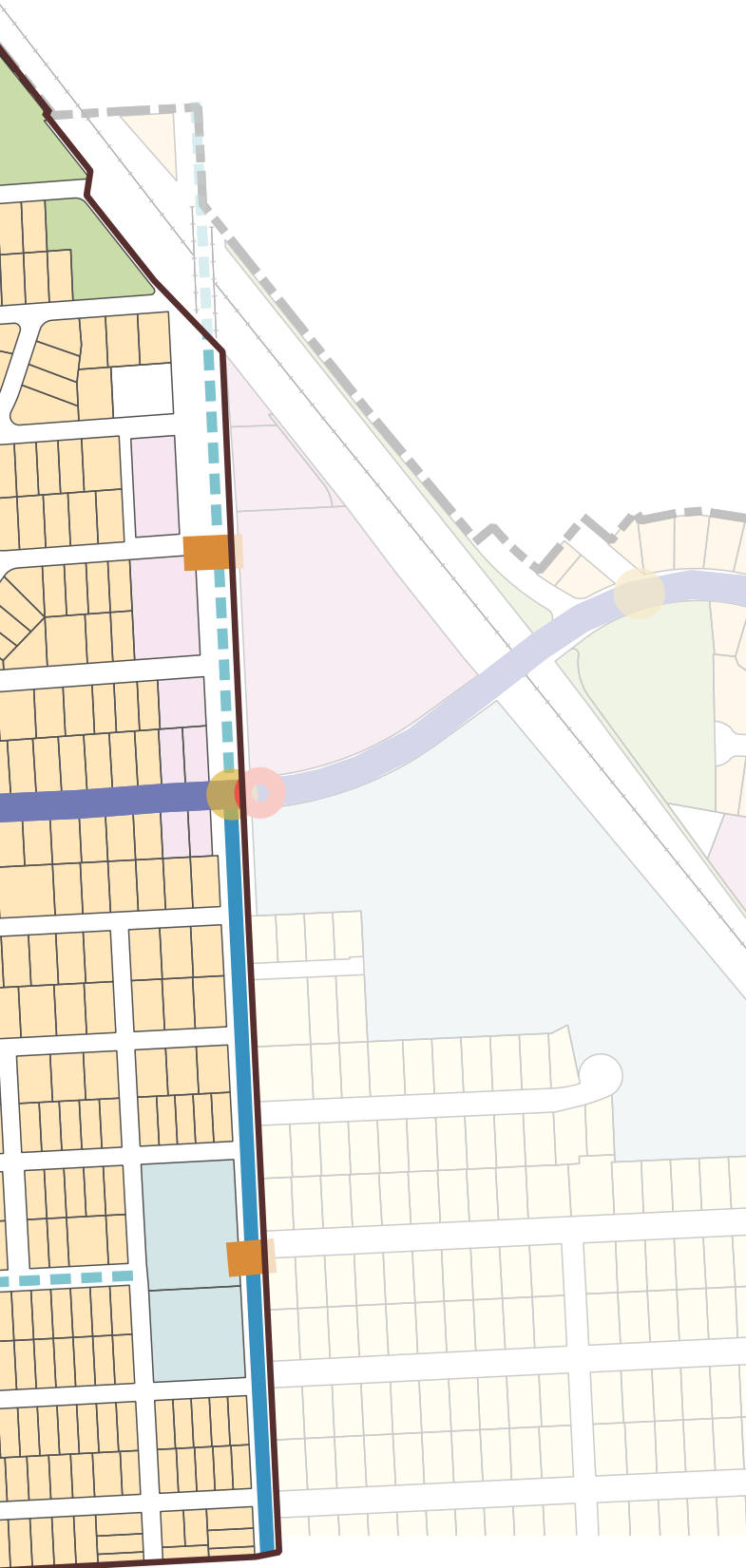
Poppleton

Small block sizes and the persistence of the housing stock from 1910-1930 and the 1950s distinguish Poppleton Park from other neighborhoods in Birmingham. Lot widths ranging from 50- to 70-feet, 30- to 40-foot front setbacks, 25 percent lot coverage and a mature tree canopy contribute to a comfortable park like setting throughout the neighborhood. Related block densities range from three to four homes per acre with an overall density just below the city average of 3.3 homes per acre.

Most of the homes are two-stories with detached garages. Stylistically, there are several unique home designs, but craftsman-style homes are prevalent in the south part of the neighborhood and brick colonials are common in the north. Streets are slightly narrower than the city's average for yield-streets and there is a noticeable proportion of unimproved streets. A small collection of multi-family buildings line Adams Road highlighted by the Wallace Frost designed Wimbleton Terrace. Maples comprise a majority of the street trees however locusts are present in the post-war development.

Poppleton's eponymous park along Woodward contributes 15-acres of open space and recreation while Manor Park and Adams Park ensure nearly all residents are within a 5-minute walk of recreational amenities. Neighborhood commercial destinations are located on the southern border, which transitions to Downtown. Two schools on Adams Road provide civic destinations, shared with the Derby neighborhood. Poppleton Park is a very walkable neighborhood due to its location and amenities.

Poppleton Park mirrors the city's average neighborhood size of 180-acres, within which there are 1,360 residents living in 510 households. There are 2.68 persons per households and just over 40 percent of the households have children. The median age is just one year over the Birmingham figure at 44.6 years and 84 percent of adults are college educated. The median income is \$150,900 and the median home value is \$540,000.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans



Figure B.2-5. Derby Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

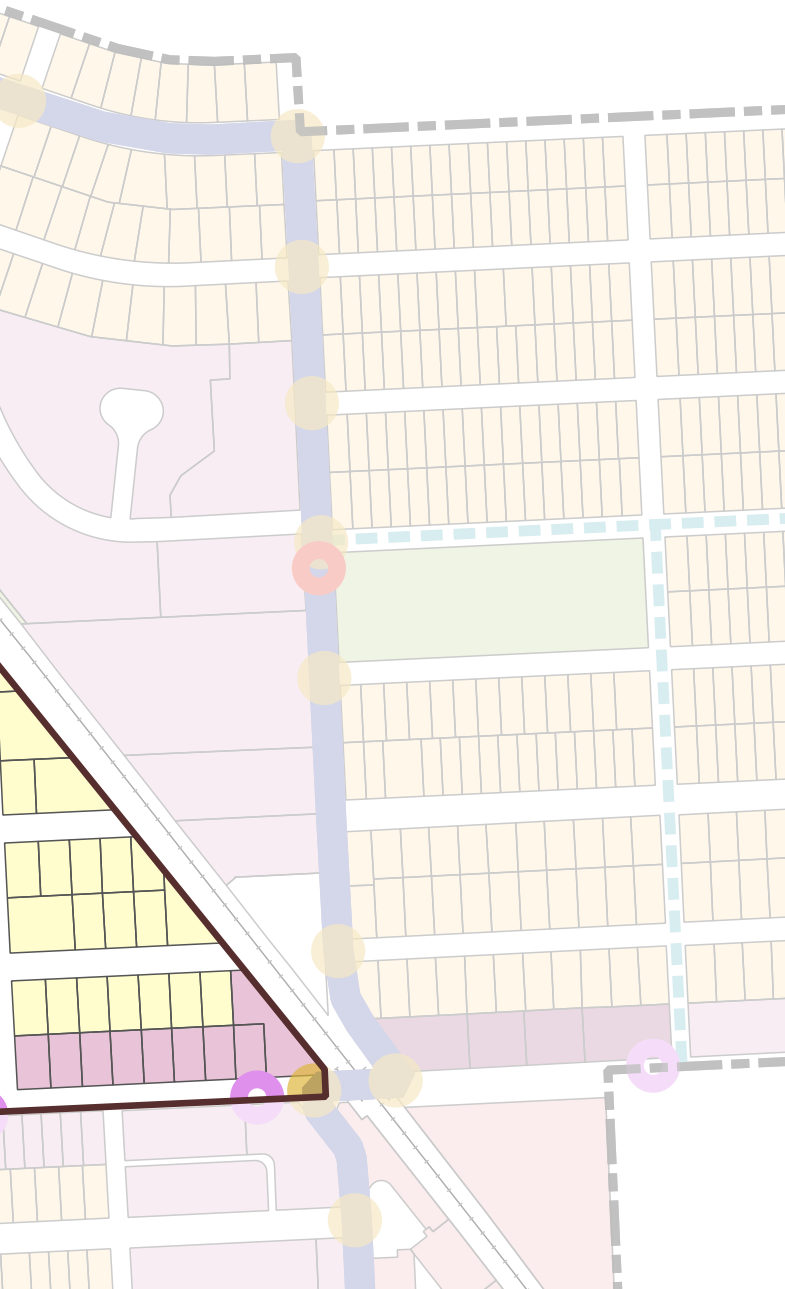
B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Derby

An assortment of home sizes and styles populate a fairly consistent 80- to 90-foot wide lot structure in the Derby neighborhood. In general, the homes are newer in the northern half of the neighborhood, although most decades since the 1910s are represented on the 350-feet by 870-feet blocks. Mostly two-story colonials with attached garages, newer homes deviate in style but approximate the neighborhood's 20 percent lot coverage. Locust is the most common street tree.

Anchored by Derby Middle School and the surrounding park space, the remainder of the neighborhood is residential. North of Derby, 1960s era multi-family adds apartments and condominiums to the housing stock. Westboro Street is unique to the neighborhood and city with front-loaded garages and no sidewalks. While there is open space at Derby Middle School, much of it unstructured field and not particularly accessible to the neighborhood. The nearby eastern Maple Road commercial area serves as Derby's neighborhood destination, shared with Poppleton Park and transitioning to Downtown.

There are roughly 750 residents of the Derby neighborhood living in 320 households for an average density of three homes per acre. Thirty percent of the homes have children and the median age is just over 46 years. The median home value is \$570,000 afforded by median household incomes of \$156,000. Just over 86 percent of the neighborhood's adults have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans



Figure B.2-6. Pembroke Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

- School
- Cemetery

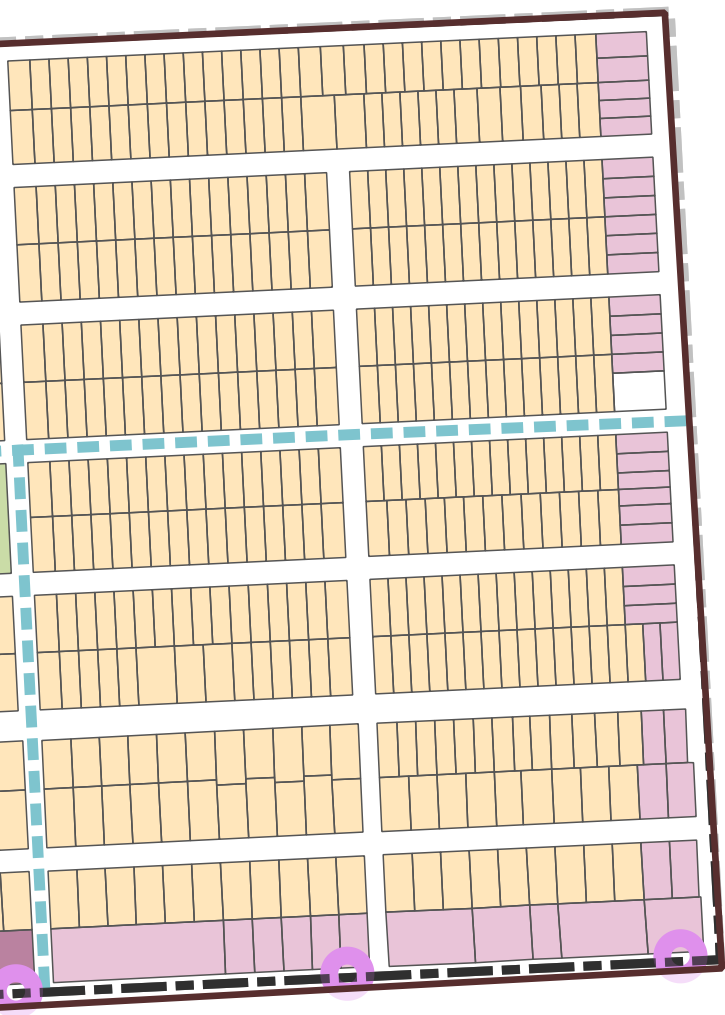
Pembroke

A consistent 320- by 850-foot block grid, predominantly 50-foot wide lots and one of the largest concentrations of multi-family housing result in Pembroke Park being one of Birmingham’s most dense neighborhoods at 5.6 homes per acre. Mostly a post-war neighborhood, bungalows abound and evenly spaced maple street trees create an idyllic setting. An increasing amount of homes are being replaced by contemporary homes and a fair number have had second stories added; detached garages are the norm.

Most daily needs can be satisfied within a mile of most residents, though walkers and cyclists are required to brave the busy intersections of Maple and Eton and Maple and Coolidge, or the busy Adam’s road via Derby. A small commercial strip on the western edge features a cafe, market, pizza shop and cleaners while national retailers Whole Foods, Target, Kohl’s and Home Depot are south of Maple Road. Somerset Mall, the region’s premier mall is at most one mile from the majority of homes.

The six-acre Pembroke Park is a centrally located recreation destination. Derby Middle School, located in the adjacent neighborhood, is easily accessed via Derby Road which crosses the railroad. Coolidge Road, the eastern boundary of the neighborhood provides convenient access to regional transportation routes, combined with Maple Road the neighborhood has the most consistent public transit access in the city.

The second most populous neighborhood, 2,150 residents call Pembroke Park home. An average of 1.85 persons per household, the lowest rate outside of downtown, live in the neighborhood’s 1,140 households. The median age of 41.5 is just below the city’s average and 23.2 percent of the households have children. Nearly 68 percent of adults are college educated and the median income is \$84,000. One of the more attainable neighborhoods in the city, the median home value is \$300,000.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

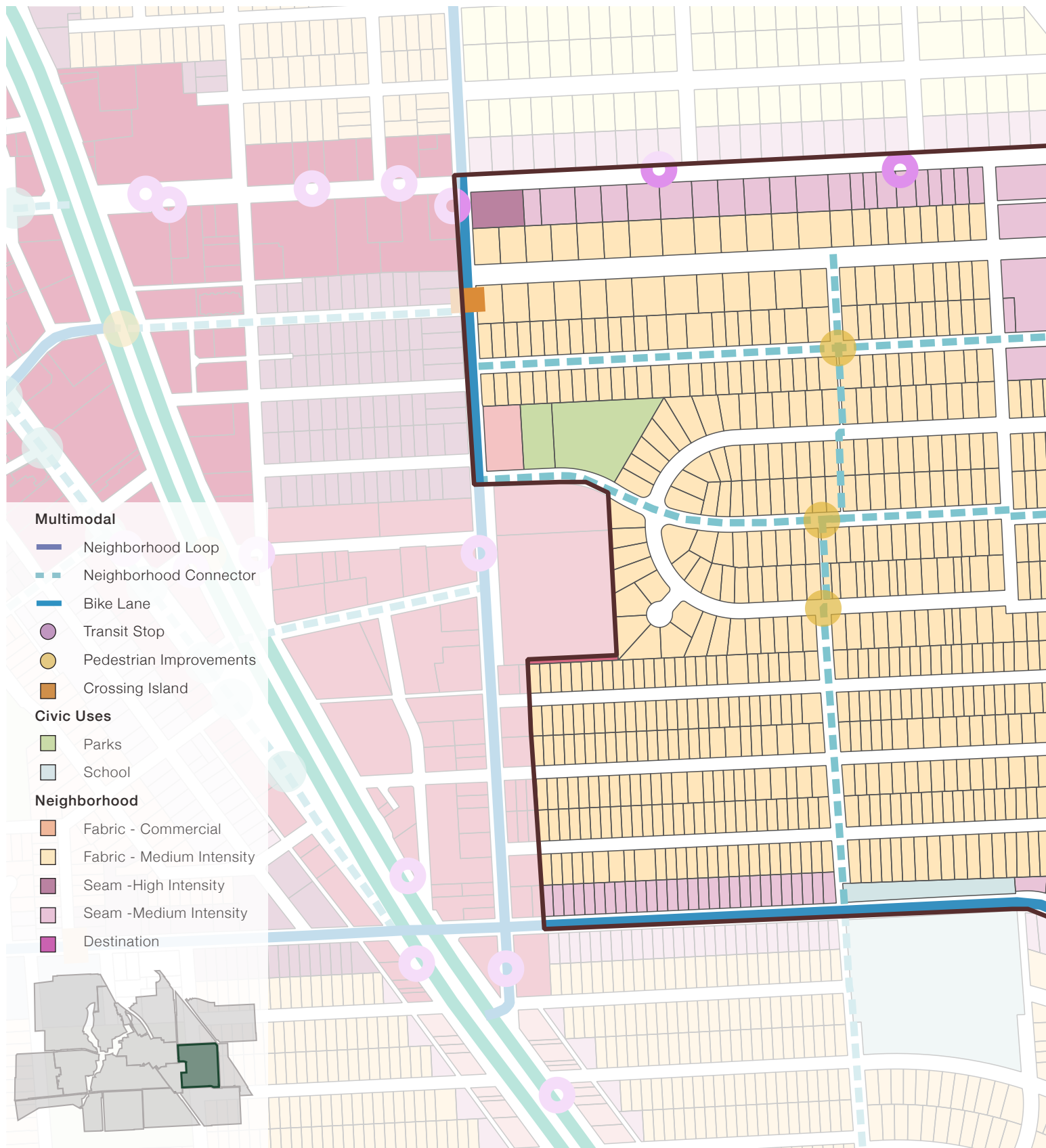


Figure B.2-7. Torrey Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

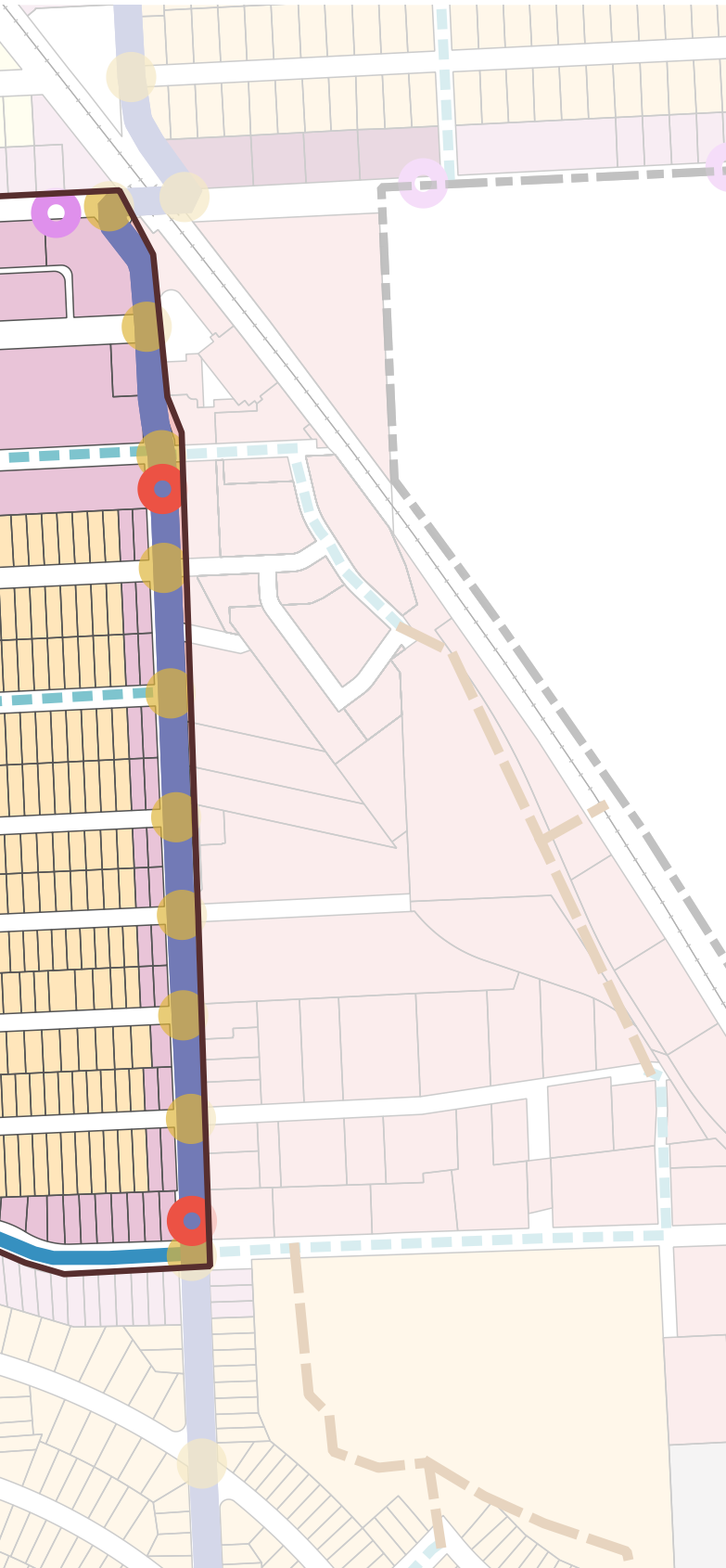
Torry

The most densely developed neighborhood in the city, Torry was initially developed in the 1920s though most homes were built in the 1950s. Containing the highest prevalence of ranch homes, Torry is the most likely neighborhood to find homes under 1,500 sf. The block structure is a nearly consistent 320- by 600-feet with an average of over 5.6 homes per acre; some densely developed blocks exceed seven homes per acre. A notable strip commercial shopping center and the city's post office serve as the neighborhood commercial destinations however additional destinations line the neighborhood's east side in the Rail District. Pembroke Park neighborhood and the eastern portion of downtown are also easily accessible.

Without its own park, Our Shepard Lutheran School and Kenning Park are the primary recreational destinations. While a park was planned for Torry in the 1929 plan, the site became mostly housing along Hazel, Bowers, and Haynes, the present day post office, and the shopping center. Averaging 12 trees per acre, the tree canopy is more developed on certain streets with maples and locusts. Select streets of the neighborhood remain unimproved.

The densest blocks of Torry are between Lincoln and Holland Streets however small footprints maintain a lot coverage hovering around 30 percent. Larger homes, and lots, are more common in the northern part of the neighborhood as well as select corner lots. A few blocks of multi-family housing are dovetailed into the northeastern quadrant.

Just over 2,000 residents call Torry home. An average of two persons live in the 990 households and nearly 40 percent of the homes have children. The median household income approaches \$104,000 and 76.5 percent of adults are college educated. The median home value is \$367,000.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

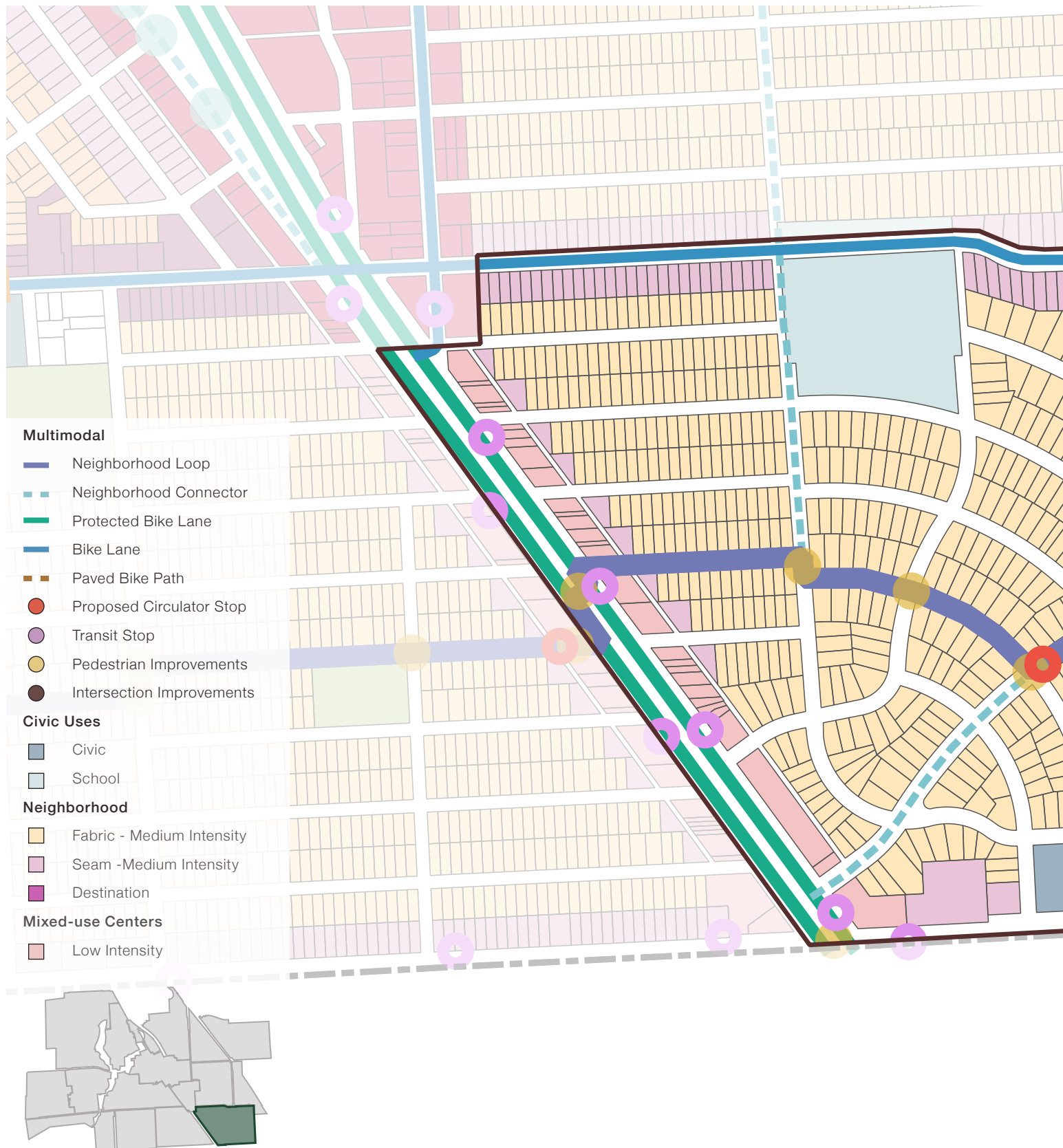


Figure B.2-8. Kenning Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

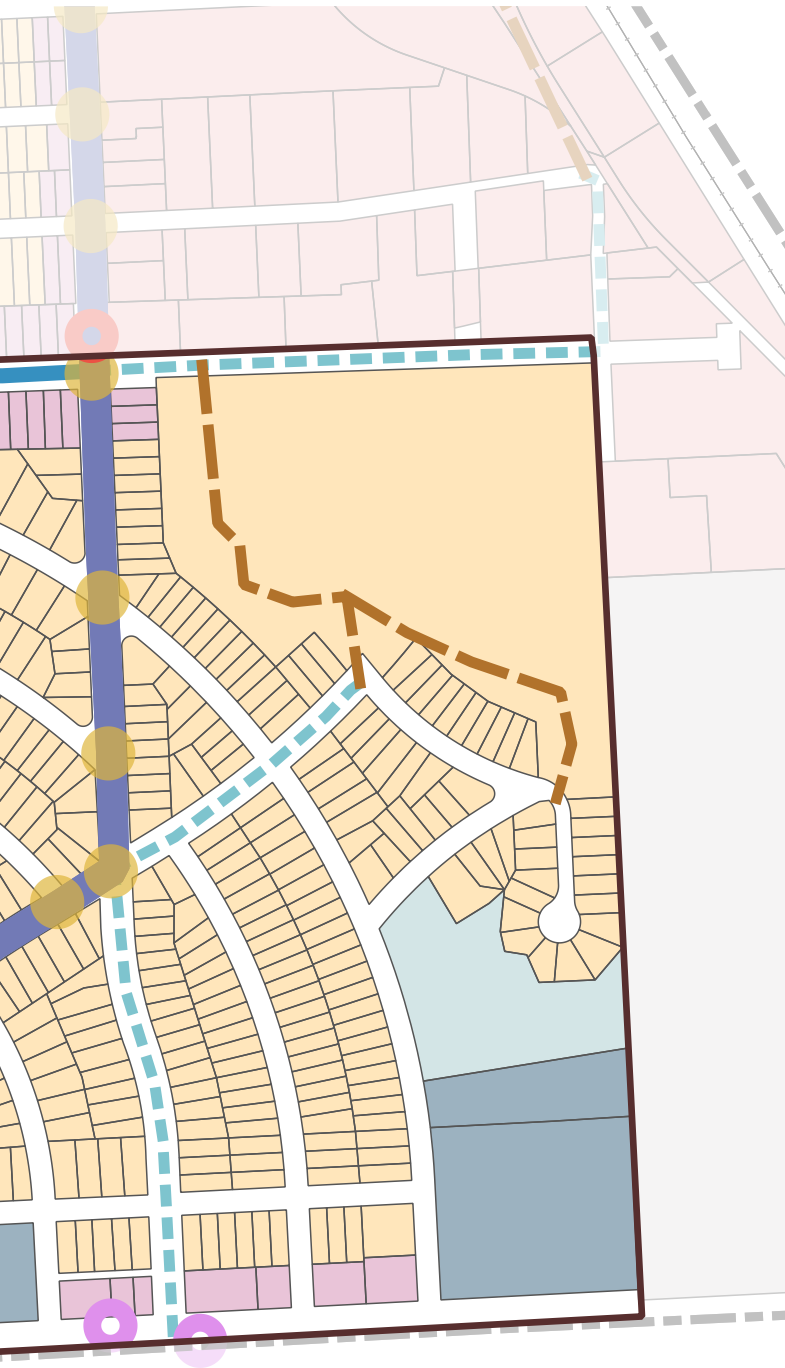
Kenning

Birmingham's southeastern neighborhood is recognized for its curving streets and healthy mix of ranch and bungalow homes with mid-century colonials interspersed. The densest part of the neighborhood is found between Torry Street and Woodward (seven units per acre), though the irregular lot shapes along the curving streets leave the overall neighborhood density near 4.5 homes per acre. The dense blocks are complemented by a higher rate of trees per acre (15). Most homes are 1.5-stories, but the increasing popularity of redeveloped contemporary homes is finding more two-story homes being added to the area.

Bound by Woodward to the west, 14 Mile to the south and the nearby Rail and Triangle districts many residents are within a walkable distance to commercial and service destinations. However, the speed and size of Woodward presents a sizeable barrier. Kenning Park, Our Shepherd Lutheran School and Church, and Eton Academy are the neighborhood's recreational and civic destinations. Eton Street is one of the city's few connections to neighboring Royal Oak.

Homes are uniformly setback 25-feet from the right-of-way and narrow side setbacks create a consistent built fabric. Detached garages are prevalent, and the planter is narrowed by a slightly wider street width influenced by the curving streets. Many streets in the neighborhood are unimproved. The tree canopy is mature and sycamore trees are common. A few small multi-family buildings are mixed into local-serving office on the southern boundary.

Slightly larger than the city's average neighborhood, 1,640 residents live in Kenning's 800 households. Younger than the city, the median age is 37.8 years and just over 56 percent of adults are college educated. The median income is \$98,000 and the median home value is \$282,000 – the most affordable of the city.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

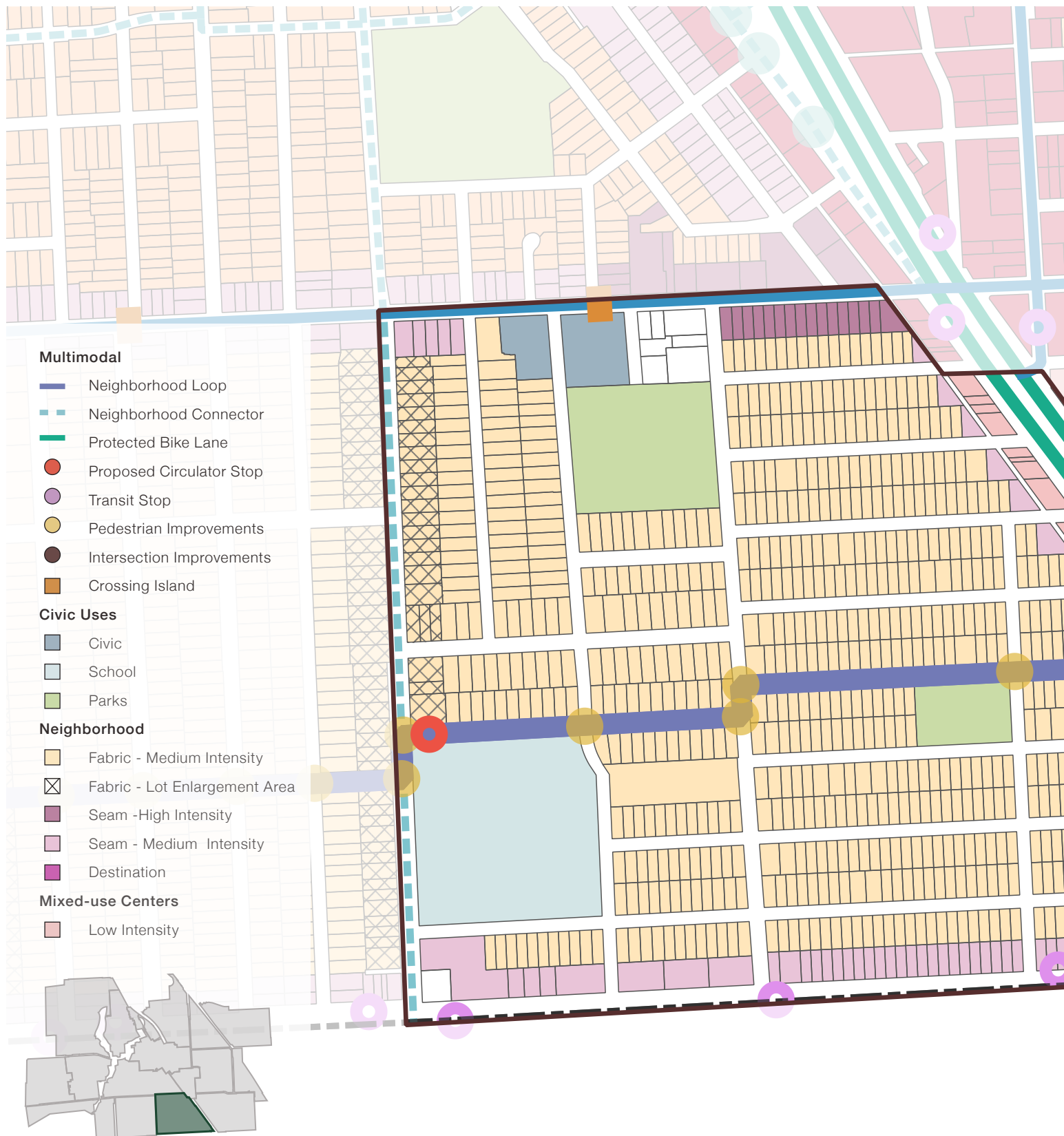


Figure B.2-9. Pierce Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

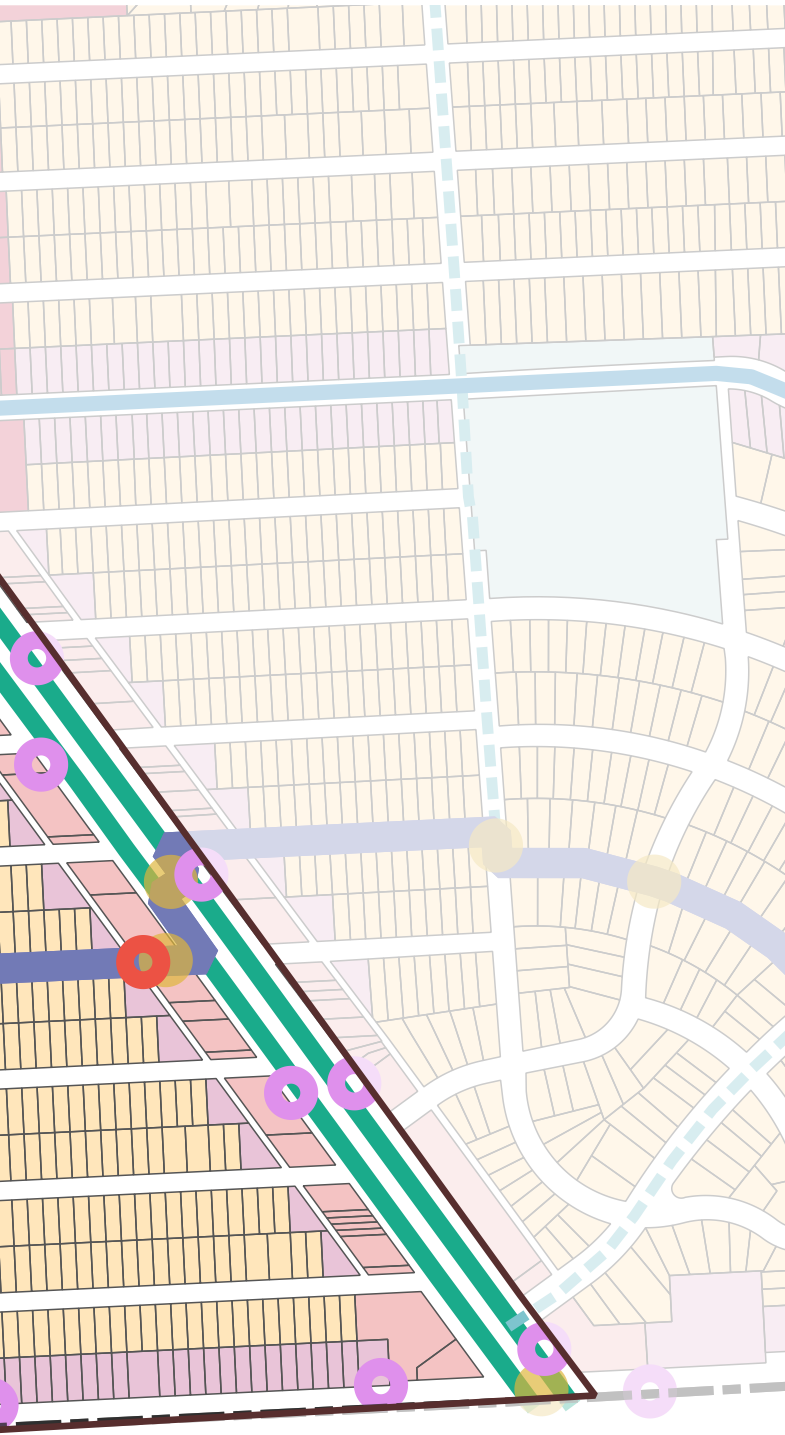
B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Pierce

With the highest incidence of 40-foot wide lots, a fairly consistent 20-foot front setback and narrow streets, Pierce has a distinct urban feel. Originally developed in the 1920s, the majority of homes have been rebuilt within the last 20 years, often doubling in size. Contemporary colonial is the primary housing style, however the diversity of builders and years of construction add considerable variety. Ranches are intermixed with predominantly two-story homes while some homes have opted for a front-loaded garage. Most homes have detached garages, and some have opted to rebuild larger garages with habitable second floors. A few multi-family buildings are integrated into the southwestern quadrant of the neighborhood along 14 Mile Road.

Three parks and the Birmingham YMCA ensure ample recreational opportunities. Retail and service destinations abound on the perimeter of the neighborhood. A small service cluster is located at the intersection of Lincoln and Grant; another retail and service center destination can be found at the intersection of 14 Mile and Pierce; and there are a number of retailers and services along Woodward Avenue. A Baptist church on Lincoln, the YMCA, and Pierce Elementary School are the neighborhood's civic destinations.

Narrow lots and nearly 40 percent lot coverage translate to an above average density of 5.3 homes per acre. Some blocks approach seven homes per acre, but the three neighborhood parks balance overall density from exceeding the levels noted for Pembroke Park, Torry, and Barnum. Similar to those neighborhoods, the population of Pierce is 2,060 with 2.4 persons per each of the 860 households. The youngest of Birmingham's neighborhoods, the median age is 36.9 and 76 percent of adults have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. The median home value is \$500,000 supported by median household incomes of \$142,000.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

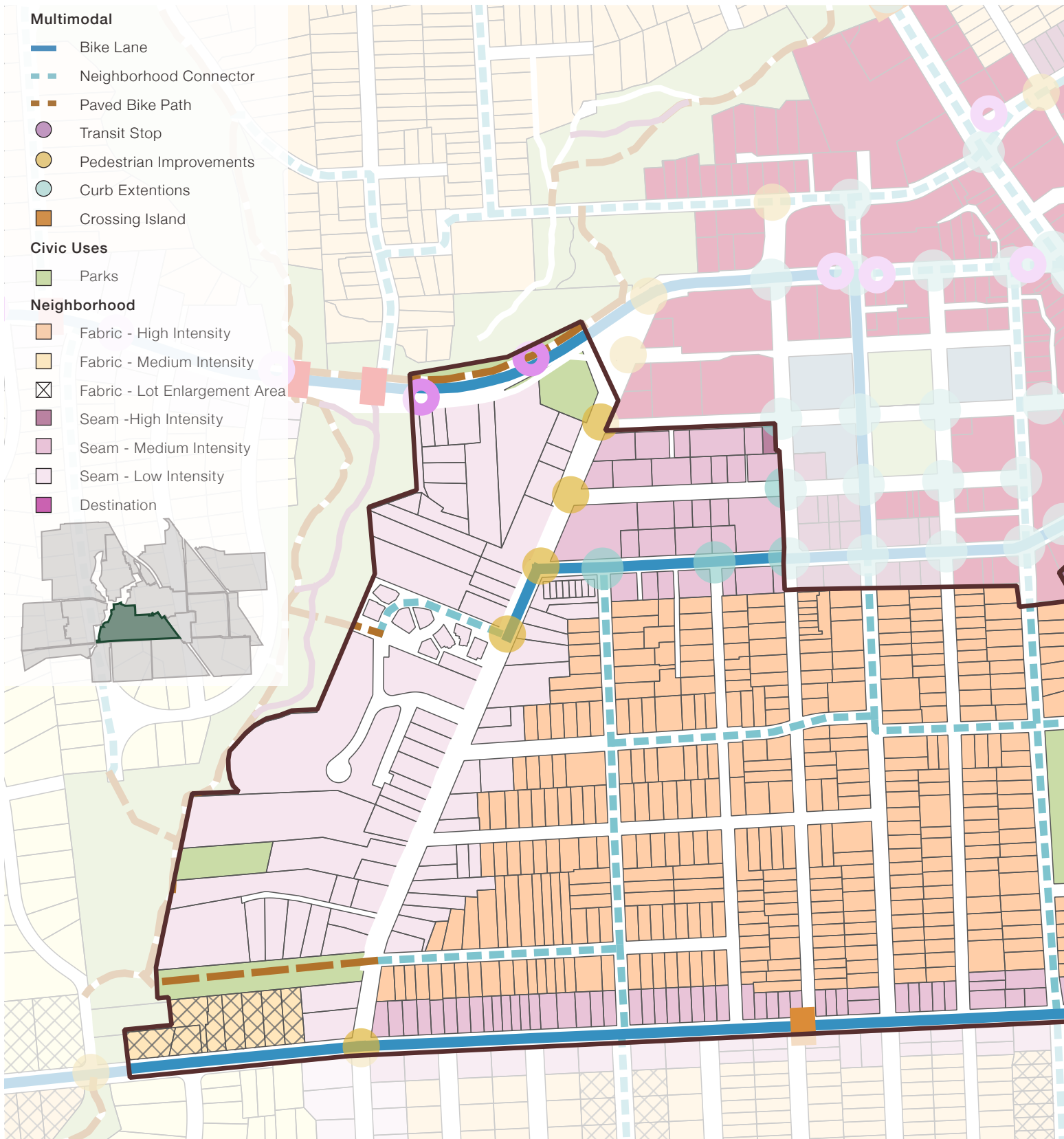


Figure B.2-10. Barnum Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

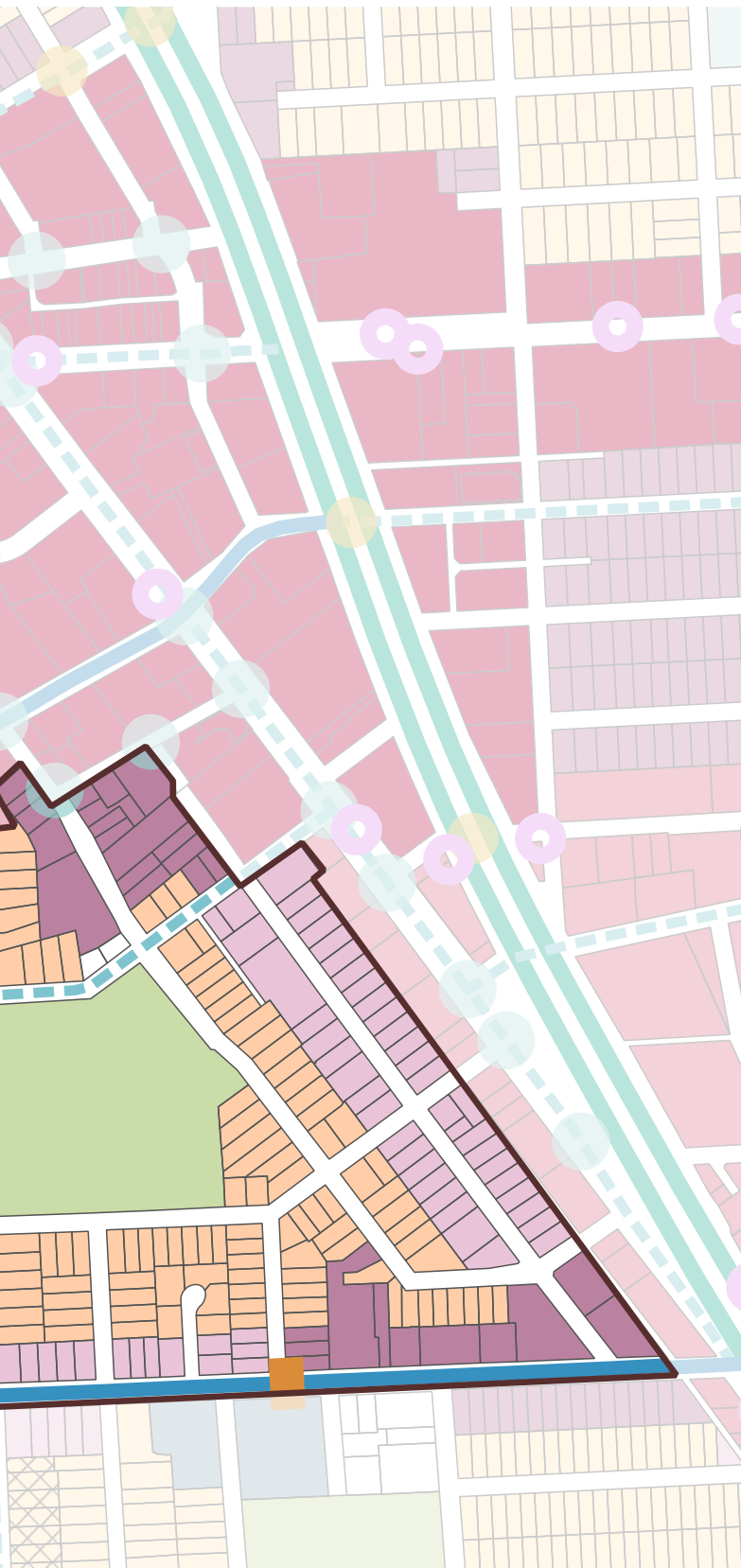
Barnum

An assortment of conditions makes the most accessible neighborhood to Downtown also Birmingham's most eclectic. While many of Barnum's homes have been rebuilt over the last 30 years, styles, lot sizes, disposition and home size all vary. Density is the highest in the eastern half and drops off by the Rouge River where estate homes are common though many estates have been redeveloped. Multi-family and townhomes occur in the areas closest to downtown, although there are several instances of small-scale multi-family buildings integrated alongside single-family homes.

Barnum Park is the primary recreational amenity however residents can easily access Downtown's Shain Park, the Birmingham YMCA and the Pierce neighborhood parks. While there are few commercial or service destinations within the neighborhood, the proximity to Downtown and Old Woodward ensure that many daily tasks could be accomplished on-foot if desired.

Lots average 50- to 60-feet in width but there are some as narrow as 35-feet and several instances of lot combinations result in lots wider than 100-feet. Lot coverage approaches 40 percent and front setbacks range from 20- to 30-feet. Side setbacks are limited to a few feet wider than needed to accommodate a driveway. Barnum has a high incidence of front-loaded garages though detached and side- or rear-attached are also common. A mature neighborhood with notable private landscaping, the average tree density approaches 20 per acre.

Effectively as dense as Pembroke Park and Torry thanks to the number of multi-family buildings, 1,770 residents live in Barnum's 920 households for an overall density of 5.6 homes per acre. In the older quartile of Birmingham neighborhoods, the median age is 49.4 years and just under 20 percent of households contain children, the lowest percentage in the city. Over 75 percent of adults are college educated with a median household income of \$130,000. Buoyed by 30 years of newly built homes, the median home value is \$584,000, third highest in the city.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

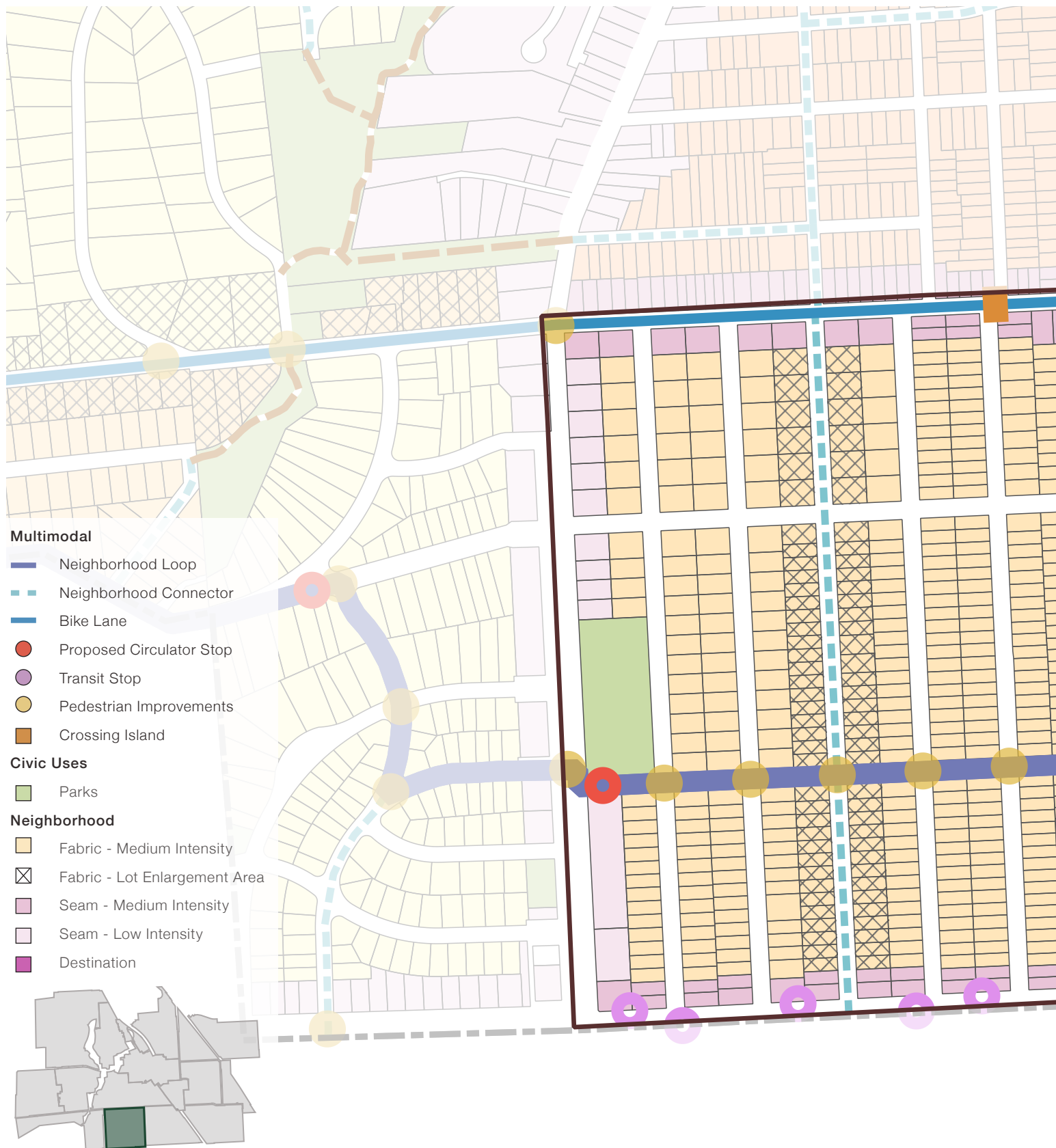


Figure B.2-11. Crestview Neighborhood.

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Closely resembling Pierce to the east and Barnum to the north, Crestview is more consistent in block size and lot dimensions. Largely constructed in the post-war boom of the late-40s and 50's, most lots approximate 50-feet in width; 75- and 100-foot lots are common in the northern blocks of Shipman, Birmingham, Maryland and Stanley Boulevards. A majority of homes have retained their mid-century vintage but an increasing number of rebuilds have occurred in the last five years.

Crestview Park is on the neighborhood's western edge and Pierce and Barnum Parks are within a comfortable walking distance for residents on the eastern half of the neighborhood. A small convenience commercial strip is in the southeastern corner of the neighborhood and contains a market, bakery, cleaners, salon and dance studio. Another market is located adjacent to the neighborhood's southwestern corner. There are no internal civic destinations, though the Pierce Elementary School and YMCA are nearby.

Similar in number to Barnum, 1,760 residents live in Crestview; however the number of households is notably lower (660) owing to a higher persons per household figure of 2.6. As such, 39 percent of households have children and nearly 84 percent of adults are college educated. The median household income is \$140,000 and the median home value is \$543,000.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans



Figure B.2-12. Birmingham Farms Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

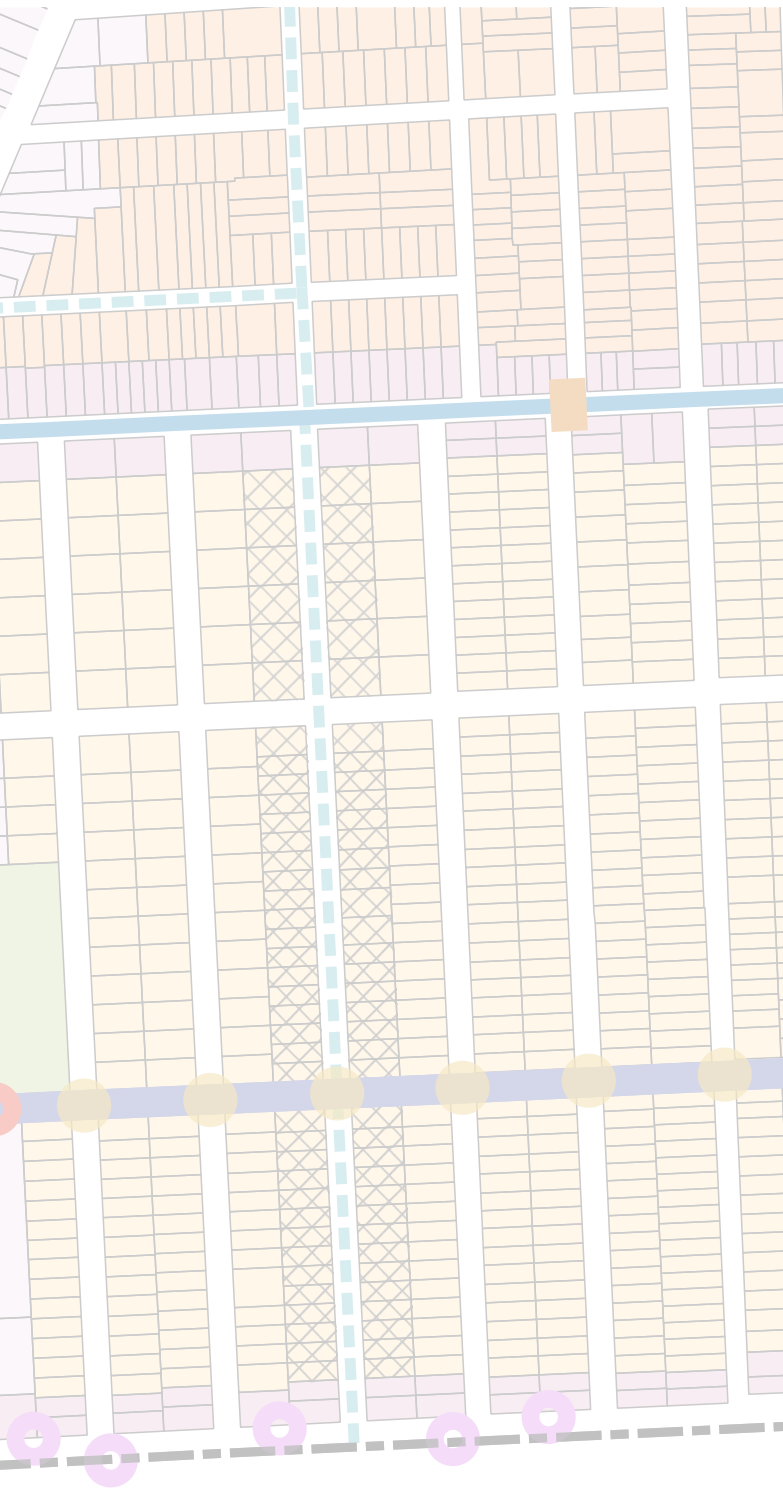
B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Birmingham Farms

Half the size of Crestview with less than a third of the population, Birmingham Farms is characterized by large homes on large lots. Mostly constructed in the 1950s on curvilinear streets, Birmingham Farms projects the most suburban setting of Birmingham's neighborhoods. A majority of the streets are unimproved, and sidewalks are typically only on the edges of the neighborhood. Colonials and bungalows are most common and lot coverages are frequently less than 20 percent.

Generous setbacks and yards take the place of public recreation destinations; however, Crestview Park is easily accessible, and the Linden Park trail is just to the northwest of the neighborhood. Pumphouse Park is a little-known playground park hidden at the termination of Wakefield Street. A market and salon are located in the neighborhood's southeastern corner - a little over a half-mile walk from the farthest neighborhood resident. A series of multi-family buildings buffer Birmingham Farms from Southfield Road.

In total, there are 530 residents and 200 households in Birmingham Farms. The average household size is 2.66, and 37 percent of the households have children. The median age (46.7) is five years higher than the Crestview neighborhood. The median income is \$166,000 and nearly 78 percent of adults have earned a bachelor's degree. Birmingham Farms homes occur at a rate of 2.7 homes per acre and their median value is \$489,000.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans



Figure B.2-13. Lincoln Hills Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

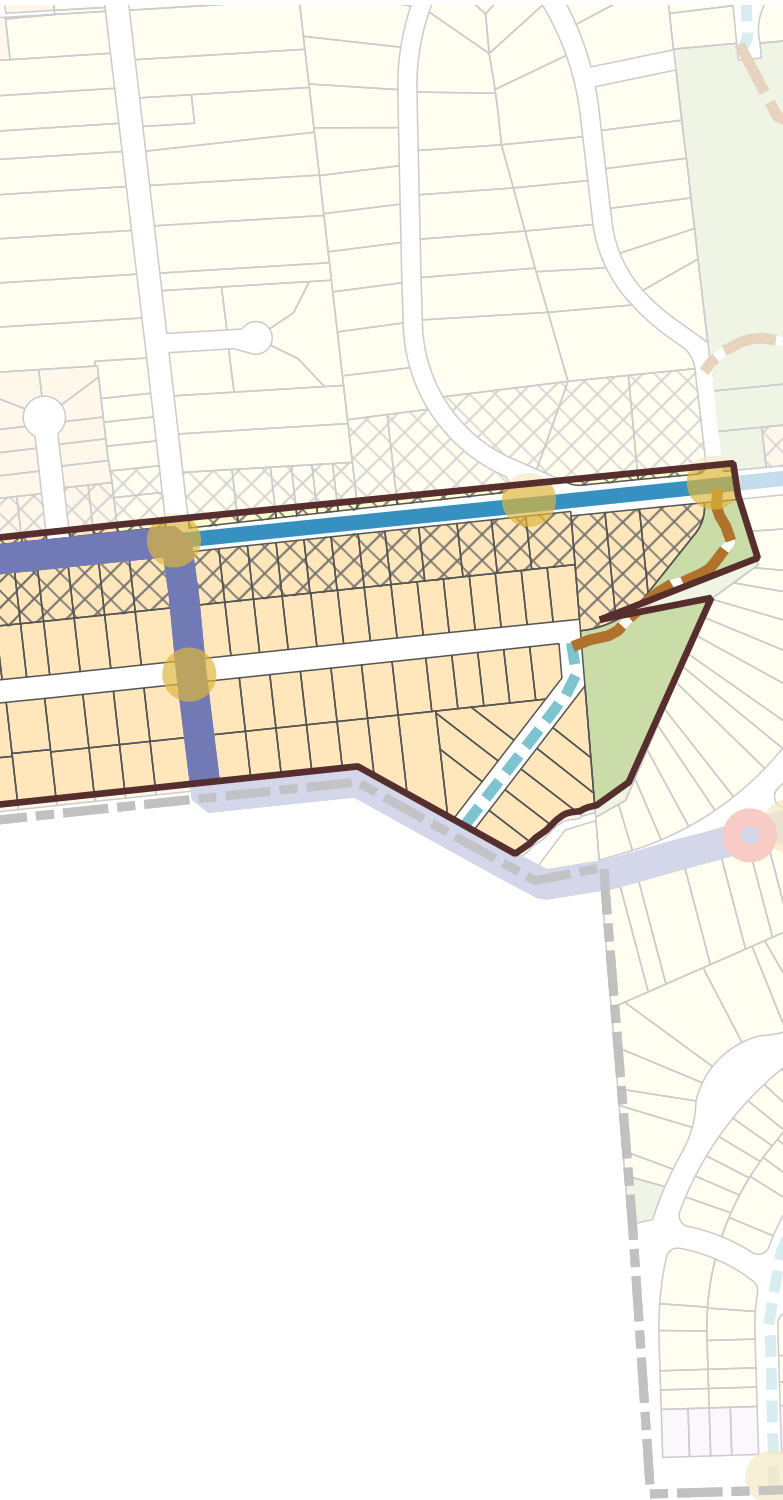
B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Lincoln Hills

The second smallest neighborhood by area, Lincoln Hills is a little larger than Birmingham Farms. While oriented towards the Seaholm neighborhood, Lincoln Street presents a significant barrier. Unique in its own right, Lincoln Hills is defined by its relationship to the Birmingham Country Club to its south and the Lincoln Hills Golf Course to its east, which influence the names of neighborhood streets like Fairway Drive and Golfview Boulevard. The neighborhood includes a variety of house types and lot sizes but is typified by consistently deep front setbacks, particularly along Northlawn Boulevard facing the Birmingham Country Club.

Lincoln Hills shares neighborhood recreation destinations with Seaholm: the West Lincoln Well Site, Lincoln Hills Golf Course with a dog park and the high school. The neighborhood is entirely unserved by neighborhood commercial and civic destinations.

With the exception of Fairway Drive, most neighborhood streets are unimproved. Sidewalks are limited to Lincoln Street and along Pleasant Ave. Houses are a mixture of historic homes, especially along Lincoln Street, mid-century homes throughout, and a few newer homes along Hillside Drive.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

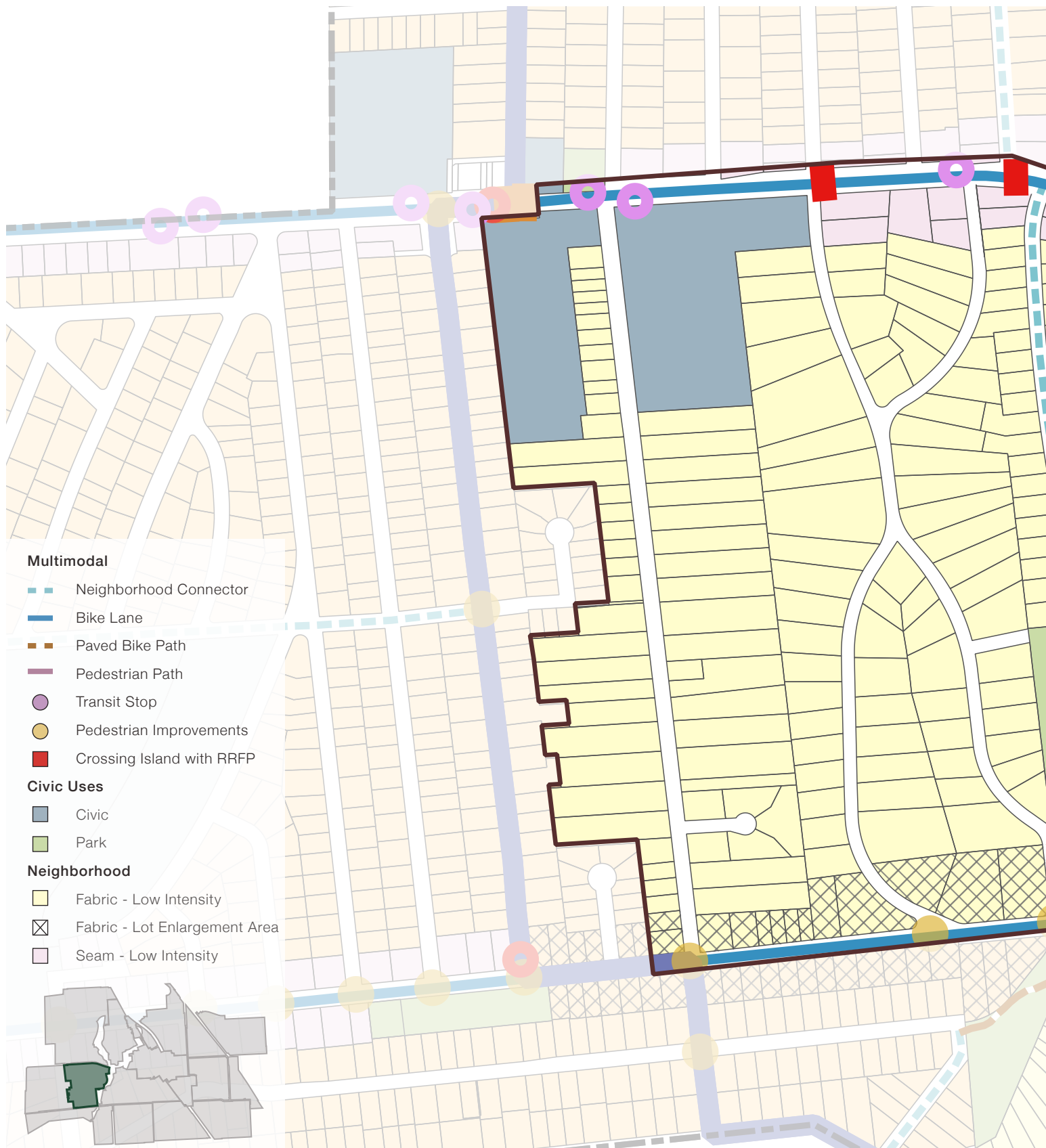


Figure B.2-14. Linden Neighborhood.

B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

Linden

Birmingham's least dense neighborhood, Linden's lot sizes range from 10,000 sf to more than two-acres. First settled in the 1920s, homes from every decade can be found. The homes represent a variety of styles and sizes, but most could be described as custom estate homes. Setbacks range, by block, from 30- to 75-feet. Despite the large lots, lot coverage ranges from 15 to 35 percent, an indication of the size of the homes. Irregular in shape, the streets wind through often without sidewalks. Linden is home to the curious unimproved streets which are curbed but not paved.

Linden Park and the Linden Park Trail offer access to a large forest preserve along the Rouge River. The trail also serves as a connection to Quarton Lake, with options to connect to Booth Park and Downtown. Two churches along the neighborhood's Maple Road edge serve as the civic destinations. The small commercial strip located in the Quarton neighborhood provides the commercial destination for this neighborhood.

There are an estimated 520 residents of the Linden neighborhood. Living in 180 households, the average density is just 1.25 homes per acre – a little more than a third of the city average. Nearly the oldest neighborhood, the median age is 50.8 and 79.3 percent of adults are college educated. More than 35 percent of the homes have children for an average household size of 2.91, the highest in the city. The median income is \$200,000 and the median home value is \$686,000, the second highest in the city behind Quarton.



B. Neighborhoods

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

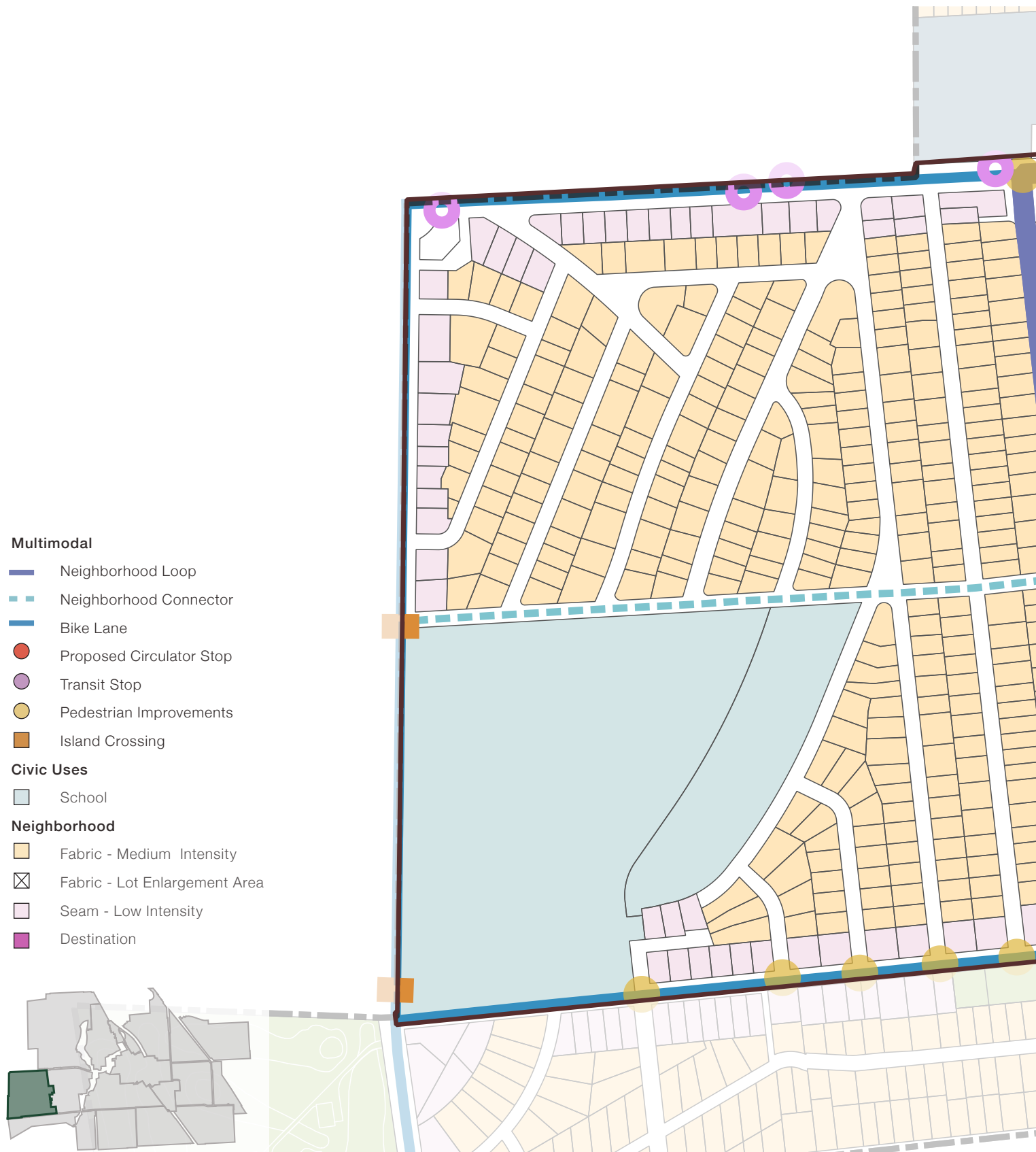


Figure B.2-15. Seaholm Neighborhood.

B.2. Neighborhood Plans

The second largest neighborhood by area, Seaholm occupies about 10 percent of the city. Anchored by Seaholm High School, which occupies about 15 percent of the neighborhood, the overall density is the third lowest in the city (2.4 homes per acre). Most lots are 60- to 70-feet wide and lot coverage averages between 25 and 30 percent. Colonials new and old are the majority housing style but bungalows and ranches are also common.

The West Lincoln Well Site, Lincoln Hills Golf Course with a dog park and the high school are the neighborhood recreation destinations. A small collection of buildings at Cranbrook and Maple is the neighborhood's commercial destination but many residents are within walking distance of the Quarton commercial strip at Chesterfield and Maple. The high school, an early childhood center, and Next (an active seniors center) are the civic destinations.

Streets are mostly improved with sidewalks but there are exceptions. The tree canopy is mature with some areas benefiting from more than 20 trees per acre.

Seaholm's 650 households contain 1,720 residents at an average of 2.65 persons per household. The median age (46.4) is older than the city figure by three years and almost 40 percent of households have children. The median household income is \$173,000 and the median home value is \$530,000.

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C. Mixed-use Districts

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.1. Districts in General

Districts in General

Mixed-use districts are an extremely valuable asset for Birmingham, generating a great deal of the tax base necessary to support the City's services and activities. Downtown performs very well in a competitive market, and has become a regional draw, just now succumbing to a bit of office competition with Detroit. But many of the City's other mixed-use and commercial areas are underperforming. Luckily most of these areas have been set up with future plans but many of those plans have been around for awhile. The City should work to invigorate its underperforming mixed-use districts to see more robust future success and resiliency.

Housing is an important element in mixed-use districts. In Birmingham, housing is nearly or entirely missing from its commercial centers, which impacts their performance and ability to provide a diverse set of services and price points. Each of these districts should develop into a neighborhood, different from the City's single-family neighborhood. During the round-table discussions at the outset of this plan process, a number of residents lamented that Downtown didn't provide services that they need, like small markets, and that the price point of restaurants and goods was trending upwards towards being unattainable, especially for older adults on fixed incomes. Some aspects are addressed with Neighborhood Commercial Destinations, specifically markets and services. But these and other trends in Downtown are due in part to the lack of housing, an important issue to consider for all mixed-use

districts. Combining offices, services, and housing means that a district can be busy day and night, which provides a more robust customer base. Restaurants are especially vulnerable; despite perception, the business is relatively low margin and heavily influenced by rental cost. During the master plan process, Downtown has lost two reasonably priced restaurants that are important for office and service workers.

Most of Birmingham's mixed-use districts need to see public investment in order to drive private investment. In Downtown this process has been successful, but there is a reluctance to do the same for the Triangle District / Haynes Square and the Rail District. Both of these areas require public investment in streets, public space, and parking in order to jumpstart private investment. While many residents feel that neighborhoods have drawn a short straw concerning City investment, putting money into underperforming mixed-use districts, and helping these and downtown households will result in more money to invest in neighborhoods. Mixed-use districts are an important investment.

Mixed-use districts are an extremely valuable asset for Birmingham, generating a great deal of the tax base necessary to support the City's services and activities.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.1. Districts in General

District Differentiation

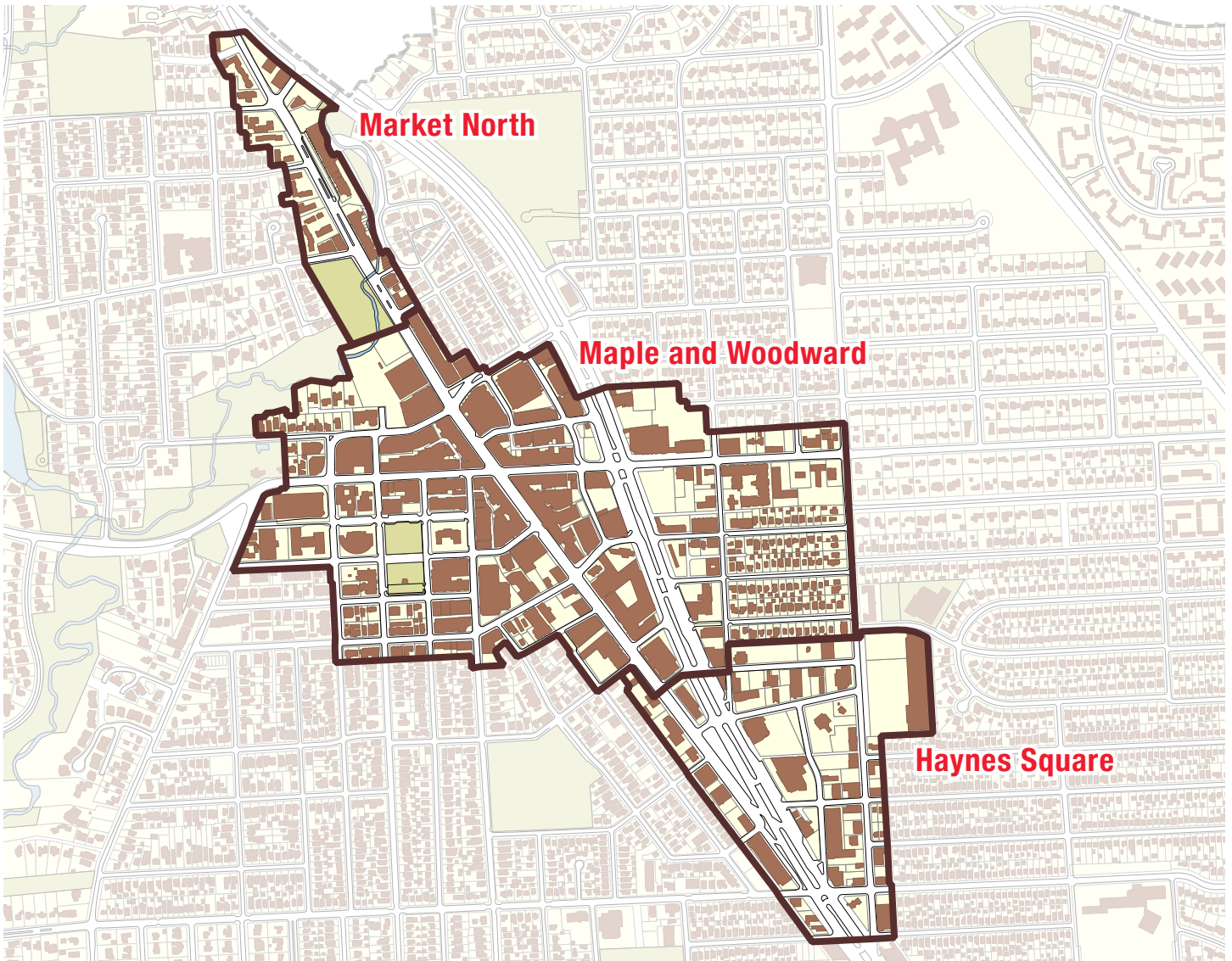


Figure C.1-01. Three districts of Downtown Birmingham.

OBSERVATIONS

The Triangle District and portions of Downtown are under-performing. The boundaries of these districts reinforces the Woodward divide. And Downtown's size exceeds the distance that a single identity can support.

These three districts are discussed as the Greater Downtown, which combines and re-defines the areas currently known as Downtown and the Triangle District.

DISCUSSION

Much of this has been discussed in Chapter A, Vision. There, the need for a distinction between the northern, central, and southern portions of Downtown is clarified. Also discussed is the ability of district boundaries to bridge the Woodward divide.

Beyond that which was discussed in Chapter A, the South Woodward Gateway and the Rail District need clear identities that are reinforced with signage and marketing. Details of these districts are provided later in this Chapter.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.1. Districts in General



Images C.1-02-C.1-04. Wayfinding signage. Business directory signage on the left, general wayfinding at center, and dynamic parking wayfinding on the right.

The Birmingham Shopping District markets for Downtown and its services are needed elsewhere in the community. To begin, the differentiation between Market North, Maple and Woodward, and Haynes Square should be supported in shopping district efforts and materials, and needs to be reinforced with signage. These three districts are discussed as the Greater Downtown, which combines and re-defines the areas currently known as Downtown and the Triangle District. Many Downtown visitors include tourists and out-of-town shoppers who are unfamiliar with its business selection (See Img.'s C.1-02-03), parking locations, or street layout. When expanding to multiple districts, this signage is especially important to orient visitors. Overall, signage is lacking throughout the Greater Downtown area, from wayfinding for parking access to civic institutions and business directories. Each district should have clear signage which is consistent in the information provided but differentiated by district.

Parking signage is especially important as the City deals with extremely high occupancy of its Downtown garages. Presently many of the City's parking garages operate at 99% of capacity (See Fig. C.1-05). The few garages that consistently have available spaces - the Chester and Pierce Garages - are further from the core shopping and office area. While North Old Woodward, Park, and Peabody garages all operate above 90%, visitors are not aware of capacity and other district garages. New technology exists which can inform users of available capacity throughout an area, but much of it is unattractive, like the signage in use currently in Ann Arbor. Yet there is a minimal and elegant solution available (See Img. C.1-04) which directs users to the nearest available capacity. This signage should be piloted in Downtown and spread to the City's other mixed-use districts once parking investments are made.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.1. Districts in General

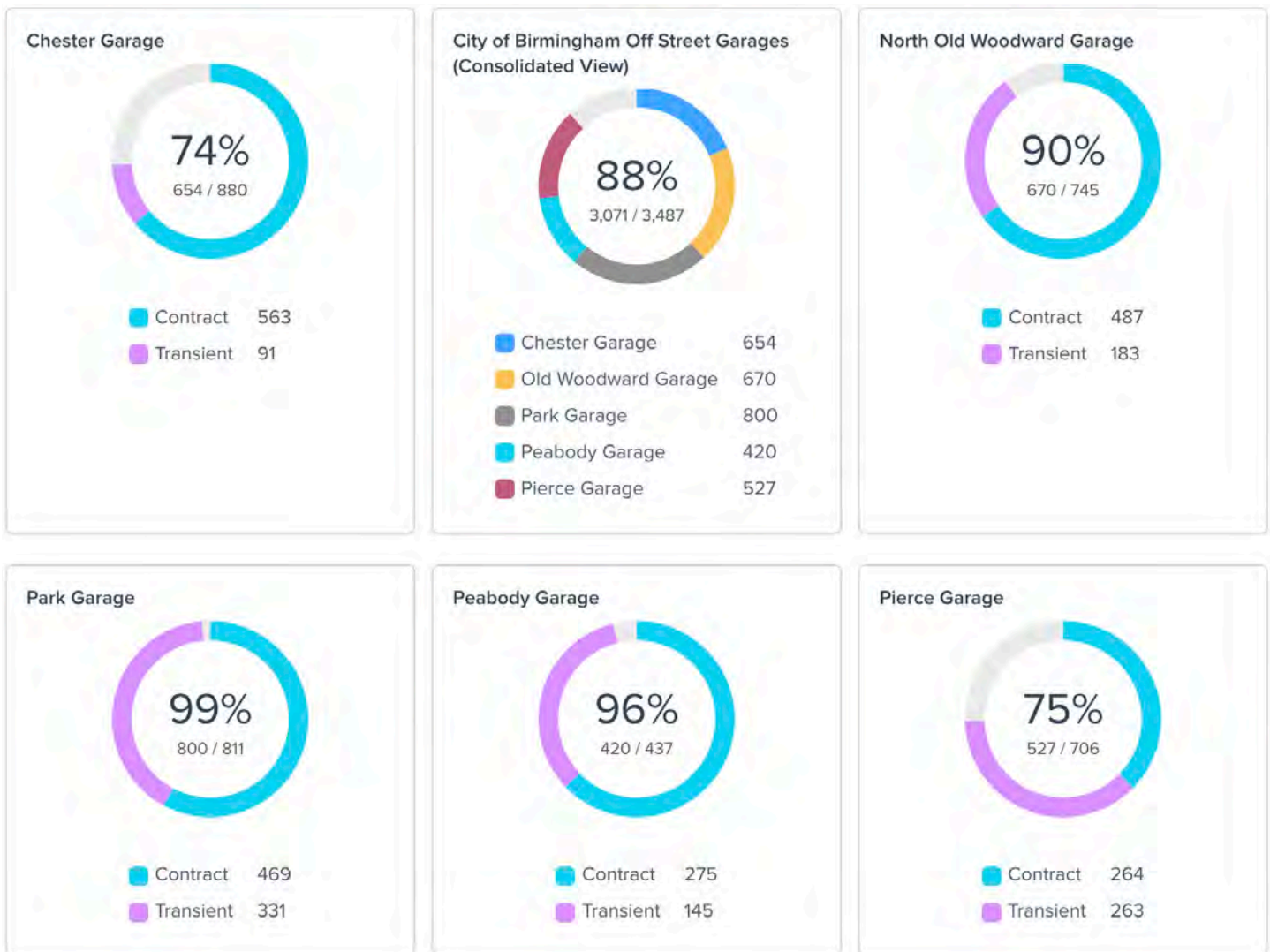


Figure C.1-05. Sample: Capacity usage of downtown parking district garages in early summer at 1pm on a Monday.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Release an RFP to brand the City's multiple mixed-use districts, especially concerning signage and wayfinding, but extending also to elements of the streetscape like tree grates, lights, trash and recycling cans, and public art themes like the recent popcorn painting of a utility box on Old Woodward at the theater.
2. Define, sign, and market three distinct Downtown districts: Market North, Maple and Woodward, and Haynes Square. (as identified in Chapter A)
3. Install business directory and way-finding signage for pedestrians and cyclists throughout all shopping districts, beginning with Maple and Woodward, Market North, and Haynes Square.
4. Install smart and elegant parking wayfinding signage in Downtown.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.1. Districts in General

Zoning

OBSERVATIONS

Zoning is inconsistent across the City's mixed-use districts despite similarities in what is being regulated.

DISCUSSION

This follows on the discussion about zoning in Chapter A, extending its recommendations.

Birmingham's zoning districts are a combination of regular districts along with overlay districts that act like regular districts. This issue was already raised, where the present overlays should be regular districts since they operate as such. Overlays are applicable for implementing small scale changes to the regular districts for specific issues like contextual use restrictions or step backs that may not be necessary in other areas with the same zoning district.

Additional confusion is caused by multiple districts regulating very similar things, adding to the number of overall districts. This problem is paramount in the City's mixed-use districts. Downtown's zoning districts are very similar to the Triangle District's zoning districts. And the MX zoning district in the Rail District is similar as well. For clarity and consistency, these districts should be collapsed into as few districts as are necessary. This is just as important for residents to understand what is possible with the current Zoning Code as it is for developers and property owners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. As part of a Zoning Code overhaul, collapse zoning within the City's mixed-use districts into as few zoning districts as can meaningfully regulate the intent of the Code and the City's plans.

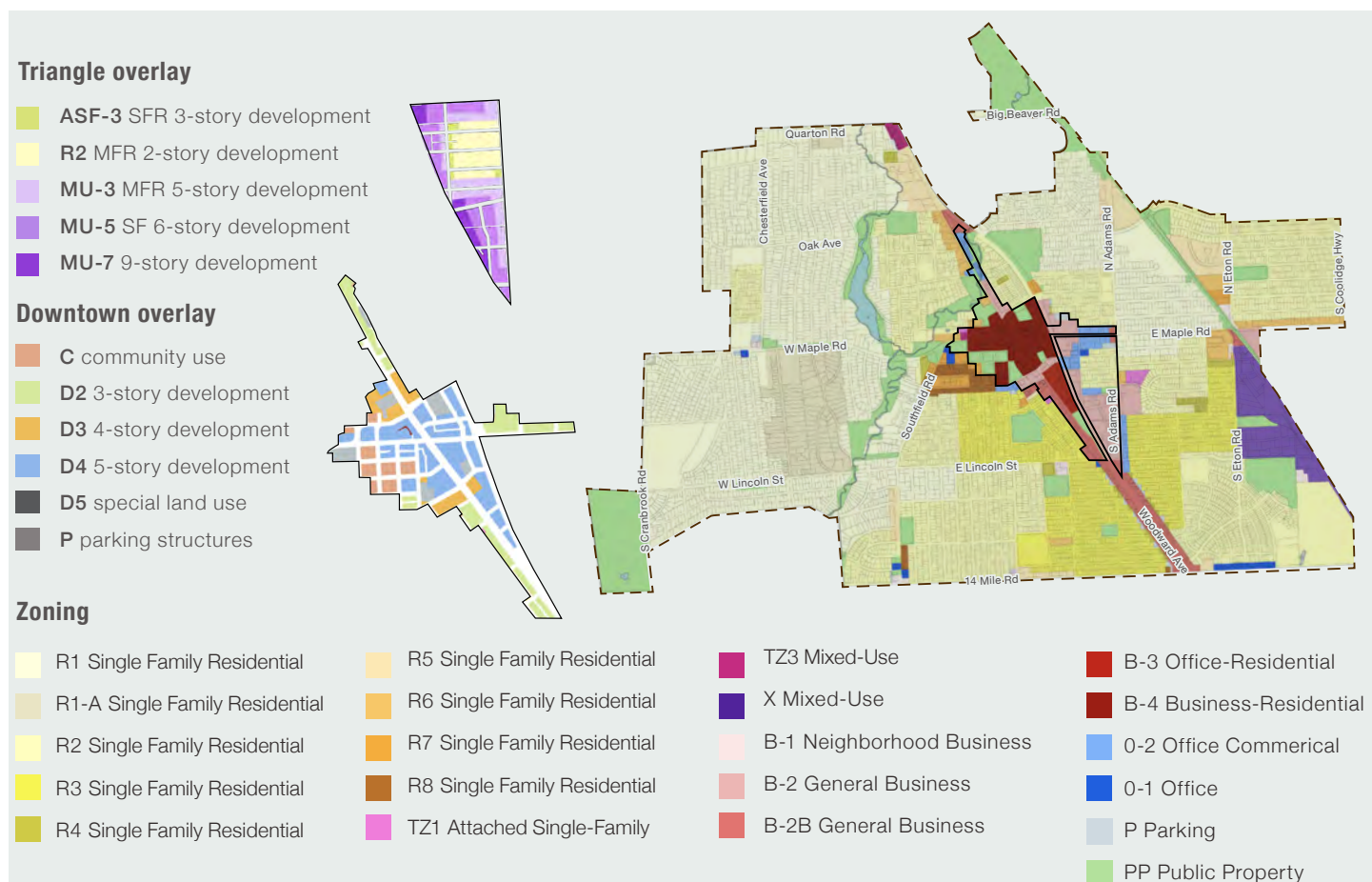


Figure C.1-06. Zoning Districts.

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C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

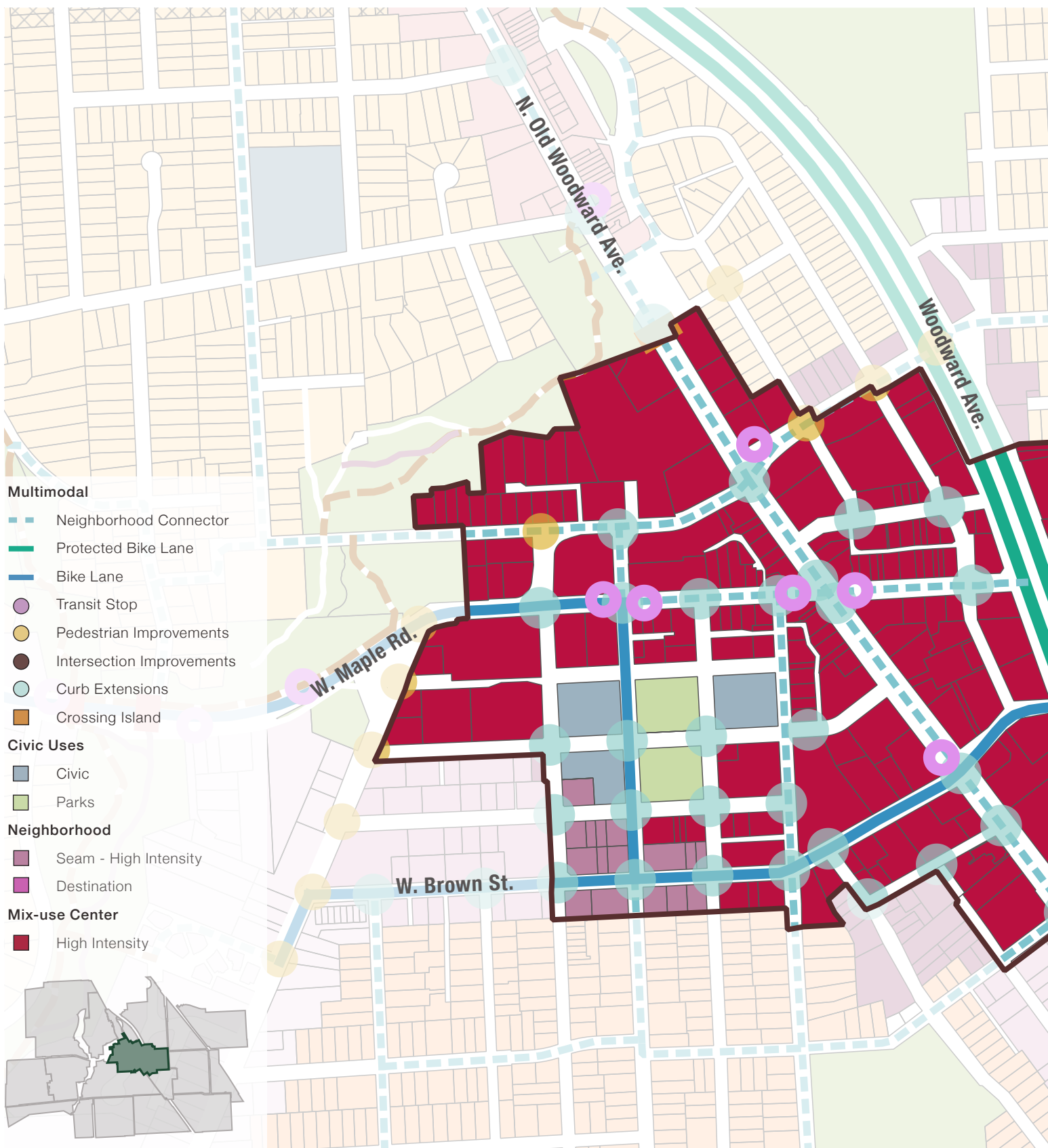


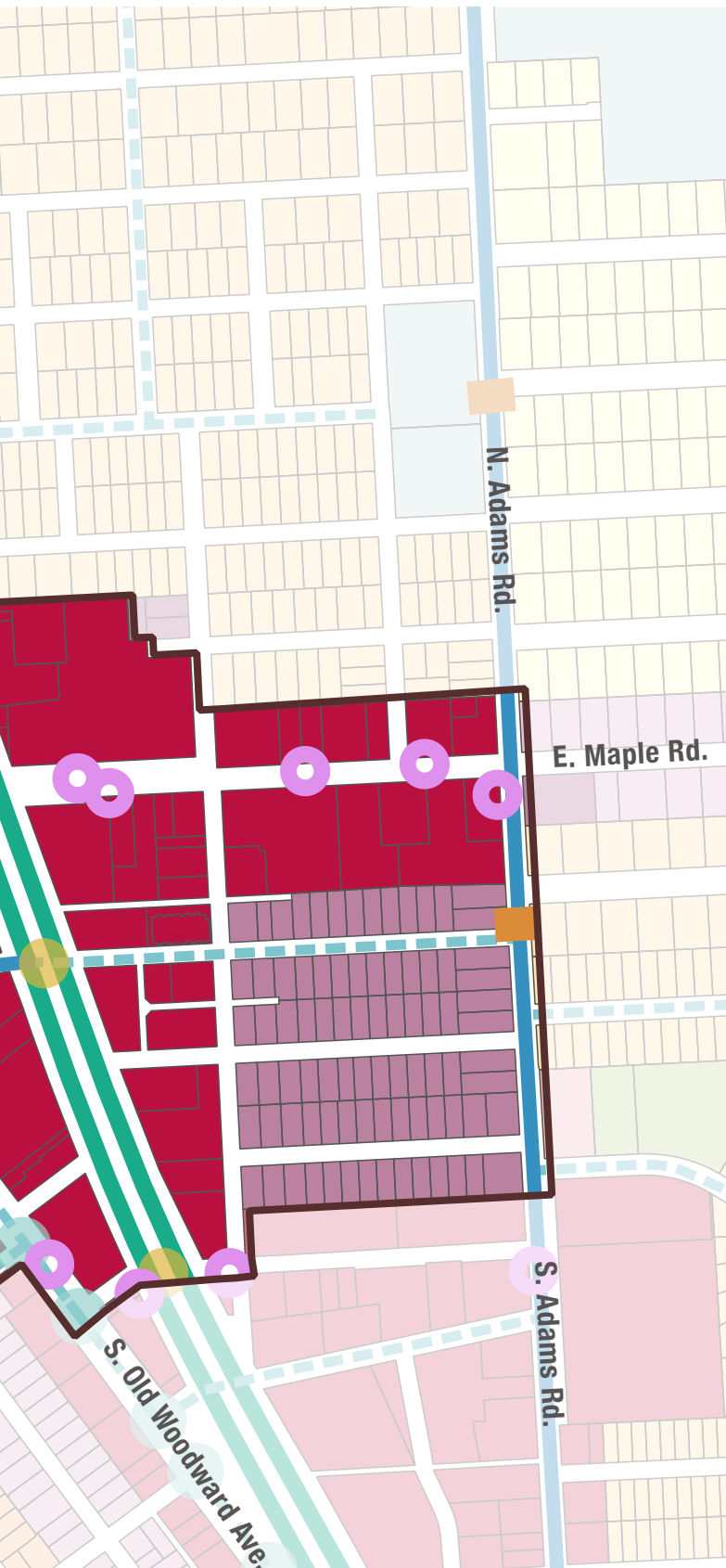
Figure C.2-01. Maple and Woodward district.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

Maple and Woodward

Maple and Woodward (Downtown Birmingham) is a vibrant urban center that is the envy of many other communities. Although its population is only 21,000, Birmingham has a commercial core the size of a city of 200,000. The city's assortment of shops, restaurants, parks, offices, civic buildings, and entertainment venues offers an exciting, safe, and walkable environment and lifestyle to its residents. It also draws people from throughout the region. Until downtown Detroit's recent revival, Birmingham served as a shopping and dining destination for many of the region's five million people. It was the "go-to" downtown. Like any dynamic urban center, Birmingham continues to address and resolve challenges, such as affordability, conflicting commercial and residential interests, rapid growth, municipal administration, adequate parking, and effective traffic management.



C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

Street Life

OBSERVATIONS

Given downtown Birmingham's walkability and scale of commercial presence, the city has only a moderate amount of weekday pedestrian traffic. During the week-ends Birmingham's downtown pedestrian traffic although busier than most day times, has noticeably fewer visitors than Royal Oak and Detroit's central business districts.

DISCUSSION

Most downtown sidewalks are lined with active retailers and restaurants, but many downtown workers remain in their office buildings the entire workday and do not venture onto the street for morning, noon, or evening dining or shopping. In the U.S., most "brick-and-mortar" shopping occurs after 5:00 pm and on Sundays, when many of Birmingham's stores are closed. During the summer,

In the U.S., most "brick-and-mortar" shopping occurs after 5:00 pm and on Sundays, when many of Birmingham's stores are closed.

the busiest evenings downtown and in the Market North district are Friday and Saturday between 5:00 pm and 9:00 pm. During these hours, restaurants are usually the only businesses operating, along with the theaters. The lack of downtown housing contributes to weak pedestrian activity levels.

Old Woodward, between Hamilton and Merrill Streets, West Maple and Pierce Streets carry the most pedestrian traffic, the core of the Maple and Woodward district. Hamilton Row is severely impacted by Comerical Bank which causes a dead zone of nearly 350 feet at the critical



Image C.2-02. Maple and Old Woodward intersection during the Hometown Parade (2019).

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

intersection of Hamilton and Old Woodward. There are three scales of street in the Maple and Woodward district, Old Woodward being the largest followed by Maple and then smaller streets like Merrill.

Smaller streets are ideal for intimate dining experiences with outdoor seating which generally want to avoid busier streets, as is found along Merrill and Pierce. These streets can also handle a more varied consistency of storefronts due to their closeness. However, the sidewalk is easily crowded to the point of becoming unusable by the prevalence of dining decks. Merrill provides a good opportunity to pilot a downtown shared space street, which reduces but does not eliminate the car accommodations and allows dining areas and public seating to extend further into the street during evening hours. Paving generally in the character of Merrill through Shain Park. Connecting the active portion of Merrill to Shain Park would improve the

pedestrian experience, though it is made difficult by the surface parking lot at City Hall and relatively poor frontages along the Townsend Hotel. Liner buildings along the municipal building could activate this connection, requiring some of the City Hall parking to be relocated. Continuing the shared space design on Merrill from Old Woodward to Shain Park would solidify this pedestrian experience where pedestrian movement, clusters of public seating, public art, and bike racks would displace but not eliminate space for cars.

The outside seasonal dining decks proposed in the 1996 master plan (Downtown Birmingham 2016) have successfully expanded the downtown's afternoon and early evening street life. Many restaurant decks occupy prime on-street parking spaces for over six months of the year. The popularity of these decks has increased the demand for downtown parking at the same time that their implementation



Image C.2-03. The dining deck at Dick O' Dow's leaves insufficient sidewalk space.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

has decreased the number of parking spaces available to both diners and shoppers. Many of these decks reduce the sidewalk width such that it is barely usable. Few bike facilities exist and bikers and micro-mobility users often ride along sidewalks, creating dangerous conditions at the dining decks. Often a single deck causes little disruption but longer decks and multiple decks together are problematic at the same time that they create a better dining experience. Solutions should include greater minimum sidewalk dimensions associated with decks and streetscape updates to provide more space for sidewalks and outdoor dining in the public realm where possible. But these opportunities are limited given the need to retain on-street parking. This will require limiting the number of decks per restaurant and per block. Opportunities to provide a smaller number of outdoor tables within the streetscape planting zone without fencing should be further explored.

Old Woodward, being the largest and most trafficked roadway, requires the greatest consistency and quality

of storefronts, with more transparency than the smaller streets. The new streetscape is an improvement for pedestrians, but at present it lacks adequate public seating. In fact, throughout the Maple and Woodward area, and in other mixed-use districts, public seating is lacking.

Throughout the area, pedestrian street lights are often nonfunctioning or function intermittently, an absence of safe, sufficient lighting that occurs on nearly every street. Bike parking and micro-mobility corrals are also lacking throughout the district. As micro-mobility has yet to become a concern locally, addressing bike parking should come first, but micro-mobility will arrive soon. Bike parking needs



Image C.2-04. Old Woodward following the recent streetscape redevelopment.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

to be provided throughout the district, but especially in areas that are busy in the evening and weekend. Racks are most easily accommodated in bulb-outs at intersections where they can be installed perpendicular to the curb, accommodating 3 or 4 U-racks. Cyclists prefer to keep an eye on their bikes if they are dining, which should influence the availability of racks. Preferring locations in bulb-outs, including at mid-blocks, may help reduce cyclist riding on sidewalks.

Currently, the Redline Retail District requires adjustment to reflect evolving conditions (See Fig. C.2-05). The disciplined application of the required retail frontages at 20

feet has been an undoubted success. Retail in downtown Birmingham remains highly competitive as a result of this essential retail industry practice. However, its application must be adjusted with greater care more accurately reflecting the building types. And extending it to Haynes Square / the Triangle District so that the retail trajectories on both sides support each other, and so that as Haynes Square is developed, there is a predictable outcome. The adjustment of the redline in downtown involves primarily more accurate mapping. The extension to Haynes Square is substantial and would be a great addition to Birmingham's position as a primary commercial center competing successfully with Somerset Mall and the powerful re-emergence of Downtown Detroit.

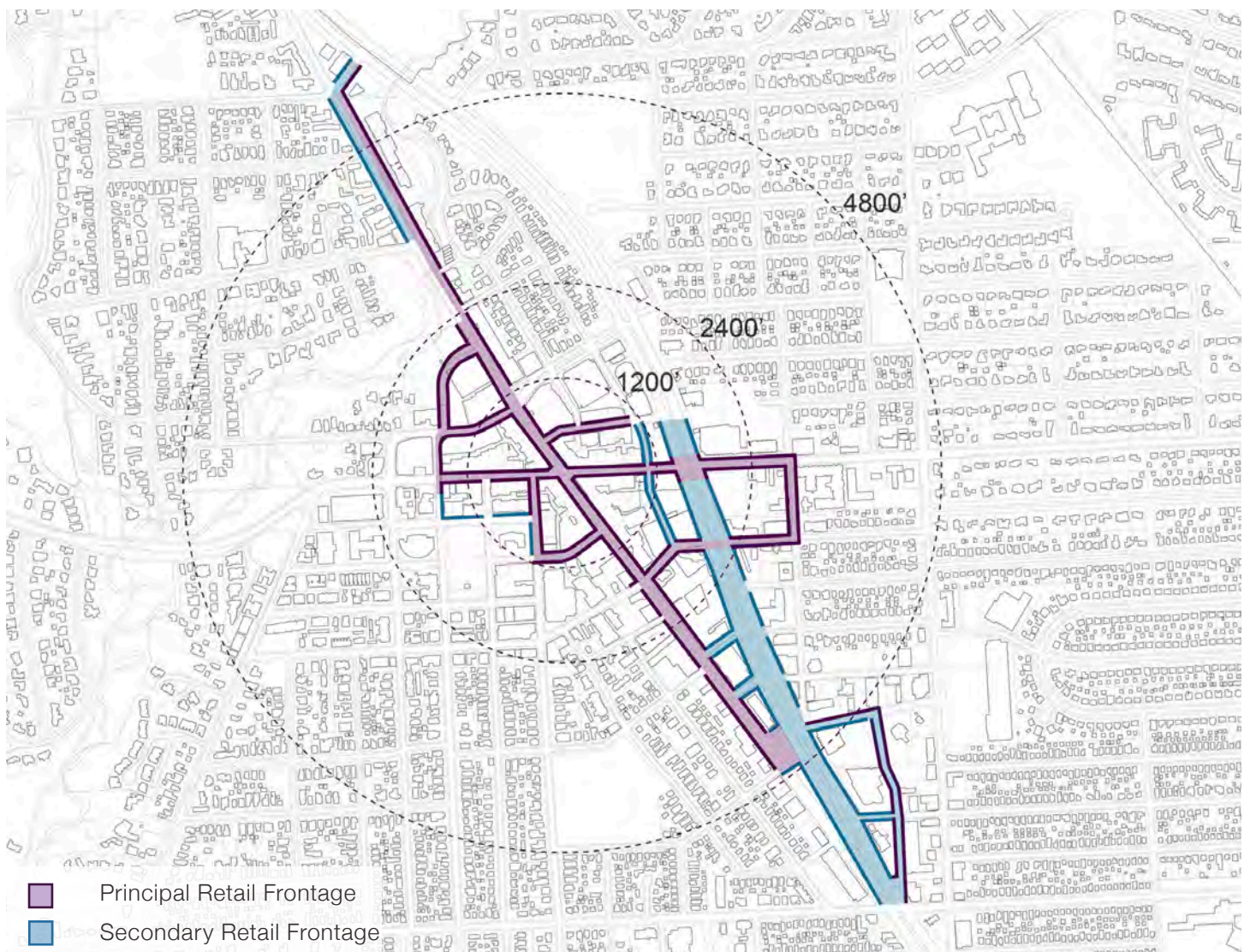


Figure C.2-05. Frontage quality differentiation between the most important and restrictive Principal Retail Frontage and the less restrictive Secondary Retail Frontage.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Expand activities and special events to attract office workers and residents to shop and dine downtown, including weekly food-truck events at Shain Park.
2. Encourage new housing downtown, discussed in a subsequent section.
3. Reduce the number of permitted dining decks in the Old Woodward, Hamilton, Merrill, Pierce, West Maple area to improve parking for retail shoppers and sidewalk space. Limit restaurants to one deck each, and limit the number of decks to two per block.
4. Require a minimum 6 foot sidewalk be retained where dining decks are installed.
5. Expand the distance of corner curb extensions at street intersections and midblock to accommodate seated dining for restaurants not fronting onto wide sidewalks.
6. Install 6-foot-long benches with backs and armrests throughout the downtown area.
7. Implement a program to report, regularly inspect, and replace non-working street lighting.
8. Increase bike parking within the public streetscape throughout the Maple and Woodward district, especially at corner and midblock bulb-outs where multiple racks can be installed.
9. Reserve space for future micro-mobility storage at corner and midblock bulb-outs along with bike parking.
10. Pursue a shared space streetscape retrofit for Merrill between Old Woodward and Shain Park.
11. Add liner buildings along the south edge of the City Hall property to activate Merrill, housing small and lower cost incubator retail spaces and a few apartments on the upper floor.
12. Further study and then adopt the proposed retail frontage plan.
 - a. Establish two categories of retail frontage:
 - i. Primary Retail Frontage (purple) requires a minimum of 70% clear glazing along the sidewalk. Retail or food service must occur within a zone 20 feet deep along the frontage.
 - ii. Secondary Retail Frontage (blue) may be exempted by waiver of the City Commission to allow other commercial uses.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

Public Space

OBSERVATIONS

Maple and Woodward (Downtown Birmingham) has an abundant amount of public space in the form of numerous attractive greens and parks. But these parks require some additional seating and treatments.

DISCUSSION

Shain Park represents one of Southeast Michigan's finest civic destinations, embedded in the civic core of the City. Numerous special events are hosted in the park, including art fairs, concerts, holiday markets, and carnivals. Shain Park is usually filled with people of all ages throughout the year, often into the early evening. It provides a playground for toddlers enrolled in the Community House daycare program.

Booth Park is nearby, a popular destination for young families who live in Birmingham and its surrounding suburbs. From Maple and Woodward, Booth is a little separated, more a part of Market North. The Bates Street Extension

recommended in the 1996 plan should be pursued, particularly with a focus on connecting Maple and Woodward to Booth Park and the Rouge River trails. Additionally, signage should be provided along Maple and Old Woodward, and through the district. Wayfinding signs should be used as recommended previously, to orient people towards Shain Park, Booth Park, and the Rouge River trails. Where the Willits Trail meets Maple, at the Birmingham Museum, should be a clear touch point for the trail system from the Maple and Woodward area. At present the trail is disconnected from the museum, however the museum should be more clearly integrated with the trail system. The Birmingham Museum's entry with seating and the bell should more clearly connect down the slope and into the trail system.

Seating at both Shain and Booth Parks does not accommodate visitors during peak hours. Shain Park's moveable seating has been a good addition which should be expanded. More regular park benches should also be installed around the central loop. In major cities, the central loop would be entirely lined with benches, which is too



Image C.2.06. Booth Park's underwhelming entrance is the ideal place for a corner plaza with a cafe and ample seating.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

much for Birmingham's character, but the supply should be greatly increased. Booth Park has a well used set of play structures but very few accommodations beyond that. The entry is underwhelming, an ideal location to get information, a beverage, and to have seating opportunities either in a plaza space towards the entry corner or a more naturalistic setting further into the park and along the Rouge River trail. Shain and Booth Park's lack of food and beverage offerings could be rectified by opening a small café or coffee shop, either of which would enhance park-goers' experiences and draw more people to the parks during the daytime.

The districts' pocket parks are underutilized during the day and evening. The Old Woodward-Oakland pocket park's size is limited and its use is inhibited by the vehicular turn lane along its South edge. The 1996 master plan recommended removing this south vehicular lane and expanding the park, which would improve the park's appeal, the

Shain Park represents one of Southeast Michigan's finest civic destinations, embedded in the civic core of the City.

walkability along Old Woodward, and the pedestrian linkage between the Market District and downtown. Each of these spaces would benefit from additional seating and public art. The Pierce-Merrill space has sufficient public art but no seating, and Pierce-Brown no seating. The plaza at the Library's entrance also lacks seating, which could easily be provided along the sloped ramp, a good place for public art as well. In fact the Library entrance plaza pavement should have a surface mural or more compelling paving.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase the amount of seating in Shain, Booth, and the City's pocket parks with traditional English garden benches, as specified in the 1996 master plan.
2. Expand portable café seating in Shain and Booth Parks, in all pocket parks, and on all widened sidewalks.
3. Open a café in both Shain and Booth Parks, each with public restrooms and limited food and beverage offerings, per the 1996 master plan's recommendations.
4. Expand the civic art program into all parks and implement a timetable for the regular rotation of art.
5. Implement an art-mural program for large blank wall surfaces in key locations.
6. Expand the Oakland – Old Woodward pocket park by removing the south vehicular lane, per the 1996 master plan recommendations.
7. Add paths and seating to the Pierce-Brown pocket park.
8. Improve the Library's entrance plaza with seating and murals.
9. Integrate the Birmingham Museum into the Rouge River trail and park system, including more connections and signage at Maple and Woodward and with wayfinding along trails.

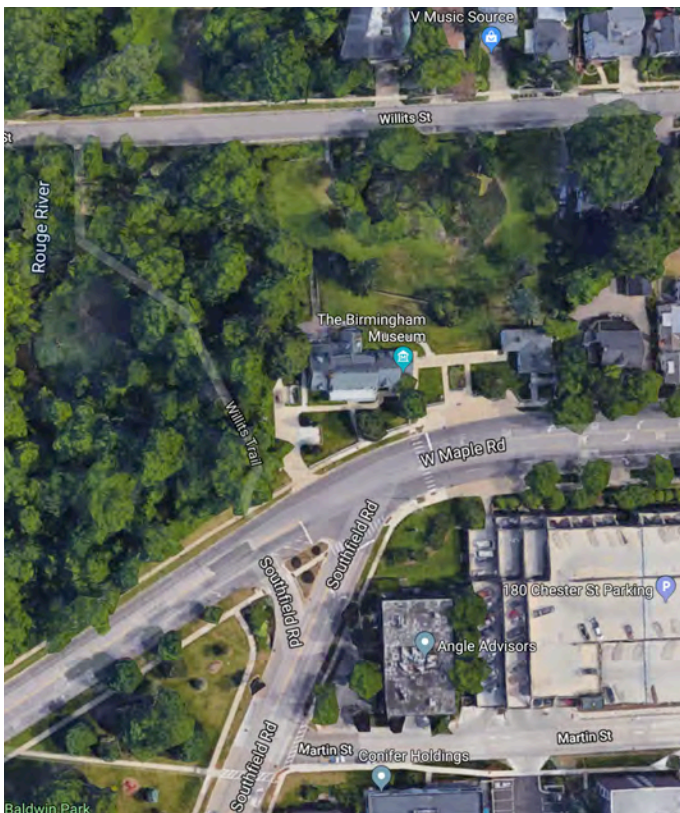


Image C.2-07. The Birmingham Museum is adjacent to the Willits Trail and Rouge River and should serve as a trailhead, integrated into the system.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

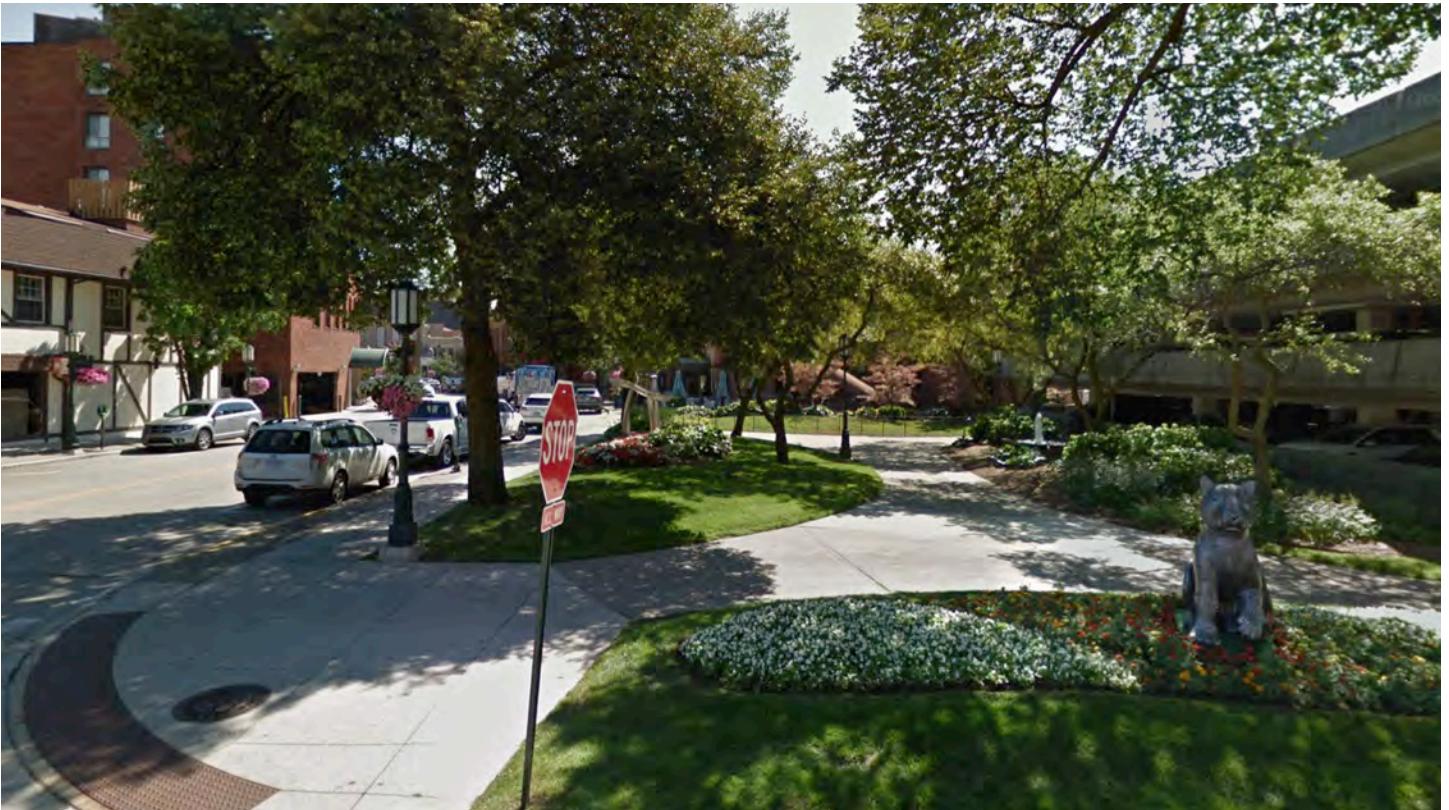


Image C.2-08. The Pierce-Merrill pocket park has walkways and public art but lacks seating.



Image C.2-09. The Library's entrance plaza lacks seating and has a wide area of plain concrete which lacks visual interest.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

Housing

OBSERVATIONS

The Maple and Woodward district (Downtown Birmingham) has an imbalance of commercial to residential development, with very few households compared to a significant square feet of office and retail space.

DISCUSSION

The lack of housing in the Maple and Woodward district has been recognized since the 1980 plan owing to a policy which does not allow residences to park in the public parking decks. As discussed previously, each mixed-use district requires a balance of housing with offices and retail space. A proper mix ensures that the district is active during daytime hours and into the evening, supporting retail spaces and restaurants and promoting greater public safety. If housing is going to be provided downtown to meet the need and to rebalance the 24-hour lifecycle of the downtown, it will require access to the municipal parking supply.

For housing, the Maple and Woodward district is very desirable being proximate to parks, the Library and other civic institutions, and its many workplaces, retailers, and restaurants. Due to parking policies and current zoning incentives, recent downtown housing has been very expensive. Notably, luxury residential units in a Downtown building

For housing, the Maple and Woodward district is very desirable being proximate to parks, the Library and other civic institutions...

made regional headlines for failing to sell, remaining mostly vacant. This follows a pattern that plays out between parking and zoning requirements and incentives. Zoning allows a bonus story when that story is entirely residential, intending to encourage housing Downtown. But for each unit, the parking requirements must be provided on-site while the rest of the buildings' commercial uses park in the public structures. Due to small property sizes and the general lack of building infrastructure for parking, developers are incentivized to build as few units as possible to achieve the bonus in order to avoid building expensive and inefficient parking, often costing in excess of \$50,000.00 per car.

Parking Downtown is heavily utilized during the daytime, with most public garages over 90% of their capacity. However, that same parking is virtually empty during the evening and overnight (See Fig. C.2-10). Weekend parking is also underutilized with around 2,000 spaces available over the weekend. This parking imbalance is an ideal opportunity to accommodate housing, which requires parking at night and on weekends, and vacates parking during the day. When initially proposed as a concept, concern for the



Figure C.2-10. Downtown garages monthly capacity.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

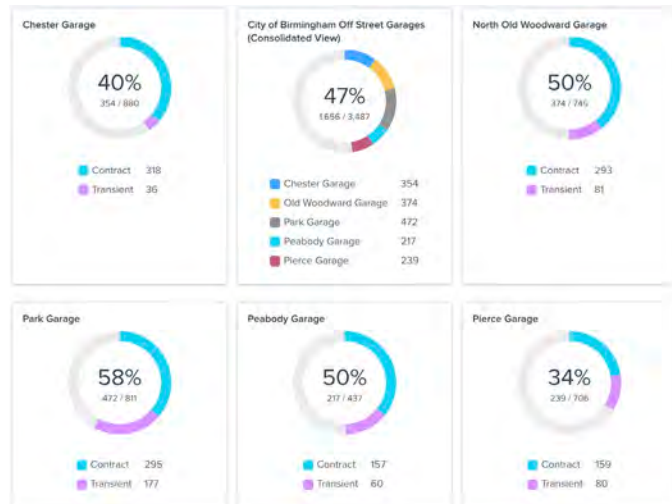
time that residents would depart and office workers would arise was raised. Having monitored parking patterns, at least half of total parking capacity is available at 10am, providing a significant period of overlap.

During the first and second surveys, residents were asked if they supported additional Downtown height allowances to increase housing and affordability. While many were amenable, most write-in open ended responses voiced a desire to not further increase heights. Presently, four and five-story buildings are allowed “by right” in most areas downtown yet most buildings are still between one and three stories. Considering the difference between the height

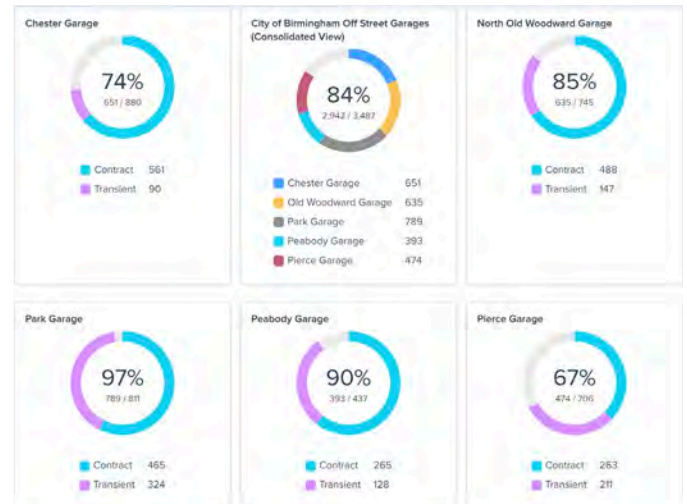
of existing buildings and the currently allowed potential, all housing growth needed in the Downtown area could be accommodated as is. We do not recommend increasing heights beyond what is currently zoned, except where adjusting zone boundaries for greater consistency. Focus should instead be on filling existing capacity. Clearly the parking policy is holding back housing, which has been identified as a problem for decades.

Providing parking for Downtown housing within municipal structures will naturally control the price of housing. First, this will allow residential units to be right-sized for the market, providing many apartments desirable

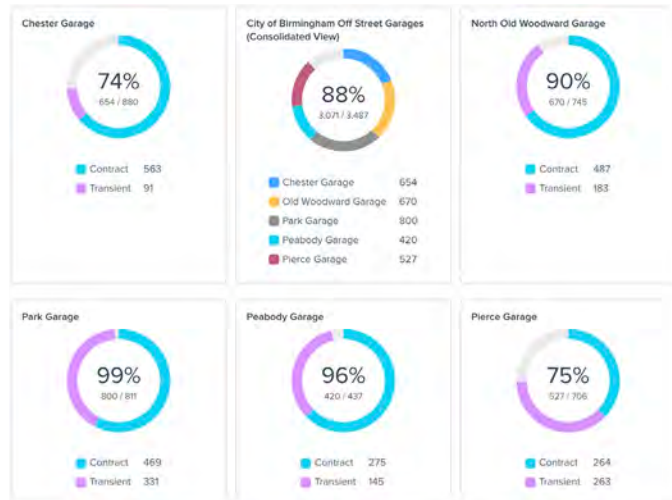
MONDAY, 9:30AM



MONDAY, 11AM



MONDAY, 1PM



MONDAY, 5PM

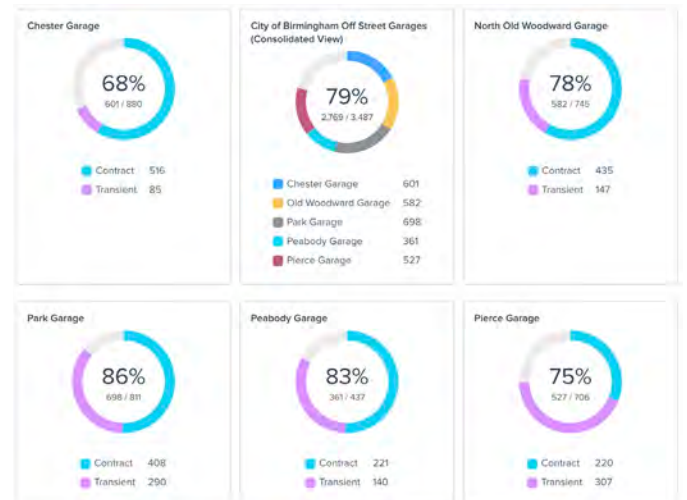


Figure C.2-11. Sample capacities at different points of the day.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward



Figure C.2-12. Growth capacity West of Woodward on sites with 1 and 2 story buildings.

for singles, couples, and empty nesters that are relatively small - studios, one and two bedrooms. Second, unbundling parking from housing both reduces the cost to deliver housing units and restricts rental or sales price. Unbundled parking is the process of separating the cost and provision of housing from parking where parking has a separate fee. This allows the housing to be built more efficiently, reducing at least \$50,000.00 from the cost of

Providing parking for Downtown housing within municipal structures will naturally control the price of housing.

delivering a unit in addition to allowing smaller units. And it allows parking to be priced competitively. Parking price should be set to be attainable yet discourage residents from parking cars that are not used regularly. Distribution can also be managed through permit assignments, assigning spaces in less used garages like Chester Street. For the mostly younger and older residents who may not need a car, they benefit from the cost of parking being entirely eliminated from the cost of their housing. And lastly, the added income for the parking district can be reinvested

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

into existing structures and for replacements and new structures.

Beyond parking, in some cases the noise generated by ground-floor dining has resulted in conflicts between restaurateurs and residents on floors above. Many developers have resorted to only building rental residential over first-floor commercial, since noise issues can be resolved by allowing renters to relocate. While there is often a concern about too much rental housing, the US population has begun to catch up with the rest of the world in tenure. Rental rates are increasing, especially among younger people, and the rental mentality has spread into many services in peoples' daily lives from mobility to music.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Immediately pilot unbundled residential parking in Downtown and study its progress over a 5-year period (adjusted as necessary for recessions).
 - a. Offer a limited supply of 500 permits for Downtown housing which is not required to provide on-site parking.
 - b. Tie this to an average rental or sales rate of 150% of Area Median Income or less, calculated on a per-building basis to allow for a range or prices.
 - c. Establish a residential permit program for Downtown housing, with pricing tiered according to the number of vehicles per residence, increasing in price for each vehicle, and the parking garage residents are permitted to park within.
2. Evaluate the outcomes of the unbundled residential parking pilot, evaluating the average number of vehicles per unit and price incentives over the pilot period as well as usage rates in Downtown structures.
3. Establish permanent unbundled residential parking in Downtown.
4. Establish permanent unbundled residential parking in other mixed-use Districts as municipal garages are built.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

Parking

OBSERVATIONS

Many parking issues in the Maple and Woodward District are common to all mixed-use districts and discussed previously, concerning signage and an imbalance between housing and commercial uses. Supply constraints also affect all districts, but especially this core area of Downtown.

DISCUSSION

Presently, municipal parking downtown is operating at or above 90% occupancy and the district is growing. During its busiest periods, valet services are employed to fully utilize rooftop capacity which is otherwise not preferred by individual drivers. While the roughly 5-10% available capacity seems right-sized for the district, monthly passes for Downtown workers have a significant waiting list and parking continues to spill-over into adjacent neighborhoods.

Continued growth and success Downtown is important for the continued success of the City. Past plans have discussed parking needs in this area, which have wavered and at present have not been fully alleviated. The 1980 plan recommended construction of two parking decks, the Chester Street deck which was already in process at the time and the Peabody Street garage, discussed as the Brown-Brownell site. The plan also discussed enlarging 3 decks to add 972 spaces, but these were not listed in the plan's recommendations. The 2016 plan, prepared in 1996, discussed the lack of parking utilization at the time as a problem for which the downtown zoning overlay was added to encourage development. The plan also specified that "to fulfill the need for parking that will be created by the new Overlay Zoning Ordinance, pursue the potential for expanding the existing decks...". Additionally, it stated "although it will be many years before there is an actual parking shortage in Birmingham, prepare for that time by having the funding in place for the proposed new decks: the Willits Block... and the Maple Gateway...". In the case

Presently, municipal parking downtown is operating at or above 90% occupancy and the district is growing.

Continued growth and success

Downtown is important for the continued success of the City.

of both plans, additional funding was recommended for future parking needs which was not pursued. During the process of this plan, the deck recommended for the Willits Block in 1996 (the Bates extension) failed to pass a bond measure which may have been unnecessary had a fund been set aside nearly 25 years ago. At present, additional parking is needed, and this site is a prime opportunity.

The need for more parking capacity is clear. Presently, 3,700 people are on the waiting list for monthly permits in the City's garages. The City has considered resident requests to add secure bicycle parking to garages and spaces for electric vehicle charging. Both of these proposals should be pursued in time. However, there is not sufficient capacity to remove regular vehicle spaces. In each of the City's major plans, post-1929, increasing parking capacity has been recommended. The City's current insufficient supply is a result of not following those recommendations in a timely manner.

Some residents have questioned the future need for parking as technology changes are underway. Some trends are likely to reduce parking demand, like the rise of Transportation Network Companies, rebalancing housing and commercial in the Downtown, and reduced rates of teen driving. Growth within current zoning allowances will increase demand. But most often, autonomous vehicles (AVs) have been brought into the conversation. Unfortunately, at this point in time AVs are still in development, albeit rapid, and are not likely to see widespread usage until the end of this plan's horizon. At present it remains unclear whether AVs will reduce traffic and parking demand or increase it. Along with AV research, many auto companies are investing in shared ownership models and services, like Car-2-go, which could further complicate parking compliance while also reducing aggregate demand. To address this timing issue, another set of parking analysis will likely be needed

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.2. Maple and Woodward

in 10 years. But in the meantime, parking is underserved and will continue to be underserved for at least the next 10 to 15 years.

While parking across Woodward in Haynes Square / Triangle District is somewhat remote, the area is in need of parking investment and may be able to accommodate some Downtown / Maple and Woodward workers. A parking deck here should be pursued immediately in order to jumpstart development there and provide some alleviation for parking demand Downtown.

In addition to capacity, the downtown parking district is pursuing a number of technological solutions. In the garages, they intend to test a pay-by-phone near field communication (NFC) system aimed at reducing the lines entering garages. In the broader mixed-use district discussion, smart signage is recommended to direct users towards garages with capacity and away from those at or near capacity. Metered parking has recently been equipped for monitoring and demand or tiered pricing, which allows prices to be adjusted electronically. These systems are used to balance where people park by manipulating meter rates on a per-block basis. This should be pursued and monitored, but rates should not be changed too frequently.

During the design charrette which was part of this master plan, numerous attendees stated that the monthly parking pass rates are extremely low in Birmingham, recommending that they be raised. Fees should be set to be competitive with other jurisdictions. The additional funding created by increased fees should be reinvested in building new parking capacity, technological improvements, safety, lighting, and aesthetic improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Build a parking deck in the Triangle District as soon as possible. Ensure that the decks are flat, not sloped, and ceilings are sufficiently high that the structure can be reused should demand fall.
2. Study the Bates Street Extension elements that are not parking related, specifically the additional street

connections and a plaza and trail connection to the Rouge River trail.

3. Study opportunities for expanding downtown parking capacity with the APC, BSD, Planning Board, and City Commission.
4. Accommodate more monthly permit users as capacity becomes available.
5. Pursue recommendations noted in the mixed-use districts parking section, especially directional and informational signage.
6. Pursue technological improvements to ease parking usage, such as parking space occupancy indicators (green and red lights above spaces) to more easily direct users through the garages.
7. Use tiered parking meter prices to achieve an average maximum 85% occupancy along district streets.
8. Increase monthly parking pass fees.
9. Study a tiered parking rate system across all garages, once monthly fees have been increased, to supplement assignment-based management.
10. Study opportunities to accommodate secure bike parking and electric vehicle charging stations within parking garages as capacity becomes available.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North

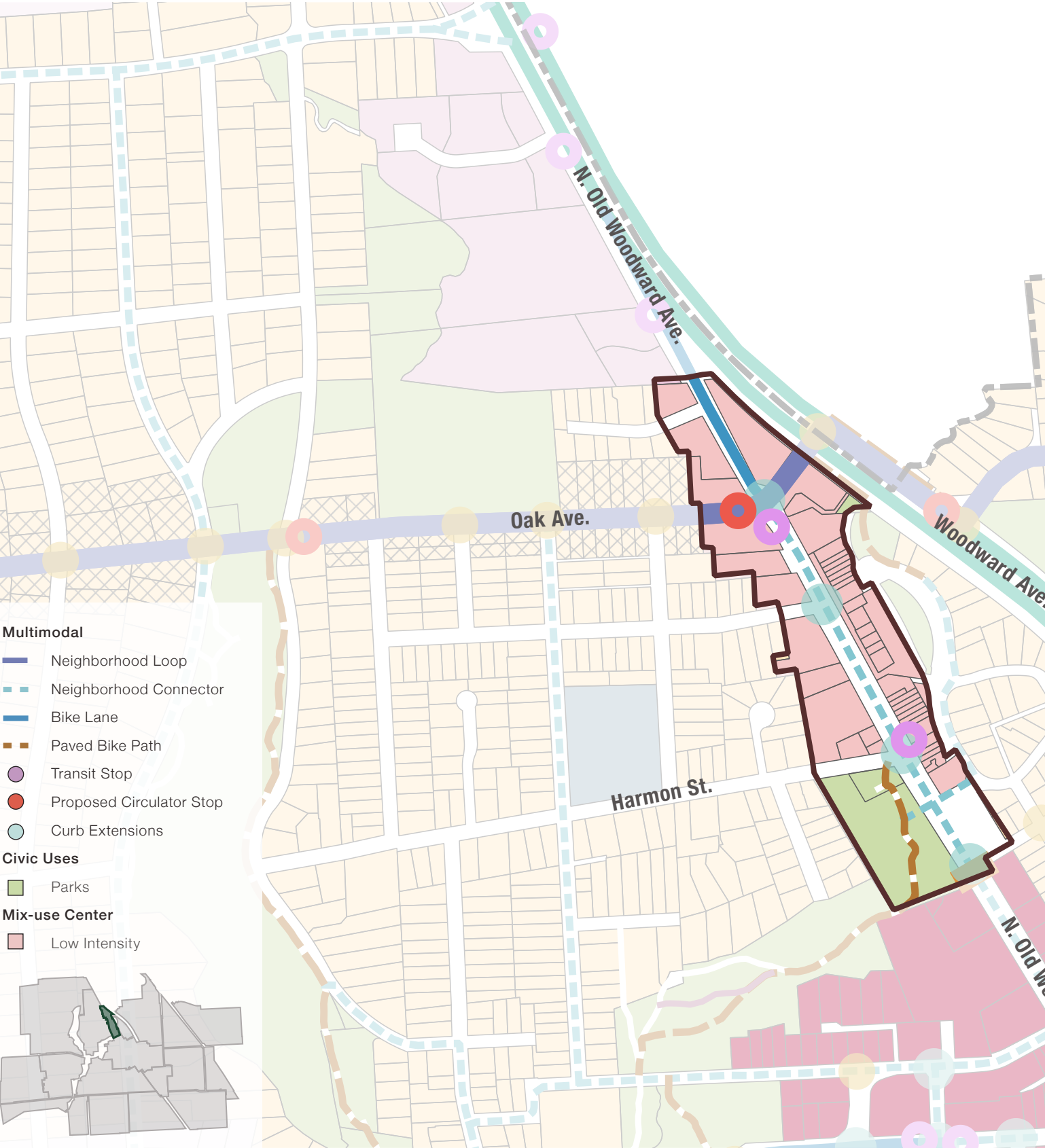


Figure C.3-01. Market North.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North

Market North

Historically, the 1/3rd mile-long Market North – Old Woodward retail district has been viewed as the “little sister” to downtown Birmingham, but it has now become a dining and shopping destination of its own. North Old Woodward has transitioned from a collection of fine art galleries into a busy dining district. The market district includes some of the region’s most popular restaurants, which allows it to be open and active into the late evening, even on weekdays. Market North’s businesses, farmer’s market, and Booth Park offer commercial and civic amenities that draw residents from surrounding neighborhoods, such as Holy Name, Ravines / Little San Francisco, Poppleton, and Quarton Lake. The district requires its own identity, branding, and focus on its’ specific needs independent of other districts. Because it hosts a popular seasonal farmer’s market, and following the aptly named Market North End restaurant, it is recommended that the area be called Market North. The district has begun to see new development with a 4-story mixed-use building under construction and developers beginning to purchase multi-family condos for redevelopment. The future of Market North is bright but it should retain its character of small shops and restaurants, and a street life distinct from Maple and Woodward.



C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North

Street Life

OBSERVATIONS

Presently, street life is intermittent throughout the Market North district.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of the 1996 master plan's traffic-calming design for Old Woodward, which reduced the number of lanes and inserted a landscaped island, has significantly slowed vehicular speeds and improved the area's walkability. But problems still exist such as the pedestrian crossing at Harmon and Old Woodward, which can be dangerous at times. Further north along Old Woodward, traffic increases in speed and pedestrian crossing opportunities are non-existent, clearly missing at Vinewood Ave. North of Harmon St, Old Woodward needs to be

redesigned to slow traffic and focus on increasing street parking and pedestrian crossings, especially in anticipation of increasing redevelopment.

Market North district character should be reinforced at the connection between the sidewalk and building facades. Currently some storefronts and signage are unattractive and incongruous with Birmingham's upscale character and image. This district is distinct from Maple and Woodward in storefront design, featuring less glazing and more small-scale business facades. Even with new buildings, the storefront scale should be retained with paned windows featuring more traditional muntins above bulkheads and framed door entries. Benches should be encouraged along the building facades, facing towards the street. And streetscape elements like benches, trash cans, and signage should be unique to this district.



Image C.3-02. Character of small scale businesses with traditional detailing an a unique sidewalk experience.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North



Image C.3-03. Outdoor dining.



Image C.3-04. Market North End restaurant.

Unlike Maple and Woodward where restaurants have large seating areas in dining decks, Market North maintains a character of smaller cafes and even ice cream stores with limited outdoor seating. This treatment should be encouraged in new buildings, with intimate cafe spaces and some outdoor dining (See Figure C.3-03). The condition at the Market North End restaurant is also to be encouraged (See Figure C.3-04). In Market North, people should be enjoying a slower pace of life in the public realm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue pedestrian safety and traffic-calming measures along North Old Woodward and in surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Reinforce the distinctive character of the Market District with branding; unique architectural design; and special signage, seating, and streetscape elements that distinguish it from the City's other commercial districts.
3. Install additional café and pedestrian seating along Old Woodard.
4. Enforce or expand storefront design and signage standards.
5. Install street and business way-finding signage throughout the district.
6. Install additional pedestrian seating throughout the district.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North

Public Space

OBSERVATIONS

Market North is anchored by Booth Park, a popular City-wide and regional attraction to children and adults with access to a natural trail system. The farmers market also occurs in the district but lacks public space associated with it. In both cases, the district's public spaces require improvements.

DISCUSSION

Booth park provides direct access to the Rouge River trail system, and occupies nearly 500 feet of Old Woodward frontage which creates a clear distinction between Maple

...the district's identity should be reinforced with a permanent, open-air market pavilion.

and Woodward and Market North. Booth Park is shared with Maple and Woodward by proximity, with workers strolling through nature on pleasant summer days. As discussed previously, the park lacks adequate seating for its users at peak hours. Additionally the entry corner at Harmon and Old Woodward is too informal for its' setting. Proposed in the Downtown 2016 plan, Booth Park should have a cafe and restrooms within an iconic park building near this entrance. Along with this, the entry should be treated like a small plaza with cafe seating, solidifying its place in the district's scenic core and encouraging an afternoon stroll through its trails.



Figure C.3-06. Proposed open air market pavillion on municipal parking lot 6.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North



Image C.3-07. Municipal parking lot 6 presents unbuffered surface parking along Old Woodward.

The Farmers Market gives the district its name, but has little presence on non-market days. Rather than an afterthought, the district's identity should be reinforced with a permanent, open-air market pavilion. The pavilion could be located where the market currently takes place, in the portion of municipal parking lot 6 that is open to Old Woodward. Designed appropriately, cars could continue to park under the pavilion awnings on non-market days. This midblock location should be treated like a public space with a plaza in front of the market structure that is extended with a curb extension into Old Woodward. Across Old Woodward, paving should signify this central point in the district and accompany pedestrian crosswalks. On the pavilion side, ample seating should be provided for daily use as well as during markets. Overall,

The Farmers Market gives the district its name, but has little presence on non-market days.

these improvements will reinforce the district's identity and communicate a pedestrian orientation at this critical point along Old Woodward (See Fig. C.3-06). On the opposite side of the pavilion, the space should be gently shaped to provide a more respectful edge to the Rouge River.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Construct a permanent, open-air farmers market pavilion with public restrooms on the portion of Lot 6 that is along Old Woodward.
2. Establish a plaza with curb extensions, mid-block crossings, consistent paving, and ample seating at the front of the pavilion, crossing Old Woodward.
3. Install ample benches in Booth Park.
4. Install a small café and public restrooms in Booth Park along with moveable tables and chairs.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North

Housing

OBSERVATIONS

The district's existing housing is mainly in inefficient multi-family buildings along its northwestern edge. Redevelopment has begun with new mixed-use buildings on the east side of Old Woodward and development interest beginning on the west.

DISCUSSION

Many of the district's buildings along Old Woodward are single level at present and are prime opportunities for redevelopment as mixed use structures. At the time this is being written, a mixed-use building is under construction. Additionally, residents of one multi-family cluster on the west side of Old Woodward have reported that a developer has begun purchasing their condo units for redevelopment. In all, this clearly signifies that Market North will see an increase in housing, which in turn will help support businesses in the district. While some may be nostalgic

for the area's garden apartments, their form and deep setbacks from Old Woodward signal that drivers can speed through the area, especially coming from the high speed portions of big Woodward just to the north. Better definition at the streetscape with new buildings will slow cars and reinforce walkability. But improvements are needed along Old Woodward to support additional pedestrians, particularly north of Harmon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Extend D2 zoning to the multi-family properties along the west side of Old Woodward up to Quarton.
2. Make streetscape improvements to support additional pedestrians as discussed in the Street Life section.
3. Make park and plaza improvements to support additional residents as discussed in the Public Space section.

CURRENT ZONING WITH OVERLAY



Downtown Overlay Zoning

- D2 3-story development
- D4 5-story development

Zoning

- R2 single family residential
- R6 single family residential

- B2 general business
- O office commercial

- P parking structures

PROPOSED OVERLAY EXTENSION



Figure C.3-08. Extension of D2 zoning in Market North.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.3. Market North

Parking

OBSERVATIONS

There is a shortage of daytime parking in Market North.

DISCUSSION

As the Market North district is seeing redevelopment interest, it has too little parking to support its potential. As in Maple and Woodward, daytime parking is full in Lot 6 while it is empty at night. The Downtown 2016 plan, completed about 25 years ago, recommended that a parking deck be built on Lot 6. This recommendation should be pursued along with the permanent market pavilion, with a low deck,

about 3 floors total, located behind the existing buildings. To avoid disturbance to neighbors along Brookside, care should be taken to eliminate any light spill over and to present a pleasant facade to the west, and care also taken to limit impacts on the Rouge River.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Research constructing a parking garage in the Lot 6 parking lot.
2. Provide additional on-street parking along Old Woodward, north of Harmon including the area north of Oak.



Image C.3-09. Municipal parking lot 6 is full during the daytime.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.4. Haynes Square

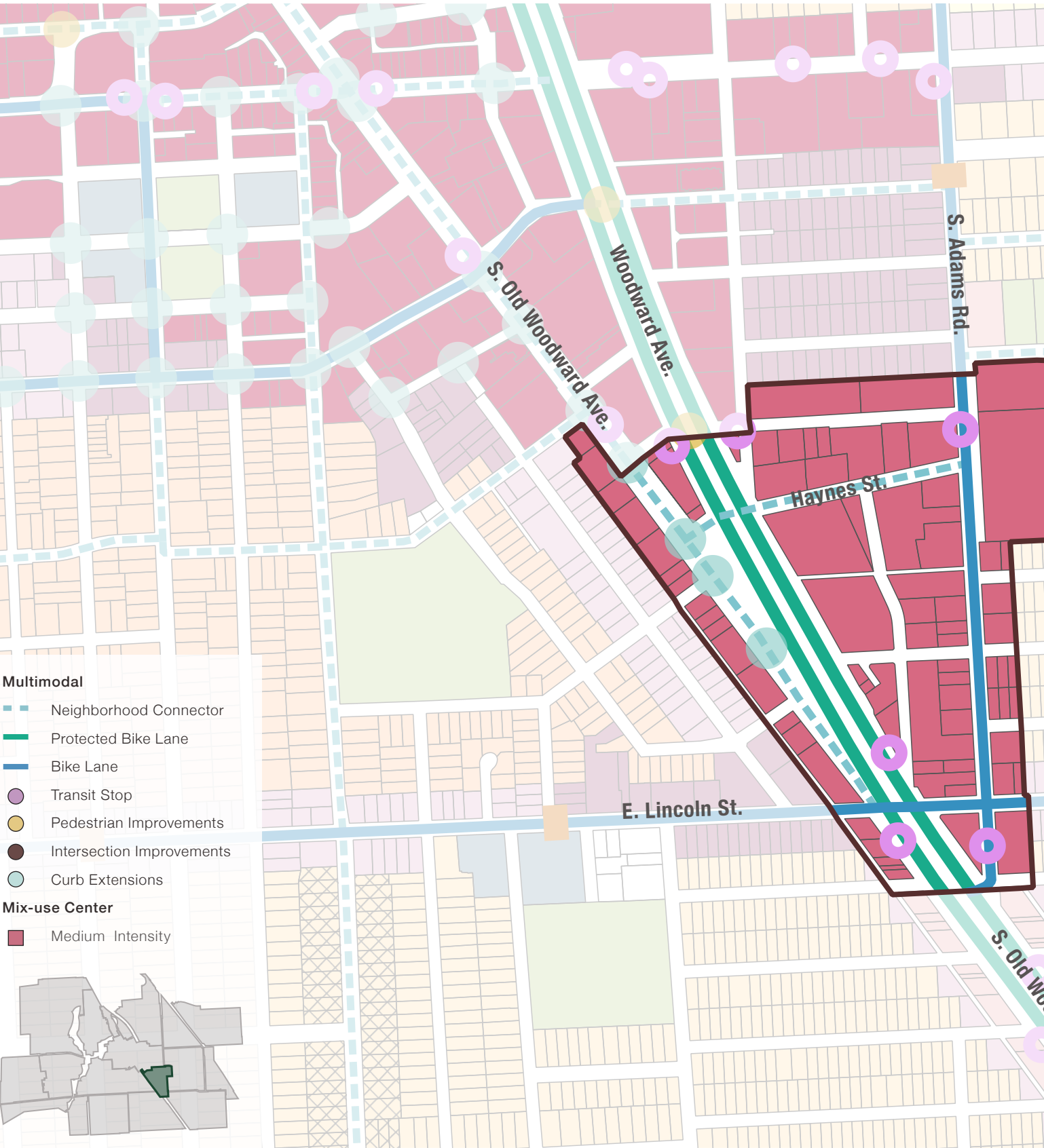


Figure C.4-01. Haynes Square.

C. Mixed-use Districts

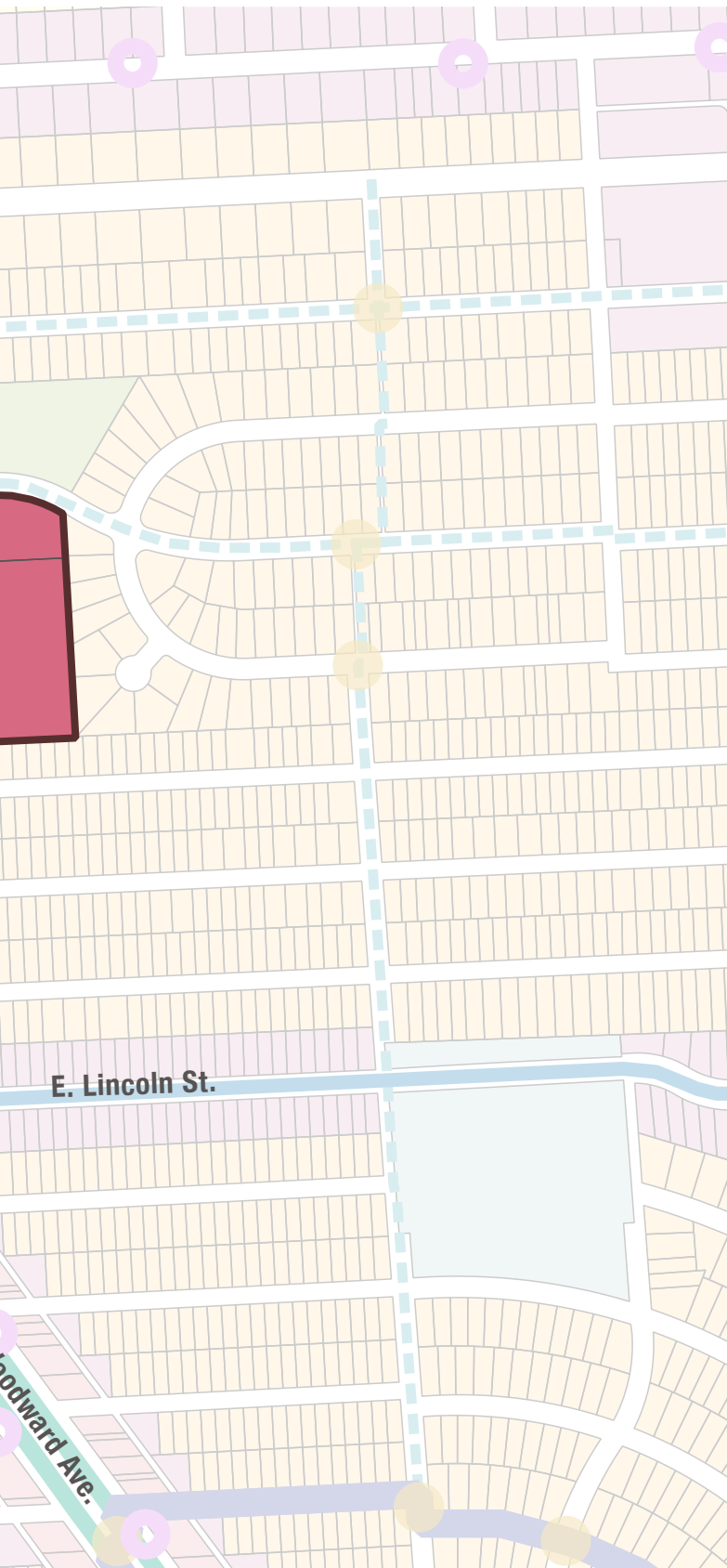
C.4. Haynes Square

Haynes Sqaure

CHARACTER

South of Frank Street, the character of downtown changes, expressed in zoning as well as business success. Birmingham has a need for and room for business diversity, which better serves residents. Rather than consider South Old Woodward an inferior retail district, the area should be combined with the lower Triangle District, spanning big Woodward as Haynes Square. Street reconfigurations would result in a public plaza at south Old Woodward and Haynes Street. This plaza should be the new heart of a district independent from Maple and Woodward. Differentiating this area, and connecting across big Woodward supports a clear distinction in retail and mixed-use. While Maple and Woodward includes a significant presence of offices, Haynes Square may be oriented towards more residentially-based mixed-use. The district encompasses the southern portion of the Triangle District, centered on Worth Park, spanning Woodward. Due to the adjacency of the 555 building and 9-story zoning along Woodward, Haynes Square frames the entry to the greater downtown area and gently feathers down in intensity to the east and west.

This combined district represents Birmingham's greatest opportunity for the development of both extensive middle-income housing—a deficiency that needs to be addressed—and emerging commercial business spaces. Unfortunately, the development envisioned in the 2007 Triangle District master plan has never been realized, even though the region's real estate market has been booming for over a decade. Numerous non-market-based factors, including the lack of public parking structures, an uninspiring public realm, and real estate development restrictions, have contributed to the district's stagnation.



C. Mixed-use Districts

C.4. Haynes Square

Opportunity

OBSERVATIONS

The Haynes Square area lacks the walkability and identity that all other Birmingham commercial districts possess. Having stagnated for decades, the district is the City's greatest opportunity for development, with few existing buildings of value.

DISCUSSION

Haynes Square is within walking distance to Maple and Woodward, on both sides of big Woodward. Nearby are three supermarkets, the Rail District, numerous restaurants, as well as popular businesses in the district. Haynes Square spans both sides of Woodward Avenue, bound by Bowers to the North, Adams to the East, and Lincoln to the South. Its size is similar to the active office and retail

core of Maple and Woodward. To capitalize on its potential, two major investments are required: constructing a parking garage on the east side of Woodward and reconfiguring the intersection between Woodward and Old Woodward.

Neither of the 2007 Triangle District plan's proposed public parking structures nor its proposed parking assessment district have been implemented. Due to the odd lot shapes in the area and high zoned capacity, private development is not going to take the first step to launch the district. To successfully launch Haynes Square, the City needs to invest in a parking garage. Ideally this garage would be suited to meet most of the needs of the district alleviating developers from the burden of parking. With this structure in place, and mixed-use residences able to unbundle

...the district is the City's greatest opportunity for development...



Image C.4-02. The south Old Woodward shopping area is underdeveloped and lacks a clear identity.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.4. Haynes Square

parking as discussed in the Maple and Woodward section, new housing and businesses are likely to be developed quickly in the surrounding blocks. Due to the district's size and large areas of surface parking, development will bring significant increases in tax revenue. While a smaller garage has been discussed, which may be pursued to whet the appetite of developers, the construction of multiple smaller garages is less efficient in the long run than a higher-capacity structure.

On the west side of Woodward, the southern portion of Old Woodward has historically been considered a poorly performing portion of downtown. Presently the intersection of Old Woodward and Woodward occurs at a very acute angle, and without a signal it requires a dangerous northbound left turn (See Fig. C.4-03). Properties that are located along Old Woodward south of George Street are

zoned for taller buildings, but have not seen redevelopment. While fronting onto the empty grass strip is unattractive, parking issues also make development difficult. Being outside of the downtown parking district, the parking necessary to build in this area makes the prospect impractical with relatively shallow lots that back onto single-family residential. This plan recommends that Old Woodward be reconfigured to alleviate the awkward intersections and provide larger building pads. George St is extended to big Woodward, and Old Woodward removed south of George. Bound by Haynes St, Old Woodward, George St, and big Woodward is a new public square, Haynes Square. South of George St, properties are extended to big Woodward, providing sites that can accommodate buildings and parking. The extended properties should be traded for a public surface parking lot where buildings currently sit along Old Woodward, 70 feet deep measured from the alley, which leaves over 100 feet of property for development, deeper

EXISTING



PROPOSED

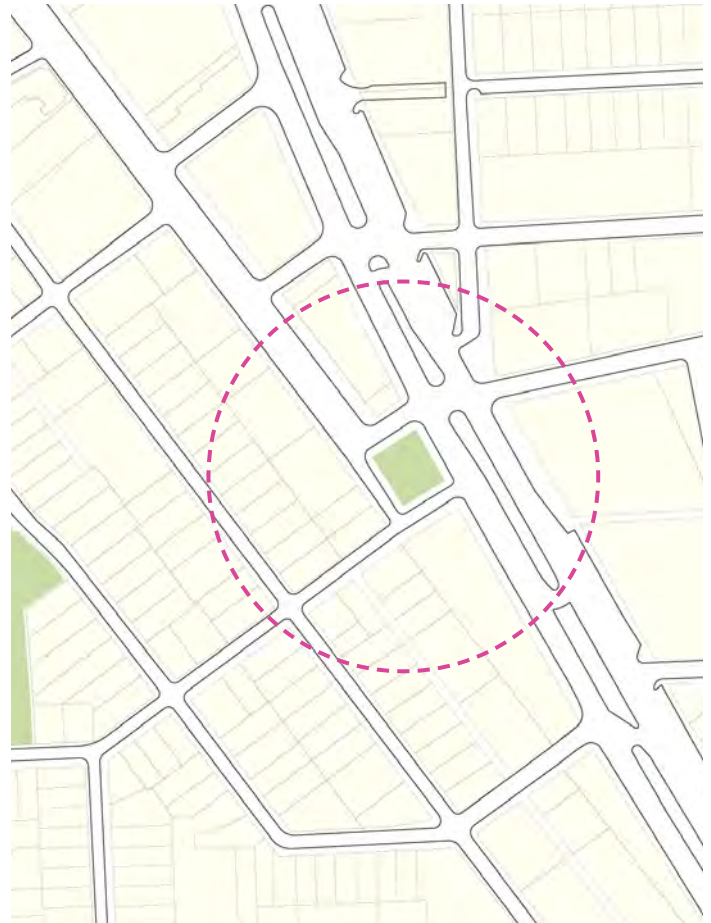


Figure C.4-03. Haynes Square reconfiguration.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.4. Haynes Square



Figure C.4-04. Redevelopment of Haynes Square.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.4. Haynes Square

New buildings in the area can take advantage of the dynamic and pedestrian-centric streetscape.

than current properties.

The public space of Haynes Square should be configured as a square, similar to Shain Park but about half its size (See Fig. C.4-03). Haynes Square should have a cafe, seating, and restrooms as is recommended for other urban parks. Lined by trees along its edges, the square will provide an attractive entrance to the greater downtown area, flanked by tall, new development east along Woodward and the 555 building to its north.

Through this redevelopment, Haynes St. crosses Woodward to meet Old Woodward at a signal. On the east side of Woodward, Haynes becomes a main street, paired with Worth Street. To support the main street with additional traffic, as Maple and Woodward is supported by Maple's traffic, Adams should be slightly adjusted so that south-bound traffic uses Haynes to access Woodward. This adjustment is detailed in Figure A.2-26 and the section Connecting the City.

At the intersection of Haynes and Worth Streets, the 2007 Triangle District plan recommends a triangular green called Worth Park. This space provides an important focal center for the east side of Haynes Square. It also provides needed open space for the Torry neighborhood. Like other urban parks discussed in this plan, Worth Park should have ample seating, shade, and areas for children to play, and a cafe with public restrooms. Worth Street, which has few existing buildings facing onto it, should be considered for a shared-use treatment to provide interest and connect with the South Woodward Gateway alley system. New



C. Mixed-use Districts

C.4. Haynes Square

buildings in the area can take advantage of the dynamic and pedestrian-centric streetscape.

A missing piece for decades has been the Adam's Square shopping center, which represents the greatest single redevelopment site in the City. While plans cannot force the owners to redevelop their site, activating Haynes Square will significantly increase the property's value. With an active Haynes Square district adjacent, development pressures may win out. To prepare for this, zoning and subdivision requirements should be considered such that Adam's Square provide open space for the Torry neighborhood and public parking in exchange for development capacity modeled upon the Triangle District Overlay.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a parking assessment or incremental tax district as necessary for land purchases and for financing the development of parking structures. Decades ago, a similar process was used to build downtown's five structures.
2. Reconfigure the streets around Haynes Square to create the square and fix the acute intersection between Woodward and Old Woodward.
3. Build the public square with a cafe and trees to block noise from Woodward, seating, a kids play area, and other compelling civic features.
4. Purchase properties and implement Worth Park and other public realm enhancements, including civic art, streetscaping, traffic calming, and way-finding.
5. Build a public parking deck on the east side of Haynes Square, in the Walgreens parking lot as has been negotiated.
6. Build Worth Park.
7. Create a brand for the Haynes Square, reinforced with special signage, landscaping, street furnishings, and building design standards.
8. Install enhanced streetscape and landscape improvements along Bowers, Haynes, and Webster.
9. Develop Worth Street as a shared-use streetscape.
10. Improve pedestrian linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, especially along Adams.
11. Trade developable land and install a public surface parking lot along the south Old Woodward alley.
12. Create a parking district for Haynes Square which allows residences to purchase parking passes in public garages, as discussed for Maple and Woodward.
13. Install metered, on-street parking along Adams and Lincoln Roads.
14. Create subdivision and zoning standards to encourage redevelopment of the Adam's Square shopping center, offering significant development capacity in exchange for a public open space and public parking.
15. Implement pedestrian-walkway improvements along Woodward to improve the walkability to both downtown and the market districts.

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C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

South Woodward Gateway

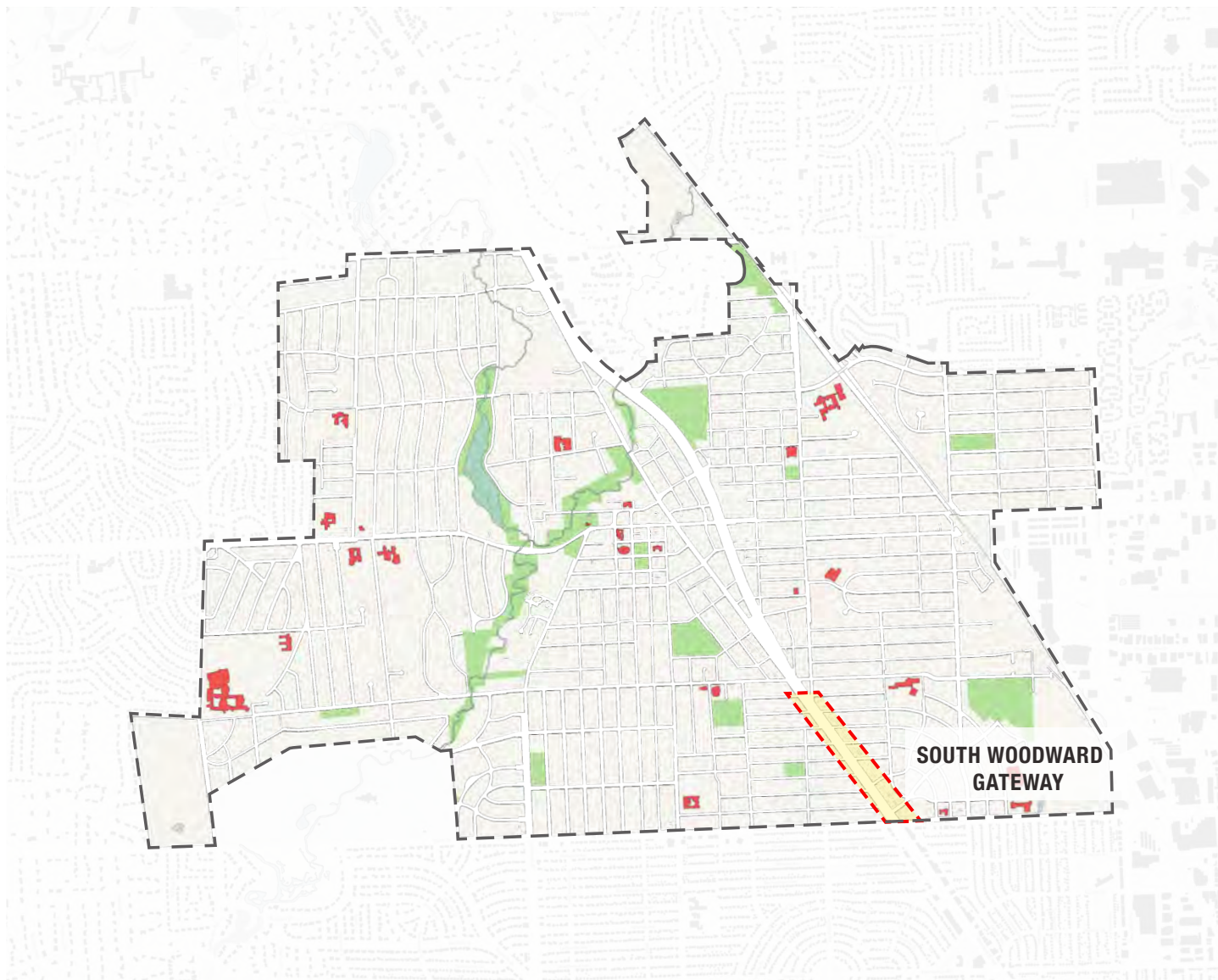


Figure C.5-01. South Woodward Gateway area.

CONDITIONS

The South Woodward Gateway, located along Woodward from 14 Mile to Lincoln, is the most un-sophisticated stretch of retail in the City. The southern portion of Woodward presents a sloppy and tired image of the community, which is otherwise active and successful. Woodward's growth and decades of mis-focused transportation policy has divided Birmingham and eroded the quality of the pedestrian and business environments. The area is not nearly

as bad as Anywhere USA, signage being under a moderate level of control to avoid the most egregious eyesores. This Gateway district is Birmingham's first impression to those travelling from the south. Numerous times the Gateway has been defended, suggesting that the quality of Woodward through Royal Oak is worse. To some extent this is true, Royal Oak has allowed a number of large, pole-mounted signs while Birmingham has not. And in Birmingham there is a roughly 5 foot wide raised section

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

of concrete between Woodward and the angled parking along the front of businesses, consistent for much of the corridor. Yes, the character of Woodward in Birmingham is better than Royal Oak, but it still is not good and not in keeping with the image of Birmingham. However, the area provides lower cost retail space with excellent exposure to traffic, housing most of the national chain merchants in the City. The Gateway is valuable for Birmingham, it just needs a new image. Woodward's conversion to an attractive and grand avenue is now supported by the Department of Transportation, however that future remains distant. In the interim, changes can be made on the side of private development to make this area more attractive and functional. While different from Downtown, the South Woodward area is a gateway to Birmingham and should reflect the community's character.

This Gateway district is Birmingham's first impression to those travelling from the south.

Few built environments are equally unpleasant for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. Woodward, south of Lincoln, somehow achieves a distinguished failure for all roadway users. For drivers, exiting and entering Woodward to access businesses is confusing and dangerous, and often parking is unclear. For pedestrians the cars move too fast for comfort, there are inconsistent sidewalks, and there is no beauty to hold interest. And for cyclists, there is no place safe to ride.

The low quality of the Gateway is well recognized; in 2013 The Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan was developed. A number of details from this plan should be pursued to identify and improve the Gateway character, adopted into this plan. And some influence the transformative proposals detailed here, like the improved alley treatment and adding Missing Middle housing. The plan recognizes that there are challenges to properties along the corridor and a historic perception that is difficult to change. It also recognizes opportunities to provide retail and events that are not present or allowed in the Downtown retail district. Numerous details from this plan remain important.



Image C.5-02. Typical character of the South Woodward Gateway in Birmingham.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

With fresh eyes, this plan recognizes the need for more radical transformation. While the 2013 plan focuses heavily on public sector improvements, leaving existing buildings as-is. This plan imagines that with the right incentives and capacity, the area's aged buildings can be redeveloped in a manner that truly changes the Gateway's character. Because we were asked to focus on neighborhoods, this plan looks first at how the Gateway interfaces with the neighborhoods along it and second at the character along Woodward.

This plan imagines that with the right incentives and capacity, the area's aged buildings can be redeveloped in a manner that truly changes the Gateway's character.

From a neighborhood perspective, the Gateway provides some necessary services but it continues to encroach into neighborhoods with parking, increases neighborhood cut-through traffic, and is incredibly inconvenient for pedestrians. Some residents reported that they frequent a number of businesses in the Gateway, which serve as neighborhood destinations. Another resident reported that she walks the alleys for exercise. Despite the advantages of having nearby businesses, parking is a continual problem. Many businesses have purchased neighborhood houses beyond the alley, converting these to surface parking. This condition is most prevalent on the west side, but exists on both sides of Woodward. In many cases, this results in neighborhood houses facing onto open parking lots, and many more sharing a side or rear lot with them. As is recognized in the 2013 plan, the triangular parking lots are incredibly inefficient, even larger ones. In some instances parking spills over onto neighborhood streets as well.



Image C.5-03. Three houses on Bennaville face onto property purchased for parking.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

Alleys

OBSERVATIONS

Some residents reported that they walk along the alleys of the Gateway rather than along Woodward. The 2013 Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan recommends that alley pavement be improved and made consistent and shared-use to accommodate pedestrians, shoppers, and service vehicles.

DISCUSSION

As identified in the 2013 Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan, the alleys present a key opportunity for transformative improvement. The plan focuses on surface treatment, opportunities for stormwater management, and the need for consistent treatment. It also identifies that alleys are shared between different types of users, recommending shared-use pavement treatment as illustrated in Img.'s C.4-05-08.

In addition to the surface treatment of alleys, they require active uses along their edges to be safe and pleasant. Currently businesses face onto Woodward and use alleys for parking and service. For transformative change, businesses should also face onto alleys, creating true shared-use streets. This dual-sided condition is becoming common in the local area, found at Kroger along Maple, along Big Beaver in Troy, and elsewhere throughout the region. In the alley, businesses should be encouraged to extend outdoor seating and outdoor retail displays into the shared-use alley space (See Img. C.5-04). Some residents expressed excitement at the opportunity for extending seating into alleys and occasional closure to traffic for block parties and events.

...the alleys present a key opportunity for transformative improvement.



Figure C.5-04. Shared-use alley space.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway



Images C.4-05-08. Shared-use paving examples from the 2013 Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan.



Image C.4-09. Double-fronted retail at Maple and Woodward.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

In the alley, businesses should be encouraged to extend outdoor seating and outdoor retail displays into the shared-use alley space.



Image C.5-10. Muse-type housing in London.



Image C.5-11. Muse-type housing in Birmingham.



Figure C.5-12. Muse-type houses along the alley.

Full alley activation requires that both sides of the alley engage to define its character. Two options are presented in later subsections that propose consolidated parking. With parking addressed more efficiently, the triangular parking lots should revert to residential use. Most of the triangular properties can remain yard space, with shallow townhouses lining the alley and side streets. A muse-type townhouse is also appropriate, which has a flush single car garage entry composed along with the building facade. Common in the United Kingdom, Birmingham has a few townhouse developments that approximate this treatment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify an alley segment to use as a pilot project. This segment should have generally underutilized parking and intermittent buildings, like the segment between Humphrey and Bennaville on the east side, or underutilized parking and businesses that may be willing to open rear entrances, like the segment between Bennaville and Chapin on the east side.
2. Pilot a shared-use alley at the selected segment by re-paving the alleyway and working with property owners to infill housing along the triangular parcels and open existing buildings to the alley. Power poles should be relocated underground during the alley development.
3. Incentivize redevelopment through increased zoning capacity and reduced parking requirements.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway



Figure C.5-13. Neighborhood Sleeve block configuration which consolidates parking mid-block and creates small neighborhood-

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

Neighborhood Sleeves

OBSERVATIONS

The South Woodward Gateway should provide neighborhood-serving retail and services for nearby houses as well as retail opportunities for travelers along Woodward. Facing buildings onto Woodward creates an awkward parking condition and poor pedestrian experience. And parking access from Woodward is inefficient.

DISCUSSION

Each residential street in the Kenning and Pierce neighborhoods terminates on Woodward. Currently, the last 150 feet or more of each residential street is presented with surface parking, an unattractive alley, and typically a long blank wall along the side of buildings that face Woodward. For the neighborhood this is a poor experience by car, and especially walking. One specific instance illustrates a different potential outcome. The building with a sign “Charleston”, located behind a Dominos Pizza, faces onto Bennaville rather than Woodward (See Img. C.5-14). If this building were a coffee shop, for instance, it might have an outdoor patio to the left side of the image.

If most buildings faced businesses onto the neighborhood streets rather than Woodward, the end of each street would become a small neighborhood main street with a handful of shops. These Neighborhood Sleeves would benefit neighborhood residents and provide a superior pedestrian experience over Woodward. Limited in size, each Neighborhood Sleeve would create minimal traffic, and further they would encourage neighborhood residents to walk or bike for convenient access. The 2013 Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan includes two recommendations

The South Woodward Gateway should provide neighborhood-serving retail and services for nearby houses as well as retail opportunities for travelers along Woodward.



focused nodes along the east-west streets.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway



Image C.5-14. Building on Bennaville with potential for outdoor activation facing onto the neighborhood street.

for reducing traffic speed into neighborhoods. These options, particularly the one with parallel parking, perfectly support Neighborhood Sleeves and the pedestrianized alley. Facing businesses onto the neighborhood streets would also help slow traffic entering neighborhoods by the presence of pedestrians and seating. Additionally, these small neighborhood main street areas would be shielded from most of Woodward's traffic noise.

To achieve Neighborhood Sleeves, parking is consolidated midblock into two efficient parking trays, replacing both the angled-parking and triangle parking lots one for one. The existing buildings are razed and new buildings built to face the neighborhood streets. These new buildings could accommodate housing above. Due to the street geometries, new buildings could also include a mix of larger and smaller spaces. Should development demand be sufficient, a single parking deck would fit in the double tray, allowing for two stories of residential above the ground floor shops.

Along Woodward, the condition is made more attractive by removing the angled parking and consolidating parking access closer to midblock. Building facades line the Woodward sidewalk and the parking area can be made more attractive by low walls and landscaping, as is recommended in the 2013 plan.

Compared to the parking tray alternative, the Neighborhood Sleeve allows for larger footprint buildings and interfaces better with surrounding neighborhoods. However it is less attractive along the shared-use alley which is fronted by parking for a good duration. This can be mitigated by shade structures for seating and landscaping, as the retail buildings retain frontage on the alley as well.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

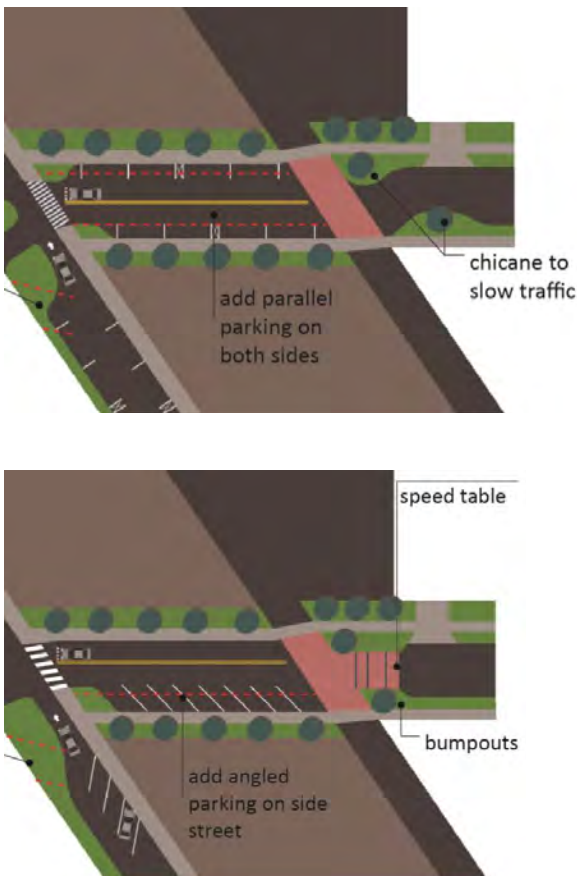


Figure C.5-15. Traffic calming recommendation from the 2013 Southern Gateway Urban Design Plan.



Figure C.5-16. Facing businesses onto the neighborhood streets to help slow traffic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a zoning district to allow for and incentivize redevelopment in this format, including:
 - a. Requiring storefronts along neighborhood streets.
 - b. Requiring parking be located midblock.
 - c. Requiring storefronts along the alley.
 - d. Requiring housing along the neighborhood-side of the alley, limited to 2 stories.
 - e. Permitting townhouses and mixed-use housing along the neighborhood-side of the alley.
 - f. Permitting multi-family housing on the commercial properties.
 - g. Permitting 2 stories along the alley and 3 or 4 stories between Woodward and 50 feet of the alley.
 - h. Reducing parking requirements and allowing shared parking.
2. Pilot the Neighborhood Sleeve option where the shared-use alley is implemented by:
 - a. Striping on-street parking.
 - b. Constructing chicanes on the neighborhood side of the alley.
 - c. Revising the streetscape between the alley and Woodward, paving the planter with pervious pavers and providing seating, trash and recycling cans, pedestrian-scaled lighting, bike racks, and other streetscape elements typical in commercial districts.

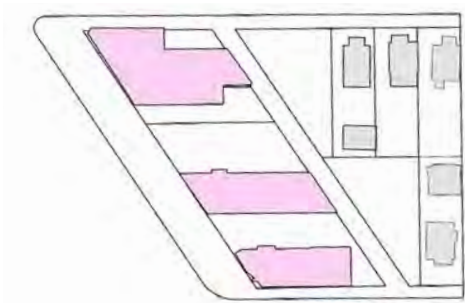
The following pages include diagrams of the Neighborhood Sleeve condition for sites on either side of Woodward.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

FUTURE POTENTIAL

CURRENT CONDITION



CURRENT V. FUTURE CONDITIONS		
	CURRENT	FUTURE
# OF PARKING SPACES	41	64
# OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS	-	18
RESIDENTIAL SF	-	16,523
RETAIL SF	15,177	16,559

- Green
- Residential
- Retail

Figure C.5-17. Neighborhood Sleeve condition on east side of Woodward.

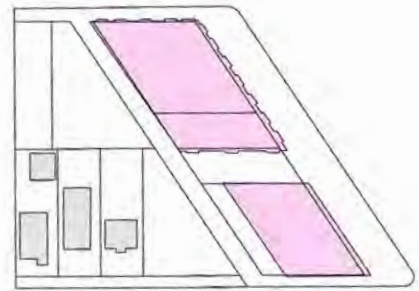
C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

FUTURE POTENTIAL



CURRENT CONDITION



CURRENT V. FUTURE CONDITIONS		
	CURRENT	FUTURE
# OF PARKING SPACES	52	52
# OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS	-	21
RESIDENTIAL SF	-	16,815
RETAIL SF	19,852	14,399

- Green
- Residential
- Retail

Figure C.5-18. Neighborhood Sleeve condition on west side of Woodward.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway



Figure C.5-20. Parking Tray alternative consolidates parking along Woodward and focuses buildings towards the alley.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

Parking Tray Alternative

The Parking Tray option is an alternative to the Neighborhood Sleeve. This option also requires buildings be reconstructed, which remains the only way to achieve real change. New buildings are built to face onto the shared-use alley as their primary facade, providing a secondary entry towards Woodward. This is described in the previous section on Alleys. Allowing second story residential along with the townhouses on the opposite side of the alley provides redevelopment incentive. To present a more attractive face to Woodward, parking is organized in a standard head-in tray, afforded more space as buildings have been relocated towards the alley. The reorganized parking is much more efficient, replacing existing parking one-to-one or substantially increasing parking. Entry to parking is removed from Woodward and relocated to the side streets. While there is a small amount of cross-traffic, turning onto the side streets and then into the parking lots will substantially slow traffic and impact Woodward traffic less during exit and entry. With more space and buildings aligned, the sidewalk along the Woodward-facing side of each business can be wide, consistent, and landscaped. Along Woodward the parking lot can be lined with a consistent low wall and landscaping, as detailed in the 2013 plan. The disadvantage to this option compared to the Neighborhood Sleeve is that it widens the overall space of Woodward rather than providing more enclosure and it does not support structured parking.

The following pages include diagrams of the Parking Tray condition for sites on either side of Woodward.

The reorganized parking is much more efficient, replacing existing parking one-to-one or substantially increasing parking.

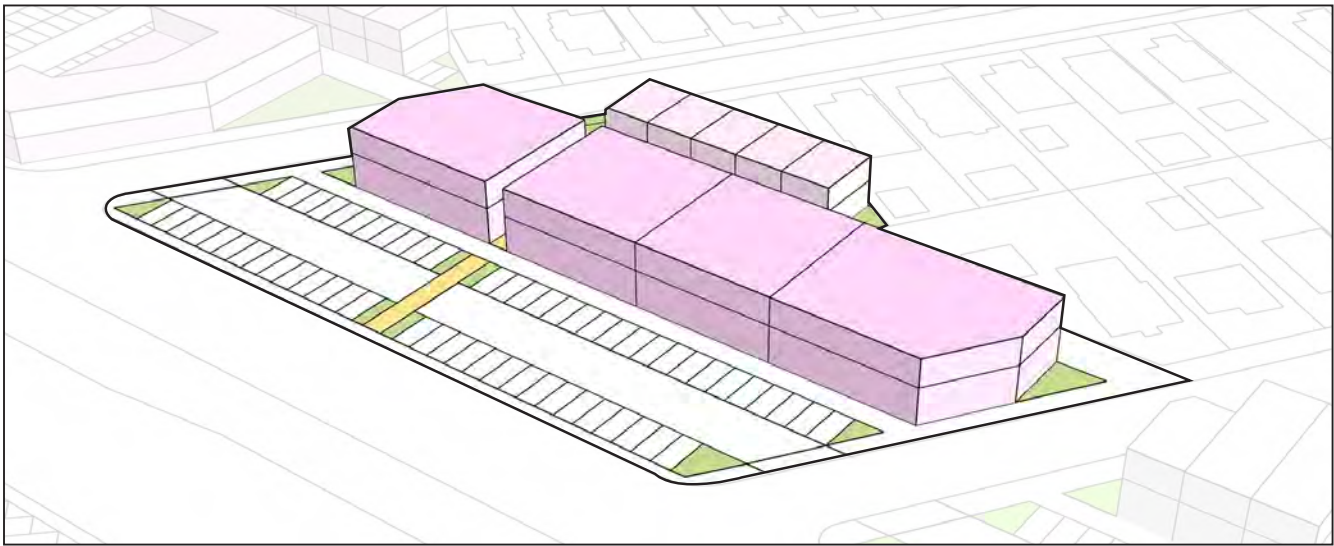
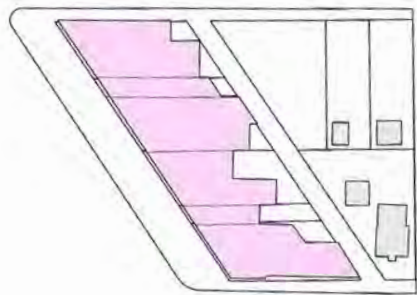
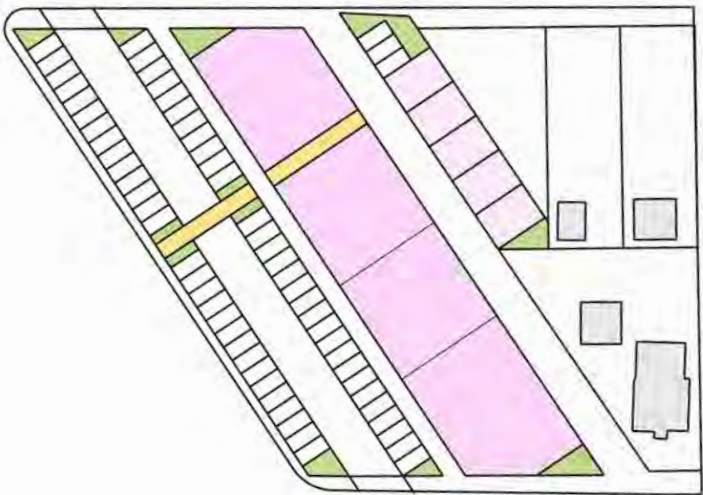


C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

FUTURE POTENTIAL

CURRENT CONDITION



CURRENT V. FUTURE CONDITIONS		
	CURRENT	FUTURE
# OF PARKING SPACES	33	62
# OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS	-	21
RESIDENTIAL SF	-	19,629
RETAIL SF	23,155	16,327





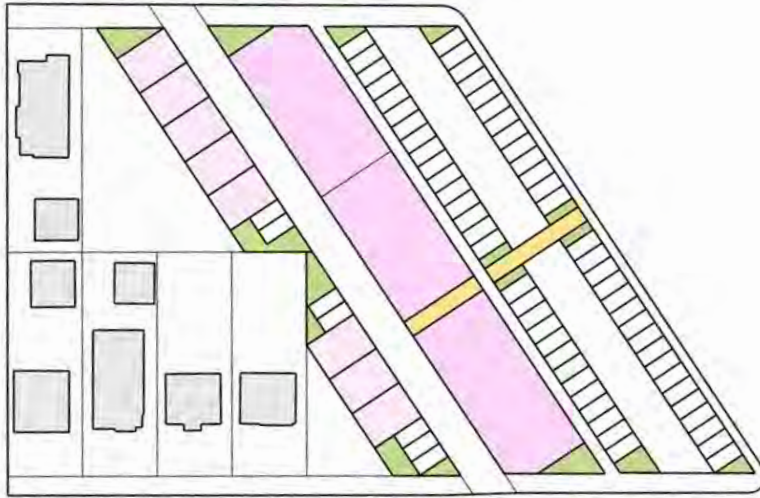
-  Pedestrian Path
-  Green
-  Residential
-  Retail

Figure C.5-21. Parking Tray condition on east side of Woodward.

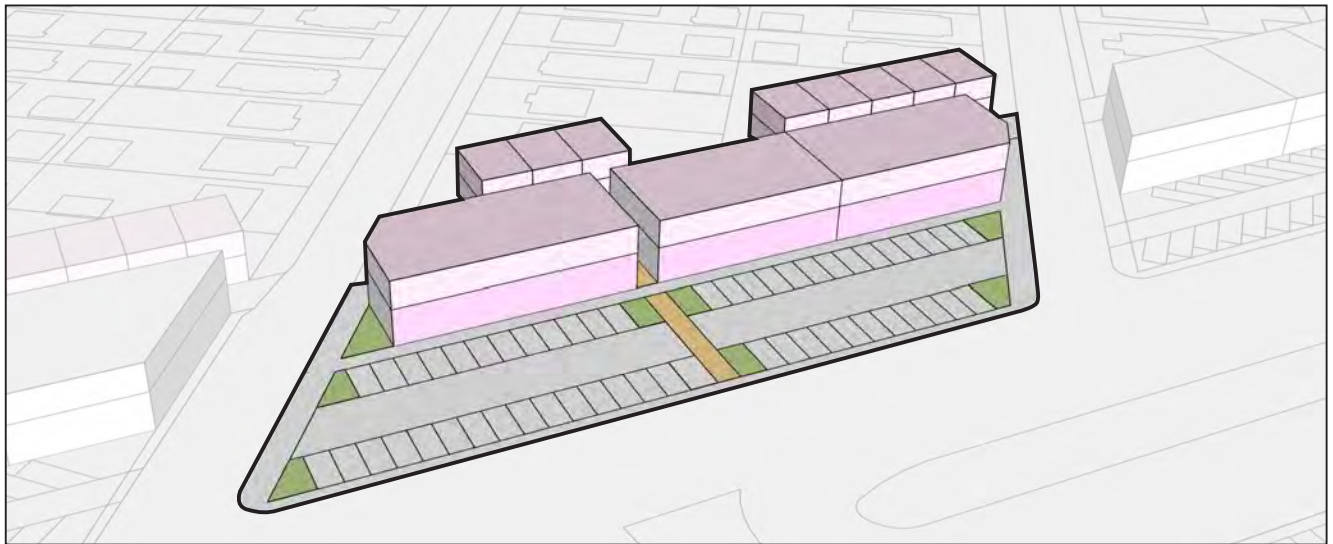
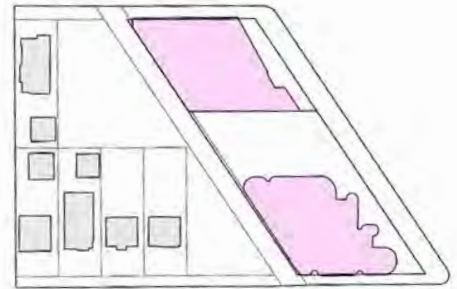
C. Mixed-use Districts

C.5. South Woodward Gateway

FUTURE POTENTIAL



CURRENT CONDITION



CURRENT V. FUTURE CONDITIONS		
	CURRENT	FUTURE
# OF PARKING SPACES	66	66
# OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS	-	20
RESIDENTIAL SF	-	17,090
RETAIL SF	17,278	11,938

- Pedestrian Path
- Green
- Residential
- Retail

Figure C.5-22. Parking Tray condition on west side of Woodward.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District

Rail District

CONDITION

The Rail District is divided between what has been envisioned for its future and the utility that it currently provides. This is a place of experimentation for Birmingham, and has been for some time. Layers of history expose incremental changes. Traces of former rail spurs from the Grand Trunk Railroad are evident in odd property divisions, fencelines, and paths of unkempt foliage.

The district's northern edge, at the top of South Eton Rd., is capped by Big Rock Chophouse, an upscale restaurant housed in the City's former passenger rail station. From nearby parking lots, the City's Whole Foods market and large scale commercial in Troy is visible just over the tracks, yet inaccessible. Just below this, the District Lofts illustrate a grand future vision that is formal and neat. Along with the adjacent Iron Gate to the south, the area includes

some of the City's most contemporary multi-family offerings. Just east of Iron Gate, also part of the 1999 Eton Road Corridor Plan, is an experiment in live-work units, the area's tallest buildings at the time - 3 stories - that create a tight urban street grid open for future connections on neighboring properties. The Griffin Claw brewery is next southbound on Eton, a substantial micro brewery with an informal brewpub and outdoor beer garden, especially popular with young families. Next to this, tucked far back from Eton is the Robot Garage, a wonderland of toys and classes for creativity in making, from legos to art to robotics. Auto service, a lumber yard, and the City's Public Services Department follow old lines of rail spurs.

The Rail District is a place of experimentation for Birmingham, and has been for some time.



Image C.6-01. Recently constructed District Lofts look to the Rail District's urban future.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District



Image C.6-02. Despite being quite near, the large shopping area across the rail line is inaccessible.



Image C.6-03. Live-work townhouses experiment with new business formats and an urban scale well in advance of focused district development.

The Rail District has no singular character, but overall it feels intimate, which is its charm.

The Lower Rail District, south of Palmer Street, consists of small, mostly single-story warehouse buildings occupied with varied businesses including yoga, co-working, dog daycare, art, dance, videography, auto body shops, and more. These are arranged haphazardly among small parking areas, charming in a way that is certainly not suburban. Only the degraded character of the street and lack of trees detract from the area's charm. The southern end of the district is capped by Kenning Park with the City's Ice Rink and skatepark, along with a new and quite urban senior retirement development.

The Rail District has no singular character, but overall it feels intimate, which is its charm. Other parts of the City are increasing their refinement, and many lament the loss of the City's artistic and entrepreneurial roots. Yet this is alive in the Rail District.

Plans and zoning for the Rail District point to a heavily urbanized future. A 2017 Ad-hoc Committee report for the Rail District estimated the zoned potential that could be built on properties likely to redevelop in the near future could increase intensity 10-fold, albeit unlikely. Due to the significant disparity between the district's long-term future and the functional and desirable near-term conditions, this plan recommends that policies and improvements continue the district's current success while incrementally preparing it for an intensified future condition.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District



Images C.6-04-C.6-05. The Robot Garage on South Eton Street.



Image C.6-06-C.6-07. Diverse businesses occupying small, single story warehouse buildings along Cole St.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District

Near-term Conditions

CONDITION

Many existing buildings within the Lower Rail District, are legally non-conforming, disincentivizing investments in existing buildings and continuation of the present condition.

DISCUSSION

The Lower Rail district is a type of commercial development which is currently emerging nationally. It provides incubator space for businesses at a much lower cost level than the downtown shops. Furthermore, its character is attractive to the younger demographic which is not and has not historically been particularly interested in the downtown corridor. While this area has already been rezoned to four stories it is essential that its continuation not be dis-incentivized. Therefore, everything possible

should be done to support its continued existence and even its extension as one-story buildings embedded in very small parking lots.

The current code applies standards that are appropriate to create pedestrian-oriented streets but as a result is burdensome to existing structures and uses. In the near-term, the Lower Rail District should remain informal and somewhat experimental. This character should be encouraged through zoning, development review, and in the public realm.

The Lower Rail district is a type of commercial development which is currently emerging nationally.

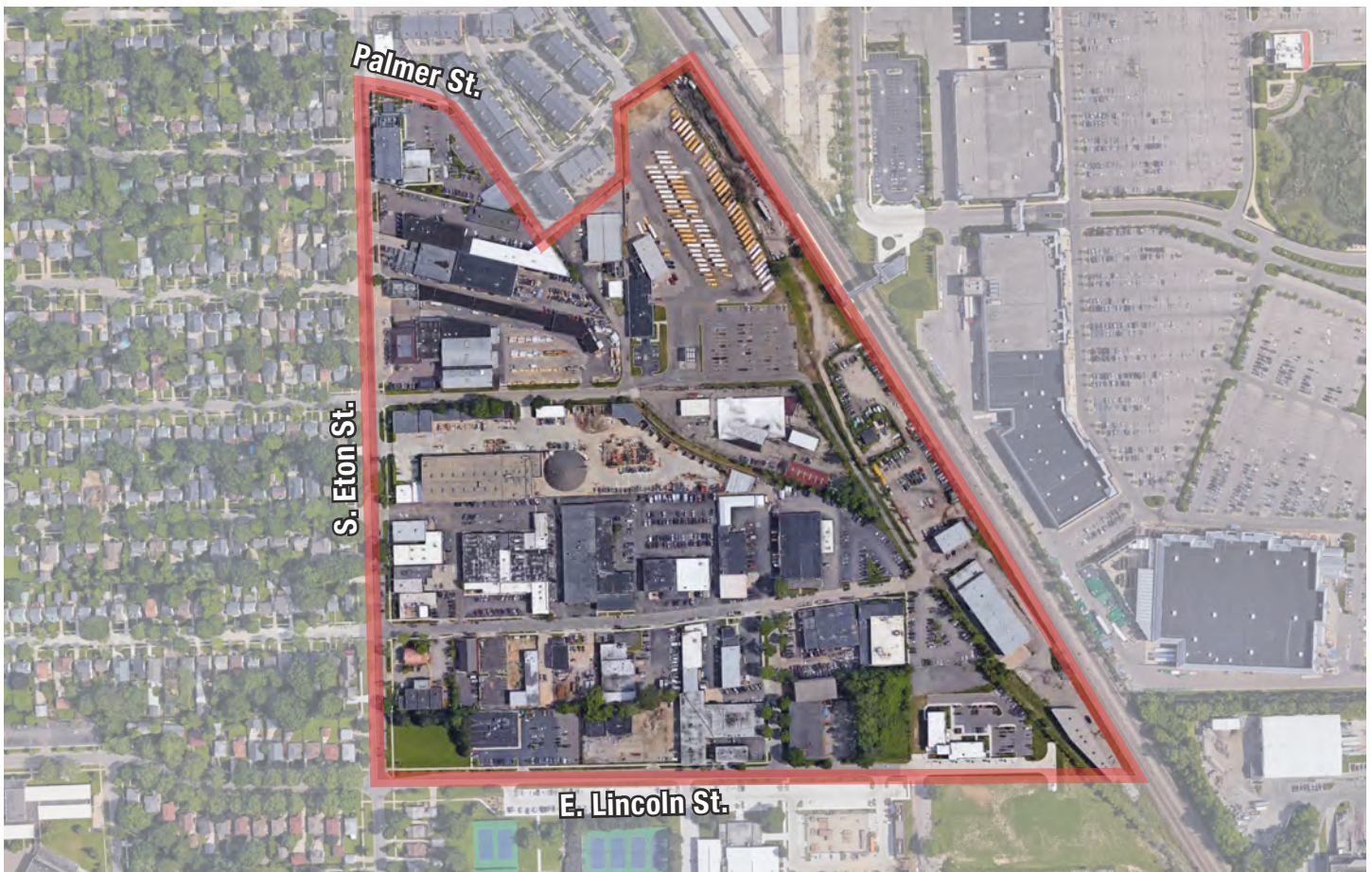


Figure C.6-08. The Lower Rail District.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District

Zoning need only be slightly adjusted. These adjustments are the type appropriate for an overlay district which applies only to the Lower Rail District. The overlay should allow the following when existing buildings are improved or expanded, or when new single-story buildings are built:

- Parking to remain between buildings and front lot lines if it already exists.
- Buildings to retain their present setback when renovated, expanded, or reconstructed.
- Parking lots of 70 feet wide or less to be exempted from required trees and landscaping.
- Screening not be required except along lot lines facing Eton Street.
- Small footprint towers of 600 square feet or less should be allowed to exceed one story without causing the overall structure to be interpreted as over one story, invalidating the overlay allowances.

Development review should allow the unique nature of the district to continue when single story structures are improved or expanded, or when new single-story buildings are built, including the following:

- The wall cladding may be any material including raw concrete block, corrugated metal, wood, or brick.
- Awnings and canopies of any size may be used.
- Artificial sod should be encouraged over pavement where there is no parking. Other than artificial sod no landscaping should be required.
- Sidewalks should not be required to be added, preferring shared-use street conditions with bollards to define sidewalks.
- Large expanses of walls should be painted with murals.

In the near-term, the Lower Rail District should remain informal and somewhat experimental.

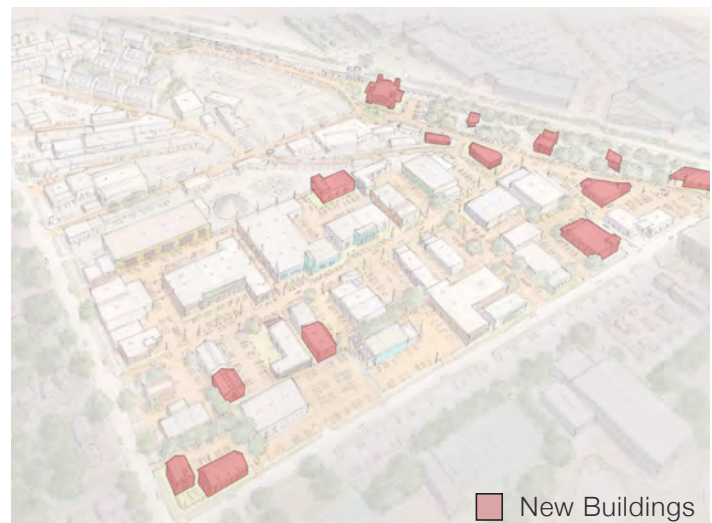
To support the district's current character and prepare for the future, streetscape improvements should be pursued which work for both. While mentioned in a number of existing contexts in other districts, shared-use streets are ideal for implementation along Cole and Commerce Streets, and Lincoln to the East of Eton. For the current condition, shared-use formalizes the condition that has occurred organically over time, and provides greater importance to pedestrians and cyclists. In the long-term condition, it helps to retain the character of the district, with greater use of shared-use streets than other places in the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create an Overlay District for the Lower Rail District that implements the zoning adjustments discussed above and activates more lenient development review decision making.
2. Construct a shared-use street section along Cole and Commerce Streets.
3. Update the 1999 Eton Road Corridor Plan of 1999 for the area south of Palmer Street by including the following:
 - So long as the buildings--existing or new--are one story, eliminate all requirements of Section 5 of the Site Design Guidelines p 41-46. of the Eton Road Corridor Plan. These include but are not limited to:
 - ◊ Eliminating building frontage and sidewalk requirements.
 - ◊ Eliminating parking requirements, except as the on-street parking shall be as determined by the "Immediate Neighbors" of the adjacent Torry or Kenning Neighborhoods.
 - ◊ Eliminating the signage and landscaping requirements.
 - ◊ Eliminating building use and aesthetic requirements.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District



Figures C.6-09 C.6-14. Near-term interventions to extend and improve upon the area's current character.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District

Long-term Conditions

OBSERVATIONS

From a long-term perspective, local and regional connections are a limiting factor in the Rail District. Like the Triangle District, it requires public investment to incentivize development due to the lotting pattern.

DISCUSSION

Many of the City's district-specific plans have become long-range, with investment remaining focused Downtown. Beyond the clear draw of Downtown's reputation, building there removes a \$50,000 per car obligation from developers, which is \$7,500,000 for 100 apartments or about \$5,625,000 for a 25,000 square foot office building. Both the Triangle and Rail Districts suffer from lot patterns that are generally small and include a number of oddly shaped properties. Redeveloping these properties at a high capacity doesn't easily pencil when parking must be accommodated. On the other hand, Downtown's small properties are being developed, including the recent hotel at Brown and Old Woodward. Like the Triangle District, the Rail District needs public parking capacity and the ability to use that capacity in lieu of providing parking in mixed-use development projects. As opposed to the Triangle District, the City owns property in the rail district. Most notably, the Public Services Department site is well located to provide parking access to Cole Street. Uses on site are necessary for maintenance of the City, and there are few places to relocate those uses. Even remaining on site, the DPS building is approximately the size of a parking structure, and may be part of a redevelopment plan to accommodate both. Additionally, the School District's underutilized bus lot can easily accommodate structured parking. These are options to be weighed in service of unlocking the area's development potential.

Before the district begins to see more intense development, its standards should be revisited. There are a number of ways that the MX standards differ from the Downtown Overlay standard, despite having similar desired physical outcomes. As discussed previously, zoning districts across the City that are similar in their desired outcome

should be consolidated. If not consolidated with Downtown and Triangle District zones, the MX zone should be carefully analyzed. A quick reading of zone standards passes muster, however some details have potential negative consequences. For instance, the zone has tree requirements tied to the number of residential units; because this doesn't account for potentially high lot coverage, the tree requirements could be a barrier to development, disincentivizing new housing in the district.

Connectivity is the most significant limitation to the Rail District. The Grand Trunk Railroad limits all modes of connectivity, with crossings only at Maple and 14 Mile, of which the Maple crossing is in poor condition. Additional rail crossings should be studied, mainly for pedestrian and bicycle movement. A vehicular bridge would be logical at Lincoln, like the Derby bridge, though difficult to achieve due to existing buildings, including the new senior living building on Lincoln. In the further future, with significant development in the Rail District, further connections will be necessary. Every effort should be made to avoid increased car trips from new development, providing extensive pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure instead.

ACCESS TO THE TRAIN STATION

Over Birmingham's long history, the railroad connection to Detroit has been an important asset. In recent decades, disinvestment in rail and investment in automobiles has reduced the role of rail travel. However, this trend is slowly changing across the country. Into the future, rail's comeback is projected to continue. The City cannot risk being left without a direct connection to passenger rail. Looking forward a few decades, rail access in the Rail District is the most likely economic driver.

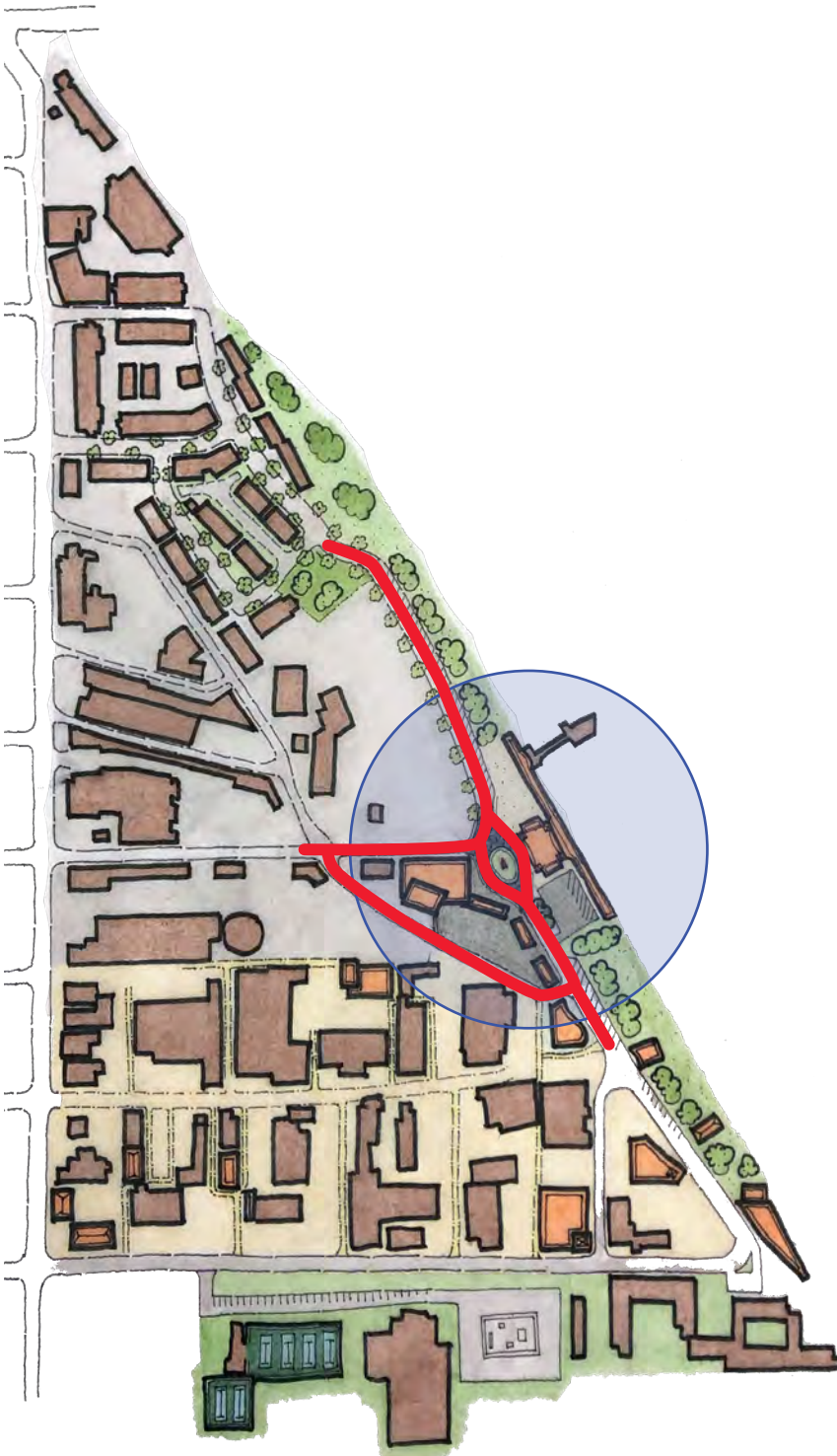
The City has recently attempted to negotiate access to the Troy Transit Center unsuccessfully. While the School District is willing to work with the City, a private land owner is not. The City should make another attempt at connection




Connectivity is the most significant limitation to the Rail District.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District

Future Potential



-  Location of train station addition
-  Property blocking connection
-  Future road extensions

Existing Conditions



TRAIN STATION ACCESS

The City has recently attempted to negotiate access to the Troy Transit Center unsuccessfully. While the School District is willing to work with the City, a private land owner is not. The City should make another attempt at connection with this land owner. Should they be unwilling to participate, the City should not be afraid to exercise its' power to condemn property. Eminent domain has become a bad word in planning, particularly in a property rights focused place like Michigan. However, the tool is specifically designed for this type of situation, wherein a transportation connection is critical to the City's future success. Property owners are paid fair market value for the property, independently assessed. Ideally an agreement would be reached with the property owner, not requiring condemnation. However, the City has gone down this path before, resulting in City Hall, the Library, and Shain Park.

Figure C.6-15. Existing conditions and future potential of access to Troy Transit Center.

C. Mixed-use Districts

C.6. Rail District

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Zoning should be modified such that the MX District is exempt from LA-01 (E) and (F), as is true in Downtown, or at a minimum that plantings in the MX District are only required within the streetscape and within open areas of the property, but not based on a minimum number of trees per residential unit as currently defined.
- MX District zoning should be carefully analyzed by contracting two or more architects to complete preliminary building designs for mixed-use buildings on existing sites, small and large, with and without on-site parking, attempting to achieve capacity. The architects should be requested to discuss and present challenges and constraints that are faced in the process. While some challenges are part of code design, others may be unknown without testing.
- Update the 1999 Eton Road Corridor Plan for the area south of Palmer Street by including the following:
 - ◊ At the termination of Holland Street, creating a connection to the rail station by purchasing a 30 ft wide corridor or easement.
- Acquire access to the Troy Transit Center from the School District.
- Acquire access to the Troy Transit Center from remaining property owners using through negotiation, failing which through eminent domain.
- Pursue development of a public parking structure in the Rail District on a site with adequate access to the Lower Rail District and the future connection to the Troy Transit Center.

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APPROVED
2/5/2020
PAA 20-0006



Administrative Approval Application Planning Division

Form will not be processed until it is completely filled out.

1. Applicant

Name: Gaeun Park
Address: 31757 Raymond Dr
Warren, MI 48093
Phone Number: 248-602-6714
Fax Number:
Email Address: kaylazine@gmail.com

2. Property Owner

Name: Julie Property LLC
Address: 8649 Robinson Ridge Dr
Las Vegas, NV 89117
Phone Number: 248-644-2204
Fax Number:
Email Address: narongsak-II@hotmail.com

3. Applicant's Attorney/Contact Person

Name:
Address:
Phone Number:
Fax Number:
Email Address:

4. Project Designer/Developer

Name:
Address:
Phone Number:
Fax Number:
Email Address:

5. Project Information

Address/Location of Property: 33757 Woodward Ave,
Birmingham, MI 48009
Name of Development:
Parcel ID#:
Current Use:
Area in Acres:
Current Zoning:

Name of Historic District if any:
Date of HDC Approval, if any:
Date of Application for Preliminary Site Plan:
Date of Preliminary Site Plan Approval:
Date of Application for Final Site Plan:
Date of Final Site Plan Approval:
Date of Revised Final Site Plan Approval:

6. Required Attachments

- Warranty Deed with legal description of property
- Authorization from Owner(s) (if applicant is not owner)
- Completed Checklist
- Material Samples
- Specification sheets for all proposed materials, fixtures, and/or mechanical equipment
- One (1) digital copy of plans
- Two (2) folded copies of plans including an itemized list of all changes for which administrative approval is requested, with the changes marked in color on all elevations
- Photographs of existing conditions on the site where changes are proposed

7. Details of the Request for Administrative Approval

Changing Shingles on the storefront with red asphalt shingles

The undersigned states the above information is true and correct, and understands that it is the responsibility of the applicant to advise the Planning Division and/or Building Division of any additional changes to the approved site plan.

Signature of Applicant:

Date: 01/10/2020

Application #: PAA 20-0006

Office Use Only
Date Received: 1/10/2020

Fee: \$100.00

Date of Approval: 2/5/2020

Date of Denial: N/A

Reviewed By:

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
Date 01/10/2020 4:16:28 PM
Ref 00165841
Rec'd 520632
Amount \$100.00

Fwd: 33757 Woodward Ave

1 message

Mimimim mim <kaylazone@gmail.com>
To: ndupuis@bhamgov.org

Fri, Jan 31, 2020 at 9:29 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Narongsak Tontapanish** <narongsak-tt@hotmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 30, 2020, 7:16 PM
Subject: Re: **33757 Woodward Ave**
To: Kayla Park <kaylazone@gmail.com>

Kayla,

I approve you to change the paint and shingles.

Regards,
Narongsak

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mimimim mim** <kaylazone@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 30, 2020, 10:23 AM
Subject: **33757 Woodward Ave**
To: <narongsak-tt@hotmail.com>

Hello Mr. Tom,

I'm sending you a rough image of house its going to look and ask your permission for painting.

Thank you!
Kayla



Screenshot_20200130-101925_Chrome.jpg
355K

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JAN 10 2020

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.OVERVIEW

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For homeowners seeking true peace of mind, Landmark® shingles are the high-quality, reliable choice for beautifying and protecting a home. With a dual-layered design that emulates the dimensionality of true wood shake, Landmark asphalt shingles offer the heaviest weight and widest array of color options in their class, allowing you to create or re-create the ideal look for your home with confidence. Backed by a 100+ year legacy of trusted manufacturing performance, all Landmark shingles include CertainTeed's industry-leading, lifetime-limited warranty.

- Certified as meeting the industry's toughest third-party (UL) manufacturing quality standards
- Dual-layered construction provides extra protection from the elements
- Ten year StreakFighter® algae-resistance warranty
- Class A fire-resistance rating

Due to variation in computer monitors and printers, the color samples seen on your computer screen may not exactly match the corresponding color. To verify actual product color, ask to see the actual product, available through a CertainTeed contractor or distributor.

PRODUCT OVERVIEW

- [Landmark Series Brochure - Northwest](#)
 - [Landmark Series Brochure - North Central](#)
 - [Landmark Series Brochure - Lake Central](#)
 - [Landmark Series Brochure - Northeast](#)
- ([More Info](#))

TECHNICAL SPECS

- [Data Sheet - Landmark Series](#)
 - [SDS - Asphalt Shingle - AR](#)
 - [SDS - Asphalt Shingle - non-AR](#)
 - [3-Part Spec - Landmark](#)
- ([More Info](#))

INSTALLATION

- [Landmark Installation Instructions](#)
 - [Video:Installing Landmark - five course pattern, alternate closed cut valley & skylight flashing](#)
- ([More Info](#))

WARRANTY

- [Asphalt Shingle Limited Warranty](#)
 - [SureStart Warranty Brochure](#)
- ([More Info](#))



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WARRANTIES](#)



ARTICLES

[ROOFING 101:
CONTRACTS
MADE EASY](#)

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- Two-piece laminated fiber glass-based construction
- UL Class A fire resistance
- UL certified to meet ASTM D3462
- UL certified to meet ASTM 3018 Type I
- Conforms to CSA standard A123.5
- Miami-Dade Product Control Acceptance: Please see the Notice of Acceptance (NOA) to determine approved products by manufacturing location.

SPECS

- [Data Sheet - Landmark Series](#)
- [SDS - Asphalt Shingle - AR](#)
- [SDS - Asphalt Shingle - non-AR](#)
- [3-Part Spec - Landmark](#)
- [3-Part Spec - Landmark AR](#)
- [ICC-ES-ESR-1389](#)
- [ICC-ES ESR-3537](#)
- [FL-5444 - Asphalt Roofing Shingles](#)
- [Miami-Dade NOA - Landmark Series](#)

INSTALLATION

Applying a roof system correctly is essential to the warranty and performance of the roof.

Please refer to the installation instructions for complete details. Available in both English and Spanish.

INSTALLATION

- [Landmark Installation Instructions](#)
- [Video: Installing Landmark - five course pattern, alternate closed cut valley & skylight flashing](#)

WARRANTY DETAILS

CertainTeed warrants that its shingles will be free from manufacturing defects, and provides the extra assurance of SureStart™ protection. Below are highlights of the warranty for Landmark®. See CertainTeed's Asphalt Shingle Products Limited Warranty document for specific warranty details regarding this product.

- Lifetime, limited transferable warranty
- 10-year SureStart™ warranty (100% replacement and labor costs due to manufacturing defects)
- 10-year StreakFighter® warranty against streaking and discoloration caused by airborne algae
- 15-year, 110 mph wind-resistance warranty
- Wind warranty upgrade is available for Landmark up to 130 mph. Specified CertainTeed starter and CertainTeed hip and ridge are required

WARRANTY

- [Asphalt Shingle Limited Warranty](#)
- [SureStart Warranty Brochure](#)

EXPORT INFORMATION

Landmark® asphalt roofing shingles are available for Export. Please review the related Export documents for additional information.

EXPORT LINKS

- [Export Roofing Selection Guide](#)
- [International Limited Product Warranty](#)
- [Declaration of Performance Documents](#)



Paint All Trucks w/ different colors

When it is new





Mike's Subs

3295

Bahr Dark Navy Exterior Paint

wood stained

Design Review Board Action List – 2020

Design Review Board	Quarter	Rank	Status
Update Sign Ordinance	1 st (January-March)	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
?	1 st (January-March)	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Redesign/Update DRB Board Applications	2 nd (April-June)	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
?	2 nd (April-June)	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create New Informational Artwork for Sign Ordinance	3 rd (July-September)	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sign Ordinance Enforcement	3 rd (July-September)	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
?	4 th (October-December)	7	<input type="checkbox"/>