



NORTH VERNON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

FEBRUARY 2024

MKSK

AP
DEVELOPMENT
ANDERSON
PARTNERS

SA
STRAND
ASSOCIATES



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Vernon Main Street Board of Directors

City of North Vernon

Jennings County Area Planning

Jennings County Schools

Jennings County Public Library

Indiana Landmarks and Historic Preservation

Local Business Owners, Stakeholders, and Residents

Prepared by:

MKSK

SA
STRAND
ASSOCIATES®

AP
DEVELOPMENT
A ANDERSON
PARTNERS

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

This study of Downtown North Vernon aims to create strategies around establishing common spaces for gathering, connecting downtown, celebrating sense of place, identifying unused spaces to activate, designing concepts for potential development sites, and considering preservation of the City's unique historic character.

The study is envisioned as a two-phase approach over the course of several months that will enable local leaders to better position downtown property for development opportunities and to leverage the City's cultural, historical, and civic assets in creating a series of connected activity nodes. This work will also help Main Street and the City apply for the next round of READI Grant funding.

This planning process focused on the following topics or "big moves" to identify opportunities and elevate quality of life in the downtown, based on a two-pronged framework approach.

1

Open Space + Connectivity Framework



**Curate Common
Spaces**



Link to Downtown



**Activate Overlooked
Spaces**

2

Economic Development Framework



**Redevelop Key
Sites**



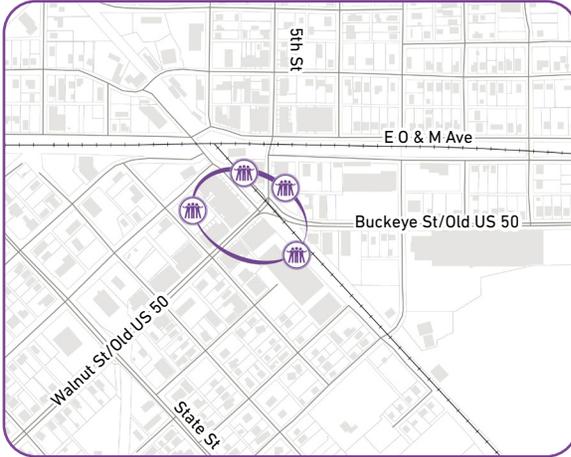
**Land Acquisition
Strategy**



Preserve History

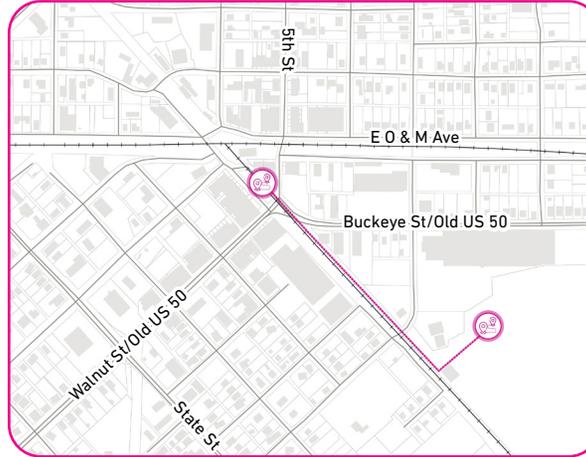
CURATE COMMON SPACES

Establish additional downtown gathering spaces and integrate open space into redevelopment site. Create conceptual designs/cost estimates for those sites.



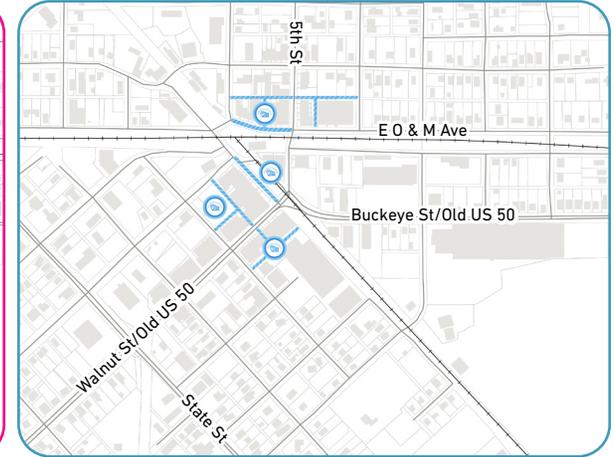
LINK TO DOWNTOWN

Plan trail connectivity downtown to neighborhoods and park space. Create conceptual designs/cost estimates and a phasing plan for proposed alignments.



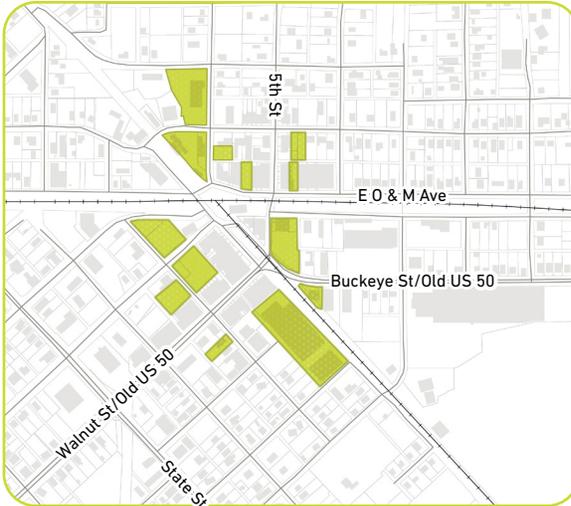
ACTIVATE OVERLOOKED SPACES

Study opportunities and work with property owners to transform alleys into pedestrian amenities, outdoor dining, and public art. Identify and remove redundant or abandoned utilities. Create conceptual designs/cost estimates for those sites.



REDEVELOP KEY SITES

Develop a vision for redevelopment sites, and create sketch concepts and massing renderings to illustrate the vision. Develop proformas and understand incentives for development, including tax credits.



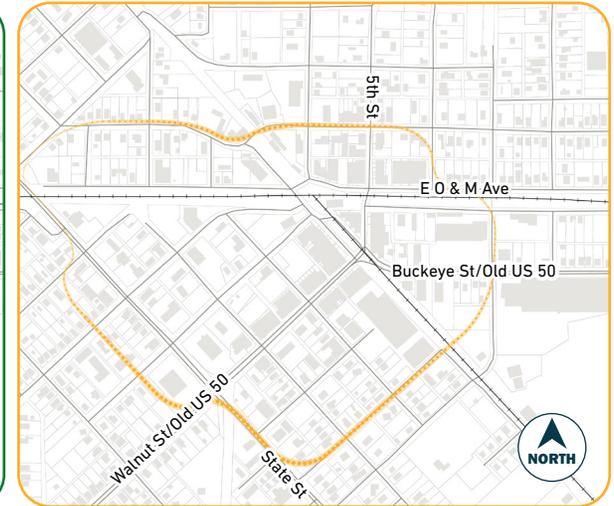
LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

Plan for a non-profit land development entity and devise a land acquisition strategy to hold and sell properties for redevelopment. Analyze property values of underutilized parcel for possible acquisition.



PRESERVE HISTORY

Explore the process of becoming a Certified Local Government through the State of Indiana and the potential for a conservation ordinance to ensure investments in historic buildings are preserving downtown's historic character.



PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

This planning process builds upon the recent successes of North Vernon which include Stellar Plaza, well-attended events downtown throughout the year, building stabilization and facade improvements, streetscape upgrades, and ongoing building restoration efforts by local investors. Downtown North Vernon has a significant collection of unique historic buildings and a rich history tied to the railroad. Although the downtown is one of the more intact historic downtowns in the region, today many of these structures are in disrepair, vacant, and at risk due to neglect. This North Vernon Downtown Development Plan establishes a list of focused projects to enhance the downtown experience and attract more visitors, tourists, and residents to downtown.

Study Areas

Two Study Areas were developed for as the focus areas of this plan. The Core Study Area consists of the heart of downtown, centered around the energy created by Stellar Plaza and other recent investments like the Park Theater. The secondary study area is the Influence Area which includes the downtown blocks that are bounded by Tripton Park and City Park, where downtown transitions into more residential blocks.

OUR PROCESS

Project Schedule

During the first phase of work, the team gathered and reviewed existing data and reports, collected field data, and talked with stakeholders to understand concerns and identify goals, aspirations, and priorities of the plan. This "learning" phase built a solid foundation of knowledge and information to guide the focus of analysis and recommendations. Phase two involved conducting a physical analysis of downtown, identifying opportunities, and developing frameworks for organizing the concepts and recommendations into a cohesive vision and an project matrix for implementation.

Engagement Strategy

The North Vernon Main Street Board established the core group of engaged individuals as the working group who worked intimately with the consultant team.

This process began in Summer of 2023 with a walking tour of downtown, where the Main Street Board and consultant team toured the area while documenting existing conditions.

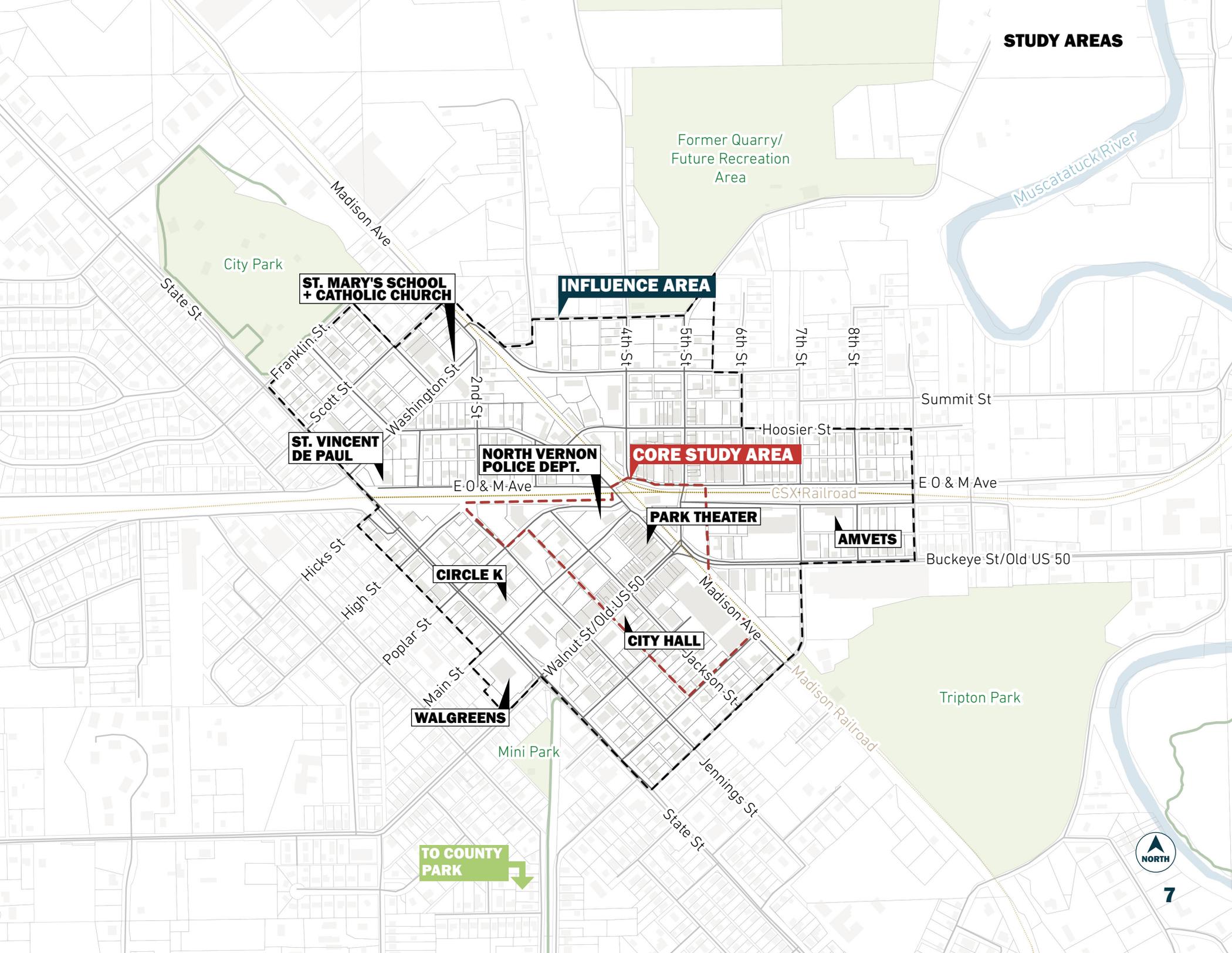
Phase 1: Preparation

- Kickoff, organizational meeting
- Site walk
- Base mapping
- Existing conditions review
- Study area and area of influence
- READI grant requirements review
- Goals and priorities/Big Moves
- Stakeholder meetings
- Review meetings

Phase 2: Advancement

- Big Moves evaluation workshop
- Develop a framework for economic opportunity and district development
- Develop a framework for connectivity and public space improvements
- Pop-up Engagement and summary
- Pitch Kit/Grant Document (up to 2 revisions)
- Character Rendering
- Review meetings

STUDY AREAS



Over 50 stakeholders and members of the public were engaged throughout this process in person, virtually via Zoom, and on conference calls to reach neighborhood partners, business owners, City and County staff, and the community. A public engagement opportunity was hosted at an existing community event in September to provide project updates to residents and collect feedback.

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Who We Heard From

Throughout this planning process, we heard ideas and concerns from a diverse representation of residents, business and property owners, and community partners located in or involved with the downtown. These stakeholders influenced the plan's opportunities and recommendations.

What We Heard

Curate Common Spaces

- Several lots/parking lots could be activated with pop-up events or short-term programming
- A dog park would be nice for downtown and near-downtown residents
- Markets and festivals could utilize empty spaces/lots and support local businesses and entrepreneurs

- There is a need for indoor places for kids during winter months
- A multi-purpose spaces, such as a coffee shop, with co-located businesses is desired to provide entertainment/gathering spaces for adults, families, and kids
- More restaurants could diversify the mix of options and complement existing businesses downtown

Link to Downtown

- Create better connections to Tripton Park from downtown and North Vernon's neighborhoods
- Connecting downtown to the future recreation destination planned for the former Quarry north of downtown will be important
- Trail connections downtown should focus on connecting between City Park and Tripton Park, with future potential to the County Public Library
- One-way conversions are being considered on streets downtown that would include multi-use paths



Site Tour of Downtown (June 2023)

Activate Overlooked Spaces

- Outdoor sports/recreation is popular in the region, and North Vernon could cultivate outdoor recreation tourism
- Alleys and backs of buildings include a complicated network of utilities that are unsightly and potentially redundant; these utilities should be studied and cleaned up to make alleys more attractive

Redevelop Key Sites

- The City has been successful in stabilizing and beautifying facades of buildings downtown, but the interior and rear of buildings still present safety concerns
- Primary concern or priority should be clearing up blighted structures downtown to attract and incentivize new, bigger projects
- Continued public infrastructure investments can encourage private investment
- Rehabilitated residential units would attract a newer renter population
- A barrier to redevelopment is the degree of deterioration of some buildings that makes rehab projects too costly for most small developers/ investors
- Funding sources and education is crucial to interested investors

Land Acquisition Strategy

- The City should prioritize properties it currently has control over for redevelopment and set the tone for new development
- The former Arvin manufacturing site is a significant opportunity for a critical mass of housing, but the future of the site is unknown

Preserve History

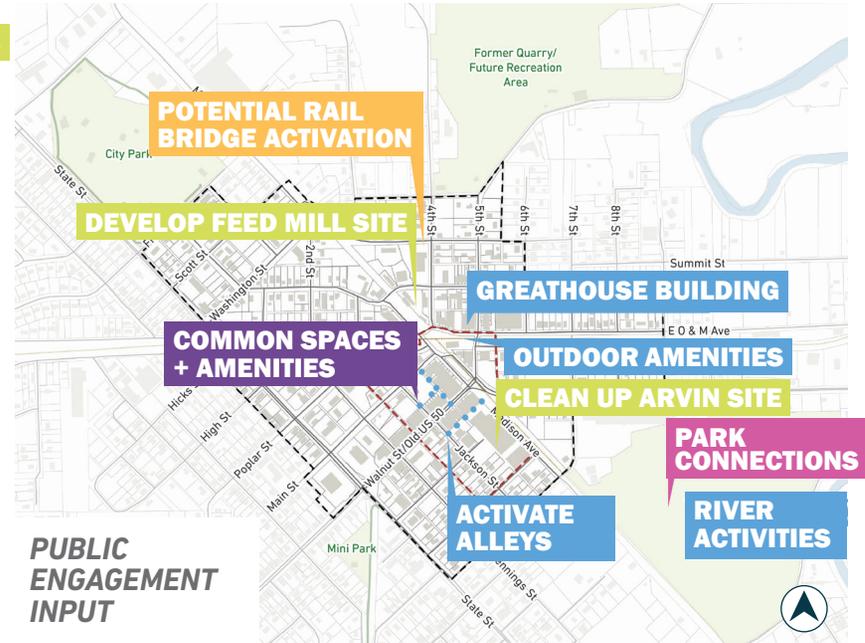
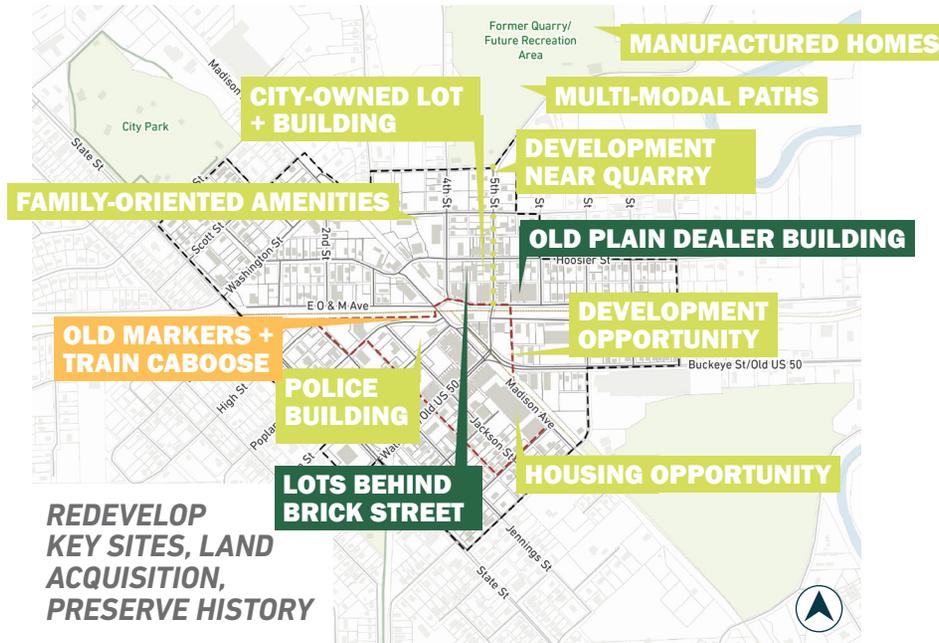
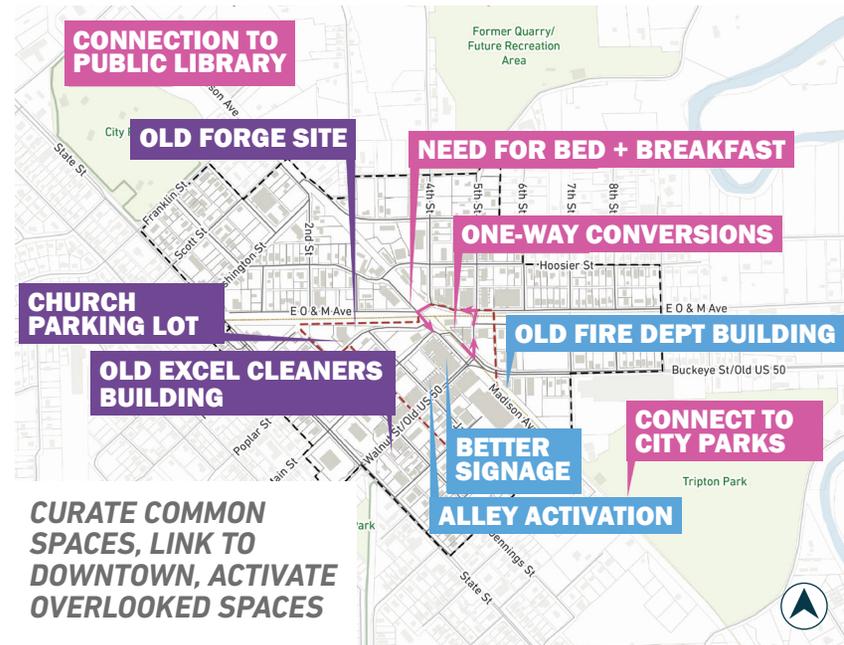
- Opportunity to expand upon existing historic signage and the Caboose to celebrate downtown's rail history
- Celebrate the rich history of the railroad and architecture through interpretive signage, cultural tourism, and designed open spaces
- Local leadership on zoning, code enforcement, and renovations of historic buildings to prevent further building deterioration



Public Engagement Event (September 2023)

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

The following maps summarize what we heard from North Vernon stakeholders, businesses owners, investors, and residents throughout the planning process.



**CONNECTION TO
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

City Park

**LOTS ARE NOT IN
USE BEHIND BRICK
STREET**

Former Quarry/
Future Recreation
Area

**DEVELOPMENT/RESTORATION OF
GREATHOUSE BUILDING**
Retail + residential

**POTENTIAL FOR FAMILY-
ORIENTED AMENITIES**
Restaurants, brewery, etc.

MORE OUTDOOR AMENITIES DOWNTOWN
Coffee shops, ice cream, playground

**OLD MARKERS AND
TRAIN CABOOSE**
Celebrate rail history

**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITY**
City-owned vacant lot

**DEVELOP COMMON SPACES +
AMENITIES**
Fire pits, seating, playscapes

**CONNECTION TO
CITY PARKS**

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY
Redevelopment of Arvin Site

**OPPORTUNITY FOR
ALLEY ACTIVATION**

Mini Park

Tripton Park



EXISTING CONDITIONS

OVERVIEW

Analysis of existing conditions included both quantitative and qualitative analysis that provided a baseline understanding of the recent planning efforts, public and private investments in buildings and infrastructure, current market conditions and gaps, land ownership, zoning, building conditions, and history and heritage.

PREVIOUS PLANNING

North Vernon Comprehensive Plan

In 2021-2022, the City of North Vernon completed a Comprehensive Plan that focused on placemaking, community identity and pride, public facilities and services, economic development, housing, transportation, agriculture, natural resources, and historic and archaeological resources. The following findings and recommendations are relevant to Downtown North Vernon and helped inform this planning process:

- Establish a Main Street program to support downtown revitalization

- As part of streetscape enhancements, explore the feasibility of burying overhead utility lines
- Build "pride pieces" such as Tripton Park and community events
- Develop plans for key underutilized or vacant sites for mixed-use projects with housing, including the demolition and clean-up of the former Arvin Manufacturing property
- Partner with agencies to support small business development in downtown and assist local entrepreneurs
- Incentivize new housing, including a mix of rental types and income levels
- Strengthen code enforcement and address blighted or vacant properties
- Build trail connections from downtown to Tripton Park, Jennings County Public Library, the river, and other destinations
- Support the maintenance and restoration of historic buildings downtown and consider a local historic preservation district to increase protection of historic buildings

Indiana Main Street Transformation Strategy

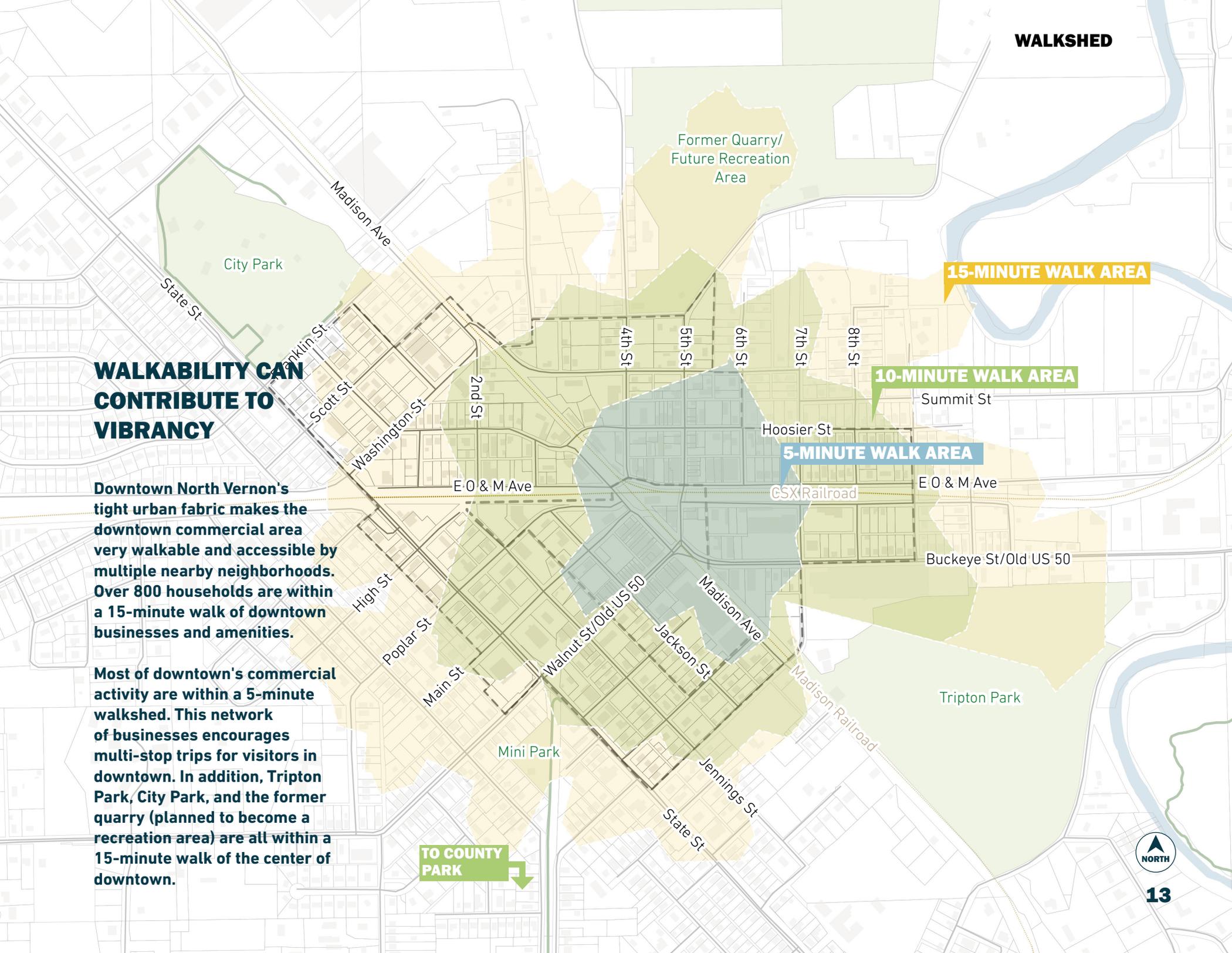
In 2023, North Vernon Main Street partnered with Indiana Main Street to develop a plan for transforming downtown based on community-wide feedback and current market data. Relevant recommendations include:

- Top concerns for downtown are neglected buildings in need of rehabilitation, vacant storefronts and lots, lack of diversity of businesses and destinations
- Address property development through additional funding mechanisms, financial incentives, education programs, and developer engagement
- Implement high-impact, low-investment placemaking efforts that create gathering places, activate alleys, and enhance trail connectivity
- Support entrepreneurs through pop-up and short-term opportunities to test the market

WALKABILITY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO VIBRANCY

Downtown North Vernon's tight urban fabric makes the downtown commercial area very walkable and accessible by multiple nearby neighborhoods. Over 800 households are within a 15-minute walk of downtown businesses and amenities.

Most of downtown's commercial activity are within a 5-minute walkshed. This network of businesses encourages multi-stop trips for visitors in downtown. In addition, Tripton Park, City Park, and the former quarry (planned to become a recreation area) are all within a 15-minute walk of the center of downtown.



15-MINUTE WALK AREA

10-MINUTE WALK AREA

5-MINUTE WALK AREA

TO COUNTY PARK



ANALYSIS

Historic Assets

The study area intersects with three nationally-registered historic districts in Downtown North Vernon. The Walnut Street Historic District and State Street Historic District are both primarily residential districts, while the North Vernon Downtown Historic District includes North Vernon's historic original downtown core.

The North Vernon Downtown Historic District was registered in 2006 and included a total of 97 buildings, 80 of which were considered "contributing". Architectural styles within downtown include Federal, Italianate, Classical Revival, and Bungalow/Craftsman; notably many downtown buildings consist primarily of brick materials with ornate Mesker iron facades and details.

Over time however, some of these notable buildings downtown have been not been maintained properly and are in disrepair, falling down or have been demolished due to this neglect. The longer these buildings are left to deteriorate, the more extensive and expensive the process becomes to stabilize and restore these significant buildings; the amount and cost of repairs needed to rehabilitate some historic buildings has been identified as a barrier to historic preservation efforts. Lack of effective, targeted, and consistent code enforcement

has not held property owners accountable for maintenance of buildings and necessary structural repairs. The City and the County should work with investors to implement a more proactive approach to preserving historic buildings and preventing losing more to neglect.

Zoning

Much of the historic core of downtown is zoned commercial, and this zoning pattern reflects the Historic District boundary. Beyond the center of downtown, properties are mostly zoned residential, with the majority being two-family. Very few properties are zoned as industrial, including the Arvin Manufacturing property and the former quarry - both of which are anticipated to redevelop and change in use.

Vacant & Publicly-Owned

A significant amount of property within the study area is vacant or underutilized. Despite many downtown commercial buildings with active storefronts have occupied groundfloors, the upper floors of the buildings are often vacant. These vacant upper floors are an opportunity to invest in and create more housing opportunities downtown. The City owns several properties downtown, most of which are vacant lots. A particularly significant property is at the highly-visible corner of Walnut Street, Buckeye Street, and 5th Street, which is a vacant lot that the City owns and is actively interested in developing.

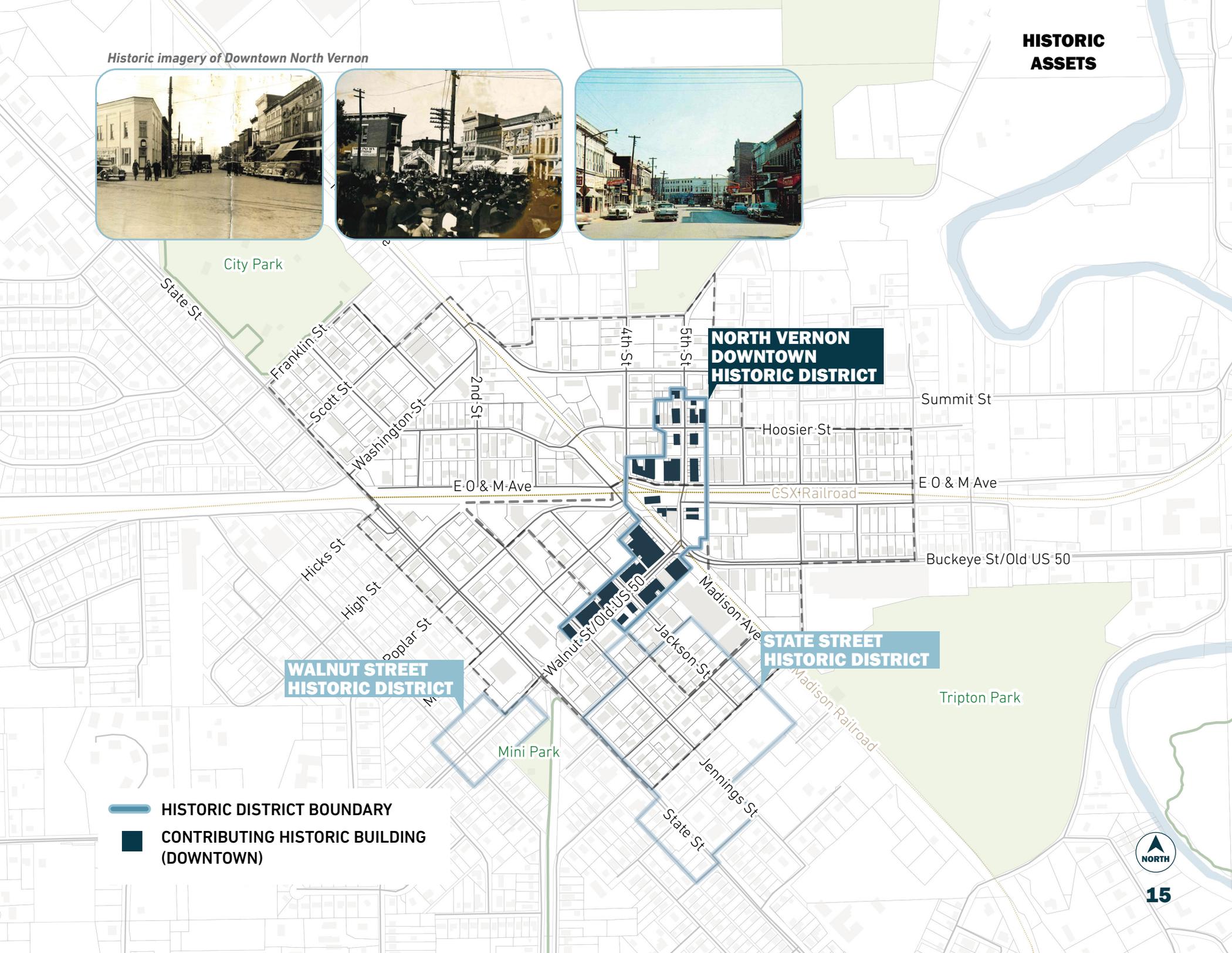


Historic buildings within the North Vernon Downtown Historic District

Historic imagery of Downtown North Vernon



HISTORIC ASSETS



NORTH VERNON DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

WALNUT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

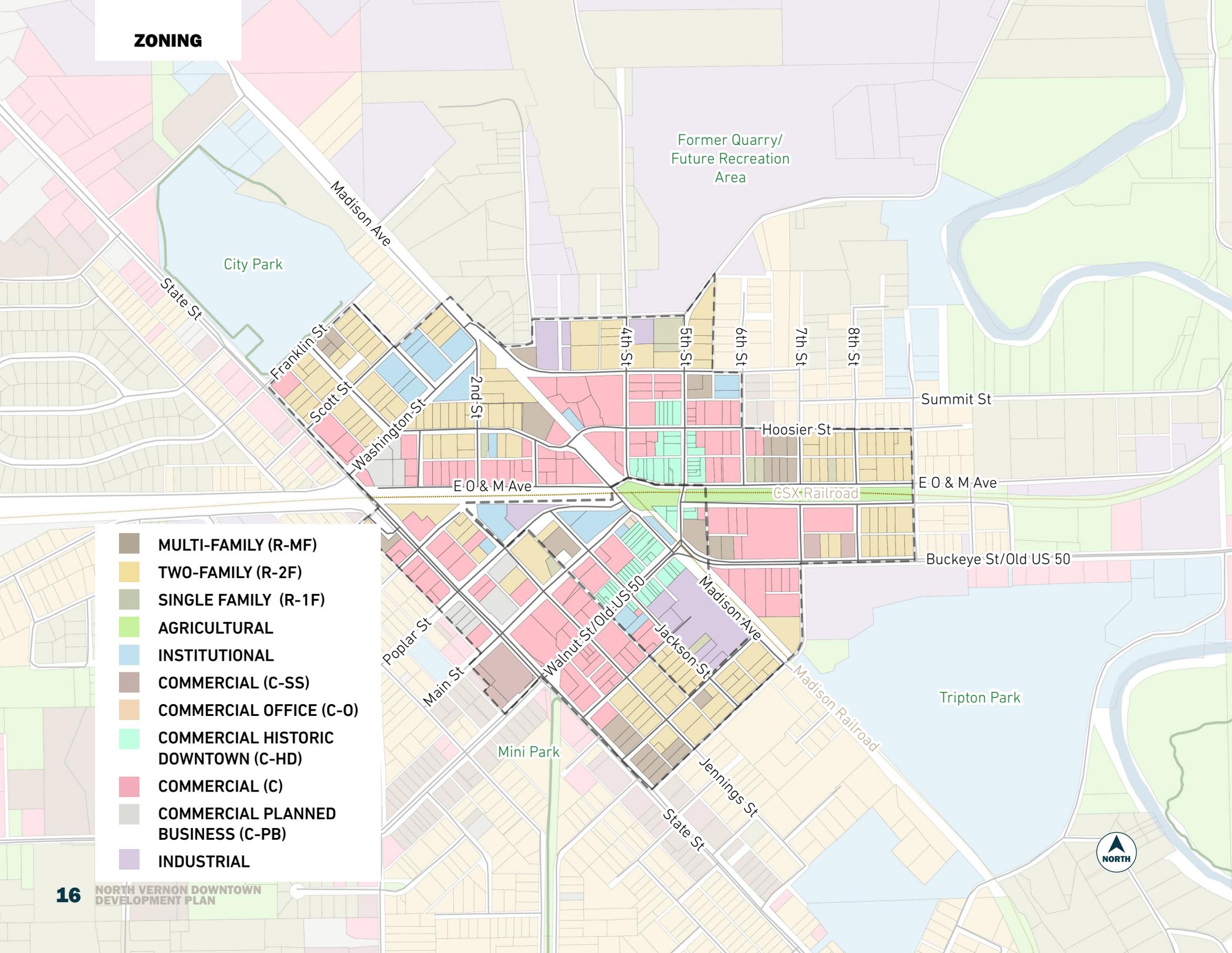
STATE STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

-  HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  CONTRIBUTING HISTORIC BUILDING (DOWNTOWN)

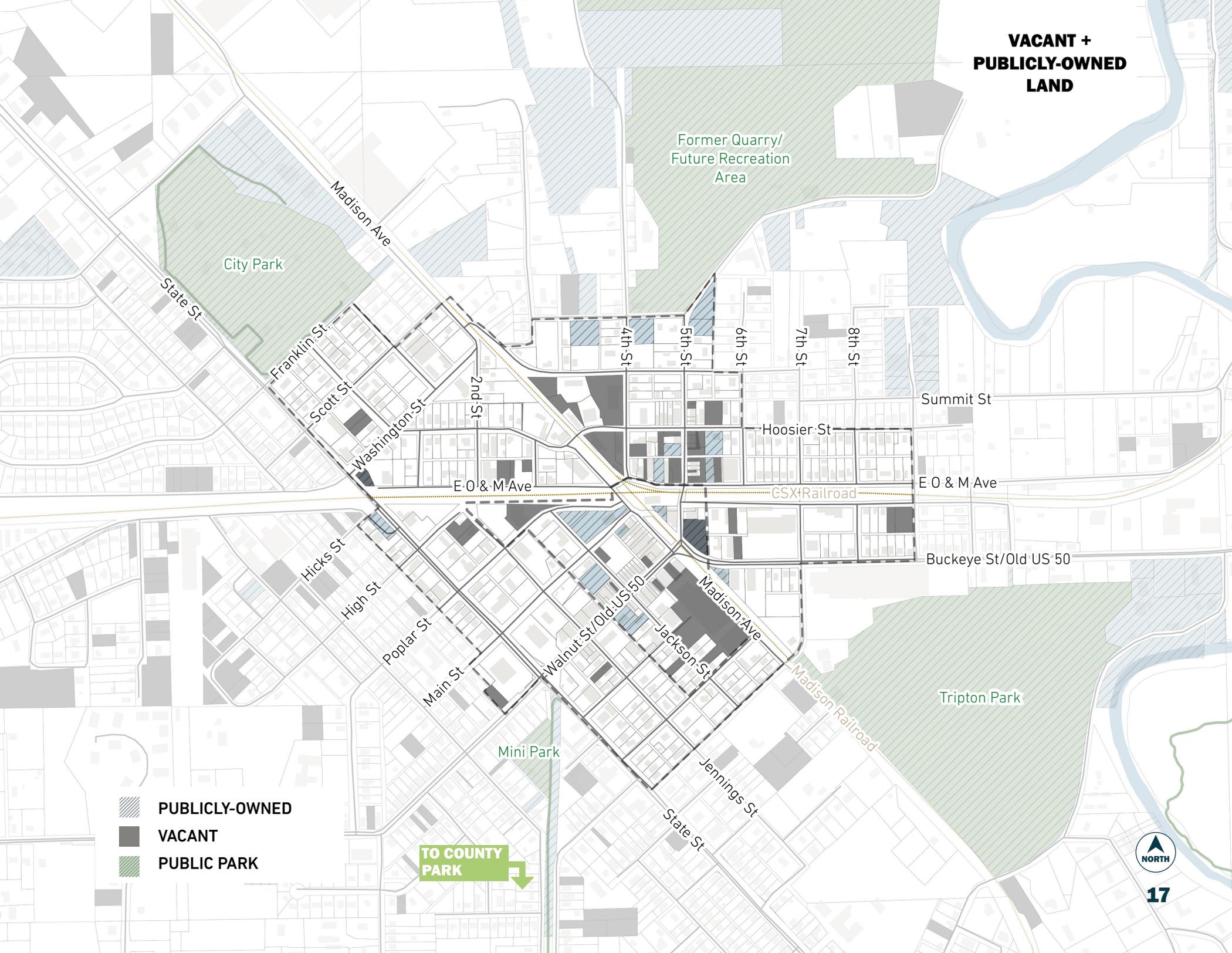


ZONING

- MULTI-FAMILY (R-MF)
- TWO-FAMILY (R-2F)
- SINGLE FAMILY (R-1F)
- AGRICULTURAL
- INSTITUTIONAL
- COMMERCIAL (C-SS)
- COMMERCIAL OFFICE (C-O)
- COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DOWNTOWN (C-HD)
- COMMERCIAL (C)
- COMMERCIAL PLANNED BUSINESS (C-PB)
- INDUSTRIAL



**VACANT +
PUBLICLY-OWNED
LAND**



Former Quarry/
Future Recreation
Area

City Park

Summit St

Hoosier St

E O & M Ave

Buckeye St/Old US 50

Tripton Park

Mini Park

-  PUBLICLY-OWNED
-  VACANT
-  PUBLIC PARK

**TO COUNTY
PARK** 



FRAMEWORK

Recommendations from this plan are organized into two frameworks, Open Space and Connectivity and Economic Development, each with a list of focused projects and initiatives included. Further studies may be necessary to advance the concepts and strategies proposed within these frameworks.

OPEN SPACE + CONNECTIVITY

The Open Space and Connectivity Framework focuses on increasing downtown vibrancy through enhanced walkable connections, curating a unique experience through downtown, celebrating history and sense of place, bringing people together, and continuing public infrastructure investments that will make downtown more accessible and attractive to visitors, tourists, and residents.

1

Activating the Walkable Core

Design a new gathering space that supports downtown businesses, events, and everyday visitation. Identify other ways to activate additional spaces downtown.

2

Building Trails to Connect

Design a phased trail network through downtown that connect community assets and destinations. Include amenities and placemaking elements to curate a unique trail experience.

3

Improving Alleys + Utilities

Identify utilities to be consolidated, removed, or buried and improve alleyways to become part of the walkable pedestrian and open space network.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Framework focuses on key (re) development opportunities. Future investments should focus on increasing housing supply and options downtown, proactively addressing property maintenance and historic preservation, supporting a vibrant retail and entrepreneurial environment, and incentivizing private investment in catalytic development opportunities.

4

Supporting Historic Preservation + Building Rehabilitation

Build upon the current momentum of building rehab projects to ensure that downtown's greatest historic assets are being preserved.

5

Developing Key Infill Sites

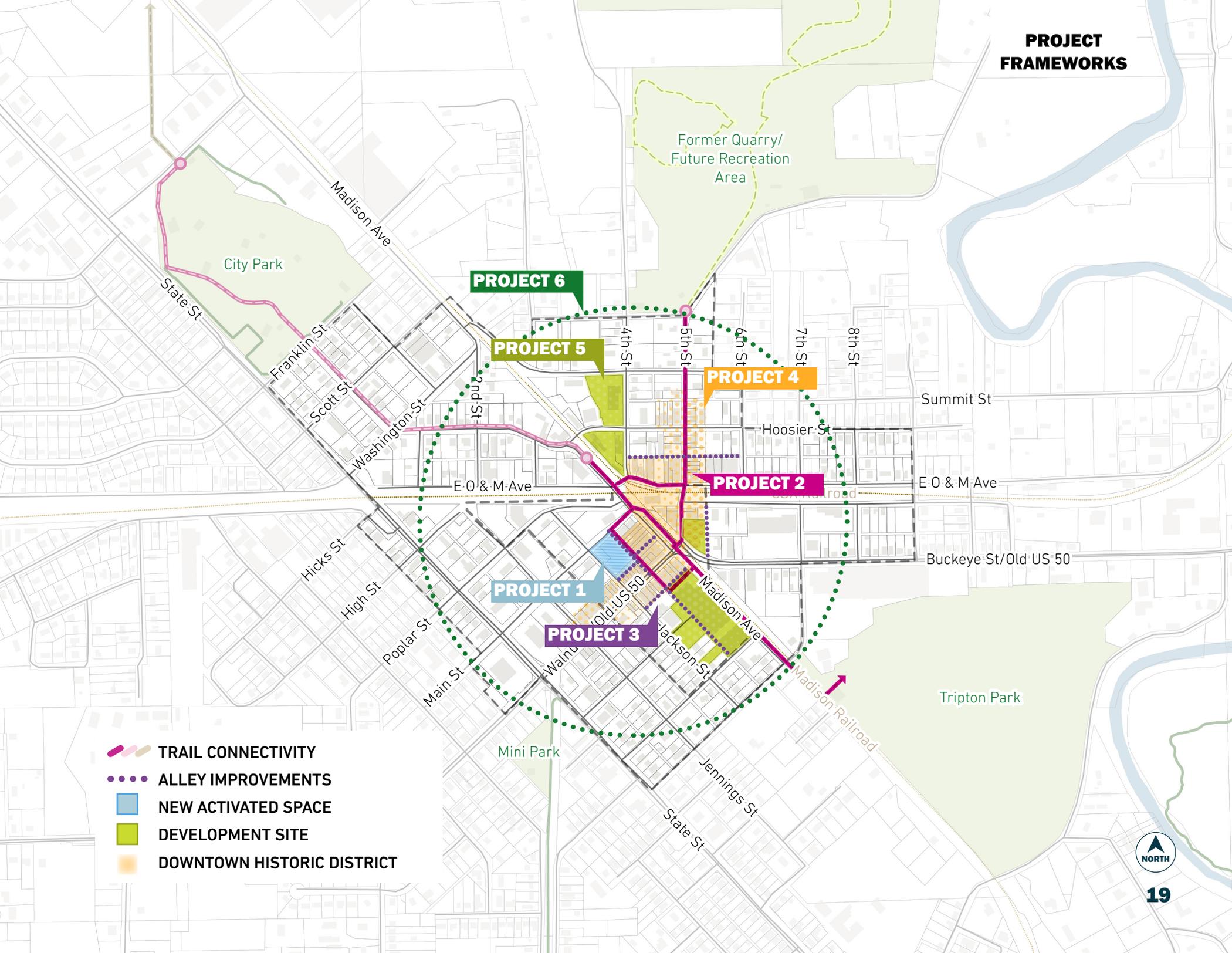
Develop a vision for high-impact sites downtown that meets the needs of the community and complements downtown's historic character.

6

Land Acquisition + Disposition

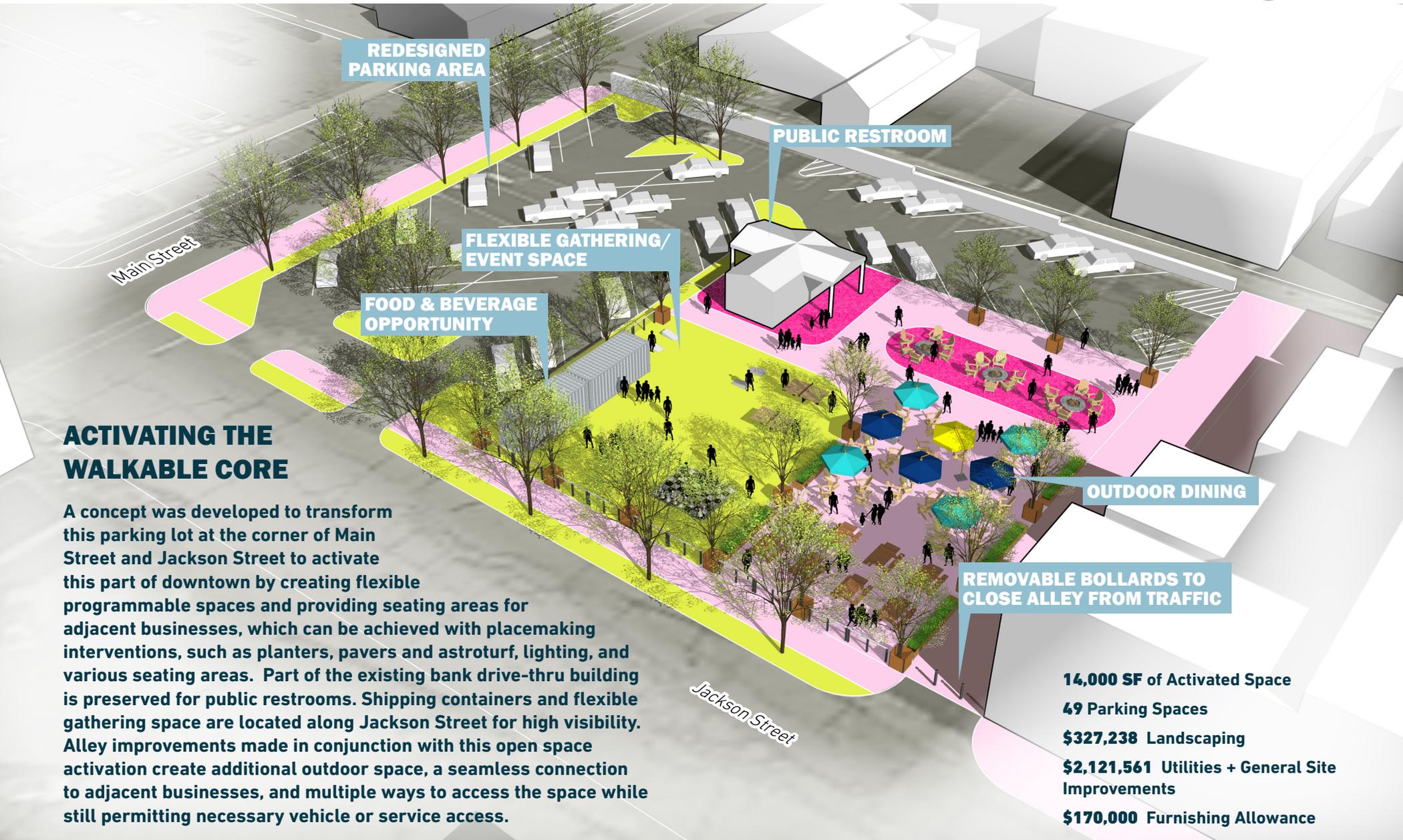
Establish a process for acquiring and disposing of land for redevelopment and an entity and dedicated funding source to carry out land acquisition.

PROJECT FRAMEWORKS



- TRAIL CONNECTIVITY
- ALLEY IMPROVEMENTS
- NEW ACTIVATED SPACE
- DEVELOPMENT SITE
- DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT





ACTIVATING THE WALKABLE CORE

A concept was developed to transform this parking lot at the corner of Main Street and Jackson Street to activate this part of downtown by creating flexible programmable spaces and providing seating areas for adjacent businesses, which can be achieved with placemaking interventions, such as planters, pavers and astroturf, lighting, and various seating areas. Part of the existing bank drive-thru building is preserved for public restrooms. Shipping containers and flexible gathering space are located along Jackson Street for high visibility. Alley improvements made in conjunction with this open space activation create additional outdoor space, a seamless connection to adjacent businesses, and multiple ways to access the space while still permitting necessary vehicle or service access.

REDESIGNED PARKING AREA

PUBLIC RESTROOM

FLEXIBLE GATHERING/ EVENT SPACE

FOOD & BEVERAGE OPPORTUNITY

OUTDOOR DINING

REMOVABLE BOLLARDS TO CLOSE ALLEY FROM TRAFFIC

- 14,000 SF** of Activated Space
- 49** Parking Spaces
- \$327,238** Landscaping
- \$2,121,561** Utilities + General Site Improvements
- \$170,000** Furnishing Allowance



BUILDING TRAILS TO CONNECT

The City has many community assets within or near downtown, including its popular and well-utilized parks. Recent streetscape investments have enhanced the walking experience downtown, but many areas near downtown are lacking in adequate infrastructure and pedestrian amenities.

A key goal of this plan is to strategically invest in pedestrian infrastructure to connect existing and future community amenities, open spaces, and planned trails to downtown. This strategy intends to build upon ongoing planning efforts including a trail to connect downtown to City Park, which has been recently submitted for a Next Level Trails Grant, and the transformation of the quarry north of downtown into a recreation area with recreational trails and other natural outdoor amenities.

This phased strategy proposes extending streetscape improvements further beyond the core of downtown to Tripton Park, incorporating improved alleyways and new development as part of the trail network. The second phase includes completing the connection north to City Park. The third phase includes a trail extension to the Jennings County Public Library.

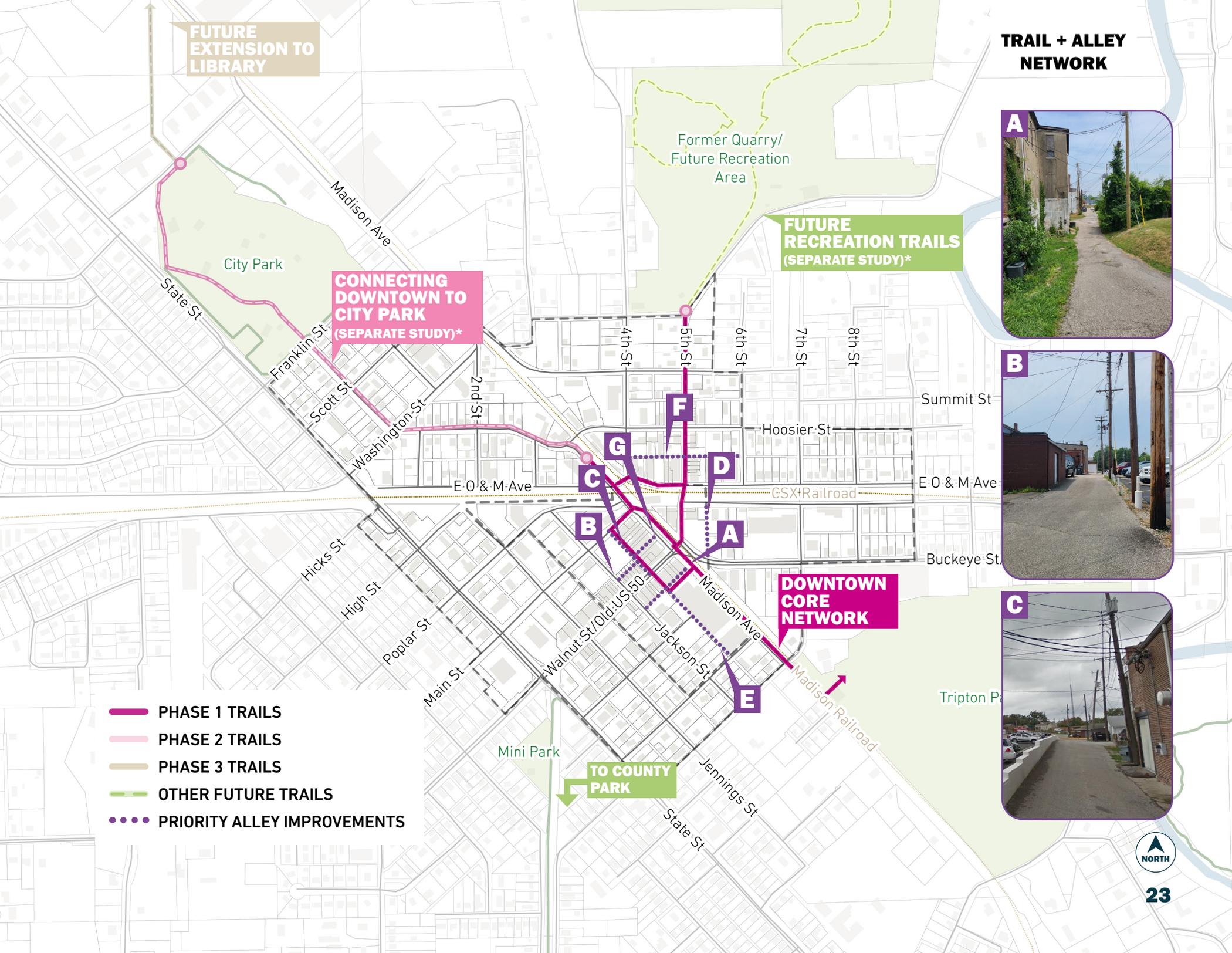
New trails should include wayfinding, placemaking elements, public art, and other public amenities. These amenities should be designed unique to North Vernon to celebrate and tell the story of the rich history of the city and create a memorable experience for residents and visitors of downtown.

**The City recently developed a preliminary master plan for the conversion of the former quarry into a recreation area. Future downtown trails should connect to the trails within the park. The City also recently submitted for funding to design/build a trail connection from Madison Avenue north of the CSX Railroad to the western edge of City Park. These separate studies are included in the proposed trail network in this plan.*



Examples of interpretive signage and public art honoring local history and creating sense of place

TRAIL + ALLEY NETWORK



FUTURE EXTENSION TO LIBRARY

City Park

CONNECTING DOWNTOWN TO CITY PARK (SEPARATE STUDY)*

Former Quarry/
Future Recreation Area

FUTURE RECREATION TRAILS (SEPARATE STUDY)*



DOWNTOWN CORE NETWORK

TO COUNTY PARK

- PHASE 1 TRAILS
- PHASE 2 TRAILS
- PHASE 3 TRAILS
- OTHER FUTURE TRAILS
- PRIORITY ALLEY IMPROVEMENTS



IMPROVING ALLEYS + UTILITIES

Recent investments in historic buildings downtown have effectively restored many building facades and storefronts that enhance North Vernon's unique historic character; however, the rears of these buildings and the alleyways behind them have not seen such investment. Many alleys are poorly maintained, view boarded up windows and unkept building exteriors, and are littered with utility poles and wires that are unsightly.

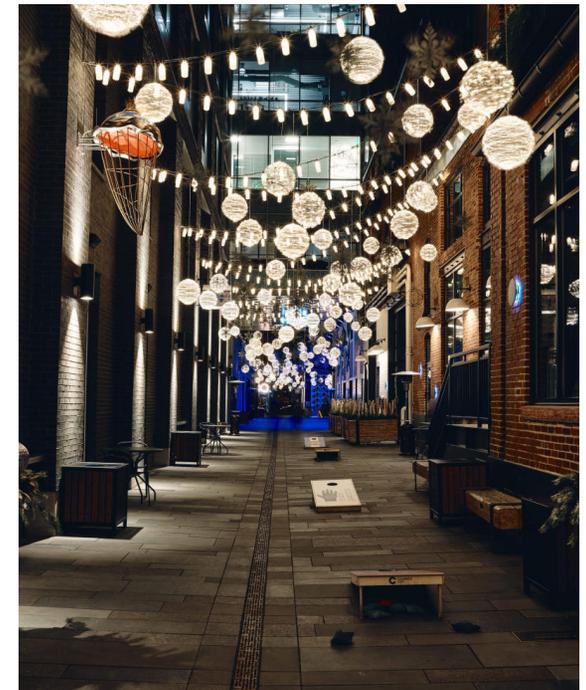
Several alleys downtown have been identified for improvements and clean up of utilities, including either removing redundant lines and cleaning up existing lines and/or burying utility lines underground. These alleys were prioritized in the plan for their key roles in downtown connectivity and adjacency to catalytic development opportunities. These priority alleys include:

- A: South of Walnut Street, adjacent to the Arvin Manufacturing site, between Jackson Street and Madison Avenue
- B: North of Walnut, connecting to Jackson Street
- C: West of Madison Avenue, between Walnut Street and Main Street
- D: East of 5th Avenue (Moir Avenue), between Buckeye Street and Amvets Drive
- E: South of Madison Avenue, between Walnut Street and College Street
- F: North of East O & M Avenue, between 4th Street and 6th Street
- G: Adjacent to Park Theater, connecting to Madison Avenue

Well designed and activated alleys can perform as both additional pedestrian corridors to enhance pedestrian connectivity and additional gathering space to accommodate nearby businesses and programming.



Cady's Alley, Washington, DC

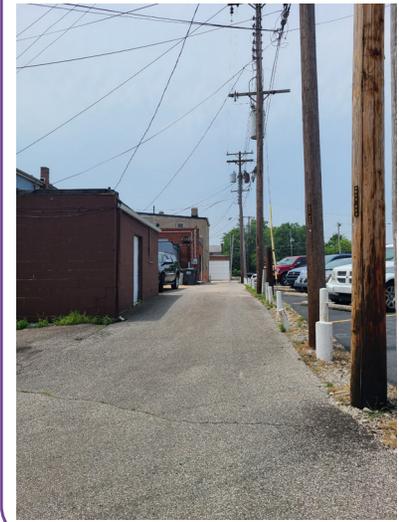


Dairy Block Alley, Denver, CO

ARVIN SITE/BEHIND WALNUT (A + E)



BANK DRIVE-THRU/BEHIND WALNUT (B)



BANK DRIVE-THRU/BEHIND MADISON (C)



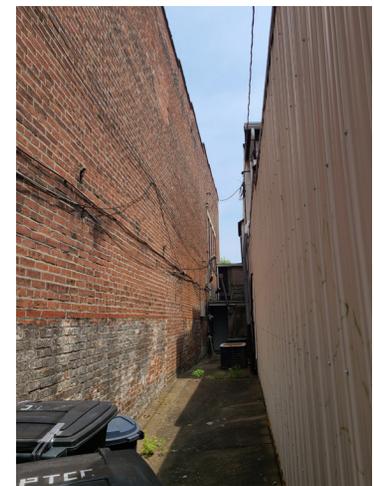
BEHIND 5TH AVENUE/MOIRE AVENUE (D)



NORTH OF O & M AVENUE/4TH TO 6TH (F)

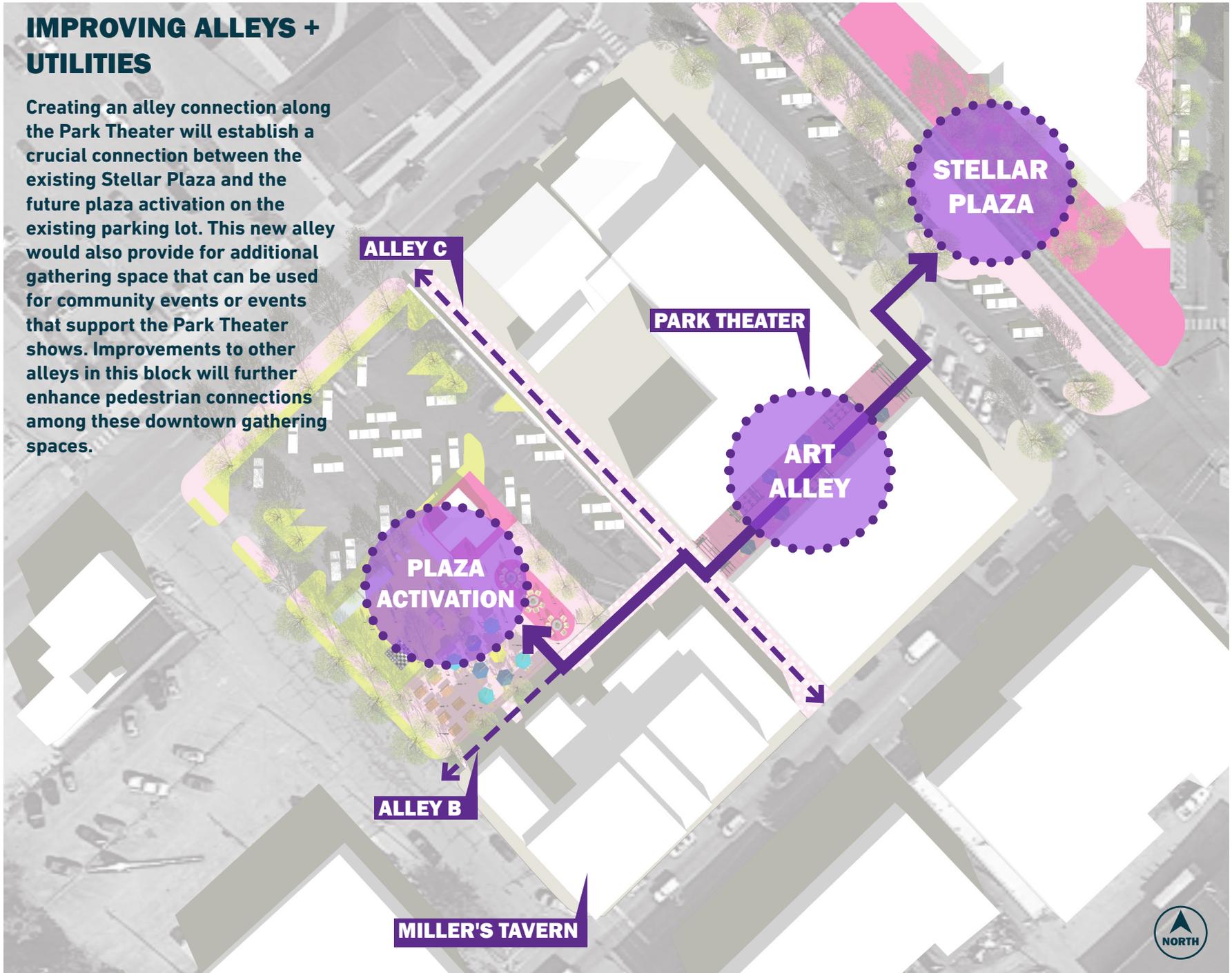


ADJACENT TO PARK THEATER (G)

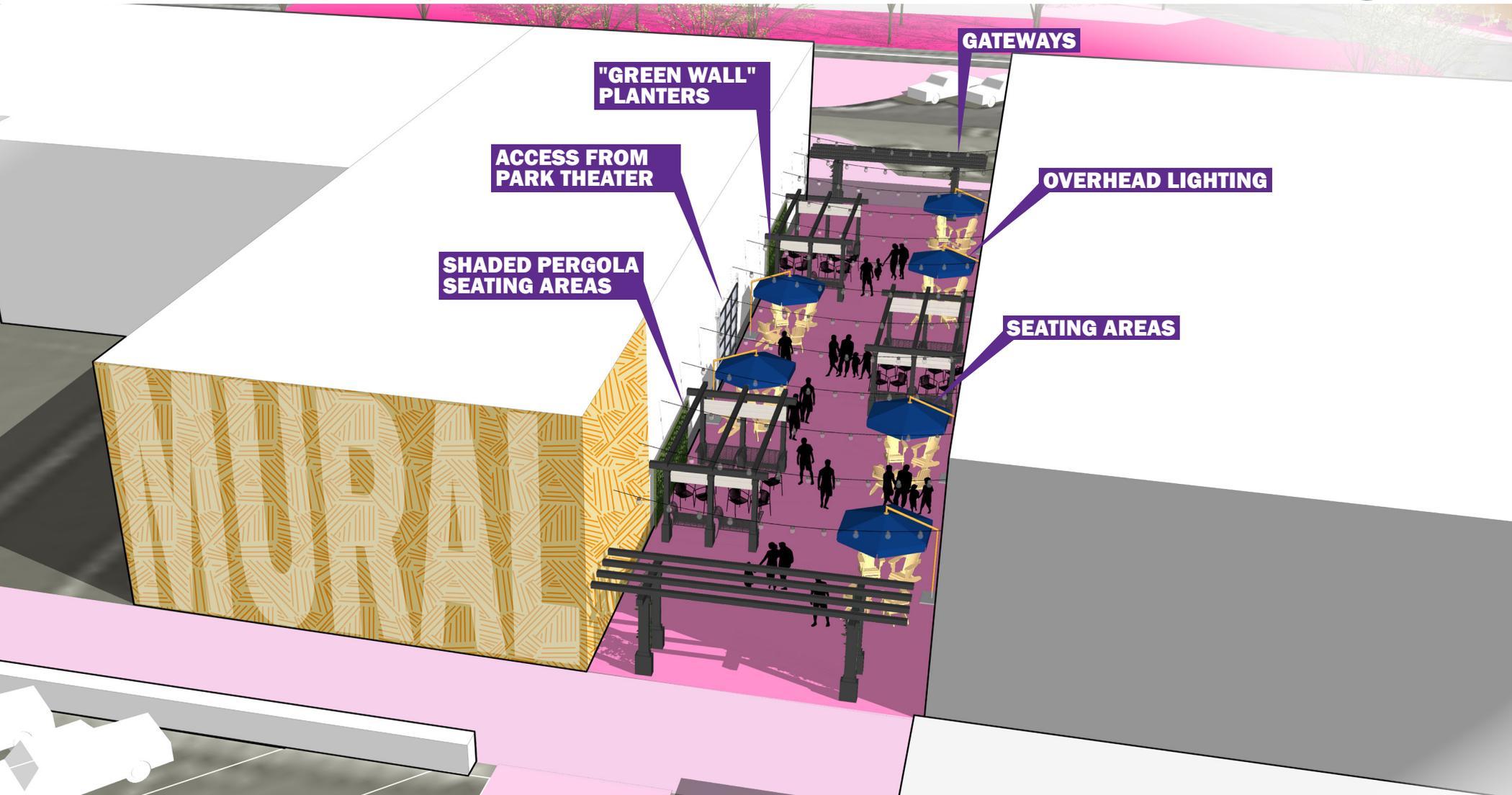


IMPROVING ALLEYS + UTILITIES

Creating an alley connection along the Park Theater will establish a crucial connection between the existing Stellar Plaza and the future plaza activation on the existing parking lot. This new alley would also provide for additional gathering space that can be used for community events or events that support the Park Theater shows. Improvements to other alleys in this block will further enhance pedestrian connections among these downtown gathering spaces.



Art Alley Concept (Alley G)



- 4,200 SF** of Activated Space
- \$300,000** Property Acquisition
- \$60,000 - \$80,000** Building Demolition
- \$428,350** Utilities + Site Landscaping + Furnishings



SUPPORTING HISTORIC PRESERVATION + BUILDING REHABILITATION

There is already momentum present in North Vernon that is driving a wave of private investment in historic buildings. Several commercial buildings downtown are currently being stabilized and restored by local investors, encouraged by the City's facade improvements program; this demonstrates the level of recognition of the community how significant these historic buildings are and the level of investment the community has in creating a more vibrant Downtown North Vernon.

The magnitude of repairs needed for some rehabilitation projects, however, may be preventing investors from investing in other significant historic buildings that are crucial pieces of the historic downtown fabric. In order to incentivize further investment in downtown buildings, the City and County should explore potential grant opportunities, funding mechanisms, creative partnerships, and other resources to assist interested individuals or developers in their restoration projects and to increase attractiveness and feasibility of such projects. The City may want to continue its facade improvements program and allow interest applicants to include interior renovations in their project for additional funding; this is where the City

could encourage and incentivize investment in upper story interiors. Matching grant programs are common for these types of building renovations, both exterior and interior. Matching grant programs or rebate programs are common among municipalities similar to North Vernon to help fund these types of historic building rehab projects.

To attract residents downtown, building stabilization and rehabilitation efforts should focus on properties with secondary floors that could accommodate residential uses, including the PNC Bank building, the Greathouse building, the Masonic Lodge and the adjacent building, and the Redmen building. Some of these properties have been or are currently being stabilized, with groundfloor space and/or facade improvements, but the upper floors have not been invested in and remain vacant. There is also desire for a hotel or bed and breakfast to locate downtown. This plan recommends a feasibility study to understand demand, space needs, and potential locations for this use.



Recent investments in historic buildings downtown

The City should consider establishing a Historic Preservation Commission or a design review body that can firstly, establish desired design parameters for future building improvements and secondly, review rehabilitation project proposals and ensure that improvements to historic buildings are in accordance with desired design parameters.

The City may also explore the process of becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the State of Indiana to assist with efforts focused on preserving downtown's historic character. If pursuing becoming a CLG community, establishing a Historic Preservation Commission and a preservation ordinance is part of the required process.

For more information on Certified Local Governments, go to:
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/certified-local-government-program.htm>

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The CLG Program is a program in which Indiana State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service partners with local governments to promote local-level preservation efforts that preserve, protect, and increase awareness of unique cultural heritage in places from small towns to large cities. By participating in this program and committing to national historic preservation standards, communities can qualify for technical assistance and training opportunities, gain competitive advantage when applying for federal grants, and be eligible for more advantageous grant-to-match ratios. Participating municipalities are offered training opportunities through scholarships to attend the Preserving Historic Places conference and membership to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.

Benefits of the program include:

- **Funding:** States are required to give at least 10% of their annual Federal Historic Preservation Fund dollars to CLGs. Grants can fund a variety of projects such as: surveys, National Register nominations, rehabilitation projects, design guidelines, educational programs, training, structural assessments, feasibility studies, and more
- **Technical Assistance:** Municipalities have access to their own designated CLG Coordinator for assistance with their commission, building assessments, surveys and nominations, and general preservation.
- **Sustainability:** Studies have shown that historic preservation provide communities with economic, environmental, and social benefits, including higher property values, less population decline, and greater sense of community.

Municipalities must meet certain requirements to become certified as a CLG community to execute regulatory and administrative preservation activities. Requirements for becoming a CLG community include:

- A local preservation ordinance for the designation and protection of local properties including at least one locally-designated landmark
- An active and qualified historic preservation commission
- Access to a qualified professional staff person to support the commission
- An up-to-date inventory of historic properties within its jurisdiction
- Nominate properties to the National Register of Historic Places
- Provide for public participation in its meetings and activities

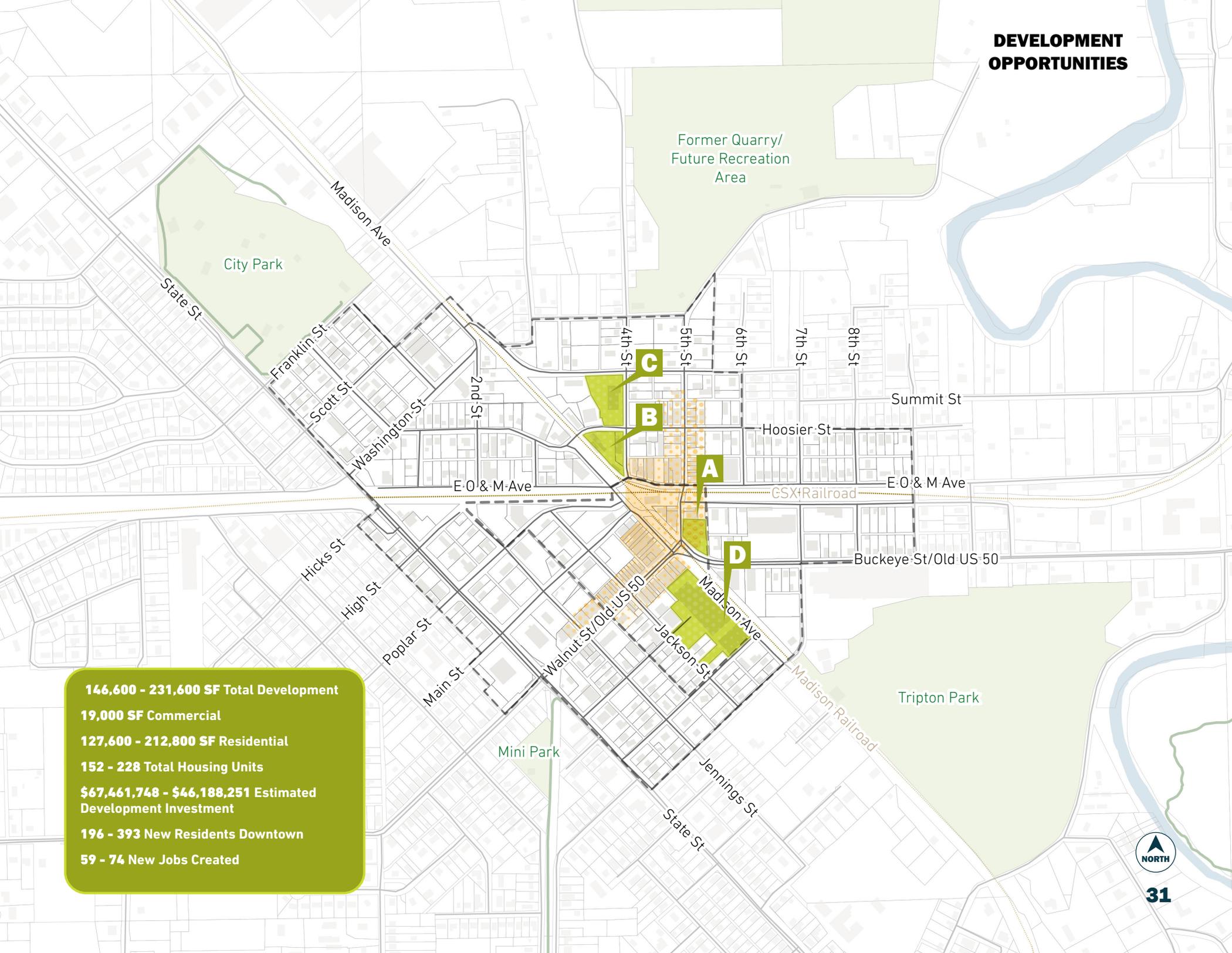
DEVELOPING KEY INFILL SITES DOWNTOWN

High-level redevelopment concepts were developed for these four key sites. These sites include vacant or underperforming properties in the core of downtown that are primed for redevelopment. These sites have the potential to impact the market and demonstrate successful, thoughtful infill development in a way that attracts additional private investment.

The vision for new development downtown aims to focus on architecture and urban design character that is complementary to North Vernon's historic character, to build a critical mass of housing units to increase the number of residents downtown, and to incorporate gathering spaces and pedestrian connectivity. Key considerations of each development concept include public infrastructure enhancements such as rebuilding curbs and sidewalks, utility needs, streetscaping and landscaping, parking demand and needs, diversity of housing options, and impacts to the population such as job creation and new residents.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



146,600 - 231,600 SF Total Development
19,000 SF Commercial
127,600 - 212,800 SF Residential
152 - 228 Total Housing Units
\$67,461,748 - \$46,188,251 Estimated Development Investment
196 - 393 New Residents Downtown
59 - 74 New Jobs Created





SITE A

Ironclad Site

Site A is located in a prominent location at the heart of downtown: at the intersection of Walnut Street, Buckeye Street, Madison Avenue, and 5th Street and across from the new Stellar Plaza. This site is the location of the former Ironclad Building which was formerly retail and was unfortunately leveled by fire. The site is currently owned by the City of North Vernon and is clear, making this site prime and ready to engage a developer.

Development of this site has the potential to re-establish this important corner with groundfloor retail and residential units. Building character should carefully consider the scale and architectural features of the existing historic buildings nearby. The slope of the site and alley to the rear presents an opportunity to incorporate parking and access in the rear of the site.

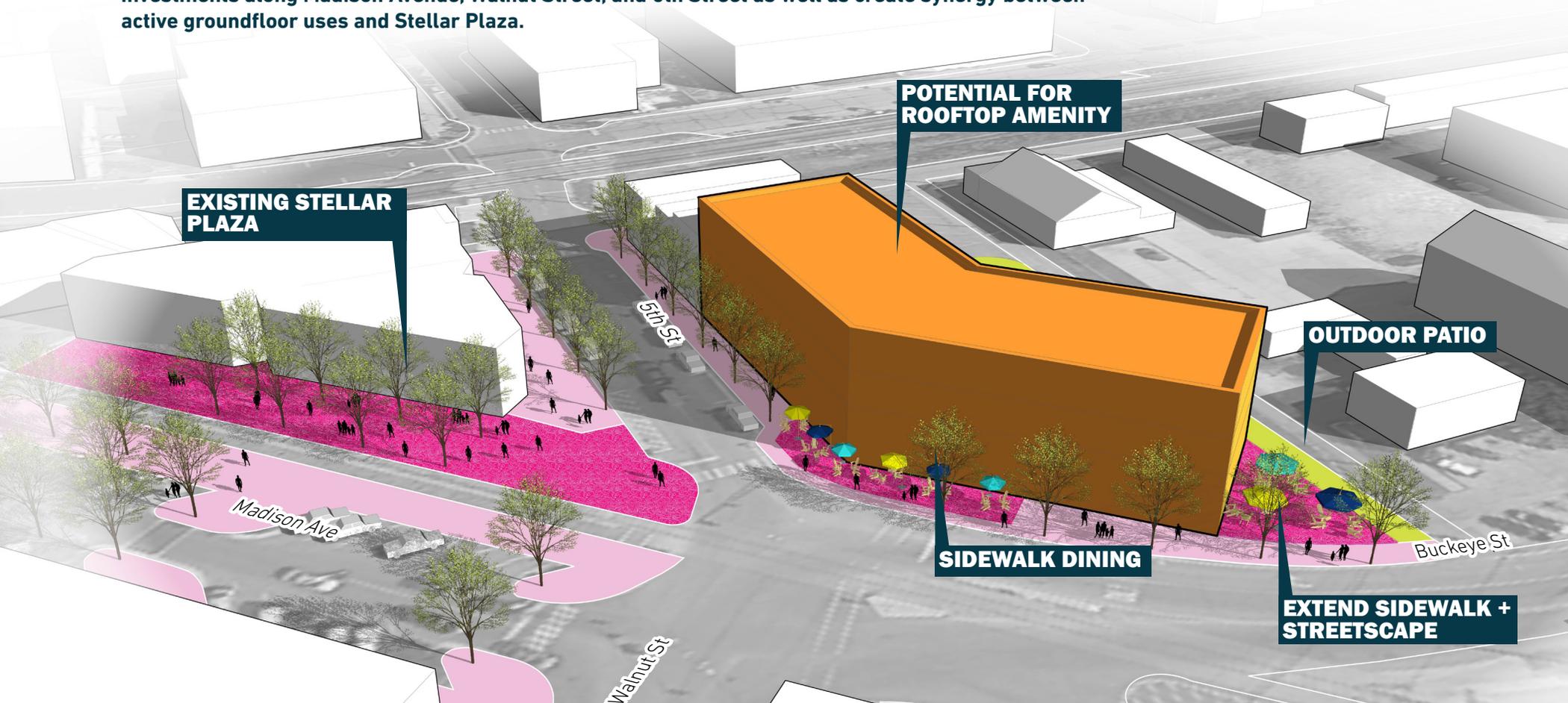


Existing Conditions



FILLING A CRUCIAL GAP IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN

Development of this prominent corner of downtown has the potential to build upon recent public investments along Madison Avenue, Walnut Street, and 5th Street as well as create synergy between active groundfloor uses and Stellar Plaza.



- 70,000 SF** Total Development
- 6,000 SF** Commercial
- 64,000 SF** Multi-Family Residential (60 Units)
- 90 - 105** New Residents
- 12** New Employees
- \$798,000** Site Improvements Costs
- \$17,000,000 - \$19,000,000** Development Costs



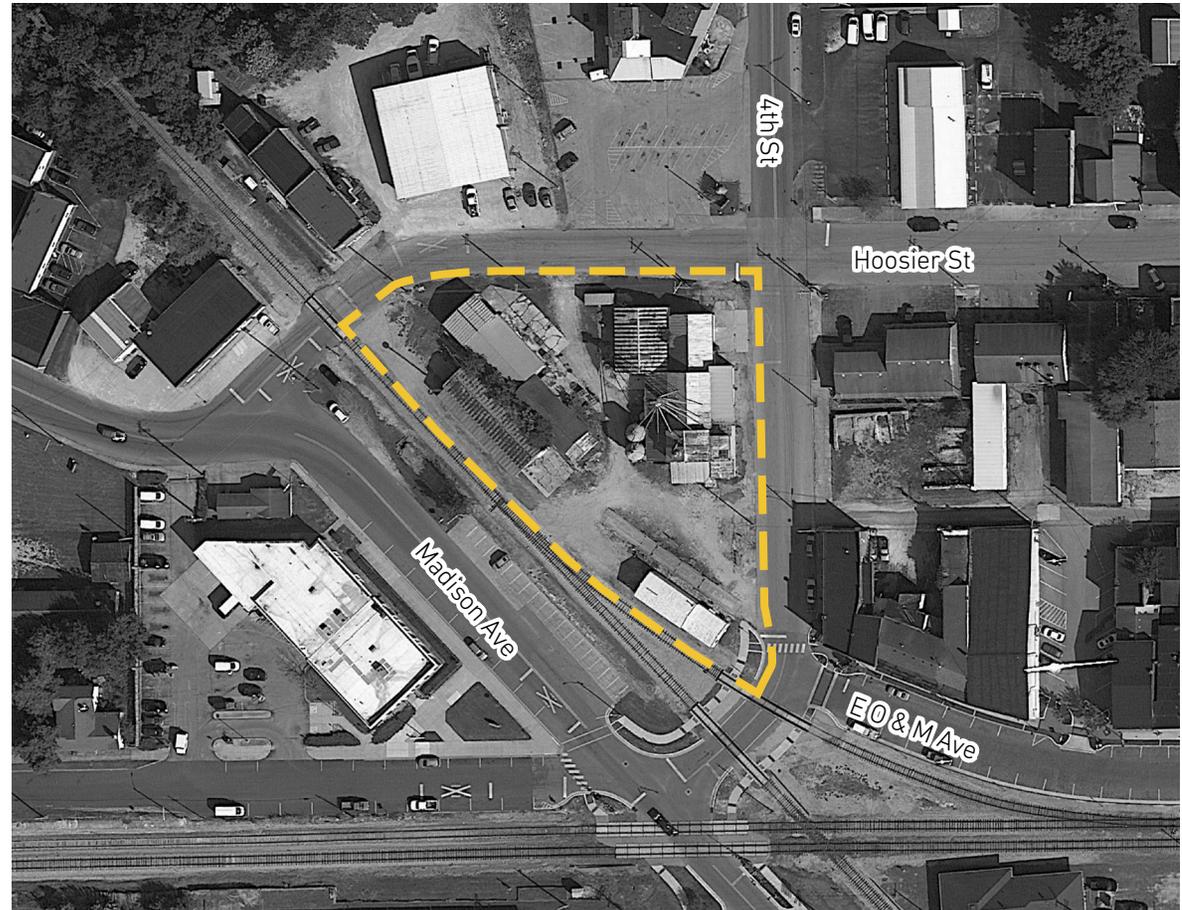


SITE B

Eaton Feed Mill

Site B is separated from the rest of downtown by the intersection of CSX Railroad and the Madison Railroad lines. The site's current use includes an inactive feed mill and associated storage buildings. The individual parcels of this site (two parcels, one owner) could be aggregated to form one single site for redevelopment. The site is accessible from Hoosier Street and 4th Street, but is lacking in sidewalks to ensure continuous pedestrian connections downtown.

Potential for this site could include a family-friendly experience such as a restaurant, a food hall, or a brewery or distillery with outdoor space that would activate a part of downtown that has seen less investment than the blocks south of the railroad. Redevelopment could include a full or partial reuse of the existing feed mill depending on the condition of the structures. The extent of the City's recent streetscape improvements downtown, which currently end at the southern corner of this site, should be extended through the site to enhance walkability and create continuity in the design and amenities of the public realm.

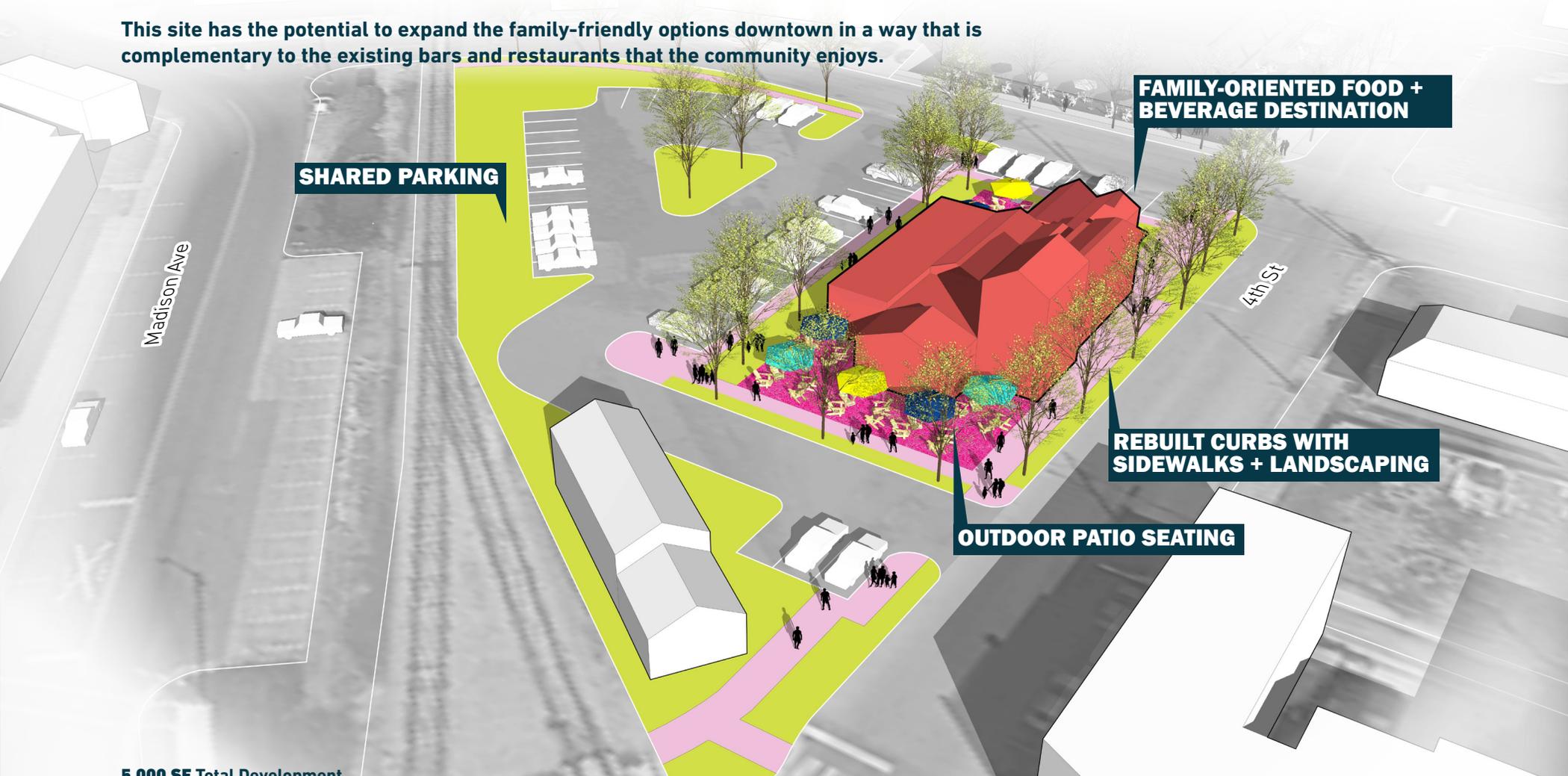


Existing Conditions



ESTABLISHING NEW VIBRANT DESTINATIONS

This site has the potential to expand the family-friendly options downtown in a way that is complementary to the existing bars and restaurants that the community enjoys.



- 5,000 SF Total Development
- 5,000 SF Commercial
- 0 New Residents
- 20-25 New Employees
- \$1,303,000 Site Improvements Costs
- \$1,250,000 - \$1,500,000 Development Costs



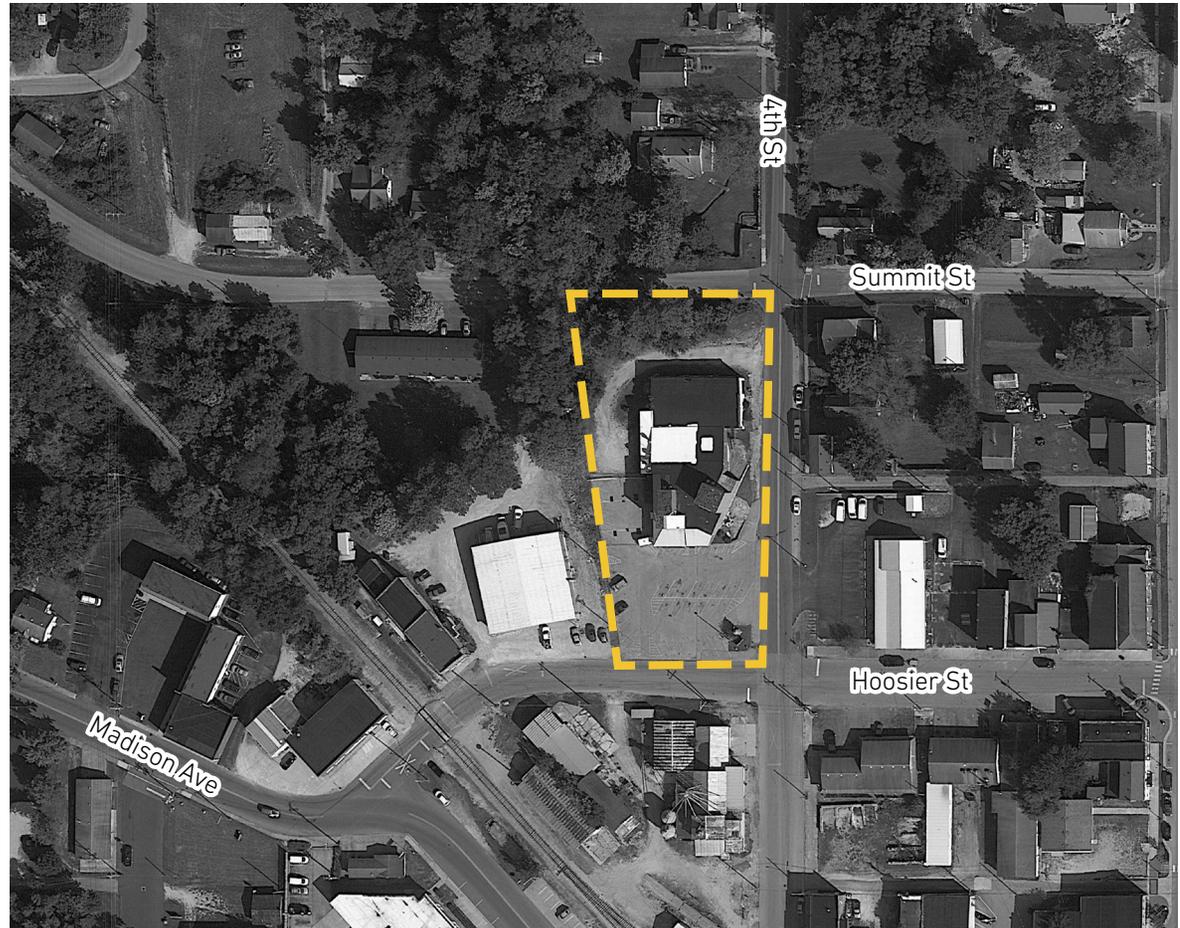


SITE C

Former Phat Guy Sports Bar

Further north, Site C includes a large vacant building and parking area. In this block between Hoosier Street and Summit Street, uses begin to transition from commercial or mixed-use to residential to the north. The site is accessible from Hoosier Street and 4th Street, but is lacking in sidewalks to ensure it is walkable from downtown and the nearby residential areas.

Redevelopment of this site should activate Hoosier Street and 4th Street with a family-friendly indoor experience such as indoor play, gaming, bowling, etc. Frontage on Summit Street has the potential for residential that blends in with the character and scale of the adjacent neighborhood. Streetscape improvements should be extended from downtown through the site to enhance walkability and create continuity in the design and amenities of the public realm.



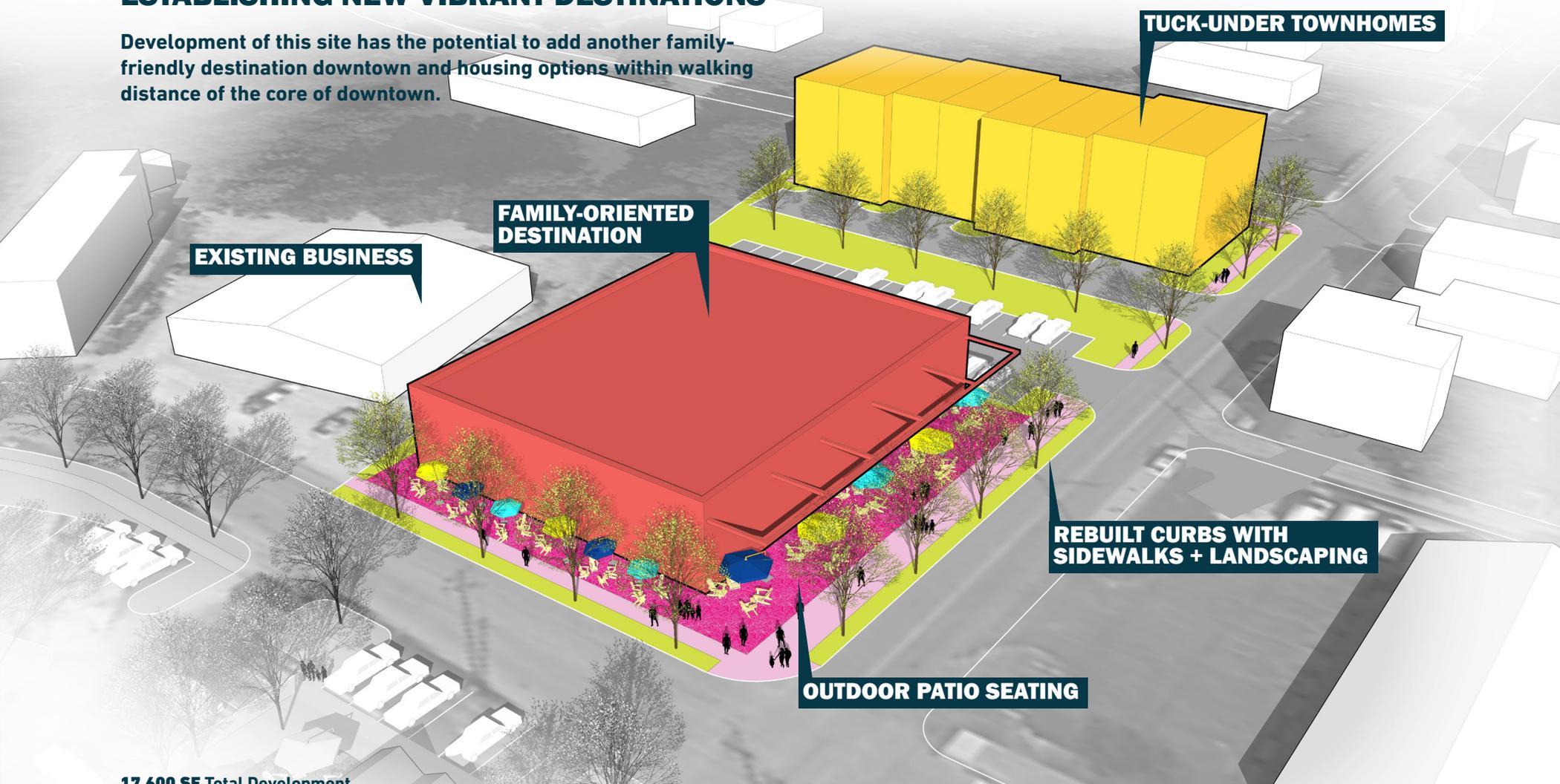
Existing Conditions



Site C - Former Phat Guy Sports Bar

ESTABLISHING NEW VIBRANT DESTINATIONS

Development of this site has the potential to add another family-friendly destination downtown and housing options within walking distance of the core of downtown.



- 17,600 SF** Total Development
- 8,000 SF** Commercial
- 9,600 SF** Residential (8 Townhomes)
- 16 - 20** New Residents
- 25 - 30** New Employees
- \$1,971,000** Site Improvements Costs
- \$4,400,000 - \$5,280,000** Development Costs





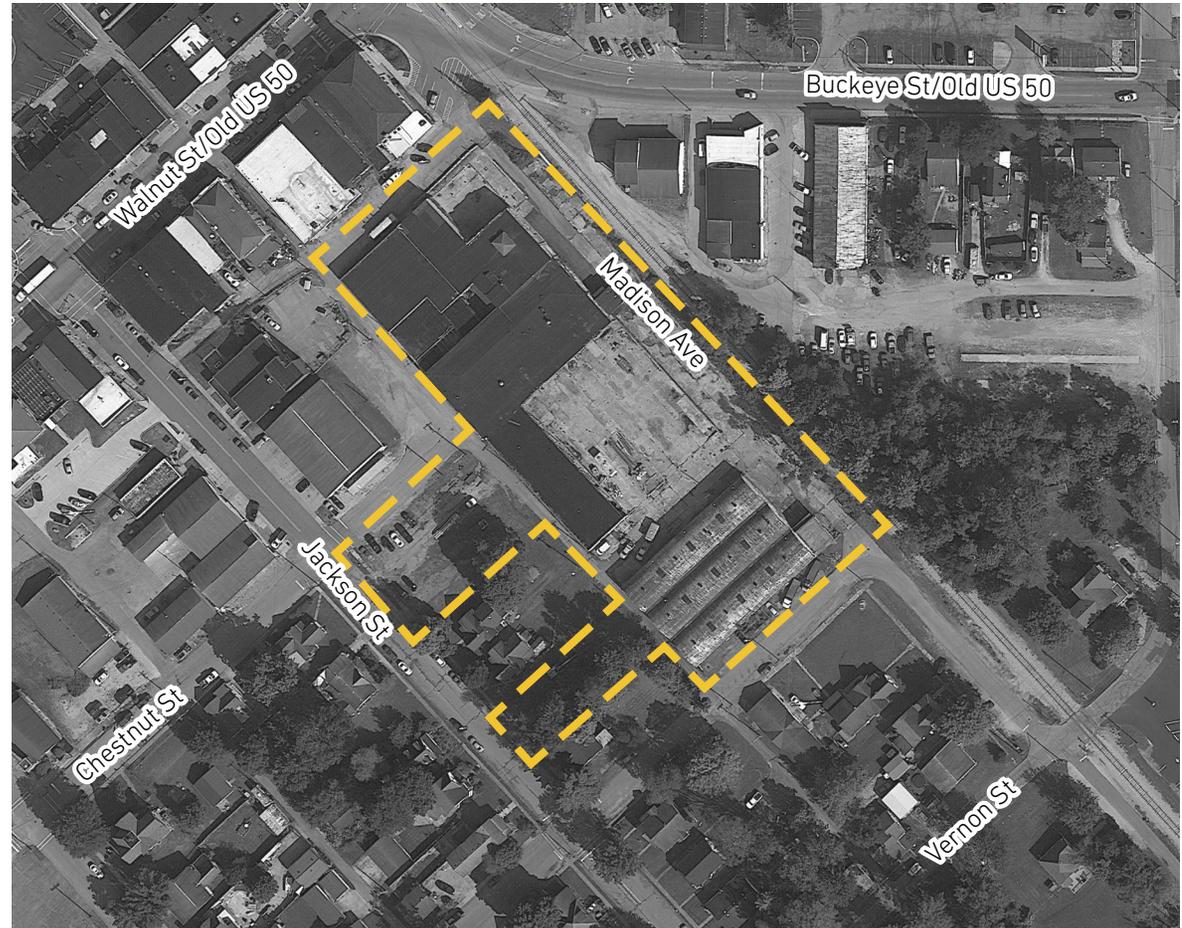
SITE D

Arvin Manufacturing Site

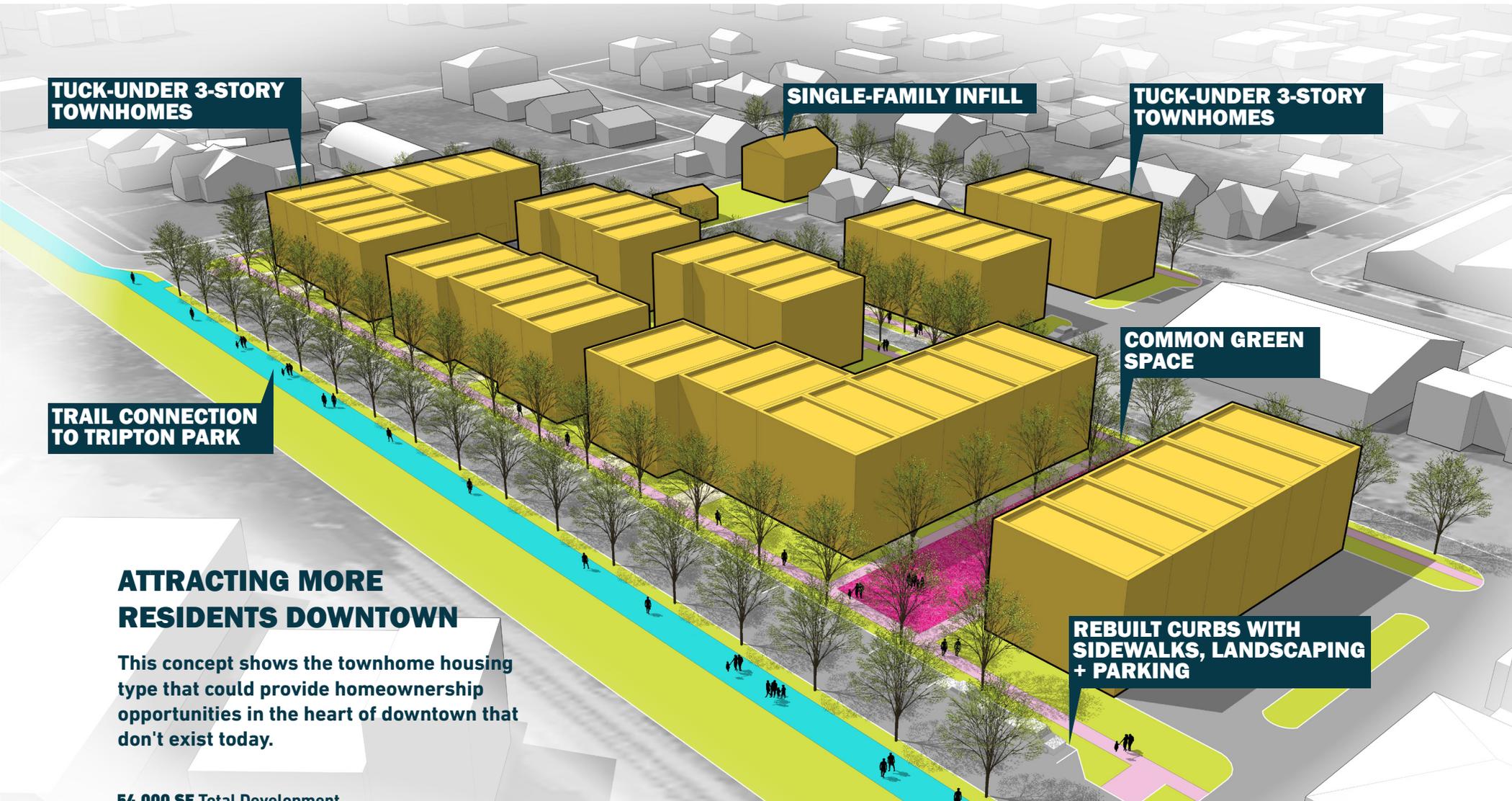
The former Arvin Manufacturing site located south of the intersection of Walnut Street, Buckeye Street, and Madison Avenue. Due to its location and size, redevelopment of this site presents a significant catalytic opportunity downtown. The site is bounded by alleys on two sides of the property which, if improved with paving and removal of redundant utilities, could provide key pedestrian connections to this site. In addition, Madison Avenue, although currently gated off on this property, is a crucial link from downtown to Tripton Park.

Opportunities on this site focus on building a critical mass of housing options to increase residents downtown. Three concepts were developed as part of this plan which propose a variety of housing types between rentals and owner-occupied including townhomes and multi-family. Portions of this site facing Jackson Street could include infill housing that blends in with the existing scale and character of the street, which lies within the State Street Historic District. Madison Avenue should be reconstructed to include a multi-use path that, as part of the proposed downtown trail network, would provide access to Tripton Park.

Due to historic manufacturing uses of this site, it is likely that some remediation would be required to enable redevelopment.



Existing Conditions



TUCK-UNDER 3-STORY TOWNHOMES

SINGLE-FAMILY INFILL

TUCK-UNDER 3-STORY TOWNHOMES

TRAIL CONNECTION TO TRIPTON PARK

COMMON GREEN SPACE

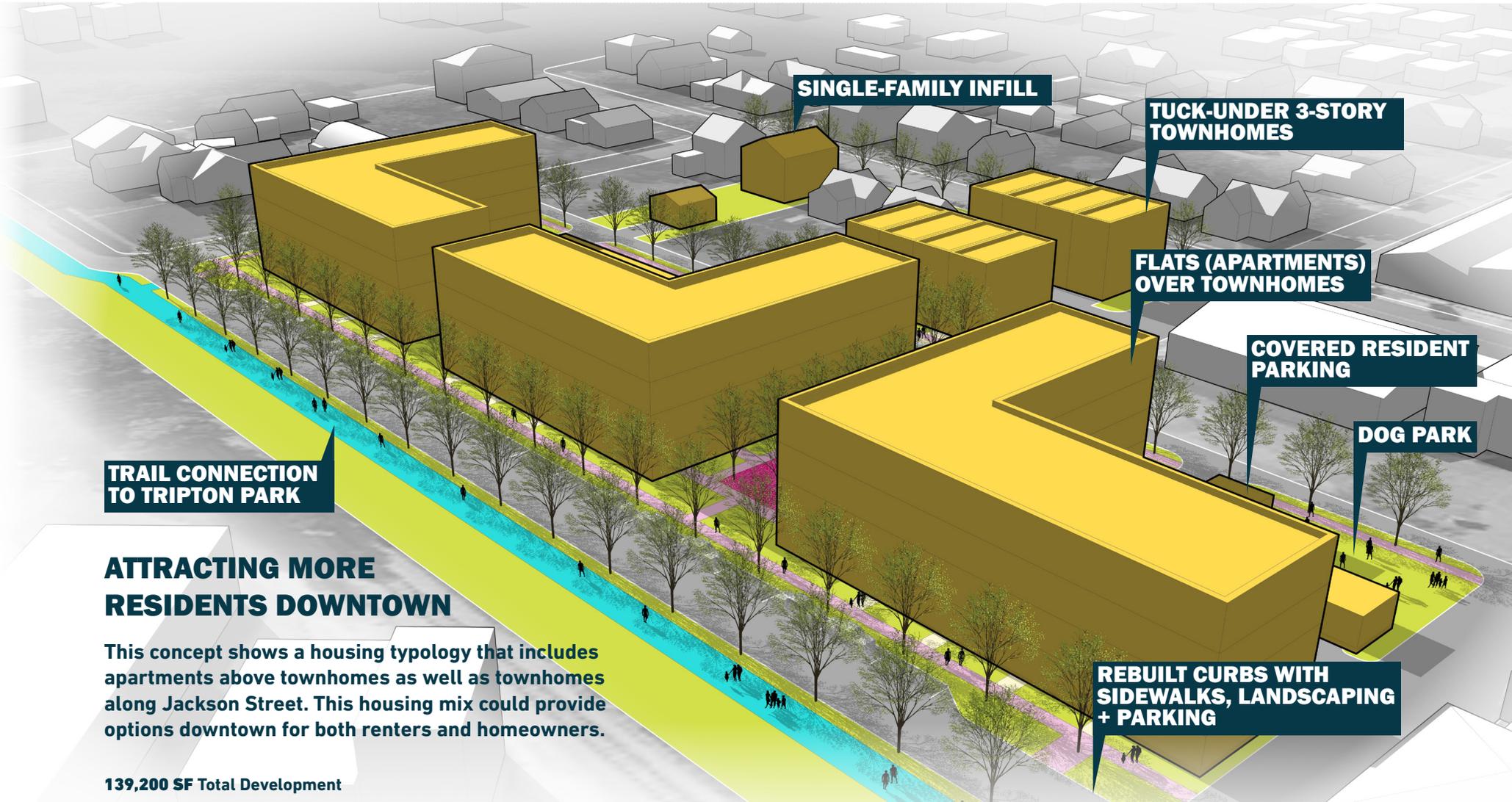
REBUILT CURBS WITH SIDEWALKS, LANDSCAPING + PARKING

ATTRACTING MORE RESIDENTS DOWNTOWN

This concept shows the townhome housing type that could provide homeownership opportunities in the heart of downtown that don't exist today.

- 54,000 SF** Total Development
- 54,000 SF** Residential (45 Townhomes)
- 90 - 112** New Residents
- 2** New Employees
- \$4,078,000** Site Improvements Costs
- \$13,500,000 - \$16,200,000** Development Costs





TRAIL CONNECTION TO TRIPTON PARK

SINGLE-FAMILY INFILL

TUCK-UNDER 3-STORY TOWNHOMES

FLATS (APARTMENTS) OVER TOWNHOMES

COVERED RESIDENT PARKING

DOG PARK

REBUILT CURBS WITH SIDEWALKS, LANDSCAPING + PARKING

ATTRACTING MORE RESIDENTS DOWNTOWN

This concept shows a housing typology that includes apartments above townhomes as well as townhomes along Jackson Street. This housing mix could provide options downtown for both renters and homeowners.

139,200 SF Total Development

139,200 SF Residential (80 Townhomes + 39 Multi-Family Units)

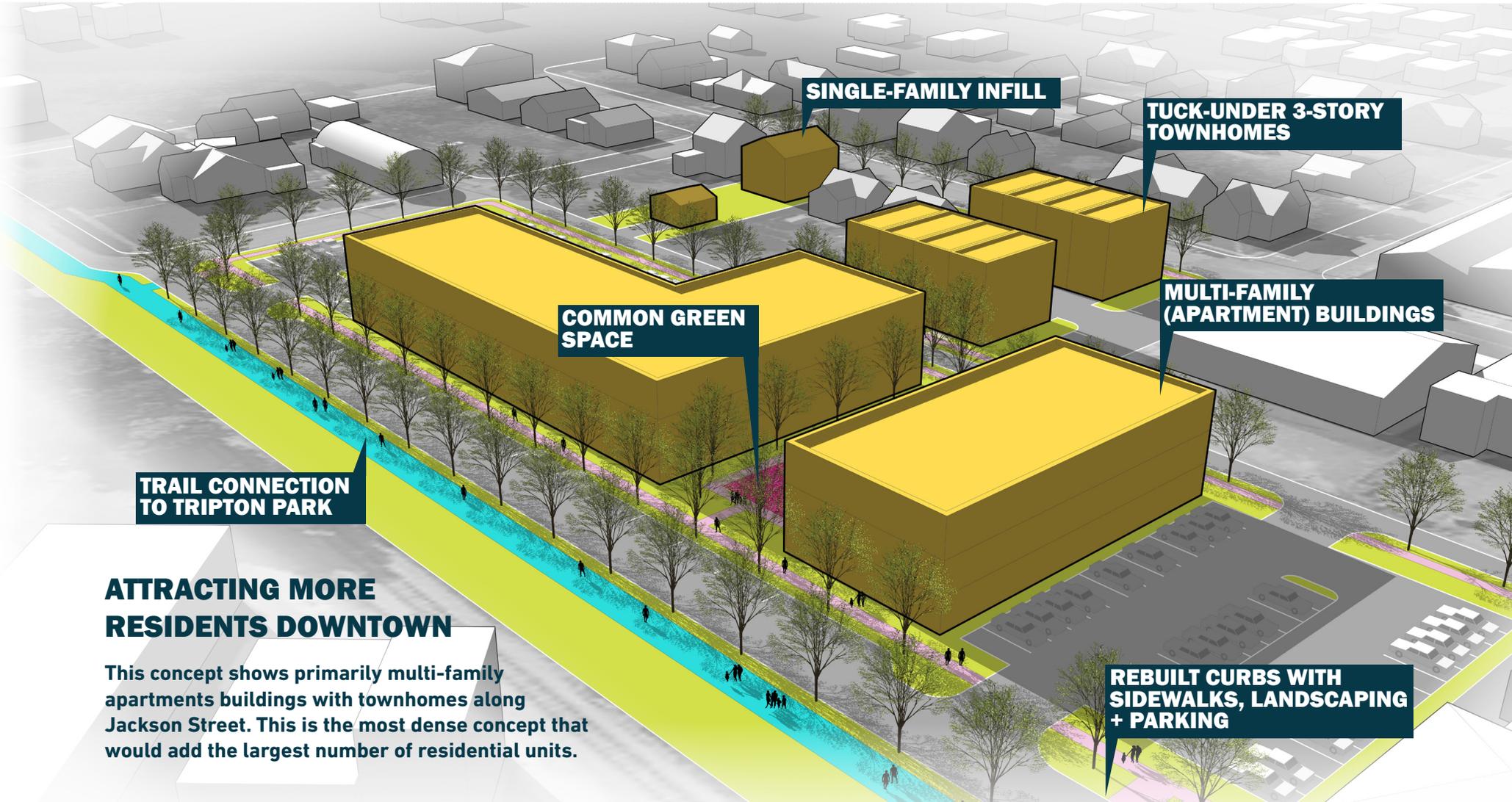
218 - 268 New Residents

2 New Employees

\$4,246,000 Site Improvements Costs

\$34,750,000 - \$41,760,000 Development Costs

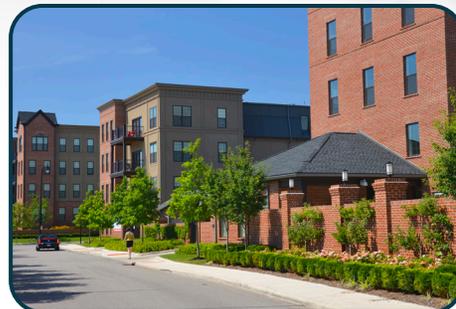




ATTRACTING MORE RESIDENTS DOWNTOWN

This concept shows primarily multi-family apartments buildings with townhomes along Jackson Street. This is the most dense concept that would add the largest number of residential units.

- 86,700 SF** Total Development
- 86,700 SF** Residential (80 Multi-Family Units)
- 120 - 140** New Residents
- 2** New Employees
- \$4,225,000** Site Improvements Costs
- \$21,675,000 - \$26,010,000** Development Costs



PROJECT MATRIX

PROJECT 1 - ACTIVATING THE WALKABLE CORE		
	Key Considerations	Total Project Costs
Plaza Activation (including Alleys B + C)	<p>An easement exists along the alley that connects to Jackson Street (rear of Walnut Street) among property owners of the buildings along Walnut Street. Alleyway property donations and/or compensation would need to be negotiated individually along this corridor.</p> <p>The re-oriented parking lot increases the number of spaces that are currently on the site. The City could acquire this property to manage/maintain the parking lot as open parking available for downtown visitors.</p> <p>Furnishings allowance include costs for two shipping containers, furniture, and planters.</p>	\$2,618,799
PROJECT 2 - BUILDING TRAILS TO CONNECT		
	Key Considerations	Total Project Costs
Downtown Trail - Phase 1	<p>Phase 1 prioritizes pedestrian connections from Tripton Park to activation and development sites in this plan. Alley improvements as part of Project 3 should be incorporated into the trail network. Phase 1 also considers the City's current preliminary study of converting a portion of 5th Street (between Buckeye Street and East O & M Avenue) and East O & M Avenue (between 4th and 5th Streets). The study proposes a multi-use path in place of on-street parking on one side and re-oriented angled parking on the other side of the streets.</p> <p>Phase 2 consists of the segment of trail previously submitted by the City for funding through a Next Level Trails Grant. Alignment, cost estimates, and other details are specified in that grant application.</p> <p>Further engineering studies are needed for design and implementation of all three phases to confirm alignment, rights-of-way, amenities, and crossings, among other potential considerations. Placemaking and wayfinding should be developed as part of trail design/implementation.</p>	\$1,325,025
Downtown Trail - Phase 2		\$1,202,000
Downtown Trail - Phase 3		\$1,031,940
PROJECT 3 - IMPROVING ALLEYS + UTILITIES*		
	Key Considerations	Total Project Costs
<i>*Alleys adjacent to future development/activation sites are included in those project costs. Additional alleys not associated with other projects are listed below.</i>		
Alley F	Additional alley project not associated with a development/activation concept. Potential to influence activation of vacant lots located along this alleyway or investment in the buildings along O & M Avenue.	\$243,880
Alley G	An additional future project as a pedestrian corridor along the Park Theater that would connect from the activated plaza through to Madison Avenue. This would further increase pedestrian access and integrate the Park Theater into the activation of this site. Further study should be conducted on the actions necessary to facilitate alley improvements for pedestrian access, potentially including: ownership or easements, utilities, grading/pavement, and demolition of a vacant building.	\$788,350 - \$808,350

PROJECT MATRIX

PROJECT 4 - SUPPORTING HISTORIC PRESERVATION + BUILDING REHABILITATION		
Key Considerations	Project Cost: \$2,500,000 (zero-interest revolving loan fund)	
<p>The building conditions study currently underway should be used as leverage to target efforts on the most at-risk properties and determine where funding is needed most.</p> <p>.Additional funding resources should be explored to encourage building rehabilitation efforts and assist in any gaps in capital for projects that carefully preserve existing historic architectural features, including: Redevelopment Tax Credits and Low Income Housing Tax Credits (OCRA programs such as the Historic Renovation Grant Program and Main Street Revitalization Program are currently on hold, but could be reactivated in the future.)</p> <p>Range of Magnitude costs estimates for typical building improvements are listed below. These costs will vary by project size, individuals needs of particular buildings, and fluctuating costs of materials and labor.</p>		
<p>Estimated costs for typical exterior improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exterior building material improvements: \$5,000 - \$50,000 • Tuckpointing: \$5 - \$10 per square foot • Signage improvements: \$2,000 - \$25,000 • Replacement windows, installed: \$500 - \$1,000 per window • Rebuild a parapet wall can be \$20 – \$40 per square foot • Roof replacement: \$4 - \$14 per square foot 	<p>Estimated cost for typical interior improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible bathroom improvements: \$1,500 – 10,000 • Bathroom fixture count improvements: \$3,000 - \$15,000 • Egress improvements: \$2,000 - \$15,000 • Hazardous building material abatement: \$5,000 - \$50,000 • Retrofitting a sprinkler system in an existing building: \$2 - \$7 per square foot • Renovate upper floor(s) for commercial use: \$7,000 - \$30,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate upper floor(s) for residential use: \$15,000 - \$80,000 • Install an elevator: \$30,000 - \$80,000 • Estimated cost to entirely replace one primary building system (furnace, hot water heater, air handling unit, air conditioner condenser/ compressor and fans, heat pump condenser/ compressor and fans, electrical panels): \$15,000 - \$60,000 • Replace a central unit connected to existing distribution: \$2,500 – 10,000
PROJECT 5 - LAND ACQUISITION + DISPOSITION		
Key Considerations	Project Cost: \$5,000,000	
<p>The City should create a Property Acquisition Fund and set aside dedicated public funds to provide ready capital which can be used to purchase buildings or land for development/redevelopment.</p> <p>Potential partnerships with the City include traditional financial institutions/lenders, community development financial institutions (CDFIs), investors, philanthropic and charitable organizations, large employers or universities to source capital to supplement dedicated public funds.</p>		

PROJECT MATRIX

PROJECT 6 - DEVELOPING KEY INFILL SITES				
	Utility + Site Improvements Costs**	Development Costs	Total Project Cost	Key Considerations
Site A (including Alley D)	\$798,000	\$17,000,000 - \$19,000,000	\$17,798,000 - \$19,798,000	The City should continue engaging with developers to develop on this city-owned property. This project is a candidate for READI Grant.
Site B	\$1,303,000	\$1,250,000 - \$1,500,000	\$2,553,000 - \$2,803,000	The existing structures on the site should be evaluated for structural integrity and the feasibility of adaptive reuse of the feed mill buildings or salvage of portions of the buildings, which would likely impact development costs. This project is a candidate for READI Grant.
Site C	\$1,971,000	\$4,400,000 - \$5,280,000	\$6,371,000 - \$7,251,000	This site is adjacent to a former rail bridge that crosses Summit Street. There is potential to activate this bridge as a gathering space if the site and bridge are cleared. This project is a candidate for READI Grant.
Site D (including Alleys A + E)	\$4,078,000 - \$4,246,000	\$13,500,000 - \$41,760,000	\$17,578,000 - \$46,760,000	Environmental Assessments have been conducted for this site. Some remediation efforts may be required to enable certain types of development. Property acquisition and/or assemblage, state brownfield remediation grants, Redevelopment Tax Credits, and READI Grant dollars. A mix of housing options between rental and owner-occupied/for-sale residential units would provide the greatest variety of new housing options for a diverse set of residents downtown. This project is a candidate for READI Grant.

****Utility and Site Improvements Cost Estimate includes a 30% contingency. Landscaping around the sites and the public right-of-way are estimated using an average \$25/square foot cost.**

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