

**RALSTON DOWNTOWN/HINGE**  
MASTER PLAN  
ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2019



This document is a flexible tool, which presents a vision, framework, principles, and guidelines for the development of the Downtown and Hinge areas in Ralston, NE. **It is important to note that specific buildings/physical designs have not been determined.** Rather, these designs are conceptual in nature, depicting possible improvements that will fulfill the vision, follow the framework initiatives, and create the desired district identity. Changes in priorities, budgets, programming, and/or physical constraints will almost certainly occur over time. However, this plan will provide a foundation and cohesive approach to future development initiatives.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## HINGE COMMITTEE

### CITY OF RALSTON

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Jerry Krause, Council President  
Michael Sanchez, City Council  
Dave Forrest, City Administrator  
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A special thanks to all those who attended the Visioning Workshop and Charrette; called, emailed, or visited with suggestions and ideas; provided insights, thoughts, and guidance; and assisted through the course of the planning process. If your name has been inadvertently omitted, we apologize and thank you for your contribution.





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Downtown and Hinge Study Area is comprised of Ralston’s original downtown and a large industrial area located between downtown and the 72nd Street corridor. Downtown Ralston has not experienced the wave of new development that other walkable urban districts within the region have recently received, nor has the industrial area received any recent significant investment. Guided by a multi-faceted master planning process, including a market assessment, public and stakeholder visioning, and a three-day iterative design charrette, a conceptual redevelopment master plan was created for the neighborhood. The goal of the plan was to create a redevelopment framework that will help revitalize Downtown Ralston and the Hinge area; establish a walkable urban neighborhood that will draw people into downtown from the 72nd Street corridor, and ultimately help connect Downtown Ralston with the Ralston Arena.

Over time, the neighborhood should be characterized by low- to mid-rise buildings with urban character, whereby buildings, and the uses contained within them, will address the street and help activate the sidewalks. New development should be pedestrian-oriented in order to encourage walking and dynamic street-level activity. A variety of uses and building typologies will be encouraged. Uses will be mixed both horizontally and vertically within individual buildings. Active uses, such as restaurants and retail stores, will be located on the first level of buildings located at key nodes, while office and residential uses will be encouraged on upper floors. Elsewhere within the district, “missing middle” residential options will be developed to encourage a variety of household types and income levels within the neighborhood, from millennials, young professionals, and families to empty-nesters, retirees, and seniors. Residential options should range from condos and apartments to townhomes, duplexes, mews homes, and courtyard bungalows. These uses will be interconnected by a robust mobility network equally serving the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit. The neighborhood will be interspersed with a network of parks, plazas, open spaces, and trails, all designed to benefit residents and help attract visitors.

To help ensure that the goals of the Master Plan are met, several key Framework Initiatives are identified in the plan and should be implemented. Mobility enhancements include the appropriate design and construction of several new street segments, the establishment of a hierarchy of streets, the implementation of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network, and the realization of a shuttle system within the district. New development within the district will require the completion of a number of key infrastructure projects, including connecting Burlington Street to 72nd Street and the restoration of Ralston Creek. Because the area will transition into a dense walkable neighborhood, several important park and open space enhancements must be made, including a new Gateway Park that will act as a catalyst for new development projects, several new plazas, existing park renovations, and a network of pedestrian connections through the area.

If developed according to the master plan, the Downtown/Hinge area should yield over 460 new housing units, with 300+ multi-family units and 160+ missing middle units. The mixed-use structures will contain approximately 160,000+ square feet of retail/commercial space and a commensurate number of parking stalls provided in a number of configurations, including on-street parking, surface parking lots, and parking structures. Details of the master plan, framework initiatives, and development yield are included on the following pages.



STUDY AREA BOUNDARY / EXISTING CONDITIONS





PROPOSED MASTER PLAN

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## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The Site  
Regional Context  
Vicinity Map  
Built Form  
Property Ownership  
Zoning  
Topography  
Hydrology  
Mobility  
Utilities  
Inventory / Existing Conditions





## INVENTORY + ANALYSIS



## THE SITE

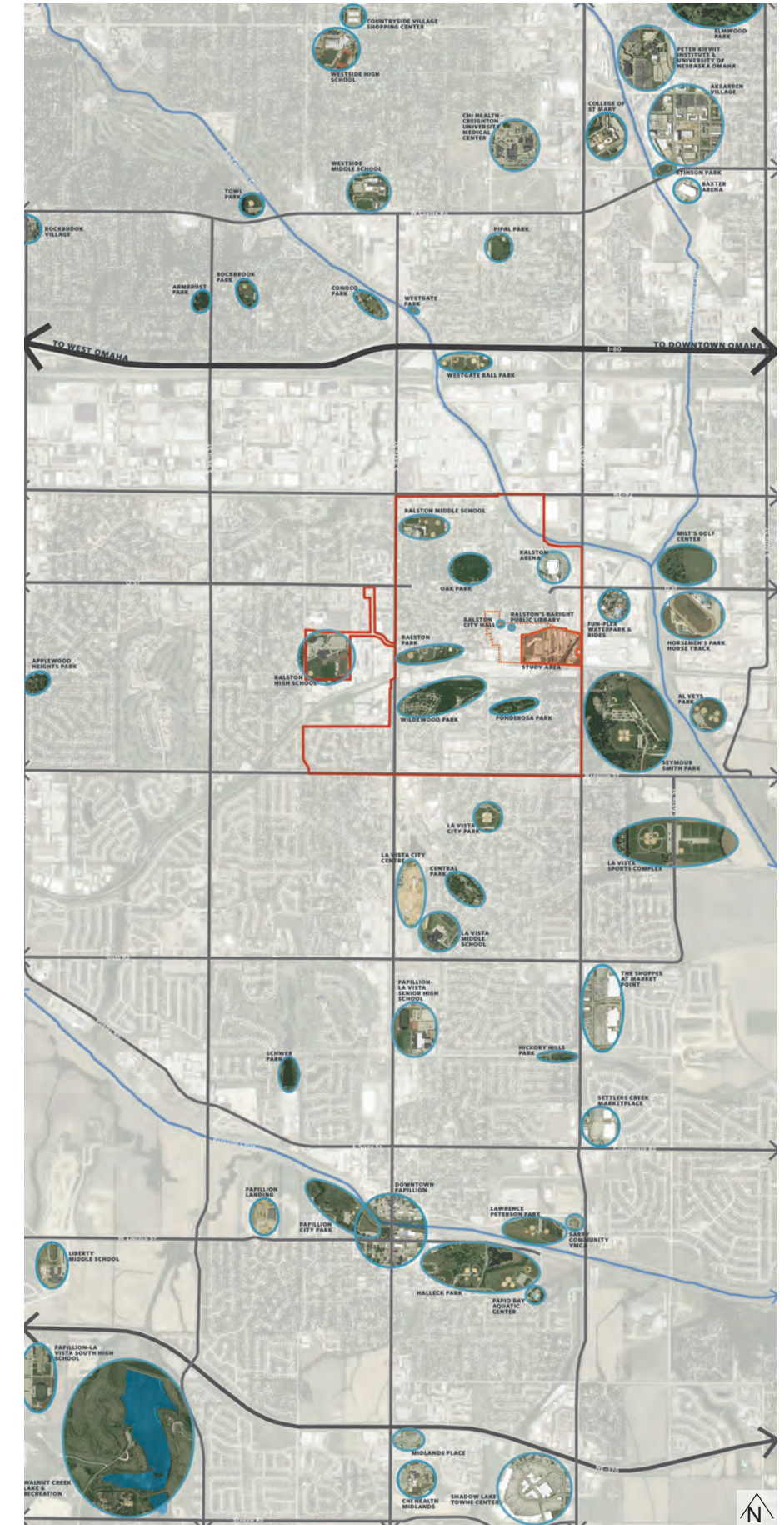
The Downtown/Hinge Study Area is strategically located adjacent to the 72<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor, and contains a variety of uses. Downtown Ralston sits on the western edge of the Study Area, and contains commercial/retail, automotive, office, and residential (apartments and single family homes) uses. The Hinge portion, located between Downtown and 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, is predominantly industrial in nature. The industrial uses are bisected by Ralston Creek, which is channelized as it cuts diagonally through the area. Downtown Ralston lacks visibility from 72<sup>nd</sup> Street due to topography and the industrial uses that shield it from view.

**KEY:**

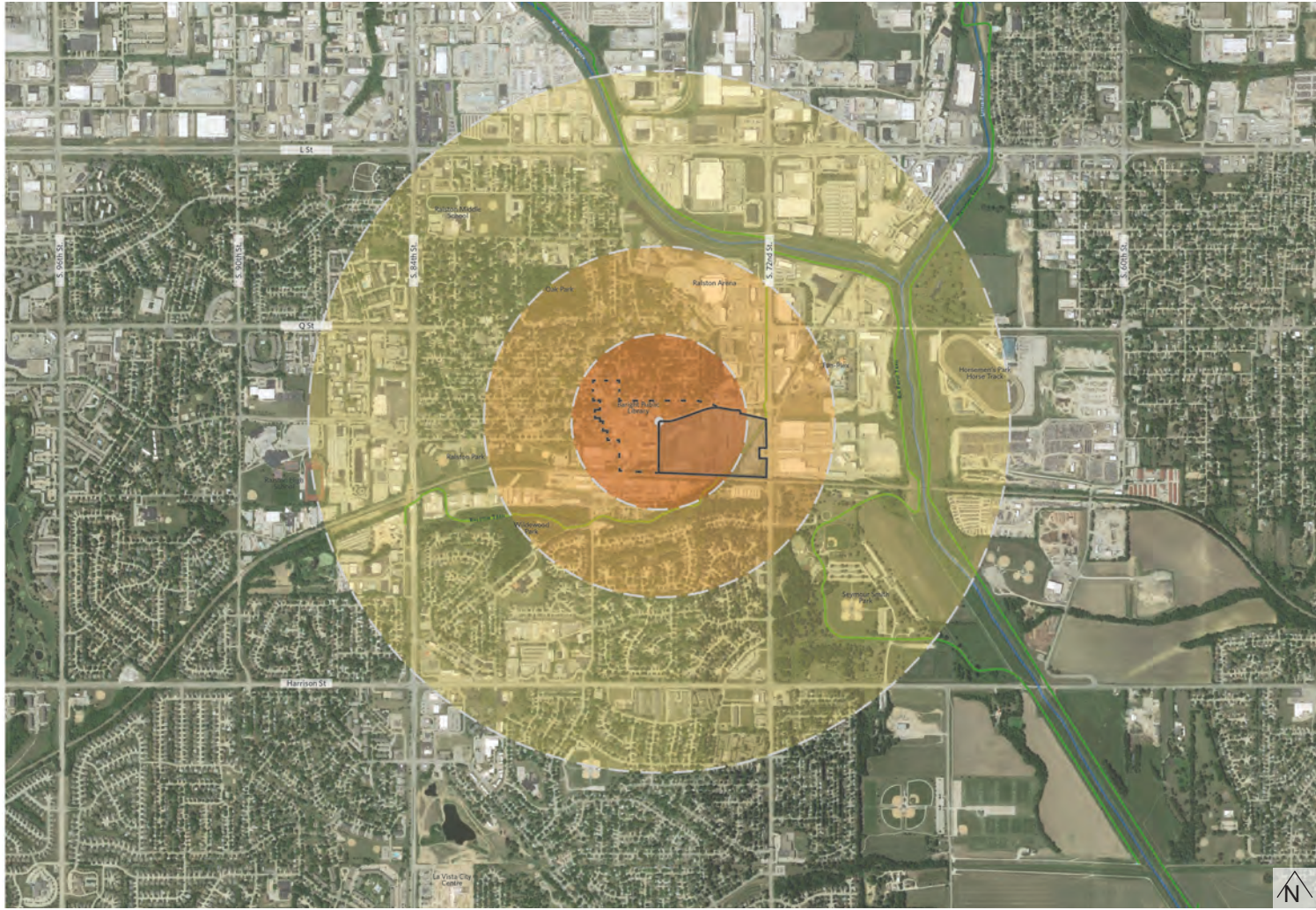
-  Hinge Study Area  
 Downtown Study Area

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Downtown/Hinge Study Area is strategically located on the 72<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor. This corridor is one of the primary north-south arterial streets within the metro area, and carries a significant amount of traffic. Traffic on this corridor, as well as along the parallel 84<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, will continue to increase with the on-going growth in Sarpy County resulting from the recently reached multi-jurisdictional agreement which allows for sanitary sewer construction in the Platte River basin. In addition, the study area is minutes away from both L Street and I-80, two of the major east-west corridors within the metro. Ralston is surrounded by suburban density residential and commercial development in all directions.












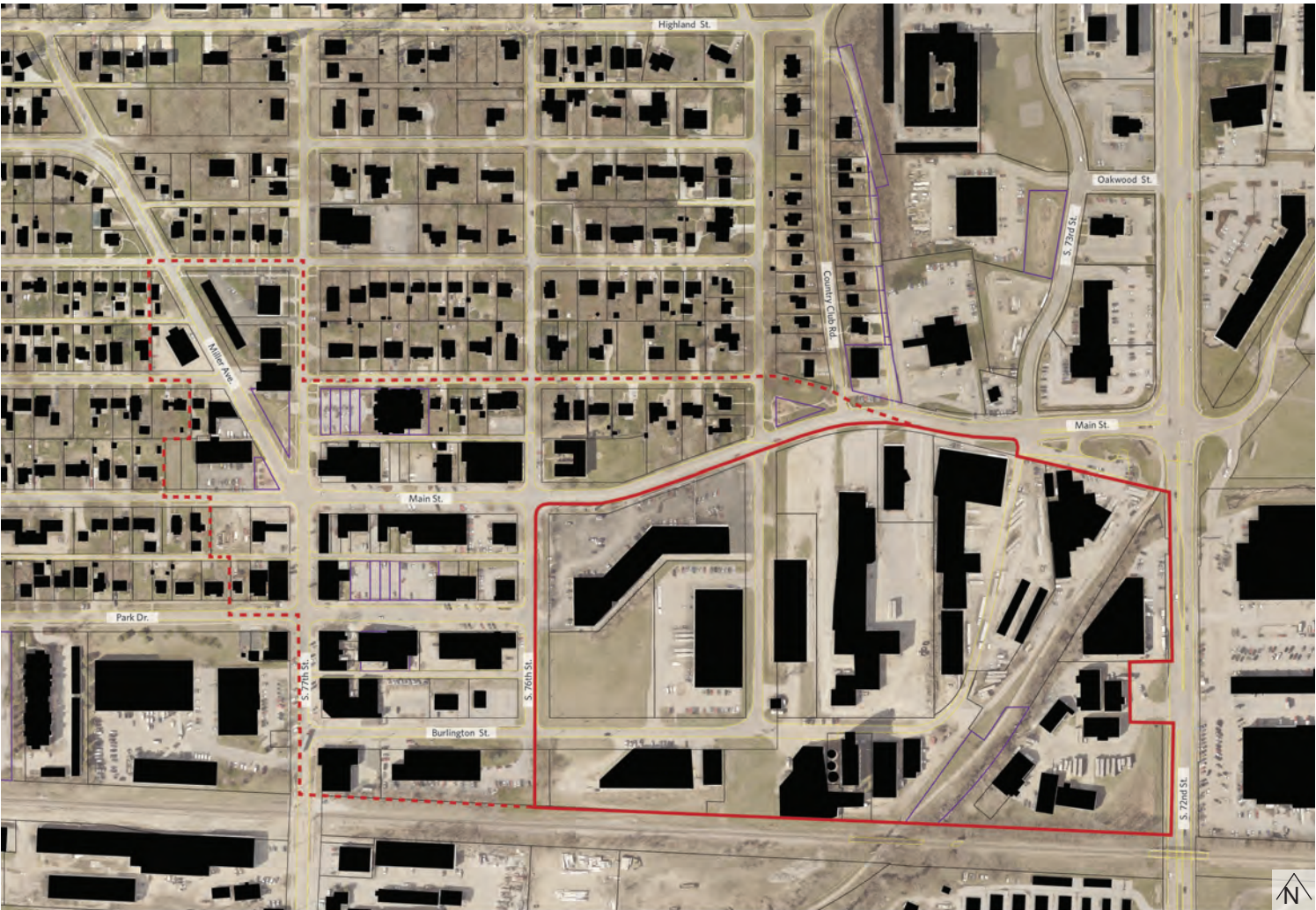


### VICINITY

Downtown Ralston has always been the center of Ralston. As a result, the majority of the Study Area is located within a 5-minute walk (1/4 mile) of the geographic center of the district. A significant portion of Ralston is located within a 10-minute walk (1/2 mile) of the center of the Study Area, and virtually the entire city is located within a 20-minute walk (1 mile) of the Study Area. Walkability/access is best to the north and west of the Study Area. The 72<sup>nd</sup> Street corridor and associated auto-related uses limits walkability to the east, as does the rail corridor to the south of the Study Area.

### KEY:



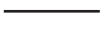



-  Hinge Study Area
-  Trails
-  Trails
-  Creeks
-  5 Minute Walk - 1/4 Mile Radius
-  10 Minute Walk - 1/2 Mile Radius
-  20 Minute Walk - 1 Mile Radius



### BUILT FORM

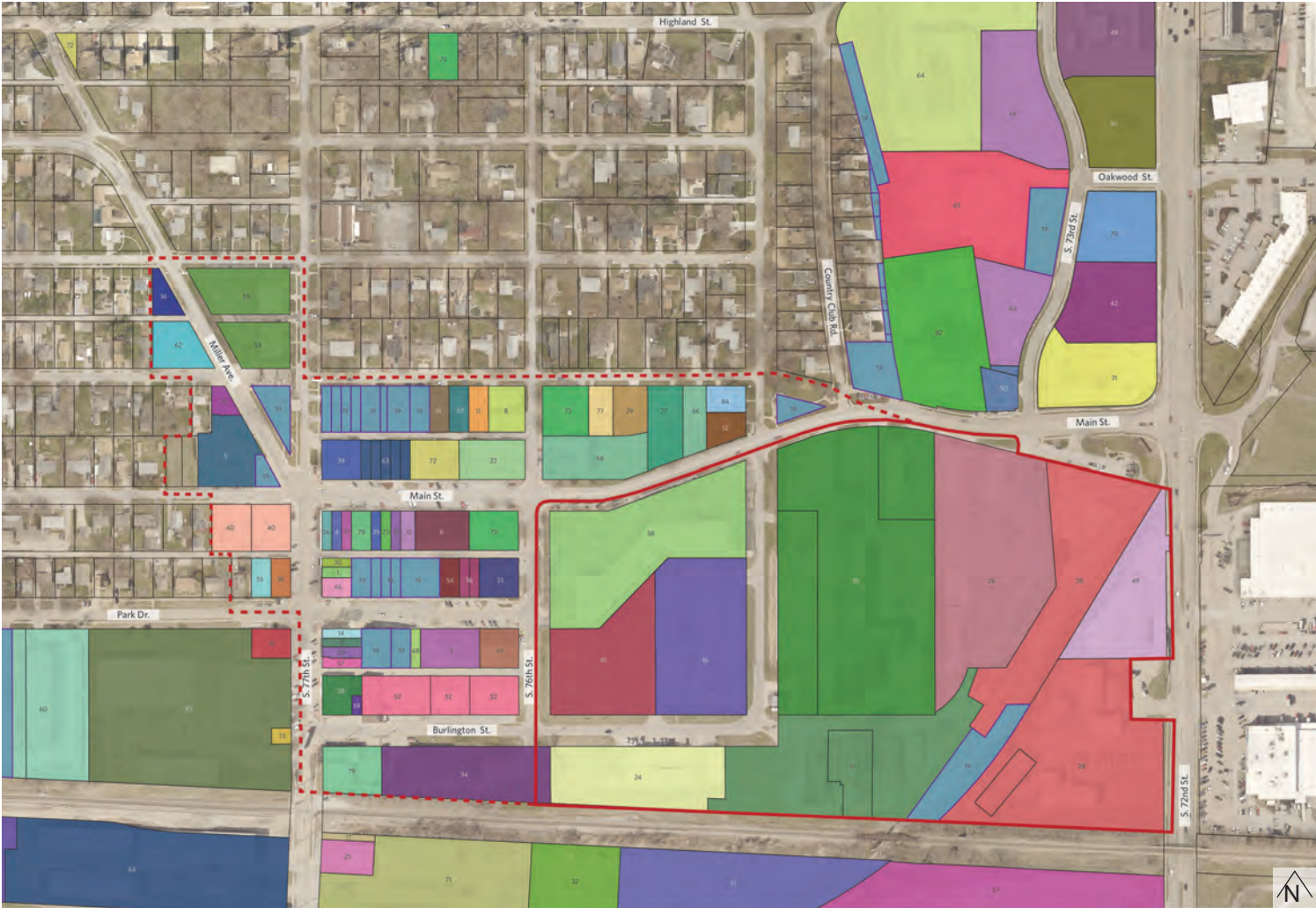
This diagram identifies the built form within the Study Area. The western third of the district (Downtown) is inherently walkable, and contains decent urban form (density, urban frontages, etc.), although new infill development will help improve this significantly. Between Downtown and 72<sup>nd</sup> Street (the Hinge), the urban form and walkability of the study area deteriorate due to the lack of an existing block structure, large parcel sizes, industrial uses, surface parking lots and outdoor storage, and lack of crossings over Ralston Creek.

### KEY:

-  Hinge Study Area
-  Downtown Study Area
-  Parcels
-  City-Owned Parcels
-  Curb Lines
-  Building Footprints



# INVENTORY + ANALYSIS

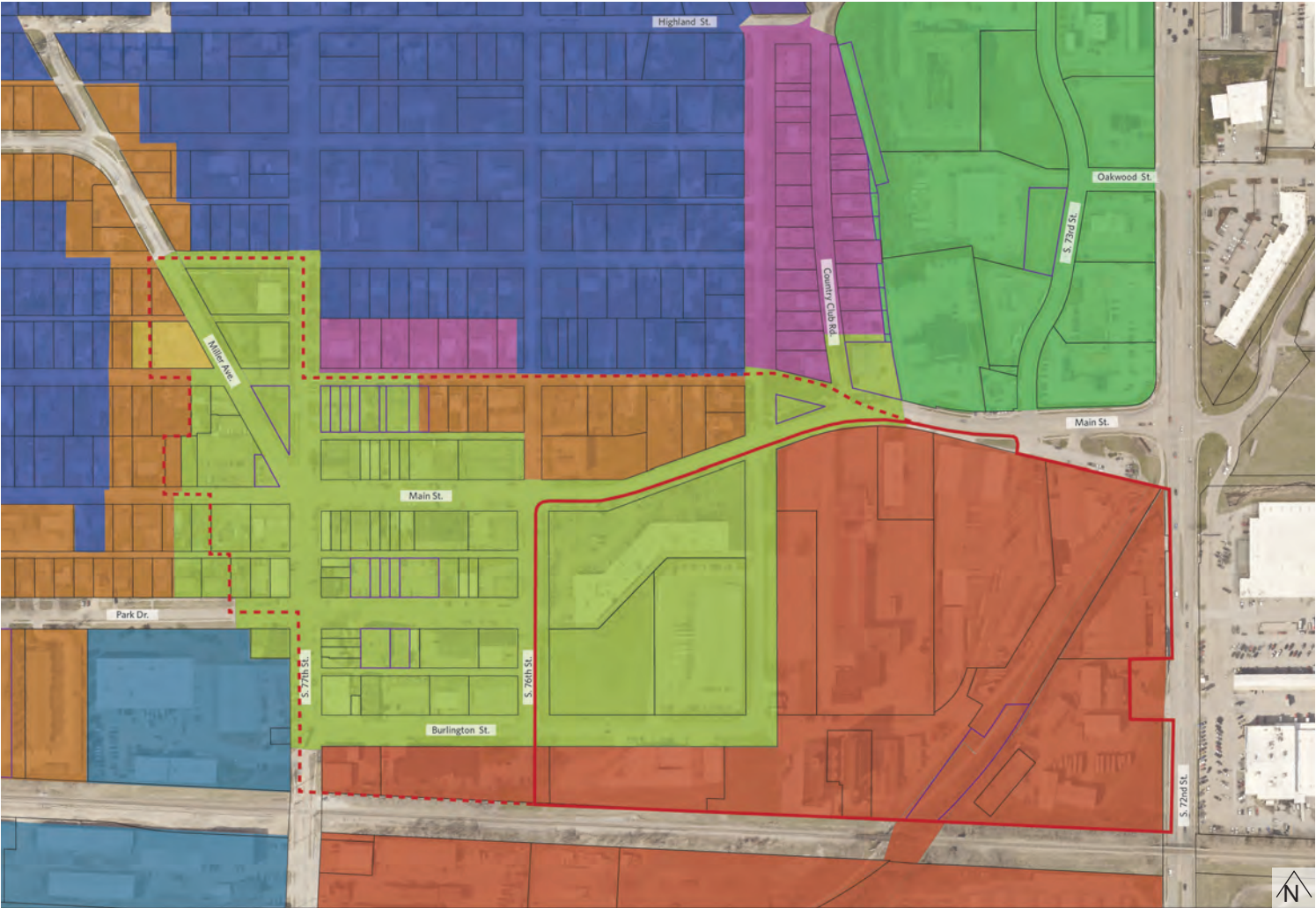


## PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Property within the Study Area is owned by a variety of owners. The Downtown portion has a finer grain of property ownership, with smaller parcels and multiple owners. The Hinge area has fewer owners, but substantially larger parcels. Once development momentum is achieved via the easier infill and redevelopment of the smaller Downtown parcels, the larger parcels in the Hinge area will provide a significant opportunity to transition with new larger scale projects that will add not only “rooftops” and their resulting activity to the area, but will increase retail opportunities and the City’s tax base.

### KEY:

- |                               |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 5615 S 77 ST LLC              | Eubanks-Tamayo Dianne M       | Omaha Brick Works Inc          |
| 5703 LLC                      | First Ralston LLC             | P and A Management LLC         |
| 7615 Holdings LLC             | First State Bank              | Palermo-Harris, Michelle A     |
| 7639 Main Street LLC          | Guinan Family Properties LLC  | Park Properties LLC            |
| Abraham JK Etal TR George H   | HNWH Real Estate LLC          | PDL LLC                        |
| Affordable Solutions Inc      | Interstate Business           | Phibro Animal Health Corporate |
| American Legion Post 373      | J & M Ralston Granary LLC     | Platinum Real Estate Group     |
| Anderson, Dwight              | James, Jeffrey J              | Ralston House Associates LLC   |
| Antibro Properties LLC        | Jandy Holdings LLC            | Ralston Hospitality LLC        |
| Bade, Thomas E                | K and M Realty LP             | Ralston Rentals LLC            |
| Beckman, Bradley              | Kettelhut Enterprises Inc     | Ralston Toy & Novelty Co       |
| Billingsley, Ronald L         | Kettelhut, Keith              | Ralston Volunteer Fire Rescue  |
| Black Hills NE Gas Utility Co | Keystone LLC                  | Rhinorx LLC                    |
| Bles, Anthony                 | Keystone Main St LLC          | Robertson Properties LLC       |
| Boyle, Jean M                 | Keystone-Ralston Building One | Sadler, Robert W               |
| Burlington Investment LLC     | Keystone Ralston LLC          | Seran, Gungor                  |
| C B & Q RR Co                 | KMS and K Enterprises Inc     | Seranco Enterprises LLC        |
| Cich, John J                  | Kolacz Management LLC         | Sillman Properties LLC         |
| City of Ralston               | Kowal, Joan                   | Sodo Properties LLC            |
| Colton, David L               | Kwik Shop Inc                 | Steffensmeier Insurance Agency |
| CRC Properties LLC            | Lienemann, Larry              | Steffensmeier, Joan L          |
| D E Anderson Inc              | LJR Commercial Properties LLC | TC Management LLC              |
| Delanty, Steven M             | Marias Restaurant Inc         | Texo, Vang                     |
| Doub, Allen W                 | Maywood School LLC            | Triantafillou, Nickolas        |
| Dubbs Brothers LLC            | McNeill, Mike L               | United Seeds Inc               |
| Dudleys Moving & Storage      | Merg LLC                      | United States Postal Service   |
| Dugger, Gary W                | National Association of Power | Vasko Limited Partnership      |
| Eccles Heating & Air          |                               | Walter, Rhonda L               |



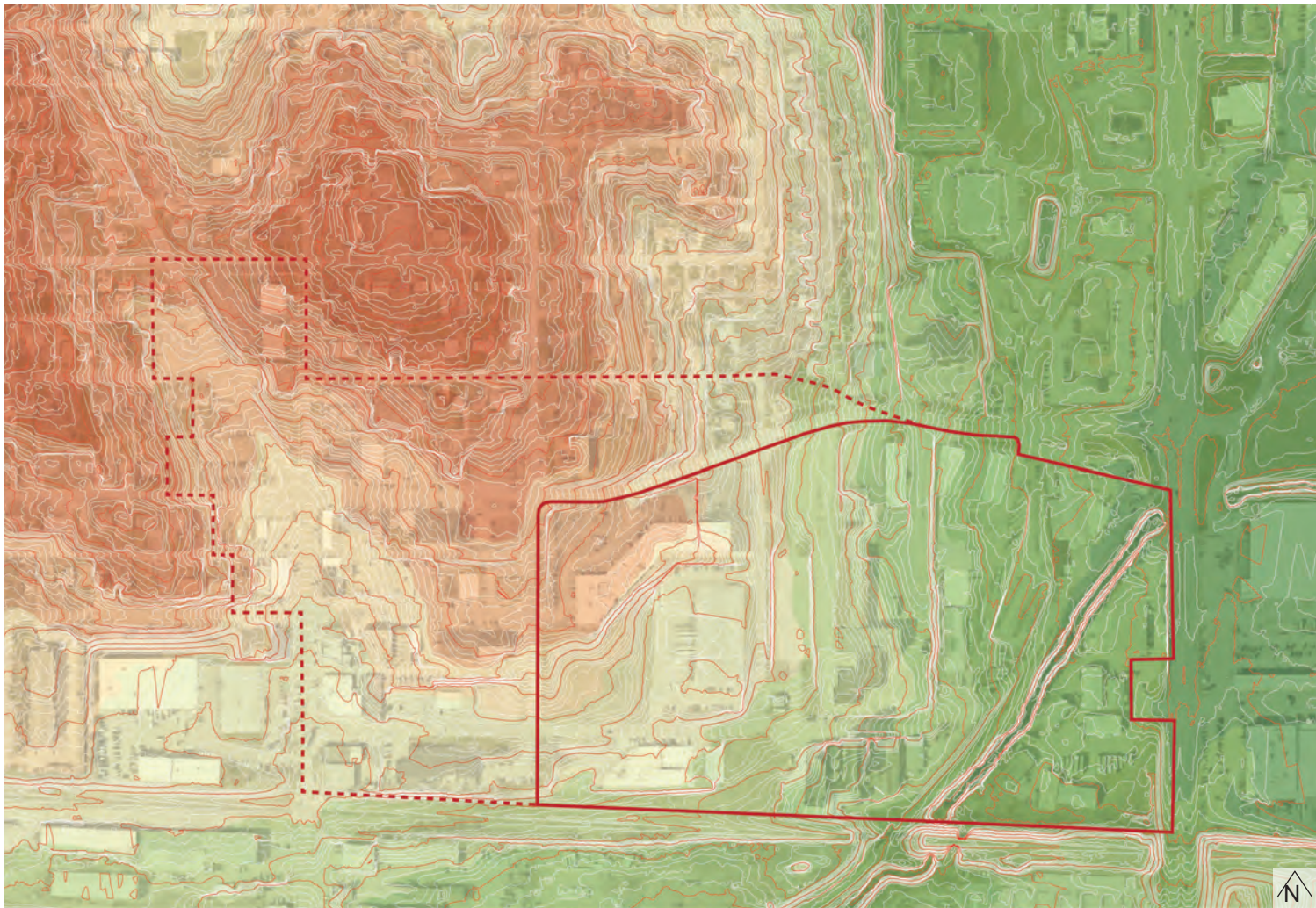
## ZONING

The majority of the Study Area is zoned either Town Center District or General Industrial District, with a small portion zoned as Multiple-Family District. As part of the on-going planning process, the Town Center District zoning classification is being reviewed and revised so that it will be in conformance with both the master plan and the design guidelines. Over time, as redevelopment occurs, the General Industrial District will transition to the more appropriate Town Center District zoning classification.

### KEY:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Hinge Study Area  |
|  | Downtown Study Area                                     |
|  | Parcels   |
|  | City-Owned Parcels                                      |
|  | GC - General Commercial District                        |
|  | GI - General Industrial District                        |
|  | GI-F - General Industrial District                      |
|  | LC - Limited Commercial                                 |
|  | Mixed Use   |
|  | R-2 - Single-Family Residential District (Moderate Lot) |
|  | R-3 - Urban Single-Family Residential District          |
|  | R-4 - Multiple-Family Residential                       |
|  | TC - Town Center District                               |



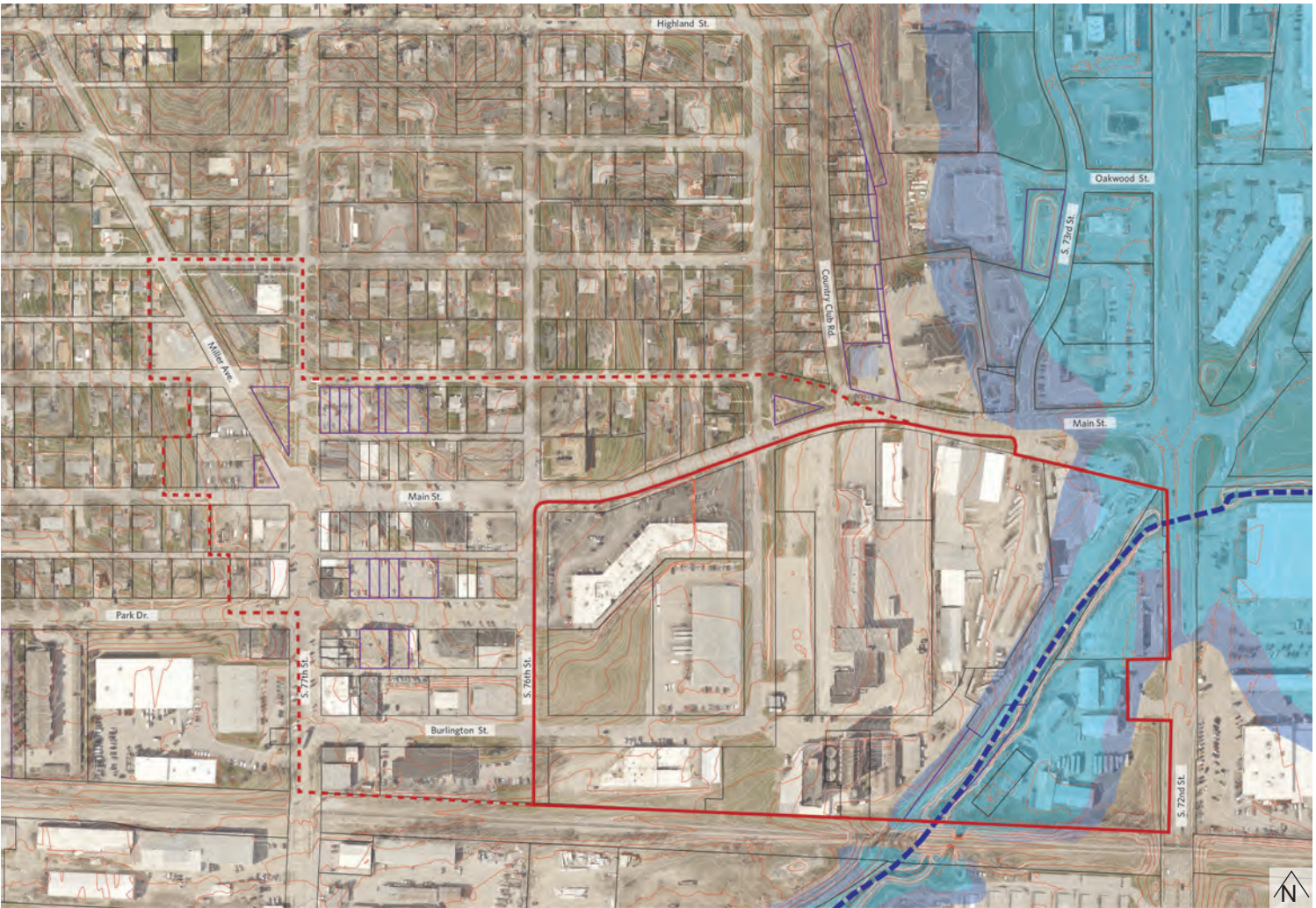
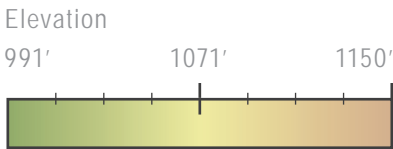


### TOPOGRAPHY

The Study Area generally rises from its low point on the east (along 72<sup>nd</sup> Street) to Downtown Ralston, and then gently drops to near the western boundary of the study area (77<sup>th</sup> Street). In essence, Downtown Ralston sits on a knoll, or bluff, that overlooks the Big Papio Creek, located just to the east of the Study Area. The resulting change in topography “hides” Downtown Ralston from 72<sup>nd</sup> Street traffic, and will be a factor that must be addressed through creative site design once large scale redevelopment begins to occur.

### KEY:

- Hinge Study Area
- - - Downtown Study Area
- 1' Contours
- 5' Contours



### HYDROLOGY

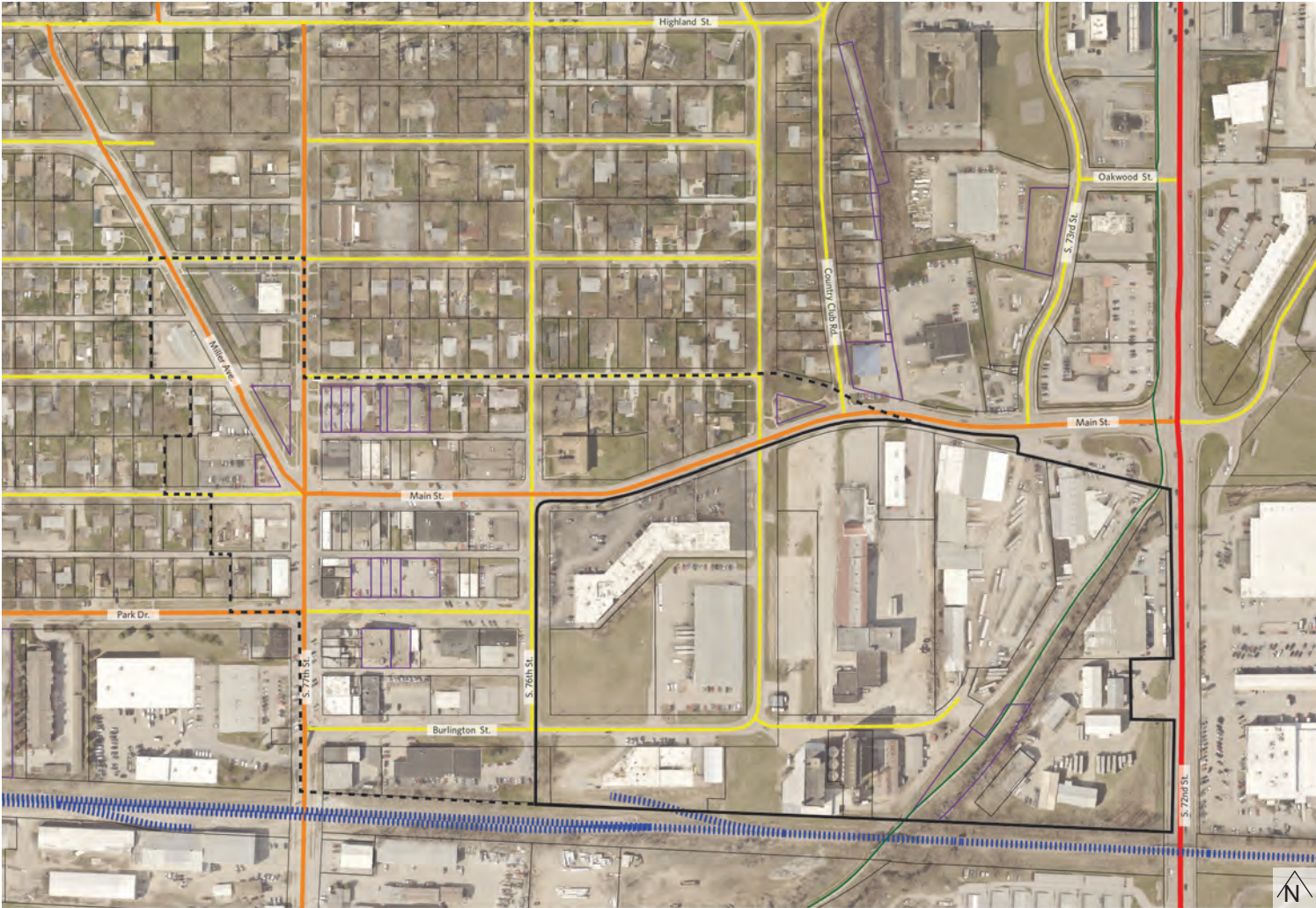
As mentioned in the previous section, the Study Area sits astride Ralston Creek and is located just to the west of the larger Big Papio Creek. As a result, a portion of the Hinge area is located within both the 100-year and 500-year flood zones. The flood zones are currently in the process of being re-mapped, the results of which are unknown at this time. That said, redevelopment within the Study Area will need to conform with all necessary stormwater requirements, and potential stormwater solutions, such as the restoration of Ralston Creek, will need to be identified and implemented.

### KEY:

- Hinge Study Area
- - - Downtown Study Area
- Parcels
- City-Owned Parcels
- 1' Contours
- 5' Contours
- - - Existing Creek
- 100-Year Flood Zone
- 500-Year Flood Zone



# INVENTORY + ANALYSIS

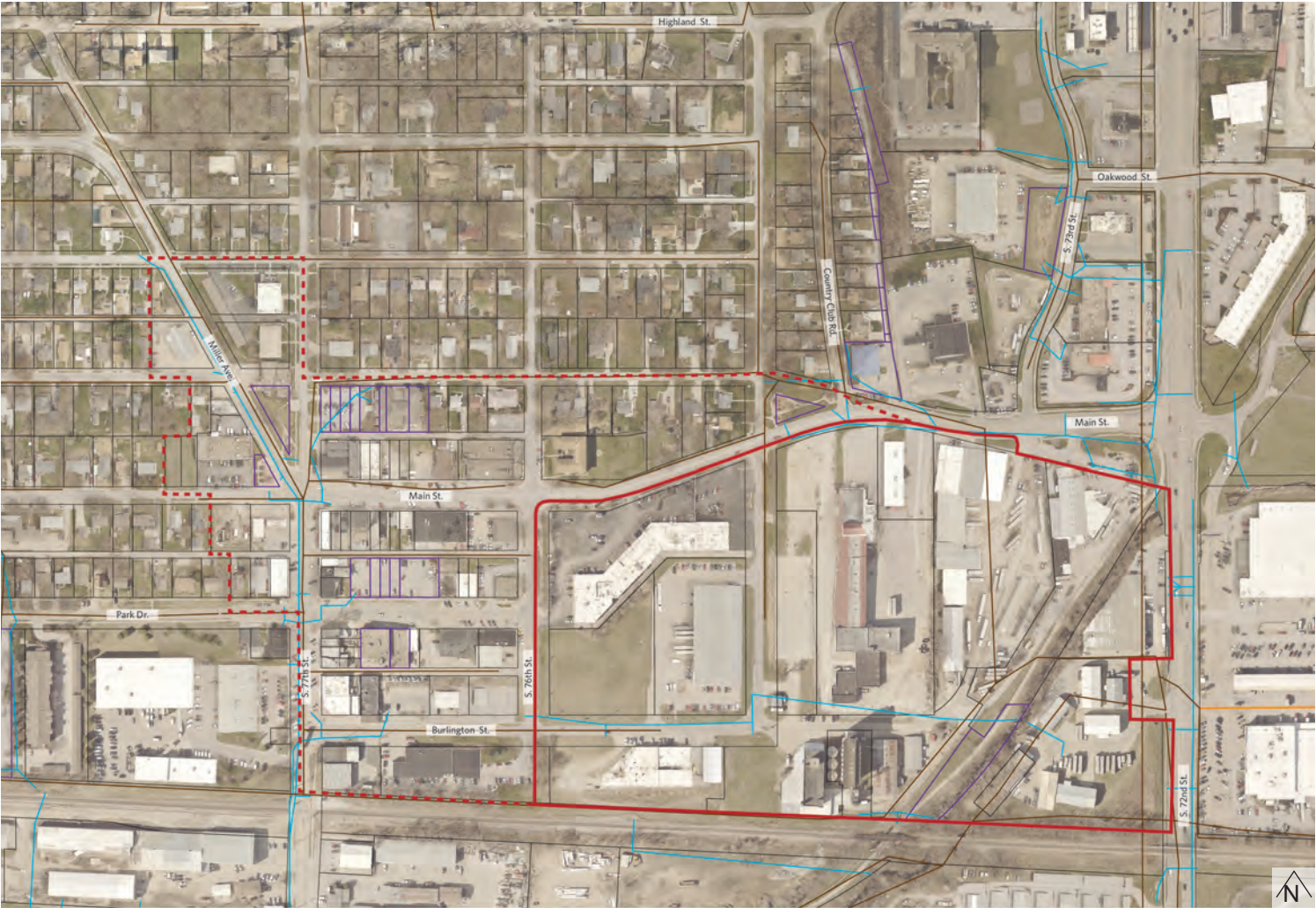


## MOBILITY

The Study Area is located within a fairly pronounced grid network of streets. The eastern boundary, 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, is a major arterial. Main Street, 77<sup>th</sup> Street, and Miller Avenue are classified as collector streets. The remainder of the streets in the Study Area are classified as local streets. Metro bus service gets no closer than the intersection of 72<sup>nd</sup> Street and Q Street. As redevelopment begins to occur, it will be important to extend Downtown's grid network of streets into the Hinge area and create a block pattern that is conducive to redevelopment.

### KEY:

- Hinge Study Area
- Downtown Study Area
- Parcels
- City-Owned Parcels
- Existing Trail
- Bus Transit Lines
- Railroad
- Major Arterial
- Collector
- Local



## UTILITIES

Because this is a redevelopment area, all major utilities are located within, or adjacent, to the Study Area. As redevelopment occurs, infill projects will need to connect to existing utilities. On larger redevelopment sites, such as in the Hinge area, it may be necessary to re-route, install, or extend new utilities to better serve newly development projects.

### KEY:

- Hinge Study Area
- Downtown Study Area
- Parcels
- Sanitary Sewer
- Storm Sewer
- Combined Storm Sewer
- Combined Sewer







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## **MARKET ASSESSMENT**

Overview

Demographics

Office

Multi-Family Apartments

Retail, Dining, & Entertainment Destinations

Conclusion and Next Steps





# MARKET ASSESSMENT - OVERVIEW

## HINGE STUDY AREA



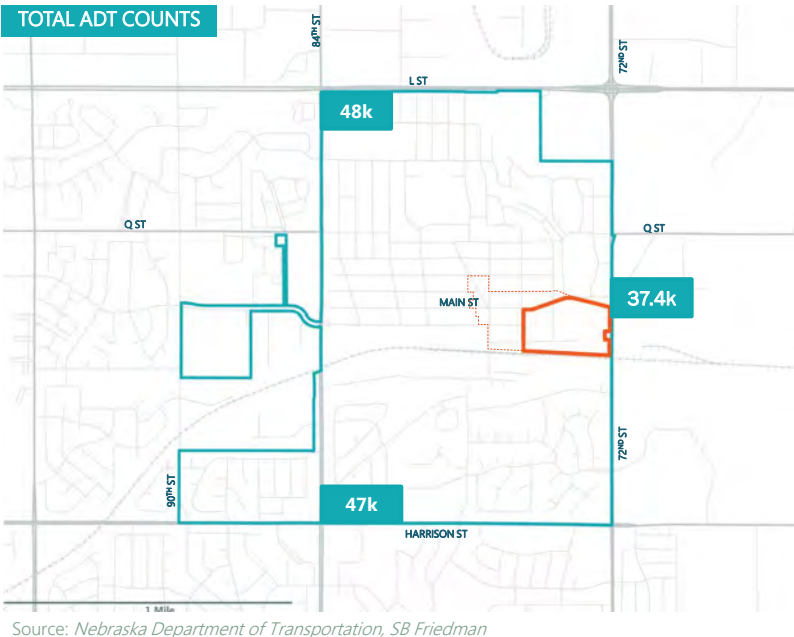
### HINGE STUDY AREA

- 15 Parcels; 30.5 acres
- Roughly bounded by 72nd Street (east), 76th Street (west), Main Street (north), and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad line (south)
- Downtown Ralston located west of the Hinge Study Area
- Located in an Opportunity Zone designated by the United States Treasury

### CURRENT TENANTS AND LAND USE

- Primarily industrial and storage users with retailers and service users

## ACCESS AND TRAFFIC VOLUME



### ACCESS

- Accessible regionally by 72nd and 84th Streets
- Close to Interstate 80 (approximately 5 minute drive time) and downtown Omaha (approximately 15 minute drive time)

### TRAFFIC

- 72nd Street & Main: 37,400 vehicles per day
  - 72nd Street: 31,000 vehicles per day
  - Main Street: 6,400 vehicles per day
- 84th Street & L Street: 48,000 vehicles per day
- 84th Street & Harrison Street: 47,000 vehicles per day

## ADJACENCIES AND VISIBILITY



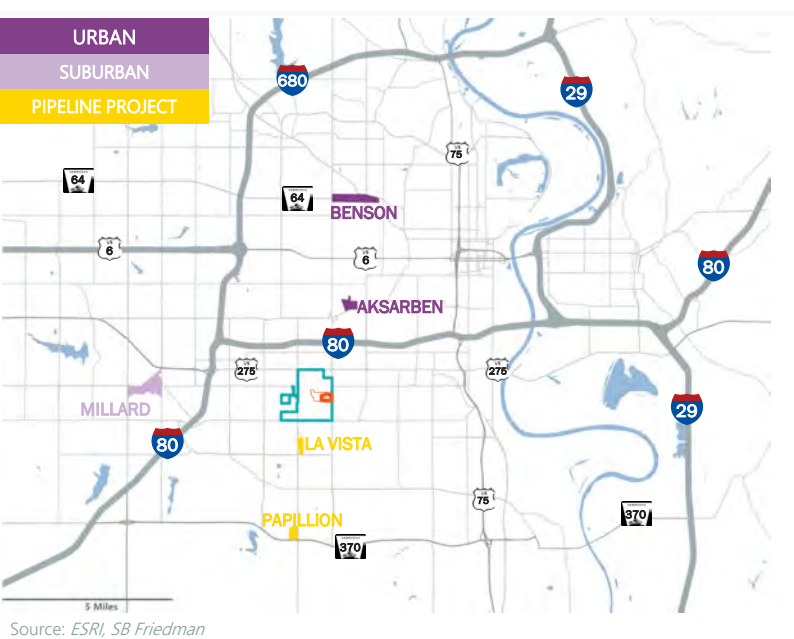
### URBAN FORM AND ADJACENCIES

- Downtown Ralston is a walkable, street grid format
- Nearby dining and entertainment destinations
- Ralston Arena is about 1/4 mile north of the Hinge Area

### VISIBILITY

- Industrial buildings limit visibility into the Hinge Area and Downtown Ralston from 72nd Street

## NEARBY COMPETITIVE AREAS





**BENSON**  
**URBAN DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR**  
Recent beautification efforts through Omaha business improvement district funding



**AKSARBEN VILLAGE**  
**AKSARBEN VILLAGE (2009)**  
Mixed use development, nearly built out



**MILLARD**  
**LUMBERYARDS DISTRICT (2017)**  
Mixed use project surrounded by strip retail and high automobile use



**LA VISTA**  
**LA VISTA CITY CENTRE (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)**  
Redevelopment of former Walmart



**PAPILLION**  
**PAPILLION COMMONS (TBD)**  
Proposed development of former farm, undergoing entitlement process

# MARKET ASSESSMENT - DEMOGRAPHICS

## POPULATION

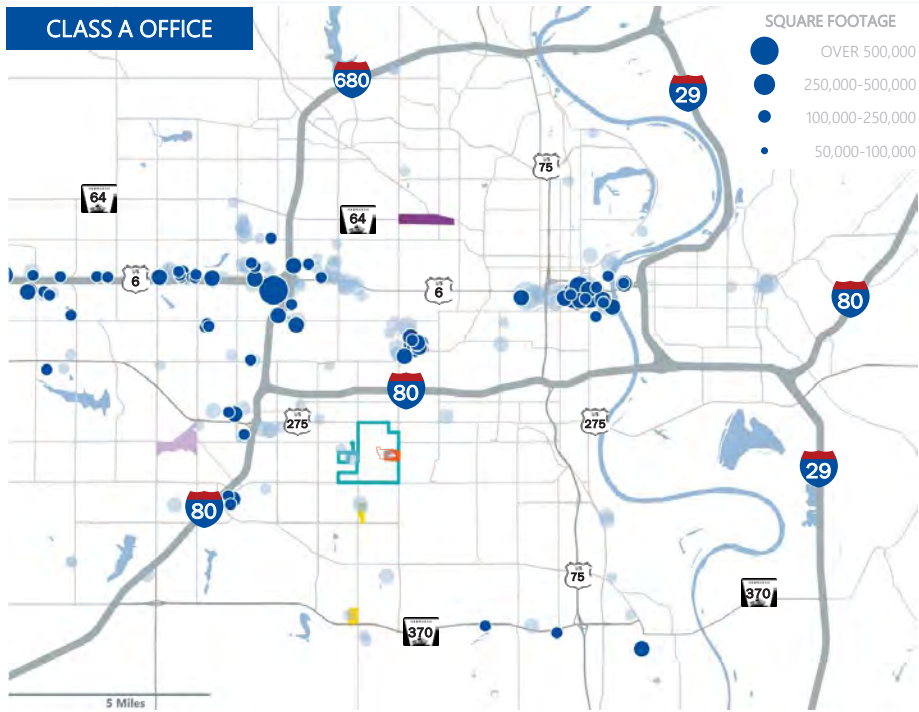
- High empty nester and senior cohort population within a half-mile of the Hinge that is projected to grow rapidly
- Millennial population surrounding Ralston is currently projected to grow at lower rates than nearby competitors

## INCOME

- Households surrounding the Hinge have median income of almost \$55,000
- Comparable with nearby competitors and Omaha region

# MARKET ASSESSMENT - OFFICE

## OMAHA REGIONAL SUPPLY



- Downtown Omaha, Midtown/Aksarben, Suburban West Dodge are high performing office submarkets
- Class A office tenants have location preferences for:
  - Proximity near a highly educated and high income workforce
  - Adjacency to major roadways
  - Larger properties with flexible built-to-sit capacities

| Submarket            | Class A Buildings | Square Footage | Rent PSF | Vacancy Rates |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|---------------|
| Omaha Metro          | 100               | 9.7 M          | \$25.92  | 3.7%          |
| Downtown             | 20                | 3.8 M          | \$23.34  | 3.1%          |
| Suburban West Dodge  | 26                | 2.0 M          | \$27.44  | 3.5%          |
| Midtown and Aksarben | 11                | 1.3 M          | \$29.01  | 3.2%          |

Source: CoStar, SB Friedman

## OFFICE FINDINGS

### ESTABLISHED REGIONAL OFFICE SUBMARKETS

- Downtown Omaha, Aksarben/Midtown, Suburban West Dodge

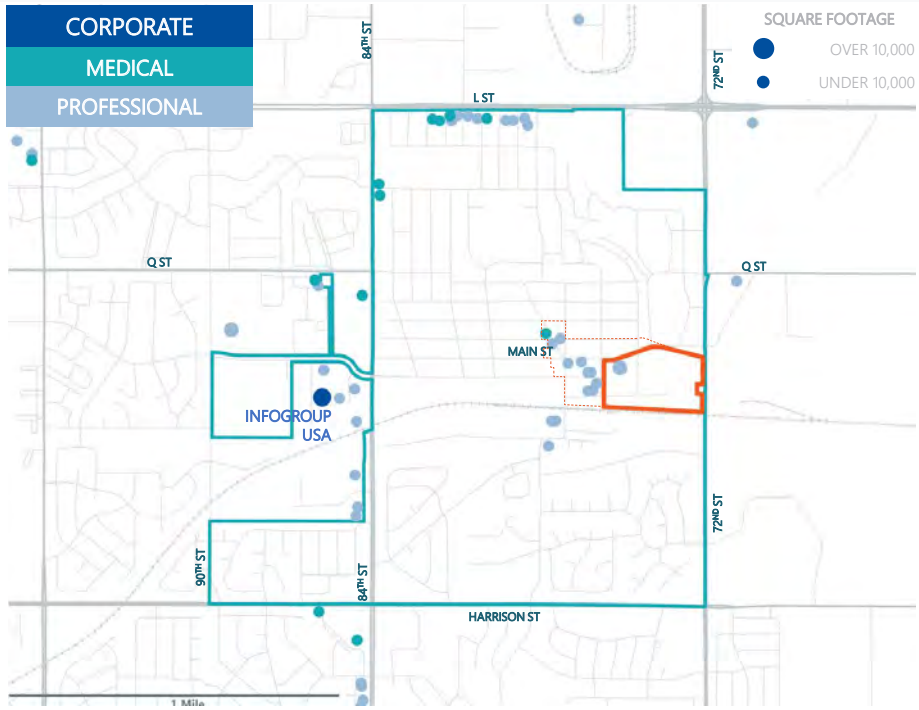
### PREFERENCES FOR NEW OFFICE DEVELOPMENT IN OMAHA REGION

- Access to major roadways
- Proximity to a highly educated, high income workforce
- Greenfield development potential for built-to-suit capacities
- Presence of dining options and other amenities for workers

### OFFICE POTENTIAL

- Unlikely to attract market driven corporate office development
- Smaller professional office development play possible in future, given additional amenities for workers
- Master plan should incorporate potential wild card office development

## RALSTON SUBMARKET OFFICE SUPPLY



- Primarily professional and medical office uses under 10,000 square feet
- Clustered around L Street and in Downtown
- No new office deliveries in Ralston Submarket in last 10 year

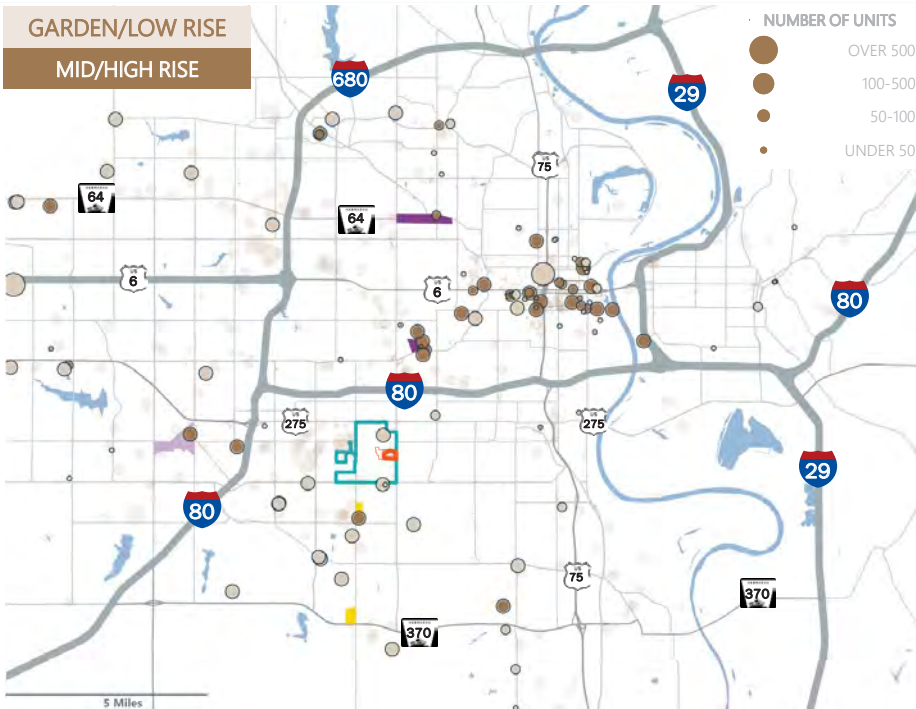
| RALSTON OFFICE MARKET |                                 |              |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| 183K                  | \$11.43                         | 1.1%         |
| TOTAL SQUARE FEET     | AVERAGE RENT PSF <sup>[1]</sup> | VACANCY RATE |

[1] Based on direct office space leasing



# MARKET ASSESSMENT - MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENTS

## NEW MULTIFAMILY DELIVERIES IN OMAHA REGION SINCE 2008



Source: CoStar, ESRI, SB Friedman

### HINGE STUDY AREA

- New deliveries concentrated in Downtown Omaha, Midtown, and Aksarben submarkets
- Redevelopments and adaptive reuses of existing buildings in Downtown Omaha and Midtown
- Garden style apartments on greenfield sites coming online in suburban multifamily submarkets

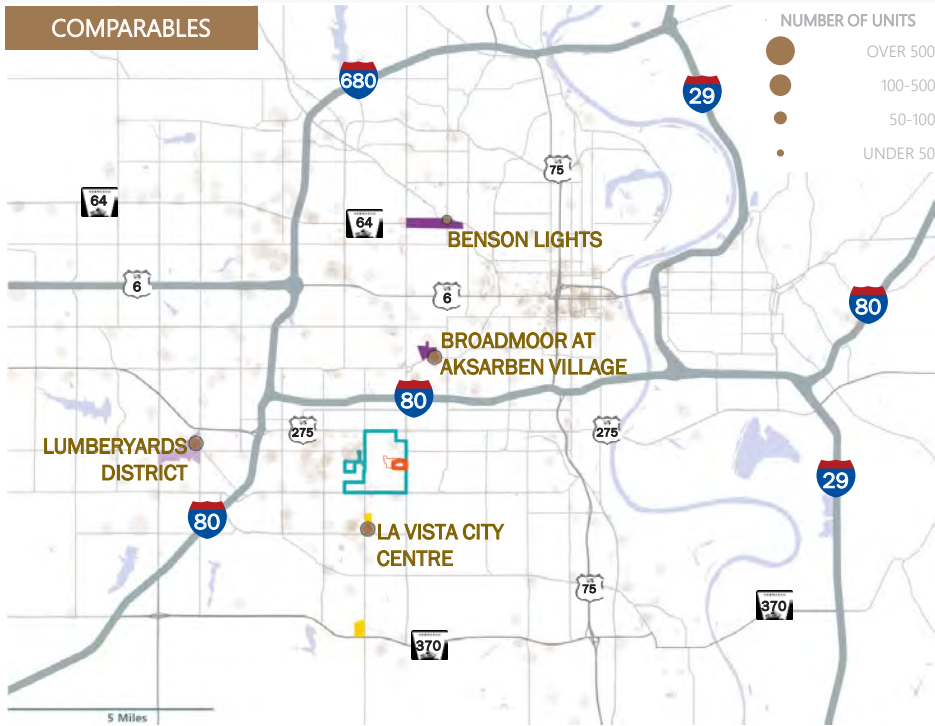
| Submarket | Building Count | Unit Count | Rent PSF | Vacancy Rates |
|-----------|----------------|------------|----------|---------------|
| Downtown  | 16             | 1,483      | \$1.32   | 8.4%          |
| Aksarben  | 8              | 1,458      | \$1.42   | 11.7%         |
| Midtown   | 8              | 1,399      | \$1.29   | 25.9%         |

Source: CoStar, SB Friedman



New Apartment Building at River’s Edge in Council Bluffs

## OMAHA REGION MULTIFAMILY PROJECT PROFILES



Source: CoStar, ESRI, SB Friedman



### BENSON LIGHTS BUILT IN 2017

99 units; 2.5 acres (40 units/acre)  
23 street parking spaces and shared parking with bank  
\$1.34 Rent PSF; 2.0% Vacancy  
Amenities: Courtyard, Gym, Pool, Rooftop Lounge, W/D



### BOADMOOR - AKSARBEN VILLAGE BUILT IN 2009

400 units; 7.2 acres (56 units/acre)  
308 parking spaces  
\$1.54 Rent PSF, 2.0% Vacancy  
Amenities: Clubhouse, Dog Park, Gym, Pool, W/D



### LUMBERYARDS DISTRICT - MILLARD BUILT IN 2017

346 units; 5.7 acres (61 units/acre)  
544 parking spaces  
Undisclosed Rent PSF, 4.6% Vacancy  
Amenities: Clubhouse, Gym, Pool, W/D



### LA VISTA CITY CENTRE BUILT IN 2020

384 units; 5.2 acres (74 units/acre)  
Unknown parking spaces, Interior garage  
\$1.52 Rent PSF, Lease Up Period  
Amenities: Clubhouse, Meeting Space

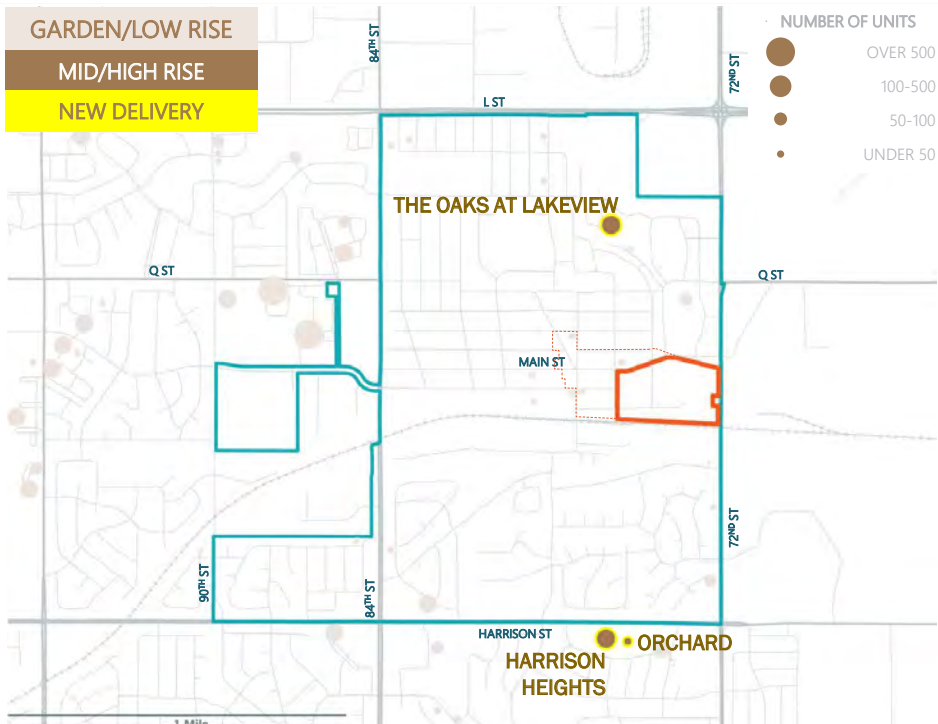


Apartment Buildings in Aksarben Village



# MARKET ASSESSMENT - MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENTS

## RALSTON SUBMARKET MULTIFAMILY RENTAL SUPPLY



Source: CoStar, ESRI, SB Friedman

- Most of multifamily housing stock in Ralston consists of garden style apartments
- All but four apartment complexes are under 50 units
- One new market rate multifamily apartment delivery (The Oaks at Lakeview) in past 10 years

## MULTIFAMILY RENTAL FINDINGS

### LIMITED DELIVERIES IN RALSTON

- Ralston has experienced little multifamily developments in the last 10 years
- Apartment rental rates in Ralston are lower than those of newer products in competitive clusters
- Lack of available land in Ralston for larger scale apartments

### NEXT STEPS

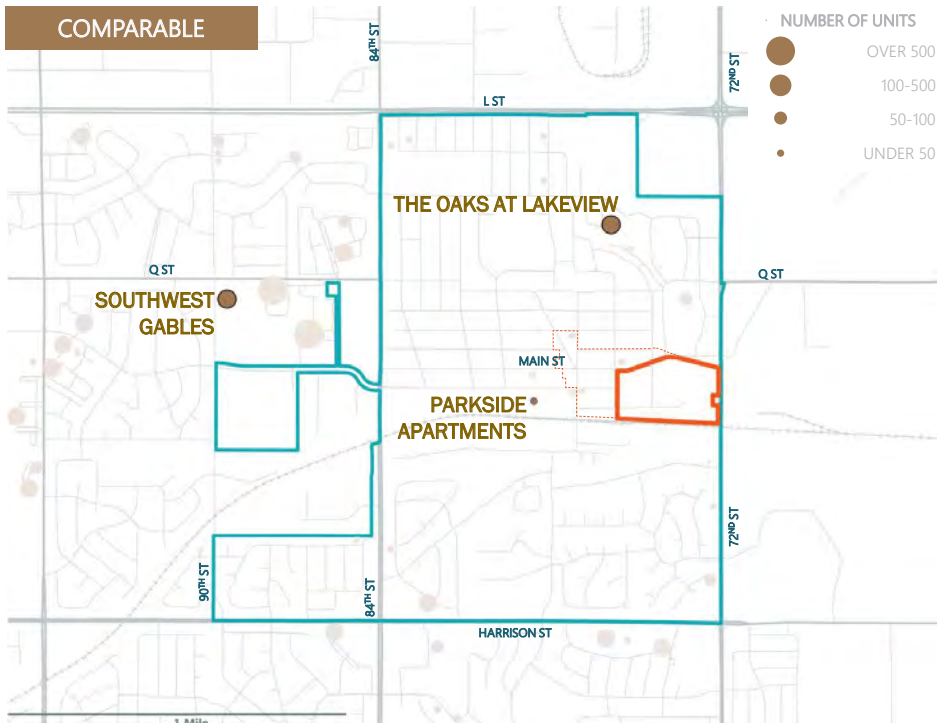
- Need to grow the multifamily rental market in order to approach top of market rents
- Future multifamily development in Ralston should focus on urban form apartments to fill infill space
- New products will have fewer amenities due to size constraint of sites

## RALSTON SUBMARKET MULTIFAMILY RENTAL MARKET

**915** **\$1.18** **5.8%**  
TOTAL UNITS AVERAGE RENT PSF<sup>[1]</sup> VACANCY RATE

[1] Average rent per square foot of three highest rent multifamily products in submarket; Harrison Heights Senior Village, Parkside Apartments, and Southwest Gables.

## RALSTON SUBMARKET MULTIFAMILY PROJECT PROFILES



Source: CoStar, ESRI, SB Friedman



### PARKSIDE APARTMENTS

#### BUILT IN 1993

Market Rate; Garden Style  
36 units; 1.4 acres (25 units/acre)  
40 parking spaces  
\$1.01 Rent PSF; 5.6% Vacancy  
Amenities: Gated Community, W/D



### SOUTHWEST GABLES

#### BUILT IN 1994

Market Rate; Garden Style  
180 units; 4.8 acres (38 units/acre)  
200 parking spaces  
\$1.07 Rent PSF, 6.1% Vacancy  
Amenities: Clubhouse, Game Room, Gym, Pool, W/D



### THE OAKS AT LAKEVIEW

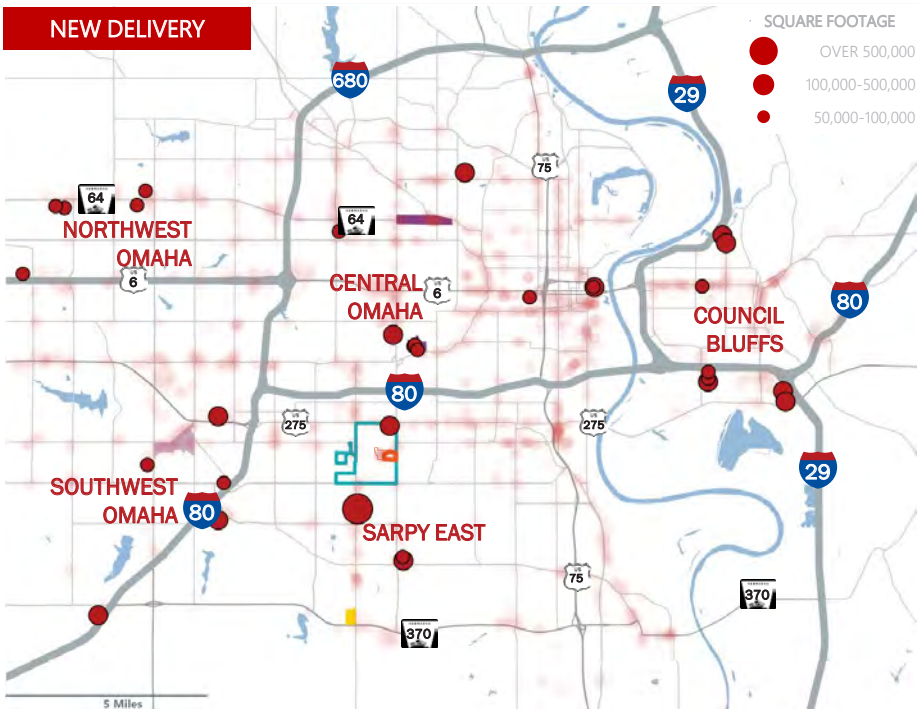
#### BUILT IN 2011

Market Rate; Garden Style  
276 units; 13.7 acres (20 units/acre)  
358 parking spaces  
\$0.93 Rent PSF, 4.35% Vacancy  
Amenities: Clubhouse, Gym, Pool, W/D



# MARKET ASSESSMENT - RETAIL, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS

## NEW RETAIL DELIVERIES IN OMAHA REGION SINCE 2008



Source: CoStar, ESRI, SB Friedman

- Retail Clusters and new retail developments scattered throughout Omaha region
- Preference of national retailers to locate near high traffic arterials, and on sites with built-to-suit capacity

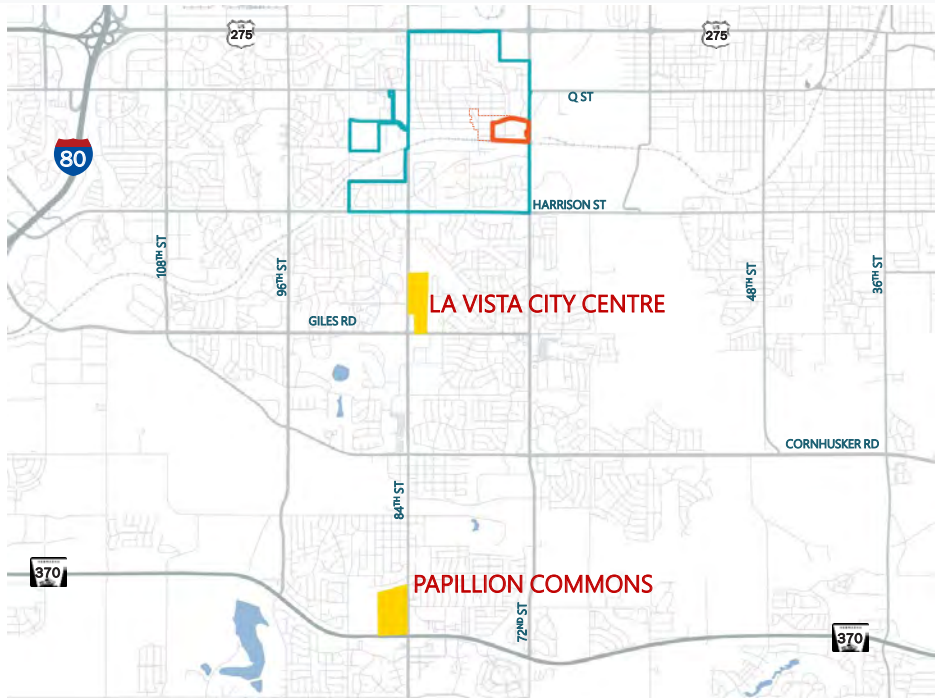
| Submarket       | New Deliveries | Square Footage | Rent PSF | Vacancy Rate |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|--------------|
| Omaha Metro     | 358            | 5.9 M          | \$19.69  | 8.3%         |
| Southwest Omaha | 87             | 1.4 M          | \$20.57  | 6.9%         |
| Sarpy East      | 48             | 1.3 M          | \$19.91  | 6.5%         |
| Central Omaha   | 36             | 662 k          | \$17.44  | 5.6%         |
| Northwest Omaha | 48             | 614 k          | \$16.76  | 4.8%         |
| Council Bluffs  | 30             | 559 k          | \$31.56  | 6.8%         |

Source: CoStar, SB Friedman



Street Level retail frontage in Aksarben Village

## PIPELINE RETAIL DELIVERIES AND COMPETITORS NEAR RALSTON



[1] Shadow Lake Towne Center (735,000 square feet of retail) acquired by PREP Property Group in 2018  
Source: City-Ventures, Omaha World-Press, ESRI, SB Friedman



### LA VISTA CITY CENTRE CITY + VENTURES

Spring 2019 Delivery  
25,000 retail square feet; 34 acres  
46,200 vehicles per day on 84<sup>th</sup> and Giles Rd  
Amenities: Hotel, Music Venue, Park



### PAPILLION COMMONS ROYCE ENTERPRISES, INC.

Unknown delivery  
725,000 retail square feet; 110 acres  
420,000 vehicles per day on 84<sup>th</sup> and Hwy 370  
Amenities: Hotels, Senior Living Facility

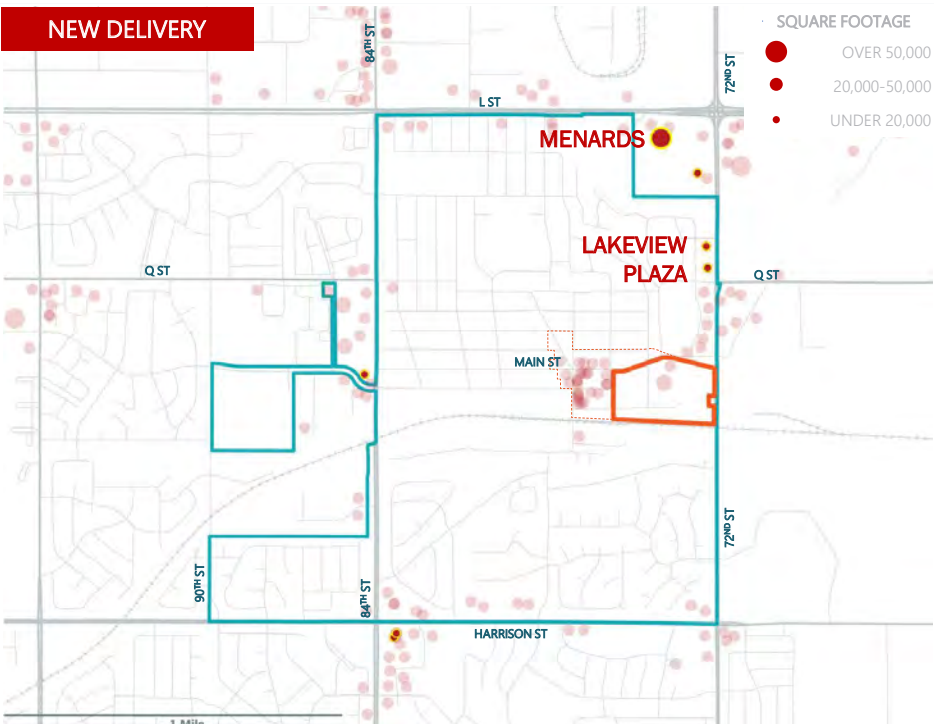


Blackstone District in Midtown Omaha



# MARKET ASSESSMENT - RETAIL, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS

## RALSTON SUBMARKET RETAIL SUPPLY



Source: CoStar, ESRI, SB Friedman

## RALSTON RETAIL SUPPLY

- Retail clusters located in Downtown area and along major arterials such as 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, 84<sup>th</sup> Street, and L Street
- Two notable retail deliveries in Ralston submarket in last 10 years; Lakeview Plaza (2008) and Menards (2013)

## REGIONAL COMPARISON

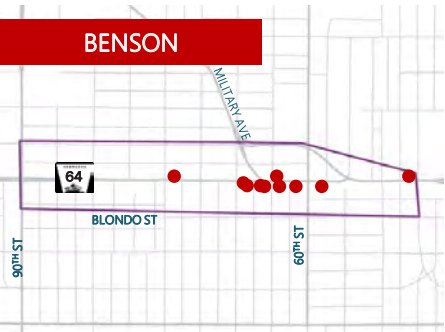
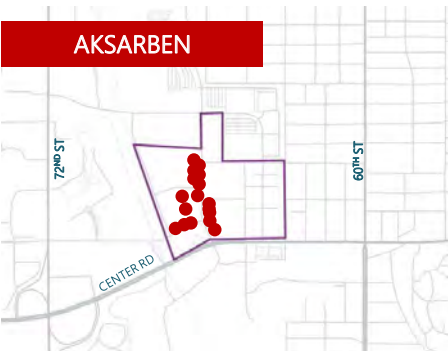
- Ralston retail rents per square foot lower than Omaha regional average (\$20 NNN PSF)

| RALSTON RETAIL MARKET |                  |              |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 429k                  | \$14.67          | 3.7%         |
| TOTAL SQUARE FEET     | AVERAGE RENT PSF | VACANCY RATE |



Outdoor Dining in Aksarben Village

## DESTINATION DINING CLUSTERS



- Ralston has dining and restaurant assets in Downtown area
- Other competitive clusters have more dining options and higher diversity of dining options
- Additional dining options would benefit current restaurants and other land uses

|               | Ralston <sup>[4]</sup> | Aksarben | Benson | Average |
|---------------|------------------------|----------|--------|---------|
| American      | 0                      | 5        | 3      | 4       |
| Asian         | 0                      | 3        | 1      | 2       |
| Café          | 1                      | 1        | 3      | 2       |
| Dessert       | 0                      | 3        | 1      | 2       |
| Healthy Foods | 0                      | 4        | 0      | 2       |
| Italian       | 0                      | 1        | 1      | 1       |
| Mexican       | 1                      | 1        | 1      | 1       |
| TOTAL         | 2                      | 18       | 10     | 14      |



# MARKET ASSESSMENT - RETAIL, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS

## ENTERTAINMENT IN COMPETITIVE CLUSTERS



- Downtown Ralston has some entertainment options
- More entertainment and leisure options in Ralston may retain visitors within the City to benefit nearby retailers
- Competitors have utilized entertainment destinations as draws for visitors to patronize neighboring businesses

|                           | Ralston <sup>[1]</sup> | Aksarben | Benson | La Vista <sup>[2]</sup> |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----------|--------|-------------------------|
| Arena/Stadium             | 1                      | 1        | 0      | 0                       |
| Breweries                 | 0                      | 0        | 2      | TBD                     |
| Indoor Recreation         | 1                      | 0        | 0      | 0                       |
| Live Entertainment Venues | 1                      | 1        | 3      | 1                       |
| Movie Theaters            | 0                      | 1        | 0      | 0                       |
| Programmed Open Space     | 0                      | 1        | 0      | 1                       |
| TOTAL                     | 3                      | 4        | 5      | 2+                      |

[1] Includes Downtown Ralston and Hinge Study Area  
[2] Proposed development program  
Source: CoStar, Yelp!, SB Friedman



Main Street Destination Dining Experience

## RETAIL AND DESTINATION DINING FINDINGS

### RETAIL POTENTIAL

- Vacant or underutilized buildings in Downtown Ralston have the potential for adaptive reuse and may be attractive for redevelopment opportunities
- Suitable for independents or start-up tenants in the near term

### DINING DESTINATIONS AND ENTERTAINMENT EXPANSION

- Downtown has established dining and entertainment destinations
- Attracting a few more neighborhood-level restaurants and entertainment destinations would bring patrons to Ralston at higher frequencies during all seasons
  - Breweries, live entertainment venues, movie theater, and/or programmed open space
- Destinations could help attract new Ralston residents and retain customers visiting existing entertainment venues, such as the Arena



Destination Main Street Similar in Scale to Downtown Ralston



# MARKET ASSESSMENT - CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

## NEAR-TERM: TARGET SMALLER-SCALE REDEVELOPMENTS AND ADAPTIVE REUSES OF DOWNTOWN PROPERTIES

- Likely feasible to implement and, if successful, could help create an environment that is more attractive for larger scale development in the future
- Multifamily developments – prioritize infill sites for redevelopment; up to 20 units per project depending on site constraints
- Retail, dining, and entertainment developments – pursue independents and start-ups to occupy vacant or underutilized spaces Downtown

## LONGER-TERM: LARGER SCALE REDEVELOPMENT IN THE HINGE AREA



Contextual Neighborhood Services and Retail



Larger-scale Mixed-use Building



Small-scale Destination Restaurant



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**VISIONING**  
Stakeholder Interviews  
Tabulation  
Visioning Workshop  
Workshop Photos  
SWOT Analysis  
Geographic Mapping Exercise





# VISIONING - STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

## OVERVIEW

A key element of the planning process was the establishment of a consensus-driven vision for the Study Area. The visioning process was comprised of three key components: specific interviews with key stakeholders, a visioning workshop, and a 3-day interactive design workshop. The vision, when combined with the site analysis and market assessment, helped form the principles necessary to guide the effort and was manifested in the development program that was used as the basis of design during the design workshop. To guide the planning effort, a thorough process for soliciting community input and establishing a consensus-driven vision was undertaken, and is highlighted on the following pages.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Fifteen individuals were selected and took part in one-on-one and group interviews. The specific interviews were based on a standard list of questions and were meant to elicit feedback on the opportunities and challenges impacting future development within the Study area. Interviewees represented a variety of stakeholder groups, including local property owners, local business owners, developers, designers, Urban Design review Board members, and Planning and Zoning Commissioners.

## EXISTING SURVEY TABULATION

The following tabulation describes the survey results conducted during the Specific Interview process. Fifteen (15) individual stakeholders were asked to rank each of the elements below on a scale of 1 (least important) to 5 (most important) in regard to their importance to the growth and development of the Hinge Study Area in Ralston, NE. This survey defined goals and directions for the basis of the detailed Redevelopment Master Plan. The rankings were then totaled for each element and the average score calculated to determine the most preferred and desirable features for the study area and adjacent properties.

|                 | AVG.<br>SCORE | MASTER PLANNING ELEMENTS                       |
|-----------------|---------------|--|
| MOST IMPORTANT  | 4.8           | a. Mix of Uses                                 |
|                 | 4.3           | q. District Image / “Branding”                 |
|                 | 4.3           | i. Relationship to 72nd Street (City entrance) |
|                 | 4.2           | f. Connections with Downtown                   |
|                 | 4.2           | n. Landscaping                                 |
|                 | 4.2           | b. Entertainment Uses (“Things to do”)         |
|                 | 4.0           | j. Central Gathering Space                     |
|                 | 4.0           | p. Sense of Place                              |
|                 | 4.0           | m. Ped / Cycle Trails and Amenities            |
|                 | 4.0           | e. Availability of Parking                     |
|                 | 3.9           | d. Residential Development/Typologies          |
|                 | 3.9           | c. Retail Uses                                 |
|                 | 3.9           | g. Synergy with Arena district                 |
|                 | 3.8           | l. Parks and Open Space                        |
|                 | 3.8           | k. Focal Water Feature / Creek Amenity         |
| LEAST IMPORTANT | 3.5           | o. Wayfinding / Signage                        |
|                 | 3.4           | h. Access to Adjacent Neighborhoods            |

## EXISTING SHORT ANSWER SUMMARY AND RESPONSES

The following questions were posed to the individual stakeholders during the Specific Interview process. The objective was to provide insight into the issues and opportunities relating to the Redevelopment Master Plan. The responses, as well as the number of individuals who mentioned them, are included below.

### 1. WHAT IS YOUR LONG-RANGE VISION FOR THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE HINGE AREA?

- Fun / Vibrant with small-town character / Destination\_\_\_\_\_4
- Improve Business District / Commercial development on Main St\_\_\_\_\_3
- Unique, urban environment for all ages – inclusive\_\_\_\_\_3
- Residences\_\_\_\_\_3
- Restaurants\_\_\_\_\_3
- Mixed-use (commercial and residential) destination\_\_\_\_\_3
- Entertainment and activities\_\_\_\_\_2
- Changing the entrance / Image of Ralston to attract people\_\_\_\_\_2
- Small Grocery Store\_\_\_\_\_1
- Small shops\_\_\_\_\_1
- Extension of Downtown\_\_\_\_\_1
- Hopefully find the right use\_\_\_\_\_1
- Greenspace\_\_\_\_\_1
- Water Feature\_\_\_\_\_1

### 2. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE HINGE AREA WILL FACE DURING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

- Financial feasibility and commercial support\_\_\_\_\_7
- Buying properties / availability of real estate\_\_\_\_\_5
- Relocating businesses\_\_\_\_\_4
- Competition for money and resources by like projects in the area\_\_\_\_\_3
- Getting started\_\_\_\_\_3
- Elevation change / Walkability\_\_\_\_\_3
- Finding the “right” mix of uses / New businesses\_\_\_\_\_3
- Parking / Traffic\_\_\_\_\_3
- Macroeconomic conditions\_\_\_\_\_2
- Cleaning up the entrance and the “junk”\_\_\_\_\_2
- Open mindedness of business owners and residents\_\_\_\_\_2
- Streets/Roads\_\_\_\_\_2
- Linking to Downtown and Arena\_\_\_\_\_2
- Greenspace\_\_\_\_\_1
- Sewer/Utilities/Gas water electrical\_\_\_\_\_1
- Fixing up the creek\_\_\_\_\_1

### 3. WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT THE HINGE AREA?

- Improving / growing / advancing the City of Ralston\_\_\_\_\_6
- Location\_\_\_\_\_5
- Link to Downtown district / Main St. corridor gateway\_\_\_\_\_3
- Space with Potential and opportunities\_\_\_\_\_2
- Easy access to interstate and historic district of Ralston\_\_\_\_\_2
- Ralston Values / Small town feel\_\_\_\_\_2
- The Granary Building\_\_\_\_\_1



4. WHAT ARE YOUR *LEAST* FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT THE HINGE AREA?

- Unattractive/ Industrial feel / not a place people want to go\_\_\_\_\_4
- Cost / unknown funding\_\_\_\_\_3
- Not income producing / dearth of nearby employment \_\_\_\_\_2
- Moving existing buildings / relocating businesses \_\_\_\_\_2
- Location / foreign to other areas of city (downtown, residential, arena / hotel district)\_\_\_\_\_2
- Getting started and moving forward – lots of opinions / slow process\_\_\_\_\_2
- Unknown where development will occur\_\_\_\_\_1
- Layout\_\_\_\_\_1
- High tax base\_\_\_\_\_1
- The feeling that “it is what it already is” and can’t change\_\_\_\_\_1
- Old, low value buildings\_\_\_\_\_1
- Lack of Restaurants\_\_\_\_\_1

5. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE GREATEST ASSETS OR STRENGTHS OF THE HINGE AREA (I.E. LOCATION, OPEN SPACE, ETC.)?

- Location\_\_\_\_\_12
- Proximity to arena and downtown / Catalyst for development \_\_\_\_\_5
- Access to interstate / Access from 72nd St. \_\_\_\_\_4
- The Community of Ralston / Well-known name in Metro area \_\_\_\_\_4
- Open Space / “Blank slate”\_\_\_\_\_4
- The creek \_\_\_\_\_4
- Local officials and City supports development \_\_\_\_\_3
- Water feature / Trail access\_\_\_\_\_3
- Size – not too large\_\_\_\_\_3
- Good school system and average income\_\_\_\_\_2
- Opportunity to reinvent the entire community / Improve image \_\_\_\_\_2
- Many existing buildings could be saved or implemented in the project \_\_\_\_\_2
- Residents will welcome upgrade\_\_\_\_\_1
- The granary\_\_\_\_\_1
- Creating a desirable place for a wide range of demographics to visit \_\_\_\_\_1
- Slow Paced\_\_\_\_\_1

6. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE GREATEST LIABILITIES OR WEAKNESSES OF THE HINGE AREA (I.E. LAYOUT OF FACILITIES, TOPOGRAPHY, ETC.)?

- Topography / Walkability\_\_\_\_\_7
- Cost / higher taxes\_\_\_\_\_7
- The current businesses and facilities in the area \_\_\_\_\_6
- Location\_\_\_\_\_5
- Scale of the area\_\_\_\_\_3
- Flood plain/water/creek area \_\_\_\_\_3
- Many similar projects / Competition \_\_\_\_\_3
- Layout of existing structures \_\_\_\_\_2
- Community Support \_\_\_\_\_2
- Shows lack of general planning \_\_\_\_\_1
- Historic buildings \_\_\_\_\_1
- How to contract businesses \_\_\_\_\_1
- Lack of employment \_\_\_\_\_1
- Stigma that Ralston is a sleepy town \_\_\_\_\_1
- Nearby railroad and industrial uses \_\_\_\_\_1
- Over saturation of “entertainment district” \_\_\_\_\_1

7. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE SHOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR THE HINGE AREA DURING THE NEXT TEN YEARS?

- Something to draw people – trail connection, water feature, gathering space\_\_\_\_\_5
- New business / Mixed Use \_\_\_\_\_5
- Establish / Implement plan with design criteria \_\_\_\_\_3
- Best use of area \_\_\_\_\_2
- Improve Entrance to the area \_\_\_\_\_2
- Razing of structures with construction of new structures \_\_\_\_\_2
- Quality and unique mixed use products \_\_\_\_\_2
- Link 72nd to downtown / Access to area \_\_\_\_\_2
- Granary \_\_\_\_\_2
- Get rid of used car lots \_\_\_\_\_1
- Sewer/water utilities electrical figured out \_\_\_\_\_1
- Start with land available without needing to demo structures \_\_\_\_\_1
- Friendly to animals \_\_\_\_\_1
- Make the creek a focal point \_\_\_\_\_1
- Hillcrest Renovation \_\_\_\_\_1
- Landscaping / Beautification \_\_\_\_\_1

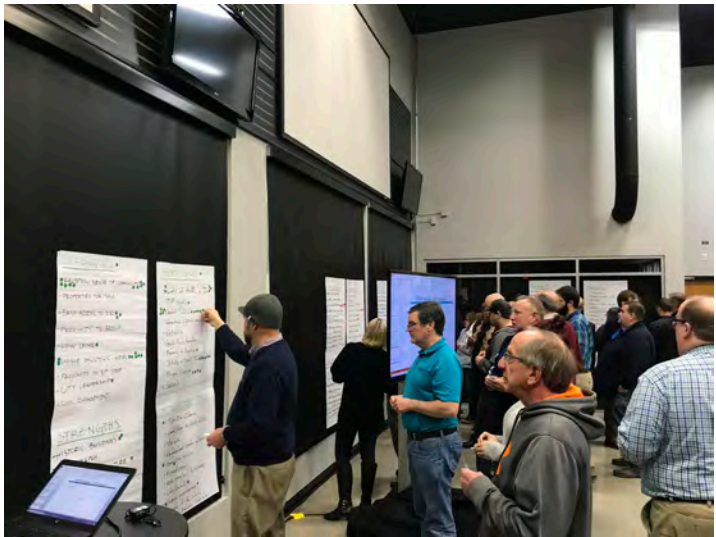
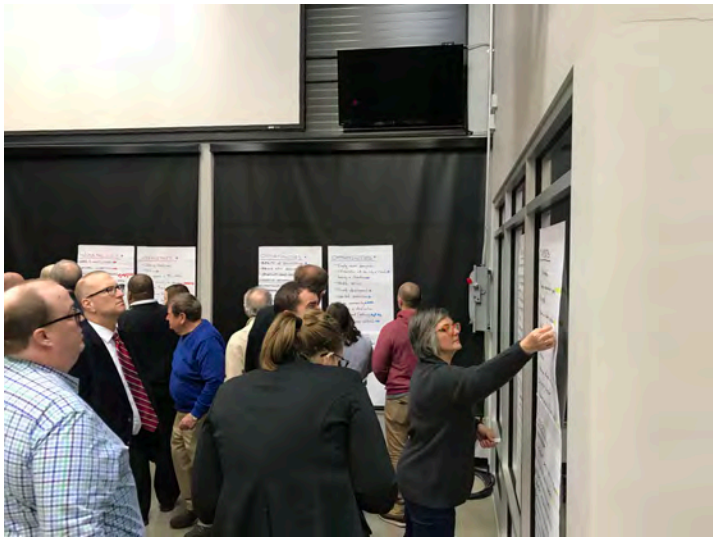
8. WHAT THREE SPECIFIC ACTIONS OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ACCOMPLISHED ON THE HINGE AREA?

- Draw people to area / Make people more aware of Ralston \_\_\_\_\_5
- Mixed-use residential / Store front areas \_\_\_\_\_5
- Parks / Open greenspace / Trail \_\_\_\_\_5
- Bring in new business \_\_\_\_\_4
- Improve looks / Clean up entrance \_\_\_\_\_4
- Entertainment district \_\_\_\_\_3
- Restaurants (not chains) \_\_\_\_\_3
- Grocery store / Market \_\_\_\_\_2
- Multifamily development \_\_\_\_\_2
- Water feature \_\_\_\_\_2
- Upscale housing community \_\_\_\_\_1
- Walkable neighborhood \_\_\_\_\_1
- Early childhood development \_\_\_\_\_1
- Unique from other developments in the metro area \_\_\_\_\_1
- Start towards downtown and move toward 72nd St. \_\_\_\_\_1
- Brewery/brewpub in the granary \_\_\_\_\_1



# VISIONING - VISIONING WORKSHOP

A visioning workshop was held on the evening of January 1st, 2019. City staff, key stakeholders, and the general public were invited to attend. Participants were provided an overview of the planning process and participated in a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and performed a Geographic Mapping Exercise for the Study Area. The SWOT Analysis allowed participants to identify and vote on their top priorities in each category. The numbers next to each response on the following pages identify the top vote receivers based on workshop participant responses. The Geographic Mapping Exercises allowed groups of participants to design their “dream” district. Details of the Visioning Workshop are provided on the following pages.





VISIONING - SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Ralston Sense of Community                     | 17 |
| Central Location                               | 17 |
| Unique Downtown                                | 12 |
| Actually a small town                          | 9  |
| 72nd Street Traffic                            | 7  |
| Historic Buildings                             | 4  |
| Unique Businesses                              | 4  |
| Easy access to I-80                            | 3  |
| Independence Day Celebration                   | 2  |
| Quality City Services                          | 2  |
| Character City Leadership                      | 2  |
| Low Crime                                      | 2  |
| Parks and Established Trees                    | 2  |
| Great Library / Police Force                   | 1  |
| Connection to adjacent amenities               | 1  |
| TIF  | 1  |
| Family Oriented Amenities                      | 1  |
| Services for Elderly                           | 1  |
| Strong / Active Chamber and Business Community | 1  |
| Unique Focal Points (5-Way Intersection)       | 1  |
| Arena Proximity                                | 1  |
| Area to work with                              | 1  |
| Nimble City Structure (Fast Decisions)         | 1  |
| Active Churches                                | 1  |

WEAKNESSES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Brand Awareness                                    | 19 |
| Lack of Retail                                     | 16 |
| Negative Reputation                                | 10 |
| Parking  | 9  |
| Visibility   | 8  |
| Limited Tax Base                                   | 6  |
| Blank Storefronts                                  | 5  |
| Landlocked Area                                    | 3  |
| Unappealing Entrances                              | 3  |
| Lack of Destination Businesses                     | 3  |
| Aging Building Conditions                          | 3  |
| Missing Teeth                                      | 3  |
| Regional Competition                               | 2  |
| Lack of Multi-Family Housing Units                 | 2  |
| Lumberyard East of 72 <sup>nd</sup>                | 2  |
| Industrial Businesses (Limited Relocation Options) | 2  |
| Topography   | 1  |
| Area East of 72nd Area (Lopsided)                  | 1  |
| Lack of “Drawing Power”                            | 1  |
| Bonding Capability / City Finances                 | 1  |
| Challenging Housing Market                         | 1  |
| Non-Functional Infrastructure                      | 1  |
| Lack of Walkability                                | 1  |
| Cost of Property Acquisition                       | 1  |

OPPORTUNITIES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Create Brand / Gateway                 | 19 |
| Generate Revenue for City              | 15 |
| Mixed-Use                              | 11 |
| Having a Downtown                      | 10 |
| Entertainment District Designation     | 8  |
| Niche Community                        | 5  |
| Restore Community Confidence           | 4  |
| Increase Revenue / Economic Base       | 4  |
| Attract New Residents                  | 3  |
| Create Density                         | 2  |
| Attracting Small Businesses            | 2  |
| Develop Empty Lots                     | 2  |
| Youth Leadership                       | 2  |
| More Walkability                       | 2  |
| Creative Re-purposing Opportunities    | 2  |
| Community Gathering Opportunities      | 2  |
| Beauty of Downtown                     | 1  |
| Opportunity Zone Designation           | 1  |
| Empty-Nester Market                    | 1  |
| Collaborate with Omaha Shuttle Service | 1  |
| Gap in Destination Restaurants         | 1  |
| Private Development                    | 1  |
| Habitat Restoration                    | 1  |
| Extension of Burlington Street         | 1  |
| Make it a Destination                  | 1  |
| Ralston Creek Water feature            | 1  |
| Spur Additional Redevelopment Areas    | 1  |

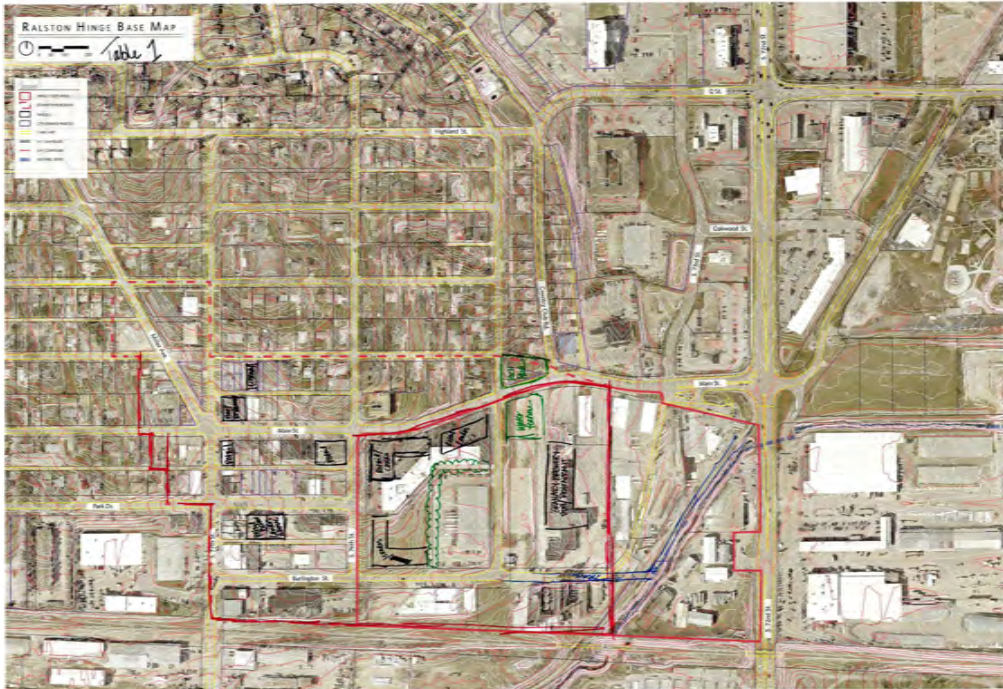
THREATS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Regional Competition                         | 21 |
| Owners Not Willing to Sell                   | 19 |
| Negative Arena Stigma                        | 12 |
| Property Acquisition Cost                    | 9  |
| Negative Perception and Publicity            | 7  |
| Lack of Ready-to-Use Buildings               | 5  |
| Two Service Businesses at 5-Way Intersection | 4  |
| Surrounding Development Head Start           | 3  |
| Maintain Tax Base                            | 3  |
| Arena Debt                                   | 3  |
| Project Financing                            | 3  |
| High Property Taxes Within City              | 2  |
| A lot of Rentals                             | 2  |
| Losing Existing Identity                     | 2  |
| Adjacent Land Use to the East                | 2  |
| Lengthy Implementation                       | 2  |
| Omaha  | 1  |
| Annexation                                   | 1  |
| Lack of Diversity                            | 1  |
| City / County Merger                         | 1  |
| Attracting Businesses                        | 1  |
| Housing Bubble                               | 1  |



# VISIONING - GEOGRAPHIC MAPPING EXERCISE

TABLE #1



**FOCUS: WESTERN HINGE**

- Granary transformed into a brewpub
- Connect Brewpub to Trails - Similar to Des Moines
- Condos by Hillcrest Landing
- Expand library parking lot
- Tree lined amphitheater as a community gathering space
- Mixed-use development
- A lot of retail opportunity

TABLE #3



**FOCUS: WALKABILITY**

- Improve entrance to attract people to area
- Entry feature - Fountain
- Create another main entrance besides 72nd St. and Main St.
- Green, gathering space
- Apartments/Multifamily housing
- Small business in the granary
- Warehouses behind the granary used for internet sales
- Brewery by the grain elevators
- Walking path that loops around amenities and down 77th St.
- Trails connect the green, gathering space
- Mix small business retail with services

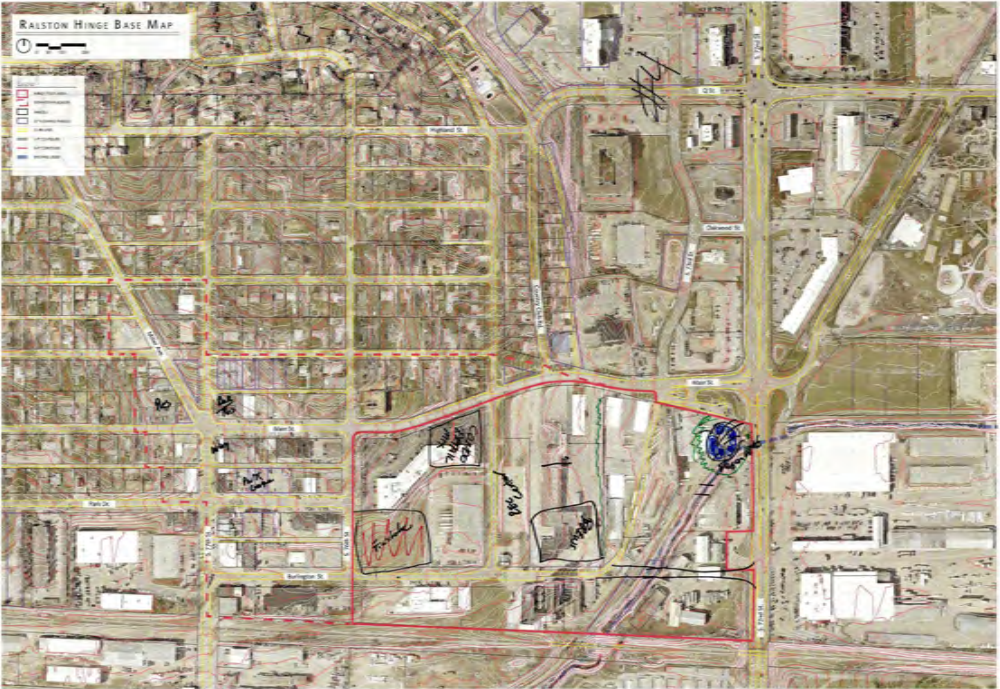
TABLE #2



**FOCUS: MAIN STREET ENTRANCE PARK**

- Open lawn space on corner area leading to Main St.
- Open Greenspace connecting Burlington St. to the park
- Open Greenspace becomes community gathering space
- Incorporate trail system
- Mixed-use retail development
- Brewery
- Townhouses and apartments

TABLE #4



**FOCUS: FIRE DEPARTMENT RELOCATION**

- Transform the granary into a brewery
- Funky retail by Bushwacker's Saloon
- Restaurants
- 8-10 story condos / Mixed retail at Hillcrest Landing location
- Move the existing fire department to empty space on the corner of 76th St. and Burlington St.
- Bring more retail to existing fire department location
- Recreation center
- Bakery
- Catering restaurant
- Greenspace
- Focal feature - Fountain



TABLE #5

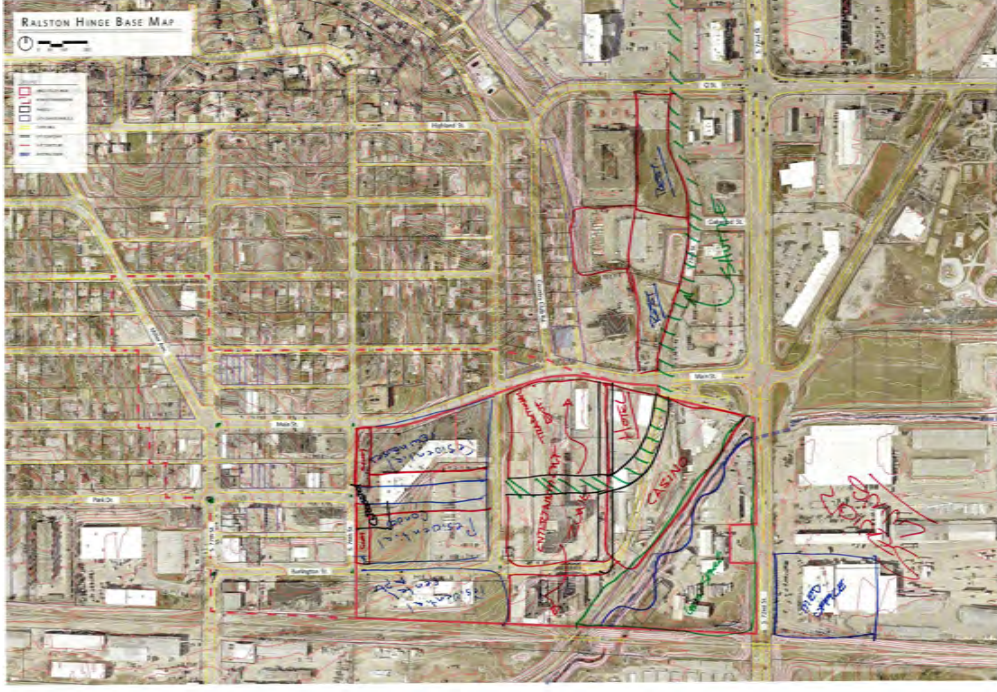


**FOCUS: POND**

- Dam the Ralston Creek into a pond
- Move businesses
- Extend Burlington St. to 72nd St.
- Community greenspace
- Apartments overlooking greenspace
- Parking garage off of Burlington St. by the railroad



TABLE #6



**FOCUS: CONNECTIONS AND ENTERTAINMENT**

- Connect to Ralston Arena and downtown
- Tree Lined boulevard
- Autonomous shuttle
- Grocery store
- Commercial entertainment zone terminating at the granary
- Continue city grid pattern
- Hotel and casino anchors
- Meandering stream
- Open space
- Senior housing on City of Omaha property

TABLE #7



**FOCUS: COMPANY HEADQUARTERS**

- Bring people in by Hillcrest Landing
- Corporate headquarters or residential high rise by Hillcrest Landing
- Extend Burlington St. to 72nd St.
- Greenspace where underused retail is now
- Downtown plaza
- Synergy between sites



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# DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM & STRATEGY

Overview  
Development Program  
Development Strategy





# DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM & STRATEGY

## OVERVIEW

Based on the findings of the inventory and analysis, the market assessment, and the visioning process, and guided by discussions with City staff, the Hinge Committee, and key stakeholders, a development program and strategy were created for use during the 3-day design workshop. The development program was comprised of key findings and specific elements deemed necessary to achieve the objectives of the master planning process, and contained key elements to be explored and tested during the interactive workshop.

## DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The goal for the Hinge / Downtown Study Area was to create an entrance into the City and act as a catalyst for development and support and supplement redevelopment in the area from Downtown Ralston to the Ralston Arena. The new and revitalized neighborhood will be characterized by low- to mid-rise buildings and urban character, whereby buildings, and the uses contained within them, will address the street and help activate the sidewalks. New development should be pedestrian-oriented in order to encourage walking and dynamic street-level activity. A variety of uses and building typologies will be encouraged. Uses will be mixed both horizontally and vertically within buildings. Active uses, such as restaurants and retail stores will be located on the first level of buildings located at key nodes, while office, hospitality, and residential uses will be encouraged on upper floors. Elsewhere within the district, residential options will be developed to encourage a variety of household types and income levels within the neighborhood, from millennials, young professionals, and families to empty-nesters, retirees, and seniors. Residential options will range from condos and apartments to missing middle typologies and townhomes. These uses will be interconnected by a robust mobility network equally serving the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit. The neighborhood will be interspersed with a network of parks, plazas, and trails, which will function as the backbone of the district’s green infrastructure network. Details of the Development Program are on the following pages. The images, adjacent, show examples of various building typologies that would be appropriate within the Study Area.



Example of mixed-use building typology



Example of townhome building typology



Example of multi-family building typology



Example of missing middle building typology



**DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

Following the inventory and analysis of the study area, the market assessment, stakeholder interviews, and conversations with the development community, the project team established a comprehensive Development Strategy for the study area. This strategy considered a number of factors, including existing conditions, market conditions, and potential development scenarios to create a “play book” that would provide the best chance for success. Key elements of this strategy include the following:

- 1. Create a Framework for Development – Develop a master plan, design guidelines, and appropriate implementation mechanisms to guide redevelopment in the Downtown and Hinge Study Area.
- 2. Start Downtown – Downtown Ralston is one of the few remaining walkable urban centers within the metro that has not undergone redevelopment. It contains a nice stock of urban buildings; however, many of them are underutilized or vacant. Start small by creating a strategy to fill available bays and create activity.
- 3. Establish Proof of Concept – Once vacant/marginal bays are filled with activity-generating uses, capitalize on the momentum to attract missing-middle developers to redevelop infill lots Downtown with smaller-scale residential typologies.
- 4. Use Downtown as a Catalyst – Once momentum, critical mass, and new rooftops have been established, use downtown as a catalyst to attract larger-scale developers to build within the Hinge area.
- 5. Redevelop the Hinge – Using the momentum created in Downtown Ralston, supplemented by public investment in a new gateway park, attract one or two large developers to redevelop the industrial sites within the Hinge with large-scale mixed-use development.



*Downtown Ralston*



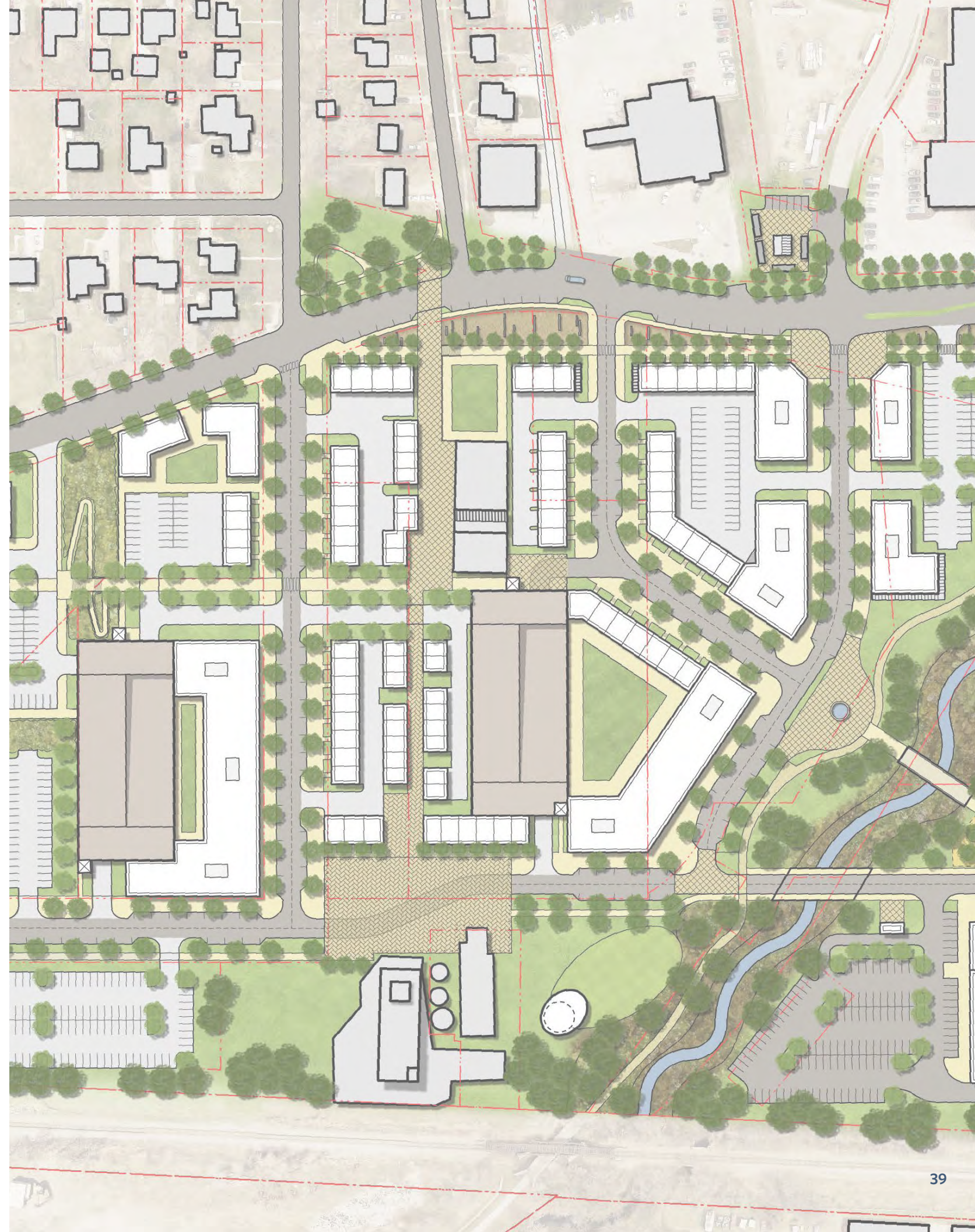
*The Hinge Area*



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**MASTER PLAN**  
Charrette Overview  
Day One  
Day Two  
Day Three  
Master Plan





# MASTER PLAN - CHARRETTE | DAY ONE

## OVERVIEW

The focal point of the Downtown / Hinge master planning process was the Design Charrette. The Charrette was held over a three-day period from March 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The Charrette merged the results of the site inventory and analysis, market assessment, visioning process, and development program. The focus of the charrette was to develop a conceptual master plan for the Study Area.

The Charrette was staffed by design professionals from a variety of backgrounds and specialties, including urban planning and design, landscape architecture, transportation planning, site/civil engineering, and market/real estate advisory services. Held over the course of three days and attended by City staff, elected officials, key stakeholders, and the general public, the iterative process continually tested ideas and concepts and made revisions based on input received from the participants during evening pin-up sessions. Ideas were continually refined, so that by the end of day three, general consensus on the key framework elements and development concepts to be included in the master plan had been achieved. The results of the Design Charrette are included on the following pages.

## DAY ONE - MARCH 13, 2019

Day one of the Charrette explored a number of concepts for the Study Area. These concepts focused on key “big picture” organizational aspects of the district, including future streets and their resulting block structure, development typologies, parks and plaza locations, and infill typologies. A number of site specific elements were also examined. These included infill development on downtown parcels, development options for the large industrial parcels, and options for a gateway park fronting onto 72<sup>nd</sup> Street. These elements were presented and discussed during the day-one evening pin-up session.



Photos of current conditions in Study Area

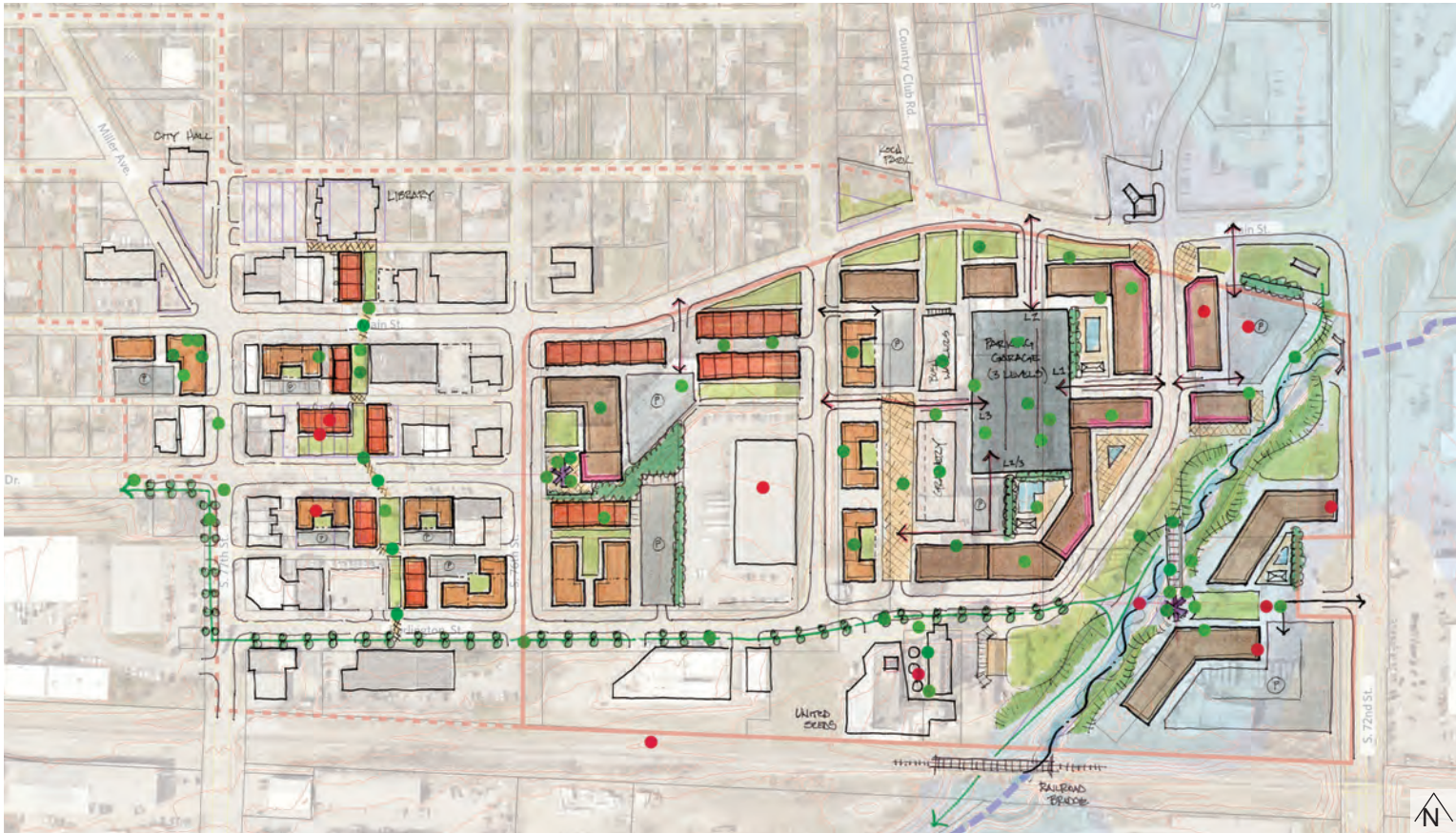


Pin-Up Session

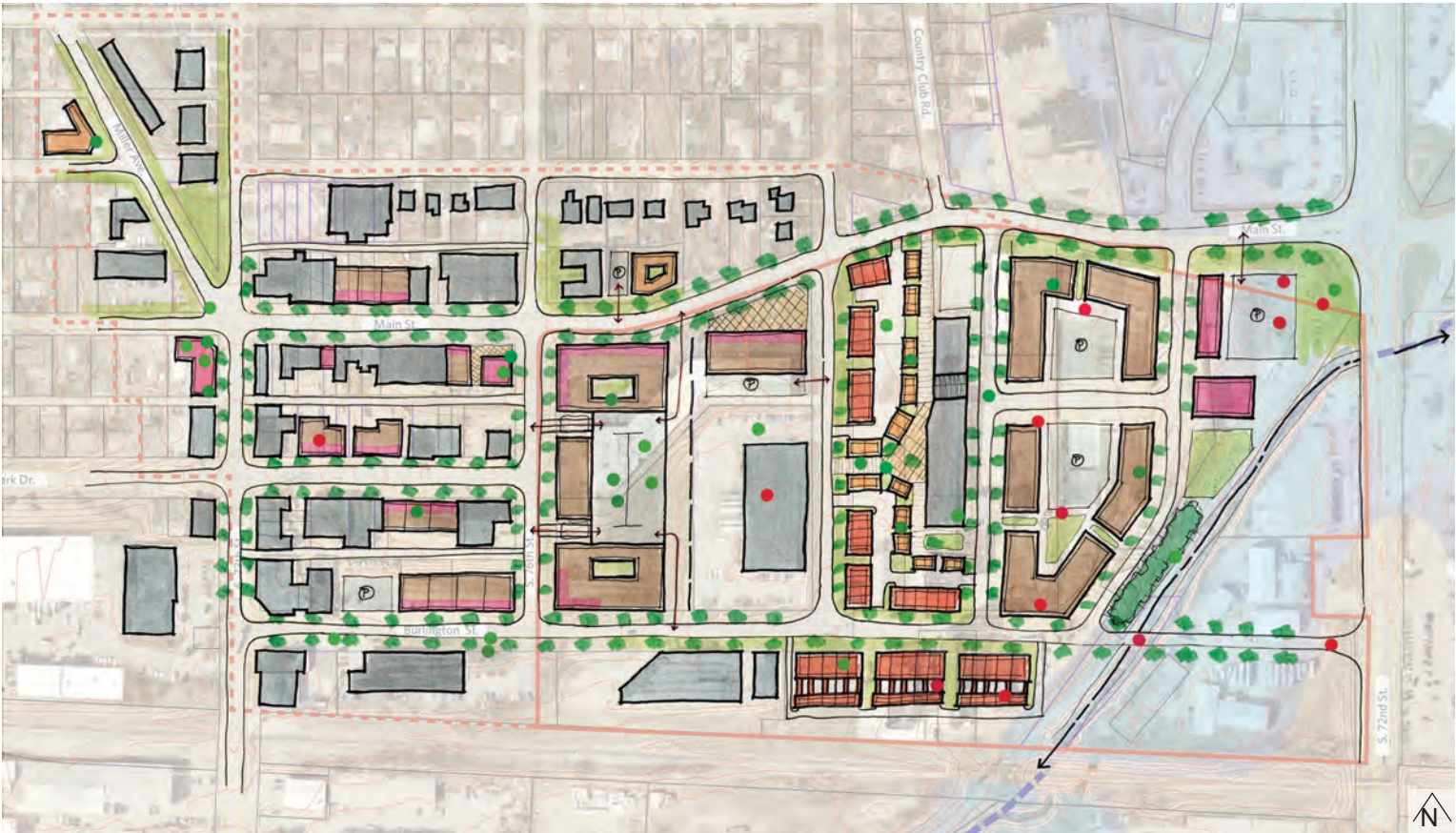


# ALTERNATIVE CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

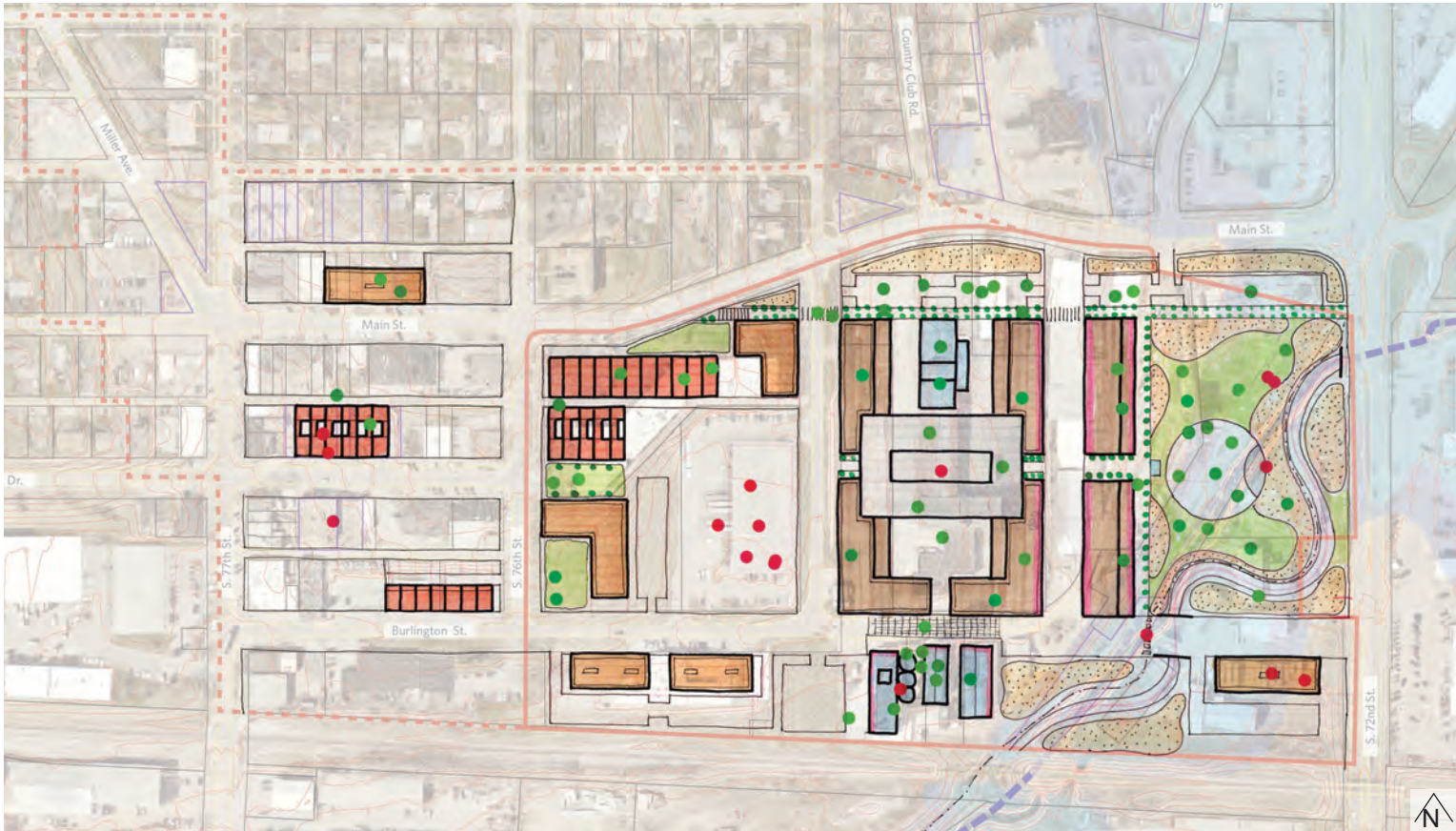
CONCEPT A



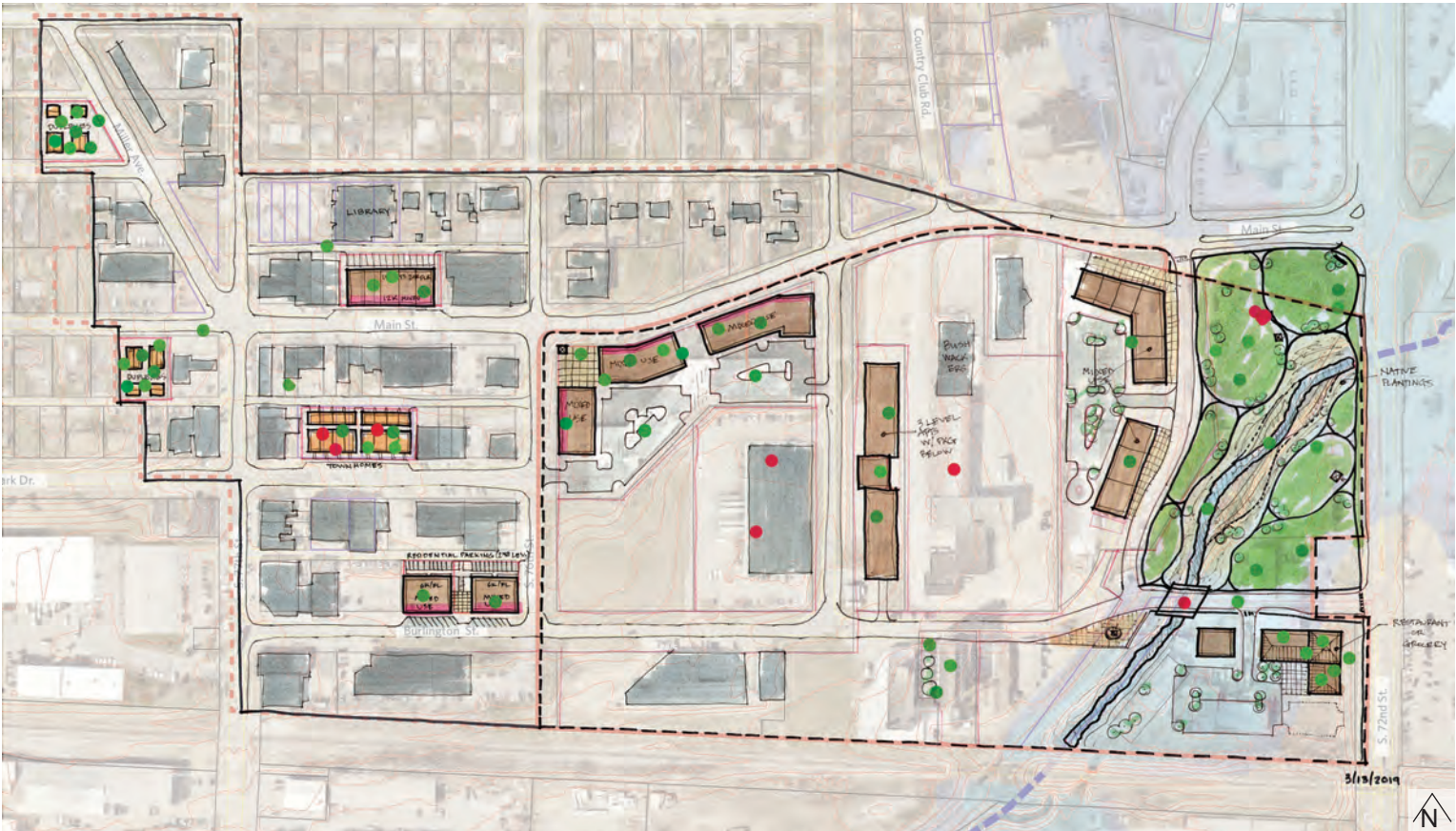
CONCEPT B



CONCEPT C



CONCEPT D





# MASTER PLAN - CHARRETTE | DAY TWO

## DAY TWO - MARCH 14, 2019

Based on voting and comments received during the previous evening's evening pin-up session, revisions and refinements to these elements were made on day two of the Design Charrette. Options, two each for the Downtown Area and the Hinge Area, were developed. Focus was placed on preferred alternatives for the City-owned parking lot; potential redevelopment of auto-oriented uses in Downtown; and redevelopment options for Hillcrest Landing, Theatrical Media Services, and United Seeds. Additionally, future potential refinements to the 5-Points Intersection were examined. All elements were consolidated onto one of four conceptual plan diagrams of the district, and then presented and discussed during the day-two evening pin-up session.



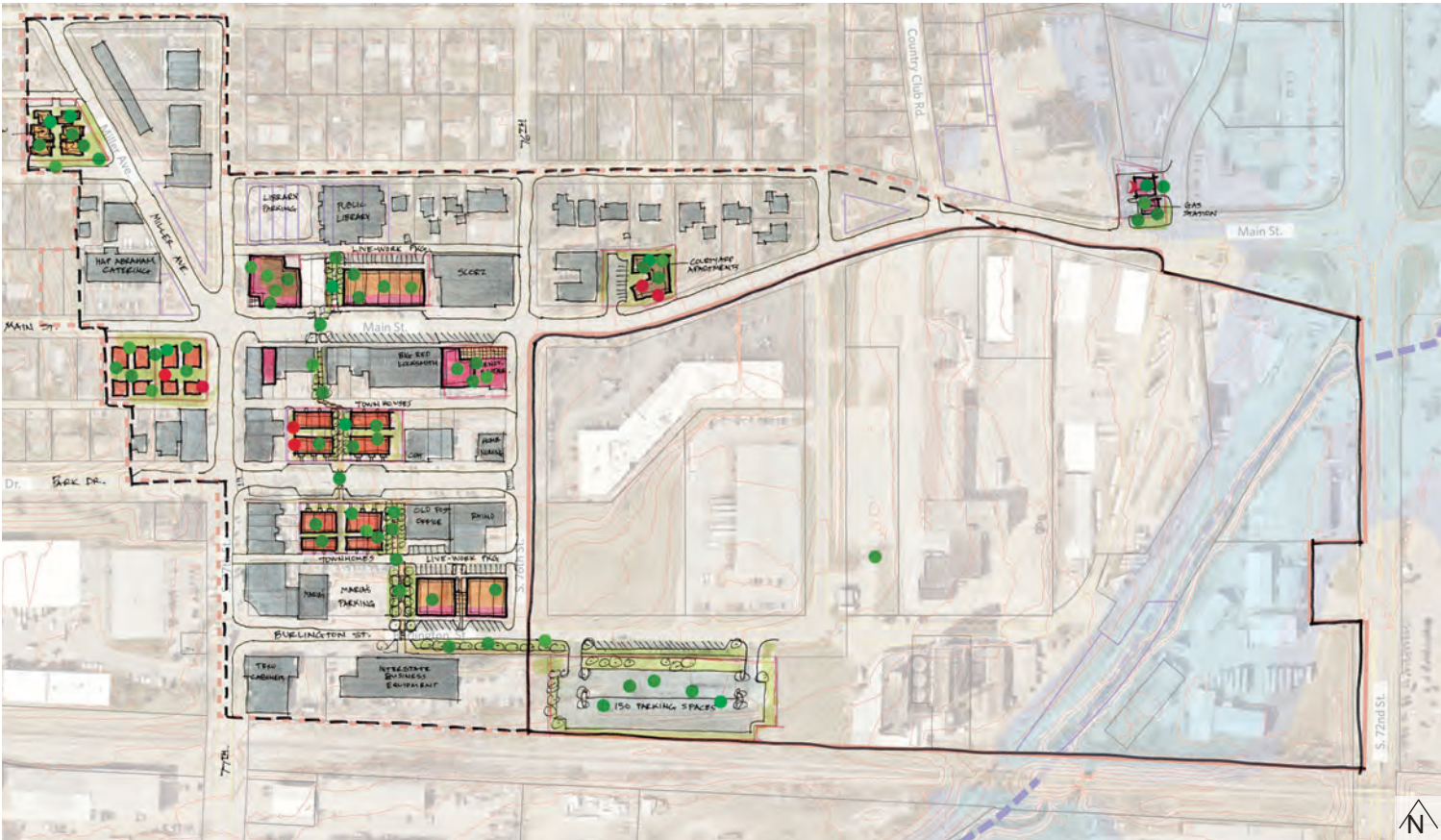
Pin-Up Session



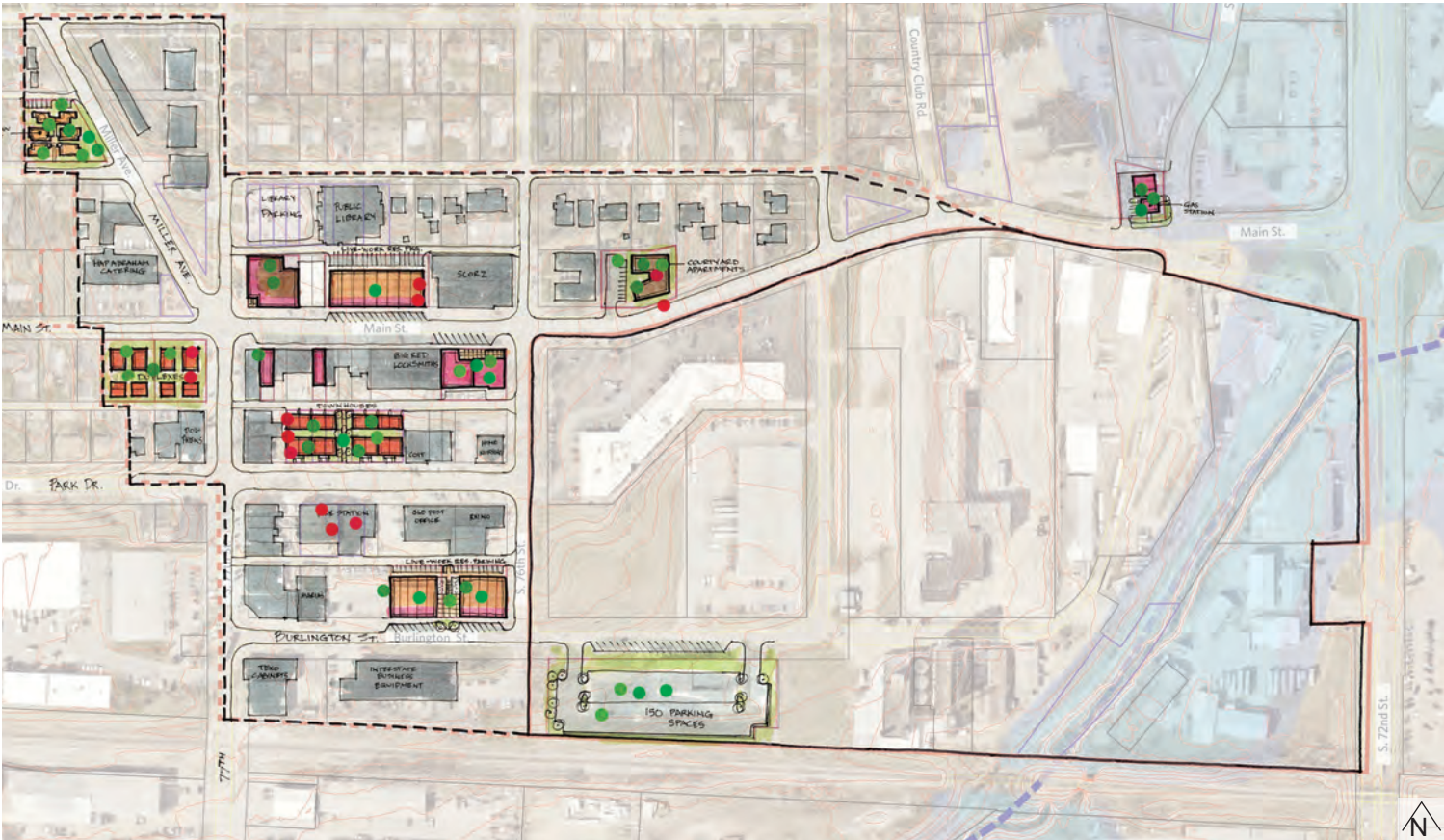


PREFERRED CONCEPTS

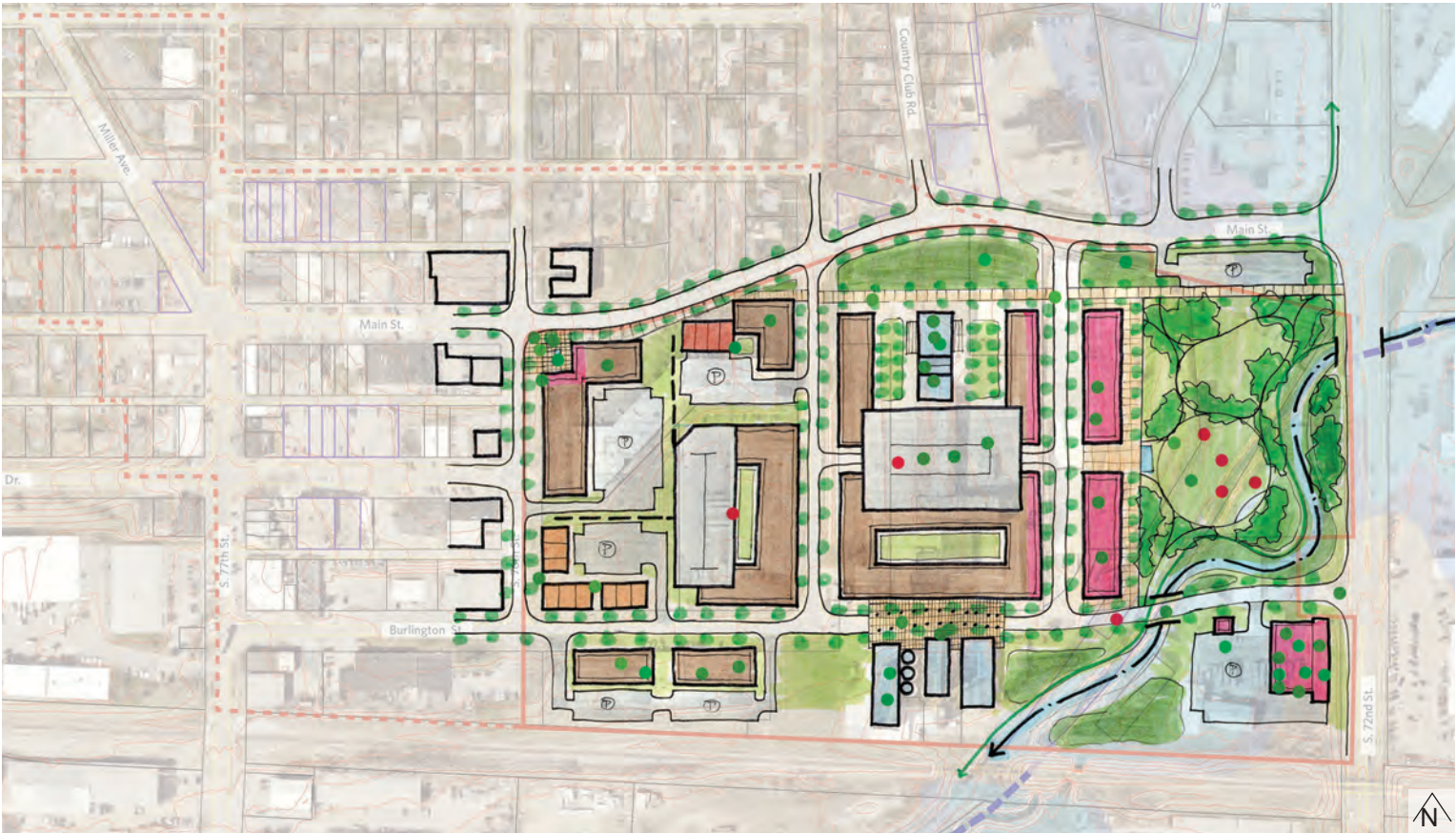
DOWNTOWN A



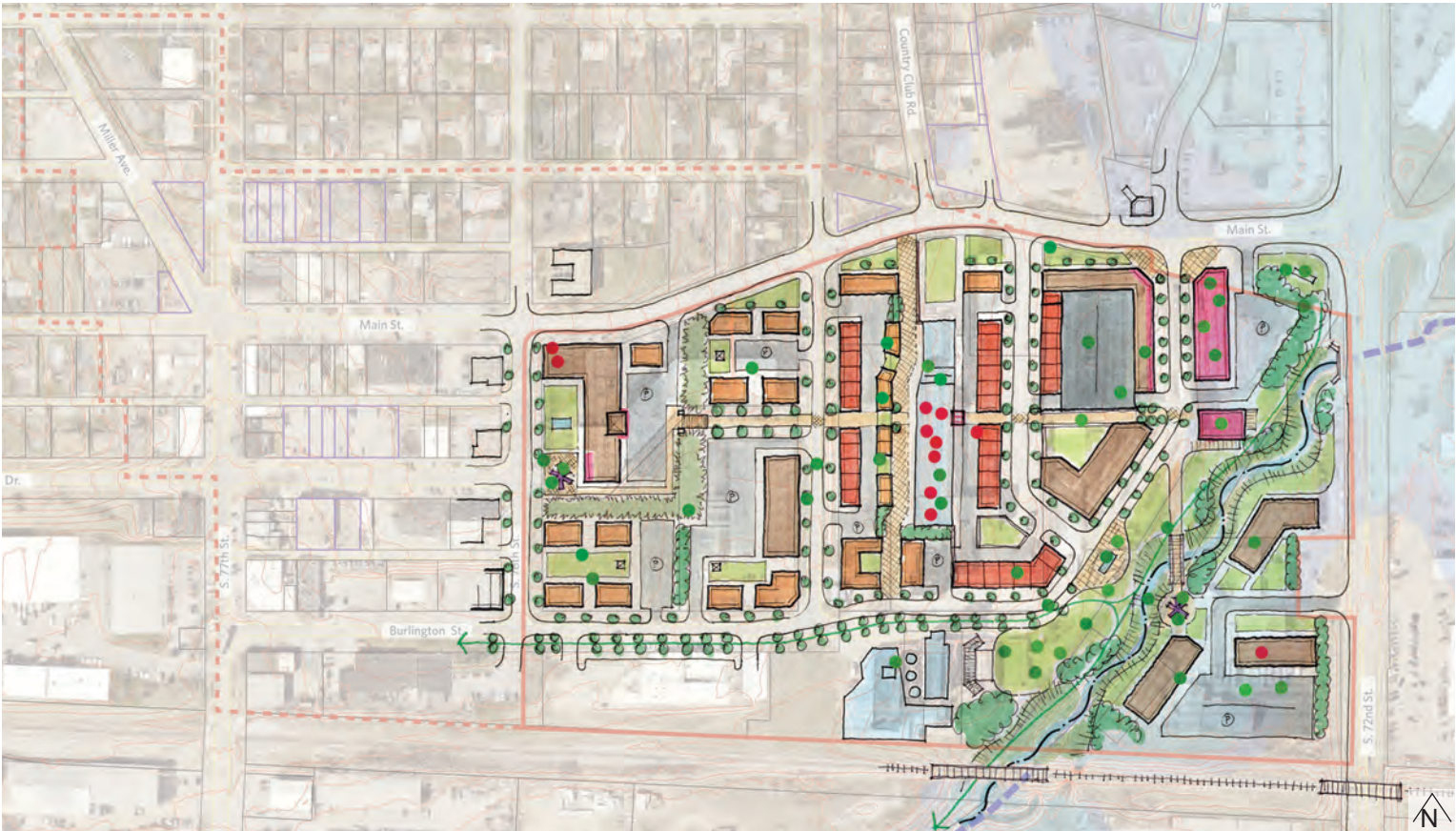
DOWNTOWN B



HINGE A



HINGE B

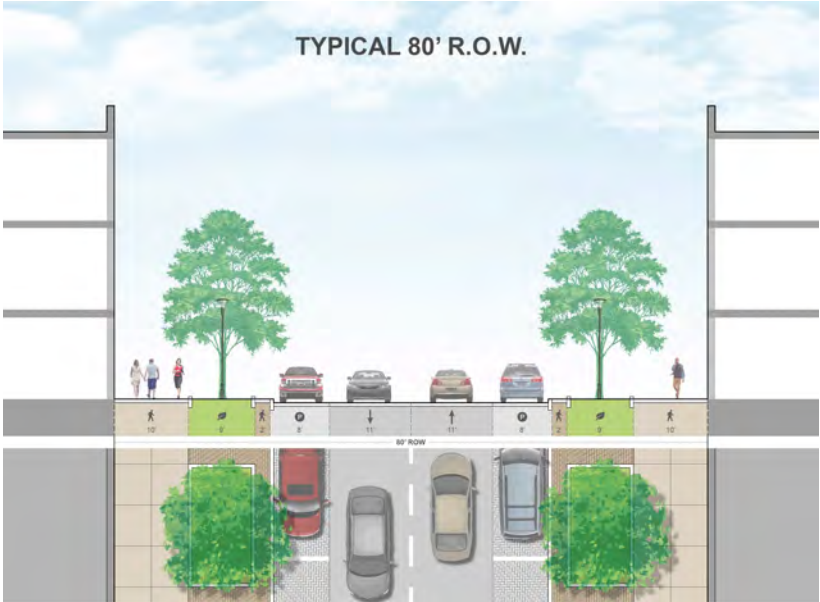




# MASTER PLAN - CHARRETTE | DAY THREE

## DAY THREE - MARCH 15,2019

Based on voting and comments received during the previous evening’s evening pin-up session, revisions and refinements to these elements were made on day three of the Design Charrette. Direction was provided on a number of key elements in Downtown: Yes to the north-south pedestrian connector, relocation of the Fire – Rescue Building out of Downtown, transition of the 5-Points gas station into a future mixed-use development site, and the provision of an employee parking lot and associated parking management plan. Similar guidance was provided in the Hinge area: enclose the Gateway Park, recommend a small grocery store along the Burlington Street connection, right-sizing of the granary building and associated block, and future redevelopment of Hillcrest Landing and the Theatrical Media blocks. The refined elements were then consolidated into an overall preferred conceptual plan diagram of the district, and then presented during the day-three evening pin-up session.



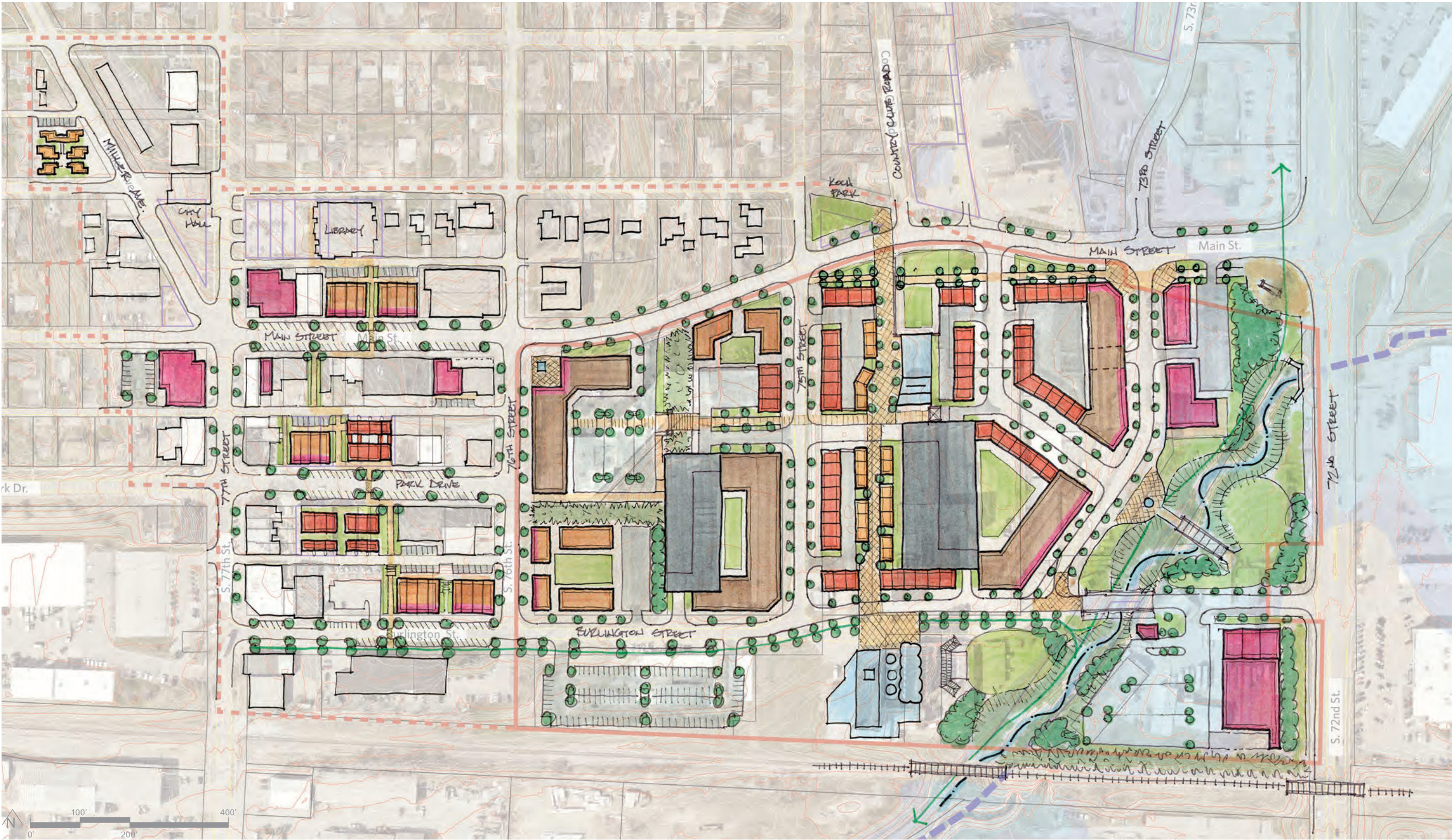
Charrette Section Designs



Active Design Discussions









# MASTER PLAN

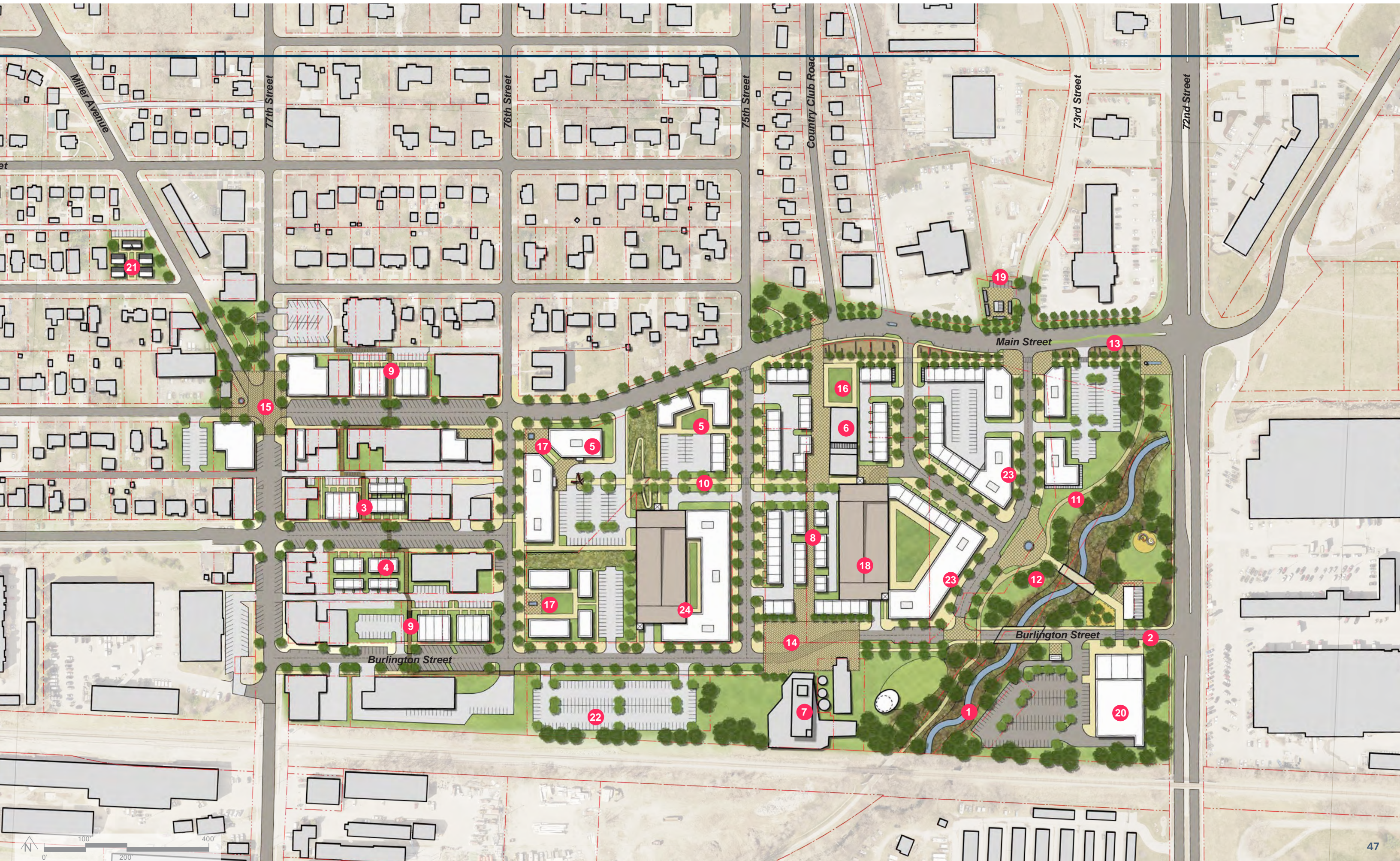
The preferred conceptual master plan developed for the Downtown / Hinge during the 3-day charrette was vetted with City of Ralston staff and Planning Board members in the weeks following the Design Charrette. Based on their input and feedback, minor refinements and enhancements to the plan were made. The plan was then digitally drawn and rendered, and is depicted in detail on the following pages:



Study Area boundary / existing conditions

- 1 RALSTON CREEK RESTORATION
- 2 BURLINGTON STREET CONNECTION
- 3 CITY PARKING LOT REDEVELOPMENT
- 4 FIRE / RESCUE RELOCATION AND REDEVELOPMENT
- 5 HILLCREST LANDING SITE REDEVELOPMENT
- 6 THE GRANARY RETROFIT
- 7 UNITED SEEDS RETROFIT
- 8 THE MEWS
- 9 THE PASSAGEWAY
- 10 THE PROMENADE
- 11 RALSTON CREEK TRAIL
- 12 GATEWAY PARK
- 13 THE GRAND ENTRANCE
- 14 BURLINGTON PLAZA
- 15 5-POINT PLAZA
- 16 THE GRANARY GREEN
- 17 URBAN PLAZAS
- 18 DISTRICT PARKING STRUCTURE
- 19 FOOD TRUCK PARK
- 20 SMALL GROCERY STORE
- 21 INFILL COURTYARD BUNGALOWS / POCKET NEIGHBORHOOD
- 22 DOWNTOWN DISTRICT / EMPLOYEE PARKING LOT
- 23 PARK-FRONTING MIXED-USE BUILDINGS
- 24 APARTMENT BLOCK REDEVELOPMENT







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## FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

Overview  
Key Initiatives  
Mobility  
Open Space





# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

## OVERVIEW

During the course of the master planning and design process, several prominent features and initiatives were discussed on a recurring basis. Due either to their prominent role in the plan, or their relevance and impact on other elements, these features came to be known as Framework Elements. These Framework elements are discussed in further detail on the following pages, and are identified by their proposed sequencing:

- Short-Term Priority (0 - 5 years)
- Mid-Term Priority (5 - 10 years)
- Long-Term Priority (10+ years)

## KEY INITIATIVES

### STRATEGIC INFILL

Downtown and the Hinge area contain several vacant parcels and/or surface parking lots. These “missing teeth” provide a grand opportunity to infill these lots with missing middle and contextual mixed-use building typologies. This densification will enhance the area’s urban form (by filling in the street walls) and generate street level activity, while the additional “rooftops” that are created will support continued downtown redevelopment.



### RALSTON CREEK RESTORATION

The restoration of Ralston Creek is a key framework opportunity to turn an eyesore into an amenity. The creek should be restored so that its course meanders and its sides are splayed back, making it easier to approach. Its banks should be replanted with native grasses and wildflowers, in a design that is compatible with the proposed Gateway Park. Done correctly, the restored creek will positively enhance both water quantity and quality issues.



### CITY PARKING LOT & “DICON” LOT REDEVELOPMENT

The city parking lot and the “Dicon” lot provide a prime opportunity to leverage existing City assets to the benefit of the study area. When the timing is right, the City should establish a developer RFP process and offer these sites, for contextual infill redevelopment, to a developer. Ideally, missing middle housing typologies would be constructed on these sites, adding rooftops, increasing activity levels, and acting as a catalyst for continued redevelopment.



### AUTO-ORIENTED USE TRANSITION

Downtown Ralston contains several auto-oriented uses that do not benefit or enhance downtown. This is compounded by their location – they are located on very visible/prime sites or at the entrances into Downtown, negatively impacting the character and feel of Downtown. Over time, and as the market allows, these uses/sites should be transitioned into contextual mixed-use buildings that will help activate Downtown and support redevelopment efforts.





**FIRE / RESCUE RELOCATION & REDEVELOPMENT** ■

The Fire/Rescue facility sits on a large site in a strategic downtown location. As new residential projects occur, the sirens and noise associated with the facility will likely become a detriment to the continued redevelopment of the area. When funding permits, the City should relocate this facility to a more suitable location in the city and then utilize a developer RFP process to redevelop the site with contextual mixed-use or missing middle typologies.



**BURLINGTON STREET CONNECTION** ■

A key goal of the planning process was to enhance accessibility into the Hinge/Downtown area. As such, a new Burlington Street connection (bridge and street) should be constructed that connects the existing portion of Burlington Street with 72nd Street, at a signalized intersection. This will provide a second connection into and out of Downtown, enhancing access and distributing traffic.



**HILLCREST LANDING SITE REDEVELOPMENT** ■

Hillcrest Landing is situated on a strategic site along Main Street, linking the Hinge with Downtown. Over time, the former mall has been out-positioned within the marketplace. When the opportunity is right, the site should be redeveloped. New development on the site should provide density and a mix of uses to enhance the site's key location and create key linkages between the Hinge and Downtown.



**INDUSTRIAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT** ■

The Hinge area is dominated by large industrial uses that do not conform to the vision and goals for the area. Over time, demographic and market forces will create opportunities for a transition of uses. When this occurs, the area should transition from industrial uses to walkable urbanism, centered on a new gateway park, a restored Ralston Creek, and a new street grid.



**THE GRANARY RETROFIT** ■

The Granary Building provides a link to Ralston's history and should be restored and/or redeveloped. However, its long north-south dimension creates a mega-block, hindering east-west connectivity. Because of this, the northern, historic section of the structure should be preserved and renovated, allowing the southern 2/3rds of the structure to be removed and the remainder to be redeveloped. Restoring east-west connectivity through the site will be an important redevelopment goal. Appropriate uses for the restored northern portion of the building include retail, office, entertainment uses and/or a micro-brewery.



**UNITED SEEDS RETROFIT** ■

Similar to the Granary, the United Seeds complex should be retrofit/redeveloped with entertainment uses and/or a micro-brewery when market conditions permit. The building also provides a link to Ralston's history, and has acted as Ralston's "skyline" since it was built. The building is made of thick concrete and rebar, likely making demolition costly. So, it makes economic sense to rehabilitate/celebrate the building instead. The grain elevator portion could be repainted and used as a "canvas" for art or as a projection screen for light shows, while the water tank tower should "terminate" the north-south view down the Mews.





# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - **MOBILITY**

## OVERVIEW

Traveling to and from one’s daily destinations is a key part of most everyone’s typical day. As a result, ensuring mobility and accessibility should be a key element of any master planning process. This means designing not only for personal vehicles, but for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and the distribution of goods. With this as a goal, there are a number of Downtown / Hinge Framework Elements that relate to mobility, which are described on the following pages.

## STREET HIERARCHY

When crafting a new district, it is extremely important to identify and establish a hierarchy of streets. It is important to note that all streets do not, and should not, look and function alike. Instead, they should be contextual with their purpose and location. For the Ralston, this means establishing a variety of street typologies, including A Streets, B Streets, and C Streets.

**A Streets are the primary streets within a district and are lined by mixed-use buildings that front onto, and address, the street.** Buildings fronting onto A Streets often have street level active uses, including retailers and restaurants. Urban frontage is required, but blank walls are avoided. Parking is provided on-street, or in surface parking lots or parking structures that are located on the interior of their blocks. Streetscape enhancements on A Streets are significantly more robust than those on other street typologies. As a result, A Streets are typically sought after addresses due to their special character and high level of street-level activity.

**C Streets are the opposite of A Streets. C Streets function as service and access streets, and are often lined by surface parking lots, entrances to parking structures and lots, service courts and docks for adjacent buildings, secondary and tertiary pedestrian entrances, and blank walls.** Building frontage is optional. As a result, pedestrian activity on C Streets is typically rather limited. Because of this, streetscape enhancements are provided, but to a lesser degree than either A or B Streets.

**B Streets fall in-between A Streets and C Streets. Urban frontages are recommended, but not required.** Where buildings do not front onto the street, parking lots and structures and service courts and docks are permitted. Streetscape enhancements should not be as robust as those for A Streets, but greater than those that occur on C Streets.



*A Street Example*

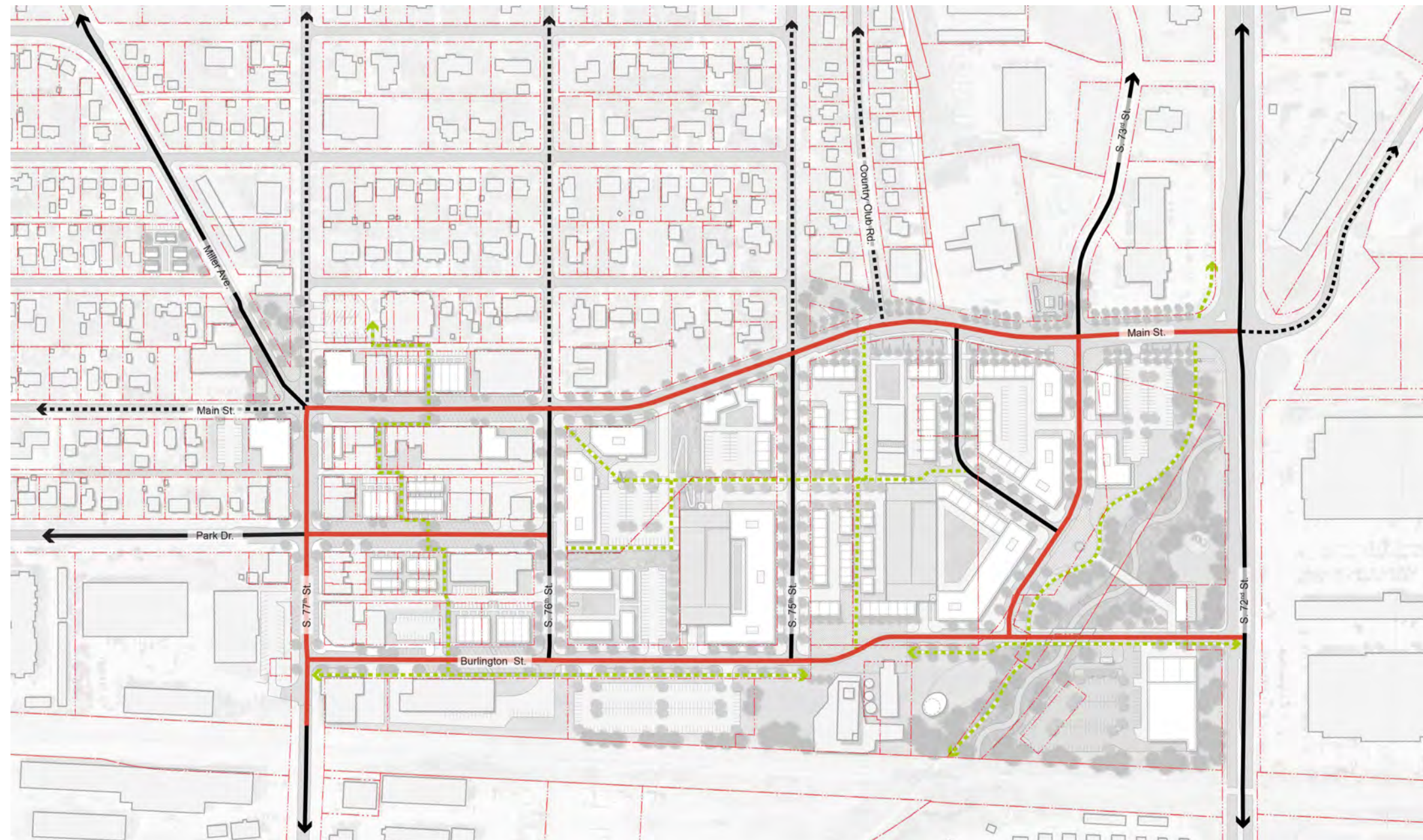


*B Street Example*



*C Street Example*





**KEY:**

- A Streets
- B Streets
- - - C Streets
- - - Pedestrian Corridors

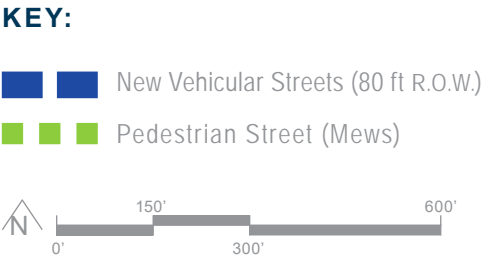




# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - MOBILITY

## NEW STREETS

The street network within Downtown / the Hinge is designed to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. Traffic calming elements such as narrow traffic lanes, on-street parking, corner bulb-outs, landscaped parkway strips, and generous sidewalks are incorporated throughout the neighborhood. The district's interconnected street network will help disperse traffic within the neighborhood and allow multiple options and flexibility for those moving through the site. The illustrated street sections on the following pages conceptually identify the proposed rights-of-way and recommended functions for two new varieties of streets. A traffic study will be needed to finalize roadway design recommendations, as achieving the intended street character will require balancing the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.





**NEW VEHICULAR STREETS: 80’ ROW**

New streets within the Hinge will be designed as A Streets with an 80’ ROW. Within the ROW, these streets will contain a traffic lane in each direction, parking lanes, landscaped parkway strips, and generous sidewalks on each side of the street. A Streets are more generous in their amenity package, with permeable pavers in the parking lanes, extensive landscaping along the parkway strips, and storm water planters.



*New Vehicular street (80’ R.O.W.)*

**NEW PEDESTRIAN STREET - THE MEWS: 20’ ROW**

The Mews is a new pedestrian-only street located in the Hinge. It will extend between Koch Park on the north and the United Seeds complex on the south. It should be constructed on axis / terminate on the former water tank tower on the south side of Burlington Street. At its narrowest, the ROW for the Mews will be 20’ in width. Mews paving should be a minimum of 10’ wide, in either concrete or clay pavers. 5’ landscape strips should border each side of the Mews, and Mews Homes will line its length, with their primary entrances fronting onto the pedestrian street.



*New Pedestrian Street (The Mews)*

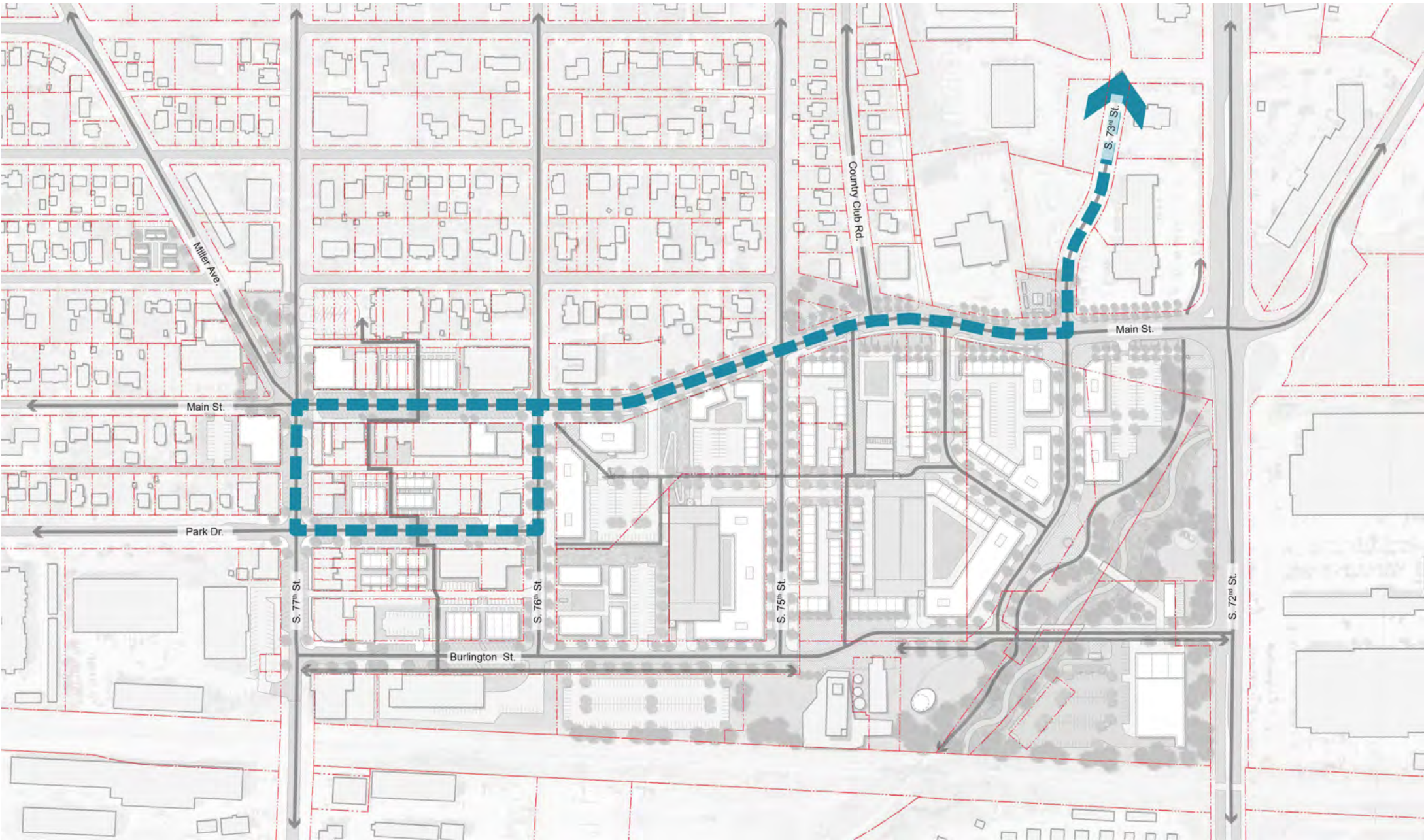


# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - MOBILITY

## TRANSIT - THE HINGE SHUTTLE

The Downtown / Hinge has significant potential to transition into a dense, vibrant, pedestrian-oriented urban neighborhood. In order for it to achieve its full potential, it will need to reduce its reliance on personal vehicles and the resulting need to park them, which ultimately encumbers valuable real estate and its associated development potential, and instead focus on developing around a multi-modal transportation framework. A key element of this framework is a viable transit system.

The study area; however, is not currently served by transit. The closest Metro gets to it is the intersection of 72nd and Q Streets. In order to capitalize on this, a Hinge Shuttle (either an enhanced bus vehicle or an autonomous shuttle) route should be established. This route would function as a “walk extender,” ideally running on 10-minute headways and creating a line that connects Downtown Ralston, the Hinge, and the Ralston Arena with the Metro bus line, ultimately providing connectivity to Metro’s entire service area. This new service, with its inherently valuable local and regional connections, would greatly reduce dependence on personal vehicles within the district, thereby allowing denser development and enhanced accessibility for both residents and visitors.



**KEY:**  
 Hinge Shuttle Route

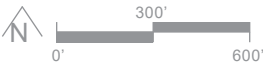






Photo of enhanced bus vehicle / route in Des Moines



Example of shuttle vehicle stop



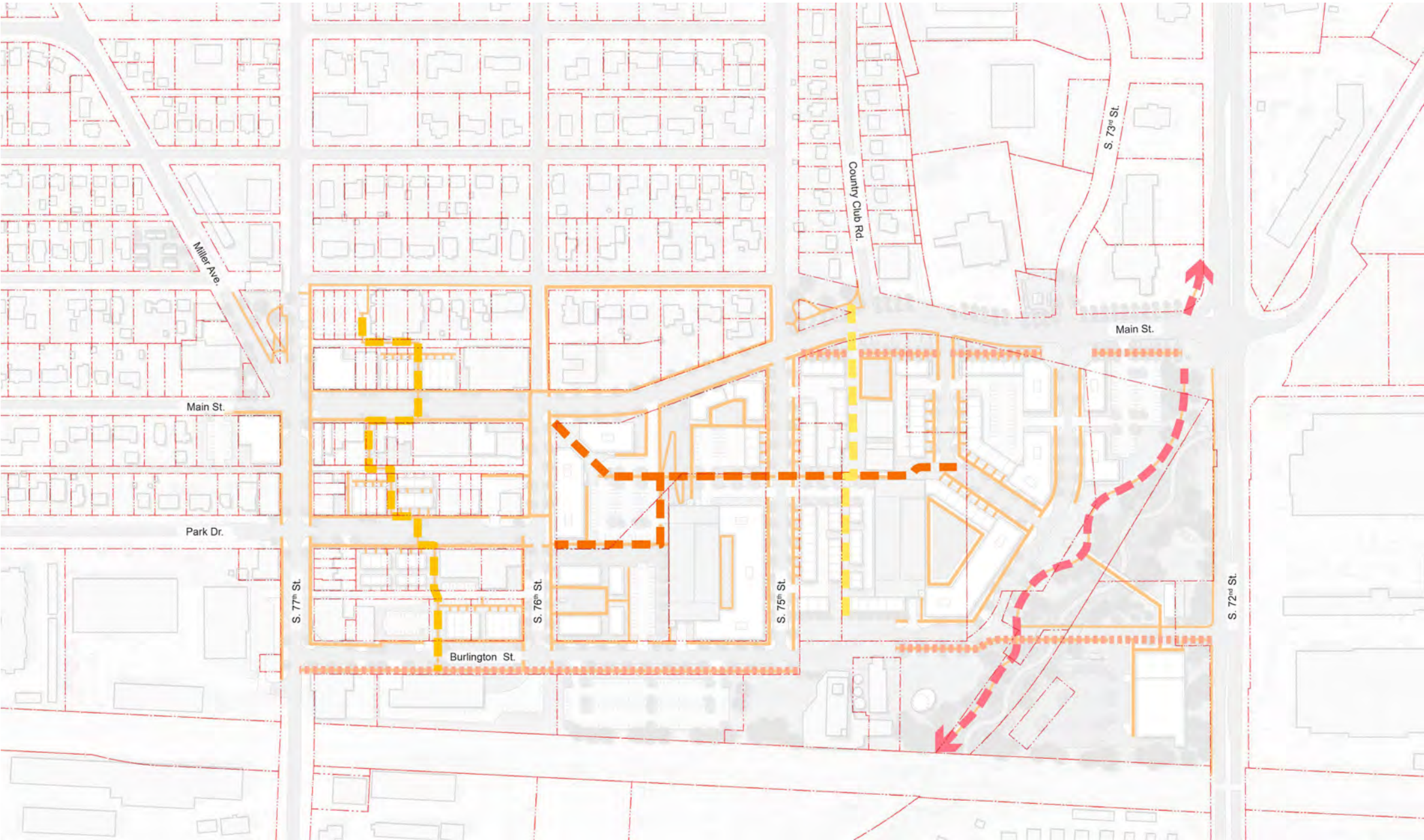
Example of an autonomous shuttle vehicle



# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - MOBILITY

## BIKE / PED NETWORK

Both Downtown and the Hinge will contain a robust bicycle and pedestrian network. New streets should have 10' sidewalks to encourage walking. Parkway strips between the sidewalk and the back of the curb should be 8' – 10' in width to help encourage healthy street tree growth and to create a more friendly pedestrian environment. In addition to the standard sidewalk network, there will be several special pedestrian routes designed to help reduce block sizes, provide more direct pedestrian connections, and encourage overall walkability. These routes generally connect to/feed into the Ralston Creek Trail, providing connectivity to the regional trail system.



- KEY:**
- Sidewalks
  - Pedestrian Street (Mews)
  - The Passageway
  - The Promenade
  - Ralston Creek Trail
  - Shared Use Paths



THE PASSAGEWAY

The passageway is a key north-south pedestrian connection through Downtown Ralston. Its design should utilize vacant parcels to “break-up” and scale-down the long east-west blocks. If done correctly, it will provide a direct link from the future employee parking lot along Burlington Street to a vast majority of the Downtown area. In addition, it will help reduce walking times and distances, and provide an opportunity to create a special pedestrian space that is unique within the region. This feature should be a short-term priority for the City.



Examples of pedestrian passageways

THE PROMENADE

The Hinge area currently does not have a true block structure. As new development occurs, and in order to ensure that one mega-block is not replaced with another, an east-west promenade should be constructed. This pedestrian corridor should connect the Gateway Park with Downtown Ralston, and provide pedestrians with a off-street route between the two areas. A large change of grade will necessitate the use of strategically located stairs, switchbacks, and an elevator tower in order to facilitate east-west movement.



Examples of neighborhood promenades

RALSTON CREEK TRAIL

Following the restoration of Ralston Creek, a new replacement trail should be constructed along the creek. This trail will connect with the other bicycle/pedestrian improvements within the study area, and provide direct bike and pedestrian connections to the regional trail network. Conversely, it will also provide direct non-vehicular access to the district for diners, shoppers, and visitors.



Examples of trails along naturalized corridors



# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The parks and open space system consists of different types of open spaces that respond to both community and environmental needs, and include typologies ranging from hard-scaped urban plazas to a naturalized creek and park. They are intended to be the centers of activity and are typically co-located with retail and other active uses. They can also help to create a sense of arrival - tying the 72nd Street corridor to Downtown Ralston. Buildings adjacent to parks and/or open spaces should always front onto them, preferably with ground-floor active uses, in order to help activate the space and provide eyes and ears on the park.



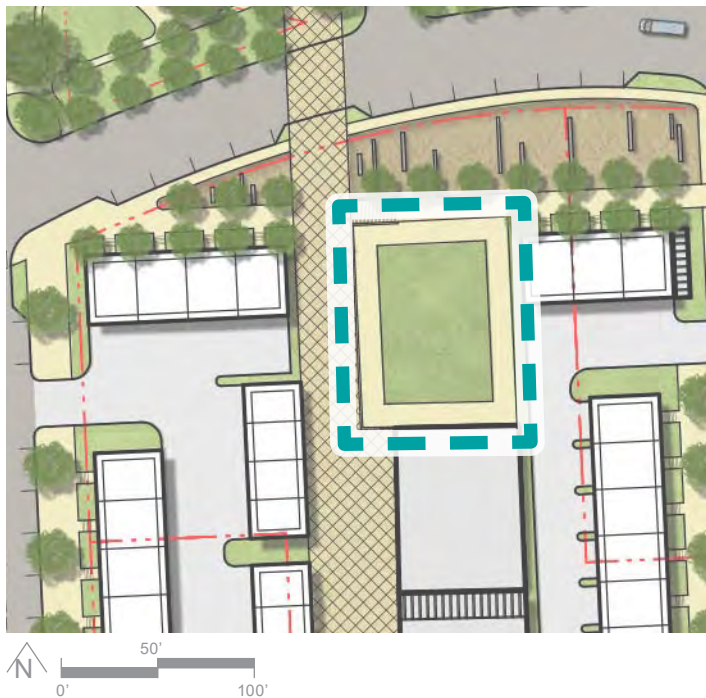
- KEY:**
- 5-Point Plaza
  - Urban Plazas
  - Burlington Plaza
  - Gateway Park
  - Enhanced Streetscapes
  - The Granary Green
  - The Grand Entrance
  - Food Truck Park
  - Naturalized Landscape
  - Manicured Landscape
  - Programed Lawnspace
  - Plazas
  - Waterway



# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## THE GRANARY GREEN

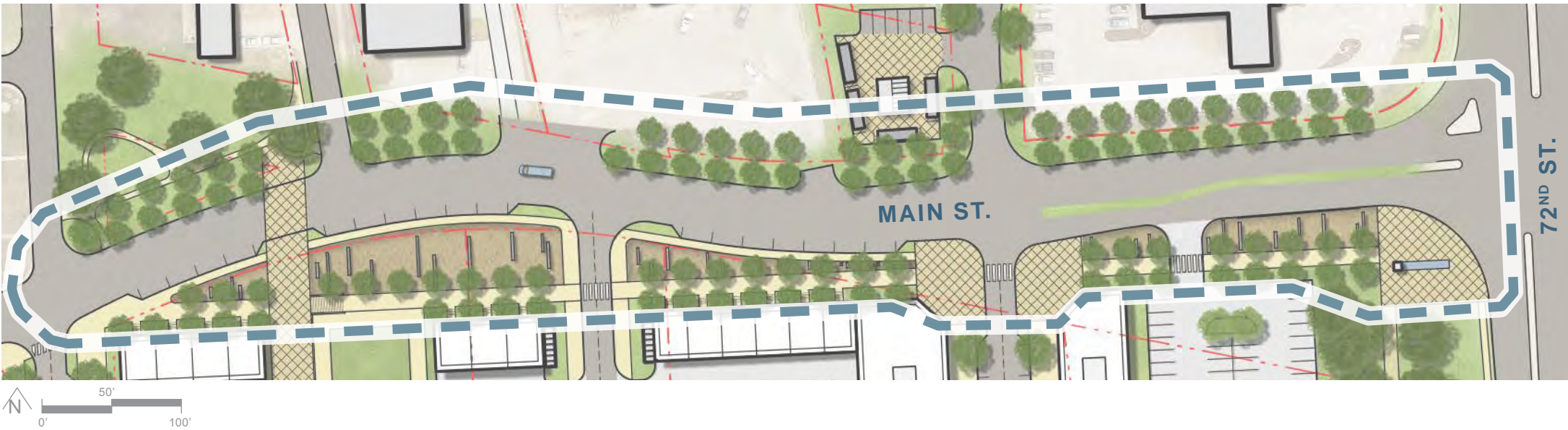
The Granary Green is a simple programmable open space that connects the front of the Granary Building to Main Street, thus helping preserve views to the historic building façade from the main entrance into Downtown. This space, designed as a flat lawn, is one of a series of open spaces lining the Mews. It should be designed to accommodate a variety of events, including art fairs, community dinners, and festivals. If the Granary Building redevelops into a micro-brewery, the green could also function as a beer garden. It can also be used for more passive uses, including open lawn space for throwing the ball, reading, or just hanging out.



Examples of historic buildings fronting onto programmable open spaces

## THE GRAND ENTRANCE

Main Street is the primary entrance into the Hinge and Downtown Ralston. As such, it should receive special landscape treatment designed to help draw visitors into the area. A new entrance sign, low branding walls, specialty lighting, and enhanced landscaping should preserve views up Main Street and set a rhythm to help draw visitors in and create a sense of arrival for both the Hinge and Downtown. An enhanced pedestrian walk along the south side of Main Street should be designed to create an inviting ascent up the hill to Downtown. This feature should be a short-term priority for the City.



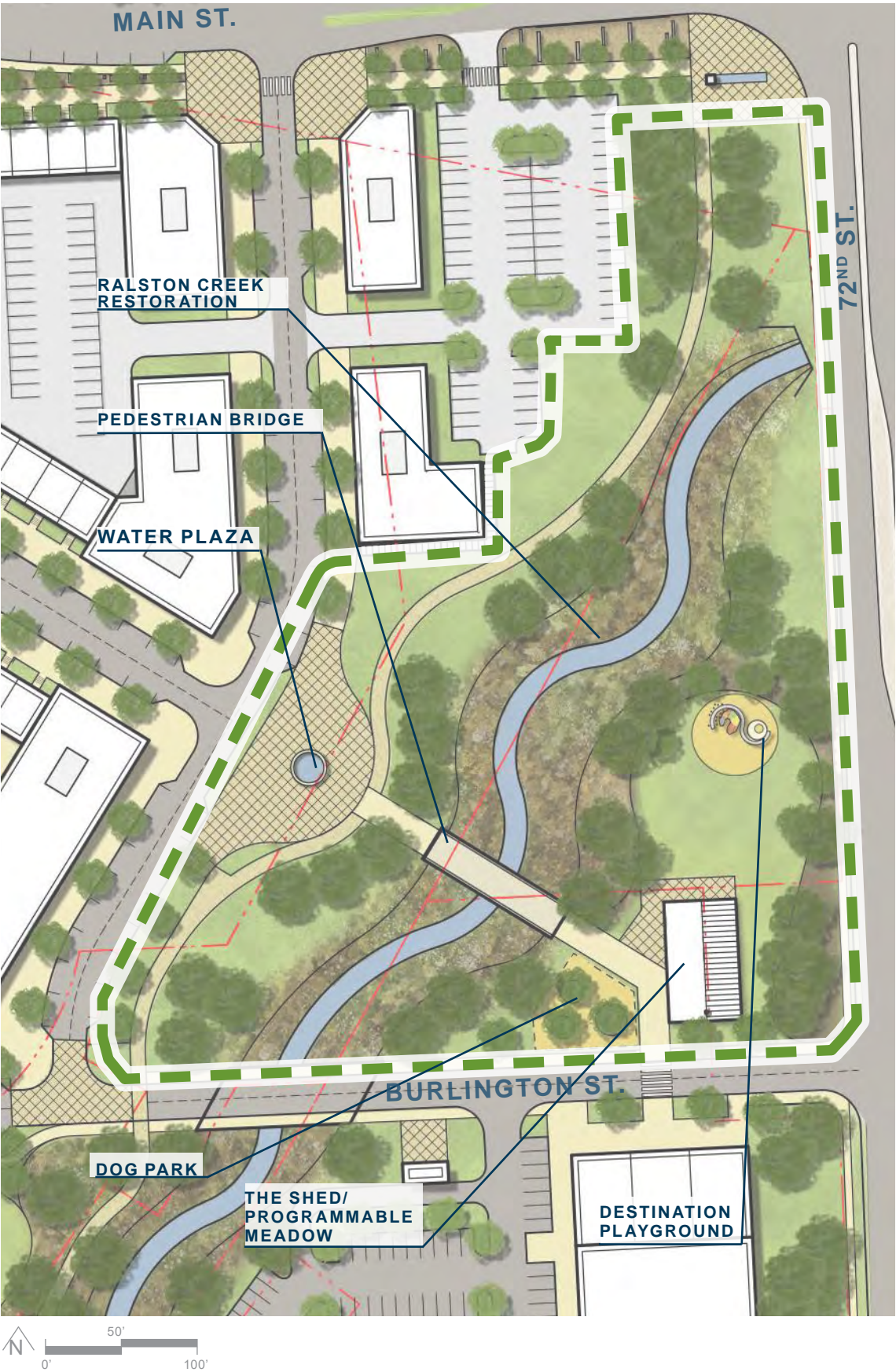
Example of a ceremonial entrance incorporating signage, low branding walls, lighting, and landscaping



# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## GATEWAY PARK

The Gateway Park provides both an active and passive amenity space, as well as an attractive entrance into the Hinge and Downtown. Bisecting the park is the restored Ralston Creek and trail. On the west side of the creek is a small plaza that contains an interactive water feature that will draw families and children to the space during warmer months. Connecting across the creek, to the east, is a new pedestrian bridge. The new bridge leads to a Dog Park, a Destination Playground, and The Shed. Dog parks and destination playgrounds are major draws for parks, and will help to activate the space throughout the year. The Shed, with its associated programmable open space, will provide a protected outdoor space suitable for wedding receptions, birthday parties, and reunions. When not rented out, it will function as a meeting point and respite for park users.



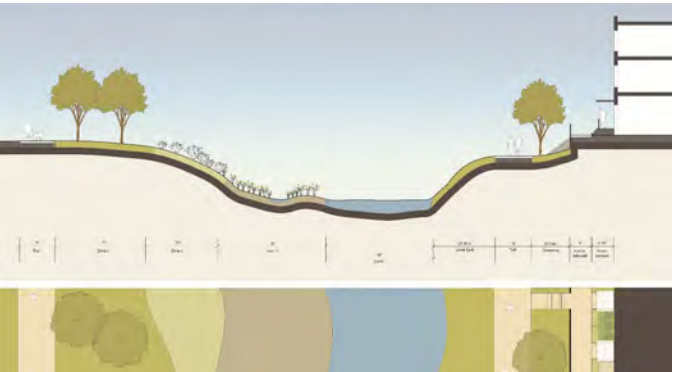
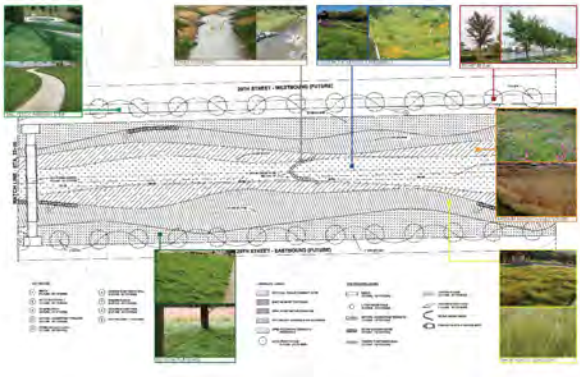
## PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

The new pedestrian bridge will provide east-west access across Ralston Creek. In addition to providing access across the creek, the bridge could be designed as a unique architectural icon within the park, becoming a recognizable landmark and helping attract visitors to Ralston.



## RALSTON CREEK RESTORATION

As highlighted in the Key Initiatives section, the restoration of Ralston Creek is a key framework element for the Hinge and Downtown areas. Restoration is much more effective, from both a functional and cost perspective, than damming the creek. Instead, the creek will be restored so that it meanders as it originally did, and its sides will be splayed back and planted with native grasses and wildflowers. This will help address both water quantity and quality issues, while simultaneously turning an eyesore into an aesthetically pleasing, and functional, community asset.





WATER PLAZA

Plazas with interactive water features (i.e. fountains, membrane pools, etc.) are major draws for families and children. They provide a place for safe water-play, as well as a place too cool off during the hot summer heat. The activity generated in programmed plazas with interactive water features can be a catalyst for adjacent ground floor retail and restaurant uses.



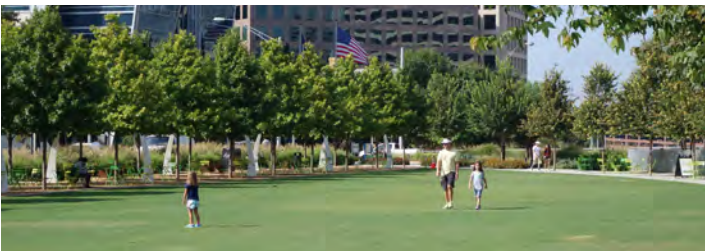
DESTINATION PLAYGROUND

Like water plazas, destination playgrounds also draw a significant number of users to an area. They are typically larger and more focused on natural play and learning than a typical jungle gym, and can have a large number of play features for a variety of age groups.



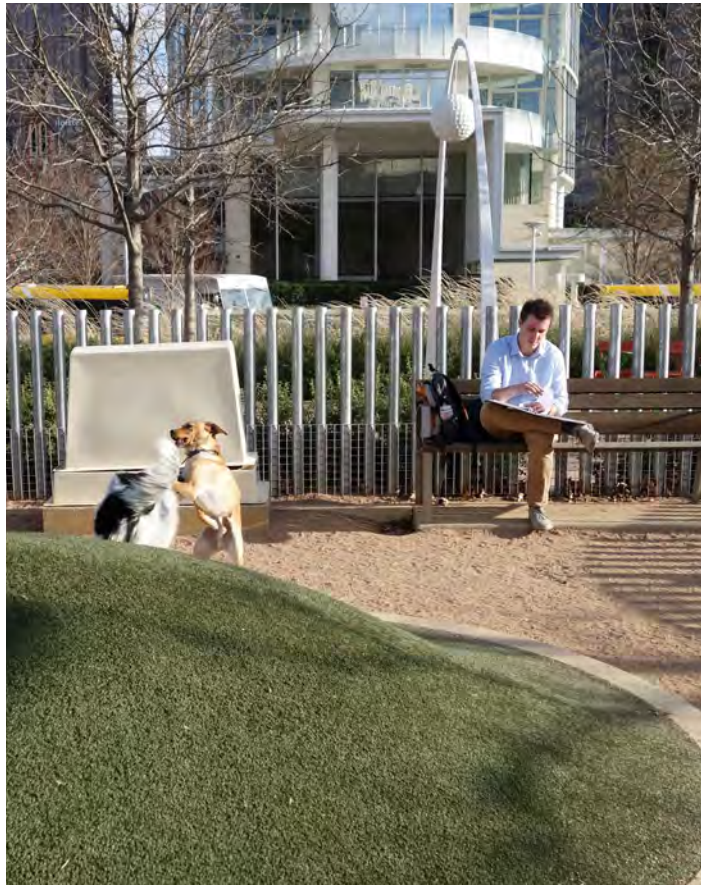
THE SHED / PROGRAMMABLE MEADOW

The Shed, with its associated programmable open space, will provide a protected outdoor space suitable for a variety of functions, ranging from wedding receptions, birthday parties, and reunions to dinners, food truck festivals, and maker fairs. When not rented out, it will function as a meeting point and respite for park users.



DOG PARK

Dog parks are as much about people as they are for dogs. In addition to providing residents without access to yards a place to bring their dogs to play and socialize, they are magnets for residents who use them as a place to meet and socialize with friends and strangers.





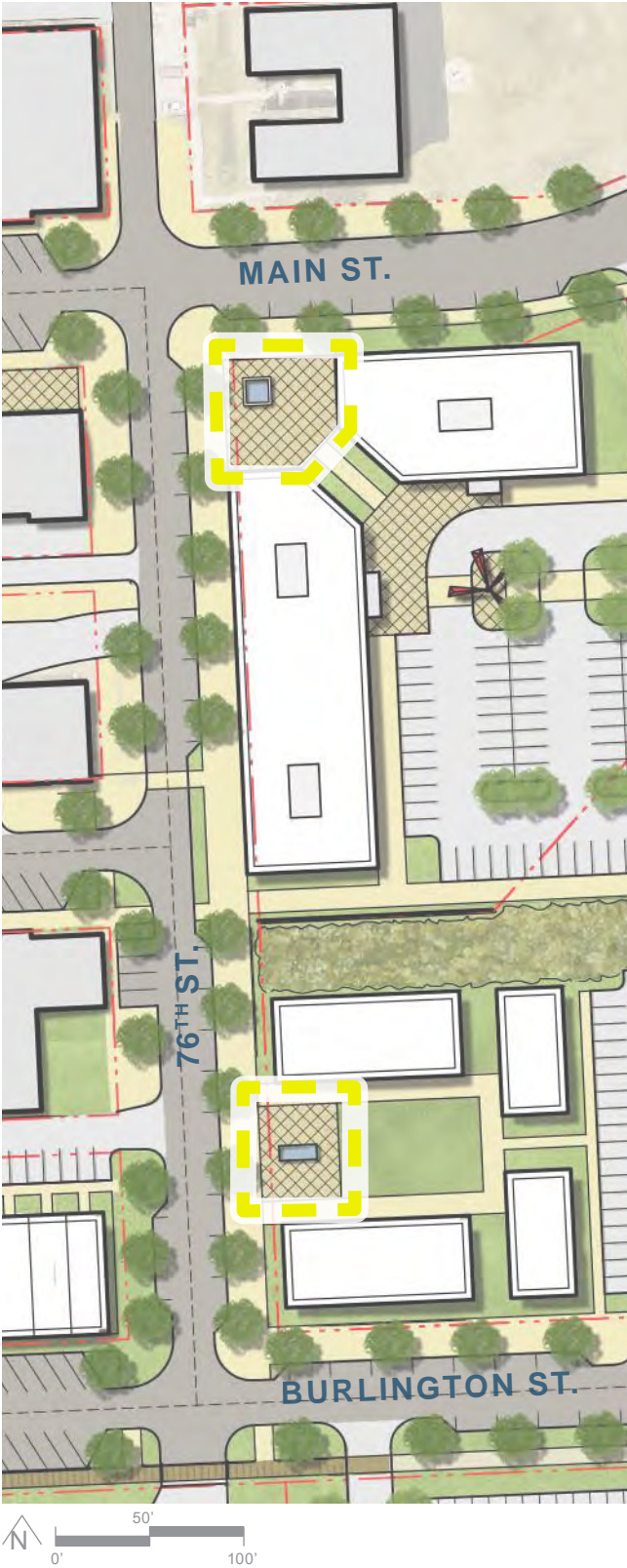
# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## URBAN PLAZAS

Urban plazas are intended to be gathering places for residents and visitors, with water features, movable seating, and tree cover to help create an attractive environment. Two plazas are designated for 76th Street, and will help activate this important “seam” between the two areas. Retail frontages on adjacent buildings can help activate them by providing adjacent food and services.

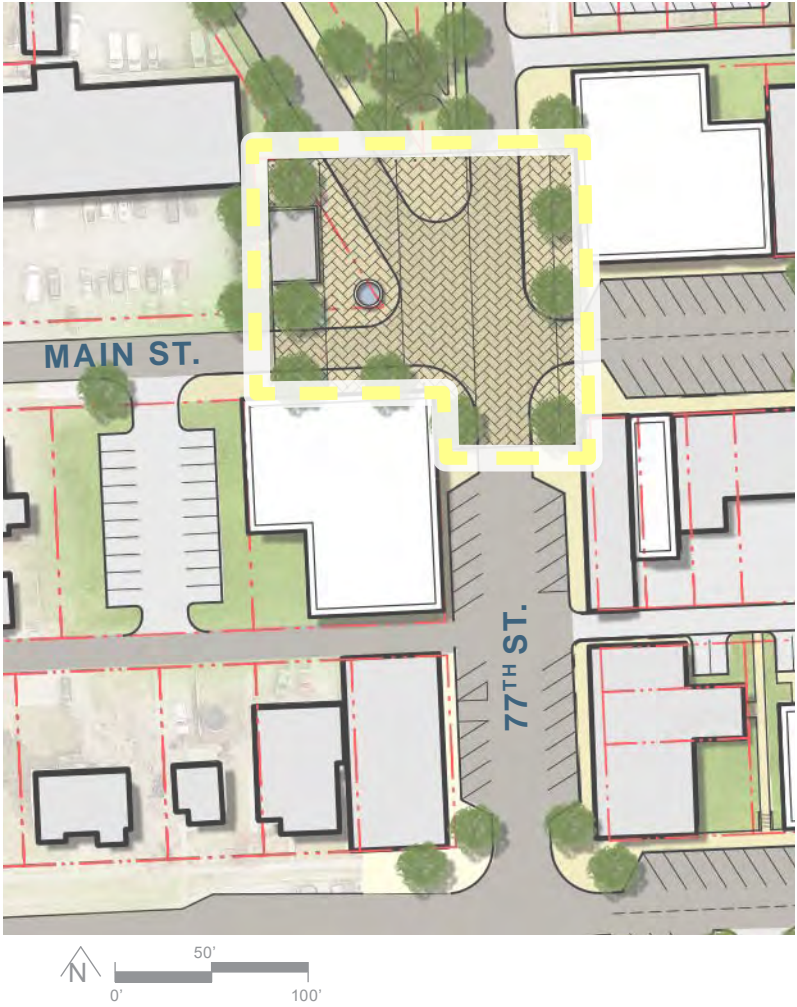


Examples of plazas with ground-level active uses



## 5-POINT PLAZA

The 5-Point Plaza is an important iconic location within Ralston. It has limited functionality; however, and could be redesigned to truly become the heart of Ralston. A shared-space design, with limited curbing, bollards, specialty pavers and lighting, and landscaping would protect pedestrians from traffic and would allow the plaza to be closed down for larger events. A new stage, movable furniture, tree cover, and water would help create a comfortably scaled space. Adjacent redevelopment should frame the space and have active uses on the ground floor, preferably providing food and beverage services. This feature should be a short-term priority for the City.



Examples of shared space streets / plazas





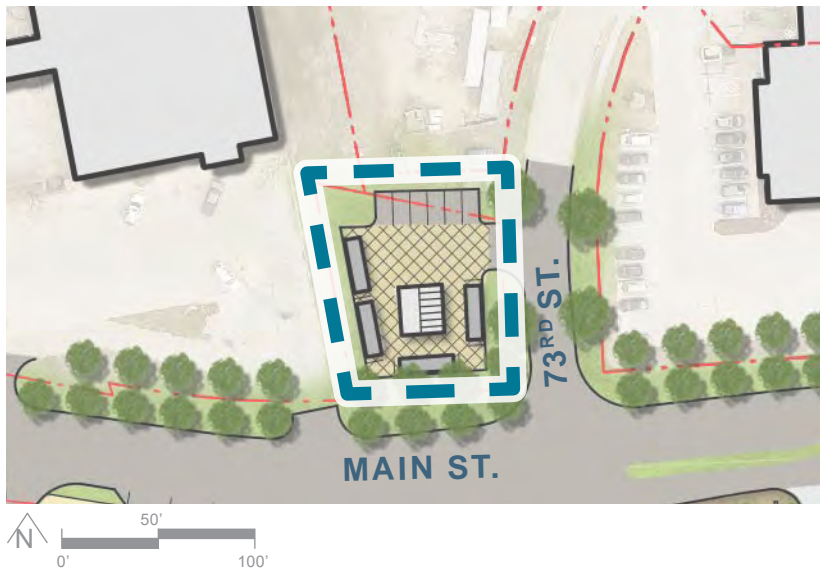




# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## FOOD TRUCK PARK

Food truck parks are an easy and relatively inexpensive way to draw people to an area. They are easy to implement and can be surprisingly successful. The small site on the north side of Main Street is ideal with its proximity to 72<sup>nd</sup> Street. New paving, utility hook-ups, a shade pavilion and seating are all that is needed to create this space. Once running, the City will have a new destination that will draw people to the study area.

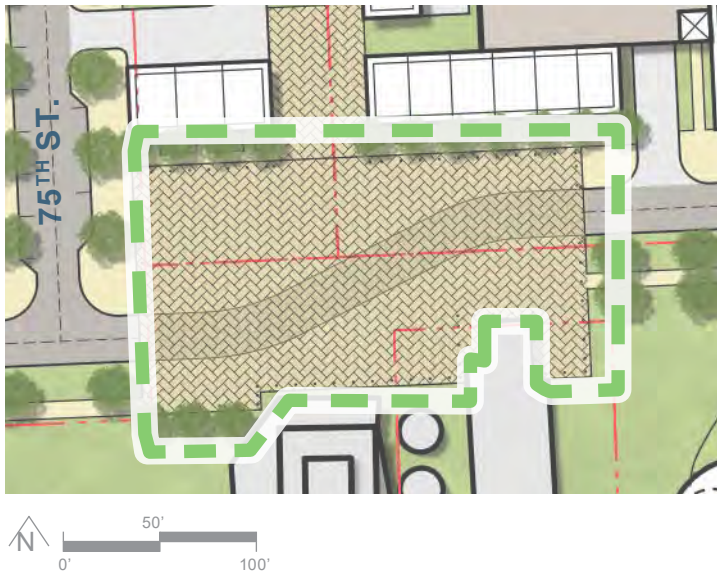


Examples of food truck gathering spaces



## BURLINGTON PLAZA

Much like 5-Point Plaza, Burlington Plaza should be a shared-space, curb-less plaza with specialty pavers, bollards, and lighting. It would function as the southern terminus of the Mews and would act as a fore-court for the United Seeds complex, in a manner similar to how St. Philips Church in Charleston, SC interacts with its surrounding public environment. This flexible space should be designed so that Burlington Street can be temporarily closed, and programmed and activated with a variety of community events and festivals throughout the year. Daily activities from the revitalized United Seeds complex should be allowed to spill out and activate this grand space.



Examples of curb-less shared-space / Green streets



St. Philips Church in Charleston, SC projecting into the ROW / terminating the street view, similar to the United Seeds complex





# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## ENHANCED STREETSCAPES

The City of Ralston should undertake a streetscape enhancement program for its Downtown streets. This will provide the opportunity to “freshen up” the district, and provide a consistent and contemporary aesthetic that will be compatible with new streets in the Hinge area. As part of this initiative, the cross-section of each street should be evaluated and refined in order to appropriately address lane configurations and width, on-street parking, sidewalk widths, and streetscape enhancements. If done correctly, additional space for pedestrian and bicycle amenities may be created. Streetscape enhancements may include, but are not limited to, elements such as decorative street and sidewalk paving, pedestrian and street lighting, street furnishings, signage, planting beds, and trees. Streetscape enhancements will not only create a more aesthetically pleasing and user friendly pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular environment, but will also signal the City’s on-going commitment to the revitalization of the Downtown and Hinge areas.



Examples of enhanced streetscapes in both existing and new contexts



# FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS - OPEN SPACE

## RECOMMENDED PLANT TYPES

### STREET TREES:

The following trees are recommended for placement along the Public Right of Way. Other cultivars and the straight species of plants listed may also be acceptable, providing they match the aesthetic and functional characteristics of their established group. Species with similar characteristics are grouped to provide visual continuity to street segments while allowing for horticultural diversity:

#### LARGE TREES WITH *ROUND* CANOPIES & *FINE* TEXTURED FOLIAGE

*Cladrastis kentukea*  
Yellow Wood

*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis*  
Thornless Honeylocust

*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis* ‘*Christie*’  
Halka Honeylocust

*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis* ‘*Moraine*’  
Moraine Honeylocust

*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis* ‘*Shademaster*’  
Shademaster Honeylocust

*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis* ‘*Imperial*’  
Imperial Honeylocust

*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis*  
Thornless Honeylocust

*Gymnocladus dioicus*  
Kentucky Coffee Tree

*Phellodendron amurense* ‘*Macho*’  
Amur Cork Tree Macho

*Phellodendron amurense* ‘*His Majesty*”  
Amur Cork Tree His Majesty

*Phellodendron amurense*  
Amur Cork Tree

*Sophora japonica* ‘*Regent*’  
Regent Scholar Tree

*Sophora japonica*  
Japanese Pagoda Tree, Scholar Tree

*Sophora japonica* ‘*Halka*’  
Millstone Scholar Tree

*Ulmus parvifolia* ‘*Dynasty*’  
Dynasty Elm

#### LARGE TREES WITH *ROUND* CANOPIES & *COARSE* TEXTURED FOLIAGE

*Acer x freemanii* ‘*Jeffersred*’  
Autumn Blaze Maple

*Acer x freemanii* ‘*Celzani*’  
Acer Wigrum Black Maple

*Aesculus glabra*  
Ohio Buckeye

*Aesculus hippocastanum*  
Common Horsechestnut

*Platanus x acerifolia* ‘*Bloodgood*’  
Bloodgood London Plane Tree

*Platanus x acerifolia* ‘*Columbia*’  
Columbia London Plane Tree

*Platanus x acerifolia* ‘*Liberty*’  
Liberty London Plane Tree

*Platanus x acerifolia* ‘*Yarwood*’  
Yarwood London Plane Tree

*Platanus occidentalis*  
American Planetree

*Quercus macrocarpa*  
Bur Oak

*Quercus rubra*  
Red Oak

*Quercus alba*  
White Oak

*Quercus bicolor*  
Swamp White Oak

*Quercus robur*  
English Oak

*Quercus muhlenbergii*  
Chinkapin Oak

#### LARGE TREES WITH *OVAL* CANOPIES & *FINE* TEXTURED FOLIAGE

*Celtis occidentalis* ‘*Prairie Pride*’  
Prairie Pride Hackberry

*Celtis occidentalis* ‘*Chicago Land*’  
Chicago Land Hackberry

*Celtis occidentalis* ‘*Windy City*’  
Windy City Hackberry

*Metasequoia glyptastroboides*  
Dawn Redwood

*Quercus imbricaria*  
Shingle Oak

*Robinia pseudoacacia* ‘*Bessoniana*’  
Purple Robe Locust

*Taxodium distichum*  
Bald Cypress

*Tilia cordata* ‘*Chancellor*’  
Chancellor Littleleaf Linden

*Tilia cordata* ‘*Glenleven*’  
Glenleven Littleleaf Linden

*Tilia cordata* ‘*Greenspire*’  
Greenspire Littleleaf Linden

*Tilia cordata* ‘*Olympic*’  
Olympic Littleleaf Linden

#### LARGE TREES WITH *OVAL* CANOPIES & *COARSE* TEXTURED FOLIAGE

*Catalpa speciosa*  
Catalpa

*Ginkgo biloba*  
Ginkgo

*Ginkgo biloba* ‘*Autumn Gold*’  
Autumn Gold Ginkgo

*Gleditsia triacanthos inermis* ‘*Skyline*’  
Skyline Honeylocust

*Liriodendron tulipifera*  
Tulip Tree

*Quercus coccinea*  
Scarlet Oak

*Quercus velutina*  
Northern Black Oak

*Tilia americana* ‘*Redmond*’  
*Redmond Basswood*

*Tilia* sp ‘*Sterling*’  
Sterling Linden

*Tilia* sp ‘*Green Meadows*’  
Green Meadows Linden

*Tilia tomentosa*  
Silver Linden

*Ulmus* ‘*Frontier*’  
Frontier Elm

*Ulmus* ‘*Discovery Elm*’  
Discovery Elm

*Ulmus* ‘*Morton Glossy*’  
Morton Glossy Elm



|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | RECOMMENDED PLANT TYPES  |  |
|  |  | ORNAMENTAL TREES:  |  |
|  |  | The following ornamental trees are recommended for placement within medians at divided roadway sections, accent areas and under power lines. |  |
|  |  |  |  |

LARGE TREES WITH *SPREADING* CANOPIES & *FINE* TEXTURED FOLIAGE

- Celtis occidentalis*  
Hackberry
- Celtis Occidentalis ‘Magnifififica’*  
Magnifica Hackberry
- Ulmus ‘Accolade’*  
Accolade Elm
- Ulmus americana ‘Delaware 2’*  
Delaware American Elm
- Ulmus americana ‘Washington’*  
Washington American Elm
- Ulmus ‘Princeton’*  
Princeton Elm
- Ulmus wilsoniana ‘Prospector’*  
Prospector Elm
- Ulmus ‘Morton Plainsman’*  
Vanguard Elm
- Ulmus ‘Sapporo’*  
Autumn Gold

LARGE TREES WITH *COLUMNAR* CANOPIES

- Carpinus betulus ‘Fastigiata’*  
Upright European Hornbeam
- Ginkgo biloba ‘Lakeview’*  
Lakeview Ginkgo
- Ginkgo biloba ‘Princeton Sentry’*  
Princeton Sentry Ginkgo
- Pyrus calleryana ‘Capital’*  
Capital Callery Pear
- Pyrus calleryana ‘Chauticleer’*  
Chanticleer Pear
- Quercus robur ‘Fastigiata’*  
Upright English Oak
- Quercus robur ‘Long’*  
Regal Prince Oak
- Quercus robur ‘Asjes’*  
Rosehill Oak
- Taxodium distichum ‘Shawnee Brave’*  
Bald Cypress

SMALL TREES WITH *ROUND* CANOPIES

- Acer ginnala*  
Amur Maple
- Crataegus phaenopyrum*  
Washington Hawthorn
- Crataegus punctata inermis ‘Ohio Pioneer’*  
Thornless Ohio Pioneer Hawthorn
- Koelreuteria paniculata*  
Goldenraintree
- Malus baccata ‘Jackii’*  
Jackii Crabapple
- Malus ‘Professor Sprenger’*  
Professor Sprenger Crabapple
- Malus ‘Sugartyme’*  
Sugartyme Crabapple
- Malus x zumi ‘Calocarpa’*  
Calocarpa Crabapple
- Robinia pseudoacacia ‘Inermis’*  
Globe Locust
- Syringa reticulata ‘Summer Snow’*  
Summer Snow Japanese Tree Lilac

SMALL TREES WITH *OVAL* CANOPIES & *DENSE* BRANCHING

- Acer platanoides x truncatum ‘Norwegian Sunset’*  
Norwegian Sunset Maple
- Acer platanoides x truncatum ‘Pacifi c Sunset’*  
Pacific Sunset Maple
- Acer campestre ‘Deborah’*  
Deborah Hedge Maple
- Amelanchier ‘Autumn Brilliance’*  
Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry
- Amelanchier ‘Snow Cloud’*  
Snow Cloud Serviceberry
- Amelanchier ‘Spring Flurry’*  
Spring Flurry Serviceberry
- Malus ‘Adams’*  
Adams Crabapple
- Malus ‘Centurion’*  
Centurion Crabapple
- Malus ‘Indian Summer’*  
Indian Summer Crabapple
- Malus ‘Prairie Fire’*  
Prairie Fire Crabapple
- Malus ‘Purple Prince’*  
Purple Prince Crabapple
- Malus ‘Robinson’*  
Robinson Crabapple
- Prunus virginiana ‘Shubert’*  
Shubert Choke Cherry
- Syringa reticulata ‘Ivory Silk’*  
Ivory Silk Japanese Tree Lilac
- Syringa reticulata ‘Regent’*  
Regent Japanese Tree Lilac



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## DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Overview  
The Hinge Area  
Downtown  
Developmental Yield

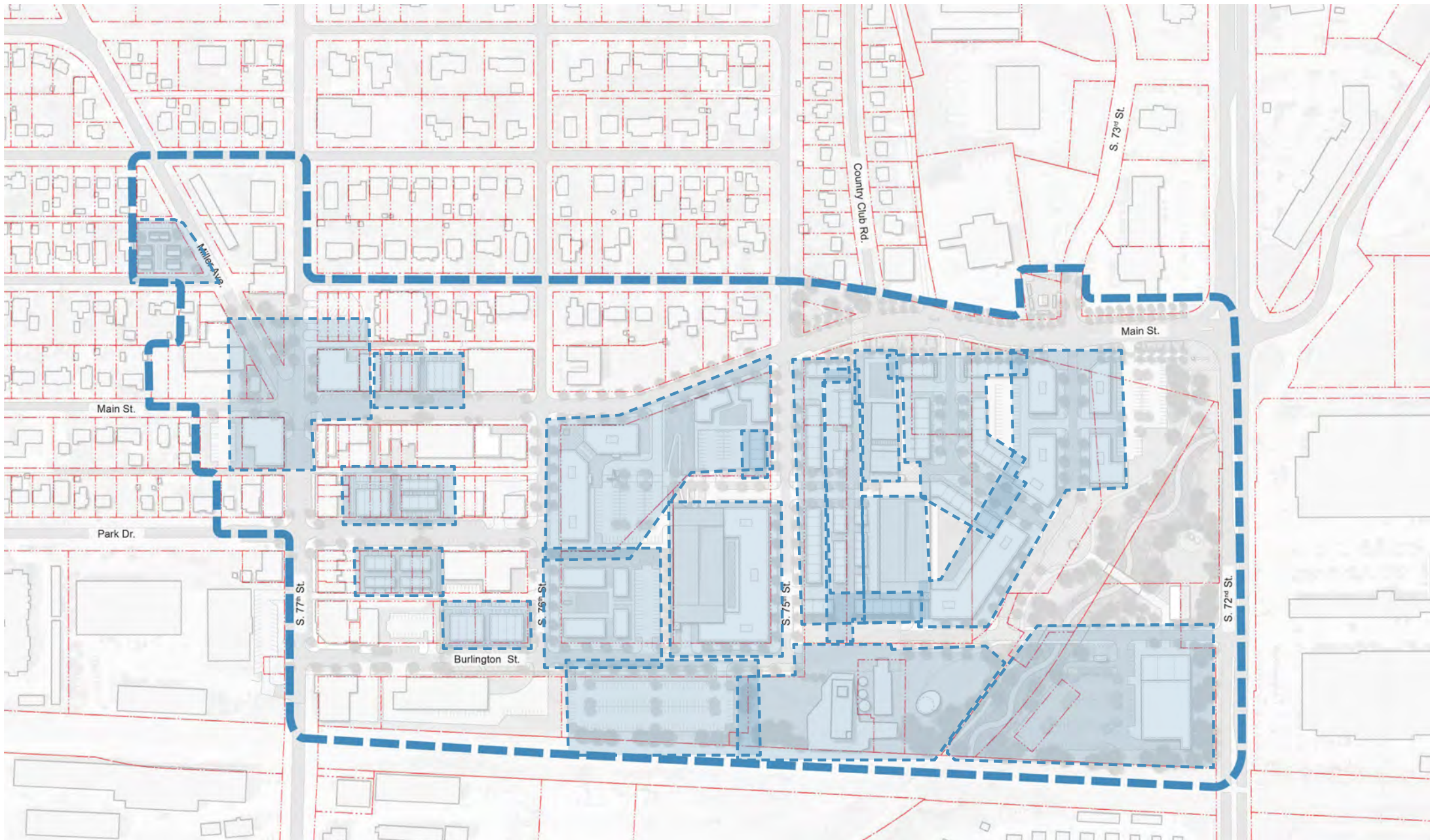




# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## OVERVIEW

A key element of the Ralston Downtown / Hinge Master Plan is the identification of future Development Opportunities. These opportunities emerged from conversations with City, key stakeholders, and real estate professionals, were tested during the Design Charrette, and further advanced and vetted during the refinement period following the Charrette. They are based on local market conditions and have been developed to the level of detail possible in a conceptual master plan. **It bears emphasizing – the Development Opportunities identified on the following pages are conceptual in nature. Their value is to identify visions and ideas for specific areas of the neighborhood. Successful visions will endure, but details will change and evolve as projects are implemented.** The plan is simply a vision, highlighting certain potential development projects. The Development Opportunities are listed with brief descriptions of each project or intervention. Following the discussion on Development Opportunities is a brief Developmental Yield Analysis. This analysis summarizes the Development Opportunities and includes building types, unit totals, square footages, and parking counts provided. The Yield Analysis is provided in order to offer a sense of the development potential and impact of the neighborhood if developed to the density shown.





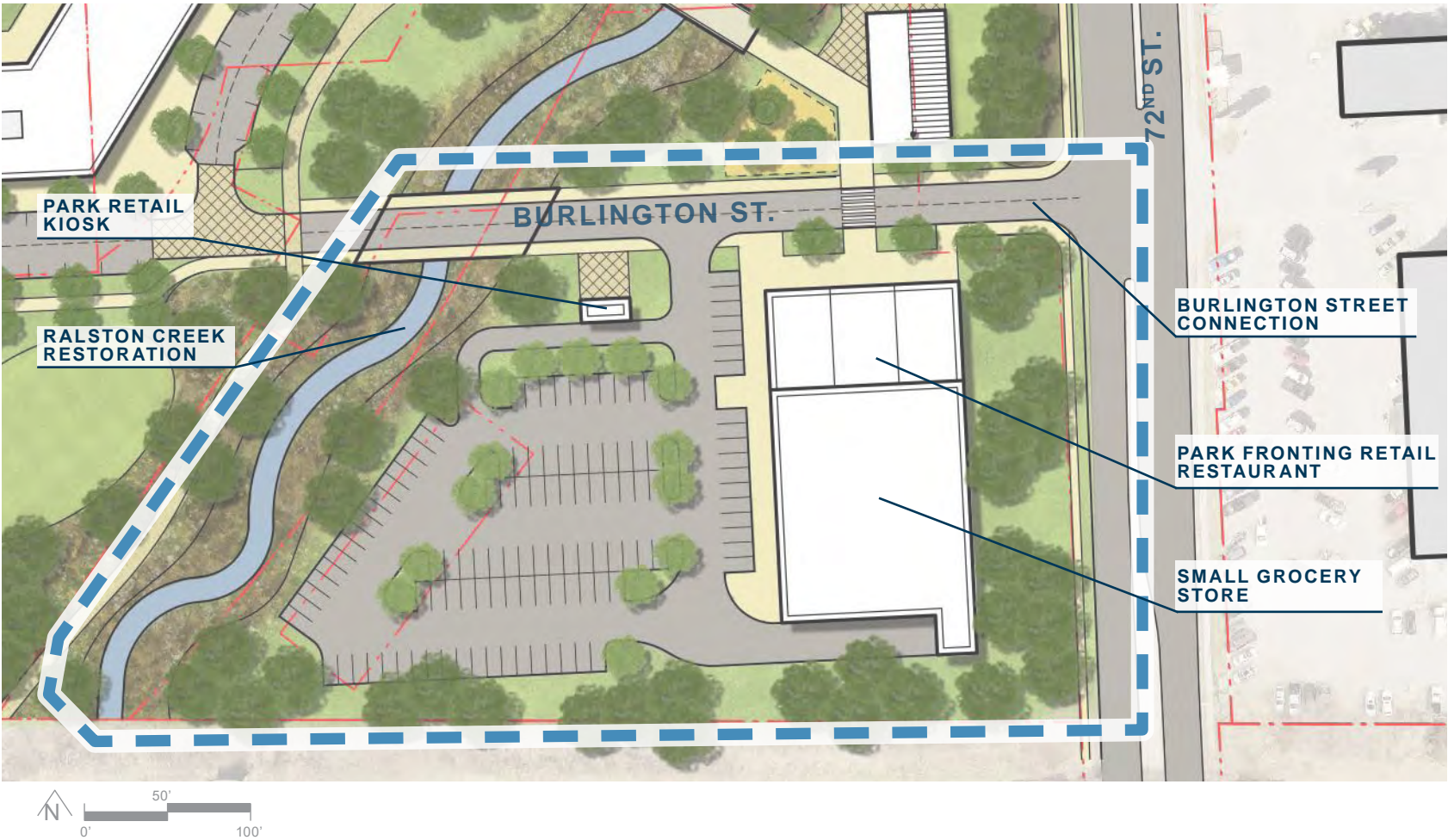




# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## GROCERY STORE BLOCK

Through the course of the planning effort, the desirability of a small neighborhood grocery store was a recurring theme. Seen as a neighborhood amenity, district draw, and/or an enhancer of quality of life, a small grocery store, similar to an Aldi or Fareway, was seen as a true benefit to the district. As a result, a preferred site, located at the intersection of 72nd Street and Burlington Street, was identified. This site has prime 72nd Street frontage, visibility, and traffic volumes to ensure viability. It would be lined on the north by small retail/restaurant bays that front onto, and help activate the Gateway Park. In addition, the site would contain a location for a small food and beverage kiosk, suitable for a coffee house or similar use. Together, the grocery store, retail/restaurant bays, and food and beverage kiosk would draw people to Ralston, help activate the park and adjacent development parcels, and enhance the district’s quality of life by providing important services, all within walking distance from Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.



Food and beverage kiosk typologies



Examples of urban grocery stores and markets



Outdoor cafe overlooking regional park



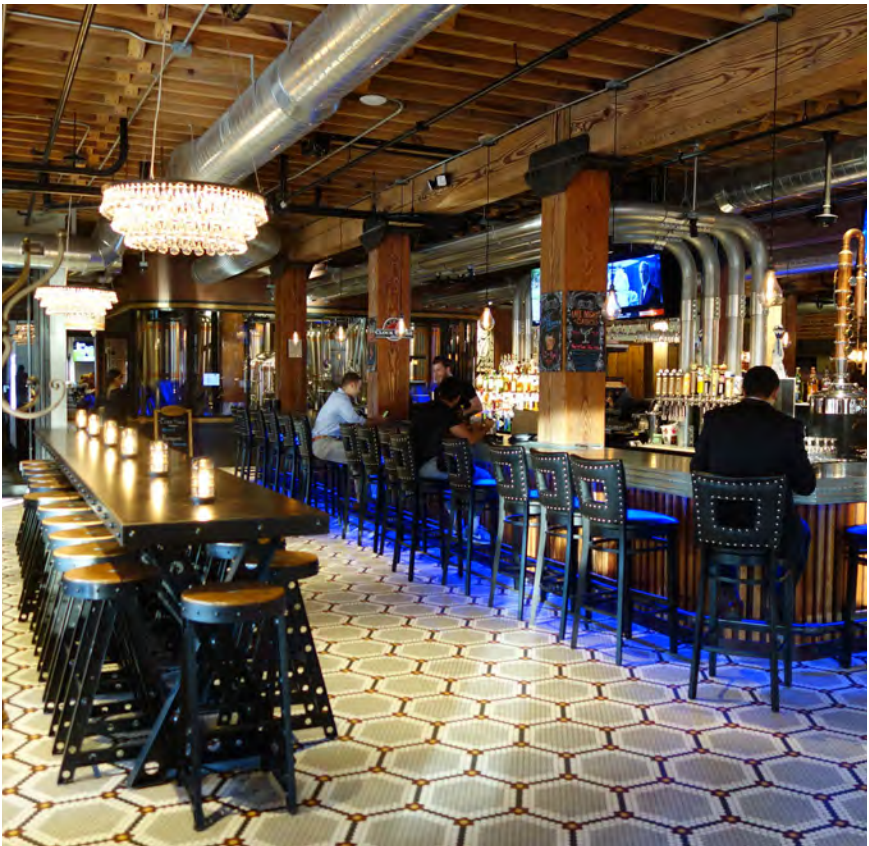
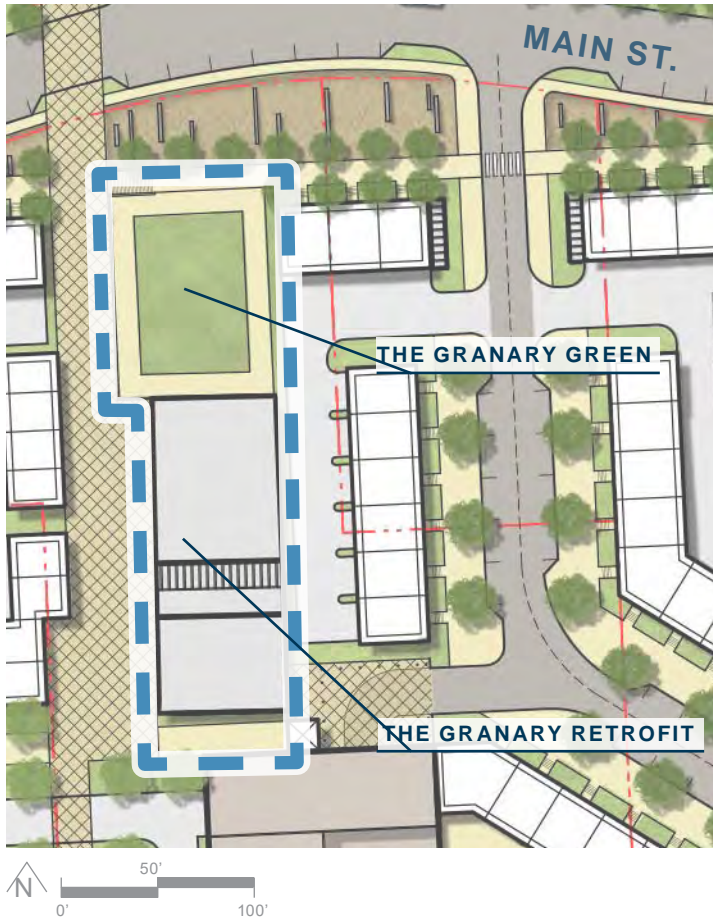
Example of retail / restaurant liner building



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## GRANARY RETROFIT

As mentioned in the Key Initiatives section, the Granary Building is an historic asset for Ralston and should be restored and/or redeveloped. The northern historic section, especially its front façade and “tower”, should be preserved and renovated in order to retain the historical integrity and unique character of the area. The southern 2/3rds of the structure can be removed so the remainder of the site can be redeveloped. This will help restore east-west connectivity through the site and allow for more market-appropriate development typologies, such as apartments, townhomes, and a district parking structure. Appropriate uses for the preserved, northern portion of the Granary include specialty office, niche or destination retailers, and/or entertainment uses, such as a micro-brewery. These uses would help drive traffic to the district and activate the pedestrian realm.



Microbrewery typologies



Granary existing conditions



Specialty coffee shop



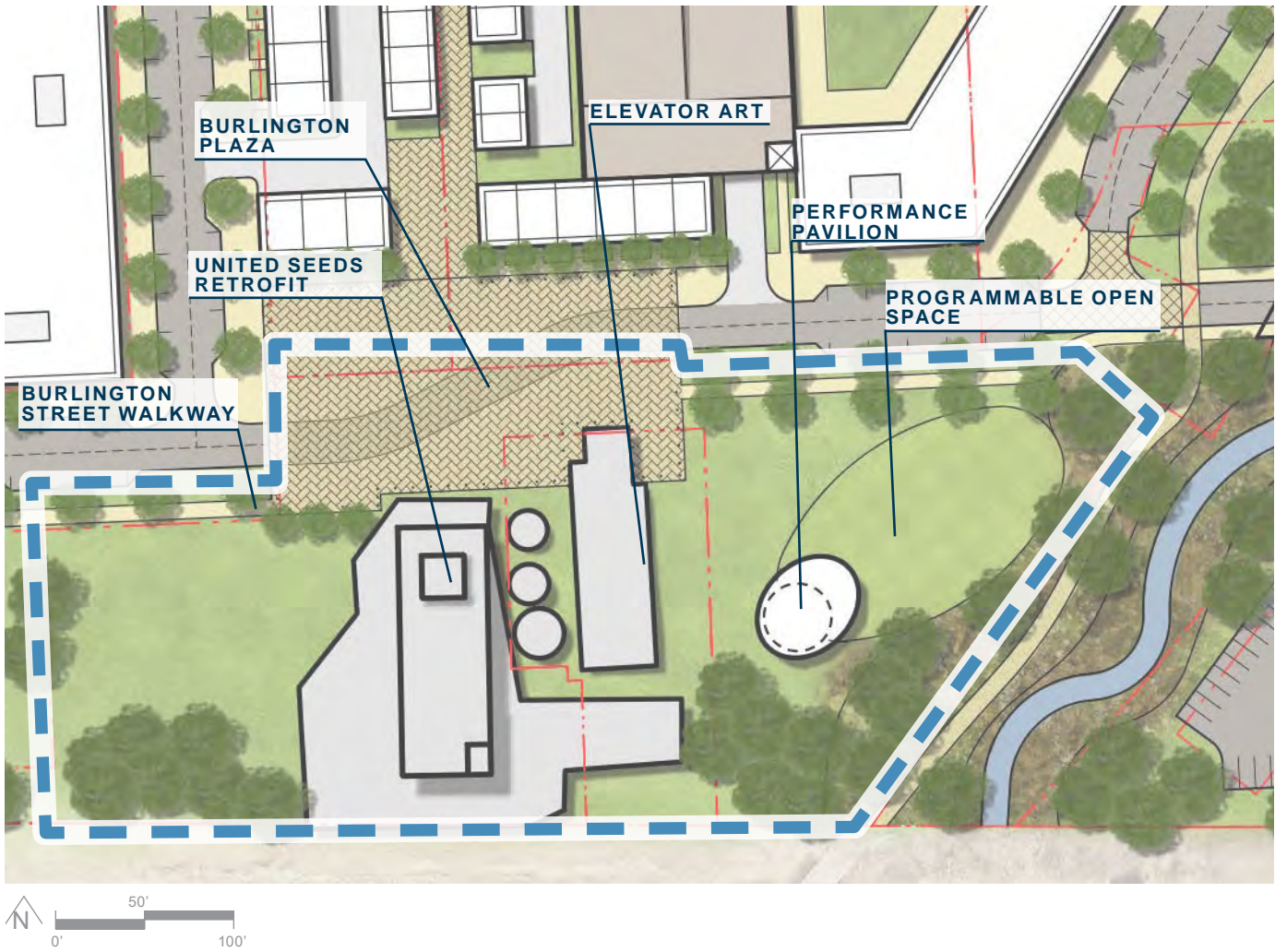
Examples of niche / destination retailers



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## UNITED SEEDS RETROFIT

As highlighted in the Key Initiatives section, the United Seeds complex is a historic asset and should be retrofit with entertainment uses and/or a microbrewery when market conditions permit. Because of the building's solid construction, it may be more feasible to renovate the building instead of demolishing it and rebuilding something new. Instead, the key features of the building could be celebrated, transforming it into a “canvas” for local artists. This includes potentially using the elevator towers as a projection screen for light shows and/or the water tank tower as a terminated view down the Mews. Additional arts and entertainment options are discussed on this page.



## PERFORMANCE PAVILION

A performance pavilion and adjacent programmable open space are a simple way to help activate the district and provide rentable, income producing space for community events and activities. Designed as an amphitheater and large lawn space, it can be utilized for a variety of activities, or as a simple park and shade structure when not in use.



Example of a performance pavilion



Existing terminated vista



Example of terminated vista

## ELEVATOR ART

Across the country, large derelict industrial facilities have been transformed into artistic icons for their respective communities. The United Seeds elevator towers could be utilized for LED and/or laser light shows, or as a canvas for a large mural or artistic banners. Light shows could be regularly programmed to help draw visitors into the district.



Examples of elevator art

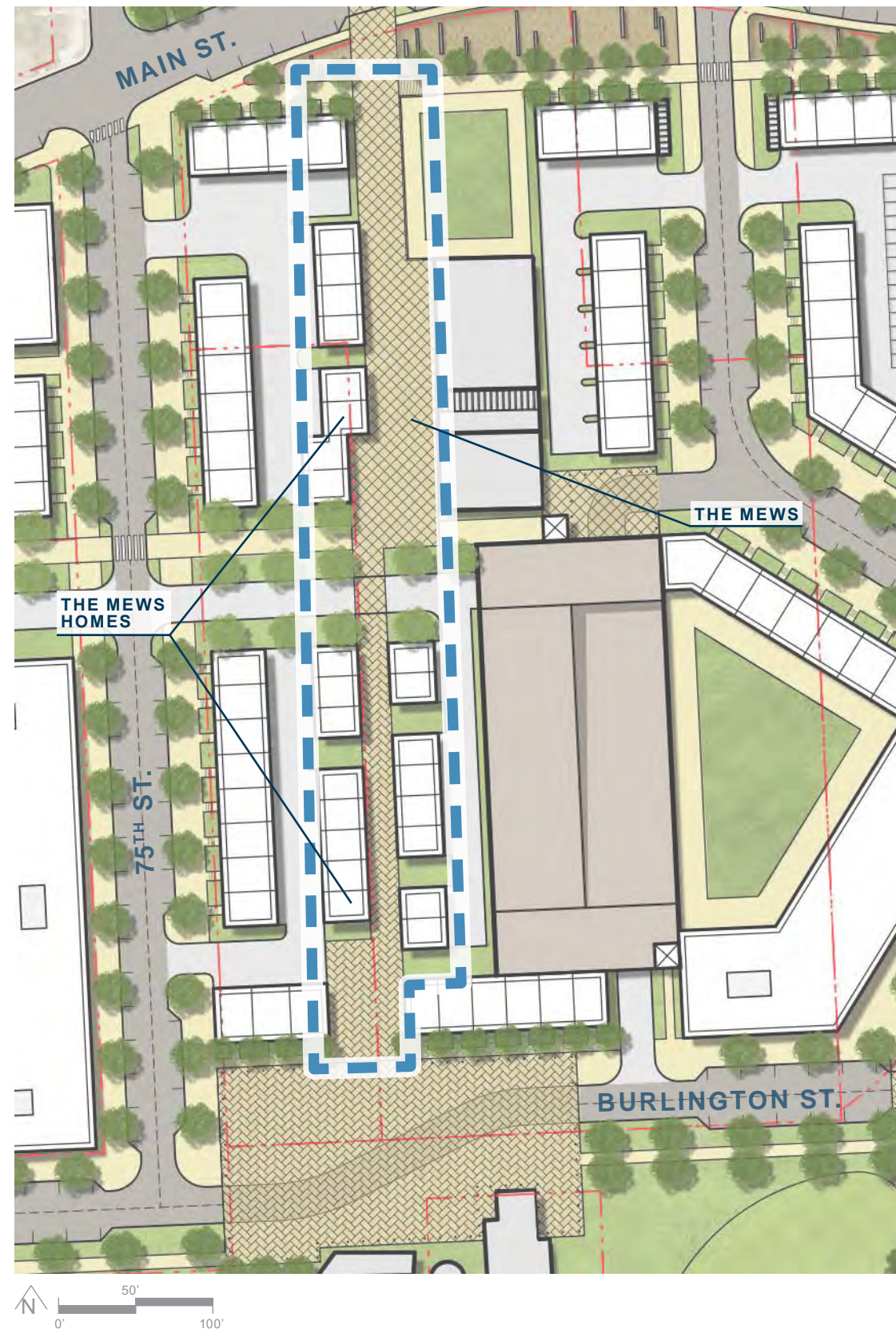




# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## THE MEWS

Mews homes are a unique residential building type that front onto The Mews, a new pedestrian street. These attached single-family units, two story in nature, share a back alley/parking area with other unit types, and have a pedestrian corridor in the front. They are a small and flexible missing middle housing type that is not currently found in the markets. Mews homes will extend along the Mews from Koch Park on the north to the Burlington Plaza on the south.



Mews - Historic Precedent



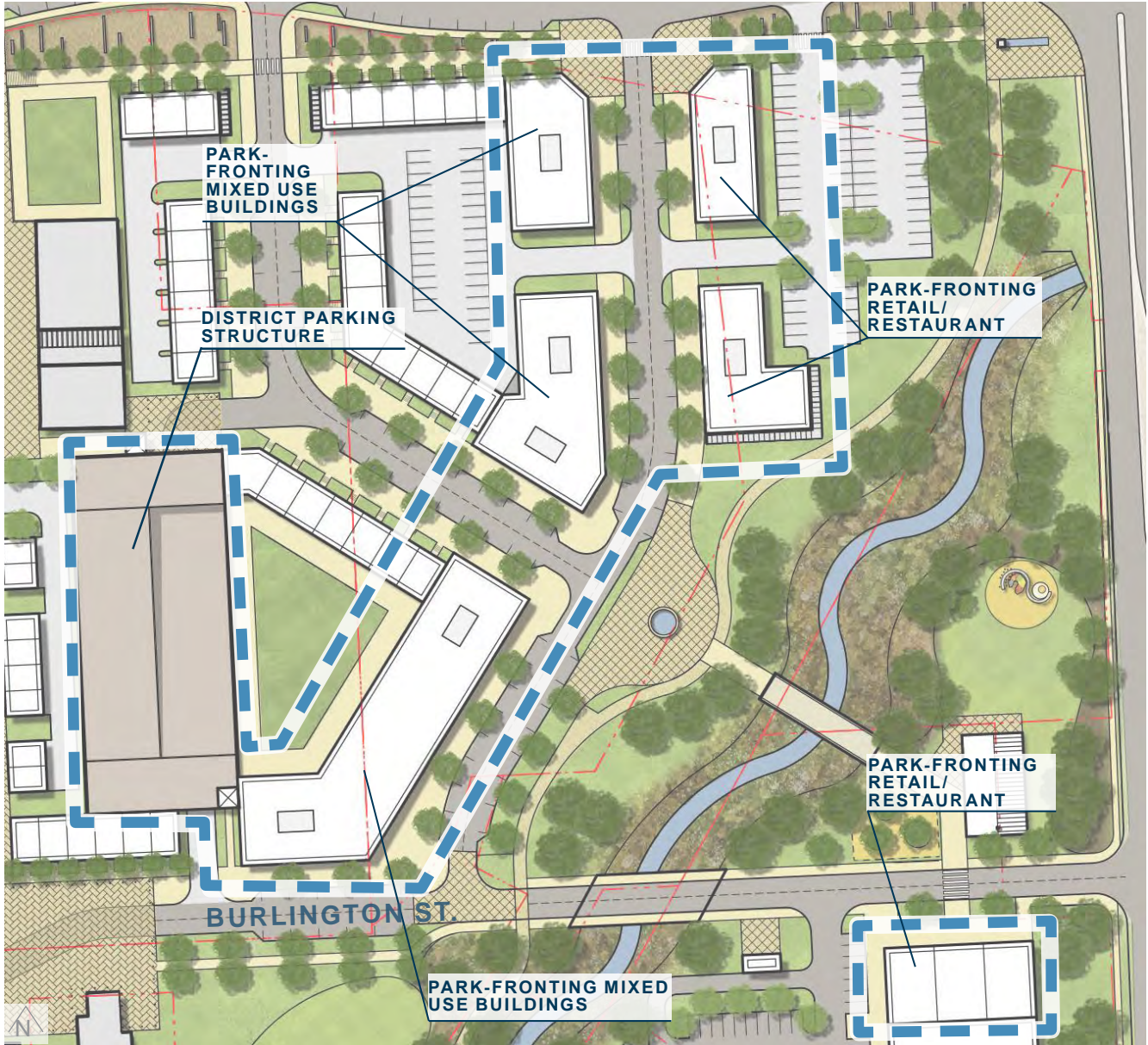
Mews - Modern Precedent



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## PARK-FRONTING MIXED-USE BLOCK

The park-fronting mixed-use block is the most dense development site in the Hinge. Buildings will be mixed-use in nature, both vertically and horizontally. Ground floor retail and food & beverage uses will front onto the new street and help activate the Gateway Park. Upper levels of the buildings will be residential (owner or rental) and/or office in nature, and have great views of the park. The combination of uses and ground level activation will help create a new “main street” destination that will be a significant draw to the district. The buildings on the east side of the new street should have outdoor dining patios that spill out into the park. Together, these buildings and their uses will have a synergistic relationship with the park, creating a unique one-of-a-kind location within the metro area.



## DISTRICT PARKING STRUCTURE

This development block should contain a district parking structure. This structure should be wrapped by other uses and hidden from the street. It will contain parking for the adjacent mixed-use buildings and park visitors. Efficiencies should be achieved through the shared use of parking between office tenants and park visitors, thereby requiring the construction of fewer parking stalls. Additionally, the parking structure can be designed to act as a large retaining wall to help negotiate the difficult grade change on the site and increase the density of the mixed-use buildings. This increased density will help offset the high cost of replacing the existing industrial uses.



Example of district parking structures



Example of mixed-use main street



Outdoor dining fronting onto a park



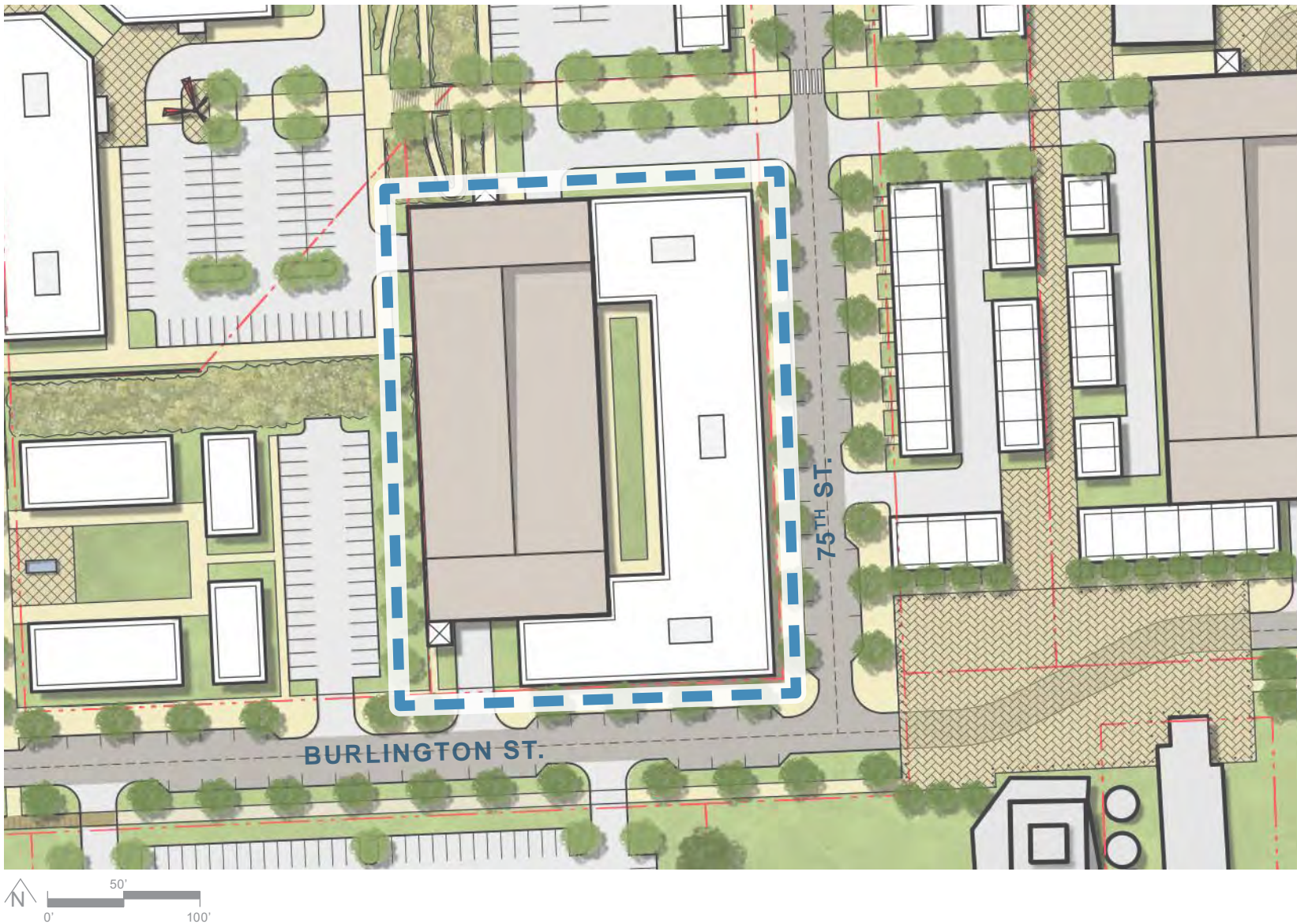
Street-fronting mixed-use building



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## MULTI-FAMILY REDEVELOPMENT

This large parcel provides a nice opportunity to add necessary density to the district. However, due to its current use, this parcel will likely not redevelop until later in the planning horizon. When the timing is right, the site should be transformed into a large multifamily project (owner or rental) with an attached parking structure. The parking structure should be lined by the residential units, thereby shielding the parking from view. The density brought about by this project will help provide “rooftops” for the district, thereby helping to activate it while creating a synergistic relationship with the desired retail and restaurant uses. As with the previous development opportunity, the parking structure can be designed to act as a large retaining wall to help negotiate the difficult grade change on the site and increase the unit count in the building. This increased density will, once again, help offset the cost of replacing the existing use.



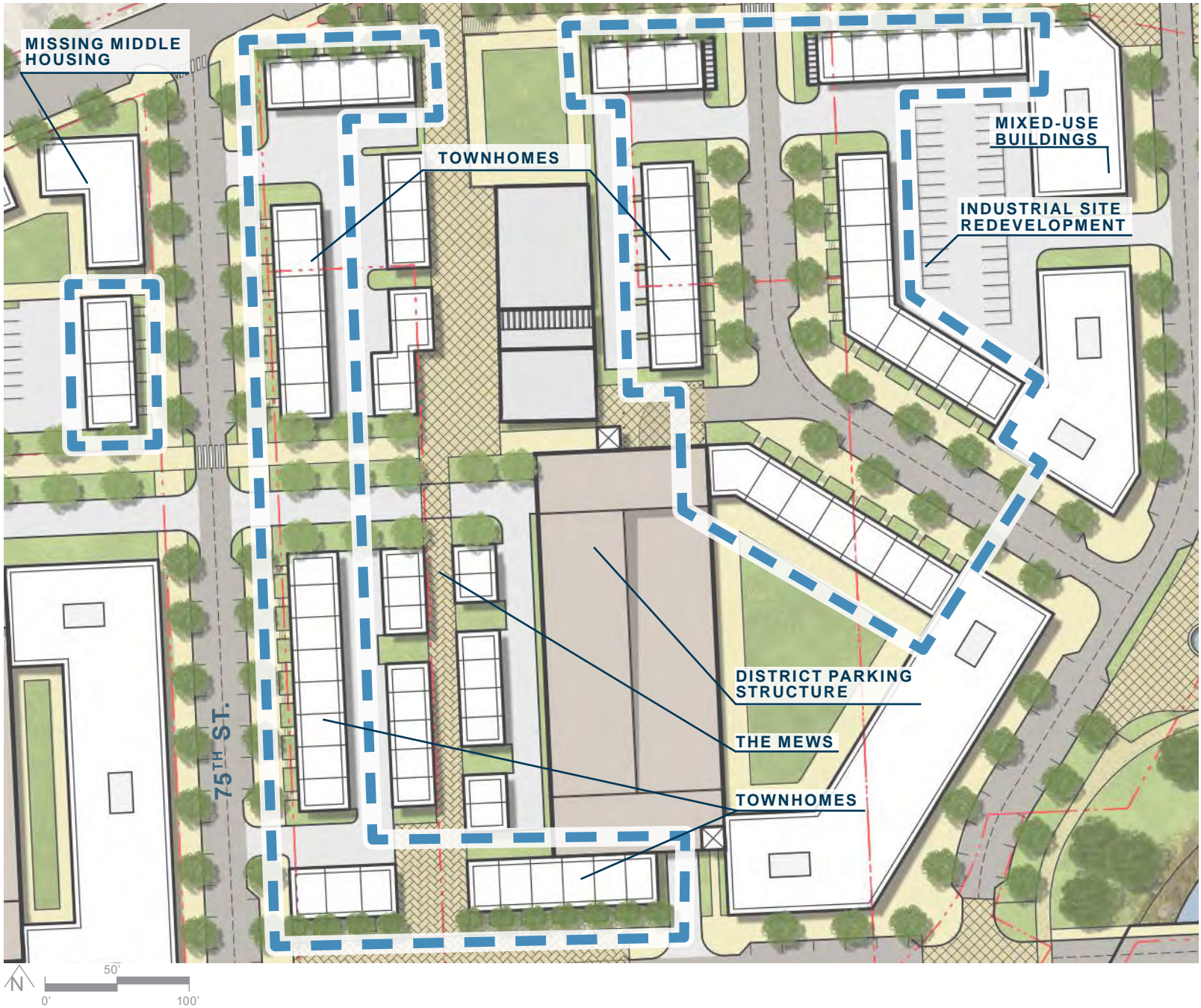
Examples of large multi-family building typology



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## TOWNHOMES

There are a number of sites within the district that would be ideal for townhomes. Townhomes are a traditional missing middle housing typology found in cities throughout the world. They are typically two to three stories in height, with a front, raised stoop. They are typically alley-loaded, with an attached or detached garage served by an alley located to the rear of the building. Townhomes can be either owner or renter occupied, and help to provide density and variety within the housing market.



Example of alley serviced rear-loaded townhomes



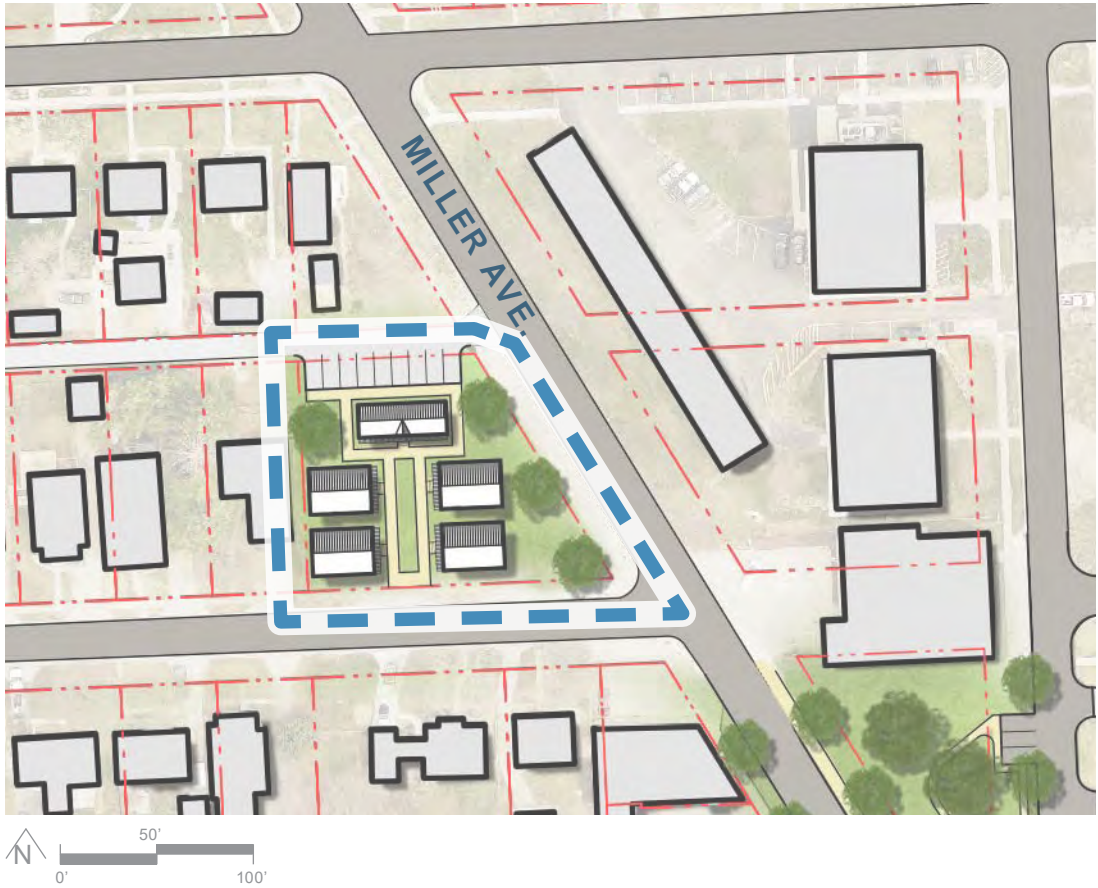
Example of a sidewalk with a townhome frontage



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## BUNGALOW COURT / POCKET NEIGHBORHOOD

On the far northwest corner of Downtown Ralston is a small, under-performing parcel of land that would be ideal for a bungalow court/pocket neighborhood. This missing-middle housing typology situates several small, well-designed cottage homes around a common open space. The homes, which have generous front porches, front onto this community space, which often contains gardens, community patios/fire pits, and/or a passive open lawn space. Parking is typically provide in rear-loaded garages or in a common lot served from an alley. These homes are ideal for a variety of demographics, including young professionals, empty nesters and seniors.



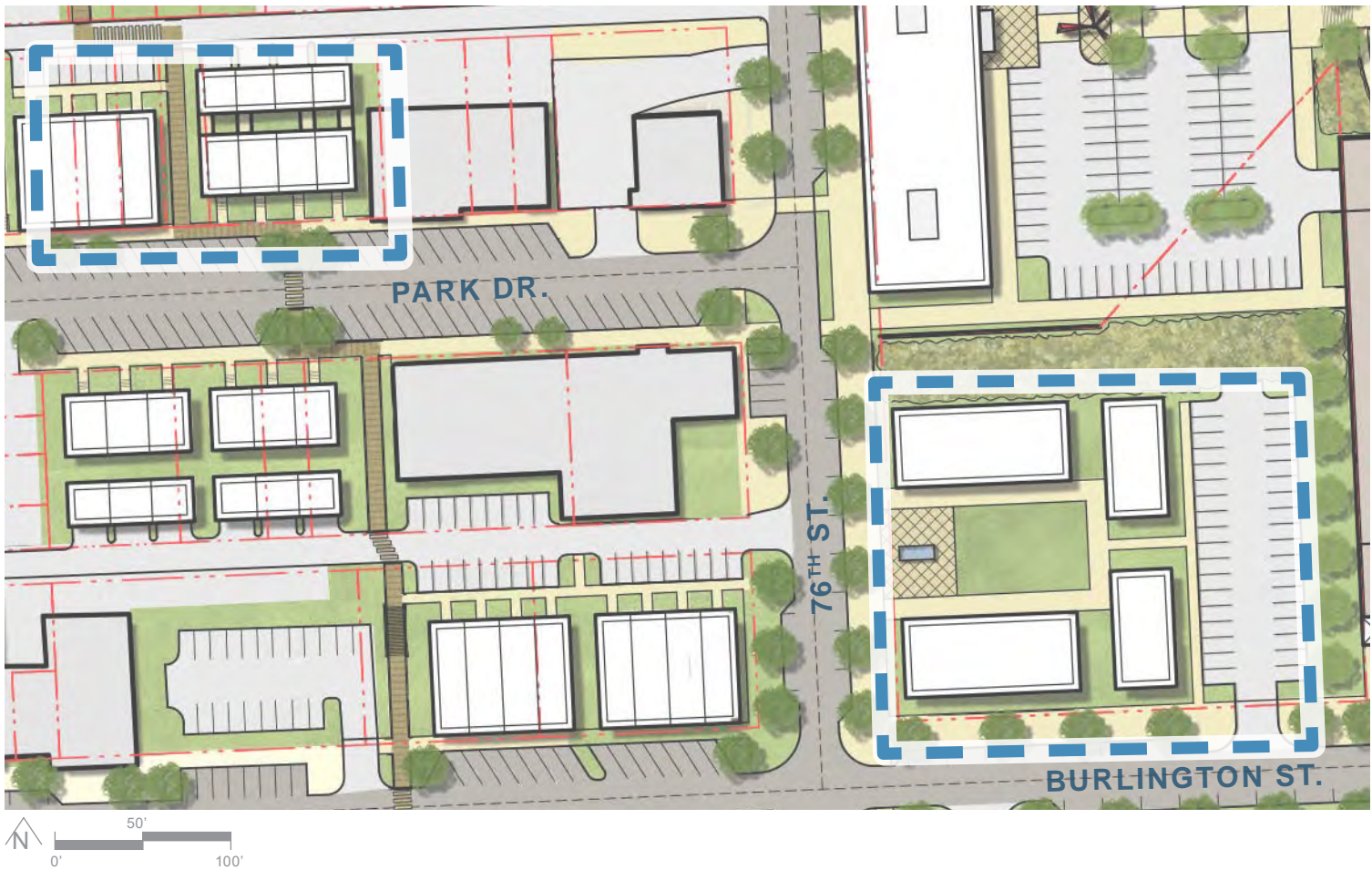
Examples of bungalow court / pocket neighborhood typologies



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## CITY PARKING LOT & “DICON” REDEVELOPMENT

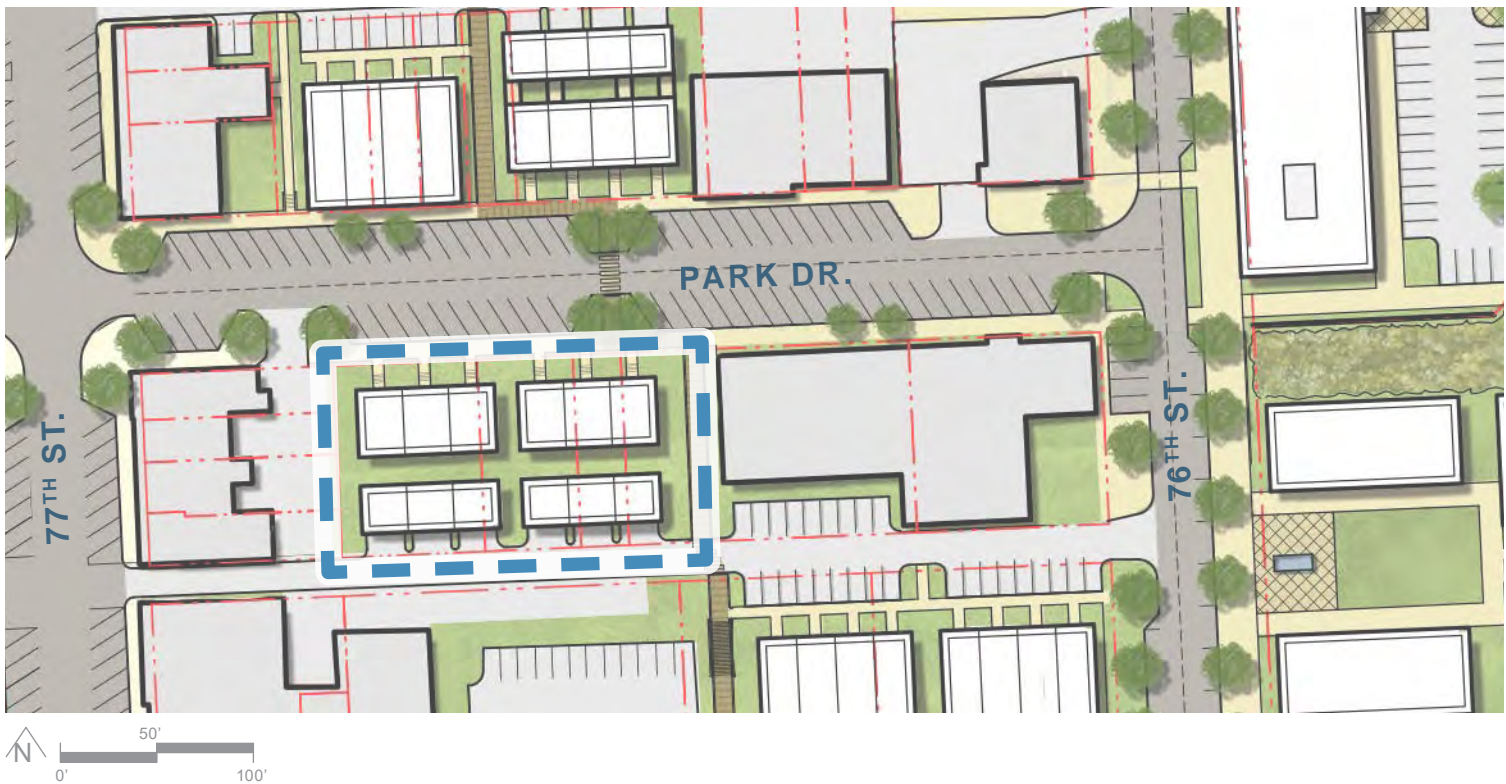
Both the city parking lot and the “Dicon” lot provide a prime opportunity to leverage existing City assets to the benefit of the district. Both of these parcels are currently “under-performing.” As such, the City should create a developer RFP and solicit proposals from developers for contextual infill development on these sites. A variety of missing middle housing typologies could be constructed on these sites, thereby adding “rooftops” to downtown Ralston, increasing activity levels, and acting as a catalyst for additional infill development. This should be a short-term priority for the City.



Existing city parking lot

## FIRE / RESCUE FACILITY RELOCATION & REDEVELOPMENT

The Fire/Rescue facility sits on a large site in a strategic downtown location. As new development begins to occur within downtown, the sirens associated with the facility may become a detriment to the redevelopment efforts within the area. When time and funding permit, the City should relocate the facility to a more suitable location within Ralston, and utilize a developer RFP process to redevelop the existing site with contextual mixed use or missing middle infill development. This new development will build on the synergy created by development on the other city-owned lots, and be a catalyst for larger scale development within the hinge area.



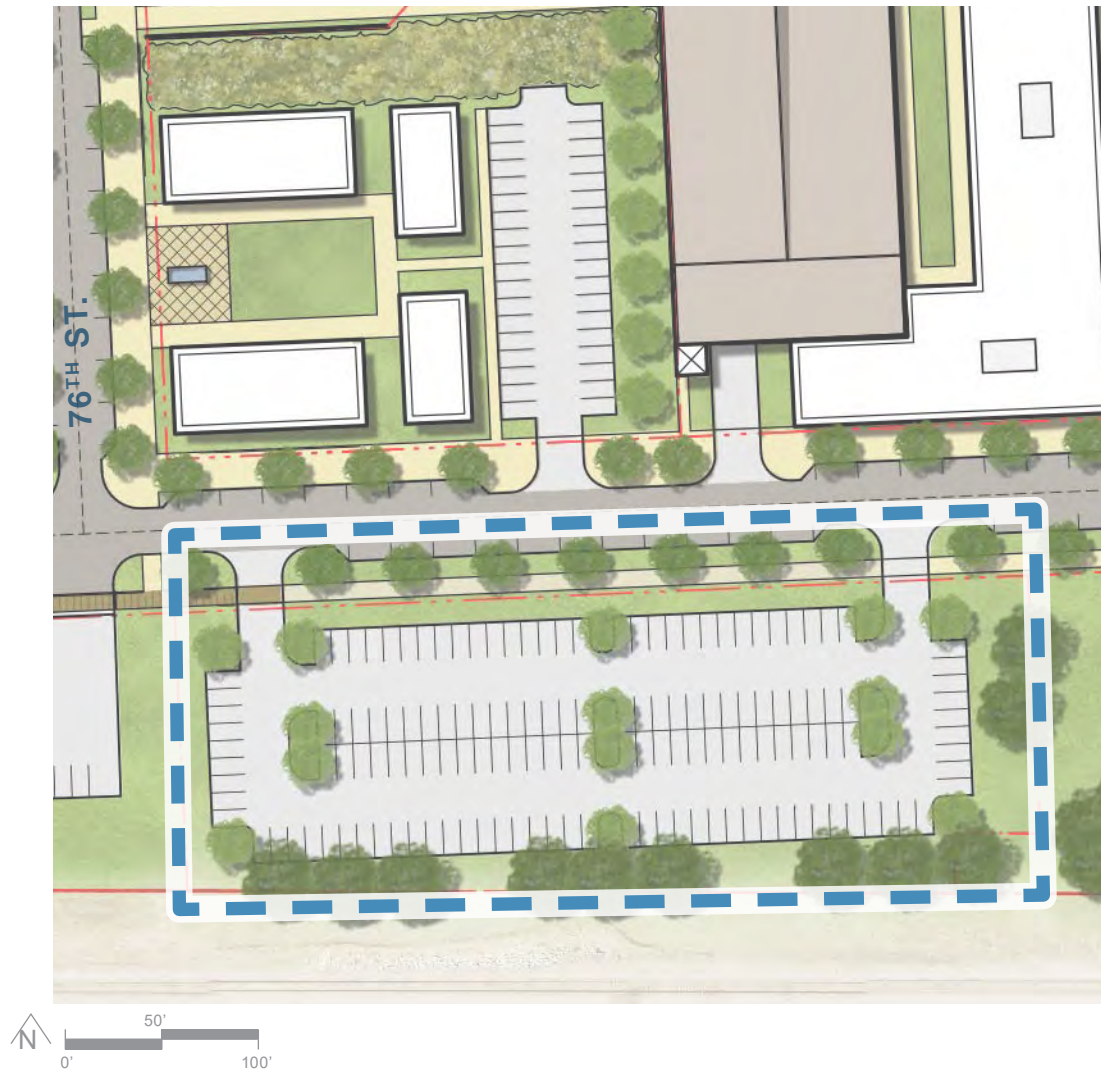
Existing Fire / Rescue facility



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## DISTRICT / EMPLOYEE PARKING LOT

As Downtown Ralston continues to redevelop, it will be necessary to implement a parking management plan and create a district-serving employee parking lot. By creating a conveniently located employee parking lot, prime curb-side stalls will be preserved for shoppers, diners, and visitors. The preferred location for an employee parking lot is on the south side of Burlington Street, east of 76th Street. A new district serving parking lot in this location would provide a large supply of parking that is within easy walking distance to all of downtown. Access would be provided by the existing robust network of sidewalks, the future Burlington Street side path, and the Passageway, which would provide a direct north-south connection all the way to the City Library. In addition to helping free up curbside stalls for customers, this lot will also help to free up other existing small parking lots for future redevelopment.



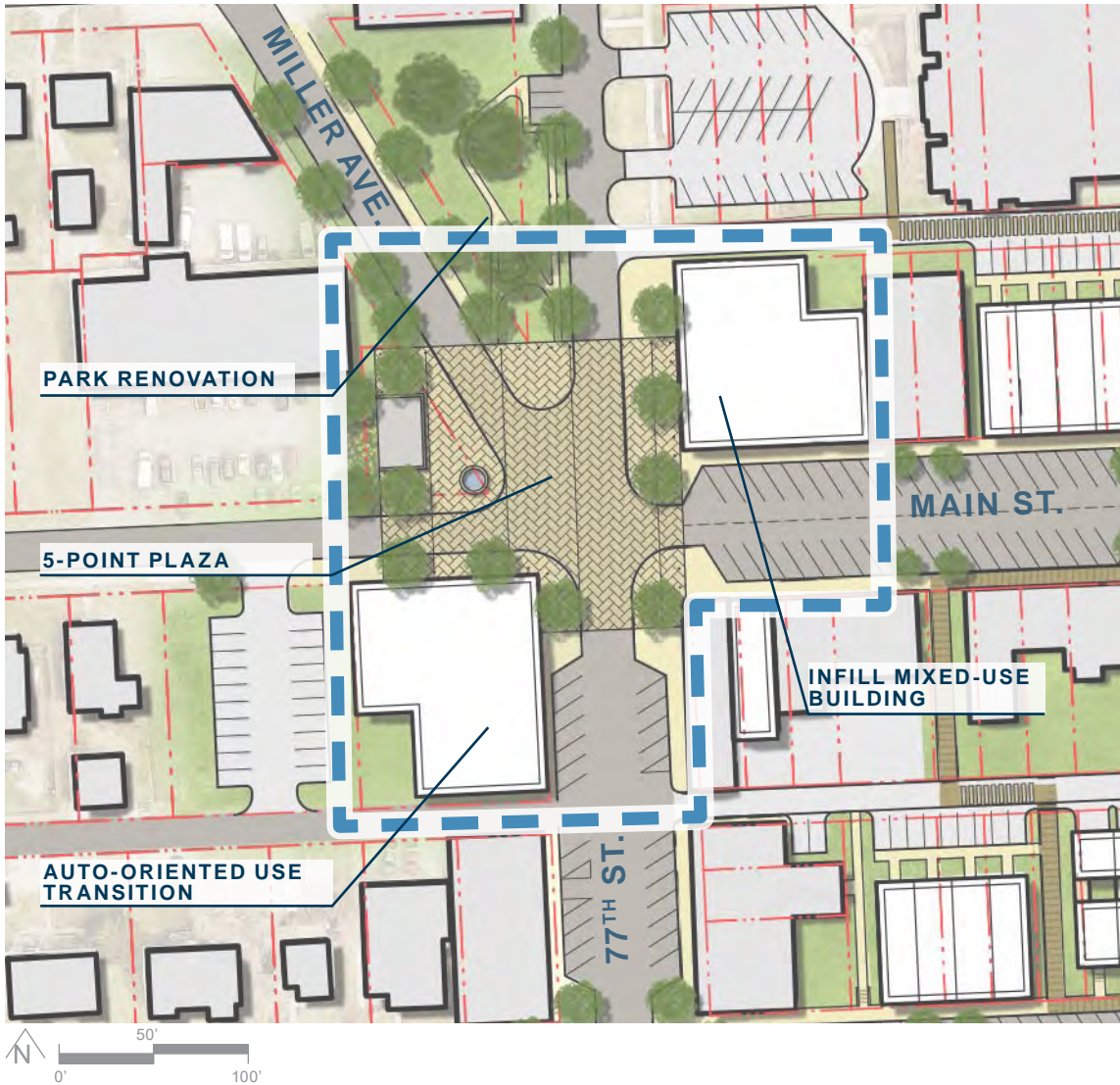
Well-landscaped surface parking lot



# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## 5-POINT PLAZA MIXED-USE BUILDINGS

Ralston's 5-point intersection is an iconic location within the community, functioning as the heart and soul of the city. When the intersection is transformed into a more flexible and user-friendly shared-space plaza, it will be important that the adjacent buildings help enclose, and activate, this iconic space. With a goal of transitioning auto-oriented uses to mixed uses, these two sites should be redeveloped with new multi-story mixed-use buildings. Their ground floors should contain active uses, such as retail and/or food & beverage services. Upper levels should contain office or residential uses. The buildings should be built to the property lines in order to help enclose the plaza space, with primary entrances located along the street frontages or at the front corner of the buildings.



Existing Ralston Automotive



Existing Ralston Fuel Service



Street corner oriented mixed-use buildings





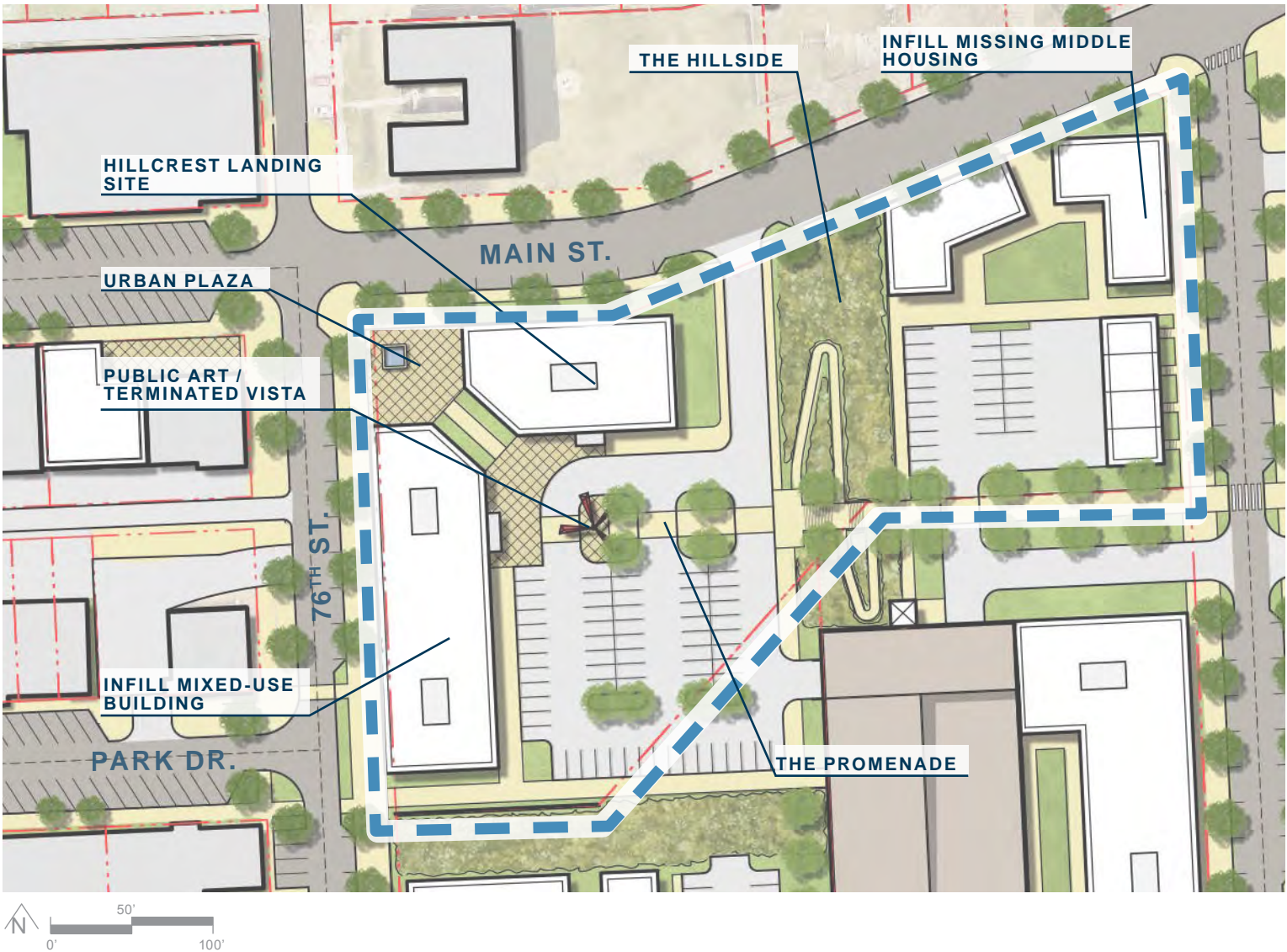
# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## HILLCREST LANDING SITE REDEVELOPMENT

Hillcrest Landing is situated on a strategic site along Main Street, linking the Hinge with Downtown. The former mall has been out-positioned within the marketplace. When the opportunity is right, the site should be razed and redeveloped. Redevelopment could be done in phases based on the site's varied topography. It should provide density and a mix of uses that will benefit the entire district, as well as key linkages to help connect the Hinge with Downtown. Office, street-level retail, and a variety of residential typologies are preferred on the site.



Existing Hillcrest Landing



Example of an urban streetscape with a mixed-use frontage



Mixed-use building typology

## HILLSIDES

The Hillcrest Landing site and the “Dicon” lot each have a significant amount of topographic grade change across their respective sites. This grade difference presents challenges when creating both functional and cost-effective development pads on these sites. To address this, well-landscaped hillsides could be created as the sites are developed. These hillsides could provide a simple, aesthetically pleasing, and cost-effective solution that addresses not only the grade change, but also creates viable development pads for future development.





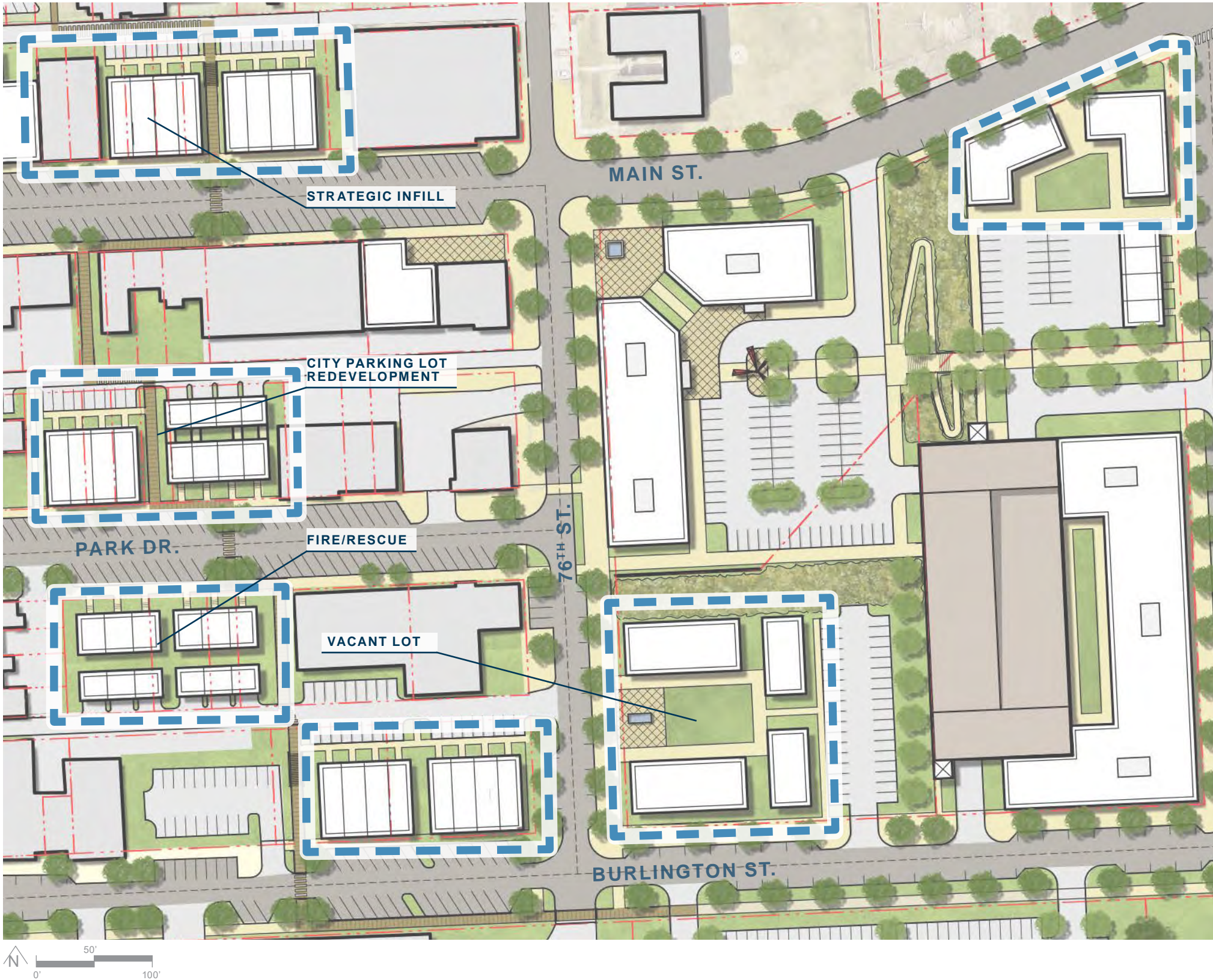
# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## STRATEGIC INFILL / MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

There are several vacant parcels and surface parking lots located throughout Downtown Ralston and the Hinge area. These vacant parcels are effectively the “missing teeth” of the district. Instead of being thought of as a negative, they provide a grand opportunity for new contextual infill development. These parcels can be redeveloped with small mixed-use buildings or with one of the many missing middle housing typologies. The resulting densification will enhance the district’s urban form, help generate activity in the area, and provide additional “rooftops” that will be critical to the success of local retailers.



Missing middle residential typologies



Missing middle residential typologies



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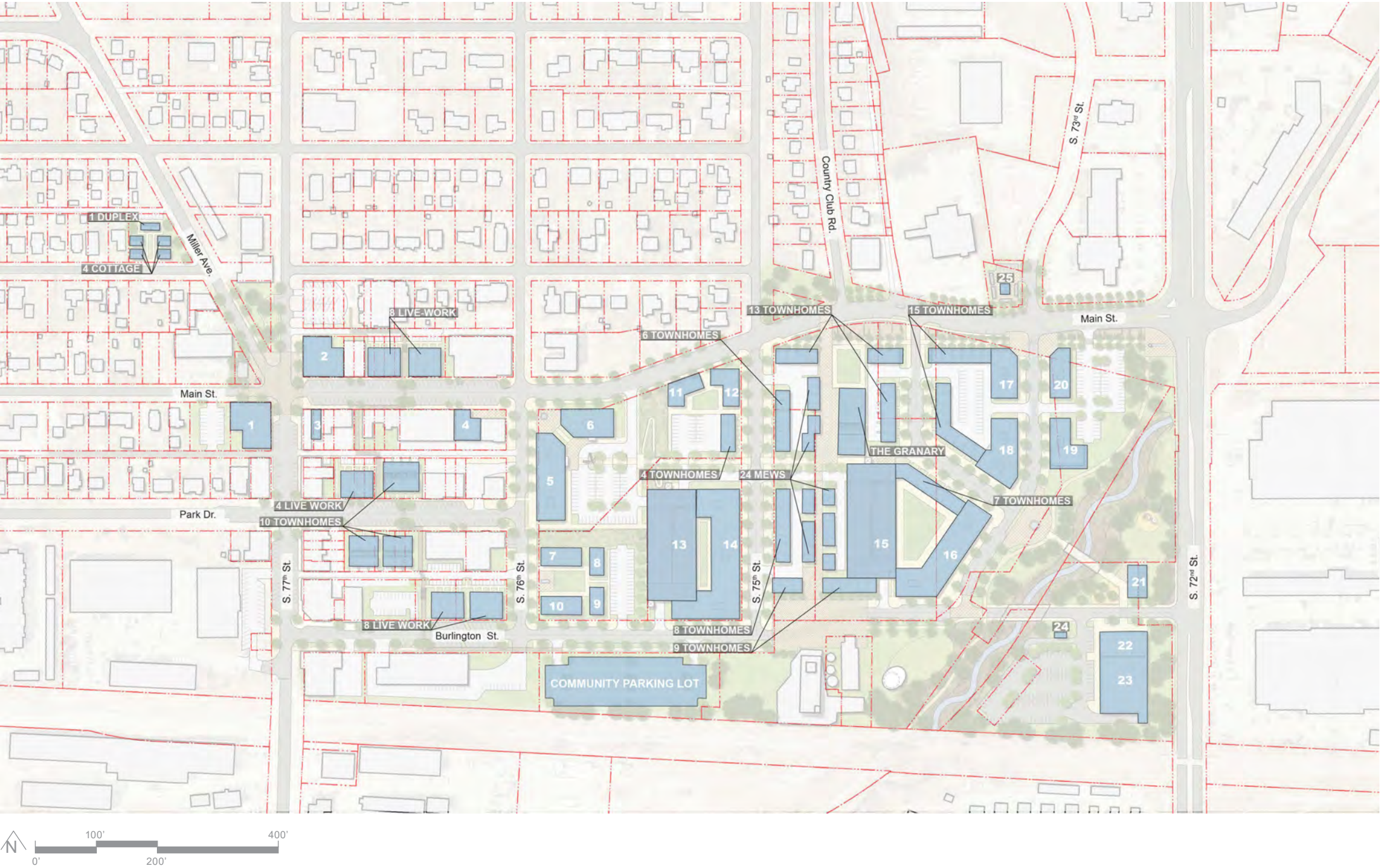
# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES - DEVELOPMENTAL YIELD

## YIELD ANALYSIS

The Ralston Downtown and Hinge area is a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use district that contains a variety of uses and amenities in an environmentally friendly design. Based on the Conceptual Master Plan and the uses it identifies, the walkable urban neighborhood yields over 600 residential units, with 450+ multi-family units, 70+ townhomes, 30+ units in missing middle configurations, 20 live-work units, and 24 mews units. In addition, the neighborhood contains an additional 170,000+ sq. ft. of retail, food & beverage, and office uses. Over 1,500 parking stalls are provided in a number of configurations, including on-street parking, surface parking lots, and parking structures. Details of the development yield are included in the Yield Analysis Summary on the following page.

### RALSTON DOWNTOWN AND HINGE - YIELD SUMMARY

| HOUSING              |         |        |
|----------------------|---------|--------|
| Apartments           | 473     | Units  |
| Townhomes            | 72      | Units  |
| Missing Middle       | 34      | Units  |
| Live-Work Units      | 20      | Units  |
| Mews                 | 24      | Units  |
| TOTAL HOUSING        | 623     | Units  |
| OTHER USES           |         |        |
| Commercial           | 107,030 | SF     |
| Mixed Use            | 55,660  | SF     |
| Miscellaneous        | 3,835   | SF     |
| Pavilions            | 4,395   | SF     |
| TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE | 170,920 | SF     |
| PARKING              |         |        |
| Parking Lots         | 561     | Spaces |
| Parking Garages      | 615     | Spaces |
| On-Street Parking    | 195     | Spaces |
| Private Garages      | 136     | Spaces |
| TOTAL PARKING SPACES | 1,507   | Spaces |





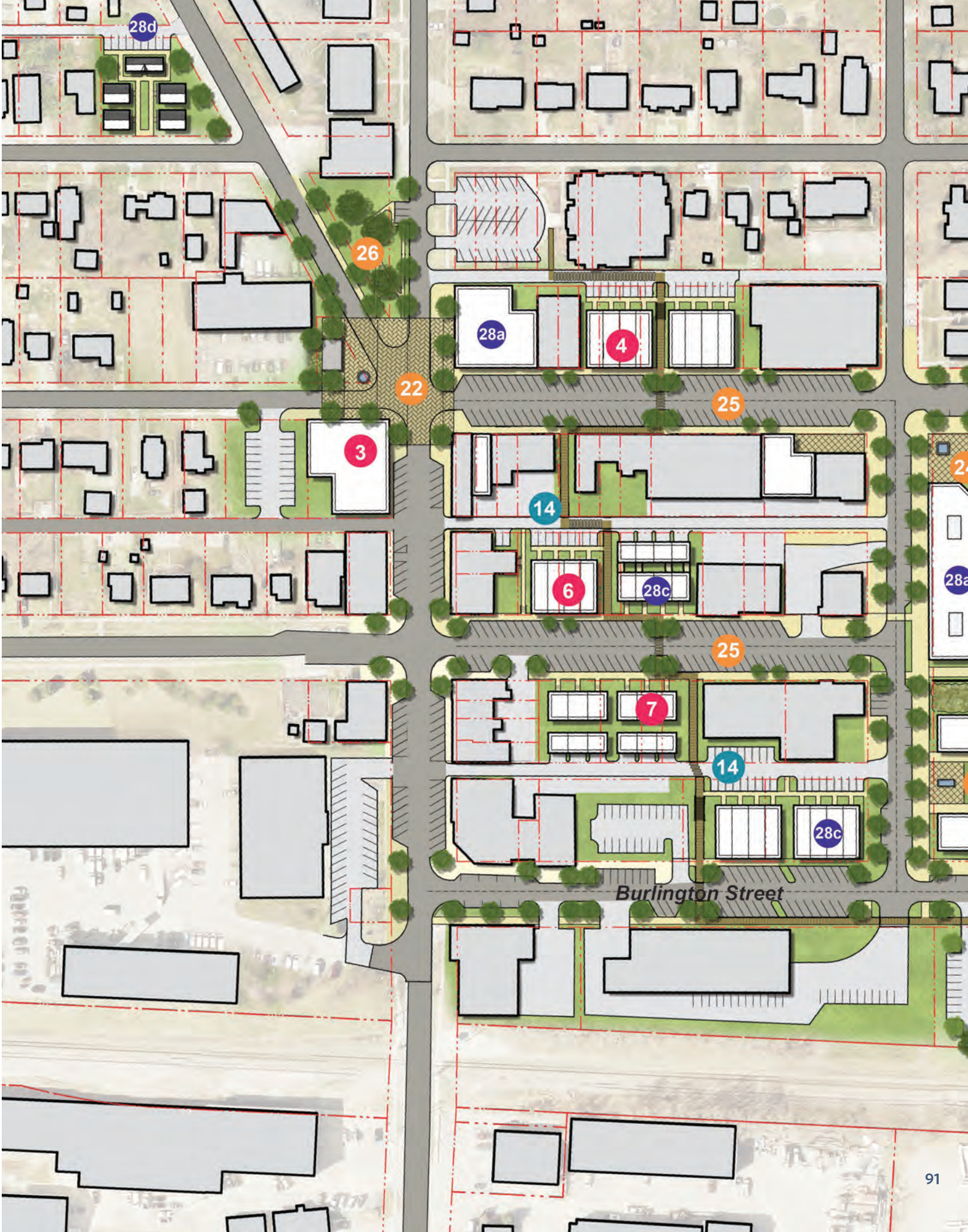
| RALSTON DOWNTOWN AND HINGE YIELD  |                |                    |         |                |          |          |         |          |                   |                |                  |         |         |         |           |   |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|----------------|----------|----------|---------|----------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---|
| Building ID                       | Building Type  | Building Footprint | Stories | Square Footage | Comm. SF | Mixed SF | Misc SF | Resid SF | Residential Units | Parking Demand | Parking Provided | Private | Pkg Lot | Pkg Gar | On Street | Notes   |
| 1                                 | Mixed          | 10,145             | 2       | 20,290         | 0        | 10,145   | 0       | 20,290   | 20                | 68             | 20               | -       | 20      | -       | -         | Remainder served by on-street parking                                 |
| 2                                 | Mixed          | 9,095              | 2       | 18,190         | 0        | 9,095    | 0       | 18,190   | 18                | 61             | 0                | -       | -       | -       | -         | Served from on-street parking   |
| 3                                 | Commercial     | 1,755              | 1       | 1,755          | 1,755    | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 8              | 0                | -       | -       | -       | -         | Served from on-street parking   |
| 4                                 | Commercial     | 4,475              | 1       | 4,475          | 4,475    | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 18             | 0                | -       | -       | -       | -         | Served from on-street parking   |
| 5                                 | Mixed          | 14,550             | 4       | 58,200         | 2,400    | 0        | 0       | 55,800   | 54                | 91             | 58               | -       | 40      | -       | 18        | Shared parking lot with 6   |
| 6                                 | Mixed          | 8,615              | 4       | 34,460         | 2,400    | 0        | 0       | 32,060   | 31                | 57             | 43               | -       | 24      | -       | 19        | Shared parking lot with 5   |
| 7                                 | Missing Middle | 4,500              | 2       | 9,000          | 0        | 0        | 0       | 9,000    | 9                 | 14             | 11               | -       | 11      | -       | -         | Shared lot for 7-10   |
| 8                                 | Missing Middle | 2,365              | 2       | 4,730          | 0        | 0        | 0       | 4,730    | 5                 | 8              | 7                | -       | 7       | -       | -         | Shared lot for 7-10   |
| 9                                 | Missing Middle | 2,365              | 2       | 4,730          | 0        | 0        | 0       | 4,730    | 5                 | 8              | 7                | -       | 7       | -       | -         | Shared lot for 7-10   |
| 10                                | Missing Middle | 4,500              | 2       | 9,000          | 0        | 0        | 0       | 9,000    | 9                 | 14             | 11               | -       | 11      | -       | -         | Shared lot for 7-10   |
| 11                                | Apartments     | 4,325              | 4       | 17,300         | 0        | 0        | 0       | 17,300   | 17                | 26             | 12               | -       | 12      | -       | -         | Shared parking lot with 12  |
| 12                                | Apartments     | 4,865              | 4       | 19,460         | 0        | 0        | 0       | 19,460   | 19                | 29             | 12               | -       | 12      | -       | -         | Shared parking lot with 11  |
| 13                                | Parking Garage | -                  | 3       | -              | -        | -        | -       | -        | -                 | -              | 300              | -       | -       | 300     | -         | Serves 5,6,11,12,14. 100/FL, flat decks                               |
| 14                                | Apartments     | 30,325             | 6       | 181,950        | 0        | 0        | 0       | 181,950  | 174               | 261            | 42               | -       | -       | -       | 42        | Served from Parking Garage 13   |
| 15                                | Parking Garage | -                  | 3       | -              | -        | -        | -       | -        | -                 | -              | 315              | -       | -       | 315     | -         | Serves 16, granary, 36 sp for mews, 8 sp for th's. 105/FL, flat decks |
| 16                                | Mixed          | 21,320             | 6       | 127,920        | 0        | 16,800   | 4,520   | 106,600  | 102               | 215            | 33               | -       | -       | -       | 33        | Misc is apartment common space  |
| 17                                | Mixed          | 7,780              | 3       | 23,340         | 0        | 7,780    | 0       | 15,560   | 15                | 51             | 25               | -       | 12      | -       | 13        | Shared with 19  |
| 18                                | Commercial     | 5,935              | 1       | 5,935          | 5,935    | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 24             | 27               | -       | 27      | -       | -         | Shared with 20  |
| 19                                | Mixed          | 11,840             | 3       | 35,520         | 0        | 11,840   | 0       | 23,680   | 23                | 78             | 46               | -       | 19      | -       | 27        | Shared with 17  |
| 20                                | Commercial     | 7,655              | 1       | 7,655          | 7,655    | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 31             | 36               | -       | 36      | -       | -         | Shared with 18  |
| 21                                | Pavilion       | 3,835              | 1       | 3,835          | 0        | 0        | 3,835   | 0        | 0                 | 0              | 0                | -       | -       | -       | -         | Served from on-street parking   |
| 22                                | Commercial     | 7,020              | 1       | 7,020          | 7,020    | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 29             | 34               | -       | 34      | -       | -         | Shared between 22-24  |
| 23                                | Commercial     | 17,070             | 1       | 17,070         | 17,070   | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 69             | 81               | -       | 81      | -       | -         | Shared between 22-24  |
| 24                                | Commercial     | 420                | 1       | 420            | 420      | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 2              | 2                | -       | 2       | -       | -         | Shared between 22-24  |
| 25                                | Pavilion       | 560                | 1       | 560            | 0        | 0        | 560     | 0        | 0                 | 6              | 6                | -       | 6       | -       | -         | Food Truck parking  |
| Duplex                            | Duplex         | 780                | 2       | 1,560          | 0        | 0        | 0       | 1,560    | 2                 | 3              | 3                | -       | 3       | -       | -         | Shared parking with Cottages  |
| Cottage                           | Cottage        | 3,080              | 2       | 6,160          | 0        | 0        | 0       | 6,160    | 4                 | 6              | 6                | -       | 6       | -       | -         | Shared parking with Duplex  |
| Live-Work                         | Live-Work      | 26,800             | 3       | 80,400         | 26,800   | 0        | 0       | 53,600   | 20                | 138            | 45               | -       | 45      | -       | -         | Parking for residential in alleys                                     |
| Mews                              | Mews           | 14,640             | 3       | 43,920         | 0        | 0        | 0       | 43,920   | 24                | 36             | 0                | -       | -       | -       | -         | Served from Parking Garage 15   |
| Townhomes                         | Townhomes      | 62,480             | 2.5     | 156,200        | 0        | 0        | 0       | 156,200  | 72                | 144            | 136              | 136     | -       | -       | -         | Private garages   |
| Granary                           | Granary        | 10,700             | 6       | 31,100         | 31,100   | 0        | 0       | 0        | 0                 | 125            | 43               | -       | -       | -       | 43        | Served from Parking Garage 15   |
| Community Parking Lot             | Parking Lot    | -                  | -       | -              | -        | -        | -       | -        | -                 | -              | 146              | -       | 146     | -       | -         | Overflow parking to serve both Downtown and Hinge                     |
| RALSTON DOWNTOWN AND HINGE TOTALS |                |                    |         |                | 107,030  | 55,660   | 8,915   | 779,790  | 623               | 1,620          | 1,507            | 136     | 561     | 615     | 195       |   |
|                                   |                |                    |         |                | Comm. SF | Mixed SF | Misc SF | Resid SF | Residential Units | Parking Demand | Parking Provided | Private | Pkg Lot | Pkg Gar | On Street | Parking Numbers   |



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IMPLEMENTATION





# IMPLEMENTATION

## OVERVIEW

There are a number of potential mechanisms that can be utilized to help implement the Downtown and Hinge Master Plan. These range from simple to complex, and from common to unique. However, there is no particular requirement for success. If only one mechanism is utilized, it is a step in the right direction. If all of the mechanisms are utilized, the results could be truly spectacular. The purpose of this chapter is not to advocate for a certain mechanism or mechanisms. Instead, it is to identify a list of potential implementation mechanisms that could be utilized by the City to help implement the master plan, and let the City utilize the ones that make the most sense. Implementation options may include, but are not limited, to the following:

**MASTER PLAN –** The first step in any planning process is the development of a master plan. The plan should detail uses, building typologies, street sections, park and open space elements, etc. It should be designed to a level of “realistic fiction.” In other words, it should provide enough detail to ensure that its various elements are achievable, while also providing a sense of what the plan will yield (i.e. unit counts, square footages, etc.). With this as a base, the plan becomes a guide for the jurisdiction, helping it identify follow-on activities that will lead to the implementation of the plan. Just as importantly, it also provides the jurisdiction justification for pursuing the plan’s various elements, i.e. “it was a key component of the plan.” Ralston has taken this first step, and will need to formally approve the master plan once it has been reviewed and vetted.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES –** Following completion of the Master Plan, a set of Design Guidelines will be created for the area encompassed by the Master Plan. These guidelines will direct the design and siting of all new buildings within the district. The Design Guidelines are a companion document to the Master Plan and the Development Application / Review Checklist that will be delivered with the guidelines. Prior to the design and construction of any new building within the district, all three of these documents will need to be reviewed by applicants and used for design inspiration and guidance. Adherence to the vision and parameters identified in these documents will facilitate timely review and approval of development applications within the Hinge and Downtown area. The guidelines will address a variety of elements, including lot types and associated requirements, architectural guidelines, building materials, and landscape guidelines. The City will need to formally approve the design guidelines once they have been reviewed and vetted and create an Architectural Control Committee that will be charged with reviewing development submittals.

**ZONING UPDATE –** The City of Ralston will need to update its zoning ordinance so that it is in concurrence with the Master Plan and Design Guidelines. This will ensure that all three mechanisms are working in sync, producing the desired and intended results, and thereby achieving the vision set forth in the Master Plan. The City of Ralston will need to formally approve the Zoning Update once it has been properly reviewed and vetted.

**BRANDING –** The City of Ralston and/or the Chamber of Commerce should create and fund an organizational structure whose sole purpose would be to brand and promote Downtown Ralston and the Hinge. Similar to “Realize Bradenton” in Florida, Ralston’s version (i.e. “Realize Ralston” or something similar) would advocate for the district and be responsible for common marketing, activation (pop-ups, long table dinners, movie nights, art festivals, farmer’s markets, etc.), tactical urbanism, etc.

**ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE (ACC) –** The City of Ralston will need to establish an Architectural Control Committee. The function of this committee is to review all new development submittals for the district and determine if they are in conformance with the Master Plan, Design Guidelines, and Development Application / Review Checklist requirements. If they are in conformance, the ACC will approve the development submittal. If they are not in conformance, the ACC will either deny the submittal or approve it with conditions. The ACC is ultimately charged with keeping and implementing the Master Plan’s vision for the district.

**DEVELOPER RFPS –** The City should create and distribute a Request for Proposals (RFP) for developers to redevelop two key city-owned parcels: the City Parking Lot and the former Dicon Lot. Both of these lots are owned by the City of Ralston, and could be easily redeveloped with contextual missing-middle infill development projects. The goal is to stimulate new market rate development within the district that will add rooftops and activity to the area, thereby acting as a catalyst for additional new development.

**RETAIL STRATEGY –** A number of the retail bays within Downtown Ralston are either vacant, used for storage, or filled with marginal uses. In this condition, they are doing very little to stimulate activity and/or help achieve the vision for downtown Ralston. In order to address this, the City and/or Chamber should develop a Retail Strategy that will help transition these bays into productive uses that will attract visitors to the district. This could be as simple as working with property owners and offering the bays to artists on a temporary basis for use as studio or gallery space, to helping property owners clean out and market their bays for new tenants, all the way to selling the buildings and redeveloping them with different uses. The goal is to build on the synergy created by the Developer RFP’s, and create a catalyst for additional activity and development.

**DISTRICT PARKING –** As new development begins to occur within the Downtown and Hinge area, it will be necessary to address parking needs. Instead of requiring parking on a project-by-project basis, which leads to an over-abundance of parking that detracts from street-level activity, the City should establish a District Parking Policy. This policy should look at shared-parking opportunities, as well as providing both on-street solutions and strategically located district parking solutions. A new district parking lot located along Burlington Street could strategically provide both employee and visitor parking, all within easy walking distance of Downtown Ralston.



**IMPLEMENTATION TOOL KIT** – The City of Ralston should utilize all of the available tools in its redevelopment tool kit. These include the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), inclusion of the district within an Opportunity Zone, and a variety of potential funding mechanisms, each of which is described below.

**TIF** – Tax Increment Financing is a public financing method that is used as a subsidy for redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community development projects. It is typically utilized for financing public infrastructure such as streets, sewer and water systems, street lighting, and sidewalks.

**OPPORTUNITY ZONE** – Opportunity Zones are a new community investment tool established by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to encourage long-term investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide. Opportunity Zones provide a tax incentive for investors to re-invest their unrealized capital gains into dedicated Opportunity Funds. The Downtown and Hinge district is included in an Opportunity Zone.

**SMALL LOAN FUND (CDBG)** – This fund, administered by MAPA, provides assistance for façade grants, storefront renovation funding, and rehab assistance. TIF and/or contributions from private property owners can be utilized as a match.

**CITY DONOR FUNDING** – The City of Ralston received a significant amount of funding from a private donor for use within the Downtown/Hinge District. The City should explore ways to strategically use this funding for the betterment of the area. Possibilities include the following:

**REVOLVING LAND ASSEMBLY FUND** – Utilize a portion of this funding for City or developer-led purchase of strategic redevelopment parcels. Upon re-sale or development, land assembly fund would be repaid, allowing for the continued/on-going purchase of additional strategic parcels.

**FAÇADE LOAN OR GRANT FUND** – A portion of this funding could be utilized for façade loans or grants, allowing building or business owners to aesthetically enhance the exterior facades of their buildings/businesses. Grants are one-time expenses, while loans would be revolving, similar to the previous example.

**CITY PUBLIC INVESTMENT** – A portion of this funding could be utilized for enhanced public amenities within the district. This could include the following:

- **URBAN PLAZAS/PARKS** – The design and construction of amenities such as the 5-Points Plaza or any of the other parks or plazas identified in the Master Plan.
- **STREETSCAPES** – The design and construction of any of the streetscapes identified in the master plan. This could be done in conjunction with the 5-Points Plaza design and construction.
- **CITY FACILITIES** – Enhancements could be made to the facades of any of the City facilities downtown, such as the Fire/Rescue Station, Police Station, or City Hall.

**RALSTON CREEK RESTORATION** – A key element of the Master Plan is the restoration of Ralston Creek. Due to its complexity, a number of potential funding sources may be pursued. These include the following:

**319 GRANT PROGRAM (US EPA)** – The Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program addresses the need for greater federal leadership to help focus state and local nonpoint source efforts. Under Section 319, states, territories and tribes may receive grant money that supports a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects and monitoring to assess the success of specific nonpoint source implementation projects.

**URBAN DRAINAGEWAY PROGRAM (PM-NRD)** – Initiated in 1987, this cost-share program was developed to address erosion and flooding problems on major urban drainageways. Completed projects are operated and maintained by their sponsors. For a project like Ralston Creek, there is a 60% - 75% cost share possibility, with a \$1 million cap.

**WATER SUSTAINABILITY FUND (NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION)** - The Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) is a source of financial support to help local project sponsors achieve the goals set out in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2-1506. Of the annual funding appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature, ten percent is designated by statute for projects separating storm and sewer water. The NRC also reserves ten percent for projects requesting \$250,000 or less.

**BROWNFIELDS GRANT FUNDING (US EPA)** - EPA's Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, planning, revolving loans, environmental job training, technical assistance, training, and research. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA's Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfield activities. Potential programs to look into include the following:

**ASSESSMENT GRANTS** – These grants provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach.

**AREA-WIDE PLANNING GRANTS** - These grants provide funding to communities to research, plan and develop implementation strategies for cleaning up and revitalizing a specific area affected by one or more brownfield sites.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, TRAINING, AND RESEARCH GRANTS** – These grants provide funding to organizations to conduct research and to provide training and technical assistance to communities to help address their brownfields challenges.



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## DESIGN GUIDELINES

Block Structure  
Land Use  
Building Heights  
Building Setbacks  
Parking and Access  
Special Requirements





# DESIGN GUIDELINES

## BLOCK STRUCTURE

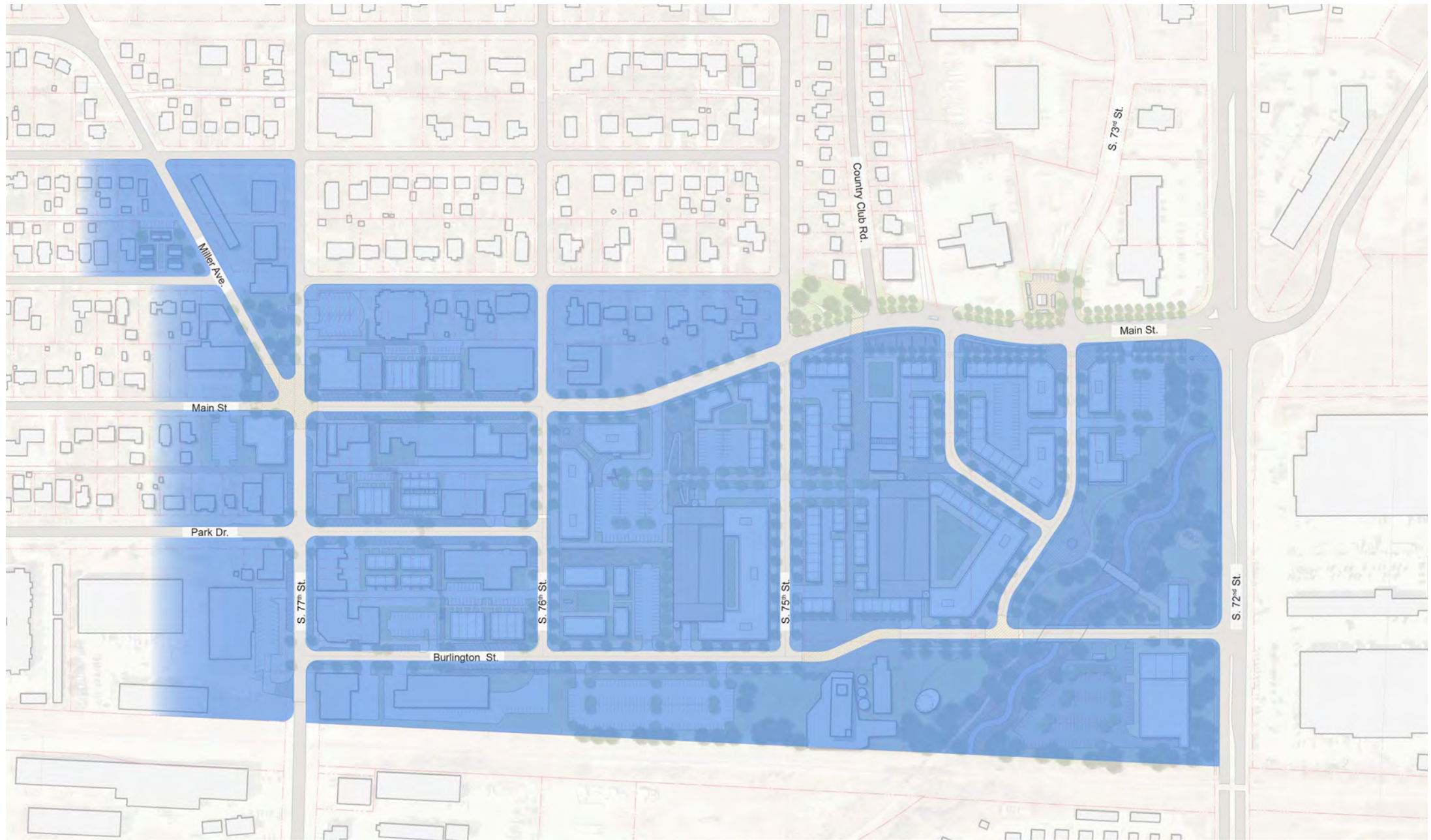
The Downtown and Hinge Area are based on a modified street grid, which results in a generalized block structure that is generally scaled to the pedestrian and can accommodate a variety of uses and building types. The block structure is more fine-grained in Downtown Ralston, and becomes less defined in the Hinge area. As a result, several new streets are proposed for the Hinge area. These streets are designed to break up the large industrial parcels, resulting in the establishment of a tighter street grid / block structure on the east side of the district. It will be important to provide the recommended east – west pedestrian connections through these new blocks in order to further break down the scale of the blocks.





**KEY:**

Development Blocks





# DESIGN GUIDELINES

## LAND USE

In order to create a true pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood, the study area must be able to accommodate a number of land uses in order to achieve the vision of becoming a walkable urban neighborhood. This idea goes against the conventional planning ideals of the last half-century where uses were separated from each other into their own individual districts. This plan aims to encourage the development of a diversity of uses that will be integrated not only horizontally, but vertically within the same structure.

A considerable portion of the neighborhood is planned for residential uses, including multi-family structures (owner and renter occupied), missing middle typologies (4-plex, 6-plex, 8-plex, and 12-plex), and townhouses. This variety of housing allows residents to age in-place and move up or down the scale of housing based on what their life, family, and financial needs dictate. This allows for a variety of household types to be accommodated within the neighborhood, promoting a diverse community with a stable population of long-term residents of all incomes and ages rather than focusing only on a market for a single demographic group.



*Apartments*



*Apartments*



*Parking Garages*



*Retail*

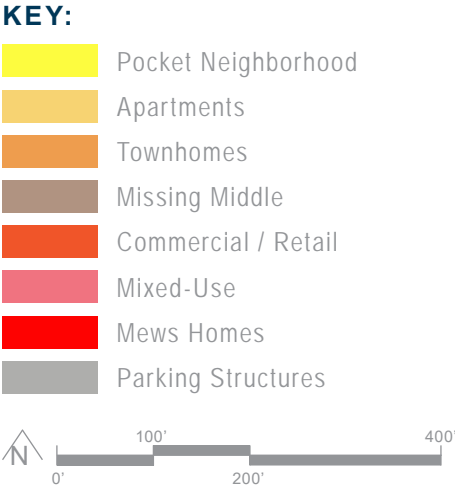


*Townhomes*



*Missing Middle*







# DESIGN GUIDELINES

## BUILDING HEIGHTS

The building heights within the study area are based on the desired urban form and density of the district, balanced with the capacity of each respective development parcel/block to be parked. If the district receives more robust transit service in the future, and less land needs to be devoted to parking vehicles, building heights/density can increase. Generally, all buildings in Downtown Ralston are within the 1-3 story range, which fits contextually with the existing building stock. East of 76<sup>th</sup> Street, in the Hinge area, buildings can vary in height based on use, with 6 stories being the tallest.



One-Story Retail Building



Two-Story Retail Building



Three-Story Mixed-Use Building



Four-Story Residential Building



Five-Story Mixed-Use Building



Six-Story Mixed-Use Building



- KEY:**
- 6 Stories
  - 4 Stories
  - 3 Stories
  - 2.5 Stories
  - 2 Stories
  - 1 Story





# DESIGN GUIDELINES

## BUILDING SETBACKS

Guidelines for building setbacks help guarantee the appropriate placement of buildings within the public realm. This helps to ensure that the interface between the buildings, sidewalk, and street are detailed appropriately. Within Downtown, most of the buildings should have no setback and front onto the property line/sidewalk. A 5' setback is allowed to account for desired building projections, such as canopies and/or balconies, or for different building types such as townhomes. Buildings within the Hinge area will have a greater diversity of setbacks. Mews homes are unique in the fact that they front directly onto an open pedestrian corridor that varies in width. Buildings with park frontage can vary based on circumstances, but should generally be placed as close to that property line as possible in order to help “enclose” the open space.



Example of a building with no Setback



Example of a building with no Setback



Example of a building with a small Setback



Example of a building with a small Setback



Example of a building with a large Setback



Example of a building with a medium Setback



Example of a building with a medium Setback

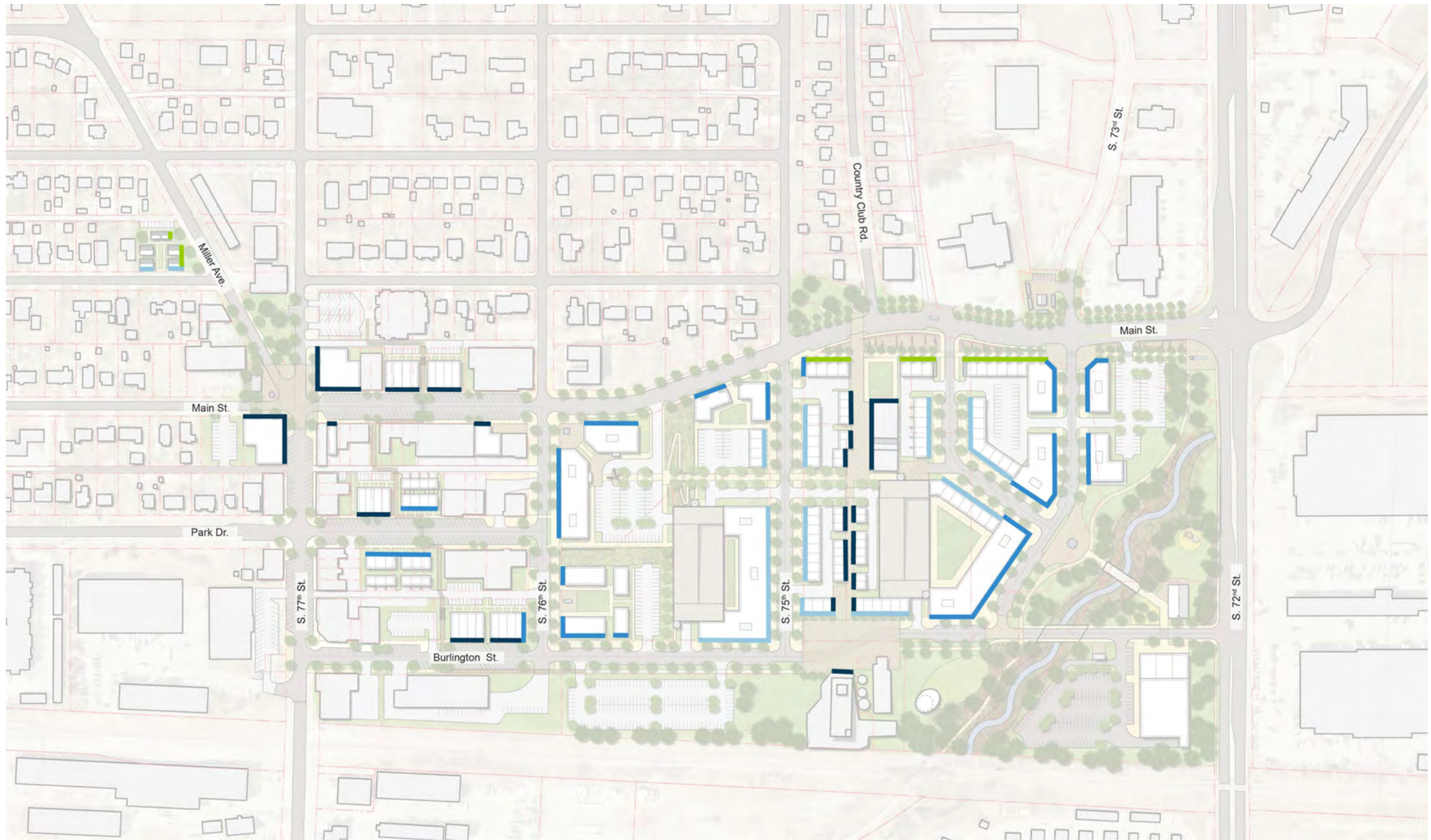


Example of a building with a large Setback



KEY:

- 0-5'
- 0-10'
- 10-15'
- 20'+





# DESIGN GUIDELINES

## PARKING AND ACCESS

The type of parking, and how it is accessed, is critical to the proper development and success of the Hinge. Entries into off-street parking areas should be limited from the street (see section on Street Hierarchies) in order to promote a comfortable and safe pedestrian-oriented environment. The more curb-cuts that are allowed, the more unsafe and inconvenient the area becomes for pedestrians. Parking areas (both structures and lots) should always be located to the rear of their respective buildings and accessed by alleys in order to shield them from view and to improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood. On-street parking should be provided whenever possible to activate the street and provide a safety buffer for pedestrians walking along sidewalks.



Interior Parking Structure



Interior Parking Lot



On-street Parking



On-street Parking



Detached Townhouse Parking



Tuck-under Townhouse Parking



**KEY:**

- Structured Parking
- Tuck-Under Private Parking
- On-Street Parking
- Public Surface Lots
- Private Surface Lots
- Alleys / Access

0' 100' 200' 400'





# DESIGN GUIDELINES

## SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

The master plan is designed to maximize the pedestrian experience and visually articulate relationships between important buildings and public open spaces through axial views, terminated vistas, and enhanced facades. The relationship between terminated vistas and axial views is direct, whereby each axial view corridor is terminated by a vertical element. These elements can include architectural elements, statues, fountains, and public art. To create a more compelling public realm, visually significant building facades shall be designed to respond to functional and aesthetic cues. Important corners, as well as facades facing onto public open spaces, should receive special architectural recognition, and include elements that distinguish them from other buildings within the plan. The required storefronts / retail frontages require that the buildings provide a storefront at sidewalk level along the length of the façade shown. These storefronts should be no less than 70% glazed in clear glass, and shaded with a canopy overhanging the sidewalk. All street-facing buildings should be required to have a minimum level of architectural treatment; however, higher design standards should be placed on buildings that front onto key public spaces and along key streets and corners.



Enhanced Facade



Enhanced Facade



Maintained Viewshed



Maintained Viewshed



Required Storefront / Retail Frontage



Axial View / Terminated Vista and Public Art



Axial View / Terminated Vista and Public Art

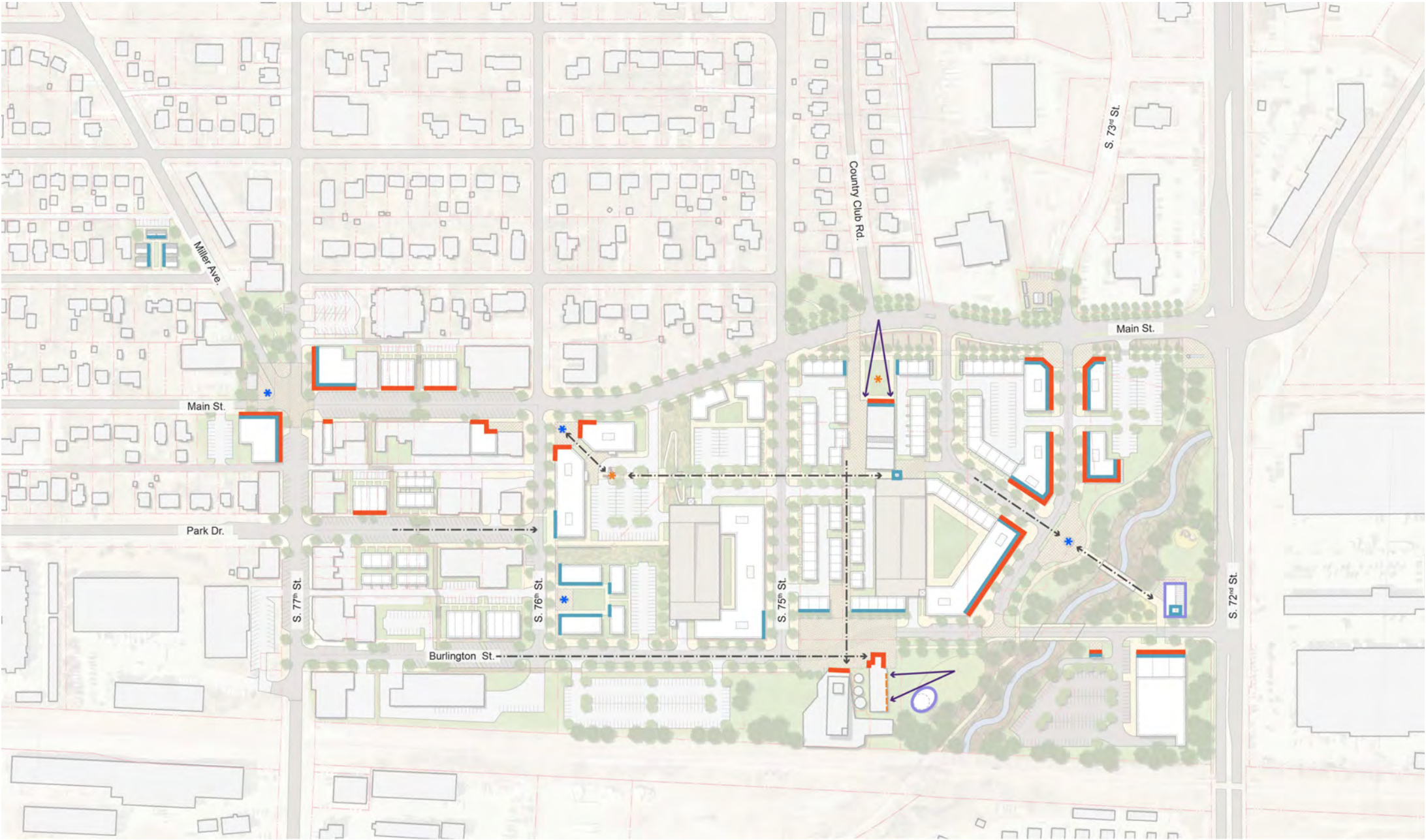


Required Storefront / Retail Frontage



KEY:

- Required Storefront / Retail Frontages
- Iconic Architecture
- Enhanced Facades
- Axial Views / Terminated Vistas
- Maintained Viewshed
- Public Art
- Water Feature





**RALSTON DOWNTOWN/HINGE**  
MASTER PLAN