



MLK / Reading Road Corridor

Approved by Cincinnati Planning Commission: June 6, 2014
Approved by Cincinnati City Council: September 17, 2014

Uptown Consortium & City of Cincinnati

Study

MLK/READING ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY

“The plan will provide the opportunity to proactively enhance the [MLK and Reading Road] corridor[s] from a pedestrian, residential, business and sense-of-place perspective....

[It will] create a strategy and provide tools to achieve a **mix of land uses, transportation infrastructure elements, urban design...** [and it will] guide investments that protect the existing institutions and neighborhoods from the impacts of the future highway interchange.... [The plan] should reflect the **community’s vision for a vibrant, diverse, healthy and growing mixed-use corridor** within the Cincinnati region.”

- **Uptown Cincinnati**
Request for Qualifications, 2012

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Introduction

Context

This Corridor Study and Master Plan represent the culmination of eight months of collaborative work facilitated by the City of Cincinnati and the Uptown Consortium to envision and plan the future of the MLK/Reading Road Corridor within Uptown Cincinnati. Community stakeholders, including neighborhood and institutional leaders, came together to guide this work and advance the common goals of those who live, work and play in the neighborhoods of Uptown. This study builds on the existing institutional, residential, business, cultural, social and physical assets in Uptown.

With over 55,000 employees, Uptown is Southwest Ohio's second largest employment center and home to the region's center of learning and healthcare. Uptown Cincinnati is also infused with the energy of vibrant and diverse neighborhoods with a collective population of over 51,000. All told, Uptown Cincinnati is where people come to get well, stay healthy, learn, live, work and play.

The timing of this effort is intentional and coincided with two primary efforts underway in the Uptown area.

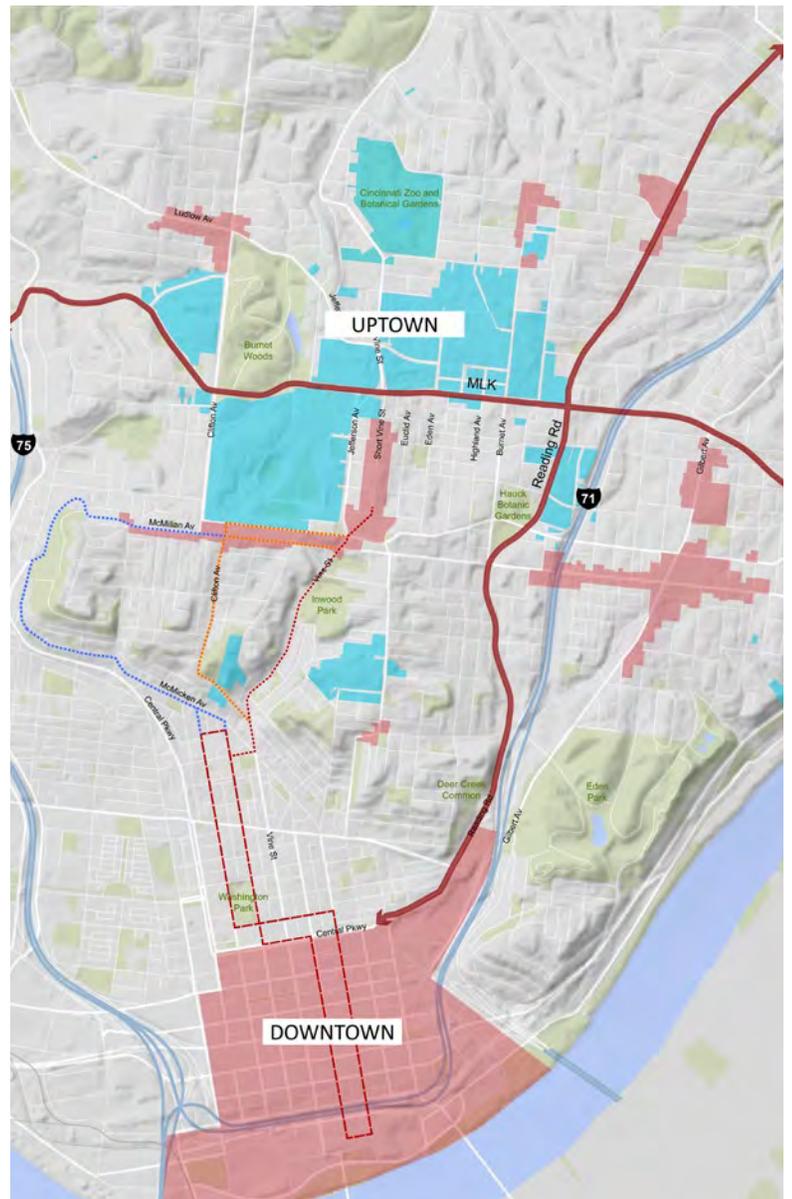
The first is the Martin Luther King interchange improvements. At the west end of Martin Luther King Drive (MLK), an improved interchange at Hopple Street is under construction. More transformational is the creation of a brand new interchange that serves the east end of MLK, which is in design by the State and City Departments of Transportation. That construction is intended to begin in summer 2014 with a completion date in fall 2016.

This second recognizes the success of the Plan Cincinnati effort that was begun in 2009 and released and adopted in fall 2012. This effort to create more livable communities throughout all neighborhoods of Cincinnati is founded in following guiding principles:

- Increase access to safe, reliable and economical transportation.
- Promote equitable and affordable housing.
- Enhance economic competitiveness through accessibility to workers and education.
- Support targeted communities for investment.
- Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.

Many factors will affect Uptown Cincinnati and this specific study area in the coming months. The interchange design process will come to completion and its implementation will begin and the City of Cincinnati will adopt new zoning policies that embrace complete streets, mixed-use, transit-oriented development and utilize principles of form-based codes. This corridor study shows how these changes can be channeled toward a new vision for Uptown. In this vision, traffic from the new interchange is seen as a generator for economic development and as a means to reinvest in the surrounding urban streetscape to better serve its users and the community.





Relation of Uptown to Downtown

Context

Uptown is a diverse and vibrant urban area made up of six neighborhoods, five major medical and research institutions, the Zoo and numerous area small businesses. It is adjacent to Downtown and is the second largest employment center in Cincinnati. In anticipation of the construction of a new interchange at the intersection of Martin Luther King (MLK) Drive and I-71, the Uptown Consortium, Inc. (UCI) initiated a strategic corridor study (The Vision) in order to plan for the impacts of the new interchange.

The vision aims to build on the existing institutional, residential, business, cultural, social and physical assets of the area in order to guide policy decisions and promote positive investment in the Uptown neighborhoods. Figure 1 & 2 (City Context & Stakeholder Maps).

The Vision was created through the collaborative effort of a broad base of stakeholders (The Steering Committee), including representatives from the City of Cincinnati (Planning, Community and Economic Development and Transportation and Engineering Departments), UCI (Cincinnati Children's Hospital, University of Cincinnati, UC Health, TriHealth and Cincinnati Zoo) and community leaders from Avondale, Clifton, Coryville, CUF, Mt. Auburn and Walnut Hills. Other participating partners included Christ Hospital, local small business owners and Metro transportation service.

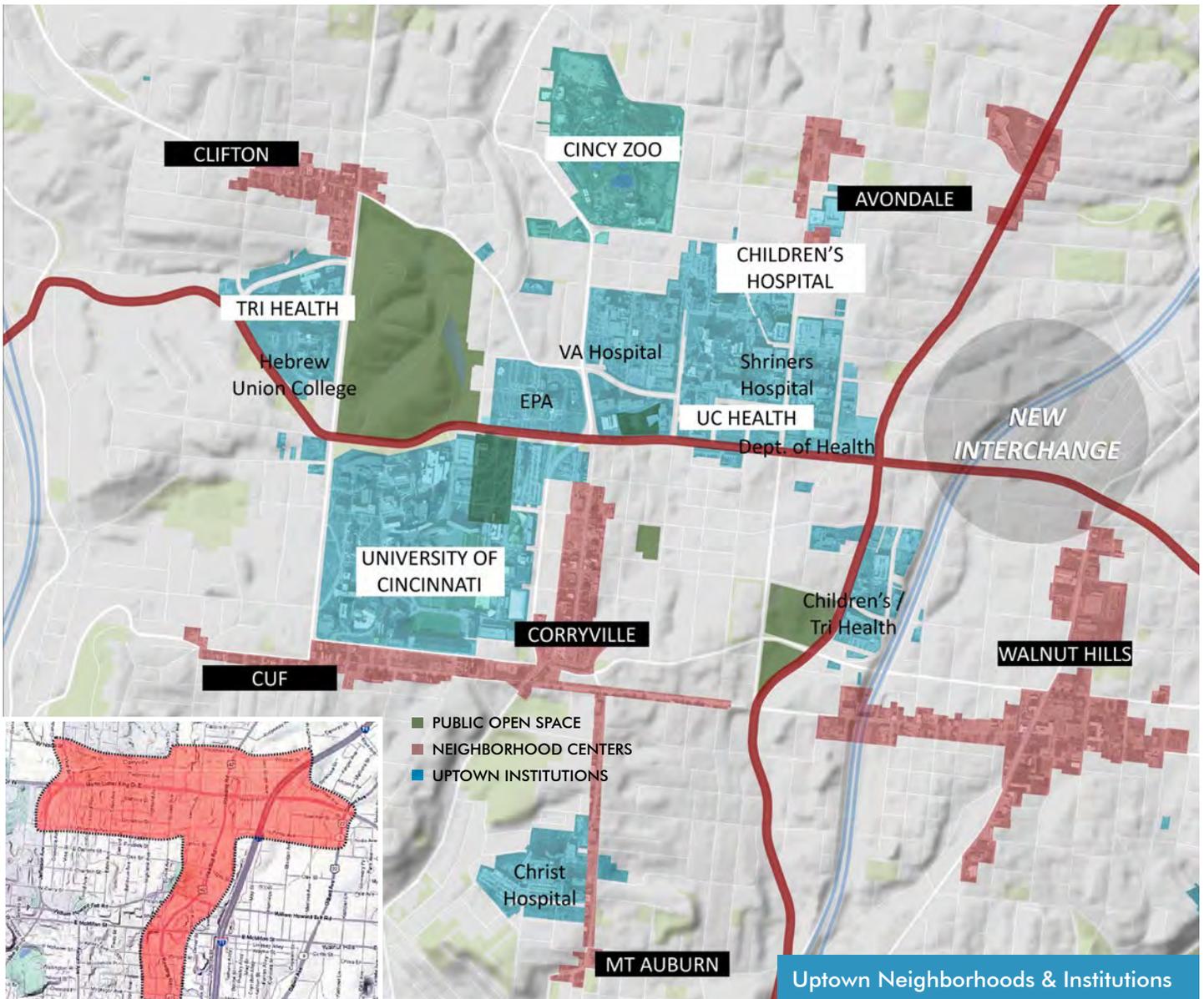


Figure 1

Figure 2

Through a dynamic process of stakeholder interviews, group working sessions and public hearings, between March and August of 2013, the Steering Committee shared their aspirations as well as their concerns for Uptown and together developed guiding principles that informed the recommendations in this report.

GBBN Architects along with **Sasaki Associates, RCLCo** and the **Community Building Institute** (The Design Team) worked closely with the Steering Committee to identify the challenges, opportunities, goals and objectives for the study area and together developed a compelling Vision.

Uptown Vision:

“The aim of this Study is to create a Vision and Implementation Strategy for the MLK and Reading Road corridors that enable the Stakeholders of Uptown to realize a Healthy, Sustainable and ‘Complete Community’”

– Uptown Vision Steering Committee

“The vision aims to build on the existing institutional, residential, business, cultural, social and physical assets of the area in order to guide policy decisions and promote positive investment...”



BURNET

HARVEY



**Guiding Principles:
Three-tiered Approach**

Transportation
Management

Planning
& Urban Design

Economic Development

Planning & Design

- Vision ·
- Street Design and ·
- Public Realm Improvements
- Urban Design Guidelines ·

Traffic Management

- Transportation & Parking ·

Economic Development

- Implementation Plan ·
 - Phasing Strategy ·
-



Guiding Principles



Figure 3

Three-tiered approach to inter-institutional and community cooperation to tackle traffic challenges: Transportation Management, economically supported Community Development and Planning & Design guides.



| Guiding Principles continued...



Figure 4

Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with the public spaces along and across the MLK and Reading corridors.



| Guiding Principles continued...



Figure 5

Establish a unified identity for the corridors and anchor the MLK intersection at Eden, Burnet and Reading as catalytic mixed-use gateways, the Core of which, is at MLK and Burnet Avenue.



| Guiding Principles continued...

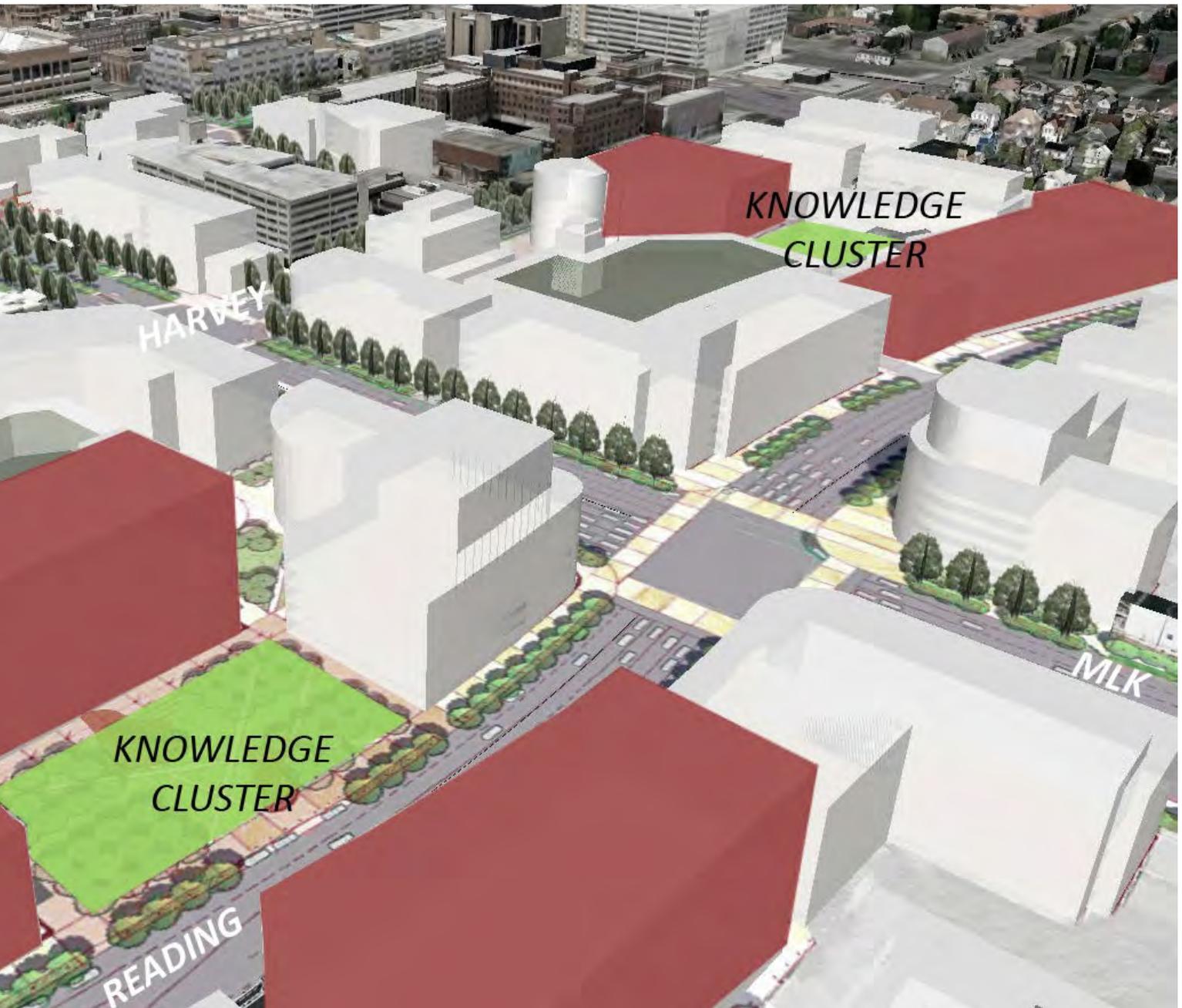


Figure 6

Increase pedestrian accessibility and visual connection to actively used open spaces to foster collegiality and neighborhood connections.



| Guiding Principles continued...



Figure 7

Define an urban street edge along the frontage of both corridors including amenities in the public realm.

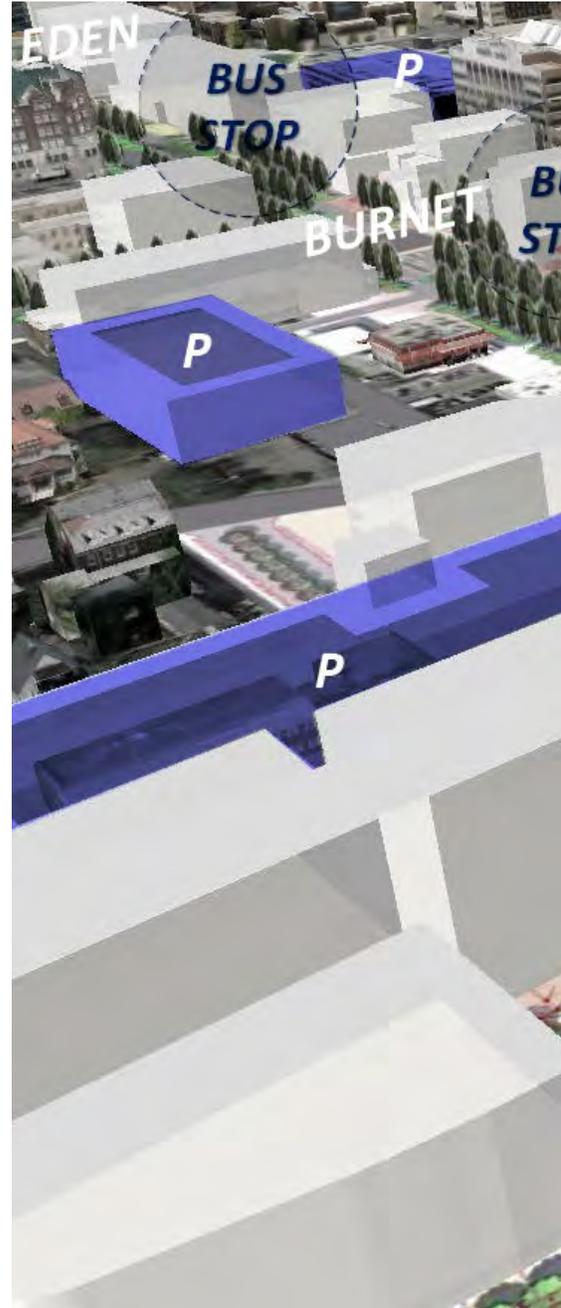


| Guiding Principles continued...



Figure 8

Stabilize existing housing fabric and Neighborhood Business Districts with appropriately scaled residential infill to increase connectivity to and around the Uptown.



| Guiding Principles continued...



Figure 9

Improve access to the Uptown through transit coordination.

Three-tiered Approach (Process Analysis & Summary)

As with any large infrastructure project planned for an urban area, the prospect of a new interchange has multiple implications for Uptown. In order to understand and address the many possible scenarios for the area, the Design Team took a holistic and integrated Three-Tiered Approach:

- Transportation Management
- Planning and Urban Design
- Economic Development

Through analysis of the projected traffic increase created by the new interchange the Design Team worked with the Executive Committee to identify the primary opportunities and challenges to achieve the aims of the Vision.

The committee considered the underutilized and deteriorated impression of the physical environment along MLK and Reading Road (dominated by surface parking and poor pedestrian connections, providing limited open space, an with and overall lack of identity) and assessed the Uptown's economic position in the region (using demographic, employment, retail and housing market data).

“Uptown is the fastest growing jobs creator in Cincinnati, producing approximately 54,000 jobs generating \$1.4B in annual salary and \$3M in annual economic impact.”

Opportunities:

- Uptown is the fastest growing jobs creator in Cincinnati, producing approximately 54,000 jobs generating \$1.4B in annual salary and \$3M in annual economic impact.
- UCI provides a unique forum for collaboration among the Institutions and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Uptown neighborhoods have many active and passionate community associations and community development corporations.
- The interchange will produce increased access (Approximately 40% increase in daily trips) to Uptown, for workers, residents and visitors.
- The combination of street improvements and coordinated traffic management can enhance the ability of existing roads to accommodate additional traffic generated by the interchange.
- Under existing zoning regulations, 6 million square feet of development potential exists within the study area on undeveloped, vacant or heavily deteriorate areas along MLK and Reading Road (with minimal tear-downs of Institutional, Commercial or Residential buildings).

Challenges:

- The project area is difficult to navigate and confusing to visitors.
- The medical district has no sense of place, arrival, or unified identity.
- The project area is dominated by surface parking and is a primarily vehicle-oriented environment.
- Pedestrians have limited access to public open space or attractive streetscapes.
- Recent construction projects in the project area have happened without over arching land use or urban design direction and therefore lack in collective community benefit.
- There is a general lack of community investment in the form of residential infill and neighborhood connectivity.
- Improved streetscape and shared curb cut access will improve safety, experience and orientation of pedestrians and motorists.
- We must meet the needs of the diverse existing population, in which the racial and socioeconomic variances within the population will be effected as a result of the revitalization. Disparities are prevalent in our underserved populations who live twenty years less than their counterparts across the Greater Cincinnati area.

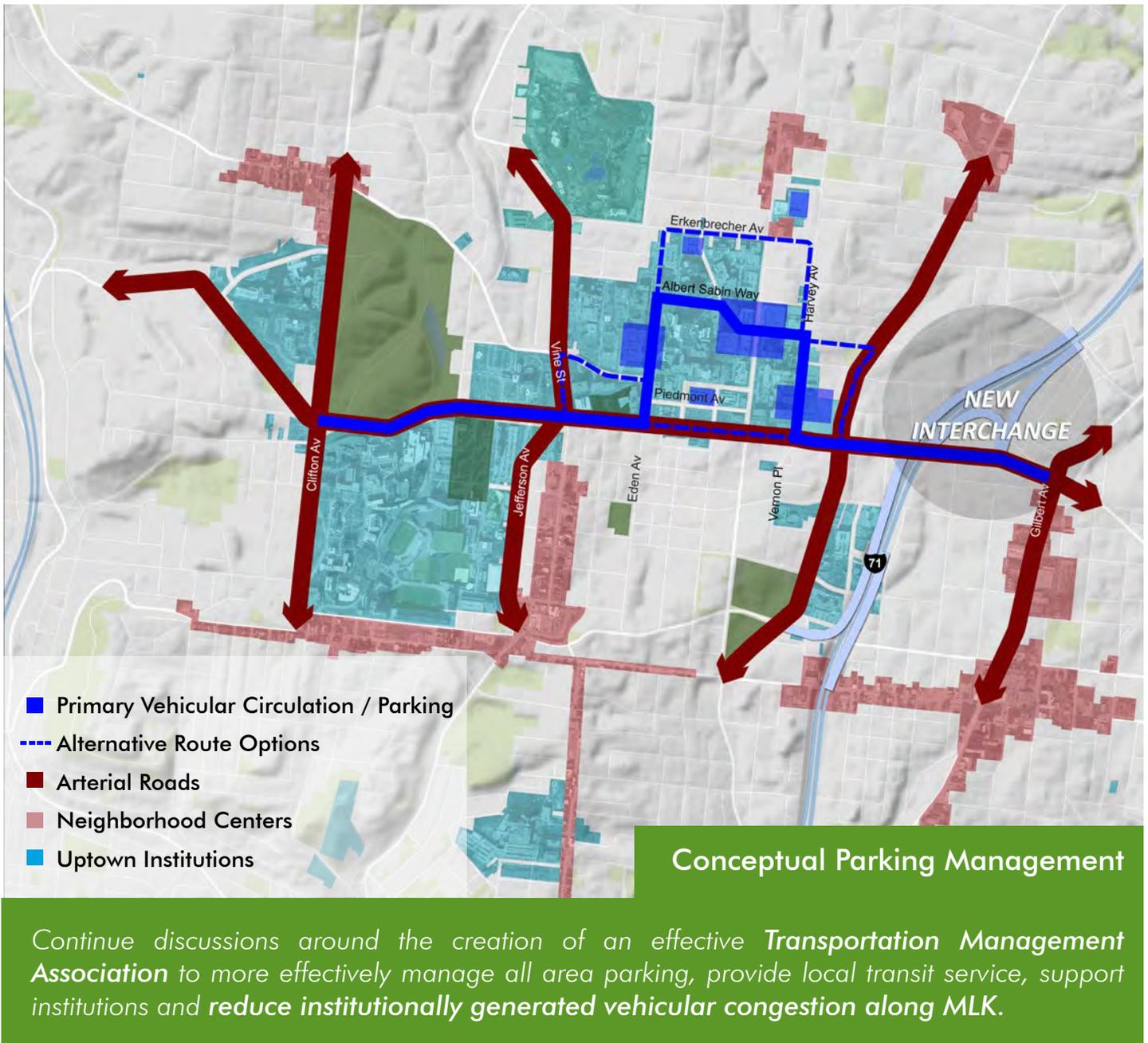


Figure 10

Transportation Management

65% of the daily vehicular trips along the MLK corridor are generated by institutional workers, contractors, or visitors in the areas North of MLK between Jefferson and Harvey Avenues. Therefore, traffic volume could be reduced with a coordinated park and ride strategy and by improved signage throughout. Figure 10.

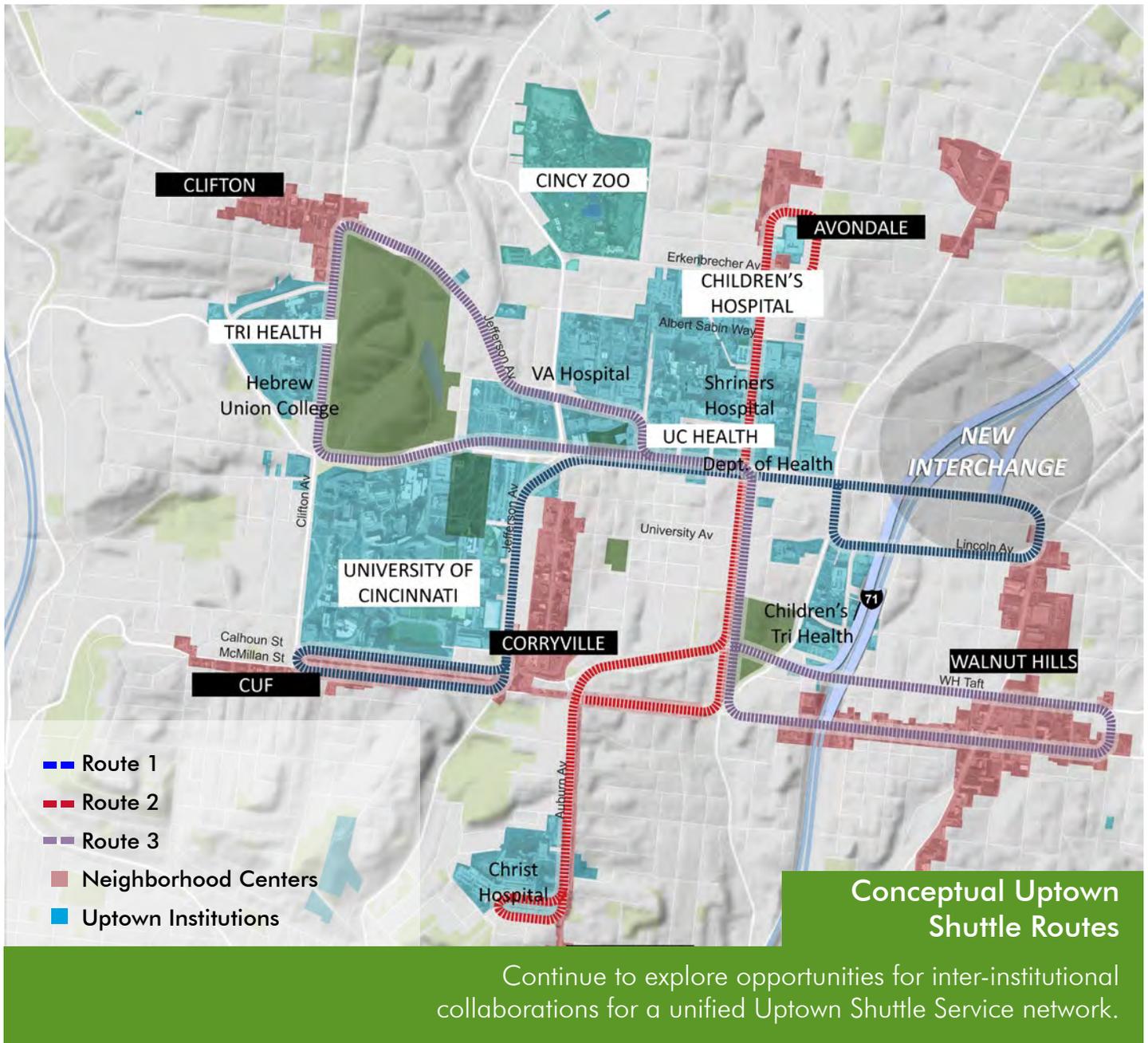


Figure 11

Key Recommendations for Improvement:

- Establish a coordinated institutional parking and transportation management strategy that includes a regional bus and local shuttle system.
- Work with Metro to site a single cross-town transfer hub near the district core (further up Burnet) and install new covered bus shelters. Figure 11.
- Expand the current environmental graphics and coordinated signage system into the project area to direct visitors unfamiliar with the area to the Institutions and Neighborhood Business Districts.
- Coordinate pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular (both public/private transportation services Figure 12,13, 14 and 15.
- See Figure 29 for proposed location of Uptown Hub, with 5-minute walk access to clustered high-density parking garages, existing and proposed Metro stops and the Institutions.

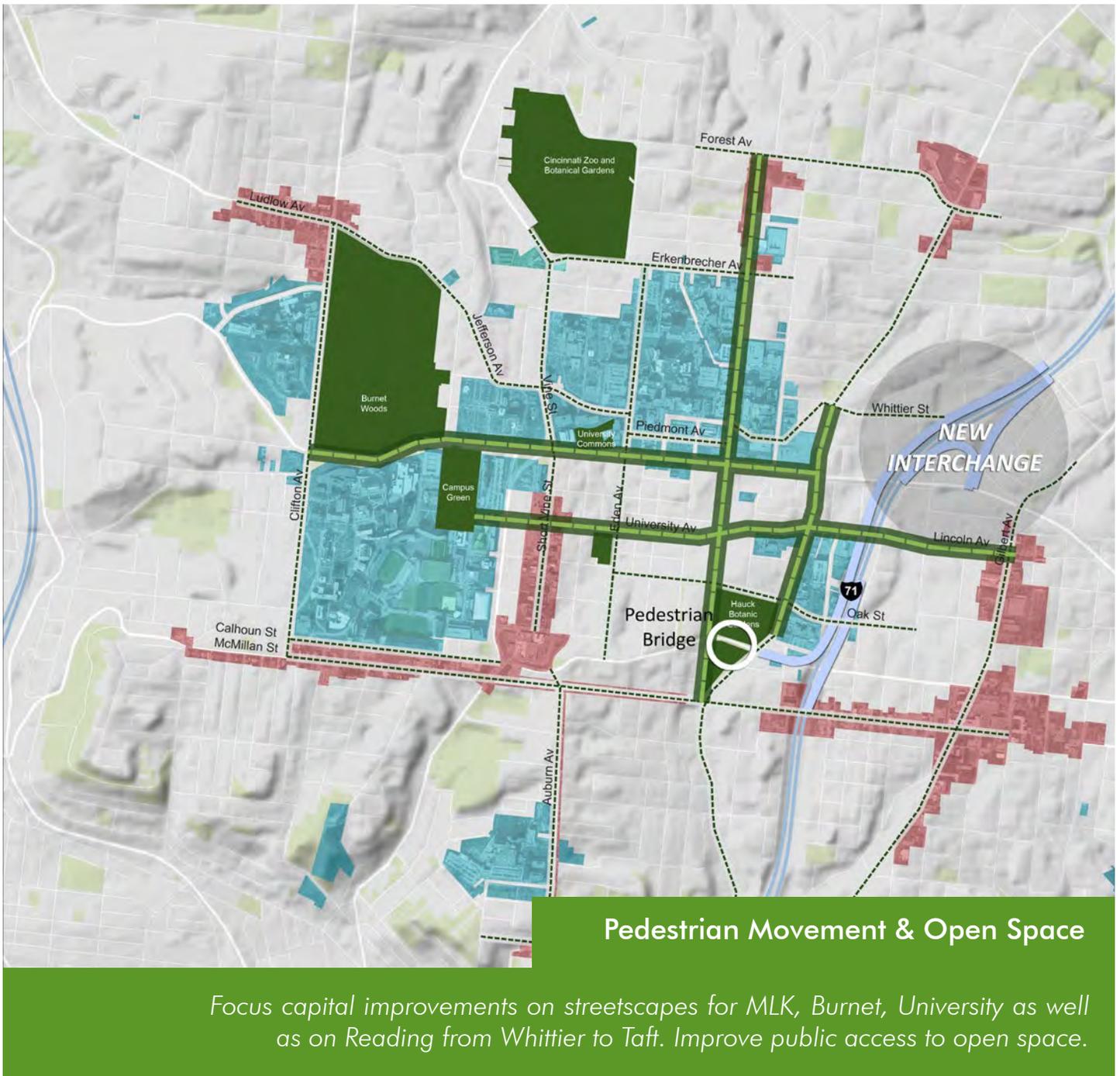
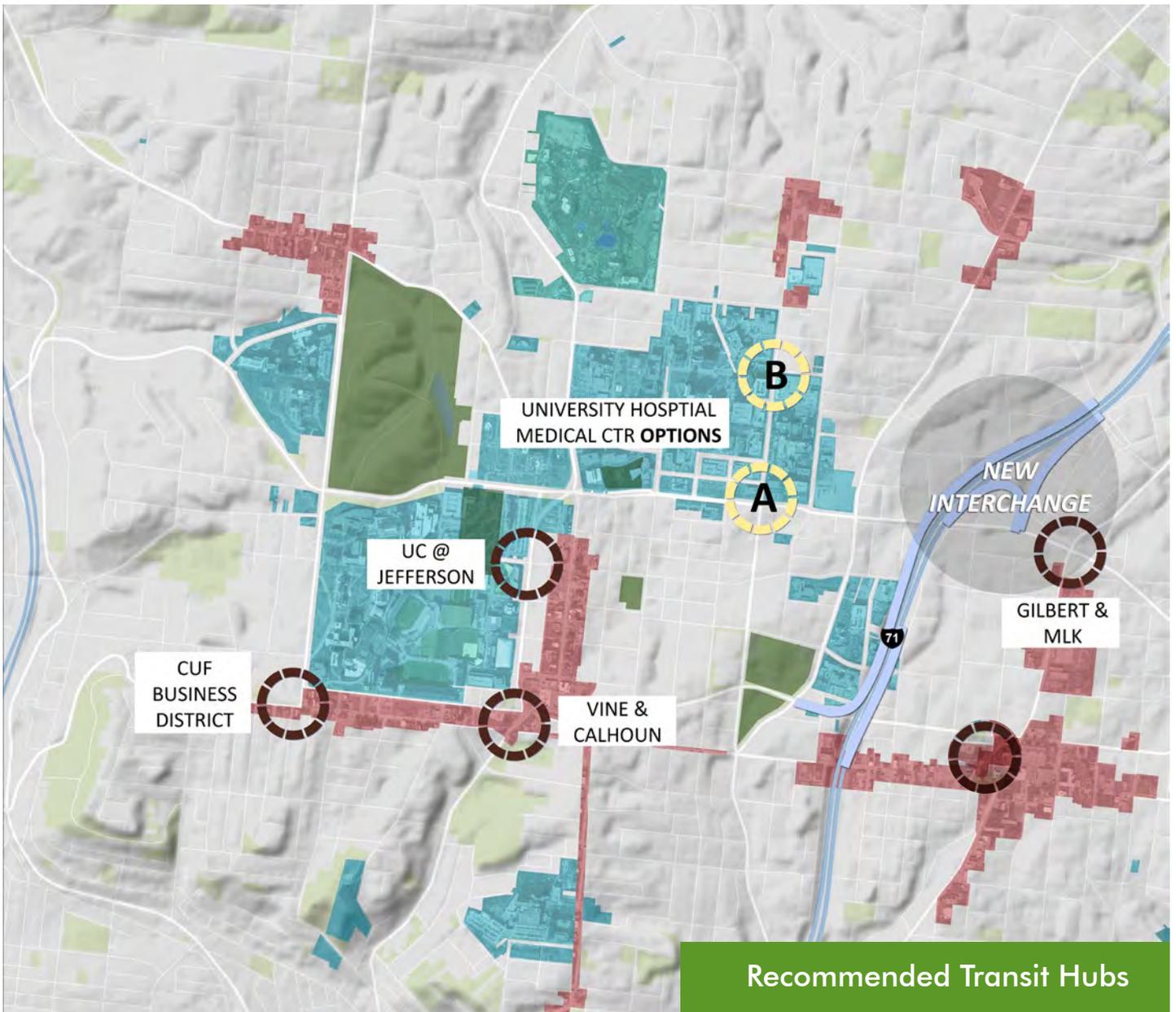


Figure 12

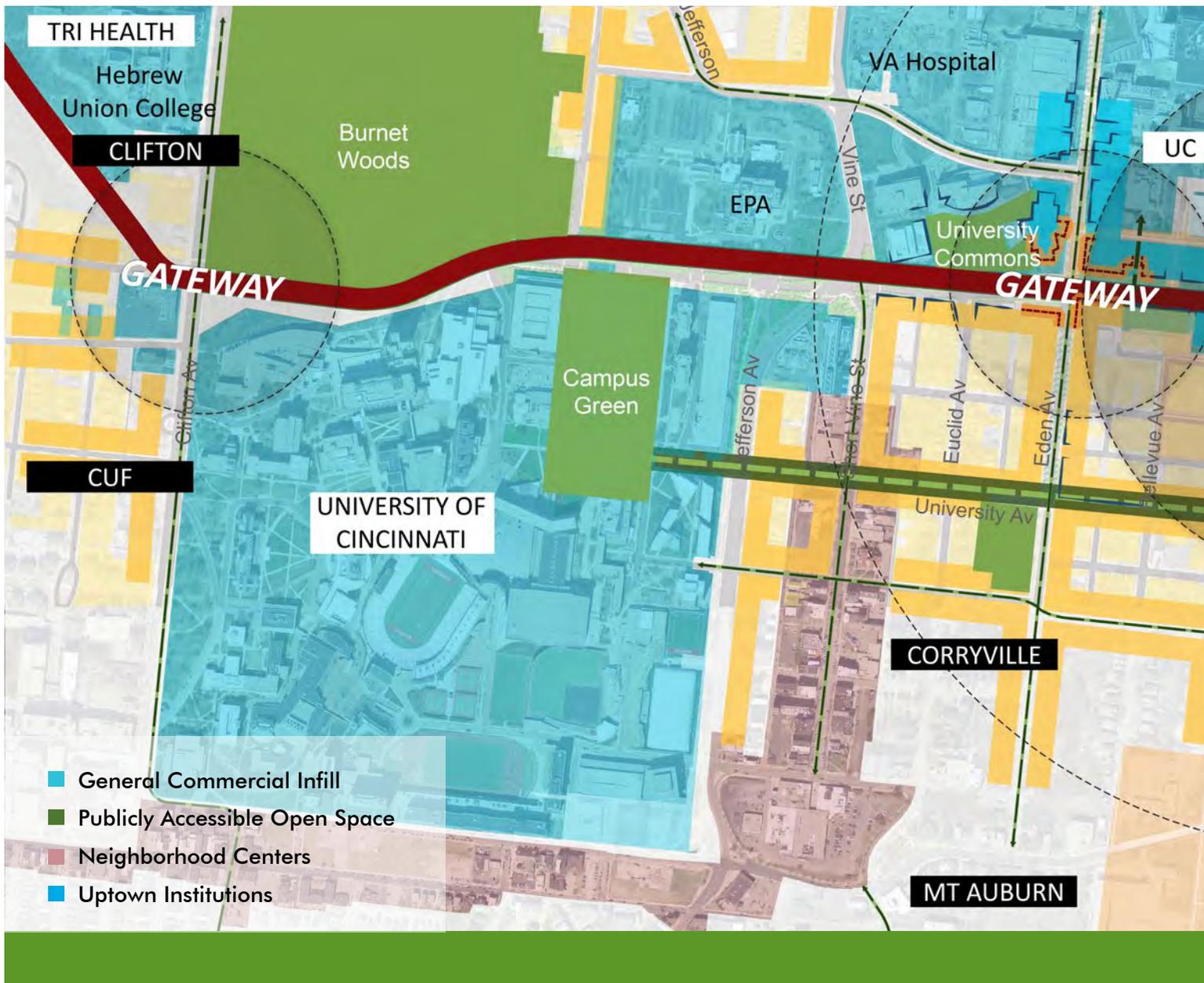
| Transportation Management continued...



Recommended Transit Hubs

Provide Uptown transit options that are better coordinated and more readily available to workers, residents and visitors with enhanced bus and shuttle transfer hubs.

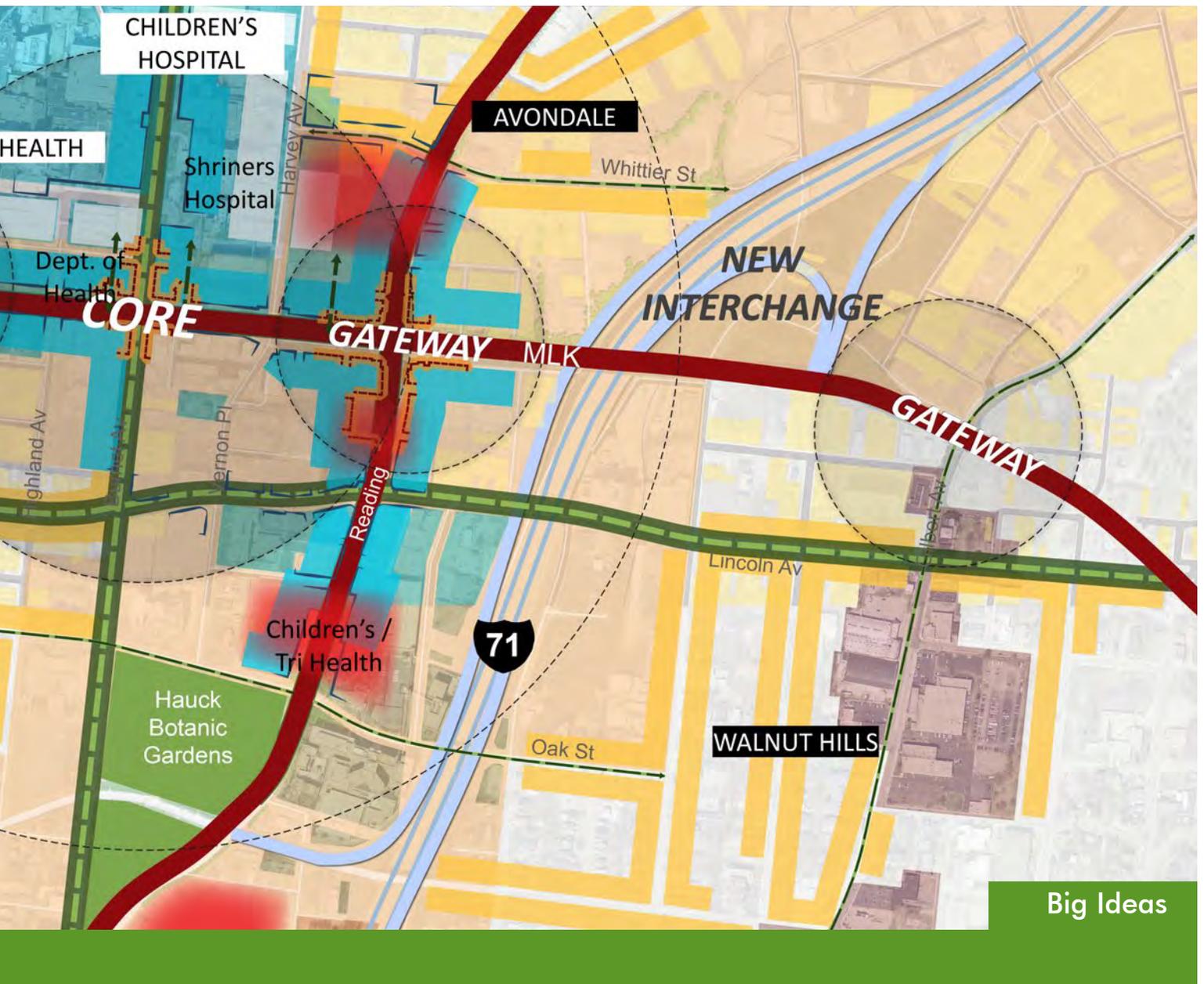
Figure 13



Planning & Urban Design

Three over arching land-use strategies were established to realize the Urban Design Vision: *Figure 16*

- Establish Mixed-Use Gateways along MLK at Eden Avenue and Reading Road and establish a Core development at MLK and Burnet Avenue as three transformative anchors for the Uptown community. Further develop knowledge clusters along Reading Road from Whittier Street to McGregor Avenue to establish identity and create walkability.
- Locate residential infill and new development in neighborhoods of viability and within a 10 minute walking radius of the existing Neighborhood Centers.
- Improve access and accessibility to public and semi-public green space with active programming and passive respite to better utilize neighborhood assets. Improve the street condition and pedestrian safety by inclusion of green edges that buffer vehicle traffic.
- Ensure future development contributes to a more structured urban street edge along MLK and the Reading Road corridors: Medical and research-based institutional development along MLK and Mixed-use innovation corridor development in support of the medical, research and innovation industries.



Big Ideas

Figure 16

| MLK Drive

The construction of the new interchange is projected to increase traffic along MLK Drive. However, through coordinated traffic management and a pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvement plan, there is a unique opportunity to re-imagine the suburban nature of the street as a coherent and urban district spine. After considering three options, the “Grand Boulevard” scheme was the preferred street design for MLK from Jefferson to the Reading Roads and requires widening the existing right-of-way by 12 feet along the Northern edge of MLK. Key components include: Figures 17-23

- 15 foot sidewalk to provide ample space for pedestrians, bike riders, business entrances and structured landscape seat-wall between sidewalk and roadway.
- 8 foot street lawn and amenities (street trees, public seating and covered bus stops).
- Three 11 foot travel lanes in both directions (with an option for street parking during off-peak hours).
- 22 foot center median that creates a unified character, aids way-finding, increases safety for crossing pedestrians and provides room for left-turn lanes as necessary.
- Signal protected Left or U-turns along MLK at street intersections or mid-block, coordinated with traffic signaling, turn lane queues and design for medians.

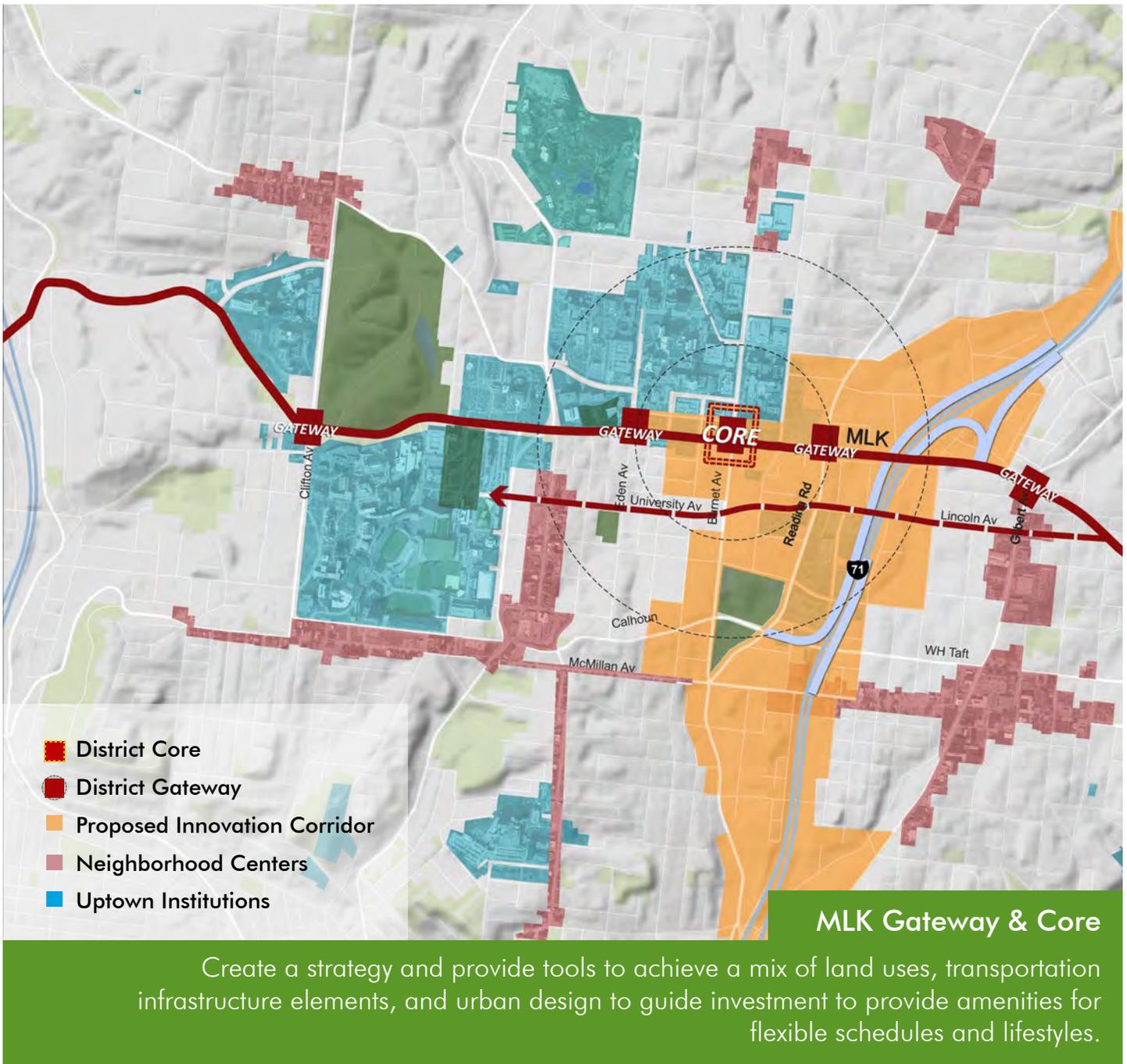
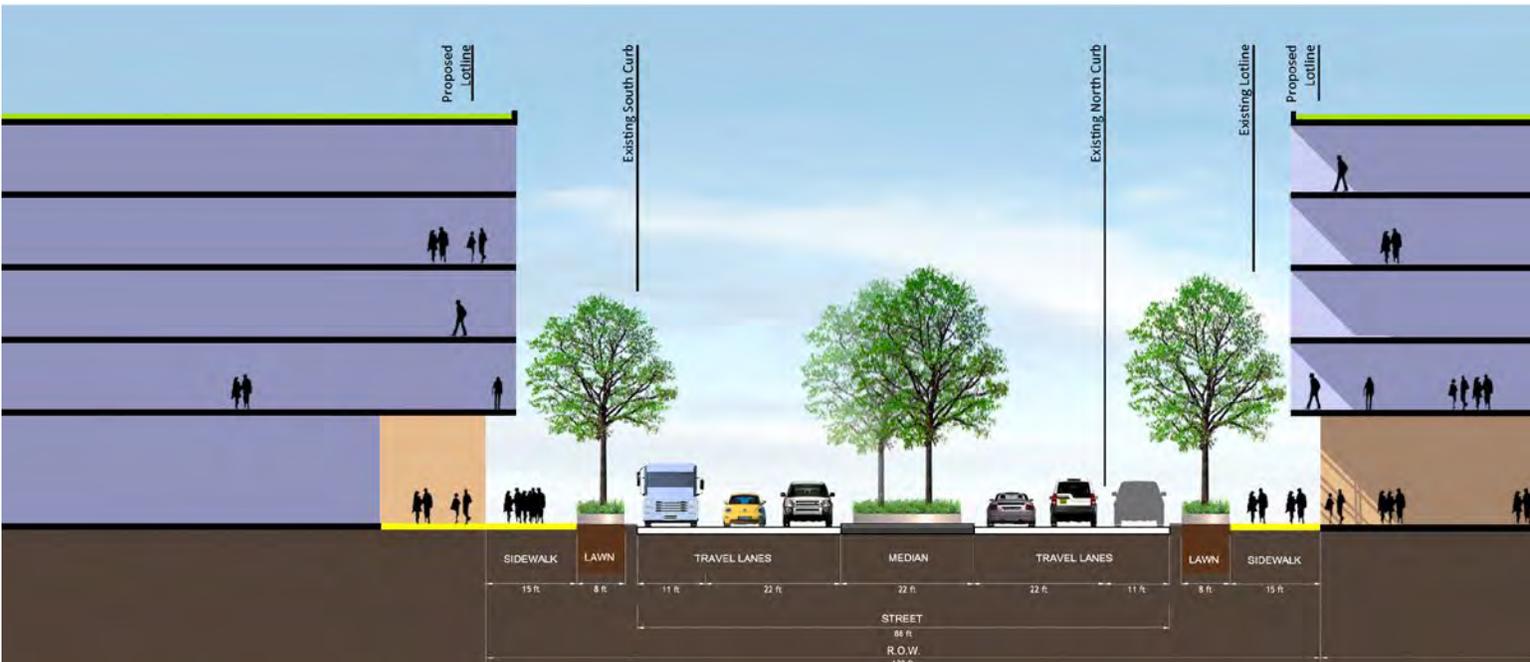


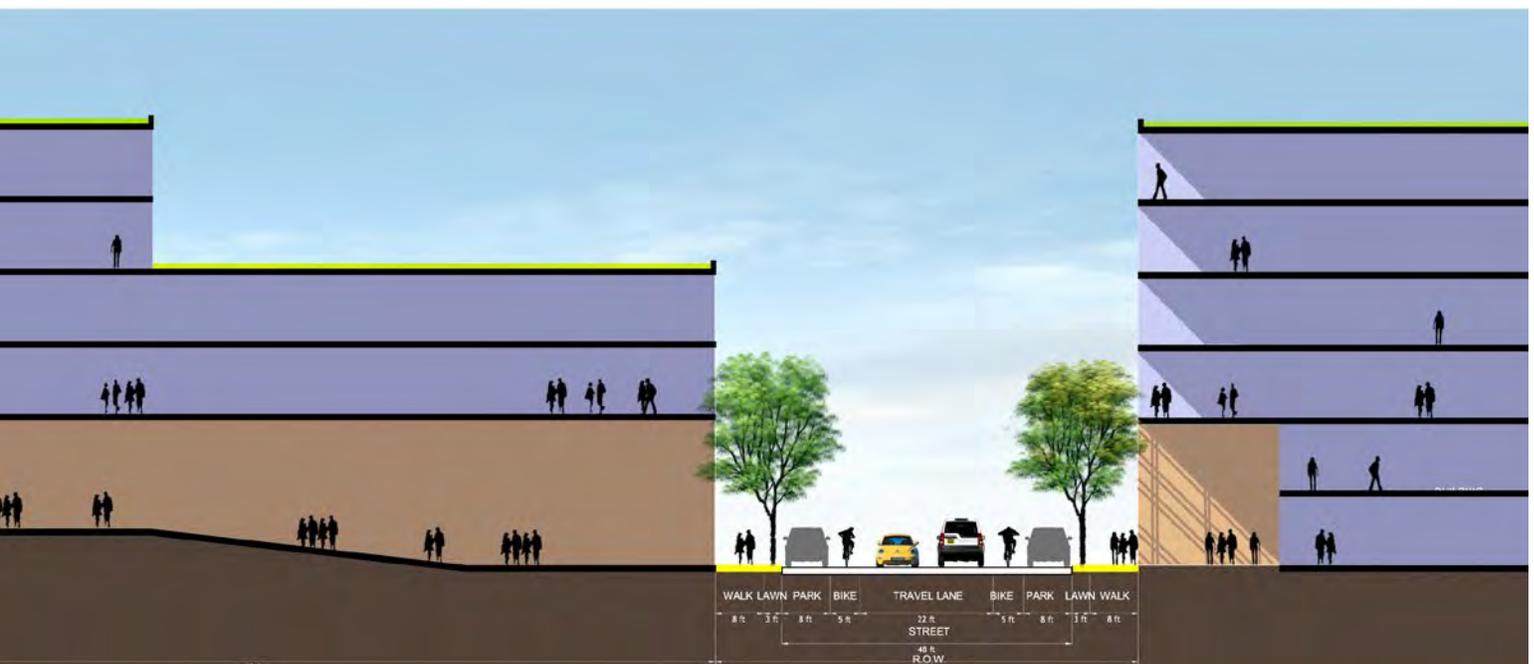
Figure 17

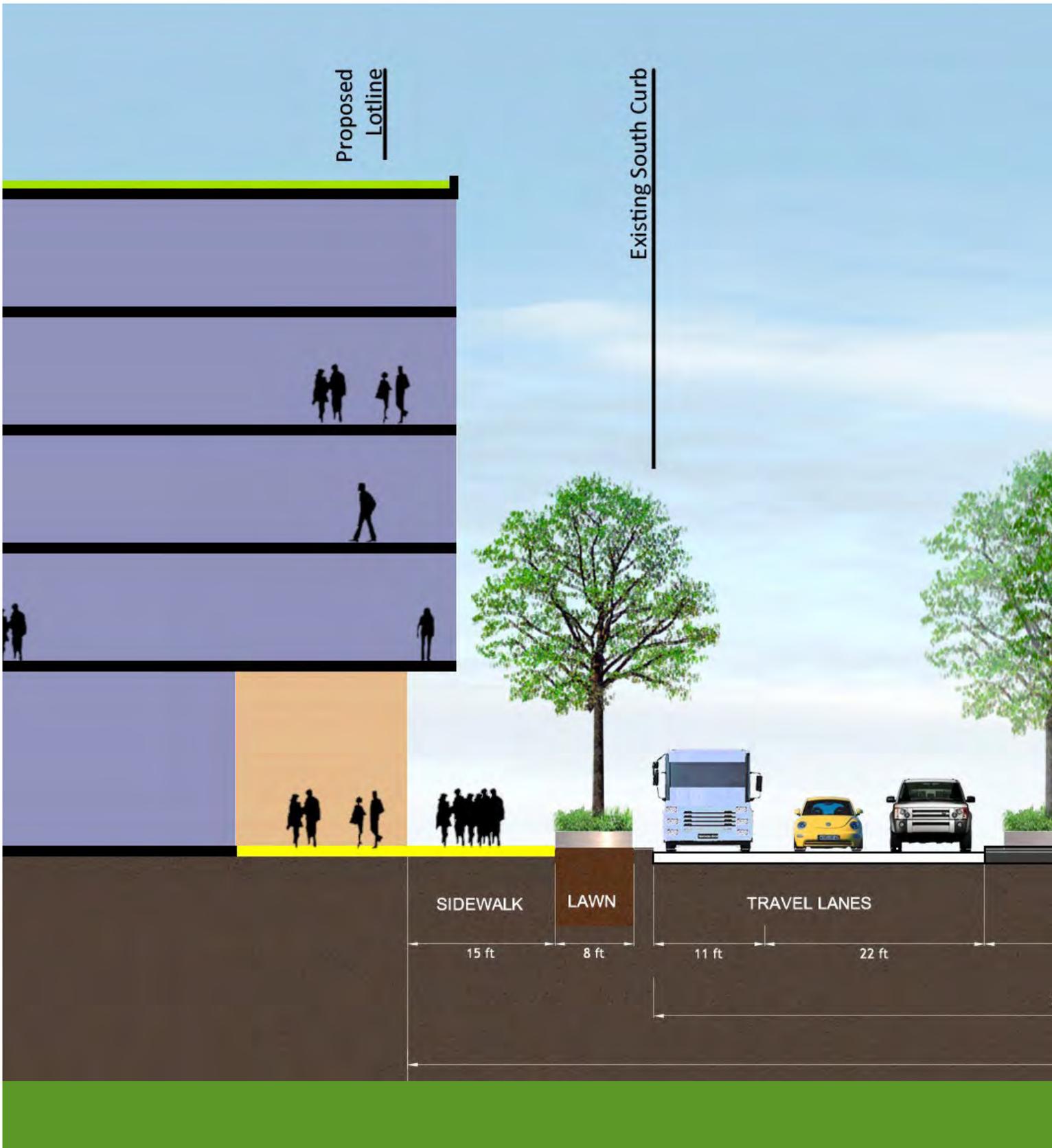


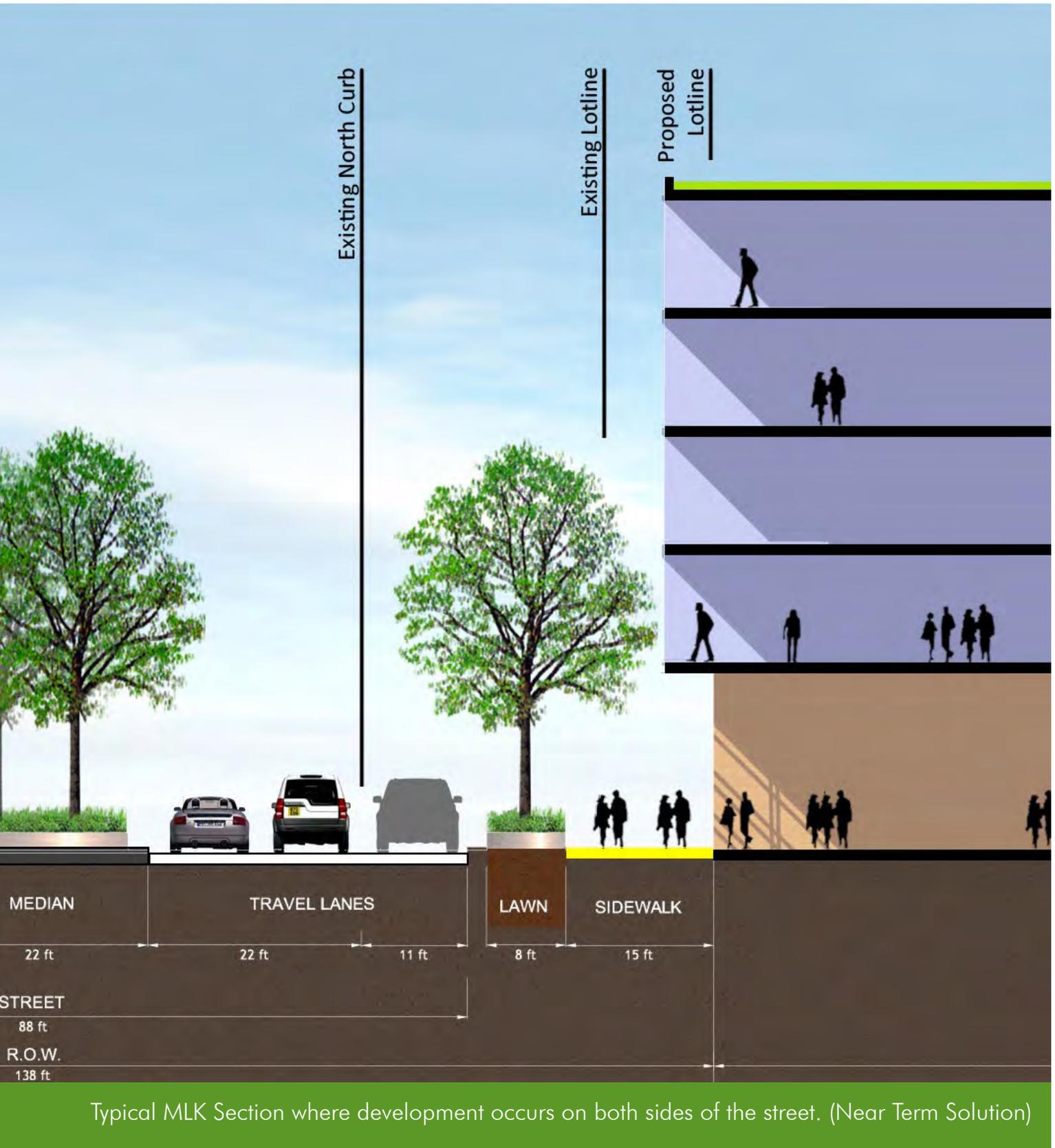


Typical MLK Section where development occurs on both sides of the street.

Figure 18

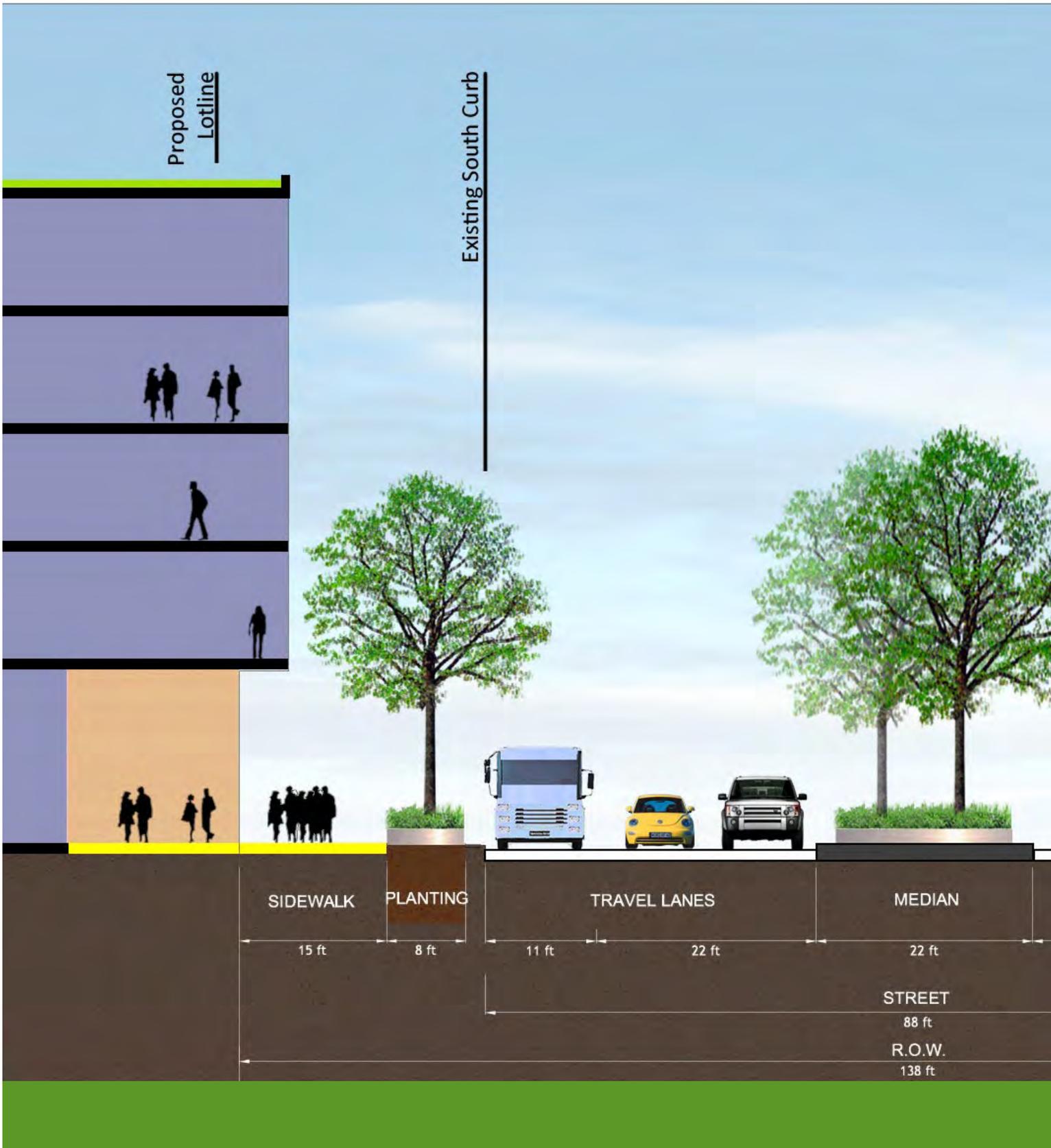






Typical MLK Section where development occurs on both sides of the street. (Near Term Solution)

Figure 19





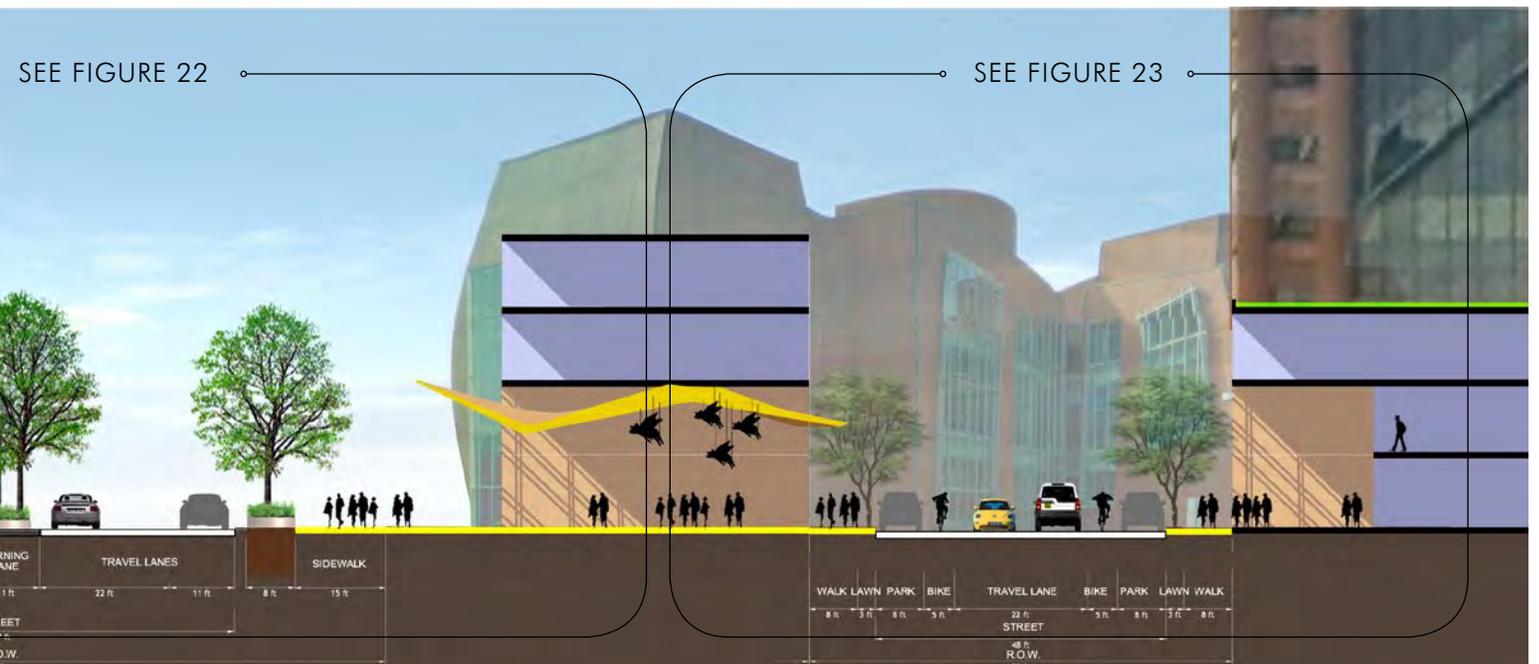
Typical MLK Section where development occurs on one side of the street. (Near Term Solution)

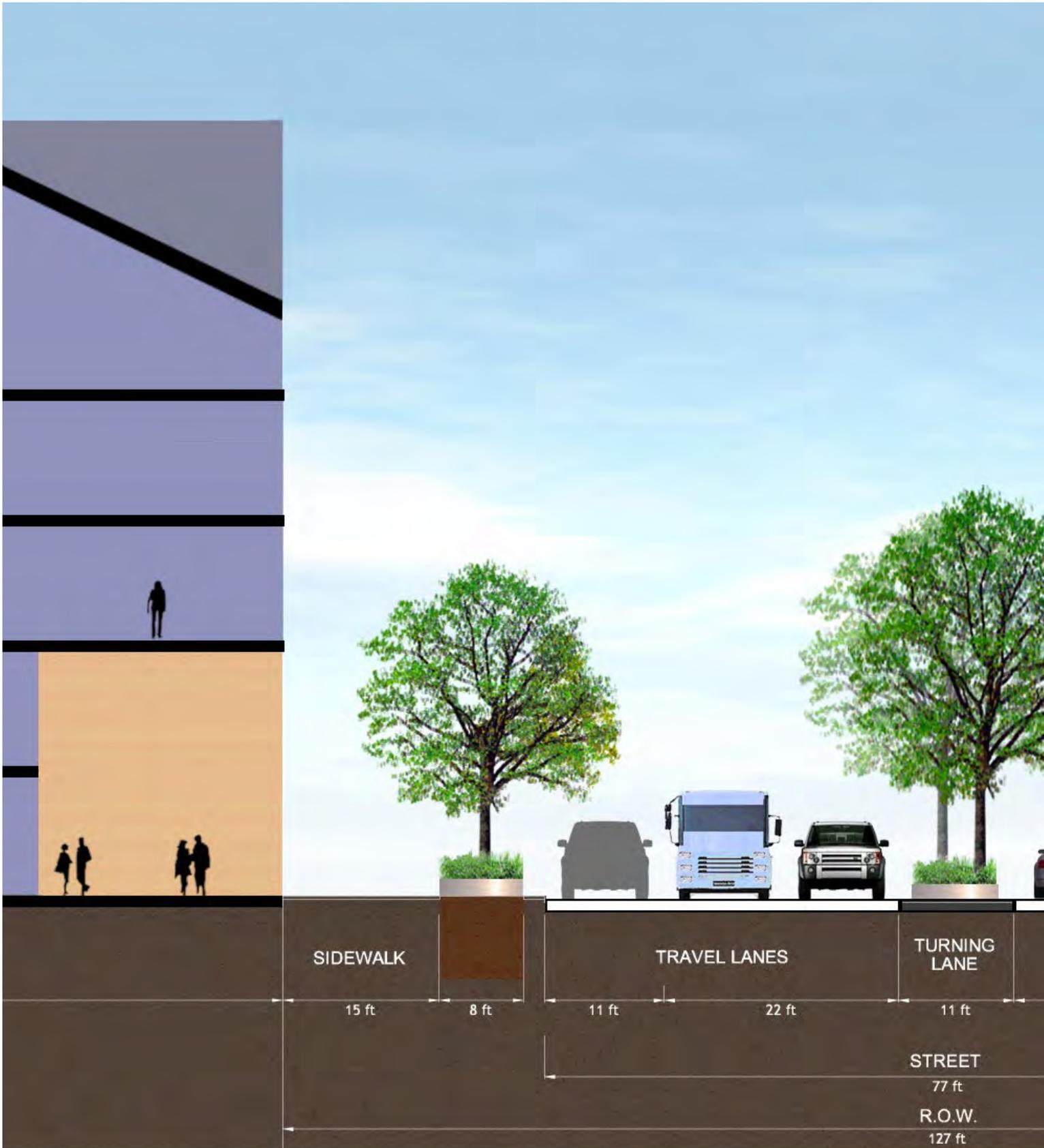
Figure 20





Figure 21





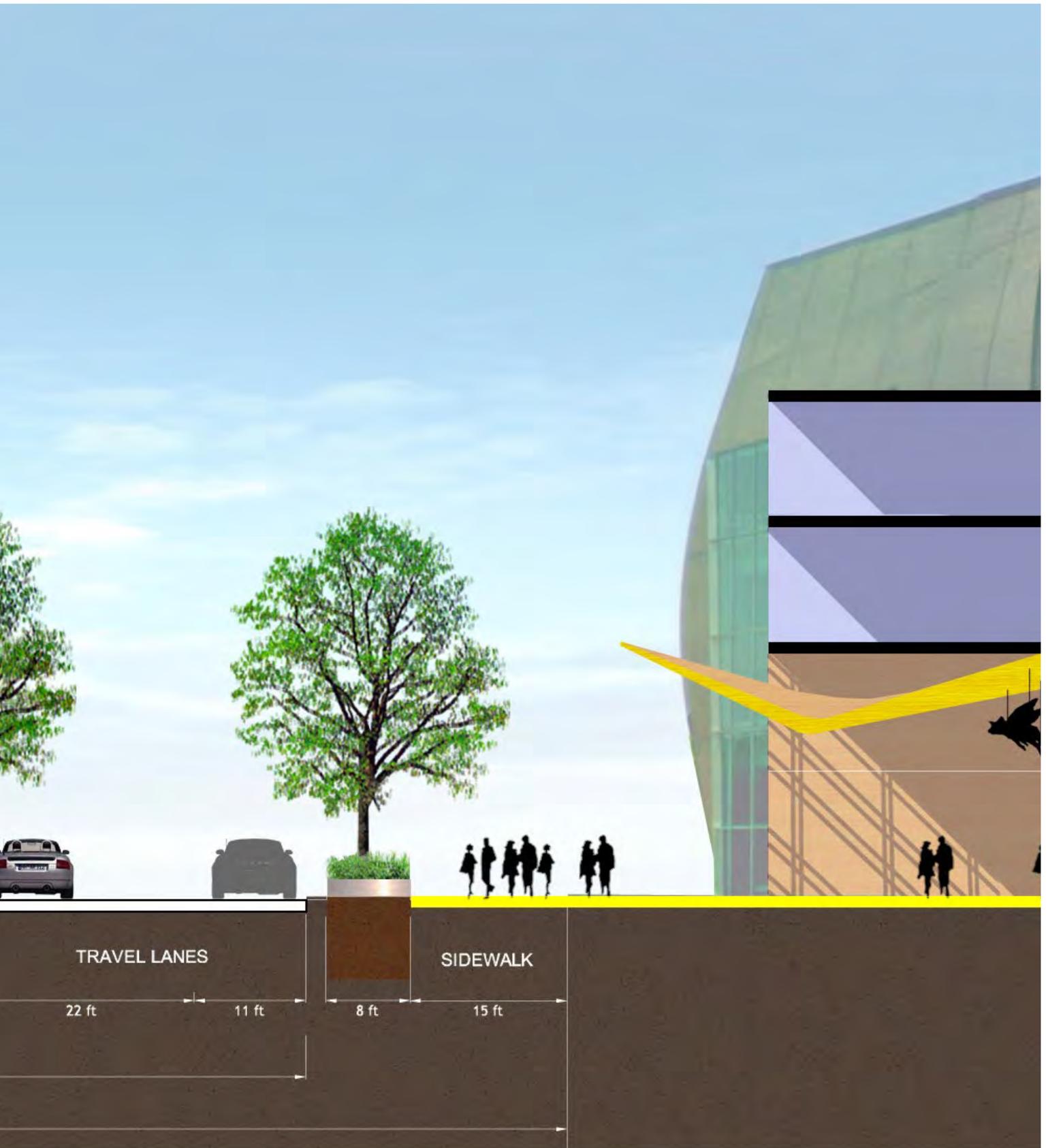
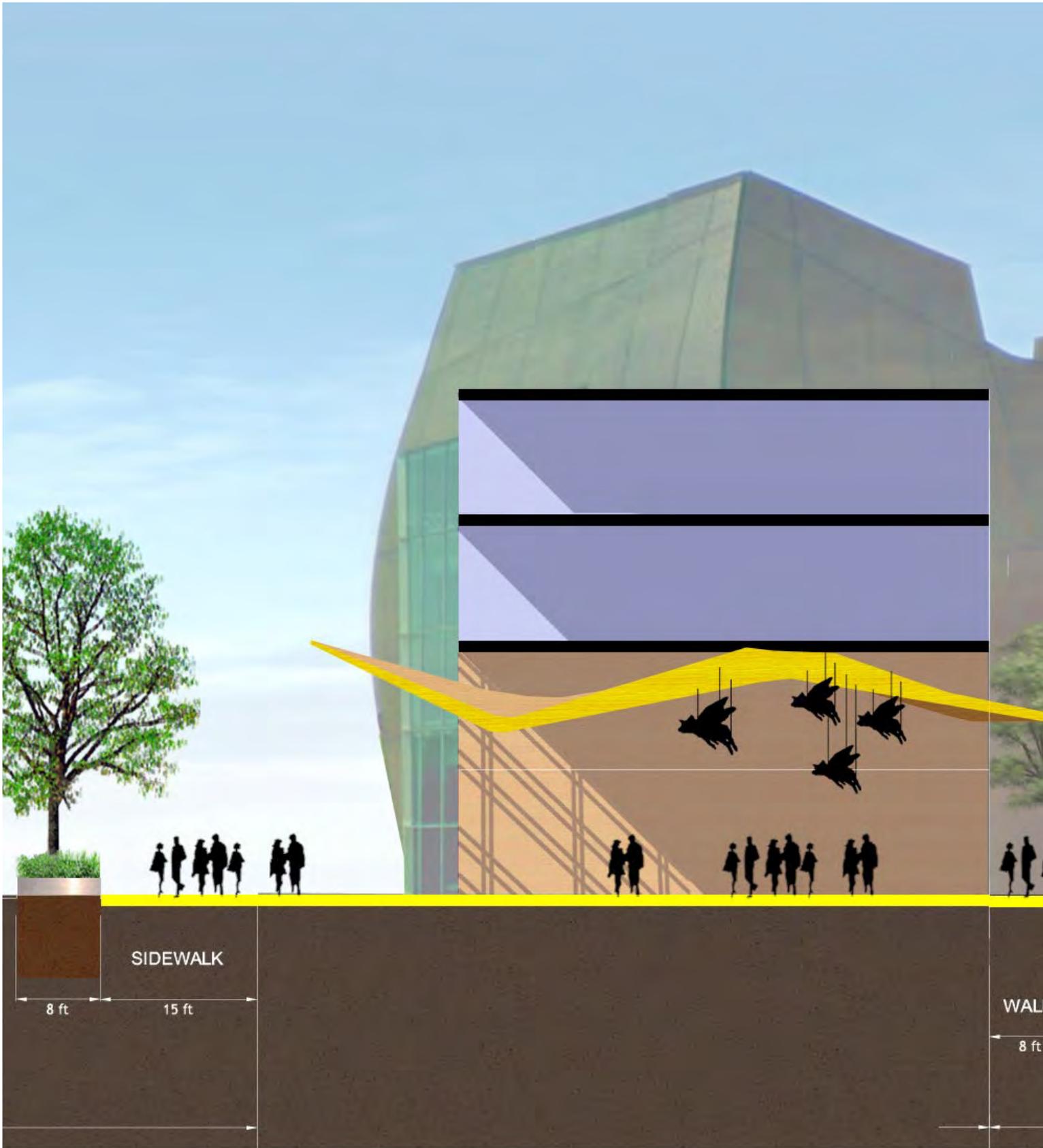


Figure 22



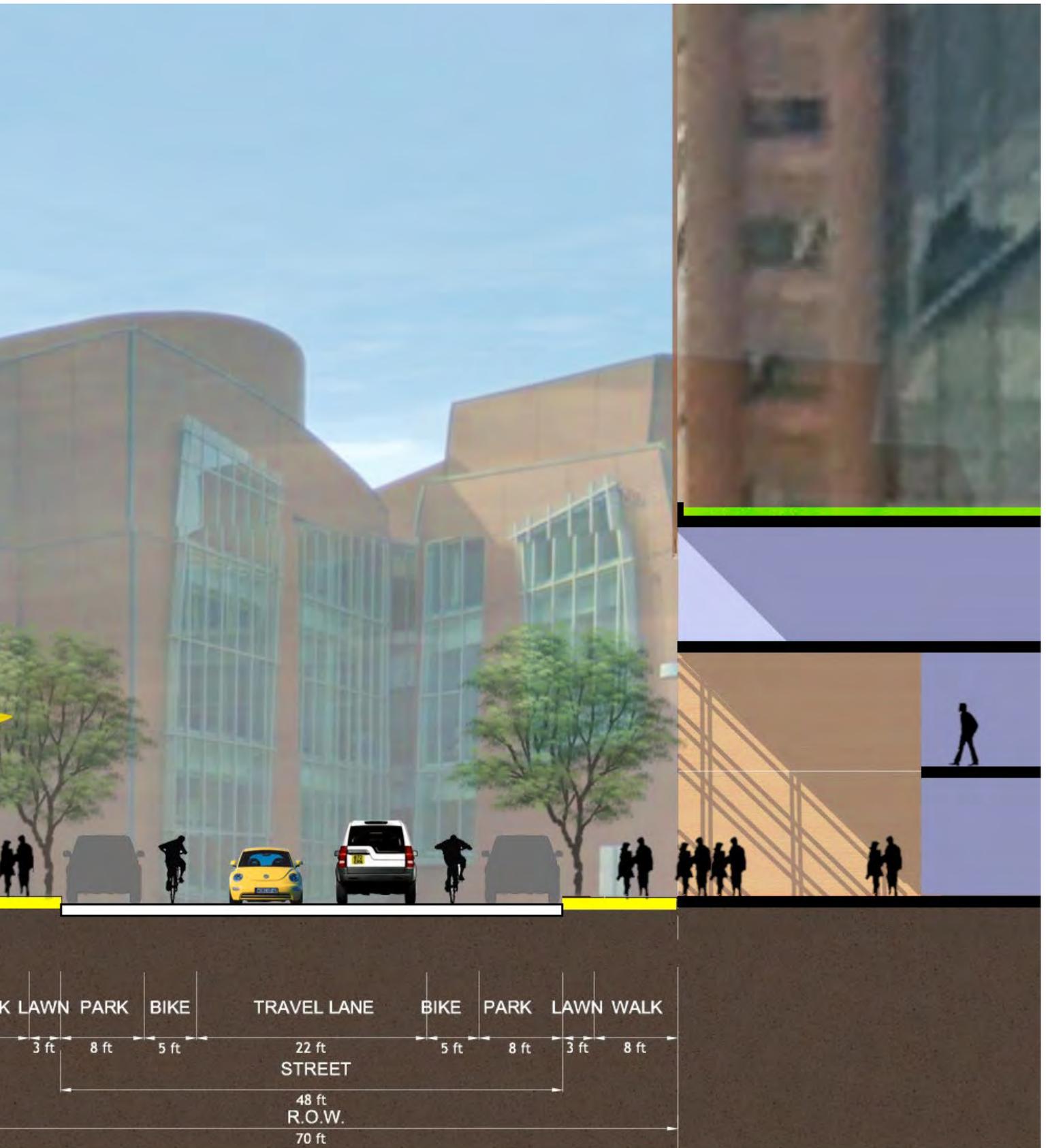


Figure 23

| Reading Road

A major arterial connecting Uptown to Downtown, Reading Road lacks a consistent character and has the unique opportunity to become a new technology corridor connecting the business center of Downtown to the medical research center of Uptown. To catalyze development, “Knowledge Clusters” are recommended as state-of-the-art research and development centers and are intended to attract and support prominent bioscience and medical industry partners. The primary objectives are to establish a new identity for Reading Road, increase publicly accessible open space, promote the collaboration of innovative people and create a close-knit ecosystem that fosters creative growth. The additional ROW positions Reading Road as the primary connector between Downtown and Uptown, creates a safer pedestrian environment and easier access to new and existing development.

- 15 foot sidewalk to provide ample space for pedestrians, bike riders, business entrances and structured landscape seat-wall between sidewalk and roadway.
- 8 foot street lawn and amenities (street trees, public seating and covered bus stops)
- Three 11 foot travel lanes in both directions (with an option for street parking during off-peak hours)
- At the center of each knowledge cluster create a 70 foot deep publicly accessible open space activated by research and office buildings, restaurants and retail, residential and structured parking



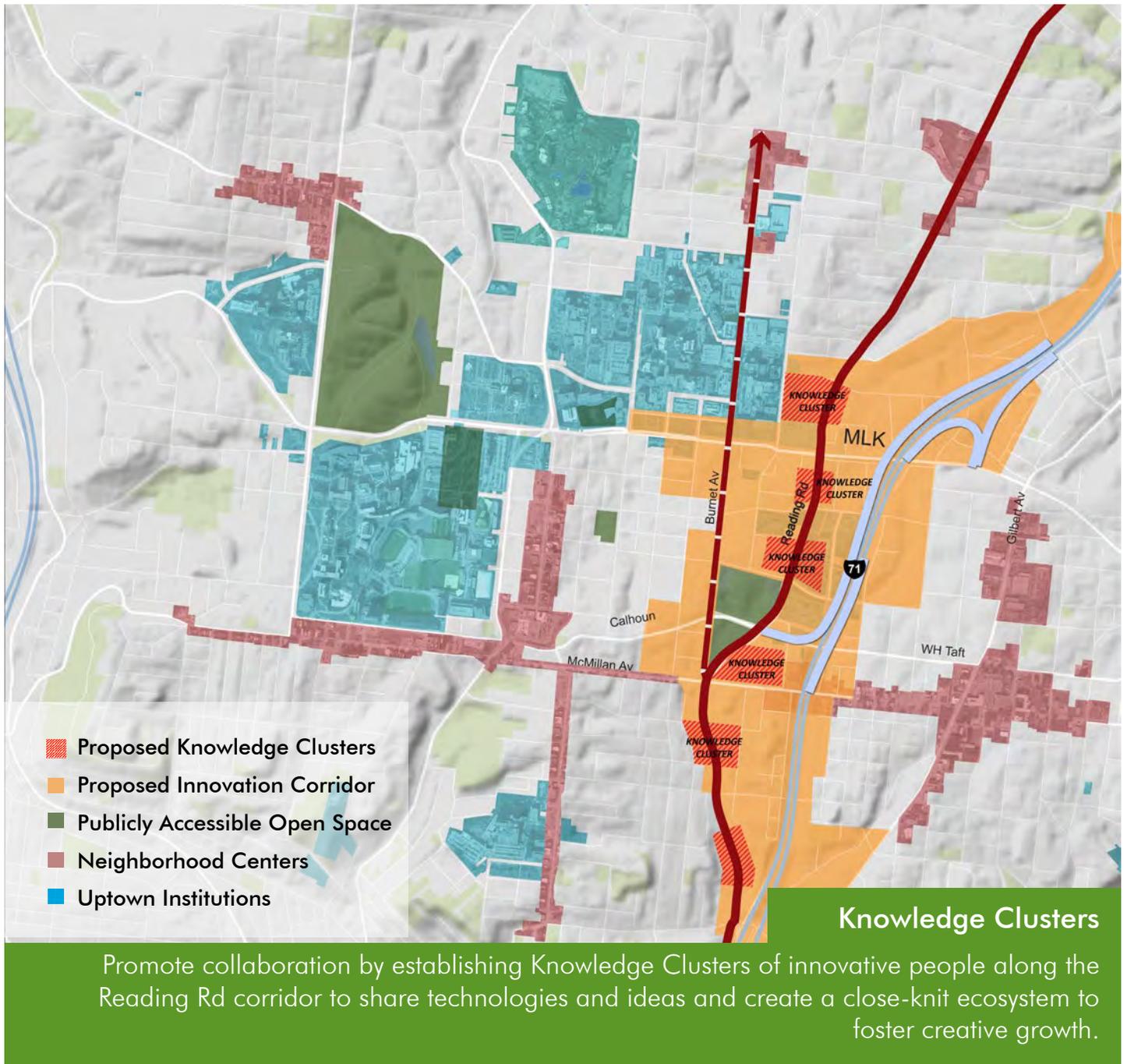
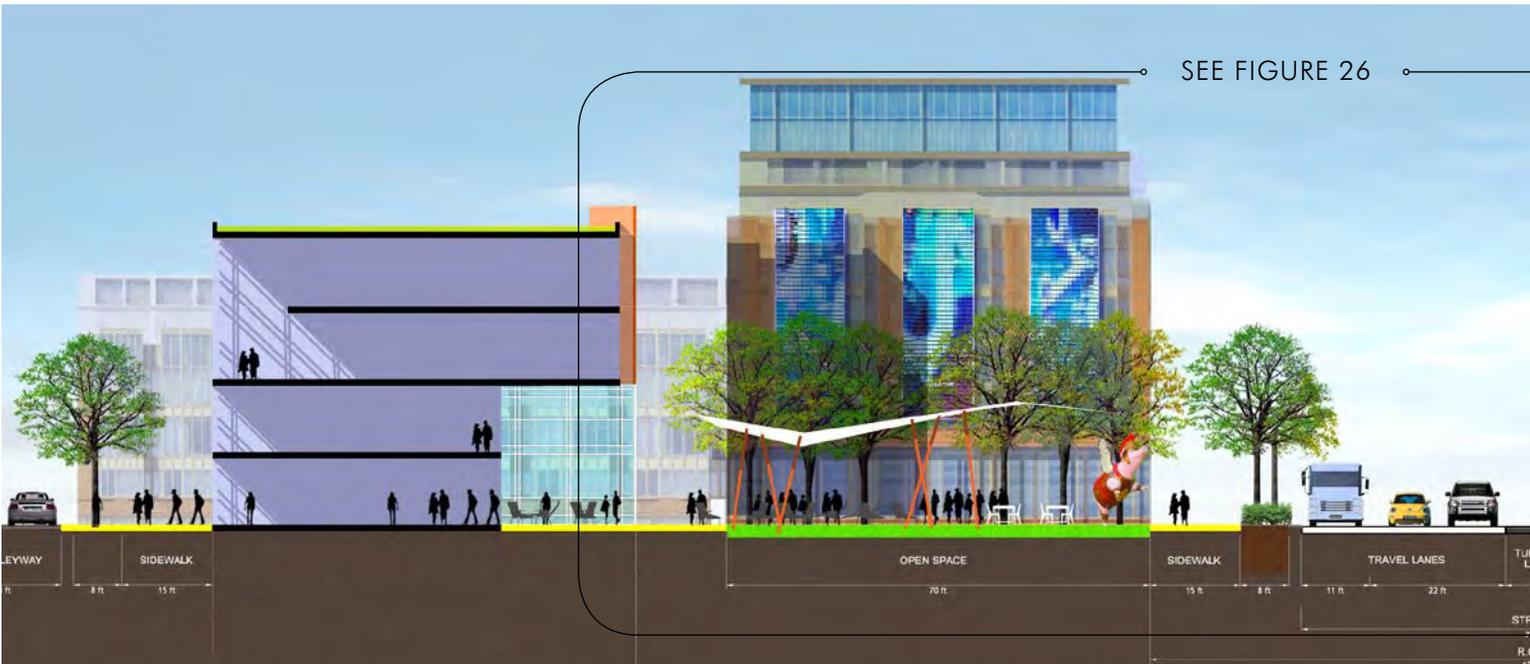


Figure 24





Reading Road Section alternatives at knowledge clusters

Figure 25



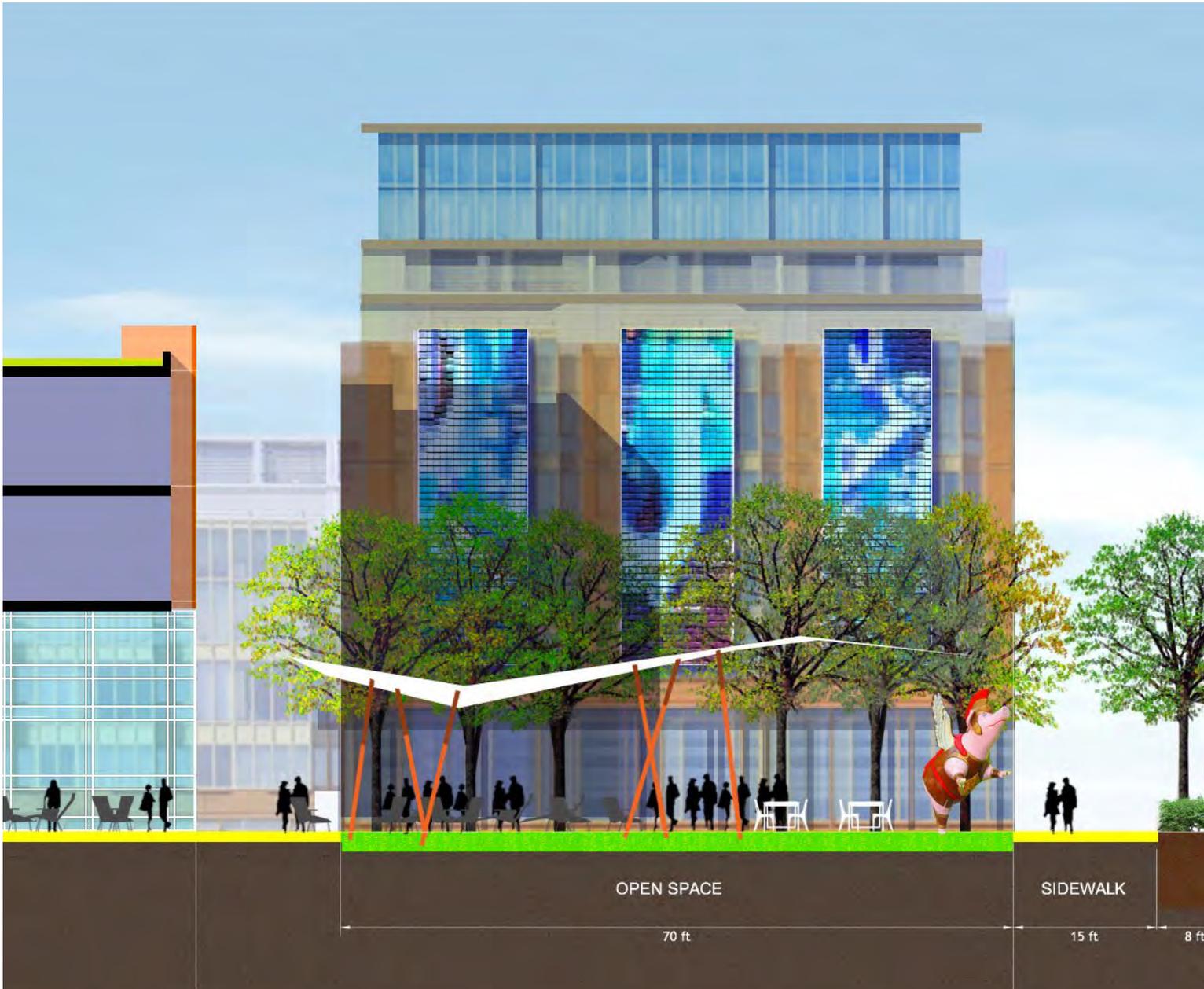




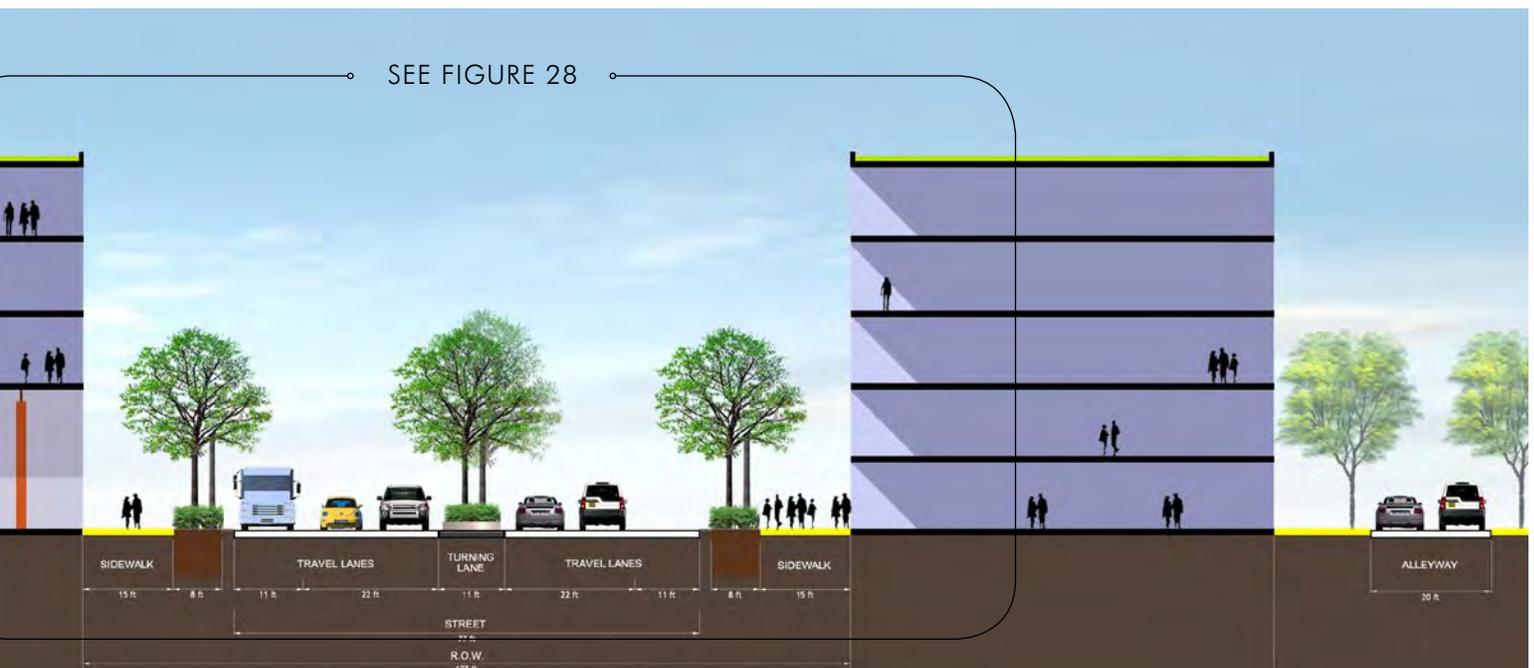
Figure 26





Reading Road Section alternatives at knowledge clusters

Figure 27



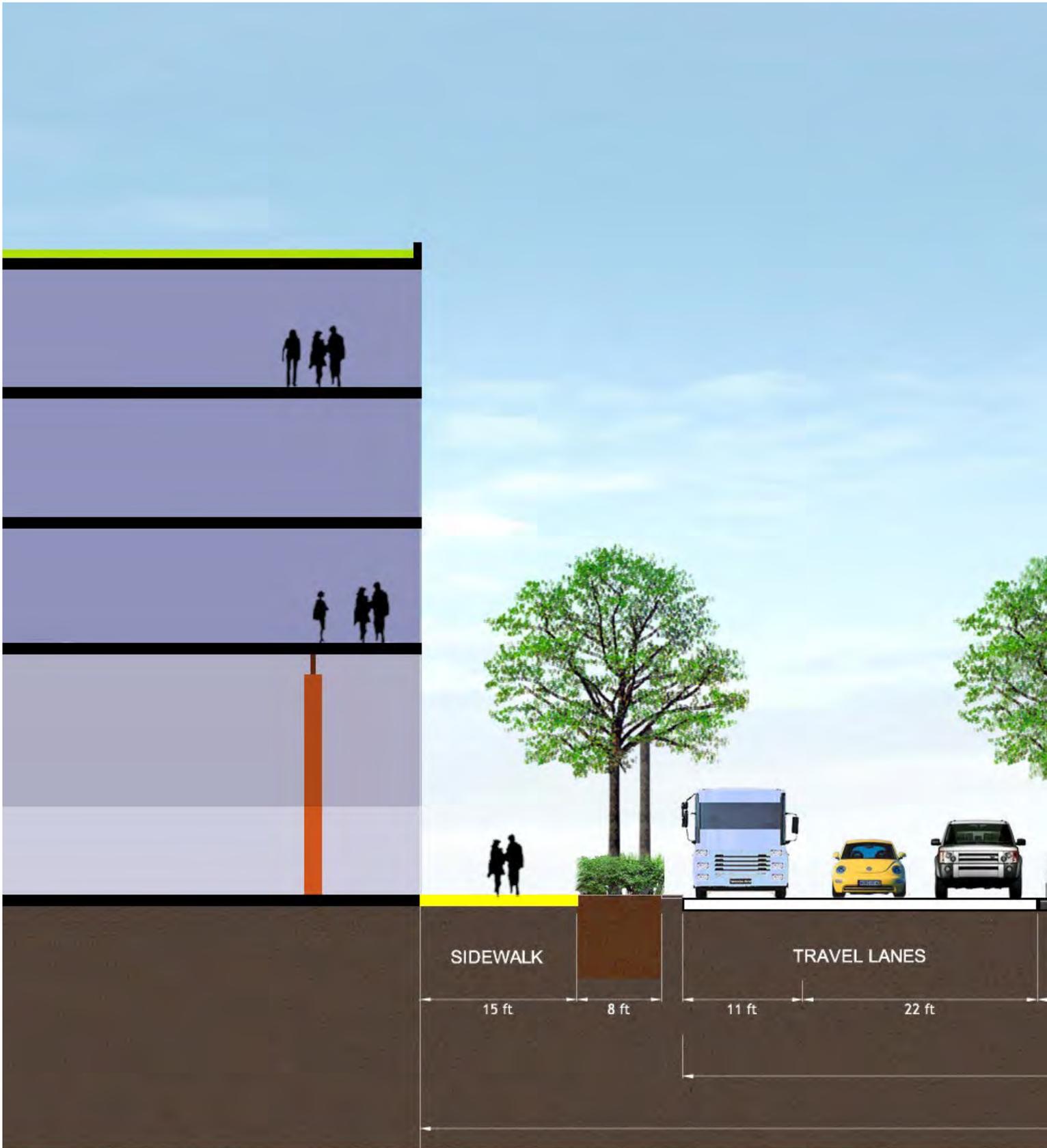




Figure 28

| Burnet Avenue

The intersection of Burnet and MLK was identified as the “Core” intersection for the Medical District and as a shared gateway for both the surrounding neighborhoods and institutions. By anchoring all four corners of the intersection with buildings or ground level amenities for workers, residents and visitors, Burnet can become an activity center with fluid and flexible movement in and around active plaza spaces. Shade structures, public art and street furniture should be concentrated here to establish a strong identity and to serve a variety of users. (Figure slides 29-31)
Caption: Burnet Avenue Section at the intersection with MLK.

By encouraging staff traffic to utilize Eden and Harvey as north-south connectors to centralized parking structures, Burnet becomes more accessible for patrons and patients. Reduced traffic quality promotes a more pedestrian-friendly street.

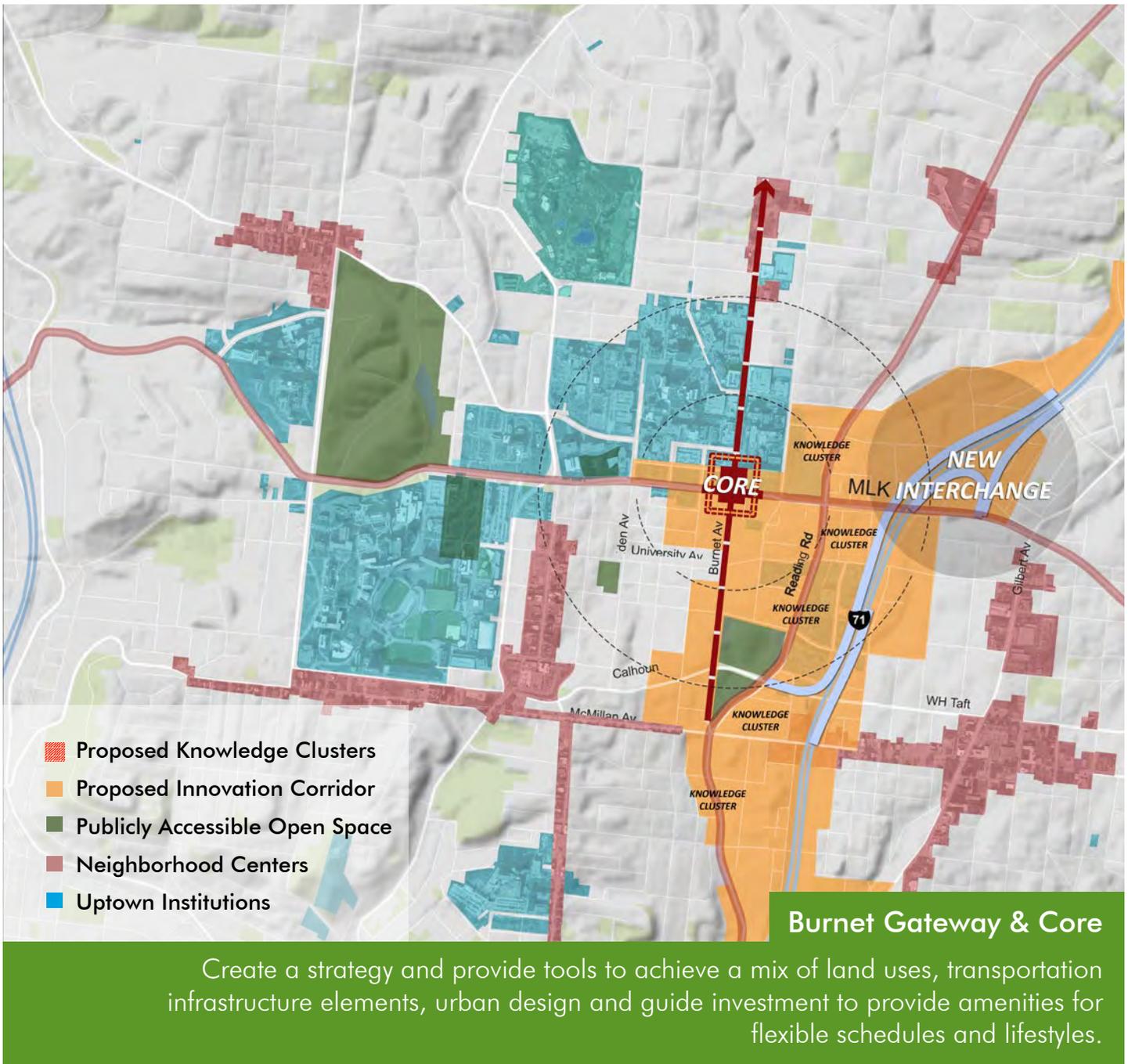


Figure 29

- 15 foot sidewalk to provide ample space for pedestrians, bike riders, business entrances and structured landscape seat-wall between sidewalk and roadway.
- 8 foot street lawn and amenities (street trees, public seating and covered bus stops)
- Two 11 foot travel lanes in both directions (with an option for street parking during off-peak hours)
- 8 foot center median that creates a unified character, aids way-finding, increases safety for crossing pedestrians and provides room for left-turn lanes as necessary.

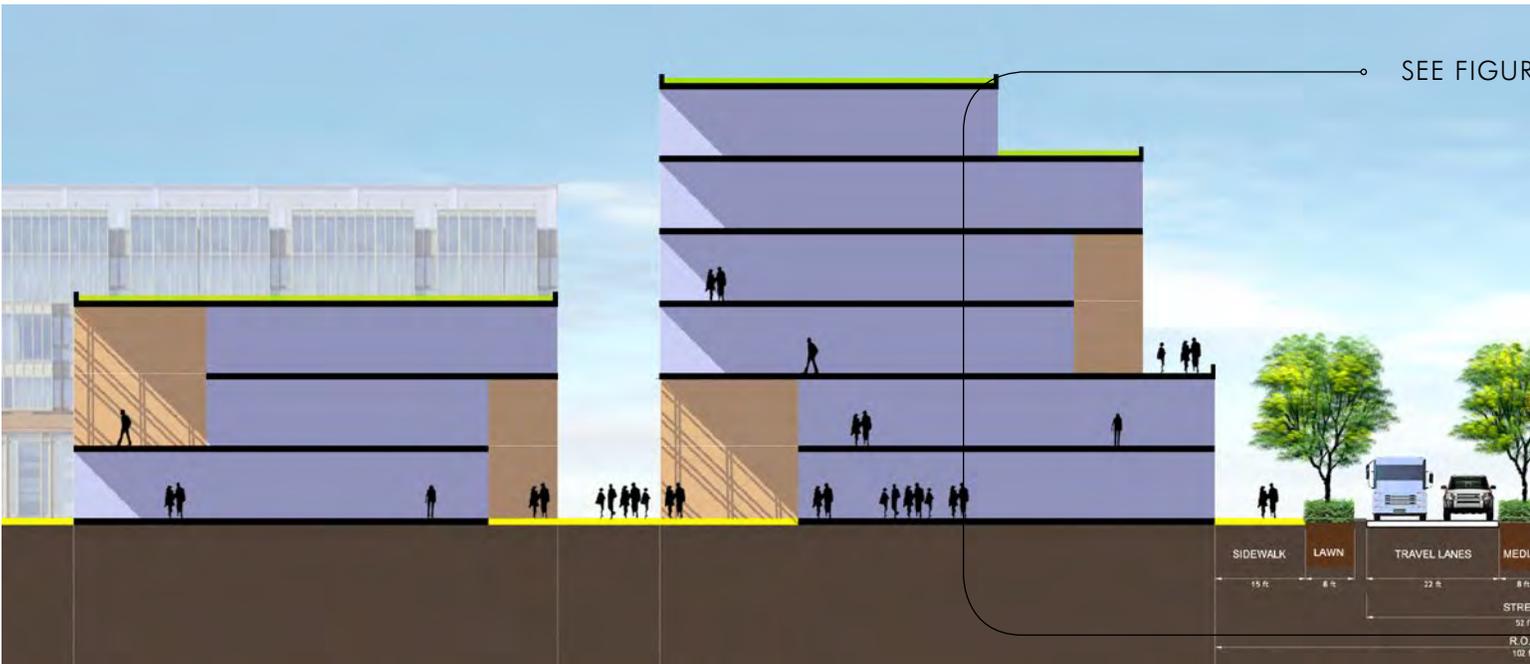
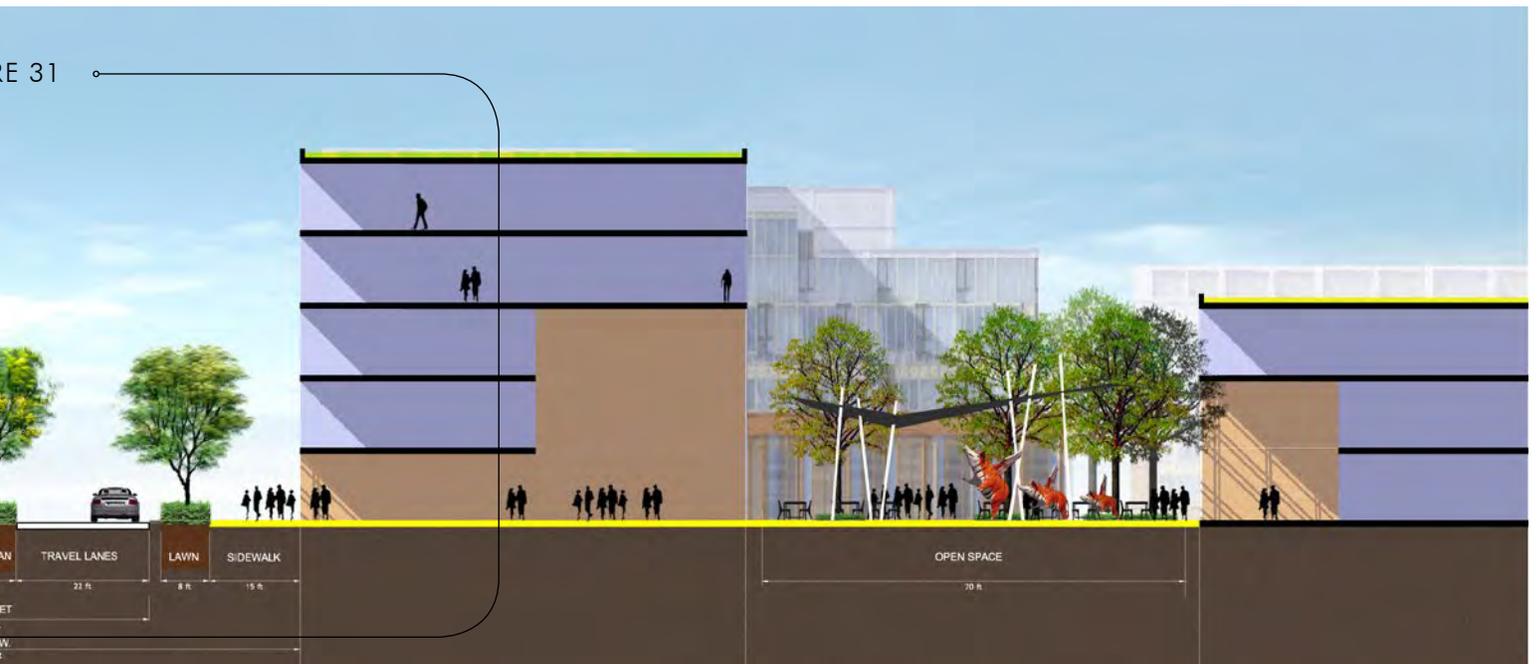
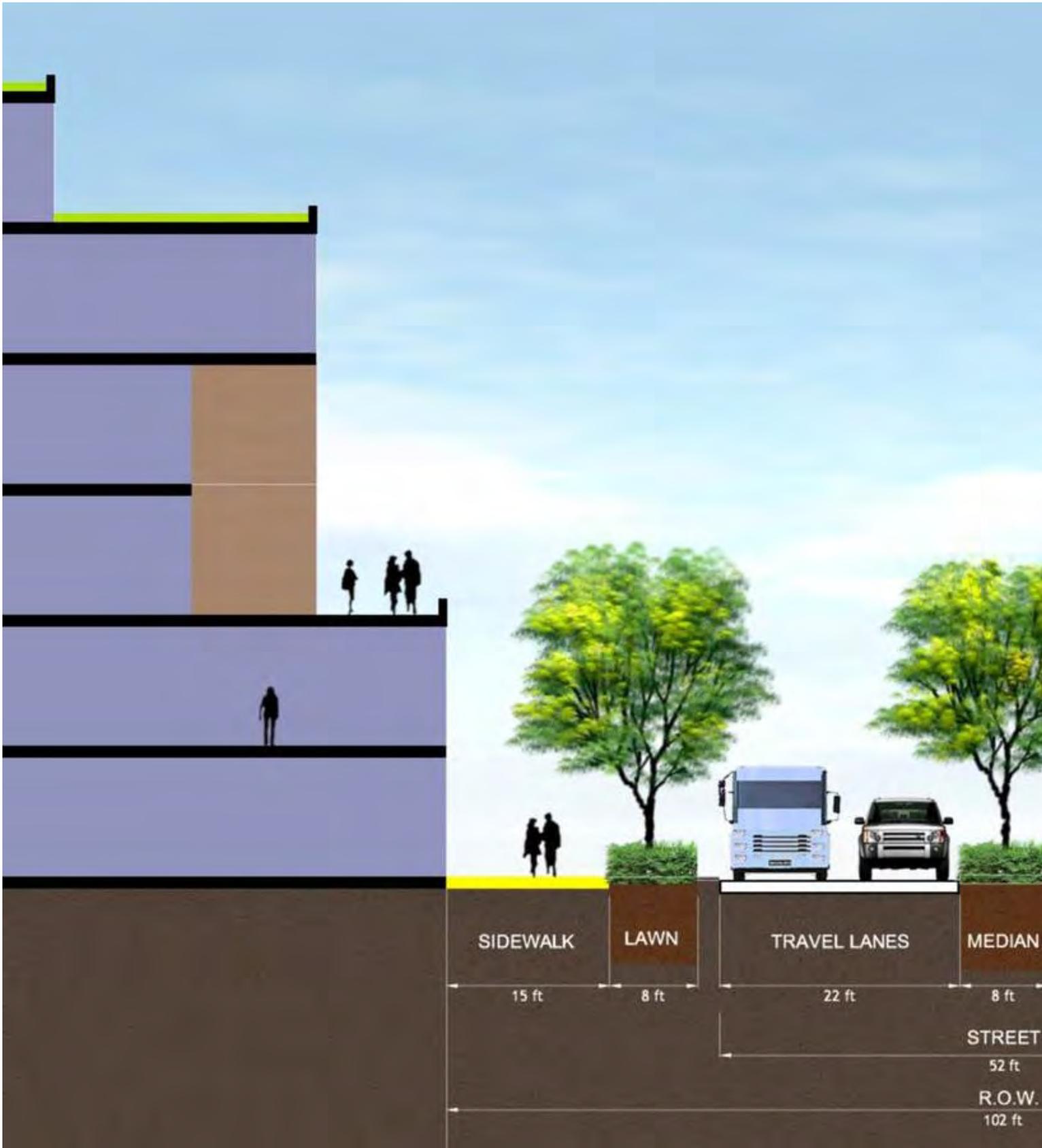




Figure 30





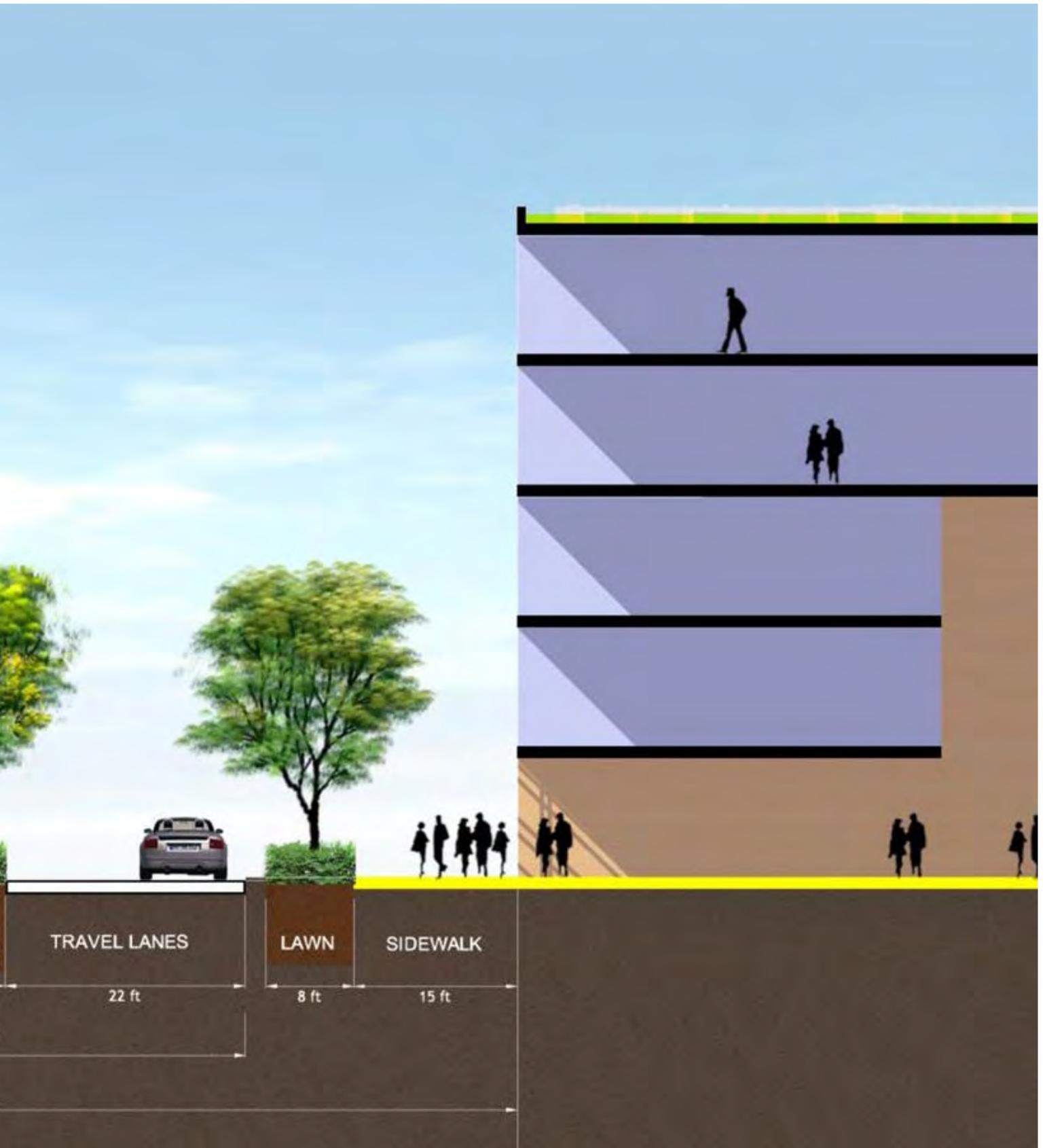


Figure 31

Economic Development

The Cincinnati market is in recovery. Employment projections suggest full jobs recovery by 2015; permitting levels are returning to historical averages and residential sales volume is steadily growing. In their current state, Uptown neighborhoods are not projected to receive a large amount of this demand. However, as the Cincinnati MSA re-urbanizes, Uptown is well positioned to capture growth in residential demand from households who prefer to live in close-in, walkable neighborhoods.

Market analysis of Uptown indicates that the land use that is most economically feasible and supportive of existing neighborhood vitality is residential development. There is limited short-term opportunity for new retail in the study area and the planning process established that the primary retail strategy should be to support existing Neighborhood Business Districts, not compete with them.

Moving forward, new retail should be consolidated into those commercial nodes – Walnut Hills, Corryville, CUF, Clifton, Mt. Auburn and Avondale. Long-term, there is also an opportunity to incorporate ancillary retail into mixed-use projects within the corridor. Likely, projects would be mixed horizontally rather than vertically. Figure 32

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<p>Transportation/Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Key regional East-West connections at MLK & I-71 ▶ Approximately a 30 minute drive from the Greater Cincinnati Airport ▶ Central location within the region 	<p>Transportation/Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pedestrian and cross connections not strong—therefore, even with existing retail, hard for households and tenants to access them ▶ The street is fairly wide for an urban area to create an interesting and unique environment for new residents and businesses
<p>Connection to Current Demand Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Over 18,000 households are located within Uptown neighborhoods – just west of the MLK/I-71 intersection ▶ Strong daytime population attributed to anchor institutions & strong student population 	<p>Place-making vs. Demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Limited destinations within the corridor and Uptown neighborhoods that capture new activity ▶ Cannot currently compete with more prestigious corridors and neighborhoods within the region
<p>Opportunity to differentiate itself within the marketplace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Alternative to riverfront and Downtown 	<p>Market Economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Limited demand for near-term new land uses. Need to determine which neighborhoods in Uptown will likely garner the demand
<p>Current Strong Users = Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recognize who the businesses and residents are and how to play off of their successes and needs 	<p>Neighborhood Variance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Socioeconomic conditions vary widely between nearby neighborhoods, indicating the prevalence of health disparities throughout the Greater Cincinnati area. ▶ Highlights the necessity for community-based needs and inclusion

Figure 32

“...as the Cincinnati MSA re-urbanizes, Uptown is well positioned to capture growth in residential demand from households who prefer to live in close-in, walkable neighborhoods.”

Product	For-Sale Residential	For-rent Residential	Commercial Development		
Product Type	Condo or Townhome or Small-hot SFD	Apartment (Garden, Donut, or Midrise)	Ground floor/ In-Line Retail	Medical Office	Hotel – Upper Midscale - Upper Upscale
0-5-year Demand	265-325 units	350-400 units	0-10,000 SF	Based on hospital need	110 key
5-10 year Demand	300-360 units	200-300 units	20,000-30,000 SF	Based on hospital need	0
Total 10 year Demand	565-665 units	550-700 units	20,000 – 40,000 SF	Based on hospital need	110 key
Target Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce housing • Graduate Students • Singles • Young professionals • Divorcees • Downsizing empty nesters • Mid-level professionals (singles and couples) working in Cincinnati (Uptown, Downtown, other employment cores) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce housing • Graduate Students • Singles • Young professionals • Divorcees • Downsizing empty nesters • Young families • Mid-level professionals (singles and couples) working in Cincinnati (Uptown, Downtown, other employment cores) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and existing Uptown residents • Uptown employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Cincinnati 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UC visitors • Friends and family of hospital patients • Business travelers

Figure 33

| Economic Development continued...

Many redevelopment opportunities exist along the MLK Corridor and within Uptown. In the short run, most investment is likely to focus on updating aging commercial and residential properties within the area, with some opportunities for smaller-scale commercial uses. Once a critical mass is created within the corridor based upon the new interchange and the increased employment projected in the area, larger-scale projects will be feasible. These catalytic sites can be leveraged to engage in broader place-making strategies.

Figure 33 & 34.

“Focus new residential development within walking distance of existing neighborhood centers to bolster commercial demand.”

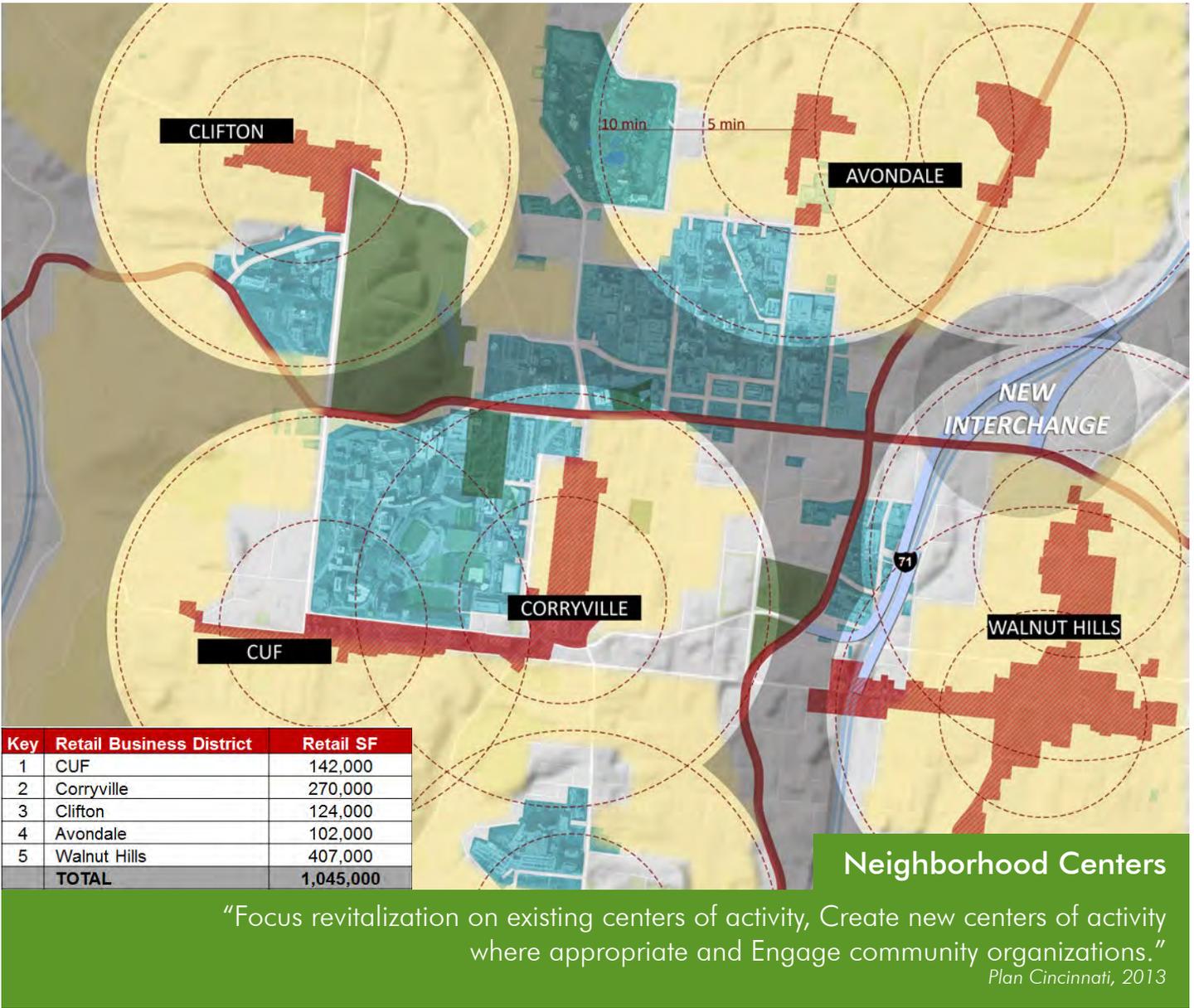


Figure 34

870,000 SF
 Retail Demanded in Primary Market

1,045,000 SF
 Existing Retail in Primary Market Area

Vacant, Obsolete Retail:
 The difference between retail space and retail demand

1,100 - 1,400 Dwelling Units
 Long-Term Residential Demand





Implementation Recommendations

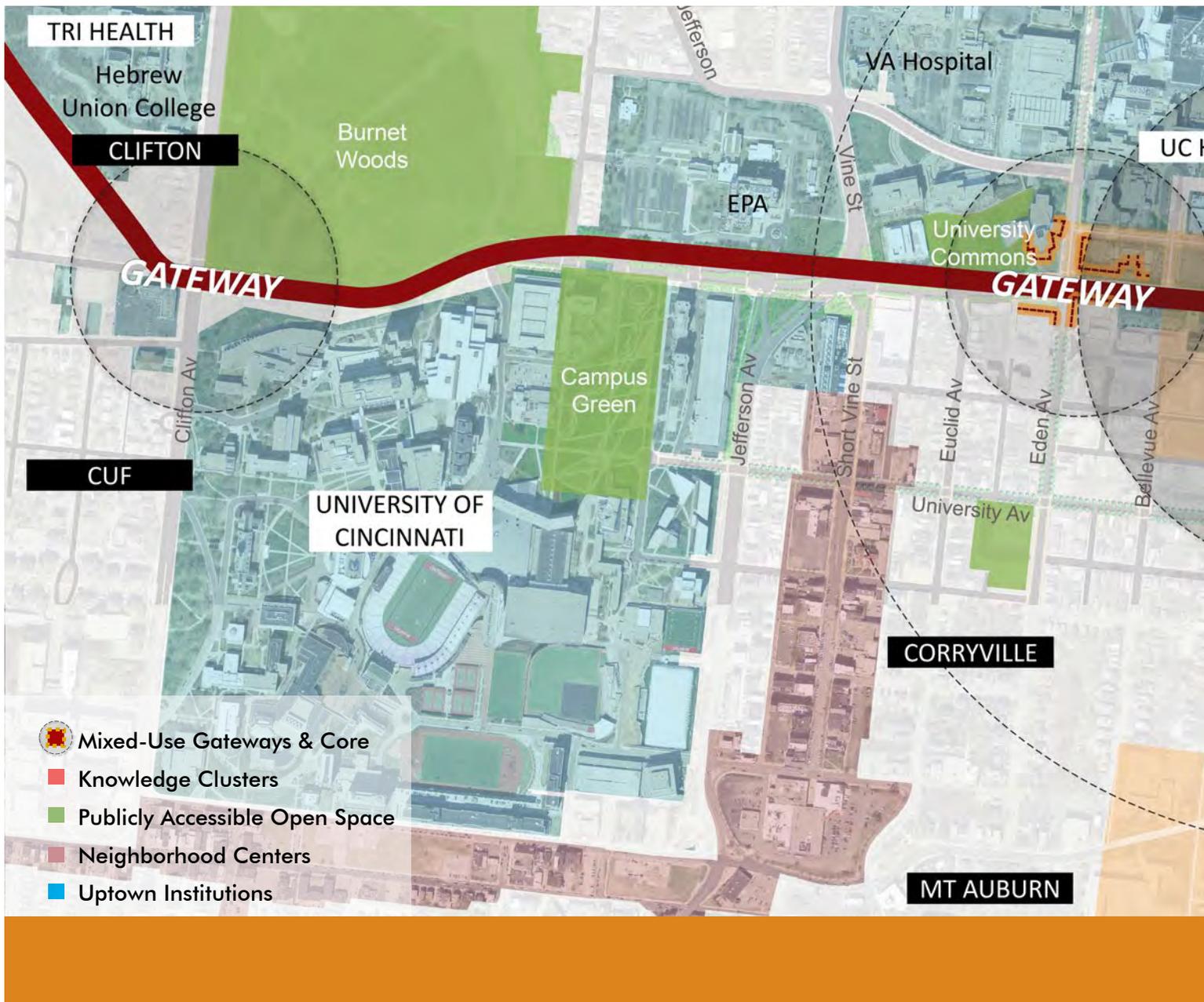
Critical Success Factors

Uptown Consortium
Governance

City approval process

5-10-20 Year Capital
Improvements Program

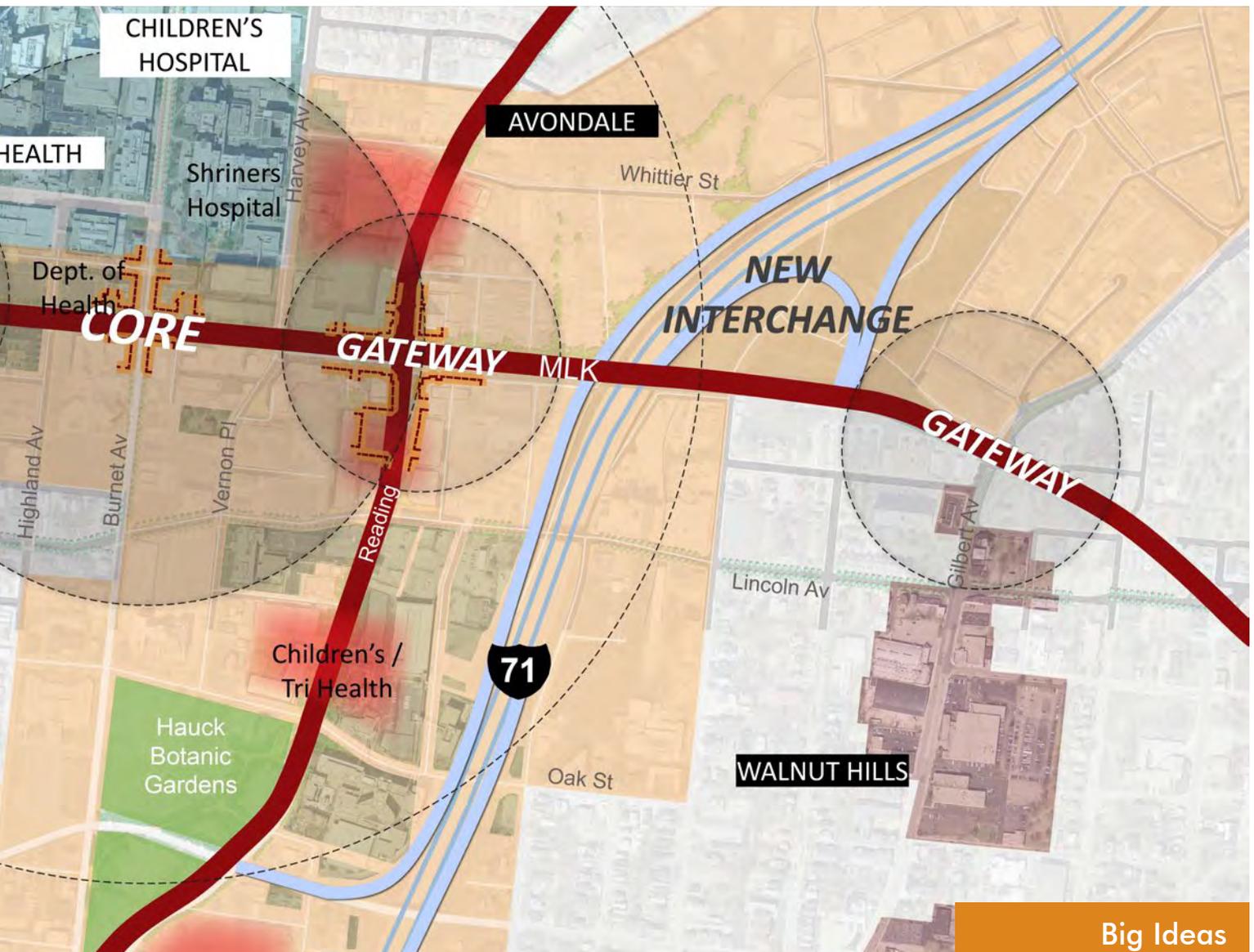
Priorities & Next Steps



Critical Success Factors

In order to facilitate revitalization along the MLK Corridor and within the Uptown neighborhoods, the Uptown community and other interested stakeholders should focus on the following critical success factors:

- Create value and facilitate connections. A lively, healthy MLK corridor will grow from well-ordered land uses that provide for a full range of activities and lifestyles. On the sound foundation of Uptown's existing residential communities and strong employment base, new investment can catalyze the development of an economically and socially vibrant urban district.
- Create a unique, walkable environment along the corridor that will make the area less auto-oriented.
- Establish focal points in the corridor. Key nodes and intersections, defined by commercial activity and public amenities, will form a framework that will bring the community together and create a district identity.
- Identify key parcels. Work with owners to zone them properly and promote a mix of uses that supports the long-term vision of Cincinnati and Uptown community stakeholders.
- Identify the diverse existing population that will be effected impacted, recognizing the prevalence of underserved populations.

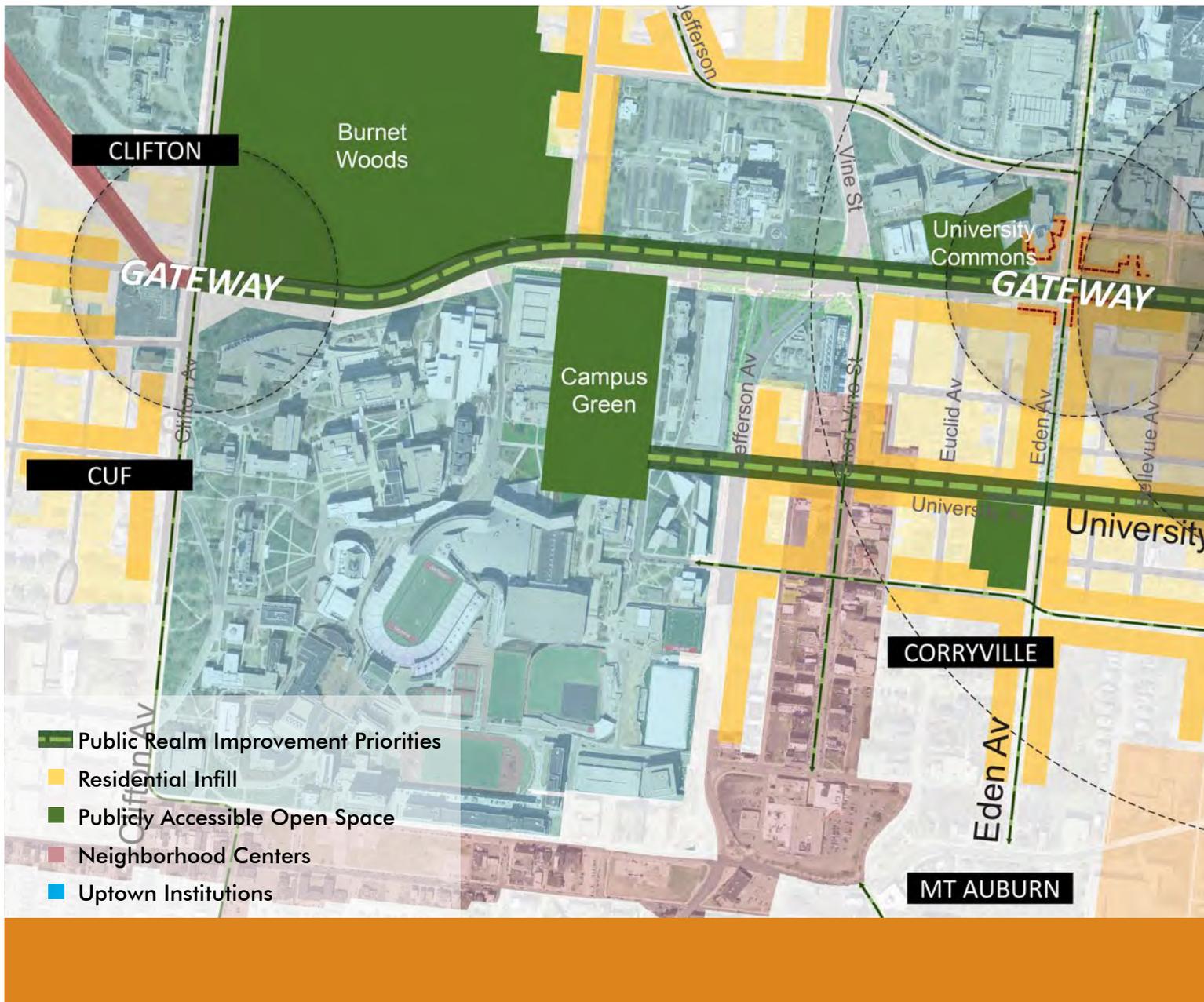


Big Ideas

Establish **mixed-use gateways** along MLK at the intersections of Eden, Burnet and Reading, and incentivize **knowledge clusters** along Reading to encourage identity and walkability.

Figure 35

“...promote a mix of uses that supports the long-term vision of Cincinnati and the Uptown community”



Critical Success Factors continued...

- Partner with long-time business owners in Uptown to meet their continued needs for safe access for patrons and vendors.
- Help assemble the land. Identify landowners willing to participate and work with them to put together parcels big enough to attract larger users.
- As sites are identified, work with developers to maximize potential by considering density, market, connections and amenities. Creative, nuanced zoning will ensure the community's vision is executable.
- The corridor has distinct zones and areas that should be explored separately (e.g. east and west of MLK Dr./I-71 overpass).
- Community stakeholders within Uptown should join forces to create an identity and brand campaign for the area(s). Further study could catalogue and categorize businesses in the area, to identify trends and key new businesses to spark development.

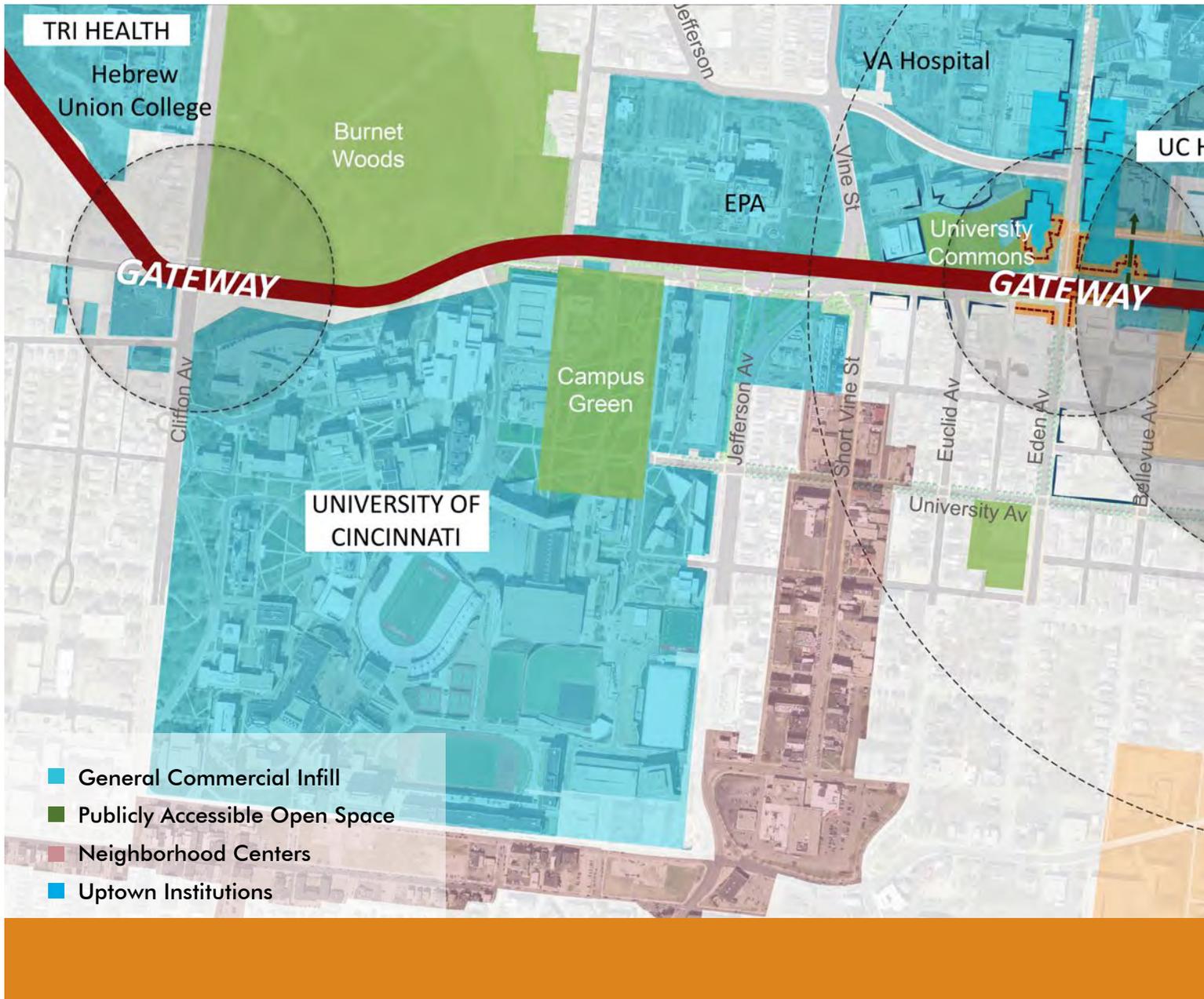


Big Ideas

Locate residential infill near to and within predominately residential areas and focus public realm improvements along MLK, Reading, Burnet and University Avenue for pedestrians and bicycles to support living initiatives.

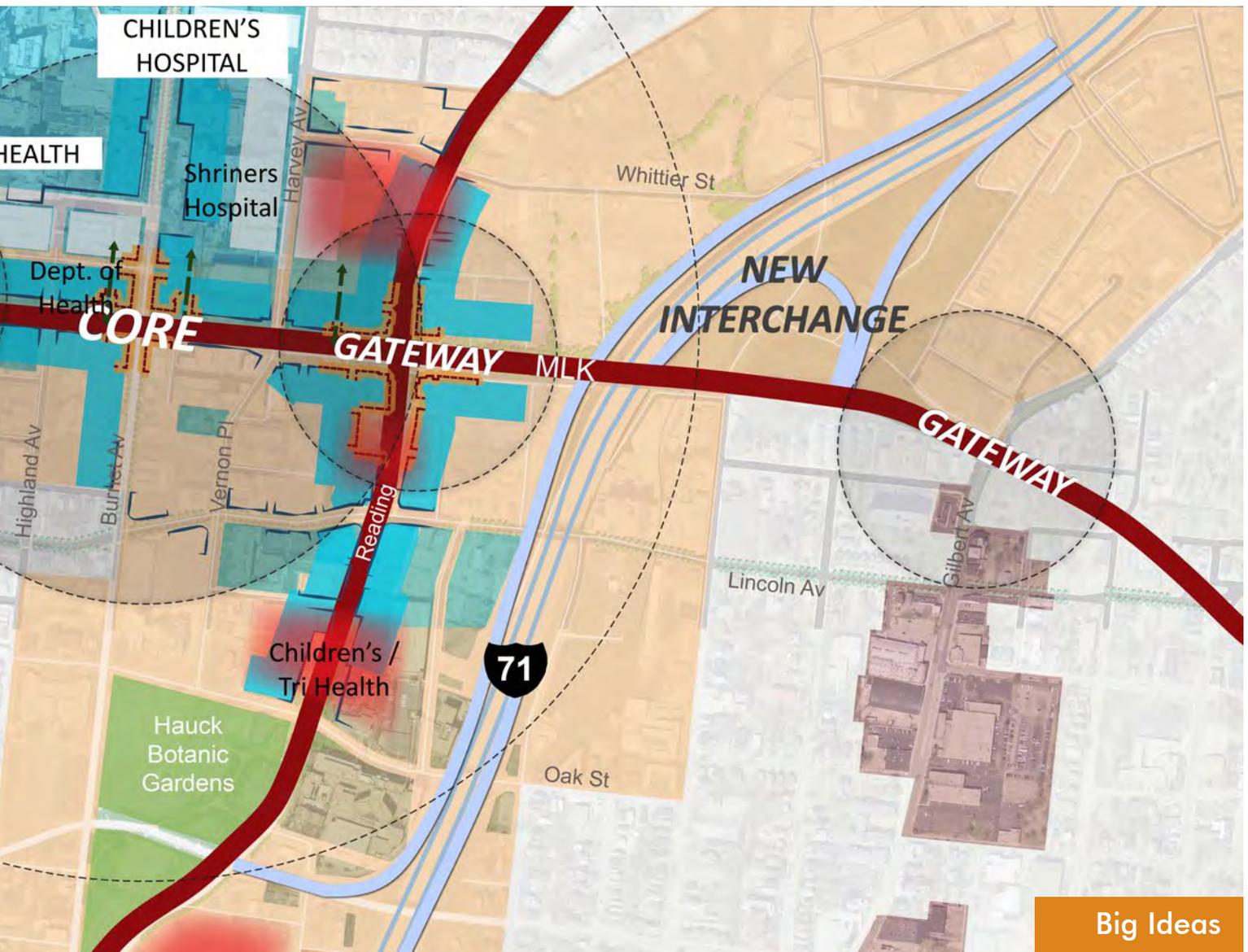
Figure 36

“...be creative in the use of zoning to ensure the Uptown community vision is executable.”



Critical Success Factors continued...

- Showcase existing businesses with an innovative marketing strategy. The City should prioritize promoting existing local businesses by exploring ways to help small businesses grow by promoting them to Cincinnati residents and in the media.
- Promote entrepreneurship through incubation. Uptown is a unique place within the Cincinnati market, where businesses can gain access to young professionals, college students and talented workers at all levels. Public and private partners should leverage the area's human capital, as well as affordable rents and public transportation access, to encourage the incubation and cultivation of entrepreneurial ideas. Figures 35, 36, & 37.
- Promote a workforce pipeline per the model case study EBDI, to connect at-need residents with the increased volume of employment and educational opportunities.



Big Ideas

Ensure that future development contributes to a continuous urban street edge along primary corridors with general commercial development (research & development class a office)

Figure 37

“Uptown is a unique place within the Cincinnati market, where businesses can gain access to young professionals, college students and talented workers at all levels.”

Uptown Consortium Governance

The Uptown Consortium and its Board of Directors have an unprecedented opportunity to lead the implementation of this transformative vision, but it will take unprecedented will to achieve full and lasting success. The co-sponsors of this document will inherit the responsibility to see it through. All are encouraged to integrate its findings and recommendations into their active agendas for guiding decisions and to marshal the resources and skills at their disposal to realize the Uptown Vision.

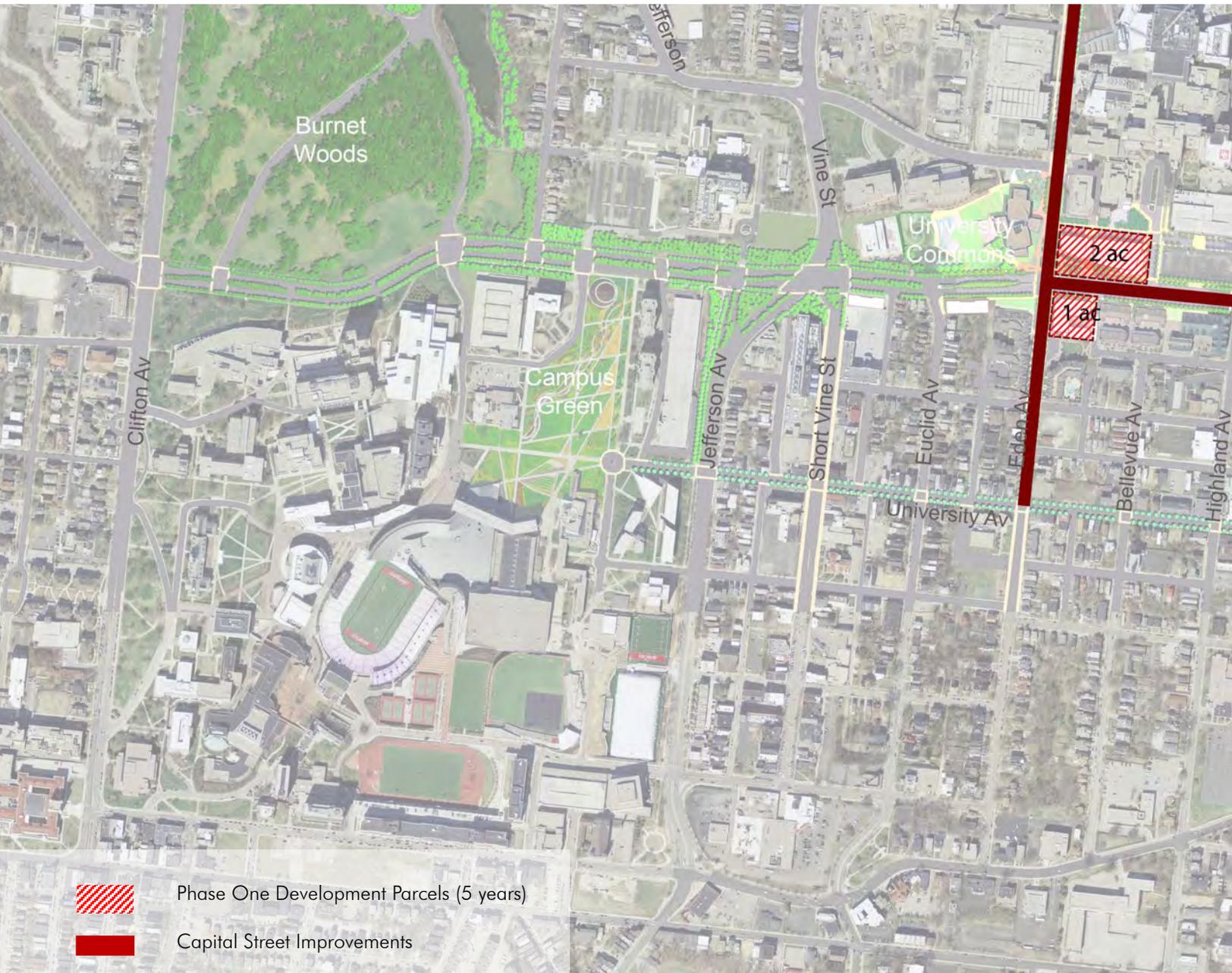
The durable effectiveness of support for a vision by multi-generational leadership is grounded in the conviction that the Uptown Vision is good business. Actions of transformational leadership are necessary, such as:

- Recognizing and acting on the fact that community development is economic development and fundamental to business success.
- Organizational structure and authority to make decisions and champion the cause.
- A new level of trust and transparency in inter-institutional collaboration and community leadership – sharing master plans, community plans, development strategies and capital investment schedules.
- Robust community engagement agenda
- Win/win programmatic requirement of every institutional capital project
- Establishing a regular schedule of Community Communication Events to allow residents and stakeholders to hear and give feedback on implementation progress.
- Incentivizing land assembly for development of supply-chain and incubator businesses that provide the operational and intellectual infrastructure for an Uptown innovation economy.
- Encourage creation of a Buy Local, Hire Local and Live Local marketing and incentives program to spur on the local micro-economy of the Uptown.

“The co-sponsors of this document will inherit the vision and the responsibility to see it through. ”

City Approval Process

The City of Cincinnati Planning Commission is asked to approve the recommendations of this study and its participants as a guiding document in consideration of investments and project approvals in the area. Further, the Planning Commission is asked to incorporate these recommendations into the pending comprehensive Zoning Code updates affecting the study area.



5-10-20 Yr Capital Improvements Program

A master development pattern is provided to guide prioritized development by location. These indicated opportunities are not meant to hinder development in any way, but identify opportunities for growth and land uses that are underdeveloped or incompatible with the vision. Figure 38-43

The potential gross square foot development for the early-term target development sites is 3 Million square feet based on the acreage of the land area multiplied by a floor area ration (FAR) of 2.5 consistent with a mixed-use mid-urban community. Floor area ratio is a multiple of square footage of available land area. By contrast, a floor area ratio for suburban development may be 1.0 FAR, while urban development may be 10.0 FAR.

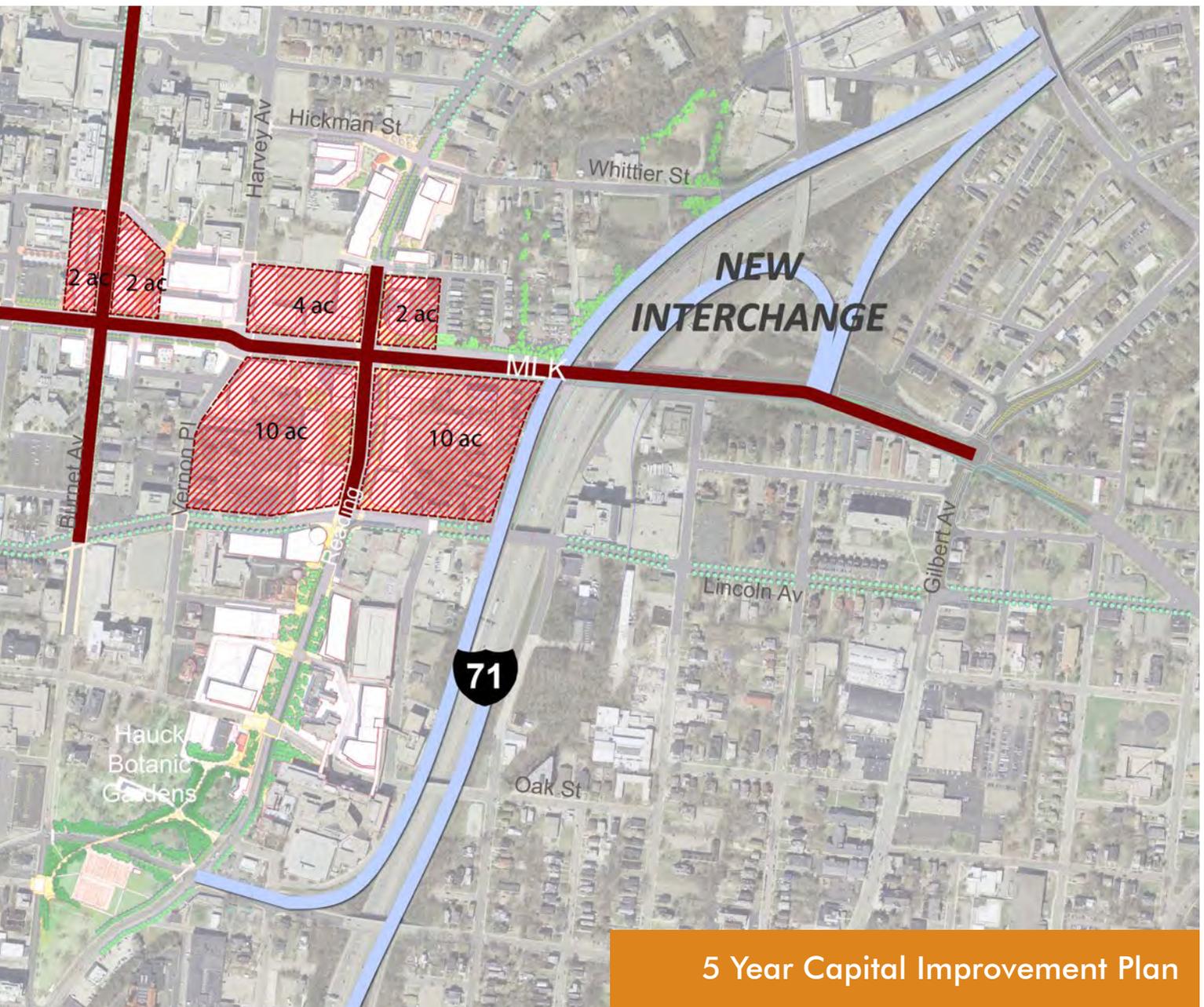
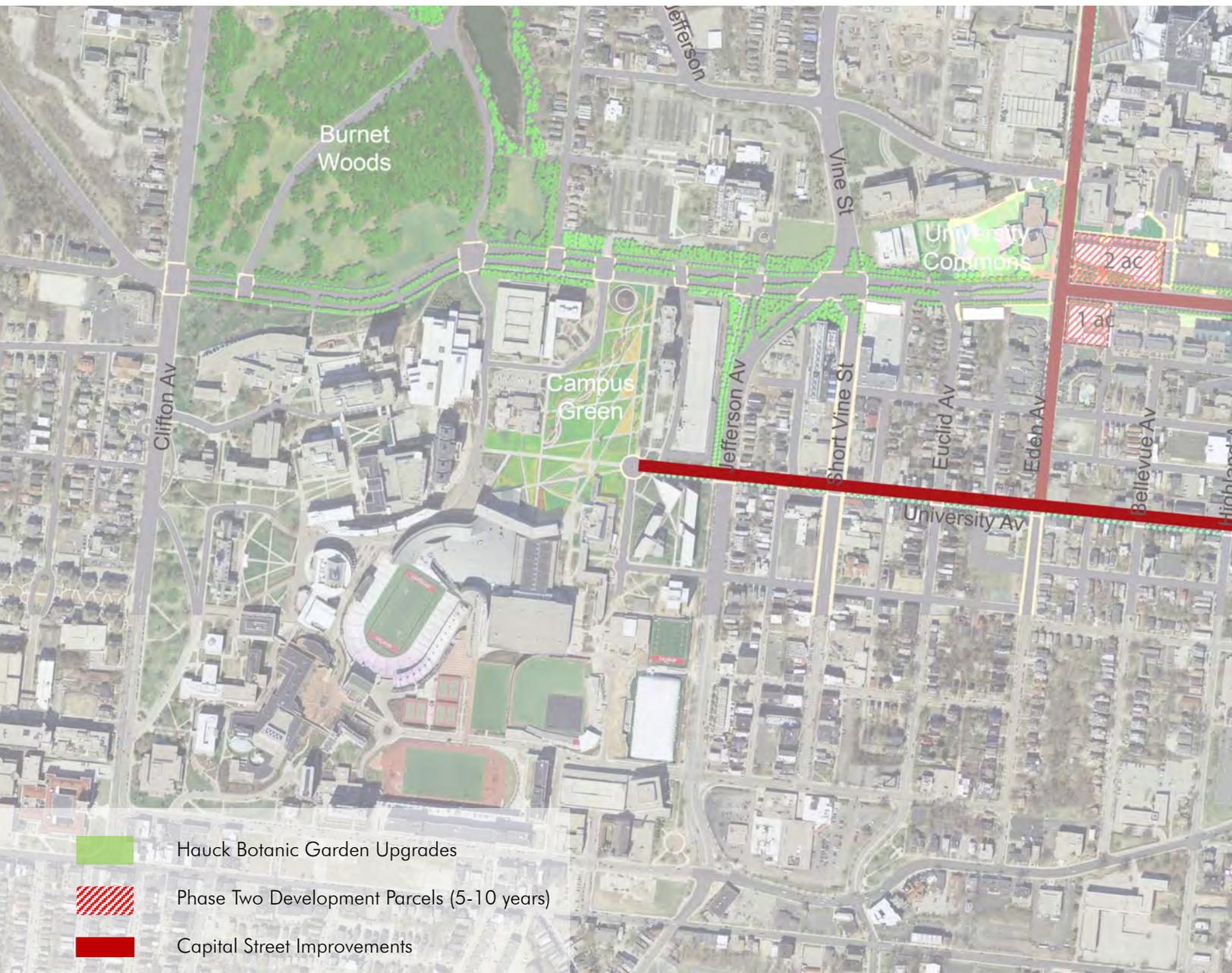


Figure 38

Average Floor to Area Ratio: 2.5 FAR
 Re/Development Potential: 3 MILLION gsf

1. Invest in Capital Improvements at MLK, Reading, Burnet and Eden.
2. Prioritize new developments on anchoring parcels at primary gateway intersections along MLK.
3. Establish the first knowledge cluster at the intersection of Reading and MLK.



5-10-20 Yr Capital Improvements Program continued...

The potential gross square foot development for the intermediate-term target development sites is 5 Million square feet based on the acreage of the land area multiplied by a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.5 consistent with a mixed-use mid-urban community. Floor area ratio is a multiple of square footage of available land area. By contrast, a floor area ratio for suburban development may be 1.0 FAR, while urban development may be 10.0 FAR.

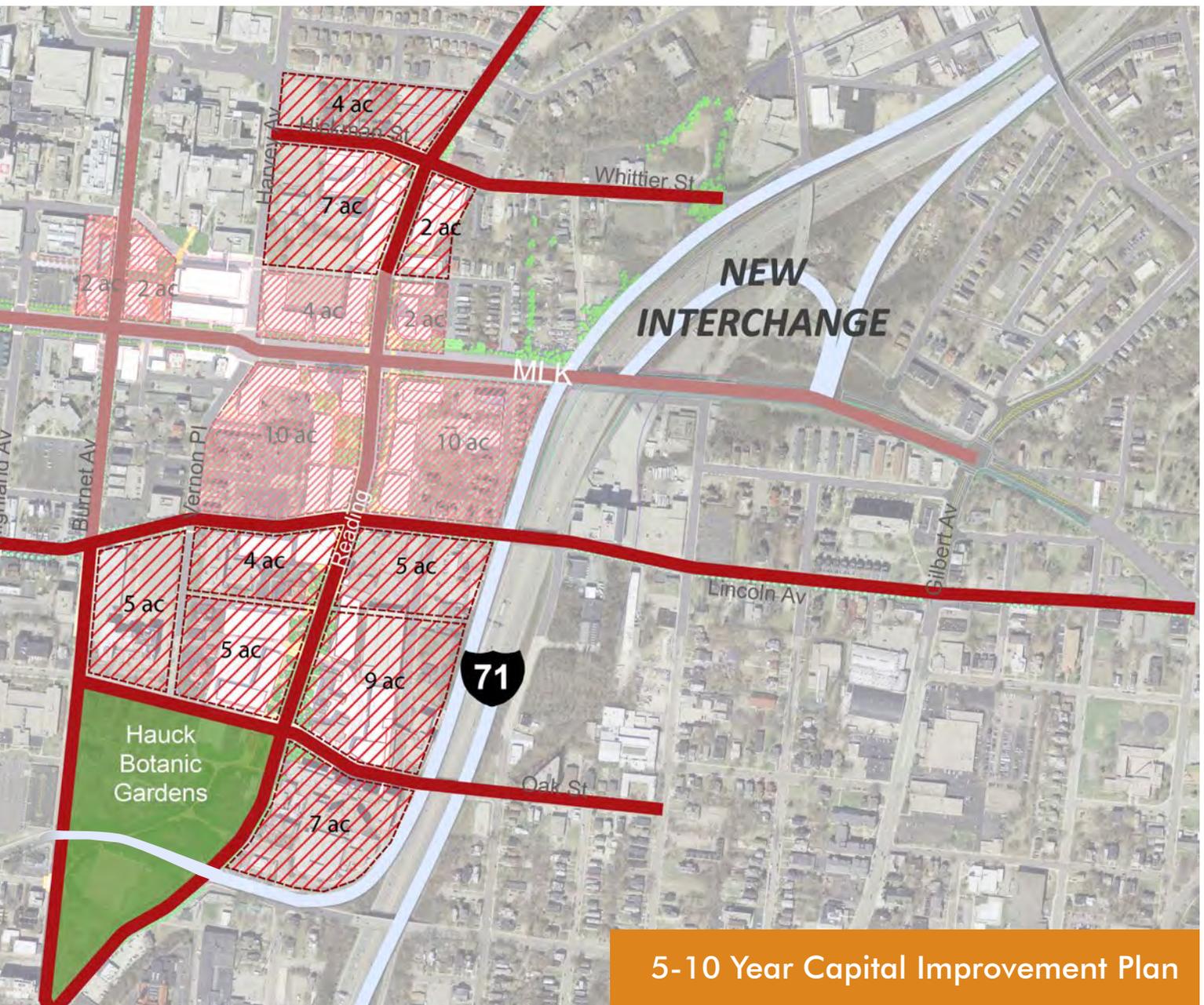
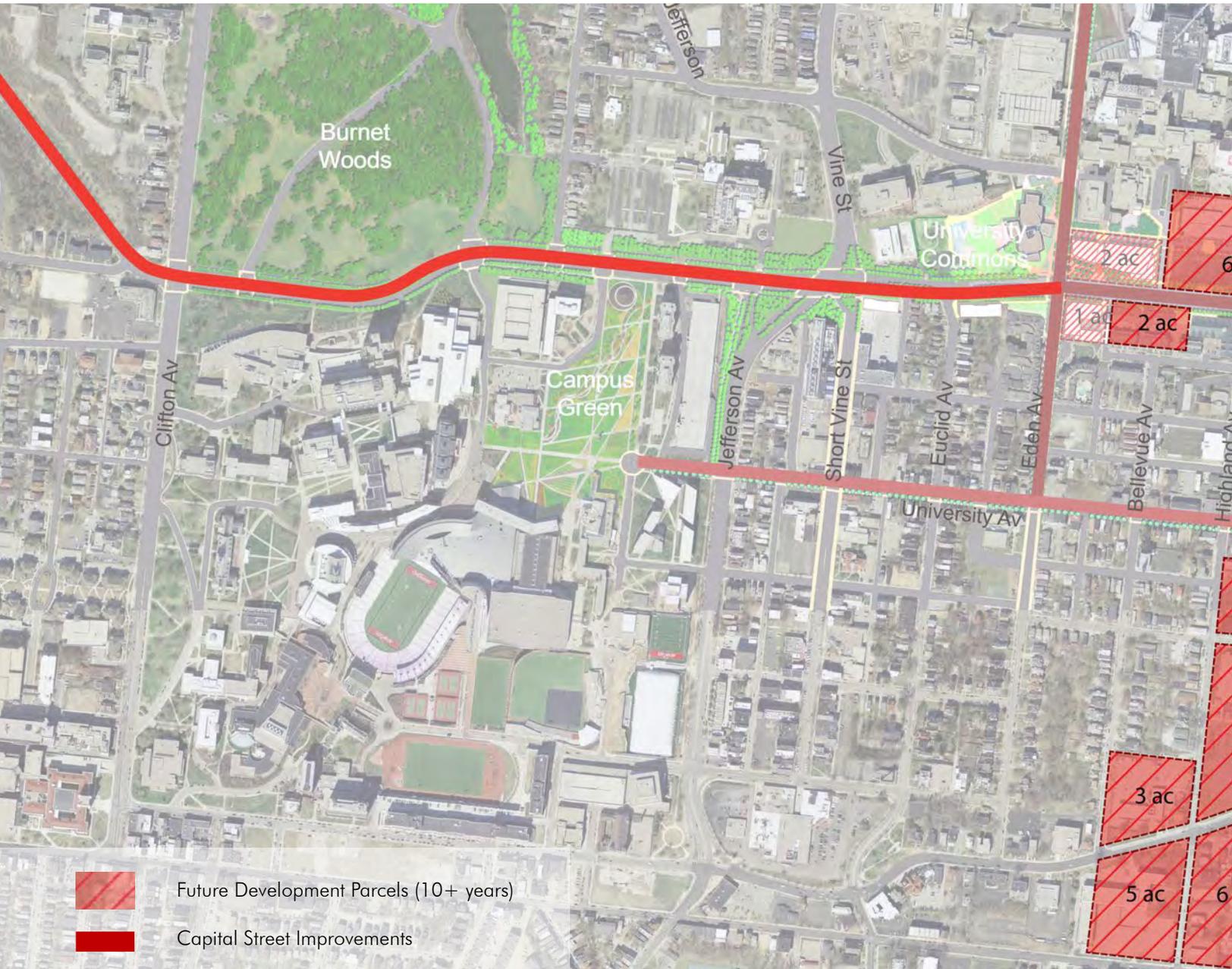


Figure 39

Average Floor to Area Ratio: 2.5 FAR
 Re/Development Potential: 5 MILLION gsf

1. Invest in Capital Improvements at Reading, University/Lincoln, Whittier/Hickman and Oak.
2. Develop additional knowledge clusters along Reading Road.



5-10-20 Yr Capital Improvements Program continued...

The potential gross square foot development for the long-term target development sites is 15 Million square feet based on the acreage of the land area multiplied by a floor area ration (FAR) of 2.5 consistent with a mixed-use mid-urban community. Floor area ratio is a multiple of square footage of available land area. By contrast, a floor area ration for suburban development may be 1.0 FAR, while urban development may be 10.0 FAR.

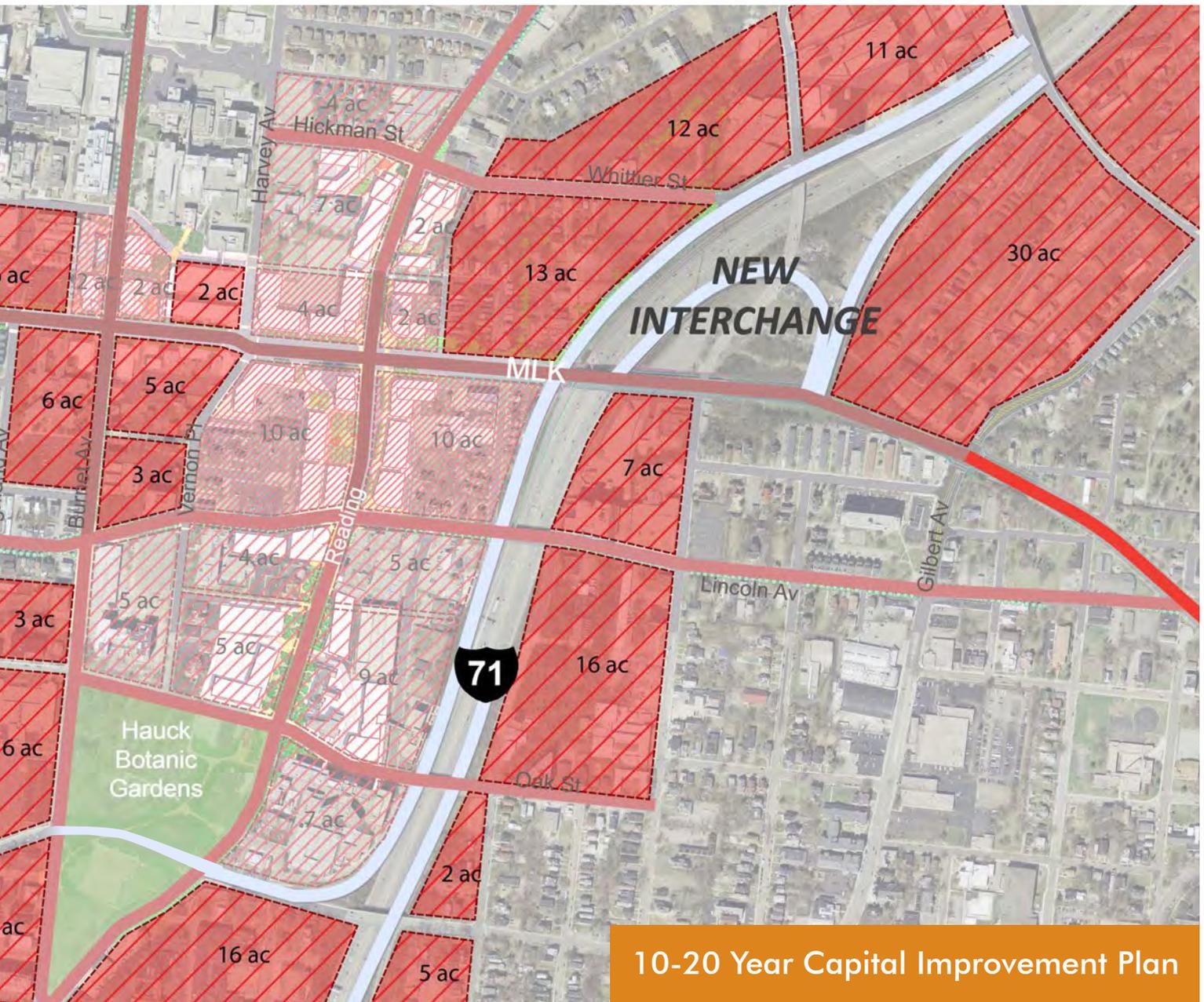


Figure 40

Average Floor to Area Ratio: 2.0 FAR
 Re/Development Potential: 15 MILLION gsf

1. Continue to infill along MLK, Burnet, and Reading.
2. Continue to incentivize and develop knowledge clusters along the Reading/I-71 corridor.







Figure 42



“The plan should reflect the community’s vision for a vibrant, diverse, healthy and growing mixed use corridor within the Cincinnati region.”



Priorities & Next Steps

Next steps from this study to move into active implementation include:

- Continue to utilize existing funding to pursue a capital improvement plan to accelerate upgrades to key areas of the streetscape in the corridors.
- Establish a robust set of design and development guidelines in order to give the local community a blueprint in conjunction with the local development community.
- Develop a strategy for attracting complementary research and development businesses and institutional anchors in support of the vision.
- Rebrand the Uptown district as the Uptown Innovation Corridor. This may involve a new logo/signage and a targeted effort to market the new vision.
- Explore additional funding opportunities for 'clean and safe' programs within the district.
- Continue to communicate with the Uptown Institutions to understand their plans for growth, managing that impact on traffic and leveraging the opportunity for public/private/institutional partnerships.
- Incentivize several early multi-family projects to help establish an 18-hour community presence within 10-minute walk from existing neighborhood commercial districts. This can be done through financial mechanisms such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF District) used to defray the cost of parking and infrastructure to make development feasible.

“Establish a robust set of design and development guidelines in order to give the local community a blueprint in conjunction with the local development community.”

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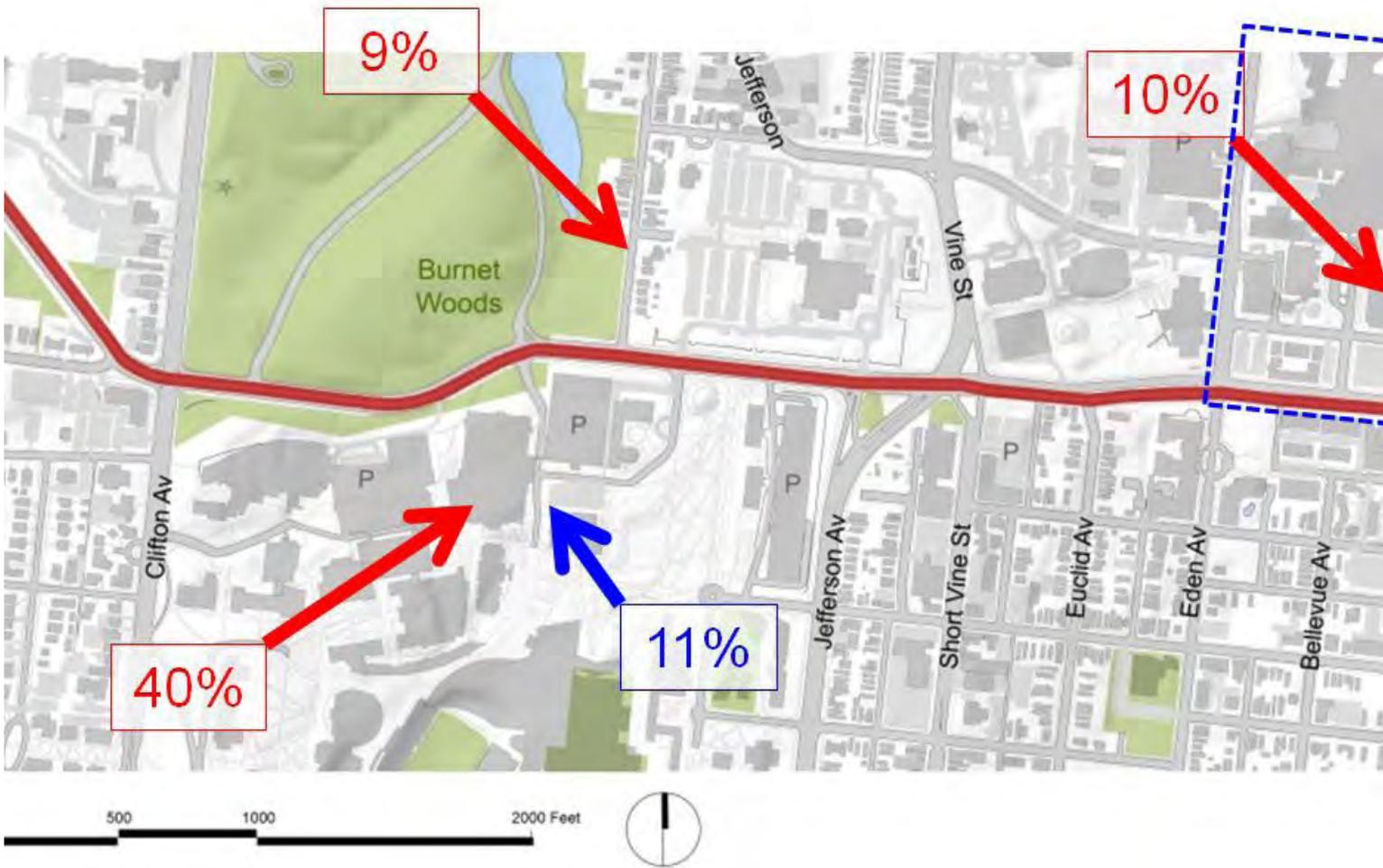




Appendix

Transportation Analysis

Model Case Studies



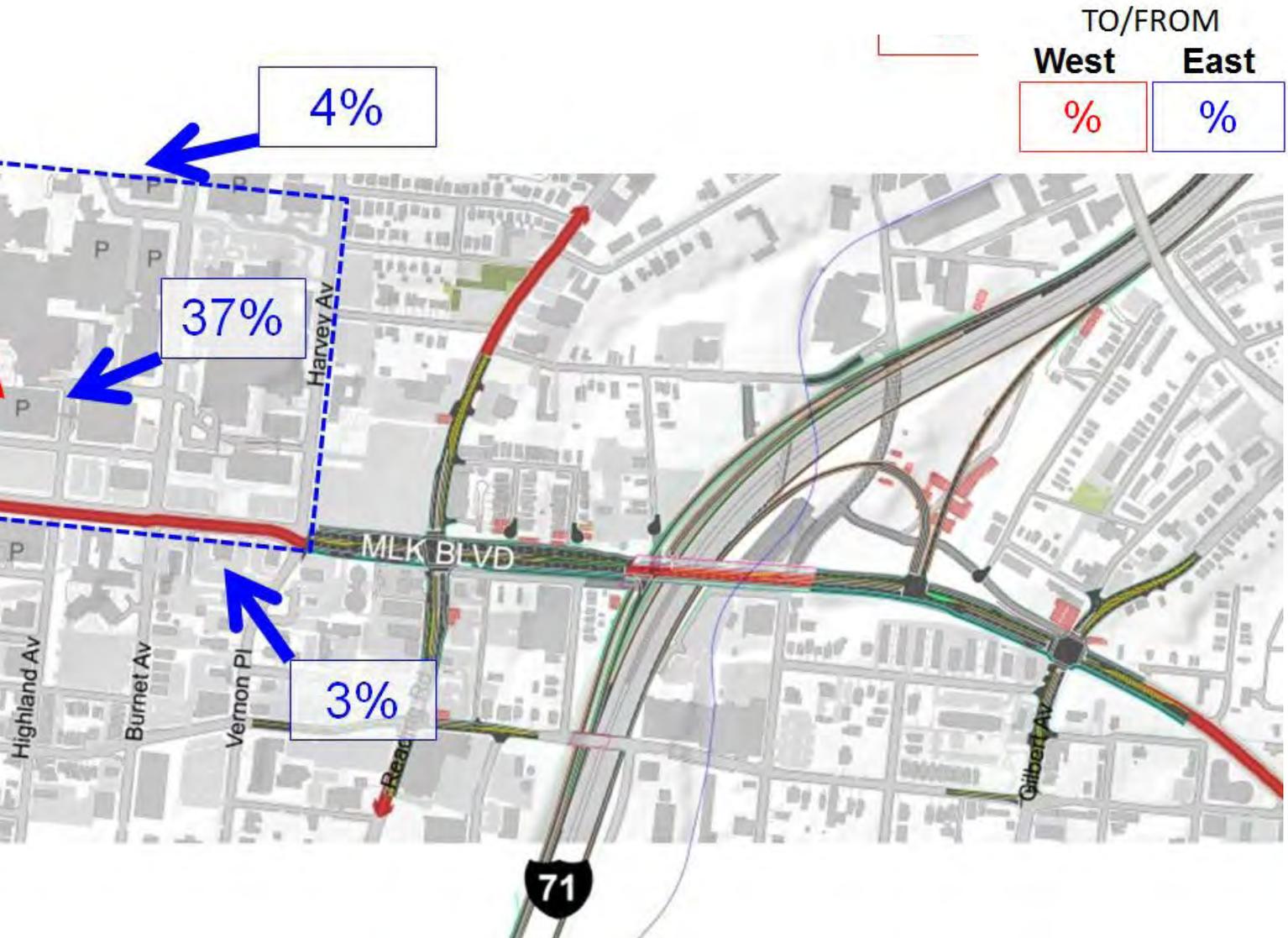
Transportation Analysis

The transportation analysis provides the basis for the urban design scheme, by establishing the capacity requirements for the MLK corridor and determining the appropriate street cross-section and lane configuration. This was achieved by a multi-step process:

- Consulting the transportation modeling and traffic volume projections developed by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the planned I-71/MLK interchange
- Refining the selected road type (the Grand Boulevard) in terms of signal operations, turn lanes and pedestrian crosswalks and integrating the details of the street configuration into the urban design scheme
- Extrapolating those projected volumes along the MLK corridor and testing a variety of road types and lane configurations for their ability to carry the projected volumes and for their influence on the urban/community character

No-Build 2019	Build 2039
31,370	42,660

Table 1. Certified Traffic Volumes on MLK West of I-71



Traffic Generated within the Study Area as a % of all traffic on MLK

Figure 44

Interchange traffic volume projections. In September 2012, in connection with the MLK/I-71 interchange project, ODOT prepared a model of future traffic volumes (“Certified Traffic Volumes”) at intersections along the I-71 corridor, under different project alternatives. Average daily traffic volumes under no-build 2019 and preferred-alternative 2039 conditions were projected for MLK just west of I-71. These volumes were used as an indication of the potential changes in traffic volumes on MLK under the influence of the new interchange.

Extrapolation of projected volumes and Testing of alternatives. Given the large projected traffic volume increase in the MLK corridor, it is important to understand the role that Uptown institutions play in generating vehicular traffic and the degree to which, that influence could be moderated. To do this, the Ohio Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Governments was asked to perform a select link analysis of their regional traffic model, to identify the percentages of trips on MLK that have origins or destinations within the study area. The results, shown in Figure 44, indicate that the Uptown Consortium partners generate a large proportion of the traffic on MLK.



Estimated 2039 AM Peak-hour traffic volumes

Figure 45

Transportation Analysis continued...

The select link analysis, in conjunction with the Certified Traffic Volumes, provides a basis for estimates of traffic volumes on the side streets, which give access to the Uptown institutions and the parking that serves them. These estimates, stated in terms of peak hour turning movement volumes, were input into a model of the study area, which were used to evaluate the capacity requirements of the MLK corridor and the alternative road configurations under consideration. The estimated AM peak-hour traffic volumes are shown in Figure 45.



Projected 2039 AM Peak-hour Levels of Service

Figure 46

Figure 46 shows calculated Levels of Service given the lane configuration of the Grand Boulevard alternative. The traffic analysis provides confirmation that, despite the increase in traffic that will be induced through the MLK corridor by the I-71 interchange, volumes will be manageable by a basic six-lane cross-section with turning lanes at intersections – the same as exists today. This finding validates the urban design scheme and the public participation process, which selected the Grand Boulevard concept as the alternative that best supports the goals of both the institutions and the residential/commercial neighborhoods in Uptown.

| Transportation Analysis continued...

Refining the Grand Boulevard. The integration of the traffic model with the land use plan enabled the consultant team to develop the details of the Grand Boulevard concept and to ensure that critical features such as planted medians, street trees and wide sidewalks will be feasible given the traffic volumes that MLK will carry. Figure 47 shows a typical detail. While continued monitoring will be necessary to track changing traffic conditions under the influence of the new I-71 interchange, the I-75 Hopple interchange reconstruction and institutional/ residential/ economic development, the Grand Boulevard concept is feasible and is recommended as an integral feature of the Uptown MLK corridor plan.



Integration of traffic and urban design schemes (crosswalks not shown)

Figure 47

Management elements. The analysis, showing that a large proportion of all traffic on MLK is generated within the study area, indicates that managerial efforts of the Uptown institutions could significantly influence the traffic volumes and capacity requirements on MLK. If Eden and Harvey Avenues were developed as a loop road, a portion of the traffic on the center section of MLK could be diverted to parking facilities north of MLK. Furthermore, Transportation Demand Management measures could be implemented which would reduce the auto-dependence of commuters while strengthening the community fabric:

- Unified medical area shuttle bus provides local service
- Employee parking assigned by corridor of approach
- Bicycle accommodations
- Public transit focuses on MLK – Metro routes meet Uptown shuttles
- Walkable streets (trees, safe crossings, wide sidewalks)
- Use of medians provide safe crossing for pedestrians and offer queues for Left and U-turns at signalled intersections.
- Parking access routes focus on Vine, Burnet, lower Harvey
- Local living initiatives

Model Case Studies *(Useful tools for development)*

Cleveland University Circle Inc.

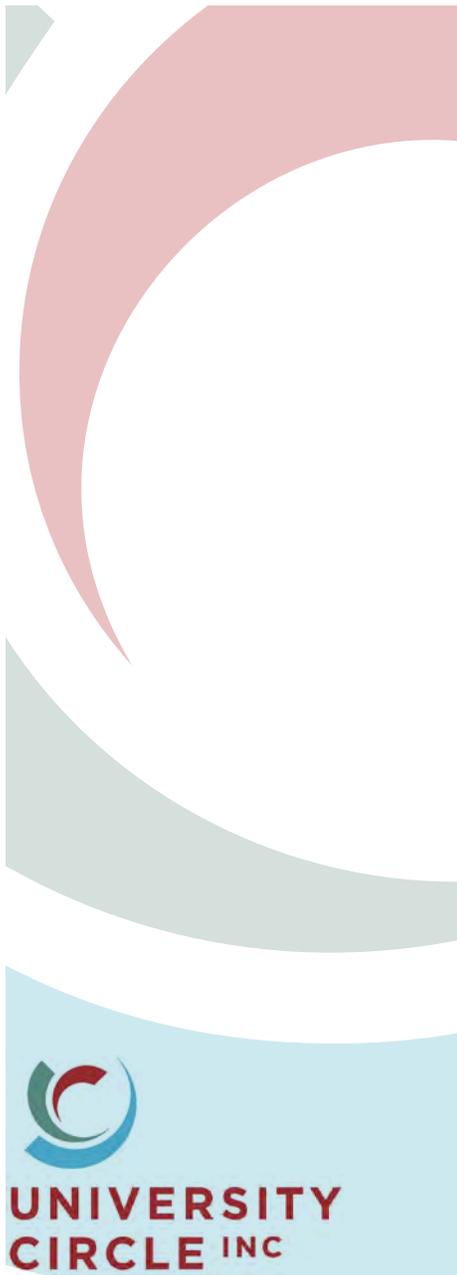
www.universitycircle.org

UCI is the development, service and advocacy organization responsible for the growth of University Circle as a premier urban district and world-class center of innovation in health care, education and arts & culture. University Circle, Inc. (UCI) is the community service corporation creating a premier destination for everyone to experience.

East Baltimore Development, Inc.

EBDI is supported by public and private partners, including the U.S. Government, the State of Maryland, the City of Baltimore, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Johns Hopkins Institutions, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies and others.

When completed, the project will include 2,100 units of mixed income home ownership and rental housing units, 1.7 million square feet of life sciences research and office space, a new 7 acre community learning campus with an early childhood center, a public K- 8 elementary school, fresh food stores and other neighborhood-serving retail amenities, green spaces and a new community linear park.



MASCO

MASCO is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing Boston's Longwood Medical and Academic area (LMA) for the benefit of those who live, work, study or receive care in the area.

MASCO's mission is to pursue programs that promote a sense of community among its members and to deliver services that are more efficiently developed collaboratively. MASCO and its family of organizations offer a wide range of services including area planning and development, parking and transportation, collaborative purchasing, a call center and child care.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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