

T E N N E S S E E

CITY OF MURFREESBORO

NORTH HIGHLAND

AVENUE PLANNING STUDY

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In developing the North Highland Avenue Planning Study, the Ragan-Smith, Common Ground, Sterling Communications and Randall Gross Development Economics team worked closely with City of Murfreesboro Officials and members of the Steering Committee. This plan could not have been possible without the time and efforts put forth by the following:



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The City of Murfreesboro recognizes the importance of the North Highland study area in shaping its future. The primary goal of the study is to “Present possible land use patterns and development scenarios and implementation strategies that will create a plan for future growth, create a positive sense of place, connect to the surrounding community and its positive historic elements, and increase economic vitality.” The Murfreesboro 2035 Plan “Our Future Begins Now” recommends planning and master plan studies for specific areas like the North Highland Avenue Planning Study. The first step in developing the North Highland Avenue Planning Study was to establish the key goals and objectives for the study itself. The key goals and objectives are as follows:

Economic Growth and Development:

- *Provide an economic overview of the study area to evaluate employment, population, market conditions, and establish recommendations for capturing market potentials and economic growth. Proposed land use patterns and development scenarios will integrate market conditions as a consideration for growth and development.*

A Clear Pattern to Establish Future Land Use:

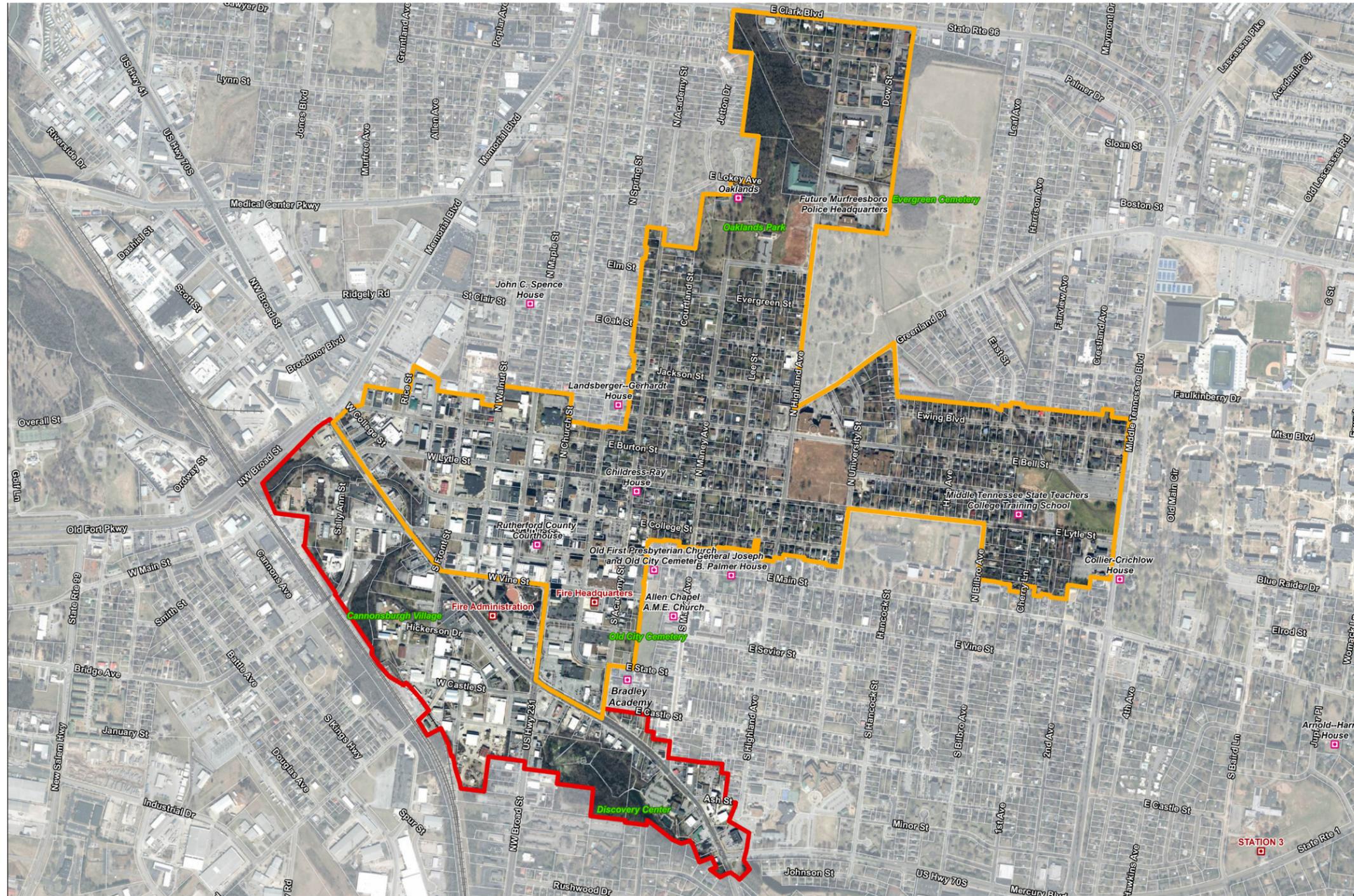
- *Map a clear plan to capture character areas and shape specific land use patterns in the study area. Potential development scenarios along with precedent imagery will be established to help visualize how future growth and development might function and feel.*

A Strong Plan to Preserve Community Character:

- *Establish potential design parameters that suggest how buildings, streets and landscapes will be shaped as they develop. Address issues that affect the quality of life for residents and visitors of Murfreesboro, while also preserving and enhancing cultural qualities found in the study area.*

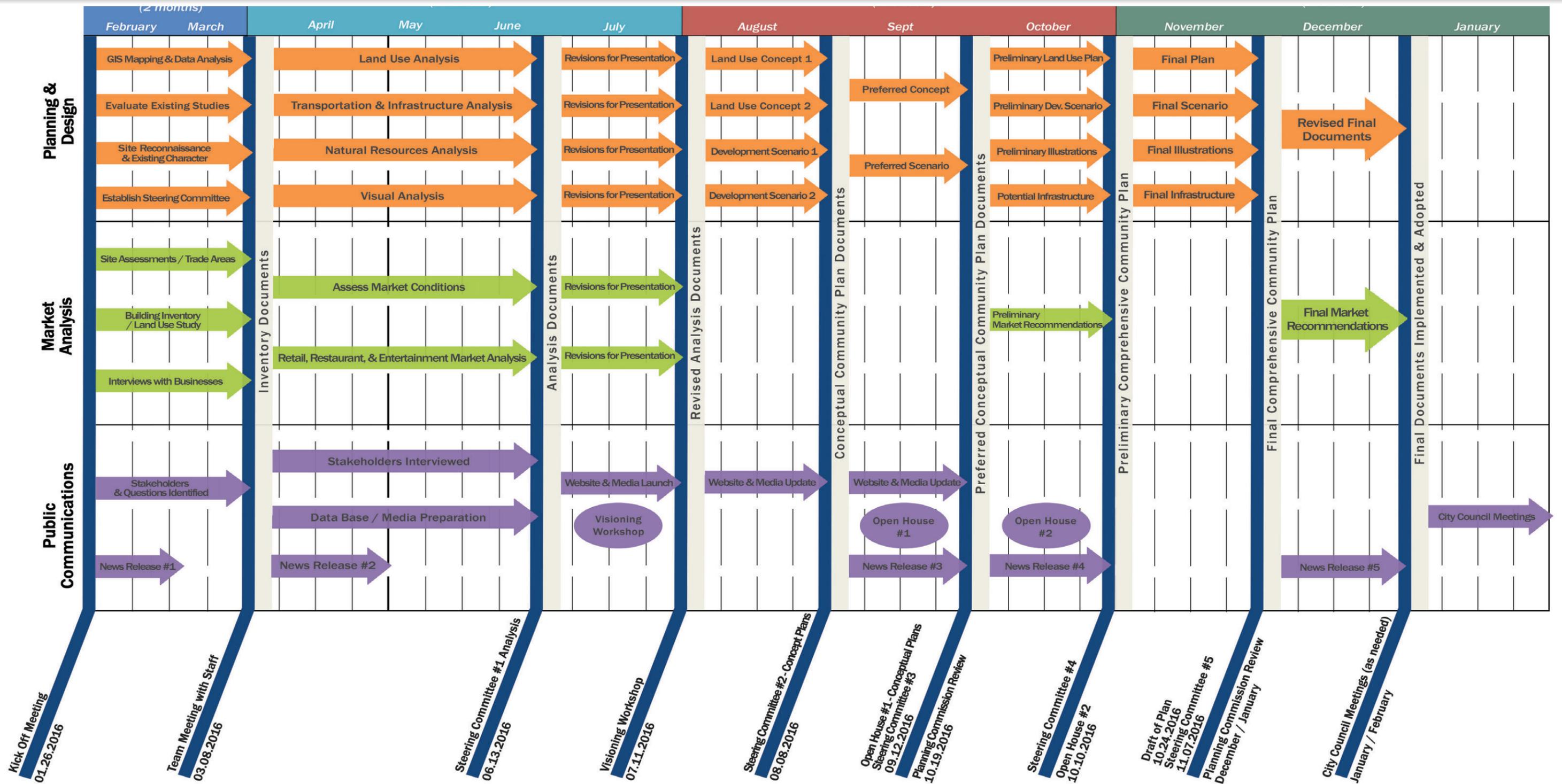
Planning for Good Transportation, Utility, and Environmental Infrastructure Needs:

- *Anticipate the impact of redevelopment, establish a clear plan for addressing environmental assets, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, streetscape character, and connecting the surrounding community, and to make provisions to expand existing infrastructure to accommodate future growth in the study area.*



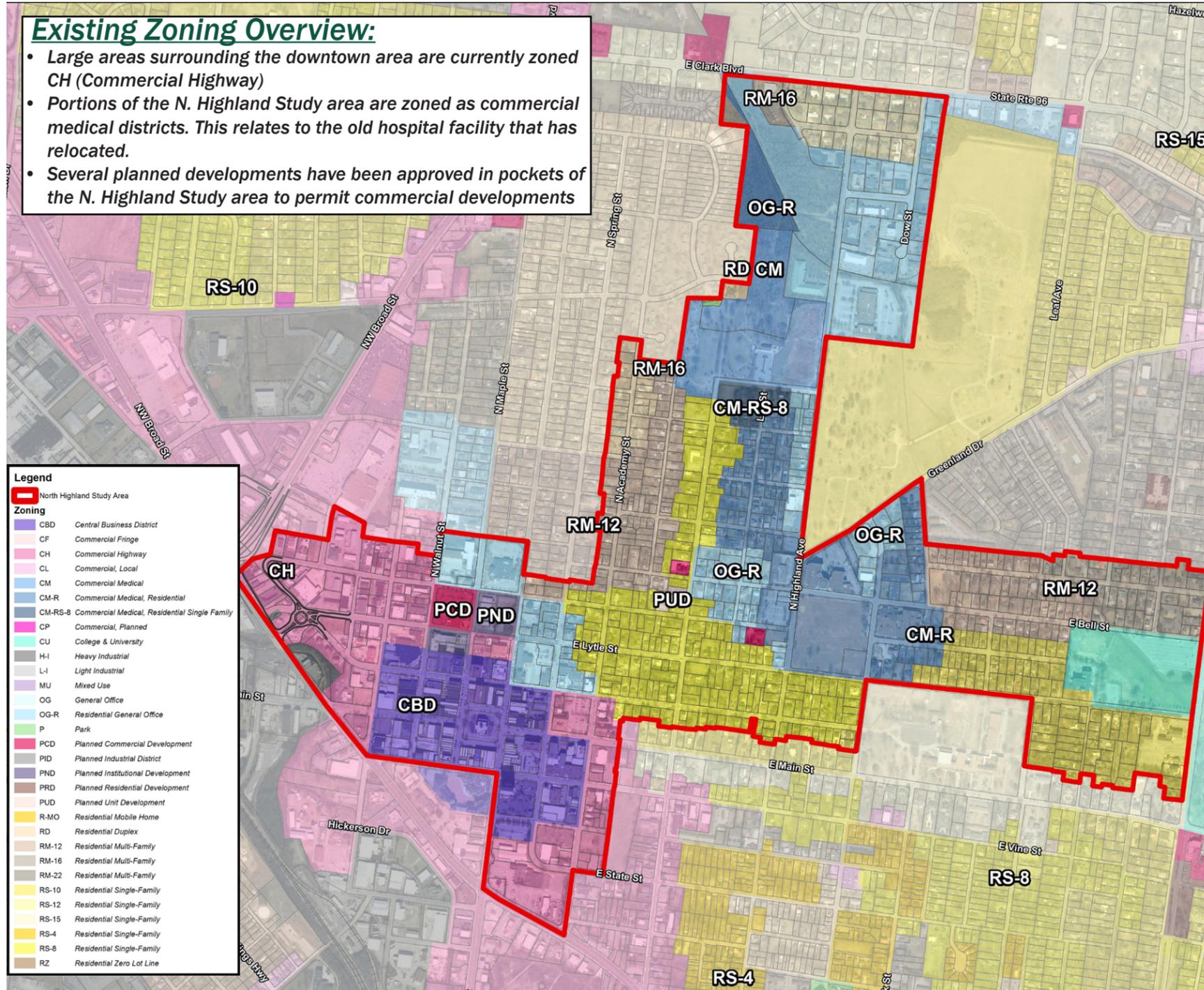
Project Limits Overview:

- The Study area centers on Lytle Street as its east - west axis and North Highland Avenue as its north - south axis. It includes the existing central business district, the county courthouse, square and the neighborhoods that surround it. This area is at the historical center of the city and the old Dixie Highway took travelers through the square in the 1930s and 1940s. An urban renewal program was funded in the 1950s to take U.S. Highway 41 (Broad Street) through the heart of Murfreesboro and connect it to Nashville. In the process of making room for the highway a working class neighborhood was demolished along with the cotton gins, barbers, mills and other businesses that had filled this area. This created a division between the downtown area and the remaining land to the south-west of Broad Street. This divisional edge still exists today along the southeastern margin of the North Highland Study Area.
- The North Highland Avenue Planning Study area has an adjacent area that also is being studied, the Historic Bottoms Planning Study. The two study areas meet at N. W. Broad St. with the intent of integrating the two areas together. While the economic market analysis and planning concepts include both study areas together, each study has its own unique aspects highlighted in the findings and recommendations of the plans.



Existing Zoning Overview:

- Large areas surrounding the downtown area are currently zoned CH (Commercial Highway)
- Portions of the N. Highland Study area are zoned as commercial medical districts. This relates to the old hospital facility that has relocated.
- Several planned developments have been approved in pockets of the N. Highland Study area to permit commercial developments



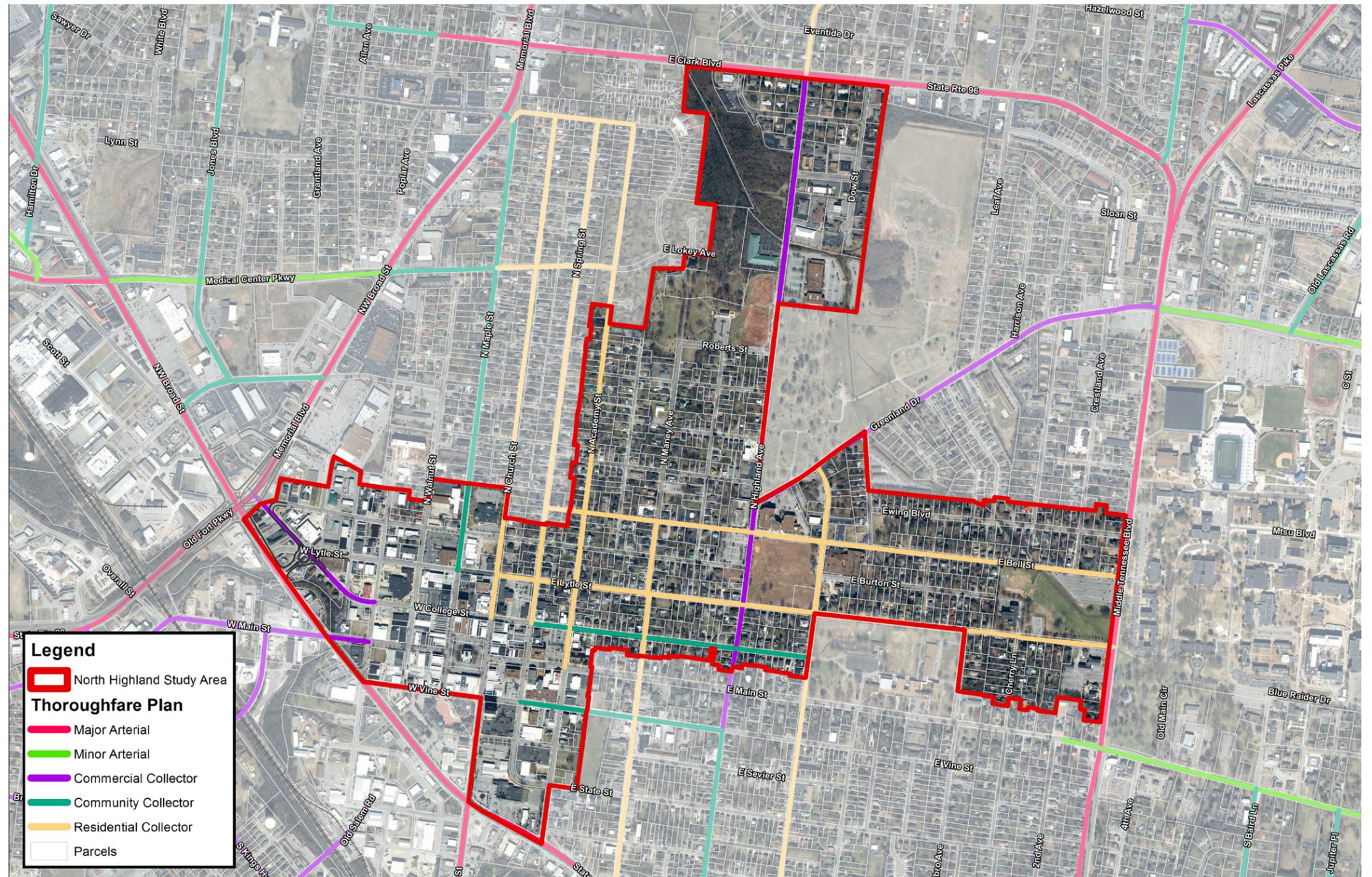
Existing Zoning Description:

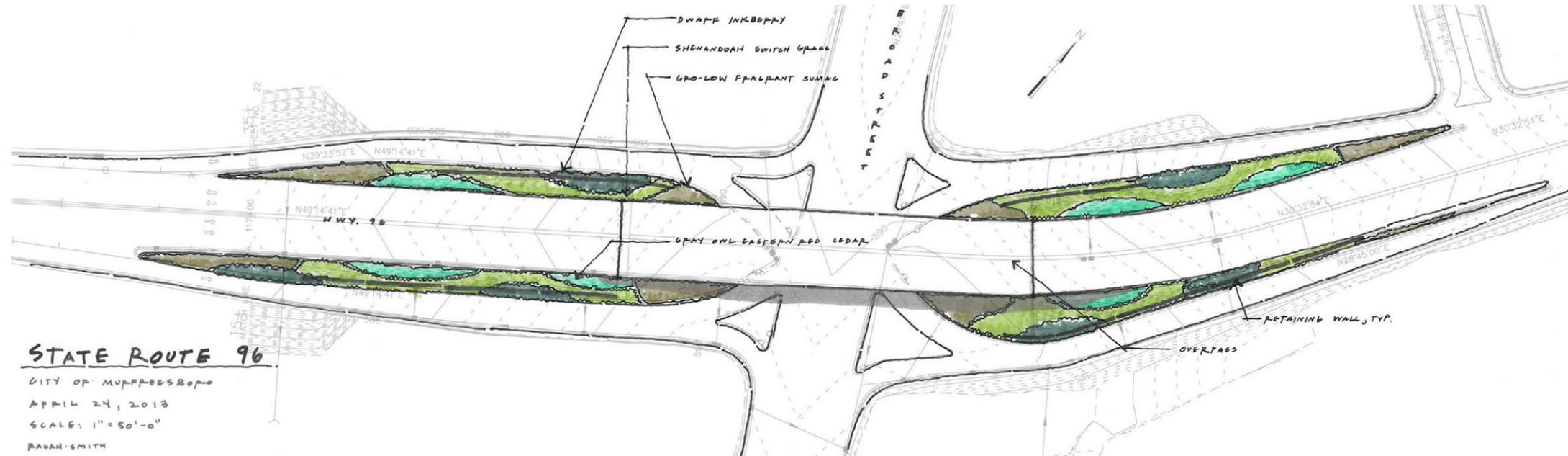
Below is a list of the zoning districts that are within the N Highland Study Area along with a formal description of each:

- **CBD** - This district is to provide a zoning category which allows the maintenance and development of use which will reinforce the vitality of the central business district as a residential and employment center and as the commercial, governmental, and cultural center of Murfreesboro.
- **CH** - This district is intended to permit the development and continued maintenance of general commercial uses located in a linear fashion along highways and near transportation facilities and industrial areas.
- **CM** - The purpose of this district is to provide a zoning category devoted primarily to health-related uses.
- **CM-R** - The purpose of this district is to provide a zoning category devoted primarily to health-related uses. The minimum lot and yard requirements, maximum height, maximum gross dwelling unit density and the land use intensity ratios which govern any use in this district are listed on Chart 2 (Lot Requirements) in the Murfreesboro Zoning Ordinance.
- **PCD** - Planned Commercial District: Any planned development for a land use, uses, or combination of uses permitted by right or special permit as indicated in the commercial section of Chart 1 (Uses Permitted by Zoning District) in The Murfreesboro Zoning Ordinance.
- **PND** - Planned Institutional District: Any planned development consisting of a combination of uses permitted by right or by special permit in a combination of the zoning districts indicated on Chart 1 (Uses Permitted by Zoning District) in The Murfreesboro Zoning Ordinance.
- **PUD** - Planned Unit District: Any planned development for a land use, uses, or combination of uses permitted by right or special permit as indicated in the institutional section of Chart 1 (Uses Permitted by Zoning District) in The Murfreesboro Zoning Ordinance.
- **RD** - This district is intended to permit the development and maintenance of residential areas characterized by single and two-family dwellings on lots of at least eight thousand square feet
- **RM-12** - This district is intended to permit the development and maintenance of residential areas characterized by a broad range of residential housing types including single-family, two-family, three-family, four-family and multiple-family dwellings up to three stories in height.
- **RM-16** - This district is intended to permit the development and maintenance of residential areas characterized by a broad range of residential housing types including single and two family dwellings and multiple-family dwellings up to three stories in height.
- **RS-8** - This district is intended to permit the development and continued maintenance of single family residential areas characterized by relatively low overall density with lots of at least eight thousand square feet per dwelling unit.
- **RS-15** - This district is intended to permit the development and continued maintenance of single family residential areas characterized by relatively low overall density with lots of at least fifteen thousand square feet per dwelling unit.
- **OGR** - This district is intended to permit offices and associated administrative, executive, and professional uses, and residential uses and specified institutional and limited retail commercial uses.

Transportation Overview:

- Lytle Street roundabout will change access opportunities
- Memorial Boulevard will become an improved overpass with off ramps onto Broad
- The volume and traffic on Broad Street is a major barrier to pedestrian crossings
- Proposed improvements will continue on North Maney Ave.
- A stronger bike and pedestrian connection between MTSU and the CBD is encouraged
- Possible extension of Medical Center Parkway was explored but deemed to be in conflict with the environmental conditions of Sinking Creek and park expansion of Oaklands Mansion.
- These road classifications are based on 2025 Major Thoroughfare Plan GIS data as depicted as of September of 2016.





Transportation Projects Overview:

Major roadway infrastructure changes have been in motion within and adjacent to the study area. The Lytle Street and N.W. Broad Street intersection has been redesigned. The Memorial Boulevard Bridge project will cross over N.W. Broad Street creating a limited access intersection, and major streetscape improvements have been implemented on Maney Avenue.

Bridge Over Broad project:

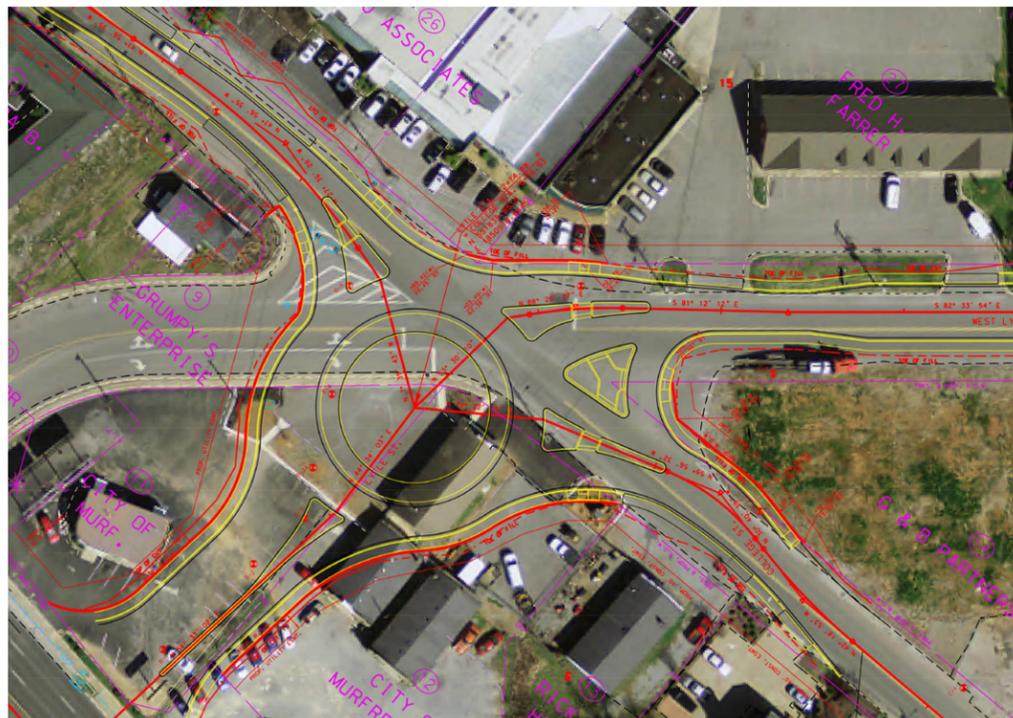
- New interchange at Broad Street, Memorial Boulevard and Old Fort Parkway.
- The \$17.6 million TDOT project will separate traffic on Broad Street and Hwy 96 (Old Fort Pkwy) by eliminating the existing at grade intersections and building a new bridge at one of the state's busiest intersections.
- Additionally, there will be enhanced lighting, landscaping, aesthetic treatments of the retaining walls, sidewalks, and curb and gutters.

Lytle Street Roundabout & Realignment:

- This companion project to the larger Bridge Over Broad project relocates and reconstructs several blocks of Lytle Street and constructs a roundabout at the intersection of Lytle and College Streets.

S. Maney Avenue Street Improvements:

- The City of Murfreesboro has invested into improving public infrastructure along S. Maney Ave. between E. College and S.E. Broad Street. Improved crosswalks, street canopy trees and formal on street parking with "bump out" islands were designed and implemented. These improvements have helped create a sense of place, and improve environmental conditions along the street. The same improvements are planned to continue on N. Maney Ave. past E. College. These improvements exemplify opportunities for future streetscape enhancements in other areas of the study with possible adjustments to on-street parking.



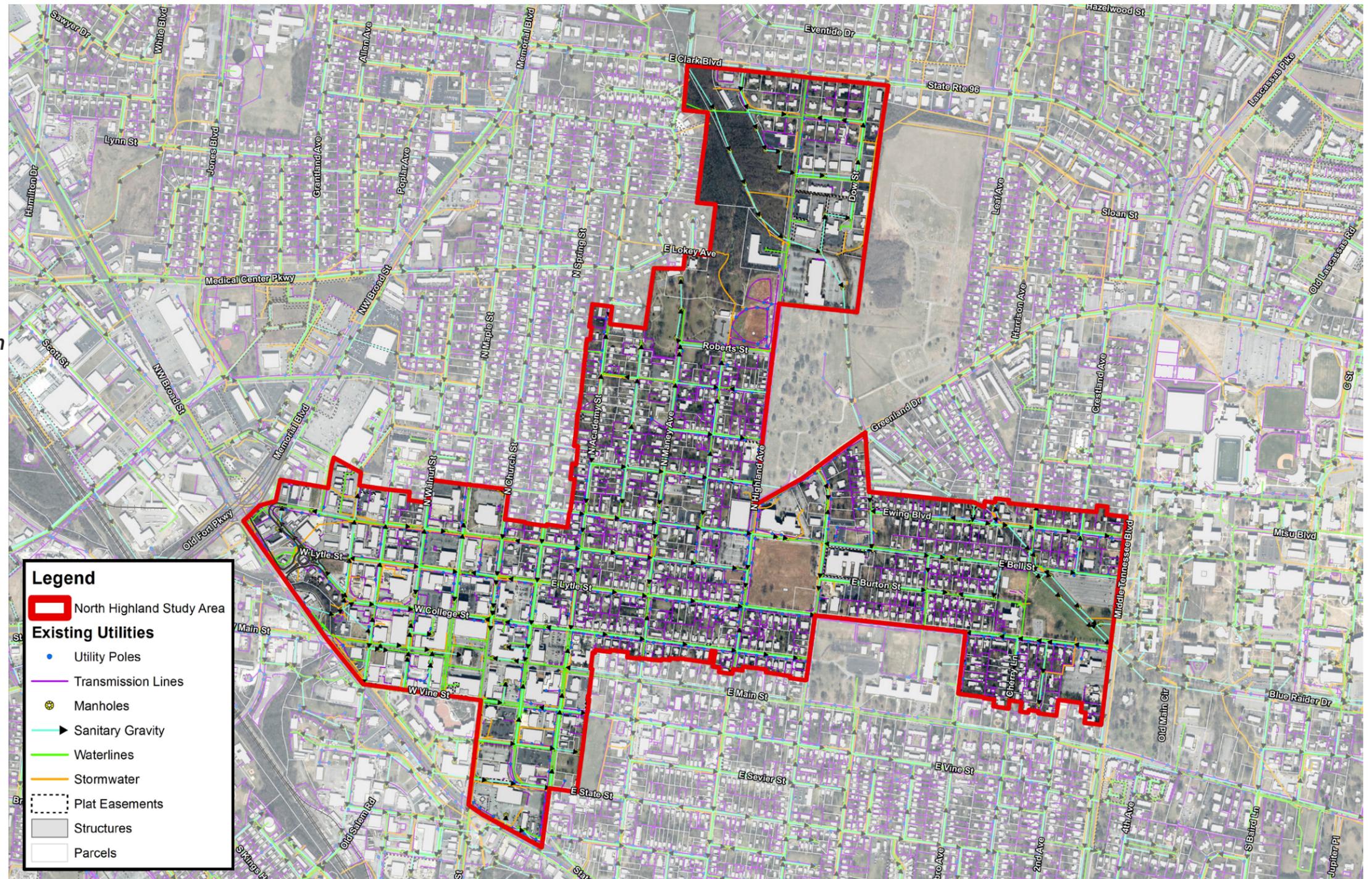
Roundabout at Lytle St. and W College St. Currently Under Construction

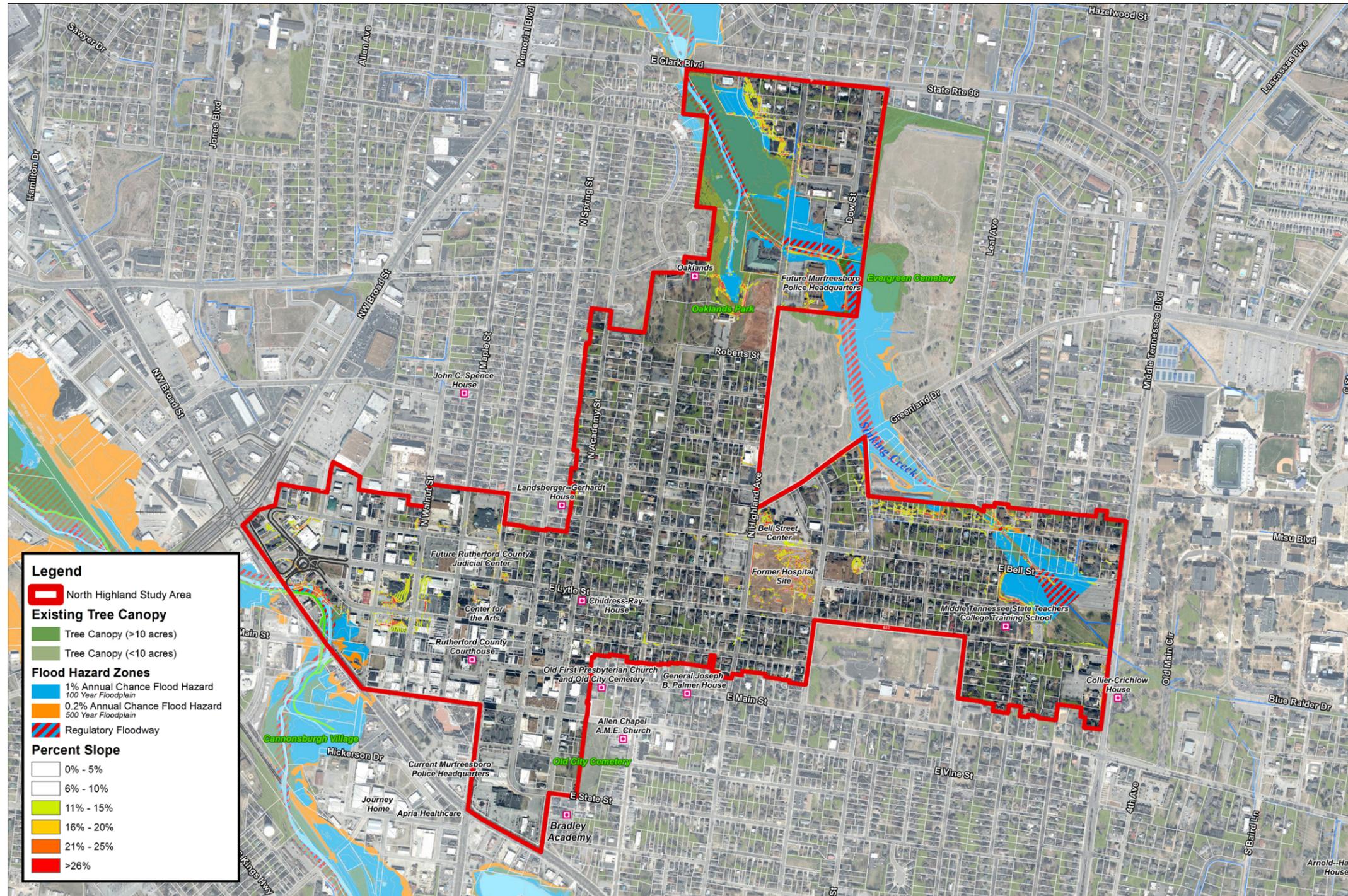


S Maney Ave. Street Improvements

Utility Overview:

- Initial Feedback on water and sewer capacity for this area is positive
- Storm drainage infrastructure on part of Maney Avenue and at Church and Broad is in need of replacement
- Water services in the CBD and surrounding area are problematic for commercial development (fire sprinkler requirements)
- Grease trap requirements for redevelopment of properties in Downtown District can be a challenge
- Water and Sewer line size and type is available at the Murfreesboro Water & Sewer Department



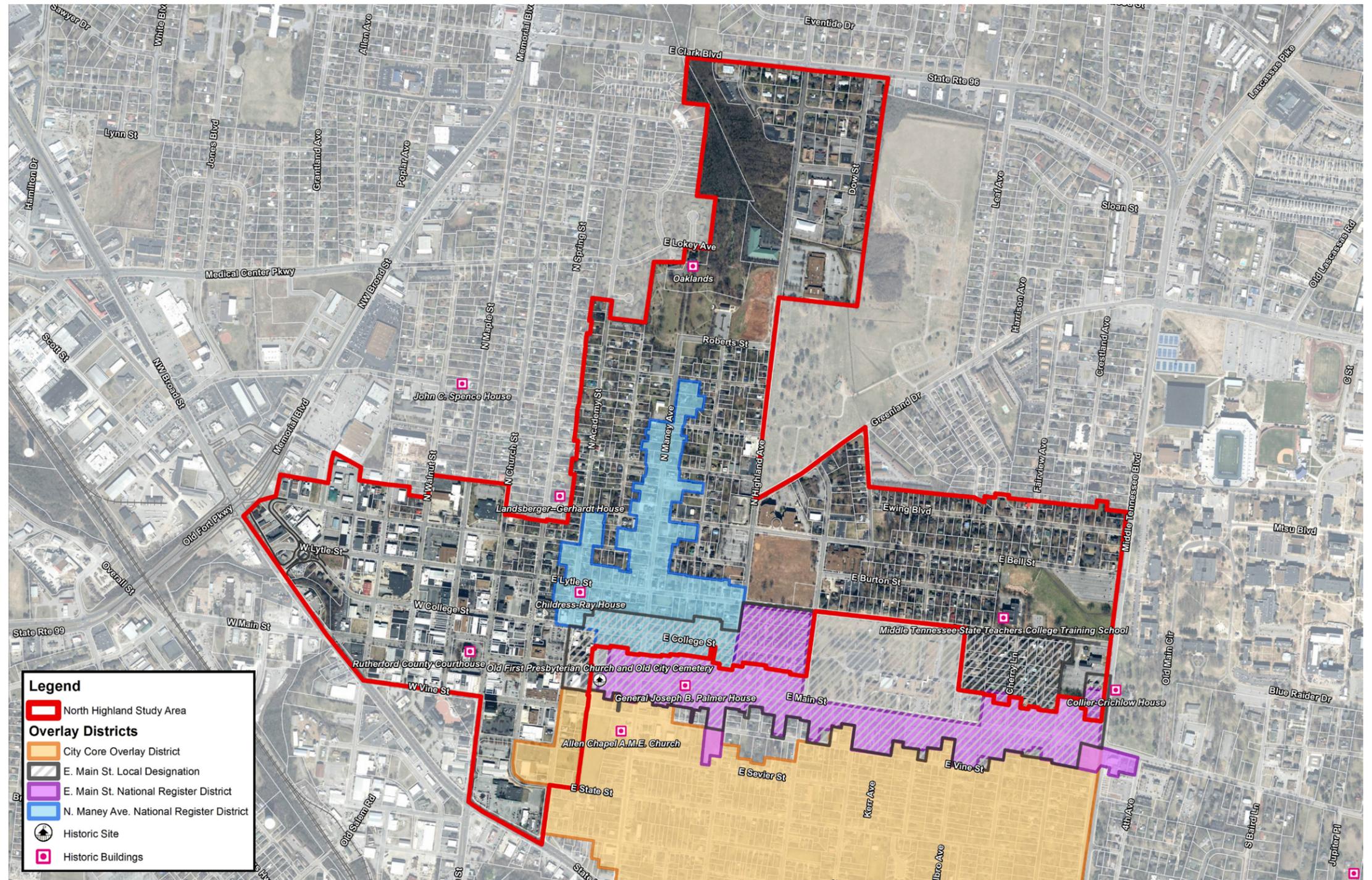


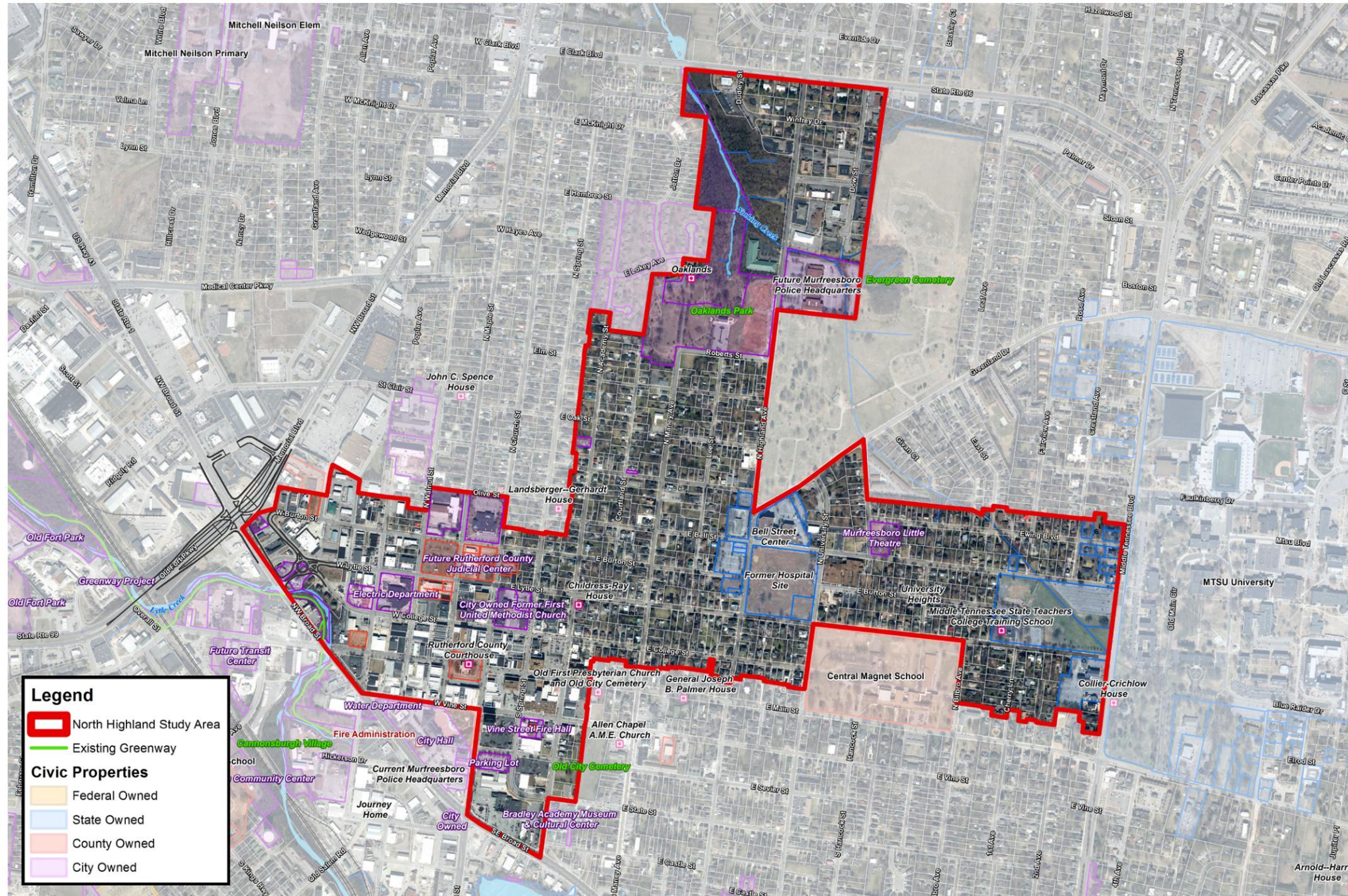
Natural & Cultural Resources Overview:

- Floodway and Floodplain from Sinking Creek is a major impact
- An outdoor performance area has been programmed into the Oakland Park site
- Major events occur (such as Uncle Dave Macon Days) at Cannonsburgh. More events are planned with the incorporation of permanent outdoor stage
- Connections from the square to Cannonsburgh and the Discovery Center need to be improved
- The Bradley Museum and related African American History should be emphasized as part of the cultural opportunities for both the N. Highland Ave. Study and the adjoining Historic Bottoms Study area
- Take advantage of Sinking Creek to create a new greenway
- Connect natural and cultural resources with pedestrian routes

Historic Districts:

- Historic Districts relate mostly to East Main Street and North Maney Avenue
- City Core Overlay District currently relates to south of Main Street but extending it to the north side is under consideration





City Owned Property:

- Several changes have taken place in the study area regarding municipal properties including the development of the future Rutherford County Judicial Center at Maple and Lytle, the new Murfreesboro Police headquarters on North Highland Ave and the acquisition of the Former First United Methodist Church (Franklin Synergy Bank Site) property on North Church Street and East Lytle Street. This property spans an entire city block and is seen as a key parcel in shaping the future development of the study area.
- Another important change in the study area is MTSU's acquisition of the former hospital site at East Lytle Street and North Highland Avenue. This is a large piece of property that has the potential for institutional use and its development will have important implications for the study area. MTSU has no current plans for the property.



Proposed Justice Center

Industry	2009	2015	2009-2015 Change		
			Number	Percent	Per Year
Mining/Constructn	3,471	4,252	781	22.5%	3.2%
Manufacturing	17,942	25,273	7,331	40.9%	5.8%
Utilities	291	733	442	151.9%	21.7%
Wholesale	4,986	5,406	420	8.4%	1.2%
Retail	11,359	13,963	2,604	22.9%	3.3%
Transport/Whse	3,791	5,455	1,664	43.9%	6.3%
Information	2,997	2,686	(311)	-10.4%	-1.5%
Finance/Insurance	2,965	3,565	600	20.2%	2.9%
Real Estate	1,024	1,356	332	32.4%	4.6%
Prof/Tech Svcs	2,155	2,659	504	23.4%	3.3%
Mgt Svcs	785	903	118	15.0%	2.1%
Admin Support	8,004	10,164	2,160	27.0%	3.9%
Education	487	664	177	36.3%	5.2%
Health Care	7,889	13,401	5,512	69.9%	10.0%
Accom/FS	8,810	12,369	3,559	40.4%	5.8%
Arts/Entertainment	704	905	201	28.6%	4.1%
Other Svcs	1,839	2,062	223	12.1%	1.7%
Govt/Education	13,167	16,623	3,456	26.2%	3.7%
TOTAL	92,666	122,439	29,773	32.1%	4.6%
Note:	Non-farm employment only.				
Sources	Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Randall Gross / Development Economics.				



Murfreesboro and Rutherford County form part of the vibrant Nashville-area economic base. Rutherford County is among the fastest-growing job markets in the country, with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics ranking Rutherford fourth out of 3,144 counties nationwide in job growth from 2015 to 2016. That job growth has been accelerating, with the county's overall employment base up by one-third in only six years (for an average growth of 4.5% per year), as compared with a growth rate of 1.5% from 2000 to 2010.

Rutherford County has seen rapid job growth in nearly all sectors, especially in manufacturing, health care, accommodation services, education, administrative services, retail trade, and transportation services.

The City of Murfreesboro has also experienced rapid economic growth in recent years, with employment up by 5.5% per year on average since 2002. Much of that growth has been concentrated in health care services, accommodation, retail trade, and information services. The City and County have worked pro-actively to encourage growth such as through the establishment of the new Gateway medical and corporate node.

While the City and County are experiencing unprecedented economic growth, population and household growth are actually slowing in both the city and the county. Between 2000 and 2010, the city experienced annual population growth of 5.8%, but that growth rate fell to only 2.8% per year between 2010 and 2014, according to Census data. Similarly, the county's annual population growth rate fell from 4.4% (2000-2010) to 2.5% (2010-2014).

Some of this shift in growth is healthy, in that Murfreesboro and Rutherford County residents have an increasing array of job opportunities near home, and new commercial and industrial development helps support their tax base. On the other hand, slower household growth can translate into static labor force growth, which could put the brakes on economic expansion.

A Market Analysis was conducted to determine the potential of the North Highland & Historic Bottoms areas for office development. The complete findings from the market analysis are found in the Appendix report attached to this plan.

Existing:

Sub-Market	Total SF	Occupied	Vacant	Vac Rate	Ave Rent	Ave Age
NW/Northfield	463,676	403,848	59,828	12.9%	\$ 14.98	1995
Gateway/Medical Ctr	903,018	652,498	250,520	27.7%	\$ 19.17	2008
West Murfreesboro	83,281	69,932	13,349	16.0%	\$ 15.93	2004
Southeast	99,010	75,560	23,450	23.7%	\$ 14.56	1996
CBD / Highland Area	1,160,542	743,058	417,484	36.0%	\$ 13.02	1952
Smyrna	172,616	100,498	72,118	41.8%	\$ 14.36	2002
TOTAL	2,882,143	2,045,395	836,749	29.0%	\$ 16.03	1982
Notes:	Based on detailed CBD inventory plus market listings for sub-markets. Includes downtown space that is functionally obsolete or otherwise non-competitive. Excludes Government offices.					
Sources:	Rutherford County Assessor, Commercial Brokers, LoopNet, web sites, Main Street, and Randall Gross / Development Economics.					

Existing Market Conditions:

The Murfreesboro-Smyrna Office Market was inventoried and analyzed for this planning effort. It was determined that this market has about 2.9 million square feet of competitive multi-tenant office space. There are six sub-markets that were identified and defined for this study. The largest of these sub-markets is the Downtown Murfreesboro/Highland Area, which has about 1.2 million square feet of office space. Nearly 420,000 square feet or 36.0% of this space is vacant, based on data collected through the County Assessor, field reconnaissance, and brokers. The inventory excludes Government offices.

Downtown-area rents are averaging about \$13.00 per square foot, which is the lowest among all sub-markets in the Murfreesboro-Smyrna area. The overall average rent is \$16.00 per foot. Much of the downtown space is functionally obsolete or otherwise non-competitive. The average downtown building was built in 1952 and is over 64 years old. This compares with the market average of 34 years (built in 1982) and with Gateway buildings built on average in 2008. Not surprisingly, Gateway rents are much higher, at nearly \$20.00 per square foot. Vacancy in Gateway buildings is also relatively high, but only because many are newer buildings still in lease-up.

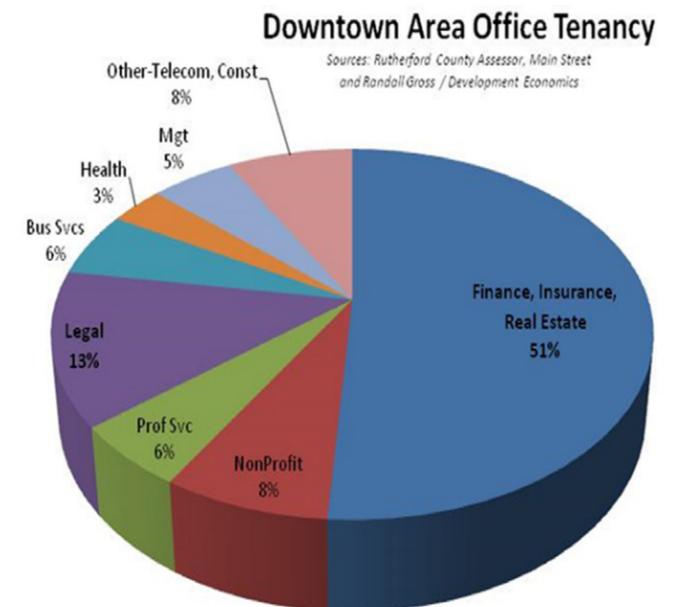
Downtown-area office tenants tend to be oriented to finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE), accounting for more than half of the total. However, law firms also comprise a substantial share (12%) of downtown space and tend to take up ground-floor retail spaces.

Potentials:

Factor	Office Potentials in Square Feet		
	2016-2021	2021-2025	TOTAL
Employment-Driven Demand	367,601	322,754	690,354
Absorption-Based Demand	300,500	332,778	633,278
Average	334,000	328,000	662,000
Historic Performance	15.9%	15.9%	15.9%
Expected Capture	53,000	52,000	105,000
Target Potentials	21.5%	30.9%	26.1%
Targeted Capture	71,500	101,500	173,000
Source:	Randall Gross / Development Economics.		

Downtown/Highland Office Potentials:

The market analysis forecasted potential for development of about 170,000 to 200,000 square feet of new office space within the competitive market. These forecasts were completed based on analysis of employment and industry sector projections, absorption trends, emerging labor force, and competitive positioning in the market. Despite the high vacancy in existing space, downtown has very little Class A office space available to attract or recruit the types of companies that are driving demand in the area. Key target tenants for this space would be move-ups among FIRE and legal firms; but also companies with young workers including administrative services & business process outsourcing, business & professional services, and management services (including headquarters offices).

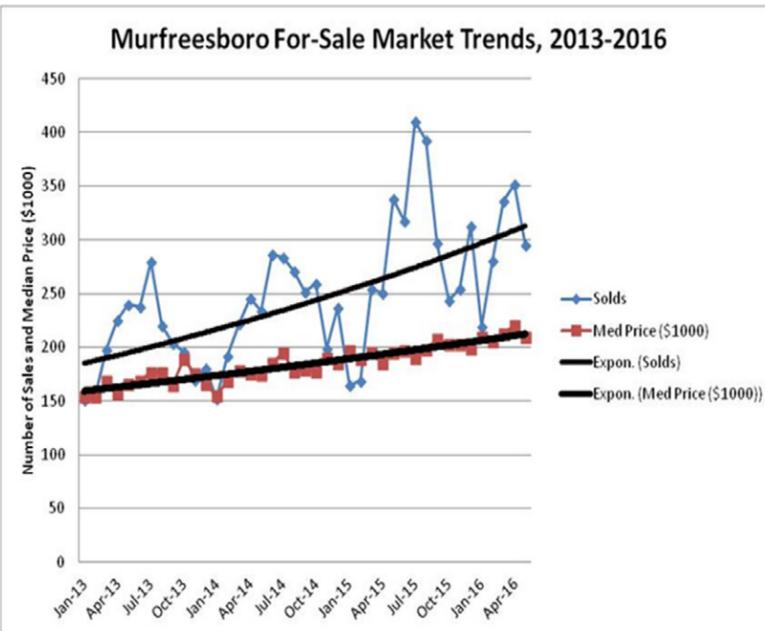




The residential market potentials for the Downtown / North Highland & Historic Bottoms Areas were forecasted based on analysis of demographic forecasts among various niche markets including university-related drivers, housing market conditions, and competitive context. The demand for different types of housing products and price ranges was forecasted as a basis for housing recommendations in the plan.

Existing Conditions:

Sub-Market	Units	Vacant	Rate	Ave Rent	Units UC
Murfreesboro	10,027	460	4.6%	\$ 1,019	1,056
Smyrna/Lvn	3,449	280	8.1%	\$ 933	24
TOTAL/Ave	13,476	740	5.5%	\$ 997	1,080
Market	87,284	4,730	5.4%	\$ 1,050	14,741
Share	15.4%	15.6%	101.3%	95.0%	7.3%
Sources:	Real Data and Randall Gross / Development Economics.				



Potentials:

Rent Range	Area Capture		Market Rate
	Moderate	High	
\$ 200	75	93	-
\$ 400	55	78	-
\$ 600	48	77	-
\$ 900	68	122	95
\$ 1,300	85	164	124
\$ 1,800	44	90	67
\$ 2,300	29	70	49
\$ 3,000	32	104	68
TOTAL	375	625	220
Workforce	177	249	
Sources:	U.S. Bureau of the Census; Nielsen; and Randall Gross / Development Economics.		

Price Point	Area Capture		Market Rate
	Moderate	High	
\$ 106,250	11	13	-
\$ 156,250	27	38	-
\$ 218,750	44	73	58
\$ 281,250	23	46	35
\$ 343,750	7	16	11
\$ 437,500	27	134	80
TOTAL	138	321	105
Sources:	U.S. Bureau of the Census; Nielsen; and Randall Gross / Development Economics.		

Existing Market Conditions:

The combined Murfreesboro/Smyrna-Lavergne (M/SL) housing market has about 14,000 rental housing units in competitive properties throughout the area. This inventory constitutes about 15.4% of the overall Nashville-area rental housing market. There are about 740 vacant rental housing units in the M/SL market, yielding a healthy vacancy rate of 5.5%. This vacancy is relatively consistent with the market as a whole. Rents, however, tend to be lower in the M/SL market than in other parts of Nashville, with an average of \$997 versus \$1,050 market-wide.

More importantly, the M/SL market only has about 1,080 units currently planned or under construction, which constitutes just over 7.0% of the Nashville-area market or about one-half of the expected number (if based on overall inventory). The lack of multi-family housing construction in the Murfreesboro market suggests a shortfall in meeting current market demand, given the rapid increase in employment within this same market. In general, employment growth fuels demand for rental housing, since many professionals and other workers settle in rental housing first before moving up to purchase housing.

Both the number of housing units sold and the median sale price have been increasing in Murfreesboro. The number of sales fluctuates with the seasons but has increased year-on-year since the end of the recession. Median prices have increased on average from about \$150,000 in January 2013 to \$220,000 by April 2016, an increase of nearly 50% in just three years.

Downtown/Highland Housing Potentials:

The market analysis forecasted potential for both rental and for-sale housing products in the Downtown / North Highland & Historic Bottoms areas. Total demand for up to about 625 rental housing units was forecasted through 2021 for the study area. However, a substantial share of this demand would be generated by households with less than the median household income for Rutherford County. Thus, demand for up to about 250 "workforce" housing units was forecasted as a share of the total demand. Demand was forecasted by rent range, based on the amount of housing that would be affordable for each income level. The largest share of market-rate rental units would be generated in the \$900 to \$1,300 rent range.

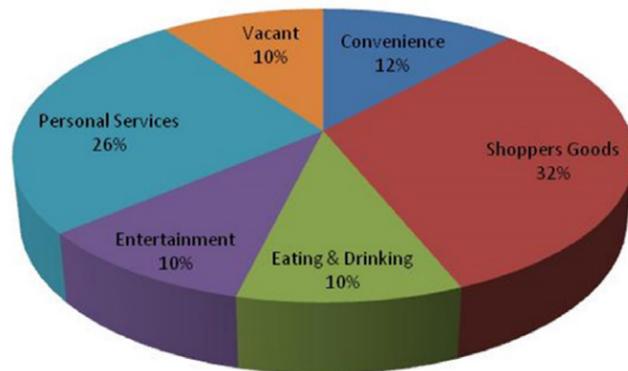
Similarly, potential for up to about 320 for-sale housing units was forecasted for the study area through 2021. This number also includes workforce housing. Demand for about 100 to 125 market-rate units would be generated within the near term. Demand was forecasted by price point, with market-rate prices ranging from about \$218,000 to \$437,000.

A retail market analysis was conducted to determine the existing and future potential for retail businesses and development in the Downtown/North Highland & Historic Bottoms Areas. Key findings are summarized below and detailed in the Appendix Report.

Existing Conditions:

Existing Study Area Retail Business Inventory by Type

Sources: Rutherford County Assessor, Businesses, and Randall Gross / Development Economics



Existing Retail Conditions:

The Downtown / North Highland & Historic Bottoms Areas has about 440,000 square feet of existing retail use in 140 businesses, including 140,000 square feet in shopper's goods (products for which consumers comparison shop), 114,000 square feet in 51 personal service establishments (hair and nail salons, tattoo parlors, etc), 52,000 square feet in convenience uses, 44,000 square feet in entertainment, and 44,000 square feet in eating and drinking establishments.

The Square has significant office use (lawyers and government offices) in ground-floor spaces, reducing overall pedestrian activity and consumer exposure in Murfreesboro's prime commercial node. Interviews with various businesses indicate that sales are increasing, albeit slowly, but they are looking for more destination appeal beyond their traditional market base. Several long-time businesses survive based on a dependence on aging but loyal customers. It's difficult for one or two restaurants or specialty shops to survive without being part of a larger cluster of businesses that establishes downtown as a destination. There is some new excitement on the Square, with the opening of new restaurants including a local Puckett's, an ice cream shop and game business.

About 44,000 square feet of retail space is currently vacant in the area, yielding a vacancy rate of 10.0%. This vacancy rate is relatively high for centrally-managed retail shopping centers, but for disperse retail space located in older and sometimes functionally obsolete buildings, a higher vacancy is not unexpected.

Potentials:

Table 1. SUMMARY RETAIL POTENTIAL BY PRIMARY USE STUDY AREAS, MURFREESBORO, 2016-2021

Type of Good	Gross Demand (SF)		Existing Uses	Warranted Demand
	2016	2021		
Convenience	108,708	125,395	52,234	73,161
Shoppers Goods	273,763	358,491	139,683	218,808
Eating/Drinking	101,834	128,952	43,933	85,019
Limited Service	32,222	37,323	17,584	19,739
Full Service	53,089	72,593	26,349	46,244
Entertainment	96,147	137,149	44,079	93,070
Personal Services	43,260	52,427	114,349	(61,922)
TOTAL	623,711	802,415	394,277	408,138
Existing Vacant			43,901	
Net New Space				364,236

Source: Randall Gross / Development Economics.

Table 2. RECOMMENDED RETAIL MIX, DOWNTOWN MURFREESBORO, 2021

Type of Business	Square Feet
Multi-Use Entertainment Center	100,000
Full-service Restaurants	32,000
Drinking Places	12,000
Sandwich Shops	8,000
Pharmacies, Cosmetics	18,000
Furniture/Art Galleries/Antiques	12,500
Urban Outfitters/Anthropologie, Kinnucans Nielsc	30,000
Outdoor Sports/Rec/Bike	4,000
Book, Music	9,500
Gift, Antiques, Novelty Stores	15,000
Toy/Hobby Store	10,000
Boutiques	10,000
Smoke/Liquor	7,500
Specialty Food Stores	12,000
Jewelry, Accessories, Shoes	10,000
Office Supply	8,000
Florist	3,500
Expanded Art Supply	5,000
Total	307,000

Downtown/Highland Retail Potentials:

Retail potentials were forecasted for the Downtown / North Highland & Historic Bottoms Areas through 2021 based on an analysis of existing market conditions, demographic forecasts within the retail trade area(s), competitive market conditions, and other factors. It was determined that the Downtown/Highland area will generate potential for about 400,000 square feet of warranted additional retail, restaurant, personal service, and entertainment use within the next five years.

There would be potential for about 219,000 square feet of shopper's goods stores, 93,000 square feet in entertainment, 85,000 square feet of eating and drinking space (including nearly 50,000 square feet in full-service restaurants), and 73,000 square feet of convenience goods space. There will be an oversupply of personal services establishments such as hair and nail salons, at least in the near term.

Recommended Retail Tenant Mix:

Based on the findings of the Market Analysis, a recommended tenant mix is provided to inform broader marketing, management and development strategies explained elsewhere in this plan. The recommended tenant mix includes a target of about 310,000 square feet of net new retail uses, with an emphasis on entertainment (80,000 to 100,000 square feet of entertainment uses), full-service restaurants, and urban-scale general merchandise or department stores that target a young, college-educated niche market (e.g., Urban Outfitters, Anthropologie, etc).

Other target uses include specialty food stores (e.g., ethnic or organic groceries), gifts/antiques and novelties stores, jewelry/accessories and shoe stores, toy & hobby store, women's clothing boutiques, drinking places, pharmacies/cosmetics, home furnishings, outdoor sports & recreation, and other businesses. Overall, the recommended mix of businesses would target a younger professional niche market, college students/graduates, day trippers (from Nashville or surrounding counties), and others.



The planning study was conducted in three main phases with the intent of allowing careful analysis of the existing data and identification of key opportunities and constraints followed by the exploration of strategic concepts and the selection and documentation of the best solutions. The three main phases of the study include:

1. *Inventory & Analysis Phase*
2. *Strategic Development Plan with Findings and Recommendations*
3. *Implementation & Strategic Conclusions*

The study was performed using a collaborative approach by assembling a project team that included:

- *City of Murfreesboro Staff, Project Steering Committees and Key Community Stakeholders*
- *The Ragan-Smith team of land planners, transportation engineers and landscape architects*
- *Common Ground Urban Design + Planning*
- *Randall Gross / Development Economics*
- *Sterling Communications*

Ragan-Smith was the lead firm to coordinate efforts throughout all phases of the project.

Project Schedule:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| January 26, 2016: | Kick-off Meeting |
| March 8, 2016: | Site reconnaissance & inventory update meeting with staff |
| April 11, 2016: | Community Stakeholder Interviews
<i>(43 Participants Interviewed)</i> |
| June 13, 2016: | Steering Committee #1 |
| July 11, 2016: | Visioning Workshop |
| August 8, 2016: | Steering Committee #2 |
| September 12, 2016: | Steering Committee #3
Open House #1
<i>(120 Attendees - 299 comments logged on charts)</i> |
| October 10, 2016: | Steering Committee #4
Open House #2
<i>(92 Attendees - 239 comments logged on charts)</i> |
| October 19, 2016: | Planning Commission Review |
| November 7, 2016: | Steering Committee #5 |
| December, 2016: | Planning Commission Workshop Plan Review |
| January/February: | Planning Commission Public Meeting
& City Council Meetings |

*(*63 comments were logged on Facebook over the length of the project)*

Community input was gathered through multiple sources including stakeholder focus groups, Facebook comments, input boards at community events on the square, email input to City staff, public visioning sessions and open house presentations. From this body of commentary, a list of the most common thoughts and ideas have been summarized below.

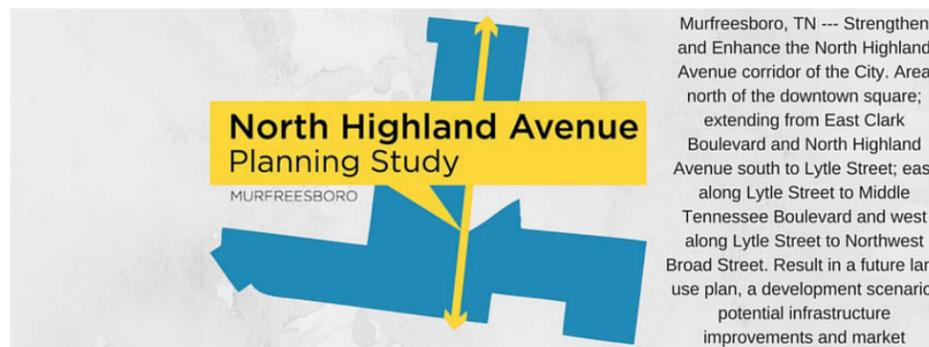


Top 10 Issues from Stakeholder Interviews:

1. Increase the mixture of uses and density of development in the downtown area
2. Seek to draw high quality restaurants and retail to the downtown area
3. Consider ways to highlight the cultural arts in the downtown area
4. Focus on community, walkability and historical interpretation
5. Work to reduce crime and the perception of unsafe areas in the study area
6. Provide for more residential options
7. Attract college students to stay in town during evenings and weekends
8. Recognize and enhance the valuable natural resources of Lytle, Town, and Sinking Creeks
9. Create more social and cultural events and spaces that become a regional draw
10. Provide flexibility for businesses to prosper on the square and in the CBD

Top 6 Big Ideas from Public Visioning Session & Social Media:

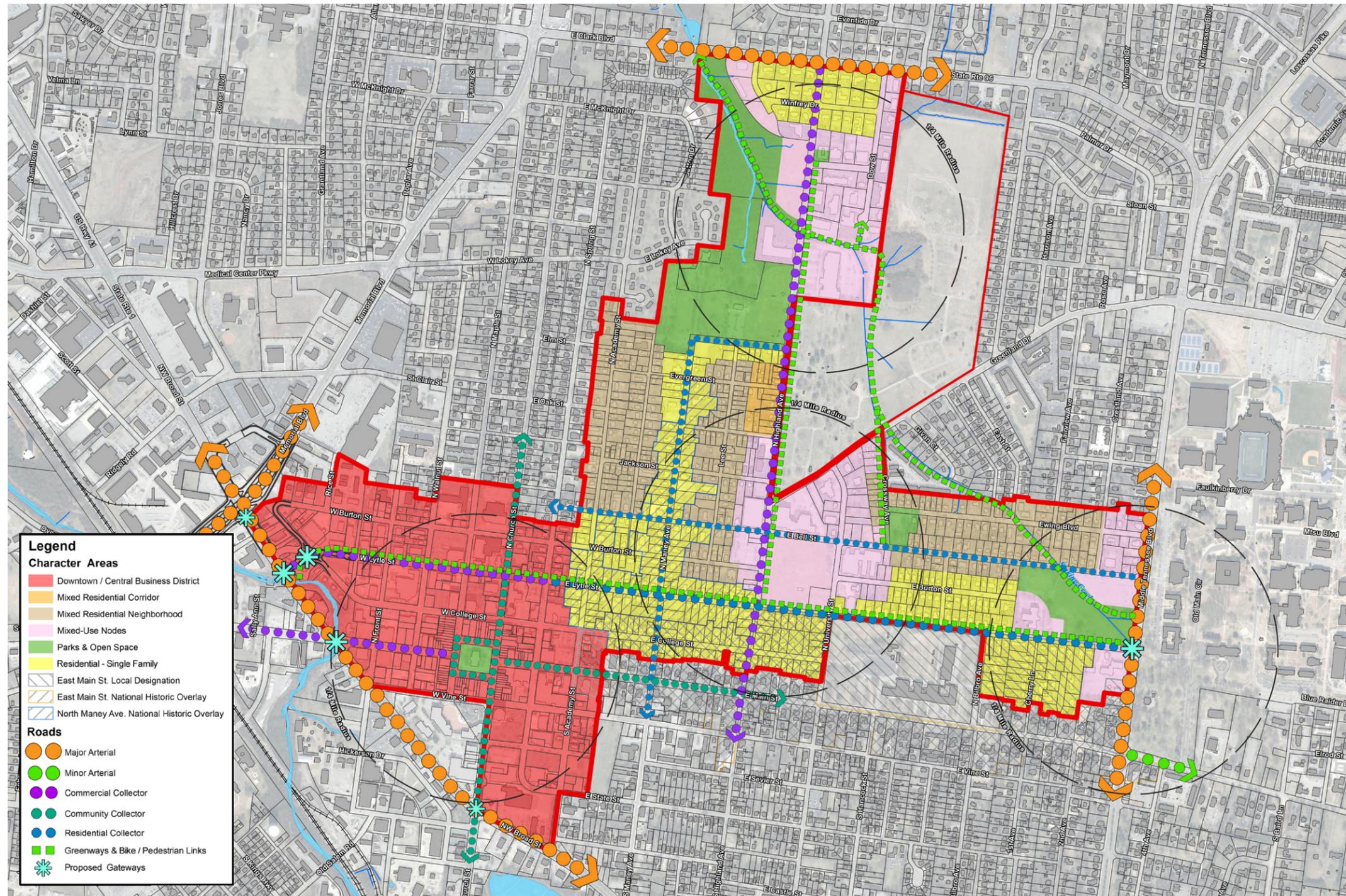
1. Expand the downtown area
2. Encourage a greater mixture of uses including restaurants, retail and increased density
3. Preserve and enhance historical and cultural assets and connect to tourism
4. Increase moderate density residential but also protect historical single family areas
5. Preserve and connect parks and open space
6. Increase mobility (provide more pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit opportunities)





Throughout the planning study process, community involvement, stakeholder input, and steering committee review were given a high priority. Several workshops and public input meetings were held to discuss the project goals, review design concepts, and to gather public input which proved invaluable in the planning process. Six Big Ideas emerged during the analysis and strategic development process for the North Highland Study. During the open house process, public input was gathered regarding the priorities attached to the Big Ideas. The priority summarization outlined in the table below indicates that the idea of expanding the Downtown District is seen as a very high priority. Increasing mobility through the provision of more opportunities for pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit routes is also seen as a high priority. All of the Big Ideas received enough prioritization to warrant them as important, with the remaining four Big Ideas receiving relatively equal weight.

Big Ideas:	1st Priority:	2nd Priority:	3rd Priority:	Total:
Expand Downtown <i>The downtown needs to include more area and to include opportunities for more restaurants, retail, and residential consider an Art & Entertainment District as part of the Downtown area. Continue to Reinforce the Courthouse as the ceremonial, formal civic space in the heart of Downtown.</i>	30	14	6	50
Greater Mixture of Uses & Increased Density <i>Concentrate a greater density and a mixture of commercial / office and residential uses at key development "nodes" in the North Highland area</i>	9	15	3	27
Preservation & Enhancement of Historical & Cultural Places <i>Celebrate the history of Murfreesboro with monuments, interpretive signage and art in public spaces. Connection to the rich musical history deserves special attention.</i>	5	11	9	25
Increase Moderate Density Residential Options / Preserve Historical Streets <i>Provide more residential options in specific parts of the North Highland study area including moderate density housing (5-10 units per acre) like single family cottage homes, duplexes and attached condominiums or townhomes while preserving some of the streets that have a historical single family neighborhood character.</i>	9	5	8	22
Preserve & Connect Parks & Open Space <i>Connect the existing parks, squares, and green space with trails, walkways, and urban greenways. Plan for acquiring and preserving open space in the North Highland study area to balance the anticipated increase in development density of the downtown area and improve health and recreational opportunities.</i>	6	13	9	28
Increased Mobility <i>Provide for more pedestrian, bicycle, and mass transit opportunities especially on streets designated as community and commercial connectors. Stronger connections between MTSU campus, the downtown area, and stronger pedestrian connections across Broad Street.</i>	11	4	17	32



Land Use Designations:

The future land uses were defined by analyzing the existing land use patterns, existing land features, future growth opportunities and the unique qualities of different parts of the study area. These character areas are not proposed zoning changes, but they could be used to shape future zoning policy.

- **Downtown / Central Business District:**
 The square and the historic courthouse make up the heart of downtown. The personal scale and historic character gives a unique feeling to downtown and should be expanded to provide options for mixed-use and residential opportunities.
- **Mixed Residential Corridor:**
 This development area has potential for a moderate to high density residential development with a small mix of office or commercial. Institutional or civic uses could also have potential.
- **Mixed Residential Neighborhood:**
 These areas are residential in character. These areas permit a mixture of housing options that include both detached single-family and two, three, or four unit attached residential buildings. Housing design in these areas should encourage details that relate to the street and keep a pedestrian scale.
- **Mixed-Use Nodes:**
 Opportunities exist to create mixed-use nodes of dense developments at key intersections. These areas are ideal for blending a mixture of residential, commercial and office space together in multi-level buildings.
- **Residential - Single Family:**
 These areas are established to encourage existing single-family neighborhoods to keep their character.

Downtown / Central Business Overview:

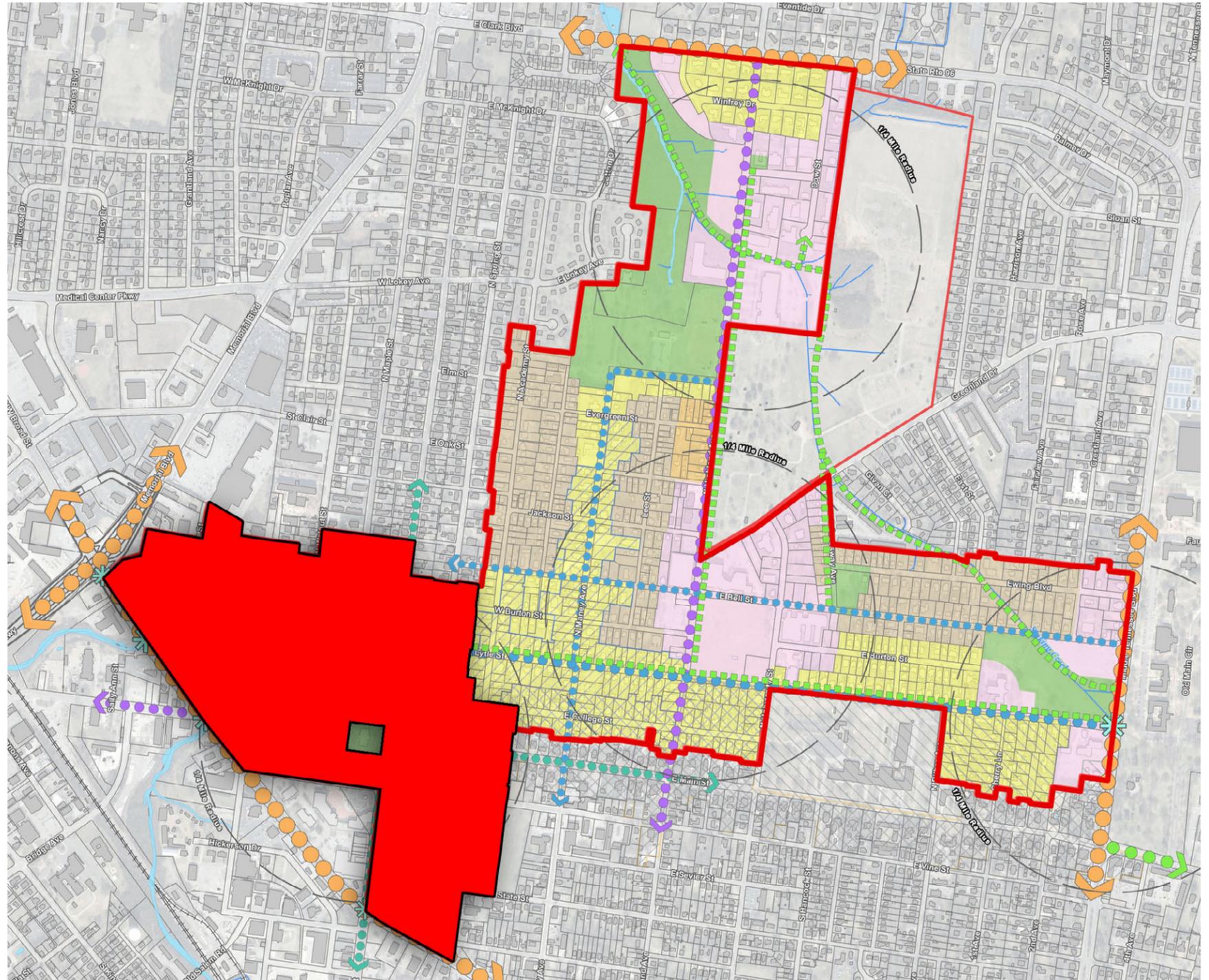
The downtown area in Murfreesboro has its focus on the square and the historic courthouse surrounded by mostly two-story buildings. The area has a historic feeling and a personal scale. However, the size of the existing downtown area is small in scale relative to the population of Murfreesboro. The ground floor use around the square is predominantly office space.

It would be beneficial to expand the area classified as downtown on current zoning maps. This includes expanding the downtown “feeling” to the northwest of the square and across N.W. Broad Street. It would also be good to capture more opportunities for a mixture of retail and restaurant establishments and residential housing opportunities in the expanded downtown area. Capturing residential development is important in providing a spectrum of housing opportunities that respond to the age and economic needs of Murfreesboro residents. Residential development also helps to drive the success of downtown retail and restaurant businesses.

The expanded downtown district needs to become a stronger destination point for visitors and tourists. The district could benefit from a stronger connection to MTSU and should seek to capture the current market demand for urban living and urban amenities.

As highlighted in the Murfreesboro 2035 Comprehensive Plan, growth should “Encourage infill development and redevelopment, which maximizes existing infrastructure, maintains the existing character of neighborhoods, and preserves a compact community form.” The infill and redevelopment opportunities in the expanded downtown district serve to meet this goal.

Specific recommendations that have been discussed for achieving some of the redevelopment goals for the Downtown Central Business District include a possible tax increment financing district, flexibility in code requirements to help reinvestment in older buildings around the square (where possible) and creation of an Art and Entertainment district.





Streetscape:

- Wide Sidewalks (6-12 ft. min.) along public streets
- Street Trees (Appropriate Compact Urban Species)
- Formal On-Street Parking outdoor cafes, plazas, pocket parks, and street amenities encouraged
- Pedestrian scaled street lighting required

Character Setbacks:

- Mixed-use and commercial buildings are placed close to sidewalk
- Residential buildings have shallow setbacks
- Institutional buildings have setbacks appropriate to purpose
- Structured parking placed close to sidewalk with active uses at street level

Use:

- Retail/Restaurant/Entertainment
- Office
- Residential (Multi-family, Single-family Attached)
- Institutional/Civic
- Structured Parking

Building Design:

- Greater emphasis on building design and materials
- Encourage materials consistent with existing downtown character
- Require a high percentage of door and window area on front facades

Landscaping & Screening:

- Allow for greater amount of impervious surface permitted
- Service areas, garage collection and utility boxes and connections provided at the rear of buildings
- Greater emphasis on hardscape details
- Less emphasis on foundation plantings
- Encourage a high level of detail in public spaces (Plazas, Pocket Parks, Streetscapes)

Height:

- 2 Story encouraged
- 4 stories maximum without residential use
- 6 stories maximum with density bonus for including residential

Parking & Access:

- Parking located behind or below buildings
- Access primarily from secondary streets and/or alleys
- Central parking garages utilized



NORTH HIGHLAND AVENUE
PLANNING STUDY

DRAFT
11-22-16

Art & Entertainment District Images





Streetscape:

- 6' Wide Sidewalks & 4' min. planting strip between sidewalk & street
- Street Trees (Appropriate Compact Urban Species)
- Formal On-Street Parking
- Dedicated Bike Lanes

Character Setbacks:

- Residential buildings have shallow setbacks
- Commercial or Office related to street with shallow setbacks

Use:

- Predominantly Residential (Multi-family, Single-family Attached, Single Family)
- Limited Ground Floor Office
- Limited Ground Floor Retail Commercial

Building Design:

- Greater emphasis on building design, materials, & quality
- Flexibility in architectural style

Landscaping & Screening:

- Foundation plantings encouraged
- Parking, loading, & service areas to be screened with landscape

Height:

- 4 story maximum

Parking & Access:

- Parking located behind, below buildings, or in combined lots
- Access primarily from secondary streets and/or alleys

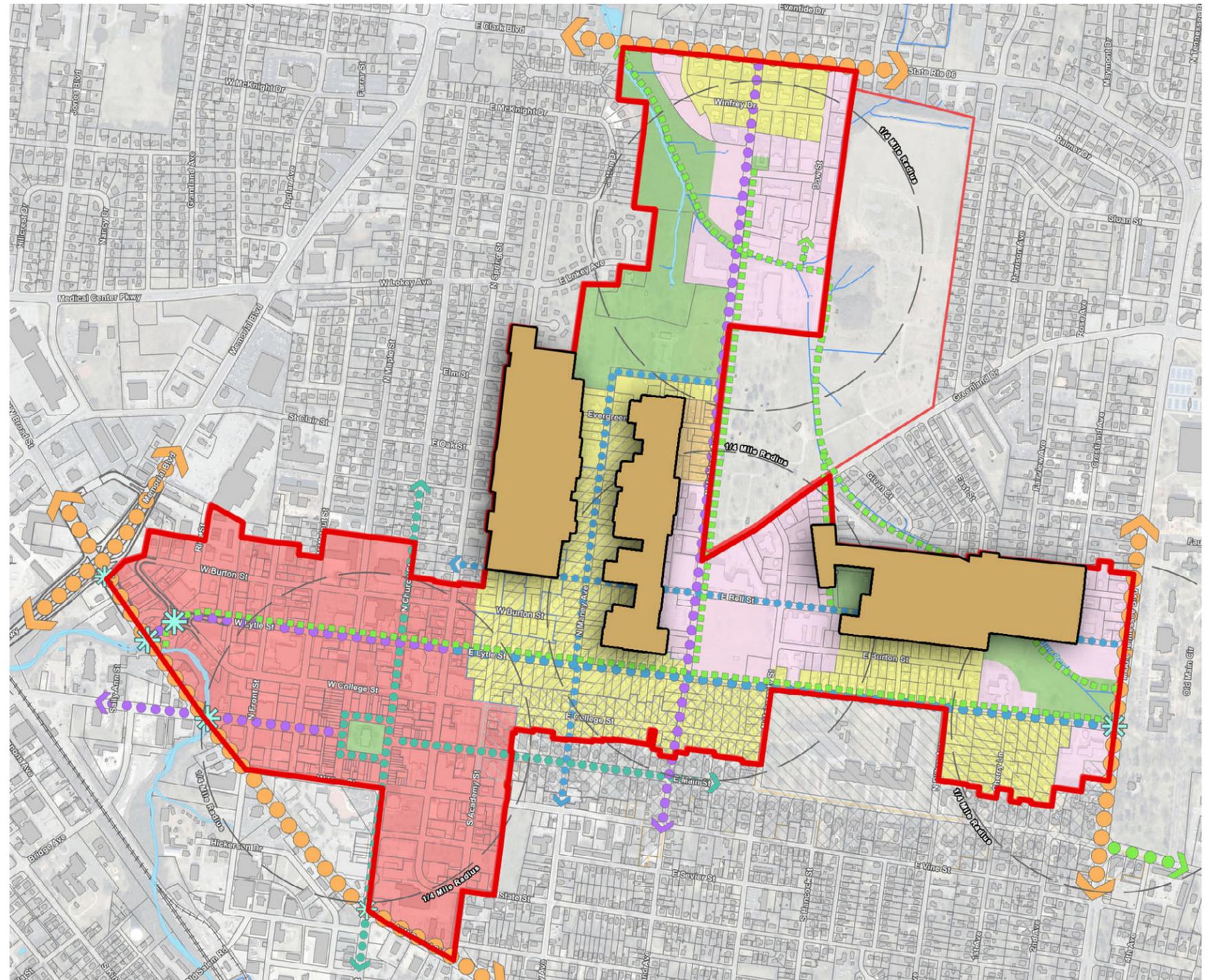
Mixed Residential Neighborhood Overview:

The mixed-use neighborhood areas are residential in character. These areas permit a mixture of housing options that include both detached single family and attached two, three, and four unit residential buildings. Cottage homes and zero lot line conventional single family development patterns would also be appropriate in these areas. This helps provide a broad range of housing options, including a variety of high-end, moderate, and work force housing opportunities.

Housing design in these areas should encourage details that relate to the street and keep a pedestrian scale to the neighborhood. Elements like front porches, fences, hedges, roof awnings and window and door detailing should be encouraged. Garage doors should be set back from the front facade or entered from a rear alley if possible.

Front sidewalks should extend from the front door to the street to connect to public pedestrian ways. Street trees, fences and hedges can be used to create a sense of separation between streets and front yards while creating a visual connection along the streetscape.

Commercial or office use could be appropriate only at a scale that fits with the surrounding residential neighborhood character, with architecture that emulates residential detail and parking that fits along the side or at the rear of buildings, and a high quality of landscape should be provided along public streets.

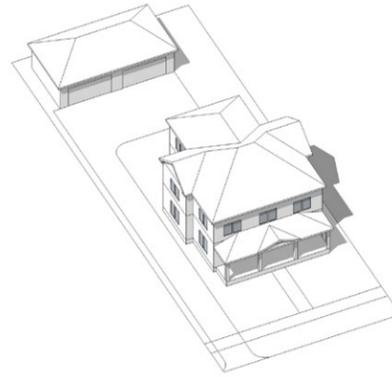


THE "MISSING MIDDLE"

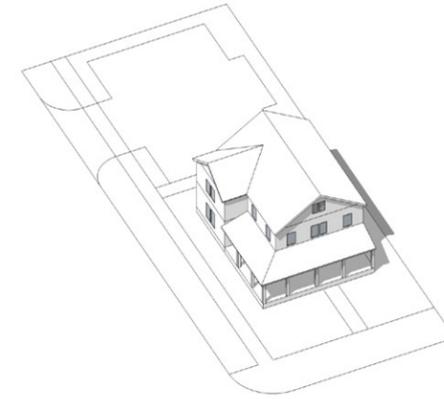
Missing Middle is a range of single, multi-unit, and clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living.

Missing Middle Housing is nothing new. It is a range of building types that were prevalent in cities and towns across the country, before modern-day suburbs.

2 - 4 UNIT ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING



ADAPTIVE REUSE (CONVERSION TO OFFICES)



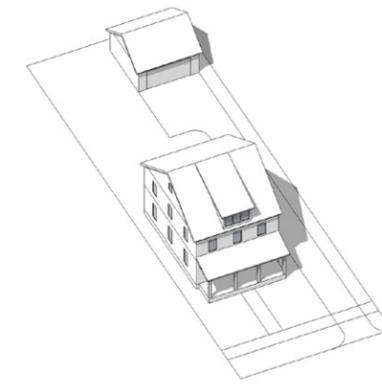
COTTAGE SINGLE-FAMILY



4 UNIT ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING



SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE



Streetscape:

- 6' Wide Sidewalks & 6' min. planting strip between sidewalk & street
- Street Trees (Appropriate Compact Urban Species)
- Informal On-Street Parking
- Sidewalk and planting strip with street trees should be provided along the frontage of new development to form a complete network

Character Setbacks:

- Residential buildings have shallow setbacks consistent with the predominant character
- Minimum & maximum setbacks established to keep a consistent relationship to the street
- Front setbacks for new infill should be similar to setbacks of existing contributing structures

Use:

- Live-Work units or conversion of corner lots to appropriate businesses could be considered
- Neighborhood scaled commercial or office at street corners
- Single-family detached and two, three, and four unit attached residential buildings

Building Design:

- Greater emphasis on design of detailing of street-facing facades
- Multi-unit buildings designed to resemble a single-family detached house
- Buildings encouraged to incorporate details typical of urban neighborhoods: porches, stoops, bays, and dormers
- The design of other details typical of single-family residential should be authentic, including windows, shutters, eaves.
- Maximum of 4 unit buildings

Landscaping & Screening:

- Emphasis on foundation plantings, low fencing or hedges along the street

Height:

- 2 ½ story maximum

Parking & Access:

- Parking located behind or setback from front of house
- Access from primary streets, secondary streets and/or alleys
- 25% reduction of on-site parking criteria to encourage XXXXXX

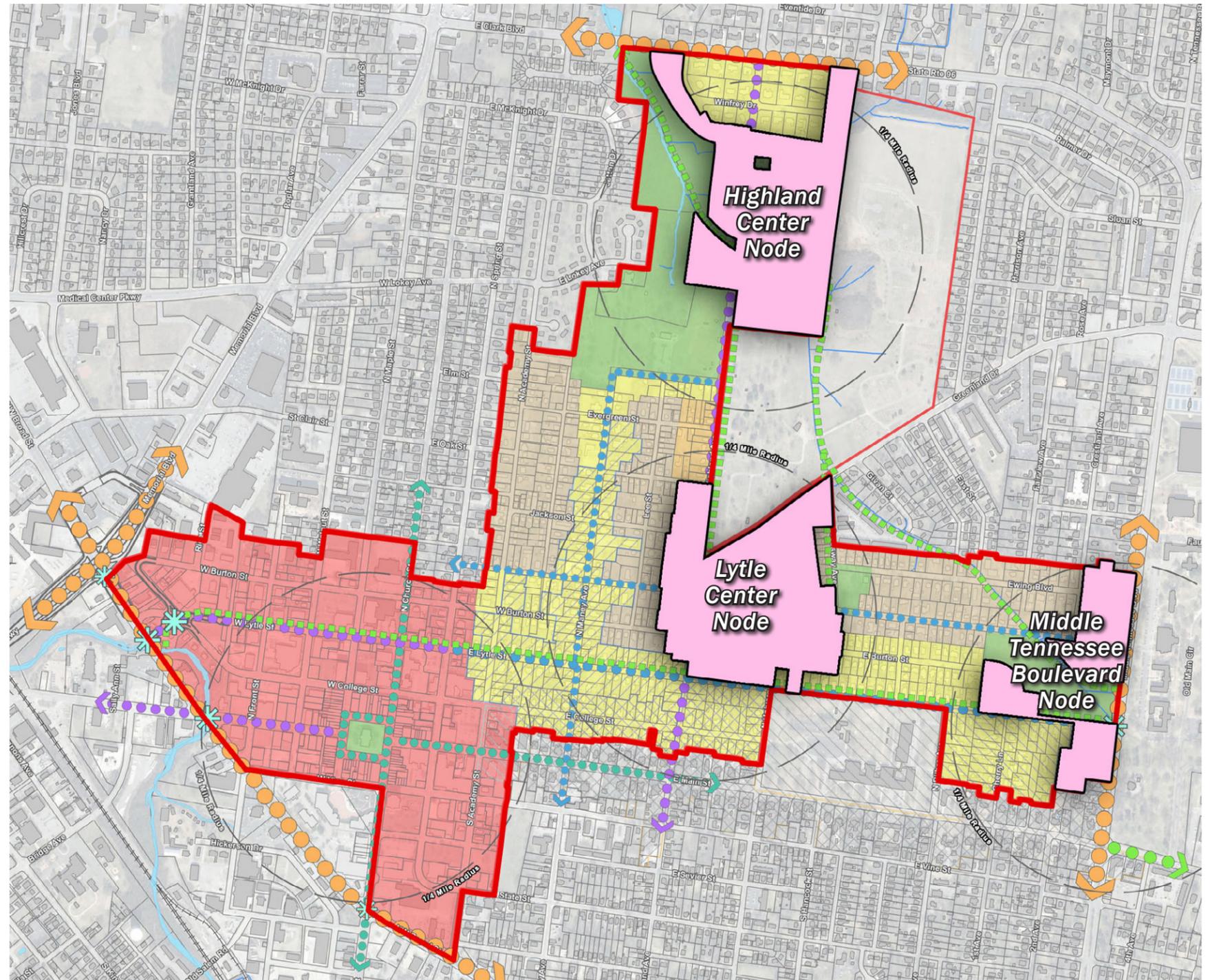
Mixed-Use Nodes Overview:

There are several key intersections and parcels in the North Highland study area that promote the opportunity for development of a higher density in nature. These areas also fit well with the idea of blending a mixture of residential, commercial and office space together in multi-level buildings. The form that many mixed-use developments take allows for integrated parking and good pedestrian connections. These nodes are good places to provide medium to high density residential units that help meet the need for work force housing units. Mixed-use development zones provide flexibility in space and response to market conditions. Mixed-use sites typically have opportunities for a strong sense of place with common open space and plaza areas.

Middle Tennessee Boulevard Node: The mixed-use node at Middle Tennessee Boulevard and Lytle Street relates to the growth of MTSU and the commercial development at the south west corner of the campus. This intersection is seen as a gateway between MTSU and the downtown area. The Homer Pittard Campus School site currently contains a large piece of open space that connects to Sinking Creek. Much of this node will develop in the context of plans driven by MTSU. Any development in this node needs to be particularly sensitive to the adjoining Residential - Single Family designation.

Lytle Center Node: The mixed-use node identified at North Highland Avenue and Bell Street centers around the old hospital site that is currently owned by MTSU. No current plans have been disclosed for this site but it is anticipated that MTSU will be developing this site in the future that would warrant a mixture of commercial, residential and possibly office space on the surrounding lots. This site is centered in the study area and sits as a halfway point between MTSU and the downtown district on Lytle Street. It also sits as a halfway point on North Highland between the major arterial roadways of SE Broad Street and East Clark Blvd.

Highland Center Node: This mixed-use node on North Highland between Winfrey Drive and Roberts Street is mostly comprised of medical office space that was developed in conjunction with the former hospital. Some of this office space continues to operate profitably within the context of the new medical center location, while some of this space has transitioned into different uses as medical facilities have relocated closer to the new medical facility. This node has the potential for property consolidation and redevelopment as a mixed-use site.





Streetscape:

- Wide Sidewalks (6-12 ft. min.) along public streets
- Street Trees (Appropriate Compact Urban Species)
- Formal On-Street Parking
- Outdoor cafes, plazas, pocket parks, and street amenities encouraged
- Pedestrian scaled street lighting required

Character Setbacks:

- Mixed-use & commercial buildings are placed close to sidewalk
- Residential buildings have shallow setbacks
- Institutional buildings have setbacks appropriate to purpose
- Structured parking placed close to sidewalk with active uses at street level

Use:

- Retail / Restaurant
- Office
- Residential (multi-family, Single-family Attached)
- Institutional
- Structured Parking

Building Design:

- Greater emphasis on building design & materials
- Street level & front facades maintain a high percentage of door and window space
- Flexibility in architectural style

Landscaping & Screening:

- Allow for greater amount of impervious surfaces
- Service areas, trash collection, utility boxes & connections provided at the rear of buildings
- Greater emphasis on hardscape details
- Less emphasis on foundation plantings
- Encourage a high level of detail in public spaces (Plaza's, Pocket Parks, Streetscapes)

Height:

- 3 story maximum
- 4 story maximum (bonus with residential use)

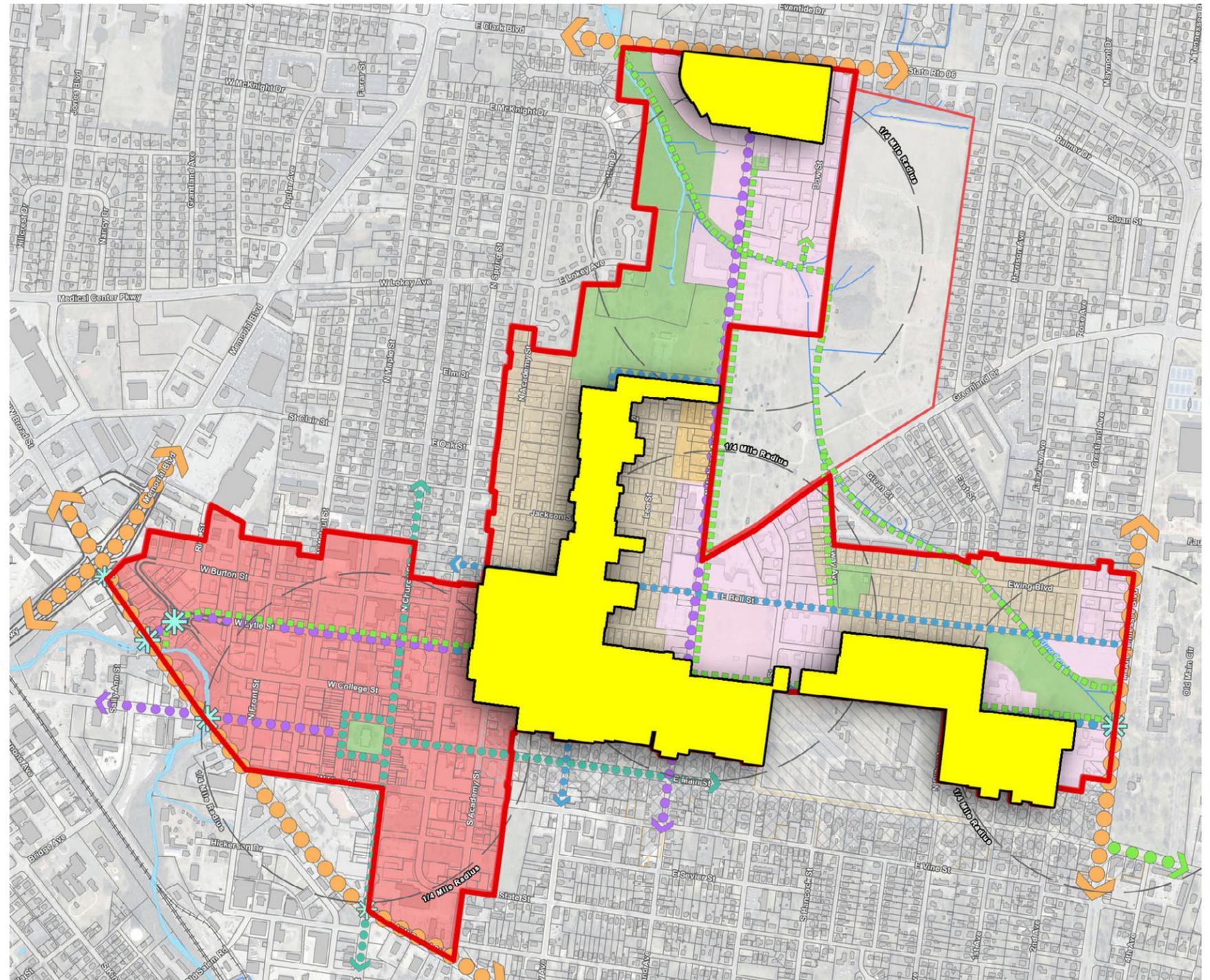
Parking & Access:

- Parking located behind or below buildings, or in combined lots
- Access from secondary streets and/or alleys
- Combined parking lots & garages



Residential - Single-Family Overview:

The Residential - Single-Family areas are established to encourage existing single family neighborhoods to keep their character. Although there are portions of these areas that fall within the existing East Main Street Historic District, it is not the suggestion that the Residential - Single Family character areas, shown on the study maps, are established to change the boundaries of the East Main Street Historic District or to formally establish a new historic district with strict guidelines. Rather it is the suggestion that the character of the neighborhoods along these streets be encouraged to remain similar to the patterns of older single-family neighborhoods. Single-family homes should line both sides of these streets. Front yards should be encouraged to hold a deeper depth consistent with the existing fabric of the neighboring homes. Architectural materials and styles of new homes should be sensitive to the existing homes along the street and should maintain a quality that reflects a feeling consistent with the time period of surrounding homes. The historical focus is on general patterns of the neighborhood rather than specific architectural requirements. This character area maintains a form and feeling similar to East Main Street and Cherry Lane. It should be noted that this document is expanding the Residential - Single Family District but not the Historic District.





Streetscape:

- Minimum 6' wide sidewalks & 4' minimum planting strip between sidewalk & street
- Street Trees (Appropriate Compact Urban Species)
- Informal on-street parking

Character Setbacks:

- Residential buildings shall have setbacks consistent with the predominant historic character of the area

Use:

- Residential (Single-family detached)
- Office permitted with special exception approval

Building Design:

- Architecture consistent with the character of existing neighborhood

Landscaping & Screening:

- Encourage foundation plantings & street trees or front yard canopy trees

Height:

- 2 ½ story maximum

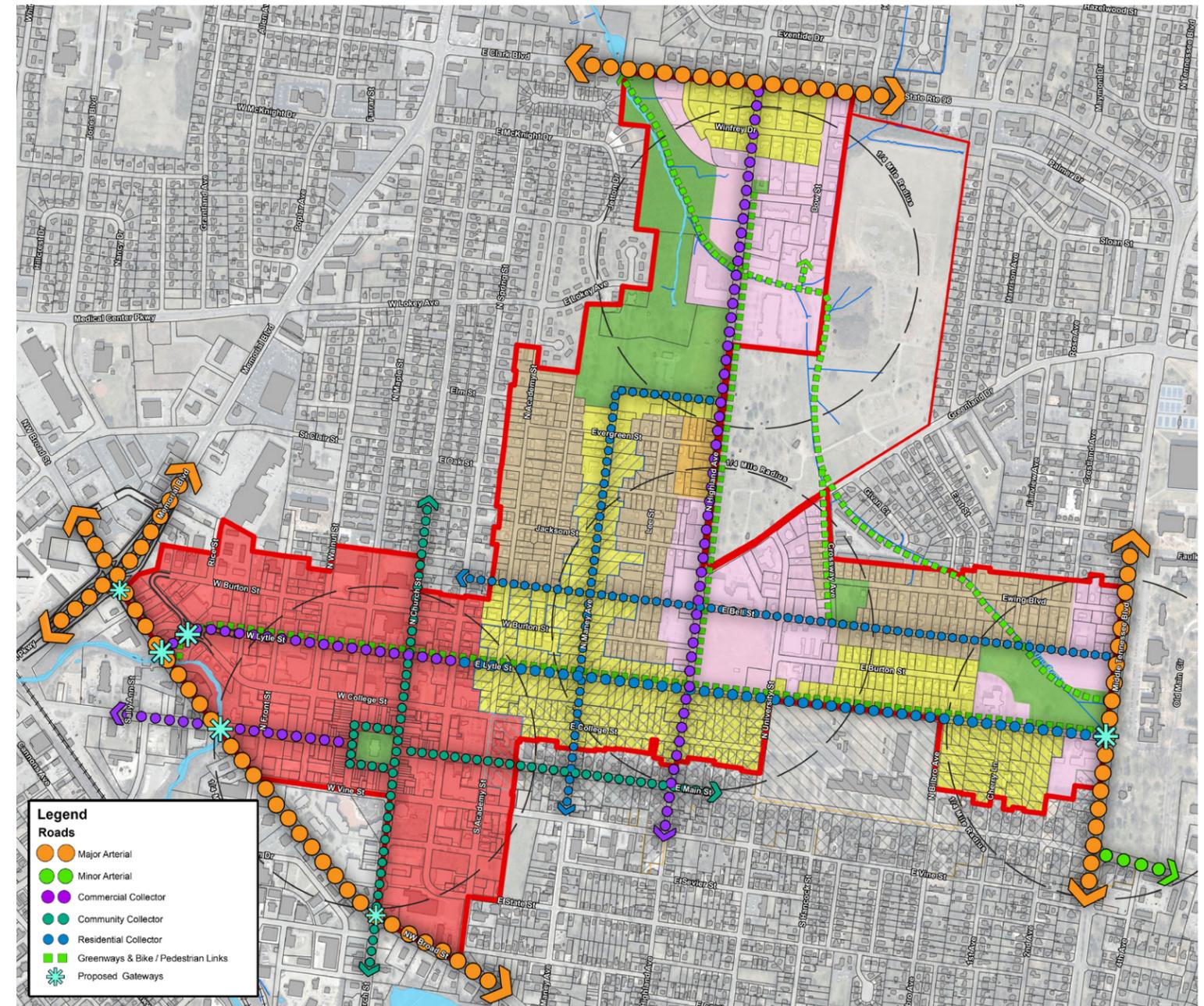
Parking & Access:

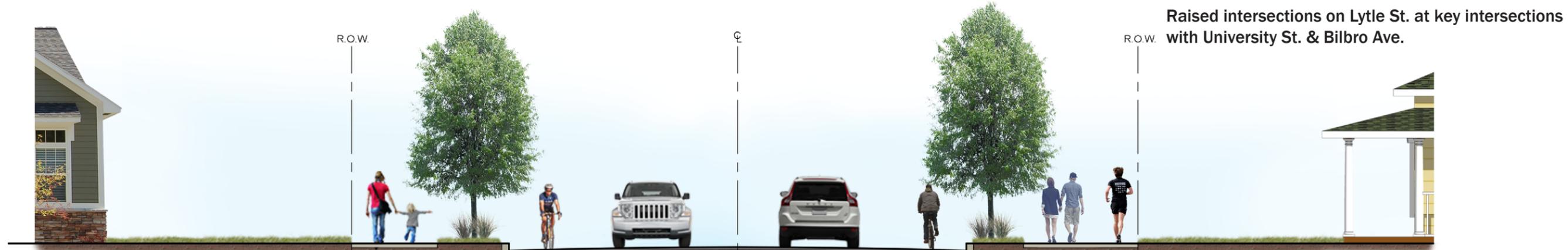
- Access from primary streets, secondary streets and/or alleys
- Parking located behind front facade or setback from front of house

Proposed Transportation Network

Transportation Network Overview:

- The City of Murfreesboro is currently evaluating the proposed major thoroughfare plan as it relates to the street network in the N. Highland Ave. Study area.
- Lytle Street and N. Highland Ave. have been identified as important collector streets to serve the surrounding community and important pieces of the larger and network in Downtown Murfreesboro.
- Major Arterials are roadways that serve moderate to high traffic volumes (in excess of 7,000 vehicles per day (VPD)) traveling relatively long distances. They preferably provide a low degree of direct access to abutting properties, functioning as a major route between regions and to major employment areas. Major Arterials distribute traffic to freeways and to other Major Arterials as well as provide routes for mass transit. Major Arterials are applicable in commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and residential land categories. Traffic speeds and major arterials are typically 40 MPH and higher; however, in limited circumstances speeds may be as low as 30 MPH. Examples of Major Arterials are Broad Street and Old Fort Parkway
- Minor Arterials are roadways that serve moderate to high traffic volumes, typically in excess of 4,000 VPD. Functioning as a connector between Major Arterials, Collectors, and other Minor Arterials, Minor Arterials also provide access to abutting property with some access control. Minor Arterials are applicable in commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and residential land categories. Traffic speeds are typically 35 MPH and higher, although in residential areas speeds may be as low as 30 MPH. Examples of Minor Arterials are DeJarnette Lane and Warrior Drive.
- Commercial Collectors are roadways that serve moderate to high traffic volumes of 3,000 to 10,000 VPD. Providing access to all adjacent properties, Commercial Collectors have less of a regional function than Minor Arterials. Commercial Collectors typically serve medium to high - density commercial, mixed-use or industrial areas, which may have high volumes of truck traffic. Commercial Collectors function as connecting routes between Local streets and Arterials, or from Local streets to other Collectors. Traffic on a Commercial Collector should operate at speeds of 25-35 MPH. Examples of Commercial Collectors are Stones River Mall Boulevard and Bridge Avenue.
- Community Collectors are roadways that serve residential and low to medium-intensity commercial and mixed-use areas, providing access to all adjacent properties. Since the nearby land uses vary, this classification functions as sort of mixed-use roadway that links homes to shopping, work places, and other daily trip generators. Accordingly, Community Collectors are important routes not only for cars, but also pedestrians and cyclists, and should safely accommodate all modes. Community Collectors function as connecting routes between Local streets and Arterials, or from Local streets to other Collectors. The typical two-lane cross-section with median or three-lane cross-section street serves a low to medium traffic volume of 1,500 to 8,000 VPD. Traffic on a Community Collector should operate at speeds of 30-35 MPH, although 40 MPH may be appropriate in limited cases. Examples of Community Collectors are Cason Lane, Battleground Drive and Saint Andrews Drive.
- Residential Collectors are roadways that server residential areas with residences likely on both sides of the roadway. Accordingly, for the safety and quality of life of nearby residents, slow traffic speeds are encouraged and cut-through traffic discouraged. Residential Collectors serve as a connecting route between Local streets and Arterials, or from Local streets to Collectors. Access is provided to all adjacent properties. The typical two-lane cross-section serves a relatively low traffic volume of 500 to 3,000 VPD. In many situations, a two-lane Residential Collector can provide needed capacity and reduce negative impacts on adjacent properties. Traffic on Residential Collectors should operate at speeds of 25-30 MPH. Examples of Residential Collectors are Patriot Drive and Cason Trail.



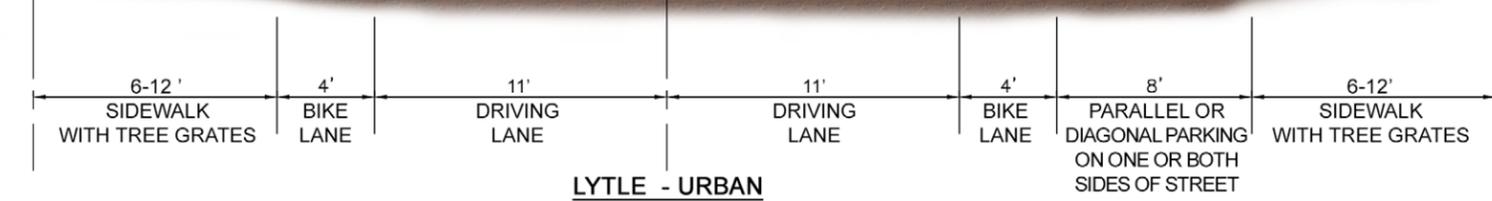
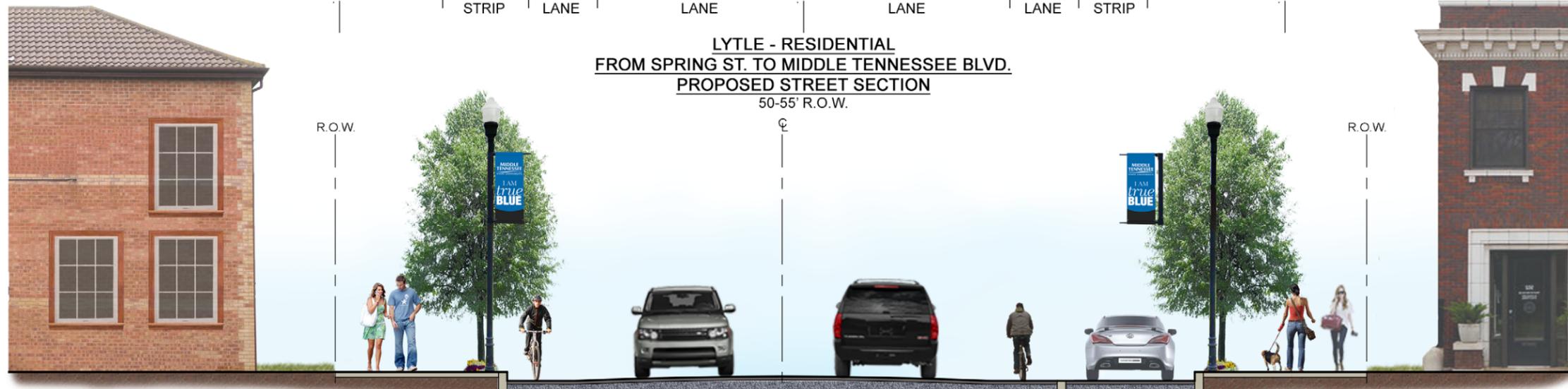


Raised intersections on Lytle St. at key intersections with University St. & Bilbro Ave.



On-street parking may replace dedicated bike lanes on this street section. This would establish a shared bike lane scenario with a minimum of 14' driving lane width.

LYTLE - RESIDENTIAL
FROM SPRING ST. TO MIDDLE TENNESSEE BLVD.
PROPOSED STREET SECTION
50-55' R.O.W.



LYTLE - URBAN
FROM N.W. BROAD ST. TO SPRING ST.
PROPOSED STREET SECTION
60' R.O.W.

Parks & Open Space Overview:

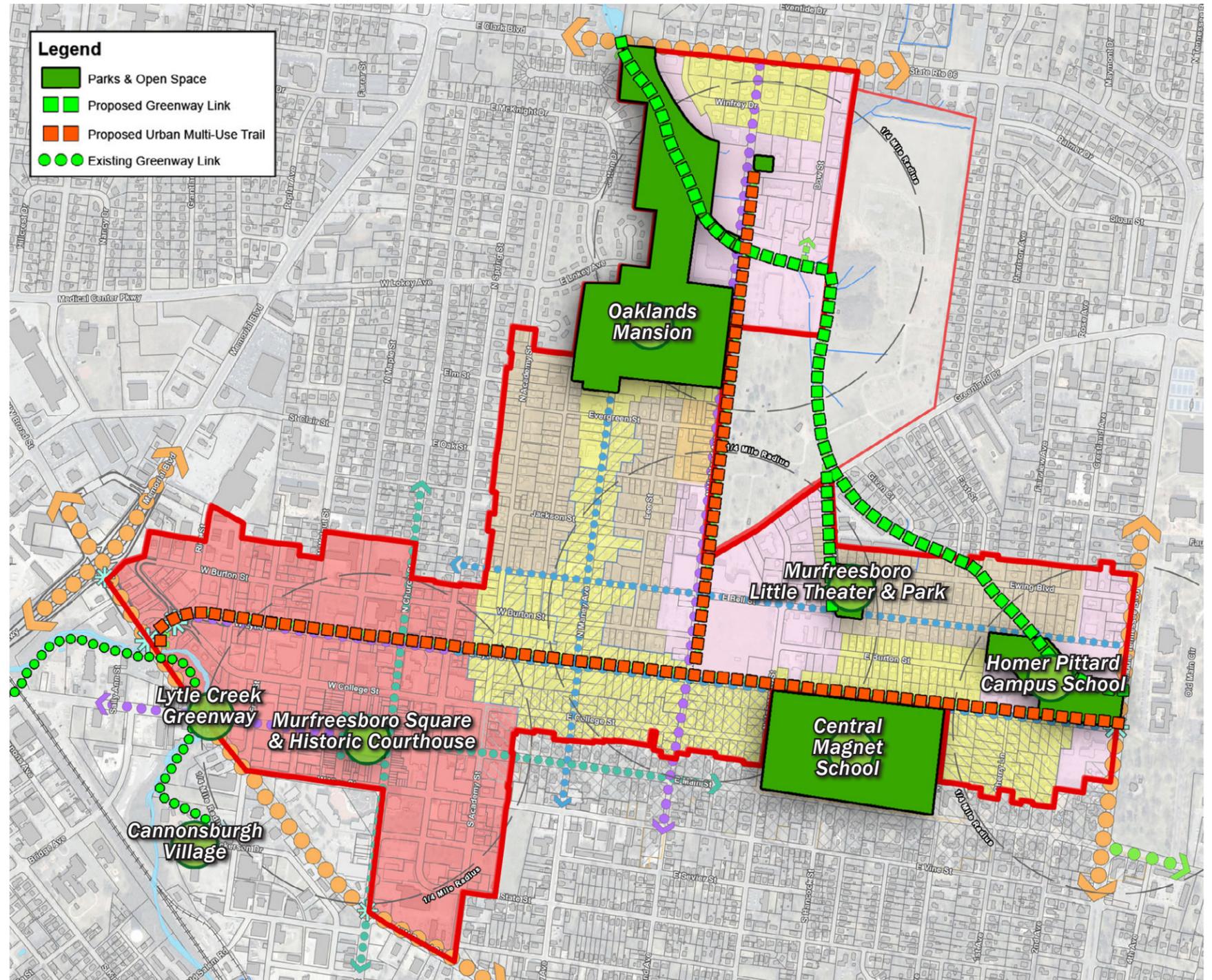
The North Highland area will require a variety of different parks that fit into the community at different scales. It is important for a community to have a mixture of parks that balance passive and active recreational needs for its residents and its visitors. It is also important for these park systems to be linked together with trails, pedestrian walkways, multi-use greenways and multi-modal streets (streets designed for people, bikes, cars and mass transit). The benefits of each park and open space facility are greatly enhanced by connecting them.

As the development density of the North Highland area increases it will be important to balance commercial and residential growth with the parks and open space needs of the community. As highlighted in the Murfreesboro 2035 Comprehensive Plan; "As cities across the country find that populations are being attracted back into more urbanized areas, revitalized park systems and recreation facilities are becoming central themes of this urban renaissance. The role of parks in cities and urban metropolitan areas has become much greater as the scope and impact of parks increasingly influences quality of life, economic development, health, and many other aspects of urban life."

The North Highland area and Downtown Murfreesboro are currently within the service area of some excellent special use and community parks; however there are some significant challenges in connecting these parks. NW Broad Street serves as a barrier to pedestrian and bicycle connections to Cannonsburgh, Murfree Spring and the Discovery Center. Its suburban commercial feeling and relative high speed travel discourages access and recognition of these valuable community assets. Oaklands Mansion and Oaklands Park are not easily found within the context of the surrounding community.

A strong connection from downtown to the existing Lytle Greenway is needed. There is an existing opportunity for this connection at Main Street and N.W. Broad Street. There also exists the potential for a future connection from College Street near the Lytle and College intersection. In addition to these greenway connections, safe pedestrian crossings are needed on N.W. Broad Street. The enhancement of Lytle Street and Highland Avenue into community collector routes designed with an urban cultural trail for pedestrians and dedicated bike lanes would greatly enhance connections to the existing park and open space facilities in the North Highland study area. The extension of a future greenway trail along Sinking Creek could serve as a strong link between future areas of mixed-use development. It would also provide a greenway connection to the Oaklands Historic House and Park from Middle Tennessee Boulevard and East Clark Blvd.

In addition to existing park and open space facilities, there is a need for small pocket parks, public open space amenities and urban plazas to be incorporated into future mixed-use development areas and the expanded downtown district. These are especially important assets for establishing the downtown district of Murfreesboro as a stronger destination place for visitors and potential tourists. These types of small pocket parks or public art displays should occur at a minimum of 2 block intervals to be effective.





Existing Park Summary:

Special Use / Regional Parks:

- Stones River National Battlefield & Fortress Rosecrans
- Oaklands Mansion
- Cannonsburgh Village
- Murfree Spring & Wetlands
- Bradley Academy Museum & Cultural Center
- Murfreesboro Square & Historic County Courthouse
- City Hall Plaza

Community Parks

(1-2 mile service area):

- Oaklands Park
- Patterson Community Center Park
- Old Fort Park

Neighborhood Park & Schools

(½ mile service area):

- Murfreesboro Little Theater & Park
- Central Magnet School
- Homer Pittard Campus School

Linear Park & Greenway:

- Lytle Creek Greenway

Future Proposed Park Acquisitions:

- Pocket Parks
- Urban Plaza Space
- Public Art Displays

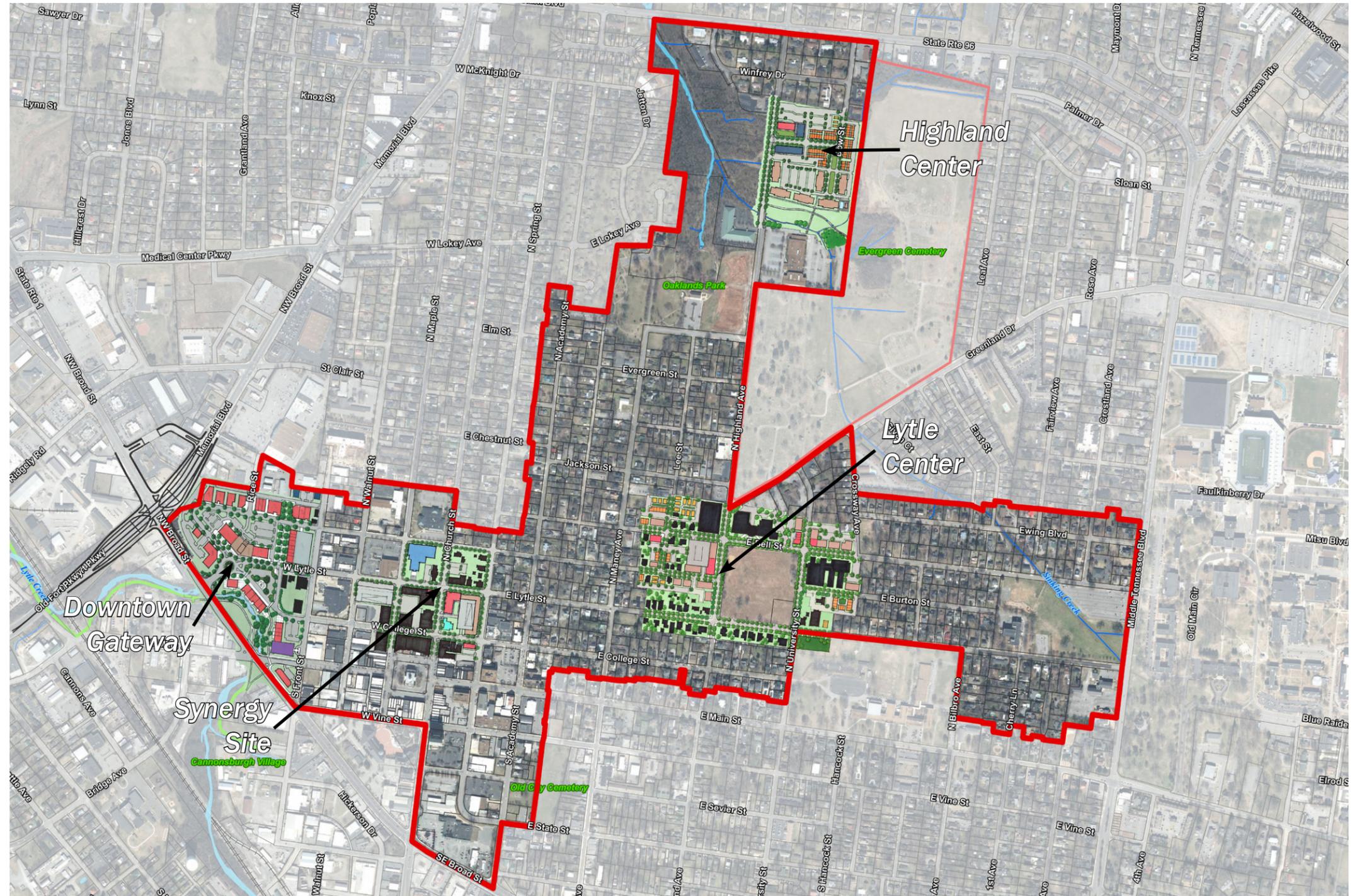
Development Scenario Overview:

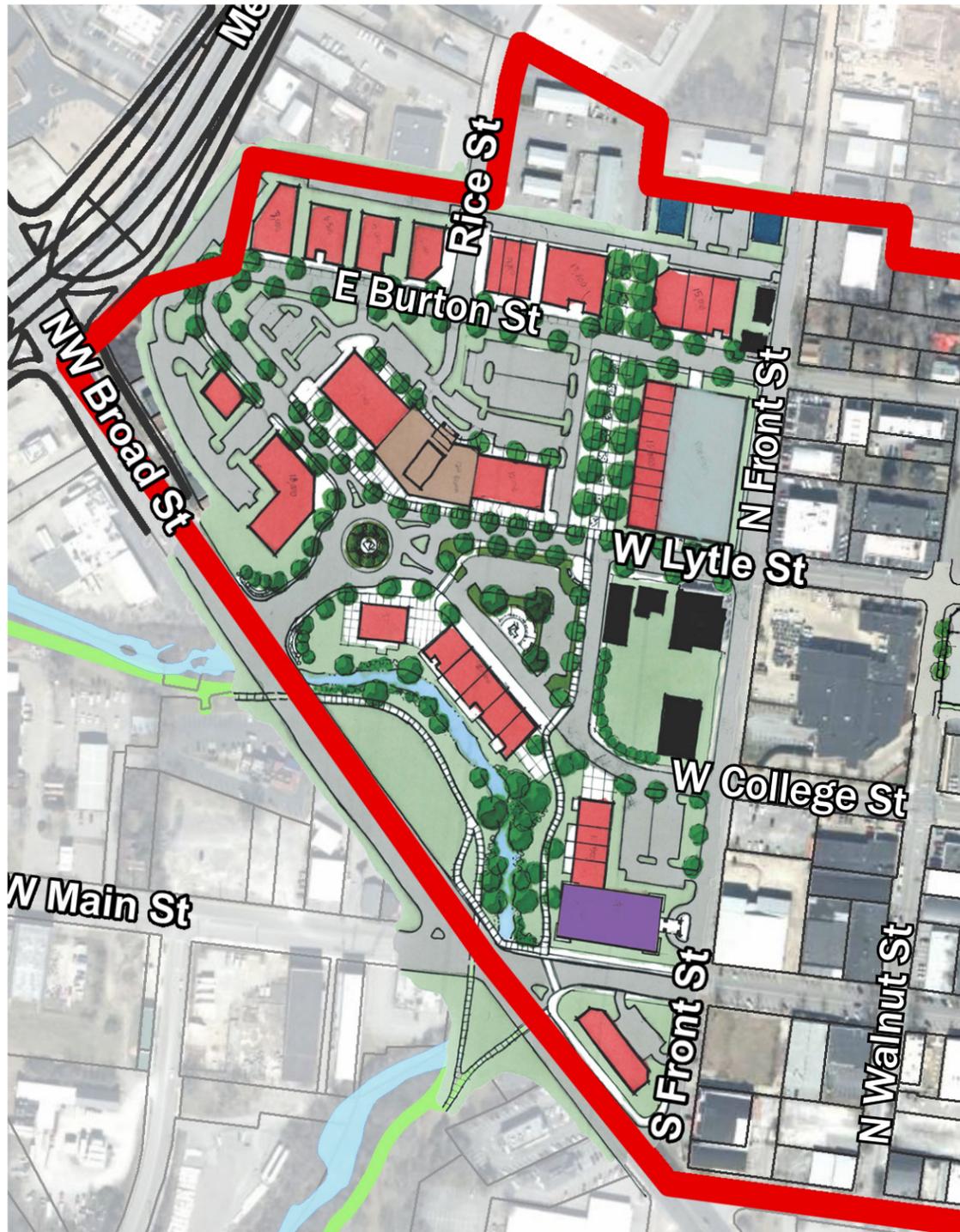
Specific areas of the N. Highland Ave. study area were examined to explore how development patterns might look as growth occurs in the Downtown Murfreesboro area. The development areas start with the established street network as a framework. In some cases new street networks are created and lots are consolidated to provide better geometry for typical building patterns. Existing buildings that contribute to the desired future character are left in tact (black buildings in the scenario). Potential new infill buildings that fit the desired future character of the area are also illustrated (colors correspond to building type and use). The pattern depicted is only one of many possible alternatives.

Based on the market analysis for this study area, square footages for additional office, residential and retail spaces are calculated to fit into the new development footprint. This provides a sketch for how an area might shape out in the future based on the potential demands for a ten year market window.

Parking requirements are roughly calculated and open space opportunities are also evaluated to determine how much building footprint can be accommodated in an area. In this study potential commercial and retail buildings are generally depicted in red, multi-family apartments, condominiums or mixed-use residential buildings are shown in brown, attached single family or townhome units are shown in orange and single family detached homes are shown in yellow. Potential office or institutional buildings are depicted as blue and potential hotel space is depicted as purple.

Precedent imagery for some of the building and site characteristics are shown on enlargement graphics for each scenario.





- Hotel
- Cultural/Entertainment Venue
- Specialty Retail
- Restaurant/Bar
- Multi-family/Mixed-use Residential
- Office
- Existing Buildings

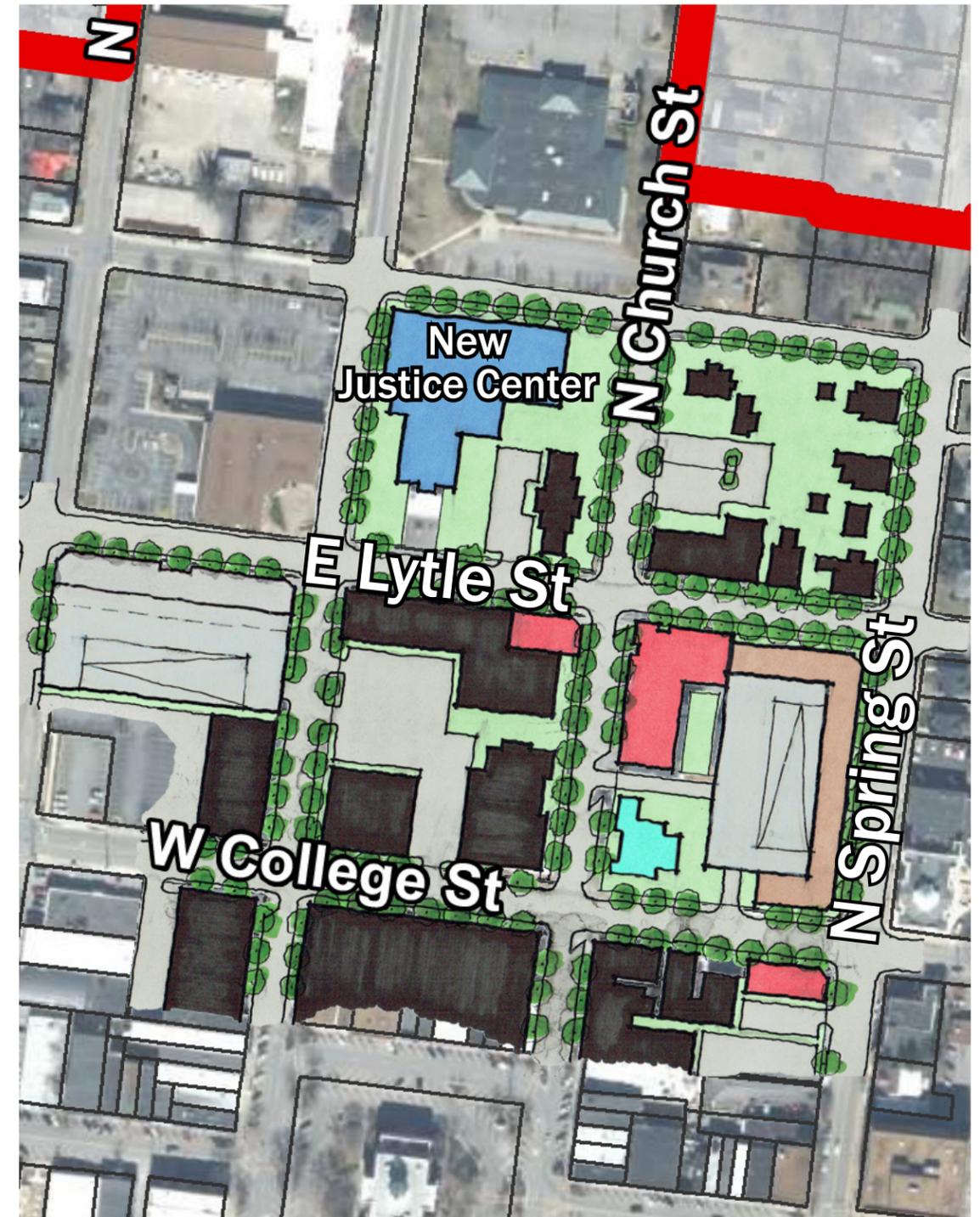
The intersection at W. Lytle Street and N.W. Broad Street was evaluated because of its potential to serve as a primary gateway into the downtown area. It holds high potential for specialty retail, restaurants and cultural and entertainment commercial space. It is at the heart of the proposed Art & Entertainment District, It has large lots with older single story buildings that hold high potential for possible redevelopment. It also has a strong relationship to the Lytle Creek Greenway if a connection was established from College Street. An iconic building would be well suited near the W. Lytle Street or Front Street connections to Broad. The potential for a Hotel to serve the downtown area might fit into this development area.



The Intersection of N. Church and E. Lytle was evaluated because of its redevelopment potential. The city of Murfreesboro has obtained ownership of the old Franklin Synergy Bank and the old First United Methodist church building which has high value as an iconic piece of architecture. The development scenario for this block illustrates the preservation and adaptive reuse of the existing church; new mixed-use development at the intersection of N. Church and Lytle; and multi-story residential that wraps a parking structure serving the redevelopment. This block has the potential to both depict redevelopment and economic growth while preserving some of the unique historic character of downtown. The New Justice Center will fill the block between N. Maple, N. Church and W. Lytle and W. Burton. A public parking garage is under construction along W. Lytle street. This garage and others will be key to meeting the parking needs of higher density development anticipated for this area.

Mixed-Use with Parking Structure:

- Retail/Restaurant (street level)
- Multi-family Residential (ground floor)
- Multi-family Residential (upper floors)
- Parking Structure
- Church Adaptive Reuse
- Existing Buildings





- Retail (street level)
- Multi-family Residential
- Office

The area along N. Highland Ave between Winfrey Drive and the new police headquarters is currently zoned for OGR Residential General Office. This area has served to facilitate medical office space for the now relocated hospital complex. The old hospital site has been razed and is currently owned by MTSU. Some of the office space in this area has continued to function for medical facilities but some of it has turned over to other uses as medical related facilities have moved closer to the new hospital complex. The vision for this area is a transformation from a suburban-style office park into a mixed-use, higher intensity, walkable development. Scenario 1 assumes the assemblage of parcels to create a clear block structure instead of a cul-de-sac with buried lots. The development program includes neighborhood-serving retail in mixed-use buildings at the intersection of N. Highland and Highland Terrace and fronting a small green. There is a fairly large amount of office space along Highland Terrace, but in a more urban form than the existing suburban pattern. The balance of the program includes urban, multi-family building types fronting a redesigned Dow Street and the preserved flood plain to the south. A trail system within the floodplain could connect to the new Police Headquarters and to Highland Center via Dow Street.

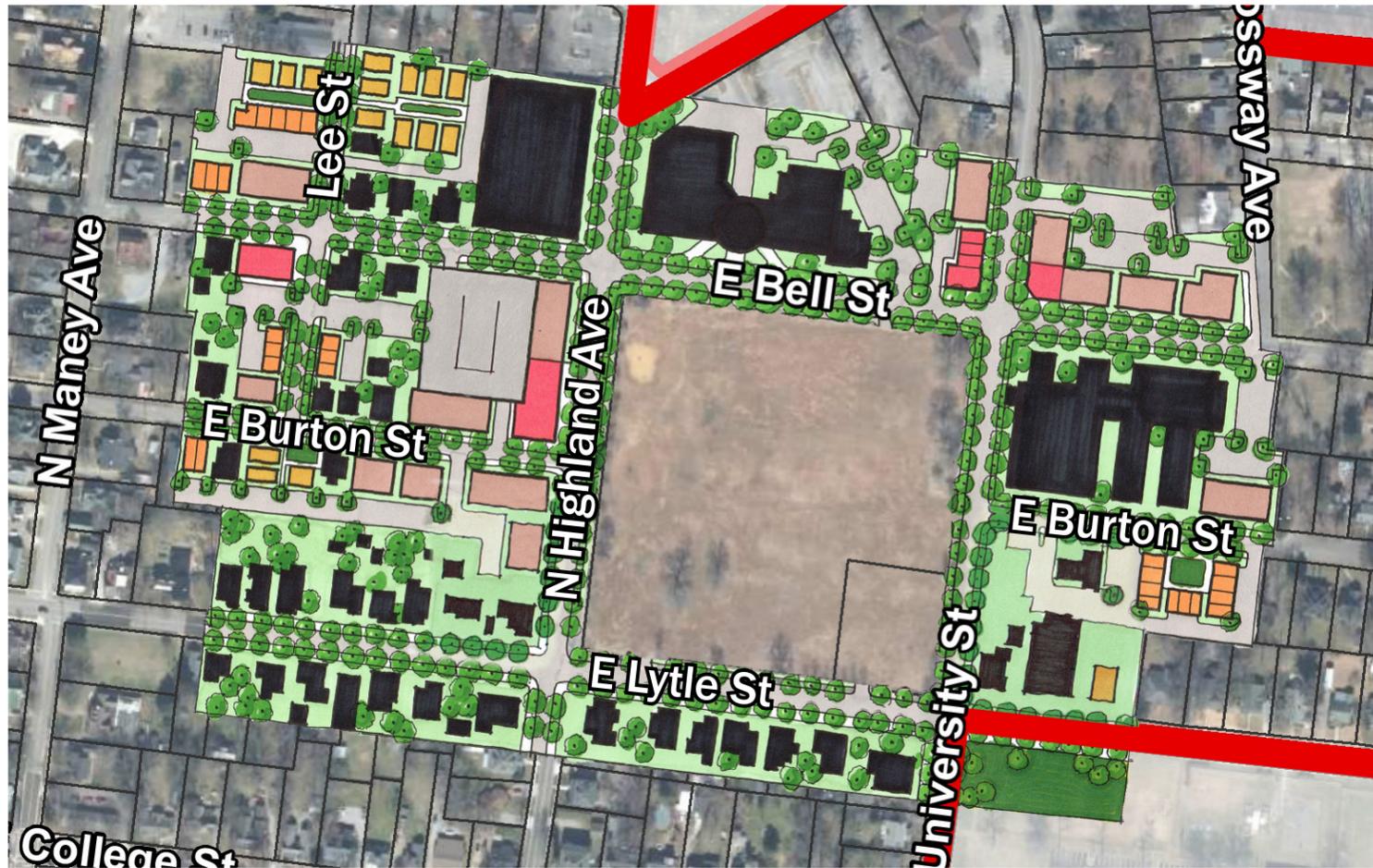


Scenario 2 depicts a similar arrangement of blocks and streets, but with a slightly less intense program. Office and retail is confined in mixed-use buildings at the intersection of N. Highland and Highland Terrace framing the attached green. A finer mix of building types is illustrated including townhouses and small cottages as well as more urban multi-family. As in Scenario 1, buildings are oriented to streets or open space and parking is located to the interior of the blocks behind buildings.

- Retail (street level)
- Multi-family Residential
- Office
- Townhouse/Cottages



Lytle Center Development Scenario



The mixed-use node identified at North Highland Avenue and Bell Street centers around the old hospital site that is currently owned by MTSU. No current plans have been disclosed for this site but it is anticipated that MTSU will be developing something on this site in the future that would warrant a mixture of commercial, residential and possibly office space on the surrounding lots. This site is centered in the study area and sits as a halfway point between MTSU and the downtown district on Lytle Street. It also sits as a halfway point on North Highland between the major arterial roadways of NW Broad Street and East Clark Boulevard.

This node would be well served with formal open space incorporated into its plan. Mixed-use buildings with retail at street level would fit well into the corner locations. This development area would have a pattern of higher density residential around the potential future development site, transitioning to medium density residential in adjacent Mixed-Residential Neighborhood and Single-family areas.

- Retail (street level)
- Multi-family Residential
- Townhouse/Cottages
- Existing Buildings





Executive Summary-Implementation Steps

At the beginning of the planning process for the N. Highland Ave. Study, specific goals were established. They can be summarized as: Providing opportunity for economic growth and development, mapping a clear plan to shape land use patterns, establishing a design pattern to preserve and enhance community character, and planning for good transportation, utility and environmental infrastructure. An extensive inventory, analysis and public input process have shaped several “big ideas” that communicate how these goals are translated into a real plan for the study area. These ideas are the important keys to create momentum for the plan to move forward and impact real and positive change for those who live, work, play and visit the N. Highland Ave study area. An executive summary of implementation steps for these big ideas is as follows:

Economic Growth and Development:

Expand Downtown:

The downtown needs to include more area to promote opportunities for restaurants, retail, and residential and community events in the heart of the city. The Courthouse and square need to continue to function as ceremonial and formal civic spaces at the center of town. The proposed expanded downtown area (central business district) has been mapped on the Future Land Use Map and defined with some precedent imagery and conceptual design guidelines. The recommendation to implement this idea involves three plans of action. The first is to adopt this planning study as a guiding policy document to shape future growth and development in the downtown area. This would help in the review and approval process for any proposed rezoning or development that is proposed within the downtown area. The second is to expand the existing CBD zoning to match all or a portion of the character area mapped as downtown / central business district as shown on page eighteen. This would establish a larger footprint for the CBD zoning district. The third step would be to review the CBD guidelines and standards for possible revisions to match the proposed future land use objectives. Every step outlined in this plan of action could be done independently with or without the other steps if desired.

Greater Mixture of Uses & Increased Density:

A greater concentration of density and a larger mixture of uses that include commercial, office and residential should be promoted at key nodes of development. This creates a focus for development to occur at key intersections with high development potential. Mixed-use nodes have been mapped on the Future Land Use Map and defined with some precedent imagery and conceptual design guidelines. The recommendation to implement this idea involves the same plan as expanding the downtown area. The first step is to adopt this planning study as a guiding policy document for these areas. The second is to create a distinct zoning district that would be approved for all or some of these nodes. This would likely require the creation of a new zoning or overlay district with new standards to meet specific objectives and achieve a high quality of development. An alternative interim approach to developing these areas would be to promote the use of existing planned development districts for these nodes. This would require a site specific plan to allow flexibility, create efficiency and insure a high quality of development that fits in the context of its surroundings. These steps could be taken independently with or without the other steps if desired.

A Clear Pattern to Establish Land Use:

Increase Moderate Density Residential Opportunities:

Provide more residential options in specific parts of the N. Highland Ave study area, including moderate density housing (five to ten units per acre). Residential options are important providing living space in the downtown area. When people live in a place they tend place a high value on it. Residents downtown encourage amenities that help establish a marketable destination place. This in turn helps generate economic return for the commercial establishments in the area. Recommendations to implement this idea include zoning that promotes housing density in the mixed-use nodes and central business district areas. Another tool to encourage more residential in the mixed-use and central business districts is the provision of bonus densities and / or additional building height for buildings that include a mixture of residential in addition to office and / or commercial uses. Residential density at the right locations with the right design parameters helps provide for the needs of work force and young urban professional housing demands.

Preserve Single Family Neighborhoods:

There are some beautiful single family neighborhoods within the N. Highland Ave study area. These neighborhoods have a historic feeling to their character and land patterns. Portions of Lytle Street, Maney Avenue, Burton Street, College Street, Clark Blvd and Cherry Lane have all been identified as important areas to maintain as detached single family development patterns. Homes across for the Oaklands Mansion have also been identified as important properties to maintain as single family development. The implementation recommendations for this goal involve some moderate adjustments to expand portions of the single family zoning district to match the single family character area as identified on the Future Land Use Map.

A Plan to Preserve Community Character:

Preservation & Enhancement of Historical & Cultural Places:

There is a rich fabric of historical elements and some classic architectural buildings within the N. Highland Ave area. One of the big ideas to emerge from the study is to establish an Art and Entertainment District in the downtown area. Specific feedback was evaluated during the planning study process from stakeholders, steering committee members and the general public regarding the value and location of a proposed district. A proposed district boundary has been mapped with the Art and Entertainment District Map on page 21. The district is anchored on one end by the square and existing Center for the Arts and anchored on the other end with the edge of Cannonsburgh Village and the historic buildings and promenade to the courthouse created along West Main Street. Implementation of this idea would include creating an official overlay district and an art and entertainment task force and committee to govern its administration and marketing efforts. Zoning flexibility and incentives could be offered to developments that provide live-work studio units for artisans interested in establishing themselves in the downtown area. The establishment of an art and entertainment “cultural trail” with clear and creative signs, trail markings and public art displays would link together existing and future places of interest within the downtown area.

Preserve & Connect Parks & Open Space:

Connecting existing parks, squares and green space greatly increases their use and value. Connecting downtown to the existing Lytle Creek Greenway is a very important plan of action for the N. Highland Ave area. Strong pedestrian linkage across N.W Broad Street at West Main and other intersections is a top priority to create the link between downtown and the Historic Bottoms area. Additional Greenway should also be explored along Sinking Creek because of its valued connection to Oaklands mansion and the MTSU campus. Pocket Parks and open space amenities and urban plazas should be planned in any future developments areas in the downtown district. Coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department and an Art and Entertainment Committee should be integrated into the development process for all downtown and mixed-use development areas with the goal of having a pocket park, plaza or public art display established at no more than two block intervals. These elements do not have to be large or elaborate only creative comfortable places with some type of noteworthy element. Another implementation tool is the option of creating a nominal park and public art development fee in lieu of dedicating pocket park space. Pursuit of a corporate or institutional sponsor for pocket parks, plazas or public art is worth exploring.

Transportation Infrastructure:

Increased Mobility:

More provision are needed for pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit options in the study area. The desire for a more walkable community was expressed as a high priority from those participating in the public input meetings. One of the key steps to implement this goal is to integrate pedestrian walks as a requirement for all street networks and new development in the study area. This is already a provision in the City of Murfreesboro Street Design Specifications. A good general rule of thumb is “sidewalks everywhere for everybody”. Dedicated or shared bike lanes should be considered standard design elements for all collector streets. Expansion of Rover routes and dedicated transit stops should be specifically evaluated in connection with the downtown and campus areas.

Broad Street as a Zipper:

One of the big ideas related to transportation and land use together is the concept of rebuilding Broad Street to become an urban, pedestrian-friendly street. This concept will help to bring together downtown and the Historic Bottoms area making it a destination rather than simply a conduit for cars. The redesign of Broad Street will require elements such as wider sidewalks, pedestrian safe havens, and clear crosswalks with audible and countdown signals. Outside of the right-of-way, future development along Broad should be mixed-use and built close to the sidewalk to encourage a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Implementation of this plan will require coordination with TDOT to evaluate possible design solutions. If adequate crossings at street level cannot be provided, pedestrian bridges in one or two places may be warranted.



Downtown Marketing and Development Concepts

Murfreesboro is now the fifth largest city in Tennessee, with a population of 150,000 plus a large university student enrollment, within a fast-growing county of 300,000. Murfreesboro deserves a downtown that reflects the growth of its population and economic base, as well as its stature as a major city and home to one of the state's largest universities. Ultimately, downtown Murfreesboro can extend beyond the Square and offer significant opportunities for shopping and entertainment, cultural venues, diverse housing stock, entrepreneurship and business development, civic space, historical context and tourism, all within a walk-able mixed-use urban environment. Downtown Murfreesboro can offer a "college town" feel but can also be much more than a college town. Key components of this concept are summarized below:

Arts & Entertainment District Development Scenario

The market analysis identified significant potential for more commercial entertainment, eating & drinking and other uses that can activate downtown Murfreesboro and create a destination for residents and visitors alike. An arts and entertainment district could be developed that builds on downtown's inherent strengths, its existing base of arts and cultural organizations and venues, and its market potentials. This district would be anchored by 180,000 to 200,000 square feet of performing arts, cultural, and entertainment venues, as well as restaurants, clubs, drinking establishments, and specialty retailers serving a young and diverse clientele. There would also be 10,000 to 30,000 square feet of office space, 50 to 80 residential units, and a hotel integrated into this mix.

Redevelopment & Vision for the Broad Street Corridor

Broad Street is Murfreesboro's "main street," and offers significant opportunities for redevelopment as a more urban and pedestrian-friendly boulevard through downtown. Broad Street can also be positioned as the "zipper" or link between downtown and the Historic Bottoms area, providing exposure and access to and between them. Broad Street is a prime location for hotels and mixed-use development. While the market potential for hotel development was not tested as part of this planning effort, hotels were identified as a market opportunity to fill a gap within the downtown area.

Rethinking Institutional Role in Downtown

There are opportunities for MTSU to extend more of its academic and institutional functions off campus to downtown Murfreesboro. Many other universities have developed strong linkages with the downtown core in their home communities, such as through relocation of programs like culinary arts and entrepreneurship training, retail uses like university bookstores, and public venues like museums and performing arts facilities into downtown areas. The advantages for universities include direct public service training and exposure, enhanced marketing identity (a stronger downtown can help in marketing a university to prospective students and faculty), and revenue growth due to increased participation in institutional programs. Better physical linkages can also be provided between downtown and the campus.

County Government is expanding its presence downtown with new court facilities and offices, providing a strong anchor for downtown. There are additional opportunities to consolidate other government functions away from commercial space in order to free up space for active retail, restaurant, and entertainment functions.

Pro-Active Business Recruitment and Development

A program for business recruitment and development is recommended to strengthen downtown by targeting and attracting new development and businesses to the area. This program is described in more detail in the Appendix Report for this plan.





North Highland Neighborhood Concepts

Residential neighborhoods within the North Highland study area would retain and build on their historic ambiance as attractive urban communities. The market analysis identified growing market demand for walk-able urban neighborhoods near downtown Murfreesboro, generated by Millennial professionals, empty nesters, university faculty and staff, graduate students, and others.

Quality and Amenity Value

A key component of marketing and development among these residential communities is an emphasis on amenity value. Building on the historic character of these neighborhoods, their parks and open space, walk-ability and access to downtown and MTSU will be critical for marketing. There is a need to encourage small-scale infill retail development or rehabilitation of historic commercial spaces where the market supports such use, as these small businesses add amenity value for marketing walk-able residential neighborhoods. Not all commercial spaces will be viable, but where traffic is sufficient or where there are higher-density housing developments within walking distance, there will be opportunities for small-scale retail uses such as personal service establishments (hair salons, shoe repair), small convenience stores and cafes, or art galleries and other destination-oriented small businesses.

Branding

It will be important to establish or re-establish names for each of the individual neighborhoods (e.g., “Oaklands”) within the North Highland study area, to help in strengthening identity, building market, and attracting high-quality infill development.

Infill Development

The City should encourage infill residential development that strengthens the historic character of surrounding housing and North Highland neighborhoods. Again, an emphasis should be on quality. The market analysis suggests demand for single-family, zero-lot line, and townhouse development within these residential neighborhoods. There is also the need to encourage some “corner” infill retail development and where possible, rehabilitation of older neighborhood commercial spaces as noted above to build amenity value.

Highland Center Development Scenario

The medical office complex located on North Highland should be master planned for gradual redevelopment as a mixed-use housing development with ancillary office and retail space. The market analysis supports development of 100 to 130 medium-density housing units, such as townhouse condominiums, zero-lot line homes and other “maintenance-free” housing geared to empty nesters and young families. The market analysis also supports integration of 90,000 to 100,000 square feet of office space at this location, including upgrading of existing space. About 10,000 to 13,000 square feet of ancillary retail uses such as coffee shop, pet store, personal services, etc would also be supportable at this location. Ultimately, the area would be marketed and developed as an alternative, higher-density and walk-able location for those who do not want a large yard to maintain.

Housing Rehabilitation Programs

There is a need for rehabilitation and upgrading of existing housing, in addition to development of infill housing projects, in portions of the study area west of North Highland. Stronger enforcement of existing building and occupancy codes is encouraged in tandem with provision of a package of incentives. The incentives would help encourage property owners to upgrade their properties or promote infill development to avoid further code enforcement.

Marketing Strategies

General marketing strategies are provided herein as a guide for more detailed marketing plans and revitalization strategies. Several of these strategies capture some of the recommendations made for individual concept areas discussed above.

Build Amenity Value

As noted earlier, there is a need to build amenity value to support housing and tourism development in the area. Key components of this strategy relate to development of retail and mixed-use amenities, strengthening of existing tourism assets, creation of more music venues and events, enhancing existing greenways and other components.

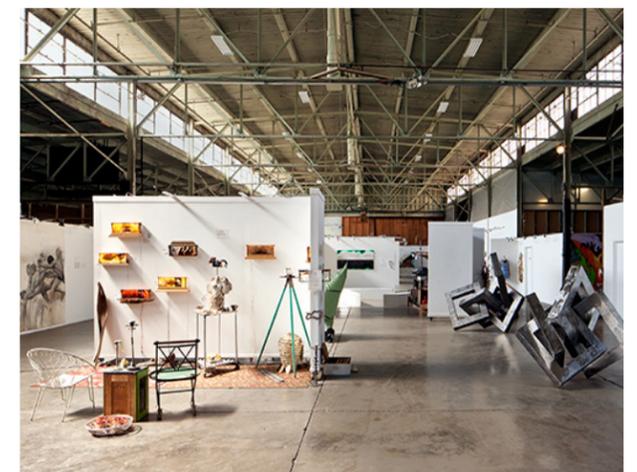
Establish Destination Marketing

Marketing strategies focus on establishing destination draw to help build market support for retail/commercial and tourism uses in the downtown area. Such uses in turn help strengthen the market for housing and employment-generating office uses in downtown Murfreesboro.

A key component of the destination marketing strategy relates to designation and development of an arts & entertainment district (portions of which may straddle the line between North Highland and Historic Bottoms).

Another key component of this strategy is expansion and strengthening of the tourism offering in the downtown area, including Oaklands, Cannonsburgh, Discovery Center, Stones River, various music venues, hotels and tourism services.

Finally, there is the need and opportunity to establish an entrepreneurial development district that incorporates the downtown and Historic Bottoms areas that can accommodate and support information technology, design, artisanal manufacturing, and similar companies that show a preference for these types of urban locations. The office market analysis determined that there is significant untapped potential for space to accommodate these emerging design and technology uses in addition to finance, insurance, real estate, government, non-profit and other uses. A program of incentives coupled with facilitation and business recruitment is recommended to help capture this opportunity for downtown Murfreesboro.





Development and Financing Strategies

Several strategies have been developed for development and financing to effect change in support of the proposed plan. Several of these strategies are summarized below and are discussed in more detail in the Appendix Report.

Preserve/Celebrate Historic, Cultural and Natural Resources

There is a need identified as part of the marketing strategy for preserving and celebrating the area's historic character. In order to encourage preservation, incentives are recommended that focus on adaptive use of existing buildings for maker space, neighborhood retail, live/work residential and other uses. Façade grants and PILOT programs are among the recommendations for encouraging preservation and sensitive infill development in the study area.

Target Business Development

There are a number of programs and incentives proposed to assist in business recruitment, retention and development in the downtown area and in the Historic Bottoms. Among these incentives are small business & entrepreneurial development business loans and grants, infrastructure improvements, and creation of a downtown-area Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to support infrastructure and capital investment. Broad Street would become a focus for redevelopment in the downtown area, because of its under-valued land with excellent exposure and potential for various types of commercial and mixed-use development. Urban design improvements are recommended for Broad Street, the Arts & Entertainment District, and Historic Bottoms to help strengthen identity branding, business recruitment, and marketing. A pro-active business and developer recruitment strategy is also recommended that focuses on downtown Murfreesboro and the Historic Bottoms.

Affordable Workforce Housing

The residential market analysis identified a clear need and strong market for workforce housing in central Murfreesboro to support business and economic development in the city. Attractive, affordable housing resources can help attract and retain a labor force in support of job creation. Importantly, the already high-density downtown and Historic Bottoms areas provide opportunities for multi-family housing and mixed-use development that has no direct impact on other residential neighborhoods in the city.

In fact, higher-density housing development in the downtown area can help take some of the development pressure off of suburban neighborhoods while still providing a needed product for young professionals and other workers in Rutherford County's growing labor force. Finally, higher-volume housing development in the downtown area and Historic Bottoms can help strengthen the built-in market for walk-able downtown retail and businesses located in Murfreesboro that are desired by the general population.

Key tools for leveraging in development of affordable workforce housing include the use of a TIF district (described above) along with density bonuses and other planning and regulatory tools. The City can also assist with site assembly, structured parking and infrastructure as well as facilitation to encourage more diverse and inclusionary housing development in the downtown area.

Management Strategies

In order to effect change and implement marketing, development and financing strategies, there are also recommendations provided for management mechanisms to assist in these efforts. Some of these strategies are summarized here, with more detail provided in the Appendix.

City Development Agency or Division

It is strongly recommended that the City of Murfreesboro establish a municipal development agency, or a division within the planning department, with authority to manage and promote development, financing, and business development in the city. This agency or division would have the authority to manage a tax increment financing (TIF) district, recruit and negotiate with developers and businesses, manage financial or fiscal incentives, and work with the Community Development department on workforce and affordable housing issues.

Downtown Business Improvement District (BID)

Murfreesboro should also consider creation of a Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) with the approval of the required majority of property owners, to manage marketing, safety, security, parking, cleanliness and other aspects of downtown management. This entity would be self-funding in the same way as other BIDs across Tennessee (like Downtown Nashville's) and nationwide. The BID would also work with Main Street on strengthening marketing initiatives and providing financial, management and technical support to Main Street for some of its marketing and event initiatives. The BID would also work with the proposed City Development agency on development initiatives, leasing, assembly, preservation, and other efforts to encourage development and investment in the downtown and Historic Bottoms areas.