City of MURFREESBORO TENNESSEE

City of Murfreesboro

Historic Bottoms

Planning Study

Last Revised: January 4th, 2017

RAGAN • SMITH

DRAFT
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Acknowledgments

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Planning Study Goals & Objectives

The City of Murfreesboro has recognized the importance of the Historic Bottoms in shaping its future. The primary goal of the study is to "Present possible land use patterns and development scenarios that will create a plan for future growth, create a positive sense of place, connect the surrounding community, and increase economic vitality, while preserving the historic fabric of the study area." The Murfreesboro 2035 Plan "Our Future Begins Now" suggests planning and master plan studies for specific areas like the Historic Bottoms. The first step in developing the Historic Bottoms Planning Study was to establish the key goals and objectives for the study itself. It was decided that the key goals and objectives are as follows:

Economic Growth and Development:

- *Determine existing and future market potentials for retail, office, and residential land uses in the study area and to strengthen the relationship between the Historic Bottoms and Downtown Murfreesboro. Provide an economic overview of the study area to evaluate potential market recommendations and reflect the recommendations in proposed land use patterns and development scenarios.*

A Clear Pattern to Establish Future Land Use:

- *Map a clear plan to 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 design objectives that protect and enhance the quality of life for Murfreesboro residents and encourage visitors to return. Tap into existing historical, cultural, & environmental assets to strengthen the sense of community character.*

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

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

Historic Murfreesboro Bottoms

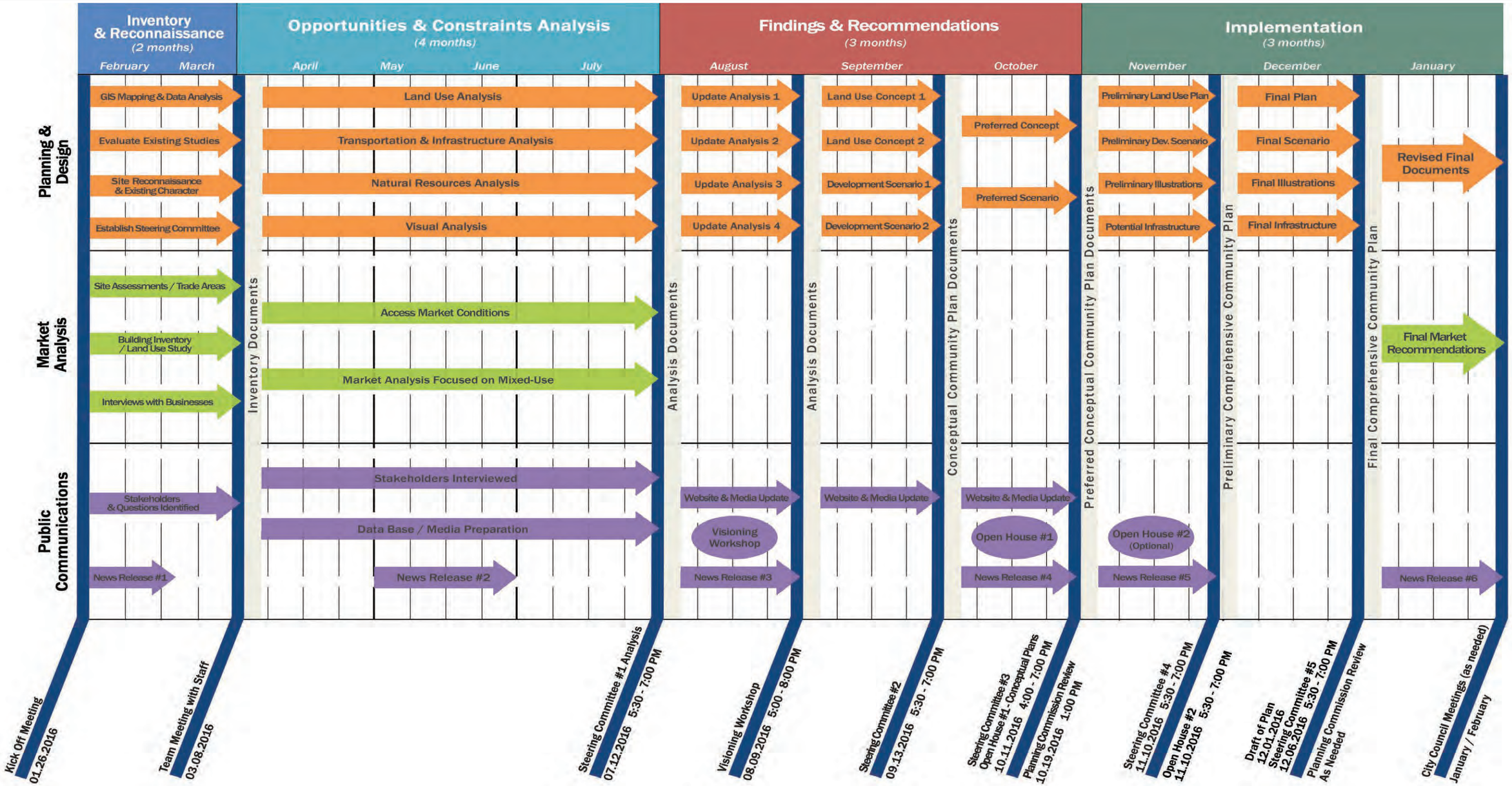
The Bottoms has a prominent history in Murfreesboro for its role as an African American neighborhood and for the industries associated with the railroad. During the Reconstruction era in almost every town where slavery existed, former slaves went looking for employment and shelter. Most were in extreme poverty and were searching for any type of shelter. The Historic Bottoms area developed in a lower income 20-block neighborhood of approximately 55 acres that bordered the southwest side of downtown Murfreesboro. This area became known simply as the Bottoms because of its low-lying terrain that was consistently flooded by rising water from Lytle Creek. Home to blue-collar service workers and, in some out-skirted areas, some professionals and property owners. The area was predominantly African American but some white residents also lived in the vicinity. Additionally, light industrial operations and warehouses were also located in the area. Living conditions were difficult and unsanitary with no running water or plumbing, little or no electricity, and nominal heating. These conditions would continue through to the 1950s when the area went through a phase of urban renewal, triggered by the National Housing Act of 1949 and the funding of a major highway project U.S. Route 41 to connect Murfreesboro to the surrounding communities to the north and the south. U.S. Route 41 became a part of the Dixie Highway, which was a major national travel route that connected Miami, Florida in the south to the Canadian border in the north. The historical black and working class neighborhoods were demolished and displaced in the process of this urban renewal effort. This diagonal swath of the new U.S. Route 41 cut through the heart of the Murfreesboro Downtown grid, creating a division between Downtown and the Historic Bottoms area. The hope of this planning study includes the goal of re-invigorating and reconnecting Downtown Murfreesboro with the Historic Bottoms area.

Project Study Area - Surrounding Context

Project Limits Overview:

- *Bound by Broad Street to the northeast (including City Hall).*
- *Bound by Memorial Boulevard to the northwest.*
- *Railroad defines the southwest edge.*
- *Discovery Center anchors the southeast side at Mercury Boulevard.*
- *The Historic Bottoms Planning Study area has an adjacent area that also is being studied via the North Highland Avenue Planning Study. The two study areas abut each other with N. W. Broad Street between them. 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.*
- *Many of the concepts examined will overlap between the two study areas.*

Project Approach

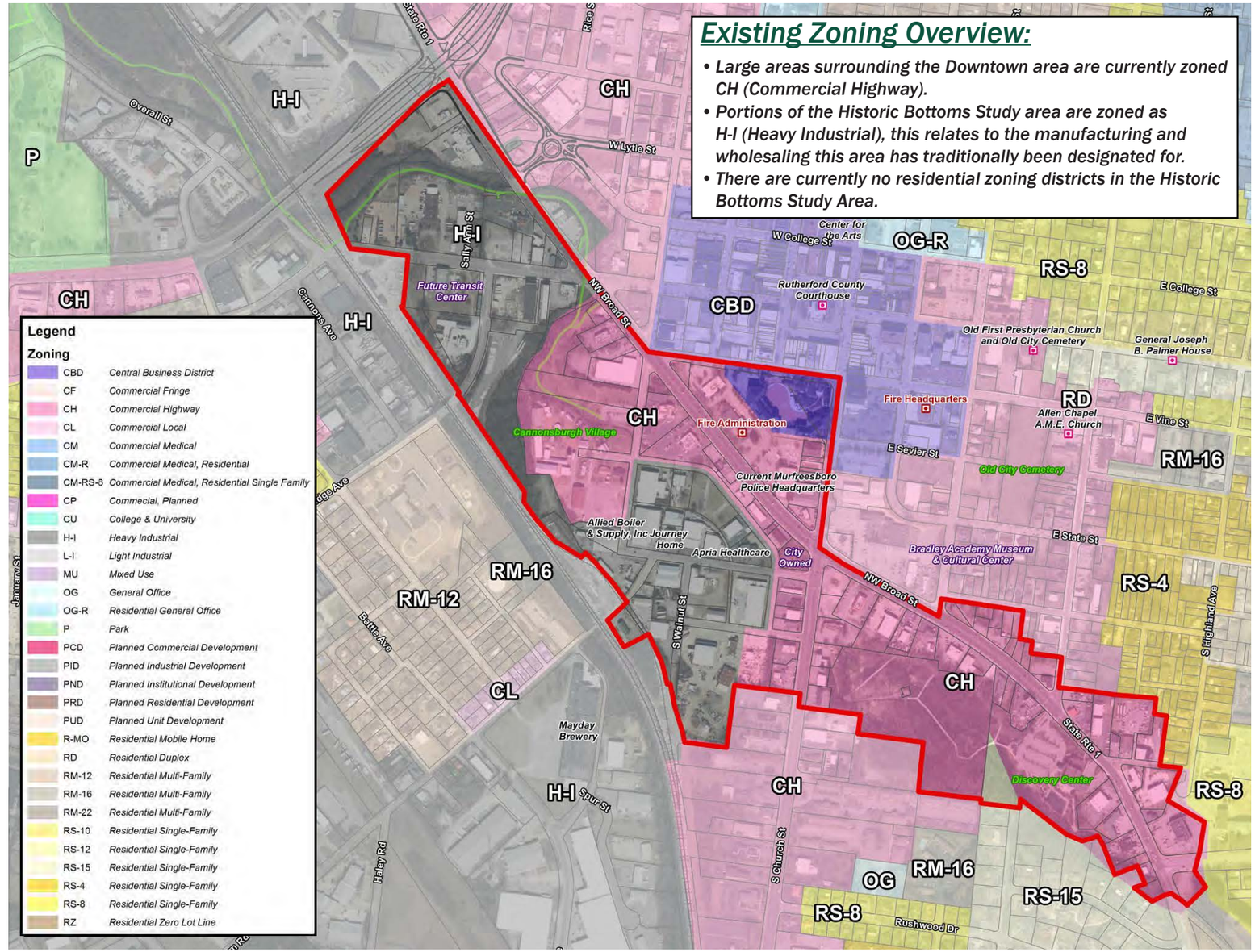


Existing Zoning

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:

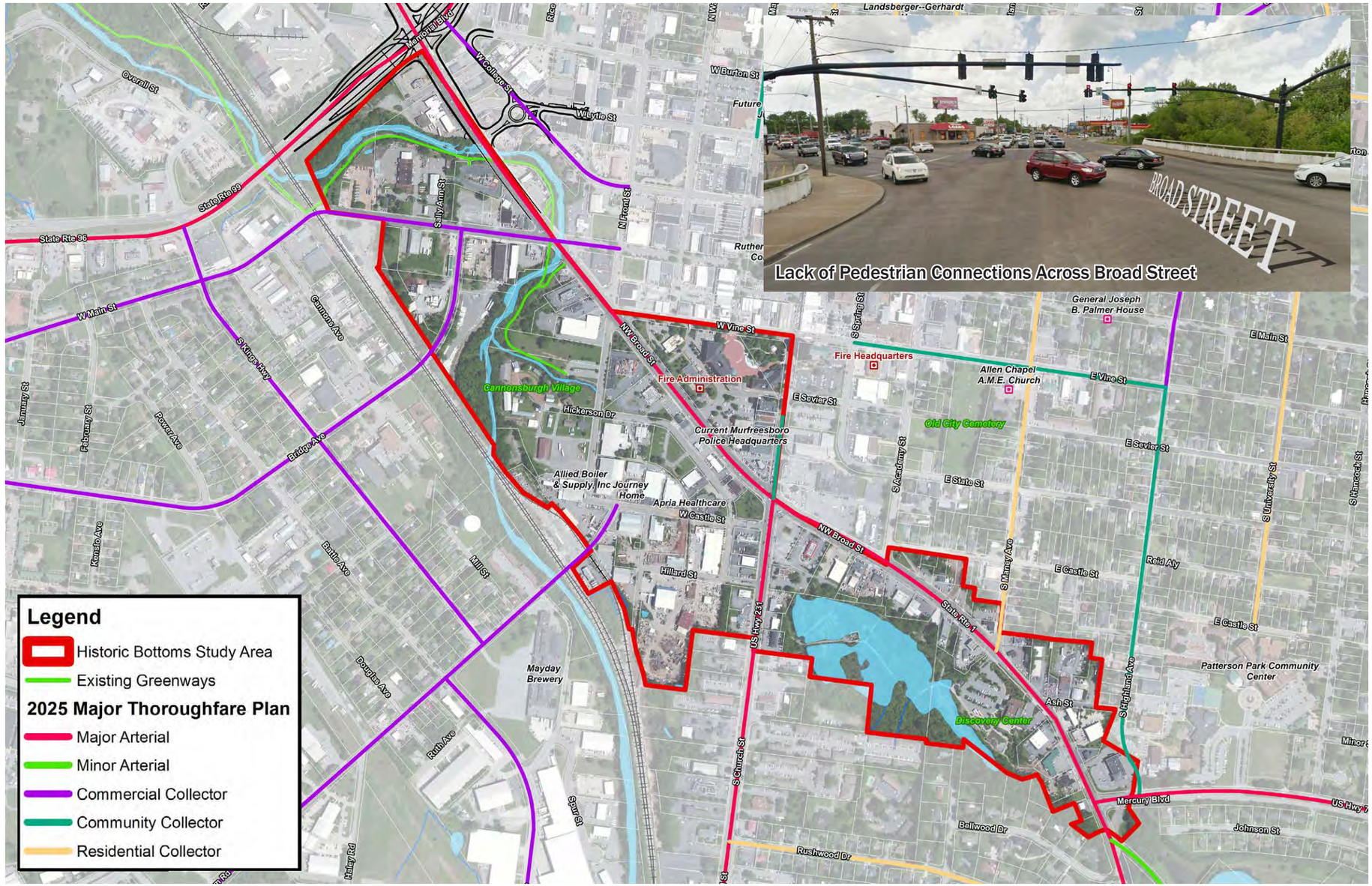
- **CBD** - *This district is to provide a zoning category which allows the maintenance and development of use which will reinforce the vitality of the central business district as a residential and employment center and as the commercial, governmental, and cultural center of Murfreesboro.*
- **CL** - *This district is intended to permit the development and continued maintenance of commercial retail uses and personal services serving the needs of a relatively small area and developed either as a unit or on individual parcels.*
- **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*
- **H-I** - *This industrial district is intended to provide areas in which the principal uses permitted are manufacturing, wholesaling, or warehousing and which are accessible to major transportation routes.*
- **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 Chat 1 (Uses Permitted by Zoning District) in The Murfreesboro Zoning Ordinance.*
- **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-4** - *This district is primarily intended to provide continued maintenance of single-family lots of four thousand square feet in area in the existing older parts of the City.*
- **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-10** - *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 ten 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.*
- **OG-R** - *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.*



Existing Zoning Overview:

- *Large areas surrounding the Downtown area are currently zoned CH (Commercial Highway).*
- *Portions of the Historic Bottoms Study area are zoned as H-I (Heavy Industrial), this relates to the manufacturing and wholesaling this area has traditionally been designated for.*
- *There are currently no residential zoning districts in the Historic Bottoms Study Area.*

Transportation Network



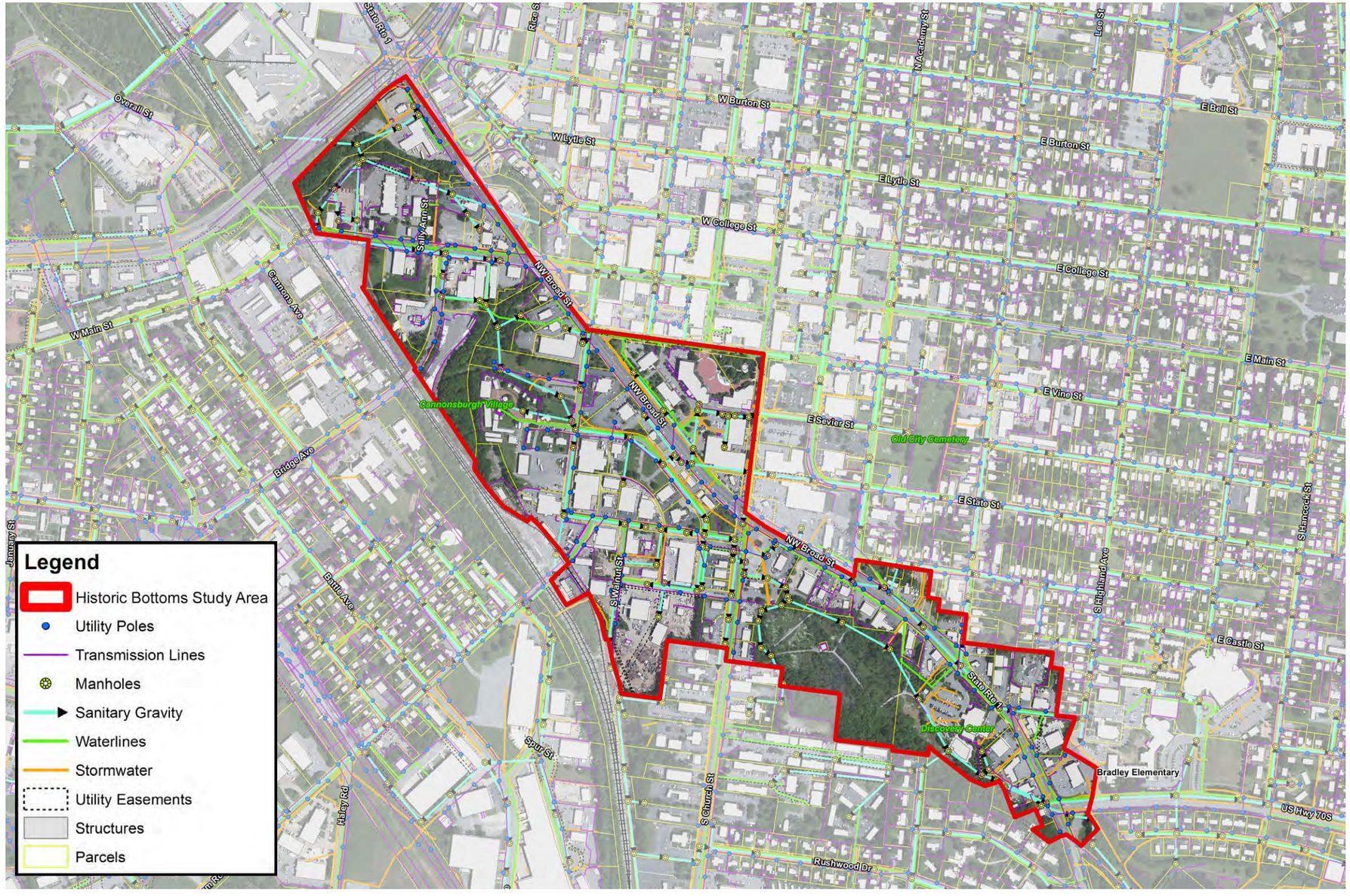
Transportation Overview:

- *The volume and traffic on Broad Street is a major barrier to pedestrian crossings.*
- *Lytle Street roundabout will change access opportunities into Downtown.*
- *Memorial Boulevard will become an improved overpass with off ramps onto Broad Street.*
- *A stronger bike and pedestrian connection should be considered.*
- *Current street network on the south side of Broad Street has access limitations, especially with left turns in and out. Street network in the Historic Bottoms should be addressed.*
- *These road classifications are based on 2025 Major Thoroughfare Plan GIS data as depicted as of September of 2016.*

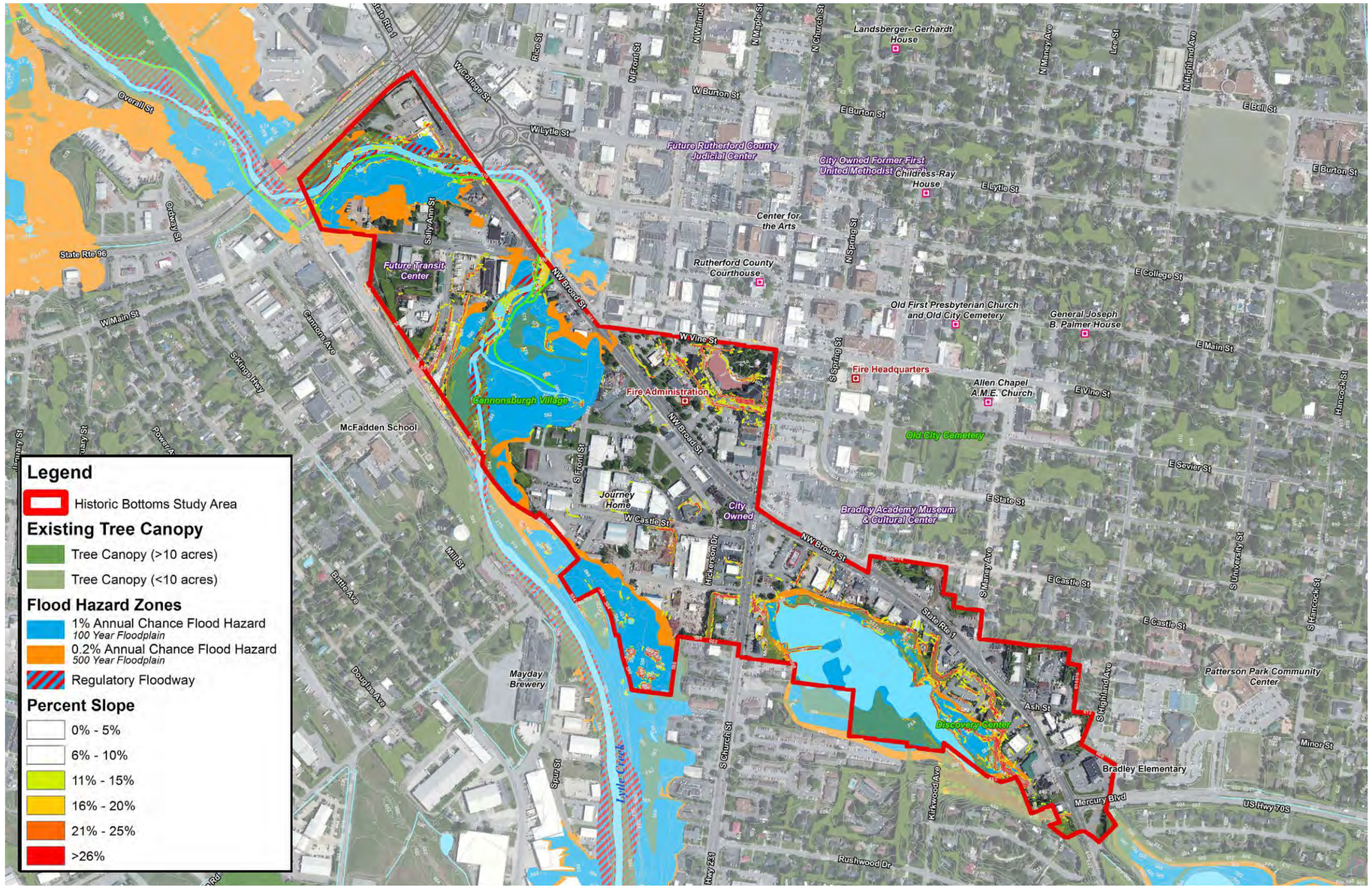
Existing Utilities

Existing 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.*
- *Opening up the piped channel of Town Creek between Cannonsburgh Village and the Discovery Center is under consideration.*
- *Water services in the CBD and surrounding area are problematic for commercial development (fire sprinkler requirements).*



Natural Resources & Park Assessment



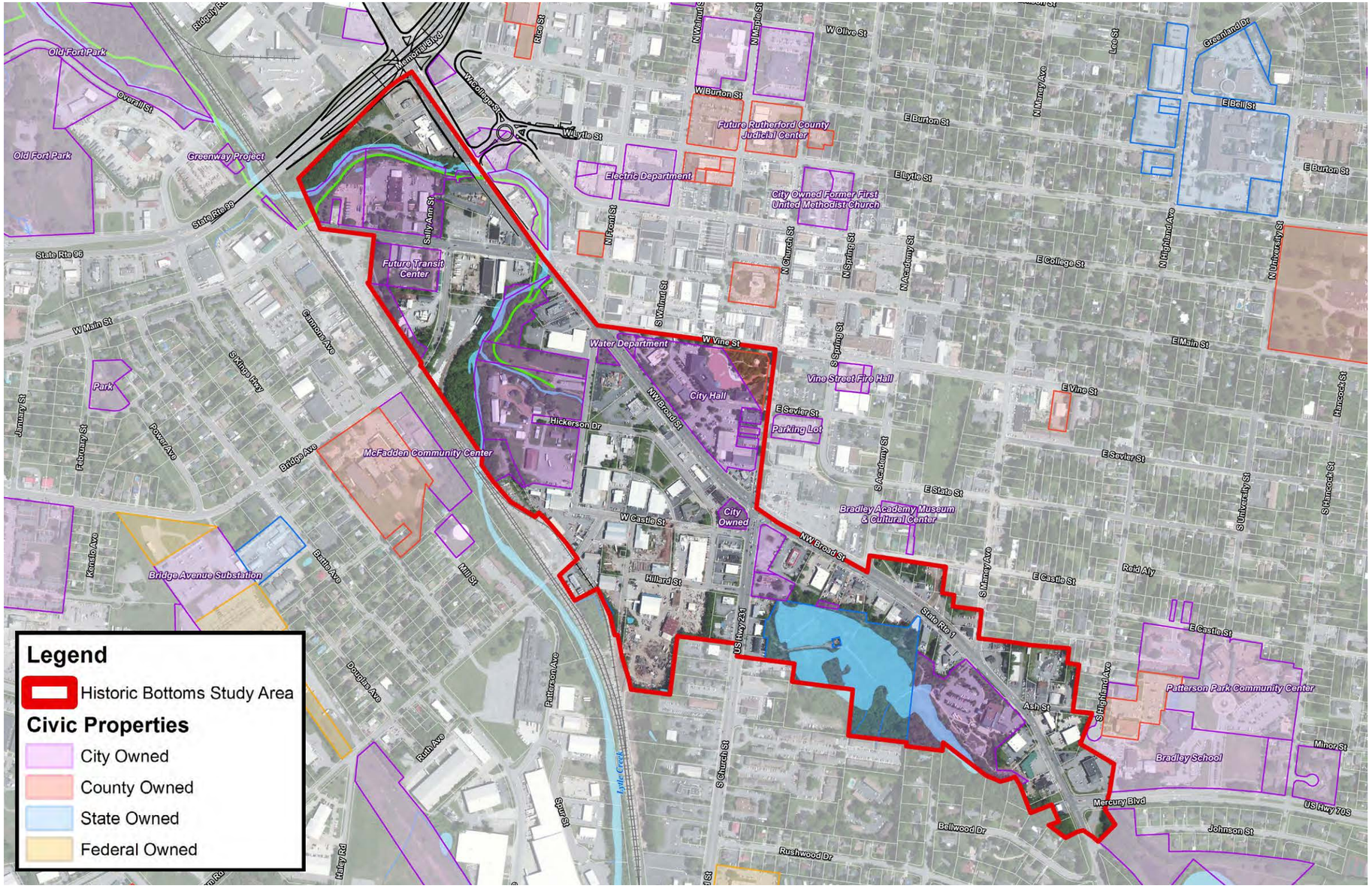
Natural & Cultural Resources Overview:

- *Floodway and Floodplain from Lytle Creek is a major impact.*
- *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.*
- *Explore the possibility of "Daylighting" Town Creek and extending the Lytle Creek Greenway to the Discovery Center.*
- *Connect natural and cultural resources with pedestrian routes.*

Government Owned Property

City Owned Property:

- *The City of Murfreesboro owns a significant portion of the Historic Bottoms Study Area. Many of the properties like City Hall, Cannonsburgh, and the Discovery Center are important to the character of the area.*
- *There are also several parcels that are vacant or under utilized that the City of Murfreesboro owns that are prime for future development.*
- *Additionally, the City of Murfreesboro has plans for a future transit center located on Main Street.*



Economic Overview

Table.	AT-PLACE EMPLOYMENT TRENDS, RUTHERFORD COUNTY, 2009-2015				
			2009-2015 Change		
Industry	2009	2015	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.

Office Market

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:

Table. SAMPLE OFFICE INVENTORY, M'BORO-SMYRNA AREA, 2016

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.

Potentials:

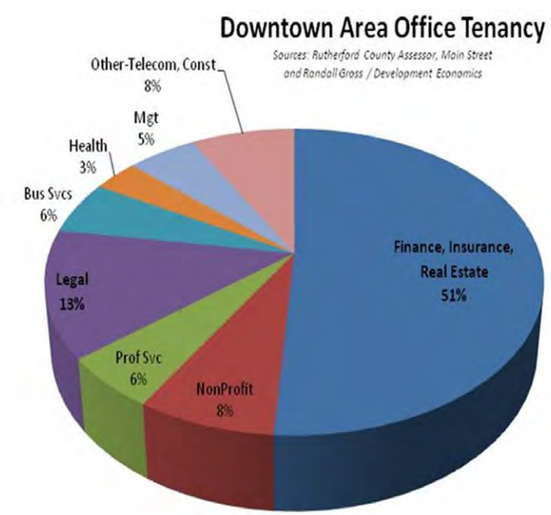
Table. OFFICE POTENTIALS, M'BORO STUDY AREA, 2016-2025

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).



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.

Residential Market

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:

Table. EXISTING RENTAL MARKET CONDITIONS, DOWNTOWN MARKET AREA, 2016

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.				

Existing Market Conditions:

The combined Murfreesboro/Smyrna-La Vergne (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.

Potentials:

Table. RENTAL HOUSING POTENTIALS, 2016-2021

Rent Range	Area Capture Moderate	Area Capture High	Market Rate
$ 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.		

Table. FOR-SALE HOUSING POTENTIALS, 2016-2021

Price Point	Area Capture Moderate	Area Capture High	Market Rate
$ 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.		

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.

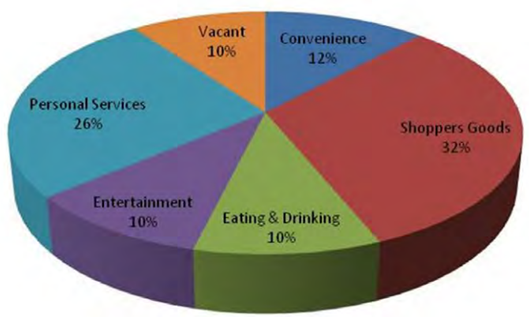
Retail Market

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) 2016	2021	Existing Uses	Warranted Demand
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**

RECOMMENDED RETAIL BUSINESS MIX, HISTORIC BOTTOMS AREA

Existing Assets
Cannonsburgh Village
Discovery Center at Murfree Spring
Bradley Academy Museum/(S Maney Street)
Uncle Dave Macon Days
Industrial Heritage/CSX Station/Buildings & Industry
Main Street Music Venue
Town Creek, Springs, and Greenways
Grocery, gym, restaurants, amenities

New Retail/Commercial Uses	
Distillery/Brewpubs	10,000
Restaurants, Drinking Establishments	15,000
Expanded Main Street Music Venue	5-10,000
Home Furnishings	4,000
Lighting, Other Household Supply	10,000
Antiques "Warehouse"	7,500
Relocated/Expanded Gym	10,000
	56,500

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.

Planning Study Process

The planning study was conducted in four 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 four main phases of the study include:

1. *Public Input*
2. *Market Analysis*
3. *Land Use Planning Study*
4. *Public Relations Services*

The study was done 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.

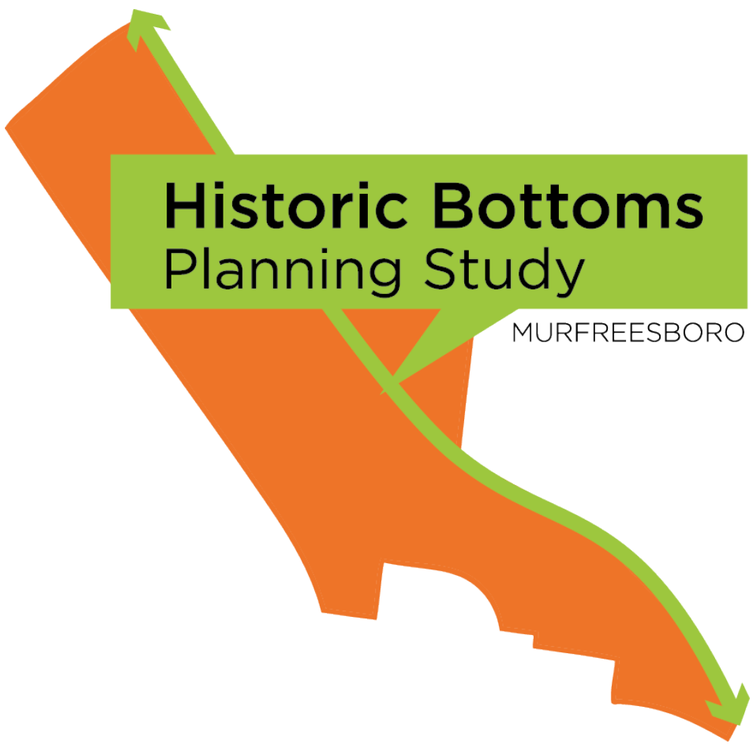
Project Schedule:

January 26, 2016:	Kick-off Meeting
March 8, 2016:	Site reconnaissance & inventory update meeting with City Staff
March 18, 2016:	On site walking tour led by State Historian
April 12, 2016:	Community Stakeholder Interviews *(43 Participants Interviewed - Combined with North Highlands Study)*
June 6, 2016:	Team meeting with City Staff
July 12, 2016:	Steering Committee #1
August 9, 2016:	Project Visioning Workshop
September 13, 2016:	Steering Committee #2
October 11, 2016:	Steering Committee #3 Public Open House #1 *(78 Attendees - 121 comments logged on charts)*
October 19, 2016:	Preliminary Planning Commission Review
November 10, 2016:	Steering Committee #4 Public Open House #2 *(52 Attendees - 118 comments logged on charts)*
December 6, 2016:	Steering Committee #5
December, 2016:	Planning Commission Review
January-Feb. 2017:	Planning Commission & City Council Review

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

Qualitative Community Input

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 Issues from Stakeholder Interviews:

1. *Study area to reconnect Downtown*
2. *Produce multi-modal connectivity throughout the study area and especially along Broad Street and Church Street*
3. *Recognize homeless presence*
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. *Draw students to stay in town during evenings and weekends*
8. *Recognize and enhance the history of the study area*
9. *Look for opportunities to brand this area*

Top Big Ideas from Public Visioning Session & Social Media:

1. *Expand Downtown Across Broad Street*
2. *Pedestrian Crossings on Broad Street / Slow Down Traffic*
3. *Adjust Existing Road Network*
4. *Create an Art & Entertainment District*
5. *Celebrate History & Culture*
6. *Daylight & Re-introduce Town Creek into Development*
7. *Greater Mixture of Uses & Increased Density*
8. *Create a Place of Destination with an Emphasis on Connections to Downtown*
9. *Collaborate with the City's Task Force Regarding the Homeless in the Area*

Quantitative Community Input

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. Nine Big Ideas emerged during the analysis and strategic development process for the Historic Bottoms 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 across Broad Street involving more opportunities for pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit routes along with strengthening connections to MTSU's campus is also seen as a high priority. Addressing the opportunities and constraints associated with homeless services in this area is also seen as an important issue. All of the Big Ideas received enough prioritization to warrant them as important.

Big Ideas:	1st Priority:	2nd Priority:	3rd Priority:	Total:
Expand Downtown Across Broad Street *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.*	11	16	1	***28*** *1st*
Pedestrian Crossings on Broad Street / Slow Down Traffic *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.*	8	12	7	***27*** *2nd*
Adjust Existing Road Network *Enhance connections at Church & Lytle as gateways to Downtown. Extend Old Salem to create a new intersection between Vine & Church St. Extend a one way approach from St. Rt. 96 to create a direct connection to Main St. and the square. Develop three strong signalized at-grade crossings (Vine, Old Salem, & Church*	7	6	8	21
Create an Art & Entertainment District *Function to encourage establishments with a cultural entertainment, art, and creative enterprise work space and housing as a focus.*	13	7	3	***23*** *4th*
Celebrate History & Culture *Celebrate the history of Murfreesboro with monuments, interpretive signage and art in public space. Connection to the rich musical history deserves special attention.*	5	3	9	17
Daylight & Re-introduce Town Creek into Development *There are numerous benefits of daylighting Town Creek including providing wildlife habitat, flood protection, natural cooling, and an invaluable aesthetic and recreation amenity to the surrounding neighborhood. Economic benefits include increased property values and commercial activity in the area.*	13	4	5	22
Greater Mixture of uses & Increased Density *Concentrate a greater density and a mixture of commercial / office and residential uses at key development "nodes" in the Historic Bottoms area.*	4	0	7	11
Create a Place of Destination with an Emphasis on Connections to Downtown *Connect the existing parks, squares, and green space with trails, walkways, and urban greenways. Plan for acquiring and preserving open space in the Historic Bottoms Study Area to balance the anticipated increase in development density of the Downtown Area and improve health and recreational opportunities.*	6	4	5	15
Collaborate with the City's Task Force Regarding the Homeless in the Area *Coordinate with the evaluation of opportunities and constraints associated with the current services that are provided to the homeless in the Historic Bottoms Study Area.*	19	2	3	***24*** *3rd*

Proposed Transportation Network

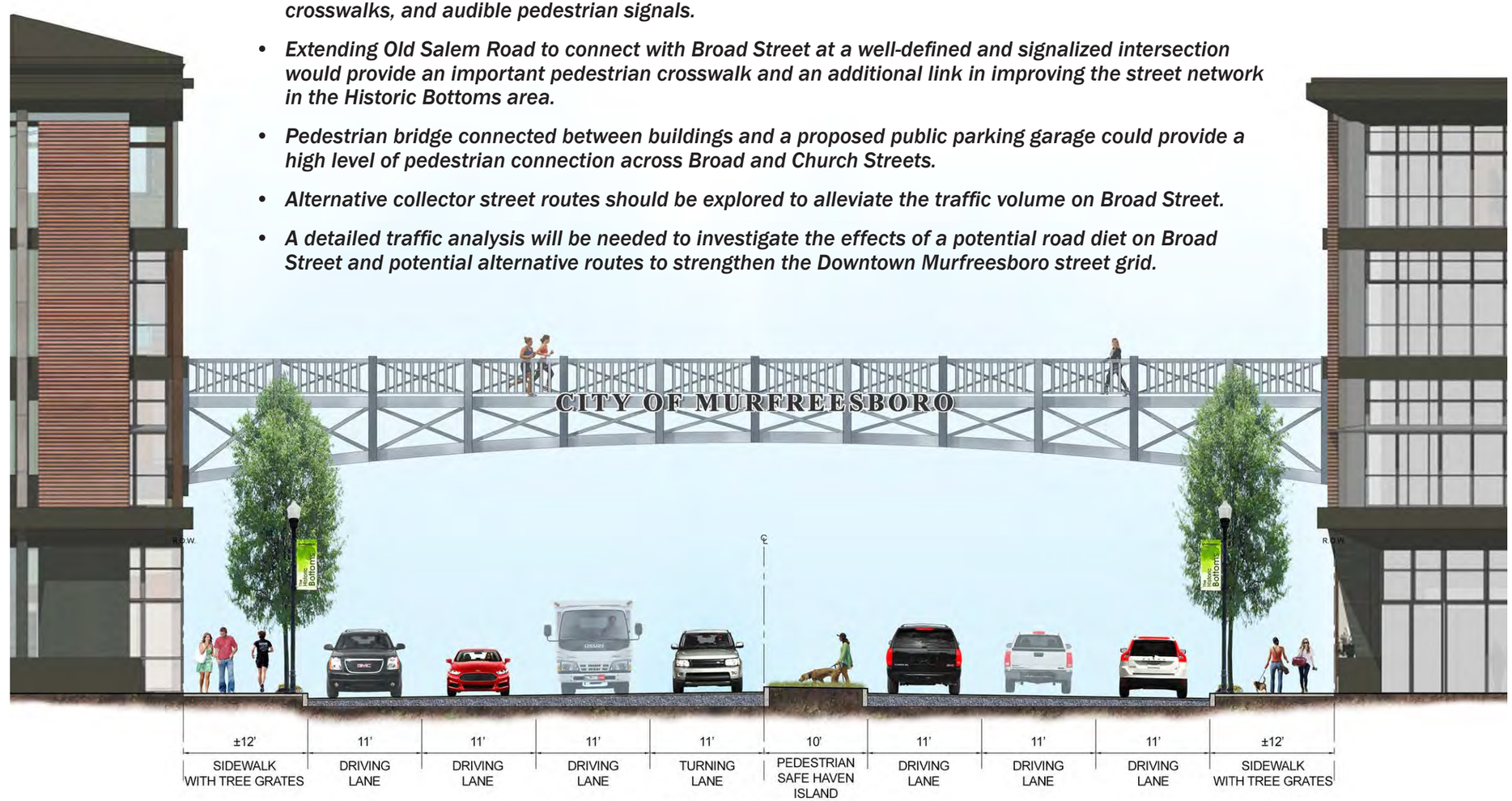
NW Broad St & Old Salem Rd Intersection

NW Broad St & W Main St Intersection

NW Broad St & S Church St Intersection

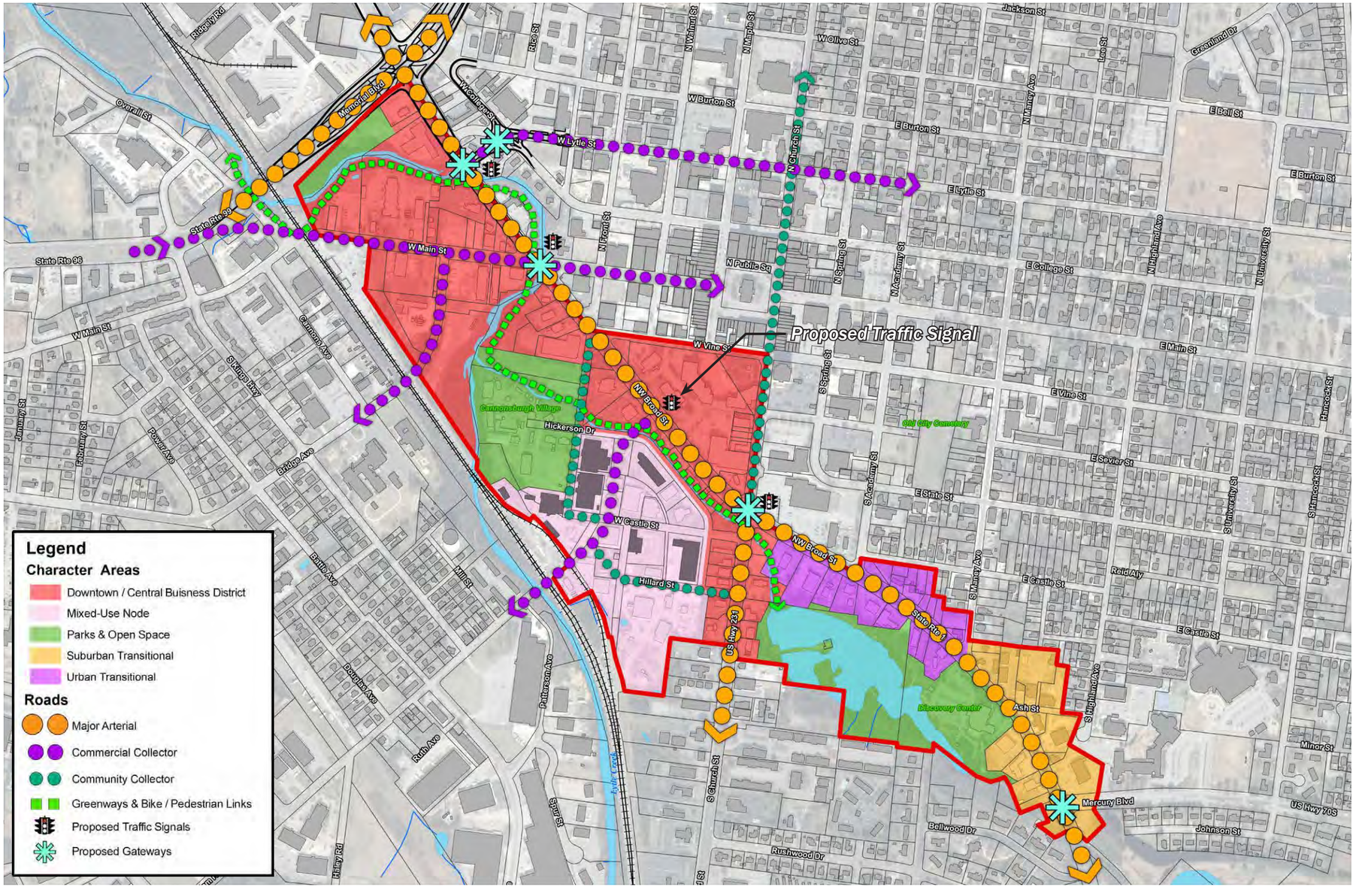
Proposed Transportation Network:

- *Pedestrian crossings on Broad Street will be very important. Clearly defined walk systems are needed at signalized intersections, along with safe haven islands, well designed curb ramps, clearly marked crosswalks, and audible pedestrian signals.*
- *Extending Old Salem Road to connect with Broad Street at a well-defined and signalized intersection would provide an important pedestrian crosswalk and an additional link in improving the street network in the Historic Bottoms area.*
- *Pedestrian bridge connected between buildings and a proposed public parking garage could provide a high level of pedestrian connection across Broad and Church Streets.*
- *Alternative collector street routes should be explored to alleviate the traffic volume on Broad Street.*
- *A detailed traffic analysis will be needed to investigate the effects of a potential road diet on Broad Street and potential alternative routes to strengthen the Downtown Murfreesboro street grid.*



NORTHWEST BROAD STREET
PROPOSED STREET SECTION AT OLD SALEM ROAD
APPROX. 110' R.O.W.

Future Land Use Map



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:
Retail sales, services, hotels/motels, residential, office, recreational services and restaurants that are predominantly privately owned and operated for profit.

Mixed-Use Node
Opportunities exist to create mixed-use nodes of dense developments at key intersections. These areas are ideal for blending a mixture of residential, commercial, & office space together in multi-level buildings. This area can also accommodate existing industrial uses.

Urban Transitional
Transition from high density to moderate-high density mixed-use development, or free standing commercial or office buildings. Opportunities also exist for attached or multi-family residential development.

Suburban Transitional
Areas appropriate for a mixture of residential, commercial, and office use, typically at medium densities.

Downtown / Central Business District Map

Downtown/Central Business District:

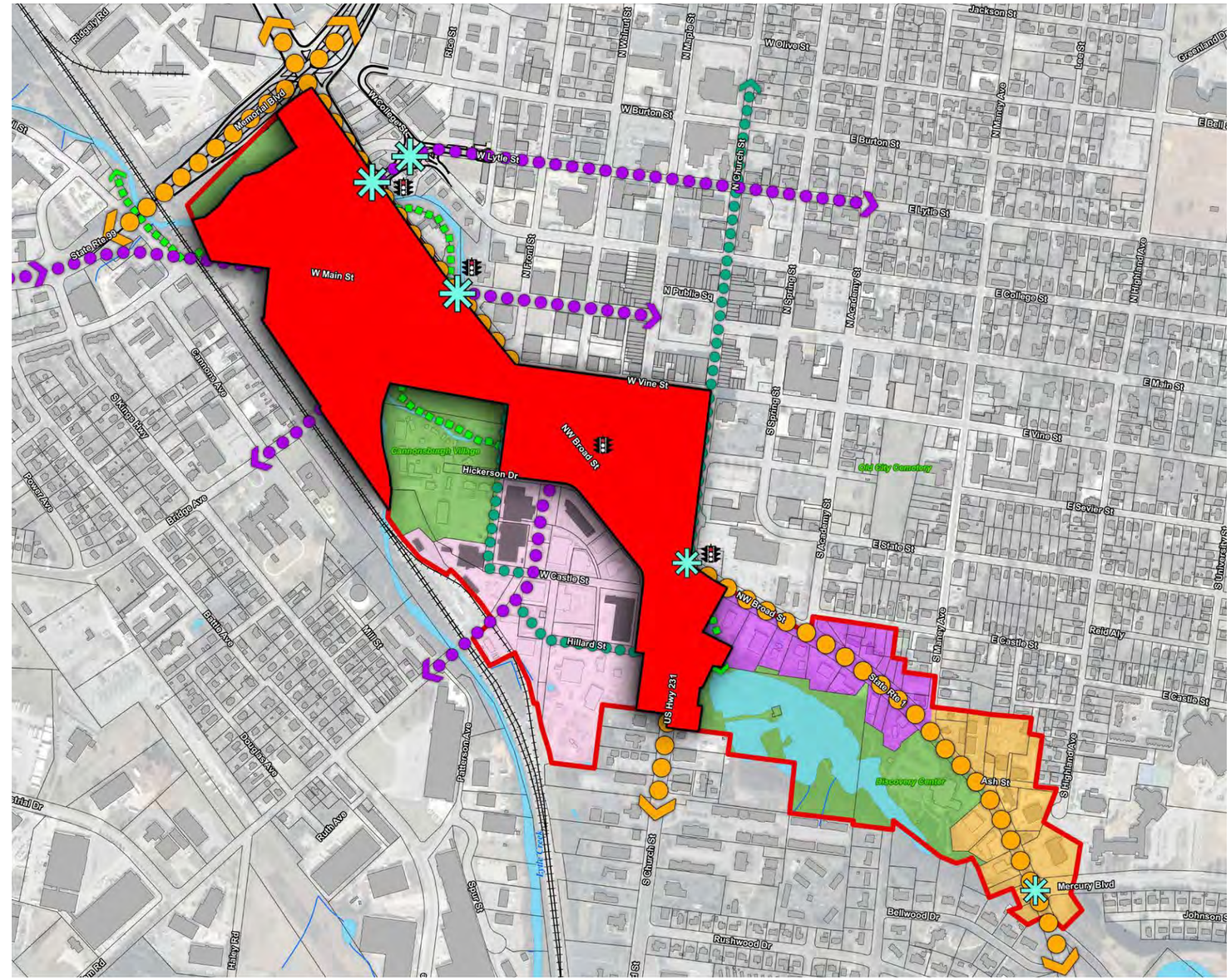
The downtown area in Murfreesboro has its focus on the Square and the historic courthouse surrounded by mostly two-story buildings. The area has a historic feeling and a personal scale. However, the size of the existing downtown area is small in scale relative to the population of Murfreesboro. The ground 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 & Entertainment district.



Downtown / Central Business District Images

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*

Art & Entertainment District Map

Art & Entertainment District Overview:

The Art & Entertainment District established over the Downtown Square and part of the extended Downtown District would function to encourage establishments with a cultural entertainment, art and creative enterprise work space and housing as a focus. The district can target incentives for art and cultural businesses, entertainment venues, and organizations, such as sales or use tax breaks for art supplies, galleries, and public assembly venues. The Art & Entertainment District would be best associated with mixed-use and moderate to high density space.

Key elements for the district include:

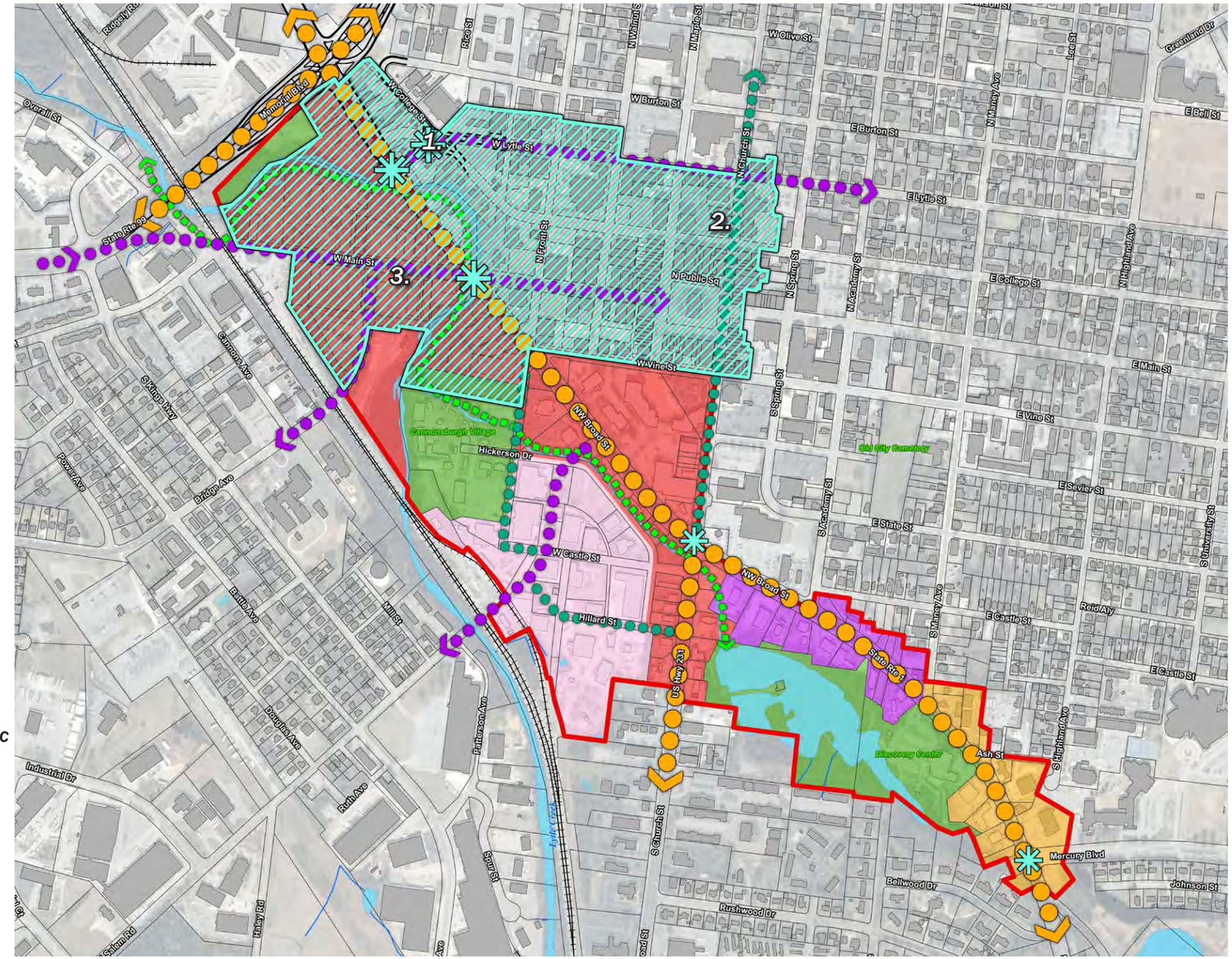
- *Walkable area small enough yet sufficient for clustering of entertainment and associated activity.*
- *Inclusion of existing cultural and/or entertainment anchors and venues.*
- *Provide developable sites and opportunities for rehabilitation and leveraging of revitalization.*
- *Use of historic / vintage character existing buildings as venues.*
- *Provide opportunities for restaurants, bars, and mixed-use in existing buildings or new infill development.*
- *Clear signage and monuments for wayfinding and market branding opportunities.*
- *Locations for public art display.*

Potential Elements:

- *Restaurants & Drinking establishments*
- *Food Trucks*
- *Public Art Displays*
- *Outdoor Amphitheaters*
- *Community Events & Art Shows*
- *Art Galleries*
- *Outdoor Cafes*
- *Specialty Retail*
- *Performing Arts / Theaters*
- *Cultural Trail*

Art & Entertainment Focus Areas:

1. *Lytle Street improvements serving as gateway*
2. *Existing Center for the Arts and connection to City Square. Strong historic connection, but limited opportunity for new development*
3. *Main Street Corridor prominent relationship to City Square. Existing Buildings have strong character connection to adjoining Cannonsburgh*



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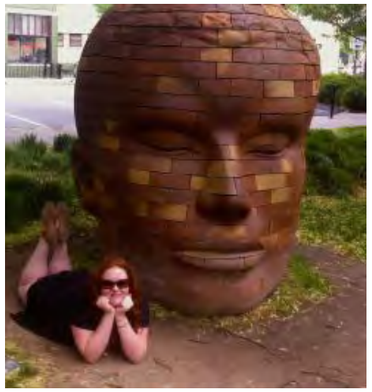
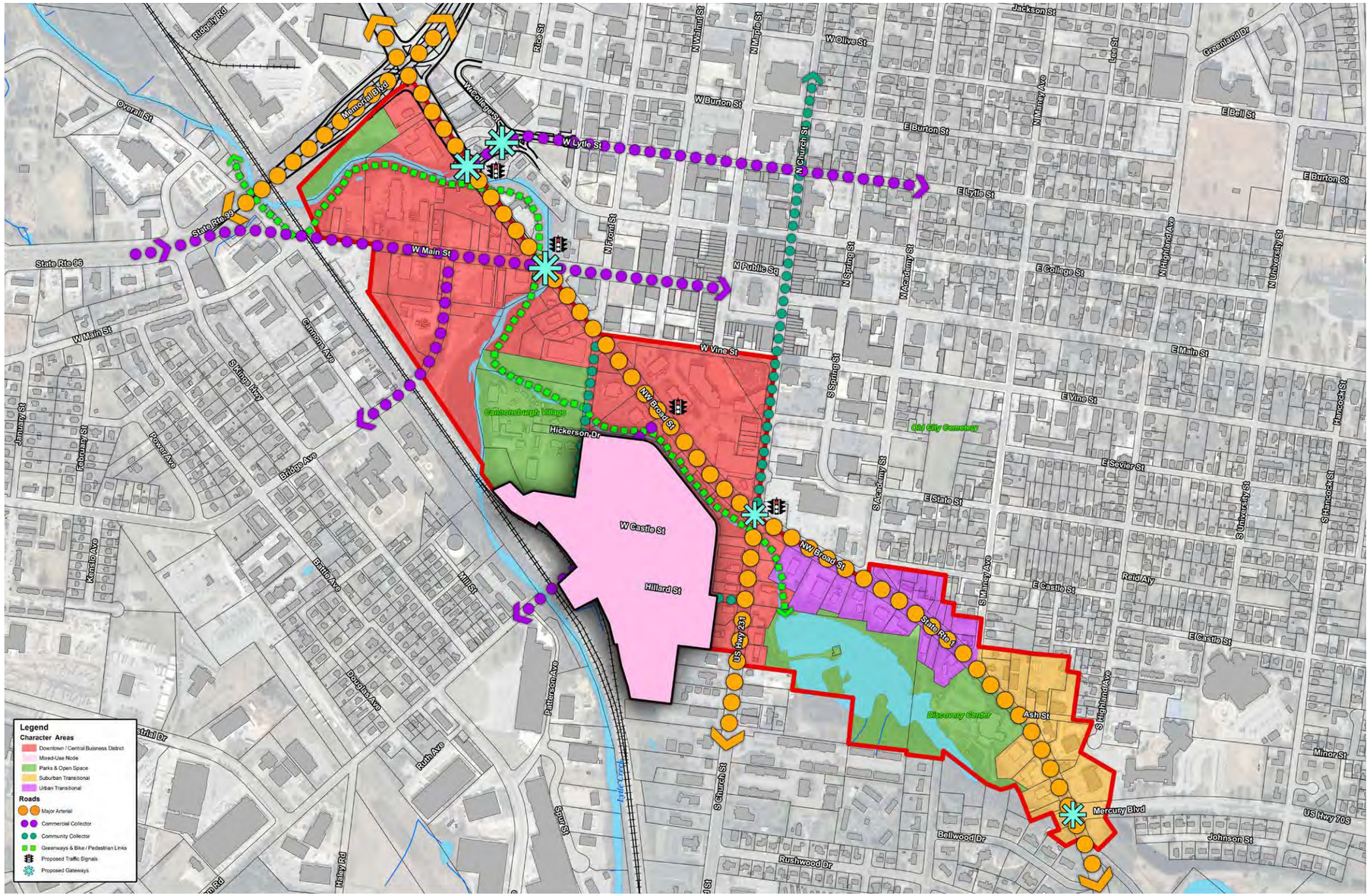
Art & Entertainment District Images



Mixed-Use Node Map

Mixed-Use Node:

The Mixed-Use Node District in the Historic Bottoms study area would promote the opportunity for development of a higher density in nature. This area will also fit well with the idea of blending a mixture of residential, commercial and office space together in multi-level buildings. Existing industrial uses could be integrated with new mixed-use development. The form that many mixed-use developments take allows for integrated parking and good pedestrian connections. This node will be a good place 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.



Mixed-Use Node Images

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:

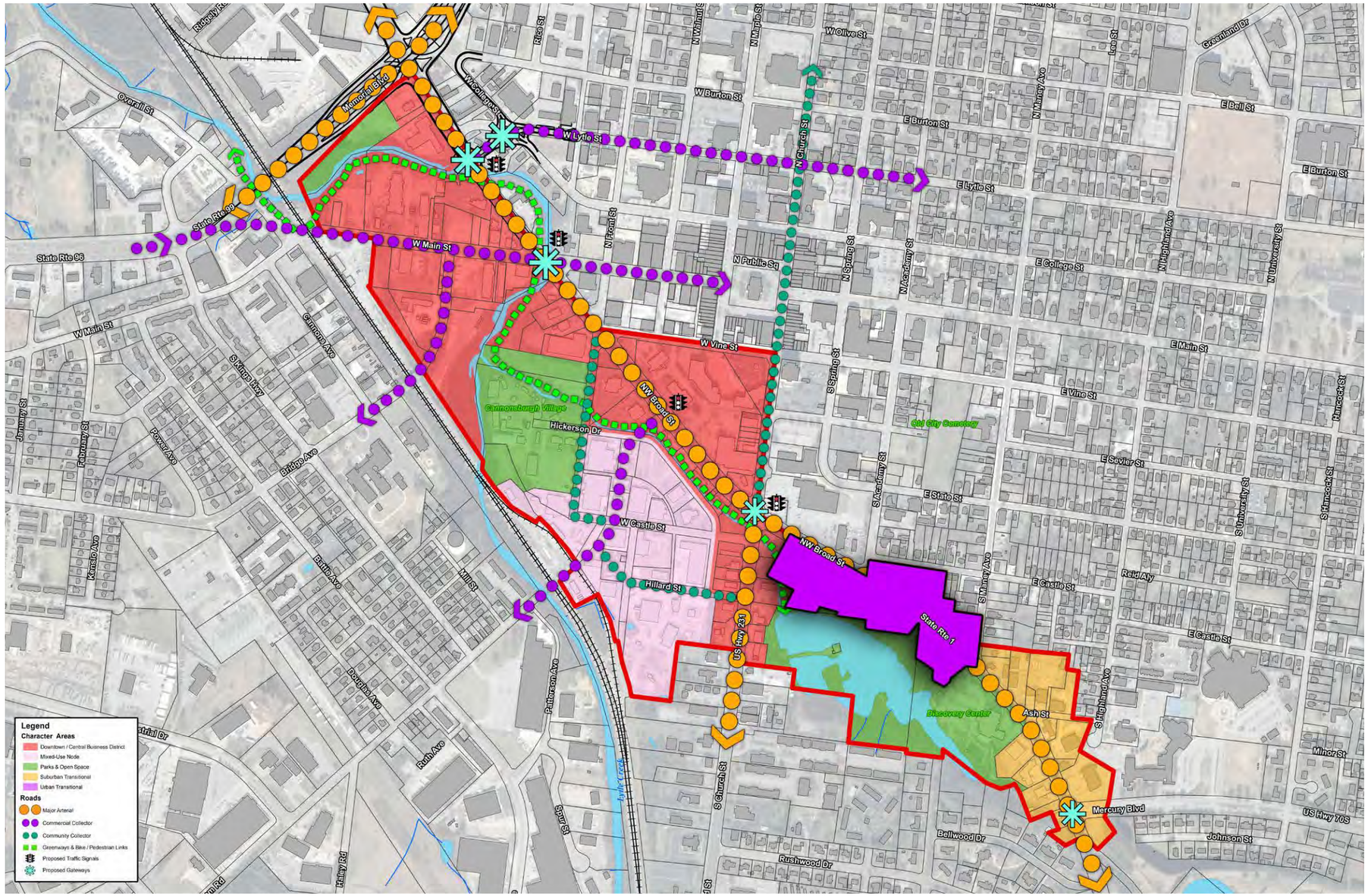
- *Parking located behind or below buildings, or in combined lots*
- *Access from secondary streets and/or alleys*
- *Combined parking lots & garages*

Urban Transitional District Map

Urban Transitional:

The Urban Transitional area relates to the Downtown - Central Business District but acts as a transition to areas with less density. This development area has potential for a moderate to high density residential development with a mix of ground floor commercial retail and/or office. New development should have buildings close to the street with parking at the side and the rear of lots. Lots are of moderate size with limited depth and access to Broad Street. Many of these lots would be good acquisitions for the Discovery Center and Murfree Spring Park if they were to become available.

- *This portion of Broad Street still relates to the Downtown District but acts as a transition to areas with less density.*
- *Land use includes commercial, office, and residential.*
- *2 story buildings with an allowance for 3 story if residential is included.*
- *Lots are of moderate size with limited depth and access of Broad.*
- *Encourage new development to have buildings close to the street with parking at the side and rear of lots.*
- *Some of these lots would be good acquisition to the Discovery Center and Murfree Spring Park if they became available.*



Urban Transitional District Images

Streetscape:

- *6' wide sidewalks & 6' min. planting strip between sidewalk and street*
- *Street trees*
- *Formal on-street parking*
- *Dedicated bike lanes*

Character Setbacks:

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

Use:

- *Residential (multi-family, Single-family Attached)*
- *Ground Floor Office*
- *Ground Floor Retail Commercial, i.e. Coffee Shop, Home Furnishings*
- *Free Standing Commercial or Office Buildings*

Building Design:

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

Landscaping & Screening:

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

Height:

- *2 story maximum, with allowance for 3 stories if residential is included.*

Parking & Access:

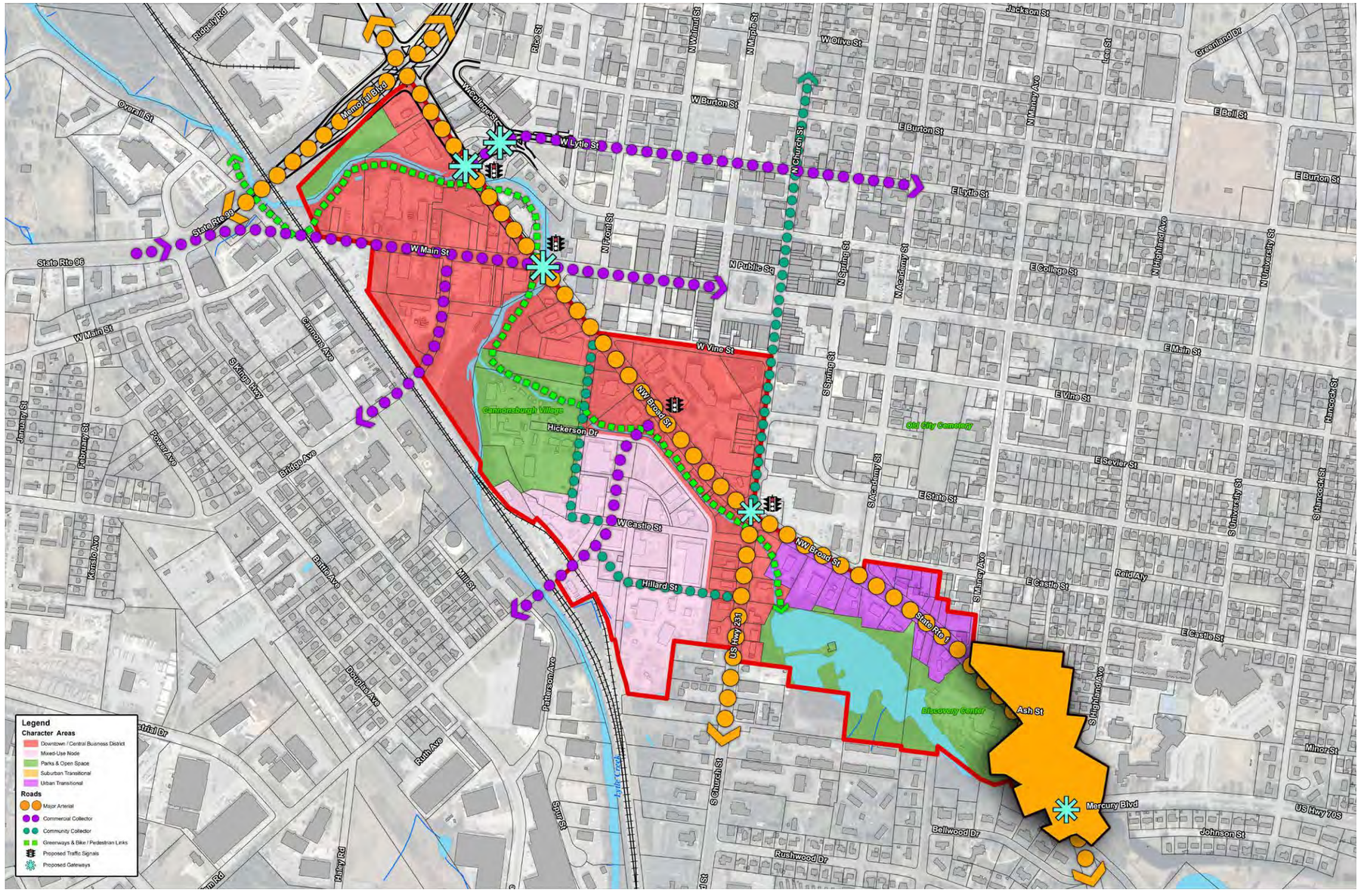
- *Parking located behind or below buildings, or in combined lots*
- *Access primarily from secondary streets and/or alleys.*

Suburban Transitional District Map

Suburban Transitional:

The Suburban Transitional area is placed on the southeast side of the Historic Bottoms where Broad Street narrows. This development area has potential for a moderate density residential development with a mix of commercial retail. It continues in the context of Downtown / Central Business District and the Urban Transitional areas along Broad Street. This area continues to act as a transition to the Downtown area.

- *Broad Street narrows in this area*
- *Maximum building height is 2 stories*
- *Proposed uses include commercial and residential*



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Suburban Transitional District Images

Streetscape:

- 6' wide sidewalks & 6' min. planting strip between sidewalk and street
- Street trees
- Formal on-street parking
- Dedicated bike lanes

Character Setbacks:

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

Use:

- Residential (Single-family, Single-family Attached)
- Ground Floor Retail Commercial, i.e. Household Supply, Gym
- Free Standing Commercial or Office Buildings

Building Design:

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

Landscaping & Screening:

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

Height:

- 2 story maximum

Parking & Access:

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

Parks & Open Space Map

Parks & Open Space Overview:

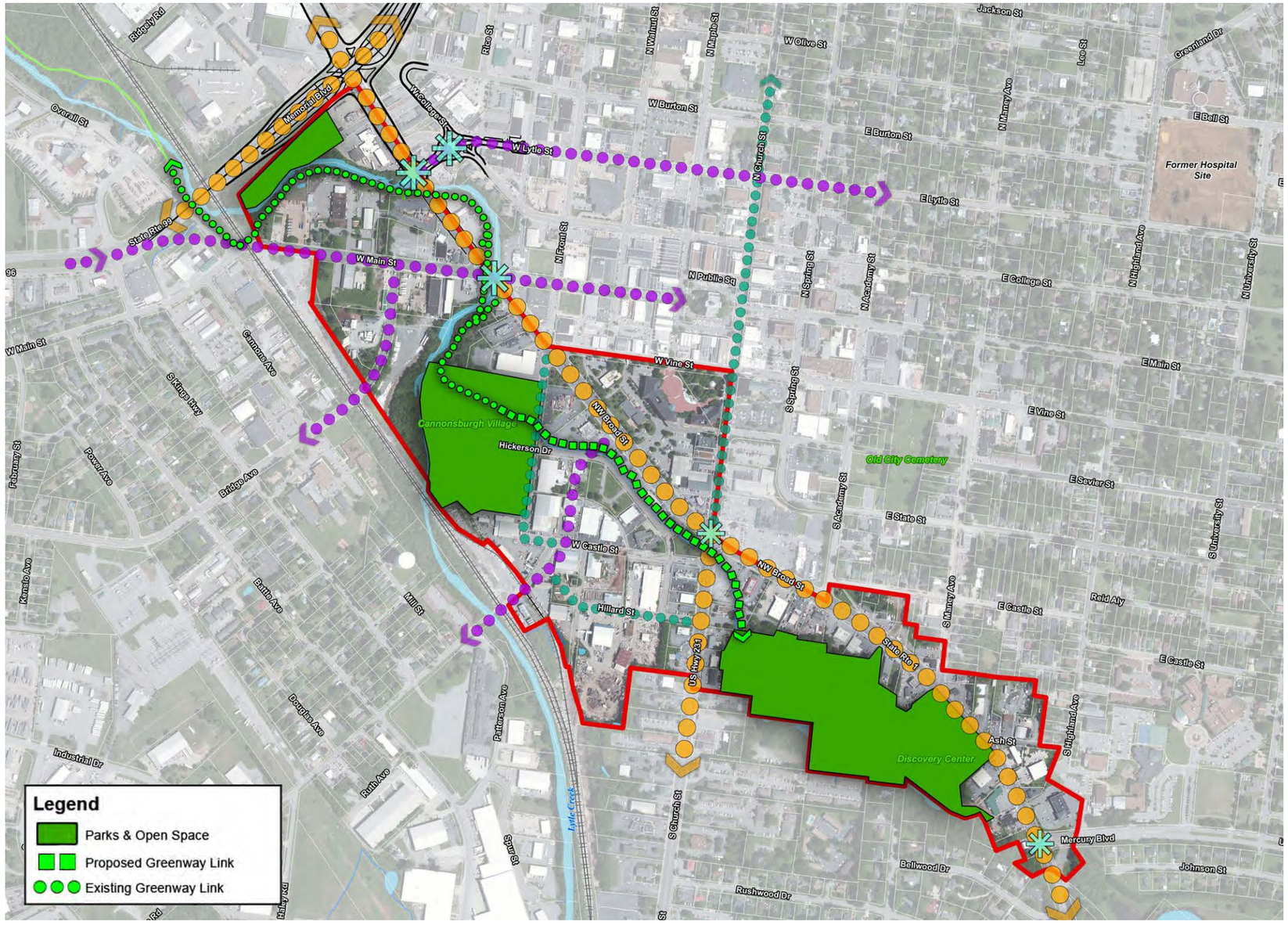
The Historic Bottoms is home to two community treasures in Cannonsburgh Village and the Discovery Center. These parks provide unique hands-on opportunities for education in history and nature. However, it is important for a community to have a mixture of parks that balance passive and active recreational 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 Historic Bottoms 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 Historic Bottoms area and Downtown Murfreesboro are currently within the service area of some excellent special use and community parks however there is some significant challenge in connecting to these parks. Broad Street serves as a barrier to pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Downtown Square and the Oaklands Mansion. Its suburban commercial feeling and relative high speed travel discourages access and recognition of these valuable community assets.

A strong connection from the existing Lytle Creek Greenway to the Discovery Center is needed. There is an existing opportunity for this connection by "daylighting" Town Creek. 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.

Cannonsburgh Village has the potential to serve as a stronger community space with continual seasonal events to draw tourism and local programs, such as outdoor theater space and community garden space.



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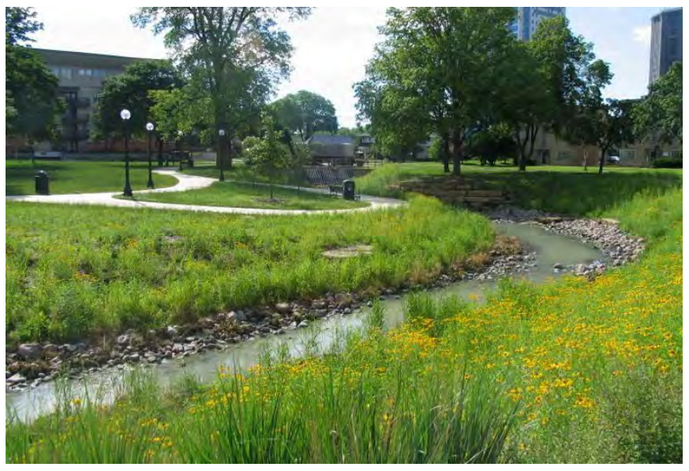
Parks & Open Space Images



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*

Overall Development Scenarios

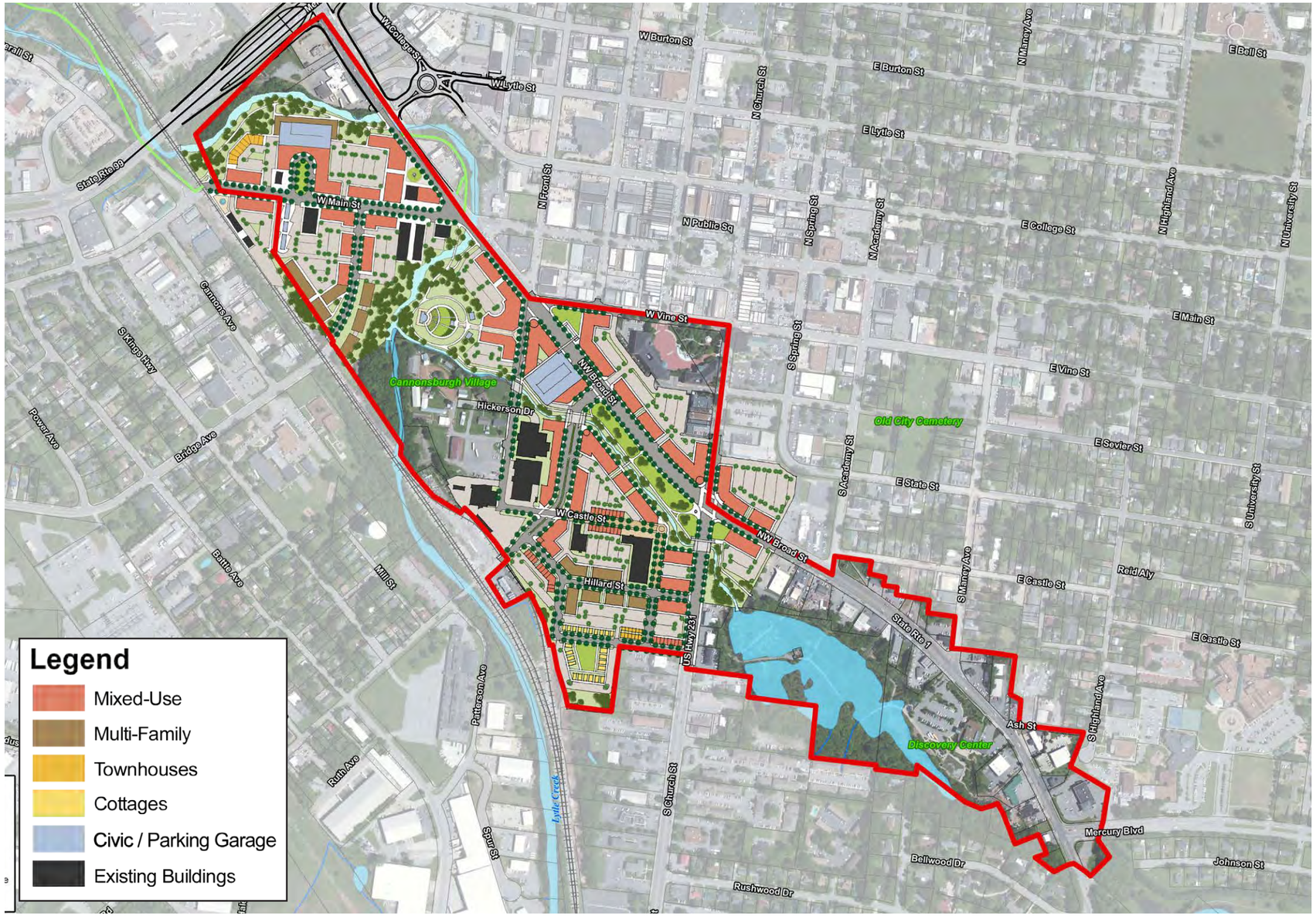
Development Scenario Overview:

Specific areas of the Historic Bottoms 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 intact (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.

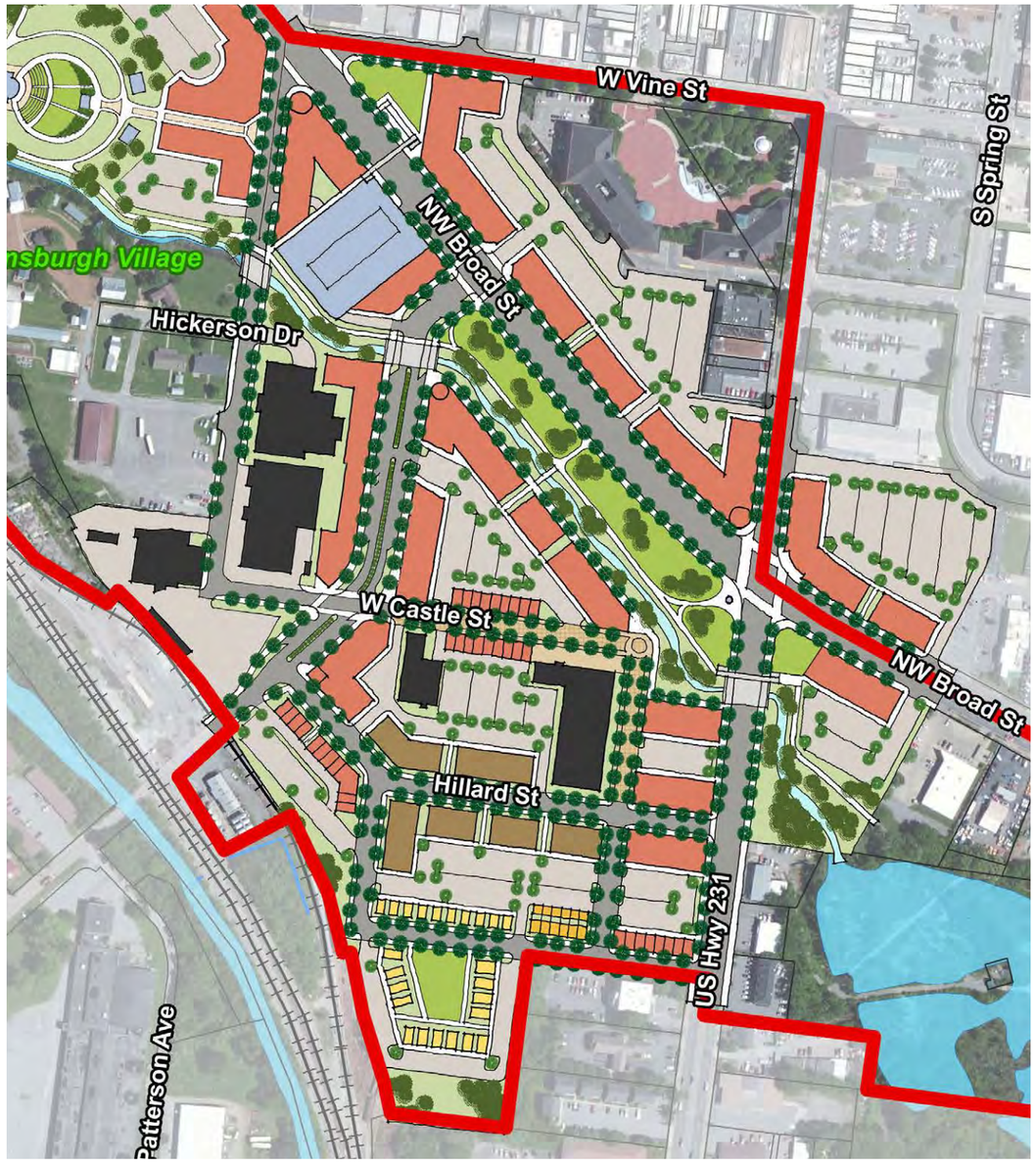
Based on the market analysis for this study area, square footages for additional office, residential and retail spaces are calculated to fit into the new development footprint. This provides a sketch for how an area might shape out in the future based on the potential demands for a ten year market window.

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.



Bottoms Core Development Scenario 1



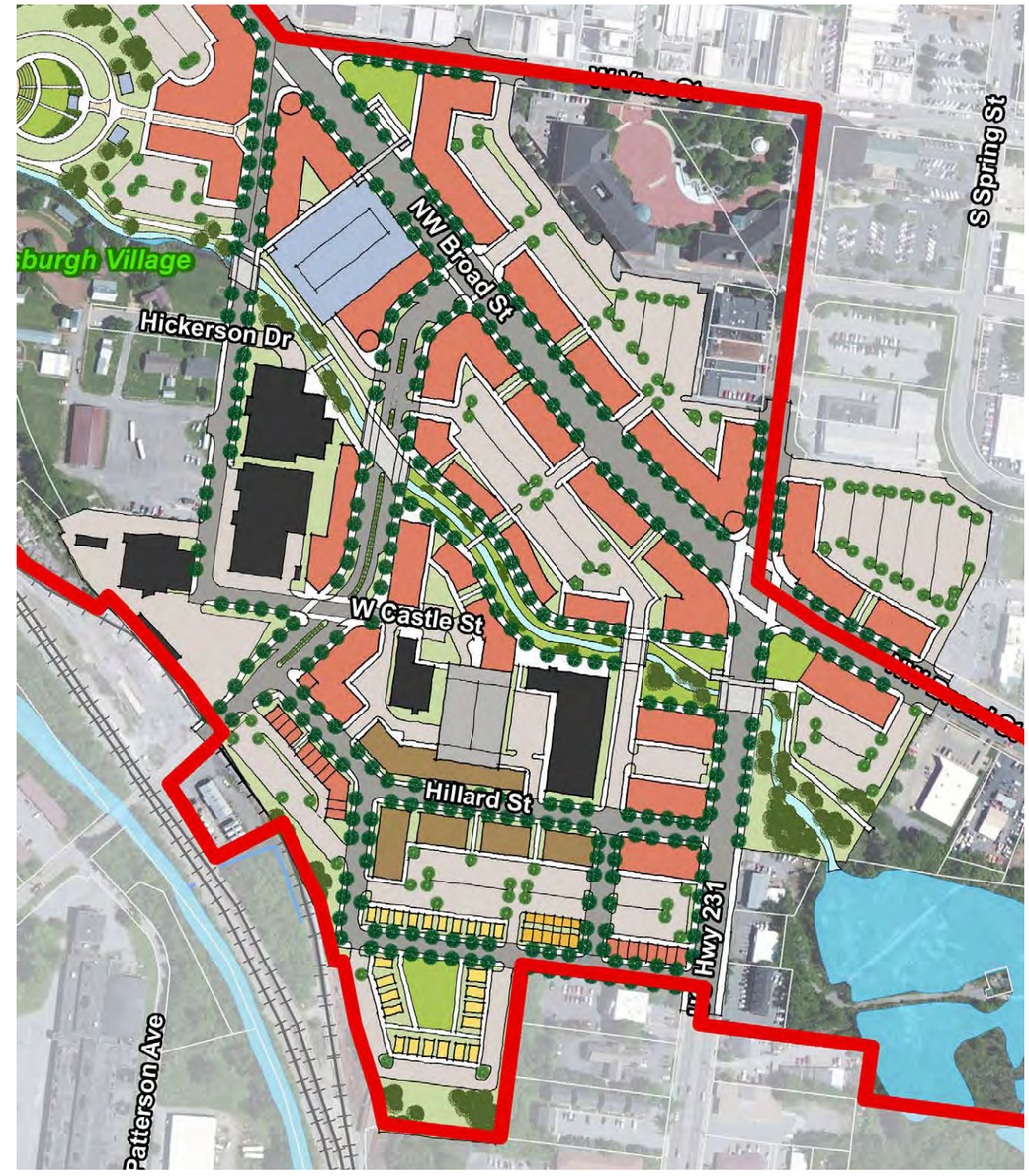
The Bottoms Core Development Scenario 1 highlights the daylighting of Town Creek along Broad Street to create a linear park and a greenway connection between Cannonsburgh and the Discovery Center. The existing street network was used as the original frame work for the scenario, then was reworked to be more functional and efficient. Old Salem Road is shown extending to Broad Street with the addition of diagonal on-street parking, landscaped medians, and mixed-use development occurring on both sides. Portions of Castle Street and Hickerson Drive are shown as a "shared street" with live/work units and existing buildings to frame the new shared boulevard giving it a more pedestrian scale. Additionally, this scenario shows the potential for a municipal parking structure including a pedestrian bridge that would connect over Broad Street into the North Highland Study Area.

Legend

- Mixed-Use
- Multi-Family
- Townhouses
- Cottages
- Civic / Parking Garage
- Existing Buildings

Bottoms Core Development Scenario 2

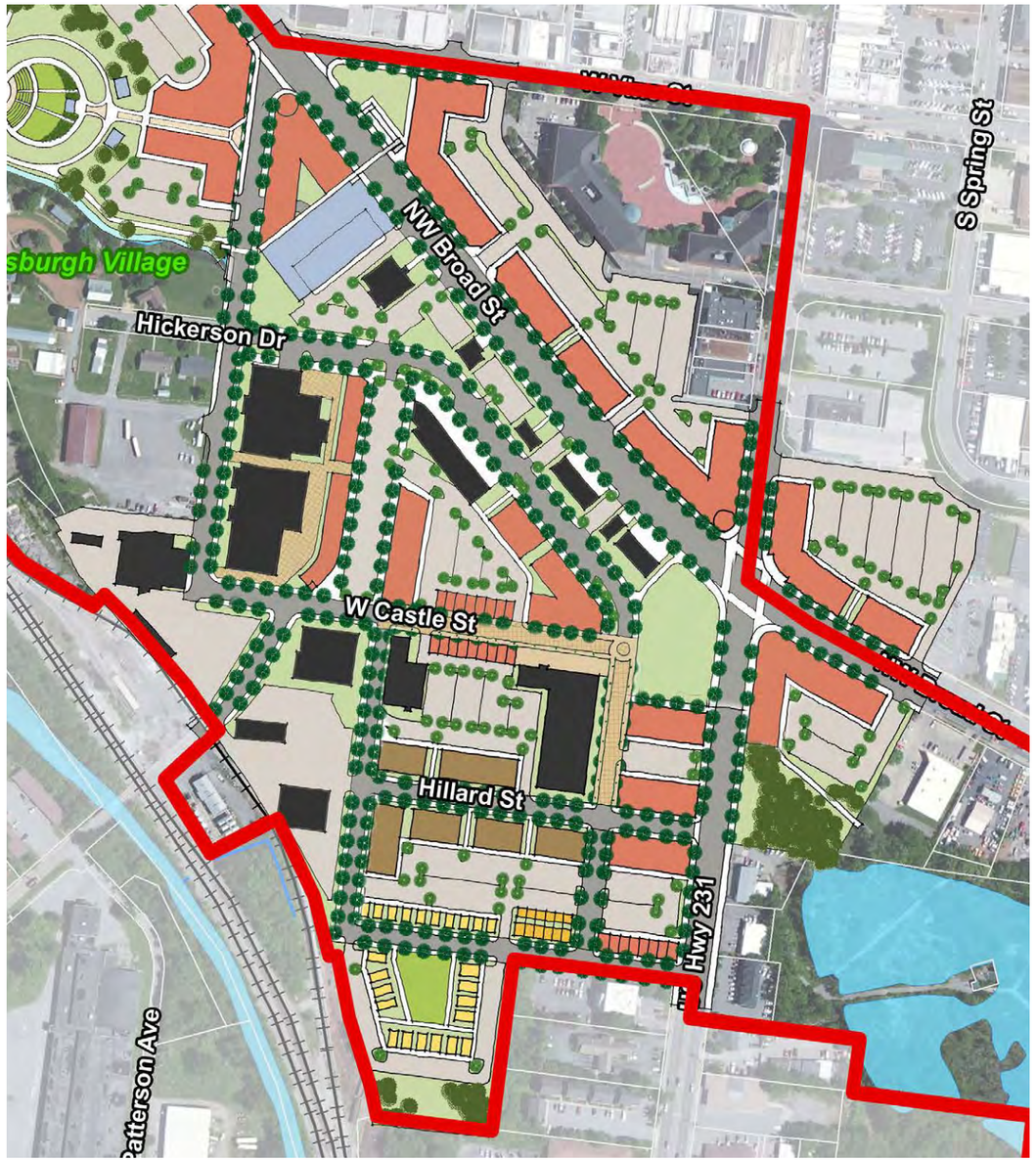
Similar to the Bottoms Core Development Scenario 1, the Bottoms Core Development Scenario 2 highlights the daylighting of Town Creek. However, this scenario shows Town Creek taking an interior route creating a linear park and greenway connection between Cannonsburgh and the Discovery Center along Hickerson Drive. This route would allow for mixed-use development to take place along Broad Street and along both sides of Town Creek that was not possible in the previous scenario. Much like the previous scenario, the existing street network was used as the original frame work for development, then was reworked to be more functional and efficient. Old Salem Road is again shown extending to Broad Street with the addition of diagonal on-street parking, landscaped medians, and mixed-use development occurring on both sides. Additionally, this scenario also shows the potential for a municipal parking structure including a pedestrian bridge that would connect over Broad Street into the North Highland Study Area. Structured parking and surface parking will be confined to the interior of blocks to create a more urban feel with buildings set to the street.



Legend

- Mixed-Use
- Multi-Family
- Townhouses
- Cottages
- Civic / Parking Garage
- Existing Buildings

Bottoms Core Development Scenario 3



In the Bottoms Core Development Scenario 3, an effort to preserve the existing street network and buildings was taken. Industrial uses can continue to work with the mixed-use development approach for all three Bottoms Core Scenarios. The timing and pattern of property acquisition and consolidation will shape which buildings remain and where new buildings are developed. The exact location of a redesigned street network and the path of daylighting Town Creek has flexibility. The key objective is to provide a new future signalized intersection with Broad Street that will make this area more accessible.

Legend

- Mixed-Use
- Multi-Family
- Townhouses
- Cottages
- Civic / Parking Garage
- Existing Buildings

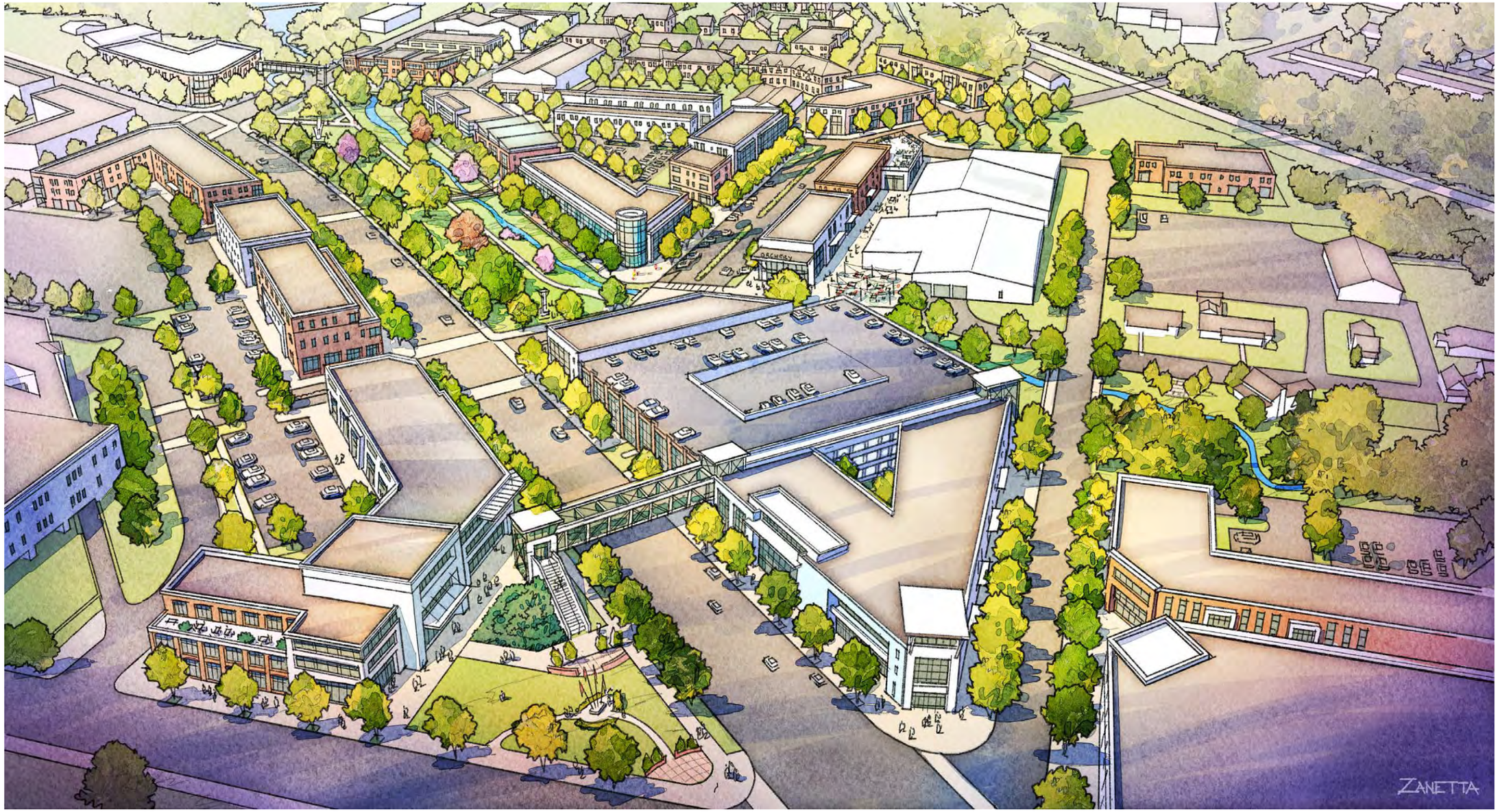
Main Street Development Scenario

In the Main Street Development Scenario, preserving existing buildings that contribute to the "downtown" vision for the area was a main goal. It was also important to show the opportunity for vertical mixed-use developments that are consistent with the Central Business District along West Main Street, Broad Street, and at the Bridge Avenue / West Main Street intersection. Additionally, this scenario shows the transition of uses from mixed-use developments along major streets to the surrounding neighborhoods with multi-family residential. Furthermore, this scenario shows the opportunity for an enhanced transit center and an outdoor amphitheater at Cannonsburgh.

Legend

- Mixed-Use
- Multi-Family
- Townhouses
- Cottages
- Civic / Parking Garage
- Existing Buildings

Illustrative Perspective Vision of The Historic Bottoms



Market Analysis Findings Review

Summary of Market Findings

The market analysis and opportunities assessment identified the following potentials for retail, housing, office and other uses.

Office Market Potentials

- Downtown-Area Potential for 200,000 square feet
- Historic Bottoms Targets: Back Office/Admin. Services, IT, Design, Non-profit, Emerging Technology

Residential Market Potentials

- Increasing Demand + Limited Supply = Rapidly-Increasing Prices
- Historic Bottoms:
  - Rental: 144-260 units, including 90-140 workforce housing in apartments, live/work, and loft units
  - For-Sale: 100-170 units, primarily affordable/workforce housing in condo/mixed-use, SF cottage homes, and lofts

Retail Market Potentials

- Downtown-Area Potential for 370,000 square feet
- Historic Bottoms: 50,000sf in distilleries/breweries, restaurants/bars, music venues, and home furnishings/antique "warehouse."

Other Historic Bottoms Untested Opportunities

- Artisanal manufacturing and "maker" spaces
- Business/IT incubators
- Tourism attractions, connections, enhancements, venues (amphitheater)
- Hotels (Downtown area)
- Performing Arts Venue (Downtown area)

Market Strategic Recommendations

Strategic Recommendations

This section provides strategic recommendations for marketing, development, management and financing based on the findings from the various market analyses and opportunities assessments, stakeholder input, and planning team efforts. The strategic recommendations are meant as an initial guideline for implementation, but it is recommended that an Action Plan be established next that accommodates key priority recommendations and assigns a timeframe, responsibility, indicative costs, and possible funding sources. The following recommendations include broad strategies for Downtown as well as several specific recommendations for the Historic Bottoms.

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.

Downtown would logically include mixed-use rental housing/retail uses, as well as mixed-use office/retail. There is the opportunity for developing an "arts and entertainment district" that builds on the potential for dining and commercial entertainment, specialty retail, as well as the opportunity for performing arts and other cultural facilities in the downtown area, including portions of the Historic Bottoms.

There is the opportunity as well for integration of more MTSU functions, at least some retail uses that generate more exposure and excitement for university-branded merchandise in the downtown area, but also incubator facilities in the Historic Bottoms. Both sides of the Broad Street corridor would be redeveloped and a vision created for establishing this street as the "Zipper" connecting Downtown and the Historic Bottoms. Opportunities for hotels and mixed-use development would be integrated into Broad Street redevelopment. The Public Square would see more ground-floor retail, restaurant and other consumer activity rather than office space. There would be pro-active downtown business and investor recruitment efforts, along with physical improvements, identity branding and physical linkages with the MTSU campus. Key elements of this concept are explored in more detail, 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. This district might extend across Broad Street to incorporate areas of the Historic Bottoms, especially since there are cultural and potential entertainment venues in the Bottoms.

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.

Market Strategic Recommendations

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.

Having an "entrepreneurship" center or other business development facility in the Historic Bottoms could help extend the university's relationships with the business community and enhance university-related revenues generated through training and other 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.

Historic Bottoms Neighborhood Concepts

The Historic Bottoms would develop as a strong, mixed-use neighborhood or "district" within downtown Murfreesboro. A mix of affordable workforce housing, coupled with distilleries and other artisanal retail and "maker" spaces would complement existing industrial uses and character in the area. Opportunities for business incubation, training, and workforce development among university graduates as well as under-served populations could be captured. Reuse and rehabilitation of existing industrial facades and spaces would be encouraged wherever possible. Amenities and visitor attractions would appeal to tourists as well as to Millennial professionals, graduate students, and administrative workers looking for an affordable place to live, work, entertain, dine and visit.

Historic Character, Quality of Amenity Value

A key component of marketing and development throughout the North Highland and Historic Bottoms is an emphasis on amenity value. Building on the historic character of these areas, 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 industrial and commercial spaces where the market supports such use, as these small businesses add amenity value for marketing walk-able neighborhoods. Rehabilitation of all industrial spaces may not be viable, but every effort should be made to incorporate the vintage industrial character of the area as part of its unique branding and identity.

Branding

"Historic Bottoms" is a name that has already been selected by the community's stakeholders to evoke the area's unique character. Branding and identity, as established through signage, design, marketing, public art, streetscape, and other hard and soft elements would focus on the area's industrial character and African-American heritage. Rehabilitation of heritage structures, in addition to development of infill mixed-use projects, would be encouraged.

Infill Development

The City should encourage infill residential and mixed-use development that strengthens the historic character of the community. Again, an emphasis should be on quality. The market analysis suggests demand for lofts, mixed-use and live-work projects in this area. There is also the need to encourage rehabilitation of older industrial buildings to help reinforce the unique character of the area. 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.

Market Strategic Recommendations

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, and 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 and surrounding areas.

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 back office emerging design and technology uses in the Historic Bottoms (in addition to finance, insurance, real estate, government, non-profit and other uses downtown). A program of incentives coupled with facilitation and business recruitment is recommended to help capture this opportunity for downtown Murfreesboro and the Historic Bottoms.

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.

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 & Real Estate Development Incentives

There are a number of programs and incentives proposed to assist in business recruitment, retention and development in the downtown area and in Historic Bottoms. Among these incentives are small business & entrepreneurial development business loans and grants, infrastructure improvements, and creation of financing incentives.

A downtown-area Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district is recommended to support infrastructure and capital investment. TIF has been extremely beneficial to Downtown Nashville's development, by financing infrastructure, parking facilities and other facilities that directly yield long-term employment and fiscal benefits. Use of PILOT (payment in-lieu-of taxes) programs is also encouraged as an added incentive to attract anchor development. PILOT is now used widely throughout Tennessee. Development of structured parking facilities as part of packaging with key development sites can help leverage private development of anchor mixed-use projects while creating a public amenity to support downtown as a destination and a location for major events.

Business development programs are recommended for recruiting and retaining the target businesses identified in this report (i.e., administrative support & back office operations, financial services, IT and design firms, restaurants and entertainment venues, specialty retailers, etc). Some cities or downtown organizations offer rent/lease assistance for downtown buildings, façade and exterior renovation grants, grants for equipment purchases, and even mezzanine financing programs. Collaboration with MTSU's business school could result in a technical assistance program geared to re-merchandising, marketing, business planning, and other operations among small downtown businesses. MTSU, the City, and/or County could sponsor or collaborate on an incubator or business accelerator housed in the Historic Bottoms. Some cities offer special assistance to restaurants, such as bulk purchase of liquor licenses offered to individual businesses at reduced rates.

Broad Street should become a focus for physical 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, the Highland Center area, and the Historic Bottoms.

Housing Financing and Incentives

Initial housing development within the Historic Bottoms is likely to require some form of subsidized approach because of the focus on an "urban pioneer" market base that cannot necessarily afford market rents for newly-constructed space. Incentives could be packaged to include, as in the downtown area, façade enhancement and rehabilitation grants (possibly funded through Community Development Block Grants) for heritage buildings. Federal grant funds can also be directed to increasing compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other target populations.

Many cities offer low-interest rehabilitation loan programs and PILOTs geared to rehabilitation and redevelopment. There are opportunities for Murfreesboro to establish a strong homeownership program, providing technical and financial assistance (e.g., down payment assistance) to encourage qualified residents to move up to homeownership. There are multiple iterations of such programs, the definition of which is not within the scope of this project. Affordable housing programs, as discussed below can help leverage higher-quality affordable and mixed-income housing.

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 development of affordable workforce housing include the use of a TIF district (described above) along with density bonuses and other planning and regulatory tools (such fast-tracking for inclusionary projects). 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. Facilitation and coordination with private property owners on site assembly and packaging is a key low-cost opportunity to help leverage private investment (including affordable housing) because such facilitation services can help reduce the overall cost of pre-development to private investors.

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, although a full strategic plan is outside of the scope for this project and it is recommended that the City pursue more detailed strategic planning to flesh out the overall program for key incentives, projects, and programs discussed in this section.

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 programs.

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. The BID could extend into the Historic Bottoms as appropriate. 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.

Murfreesboro Parking Authority

The City might also consider the mid- to longer-term concept of establishing a self-operating, self-funding parking authority that could oversee the planning, development and operation of public parking facilities. Such facilities are important not only for providing a public service but also to help leverage private investment that could benefit from the use of shared parking facilities. A number of Tennessee cities have public parking authorities including Chattanooga, Memphis, Knoxville, and Clarksville. Nashville decommissioned its parking authority mainly because funds were being siphoned away from parking projects and into the City's general fund. The result of a lack of managed parking is evident in downtown Nashville today.

Next Steps for Implementation

While a detailed implementation plan lies beyond the scope for this project, several recommendations are provided below to assist in moving strategic elements of the plan forward. Ultimately, as noted previously, an implementation Action Plan should be developed that specifies individual implementation steps, timetables, responsible parties, indicative funding requirements, and funding sources.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Establishment of a TIF district in the downtown area has been recommended in this report as one approach for leveraging private investment and revitalization in downtown Murfreesboro. State law dictates the specific procedures required for establishing a TIF district with State oversight. TIF is regulated and updated through Public Chapter 605 of the Tennessee Code, and key requirements include the establishment of a TIF district with revenue estimates, a TIF budget, certain key findings pertinent to the district, and a plan for allocation of tax revenues. As of 2012, all TIF expenditures must be shown to be "in the best interest of the state." A number of cities in the state have already designated TIF districts in their downtowns, including most recently, Clarksville (designated by Montgomery County's Industrial Development Board).

But before the City of Murfreesboro begins to consider designation of a TIF district, there is a need to establish a strategic plan for redevelopment and revitalization of the downtown area that specifies how TIF funds might be used and identifies specific types of potential public and private projects. Development and management of the TIF plan and TIF district should be directed by an experienced Development Manager who has the full support of the City Council and the County's IDB leadership. Thus, creation of a City Development Agency or Division (as noted previously) would be prioritized over establishment of the TIF district itself, since this agency or division would have primary responsibility for management, with oversight by the Council.

There are several types of public or private projects identified in this plan that might be appropriate for consideration as part of the strategic plan for downtown. These projects include:

- Streetscaping and other public improvements to Broad Street that are not otherwise funded through Tennessee DOT or other sources
- Public or shared parking facilities that might be needed to help leverage public anchors (such as cultural facilities) and private redevelopment projects
- Affordable, workforce, and mixed-income housing development that would not otherwise generate sufficient returns
- Economic development projects such as the entrepreneurial development district, incubator space, and related projects
- Arts & entertainment district projects and key tourism anchor improvements that address issues of blight, downtown revitalization, and economic development.

Market Strategic Recommendations

Master Developer Process

There is also the recommendation that the City of Murfreesboro work with private property owners to help facilitate rehabilitation, redevelopment and reinvestment in key anchor project areas. If the City can pro-actively facilitate private site consolidation or assembly, master planning, and developer recruitment for key sites or sub-districts, it can help leverage and accelerate change within the downtown area. The City would work to establish MOAs among private property owners to consolidate their parcels based on a master plan and for the purposes of recruiting a master developer. Property owners might determine that it is in their interest to retain an equity stake in development equivalent to the value of their property.

Developers would be recruited through a request for proposals (RFP) process led by the City (or with technical support) and targeted to appropriate developers. This approach ultimately reduces the time and cost of site assembly, thereby providing a functional incentive to developers. Such an approach also allows both the private property owners and the City some measure of control over the type of development that is encouraged. In fact, a master planning process held collaboratively by the City and private property owners can help determine a vision and potential program for the site that provides direction for responding developers. By master planning these areas, the City can also ensure a more comprehensive and higher-quality long-term product.

Again, it is recommended that the City appoint a manager (e.g., development agency, perhaps working in collaboration with the planning department), goals, and parameters for the use of this tool to affect change in the downtown area or elsewhere in the city. Designation of priority redevelopment zones or areas should be accomplished in tandem with the TIF district strategic planning process identified above. Potential redevelopment opportunities that might be considered for this approach include:

- The “Synergy Block” owned by the City of Murfreesboro
- Arts & entertainment district anchor sites oriented to restaurants, entertainment and mixed-use development
- Portions of the Historic Bottoms (e.g., South Front, Hickerson, West Castle) primed for rehabilitation and redevelopment.
- Highland Center area redevelopment
- Sites or redevelopment districts along Broad Street

Again, a key strength of this approach is that it allows private property owners (and often, businesses) to retain a longer-term equity position as an incentive to encourage redevelopment that might not otherwise have occurred without their buy-in.

Executive Summary - Implementation Steps

At the beginning of the planning process for the Historic Bottoms Planning 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 Historic Bottoms 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 expand beyond the immediate Square and include areas on the southwest side of Broad Street. The downtown area for Murfreesboro should be perceived to include all of west main street and part of the Historic Bottoms district. Driving through Murfreesboro on Broad Street should feel like driving through a part of downtown. Development patterns should promote more 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.

- **Promote the Historic Bottoms area as a Destination point for tourism:**

Events like Uncle David Macon Days should be replicated in the Historic Bottoms area. Cannonsburgh Village is a facility that holds high potential for hosting regional events that establish "destination marketing" opportunities. Recommendations to expand tourism in the Historic Bottoms area include physical, planning and management facets. Improving the physical infrastructure to address increased parking and better access to the area is one key. This is further discussed under the Transportation Infrastructure recommendations. A second key is providing zoning that allows for a mixture of commercial, office and residential uses in addition to the existing industrial uses that occur in the Historic Bottoms area. A third key is establishing strong collaboration between a potential art and entertainment district, the city parks and recreation department (and other city departments), Middle Tennessee State University, and the local chamber of commerce. This collaboration would help facilitate a high level of programing and marketing to draw visitors at both the local and regional level. It would also help to cross pollinate good strategies for attracting visitors to Murfreesboro and connecting them to attractions and establishments that would extend their visit in the Historic Bottoms and downtown area.

- **Master Plan Proposal**

The City of Murfreesboro may wish to establish the opportunity to drive a collaborative master plan process for the Historic Bottoms area. This could target the Mixed Use Node currently shown on the Future Land Use Map. Such a process would invite existing property and business owners to collaborate to form a potential development plan that would collectively benefit their interests through parcel consolidation and the creation of an improved road network and development "blocks". This plan could also be connected to interested development investors through a formal or informal RFD (Request For Development) solicitation.

A Clear Pattern to Establish Land Use:

- **Increase High Density Residential Opportunities:**

Provide more residential options in specific parts of the Historic Bottoms Study Area, including high density residential housing. 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 node and central business district area. 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.

- **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 within the Historic Bottoms area. The especially holds true for the Central Business and Mixed Use Node land use areas established on the Future Land Use Map. Mixed-use Nodes 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 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 the Historic Bottoms Mixed Use Node. 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 develop this area would be to promote the use of an existing planned development district for this node. 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.

- **Collaborate with the City's Task Force Regarding the Homeless**

There are currently existing facilities in the Historic Bottoms area that serve the needs of the homeless. These facilities have met an important need. The redevelopment of this area has raised concerns on two fronts. One concern is properly anticipating a different location for these services should they chose to relocate. The proposed mixture of uses associated with the Future Land Use Map for the Historic Bottoms does not prohibit these facilities from remaining, but the anticipated infrastructure improvements and increased land values may make it impractical, and it has been recognized by some of the organizations providing services that this may not be the best long term location for their facilities. The second concern that has been voiced during public input is the concern for creating a safe environment for those who use the greenway and public park spaces in the Historic Bottoms area. A task force has been created by the City of Murfreesboro to examine these issues from a citywide perspective to look for solutions that benefit the entire community.

Executive Summary - Implementation Steps

At the beginning of the planning process for the Historic Bottoms Planning 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 Historic Bottoms Study Area. An executive summary of implementation steps for these big ideas is as follows:

A Plan to Preserve Community Character:

- **Preservation & Enhancement of Historical & Cultural Resources:**

There is a rich fabric of historical elements and some classic architectural buildings within the Historic Bottoms Study Area. The Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center, The Discovery Center at Murfree Spring and Cannonsburgh Village are all connected to the Historic Bottoms area and are all within a walkable distance from each other. One of the big ideas to emerge from the study is to establish an Art & 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 & 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 & 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 & 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 Historic Bottoms 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 Town Creek, if it becomes "daylighted", because of its valued connection to the Discovery Center and Cannonsburgh Village. 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 & 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, institutional sponsor for pocket parks, plazas or public art is worth exploring.

- **Noncomformities:**

In order to continue to preserve existing community character, the continued existence of uses, lots, structures and signs established in the study area shall be allowed to remain in place. However, the provisions in Section 28, of the City of Murfreesboro's Zoning Ordinance are designed to curtail substantial investment in such conformities and to bring about their eventual elimination, where appropriate, in order to preserve the integrity of the Historic Bottoms Study Area.

Transportation Infrastructure:

- **Increase Mobility:**

More provisions 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 and with potential key tourism sites. This includes provision of a public parking facility on the southwest side of Broad Street to serve the Historic Bottoms area. A parking garage would serve both large community events and local retail and commercial establishments. Improving pedestrian access across Broad Street will be another key infrastructure improvement. This will require better crossings at existing and future intersections. A pedestrian bridge connected to a potential parking garage could also be an important piece of infrastructure.

- **Improve Street Network:**

The existing street network in the Historic Bottoms has some major limitations. The angled intersections and limited signalization make it extremely difficult to navigate left turn movements both in and out on S. Front and W. Castle Street. A new street network that extends Old Salem Road to Broad Street creating a new intersection could much better serve the properties in the Historic Bottoms area. This intersection would also be a good location for an additional signal and pedestrian crossing on Broad Street when traffic volumes would warrant it. Increased development and pedestrian crossings on Broad Street will create slower traffic patterns along this portion of Hwy 41. This is a positive thing for promoting a stronger connection to surrounding land use and for pedestrian safety. It may also divert more traffic to surrounding streets. It would be appropriate to examine strengthening surrounding collector routes to accommodate the possibility of increased traffic as people may look for alternative routes through Murfreesboro.

- **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.

DRAFT 01-04-17

Executive Summary - Implementation Tools

Planning and Codes

"Make a big plan that casts a strong vision. It will become a living document that carries concepts into reality and shapes the details of the future."

Infrastructure

"Investment in public infrastructure generates private investment. Private investment will bring a public return of tax revenue."

Financing

"The greatest financial leverage comes with public/private collaboration and matching local funds with state and federal monies."

Management and Development

"The way people use a space mirrors the design and management expectations we place on it."

Marketing

"Marketing is a tactical drive to propel people to come and visit a place. Branding is creating a strategic pull to bring them back to a place as loyal patrons."

Step 1 Establish Vision and General Policy Adopt the North Highland Avenue and Historic Bottoms Planning Studies as Guiding Documents (Based on public input and consultant recommendations)

Step 2 Codify

- Rezone portions of the study area to match future land use goals

and/or

- Create an Overlay District with specific land use and design guideline opportunities

and/or

- Create an Art & Entertainment District

and

- Design Standards created or modified to match planning studies. This could involve adjusting existing zoning district standards or creating new standards for just the overlay district. Form based code could be used for the Downtown & Mixed-use districts

Step 3 Administrate

- Plan Review and Permit applications utilize new zoning and design standards

and/or

- Planned Development Districts used to implement vision and policy. This can be utilized with or without zoning change

and

- Building Codes adjusted to allow flexibility for improvements to existing buildings. Consider adoption of the 2012 international building code for existing buildings
- Utilize Carrots (Density bonus, assistance with facade and/or signage, landscapes, and management coordination for downtown marketing) and Sticks (Penalties for code violations)

Step 2 Identify Capital Improvements

- Generate a Capital Improvement Plan with focus on prioritized improvements in the planning study areas

and

- Identify Funding opportunities in connection with financing options

Step 3 Complete Projects

- Plan, Design, and Construct Projects identified as high priority
- Possible Infrastructure Projects in the study areas include:
  - Lytle Street Gateway
  - Improved road network system to shape development blocks and improve access
  - Public parking garage facility to encourage higher density development, tourism, and community events downtown
  - Streetscape enhancements and pedestrian improvements (crosswalks, sidewalk systems, patterned & colored hardscape)
  - Public open space & park facilities,
  - Events amphitheater
  - Storm drainage improvements (Creek daylighting, storm water inlets/pipes, detention and water quality features

Step 2 City Revenue/Grants

- Identify Revenue Leveraging opportunities to be applied to projects and programs. Leverage options include:
  - Tax Revenue
  - City Bonds
  - Hotel/Motel Tax
  - Stormwater Assessment Fees
  - Development Contributions

and

- Identify Matching Grants (Federal and State):
  - TN Dep. of Economic Dev. (TN Downtown Program, TN Main Street Program, Environmental Hazard Studies)
  - TDOT /Local Programs (Transportation Grants)
  - Metro. Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation & Infrastructure Grants
  - TDEC and EPA (Trails, Green Development Grants, Local Parks and Rec., Land & Water Conservation Funds, EPA 319 Impaired Waterway Grants)
  - TN Dep. of Health (Walkable Communities, Greenway Funding)
  - TN Housing Dev. Agency (Rehabilitation, Affordable Housing, Homeless Assistance)

and/or

- Establish a TIF (Tax Incremented Financing) to leverage investment into specific areas that need revitalization. This should be done in context with a strong development agency to manage the proposal and implementation or any TIF incentives

Step 2 Empower Municipal Departments

- Emphasize Collaboration between departments to achieve the vision and general policy for the planning areas

and/or

- Promote a Master Development Process initiated by the city to facilitate private site consolidation, development and reinvestment. Developers would be recruited by a request for proposal process lead by the city

Step 3 Establish or Strengthen an Economic Development Agency

- Promote and Manage Business Development and growth in the city
- Manage Collaboration between key downtown businesses and organizations to promote the growth and economic vitality of downtown
- Organizations that Might Connect to the Economic Dev. Agency could include:
  - Key Downtown Businesses/Property Owners
  - Main Street Murfreesboro
  - Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce
  - Middle TN State University
  - Discovery Center at Murfree Spring
  - Center for the Arts and The Heritage Center
  - Murfreesboro City Departments

and/or

- Create a Downtown Improvements District to manage marketing, safety, security, parking, cleanliness, and other aspects of downtown management.
- Promote Community Events that bring a regional draw (like Uncle David Macon Days)

Step 2 Publish a Communication Tool

(Possibly in magazine format)

- To Distribute the Adopted Plan and generate further excitement about growth and enhancement in the study areas

and

Step 3 Marketing Strategy and Destination Branding

- Establish a Marketing Plan that draws tourists and interest in development investment
- Create District Destination Branding for the study areas, the Art and Entertainment District, and the Overall Downtown area. Distinct brands for these areas should be an expression of their essential true qualities, characteristics, and values
- Create Distinct Neighborhood District Names within the study areas that connect to their branding qualities

and/or

Step 4 Develop a Wayfinding Monument and Signage Plan

- To Provide clear directions
- To unify branding graphics
- To promote key points of interest and cultural/historical assets