

Summary of Second Public Meeting

Each District Plan uses three public meetings to solicit ideas, priorities, recommendations, and feedback at various stages of the planning process. Every meeting is held within the district. Since most districts have issues and attractions of citywide and regional importance, all Philadelphians are encouraged to participate.

September Meeting

The second public West Park meeting presentation focused on early recommendations for topics in key geographic areas. Draft recommendations were presented for West Fairmount Park, City Avenue, and vacant land. The public then worked in small groups with Planning Commission staff to create scenarios. The scenario building exercise allowed participants to discuss topics that are seemingly opposite. The exercise helped determine how these topics relate and weighed differing points of view.

Using X and Y axes and setting the two opposing topics on each one, four potential situations are possible. Three scenarios focused on West Park topics were discussed: facilities in Fairmount Park (cultural attractions vs. park amenities), mobility along City Avenue (car traffic vs. pedestrian movement), and options for vacant land abatement (housing vs. non-housing uses).

* - Preferred Scenario



Fairmount Park	
<p>Less Cultural Attractions More Park Amenities</p> <p>More park amenities would provide more benches and trails/paths for exercise, as well as more spaces for picnics/BBQs and community gatherings. The park would become more accessible/inclusive for neighborhood residents.</p> <p>Consequences would be increased crime, fewer visitors to the park and lower investment/higher maintenance costs in the park.</p>	<p>More Cultural Attractions * More Park Amenities</p> <p>More cultural attractions and park amenities would benefit the community and bring revenue for the city.</p> <p>There would be more youth-centered amenities like a pool and skate park, as well as better pedestrian access and exercise trails. There would be more diversity of attractions that appeal to both community and visitors. There would also be more opportunities for improved public transportation.</p> <p>The disadvantage would be increased traffic.</p>
<p>Less cultural attractions and park amenities would have a negative impact on the neighborhood and the park. There would be more crime, fewer users, more trash dumping, lower property values and fewer businesses.</p>	<p>More cultural attractions would result in more jobs and visitors spending money in the community.</p> <p>Consequences would include more traffic and congestion, more parking issues, such as visitors parking on the grass or taking spots from residents, and a more exclusive atmosphere hampering local residents from wanting to use the park.</p>
<p>Less Cultural Attractions Less Park Amenities</p>	<p>More Cultural Attractions Less Park Amenities</p>



Example cultural attraction - The Philadelphia Zoo



Example park amenity

Mobility	
<p>* Less Car Traffic More Pedestrian Movement</p> <p>More pedestrian movement and less cars would increase safety, lead to better traffic circulation, more public transit riders and better pedestrian access to destinations.</p> <p>Residents were split on whether this would be good or bad for businesses.</p>	<p>More Car Traffic More Pedestrian Movement</p> <p>More cars and pedestrians would need wider sidewalks and possibly streets, as well as improved transportation and structured parking, to deal with traffic and congestion.</p> <p>This would benefit businesses due to increased foot and car traffic.</p> <p>Residents were split on whether this would increase or decrease neighborhood quality of life.</p>
<p>This would lead to a stagnant community with decreased housing values, fewer businesses and a less desirable neighborhood.</p>	<p>More cars would lead to more traffic, congestion, pollution, and parking problems. It would also make the area more dangerous, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists, and the neighborhoods less accessible.</p> <p>This would encourage auto-oriented businesses like big box stores and discourage local businesses.</p>
<p>Less Car Traffic Less Pedestrian Movement</p>	<p>More Car Traffic Less Pedestrian Movement</p>



Varying pedestrian accommodations along City Avenue



Vacant Lots	
<p>Less Housing More Non-Housing Uses</p> <p>Residents want to see more open space such as community gardens, pocket parks and side lot yards. They emphasized a need to grow more food locally. They also suggested lots being used for parking, events and plazas with vendors.</p> <p>Residents were interested in a combination of privately owned and community owned green spaces. They also expressed the need for more local control of uses.</p> <p>Residents are concerned about proper maintenance and safety of vacant lots if not developed or used for open space.</p>	<p>More Housing * More Non-Housing Uses</p> <p>Residents thought this could lead to more mixed-use developments, an increase in property values and more vibrant neighborhoods.</p> <p>Residents expressed concerns about gentrification and parking problems. They wanted to make sure that new housing is affordable and fits into the existing neighborhood and community fabric. They are also interested in seeing more green homes built.</p> <p>Residents want to see some lots set aside for community uses and a focus on community resources.</p>
<p>Residents felt that this was a very negative scenario.</p> <p>Residents felt this would cause stagnation in their neighborhoods and lead to an increase in crime and trash. They also worried this would cause people to move away and would de-value their neighborhood.</p>	<p>New housing could be good for property values and could bring new residents to the neighborhood. It could also increase commercial development and home ownership.</p> <p>Residents expressed concerns about gentrification and parking problems. They wanted to make sure that new housing is affordable and fits into the existing neighborhood and community fabric. They are also interested in seeing more green homes built.</p>
<p>Less Housing Less Non-Housing Uses</p>	<p>More Housing Less Non-Housing Uses</p>



Example of infill housing



Example of a pocket park



Neighborhoods

Improve neighborhood livability

Neighborhood Centers and Healthy Communities

A. Update zoning in locations well served by frequent transit service to **encourage transit-supporting densities**.

- Adjust zoning in around the nodes of 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue, Lancaster Avenue/Girard Avenue/48th Street, and 40th Street/Girard Avenue/Parkside Avenue.
- Active transit nodes benefit from zoning that allows a mix of uses and a density appropriate to the level of service provided.

B. **Create farmers'** markets within the West Park District boundaries. Potential locations include:

- The High School of the Future
- Leidy Elementary School
- Parkside and Belmont Avenues (summer location to capture park users)
- 54th Street and Wynnefield Park, near the library and cultural center

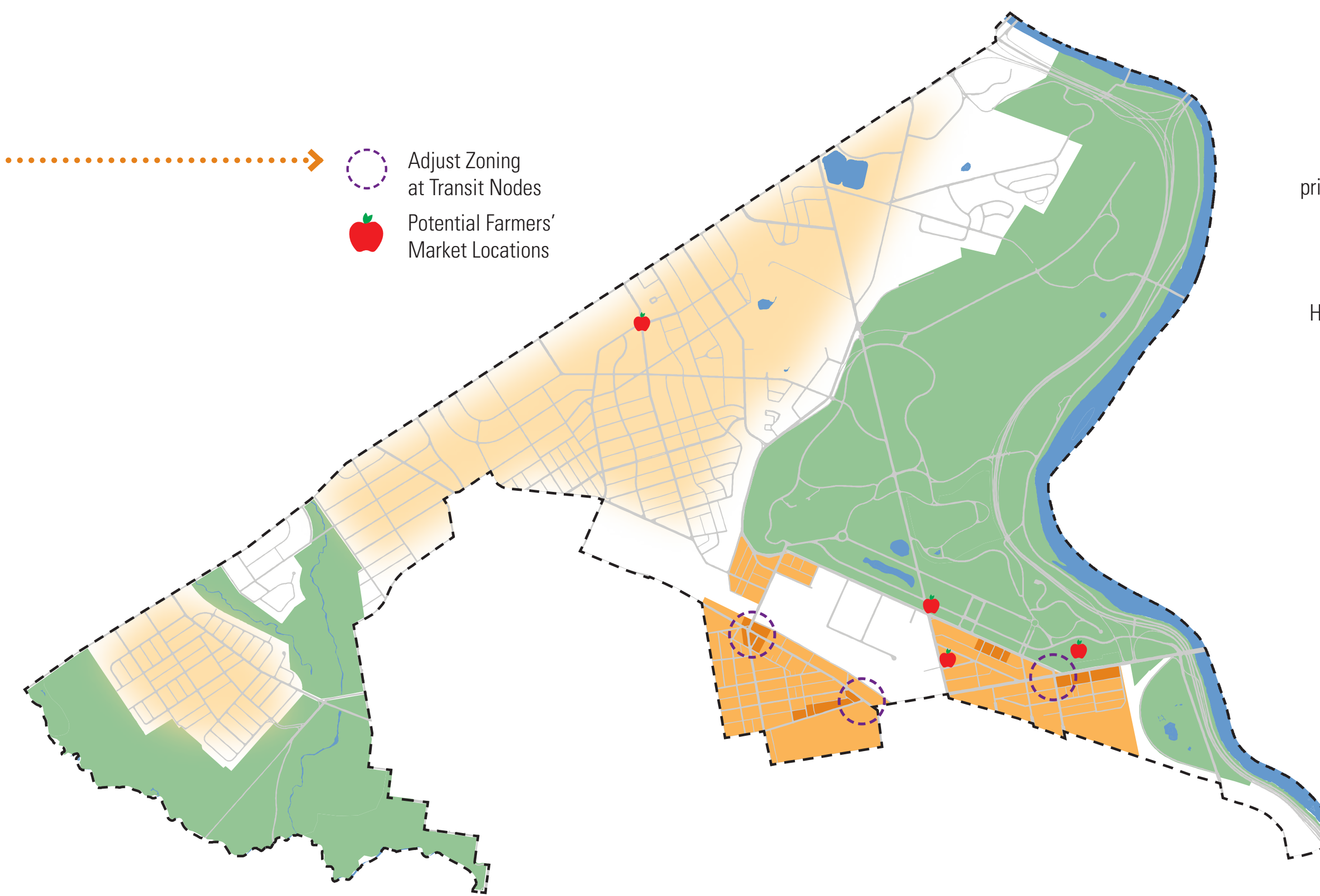
Commercial Corridors

C. Identify opportunities to **consolidate commercial businesses and rezone parts of underperforming commercial corridors** to encourage other uses, including Lancaster Avenue (44th Street to 50th Street); 40th Street and Girard Avenue; 54th and Berks Streets.

D. Invest in and **support upgrades to the public realm**, such as sidewalks and street lighting for Haverford Avenue; North 52nd Street; Lancaster Avenue (44th Street to 50th Street); Bryn Mawr and Wynnefield Avenues; City Avenue (50th Street to 52nd Street); Pathmark Super Center; and Balwynne Park.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

THRIVE



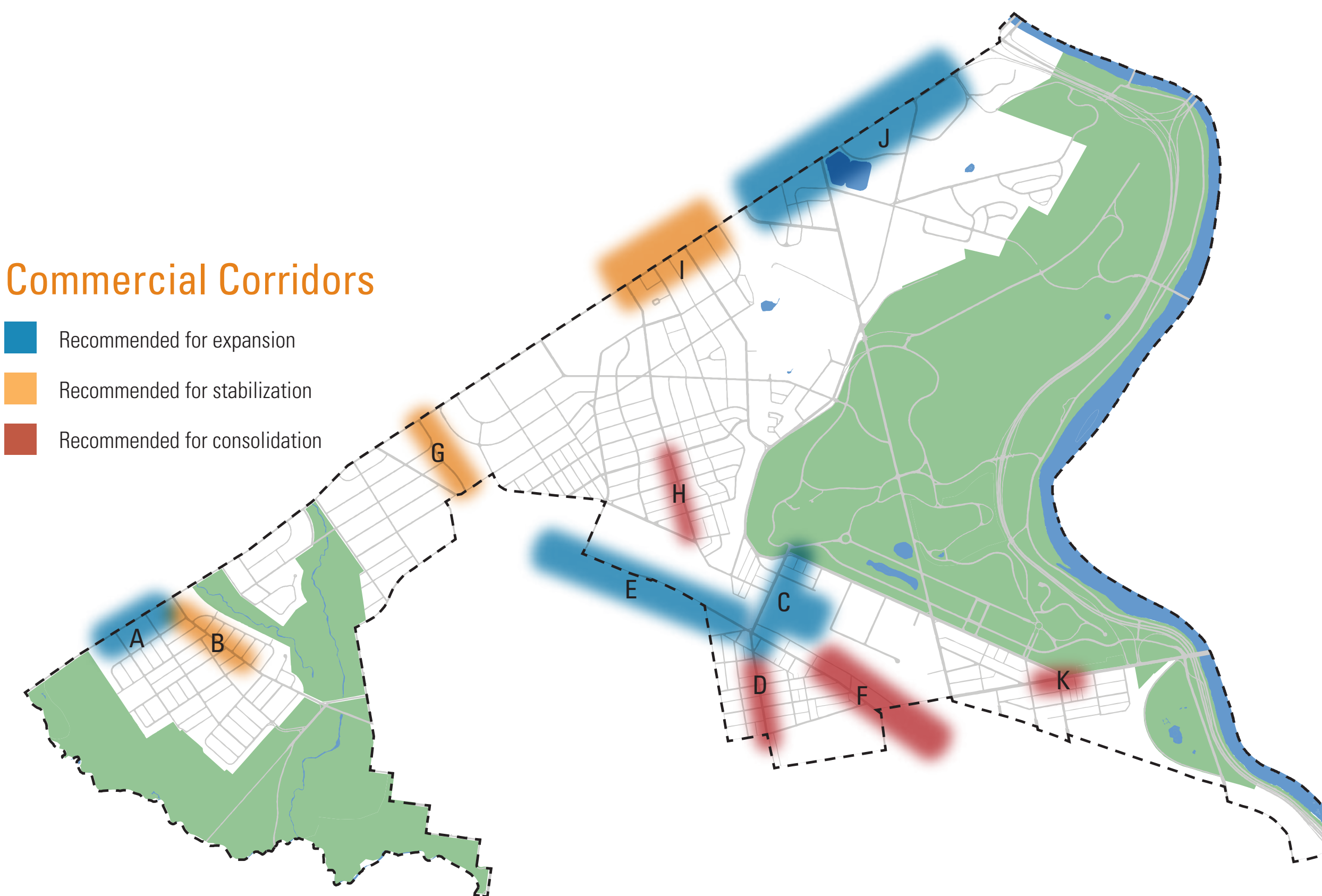
- High visibility priority infill development
- Scattered site infill development
- St. Joseph's University Home Buy Now program

Definition | Home Buy Now Program

The Home Buy Now Program uses public funds to match grants from employers to help their employees buy homes in the City.

Commercial Corridors

- Recommended for expansion
- Recommended for stabilization
- Recommended for consolidation



Corridor Name	Gross Leasable Square Footage	Number of Stores (2011)			Vacancy Rate	PCPC Recommendation
		total	occupied	vacant		
A City Avenue Shopping Center	159,900	31	26	5	16.1%	Expansion
B Haverford Avenue	140,000	76	72	4	5.3%	Stabilization
C Park West Town Center	341,163	22	19	3	13.6%	Expansion
D North 52nd Street	55,376 (12,000 outside West Park)	40	28	12	30.0%	Consolidation
E Lancaster Avenue, 53rd - 61st	145,436 (80,000 outside West Park)	42	37	5	11.9%	Expansion
F Lancaster Avenue, 44th - 50th	80,000 (20,000 outside West Park)	40	32	8	20.0%	Consolidation
G 63rd Street, Malvern to City Avenues	95,000	47	35	12	25.5%	Stabilization - improve retail mix
H 54th Street and Berks Avenue	39,648	45	32	12	28.9%	Consolidation
I City Avenue, 50th to 54th Streets	95,000	45	48	7	12.7%	Stabilization - improve public realm and retail mix
J City Avenue, Presidential Boulevard to Conshohocken Avenue	600,000	68	62	6	8.8%	Expansion
K 40th Street and Girard Avenue	30,000	21	11	10	47.6%	Consolidation - transition out



Neighborhoods

Improve neighborhood livability

Housing

E. Prioritize government-funded projects to **rehabilitate and reuse existing housing stock**. Prioritize:

- 3800-4000 blocks of Girard Avenue
- 1700 blocks of Memorial, 42nd, and Marlton Streets

F. Enroll St. Joseph's University and PCOM in the City's **Home Buy Now program** to **support home ownership in Wynnefield and Wynnefield Heights**.

G. Support programs that provide maintenance and home-ownership education to **help residents maintain the current housing stock**.

- Work with the Energy Coordinating Agency and EnergyWorks to educate homeowners about energy-efficient upgrades.
- Intensively market the PHILoan program for low-interest loans for upgrades.
- Intensively market programs for first-time home buyers, such as the American Dream Downpayment Initiative and Settlement Grant Program.

H. **Provide more aging-in-place programs** to help older residents stay in their houses for a longer period of time.

- Work with the Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging to provide information on adapting housing to meet needs of older residents, through their Family Caregiver Support Program, BRAVO Health's Senior Partners Silver Plan and Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program (SHARP).

I. **Concentrate new affordable housing as infill on stable blocks** rather than in large new developments. Prioritize:

- Scattered sites in Wynnefield
- 4900 block of Girard Avenue

Land Management

Capitalize on land assets

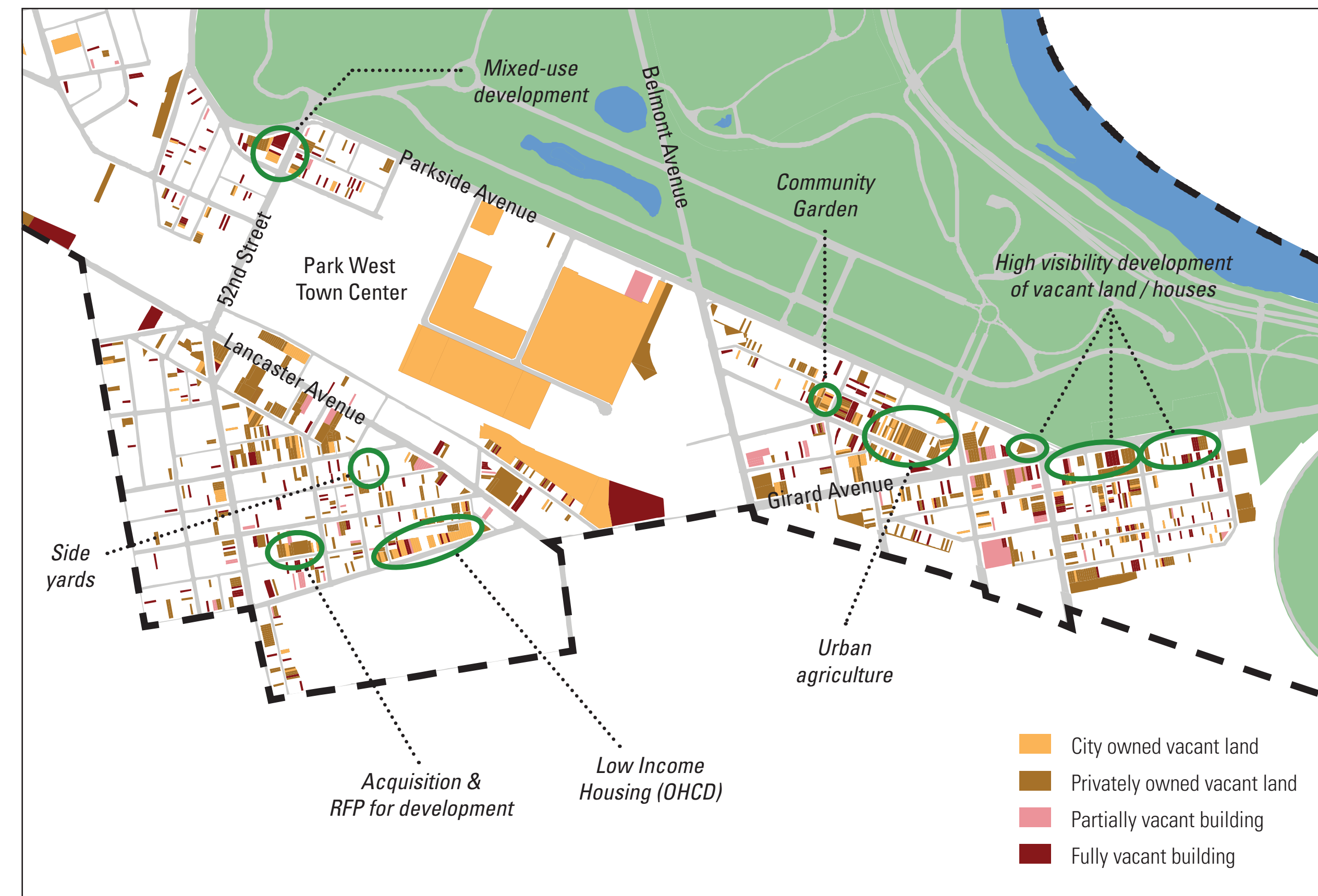
Municipal and Community Support Facilities

- Relocate Clayborn-Lewis Playground to 41st and Poplar Streets to increase its catchment in an area with a large youth population.
 - Work with PWD to make the relocation an opportunity for green infrastructure on the Leidy school grounds.
- Move the playground facilities of Rose Playground to the Lambertson High School in Overbrook Park, and reinvest in the adjacent Papa Playground to achieve well-maintained facilities for different users.
 - Work with Lambertson School officials, residents, PWD, and PPR to create a design for the school grounds that balances playground facilities for younger children, adequate play space for high school students, as well as stormwater management and additional community amenities.
- Move the playground facilities of the Ford Road Playground to a revitalized Conshohocken Playground.
 - Work with local residents and undertake analysis to identify potential new uses for the Ford Playground site that better serves the area's population, such as recreational space designed for seniors.
- Relocate the Streets Department's salt yard at 48th and Parkside Avenue further south in the Parkside Industrial District to facilitate development along the park that is appropriate to surrounding uses and populations.

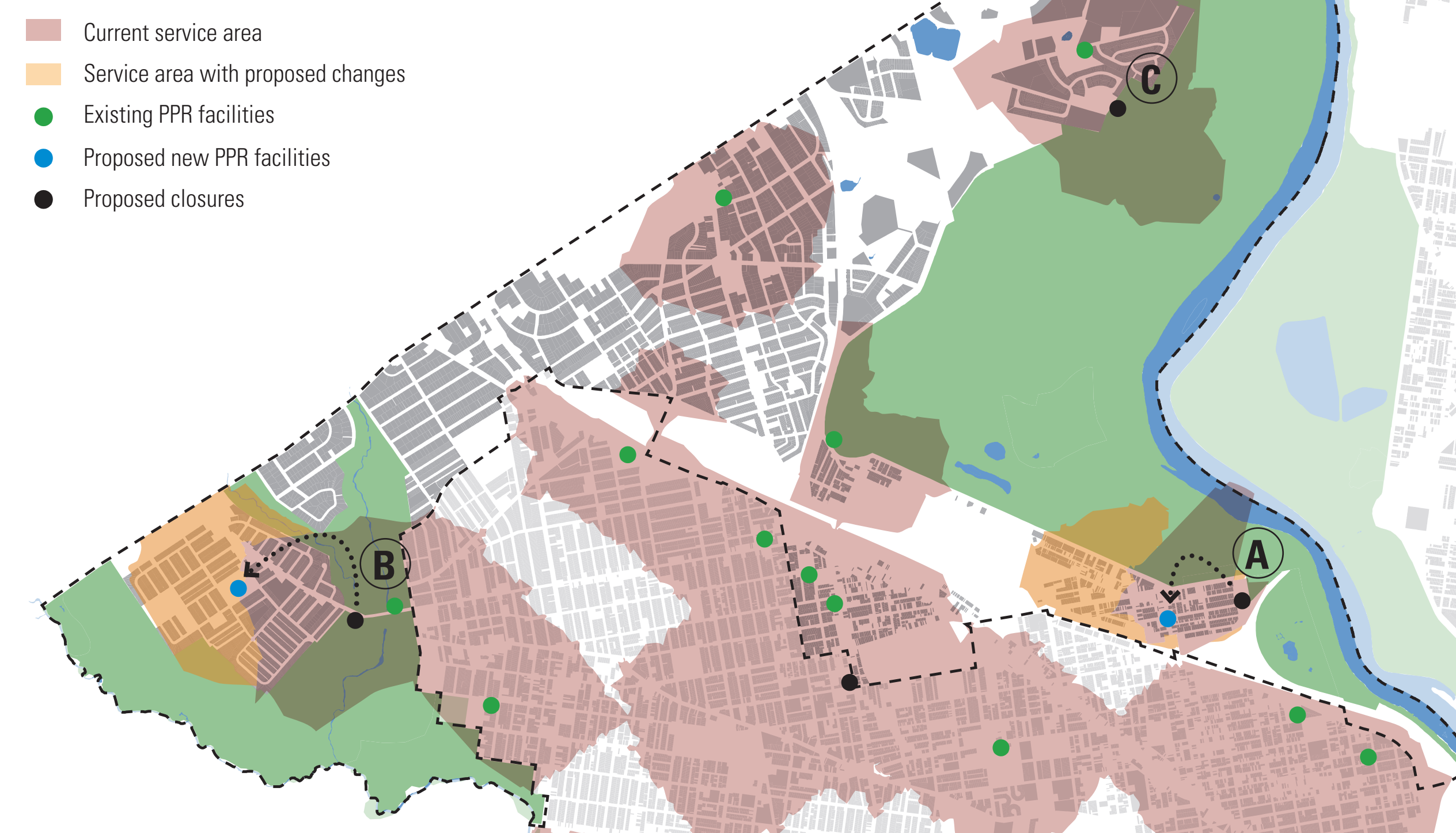
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

THRIVE

Vacant Land and Structures in Parkside and Cathedral Park



Parks and Recreation Facilities



Economic Development

Make Philadelphia more competitive in the metropolitan region

Vacant Land and Structures

- Help create and maintain community gardens.**
Target the 4100 block of Leidy Avenue for a larger urban farm.
- Sell city-owned scattered sites** in Cathedral Park for side-yards at nominal cost.

Industrial Land

- Preserve all but the Parkside Avenue frontage of the Parkside Industrial District for industrial uses.**
Convert the frontage along Parkside Avenue to uses more compatible with the neighboring residential and cultural uses.
- Partner with the owner of the former Acme Distribution facility to plan for its possible reuse.

Institutions and Cultural Economy

- Market the parcels in the Parkside Industrial District that are located along Parkside Avenue for development of cultural or commercial uses that support neighboring cultural attractions.
- Incorporate the entire St. Joseph's University campus into the University's IDD zoning.
- Work with PCOM to create an IDD for its campus.

Definition | IDD Zoning

The Institutional Development District (IDD) is intended to encourage the development of institutional uses, commercially related facilities to service the institutional complex and area, and other nonresidential uses in accordance to an approved master plan of development. This master plan must be approved by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and by City Council.



Transportation

Improve transportation safety, efficiency, and convenience

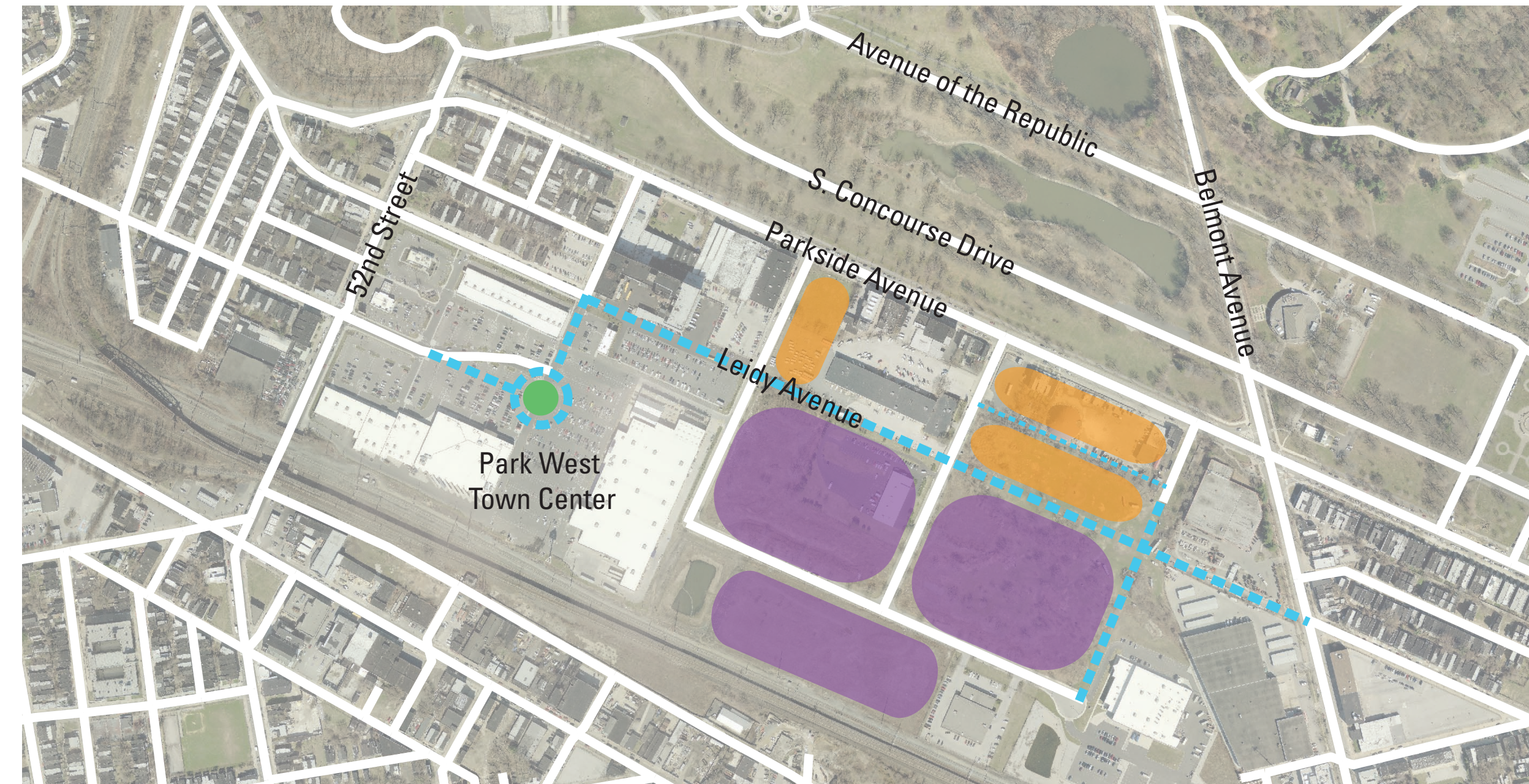
Transit

- A. **Study implementation of a light rail transit connection between Center City and cultural attractions within the Centennial District** including the Mann Music Center, Memorial Hall, and Philadelphia Zoo.
 - Future study of the Cultural Corridor Light Rail should consider both commuter and tourist ridership between Center City and cultural destinations in the Centennial District.
 - Phlash bus service to cultural attractions either needs long term/ dedicated funding or a transit substitute in its place.
- B. In Parkside and Cathedral park neighborhoods, **change zoning for properties adjacent to active and proposed transit routes** to support neighborhood stabilization and revitalization [see *Neighborhood Centers and Healthy Communities* in THRIVE].



A. Example of a modern light rail system

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS CONNECT



C. Leidy Avenue extension with proposed land uses

- New Streets
- Mixed-Use
- Flex Industrial



D. Existing: Parkside Avenue



D. Future Vision: Parkside Avenue



E. Existing: 52nd Street rail underpass



E. Future Vision: 52nd Street rail underpass

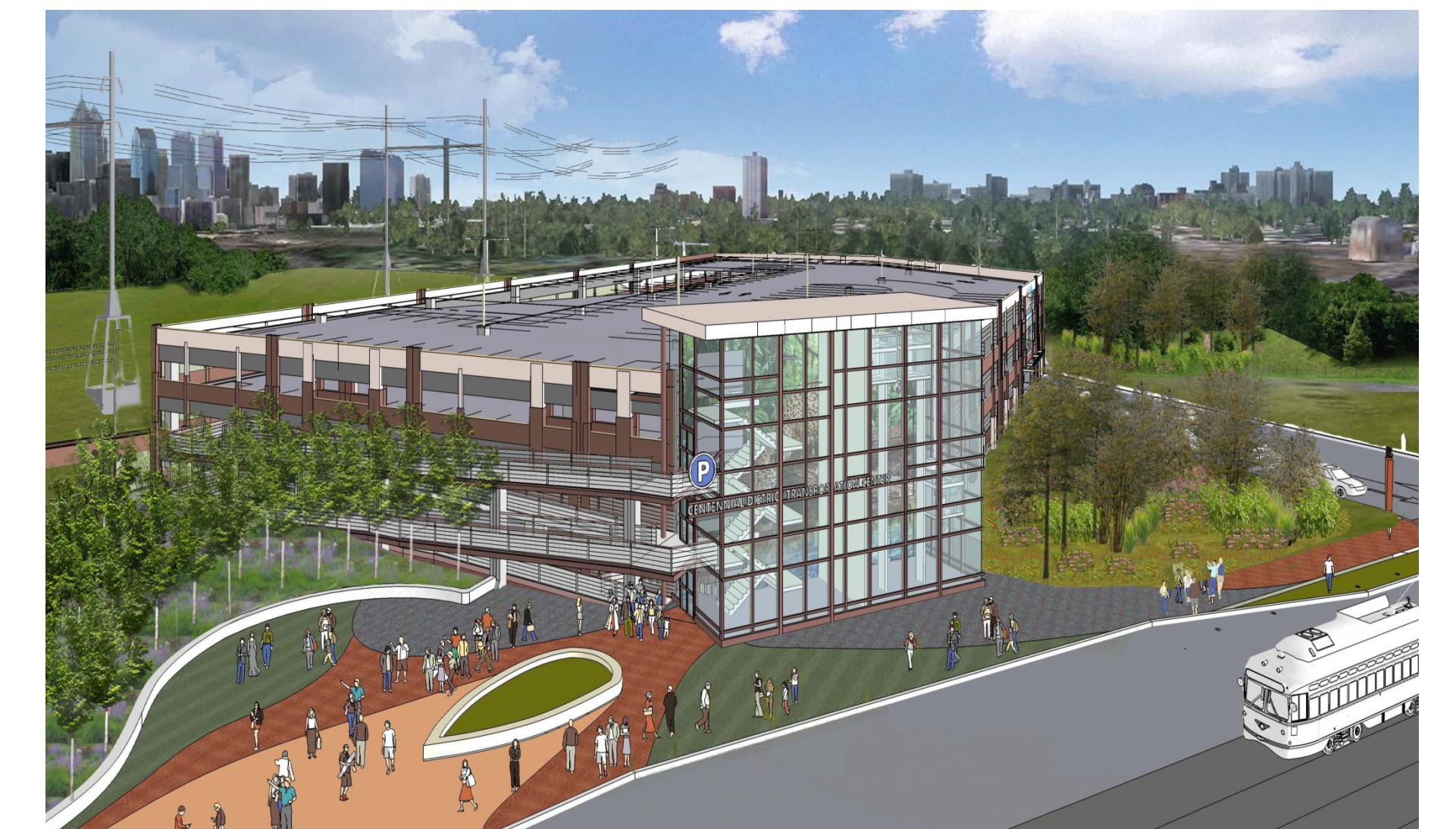


Transportation

Improve transportation safety, efficiency, and convenience

Complete Streets

- C. **Extend Leidy Avenue from Belmont Avenue to 50th Street** to create better automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle connections between East and West Parkside and to the Park West Town Center.
- D. **Improve Parkside Avenue with new medians, crosswalks, and traffic lights** as recommended in the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Association's Parkside Traffic Taming plan in order to facilitate better connections between East and West Parkside and Fairmount Park.
- E. **Improve safety for pedestrians under the 52nd Street Amtrak Bridge** through improved lighting, gateway signage and sidewalk maintenance.
- F. **Implement the Philadelphia Zoo Intermodal Transportation Project** in order to decrease automobile congestion and reliance on automobiles, specifically at the I-76 Girard Avenue Interchange.



F. Philadelphia Zoo Intermodal Transportation Center, as proposed by the Philadelphia Zoo

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

RENEW



Open Space

Make Philadelphia more competitive in the metropolitan region

Watershed Parks and Trails

- A. **Extend the Cynwyd Heritage Trail** to Parkside via the Bala Regional Rail Line right-of-way.
- B. **Extend the Cobbs Creek Trail** from 63rd and Market along the creek, through Morris Park to Delaware County.
- C. Make the following Centennial District improvements:
 1. Improve upon and create more active recreation fields between South Concourse Drive and the Avenue of the Republic.
 2. Create neighborhood amenities between South Concourse Drive and Parkside Avenue near intersections along Parkside Avenue to increase neighborhood use of the Park.
 3. Align Lansdowne Drive with the Avenue of the Republic to facilitate Avenue of the Republic being the central drive of the Centennial District.
 4. Extend the feel of the park outside of the Centennial District by greening streets that lead into the neighborhoods, including 41st, 42nd, 52nd, and 49th Streets.

Neighborhood Parks and Recreation

- D. Discuss the opening of Old Cathedral Cemetery to public access with current owner.
 - Use current roads and trails for walking, jogging, and biking.
 - Align access points with currently existing streets to create a more open relationship between the cemetery and surrounding neighborhoods



Public Realm

Achieve excellence in the design and quality of Philadelphia's built environment

Urban Design

- E. **Create gateways** at major entrances to neighborhoods, parks, and the City boundary. These gateways can include signage, plantings, and pedestrian plazas.
 - 52nd Street and Parkside Avenue
 - 52nd Street railroad overpass
 - Belmont Avenue and Parkside Avenue
 - City and Belmont, Lancaster, and Haverford Avenues



Environmental Resources

Capitalize on land assets

Air Quality, Water Quality, and Tree Cover

- F. **Create green infrastructure** in the following locations to capture stormwater runoff.
 - Parkside Avenue
 - Upland Way
 - Dimmer Beeber Middle School



Historic Preservation

Preserve and reuse historic resources

Cultural, Historical, and Archeological Resources

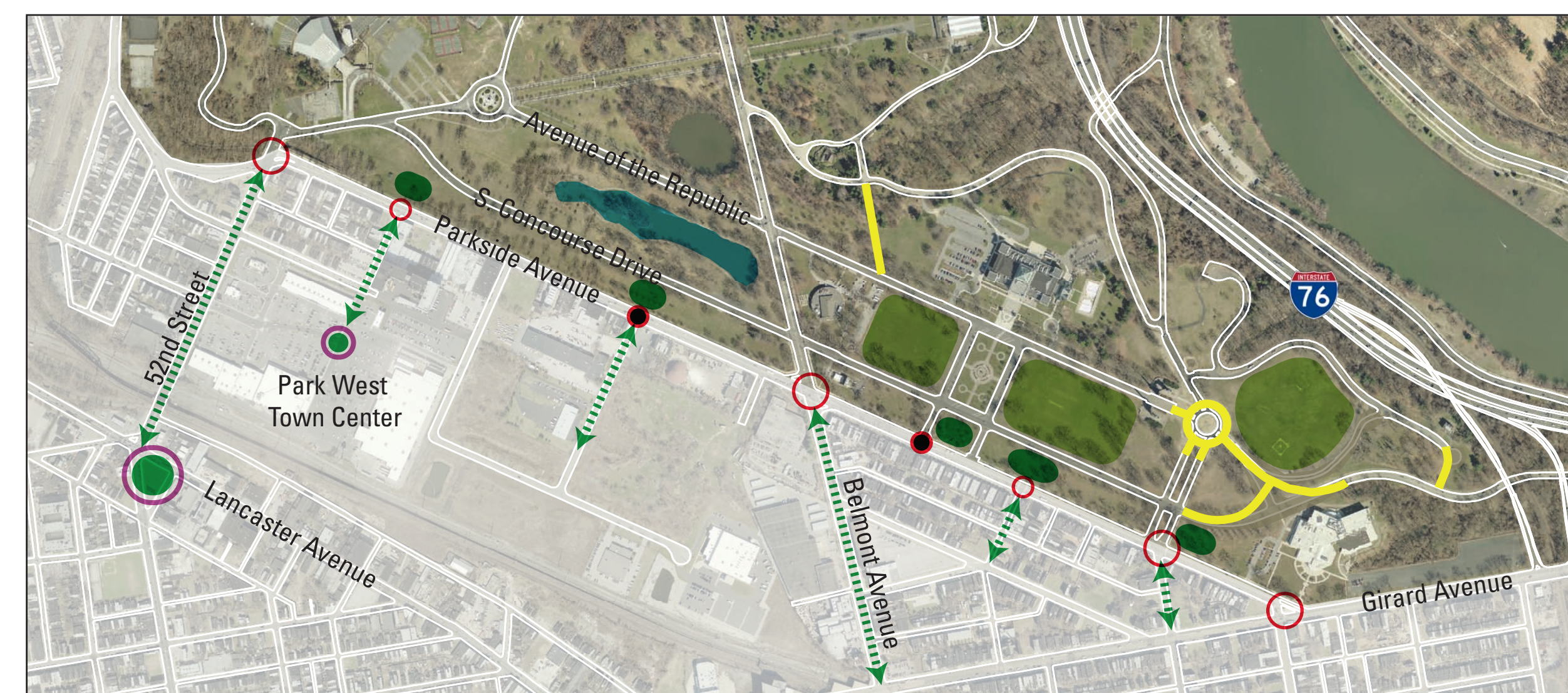
- G. **Create a memorial baseball field for the Philadelphia Stars** near the original location at Belmont Avenue and Parkside Avenue.
- H. **Designate the Japanese House and the Wynne Theatre to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.** Study the reuse potential for the Theatre once it is eligible for historic property tax credits.

Trail, Gateway, and Green Street Improvements

- Proposed Trail
- Proposed "Green" Street
- Gateway Improvements



Centennial District Improvements



- New Recreational Spaces
- New Park Amenities
- Neighborhood Center
- Enhanced Crossing
- New Crossing
- New Roadways
- ◀▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ "Green" Connector Streets



D. Old Cathedral Cemetery



H. Wynne Theatre



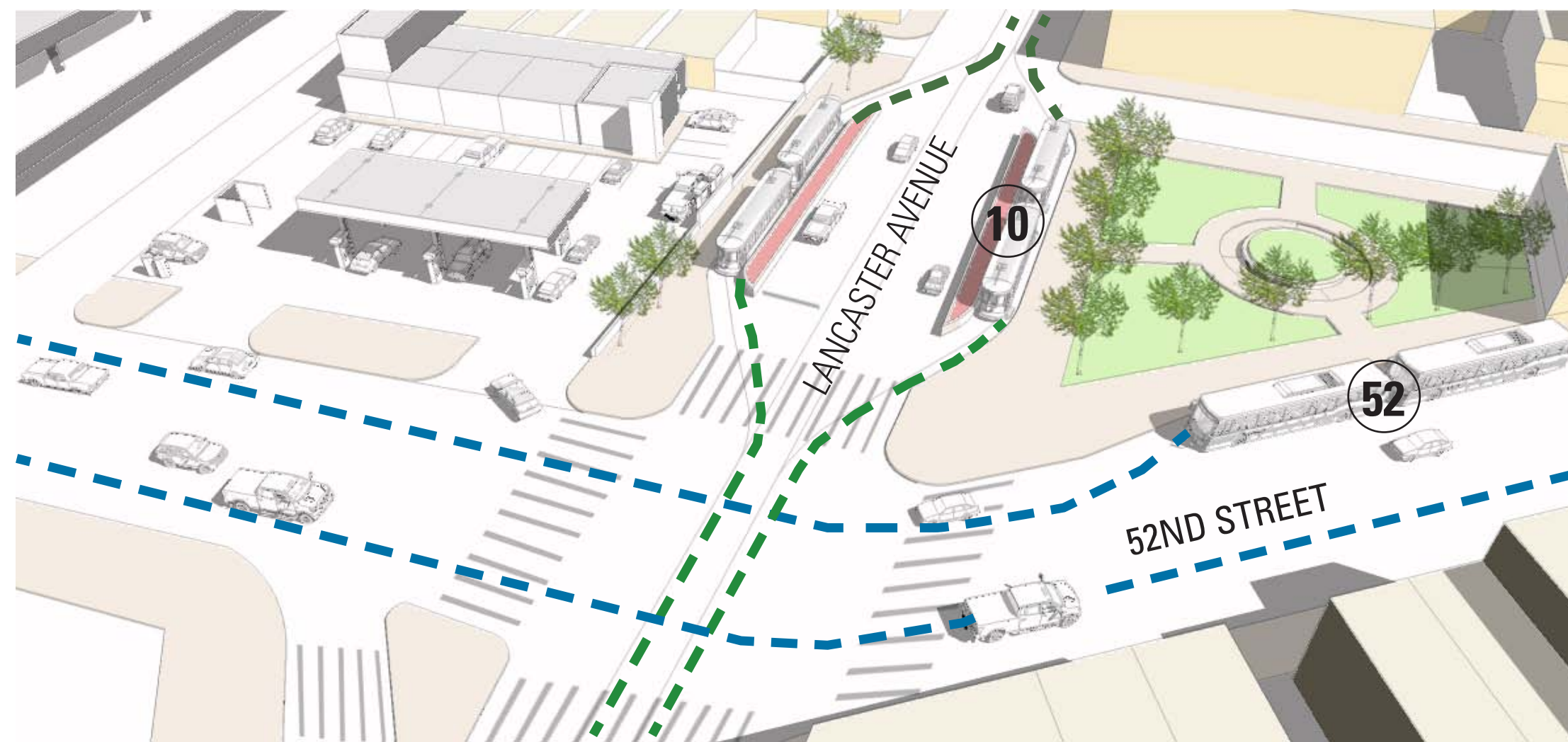
H. Japanese House and Garden

Planning Focus Area

52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue

Short Term: Improve Access and Safety

At 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue, the route 10 trolley route 52 uss cross through a complex intersection, often blocking traffic to discharge passengers onto poorly defined sidewalks. This causes congestion and an unwelcome and sometimes unsafe pedestrian environment. Reconfiguring sidewalks and reducing curb cuts allows for transit drop-offs onto clearly-defined sidewalks that provide refuge from the heavy flow of automobile traffic.



Suggested improvements for the intersection of 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue



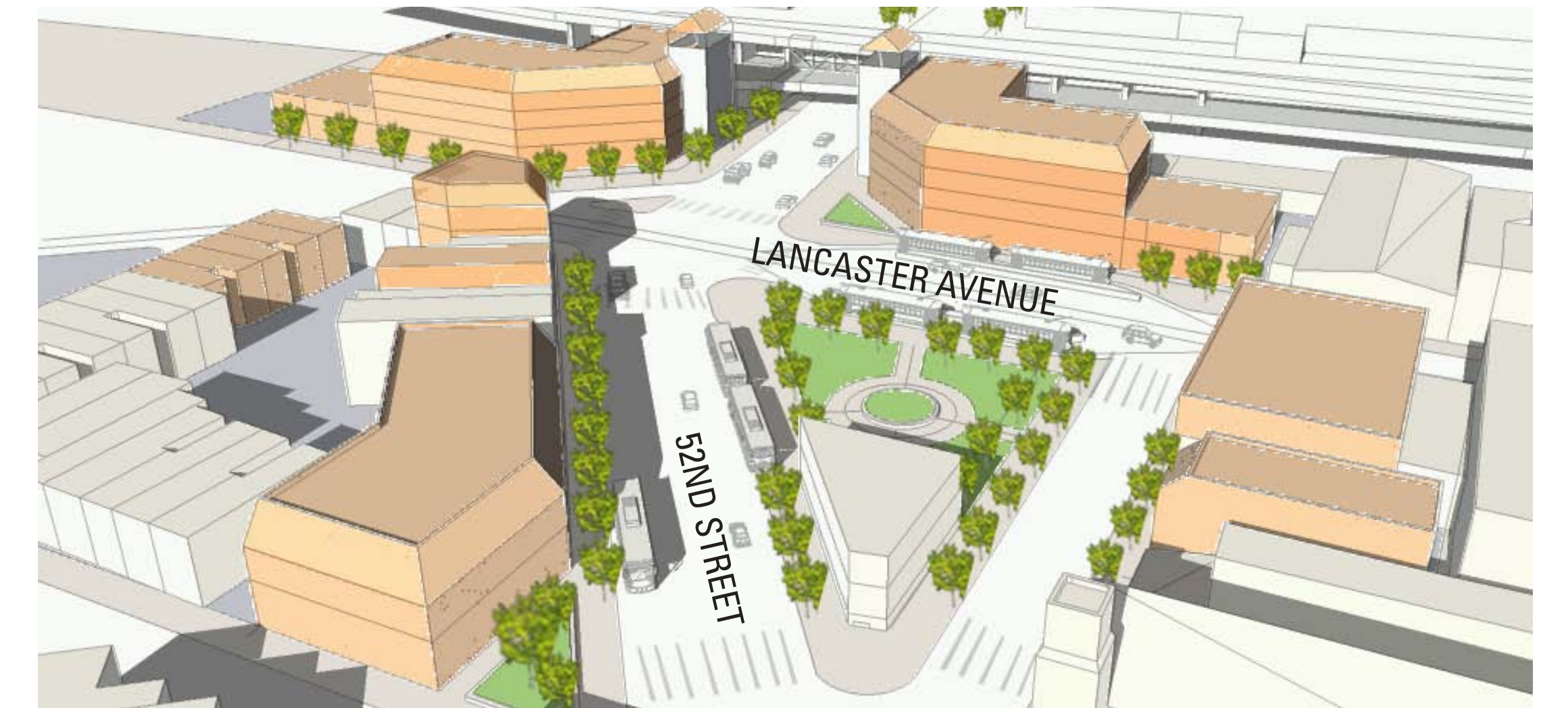
Existing: 52nd Street rail underpass



Future Vision: 52nd Street rail underpass

Long Term: New Development

Improved transit access and safety can help spur new construction at the intersection of 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue. New development can be incrementally added on the several parcels of vacant and underutilized land that border the intersection, creating a defined gateway to the 52nd Street Corridor and a sense of place. New development can also provide for public realm improvements, including sidewalk restoration, street trees, and rain gardens.



Massing diagram of potential development and improvements at 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue



Existing: 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue



Future Vision: Redevelopment at 52nd Street and Lancaster Avenue



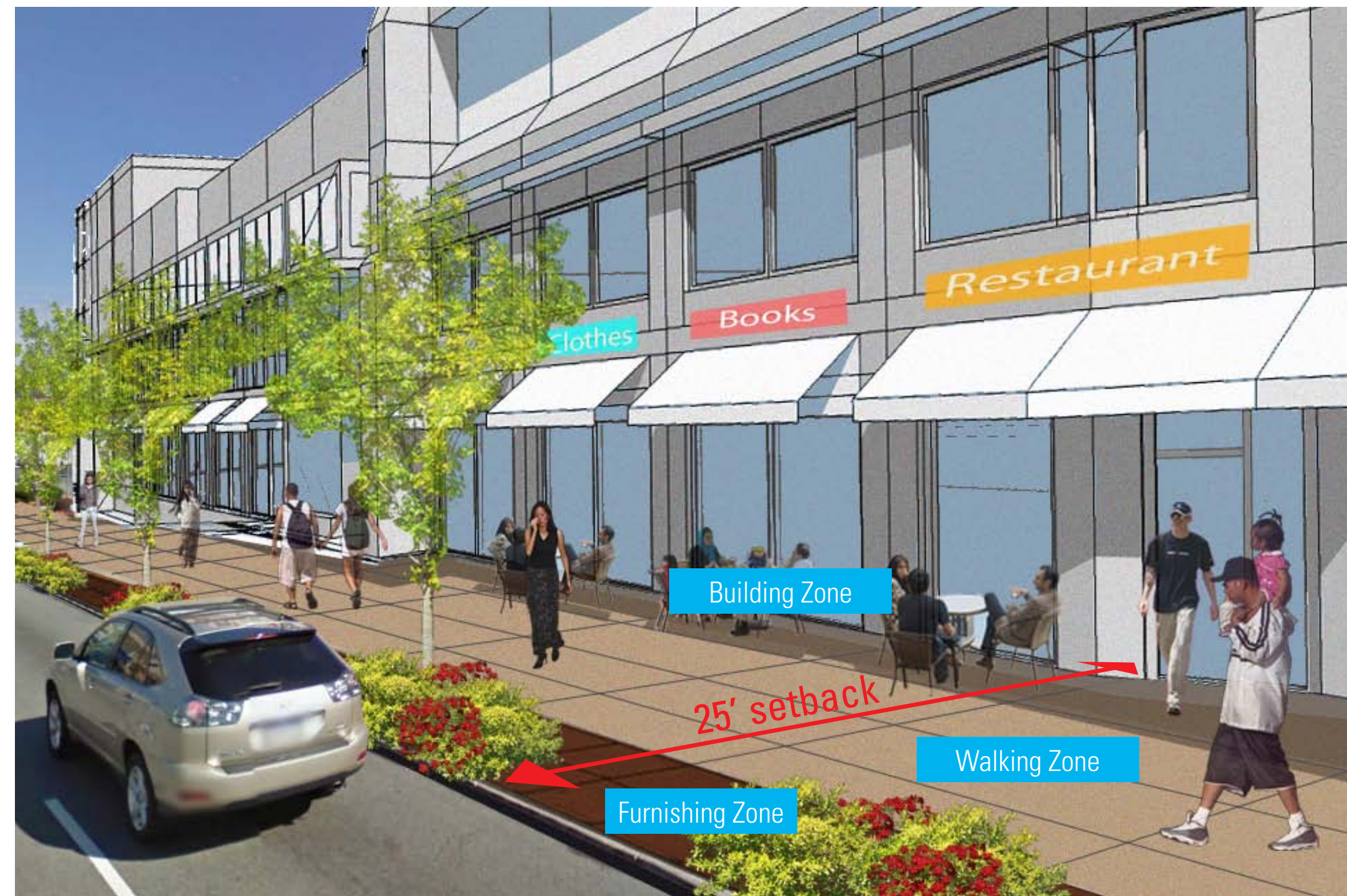
Site plan of suggested improvements along 52nd Street

City Avenue

City Avenue is characterized by numerous surface parking lots, large chain stores, drive-through retail, high-speed traffic, and an unsafe pedestrian realm. In 2007, Philadelphia City Council adopted a zoning overlay that will significantly change the character of new construction. New development is required to be built closer to City Avenue with a large, well defined sidewalks that accommodate a variety of uses. The zoning overlay is divided into sections, reflecting the different contexts along City Avenue. Building heights, setbacks, and other design elements respond to the context of each section.



Existing: Multiple curb cuts and auto-centric uses



Future Vision: Development that conforms to the overlay with a recommended 25-foot setback from curb to accommodate planting and sidewalk activities



City Avenue Zoning Overlay

- Regional Center
- Village Center

Suggested City Avenue Village Center Street Section



Existing Travel Lanes 25' curb to building face setback

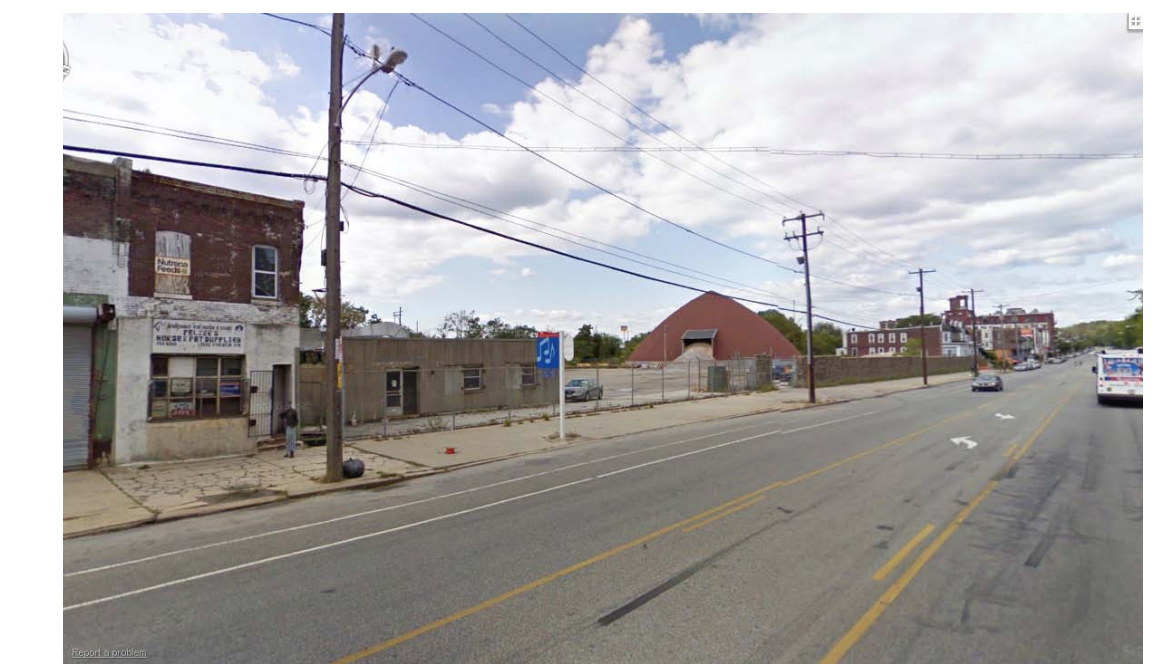
Planning Focus Areas

Parkside

Fronting the Centennial District, Parkside Avenue has numerous vacant lots, inappropriate land uses, and a wide, fast moving roadway with few pedestrian crossings. Consistent with the scale of the East Parkside Historic district, four-story mixed-use development coupled with a new traffic calming medians can connect new residents and businesses to one of Philadelphia's largest and most significant urban parks.

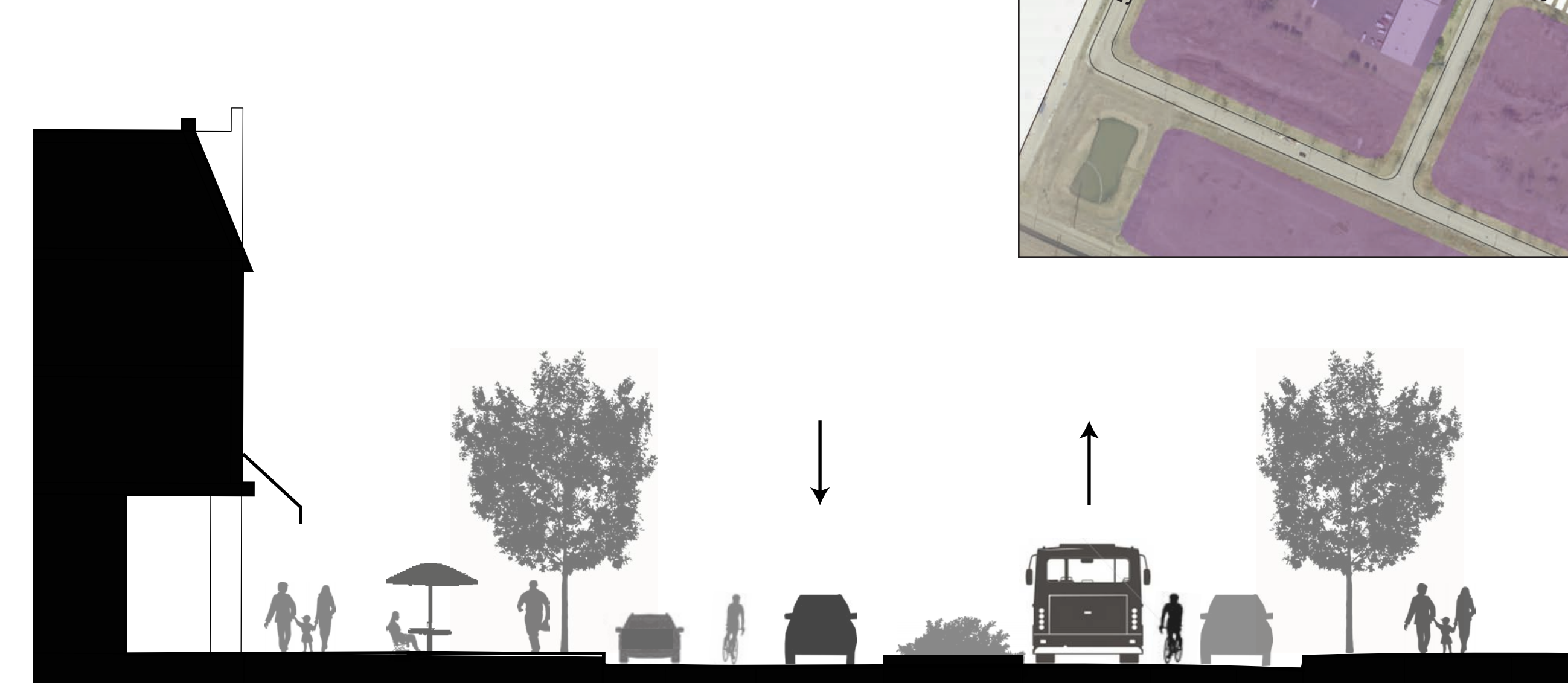


Future Vision: Looking west down Parkside Avenue with new development, medians, and crosswalks

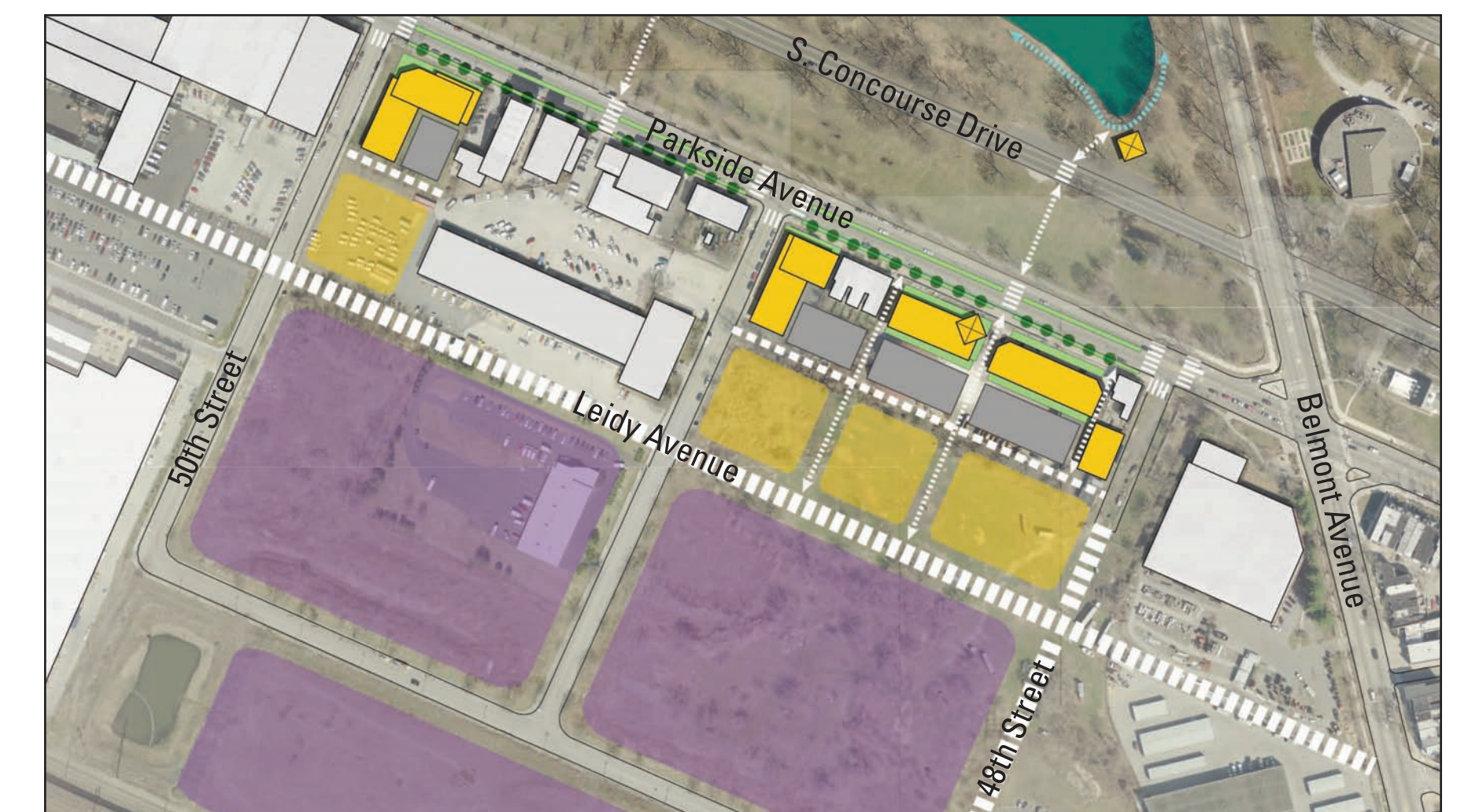


Existing: Looking west down Parkside Avenue

Suggested Parkside Avenue Street Section



30' curb to building face setback 50' roadway with new planted median

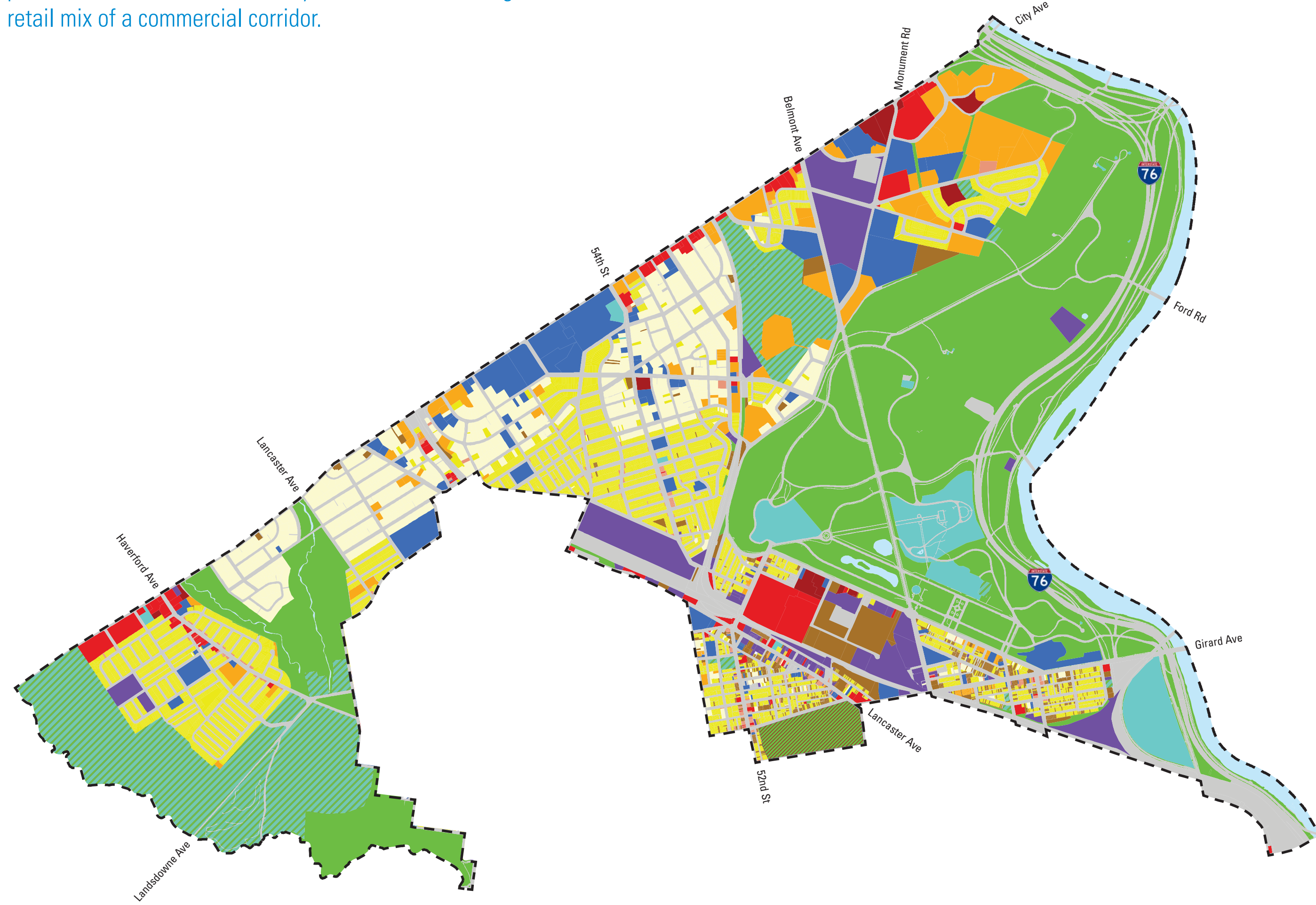
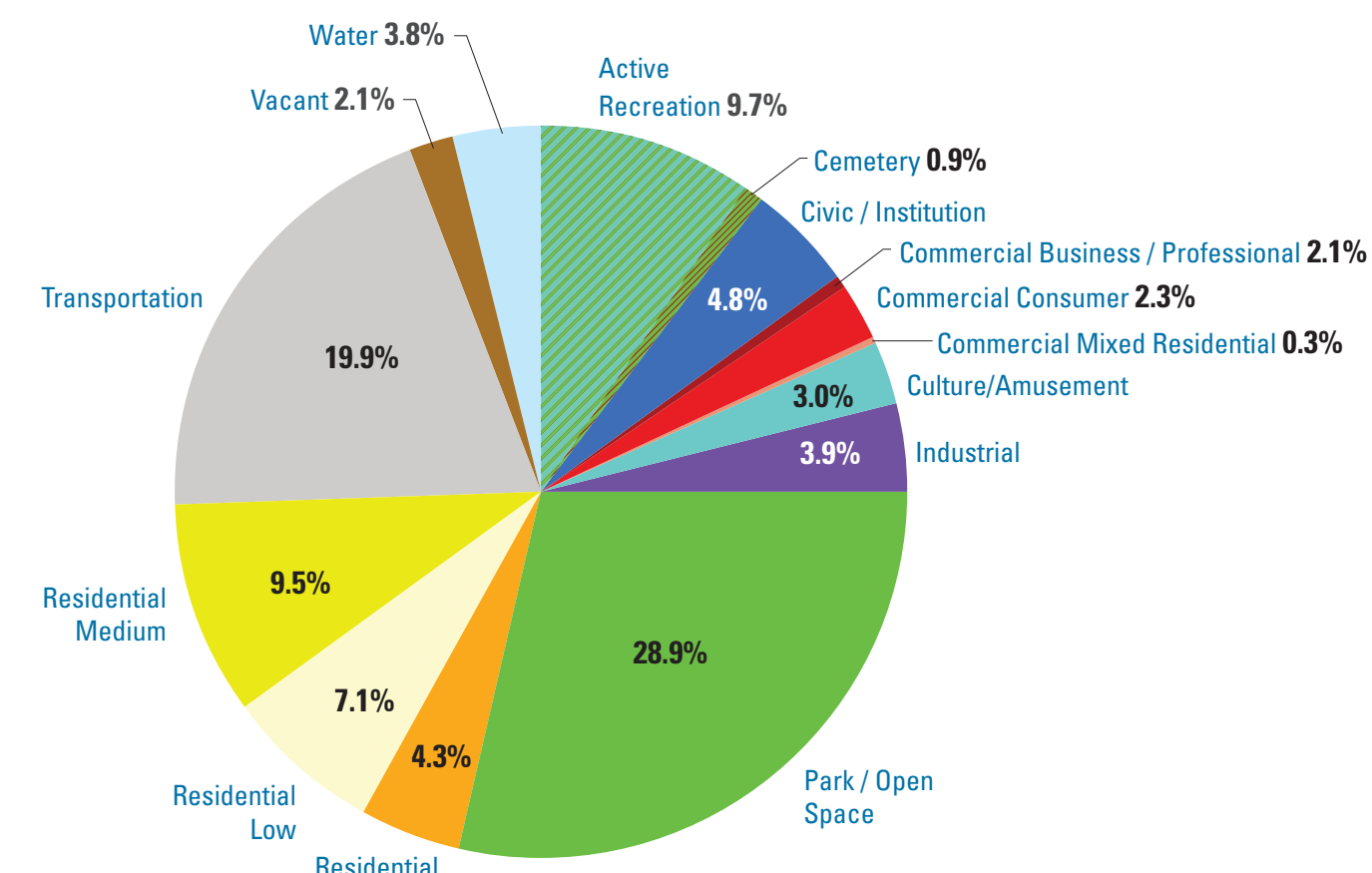


Site plan of suggested improvements

- Mixed-Use
- Flex Industrial

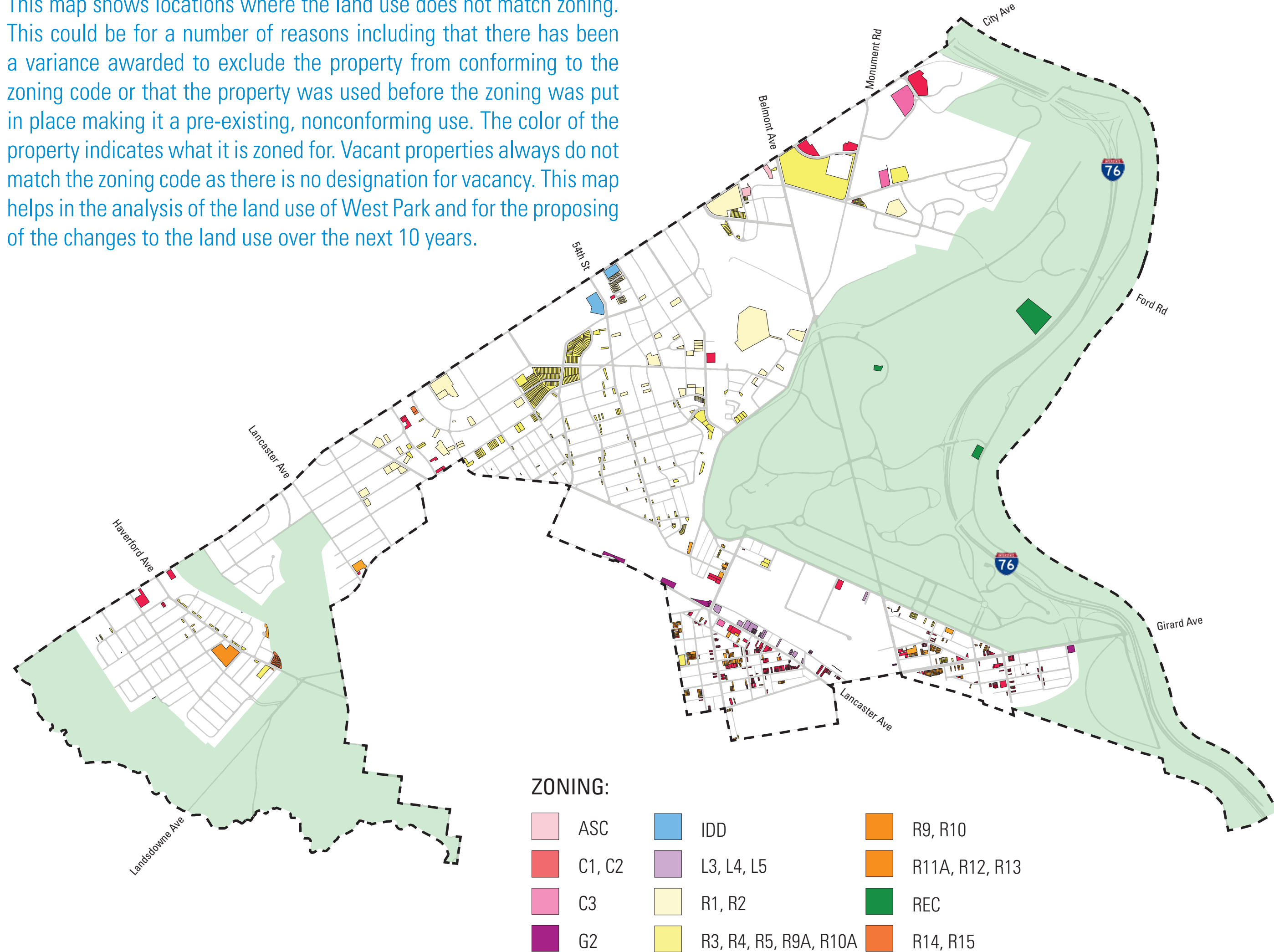
Current Land Use:

The current land use map depicts land use in West Park in 2011. It was created from various City databases including data from the Office of Property Assessment and verified in field surveys conducted by PCPC staff. The land use is stored in a geographic information system (GIS) database maintained by PCPC. Color codes are used to represent 16 major categories of land use. For example, all commercial consumer uses are shown in bright red and all transportation uses are shown in gray. Within the land use database the 16 categories are further broken down into more detailed descriptions. These descriptions are assigned individual codes that can be easily sorted. This level of detail allows planners to conduct further analysis such as evaluating the retail mix of a commercial corridor.



Zoning / Land Use Mismatches

This map shows locations where the land use does not match zoning. This could be for a number of reasons including that there has been a variance awarded to exclude the property from conforming to the zoning code or that the property was used before the zoning was put in place making it a pre-existing, nonconforming use. The color of the property indicates what it is zoned for. Vacant properties always do not match the zoning code as there is no designation for vacancy. This map helps in the analysis of the land use of West Park and for the proposing of the changes to the land use over the next 10 years.



Proposed Future Land Use

The West Park District is forecast to see modest growth over the next 10 years. These proposed changes to the land use of the district take into account not only places where the zoning and land use currently do not match but also where best to place growth and how best to utilize land that is available. Taking into account the recommendations from the *Philadelphia2035: Citywide Vision* as well as previously existing plans and community feedback, this proposal looks to distribute density around areas of concentrated transit access, capital facilities, and cultural amenities. The Proposed Future Land Use Map reflects the recommendations of the THRIVE, CONNECT, and RENEW chapters of this plan and the expansion and consolidation of commercial corridors. In addition, the map shows existing vacant and under-utilized land used for new and exciting purposes.

