Oak Street Ahead

A Plan for the Future of Conway's Great Street

Adopted March 28, 2023

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many residents, committee members, elected and appointed officials, city staff contributed to the vision and success of the Oak Street Ahead Corridor Study, including scores of public participants and business owners.
A special thank you to the following:

City of Conway Administration, Planning, and Engineering Staff

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Oak Street Ahead: The Context

Oak Street (US Highway 64) is a major corridor running through central Conway, Arkansas, and functions as the primary gateway for traffic from Interstate 40 (I-40) accessing the City's vibrant downtown. The City of Conway is located in Central Arkansas, within southwestern Faulkner County. The City's population and development growth began partly due to the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad construction, with the town being platted in 1871 and eventually incorporated in 1875. Conway would soon become the location of five colleges, the first being the Central Collegiate Institute (Hendrix College) in 1889. Historically, Oak Street began as a main thoroughfare in downtown Conway. Over time it has expanded to become a major commercial corridor within the city providing access to hotels, retail, restaurants, and general commercial uses utilized by both the citizens of Conway and smaller surrounding towns within the region. The construction of I-40 and its connection to Conway in 1970 continued commercial growth within the city, specifically along Oak Street.

Throughout the 20th century, Oak Street would continue East, eventually running under I-40. As commercial development continued along Oak Street over the past half-century, vehicular traffic has grown. Specifically, the Oak Street corridor adjacent to the Conway Commons commercial development experiences high congestion and traffic volumes.

Circa 1940s, View of downtown and Oak Street looking east

In 2014 the city moved the location of the airport to provide for a connection of Elsinger Blvd. west, across I-40, to connect with Harkrider Street (via 6th Street/Bruce Street). This project is beneficial in regard to intra-city connectivity, but high traffic volumes and congestion are still prevalent along the Oak Street Corridor.

Some streetscape, connectivity, and alignment improvements have been implemented on the section of the corridor just east of Harkrider/Oak Streets, adjacent to Downtown Conway in the past decade. These improvements are positive impacts to the corridor.

Corridor challenges such as the lack of continuous active transportation infrastructure and a continued increase in traffic led to a city initiative to improve the Oak Street Corridor. Through public input, discussions with business owners, traffic analysis, thoughtful conceptual design, and field inventory, the Oak Street Ahead corridor study provides a conceptual design and recommendation for improvements that will positively impact the community and economy.

Process Overview and Initial Input

Overview

The Oak Street Corridor study area extends from Harkrider Street to Hart Lane, including adjacent properties and transitions to surrounding blocks. The knowledge and insight of people who shop, work, do business and live on or near the corridor has contributed to the production of a plan that creates a realistic vision of the future for this significant Corridor.

The process began in early 2022 with the initial kick-off activities taking place in February and March. These featured an introduction of the planning process and a series of onsite activities, including kickoff meetings with as the steering committee, the general public, and stakeholder interviews. The process maximized community participation at each step through the city's engagement of citizens and stakeholders through social media, digital notifications, committees, and a series of public meetings.

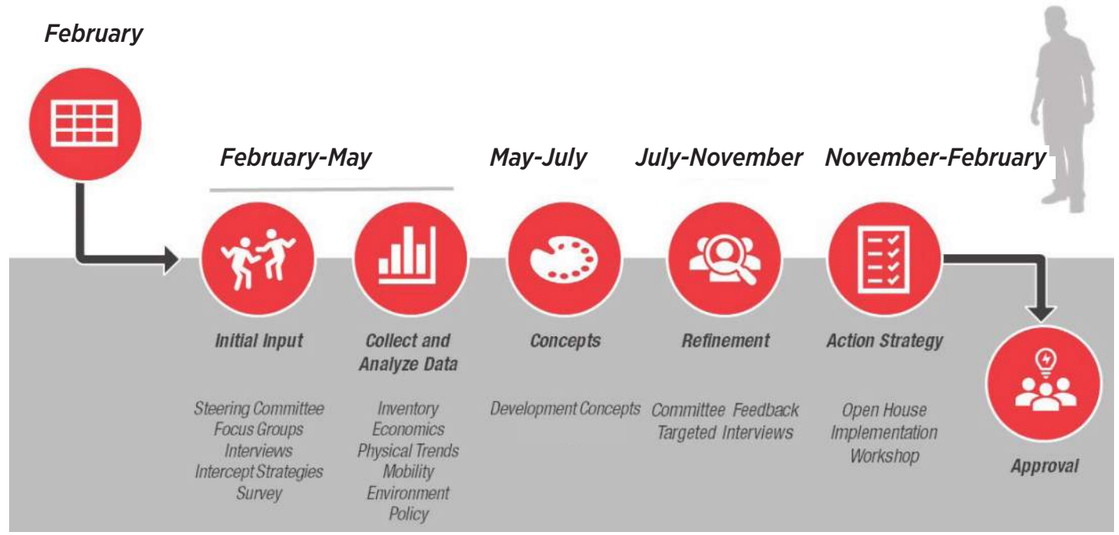
Central to this process were multi-day, collaborative planning workshops focusing on individual segments of the corridor study area. This approach recognized the individual character of each part of the corridor.

Initial Input

Steering Committee

The steering committee was formed by the city in February 2022 and included members of the Chamber of Commerce, local owners and representatives, developers, University of Central Arkansas (UCA) administration, Conway Corporation, planning commissioners, and city council members. The committee met at strategic milestones of the project to provide direction, course correction, and review of study deliverables. The committee met regularly to discuss the corridor's future ideas, provide feedback on emerging concepts, and direct the project's recommendations.

THE PROJECT SCHEDULE



Technical Committee

The technical committee was composed of key city staff and the RDG/Garver Team. Throughout the planning process, the technical committee met bi-weekly via virtual meetings and in-person for several on-site meetings. Discussions generally focused on overall process feedback, the review of technical documents and information, conveyance of background information regarding the corridor, next steps, and reviewed emerging new information and concepts.

Survey

The initial process included an on-line survey that measured people's attitudes and use of the Oak Street corridor, and allowed then to offer opinions on the relative applicability of different approaches, and identify priorities. The survey also included a visual preference component, asking participants to rate their opinion of an image array of various corridor treatments and their applicability to Oak Street. A summary of the results and findings of the survey follows.

Stakeholder Conversations and Focus Groups

Stakeholder conversations and Focus Group input were an integral part of the corridor study process. In February and March 2022, the project team conducted a multi-day program of individual and group stakeholder conversations. The team met with developers, investors, residents, business owners/operators, city departments, city council members, planning commissioners and officials, and
other various other stakeholders. Follow up conversations were held with many of these groups and stakeholders in the following months.

At these discussions, stakeholders provided key insights into the project study area regarding the business and commerce economics of the corridor, the day-to-day functional aspects of parking and delivery needs for specific developments, general corridor challenges and dynamics, and important perceptions of the true future potential of the corridor. The input from these individuals and groups provided a vital component of creating a conceptual design reflective of the needs of the businesses composing the corridor area.

Community and Stakeholder Feedback

The following topics and opinions reflect key themes received from community stakeholders and public input survey responses throughout the different general sessions offered in the Spring and Summer of 2022.

Land Use

- Oak Street should be more appealing since it is the 'Front Door" to the city. "Like the person who answers the phone at your office being the 'first impression' of your business, Oak Street serves Conway in the same capacity. It sets the impression for the entire city. From the overpass, it looks tired and not

very inviting."

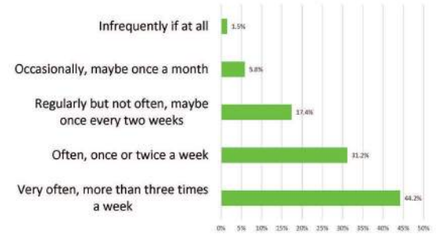
- A form-based code approach should be explored
- Possible extension of the historical overlay district (or similar) standards east along the corridor
- The creation of an Oak Street- focused group (similar to a downtown business owner organization) that could discuss future corridor improvements and events that could benefit all properties along the corridor.
- Code changes to provide a broader range of housing options throughout and adjacent to the corridor.

Transportation and Mobility

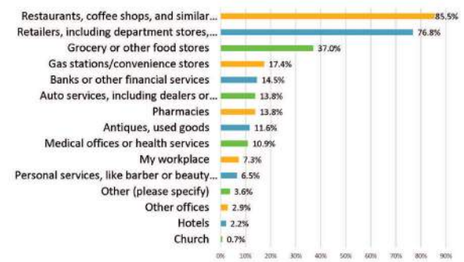
- General support for roundabouts, with some specifically mentioning implementation of roundabouts at primary intersections from Harkrider to I-40.
- Consensus that traffic is a major issue
- Truck traffic becomes an issue at the eastern end of the corridor (near E. German Lane)
- Better solutions and alternatives to alleviate traffic challenges throughout the Oak Street corridor should be explored
- Drainage problems exist near Harkrider
- Need for attractive way-finding signage (not DOT-style) that is inviting and points people towards areas of interest (e.g., colleges, the entertainment district, historic places, convention center, county municipalities and school districts, etc.) and family destinations
- Overall support for increased beautification efforts from the interstate to Harkrider would be a positive change for the corridor.
- Recommendation for a painted mural under I-40 Bridge
- A need for better connectivity between businesses along the eastern portion of the corridor

SURVEY: behavior patterns and opinions

Frequency of Visits

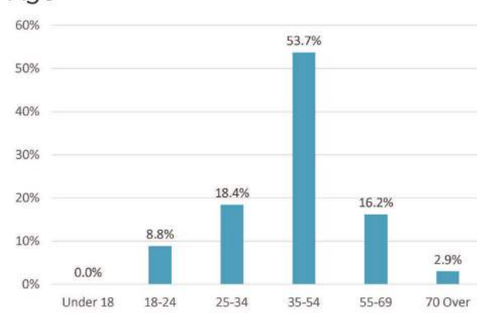


Destinations Visited Most Often

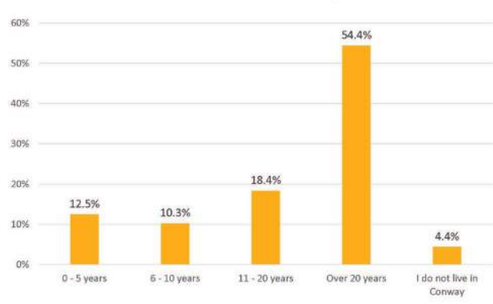


Respondents' Demographics

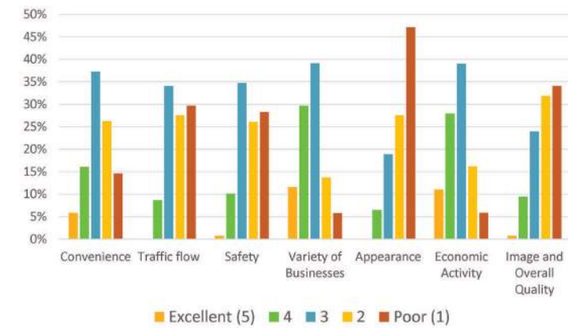
Age



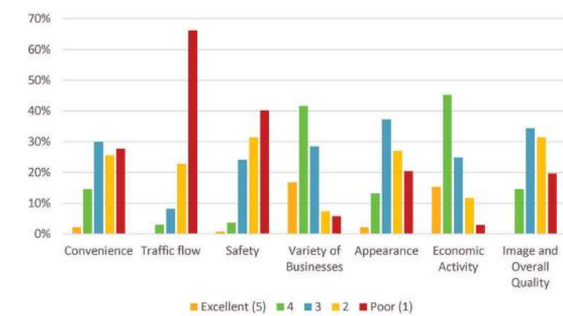
Time of Residence in Conway



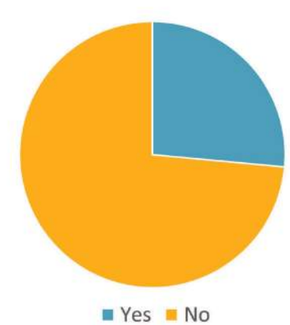
Ratings of Oak Street Between Harkrider and I-40 (5=excellent to 1=poor)



Ratings of Oak Street Between I-40 and Hart Lane (5=excellent to 1=poor)

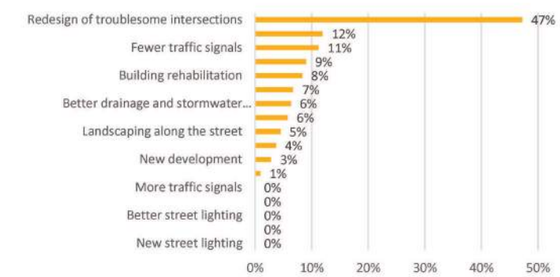


Lives within 1 mile of Oak Street

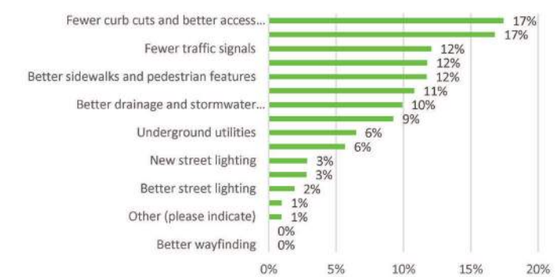


Recommended Actions

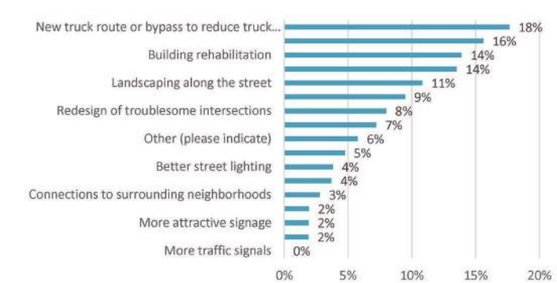
First Choice



Second Choice



Third Choice



The Human Scale: Pedestrian connectivity and streetscape

- Need for improved and better-connected pedestrian sidewalks and crossings
- Need for landscape buffering or low hardscape features along parking lot edges
- Potential to add outdoor dining/street plaza-type areas within developments along the corridor with new development and redevelopment projects
- Increased landscaping elements like street trees and landscaped beds
- High visibility crosswalks and pedestrian refuge medians
- Thematic lighting at special locations on street
- Support the integration of bikes and pedestrian accommodations throughout the corridor
- Recommendation for more modern and energy-efficient lighting throughout the corridor
- Bright under-lighting of the I-40 overpass

Traffic Control

- Need better timing for stoplights between I-40 and E German Lane (especially at the Amity and Elsinger)

SURVEY: visual preference

High-Visibility Crosswalks
Great/Good: 68.9%
Skeptical/Bad: 21.2%

Intermediate Median/Complete Street
Great/Good: 69.8%
Skeptical/Bad: 19.0%

Pedestrian Overpass
Great/Good: 57.6%%
Skeptical/Bad: 25.8%

Light Features
Great/Good: 61.6%
Skeptical/Bad: 15.2%

Sidewalk and Grass Buffer
Great/Good: 74.2%
Skeptical/Bad: 8.6%

Ornamental Arch
Great/Good: 37.0%
Skeptical/Bad: 31.9%

Outdoor Meeting Areas
Great/Good: 60.9%
Skeptical/Bad: 20.6%

Parking Lot Screening
Great/Good: 52.4%%
Skeptical/Bad: 18.6%

Surface "Median"
Great/Good: 28.5%
Skeptical/Bad: 30.4%

Sidepath and Streetscape
Great/Good: 70.2%
Skeptical/Bad: 11.9%

Paving and Ped Lights
Great/Good: 72.4%
Skeptical/Bad: 8.0%

Planter Beds/Tables
Great/Good: 68.9%
Skeptical/Bad: 15.9%

Protected Paths from Streets
Great/Good: 62.9%
Skeptical/Bad: 14.6%

Survey Findings

The on-line survey, receiving nearly 200 responses, provides a valuable way to gauge the opinions of citizens with a particular interest in Oak Street. The survey covered two general topic areas: behavior patterns and opinions – how people use the corridor – and physical preferences – what types of features and enhancements are most appropriate to the Oak Street setting.

Behavior Patterns and Opinions

Survey participants were most likely to be in the 35 to 54 age group, live more than a mile away from Oak Street, and are relatively long term residents of Conway. They...

- Use the Oak Street corridor frequently, often more than three times a week.
- Most frequently visit for restaurants and food services and shopping for retail goods and services.
- Generally give the corridor west of I-40, low marks for appearance, image, safety, and traffic flow; and somewhat higher ratings for convenience.
- Generally give the corridor east of I-40 very low ratings for traffic flow and low ratings for safety, with high marks for business variety and economic activity.
- Place highest priority on transportation related Initiatives: redesigning problem intersections, reducing curb cuts, and reducing the number of traffic signals.
- Other priorities include lighting, sidewalks, building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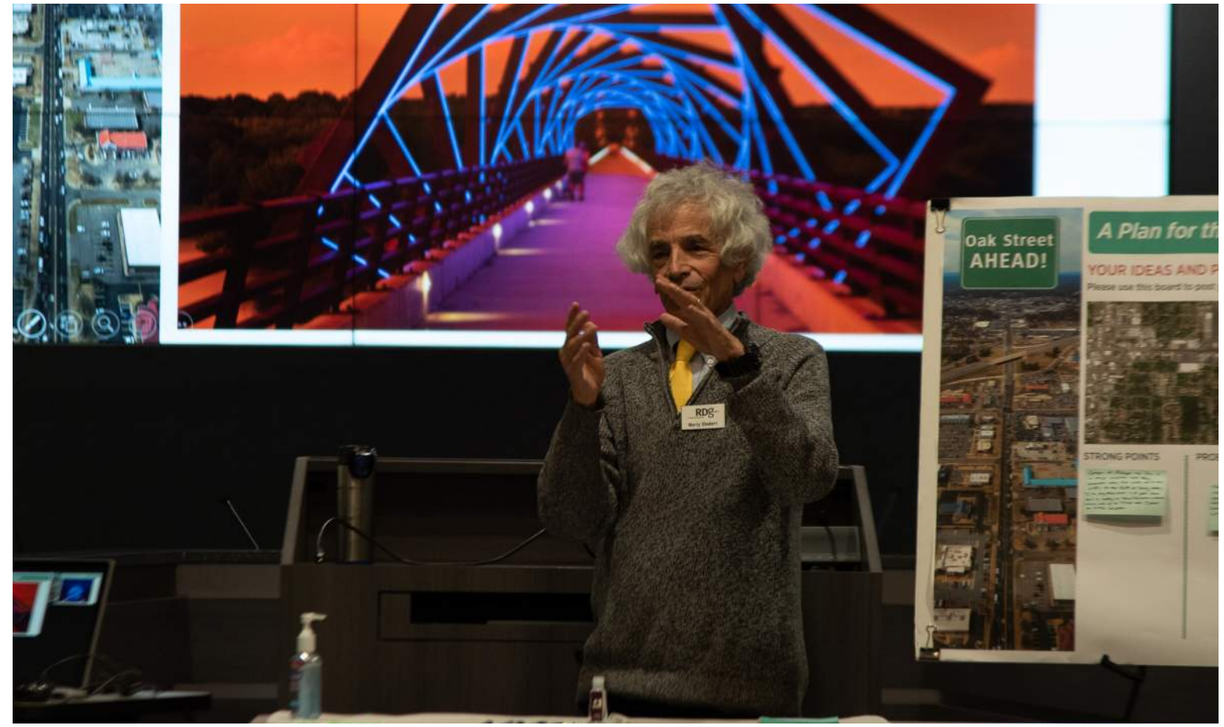
TRANSPORTATION: FUTURE ALTERNATIVES
Conway's Great Street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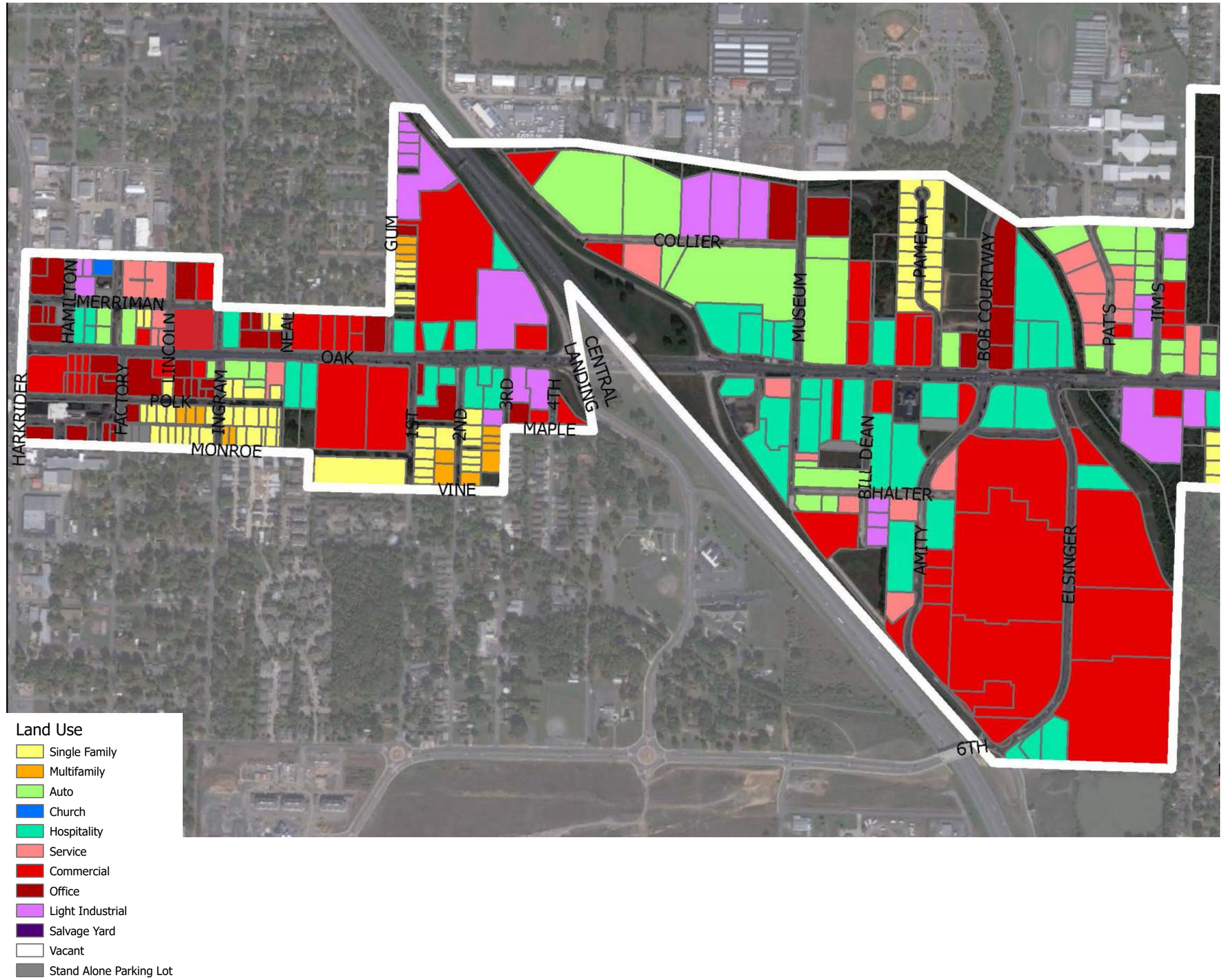
Land Use

While Oak Street is primarily a mixed commercial corridor, it exhibits a variety of land uses between Downtown Conway and the eastern city limits. This mix changes as the street's context and character changes. Along the way, lot sizes and site design also change.

Harkrider to Ingram. West of Interstate 40, various types of commercial, office, eating places, and automotive uses dominate. Between Harkrider and Ingram, directly adjacent to Downtown, relatively small lots mark the a transition from the city center to a more automobile dominant environment toward I-40. Significant contemporary development has occurred in this inner segment, including the CVS store on the southeast corner, Arvest Bank, three recent street-oriented restaurants, and a new Kum & Go convenience store, featuring an innovative urban site design. Industrial and building supply uses, extend for several blocks north of this Oak Street segment, while blocks to the south are largely commercial and residential.

Ingram to I-40. Here the scale of development and size of street-facing parking lots increases, with the Faulkner Plaza shopping center and associated pad sites constituting the largest single user of land. Other large commercial boxes include the Kroger grocery store on the south block west of 1st Avenue and an older strip center directly across the street to the north. Free-standing restaurants account for most of the balance of this segment.

I-40 to Little Creek. East of I-40, the smaller, urban commercial corridor environment of Oak Street gives way to the more expansive scale of a post-1980 commercial and hospitality development. Hospitality uses, including free-standing sit-down and fast-food restaurants and lodging dominate the immediate Oak Street frontage between the interstate and Little Creek. South of the highway frontage, Conway Commons – a single project composed of two large retail power centers flanking Elsinger Boulevard for about 1/2 mile – is the city's largest commercial development. New car sales is also a significant use along Museum Road north of Oak Street.



A mix of automotive, office, commercial, and light industrial extends to Little Creek on the north and 6th Street on the south of the main corridor. Some of these uses are located in multi-tenant buildings. This area also includes a single-family residential pocket and undeveloped sites along Bob Courtway Drive and Little Creek.

Little Creek to Gold Creek. Moving farther to the east, the corridor's character changes to a more automotive and industrial character, in some ways typical of edge of city development. These include automotive uses such as repair shops, used car and auto parts sales, trade commercial, and a large aggregation of auto salvage establishments south of Oak Street along Simon Road. A large, mostly unused parcel north of the Oak Street strip once housed a large mobile home park. This site is surrounded by contemporary residential development, including the Crossing and HomeTowne developments, and presents an important new development opportunity. Relatively low-density, single-family clusters surround the Simon Road complex.

The quasi-industrial, edge-city quality changes to a more consumer and retail-oriented land use mix toward East German Lane, creating a more neighborhood service environment at that intersection. These establishments include two multi-tenant commercial centers, free-standing retailers, and convenience and fast-food stores. Most of these sites depend on Oak Street for access. The northeast quadrant of the East German intersection includes a bank and Harps grocery store, consistent with the neighborhood service function of this node.

Commercial development thins east of East German to the creek, with significant vacant or underused sites along Oak Street. The corridor is bounded on the south by established mixed density residential neighborhoods around Florence Mattison Elementary School. The north side includes a small mobile home cluster, with a mix of housing ranging from large lot single-family to attached and single-level multifamily buildings.

East German Lane to Hart Lane. The eastern edge of the study corridor transitions to a semi-rural landscape, with

some scattered commercial and automotive uses along the highway frontage. The primary existing land use is the Conway Expo and Event Center, with an approximately 30 acre vacant parcel between Oak Street and the Center's drive. A low density single-family residential area is immediately adjacent and extends west to Gold Creek.

Character Segments

This land use and community character analysis suggests a logical division of the 2.8 mile study area and its surroundings into four logical character segments for land use and development planning:

- Harkrider to Interstate 40, a 0.75 mile segment comprising the more mature commercial corridor and linking Downtown Conway to I-40. In some ways, this link may be viewed as a logical extension of the central business district to the Interstate.
- Interstate 40 to Little Creek, including one of the city's major concentrations of highway-related commercial and its largest shopping complex.
- Little Creek to Gold Creek, incorporating major near term development sites and a potential neighborhood and community service node at East German.
- Gold Creek to Hart Lane, including the Event Center on the adjacent property to the north.

Opportunity Maps

The maps on the following pages identify opportunities for each of the character segments identified above, Many, although not all, of these ideas are developed in greater detail in the plan maps on pages 23 & 25. The opportunity items highlighted on these displays include the following:

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES: These sites are substantial parcels of vacant land which were either never developed, developed with uses that have been abandoned, or have current uses that do not use their current sites effectively.

RECENTLY COMPLETED REDEVELOPMENT: These are projects that have been completed in late 2021 or 2022 that are too recent to be reflected in current aerial photography.

SITE OR PARKING LOT REDESIGN POSSIBILITIES: These sites are parking areas that can benefit from significant redesign to add efficiency and landscaping without sacrificing necessary parking spaces.

POTENTIAL INFILL AREAS: These areas have scattered lots or sites that could be developed, while retaining most existing uses.

FUTURE REUSE AREAS: These sites are in active, economically viable use but could experience changing demand and higher value in response to surrounding redevelopment or markets.

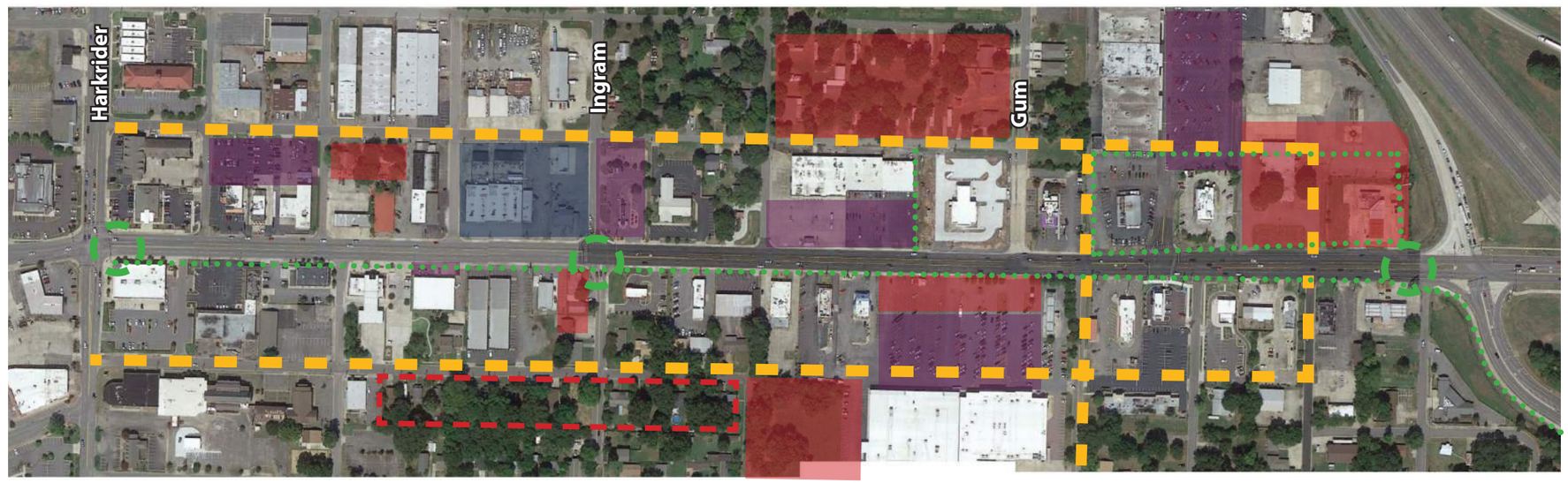
SPECIAL LAND USE DISTRICT: This applies to a concept for the Simon Road area where various uses like auto parts and recycling could be consolidated in a thematic, destination district.

CONNECTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES: These provide links for better local connections that can provide alternatives to Oak Street for local traffic.

PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITIES: These are strategic locations where public art, lighting, landscaping, and user amenities could enhance the quality of the street environment.

TRAIL/MAJOR PATH POTENTIAL: These are connections along and around the Oak Street corridor that strengthen active transportation facilities to major local and regional destinations. In general, this does not include routne sidewalks, but focuses on shared use facilities.

Harkrider to Interstate 40



Potential redevelopment sites

Recent completed redevelopment

Site or parking lot redesign possibilities

Potential infill areas

Connectivity opportunities

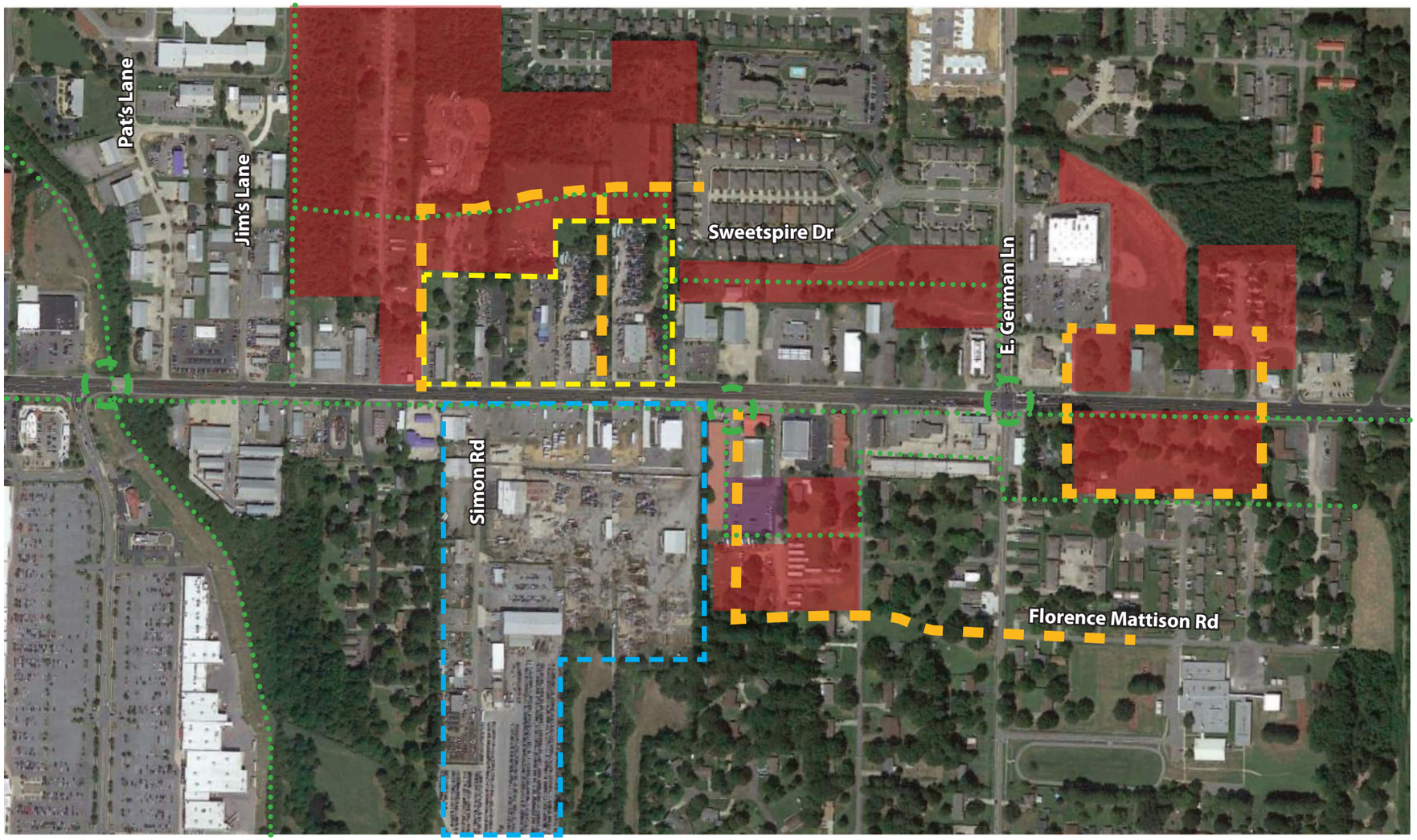
Placemaking opportunities

Trail/major path potential

Interstate 40 to Little Creek

- Potential redevelopment sites
- Recent completed redevelopment
- Site or parking lot redesign possibilities
- Potential infill areas
- Connectivity opportunities
- Placemaking opportunities
- Trail/major path potential

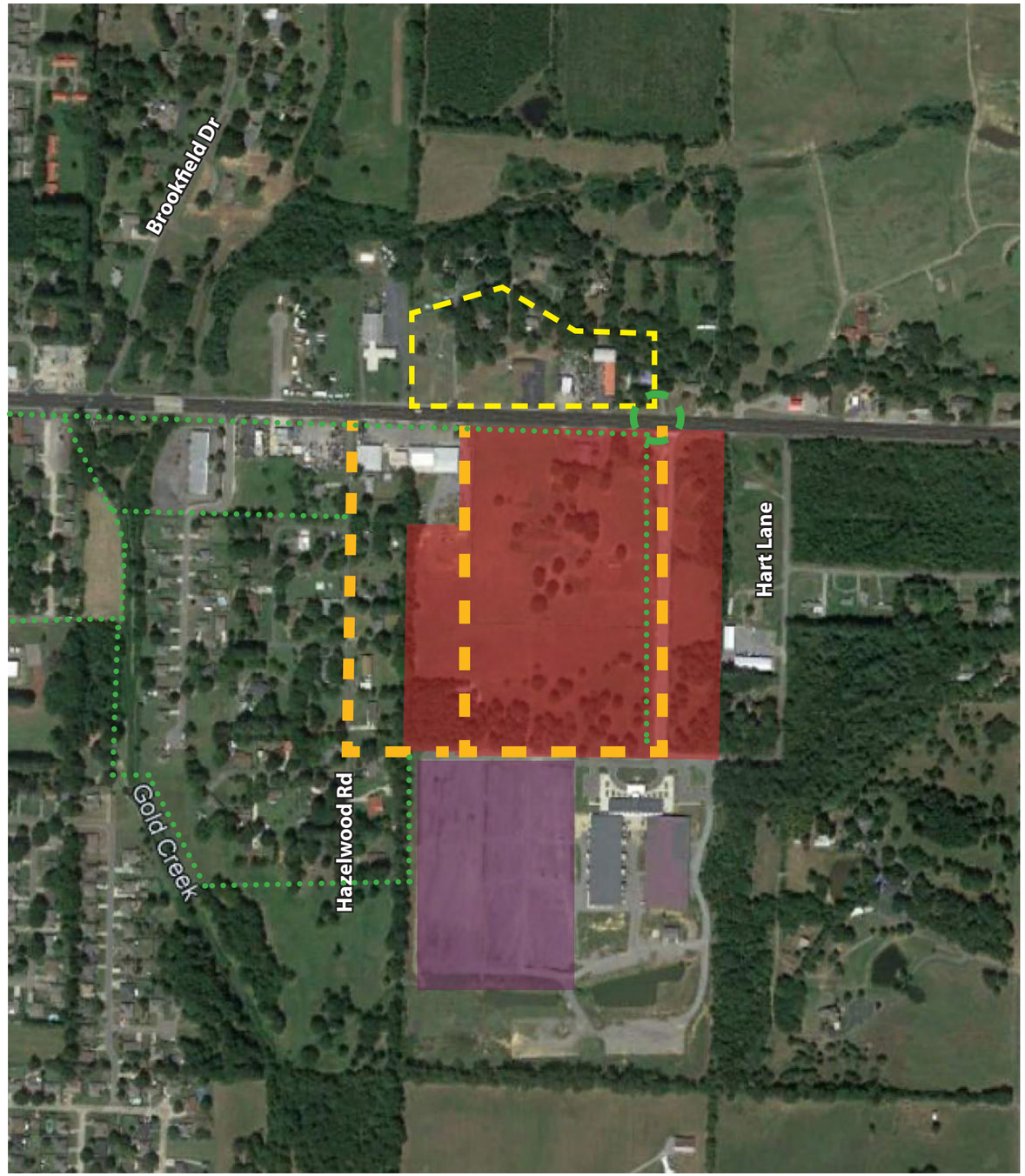
Little Creek to Gold Creek

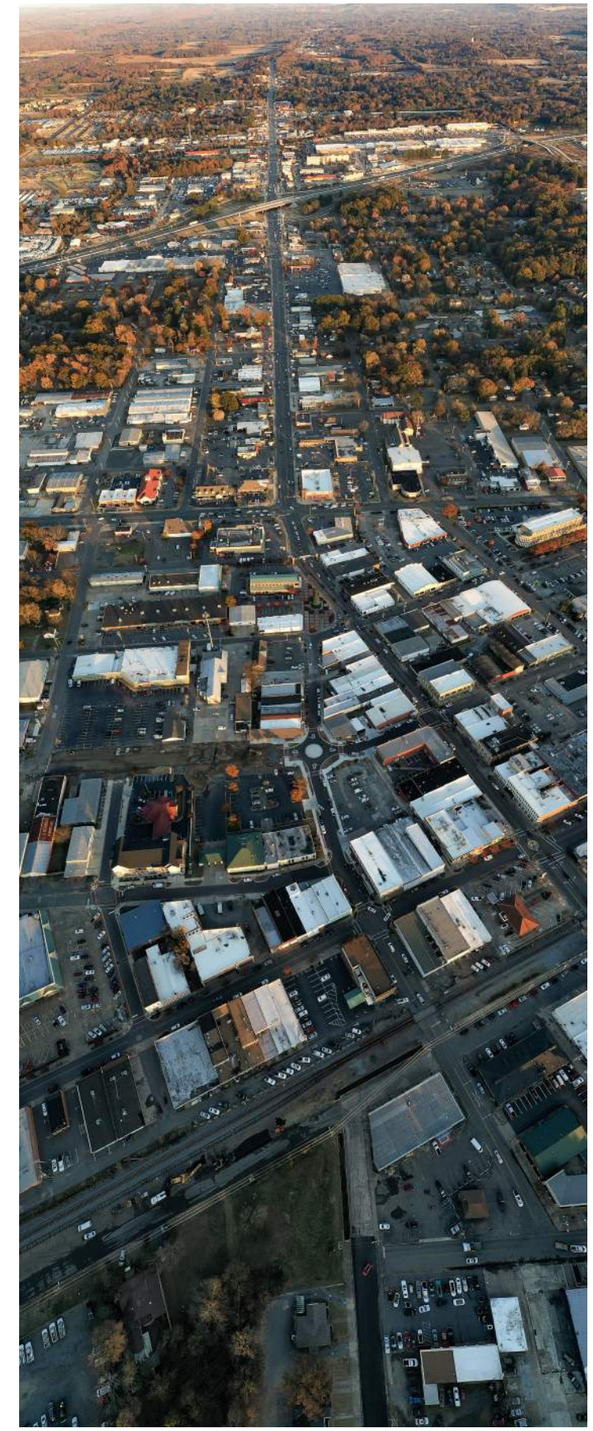


- Potential redevelopment sites
- Recent completed redevelopment
- Site or parking lot redesign possibilities
- Future reuse area
- Special land use district
- Connectivity opportunities
- Placemaking opportunities
- Trail/major path potential

Gold Creek to Hart Lane

- Potential redevelopment sites
- Recent completed redevelopment
- Site or parking lot redesign possibilities
- Future reuse area
- Special land use district
- Connectivity opportunities
- Placemaking opportunities
- Trail/major path potential





Transportation Assessment

The Oak Street Ahead study includes a detailed Traffic Report, assessing safety and operational issues along the corridor. The complete study is included as an appendix to this plan. This section summarizes its assessment of the current state, while recommendations for improvements are included later in this document.

Scope of the Traffic Report

The report assembled the following information:

Data Compilation

- Review of 24-hour turning movement counts for nine (9) intersections, collected on April 5, 2022.
- Review of 2016-2020 crash data

Field Observations

• Site visits to evaluate the operational issues with the existing conditions

Safety Analysis

• Maps developed using Microsoft Power BI software with the type, location, and severity of crashes

• Identification of high crash locations

• Calculation of corridor crash rates

Volume Development

• Development of 2022 Existing Volumes

• Determination of the traffic growth rate for the study area

• Development of 2045 Design Volumes

Operational Analysis

Analysis of the level of service (LOS) and queue lengths at study intersections for:

• 2022 Existing Conditions

• 2045 conditions if no improvements are made

• 2045 conditions with the proposed improvements, including a site visit was performed to evaluate the operational issues with existing conditions

• Review of 24-hour turning movement counts for nine (9) intersections, collected on April 5, 2022.

• Review of 2016-2020 crash data

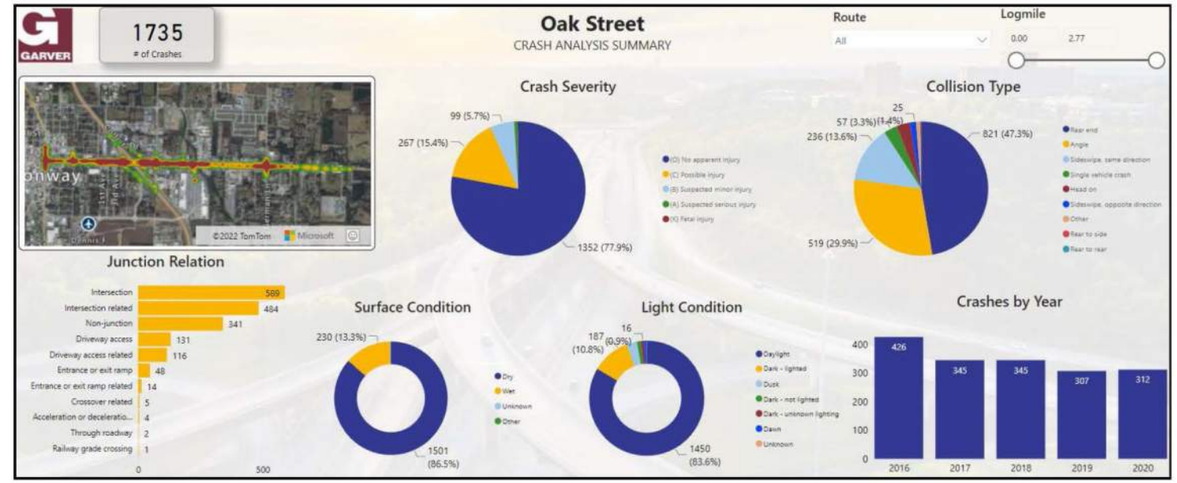
Review and evaluation of crash data provided by Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT).

Field Observations

- The corridor has a high density of existing driveways and intersecting streets, with the most significant issues occurring west of Interstate 40. The following discussion describes and illustrates these driveway accesses in more detail.
- Nine intersections along the corridor were studied, each of which exhibits its own operational challenges. These observed conditions included:
    - Oak Street at Harkrider Street. Heavy traffic on all approaches during AM and PM peak hours.
    - Oak Street at Faulkner Plaza. Heavy westbound right movement was noted during the PM peak hour.
    - Oak Street at Museum Road. Heavy through traffic in the AM and PM peak hours.
    - Oak Street at Amity Road/Bob Courtway Drive. Heavy traffic in the westbound direction in the AM peak hour and in the eastbound direction in the PM peak hour.
    - Oak Street at Elsinger Boulevard. Heavy traffic in the westbound direction in the AM peak hour and in the eastbound direction in the PM peak hour. In addition, significant queue of vehicles was noted making a westbound left turn movement and an eastbound right turn movement at the intersection.
    - Oak Street at E German Lane. Heavy westbound traffic in the AM peak hour.

Safety Analysis

Safety and crash incidents are a particular problem along Oak Street. Crash data from 2016 to 2020 were provided by ARDOT for the study area. Corridor crash rates for total crashes and fatal and serious injury (KA) crashes were calculated for Oak Street and compared



Oak Street Crash Analysis Summary

to statewide crash rates for similar facilities. The crash data was also reviewed to determine high crash locations and crash types. Average crash rates were calculated for the five years of crash data to evaluate the safety performance of the Oak Street corridor as compared with the statewide averages for similar facilities. This analysis yielded the following results:

The corridor crash rates for Oak Street were approximately three times higher than the statewide crash rate for total crashes.

- For the KA crashes, the segment of Oak Street from Harkrider Street to I-40 had a crash rate nearly twice that of the statewide crash rate while the KA crash rate for the segment from I-40 to E German Lane was below the statewide crash rate.
- The majority of crashes that occurred along the corridor were no apparent injury (O) type crashes (78%) and rear-end type crashes (47%), followed by angle crashes (30%).
- Approximately 84% of the crashes occurred during daylight hours.
- 87% of the crashes were on dry road surface conditions.
- Approximately 75% of the crashes were either intersection or driveway related.
- The high occurrence of rear-end and angle crashes can be attributed to the backup due to regular congestion as cited in the crash data.
- Rear-end crashes are generally caused by driving in heavy traffic conditions, distracted driving, and speeding.
- Angle crashes are generally caused by left-turn conflicts at intersections or cross-street traffic not yielding to the main line traffic.

Traffic Volume

Average daily traffic (ADT) on the five-lane Oak Street is highest between Museum Road and German Lane, with a 2021 level of 31,000 vpd (vehicles per day) toward I-40 and Museum Road and 26,000 vpd west of German Lane. Volume drops off west of I-40, although at 23,000 to 24,000 vpd remains at a level that warrants a five-lane section. East of German Lane, traffic is in the range of 26,000 to 27,000 vpd.

Change in ADT between 2001 and 2021 for different segments of the corridor also yields interesting results. West of I-40, traffic level has been relatively stable -- slightly higher near Downtown, slightly lower at Faulkner Plaza. Traffic has increased moderately between I-40 and German Lane. The largest growth margin occurred east of German Lane, growing by about 60% during that period.

Access Management and Site Design

During the community engagement process, participants identified the large number of curb cuts as a problem along Oak Street. The maps on the right display curb cuts, intersecting streets, and internal circulation along the character segments of Oak Street.

Uncontrolled curb cuts are a particular problem on major streets with a five-lane section like Oak Street. The center lane, referred to as a two-way turn lane or TWTL (pronounced "twittle") are just that – lanes that permit traffic moving in both directions to make left turns. The chances that two cars traveling in opposing directions trying to occupy the same space increase as the number of curb cuts that are not aligned with curb cuts across the street increase. This condition is common along Oak Street, but most serious where the density of individual businesses and driveways is greatest: between Harkrider and I-40. Each of these misalignments is a potential crash site, giving TWTL's the unfortunate nickname of "suicide lanes." Too many curb cuts also create hazards for pedestrians as well, because drivers trying to concentrate on making left turns rarely see a pedestrian on the sidewalk, and Oak Street's sidewalks, typically at the back of curb, allow little margin for error.

Often, the preferred solution to the problem is to used raised medians to control turn locations, but this is often very unpopular with businesses who are then restricted to right in/right out access. This plan focuses on three other options:

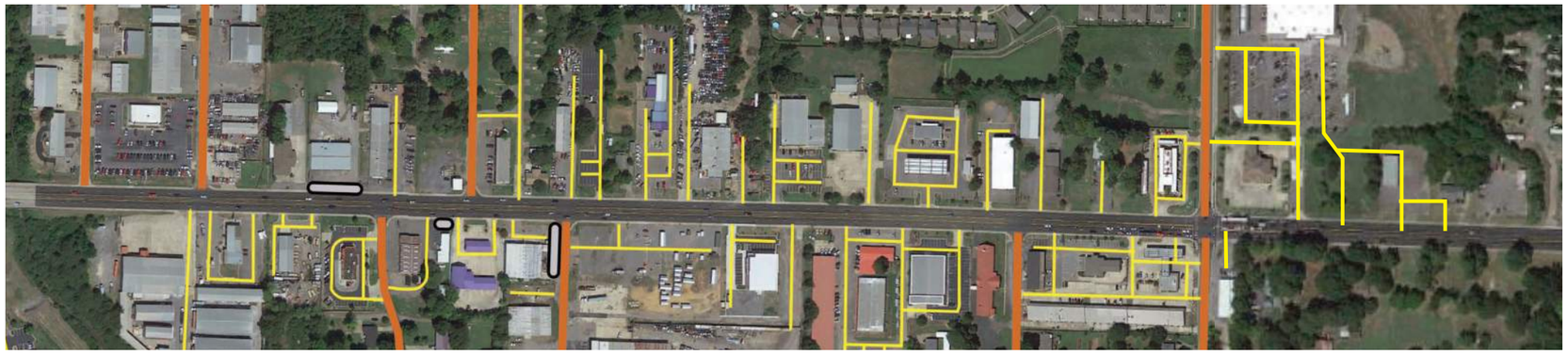
- Aligning driveway accesses across the street wherever possible.
- Reducing the number of access points to individual establishments. In many cases, one point of access is sufficient.
- Providing secondary access routes parallel to Oak Street, reducing the necessity for making left turns.
- Providing as much access as possible from intersecting streets.
- Eliminating parking situations that require people to back out onto Oak Street.

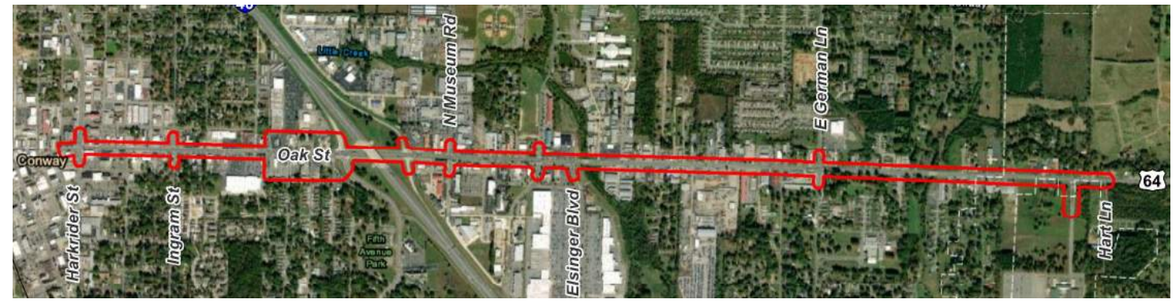
These solutions often involve some level of parking lot design. During the planning process, we have looked at each parking lot to develop solutions that do not significantly reduce (and in some cases increase) parking supply. Actual execution of these changes will require a recognition of these issues and a close city/business partnership to reduce these potential conflict points.

Curb Cuts and Internal Circulation: Harkrider to I-40

Curb Cuts and Internal Circulation: I-40 to Little Creek

Curb Cuts and Internal Circulation: Little Creek to West of Gold Creek





Environmental Review

A desktop review of environmental constraints was performed using federal, state, and local resources for potential environmental impacts resulting from corridor improvements. The study area reviewed, which is shown below, is approximately 92 acres in size and encompasses any areas where improvements could occur. Information sources utilized in this desktop review primarily consisted of GIS databases, topographic maps, aerial photographs, and the Official Species List generated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for federally protected threatened and endangered species. Census data was evaluated for low income and minority populations. Preliminary site checks for historic structures and archeological resources were conducted online through the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) National Register and Survey Database and AMASDA Online, respectively. The full Desktop Screening and Environmental Constraints Report is available as an appendix to this study. A list of all resources investigated is provided in the report and those of significance are summarized in the following paragraphs.

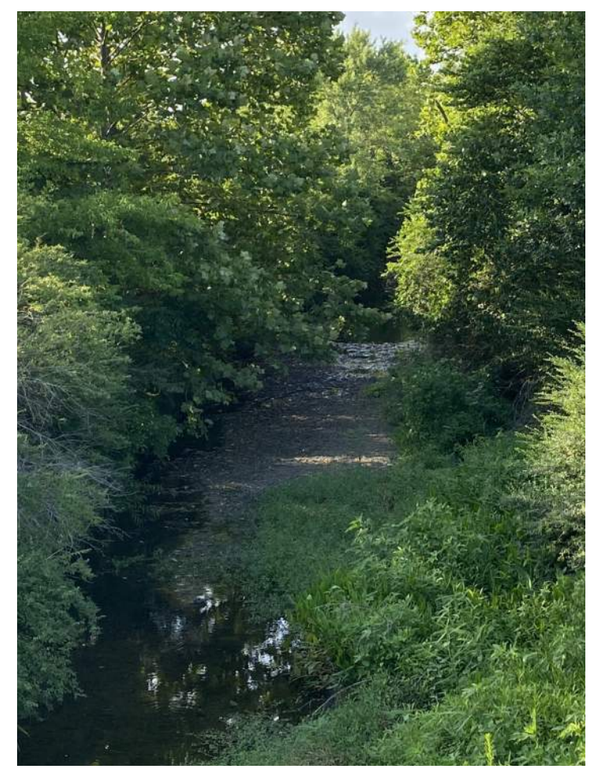
Three streams (Little Creek, Gold Creek, and an unnamed stormwater canal located approximately 700 feet east of Little Creek) cross through the study area. Additionally, approximately 0.25 acres of wetlands may be located within the study area adjacent to Little Creek. These three streams and the wetland are likely considered jurisdictional waters of the U.S. by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Two FEMA-mapped floodways and floodplains (Zone AE) associated with Little Creek and Gold Creek are also present.

Reviews of the Arkansas DEQ and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) databases showed eight Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste handler sites, one Toxic Release Inventory site, and 10 regulated storage tank sites (none with leaks) within or immediately adjacent to the study area. Five brownfields sites are reported within 0.25 miles of the study area. All of these sites have the potential to contain contaminated soil or groundwater that could be encountered during construction. A more detailed review of hazardous sites is suggested prior to any proposed ground disturbance.

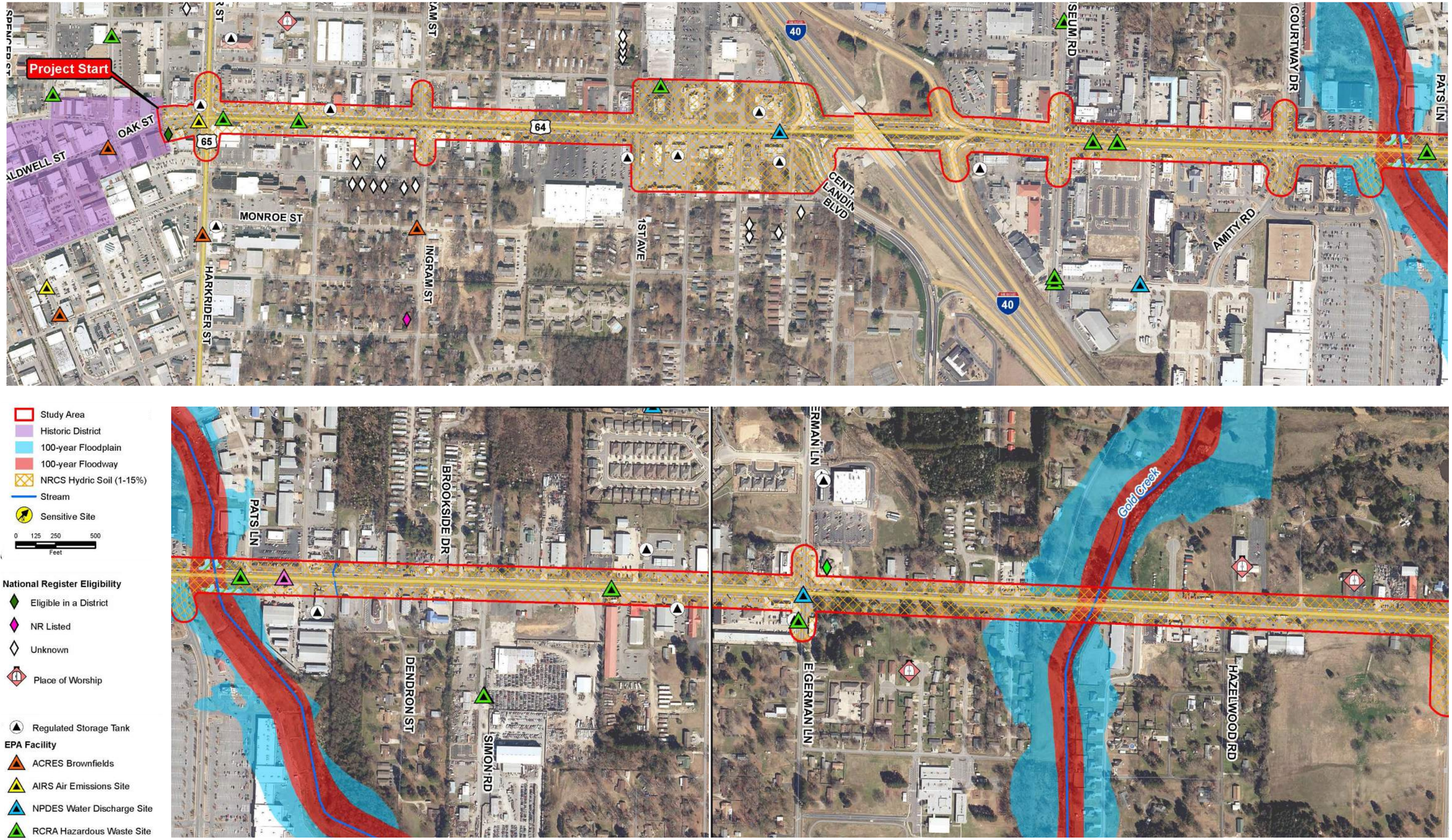
The desktop habitat review suggests habitat for at least three threatened or endangered species that may occur along the riparian zones of Little Creek and/or Gold Creek. Impacts to habitats important to these species would require further consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are present within the study area other historic properties that have not been previously identified may be present. Impacts to the parcels associated with these NRHP-eligible buildings may be considered an adverse impact. Coordination with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act would be required for any proposed improvements utilizing federal funding.

Based on data obtained from EPA's EJScreen tool, low-income or minority populations may be present in the study area, and a more detailed assessment of Environmental Justice populations may be warranted. Any proposed improvements utilizing federal funding would need to comply with Executive Order 12898, which directs federal agencies to avoid disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on low-income and minority populations, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act.



Environmental Assessment of Oak Street Corridor



Oak Street Ahead: The Plan

This section presents the concept plan for the Oak Street study area. It is divided into three parts:

- The philosophy of Corridor Urbanism that we have developed and describes our approach to the planning of urban corridors.
- A summary of the unifying elements of the plan. The summary is divided into six focus areas:
    - Transportation
    - Land Use
    - Development
    - City Quality
    - Implementation
- Annotated plan and perspective maps, corresponding to the four character segments identifies above, that provide specific illustrations of how these unifying ideas are expressed in the physical environment.

Corridor Urbanism

The concept of Corridor Urbanism was derived from our past work and thinking about commercial corridors in cities, and was first expressed as a coherent philosophy in the publication Tomorrow's Corridor: Rethinking 71B, developed by RDG and Garver for the City of Fayetteville. We believe its principles are highly appropriate for Oak Street and for other similar corridors across the country.

In our era, different philosophies of community design have grown in an attempt to redirect a prevailing pattern of urban development. New Urbanism developed "to offer alternatives to the sprawling, single-use, low-density patterns typical of post-World War II development, which have been shown to inflict negative economic, health, and environmental impacts on communities." The Village in Conway is a good example of a New Urbanist development and offers a highly appealing city environment. While less influential, a competing philosophy, "Landscape Urbanism," was presented as a response to New Urbanism's largely architectural approach by emphasizing landscape and open space as the desirable central organizing elements of cities and towns. Debates between these two philosophies have largely focused on density.

These urban philosophies and others have been very influential, even when not fully implemented. But the primary forces that shape urban form still tend to be transportation, technology, and markets. The dense forms of the traditional cities and towns, including traditional walkable districts like Downtown Conway, were generated by walking and public transportation as primary modes of travel. But ultimately, the technology and enormous market success of the automobile created the low-density development patterns and commercial corridors that New Urbanism seeks to replace.

Ultimately, many physical philosophies of urbanism tend to be utopian. When properly executed, they provide environments that are a delight and demonstrate principles of good design. But low-density development and the commercial strip are ubiquitous in many American cities, and these forms and their establishments generate other uses and service requirements that our current ideas of urbanism fail to address. The strip continues to challenge – specifically, how can we apply the compelling principles of contemporary urban design and land use philosophies to these cityscapes in general and to the Oak Street corridor in particular.

We find considerable insight in the classic 1972 volume *Learning from Las Vegas* by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour:

> **The commercial strip challenges the architect to take a positive, non chip-on-the-shoulder view. Architects are out of the habit of looking non-judgmentally at the environment because orthodox Modern Architecture is progressive, if not revolutionary, utopian and puristic; it is dissatisfied with existing conditions. Modern architecture has been anything but permissive. Architects have preferred to change the existing environment rather than enhance what is there.**

In *Learning from Las Vegas,* the authors take on the Las Vegas strip and other commercial corridors on their own terms, as environments that are "almost all right" rather than impositions on the environment that should be either transformed or rejected. This leads to an integrative approach when applied to corridors like Oak Street – the challenge to respect the corridor and its history and "enhance what is there" rather than trying to make it something else. We call this approach Corridor Urbanism.

The Strip as an Opportunity

Corridor Urbanism considers some of the intrinsic characteristics of the strip as the keys to making it a successful and sustainable environment. Like most other long commercial corridors, Oak Street uses land inefficiently, and the amount of its total area that is actually in its intended primary use (that is housing human enterprise and activity rather than the movement and storage of cars) is very small. On the other hand, the environmental footprint of the corridor is very high. Its current highway commercial zoning and transportation access are completely dependent on motor vehicles. Some of the operational aspects of the corridor, such as traffic delays at intersections also place cars in their least efficient mode. And large paved areas increase the volume and speed of urban runoff and increase impacts on the flow and water quality of the creeks that cross the corridor.

Yet the corridor's features and even some of its problems can also help evolve it into an urban environment with greater vitality and lower impact. Specifically:

- **Business and destination mix.** Even if they are dispersed and separated from one another, the eating and drinking places, shops, churches, service businesses, and offices are precisely the destinations that people want to live near.

- **Underused land.** Unnecessarily large parking lots, unused spaces between free-standing buildings, obsolete structures, vacant land, and underutilzed sites, grouped together, present major opportunities for new and different development and connections.

- **Integral open space.** Flood-prone areas that cross the corridor and the future Little Creek trail provide possibilities for catalyzing new, higher-density growth.

- **Street intersections and the I-40 interchange.** Space-intensive intersections and interchanges that now tend to separate parts of the corridor from each other can be re-imagined as bridges rather than barriers.

Corridor Enterprise as an Approach

The idea of Corridor Urbanism synthesizes the different roles of a street like Oak Street – a regional highway that moves traffic efficiently, a city street that provides access to individual businesses, a place where visitors stay overnight, a setting where people shop and eat, and a gateway into a city and its city center. Corridor Urbanism applied to Oak Street seeks to harmonize these sometimes conflicting roles, incorporating the mixed use, connectivity, street quality, density, and civic life components of New Urbanism; the structuring green space and greenway elements creeks, trails, and parks and recreational facilities, and the idea of understanding and planning and building within an active economic corridor where business is done. Corridor Urbanism is built on five broad categories of principles:

- **Reality and Respect**
- **Resident Population**
- **Opportunities**
- **Transportation Function and Choice**
- **Urban Environment**

REALITY AND RESPECT

Respect existing businesses and build on the character of the corridor.

The Oak Street corridor is a strong economic entity and preserving that economic life is a primary project objective. The corridor has provided further ground for new enterprises and displays a high degree of dynamism. It also is generating significant new commercial development. But it also includes establishments that many people would judge to be "gritty" and would not be seen as exemplars of quality urban design. However, these businesses also provide vital services to their customers and the community, and people earn their livings from them. Corridor Urbanism respects these businesses and encourages creative ways of enhancing their visual appearance and functional quality. It also recognizes that these uses can change over time as a city grows and areas that were once on the edge are increasingly at the center.

View change as evolutionary and generally market driven.

Cities and corridors are long-term processes. Oak Street is made up of over a hundred owners and businesses, all making individual decisions. The term "master plan," which implies a controlling presence, does not apply very well to such a diverse urban district. Change when it comes is and should be incremental and takes place over the long term.

Use this plan as a tool to guide that evolution.

On Oak Street, actual change will take place through individual decisions responding to markets, trends, and goals at the time. A plan provides a unifying framework for these individual decisions. Its concepts on private property illustrate general site and use guidelines; possibilities rather than specific redevelopment proposals; and proposed relationships between buildings and sites. The plan becomes somewhat more specific when it addresses public realm investments and the interface between the public and private environment. But this and other corridor plans should be viewed as organic and flexible, rather than static and "designed."

RESIDENT POPULATION

Gradually increase the number of people living on and around the corridor.

Residential development has been fundamental to downtown redevelopment and has the same relevance to commercial corridors. The easy availability of retail assets, eating and drinking places, and transportation, support housing of various densities. Housing adds neighborhood character generally lacking in single-use commercial strips. Further, when demand for brick and mortar commercial is declining, residential growth provides a great potential for reuse of surplus commercial sites. Finally, commercial corridors avoid the neighborhood opposition often faced by projects with higher residential densities. Neighborhoods, both old and new surround Oak Street, but are not well connected to its assets. But new residential on vacant or underused sites can help make that connection, create new customers for businesses, and have a positive impact on the housing market.

Work toward an environment where a growing population can comfortably walk, bike, or use other active modes to travel to corridor destinations.

While commercial corridors lack the intimacy of "traditional" business districts, mixing residential, commercial, office, and employment uses can create highly walkable and bikeable environments with supporting infrastructure such as good quality and comfortable walking and shared use paths and parallel routes for active transportation. The corridor's character can generate a large number of potential trips under one mile, making low-cost alternative modes feasible. We often think of corridors in terms of long-distance linear modes. But the short local trip is also a significant component, and diverting more of these trips to active modes creates real benefits.

Include a variety of housing types attainable by a range of people.

The concept of "attainable" housing requires diverse housing types that meet the needs of different people and household types. Housing around the Oak Street corridor should accommodate households with people of all ages, including the emerging market of families with young children.

OPPORTUNITY AND ORIENTATION

Take advantage of opportunities such as underused parking lots, vacant sites, obsolete buildings, and marginal uses.

Evolutionary change should occur naturally through voluntary action rather than disruption. But opportunity sites along Oak Street are abundant and can be used in ways that reinforce the existing commercial structure. For example, some parking lots have excess spaces, designed according to zoning requirements or other standards that have become less valid. Other businesses have insufficient or poorly located spaces. More efficient site design and shared access can open other development possibilities, and some uses are economically viable because of low land costs or rents. When buildings account for less than 15% of land coverage, a significant amount of land existing for increasing the use density of the corridor.

Develop new projects that fill gaps.

Low building coverage, a large vacant mobile home park, lack of relationships between buildings, and lack of connectedness create gaps in the continuity of a corridor. Gaps create opportunities, where new commercial, office, or residential development can connect to each other.

Increase the number of intersections and decrease the length of undifferentiated stretches of road and land use.

Corridors like Oak Street can be disorienting. West of I-40, the urban grid provides a number of intersections. But east of Little Creek, intersections are relatively few and hard to read. Even important destinations like the Event Center are easy to miss. This segments lacks clear intersecting street connections, landmarks, or nodes of different densities. Strategically located and visible street connections to Oak Street can reduce the number of individual curb cuts, improve wayfinding, and provide opportunities for landmarks and higher-density development nodes.

TRANSPORTATION FUNCTION AND CHOICE

Fix functional transportation problems, addressing capacity, access, and parking needs that exist today.

Most people travel to and along Oak Street and similar corridors by car, and are likely to do so in the future, although the nature of the vehicle might change. As we have seen, conflicts between local and through traffic, disorientation, lack of alternative links, and intersection delays can reduce safety, increase frustration, and ultimately hurt business. For example, some participants in the planning process said that they actually avoid Oak Street and use less direct routes because of the street's traffic flow issues. Addressing these issues creatively and continuing to provide an adequate supply of convenient and easy-to-use parking are critical, even as other modes of travel are introduced.

Create a web of streets and alternative routes.

One consistent problem with commercial corridors like Oak Street is a lack of local street connectivity and alternative routes. The result is a mix of local and through movements, frequent and sometime eccentric turning movements, and motorists traveling at a variety of speeds for a variety of purposes. A lack of local connectivity also separates the corridor from other neighborhoods and prevents development of adjacent development, like medium-density residential, that may not be appropriate along the strip but benefits from adjacency. A web of local streets that includes parallel circulators and cross-connections dramatically helps function and safety along the mainline by minimizing conflicts between through and local traffic streams, and provide routes to major locations that avoid the main corridor entirely. It also reduces the number of left turns required for access, an important safety enhancement. Additionally, it helps provide adjacent development possibilities that can reduce the need for auto travel and increase use of active modes.

Provide sidewalk and off-road, shared use path continuity to link present and future residents with each other and corridor stores, restaurants, workplaces, schools, and public space.

An important benefit of corridor urbanism is the ability to use alternative means (walking, biking, or "scootering") to travel from living places to other destinations within the corridor, or from other parts of the city to corridor destinations. Most of these internal trips will be less than two miles. This requires a complete barrier- and stress-free path network. Safe and comfortable sidewalk continuity along the corridor is a minimum requirement, Currently, sidewalks are present much of the corridor between Harkrider and Willis Way, along with the exception of a strategic gap between I-40 and Gum Street. However, these sidewalks are narrow and located along the back of curb, a very poor situation given the heavy truck traffic on Oak Street. Intersection ramps are often in poor repair, complicating pedestrian access.

Bicycle and micro-mobility facilities that provides direct access to destinations is also highly desirable. This can be especially desirable in Conway as it moves forward with implementing a citywide trail system with RAISE funds.

URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Build a quality environment that is rewarding to people traveling by different modes, from pedestrians at 3 mph to motorists at 45.

People experience urban corridors at different speeds and our visual perception of the physical environment changes with those speeds. Oak Street and most similar corridors are scaled to motorist speeds and lack the detail and quality necessary to engage pedestrians. Even an unattractive streetscape can be tolerable to drivers who have a relatively narrow cone of vision and will not be spending much time in any one location. The street environment then should be engaging at three basic speed levels: pedestrians (3 mph), scooters and bicycles (12 mph), and motorists. However, people at all speeds require nodes and visual rhythm that provide both interest and orientation along the street.

Be certain that the environment responds to the needs of both residents and businesses, and establishes a fabric based on connectedness.

Introduction of residential uses around a commercial environment advances the concept of corridor urbanism. Residential use fills in the gaps in commercial strips, provides interest and continuity, and furnishes a customer base for businesses. Yet, businesses and residents have individual requirements that are sometimes in conflict. Businesses need parking, exposure, identification signs, lighting, and service areas, while residents need urban fabric, calmer streets, landscape, walkways, and, for many, a reasonable level of peace. These conflicting needs lead to the physical separation and buffering of uses that are typical of single-use zoning districts. And this physical separation can defeat the idea of corridor urbanism.

Careful site planning and a sensitive regulating plan can address these different needs and avoid both extremes of injecting apartment buildings unceremoniously into parking lots and separating adjacent uses by walls and buffers. These techniques and regulations should provide connectedness without conflict through such techniques as:

- Using public environments like public open space, interior streets or drive aisles with a residential street character, and trail and greenway corridors to separate residential and commercial uses.

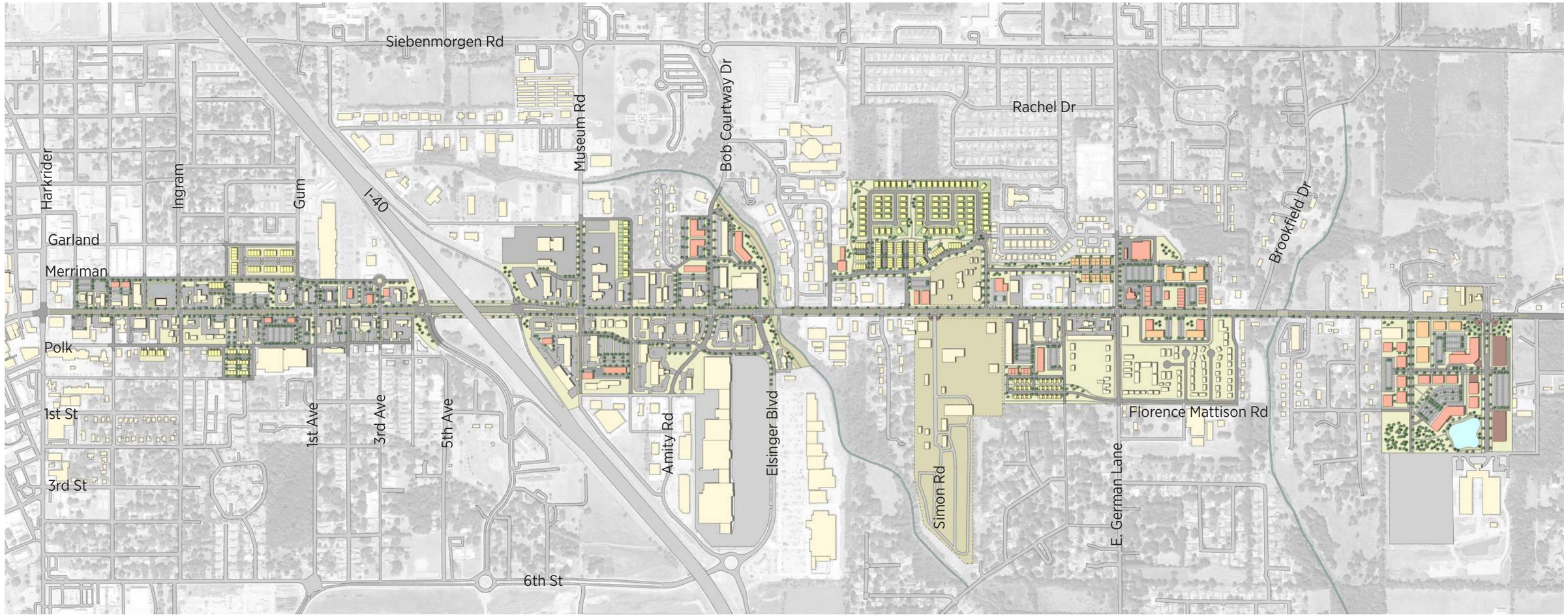
- Creating neighborhoods that cluster buildings that relate to surrounding commercial development but provide enough critical mass and common space to form an interior residential refuge.
- Orienting commercial and residential service areas toward each other, or locate commercial service areas in places that avoid impact on neighboring residential development.
- Placing lower-density residential farther away from the main street and close to pre-existing neighborhoods.
- Managing the size and visibility of commercial signage, focusing signage toward the main corridor.

Create personality, texture, and social space.

Traditional commercial strips developed as corridors to drive through or to a single destination. A few, like the Las Vegas strip or Ventura and Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, do create a unique image and sense of space, but most corridors are generic. Consequently, they rarely include public space or human-scaled elements. Corridor urbanism envisions the strip itself as a place, and part of that is achieved by creating individual character and amenity areas along the way.

On Oak Street, logical locations for these special places include trail access points, drainageways and flood zones, intersections, and right-of-way that is vacated by street realignments.

Overall Concept Plan



1 mile

- Existing Buildings
- Future Single Family Detached/Attached Residential
- Future Medium and High Density Residential
- Future Commercial or Mixed Use

Transportation

Intersection Improvement

Modify intersections to reduce delays.

Interruptions to traffic flow at intersections create both safety and business environment problems. A program of improvements to intersections – most frequently additional or longer turn lanes to reduce backups– is a high transportation priority.

Access Management

Reduce and align curb cuts for greater safety and clarity.

Frequent and misaligned driveway cuts create multiple points of conflicts, helping to catapult Oak Street's crash rate to three times that of similar street environments in Arkansas. The problem is especially serious in the western part of the corridor. The plan proposes aligning driveways wherever possible, eliminating unnecessary and duplicative curb cuts, and defining their width, where possible.

Parallel Service Streets

Provide more ways in and out for local traffic.

Parallel service streets, formed by upgraded and extending Polk and Merriman Streets west of I-40 and linking existing drives east of I-40, provide alternatives to Oak Street for local traffic. This reduces conflicts created by traffic moving at different speeds and purposes and reduces the number of necessary left turns.

Traffic Signal Redeployment

Relocate, add, or subtract signals to meet changing demands over time.

Suggested concepts include relocating the Faulkner Plaza signal to 1st Avenue in concert with extension of Merriman Street between Gum Street and 3rd Avenue; possible modification of the Amity and Elsinger intersections that align Elsinger and Bob Courtway Drive and making Amity a partial access street without a signal; and in the future, adding a signal with land adjacent to the Event Center site.

Active Transportation

Provide continuous sidewalks and shared use paths set back from street, trail integration and safer crossings.

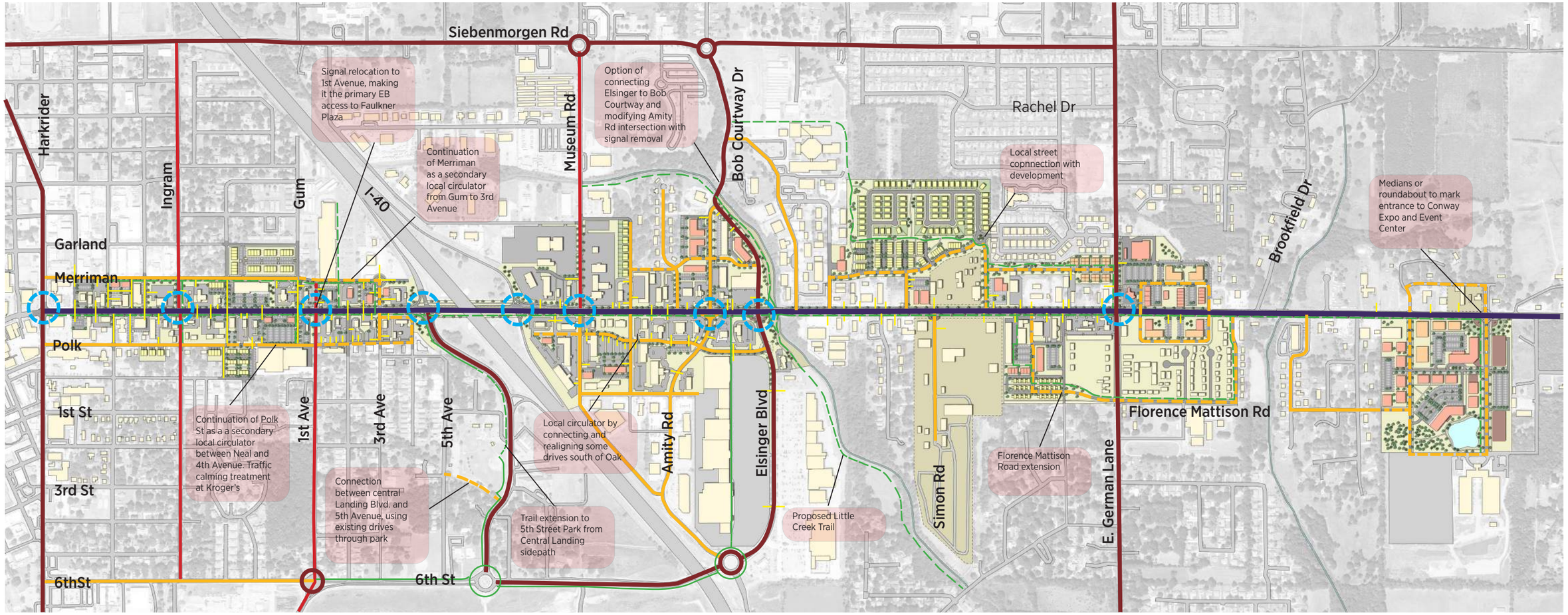
Safe and pleasant sidewalks along busy streets that people are comfortable with using are set back from curbs. The setback creates a more attractive street. Secondary streets and drive connections should also accommodate pedestrians. Bicycle access can be provided in a number of ways, including adaptation of low-volume parallel streets and shared use paths where possible. A sidepath along one side of Oak Street can provide local access to businesses from other trails that touch the corridor. Intersections should also provide highly visible crossings for active users.

Neighborhood Connectivity

Improve linkages to neighborhoods and major streets outside the corridor.

The plan recommends a number of initiatives to provide better access from neighborhoods to Oak Street. These include new street connections, emphasis and signalization of the 1st Avenue intersection, connection of Central Landing Boulevard to Fifth Street Park and adjacent neighborhoods, trails to Bob Courtway Middle School and City of Colleges Park, and extensions of Merriman and Polk Streets.

Proposed Area Transportation Network

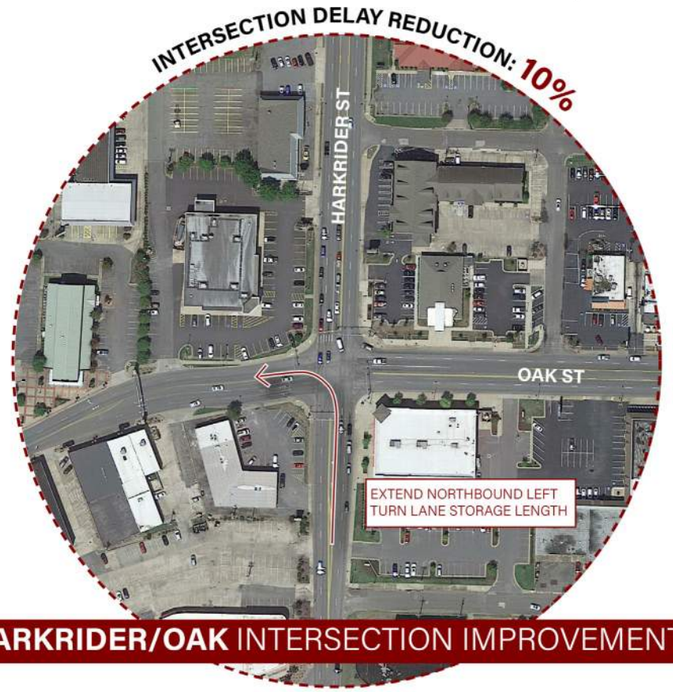


- Oak Street "Mainline"
- Arterial Streets
- Other MajorStreets
- Circulators
- Curb Cuts/Driveway Access
- Major Active Transportion Facilities
- Intersection Improvement Projects

Dashed lines are proposed facilities

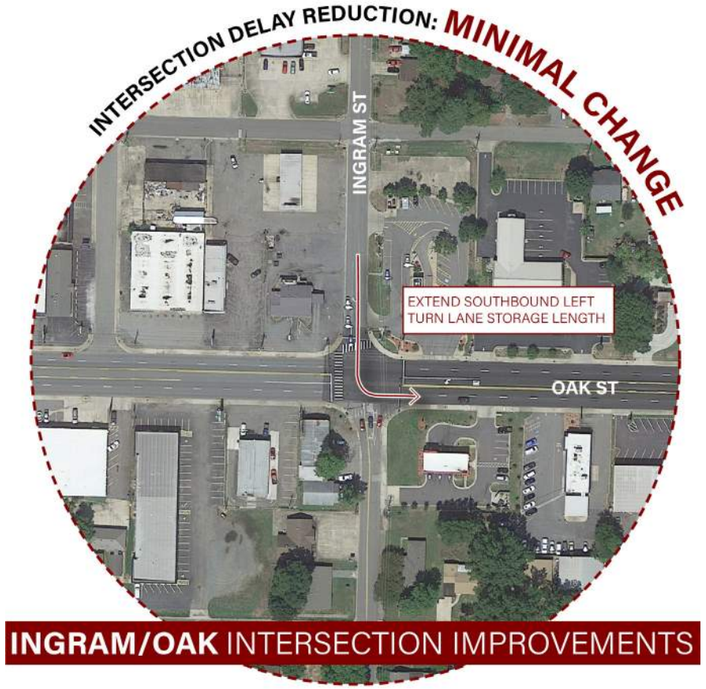
- Existing Buildings
- Future Single Family Detached/Attached Residential
- Future Medium and High Density Residential
- Future Commercial or Mixed Use
- Future Flex Buildings

Intersection Improvement Projects



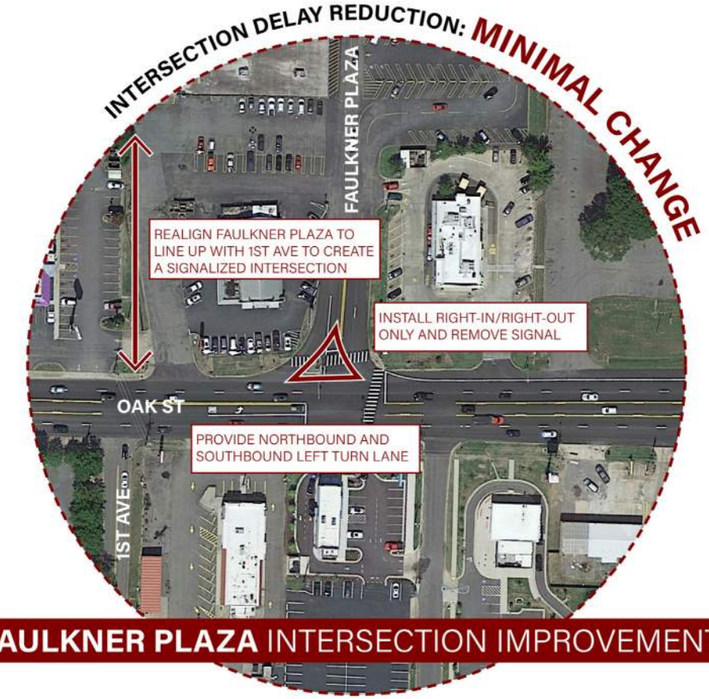
HARKRIDER/OAK INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Recommend extension of the northbound left turn lane storage length. This change is estimated to result in approximately a 10% reduction in delay at this intersection.



INGRAM/OAK INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

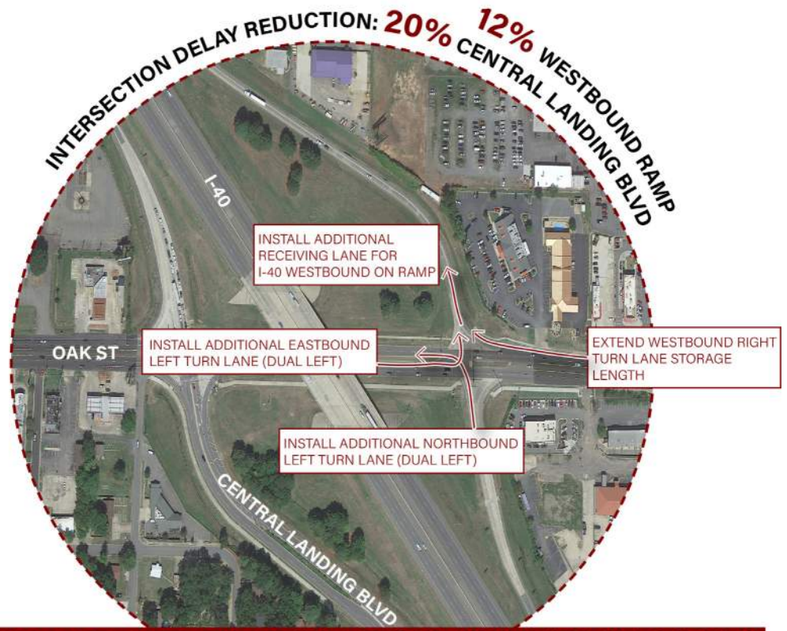
Recommend extension of the southbound left turn lane storage length. The existing roadway width can accommodate this extension so the only necessary improvements would be restriping. This change is estimated to result in a minimal reduction in delay at this intersection.



FAULKNER PLAZA INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

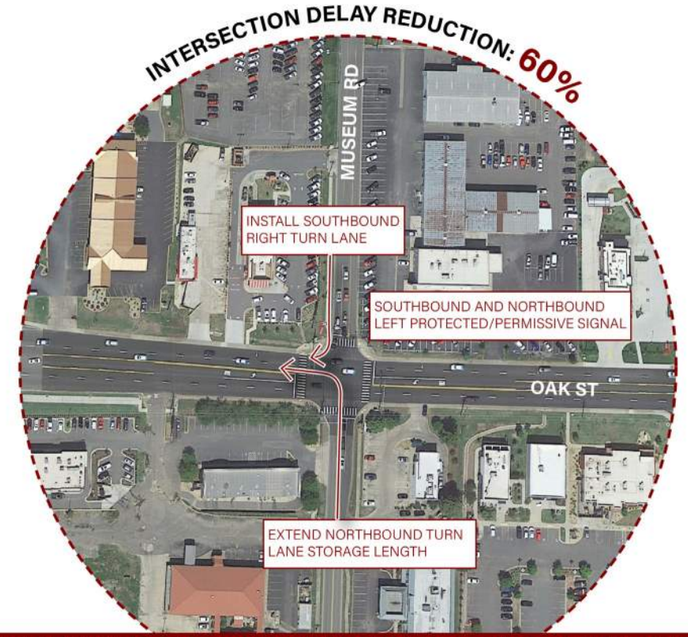
Recommend relocation of existing Faulkner Plaza signal to 1st Avenue and extension of Merriman Street from Gum Street to 3rd Avenue south of the Faulkner Plaza building. Primary access eastbound to Faulkner Plaza would be protected left turn from Oak Street to Merriman and new Merriman to the Plaza's parking lot. Primary westbound access would be at 3rd Avenue, serving both the shopping center and new development on Entergy site. Existing Faulkner Plaza access would be right-in/right-out. Alternatively, the drive could be removed and converted to greenway with pedestrian path from street.

Intersection Improvement Projects



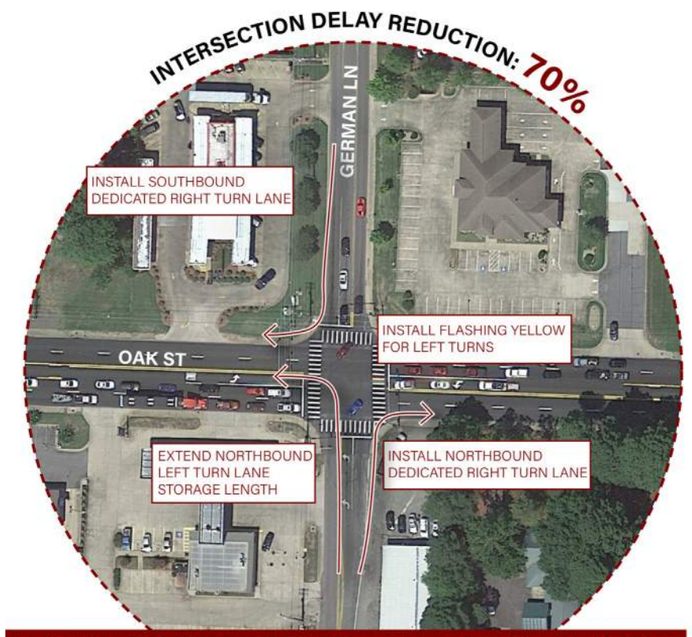
I-40 ON AND OFF-RAMP INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Restripe Oak Street to install an additional eastbound left turn lane to allow dual protected lefts. To accommodate these dual lefts, the I-40 westbound on-ramp would need to be widened to two lanes and tapered down to one line prior to merging with the mainlanes of I-40. Widen the westbound off-ramp to install an additional left turn lane to allow for dual lefts onto Oak Street from the off-ramp. Recommend extending the westbound right turn lane storage length on Oak Street. Estimated reduction in delay is approximately 20% reduction at the Central Landing Blvd. / Oak St. intersection and approximately a 12% reduction in delay at the I-40 westbound ramps and Oak St. Intersection.



MUSEUM RD/OAK INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

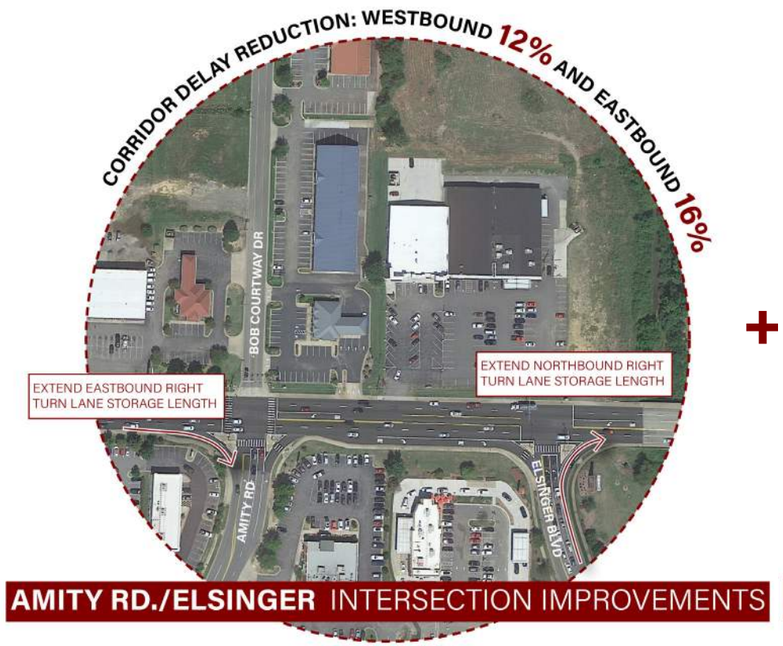
Recommend installing a southbound right-turn lane and extending the northbound left-turn lane storage length. Recommend applying permitted/protected signalization for the southbound and northbound left-turn movements. These changes are estimated to result in approximately a 60% reduction in delay at this intersection.



GERMAN LN INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Recommend installing a southbound right-turn lane and a northbound right turn lane. Recommend extending the northbound left-turn lane storage length. Recommend installing a flashing yellow arrow for all left-turn movements. These changes are estimated to result in approximately a 70% delay reduction at this intersection.

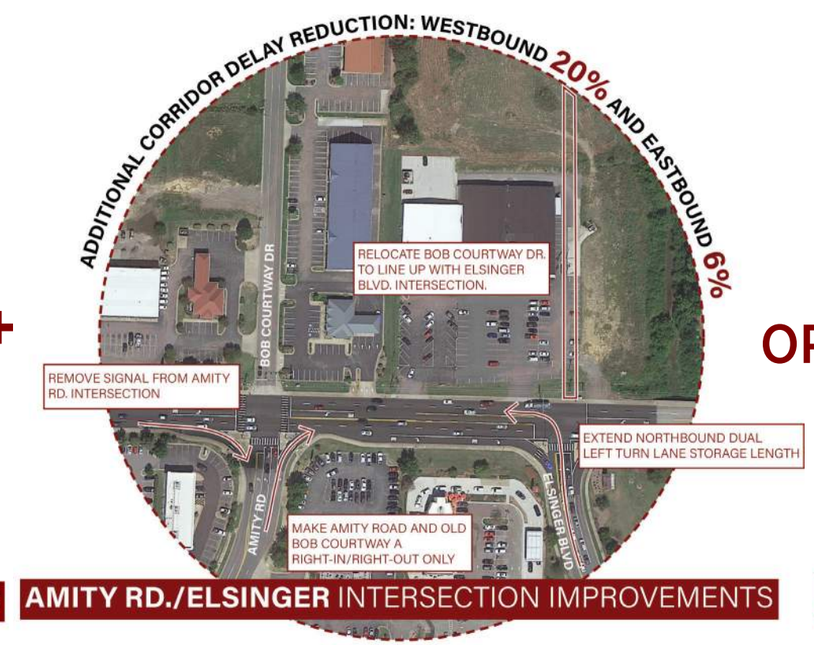
Intersection Improvement Projects



OPTION 1

Recommend extending the eastbound right-turn lane storage length at the Amity Road /Oak Street Intersection. Recommend extending the northbound right-turn lane storage length on Elsinger Blvd. These changes are estimated to result in a reduction in corridor delay between these two intersections of approximately 12% in the westbound direction and 16% in the eastbound direction.

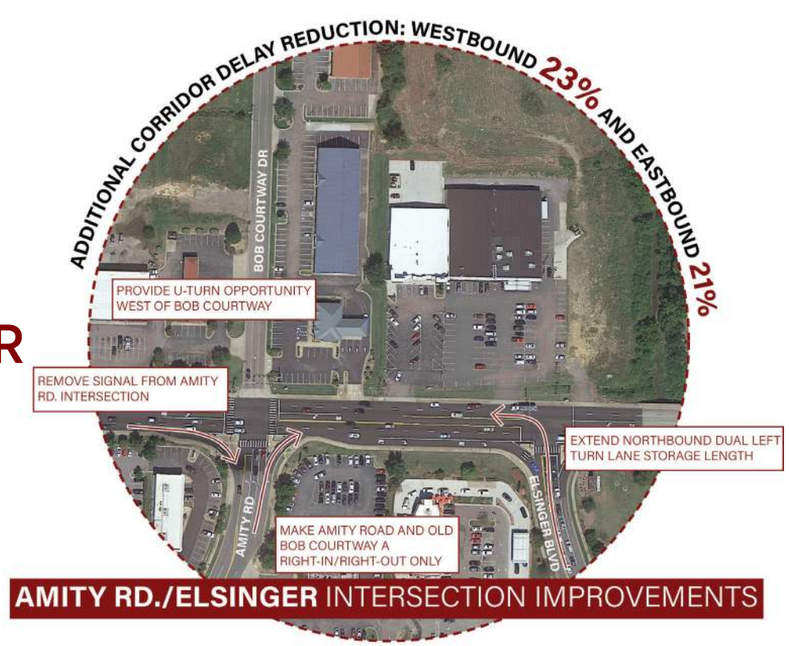
+



OPTION 2

Option 2 would make the improvements described in Option 1, but would also realign Bob Courtway Drive to tie with Elsinger Boulevard converting the intersection from three-leg to four-leg. This realignment would allow the traffic signal at the Amity Road intersection to be removed and the intersection to be converted to a right-in/right-out only. The additional left turns that are diverted to Elsigner Boulevard will require the dual left turn lane storage length to be increased. These changes are estimated to result in an additional reduction in corridor delay between these two intersections of approximately 20% in the westbound direction and 6% in the eastbound direction when compared to Option 1.

OR



OPTION 3

Option 3 would make the improvements described in Option 1, but would also install a left-in/right-in/right-out only (J-turn) at Bob Courtway Drive/Amity Road to restrict northbound and southbound through and left-turn movements. This would allow the signal at this intersection to be removed. Vehicles heading west and north from Amity Road will be diverted to Elsinger Boulevard. Vehicles heading south and east from Bob Courtway Drive will have to make a right turn at Oak Street followed by a U-turn at a designated mid-block location. The additional left turns that are diverted to Elsigner Boulevard will require the dual left turn lane storage length to be increased. These changes are estimated to result in an additional reduction in corridor delay between these two intersections of approximately 23% in the westbound direction and 21% in the eastbound direction when compared to Option 1.

Land Use

Respect for Existing Businesses

Create a supportive environment for existing establishments

Corridor urbanism's first principle is "Reality and Respect." Existing businesses on a commercial corridor have parking, loading, and circulation needs and these requirements must be accommodated successfully. Changes that can create better traffic management and a more attractive street environment for all users can also improve the function of existing uses. The plan strives to provide a solution for every change proposed for the street and public environment. The plan also recognizes that automobile-oriented businesses, including car sales, auto parts, and salvage are major parts of the corridor's current economy. However, these can be consolidated over time and located in a specific district that can improve operations and convenience for both business owners and customers.

More Housing

Increase resident population around the corridor

Oak Street has many features within potential walking or easy bicycling distance of existing and potential residents, including major retailing, restaurants, services, food stores, schools, and recreational facilities. Using open sites to increase this walking distance population is both good for adjacent businesses and good for potential residents who would have convenient access to these services. These sites can also accommodate higher density housing that speaks to affordability but often engenders opposition within lower density areas. Therefore, residential development can be primary use on both large developable sites and infill lots.

Evolution in Land Use

Accommodate gradual changes in the market

Oak Street's role in the city has changed as Conway changes. Parts of the corridor that attracted edge of city uses are now more central to different types of development. In addition, new neighborhood development on large sites around Oak Street will create demand for more retail and consumer-oriented uses along the corridor. The plan recognizes market evolution without advocating displacement of existing establishments.

Buffering

Buffer potentially conflicting land uses, using buffers productively

While mixing land uses has been a staple of contemporary planning philosophy, some uses do not mix well. Uses that involve open storage, dismantling of automobiles, and related uses require horizontal separation and vertical screening from adjacent lower-intensity areas. But these buffers can be used productively, increasing usable open space and the potential for connectivity. They can provide trail links from neighborhoods to Oak Street, neighborhood greenways and parks, wildlife corridors, and other benefits, and should be viewed as productive contributors to the fabric of communities.

Regulating Plan

Modify land development regulations to encourage desirable outcomes.

Existing commercial and industrial zoning along Oak Street does not reflect the potential and changing nature of the street. The plan outlines changes that use zoning as a tool to achieve desirable outcomes, rather than being an obstacle that must be surmounted. Changes will encourage residential uses at various densities; limitations on the expansion of high-impact existing uses adjacent to existing or potential residential development areas; better signage controls; street yard landscaping; driveway access to Oak Street; pedestrian access from sidewalks to building entrances; and buffering and screening requirements between potentially incompatible uses.

Growth and New Development

Four Major Focuses

Identify four character focuses future development and redevelopment

As discussed earlier, the study corridor logically divides into four segments, each of which has specific land use and scale character. Each of these segments include areas for new development, described in general terms in this section. These segments are:

- Harkrider to I-40, connecting Downtown to the interstate.
- I-40 to Little Creek, incorporating a concentration of hospitality uses and the city's largest retail center.
- Little Creek to Gold Creek, in transition for the edge of the city to more typical consumer-oriented commercial development.
- The Event Center district, Gold Creek to Hart Lane.

Harkrider to Interstate 40

Use infill development opportunities for new residential and commercial development in this Downtown Gateway segment.

This primarily built-up segment nevertheless has significant possibilities for new development on opportunity sites. These include:

- Merriman Street. Deteriorating houses on the south side of the street provide a opportunities for infill commercial between Factory and Lincoln. The most likely use will be trade or wholesale uses, consistent with the limited industrial character of adjacent uses to the north. East of Neal Street, future redevelopment of the existing older mobile home park with affordable, infill attached housing would upgrade the area's housing quality. This site could accommodate about 40 new rowhomes.
- Entergys site. This site on the west edge of the Faulkner Plaza parcel and including Oak Street frontage, should be used for retail or hospitality commercial. Principal access would be the redesigned 1st Avenue/Merriman Street/3rd Avenue system.
- Polk Street. The south side of Polk Street has available sites for medium density residential infill . An open site west of the Kroger supermarket Neal Street provides a location for up to 20 new units in rowhome configuration.
- The redesign of the Kroger parking lot and use of Oak Street frontage could provide two new, street-oriented pad sites.

I-40 to Little Creek

Develop infill sites that have been skipped over and new possibilities for trail-oriented development along Little Creek.

While this segment differs in scale from Oak Street west of I-40, it is also largely built up, here with hospitality and large-scale commercial development. Important opportunities include:

- Infill commercial sites between I-40 and Bill Dean Drive. Two of these sites accommodate small free-standing buildings, while a third is large enough for an additional hotel or multi-tenant commercial project.
- Trail-oriented development. Trail corridors can be major development catalysts, and the planned Little Creek Greenway can open sigificant sites on either side of Bob Courtway Drive for mixed use development, combining multifamily residential with commercial and/or office use sized appropriately for market demands.

Little Creek to Gold Creek

Major development areas along this segment can fill gaps by creating new neighborhoods.

This segment, with the East German Lane node ai ts approximate center, presents rich opportunities for major new development. These sites, largely vacant now, will fill major gaps in the city fabric and reinforce population and business growth in this evolving growth sector. Major sites include:

- The now vacant Brookside mobile home park site between Jim's Lane and The Crossing residential development. The site concept illustrated in the plan includes new Oak Street and East German Lane access, a trail network connecting to other parts of the study area, Bob Courtway Middle School, and City of Colleges Park, and a 150-unit mix of single-family and townhome/rowhome residential.
- Infill and future new development along Oak Street and East German. Several sites along Oak Street could accommodate new or upgraded commercial buildings. In addition, the some of the automotive-oriented uses directly south of the neighborhood development opportunity discussed above might change organically over time with greater demand for new commercial types. Finally, a site south of The Crossing along East German could support new infill residential. The concept illustrated in the plan calls for single-level 4-plex "pinwheel" buildings, a development model well suited for independent older adult households.
- Small Towne Shoppes site. The south part of this unique small shopping center is largely unused, and provides a location for new commercial on the south side of a redesigned parking lot. This plan's concept shows the balance of the site used for single-family semi-attached homes, another model that can provide affordable ownership housing by combining the savings of attached units with the individuality of detached homes. This mixed

Contemporary attached units with built-in auxiliary dwelling units and modern affordable rowhomes at the Highlander development in Omaha, NE.

Possible Little Creek development types. *From top: Multifamily buildings with convertible commercial or residential space at street level; trail-oriented development in Minneapolis.*

use development would be linked to Florence Mattison Elementary School by a new street link and would be connected to the primarily retail CrossRoads Center.

- Harp's Site. The Harp's supermarket is a major anchor at the developing East German commercial node. Vacant land around the store can be developed with horizontal - mixed use – commercial and office near Oak Street, with residential and/or office uses farther off the main corridor. Major circulation is internal, with the possibility of a new signalized access at the eastern edge of the development. This would limit the current primary access to right-in right-out movement, minimizing an existing traffic conflict.
- South Quadrant. An available vacant site directly across from Harp's is envisioned as a mixed use project, with multifamily residential to the south of the parcel and commercial extending north toward Oak Street. A greenway and trail buffer would provide a functional separation and pedestrian connectivity for the adjacent residential area.
- Simon Road Special Use District. Building on the LKQ Preferred Auto development, Simon Road is evisioned as an automotive salvage and parts district, with street features that identify it as the major destination that it is. The district would have specific boundaries with room for growth and would ultimately provide space to consolidate smaller operations now located along Oak Street as land use markets along the main corridor itself continue to evolve.

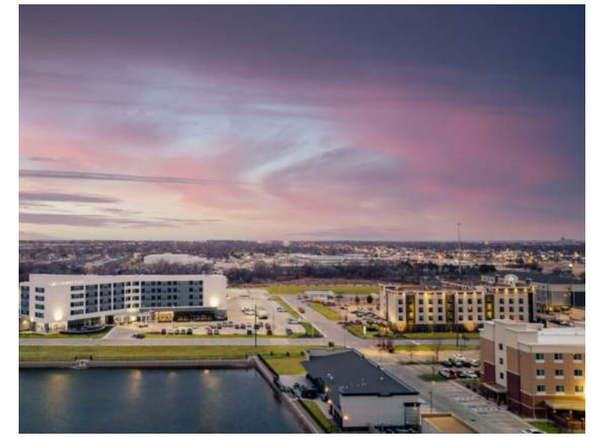
The Event Center: Gold Creek to Hart Lane

Develop the land around the Conway Expo and Event Center as a multipurpose attraction that makes the center a major regional venue.

The Conway Expo and Event Center is an excellent facility that could benefit from and catalyze future development. Its deep setback from the street makes the facility hard to see from Oak Street. But the land can also be an enormous asset. The superb Younes Campus off Interstate 80 in Kearney, Nebraska is a larger scale site, but is an excellent model for the synergy that can be built around a strategically located event and conference center away from a metropolitan area.

Semiattached homes. *These units illustrate the concept suggested for the south of the Small Towne Shoppes site.*

Commercial/residential mixed use concept. *This idea is appropriate for sites on the east side of the East German node.*



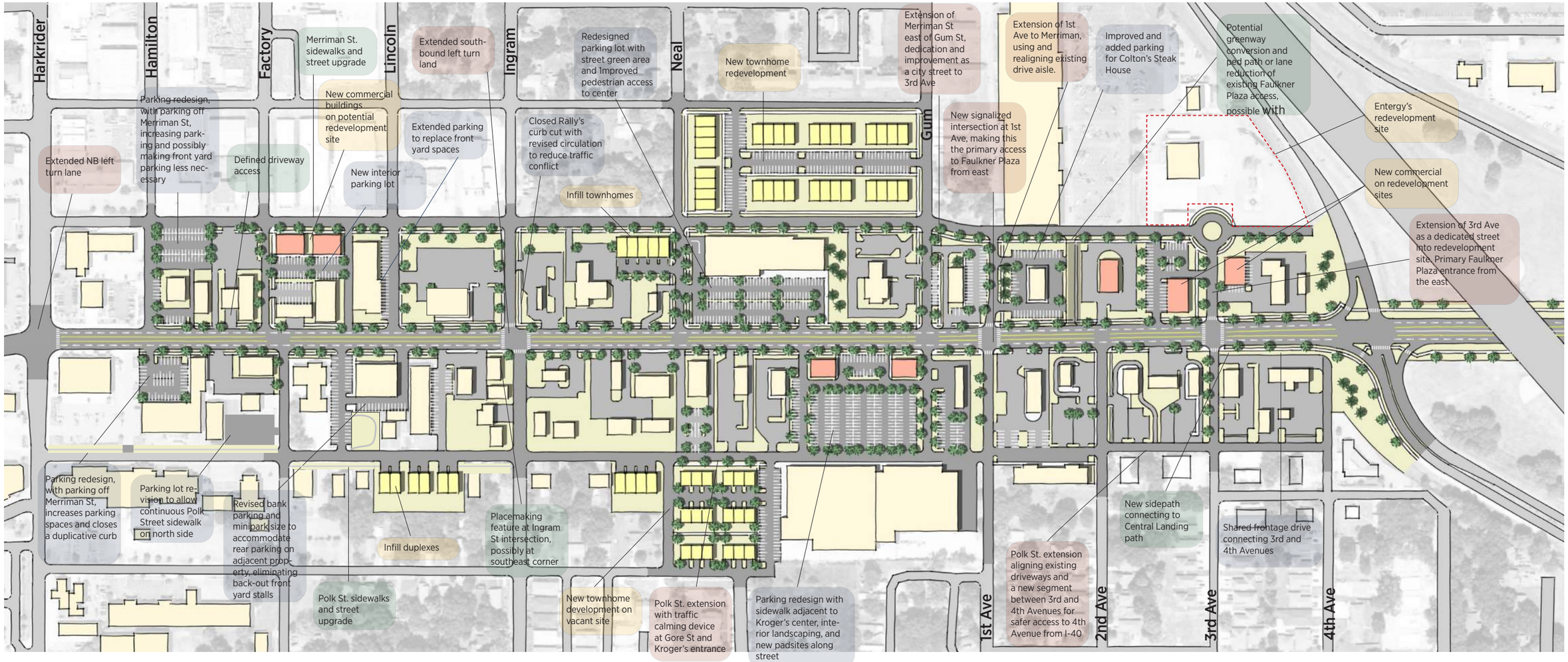
Younes Campus in Kearney, Nebraska *While larger than the Conway Event Center, this very successful facility shows how event facilities, hotels, amenities, and restaurants can create a regional and statewide event market.*

The concept illustrated in this plan envisions two hotels, a restaurant row, small footprint multifamily buildings, and flex office/innovation buildings in a walkable environment that also includes a small detention feature and preservation of on-site trees as a natural, more contemplative refuge away from more intensive uses. The idea is to create a unique environment that attracts markets from around the state and complements facilities in Little Rock and Fayetteville.

The following pages display annotated conceptual plans for each of these character segments. The illustrations are designed to show an expression of the guiding principles of the plan. The plan recognizes that actions in the corridor are voluntary and there are other solutions that are also consistent with the general ideas discussed here.

Land Use and Development: Harkrider to I-40

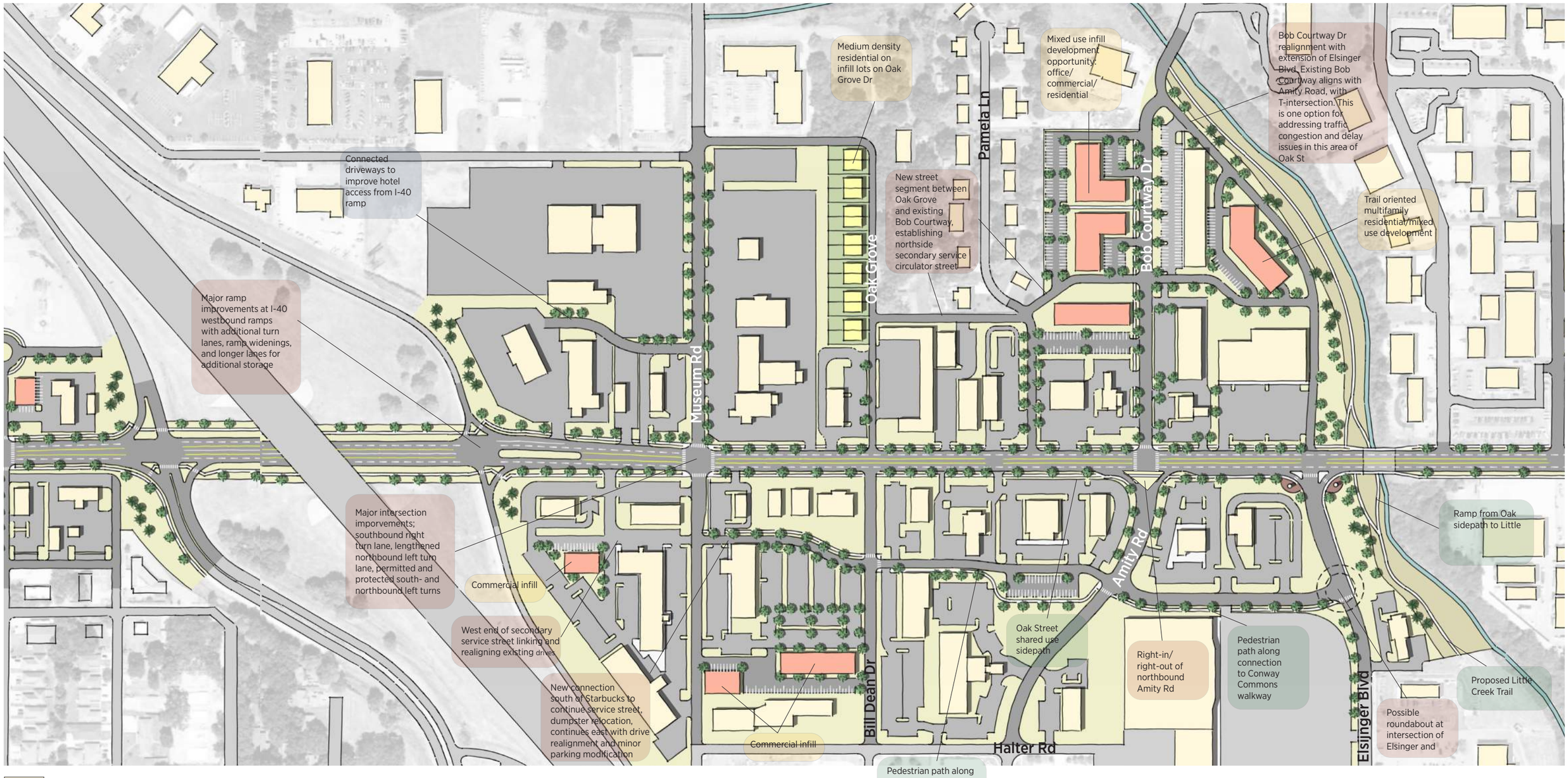
Land Use and Development: Harkrider to I-40



- Existing Buildings
- Future Single Family Detached/Attached Residential
- Future Medium and High Density Residential
- Future Commercial or Mixed Use

Land Use and Development: I-40 to Little Creek

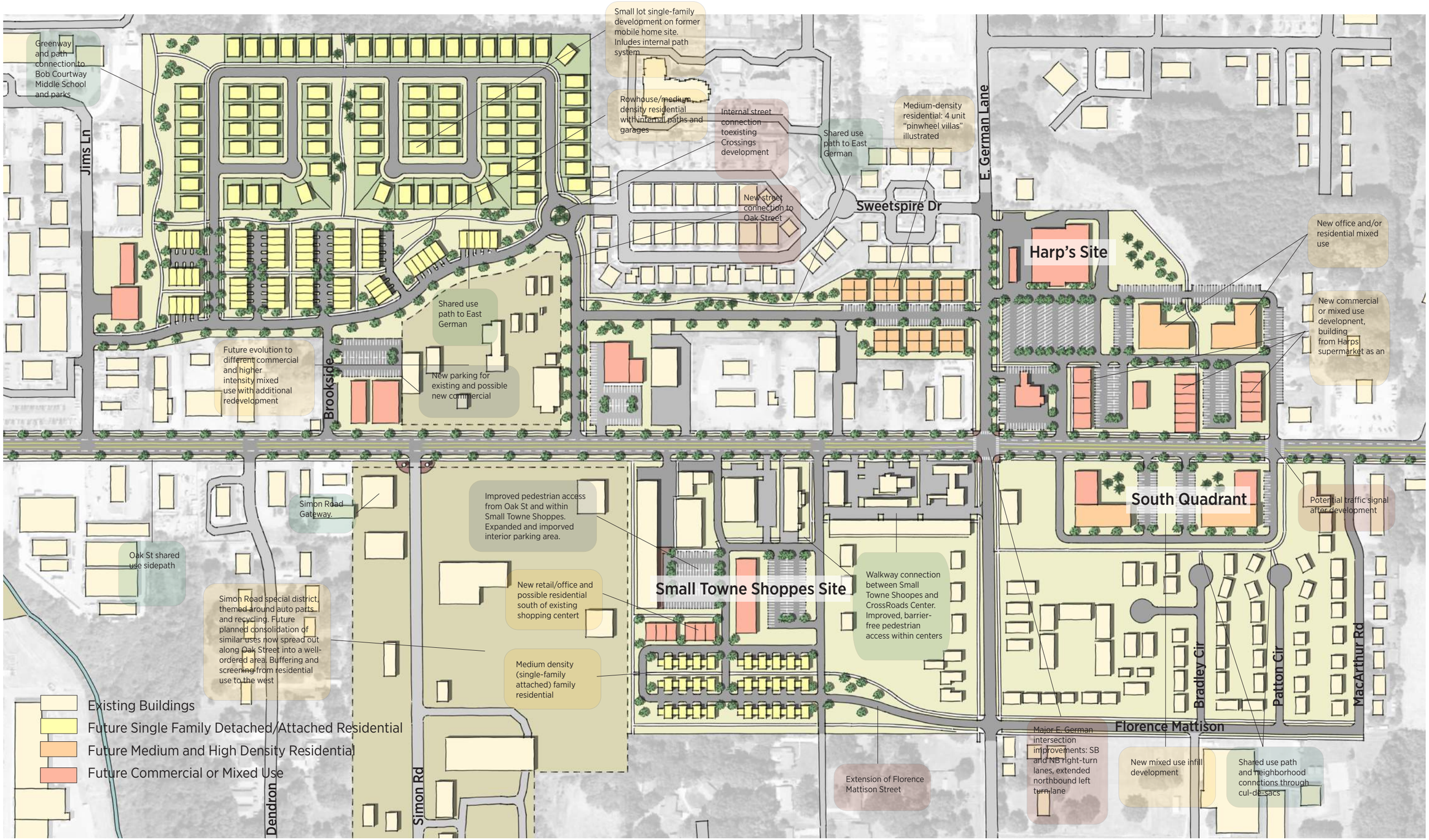
Land Use and Development: I-40 to Little Creek



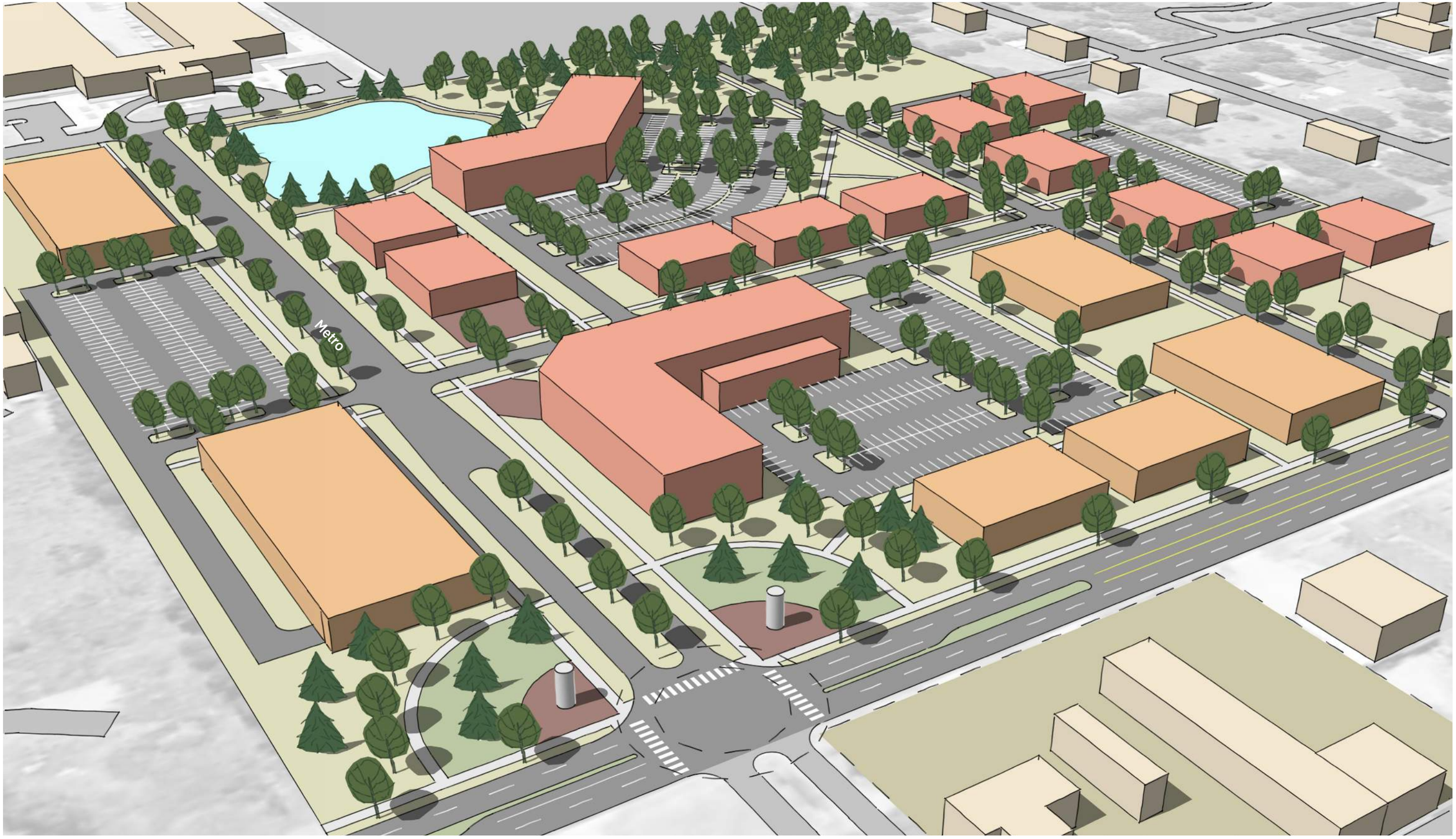
- Existing Buildings
- Future Single Family Detached/Attached Residential
- Future Medium and High Density Residential
- Future Commercial or Mixed Use

Land Use and Development: Little Creek to Gold Creek

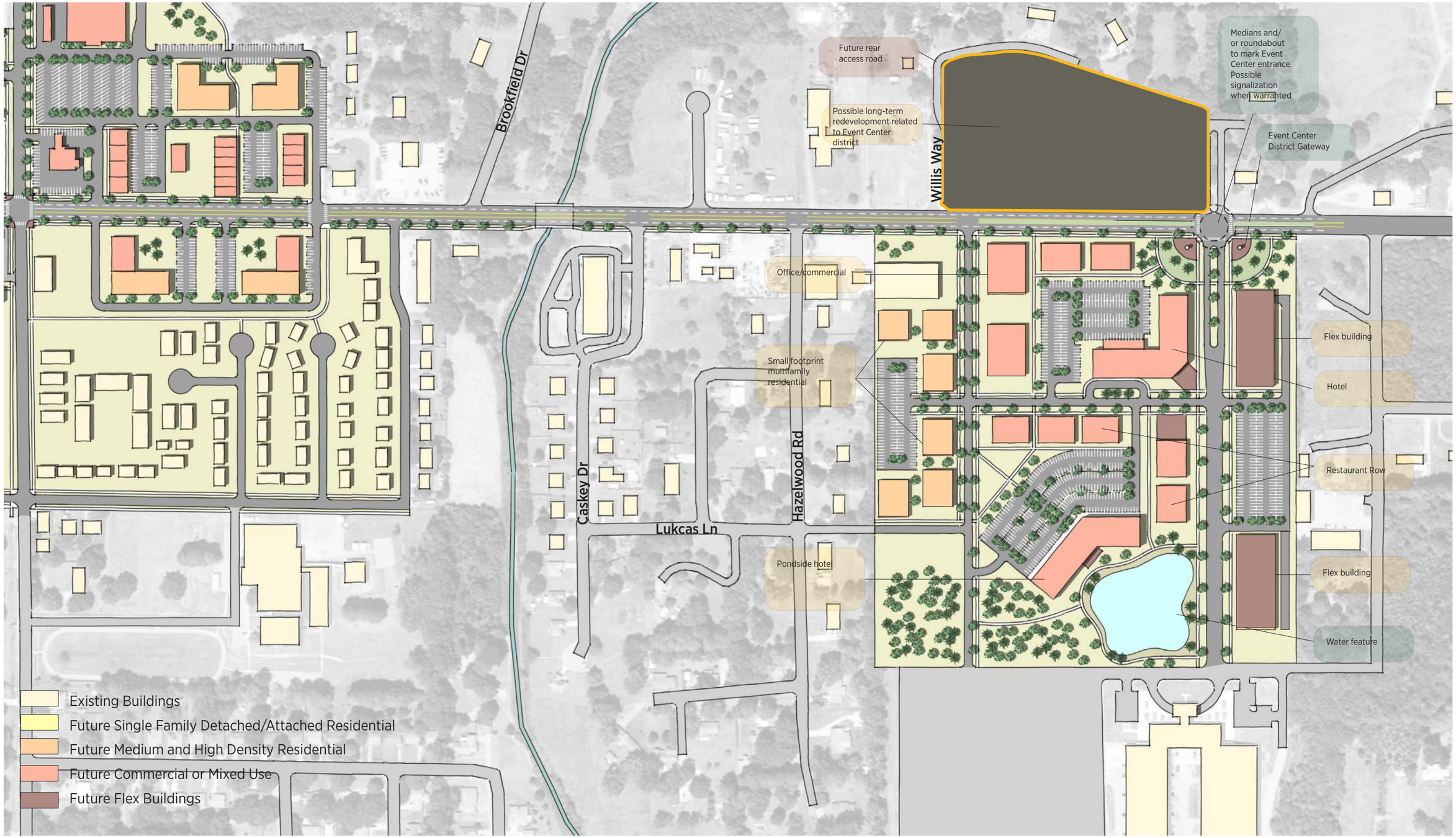
Land Use and Development: Little Creek to Gold Creek



Event Center: Gold Creek to Hart Lane



Event Center: Gold Creek to Hart Lane



City Quality

Green Corridor

Provide green space in street front yards (or streetyards) where feasible without losing parking.

Most participants believe that Oak Street presents a harsh city environment because of the street's lack of trees and landscaping. The city has attempted to address this with new urban design guidelines and newer projects have complied with them. However, many existing developments have excessively large parking or paved areas, many of which are not functionally necessary but are viewed as being easily maintainable. But sometimes, businesses simply need the customer and functional convenience streetyard parking.

Oak Street should provide a green corridor wherever possible. Redesign of parking lots can provide some level of landscaping and buffering from the street even in constrained areas. And some of the transportation improvements proposed in the plan can reduce the need for streetyard parking. The ultimate solutions may not be perfect, and should be tailored to individual site and business needs, but solutions exist in most cases that can create a better overall environment.

Quality Functional Streetscape

Create a more attractive and comfortable basic street environment for all users.

This starts with a functional transportation need–providing space and basic facilities that welcome people using human powered transportation. In addition to the basic purpose of keeping places safe and accessible, human-scaled features in a commercial corridor make the street more physically attractive. Thus well-designed, adequately wide sidewalks and paths add a level of space and generosity that make the environment better for everyone, including businesses. Sidewalk and path setbacks from the curb, proposed in this plan, add another layer of separation from trucks and fast-moving automobiles and provide possibilities for detail in paving and landscaping.

Conway has used attractive lighting to identify new projects and should standardize on extending these thematic fixtures throughout the corridor. More pedestrian scaled lighting, consistent with this overall design, may also be used at certain locations along the street. Lighting standards may also be used to communicate a corridor image and brand through banners and street graphics.

The street section concepts in the plan illustrate desirable dimensions and locations for functional facilities like walkways. These will not be achievable in constrained areas, but they can apply in most parts of Oak Street.

Placemaking

Introduce features at strategic locations that increase amenity and improve image.

The arch on Oak Street marking the entrance into Conway's historic downtown establishes a sense of place and communicates entry into a special place. But Oak Street along with most other urban corridors in America does not communicate this idea of being distinctive and different. Special features at strategic locations can help establish this concept of place and create nodes or centers that break the monotony of the street environment. These features can include gateways, public art installations, a major lighting installation, urban design features, gardens or plantings, and a variety of other treatments.

Nodes and opportunities for placemaking features along Oak Street can include:

- Harkrider, possibly emphasizing continuity with downtown
- Ingram Street
- Upgraded 1st Avenue intersection
- Area around the I-40 ramps
- Elsinger and the future Little Creek Trail
- The Simon Road special use district at Simon Road
- East German
- The Event Center entrance
- Carefully located medians where left turns are either not required or not desired

Utilities

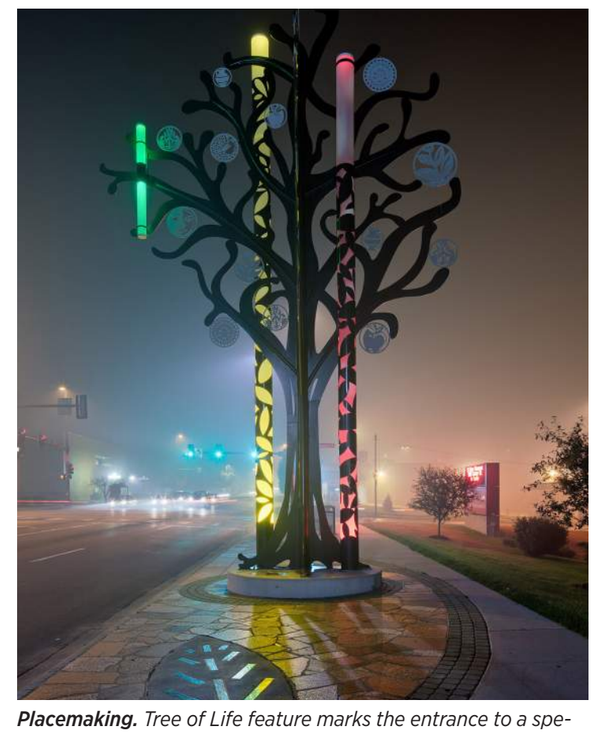
Work with the Conway Corporation to relocate or consolidate overhead wires.

Unless technologies change dramatically in the distant future, electrical distribution systems will be with us to power our homes and businesses. Along Oak Street, these are a source of visual clutter. This has led some communities to put main utilities underground, and buried utilities have a number of advantages, both visual and functional. However, it is also very expensive. Working with the utility on ways to rationalize power supply, find more attractive poles, and relocate overhead wires to lower impact parallel routes can provide visual benefits at lower cost. This will also have impact on how well small cell is implemented.

Redesignating US 64

Consider the possibility of removing the US 64 designation between I-40 and Harkrider Street.

Federal highway designation brings state standards into play, which are not always appropriate in urban settings. They also limit local flexibility and the ability to create better looking streets with lower traffic speeds in dense city districts. One of these standards is a prohibition of street trees within nine feet of the edge of pavement. Applying this standard to new projects in Conway has actually produced excessively wide paved areas in some places and tends to promote higher speeds overall. The city should consider working with ArDOT or rerouting the US 64 designation to I-40 around the city to provide greater flexibility toward improving the character of Oak Street as it transitions into Downtown.



Placemaking. *Tree of Life feature marks the entrance to a special business district.*

Lanes can be reduced to 11' to accommodate raised medians and pedestrian refuge.

Lanes can be reduced to 11' to accommodate raised medians and pedestrian refuge.

Oak Street, East of I-40

Oak Street, West of I-40

Oak Street, Harkrider to Ingram

Normal Condition and With Gateway Median

Lanes can be reduced to 11' to accommodate raised medians and pedestrian refuge.

Lanes can be reduced to 11' to accommodate raised medians and pedestrian refuge.

Merriman Street

Ingram to 3rd Ave

Harkrider to Ingram

Implementation

Regulating Plan

Modify land development regulations to encourage desirable outcomes.

While the Land Use section addressed land development regulations, their importance as an implementing tool is worth repeating. Zoning and other land use regulations do not by themselves make positive things happen, but they can help steer things in good directions. The Hippocratic Oath can certainly be applied to development regulations: DO NO HARM. Sometimes even well-meaning regulations place obstacles in the way by preventing desirable land uses, failures of imagination, and becoming unnecessarily complex, confusing, and difficult to understand. They can identify and enforce priorities such as street landscaping and buffering, but must also be applied with sensitivity to existing contexts. This section includes an analysis of Conway's current zoning regulations applied to Oak Street and recommended directions for modification.

Strategic Public Investment

Focus on public projects that address practical problems and encourage a positive private investment.

The late Alexander Garvin, the renowned planner (and teacher and mentor of one of the writers of this document) defined good successful planning as "public action that generates a sustained and widespread private market reaction which improves the quality of life of the affected community, thereby making it more attractive, convenient, and environmentally healthy." That is a focus of this document and the priority tables that follow in this section. This can be applied in different ways. For example, there are people who would not consider intersection improvements to be a particularly wise use of money. But we note that this was a top priority of the people who cared enough about the future of Oak Street to participate in this process. Indeed, if traffic delays, inconveniences, and appearance are sufficient to cause people to avoid using the corridor, addressing those problems rises dramatically in strategic importance. The art is in making those without detracting from the needs of other users.

Voluntary Private Actions

Provide ideas for changes in site design and access that make Oak Street better for everyone. However, execution depends on private initiatives, possibly combined with public incentives.

The public sector can act in the public realms – streets, sidewalks, trails, parks, and infrastructure. But it cannot force people to modify their parking lots, plant trees, or build new neighborhoods. In the private sector, people must see that a project provides benefit to them that outweighs the cost. Sometimes that benefit is the satisfaction of doing something that brings delight to other people or is good for the common interest. It is evident that many people in Conway think that way. But it also must make sense and offer benefits which are often functional or economic. An attractive Oak Street is a nice thing to have, but it's also going to be good for business. Often public incentives are needed to encourage people to do good things -- and an enterprise like Oak Street Ahead will be a partnership that involves both the public and private sector.

Creative Funding and District Thinking

Effective funding and implementation will require people to think together for a common purpose.

In successful urban districts, people understand a common interest. That's why two restaurants in an area are better than one, and four are better than two. Strong downtowns like Conway's understand the importance of common action and district thinking. But along linear corridors, that level of thinking is less common. Businesses are more separated and think more about their individual needs. But we can think on two levels at once. Some actions identified in this plan will take cooperative action and even cooperative financing. And even on commercial strips, an increasing number of businesses and property owners are aware of this in such areas as maintenance, advertising, events, and capital improvements.

Many of the projects identified in the plan are funded through public source – bonding, state and federal transportation programs, philanthropic contributions, and similar sources. But there is a role for cooperative action. Business improvement districts, where special assessments are used for a number of purposes, are an example of this kind of cooperative thinking. Downtown Conway has used a device in Arkansas statutes called Central Business District Improvement Districts. The western part of the Oak Street corridor could be viewed as an extension of Downtown -- the avenue that ties the city center to the location that most visitors arrive at. This device could be extended to Oak Street. But all of this requires voluntary agreement and the power of common action. We hope that this plan has articulated the ideas that many people have talked to us about and will help others see the possibilities.

Corridors and common action. *Thee corridors that have transformed their private business environments by recognizing common purpose. From top: Grand Island, NE, Coralville, IA, and Shawnee, KS. There are many more.*

Existing Zoning and Regulating Plan

This chapter establishes principles and recommendations for a regulatory program that will help move toward the mixed-use corridor urbanism.

Existing Zoning

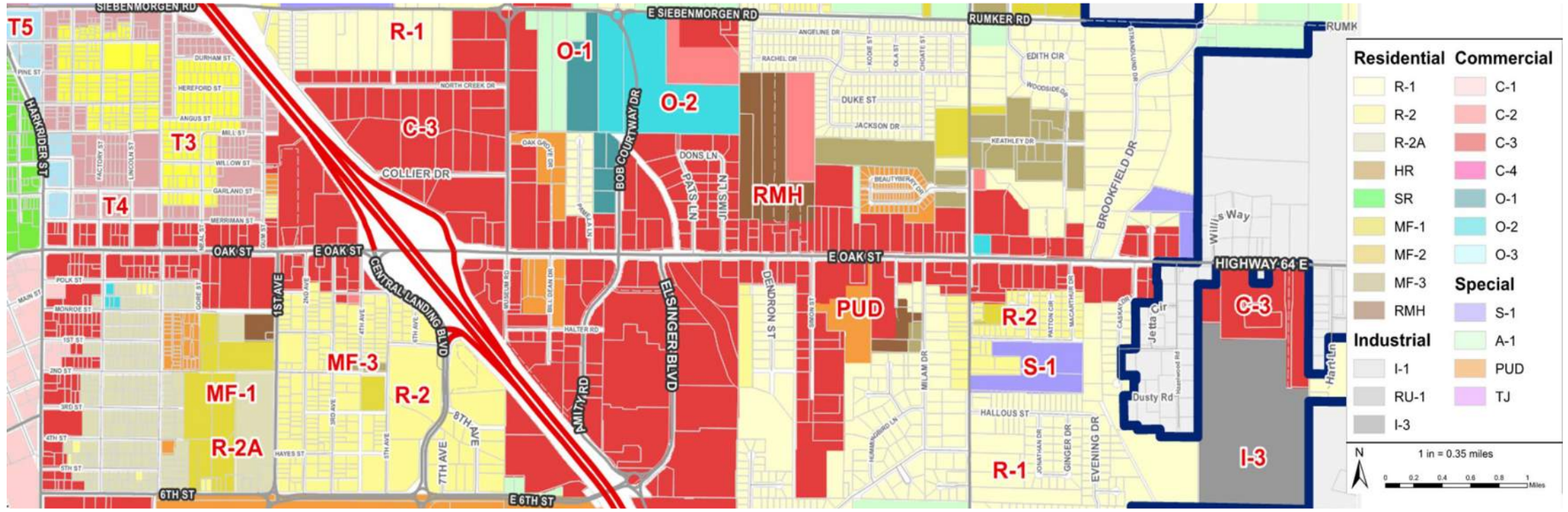
Overall Zoning Structure

Conway's Zoning code includes traditional use and intensity-based zoning districts, and some overlay categories that reflect specific urban contexts, and a flexible, project-specific planned unit development (PUD) district. The overlay districts within the code which are currently focused in the downtown area of the city include some form-based elements that focus on establishing build-to lines to require street orientation.

The zoning map illustrates zoning district categories in the study area, discussed in more detail below.
A vast majority of the corridor is currently Zoned C-3, Highway and Open Display District.

As stated in the City of Conway Zoning Code:

> The C-3 district is designed to encourage the development of recognizable, attractive groupings of facilities to serve persons traveling by automobile, as well as to provide certain amusement facilities serving the area. It is also a zone for business that serves a city or regional trade area but which cannot command a location in the central business district or neighborhood shopping areas because of small volume, special clientele, need for parking or similar reasons. The district has a high level of vehicular ingress and egress. Merchandise may be of a type that must have special display and storage outside of building and requires special transportation. This type of retail trade is not compatible with pedestrian oriented commercial districts and shopping centers because they impede pedestrian movement. Locations appropriate for such districts are along heavily traveled major arterials.



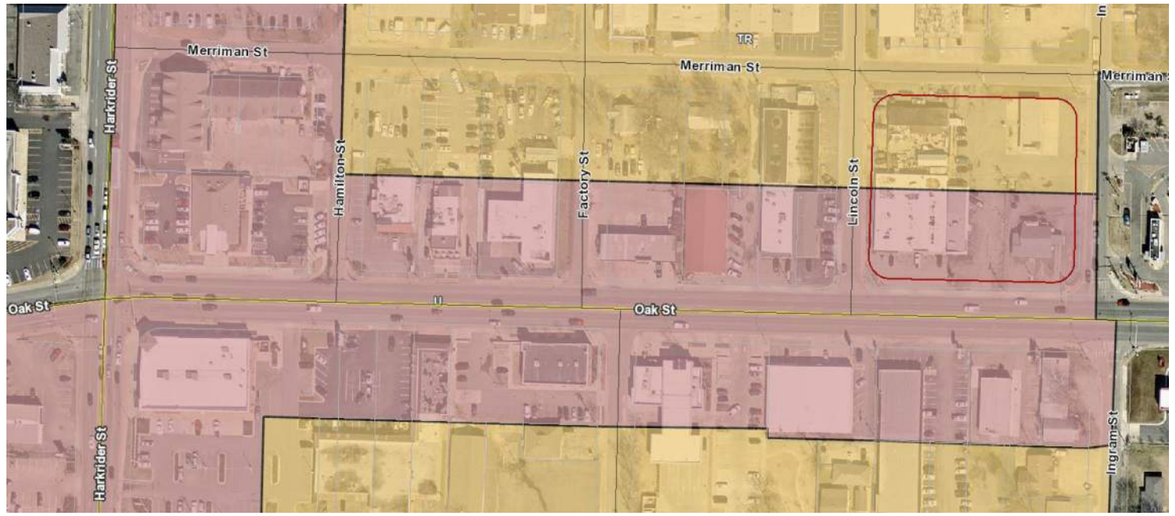
Existing Zoning in the Oak Street Corridor

Several PUDs are located on or adjacent to the corridor on the east side of I-40. One PUD covers an area on either side of Bill Dean Drive and encompasses the Chipotle, Outback Steakhouse, Verizon Store, and Home 2 Suites. Another PUD to the east of Simon Street is located primarily south of the corridor but includes a small finger of land directly adjacent to the corridor as well. This PUD encompasses automobile recycling/salvage-type uses.

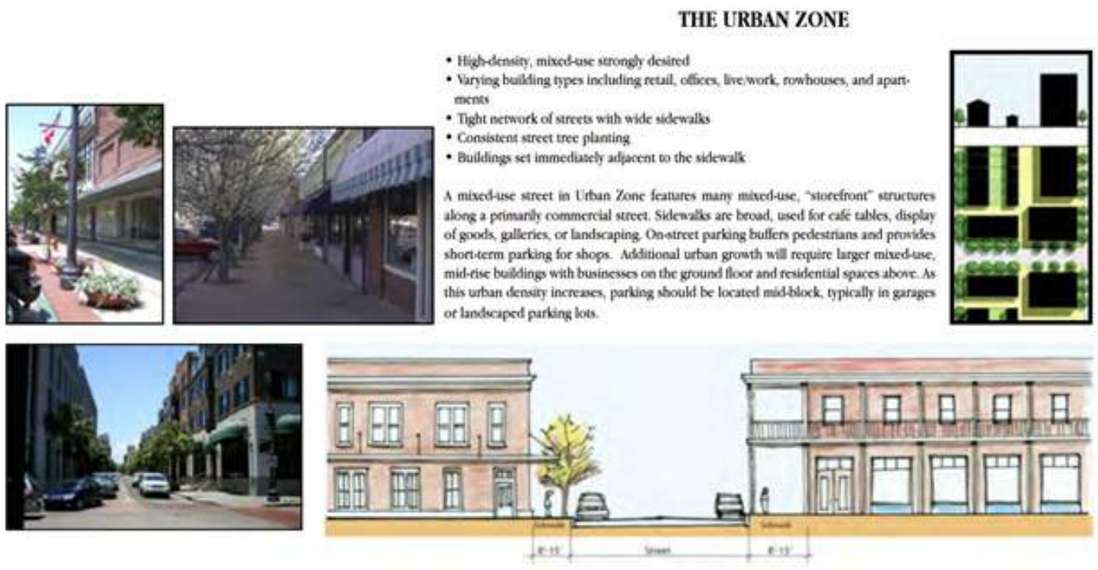
There is a bank on the northwest corner of the E. German/Oak Street intersection zoned as O-2, Quiet Office District, and an existing Church on the North side of the corridor at the current eastern boundary of the city zoned as S-1, Institutional District.

Existing Overlay District Zoning

One existing overlay district zone category within the Old Conway Design Overlay District directly impacts the Oak Street corridor itself or adjacent areas. The Urban Zone Overlay District-(U), shown as a pink color on the map above, overlays C-3 zone between Harkrider and Ingram Streets within the study area. This zone requires that buildings be pulled to the street, the allowance for mixed use development, and a street tree requirement. The redevelopment experienced within the study area of the corridor has been well received by the public in regard to aesthetics and pedestrian accessibility.



Existing Design Overlay Districts: Oak Street, Harkrider to Ingram



Excerpt from the Old Conway Design Overlay District depicting the Urban Zone design guidelines.

The Regulating Plan: Corridor Wide Guidelines

The following items address policies and criteria that lead to the outcomes envisioned by the overall corridor plan. They are divided into two categories:

- On-corridor development, focused on elements that specifically affect the visual and development environment along the street; and
- Transitional areas, considering the boundary conditions between and interaction between the corridor and its adjacent neighbors.

These recommendations fall within three categories:

- Policies are general guidelines that public and private decision-makers apply within development design and review processes but can be difficult to quantify with specific numerical regulators.
- Comprehensive Plan refers to policies, maps, and other specific measures that are incorporated as comprehensive plan elements and are typically implemented through capital investments.
- Regulatory are specific required items to be drafted as part of a new district or an amendment to existing city zoning or development regulations, adding special requirements and standards that apply to all parts of the Oak Street planning corridor.

On-Corridor Development

General

Consideration should be given to the creation and implementation of at least three new zoning or overlay districts which promote the integration of mixed-use development and appropriate residential development into the corridor. These zones should contain build-to zones and form-based standards along the corridor applicable to all new developments and retrofits along the corridor. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Oak Street District #1: Oak Street Special District, Ingram Street to I-40

- Acts as a gateway district between I-40 and downtown Conway
- Scale of buildings and their pedestrian and vehicular connection/relationship with the surrounding neighborhoods is very important for the redevelopment of this district
- High opportunity for redevelopment in the coming years which paves the way for integration of new mixed use and residential development in this district.
- Relect as a transition zone from downtown.
- Opportunity for connectivity into the new aquatic facility and existing park and trail facilities on the south side of the corridor.
- Limitations to outdoor display uses should be implemented in this district.

Oak Street District #2: Oak Street Special District, I-40 to Little Creek

- Existing destination restaurants and retail and the introduction of robust trail infrastructure to this area create an ideal environment for the integration of mixed use, office, and residential uses along the corridor.
- Opportunity for some redevelopment and adaptive re-use of buildings and large parking areas as the in-person retail marketplace continues to evolve in the coming years.
- Additional pedestrian/trail connectivity infrastructure and driveway consolidations between developments would provide tremendous benefit to this district.
- Regulations to allow trail-facing development in this district to further leverage the beneficial impact of the trail system expansion.

Oak Street District #3: Oak Street Special District,Little Creek to Hart Lane

- Acts as an eastern gateway to Conway
- Large areas of undeveloped land create the opportunity for multiple new developments, including mixed-use and residential developments.
- Close proximity to the expanded trail system should be capitalized upon and required linkages to the system should be required for new developments within this area through an up to date to the Master Trails Plan.
- Special zoning subdistricts for the E. German Lane area and the Events Center area should be considered
- Limitations to outdoor display uses should be implemented in this district.

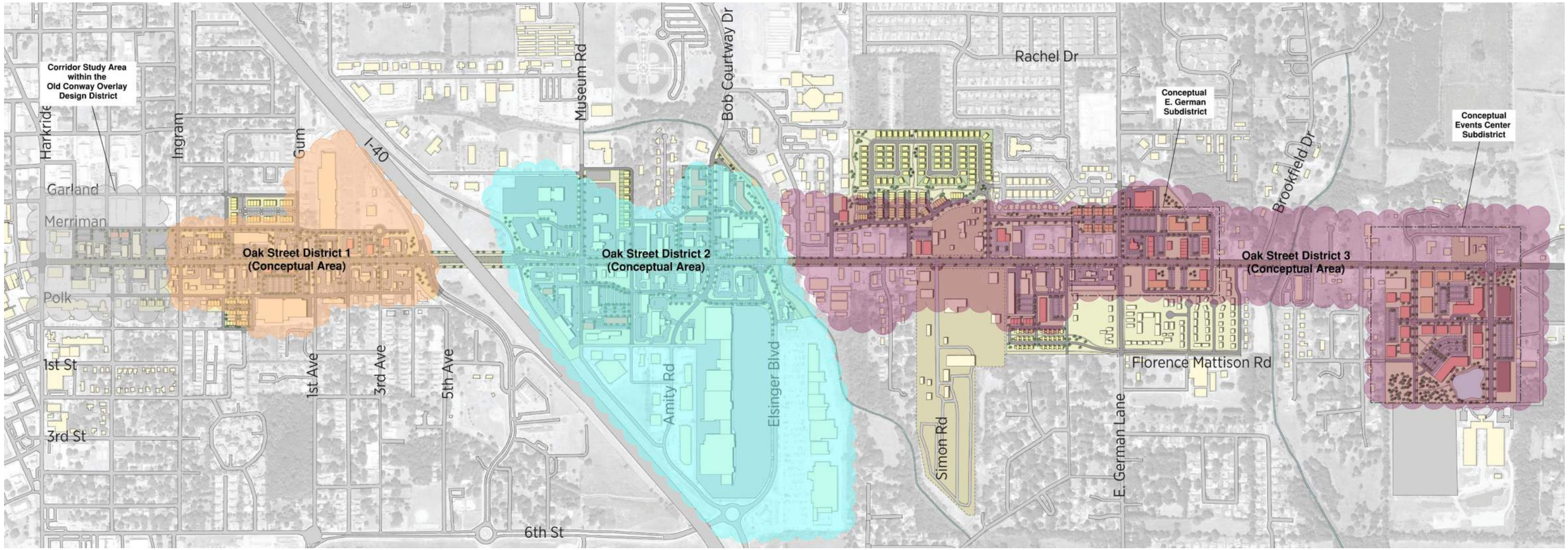
- Each Oak Street District within the corridor defines and communicates its own character within the context of the larger corridor. (Policy: Implementation by city and corridor organization)
- Adjacent subdistricts, and development within subdistricts, connect to each other through shared use paths, sidewalks, collector streets, and drives. These connecting points, identified in the Transportation Framework Plan, are respected with redevelopment or major retrofit projects. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- The City's existing Design Standards Pattern Book contains excellent guidance for the integration of parking and vehicular accommodation with development. Updates to this manual are recommended to further clarify some of the regulatory language within the manual as well as general updates and diagrams that are necessary every 5-10 years to keep the document effective and relevant. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Vehicular

- The City's Master Street Plan should be updated to reference the planned public connections and typical cross sections shown within the Transportation Framework Plan. (Comprehensive Plan: Implementation by City)
- The connections shown rely on forming a quality network of both public and private dedications/connections. (Policy: Implementation by City)
- Secondary connecting roads and drives may be built to current standard street sections shown in the Master Street Plan or adopted special-area plan. Updates to the Master Street Plan should consider the nature and function of these local connections and apply sections specific to their contexts. (Policy and Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- Custom access management planning is addressed throughout the plan by showing proposed drive consolidations and cross access throughout the corridor. As redevelopment takes place throughout the corridor, a threshold for the requirement of minimum driveway spacing and/or consolidation should be considered by the city. While a majority of the corridor is developed, the area between East German Lane and Hart Lane has multiple large tracts of undeveloped or underdeveloped land. This area could benefit from additional study to set prescribed driveway spacing lengths for new development. (Policy and Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Active Transportation

- The City should update the Master Trail Plan to reflect proposed shared use path connections. (Comprehensive Plan:



Implementation by City)

- All projects should provide direct, safe, and protected pedestrian connections to and from public sidewalks along the corridor. Projects should also provide direct connections when they are served by an adjacent trail segment. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- All projects should provide direct, safe, and protected pedestrian connections to and from public sidewalks along the corridor. Projects should also provide direct connections when they are served by an adjacent trail segment. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Open Space

- Minimize development within 100-year floodplains. When development occurs within these areas, require that development includes:
  - Features that prevent any impact including displacement, additional flows, or expansion of flood boundary lines on any property outside of the subject site
  - A design that minimizes potential damage or impact to any habitable portion of any off-site building.
- Provide functional open spaces internal to developments that are defined by buildings, are observable to residents and workers in surrounding spaces, and have features and spaces that encourage activity and passive enjoyment by adjacent users.

  Follow CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environ mental Design) standards to ensure both security and active, productive use. Avoid undefined open spaces that do not have specific functions or goals for use by people.

Built Character

Build-to and Setback Lines

- When possible, projects should maintain a close relationship with and orientation to adjacent streets and public ways.
- Because of Oak Street's large number of existing buildings with large setbacks, it may not be possible or appropriate for all new buildings to be placed on build-to lines adjacent to or near streets. Where bulk, scale, internal drive connections, or other issues intervene, flexible methods in building siting should be applied, but deeper setbacks should be remediated by clear relationships to adjacent streets, public open spaces, and pathways. Surface parking between the Oak Street right-of-way line should be minimized. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Parking and vehicular accommodation within development

- Consideration should be given to limiting or removing mandatory parking requirements for non-residential developments along the corridor (Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Number of Stories

- The typical maximum height for buildings along the Oak Street corridor should be three to four stories. This may increase in specially designated areas. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)

Signage

- Special consideration should be given to the appearance of signage in close proximity to the interstate. While the

city may prefer that interstate-adjacent signage be greater in height than other sections of the Oak Street corridor, the maximum height allowable and depth of the interstate sign zone should be limited, and the design standards and aesthetics of these signs should be regulated.

Transition Areas

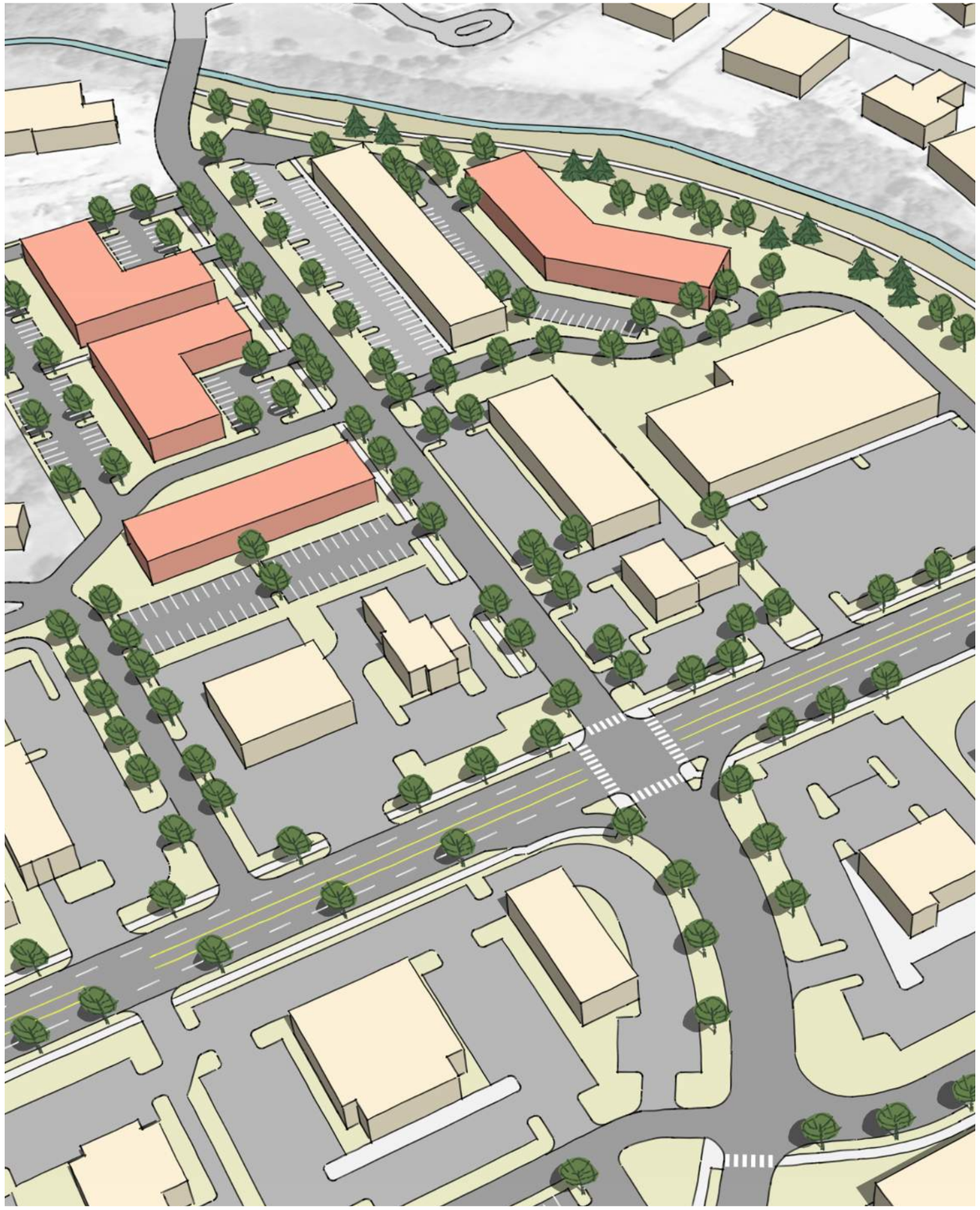
Transitions between intensive corridor development and surrounding, lower-intensity neighborhoods and uses can present significant issues. These issues include noise, light, traffic, and building scale. Internal use and intensity transitions within mixed use (such as proximate commercial and residential uses) also must be managed. Typically, the most intensive and public settings are directly adjacent to the corridor. Properties farther from the Oak Street "main line" transition to a smaller scale development pattern.

A variety of planning tools are available to address use and intensity transitions within and outside of the mixed-use corridors and the new proposed zoning districts should include requirements for managing these potential conflicts. Examples of transitional area treatments include:

- Near residential areas, prohibiting parking lots between public streets and buildings to reflect development patterns of adjacent residential development. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- Provide most parking within multi-family residential projects rather than between buildings and the street, thereby defining the street edge with residential buildings. (Regulatory through site plan review: Implementation by City)
- Design lighting of commercial and industrial signage to minimize impact on adjacent residential areas. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- Avoid channeling traffic generated by higher intensity uses to low traffic streets except as part of comprehensively planned mixed use projects. (Regulatory through site plan review: Implementation by City)
- Make maximum use of internal cross-easements and shared access points between or within individual projects when possible. (Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- Use traffic calming techniques to reduce speeds between adjacent properties. (Policy: Implementation by City)
- Connect buildings on the site with internal streets, drives, and pedestrian connections and pathways to prevent unnecessary traffic in adjacent areas. (Policy and Regulatory: Implementation by City)
- In retrofits of larger-scale existing buildings or new construction, providing public spaces for interaction. (Policy: Implementation by City and property owners/developers)
- Using liner buildings along blank walls of commercial "boxes" with office, small-scale storefronts, or multifamily, possibly serviced by interior service alleys. (Policy: Implementation by City and developers)

But transitions are not just about managing and minimizing conflicts. Connectivity and mutual reinforcement of urban environments are fundamental values of the Oak Street concept. A successful corridor responds to the needs of both residents and businesses, and establishes a fabric based on connectedness. To this end, the plan advocates a circulation network that both improves internal links and connects the corridor to the rest of the city. Good transition techniques that provide connectedness without conflict include:

- Using public environments like public open space, interior streets or drive aisles with a residential street character, and trail and greenway corridors to provide positive common ground between residential and commercial uses.
- Creating residential clusters and neighborhoods that connect to surrounding commercial development but have sufficient critical mass and common space to form an interior residential environment.
- Orienting commercial and residential service areas toward each other or locating commercial service areas to avoid impacts on residential neighbors.
- Establishing a gradient scale on projects adjacent to pre-existing single-family residential neighborhoods, stepping residential density or project intensity down from highest along the Oak Street corridor itself to lowest adjacent to low-density development. An approach to consider might be limiting new residential density to a specific increment (for example 200%) within 100 feet (or a typical lot depth) of pre-existing developed residential blocks.
- Managing the size and visibility of commercial signage, focusing signage toward the main corridor.

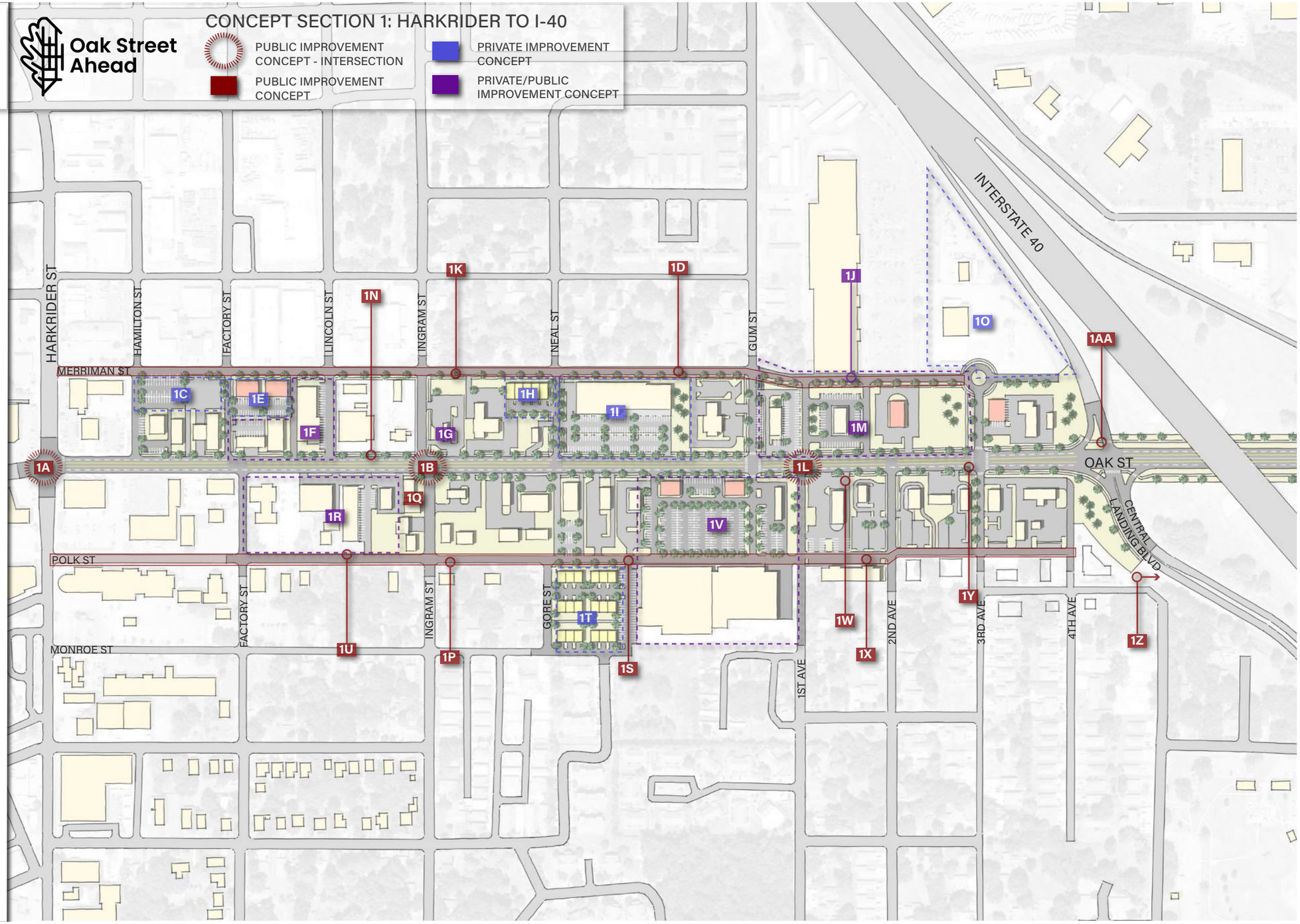


Implementation Map: Harkrider to I-40

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

**0-5 YEAR PRIORITIZATION PROJECTS*

1A	Harkrider St/Oak St Intersection Improvements
1B	Ingram St/Oak St Intersection Improvements
1C	Parking Reconfiguration
*1D	**Merriman Street Sidewalks**
1E	Merriman Street Infill
*1F	**Street Yard Enhancement**
*1G	**Access Redesign**
1H	Infill Townhomes
*1I	**Parking Reconfiguration**
*1J	**Merriman Extension**
1K	Merriman Street Upgrade
*1L	**1st Avenue Traffic Signal**
*1M	**Faulkner Plaza Area Access**
*1N	**Oak Street North Walkway**
1O	Entergy's Redevelopment
1P	Polk Street Enhancement
1Q	Ingram Street Placemaking
*1R	**Street Yard Parking**
1S	Polk Street Extension
1T	Polk Street Townhomes
1U	Polk Street Sidewalks
1V	Kroger's Center Site Redesign
1W	Frontage East of 1st Avenue
1X	Polk Street East
*1Y	**Oak Street Sidepath**
1Z	5th Avenue Park Connection
*1AA	**I-40 Pathway Crossings**



Proposed Improvement Projects Concept Section 1: Harkrider To I-40

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT

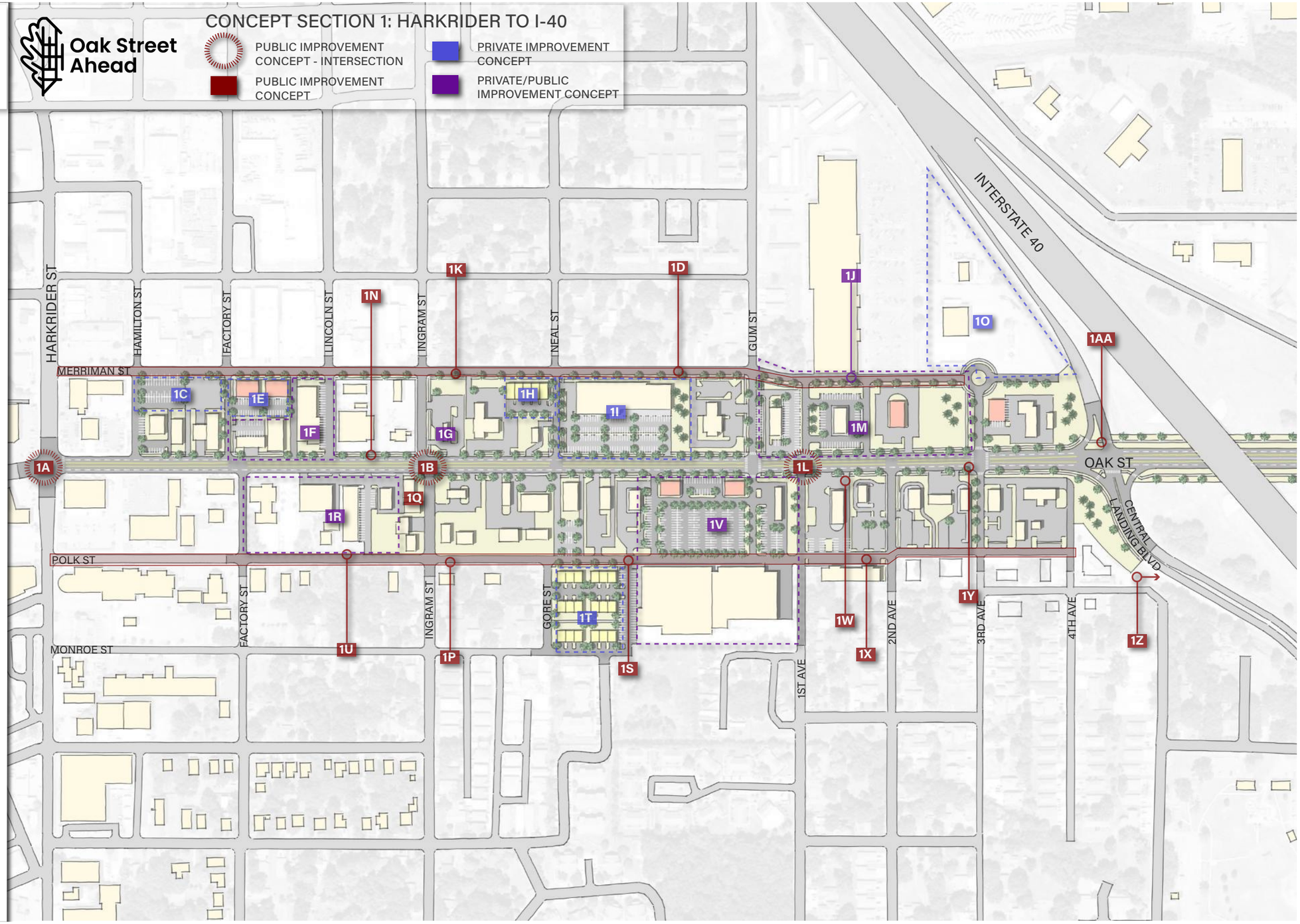
ID	Project Name	Location	Proposed Improvement	Benefit	Priority Period		
					Under 5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
1A	Harkrider St./Oak St. Interstate Improvements.	Intersection of Harkrider St. and Oak St.	Extend northbound left turn lane storage length	The project is estimated to decrease overall intersection delay by 5% and to decrease the NB left turn queue length by up to 40%. Harkrider Improvements are programmed by ARDOT for the Nov. 2024 letting, which are expected to address this need for a longer NB left turn lane.			
1B	Ingram St./Oak Street Interstate Improvements	Brookside Drive north of Oak	Improved entrance street to new residential development. May include realignment of car wash entrance on south side of Oak to reduce left turn conflicts	Project opens a significant residential development opportunity that can encourage a gradual commercial use transition along Oak Street.			
1C	Parking Reconfiguration	Factory to Hamilton, North Block	Reconfiguration of parking lots, providing head-in perpendicular parking off Merriam Street	Adds parking stalls by providing greater circulation efficiency, increases open and green space along Oak in front of restaurants			
1D	Merriman Street Sidewalks	South side of Merriman, Factory Street to 3rd Avenue	New sidewalk/pedestrian path on south side of street	Provides pedestrian connections to adjacent residential area			
1E	Merriman Street Infill	South side of Merriman, east of Factory Street	Redevelop distressed structure with new commercial buildings and improved adjacent parking lot on block interior	Creates new investment and removed a distressed structure			
1F	Street yard Enhancement	North side of Oak, Lincoln to Factory	Relocate all commercial parking to Lincoln Street, removing existing front yard parking, define driveway access points and provide street yard landscaping	Substantial visual and pedestrian improvement with adequately sized and located walkway, reduces curb interruptions and potential back-out movements to Oak Street			
1G	Access Redesign	Rally's site, NE corner of Ingram	Redesign of circulation pattern for existing drive-through restaurant, with closing of existing two-way access from Ingram closest to Oak. Ideally Oak access should be right in-right out	Reduces possible crashes and near crashes because of conflicting movements			
1H	Infill Townhomes	SW corner of Merriman and Neal	Development of five townhomes on site of two existing single-family houses	Increases urban housing on the Oak Street corridor			
1I	Parking Reconfiguration	Redesign of shopping center parking along Oak Street	Redesign with two continuous parking modules. Includes pathway access from Oak Street walkway to business entrances	Provides green space along the street replacing non-functional parking row and pedestrian space along the building front. Includes path access from Oak Street to businesses and space for walkway along Oak. Aligns parking driveways with Kroger Center.			
1J	Merriman Extension	Extension of Merriman Street between Gum Street and 3rd Avenue/ Faulkner Plaza	New street link as part of a local street access system. Drive on the south side of Faulkner Plaza would be dedicated and redesigned as a city street with curb and walkway.	Establishes Merriman as a continuous circulator north of Oak, relieving some local traffic movements from the main street. Provides better neighborhood access to Faulkner Plaza and allows relocation of traffic signal east to 1st Avenue.			
1K	Merriman Street Upgrade	Merriman Street from Harkrider to 3rd Avenue	Street environment upgrade with lighting, street landscaping, traffic calming, and bicycle/pedestrian friendly elements.	Defines Merriman as both an alternative to Oak Street for local traffic and a renewed business corridor with a better neighborhood interaction. Bicycle friendly features create the possibility of a bicycle boulevard with rear access to Oak Street businesses.			
1L	1st Avenue Traffic Signal	1st and Oak	Relocation of traffic signal from existing location at Faulkner Plaza entrance to 1st Avenue. Minor realignment of 1st Avenue on both sides of Oak. Possible vacation of Gum Street from Merriman to Oak, using Merriam and 1st Street for access. Reduces BK access from Oak to a single point.	Increases distance from I-40 ramp to signalization and aligns signal with a major collector street. Establishes 1st Avenue as the major access to the shopping center from the west, clarifying circulation patterns.			
1M	Faulkner Plaza Area Access	1st to 3rd Avenue on Oak S	Reduction of existing access to a single lane in and out. Possible removal , using 3rd for access from the east and a signalized 1st from the west. Continuation of Merriman as a city street to 3rd Avenue.	Clarifies traffic flow and internalizes and potentially increases Colton's and Burger King's parking.			
1N	Oak Street North Walkway	Oak, Harkrider to I-64 ramp	6-foot sidewalk with typical 6 to 8 foot setback where possible. Street landscaping and placemaking improvements at strategic locations.	Provides a comfortable pedestrian environment along the corridor. With setback and landscaping, provides a dramatically improved street image.			
1O	Energy's Redevelopment	3rd Avenue to I-64	Major private commercial redevelopment on vacant site	Site is benefited from extension of Merriman Street, providing access from both 1st and 3rd Avenues. Various plans for site in development.			
1P	Polk Street Enhancement	Polk Street, Harkrider to 4th Avenue	Street environment upgrade with lighting, street landscaping, traffic calming, and bicycle/pedestrian friendly elements. Treatment similar to Merriman Street.	Defines Polk as both an alternative to Oak Street for local traffic and a renewed business corridor with a better neighborhood interaction. Bicycle friendly features create the possibility of a bicycle boulevard with rear access to Oak Street businesses.			
1Q	Ingram Street Placemaking	Oak and Ingram	Placemaking, street park, or art installation opportunity at major urban intersection.	Marks transition to a more urban environment that transitions to Downtown Conway. Could be an incentive for redevelopment on the southwest corner of the intersection. Potential residential redevelopment south of the grocery store.			

Implementation Map: Harkrider to I-40

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

**0-5 YEAR PRIORITIZATION PROJECTS*

- 1A Harkrider St/Oak St Intersection Improvements
- 1B Ingram St/Oak St Intersection Improvements
- 1C Parking Reconfiguration
- ***1D Merriman Street Sidewalks**
- 1E Merriman Street Infill
- ***1F Street Yard Enhancement**
- ***1G Access Redesign**
- 1H Infill Townhomes
- ***1I Parking Reconfiguration**
- ***1J Merriman Extension**
- 1K Merriman Street Upgrade
- ***1L 1st Avenue Traffic Signal**
- ***1M Faulkner Plaza Area Access**
- ***1N Oak Street North Walkway**
- 1O Entergy's Redevelopment
- 1P Polk Street Enhancement
- 1Q Ingram Street Placemaking
- ***1R Street Yard Parking**
- 1S Polk Street Extension
- 1T Polk Street Townhomes
- 1U Polk Street Sidewalks
- 1V Kroger's Center Site Redesign
- 1W Frontage East of 1st Avenue
- 1X Polk Street East
- ***1Y Oak Street Sidepath**
- 1Z 5th Avenue Park Connection
- ***1AA I-40 Pathway Crossings**



Proposed Improvement Projects Concept Section 1: Harkrider To I-40

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT

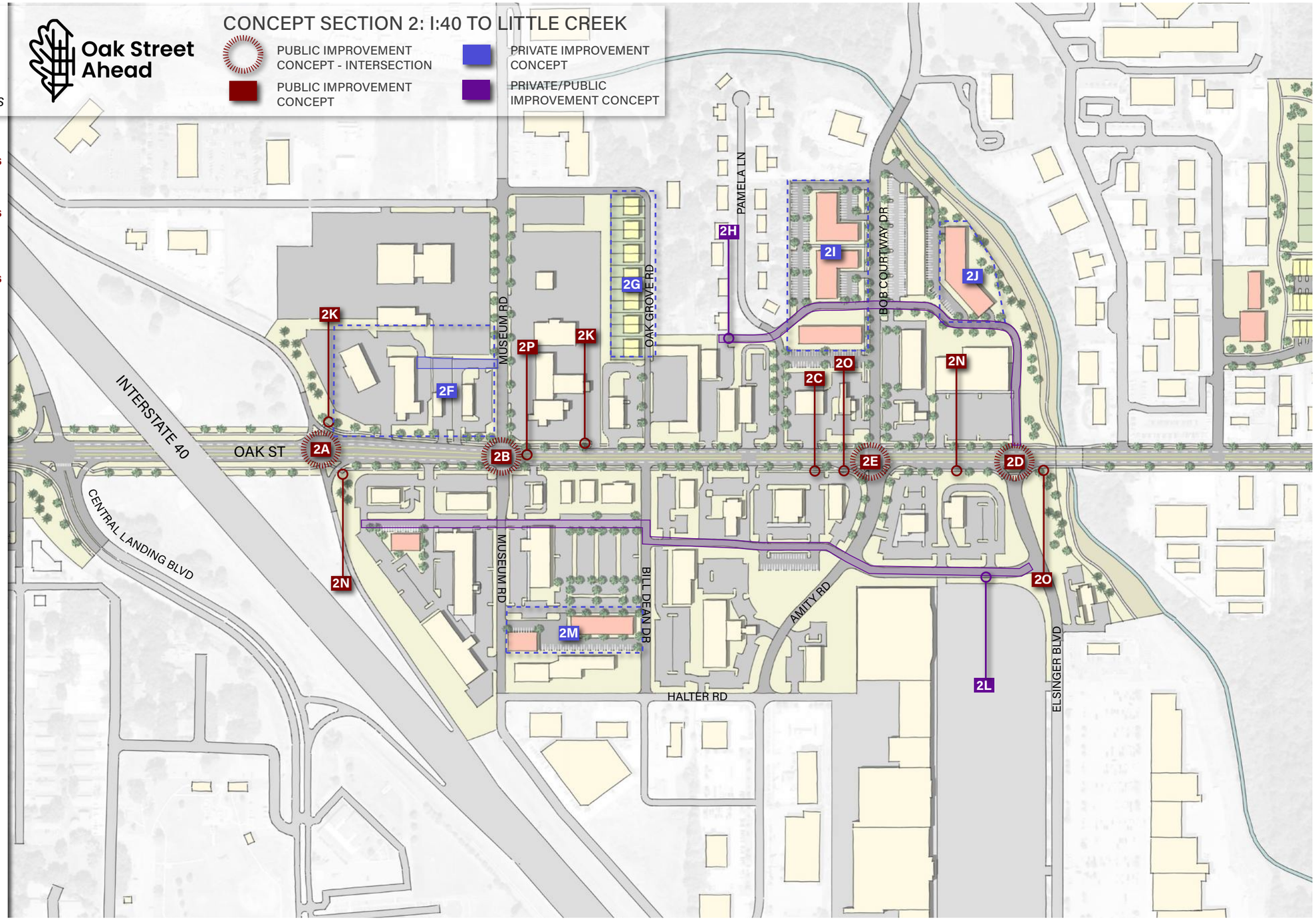
ID	Project Name	Location	Proposed Improvement	Benefit	Priority Period		
					Under 5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
1R	Street yard Parking	South side of Oak between Ingram and Factory	Revision of front parking that currently backs out on Oak. Concept turns short parking bays sideways to allow cars to exit forward. Preferable solution would be elimination of this parking and joint use of either part of the neighboring Arvest lot or converting the north 42 to 60 feet of the Arvest mini-park for parking to serve the existing businesses on the neighboring site.	The project is estimated to decrease overall intersection delay by 30% at the WB on/off ramps and 25% at the intersection with Central Landing Blvd.			
1S	Polk Street Extension	Polk Street, Gore Street to Kroger's Center property line	Street and sidewalk continuity to the edge of commercial drive. Includes traffic calming or gateway device to slow or discourage through local trips without preventing it.	The project is estimated to decrease overall intersection delay by 25%.			
1T	Polk Street Townhomes	Polk to Monroe block, east of Gore	Medium density residential infill with 18 to 24 townhome or villa units	The project is estimated to decrease corridor delay in the WB direction by 7% - 20% and to decrease corridor delay in the EB direction by 2% - 15%.			
1U	Polk Street sidewalks	Both sides of Polk, Harkrider to Kroger's	Sidewalks to replace substandard sections or fill current gaps. Incorporated into a Polk Street enhancement program.	The project is estimated to decrease corridor delay in the WB direction by 17% - 30% and to decrease corridor delay in the EB direction by 0% - 11%. This improvement will eliminate the potential for the Amity intersection queue to back up across the Elsinger intersection.			
1V	Kroger's Center site redesign	Oak to Vine, Monroe to 1st Avenue block	Redesign of Kroger's site including defining drive in front of the store to an interior street configuration with urban sidewalk along front of store; parking reconfiguration to 90 degrees to allow pad site development along street frontage without losing parking; and two commercial pad sites along the street. Possible residential development south of the grocery store.	The project is estimated to decrease corridor delay in the WB direction by 12% - 16% and to decrease corridor delay in the EB direction by 19% - 27%. This improvement will eliminate the potential for the Amity intersection queue to back up across the Elsinger intersection.			
1W	Frontage east of 1st Avenue	South side of Oak east of 1st Avenue	Redirect access to commercial property on SE corner to 1st Avenue, made possible with 1st Avenue signalization	Increases safety by minimizing conflicts caused by vehicles exiting I-40 and bound for motel and restaurants.			
1X	Polk Street East	Polk/Maple alignment east of Kroger's	Continues alignment of Kroger's drive east by minor redesign of parking lots between 2nd and 3rd Avenues and continuing with a new street segment on unused ground to 4th Avenue. Includes sidewalk access through to 4th Avenue on the south side of this new connection. An option is to transition this new alignment to existing Maple Street, but continuity would require acquisition of one property.	Consistent with Corridor Urbanism guidelines			
1Y	Oak Street Sidepath	Oak Street, Harkrider to Central Landing Boulevard	8-10' sidepath, continuing existing Central Landing path west along Oak and toward Downtown. Path is accommodated by added green space created by driveway reductions and parking lot redesign. New sidewalks area constructed to city and state design standards would be incorporated into this path.	Provides local circulation around the congested Elsinger to Amity segment of Oak, potentially reduces local traffic load on Oak and a bypass route leading to Siebenmorgen. Middle school, and ballfield complex. Could encourage development on Bob Courtway.			
1Z	5th Avenue Park Connection	Central Landing south of I-64 access	Street or drive connection from 5th Avenue Park to Central Landing Boulevard, probably linking 8th Avenue and Cedar Street.	With residential component, adds population and activity to the corridor. Extending mixed uses up Bob Courtway to the north is a desirable development.			
1AA	I-40 Pathway Crossings	Base of I-40 ramps	Pedestrian crossing caution signs and possible raised crosswalk	Valuable mixed use or high-density residential site with direct trail access and convenient adjacent services			

Implementation Map: I-40 to Little Creek

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

**0-5 YEAR PRIORITIZATION PROJECTS*

- ***2A I-40 WB Ramps/Oak St Intersection Improvements**
- ***2B Museum Rd/Oak St Intersection Improvements**
- ***2C Option 1:Amity Rd/Elsinger Rd/Oak St Intersection Improvements**
- 2D Option 2: Bob Courtway Dr. Relocation
- 2E Option 3: Amity Rd/Oak St Intersection Improvements
- 2F North Parking lot interconnection
- 2G Oak Grove Housing
- 2H North Circulator
- 2I Bob Courtway West Development Site
- 2J Bob Courtway East Development Site
- 2K Oak Street North Streetscape
- ***2L South Circulator**
- 2M Infill Development
- ***2N Oak Street South Streetscape**
- ***2O Pedestrian Crossing Improvements**
- 2P Museum Road Refuge Median



Proposed Improvement Projects Concept Section 2: I-40 to Little Creek

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT

ID	Project Name	Location	Proposed Improvement	Benefit	Priority Period		
					Under 5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
2A	I-40 WB Ramps/Oak St. Inters. Impvts.	Intersection of I-40 WB Ramps/Oak St.	"Install additional EB left turn lanes (dual protected lefts) Install additional NB left turn lane (dual lefts) Extend WB right turn lane storage length Widen on-ramp to two lanes that merges to one lane"	The project is estimated to decrease overall intersection delay by 30% at the WB on/off ramps and 25% at the intersection with Central Landing Blvd.			
2B	Museum Rd/Oak St Inters. Impvts.	Intersection of Museum Rd./Oak St.	"Install SB right turn lane Extend NB left turn storage length SB and NB left permitted/protected"	The project is estimated to decrease overall intersection delay by 25%.			
2C	Option 1: Amity Rd./Elsinger Rd./Oak St. Inters. Impvts.	Intersection of Amity Rd. and Oak St.	Extend EB right storage length	The project is estimated to decrease corridor delay in the WB direction by 7% - 20% and to decrease corridor delay in the EB direction by 2% - 15%.			
2D	Option 2: Bob Courtway Dr. Relocation	Intersection of Amity Rd., Elsinger Rd. and Oak St.	"Realign Bob Courtway to line up with Elsigner Rd. Intersection Remove signal from Amity Rd. Intersection Make Amity Rd a right-in/right-out only Extend EB right storage length"	The project is estimated to decrease corridor delay in the WB direction by 17% - 30% and to decrease corridor delay in the EB direction by 0% - 11%. This improvement will eliminate the potential for the Amity intersection queue to back up across the Elsinger intersection.			
2E	Option 3: Amity Rd./Oak St. Inters. Impvts.	Intersection of Amity Rd. and Oak St.	"Remove signal from Amity Rd. Intersection Make Bob Courtway a left-in/right-in/right-out Make Amity a left-in/right-in/right-out Provide U-turn opportunity west of Bob Courtway Lengthen dual left turn lane on Elsinger Rd Extend EB right storage length"	The project is estimated to decrease corridor delay in the WB direction by 12% - 16% and to decrease corridor delay in the EB direction by 19% - 27%. This improvement will eliminate the potential for the Amity intersection queue to back up across the Elsinger intersection.			
2F	North Parking lot interconnection	North of Oak between I-40 and Museum Road	Connection of drive aisles to provide alternative access to restaurant and hotels. Convert existing Oak Street access to right in/right out	Increases safety by minimizing conflicts caused by vehicles exiting I-40 and bound for motel and restaurants.			
2G	Oak Grove Housing	Oak Grove Drive north of Oak	Infill housing on vacant land. Because of single-family adjacency, concept suggests attached units as a transitional density	Consistent with Corridor Urbanism guidelines			
2H	North Circulator	North of Oak from Little Creek to Oak Grove Drive	Secondary local circulation drive north of Days Inn, continuing east using existing access drive to Pamela Lane, then on open land between Pamela Lane and Bob Courtway Drive aligned with drive north of Community Court strip center, then north and east of bowling alley to align with Elsinger Boulevard. Sidewalk on one side would be desirable but not necessary.	Provides local circulation around the congested Elsinger to Amity segment of Oak, potentially reduces local traffic load on Oak and a bypass route leading to Siebenmorgen. Middle school, and ballfield complex. Could encourage development on Bob Courtway.			
2I	Bob Courtway West Development Site	West side of Bob Courtway north of Oak.	Mixed commercial/residential or office development on open infill site	With residential component, adds population and activity to the corridor. Extending mixed uses up Bob Courtway to the north is a desirable development.			
2J	Bob Courtway East Development Site	Little Creek frontage north of Oak	Apartm prograr				
2K	Oak Street North Streetscape	I-40 Ramp to Little Creek Trail	Replacement of back of curb sidewalks with new sidewalks, with a desirable 6-foot width and 6-foot setback from back of curb. Continued installation of attractive contemporary lighting, street graphics, and landscape compliant with ArDOT requirements. Includes new land development regulations to require these changes over time. Direct connection of sidepath to planned Little Creek Trail.	Significant image improvement and increased pedestrian comfort and safety. Supports pedestrian access from new and existing adjacent residential development.			
2L	South Circulator	South side of Oak from I-40 to Elsinger	Interconnection of existing drives into a continuous secondary circulator south of Oak. Design is a hybrid of a drive and city street, and includes a walkway on at least one side, with high visibility crosswalks at intersecting streets. Major "squeeze points" include the passage between Starbucks and Motel 6 and north of Home2Suites.	Provides local circulation around the congested Elsinger to Amity segment of Oak, with an alternative local route to Museum Road. Sets up a "rearrange" road arrangement with back access to Oak Street fronting businesses. Potentially reduces local traffic load on Oak, as Halter Road is too far south to serve as an immediately useful alternative route. Includes pedestrian connections for visitors at main hotel complex.			

Implementation Map: I-40 to Little Creek

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

**0-5 YEAR PRIORITIZATION PROJECTS*

- ***2A I-40 WB Ramps/Oak St Intersection Improvements**
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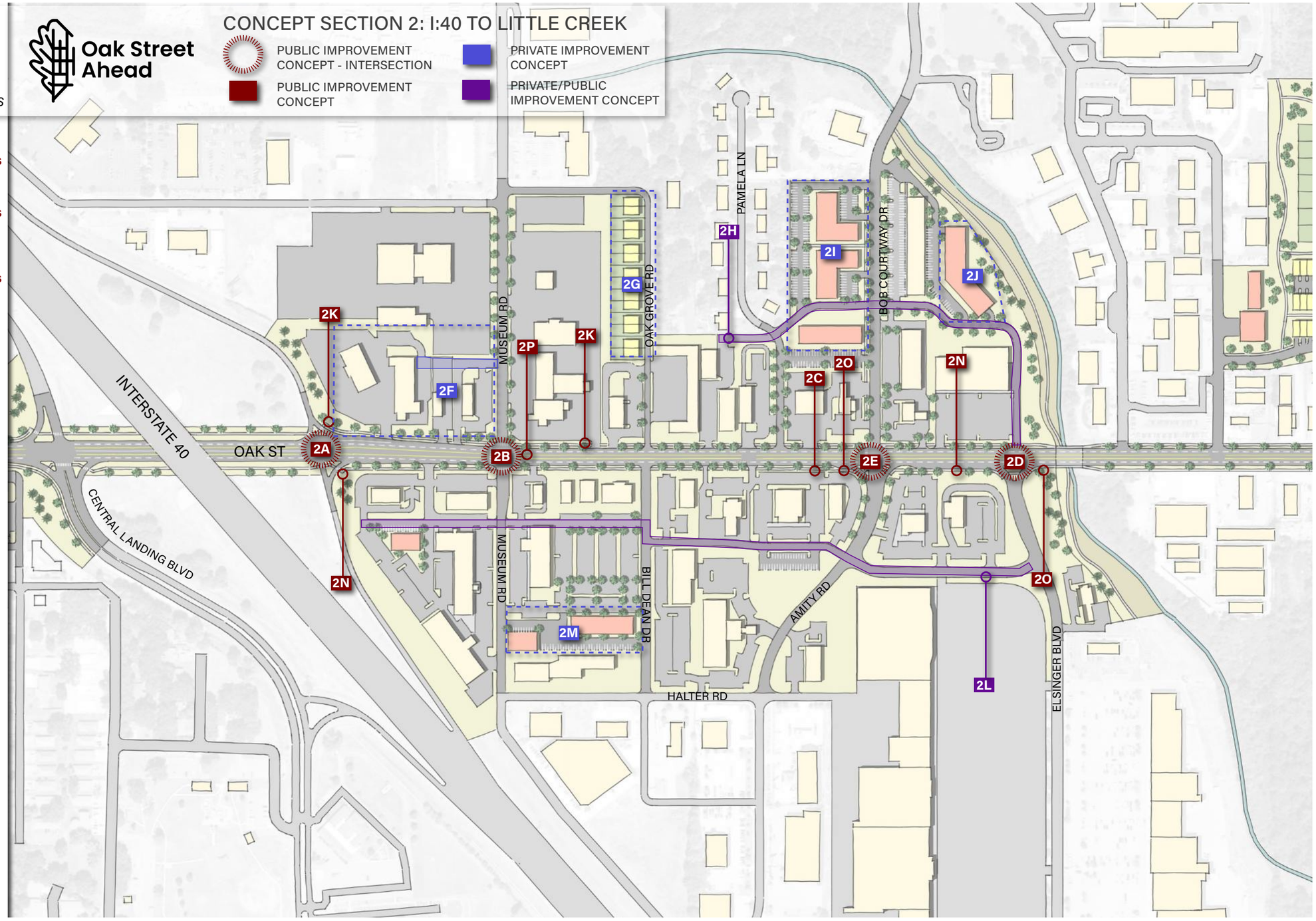

Proposed Improvement Projects Concept Section 2: I-40 to Little Creek

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT

ID	Project Name	Location	Proposed Improvement	Benefit	Priority Period		
					Under 5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
2M	Infill Development	Bill Dean to I-40 frontage south of Oak	Multi-tenant or free standing commercial development south of Oak Street	Logical extension of existing commercial district. Presents a consumer edge to trade commercial and light industrial businesses along and south of Halter.			
2N	Oak Street South Streetscape		Replacement of back of curb sidewalks with sidepath, with a minimum desirable 8-foot width and 6-foot setback from back of curb. Continued installation of attractive contemporary lighting, street graphics, and landscape compliant with ArDOT requirements. Includes new land development regulations to require these changes over time. Direct connection of sidepath to planned Little Creek Trail.	Extends multi-modal treatment of the more urban segment of Oak west of I-40 with direct connection to the new trail system and Oak Street underpass. Major street image improvement, with amenities for visitors to the city.			
2O	Pedestrian Crossing Improvements	Right turn bypass lanes at Elsinger and Amity intersections	Pedestrian crossing caution signs and possible raised crosswalk	Increases pedestrian/bicycle safety and visibility, reduces speed of motorists at free right turns at these intersections			
2P	Museum Road Refuge Median	Oak and Museum intersection	With intersection modifications, possible widening of Oak to provide space for a pedestrian crossing median at the intersection	More comfortable pedestrian access across Oak Street			

Implementation Map: Little Creek to Hart Lane

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

**0-5 YEAR PRIORITIZATION PROJECTS*

Oak Street Ahead

CONCEPT SECTION 3: LITTLE CREEK TO HART LN

- PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT CONCEPT - INTERSECTION
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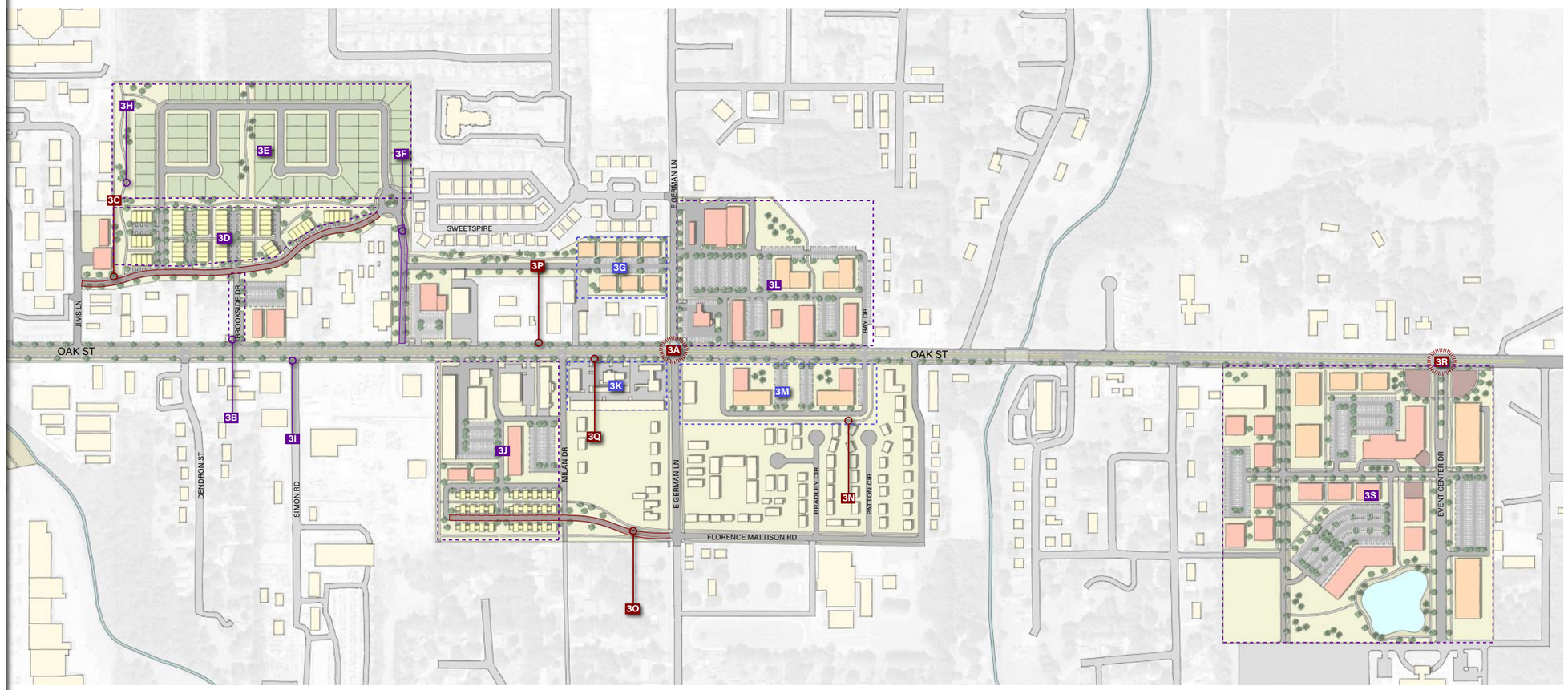
***3A**	**German Ln/Oak Street Intersection Improvements**
3B	Brookside Drive Improvement
3C	North East-West Connector
3D	Medium Density Residential
3E	North of Oak Single Facility Development
3F	New North-South Street
***3G**	**Villa Development**
3H	Internal Path Network
***3I**	**"Auto Parts District"**
3J	Small Towne Shoppes
***3K**	**Cross Roads Center**
3L	Harps Development Area
***3M**	**South Oak Development Site**
***3N**	**Southside Pedestrian Connectivity**
3O	Florence Mattison Road Connection
***3P**	**Oak Street North Walkway**
3Q	Oak Street South Shared use Path
3R	Event Center Drive Intersection
3S	Event Center Site Redevelopment



Proposed Improvement Projects Concept Section 3: Little Creek to Hart Lane

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE IMPROVEMENT | PRIVATE/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT

ID	Project Name	Location	Proposed Improvement	Benefit	Priority Period		
					Under 5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
3A	German Ln./Oak St. Interstate Improvements	Intersection of German Ln. and Oak St.	"Install SB right turn lane Install NB right turn lane Extend NB left turn lane storage Install flashing yellow for left turns"	The project is estimated to decrease overall intersection delay by 60%.			
3B	Brookside Drive Improvement	Brookside Drive north of Oak	Improved entrance street to new residential development. May include realignment of car wash entrance on south side of Oak to reduce left turn conflicts	Project opens a significant residential development opportunity that can encourage a gradual commercial use transition along Oak Street.			
3C	North East-West Connector	North of Oak between Jim's Lane and East German via connection to Verbena and Sweetspire Drives					
3D	Medium density residential	North of Oak between Jim's Lane and Crossings property line	Townhouse/rowhouse residential development north of Oak Street. In rowhouse configuration, produces up to 53 units. Utilizes proposed east-west circulator for primary access.	Redevelops a blighted site with new residential that helps support additional consumer commercial business along Oak Street. Concept provides improved local traffic circulation and reinforces existing quality residential development at The Crossing. Could be marketed either as owner-occupied or build to rent (BTR) units.			
3E	North of Oak single facility development	North of Oak between Jim's Lane and Crossings property line	Potential single-family subdivision on redevelopment site, extending to south property line of Jackson Drive lots. Illustrated concept produces up to 86 moderately sized lots	Redevelops a blighted site with new residential that helps support additional consumer commercial business along Oak Street. Concept provides single-family lots oriented around two loops and an internal circulation system.			
3F	New North-South Street	North from Oak Street west of Dollar General store	New street access aligned with driveway of new Carpet Barn retail store	Local street access connecting west side of The Crossing and potential new development to East German and Oak Street. Opens redevelopment site to major residential development.			
3G	Villa Development	South of The Crossing and west of East German	Attached housing on open site north of existing commercial. Includes rearage drive with parking between East German and new north-south street (project 3G). Project concept includes four unit "pinwheel" concept with utility core and independent entrances.	Additional residential development to extend mixed use corridor concept on Oak Street and support evolution of commercial character of the main street. Improves local circulation.			
3H	Internal path network	Redevelopment area on former mobile home park north of Oak Street and west of The Crossing and HomeTowne at Conway	North-south and east-west paths connecting parts of redevelopment area together, and linking Oak Street, East German Lane, and Courtway Middle School.	Helps create a walkable/bikeable community with direct pathway access to schools, commercial assets, City of Colleges Park and the citywide trail network			
3I	"Auto Parts District"	Oak and Simon Road	Whimsical placemaking feature celebrating major corridor of auto salvage and parts. Improved site development standards and possible coordination of other salvage facilities and recycling along Oak into a signature district. Screening as residential edges.	Re-imagining large salvage and auto recycling operations as anchors of a signature district. Possible consolidation of smaller salvage businesses within a defined district, creating a unique asset and opening Oak Street frontages to other commercial and residential uses			
3J	Small Towne Shoppes	West of Oak and Milam Drive Intersection	Evolution of distinctive strip shopping center with improved pedestrian connection to Oak Street, reduction of paved area directly adjacent to Oak, interior parking and walkway improvements, additional commercial and new multifamily/mixed use defining the parking lot to the east and south, single-family attached housing redevelopment on the south edge, and connection to Florence Mattison Road extension, and pedestrian connection to Cross Roads Center.	New housing and improved business environment for a commercial asset, and advancing concept of the East German Lane intersection as a significant community node and walkable center. Improved access to Florence Mattison School and park and better neighborhood connections			
3K	Cross Roads Center	Southwest quadrant of E. German intersection	Improved pedestrian access from Oak to the Center, removal of access barriers with ramps, connection to Small Towne Shoppes area	Continued commercial enhancement of emerging intersection node			
3L	Harps Development Area	Northeast quadrant of E. German intersection	Growth of Harps and adjacent sites as a mixed use center, with infill commercial on vacant sites, multi-family development, and circulation and parking loop using Ray Drive as an eastern entrance. With full development including south side of street, possible signalization of Ray Drive access.	Substantial development in a potential growth area, including new commercial, residential, and potential office use. Taking full advantage of a major neighborhood center. Possible slowing of highway traffic approaching East German intersection with Ray Drive signal, 900 feet east.			

Implementation Map: Little Creek to Hart Lane

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

**0-5 YEAR PRIORITIZATION PROJECTS*

Oak Street Ahead

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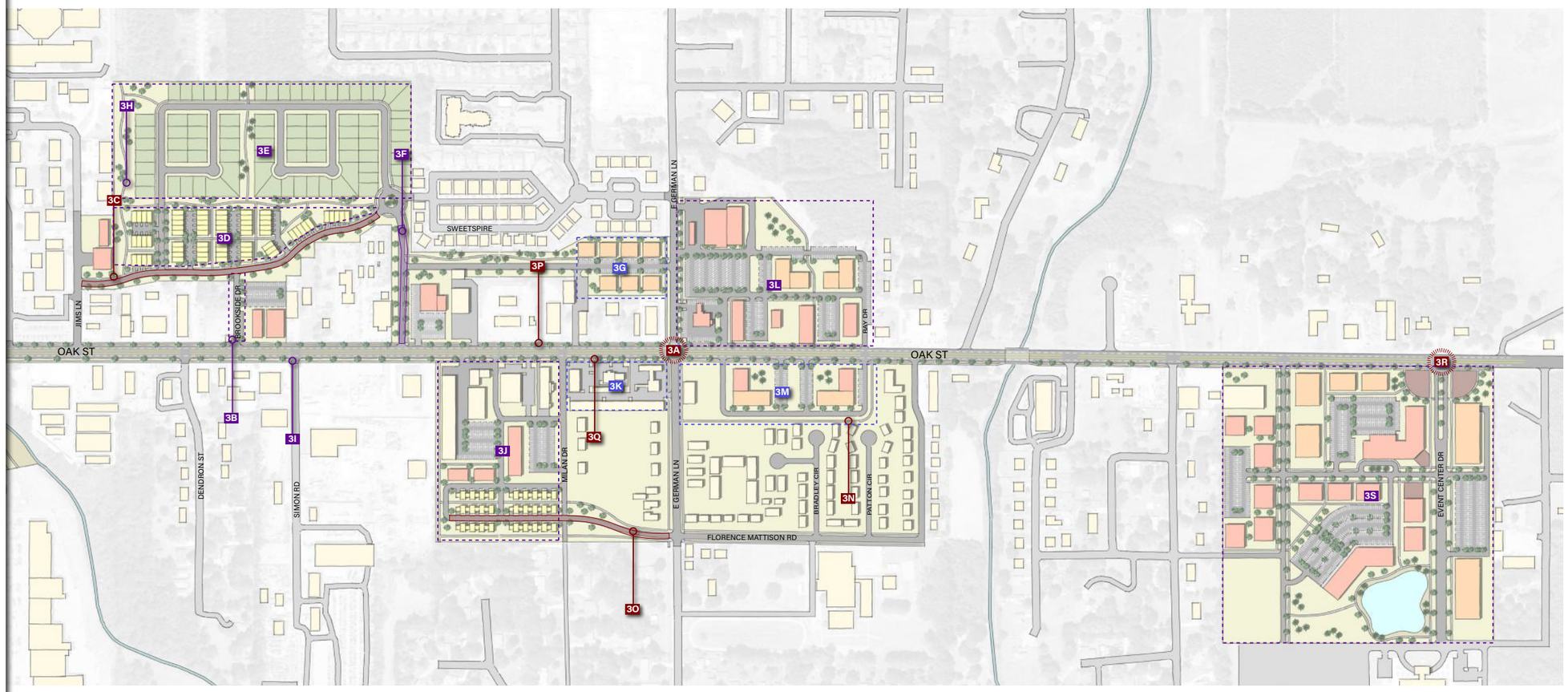

Proposed Improvement Projects Concept Section 3: Little Creek to Hart Lane

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					Under 5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
3M	South Oak Development Site	Southeast quadrant of E. German intersection	Mixed use development with possible commercial/office frontage on Oak and multi-family development off the main highway. Site design to preserve large trees. Concept envisions circulation loop with primary access using Ray Drive.	Substantial development in a potential growth area, including new commercial, residential, and potential office use. Possible slowing of highway traffic approaching East German intersection with Ray Drive signal, 900 feet east.			
3N	Southside pedestrian connectivity	South side of Oak between ray Drive and E. German	Path and greenway buffering major mixed use development from residential area to south. Path connects Oak and Ray with existing and enhanced commercial to the west. Path connection from Patton Circle and Bradley Circle cul-de-sacs. Protected pedestrian crossing of East German to Cross Roads Center.	Improved neighborhood connectivity. Buffering to reduce impact of major urban development. Helps create warrants for Ray Drive signalization			
3O	Florence Mattison Road connection	Florence Mattison east and west of East German	Florence Mattison Street extension west of E. German to Small Shoppes Center development area.	Neighborhood linkage to parks, elementary school, and commercial resources.			
3P	Oak Street North Walkway	Oak Street, Little Creek to Event Center Drive	6-foot path, set back a desirable minimum of 6 feet from back of curb or pavement edge. Revision of site use to permit this improvement	Safe and comfortable pedestrian access along Oak Street. Possibility of roadscape improvement with landscaping, consistent with ArDOT standards			
3Q	Oak Street South Shared Use Path	Oak Street, Little Creek to Event Center Drive	8 to 10-foot path, set back a desirable minimum of 6 feet from back of curb or pavement edge. Revision of site use to permit this improvement	Safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle/micro-mobility access along Oak Street. Possibility of roadscape improvement with landscaping, consistent with ArDOT standards			
3R	Event Center Drive Intersection	Oak Street and Event Center Drive	Road design improvement with landscaping, gateway features, landscaped median, lighting features, and eventual signalization. Roundabout as a possible alternative to a more conventional intersection.	Increased visibility for Event Center, now relatively hidden from users and travelers. Traffic slowing as westbound traffic transitions from rural highway to urban environment.			
3S	Event Center Site Redevelopment	Vacant land between Oak Street and Event Center	Comprehensive redevelopment envisioning event center as a major regional destination with conveniences and amenities within easy walking distance. Concept includes hotels, adjacent restaurants, and a variety of land use types such as housing, office space, and flex buildings. Additional site access includes a street aligned with Willis Way. Site amenities include paths, a detention feature, and preservation of major grove of trees with a nature path.	Capitalizing on major community investment by creating a regional destination and a walking distance environment. Providing a unique opportunity for a variety of development types.			