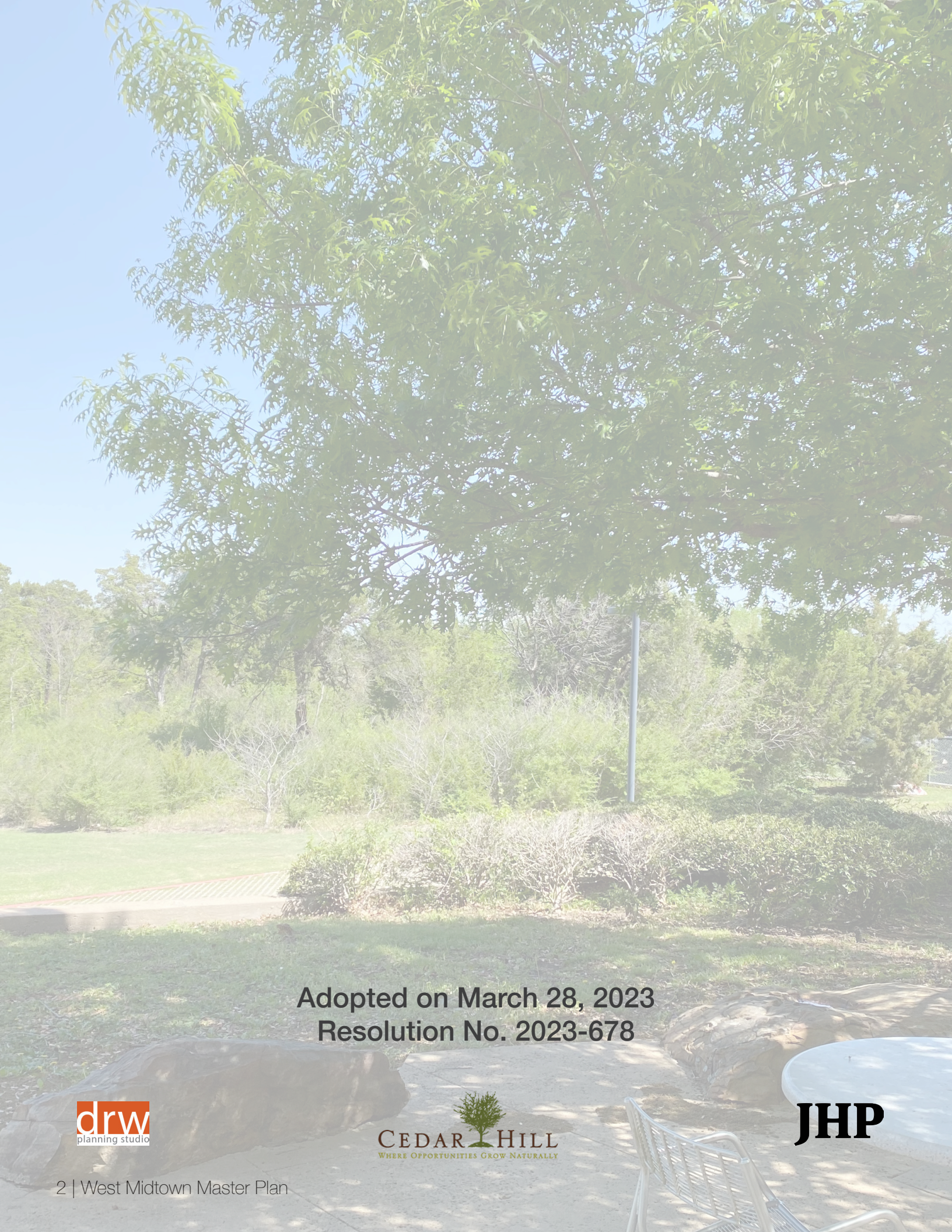


West Midtown Master Plan City of Cedar Hill

March 2023



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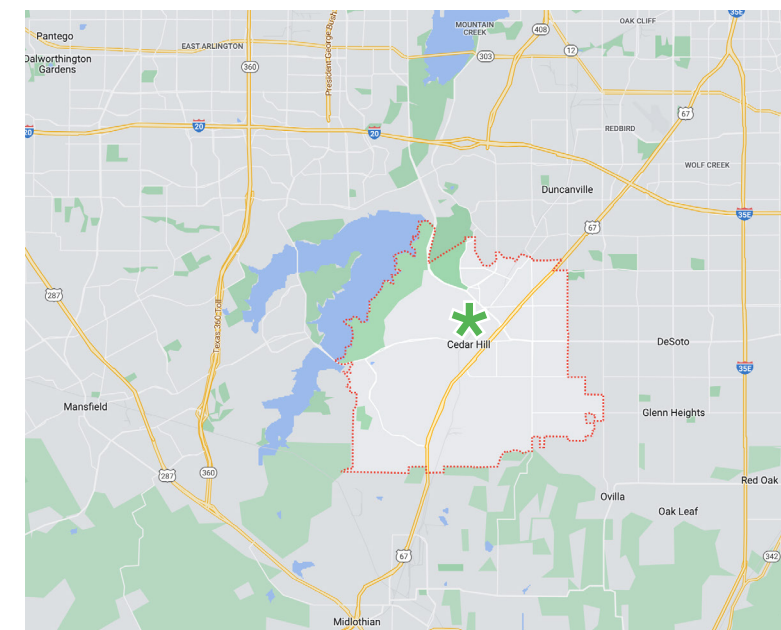




Introduction

Plan Purpose

The rolling terrain and natural elements in the West Midtown area, combined with its central location between downtown and the Government Center provide an unmatched opportunity to showcase development that embodies Cedar Hill’s philosophy of creating places “where opportunities grow naturally.” This plan provides a framework to create a cohesive district in this very strategic location that has a distinct sense of place and builds upon natural assets and significant government investment. Voters approved funds to build a new Signature Park and library in the district as part of the 2017 Bond Program.



These civic assets will anchor a new walkable mixed-use district and act as a catalyst for future development. The vision is for a district that acts as a gathering place and cultural hub, while providing a range of housing options and economic opportunities. This plan lays the groundwork to fully leverage both these investments, ensure that they complement each other, and outline development parameters that will create a walkable, memorable place that could only happen in Cedar Hill.

West Midtown is located in the heart of Cedar Hill

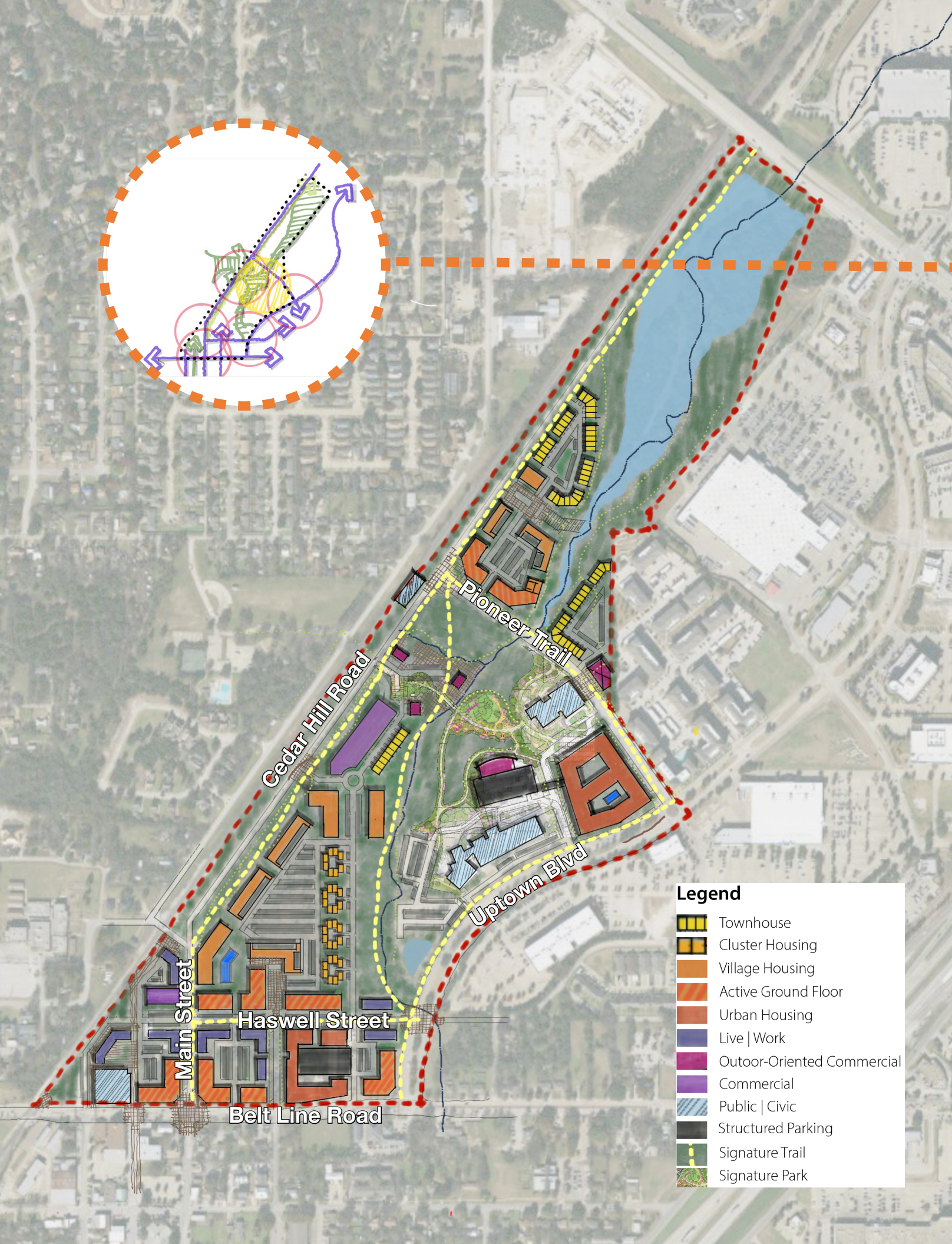
How to Use this Plan

This plan is a guidebook for the development of the West Midtown area. While the plan itself does not serve as enforceable development regulations, it does provide clear guidance on the nature and type of regulations that will be necessary to implement this vision. These guidelines should be used as the foundation for tailor-made zoning regulations that should be put in place for the West Midtown area. Additionally, this plan provides guidance on important actions that will be necessary to ensure that the vision laid out through this process, becomes a reality.

Vision Summary and Implementation

Urban Design Influences

- The site can serve as the intersection between nature and downtown, by building on downtown connections to the south and connecting the street grid into the open space and trail system
- The center of the site will be anchored by a civic hub that will provide a variety of active destinations
- Access to the site should be via both open space and mobility gateways
- There is a need to open the site up—both through direct access and increased visibility into the site—in order to create a more permeable and accessible place



Today, the West Midtown area is largely open space marked by rolling terrain and dense vegetation in some areas. It is a bucolic setting that embodies Cedar Hill's value of the natural environment and the city's distinctive natural heritage in DFW. Existing development includes the Government Center, as well as smaller scale development in the area's southern portion along Belt Line Road and Main Street. However, major investment by the City of Cedar Hill is slated to create a dramatic hub of activity at the center of the area, with the development of a signature park, and innovative library, and the nexus of an expansive trail system. These projects present an opportunity to build a district unique to Cedar Hill—and DFW—that blends amazing natural features, recreational opportunities, and a vibrant mix of pedestrian-oriented and outdoor-oriented uses.

This plan illustrates one possible scenario that follows three fundamental underlying objectives that serve as a foundation for this vision:

- Respect and incorporate the natural environment into development;
- Build strong connections to the civic hub that anchors the district; and
- Extend the scale and pattern of development of downtown northward.

Figure 1. Master Plan Diagram [opposite page]

This drawing is for illustrative purposes only. It represents one potential development scenario to achieve the vision. It is not a regulatory document. It is only a tool for visualizing potential development in the West Midtown Master Plan.

Implementation

This plan lays out a vision for the West Midtown area and provides a possible development scenario of how that vision may be built out. There are numerous development opportunities that could achieve the same end of creating a memorable development hub that capitalizes on Cedar Hill’s investment in public assets on the site, while maintaining a clear connection with the natural environment. Successfully implementing this vision will require steps taken by both the public and private sectors. This section identifies the priority actions that need to be taken in order to set the course for development in the area that is consistent with this plan, and ensure that this document does not just sit on a shelf, but becomes a reality.

Priority 1 Align Development Regulations with the Vision

One of the initial drivers of this plan was to ensure a cohesive development vision for the site. The most effective way to ensure success of this objective is to layout the development requirements for the whole district in a regulatory document that will govern development of all properties located within the district. Key action items are:

- Action 1 Draft development regulations based upon guidance provided in this plan to ensure a vibrant mix of uses on site
- Action 2 Seek public input on draft zoning recommendations to further tailor the regulations to meet the community’s standards and ensure that they are clear and easily implemented
- Action 3 Adopt a unified planned development district for West Midtown

Priority 2 Explore Economic Support for Public Priorities

While this plan strove to present a development scenario that acknowledged some of the market limitations that were expressed through our discussion, a detailed market analysis identifying future demand was not conducted. As such certain priorities outlined in this plan may be ahead of what the market would typically bear. In these cases, the City will need to make a determination on what items are a critical path to achieving the public objectives outlined in this plan and worthy of additional investment. Key action items are:

- Action 1 Commission detailed market study to better understand gaps in retail market
- Action 2 Incentivize retail and active ground floor uses based upon a detailed market understanding
- Action 3 Proactively seek and attract outdoor-oriented restaurant and entertainment uses and incentivize their development if necessary

Priority 3 Make Supportive Transportation Improvements

Laying the groundwork for the transportation network is a critical step to set the desired development pattern and ensure a high level of connectivity to, through, and within the site. Key action items are:

- Action 1 Complete the trail system through the site
- Action 2 Extend Haswell Street to Main Street
- Action 3 Reserve rights-of-way for a walkable street grid or put requirements in place that will require the dedication and development of these streets as development unfolds, and provide flexibility in the alignment of the street while maintaining a walkable scale

Priority 4 Support Other Public Infrastructure and Amenities

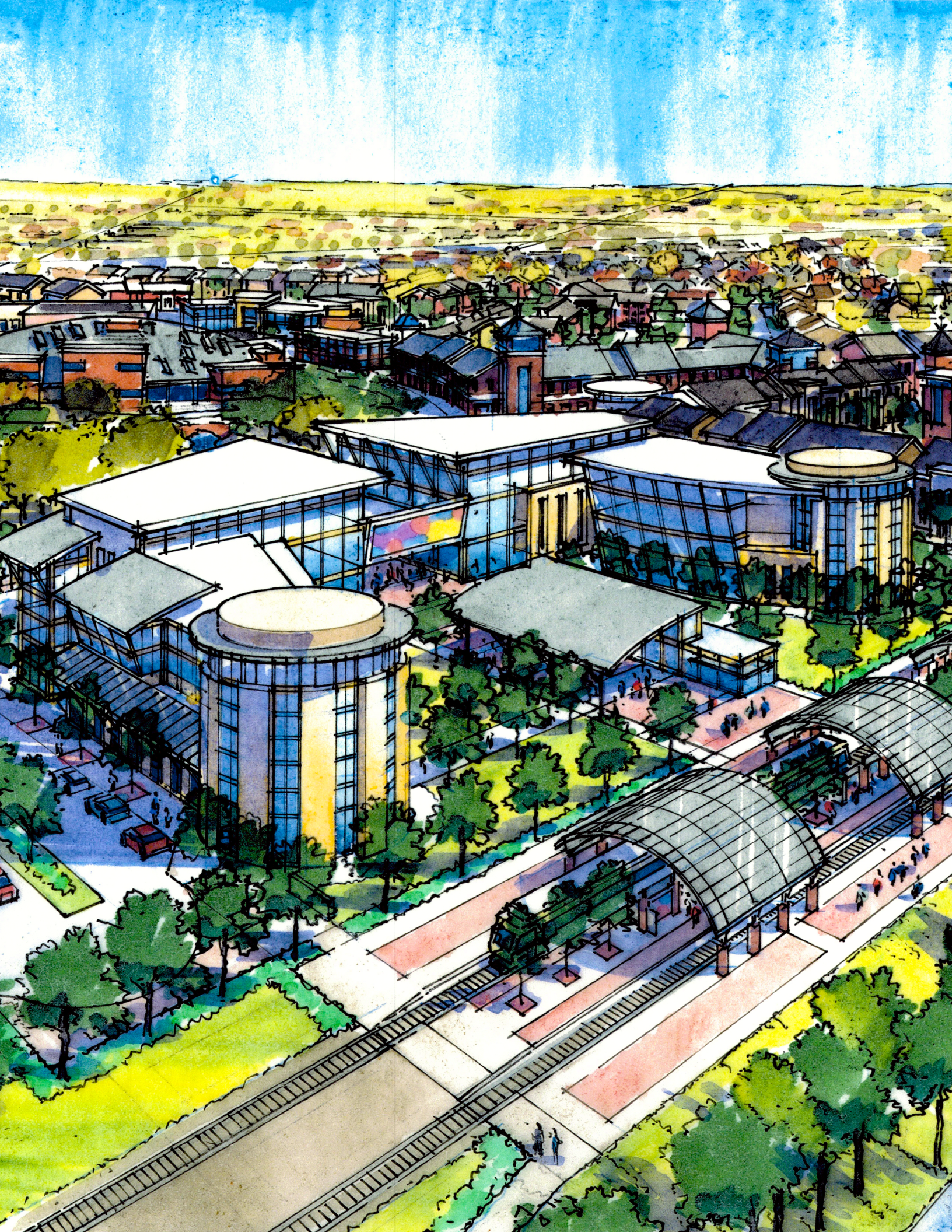
Prioritizing capital projects to support proposed development outlined in the vision will align the development of infrastructure and amenities with the build out of the vision. This will also aid in establishing the desired development pattern and provide for orderly development.

- Action 1 Develop a capital needs inventory for the development of this vision with associated costs for anticipated improvements such as: a potential shared parking structure; extension of utilities; and site infrastructure such as drainage and streets
- Action 2 Identify appropriate phasing of improvements and infrastructure expenses that may be a cost prohibitive barrier to development
- Action 3 Explore development agreements with private development partners to identify parameters for development and provision of needed infrastructure

Priority 5 Monitor Progress of Plan Implementation

Plans should be dynamic. A monitoring program is needed to continually track progress of the implementation of the West Midtown Master Plan and identify adjustments to implementation as needed. The City of Cedar Hill should track plan successes as well as resulting development and report periodically on progress, as well as assess where and when adjustments might be necessary.

- Action 1 Track and report on development activity, including amount and type of development, as well as completion of actions in support of vision development.



Background

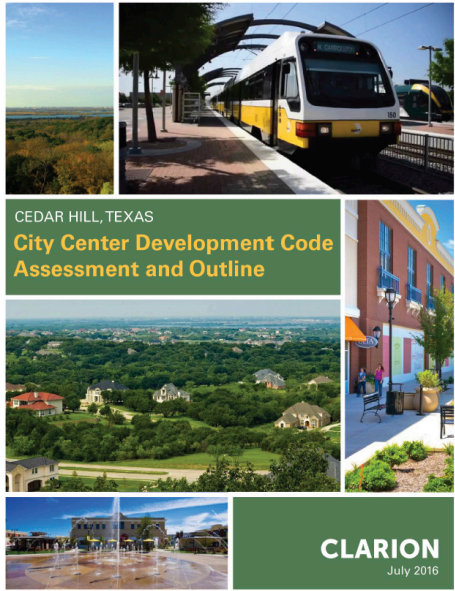
Prior Planning Efforts

A number of relevant studies provide the policy context relating to the West Midtown Area. These studies provide important context regarding the evolution of planning and policy direction for the area. This small area plan is an extension of these prior discussions and provides more detailed refinement of site development opportunities in West Midtown.



City Center Plan

In 2010, the City Center Vision outlined a series of three complementary districts—Uptown, Midtown, and Old Town—connected by a supportive mobility network. General direction for Midtown defined a set of urban form subdistricts that establish the character of desired development at the time: Urban Center, Urban General – Midtown/Uptown, Urban General – Old Town, and Urban Neighborhood 1.



Additionally, a 2016 assessment outlined possible provisions for a new City Center Development Code to implement the City Center Development Plan. The assessment recommended a range of new zoning requirements to achieve the plans revision, including:

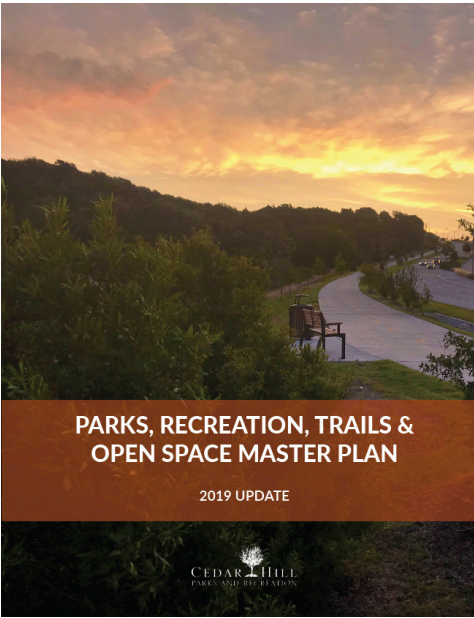
- New zoning districts that better match the policy goals of the City Center Development Plan;
- An expanded list of allowed uses to achieve the plan’s intended diverse use mix;
- New building and streetscape design standards to enhance existing character and ensure adequate connections to and through City Center; and
- An improved organization and format to ensure that the City Center Development Plan is user-friendly.



Downtown Complete Streets

In 2020, a set of Complete Streets Guidelines for downtown was developed to “provide direction and policy for the future development of downtown Cedar Hill.” These guidelines served as a manual for the development within the rights-of-way in downtown. They were intended to be adaptable and evolve based on best practices in the industry.

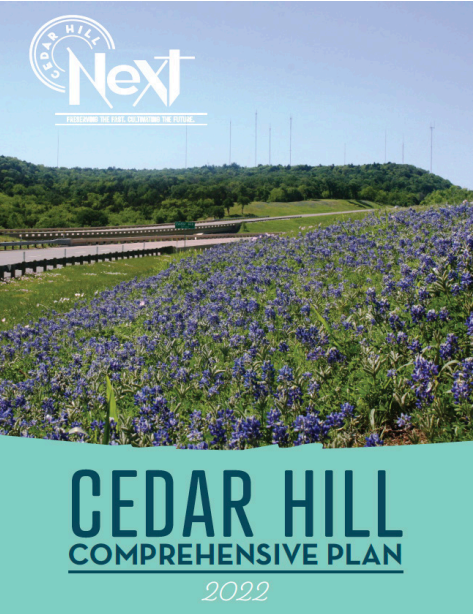
While the Complete Streets plan does not include any rights-of-way within the West Midtown study boundaries, they are a guiding document for streets immediately south of Beltline Road that connect directly into the site from the south and should be considered as part of the policy context guiding the work of the current planning effort of West Midtown.



Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan

A 2019 update to the Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Master Plan was built upon the prior 2012 master plan that outlined three key concepts: a city within a park, 20% open space, and nature/urban interface.

Parks assets play a significant role on the West Midtown site. In addition to the Signature Park, a major open space anchor for West Midtown now under design—the site is also a hub for the trail network in Cedar Hill. Access from the site will be available to most of the major core trails that will connect throughout the city and the regional trail network that they ultimately link to.

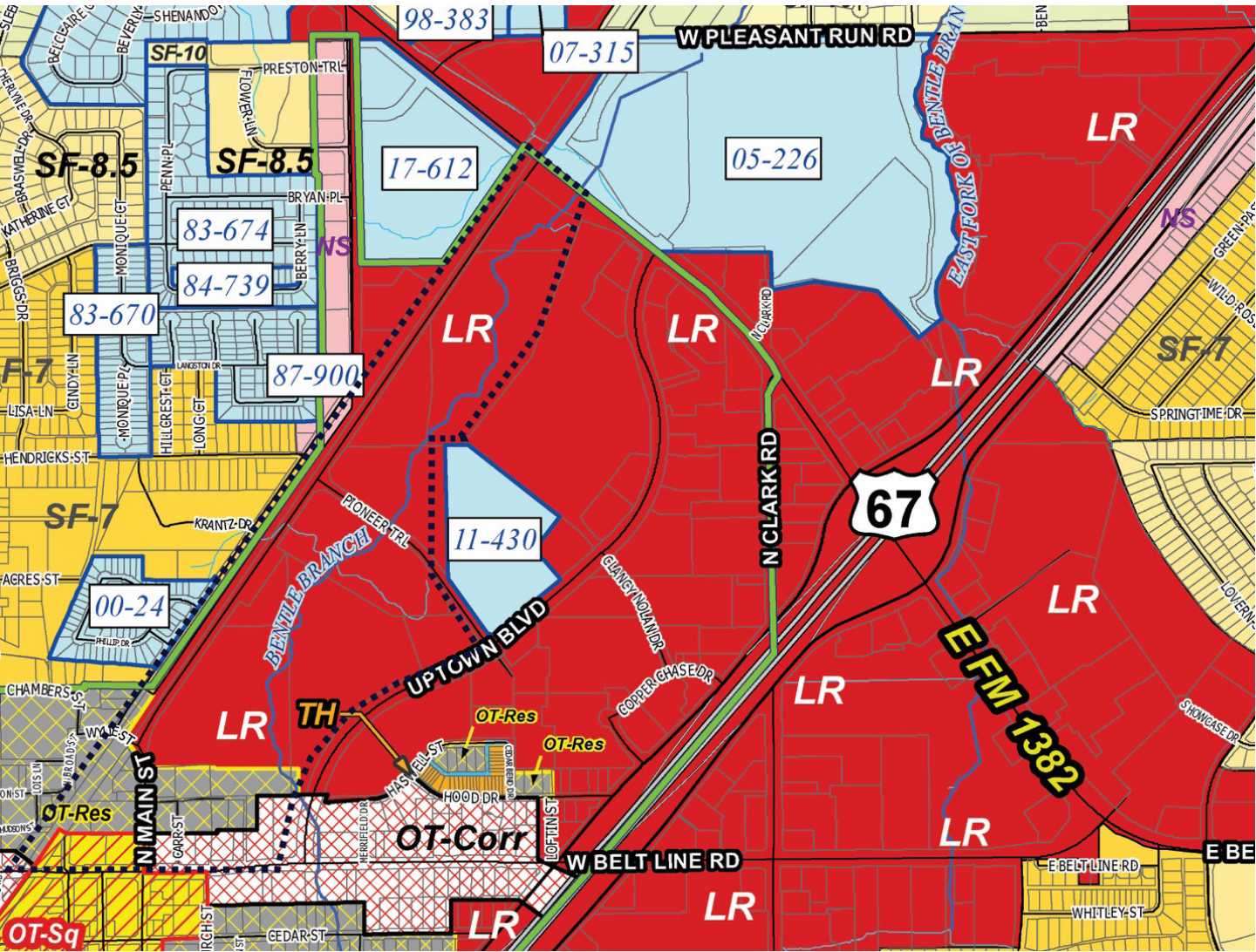


Cedar Hill Next

Cedar Hill Next is the City’s 2022 update to its Comprehensive Plan. The site is located in the Midtown area of Cedar Hill, which is described as:

Similar to its Historic Downtown counterpart to the south, this Place Type features a mix of uses offering opportunities to live, shop, work and play all in the same neighborhood. However, the building scale is much larger, and the character of development is contemporary. Blocks and streets are also designed to promote pedestrian activity with wide sidewalks and parking that is only accommodated with on-street parking, structured parking, and shared rear lots. The focal point is major civic institutions, including the Government Center, the new state-of-the-art library, and the Signature Park and trail. Land uses in Midtown should include those that promote active engagement to facilitate a robust, pedestrian-friendly environment. To accomplish this, ground level uses should include experiential retail, dining, and cultural venues, though they may not be exclusively found on the ground floor. Office spaces that do not lend themselves to heavy foot traffic should be located above the ground level. Stacked residential units are located above commercial uses. Formal public spaces including green spaces, public art and street furniture should be located throughout the area. The height of buildings typically does not exceed five stories with exceptions for open space conservation. The compact, walkable environment and mix of residential and non-residential uses support multiple modes of transportation and make the area transit-ready if commuter rail service should become available.

Current Zoning Summary



West Midtown has a combination of zoning classifications that are applicable to the site. The bulk of the site is zoned LR-Local Retail, with the southern portions zoned a combination of OT-Res, OT Corr, and OT-Sq. The Uptown Overlay applies to the whole site. Zoning classifications are summarized below:

LR-Local Retail District

The “LR” district is intended to provide areas for neighborhood, and / or local shopping facilities for retail sales of goods and services, including convenience stores, shopping centers and regional malls, serving the entire community, but does not include wholesaling or warehousing. This district should be located along or at the intersection of major collectors or thoroughfares to accommodate higher traffic volumes and should utilize landscaping and buffering requirements. Structures should be limited in height and mass to be compatible with area residential structures and masonry walls should be required adjacent to residentially zoned property.

OT-Old Town District

The “OT”, Old Town District is intended to create a zoning district that would be divided into three (3) sub-districts. Each sub-district would have a distinct purpose and have a special criteria to achieve the desired land use pattern which would facilitate enhancement and revitalization of the original old town area’s turn-of-the-century architecture and the Texas small town character. The purpose of this district will be to serve as the focal point of the community and the city, while providing for a blending of mixed land uses to create a defined area. This district may accommodate greater development intensity (than allowed elsewhere in the city) as a result of coordinated review requirements and special development standards. The district is

Current Development Standards: General Summary

District	Max. Density	Min. Lot Area	Min. Lot Width	Min. Lot Depth	Min. Front Yard	Min. Side Yard	Min. Rear Yard	Max. Height	Special Standards
LR	---	None	None	None	20 ‘	None; 20’ with residential adjacency	20’	6 stories; 3:1 setback above 2 stories	
OT-Sq	None	None	None	None	Match existing or site plan	Match existing or site plan	Match existing or site plan	Within 12’ of adjacent buildings on same block	Yes
OT-Corr	None	5,000 sf	50’	None	20’	5’/15’ with residential adjacency	0’/20’ with residential adjacency	2 stories or 7’ variation of other structures	Yes
OT-Res	14 dua	3,000 sf	25’	100’	20’	0’/10’ or 15’ from side street	15’	2 stories	Yes
UT	Base zoning	Base zoning	Base Zoning	Base Zoning	10’ for ROW < 65’	0’ for blds. < 10,000 sf /50’ with residential adjacency	0’ /20’ for blds. < 10,000 sf with residential adjacency	Base Zoning	Yes

also established to encourage and emphasize pedestrian-oriented activities and uses such as outdoor malls, festival marketplaces and similar activities, to create a truly vital environment, such that the district reflects the center of social, economic and political functions in the city.

Development proposed within the Old Town District is required to be consistent with sub-districts created for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of the Old Town Plan. The sub-districts correspond to the “Old Town Concept” discussed in the City of Cedar Hill’s Comprehensive Plan. Boundaries for the sub-districts are identified in this section as a part of this ordinance and recorded on the City’s official zoning map. The following sub-districts are established:

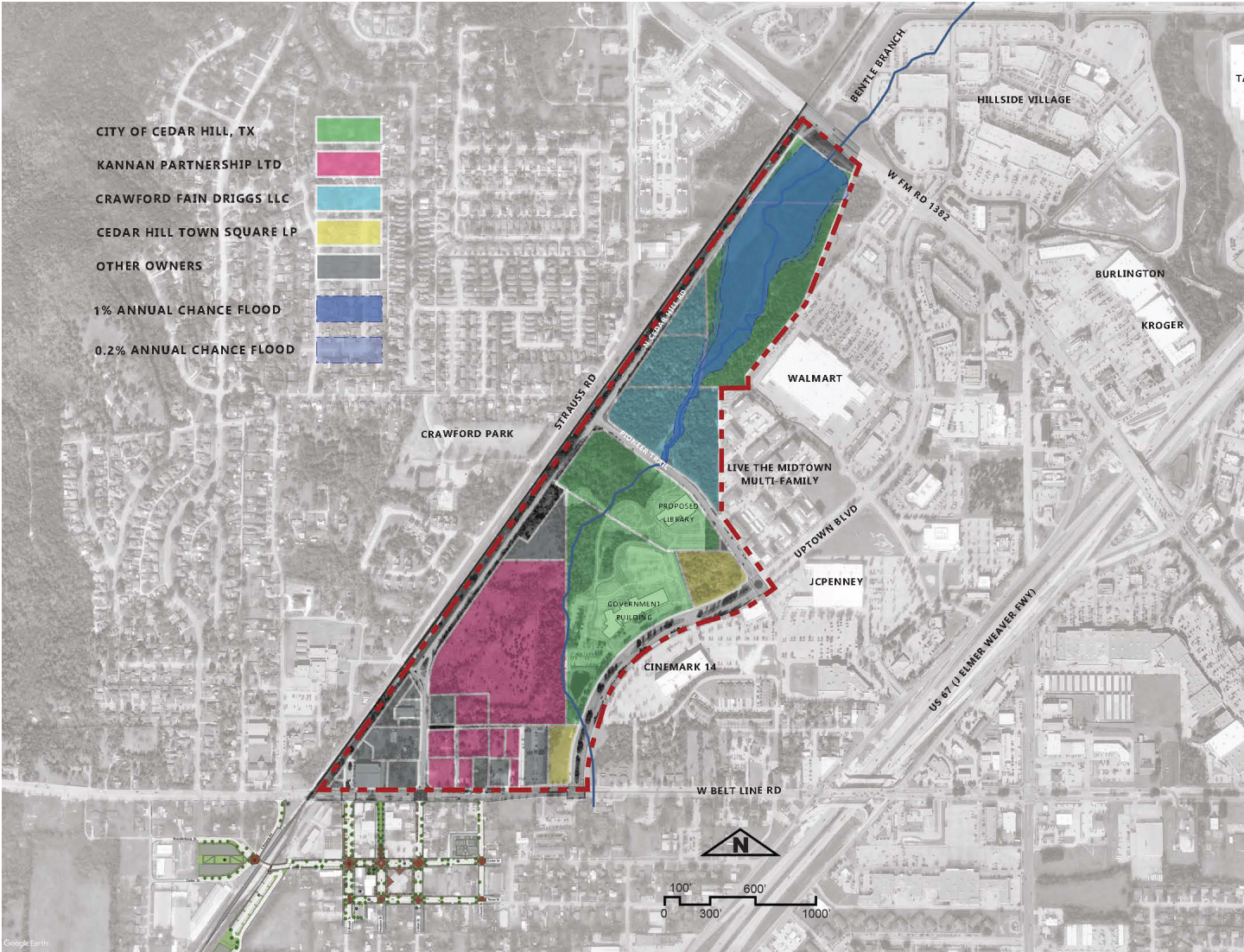
- Old Town Square Sub-District: A primarily retail/office district with the opportunity for second story residential, that is primarily for the development of the core of the Old Town District “Retail Core Concept.” Development within this sub-district should have a site orientation, which creates a focal point within the Old Town District, and should take advantage of environmental amenities, encourage pedestrian traffic and connection between uses. The boundaries of this sub-district shall be established on the Zoning Map consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Old Town Corridor Sub-District: A retail/office sub-district that is primarily for retail and office uses that meets the convenience needs of the community. The boundaries of this sub-district shall be established through the Zoning Map.
- Old Town Residential Sub-District: This sub-district is intended primarily for residential uses that provide a buffer between the nonresidential uses of the Old Town District and lower density residential uses around it. Certain nonresidential uses that are compatible to the residential uses may be allowed in this sub-district through an approved Conditional Use Permit. The boundaries of this sub-district shall be established through the Zoning Map.
- While there are general site orientation and layout standards as well as parking standards that apply to the whole district, established subdistricts provide specific requirements for each subdistrict.

Uptown Overlay: This is an overlay district intended to guide the development of the Uptown area to create a thriving mixed-use area that builds on, and enhances, Cedar Hill’s unique character as a friendly and family-oriented Texas town. The district regulations seek to extend the character of the historic downtown into the Uptown area by providing an extension of pedestrian corridor(s) and vehicular circulation with the historic downtown core, and to establish harmony between mixed uses similar to the historic downtown. The regulations are intended to accommodate contemporary development needs for retail and commercial uses.

Site Context

Ownership

The majority of the site is owned by four entities: the City of Cedar Hill, Kannan Partnership, Crawford Fain Driggs, and Cedar Hill Town Square. Additional ownership is primarily located on the southern portions of the site. A map showing the location of ownership on this site is below.



West Midtown ownership map

Floodplain and Topographic Features

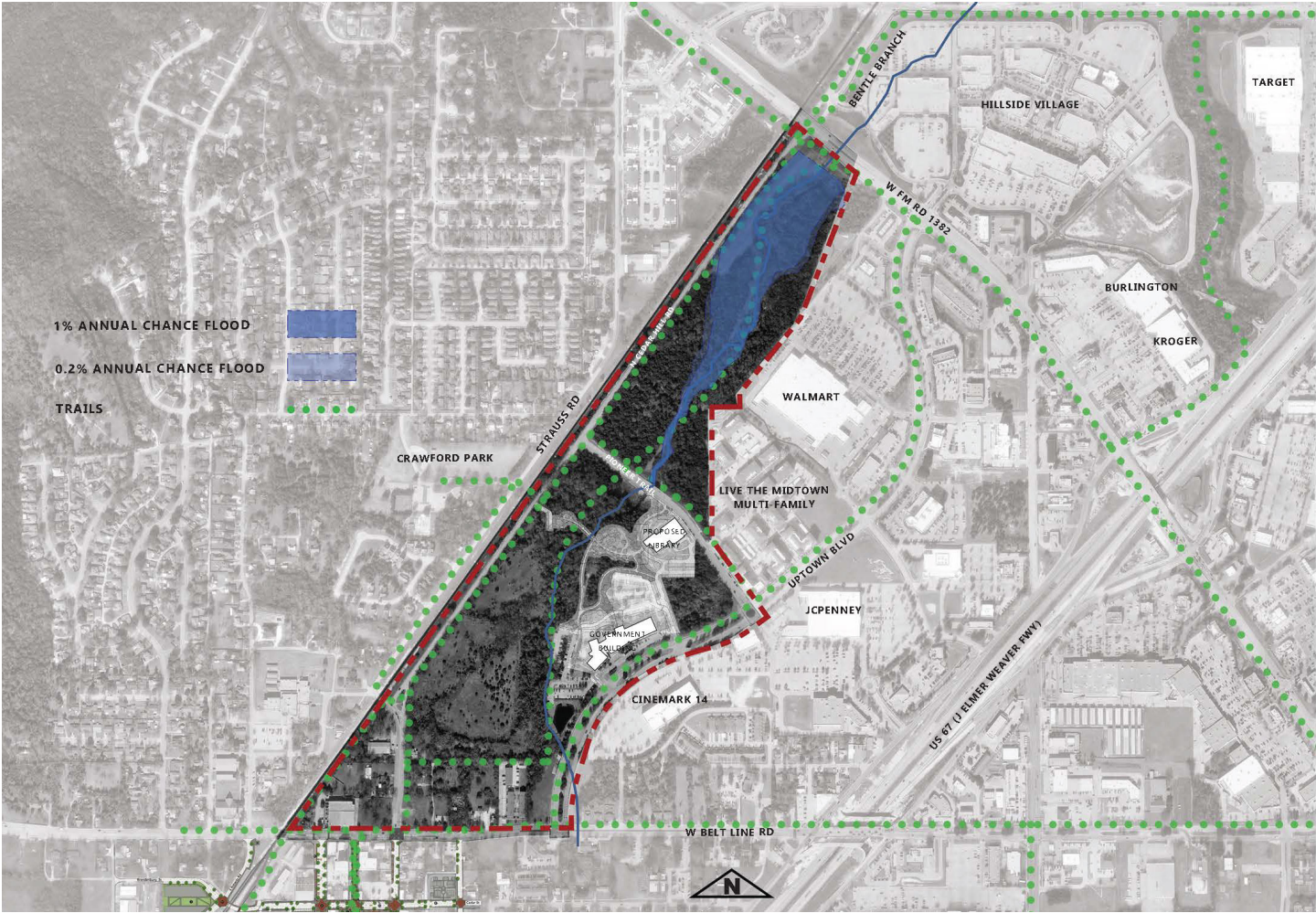
The site has rolling hills and is bisecting by floodplain associated with Bentle Branch. While there are significant slopes on part of the site, the areas generally in the southwest portions of the site are more flat.



West Midtown floodplain and topographic map.

Trail Connectivity

The relationship between on-site trails and the larger city and regional trail network provides a hub for bike and pedestrian connections at the doorstep of any development that occurs on the site and will be a large character driver for the site. Additionally, as part of the Downtown Complete Streets Plan, a proposed “Downtown Patio” along Houston Street from Belt Line to Cedar provides another important connection opportunity for pedestrians.



Proposed trail network on and adjacent to the site.

City Investment

Voters approved \$20M for a new public library in the 2017 bond program. The library will have a significant function as a gathering and event space, serving as a major attraction and anchor for the district as a community hub with space programmed for community events. The library will be strongly connected to the Signature Park.

The Signature Park was funded through \$5M of 2017 bond funds for the initial phase of this innovative park. The Signature Park will serve as an innovate hub for social gathering and recreation. Both assets are currently in development. This plan serves to lay the groundwork to fully capitalize on this investment by ensuring compatible and complimentary development.

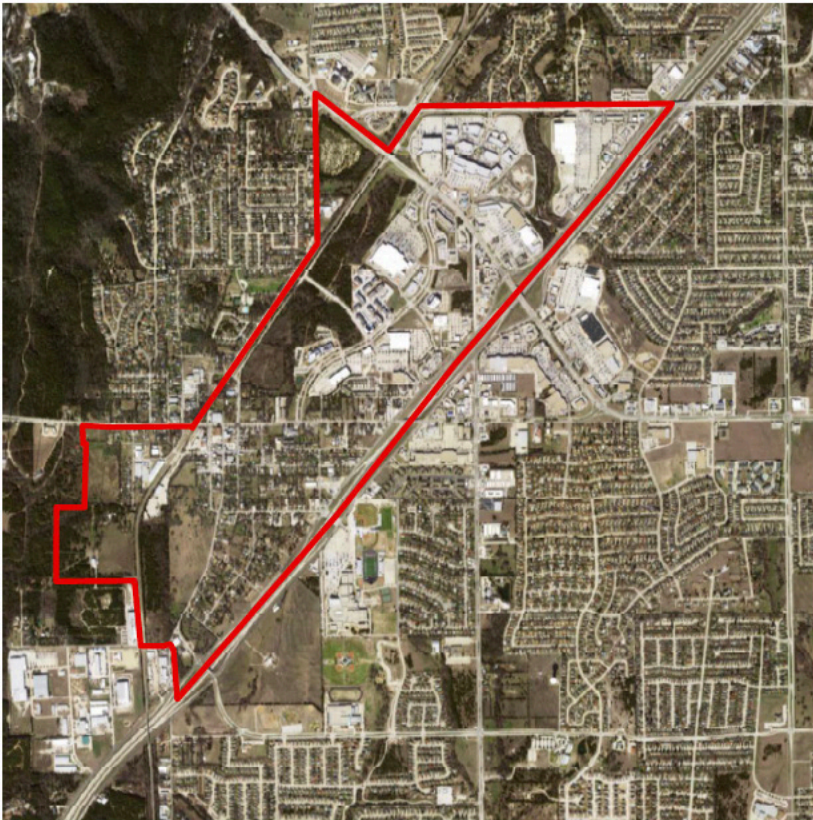
Additionally, the site is also a hub for the trail network in Cedar Hill. Access from the site will be available to most of the major core trails that will connect throughout the city and the regional trail network that they ultimately link to.



Rendering of new library.

Market Context

Over the course of the process, considerations regarding the office, retail and residential markets in Cedar Hill were discussed as part of the background context for this plan. The site is located within the city's Tax Increment Finance Zone #1. The district was established in 2017 to fund the construction of public infrastructure and incentivize private development.



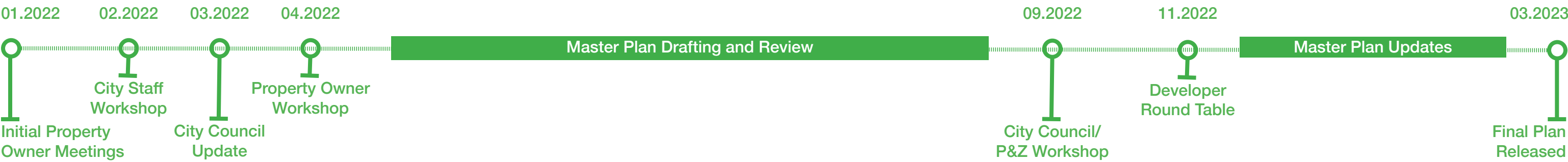
Boundaries of Cedar Hill's Tax Increment Finance Zone #1. Source: David Pettit Economic Development

Existing development in the zone was overwhelmingly commercial in 2021, with \$193M worth of tax value and 276 acres being classified as commercial, and \$6M and 11.4 acres being classified as residential.



Conceptual Design of Commercial Building next to Signature Park Trail Head and Cedar Hill Road --Design by Wes Pool and Norman Patten

Planning Process



This plan was built through a series of conversations and workshops with stakeholders, private property owners, and departmental discussions with the City of Cedar Hill. Over the course of approximately six months input and insight from this dialogue laid the groundwork for the vision that is articulated through this document.

Initial Property Owner Meetings

The City hosted initial conversations with each of the three main private property owners in the study area. The purpose of the meetings was to provide an update on City progress on the Signature Park and Library projects; an overview of the master plan process for the study area; and a discussion about expectations and possibilities for use and development of the study area. Key feedback during those meetings from the property owners include:

General Feedback

- This process might be a good opportunity to re-think the “Midtown” brand
- Property owners would like a product of this effort something that they can use in marketing materials for the property

Access and Mobility

- Think about access to the site from various locations
- Trail/greenbelt should also be a frontage
- Pedestrian access through the site will be important
- Want what is greatest good for City and property owner

Market Considerations

- Having market feasible recommendations is an important outcome of this effort
- Cedar Hill is already over-retailed and does not need additional office space
- However, office market might be a challenge; it would need to be specialty office
- There is a lack of housing supply and there is a 20% premium as a result
- Next generation is thinking differently about housing; ownership is more difficult than rental
- Owner occupied townhomes would be extremely marketable
- High-end surfaced park multifamily is feasible today; structured parking would need subsidy
- High density multifamily is desirable
- Differentiated housing types is a great idea; tuck-under townhouse with multifamily
- High-end senior housing in a rural setting should also be considered

Development and Use Considerations

- Live with a little bit of play as a mix of uses makes sense for the site
- Looking at a shared garage makes sense
- A single, unified PD makes sense

Charrette Outcomes Summary Report

A dry run of the project charrette was conducted that included members of various City departments including the City’s Development Review Committee. Key outcomes from that activity helped shape the final approach to the Stakeholder Charrette and provided the following specific feedback for the site:

- Possible additional anchor of performing arts center
- Variety of housing types and scales
- Retail/restaurant options, with outdoor spaces
- Range of lodging ideas
- Variety of parking options
- Placement of possible transit stop
- Trail as a spine for development
- The southern end as an extension of downtown, and the area near Pioneer Trail building more directly from Library and Park

A stakeholder charette was subsequently conducted, with attendees representing various property interest within the study area, as well as various facets of the City including political leadership. The charrette focused on understanding property owner perspectives relating to the location and type of development; connections to trails and open space; access to and from the site; and overall desired general character of the area once it is complete. Key common themes from the property owner feedback include:

- Downtown could grow north across Belt Line Road, and there are opportunities for retail options in this area;
- Attractions such as Chicken N Pickle or Katy Trail Ice House might be appropriate for parts of the site;
- Consider extending Haswell Street and connecting across Uptown Boulevard; and
- Preferred residential options outlined by property owners included primarily town house and multifamily options.



West Midtown Master Plan

Site Design: The priorities that drive overall layout of streets and development

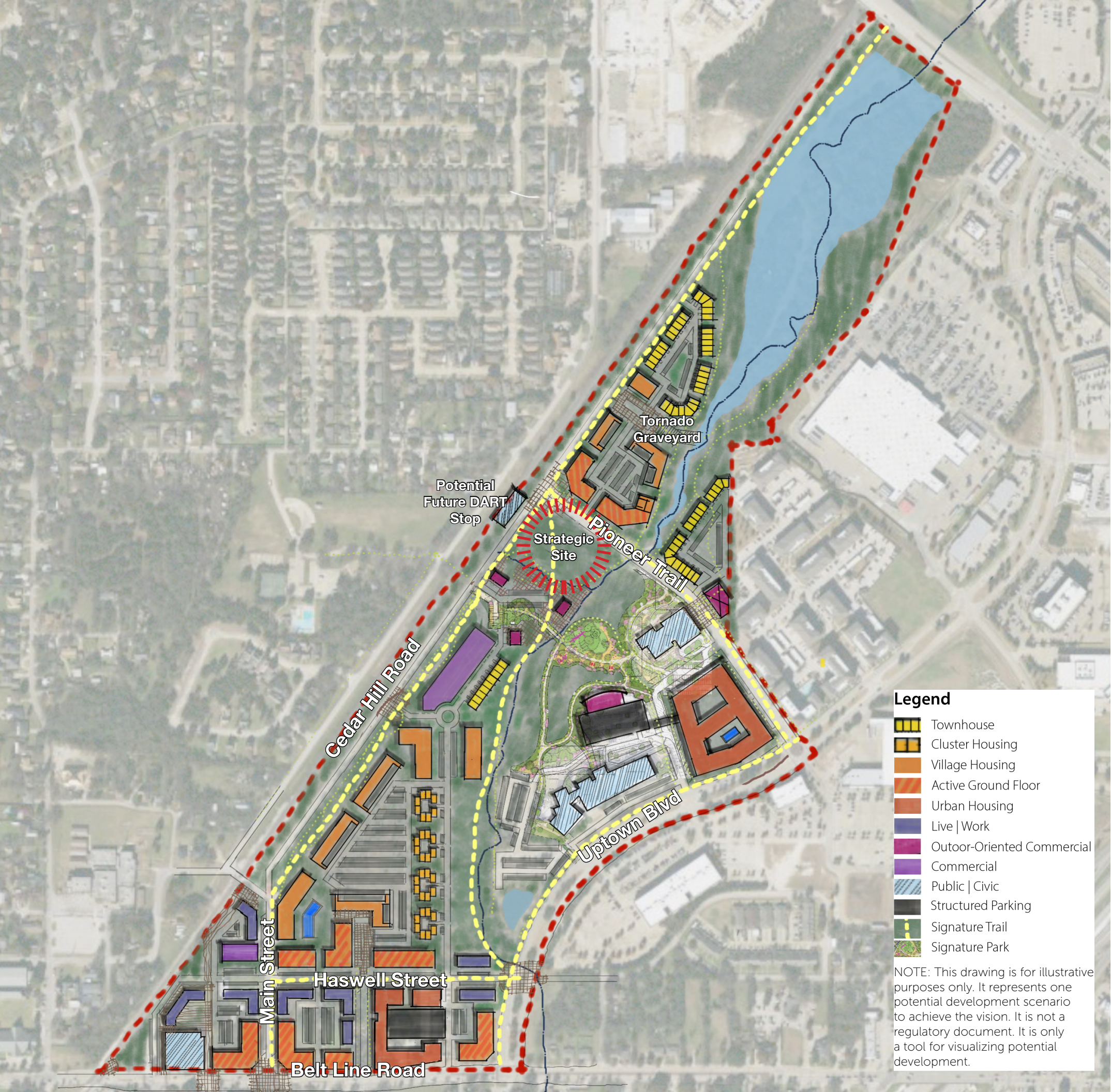
- Site layout and parking design respects land and highlights natural features
- Development patterns for the southern portion of the site are an extension of downtown
- Development pattern along and near Pioneer Trail build off civic anchors
- Street layout supports pedestrian activity [connected streets, block perimeter, pedestrian paseos]
- Trail network serves as a front door for all development along it
- Parking strategy that minimizes surface parking through use of shared parking, structured, on-street parking
- Development pattern is transit ready by providing convenient access to possible commuter rail stop
- City-owned site adjacent to the Library and Signature Park is a strategic opportunity, which should be further studied as development unfolds

Development: Scale, use mix and arrangement that promote a pedestrian environment

- Open space is a central element throughout the site
- Site provides a mix of pedestrian-friendly live, work, play uses, along with a variety of housing options
- Scale of development is appropriate and compatible with the comprehensive plan

Character and placemaking: The elements that make the area unique and special

- Architecture that compliments Library and Signature Park
- Tornado Graveyard is memorialized
- Gateways provide a sense of arrival into the district
- Unique “moments” designed into the site, such as stairways, pocket parks, and gathering spaces
- Details develop specific character for Midtown as well as reflect Cedar Hill’s overall character
 - Paving materials [sidewalks, crosswalks, intersections]
 - Landscape design and plant materials
 - Public art
 - Street amenities [pedestrian lights, trash receptacles, benches]
 - Streetlights
 - Street intersections
 - Street signs and wayfinding signs
 - Trail markings



Open Space

Objective: Open space and natural features are a central organizing element for the district.

Key Strategies to Achieve this Objective:

- Preserve floodplain and significant slopes
- Provide trail and pedestrian connectivity through the site and to downtown
- Provide greenbelt along Cedar Hill Road from Main Street to west trailhead
- Explore crossing opportunities to Crawford Park to the west under the railroad tracks
- Acknowledge and preserve tornado graveyard
- Ensure private development provides open space as well
- Provide connections to Signature Park from private development within the district
- Create a connected network of open space through a hierarchy of spaces, including public, semi-private, and private spaces of varying scales
- Integrate open space development requirements into Planned Development regulations



The overall character of development on-site should be driven by the open space developments underway by the City of Cedar Hill, including the trail and Signature Park.



The trail will provide a ribbon of open space connecting through the site. This should be considered a spine of an open space network with additional private and semi-private open space opportunities reinforcing the emphasis on the natural environment for the character of development.

Additional open space opportunities that can augment the trail and Signature Park:



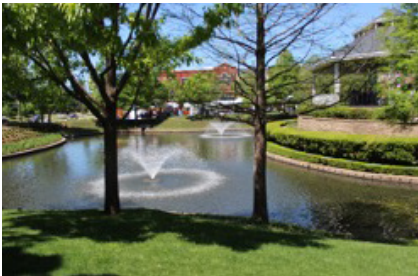
Private and Semi-private Open Space

Access to the outdoors, open space, and recreational opportunities is an important element of livability and is of particular importance for the West Midtown area given the emphasis on natural surroundings. Open space serves to provide natural relief, improve stormwater runoff, and reduce urban heat, among other benefits. While the Signature Park is a major recreational and open space asset for the community, developments must also provide access to additional open spaces for their residents and tenants. These can take the shape of internal pocket parks or dog parks, plazas or roof decks.



Pedestrian Paseos

To ensure pedestrian access through the site, it is important to provide pathways in addition to a connected street grid. This is particularly important in an area such as West Midtown where topography and natural features can limit the ability to construct streets, especially since maintaining the natural character and integrity is so important to this location. Pedestrian paseos are a tool to provide this level of connectivity and provide an opportunity to create unique and special places for pedestrians to move and gather. It is recommended that publicly accessible paseos be provided when block lengths are greater than 500 feet. A pedestrian passage must be a minimum of ten feet wide and can be set off with distinctive hardscape or heavily landscaped. These spaces also often double as pocket parks as well.



Improved Infrastructure

Utilitarian infrastructure such as drainage basins and retention ponds can be improved to serve as open space assets in addition to their utility function. The detention pond along Uptown Boulevard presents an opportunity to provide a visual landmark, entry gateway, and open space asset for the community.

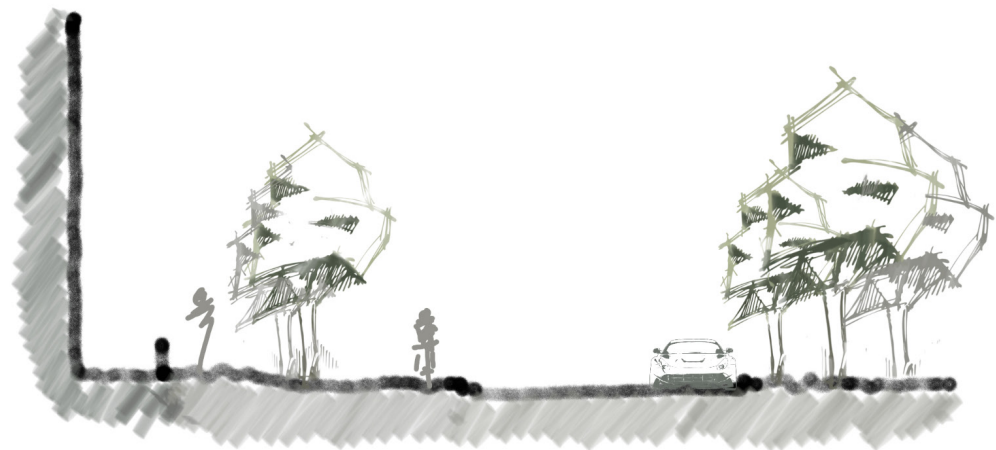




Mobility

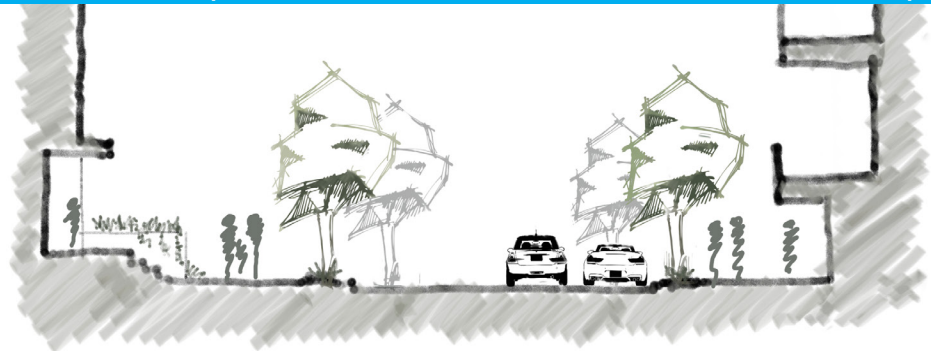
Streetscape Guidelines

Cedar Hill Road



Private	Sidewalk	Plant Zone	Share Use (Meanders)	Travel Way	Plant Zone
	5'	5'	8'	22' 2 lanes	varies'

New Local Streets [Haswell Street Extension + New North-South Streets]



Private	Sidewalk	Plant Zone	Parking	Travel Way	Parking	Plant Zone	Shared Use	Private
	5'	5'	8'	22' 2 lanes	8'	5'	10'	

Streetscape Enhancements [Uptown Boulevard, Belt Line Road, Pioneer Trail]



Street	Parking	Plant Zone	Sidewalk	Private
	8'	5'	5'-10'	

Note: The elements depicted in these cross sections are designed to foster an engaging environment along the street. The width and locations of the travel aisles, sidewalks, plant zones, and shared use paths may vary when construction plans are developed.

Objective: Improve access to the interior of the site and create multi-modal connections.

Key Strategies to Achieve this Objective:

- Extend Haswell Street to Main Street to create a connection to retail to the east and provide direct access from Uptown Boulevard
- Continue downtown grid up to Haswell to unify to downtown and West Midtown
- Provide additional north-south connection between Haswell Extension and Cedar Hill Road
- Provide pedestrian crossings of the creek to improve east-west connectivity within the site
- Implement standards for Main Street, Cedar Hill Road, Uptown Boulevard and Pioneer Trail to provide for desired sidewalk or shared use path widths, along with necessary street amenities
- Consider pilot program to demonstrate streetscape improvements along Uptown Boulevard
- Provide multi-modal crossing at gateways into the district
- Use Planned Development or other development regulations to require development of the street grid to ensure pedestrian scale and character consistent with this plan in concert with private development



Multi-modal connectivity

Incorporating shared use paths along roads through West Midtown increases the role that this area plays as a major hub for bikes and pedestrians throughout the Cedar Hill.

Gateways and enhanced intersections

Using special architectural features can mark major gateways into West Midtown and into significant developments within the community. These features further support the pedestrian orientation of the area, and provide clear guidance on important pathways and connections within the area and to adjacent neighborhoods.

Special lighting, paving patterns, crosswalk design, public art signage and architectural features can create a sense of significance at intersections in West Midtown. Buildings should also acknowledge their location at these important places through the use of special architectural design, as well as locating social uses such as sidewalk cafes and plazas adjacent to important intersections.



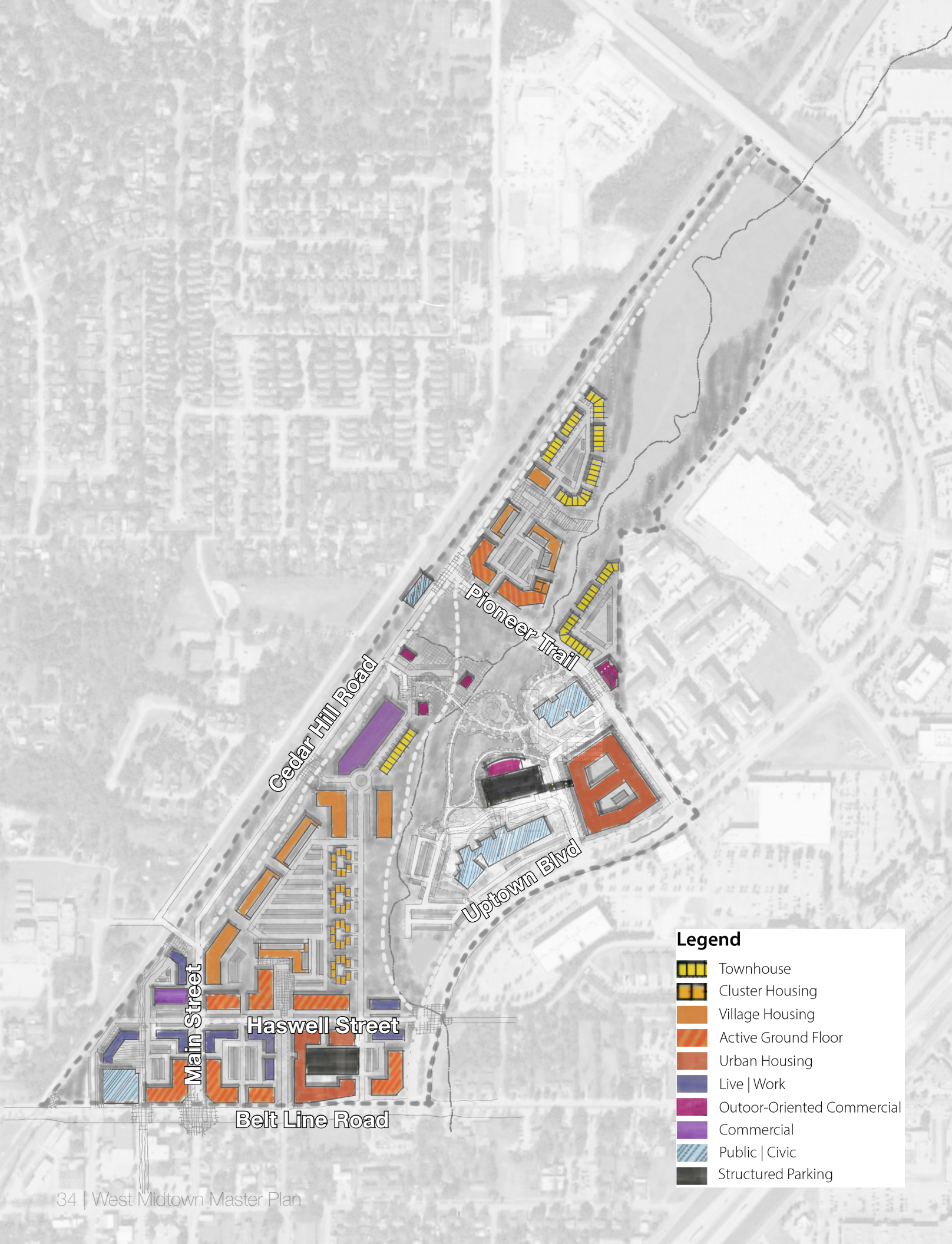
Development Mix and Zoning Framework

Objective: Create a dynamic mix of pedestrian-oriented uses

Key Strategies to Achieve this Objective:

- Development transition should respect scale and development pattern of downtown
- Provide active ground floor uses along Belt Line Road
- Create a residential core on the interior of the site
- Cap the number of multifamily stacked units at 850 units maximum
- Planned Development regulations should incorporate development triggers to ensure that site provides a vibrant mix of uses and array of housing types
- Horizontal and/or vertical mixed-use along the Pioneer Trail corridor
- Explore a shared garage to support private development and public destinations on site
- Minimize the visual presence of parking and encourage shared and on-street parking to reduce the amount of surface parking.

An important consideration voiced by city representatives and stakeholders during the plan development process was giving careful consideration to market realities. The vision illustration represents approximately 1,000 dwelling units in a combination of cluster housing, townhouse, multifamily and mixed-use developments. Commercial and live/work space represents approximately another 300,000 square feet of space. While this amount of commercial would likely be considered more than could be supported solely by residents of West Midtown, a flexible approach to allowing live/work along with some unique destination uses that capitalize on the natural surrounding can help to balance the uses on site. It is important to consider the site in the context of the surrounding retail and adjacent downtown business as well, and how development on this site can contribute to a stronger core for Cedar Hill. A more detailed market study would yield a deeper understanding of the potential development opportunities and build out potential of the site.



Legend	
	Townhouse
	Cluster Housing
	Village Housing
	Active Ground Floor
	Urban Housing
	Live Work
	Outdoor-Oriented Commercial
	Commercial
	Public Civic
	Structured Parking



Ground floor activation
The Belt Line corridor should be prioritized for ground floor active uses such as retail, office, and personal service uses, given its proximity to downtown. However, areas along Pioneer Trail should also pay careful consideration to how the ground floor is treated to provide pedestrian orientation, whether it is through horizontal mixed use, vertical mixed use, or lining residential buildings with the more active residential uses such as gyms, common rooms, and leasing offices.



Capitalizing on views and access to the trail
The hills, creek, and trail system are all assets that set this site apart. These attributes should be maximized to their greatest potential. Buildings should also be oriented to the trail system in order to provide visual connections with the trail, as well as increased activity to improve the perception of safety for trail users.



Focus on the outdoors
Retail and restaurant opportunities that have large outdoor footprints and a blurred separation between indoor and outdoor spaces will contribute to the desired character of the area, building upon the natural surroundings. Examples include outdoor markets, outdoor dining and entertainment venues, as well as outdoor recreation-based entertainment venues.



Parking surface treatment
The visual impact of parking should be minimized. Having parking set behind buildings and using surface treatments that add variety to the ground plane can achieve this objective. Permeable paving materials can also serve to reduce urban heat and improve stormwater runoff.



Distinctive materials can highlight pedestrian crossings, and temporary bollards can be designed into the site to allow for easy conversion of parking areas for use as markets or festivals.

Zoning Concept
The zoning framework is intended to serve as a guide for the development of tailor-made zoning regulations for the West Midtown area. Creating a unified set of zoning regulations and applying them to the site will provide the most unified way to achieve the development vision. This approach will provide predictability to the development environment and eliminate the need for individual developments to seek zoning changes.

The format of this framework outlines an array of development types desired for the West Midtown area, and then applies those development types to various smaller subdistricts within the site.



Park or Open Space
This development type includes parks, green space, trails, and other recreation areas. They may be publicly or privately owned. Buildings are typically limited to pavilions, covered eating or gathering areas, or maintenance facilities.



Civic or Public Building
1-4 stories
This development type includes government buildings such as libraries, government offices, recreation or community centers, police and fire stations and similar civic uses.



Outdoor-Oriented Retail, Restaurant, or Entertainment
1-2 stories
Covered or indoor footprint for the use is limited. The primary seating space is uncovered and outdoors. This development type may include permanent structures that house temporary or seasonal markets.



Commercial
1-5 stories
Typically includes office, retail, restaurant and personal service uses.



Live|Work
1-3 stories
Typically includes office, retail, personal service, or studio space on the ground floor with the proprietor's housing above it. The public commercial space has direct access to the sidewalk.



Townhomes or Rowhouses

12-18 units/acre

Townhomes or rowhouses combine lower maintenance needs with valuable community amenities and an urban location at a lower price point than a traditional single family home in exchange for less privacy and space.

- Single family, attached rowhouses with garage or tuck-under parking from rear alley
- Front-facing with walkable streets
- Small, private patios
- Limited curb cuts along streets

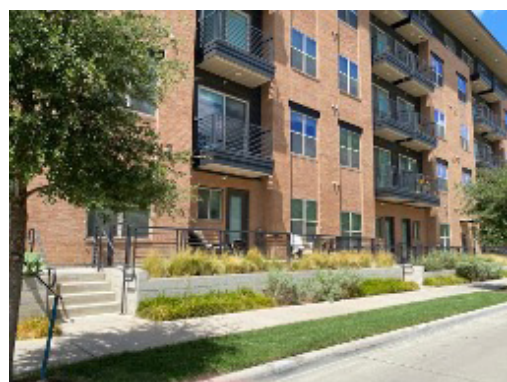


Cluster or Manor Homes

15-22 units/acre

Cluster homes, or Manor homes, are smaller walk-up style multifamily buildings. They fit multiple residences in a mansion-scale structure.

- Smaller multifamily buildings, sometimes clustered around courtyards
- Front-facing with walkable streets
- Two to three stories; walk-up
- Organized with parking courts behind and with parallel on-street parking



Village or Uptown Housing

Type 1: 30-35 units/acre

Village housing provides an urban, pedestrian oriented character while providing some surface parking options.

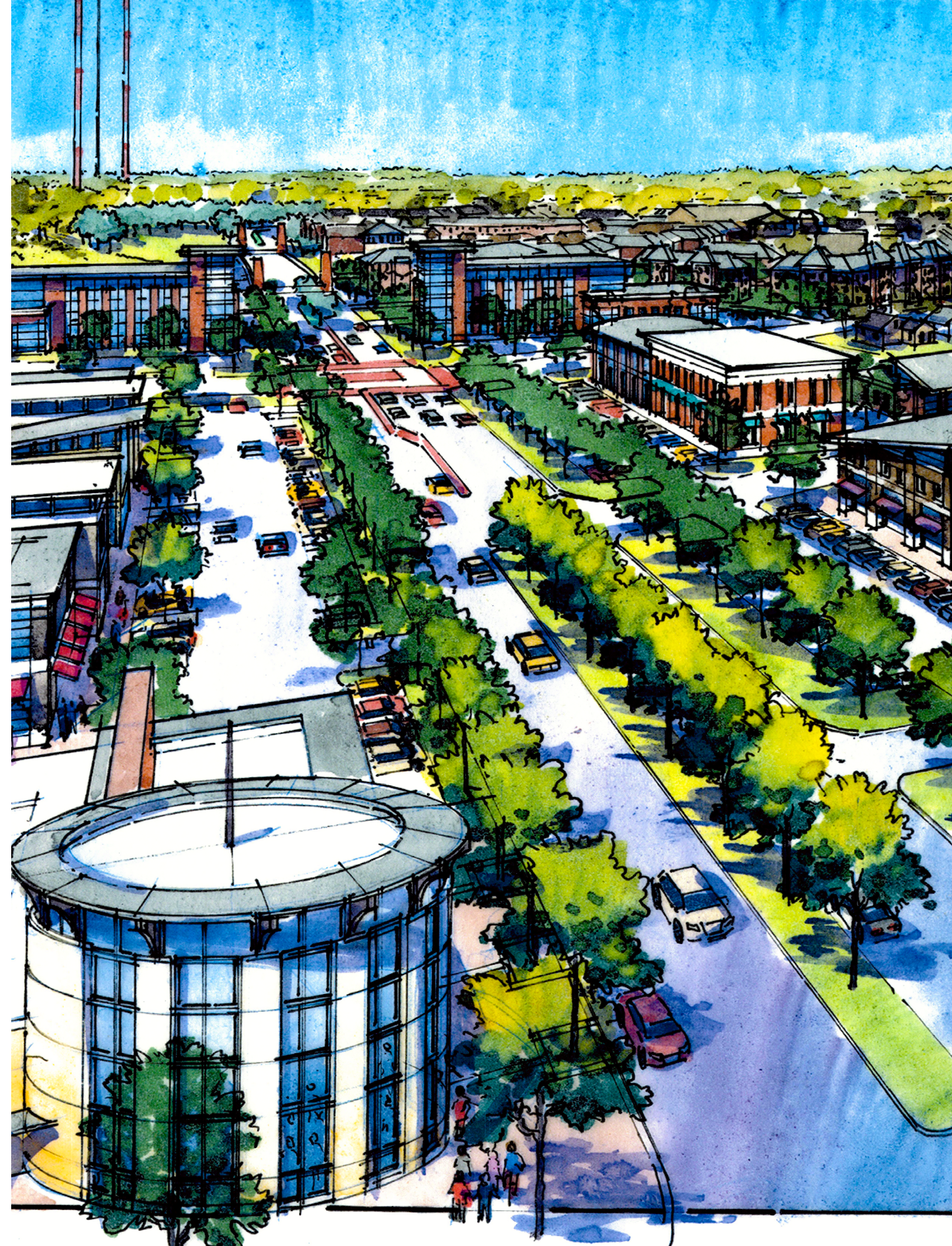
- Multifamily buildings oriented towards streets in a walkable setting
- Typically three or four stories; walk-up or limited elevators
- Corridor style buildings, either open-air or conditioned
- Organized with parking courts behind, and/or tuck-under rear ground floor parking, with parallel on-street parking

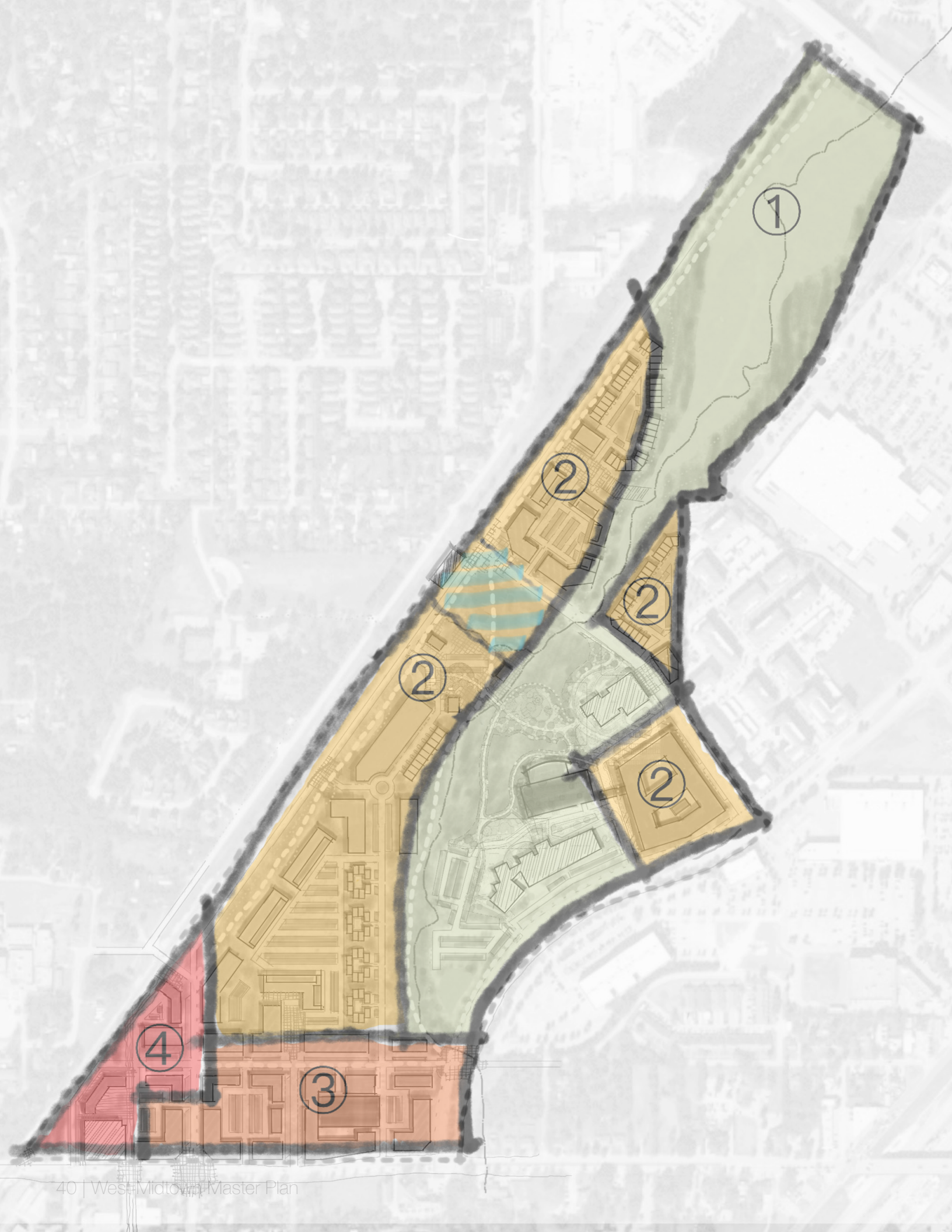


Type 2: 45-80 units/acre

Called the "Texas Donut" Wrap, this is a four story structure in which housing wraps around a central parking structure. This scenario provides ample parking on-site while still hiding parking from street level.

- Four stories of Type VA wood construction
- 5 stories of Type IIIA non-combustible wood construction [Building to this height is dependent upon local fire codes as it is not allowed by all municipalities]
- May also be over one story of podium parking for a total height of six stories Multilevel parking structure (typically concrete)
- Urban Form facing walkable streets





Development Type	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
Park or Open Space	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Civic or Public Building	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Outdoor-Oriented Retail, Restaurant or Entertainment	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Commercial	Prohibited	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Live Work	Prohibited	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Townhomes or Rowhouses	Prohibited	Allowed	Allowed, ground floor retail, restaurant, office or personal service uses required along Belt Line Road	Prohibited
Cluster or Manor Homes	Prohibited	Allowed	Allowed, ground floor retail, restaurant, office or personal service uses required along Belt Line Road	Prohibited
Village or Uptown Housing [Maximum 850 units]	Prohibited	Allowed, with horizontal or vertical mix of uses or structured parking. Uptown, Haswell and Pioneer Trail as pedestrian/retail streets require active uses.	Allowed, with structured or surface parking. Ground floor retail, restaurant, office or personal service uses required along Belt Line Road	Prohibited

Additional Recommended Development Standards:

- Urban form standards that ensure activation of the pedestrian environment [establishing build-to zones and minimum ground floor transparency] and ground floor commercial uses are recommended along Beltline Road, as well as establishing a build-to zone.
- Urban form standards are recommended that ensure an active pedestrian environment are recommended on Pioneer Trail [between Uptown Boulevard and the Library] and establishing a build-to zone that will pull buildings toward the street on this segment of road.
- Development requirements will also ensure appropriate streetscape amenities along with pedestrian and bike accommodations [minimum sidewalk widths, street trees, pedestrian lighting], adjacent to Cedar Hill Road, Main Street, as well as two new streets [Haswell Street Extension, and a north south connector road connecting Haswell Extension to Cedar Hill Road].
- Minimum setbacks for surface parking should ensure that surface lots will be behind the main structure on a lot.
- Maintain views from new Signature Library by implementing height standards
- City-owned site is a strategic development opportunity that should be evaluated as development unfolds

Placemaking Elements

A general connectedness to the outdoors is a main element creating West Midtown’s sense of place. The overall development pattern and preservation of natural features and vegetation are the largest building blocks that will define this character. However, additional elements and design features throughout the site will reinforce this identity.



Emphasis on nature and biophilic design

Biophilic design is the means of designing buildings and communities to increase our connection to nature – both directly, through access, and indirectly by using patterns and materials found in nature. This can be accomplished through a number of ways:

- Directly using natural elements to provide a visual connection, creating diffuse lighting, working with airflow and thermal comfort, and using water
- Designing with elements that mimic nature through shapes, patterns, material choices,
- Creating spaces that echo experiences found in nature including providing views, creating a sense protection, adding an element of mystery, or sense of risk.
- Biophilic design has been shown to have positive effects on physical, mental, environmental, and economic health.

Important focal points

Important intersections and nodes of activity provide opportunities to create memorable places that help define the identity of the district. The intersections of Main Street and Belt Line, Main Street at Cedar Hill Road, Uptown Boulevard at the future Haswell Extension are all noted as important focal points and gateways into the community where special features should be considered.

Additional focal points can include plazas, or squares. These can be set off with distinctive landscaping, special paving patterns, the addition of public art, and pulling back building lines in order to provide visual access into these spaces. Architectural landmarks can also aid with orientation within the site in addition to helping build character.



Trail character

The spine trail is an important element of site development and connectivity. There should be numerous points of access to the trail within the site. The type of access can range from simple access points to larger entries with trail amenities. Typical trail access amenities may include drinking fountains or bottle fill stations, maps or information kiosks that can orient users to their location and potential destinations on the trail, trash receptacles, benches or other seating, bike repair stations, dog waste stations, as well as special plantings, paving materials lighting or signage.

Along the trail itself through the districts amenities such as mile markers, safety call boxes, lighting, special planting areas and/or wildflower zones can reinforce the character of the district and provide a positive experience for trail users to increase convenience, access, and sense of safety.

Public art

Public art can add a sense of whimsy or fully ground the space in a particular identity. Public art can take many forms for individual sculptures, murals, interactive experiences, lighting, or integrated into the surrounding elements through artistic design of seating, shelters, or landscape areas for example. Art could also be used to echo the strong connection to nature through use of natural materials or emphasizing or using natural elements such as wind, water, rain collection, and sunlight.



Distinctive landscaping and signage

Use of native landscaping contributes to a sense of place. Appropriately scaled signage can also create a sense of arrival and provide an important gateway element.

Street furnishings

Streets and sidewalks are more than just conduits for traffic and pedestrians. Designed well, they serve as social corridors and define the character of the place. Elements such as street signs, street furniture, paving choices, pedestrian and artistic lighting should all be selected and designed in a coordinated way to provide a consistent identity to the district and emphasize the pedestrian experience over car traffic.

In West Midtown, streetscape elements should take their cue from the natural surroundings, using native landscaping and natural materials such as stone and wood.



Image: MIG

Distinctive paving

Special paving can not only provide a distinction to motorist and pedestrians regarding elements such as cross-walks and pedestrian paths, but can also be an artistic element in the landscape. These elements not only prioritize the pedestrian experience but also can improve pedestrian safety and contribute to the unique character of West Midtown.



Building elements

Natural materials such as stone, brick and limited applications of wood can evoke a connection with nature. Additionally, ground floor treatments should incorporate glazing to provide eyes on the street and direct connections to sidewalks from interior spaces to promote activated pedestrian spaces.



Additionally, special features like enhanced entryways, gathering spaces, and sidewalk cafes can add architectural variety as well as places for socialization.

Additional elements

Additional elements like temporary uses, festivals or markets can provide a sense of energy and build awareness of an emerging district in advance of large scale development. The location of the Library and Signature Park will draw visitors to West Midtown. Extending and expanding their experience of the neighborhood will be an important step to build a market for other future opportunities. Use of compatible temporary retail and entertainment uses can build the sense that West Midtown is a destination and extend the stay of those visiting existing attractions.





Implementation Matrix

Priority/Action	Partners	Timeline*	Resources
Priority 1: Align Development Regulations with the Vision			
Action 1: Draft development regulations based upon guidance provided in this plan to ensure a vibrant mix of uses on site	Planning Department, Development Community	Immediate	Operating Budget
Action 2: Seek public input on draft zoning recommendations to further tailor the regulations to meet the community's standards and ensure that they are clear and easily implemented	Planning Department, Development Community	Immediate	Operating Budget
Action 3: Adopt a unified planned development district for West Midtown	Planning Department, Development Community	Immediate	Operating Budget
Priority 2: Explore Economic Support for Public Priorities			
Action 1: Commission detailed market study to better understand gaps in retail market	Economic Development	Immediate	Operating Budget
Action 2: Incentivize retail and active ground floor uses based upon a detailed market understanding	Economic Development	Near-term	TIRZ
Action 3: Proactively seek and attract outdoor-oriented restaurant and entertainment uses and incentivize their development if necessary	Economic Development	Near-term	TIRZ or other incentive funds
Priority 3: Make Supportive Transportation Improvements			
Action 1: Complete the trail system through the site	Parks & Recreation	Immediate	Capital Funds
Action 2: Extend Haswell Street to Main Street	Public Works	Long-term	Capital Funds
Action 3: Reserve rights-of-way for a walkable street grid or put requirements in place that will require the dedication and development of these streets as development unfolds, and provide flexibility in the alignment of the street while maintaining a walkable scale	Planning, Public Works	Near-term	Operating Budget
Priority 4: Support Other Public Infrastructure and Amenities			
Action 1: Develop a capital needs inventory for the development of this vision with associated costs for anticipated improvements such as: a potential shared parking structure; extension of utilities; and site infrastructure such as drainage and streets	Planning, Public Works	Immediate	Operating Budget
Action 2: Identify appropriate phasing of improvements and infrastructure expenses that may be a cost prohibitive barrier to development	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development	Immediate	Operating Budget
Action 3: Explore development agreements with private development partners to identify parameters for development and provision of needed infrastructure	Planning, Economic Development	Near-term	Operating Budget
Priority 5: Monitor Progress of Plan Implementation			
Action 1: Track and report on development activity, including amount and type of development, as well as completion of actions in support of vision development	Planning, City Managers Office	Ongoing	Operating Budget

*Immediate: 1 year Near-term: 2-5 years Long-term: 5+ years

