
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: September 30, 2022

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RE: RISE Ohio Project Proposal: City of Athens Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan

Overview

The City of Athens is the county seat of Athens County, the home of the state's 4th largest public university, Ohio University, and the largest City within the eight county Buckeye Hills region. In recent years, the City has aggressively pursued a number of strategies to enhance the quality of life for residents and students alike. As part of this effort, in early 2020 the City of Athens published its new comprehensive plan, Athens 2040, to guide future policy, land use, infrastructure investment, and other critical community decisions.

Athens 2040 describes the Stimson Avenue corridor, a half mile stretch of commercial zoning that connects Uptown Athens and the Ohio University campus to the west with a Route 33 interchange to the east, as a major gateway for the City. The plan recommended the City make a number of infrastructure and policy changes to help the corridor become more usable for Athens residents, as well as allowing for change in the local built environment concurrent with the desire for neighborhood level amenities. These recommendations included:

- Changes in the City's Zoning Code so that mixed use development can more easily occur along the corridor, with densities scaling down into the surrounding residential areas. The Plan specifically recommended re-zoning certain sections to a B2D or similar designation, as well as implementing a zoning overlay district that would allow 3½ stories on the South side and 2½ on the North side of the corridor.
- Parking changes, including reducing City parking minimum requirements and allowing the creation of shared-use parking agreements. This plan also recommended reducing the need for surface parking and encouraging pedestrian scale design along the corridor.
- Pedestrian Improvements, including creating shared use paths that connect to surrounding bike trails.
- Road infrastructure improvements focused on potential improvements to the intersection of Carpenter, Stimson, and E. State Streets in order to increase pedestrian safety.



Stimson Avenue Corridor

The City began work implementing the Athens 2040 Plan's recommendations for the Stimson Avenue Corridor immediately. In 2020, the City successfully acquired financing and finalized engineering plans to completely reconstruct Stimson Avenue from East State Street to Grant Street. After acquiring \$2 million from the Ohio Department of Transportation's Ohio Small Cities Grant, a zero interest \$400,000 loan from the Ohio Public Works Commission, and a \$5 million loan from the Ohio Department of Transportation's State Infrastructure Bank, the City began construction in January 2021 to replace city-owned underground utilities, install decorative lighting, lay fiber optic conduit, upgrade traffic signals, replace curbs, widen sidewalks, make the corridor's crosswalks ADA accessible and more visible, and reconstruct the road with a new concrete roadway. In mid-2022, decorative and aesthetic elements were added, making the corridor an accessible and attractive location for future commercial and mixed use development.

In addition, portions of Stimson Avenue and the adjacent areas (including a residential neighborhood and an aging industrial park) lay within one of the City's federally designated Opportunity Zones. The City feels the likelihood of new development in this area is higher than it has been in several years. In order for a successful project to occur the city will need to work closely with a developer to achieve a finished project that aligns with the City's goals for housing and economic development.

In order to assist the City's efforts in attracting businesses to locate along the Stimson Avenue corridor, and after consultation with the Mayor, City Manager, Planning Director, and City Engineer of the City of Athens, the Athens County Board of Commissioners, and the Executive Director of the Athens County Economic Development Council (ACEDC), the technical assistance Buckeye Hills Regional Council proposes for American Structurepoint to provide for the City of Athens will include:

1. The creation of the "Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan," which will identify several strategies the City/ACEDC can take to achieve their development goals for the corridor.
2. The development of a "Stimson Avenue Corridor Prospectus," which will be used by the City and the ACEDC to market properties along the corridor to potential developers and opportunity zone investors.

This assistance described above will allow the City and County to better position developable sites located within Opportunity Zone #9739.02 to investors/developers. Thus, this project achieves the goal of the RISE Ohio program by increasing Opportunity Zone investment opportunities within the Buckeye Hills Region.

Project Description

American Structurepoint will develop a corridor plan for Stimson Avenue that will be used by the City of Athens as policy and development guide in order to achieve its development goals for the corridor. This planning effort will also include a corridor prospectus that will double as a marketing brochure to "sell" this vision to potential developers and land owners. It is anticipated this project will require 6 to 10 months to complete from an authorization date of October 1, 2022.

Scope of Work

American Structurepoint will use its Vision2Action planning process to focus this analysis on critical success factors to formalize common goals that identify land use analysis efforts and visuals to generate interest in the redevelopment of the Stimson Avenue corridor. The Vision2Action approach is a collaborative, action-oriented approach that allows local governments and stakeholders to shape and carry out the shared vision of the community.

The Vision2Action approach will consist of three specific phases, the *Educate* phase, *Explore* phase, and the *Empower* phase.

1. **Phase 1 (Educate)**

During this phase, information will be gathered and assembled into datasets that will help the project team understand Stimson Avenue and the needs of this corridor. The project team will identify assets and liabilities for the study area through data collection and engagement methods, and will use this information to assemble a series of maps, existing land use patterns, economic development assets, and market data. This information will form the basis for ongoing discussions with the City, ACEDC, and area stakeholders about future land use, design recommendations, and policy recommendations.

Tasks:

- **Project Kick-Off Meeting.** This will provide an opportunity to clarify expectations and answer questions about project tasks, schedules, data, stakeholder input, and deliverables. It will also create/formalize a project advisory group, establish a format for progress reports, and set a schedule for monthly check-in meetings.
- **Land Planning Analysis.** The project team will complete the following tasks related to land use planning (depending on data availability):
 - A lot by lot land use analysis of all the parcels along and adjacent to the corridor to examine vacancy, conflicting land uses, and underutilized properties;
 - Review relevant zoning ordinance districts, codes, and development policies and neighborhood-level planning efforts;
 - Develop a base total assessed valuation (based on publically available property tax data) to inform the future land use scenarios discussed in Phase 2.
 - Physical analysis of the defined study area to ascertain predominate architectural form, street widths and underutilized rights-of-way areas, potential gateways or public urban places, etc.; and
 - Inventory of existing public/private parking spaces.
- **Economic Development Opportunity Review.** The project team will complete the following tasks related to economic development planning (depending on data availability):
 - Market analyses to identify retail gaps, housing needs, and target industries;
 - Existing and recent business starts and expansions; and
 - Review existing funding mechanisms in-use or available to the City of Athens and/or Athens County that could be deployed to assist physical redevelopment (e.g., TIF, downtown districts, etc.).
- **Existing and Planned Infrastructure Review.** The project team will complete the following tasks related to infrastructure planning for the streets that form the feeder network adjacent to Stimson Avenue (depending on data availability) to determine the carrying capacity of newly constructed infrastructure to support potential redevelopment options:
 - Size, extra capacity, and location of existing roads, water, sewer, telecommunications, etc.;
 - Assess existing road and right-of-way widths for potential streetscape improvements on streets intersecting/adjacent to Stimson Avenue; and
 - Review of relevant yet-to-be implemented goals or projects from current infrastructure plans.

- Conduct Four Virtual Focus Group Meetings. The project team will conduct four virtual meetings with identified stakeholder groups/individuals to understand further the property owner and local development community's interest opportunities along the corridor. Stakeholders will consist of government officials, primary land owners, business owners, developers, and commercial real estate brokers.

Deliverables:

1. **Existing Conditions Report.** A summary of the above described information gathered during the educate phase, including all data and surveys of physical conditions. A supplemental PowerPoint presentation for the advisory group will also be prepared.

Advisory Group Meeting #1: Upon the completion of the existing conditions report, this in-person meeting will be convened with the advisory group, or a chosen subset of the whole, to discuss the findings of the existing conditions report, and to set direction for the evaluation of the development scenarios that will take place in Phase 2.

2. **Phase 2 (Explore)**

This phase is dedicated to dreaming, thinking creatively, and testing various ideas. The project team will use the knowledge gathered during Phase 1 to explore a future vision for the corridor.

Tasks:

- Evaluation of Development Scenarios. The project team will evaluate two preliminary future land use scenarios that examine the different physical locations for potential building expansions, shared parking solutions, and a placemaking framework that will help create a complementary development nodes based on Phase I results. The scenarios will also provide high-level assessed value increase projects.
- Evaluation of Incentive Policy Options for the Corridor. In conjunction with the evaluation of development scenarios, the project team will evaluate how the City could make use of geographic/district-based incentive policies, such as CRA, TIF, Downtown Development District, or other alternatives, to enhance development opportunities within the Corridor.
- Production of Conceptual Property Enhancement Concepts. The project team will develop conceptual level plans for two potential redevelopment sites and include the spaces adjacent to the right-of-way to help visualize how integrated design solutions would connect and enhance the neighborhood. The visual concepts will also help showcase how physical expansion can blend into the existing public infrastructure/recent Stimson Avenue improvements to ensure coordinate look and feel for the Corridor.

Deliverables:

1. **Finalized Goals Statement** – A list of finalized goal statements that clearly articulate the advisory committee's desired outcomes for the corridor.
2. **Two Development Scenario Maps** - The project team will prepare two development scenario maps to discuss with the advisory committee. These maps will review likely streetscape/intersection improvements, identification of business expansion sites and new parking facilities, and future land use recommendations. Additionally, this part of this process will identify any zoning ordinance, code, or other policies that should be considered for modification to facilitate these future land use changes.
3. **Zoning Overlay Map** – The project team will create an initial zoning overlay district map to examine

the potential boundaries for this district.

4. **Two Preliminary Design Concepts** – The project team will develop initial conceptual renderings to guide and define the physical environment of two properties and roads adjacent to Stimson Avenue. These will identify development types, scale, decorative features, and physical connections to Stimson Avenue to help create the standards of the Zoning Overlay District.

Advisory Group Meeting #2: After review of the two development scenario maps and preliminary concepts, as well as the relative costs, benefits, and activities required of each scenario, the advisory committee will be given time to discuss and select its preferred scenario. The selection of the preferred scenario will allow Phase 3 to begin.

3. ***Phase 3 (Empower)***

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan is being created with the intention that the City, ACEDC, local partner agencies, and community groups would help facilitate its implementation. Thus, phase 3 will be dedicated to the development of implementation actions that will energize and encourage community organizations, partner organizations, local leaders, and residents to actualize the plan. Recommendations will be provided in the form of “Critical Path Strategies” that will describe the related goals, action items, people/organizations to involve, estimated timeframes and cost, and funding resources to consider when implementing each recommendation.

Tasks:

- Final Land Use Layout Map. This map will identify the location of future land uses potential building footprints and heights for all potential redevelopment opportunities for the properties in the defined study area:
 - Development of a final land use map and options for crucial development sites whose future land use may not be defined by one specific land use type depending on future market conditions; and
 - Phasing and logical starting locations.
- Final Renderings. Two finalized conceptual development site renderings that will guide future projects via a proposed zoning district overlay, such as preferred building heights, lot coverage, integrated street designs for road adjacent to Stimson Avenue within the identified overlay district. These concepts will also be used as the basis of zoning code/design standards recommendations.
- Property Value Projected Growth Assessment. The project team will create high-level property tax assessment increases for properties with redevelopment opportunities. This will include the development of a “parcel by parcel projections” spreadsheet that will estimate the potential increases in assessed values based on the final land use layout map, assumed development types, and square footages. This spreadsheet will also include a projection for annual TIF increases over a 20-year timeframe. The project team will also create pro-formas for two large redevelopment projects shown in the final renderings in order to help illustrate a business case to be used in the pro-forma.
- Utility Extension Preliminary Analysis. The project team, on a preliminary basis and contingent on development opportunities that may arise during the project period, will evaluate the general feasibility of extending underground utility services (e.g. water, wastewater, fiber) out from the Stimson Avenue corridor into adjacent areas. The analysis performed would be meant to provide rough estimates of the potential costs in designing and constructing these extensions, and offer some guidance on how such development-related improvements might be paid for in a partnership between a developer and the City.

- Zoning Overlay District Recommended Standards. The project team will develop a recommended zoning ordinance overlay district for the area identified in Phase 2 to provide a uniform set of standards and guidelines for the redevelopment of the corridor.

Empower Phase Deliverables:

1. **Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan.** The Final Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan will include:
 - a. Background information and existing conditions summary;
 - b. Zoning district overlay map and recommend zoning changes;
 - c. Final 20 year assessed value increase projections
 - d. A policy guidebook/summary of identified incentive options to be utilized for evaluating future development proposal incentives, such as TIF district, Downtown Development Districts, or other alternatives; and
 - e. Critical path strategy recommendations.
2. **Corridor Prospectus.** A marketing prospectus that can be utilized for conversations and showcase expansion options to business owners or initiate streetscape and connectivity projects, create interest from private the private development community. This document will contain a summary level of information to and the finalized graphics from final plan.

Budget

It is anticipated that the services described above will be approximately **\$70,000.00**. Justification of this amount is based on American Structurepoint's projection of the hours necessary to complete this work for a building of this size. All time spent on the project will be billed using the standard hourly rates indicated in our master service agreement. Reimbursable expenses will be invoiced at cost.

Once project activities begin and should it arise that project costs may exceed \$70,000, Buckeye Hills Regional Council and American Structurepoint will justify the need for additional resources in writing.

STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR PROSPECTUS

SEPTEMBER 2023





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WELCOME TO STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR

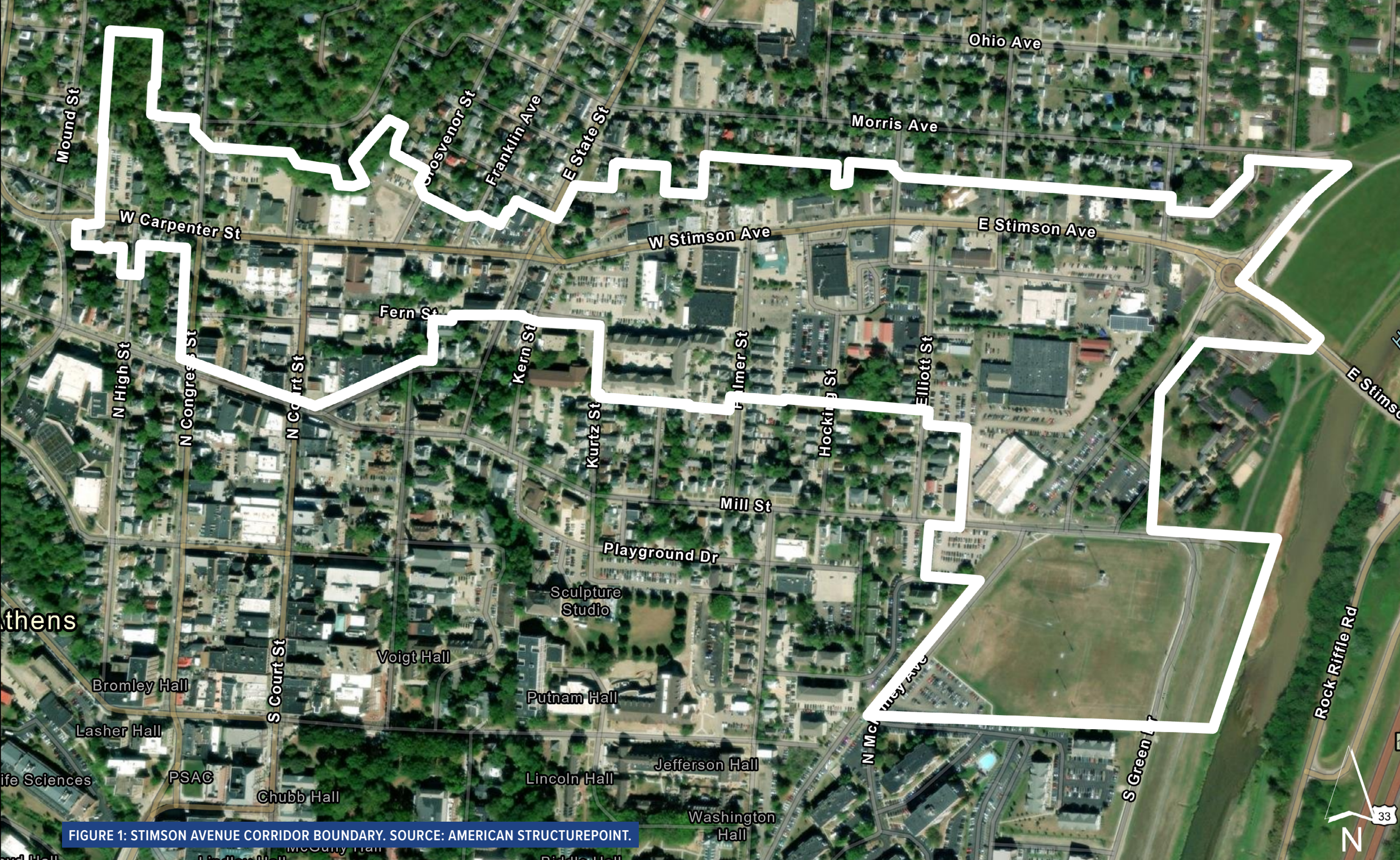


FIGURE 1: STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR BOUNDARY. SOURCE: AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT.

OVERVIEW OF THE CORRIDOR

The Stimson Avenue Corridor, situated along the Hocking River in Athens, Ohio, connects student accommodations, the Ohio University campus, and permanent residential zones. There is a noticeable transformation in land uses moving east towards Carpenter Street on Stimson Avenue. The western end showcases expansive and varied developments, while the eastern side predominantly features compact, singular-purpose plots.

Since 2021, this area has seen marked enhancements in infrastructure and streetscape, addressing chronic issues. The Stimson Avenue Corridor stands out as a potential entry point to the Athens community, offering many a first glimpse of the city. Given its strategic position in Athens, it remains a crucial and ever-changing facet of the cityscape.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The Stimson Avenue area presents a remarkable investment prospect. Its strategic location, scenic allure, profound cultural heritage, and eclectic array of experiences make this Southeast Ohio jewel ripe for expansion and evolution. What makes Athens stand out?



PRIME LOCATION

Athens, Ohio, is strategically located, offering the best of both worlds. Situated just an hour from the City of Columbus and about a half-hour drive from the nature of West Virginia, Athens offers a unique opportunity for rural life and accessibility.



HIDDEN GEM OF SOUTHEAST OHIO

Athens County is a hidden gem in Southeast Ohio. The area's natural beauty, including rolling hills, lush forests, and scenic rivers, creates an ideal opportunity for future development projects. It's a place where residents and visitors can escape the fast-paced city life, finding tranquility in nature without sacrificing modern amenities.



RICH CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

The city boasts a thriving arts scene, with numerous galleries, theaters, and music venues. The historical significance of Athens County adds a unique charm, making it an ideal location for those who appreciate history and culture.



DIVERSE RANGE OF EXPERIENCES

Whether your target market includes young professionals, families, or retirees, Athens County, Ohio, caters to everyone's interests and desires. From educational institutions like Ohio University to family-friendly events and retirement-friendly amenities, Athens has something for everyone.

STIMSON CORRIDOR VISION

The city dreams of transforming the Stimson Avenue Corridor into a beacon of beauty and convenience, where every resident can find a slice of home. They envision streets where accessibility is a given, not a luxury, and where economic vitality pulses, drawing in businesses and visitors alike. More than just a roadway, the city is sculpting this area to be a neighborhood that resonates with the needs of its year-round inhabitants, bustling student community, and the heartbeat of its local businesses. It's not just about infrastructure; it's about building a legacy for Athens.

A photograph of a residential street at dusk or dawn, featuring brick buildings, a sidewalk, and a road. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish tint. The text 'ACTIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

ACTIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS NEXT

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENTS

The City aims to create an inviting and developer-friendly environment along Stimson Avenue, ultimately encouraging growth, investment, and revitalization in the area by:

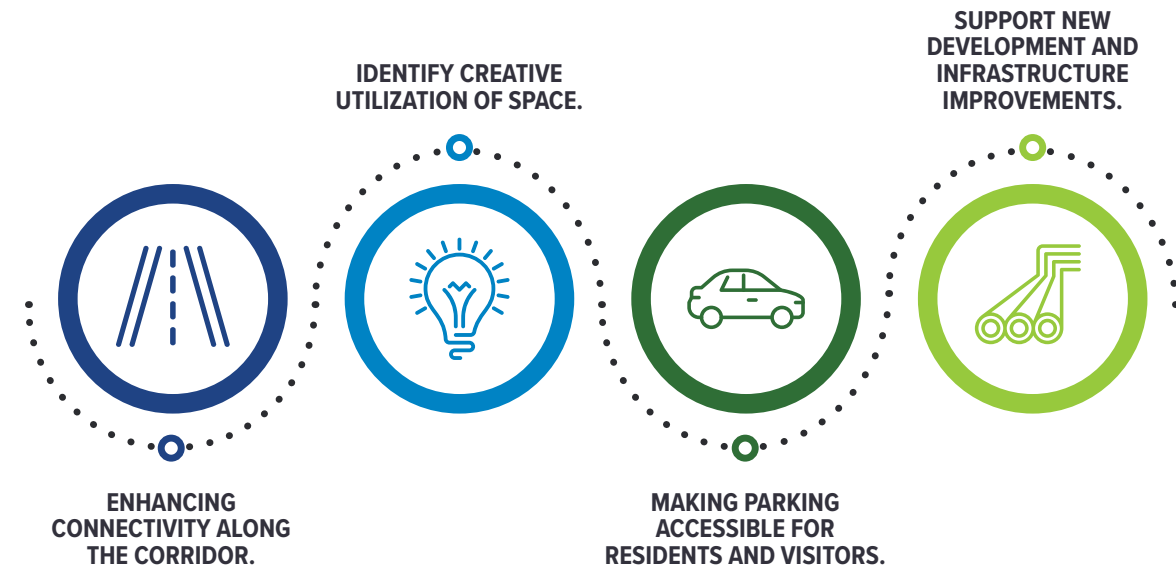
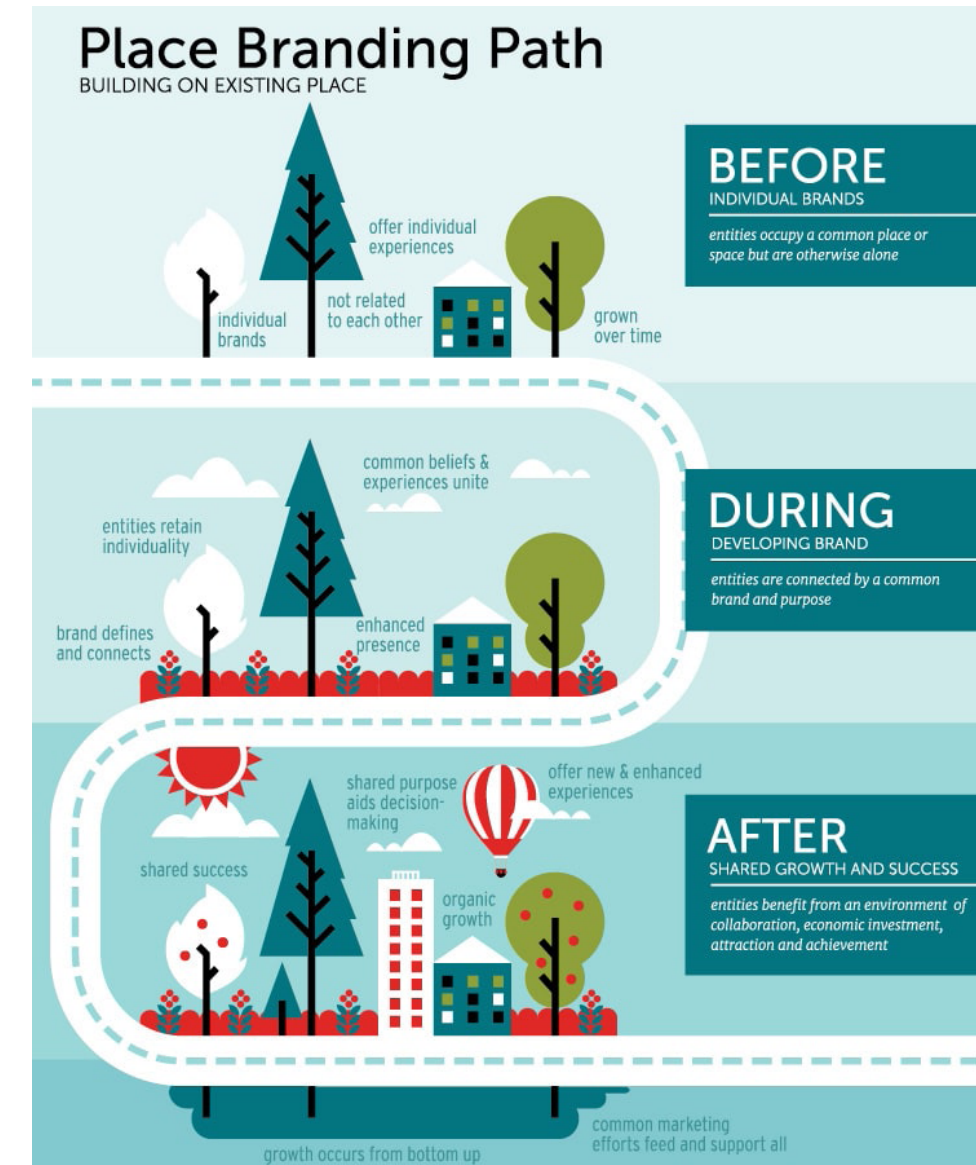


FIGURE 2: PLACE BRAND FUNDAMENTALS



Source: Making Sense of Place Branding - Guide Studio.

STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR'S BRAND

Implementing a branding strategy for Stimson Avenue can make the area more appealing to developers by creating a unique identity, improving aesthetics and infrastructure, and simplifying navigation.

DISTINCT IDENTITY

Creating a strong brand for Stimson Avenue gives the area a distinct identity and sense of place.

AESTHETIC APPEAL

Well-designed signage and branding elements can improve the aesthetic appeal of the corridor. Developers are often attracted to attractive and well-maintained areas, as it can enhance the value of their investments.

WAYFINDING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Implementing a wayfinding signage plan is crucial for attracting developers. It enhances the experience for residents and visitors and makes it easier for developers to locate key sites and understand the area's layout.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

A well-branded Stimson Avenue can gain a competitive advantage over neighboring areas. Developers are more likely to choose locations that offer a unique selling proposition, and a strong brand can provide that edge.

FIGURES 3 AND 4: CITY PROJECTS ALONG THE STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR.



Source: American Structurepoint.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

- In 2021, Athens collected \$7 million from grants and loans from the City's street revitalization levy.
- Water, sewer, and gas lines have been replaced and upgraded along Stimson Avenue.
- A major rehabilitation of the US 33/US 50 interchange in Athens. The rehabilitation includes pavement, guardrail, drainage, lighting, and other work.
- A roundabout has been constructed at Stimson Avenue.
- Signage and crosswalks have been installed.

STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN

Investing in the Stimson Avenue is a strategic move for developers looking to capitalize on the growing potential of this vital corridor. The City's commitment to improving the corridor is evident through its 2040 Comprehensive Plan, which outlines strategies to enhance the roadway. The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan highlights the City's dedication to its revitalization. This corridor offers an exceptional opportunity to sustain existing retail and dining options and emerge as a vibrant hub for new activities, catering to residents and students. Investing in Stimson Avenue means embracing a future where innovation meets tradition, making it an inviting prospect for developers seeking to be part of Athens' urban evolution.

FIGURE 5: THE ARMORY PARK AT STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR



Source: American Structurepoint.

CORRIDOR ASSETS

OHIO UNIVERSITY

Ohio University significantly impacts the community, enhancing its economic, cultural, and overall life quality. The symbiotic relationship between the University and the Stimson Avenue corridor amplifies the area's appeal as a prime locale for living, working, and academic pursuits. Here are some ways in which the university enriches the community:



ECONOMIC IMPACT

Ohio University significantly contributes to the local economy in Athens. It brings in many students, faculty, and staff who spend money on housing, food, transportation, and other goods and services in the community. This stimulates local businesses and creates job opportunities.



CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

Ohio University hosts various artistic and cultural events, lectures, performances, and exhibitions that are open to the community. This enhances the cultural life of the corridor due to its proximity with to the college and provides residents with access to educational and entertainment opportunities.



TOURISM AND REPUTATION

Recognizing Athens as the best college town in Ohio has positive implications for tourism. Visitors come to explore the city, attend university events, and enjoy the local restaurants and shops. This influence of tourists can boost the local economy and contribute to the city's reputation as a desirable destination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY LIFE

Athens is known for its lively community, which is enriched by the presence of Ohio University. The Stimson Avenue corridor has the potential to offer a wide range of dining options, shopping opportunities, and cultural events that will cater to the diverse tastes and interests of both students and residents.



NATIONAL RECOGNITION

[Athens has been called a top college town](#), highlighting its appeal and reputation. That recognition can attract more students to Ohio University and encourage local businesses to thrive.



FIGURE 6: PHOTOGRAPH OF THE 2016 OHIO UNIVERSITY HOMECOMING PARADE GOING DOWN COURT STREET
SOURCE: OHIO UNIVERSITY.



FIGURE 7: FRIENDS CRUISE THE HOCKING ADENA BIKEWAY NEAR MILE MARKER 3 IN ATHENS, OHIO.
 SOURCE: THE BIKEWAY — BIKE ATHENS OHIO.

HOCKING ADENA BIKEWAY

The Hocking Adena Bikeway stands as both a recreational treasure and a development catalyst for Athens, especially within the Stimson Avenue corridor. This path seamlessly merges health-centric living, easy connectivity, tourism opportunities, and community involvement. Developers eyeing this area have a golden chance to harness these benefits, crafting dynamic and sustainable projects that magnetize residents and enterprises.



PROMOTES HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING

The bikeway promotes a healthy lifestyle by encouraging cycling and outdoor activities.



CONNECTIVITY

The 22-mile bikeway connects key areas within Athens and links the city, Eclipse Company Town, and the City of Nelsonville. This connectivity opens up opportunities for mixed-use developments, allowing residents easy access to work, school, shopping, and other activities without relying heavily on cars.



TOURISM AND RECREATION

The bikeway, mountain bike trails, and other recreational amenities make Athens an attractive destination for tourists and outdoor enthusiasts. This can boost the local economy by attracting visitors who contribute to local businesses and tourism-related development.



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The Hocking Adena Bikeway can drive economic development by attracting new residents and businesses along the Stimson Avenue corridor. With increased population and tourism, greater demand for services, retail, and dining establishments will be created, creating a thriving local economy.



ACCESSIBILITY

The bikeway enhances accessibility within the city, making it easier for people to reach different parts of Athens. This can lead to increased foot traffic, which can benefit businesses along the Stimson Avenue corridor.

ATHENS FARMERS MARKET

As a lively community centerpiece, the Athens Farmers Market greatly bolsters the allure of the Stimson Avenue Corridor, drawing people to the area. Characteristics of the market include:

<p>50 YEARS OF SERVICE IN OHIO</p>	<p>IT CREATES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND ENHANCES THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE CITY</p>		
<p>RANKED</p>	<p>35TH NATIONWIDE</p>	<p>1ST IN OHIO</p>	<p>10TH IN THE MIDWEST</p>
<p>IT HAS BECOME A TOURIST ATTRACTOR LEADING FUTURE MAY SEE THE POTENTIAL TO INVEST IN RESTAURANTS OR OTHER HOSPITALITY-RELATED BUSINESSES IN THE STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR TO CATER TO THE <i>INFLUX OF VISITORS</i> DURING MARKET DAYS</p>		<p>IT IS AN IMPORTANT ASSET FOR THE COMMUNITY AS IT SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESSES AND OFFERS DIVERSE SHOPPING OPTIONS</p>	



FIGURE 8: ATHENS FARMERS MARKET LOCATED AT THE ATHENS COMMUNITY CENTER CAMPUS PARKING LOT.
SOURCE: ATHENS FARMERS MARKET.

CURRENT BUSINESS ALONG CORRIDOR



FIGURES 9- 12: BUSINESSES ALONG THE STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR.



Source: American Structurepoint.

SURROUNDING NATURAL ASSETS

1 HOCKING RIVER

The Hocking River, winding through the Appalachian Ohio landscape, flows from its glacial headwaters in Fairfield County to join the Ohio River at Hocking Port, passing by towns, including the City of Athens.

2 HOCKING HILLS

Hocking Hills is a stunningly rugged region distinguished for its landscapes featuring cliffs, hidden rock shelters, and waterfalls.

3 HOCKING HILLS STATE PARK

Situated within the Hocking Hills region, this State Park in Hocking County offers visitors over 25 miles of hiking trails, rock formations, waterfalls, and mysterious caves, all accessible year-round. [The park was voted as a top place to travel in 2023.](#)

4 STROUDS RUN STATE PARK

Located on the outskirts of Athens, Strouds Run State Park offers an escape into nature, with its boundaries often merging seamlessly with the city limits, providing abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation and relaxation.





FIGURE 11: DESIGN EXAMPLE OF TOWNHOMES DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE CORRIDOR
 SOURCE: AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT

STIMSON AVENUE ASPIRATIONS

OVERVIEW

The Stimson Avenue corridor redevelopment presents a golden chance for developers interested in a vibrant mixed-use local retail district. Upcoming developments along this stretch are geared towards catering to community needs through improvements in streetscapes, resolving public parking challenges, establishing a community centerpiece, and adaptively repurposing select sites, notably the Ohio National Guard Armory and the Intramural Fields. With seamless access to nearby facilities and an emphasis on varied public areas, capitalizing on these redevelopment prospects assures a bright future for the Stimson Avenue corridor.

CREATE A MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD

STIMSON AVENUE & NORTH 1804 WAY CONCEPT

- A 1.5-acre mixed-use neighborhood redevelopment effort.
- The project aims to enhance property maintenance by implementing streetscape strategies for commercial facilities in place.
- Creates a mixed-use neighborhood retail district by establishing a thriving commercial/living hub.
- The project helps create a corridor identity.
- Improves the physical appeal of the Stimson Avenue corridor.
- Incorporates design elements such as wayfinding signage, residential spaces, outdoor sitting areas, shade areas, etc.

FIGURE 12: REDEVELOPMENT ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS



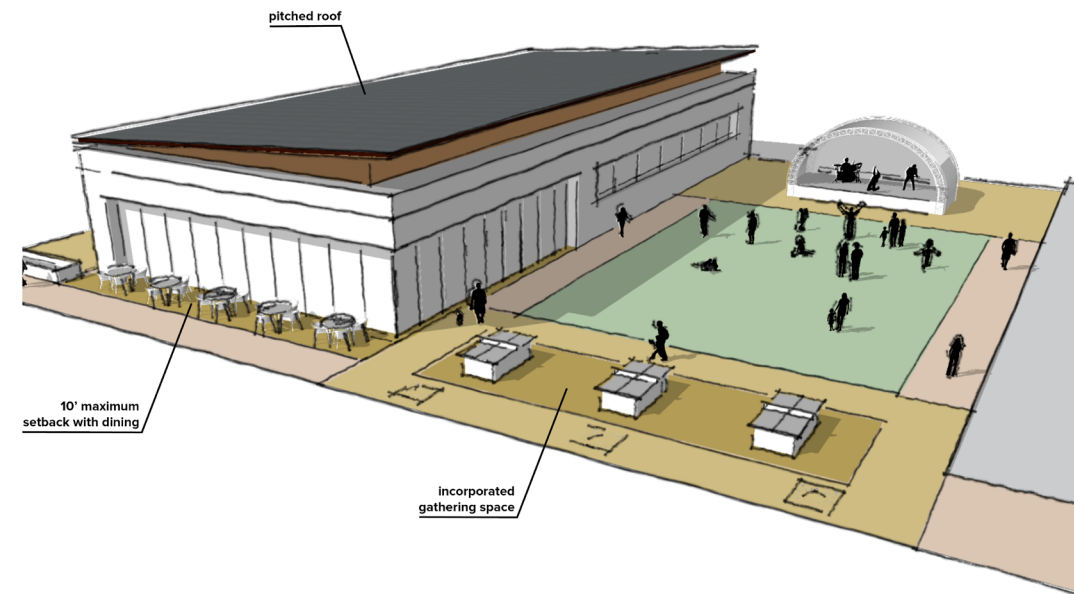
Source: American Structurepoint.

CREATE A VIBRANT RETAIL DISTRICT

STIMSON AVENUE & KERN STREET CONCEPT

- A 1.5-acre retail district effort.
- The project accommodates the needs of public parking for residents and visitors.
- Offers ground-floor retail space that will help increase business activity and economic vibrancy.
- The project includes landscape enhancements that integrate the project with the public right-of-way.
- Outdoor seating areas were included in the design, which help create dynamic spaces that foster visible activity.
- Incorporates design elements such as indoor/outdoor sitting areas, tree shade, recreational amenities, retail shops, public parking, etc.
- Add retail space by creating structured parking (see Figure 14).

FIGURE 13: VIBRANT RETAIL DISTRICT



Source: American Structurepoint.



FIGURE 14: DESIGN EXAMPLE OF PARKING DECK
SOURCE: AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT .

DESIGN PUBLIC SPACES FOR LOCALS AND VISITORS

The Old National Guard Armory in Athens holds significant historical importance, going back to its opening in 1915. The journey to establish this landmark began in 1912, with local Ohio National Guard members and city entrepreneurs advocating for state funding. The State Armory Board approved their request and acquired land from the Athens Brick Company. Construction commenced in 1914, and by December 1915, the armory was operational for both military drills and public gatherings. The dedication ceremony in 1917 coincided with the United States' entry into World War I.

Over the following eight decades, the armory was a hub for Ohio National Guard activities and a venue for community events. However, a new proposal aims to repurpose the Old National Guard Armory into a public space. This revitalization project is expected to greatly benefit the residents by providing them with a dynamic and adaptable space for various purposes.

THE ARMORY ON STIMSON AVENUE PROJECT

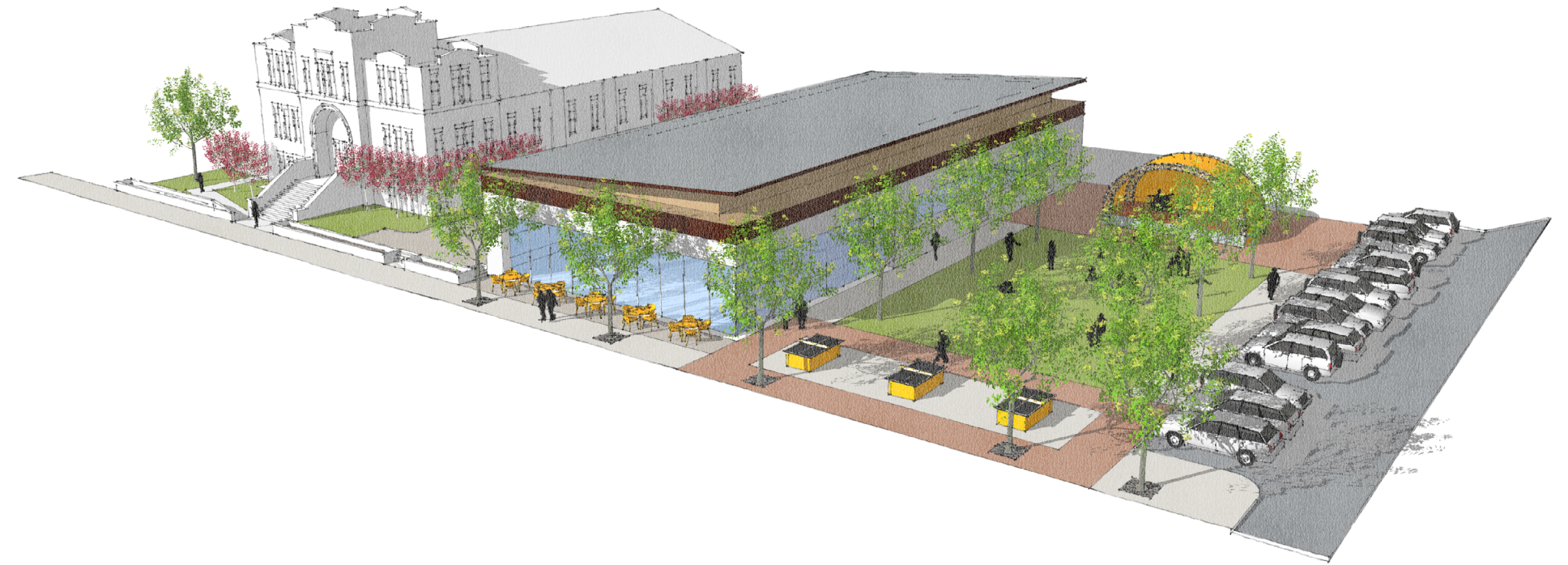
- A one-acre site adaptable for public spaces.
- The Old National Guard Armory reuse plan envisions a public space with shared collaboration and meeting spaces for residents, visitors, and students.
- Outdoor amenities such as a band shell structure and an open lawn with sitting areas are implemented to invite residents and visitors to engage in various activities that the area offers.
- The project incorporates outdoor entertainment, collaboration, meeting spaces, a historical atmosphere, etc.

FIGURE 15: THE OHIO NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY IS AN IMPORTANT LANDMARK LOCATED ALONG STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 16: DESIGN EXAMPLE OF A PUBLIC SPACE FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS LOCATED ALONG STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR



Source: American Structurepoint.



MARKET CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECTS

SOUTH STIMSON AVENUE

MEDIAN AGE

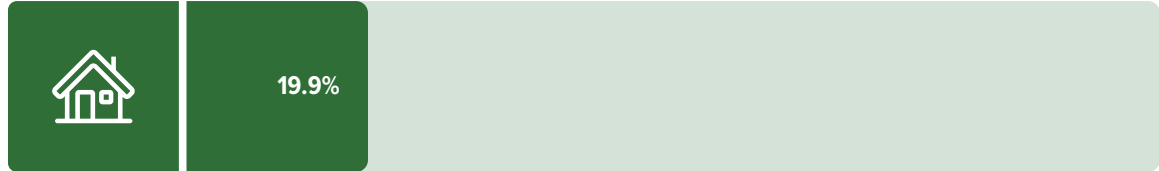


MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



HOUSING TYPE

OWNER-OCCUPIED



RENTER-OCCUPIED



NORTH STIMSON AVENUE

MEDIAN AGE

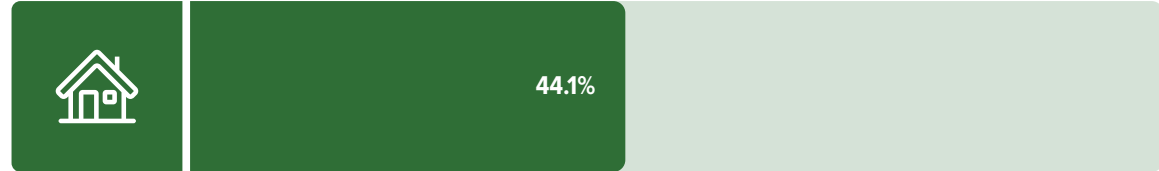


MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

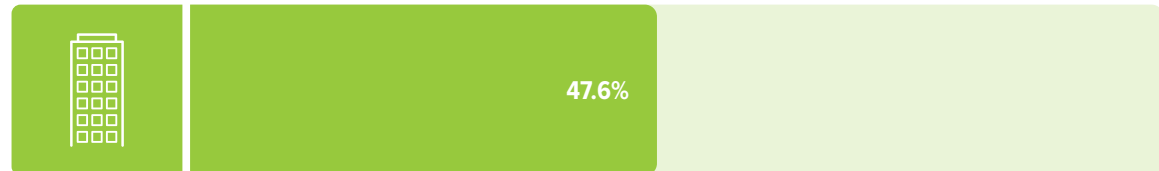


HOUSING TYPE

OWNER-OCCUPIED



RENTER-OCCUPIED





**FINANCIAL
CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE PROJECTS**

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Several alternate scenarios for build-out of the corridor have been assessed. These include mixed-use development, single-story rental, and multi-story rental alternatives. The respective returns on investment for each category are 15.1%, 14.7 %, and 11.7%, independent of incentives, which are described on the next page.



INCENTIVES

The City of Athens is fortunate to have an array of resources at its disposal to foster and facilitate the redevelopment process. While navigating this transformative journey, the City is developing innovative tools and strategies to achieve its vision. Those incentives, crafted with a keen understanding of developers’ needs and residents’ aspirations, symbolize the dedication to ushering in a new era of growth and prosperity for the corridor.

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Opportunity Zones are economically distressed communities where the government seeks to promote and incentivize private investment. That designation, stemming from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, was designed to spur economic development and job creation in struggling areas by offering federal tax incentives to investors.

To determine these zones, each state’s governor nominated certain census tracts for this designation, which the US Treasury Department later approved. Those tracts were selected based on specific criteria, primarily focusing on areas with high levels of poverty or those that met other specific income and employment measures.

At the heart of the Opportunity Zones initiative is the tax program that incentivize private investment into these distressed communities. The program's design aims to defer, reduce, and, in some cases, eliminate capital gains taxes for investors who commit their capital to projects within these zones. See how it works to the right.

The Opportunity Zone Tax Program is more than just a tax break; it's a shift in how economic development is approached. By providing significant tax incentives, it's designed to redirect capital to areas that traditionally might not attract as much investment.

INITIAL INVESTMENT

To benefit from the Opportunity Zone tax program, investors must invest their capital gains into Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOFs). These QOFs are specifically set up to invest in eligible property located in an Opportunity Zone. The investment into the QOF must be made within 180 days of realizing the capital gain.

DEFERRAL OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX

By investing in a QOF, investors can defer the tax on the initial capital gain until the earlier of two dates: the date on which the QOF investment is sold or exchanged, or December 31, 2026.

STEP-UP IN BASIS

The tax program rewards longer-term holdings:

- If the QOF investment is held for at least five years, there's a 10% step-up in basis, effectively reducing the original capital gains tax by 10%.
- If held for at least seven years, the step-up in basis increases to 15%, meaning a further 5% reduction.

EXCLUSION OF FUTURE GAINS

The most significant incentive comes if an investor holds their QOF investment for at least ten years. In this case, they can benefit from a permanent exclusion from taxable income of capital gains from the sale or exchange of the investment.

ACQUISITION ASSISTANCE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SUBSIDIES

In an effort to revitalize and repurpose languishing areas, the community can harness the potential of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) by allocating funds to subsidize developer acquisition of vacant or underutilized properties. Recognizing that the financial viability of rehabilitating these areas can deter many investors, these subsidies aim to enhance the rate of return on investment. By effectively reducing the upfront cost burden for developers, this strategy encourages the transformation of these neglected spaces into productive assets, aligning with the community's broader goals of sustainable urban development and economic resurgence.

The community can subsidize developers who adopt runoff reduction measures and post-construction structural practices outlined in the OEPA Rainwater and Land Development Manual by introducing TIF offset incentives. Emphasizing sustainable urban planning, these practices include features like green roofs and bioretention systems, which assist in water management and enrich the pedestrian experience along the Corridor. Through this integrated approach, the community aims to balance private sector growth with environmental responsibility and aesthetic enhancement.

A financial analysis of the development prospects of the corridor conservatively estimates about \$21.5M in TIF revenue available for these activities. While the final split between investments has yet to be made, this represents a large pool of funding for covering costs that would otherwise fall on the developer.



STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN (DRAFT)

ATHENS, OHIO





TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

FIGURE 1: ATHENS BLOCK MURAL LOCATED AT STIMSON AVENUE

The Stimson Avenue Corridor is centered in Athens, Ohio, the county seat of Athens County, located along the Hocking River.

The city is also known as the home of Ohio University. Stimson Avenue is situated at an exciting place in the city, both geographically and socially. The roadway is a transition area between student housing, Ohio University's campus, and year-round residents. As residents and visitors travel this roadway, they see this transition heading east to west as Stimson Avenue becomes Carpenter Street. Land uses grow in size and diversity on the western edge of the Corridor while staying smaller in scale on the east.

This plan intends to develop actionable physical and policy strategies to drive the Stimson Avenue Corridor towards a unified vision. The vision will help activate a "place" unique to Athens. Stimson Avenue will become a place that embraces its role as the link between the community and the university by providing unique retail opportunities, connections to open space, art, and year-round activity. This document can also be used to market the area to developers and landowners and attract investment.



Source: American Structurepoint Inc.

STUDY AREA BOUNDARIES

The Stimson Avenue Corridor is a half-mile stretch on the East side of Athens. The study area boundaries were established based on feedback from the Plan’s advisory group (see Advisory Team Meetings). The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan will focus on that study area’s core and context areas. The Stimson Avenue Corridor boundaries include the intersection of West Carpenter Street and Stimson Avenue to the west and the junction of Stimson Avenue and the Hocking River. The study boundary also extends to include segments of several neighborhood streets. While the study area comprises the focus of the physical analysis portion of the report, the city of Athens and surrounding context areas were examined to ensure the findings represent the greater context and land use patterns connected to the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

FIGURE 2: STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN STUDY AREA



Sources: Esri Community Maps Contributors, WVU Facilities, VGIN, West Virginia GIS, OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, Maxar.

WHAT IS A CORRIDOR?

“Corridors are linear pathways that connect places and allow for the movement of people, goods, or wildlife. They often center around transportation infrastructure such as streets, highways, and public transit but can also center around historic sites, habitats, rivers, or other natural features. They may be regional in scale, as in a heavy rail corridor, or extremely local, as in a retail corridor along a city thoroughfare.”¹

In the case of Stimson Avenue, this Plan frames the Corridor as an opportunity to create a unique physical environment that continues to provide retail and dining options while becoming a focal point for new activities residents and students can enjoy.

¹[Corridor Planning](#)



PLAN PURPOSE

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan aims to enhance the unique identity and elevate the Corridor’s appeal by recommending architectural and site dimensional standards through a proposed zoning overlay. It encompasses policy support, physical enhancements, and potential incentives to guide the Corridor and increase property values. The Plan evaluates current conditions, proposes streetscape improvements, and offers policy guidance by analyzing local data and existing infrastructure for the Corridor’s redevelopment.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan was created using American Structurepoint’s Vision2Action process. The primary goal of any planning process is to provide in-depth issue identification through data and a stakeholder engagement process specific to each planning effort to achieve realistic and hopeful outcomes. For this Plan, the consulting team worked with City officials through three specific phases: Educate, Explore, and Empower. During Educate, data gathering from published and primary resources, such as stakeholder interviews, is conducted to create an inventory of existing conditions (see Appendix A- Existing Conditions Report). The Explore phase builds on the findings of the Educate phase to begin formulating and evaluating the goals, objectives, and strategies through visioning exercises with Corridor stakeholders. The Empower phase yields final recommendations and a supporting work plan built upon the direction and conditions established in the previous phases. The details of activities accomplished in each phase are highlighted in Figure 3.

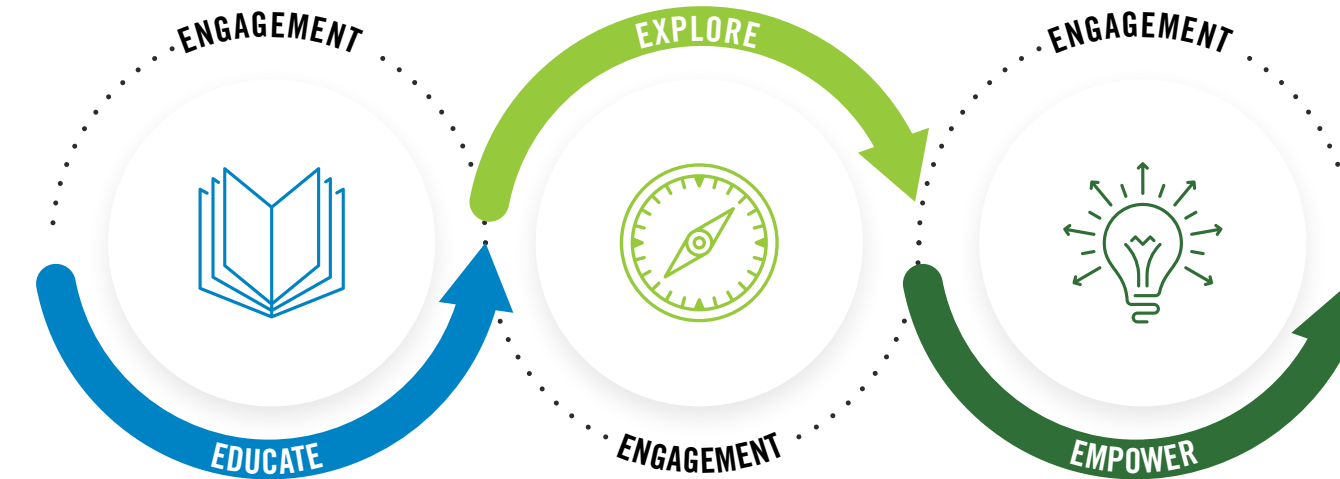
ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

This document will present the Vision Statement, the guiding principle for the entire Corridor Plan. Following that, the goals will be introduced. These are meant to be broad guidelines to achieve the community’s vision.

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan document outlines the key themes from input received and the Existing Conditions Report (see Appendix A- Existing Conditions Report) during the Explore Phase. Each theme is then broken into objectives and strategies to provide broad guidelines to achieve the community’s vision.

In the Implementation section, the document will lay out Critical Path Strategies. These strategies have been identified based on their ability to be accomplished in the next zero to five years. Items considered are relatively low-cost, with quick implementation timelines. These strategies are designed to propel the Corridor Plan’s implementation forward effectively.

FIGURE 3: STIMSON AVENUE PROJECT PHASES



PHASE 1: EDUCATE

- Project Kick-off Meeting
- Land Planning and Economic Development Opportunities
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Existing and Planned Infrastructure Review
- Advisory Team Meeting #1

Deliverables

- Existing Conditions Report

PHASE 2: EXPLORE

- Evaluation of Development Scenarios
- Evaluation of Incentive Policy Options for the Corridor
- Production of Conceptual Property Enhancement Concepts
- Advisory Team Meeting #2

Deliverables

- Finalize the Goals Statement
- Four Development Scenario Maps with Preliminary Design Concepts
- Zoning Overlay Map

PHASE 3: EMPOWER

- Final Land Use Layout Map
- Final Renderings
- Property Value Projected Growth Assessment
- Preliminary Utility Extensions Analysis
- Zoning Overlay District Recommended Standards
- Advisory Group Meeting #3

Deliverables

- Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan
- Corridor Prospectus

Source: American Structurepoint Inc.

EXISTING
CORRIDOR
ANALYSIS
vs. STIMSON
AVENUE
CORRIDOR
APPROACH



The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan focuses first on providing a snapshot of existing conditions through the lens of multiple demographics and physical elements. The existing conditions summary (on the next page) describes Athens and the study area today. The remainder of the Plan focuses on what the Corridor aspires to be.

This first section of the Plan discusses Stimson Avenue's regional location, key trends from the Existing Conditions Report, and a summary of the input information gathered during phase one and its implications for the recommendations.



EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

Before providing any recommendations for the Stimson Avenue Corridor, the consulting team undertook a comprehensive analysis of the Corridor's existing conditions. That involved understanding past planning efforts, engaging in discussions with key stakeholders to understand the dynamics of the Stimson Avenue Corridor, and documenting physical conditions/observations along the way.

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan Existing Conditions Report presents the results of comprehensive research, significant finding area highlighted as follows:

- **Population Decline:** Athens experienced a decrease in population from 24,271 residents in 2010 to 23,813 residents in 2022. The study area, which encompasses approximately a 10-minute walk from Stimson Avenue, housed a population of 5,831 residents in 2010 and 5,670 residents in 2022.
- **South vs. North Analysis:** The neighborhood south of Stimson Avenue's population remained stable from 2010 to 2022. The area experienced a slight decrease in residents from 17,952 in 2010 to 17,383 in 2022. A similar trend was noted in the neighborhood north of Stimson Avenue. The area to the north experienced a slight increase in residents from 6,333 in 2010 to 6,443 residents in 2022.
- **Flood Hazard Area:** Athens participates in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The Hocking River regulatory floodplain and floodway, collectively known as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), affects the eastern part of the study area. All construction activities within the SFHA, including grading, new buildings, and modifications to existing structures, are subject to NFIP standards.
- **Commuting Patterns:** In 2019, Athens had more workers commuting into the city than those commuting out. Of the 14,447 local employees, 11,988 worked in the city but did not live there. Of all workers in Athens' businesses, 2,459 resided and worked there, but 3,588 residents commuted outside the city for work.
- **Zoning:** The Stimson Avenue Corridor is characterized by three distinct zones: residential, commercial, and industrial zoning. Most of the southern part of Stimson Avenue is zoned as Residential (R-3), which caters to multi-family units. On the northern side, the zoning is mainly Residential (R-2), designed for two-family homes. Additionally, the Corridor houses various business zones, including B-2 and B-D2 Business Zones and the B-2D Downtown Business Zone.

The analysis in this report provides valuable insights into the final Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan and can be essential in guiding future development and planning initiatives.

SOUTH VS. NORTH OF STIMSON AVENUE ANALYSIS

In summary, the Existing Conditions Report data showed that the area south of Stimson Avenue has a larger, younger population and a higher daytime population due to the presence of Ohio University. Also, the existing zoning of this area, especially south of Stimson Avenue along North Court Street, is classified as a Downtown Business Zone. That area has many local restaurants, bars, and other retail stores and amenities. Conversely, the northern area has a higher median age and household income. Developing the Stimson Avenue Corridor can act as an opportunity to cohesively connect all areas of the Corridor.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Public input is essential because it helps capture users' needs, the feedback from which can enhance the redevelopment of the Stimson Avenue Corridor. Input for the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan included the following components:

1. Advisory group meetings were scheduled to discuss the project's current and future phases and ensure the Plan's accuracy.
2. Stakeholder meetings were conducted to collect information regarding the Corridor's physical and social environment.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder meetings were one-hour sessions with developers, business owners, real estate professionals, and property owners from Athens. These meetings took place during the last week of January 2023, and the most discussed themes among the stakeholder meetings included flexible zoning, unique physical environment, experiences not just retail, high land cost expectations, resident engagement, and pedestrian-oriented development.

Some of the critical representative comments that reflected these themes included:

- **Physical Environment Opportunities:**

- Discuss the potential for smaller-scale business redevelopment opportunities in the Corridor.
- Advocate for creating and implementing design standards to enhance the visual appeal and coherence of the Corridor while preserving opportunities for first-floor retail.
- Create a unique physical environment that attracts residents, students, and visitors to "hang out" on the Corridor all year.

- **Flexible Zoning:**

- Implement zoning for walkable mixed-use first-floor retail and residential spaces to create a unique destination.
- Allow higher lot coverage to accommodate walkable built environments.

- **High Land Cost:**

- Reinvigorate development in the Corridor, particularly smaller-scale development, through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other means.
- Permit land assemblage through land banking and zoning changes.

- **Experiences Not just Retail:**

- Suggest ensuring that approximately 20 percent of Corridor first floor uses are retail spaces.
- Emphasize making the Corridor itself a destination by offering a variety of attractions, including family experiences, unique stores and restaurants, art installations, and unique wayfinding and branding.

- **Parking:**

- Address and add public parking facilities to enhance the Corridor's accessibility and attractiveness, while increasing developable land.

- **Pedestrian-Oriented Development:**

- Highlight the need to add more points of interest to encourage pedestrian traffic from east to west.
- Allow height and more lot coverage to foster a walkable built environment.

ADVISORY TEAM MEETINGS

The first advisory group meeting was held on January 23, 2023, and served as an introduction to the project for the advisory group. Initial findings about the Stimson Avenue Corridor were presented to the team. During this meeting, the advisory group was introduced to their roles and responsibilities for the Plan process.

The second advisory group meeting was held on April 25, 2023. This meeting included a presentation of the Existing Conditions Report findings and key themes from stakeholder meetings. Also, the physical conditions analysis findings were presented to the advisory team during the meeting.

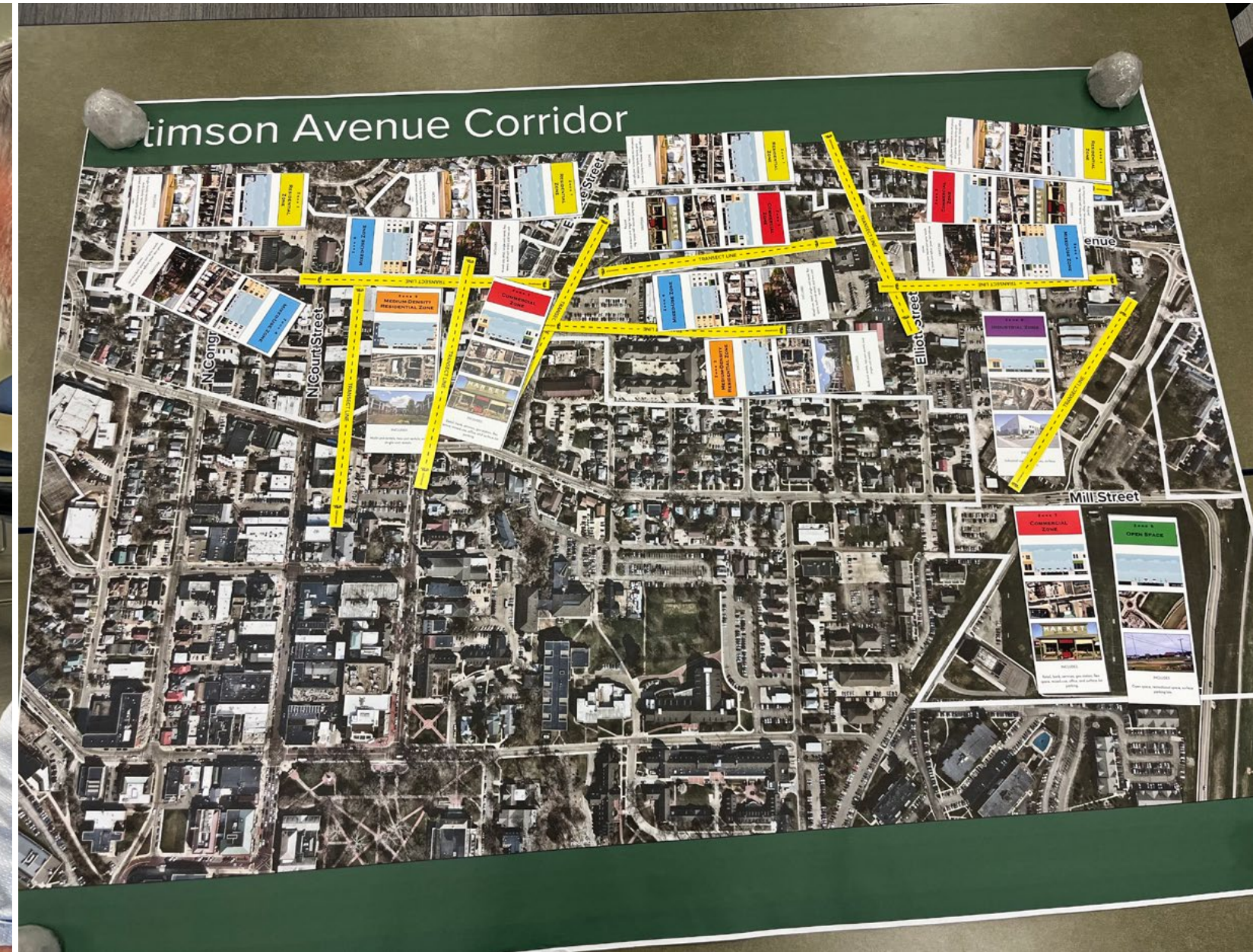
During meeting two, the advisory team was introduced to the “transect exercise.” This activity allowed the members to identify different zoning districts within the Stimson Avenue Corridor. The zones included residential, medium-density residential, commercial, mixed-use, industrial, and open space. During the activity, the advisory team created the additional recreational commercial zone by combining commercial and open space zones. The transect activity results were then digitized, included, and explained in this plan’s Flexible Zoning section.

FIGURE 4: TRANSECT MAPPING ACTIVITY



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 5: TRANSECT MAPPING ACTIVITY RESULTS



Source: American Structurepoint.

EXISTING PLANNING RESOURCES

There are several past planning efforts to guide or prepare for future development and redevelopment opportunities throughout Athens. Each past planning effort is unique and offers a perspective on residents' desired goals and outcomes. A summary of the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan is provided to understand the content and its relationship with the Stimson Avenue Corridor.



FIGURE 6: ATHENS 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STRUCTURAL PROJECTS—LIGHTING AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS IMPROVEMENTS

THE CITY OF ATHENS 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan presents an overview of the Stimson Avenue corridor, a significant half-mile stretch of commercial zoning that is a vital link between Uptown Athens and the Ohio University campus to the west and a Route 33 interchange to the east. It stands as a crucial gateway for the city's development. The proposed plan suggests several infrastructure and policy adjustments to enhance the Corridor's accessibility for Athens residents and to facilitate positive transformations in the local built environment. These recommendations encompass:

- A change in zoning
- Parking changes
- A connecting service road from this Center to East Park
- Explore changes to the intersection of Carpenter, Stimson, and East State Street to increase pedestrian safety and ease of use
- Change the zoning to B-2D or similar to reduce surface parking requirements

Athens started the execution of the Athens 2040 Plan's proposals for the Stimson Avenue Corridor in 2020. With dedicated funding, the City initiated several projects, such as replacing City-owned underground utilities, installing lighting and traffic signals, replacing curbs, and various other streetscape enhancements along the Stimson Avenue Corridor. Furthermore, following the adoption of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan, additional initiatives were undertaken to transform the Corridor into a welcoming and accessible destination, encouraging prospects for future commercial and mixed-use developments.



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 7: ATHENS 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STRUCTURAL PROJECTS—CURB REPLACEMENTS



Source: American Structurepoint.

COMMUNITY VISION

A Stimson Avenue Corridor that is attractive, convenient, livable, accessible, and economically vibrant for residents, businesses, and visitors. Planning for a neighborhood that serves the year-round residents, student population, and local businesses.



GOALS

This Plan's goals represent the vision the community wants to accomplish. Each statement works to identify the desired outcome of conditions. These goals are carefully designed to encompass plan focus areas and link all objective statements to familiar themes. In total, the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan comprises seven goal statements.

CORRIDOR GOALS

- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor's appearance and functionality
- **Develop** a positive image and "brand" of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- **Improve** multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- **Mitigate** floodplain concerns
- **Optimize** land usage
- **Enhance** community engagement
- **Stimulate** sustainable development



OBJECTIVES

The objectives are specific statements that provide quantitative measurements. The statements are policy objectives related to the previously mentioned goal topics. These statements are aspirational to guide the Stimson Avenue Corridor toward its future goals and overall Community Vision. They were created using a variety of data and input from stakeholders and advisory group as the primary sources used when crafting these statements include:

- Past planning documents from the community
- Input from the advisory team members
- Input from the various stakeholder groups

STRATEGIES

Strategies are concrete initiatives intended to carry out an idea, goal, or objective identified within the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan. Each strategy will be a specific projection or program to implement. The implementation section of this plan further identifies strategies into Critical Path Strategies, which are seen as high-priority strategies that the study area should implement over the next zero to five years. More details about the strategies will be discussed in the Implementation section. The strategies listed in the following sections were developed to implement the goals and objectives.

CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN





UNIQUE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The built environment shapes visitors' perception of a place. When discussing changing a community's physical structure, various activities can occur. These activities can involve creating something entirely new or modifying existing structures.

Any action that alters the built or natural environment can be considered a change to the physical structure of a community. These changes can significantly impact the area's overall quality of life, attractiveness, and functionality for residents and visitors. It is essential to consider and plan these changes to ensure they align with the community's needs, values, and goals.

EXISTING CONDITIONS TAKEAWAYS

Advisory team members were asked to identify landmarks and opportunities on a map. The team identified potential areas for redevelopment, and it helped the consulting team identify the landmarks of the Stimson Avenue Corridor. The following is a result of the Placemaking Map exercise (see Appendix A- Existing Conditions Report for the Placemaking Map):

OPPORTUNITIES

- There are 12 acres of mostly scattered vacant land along Stimson Avenue Corridor.
- Opportunity areas include greenways, and the Ohio University intramural field.
- Opportunity areas also exist in parking surfaces along Stimson Avenue, such as the lot at Stimson Avenue and State Street.

LANDMARKS

- Southeast Ohio History Center
- Mount Zion Baptist Church Preservation Society
- Ohio Athens Armory
- Federal Bureau of Investigation

REDEVELOPMENT

- Parcels between Stimson Avenue, Kern Street, and Palmer Street were identified as redevelopment opportunities.



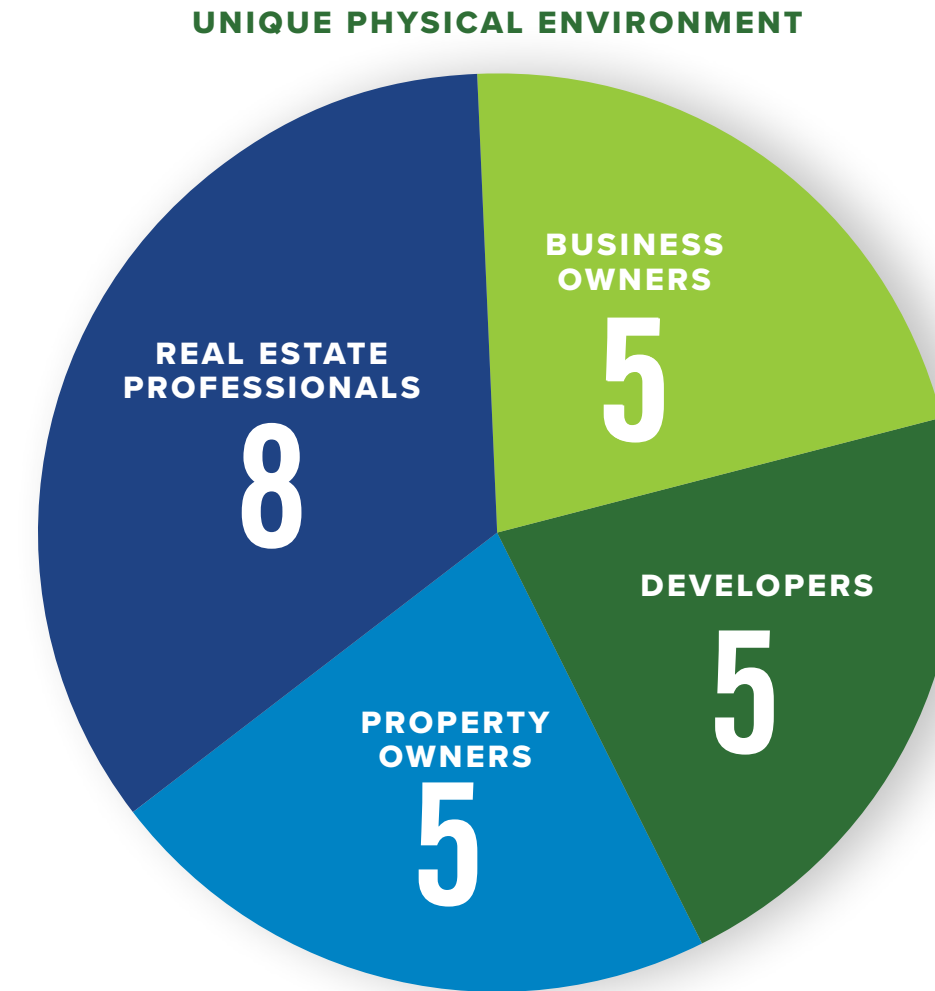
WHAT WE HEARD

- **Beautification:** The stakeholders mentioned the importance of improving streetscapes and suggested adding colorful plants to create an inviting and playful atmosphere for people.
- **Utilizing Vacant Spaces:** There are suggestions to re-purpose vacant buildings and spaces along Stimson Avenue. Stakeholders propose setting up pop-up shops using old buildings and parking lots.
- **Wayfinding and Signage:** Several stakeholders mentioned wayfinding. Implementing wayfinding signage and banners on light poles was suggested by the stakeholders to improve navigation and draw attention to specific areas and businesses.
- **Business Diversity:** Stakeholders support mixed-use developments integrating various functions, such as boutique shops, health food stores, drug stores, bike shops, and small businesses.
- **Enhancing Public Spaces:** There is a desire from the public to create inviting outdoor spaces, including rain gardens, parks, and artistic installations, to encourage walking, social gatherings, and interactions along the Corridor.

All four stakeholder groups commented on the need for physical enhancements to the Stimson Avenue corridor, highlighting the recommendations' importance. Of all group stakeholder comments, 23 focused on this topic, further demonstrating the need for a comprehensive approach to urban development, incorporating green spaces, public amenities, and a mix of businesses to create an attractive and vibrant Corridor along Stimson Avenue.



FIGURE 8: RESULTS FROM STAKEHOLDER GROUPS ABOUT THE UNIQUE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



Source: American Structurepoint.



PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS²

“Love the coal miner murals uptown, the mural at Stimson/East State intersection, the decorated waste/recycling/utility receptacles, the wheat-pasted photography exhibit on the parking garage, and the poetry on the buses. I especially like decorating the parking garage frequently in hopes that students will recognize town pride and be less likely to trash the town. The steps from Morris to Stimson, and others around town, would lend themselves to street art.”

– From the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan Public Input.

The following objectives are restated from the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The goals stated in this section feed into the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals.

- Explore changes to the intersection of Carpenter, Stimson, and East State Street to increase pedestrian safety and ease of use.
- Changing the zoning to B-2D or something similar to reduce the need for more surface parking and encourage pedestrian scale design.
- Increased Street Art—Utilize walls, steps, sidewalks, and alleys when feasible to encourage exploration and “selfie” spots.
- Add value to the Armory Park by including art, programming, and lighting to draw people there and anchor the north end of Uptown.
- Formalize the funding process for public arts to increase transparency and reinforce the city’s commitment to arts and programming.

²[Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

RELEVANT GOALS

- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor’s appearance and functionality
- **Develop** a positive image and “brand” of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- **Improve** multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- **Optimize** land usage

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Strengthen the Stimson Avenue streetscape.
 - **STRATEGY:** Implement streetscape beautification initiatives incorporating colorful plants, flowers, and greenery strategically placed along the sidewalks.
- Support new zoning overlay districts to encourage a mix of land uses in the Stimson Avenue corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Ensure all new development in the area follows the standards of the proposed zoning overlay district.
- Utilize the corridor’s built environment to create a sense of place and identity.
 - **STRATEGY:** Insert public art, signage, or branding elements into the “left-over” spaces along the corridor, such as Stimson Avenue, Carpenter Street, the State Street intersection, and Johnny Appleseed Park.
 - **STRATEGY:** Use “left-over” spaces, such as on-street parking spaces, to create temporary seating and outdoor dining areas.
 - **STRATEGY:** Integrate public art in the design of streetscapes and public spaces. For example, the Armory Park murals.
 - **STRATEGY:** Redevelop Stimson Avenue and North 1804 Way to create a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood retail district.
 - **STRATEGY:** Redevelop the intramural fields by creating recreational amenities for the residents and visitors of Stimson Avenue.
 - **STRATEGY:** Encompass diverse public spaces for locals and visitors to provide them with various experiences at the Athens Armory on Stimson Avenue.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create a parking deck at Stimson Avenue and Kern Street with retail frontage to resolve parking concerns within the community.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Through input from stakeholders, an existing conditions report analysis, and a market assessment report, key development opportunities were identified with the help of the advisory team. These focus areas helped guide recommendations to create a unique physical environment in the Stimson Avenue Corridor. In this section, the opportunities of each focus area are described.

! THE POWER OF 10+³

“The Power of 10+ is a concept Project for Public Spaces developed to evaluate and facilitate Placemaking at multiple city scales. The Power of 10+ shows how paying attention to the human experience when building a city’s destinations and districts can have immediate and widespread impacts.”

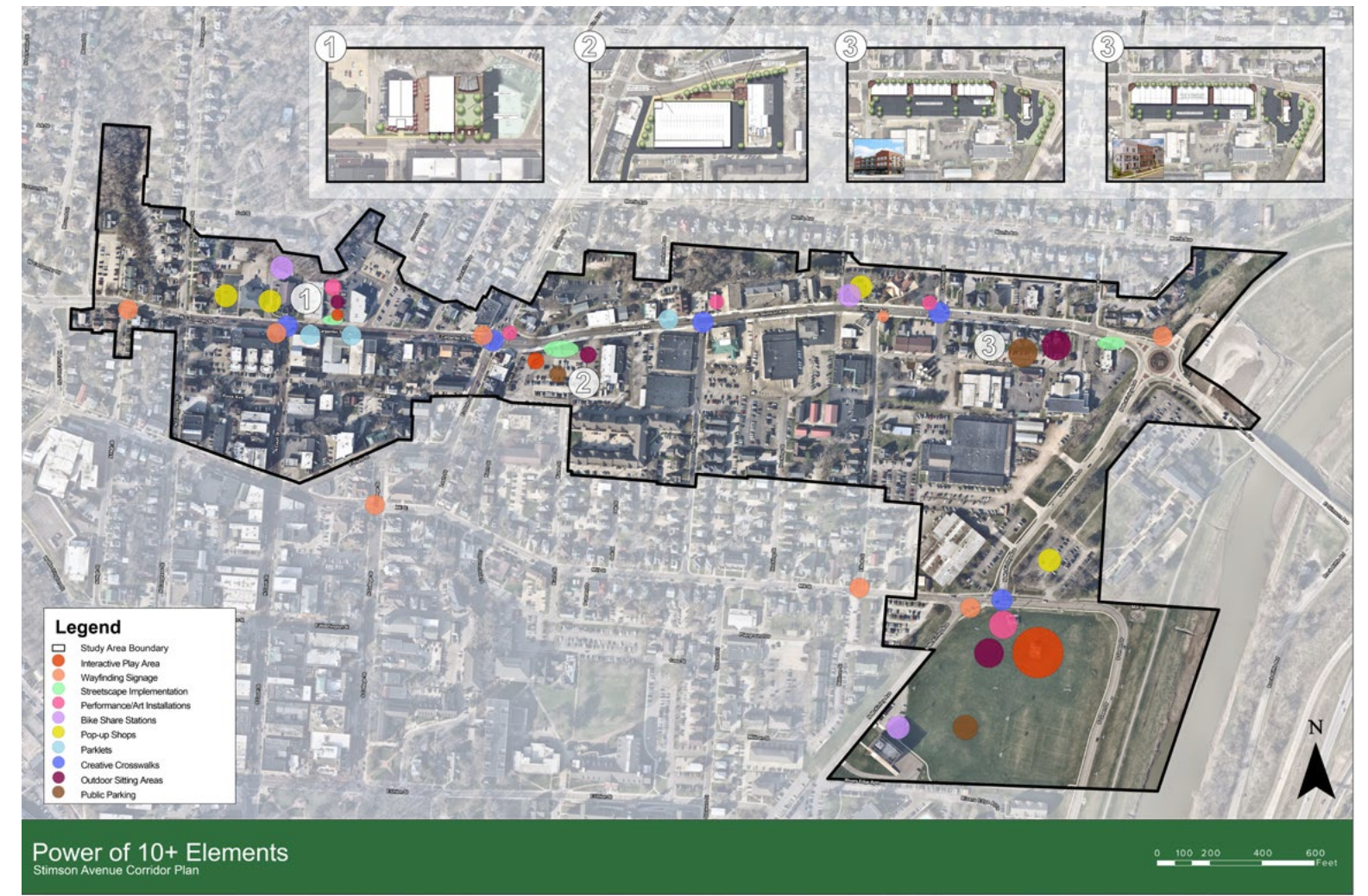
The idea behind The Power of 10+ is that places succeed when these places offer the community ten or more reasons to be there. These can include but are not limited to sitting areas, art to touch, a café, a place to read the paper or drink a cup of coffee, food to eat, water features, history to experience, etc. Creating an appealing environment is a critical economic drive for the Stimson Avenue Corridor. Based on stakeholder comments, it is important to incorporate elements that provide a unique experience and encourage social interactions around the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

In this section, different development opportunities are described. These development opportunities create a place out of Stimson Avenue Corridor. The development opportunities of this plan include essential placemaking elements, including outdoor sitting areas, wayfinding signage, shade trees and umbrellas, art displays, history experiences, etc. Choosing more than one focus area was to connect entertainment and amenities along the corridor.

Expanding on the “Power of 10+” concept, Figure 9 highlights the locations of the four focus areas chosen by the consultant and advisory team members. The focus areas were selected based on their potential to create a positive environment for the Corridor. Figure 9 also illustrates potential nodes for recommended placemaking projects that will help improve the urban vitality of the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

³ [The Power of 10+](#)

FIGURE 9: DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES MAP



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 10: EXAMPLE OF A PARKLET ALONG A STREET SHOWCASING SITTING AREAS



Source: [Get parklets on your streets! — Possible \(wearepossible.org\)](#).

PARKLETS

A parklet is an approach that the Stimson Avenue Corridor can take to create a unique physical environment. Along the Corridor, there are on-street parking spaces that can be utilized for the location of temporary parklets. Parklets serve as an extension of the sidewalk, creating additional space for amenities. A parklet design can consist of café tables and chairs, activations such as arts and culture events, cycle hoop stations, etc. Temporary pop-up parklets can also be established with decorative plants, chalkboard figures, cornhole games, etc., all to encourage people to stop and interact.

FIGURE 11: EXAMPLE OF A POP-UP SHOP



Source: [Learn How to Set Up a Pop-Up Shop in 5 Easy Steps](#).

POP-UP SHOPS

As mentioned in the Existing Conditions Takeaways section, off-street parking surfaces and greenways along Stimson Avenue could be considered opportunity sites for pop-up shops. Pop-up shops are short-term sales spaces that can last a day to weeks. These pop-up shops allow emerging local businesses to engage with their communities and boost their brand awareness. The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan emphasizes the importance of diversifying public spaces for locals and visitors to provide them with various experiences, and setting up pop-up shops can be a starting point to achieve this.

FIGURE 12: EXAMPLE OF TOUR LAWRENCE BIKE SHARE PROGRAM



Source: [How to Use the Tour Lawrence Bike Share](#).

BIKE SHARE STATIONS

Pedestrian-oriented development is a Stimson Avenue Corridor approach described in a further section. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of improving multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor. Bike share programs can give Stimson Avenue residents and visitors an affordable transportation option; a bike share program can also increase the connectivity around the Corridor and help make the corridor an experience.

FIGURE 13: EXAMPLE OF ART INSTALLATIONS



Source: [Brightwire Designs](#).

ART INSTALLATIONS

Public art can help encourage Stimson Avenue residents and visitors to pay attention to the environment they occupy. Stimson Avenue Corridor has sites that could be used for permanent or temporary art installations. Public art installations can benefit the Stimson Avenue Corridor and create a sense of place and identity. Art installations can also strengthen the community of the Corridor.

FIGURE 14: EXAMPLE OF WAYFINDING SIGNAGE



Source: [Wayfinding and Transport Signage](#).

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Wayfinding uses signage, color, and other design elements to help residents and visitors familiarize themselves with Stimson Avenue Corridor, with new amenities and functions of the area. Implementing wayfinding signage can also help the Corridor build its urban physical environment.

FIGURE 15: EXAMPLE OF STREETScape AMENITIES



Source: [Gansevoort Streetscapes](#).

STREETScape AMENITIES

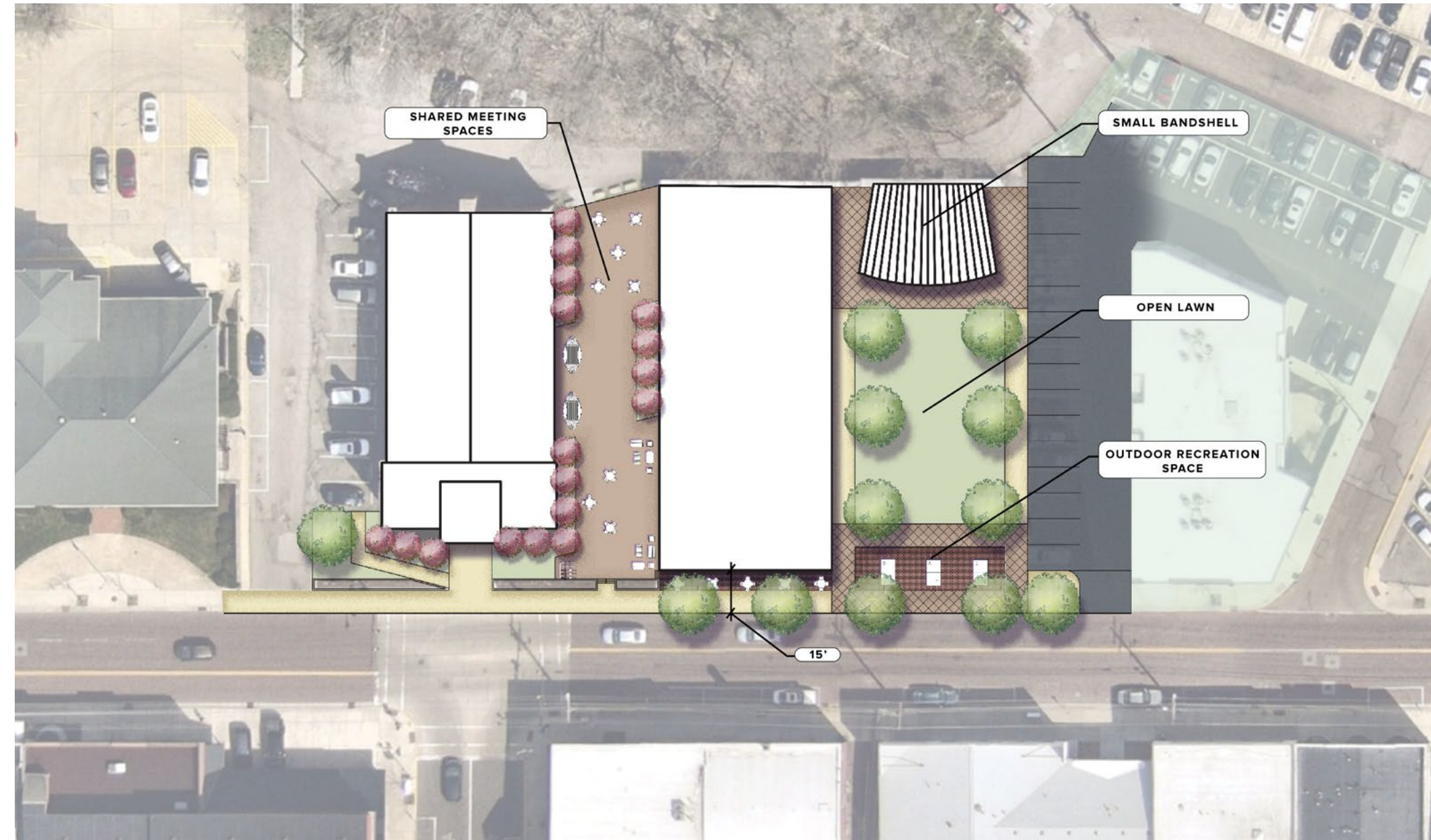
Streetscape amenities are features in the public right-of-way that encourage civic and economic activity on the street. They include public seating, trees, outdoor lighting, etc. Implementing streetscape amenities along Stimson Avenue Corridor will help enhance the community's identity.

FOCUS AREA: THE ARMORY ON STIMSON AVENUE

Strategy: Encompass diverse public spaces for locals and visitors to provide them with various experiences at the Athens Armory on Stimson Avenue.

The Armory on Stimson Avenue focus area was designed to encompass diverse public spaces for locals and visitors to provide them with various experiences. This area comprises two parcels, classified as commercial and institutional. The Ohio National Guard Armory is a Historic Landmark for Athens and was included in the design for the area. That was to give the Old National Guard Armory a new purpose by transforming it into a dynamic space with collaborative and meeting spaces that benefit the residents. The Family Dollar store was also proposed to undergo adaptive reuse to contribute to revitalizing the area.

FIGURE 16: THE ARMORY ON STIMSON AVENUE



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 17: DESIGN PERSPECTIVE FOR THE ARMORY ON STIMSON AVENUE



Source: American Structurepoint.

Key Elements:

- **Outdoor Music Center:** The project will include a permanent band shell structure for seasonal music events. The Armory band shell will serve as a gathering point for people of all ages.
- **Shared Spaces:** Creating shared collaboration and meeting spaces for various companies, students, residents, and employees will give the Corridor a sense of community and collaboration within the area.
- **Outdoor Recreational Areas:** Developing attractive outdoor recreational spaces visible from the R-O-W (Right-of-Way) will help invite residents and visitors to engage in various activities the area offers.
- **Open Lawn:** This area will host community events, farmers' markets, and other activities that will help promote the area and create a unique physical environment.
- **Power of 10+:** The Armory on Stimson Avenue design will include the following features, open space, tree shade, indoor sitting areas, outdoor sitting areas, light fixtures, outdoor entertainment, such as:
 - Corn hole and ping pong tables
 - Collaboration and meeting spaces
 - Food areas
 - Music space
 - Wayfinding signage
 - Art features
 - History plaques.

The vision for the redevelopment of The Armory on Stimson Avenue is to bring new life into the space, making it a vibrant hub of activity, culture, and connectivity for the benefit of all who visit and reside in Athens.

FOCUS AREA: STIMSON AVENUE AND KERN STREET

Strategy: Create a parking deck at Stimson Avenue and Kern Street with retail frontage to resolve parking concerns within the community.

The Stimson Avenue and Kern Street project envisions the creation of a parking deck with retail frontage to resolve parking concerns within the community effectively. The project site is near retail stores and residential areas, and it offers easy accessibility to popular establishments like the Athens Central Hotel, the Armory Park, and various restaurants, all reachable within a five-minute walk from focus area two. Currently serving as a parking lot for Palmer Place Apartments, the parcels on the site are classified as commercial and vacant.

FIGURE 18: STIMSON AVENUE AND KERN STREET



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 19: DESIGN PERSPECTIVE OF STIMSON AVENUE AND KERN STREET



Source: American Structurepoint.

Key Elements:

- **Parking Facility:** The project's primary focus is to establish a modern parking deck that accommodates the needs of the public and Palmer Place Apartments residents, ensuring public parking options.
- **Ground-Floor Retail Space:** By recognizing the importance of fostering economic vibrancy, the first floor will feature attractive commercial spaces. These areas encourage increased business activity and enhance the street's visibility, promoting an engaging urban atmosphere.
- **Integration with the Public Right-of-Way:** The project will include thoughtful landscape enhancements connecting the development with the existing streetscape, promoting a cohesive and visually appealing environment.
- **Outdoor Seating Area:** A strategically positioned outdoor seating area will be designed to be adjacent to the right-of-way. This feature seeks to create a dynamic space that fosters visible activity and interest for residents and people passing through the Corridor, enriching the overall urban experience.
- **Uniform Landscaping Extension:** The project will showcase uniform landscaping extending into the Ambassador Laundries property, promoting a smooth visual transition between the spaces.
- **Power of 10+:** Stimson Avenue and Kern Street will include the following features: parking spaces, indoor sitting areas, outdoor sitting areas, tree shade, soccer ball courts, hammocks, bocce ball courts, retail shops, wayfinding signage, etc.

The future development of the Stimson Avenue and Kern Street project aims to be a model of innovative urban design, addressing parking challenges while enhancing the community's economic vitality and physical environment. The project seeks to foster a vibrant, inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors by implementing urban design features and small retail spaces.

FOCUS AREA: STIMSON AVENUE AND NORTH 1804 WAY

Strategy: Redevelop Stimson Avenue and North 1804 Way to create a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood retail district.

The Stimson Avenue and North 1804 Way was designed for future redevelopment as a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood retail district. Currently, most parcels in this location are classified as single-family residential. As part of the redevelopment plan, the streetscape of Sonic, located within the same block, will change to enhance its overall appearance.

It's important to note that the area lies within the SFHA. Any new development must follow the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program requirements.

FIGURES 20: STIMSON AVENUE AND NORTH 1804 WAY - OPTION ONE



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURES 21: STIMSON AVENUE AND NORTH 1804 WAY - OPTION TWO



Source: American Structurepoint.

FIGURE 22: DESIGN PERSPECTIVE OF STIMSON AVENUE AND NORTH 1804 WAY



Source: American Structurepoint.

Key Elements:

- **Enhanced Community Aesthetics:** A primary objective is to improve the streetscape of the Sonic fast food restaurant, with particular attention to improving parking lots, landscaping, and street frontage.
- **Neighborhood Retail:** Emphasizing the implementation of neighborhood retail establishments will create numerous economic opportunities, fostering a thriving commercial hub that serves the local community.
- **Corridor Identity:** This area is located at one of the Corridor's entry points so that it will serve as a gateway to the Corridor itself. The redevelopment will prioritize improving the physical appeal of the Stimson Avenue corridor, contributing to a more welcoming and pleasing environment.
- **Power of 10+:** The Stimson Avenue and North 1804 Way design will include the following features: wayfinding signage, residential spaces, retail shops, outdoor sitting areas, indoor sitting areas, food, tree shade, etc.

By incorporating these key elements, the future redevelopment of Stimson Avenue and North 1804 Way will not only improve the overall livability of the neighborhood but also boost economic growth and establish a better identity for the Corridor.

CORRIDOR IDENTIFICATION AND WAYFINDING



What is Wayfinding?

“Wayfinding is the art and science of guiding people through public spaces. Roads and trails, parks and squares, campuses, transit terminals, hospitals, and airports are where people need help finding their way through unfamiliar environments.”⁴

A wayfinding system’s primary purpose is to facilitate people’s movement and flow through a given space safely and efficiently. Especially in busy environments, effective wayfinding is crucial in promoting safety and security for visitors and residents of an area. Other forms of wayfinding focus on helping users identify critical points of interest and their location relative to an area. Wayfinding helps implement efficient navigation, improves user experience, safety, and security.

The implementation of wayfinding signage has emerged as a significant focal point, not limited to just Stimson Avenue but also extending to its surroundings. In 2017, Ohio University formulated a comprehensive Wayfinding and Signage Guidelines Plan to ensure the careful and thoughtful integration of wayfinding elements throughout its campus. While this plan emphasizes the importance of thoughtfully situating these elements within the campus, its principles can be extended to build a more encompassing wayfinding strategy, benefiting students, residents, and visitors. Also, the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan actively advocates for implementing branding and wayfinding initiatives across diverse areas within Athens.

For this plan, diverse feedback was received from the public about implementing wayfinding in different neighborhoods. Stakeholders highlighted the need for better wayfinding solutions, public parking maps, and support for alternative transportation methods in and around Stimson Avenue. Figure 18 illustrates how parking surfaces could be identified as private or public so residents and visitors could quickly identify public parking surfaces. All stakeholder insights were valuable in developing strategies to enhance residents’ and visitors’ navigation experiences and mobility options.

⁴ [Planning a Municipal Wayfinding System](#)



WHAT WE HEARD

- **Wayfinding and Navigation:** Stakeholders emphasized the importance of effective wayfinding along the Stimson Avenue Corridor.
- **Comprehensive Parking Solutions:** Stakeholders highlighted the need for comprehensive parking identification that displays public parking lots.
- **Enhancing Residents’ and Visitors’ Experiences:** Several stakeholders emphasized improving the overall quality of life and mobility for those utilizing the Stimson Avenue Corridor.
- **Alternative Transportation Support:** Participants recognized the importance of promoting alternative transportation methods in the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

FIGURE 23: EXISTING PARKING IDENTIFICATION ALONG EAST STIMSON AVENUE



Source: American Structurepoint.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS⁵

The following objectives are restated from the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The goals stated in this section feed into the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals.

- Implement people-scale wayfinding.
- Create wayfinding in Sells Park and to the park.

RELEVANT GOALS

- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor's appearance and functionality
- **Develop** a positive image and "brand" of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- **Improve** multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- **Optimize** land usage
- **Enhance** community engagement
- **Stimulate** sustainable development

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Create a strong brand for Stimson Avenue with signage that utilizes colors, symbols, maps, and signs to communicate directions effectively.
 - **STRATEGY:** Utilize internal resources and partner agencies (or hire a consultant) to develop a specific Stimson Avenue branding strategy, including logos, banner designs, written narratives, etc.
 - **STRATEGY:** Implement a Wayfinding Signage Plan using the branding developed in the first strategy to direct residents and visitors to key sites and points of interest along and near the Stimson Avenue corridor.

- Enhance safety and security.
 - **STRATEGY:** Implement wayfinding solutions along Stimson Avenue that prioritize safety and security for all users.
 - **STRATEGY:** Place signage and information points to ensure that pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists can easily understand the traffic flow, designated pathways, and emergency exits, promoting a secure environment for everyone.
- Enhance parking area identification to improve the overall parking experience for residents and visitors.
 - **STRATEGY:** Install wayfinding signage to identify parking areas and local attractions to help residents and visitors find exciting activity nodes.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop and distribute comprehensive parking maps that indicate the location of public parking areas along with instructions for accessing these areas.

The Corridor identification and wayfinding section prioritizes effective wayfinding to enhance movement, safety, and the overall experience for residents and visitors. The input and feedback from diverse stakeholders were essential in shaping the strategies and objectives outlined in this section. These strategies align with the Plan's goals and create a road map for the Stimson Avenue Corridor. A strong brand and a well-executed Wayfinding Signage Plan will enhance navigation and establish a positive Corridor image. The enhancement of parking area identification is another critical aspect of the Plan. By combining a thoughtful branding approach, safety-conscious strategies, and improved parking identification, the Plan aims to transform Stimson Avenue into a vibrant, accessible, and appealing space that enriches the identity of the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

⁵ [Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

PARKING

Stimson Avenue has many parking lots that can be used more efficiently through redevelopment. These parking facilities, while essential, occupy valuable land space that could be better utilized for housing, commercial activities, or creating inviting public spaces. Additionally, they contribute to environmental issues by accumulating pollutants like oils, grease, and heavy metals. Significant impervious surface areas can contribute to uncomfortable spaces for pedestrians as they contribute to micro-climates with elevated temperatures and can exasperate storm water management issues.

The project's Existing Conditions Report conducted a comprehensive parking inventory to address these challenges. The inventory revealed that along the Stimson Avenue Corridor, there are 2,566 parking spaces.

- 2,423 surface lot parking spaces
- 143 on-street parking spaces

These surface lots comprise a significant portion of the built environment. Although the area already has sufficient parking spaces, one of the focuses is to enhance visibility and accessibility to public parking surfaces for both residents and visitors.





WHAT WE HEARD

- **Underutilized Parking Potential:** Participants mentioned that the existing parking lots on Stimson Avenue offer the potential for more efficient usage through redevelopment.
- **Public Parking Wayfinding:** Stakeholders emphasized identifying public parking lots through wayfinding.
- **Public Parking Accessibility:** There are suggestions for improving visibility and accessibility to public parking surfaces for residents and visitors.

In response to the concerns raised by stakeholders about parking in the Stimson Avenue area, one of the primary issues identified in the Wayfinding section is the need for precise identification of public parking lots. Recognizing the potential for parking improvements, the project team has identified specific surface parking sites as opportunities for future redevelopment. The Development Opportunities section of the Plan outlines the proposed designs for these sites, showcasing their potential for becoming vibrant and valuable assets to the community.

By encouraging the redevelopment of these surface parking areas and making public parking more easily identifiable, Stimson Avenue can undergo a positive transformation. This approach aims to optimize land utilization, encourage sustainable development, and create a more welcoming environment for everyone in the area.



PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS⁷

The following objectives are restated from the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The goals stated in this section feed into the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals.

- That plan recommends parking changes.
 - These changes will include a reduction in parking minimums and allow the creation of shared-use parking agreements to satisfy parking requirements.

RELEVANT PLAN GOALS

- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor's appearance and functionality
- **Develop** a positive image and "brand" of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- **Improve** multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- **Enhance** community engagement
- **Stimulate** sustainable development

⁷ [Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Support off-street parking lot infill to reinforce the physical character of the Stimson Avenue corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop a more in-depth parking analysis to determine where shared parking opportunities (between private property owners and the City) may help reduce the many off-street spaces and promote infill development.
 - **STRATEGY:** Determine if redevelopment areas in the Corridor are close enough to shared parking facilities where parking requirements may be waived for infill development.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create a streamlined process for music and/or performance events in private off-street parking lots.
 - **STRATEGY:** Redevelop underutilized surface parking lots as lively public areas, green spaces, or community gathering spots to transform Stimson Avenue into a vibrant and inviting urban space.
- Create a welcoming urban space to enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of the corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Implement sustainable parking management practices to mitigate the environmental impact of parking facilities.



- **STRATEGY:** Emphasize designs that promote energy efficiency, green spaces, and walkability, aligning with the community's vision for a more welcoming urban space.
- Support parking change recommendations included in the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop a more in-depth parking analysis to determine where shared parking opportunities (between private property owners and the City) may help reduce the overall off-street spaces.
- Promote redevelopment opportunities.
 - **STRATEGY:** Identify and prioritize specific surface parking sites for future redevelopment, aligning with the community's goals for vibrancy and value.
 - **STRATEGY:** Transform public surfaces into assets that contribute to the overall enhancement of the Stimson Avenue Corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create a parking deck at Stimson Avenue and Kern Street with retail frontage to resolve parking concerns within the community.

EXPERIENCES NOT JUST RETAIL, USING PLACEMAKING

! What is Placemaking?
Placemaking in urban planning encompasses diverse interpretations and meanings. Placemaking refers to enhancing the public realm by adding value and significance through community-driven revitalization initiatives that embrace local values, historical context, cultural elements, and the surrounding natural environment.⁸

The stakeholders involved in developing and improving Stimson Avenue stated various ideas to enhance the area and make it a thriving destination. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of Stimson Avenue becoming a lively and thriving street with a strong sense of community. They hope to invite young families and offer family-friendly activities such as bowling and pop-up shops.

While input received by stakeholders emphasized growth and development, they also want to maintain a unique character and avoid turning the area into a large commercial hub with excessive parking lots and big chain stores. Also, they would like to preserve historical sites, such as the Mount Zion Baptist Church Preservation Society and the Armory Park.

The stakeholders' vision for Stimson Avenue involves a unique, thriving, and community-oriented destination with various activities, local businesses, entertainment options, arts, and cultural landmarks. The goal is to create a place that appeals to residents and visitors while preserving the area's history and culture.

⁸ [Placemaking on a Budget: Improving Small Towns, Neighborhoods, and Downtowns Without Spending a Lot of Money.](#)



WHAT WE HEARD

- **Diverse and Vibrant Entertainment:** Suggestions to increase entertainment options.
- **Expand Experiences and Destinations:** Stakeholders suggested adding family-oriented spaces, green areas, and various businesses.
- **Local Businesses:** Stakeholders mentioned the importance of supporting local businesses to create unique shopping experiences.
- **Urban Revitalization:** Participants mentioned preserving historic landmarks and re-purposing them as community co-working spaces.

All four stakeholder groups commented on the need to create experiences along the Stimson Avenue Corridor, highlighting the recommendations' importance. Out of all stakeholder comments from all groups, 15 focused on this topic, further demonstrating the need to convert the Corridor into a community-oriented destination by incorporating entertainment, public green areas, and opportunities for local business.

FIGURE 26: EXPERIENCES, NOT JUST RETAIL COMMENTS FROM STAKEHOLDERS



FIGURE 27: OHIO NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY IN ATHENS. UNIQUE EXPERIENCES THAT WILL MAKE STIMSON AVENUE A DESTINATION SHOULD LEVERAGE CULTURAL LANDMARKS LIKE THE ARMORY



FIGURE 25: DOYLESTOWN OHIO SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

CASE STUDY: DOYLESTOWN, OHIO—SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

The Doylestown Summer Concert Series, an annual event, has been successfully running for 22 years, representing how a community-focused initiative can enhance civic engagement and cultural appreciation. That event combines music, food, and entertainment to create a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere that draws residents together during the summer months.

The event features a mix of returning and new bands every year, ensuring a diverse range of musical genres to cater to different tastes within the community. This approach fosters inclusivity and encourages broader participation. In addition to music, including various food trucks adds an extra layer of enjoyment, allowing attendees to enjoy diverse types of food while enjoying the performances.

The success of the concert series can be attributed to the unwavering support of sponsors and contributors over the past two decades. Their commitment to funding the program highlights the importance of community-driven initiatives. Collaborating with various local organizations and institutions, such as schools, businesses, and civic groups, can lead to well-rounded events with broad community involvement.

The Doylestown Concert Series is a case study for other communities looking to create vibrant, engaging, and culturally enriching events. By fostering community engagement, honoring historical legacies, and establishing sustainable funding models, communities can create enduring traditions that unite residents and enhance local culture.



Source: [Doylestown Summer Concert Series](#).

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

! “I would ask: ‘What would make life better for residents and create a pleasant atmosphere for visitors?’ More events suitable for families are where healthy food is the cornerstone. Maybe encourage people to go out and mingle, like a picnic under the cherry blossoms, community walks in the evening, events for young families, events to highlight the many nonprofits in the area, and encourage volunteering. It creates a sense of community, especially for those who don’t belong to a religious organization. I also am looking forward to the children’s science center on Columbus Road— not sure if the city is involved, but it’s the kind of thing that I think the city should support as this relates to culture/ community values, quality of life, and tourism.”

– From the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan Public Input.

The following objectives are restated from the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The goals stated in this section feed into the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals.

To cultivate a more vibrant economic Corridor along Stimson Avenue, commensurate with citizen feedback, it is the recommendation of this plan to:

- Change zoning along Stimson Avenue to help remake Stimson as a transition zone between the single-family Near East Side and the multi-unit off-campus Mill Street residential area. Such zoning changes should focus on high-quality design that is pedestrian-scaled.
- Improve pedestrian experience on Stimson with a shared-use path that easily connects to the bike path.
- Partner with the University to improve outreach, engage with students, and incorporate their experience into the Athens experience as invested residents, especially during planning efforts.
- Continued growth for the Athens Community Arts and Music Festival.
- Make Creative Placemaking Week an annual event.

RELEVANT GOALS

- Enhance the Stimson Avenue Corridor’s appearance and functionality
- Develop a positive image and “brand” of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- Improve multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- Mitigate floodplain concerns
- Optimize land usage
- Enhance community engagement
- Stimulate sustainable development

⁹ [Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Foster a thriving community hub for residents and visitors of Stimson Avenue.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop Stimson Avenue into a vibrant and engaging community hub that fosters a strong sense of belonging.
 - **STRATEGY:** Integrate a broad mixture of strategic uses (housing, office, commercial, recreational) along the Stimson Avenue corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Utilize tools approved by the State of Ohio to foster a social environment by extending the Athens Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) and creating a Community Entertainment District within this study’s boundary.
- Support local businesses and entrepreneurs to provide opportunities for small businesses.
 - **STRATEGY:** Work with local businesses to bring their stores to the public through sidewalk sales, events, and Stimson Avenue-centric festivals.
 - **STRATEGY:** Utilize the on-street parking takeover program recommended in the Parking section to help entrepreneurs showcase their businesses along the Corridor and promote an active, lively environment.

- Create family-friendly activities around the corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Department to create a calendar of engaging family-oriented activities such as cultural festivals and interactive art workshops to create an inviting atmosphere for everyone.
- Preserve historical and cultural landmarks to ensure the preservation of historic landmarks.
 - **STRATEGY:** Collaborate with the city’s historic preservation commission and Athens County Historical Society to ensure landmarks are preserved.
- Balance land uses to create an attractive and accessible environment that encourages social interaction.
 - **STRATEGY:** Revitalize and expand public spaces along Stimson Avenue to provide inviting gathering spots, pop-up shops, green areas, and pedestrian-friendly zones.
 - **STRATEGY:** Support the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan idea of making Creative Placemaking Week an annual event.
 - **STRATEGY:** Manage commercial development along Stimson Avenue in a balanced and thoughtful manner, avoiding an excessive concentration of parking lots.
 - **STRATEGY:** Adopt a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) to assist with funding and redevelopment initiatives along the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

The transformation of Stimson Avenue into a vibrant destination is driven by the aspirations of stakeholders, with a focus on preserving its unique character while fostering a dynamic community hub. Beyond retail, the vision encompasses diverse experiences, balancing growth with historic preservation and local businesses. Strategies include mixed-use integration, local business support, family-friendly activities, and historic landmark preservation. Collaborative initiatives with the Parks and Recreation Department and historical entities emphasize a commitment to inclusivity.

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan aligns with broader objectives to enhance appearance, functionality, and community engagement. Through revitalized public spaces and balanced development, the Plan aims to create an environment that enriches the present and future. This section aims to create an inviting, socially vibrant space representing successful urban transformation.

CASE STUDY: THE 2019 CREATIVE PLACEMAKING WEEK¹⁰

Strategy: Support the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan idea of making Creative Placemaking Week an annual event.

The 2019 Creative Placemaking Week is a remarkable case study showcasing the power of creative placemaking to revitalize and transform urban spaces. Conceived by a group of Ohio University students, this event demonstrated how collaboration between students, local authorities, and community members can lead to positive outcomes. The project involved a diverse team of four graduate students whose vision was to transform an underutilized space into a vibrant pocket park to benefit both residents and visitors.

One of the most notable aspects of Creative Placemaking Week was the enthusiastic community support it received. Local volunteers joined the effort over the week, contributing to various activities, such as painting a mural on the adjacent Family Dollar store wall, installing benches, tables, small stage, and making overall improvements to the park. The Family Dollar store recognized the value of the project and provided permission for the mural.

The project received assistance and guidance from various entities. The Arts for Ohio contributed art supplies, and Athens played a vital role by offering the student group the public space adjacent to the Athens Armory. Athens City Planner Paul Logue expressed his excitement about the week and aspired to make creative placemaking a regular part of the city's activities. Creative Placemaking Week helped beautify underutilized spaces and fostered a sense of community pride and engagement. That successful case study can be an example for future placemaking implementation along the Stimson Avenue Corridor. The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan can align its goals and objectives with the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan and support making the Creative Placemaking Week an annual event.

¹⁰ [Armory Space Gets Plush Volunteer Makeover.](#)

FIGURE 28: VOLUNTEERS PAINTING AND BUILDING DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF THE PLACEMAKING PROJECT NEXT TO THE ATHENS ARMORY



Source: The Athens News.

PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



What is pedestrian-oriented development?¹¹

Pedestrian-oriented development encompasses guidelines for land usage, building design, and site design in new developments that align with transportation systems, prioritizing walking, followed by biking and transit options, and motor vehicle use. Examples of pedestrian-oriented development include ensuring easily accessible sidewalks and connecting destinations such as neighborhoods, parks, business zones, and community facilities.

Input from stakeholders emphasized the importance of enhancing bike and pedestrian connectivity in the area. Their vision includes creating a network of paths and trails to encourage more people to choose alternative transportation modes over automobiles. They aim to make Stimson Avenue and its surroundings more pedestrian-friendly and bike-accessible to foster a vibrant, walkable urban environment.

During the Educational Phase of the project, a physical analysis of the path infrastructure was conducted and included in the Existing Conditions Report (see Appendix A- Existing Conditions Report). The physical analysis covered sidewalks and bike infrastructure along Stimson Avenue and examined their connections to surrounding areas. The sidewalks were found to vary in width and condition between the west and east segments of the Corridor.

Overall, Stimson Avenue was rated as a highly walkable area, with a walk score of 85 out of 100, allowing easy access to most of Ohio University's campus within a 20-minute walk.¹² While most paths were in good condition, some narrow sidewalks near retaining walls were observed. This analysis could support infrastructure redevelopment to address connectivity issues raised during stakeholder meetings regarding sidewalks or bike paths.

The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan can enhance bike/pedestrian connectivity, create a vibrant urban environment, and promote sustainable transportation options by incorporating stakeholder comments into the planning and development process.

¹¹ [Connecting Destinations through Pedestrian-Oriented Design](#)

¹² [West Stimson Avenue, Athens, OH](#)



WHAT WE HEARD

- **Efficiency and Alternative Transportation:** Stakeholders suggested creating more connections within the Corridor to enhance accessibility and movement.
- **Neighborhood Connectivity:** The participants mentioned connecting neighborhoods and creating alternative routes for residents. The development of alternative routes for neighborhoods situated uphill was also encouraged.

FIGURE 29: PEDESTRIAN CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS



Source: American Structurepoint.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS¹³

! *“The sidewalks are deteriorating, and on some streets, no sidewalk at all. Athens may be bicycle-friendly, but it’s not pedestrian-friendly. Some sidewalks are ancient and need repair.”*

– From the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan Public Input.

“Fix the sidewalks and install lighting, especially on the West side. There are so many cracked, unsafe sidewalks and so little lighting that it’s unsafe to utilize. On some streets, it’s safer to walk on the road.”

– From the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan Public Input.

The following objectives are restated from the City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The goals stated in this section feed into the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals.

- Zoning changes are needed to help shift the development focus from cars to people.
- Improve the bike and pedestrian routes throughout the city.
- Improve the built environment for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Increase the number of mobility options and improve the transit options we currently have.
- Explore the city taking over snow and ice removal city-wide.
- Report regularly on our parking data.
- Phase out brick sidewalks.
- Pilot traffic calming measures on the Near East Side, along Morris and May.
- Implement people-scale wayfinding.
- Prepare for pilot projects concerning autonomous/connected vehicles (AV) that wish to operate within the city.
- Pursue a complete streets policy citywide, which would mean placing sidewalks on at least one side of all city streets and reviewing street lighting.

¹³ [Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

RELEVANT PLAN GOALS

- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor's appearance and functionality
- **Develop** a positive image and "brand" of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- **Improve** multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- **Enhance** community engagement
- **Stimulate** sustainable development

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Promote bike and pedestrian connectivity to encourage the use of various transportation modes.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop a comprehensive network of paths and trails along Stimson Avenue and its surroundings to improve bike and pedestrian connectivity.
 - **STRATEGY:** Enhance the pedestrian experience along Stimson Avenue by improving the design and condition of sidewalks.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create educational and awareness campaigns to promote walking and biking as preferred modes of transportation along Stimson Avenue.
- Support the proposed re-zoning of Stimson Avenue to B-2D to strengthen corridor linkage.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create a highly walkable nature for Stimson Avenue to strengthen the linkage between the Corridor and Ohio University's campus.
 - **STRATEGY:** Establish metrics to assess the impact of the enhanced bike and pedestrian connectivity on transportation patterns.
- Address connectivity challenges, ensuring seamless and efficient connections for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Utilize the findings from the physical analysis of path infrastructure conducted in the Existing Conditions report to identify and address connectivity challenges in the sidewalk and bike infrastructure.
 - **STRATEGY:** Redevelop and upgrade path infrastructure, particularly narrow sidewalks near retaining walls, to improve accessibility and connectivity.
 - **STRATEGY:** Explore the potential of revitalizing old alley rights-of-way for pedestrian and bike use.



The Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan prioritizes improved bike and pedestrian connectivity, responding to stakeholders' aspirations for a more sustainable, walkable, and vibrant urban environment. This approach envisions a well-connected network of paths and trails to encourage alternative transportation modes.

Based on the path infrastructure analysis conducted for the Existing Conditions Report, the Plan aims to enhance walkability and accessibility along Stimson Avenue. Stakeholder input emphasized the need for efficient, safe transportation options and better neighborhood connections, which the Plan addresses through strategies like path network creation and improved sidewalk infrastructure.

Infrastructure redevelopment, focusing on narrow sidewalks near retaining walls, reflects the Plan's dedication to creating seamless and efficient pathways. By incorporating these strategies, the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan aims to transform the area into a model of pedestrian-oriented development.

FLOODPLAIN MITIGATION

In Athens, Ohio, floodplains cause risks to properties and community well-being. Flooding can create property damage, increases in emergency services demands, and transportation issues, while negatively impacting the area's overall economic well-being. There are 3,308 properties in Athens that have a greater than 26.0 percent chance of experiencing severe flooding within the next 30 years. This statistic represents 51.0 percent of all properties in the region.

The Hocking River regulatory floodplain, or Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), impact the eastern section of Stimson Avenue. To mitigate flooding risks and ensure better protection, Athens is a participating community in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). It has also adopted local restrictions that exceed NFIP standards. The additional local standards are a testament to Athens' commitment to mitigating flooding, which was identified as the city's top natural hazard.¹⁴ The local mitigation measures include:

- Compensatory storage limits to restrict the amount of fill placed within the SFHA based on 20- and 50-year floodplain delineated by a hydraulic and hydraulic study commissioned by the City. Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which show NFIP regulatory limits, are limited to 100- and 500-year floodplains.
- Many structures in Athens were built before 1980 when the city began participating in the NFIP. NFIP guidelines allow "grandfathering" structures until substantial improvements are made, which means improvement values meet or exceed 50.0 percent of the structure's value. Athens's higher standard for substantial improvements extends the 50.0 percent threshold to a rolling five-year basis that is tracked through permitting. That means that if the total of a series of improvements over five years exceeds 50.0 percent of the structure's value, it must comply. Many jurisdictions only enforce the substantial improvement threshold for one-time, lump-sum improvements.

¹⁴ [Athens County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019](#)



Many existing facilities are located in the Regulatory Floodplain area, as illustrated in Figure 30, Preliminary Special Flood Hazard Area. Single-family housing, multi-family housing units, local and chain businesses, and industrial facilities such as the Athens Mold and Machine are located within the Regulatory Floodplain. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of addressing this issue as many residential units and businesses experience flooding in their basements.

All new developments within the SFHA, including grading, new constructions, and modifications to existing structures, are subjected to NFIP standards. These measures are essential to enhance resilience and reduce potential damages caused by future flooding incidents in this area.

RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE GOALS

- **Mitigate** floodplain concerns
- **Optimize** land usage
- **Stimulate** sustainable development

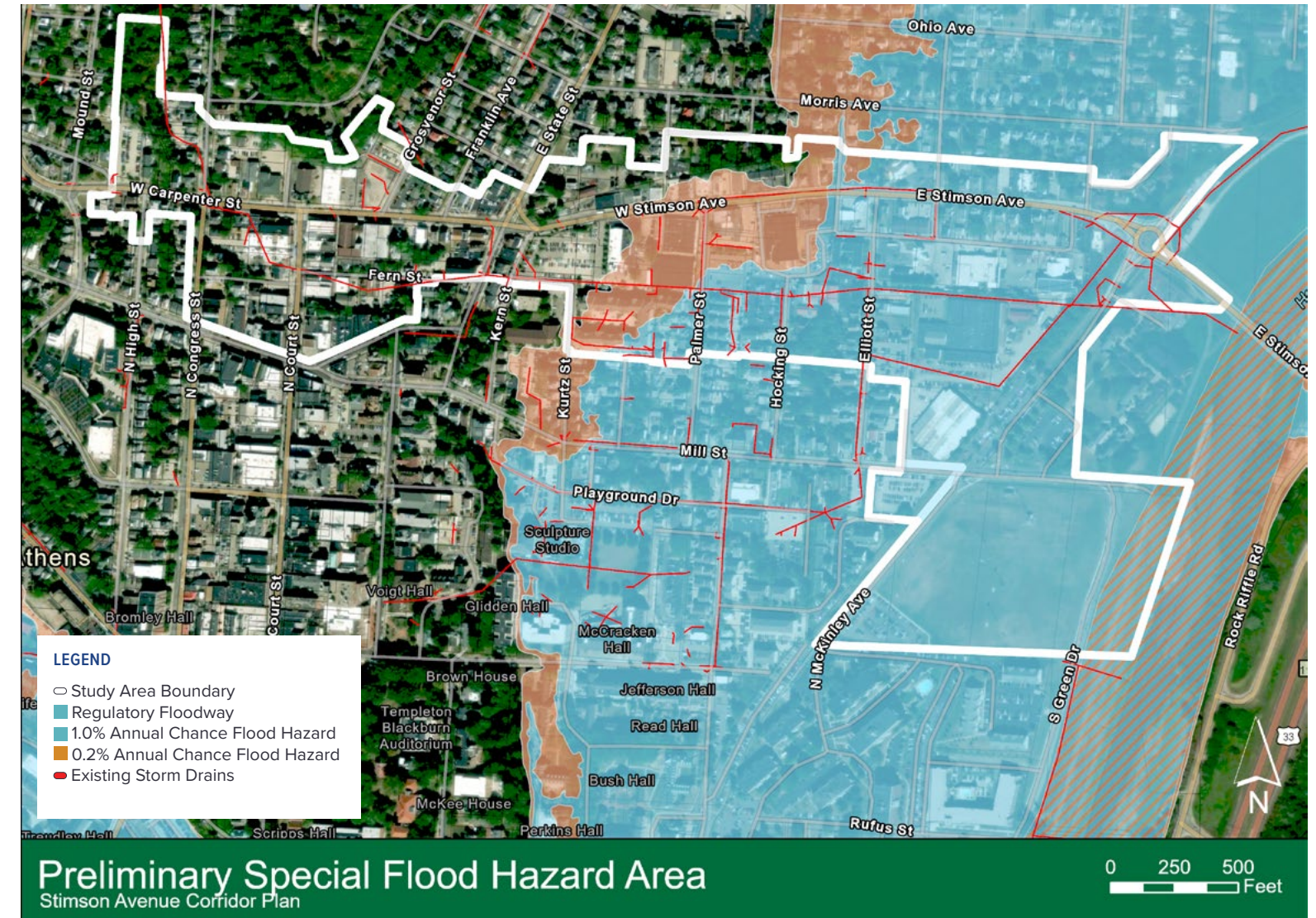
OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Implement storm water practices to reduce localized flooding outside of SFHA.
 - **STRATEGY:** Add TIF offset incentives for private development runoff reduction and post-construction structural practices from the OEPA Rainwater and Land Development Manual, which also enhance the pedestrian experience of the Corridor, such as green roofs and bioretention.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create on-site parking maximums within the proposed Stimson Avenue Corridor zoning overlay and require alternative storm water BMPs for over-parked sites.
- Strengthen support for NFIP compliance for development within the Corridor.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop a flood mitigation project prioritization list for pre-disaster funding, such as eligible Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC Round 4) projects.

For any future development in the city of Athens' floodplain, an application must be submitted to:

Department of Development
 Enforcement and Facilities
 28 Curran Drive
 Athens, OH 45701

FIGURE 30: STIMSON AVENUE CORRIDOR PRELIMINARY SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA



Source: American Structurepoint.

RETROFIT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR FLOOD RESILIENCY¹⁵

The Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting by FEMA describes six retrofitting methods that people should consider when thinking about how to protect their house from flooding:

Elevation—Raising your house so that the lowest floor and supporting building systems (e.g., HVAC) are at or above the regulatory flood protection grade with an enclosed crawlspace with openings, piers/piles, or other means.

Wet Floodproofing—Making uninhabited portions of your house resistant to flood damage and allowing water to enter during flooding.

Relocation—Moving your house out of the floodplain to higher ground where it will not be exposed to flooding.

Dry Floodproofing—Enclosing your house to prevent flood waters from entering.

Barrier Systems—Floodwalls or levees can be built to hold floodwaters away from your house.

Demolition—Consider demolition for properties with high flood risk if they are substantially damaged and/or if no other retrofitting option is available.

¹⁵ [Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting: Six Ways to Protect Your Home From Flooding](#)



HIGH LAND COST EXPECTATIONS

New residential and commercial developments can increase the value of surrounding homes. In general, new development increases home value in the long term (with a few exceptions) because new development usually means more opportunities to enrich the community. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of diversifying the local economy and their concern about the high land costs that may limit new development opportunities.

The City of Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan encourages the implementation of TIF as a mechanism to bring down costs for development to create more housing at a lower cost to buyers and renters. The Comprehensive Plan also suggests developing a package of incentives to encourage economic development, including TIFs, Downtown Redevelopment Districts, Innovation Districts, Historic Preservation tax credits, and zoning changes.



RELEVANT PLAN GOALS

- **Stimulate** sustainable development
- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor appearance and functionality
- **Optimize** land usage
- **Develop** a positive image and “brand” of the Stimson Avenue Corridor

OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES

- Reduce development costs to expand attainable housing options, diversify the local economy, and promote the rehabilitation of vacant buildings.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district within the Corridor.

OHIO TIFS¹⁶

In Ohio, TIFs are an economic development tool that allows property owners to share infrastructure costs for commercial and residential development within the area identified in locally adopted TIF legislation, known as a TIF district. TIFs work by deferring the increased tax revenue, or “increments,” that result from improvements in the TIF district.

TIFs are often authorized by two statutes in the Ohio Revised Code: 5709.40 (“.40 TIFs”) and 5709.41 (“.41 TIFs”):

- “.40 TIFs” must generally pay for public infrastructure improvements such as roads and highways, water and sewer lines, sidewalks, public parks, and parking structures.
- “.41 TIFs”, or Municipal Redevelopment TIFs, can be used for the same improvements listed under “.40 TIFs” and private improvements. To create a .41 TIF, Athens must be (or have been) a titled property owner for the property before adopting the TIF legislation.

¹⁶ [Tax Increment Financing FAQs](#)

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

In the initial phase of this project, Stimson Avenue was divided into north and south areas; each was studied separately. The reason for doing so was the different demographics present in both areas. The southern side of Stimson Avenue houses a younger population, mainly college students, whereas the northern side consists of permanent residents.

While both areas maintain their unique identities, the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan aims to create community connectivity by identifying the most suitable land uses along the Corridor. The Plan proposed Flexible Zoning Overlay changes and development in specific areas to achieve this. Keeping the Athens community well-informed and actively engaged in future developments was mentioned by stakeholders. Ensuring community involvement will help with the success of any new development. However, developer stakeholders expressed a concern that too many opportunities for public input, such as the number of required public meetings and hearings, are perceived to have a chilling effect on development in the Corridor, as they introduce unpredictability to the development approval process. This Plan seeks to balance these potentially competing desires.



RELEVANT PLAN GOALS

- **Enhance** community engagement

OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES

- Establish active and ongoing communication with the Athens community to inform them about the development plans and encourage their participation in decision-making processes.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create a dedicated team responsible for maintaining regular communication, including town hall meetings, social media updates, and/or updating websites.
 - **STRATEGY:** Organize frequent workshops and open houses where community members can learn about the development plans, ask questions, and provide input. These events should be accessible and well-publicized.
 - **STRATEGY:** Develop an online platform or app where community members can access project updates, leave comments, and participate in polls or surveys to gauge their preferences.
- Ensure meaningful community involvement in all phases of the projects, soliciting feedback and incorporating community preferences to maximize the chances of successful and well-accepted developments.
 - **STRATEGY:** Host design workshops where community members collaborate with architects and urban planners to conceptualize aspects of the developments.
- **STRATEGY:** During critical project phases, allow time for the community to review and comment on proposed plans. Ensure that their feedback is genuinely considered and addressed in subsequent iterations.
- **STRATEGY:** Recognize that not all community members can attend physical events. Incorporate virtual engagement options like online surveys and webinars to enable broader participation.
- Base decisions on demographic data and community feedback to support the creation of developments well-suited to each area's specific requirements and aspirations.
 - **STRATEGY:** Conduct thorough demographic and market analysis to understand the community's needs, preferences, and aspirations.
 - **STRATEGY:** Regularly publish reports summarizing community input and how it has been integrated into the project. That fosters transparency and accountability, reassuring the community that their opinions matter.

BEST PRACTICE: A GUIDE TO ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN YOUR PROJECT¹⁷

Ensuring the community's active involvement and informed participation in any new development within their neighborhood is essential. A comprehensive consultation process allows community members to voice their ideas and concerns, even if they still need to fully agree with the final decisions. This way, they gain insight into the decision-making process and the various considerations that influenced the outcomes.

Engaging local stakeholders and residents is crucial during the vision development process to achieve a successful project and community support. Doing so makes the project's vision understood, shared, and embraced within the community. Community engagement is essential, especially if the project will significantly impact the community physically in terms of size, architectural design, traffic, noise, and other factors.

Incorporating a well-designed consultation plan should achieve the following objectives:

1. Engage community members in the development of a strong shared vision.
2. Inform and educate the public about your project and its construction.
3. Bring to life the mission/vision/values of your development.
4. Create a sense of community ownership, pride, and project stewardship.
5. Create excitement around opportunities for the community to use and participate in your project and ensure its success as a social anchor and outlet for local artistic and cultural expression.
6. Create strong relationships between your organization, tenants, the local community, and local arts and cultural groups.
7. Engage youth and children to participate actively in their neighborhood's arts and cultural activities.
8. Seek champions and an ever-expanding circle of friends/supporters for your project.
9. Build and maintain momentum for the project.

By valuing community involvement and keeping the public informed, the development can gain crucial support and enhance its positive impact on the neighborhood and its residents. Ultimately, the project becomes a source of pride, cooperation, and unity for everyone involved. A comprehensive consultation process should be considered for any new development proposed for the Stimson Avenue Corridor. This approach will help keep long-term residents informed on the process and progress of development projects.

¹⁷ [A Guide to Engaging the Community in Your Project](#)



FLEXIBLE ZONING

Flexible zoning is an adaptive alternative approach to traditional Euclidean zoning that offers several advantages for Stimson Avenue. Land costs are reduced by minimizing regulatory constraints, such as parking minimums.¹⁸ Flexible Zoning allows developers to be efficient and creative, leading to unique placemaking. The need for variances is reduced for many land development challenges on Stimson Avenue, including irregularly shaped lots and floodplains. Variances and other permitting processes can drive up soft costs, typically 20 to 30 percent of project's total budget, as well as increase time and decrease predictability for developers. Flexible zoning can also allow for a series of small, scattered infill sites to be developed, allowing Stimson Avenue to maximize limited redevelopment opportunities.

¹⁸ [Flexible Zoning and Streamlined Procedures Can Make Housing More Affordable](#)

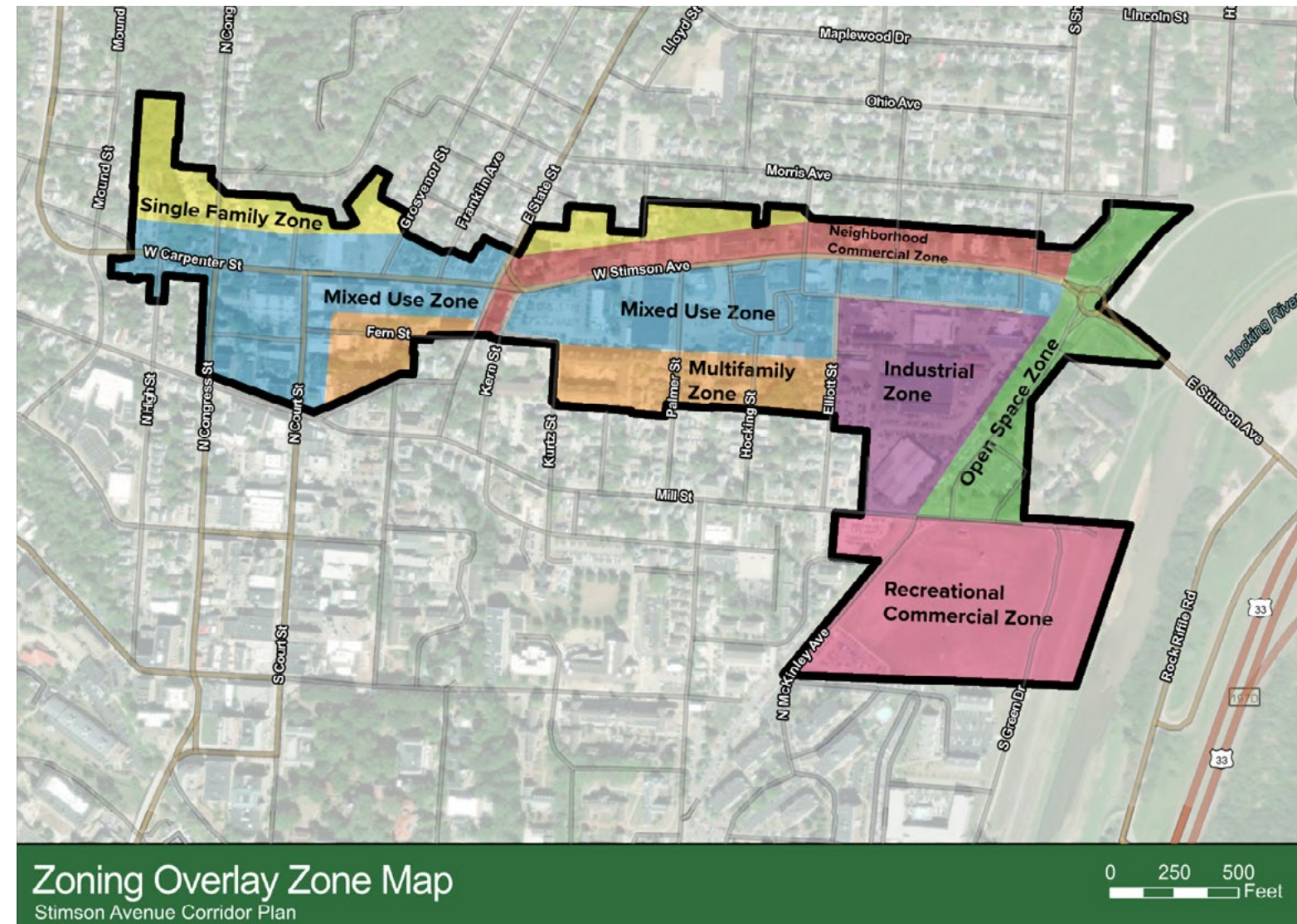


WHAT WE HEARD

Flexible zoning was a clear priority for all stakeholder groups. Stakeholders provided the following feedback on their vision of flexible zoning for Stimson Avenue:

- **Walkable with Distinctive Character:** All groups wanted the development regulations governing the Stimson Avenue Corridor to support density to walkable, mixed-use development while providing the appropriate architectural design standards to create a distinctive experience. Developers envisioned approximately 20.0 percent of the Corridor to be dedicated to retail, with the remaining 80.0 percent including the existing manufacturing area.
- **Clear Standards with a Predictable Approval Process:** Developers and business owners wanted clearly stated development standards that do not negatively affect private investment and support a dependable, efficient master plan approval process that does not require multiple public hearings.
- **Varied and Barrier-Free Housing Options:** Real estate stakeholders wanted zoning that supports various attainable and accessible housing options, including apartment units accessible from the first floor.
- **Mixed-Use with Residents' Everyday Needs, Too:** Property owners wanted their daily needs met within the study area, such as personal services and family-oriented entertainment, within walking distance.

FIGURE 31: STIMSON AVENUE OVERLAY SUBAREAS



Source: American Structurepoint.

RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS

- **Enhance** the Stimson Avenue Corridor’s appearance and functionality
- **Develop** a positive image and “brand” of the Stimson Avenue Corridor
- **Improve** multi-modal mobility throughout the Corridor
- **Mitigate** floodplain concerns
- **Optimize** land usage
- **Enhance** community engagement
- **Stimulate** sustainable development

OBJECTIVE AND STRATEGIES

- Update the City’s Zoning Ordinance to align with the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals and objectives and flexible zoning ordinance overlay standards.
 - **STRATEGY:** Amend the City’s Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the overlay recommendation in this plan.
 - **STRATEGY:** Create architectural standards that encourage pedestrian orientation and unique district character that reflects local history.

STIMSON AVENUE ZONING OVERLAY RECOMMENDATIONS

The vision for Stimson Avenues is to provide a walkable, connected neighborhood where many businesses continue to mix with residents in an integrated land use pattern. To accommodate the various types of development desired, a specific zoning ordinance overlay should be added to section 23.04.11. - OL Overlay Zones or the Athens Zoning Ordinance.

OVERALL PLAN DESIGN NARRATIVE GUIDELINES

All proposed overlay zones should incorporate the following guidelines:

- All properties with frontage on Stimson Avenue should have their underlying zoning district changed to the B-2D Downtown Business Zone to permit maximum flexibility.
- Do not develop unit types or properties as “pods” that segregate the property from the corridor and surrounding neighborhood.
- No streets should terminate in “dead-ends” or cul-de-sacs unless that scenario is unavoidable due to site constraints.
- While creating an architectural style is essential to unify the neighborhood, front-facing elevations should have enough variety to create visual interest and avoid creating monotony.
- Buildings located on Stimson Avenue should be oriented towards Stimson.
- Parking lots should not be between new buildings and Stimson Avenue.



PROPOSED OVERLAY ZONE STANDARDS

While the final architecture features and lot sizes would be established in the Zoning Ordinance, we have included specific permitted use, bulk, and design recommendations for each proposed zone overlay shown in Figure 31.

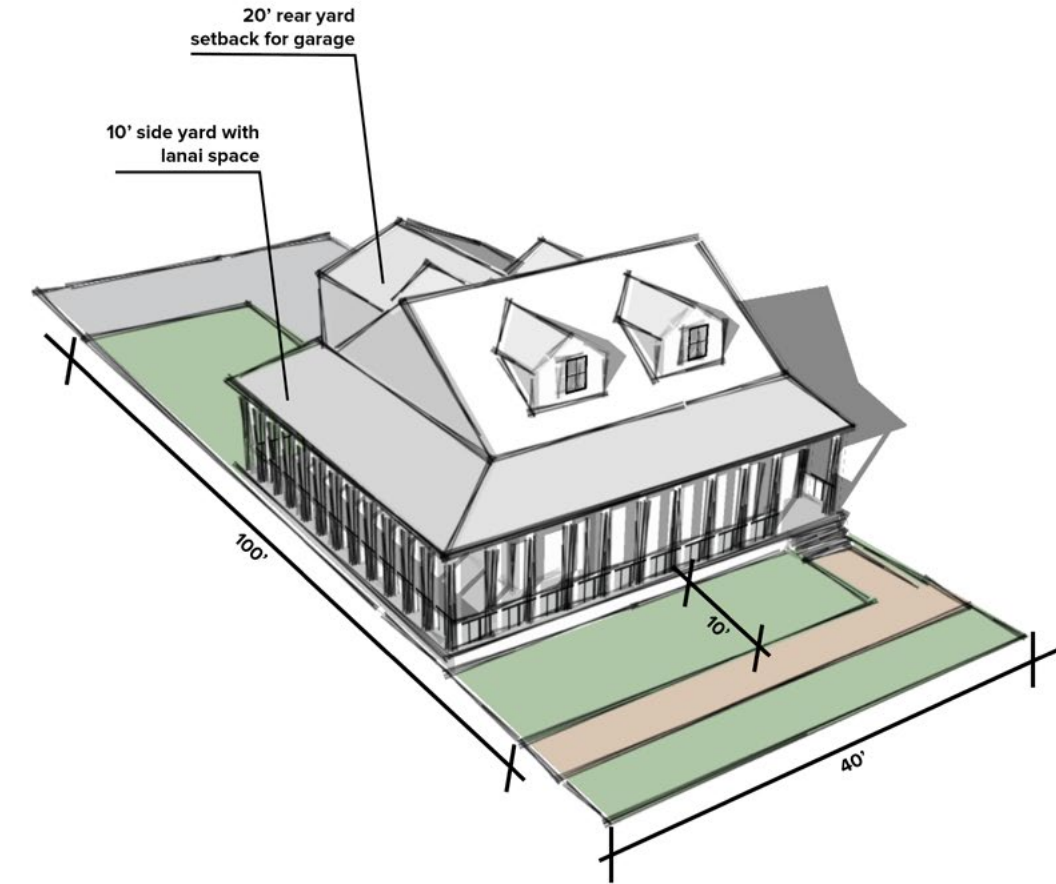
SINGLE-FAMILY ZONE

Single-family units should be alley-loaded (unless front-load garages are unavoidable due to site constraints). This development pattern creates the ability to have smaller-width lots that increase density but avoid streets dominated by garage doors. This development pattern also focuses on the front of the house while limiting the amount of rear-yard recreation space. These traditional development types benefit from creating more on-street guest parking by reducing the number of curb cuts for driveways. Another important feature of this development type is to ensure that activity from these new units is focused on the public street, creating interest for those visiting Stimson Avenue. Based on the development study plan, we recommend that detached single-family alley-loaded units incorporate the following bulk and architectural guidelines:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Lot Size	4,000 Square Feet
Lot Width	40-Feet
Front and Corner Yard Setback	5-Foot Minimum And 10-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	10-Feet Between Homes
Rear Yard Setback	20-Foot Minimum For Primary Structures, 5-Foot Minimum For Detached Garages
Building Height	The Maximum Building Height Should Be 35 Feet

FIGURE 32: SINGLE-FAMILY ZONE ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should have a porch or prominent overhanging feature to denote the front door.
- Individual outdoor space should be accommodated in the side yards of the houses through integrated patios or lanai spaces.
- Front elevations should incorporate two changes to building heights and wall projections.
- Front elevations should include shutters, dormers, or prominent pediments over each window to accent the front of the home.
- Garages should be set back at least 20 feet from the alley to increase off-street parking.

MULTI-FAMILY ZONE

The multi-family zone is intended to create various housing options depending on the redeveloped property size. The multi-family zone is proposed in the area south of Stimson, where various unit types and densities currently exist. Parcels in this zone should remain or be switched to the R-3 residential zone to accommodate various housing types.

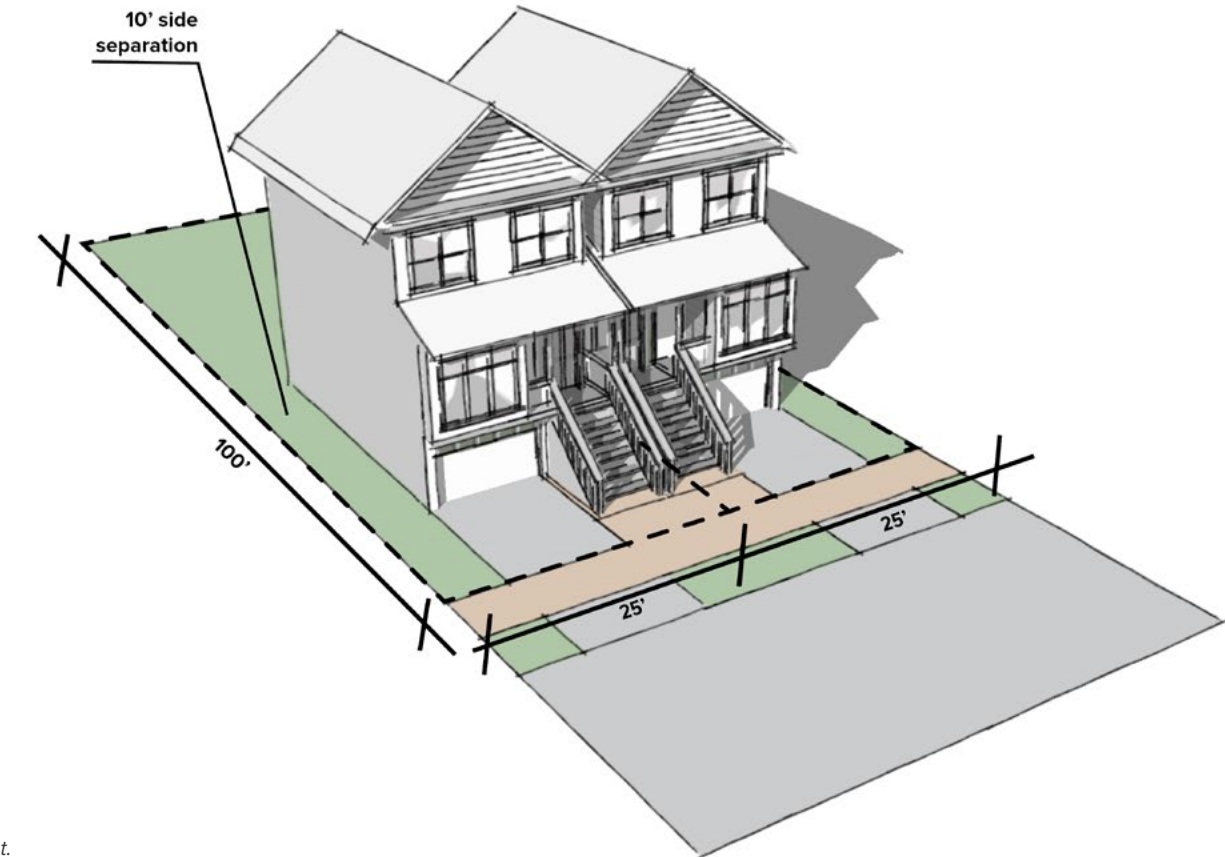
TWO-UNIT ATTACHED SINGLE-FAMILY FRONT LOADED UNITS (DUPLEXES)

The two-unit attached single-family, front-loaded units (i.e., duplexes) would be integrated into the area south of Stimson Avenue. These units will provide opportunities for a slight increase in density and more attainably priced homes. This building type helps provide well-appointed for-sale units with smaller fees and simple lots with a shared common wall and property lines. This type of unit is still desirable within the Midwest real estate market. It is recommended that duplex units incorporate the following bulk and architectural guidelines:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Lot Size	5,000 Square Feet
Lot Width	50-Feet
Lot Depth	100-Feet
Front and Corner Yard Setback	5-Foot Minimum And 25-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	5-Foot To The Side Lot Line
Interior Side Yard Setback	Zero
Rear Yard Setback	20-Foot Minimum
Building Height	35-Foot Maximum

FIGURE 33: TWO-UNIT ATTACHED SINGLE-FAMILY ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should have a porch or prominent overhanging feature to denote the front door.
- Front elevations should incorporate two changes to building heights and wall projections.
- Front elevations should include shutters, dormers, or prominent pediments over each window to accent the front of the home.
- Streets within this unit type should avoid the appearance of being dominated by garage doors.

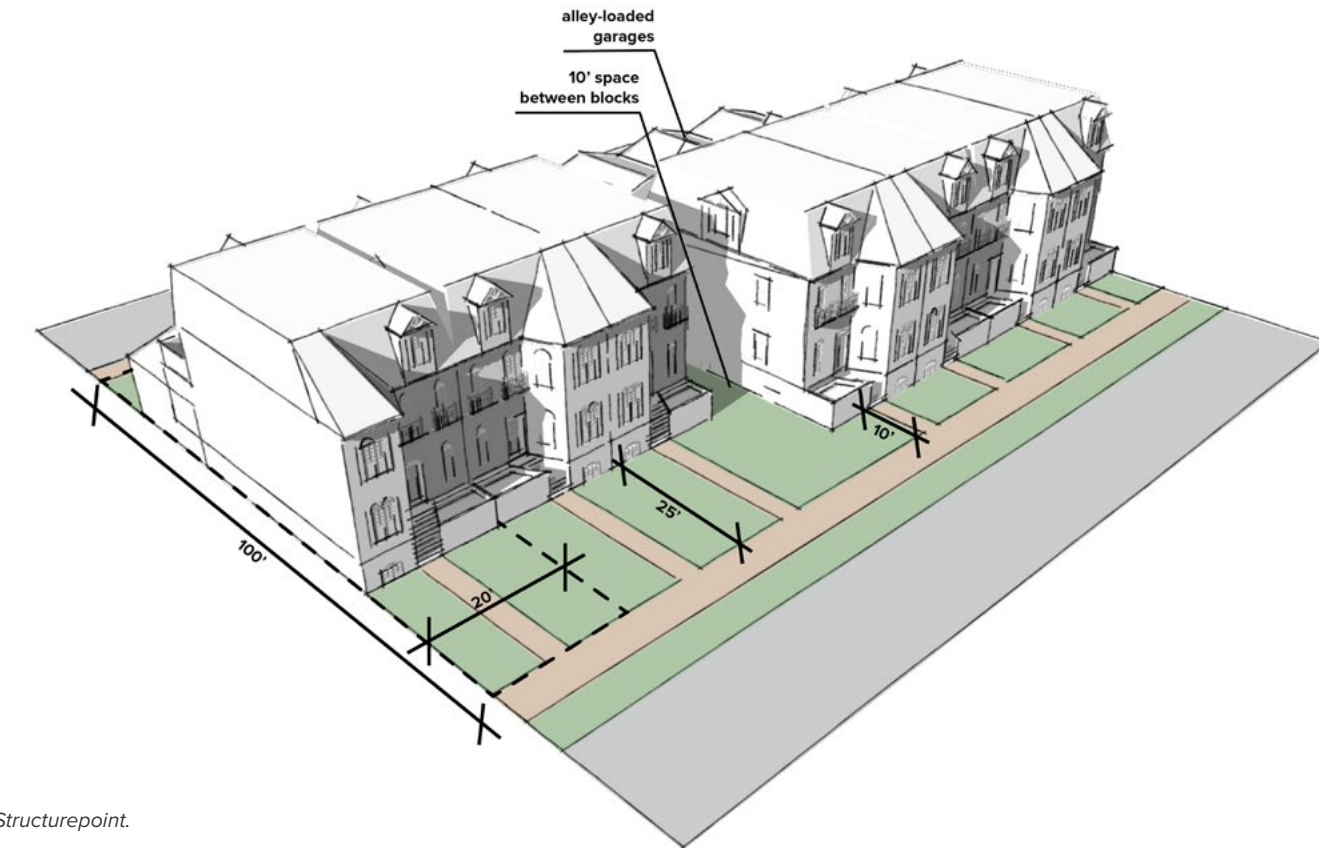
SMALL LOT TOWNHOME ALLEY-LOADED RENTAL UNITS

The small lot townhome alley-loaded rental units will provide a unique development type in the corridor market by providing larger multi-story rental units. These units will encourage residents to move into the community that prefers larger living areas but are not interested in home ownership. That building type provides attached rear-loaded garages as part of the rental unit and needs to be located where alleys can be accommodated. Those units also benefit from permitting a higher density while mitigating aesthetic and practical concerns. It is recommended that the small lot townhome, alley-loaded units maintain the following bulk and architectural requirements:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Lot Size	2,000 Square Feet
Lot Width	20-Feet
Lot Depth	100-Feet
Front and Corner Yard Setback	10-Foot Minimum And A 25-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	10-Feet Of Separation Between Buildings
Interior Side Yard Setback	Zero
Rear Yard Setback	10-Foot Minimum
Building Height	35-Foot Maximum

FIGURE 34: TOWNHOMES UNITS ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should have prominent features to denote the front door.
- Front elevations should incorporate two building height projection changes.
- Front elevations should include shutters, dormers, or prominent pediments over each window to accent the front of the home.
- To reduce monotony along public streets, front elevations should be constructed from varying and alternative fascia materials, such as brick and fiber cement siding.
- Garages can be detached or attached to the units depending on the front yard setback distance.

MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENT UNITS

New large-scale multi-family rental units should be considered to help increase the number of rooftops near Stimson Avenue and continue to create a market for choosing not to buy in Athens. These units fill out various price points. They should include a variety of unit square footage and bedroom counts ranging from efficiencies to three bedrooms. We recommend that the multi-family rental units maintain the following bulk and architectural requirements:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Lot Are Per Unit	2,000 Square Foot
Lot Width	N/A
Lot Depth	N/A
Front and Corner Yard Setback (From Public Streets Only)	10-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (Between Buildings)	20-Feet Of Separation Between Buildings
Rear Yard Setback	5-Foot From Parking Areas
Building Height	45-Feet

FIGURE 35: MULTI-FAMILY ZONE ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should have prominent features to denote the front door.
- All units should be accessed from an interior hallway.
- Front elevations should incorporate building facade projection changes.
- Front elevations should include prominent pediments over each window to accent the front of the building.
- All units should have a patio or porch area.

MIXED-USE ZONE

The mixed-use zone is located along the southern frontage of Stimson Avenue, west of State Street, then on both the north and south frontage of East Carpenter Street, west of State Street. This development type is provided to help encourage new residential and retail development and drive activity to the corridor. These units have the potential to be for-sale condominium units that cater to a market segment that wants to live above or near shopping, have great amenities, and are not interested in yard maintenance. These units should include a variety of unit square footage and multiple bedroom counts ranging from efficiencies to three bedrooms. The mixed-use rental units are located on the new building's second and third stories. The first floor should be reserved for retail spaces to accommodate new neighborhood businesses and provide walkable shopping and dining options. It is recommended that the mixed-use zone maintains the following bulk and architectural requirements:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Lot Area Per Unit	N/A
Lot Width	N/A
Lot Depth	N/A
Front and Corner Yard Setback (From a Public Street Only)	10-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	20-Feet of Separation Between Buildings
Rear Yard Setback	5-Feet for Parking Areas
Building Height	45-Foot Maximum

FIGURE 36: MIXED-USE ZONE ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should incorporate large glass areas to showcase activity visible to the public street and provide lighting to enhance the safety of patrons. All residential units should be accessed from an interior hallway.
- Front elevations should incorporate three building height projection changes.
- Front elevations should have prominent features to denote the front door, such as metal overhangs, awnings, and signage.
- All residential units should have a patio or porch area.
- Parking lots/spaces between the building and Stimson Avenue are not permitted.
- Parking structures, such as the concept shown at the intersection of Stimson Avenue and State Street, should include retail units along any street frontage to maintain the visible activity desires

and eliminate gaps in the urban feel of Stimson Avenue.

- Individual buildings should incorporate features specific to residents, such as rooftop gathering spaces, workout rooms, business centers, etc.
- Sidewalks in front of these units should be wide enough to accommodate the Americans with Disabilities Act's precise space requirements and allow for business activities, such as outdoor dining, sidewalk sales, and public seating features. The development must incorporate one or more features identified above within the 10-foot maximum setback space.
- Streets should be well-lit to encourage walking and enhance security during the evening and nighttime.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL ZONE

The neighborhood commercial zone was incorporated to serve multiple purposes. This zone will help Stimson Avenue preserve its value as a neighborhood shopping district and provide a buffer for homes farther north. This plan recommends that these properties be rezoned to the B-2D zoning district to utilize the ability to reduce required parking spaces and provide more flexibility. However, permitted uses in this zoning should be limited to the following:

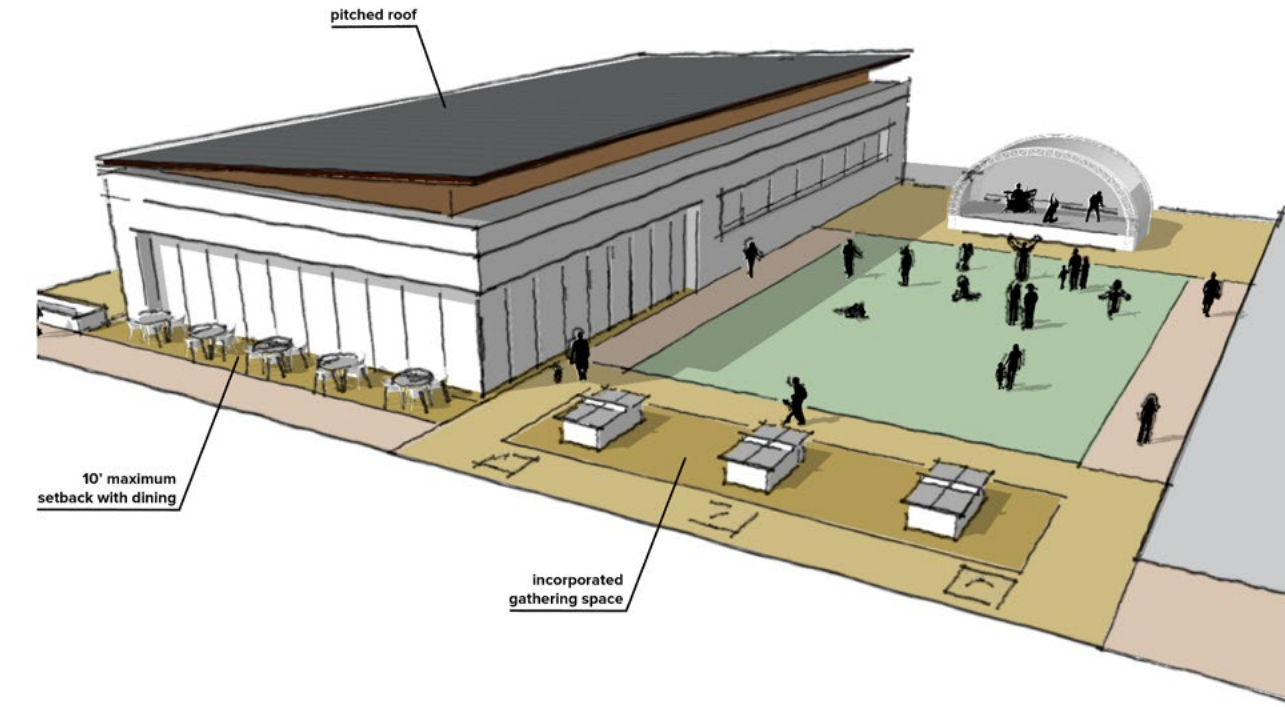
- Personal Services
- Retail sales
- Office (medical and professional)
- Restaurants (site down)
- Restaurant with a drive-through (special use review should be required)
- Residential units on the second story only

It is recommended that building in the neighborhood commercial zone maintain the following bulk and architectural requirements:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Minimum Lot Area Per Unit	4,000 Square Feet
Lot Width	N/A
Lot Depth	N/A
Front and Corner Yard Setback (From a Public Street Only)	10-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	20-Feet
Rear Yard Setback	10-Feet For Parking Areas
Building Height	35 Feet

FIGURE 37: COMMERCIAL ZONE ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should be orientated to Stimson Avenue with display windows to showcase activity visible to the public street and provide lighting to enhance the safety of patrons.
- Front elevations should incorporate two building height projection changes.
- Parking lots/spaces between the building and Stimson Avenue are not permitted.
- Drive-throughs should not be visible from Stimson Avenue unless unavoidable due to specific site constraints.
- Smooth-faced concrete masonry units, standing seam metal, and Exterior Insulated Finishing Systems should be prohibited as the primary facade material.
- Front elevations should have prominent features to denote the

- front door, such as metal overhangs, awnings, and signage.
- Sidewalks in front of these units should be wide enough to accommodate Americans with Disabilities Act precise space requirements and allow for business activities, such as outdoor dining, sidewalk sales, and public seating features. The development must incorporate one or more features identified above within the 10-foot maximum setback space.
- Streets should be well-lit to encourage walking and enhance security during the evening and nighttime.

INDUSTRIAL ZONE

The industrial zone incorporates the properties that are currently zoned for manufacturing. Keeping this industrial zone will help Stimson Avenue continue its legacy of being a job-creating area for Athens. Businesses also ensure a continued daytime population utilizing the enhanced Stimson Avenue Corridor during lunch or after work. This plan recommends that these properties continue to be zoned in the Industrial District. The following permitted uses in this zone should be limited to add to the Stimson Avenue Corridor to help enhance the more dense and walkable vision set out in this document:

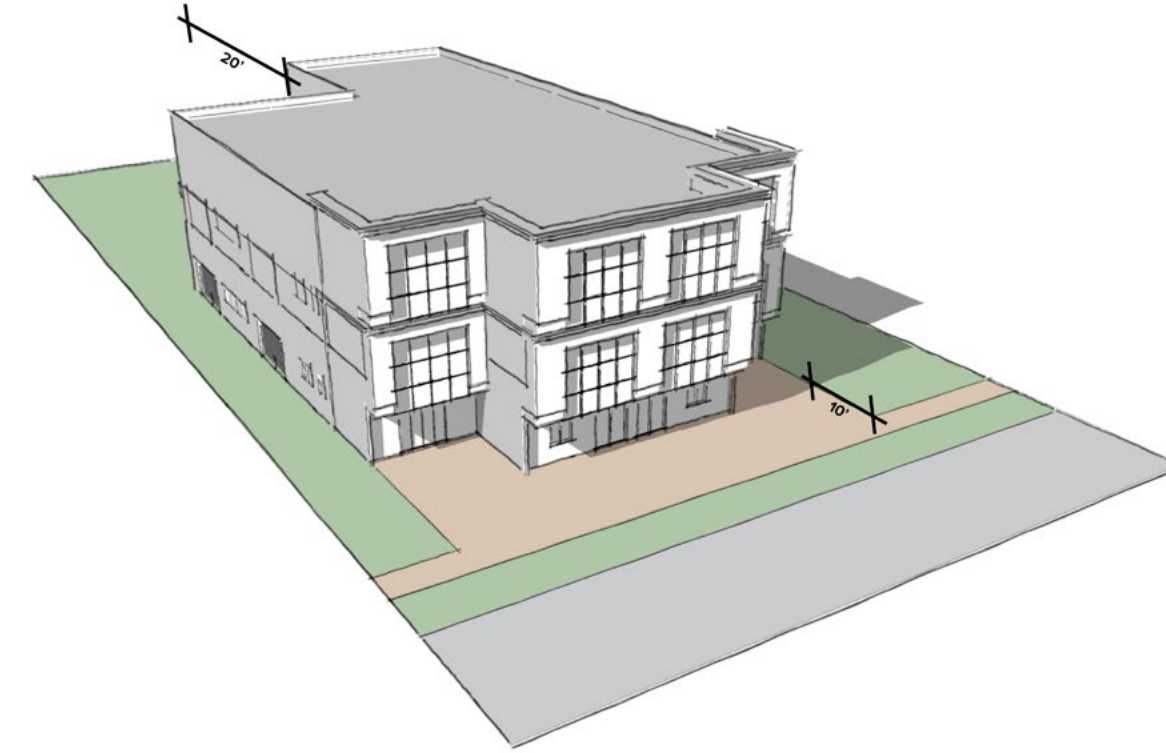
- Heavy Industrial processes include slaughterhouses, foundries, blast furnaces, etc.
- Warehouse and distribution facilities.
- Expansive parking lots.
- Enclosed contractors or storage yards.

It is recommended that buildings in the industrial zone maintain the following bulk and architectural requirements:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Minimum Lot Area Per Unit	20,000 Square Feet
Lot Width	N/A
Lot Depth	N/A
Front and Corner Yard Setback (From a Public Street Only)	10-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	10-Feet
Rear Yard Setback	20 Feet
Building Height	55 Feet

FIGURE 38: INDUSTRIAL ZONE ILLUSTRATION



Source: American Structurepoint.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Front elevations should provide lighting to enhance the safety of patrons and public streets.
- Front elevations should incorporate two building height projection changes.
- Using smooth-faced concrete masonry units, standing seam metal and Exterior Insulated Finishing Systems should be prohibited as the primary facade material.
- Parking lots/spaces between the building and the primary street frontage are not permitted.

- Front elevations should have prominent features to denote the front door, such as overhangs, canopies, changes in building height or projections, awnings, and signage.
- Sidewalks in front of these units should be wide enough to accommodate the Americans with Disabilities Act's precise space requirements.
- Streets should be well-lit to encourage walking and enhance security during the evening and nighttime.

RECREATIONAL/COMMERCIAL ZONE

The recreational/commercial zone is incorporated into this corridor plan to encourage the thoughtful development of large open-space properties near the Hocking River, currently zoned R-3. While developing these sites is not imminent, having land use direction to ensure that these properties are context-sensitive and that they continue to promote activity and recreation for Athens residents and visitors is essential. It will be crucial that the potential development of these properties also maintain the connections to the river, Stimson Avenue, and Ohio University. To encourage the creative development of these properties, they should be rezoned to the B-2D district but limited to the following permitted uses:

- Indoor recreation and amusement (indoor sports facilities, concert halls, bowling alleys, and similar entertainment uses).
- Retail and restaurants should be permitted as accessory uses to indoor recreation and amusement facilities.
- Outdoor recreation and amusement uses (sports fields, band shelters, urban plazas, and similar uses).

It is recommended that building in the recreational/commercial zone maintain the following bulk and architectural requirements:

BULK REQUIREMENTS

Bulk Requirement	Recommended Standard (Per Unit)
Minimum Lot Area Per Unit	N/A
Lot Width	N/A
Lot Depth	N/A
Front and Corner Yard Setback (From a Public Street Only)	20-Foot Maximum
Side Yard Setback (between Buildings)	10-Feet
Rear Yard Setback	20-Feet
Building Height	N/A, This Will Depend On The Use



ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- The design of any entertainment building should match the surrounding environment or utilize design cues from the buildings located on Ohio University's campus.
- Smooth-faced concrete masonry units, standing seam metal, and Exterior Insulated Finishing Systems should be prohibited as the primary facade material.
- Parking lots/spaces between the building and the primary street frontage are not permitted.
- Front elevations should have prominent features to denote the front door, such as overhangs, canopies, changes in building height or projections, awnings, and signage.
- Sidewalks in front of these buildings should be wide enough to accommodate the Americans with Disabilities Act's clear space requirements and incorporate public art, seating areas, and potentially spaces for pop-up businesses and food trucks.
- Streets should be well-lit to encourage walking and enhance security during the evening and nighttime.
- All sites should be developed with interconnected walking paths and sidewalks that connect the neighborhoods west of these sites to the Hocking River.

OPEN SPACE ZONE

The properties adjacent to North McKinley Avenue and make up that road's right-of-way are shown as continuing their open space/public purpose. These properties help connect the community to Stimson Avenue and the river while providing entertainment and recreational activities. This zone could also help provide more public parking spaces, assist local business owners, and reduce the number of individual private parking lots. Uses on these properties should be limited to the following permitted uses:

- Limited outdoor recreation uses (trails, workout areas, benches, public art installations, shaded seating areas)
- Temporary businesses. This area should be used to encourage temporary events, festivals, food truck Fridays, pop-up shops, etc., to support the recommendations of the Entertainment not Just Retail Section.
- Off-street parking lots.
- Government/institutional uses, such as fire stations.

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

- Parking lots/spaces should be shielded from public view by landscaping, trails, and public art displays. Any off-street parking lot should be located a minimum of 15 feet away from the property line.
- Sections of the right-of-way should be designated as temporary business areas to accommodate events, pop-up businesses, and food trucks.
- Streets should be well-lit to encourage walking and enhance security during the evening and nighttime.
- All sites should be developed with interconnected walking paths and sidewalks that connect the neighborhoods west of these sites to the Hocking River.



OFF-STREET PARKING

Off-street parking is always a concern when encouraging a walkable, connected, active corridor environment. While off-street parking is necessary, this plan's existing conditions analysis noted no parking space shortage throughout the corridor. In the section above, this plan recommends that the properties along Stimson Avenue be zoned B-2D to encourage a greater mix of uses in specific areas that generate activity. This recommendation also considers that more properties can utilize the existing flexible options contained in Chapter 23.08. - Off-Street Parking and Loading/Unloading Regulations of the Zoning Ordinance. The following modification to this chapter is also recommended.

- Section 23.08.06—Exceptions.
 - Add the Stimson Avenue Corridor Overlay Mixed-Use and Neighborhood Commercial zones to Subsection 1 so all properties in this zone can benefit from the 50 percent reduction in off-street parking spaces.
- Section 23.08.04. - Joint-use parking.
 - Any property within 1,000 feet of a public parking structure or surface lot may utilize that public parking area to satisfy its off-street parking requirements.
- Support zoning changes recommendations included in the City of Athens 2040¹⁹ Comprehensive Plan.
 - a. Reduce the need for more surface parking and encourage pedestrian scale design at the intersection of West Stimson Avenue, West Carpenter Street, and East State Street.
 - b. Encourage the greenspace north of East Stimson Avenue along the Hocking River to be formalized with recreational facilities.
 - c. Provide “neighborhood-level amenities, such as convenience shopping or restaurants, to the residents in the surrounding area. Such a development would also support restaurants in the area and improve the walkability of the Corridor overall.”
 - d. Create an overlay as a needed transition zone from campus to residential areas.
 - e. Reduce building height limits for parcels adjacent to residential areas.
 - f. Reduce parking minimums and permit shared-use parking agreements to satisfy parking requirements.
 - g. Follow the six feelings planning framework for Autism Spectrum Disorder to better orient the city towards being autism friendly.
- Allow temporary uses such as pop-up shops and food trucks within and outside of the public right-of-way.
 - a. Review the City's ordinances.

¹⁹ [Athens 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

HIGH-LEVEL FINANCIAL REVIEW

This plan examined multiple locations to include new residential, commercial, and quasi-public buildings that will generate activity, serve as an example for redevelopment, and provide new amenities. However, to help stimulate activity, the City may want to consider assistance to construct further improvements or fund continued corridor redevelopment. This final section of the corridor plan looks at the Stimson Avenue project boundary and the current amount of property taxes generated to understand how revenue may increase in the next 10 to 20 years and assist with paying for improvements. That analysis also examines potential new revenue generated by the development types and concepts included in this report.



BASE ASSESSED VALUE (AV) AND PROPERTY TAXES GENERATED

First, this analysis wanted to establish the increases to the current area’s base total assessed valuation and property taxes generated. Athens’ County auditor information and tax bills for 2019 and 2022 were examined for all 423 parcels in the study area boundary. Per square foot assessed value and taxes generated based on this information were included in the Existing Conditions Report. Reviewing the increases in assessed valuation and property taxes generated between these years were utilized to create annual AV and tax generation growth rates. This report estimates that if assessed values and taxes generated remain consistent, AV may increase by over \$4.3 million annually, resulting in \$84,840 new property taxes. The tax-generated figures include all taxing districts, not just the city of Athens. These estimates do not include parcels in which an assessed value increase of more than 20 percent was noted. This report assumed that this level of growth is mostly likely due to new development/redevelopment and not the steady increase traditionally seen on established parcels.

FIGURE 39, STIMSON AVENUE STUDY BOUNDARY BASE VALUES

Base Annual TIF Increase No Development	
Base Assessed Valuation	\$110,941,420
Annual Projected AV Increase	\$4,398,592
Base Property Tax Collected	\$2,998,889
Annual Project Tax Increase	\$84,840
Annual Growth Rate AV	4.0 percent
Annual Growth Rate Property Tax	2.8 percent

Source: Athens County Auditor and American Structurepoint.



LIMITED DEVELOPMENT TIF PROJECTION

The projected annual revenues from property taxes were then used to estimate expected new revenue that could be captured by creating a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF). Based on Ohio State Statutes and assuming that the area or parcel meets the State’s blight criteria, two methods for TIF revenue collection are available to municipalities:

- Not more than 75 percent of the new taxes collected for the public purpose may be paid instead of taxes for up to ten years without the board of education passing a resolution or
- Up to 100 percent of new taxes may be paid in lieu of taxes for 30 years if the local school board approves a resolution in favor of the total exemption.

This analysis generated new property taxes for both scenarios above to ensure all options were considered.

TEN-YEAR DURATION TIF AT 75 PERCENT

The first projection illustrates the potential for new property tax revenue for the shorter duration TIF at a capture rate of 75 percent. If all new property taxes generated in the study area were in this TIF, the typical property assessment value growth would create \$660,101 in new property taxes. Estimates were based on the average assessed value growth calculated from 2019 to 2022 and an average sales tax rate increase of 2.8 percent. In that same timeframe, it is estimated that the total base assessed value for all parcels will increase to \$157,904,234. Nationally, many areas of the country experienced a significant increase in assessed values due to the market dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, a second estimate illustrates the assessed value and property taxes generated at half the average rate observed during this period to help guide future decision-making processes.

FIGURE 40, TEN-YEAR TIF INCREMENTAL REVENUE PROJECTION

Year 10 TIF Revenue Projection			
Year	Base Year	Year 10	50 Percent Growth Rate Reduction
Total Assessed Value	\$110,941,420.00	\$157,904,234	\$154,867,613
Base Property Tax Collected	\$2,998,889.72	\$3,963,869	\$5,956,446
Annual Growth Rate AV		4.0 percent	2.0 percent
Annual Growth Rate Property Tax		2.8 percent	1.4 percent
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue		\$109,055	\$107,539
Total Cumulative New Property Tax Revenue		\$880,139	\$825,050
At 75 Percent		\$660,104	\$618,788

30-YEAR DURATION TIF AT 100 PERCENT

The first projection illustrates the potential for new property tax revenue for the shorter duration and TIF capture rate of 75 percent. The second projection utilized the same process for a 30-year TIF timeframe, capturing 100 percent of new property taxes generated in the study area. Under this scenario, the property assessment value growth would create \$3,841,542 in total new property taxes. Estimates were based on the average assessed value growth calculated from 2019 to 2022 and an average sales tax generated rate increase of 2.8 percent. In that same timeframe, it is estimated that the total base assessed value for all parcels will increase to \$345,987,621.

FIGURE 41, TEN-YEAR TIF INCREMENTAL REVENUE PROJECTION

Year 30 TIF Revenue Projection			
Year	Base Year	Year 30	50 Percent Growth Rate Reduction
Total Assessed Value	\$110,941,420	\$345,987,621	\$339,334,012
Base Property Tax Collected	\$2,998,890	\$13,307,216	\$13,051,308
Annual Growth Rate AV		4.0 percent	2.0 percent
Annual Growth Rate Property Tax		2.8 percent	1.4 percent
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue		\$190,530	\$187,882
Total Cumulative New Property Tax Revenue		\$3,841,542	\$3,745,298

POTENTIAL GROWTH SCENARIOS

The above examples demonstrate that increasing assessed values will generate new property tax. Typically, the most significant gains in AV and property taxes come from new development during the duration of the TIF district. Therefore, we have included new development scenarios to help demonstrate how the projects may increase the revenue generated by a TIF. The hypothetical projects were based on this plan’s preliminary concepts or future land uses.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AREA

This plan’s unique physical environment section showed conceptual new mixed-used buildings on the south side of Stimson Avenue between Campbell Street and Grant Street. The concept shows the existing structures being converted into mixed-use buildings with first-floor retail and apartments on the second and third stories. The idea contains approximately 10,000 square feet of commercial on the first floor, 33,150 square feet of new residential living space, and 6,800 square feet of covered parking adjacent to the existing parking area.

NEW REVENUE TAX REVENUE GENERATED

Comparable properties in the Stimson Avenue Corridor were assigned the land use classification of 401 commercial. The average tax generated is 2.15 dollars per square foot. At 58,499 square feet, this new development would generate \$125,870 new tax dollars once fully built-out. All properties combined currently generate \$64,331 in property taxes, resulting in \$61,540 in new tax revenue per year to a potential TIF district.

FIGURE 42, MIXED-USE PROJECT PROJECTED NEW ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED

Development Information			
Development Type	Total Development Area (Square Feet)	Property Tax Produced Per Square Feet	Total Taxes Per Year
Mixed Use Buildings	58,499	2.15	\$125,870
		Existing Taxes	\$ 64,331
		Total New Taxes General Minus Existing	\$ 61,540

Ten-Year TIF At 75 Percent of All New AV

If the new TIF were created as a ten-year TIF paid with 75 percent of all the taxes, it would generate \$46,154 in new property taxes to the TIF. Over ten years, this would equal \$353,082 in new property taxes paid into the TIF.

FIGURE 43, TOTAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED FOR TEN YEARS AT 75 PERCENT

Annual TIF Revenue	Year 10
Mixed-Use Building	
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue at 75 percent	\$46,154
75 Percent	\$353,082

30-Year TIF At 100 Percent of All New AV

If the new TIF were created as a 30-year TIF and 100 percent of all new property tax was paid into the TIF, it would generate \$61,540 in new property taxes annually. Over ten years, this would equal \$1,701,564.

FIGURE 44, TOTAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED FOR 30 YEARS AT 100 PERCENT

Annual TIF Revenue	Year 30
Mixed-Use Building	
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue at 100 percent	\$61,540
Total Cumulative New Property Tax Revenue	\$1,701,564

SINGLE-STORY RENTAL BUILDING

Stimson Avenue is a vital link and retail destination for Athens’ residents and visitors. Retail-focused development will remain prominent in the corridor to preserve that character and maintain existing neighborhood buffers. The buildings located at the northeast corner of Stimson Avenue and Campbell Street are currently occupied by smaller single-family homes. While the facilities are in good shape and not slated for redevelopment, they represent an intriguing redevelopment opportunity at a prominent location. This “hard corner” could become more retail space due to its proximity to other surface parking areas. The existing buildings occupy three parcels that equal 9,104 square feet.

NEW REVENUE TAX REVENUE GENERATED

These properties were classified as residential. The combined property taxes for all three parcels were \$3,675. Once fully built out, a new one-story retail building would generate \$15,685 in new tax dollars at \$1.70 per square foot. The latest development would create \$11,982 in annual tax revenue for a potential TIF district.

FIGURE 45, MIXED-USE PROJECT PROJECTED NEW ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED

Development Information			
Development Type	Total Development Area (Square Feet)	Property Tax Produced Per Square Feet	Total Taxes Per Year
One-Story Retail Building	9,104	1.7	\$15,675
		Existing Taxes	\$ 3,675
		Total New Taxes General Minus Existing	\$ 11,982

Ten-Year TIF At 75 Percent of All New AV

If the new TIF were created as a ten-year TIF paid with 75.0 percent of all the taxes, it would generate \$8,987 in new annual property taxes to the TIF. Over ten years, this would equal \$76,387 in new property taxes paid into the TIF.

FIGURE 46, TOTAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED FOR TEN YEARS AT 75 PERCENT

Annual TIF Revenue	Year 10
One-Story Retail Building	
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue at 75 percent	\$8,987
75 Percent	\$76,387

30-Year TIF At 100 Percent of All New AV

If the new TIF were created as a 30-year TIF and 100 percent of all new property tax was paid into the TIF, it would generate \$11,982 in new property taxes. Over ten years, this would equal \$256,121.

FIGURE 47, TOTAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED FOR 30 YEARS AT 100 PERCENT

Annual TIF Revenue	Year 30
One-Story Retail Building	
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue at 100 percent	\$11,982
Total Cumulative New Property Tax Revenue	\$256,121

THREE-STORY MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

Earlier in this plan, the transect map showed that some properties south of Stimson Avenue might make sense for continued multi-unit development to replace older homes and increase student housing while taking that pressure off the main corridor. This plan examined a hypothetical redevelopment of five smaller rental properties into a new three-story multi-unit building. The five parcels examined were on the east side of Palmer Street, south of the Hocking Hills Banks parking lot. These properties represent another example of how shared parking facilities can encourage denser development. The existing buildings occupy five parcels, which combined was 33,947 square feet.

NEW REVENUE TAX REVENUE GENERATED

These properties were classified as a combination of single-family and two-family dwellings. The combined property taxes for all three parcels was \$8,914. If a new three-story rental building were located on the site, it would take up approximately 60 percent of the site with a building footprint of 20,400 square feet. Considering common hallway and equipment, another 15 percent would reduce the building area devoted to rental space for 17,312 square feet of new apartments per floor or 17 units. A total of 51 new units might be created from this three-story building with a residential area of 17,312 square feet per floor. A redevelopment of this site would be very attractive to a developer, provide new housing, and keep the focus of Stimson Avenue on commercial and mixed-use development. The two existing land uses averaged \$1.68 tax dollars generated per square foot. A new multi-unit building classified as apartment 40 or more units would generate \$3.22 tax dollars per square foot or \$100,395 in new tax dollars once fully built out into a potential TIF district.

FIGURE 48, MIXED-USE PROJECT PROJECTED NEW ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED.

Development Information			
Development Type	Total Development Area (Square Feet)	Property Tax Produced Per Square Foot	Total Taxes Per Year
One-Story Retail Building	33,947	3.22	\$109,309
		Existing Taxes	\$8,914
		Total New Taxes General Minus Existing	\$100,395

Ten-Year TIF At 75 Percent of All New AV

If the new TIF were created as a ten-year TIF paid with 75 percent of all the taxes, it would generate \$75,296 in new annual property taxes to the TIF. Over ten years, this would equal \$583,547 in new property taxes paid into the TIF.

FIGURE 49, TOTAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED FOR TEN YEARS AT 75.0 PERCENT

Annual TIF Revenue	Year 10
One-Story Retail Building	
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue at 75 percent	\$75,296
75 Percent	\$583,547

30-Year TIF At 100 Percent of All New AV

If the new TIF were created as a 30-year TIF and 100.0 percent of all new property tax was paid into the TIF, it would generate \$100,395 in new annual property taxes. Over ten years, this would equal \$2,089,478.

FIGURE 50, TOTAL PROPERTY TAX GENERATED FOR 30 YEARS AT 100 PERCENT

Annual TIF Revenue	Year 30
One-Story Retail Building	
Total New Annual Property Tax Revenue at 100 percent	\$100,395
Total Cumulative New Property Tax Revenue	\$2,089,478

FUNDING ASSISTANCE

A variety of potential funding program options exist for Ohio municipalities to help encourage the developments discussed in the Section. While these are not one size fits all, these types of incentive programs are available to Athens that may assist with project development along the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

TIF FUNDING

Utilizing TIF to help fund new development is a common practice, especially in areas where retail, residential, and mixed-use growth is expected. The previous pages illustrated how a TIF makes funding available through the increased assessed value of real property. Per Ohio Statutes, various improvements are eligible for TIF funding assistance, such as public infrastructure (sidewalks, streets, utilities, etc.), which can be leveraged to assist in developing new residential and commercial projects. TIF funding may also be used for land acquisition and demolitions of existing structures in conjunction with economic development projects. As stated in Critical Path Strategy number 6, this funding source should be viewed as a near term priority.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA (CRA)

A CRA assists with economic development initiatives and is regulated by the Ohio Revised Code, sections 3735.65 to 3735.70. This program allows for an exemption of up to 100 percent of real property taxes for a period not to exceed 15 years; however, the exemption does not extend to the increase in the value of the land underneath the new or remodeled structure. It also does not permit an exemption from taxation of existing taxes. The county or municipality offering the CRA tax abatement must seek the approval of the board of education to provide the tax abatement for an exemption greater than 50 percent. The CRA tax abatement can be offered to commercial and industrial remodeling meeting the following conditions:

- A minimum \$5,000 investment for up to 12 or 15 years for new commercial and industrial structures;
- Up to 10 years for residential properties with less than two units with at least a \$2,500 investment or up to 12 years for residential remodeling of more than two units with at least a \$5,000 investment; or
- Up to 15 years for residential new construction.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND

Community Investment Funds are funding sources created by local municipalities and their partner organization to help fund new construction and remodeling projects. This funding source is a pot of money from a “seed” investment. Initial deposits into the account come from local governments, community improvement corporations, angel investors, corporate donations, etc. The funds are deposited in an interest-bearing account to fund building renovation assistance programs, street beautification initiatives, and similar items. Funds are usually distributed as low-interest loans expected to be repaid into the fund. Investors are rewarded for their initial investment with a one or two percent annual return on their original deposit.

²⁵ [Ohio State University Extension](#)

IMPLEMENTATION AND CRITICAL PATH STRATEGIES

The previous chapter outlines the objectives and strategy recommendations for the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan. This chapter provides specificity to the strategies identified as a top priority. These projects or programs are known as critical path strategies.

There are seven critical path strategies for the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan. Each strategy has an entire page dedicated to outlining the work plan. To assist in implementation, the work plan identifies related goals, parties to involve, action steps, the timeframe of completion, and estimated project cost.



CRITICAL PATH STRATEGIES

The goals and objective statements are created to guide the community’s vision through recommendations; the strategies are straightforward guidelines to implement those recommendations. All listed strategies are important, but the critical path strategies are actions that should be completed first as top priorities. The priorities are a combination of short-term, affordable projects that can create near-term progress for the communities along Stimson Avenue. In contrast, other priorities are long-term and might require an extended timeframe and budget.

Critical Path Strategies are the key to the implementation of this plan. Each Critical Path Strategy has a complete page outlining the work plan. This portion of the Plan is intended to assist in implementation and related goals, outline action items, list people or organizations who should be involved, and suggest an estimated timeline and cost for each project.

The Critical Path Strategies for this Corridor Plan are listed below:

1. Update the City’s Zoning Ordinance to align with the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan goals and objectives and flexible zoning standards.
2. Insert public art, signage, or branding elements into the “left-over” spaces along the corridor, such as Stimson Avenue, Carpenter Street, the State Street intersection, and Johnny Appleseed Park.
3. Implement a Wayfinding Signage Plan to direct residents and visitors to key sites and points of interest along and near the Stimson Avenue Corridor.
4. Develop and distribute comprehensive parking maps that indicate public parking areas’ locations and instructions for accessing these areas.
5. Use “left-over” spaces, such as on-street parking spaces, to create temporary seating and outdoor dining areas.
6. Establish a new Tax Increment Financing (TIF) along Stimson Avenue Corridor to help pay for new development and improvements.
7. Research and identify applicable funding for priority flood mitigation projects in the area.
8. Utilize tools approved by the State of Ohio to foster a social environment by extending the Athens Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) and creating a Community Entertainment District (CED) within this study’s boundary.

HOW TO USE THE CRITICAL PATH STRATEGIES

The following pages guide the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan in implementing the identified Critical Path Strategies. Each program’s dedicated work plan will have an included timeframe of at least five years and an estimated cost.

Strategy 1: Update the City’s Zoning Ordinance to align with the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan overlay district recommendations.	
Action Steps	Parties to Involve
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the current City’s Zoning Ordinances to identify conflict areas with the Stimson Avenue Corridor Plan. 2. Analyze the Stimson Corridor Plan to determine the needed zoning standards changes. 3. Meet with the City Council and collect feedback on proposed changes from stakeholders and the community. 4. Draft, finalize, and submit the updated Zoning Ordinance for approval. 5. Conduct post-implementation reviews by evaluating impacts on the Stimson Avenue Corridor. 6. Collaborate with developers, businesses, and property owners to encourage and support projects that align with the new zoning overlay districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athens City Officials and Staff • Athens Public Works Department • Athens County Economic Development Council • Athens Planning and Development Department
	Related Plan Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique Physical Environment • Corridor Identification and Wayfinding • Parking • Experiences Not Just Retail Using Placemaking • Pedestrian-Oriented Development • Floodplain Mitigation • High Land Cost Expectations • Resident Engagement • Flexible Zoning
Timeframe: 0 – 2 Years	
Estimated Cost: \$0 for City staff-developed zoning ordinance update; \$40,000 for consultant-driven update	

Strategy 2: Insert public art, signage, or branding elements into the “left-over” spaces along the corridor, such as Stimson Avenue, Carpenter Street, and State Street intersection, and Johnny Appleseed Park.

Action Steps

1. Site Analysis and Selection

- Conduct a site analysis to identify each site’s visibility, foot traffic, and potential impact on the corridor.

2. Community Engagement

- Hold public meetings, workshops, or surveys to involve residents, artists, and stakeholders in decision-making.

3. Concept Development

- Collaborate with artists, designers, and cultural organizations to develop a cohesive artistic theme or concept for each selected site.

4. Athens Municipal Arts Commission (AMAC)

- Ensure all recommendations follow the AMAC standards and regulations listed on the city of Athens website.

5. Request for art installations

- Submit a request to AMAC via the city of Athens website at www.ci.athens.oh.us/

6. Artistic Selection and Design

- Collaborate with AMAC to choose artists, designers, or creative professionals to develop innovative and meaningful concepts for public art, signage, or branding elements.

7. Secure Funding and Resources

- Public Art in Athens, Ohio, is funded through various sources approved by the City Council, including but not limited to public funds, private contributions, grants, corporate sponsorships, development fees, fund-raising, and funds generated through the city’s percent for Art Policy.

8. Obtain Necessary Approvals and Permits

- Comply with any regulations or guidelines for public art installations and outdoor signage.

Timeframe: 1 – 2 Years

Estimated Cost: N/A

Parties to Involve

- Athens City Officials and Staff
- Athens County Economic Development Council
- Athens Planning and Development Department
- Ohio University
- Athens Municipal Arts Commission

Related Plan Themes

- Unique Physical Environment
- Experiences Not Just Retail Using Placemaking
- Flexible Zoning

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS—LIFE AT THE INTERSECTIONS MURAL²¹

About 70 local artists were interviewed for the creation of this project. Sponsored by the Chicago Association of Realtors and the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, the mural encourages “reflection on alternative community safety, wellness, mutual support, and care.”

FIGURE 52: LIFE AT THE INTERSECTION MURAL IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



Source: Chicago Association of Realtors.

²¹ [Introducing Our New Placemaking Project: Life at the Intersections Mural](#)

Strategy 3: Implement a Wayfinding Signage Plan to direct residents and visitors to key sites and points of interest along and near the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

Action Steps

1. Visioning and Recommendations

- Engage local businesses, community organizations, students, and residents to gather input on wayfinding needs and preferences.

2. Wayfinding Design

- Develop consistent and visually appealing wayfinding design guidelines that reflect the corridor's character and are easy to understand.
- Work with Ohio University to determine how this plan can be integrated into their existing wayfinding signage plan.

3. Sign Mapping Placement

- Determine the locations for wayfinding signage, considering visibility, foot traffic patterns, and accessibility.

4. Signage Development and Production

- Collaborate with professional designers and sign manufacturers to create high-quality, durable signage that meets established design guidelines.

5. Permits

- Navigate through local regulations and obtain necessary permits to install wayfinding signage.

6. Partnerships and Funding

- Explore partnerships with local businesses to secure funding for the signage plan.
- Seek grant opportunities or sponsorships to support the signage's development, installation, and maintenance.

Parties to Involve

- Athens City Officials and Staff
- Athens Arts, Parks and Recreation Department
- Athens County Economic Development Council
- Athens Planning and Development Department
- Ohio University

Related Plan Themes

- Unique Physical Environment
- Corridor Identification and Wayfinding
- Parking

Timeframe: 1 – 2 Years

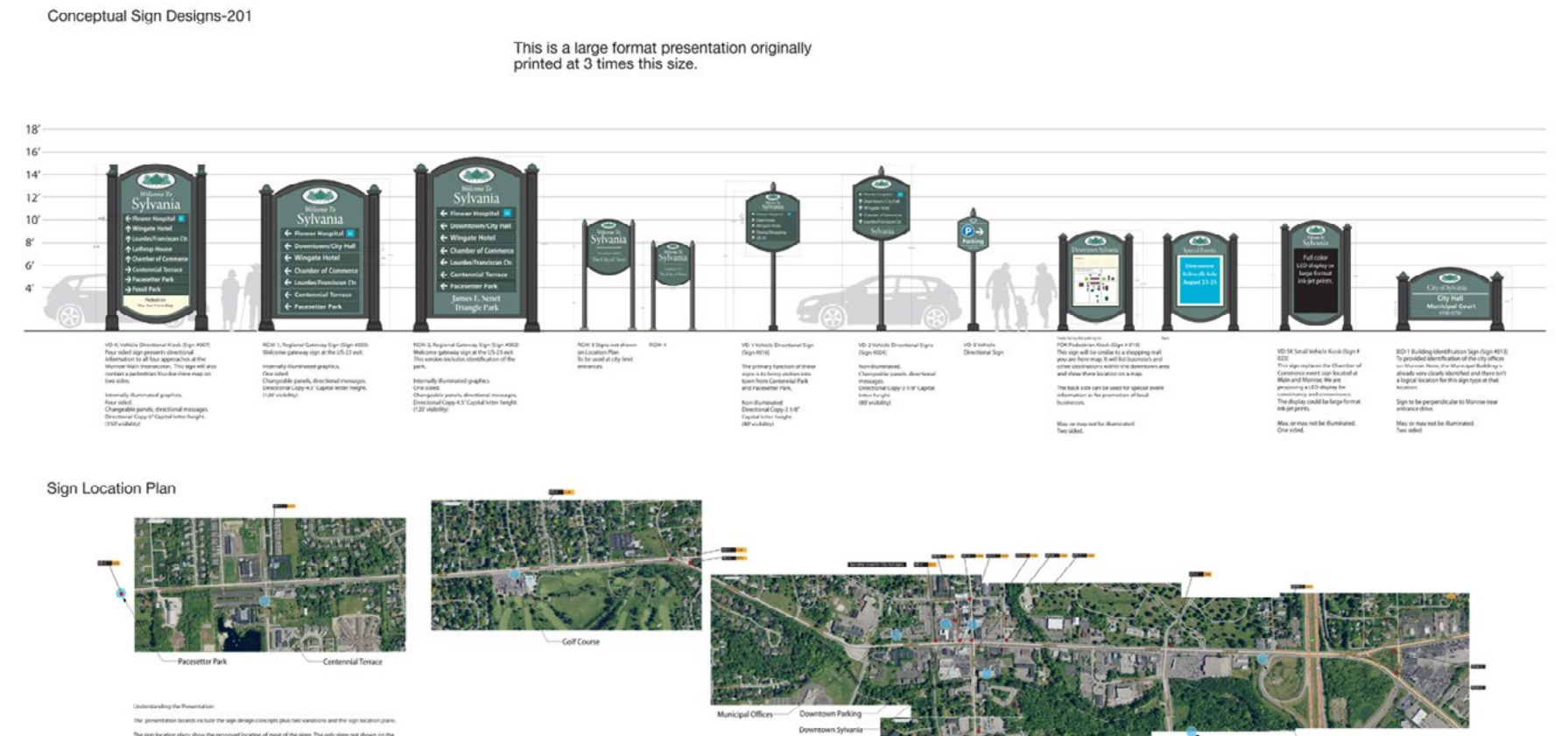
Estimated Cost: \$20,000 (For Wayfinding Signage Plan Only)

SYLVANIA, OHIO—WAYFINDING PROJECT²²

The City of Sylvania, Ohio, found itself in an interesting situation. Visitors would not know about its historic downtown on the way to their popular sports venues due to an expressway that bypassed downtown. A solution was needed to show visitors how to get to downtown, the college, hospital, and museum. Just as important was that once in downtown, visitors needed to find their way back to the sports venues.

The sign design became an important part of the strategy as well to communicate the history and elegance of the city, and capture visitors attention. A series of sign types were developed with specific locations in mind with the stated goals. The City worked with multiple constituents for the proper location, color, and design resulting in a unified sign wayfinding sign program as shown in Figure 53.

FIGURE 53: CITYWIDE WAYFINDING PROJECT.



Source: Nicolson Associates, Inc.

²² Wayfinding Project

Strategy 4: Develop and distribute comprehensive parking maps that indicate the location of public parking areas along with instructions for accessing these areas.

Action Steps

1. Create a Parking Study Report

- Create a Stimson Avenue Parking Study similar to the Athens Uptown Parking Study.

2. Parking Inventory and Assessment

- Conduct a more extensive and detailed inventory of existing public parking areas along the Stimson Avenue Corridor to accurately identify and categorize available spaces, including surface lots and on-street parking.

3. Collaboration with Local Authorities

- Engage with relevant local authorities, including City Departments and transportation agencies, to gather accurate and up-to-date information about public parking options and regulations.

4. Map Design and Development

- Work with professional mapping software to design clear and user-friendly parking maps that showcase the locations of public parking areas, nearby landmarks, and key points of interest.

5. Consider Integrating Technology

- Explore the incorporation of digital technology, such as mobile apps or interactive online maps, to provide real-time updates on parking availability, pricing, and any special events that may impact parking options.

Parties to Involve

- Athens City Officials and Staff
- Athens Code Enforcement and Community Development Department
- Athens County Economic Development Council
- Athens Planning and Development Department

Related Plan Themes

- Unique Physical Environment
- Corridor Identification and Wayfinding
- Experiences Not Just Retail using Placemaking
- High Land Cost Expectations
- Pedestrian-Oriented Development

Timeframe: 1 – 2 Years

Estimated Cost: \$10,000



Strategy 5: Use “left-over” spaces to create temporary seating and outdoor dining areas.

Action Steps

1. Site Assessment and Selection

- Identify suitable leftover spaces for potential conversion, such as underutilized on-street parking areas and surface parking lots.
- Evaluate the feasibility of each location based on factors like foot traffic, accessibility, and safety.

2. Collaboration

- Collaborate with local government agencies and departments, such as parks and recreation, transportation, and public health, to ensure regulatory compliance and obtain necessary permits.

3. Design and Planning

- Incorporate seating arrangements, shading, lighting, greenery, and traffic flow management.

4. Temporary Setup

- Assemble and install the outdoor seating areas in selected spaces, ensuring they comply with safety standards and accessibility requirements.

5. Promotion and Public Awareness

- Utilize social media, local newspapers, websites, and community events to generate excitement and encourage community participation.

6. Seasonal Adaptation

- Plan for seasonal changes by implementing weather-appropriate modifications, such as heating elements, wind barriers, or temporary enclosures, to extend the usability of the outdoor spaces.

7. Continuous Improvement

- Explore partnerships with local artists, musicians, and cultural organizations to enhance the ambiance and experience of the spaces.

Parties to Involve

- Athens City Officials and Staff
- Athens Code Enforcement and Community Development Department
- Athens County Economic Development Council
- Athens Planning and Development Department
- Athens Municipal Arts Commission

Related Plan Themes

- Unique Physical Environment
- Corridor Identification and Wayfinding
- Experiences Not Just Retail Using Placemaking
- High Land Cost Expectations
- Pedestrian-Oriented Development

Timeframe: 1 – 2 Years

Estimated Cost: (Varies Depending on Size and Type of Temporary Space)

PARKLET PROGRAM—CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD

In 2018, West Hollywood launched a Temporary Parklet Program, a creative approach to transform parking spaces into vibrant community spaces. These parklets serve as inviting platforms for public seating, effectively expanding the available space for street users.

The Parklet Program invited diverse participants, including businesses, property owners, nonprofit entities, and community organizations. The primary objective was to enrich the overall living experience in West Hollywood by collaboratively establishing and supporting new public spaces in partnership with local organizations. These parklets serve as exciting points for community gatherings and allow local artists and design teams to engage with their communities.

FIGURE 54: PARKLET EXAMPLE



In 2021, the Union Street Diner opened an outdoor dining area with several tables and an enclosed platform that occupied two parking spaces in front of the restaurant. To accomplish this approach, the owner submitted a permit to the city, which was approved quickly as his proposal followed all the guidelines for safety and accessibility. The Union Street Diner outdoor area approach is an example for restaurants along the Stimson Avenue Corridor. The Stimson Avenue Corridor has a few available on-street parking spaces that hold the potential to be artfully repurposed into temporary parklets. A parklet approach would give the community accessible and inclusive gathering spaces and effectively reshape the Corridor into a people-centric destination.

FIGURE 55: ON-STREET PARKING SPACES AS PARKLET OPPORTUNITIES



Source: American Structurepoint.

Strategy 6: Establish a new TIF along Stimson Avenue Corridor to help pay for new development and improvements.

Action Steps

1. Reach out to the City of Athens Planning Commission to start the process of evaluating the approach boundaries for a new TIF and potential ways to partner to provide new development to the Stimson Avenue Corridor. Identify stakeholders and conduct meetings to evaluate the boundaries for the TIF district and its potential revenue generation.
2. Draft, present, finalize, and submit the TIF proposal for approval to governing bodies.

Parties to Involve

- Athens City Officials and Staff
- Athens Income Tax Department
- Athens County Economic Development Council
- Athens Planning and Development Department
- School district

Related Plan Themes

- Unique Physical Environment
- Experiences Not Just Retail Using Placemaking
- High Land Cost Expectations
- Resident Engagement
- Flexible Zoning

Timeframe: 1 year or less

Estimated Cost: Staff Time



Strategy 7: Research and identify applicable funding offered for priority flood mitigation projects in the area.

Action Steps

1. Collaborate with city officials, engineers, and experts to develop comprehensive project proposals for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) or other funding sources.
2. Seek technical assistance, if needed, to ensure that grant applications meet all the requirements and guidelines of the HMA Programs.
3. Develop a flood mitigation project inventory and prioritization matrix to create a phased work plan for each funding source’s eligible activities.
4. Establish a timeline for preparing and submitting grant applications to meet designated deadlines.
5. Execute flood mitigation projects according to the approved proposals and within the specified timelines.
6. Adhere to applicable regular monitoring and reporting requirements for flood mitigation projects to FEMA as required by each funding source.

Parties to Involve

- Athens City Officials and Staff
- Athens Planning and Development Department
- Athens County EMA

Related Plan Themes

- Unique Physical Environment
- Floodplain Mitigation
- Resident Engagement
- Flexible Zoning

Timeframe: 1 year or less

Estimated Cost: Staff Time

CASE STUDY—THURSTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON²³

The case study examines how Thurston County, a rural county in western Washington with many low-income residents living in flood-prone areas, addresses construction regulations in SFHAs.

Since 2007, the county’s floodplain manager has been retrofitting homes in flood-prone areas annually, targeting properties that have experienced flooding and need to be elevated above flood levels. The county combines grants from various state and federal sources to fund these elevations, including Community Development Block Grants, the Washington State Department of Ecology, the Washington State Chehalis Flood Basin, and FEMA.

In cases where homeowners cannot afford the financial match required for retrofit grants, the floodplain manager collaborates with the National Flood Insurance Program to access the Increased Cost of Compliance fund, providing up to \$30,000 to flood proof, relocate, elevate, or demolish qualified, insured buildings. The county has included substantial damage and repetitive loss provisions to access these funds in its floodplain management ordinance.

Additionally, the county updates its ordinance regularly to ensure its effectiveness and accountability. Recently, the county incorporated “critical area” ordinances into its floodplain management ordinance to ensure that development in sensitive areas takes flooding into account.

²³ [Community Planning: Floods](#)

Strategy 8: Utilize tools approved by the State of Ohio to foster a social environment by extending the Athens Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) and creating a Community Entertainment District (CED) within this study’s boundary.

Action Steps	Parties to Involve
<p>1. Collaborate with city officials, staff, and business owners to refine the boundaries of the proposed DORA expansion and CED.</p> <p>2. Create an official survey for the boundary of the study area to use for the creation of the DORA and CED. Both approval processes require this step.</p> <p>3. DORA Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the existing DORA and expansion area does not exceed 320 contiguous acres. • File an application for the expanded DORA with the legislative authority of the City containing all the information required in section 43.430.4301.82, “Designated outdoor refreshment areas,” of the Ohio Revised Code. <p>4. CED Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to all property owners within the boundary to establish their willingness to participate in the joint economic development district (JEDD). • Discuss the concept of a JEDD with Athens Township officials. • Establish a JEDD with Athens Township. This step is required if the municipality is requesting the creation of a CED. • When ready, file the proper application for the establishment of a CED with the legislative authority of the City containing all the information required in section 43.430.4301.80, “Community entertainment district application,” of the Ohio Revised Code. 	<p>Parties to Involve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athens City Officials and Staff • Athens County Economic Development Council • Athens Planning and Development Department • Athens Township <p>Related Plan Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique Physical Environment • Experiences Not Just Retail Using Placemaking
<p>Timeframe: 1 year or less</p>	

Estimated Cost: Staff Time and Survey Cost (approximately \$15,000)

BEST PRACTICE – COMMUNITY ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS²³

CEDs are a defined area that includes or will include a combination of entertainment, retail, educational, sporting, social, cultural, or arts establishments that are near some or all the below types of establishments:

- Hotels;
- Restaurants;
- Retail sales establishments;
- Enclosed shopping centers;
- Museums;
- Performing arts theaters;
- Motion picture theaters;
- Night clubs;
- Convention facilities;
- Sports facilities;
- Entertainment facilities or complexes;
- Any combination of the establishments described in division (A)(1) to (11) of this section that provide similar services to the community.²⁴

Creation of a CED will permit the municipality and business owners the ability to request an increased number of D-5J Liquor permits specifically in the CED’s boundaries. The creation of a CED on Stimson Avenue would add to the viability of increased dining and entertainment options in the study area and to continue the corridor’s evolution into a destination for residents and visitors.

²⁴[Ohio State Statutes](#)

UPDATING THE PLAN

The following measures should be taken to ensure that the recommended strategies and action steps continue to move the community toward its vision. It will also ensure that the Plan accurately reflects the community's collective vision and values over time.

- Prepare an annual report highlighting how the Plan was used and the effectiveness of the contents. Pay particular attention to the implications of how one part of the Plan affects or otherwise relates to another.
- Establish a five-year review and update process to examine and revise the Plan's contents regularly. Of particular importance are:
 - Updates to the socio-demographic information;
 - Ensure that each of the policy objectives identified is still relevant;
 - Including the use of any newly defined best practices (e.g., land use planning, transportation planning, and zoning); or,
 - Simply aligning the Plan's content with any changes to the local regulatory environment.
- Establish a community engagement process, complete with inter-local cooperation, to complete the first two measures.



APPENDIX A—EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

STIMSON AVENUE
CORRIDOR PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT





INTRODUCTION

The existing conditions report provides an overview of the demographics and current conditions of the corridor. Analyzing these existing trends will help develop the recommendations and outcomes later in the corridor plan.

WHAT IS A CORRIDOR?

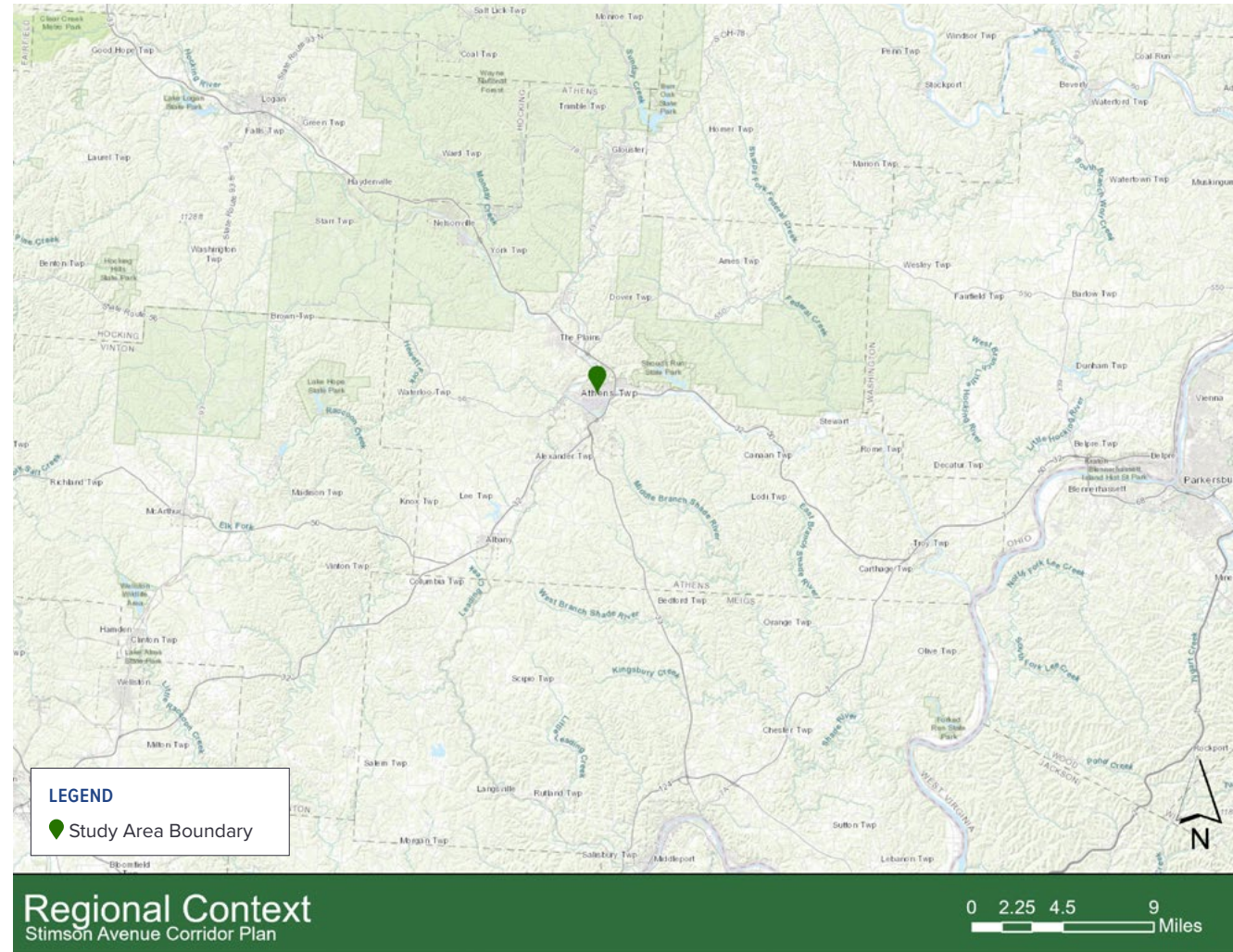
“Corridors are linear pathways that connect places and allow for the movement of people, goods, or wildlife. They often center around transportation infrastructure such as streets, highways, and public transit, but can also center around historic sites, habitats, rivers, or other natural features. They may be regional in scale, as in a heavy rail corridor, or extremely local, as in a retail corridor along a city thoroughfare.”¹

¹ Jennifer Henaghan, AICP. Corridor Planning. American Planning Association, 2018.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Athens, the home of Ohio University, is a rural city in the southeastern portion of the state, roughly an hour from Columbus and 30 minutes from West Virginia. The Stimson Avenue Corridor is a main entryway into the city.

FIGURE 1, REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP



The study boundaries include the intersection of W. Carpenter Street and Stimson Avenue to the west and the junction of Stimson Avenue and the Hocking River. The study boundary also extends to include segments of several neighborhood streets.

FIGURE 2, STUDY AREA BOUNDARIES



REGIONAL AND LOCAL MARKETS

Developing recommendations and action items rely on examining an area's demographics and market trends. This effort involved looking at various data points within the City of Athens and surrounding areas.

For this study, the northern and southern sections of the city were split at Stimson Avenue to compare the demographics of residents outside of the immediate university area. A walk time of 10 minutes (which included most of the project boundaries) and drive times of 15 and 30 minutes from Stimson Avenue were also analyzed to compare demographics.

Data used in this section was pulled primarily from the US Census Bureau via the following sources:

**2021, 2019 American Community Survey,
2020, 2010 US Census**

In addition to the decennial census, the US Census Bureau conducts dozens of other censuses and surveys, including the American Community Survey. The American Community Survey is an ongoing effort that gathers information from a community through a small sample instead of the extensive 10-year survey with which many people are familiar.

ESRI Business Analyst

ESRI Business Analyst is a powerful tool for analyzing data within a specific geographic location, allowing data to be observed locally and compared with surrounding groups. Data from the US 2010 and 2020 Census, 2022, 2021, and 2019 American Community Surveys (ACS), and ESRI-derived projections for 2027 were used in this analysis.

**The 2020 Census was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and may have led to underreporting or certain populations.*



FIGURE 3, COMPARISON AREAS

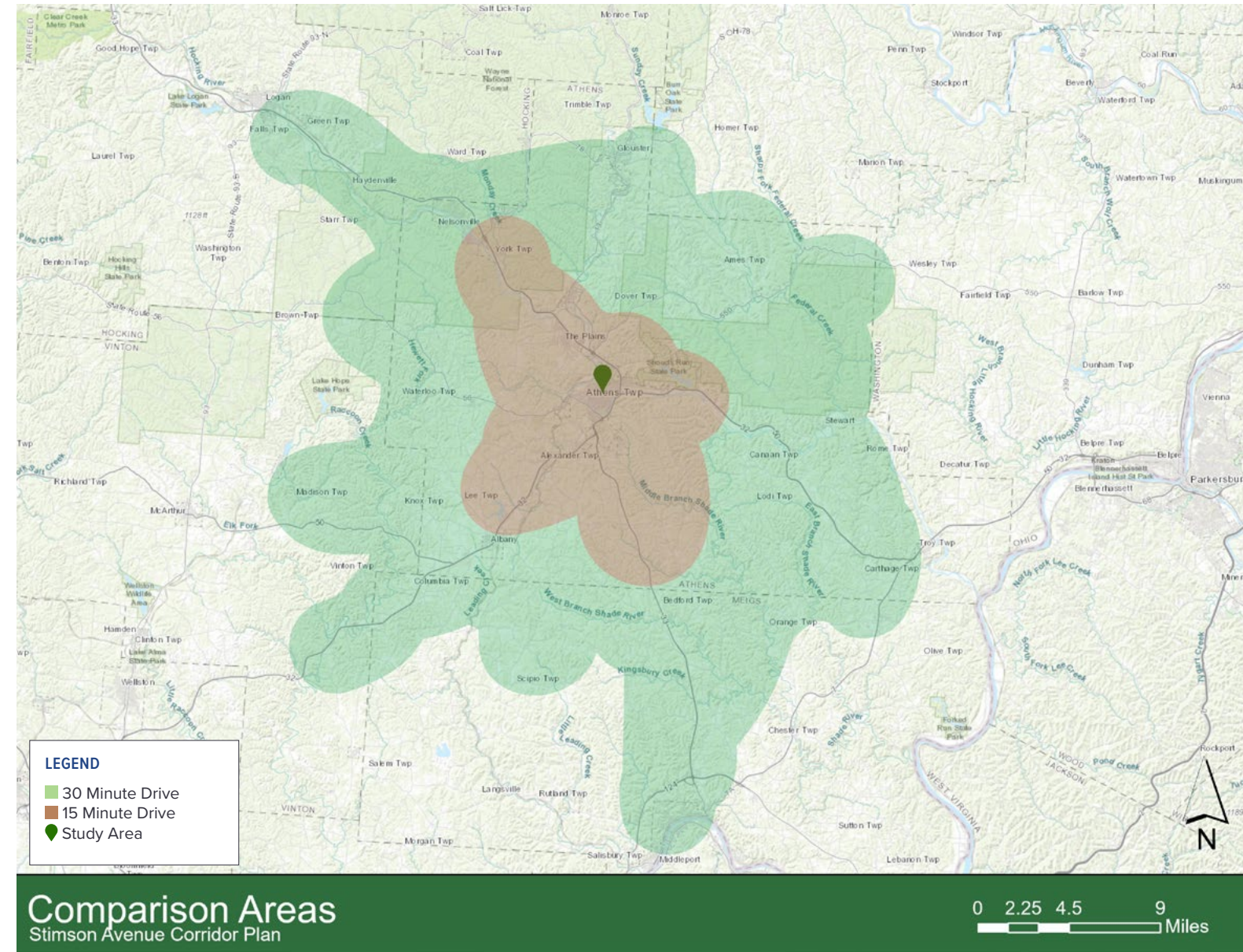
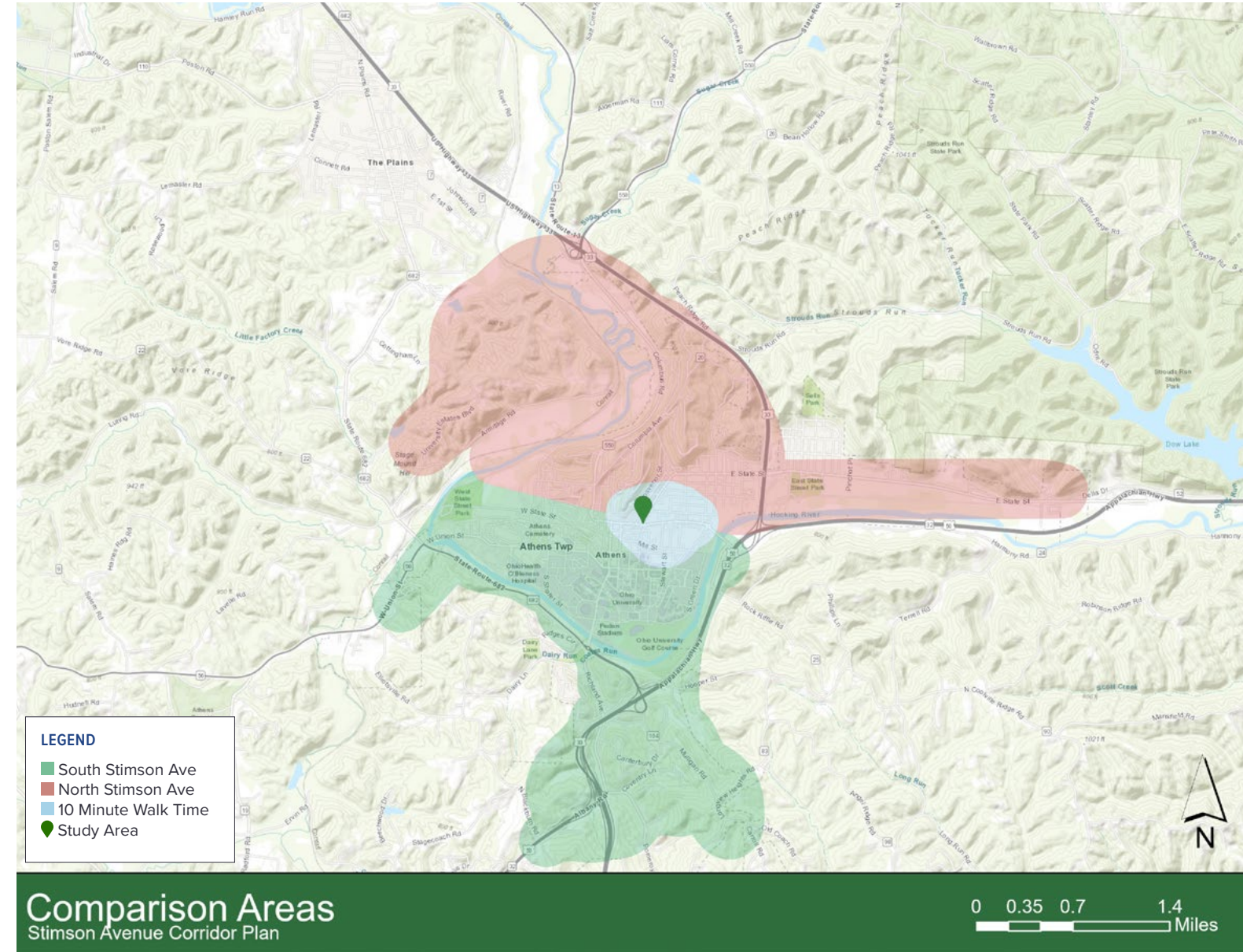


FIGURE 3.1, COMPARISON AREAS



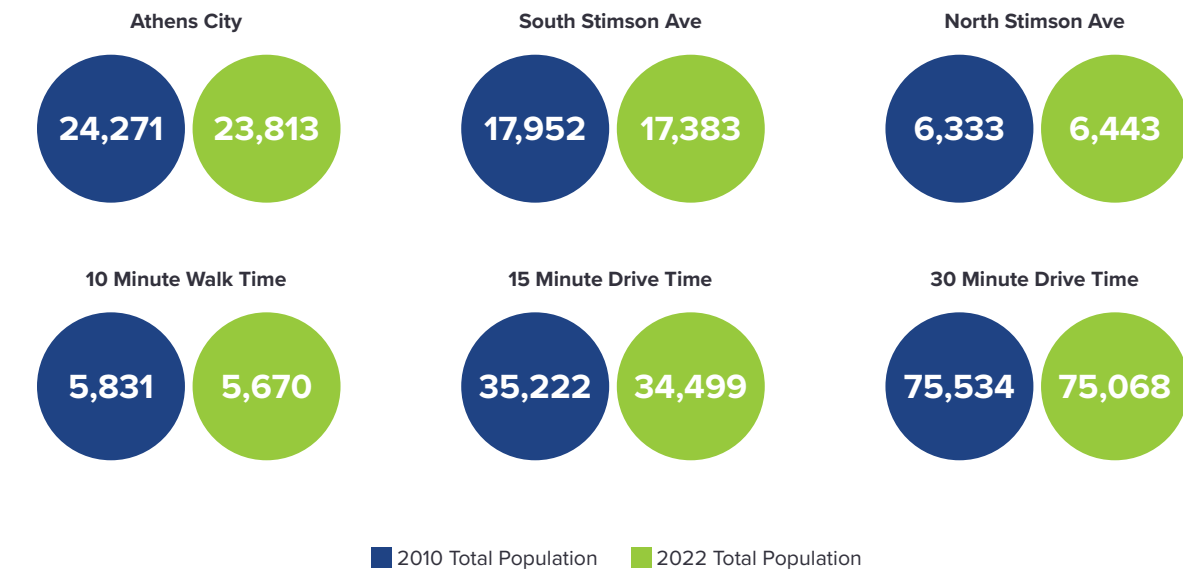


POPULATION TRENDS

Population trends and projections tell us how much development the area should expect over the next few years. Growth in households indicates the number of units that may be required, employment data demonstrates what kinds and quantities of shopping and employment areas are needed, and population growth shows how local demand for goods and services will change.

The 10-minute walk time, which encompasses most of the study area, had a population of 5,670 in 2022. When comparing the neighborhoods north of Stimson Avenue to those south, it was determined that the population south of Stimson Avenue was almost three times of the northern area. The total population within a 15-minute drive, which included the City of Athens and surrounding areas, was 34,499 in 2022. The total population within a 30-minute drive time, which extended to Pomeroy and Logan, was 75,068 in 2022. The population of the 30-minute drive time decreased by 4 percent from 2010 to 2022, the most change of all the comparison areas.

CHART 1 - TOTAL POPULATION

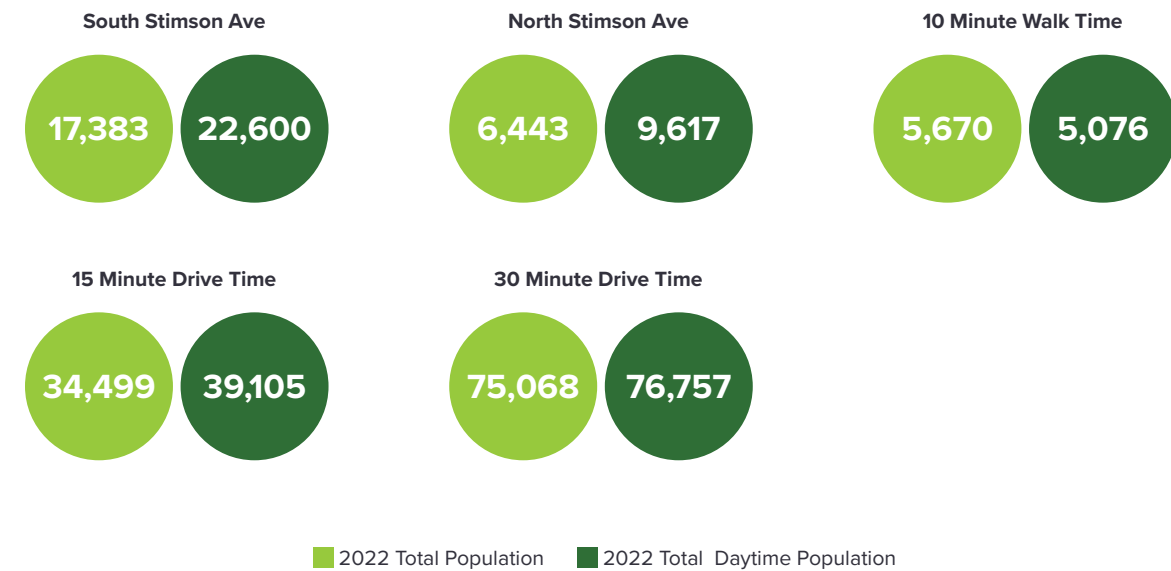


DAYTIME POPULATION

The daytime population accounts for workers, commuters, and others who spend time in the area during the day. Existing residents only account for a portion of the existing retail market. Local employees and students commuting in represent the daytime population, who also account for the current retail market.

The Total Population vs. Daytime Population Chart shows the total daytime population compared to the total population. South Stimson Avenue, which includes the Ohio University campus, had a higher daytime population (22,600) than North Stimson Avenue (9,617) and a 10-minute walk time (5,076). However, North Stimson Avenue's Daytime Population was around 3,000 more than its total population. The 15-minute drive time and 30-minute drive time also had a higher daytime population than the total population. Within a 10-minute walk, the daytime population was about 600 less than the area's population.

CHART 2 - TOTAL POPULATION VS. DAYTIME POPULATION



HOUSEHOLDS

As defined by the US Census Bureau, a household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people who share a housing unit. The household numbers for all the comparison areas remained roughly the same from 2010 to 2022 and are projected to remain the same in 2027. The 10-minute walk time experienced the largest percent change between both periods, increasing households by 6.1 percent from 2010 to 2022 and 3.6 percent from 2022 to 2027. However, the area south of Stimson Avenue had the most significant increase from 2010 to 2022 at 8.9 percent. The 15-minute drive time's households increased by 4.2 percent from 2010 to 2022. The 30-minute drive time was the only area to experience any decline of over 1.0 percent. The households in the 30-minute drive time decreased by 1.3 percent from 2022 to 2027.

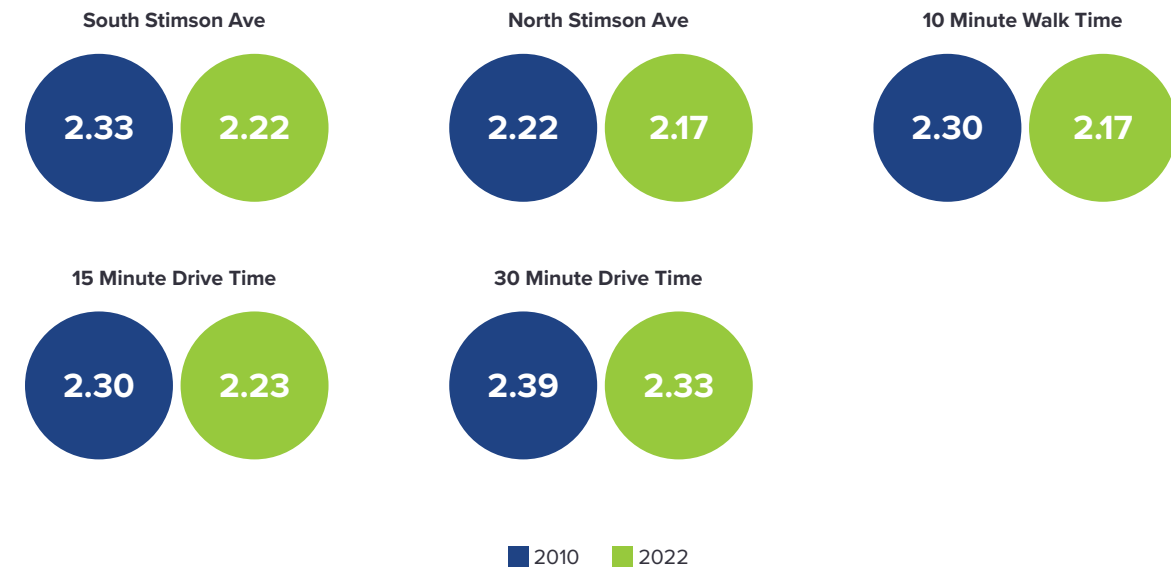
CHART 3 - HOUSEHOLDS



HOUSEHOLD SIZES

The Census describes household size as including everyone occupying a housing unit. The household size remained roughly consistent between areas in each sampled year, decreasing from 2010 to 2022 in all areas. The 30-minute drive time area had the largest average household size at 2.33 in 2022.

CHART 4 - AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE



MEDIAN AGE

North Stimson Avenue and the 30-minute drive time area had the oldest median ages of all the comparison areas. In 2022, north Stimson Avenue’s median age was 29.0, while comparatively, south Stimson Avenue’s median age was much younger at 22.4. The 10-minute walk time also had a younger median age at 23, while increasing to a 15-minute drive time saw a slight increase in median age to 24.4. The median age increased as one traveled farther outside of Athens.

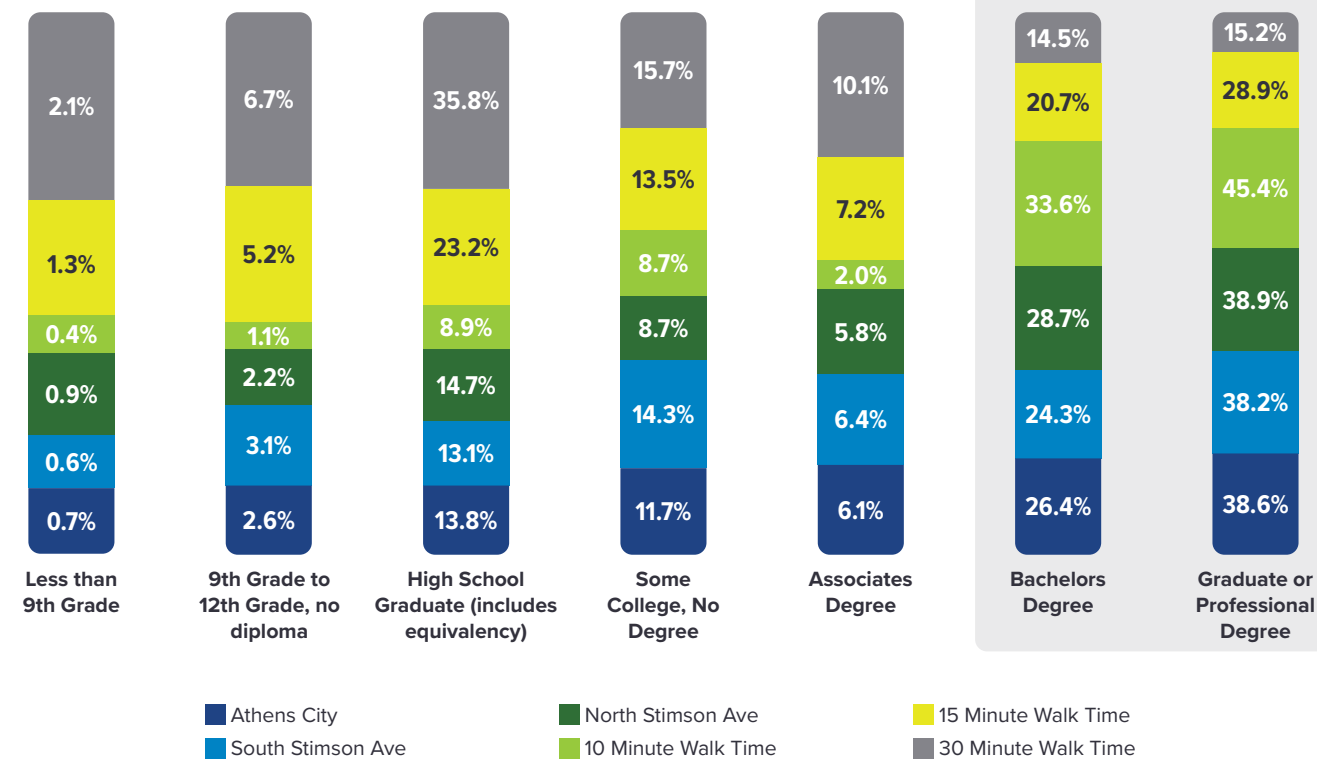
CHART 5 - MEDIAN AGE (2022)



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment measures the highest level of education an individual has received. Many in all the comparison areas, except for the 30-minute drive time, had a graduate or professional degree as their highest level of education. The majority of people in the 30-minute drive time area had high school diploma or equivalent as their highest level of education. The area with the highest educational attainment was the 10-minute walk time. Within the 10-minute walk time, 45.4 percent had a graduate or professional degree, 35.6 percent had a bachelor's degree, 2.0 percent had an associates degree, 8.7 percent had some college but no degree, 9.0 percent were high school graduates (or equivalent), and 1.5 percent had less than high school as their highest level of educational attainment. South Stimson Avenue and N Stimson Avenue had similar demographics for each level of education.

CHART 6 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2022)



INCOME

The area north of Stimson Avenue had the highest median household income at \$59,385. Conversely, the neighborhood south of Stimson Avenue had the lowest median household income at \$26,515. Similarly, the 10-minute walk time had a median household income of \$27,596. Additional data discussed later indicates that these areas had lower median income because more students live south of Stimson and within a 10-minute walk. Generally, areas with younger populations correlate with lower median income, as these individuals are in their early careers and have either student or entry-level salaries. However, the farther drive times of 15 and 30 minutes increased the median income to \$43,697 and \$50,202, respectively.

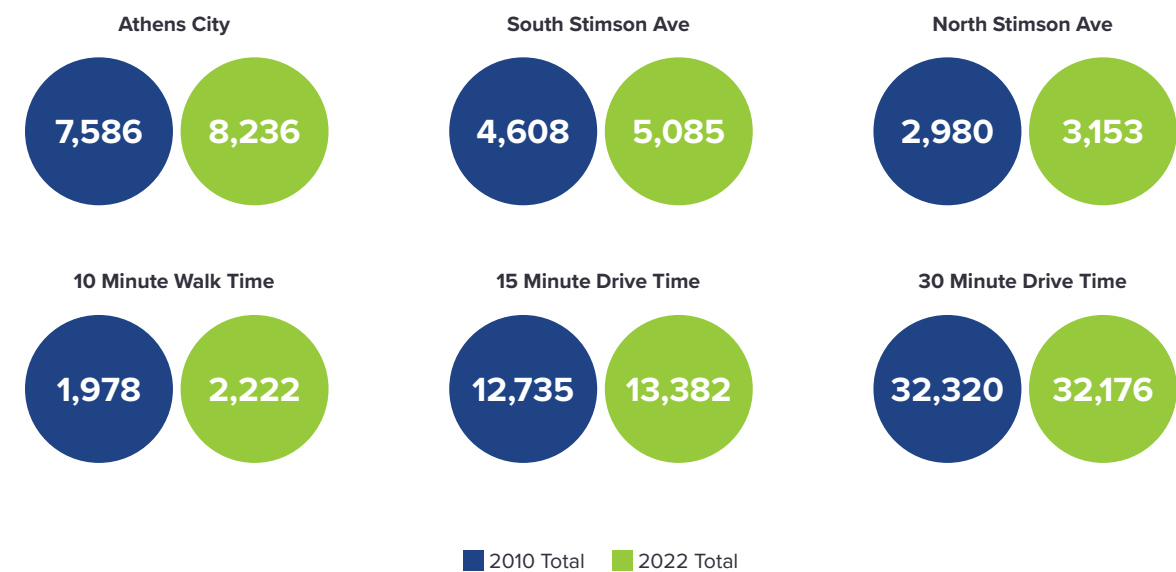
CHART 7 - MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



HOUSING

Total housing units remained primarily unchanged from 2010 to 2022. All areas experienced an increase in total housing units from 2010 to 2022 except for the 30-minute drive time, which decreased slightly by roughly 100 units.

CHART 8 - TOTAL HOUSING UNITS 2010 AND 2022

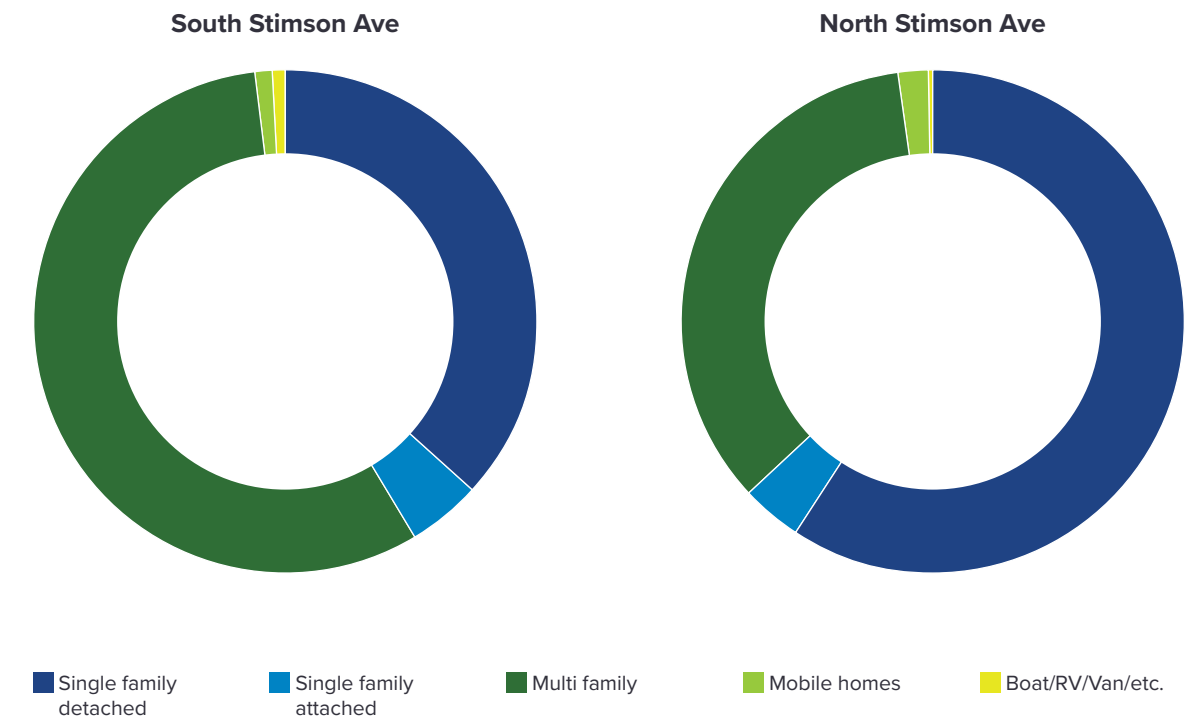


NEIGHBORHOODS

Discussions with stakeholders and the project team, alongside comparisons in demographic data, showed that students at Ohio University generally live to the south of Stimson Avenue. In contrast, permanent residents live in neighborhoods north of Stimson Avenue.

When comparing the housing types between the area south of Stimson Avenue to those to the north, the primary difference noted was that the neighborhood to the north had 30 percent more single-family detached housing types. The south area had almost 15 percent more multi-family housing units.

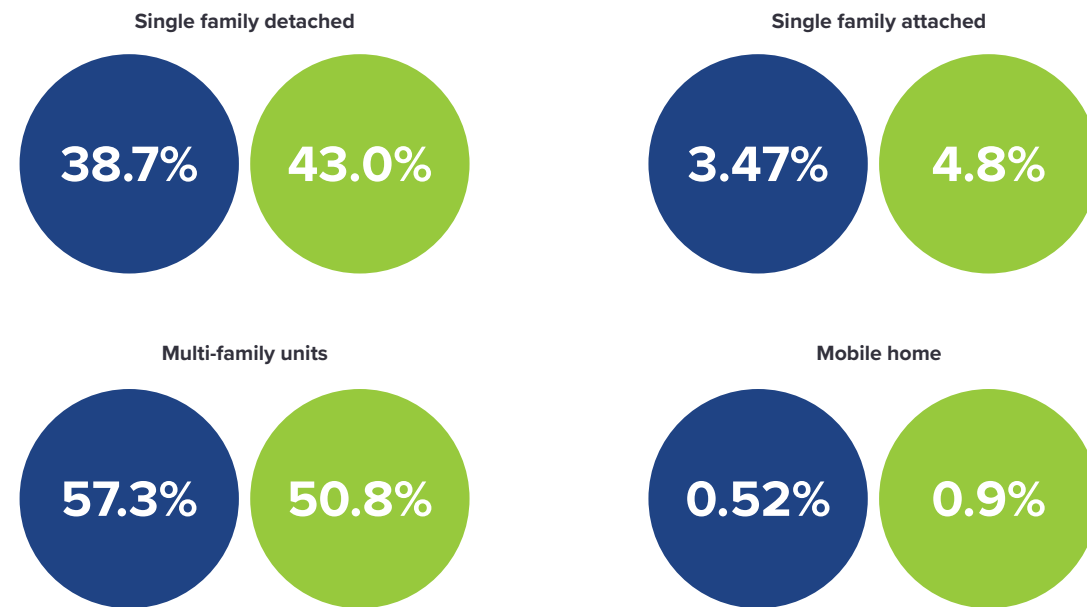
CHART 9 - HOUSING TYPES IN NORTH STIMSON AVENUE VS. SOUTH STIMSON AVENUE IN 2021



HOUSING TYPE

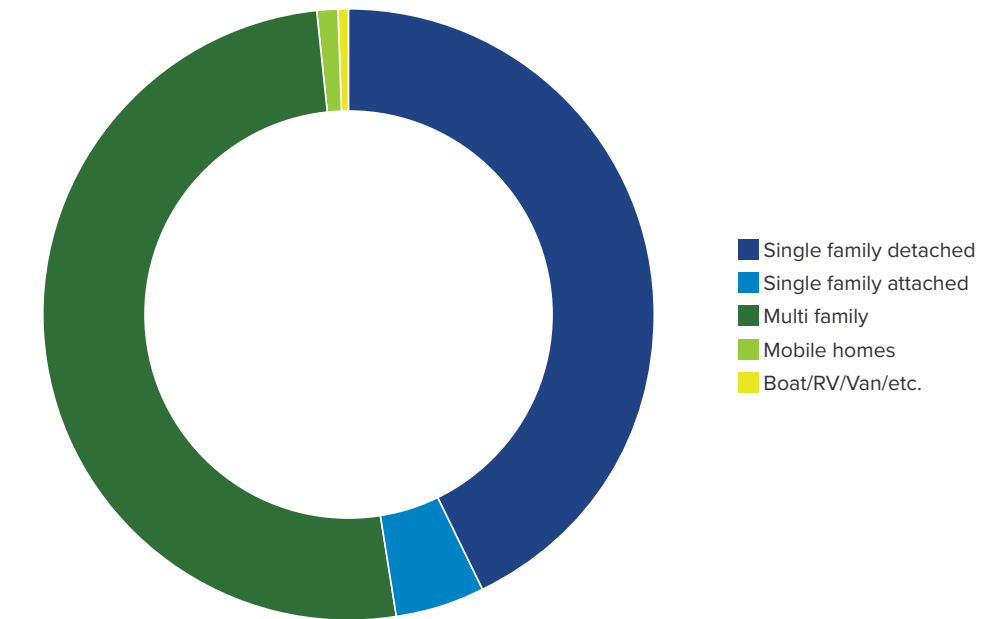
Chart 10 shows the proportion of housing types in the City of Athens. From 2010 to 2021, Athens saw an increase in the percentage of single-family detached homes and a decrease in the overall rate of multi-family units.

CHART 10 - HOUSING TYPES FROM 2010 TO 2021 IN ATHENS



In 2021, Athens had a more even ratio of multi-family units to single-family units (including detached and attached). The increase in single-family units and a decrease in multi-family units indicates that more single-family units were being built or converted in the city.

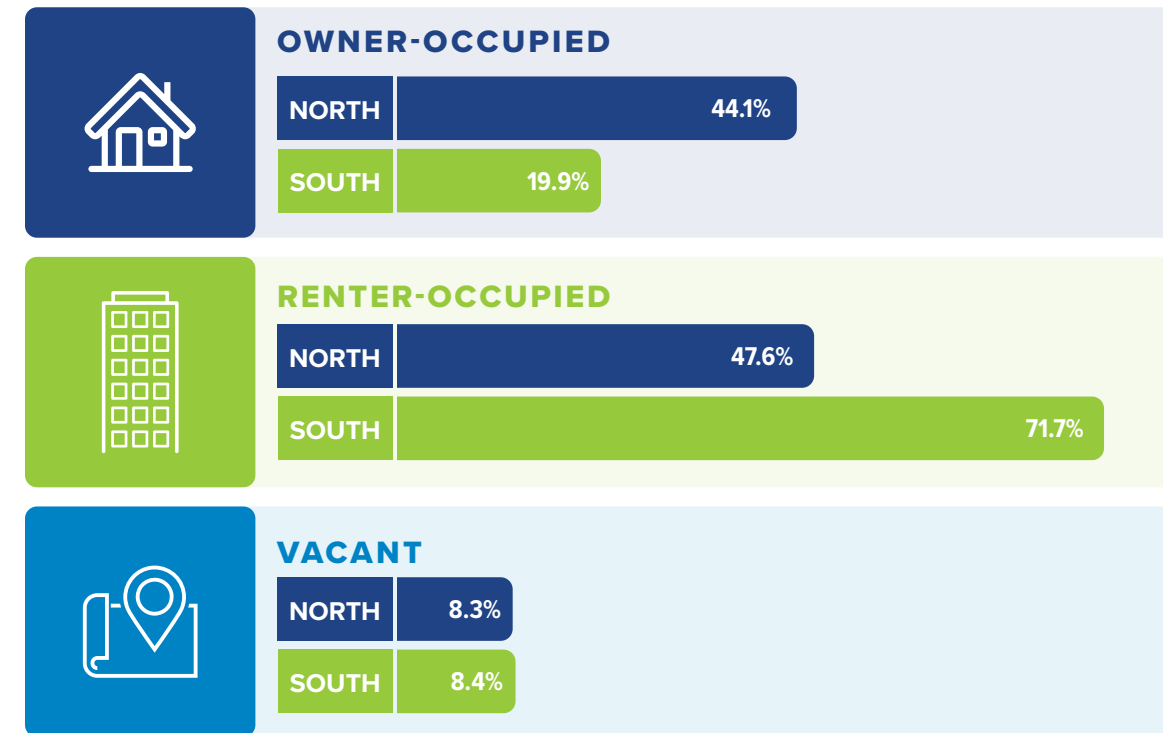
CHART 11 - PERCENTAGE OF HOUSING TYPES IN 2021



OCCUPANCY

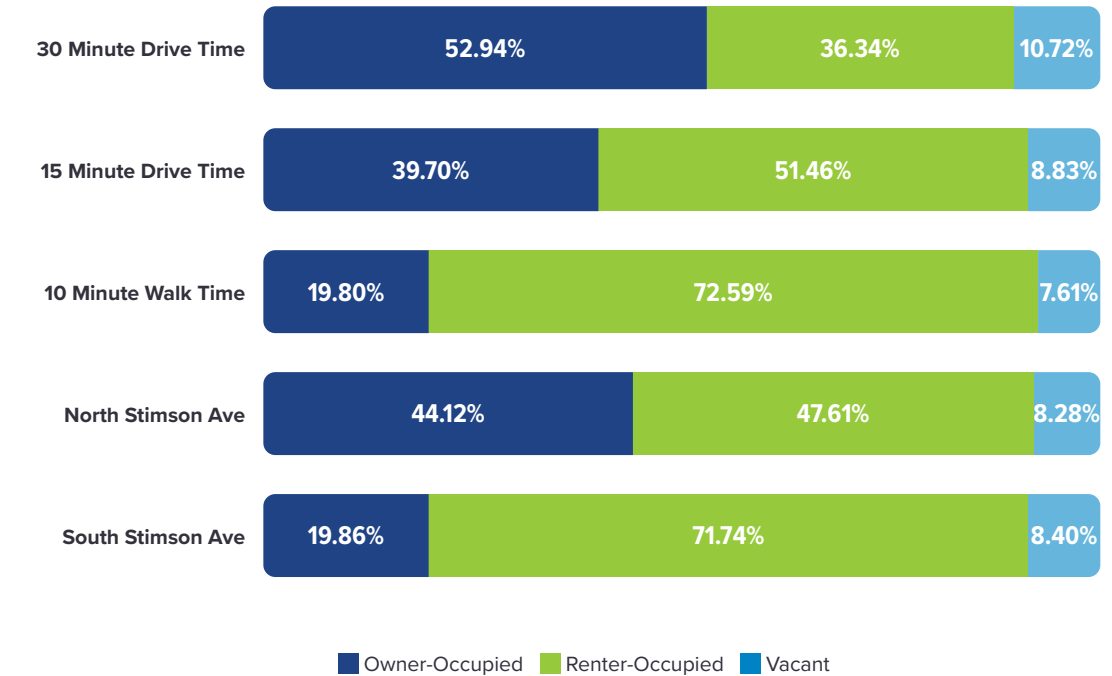
The area north of Stimson Avenue had a more even split of owner-occupied to renter-occupied units than south of Stimson Avenue. Vacancy was consistent on both sides of Stimson Avenue at 8.0 percent. A much higher percentage of housing was renter-occupied (71.7 percent) south of Stimson Avenue than to the north (47.6 percent).

CHART 12 - OCCUPANCY OF NORTH STIMSON VS. SOUTH STIMSON



The 10-minute walk time reflected almost the exact occupancy percentages as compared to the area south of Stimson Avenue. The 15-minute and 30-minute drive times were similar to the neighborhood north of Stimson Avenue, with slightly more renter-occupied units in the 15-minute area and more owner-occupied units in the 30-minute area.

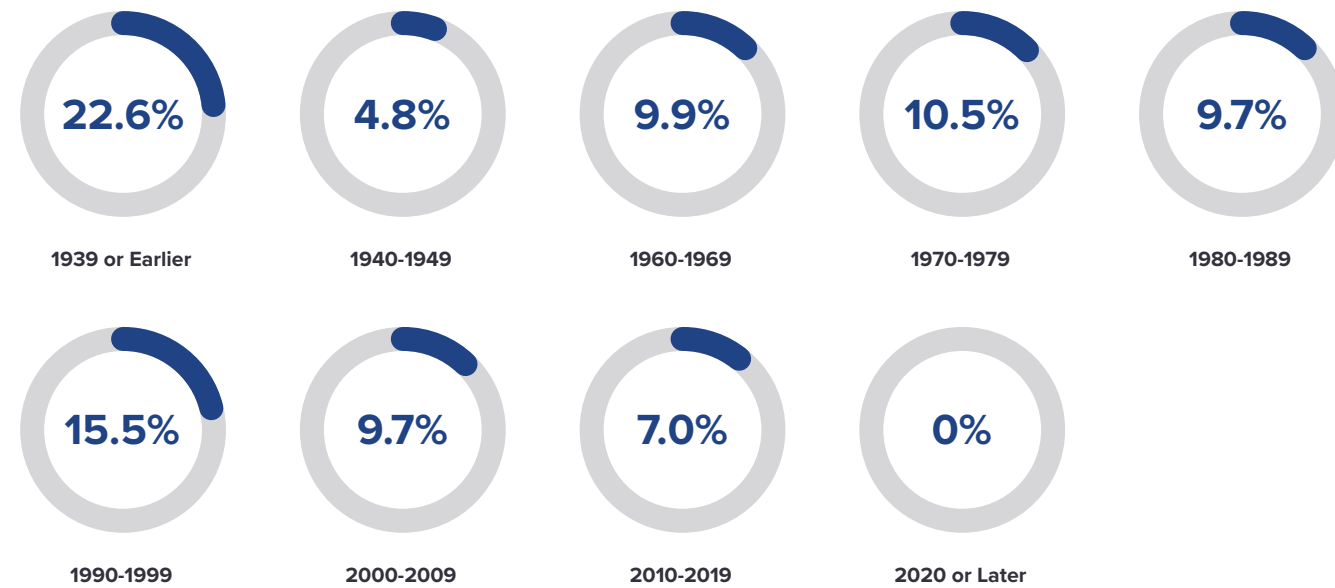
CHART 13 - HOUSING OCCUPANCY (2022)



HOUSING UNIT CONSTRUCTION

Almost a quarter of Athens' housing stock was built in 1939 or earlier. The city saw a similar housing boom between 1990-1999, when 15 percent of its housing stock was built. Since the 1990s, development has declined in Athens, with 7 percent of homes built from 2010 to 2019 and zero built after 2020.

CHART 14 - CITY OF ATHENS YEAR HOUSING UNITS WERE CONSTRUCTED



VALUE

The area south of Stimson Avenue had the highest median home value, \$218,868, of all the comparison areas. However, data in the previous sections indicated that this portion of the city comprises young adults (20-25), is primarily renter-occupied (71.7 percent), and has a 20 percent higher proportion of multi-family units than those north of Stimson. Therefore, it can be inferred that the median home value in this area may have increased due to the amount of multi-family units, rentals, and more recent sales of these properties to rental companies. Areas such as the 15-minute and 30-minute drive times included areas outside of Athens city limits and had lower median home values, with values decreasing as drive time increased (\$191,677 and \$168,367). The 10-minute walk time had a median home value of \$209,200, one thousand dollars more than the city's median home value. North Stimson Avenue was slightly less than the 10-minute walk time, with a median home value of \$201,849.

CHART 15 - MEDIAN HOME VALUES IN 2020

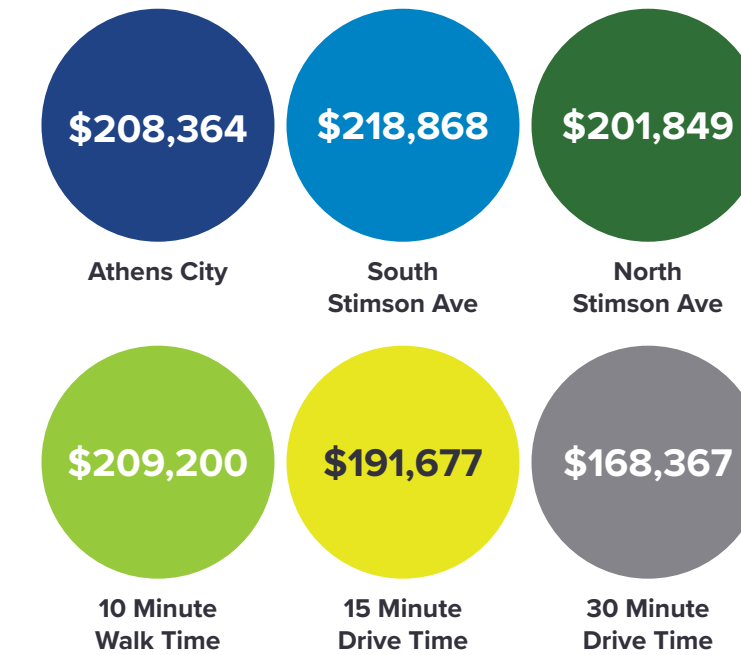
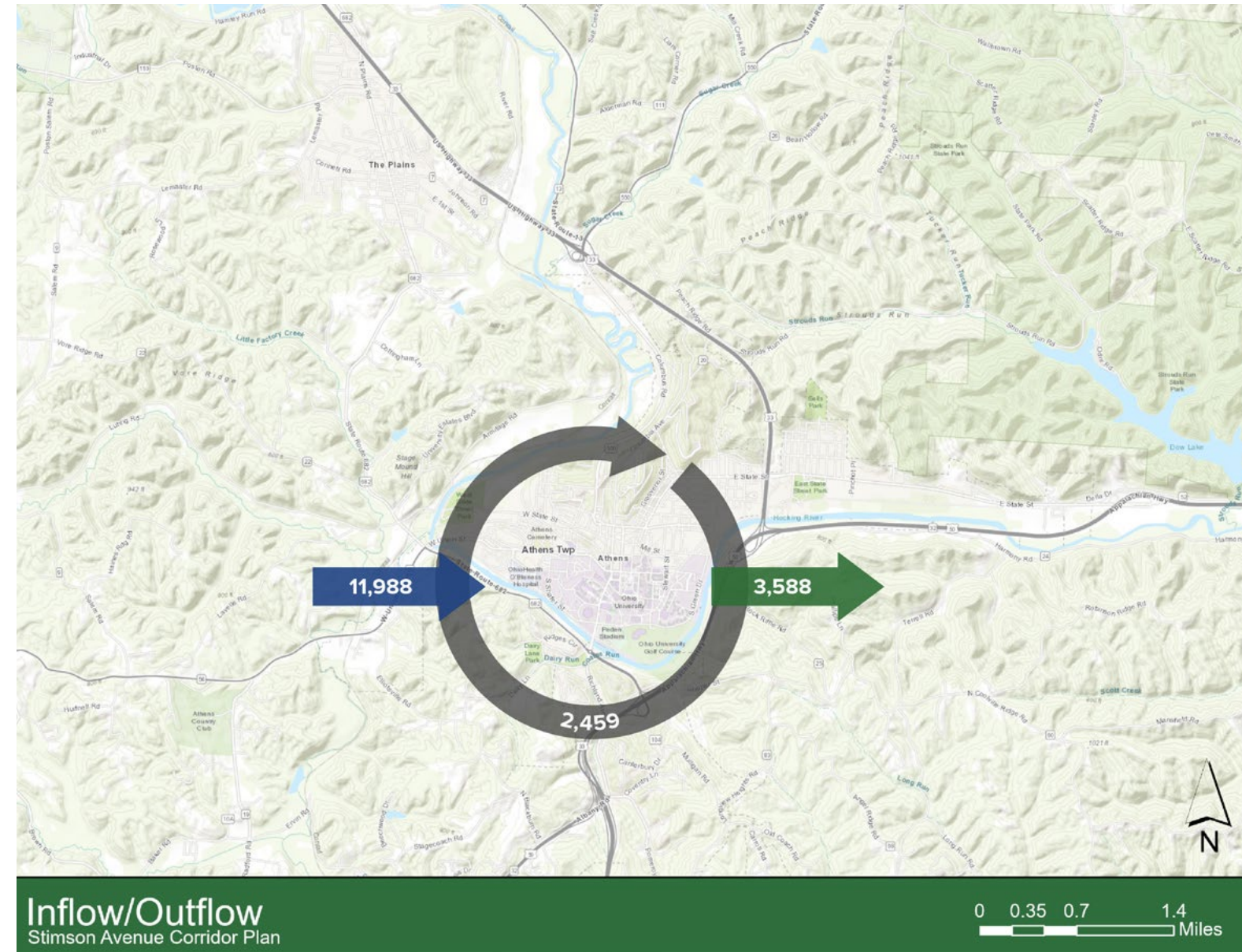


FIGURE 4, INFLOW/OUTFLOW²



COMMUTER TRENDS

In 2019, 14,447 people were employed in Athens, with the majority (11,988) commuting into the city for work. Of those who lived in Athens, 2,459 also worked in Athens, while 3,588 commuted outside of the city for work.

MARKET CONDITIONS

Market conditions in Athens were analyzed using stakeholder input, commuter data, and daytime population to determine trade areas. A retail gap analysis was then conducted to examine spending data in the trade areas.

RETAIL GAP ANALYSIS

A retail gap analysis shows how much money is spent locally compared to how much money “should” be spent based on the local population’s disposable income. A retail gap analysis helps to:

- Uncover unmet demand and possible opportunities.
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the local market area.
- Measure the difference between actual and potential retail sales.

“Leakage” and “surplus” are the two categories used in a retail gap analysis.

- Leakage in a local market means that people living in a trade area are spending money outside of that trade area. That indicates that additional disposable income could be captured in the trade area but is being lost or “leaking” to competing shopping districts.
- A surplus in a local market means more money is being spent at local businesses than the trade area’s population “should be” spending. A surplus can have multiple meanings:
 - Too many businesses exist in the trade area without enough disposable income to support them all; or
 - The trade area attracts spending from additional shoppers beyond the residents’ spending power.

² US Census Bureau: OnTheMap.

TRADE AREAS

An analysis of Athens' population trends, commuter patterns, daytime population, and public input revealed two distinct trade areas. The two trade areas identified were:

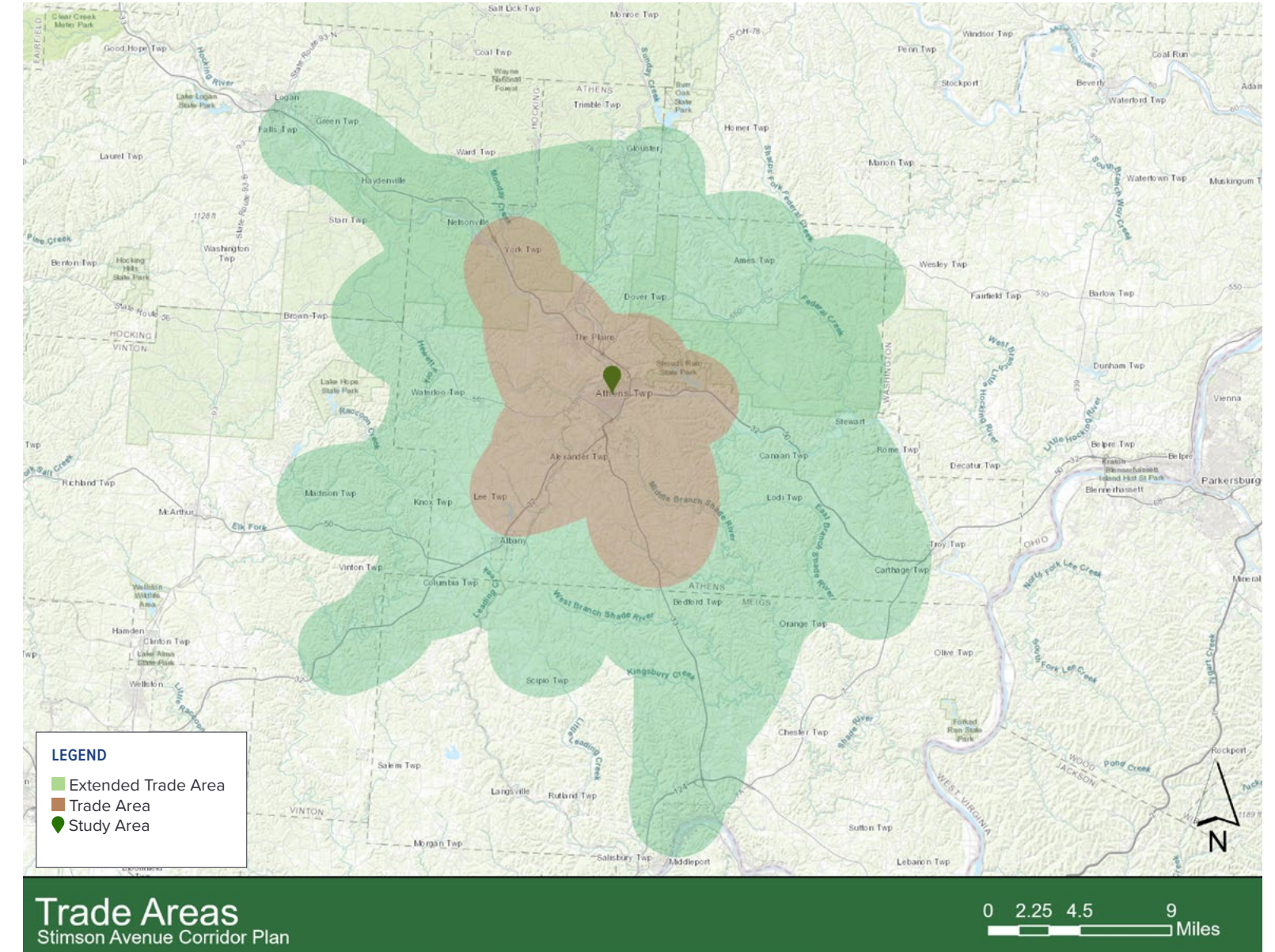
- **Primary Trade Area (15-minute drive)** – The primary trade area was defined as a 15-minute drive from State Street and Stimson Avenue intersection and captured residents and employees that work and likely shop at local businesses multiple times per week.
- **Extended Trade Area (30-minute drive)** – The extended trade area was defined as a 30-minute drive from State Street and Stimson Avenue intersection and captured potential shoppers that may frequent Athens's businesses once or twice a month.

TABLE 1 - COMPARATIVE RETAIL GAP ANALYSIS OF ATHENS AND EXTENDED TRADE AREAS³

CATEGORY <i>*Note negative numbers designate surplus.</i>	PRIMARY TRADE AREA (IN \$)	EXTENDED TRADE AREA (IN \$)
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	34,028,381	123,255,659
Furniture and home furnishings stores	4,585,147	14,315,466
Electronics and appliance stores	4,402,686	12,245,838
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	1,766,958	8,329,290
Food and beverage stores	-4,427,071	-1,758,504
Health and personal care stores	10,797,505	22,788,264
Gasoline stations	8,064,043	8,330,682
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	17,762,862	38,245,441
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instruments, and bookstores	-2,877,094	1,620,387
General merchandise stores	-3,340,595	24,488,486
Miscellaneous store retailers	-407,363	6,580,187
Food services and drinking places	-13,096,536	21,827,845
Drinking places (alcoholic beverages)	-4,994,443	-4,664,540
Restaurants and other eating places	-10,708,055	19,941,746
Total	-2,477,589	229,984,330

³ Retail Market Power Opportunity Gap by Retail Store Types 2023; Claritas.

FIGURE 5, TRADE AREAS



PRIMARY TRADE AREA

Table 1 shows the reported gap analysis for each significant retail category in the primary and extended trade areas. Surpluses are shown in red and leakages are in green. The primary trade area had a total surplus of **-\$2,477,589** for all retail trade categories, including food and drink. The largest reported surplus within the primary trade area was **-\$13,096,536** in food services and drinking places. The large surplus in food services and drinking places suggests that people are coming to Athens to visit restaurants or bars. **The primary trade area also had surpluses in the following categories:**

- Food and beverage stores (**-\$4,427,071**)
- Sporting goods, hobby, musical instruments, and bookstores (**-\$2,877,094**)
- General merchandise stores (**-\$3,340,595**)
- Miscellaneous store retailers (**-\$407,363**)
- Drinking places (**-\$4,994,443**)
- Restaurants and other eating places (**-\$10,708,055**)

The primary trade area showed leakages in the following categories:

- Motor vehicle and parts dealers (\$34,028,381)
- Furniture and home furnishings stores (\$4,585,147)
- Electronics and appliance stores (\$4,402,686)
- Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (\$1,766,958)
- Health and personal care stores (\$10,797,505)
- Gasoline stations (\$8,064,043)
- Clothing and clothing accessories stores (\$17,762,862)

People in the extended trade area were leaving to spend money in these categories outside of the community.



EXTENDED TRADE AREA

The extended trade area captured spending 30 minutes from Stimson Avenue. The total retail trade in the extended trade area yielded a leak age of **\$229,984,330**. In this case, only two surpluses were reported, **-\$1,758,504** in food and beverage stores and **-\$4,664,540** in drinking places. A closer examination revealed a surplus of **-\$12,320,570** in grocery stores and **-6,945,589** in limited-service restaurants (i.e., fast-food, fast-casual).

The largest leakage in the extended trade area was in motor vehicle and parts dealers (\$123,255,659), which suggests that people are shopping elsewhere for vehicles and automotive parts and accessories. A leakage of \$38,245,441 was also reported for clothing and clothing accessories stores, which also had leakage in the primary trade area. In both trade areas, people travel elsewhere to buy clothing, shoes, jewelry, and other accessories. Other leakages in the extended trade area included:

- Furniture and home furnishings stores (\$14,315,466)
- Electronics and appliance stores (\$12,245,838)
- Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (\$8,329,290)
- Health and personal care stores (\$8,330,682)
- Gasoline stations (\$8,330,682)
- Sporting goods, hobby, musical instruments, and bookstores (\$1,620,387)
- General merchandise stores (\$24,488,486)
- Miscellaneous store retailers (\$6,580,187)
- Food services and drinking places (\$21,827,845)

WHAT THIS ANALYSIS TELLS US

The primary and extended trade areas could support more specialty food services and sit-down restaurants, as both trade areas reported large leakages in these categories. Similarly, both trade areas reported leakages in specialty food stores and beer, wine, and liquor stores, meaning that there is an opportunity for businesses in the trade areas to catch this spending. Both trade areas also reported large leakages in clothing and clothing accessories stores, meaning that this market is an opportunity to capture spending in the area. Restaurants only showed leakage in the extended trade area and means that new restaurants must attract visitors outside the city limits to be sustainable.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Physical conditions are important now more than ever as consumers are “no longer looking just to go shopping; rather, they require a unique experience to inspire a shopping trip.”⁴ In other words, consumers need a reason to come into a store or shopping center. “Experience” does not only apply to businesses but also to the physical environment and its surroundings.

The physical conditions analysis explores the main characteristics of the built environment. Existing development, land uses, and infrastructure can be in place for long periods while the built environment changes incrementally. The character of the existing built environment and its physical conditions influence the type of development that can be expected in the future.

CHARACTER

Community character can be described as the distinct identity of a place. That identity can be described as the collective feeling or impression a place brings to visitors or citizens.⁵ Character incorporates existing land use, parking, zoning, landmarks, and the existing look and feel of the corridor.

⁴ Cushman and Wakefield: [RETAIL REINVENTED: FOOD HALLS, MILLENNIALS, AND VIRTUAL REALITY. OH MY!](#)

⁵ David Morley, AICP. Measuring Community Character. American Planning Association, 2018.

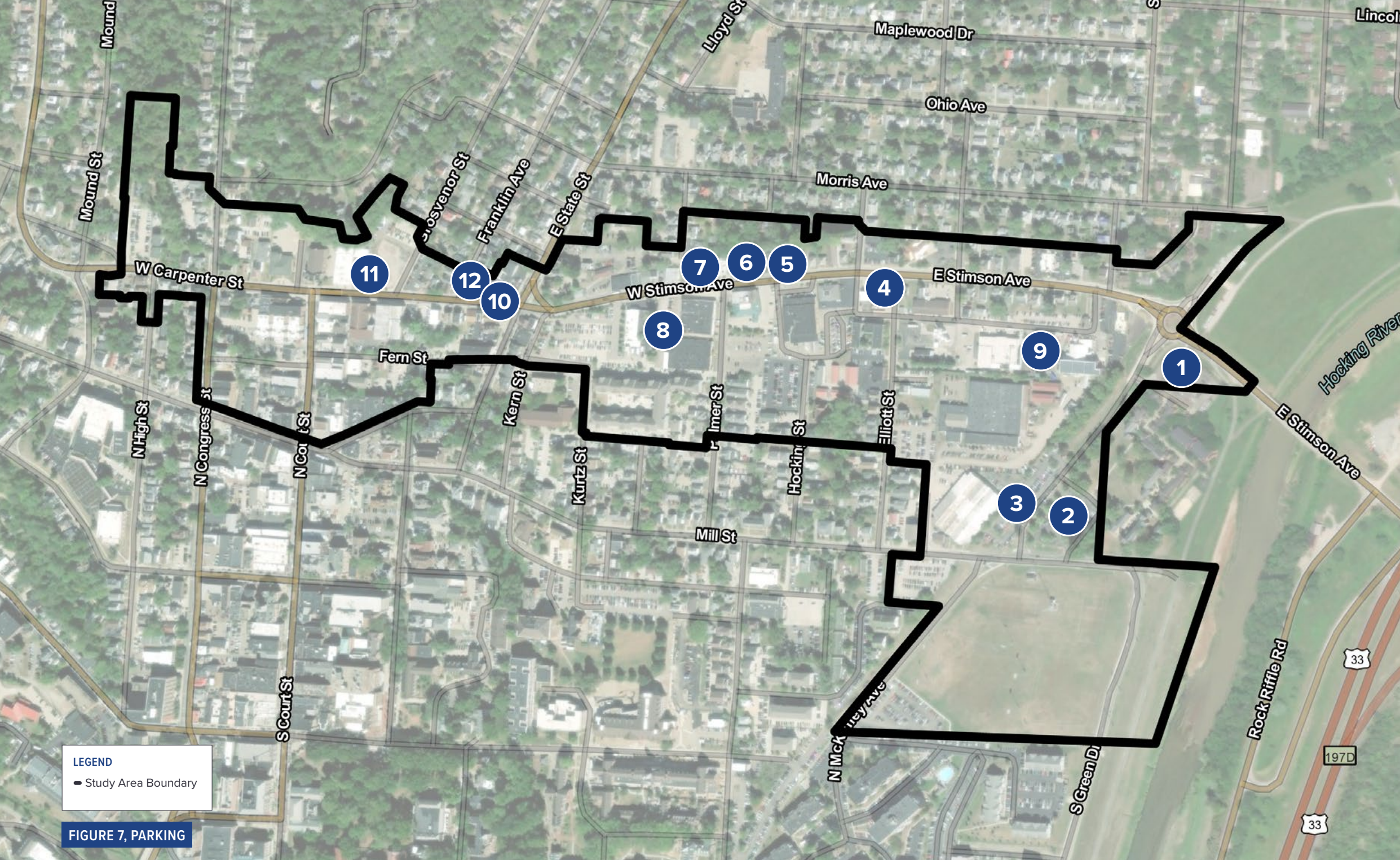




FIGURE 6, PARKING SPACES

PARKING

An inventory of off-street and on-street parking spaces was completed. The Parking Spaces Map shows the number of parking spaces; larger symbols indicate more parking spaces and vice versa. Existing parking in Stimson Avenue, including on-street parking spaces and surface lots, was approximately 2,566 spaces. Of these spaces, 2,423 were surface lot parking spaces, while the remaining 143 were on-street parking spaces. While conducting this inventory, it was noted that surface parking lots make up a considerable amount of the built environment and a key factor contributed to the corridors existing auto-centric character and may limit the desire to walk on Stimson Avenue.



The parking throughout the corridor ranged from gravel to paved to on-street spots. Examples of the parking spaces found throughout the corridor are provided on the Parking Map.



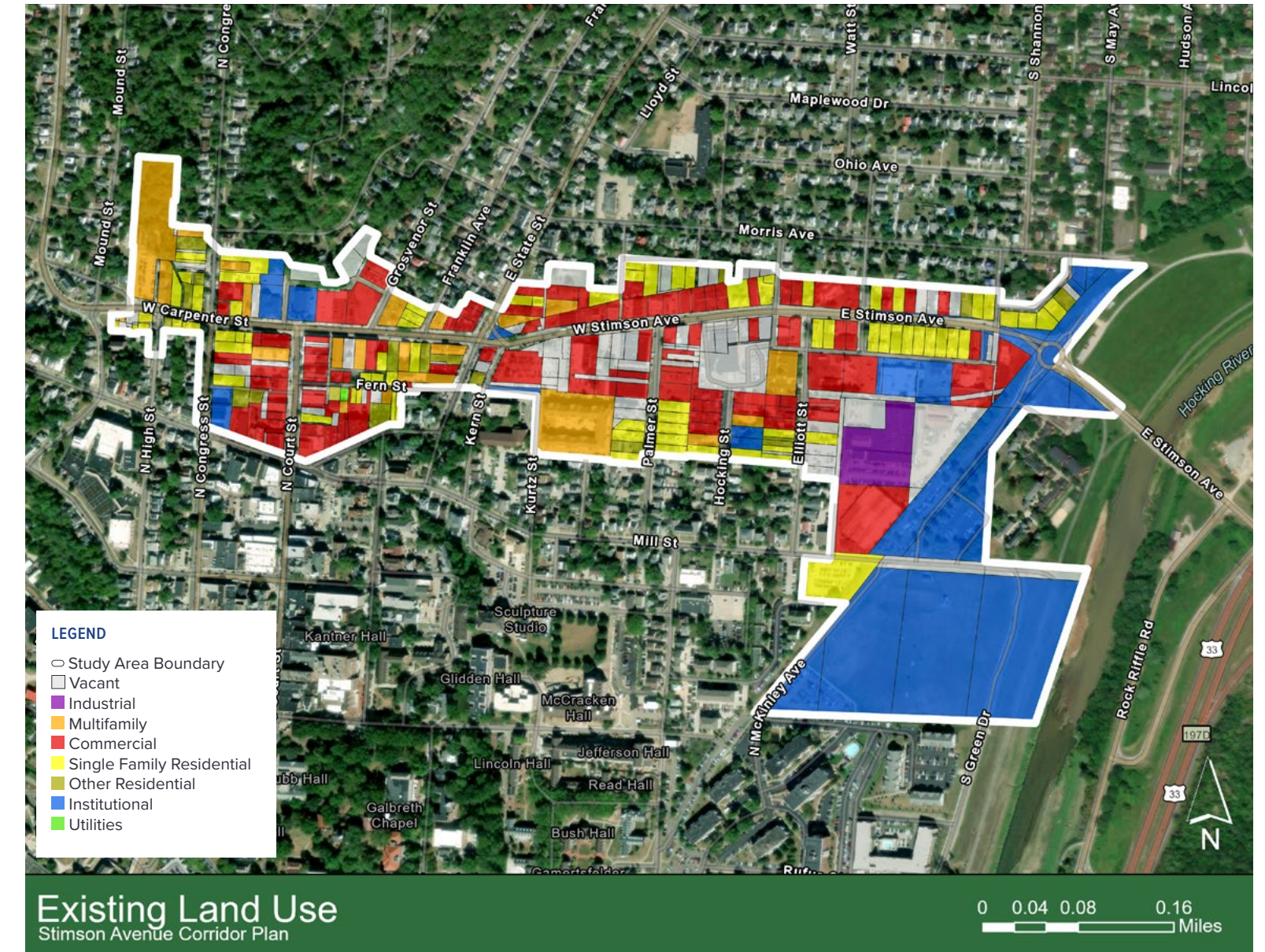
EXISTING LAND USE

Most of the corridor's study area was institutional, including parks, educational facilities, and government-owned parcels. Commercial parcels comprised 20 acres of the study area, mostly along Stimson Avenue. All residential uses made up 24 acres. One two-acre industrial parcel was also in place in the study area, mostly on the east side of the corridor.

TABLE 2 - LAND USE ACREAGES IN STIMSON AVENUE STUDY AREA

USE	STUDY AREA	
	Acres	Percent of Total Area
Other	2	2.45
Commercial	20	22.67
Industrial	2	2.72
Institutional	28	31.52
Multi-family Residential	11	12.13
Other Residential	5	6.01
Single Family Residential	8	9.41
Utilities	0.05	0.052
Vacant	12	13.04
Total	88	100

FIGURE 8, EXISTING LAND USE



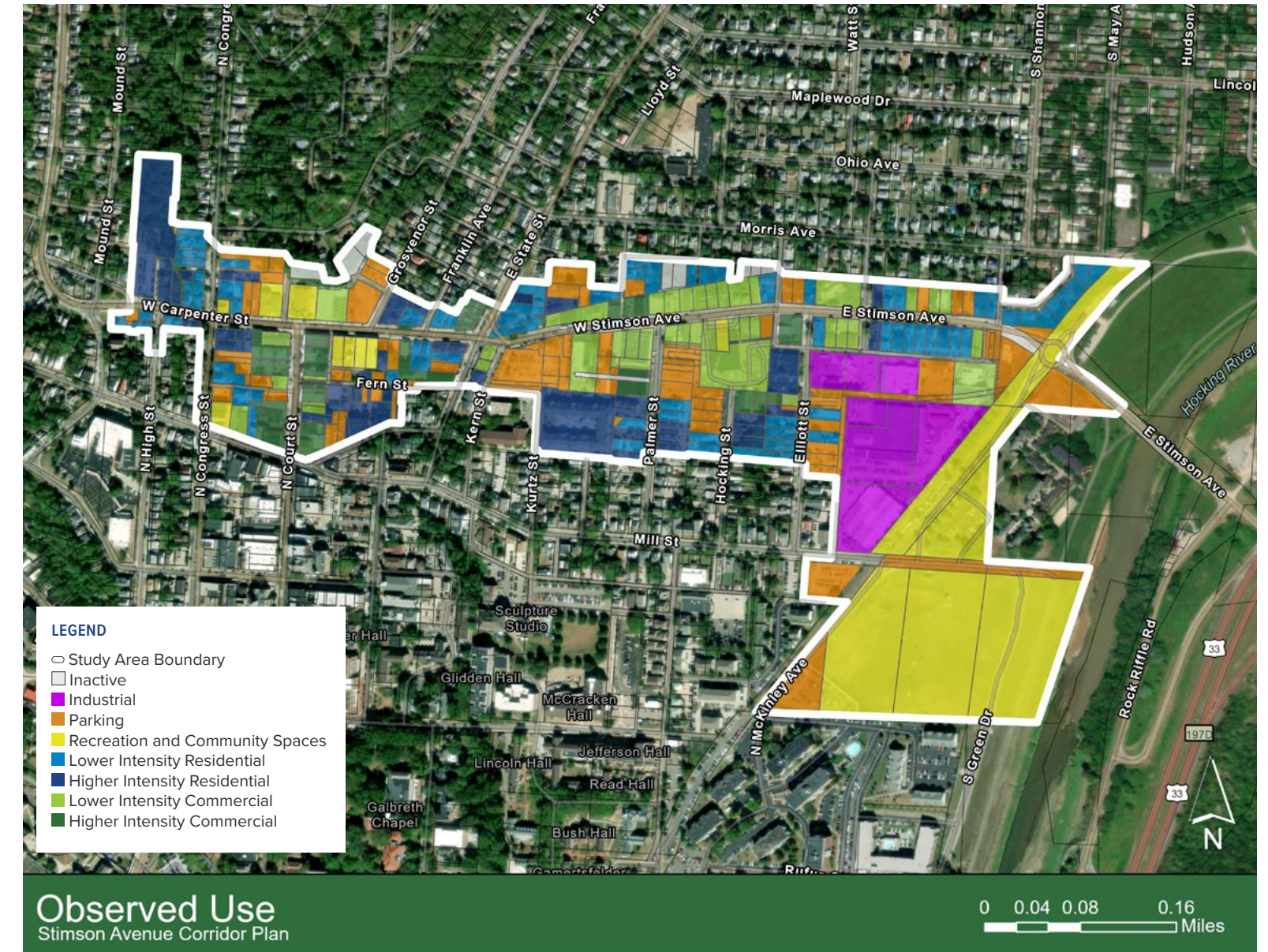
OBSERVED USES

The Observed Use Map is a more detailed collection of land uses in the corridor. Observed uses were compiled by analyzing land use codes along with an on-street visual analysis. The corridor's observed uses included the armory, bank, Carpenter Hall, community center, entertainment, flex space, gas station, greenway, hotel, industrial, limited service restaurant, Mason Lodge, mini-storage, mixed-use, Mount Zion Baptist Church, multi-unit rental, off-street parking, office, open space, personal services, post office, retail, road, SE Ohio History Museum, single-family owner-occupied homes, single-unit rentals, two-unit rentals, and vacant homes.

TABLE 3 - OBSERVED USES IN STIMSON AVENUE STUDY AREA

USE		USE	
Armory	0.52%	Multi-Unit Rental	9.75%
Bank	1.52%	Off-Street Parking	16.91%
Carpenter Hall	0.38%	Office	0.44%
Community Center	0.38%	Open Space	18.03%
Entertainment	0.38%	Personal Services	0.79%
Flex Space	2.14%	Post Office	0.22%
Gas Station	0.83%	Retail	5.35%
Greenway	7.84%	Retail/Flex Space	0.36%
Hotel	0.40%	Road	1.67%
Industrial	10.05%	SE Ohio History Museum	0.29%
Limited Service Restaurant	0.36%	Single-Family Owner-Occupied	1.16%
Mason Lodge	0.41%	Single-Unit Rental	11.55%
Mini-Storage	0.48%	Two-Unit Rental	2.81%
Mini-Storage/Single-Family Rental	0.15%	Unknown	0.18%
Mixed-Use	3.14%	Vacant	1.40%
Mount Zion Baptist Church	0.09%	Total	100.00%

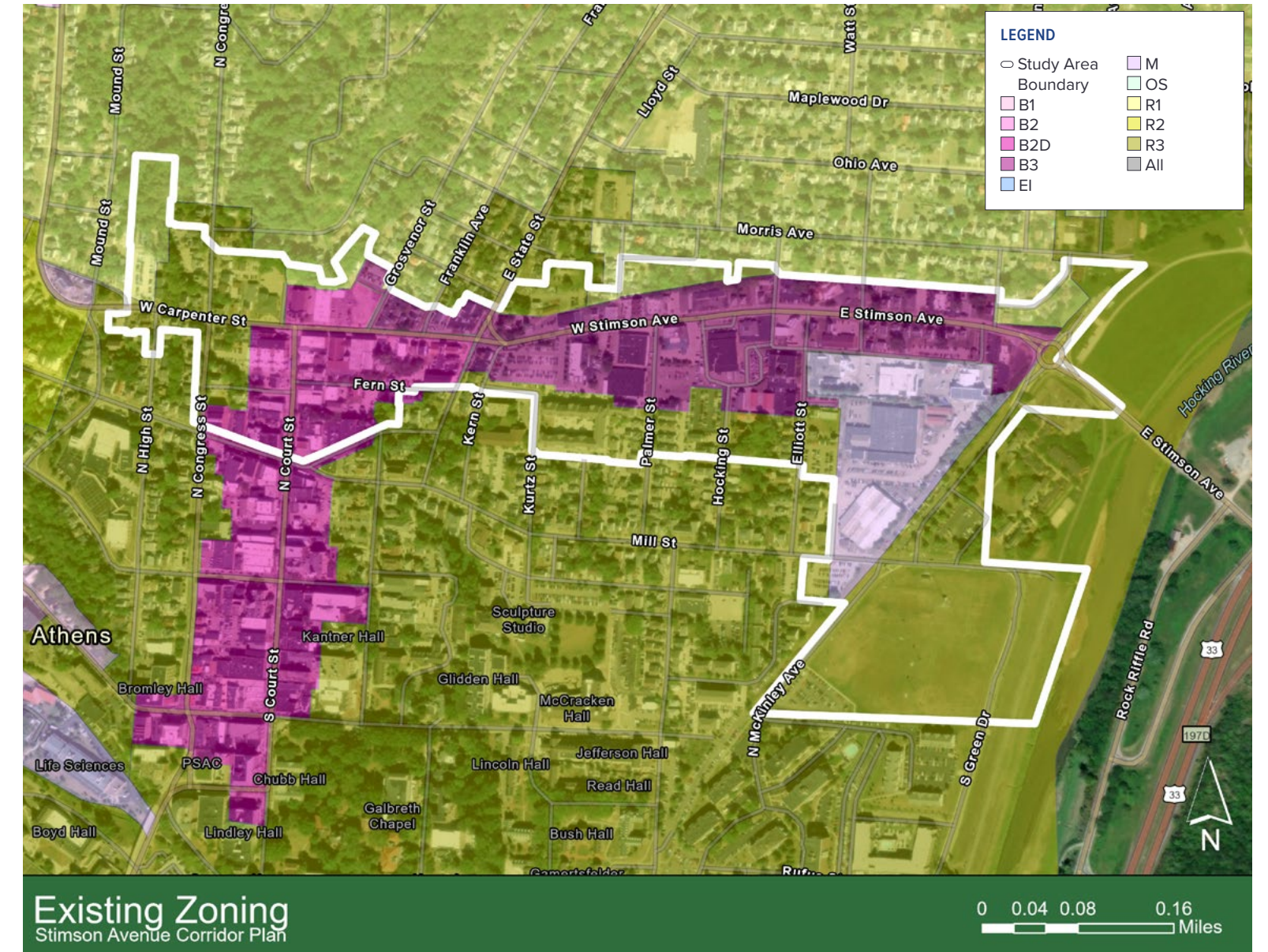
FIGURE 9, OBSERVED LAND USES



EXISTING ZONING

Zoning regulates the permitted and conditional uses, size, setbacks, and dimensions of properties. Zoning, therefore, can significantly impact the character of a street, neighborhood, or district.

FIGURE 10, EXISTING ZONING



Stimson Avenue includes a mix of commercial, residential, and industrial zoning. Most of Stimson Avenue was zoned for B-3; however, most of the study area was zoned for R-3 south of Stimson Avenue. A portion of the east end was zoned M, industrial. To the north, the area was zoned R-2, a residential zone for one and two-family homes. To the south, the area was zoned R-3, a residential zone for multi-family homes. The Downtown Business Zone (B-2D) includes the same uses as B-2 but also allows nightclubs, theaters, billiard parlors, pool halls, bowling alleys, and similar as long as they are 100 feet from any R-Zone.⁶

TABLE 4 - ZONING DISTRICTS AND CORRESPONDING ACREAGE IN STIMSON AVENUE STUDY AREA

ZONE	ACREAGE
B2D	11.5
M	10.9
B3	24.9
R3	41.6
R1	6.3

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

The residential zones in the corridor included R-1 and R-3, with R-2 to the north. R-1 was zoned for one-family residential but permitted uses also included institutional, cultural, recreational, essential services, planned unit developments (PUD), and residential healthcare facilities. The permitted accessory uses included summer houses, parking facilities, swimming pools, professional offices and home occupations, long-term rentals, short-term rentals, trailers, gardening, and domestic animals. Conditionally permitted uses included private and noncommercial recreation areas and facilities, utility stations, and short-term rentals by a nonresident owner.

The R-2 zone included the same permitted uses as R-1, including two-family dwellings. Conditionally permitted uses are educational and/or philanthropic institutions.

R-3 added multi-family dwellings, apartment hotels, lodging houses, boarding houses, and bed and breakfast establishments. Other conditionally permitted uses included clinics, clubs, funeral homes and mortuaries, convenience stores, and fraternity and sorority chapter houses.

⁶[Athens, OH: Title 23 - Zoning Code.](#)

BUSINESS ZONES

The business zones in the corridor included B-D2 Downtown Business Zone and B-3. The B-2 Business District permitted residential uses on the second story and above, automotive services and service stations, bed and breakfast establishments, hotels and motels, and any other retail business or service establishment of the same general character. The B-2D Downtown Business Zone permitted the same uses as the B-2 Business District with the addition of entertainment uses such as nightclubs, theaters, billiard parlors, pool halls, bowling alleys, and similar enterprises.

The B-3 General Business Zone included eating and drinking establishments such as drive-in and drive-through, hospitals, animal hospitals, commercial recreation, bottling works, contractors' yards, agricultural uses such as nurseries, greenhouses and general farming, sex-oriented businesses, and internet cafes. The only conditionally permitted use was trailer parks.

INDUSTRIAL ZONE

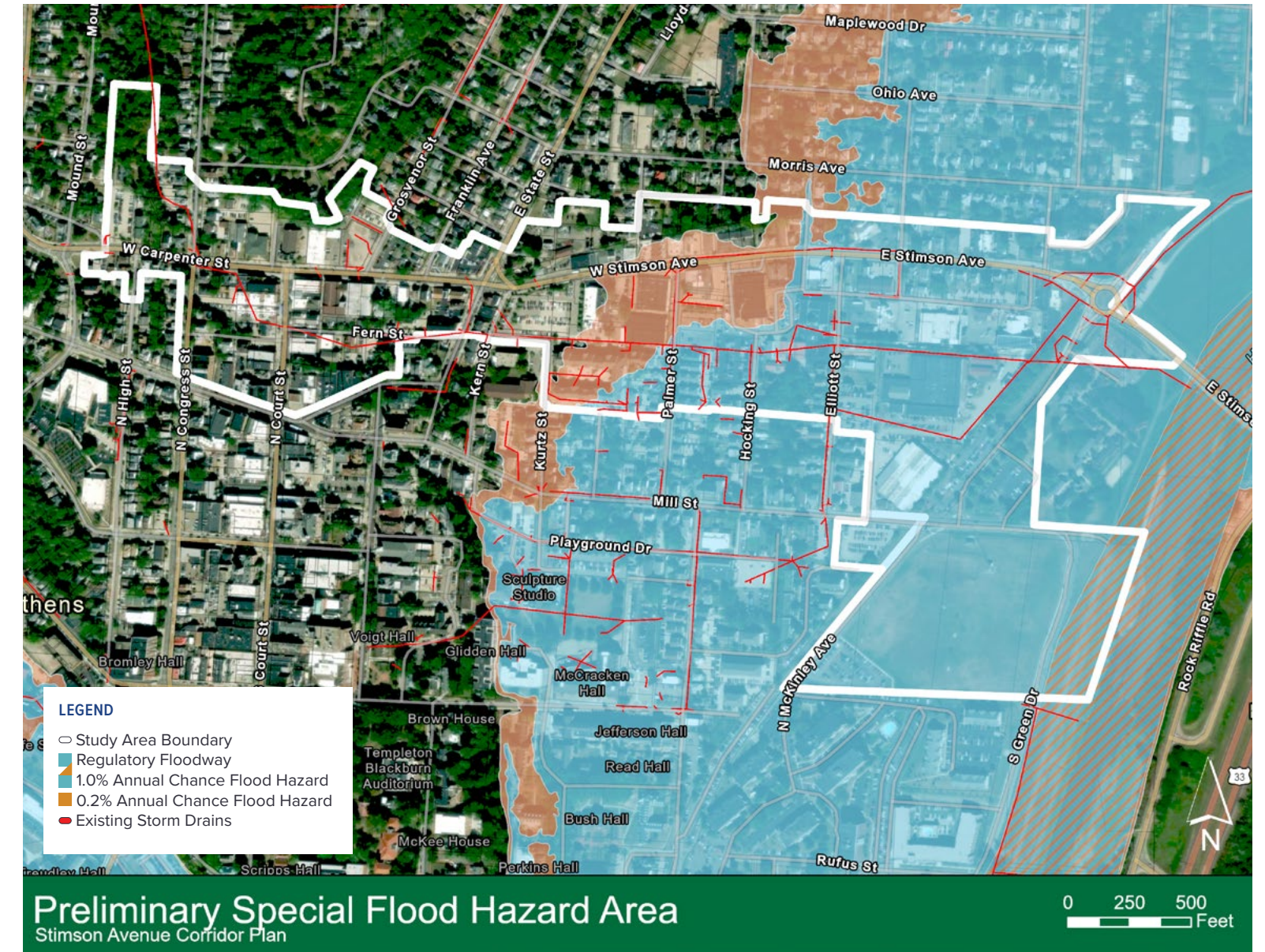
The industrial zone, labeled M, included one large area to the east corridor. Permitted uses in the industrial zone included any permitted uses in B-3 and any industrial use that follows the general conditions laid out in more detail in the zoning code. The industrial zone also prohibited the use of all private or public housing.

FLOODPLAIN

The City of Athens participates in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The eastern portion of the study area is impacted by Hocking River regulatory floodplain and floodway, known collectively as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). All development activity within the SFHA, including grading, new construction, and alterations to existing structures, will be subject to NFIP standards.

Current development activities are reviewed under the effective maps from December 18, 2009. Athens County is currently in the comment period for the November 30, 2021 map update. The preliminary SFHA identified in Figure 11 will govern future development activities upon adopting the updated maps.

FIGURE 11, PRELIMINARY SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA



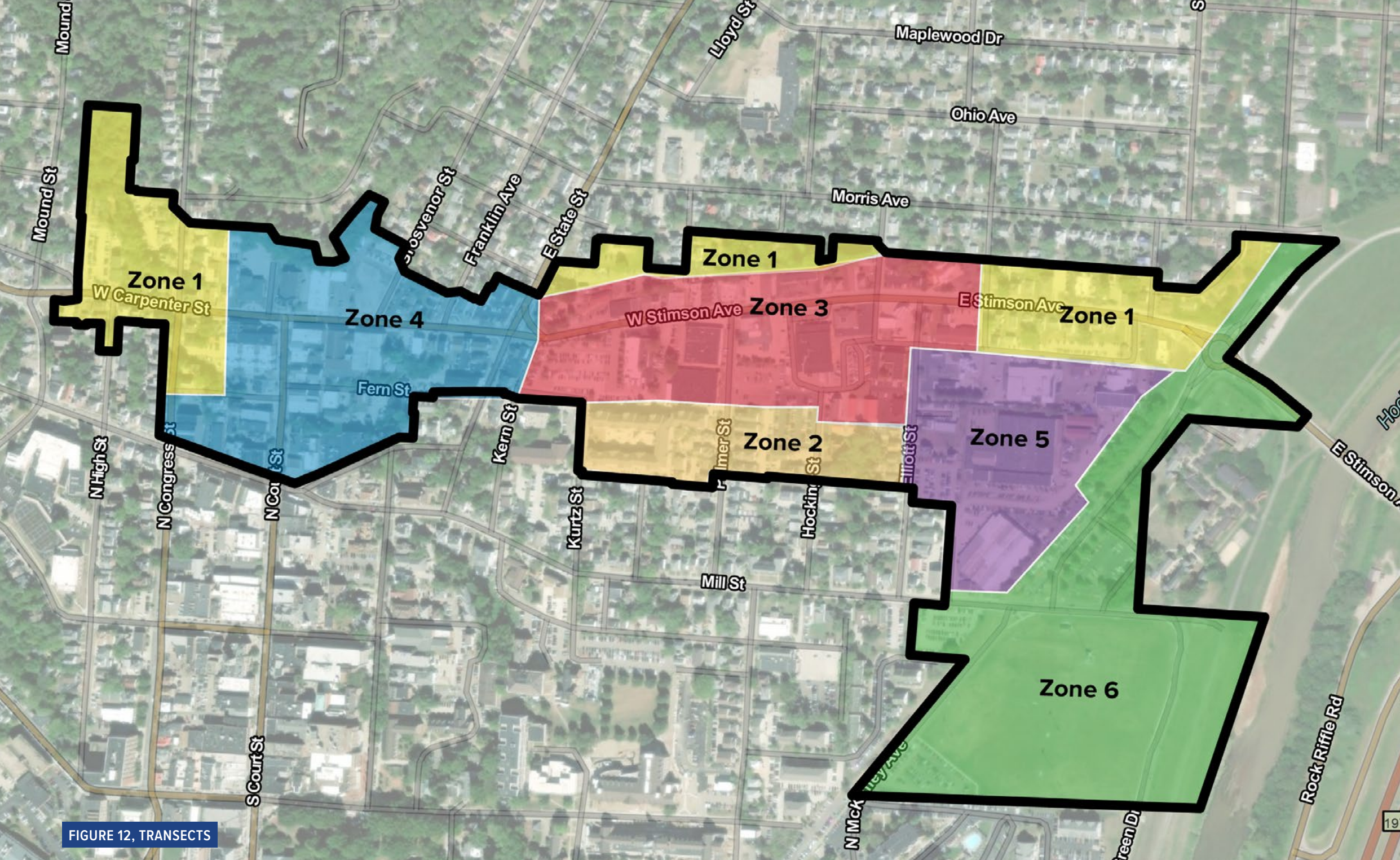


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

TRANSECTS

A transect is a “cut” through the environment that shows a range of land uses throughout a community. Transects observe land uses and design characteristic changes along a corridor. Transects can also draw attention to areas where land uses do not match the designated zoning.⁷ Transects along Stimson Avenue were examined and compiled based on observed use, zoning, and character. The project areas had six different zones, each one with a different character type.

⁷Center for Applied Transect Studies: The Transect.

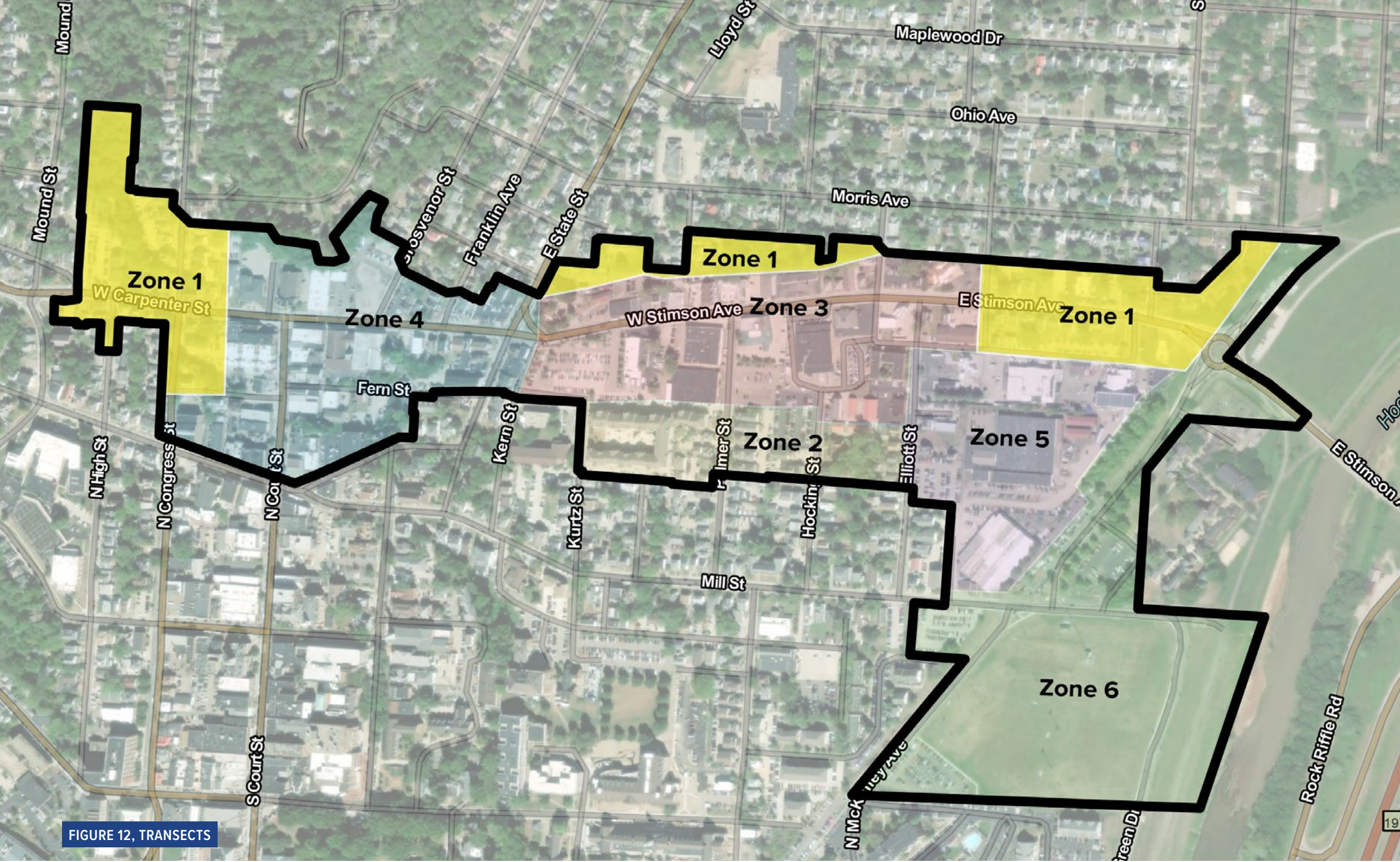


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

ZONE 1

The study boundary of the Stimson Avenue Corridor both ended with Zone 1. Zone 1 was mostly comprised of residential uses, including single-family rentals, two-family rentals, and multi-family rentals. Zone 1 also includes other services such as mixed-use, limited-service restaurants, and light retail uses.

KEY CHARACTER OBSERVATIONS

- Both Zone 1 transects were the least densely built areas, comprised mainly of single-family residential style buildings or low-density commercial with ample parking areas.
- Buildings in these areas were one to two stories in height.
- Front yard setbacks varied widely from just a few feet to over 20 feet.
- Structures in these zones were generally oriented towards the street where they were located.



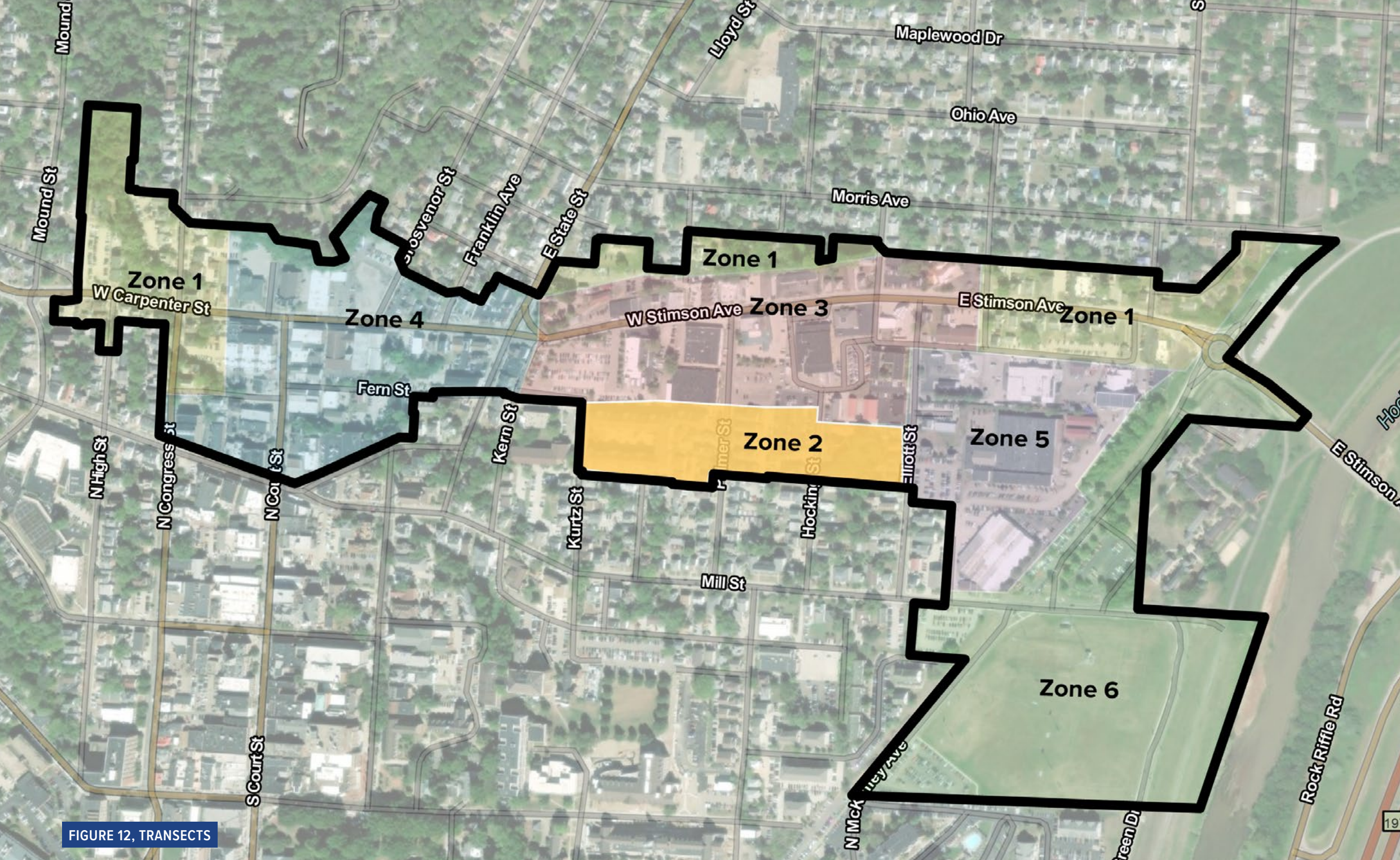


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

ZONE 2

Zone 2, while also a residential zone, contained more higher-density residential uses such as multi-unit rentals, two-unit rentals, and single-unit rentals. However, the majority of this zone was multi-unit rental.

KEY CHARACTER OBSERVATIONS

- Zone 2 had some of the more densely developed residential properties in the study area with ample parking areas.
- Buildings in this area ranged from two to four stories in height.
- Front yard setbacks varied widely from just a few feet to over 20 feet.
- Mainly the properties were densely built with buildings and accessory structures, such as off-street parking lots and garages.
- Structures in this zone were not adjacent to Stimson Avenue and did not have a high degree of physical connection to the corridor. Enhancing this connection may help provide more activity to the district.
- Some north/south streets dead-ended into buildings or gates, which further limited access to Stimson Avenue.



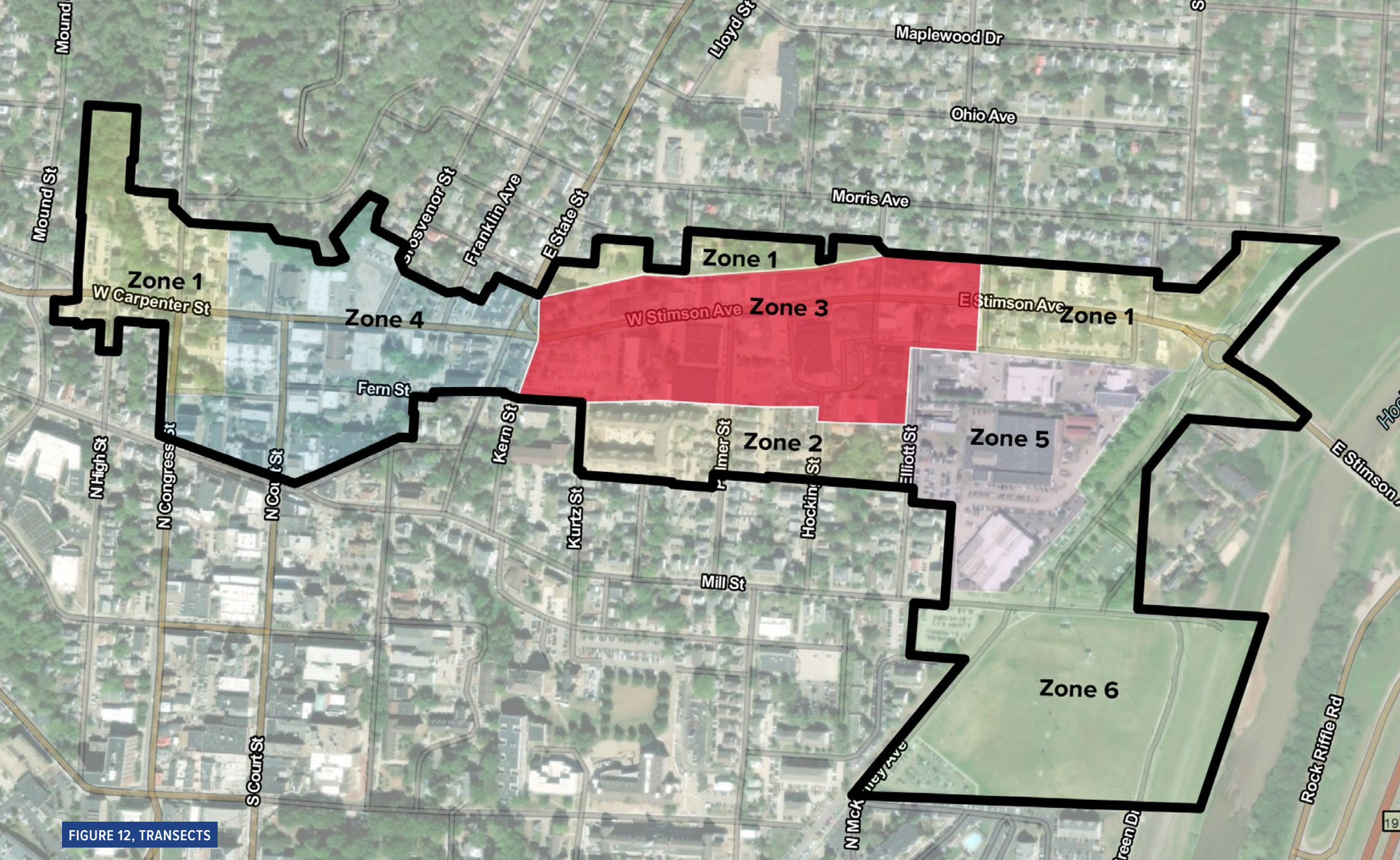


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

ZONE 3

Zone 3 was primarily a commercial zone, including multi-family rental uses. The observed uses in this zone included retail, bank, services, gas station, flex space, mixed-use, office, and surface lot parking. Some residential uses also existed in Zone 3; however, they were higher density than in Zone 1. Residential uses such as multi-unit rentals, two-unit rentals, and single-unit rentals.

KEY CHARACTER OBSERVATIONS

- Zone 3 had the widest array of uses, from single-use retail and office to mixed-used commercial and residential buildings.
- Buildings in this zone ranged from one to three stories in height.
- Front yard setbacks varied widely from zero feet to over 20 feet.
- The properties were densely built with buildings and accessory structures.
- Many of the structures in this zone looked crowded on their lots due to the topography of the corridor.
- Many parcels devoted much of their area to maximizing building space on these lots, often leading to camped off-street parking areas with minimal landscaping.
- Overall this zone had a very “tight” feeling, which may reduce the walkability of the corridor.



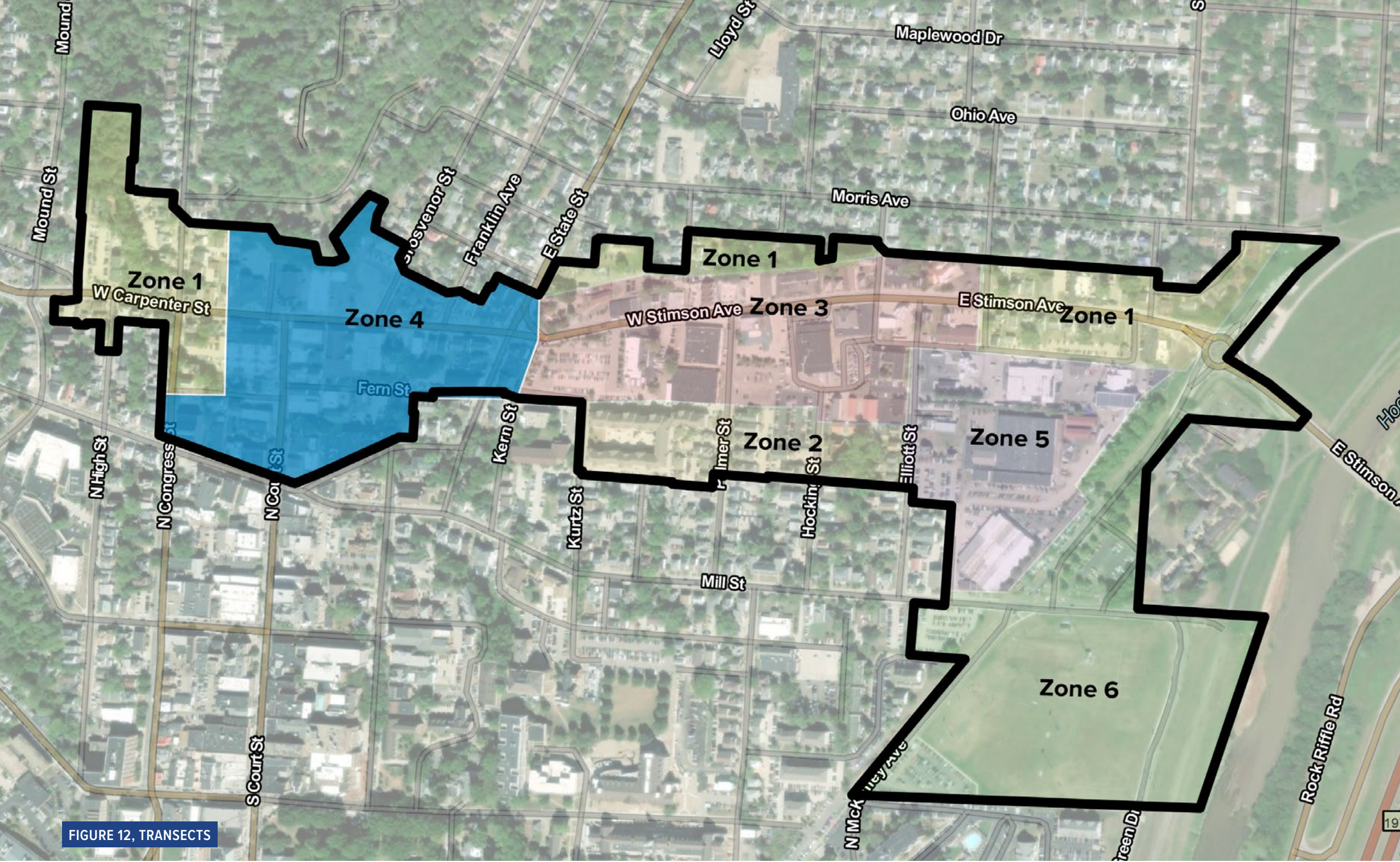


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

ZONE 4

Zone 4 was characterized by its mixed-use environment, streetscaping, and urban design. One of the key design features of this transect was the brick portion of the road, which also continues down Court Street. The uses in Zone 4 included mixed-use, retail, hotel, single-unit rental, flex space, multi-unit rental, and two-unit rental. Some notable uses in that zone included the Armory, Carpenter Hall, the Mason Lodge, Southeast Ohio History Center, and Mount Zion Baptist Church. Many off-street and on-street parking spaces also existed in this zone, some of which were adjacent to the street, eliminating valuable street frontage from being used for other purposes such as bars, restaurants, or parks.

KEY CHARACTER OBSERVATIONS

- Structures varied from single-use stores and residential units to mixed-use.
- Buildings in these areas ranged from one to three stories in height.
- Front yard setbacks varied but were primarily small at zero to five feet.
- The properties were densely built, with buildings occupying all or most of the property. Off-street parking lots were adjacent but mainly constructed on nearby or abutting properties.
- Many of the structures in this zone looked crowded on their lots due to the topography of the corridor.
- Many parcels devoted much of their area to maximizing building space on these lots. Many had historic architecture, while others were more recently constructed.
- Overall this zone had a more urban character which lent itself to more walking and pedestrian activity.



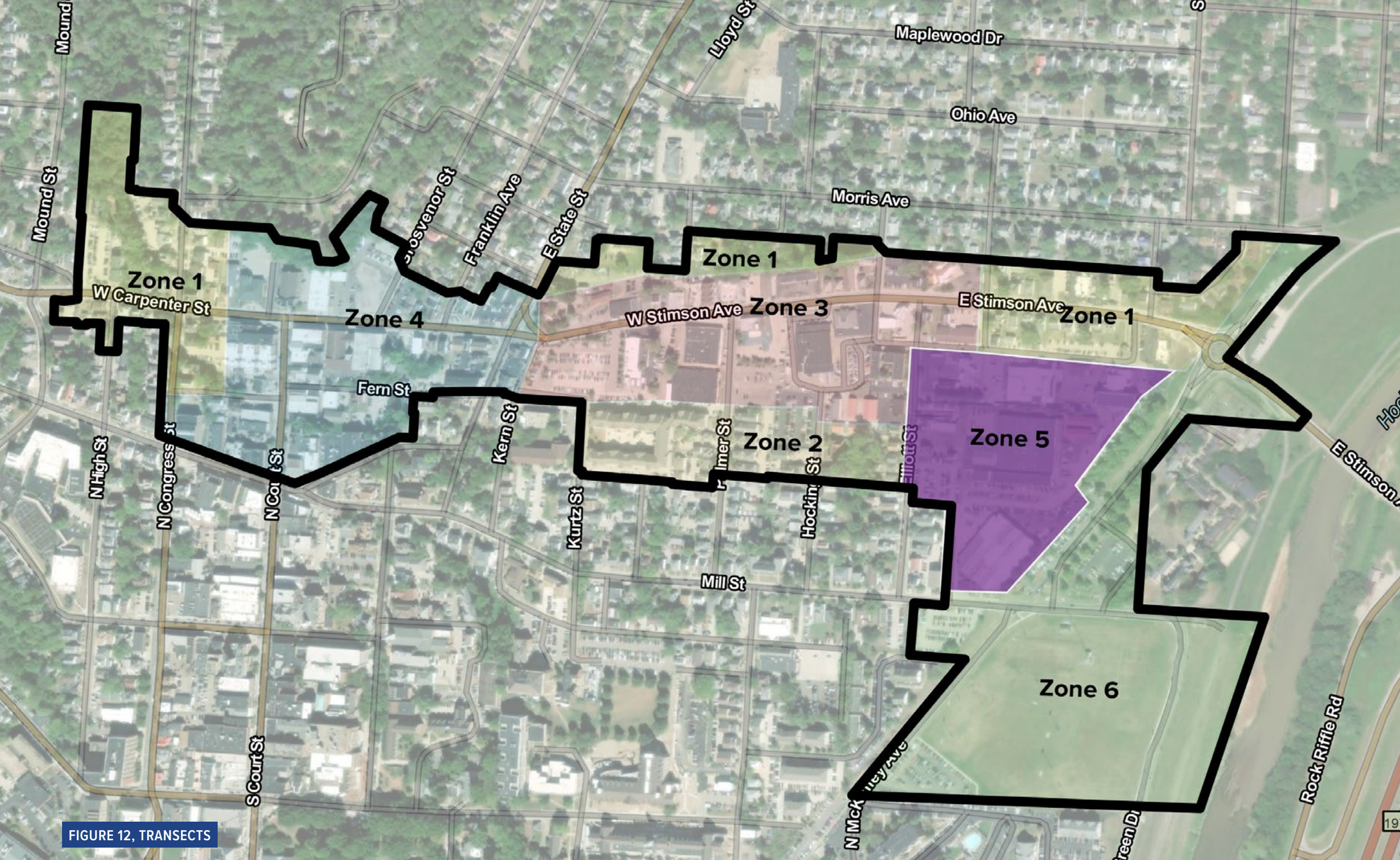


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

ZONE 5

Zone 5 contained industrial, office, and flex space uses and off-street parking lots. The character of this zone consisted of large buildings or warehouses with large surface parking lots.

KEY CHARACTER OBSERVATIONS

- Structures mostly contained one single user.
- The majority of buildings in this area were one story tall.
- Front yard setbacks varied but were primarily small at zero to five feet.
- The properties had low densities, with buildings occupying approximately 50 percent of the lots, and the rest was devoted to off-street parking.
- Overall this zone had a very suburban and auto-centric character with limited attention paid to pedestrians.



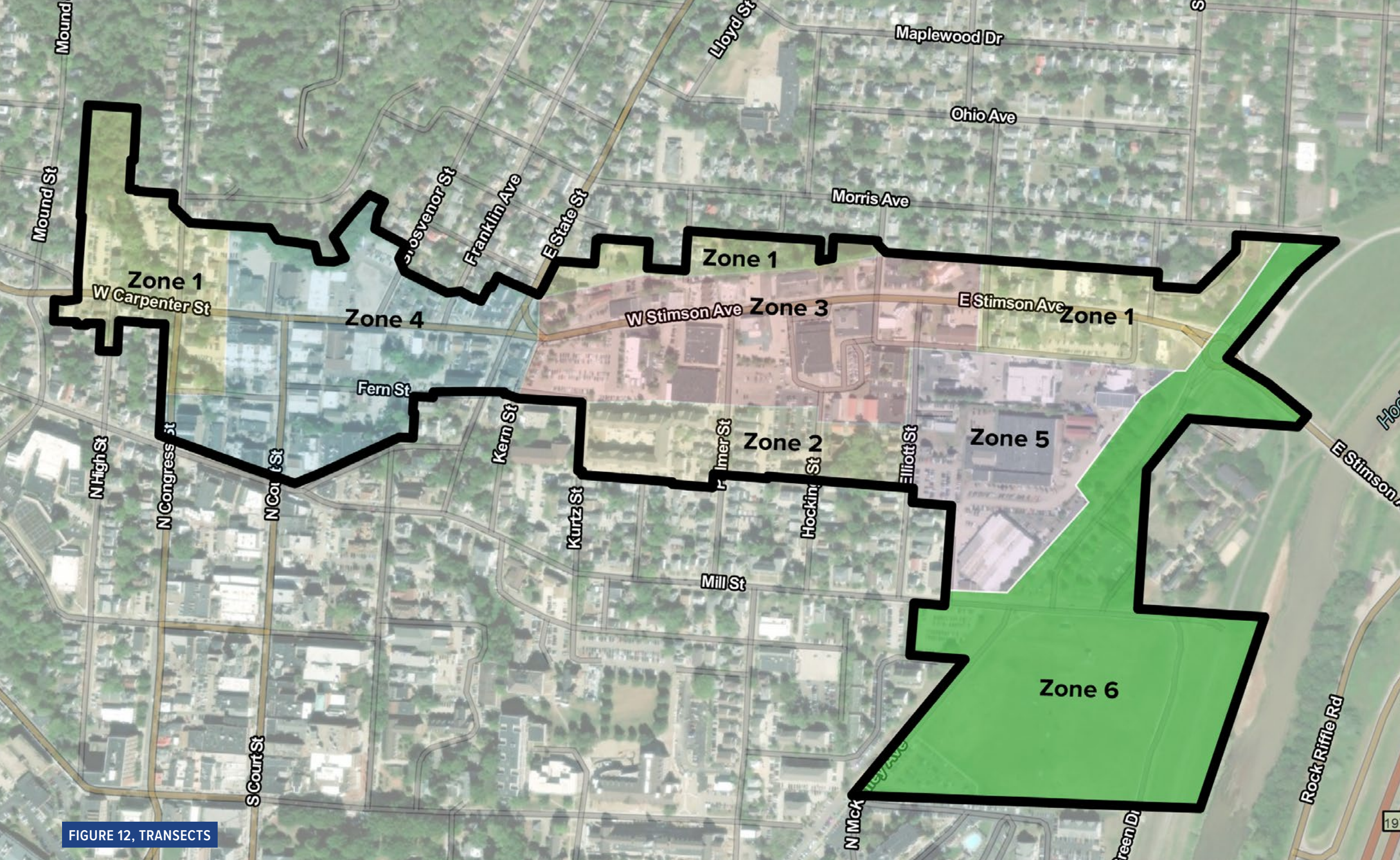


FIGURE 12, TRANSECTS

ZONE 6

Zone 6 was primarily characterized by open space and included some areas of Ohio University. Several large off-street parking lots also existed in this zone. The Hockhocking Adena Bikeway traveled the perimeter of Zone 6, providing pedestrian and bicycle access from Stimson Avenue to Ohio University.

KEY CHARACTER OBSERVATIONS

- No buildings were on these areas in the study boundary, and these parcels consisted of walking trails, sidewalks, and grass areas/landscaping only.
- Overall these areas had a pleasant, walkable character and linked Stimson to Ohio University and the river.



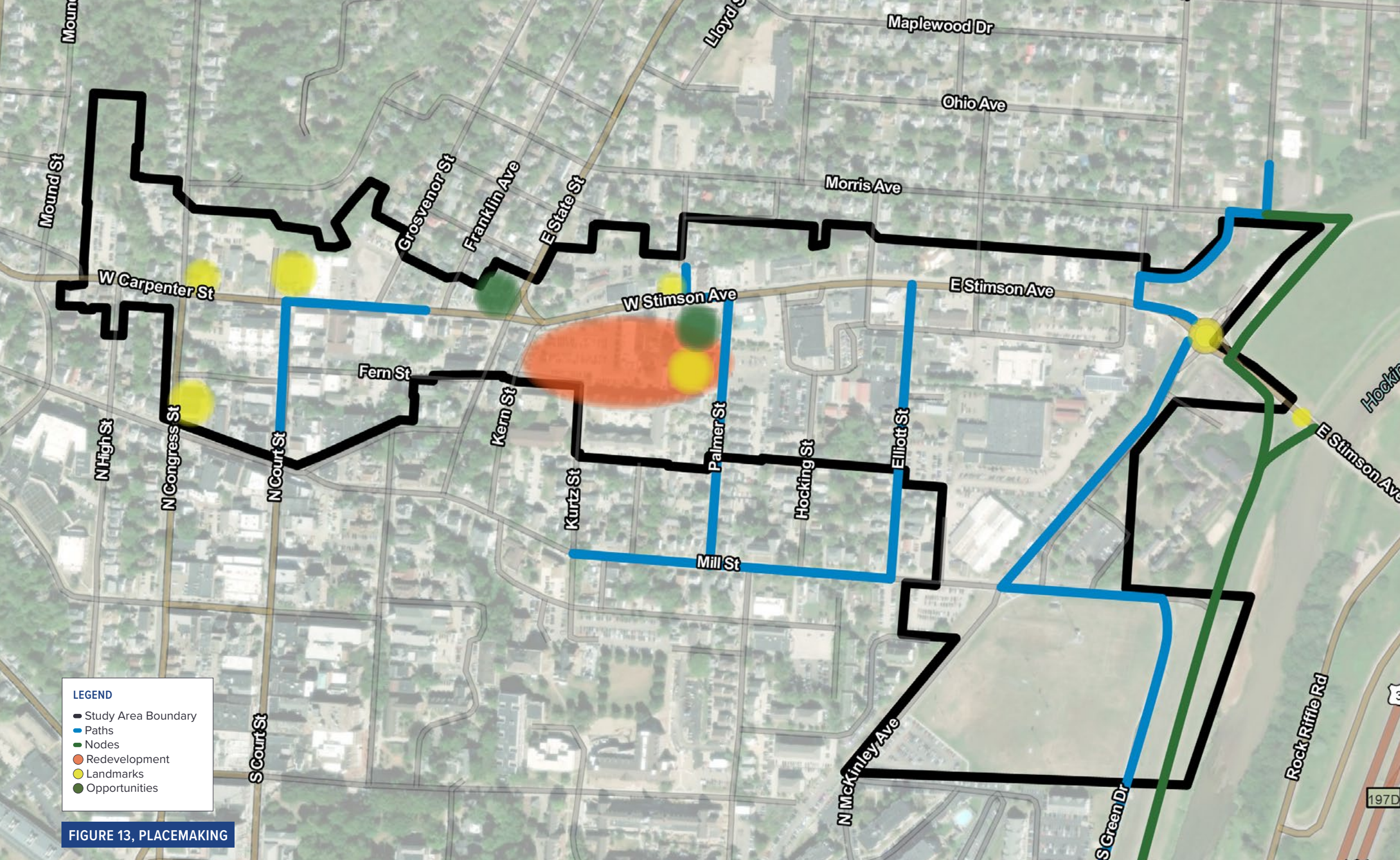


FIGURE 13, PLACEMAKING

URBAN DESIGN

Urban design connects people, places, and the natural and built environment. The fundamental principles of urban design focus on place-making (i.e., creating a “sense of place” or identity), environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic viability. These factors come together to create a site with distinct beauty and uniqueness. Good urban design can be achieved by creating recognizable neighborhoods with unique identities, designing safe and engaging spaces and buildings, and giving a recognizable “look” to the environment. Some of the commonly implemented elements of placemaking and urban design include lively commercial spaces, mixed-use development (with an emphasis on ground floor retail), human-scale design, safe and attractive public areas, branding, and beautifying aspects of the public realm such as streets, sidewalks, and open spaces.⁸

During the first advisory team meeting, members were tasked with identifying similar qualities in the project area. The Placemaking Map identifies landmarks (orange), opportunities (pink), paths (blue), and trails (green).

⁸The Center for Excellence: Urban Design.

OPPORTUNITIES

Twelve acres of vacant land exist in the study area. Several vacant parcels are located on the south side of Stimson Avenue between Kern Street and Elliot Street. Open space consists of the intramural field, greenway, and off-street parking lots throughout the corridor. Areas of open space or vacancies provide opportunities for development or redevelopment in the corridor.

When participating in the mental mapping exercise, the advisory team also pointed out an area for redevelopment, circled in black. Many development opportunities also exist in the vacant or surface parking lots along Stimson Avenue, such as the lot at Stimson Avenue and State Street, which is included in the black circle. The advisory team also labeled the pink areas “opportunities” for expanded development or redevelopment projects.

FIGURE 14, DEVELOPED LAND



CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity includes all forms of transportation that move a person from one space to another. The transportation component of the existing conditions report analyzed connections throughout the corridor for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, public transit, and other forms of travel.

ROADS

The transportation analysis was separated into motorized transportation and non-motorized transportation. Public transit is examined later in this document, in the section about roads, along with issues of regional access.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

Roadway classifications define roads as interstates, freeways, principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local roadways. Arterial roadways cater to a large traffic volume and serve cross-community travel. Collectors distribute high traffic volumes from arterial roadways to local streets. Local streets are intended for property access.

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) classified Stimson Avenue as a principal arterial. Along the Stimson Avenue Corridor, State Street, a principal arterial to the north and a major collector to the south, intersects with Stimson Avenue. The study boundary ends when Stimson Avenue becomes N Lancaster Street but remains a principal arterial. Stimson Avenue intersects with several other principal arterials along the corridor, which included N Congress Street and N Court Street. N McKinley Avenue travels southwest at the roundabout and was classified as a major collector. Mill Street loosely binds the study area boundary to the south, which was classified as a major collector. Stimson Avenue connects to US-50 on the other side of the Hocking River at the US-50 US-30 interchange. US-50 and US-30 provide regional access to the broader southeast Ohio area and connect to larger cities such as Columbus.

FIGURE 15, ROAD CLASSIFICATION



TRAFFIC COUNTS

Traffic volumes are measured by annual average daily traffic counts (AADT), which ODOT calculated. AADT calculates the annual volume of vehicle traffic on a highway or road by 365 days. The AADT is a straightforward yet helpful indicator of how busy a route is. AADT counts are now provided by the side of the road, day of the week, and hour of the day, thanks to more recent developments from GPS traffic data suppliers.

Four traffic count stations were located on Stimson Avenue and reported AADTs ranging from 4,525 on the west end of the study boundary to 5,460 on the corridor’s east end. A separate traffic count station between the intersections of N. Congress Street and N. Court Street on Stimson Avenue reported an AADT of 6,584, the highest traffic count along the corridor. Two traffic count stations exist between the intersections of E. State Street

PUBLIC TRANSIT

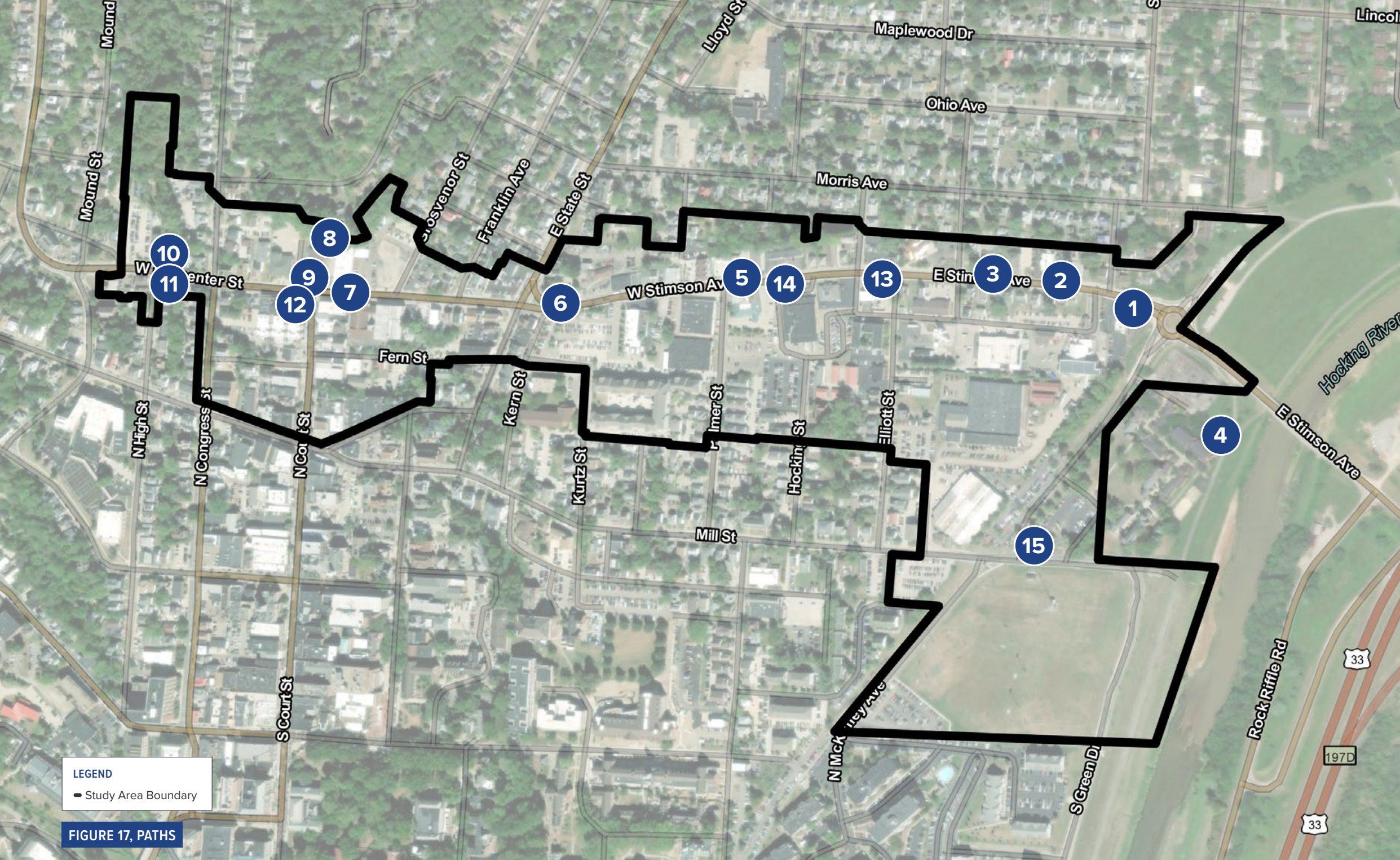
Athens County is serviced by Athens Public Transit, a program run by Hocking Athens Perry Community Action (HAPCAP).⁹ Seven lines are available, with several traveling outside the City of Athens to other county areas such as Nelsonville, Albany, Chauncey, and The Plains. All the bus routes have stops throughout Ohio University. Several bus lines have stops along Stimson Avenue, allowing easy access to the corridor and its surroundings. Eight bus stops existed along Stimson Avenue, with four additional stops within the study area boundary along N. Congress Street, N. Court Street, and E. State Street.¹⁰

⁹Athens Public Transit: About Us.

¹⁰Athens Public Transit: DoubleMap.

FIGURE 16, TRAFFIC COUNTS





PATHS

SIDEWALKS

The sidewalks along the corridor ranged in width and condition depending on location. The figures provided show the differences between sidewalks in the west segment of the corridor versus the east segment. Sidewalks were wider, in better condition, and had more street amenities like lighting and benches along the roadway segments with brick (nos. 7, 9, and 12). Sidewalks going east from the E. State Street intersection to the roundabout had less width and left very little space between the roadway and pedestrians. However, sidewalks and pedestrian crossings throughout the corridor and surrounding streets make it a very walkable area. Stimson Avenue received a walk score of 85 out of 100. Most of Ohio University’s campus can be accessed within a 20-minute walk.¹¹



Sidewalks and pedestrian crossings on the roundabout at the east end of Stimson Avenue. The sidewalk also connects to the nearby trail (no. 4).



Sidewalks are in good condition along the eastern segment of mostly residential housing. However, no buffer is provided between the sidewalk and the street. A crosswalk with a pedestrian island allows for safe crossings, as seen in the image above.

¹¹Walk Score: West Stimson Avenue.



Another view of the sidewalks heading towards the roundabout. Streetlights assist with lighting the area and add visual interest to the street design.



Hocking Adena Bikeway intersects Stimson Avenue just before the bridge over the Hocking River. The Bikeway travels from Nelsonville, through Chauncey, around Athens, and continues east with spurs throughout. It also connects to Wayne National Forest and Stroud's Run State Park, along with many spurs throughout the trail that lead to more local paths or attractions.¹²

No dedicated bike lanes existed on the corridor. However, the Hocking Adena Bikeway provides cyclists with many safe connections throughout the city and the county. Stimson Avenue had a bike score of 94 out of 100.¹³



A "pocket" park is between the Family Dollar and Armory Building. The park has urban design features such as a mural on the side of the Family Dollar, hanging lights, seating, planting, and a path.



On the street next to the Armory building, the sidewalks narrow slightly. Amenities such as lighting and decorative poles exist throughout this segment. Still, as shown in the picture above, they are sometimes placed in a way that narrows the sidewalk further and can limit accessibility.



Multiple curb cuts intersect sidewalks along this area of Stimson Avenue, which could cause dangers for pedestrians. The sidewalks in this area also appear slightly wider than in the previous images.



Due to the area's topography, many retaining walls like this exist along the corridor. Because of this, sidewalks become narrow and provide no buffer from the street. State Street and Stimson Avenue intersection has pedestrian crossing on all sides, with pedestrian islands on the north side. Although the retaining walls limit the width of the sidewalks, the murals painted on the sides help create a "sense of place" and an interesting streetscape.



Sidewalks near the Family Dollar store have some cracks in the pavement but are overall in relatively good shape. Streetscaping features such as trees and benches provide amenities for pedestrians.



Another example of narrow sidewalks due to retaining walls exists here. Unlike figure 6, this retaining wall lacks any mural or color to add to the streetscape. The conditions surrounding this narrow sidewalk make it seem uninviting to pedestrians.



Sidewalks here are very narrow and do not separate pedestrians from the street well.

¹²AthensCyclePath.com.

¹³Walk Score: West Stimson Avenue.



Looking south from the intersection of Court Street and Stimson Avenue shows a wide sidewalk ornamented with street trees, banners, street lights, and other decorative features. A sidewalk of this width encourages pedestrian activity, creating an attractive and inviting street life. Enough space exists on this sidewalk to facilitate high pedestrian traffic.



Traveling east at the Stimson Avenue and Elliot Street intersection, the sidewalks are new and in good shape. Pedestrian crossings exist along with decorative street lights.



Here the sidewalk provides enough width for pedestrians, and there are even rain gardens to buffer the street from the sidewalk.



The Hocking Adena Bikeway travels adjacent to an intramural field at Ohio University. The bikeway provides travel for pedestrians and cyclists.

PROPERTY VALUE ANALYSIS

To encourage development within a specific neighborhood, incentives are sometimes needed to motivate activity. Some standard development incentive methods in Ohio are tied to property taxes, such as tax abatements, Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA), and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts.

Therefore, when examining potential economic incentives, understanding the area's value and tax generation helps establish a baseline for future incentive discussions. The Stimson Avenue project boundary was comprised of 422 properties. As detailed in previous sections of this study, the uses and development patterns of each vary from vacant land and off-street parking lots to industrial facilities. That variety also means that current revenues generated from property taxes will differ significantly per property. Therefore, to better understand the long-term economic benefits of encouraging development, this study first examines the current assessed values of all properties in the boundary.

BASE ASSESSED AND APPRAISED VALUES

The combined parcels within the study area had a 2022 appraised value of \$110,506,750. The assessed value for these parcels was \$38,677,362. This value was determined using the Athens County Auditors Office calculation of 35 percent of the 2022 appraised value.

Knowing the total assessed and appraised values generates a value that helps determine an initial or base year value to begin the evaluation process. However, this figure does not entirely explain how property tax revenues are generated within the study boundary for the Stimson Avenue Corridor.

TABLE 5 - 2022 ASSESSED AND APPRAISED VALUES

Total 2022 Assessed Value	Total 2022 Appraised Value
\$38,677,362.50	\$110,506,750.00

APPRAISED VALUE GROWTH

The first general step towards evaluating the property tax growth is determining whether the subject area was increasing or decreasing in value. A positive change in the assessed/appraised values shows economic viability in the study area and helps prove that new development activity may be supported through increased revenue. Between 2019 and 2022, both amounts increased. The assessed value increased by \$5,488,266.00, and the appraised value increased by \$15,680,760.00, as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6 - 2019 TO 2022 CHANGES IN ASSESSED AND APPRAISED VALUES

2019 Assessed Value	Total 2022 Assessed Value	Change in Assessed Value 2019- to 2022	2019 Appraised Value	Total 2022 Appraised Value	Change in Assessed Value 2019 - 2022
\$33,355,609.00	\$39,112,033.00	\$5,756,423.50	\$95,301,740.00	\$110,941,420.00	\$15,639,680.00

EXEMPT PROPERTIES

Some of the assessed and appraised values above are attributed to exempt properties. These properties were either owned by the City, Athens County, Ohio University, or the federal government (post office). 46 of the 422 parcels in the study boundary were listed as exempt, reducing the total assessed and appraised values by \$11,866,593 and \$28,460,070. That resulted in a decrease in assessed and appraised values of \$26,810,770 and \$82,046,680, respectively.

TABLE 7 - EXEMPT PARCEL DEDUCTIONS TO ASSESSED AND APPRAISED VALUES

	Exempt Parcel Assessed Value	Exempt Parcel Appraised Value
Total Exempt Values	\$11,866,593	\$28,460,070
Revised Total Values	\$26,810,770	\$82,046,680

FIGURE 18, EXEMPT PROPERTIES



ASSESSED AND APPRAISED VALUES BY LAND USE

Different land use classes generate different amounts of property tax revenue (exempt properties were removed from the analysis below). Two factors can impact the amount of value attributed to each property type.

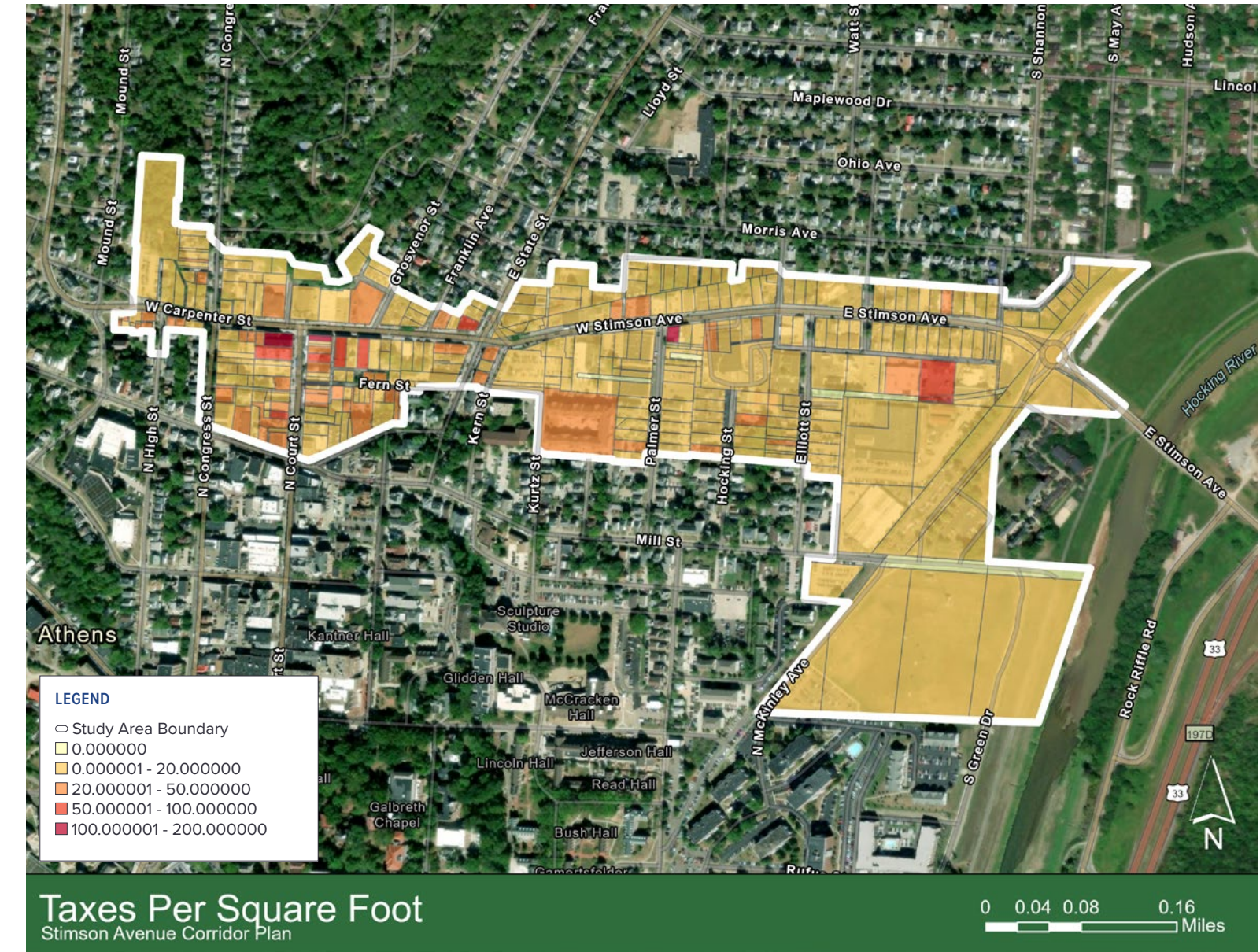
The first can be attributed to the amount of land developed for one particular use category. In the case of the study area, the most considerable amount of land was in the commercial class and generated the most considerable total appraised value of \$11,617,704.00. The smallest acreage within the boundary was the residential three-unit category, 0.2 acres, yielding a smaller value. However, the lowest total was the industrial classified property, with an assessed value of \$273,189.00 and an appraised value of \$780,540.00. Only one parcel in the study area was classified as industrial that was not vacant or an off-street parking lot, which may mitigate some of the trends noted in this analysis. Vacant properties comprised many acres in the study area, most of which were off-street parking facilities.

The intensity of the development on a specific parcel of land also impacts its assessed and appraised values. Generally speaking, properties with more built square footage generate increased value. Table 8 below illustrates this trend was present in the project area. Multi-family buildings with three to four stories of apartment generated the highest assessed and appraised values per square foot at \$41.32. That value is even more impressive, considering this was one of the smallest land areas. The lowest assessed value per square foot was 2.91 for the industrial category.

TABLE 8 - VALUES BY LAND USE CLASSIFICATION

	Average Assessed Value	Average Appraised Value	Average Per Square Foot Assessed Value	Acres
Vacant	\$1,663,039.00	\$4,751,540.00	\$5.60	15.1
Industrial	\$273,189.00	\$780,540.00	\$2.91	5.0
Multi-Family	\$6,622,255.50	\$18,920,730.00	\$41.32	2.8
Commercial	\$11,617,704.00	\$33,193,440.00	\$33.21	20.5
Residential One-Unit	\$3,767,785.00	\$10,765,100.00	\$14.37	2.3
Residential Two-Unit	\$1,551,256.00	\$4,432,160.00	\$17.61	1.9
Residential Three-Unit	\$1,501,038.00	\$4,288,680.00	\$21.19	0.2

FIGURE 19, ASSESSED VALUE



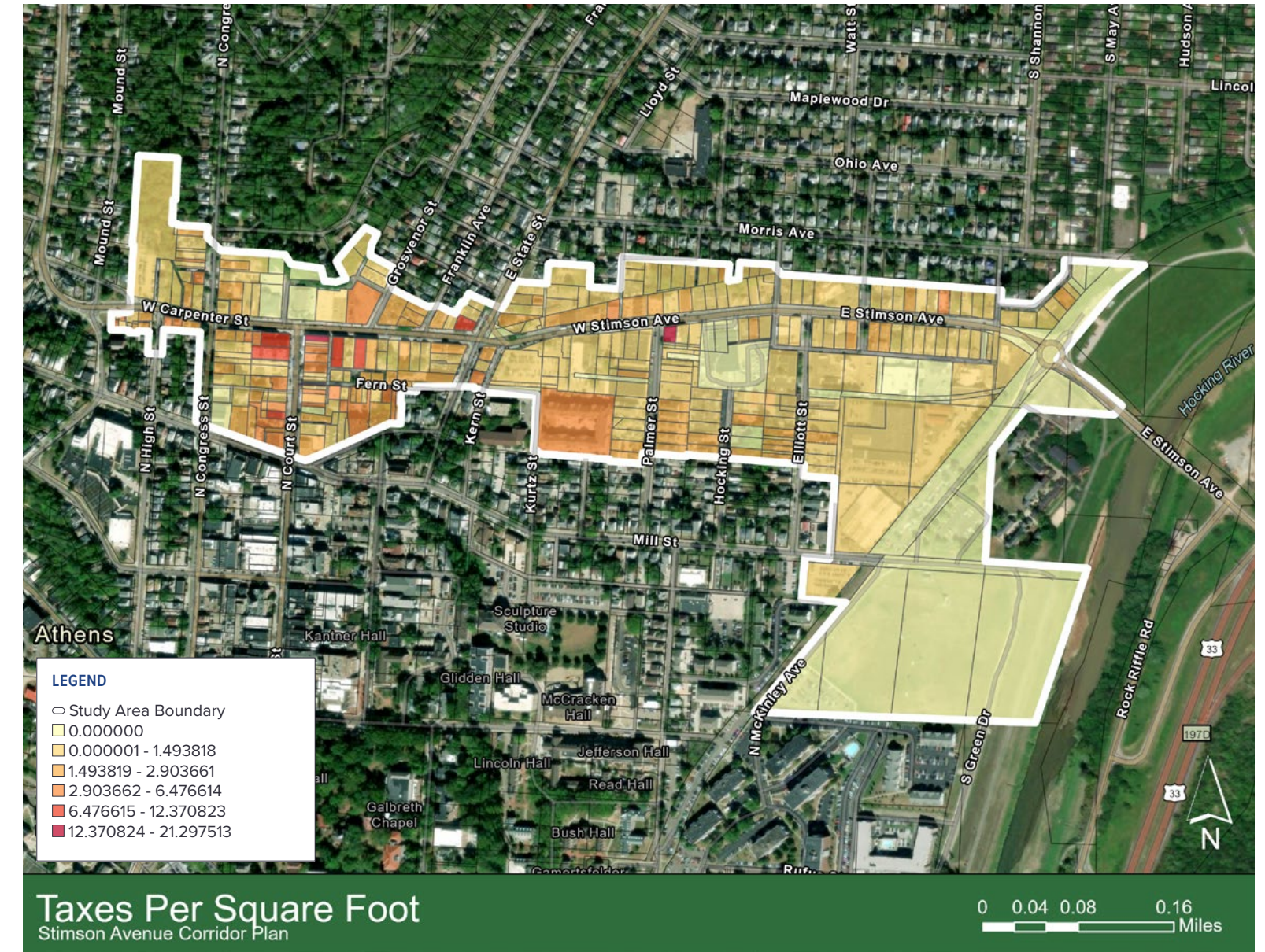
TAXES GENERATED

This report also examined the taxes generated from all properties in the study area. Utilizing this data illustrates how much new revenue may be created by implementing economic incentive tools, such as a TIF, and evaluating potential new land uses. To understand which use categories generated the most taxes, the total taxes collected and a per-square-foot average were created for each land use type. This analysis did not include exempt properties since they do not generate property tax. Table 9 details the results of this analysis and shows that multi-family generated the highest amount of taxes generated per square foot (\$4.75) and the second-highest total amount of annual taxes paid (\$761,667.08). Commercial uses generated the highest total taxes (\$1,336,224.90) and the second highest per square foot (\$3.82). The difference in total taxes generated by multi-family uses, but higher taxes generated per square foot, was due to the larger total acres of commercial parcels (20.5 acres) compared to multi-family (2.8 acres).

TABLE 9 - TAXES COLLECTED BY LAND USE CLASSIFICATION

Land Use Category	Total Taxes Collected	Taxes Per Square Foot
Vacant	\$190,609.44	\$0.64
Industrial	\$15,710.59	\$0.17
Multi-Family	\$761,667.08	\$4.75
Commercial	\$1,336,224.90	\$3.82
Residential One-Unit	\$398,433.89	\$1.52
Residential Two-Unit	\$164,160.49	\$1.86
Residential Three-Unit	\$158,678.83	\$2.24

FIGURE 20, TAXES PER SQUARE FOOT



WHAT THIS ANALYSIS TELLS US

When considering potential new development or redevelopment of underdeveloped/blighted parcels in the study area, understanding a project's value and potential revenue is an essential evaluation measure, especially when a government might consider using incentives. This section indicated that the highest tax-generating developments per square foot would be either multi-family or commercially classified properties. This analysis also noted that a large portion of the study area was classified as vacant (off-street parking) or exempt. The exempt properties were owned by university and government entities. Developing these properties would only be feasible if that group no longer needed those facilities but may represent a redevelopment opportunity. However, the off-street parking lots could add new taxable development if concerns for off-street parking were addressed.

