



DOWNTOWN
COLUMBUS
STRATEGIC
PLAN



COLUMBUS
DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
& CAPITOL SOUTH

THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3
July 19, 2022

AGENDA

- 1 Overview
- 2 What We've Heard
- 3 Plan Framework & Components
- 4 Next Steps



MEETING PURPOSE

JANUARY 25, 2022
MEETING #1

Presented planning context and gathered community feedback on priorities for the future of Downtown

APRIL 26, 2022
MEETING #2

Results from public engagement and a draft vision for Downtown

TODAY
MEETING #3

Refined Downtown vision and **policies, strategies and recommendations** to guide implementation

PROJECT SCHEDULE





WHAT WE'VE HEARD

THE VOICES WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

Engagement Methods

- One-on-one stakeholder interviews
- Neighborhood and stakeholder outreach
- Interactive online activities
- Virtual public workshop
- In-person public workshop
- Online surveys

1,900+

Community Members
Engaged To-date

340

Public Workshop
Attendees

1,124

Online Survey
Respondents

333

Online Activity
Participants

120

Stakeholders
Interviewed

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE PLACES/THINGS DOWNTOWN?

53%



#1

Food options, restaurants, & bars

44%



#2

Scioto Mile, Greenways, & Riverfront

38%



#3

Cultural attractions & entertainment

37%

#4

Walking and biking

33%

#5

Other parks and public spaces

24%

#6

Festivals, events, & programming

20%

#7

Vibrant, urban atmosphere

“The **Scioto Mile**—excellent walkability, beautiful views of downtown!”

“Local, small business retailers and restaurants”

“The abundance of walkable spaces”

“Places like **4th Street and Gay Street** that are starting to become “districts” rather than parking lots”

“The amount of **breweries and coffee shops!** Always somewhere new to try!”

“Concentration of **art and civic institutions**”

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE/IMPROVE ABOUT DOWNTOWN?

56%



#1

Alternative transportation, reducing car dependency

44%



#2

Events, programming, entertainment, and attractions

41%



#3

Built environment and development

35%

#4

Pedestrian and bike improvements

31%

#5

More restaurants and food options

30%

#6

Safety, cleanliness, and noise

26%

#7

Shopping and retail environment

23%

#8

Parks and green space

“Less surface lots.
At least convert to garages or put solar panels over the cars to make use of the space.”

“More weekend activities
in the heart of downtown”

“More things to bring people to the area and stay for a time,
not just their specific event”

“Follow through with RAPID5
at the Confluence”

“Lower tenant building rents
so fewer restaurants go out of business”



PLAN FRAMEWORK



2022 DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS STRATEGIC PLAN

Envision the next stage of Downtown Columbus' urban revival, **enhancing equity, expanding accessibility, supporting local, and increasing inclusion** so that the prosperity of our city can be enjoyed by all

IN TEN YEARS, DOWNTOWN WILL BE...

A
**A NEIGHBORHOOD
FOR ALL**

B
**A THRIVING AND
ATTRACTIVE
PLACE TO WORK**

C
**THE CULTURAL
HEART OF THE
CITY**

D
**A VIBRANT AND
DISTINCTIVE
DESTINATION**

E
**A GREEN AND
SUSTAINABLE
CAPITAL**

F
**A HUB FOR
URBAN
MOBILITY**

G
**A TAPESTRY OF
LIVABLE URBAN
DISTRICTS**

ON THE TABLE EXERCISE

- Individual Comment Worksheet found at every table
- Includes each strategy category
- Provide your feedback on priorities or anything that's missing

DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS STRATEGIC PLAN

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3
Individual Comment Worksheet

A Neighborhood for All | Housing & Livability

- 1 Create a 15-minute Downtown, where people don't need a car to accomplish the basic needs for living (grocery, pharmacy, daycare, shopping, service amenities, food/beverage, etc.).
- 2 Identify focus areas for growing Downtown urban districts.
- 3 Require and approve density Downtown where possible.
- 4 Ensure people at a variety of income levels have the opportunity to live Downtown.
- 5 As part of the 15-minute Downtown, provide park space/access and multimodal linkages to each neighborhood.
- 6 Develop and connect programs to work with the unhoused population.
- 7 Grow Downtown's residential population to 40,000 by 2040.

Which of these recommendations resonates with you the most?
Are any of these a priority for you?

Is there anything missing from this list?

A Thriving and Attractive Place to Work | Office & Employment

- 1 Maintain Downtown as the center of commerce in the region.
- 2 Determine and prioritize improvements that create healthy and inviting office and work environments in a post-COVID Downtown (ex. open office space, and flexibility).
- 3 Amenitize Downtown to attract workers back to the office (ex. first floor activation, third places, parking/mobility options).
- 4 Leverage and re-imagine current Downtown building assets for their highest and best use (ex. conversion of outdated office buildings around Capitol Square).
- 5 Consider parking solutions and the integration of mobility options as we re-establish office Downtown.
- 6 Continue the Downtown Columbus Comeback campaign, reminding people why Downtown is important and developing buzz about post-COVID Downtown opportunities. If people can work anywhere, remind them of all of Downtown's assets.
- 7 Reinforce the value of Downtown as the "economic engine" of the city and region.
- 8 Invest in safety policies and programs Downtown.
- 9 Grow Downtown employment to 120,000 jobs by 2040.

Which of these recommendations resonates with you the most?
Are any of these a priority for you?

Is there anything missing from this list?

General Questions

What were your top 3 strategies across all of the topics?

A _____

B _____

C _____

Use the space below for additional comments, concerns, or questions.

Tell Us About Yourself

In what ZIP code do you live? _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Did you attend any previous Downtown Strategic Plan public meetings? Select all that apply.

January 25, 2022 | Zoom webinar

April 26, 2022 | Main Library

Learn more at downtowncolumbus.com/plan

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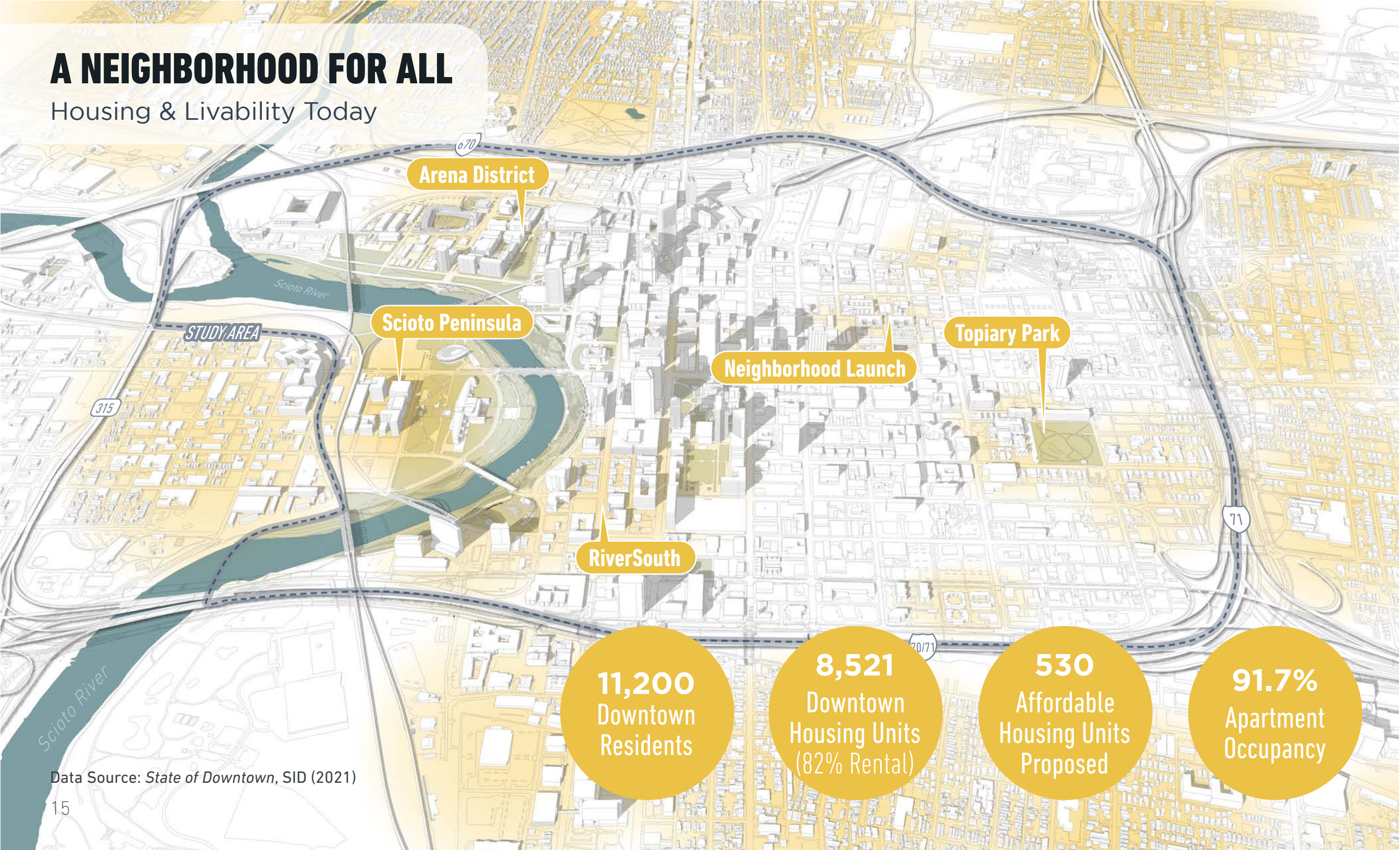
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A NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ALL

Housing & Livability Today



Arena District

Scioto Peninsula

Neighborhood Launch

Topiary Park

RiverSouth

11,200
Downtown
Residents

8,521
Downtown
Housing Units
(82% Rental)

530
Affordable
Housing Units
Proposed

91.7%
Apartment
Occupancy

Data Source: State of Downtown, SID (2021)

A NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ALL

Housing & Livability Strategies

- 1 **Create a 15-minute Downtown**, where people don't need a car to accomplish the basic needs for living (grocery, pharmacy, daycare, shopping, service amenities, food/beverage, etc.).
- 2 **Identify focus areas for growing Downtown urban districts.**
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- 5 **As part of the 15-minute Downtown, provide park space/ access and multimodal linkages** to each neighborhood.
- 6 **Develop and connect programs to work with the unhoused population.**
- 7 **Grow Downtown's residential population to 40,000 by 2040.**



EXPAND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

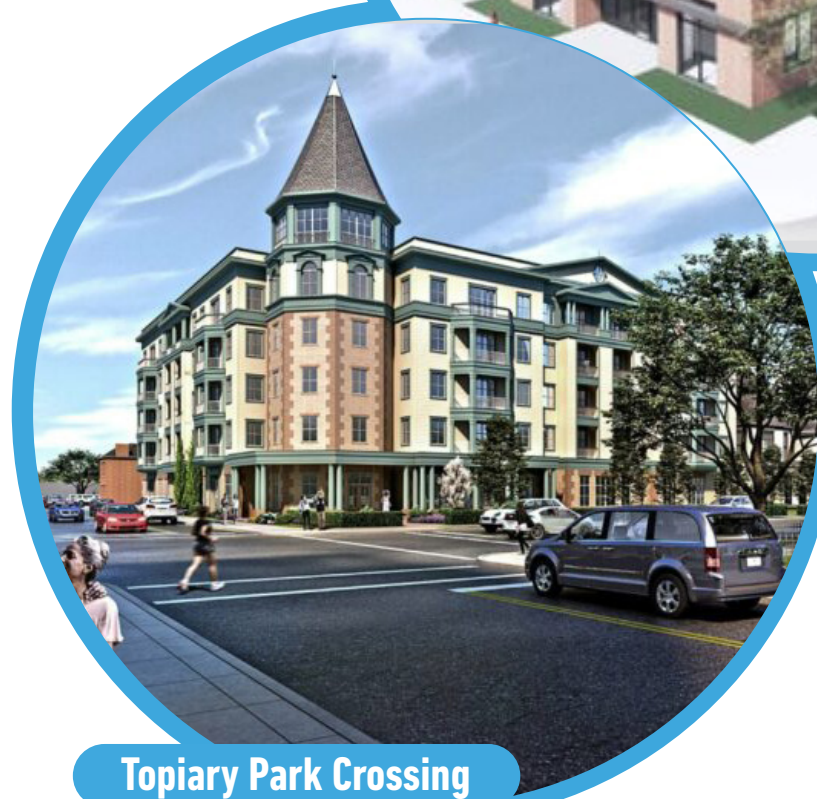
- **530 affordable housing units** proposed or under construction Downtown, representing **18%** of total housing units in the pipeline



Jaycee Arms



Vera on Broad



Topiary Park Crossing

EXPAND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

As a region Central Ohio is under building housing. **Downtown has a role to play in increasing the overall supply of housing.** Downtown and its intown neighborhoods are some of the most opportunity rich places to build housing because they provide **access to jobs, services, and transit** that are concentrated in the core of the city. In addition, density is expected in Downtown.

A housing strategy for Downtown should...

Invest

in affordable housing
downtown: \$50m City bond issue in 2019 leveraged another \$350 million in public and private dollars; a \$200 million fund is proposed for 2022 bond issue that would go toward affordable housing.

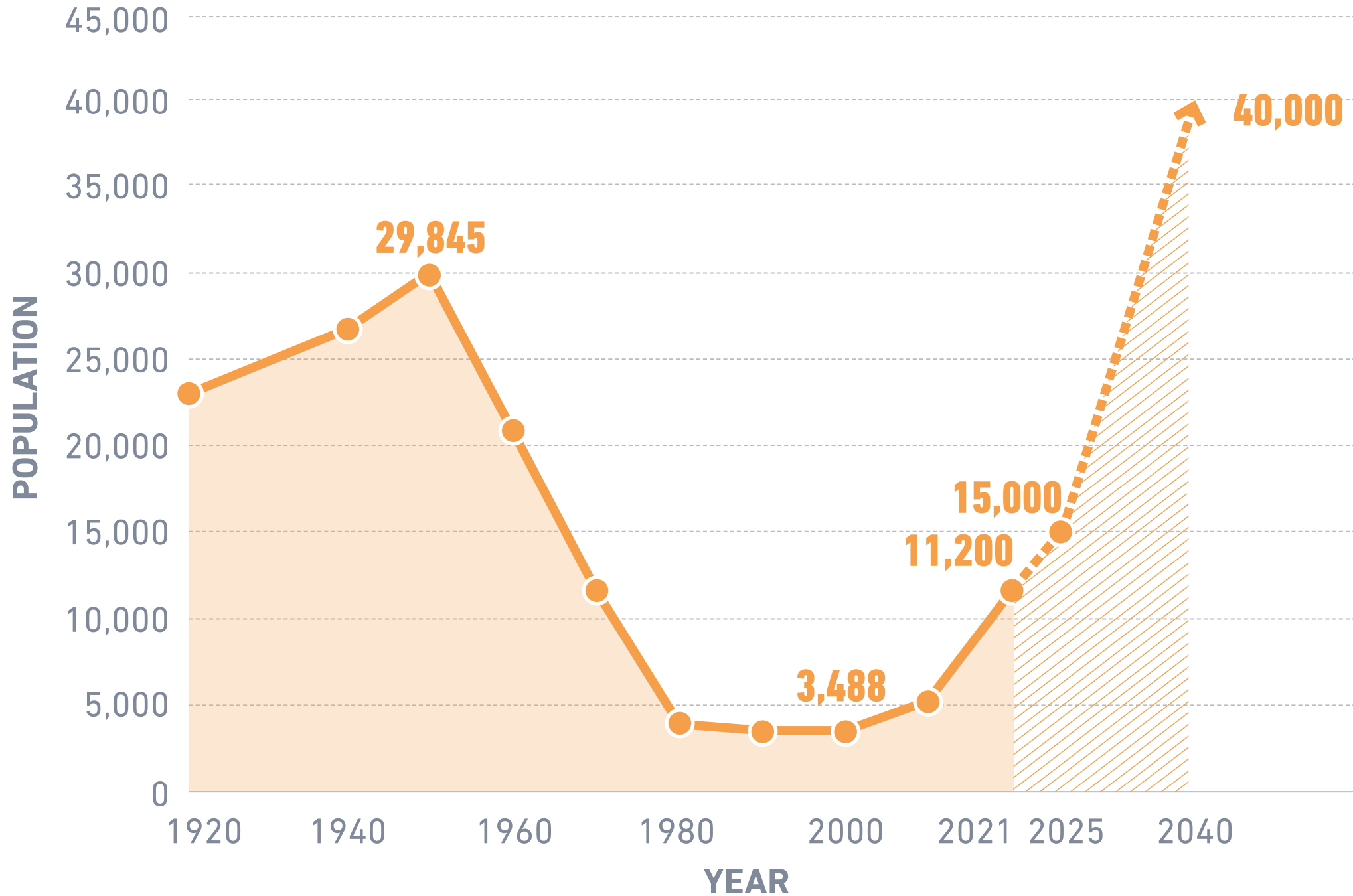
Preserve

existing affordable housing downtown through tenant and rent protection and acquisition of naturally occurring affordable housing to ensure it stays affordable.

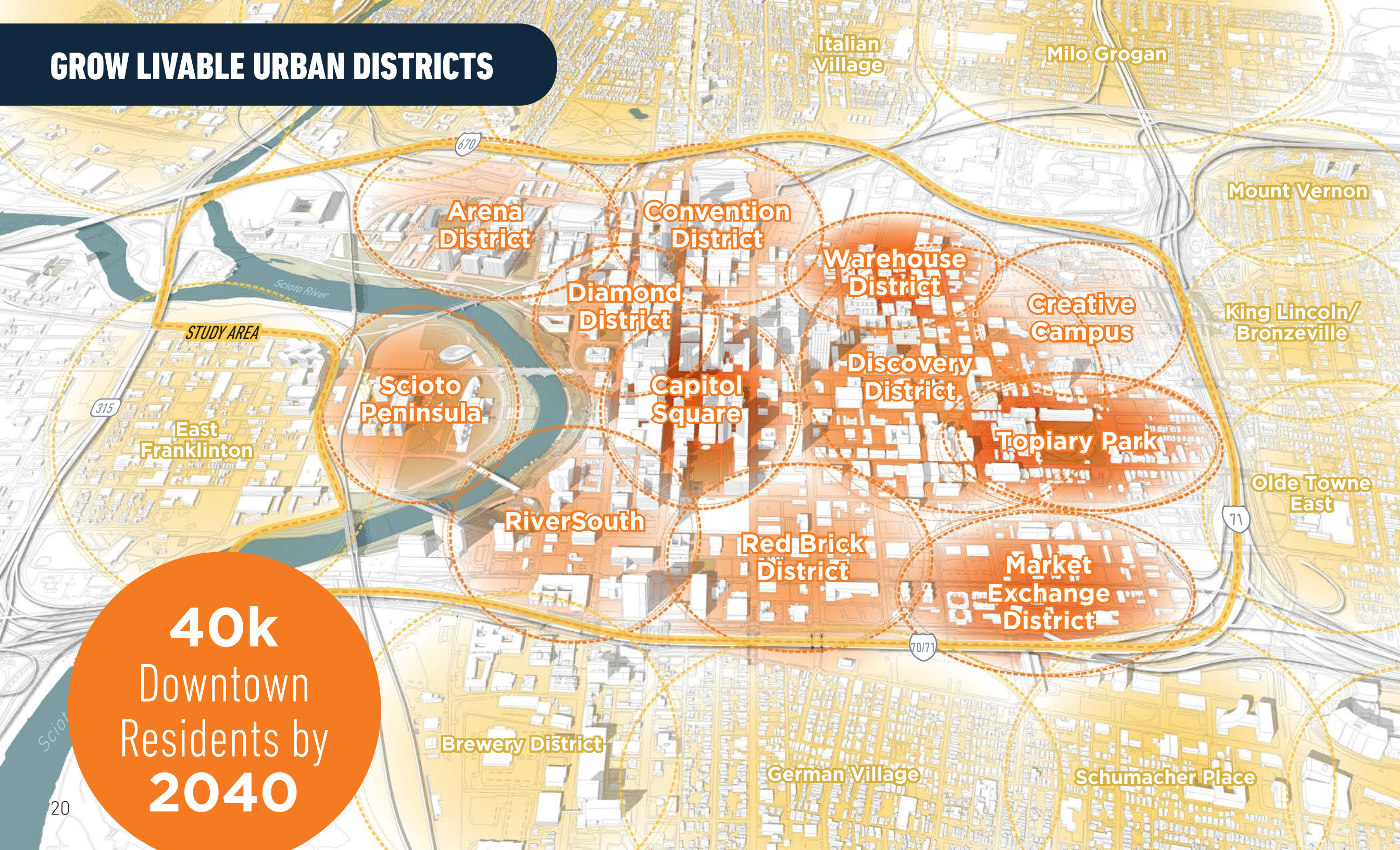
Include

housing opportunities for all individuals and families downtown through inclusive housing policies and a diversity of housing types.

DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL GOAL | 40,000 RESIDENTS BY 2040



GROW LIVABLE URBAN DISTRICTS



40k
Downtown
Residents by
2040

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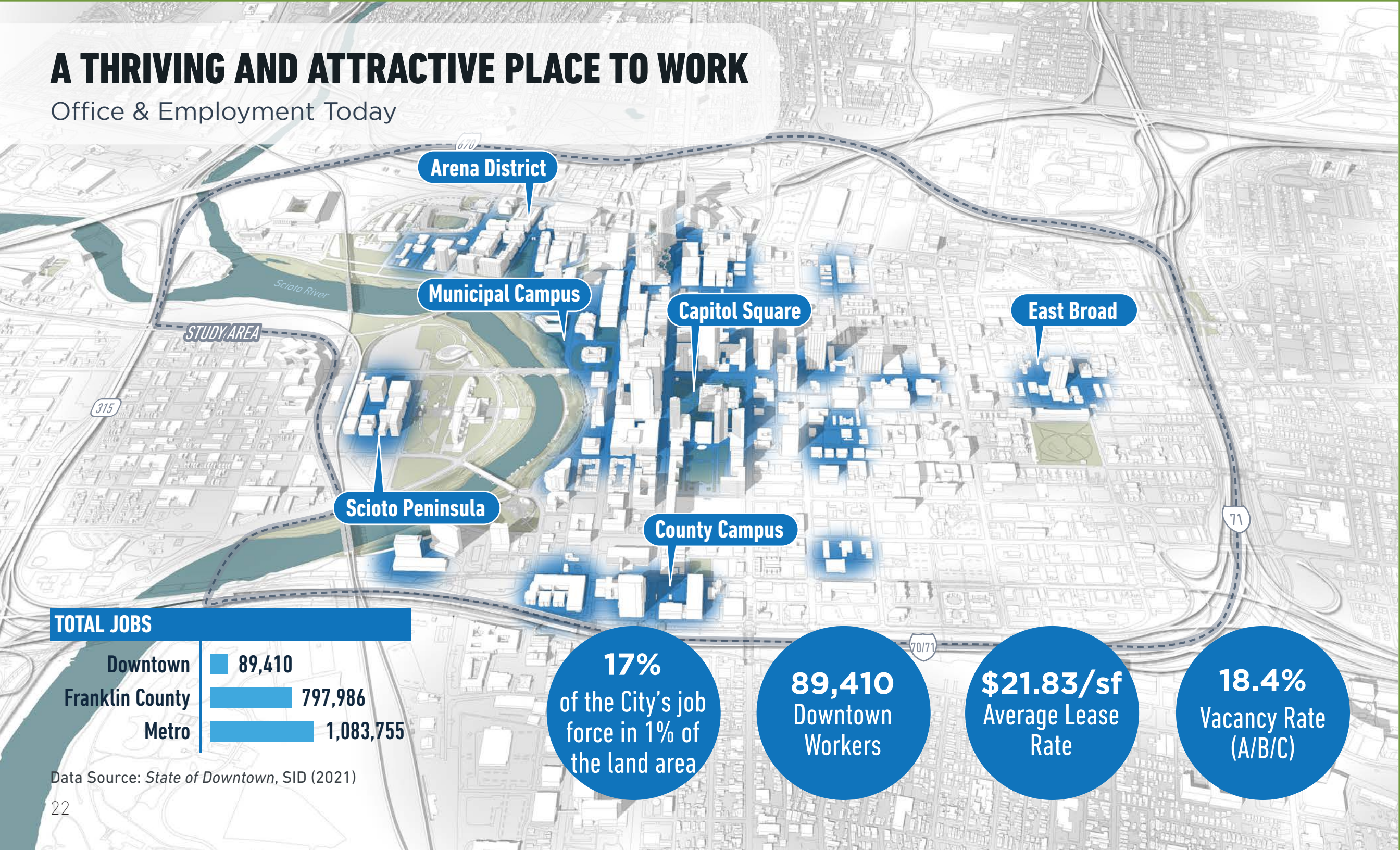
A HUB FOR URBAN MOBILITY

G

A TAPESTRY OF LIVABLE URBAN DISTRICTS

A THRIVING AND ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO WORK

Office & Employment Today



Arena District

Municipal Campus

Capitol Square

East Broad

Scioto Peninsula

County Campus

TOTAL JOBS

Downtown	89,410
Franklin County	797,986
Metro	1,083,755

17%
of the City's job
force in 1% of
the land area

89,410
Downtown
Workers

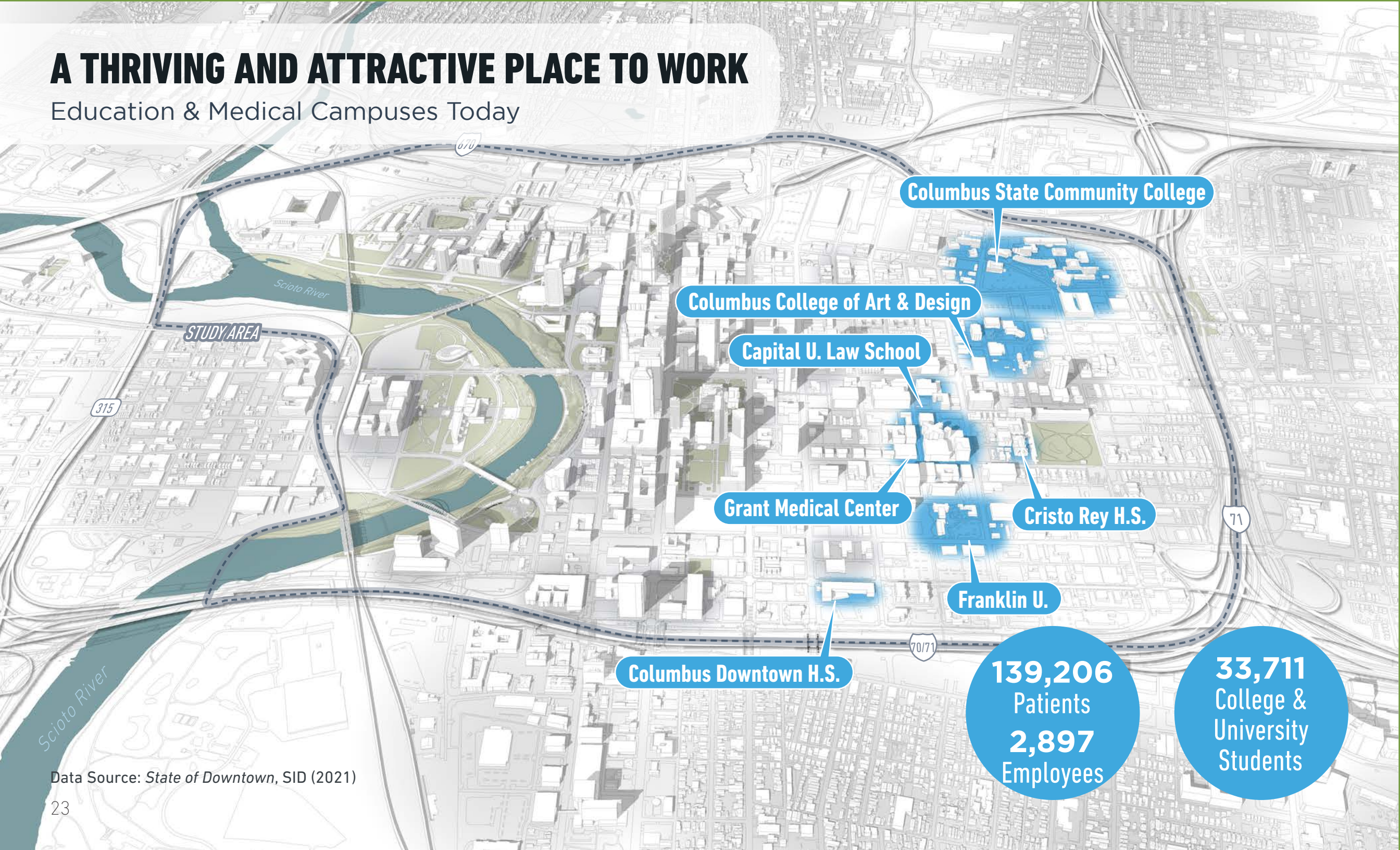
\$21.83/sf
Average Lease
Rate

18.4%
Vacancy Rate
(A/B/C)

Data Source: State of Downtown, SID (2021)

A THRIVING AND ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO WORK

Education & Medical Campuses Today



Columbus State Community College

Columbus College of Art & Design

Capital U. Law School

Grant Medical Center

Cristo Rey H.S.

Franklin U.

Columbus Downtown H.S.

139,206
Patients
2,897
Employees

33,711
College &
University
Students

Data Source: State of Downtown, SID (2021)

NATIONAL OFFICE TRENDS

- Nationwide, **office space utilization was 44%** (a pandemic era high) in June.
- **Urban office space is in high demand**, with workers preferring to be in close proximity to walkable activities and amenities (coffee shops, restaurants, bars, gyms, parks). Suburban office parks are at a competitive disadvantage.
- Amenitized office space at the top end of the market is leasing at a **faster rate than the rest of the market.**

Sources:

Cities Struggle to Get Workers Back, The Wall Street Journal, July 8, 2022
Lonely Last Days in a Suburban Office Park, The New York Times, July 10, 2022
Businesses Lease Trophy Space to Stoke Return to the Office, The Wall Street Journal, November 2, 2021



A THRIVING AND ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO WORK

Office & Employment Strategies

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- 7 Reinforce the value of **Downtown as the “economic engine” of the city** and region.
- 8 **Invest in safety policies and programs** Downtown.
- 9 Grow Downtown employment to **120,000 jobs by 2040**.



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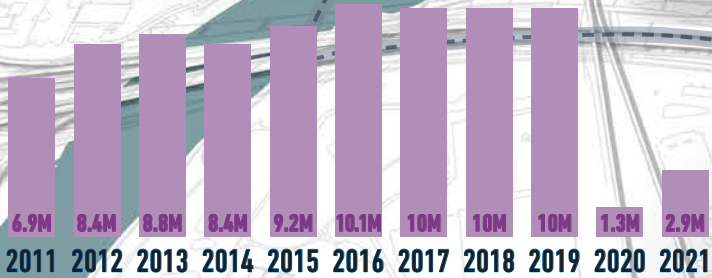
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A GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE CAPITAL

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A HUB FOR URBAN MOBILITY

G
A TAPESTRY OF LIVABLE URBAN DISTRICTS

THE CULTURAL HEART OF THE CITY

Arts, Sports, & Culture Today



DOWNTOWN VISITORS

Data Source: State of Downtown, SID (2021)

10M
Visitors to
Downtown
Attractions
(2019)

THE CULTURAL HEART OF THE CITY

Arts, Sports, & Culture Strategies

- 1 Develop and **promote clear differentiators for Downtown**; density, sports, innovation, culture, etc.
- 2 Collaborate with arts leaders to **fund a study for public art and entertainment Downtown** to determine and implement the right model for Downtown Columbus.
- 3 **Invest in safety policies and programs** Downtown.
- 4 Connect and **activate civic assets that are already in place** – especially the riverfront.
- 5 Assist in supporting and **improving concert & theater performance venues**.
- 6 **Support DORAs**, especially along the riverfront connecting the Peninsula to the Arena District.
- 7 **Invest in a public realm campaign** - make transitions seamless with activities, public art, beautiful landscapes, first floor experiences.



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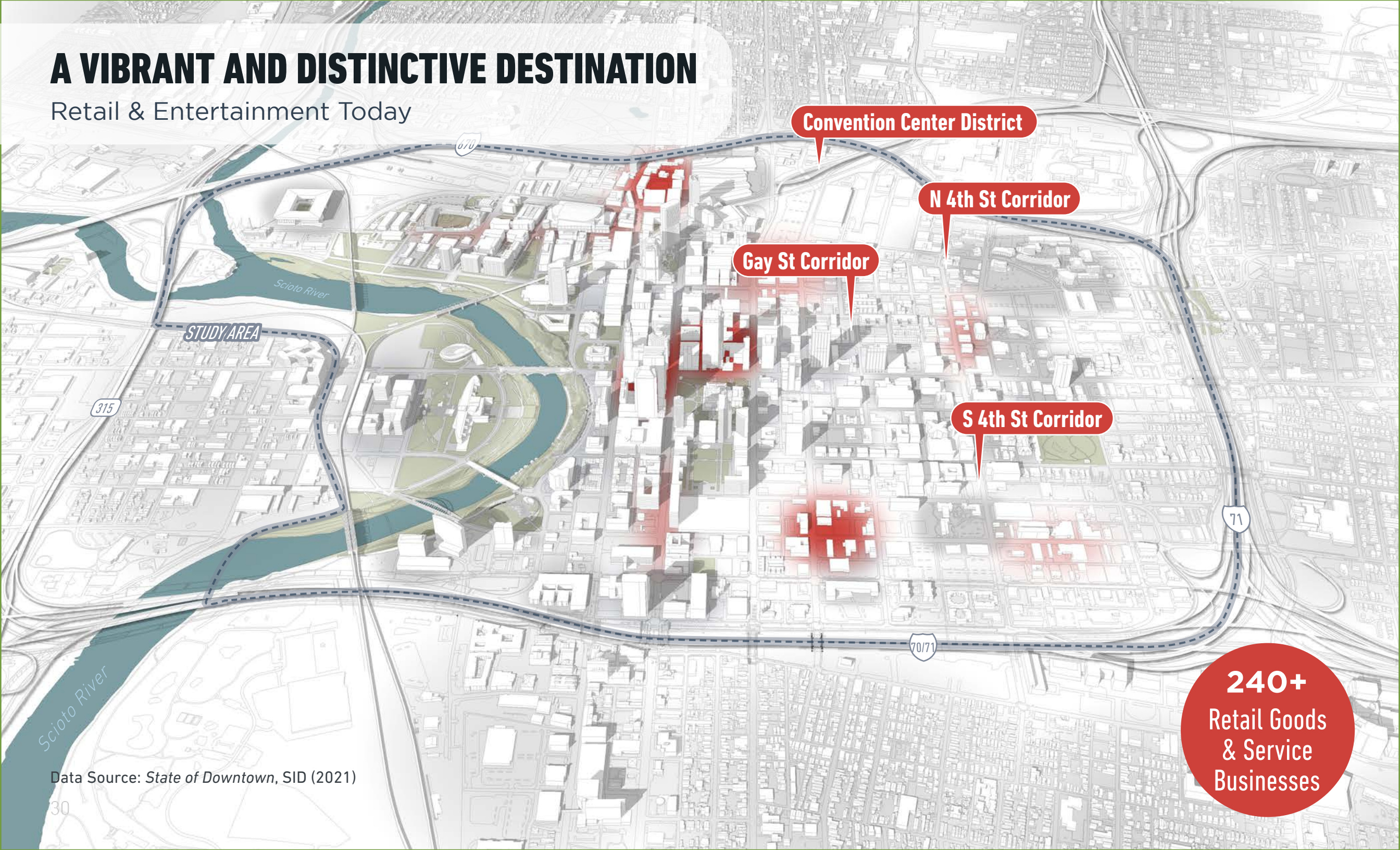
A HUB FOR URBAN MOBILITY

G

A TAPESTRY OF LIVABLE URBAN DISTRICTS

A VIBRANT AND DISTINCTIVE DESTINATION

Retail & Entertainment Today



Convention Center District

N 4th St Corridor

Gay St Corridor

S 4th St Corridor

240+
Retail Goods
& Service
Businesses

Data Source: State of Downtown, SID (2021)

A VIBRANT & DISTINCTIVE DESTINATION

Retail & Small Business Strategies

- 1 CDDC should develop a plan that considers **incentivizing and supporting MWBE-owned retail and neighborhood service businesses** (day care, market, etc.) that otherwise couldn't afford downtown in targeted, complementary nodes of retail to help create 15-minute neighborhoods. Incentives could be targeted by service type, ownership, and location.
- 2 Consider adding **retail and neighborhood services to the current tax abatement** for Downtown.
- 3 Consider “activity” rather than just traditional retail to **activate first floors** such as art displays, community spaces, nonprofit services.
- 4 Continue “COVID policies” allowing for **robust outdoor dining**.
- 5 **Focus on what Columbus does well** – fashion and food – and made downtown a hub for local offerings.
- 6 **Create or support educational programs**, like a business boot-camp to help small businesses be successful Downtown and beyond.
- 7 Develop a **Vacant Commercial Storefront Registration policy**.



INCUBATE LOCAL BUSINESSES DOWNTOWN

- Own and control targeted retail space to help anchor and activate Downtown Districts.
- Master lease space, with a focus on growing and **supporting minority- and women-owned small businesses** representing the diverse members of the Columbus community.
- Build upon and highlight Columbus' people and **local strengths** — fashion, food & beverage/culinary crafts, art & music, maker industry, etc.
- Create a program to support incubated businesses to **graduate to their own space.**
- Establish a sustained and directed effort that supports targeted retail until Downtown population growth provides sufficient market support.

Boston Seaport



Decatur, GA



Gordon Square Arts District, OH



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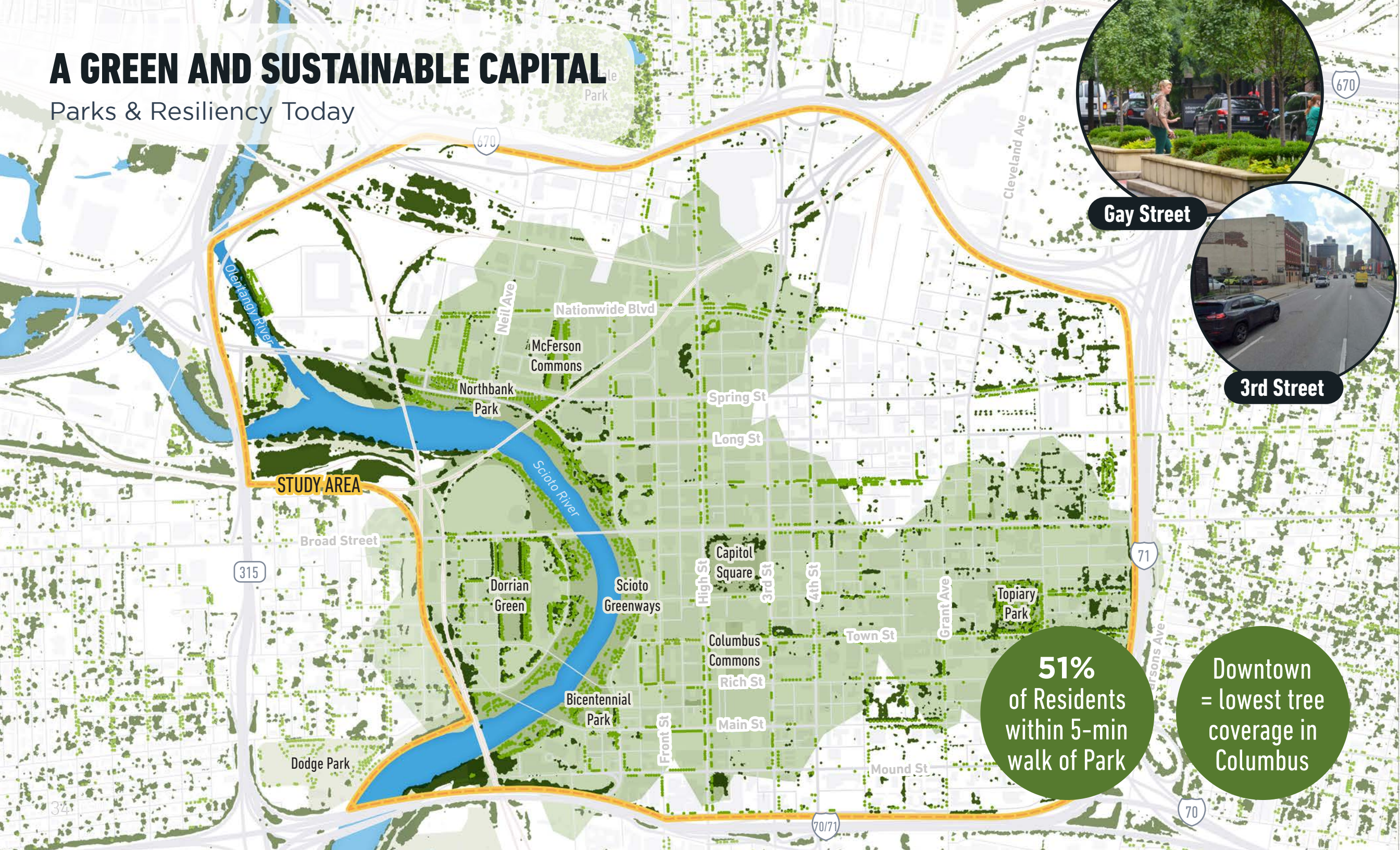
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A GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE CAPITAL

Parks & Resiliency Today



Gay Street



3rd Street

STUDY AREA

51% of Residents within 5-min walk of Park

Downtown = lowest tree coverage in Columbus

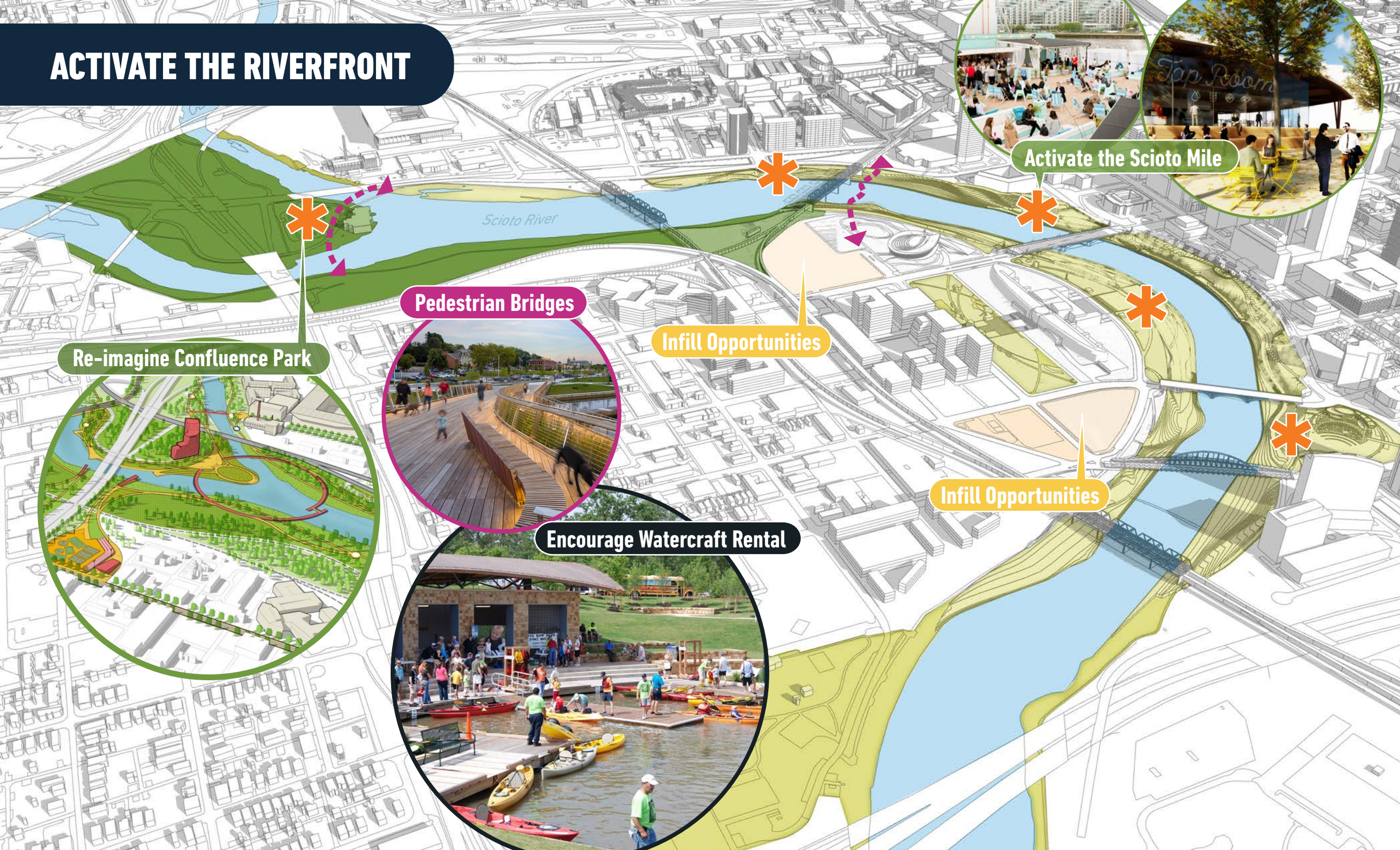
A GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE CAPITAL

Parks & Resiliency Strategies

- 1 **Activate existing civic park assets** like the Scioto Riverfront, Capitol Square Green, Topiary Park, etc.
- 2 **Work to transform Downtown streets into linear parks** across time.
- 3 **Establish a Downtown tree canopy goal and work to increase and maintain the tree canopy within Downtown**, with particular focus on street trees.
- 4 **Encourage the creation of pocket parks and neighborhood parks** as part of new development.
- 5 **Study how Downtown can play a role in mitigating the climate crisis** (tree plantings, green roofs, solar panels, stormwater capture, mobility options, caps, charging stations, energy retrofit).



ACTIVATE THE RIVERFRONT



Activate the Scioto Mile

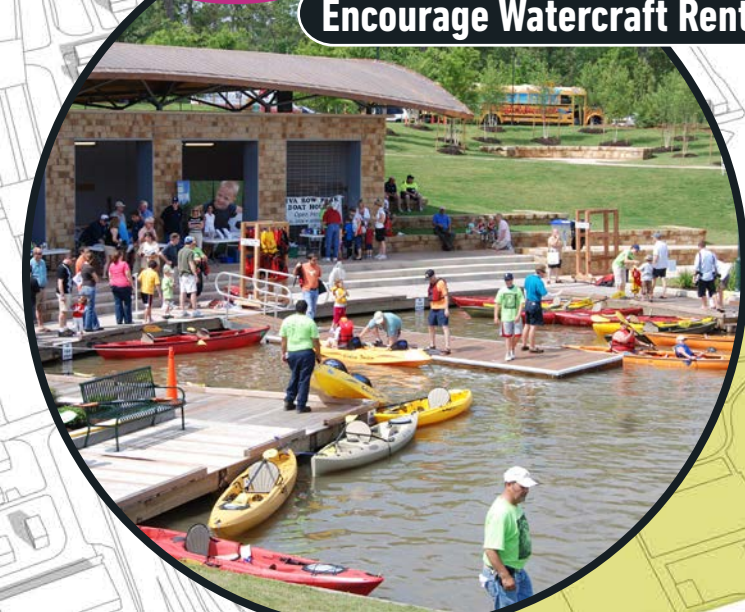
Pedestrian Bridges

Infill Opportunities

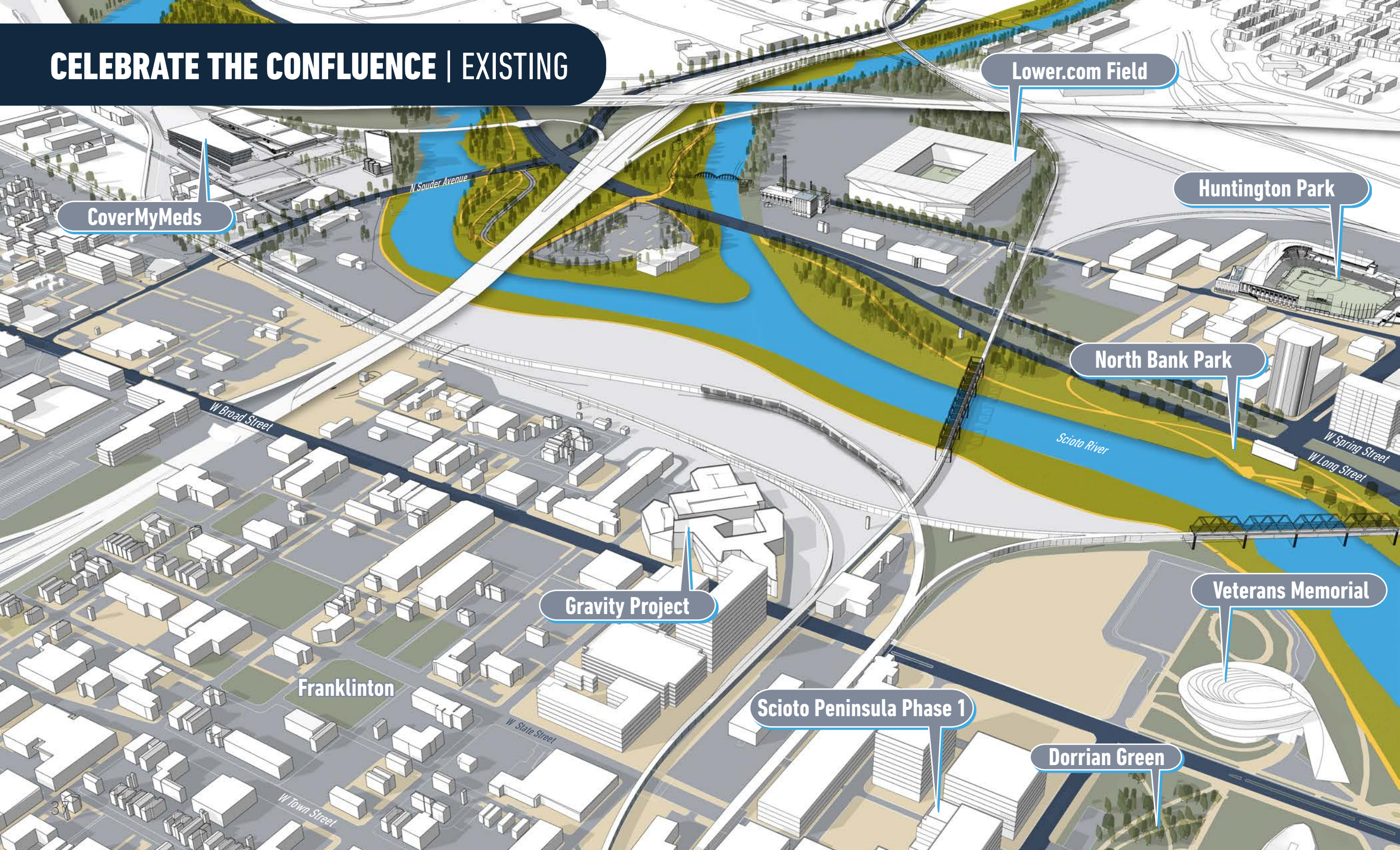
Infill Opportunities

Encourage Watercraft Rental

Re-imagine Confluence Park



CELEBRATE THE CONFLUENCE | EXISTING



Lower.com Field

Huntington Park

North Bank Park

Veterans Memorial

Dorrian Green

Scioto Peninsula Phase 1

Gravity Project

Franklinton

CoverMyMeds

N Souder Avenue

W Broad Street

W Spring Street

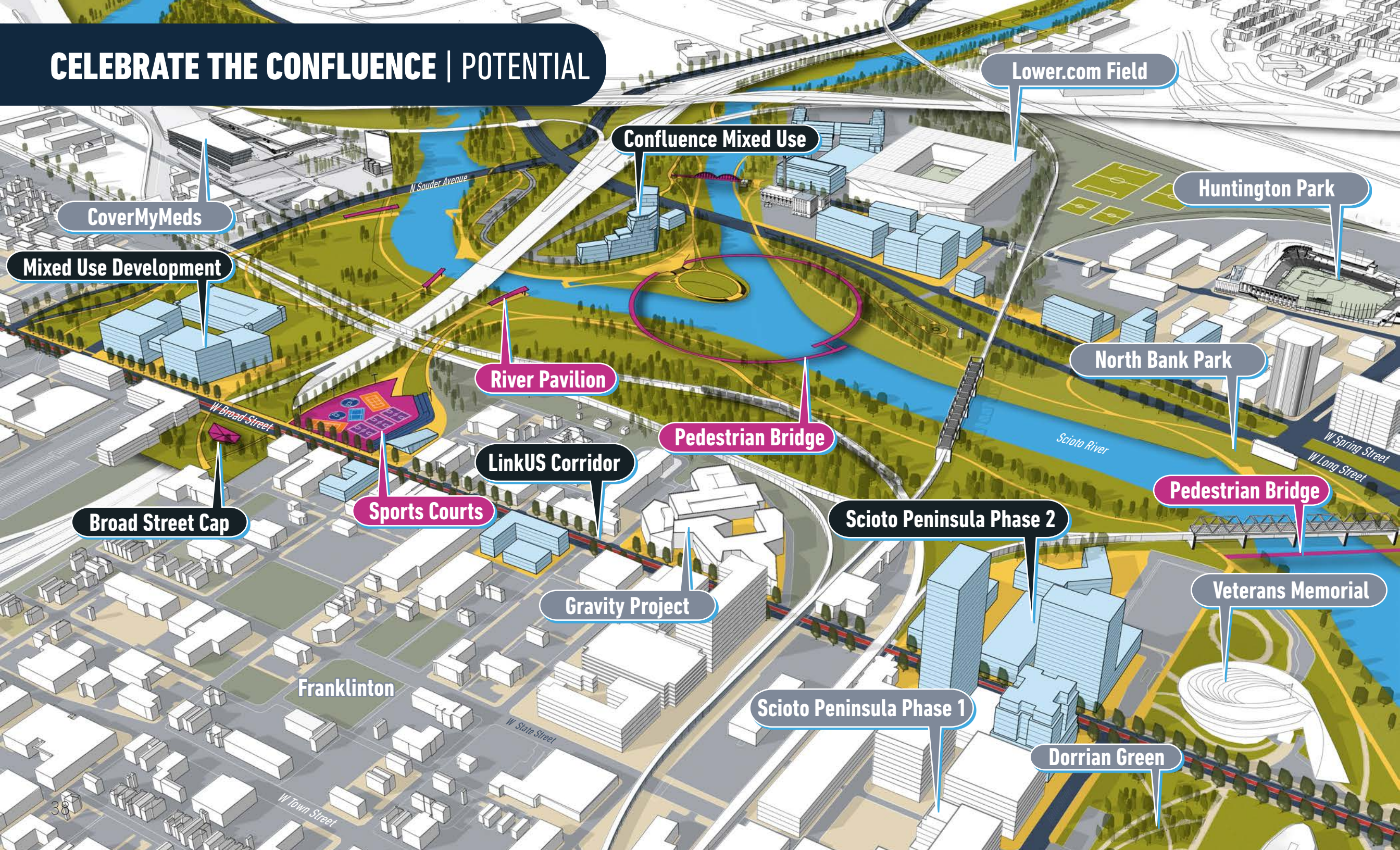
W Long Street

Scioto River

W State Street

W Town Street

CELEBRATE THE CONFLUENCE | POTENTIAL



Lower.com Field

Huntington Park

Confluence Mixed Use

North Bank Park

CoverMyMeds

Mixed Use Development

River Pavilion

Pedestrian Bridge

Pedestrian Bridge

LinkUS Corridor

Scioto Peninsula Phase 2

Broad Street Cap

Sports Courts

Gravity Project

Veterans Memorial

Franklinton

Scioto Peninsula Phase 1

Dorrian Green

W Town Street

W State Street

W Spring Street

W Long Street

N Souder Avenue

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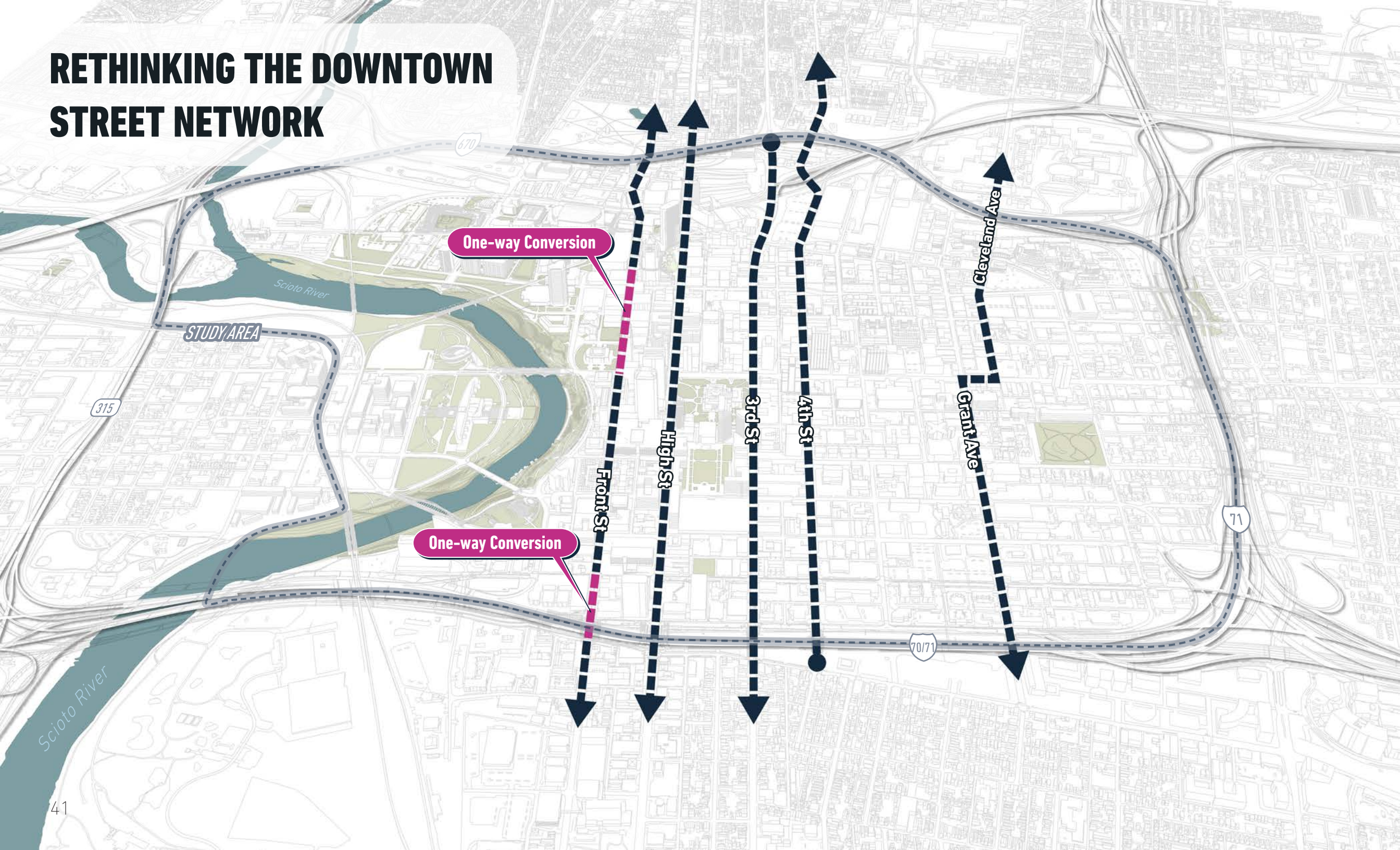
A HUB FOR URBAN MOBILITY

Transportation Strategies

- 1 **Support and assist the LinkUS project** to create high-capacity transit connections between Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
- 2 **Focus on the pedestrian-level experience and safety** so that people go *TO* Downtown rather than *THROUGH* Downtown.
- 3 **Create a low-stress bike network** with a focus on safe and inviting transportation.
- 4 Continue to find methods of providing **public parking structures with city support** to unlock Downtown redevelopment potential.
- 5 **Support an AMTRAK passenger rail station** at the Convention Center.
- 6 **Support freeway caps** that connect Downtown to surrounding neighborhoods.
- 7 Connect Arena District to The Peninsula and Confluence area via **pedestrian bridges**.
- 8 **Examine ingress and egress of Downtown districts** as they connect to the freeway system.
- 9 **Establish Downtown street typologies** that promote the right-sizing and activation of streets.
- 10 Work to **transform identified one-way streets to two-way streets**.
- 11 **Continue to study and integrate new modes of mobility** into Downtown that protect the pedestrian environment and ground floor activation while promoting ease of use and access (ride sharing, AVs, e-bikes, scooters, meal delivery services, curb management etc.).



RETHINKING THE DOWNTOWN STREET NETWORK



One-way Conversion

One-way Conversion

STUDY AREA

Scioto River

315

670

70/71

71

Front St

High St

3rd St

4th St

Grant Ave

Cleveland Ave

ESTABLISH DOWNTOWN STREET TYPOLOGIES

**High Street =
Signature Street**



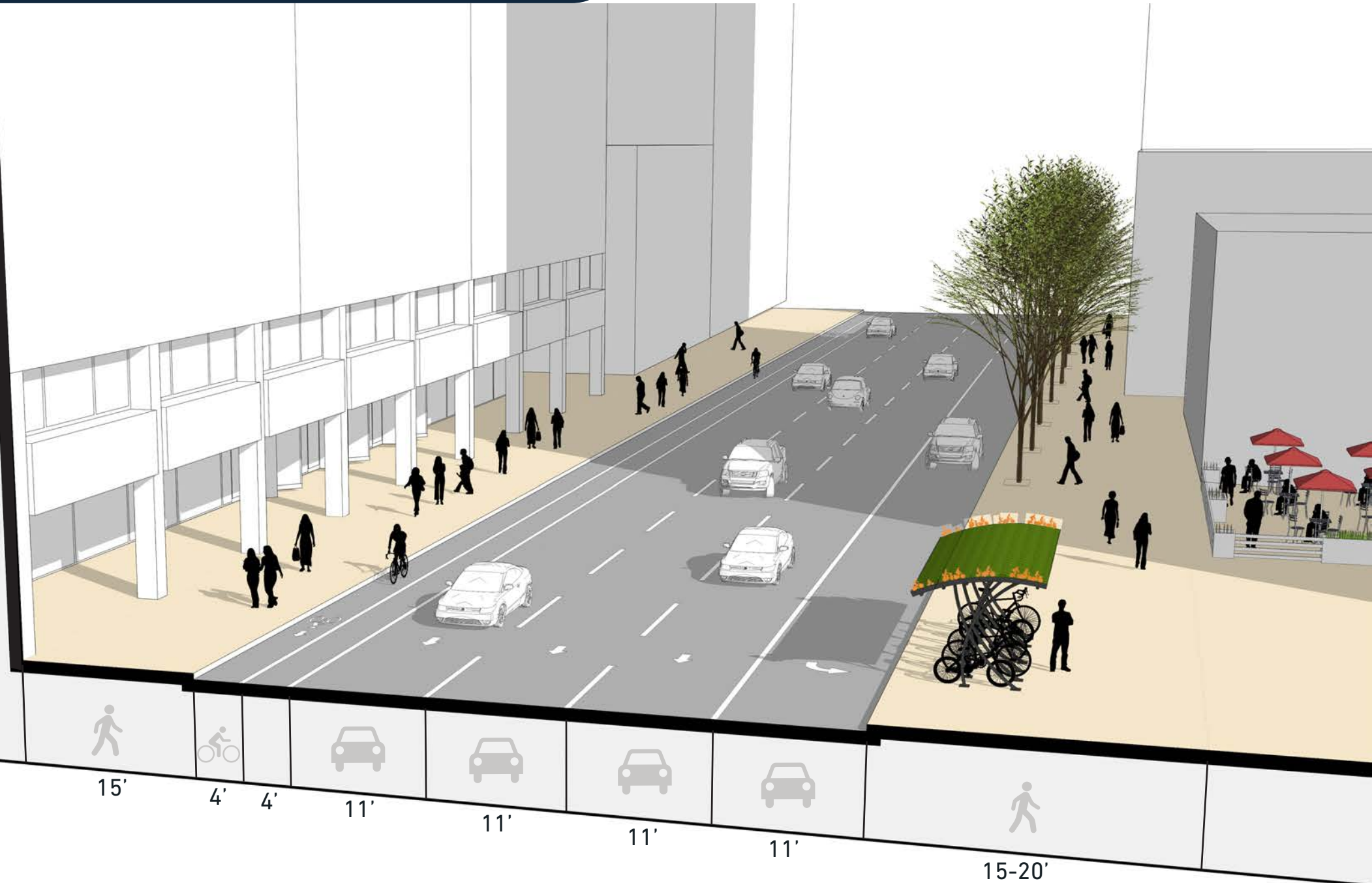
**3rd Street =
Premium Transit Corridor**



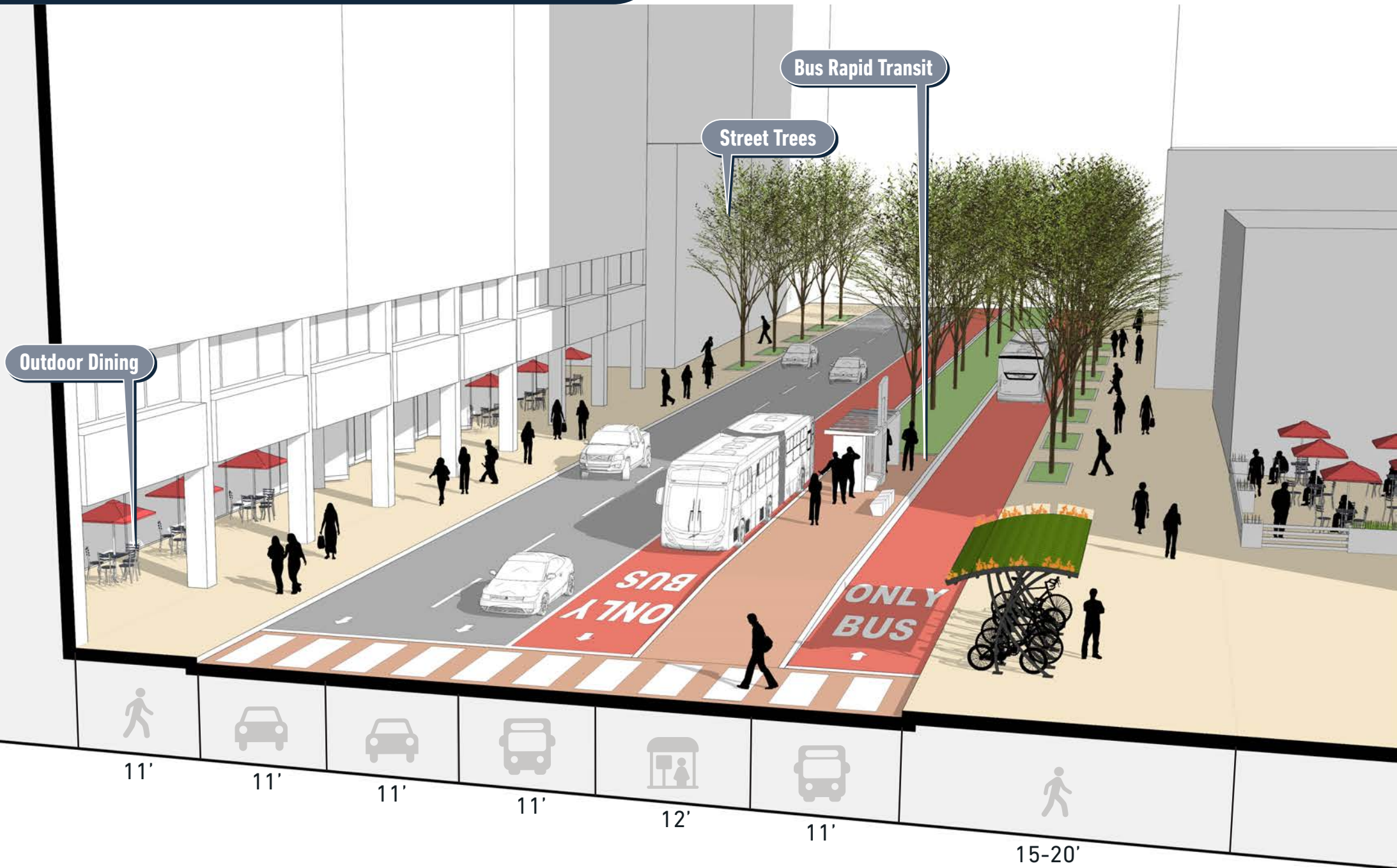
**4th Street =
Bike Commuter Corridor**



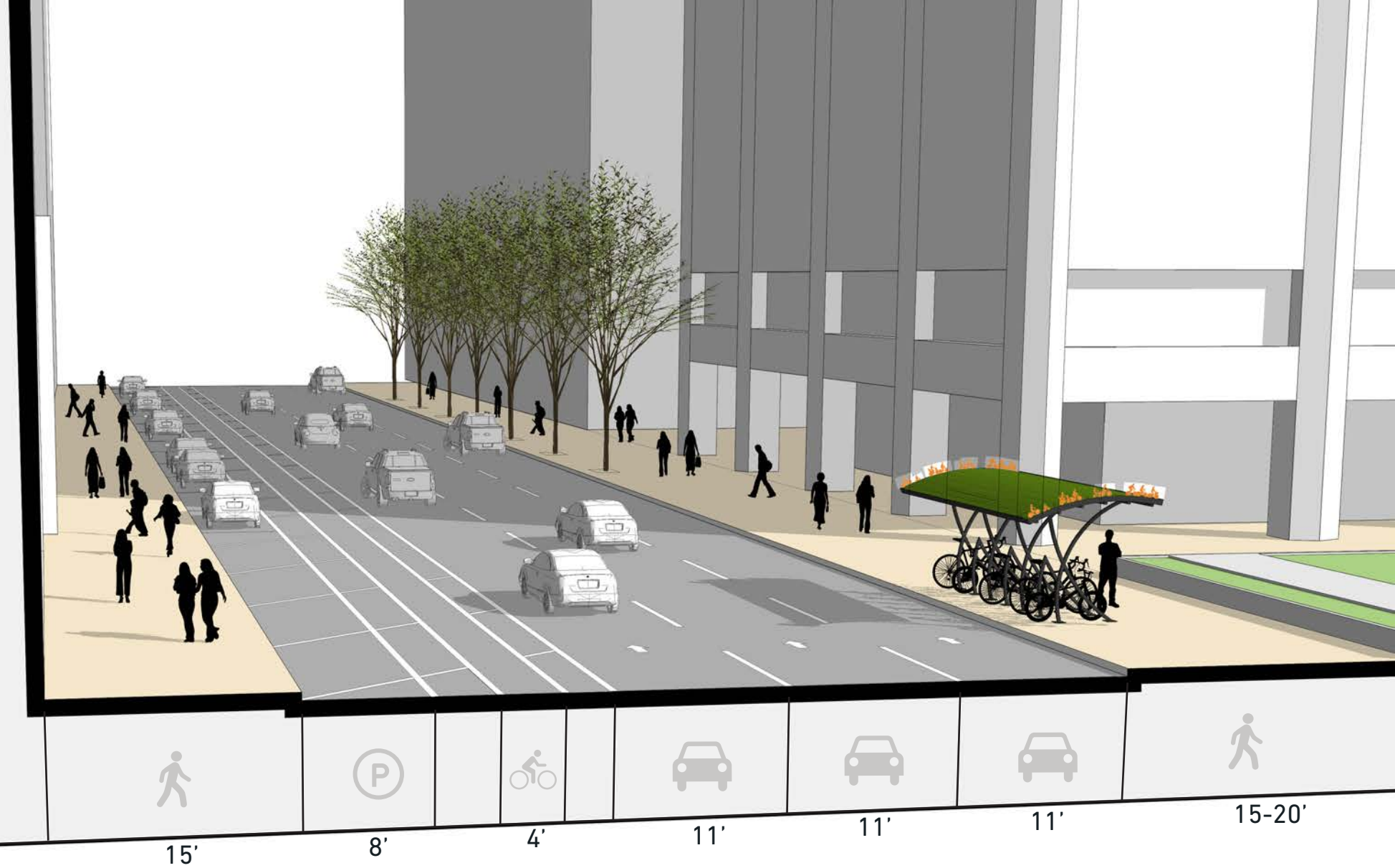
REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | 3RD STREET EXISTING



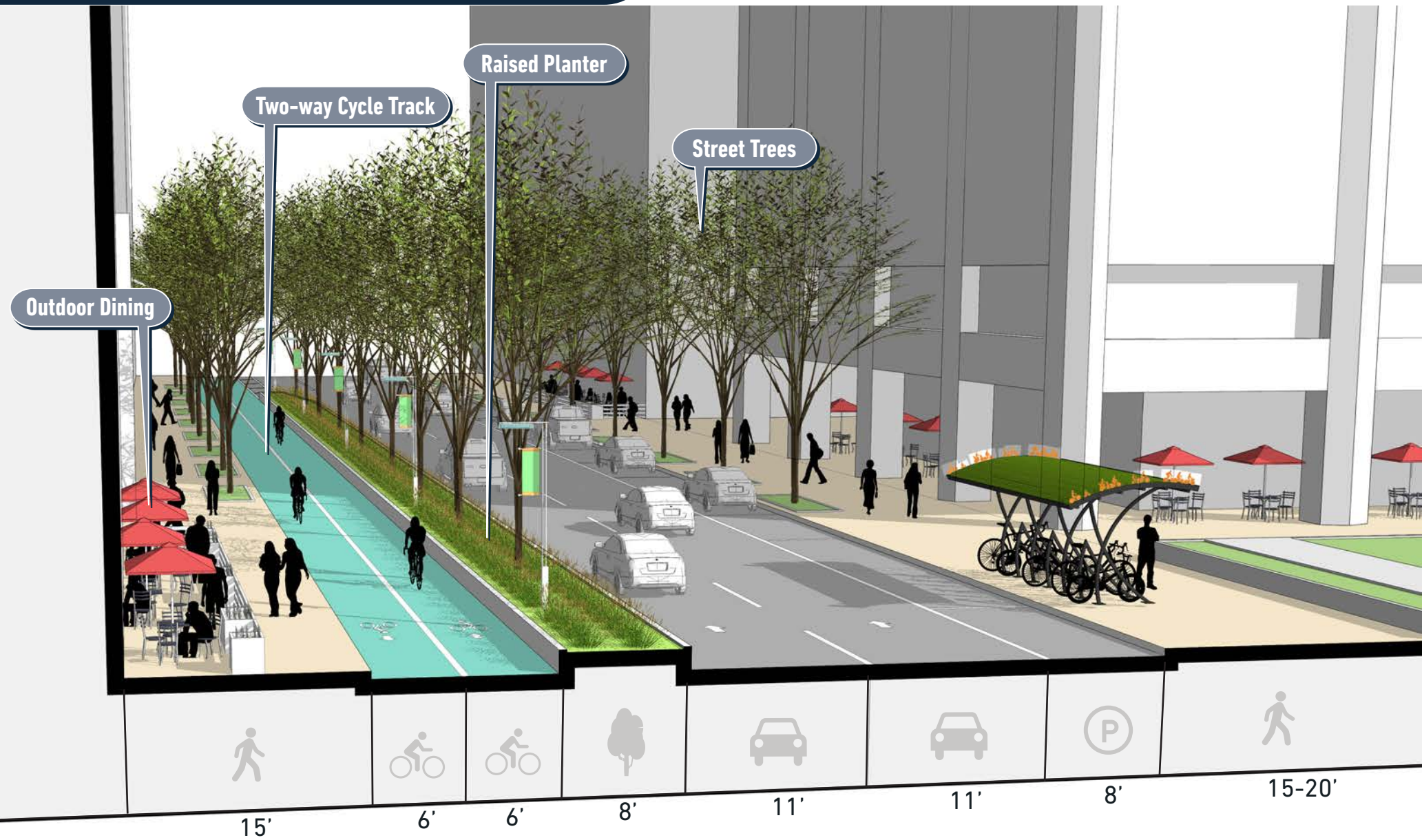
REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | 3RD STREET POTENTIAL



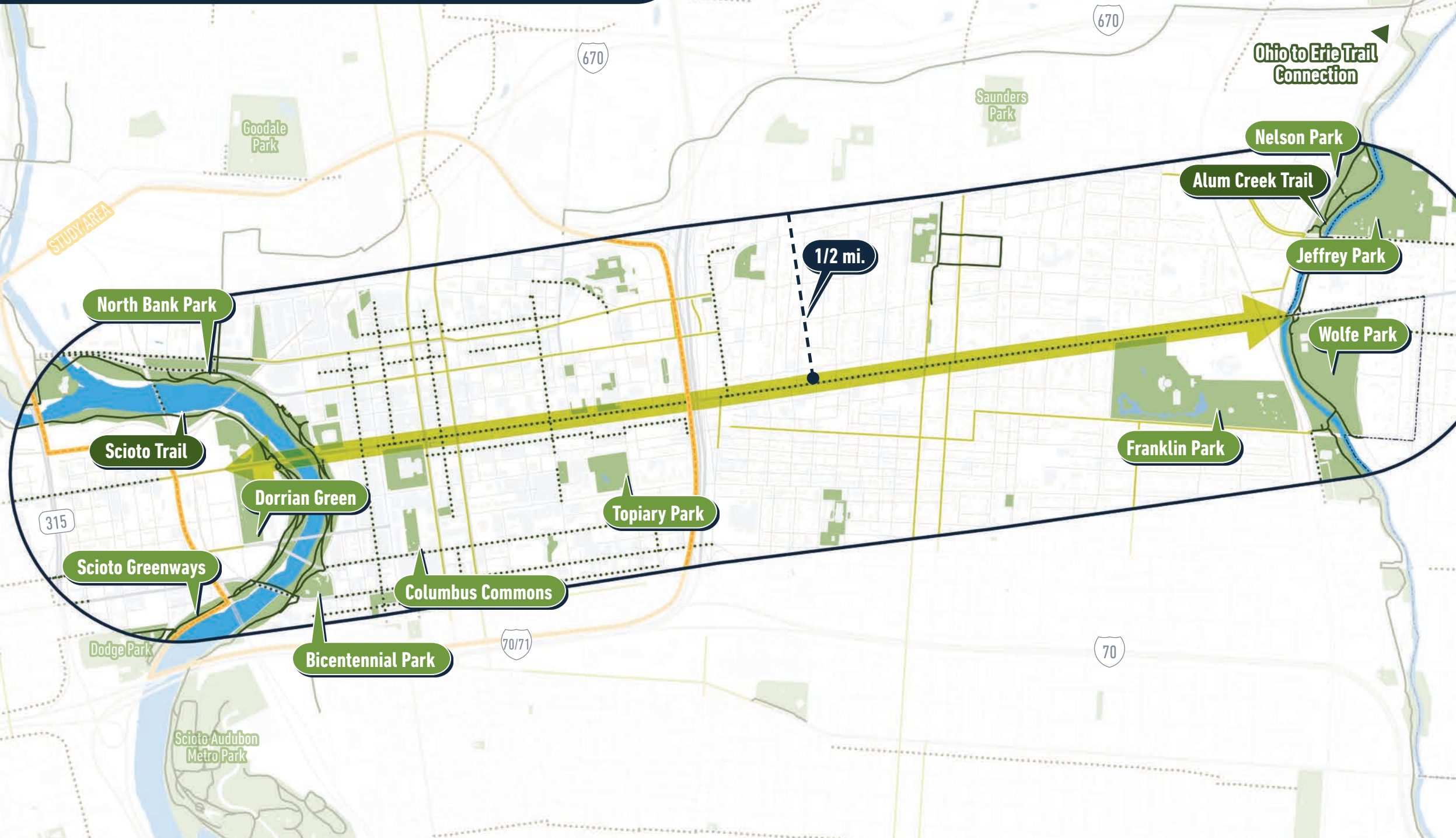
REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | 4TH STREET EXISTING



REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | 4TH STREET POTENTIAL



REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | BROAD STREET



REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | CAPITAL TRAIL

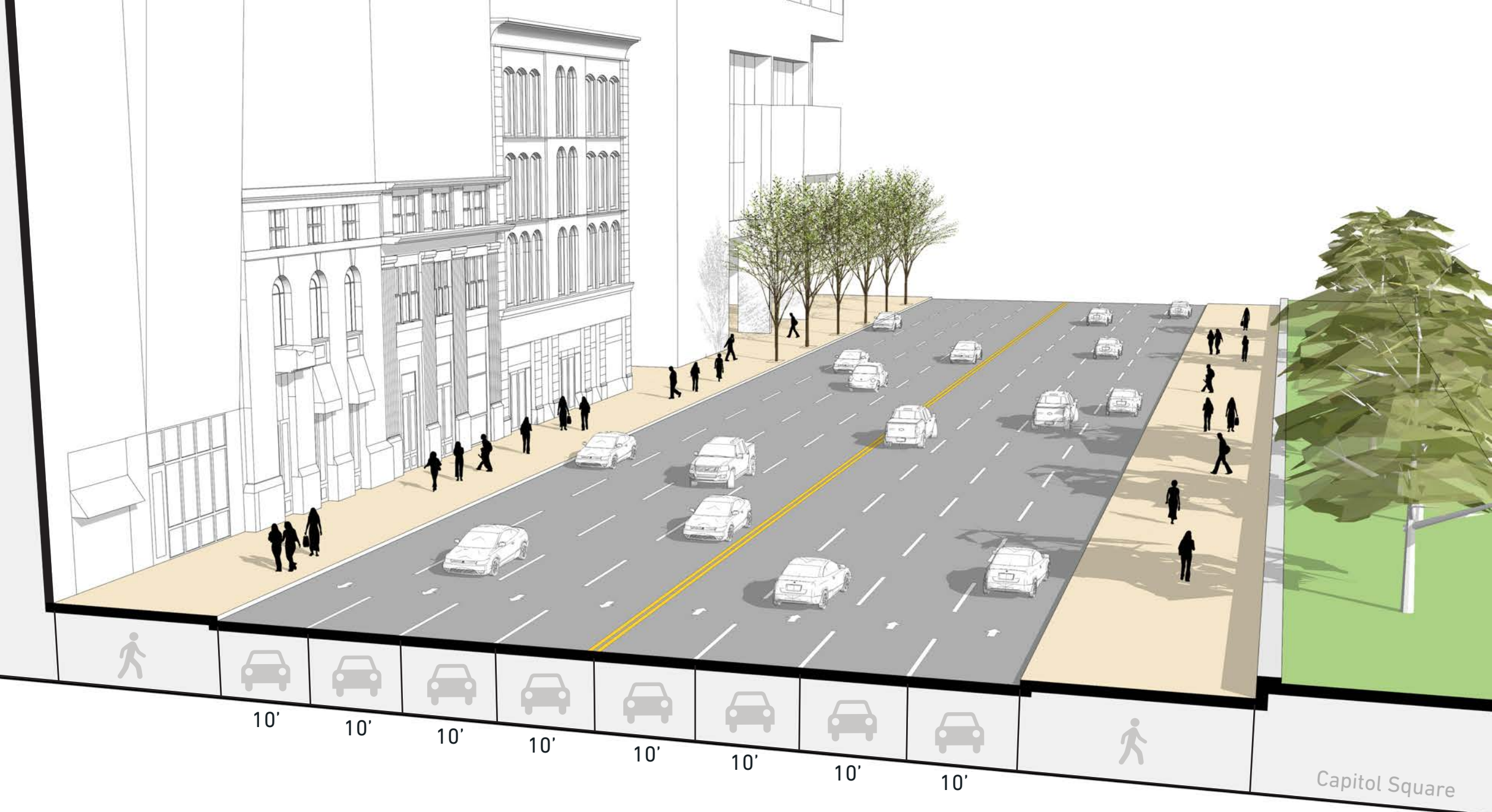


KEY
● Cultural Institutions
● Hotels

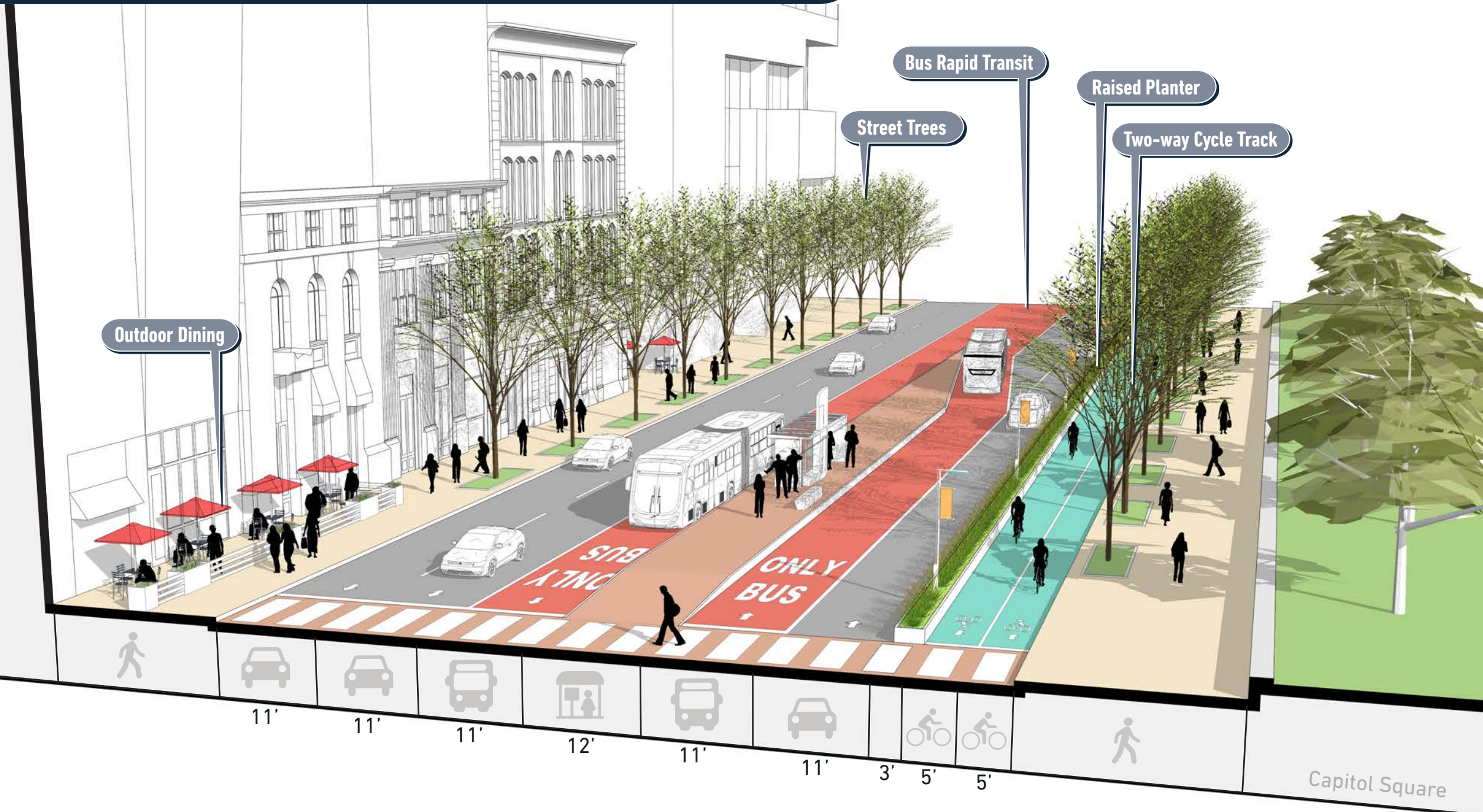
REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | CAPITAL TRAIL



REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | BROAD STREET EXISTING



REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN STREETS | BROAD STREET FUTURE



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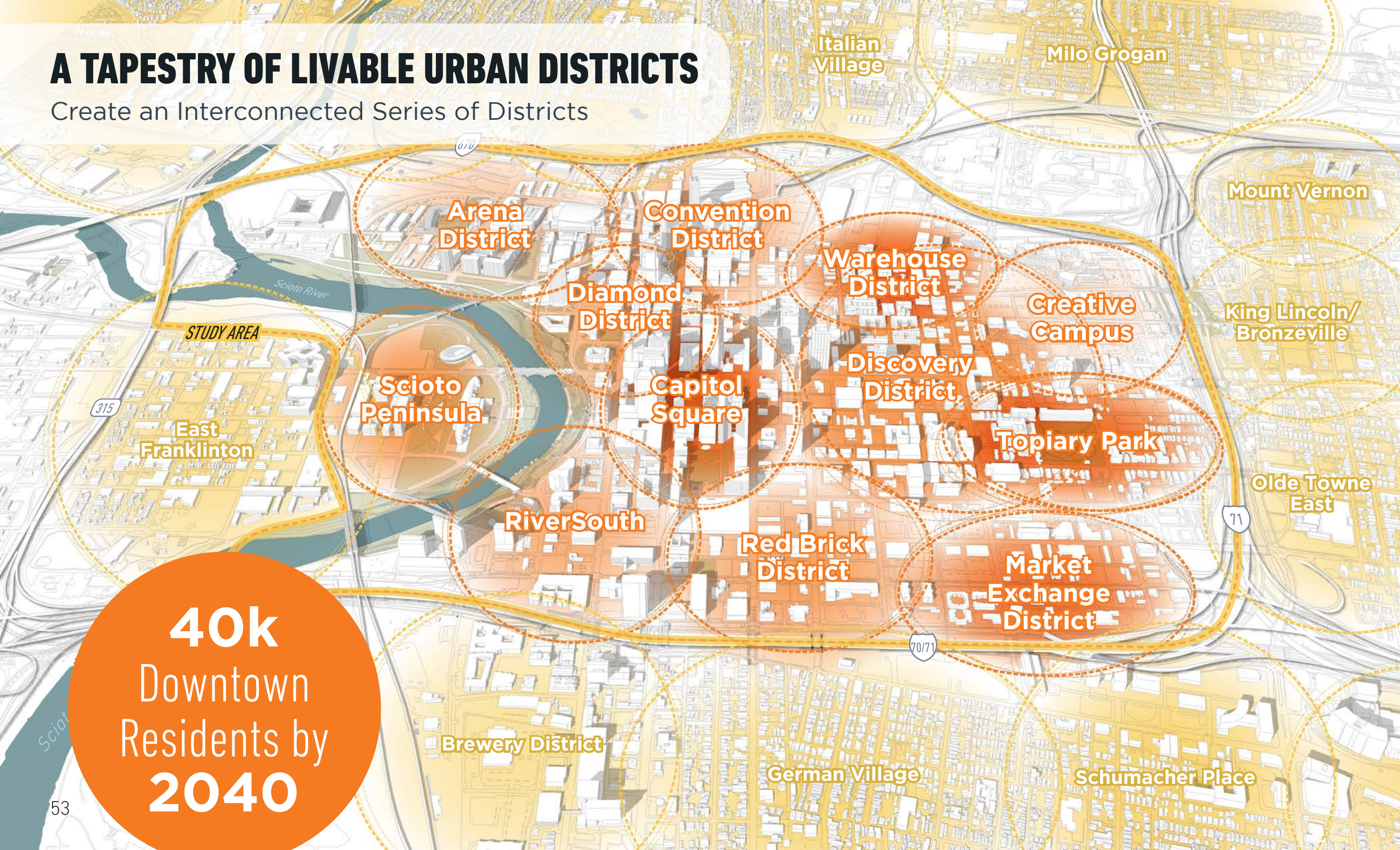
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Create an Interconnected Series of Districts



40k
Downtown
Residents by
2040

WHAT MAKES A LIVABLE URBAN DISTRICT?

Essential Elements



P Parking Garage



M Mix of Uses



H Diversity of Housing



A Active Street or Node



F Focal Public Space



O Office Environments



R Retail & Third Places



S Supportive Services

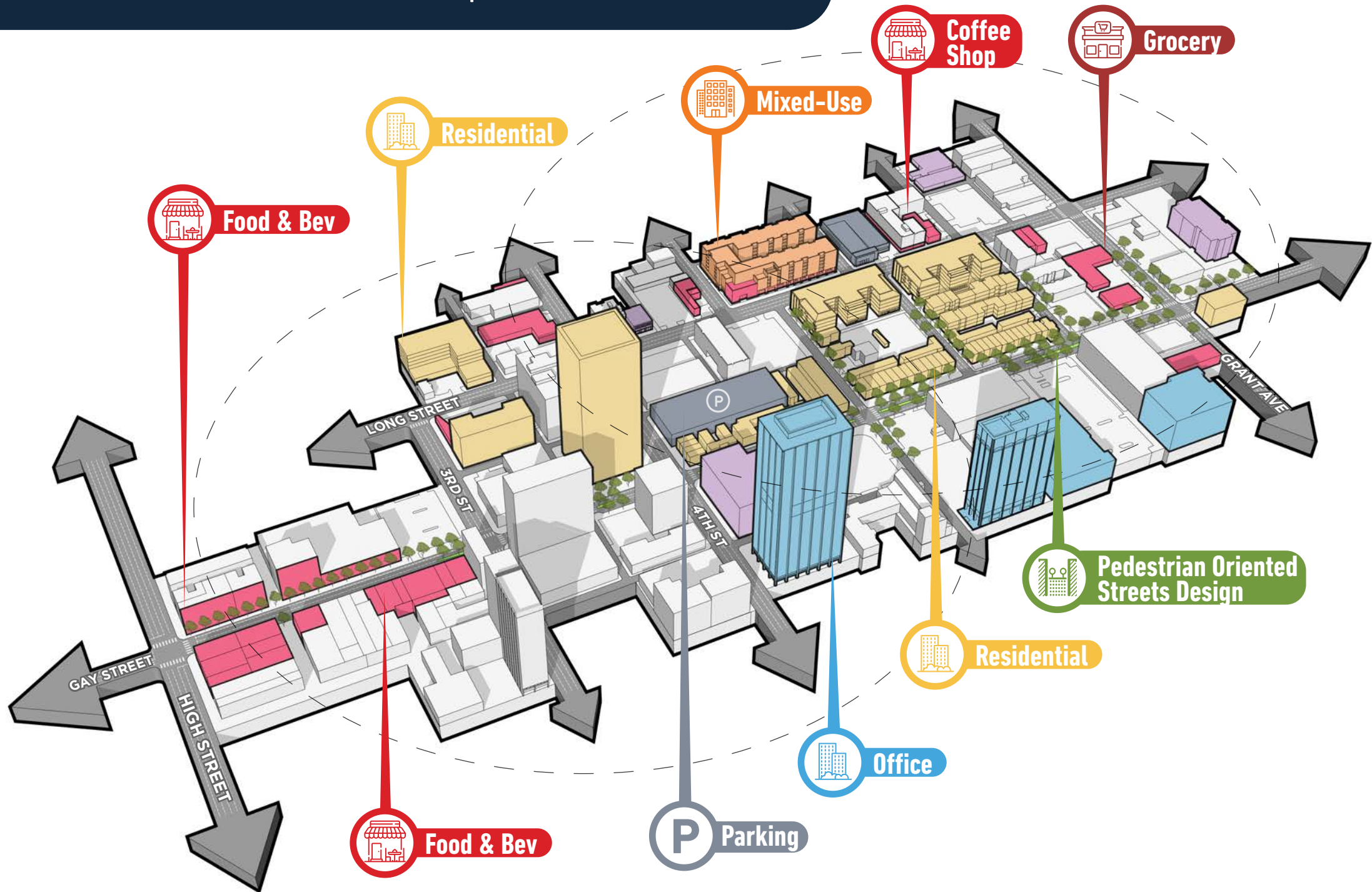


L Low Stress Linkages



T Transit Access

BUILD ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE | GAY STREET EXAMPLE



BUILD ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

EXISTING CONDITION:

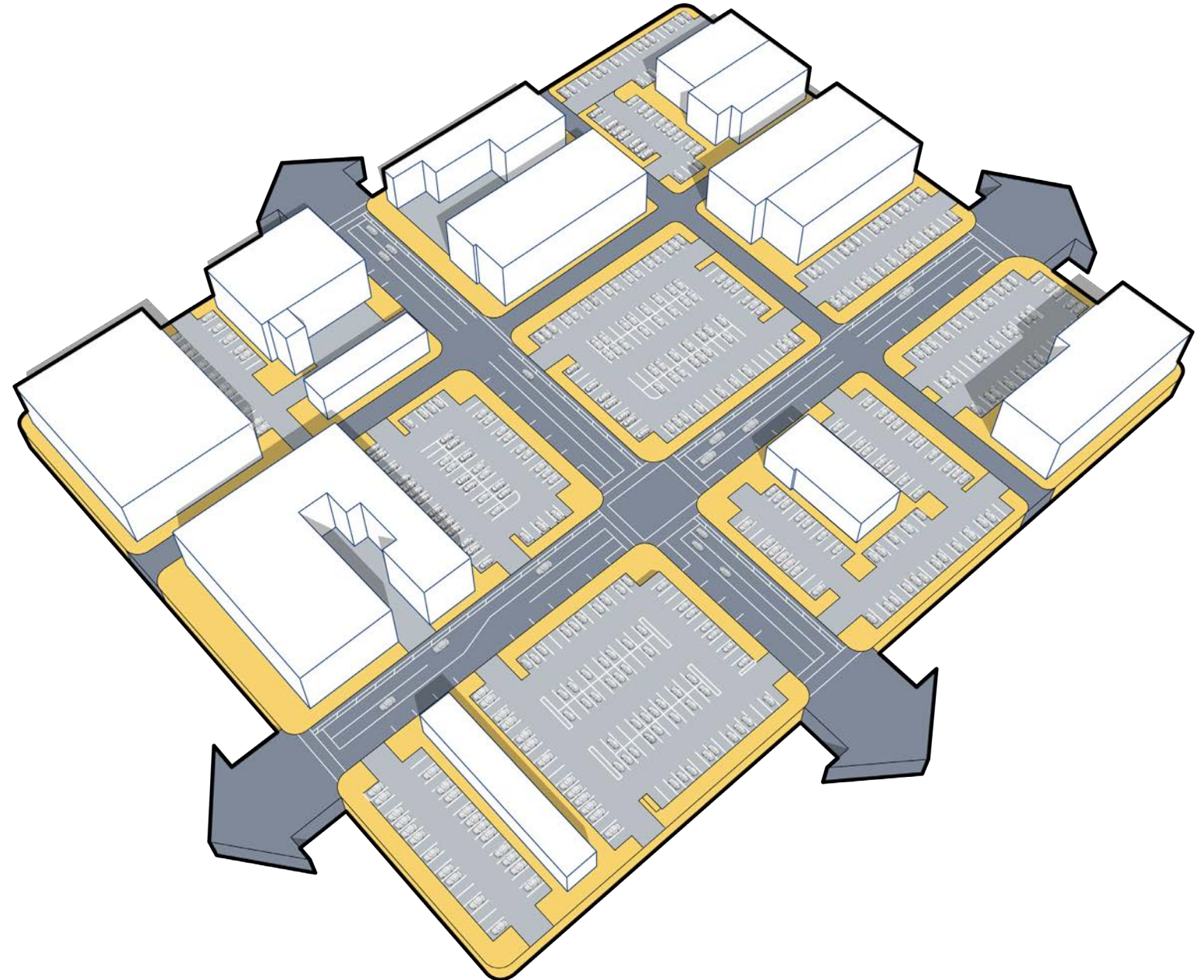
Downtown District with Streets and Blocks dominated by Surface Parking Lots

FACTOID:

Downtown has 214 acres of land devoted to surface parking lots today.

THE CHALLENGE:

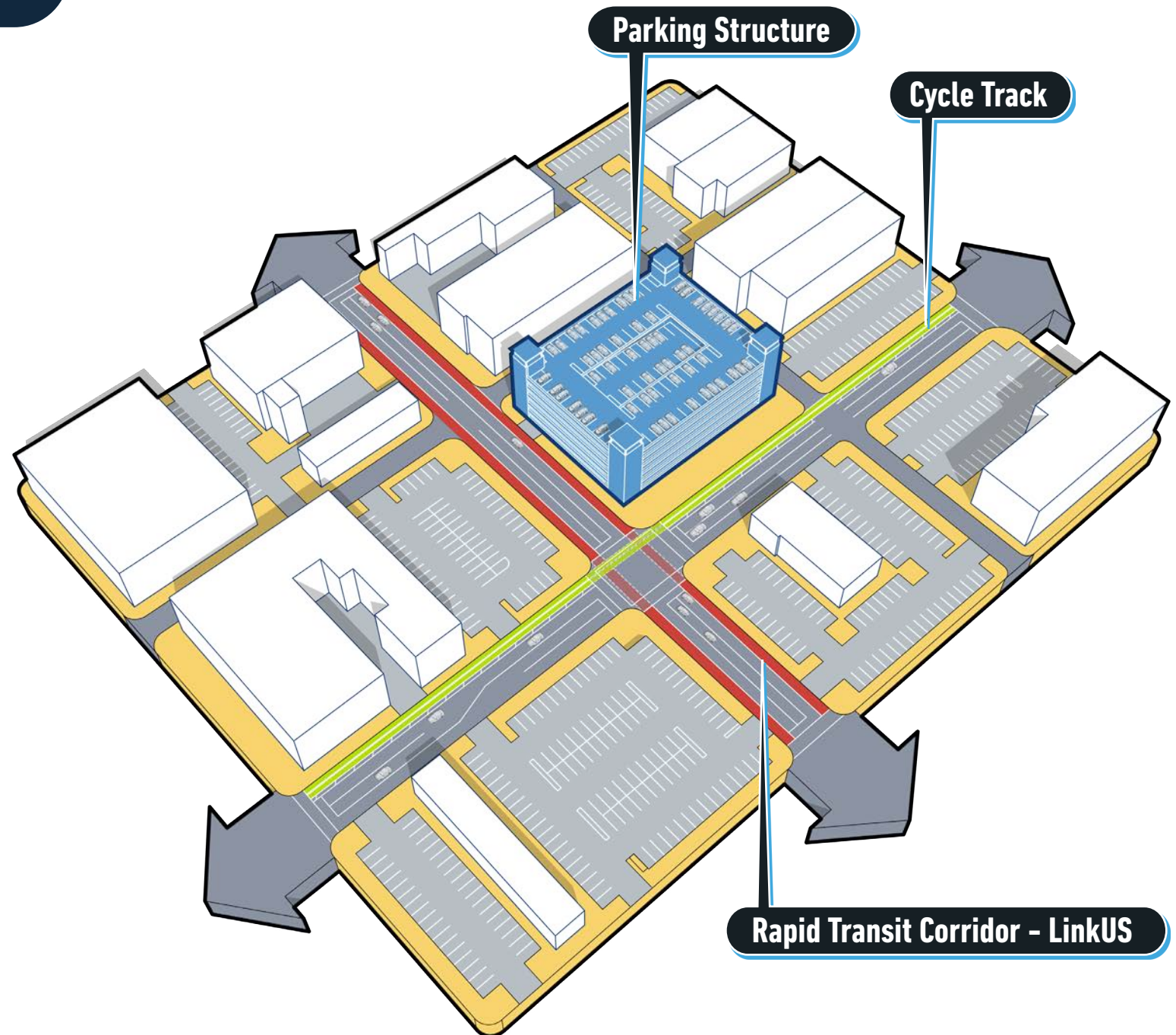
To achieve downtown goals, need to incentivize conversion of surface lots to create active streetfronts and livable mixed use districts.



BUILD ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Parking Structure built to meet District's parking needs to **unlock Development Potential**.

In addition, **High Capacity Rapid Transit and Low Stress Bike Network** created to encourage other modes of transportation and support **Transit-Oriented Development**.

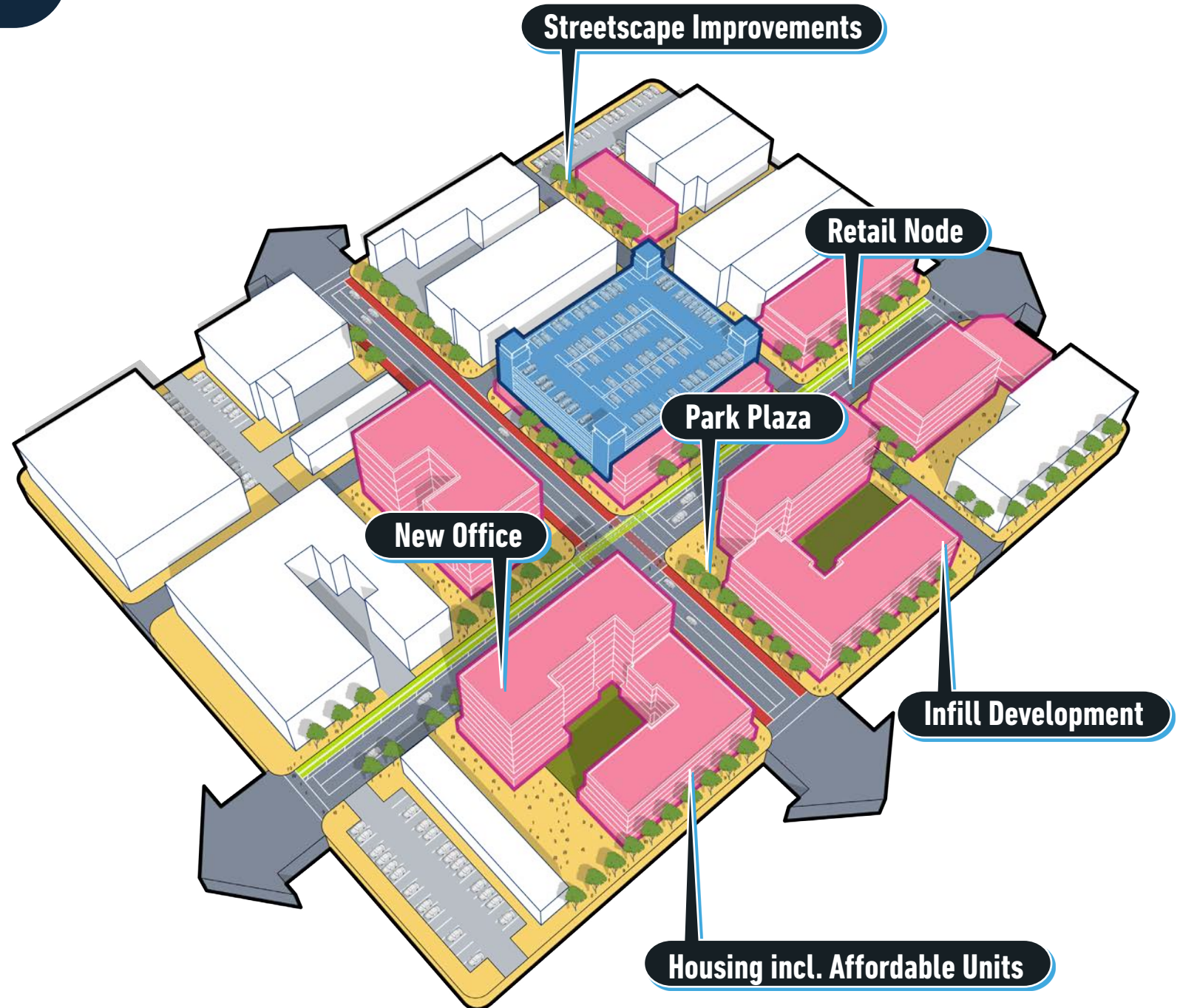


BUILD ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSFORMATION:

Mix of uses encouraged that provides spectrum of housing, corner retail spaces, creation of third places, and dynamic office environments.

- New Columbus Housing incentives aid in providing affordable units.
- Transformational Mixed-Use Development Program tax credits support office creation.
- New Small Business Retail Program supports retail node.
- Linear Park Street Program, Public Art Program, etc, create attractive, healthy environment.



BUILD OUT DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS | WAREHOUSE DISTRICT EXAMPLE TODAY



Columbus State

View on Grant

BalletMet

Nationwide Blvd

Wolf's Ridge

CCAD

Pins Mechanical

Neighborhood Launch

N 3rd Street

N 4th Street

E Spring Street

Cleveland Avenue

N Grant Avenue

E Gay Street

East Broad Street

BUILD OUT DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS | WAREHOUSE DISTRICT EXAMPLE POTENTIAL



Nationwide Blvd

Bike Corridor

BalletMet

View on Grant

Columbus State

Activated Intersection

Pocket Parks

Wolf's Ridge

Parking Structure

Square About

Public Art

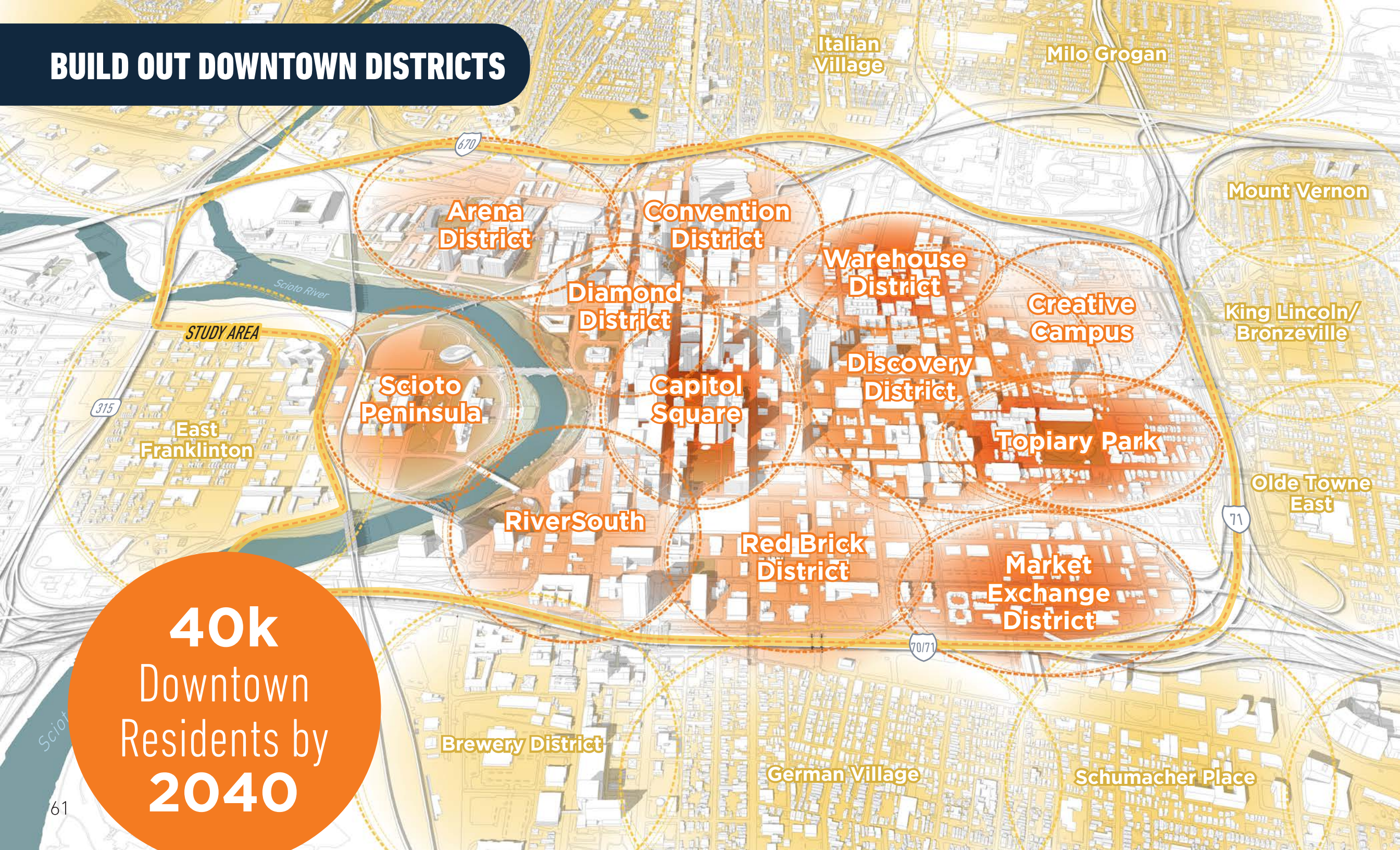
CCAD

Pins Mechanical

Neighborhood Launch

LinkUS Corridor

BUILD OUT DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS



40k
Downtown
Residents by
2040



NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

- Prepare Draft Plan
- Final Plan presented to Columbus City Council for approval

CIVIC CENTER COMMONS

As described in the Existing Conditions Analysis section of the report, Civic Center Plaza is in poor condition and in need of major repairs and complete replacement in most areas. From a design and pedestrian standpoint, the space is insufficient, uninviting and lacks amenities and programming. It is not a welcoming front door for visitors of the CBC.

It is possible to rebuild the plaza in a similar manner to its current design, but serve as a catalyst for future neighborhood development. Concurrent with the redevelopment of the Municipal Courts serve as a new front door to the CBC, new the space.

Civic Center Commons needs to continue to serve the access needs of existing users, including the City-County Library and Aloft hotel, but could contribute to the enhancement of the Aloft site in the short term. A reimagined Civic Center Plaza could incentivize improvements to the existing plaza through reuse, redevelopment, or enhancement of existing uses.

Civic Center Commons is the linchpin between the core of the CBD and the new front door to the CBC. Improvements are already underway to the 5th Street corridor space needed to complete the 5th Street promenade from the CBC to Main Street. In addition to the site adjacent to Civic Center Commons, a completed 5th Street promenade would incentivize infill development east of Denver Avenue along both sides of 5th Street.

Within the district, Civic Center Commons would serve as the heart of the public realm, providing a vital connection to all new and existing public spaces north-south through the neighborhood. The commons would provide great space for long, centralized gathering space for programmed events.

Multiple design opportunities exist for this space due to an existing grade change with Denver Avenue being the high point sloping down to Civic Center Drive. A redesigned hardscape plaza along Denver Avenue should continue to allow both City-County Library and garage. The library from a use and aesthetic standpoint, so care should be put into creating a new building. The lower space along Civic Center Drive should provide opportunities for formal gathering and programmed events, with both lawn and programmed areas. Pedestrian scale seating, lighting, plantings and shade should be provided throughout the space. With the potential for a high user count there could also be opportunities for temporary installations during large events.

Some existing parking could be rebuilt underneath with additional parking built into redevelopments on adjacent blocks.

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RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

PROJECT	REFERENCE PAGE
SIGNATURE PROJECTS	
A. Convention Center Expansion + Full-Service Hotel	90
B. Page Batcher Federal Building Site Redevelopment	85
C. Transit Center Block Redevelopment + Transit Integration	94
PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS	
D. BOK Center in the Park	98
E. Convention Center Linear Park	100
F. Civic Center Commons	106
G. Denver Avenue Park	100
H. Plaza of the Americas	114
STREET PROJECTS	
I. 3rd Street Streetscape	100
J. Denver Avenue Streetscape	100
K. Boulder Avenue Streetscape	100
L1. 8th Street	100
L2. 7th Street	100
L3. 8th Street	100
L4. Houston Avenue	100

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TONIGHT'S ACTIVITIES

- Assign a facilitator/note taker for your table
- Discuss the plan strategies with your table
- The facilitator/note taker should take notes about your group's discussion on the 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper
- At the end, the facilitator will share your group's top 3 priorities





THANK YOU!



DOWNTOWN
COLUMBUS
STRATEGIC
PLAN