

SECTION 3

OPEN SPACE
LANDSCAPE & OPEN SPACE

SECTION 3: OPEN SPACE

Landscape and Open Space

Open space provides a range of important benefits: in urban settings it provides gathering places for all types of people and brings life and activity to the street, it preserves natural and environmentally sensitive areas, and it serves recreational and, if properly designed, mobility needs. Public spaces and well-connected neighborhoods play an important role in sustaining social and economic diversity by promoting social interaction on sidewalks and in shared public spaces.

The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan seeks to provide all of these open space benefits through a combination of public and private actions. Exhibit 3.1 identifies potential sites for various types of open spaces such as parks, plazas, and greenways. Specific open space recommendations are provided below.

Open Space Recommendations:

Incorporate a range of types and sizes of open space within the area

A successful open space system provides a variety of opportunities to experience the outdoors – some natural, some urban, some limited to a specific site, some running continuously through a larger area. Different types of open space should be provided in different areas of the East Riverside Corridor, for example urban open space such as plazas, squares, and streetscapes in the Hubs, pocket parks in residential areas, and greenways along creeks or trails. Amenities for children should be integrated into the design of open space, not only in traditional parks, but also into plazas and more urban spaces where people gather. Open space should also be provided at a variety of scales, from the regional park or greenbelt to a neighborhood pocket park or square. A potential transit plaza at the East Riverside Drive/Pleasant Valley Blvd. intersection could create

much needed public gathering space in the heart of the Corridor, and allow for an celebrate community markets and other neighborhood activities.

Provide improved connections between Lady Bird Lake and Roy G. Guerrero Park to the East Riverside Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods

The East Riverside Corridor area is located close to major regional parks and open space amenities (Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park and trail system, and Roy G. Guerrero Park) but improved connections and integration with these regional parks is needed for residents and visitors to realize the full benefit of these amenities.

There are several options to provide enhanced connections between these parks and the East Riverside Corridor area including completion of the Country Club Creek trail including an underpass at East Riverside Drive and improved streetscapes and bikeways on major streets leading to Lady Bird Lake and Guerrero Park.

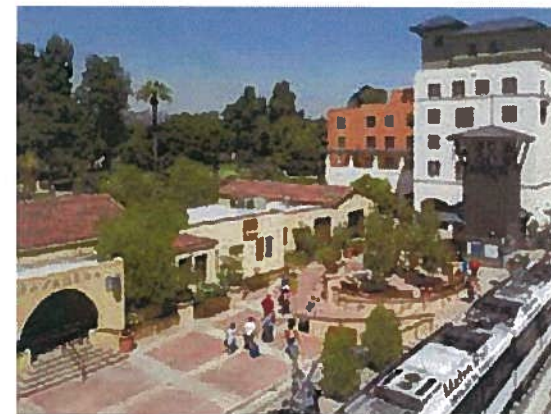
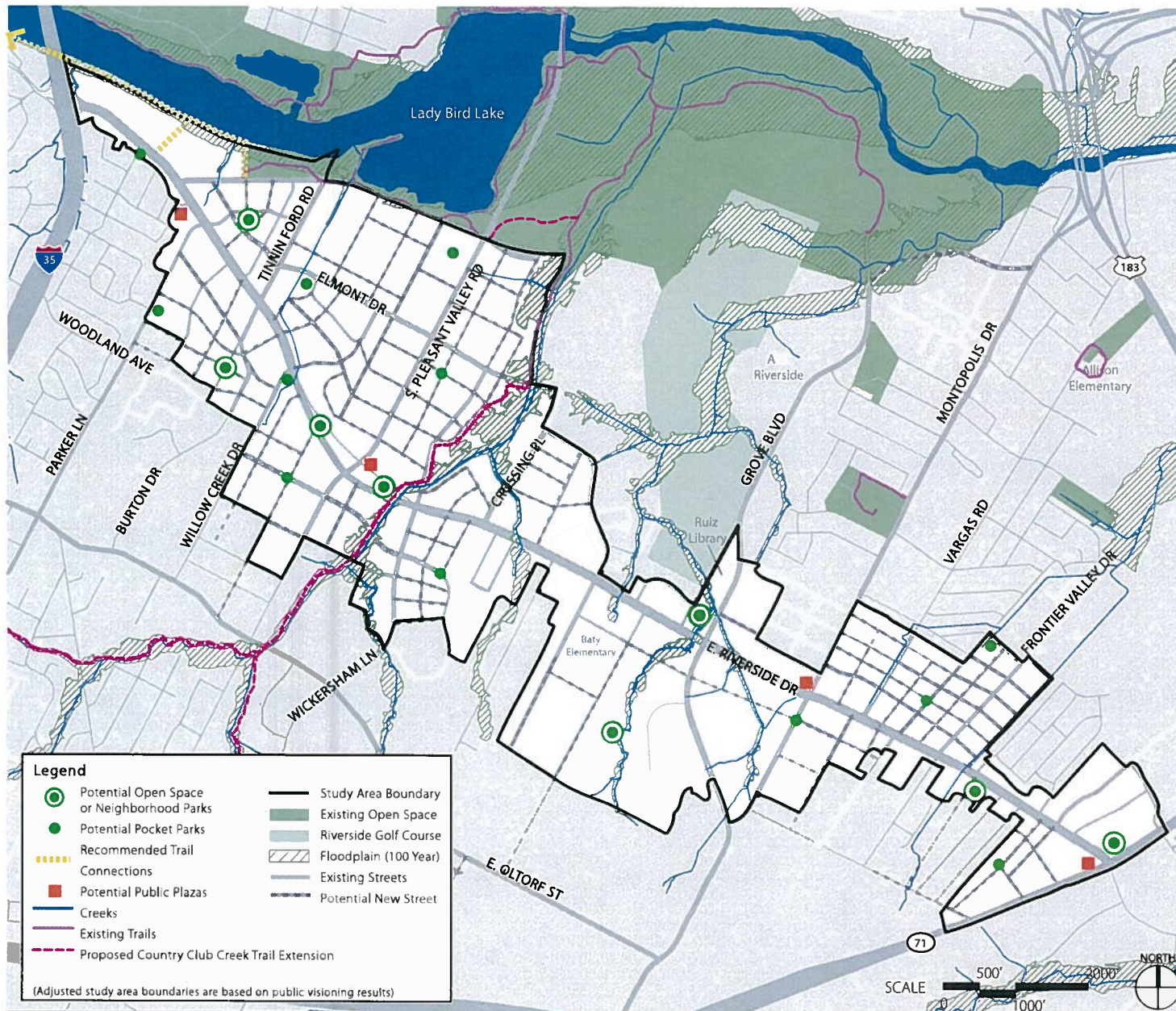


Exhibit 3.1:
Open Space Map



Note: This map represents a conceptual distribution of open space and parks.

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Increase open space in the area south of East Riverside Drive

As mentioned above, the area north of East Riverside Drive is near large regional parks and open space. The Montopolis neighborhood, east of Grove Boulevard, also has several neighborhood parks within its boundaries. In contrast, the area south of East Riverside Drive within the planning area does not currently have any public park land, playscapes or amenities such as a community pool. The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department should actively seek to acquire open space to serve this area.

Prioritize preservation of existing natural areas and trees

Much of the East Riverside corridor was developed with minimal protection of natural and riparian areas. As new development occurs in the Planning area, remaining natural areas such as floodplain or significant stands of trees should be priorities for preservation as open space. Trees along Lakeshore Drive donated by the Lower Colorado River Authority should be preserved.

Establish a network of shaded streetscapes, bikeways and boulevards to connect open space, major activity centers and transit stops

Streets are a city's most abundant and widespread public space. Streets can also provide new open space, increase access and connections to existing open space, enhance the community's quality of life, and elevate walking, biking and transit as alternatives to the automobile.

While linear amenities such as shaded streetscapes, bikeways and boulevards have not typically been viewed as open space, recent projects in Austin such as the Cesar Chavez promenade, Second Street, or the

Lance Armstrong Bikeway demonstrate the capacity for creating active and desirable places for people to gather and recreate along linear spaces.

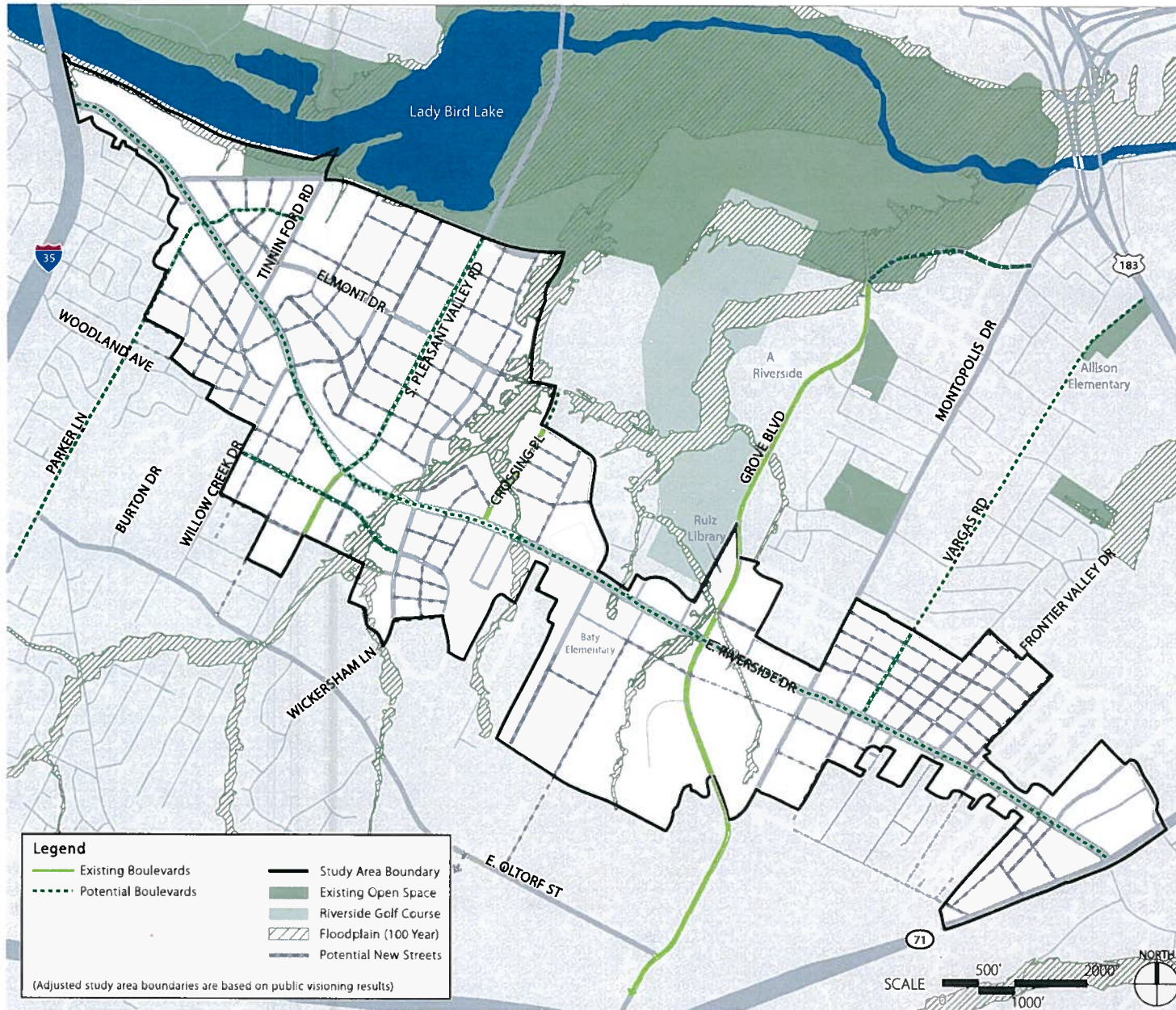
Boulevards offer another opportunity to both increase open space and enhance pedestrian and bike connections. A boulevard is a major street with a tree or plant-lined center divider median. Boulevards can transform busy streets into an environment that better balances vehicles and pedestrians by dividing the traffic lanes into smaller, more manageable increments, creating safer crossing opportunities for pedestrians, and in some cases provide linear paths within the median. The Master Plan identifies specific pedestrian, bicycle and boulevard linkages throughout the area that can provide these benefits. Exhibit 3.2 Boulevards Map identifies both existing and potential boulevards within and near the East Riverside Corridor. These could be implemented through future private development, community grants, and City Capital Improvement Projects.



Example of a boulevard street section



Exhibit 3.2:
Boulevards Map



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As redevelopment and public improvements occur, require well designed on-site open space. Establish standards to ensure that this open space is of high-quality and part of an overall system rather than remnant areas of private development or public infrastructure projects

In much of the existing development in the East Riverside Corridor open space is not integrated into the design of projects but is frequently the area left over after the project is designed and built. Where open space is provided it is rarely linked to other open space amenities. Future redevelopment of the East Riverside Corridor offers the opportunity to take a more thoughtful approach to creating new, useable open space.

The Design Standards and Mixed Use Subchapter of Austin's Land Development Code established standards for on-site private common open space for all sites 5 acres or larger. These standards should be refined and enhanced as part of the adoption of development regulations for the East Riverside Corridor to ensure new on-site open space is of high quality and creates a network of open space. In addition, larger sites should be required to partially fulfill parkland dedication requirements on-site through the development of public pocket parks and greenway connections.

Integrate open space with green infrastructure/ sustainable stormwater facilities

The East Riverside Corridor has the opportunity to address open space, water quality and stormwater drainage issues through what is sometimes referred to as "green infrastructure". Green infrastructure can manage stormwater runoff, increase open space and enhance community and neighborhood livability by using vegetated swales, rain gardens and other small scale, low impact facilities to manage stormwater runoff at its source. These combined stormwater and open space facilities are discussed in more detail in Section 6: Infrastructure.



Streetscaping Opportunities for the Corridor

SECTION 4

LAND USE & DENSITY

DEVELOPMENT HUBS
CHARACTER OF THE HUBS
PROPOSED LAND USE DISTRICTS
DEVELOPMENT BONUS
RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION 4: LAND USE & DENSITY

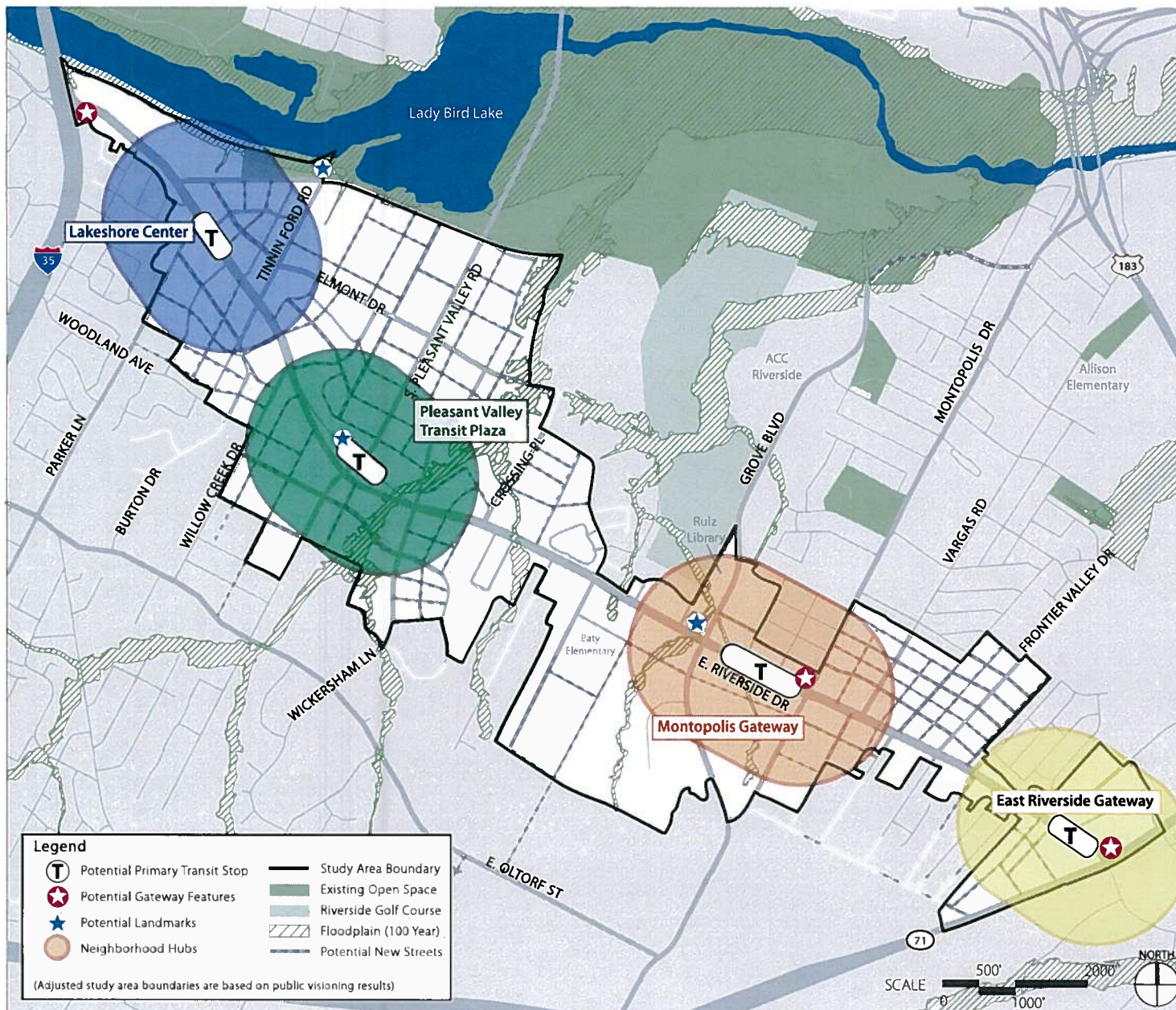


Exhibit 4.1:
Neighborhood Hubs Map

Note: Hubs represent an approximate 5 minute walk from the primary transit stop.

Development Hubs

One of the principal recommendations of this Plan is to focus future development into “Hubs” or centers along East Riverside Drive concentrated around proposed primary rail stops with dense commercial, residential and mixed uses. Through the visioning process, four distinctive Hubs were identified along the Corridor. The goal is to create a center that is active throughout the day, reduces auto dependence, and creates a unique sense of place within each Hub. The Hubs serve to break up the currently monotonous string of strip malls and surface parking into several distinct, identifiable, pedestrian friendly neighborhood commercial centers along the Corridor. The oblong symbols on Exhibit 4.1 indicate the general area recommended for Hubs and also show the general location of the proposed primary transit stops. Although the Hub locations are shown conceptually as a 1/4 mile radius (5-minute walking distance) from proposed primary rail stops, the recommendations and Hub characteristics described in this Master Plan would only apply to properties within the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area boundaries.

From west to east the proposed Hubs are:

Lakeshore Center;

Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza;

Montopolis Gateway; and

East Riverside Gateway.

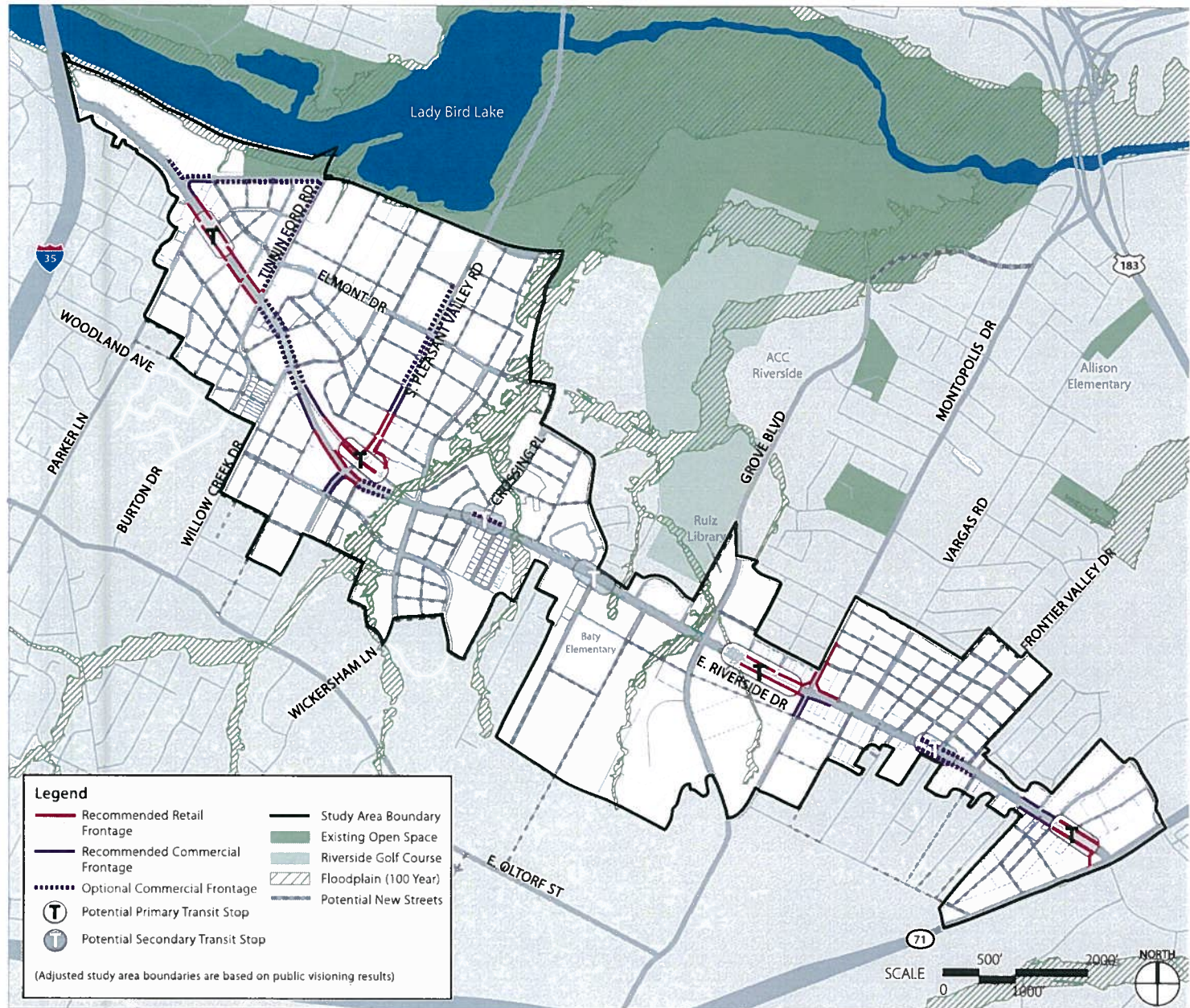
The area within the Hubs is differentiated from the rest of the corridor by the concentration of higher density mixed use development with ground floor retail and commercial space, and residential units above, and their proximity to transit stations. The strategic location of

ground floor commercial use, such as retail and office, is crucial to achieving the goals of increasing street activity, discouraging criminal behavior, and enhancing the pedestrian realm. Where these uses are recommended, as shown on Exhibit 4.2 Commercial Frontages Map, buildings should provide the ground floor commercial or retail uses and be built up to or near the sidewalk edge. Buildings should be designed to give the sense of an active use and provide interest for the pedestrian. This combination of uses cultivates a pedestrian and transit oriented environment, where residents, workers, or visitors can arrive by foot or via transit and be within a five to ten minute walk of retail and services.

The Hubs are the areas in the Corridor where it is suggested that new development should be focused and concentrated. Within the Hubs, a development bonus system is recommended to permit greater heights and/or densities if a public benefit is provided in exchange. Only properties that are within both the East Riverside Corridor planning area and in one of the four suggested Hubs are eligible for development bonuses. Focusing more dense development near primary transit stops enables a greater number of people to walk to transit, reducing the need and expense of a car. The following pages provide a brief description of the character envisioned for each Hub.

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Exhibit 4.2:
*Retail and
Commercial Frontages Map*



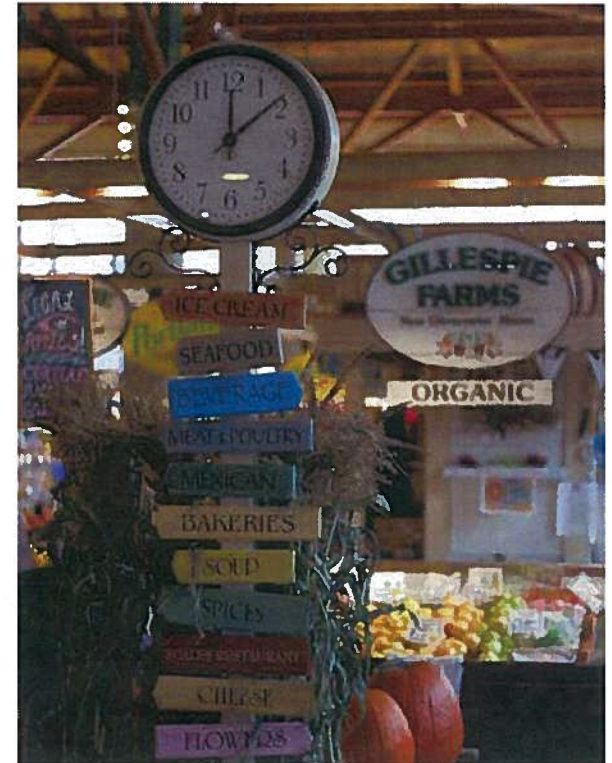
Character of the Hubs

LAKESHORE CENTER

The proposed Lakeshore Center Hub near Lakeshore Drive and East Riverside Drive, with its proximity to Lady Bird Lake and surrounding natural areas, provides a unique opportunity to mix nature with an urban center. The vision for the Lakeshore Center Hub is to create a green, sustainable, and livable mixed use area that benefits from and complements the area's proximity to existing open space around Lady Bird Lake and high quality transit along East Riverside Drive. This area is already experiencing new development, which can serve as a springboard for the Lakeshore Center Hub.

This Hub could be based on its identity as an access point to Lady Bird Lake and the associated park and trail system, and from a potential new Farmer's Market that would ideally be located across from the transit station. This area's proximity to Lady Bird Lake, downtown, and new developments that are in the planning or construction stages ensure that a potential transit stop would be well-used from opening day. In this area, East Riverside Drive will be a lively commercial street lined with mixed use buildings with retail storefronts on the

ground floor. The pedestrian environment will provide a green connection from the transit stop to Lady Bird Lake. Commercial frontages could continue on Lakeshore Blvd., providing opportunity for sidewalk cafes and other ways to enjoy the lakefront views.





PLEASANT VALLEY TRANSIT PLAZA

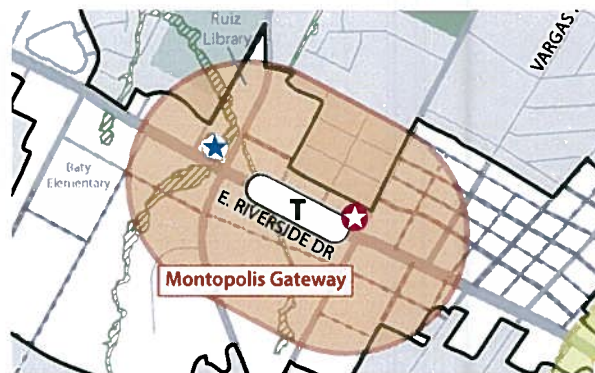
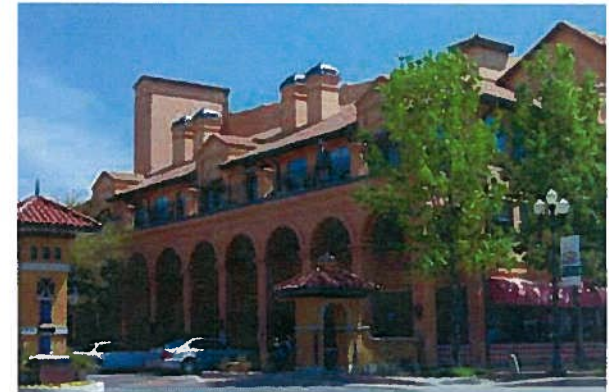
The Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza is envisioned as a major public amenity within the Corridor and is intended to create a distinct area within the planning area by combining unique plaza and open space elements with new buildings providing local and regional services and amenities.

The intention for the Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza is to create a destination for both residents and visitors to the Corridor. The central feature of the Hub is a paved transit plaza (illustrated in the adjacent rendering). Buildings surrounding the plaza could feature major retail and office uses, retaining large retailers existing in the area such as a grocery store, and providing areas for housing. The plaza area will be pedestrian-focused and draw pedestrian activity away from the nearby busy East Riverside Drive and Pleasant Valley Roads into a transit and pedestrian oriented space. A market in the plaza could provide an opportunity for small retailers to benefit from high levels of pedestrian traffic. The potential development of City-owned land in the existing median of the intersection could serve as a catalyst for redevelopment in the area and be a showcase for the type of transit-oriented development envisioned in this Master Plan, including community gathering spaces and housing affordable to a mix of income levels. Transforming this portion of East Riverside Drive into a pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial center will create a major focal point in the planning area.

MONTOPOLIS GATEWAY

Montopolis was originally settled as a separate community on the outskirts of Austin and is still a vibrant area with its own unique character. What is missing, however, is a neighborhood center that echoes that vibrancy. The goal of the Montopolis Gateway Hub is to capture the vitality of the Montopolis community, and to provide a commercial center for the residents of the Montopolis neighborhood, the employees of Tokyo Electron, and the students of the local ACC campus. This Hub will be a gateway to the Corridor from adjacent neighborhoods and Austin Community College Riverside Campus, as well as a connection to other civic amenities such as the Ruiz branch library, and the Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park and trails. The Hispanic presence in the area should be reflected in the character and uses in this hub to distinguish it from other hubs.

Gateway or landmark features at Montopolis Drive or Grove Boulevard are suggested to signify the entrance to the Montopolis neighborhood and the ACC Riverside Campus. Smaller scaled retail buildings are suggested along Montopolis Drive and East Riverside Drive to provide a commercial center for the area. As in other Hubs, a transit stop is suggested for this area so that residents, students, and workers have the option to use high quality transit. Improved streetscaping and the enhancement of existing open space will help to integrate nature with the built environment.



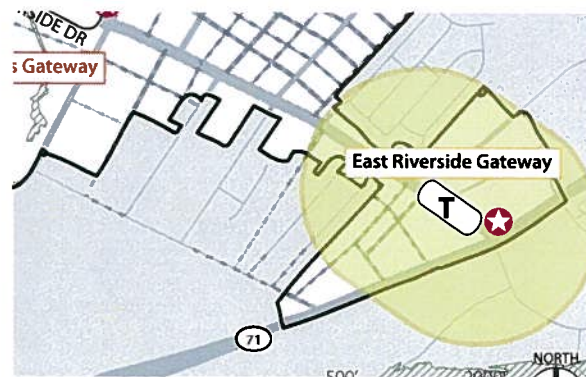


EAST RIVERSIDE GATEWAY

The intersection of Ben White Boulevard (SH 71) and East Riverside Drive is currently designed essentially as an intersection of highways with little accommodation for pedestrians. What it could be, however, is an active gateway area to the East Riverside Corridor with a busy transit hub, plaza, and commercial and retail uses. The recommendation for an improved treatment of this intersection and surrounding area includes a small

plaza and open space. The placement of a landmark or gateway feature combined with the placement of mixed use buildings along East Riverside Drive will serve as a gateway to the East Riverside Corridor. The East Riverside Gateway should create an important first impression of the Corridor for travelers entering the area from the east.

Commercial and office uses are recommended on the ground floor of buildings in the Hub to provide activity at street level. This area could serve as a regional employment center for businesses that would benefit from good highway access, proximity to the airport and the future rail connection downtown. In addition, this Hub has the potential to serve as an important transportation center because of its proximity to SH 71 and the airport; a regional parking structure is therefore suggested for this Hub. Services supporting the transportation center could provide jobs and neighborhood amenities.



Proposed Land Use Districts

The Land Use District designations proposed in this Master Plan generally describe land uses, densities and building heights envisioned for different subareas within the Corridor. These recommendations establish a framework that will guide the creation of future development regulations for properties in the planning area. The Land Use Districts are based on the concept of defining Hubs or centers adjacent to major transit stops. Their placement was carefully considered to encourage the most logical and comprehensive design relating to the proposed rail line and to existing uses in close proximity to the planning area, with the goal of creating a more pedestrian-friendly area. The allowance of greater density and mixed use development near proposed primary transit stops along East Riverside Drive should help to alleviate pressure on single family areas by providing additional units to meet some of the demand created by Austin's increasing population. Compatibility standards regulating the height of buildings in close proximity to single family residences will apply, creating a transition between single family properties and other types of buildings. The districts do not indicate property rezonings but are intended to guide such decisions in the future. This Master Plan identifies recommended entitlements (building heights, density and floor-to-area ratio (FAR)) for each land use district, as shown in Exhibit 4.4. These will form the framework for new zoning regulations to be created for the area following adoption of the plan. For the most part, these base entitlements are similar to existing zoning in the area, but would include improved urban design requirements to make the area more pedestrian-friendly.

Exhibit 4.3 illustrates the proposed Land Use Districts for the planning area. There are six district designations:

Corridor Mixed Use District

The Corridor Mixed Use District is centered on primary transit stops along East Riverside Drive. This land use district generally coincides with the central core of the Hubs. This is the highest density district designation within the Corridor and ideally will contain buildings with multiple uses. The ground floors of these buildings are envisioned to be primarily retail or office while upper floors may be office and /or residential. Single use buildings are not encouraged in this District. This District is not intended for detached single family home development due to its proximity to a transit stop.

Mixed use development is key in this district because it will improve walkability due to a variety of land uses located in a compact area. Residents can easily walk to a variety of services that otherwise would require a vehicle trip. When mixed use development is combined with accessible transit as is proposed in this Master Plan, dependence on personal vehicles can be greatly reduced. This district is envisioned to allow up to approximately 5 stories in height (60 feet), but properties within the hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses, which are further explained on the following pages.

Neighborhood Mixed Use District

The Neighborhood Mixed Use District generally occupies areas adjacent to a Corridor Mixed Use District, but this will depend also upon surrounding land uses outside the planning area. This District is intended to have opportunities for residential and smaller-scale commercial uses. Neighborhood retail, office and commercial uses may take the form of coffee shops, dry cleaners, convenience stores, small medical clinics, and other local services. Development in the Neighborhood Mixed Use District is less dense

than that in the Corridor Mixed Use district but more dense than the predominantly residential districts described below. Residential units in this district should be townhouses, condos or multifamily dwellings. This District is not intended for detached single family home development due to its proximity to a transit stop. This district is envisioned to allow up to approximately 4 stories in height (50 feet), but properties within the hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses.

Urban Residential District

The Urban Residential District as proposed contains only residential development. Residential units in this district should be townhouses, condos or multifamily dwellings. This District is not intended for detached single family home development due to its proximity to a transit stop. The Urban Residential District is envisioned to allow approximately 3 or 4 stories in height (40 feet), but properties within the hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses.

Neighborhood Residential District

Like the Urban Residential District, the Neighborhood Residential District contains only residential development and is intended to provide a transition from existing single family neighborhoods to the more active, urban development of the core of East Riverside Drive. Residential units may be in the form of detached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and smaller scale multi-family buildings.

Areas that have been designated as Neighborhood Residential are generally located off of East Riverside Drive. A large Neighborhood Residential District has been proposed between Vargas Road and Frontier

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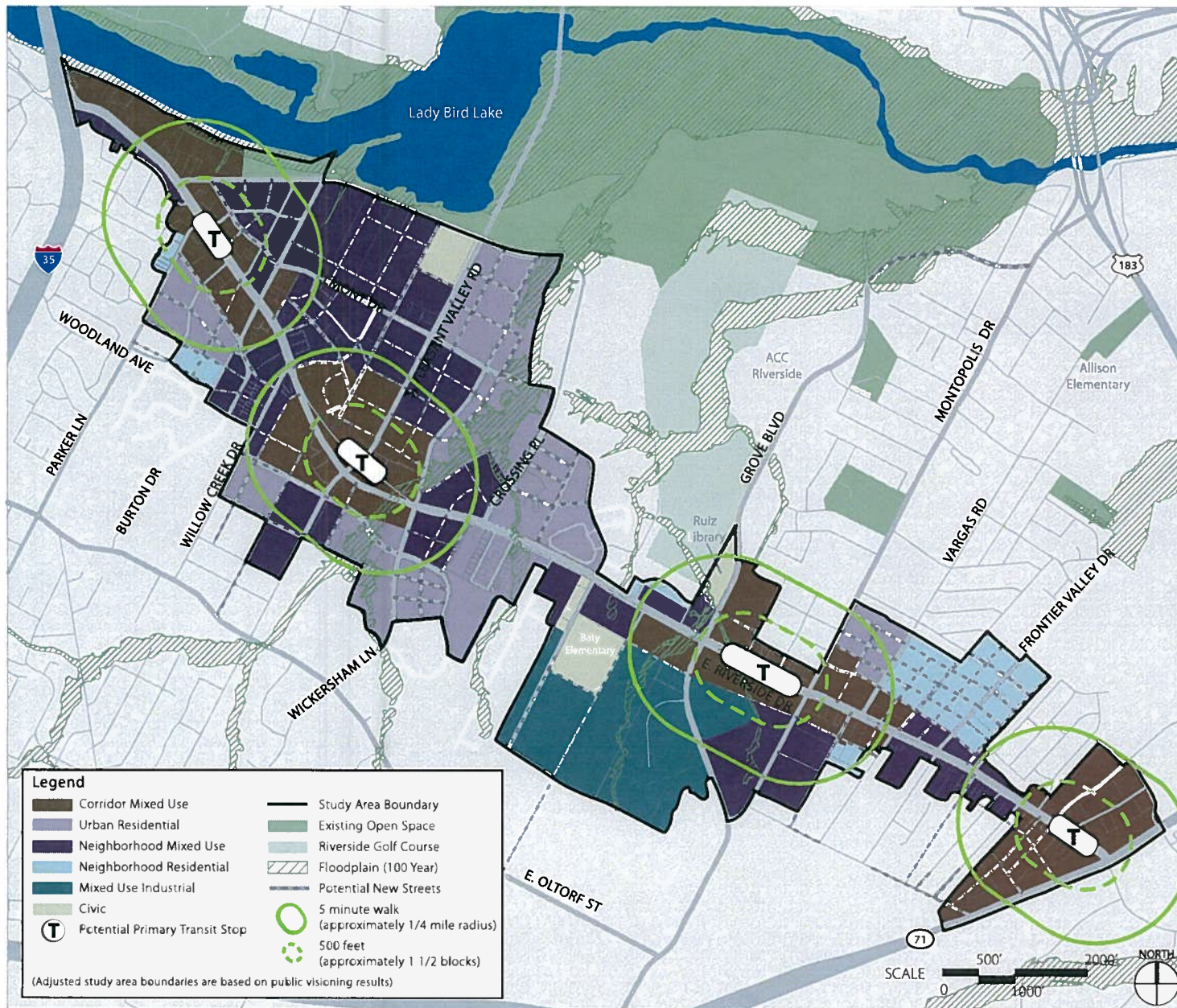


Exhibit 4.3:
Land Use Districts Map

Note: This Corridor Plan shall not constitute zoning regulation or establish zoning district boundaries.

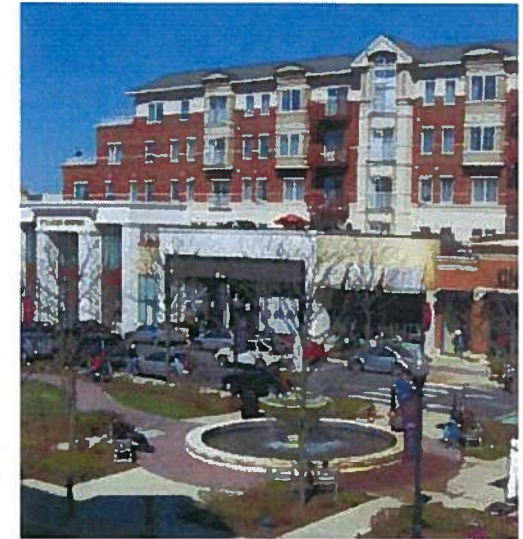
Valley Drive to transition down to neighborhoods to the north of the planning area. Additional areas off of the main corridor of East Riverside Drive have also been designated as Neighborhood Residential Districts for this reason. The Neighborhood Residential District is envisioned to allow up to 3 stories in height (35 feet), and no height or density bonuses would be allowed.

Industrial Mixed Use District

The Industrial Mixed Use District is a land use district specifically tailored to the properties owned by Tokyo Electron and Austin Energy within the planning area. In recognition and support of existing industrial activity in the area, low impact industrial uses are envisioned with added options for retail, office, and attached multi-family residential development. Mixed use is encouraged in this district especially for the portion near East Riverside Drive. Redevelopment of the site could include additional uses integrated with existing development or an entirely new development scheme. This district would have a 60' maximum height limit, but areas within the Hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses.

Civic Spaces

Existing civic facilities in the planning area are identified by a civic designation on the Land Use Districts map. As the East Riverside Corridor area changes and more people make it a place to live, work, and visit, additional civic amenities and services will be necessary to serve the community. Civic facilities could potentially be located anywhere within the planning area and are not limited to the locations identified as Civic on the map. It is clear that additional schools, police, EMS, and fire resources and/or facilities will be needed in the future, but the exact locations for those facilities will be determined when the need arises based on the guidelines of each entity. Austin Independent School District (AISD) and Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) evaluate



Potential Neighborhood Street in Neighborhood Residential or Urban Residential Land Use District

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Exhibit 4.4:
Land Use Districts Chart

	Land Use District	Corridor Mixed Use	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Urban Residential	Neighborhood Residential	Industrial Mixed Use
Building Height & Density	Max Bldg. Height (feet)¹	60'	50'	40'	35' (no height bonus allowed)	60'
	Max. Units/Acre¹	55	45	36	17	45
	Max Floor-to-Area Ratio¹ (FAR)	2:1	1:1	0.75:1	TBD	2:1
Parking	Min. Parking Standards	60% of Appendix A ² (standard City parking requirements), down to 50% with trip reduction programs				
	Max. Parking Standards	100% of Appendix A ²				
	Shared Parking Counted	Yes, per current code				
Allowable Uses	Residential, attached	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
	Residential, detached	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed
	Smaller-scale Retail (less than 50,000 sq. ft.)	Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	General Retail	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Office	Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Warehousing & Light Manufacturing	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Education / Religion	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
	Hospitality (hotels/motels)	Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Civic Uses (public)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed

¹ In designated areas around future primary transit stops, a development bonus may be available for properties to exceed these limits by providing public benefits.

² City of Austin Land Development Code Sec: 25-6 Appendix A (Tables of Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements).

Note: This Corridor Plan shall not constitute zoning regulation or establish zoning district boundaries.



their school needs on a regular basis and have a process through which they determine timelines and locations for new schools. See Appendix A for more information about existing schools serving elementary students living in the East Riverside Corridor area. As part of the visioning process, participants noted that crime was a significant issue in the area and that the redevelopment of blighted areas could be part of the solution to the crime problem. In addition to the potential addition of police facilities in the area, as commercial activity increases, there are more people watching that is happening on the streets, which can help reduce crime.



Exhibit 4.4 shows proposed land use, height and parking standards for each land district. These standards are intended to guide the development of future zoning regulations for the planning area.

Development Bonus Recommendations

The land use districts that form the land use vision for the plan, as described in the previous section, allow for a greater mix of uses and better urban design throughout the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area, but for the most part do not recommend increased allowable density by right around the transit hubs above the existing zoning entitlements. What is recommended for areas near the primary transit stops, however, is the potential for property owners or developers to participate in a development bonus program through which they could be allowed to build taller or more dense buildings in exchange for providing a specified amount of community benefits. This recommendation is based on discussions during the planning process in which a majority of the planning participants supported the idea of allowing additional density around primary transit stops in exchange for community benefits and to bring together more people, jobs, and services in close



proximity to one another and to transit. This would allow more floor area or dwelling units per acre near primary transit stops to reduce walking distances and to have buildings designed in a way that makes it efficient, safe, and convenient to travel by modes other than the automobile, including by foot, bike, and transit.

This Master Plan recommends a number of improvements important to the community to achieve the overall vision of the plan. These include the provision of parks and open space, better circulation and connectivity, transit, improved bike and pedestrian paths, incorporation of sustainability measures in new development, ensuring a continued supply of affordable housing in the area, etc. As described further in the implementation chapter of this plan, the City has various mechanisms for achieving each of these elements, but very simply put, these elements will either be provided by the public sector (City or other agencies) or the private sector through development and redevelopment of privately-owned properties. The City requires private development to take on the responsibility for providing certain public improvements in a development project (e.g., the provision of sidewalks). However, this Master Plan envisions a level and quality of improvements beyond what is typically provided by the City or required of development citywide, and so it will require additional funding sources or mechanisms to implement the vision.

One way for the area to obtain enhanced community benefits such as more parks and open space, improved connectivity, affordable housing, among others, is through a development bonus program. A development bonus program is one in which a developer is able to build a larger building than is normally allowed in exchange for providing specified community benefits. In order to create an additional source of funding and an incentive to provide a higher level of community benefits in the area, it is recommended that a development bonus system be created. Typically, a development bonus program

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is tied to clear public objectives, providing specific quantities of additional floor area above an established maximum, in return for prescribed community benefits. The development bonus approach assumes developers, if allowed to garner more revenue from a given site through greater entitlements, can provide additional benefit to the public. By providing incentives, it can induce developers to provide amenities that result in community-wide benefits, but whose cost is such that it would not otherwise be provided by the "market".

Community Benefits to be Provided in Exchange for Development Bonus

Through questionnaires given during the public planning process, several community benefits have been identified as important for the area and potentially appropriate for inclusion as part of a development bonus program: additional parks and open space (above base requirements), improved landscaping and streetscapes (above base requirements), improved bicycling facilities and cyclist changing/shower rooms, and green building. In addition, stakeholders have identified other potential community benefits for development bonuses, including the preservation and creation of affordable housing, providing homeownership opportunities, providing office uses to create employment centers, retention of small businesses, and possibly the provision of transit facilities as a way of having the private sector provide support for the urban rail project.

The community benefit exchanges for additional height or density will be defined in the Regulating Plan, developed with public input. Development bonuses can be structured to produce desired on-site amenities or features (e.g., parks and plazas, create of new affordable housing units, etc.) and/or to generate revenues for specific community programs (e.g. affordable housing preservation).

Density bonuses can also be tailored to prioritize some community benefits over others. For example, some community benefits may be a requirement for anyone seeking a development bonus, while others may be presented as options from which a developer may choose to complete the package of benefits to be provided in exchange for additional entitlements. While this Master Plan generally identifies the types of community benefits that may be required in exchange for additional entitlements, it does not specify priority. The selection of eligible community benefits, the specific exchanges, and the level of developer flexibility versus strict requirements will occur through a public process following adoption of the plan.

The development bonus program recommended in this plan would allow for an increase in height and density around the primary stations, but the ability of a property owner or developer to participate in the program, and the extent of additional height or density granted, would be dependent upon the community benefits provided by the party seeking the bonus. The specific requirements for provision of community benefits that would need to

be provided in order to receive additional entitlements will be established with public input following adoption of this Master Plan, during the creation of the Regulating Plan. It will not be a negotiated exchange, but rather a set ratio between the community benefits that must be provided in exchange for a specified increase in building floor area or height.



Creation of Development Bonus Regulations

After adoption of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, City staff will begin work on a draft Regulating Plan to implement the land use and urban design recommendations of the plan through regulation changes. The Regulating Plan will be based on the concepts described in the Master Plan and will establish new zoning and urban design standards for properties in the area as well as development bonus program provisions. The Regulating Plan will be developed through a public input process that will include community meetings. The Regulating Plan, including the development bonus program, will be presented to the public for review and comment and will require public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption. It is estimated that the creation of the Regulating Plan and development bonus system would take approximately one year.

The development bonus program will be based on the Master Plan but will also include a more detailed analysis to determine the specific properties or locations eligible for development bonuses and to define the specific requirements for community benefits granted in exchange for increased density and/or height.

One goal of creating a development bonus system is to establish a transparent and understandable system for awarding additional density, above that which is allowed by established zoning, in exchange for the provision of community benefits. The development bonus program created with public input will balance the trade-offs and be codified so that the exchange does not have to be negotiated for every property.

Development bonuses are effective when they result in clear benefits to both the property developer and the community. The property owner and developer benefit by additional land value and net project revenues, and the community benefits by a project that includes valued

public amenities on-site or that contributes monetarily to specific programs that are difficult to provide on-site.

For a development bonus program to work effectively, however, bonuses need to be calibrated so that the additional entitlements granted produce sufficient incremental value for private developers, over and above any community benefits charged, to incentivize the additional development in light of increased risk and cost. As such, the definition of the community benefit exchanges that would be required in trade for increased entitlements will need to take into consideration the ultimate height and density a developer would be allowed to build. Without such calibration, developers will have little incentive to utilize the development bonus, and the East Riverside Corridor could lose an opportunity to achieve community benefits that may otherwise be difficult to fund.

This Master Plan makes recommendations for the types of community benefits that should be provided in exchange for a development bonus (described above), but the exact amount and specific requirements of the community benefits to be provided will be determined with public input following adoption of the plan. What the developer would need to provide in additional community benefits and the amount of additional development entitlements he/she would receive would be clearly defined – it would not be negotiated as each property redevelops, or on a case by case basis. An example of such an exchange could be: for each square foot of publicly-accessible open space provided on-site (above base requirements), a property owner or developer would be granted 20 square feet of building space above what is allowed by the base zoning for that property. This exchange needs to be carefully calibrated so that the increased building space provides sufficient value to cover the costs of the community benefit, as well as provide some incremental value to the developer, in order to make the development bonus program be

successful. The exchanges may need to be re-calibrated over time as property values change. This defined exchange creates predictability for both the citizens seeking assurances that community benefits would be provided and property owners/developers who need to estimate the full costs of a proposed development.

While this Master Plan does not set maximum heights that could be achieved through a development bonus system, a developer's/property owner's ability to achieve the maximum heights that will be set during development of the Regulating Plan would be determined by the extent to which community benefits are provided, as proscribed in the Regulating Plan. The development bonus should be scalable - if a property owner only wanted a little additional height or density above their existing base entitlements (based on the land use districts described in the previous section), then they would contribute some additional community benefits, but if they wanted more height or density, they would have to provide more community benefits, as will be clearly defined in the Regulating Plan. If a property owner did not want additional height or density entitlements above what is allowed, then they would not be obliged to provide benefits to the community above and beyond what is typically required of development in the area.

Development Bonus Areas

Development bonus areas are generally recommended for properties within a 5-minute walking distance to a primary transit stop (approximately ¼ mile radius from the rail stop). It is recommended that only properties located within both the East Riverside Corridor planning area boundaries and within the Hubs would be eligible to participate in the development bonus program (see Exhibit 4.1) In addition, in order to reduce the potential incentive to redevelop existing multi-family properties that currently provide affordable market-rate housing, policy-makers could decide that only properties without

existing residential developments would be eligible for development bonuses. The intent behind these proposed development bonus areas is to allow for higher density development immediately adjacent to the primary rail stops, allowing those who want to take advantage of transit to live or work in easy walking distance to the rail stop. The bonus areas are conceptually identified as part of this Master Plan. The exact properties that would be eligible for a development bonus would be determined during the development of the Regulating Plan and development bonus program, following adoption of the Master Plan.

Development bonuses would not be allowed in the Neighborhood Residential District which is intended to provide a transition from existing single-family neighborhoods. Compatibility standards that regulate allowable building heights near single family homes would apply, further ensuring a transition from single family homes to taller buildings.

Development entitlements that could be allowed in exchange for the provision of community benefits

Within the Hubs, it is recommended that the greatest bonus heights and densities be allowed closest to the primary rail stops. The maximum height allowed with a bonus would then decrease with distance from the rail stops and in land use districts with lower base height limits. However, this Master Plan does not set maximum building heights that could be achieved through a development bonus. The maximum allowable bonus height and/or density will be determined during development of the density bonus program following adoption of this plan.

During the planning process participants indicated support for the idea that higher concentrated infill or redevelopment should occur in a series of "development nodes" around the primary transit stops to focus more

dense retail, office and residential uses in those areas. However, there was no consensus on the extent to which higher density should be allowed near primary transit stops in exchange for additional community benefits. In the public visioning process, photos of buildings in the 2 to 5 story range generally received the highest ratings. Based on this feedback during the planning process, this plan recommends the baseline land use districts have height limits to allow buildings to be a maximum of 3 to 5 stories, which is similar to existing zoning, and only allow additional height near the primary transit stops through a development bonus if developers/property owners provide additional community benefits that would contribute to the vision as described in this Corridor Plan.

Because the existing entitlements for properties on East Riverside Drive generally allow 60-feet in height, in order to achieve additional community benefits, developers must be given the opportunity to achieve entitlements greater than their existing entitlements. In addition, in order for a development bonus program to work effectively, the bonuses need to provide enough additional entitlements in comparison to the community benefits that would be required in exchange, to make participating in the development bonus program worthwhile. It must be understood that the ability to develop with increased or bonused height or density does not always generate increased or "incremental value" to a developer sufficient to incentivize the additional development, due to construction costs or other factors. On the other hand, opportunities for higher base revenues and certain construction related economies of scale are available, so there are cases where sufficient incremental value is created to justify a charge for a development bonus. One such case is in taller residential development, where the value of units increases with additional height.

Information about potential height bonus areas is provided below and will guide the creation of the development bonus program for the area:

Potential Height Bonus Areas

It is important to note that the height limits envisioned for the Land Use Districts discussed in the previous section will serve as the base heights for the Height Bonus Areas. Any property within the East Riverside Corridor planning area that is not within one of the Development Bonus Areas is intended to follow the height limitations described in the Land Use Districts.

Height Bonus Area 1 – The area within approximately one to two blocks of the primary transit stops is critical for new development to create mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places near transit. This area has a high level of transit integration, including streetscapes that connect the stop with the surrounding buildings, and buildings that are oriented toward the stop. For this reason, the area within one to two blocks of the primary transit stops should be considered during development of the Regulating Plan to allow greatest heights and densities to create incentives for redevelopment as well as provide community benefits. Mixed use buildings are ideal in this area, as they should provide ground floor pedestrian-oriented uses and employment or residential uses in the upper floors. This area is intended for the highest building heights and greatest density within the Corridor to support transit and to enable greater numbers of people to live near transit, and is located within the Corridor Mixed Use land use district.

Height Bonus Area 2 – This area would include land between height bonus area 1 and one-quarter mile of the primary transit stops. Allowing for additional development entitlement above base regulations is recommended in this area as there is much potential to benefit from proximity to transit and other services.

Pedestrians' easy access to a variety of uses and development potential are both greatest within one-quarter mile of a station, which is approximately a 5-minute walk.

Building Stepbacks

In order to lessen the visual impact of tall buildings on the pedestrian realm and to retain a human scale for the streetscape, the building façade on taller buildings should be stepped back from the street above the third story. This creates a building base of no more than three stories along the street and wider view corridors above the third floor than would exist with current zoning. The building stepback would be required whether or not the building is eligible for or using a height bonus. The streetwall created by a three (3) story building base is the most important visual element of the pedestrian realm, as the lower stories of buildings are what pedestrians generally notice as they walk down streets. A three story building base for all buildings four stories and taller creates a low-scale visual presence along sidewalks, while also allowing for increased height in important areas, such as near primary rail stops.

Other Potential Development Bonus Options

In addition to height bonuses, other potential bonus options could be offered in exchange for community benefits, including density bonuses that would allow increased Floor Area Ratios (FAR) and an increased number of dwelling units per acre. The specifics will be determined during development of the Regulating Plan and development bonus program following adoption of the plan.

SECTION 4: LAND USE & DENSITY