WEST MORGAN SMALL AREA STUDY

Final Draft Study

July 22, 2010

RALEIGH URBAN DESIGN CENTER Designing a 21st Century City
A Division of the Department of City Planning

Acknowledgments : Thank you to the following people and organizations that have contributed greatly to the development of the study process and recommendations.

Irregardless Cafe
Hillsborough CAC
NCSU Downtown Design Studio
West Morgan Business Association
Lyle Adley-Warrick
Sue Adley-Warrick
William A. Allen III
Jennifer Amster
Edwin Barnett
Carlton Billingsley, Jr.
Charles Bradsher
Claudia Brown
Madison Bullard
George Chapman
Charles Clift
Richard Cory
Councilor Thomas Crowder
Ana Duncan Pardo
Lynn Dunn
Amy Etheridge
Tom Erwin
John Farnum
Bob Geary
Renee Gledhill-Earley
Anya Gordon
Arthur Gordon
Jean Haines
Elizabeth Harrison
Gary Hoover
Myrick Howard
Mary Anne Jobe
Lillian Johnson
Alan Jurkowski
Betsy Kane
C.C. Kledaras
Elizabeth Lane
Michael Lindsay
Isabella Long
Marjorie Menestres
Bob Miller
Jean Mosher
Robert Mosher
Kelsey Mosley
Linda H. Nunnallee
Peter Pace
Jonathan Parker
Charles Phaneuf
Mack Paul
Eric Poss
Margaret Roifsen
Kathleen Ruse
Elizabeth Sapperfield
Victoria Schoenfeld
Councilor Russ Stephenson
Paul Umbach
Ted VanDyk
Akyssa Vine-Hodge
John Vine-Hodge
Richard Volk
Nina Yeager
Vincent Whitehurst
Amy Witynski Holmes
Ingrid Wood
Stan Williams
Jim Zanoni

Executive Summary

The West Morgan Area Study was undertaken by the Raleigh Urban Design Center in February 2010. The primary goal of this five month study was to provide guidance on applying future land-use classifications consistent with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan to the area. The study also investigated Development Code alternatives to guide the regulatory control of the area. The basis for that investigation was to develop a framework and strategies that would guide expectations on the form and character of the district's future growth.

This study is comprised of three publications that document the process from its inception through its submittal to the Raleigh City Council for approval. The three sections of this study are:

1. The Project Briefing Book, which served as a compendium of community input, physical characteristic documentation and regulatory information that would influence the analysis stages of the study.

2. The Draft Study publication, which documented the results of the analysis and public workshop phases of the study and presents recommended outcomes and actions.

3. The Final Study publication, which synthesizes public review and comment related to the Draft Study, as well as, further analysis by staff in order to finalize the recommended outcomes and actions in preparation for submittal to City Council.

The results of this study can be summarized into four key elements for consideration:

Key Element #1: Authorize a Comprehensive Plan amendment to the future land use map with the reccomended land use classification found in this study. The map depicting the future land use classification is found on page 4 in this report. It was widely supported that the descriptions of the future land use classifications in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan did not exactly fit the desired character of the study area. In light of the urban form mapping and form-based code strategies currently being developed as part of the New Raleigh Code process, it was generally supported that an interim combination of existing future land use classifications be adopted with the understanding that the existing land use classifications would most likely be revised in some manner to reflect the urban form analysis and form based code recommendations developed in the new Raleigh Development Code. There is also a recommendation to investigate the necessity to draft an additional classification that would more correctly describe the characteristics of a historically mixed-use area on the edge of the downtown core.

Key Element #2: The need to regulate the form and character of future development in the study area resulted in the recommendation that the City initiate a Pedestrian Business Overlay District (PBOD) for a portion of the study area. This PBOD is anticipated to be an interim measure, with the understanding that more form-based, mixed-use districts will be developed and applied to this area during the new development code process. The PBOD process would build on the results of this study and its pubic input to create a streetscape and parking plan that will regulate the form based elements of future development.

Key Element #3: The West Morgan District and the adjacent Pullen neighborhood are interspersed with a significant amount of historic and contributing structures and landscapes that warrant preservation and the economic benefits of a historic district. This study identified the need to study the feasibility of establishing both local and/or national historic districts to the area.

Key Element #4: The creation and adoption of an area plan that would amend the 2030 Comprehensive plan was discussed as a method to adequately create policies and actions specific to the district. If both the future land use classifications (key element #1) area and the PBOD (element #2) are adopted then the need for an area plan would be negligible.

Recommendations and Actions
The specific recommended outcomes and actions of this study are organized in eight categories: Character, Public Realm, Parking, Form, Open Space, Transportation Infrastructure, Land Use & Zoning, Each of the eight categories reflect the key issues and themes identified during the process and identify recommended actions

District Context and Character

The West Morgan District is a long standing example of an urban mixed-use shoulder district that encourages neighborhood scale residential and non-residential pedestrian oriented uses. The service area of the non-residential uses is generally about one mile radius or less, although city-serving uses such as Charlie Goodnight's and Irregardless Cafe have contributed greatly to the success of the district and blend well with the scale of the surrounding residential structures. Future uses serving a wider community service area should be encouraged when they can be accommodated with limited additional parking.

Residential development would generally continue to be encouraged, recognizing that there can be a wide range of densities within the district so long as the scale and height of structures are generally complimentary of adjacent properties, with special care given to the preservation of single family homes and garden apartments, as well as the historic Joel Lane House and grounds. More intense and dense land uses are encouraged to take advantage of its proximity to a future transit corridor, the planned multi modal center and existing bus service. Architecture that responds to the topography of the area should be encouraged in order to mitigate differences in scale between structures. Land uses in this category will be pedestrian oriented, with no drive-throughs, limited and shared parking, and street walls uninterrupted by large parking lots or decks.

District Identity

Recommended Outcome

DI-1. The West Morgan District should remain primarily a mixed-use district. Both neighborhood scale residential and non-residential uses should be permitted so long as they are pedestrian-oriented.

DI-2. Create design guidelines or code that restricts the location and screening of off-street parking.

DI-3. Encourage redevelopment of existing surface parking lots.

DI-4. The district should be pedestrian-oriented and universally accessible.

DI-5. The district should feature a diverse range of housing types in order to encourage an age and income-diverse population.

DI-6. New residential development should feature functional, aesthetically integrated and accessible urban open space consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines Section 3.2.

Recommended Actions

DI-7. Adopt a Pedestrian Business Overly District for a portion of the district to allow for pedestrian-friendly development.

DI-8. Create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape plan for West Morgan Street that leads to a CIP project.

DI-9. Identify alternate zoning categories, as part of the UDO project, that allow the desired mix and character of future development.

RALEIGH URBAN DESIGN CENTER Designing a 21st Century City
A Division of the Department of City Planning

Land Use

Recommended Outcome

LU-1. Require all new structures to be primarily accessed and oriented toward public streets.

LU-2. Encourage vertical mixed-use new development.

LU-3. Encourage new residential development that includes unit types, open spaces, and amenities conducive to family living.

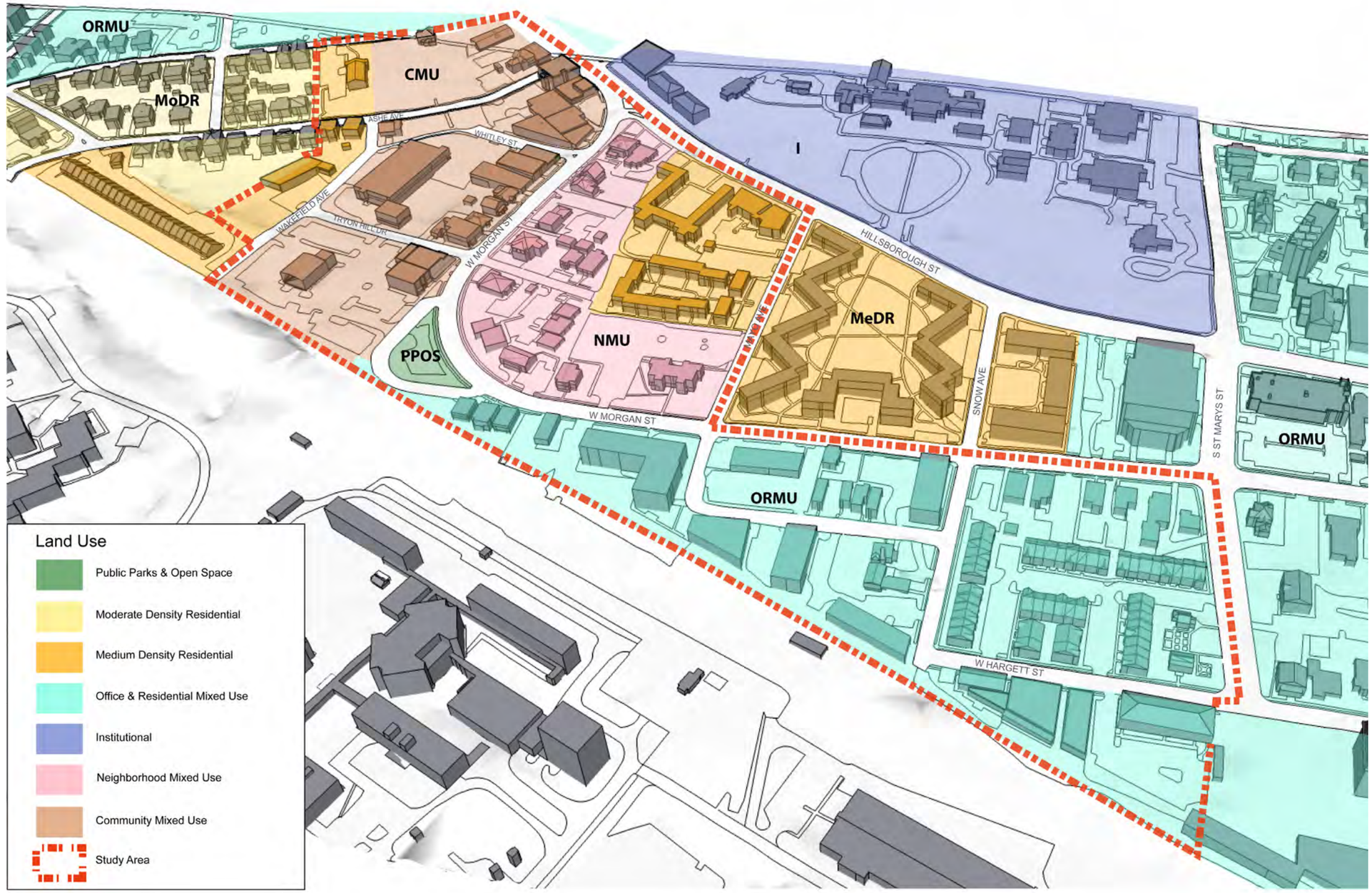
Recommended Actions

LU-4. Amend the Future Land Use Map to include land use classifications: (CMU, NMU, ORMU, MeDR, PPOS) as depicted in the adjacent diagram.

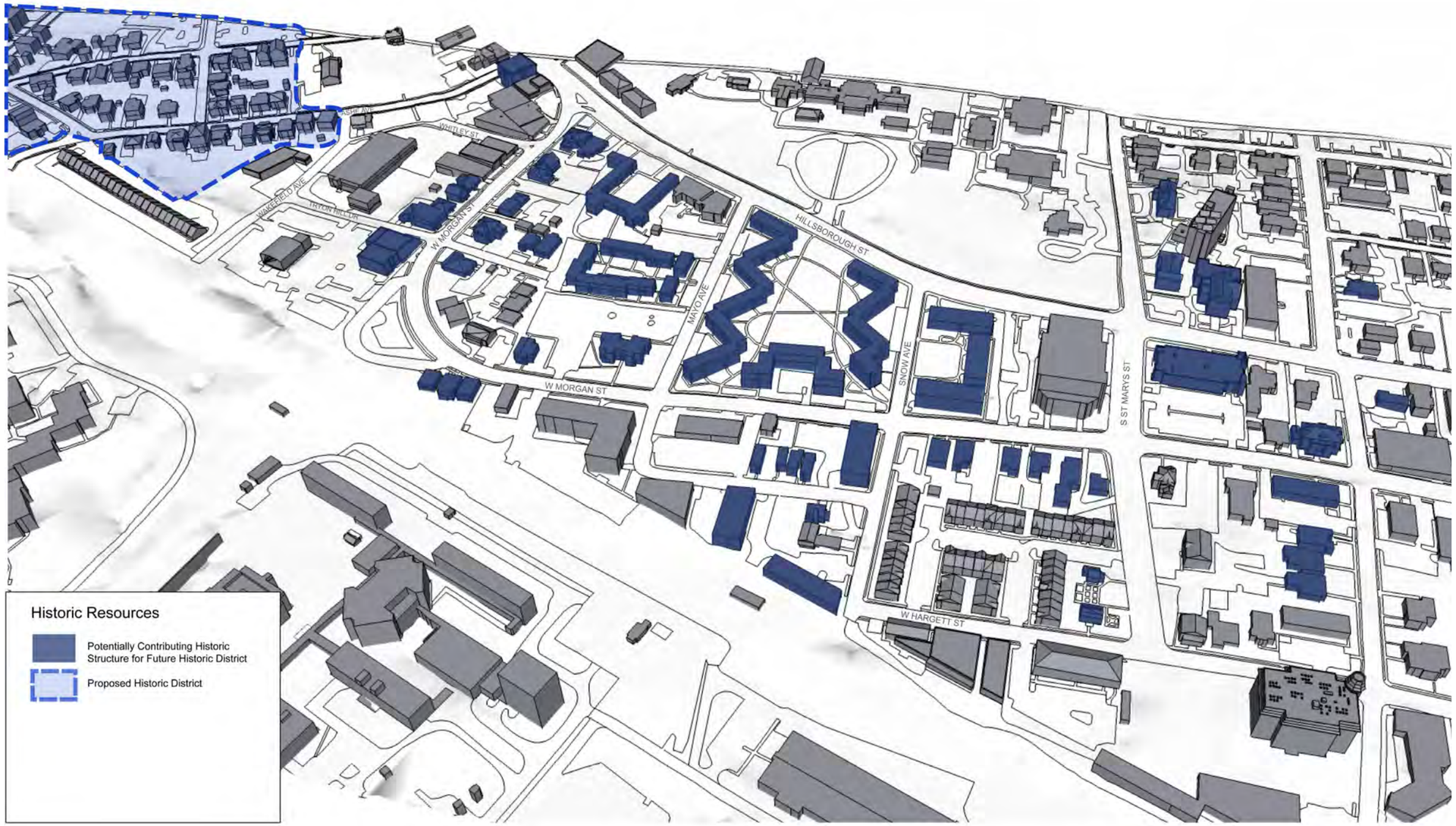
LU-5. Conduct a study to determine the feasibility of creating a new FLUM category that allows for dense pedestrian friendly mixed use that is primarily residential in character.

LU-6. Explore text changes that would:

- Allow on-street spaces to be counted towards parking totals for adjacent parcels
- Further reduce or eliminate parking requirements for all uses and potentially establish parking maximums
- Allow for shared parking on new and existing projects identified in this study.
- Create a fee-in-lieu option.



Historic Resources



Recommended Outcome

HR-1. The existing garden apartments and historic single-family structures should be preserved.

HR-2. Preserve the existing gardens and courtyards associated with the garden apartment complexes in the community.

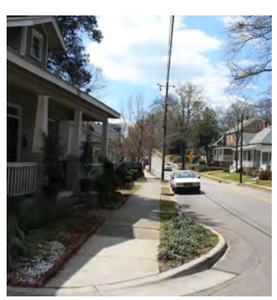
HR-3. Encourage the adaptive reuse of structures within the district.

Recommended Actions

HR-4. Create a National and/or Local Historic District for the West Morgan area and Pullen Park Neighborhood.

HR-5. Work with Preservation North Carolina and landowners to explore feasibility and desirability of conservation easements as a tool to protect historic resources.

HR-6. Explore desirability of a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District for the Pullen Park neighborhood.



Transportation Infrastructure

Recommended Outcome

T-1. Improve transit facilities in the district.

T-2. Create a greenway connection in addition to or as an alternative to the Ashe Avenue connector.

T-3. Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Recommended Outcome

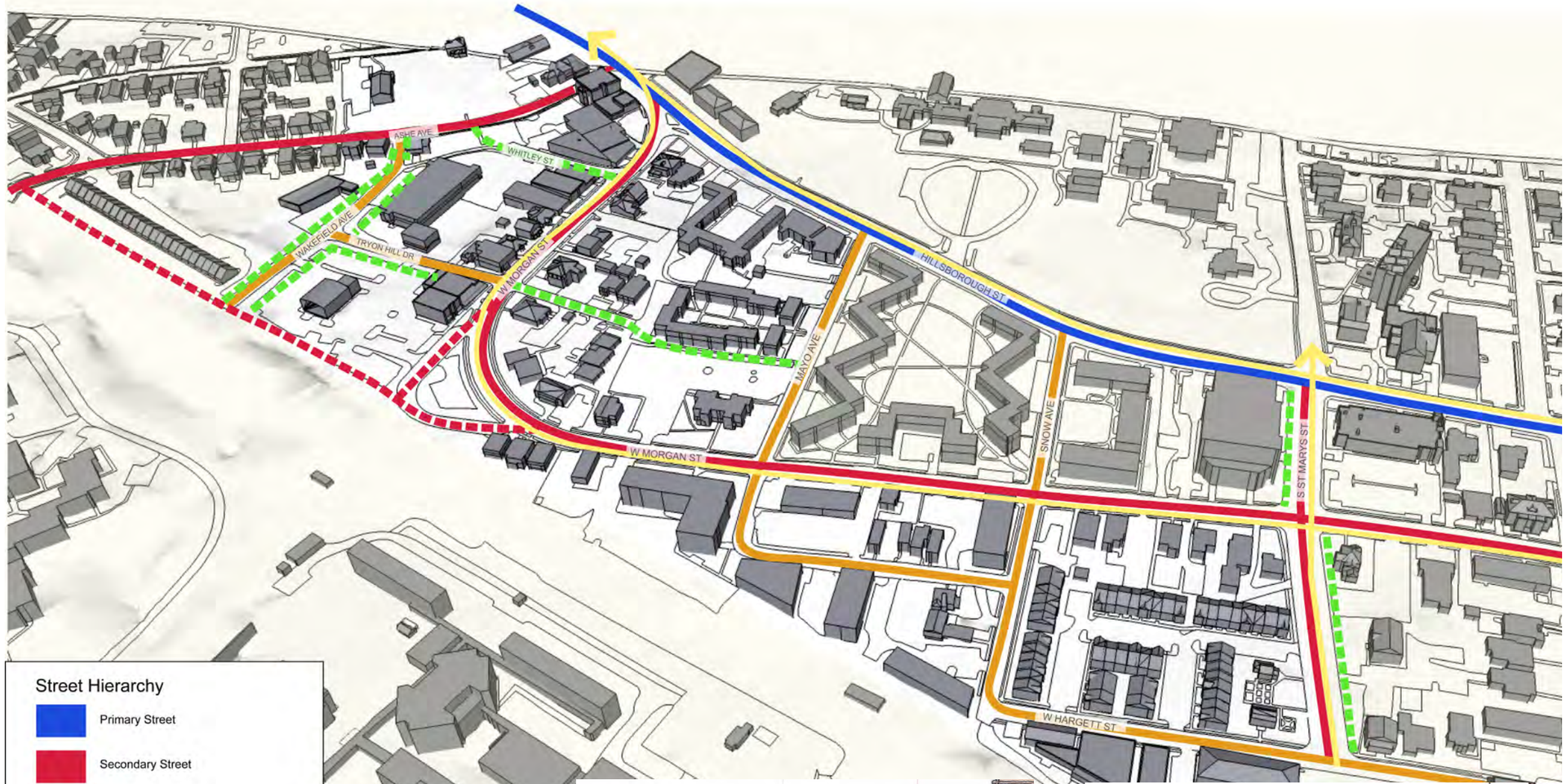
T-4. Conduct a feasibility study and pursue funding for the Ashe Avenue connector. Include a greenway option in the study.

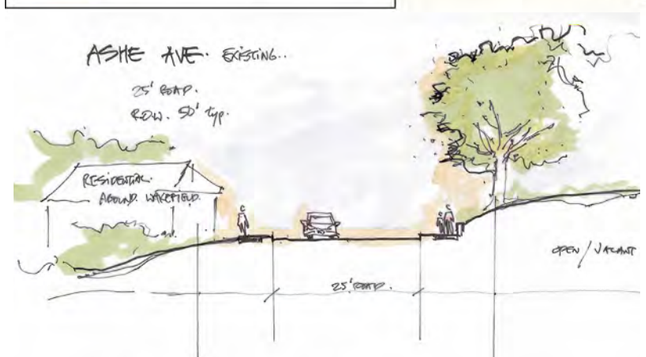
T-5. As part of the Triangle Transit commuter rail study, explore the possibility of an in-street option using West Morgan Street and/or Hargett Street. Include transit stops and intersection redesign in the study.

T-6. Design and fund roadway improvements focused on pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

T-7. Prioritize construction of bicycle lanes on Ashe Avenue, West Morgan Street, and Hillsborough Street, and sharrows on St. Mary's Street as called for in the City wide bicycle plan.

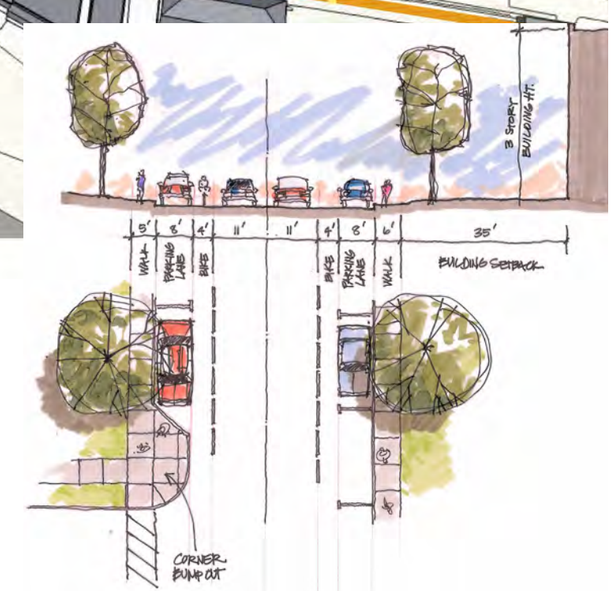
T-8. Identify and fund opportunities for improved bus stops and shelters.





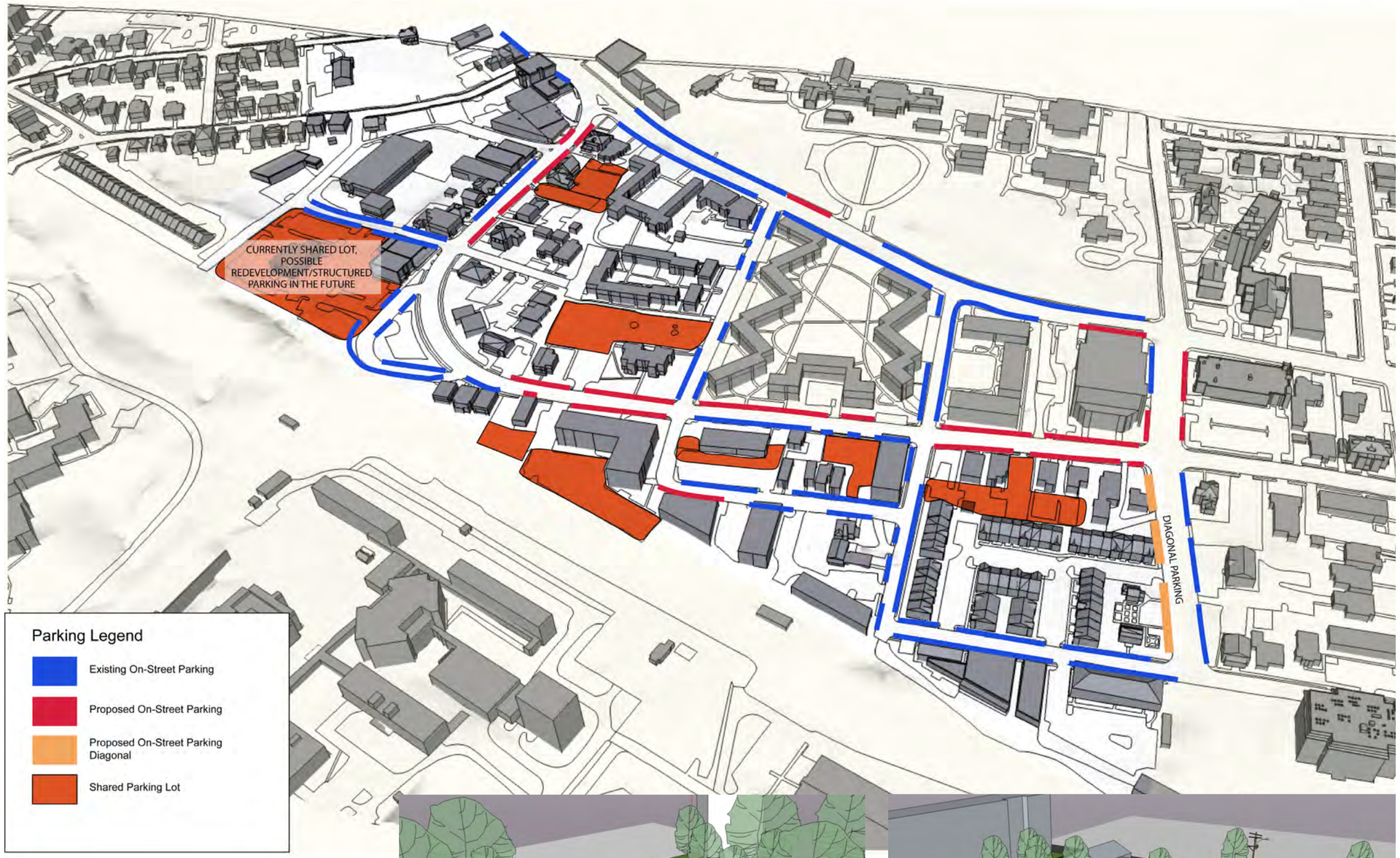
Ashe Avenue Section

West Morgan Street Section



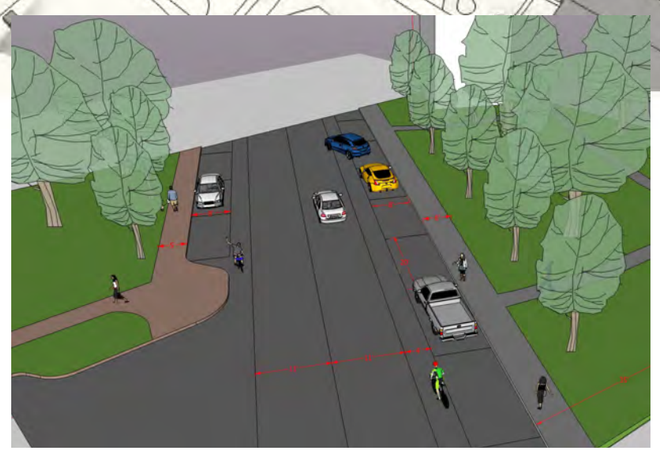
Hillsborough Street Section

Parking



Additional on-street parking

St. Mary's Parallel	13
St. Mary's Diagonal	35
Hillsborough Street	13
West Morgan Street (with restriping)	84
TOTAL	**145**



Recommended Outcome

P-1. Parking within the district should be provided in the most efficient manner possible, so as to discourage the construction of unnecessary lots and decks, and to encourage alternative modes of transportation.

P-2. On-street parking should be maximized to limit the need for new off-street spaces. On-street parking should be prioritized over additional road capacity.

P-3. Parking, when provided, should not be placed adjacent to the right-of-way and should be placed underground or wrapped with an active ground floor use, and should be screened at the upper levels.

P-4. Convene a meeting of property owners to discuss feasibility of allowing residential parking at night in office parking lots.

Recommended Actions

P-5. Conduct a parking inventory of the area to determine where additional on-street spaces can be created, and if a meter or permit system would be desirable.

P-6. Conduct a traffic analysis to determine the feasibility of removing a traffic lane on Morgan Street and Hillsborough Street in order to create additional on-street parking on both sides of West Morgan Street.

P-7. Create additional parking on St. Mary's Street through the use of angled parking adjacent to the Joel Lane House.

P-8. Work with existing parking lot owners to consolidate small surface parking lots to eliminate multiple curb cuts.

Form

Recommended Outcome

F-1. Building setbacks should respond to the existing urban character. Setbacks on Hillsborough Street east of Morgan Street should be 20-30', and setbacks on all other streets should be 15'.

F-2. Building heights can vary based on context, with lower heights where adjacent uses are predominately low height residential.

F-3. Building heights at street edges should be limited to form a generally consistent street wall of 3-4 stories, with any additional height stepped back from the street.

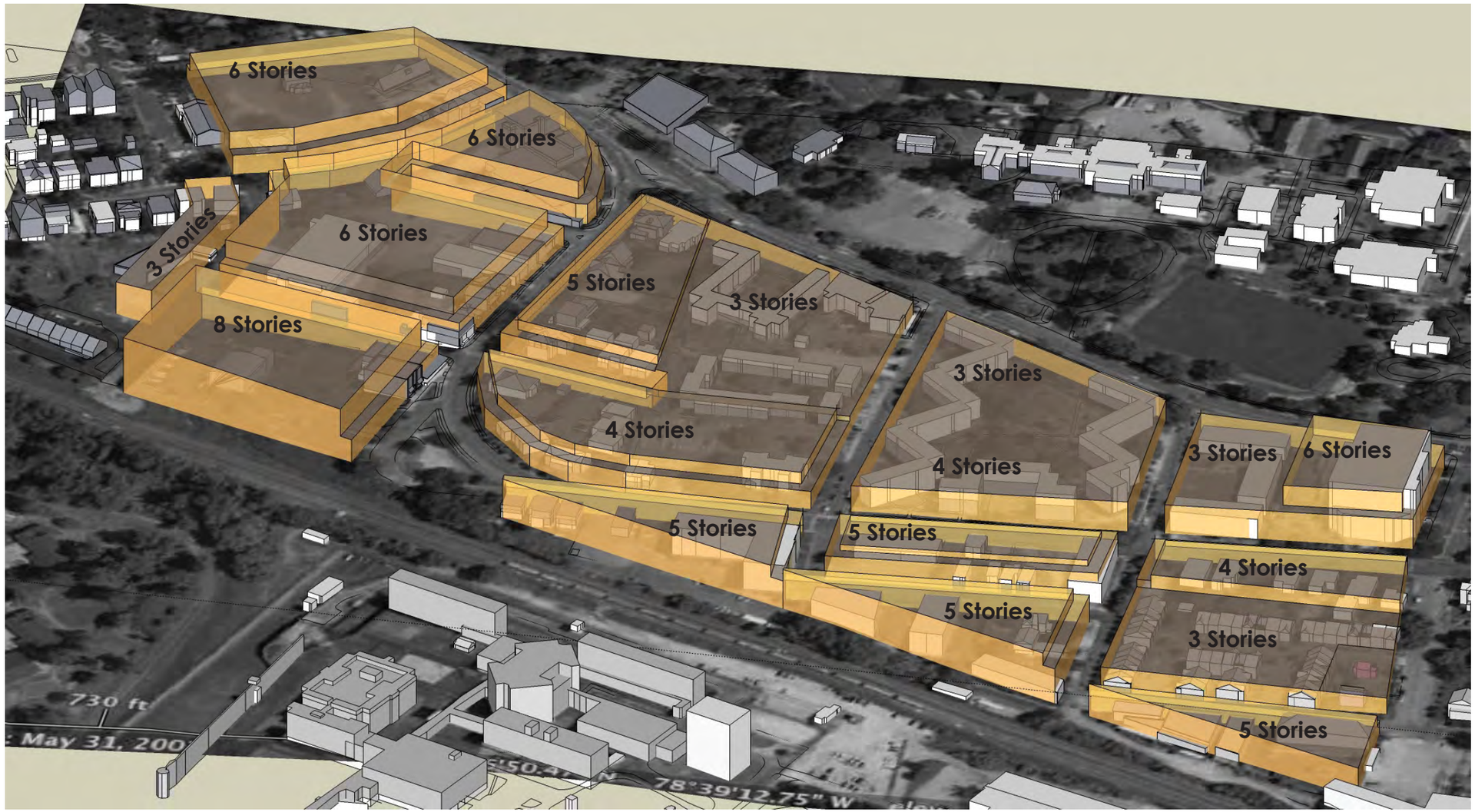
F-4. Taller structures should mitigate the impact of their height through the use of setbacks, stepbacks, smaller footprints, and smaller scale uses at the street edge.

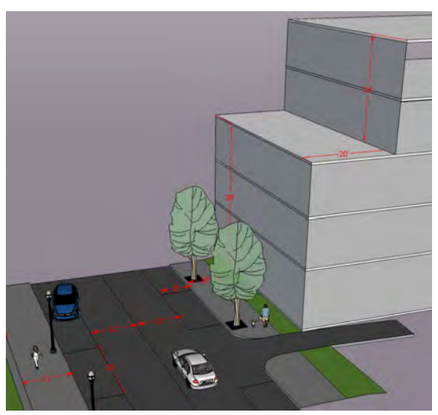
Recommended Actions

F-5. Create a PBOD, so as to allow for vertical mixed use pedestrian oriented projects, and include height restrictions and open space requirements in the Streetscape and Parking Plan.

F-6. Recommend the district for inclusion in any discussion of form-based codes or transition zones as part of the UDO project.

F-7. Streetscape and Parking Plan should address architectural character elements that contribute significantly to the overall character of the district.





Typical 15' Setback with 3 Story Stepback along street frontage

The varied style, material and scale of residential and commercial structures contribute to creating the character of the district. New development should continue those characteristics.

RALEIGH URBAN DESIGN CENTER Designing a 21st Century City
A Division of the Department of City Planning

Open Space

Recommended Outcome

OS-1. Encourage the inclusion of usable and centrally located open space in new residential development.

OS-2. Increase the connection of the West Morgan District to Pullen Park and the Dorothea Dix Greenway.

OS-3. Use open space to mitigate increased building height and density by locating open space in a manner that reduces the perceived bulk of new structures.

Recommended Actions

OS-4. As part of the UDO project, require additional usable open space for new multifamily residential development in the new UDO.

OS-5. Conduct a study to determine additional pedestrian route improvement to existing routes to Pullen Park and Dorothea Dix Greeenway.

OS-6. Include open space as a tool for density impact mitigation in transitional density zones in the new UDO.

Public Realm Improvements

Recommended Outcome

PR-1. The public realm should have a different character based on the adjacent land uses- there should be commercial streetscapes and residential streetscapes.

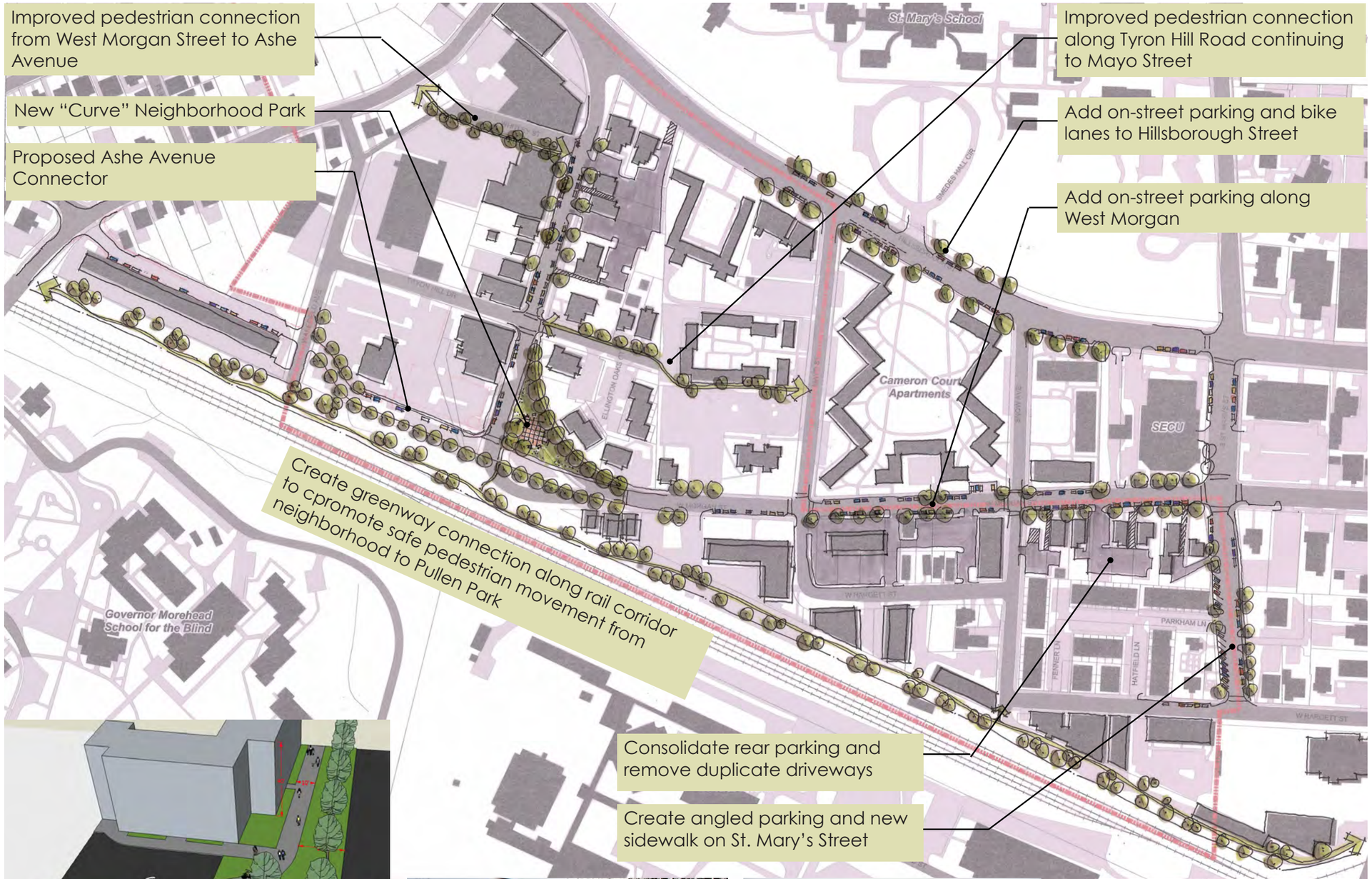
PR-2. The West Morgan District should be pedestrian-oriented, with wide sidewalks, new lighting, underground utilities, street trees, limited driveways, crosswalks, slow traffic with bike lanes, and active ground floor uses.

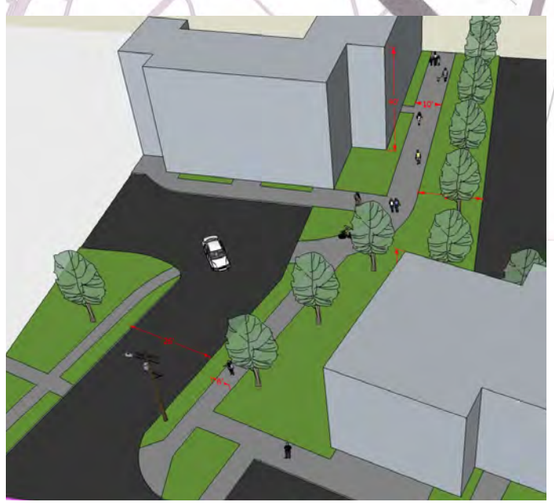
PR-3. Denser new development should include green/open space and other public realm improvements to mitigate density.

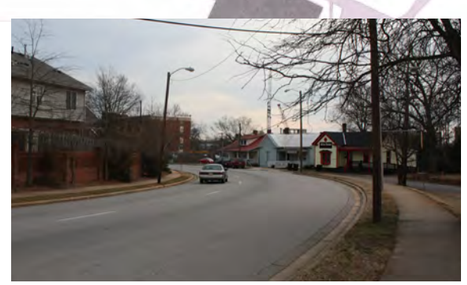
Recommended Actions

PR-4. Draft a streetscape plan that regulates ground-floor uses, sidewalk width, lighting, underground utilities, crosswalks, street trees, and other amenities. The streetscape plan should include different street typologies based on adjacent land uses.

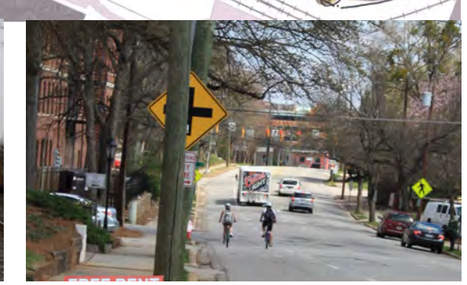
PR-5. Establish contact with the State of NC Property Office to determine future of or interest in redevelopment of Division of Prisons office and parking lots.




Tryon Hill Pedestrian Connection


Location for the new "Curve" Park

Greenway Connection Along Rail Corridor


Create on-street parking on both sides of West Morgan