

Chapel Hill Downtown Development Framework

Progress Report
10 June 2010



Process

Market Analysis – 10 Year Development Program

Infrastructure Analysis – Condition/Capacity

Resistance to Change Analysis – Opportunity Sites

Site Analysis – Urban Patterns, Networks, Systems

Precedents – Case Studies

Development Framework

Urban Form

Transportation Networks

Public Space

Public Investment Strategy

Facilities

Infrastructure

Public Realm



Outreach

Two public meetings – 100 people, neighborhoods

Developers – Greenbridge, University Square, Shortbread, Lot 5

Property Owners

University Design and Real Estate Team

Carolina North

Arts Groups – Ackland, Frank, Kidzu, Town Arts Coordinator

Police, Fire, Economic Development, Planning, Transit, Solid Waste

Downtown Partnership

Walking Tours

Summary of Public Comments and Plan Principles

Key Issues Identified

Parking:

Perception of limited availability

No one mentioned cost

Maximize on street spaces

More public off street spaces needed

Wallace deck provides no active street edge on
East Rosemary

When Kenan Stadium expands we will have
more parking issues downtown

**Downtown Plan Objective – provide adequate,
but not excessive off/on street parking to serve
the needs of business, residents and visitors**



Key Issues Identified

Perception of Safety:

Panhandling discourages visits

Loitering is what causes perception of safety to fall

Lighting needs improvement

More visible Police presence

Downtown is NOT pedestrian friendly

Informal pedestrian linkages are NOT well lit
or watched by “eyes on the street”

Create an ambassador program

The Post Office area is not kept up or welcoming

Downtown Plan Objective: Provide a safe and secure environment for citizens in Downtown.



Key Issues Identified

Boundaries:

Need to define the edges of Downtown

Need denser infill development but....

some people don't like infill

Transitions to residential neighborhoods

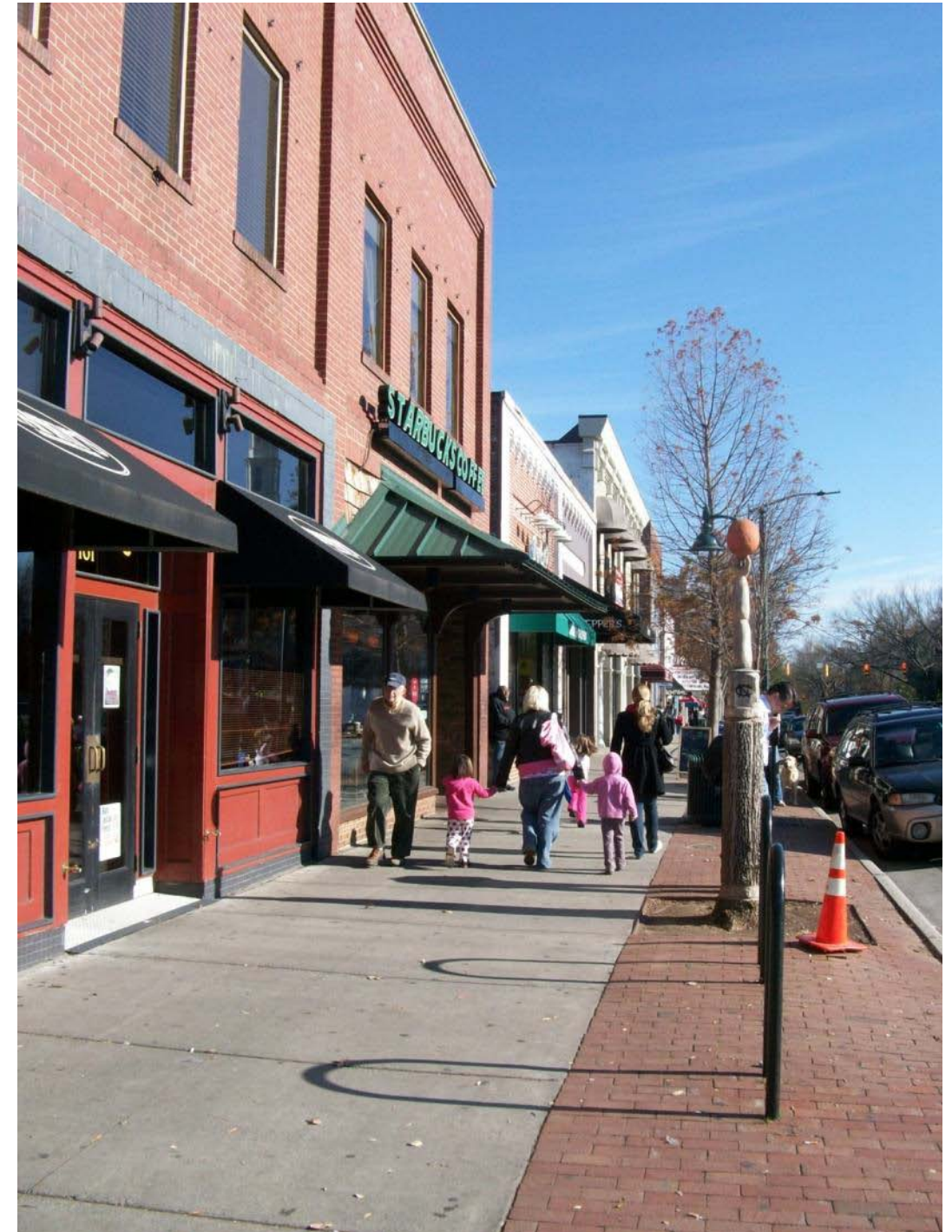
Preserve neighborhood character

East/west boundaries seem settled

North/south boundaries seem unsettled

Downtown/higher density is creeping up MLK

Downtown Plan Objective: Protect fragile residential neighborhoods bordering downtown.



Key Issues Identified

Incentives:

Property owners reluctant to invest or redevelop

Change of use code issues are tricky to navigate

Create a REIT to assemble downtown

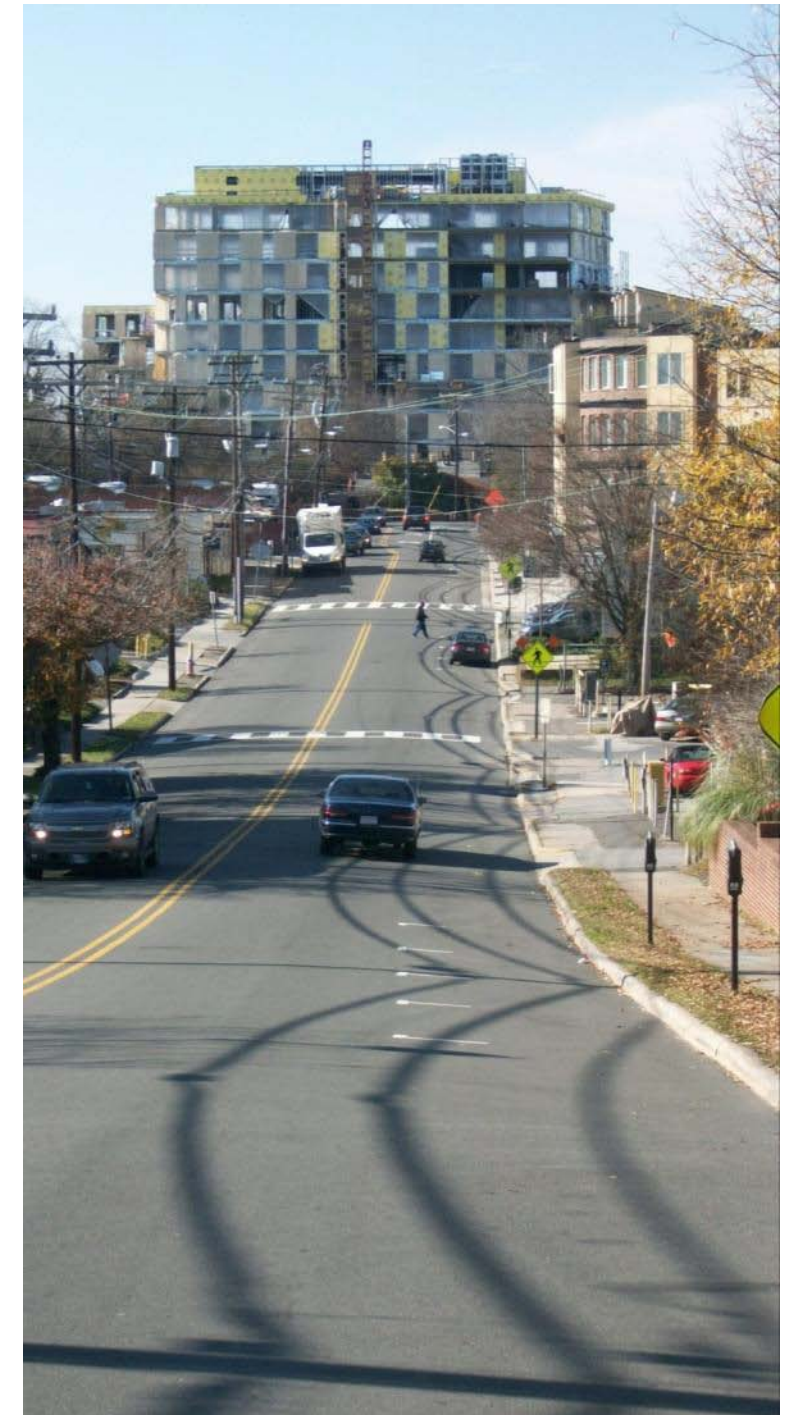
redevelopment sites and opportunities

Redevelopment review is too subjective

Remove or lower fees to encourage redevelopment

**Downtown Plan Objectives: Encourage the
Development and redevelopment of properties in
Downtown.**

**Change the regulatory environment so that is it easier
to develop in downtown than on the outskirts of town.**



Key Issues Identified

Arts and Culture:

What differentiates downtown?

Think about culture, not just commerce

Build off new arts endeavors

Kidzu has been a very positive development

Advance our cultural and creative identity

Need more public arts spaces

Could this be downtown's identity?

Need an outdoor pavilion or performance space

Save the movie theater

Use McCorkle Place for concerts and public events

Downtown Plan Objective: Maintain downtown as the focal point for all civic and cultural functions.



Key Issues Identified

Transit:

Need a new Transit Center

Stopped buses block Columbia & Franklin

No direct routes from 54 or Meadowmont

Can not make the assumption that all people
want to take transit

Expand bus service into the evening

**Downtown Plan Objective: Study and evaluate the
need for and location of a new bus transfer facility
in downtown.**



Key Issues Identified

Development Opportunities:

Downtown is losing businesses to other markets

Rosemary and West End are ripe for redevelopment

Office developments, there is a perception that
nobody works downtown

Appropriate infill is the best option

Opportunity for launch box/incubator space

NCNB building needs makeover

Why don't residents frequent Franklin St.?

University fulfilling more student needs on-campus

How will Carolina North impact downtown?

**Downtown Plan Objective: Provide a diversity of
densities, scales and land uses of new development.**



Key Issues Identified

Public Space:

Need more family oriented public spaces

Fountains, art, music, pocket parks

Build a grand public space for gathering and fountains

Create a town center with cafes lining it

Move city hall, library, middle school downtown

Sidewalks are too narrow or missing

Do we really need more “green space?”

The campus has a lot of it

Downtown Plan Objectives: Maintain existing and encourage new “magnets” to attract people downtown.

Maintain and develop new public space in downtown.



Key Issues Identified

Housing:

Does the town have to increase in size to accommodate all who want to live here?

There aren't enough people living downtown

Need denser residential infill development

Livability is not essentially related to density

Encourage people to live close to where they work
reduces infrastructure impacts

Affordability issue for students/low wage earners

Downtown Plan Objectives: Promote compatible Residential uses in downtown.

Maintain a human scale in the built environment.



Key Issues Identified

Traffic:

Loading/unloading – deliveries conflict

New options for delivery – more alleys

Create connections from Franklin to Rosemary

Make new connections to Carrboro and South &
West of downtown

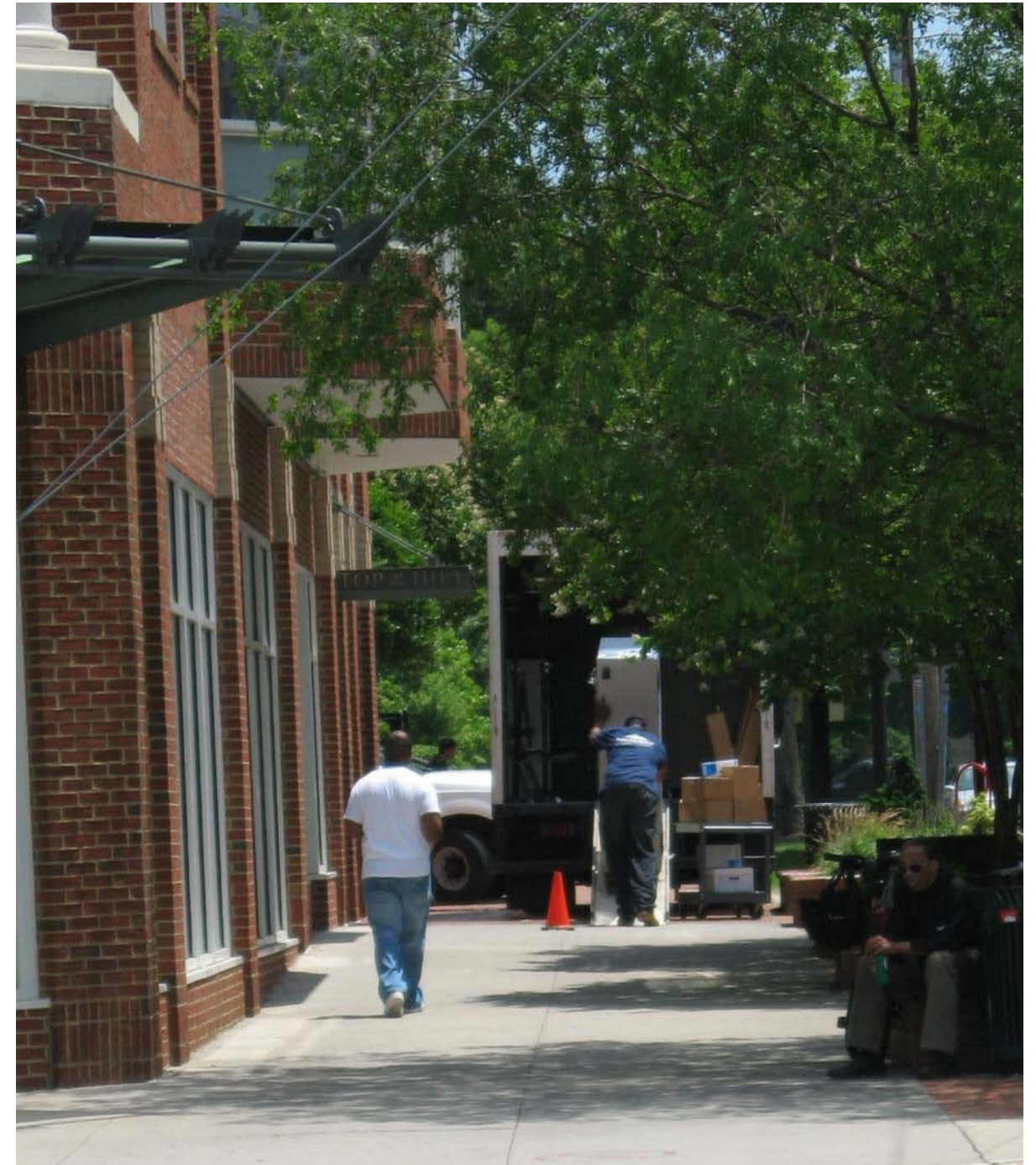
Traffic free zones that can be closed for events

There is too much traffic downtown

Cut through traffic is problem

Downtown Plan Objectives: Reduce conflicts in delivery, refuse and recycling collection.

Expand the Streetscape to include side streets connected to Franklin St.



Key Issues Identified

Walkability and Linkages:

Improve connections between

Downtown and the University

Rosemary and Franklin Streets

Neighborhoods and Downtown

Create better intersections, scramble signals

Add new sidewalks where any are missing

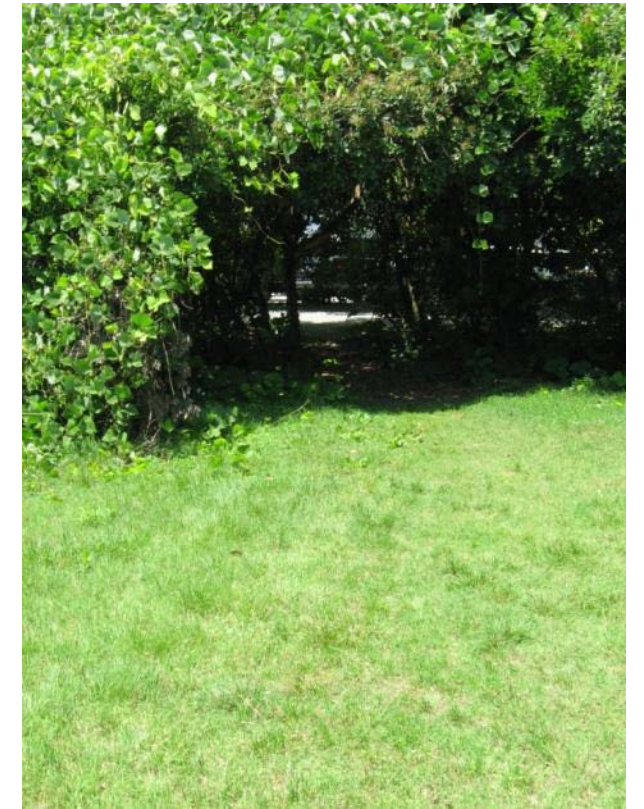
Improve the wayfinding system

Fund a circulator trolley/bus

Place Franklin Street on a road diet

Complete a bike lane network in downtown

Downtown Plan Objectives: Encourage walking and biking by developing a continuous pedestrian and bicycle system connecting downtown, neighborhoods and the University.

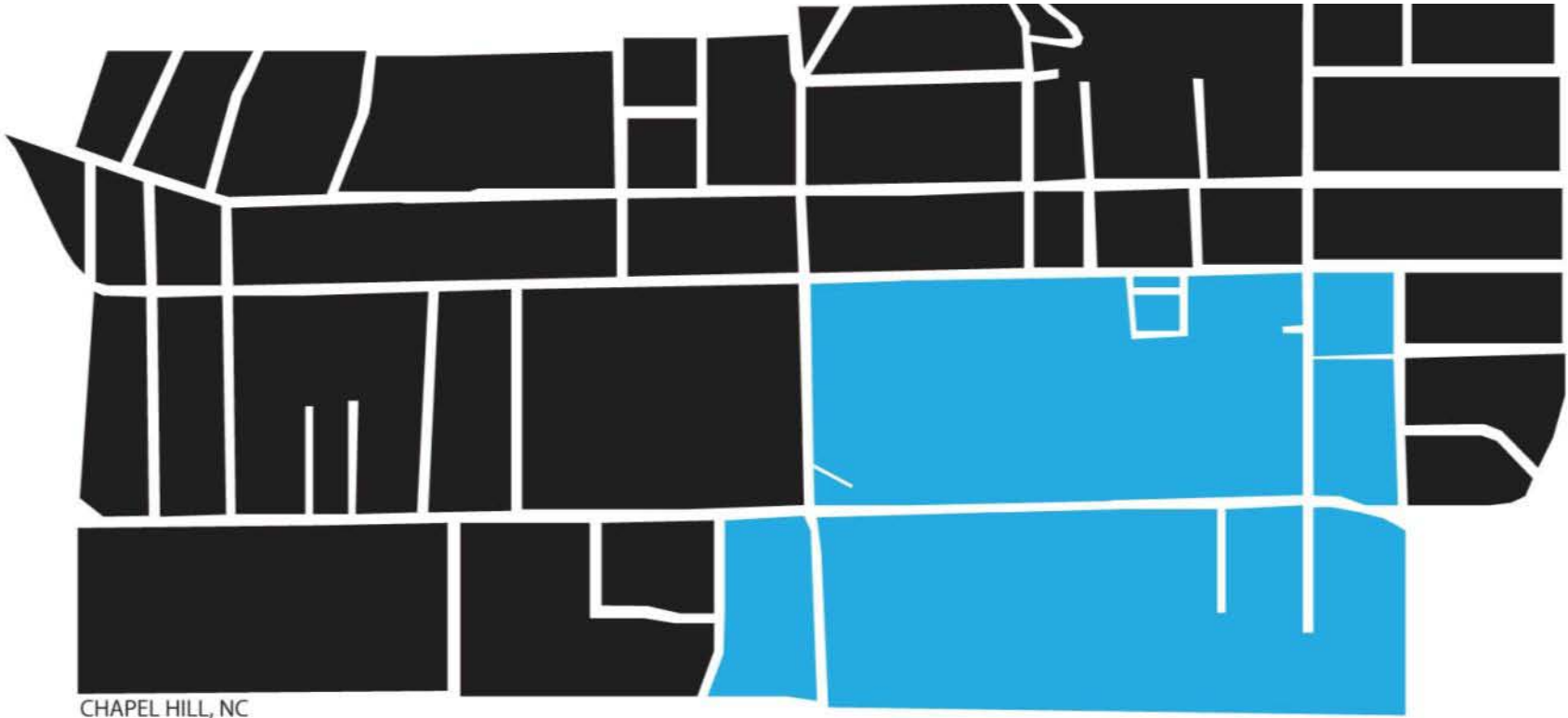


Site and Infrastructure Analysis

College Town Grid Comparisons

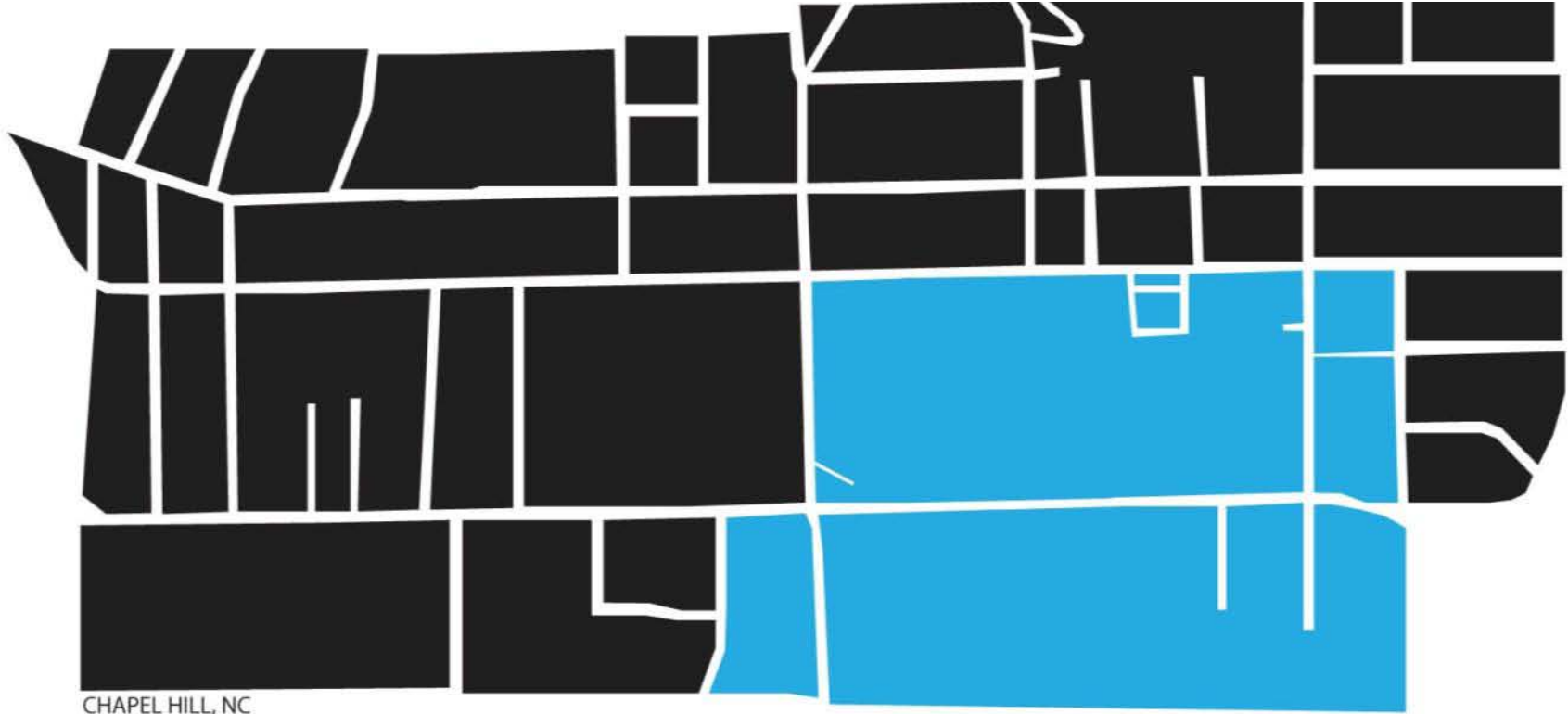


ATHENS, GA

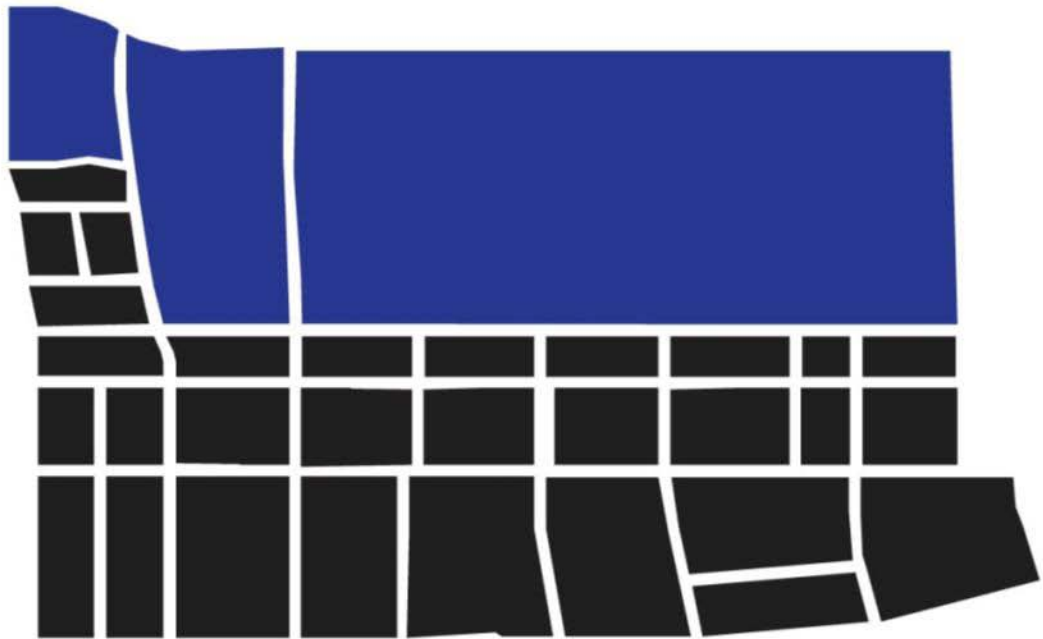


CHAPEL HILL, NC

College Town Grid Comparisons

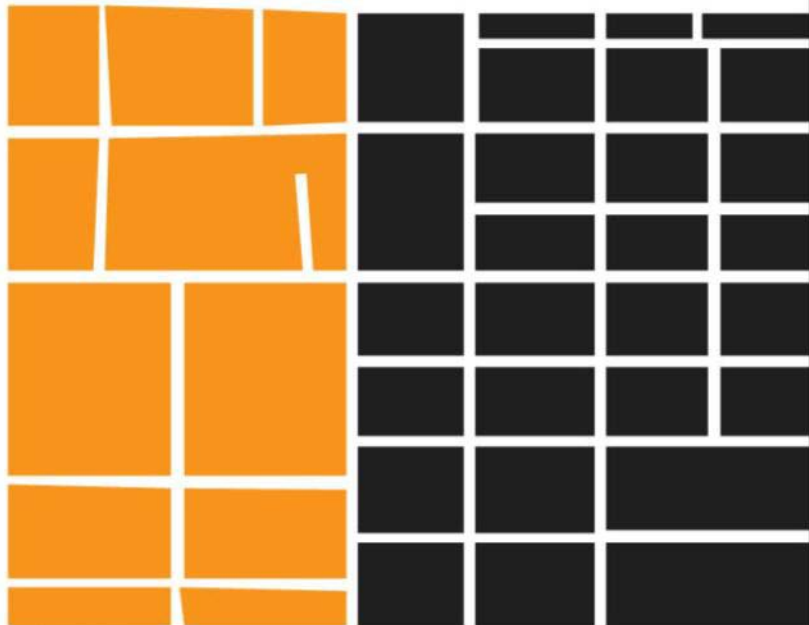


CHAPEL HILL, NC

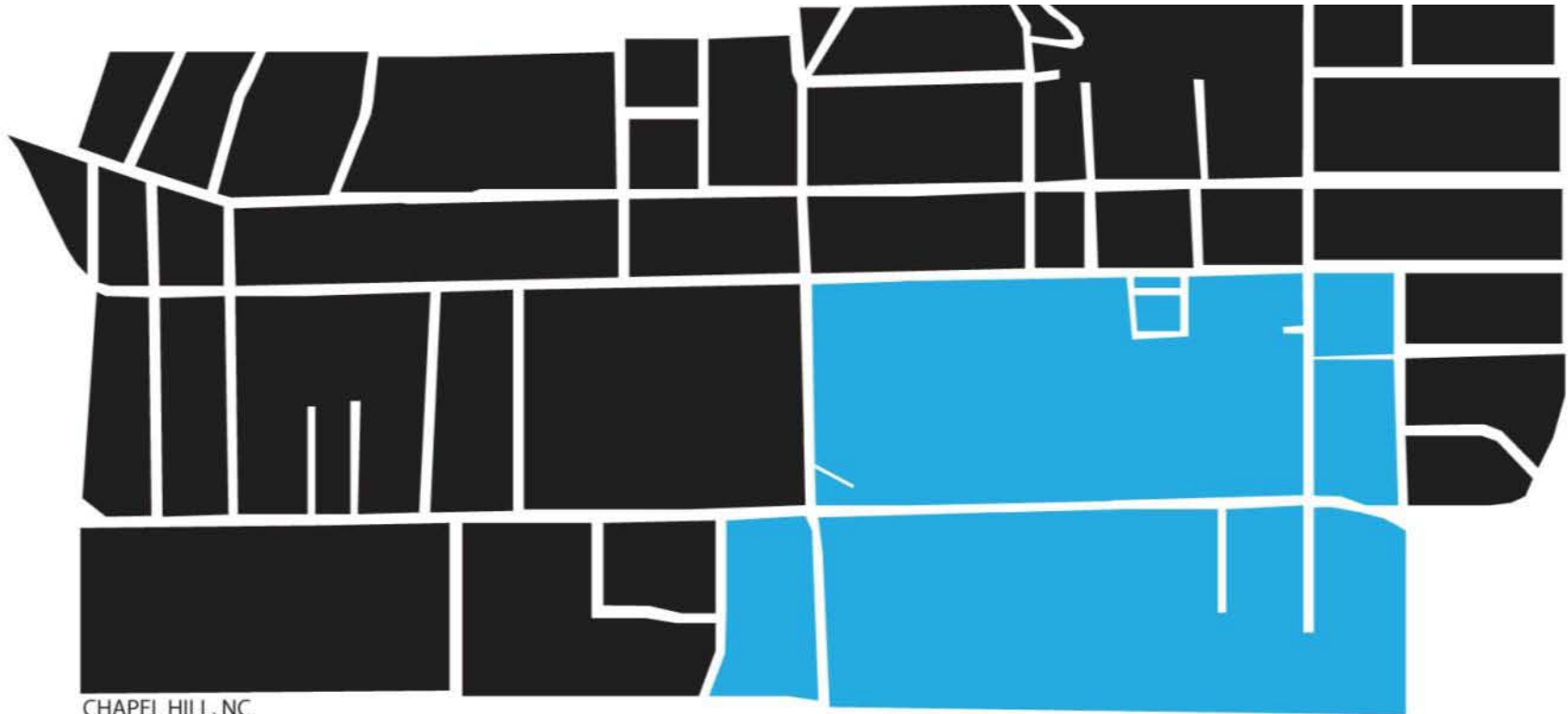


STATE COLLEGE, PA

College Town Grid Comparisons

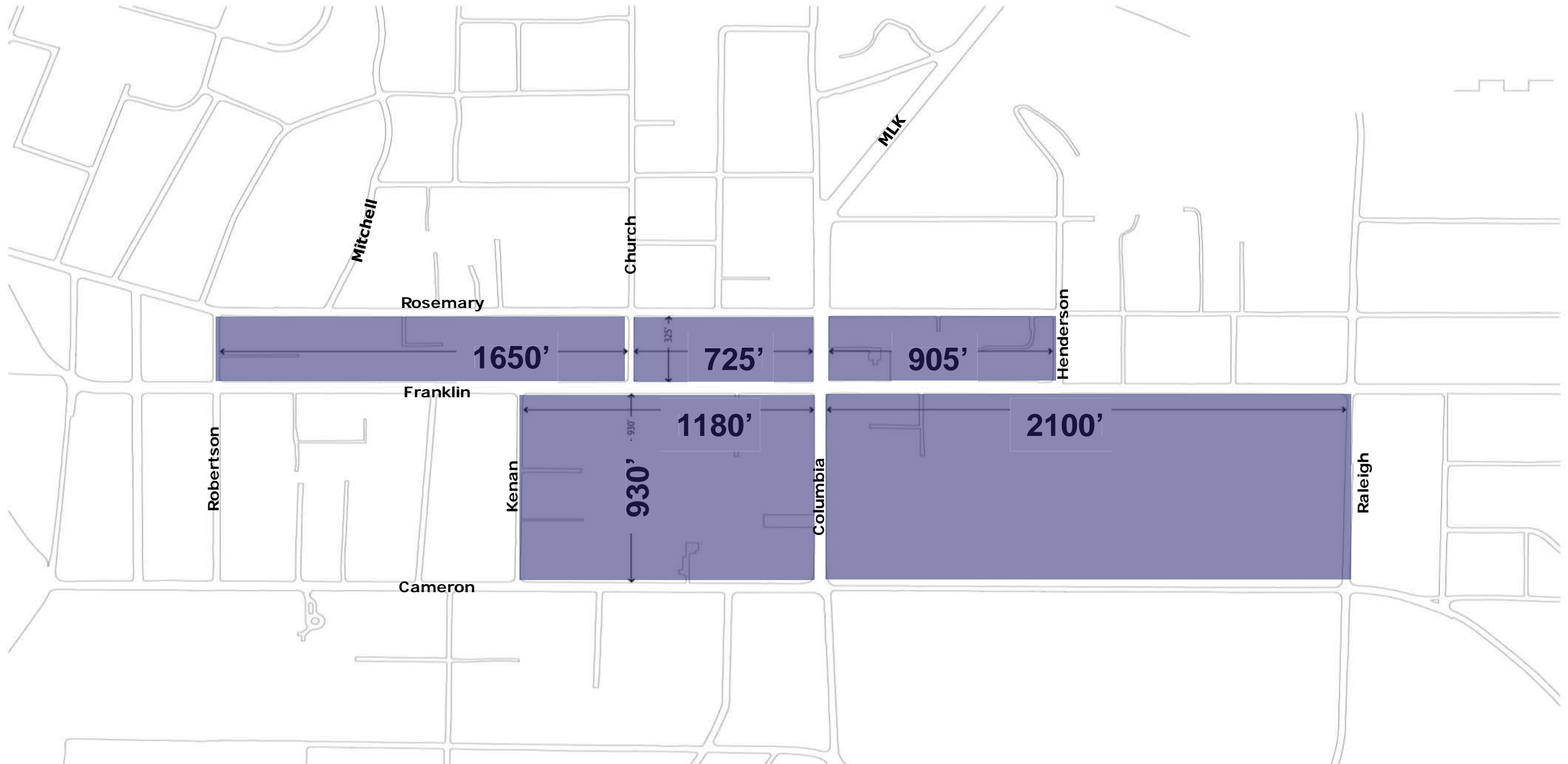


URBANA, IL



CHAPEL HILL, NC

Block Sizes



Topography and Drainage

Cameron St @ Columbia is the high ground –
The “Chapel Hill”

Downtown drains into
four different creek
sheds NE, NW, SE, SW

Small valley runs north
thru the middle of West
Franklin/Rosemary



Pedestrian Ways

Fragmented network
Limited north/south

How to connect to
Carolina North?

Connections are
informal paths – make
do networks

How to pull peds down
Franklin to west?

Numbers are the max
counts from the
Mobility Plan



Bicycle Ways

Fragmented network
Limited north/south

How to connect to
Carolina North?

No fully segregated
lanes in downtown

No strong East west
link north of downtown



Open Space

No town owned public space in downtown

Need family friendly spaces

No ground-level parks or plazas for public gatherings – i.e. movies, concerts, markets, public art...

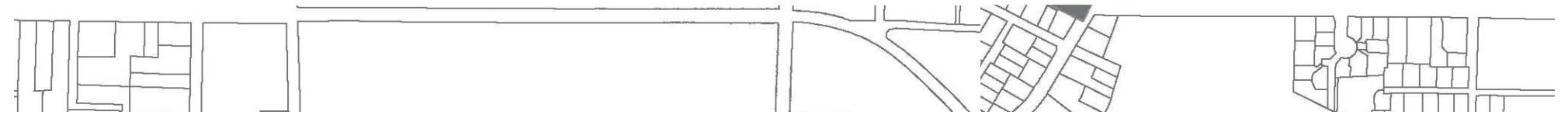


Opportunity Sites – Public Workshops

Public identified sites in workshops

Numbers tied to specific comment

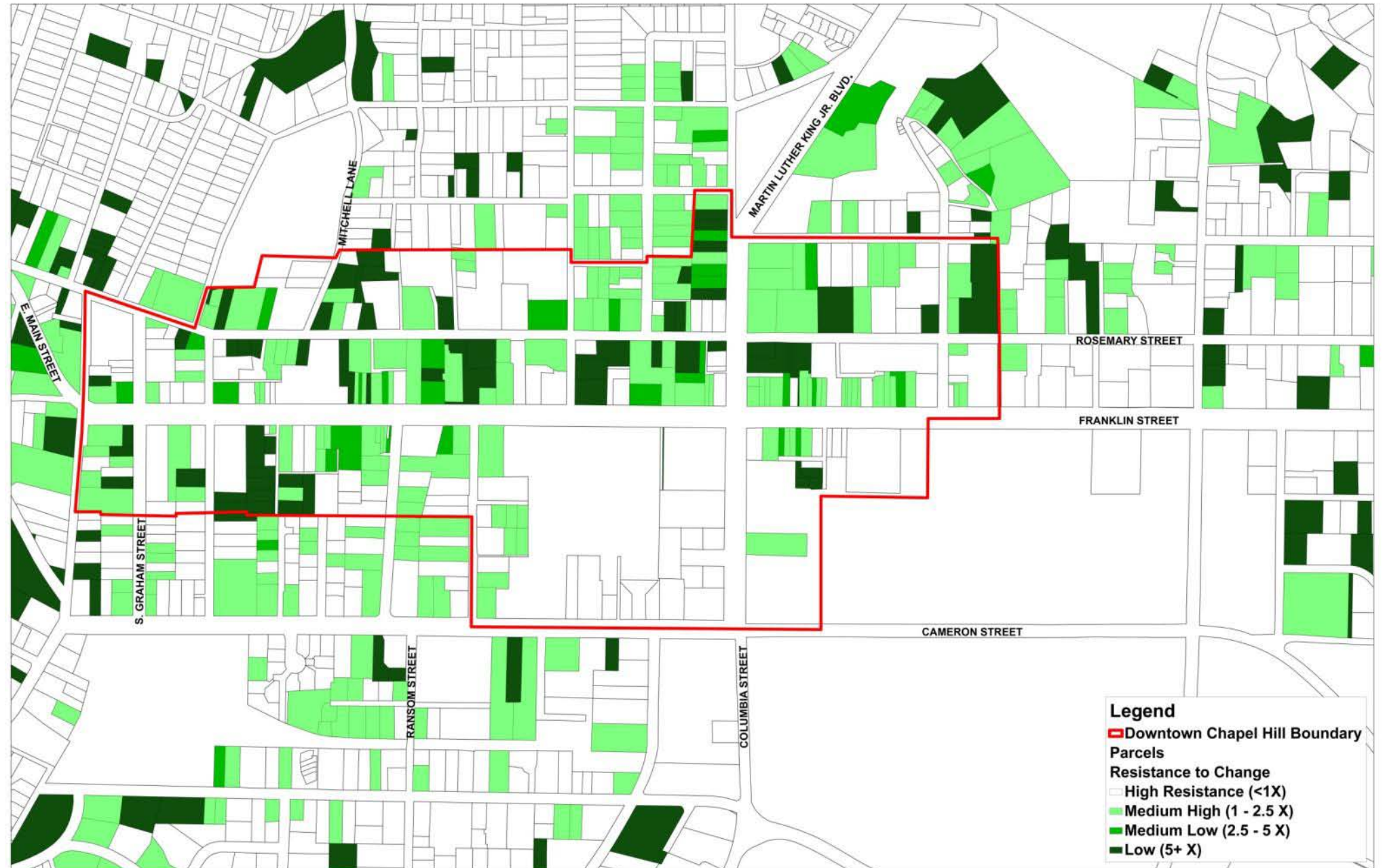
Generally agrees with consultant identified sites



Resistance to Change

Mathematic Analysis
Ground Value >
Improvements Value

Shows properties most
likely to redevelop



Opportunity Sites

Ground more valuable than the improvements

Opportunity to connect contiguous sites

Some existing buildings open for redevelopment

47 total acres in blue

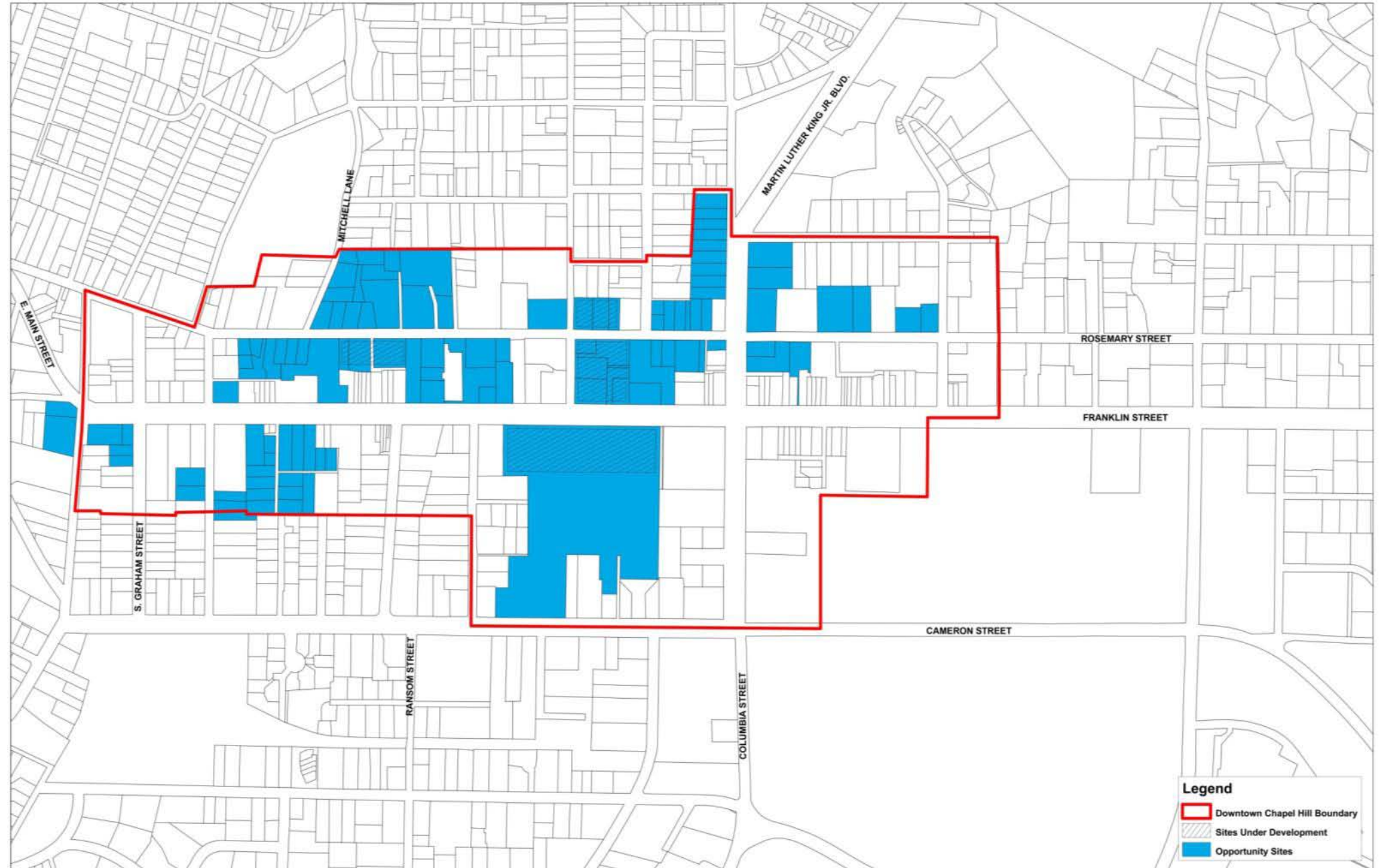
\$ 44m land value

\$ 44m building value

Subtract Univ. Square

\$ 28m land value

\$ 9m building value

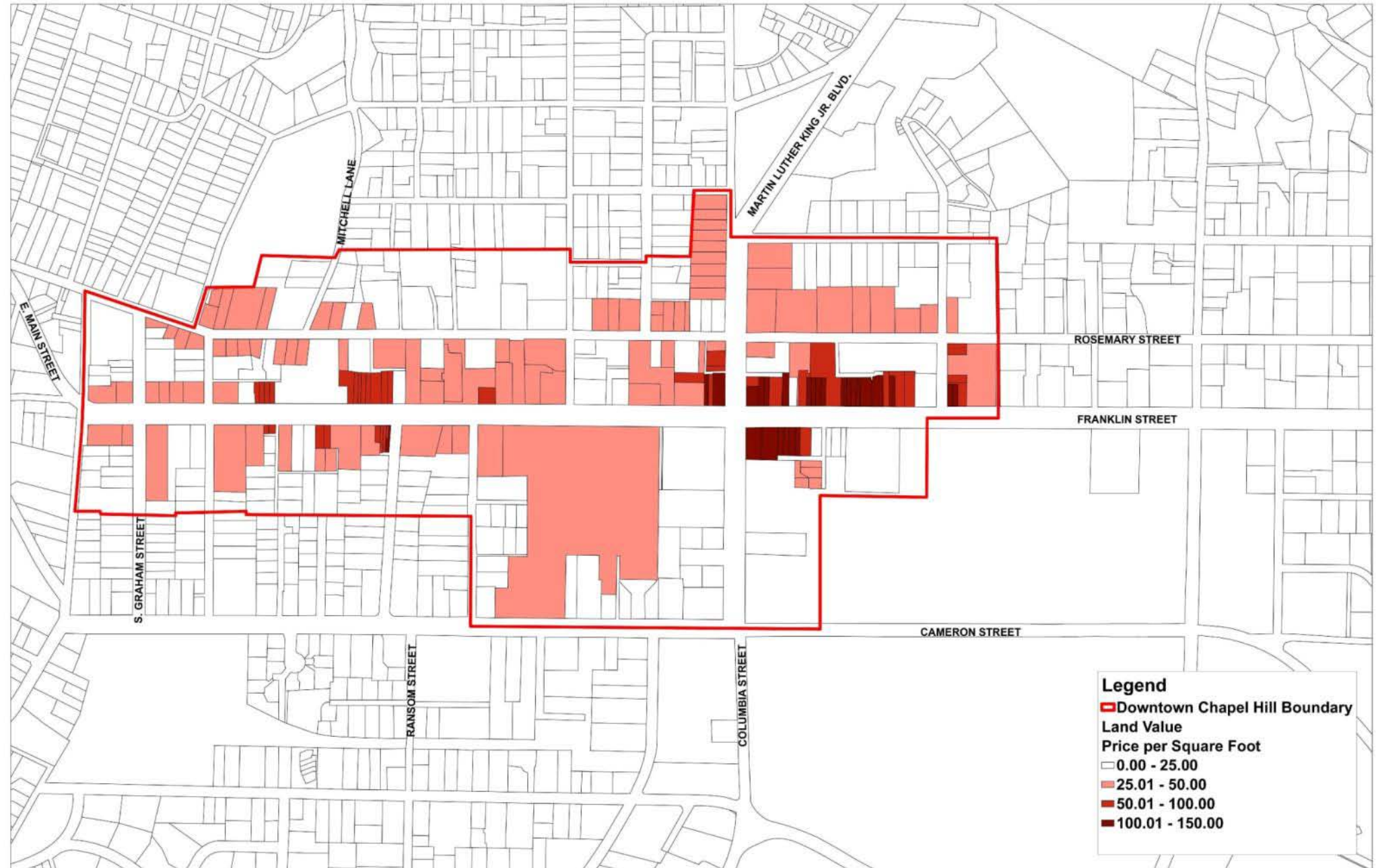


Land Value

Built up East 100 block is most valuable land

Corners fronting on Franklin are the most valuable land

Total tax value of land and buildings in downtown = \$244m



Rental Proxy

Black parcels

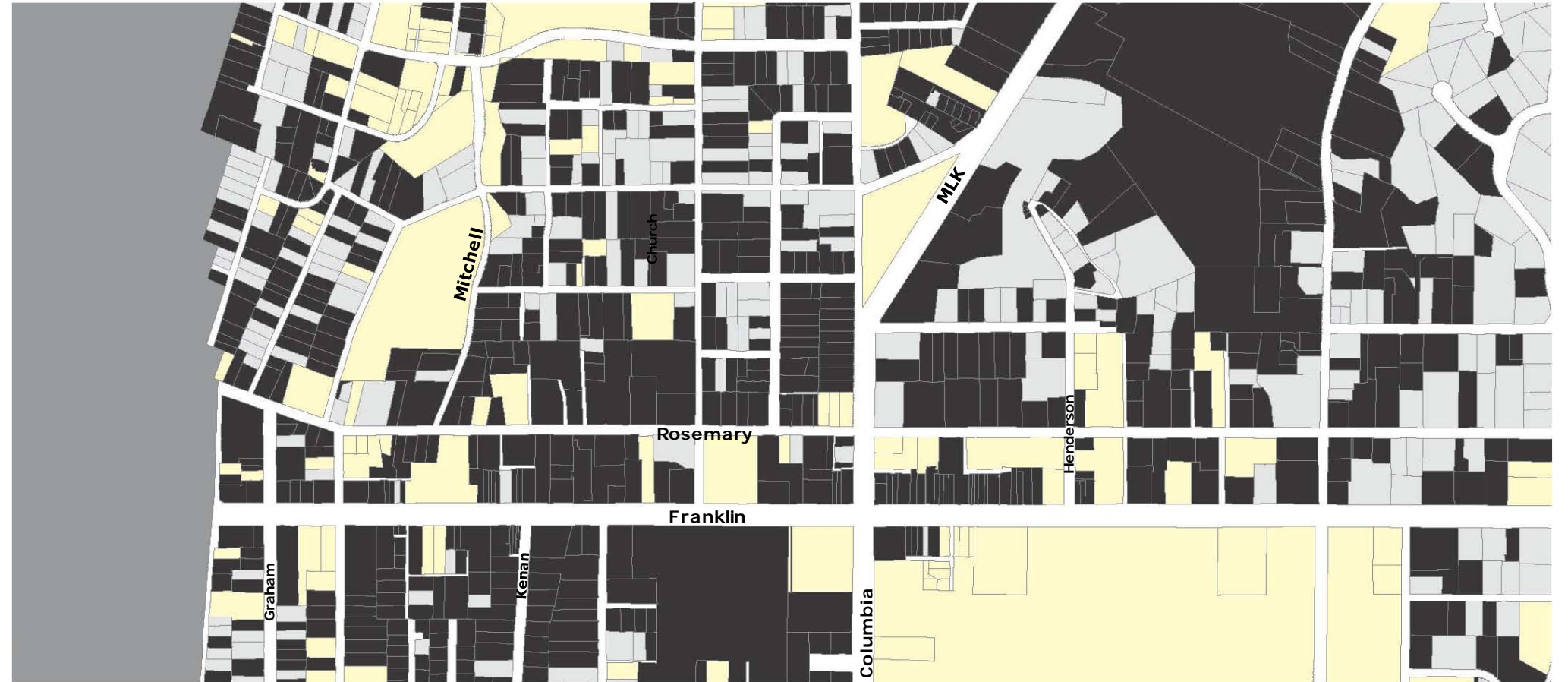
Owner \neq occupant
listed at address

Grey parcels

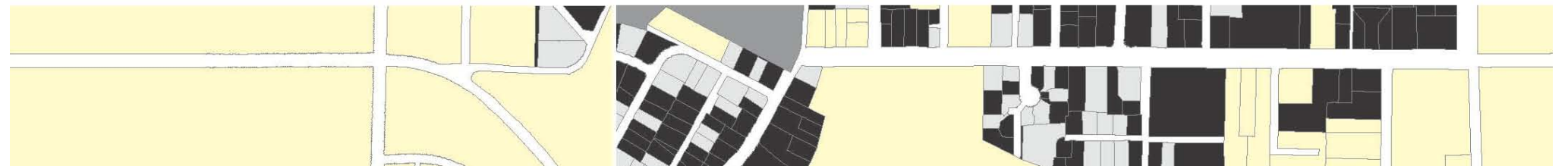
Owner = occupant
Listed at address

Yellow parcels

Non-taxable, public,
church, university



Cameron



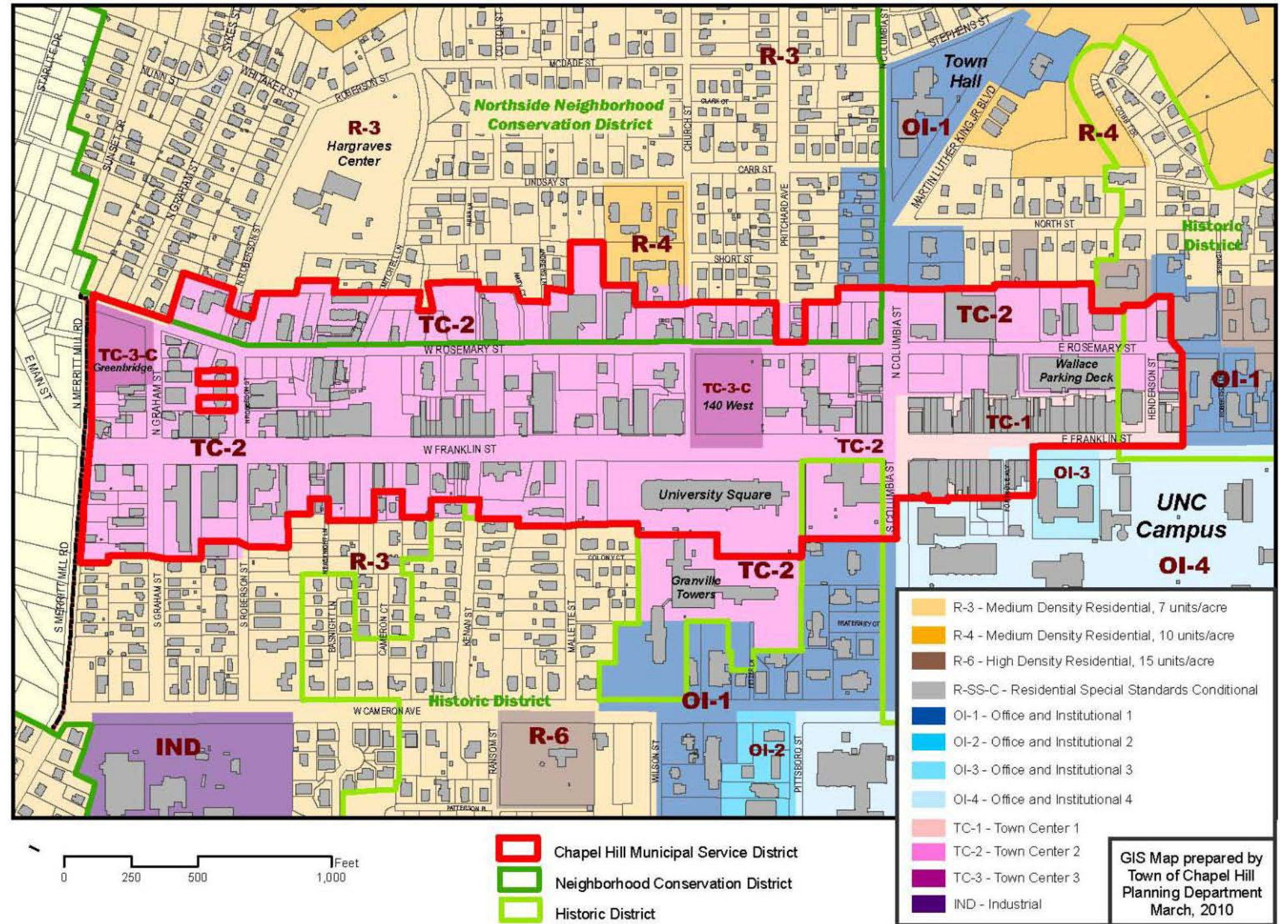
Zoning

Town Center Zoning Predominates

Newer projects are asking for up-zoning to TC-3c

TC-2 is generally only one lot deep north of Rosemary and south of Franklin – makes above ground structured parking difficult

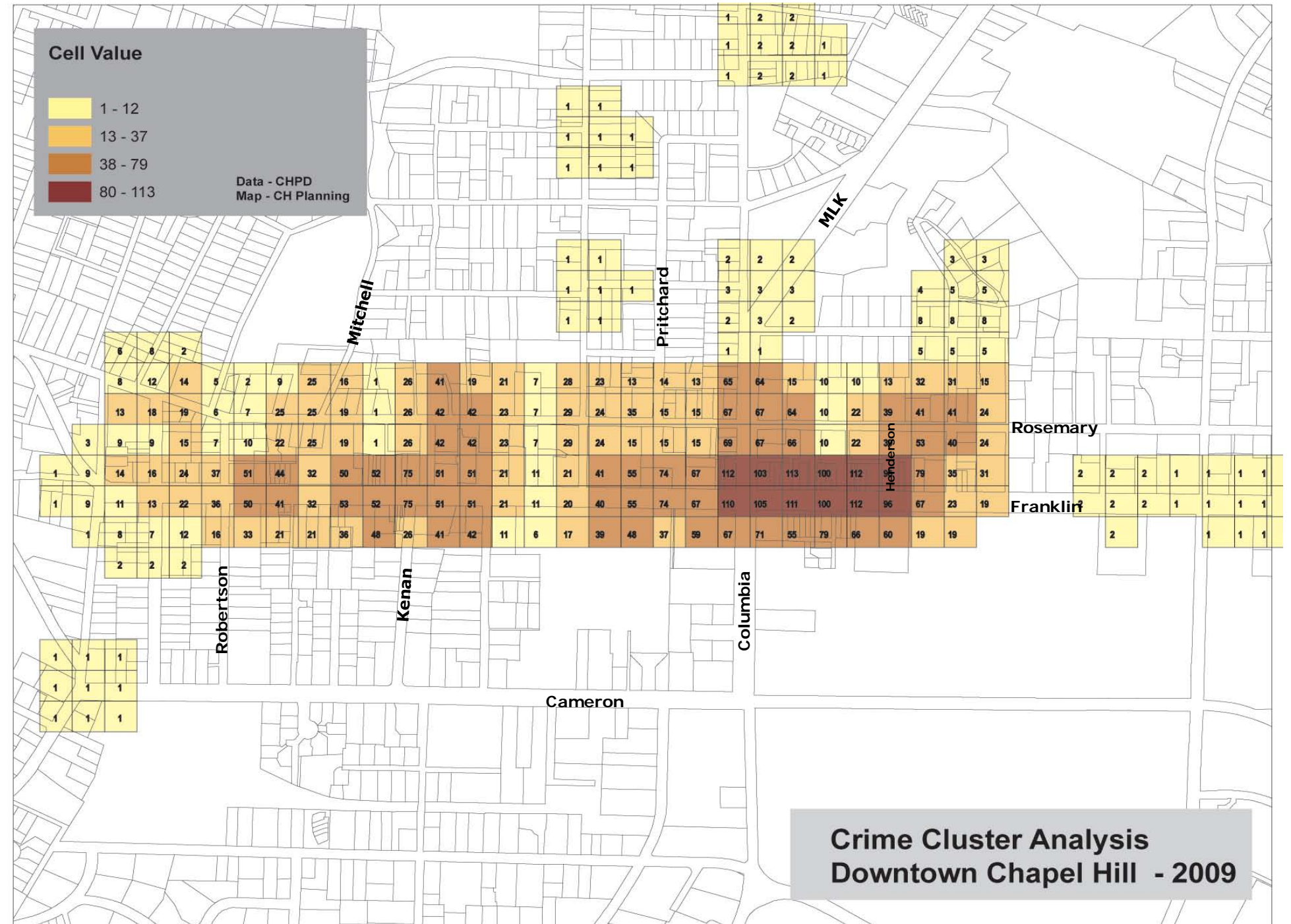
Conservation/Historic Districts overlap the TC-2 Zone and cut into the downtown



Crime Cluster Map

The highest percentage of crimes occur in the 100 blocks of east and west Franklin

The vast majority of incidents are non-violent, drug and alcohol related



Parking Supply

31% of total land area is devoted to parking

From the 2008 Parking Plan you have:

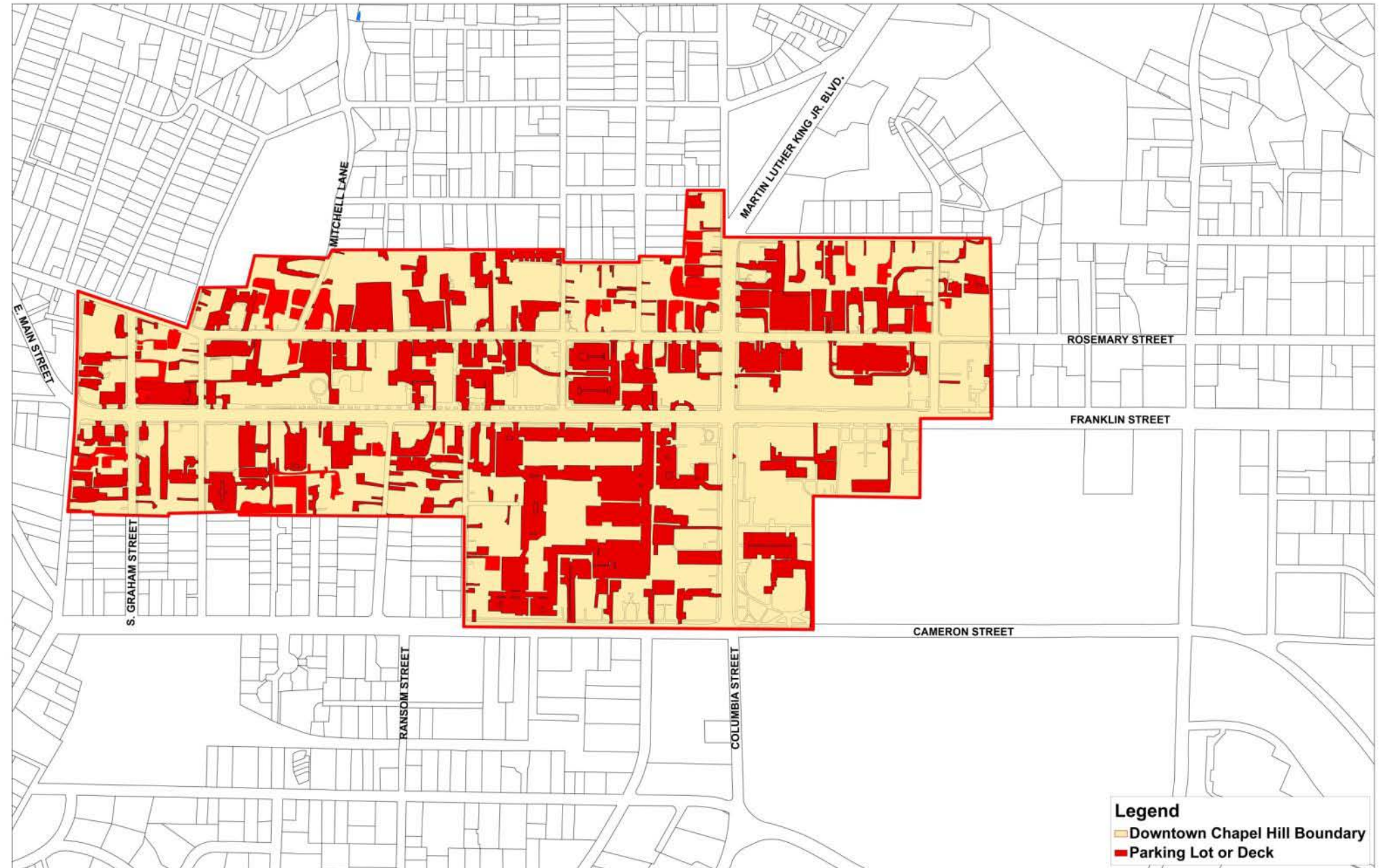
3362 total spaces

840 public spaces

161 on-street spaces

Need +/- 1280 spaces to meet current demand for customer parking

Additional spaces will be needed to serve new developments



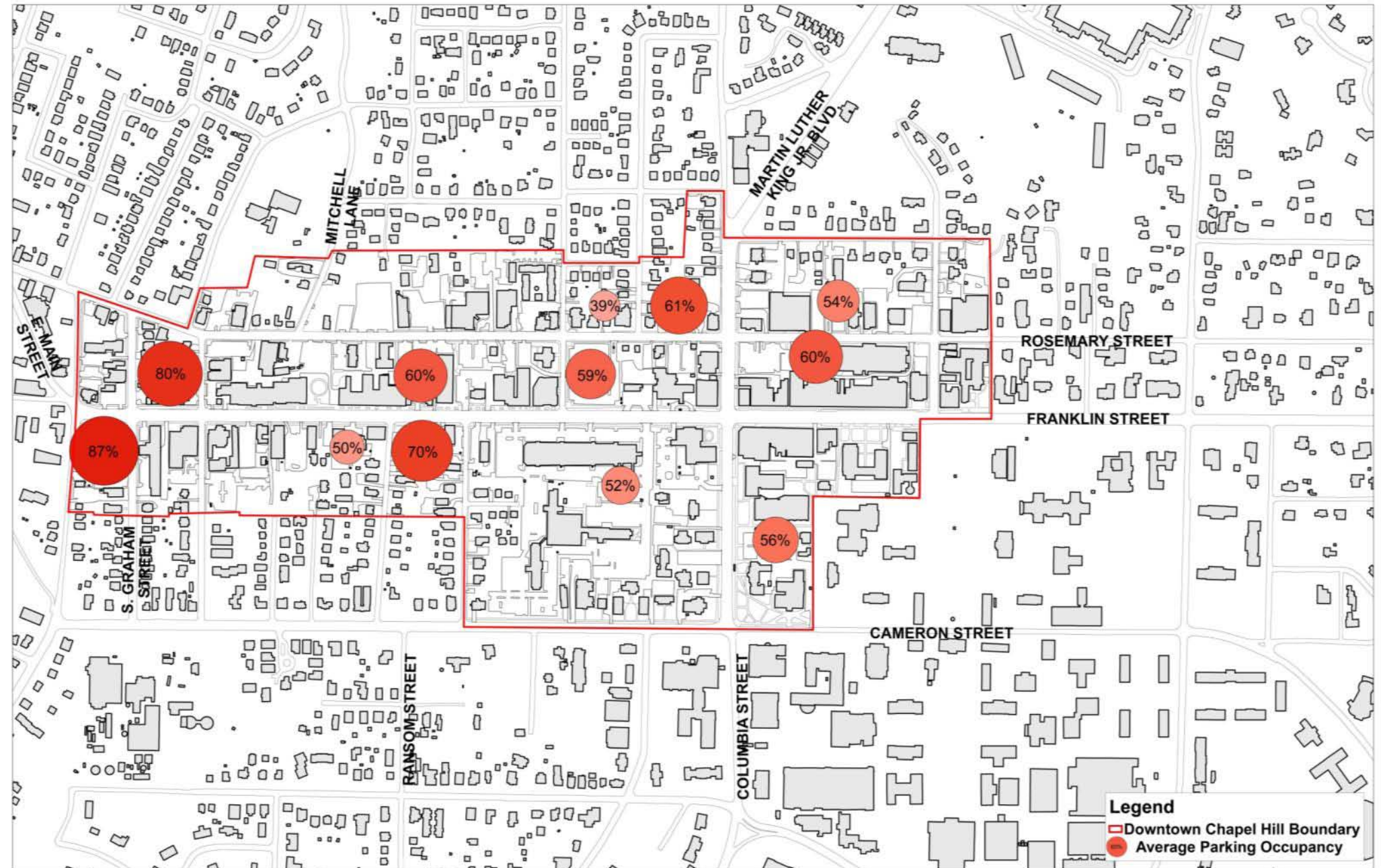
Parking Demand

Demand % is average of all times recorded in 2008 DT Parking Plan

On-street demand is the highest

Off-street demand is ranked

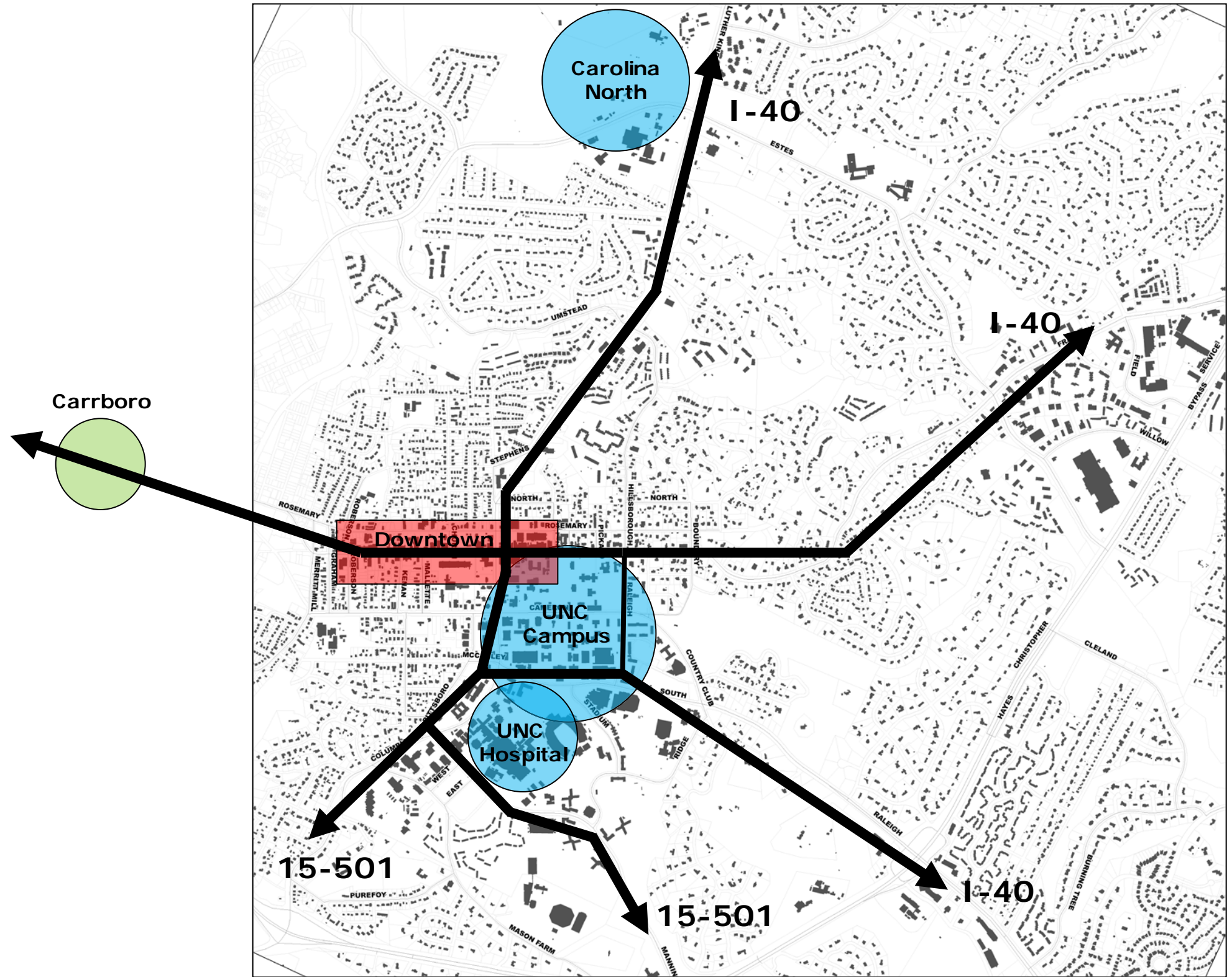
1. West End
2. Central
3. 100% corner Franklin/Columbia



Traffic Generators

Carolina North
UNC Hospitals
UNC Campus
Downtown
Carrboro

Links to I-40
Links to 15/501

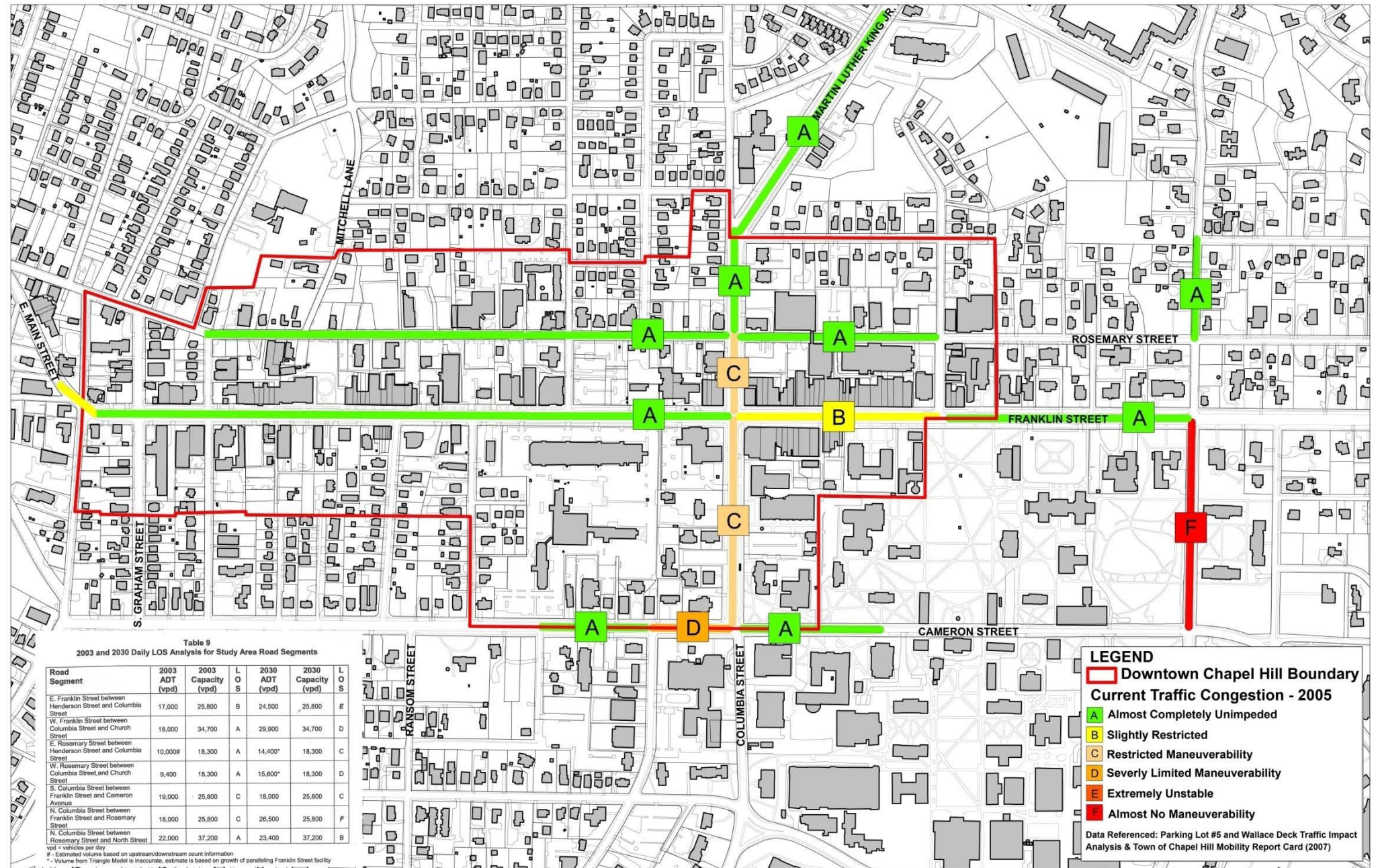


Traffic 2005

Downtown traffic is beginning to show signs of serious congestion and limited movement

Buses stopping on Columbia constrict the usable lanes

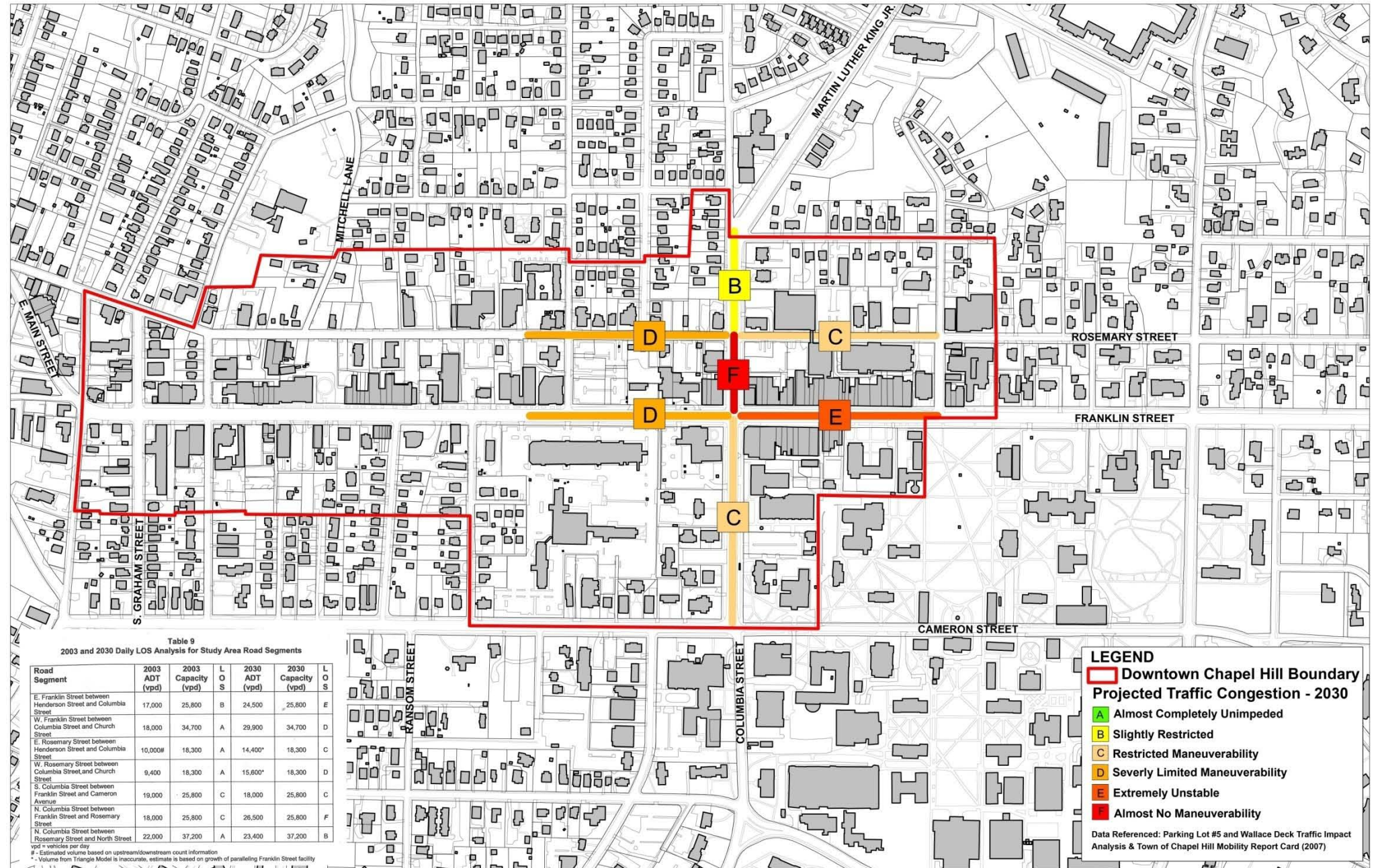
Raleigh Street is already failing



Traffic 2030

Without new travel options and removal of bus traffic – downtown traffic becomes severely constrained

Especially the bottle neck on Columbia between Franklin and Rosemary



Infrastructure Water

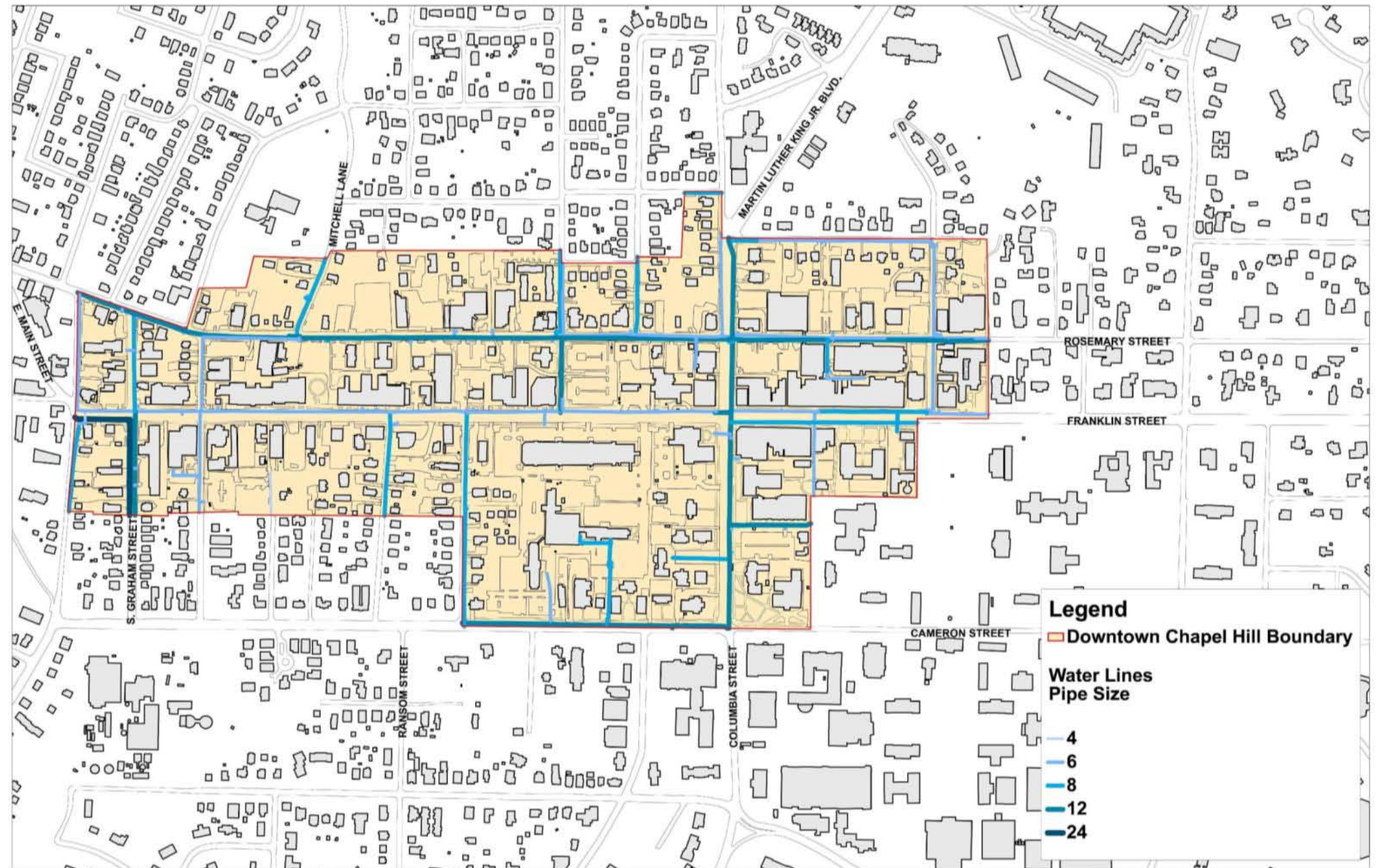
Coordinating with
OWASA and AECOM
(Consultant) with
Infrastructure Study
(I.S.) underway

Preliminary Study to be
completed in 2 months.

No current or future
water capacity issues
are anticipated.

New construction
typically more efficient
with lower impacts.

Will meet with OWASA
to review Development
Plan future plans with
OWASA I.S. projections.



Infrastructure Sewer

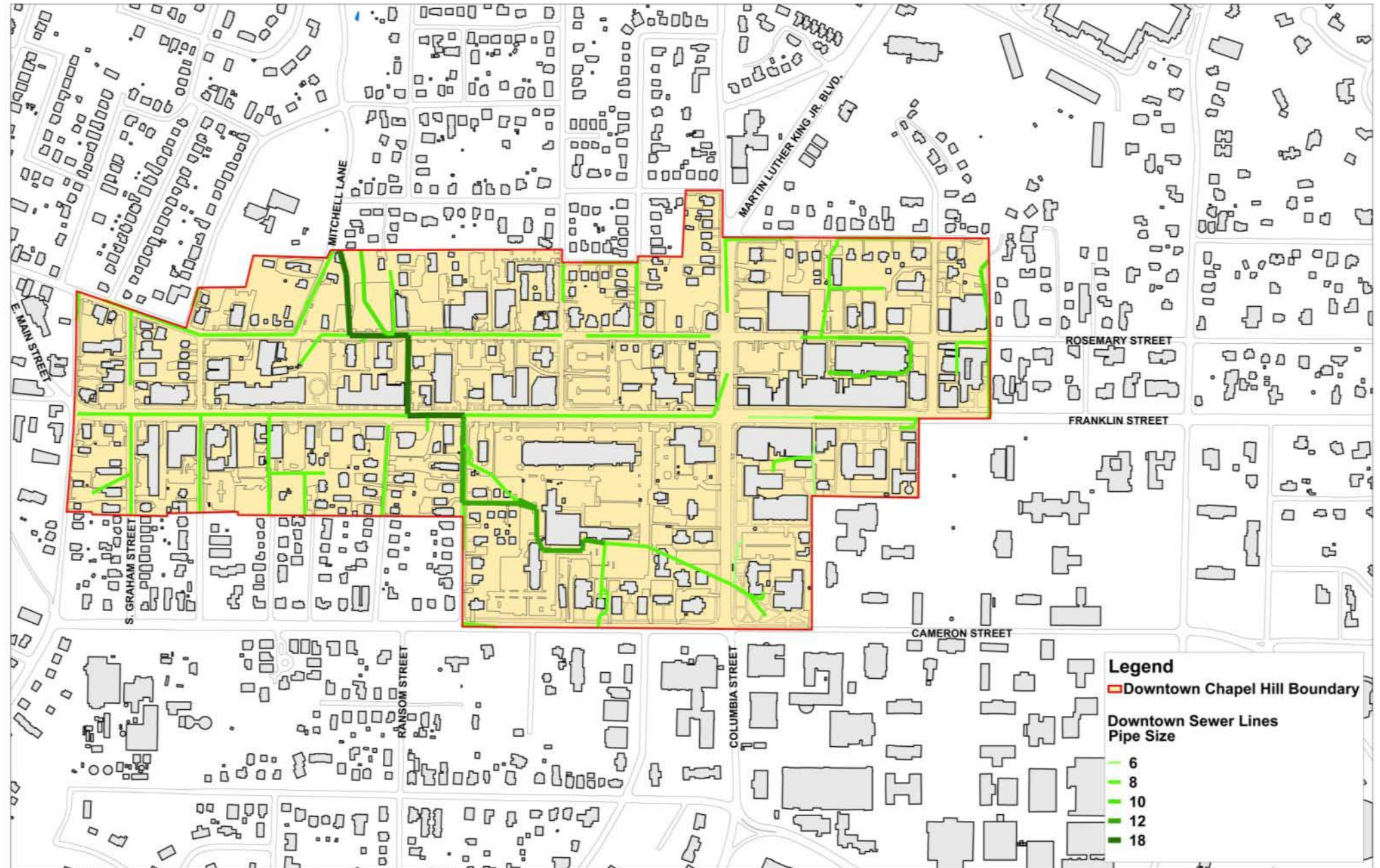
Coordinating with OWASA and CDM (Consultant) with Infrastructure Study (I.S.) underway.

Preliminary Study to be completed in 2 months.

No current or future sewer capacity issues are anticipated.

New construction typically more efficient with lower impacts.

Will meet with OWASA to review Development Plan future plans with OWASA I.S. projections.



Market Analysis

Market Observations

Approximately 5-700,000 sf of compatible retail can be supported in the Town – general merchandise, clothing, sporting goods, books, music, and electronics.

Approximately 3-500,000 sf of compatible office development can be supported.

Hotel development is maturing but offers associated opportunities in multi-purpose facilities and the group meetings market

Residential is strong but substantial additions to market-rate supply is expected. Affordable/workforce housing in downtown could fulfill multiple goals and add synergy/energy.



Supportable Development Opportunities

Mixed-use projects of various types, configurations and locations.

User driven office projects – especially smaller space (10,000 square feet and under) that is tech-connected

Infill retail and entertainment projects

Blended market-rate and affordable apartments

Hybrid live-work space

Hybrid parking garage and activated space projects

Possibly multi-purpose event facility



Adding Value by Improving Access

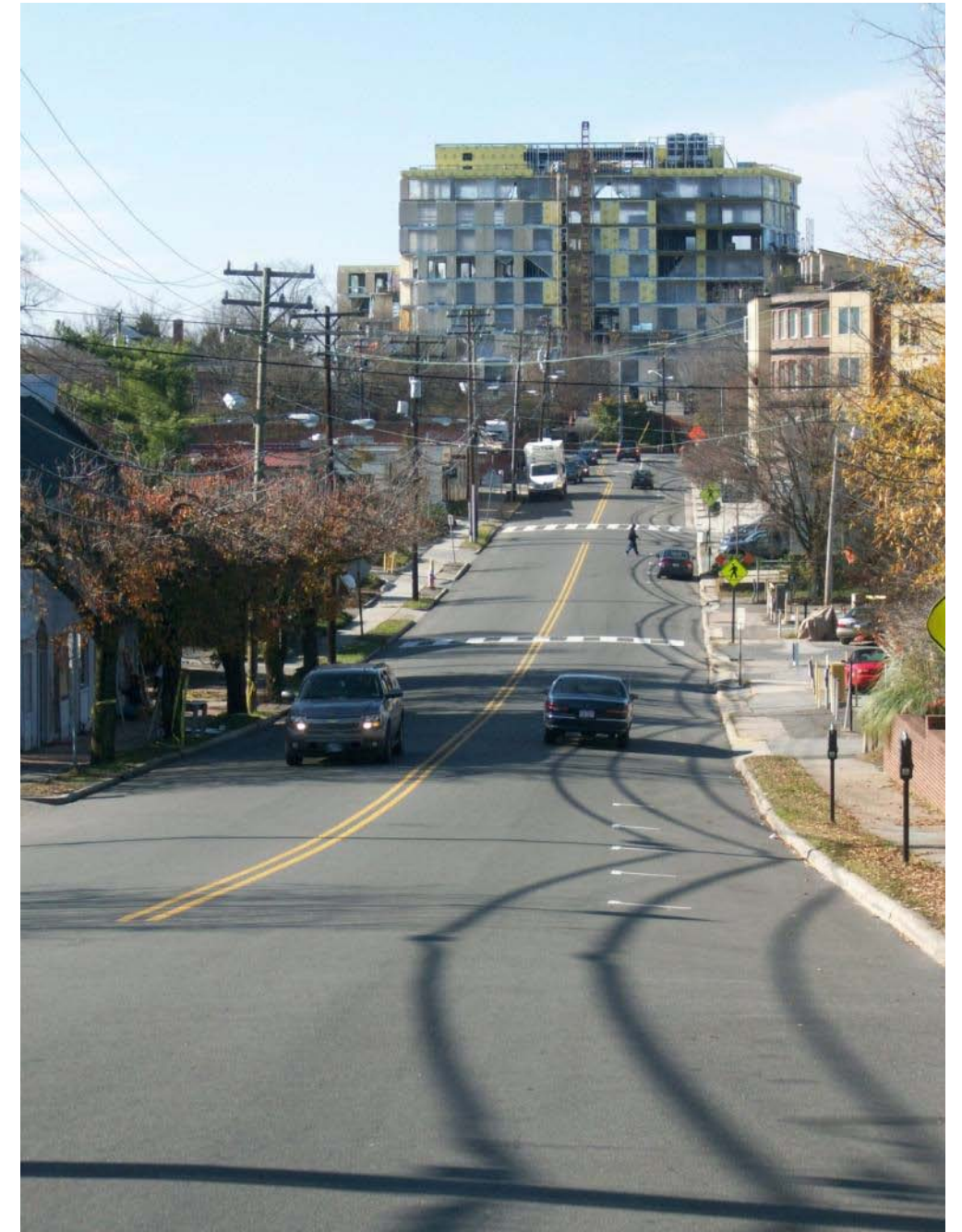
Creating value on real estate can be accomplished through:

1. Entitlement – Obtaining zoning and other approvals
2. Improvement – Site preparation, infrastructure, etc.
3. Orienting to synergistic development
4. Creating orientation to visual amenity

And:

Improving Access and Visibility

The Framework Plan seeks to utilize this dynamic



Adding Value by Improving Access

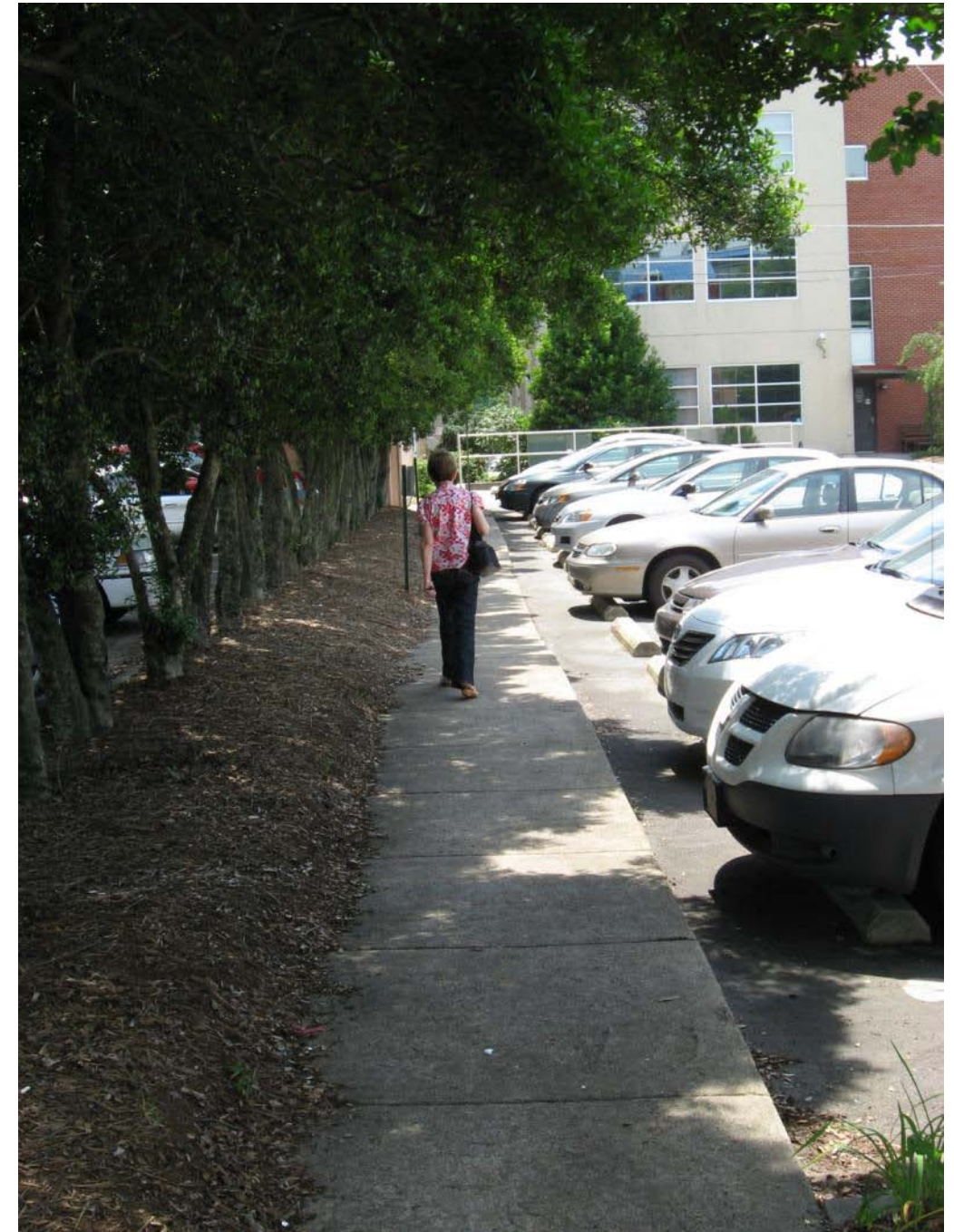
Strategy 5 has formulated a theory to express valuation impacts from improved access and visibility.

Variables such as: New people introduced to property, per capita spending, ability to park, improved opportunities for signage, marketing, etc. are coupled with a value/weighting system of consumer response.

The retail formula is expressed as:

$$VA = V + (A * B) \times (D * w) \times (E * w) \times (F * w) \times (G * w) / SSF \text{ (sales per sf)}$$

We will use this to estimate net added value and associated tax/fiscal impacts of proposed projects and their relationship to improved access and visibility.



The Conceptual Development Framework

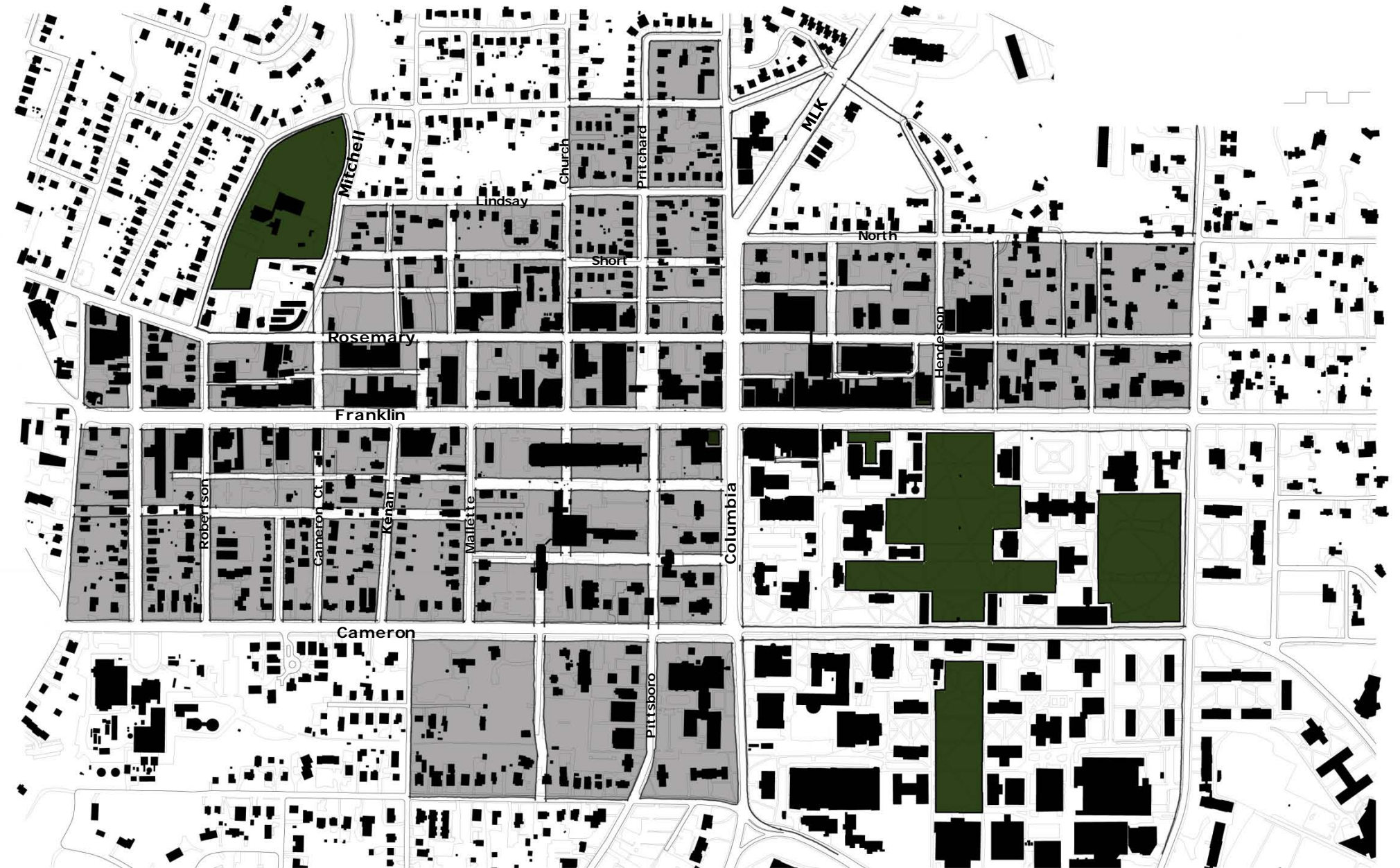
Compact, Connected, Anchored and Green

Keep downtown **Compact** and walkable but identify new development opportunities

Improve **Connections**...cars, buses, peds and bikes

Develop parking and visitor facilities to **Anchor** downtown and deliver customers

Create new **Green** public space and advance environ. and financially sustainable development practices



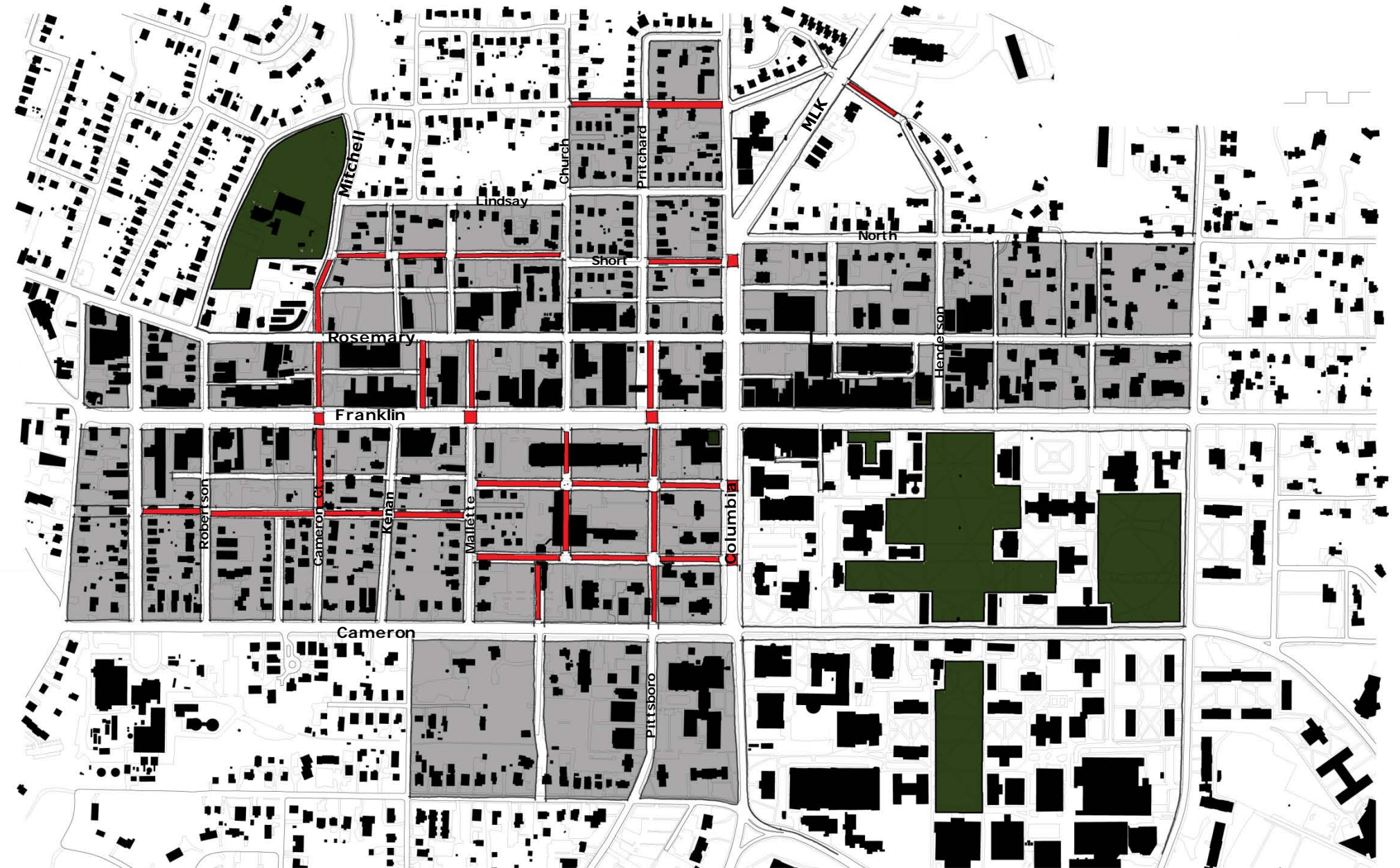
New Connections

Create a series of new connections to break up the grid and link north to south and east to west

Corners create value that can be captured to fund improvements

New connections designed to treat all modes equally – adequate space for cars, bikes, peds and buses

Window of opportunity will close as new projects develop



North South Connections

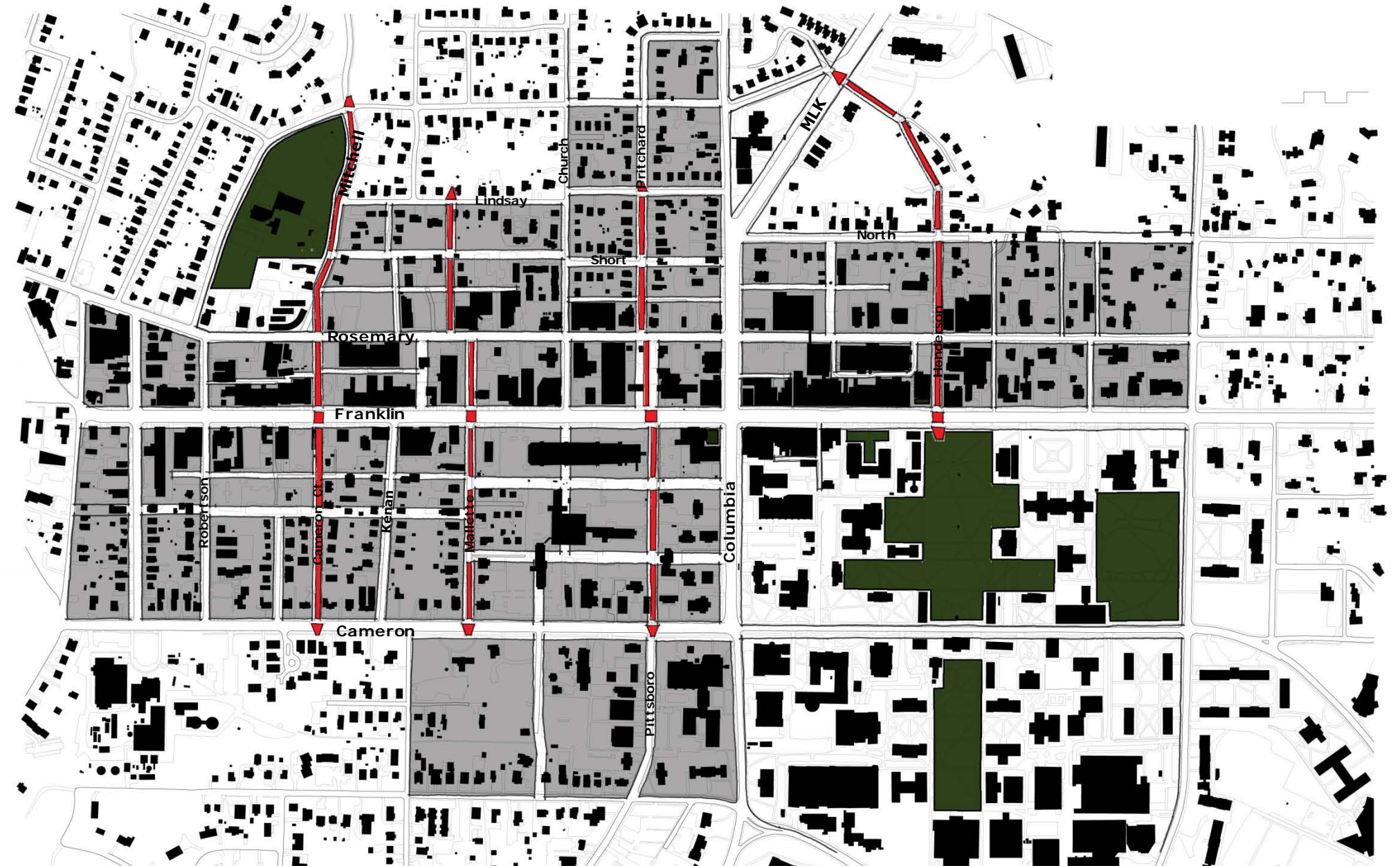
Four new north south links

- Mitchell St. to south
- Mallette St. to north
- Pittsboro St. to north
- Henderson St to north

Takes traffic pressure off Columbia St.

Each connects to a new public space

Creates three new intersections on Franklin – block sizes shrink to +/- 500 ft.



East West Connections

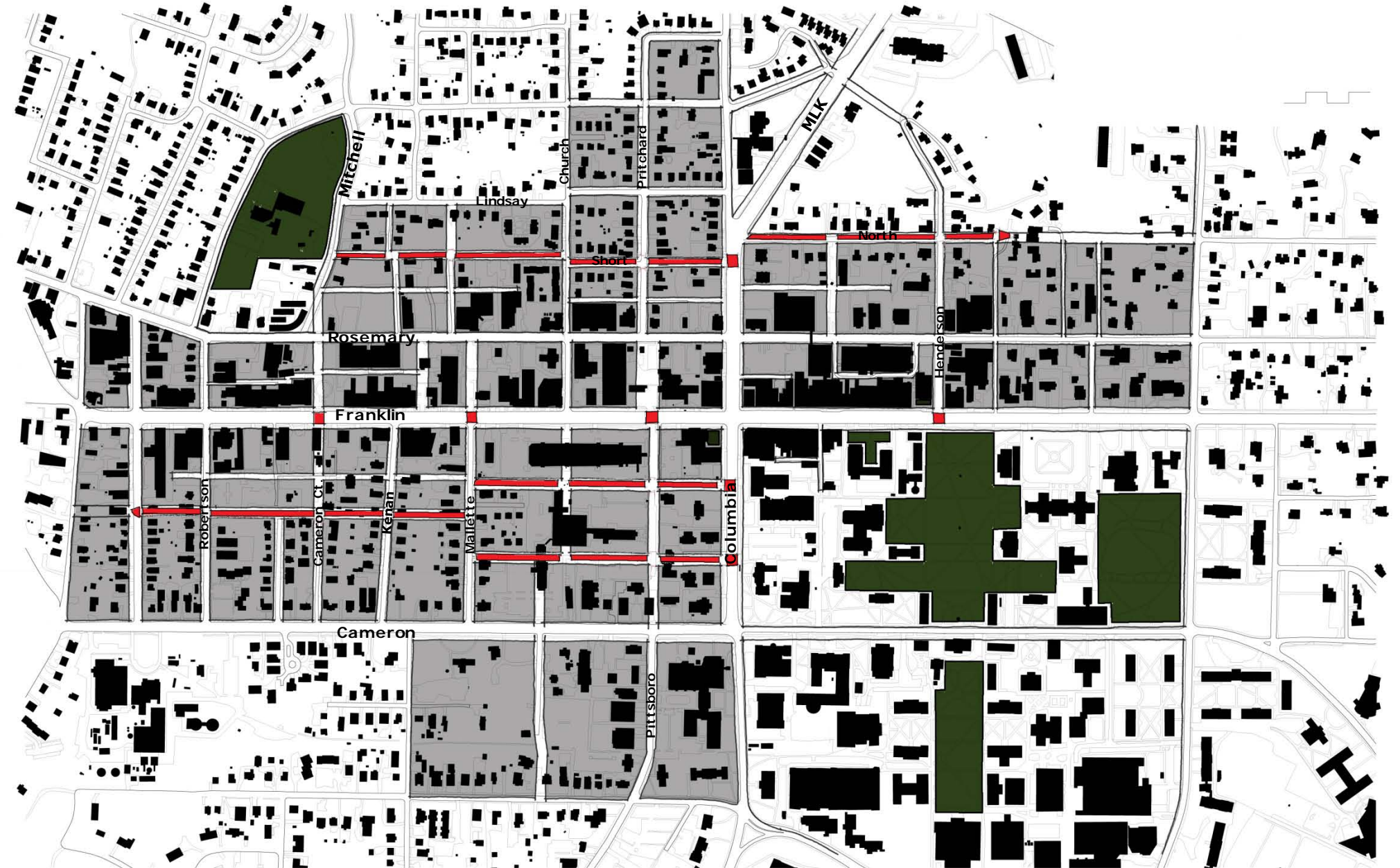
Creates three new east west links

Designing the smallest street possible with a 58' ROW including dedicate bike lanes

Not alleys meant for service, but complete streets

Roads serve new parking facilities

Creates three new intersections on Columbia/MLK brings block size down to +/- 350'



A Compact New Boundary

New east/west streets define the northern and southern boundary of downtown



Fully Connected Grid – New Opportunities

The new connections

1. Opens development opportunities on Rosemary and Franklin
2. Creates choice sites
3. Improves ped/bike and vehicular access
4. Takes buses off Columbia St.
5. Allows new adjacent public spaces, parks, plazas
6. Reduces congestion
7. Improves safety and response times for police and fire
8. Adds significant on-street parking space



Opportunity Sites

Downtown has 47 acres of land that are ripe for redevelopment

Much more than a ten year supply – this is along term Vision

This framework seeks to maximize it's environmental, communal and economic value

The action plan will explore how to capture some of that increased economic value to fund the needed improvements



Projects in the Pipeline

There are several significant projects in the pipeline today

1. 140 West
2. 123 Franklin
3. Shortbread Lofts
4. Wesley Apartments
5. Lot 2
6. The Courtyard

Together these projects may be able to absorb much of the current demand for space in downtown

The first moves should build off this current momentum



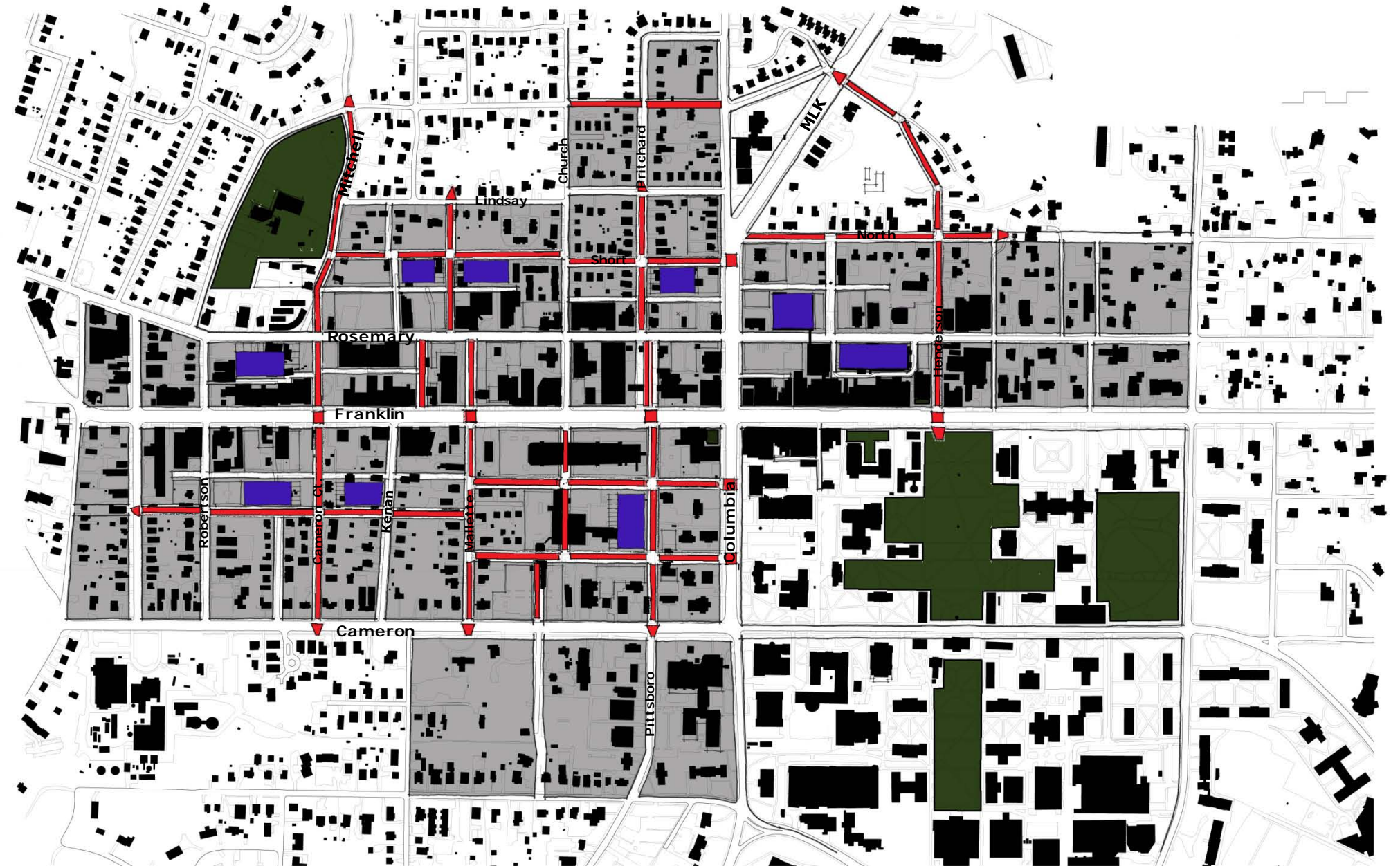
Anchored by New and Existing Parking Structures

Parking drives all new development

New decks must be placed in strategic locations that will anchor development and deliver customers

Keeping the majority of new parking outside the downtown core can create good transitions and maximize the core's development potential

A new alley system and the east west links define the deck locations



Parking Serves Opportunity Sites

New parking decks will serve, anchor and be opportunity sites

Affordable housing, recreational uses and sustainability goals can all be included on parking sites

Those near new parks can include climbing walls, skate parks, bike stations

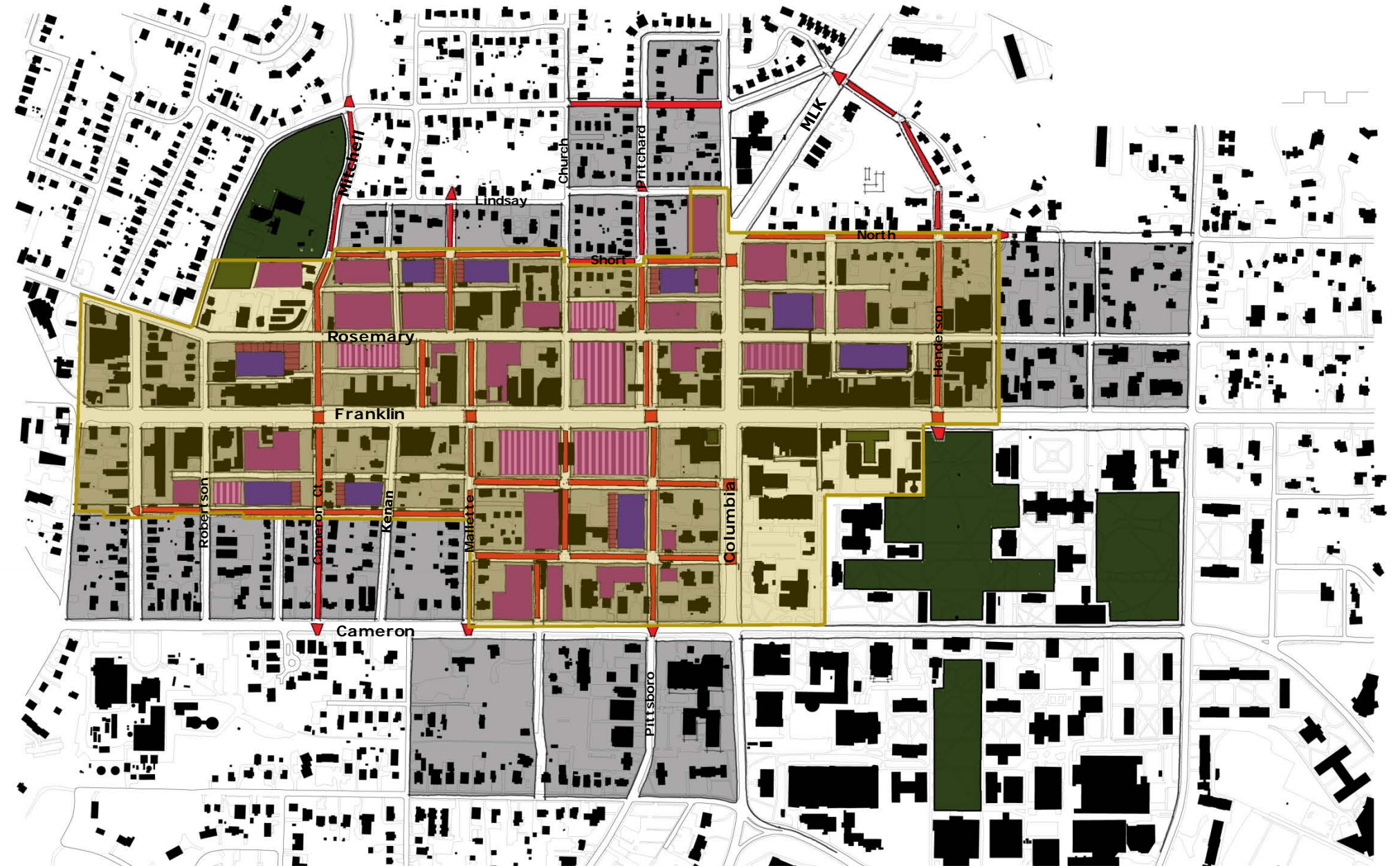
The roofs of the decks can host PV solar cells and solar hot water
Both can be financed at little cost to the town



All Parking and Opportunity Sites within the Boundary

The Framework proposes to keep downtown very compact

With the exception of the 123 Franklin Project The Framework only expands the current boundary by half a block to accommodate new parking structures



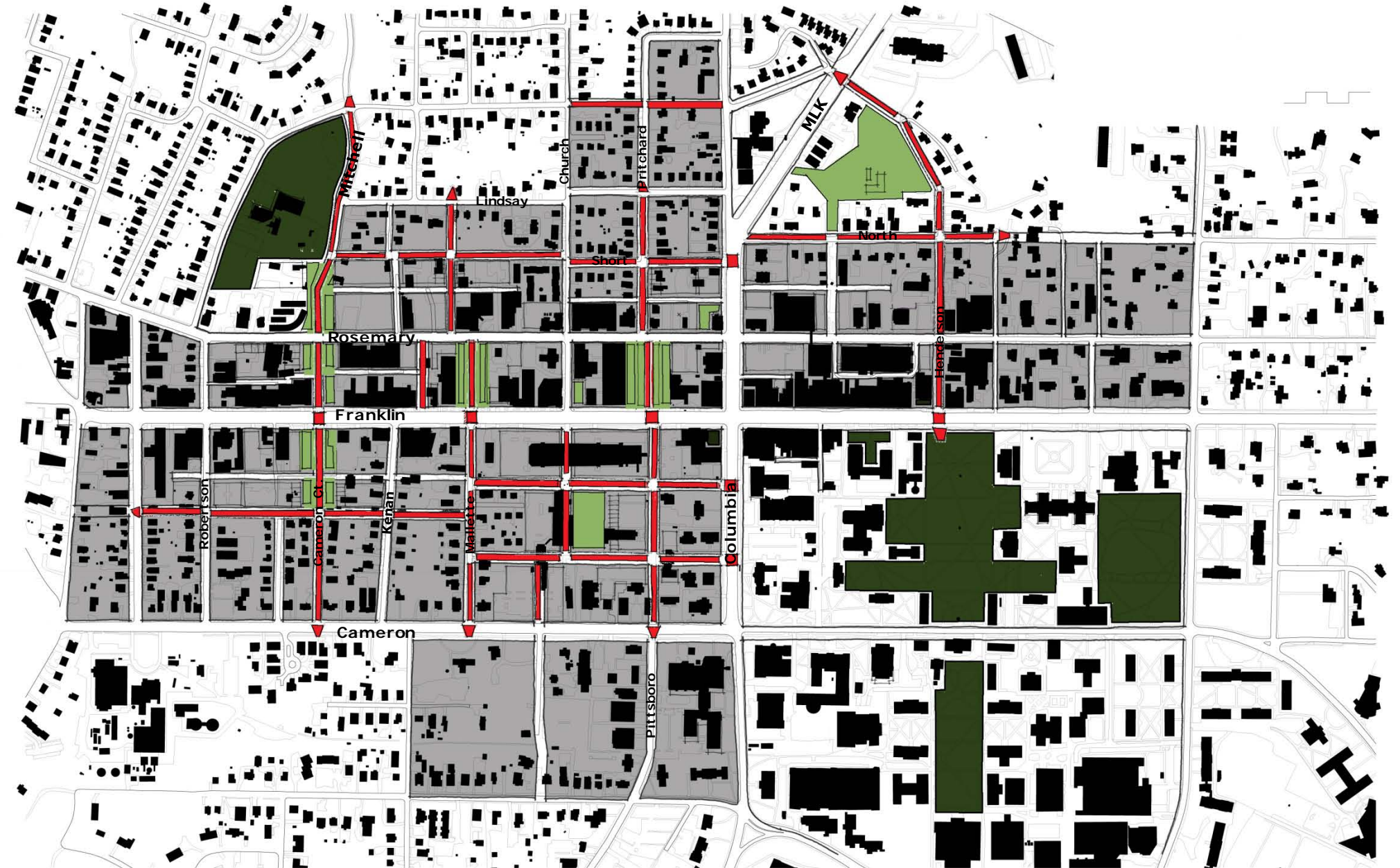
Connecting to and Opportunities for New Green/Public Space

A new park is proposed in the north east corner of downtown

Another open space is proposed as part of the 123 Franklin Project

The four new north - south connections are paired with a new green space, park or plaza

The new connections build off the existing bike/ped plans and link the major downtown parks and open spaces

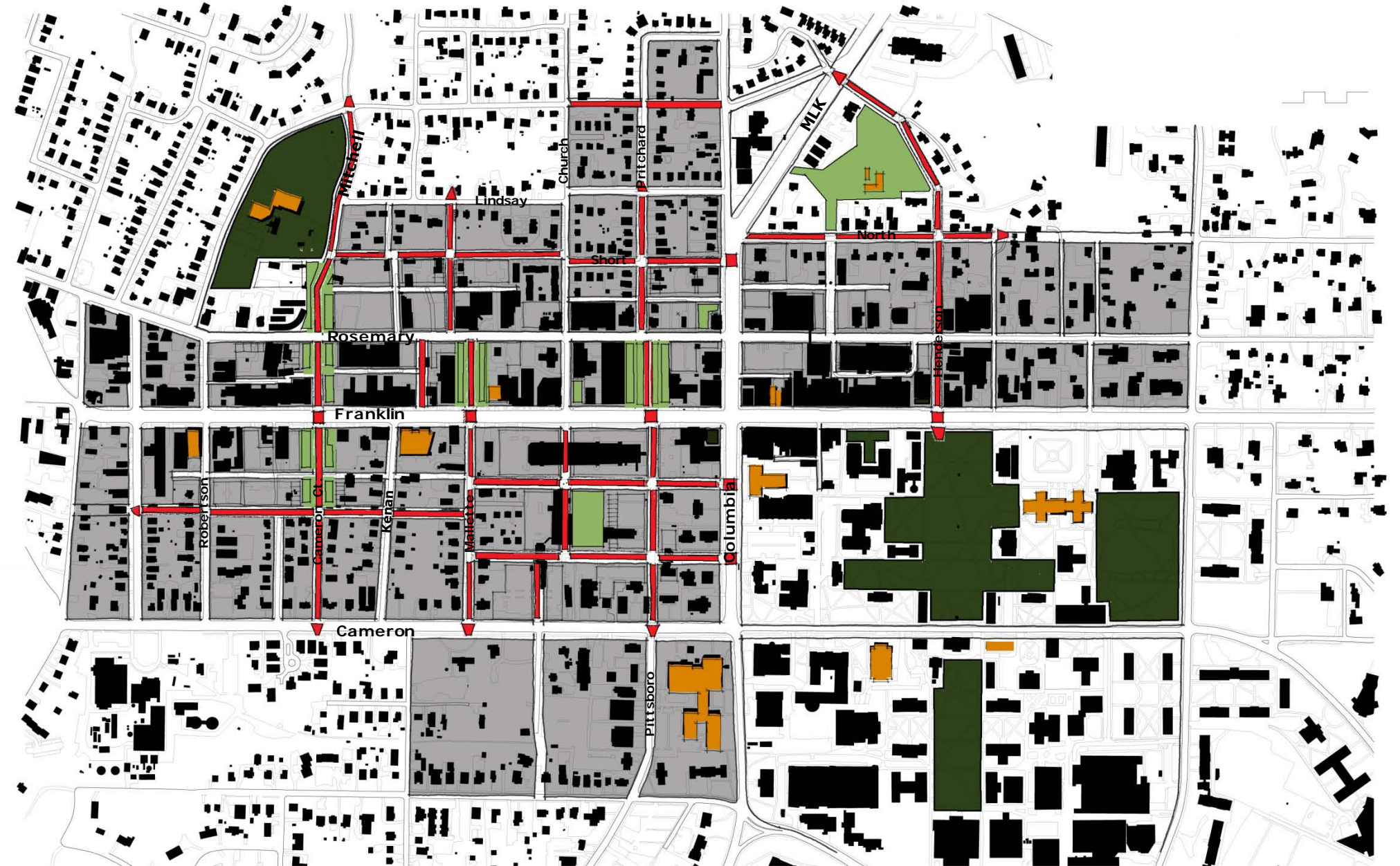


Connecting the Visitor Anchors

The new connections and public spaces open up and make the downtown more accessible for visitors

Visitor destinations anchor the green spaces/plazas and Franklin Street

New parking in close proximity to visitor destinations make downtown more easy to use for visitors



The Complete Development Framework

Compact
Connected
Anchored
and
Green



Phase I Transitway and Transfer Center

Build off and coordinate with 123 Franklin and 140 West and Wesley Projects

Study the option and if feasible acquire land for Transit Transfer Center

Secure new roadway connection to Pittsboro St.

If available offer remaining sites for redevelopment

Study use of TIF to finance



Transitway and Transfer Center

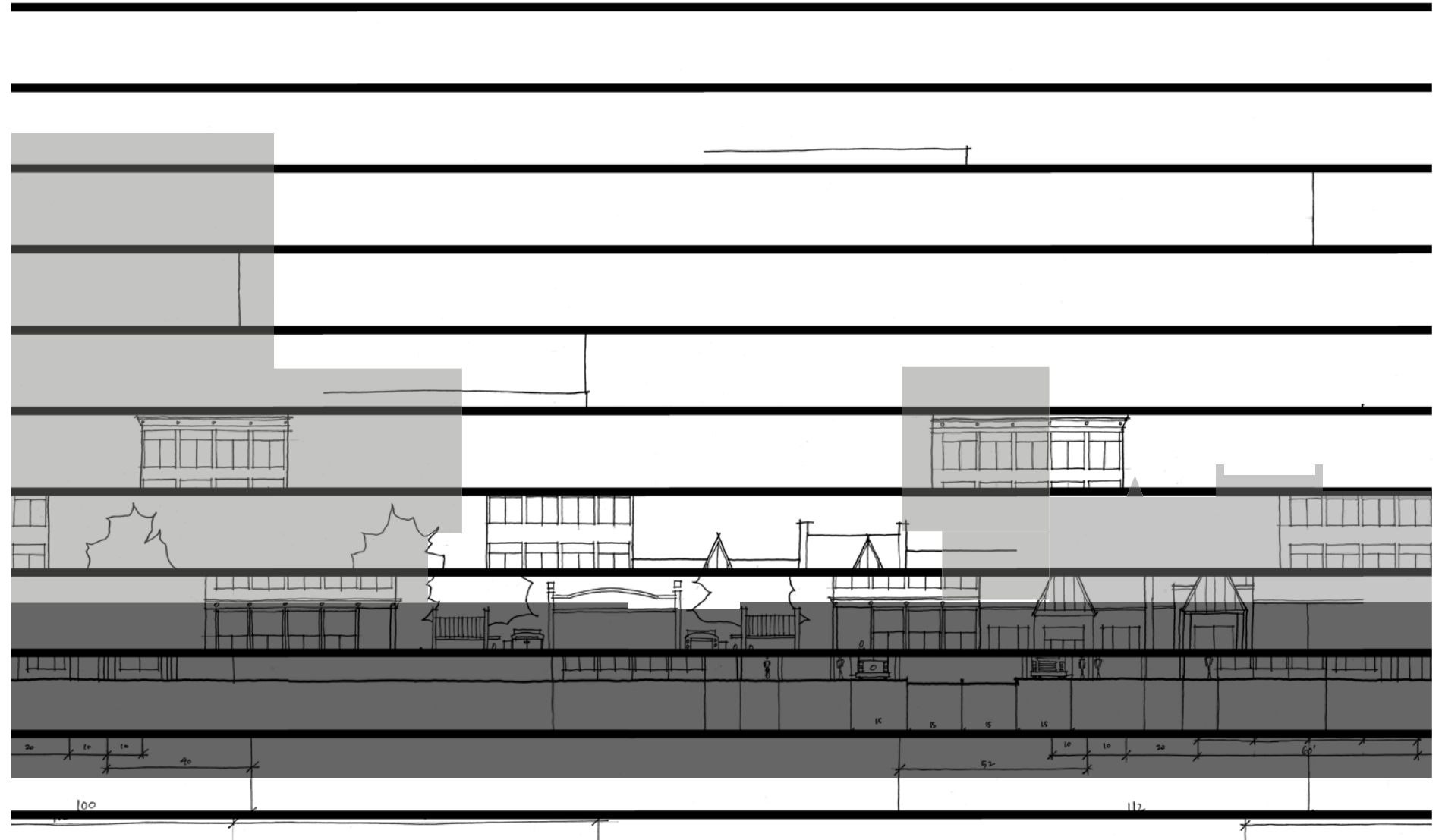
Takes North/South buses off Columbia in the heart of downtown

Provides a transfer station for Chapel Hill and Triangle Transit

Requires a road extension on 123 Franklin Site to connect to Pittsboro St.

Offers potentially two new development sites

Must be vetted as part of the Transit Operations Analysis



Phase II West End Greenway

Build off and coordinate with UNC and Shortbread project

Acquire land for new parking deck on Rosemary St.

Acquire land and create new roadway connection and parks

Build second deck to serve development on city owned parking lot

Offer remaining sites for redevelopment if not used for park space

Study TIF to finance



West End Greenway

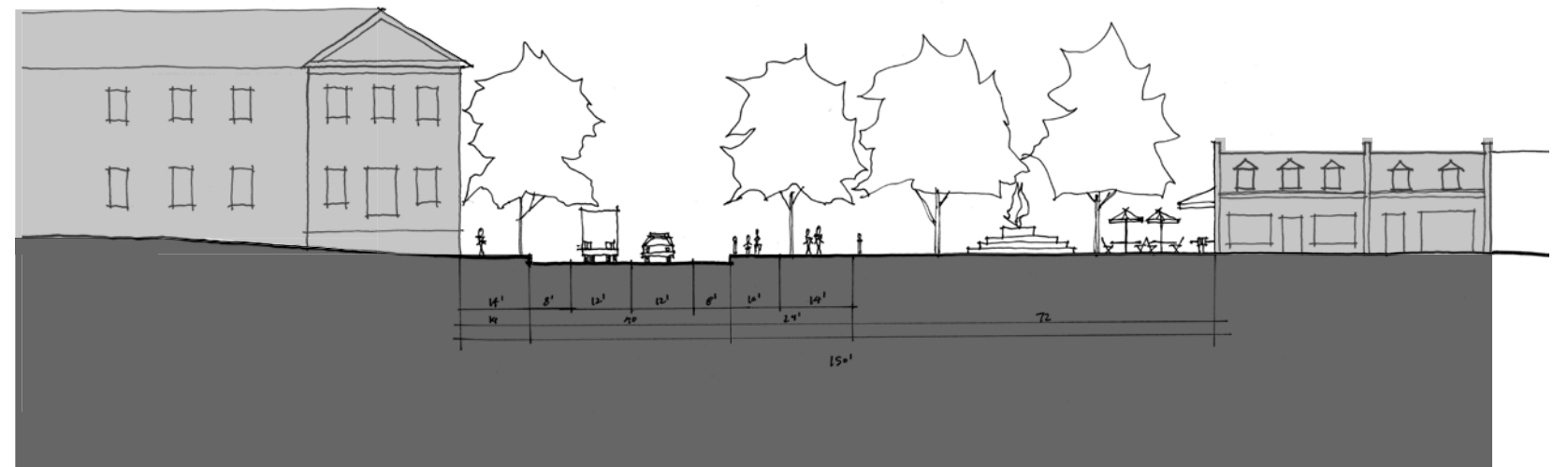
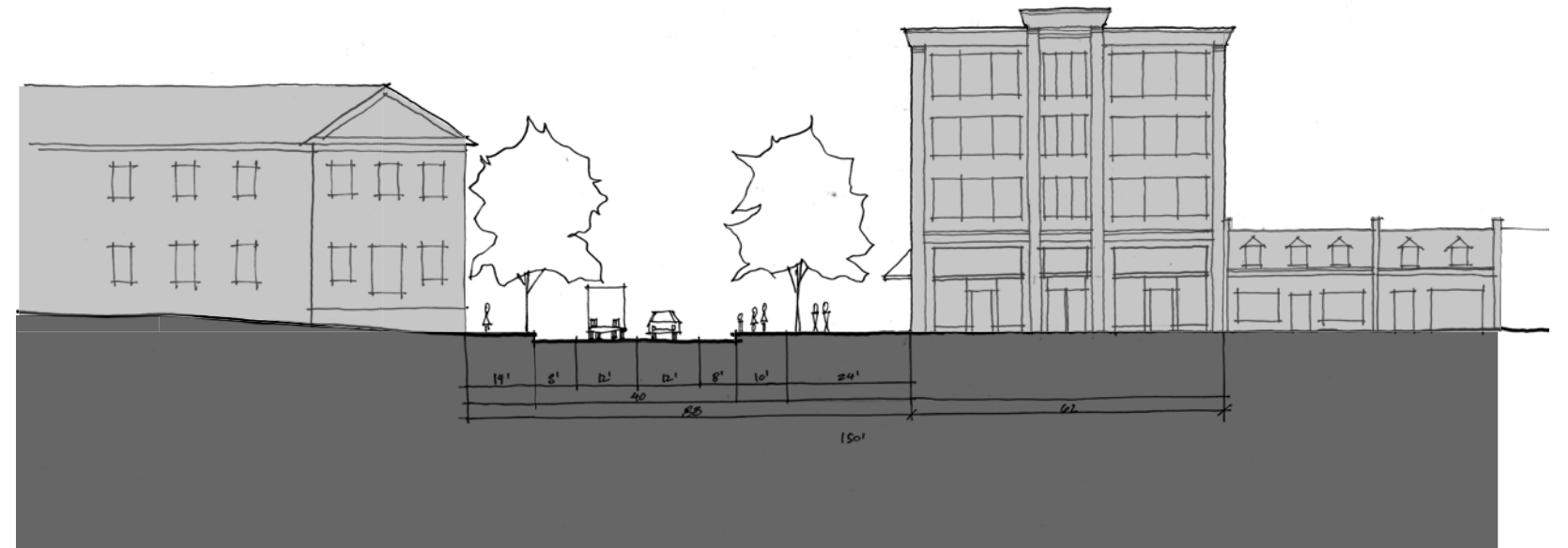
Extension of Mitchell Lane to Cameron Court

A new greenway connection for peds/bikes to Neighborhoods, Carolina North and thru downtown

Would require new parking facilities to replace existing spaces

If green space is not wanted – also offers a good development site

Utilizes property owned by UNC



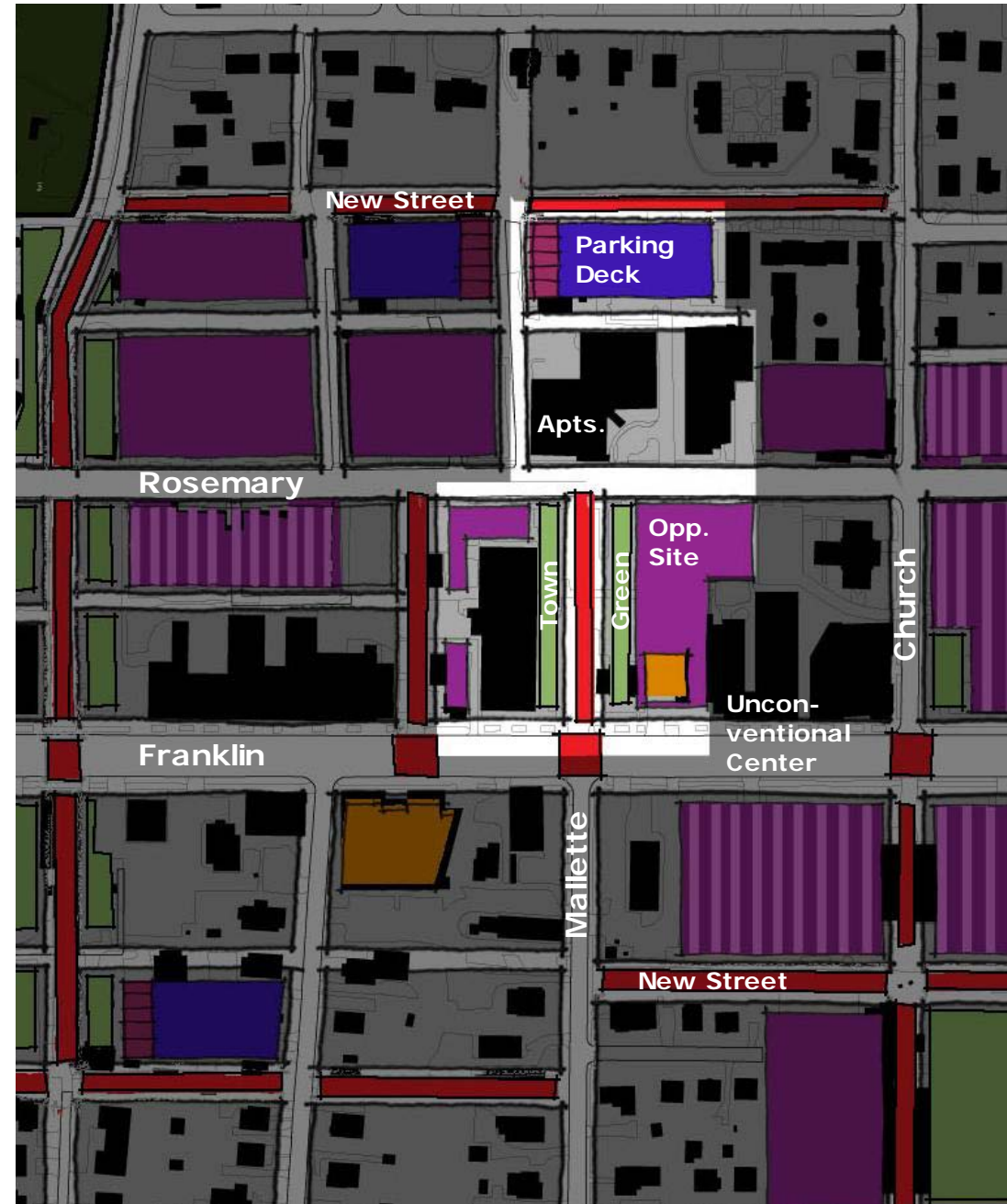
Phase III Town Green

Create new roadway/square connection

Offer remains of site for office development or maybe new public facility

Create and fund new Unconventional Center on office site

Build new parking deck to support development



Town Green

Extension of Mallette Street to Rosemary

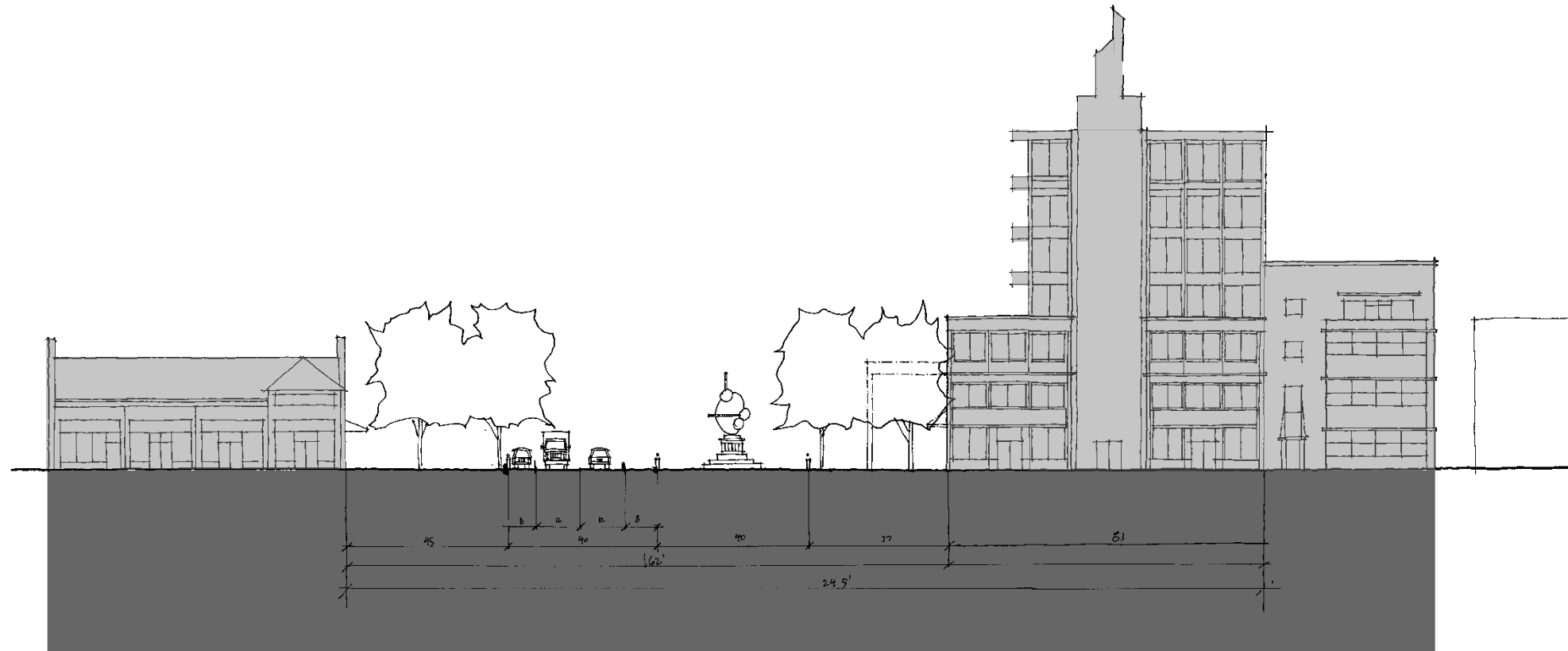
New public gathering, festival, market and open space

Street can be closed for events

Office/Retail development site. No residents adjacent to event space

Could also include a new public multi-purpose space...
The Unconventional Center

The existing adjacent building already opens out onto and could activate the new Sqaure



Next Steps

Continue feedback loop

Identify design/action strategies that have community consensus

Prioritize strategies

Develop an Action Plan and Phasing Strategy

Conduct Feasibility Analysis for catalytic projects

Determine costs and a range of financing options

