



Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan

May 2009

Prepared by the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission



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Credits

The concepts and analyses that are contained in this plan are the result of collaborative effort, involving the following departments and organizations.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission, in partnership with the East Tennessee Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the City's Community Development staff, has prepared this Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan. This corridor is a gateway to downtown and serves as a series of commercial, residential and institutional districts for central and east Knoxville. Following plans to improve the Knoxville South Waterfront, Cumberland Avenue, Fort Sanders and Downtown North, this corridor, which runs from the Old City to Burlington, is seen as the last major wedge of land and transportation systems that could be further revitalized within the neighborhoods known as the "Heart of Knoxville."

The purpose of this plan is to create opportunities to enhance development along the Magnolia Avenue corridor, including the north end of downtown, the Hall of Fame-Caswell Park area, Burlington and the areas in between. This plan is focused on the physical environment and outlines:

- opportunities for more intense, mixed-use development, including a vertical mix of retail, housing and office uses

- conservation, restoration and reuse of historic resources
- improvements to the sidewalk, bicycle and street systems, including standards for on- and off-street parking, fostering greater intensity in development
- improvements to parks and open spaces, including new squares, day-to-day access to Chilhowee Park and completion of the First Creek Greenway.

In the course of public meetings, various socio-economic concerns came to light as an issue affecting the corridor. These included homeless populations, crime (particularly arson, prostitution and drug sales), under-educated work force and a lack of opportunities for business expansion and development. These issues are of such importance that they should be addressed on a comprehensive, on-going basis. One of the key recommendations is to create a task force to create a strategic program that would involve merchant and neighborhood interests as well as government and economic development officials.

Heart of Knoxville Map



During the past two years the city, MPC, AIA and the Magnolia Area Merchants' Association hosted several workshops that were well attended, generally having between 40 and 100 persons participating. Early on, a vision was created for what the corridor would be like in the year 2020 to serve as an overall goal for the area, it follows on the next page.

To implement the vision as outline above this planning document has been created through public input and will be used to guide future development in the area. This plan contains five additional chapters, which are outlined below:

- Existing Conditions: an overview of land use and development trends
- History and Historic Resources: history and preservation of historic buildings
- A Plan for Complete Streets and Landscaping: providing for pedestrian, bike and transit facilities
- Land Use and Urban Design Plans: including proposals for a mix of land uses
- Implementation Measures: recommended programs and steps.

Vision: Magnolia Avenue in 2020

Magnolia Avenue is a vibrant corridor with a mix of strong businesses, a variety of good housing, and well designed parks and civic spaces. Historic preservation and redevelopment have been sensitive to the adjoining neighborhood needs. It is an active corridor - accessible by bus, bike and trolley. Sidewalks are enhanced by decorative lights and attractive furnishings. Residents and visitors walk safely along the avenue's sidewalks, separated from the passing traffic and shaded under a canopy of trees.

The vacant land and underutilized buildings just north of Depot Street have been used for residential, office and commercial purposes. Downtown workers live there above shops and restaurants and walk to work. A revitalized Burlington, with new shopping and housing opportunities, add vitality to the east end of the corridor. The historic architecture of Barber and others has been preserved and is used as a model for new apartments, townhouses and public buildings.

A community newspaper promotes the area's assets, including the Knoxville Zoo, the botanical gardens, Caswell and Chilhowee Parks, churches, YMCA, senior center and other community serving institutions.

Partnerships between the University of Tennessee, Pellissippi State, Knox County Schools, the City of Knoxville and local non-profits have resulted in programs that have strengthened the neighborhoods and businesses. Police and firemen enjoy a walk down Woodbine Avenue after the annual BBQ, which serves as a reminder that better relationships are a key to realizing successful growth.

Magnolia Avenue has become an address for successful enterprise, attractive housing and some of the finest places to enjoy recreation in Knoxville.



An architect's rendering of the potential for the Magnolia Avenue-Winona Street area

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

Land Use and Vacant Buildings

The Magnolia Avenue corridor is predominantly characterized by commercial and other income-producing uses, such as office, warehousing, transportation/communication and industrial uses: these represent slightly more than 50 percent of the overall properties. The corridor has a significant amount of vacant property. Vacant land and lots with vacant buildings represent about 115 acres of the 390 acres in the corridor (see pages 9 and 10).

MPC and Community Development Department staff examined the corridor to ascertain the extent of vacant lots, vacant buildings and structures with obvious problems (for example, fire-damage or roof deficiencies). In summary, the findings are:

Vacant land

There are about 130 vacant lots in the corridor. Many of these vacant lots are the result of demolition of older buildings that had fallen into disrepair or were places where arson

occurred. Many of these lots are overgrown; some are used as parking areas. All have potential for economic or residential development purposes.

Vacant buildings

There are more than 180 vacant buildings in the entire corridor, sitting on about 78 acres (20 percent of all the land in the corridor). Vacancies often become targets for arson and other crime-related activities causing major problems for the area.

Vacant historic buildings are particular concerns, primarily because of the potential for losing resources to arson. An additional concern is occupied historic houses that appear to be in substandard condition (for example, roof problems and boarded up or missing windows). Such properties are already being subjected to “demolition by neglect”; in other words, owners are not maintaining the building to the point that become substandard, possibly leading to condemnation. The historic preservation objectives (see Chapter 3) address these concerns.



*Top: A typical series of vacant lots where buildings were torn down
Bottom: Many vacant buildings once housed small commercial enterprises.*



This vacant Four Square House is part of the potential Harrison Street to Hembree Street historic district.

Existing plans and studies with implications for the corridor

The Magnolia Avenue Corridor is part of the Central City and East City Sectors. The sector plans contain several concepts, which are linked to this plan. In these plans, Magnolia Avenue was proposed as a:

- a priority for streetscape, sidewalk and related pedestrian improvements
- a mixed use corridor, allowing retail, office and residential uses along the western end of the avenue
- an area where a stronger economy should be built, particularly in the rail corridor between Old City and I-40

Since the adoption of the Sector plans, several steps have been taken to address more specific improvements. These are summarized below.

Broadway-Central-Emory Place Small Area Plan

The Broadway-Central-Emory Place Small Area Plan provides recommendations and guidance for the redevelopment and development of this area as part of an effort to expand Downtown to the north. The plan includes the rehabilitation of the North Central Street Corridor and Broadway by creating a more pedestrian friendly streetscape, enhancing neighborhood stability, establishing a sense of place for “Downtown North”, and improving non-motorized transportation systems and alleys. This plan also proposes mixed use development to follow a design code, specifically, a form code that focuses more on building mass and relationship to the street than the land uses. The proposals in this document should be considered when planning for the Downtown section of the Magnolia Avenue Corridor.

I-275/North Central Street Corridor Study, 2007

The purposes of this study are to foster economic development and to reverse the environmental degradation in the I-275 corridor. The western edge of the Magnolia



The facade improvement program has been vital to Broadway/ North Central Street restoration and has been extended to the Magnolia corridor.

Avenue Corridor is the transition between Downtown and the proposed redevelopment and preservation in Downtown North and in the I-275 corridor.

Downtown North- I-275 Redevelopment Plan

The principles and proposals of the preceding small area plan and corridor study (see above) were incorporated into this redevelopment plan, which strives to eliminate blight and provides tax increment financing for private property improvements.

Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines

The goals of these guidelines are to define expectations and allow flexibility, while fostering high-quality design. The guidelines were created to respect the existing downtown qualities, community desires and the need for reasonable provisions for both public and private improvements. The plan deals with the public realm (for example, sidewalks, plazas and streets), the private realm (buildings and their massing and form) and historic building and districts. The zoning overlay that is used to implement the guidelines offer a means, with expansion of the district, to provide guidance for renovation and new future development in the “SOMAG” area, that is, the district south of Magnolia near Downtown (see Chapter 4).

Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue (MLK) Corridor Plan

This plan was developed in 2006. The purpose of the plan is to serve as a tool for the continued revitalization of the MLK Corridor. The study dealt with the physical environment of areas along MLK and the neighborhoods directly adjacent to the corridor from Harriet Tubman Street to



The renovation of Crown and Goose was completed via the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan: Existing Land Use Map

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Vacant Land*	25.06	6.41%
Commercial	102.48	26.20%
Industrial (Manufacturing)	16.21	4.14%
Multifamily Residential	20.18	5.16%
Office	44.32	11.33%
Private Recreation	1.72	0.44%
Public Parks	22.61	5.78%
Public/Quasi Public Land	66.06	16.89%
Right of Way/Open Space	0.00	0.00%
Single Family Residential	45.34	11.59%
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	21.06	5.38%
Under Construction/Other Uses	10.70	2.74%
Wholesale	15.40	3.94%
Total for Corridor	391.15	

* Vacant Lots are classified by Existing Land Use and do not represent land affected by the SmartFIX40 project.



Original Map Print Date: April 15, 2009

Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan: Vacant Buildings and Lots Map

	Parcels	Acres	Vacant Buildings*	Vacant Buildings Acres*	Percent Vacant Building Acres*	Vacant Lots**	Vacant Lots Acres**	Percent Vacant Lots**
1A	61	18.88	6	3.54	18.75%	4	1.45	7.68%
1B	109	104.02	32	25.28	24.30%	19	15.97	15.35%
2A	46	13.00	14	3.73	28.66%	19	5.18	39.86%
2B	54	52.63	10	11.44	21.74%	11	2.95	5.60%
2C	110	46.49	47	12.72	27.36%	8	2.09	4.50%
3A	247	62.89	29	9.40	14.95%	30	5.51	8.76%
3B	226	58.00	27	9.26	15.96%	19	4.09	7.05%
4	123	33.78	19	2.41	7.13%	19	3.65	10.81%
Total for Corridor	976	389.69	184	77.76	19.96%	129	40.89	10.49%

* Vacant buildings are summarized by their parcel for analysis. This includes parcels which have large areas that are used for storage purposes. Multiple buildings on a single parcel are counted only as one parcel.
 ** Vacant Lots are classified by Existing Land Use and by analysis from the SmartFIX40 project.



Legend

Vacant Buildings

- Vacant (Red)
- Partially Vacant (Purple)
- Underutilized* (Orange)

Existing Land Use

- Vacant Lots (Green)

* This includes parcels which have large areas that are used for storage purposes. The analysis for this category was conducted only for the area between N Central St and N Bertrand St.

1 inch equals 0.25 miles

0 0.25 0.5

Approximate Scale in Miles

Original Map Print Date: April 15, 2009

Downtown Burlington. The plan contains several policies and recommendations that are pertinent to Magnolia Avenue:

- Burlington's commercial area: recommendations include forming a redevelopment area, implementing the façade program, developing a form-based zoning district, improving the sidewalk system, planting street trees and creating a new park.
- Linden Avenue and Parkview Avenue residential areas: recommendations include creating a Neighborhood Conservation or Infill Housing Overlay and rezoning the area from its medium density (R-2) zone to a low density (R-1A) zone or a new zone based on the smaller lot widths and sizes that are traditional in this area.
- Park and open space recommendations: included adding a park in Burlington and designing Chilhowee Park to accommodate festivals and serve as a day-to-day neighborhood park and open space.

Old City Master Plan

This plan was adopted in the late-1990s. Several of its proposals have been realized: standards for restoration and infill development (through the Downtown Design Overlay District), lower Gay Street pedestrian improvements and several parking and public safety recommendations such as better lighting and parking under the viaducts.

Another concept that is important to this Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan is a proposal to develop the vacant lots near Barley's Taproom and Pizzeria by re-opening Sullivan Street and developing a new street and buildings along that street.

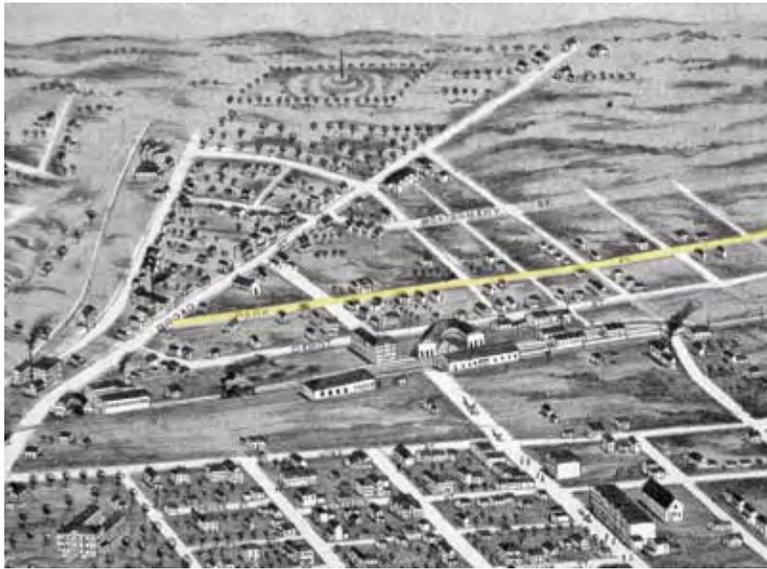


Compatible infill housing, one of the programs derived from the Martin Luther King Corridor Plan, has been a positive addition to Magnolia area neighborhoods.

Chapter 3: History and Historic Resources

A fitting introduction to Magnolia Avenue's history is to dispel the notion that it was named for the rows of Magnolia trees that once lined the street. The truth is that the mayor of Knoxville from 1880 to 1881, H. Bryan Branner, renamed Park Street in honor of his mother, Mrs. Magnolia Branner.¹

The area's history can be traced back several decades before the 1880s.



Knoxville in 1871. Park Street was to become Magnolia Avenue.

In the 19th century, the north-east valley roads east of First Creek included a route that later became McCalla Avenue. Beyond Burlington that road became known as Rutledge Pike and served as a trade route to upper East Tennessee and Virginia. Farmland largely surrounded the pike as one traveled east of First Creek.

In 1855, the East Tennessee & Virginia and East Tennessee & Georgia railroads formed a connection point in Knoxville, and the consequent industrial activity brought more manufacturing personnel and laborers to the community, including craftsmen, meatpackers, and textile and mill workers. The northward expansion of Knoxville began during this era. One of the streets, Craig Street (later renamed Park Street) ran from Broadway to a point east of First Creek and would become the spine of Magnolia Avenue.

¹ Park Street was also referred to as Park Avenue in some references. This street was also called Craig Street early on. It was depicted in an 1871 bird's eye illustration as Park Street.

Another early expansion was Shieldstown, carved from the farm of John Shields in the 1850s. It included a six-block area south of Craig Street, between First Creek and Bertrand Street. During the Civil War, Shieldstown and neighboring ridges were occasionally occupied by Union and Confederate forces because of Knoxville's strategic location along the two major rail systems. Fort Hill, along Summit Hill Drive, was one of these points of occupation.

The Heiskell School was founded during the Civil War. Named for the mayor, S.G. Heiskell, it was Knoxville's first new school for black children. One impact of the Heiskell School creation was that the area became more segregated: whites to the east of First Creek, blacks to the west. The area east of Central Street and west of the creek became known as the "the Bottom" because of First Creek flooding. This area was where the typically poorer neighborhoods were located and they have largely been redeveloped through industrial expansion, urban renewal and road projects.

The Mabry farm, created by Confederate General Joseph A. Mabry II, formed the eastern edge of Knoxville. His house still stands along Dandridge Avenue, and is known as the Mabry-Hazen House today. Mabry, a railroad lobbyist and president of the Knoxville and Kentucky Railroad, helped to fuel further industrialization with the creation of the post-war, north-bound railroad line. He sold much of his farm in the late-1860s and development increased east of First Creek as mostly working and middle class families, both white and black, began to settle there.

In 1869, Charles McClung McGhee orchestrated the merger of the first two railroads to form the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad. This further established Knoxville as a hub of industry and wholesaling; portions of his McClung warehouses were lost in a 2007 fire. The blocks at this northern border of Knoxville were annexed into the city in 1869. It is likely that this annexation marks the name change of "Craig Street" to "Park Avenue," so that the Shieldstown stretch would match its counterpart on the west side of First Creek. The most significant reminder of the industrialization is the Knoxville City Mills complex, better known as White Lily Mills, which was built in 1882 and used continuously in the flour business until 2008.

The 1870s saw the growth of additional suburban communities as well as new churches and schools. One of these schools, Peabody School (now the American Federation of Labor offices), still stands along Morgan Street.

In 1875, Fernando Cortes Beaman, a New York teacher, purchased 1,100 acres of property further east of First Creek, an area which now encompasses Park Ridge. He built a dairy farm, and within a decade carved out a 64-acre park whose large spring-fed pool became a destination for swimming, canoeing and fishing – earning its moniker, “Lake Ottossee” (as in, you “ought to see” it). This resource would latter be named Chilhowee Park.

The impetus for the development of the avenue and its nearby neighborhoods can be attributed to Beaman and William Gibbs McAdoo, a Chattanooga lawyer. In 1889, they collaborated to extend an electric streetcar line to the park. Opening on May 1, 1890, this Knoxville

Street Railway Company line offered round-trip service from Gay Street. The company also extended lines along McCalla Avenue to Burlington and converted the horse-drawn line along Washington Avenue to electric streetcar use. These improvements enabled the development of the trolley suburbs, which originally included the previously incorporated jurisdiction, Park City.

With the streetcar opening, Chilhowee Park became a venue for concerts, fairs, exhibitions and seasonal amusements such as roller coaster rides and bowling. The baseball and football fields in the Elmwood section of the park, south of Magnolia, hosted football games (including the 1907 Kentucky – Tennessee game), the Knoxville Reds baseball team and various high school sporting events. This portion of the park has been fenced and used for parking for large events over the last several years and no longer serves a daily recreation function. This plan calls for the reopening that space for day-to-day park use.



Thompson Collection



McClung Historical Collection

Top left: McAdoo's Knoxville Street Railway enabled Park City development. Top Right: Chilhowee Park pictured in its heyday of the early 20th Century. Bottom: Swan's Bakery was one of the few commercial structures along the avenue in the early 20th century.



McClung Historical Collection

Following two successful regional expositions, the Appalachian Exposition was held at Chilhowee Park in 1910, under the direction of the Knoxville Commercial Club. A beautiful Classical Revival exhibition hall designed by Knoxville architect John R. Graf provided over 80,000 square feet of exhibition space. This building was eventually lost to fire and replaced by the Jacob building. The marble Chilhowee Park Bandstand is a remnant of the fairs as is the Poultry Building, tucked into the hillside north of the Jacob's Building.

Magnolia Avenue was largely lined with residences in its earliest days. The renowned Knoxville architect, George F. Barber, contributed to the house designs of Park City, including Magnolia Avenue. Barber had established a nationally recognized "mail-order architecture" business by selling Victorian-era home plans. Park City became his virtual showcase community. The residential architecture includes the Dutch Colonial, Spanish Eclectic, Four Square and Tudor Revival styles.

The early 1900s saw the continued success of industry and the foundation of more schools, churches and other public facilities in the area. Park City Junior High School (1925), Magnolia Avenue Methodist Church (1925) and Standard Knitting Mills (1910) are among the most prominent structures left from this era.

Park City was annexed into Knoxville in 1917. In the 1920s, streetcar service patronage reached a peak, with the Magnolia line running service every 10 minutes. Several attractive apartment complexes appeared in this trolley era, such as the Aston (2736 E Magnolia) and the Lakewood (2730 E Magnolia).



McClung Historical Collection

The Aston Apartments during the trolley era

The community identity changed with widespread automobile use. Following World War II, the conversion and demolition of single-family residences for commercial uses became commonplace along the corridor as Magnolia became a federal highway, the major artery leading to Asheville and Virginia. Motels, gas stations, repair shops and restaurants emerged. Several post-war period, auto-oriented businesses such as the Pizza Palace Drive-In (3132 E. Magnolia) and Bus Terminal (100 E. Magnolia) remain today. Much of the development, however, detracted from the early pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented setting. Garish signs, too little landscaping and helter-skelter building patterns are typical remnants of the automobile age.

The construction of I-40 split the neighborhoods between Central and Randolph Streets, and created social displacement and isolation. The majority of area homes by this time were 40 to 80 years old and experiencing some deterioration. Since the 1960s, commercial business has struggled along large portions of the automobile-scaled avenue. Today, many lots and buildings are vacant or dilapidated, awaiting revitalization and redevelopment of a once vibrant neighborhood corridor.

Historic Resources

A team of preservation interests, including MPC staff, Knox Heritage and AIA, examined the architecture of the corridor. In assessing the corridor's "streetscape," several factors were considered, including architectural styles, architects who designed various buildings and historic persons associated with the resources. The types of resources that were identified include individual buildings and structures, and potential districts.



McClung Historical Collection

The Magnolia Motel, created after federal highway designation

Two categories were identified:

- buildings and structures which are relatively unchanged; in other words, most of their original fabric is intact, and
- buildings which have been modified substantially though additions or remodeling in a latter era.

The map on the next page identifies the resources by those two categories, and outlines the potential historic districts.

Highlights of the evaluation include:

The Depot Street/Magnolia Avenue District

This district would join the Southern terminal District that is immediately to the south. The buildings that are significant include:

- the Gay Street block and the Depot Avenue/Central Street corner slot-commercial buildings, which are representative of early 20th Century commercial architecture
- the former Peabody School, 1870s (now used as a labor union hall), which stands as Knoxville's oldest local educational building and has ties to the philanthropic history associated with the Peabody family
- Knox Rail Salvage: a sturdy, early-20th century Commercial Vernacular building, representing the warehousing and industrial function that characterized the area for the better part of the 20th century
- The Greyhound Bus Station, with its flat roof and streamlined rounded corner, a good example of the post-World War II Art Moderne style.



Thompson Collection

Greyhound Terminal, 1950s

The 5th Avenue District

Although not along Magnolia Avenue, this avenue will be the major conduit of future traffic from Magnolia and Hall of Fame Boulevard; its historic resources include the First Christian Church, the row houses and apartment buildings, the nearby block that includes the Beaman Building and the post-war, International-style Mac Auto Loans building. Some of these resources are significant as historic assets and as forms to guide infill development in the future.

The Standard Knitting Mills

The extensive textile mill was first built in 1910 and expanded at mid-century. It is one of the few remaining structures from the era of Knoxville's textile industry. The mill employed more than 3,000 at its peak. On the other side of the tracks are the former offices of the mill, large portions of which are now part of Cabinet Craft Company. The mill buildings and offices, although marginally altered, are worthy historic preservation candidates.

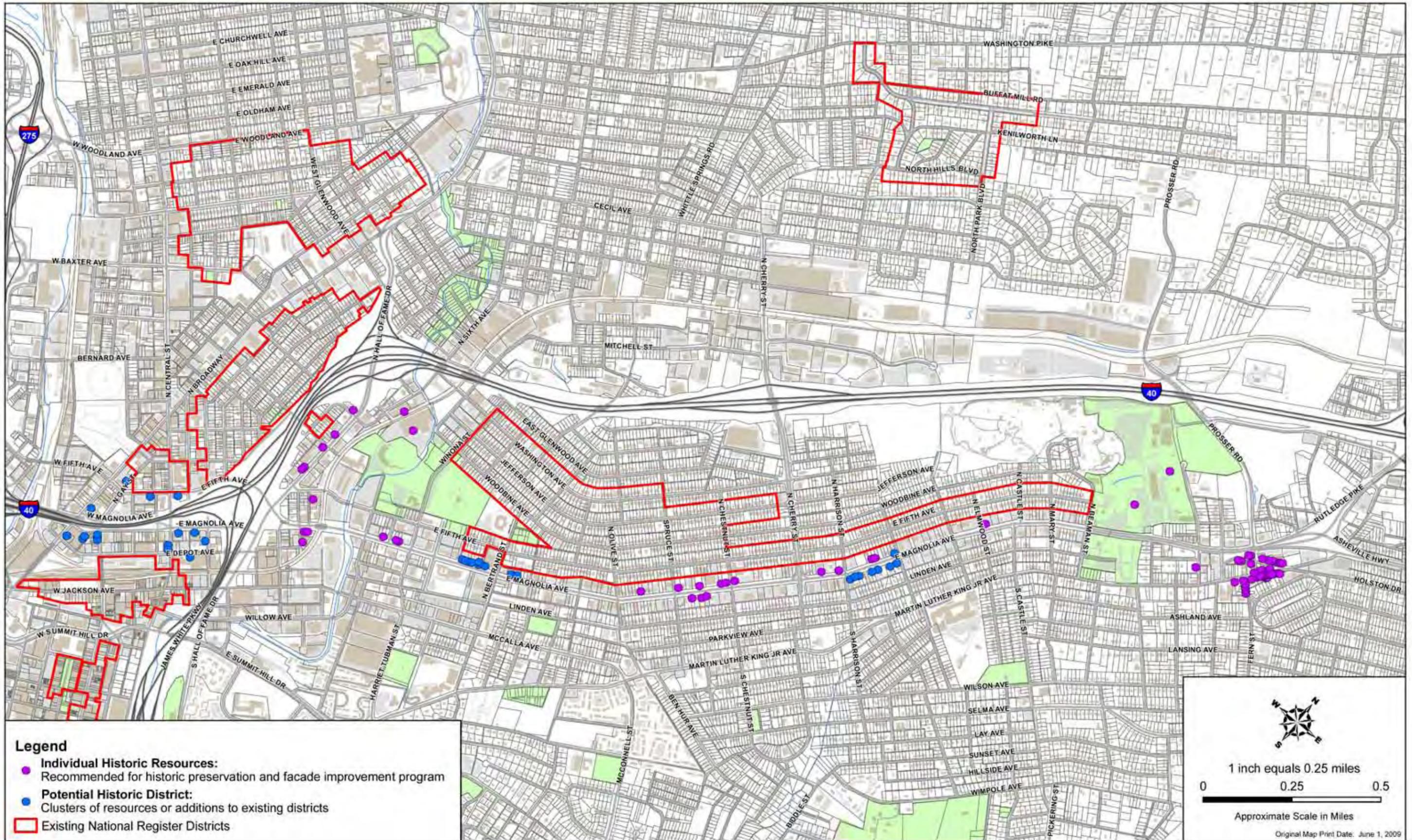
Holly Street to Bertrand Street district

Across from Pellissippi State Technical Community College, most of the buildings in these blocks developed in the 1920s. They form an intact collection of Craftsman, Mediterranean-style and Commercial Vernacular-style architecture. While the styles vary, the consistent front yard space, height and brick construction unify the residential and commercial architecture. The structures form an outstanding collection of the compatible, mix of uses that were created in the heyday of the trolley era.

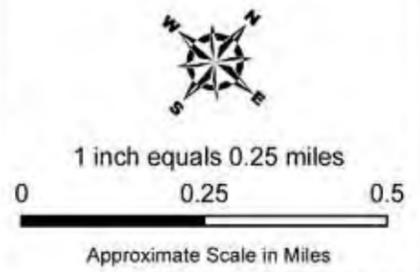


Mac Auto Loans building

Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan: Historic Resources Map



- Legend**
- Individual Historic Resources:
Recommended for historic preservation and facade improvement program
 - Potential Historic District:
Clusters of resources or additions to existing districts
 - ▭ Existing National Register Districts



Original Map Print Date: June 1, 2009

Harrison Street to Hembree Street district

The “bookends” of this block are the Magnolia Avenue Methodist Church, a Gothic-Revival edifice dating from the 1925, and the Mediterranean-style apartment buildings. In between were residential structure such as the eclectic “Mediterranean-Four Square residence” (currently abandoned and in need of stabilization). This block has significant ties to Park City history, with the church being a foremost religious institution and the Aston Apartments, being developed by C. F. Beaman, who created Park City and Chilhowee Park. (As retold to Michael Carberry, MPC staff, by Beaman’s granddaughter during a 2007 workshop.)

The Burlington District

As noted in the history section, Burlington was created at the crossroads that led out to the countryside (Rutledge Pike and Holston Road, leading to Grainger and Jefferson Counties). The advent of its development was the arrival of the street car. The district became a commercial and civic center. Its churches, fire station and slot commercial buildings remain as evidence of its once prominent position on Knoxville’s landscape. This was the place to buy groceries, get a hair cut and go to the

movies. The abandoned gas station is a good example of early automobile-era architecture. After Asheville Highway was created in the 1950s, Burlington businesses were largely bypassed, resulting in loss of drive by traffic and therefore vitality.

Chilhowee Park

Just a few features remain from its original use as an exposition site and fairgrounds. In addition to the lake itself (now much reduced in size), the limestone bandstand is the prominent structure remaining from the early 1900s. The Poultry Shed is a good example of the early fairground era and the Jacob’s Building, constructed in 1941 after the Exposition-era Liberal Arts Building was lost to fire, are other noteworthy structures.

Individual and small clusters of buildings: Historically, almost all of Magnolia Avenue was lined with residential architecture. Today, the remaining historic fabric along the corridor are houses, occasional commercial structures and civic buildings. Highlights of the patterns follow:

- Residences: The architectural styles span the breadth of the late 19th and 20th centuries. A Queen Ann-style



McClung Historical Collection

Magnolia Avenue Methodist Church



McClung Historical Collection

Chilhowee Park and its bandstand, early 1900s



Looking west along the Harrison-Hembree block.

house at 1405 Magnolia may likely be attributed to the work of nationally renowned Knoxville architect George Barber. The Audigier residence at 2651 Magnolia is a fine example of the Spanish Eclectic Style, nationally popularized between 1920 and 1940 but rare in Knoxville. Various examples of Craftsman, Dutch Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles are also represented in many blocks.

- Apartments: Several individual apartments, dating from the 1920s and usually designed in Mediterranean-style, reflect the mix of uses that was inherent when trolleys served the avenue.
- Civic buildings: The Park City Library (2501 Magnolia), now an office building, is among the most significant.



McClung Historical Collection

Audigier Residence



McClung Historical Collection

Park City Library, now an office building

- Pre-world War II commercial buildings: Prior to the widespread use of the automobile, many commercial structures were built close or next to sidewalks. Along Magnolia, these structures were almost always one-story, brick buildings. The C & S Dry Cleaners and the Hartman Beverage building at the corner of Bertrand Street are examples.
- Automobile-era commercial buildings: Most of the latter era architecture is of a standard franchise design. A few noteworthy exceptions include the small auto-oriented “kiosk” at the corner of Alice Street and Magnolia, the marble-faced Commercial Building at 1211 Magnolia and the International-style Home Federal Bank.

Recommendations:

1. Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places should be prepared, potentially placing many buildings on the Register, which would enable tax credits for restoration projects.
2. Historic overlays may be appropriate for several of the districts, offering protection and appropriate restoration and infill development.
3. Knox Heritage’s programs to acquire, restore and place properties back into active use should be pursued.
4. Modified buildings could be eligible for façade restoration and similar programs under Empowerment Zone and other funding of the Community Development Department.



McClung Historical Collection

Hartman Beverage Company

Chapter 4: A Plan for a Complete Street and Landscaping

“Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.”² This is not a new idea for Magnolia Avenue. Historically, with its sidewalks and trolley system, Magnolia was a “complete street”. The aesthetic values of the original streetscape were also pronounced: utility lines were predominately located along the alleys, not as overhead power and telephone lines, which has important implications for tree planting and related landscape improvements.

Citizens who were involved in creating this plan want to build upon the theme of creating a more pedestrian-friendly Magnolia Avenue. This vision embraces the elements of the complete street, and landscaping and urban design that enhances the setting.

The Complete Street Design

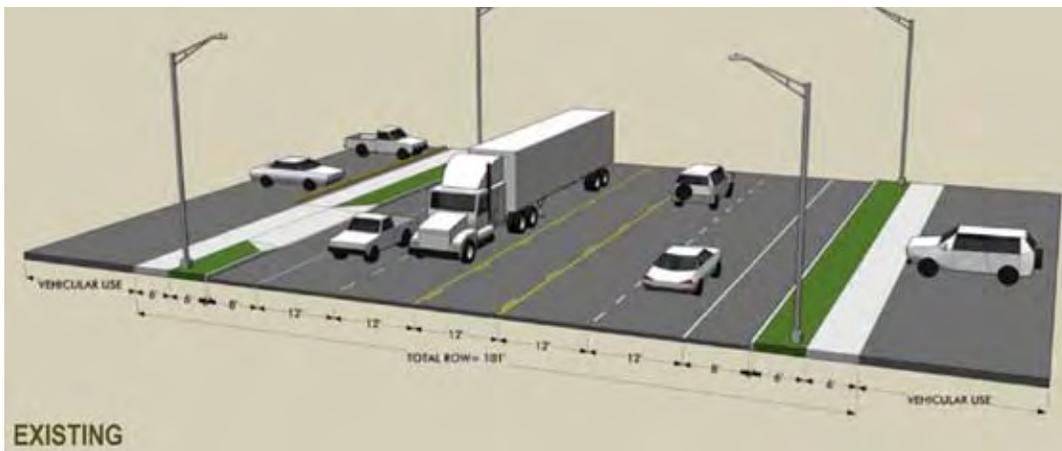
A complete street for Magnolia Avenue would not have to be that different from the infrastructure that is already in place:

- sidewalks would be enhanced
- the bike lanes would be made more functional (wider and resurfaced to eliminate concrete seams)
- on-street parking would be identified more clearly
- street trees and landscaping, including landscaped medians, would offer traffic calming and define the sidewalk system

The existing and projected traffic are important considerations. The traffic is much heavier eastward from Cherry Street because the Cherry Street/I-40 interchange is a major point of access to the corridor.³ The road profiles that are illustrated in this chapter will undoubtedly be refined with implementation plans. Such traffic engineering issues as the number of travel

lanes will have to be addressed in terms of new traffic patterns (following SmartFIX40) and a projection of trip generation in relation to the land uses of a form code.

<< *An example of a local complete street proposal*



²The national organization, Complete the Streets, provides this definition; see www.completestreets.org. Additionally, the Transportation Planning Organization's Regional Complete Streets Study is full of ideas for converting existing streets into Complete Streets. That study is on the TPO's website: www.knoxtrans.org.

³The average daily traffic is approximately 15,579 west of Cherry Street; 24,215 east of Cherry Street, 2008; TPO website.

Complete Streets are important for a number of reasons:

Public health: Americans do not get enough physical activity. Active transportation—walking and bicycling rather than driving—is one way for people to build more physical activity into their lives. Those activities are important in reducing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, dementia, clinical depression, and some cancers.⁴

Transportation Equality: Not everyone drives. Walking, cycling and taking public transportation are choices for some. For others, they are necessities. Here in the Knoxville Region, 19 percent of the population is under 16 years of age, the legal driving age. School-age children in places with complete streets are given the opportunity to walk or bike to school, to the park or to the store. Additionally, there are other groups who benefit from the choices afforded by complete streets including low income citizens, senior citizens and citizens with disabilities.

Public safety: Streets that are well designed for bicyclists and pedestrians are safer for those users. Sidewalks reduce the likelihood of a pedestrian being hit while walking along the street by 88 percent. Also, designing intersections with pedestrian travel in mind can reduce pedestrians' exposure to traffic by 28 percent.⁵

Complete streets are usually designed with means to calm or slow traffic down. Small differences in a driver's speed mean big improvements in pedestrian safety. A pedestrian hit by a car that's going 20 mph has a 5 percent chance of being killed. The fatality rate jumps to 45 percent if the car is going 30 mph, and to 85 percent if the car is going 40 mph.⁶

Air quality: Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to the region's air quality problems. If every household in Knoxville replaced one half-mile-long driving trip per week with a walking trip, emissions of compounds that cause ozone pollution would be reduced by more than 12,000 pounds per year. Emissions of carbon

dioxide, the most common greenhouse gas, would be reduced by nearly 1,000 tons per year.⁷ Complete streets can make a big contribution to cleaning up our air.

Travel Options: Recent opinion polls found that 52 percent of Americans want to bicycle more, and 55 percent would prefer to drive less and walk more.⁸ This information suggests that complete streets would be well received by many people.

Two complete street cross sections are proposed (illustrations on page 23):

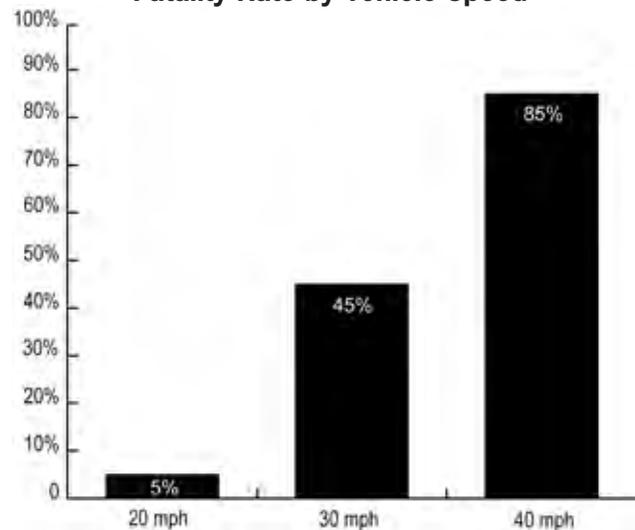
1. A road diet from Pellissippi State Technical Community College to Hall of Fame Drive, where the lower levels of traffic currently exist, and are not anticipated to increase significantly.
2. A four lane boulevard design for the area, east of Cherry Street.

Transit

While the trolley system that once enabled the development of Park City and Burlington was lost in 1947, bus transportation has evolved. As the intensity and mix of uses develops the need for greater transit frequency may increase.

Other improvements that are warranted include new shelters and long-term locations for transit shelters that meet the needs of the greatest number of passengers and the most desired destinations. Bus stops and shelters should be located within a reasonable walking distance, generally within 250 to 400 yards of most riders. Considerations for

Fatality Rate by Vehicle Speed



⁴Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 50 (09), March 9, 2001.

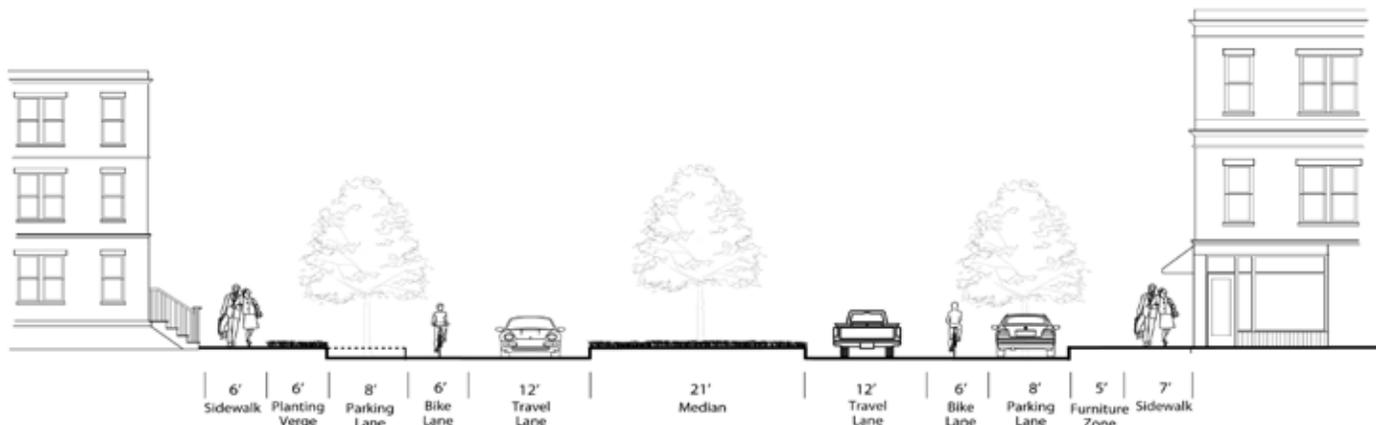
⁵Transportation Research Board 2003 Paper 03-3135.

⁶"Killing Speed and Saving Lives," U.K. Department of Transportation.

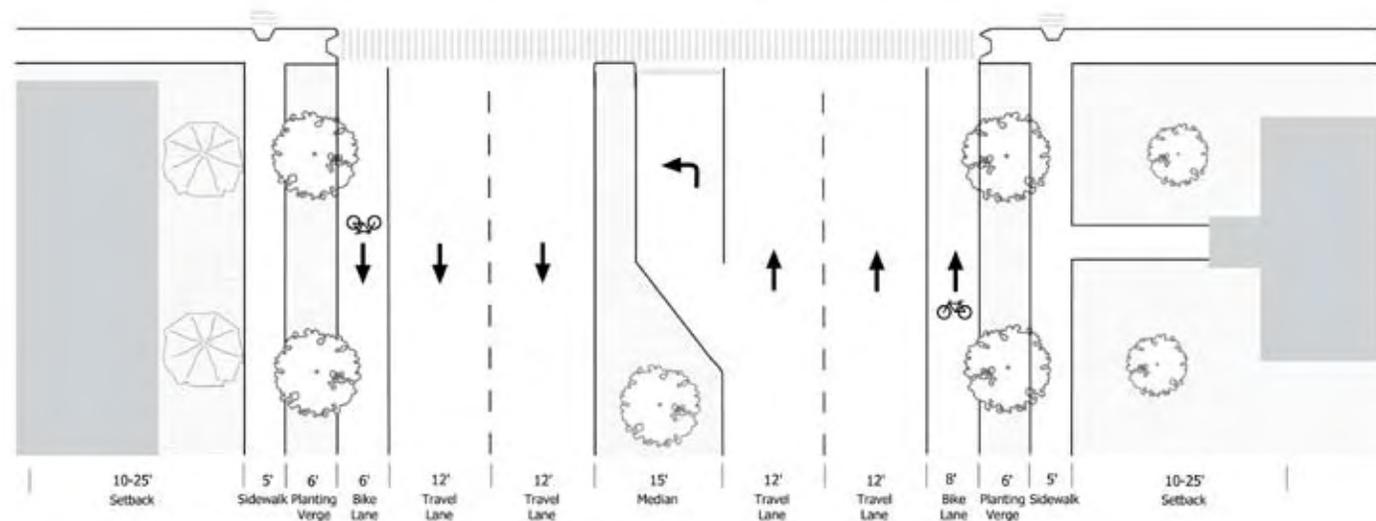
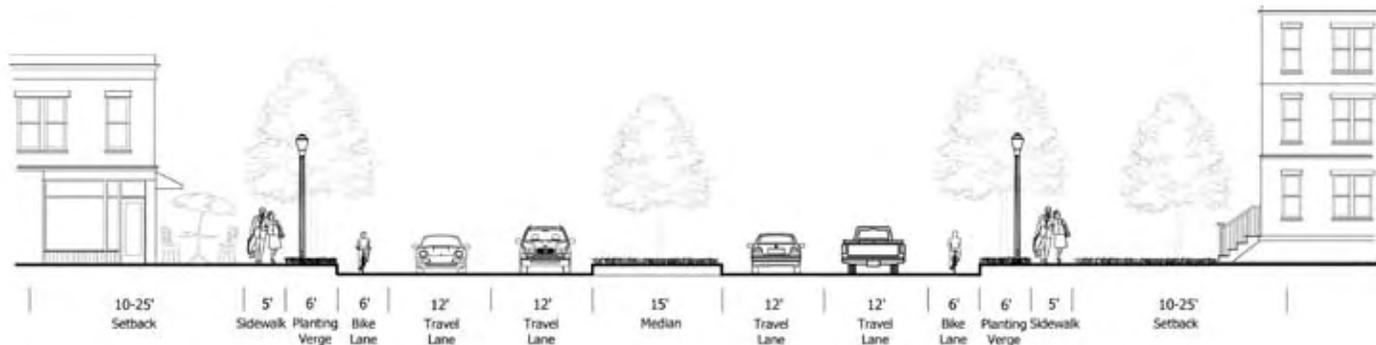
⁷The Transportation Planning Organization's Regional Complete Streets Study: www.knoxtrans.org.

⁸Ibid.

1. Magnolia Avenue-Hall of fame to Myrtle Street



2. Four-lane boulevard, east of Cherry Street



locations include: concentrations of higher intensity uses (like the 5th Avenue connection through the Downtown North area), higher density residential, the community college and such recreation destinations as Chilhowee Park and the Knoxville Zoo. Transit shelters that are open and located in places that are well lit and have high traffic volumes tend to be safer.

AIA has created various transit shelter designs in conjunction with KAT. Magnolia Avenue could be a place where the art of transit shelter design is celebrated, offering distinctive well illuminated spaces.

Landscape and Streetscape Plan

Care must be taken to choose the right tree for the right spot; the lists in the adopted *Knoxville Street Plan* and the *Knoxville-Knox County Tree Conservation and Planting Plan* should be used in selecting trees along the corridor. The City staff and its Tree Board should create a design plan for making Magnolia Avenue a greener corridor. The following are the general recommendations for a streetscape plan.

Street trees: The planting strips and bulb-outs that are proposed in the cross sections should be places for street trees. In general, the avenue should be lined with deciduous, native street trees, roughly 40 feet on center.

Yard spaces: In the boulevard district, yards should be places for a variety of evergreens, including magnolia trees and small to medium maturing native trees.



One of AIA's transit shelter proposals

Medians: A combination of deciduous trees and shrubs are proposed. Trees should be “limbed up” (that is, the lower limbs should be pruned so that drivers can see under the branches). Where sight distance does not present problems, evergreens (including magnolias), may be appropriate.

A landscape and tree planting plan is recommended with the street improvement programs to select appropriately sized landscape materials. This plan should address pruning techniques and mature tree dimensions to maintain sight distances and avoid collision hazards, while realizing beautification and reinvestment goals.



An example of the landscaping and complete street design that is proposed for the blocks near the community college

Chapter 5: Land Use and Urban Design Plans

This land use and urban design chapter is divided into four sections, corresponding to four proposed districts (see the following map):

- “SOMAG”: the Downtown area, south of Magnolia Avenue
- Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways
- North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park Area
- Burlington

Flour and Lay’s Packing Company (now Knox Rail Salvage). Shops and saloons, such as Sullivan’s, catered to rail travelers and the area’s work force. With the advent of trucking, most businesses switched to tractor-trailer access. Post-1950 zoning changed the face of the area, resulting in suburban-style setbacks for commercial and industrial uses. The vacancy rates are high (see page 9). As of spring 2009, there are approximately 60 vacant lots and buildings in “SOMAG.”

Land Use and Urban Design Districts



The discussion under each of those sections includes: the proposed land use, which contains the framework for creating more pedestrian friendly, mixed use districts. With the adoption of this plan, amendments will also be made to the Central and East City Sector Plans. The plan is a basis for re-zonings, including the creation of form codes to implement the mix of proposed land uses. Additionally, more detailed plans are outlined for street and park improvements, historic preservation and the types and forms of development.

“SOMAG”: the Downtown area, south of Magnolia Avenue

This area, which includes portions of the Old City and warehouse district, was the once the hub of railroad activity. The area also includes Summit Hill Drive. Wholesale and industrial enterprises formed much of the 19th and 20th century land uses, such as White Lily

Several highway projects changed the edges of the district, including Summit Hill Drive, I-40 and James White Parkway. While I-40 provided immediate access to the Central Business District, it severed downtown from the neighborhoods. The recent SmartFIX40 and James White Parkway projects have



been viewed as opportunities to improve connectivity while providing public parking under their viaducts.

Land Use Plan: SOMAG

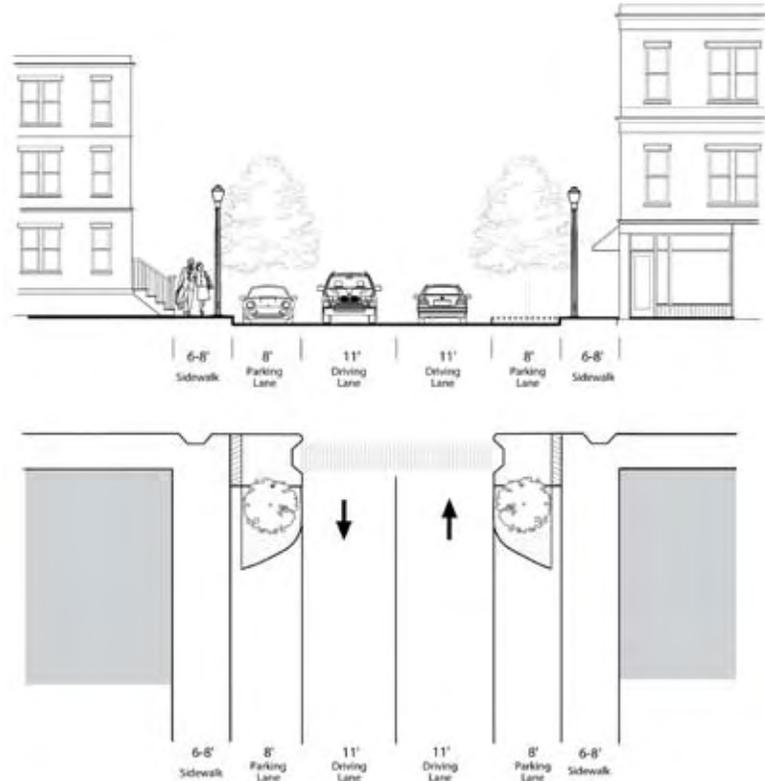
This district includes the northern edge of Downtown and the Summit Hill Drive area. (see the MU CC 3 area on the land use plan) *Note: MU CC 3 stands for a Special Mixed Use District, number 3 in the Central City; this nomenclature is used on the Knoxville-Knox County composite sector plan map so that there is a specific reference back to the information in this chapter.*

A greater mix of land use should be permitted. Office, wholesale and retail commercial, warehousing and light manufacturing, and residential development are appropriate. Rather than forcing the suburban-style setbacks of current zoning, a form code should be implemented. This code would allow continued use of storage facilities and opportunities for direct access from garage bays to most streets. The proposed code would also be compatible with historic architectural features, including many of the buildings along Jackson Avenue and Central Street.

Office, medium to high density residential and institution uses are appropriate for the Summit Hill Drive area. Vertical mixed use is possible. The recommended form code is based on limited yard space in front of and beside multi-story structures.

Basis for a Future Form Code

The following illustrations are examples of the types of forms that are proposed for most of the SOMAG area, particularly Old City and the warehouse district.



The type of street and potential building locations.



An architectural rendering of potential Jackson Avenue reuse and infill development, east of the Hall of Fame Drive viaduct.

SOMAG

Provisions for development and historic preservation

Development/redevelopment

Future projects can be composed of mixed uses, including vertical mixed use buildings (such as lofts above office or commercial space). Multi-level structures, including office, institutional and residential buildings are appropriate, particularly in such areas as Summit Hill Drive.

Location/orientation of uses

The historic forms of the original Old City with buildings that have their front doors next to the sidewalk are appropriate. Buildings should be setback along Summit Hill Drive.

Parking

The space under the viaducts will provide the opportunity for several hundred parking spaces. Additional on-street parking should be marked and provided throughout the area. Willow Avenue, for example, which is already being used by employees for on-street parking, could be striped for diagonal parking.

In the Summit Hill area, underground parking and parking structures should be considered for larger users to take advantage of the topography, reduce run-off and potentially increase intensity of future uses. Off-street surface parking should be located to the side or behind buildings in the future.



Vertical mixed use: apartments above a shop

Historic Preservation

This area is already framed by two historic districts, the Southern Terminal and Warehouse District to the south and the Emory Place District to the north. Two additional districts should be considered:

- Depot Street-Magnolia District including the 300 block of Gay Street, the slot commercial buildings along the west side of Central Street and the Greyhound Terminal and the Art Deco-styled BellSouth/AT&T buildings. Altered buildings that should also be considered include the Regas Restaurant, Knox Rail Salvage, the AFL-CIO Building/Peabody School building and the slot commercial building at 208 Magnolia.
- East 5th Avenue District including the church and apartment buildings (although this area is just north of the corridor, it was considered in this plan because of its position as a gateway to the Downtown/Magnolia area).



The historic forms and uses, such as commercial retail and wholesale, are to be encouraged.



Knox Rail Salvage is one of the buildings whose historic form and use is appropriate to the mixed use area.

Parks and Greenways

The First Creek Greenway is the foremost park improvement.

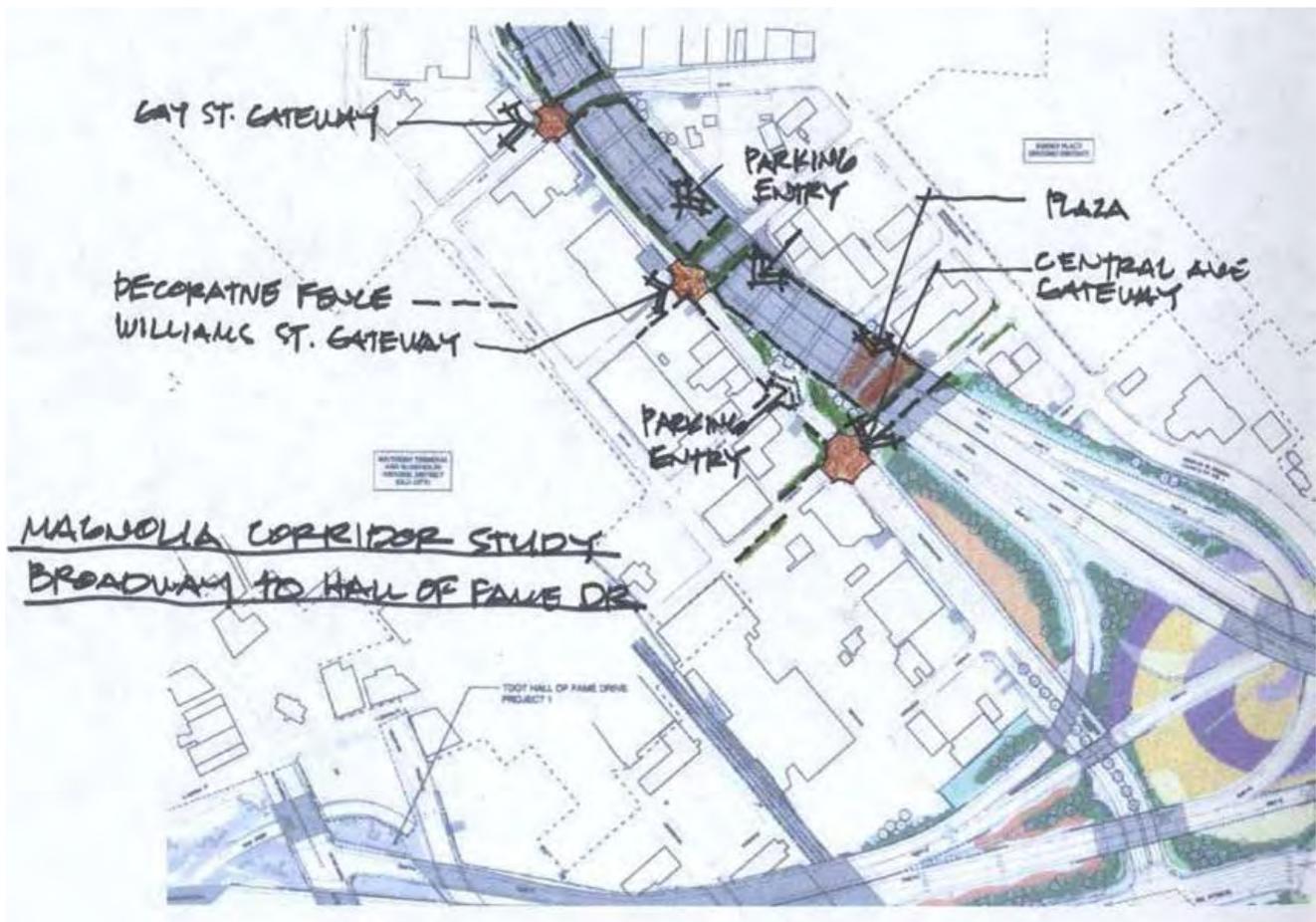
Recommendations for SOMAG:

1. Central, Williams and Gay Streets should be transformed into attractive gateways, with street trees, other landscaping and new pedestrian-scaled lighting to link the neighborhoods with downtown.
2. Supplemental zoning regulations should be amended to allow a district parking program with shared parking under I-40, James White Parkway and Hall of Fame Drive viaducts and on-street parking; the intent is that the district parking plan would be recognized by MPC and City Council as the program serving existing and

- future development in the Downtown North/Old City area, and reduce the need for required off-street parking.
3. First Creek Greenway should be created on the abandoned rail line.
4. Facade improvement programs should be used to improve the area's historic buildings.
5. Tax Increment Financing programs should be considered to assist private renovation and redevelopment in the area.



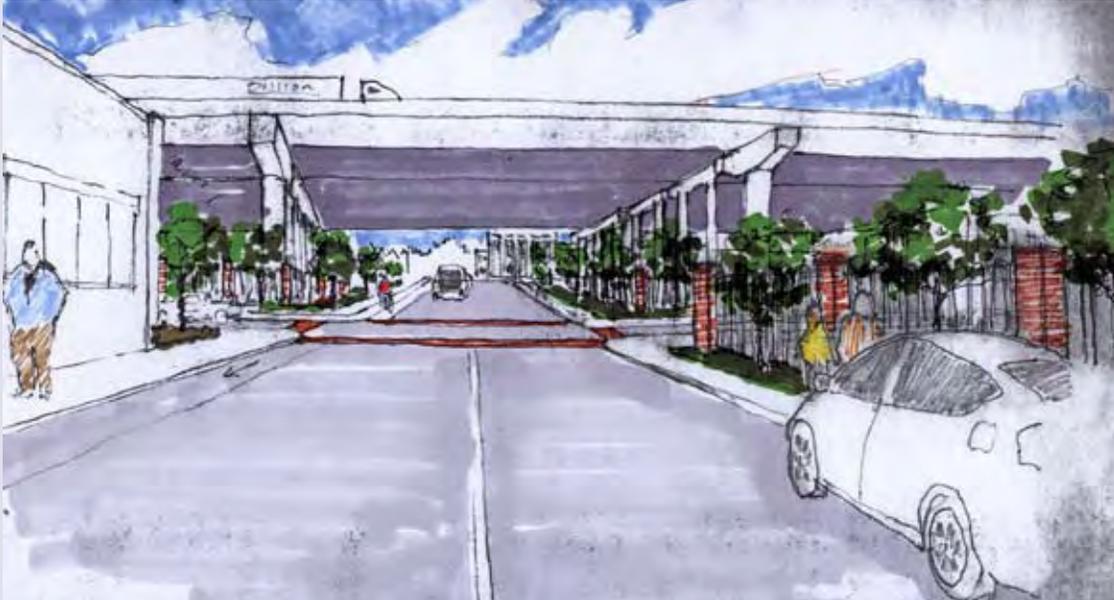
The area under James White Parkway and Hall of Fame Drive is recommended for public parking, serving both day and night time visitors to the Old City and adjacent area interests.



The gateways to Downtown and future parking area.

SOMAG Special Emphasis: The Gateway Projects

The City has worked with the Tennessee Department of Transportation on improving the Gay, Williams and Central Street gateways to provide security and enhance the aesthetics under I-40. Landscaping, lighting and signs should be part of this program and should be compatible from one block to another. Street trees should be planted in bulb-outs that define and protect on-street parking areas.



AIA captured the potential for the Williams Street gateway.

SOMAG Special Emphasis: First Creek Greenway

The First Creek Greenway forms the eastern edge of the SOMAG focus area. A significant portion of the greenway will be realized by the SmartFIX40 improvements. The greenway will be a recreational and transportation asset to this gateway and nearby neighborhoods. AIA provided a vision of the greenway and potential redevelopment along the creek (see drawing).



The abandoned railroad along First Creek, north of Willow Avenue

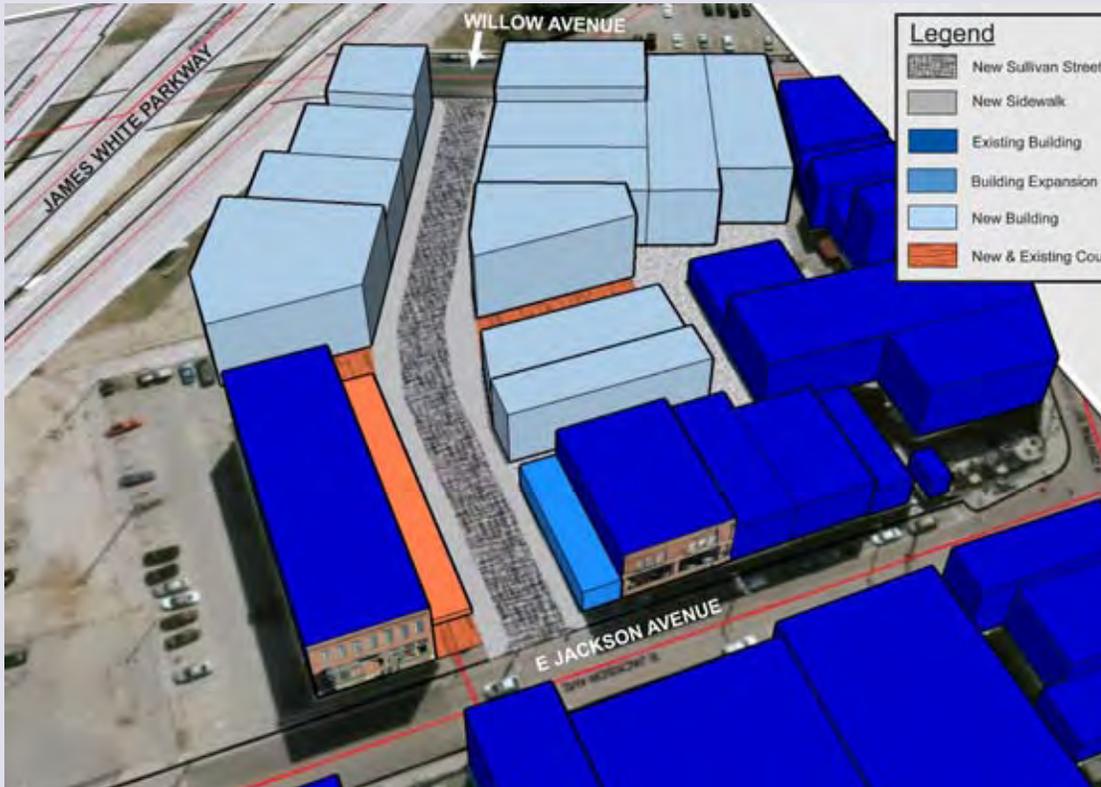


Potential greenway and future mixed use development at Willow Avenue

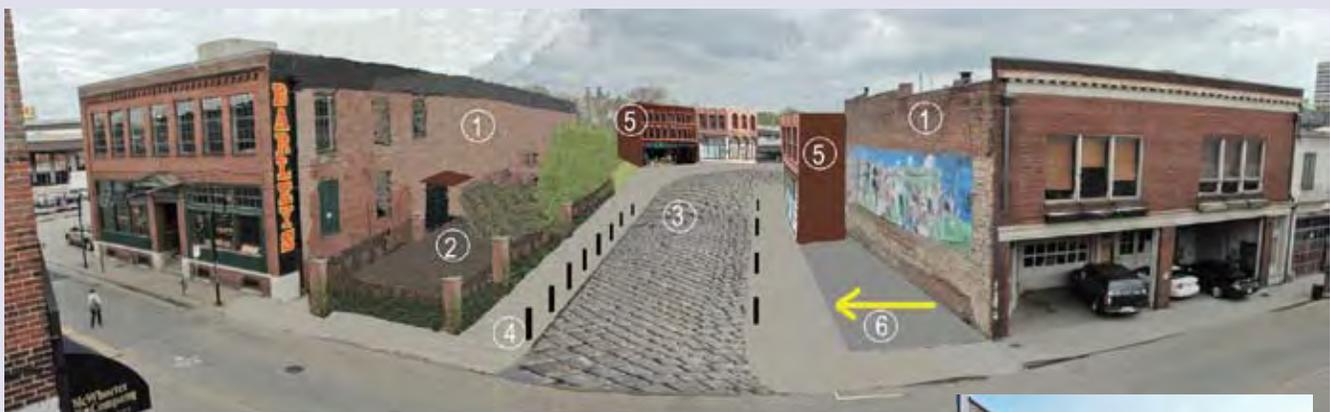
SOMAG Special Emphasis: New Sullivan Street

The concept for the re-creation of Sullivan Street, was proposed a decade ago, when the area's merchants worked with the City to adopt the Old City Master Plan. There would be several advantages in making a street connection between Jackson Avenue and Willow Avenue: foremost would be new development opportunities, which would line the street with a mix of commercial and residential uses. Perhaps equally important is the creation of better pedestrian flow around the Old City, enabling people to walk along a new block without going through neglected, largely empty spaces. Cooperation with adjacent merchants and the Southern Railroad, which once used the parcel along Willow Avenue as a rail siding,

will be key to re-development. The new parking under the viaducts can reasonably meet many of the parking demands for new development in this area.



<< Concept plan for New Sullivan Street



Design concept for New Sullivan Street.

1. Preserved buildings
2. Patio to be extended
3. New cobble-like street
4. Sidewalks and bollards
5. New buildings lining the street
6. Potential expansion or outdoor eating

A similar redevelopment in Rochester, New York >>



Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways

Both Hall of Fame Drive and the first portion of Magnolia Avenue are significant gateways to Downtown Knoxville. This portion of the plan is directed to a series of enhancements within the area. Historical development plays an important role in forming the proposals:



Hall of Fame Drive

It has only been a few years since the section of Hall of Fame Drive included in this plan was widened, using the old Mulvaney Street right-of-way. It was once lined with large Victorian-era houses and a collection of one-story commercial buildings. With the I-40 improvement program, the character changed considerably as North 5th Avenue was reconfigured to form a direct connection from Summit Hill Drive to the new I-40 interchange and Broadway. New overpasses, landscaping, sidewalks and bike lanes have been positive improvements.

The area west of First Creek

This area contains manufacturing, retail and wholesale commercial, and a few shotgun houses. It was an extension of the grid streets that began to be formed along the rail lines in the mid-1800s.



Magnolia Avenue/Park City area

Some of the oldest development along Magnolia Avenue stood and, partially, still stands along the blocks between Jessamine Street and Bertrand Street. While it was once almost entirely residential, it is now a mix of uses.

The First Creek railroad corridor

Large scale rail-oriented industrial and utility uses dominated development in this area. Standard Knitting Mills was the centerpiece of the area's industrialization. The Knoxville Area Transit site was originally the home base of Knoxville's trolley system.

Caswell Park

This was among the best facilities in Knoxville's park and recreation system in the early 20th century and was restored a few years ago. The park was largely surrounded by the Park City neighborhood and the Park Junior High School (now residential).

Washington Avenue/Jefferson Avenue area

This was the eastern edge of Park City. A small commercial hub near the Washington Avenue-Winona Street intersection provided day-to-day goods for workers and residents.

Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways Special District Land Use Plan

(see the MU CC 4 area on the proposed land use map)

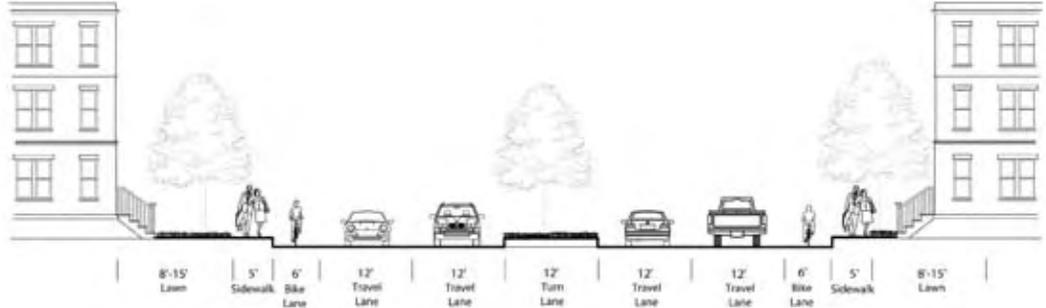
Because of the complex patterns of historical development, several sub-areas should be considered.

Hall of Fame Drive Area: A mix of uses should be allowed in this corridor, including office, commercial, institutional and residential development. Current zoning should be replaced with a form code. The scale of the Victorian-era houses is appropriate for future development.

the former knitting mills – form a derelict edge between the Hall of Fame gateway and the Park Ridge neighborhood. A mix of higher density residential, wholesale commercial/distribution and utility uses should be fostered. The First Creek greenway can be a catalyst for reuse and redevelopment. The mixed use proposal will allow reuse of Standard Mills for residential use, which should be sought.

Magnolia Avenue and Washington Avenue Area: The same mix of uses should be allowed as in the SOMAG district.

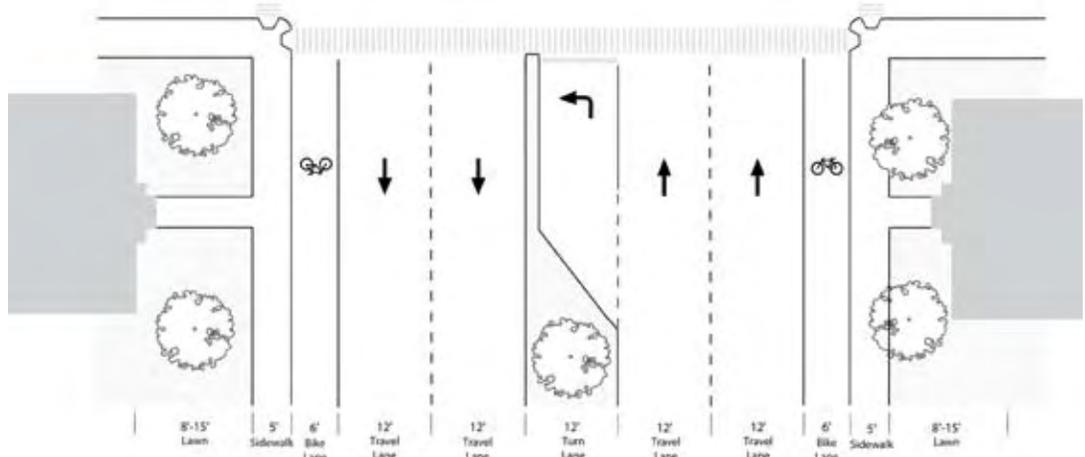
The pedestrian-friendly, landscaped boulevard should be the setting for higher intensity uses, including commercial, office and apartment development.



Caswell Park Residential-Office Area:

with the park is a centerpiece, higher intensity uses should be fostered along East Fifth Avenue and Woodbine Avenue, taking advantage of this recreation asset.

The Rail Corridor: After nearly a century of railroad-oriented uses, this area has changed. Vacant and underutilized resources – particularly



Illustrations representing the proposed street designs and their relationships to future buildings



An example of the type of housing that could be created overlooking Caswell Park.



An architect's rendering of what the gateway could be like.

HALL OF FAME AND MAGNOLIA GATEWAYS

Provisions for development historic preservation

Future development/redevelopment

A mix of uses are proposed in each of the sub-areas (see above). Along the gateways, vertical mixed use buildings (such as offices or residential above retail) should be permissible; multi-level structures, including apartment buildings, offices, institutional buildings and hotels are also appropriate.

Connectivity/circulation

Continuity in the streets, sidewalks and greenway trails are necessary to the success of revitalization. Opportunities for redesign, like a landscaped median, are possible.

Location/orientation of uses

The historic forms of buildings, such as the houses along Hall of Fame Drive and multi-story structures across from the Pellissippi State Technical Community College, are appropriate along the gateways and around Caswell Park. Limited yard space and front door orientation to the street are basic goals.

Urban forms of development, such as the type of commercial structures in downtown should be allowed between Georgia Avenue and Bertrand Street and around the Washington Avenue/Winona Street intersection.

Parking

On-street parking, which is another measure in fostering safety for pedestrians, should be encouraged, especially along Magnolia Avenue and side streets. Off-street surface parking should be located under, to the side or behind buildings in the future.

Other design elements

Landscaping, lighting and signs should be compatible from one block to another. Street trees should be planted within medians, sidewalk planting strips and bulb-outs.

Historic Preservation

The variety of historic resources in this area is remarkable because of manufacturing along the rail line and its association with Fourth and Gill and Park City history. The following should be preserved:

- Holly Street to Bertrand Street historic district: This collection of craftsman-style houses, Mediterranean-style apartment buildings and Swan's Bakery building are part of the original fabric of the corridor. A nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Place and the creation of a local (H-1) historic zoning overlay are recommended as are facade improvement programs.
- The Standard Knitting Mill complex: A National Register nomination is recommended, potentially allowing tax credit programs for restoration and reuse.
- Washington Avenue/Winona Street commercial buildings: These structures are appropriate candidates for facade improvement programs.
- The turn-of-the-last century houses along Hall of Fame Drive, which include examples of Four-square, East Lake and Colonial Revival architectural styles. They were once part of the residential area, nick-named "Fourth and Gill." The form code would complement the setting of these houses.

Parks and Greenways

The creation of the First Creek Greenway trail, reusing the abandoned rail line, is essential to the revitalization process. That open space and trail is necessary to link Park Ridge and Old North Knoxville neighborhoods to Caswell Park and beyond to downtown. The trail should be routed under Magnolia Avenue via the edge of the Knoxville Utility Board properties. Additionally, the Caswell Park walking loop should be extended and a connection should be made across the railroad to the Fourth and Gill neighborhood.



An example of the types of urban structures that would be appropriate in the Winona Street area.

**HALL OF FAME AND MAGNOLIA GATEWAYS Special Emphasis:
The Winona Street and Caswell Park area revitalization.**

The improvements to Caswell Park have been significant, including a walking path, a new playground and additions to the O'Conner center. The First Creek trail will be extended through the area. The land use plan and form code proposals would allow office uses and a variety of residences, such as the infill housing and apartments northwest of the park. Reuse of the Standard Knitting Mills, depicted here to show a residential renovation, is also a foremost concern.



**HALL OF FAME AND MAGNOLIA GATEWAYS Special Emphasis:
The northeast corner of the Magnolia Avenue-Hall of Fame Drive intersection.**

This is the signature block for redevelopment. This School Board-owned area rises on a knoll above the streets. The views of the site and of the skyline would be dramatic. The changes in topography can be used for more intensive development, particularly with underground parking.



Hall of Fame Drive today



This AIA drawing captures the potential for this area.

Recommendations for the Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways

1. Work with the Knox County School Board and other property owners in the area west of First Creek to redevelop the Hall of Fame/Magnolia corner, the “signature site” on these gateways.
2. Create a bike and trail connection from the Fourth and Gill neighborhood to Caswell Park.
3. Start the first section of the “complete street” program between the Hall of Fame intersection and Pellissippi State’s Division Street campus.
4. Develop form codes for the sub-areas to foster a wider range of pedestrian-oriented uses, higher intensity development and expansion of investment.
5. Continue aesthetic improvements, including tree-lined streets and landscaped medians.
6. Complete First Creek Greenway with a rails-to-trails connection to downtown.
7. Develop improvement programs, such as tax increment financing, to foster reuse and redevelopment.
8. Extend façade improvement program, particularly focusing on the historic commercial properties in this area.

North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park Area

Early development east of First Creek was primarily residential, with pockets of small commercial structures around major intersections. The residential styles included Victorian-era houses and Craftsman houses. There were also Mediterranean-style apartments, often two-story but, on occasion, three-story designs like the Aston. Many residential

structures remain, often expanded or converted to office or commercial use.

In the post-World War II era, when Magnolia Avenue was designated a federal highway route, the avenue became an attractive location for commercial development. Following I-40 construction, the corridor changed again: traffic volumes dropped significantly as it no longer served as a major road for travelers heading through Knoxville and the types of investment changed with more fast food and strip centers being created.



One of several early 20th Century houses that have been converted into commercial property.

North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park Special District: Land Use Plan

A mix of uses should be allowed along Magnolia Avenue. Current zoning, largely the C-3 general commercial district, should be replaced with a form code similar to the proposed



Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways code. This would allow continued use of existing residential, office and retail commercial structures that are historic to the area and the renovation of other existing structures that are transformed to comply with the proposed form code.

In the interim before new zoning is adopted, a temporary overlay is advised, which could create the front yard landscaping, reduce parking requirements and begin to establish the building settings that would be fulfilled under a form code.

A two step process is proposed. First, start with improvements that set the landscaping and design standards.



An example of improved landscaping

Secondly, allow higher intensity such as apartments and mixed use projects.



New apartments, like this, and mixed use buildings would be permitted under a form code.

Recommendations for the North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park Area

1. Extend façade improvement programs for use in upgrading buildings in the area, especially pre-1940 buildings.
2. Consider a tax increment financing program to assist private renovation and redevelopment in the area.
3. Transform Magnolia Avenue into a complete street: create better defined bike lanes, continue street tree



This AIA drawing captures the long range intent for historic preservation, infill development and road improvements in the Harrison Street area.

NORTH BERTRAND STREET TO CHILHOWEE PARK AREA: Provisions for future development and historic preservation:

Future development/redevelopment

Mixed uses, including vertical mixed use buildings (such as residential above commercial space) and multi-story office and residential buildings are appropriate.

Location/orientation of uses

Considerations for a form code in this district should be heavily influenced by the locations of the historic buildings, especially the residential structures and their front yards. New structures should have entrances that are oriented toward Magnolia Avenue.



The basis for the long term redevelopment pattern

Parking

Off-street surface parking should be located to the side or behind buildings in the future, and never sited on street corners. Shared parking (for example, a church and an office building utilizing a single parking lot) and parking space credits (for on-street parking and transit connections) should be encouraged.

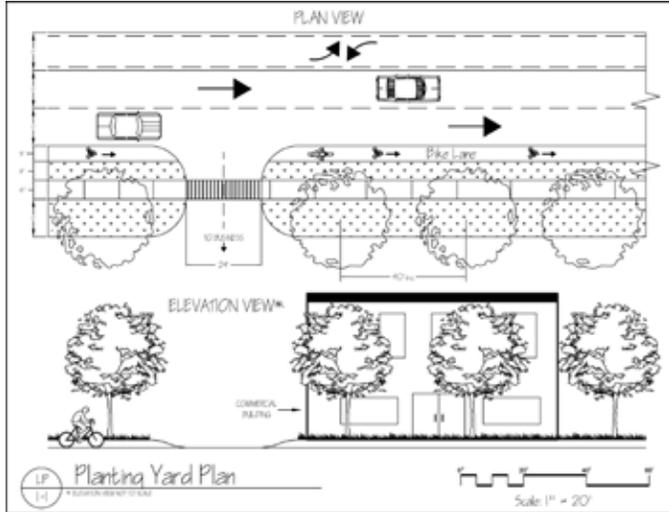
Other Design Elements

In its current configuration, Magnolia Avenue (west of Cherry Street) has excess capacity. A reduction in travel lanes, known as a “road diet,” should be considered. The excess pavement within the existing curbs should be used for on-street parking, bike lanes and other improvements, including landscaping, pedestrian-scaled lighting and bulb-outs that define on-street parking and transit stops.

Historic Preservation

This area is encompassed by the formerly incorporated municipality, Park City. The Harrison to Hembree block, containing the Park City Methodist Church and the 1920-era apartment buildings (such as the Aston), is a potential National Register district. Other individual historically significant properties, that are worthy of preservation include the Audigier residence, the former Hartman Beverage Company and other commercial structures near the intersection of North Bertrand Street. Various residential structures that have been converted to commercial or office uses should be considered as priorities for the facade improvement program.

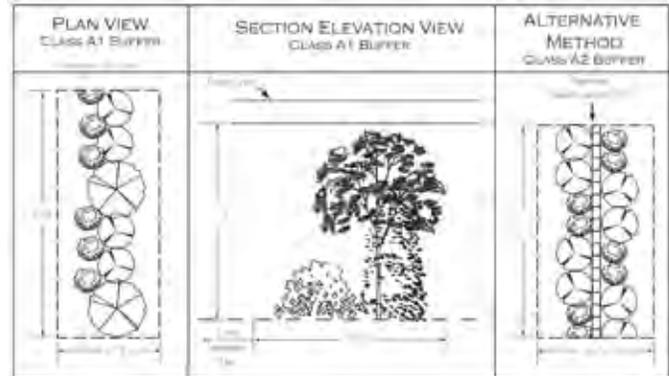
- planting, define on-street parking and consider landscaped and a “road diet” west of Cherry Street.
4. Develop a form code that allows compatible development to the area’s pre-1950 historic resources. Because of the extensive post-1950 strip commercial development, an interim zoning overlay district should



North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park area proposed landscaping

be considered to begin to realize the mix of uses and architectural improvements.

5. Encourage redevelopment of low intensity, auto-oriented uses to meet the intentions of this plan.
6. Create standards for landscaped yards and locations for future development to achieve the beautification that is associated with the future development.
7. Create standards for buffers between commercial property and adjoining residential properties.



A proposed alley buffer standard

NORTH BERTRAND STREET TO CHILHOWEE PARK AREA Special Emphasis: Cherry Street Square

Cherry Street is a connector to I-40 and a gateway to Magnolia Avenue. When it was widened to support additional travel demands, it was envisioned that Cherry Street would be extended southward and the right-of-way was purchased for this connector. That project is no longer being considered.

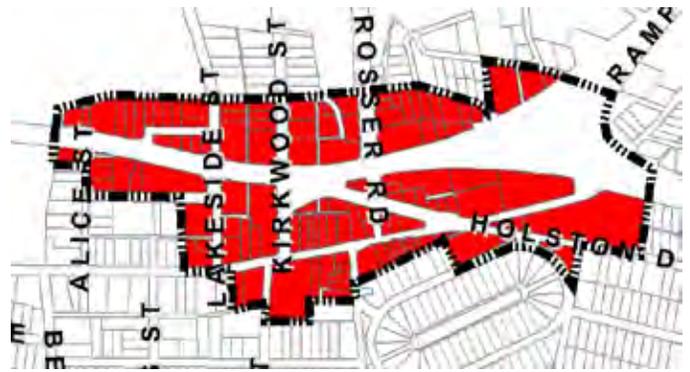
The wide right-of-way currently has underutilized travel and turn lanes, which could be reclaimed as public open space. As envisioned in the AIA drawings, this area could be converted to a public square with buildings facing the square. A monument or similar feature should be a centerpiece of this square.



Burlington Area

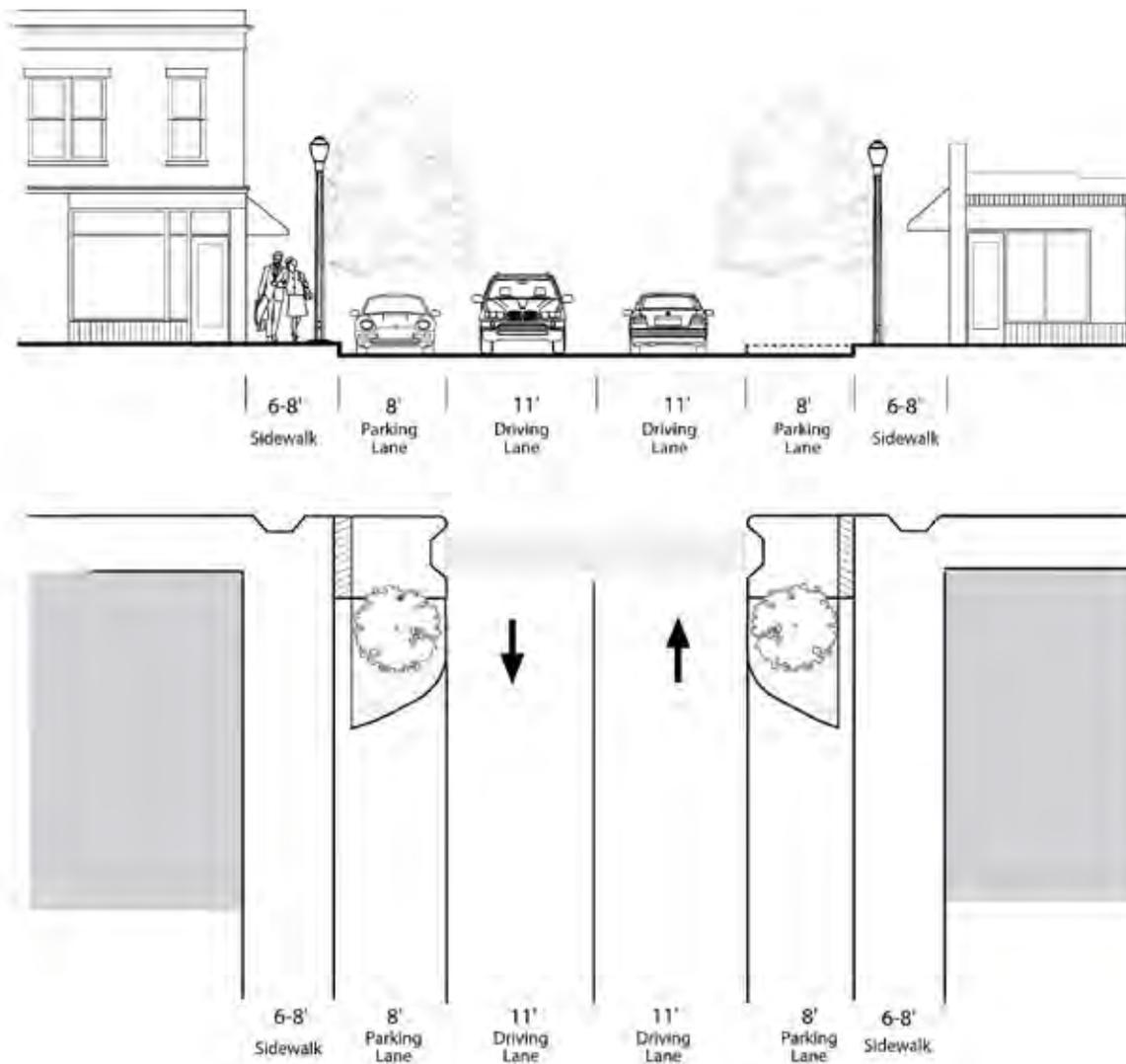
In 1890, street car lines were created along Park Street and McCalla Avenue, enabling Burlington and adjacent neighborhood development. Prior to the creation of the streetcar, this area was open countryside, dotted with farms that lined Rutledge Pike (later renamed McCalla Avenue and finally Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue) and Armstrong Ferry Pike (now Holston Drive). Those two pikes split where the enclave of businesses was created. This was also the point at the end of the trolley line.

Burlington was bypassed when Asheville Highway was connected to Magnolia Avenue. Automobile-oriented uses were created along that federal highway and Burlington changed markedly.



Burlington Special District Land Use Plan (MU EC 2)

Downtown Burlington: A mix of uses should be allowed along Magnolia Avenue and within historic Downtown Burlington, including residential, office and retail commercial



The proposed form code would allow infill development that complements historic buildings and provides a credit for on-street parking, making compliance with zoning regulations more reasonable.

development. Current C-3 zoning should be replaced with form code zoning that calls for mixed-use, buildings forms that are more urban, designed to accommodate and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Magnolia Auto-oriented Commercial: Many of the buildings between Asheville Highway and Chilhowee Park were built later after the C-3 general commercial zoning was in place, resulting in 25-foot frontyard setbacks with front yard parking and minimal landscaping. The land use plan calls for a form code district, using the same provisions as the area between Bertrand Street and Chilhowee Park (see page 33). This code would not limit existing uses, but would control the form and location of future buildings.

Recommendations for Burlington

1. Maintain the façade improvement program in Downtown Burlington, using Secretary of Interior

Standards in designing the renovations to ensure that the historic character of the area is not jeopardized.

2. Develop a form code for Downtown Burlington that is based on the setbacks, window and door patterns, and scale of historic buildings.
3. Create a parking code to reduce required off-street parking, enabling shared parking and maximizing on-street parking to serve older businesses.
4. Develop a street improvement plan for Burlington area streets that includes formalized on-street parking with tree-planted bulb-outs, marked cross walks and pedestrian-scaled lighting.
5. Explore a Downtown Burlington redevelopment program, emphasizing street improvements, reuse of the major vacant parcels such as the flea market site and the AMVETS thrift store block and potential reconfiguration of the block system to maximize development opportunities.



Potential restoration and infill development under the proposed form code

BURLINGTON AREA Special Emphasis: Burlington Square

A public plaza or square should be created to celebrate historic Burlington. The space should be created for day-to-day use and festivals. Potential locations include a portion of the vacant lot that is used for flea markets (see below) or a space in the center of the area (see the image to the right).



One of the potential concepts for the square >>



Some vacant lots are covered with gravel. This one, which several citizens looked upon as a potential plaza or park site, has been used as a flea market site, which some merchants feel hurt their legitimate businesses. >>

BURLINGTON AREA Special Emphasis: an Asheville Highway Roundabout

As a long-term transportation project, a roundabout should be considered at the junction of Asheville Highway and Rutledge Pike. There are several benefits: better traffic flow in all directions (for example, when pulling out of parts of Burlington one cannot head west without going onto Asheville Highway and making a U-turn) and opportunities for redevelopment (the excessive right-of-way and underutilized land around the existing highways contains as much as 15 acres).



The concept for an Asheville Highway roundabout.

Chapter 6: Implementation Measures

Fostering Opportunities for Mixed Use, Pedestrian-oriented Improvements and Historic Preservation

Development and adoption of the Magnolia Avenue Form Codes

The land use and urban design plan (Chapter 4) contains the basic proposals to foster pedestrian-friendly, mixed use development. With the adoption of this plan, the Central and East City Sector Plans will be amended. The One Year Plan will be changed in the quarter following plan adoption.

Zoning changes will be needed to realize the mixed use districts that are proposed. It is recommended that this rezoning process be undertaken according to the outlined focus areas, starting with the SOMAG portion of the corridor. The Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways and Burlington ASPrea would be logical subsequent re-zonings.

of this plan, an interim set of recommended zones is outlined for each of the special districts in Appendix A. A temporary overlay zoning district, which would require design review in respect to the principles of Chapter 5, could be considered to realize this plan in the interim before the various form districts and codes are adopted.

Historic Preservation

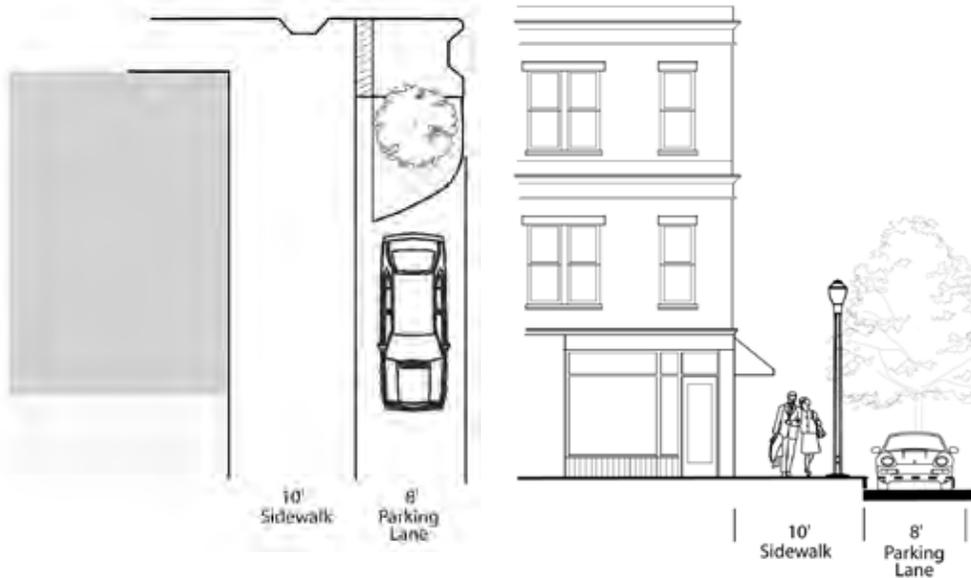
Three steps should be undertaken to realize the protection of historic buildings (see Chapter 3):

1. Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places should be prepared for various districts, including the Depot Street area, the Holly Street/Bertrand Street area and the Harrison/Hembree Street block. Additionally, a nomination for the Standard Knitting Mill should be prepared. These efforts require research, and ultimately evaluation and approval at the

both the state and federal level. Placement on or the declaration of eligibility for the National Register will enable tax credit advantages for restoration projects.

2. Local H-1 (Historic District) overlays should also be considered for these districts, offering protection while allowing the variety of mixed uses under a form code.

3. Knoxville's Community Development Department has begun to target historic resources, such as Burlington, for façade improvement grants. Such programs should be extended to other portions of the corridor.



The Magnolia Avenue-North Central Street area is recommended for the initial phase of rezoning to create a form code. Building designs, like those that have historically lined these streets, are proposed.

As evidenced in the Knoxville South Waterfront and Cumberland Avenue form codes, the rezoning process must be undertaken in consultation with all stakeholders. The rezoning dialogue for each focus area will take, at a minimum, several months. In order to foster development that is in keeping with the intent of the land use and design proposals

Developing Pedestrian-oriented, Complete Streets and Urban Parking Standards

Public investment in Magnolia Avenue and its side streets can spur private investment by creating a more functional, more beautiful setting for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and drivers (see Chapter 4: Complete Streets). Like the streets

in Knoxville South Waterfront and Downtown North, investment in Magnolia Avenue street improvements can be a catalyst for renovation and infill development. Further traffic engineering work will be necessary to implement the complete streets program. The avenue's wide right-of-way is an asset capable of realizing several design alternatives (for example, two travel lanes or four travel lanes east of Hall of Fame Drive; both with landscaped medians). One potential funding source for complete streets is the federal Transportation Enhancement Program. Other sources of funding for transportation improvements include Redevelopment Area programs (see below).

Parking in Urban Areas

In order for urban areas to develop efficiently, parking requirements in the zoning code should be flexible to allow standards to be tailored to designated areas as needed. Such approaches could be to have reduced parking standards, allow adjacent on-street parking to count toward off-street parking requirements, allow shared parking agreements between uses with different demand cycles (for example, a church and an office building). Another component of this code should be a district parking approach where all parking within a designated boundary is actively managed to optimize a minimum amount of parking for maximum utilization. This works well in historic areas where there are few available off-street parking opportunities, such as Burlington and Old City, or areas with plentiful public parking like the parking under the I-40 and James White Parkway/Hall of Fame Drive overpasses

Expanding Investment Opportunities and Eliminating Blight

Facade Improvement Program

The City of Knoxville Department administers the Facade Improvement Program, which provides financial incentives to businesses for facade improvements along Magnolia Avenue. The program's goals are to better the appearance of building façades and to improve the economic viability of Magnolia Avenue. Better aesthetics increase property values, improve the marketability of space within the buildings and draw business and residents to the area. More information be found by visiting the city's web site or by calling the Community Development Department at 865-215-2120

Empowerment Zone Business Expansion Loan Program

The City of Knoxville Community Development Department administers an Empowerment Zone (EZ) program. The

purpose of the program is to foster business expansion and relocation of businesses within the EZ. Funds will be made available as loans for the purpose of providing gap financing that will make projects feasible. More information be found at by visiting the city's web site or by calling the Community Development Department at 865-215-2120

Empowerment Zone Tax Credit

These incentives encourage businesses to open and expand and to hire local residents. Empowerment Zone (EZ) incentives include employment credits, low-interest loans through EZ facility bonds, reduced taxation on capital gains, and other incentives. More information can be found at U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's web site.

Redevelopment Area Designation

One of the implementation measures that can be undertaken to eliminate blighting influences and provide the funds for public or private improvements is a declaration of a redevelopment area. The Jackson Depot and the Downtown North Redevelopment Areas have already been established. These areas are part of or adjoin the Magnolia Corridor. A redevelopment area designation provides a means for the city and Knoxville's Community Development Corporation to address urban blight by solving problems such as improving substandard buildings and derelict vacant properties. In doing so, the overall goals are to protect public health and safety such as fire hazards, and public welfare such as increasing economic values and re-investment. Redevelopment areas can also be used to make public or private improvements via tax increment financing (TIFs). In Tennessee there are two potential programs associated with TIFs. The two programs are outlined below:

1. The traditional TIF is established to finance public infrastructure, land acquisition and utility improvements. These could include water and wastewater projects, sidewalk and road improvements, traffic control, lighting, landscaping and park improvements, environmental remediation and parking facilities.
2. Another component of the redevelopment area program is the potential for private tax increment financing. Under this program, individual property owners are potentially eligible to receive public funds for property improvements. In areas where the streets and other infrastructure are good, like most of the Downtown North-Central Street area, it was found to be more prudent to allow private use of a TIF to

foster vacant land redevelopment, historic building renovations and related private investment.

In creating a redevelopment area, government can use a mix of the two TIF programs to address public improvements or help with the financing of private revitalization. Also, a redevelopment area plan that does not initially provide for TIF financing can be amended for a variety of projects as needs are identified.

State law provides the City, County and KCDC the authority to designate tax increment financing districts. The district can last up to 40 years; however, in Knoxville local government typically permits a more prudent period of 15 years, which generally allows ample time to pay back the bonds issued to fund the improvements. Additionally, the City and County prefer allowing no more than 15 percent of the total development cost to be financed by TIF revenues. Because a TIF involves both City and County taxes in Knoxville, both City Council and County Commission must authorize the use of TIFs. However, either government may use only their tax increment to fund a project; however, this is not usually practical because not enough increment can be generated to fund the improvements.

So what is a tax increment? Simply, it is the difference between the proceeds from current taxes, which are frozen at the existing rate, and future taxes, which are calculated for the improved property, after renovations or re-investments are undertaken. The increment provides the funds to retire the approved amount of debt on the improved property.

Maintaining Strong Neighborhoods and Businesses: a Key to Implementation

Residential Zoning Changes

Reinvestment in the corridor is closely linked to continued preservation, renovation and reinvestment in the adjacent neighborhoods.

In addition to the form code provisions, there is a significant zoning program, identified in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Corridor Plan that should be implemented to enable additional neighborhood reinvestment:

Adoption of an R-1HK (Heart of Knoxville) Zoning District: this new zone has been conceived to allow residential development that is appropriate to the typical 50-foot wide lots that blanket much of the

Central and East City Sectors. It would turn the clock back on the suburban-type zoning (requiring 75-foot frontage) that was put in place in around 1960. This zone primarily focuses on infill single family housing that would complement the Victorian-era, Craftsman and other pre-1940 housing. The R-1HK zone could replace the need for the Infill Housing Overlay. The new zone would enable a wide variety of housing sizes, which can increase affordable housing opportunities while protecting the historic features along each block.

Neighborhoods where this new zone would be particularly important include areas identified as the Linden Avenue/ Parkview Avenue area and the neighborhoods from Five Points to Burlington. These were focus areas identified in the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue Corridor Plan*. Parts of the Park Ridge and Chilhowee Park neighborhoods are also good candidates for this new zoning.

A Magnolia Avenue Business Association

At the onset of this planning process, a business association—Magnolia Area Merchants Association—was being formed to create a vision for improvements and address various concerns: business revitalization; involvement of neighborhood interests; more minority business ownership; historic preservation; business marketing and promotion of the corridor; pedestrian safety; and employment, training and education of teenagers and young adults.

The association began to identify additional interests that should be involved: nonprofit organizations (such as Tribe One and CAC), all businesses (retail merchants and insurance, banking and real estate firms), contractors, educational institutions (Pellissippi State Technical Community College and the University of Tennessee), the Knoxville Chamber Partnership governmental agencies and neighborhood groups.

The vision statement on the first page of this plan was largely the work of the association.

Business leaders should reconstitute the association. A strong association is needed to realize the components of this plan. MPC, Knoxville's Community Development Department and Knoxville Police Department staff began discussing neighborhood/business association programs, based on the focus areas of this plan. The concept, at first glance, may have merit; for instance, a neighborhood/business watch could be created for a separate area or a neighborhood and businesses

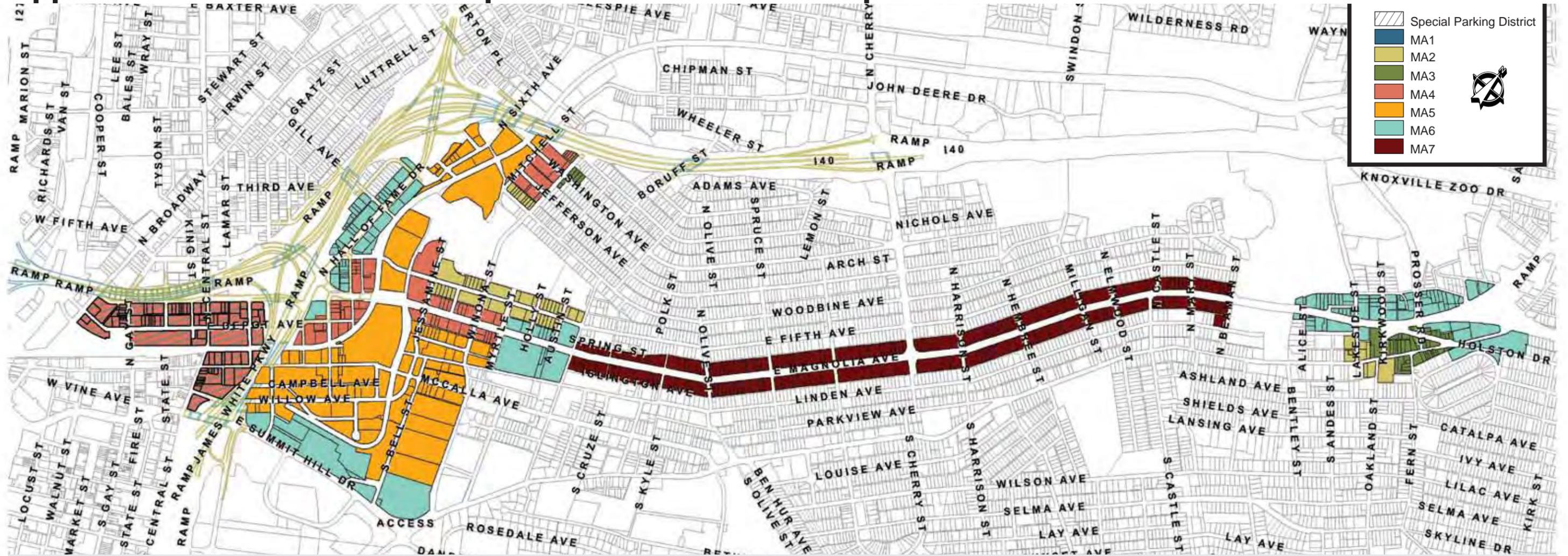
could join together to address housing and business structure improvement programs.

A Magnolia Avenue Task Force

While this plan focuses on what public and private interests can do to improve development, parks and streets, socio-economic issues must also be addressed. Many of these issues were identified by citizens during public meetings, including homeless and panhandling concerns; empty houses and lots; property upkeep and code violations; and education on home improvement programs. The need to “focus on the kids” was clearly expressed with education and preparation for future job opportunities as foremost objectives. Finally, a range of crime issues, including the perception of crime, were noted: arson, safety in parks and along streets, prostitution and drug dealing.

These are types of problems that will not be solved overnight. MPC recommends that the city form a task force to begin to address these concerns on an on-going basis. The types of members that should be on the task force include representatives of businesses, neighborhood associations, Knoxville Area Transit, the Knoxville Chamber Partnership, social service-related organizations, various departments of the local government (Community Development Department, Policy Development, Police Department and Metropolitan Planning Commission), and educational institutions.

Appendix A: Land Use Plan Proposed Form Code Concepts



MA1

A residential district that allows detached and attached single-family structures. The structures will have setbacks similar to detached single-family structures common in the historic grid areas and a maximum height of 35 feet. Office uses may be allowed by use-on-review and other uses like bed and breakfasts may be allowed.

*There are currently no areas planned for this land classification in the corridor.

MA2

This is primarily a residential district that allows any MA1 form, but also allows for more intense multi-story mixed use structures. Office and commercial uses will be restricted to the first floor. The front setback will be 5 to 15 feet.

MA3

This low intensity mixed use district is primarily intended for historic commercial centers like Downtown Burlington. Buildings will be allowed to be 1 to 3 stories in height and will be required, in most cases, to be located at the front property line (or back edge of sidewalk). The allowed uses will be residential, commercial/retail or office.

MA4

This district allows for the most intense development. It requires in most cases that buildings be built to the front property line (or back edge of sidewalk). The minimum height of a structure will be 2 stories, with a maximum height ranging from 3 to 7 stories depending on location. The allowed uses will be residential, commercial/retail, office, warehouse, wholesale and light industrial.

MA5

This district is intended for areas where the current land uses are mainly industrial, warehouse and wholesale. The required building form and uses will be essentially the same as the MA4 district except this district will allow one story buildings.

MA6

This district is meant for areas of intense development that will have a boulevard setting, like Hall of Fame Drive and parts of Magnolia Avenue. There will be a front setback of 10 to 25 feet. The minimum height of a structure will be 2 stories and the maximum may range from 3 to 7 stories depending on location. The allowed uses will be residential, office and commercial/retail.

MA7

This district is intended to be an interim overlay district that continues to allow similar uses that exist on Magnolia Avenue but also requires new structures and extensively renovated structures to create setbacks and orientation of the MA6 district. Also, mixed use buildings that meet the MA6 district standards would be allowed.

Special Parking District

The area west of Hall of Fame Drive and south of I-40 currently has many properties that are zoned C-2 which does not require any parking. Also, many public parking spaces will be available under the I-40 and HOF viaducts. Because of the uniqueness of this area as an extension of downtown, no minimum parking should be required and a shared parking program should be developed.

Appendix A:

Recommendations for an Interim Zoning Overlay

Form code zoning districts will be created in conjunction with stakeholders in several sections along the corridor. That process takes time; therefore form districts for the whole corridor cannot reasonably be created at once. An interim zoning overlay is an alternative that is recommended to guide new development and building reuse that are in keeping with the plan's goals of creating pedestrian-friendly streets and expanding options for the use of land, including vertical mixed use.

The following zones are recommended for each of the subareas while the form code is being developed. It is recommended that the City's One-Year Plan be amended following adoption of this Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan to foster the flexibility to achieve the plan's goals. The map that is entitled "Land Use Plan: Proposals for Form Code Concepts" contains the references to specific areas (for example, MA 2, MA3, etc.)

Magnolia Avenue 2 Area (MA 2)

- O-3 Office Park District
- RP-1 and RP-2 Planned Residential Districts

Magnolia Avenue 3 Area (MA 3)

- C-1 Neighborhood Commercial District

Magnolia Avenue 4 Area (MA 4)

- C-2 Central Business District
- I-2 Restricted Manufacturing and Warehousing District

Magnolia Avenue 5 Area (MA 5)

- C-6 General Commercial Park District
- I-2 Restricted Manufacturing and Warehousing District
- O-3 Office Park District
- RP-1 and RP-2 Planned Residential Districts

Magnolia Avenue 6 Area (MA 6)

- C-3 General Commercial District\
- O-3 Office Park District
- RP-1 and RP-2 Planned Residential Districts

Magnolia Avenue 7 Area (MA 7)

- C-3 General Commercial District
- O-3 Office Park District
- RP-1 and RP-2 Planned Residential Districts