

DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN

ABERDEEN, MARYLAND

PUBLIC MEETING

AUGUST 20, 2024



TEAM INTRODUCTION



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DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

PROJECT FOCUS

- Physical improvements related to **PUBLIC SPACES AND GATHERING SPACES**, particularly areas that would connect Festival Square to West Bel Air Avenue, and publicly-owned properties.
- Improvements to **PUBLICLY-OWNED SURFACE PARKING LOTS ON WALNUT ALLEY.**
- **PUBLIC INVESTMENT STRATEGIES** that would bridge development from Festival Square to West Bel Air Avenue and key destinations beyond
- Potential use of the **FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

STUDY AREA



➤ PROCESS

Assessment & Worksession #1 | July 2024

Assessment Report | Late July

Worksession #2/Public Meeting | Mid-August

Draft Plan | Mid-September

Final Plan | Early October

DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN

ASSESSMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS



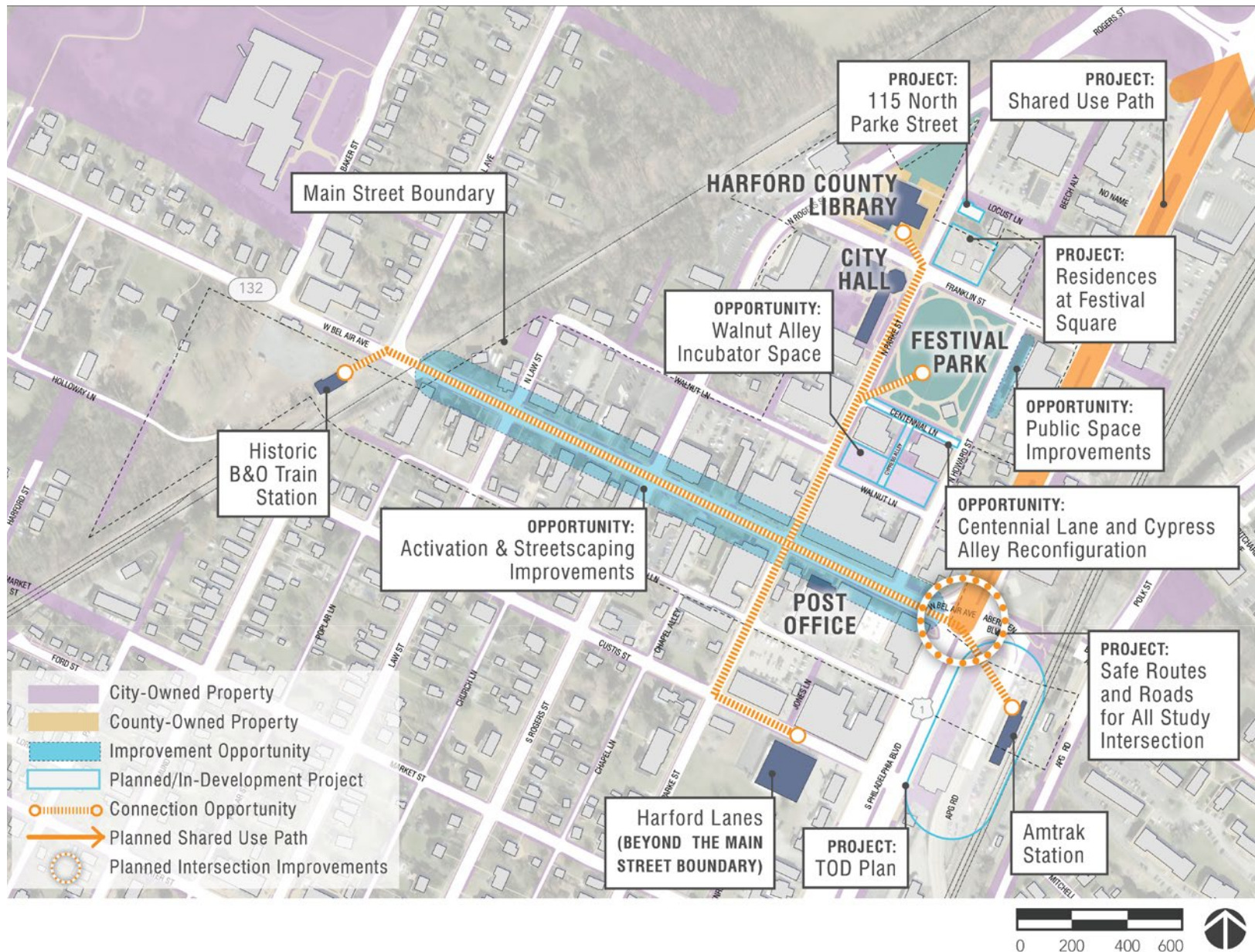
SIDEWALK ANALYSIS



STAKEHOLDER SUMMARY *from* WORKSESSION #1

- Prioritize **SHORT-TERM SUCCESSES** for immediate improvement, particularly related to the alley improvement project.
- **ACTIVATE WEST BEL AIR AVENUE** streetscape and storefronts to make it safer and more inviting
- Improve **WALKABILITY AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY** throughout downtown
- **FOSTER CONNECTION** and increase “third places” throughout downtown
- Celebrate and improve **FESTIVAL PARK**
- Explore **CREATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

CONTEXT



DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Aberdeen is a destination to work, live, learn, and play with an actively engaged community, diverse neighborhoods, thriving businesses, economic opportunities, transportation options, and a sustainable future.

-Vision from Plan Aberdeen

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

CONNECTIVITY & STREETSCAPE

CONNECTING THE DOTS

- Festival Park to Harford Lanes
- B&O Museum to Festival Park
- Train Station to West Bel Air Avenue



DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

PUBLIC REALM

CONCEPT PLAN

FESTIVAL PARK

- 1 Splash Pad/Interactive Water Feature
- 2 Open View/Connection
- 3 Treatment in Worn Lawn Zone
- 4 Renovated or Replaced Pavilion
- 5 Ample Planting Bed Space Beneath Existing Trees

CENTENNIAL LANE

- 6 Maintain Vehicular Access to Howard Street
- 7 On-Street, Head-in Parking
- 8 Outdoor Dining/Brewery Table Seating
- 9 Additional Parking Off Centennial Lane
- 10 Vertical Element or Feature
- 11 Hardscape Street Treatment

WALNUT & CYPRESS ALLEYS

- 12 Additional Parking Off Cypress Alley
- 13 One-Way Alley
- 14 Bollard & Planters
- 15 Dedicated Pedestrian Only Walk Space
- 16 Building Amenity/Plaza Space

PARKING LOTS

- 17 Existing Wall Murals
- 18 Current Proposed Angled Parking
- 19 Planting Strip
- 20 Narrow Utility-Friendly Tree Planting
- 21 Shade Tree Planting in Island Planters

PEDESTRIAN ALLEY CONNECTION

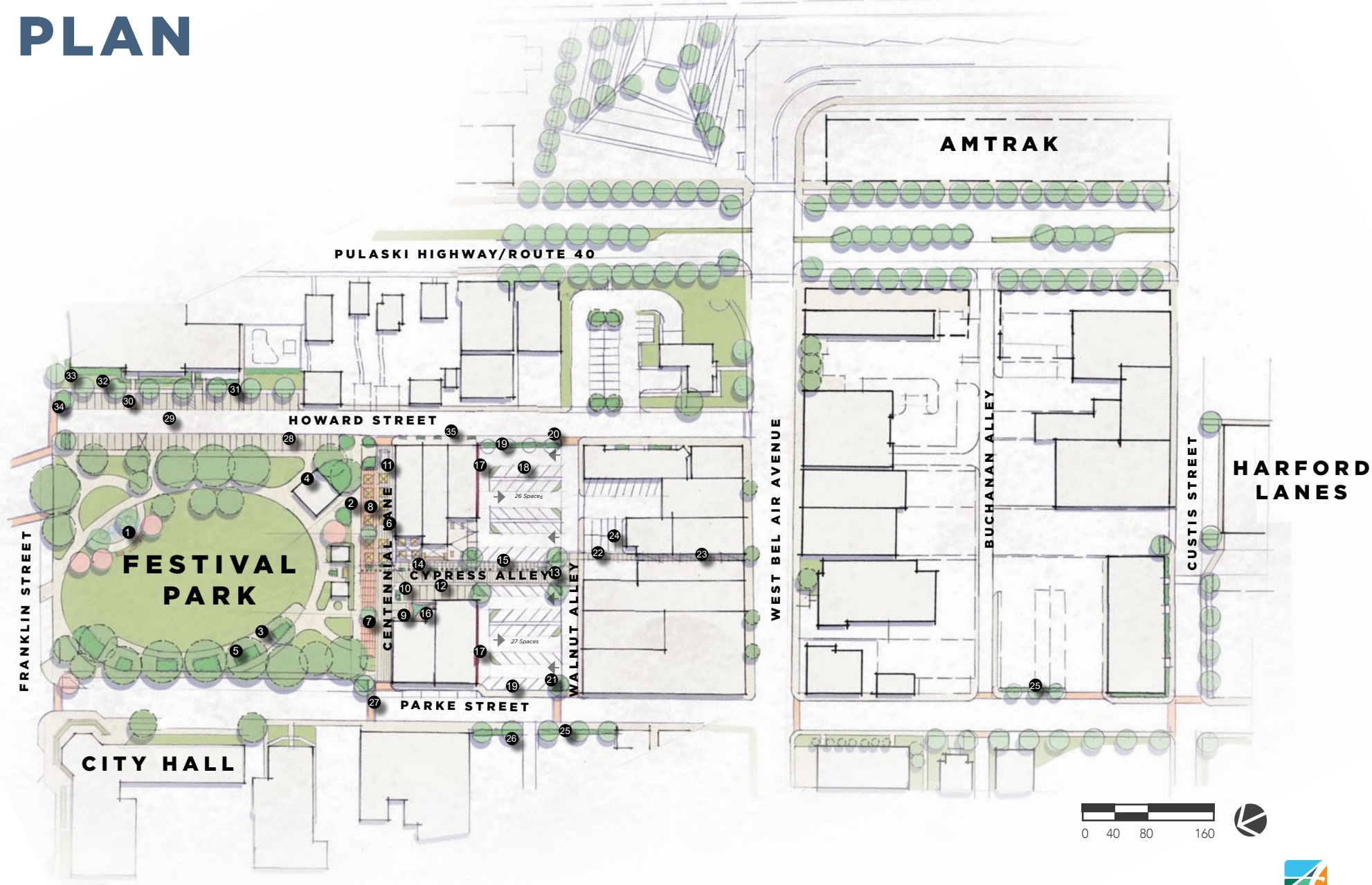
- 22 Walkway Hardscape Treatment
- 23 Alley Enhancements: Lighting, Color, Art
- 24 Maintain Access to Parking & Service Areas

PARKE STREET

- 25 Planting Strip with Low Shrub Hedge
- 26 Upright Shade/Street Planting
- 27 Additional Crosswalk Zones

HOWARD STREET

- 28 Existing 90-Degree Parking
- 29 Narrow Street
- 30 New 90-Degree Head-in Parking
- 31 Sidewalk Connection
- 32 Landscape or Future Amenity Zone
- 33 Building Foundation Landscape
- 34 Upright Shade/Street Planting
- 35 Container Planting Opportunities



FESTIVAL PARK / FESTIVAL SQUARE

- Restore worn areas
- Splash Pad
- Open access at southern edge



FESTIVAL PARK / FESTIVAL SQUARE

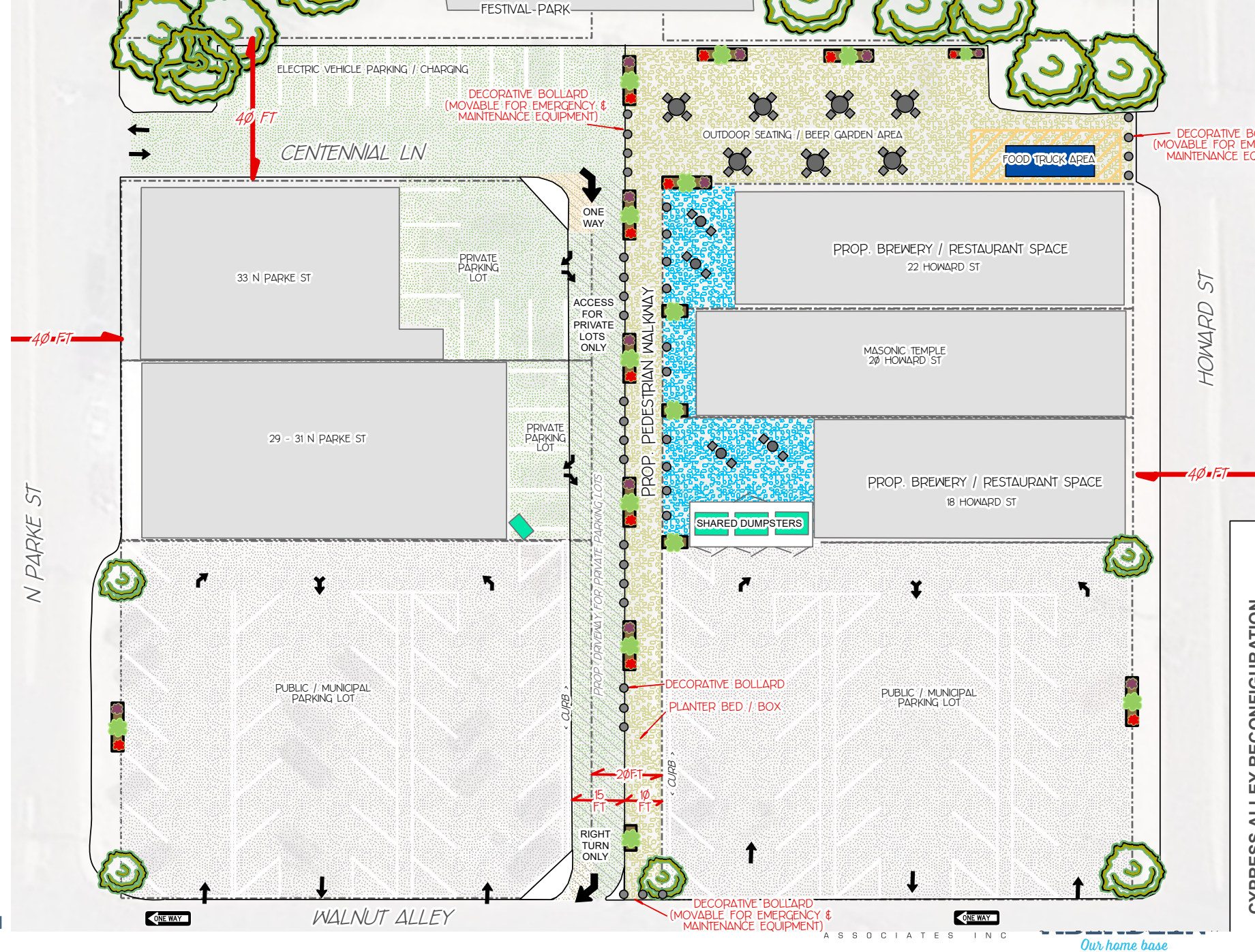
Visual and Physical Access at the Southern Edge is Blocked



Modified Landscaping to Open Access at Southern Edge



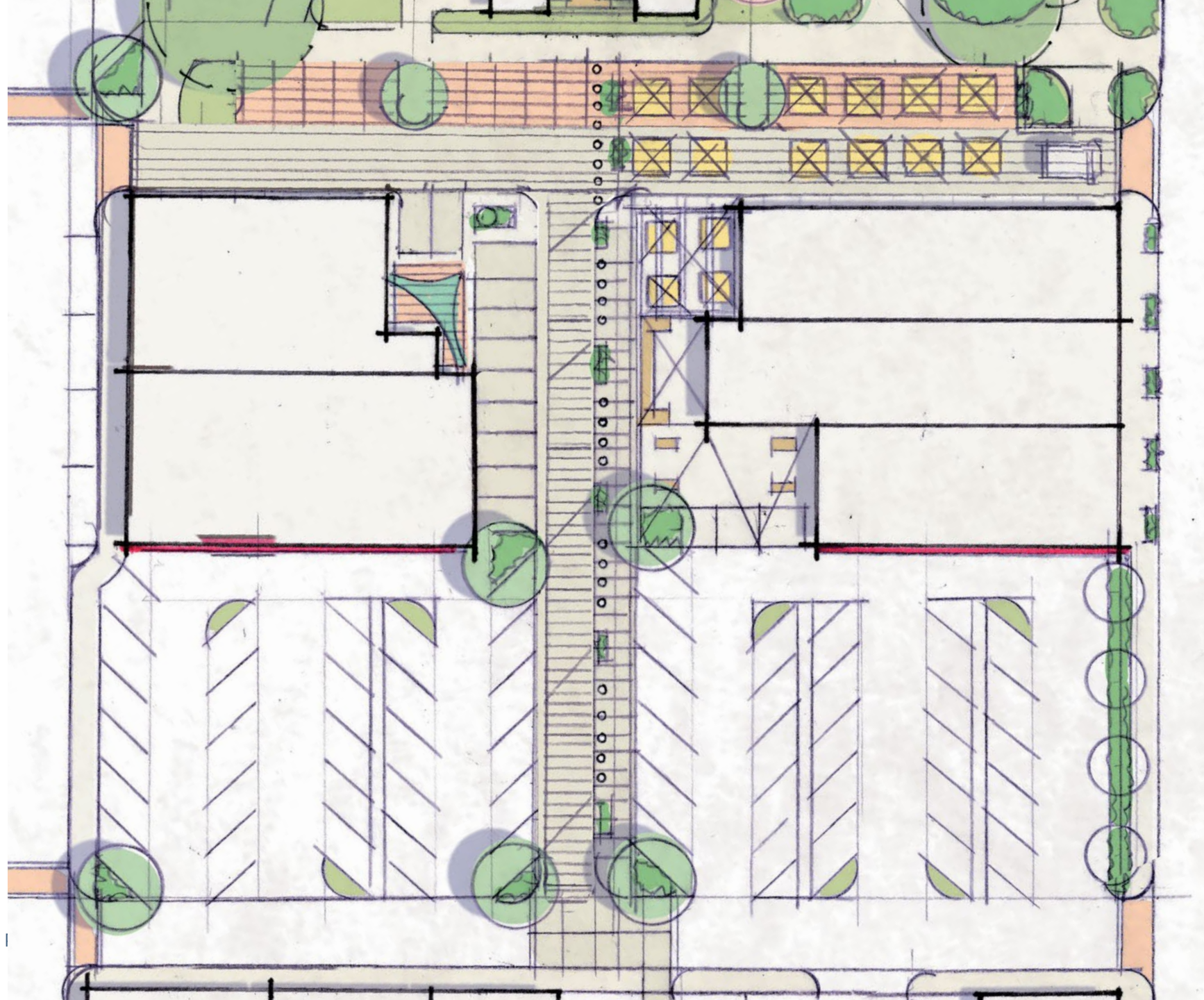
DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN



CYPRESS ALLEY RECONFIGURATION

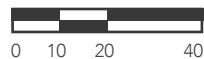
CURRENT PLAN:

*Potential
Enhancements*

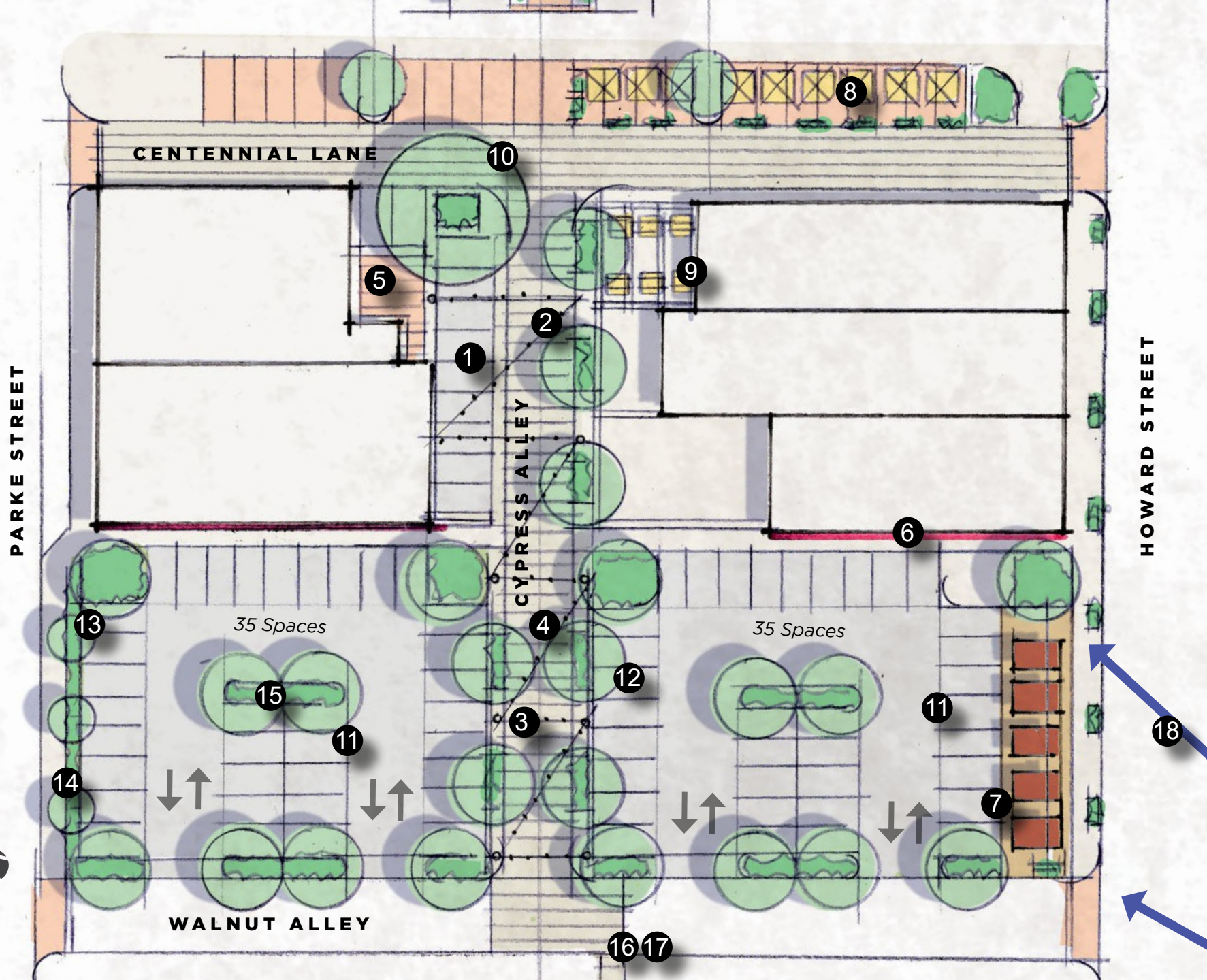


OPTION A

- 1 Additional Parking Off Cypress Alley
- 2 One-Way Alley
- 3 String/Catenary Lighting
- 4 +/- 18-20' Shared Vehicular & Pedestrian Space
- 5 Additional Private Building Amenity/Plaza Space
- 6 Existing Wall Murals - Provide a 5' Walk at Base of Wall
- 7 Micro Retail Buildings - Edge Howard Street with Potential Visibility from Pulaski Highway
- 8 Outdoor Dining/Tables (for Brewery)
- 9 Beer Garden/Amenity Space
- 10 Focal Tree - Anchor Alley Corner
- 11 Modified More Efficient Parking Layout - 90-Degree Parking
- 12 Trees in Planters at Shared Space Edge
- 13 (4-6') Planting Strip with Hedge/Low Shrub Row
- 14 Narrow Utility Friendly Upright Tree Planting
- 15 Shade Tree Planting in Island Planters
- 16 Walkway/Alley Hardscape Treatment
- 17 Alley Enhancements: Overhead Lighting, Color/Texture, Art/Murals
- 18 Maintain Views from Pulaski Highway

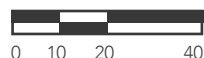


DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN

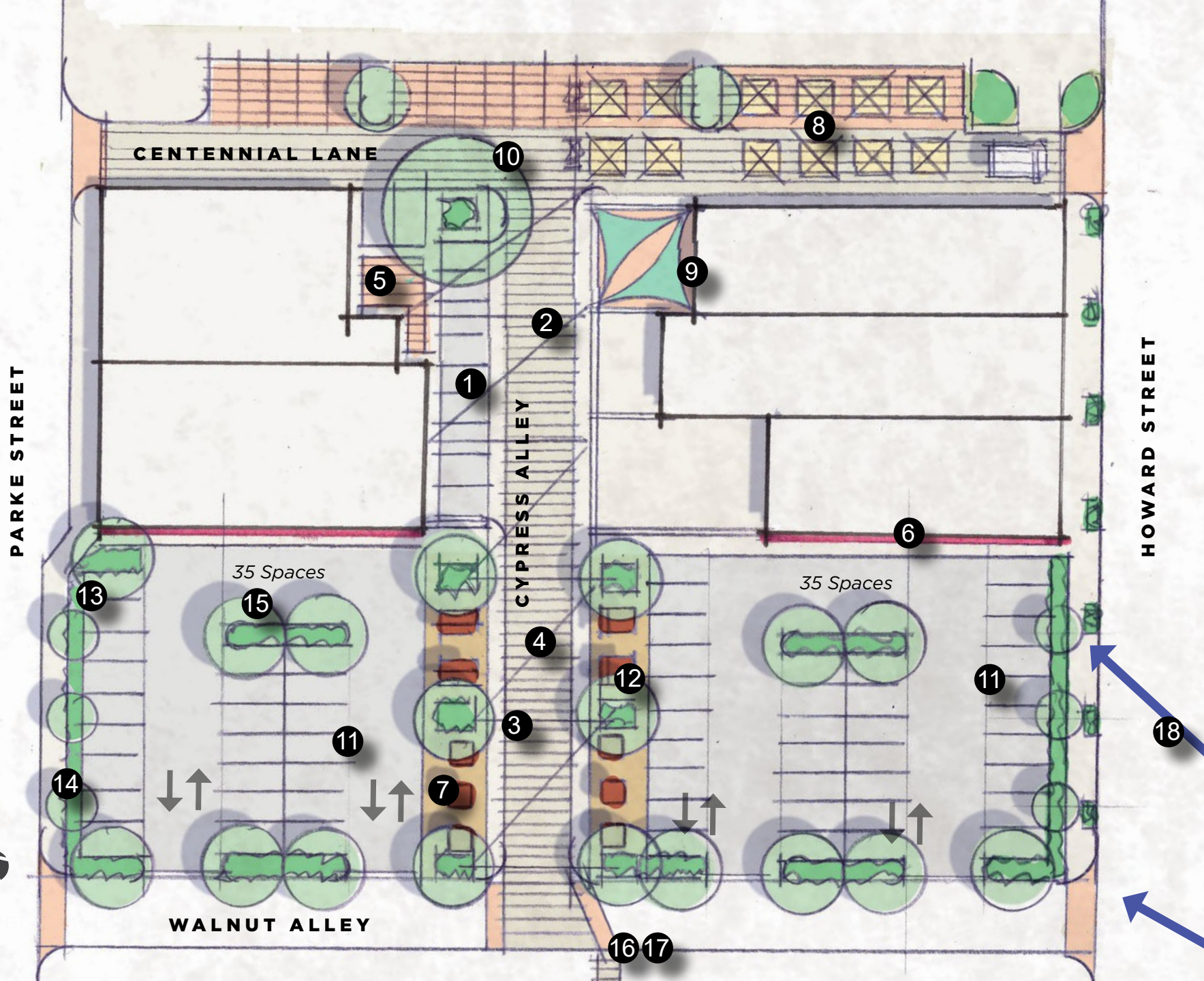


OPTION B

- 1 Additional Parking Off Cypress Alley
- 2 One-Way Alley
- 3 String/Catenary Lighting
- 4 +/- 16-18' Shared Alley Space
- 5 +/- 5-6' Designated Pedestrian Walk Zone in Front of Micro Retail
- 6 Existing Wall Murals - Provide a 5' Walk at Base of Wall
- 7 Micro Retail Buildings - Edge Alley Space
- 8 Outdoor Dining/Tables Utilizing the Full Street Closure (for Brewery)
- 9 Beer Garden/Amenity Space
- 10 Focal Tree - Anchor Alley Corner
- 11 Modified More Efficient Parking Layout - 90-Degree Parking
- 12 Trees Framing the alley & Micro Retail Spaces
- 13 (4-6') Planting Strip with Hedge/Low Shrub Row
- 14 Narrow Utility Friendly Upright Tree Planting
- 15 Shade Tree Planting in Island Planters
- 16 Walkway/Alley Hardscape Treatment
- 17 Alley Enhancements: Overhead Lighting, Color/Texture, Art/Murals
- 18 Maintain Views from Pulaski Highway

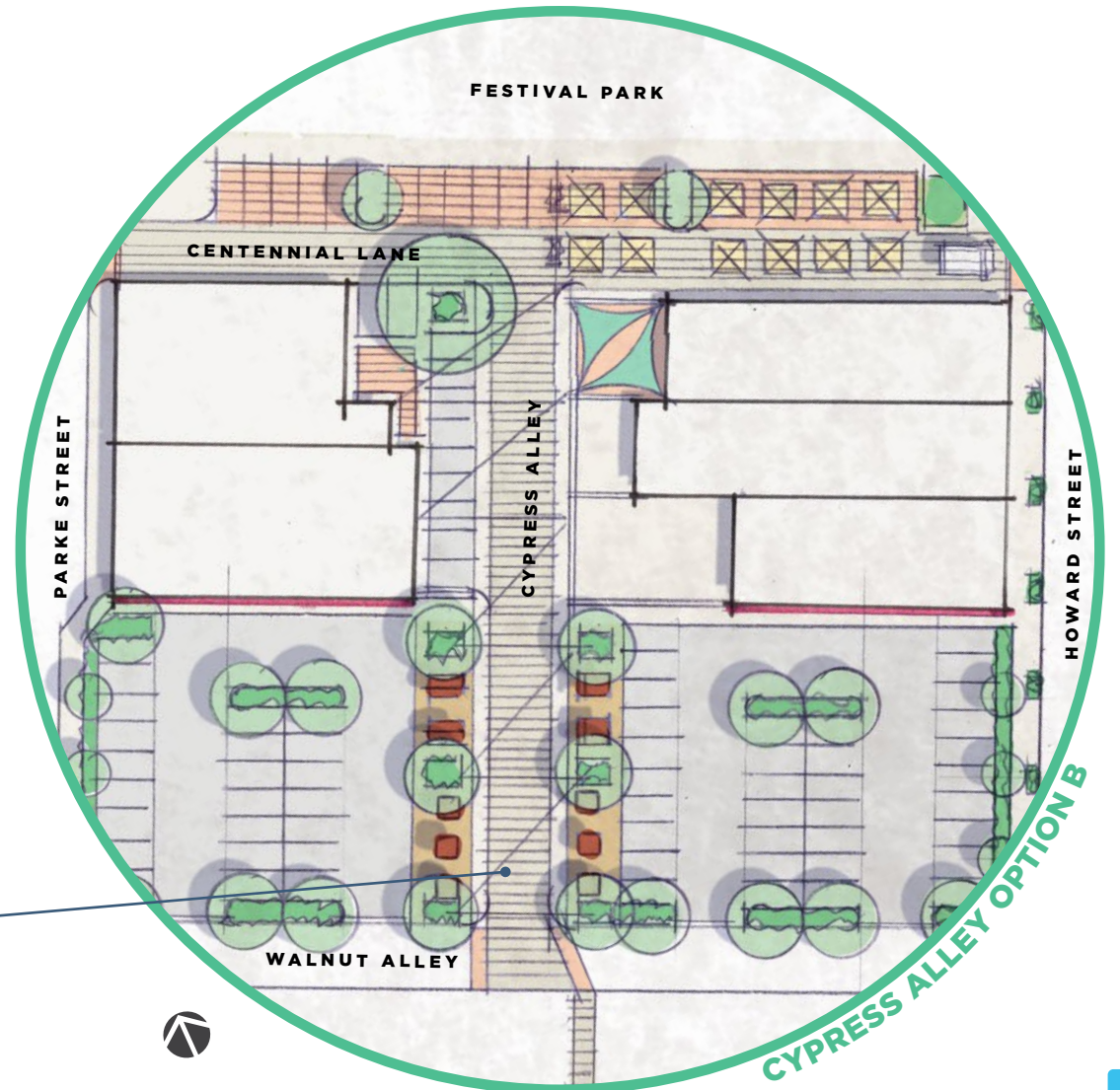


DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN



WALNUT ALLEY INCUBATOR SPACE

- Pop-up village
- Reconfigure parking
- Green and activate the edges
- Plan for flexibility



WALNUT ALLEY INCUBATOR SPACE



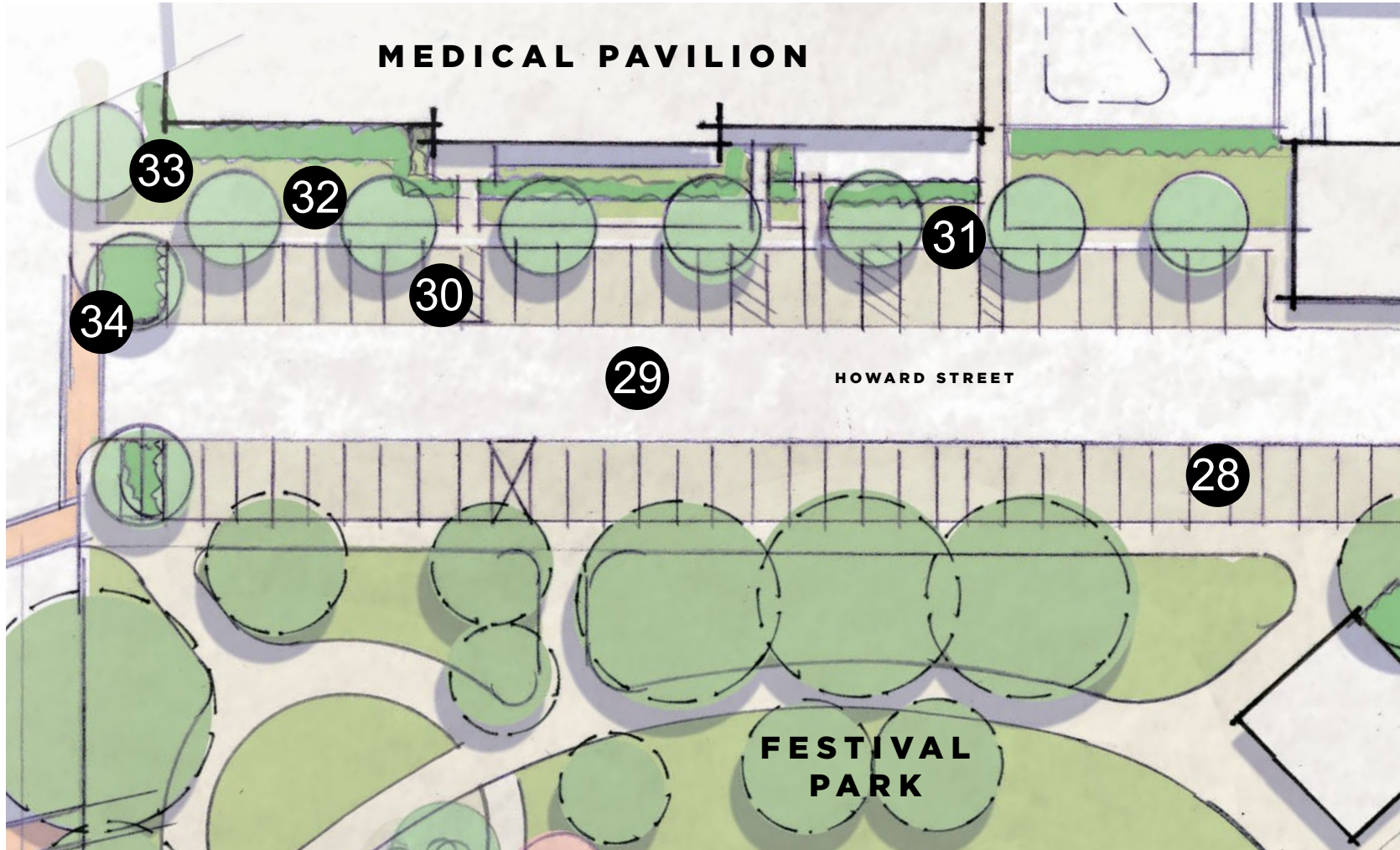
MEDICAL PAVILION/HOWARD STREET PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

- Improve street edge experience



Existing Space, Showing Opportunity Area

MEDICAL PAVILION/HOWARD STREET PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS



- 28 Existing 90-Degree Parking
- 29 Narrow Street
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▶ ACTIVATE THE STREETS

- Programmed events to draw people downtown
- Outdoor dining



▶ ACTIVATING VACANT STOREFRONTS

- Public art exhibitions
- Pop-up shops
- Community spaces
- Temporary Window Activation



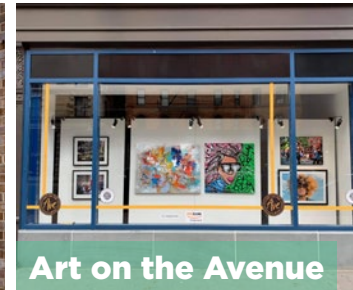
Zero Empty Spaces program



Twerton Community Space



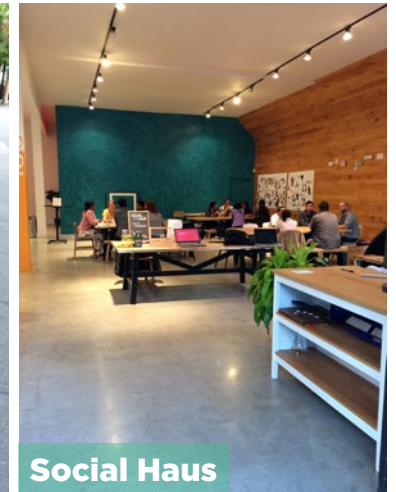
Baltimore Avenue



Art on the Avenue



Social Haus



Social Haus

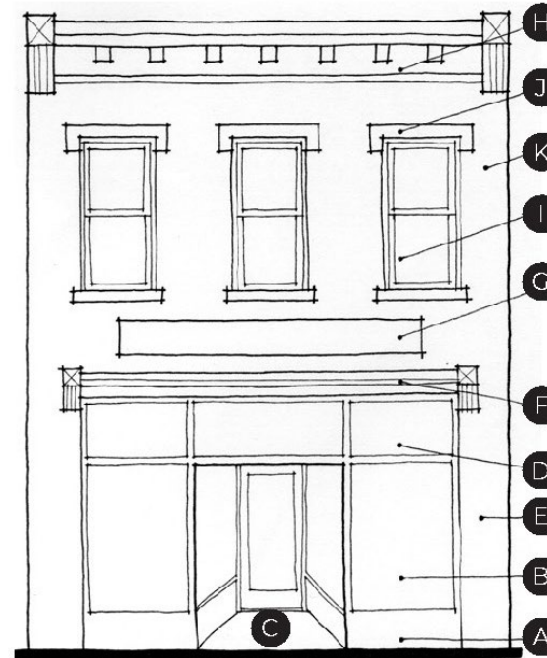
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS

FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

- Dollar-for-dollar matching grant assistance program
- Available for property owners to make exterior improvement to their commercial buildings
- Any commercially-zoned properties within the Aberdeen Sustainable Community Area

ELEMENTS OF THE TRADITIONAL FAÇADE



- A. Bulkhead (or "kick plate") as base to building fronts
- B. First floor display windows
- C. Recessed or covered central entrance areas or angled entrances on corners
- D. Transoms above entrance doors
- E. Masonry pier or building frame pilasters
- F. Storefront cornice
- G. Sign panel area
- H. Parapet walls with caps or cornices
- I. Vertical window patterns, shapes, window sills on second floor
- J. Window hoods (occasionally)
- K. Masonry wall

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS | *Strengths*



FACADE IMPROVEMENTS | Opportunities



DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

INVESTMENT & PROGRAMMING

BUSINESS ATTRACTION

- Service-oriented businesses
- “Third Places”



“2021 Cat A – My Third Place,” IFLA Europe Youth Competition, 2021

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Communication strategy
- Participation in the Chamber of Commerce
- Business cooperation and collaboration
- Expanded events



DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN AREA PLAN

DISCUSSION