



ULI Minnesota Regional Council of Mayors

CREATING COMPACT AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES BY TRANSFORMING UNDERUTILIZED LAND

Re-visioning the Greater Southdale District

Mic Johnson, FAIA
December 13, 2021



1956



2016

Greater Southdale District Plan + Design Experience Guidelines

Process + Timeline

Phase One (2015)

Participants

Greater Southdale Work Group
City of Edina [staff liaisons]

Deliverable:
**Greater Southdale
District Working
Principles**

Phase Two (2015 - 2017)

Participants

Greater Southdale Work Group
City of Edina [staff liaisons]
Architecture Field Office [lead consultant]

Deliverable:
**Greater Southdale
District Urban Design
Framework**

Phases Three and Four (2017 - 2019)

Participants

Greater Southdale Work Group
City of Edina [staff liaisons]
Architecture Field Office [lead consultant]
Comp Plan Consultant [coordination]

Deliverable:
**Greater Southdale District Plan and
Design Experience Guidelines**

Design Framework

Greater Southdale District Urban Design Vision

“ To shape the broader community experience through an urban design framework to achieve the creation of a Greater Southdale District **that connects seamlessly between the existing urban and residential fabric, maximizes development potential of each site, enhances walkability and livability, and encourages interaction** among current and future residents, businesses, and institutions.

Design Framework

Working Principles

Imagine Greater Southdale District evolution organized around human activity, with vibrant pedestrian-focused streets, beautiful parks and public spaces, and endearing and enduring buildings where:

- A sense of invention is expected from new introductions, both public and private, that build on the district’s spirit of innovation.
- Its role as regional and local center for living, shopping, working, learning, entertainment, hospitality, and medical services is enhanced.
- Other Edina neighborhoods, near and distant, benefit from investment in the district and the evolution of each parcel.
- Investment in the public realm is reflected by a commensurate investment as private parcels evolve.
- Public and civic services accommodate a growing and diverse district and community population.
- Transitions at the district’s edges recognize compatible use and scale and neighboring uses are perpetuated on their terms

Make the Greater Southdale District the model of healthy urban living where:

- The district’s form encourages healthy living habits, particularly through walking.
- The design of buildings and spaces, both public and private, attract the widest possible range of the district’s population.
- Storm water is a valued resource by making it part of the experience of the district.
- Emissions and pollutants are mitigated through the introduction of significant tree canopy and limiting idling vehicles on streets, creating a more inviting walking experience along the district’s streets.
- Sustainable solutions result in a stock of healthy buildings that compel healthy activity for their occupants.
- Public features mitigate impacts of non-local infrastructure, especially to contain the ill effects of adjacent highways.

Invent sustainable infrastructure matching the district’s sense of innovation where:

- Mutually-supportive and forward-looking infrastructure is the norm, looking beyond baseline utilitarian functions of a single site to create a broadly supportive district infrastructure.
- Infrastructure aligns with the creation of public space in the district, sharing space and resources that result in compelling, attractive and high-functioning civic spaces.
- Care for and perpetuation of public infrastructure anticipates daily human activity in all seasons.

Create neighborhoods of activity within the broader mixed-use patterns of the district where:

- Logical boundaries based on reasonable walking distances are established, with major streets as seams binding the activity of each side into an inviting and accessible public space.
- Focal points of public activity are found within each neighborhood.
- Key community services and facilities are present and help define the fabric of the District.
- Core services are delivered within each neighborhood or in an adjacent neighborhood.
- Neighborhoods are linked along street and park corridors highlighted by visible human activity.

Offer a spectrum of living opportunities integrated through the district where:

- Housing orients to a variety of income levels and household types.
- Ownership options constitute a significant portion of the living opportunities in the area.
- “Missing Middle” living opportunities (duplexes, triplexes, side-by-side or stacked townhouses, rowhouses with multiple units, and small buildings with four to six apartments) allow a broader range of Edina residents, workforce members and others to consider relocating to the District.
- Buildings for living strongly orient to the public spaces of each neighborhood within the District.

Expand significantly the number and extent of parks and public spaces where:

- Opportunities for the introduction of another large signature public space complement the programming and activities available at Centennial Lakes.
- An extension of the Promenade to Strachauer Park links neighbors and activity to the district.
- New promenades on the East and West edges of the District create movement corridors for pedestrians and bicyclists and serve as vital places for a transition between neighborhoods and the District.
- Parks and publicly accessible spaces are clearly visible and directly accessible from the public realm.
- Spaces for visible human activity and occupation, either public or publicly accessible, occur on every block.

Encourage district evolution based on incremental change and the creation of a great pedestrian experience where:

- A basic framework of streets and blocks encourages pedestrian activity and well-considered buildings.
- A rich variety of public or publicly accessible spaces are woven into the experience of the district.
- Sites and buildings support a pedestrian experience first, with storage of cars not a focus.
- Development on each site links to adjacent streets and to neighboring sites to create continuous, safe, and inviting pedestrian experiences.

Build (or plan for) a street network encouraging pedestrian movement across and through the district where:

- Walkable block lengths (200 feet) are the baseline framework for development.
- Enhanced and more frequent street crossings facilitates pedestrian movement.
- Wide landscaped boulevards encourage pedestrian activity and create a distinct district signature.
- Community corridors within and extending well beyond the district enhance bicycle and pedestrian access while accommodating vehicle traffic on pedestrian terms.

Imagine transportation in the district where:

- Cars are not the focus and streets accommodate more than vehicles.
- Major streets balance access and mobility.
- Some streets serve as community corridors, linking to other community destinations with features that allow for movement in addition to cars.
- Transit is a baseline service, both within the district and to non-Edina locations.
- Transportation recognizes trends, including autonomous vehicles and a time when parking structures aren’t needed for public parking

Expect the delivery of high quality, well-designed buildings and sites where:

- Spaces on sites are considered for people first, including connections between sites; then the ways structures are placed; and then places to store cars are found.
- Visible human activity is prominent and integrated at every site.
- People are brought to the streets via major building entries oriented to major streets.
- Storm water remains visible as an amenity, allowing it to become a central part of the experience of each site.

Frame development guidance for evolution where:

- Development review includes the desired experience, not solely quantitative thresholds.
- Accommodation of adjacent and near parcels are considered in the evolution of a single parcel.
- Early reviews focus on ideas, patterns and relationships, not specific and engineered plans, with that part of the review process based in dialog, not presentation and reaction.
- Demonstrations of quality and especially quality from a long-term perspective are baseline considerations.
- Collaboration leads to a superior result, with the community’s expectations clearly framed as part of the deliberation.
- Flexibility is not a right, but rather the natural by-product of a fair exchange for benefits, collaboration, and quality in development.

Design Framework

The Vision

Accessible

Walkable

Human-Scaled

Architecturally Varied

Mixed-Use

Family Friendly

Green

Summer City

Winter City

Connected

A Destination



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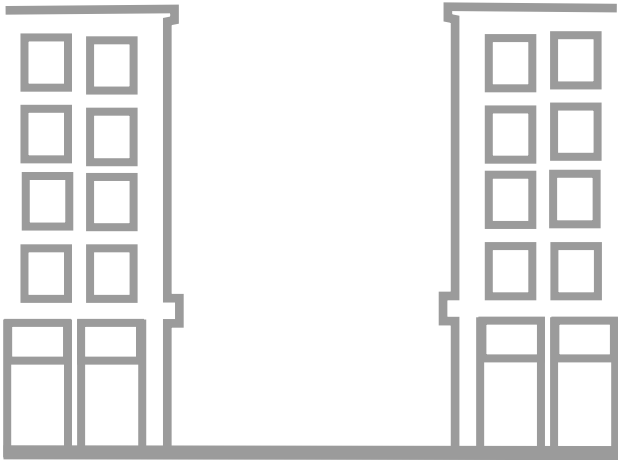


Greater Southdale District Urban Design

**DESIGN FRAMEWORK AND
PUBLIC REALM EXPERIENCE.**

Design Framework

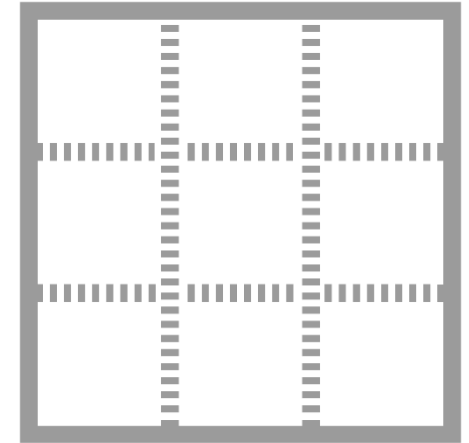
Foundational Elements



The Street Room



The Grid



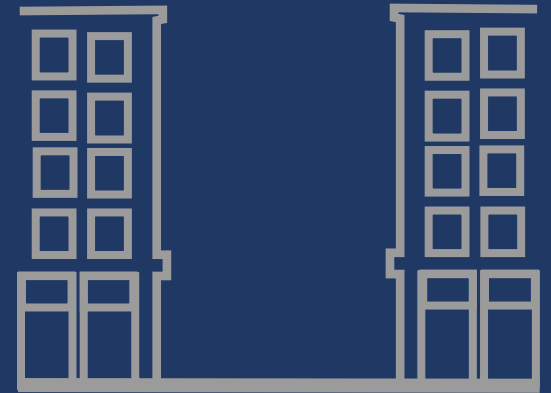
The Super Block

Design Framework

The Street Room

“The **physical qualities of each street room’s** height and width, shaped by the architecture of the District, **informs the design of the public realm** on streets that **connect and bind the human experience** of the district.

These physical characteristics also **shape the experience of transition** – transitions from existing single-family neighborhoods, and transitions into and out of the district.



Design Framework

The Street Room



Design Framework

The Street Room



Design Framework

The Grid

“The virtue of the grid is precisely in being a conceptual formal order, non-hierarchical, neutral, until it is infused with specific context. The grid is both free of picturesque content and of ideological posturing. **It is repetitive, homogeneous, even redundant.**” -Spiro Kostoff



*In the context of the Design Experience Guidelines,
this means “**democratic.**”*

Design Framework

The Grid



Pearl District Portland
260 Feet - Center Line of Street to Center Line of Street



Manhattan Cross Town Blocks
260 X 680 Feet - Center Line of Street to Center Line of Street

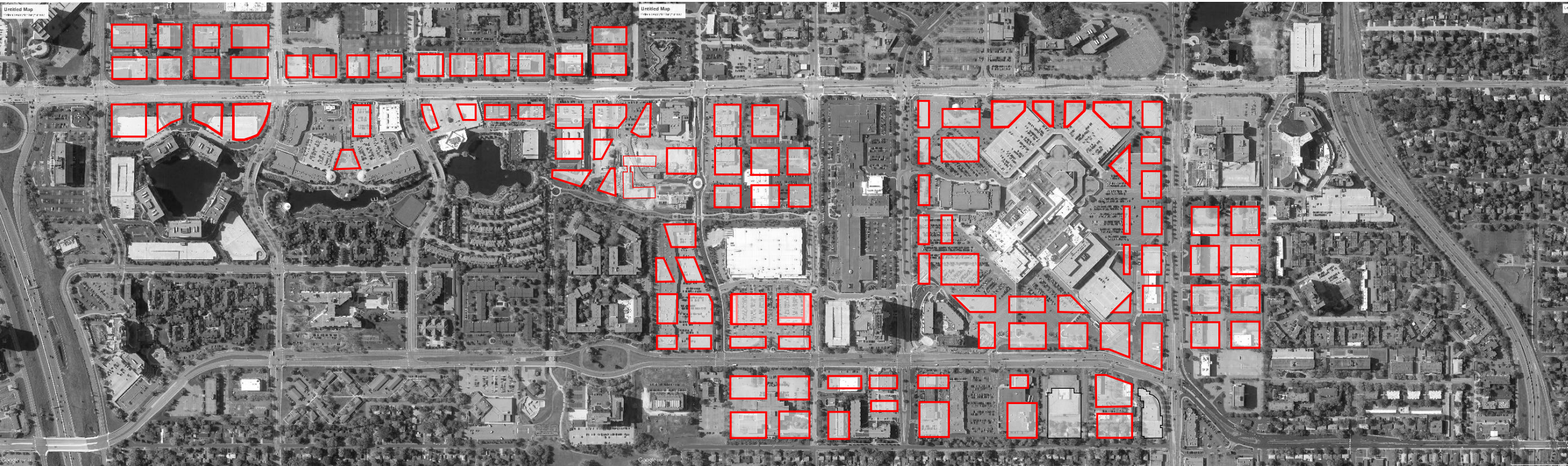


Downtown Minneapolis
410 Feet - Center Line of Street to Center Line of Street



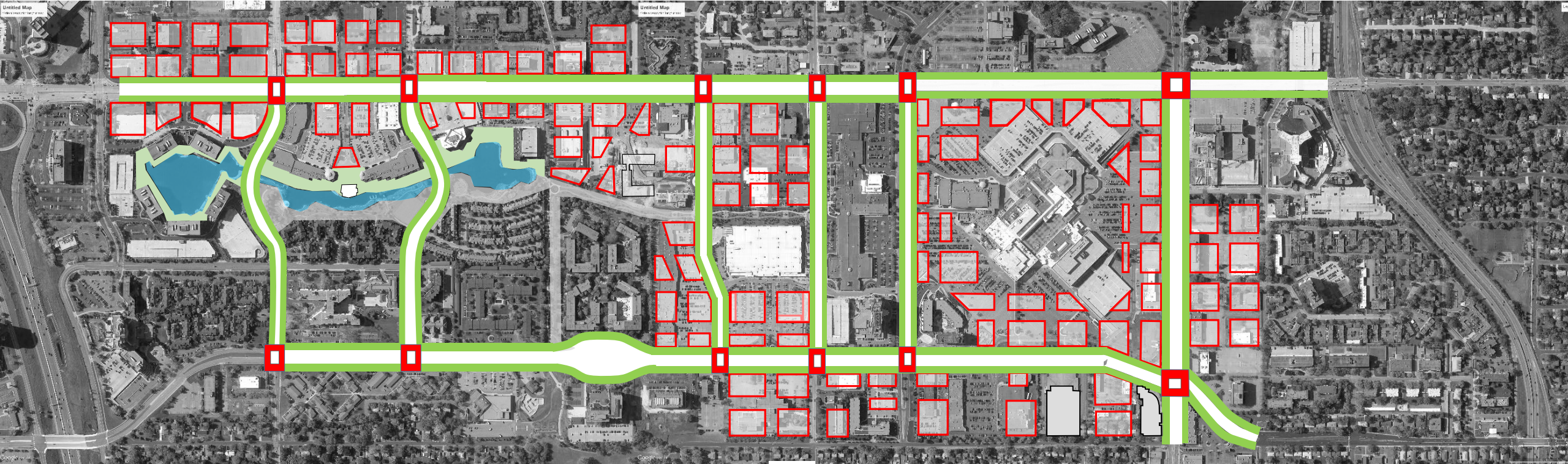
Design Framework

The 200 x 200 Foot Grid



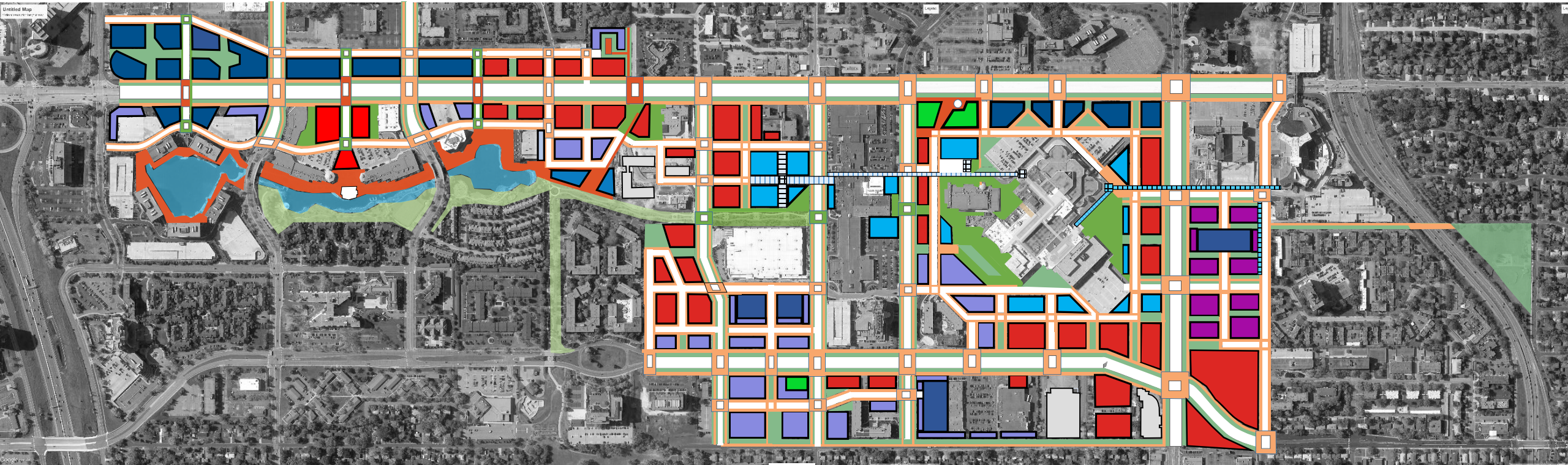
Design Framework

Primary Streets, Intersections and Super Blocks



Design Framework

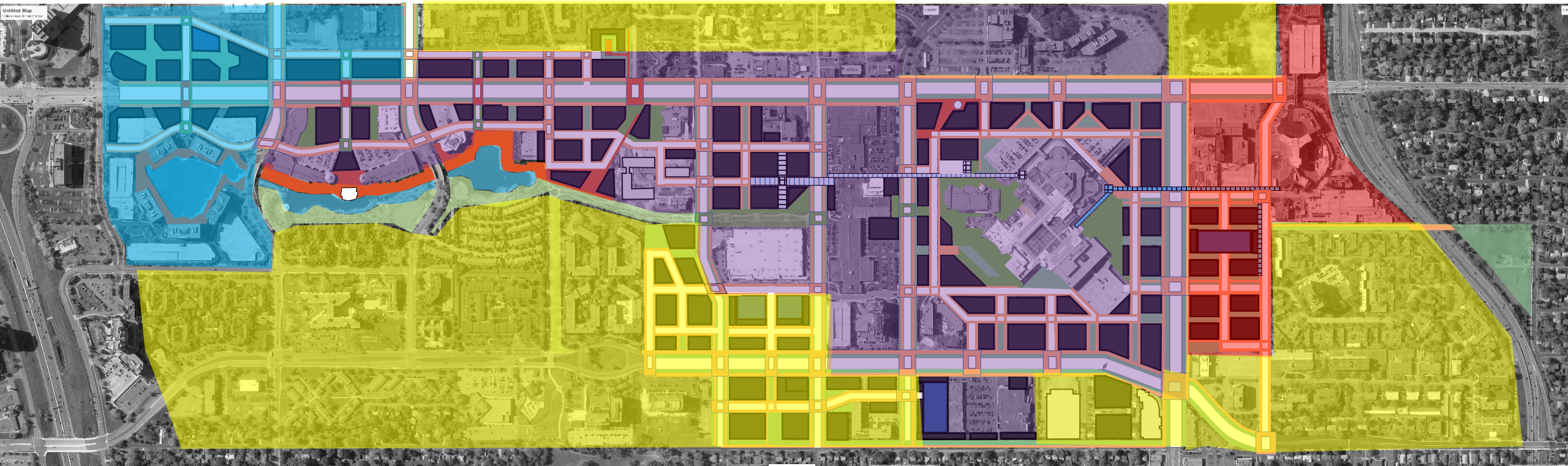
Building Use Program



- Office
- Mixed Use with emphasis on housing
- Mixed-Use with emphasis on commercial, office, retail
- Residential
- Institutional/Healthcare
- Civic
- District Parking

Design Framework

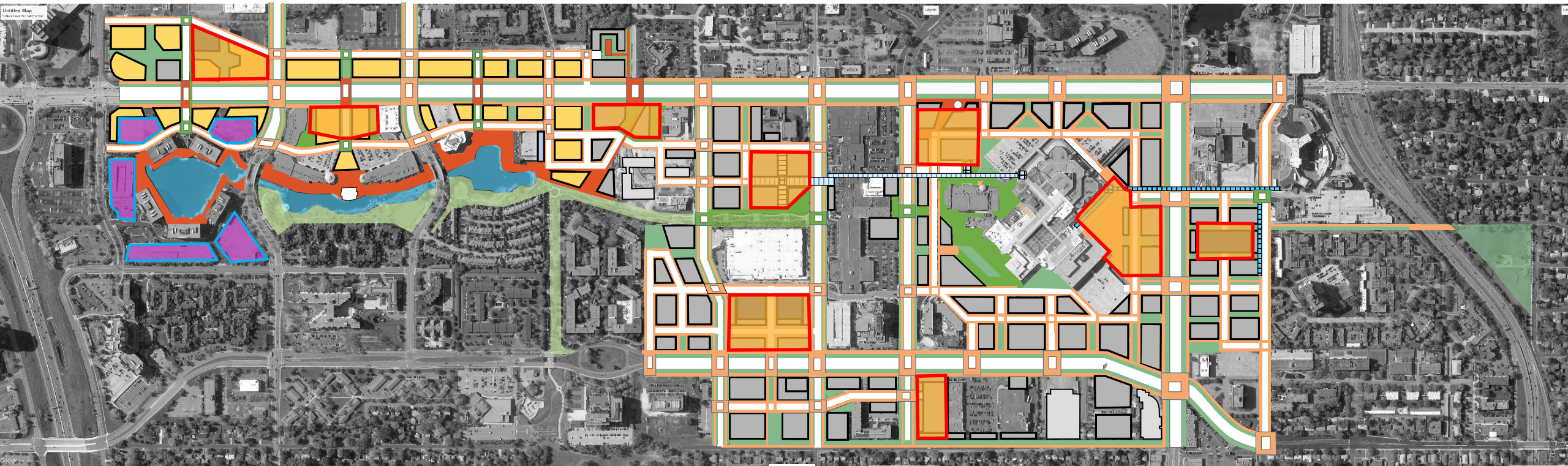
Program Zones





- Office
- Residential/ Mixed Use with emphasis on housing
- Mixed-Use with emphasis on commercial, office, retail
- Institutional/Healthcare

Design Framework

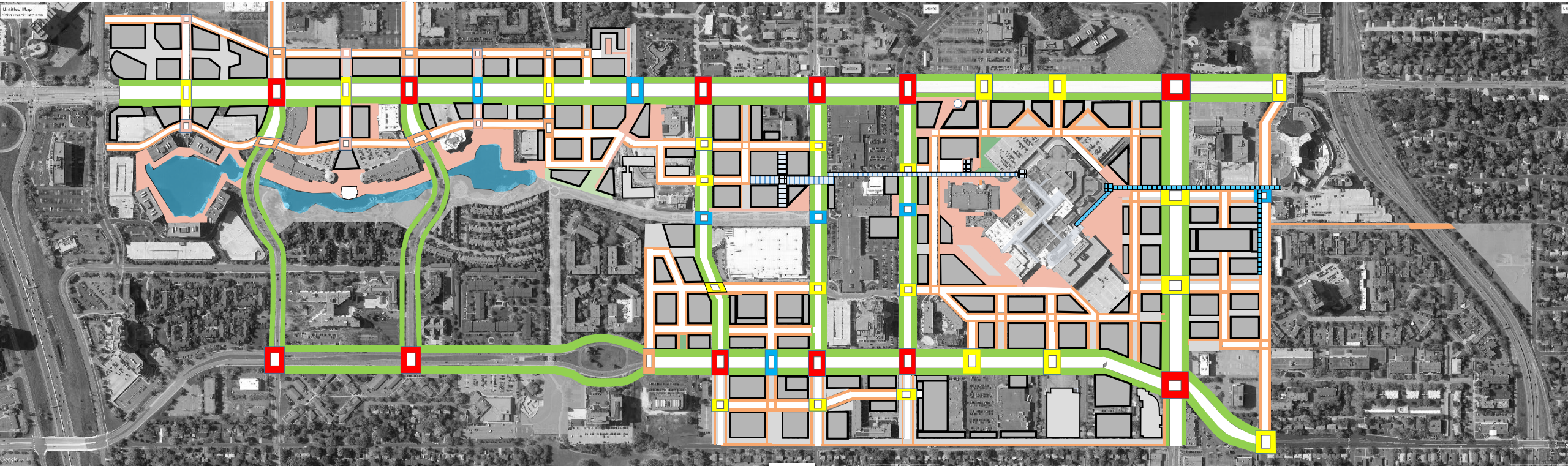
District Parking



-  Existing District Parking
-  Future District Parking

Design Framework

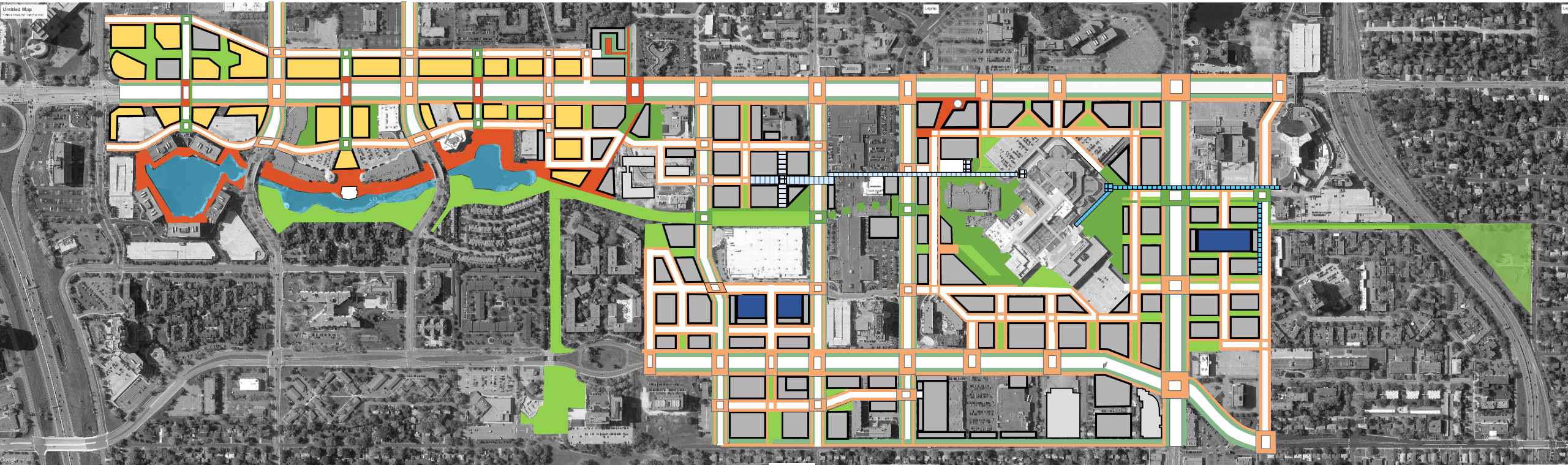
New Street + Pedestrian Intersections



- Existing pedestrian/bike/vehicular intersections
- New pedestrian/bike/vehicular intersections
- New pedestrian/bike intersections

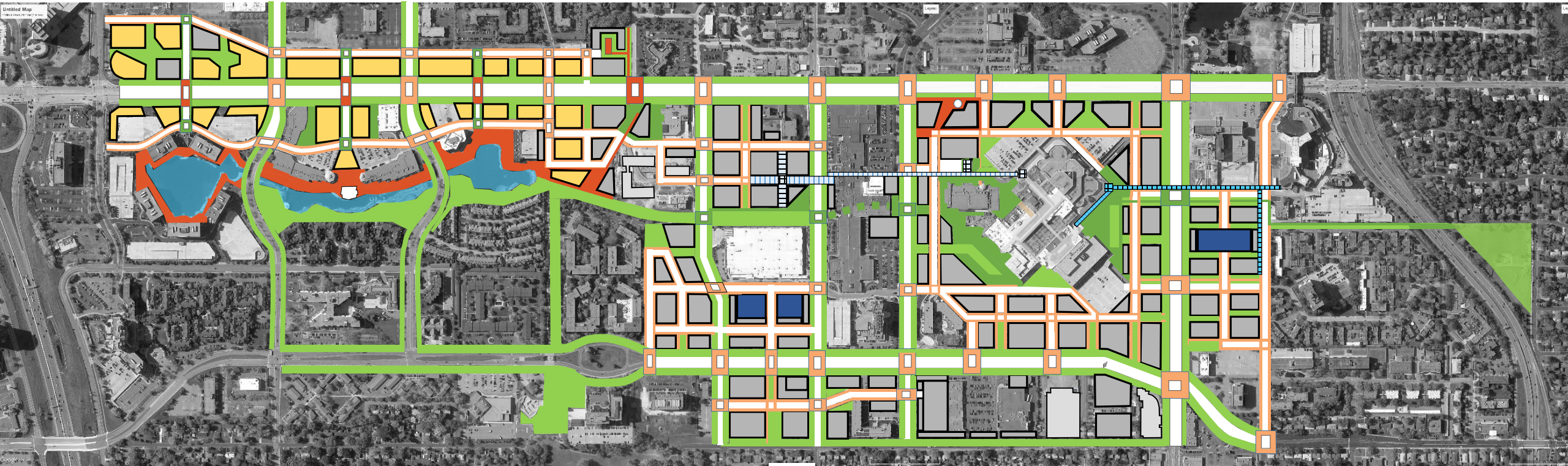
Design Framework

Parks, Plazas, Connections + Open Space



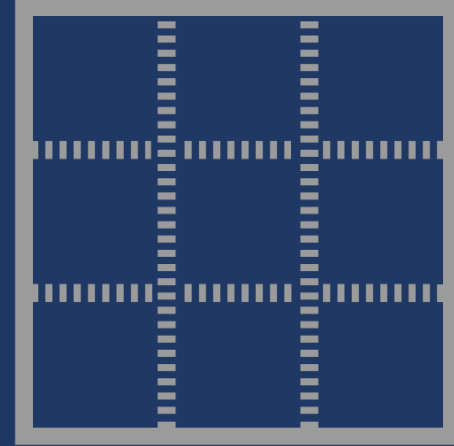
Design Framework

Open Space: Green



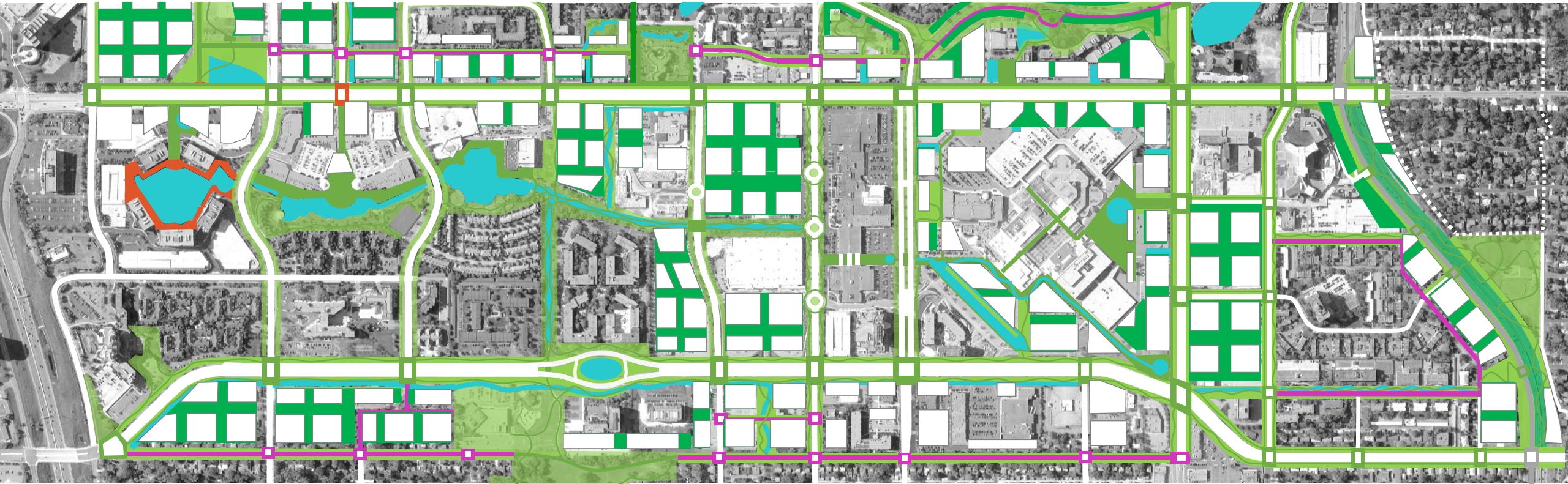
Defining The Super Block

“ **The space between buildings becomes an important asset** in shaping the overall sense of landscape and continuity of public realm throughout the district. Because the super blocks have primary responsibility for serving the vehicular traffic needs of the district, access to the smaller blocks for drop-off, service and parking can be planned to stay at the perimeter of a block, allowing for the **spaces between blocks to be used for a network of green spaces that support the health and wellbeing of the community.**



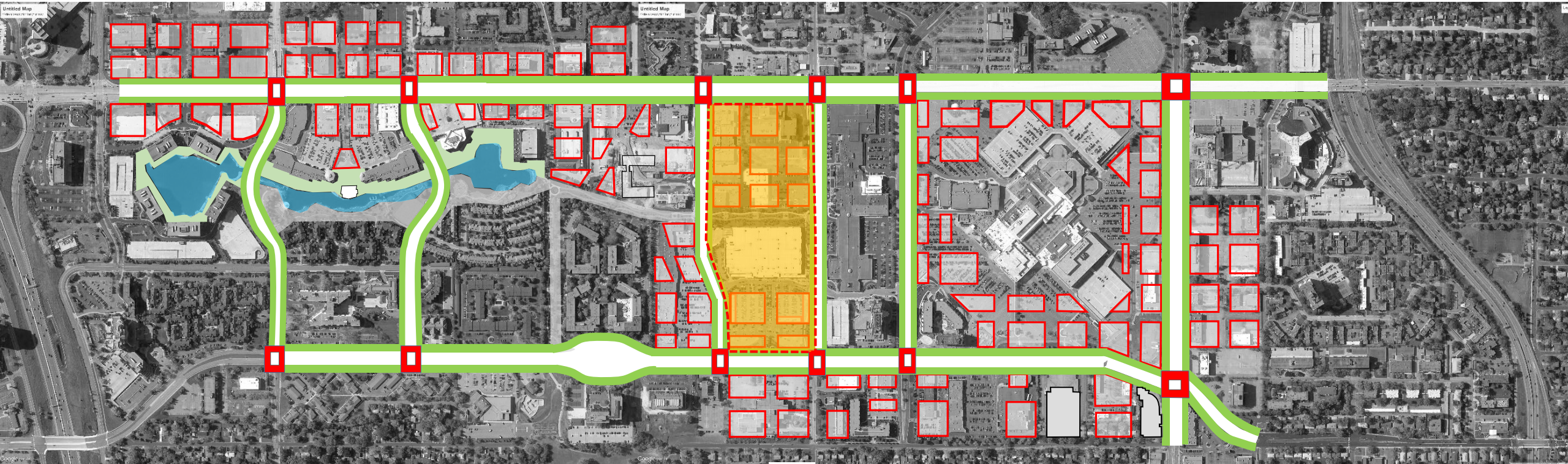
Design Framework

The Space Between Buildings



Design Framework

Super Block Test Site



The Promenade: 2.7 acres
Target Store: 7.0 acres
Target Parking: 7.0 acres
Total Site: 31.8 acres

Design Framework | Super Blocks

Boundaries for Development



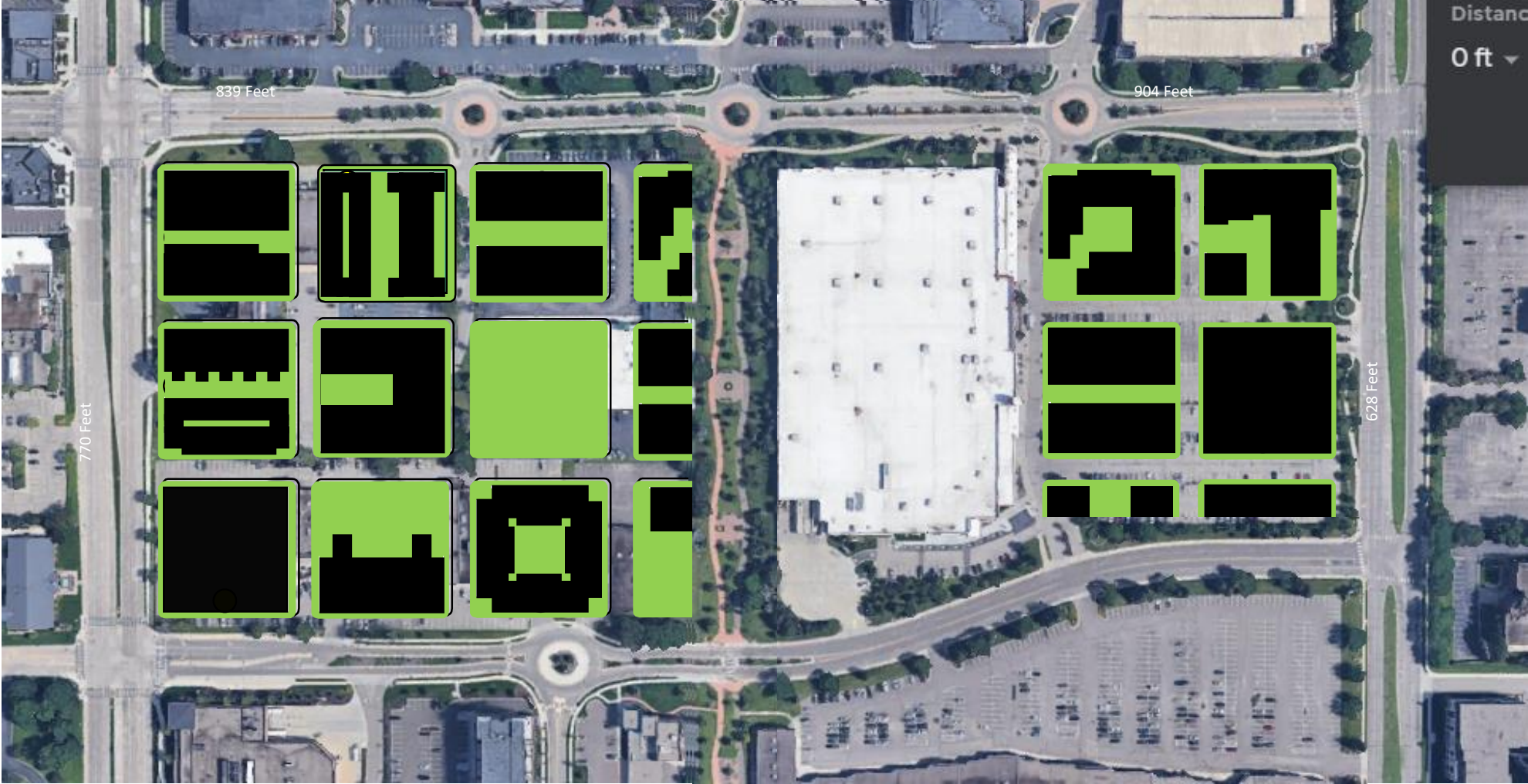
Design Framework | Super Blocks

Primary Assets



Design Framework | Super Blocks

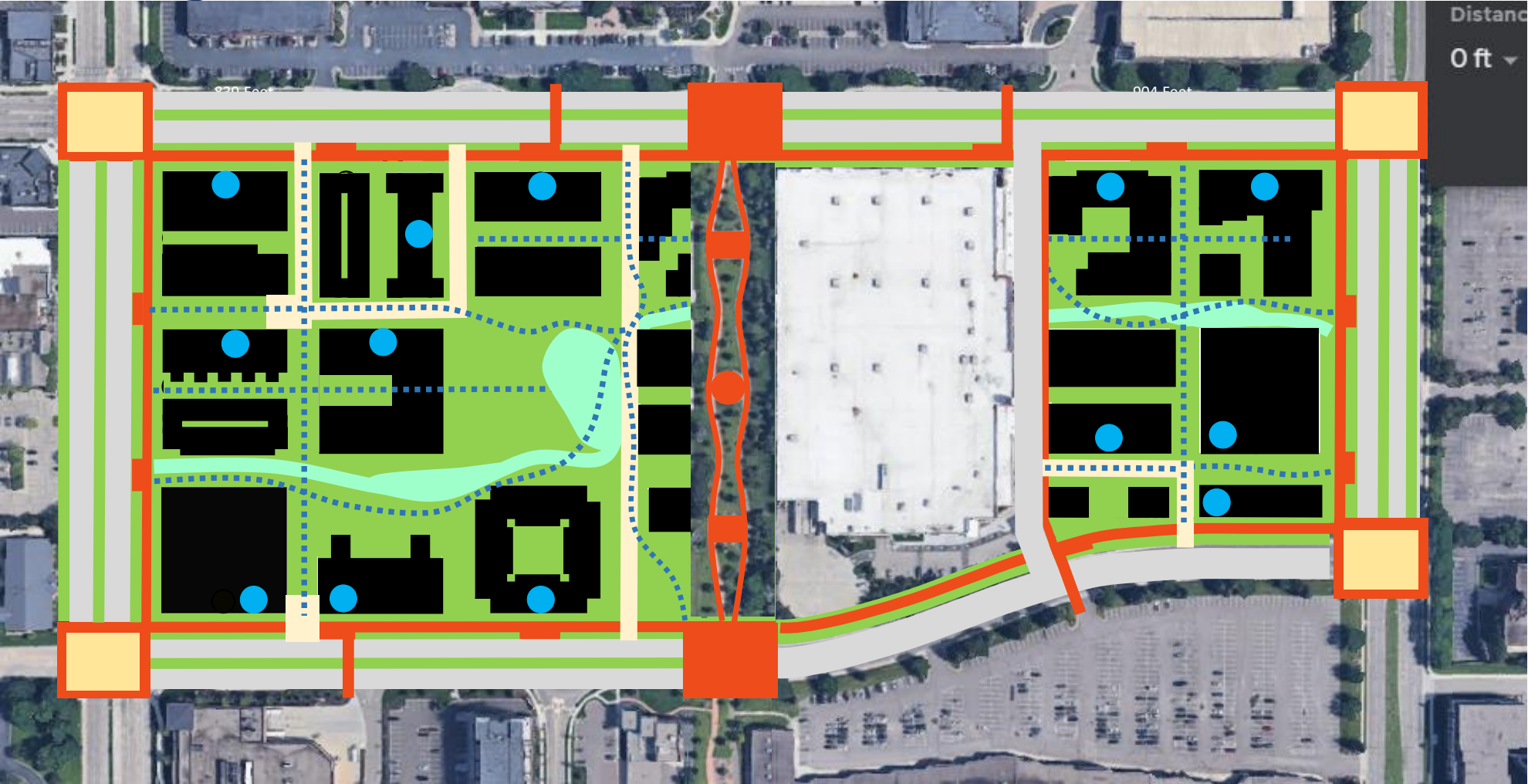
Building Overlay



Design Framework | Super Blocks

Building Overlay Characteristics

-  Primary Pedestrian Crossing
-  Primary 4 Lane Boulevard
-  Building Drop Off & Access to Below Grade Parking
-  Building Access by Woonerf Style Street
-  Landscape
-  Boulevard Cross Walks
-  Pedestrian Pathways
-  Waterways
-  Buildings



Design Framework | Super Blocks

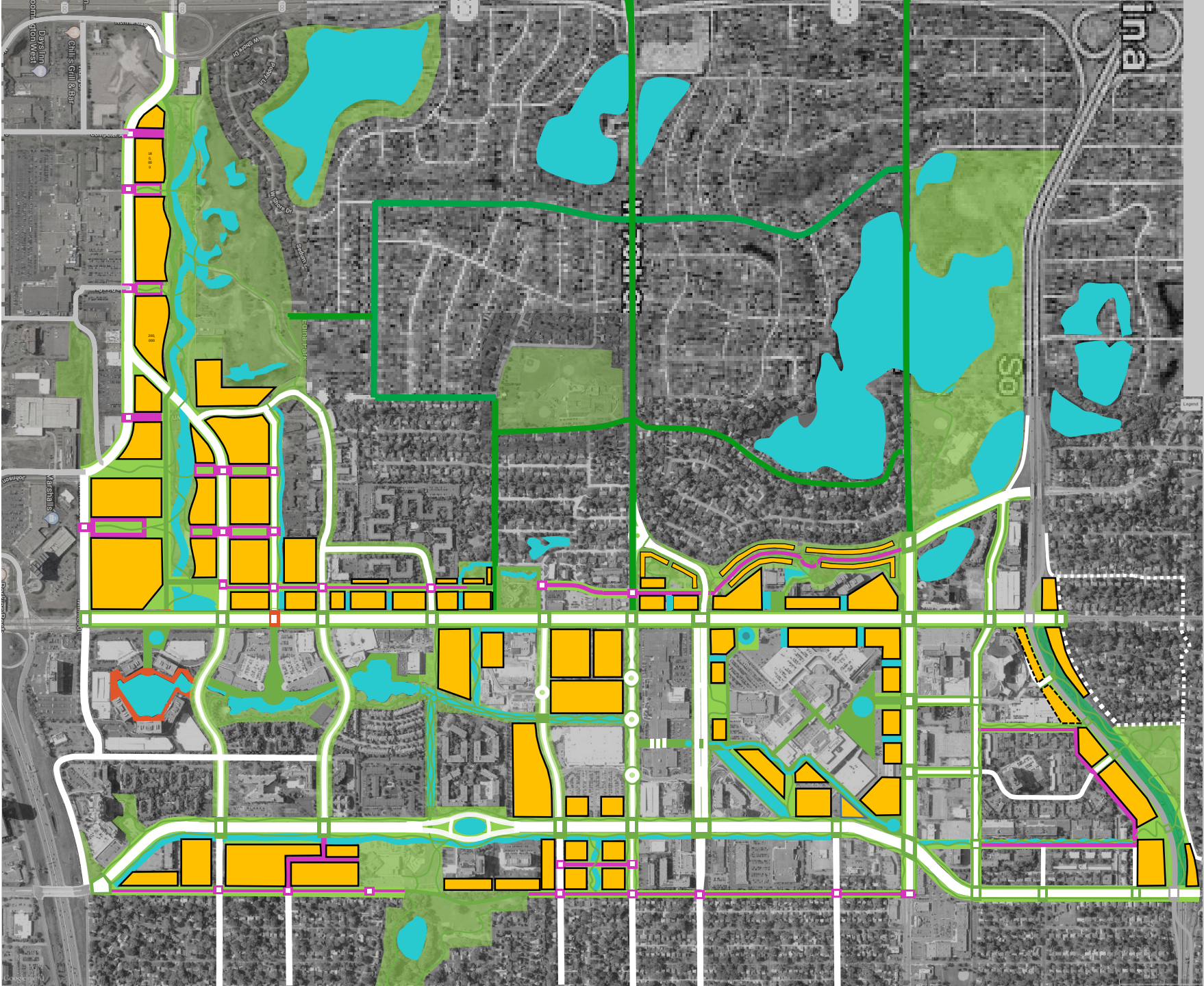
7 Things to Remember

1. **Creating the compact community begins with the redefining avenues**, boulevards and streets and their relationship to the natural environment.
2. **Every Super Block is a small community**, meaning that it has all the attributes a community needs.
3. **The space between blocks within the Super Block defines the community's resilience, environmentally and socially.**
4. **The shape of blocks within the Super Block reflect its context**, to be shaped by it but also must be held to the standards that make all buildings respectful of the tenets of the street room.
5. **All parking is below grade.** The scale of the development must be in direct relationship to the infrastructure that is below grade to include daily services, sustainable systems serving the building above, and interconnected services such as the power grid, sewer and water.
6. **All parking within the Super Block should also be connected to adjacent blocks** to manage fluxing parking needs within the district.
7. **All Super Blocks are not equal** but they share common streets that are also the life blood of the city. Each of these shared streets make the compact community accessible and scalable to human needs.



Greater Southdale District Urban Design
**DESIGN EXPERIENCE
GUIDELINES.**

**New Development Opportunities
based on
Experience**



View Corridors and Gateways



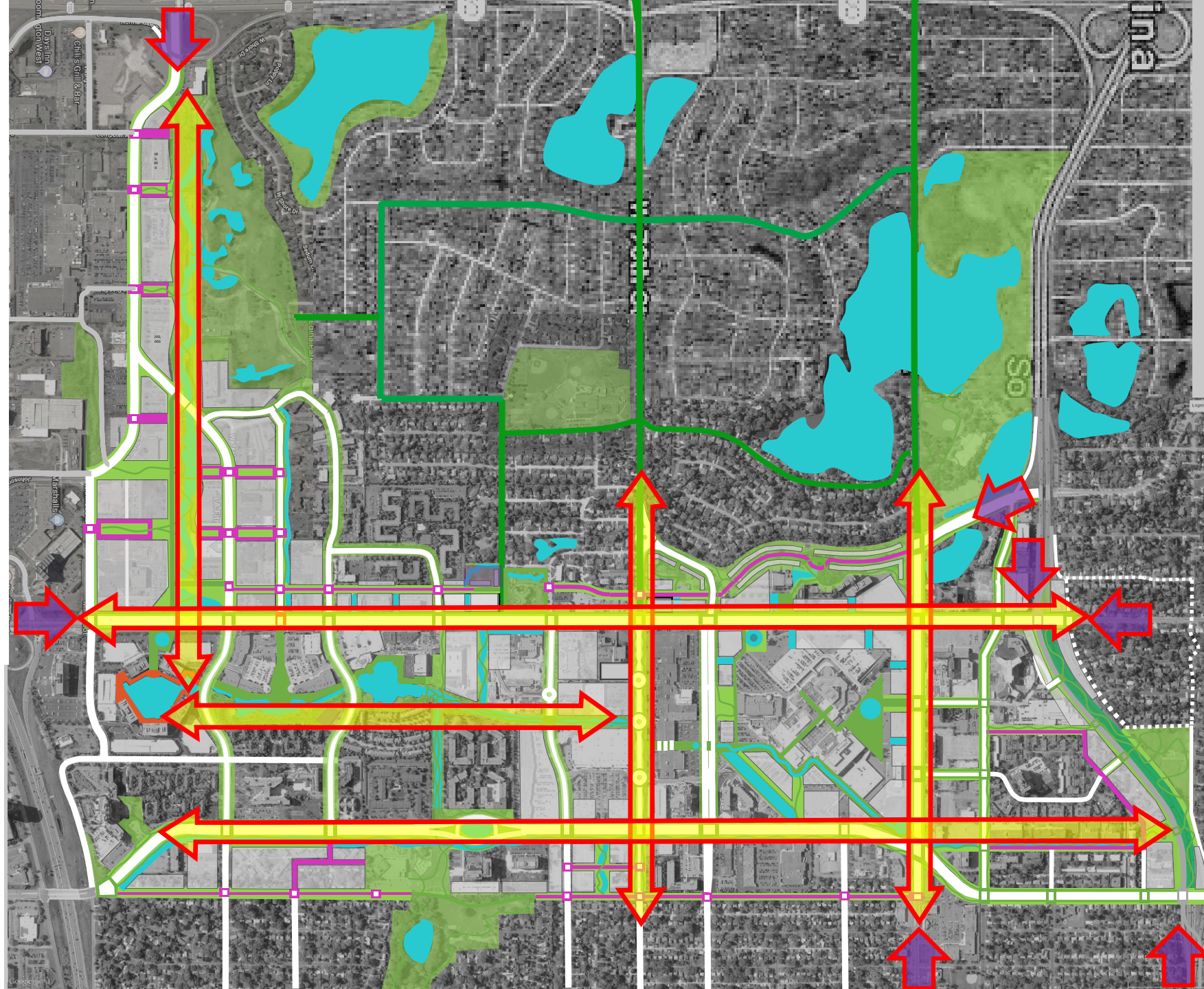
Gateways

- France and W78th
- France and Hwy 62
- Exit at Hwy 100 and W78th
- Exit at Hwy 62 at Valley View, France and Xerxes
- W 66th and York



View Corridors

- France Avenue
- York Avenue to Hwy 62
- W 66th
- W 70th to the Cornelia Neighborhood to the west and Richfield to the east
- Centennial Lakes to Fred Richards Park
- Centennial Lakes to the Promenade
- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Lined Parking Structures



Building Scale **Transition Zones**

Single Family Houses

1 to 3 Story

- Townhouses
- Row Houses

Multistory Buildings

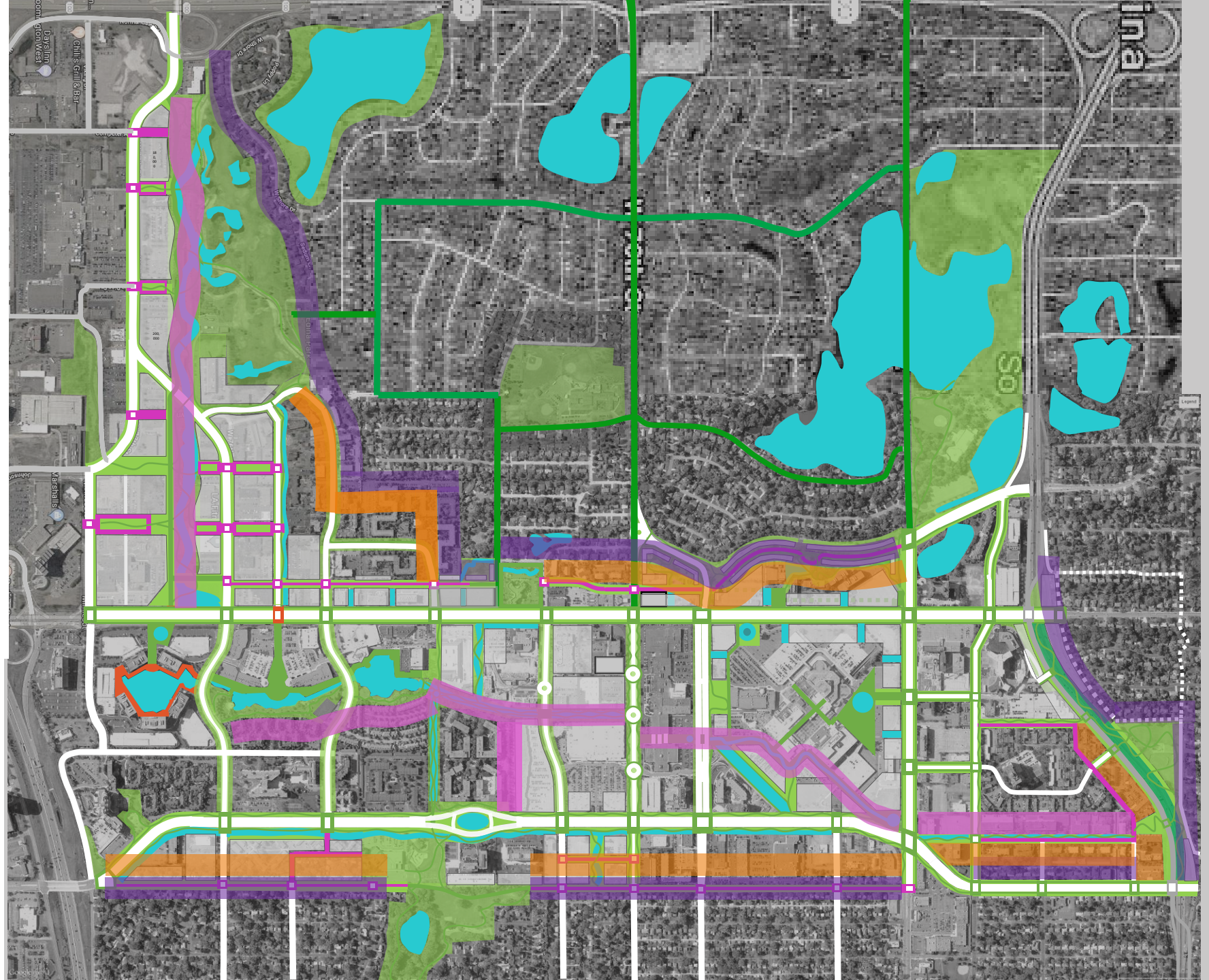
3 to 6 Story

- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Lined Parking Structures

Signature Public Realm Pedestrian Connections

3 Story Podium with 30 foot setback above

- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Commercial
- Lined Parking Structures



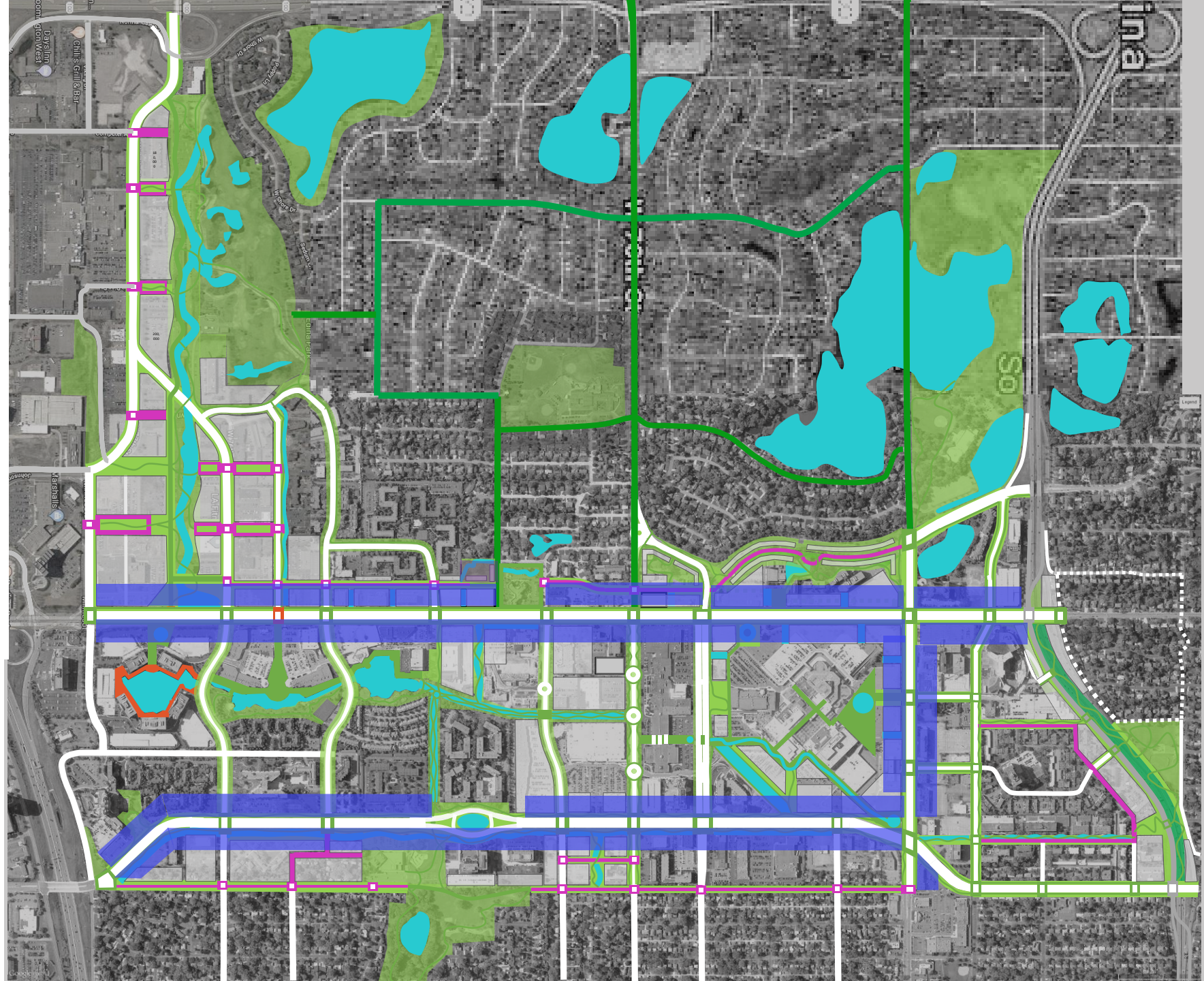
Building Scale “The Boulevards”

■ France Avenue
■ York Avenue
■ W 66th Street

Minimum building height 8 stories with 30 foot setback for buildings above 8 stories.


(Concrete or heavy timber structural frame)

- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Commercial
- Lined Parking Structures



-

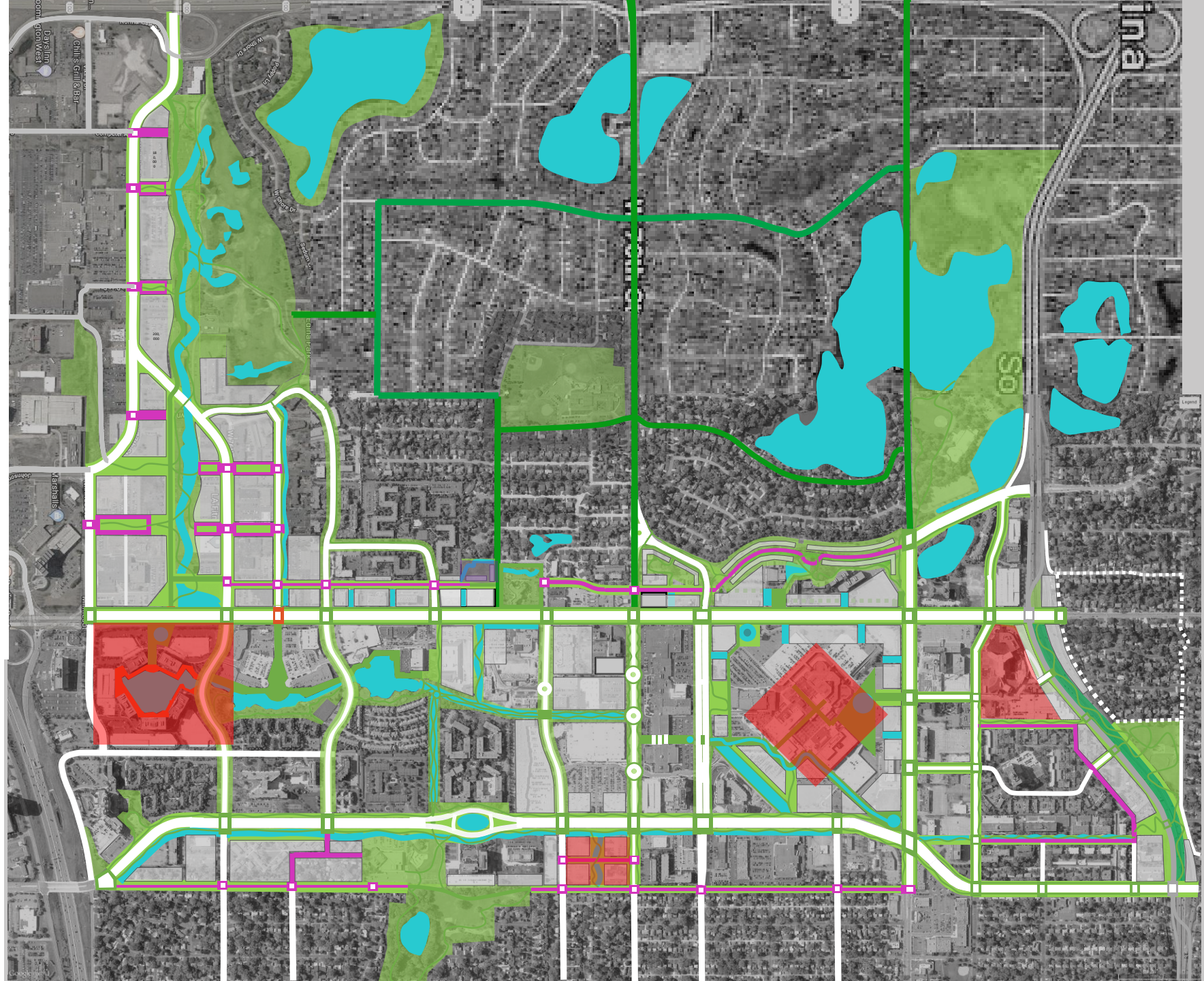
Building Scale **Assets**

 **Centennial Lakes**
6 Story Buildings
surrounding signature
Pedestrian Realm and Lake

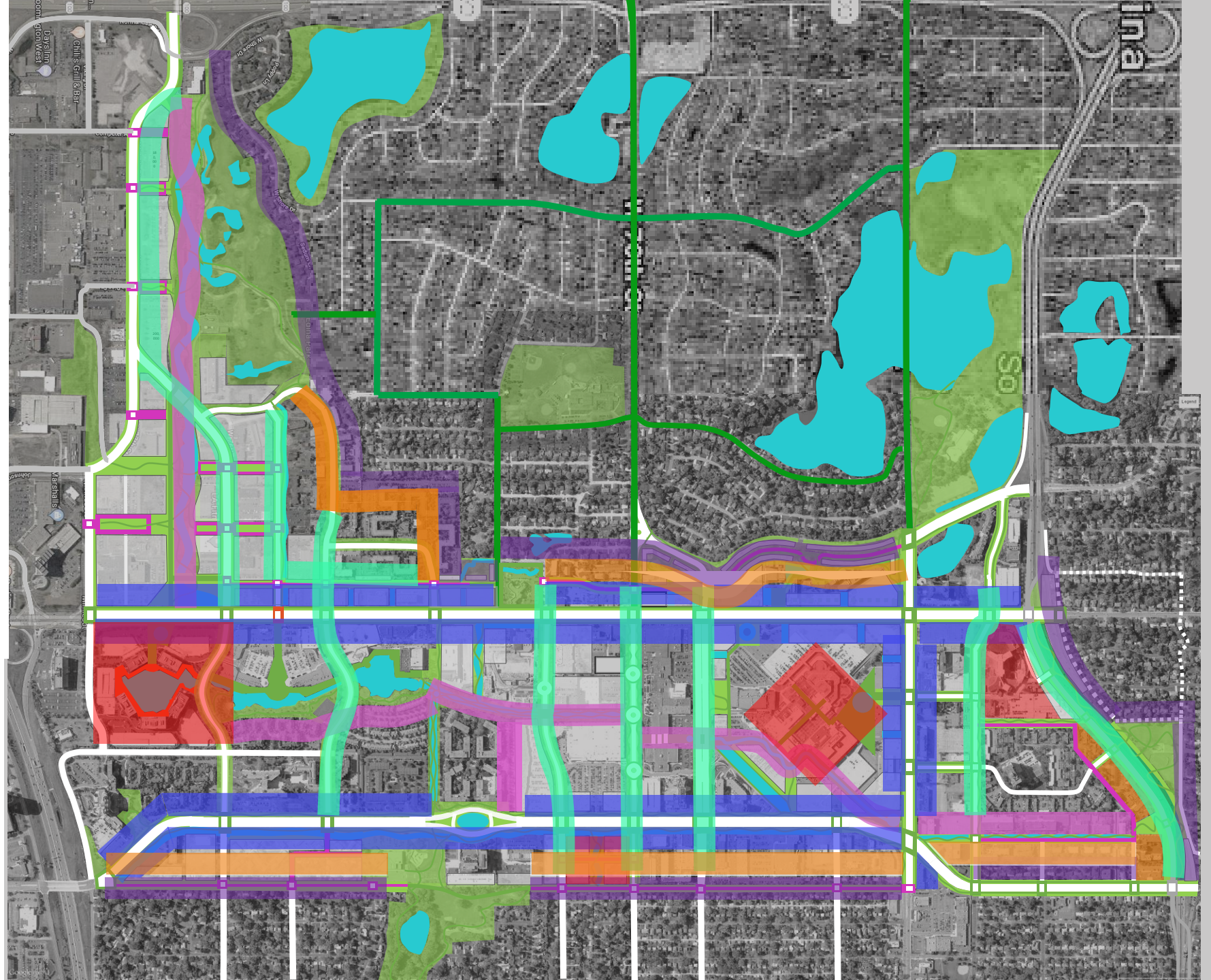
Southdale Center
Iconic 2 story mall with
diverse signature retailers
still remembered today.
There were originally no
parking structures and
everybody entered the mall
on the ground level –
creating an active Public
Realm.

Fairview Hospital
A part of the original
development idea of
shopping, everything I need
and healthcare everything I
need to stay healthy.

**Hennepin County
Library**
A community learning asset.



Building Scale **Composite**

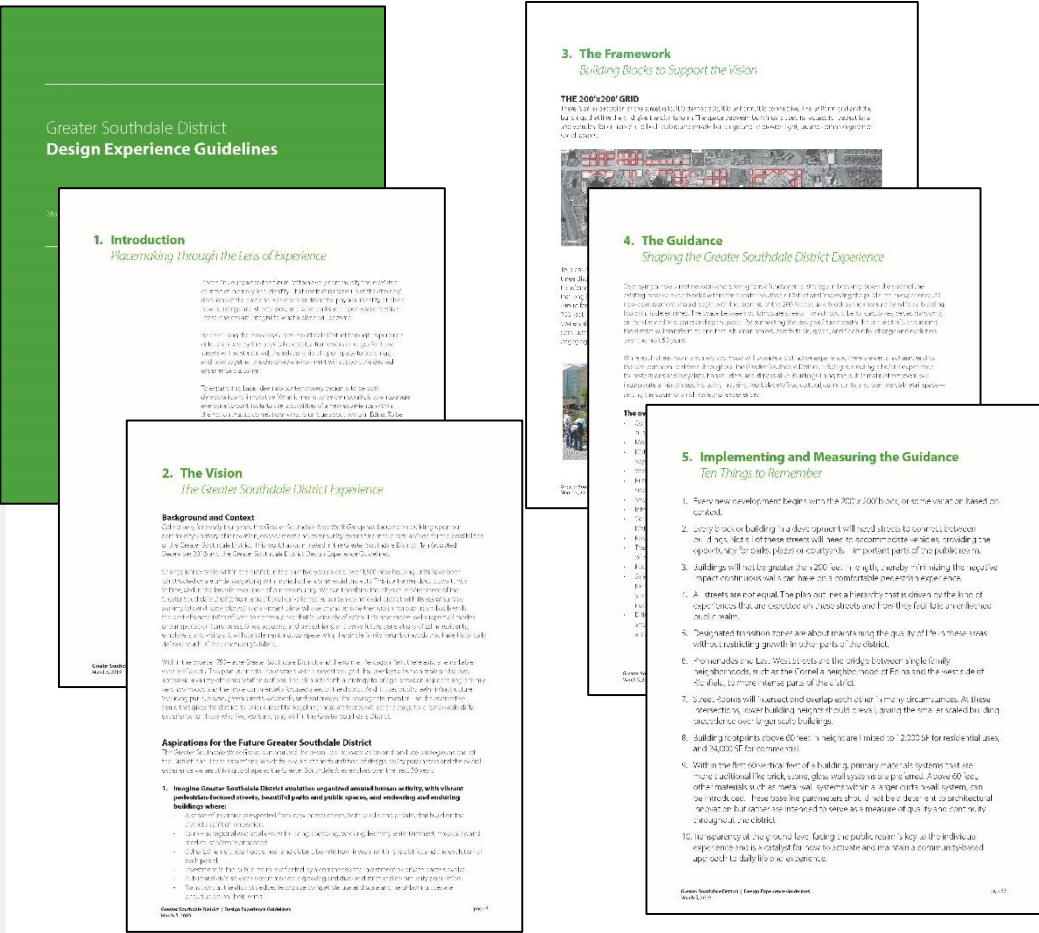


Greater Southdale District

Design Experience Guidelines Intent

- Support the **public realm**
 - Create **equity** throughout
 - Respect the larger **context**
 - Express the **collective nature of community**
 - Attend to all **street rooms** equally
 - **Represent the whole** in all actions
 - Put the **collective before individual expression**
- Architecture Field Office, 2018

Act to support the next 200 years of the Edina community.



Public Realm Experience

Connections

- **Connect intersections, incorporate street typologies, and incorporate green systems.**
- All new development shall support the goal of connections, both north/south and east/west.
- **New north-south promenades sensitively transition to single family residential neighborhoods.**
- Open up Centennial Lakes to France Avenue.
- **Manage stormwater as an amenity.**
- New parks and plazas shall be either public or publicly-accessible, not private, in nature.
- **Increase number of sidewalks, pathways, and smaller parks/gardens to better address mobility. Incorporate places to sit.**
- New trees shall be provided to enhance the continuity of pedestrian experience.



Public Realm Experience

Street Room Form

- Building setbacks are to be considered as a part of the overall landscape and public amenities, and should be designed to create a continuous pedestrian experience along major corridors.
- Every new development should connect all publicly-accessible spaces such as pocket parks, courtyards and plazas to the street room typology.
- **Along all major corridors, 75% of the face of building walls need to be at the setback line to support the creation of a ‘street room.’**
- **All new building facades in the district must have 75% percent transparency at the ground level.**
- **All building facades are prime (including parking) and must be designed accordingly.** There is no back side of a building.
- **All facades on the first vertical 60 feet of a building (above grade) shall use natural materials facing the public realm.**
- **No building façade can be longer than 200’.**
- Above 50-60 feet, glass, precast panels with brick/tile are the preferred material palette. Metal panel can be used as a secondary part of a wall system.



Public Realm Experience

Building Form

- Ground floors should have a minimum ceiling height of 20' for flexibility.
- **Above-grade parking structures should be lined with programmable public realm space** and designed with flat floorplates to allow for future conversion.
- Within 50-60 feet of the ground it is preferred that rooftops be programmed to accommodate human activities.
- Rooftops facing the Promenades must be functional and programmed.
- **All development services, including rooftop mechanical systems, should be located within buildings and should not be visible from the public realm, or semi-private and private areas of the development.** The exception are rooftop-mounted solar panels.
- **Building footprints above 60 feet should be no greater than 12,000 SF for residential use and 24,000 SF for commercial space.**
- Design buildings for flexibility and adaptability in the future, including use of structural systems that will allow a building's function to fundamentally change, e.g. concrete or heavy timber.



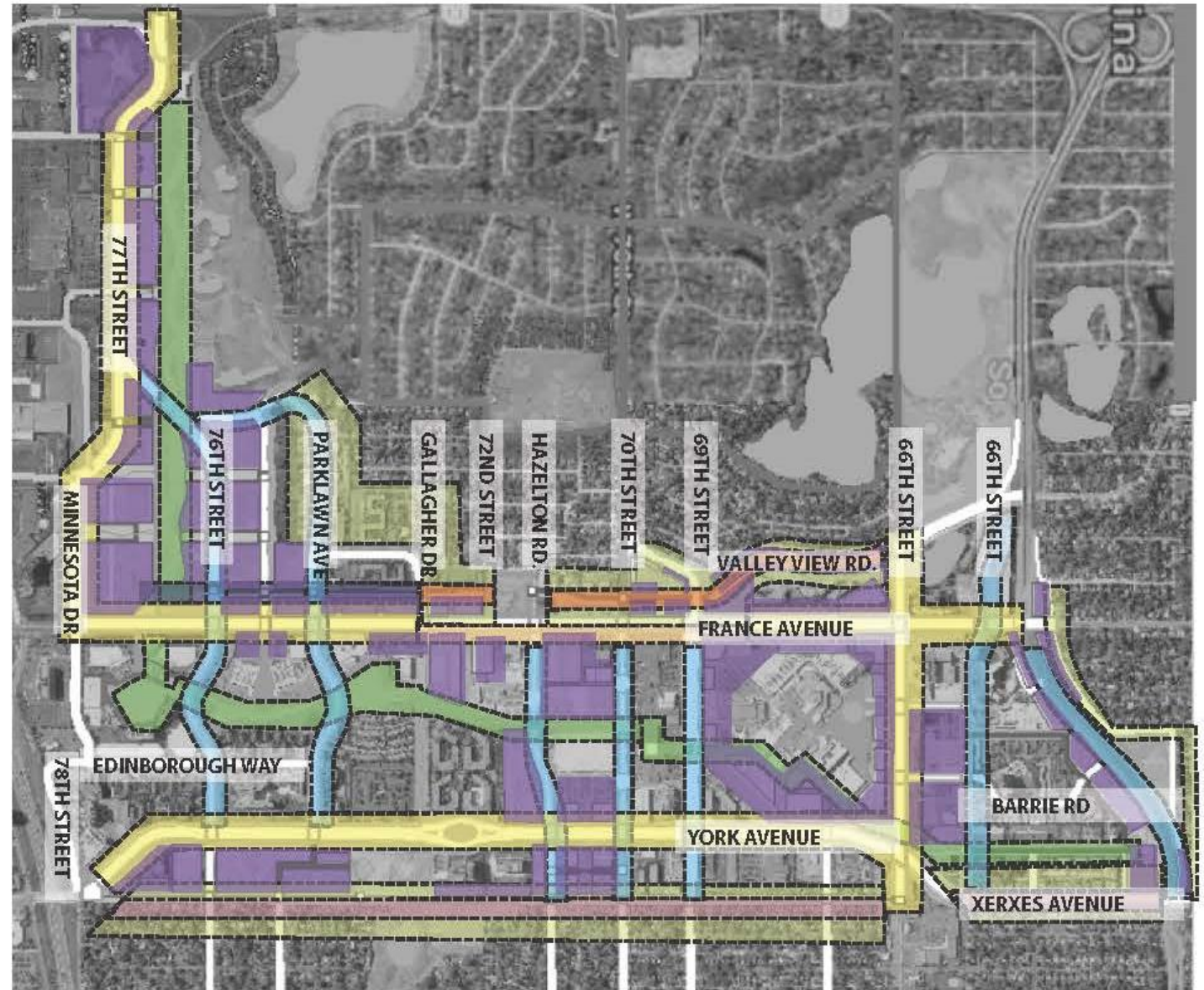
The Guidance

Street Room Typologies

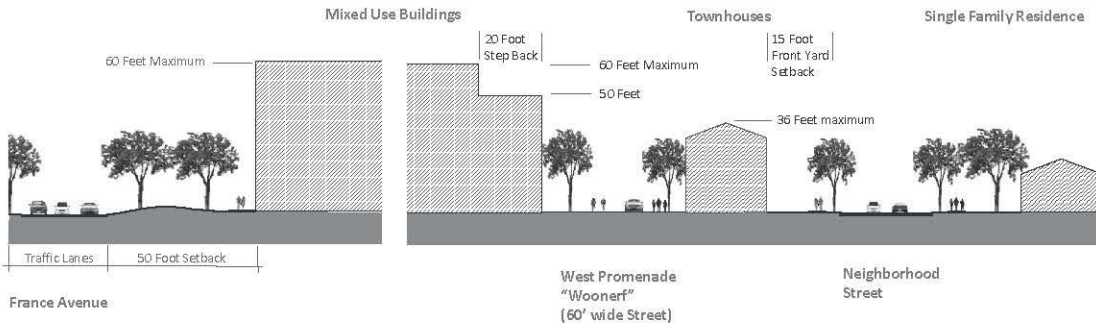
“ The **physical qualities of each street room's** height and width, shaped by the architecture of the District, **informs the design of the public realm** on streets that **connect and bind the human experience** of the district.

The Guidance **Street Room Typologies**

-  Transition Zones
-  1A West Promenade
-  1B West Promenade (South)
-  1C East Promenade
-  2 Cornelia Overlay
-  3 New Local Streets
-  4 Primary East-West Streets
-  5 Boulevards
-  6 Central Promenade Spine

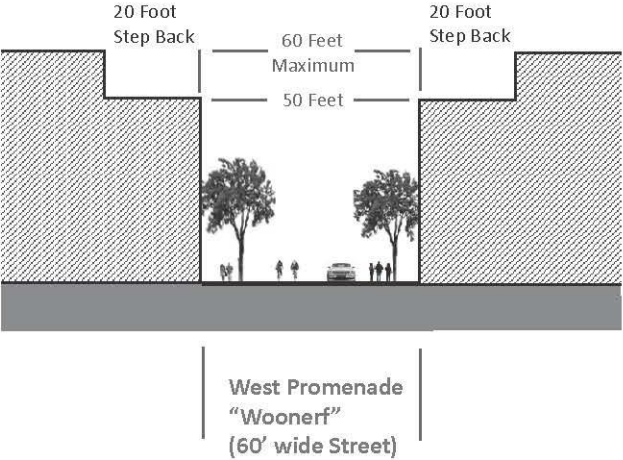


Street Room Typology 1A
West Promenade / Transition to Cornelia Neighborhood

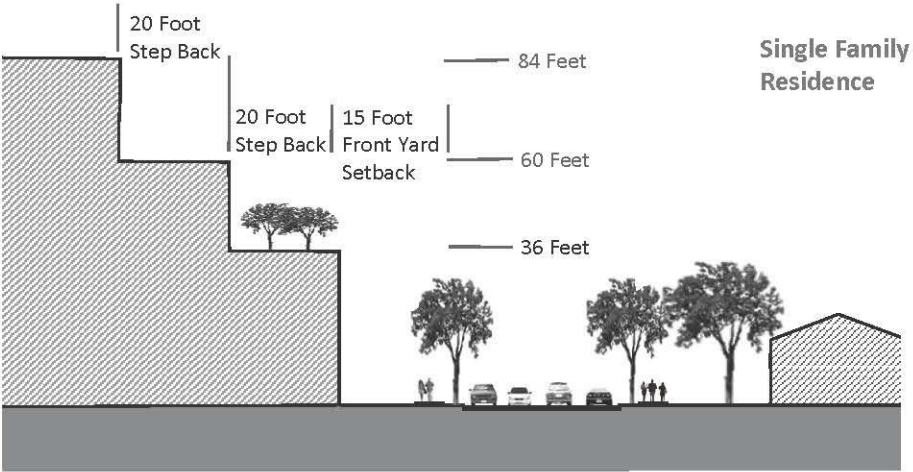


Street Room Typology 1B

West Promenade Between Parklawn and Minnesota Drive

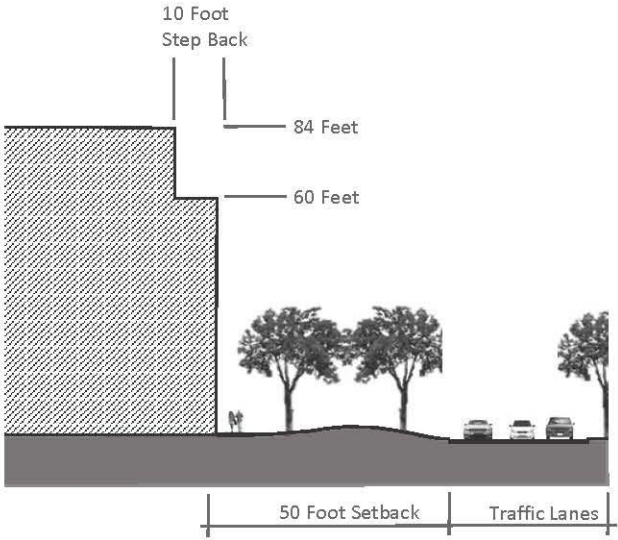


Street Room Typology 1C
East Promenade and Xerxes Avenue: Transition to Richfield



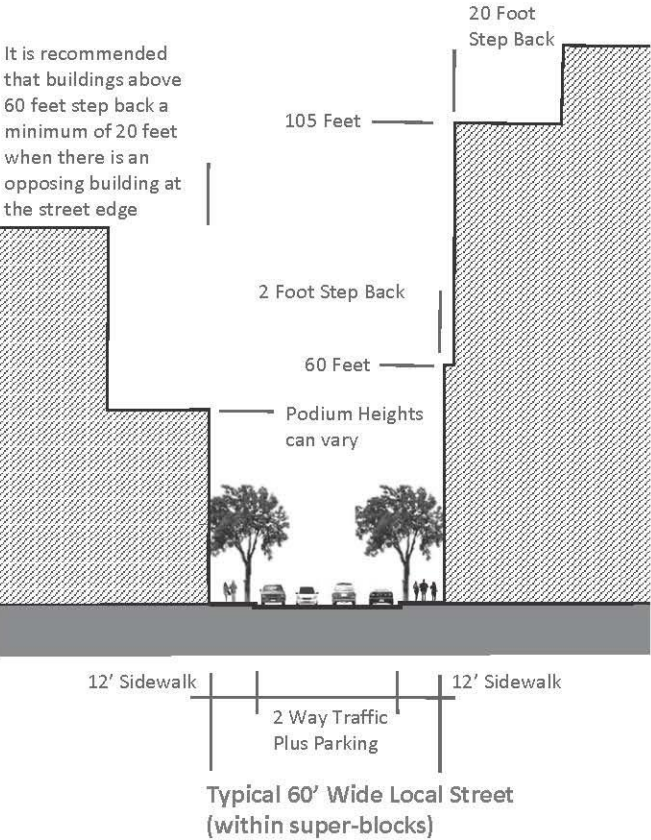
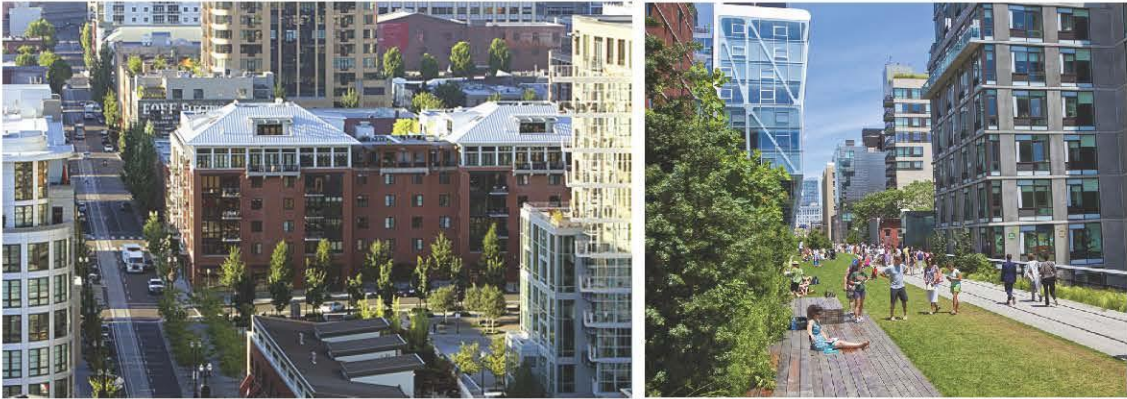
East Promenade
Existing Neighborhood
Street

Street Room Typology 2
Cornelia Overlay at France Avenue

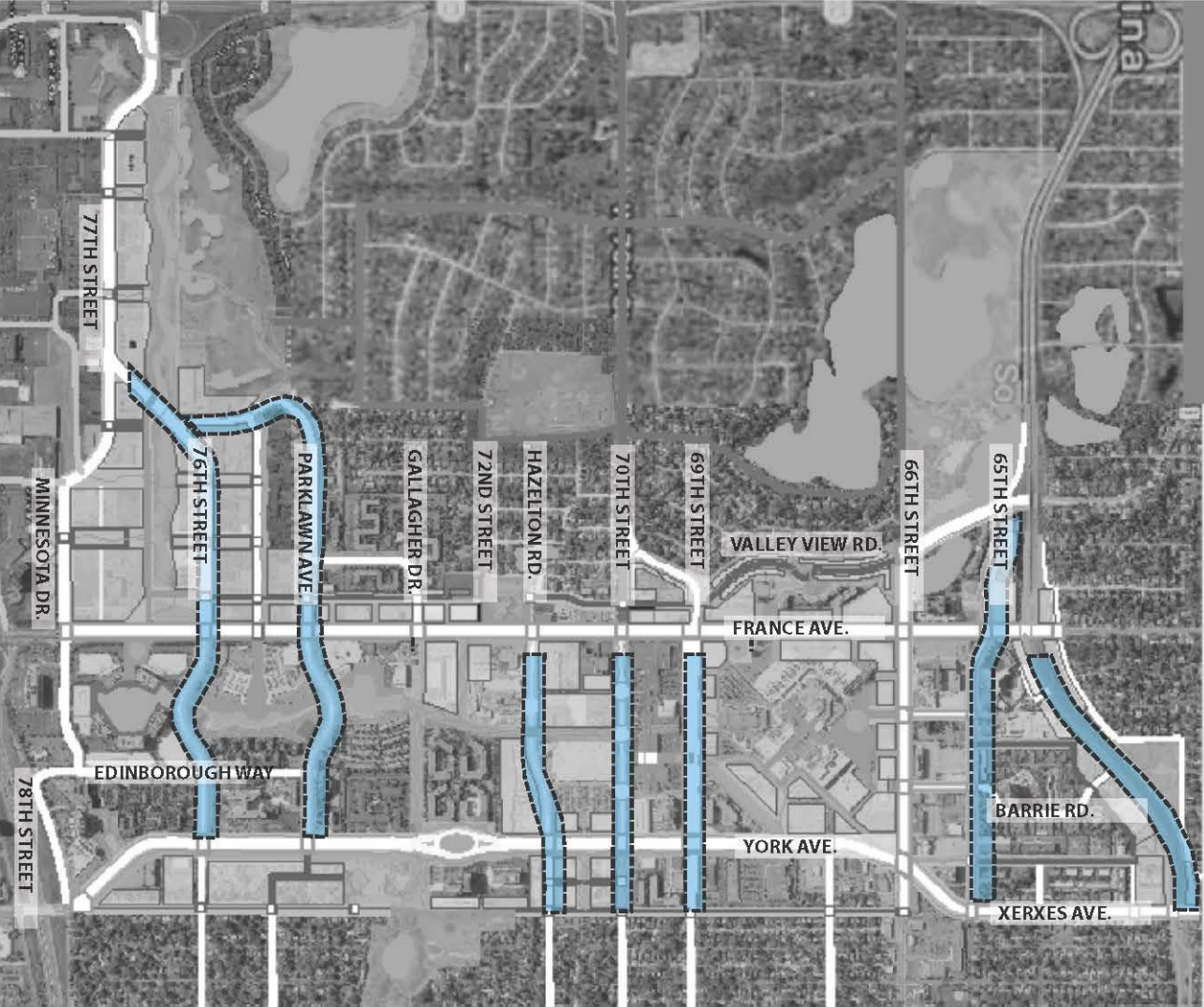


France Avenue

Street Room Typology 3 *New Local Streets*



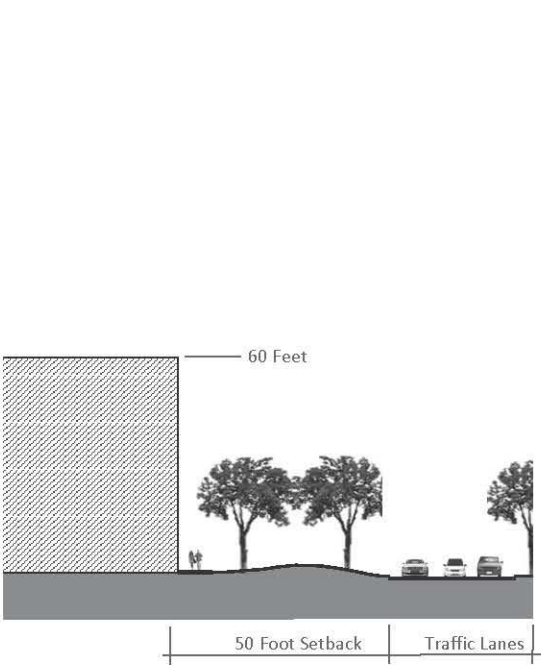
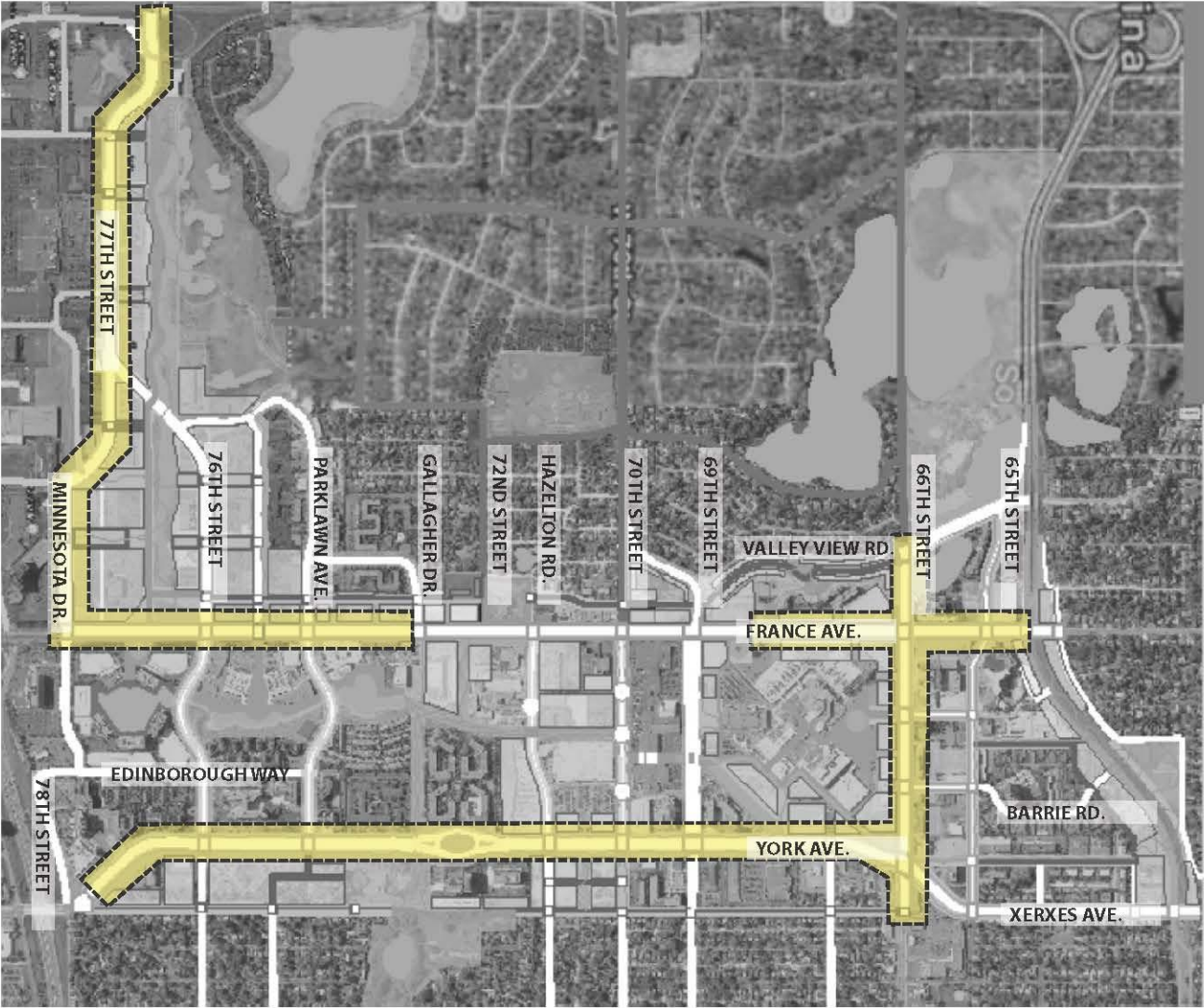
Street Room Typology 4
Primary East-West Streets



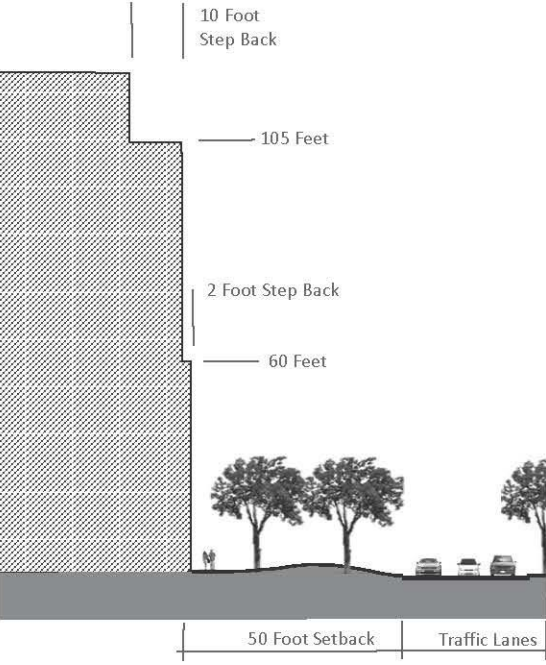
Existing East West Streets



Street Room Typology 5 *The Boulevards*

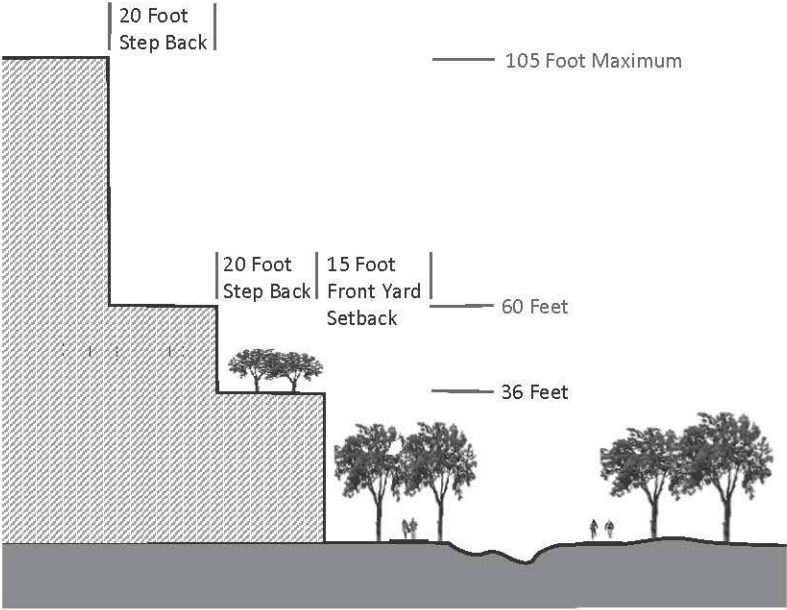
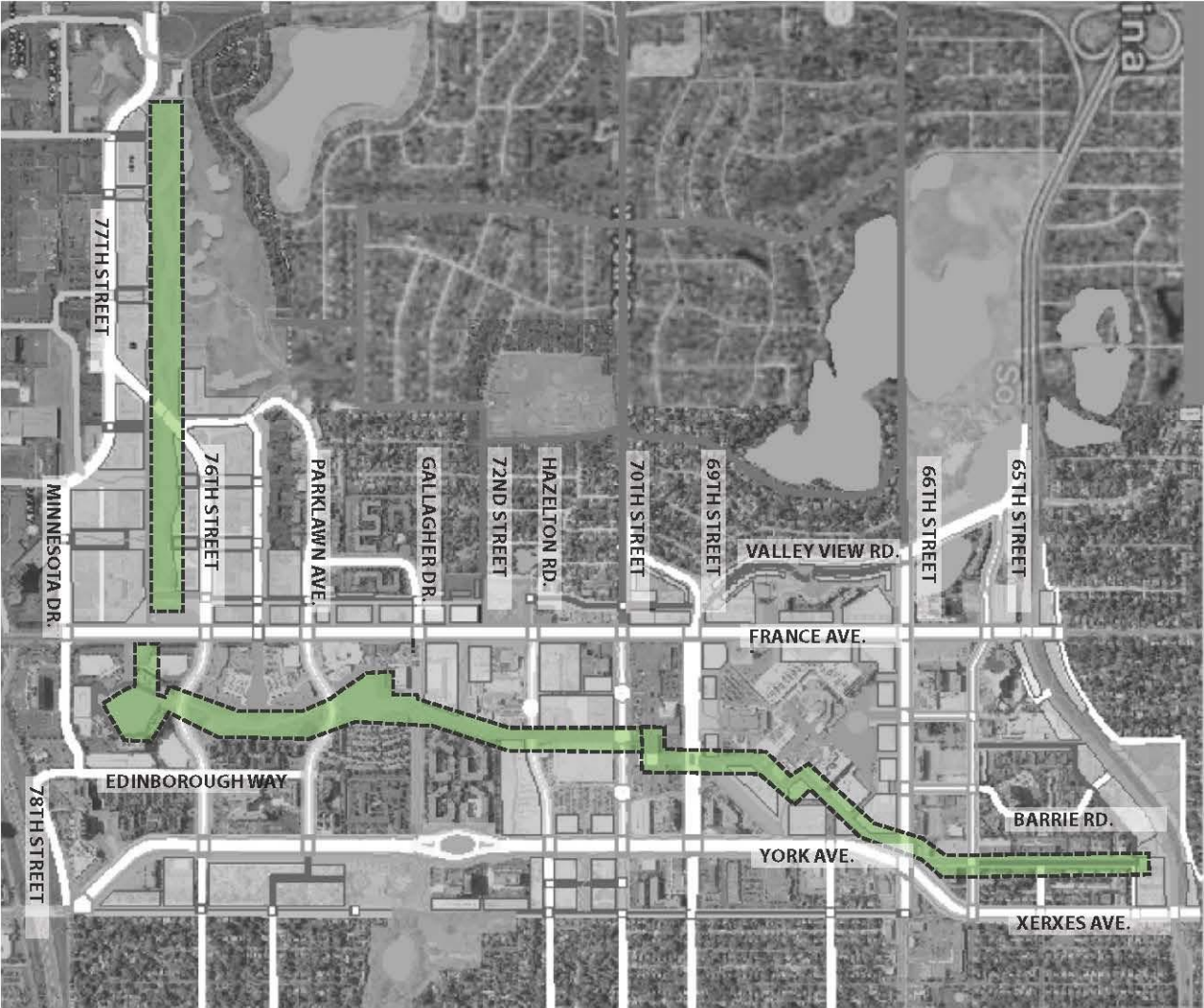


France Avenue



France Avenue

Street Room Typology 6
Central Promenade Spine



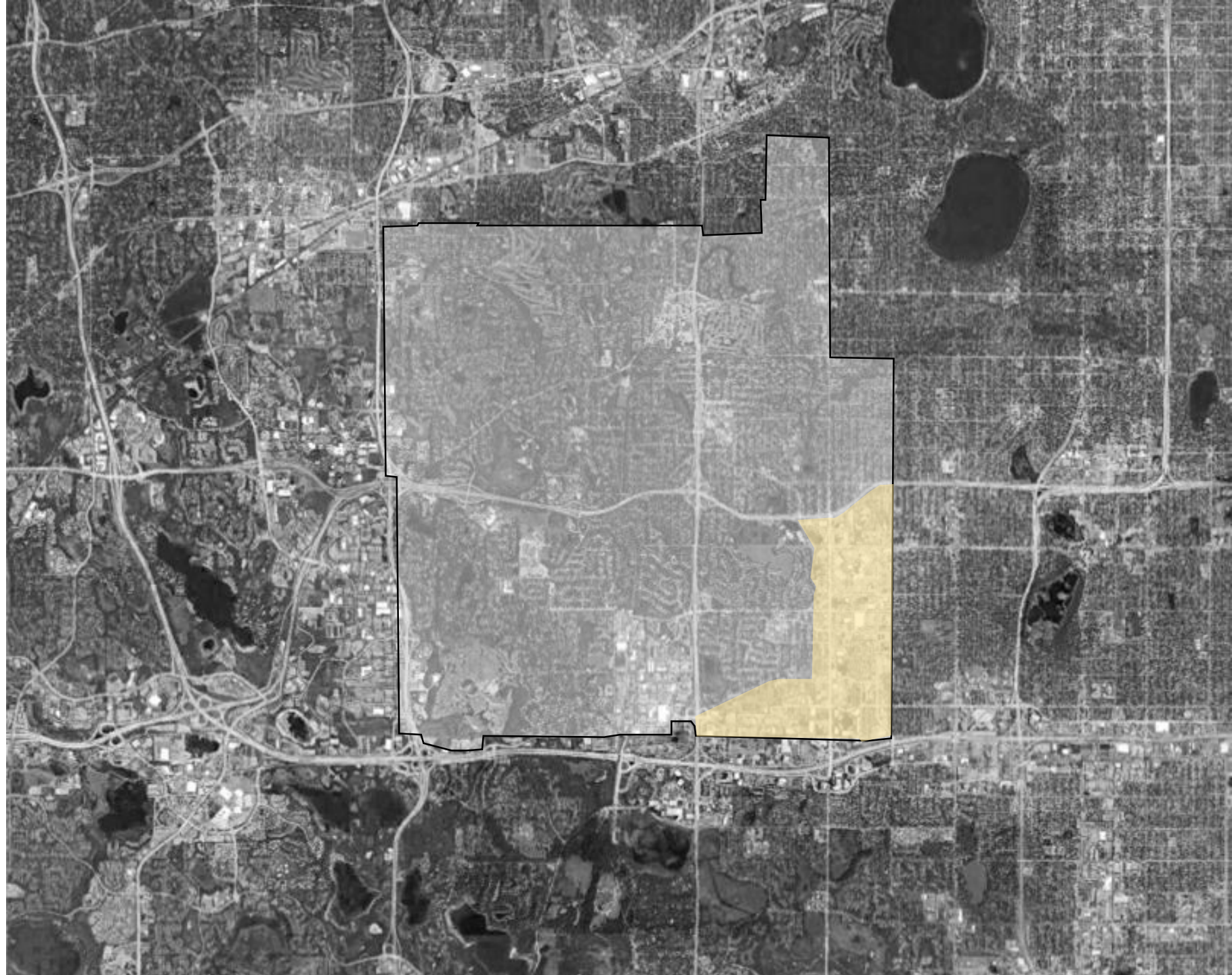
Central Promenade Spine



Greater Southdale District Urban Design
**COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS.**

City of Edina
15 Square Miles

Southdale District
1.36 Square Miles
870 acres



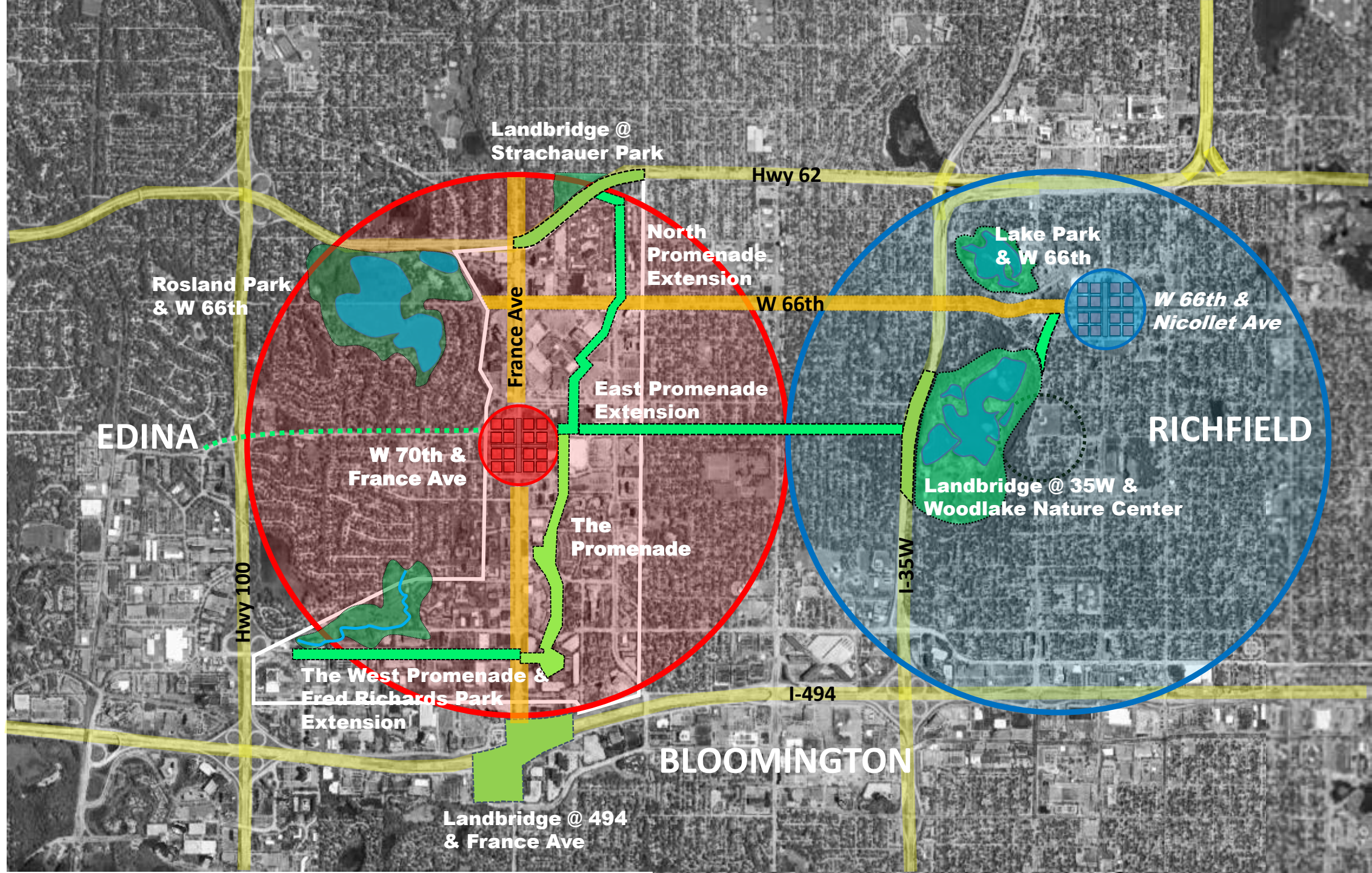


EDINA

One Mile Radius
20 Minute Walk

RICHFIELD

BLOOMINGTON



Landbridge @
Strachauer Park

Hwy 62

North
Promenade
Extension

Lake Park
& W 66th

Rosland Park
& W 66th

W 66th

W 66th &
Nicollet Ave

France Ave

East Promenade
Extension

EDINA

W 70th &
France Ave

RICHFIELD

The
Promenade

Landbridge @ 35W &
Woodlake Nature Center

Hwy 100

The West Promenade &
Fred Richards Park
Extension

I-35W

I-494

BLOOMINGTON

Landbridge @ 494
& France Ave



Klyde Warren Park

Dallas, TX



Aubrey Davis Park

Mercer Island, WA

Take Aways

The Design Experience Guidelines are about enhancing quality of life in single family neighborhoods and new higher density districts to insure an interconnected city that serves all its residents.

Maintaining the Social Health of all residents, the interconnections between neighborhoods, districts and cities should support the continuity of the natural world allowing nature to flow through the compact city.

The social health of the city, district and the neighborhood is maintained by the diversity of its people. **Equity is the integrated way of developing everything.**

We must learn to walk again. Walking is a way to see the natural world around us unfold in all beauty. Walking allows us to greet one another with eye to eye contact. Walking takes us through our neighborhoods to and from our jobs, shopping, picking up our kids from school and meeting our friends for coffee and dinner. It puts in contact with all that we need to maintain a social and consciousness about who we are and where we come from.

And most importantly, remember **building community is a 10,000 year idea that we must constantly work at.**

Greater Southdale District Urban Design

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THANK YOU.

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