D-2/UPTOWN LAND USE STUDY
CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, VA

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Produced by

McBride DALE CLARION

BUILD ONE PORTSMOUTH
working together, shaping our future

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Portsmouth City Council

John L. Rowe, Jr., Mayor
Paige D. Cherry, Vice Mayor
William E. Moody, Jr.
Elizabeth M. Psimas
Dr. Mark M. Whitaker
Nathan J. Clark
Lisa Lucas-Burke

Portsmouth Planning Commission

Albert Williams, Chairman
Amy Thompson, Vice Chairman
Yolanda E. Thomas
Peter Youngblood
Preston Vaughan
Occasio Gee
Janel Hofler

City of Portsmouth Staff

Robert A. Baldwin, AICP, Planning Director
Brian Swets, AICP, Planning Administrator
Mallory Butler, Director of Economic Development
Jonathan Hartley, Planning Administrator
Susan L. Wilson, AICP, Manager of Transportation Planning
Cliff Sayles, GIS Technician
Meg Pittenger, Environmental Manager

McBride Dale Clarion

Emily Crow, AICP, Project Manager
Elizabeth Fields, AICP, Planner
Esther West
Nick Sisco

TischlerBise

Julie Herlands, AICP, Vice President
Melissa Lindsjo, Fiscal/Economic Analyst

CONTENTS

1	Introduction
2	Existing Condition
3	Vision and Goals
4	Land Use Planning Areas
5	Business West
9	Uptown West
13	Civic Center and Services
17	London Boulevard
21	High Street
25	County Street
29	Recommendations and Implementation

APPENDIX

Existing Conditions Analysis and Assessment
Uptown/D-2 District Revenue Strategies (Economic Tool Kit)

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the D-2/Uptown Land Use Study is to analyze the existing makeup of the district's land uses, development patterns, transportation networks, market forces, and the community factors that influence the district and provide recommendations for updated zoning regulations/other development considerations to catalyze reinvestment.

In 2009, the City of Portsmouth approved a form based code for the Uptown area, the D-2 District Form Based Code. This Code was intended to transform the district from its current state to an urban mixed-use area. The Code states that it is "...designed to foster a setting for economic growth and development in a sustainable mixed-use pattern of diverse urban neighborhoods, integrating residential with employment and commercial uses within the Uptown D-2 District".

The Code and associated plan were lofty, ambitious, and guided by the City's current comprehensive plan recommendations. Despite the intentions of this Code, transformative redevelopment has not happened. The current market trends and demands for new construction have not aligned with the Code regulations and existing buildings that could be expanded or remodeled were rendered obsolete by the Form-Based standards.

The City of Portsmouth has identified that the existing Form-Based Code is not the right tool to encourage growth and development in this district. This Land Use Study is the first step in the process to update the zoning regulations that will apply to the D-2/Uptown area. This study provides recommendations to guide the zoning update, to ensure new zoning regulations reflect the reality of existing and potential land uses, current and future development forms, appropriate densities, and other similar factors.

This Land Use Study is a part of the overall City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan update, entitled Build One Portsmouth. The Comprehensive Plan update will address future land use recommendations for the City as a whole, as well as many other topics. This Study is intended to provide more detailed recommendations on this specific area. For more information on the Comprehensive Plan update go to: www.buildoneportsmouth.org.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing land use map to the left illustrates the land use context for Uptown. The Uptown district is not a unified district but rather a conjunction of several districts with distinctive existing patterns and use—it is connected to adjacent residential neighborhoods, industrial developments, and commercial districts. The above pictures represent a range of existing land uses within the district including traditional residential homes, flex/industrial space, and a newer drive-through commercial use.

The foundation of this study is the assessment and analysis of the district's existing conditions and characteristics. This included an in-depth look at the district's buildings and parcels, land uses, current zoning regulations, transportation and access characteristics, market trends and forces, incentives for investment, and historic resources.

This information is presented in its entirety in the Appendix, but the following is a summary of the key findings from that analysis and assessment:

» The D-2/Uptown district is positioned well to meet the residential, retail, restaurant, and employment needs of Portsmouth residents.

» The district has the potential to extend Downtown's synergy along High Street, west of Effingham Street.

» There are six distinct character areas in the D-2/Uptown area.

» This area is comprised of a mix of land uses and serves as a regional destination due to a number of existing businesses and services.

» High levels of vacancies create gaps in the urban fabric and reflects disinvestment in the area.

» The current zoning regulations are a hinderance to reinvestment and redevelopment.

» Public transit provides connectivity to and from the D-2 area.

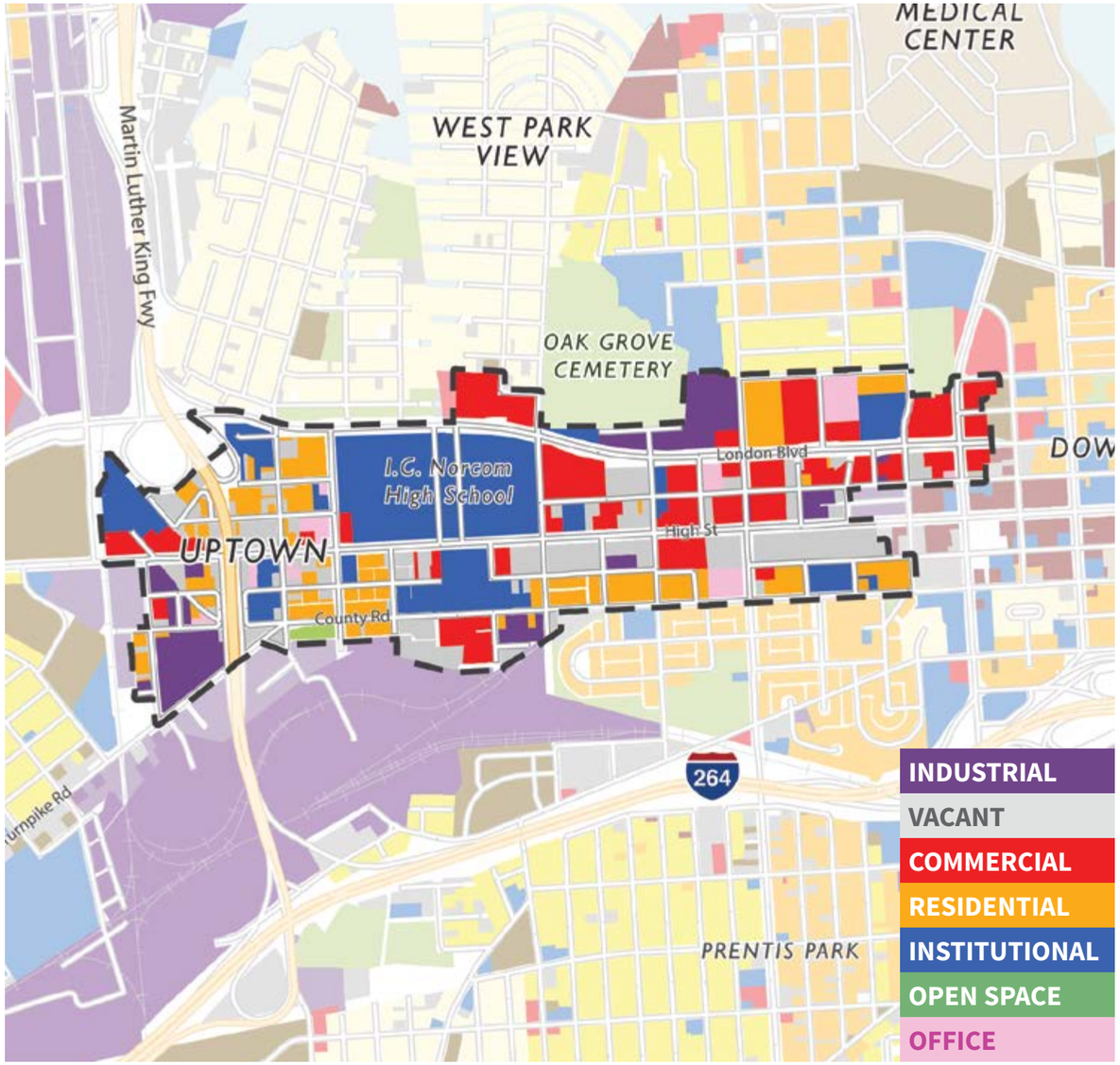
» The MLK Freeway extension, the close proximity to Downtown, and the nearby ports make this area highly visible, with the potential to support significant amounts of activity and business.

» The housing demand in the City is projected to be focused on multi-family units that can accommodate extended and non-traditional families.

» There are historic entities with significant cultural and historical value that are not protected with official historic designation status.

» There are existing residential uses on the west side of the MLK Freeway that are not compatible with industrial developments located within this area.

» Public feedback indicates that residents and local business owners have a desire to improve the district, address challenges, and to enhance the positive elements that exist.



LEFT: The existing land use map to the left illustrates the land use context for Uptown. The Uptown district is not a unified district but rather a conjunction of several districts with distinctive existing patterns and use. It is connected to adjacent residential neighborhoods, industrial developments, and commercial districts.

ABOVE: The pictures represent the range of existing land uses within the district including traditional residential, flex/industrial space, and convenience commercial.

VISION AND GOALS

The D-2/Uptown District of the City of Portsmouth will be a vibrant destination complete with an established residential population, unique commercial businesses, industrial and flex uses that provide employment opportunities for the City's residents, and institutional uses that provide necessary services to the public.

The existing conditions analysis and assessment revealed that there are six distinct character areas in the D-2/Uptown area. Each district has a unique vision and set of goals which are presented on this page. The following pages provide an in-depth analysis of each district along with land use and zoning recommendations for the future.

BUSINESS WEST

The Business West area should remain open to industrial, flex, and office users with flexible regulations to promote new development and allow for the redevelopment of existing properties, while protecting the existing homes in the area.

- Increase the number of jobs within the district by promoting the infill development of flex spaces suitable for office or industrial users.
- Reduce the amount of vacant and underutilized land and buildings.
- Provide better screening and buffering of industrial land uses and reduce the amount of outdoor storage - put materials inside a building or within an opaque fence or wall.
- Protect the existing residential land uses while allowing such uses to transition to a non-residential use over time.

UPTOWN WEST

The Uptown West Neighborhood area should remain a residential neighborhood that supports single family and attached residential units along with small-scale supportive commercial and service uses such as cafés, churches, and professional offices along the major thoroughfares.

- Strengthen the established neighborhood by reducing the amount of vacant parcels and buildings.
- Promote a mixed-use neighborhood with residential uses and context-sensitive commercial and institutional uses.
- Support community beautification efforts to instill a sense of pride in property maintenance.
- Preserve the historic resources in the neighborhood.
- Develop pocket parks or community gardens to increase the amount of green resources available to the residents.

CIVIC CENTER

The Civic Center and Services area should remain the civic heart of the Uptown district comprised of educational, governmental, and service uses. Developments in this district are typically large-scale buildings on large lots with on-site parking.

- Encourage the development or expansion of institutional uses in this area that complement the existing facilities.
- Improve accessibility and amenities for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit riders, and drivers. This may include bike lanes, bicycle racks, benches, pocket parks, bus shelters, and similar amenities.

LONDON BLVD

The London Boulevard Auto Corridor area should allow for service and convenience uses that cater to both drivers along the corridor and pedestrians. Permitted uses should be flexible to allow for a variety of development opportunities including commercial, office, medical, service, and multi-family residential.

- Increase the intensity and number of convenience retail and restaurant destinations along the corridor.
- Improve the aesthetic image of the corridor.
- Increase the amount of landscaping along the corridor to soften the off-street parking areas and buildings.
- Implement complete street concepts to improve the safety of the corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Maintain access management standards to manage curb cuts and vehicular movement.

HIGH STREET

The High Street Mixed Use Corridor area should function as an extension of Downtown, carrying forward the form and function of Downtown including mixed use buildings and an interactive street frontage, while allowing for some flexibility in development in terms of uses and design to accommodate market demands.

- Reduce the amount of vacant and underutilized land and buildings.
- Encourage parking structures and centralized lots to reduce the need for individual parking lots or parking along High Street.
- Increase the residential and commercial density in this area and establish a mixed use district that extends the character of Downtown Portsmouth into the Uptown area.
- Extend the Downtown streetscape to at least Elm Street to create an active street frontage with protected sidewalks, medians, benches, trees, and landscaping.

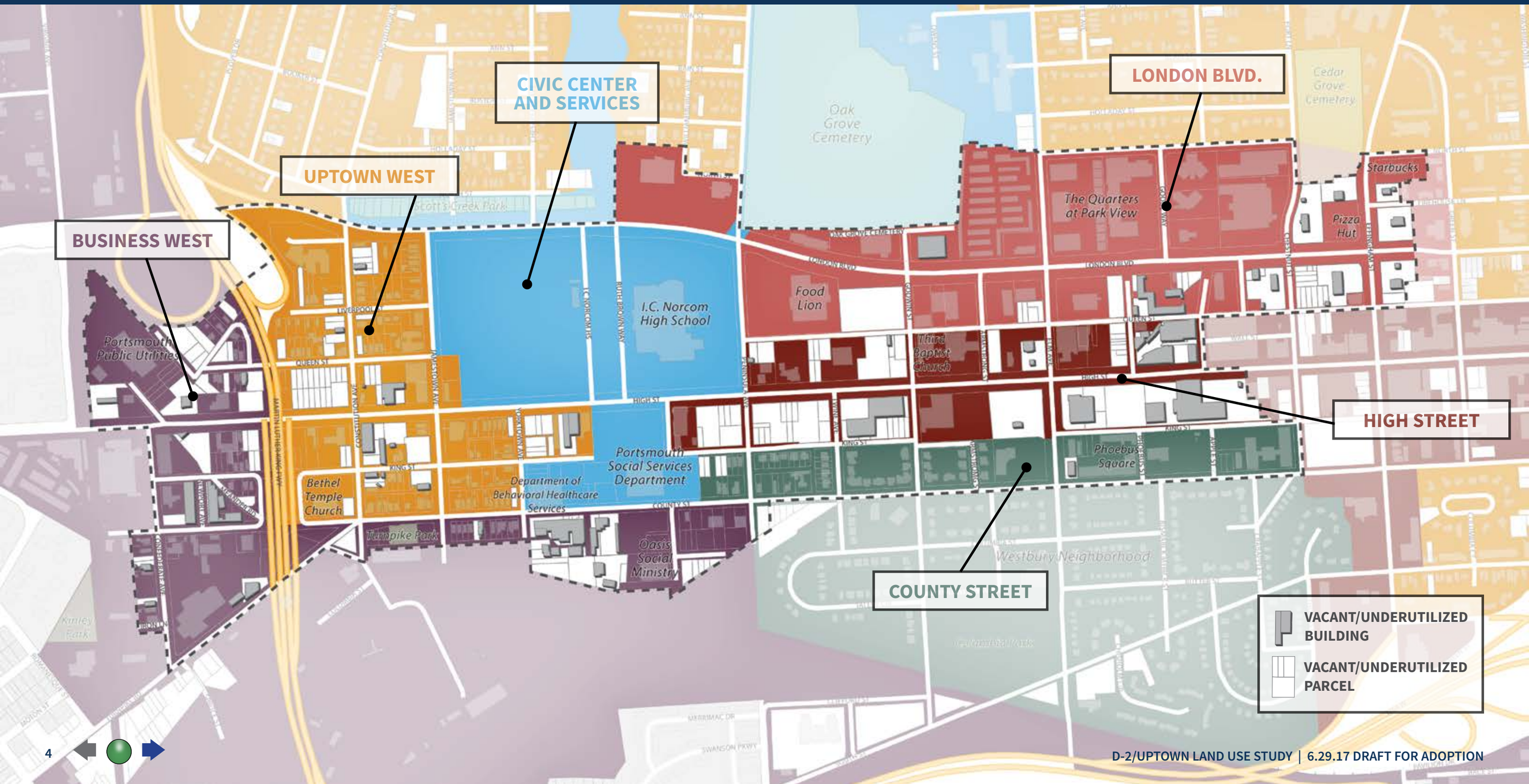
COUNTY STREET

The County Street Neighborhood will continue to be a strong residential neighborhood that serves as an extension of the Westbury neighborhood and provides a variety of housing types and styles to accommodate a variety of ages, preferences, and households, including multi-family and senior living facilities. It also provides context-sensitive non-residential developments including small scale office, public, and service uses.

- Maintain the planned Westbury residential neighborhood.
- Promote compatible infill development on vacant and underutilized properties.
- Provide a variety of residential unit types including single family, townhomes, duplexes, and multi-family units as a transition to the mixed-use High Street Corridor to the north.
- Encourage the development of neighborhood-scale service and office users on County Street that complement the adjacent residential uses.

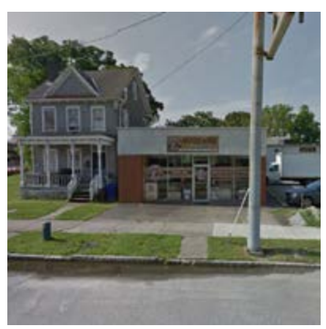
LAND USE PLANNING AREAS

The D-2/Uptown District has six distinct planning areas established from the traditional development and land use patterns that converge in Portsmouth's Uptown area. These are illustrated below and further described in the following pages. Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in the color that represents each district. Vacant and underutilized parcels are shown in white with grey buildings.



BUSINESS WEST

LOCATION KEY



The Business West District includes a variety of land uses including a range of industrial-type uses, commercial, residential, recreation, and office. The above pictures are a representation of the existing land uses along with the conditions of the properties within this area.

EXISTING LAND USE

INDUSTRIAL | 8.9 ac	VACANT | 6.8 ac	COMMERCIAL | 5.9 ac	RESIDENTIAL 4.1 ac	INSTITUTIONAL 4.1 ac	0.8

AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Good connectivity to rail, highways, and ports
- Many existing industrial and wholesale businesses
- Outdoor materials and equipment storage common
- Medium scale buildings and lots
- Looser grid pattern with some streets vacated, block pattern deteriorating, moderate setbacks
- One and two story buildings — auto-friendly design

Area	*47 ac*
% of D2 Area	*18%*
# of Parcels	*147*
Avg. Parcel Size	*9,900 ft²*

BUSINESS WEST

Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in purple on the below map. Vacant and underutilized parcels are shown in white with grey buildings.

# of Vacant Parcels	*44*
Vacant Land Area	*295,800 ft²*
Avg. Parcel Size	*6,700 ft²*
# of Underutilized Parcels	*7*
Underutilized Land Area	*128,000 ft²*
Avg. Underutilized Parcel Size	*18,400 ft²*

Due to the construction of the MLK Freeway, vacant properties were created along the highway. Now that the highway has been completed, these residual parcels can be repurposed for public benefit. Potential to return them to private ownership should be considered.

Existing residential homes should be protected for their lifespan in this district. It is expected that these uses will transition over time to industrial or commercial type uses—focusing residential development in other areas of Uptown.

Prime location for new office or light industrial uses. This location is adjacent to office and residential uses so industrial uses should be low-impact to mitigate their impacts on adjacent non-industrial users.

Light and heavy industrial users are appropriate on the west side of MLK, but should remain sensitive to existing residential neighbors.

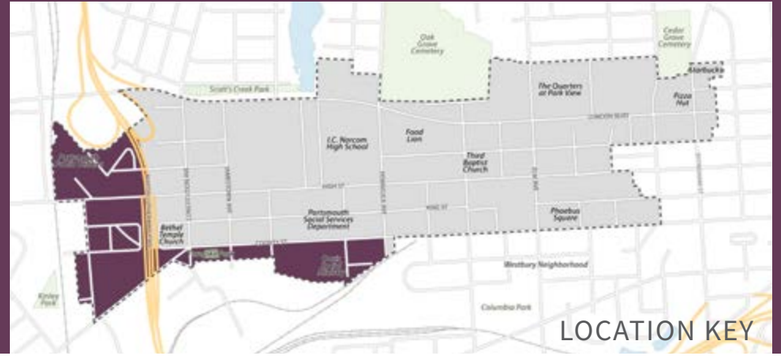
Turnpike Park, also known as Cottage Place Park, is currently being renovated. It should continue to be protected and enhanced as the Uptown district has a lack of public parks.

There is intermediate to severe flooding issues on County Street in this area.

VACANT/UNDERUTILIZED BUILDING

VACANT/UNDERUTILIZED PARCEL

BUSINESS WEST



VISION

The Business West area should remain open to industrial, flex, and office uses with flexible regulations to promote new development and allow for the redevelopment of existing properties, while protecting the existing homes in the area.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish industrial development design standards (outdoor storage screening requirements, buffering from adjacent residential uses, transitions, etc.)
- Buffer residential uses that exist within the district and adjacent to the district with a combination of landscaping and other screening elements such as fences, walls, and orientation of architecture.
- Allow the existing residential uses to remain for as long as each residential property owner wants to be there. It is anticipated that these uses will transition over time to industrial or commercial land uses, but this should occur only when the property owners choose to sell their property.
- Market the vacant properties adjacent to the MLK Freeway for new office, industrial, or commercial land uses. These parcels are smaller in size and may be suitable for smaller-scale developments such as convenience and service uses that could benefit from the new on-ramps/off-ramps. Consolidation of smaller lots could provide a site for slightly larger businesses or buildings.
- Traffic impact studies should be required for new developments that will greatly impact the traffic patterns on the existing road network. Such studies will provide recommended infrastructure improvements such as turn lanes, deceleration lanes, traffic signals, etc.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- The zoning for the Business West District should be similar in nature to the existing Light Industrial or Industrial zoning districts for the City of Portsmouth in terms of allowable uses and development standards, but tailored to fit the needs of the Uptown District.
- Customize zoning regulations to account for the existing residential properties within the district. In order to protect them, the regulations should allow the existing residents to remain conforming while not allowing for new residential development in the district. This would allow existing residents to remodel, expand, or refinance. It would not allow for residential uses to develop on properties they are currently not occupying.
- Regulations should be flexible in nature to allow for a variety of uses, development types, and building sizes. Reduced setbacks should be considered for properties that front County Street.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

"Industrial west of MLK is best option"

"Explore federal tax credit and grant opportunities for rehabilitation programs"

"Rezone area to allow for industrial development"

"Allow for a variety of uses including industrial, commercial, office, and flex"

"Let area remain the same with a little more flexibility in the regulations"

At the April 10th Workshop participants were asked to select images that best represent the ideal land uses for this district. The above images represent the preferred images for the Business West district. The quotes represent the public feedback given for this district.

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UPTOWN WEST

LOCATION KEY

The Uptown West Neighborhood is an established neighborhood that is primarily residential in nature but with a spattering of civic, commercial, and office land uses as well. This is an important residential neighborhood and the public feedback centered around preserving this neighborhood as residential while allowing for small scale mixed-use and commercial buildings along the major roads.

EXISTING LAND USE

RESIDENTIAL | 9.6 ac	VACANT | 6.0 ac	INSTITUTIONAL | 5.3 ac	OFFICE 1.7 ac	COM. 1.4 ac

AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- The Cottage Place neighborhood is a medium-density neighborhood of detached single family, two, and three family homes
- Several churches and neighborhood scale businesses
- Disconnected from other neighborhoods by London Boulevard and MLK Freeway
- Property maintenance and high levels of vacancies are primary concern
- Strong block and lot pattern, small setbacks, one and two story buildings, pedestrian friendly design

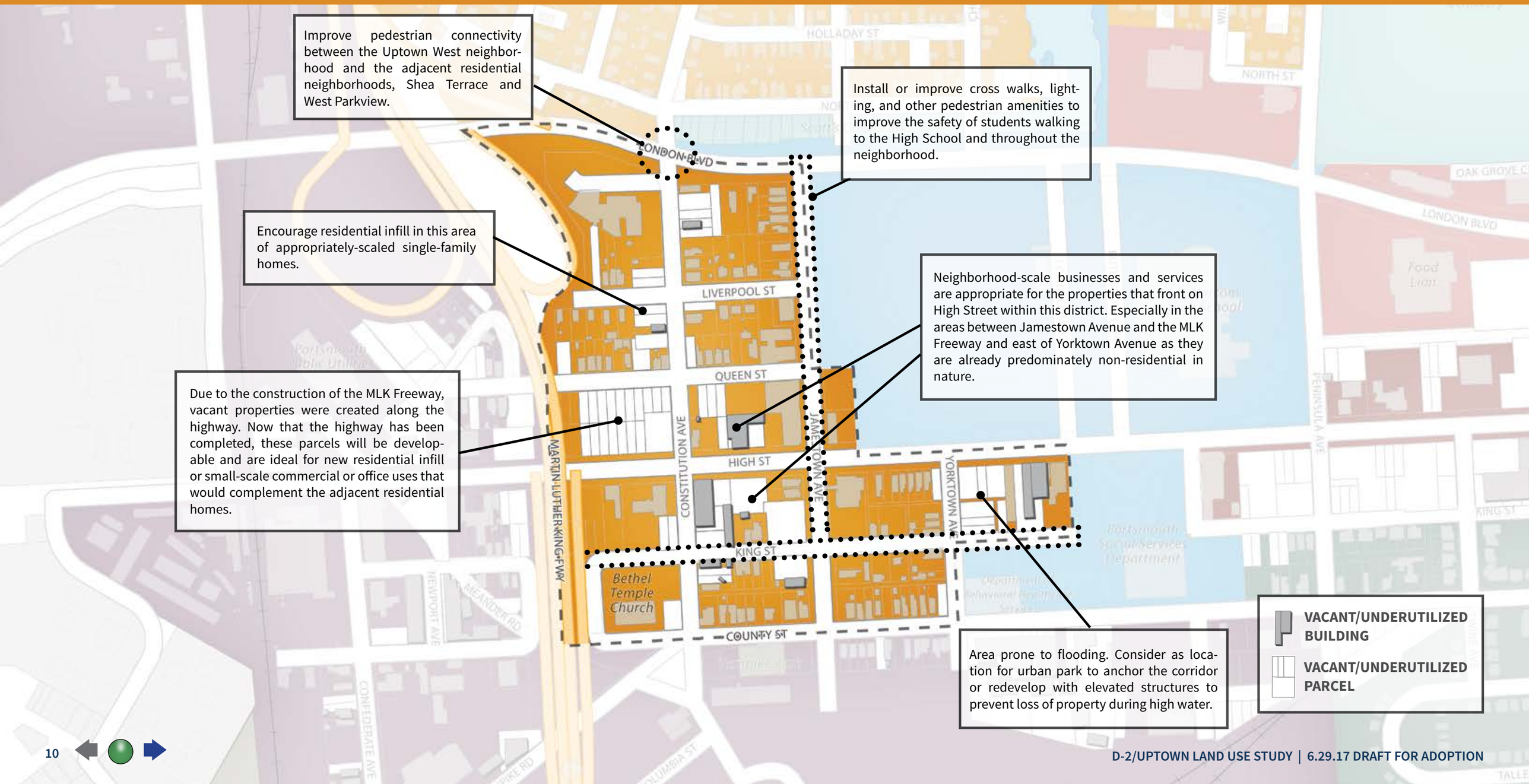
Area	*41 ac*
% of D2 Area	*16%*
# of Parcels	*179*
Avg. Parcel Size	*6,200 ft²*

FOCUS AREAS

UPTOWN WEST

Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in orange on the below map. Vacant and underutilized parcels are shown in white with grey buildings.

# of Vacant Parcels	*57*
Vacant Land Area	*263,000 ft²*
Avg. Vacant Parcel Size	*4,600 ft²*
# of Underutilized Parcels	*2*
Underutilized Land Area	*27,500 ft²*
Avg. Underutilized Parcel Size	*13,800 ft²*



UPTOWN WEST

LOCATION KEY

VISION

The Uptown West area should remain a residential neighborhood with single family and attached residential units along with small-scale supportive commercial and service uses such as cafes, churches, and professional offices along the major thoroughfares.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote traditional neighborhood design elements such as alley-loaded garages, reduced frontyard setbacks, and front porches, that support a grid street network with residential uses located to the center of the neighborhood and commercial and institutional land uses located on County St., High St., London Blvd., Jamestown Ave, and Constitution Ave.
- Market the newly vacant properties caused by the construction of the MLK Freeway as infill locations. Consider issuing a request for proposals to encourage the most suitable and high-quality development.
- Non-residential development in this area should complement the adjacent residential uses. Such uses should also be designed to limit any negative impacts to the adjacent residents including light, noise, or smell.
- Protect historic resources by designating them as landmark properties. Designation will also allow such properties to qualify for historic tax credits and other resources.
- Encourage the development of pocket parks or community gardens to enhance the neighborhood and to provide common areas for the residents to enjoy.
- Consider a neighborhood beautification pilot program to help homeowners work together on property maintenance to elevate the maintenance of older homes within the residential neighborhoods.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- The zoning regulations for the Uptown West neighborhood could emulate the City's existing Urban Residential (UR) zoning district. This district allows for a mix of residential development types and appropriate non-residential land uses—some of which would require a use permit. Setback standards for the Urban Residential district are similar in nature to the current development pattern within this district—the district requires that buildings shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from the property line, but allows for a reduced setback if the adjacent properties have a lesser setback than what is required.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

"Allow for commercial development along High Street"

"Keep the residential neighborhood intact—but allow for supportive commercial uses"

"Envision this district as a "small village" with a mix of uses—mixed-use districts make things more interesting and viable"

"Find locations for the daytime homeless populations"

"Mixed-use district"

"Houses on Yorktown Road should be used for transitional housing for behavioral health building"

At the April 10th Workshop participants were asked to select images that best represent the ideal land uses for this district. The above images represent the preferred images for the Uptown West Neighborhood. The quotes represent the public feedback given for this district.

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CIVIC CENTER AND SERVICES

LOCATION KEY

The above pictures represent the existing land uses within the Civic Center and Services district. These are generally larger-sized buildings with expansive off-street surface parking areas located on generously sized lots, especially compared to other lots within the Uptown Area.

EXISTING LAND USE

INSTITUTIONAL | 36.3 ac

AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Several destination civic uses draw people from across the City to this area
- Large lots and large buildings with deep setbacks create landmark features of school site
- Auto friendly site design with convenient parking areas
- High School site provides a civic gathering place, open space, and recreation areas near the City's center
- Large footprint buildings, up to four stories in height, with office or institutional style appearance

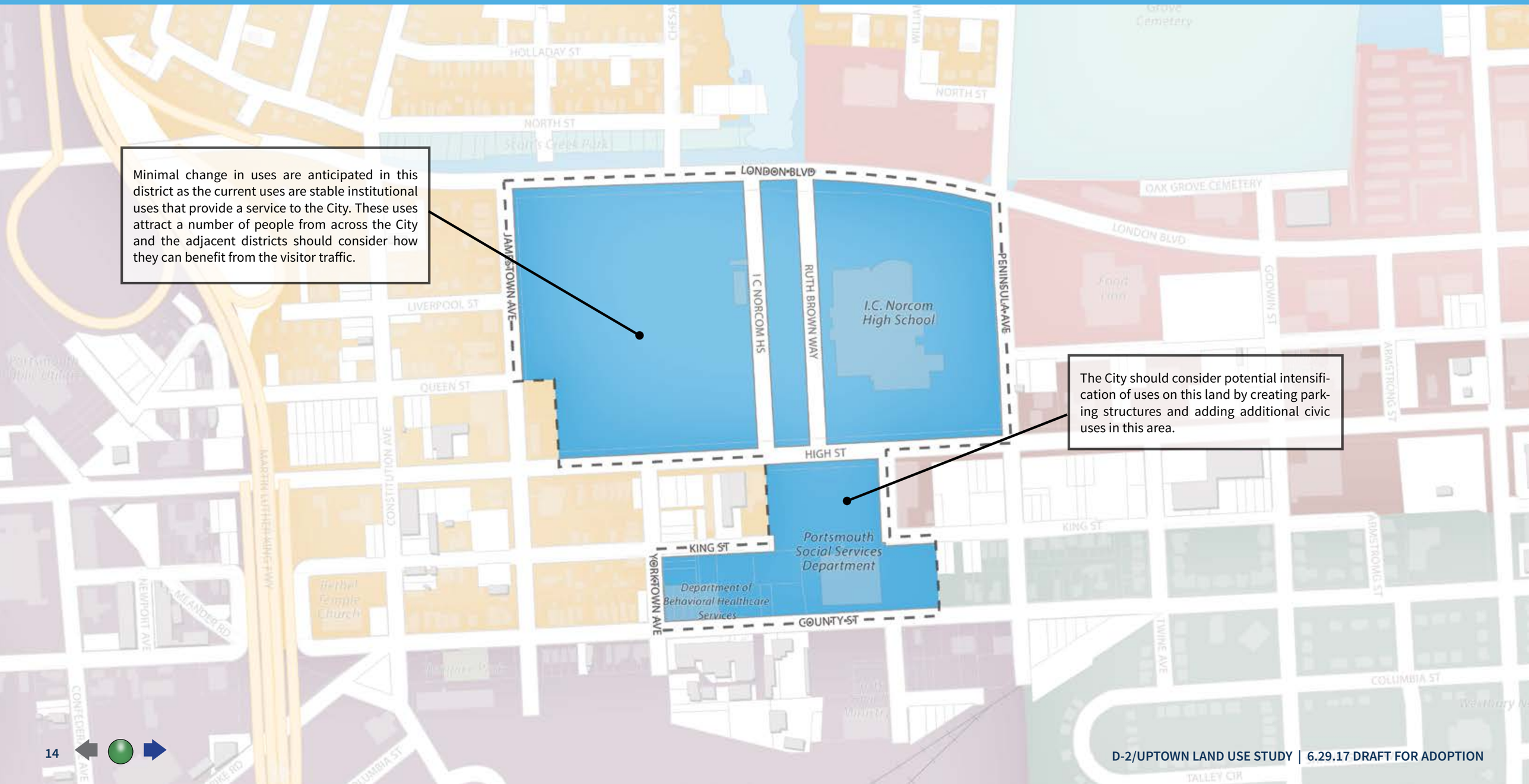
Area	*43 ac*
% of D2 Area	*17%*
# of Parcels	*14*
Avg. Parcel Size	*113,000 ft²*

FOCUS AREAS

CIVIC CENTER AND SERVICES

Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in blue on the below map. This district does not include any vacant or underutilized parcels or buildings.

# of Vacancies	*0*
Vacant Land Area	*0 ft²*
Avg. Vacant Parcel Size	*0 ft²*
# of Underutilized Parcels	*0*
Underutilized Land Area	*0 ft²*
Avg. Underutilized Parcel Size	*0 ft²*



CIVIC CENTER AND SERVICES

LOCATION KEY

VISION

The Civic Center and Services area should remain the civic heart of the Uptown district comprised of educational, governmental, and service uses. Developments in this district are typically large-scale buildings on large lots with on-site parking.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain the existing land uses and allow them to grow/redevelop as needed to accommodate their unique uses.
- Incorporate public amenities including, but not limited to, bicycle racks, open spaces, and benches in the design of City projects.
- Promote the development of additional institutional uses in this area and in adjacent districts that complement the existing uses.
- Provide structured parking to increase the floor area ratios on the public land within the district.
- The City should consider relocating additional City offices and services to this area to complement the existing uses within the district.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- The majority of the non-residential zoning districts allows for institutional uses such as what is located in this district. Therefore, these uses do not need a unique zoning district and could be located within the zoning districts of adjacent properties. For instance, the High School would probably fit in the same zoning district as what is applied to London Boulevard.
- The site design and architecture used in this area should be fitting of an urban civic use. The development in this area should serve as an example of the quality and character of the City, which should be reflected in private developments.
- Consider incorporating design allowances for civic uses to integrate campus-like design elements such as common public or green space, shared parking areas, and other shared amenities that may be appropriate.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

"City government buildings should be located on County Street/King Street behind the High School"

"Concerns with traffic to/from Oasis - litter, trouble, break-ins, unsafe feeling"

At the April 10th Workshop participants were asked to select images that best represent the ideal land uses for this district. The above images represent the preferred images for the Civic Center and Services district. The quotes represent the public feedback given for this district.

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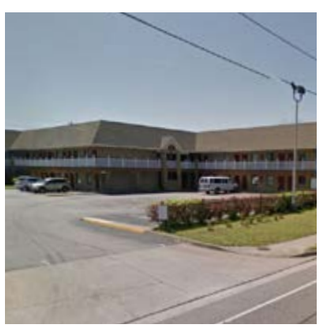
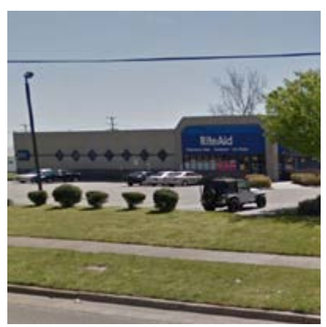
LONDON BOULEVARD

LOCATION KEY

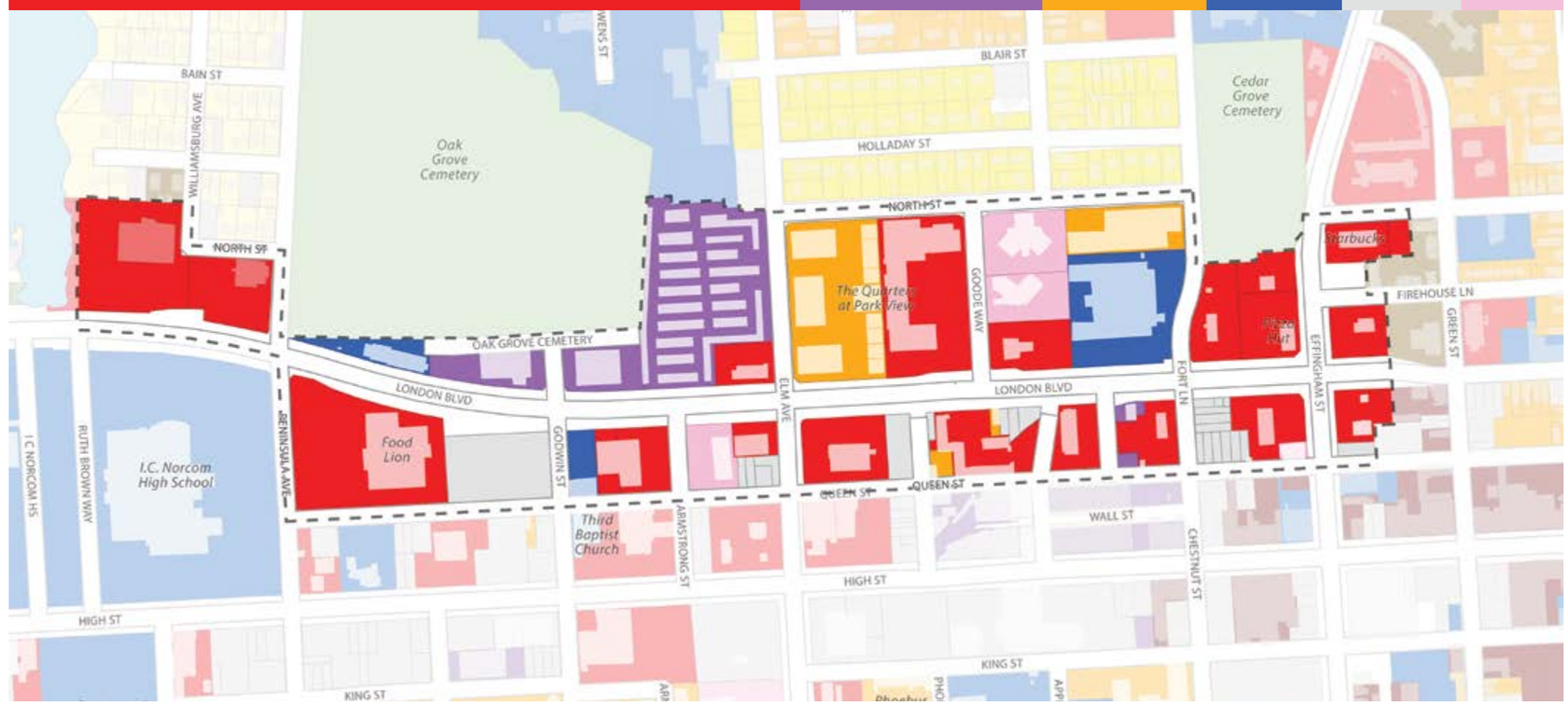




The above pictures represent the range of existing uses along London Boulevard including hotels, drug stores, multi-family residential, and banks along with their varying development forms. Sites range from large setbacks with front parking to reduced setbacks with buildings set to the sidewalk and parking at the rear or side of the building.

EXISTING LAND USE

COMMERCIAL | 24.6 ac	INDUSTRIAL | 7.5 ac	RESIDENTIAL 5.1 ac	INST. 4.2 ac	VACANT 3.7 ac	OFFICE 3.2 ac



AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Major travel corridor with auto oriented uses (drive-through, gas stations, convenience retail)
- Irregular lot and building layouts
- Various scale and styles of architecture with newer multi-family residential

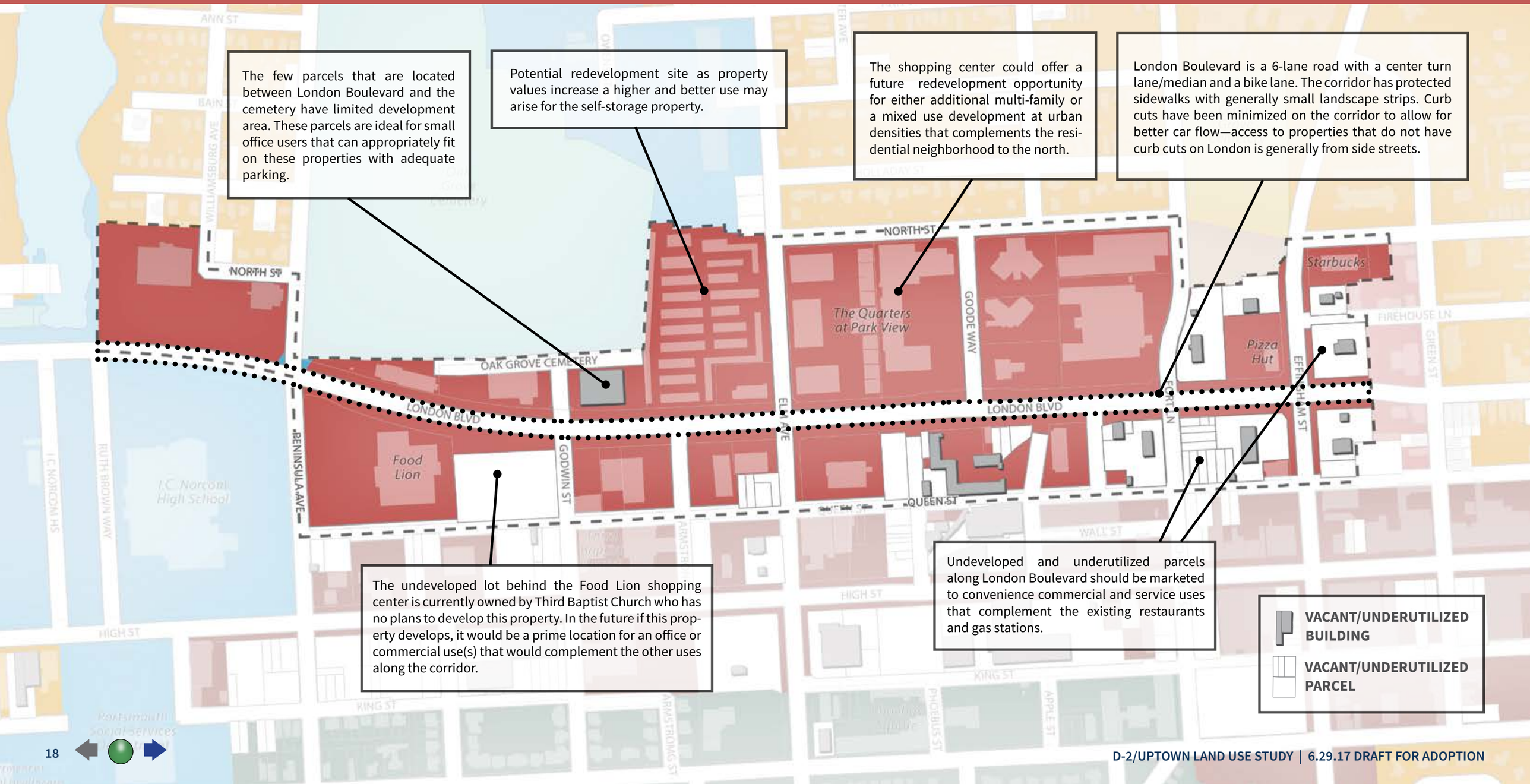
Area	*69 ac*
% of D2 Area	*27%*
# of Parcels	*62*
Avg. Parcel Size	*31,400 ft²*

FOCUS AREAS

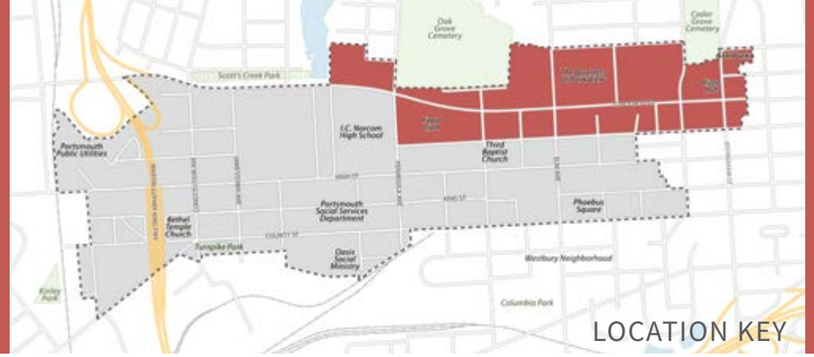
LONDON BOULEVARD

Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in pink on the below map. Vacant and underutilized parcels are shown in white with grey buildings.

# of Vacant Parcels	*24*
Vacant Land Area	*213,100 ft²*
Avg. Vacant Parcel Size	*8,900 ft²*
# of Underutilized Parcels	*9*
Underutilized Land Area	*103,500 ft²*
Avg. Underutilized Parcel Size	*9,400 ft²*



LONDON BOULEVARD



LOCATION KEY

VISION

The London Boulevard Auto Corridor area should allow for service and convenience uses that cater to both drivers and pedestrians. Permitted uses should be flexible to allow for a variety of development opportunities including commercial, office, medical, service, and multi-family residential.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow for a mix of commercial, service, office, and industrial/flex uses that are auto-oriented in nature. Developments should incorporate pedestrian- and auto-friendly design principles that promote cohesion and a focus on safety for drivers and pedestrians balanced with access to properties.
- Permit multi-family residential, including senior housing or assisted living facilities.
- Create drive-through regulations that promote good design elements including adequate stacking spaces, setbacks from residential uses, menu board signage regulations, pedestrian safety and crosswalks.
- New development should complement the existing uses in terms of size, scale, form, and architecture, while also enhancing the overall aesthetics of the district.
- The City should implement complete street concepts to improve the safety of the corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists. The City has no formal access management criteria but uses VDOT criteria and methodology where appropriate.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- The zoning regulations for the London Boulevard corridor should be similar in nature to the existing General Mixed Use (GMU) and High Intensity Mixed Use (MU-H) zoning districts. These districts, while different in terms of allowable uses and development standards, have similar goals and objectives as the corridor. Residential, commercial, office, and institutional uses are permitted land uses and development standards promote buildings set back from the street 15-20 feet with parking located on the side or rear of the building. These districts might not fit exactly, but they provide a good reference for how the regulations should be set forth for the London Boulevard corridor.
- Regulations should be flexible to accommodate market demands. General development standards should allow for buildings up to 4-stories in height, varied front yard setbacks that promote parking to be at the side or rear of the building, landscape standards, low-profile signage, and appropriately sized building mounted signs.
- Allow for industrial/flex users in at least a portion of the corridor to allow the existing industrial users to remain permitted uses within the district.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

"No change needed in this area - status quo is fine"

"Allow for mixed uses, commercial uses, art studios"

At the April 10th Workshop participants were asked to select images that best represent the ideal land uses for this district. The above images represent the preferred images for the London Boulevard Corridor. The quotes represent the public feedback given for this district.

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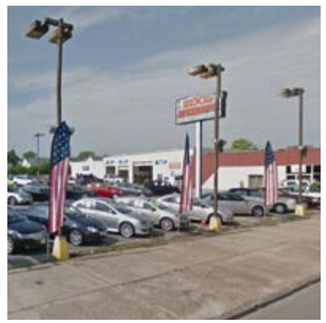
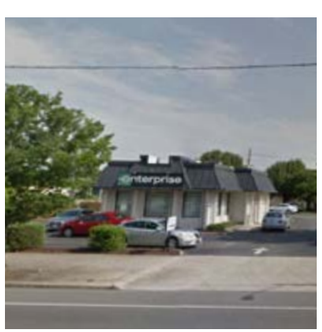
HIGH STREET

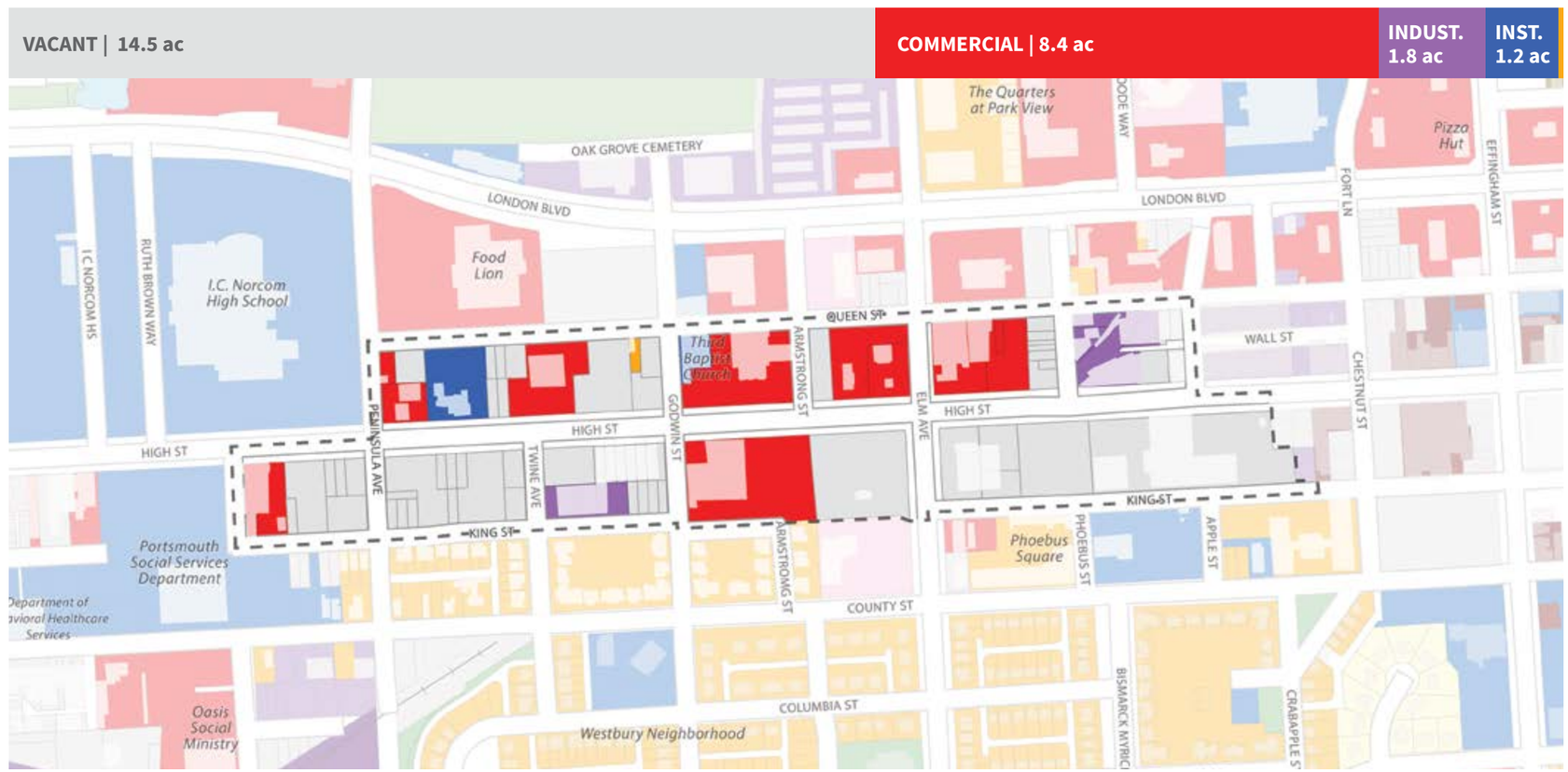
LOCATION KEY





The above pictures illustrate the current condition of High Street within the study area. Uses, building condition, and site design vary along with the types of land uses. The High Street corridor has the greatest number of vacancies of all the planning areas and has the greatest potential for transformative redevelopment.

EXISTING LAND USE



AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Extension of High Street Corridor from Downtown, reflects era of transition to auto oriented uses with traditional architectural character
- High levels of vacancy
- Most potential for transformative redevelopment due to large undeveloped properties and lack of existing architectural context
- Commercial district with potential for multi-family infill development
- Flex/light industrial space on Queen Street and High Street - potential area for shared work spaces, studios for artists or craftsmen, or business incubators

Area	*38 ac*
% of D2 Area	*15%*
# of Parcels	*80*
Avg. Parcel Size	*14,200 ft²*

HIGH STREET

Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in red on the below map. Vacant and underutilized parcels are shown in white with grey buildings.

# of Vacant Parcels	*56*
Vacant Land Area	*632,100 ft²*
Avg. Vacant Parcel Size	*11,300 ft²*
# of Underutilized Parcels	*11*
Underutilized Land Area	*103,500 ft²*
Avg. Underutilized Parcel Size	*9,400 ft²*

The undeveloped parcels located between Godwin Street and Williamsburg Avenue are detached from Downtown by a number of commercial, auto-oriented properties; therefore, these parcels have less potential for high density, mixed use development than properties east of Elm Avenue. One- and two-story commercial, institutional, flex, office, and service uses would be appropriate here to cater to the adjacent residents, students, and government workers.

Potential for the development of a Downtown gateway at the intersection of High Street and Elm Avenue.

Area prone to flooding. Consider as location for urban park to anchor the corridor or redevelop with elevated structures to prevent loss of property during high water.

Prime development area for new mixed-use, multi-family, or office developments that carry on the development form of Downtown. Good location for structured parking or surface parking at the rear of buildings with access off of King Street and Queen Street. Establishing a street wall is important here, and buildings could be 6+ stories.

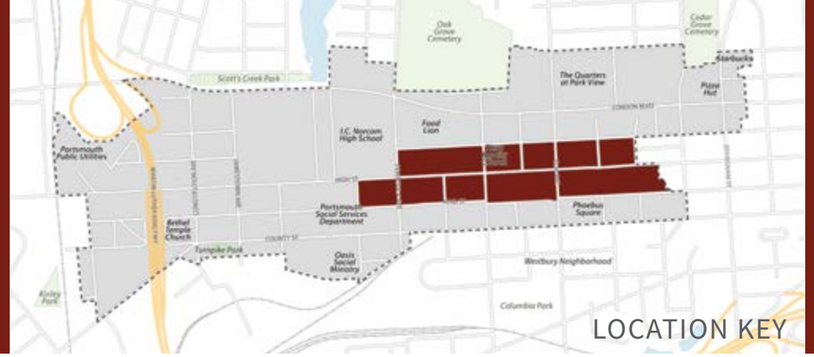
High Street is a 4-lane road with on-street parking on both sides of the street. The sidewalks and streetscape varies throughout the study area - with either a large sidewalk with no landscape strip or a protected sidewalk with a landscape strip.

This lot has the potential to redevelop as a number of uses including auto-oriented service or commercial uses that could utilize the existing parking lot and amenities or as a high density multi-family development. Due to its proximity to existing multi-family developments, it could serve as a transitional use from the Westbury neighborhood to the more intense commercial uses along High Street and anchor an important corner in the district.

VACANT/UNDERUTILIZED BUILDING

VACANT/UNDERUTILIZED PARCEL

HIGH STREET



LOCATION KEY

VISION

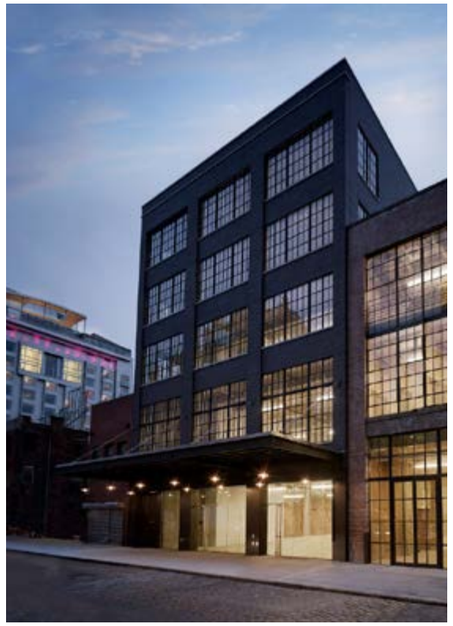
The High Street Mixed Use Corridor area should function as an extension of Downtown, carrying forward the form and function of Downtown including mixed use buildings and an interactive street frontage, while allowing for some flexibility in development in terms of uses and design to accommodate market demands.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote taller buildings (6+ stories), high lot coverage, and structured parking, especially between Effingham Street and Elm Avenue. Encourage economic incentives and private/public partnerships to promote the construction of centralized parking and garage parking.
- Create a Downtown gateway at the intersection of High Street and Elm Avenue as this is a juncture of two prominent thoroughfares that connect Uptown to a number of other areas of the City.
- Allow single-use and single story buildings with high lot coverage.
- Allow flexible development regulations west of Elm Avenue to allow for new developments that are similar in size and scale to existing buildings—the Downtown form is not as likely to occur on High Street west of Elm due to the fact that many of the existing developments are set back from the street and are auto-oriented in their design with parking lots in front of the building.
- Extend the landscaped medians and streetscape design on High Street to at least Elm Street in order to encourage the expansion of Downtown. Consider conducting a "road diet" study or exploring other complete street policies that could make High Street more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- Encourage a consistent streetscape design for the corridor west of Elm Street—promote protected sidewalks with planting strips and street trees to provide more protection for pedestrians and to soften the hardscape.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- The High Street corridor, east of Elm Avenue should have the same zoning regulations as Downtown Portsmouth as this is the most logical area for high-density, mixed-use developments that continue the look and feel of Downtown. Regulations should promote garage parking or shared parking lots, that are located at the rear of the lot, that service the district, active street frontages with outdoor patios, seating areas, and landscaping, and allow for multi-family residential, mixed use, institutional, retail, and office developments. Single use and single story buildings should be permitted.
- The High Street corridor, west of Elm Avenue should allow for the development of high-density, mixed-use or single-use buildings, while also allowing lower-density, auto-friendly urban uses, similar to what exists today, and which are more likely to develop in the short-term. Regulations should promote urban-appropriate landscaping to soften buildings and screen parking lots where appropriate in addition to using site and building design to transition from residential to higher intensity uses. Parking lots should be constructed at the side or rear of buildings and structured parking is encouraged to maximize the floor area ratios of the developable properties. Structured parking should occupy the rear of the lots, allowing the High Street frontage to remain developable.



PUBLIC COMMENTS:

"Consider this area an extension of Downtown"

"1000 block of High Street should be marketed toward artists and craftsmen"

"Mixed use buildings is best choice for this area"

"Create small parks"

"Consider bike lanes"

At the April 10th Workshop participants were asked to select images that best represent the ideal land uses for this district. The above images represent the preferred images for the High Street district. The quotes represent the public feedback given for this district.

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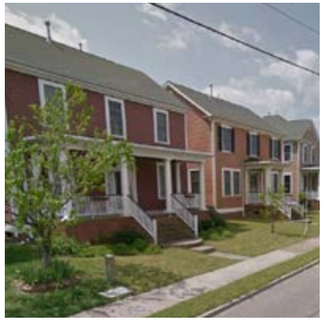
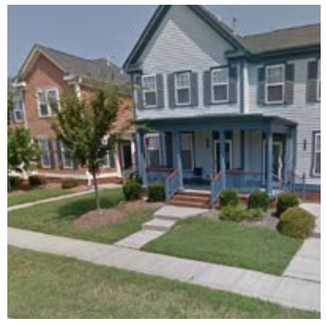
COUNTY STREET

LOCATION KEY

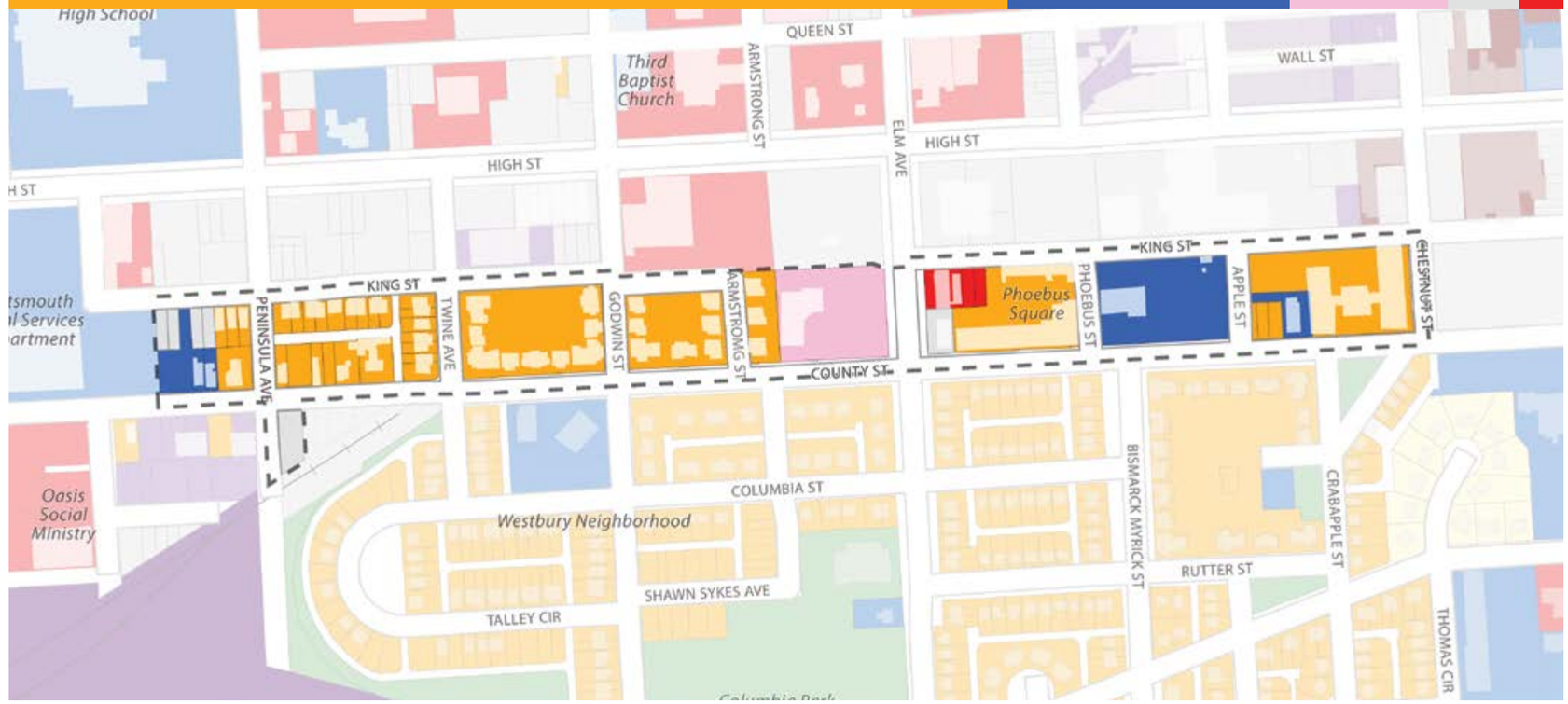




The above pictures show the range of residential and institutional land uses that are located within the County Street corridor. Some of the images are homes located within the Westbury neighborhood, but the new development along the corridor carries on the themes and design principles as Westbury.

EXISTING LAND USE

RESIDENTIAL | 9.3 ac	INSTITUTIONAL | 2.6 ac	OFFICE | 1.5 ac	VAC. 0.7 ac	0.4



AREA CHARACTERISTICS

- Newer residential developments with moderate density housing of varying types (single and multi-family)
- Corridor is primarily residential with some office, public, and service uses mixed throughout
- Few vacant or underutilized parcels - not a lot of developable land remains in this area
- The multi-family and larger institutional buildings built to the sidewalk while single-,two-, and three-family homes are setback about 10 feet with shallow front yards and gracious front porches
- Architecture is neo-traditional or traditional.

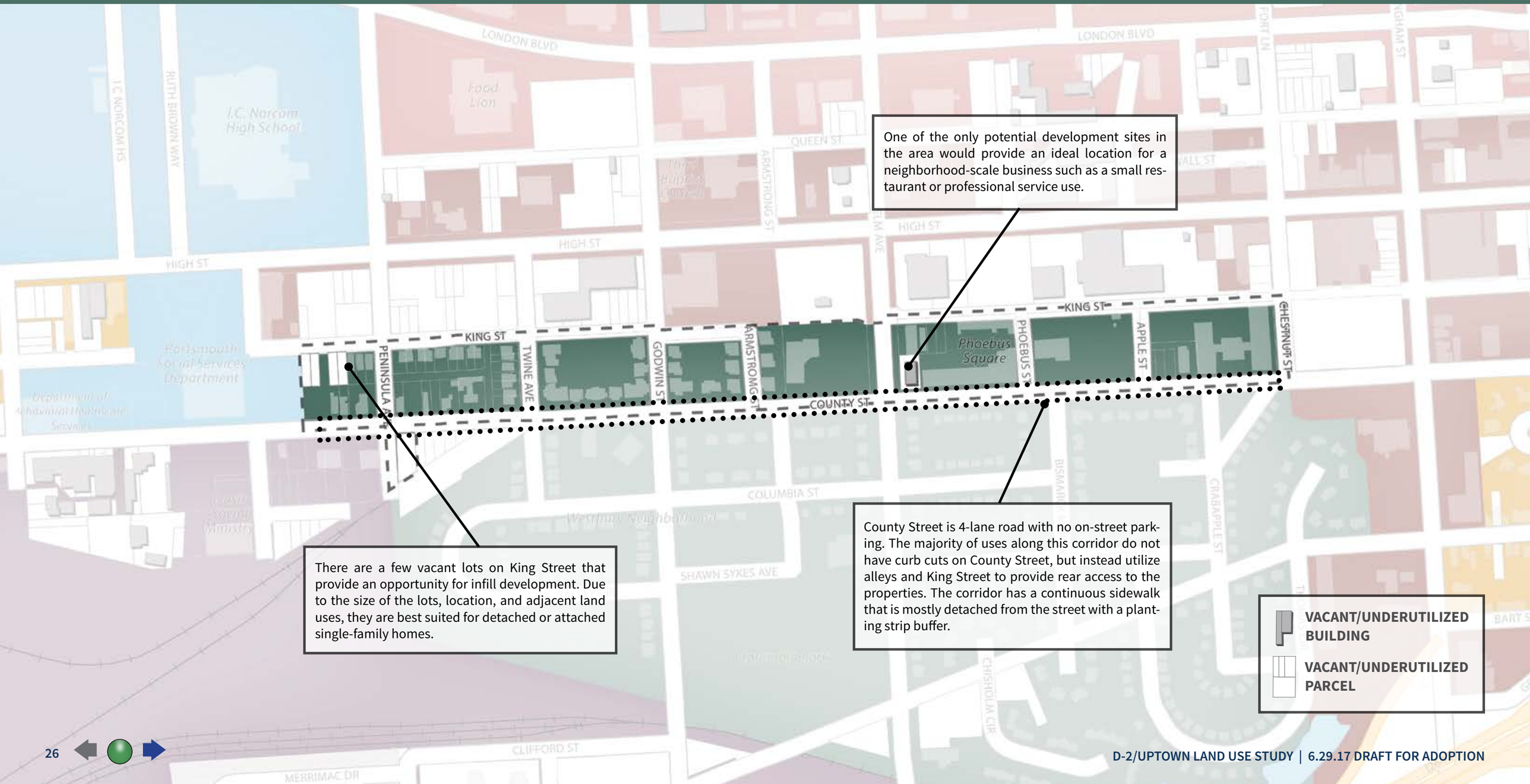
Area	*21 ac*
% of D2 Area	*8%*
# of Parcels	*48*
Avg. Parcel Size	*13,100 ft²*

FOCUS AREAS

COUNTY STREET

Occupied parcels/buildings are shown in green on the below map. Vacant and underutilized parcels are shown in white with grey buildings.

# of Vacant Parcels	*6*
Vacant Land Area	*29,400 ft²*
Avg. Vacant Parcel Size	*4,900 ft²*
# of Underutilized Parcels	*0*
Underutilized Land Area	*0 ft²*
Avg. Underutilized Parcel Size	*0 ft²*



One of the only potential development sites in the area would provide an ideal location for a neighborhood-scale business such as a small restaurant or professional service use.

There are a few vacant lots on King Street that provide an opportunity for infill development. Due to the size of the lots, location, and adjacent land uses, they are best suited for detached or attached single-family homes.

County Street is 4-lane road with no on-street parking. The majority of uses along this corridor do not have curb cuts on County Street, but instead utilize alleys and King Street to provide rear access to the properties. The corridor has a continuous sidewalk that is mostly detached from the street with a planting strip buffer.

COUNTY STREET

LOCATION KEY

VISION

The County Street Neighborhood will continue to be a strong residential neighborhood that serves as an extension of the Westbury neighborhood and provides a variety of housing types and styles to accommodate a variety of ages, preferences, and households, including multi-family and senior living facilities. It also provides context-sensitive non-residential developments including small scale office, public, and service uses.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Significant neighborhood corridor with opportunities for small scale businesses, offices, services, and retail, that blend with the residential uses and scale.
- Adopt landscape and buffering standards for when non-residential uses develop adjacent to residential uses. Screening requirements for off-street parking areas should be required to minimize the impact from car headlights on adjacent uses.
- This area was recently redeveloped following the Hope VI Westbury project; therefore, change in this area is less likely than in some of the other planning areas. This residential neighborhood is strong and should be supported for continued success.
- Promote civic league engagement in the neighborhood along with beautification events and neighborhood events.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity and environments by installing crosswalks, pedestrian-oriented lighting, benches, landscaping, and street trees.
- Conduct a transportation study for County Street to determine if the current road design is necessary or if the road could be redesigned and reduced in terms of width and number of lanes. The transportation study should take into account potential development in the other districts that may effect traffic on County Street.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Zoning for this area should be consistent with Westbury, but should address the additional uses that exist along County Street including multi-family residential, assisted living facilities, and attached residential uses.
- Zoning should allow for low to medium density residential uses, open spaces, and compatible non-residential uses on the major thoroughfares within the district.
- Consider implementing property maintenance standards to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of properties within the residential neighborhoods.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

"Relax zoning rules for home modifications/renovations"

"Maintain neighborhood feel and scale"

"Buffer residential uses from railroad tracks and adjacent industrial properties"

At the April 10th Workshop participants were asked to select images that best represent the ideal land uses for this district. The above images represent the preferred images for the County Street Neighborhood. The quotes represent the public feedback given for this district.

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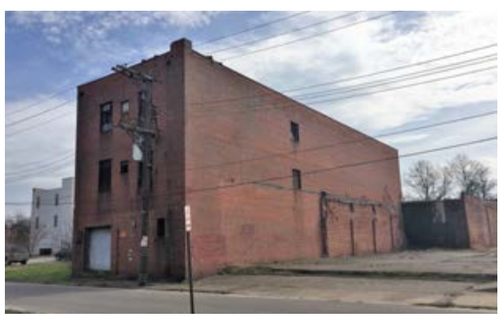
RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

D-2 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

- Remove obstacles to redevelopment and reinvestment by streamlining the development approval process in Uptown, consolidate available properties and make them development ready, and allow for adaptive reuse or occupancy of existing buildings.
- Support high-density market rate and affordable multi-family housing along High Street to increase households near Downtown.
- Make strategic public investments such as repaving streets, installing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters where they do not currently exist, or creating a new pocket park or other community gathering area in Uptown to show the City's commitment to the district and to make the area more attractive to new development.
- Improve the pedestrian connectivity between the neighborhoods in and around the Uptown area, by improving streetscapes, crosswalks, and providing street lighting designed for pedestrians throughout the district. Assess a possible footbridge over London Blvd. to improve pedestrian access between the residential neighborhoods.
- Support and promote neighborhood beautification efforts in the Cottage Place and Westbury Neighborhoods.
- Create a district parking program for the Civic Center and High Street Corridor and work with private partners to establish shared parking lots and garages that can serve civic uses, businesses, and residents.
- Issue Request for Proposals (RFPs) for redevelopment of the publicly owned land in the Uptown West Neighborhood and along High Street to ensure the redevelopment of these areas sets the stage for additional investments in the area.
- The City should consider relocating additional city offices and services to the Uptown district to complement the existing civic uses.
- Conduct a transportation study for High Street and County Street to establish what complete street elements could be incorporated into those two thoroughfares including "road diets", lane reductions, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, transit facilities, and lighting in order to make High Street and County Street more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.



PRIORITIZATION OF ACTIONS

Short-Term

Start immediately and finish within the next 18 months

1. Update Zoning Regulations
2. Update and streamline the development review process-make it more predictable and less discretionary, especially for multi-family development.
3. Continue acquiring properties and preparing them for redevelopment
4. Make a concerted effort to establish and support civic leagues in Cottage Hill and Westbury Neighborhoods
5. Compile a specific set of development incentives for the Uptown District and market their availability. See the Economic Tool Kit in the Appendix

Mid-Term

Start in the next 12-18 months
Complete within 5 years

1. Work with civic leagues to establish community beautification events
2. Issue RFPs for redevelopment of the publicly owned vacant parcels in the Uptown West Neighborhood and along the High-Street Corridor. Market them nationally to increase the profile of the projects.
3. Complete at least one of the pedestrian improvement projects, preferably in a neighborhood (High Street streetscape, Elm and High Gateway, or street lighting and trees along County Street)
4. Launch the parking program
5. Study the feasibility of relocating additional city offices and services to Uptown freeing up the Waterfront properties
6. Evaluate the feasibility of a Business Improvement District to continue making improvements in the area
7. Complete a public infrastructure improvement plan for the Uptown district that will prioritize public improvements and identify potential funding sources

Long-Range

Start within 5 years

1. Collaborate with Tidewater Community College, the Museums, the City Schools, and Libraries to establish a creative maker-space and training center along High Street to provide access to emerging technologies for Portsmouth residents
2. Continue supporting efforts of the neighborhoods to hold neighborhood events, beautification efforts, and street festivals
3. Conduct a feasibility analysis for a possible footbridge over London Boulevard to connect the residential neighborhoods
4. Implement the public infrastructure improvement projects that are slated for completion within this time frame
5. Complete a transportation study for High Street and County Street and prioritize projects for inclusion in the City's Capital Improvement Program