

CITY OF MONROE DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

PHASE 3
OCTOBER 4TH, 2023
MAYOR FRIDAY ELLIS



DOWNTOWN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT



INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Monroe Strategic Plan was developed with the goal to revitalize the downtown area and activate the connection to the riverfront. By capitalizing on Monroe's historic and cultural assets, this plan seeks to identify specific initiatives designed to increase downtown livability, encourage private sector investment, spur job creation, promote public interactions that contribute to a unified vision, and become a catalyst for continued prosperity for many years to come.

Phases 1 & 2 of the Strategic Plan were completed in collaboration with the City of Monroe, many local stakeholders, and wide community participation.

The following document contains Phase 3 of the Strategic Plan. This phase outlines a detailed implementation strategy to achieve the goals and initiatives identified in the previous phases. Phase 3 was in collaboration with the Downtown Economic Development District (DEDD) and the City of Monroe.

PHASE 3 SCOPE

- **Priority Projects** - Define the scope for specific projects that support the goals of the downtown strategic plan.
- **Circulation** – Address pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle circulation routes downtown to increase activation and improve connectivity.
- **District Branding** – Create a roadmap for branding of sub-districts within the downtown area.
- **Historic Walking Tour** – Assist the City of Monroe in researching and compiling data on historic buildings and significant sites throughout downtown
- **Target Developments** – Outline incentives for targeted development focused on historic preservation, infill of vacant lots, and development of housing stock.
- **Budgeting and Funding Sources** - Identify budgeting and potential funding sources for priority projects
- **Implementation Plan** – Identify action items, responsible parties, potential funding sources, and timeline for project implementation.
- **Strategic Plan Updates and Maintenance** - Create an outline for updating, and maintaining the strategic plan yearly.

LEGEND

PRIORITY PROJECTS	CIRCULATION	BRANDING + MARKETING	TARGET DEVELOPMENTS
●●● RIVERWALK	— STREET IMPROVEMENTS	□ DISTRICT BOUNDARIES	■ TARGET BUILDINGS
▨ MARINA	●●● BIKE PATH	○ GATEWAYS	
■ DOG PARK		●●● WALKING TOUR PATH	
■ ART ALLEY & AMBLER ALLEY			

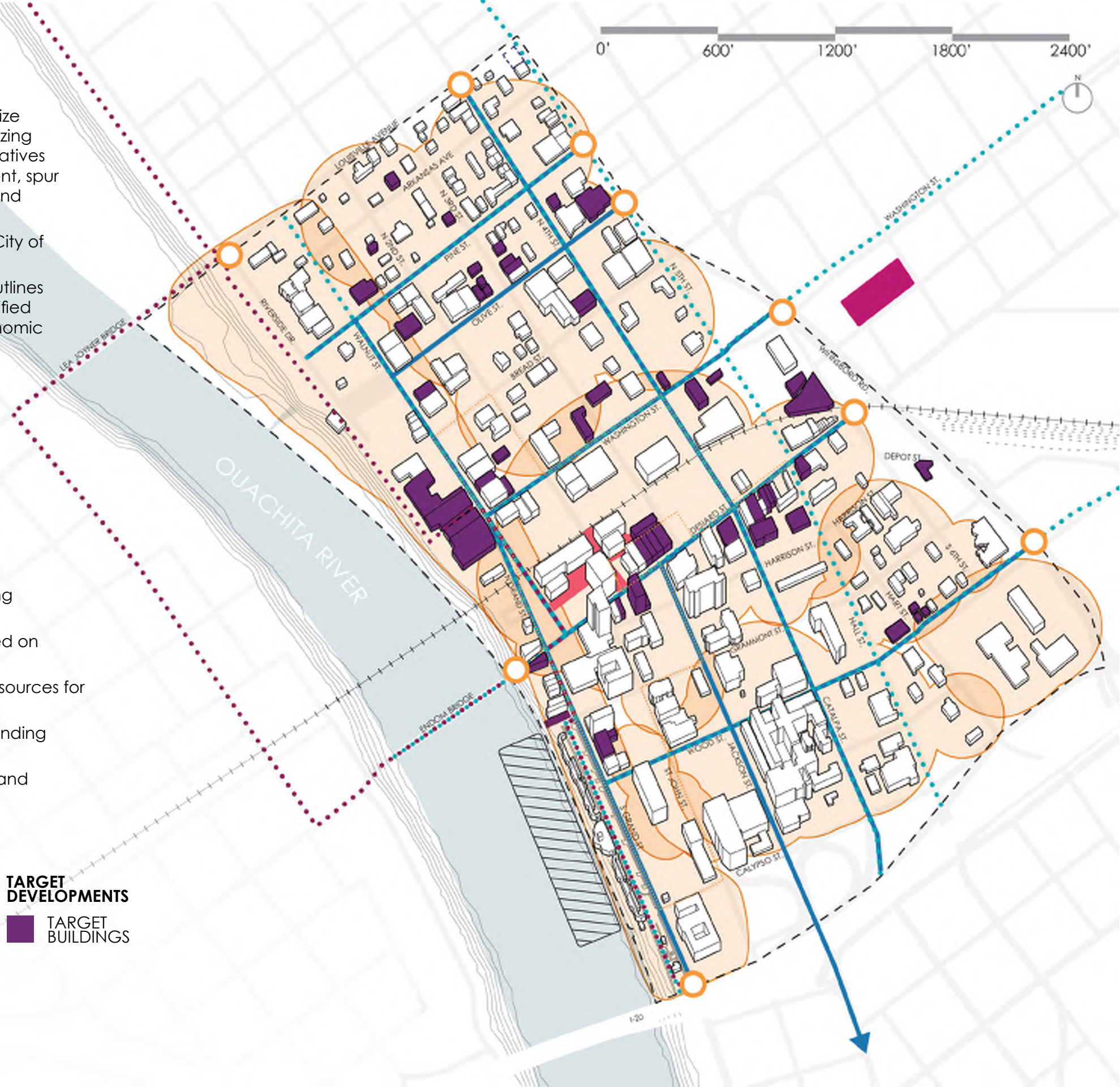


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ii INTRODUCTION

16 PRIORITY PROJECTS	17 CIRCULATION	18 BRANDING + MARKETING	19 TARGET DEVELOPMENTS	20 STRATEGIC PLAN MAINTENANCE
16.1 Riverwalk	17.1 Bike Path	18.1 District Branding	19.1 Incentive Matrix & Education	20.1 Maintenance, Tracking & Updating Policy
16.2 Levee Path	17.2 Street & Sidewalk Improvements	18.2 Gateways	19.2 Target Developments	20.2 Next Steps Checklist
16.3 Riverwalk Easements	17.3 Phase 1	18.3 Primary Gateways	19.3 Ouachita Candy Company Building	
16.4 Urban Path	17.4 Jackson Street	18.4 Secondary Gateways	19.5 Austin's on the River	
16.5 Riverwalk Path & Plaza	17.5 DeSiard Street	18.5 Tertiary Gateways	19.6 Harvey's Dance Hall	
16.6 Endom Bridge	17.6 Walnut Street		19.7 Delta Theater	
16.8 RiverMarket Programming	17.7 Phase 2	18.6 Downtown Monroe Walking Tour	19.8 The Palace	
	17.8 S. Grand Street			
16.9 Marina	17.9 N. 4th Street		19.9 DeSiard Street Development	
16.10 Art & Ambler Alleys	17.10 Washington Street		19.10 Housing & Entertainment Development	
	17.11 Catalpa Street			
16.18 Dog Park	17.12 Wood Street			
	17.13 Phase 3			
	17.14 Pine Street			
	17.15 Olive Street			

21 APPENDIX

21.1 2013 Preliminary Riverwalk Plans





PRIORITY PROJECTS

RIVERWALK - MARINA - ART ALLEY - DOG PARK

Oh Deer, it's
by L. Sanders Comp
ShylKeria

RIVERWALK OVERVIEW

PHASE 1 (1 - 5 YEAR PLAN)

- LEVEE PATH**
Efforts to pursue an accessible path along the top of the Ouachita River levee from Forsythe Park to Downtown Monroe are already in the works therefore this project is part of Phase 1.
- RIVERWALK EASEMENTS**
Obtaining easement rights to privately owned Riverfront properties is part of Monroe's 1-year plan of action to lay the foundation for further development endeavors.
- URBAN PATH**
The Urban Path planning efforts are proposed for Monroe's 1-year plan. The project will create a designated pedestrian route from the Riverwalk to the RiverMarket. The Urban Path serves as a connection around the railroad and Endom Bridge since the complexity and feasibility a riverfront path under the bridges could outweigh the benefits. These efforts are a part of the City of Monroe's and DEDD's work in the DeSiard Street and downtown improvements.

PHASE 2 (5 - 10 YEAR PLAN)

- RIVERWALK PATH**
Planning efforts for the Riverwalk path adjacent to the Ouachita River will begin during Monroe's 5-year plan. The Riverwalk path consists of a continuous river-adjacent walkway connection between the RiverMarket and the Levee path. Implementation of the planning outcomes will be part of Monroe's 10-year plan strategies.
- RIVERWALK PLAZA**
The creation of a new Riverwalk Plaza to embrace new programming to attract more users and visitors will be implemented as part of Monroe's 10-year plan.
- ENDOM BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE**
In an effort to increase pedestrian access between Monroe and West Monroe, the pedestrianization of Endom Bridge project will be planned and implemented within Monroe's 10-year plan.

PHASE 3 (10 YEAR PLAN)

- RIVERMARKET PROGRAMMING**
The revitalization of the existing RiverMarket to embrace new programming to attract more users and visitors will be implemented as part of Monroe's 10-year plan.

LEVEE PATH



POTENTIAL FUNDING

Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants for Outdoor Recreation Acquisition, Development and Planning funded by the Department of the Interior, National Parks Service.

Recreational Trails funded by the Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL)

Rural Economic Grant Program (REDG)



A. The North end of Monroe's Levee path will connect to the Pedestrian Levee Access included in the Forsythe Park Master Plan by CARBO Landscape Architecture.



B. Levee path to slope down to street level on either side of Lea Joyner Bridge / Louisville Ave for sidewalk connection to pedestrian crosswalk on Riverside Drive.



C. The South end of the Levee path slopes down to reach the Riverwalk at street level.

POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR LEVEE PATH



Permeable Paving Grid
Approx. cost PSF:
\$4 - \$12



Decomposed Granite
Approx. cost per CY:
\$3 - \$6



Solar Powered Lighting
Approx. cost per bollard:
\$300 - \$1000



Paved Surface Example

NEXT STEPS

1. Engage consultants to design and detail Levee path with continued coordination with the Tensas Basin Levee District and the US Army Corp of Engineers.
2. Apply for grants or pursue funds to complete project.
3. Build all at once or in phases.

APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS

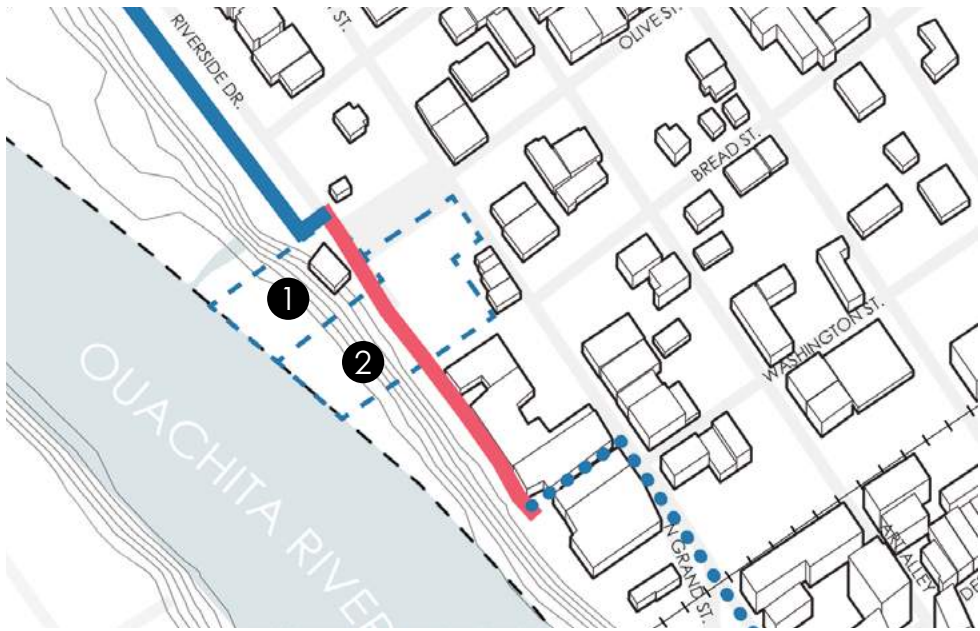
Average Path Width: 5'
Path Length: 1.32 Miles

TIMELINE

Phase 1 (1-5 years) - Install solar powered lighting
Phase 2 (5-10 years) - Create more permanent and ADA-accessible path

RIVERWALK EASEMENTS

The addition of a sidewalk / riverwalk path across these privately owned parcels would allow a continuous walkable connection from the proposed Levee path into Downtown Monroe. Shifting the existing parking spaces to accommodate the sidewalk / riverwalk path will create a buffer zone for pedestrians while still maintaining current parking capacity. The addition of planters and safety lighting will provide security and create opportunities for more outdoor activities. An increase in foot traffic would make the businesses more marketable while possibly increasing the property value.

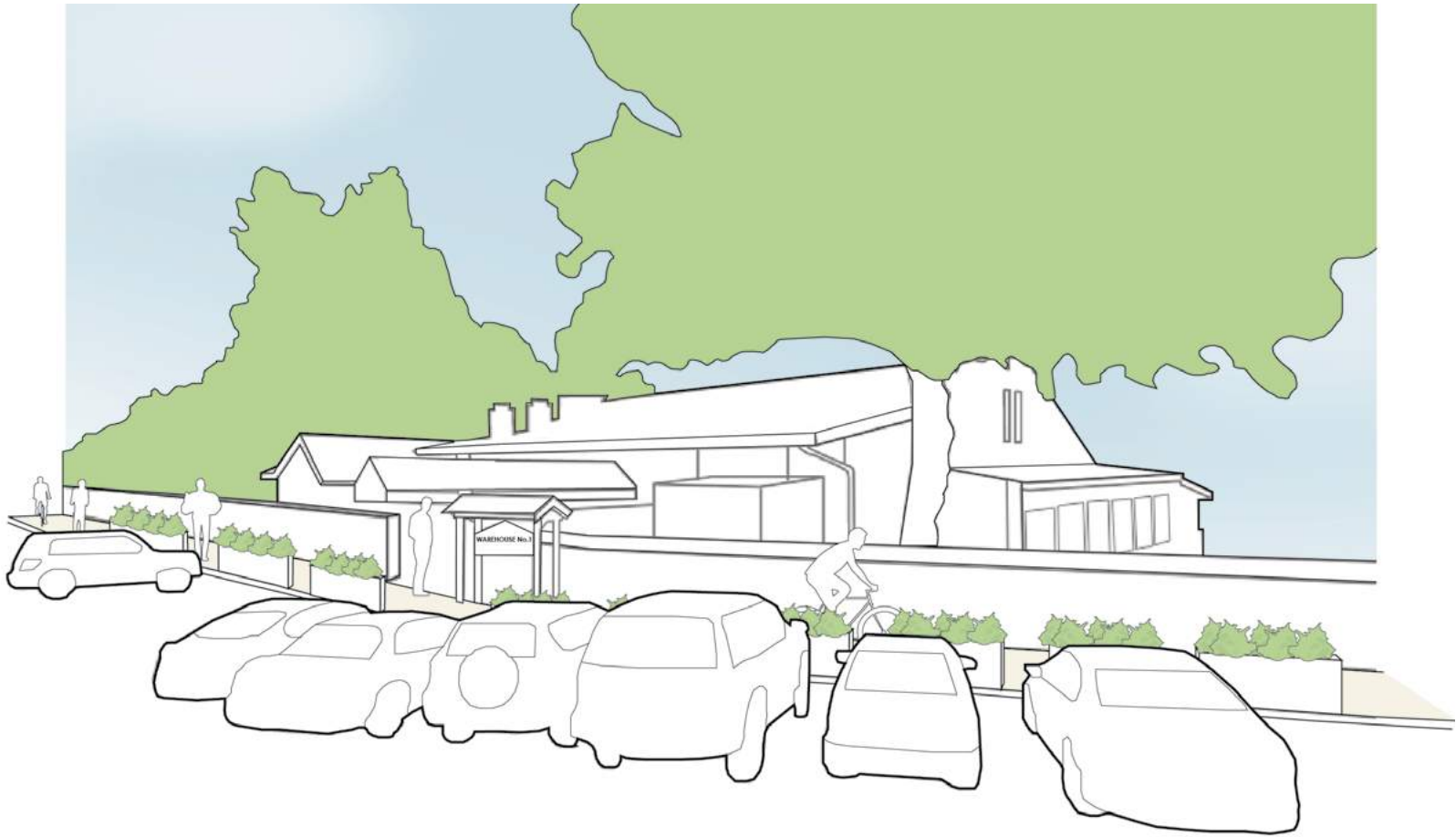
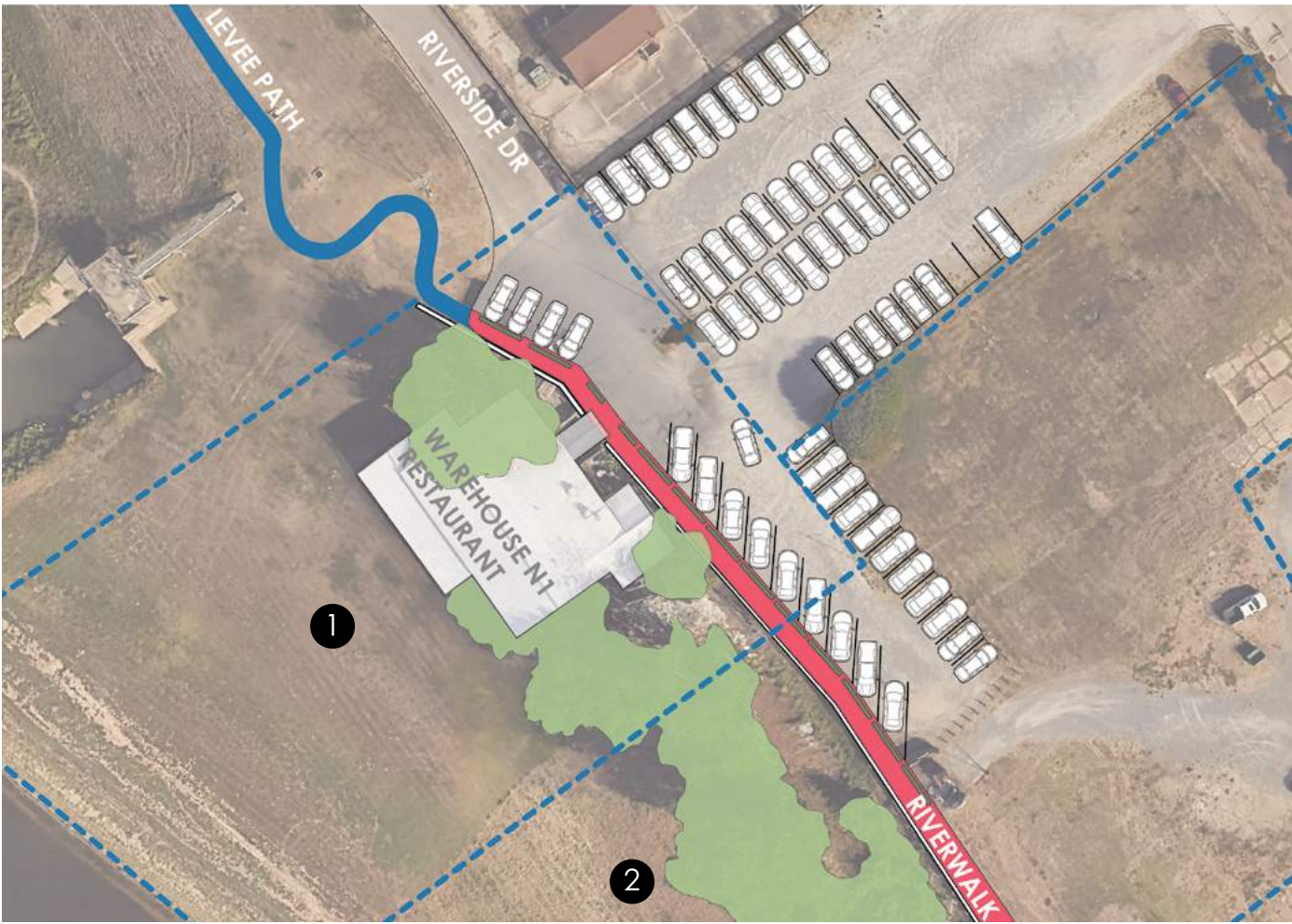


LEGEND

- 1 419 WALNUT ST
- 2 0 WALNUT ST
- PARCEL
- PROPOSED LEVEE WALK
- PROPOSED RIVERWALK
- PROPOSED URBAN PATH

NEXT STEPS

1. Obtain legal property boundary surveys for parcels.
2. Engage legal council to establish servitude for right-of-way sidewalk over parcels.
3. Fund construction of sidewalk and annual maintenance.



URBAN PATH

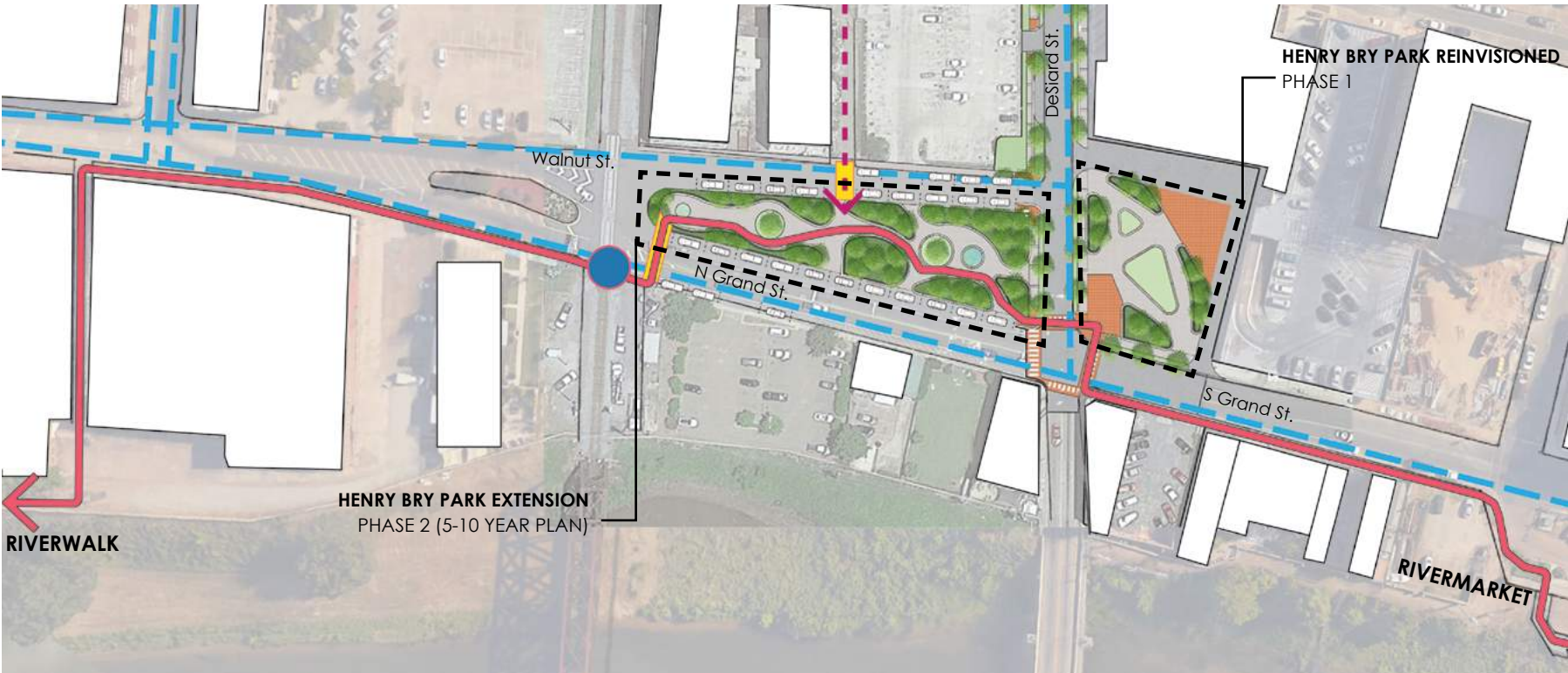
The Downtown Monroe Urban Path serves as a pedestrian connection between the existing Rivermarket and the envisioned Riverwalk. In Phase 2, extending the riverwalk under or over the railroad bridge and Endom Bridge was explored. After further investigation, it was determined that the construction and maintenance cost of this short distance would outweigh the benefits therefore furthering the importance of the urban path. In addition, deeper into the urban scene, the new re-imagined Henry Bry Park extension can potentially form a pedestrian connection to the existing Art Alley. This project includes street improvements for pedestrian use, of which DeSiard St. and Walnut St. already have plans underway.

As part of pedestrian-oriented improvements, the re-imagined Henry Bry Park extension would provide an ADA-accessible route to be implemented along the Urban Path and proposed bike lanes with the project site.

PRECEDENT IMAGES



PROPOSED PLAN



EXISTING CONDITIONS



Existing Parking: 37 | Proposed Parking: 28

BENEFITS TO THE EXTENSION OF BRY PARK

Green Space and Recreation: The transformation would create a valuable urban oasis where people can relax, exercise, socialize, and engage in recreational activities.

Improved Aesthetics: The park's lush landscaping, trees, flowers, and pathways would contribute to a visually appealing environment, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the area and boosting property values.

Improved Drainage: Converting the parking lot into a park would allow for the installation of permeable surfaces. These surfaces would enable rainwater to infiltrate the ground instead of running off into storm drains.

Reduced Heat Island Effect: Traditional parking lots, with their vast areas of impervious surfaces like asphalt, absorb and radiate heat, creating localized heat islands in urban areas. By replacing these surfaces with vegetation, trees, and green spaces, the park helps cool the surrounding environment.

POTENTIAL FUNDING

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL)
- Rural Economic Grant Program (REDG)

NEXT STEPS

- Engage consultants to design Phases 1 and 2.
- Apply for grants and pursue funding to complete project.

TIMELINE

- Phase 1 (1-5 years)** - Refresh existing Henry Bry Park to include additional greenery, shade, and potentially an event stage
- Phase 2 (5-10 years)** - Revamp triangular parking lot to become an extension of Henry Bry Park, moving parking to perimeter and creating an urban forest to provide a pleasant urban path for pedestrians.

LEGEND

- EXISTING RAILROAD CROSSING
- NEW CROSSWALK
- URBAN PATH ROUTE
- BIKE ROUTE

RIVERWALK PATH & PLAZA

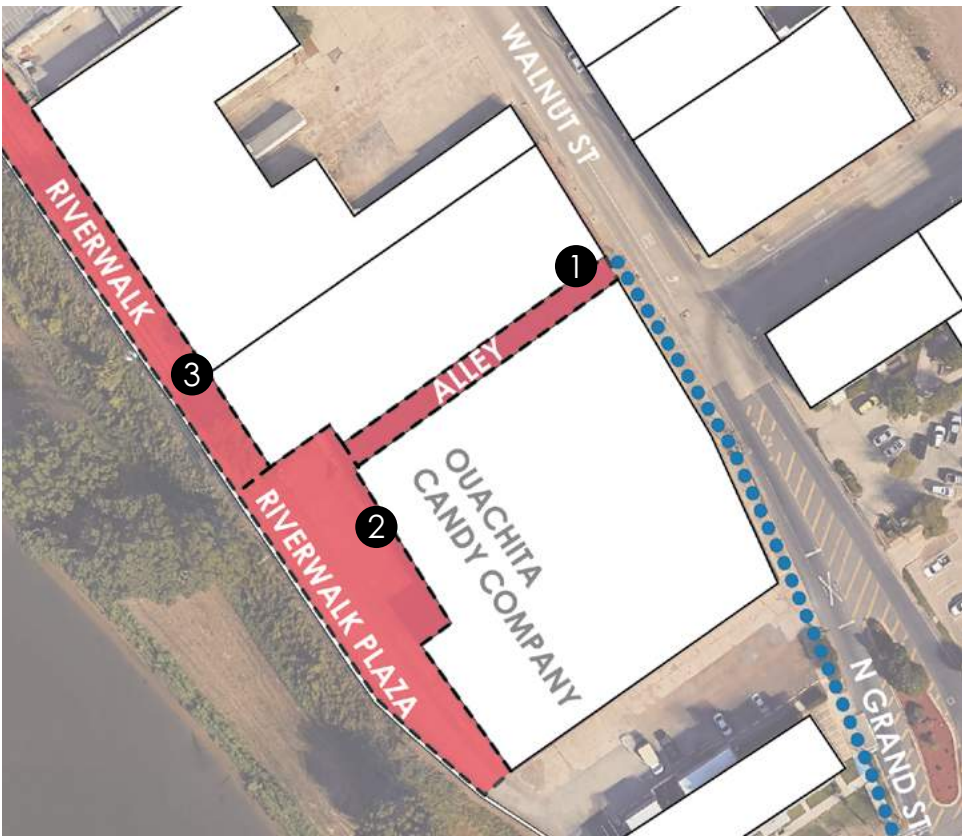
The proposed development of the Ouachita Candy Company site includes an opportunity for opening up a wide stretch of space adjacent to the levee wall. A public plaza is proposed to anchor the south end of the Riverwalk, providing an opportunity for outdoor recreational activities and gatherings with direct views of the river. In order to create a continuous pedestrian connection from the Riverwalk and Levee path to the downtown Urban Path, the space between two of the existing Candy Company buildings is proposed to be activated as a public alley. The creation of small vendor spaces creates a more inclusive environment for smaller businesses and startups while generating a vibrant active alley.



POTENTIAL FUNDING

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL)
- Rural Economic Grant Program (REDG)

BCG Engineering & Consulting LLC produced preliminary plans for the Riverwalk Path in 2013, see plans in Appendix. After the DEDD identified the need to bury the power lines on the riverfront and Walnut Street prior to proceeding with the Riverwalk, the project was put on hold. The DEDD and Volkert, Inc. are currently working with Entergy to bury the power lines. Once this project is completed, then the development of the Riverwalk will continue.



NEXT STEPS

1. Bury power lines on riverfront and Walnut Street and obtain an easement on private properties noted on the previous page.
2. Engage consultants to further develop the riverwalk plans with continued coordination with the Tensas Basin Levee District and the US Army Corp of Engineers.
3. Apply for grants or pursue funds to complete project.
4. Build!

ENDOM BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE - TWIN CITY LOOP

Improving the pedestrian experience of the Endom Bridge would allow for increased foot and bike traffic to and from West Monroe. Downtown West Monroe features a "diverse shopping experience including antique malls, individual antique stores, boutiques, specialty shops, restaurants, a bed and breakfast, events and meeting spaces." Connecting the cities would increase economic activity and enhance the sense of community on both sides of the river.

DOWNTOWN WEST MONROE



ENDOM BRIDGE EXISTING CONDITIONS



ENDOM BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

The two cities of Monroe and West Monroe are connected by the Ouachita River, however pedestrian access between the cities is currently limited. As part of the Riverwalk and Urban Path developments, improvements are suggested for enhancing the pedestrian experience across Endom Bridge. This connection has the potential to create a continuous loop for pedestrians to experience attractions on both sides of the river, such as Antique Alley in West Monroe and the Riverwalk in Monroe.

Three options were developed for improvements to the existing pedestrian walkway on the bridge.

- 1. The addition of a decorative canopy hosting solar powered lighting would provide safety and protection.
- 2. Painting the existing walkway and curb wall would be a cost effective way to activate the bridge and incorporate city branding.
- 3. Adding a tall perforated screen between the vehicular and pedestrian lanes would be a minimal investment providing a layer of protection and opportunity for signage or marketing.



1. CANOPY SCHEME
PROTECTIVE, HOSTS LIGHTING
APPROXIMATELY 1,000 FEET OF CANOPY



2. PAINT SCHEME
COST EFFICIENT, ARTISTIC
APPROXIMATELY 67,200 SF OF PAINT



3. SCREEN SCHEME
PROTECTIVE, MINIMAL
APPROXIMATELY 1,000 FEET OF SCREEN

POTENTIAL FUNDING

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

MATERIALITY



WOOD STRUCTURE



COLORFUL, FUN



PERFORATED METAL



SOLAR POWERED LIGHTING

NEXT STEPS

- 1. Coordinate with West Monroe and DOTD to outline expectations and restrictions for pedestrianization of bridge.
- 2. Coordinate with West Monroe to plan for a continuous pedestrian path to complete the "loop."
- 3. Create a team of engineers and local artists to design shade structure and artistic concept for bridge.
- 4. Apply for grants and pursue funding to complete project.

RIVERMARKET PROGRAMMING

PROPOSED PROGRAM

The RiverMarket is a great asset with beautiful views of the river. Currently, the RiverMarket is typically used for planned events and helps draw a crowd downtown. Adding amenities to support planned events and stimulate passive use can encourage the space be used more regularly. Installation of open tables would support the monthly farmer / maker's market and could be used for covered picnic tables when events are not going on. Interactive and lounge seating would support more passive activities.

POTENTIAL FUNDING

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

PROPOSED AMENITIES



INTERACTIVE SEATING ●



2D GAMES C C



SCULPTURES ●



GATHER ●



FLEXIBLE USE ●

LOUNGE ●



OUTDOOR INSTRUMENTS / PLAYGROUND ●

NEXT STEPS

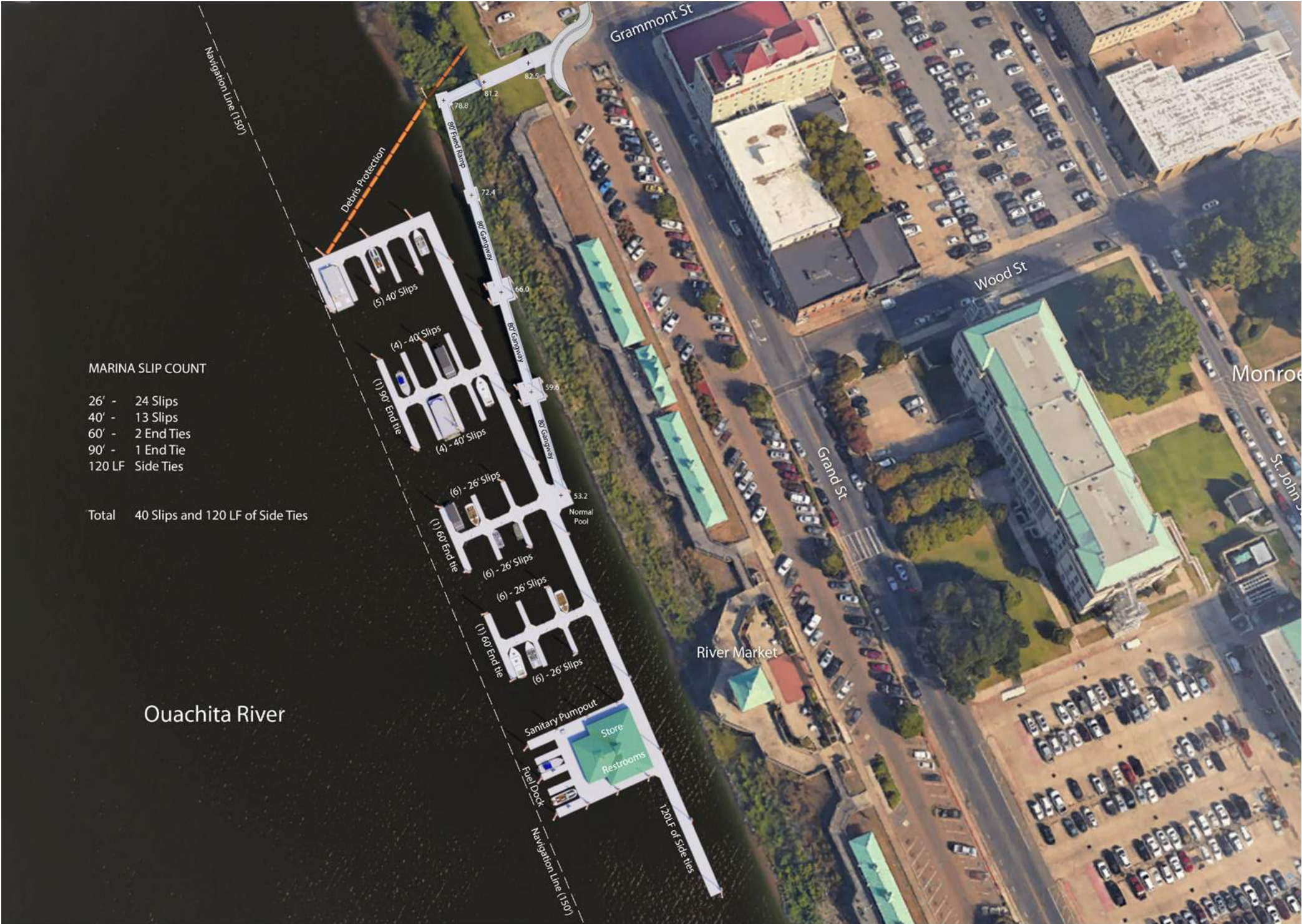
1. Engage a consultant to add amenities for both passive and planned activities.
2. Apply for grants or pursue funds to complete project.
3. Advertise space and create more planned events.



MONROE MARINA

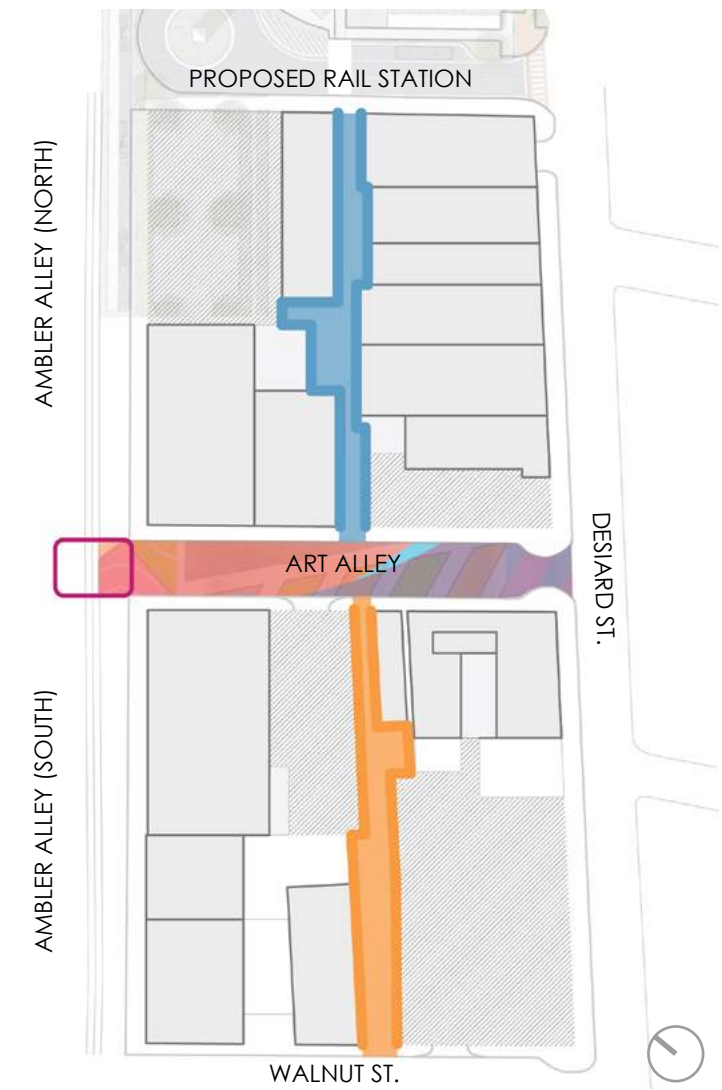
The City of Monroe and DEDD are working with MSA Professional Services, Inc. to develop plans for a marina adjacent to the existing RiverMarket. This project will connect Monroe citizens to the Ouachita River by providing a floating boat dock and convenience store. In turn, the marina will increase pedestrian circulation in the area, bringing business and activity to Downtown Monroe.

**Disclaimer: The renderings below are works in progress provided by MSA. Final design may change as the project develops.*



ART & AMBLER ALLEYS OVERVIEW

PHASE 1



Art Alley, bookended by the railroad track and DeSiard St., currently houses various local businesses and art galleries. Painting the street will invite more pedestrian friendly circulation while activating the adjacent alleys between 3rd and Walnut Streets.

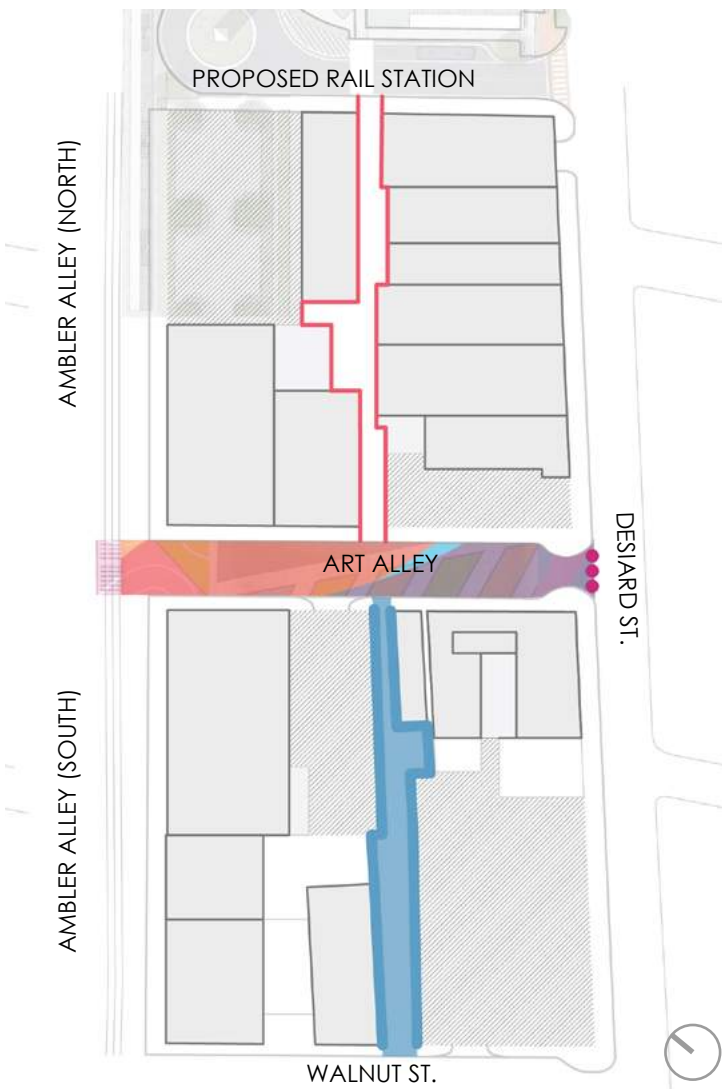
 PAINTING ART ALLEY  PARKING

 The phase 1 plan for Ambler Alley (North) will focus on cleaning and adding string lights to signal public use and alleviate safety concerns.

 Attain easement rights to start developing Ambler Alley (South)

 At the intersection of Art Alley and the railroad, a pedestrian crossing is proposed to promote continuous circulation for pedestrians.


PHASE 2



To promote a new pedestrian network, Art Alley would transition to become pedestrian-only. The added bollards will create a barrier between vehicular and pedestrian access.

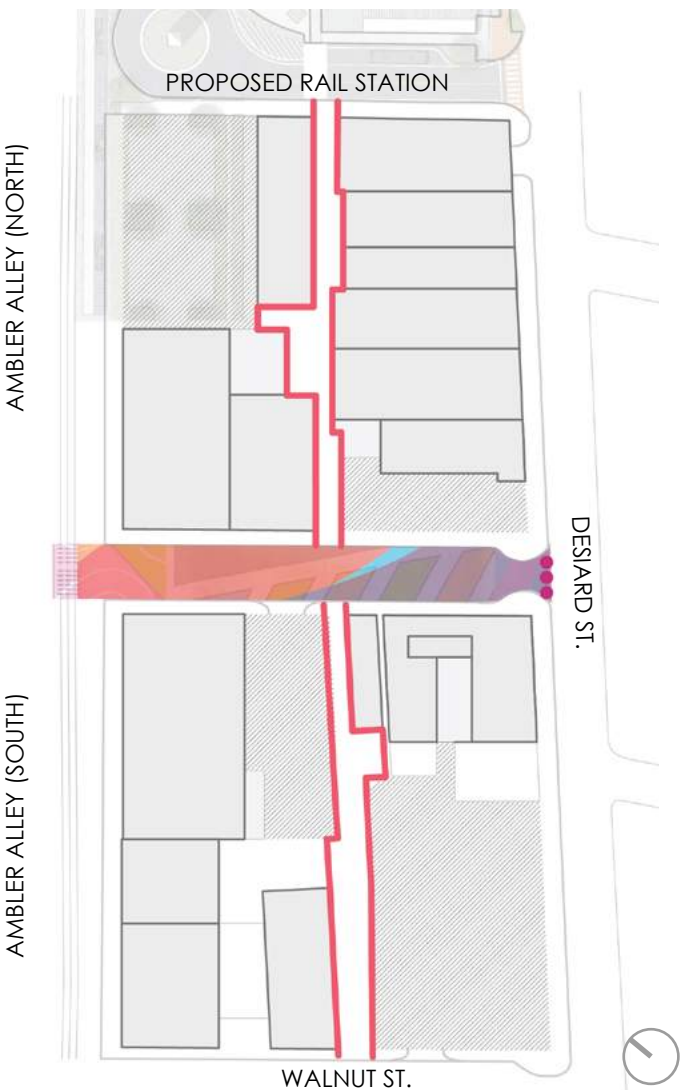
 PARKING

 Develop & program the alley between N. 3rd St. and Art Alley

 Extension of string lights from Art Alley to Walnut St. will provide access to the proposed Urban Path.

 REMOVABLE BOLLARDS

PHASE 3



Adding pavers to Art Alley St in the future would further promote pedestrian only access and serve as a precedent to extend a pedestrian network of alleys throughout downtown

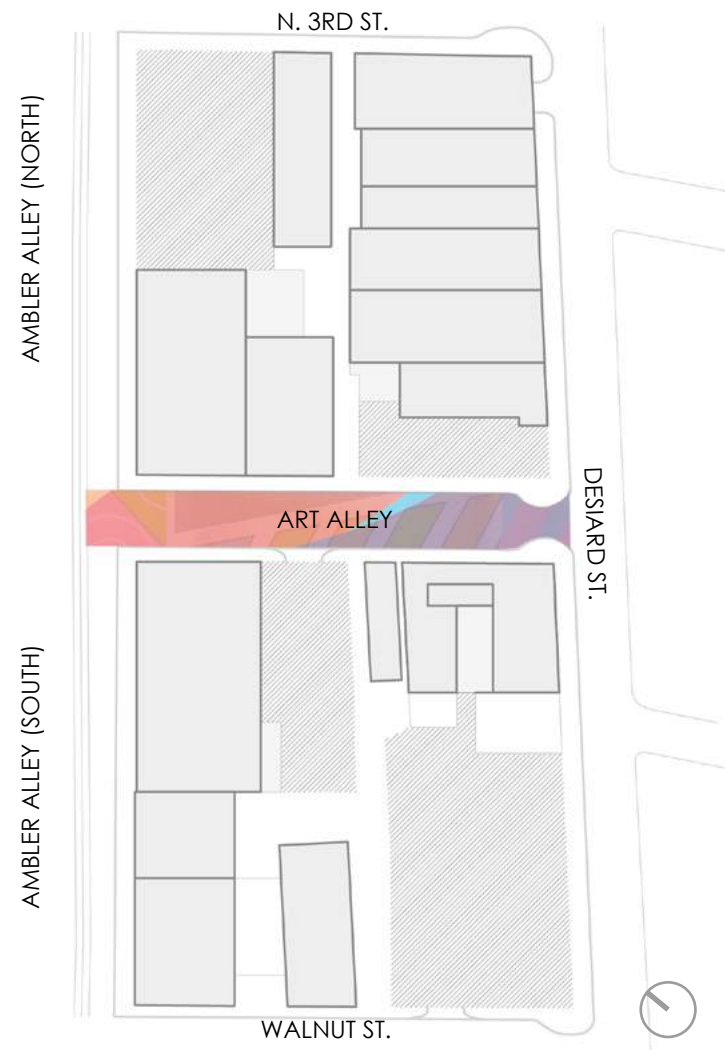
 PARKING

 Extend program and create a cohesive alley network that further links to the downtown Urban Path on Walnut St.

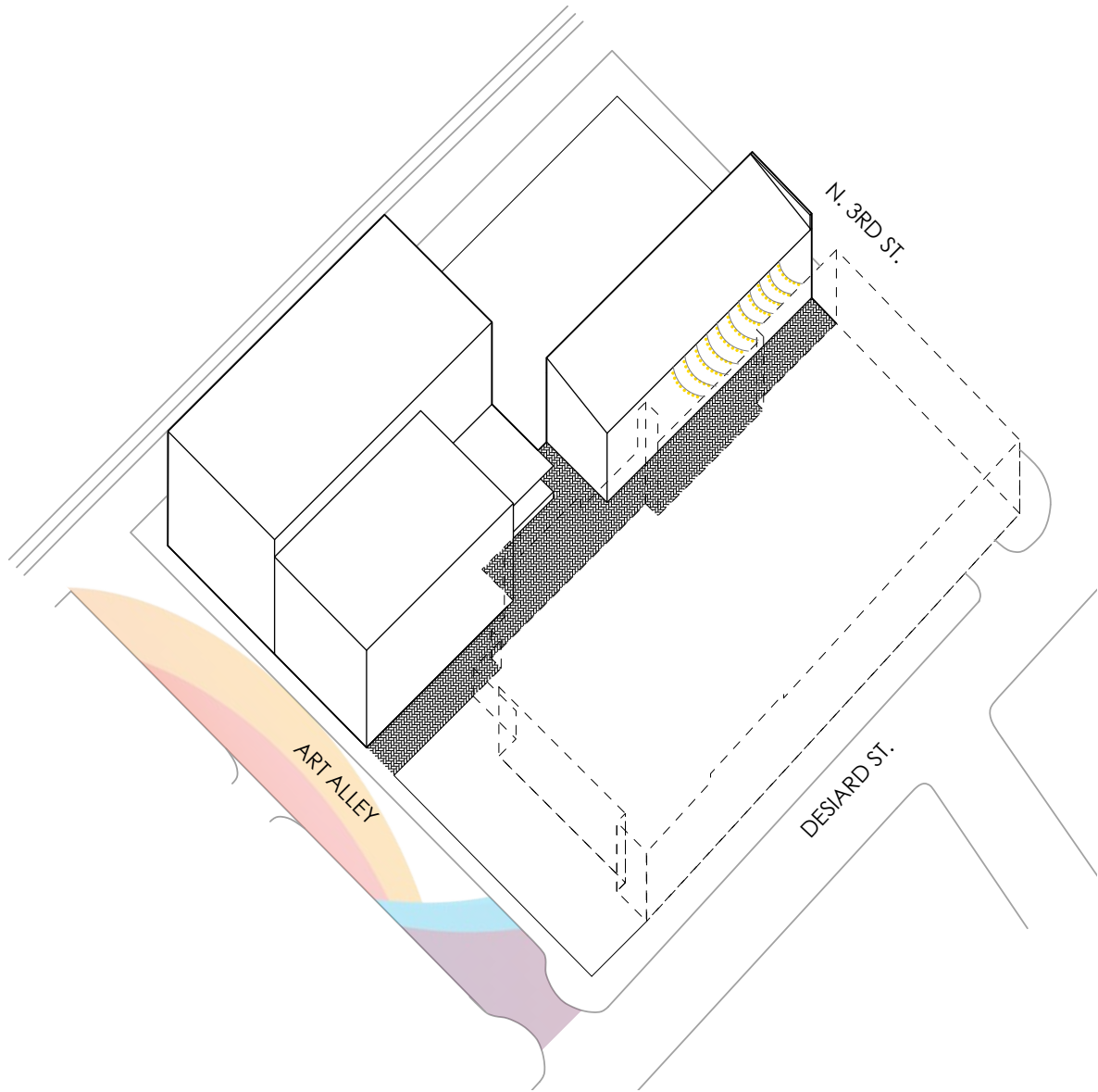
OPTIONAL
Adding pavers, stamped concrete, or other similar improvements that are pedestrian-friendly.

ART ALLEY

Phase 1 - Paint Street



Painting the street of Art Alley would not only enhance the visual appeal of the area but would also encourage a shift towards sustainable modes of transportation. The use of colorful patterns and designs creates an inviting atmosphere that attracts pedestrians; promotes social interactions and fosters a sense of community. Moreover, the act of painting the street itself can involve local residents and artists, promoting civic engagement and local pride.



STREET ART PRECEDENTS



RUA NOVA DO CARVALHO, LISBON, PORTUGAL



GRAHAM PROJECTS



GRAHAM PROJECTS



WILLIAMSBURG BROOKLYN ASPHALT PLAZA MURAL

POTENTIAL FUNDING

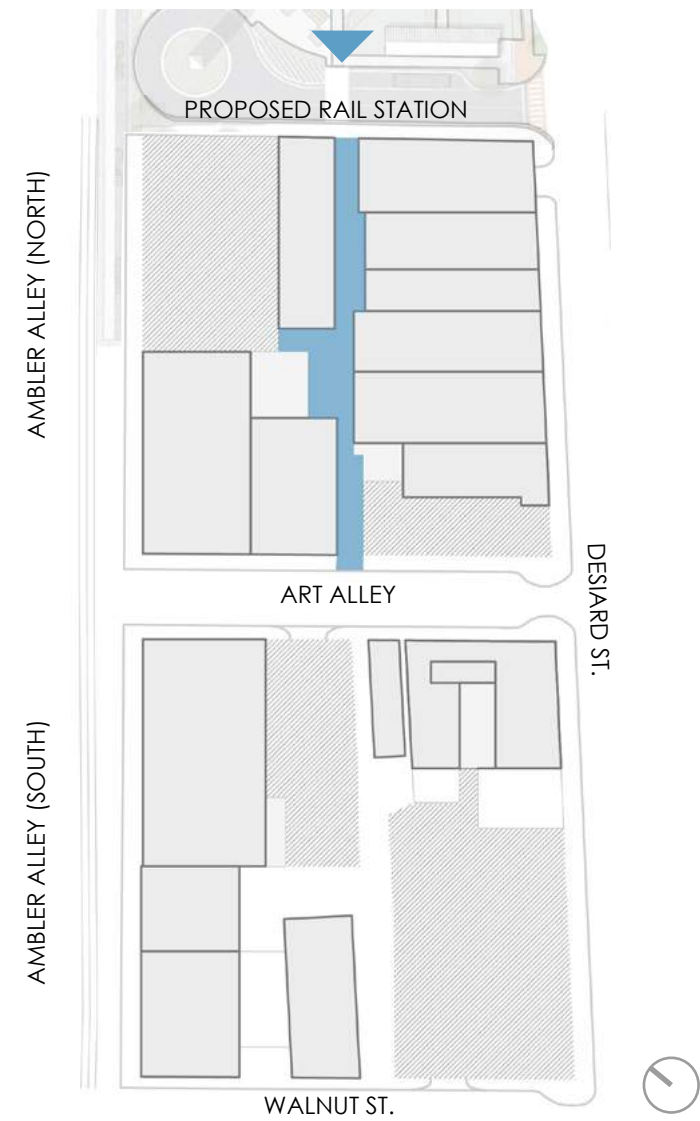
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Asphalt Art Grant
Art Grants and Partnership (NEA)

NEXT STEPS

1. Apply for grants or pursue other funding to complete project.
2. Engage local artist to design street graphics.
3. Build!

AMBLER ALLEY NORTH

Phase 1 - Define Space

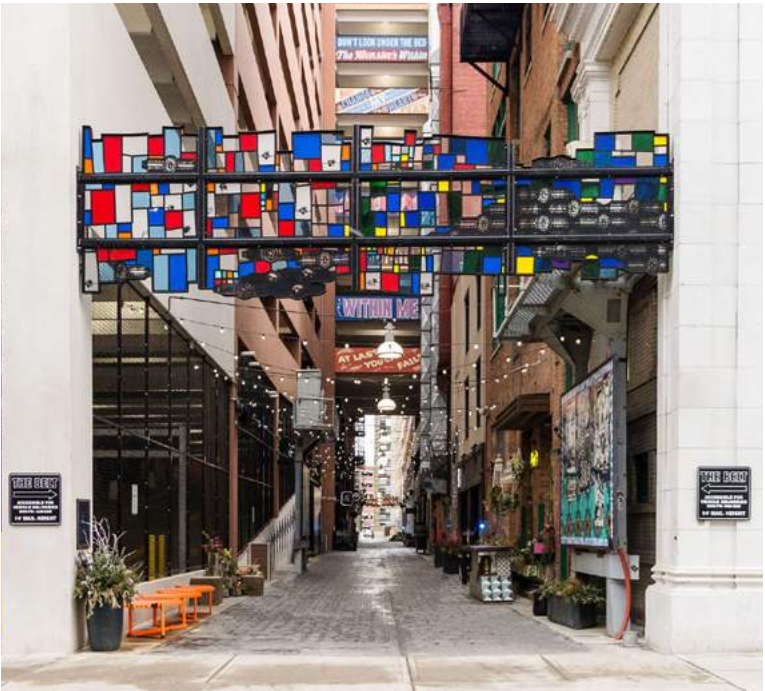


Defining the space would allow visitors to form connections to the alley, encouraging multiple visits and word-of-mouth advertisement. Some actions that would define the space include: creating a brand for the alley with a logo or mascot that can be repeated throughout the alley; building a bold gateway entrance signaling pedestrian access; and enhancing the alley with visually interesting displays and consistent event programming.

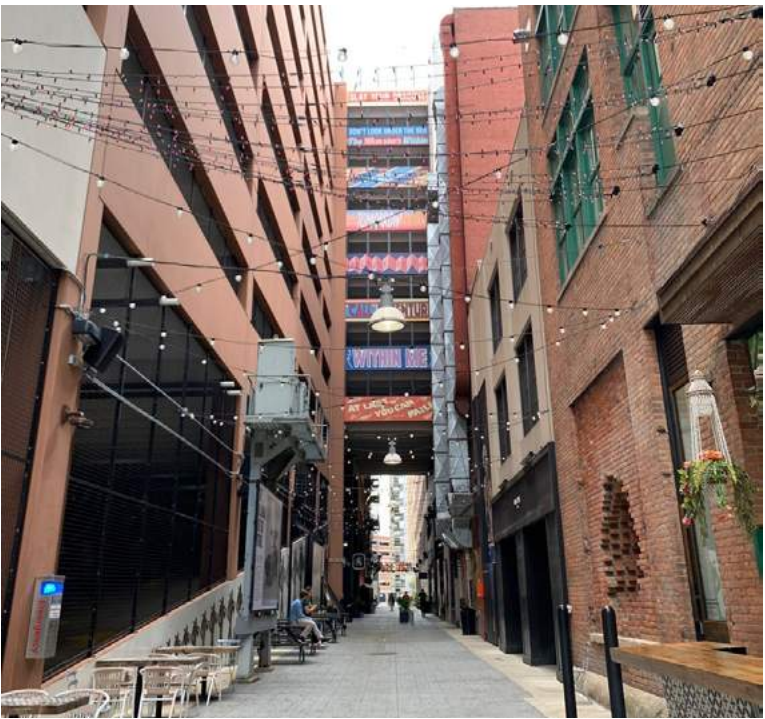
"Ambler Alley" was selected as the name of the future pedestrian network through collaboration between the City of Monroe and the community. Further interaction in developing Ambler Alley's identity through creating and designing signage would add shared communal interest in the transformation of the space.

PRECEDENT IMAGES

The Belt, Detroit



GATEWAY SIGNAGE



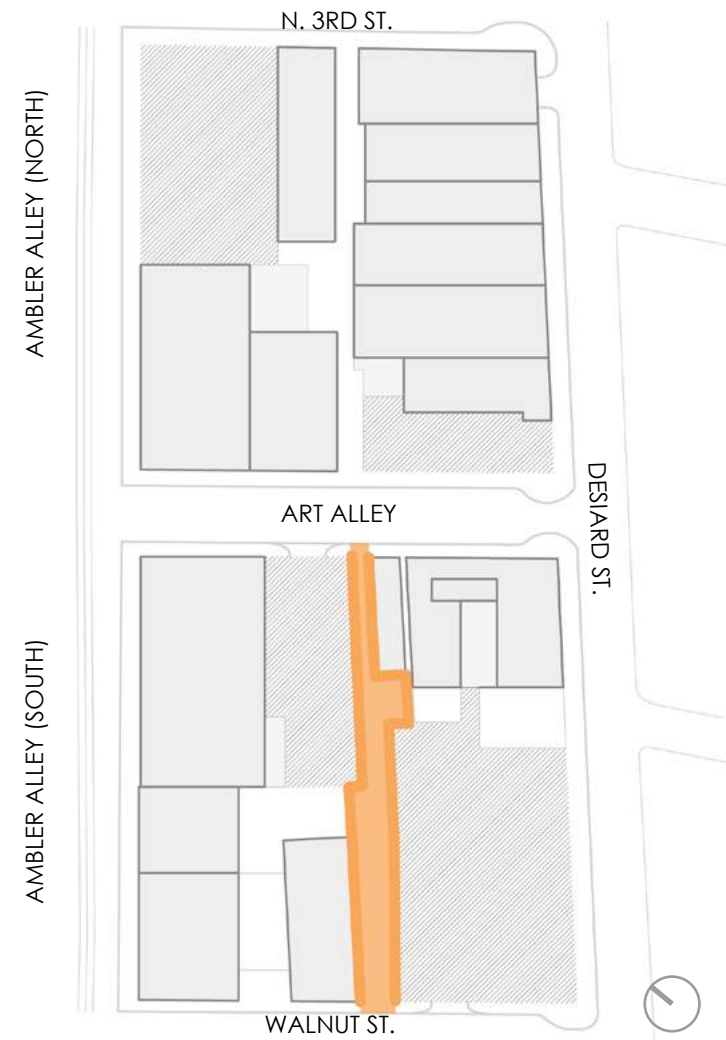
STRING LIGHTS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



AMBLER ALLEY SOUTH

Phase 1 - Gain Easement

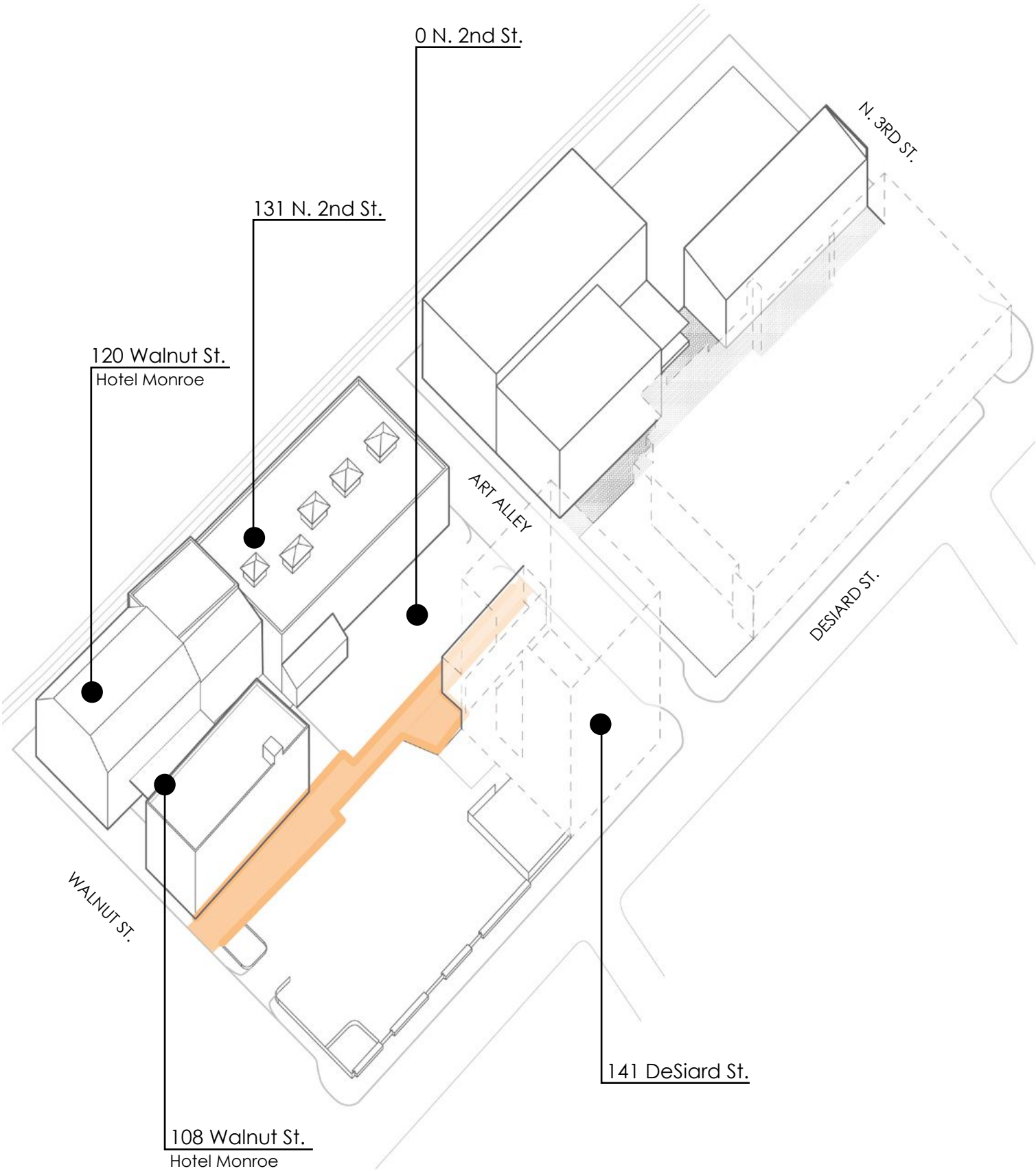


EXISTING CONDITIONS

Extending the pedestrian alley, Ambler Alley (South) would then connect Art Alley to the Urban Path, an extension of the Riverwalk. Ambler Alley (South) would help alleviate pedestrian congestion during special events on Art Alley and Henry Bry Park Extension. Art installations and programming from Ambler Alley (North) could continue through to Walnut Street.

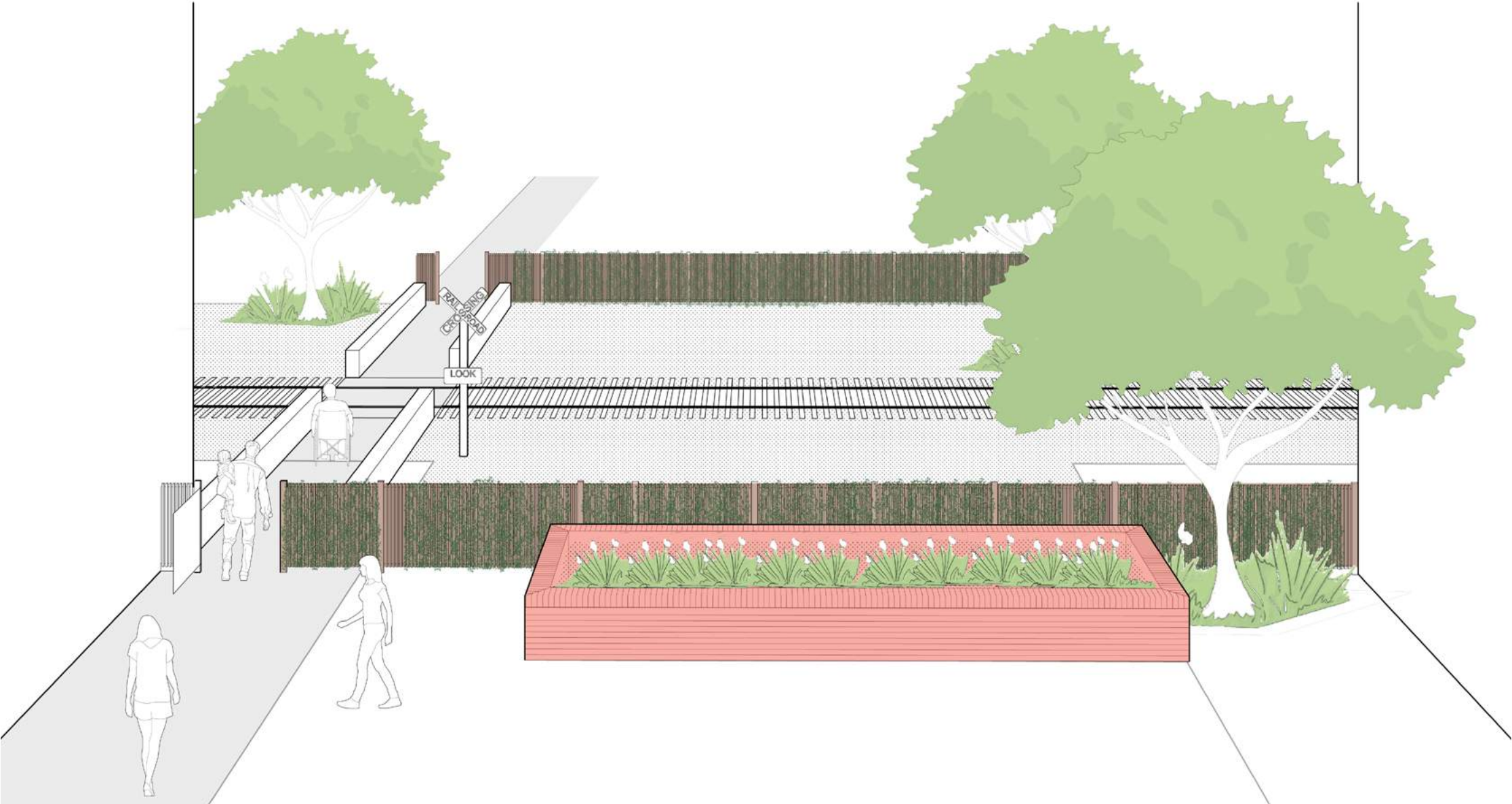
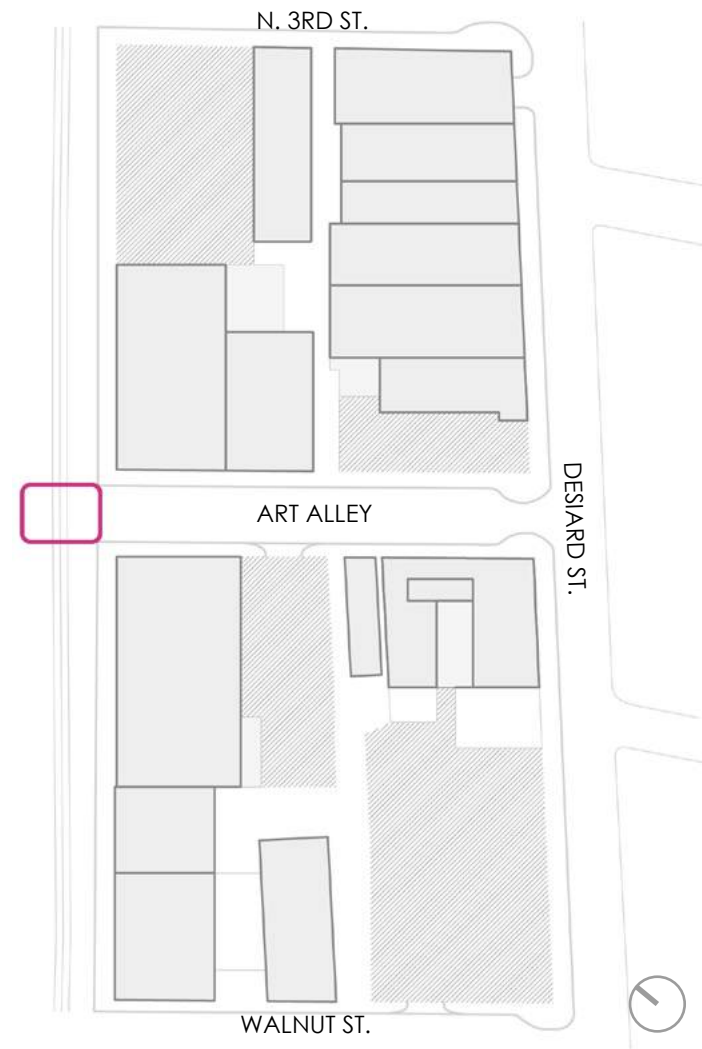
NEXT STEPS

1. Obtain legal property boundary surveys for parcels.
2. Engage legal council to establish servitude for right-of-way between buildings and over private property.



ART ALLEY

Phase 1 - Railroad Pedestrian Crossing



In 2011, plans were initiated to construct a pedestrian crossing at Art Alley for safe crossing. The blockade portion of the project was installed but the crossing over the railroad tracks was not. Re-engaging this plan by adding a pedestrian crossing at 2nd or N. 3rd Street would create a safer experience for locals and tourists.

PRECEDENT IMAGES

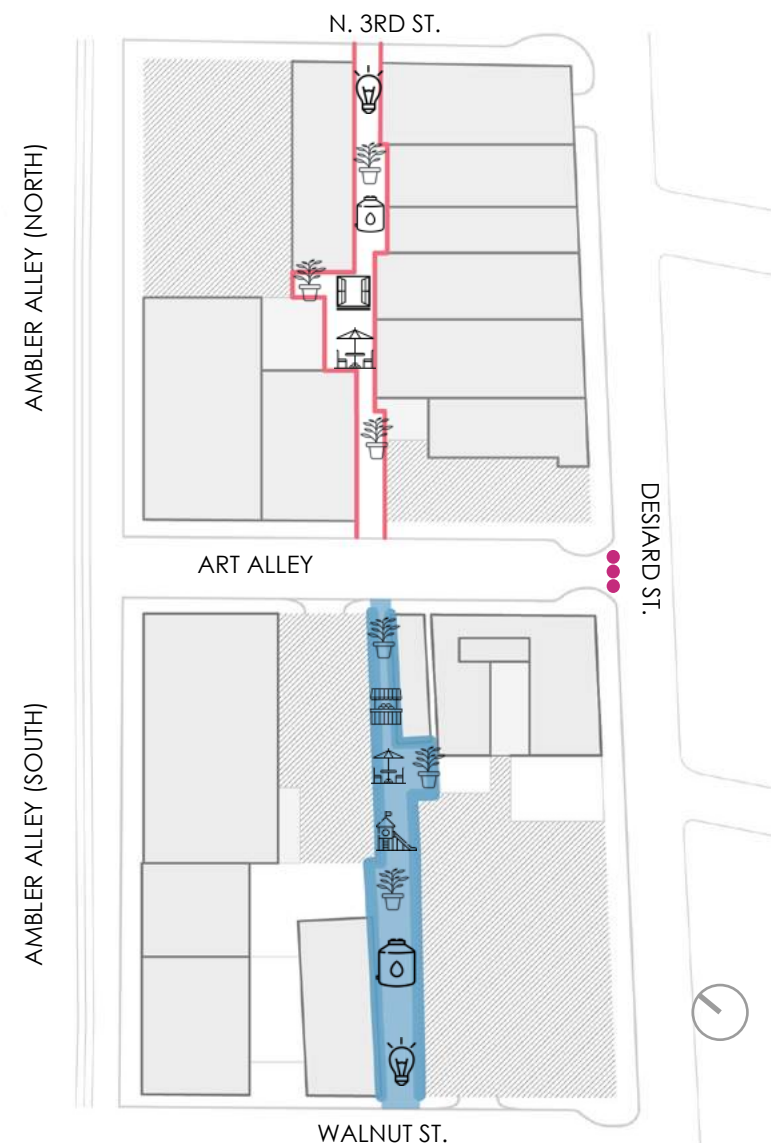


NEXT STEPS

1. Coordinate with railroad governing entity to outline expectations and restrictions.
2. Engage engineers to design and coordinate crossing.
3. Budget funds to complete project.
4. Build!

AMBLER ALLEY

Phase 2 - Define South Alley, Establish Theme & Develop Programming



Developing programming and a theme further creates a sense of place and urges locals and tourists to engage in the space. Having both passive and active programming helps keep the alley active and familiar year-round.

PROGRAMING IDEAS



GREEN SPACES

Introduce green infrastructure by planting trees, shrubs, and other vegetation along the alley. Create a pleasant environment that offers shade, improves air quality, and encourages people to use the space.



LIGHTING/ SHADING

Implement creative lighting solutions that enhance safety and aesthetics. String lights, decorative lampposts, and interactive lighting installations can make the alley attractive during both day and night.



MICRO RETAIL

Integrate small kiosks, pop-up shops, cafes, or food stalls along the alley. This introduces commercial activity, attracts visitors, and adds vibrancy to the space.



SEATING, GATHERING SPACES

Install benches, seating nooks, and communal spaces to encourage people to linger, socialize, and enjoy the transformed alley. Consider moveable seating to allow for flexible use of the space.



WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Incorporate rain gardens, permeable surfaces, and rainwater harvesting systems. These sustainable features can help manage stormwater while adding to the alley's aesthetic and ecological value.



INTERACTIVE PLAY ZONES

Design interactive installations or play zones for children and adults. This could include interactive digital displays, outdoor games, or kinetic sculptures that engage passersby.



LOCAL MARKET EVENTS

Organize periodic farmers' markets, craft fairs, or cultural events in the alley. This draws in crowds and encourages foot traffic, fostering a sense of community engagement.



HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

If the alley has historical significance, consider incorporating plaques or digital displays to share its story and educate visitors about its past.

LANEWAY ART PROGRAM

Sydney, Australia



The Laneway Art Program installs temporary art to activate Sydney's alleys and public spaces.

ALLEY OOP

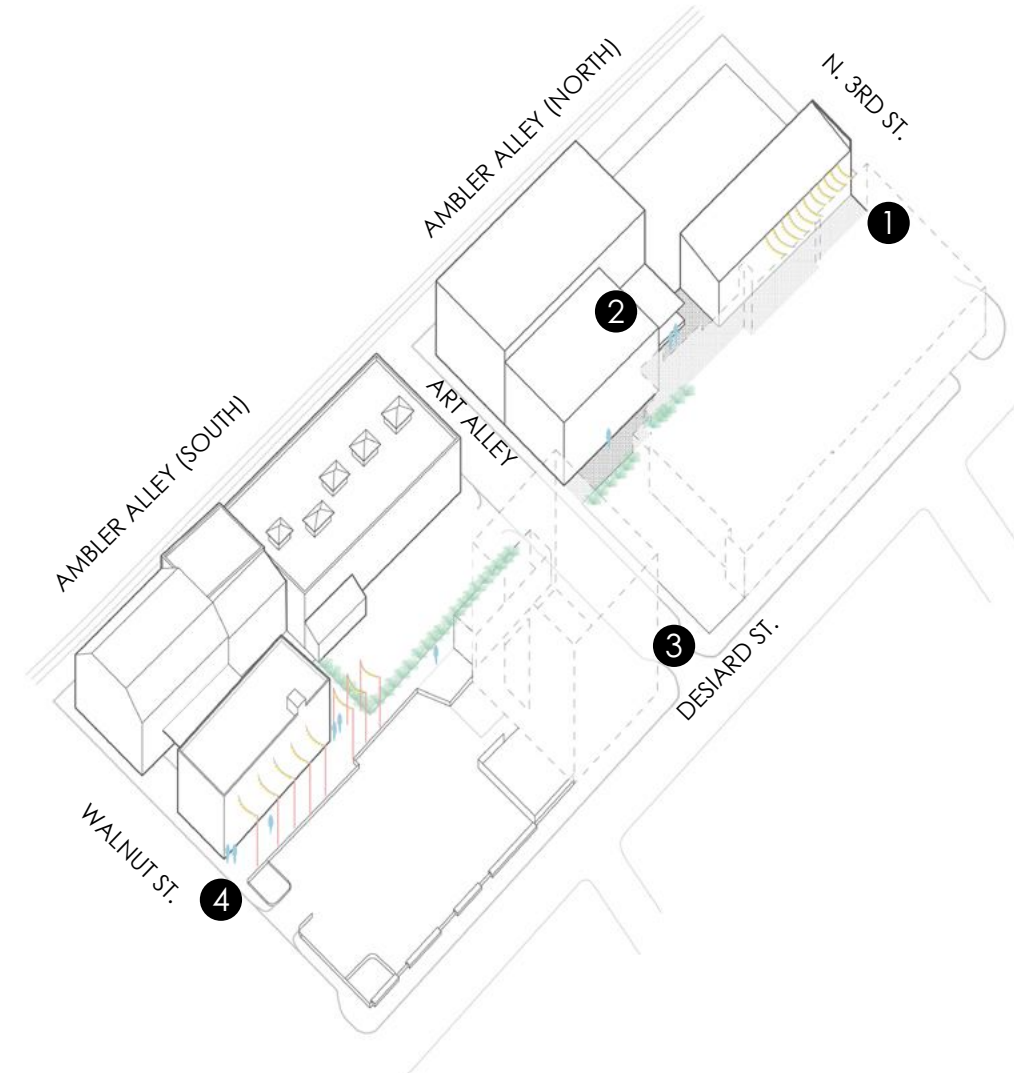
Vancouver, Canada



Alley Oop transformed an existing, underutilized laneway and reshaped it into an engaging public space that is accessible to everyone and contributes to the liveliness of the city.

ART & AMBLER ALLEYS

Phase 3 - Define South Alley, Establish Theme & Develop Programming



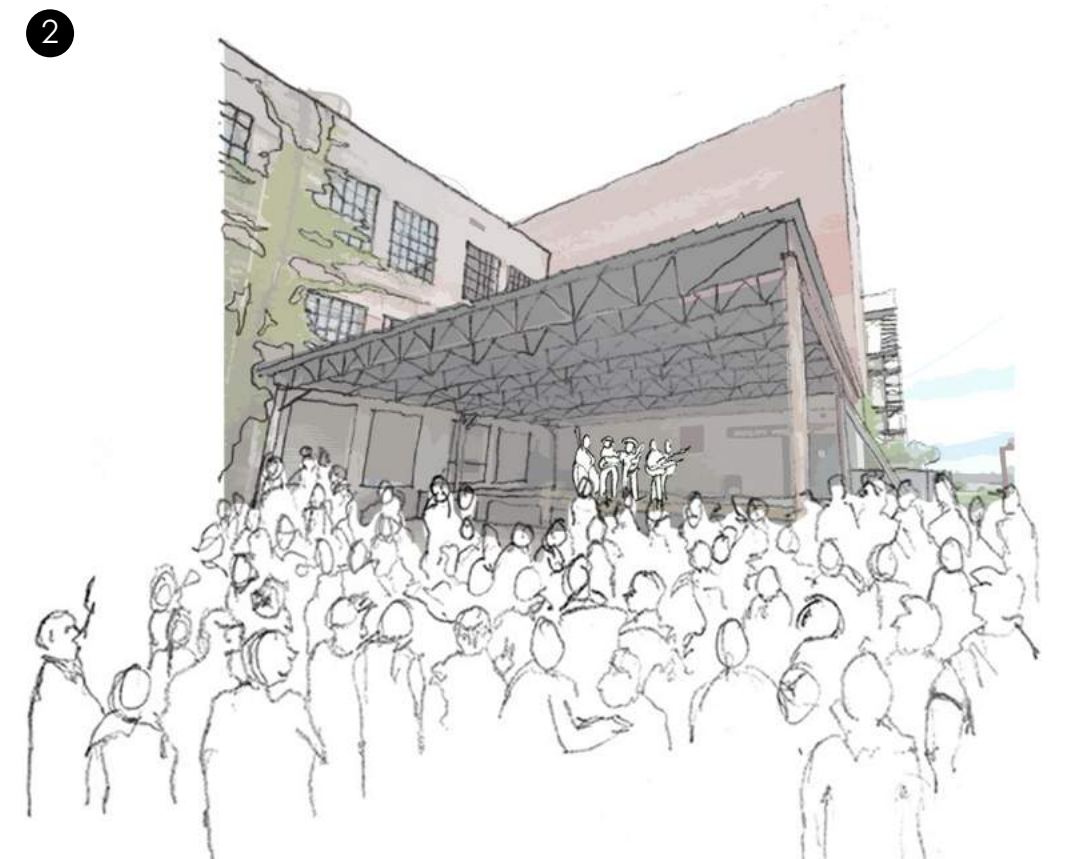
Alleys provide an opportunity to create public spaces within a city. Potential alley activation will create a more walkable city by introducing safe shortcuts and establishing more interesting routes.

When successful, alleys have a potential to:

- establish green infrastructure, native plants, stormwater drainage, and other green initiatives
- create intimate spaces for residents to connect with the city on a human scale
- create space for additional storefronts or entrepreneurial ventures
- open up additional space for cultural activities and public art.



AMBLER ALLEY (NORTH)



OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE VENUE



ART ALLEY



AMBLER ALLEY (SOUTH)

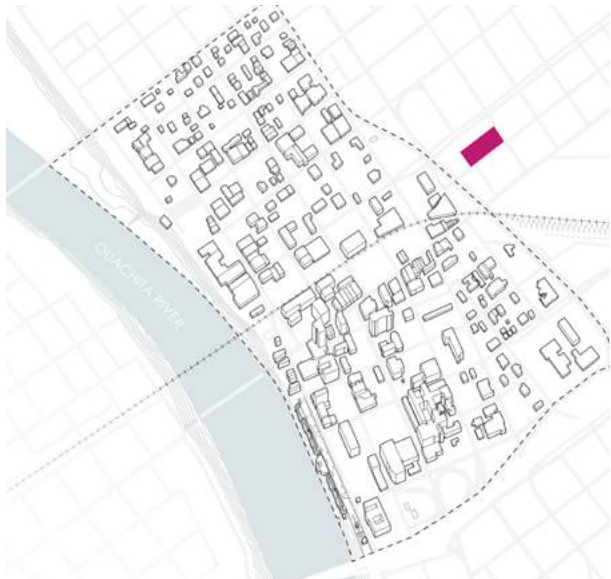
DOG PARK

Monroe Transit System
700 Washington St.

Overwhelming feedback from the community in Phase 2 showed a need for a dog park. After reviewing many sites in Downtown Monroe, the conversion of a City owned property was selected. The site has existing fencing, natural shading elements, existing seating and is located adjacent to the potential future skate park.

Located at the entrance to downtown and Washington Street, this site could bring people from ULM and surrounding neighborhoods into downtown.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



PROPOSED SITE PLAN








LEGEND

- EXISTING FENCE
- PROPOSED FENCE
- ↔ PARK ENTRANCE
- ➡ MAINTENANCE GATE
- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- EXISTING SEATING
- PROPOSED SEATING
- ENTRANCE BUFFER
- WASTE STATION
- WATER STATION
- BUS STOP
- TREE

PRECEDENT IMAGES



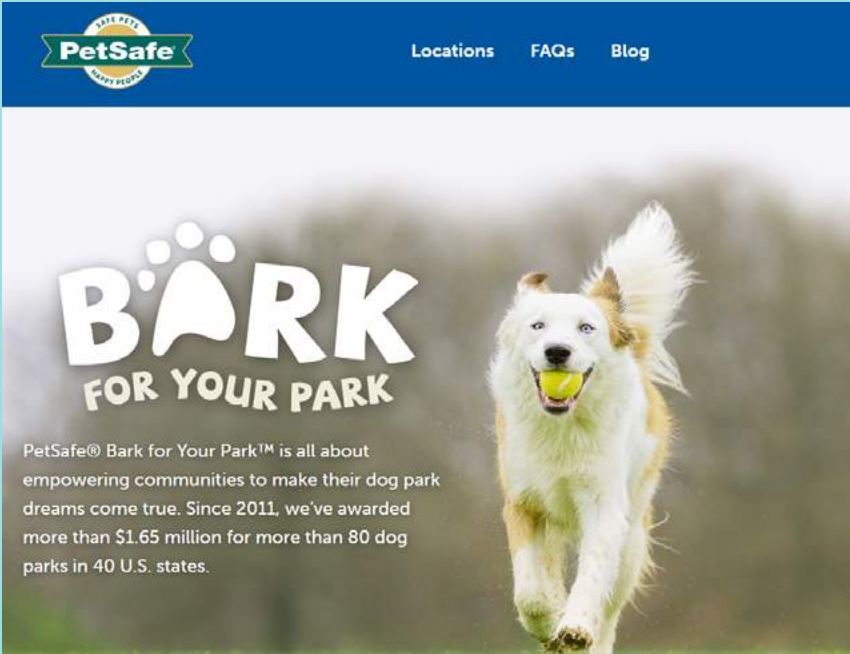
DOG PARK BUDGET COMPONENTS

					
ITEM	WATER STATION	PARK BENCH	WASTE STATION	SIGNAGE	FENCE & GATES
DESCRIPTION	Doggy & Me Drinking Fountain	Everest Series 6-ft. Park Bench With Back	DOGIPOT Pet Station With Aluminum Receptacle	Dog Park Welcome Sign	479 ft. of 6-ft. Tall Chain Link
COST	\$4,842	\$581	\$496	\$399	\$9,387
WEB RESOURCE	https://www.theparkcatalog.com/doggy-me-drinking-fountain-1?cleanprint=1	https://www.theparkcatalog.com/everest-series-6-ft-park-bench-with-back-1	https://www.theparkcatalog.com/doggy-me-drinking-fountain-1?cleanprint=1	https://www.terraboundsolutions.com/product/dog-park-welcome-sign/	https://www.hooverfence.com/calculators/chain-link-fence



POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE: BARK FOR YOUR PARK GRANT

The annual Bark For Your Park Grant is open to communities across the country and consists of a potential \$50,000 grant for the creation of a dog park. The criteria include enthusiasm, community support, community impact, and level of need. **The 2023 Bark For Your Park grant cycle is open August 25th through October 15th.**



<https://barkforyourpark.petsafe.com/>

NEXT STEPS

1. Apply to the Bark For Your Park grant.
2. Secure funding if not through grant.
3. Engage the following parties:
 - Landscape Architect
 - Civil Engineer
 - Branding / Marketing Team



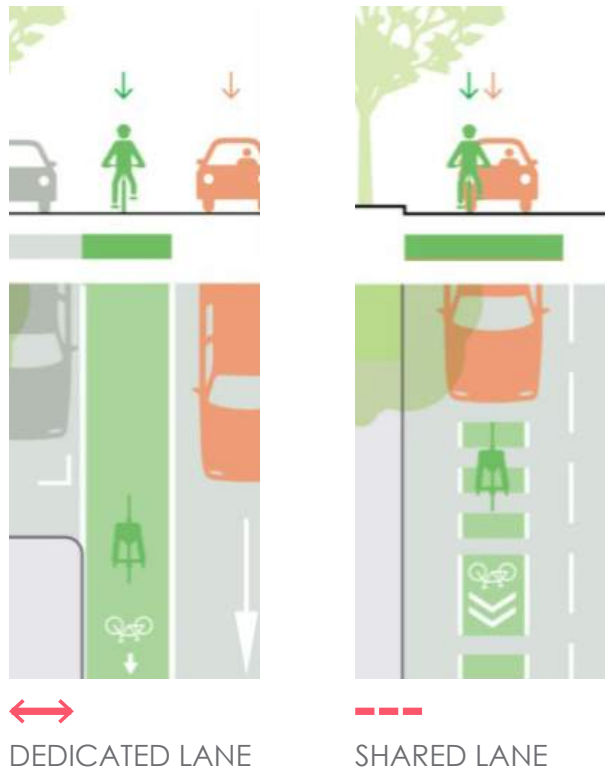
CIRCULATION

BIKE PATH MAP

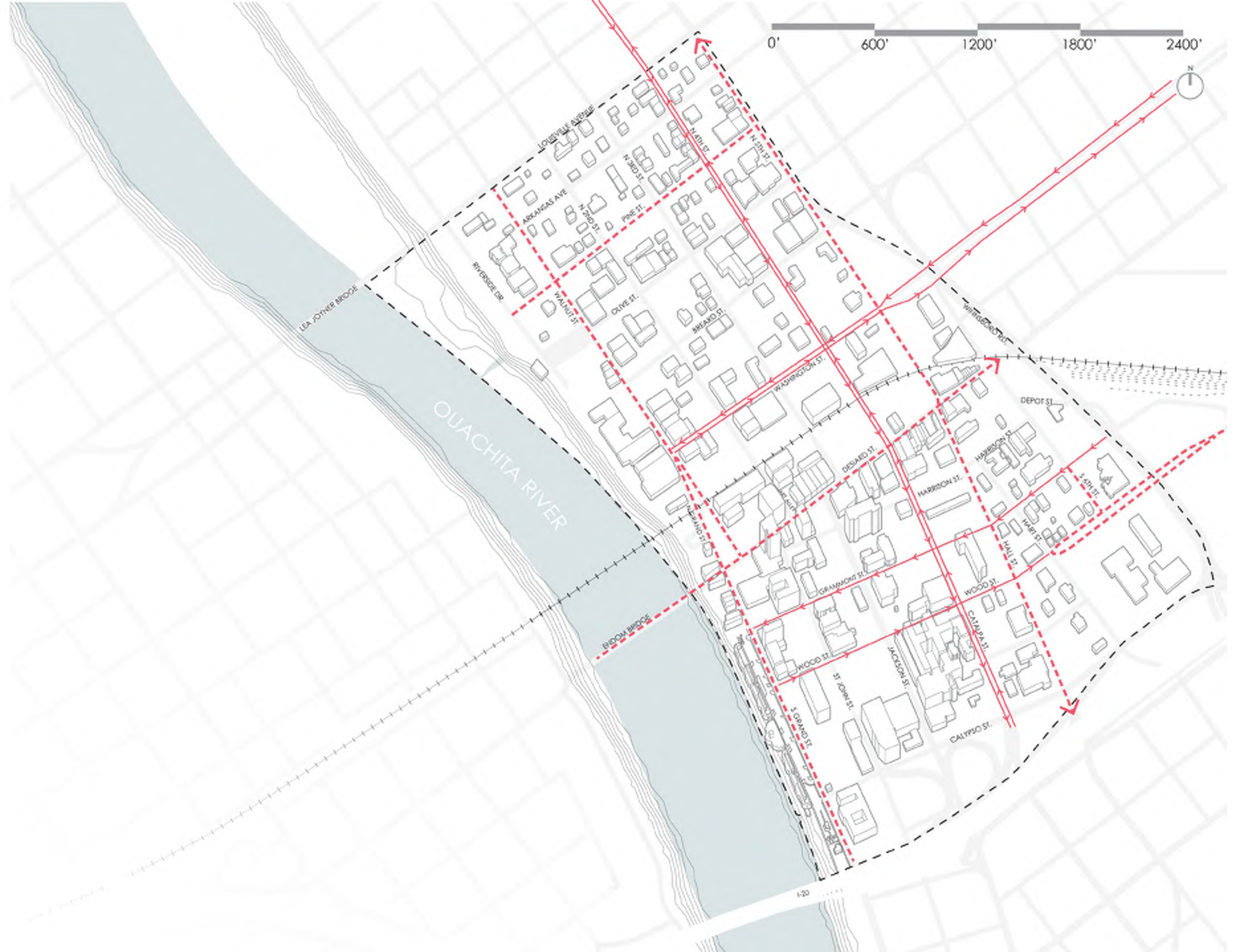
As street and sidewalk improvements are planned for Downtown Monroe, a comprehensive network of bike paths should also be considered and incorporated into both existing and improved streets. Upon further investigation in Phase 3 of the Strategic Plan, it was determined to adjust some of the bike paths based on street width and the area's type of need.

A bicycle network contributes to community health benefits, reduced demand for parking, reduced carbon emissions, and improved quality of transportation for bikers. Designated bike lanes make streets safer for everyone.

Published maps of bike-friendly streets can be circulated online to allow bikers and community members to plan their route and encourage biking downtown.



IMAGES FROM NACTO URBAN BIKEWAY DESIGN GUIDE

DOWNTOWN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT

CIRCULATION

MONROE DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN PHASE 3 | CITY OF MONROE, LA

STREET & SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Monroe is currently working to improve the streets and sidewalks throughout the City. This diagram is specifically focused on the downtown area to align with strategic plan projects and intended circulation flow. Enriching the streets and sidewalks will encourage more pedestrian and cyclist usage while making vehicular circulation safer and more enjoyable.

The street and sidewalk improvements are phased to support the strategic plan development timing. Phase 1 improvements are already in progress

PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENTS

- Jackson Street
- Desiard Street
- Walnut Street

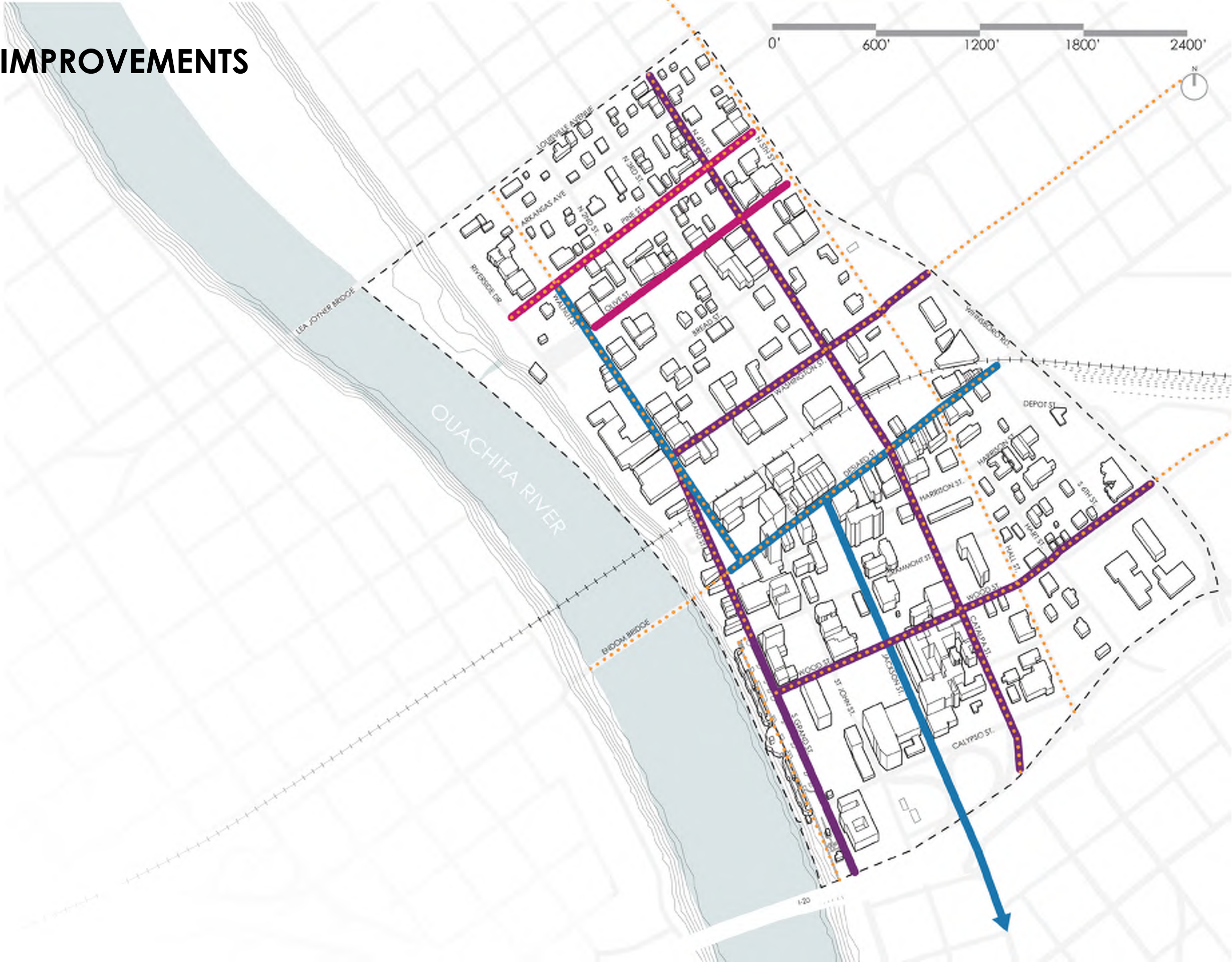
PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS

- S. Grand Street
- N. 4th Street
- Washington Street
- Wood Street
- Catalpa Street

PHASE 3 IMPROVEMENTS

- Pine Street
- Olive Street

BIKE PATH



PHASE 1 STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The Phase 1 Street Improvements are the first wave of planned initiatives and are already in progress. By initiating these enhancements, the City intends to increase pedestrian traffic, thereby improving economic conditions for business along the targeted downtown corridors.

These plans can also be used as inspiration for future improvements for city and to inform citizens of Monroe of the type of designs that are implemented elsewhere.

JACKSON STREET

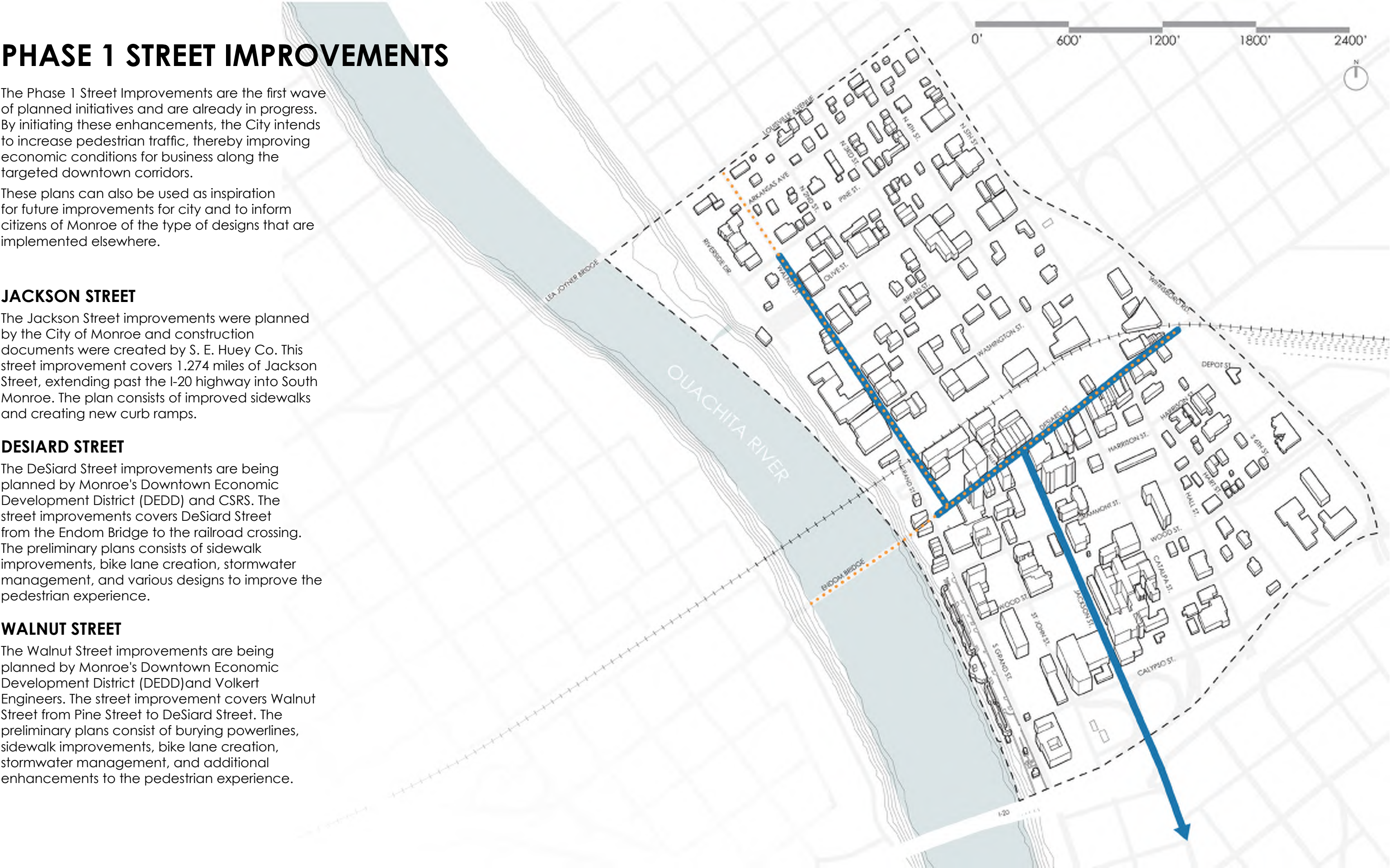
The Jackson Street improvements were planned by the City of Monroe and construction documents were created by S. E. Huey Co. This street improvement covers 1.274 miles of Jackson Street, extending past the I-20 highway into South Monroe. The plan consists of improved sidewalks and creating new curb ramps.

DESIARD STREET

The DeSiard Street improvements are being planned by Monroe's Downtown Economic Development District (DEDD) and CSRS. The street improvements covers DeSiard Street from the Endom Bridge to the railroad crossing. The preliminary plans consists of sidewalk improvements, bike lane creation, stormwater management, and various designs to improve the pedestrian experience.

WALNUT STREET

The Walnut Street improvements are being planned by Monroe's Downtown Economic Development District (DEDD) and Volkert Engineers. The street improvement covers Walnut Street from Pine Street to DeSiard Street. The preliminary plans consist of burying powerlines, sidewalk improvements, bike lane creation, stormwater management, and additional enhancements to the pedestrian experience.



DESIARD STREET

Phase 1 Street Improvements

As Downtown Monroe's Main Street, the DeSiard Street improvements are highly anticipated and are in development. Current plans keep this a two-way corridor while creating more greenery/bioswales to assist with storm water management and enhance the pedestrian and vehicular experience.

Incorporating bulb-outs to increase sidewalk depth in certain sections of the street would help accommodate sidewalk cafes and parklets for seating areas. Creating brick banding in the sidewalks and added shading elements in the form of trees would add to the beautification and entice people to walk from business to business. Enhancing the visibility of pedestrian crossings would increase safety and pedestrian prominence.



LEGEND

- PROPOSED DESIARD ST. INFILL
- EXISTING RESTAURANTS
- PROPOSED AMTRAK STATION

PRECEDENT IMAGES



KEY PLAN

CONCEPT PLAN



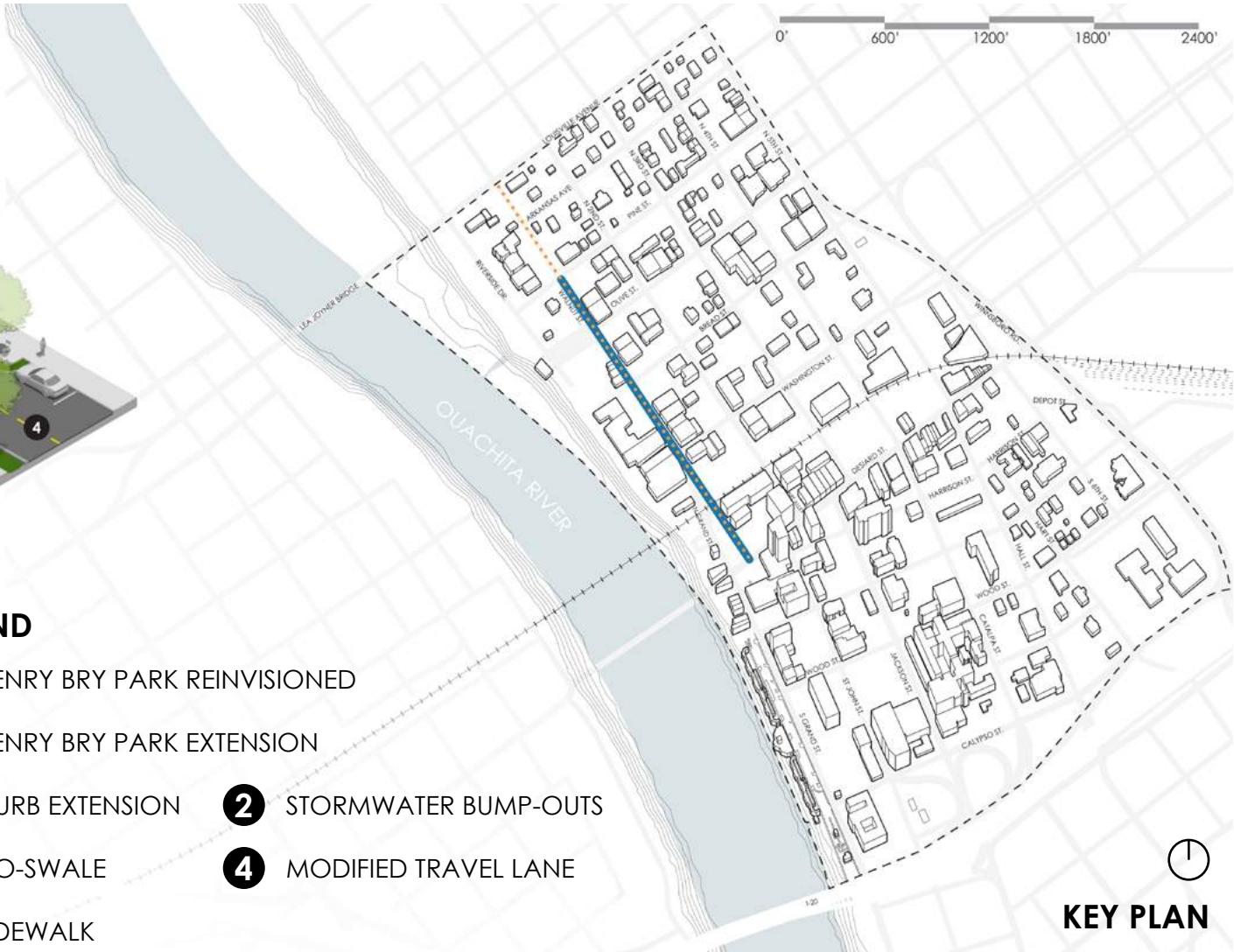
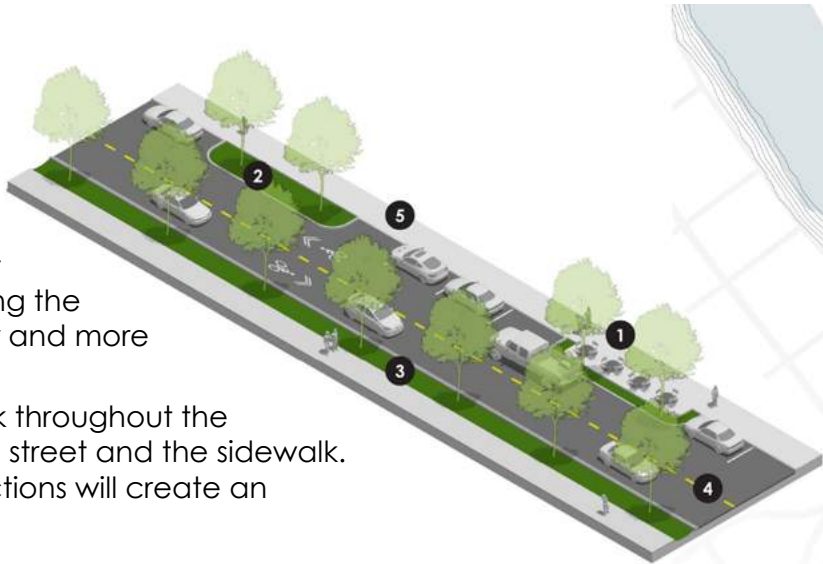
IMAGE CREDIT: CSRS

WALNUT STREET

Phase 1 Street Improvements

Improvements to Walnut Street are vital to the enhancements of the downtown experience due to its identity as a high-traffic corridor and the connection to the Ouachita River. With the DEDD's sights on a future riverwalk, burying the powerlines under Walnut Street is the first step towards that development. The plan includes maintaining the two-way corridor while integrating a shared bike lane, ensuring a safer and more sustainable mode of transport.

The sidewalk improvements focus on maintaining a consistent sidewalk throughout the entire street, potentially accompanied by a green buffer between the street and the sidewalk. Decorative bands of brick along the sidewalks and at popular intersections will create an aesthetically pleasing environment for pedestrians and cyclists.



PRECEDENT IMAGES



LEGEND

- HENRY BRY PARK REINVISIONED
- HENRY BRY PARK EXTENSION
- 1 CURB EXTENSION
- 2 STORMWATER BUMP-OUTS
- 3 BIO-SWALE
- 4 MODIFIED TRAVEL LANE
- 5 SIDEWALK

CONCEPT PLAN



PHASE 2 STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The Phase 2 Street Improvements focus on increasing connectivity to peripheral areas and promote additional traffic into the Downtown area from other parts of the City. These improvements are meant to further the designs and enhancements developed throughout Phase 1.

S. GRAND STREET

S. Grand Street provides a connection from Walnut Street to the RiverMarket, as well as to several historic buildings.

4TH STREET

4th Street is a main commuter street in Downtown Monroe. Enhancements to this street focus on improvements for vehicular, bike, and pedestrian traffic.

WASHINGTON STREET

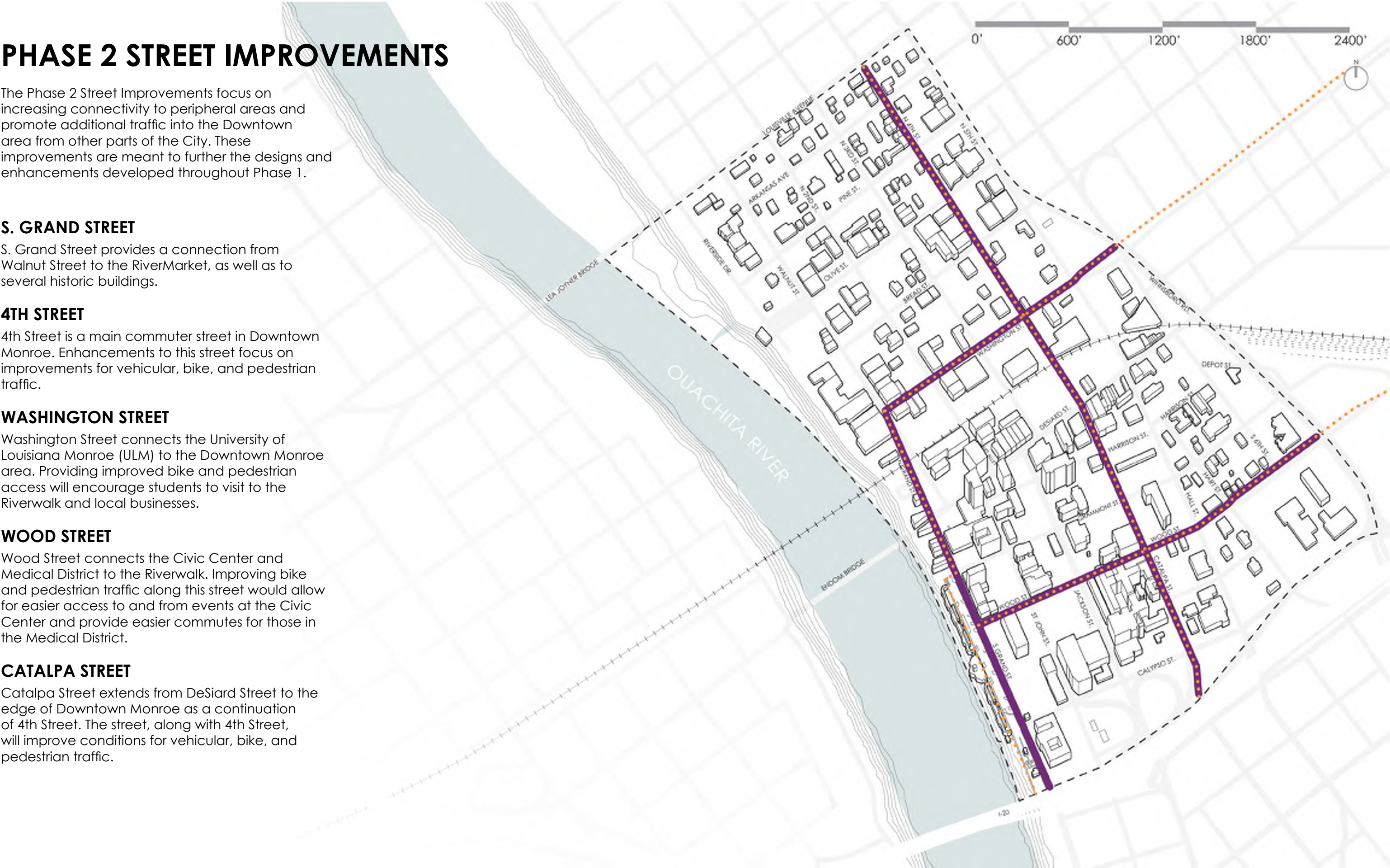
Washington Street connects the University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) to the Downtown Monroe area. Providing improved bike and pedestrian access will encourage students to visit to the Riverwalk and local businesses.

WOOD STREET

Wood Street connects the Civic Center and Medical District to the Riverwalk. Improving bike and pedestrian traffic along this street would allow for easier access to and from events at the Civic Center and provide easier commutes for those in the Medical District.

CATALPA STREET

Catalpa Street extends from DeSiard Street to the edge of Downtown Monroe as a continuation of 4th Street. The street, along with 4th Street, will improve conditions for vehicular, bike, and pedestrian traffic.



S. GRAND STREET

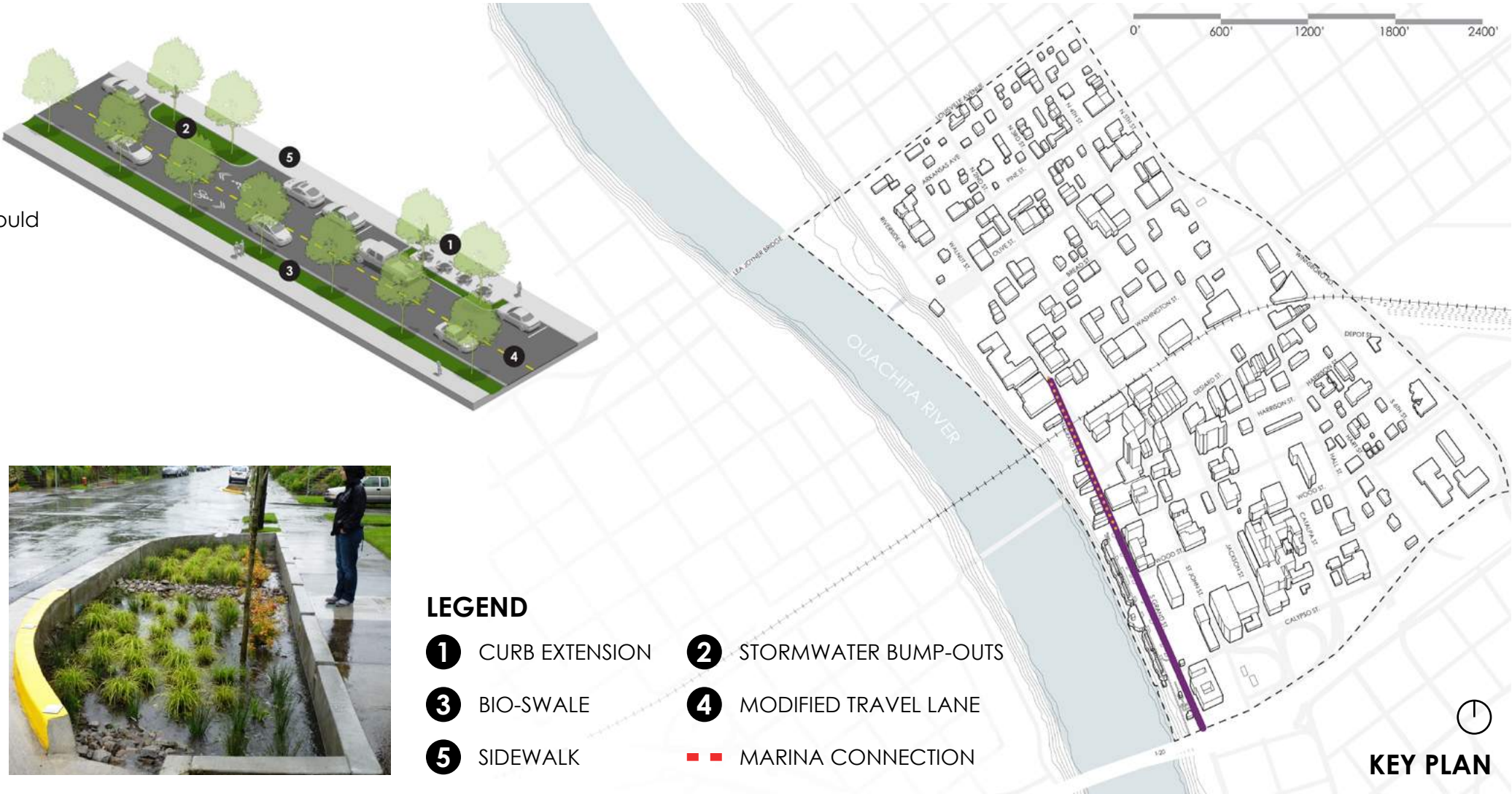
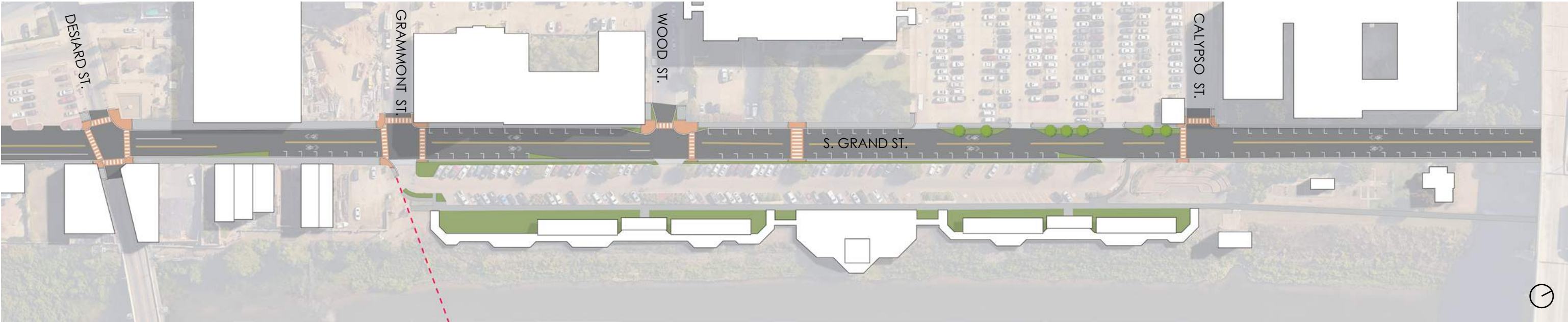
Phase 2 Street Improvements

The S. Grand Street improvements are an extension of the Walnut Street improvements and are meant to lead visitors to the RiverMarket. For that reason, the main emphasis of these improvements focuses on ample street parking and crosswalks to improve pedestrian safety. Green space are planned for areas that would not benefit from additional parking.

PRECEDENT IMAGES



CONCEPT PLAN



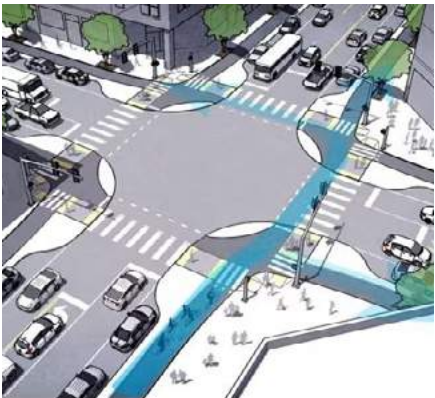
N. 4TH STREET

Phase 2 Street Improvements

The N. 4th Street improvements are planned because it is a main commuter street into Downtown Monroe. The street improvements aim to keep the two-lane traffic and create protected bike lanes on either side of the vehicular traffic. Encouraging commuters to travel by bike will reduce vehicular traffic and the buffer zone in a protected bike lane can become planters or street art.

The sidewalk improvements focus on maintaining a consistent sidewalk throughout the entire street, unobstructed by parked cars. Decorative bands of brick paving placed at popular intersections will separate the crosswalks from the continuous sidewalks. The new Amtrak station will increase pedestrian traffic in the area. It is imperative to provide safety measures for the influx of visitors, such as a safer railroad crossing.

PRECEDENT IMAGES

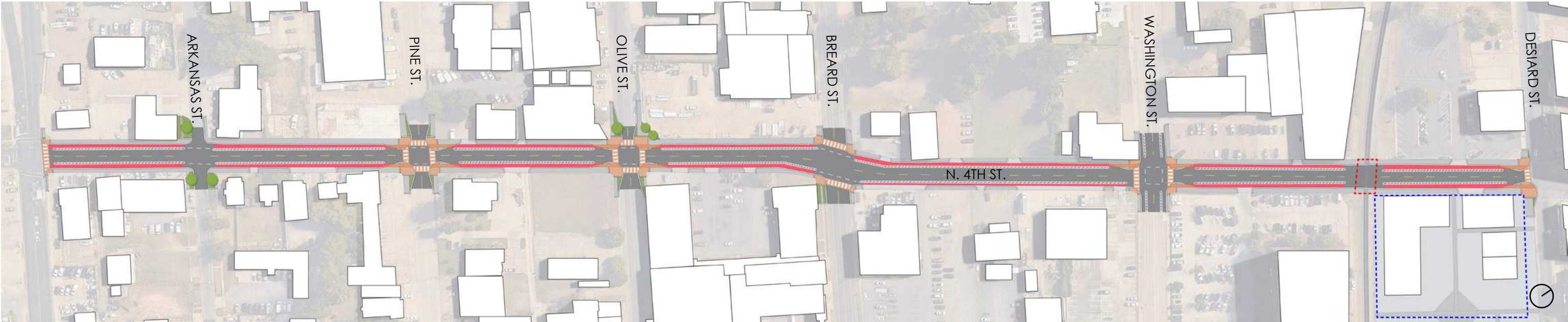


LEGEND

- 1 ONE-WAY BICYCLE PATH
- 2 MODIFIED TRAVEL LANE
- 3 CURB CUTS
- 4 RAIN GARDENS
- 5 BIO-SWALE
- RAILROAD CROSSING
- BIKE PATH
- NEW AMTRAK STATION LOCATION

KEY PLAN

CONCEPT PLAN

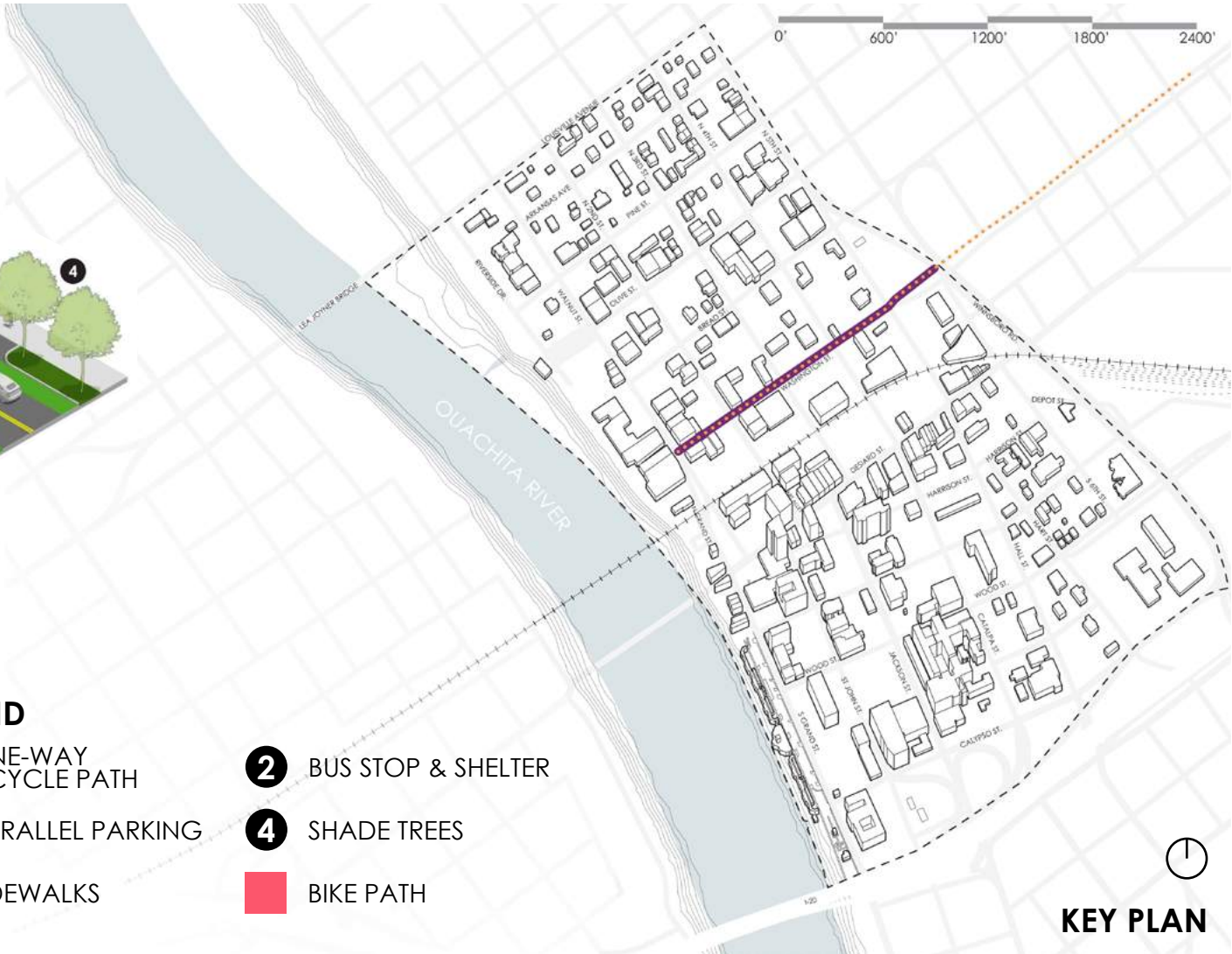
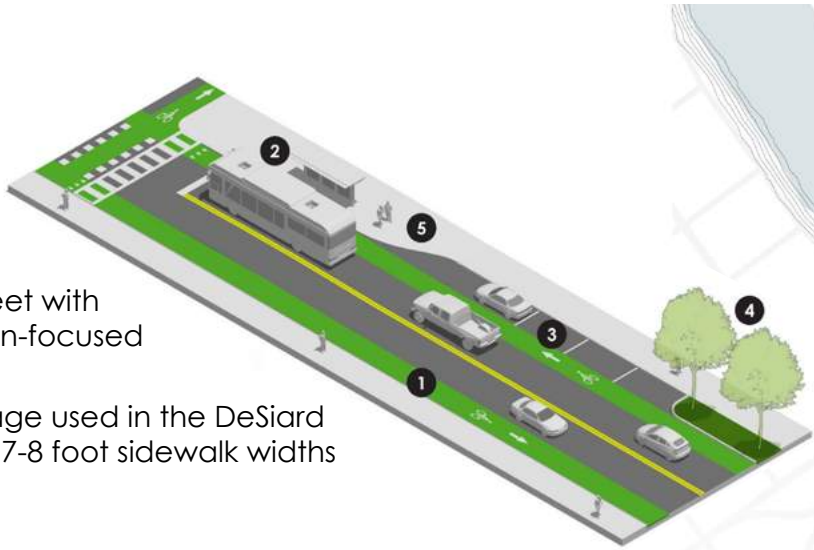


WASHINGTON STREET

Phase 2 Street Improvements

The Washington Street improvements focus on bike accessibility for the community, specifically ULM students. Protected bike lanes were added on either side of the street, reducing the street to two traffic lanes in opposite directions. Sidewalk corner curb extensions are planned for nearly every perpendicular street with the intention of slowing traffic as it enters the newly bike and pedestrian-focused street. Green spaces are added to the corner curb extensions.

The sidewalks are intended to be repaired with the same visual language used in the DeSiard Street sidewalk improvements. As this is a downtown area, the existing 7-8 foot sidewalk widths do not allow for much programming along the path.



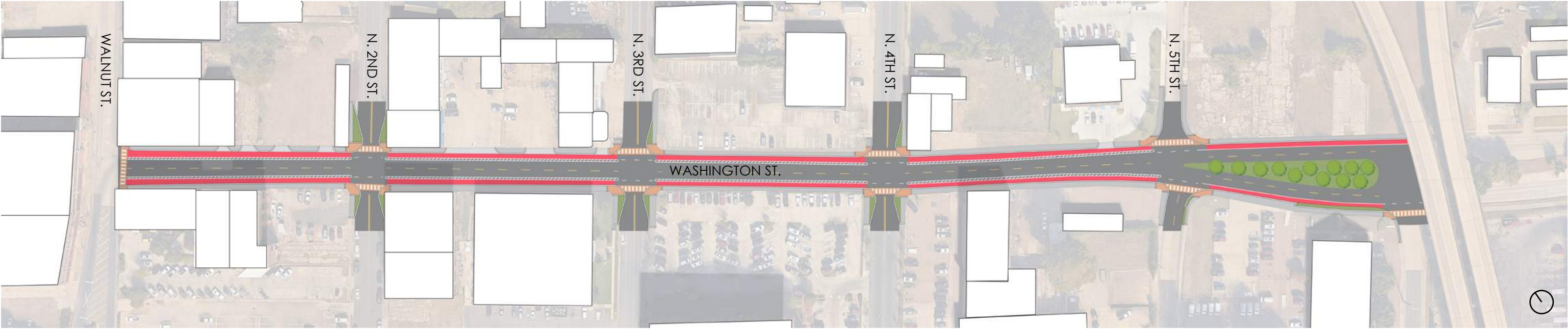
PRECEDENT IMAGES



LEGEND

- 1 ONE-WAY BICYCLE PATH
- 2 BUS STOP & SHELTER
- 3 PARALLEL PARKING
- 4 SHADE TREES
- 5 SIDEWALKS
- BIKE PATH

CONCEPT PLAN



CATALPA STREET

Phase 2 Street Improvements

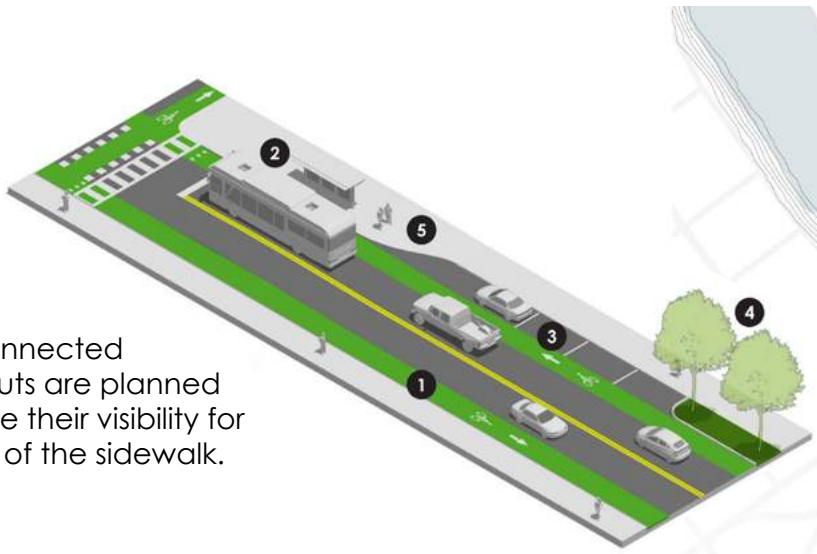
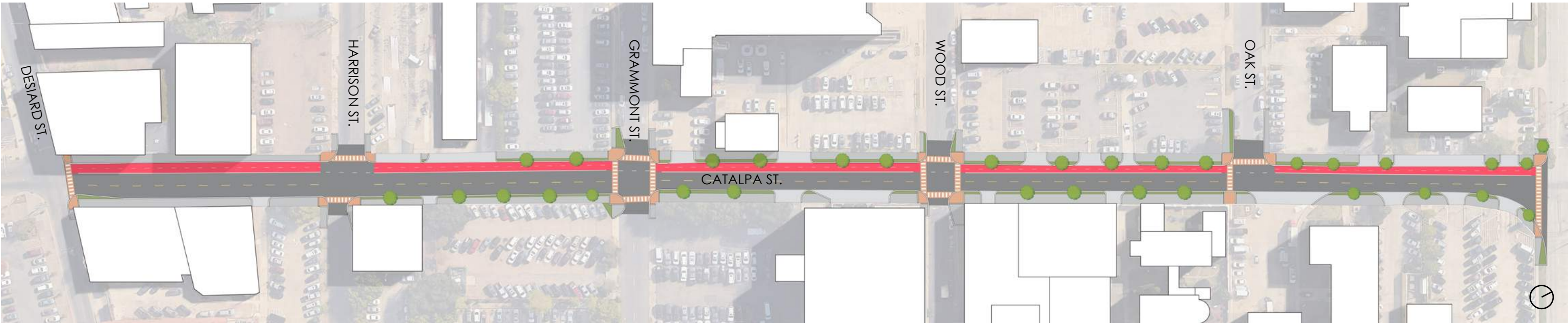
The Catalpa Street improvements are an extension of the N. 4th Street improvements for easier commuter access to the downtown area and Medical District. Due to being a smaller roadway, having two separate protected bike lanes is not feasible. A traditional bike path with two lanes is currently planned.

The Catalpa Street sidewalk improvements consist of maintaining a connected sidewalk, unobstructed by parked cars. For pedestrian safety, bump-outs are planned in several areas to increase the line of sight for pedestrians and improve their visibility for cars. Green spaces are placed wherever appropriate given the width of the sidewalk.

PRECEDENT IMAGES



CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

- 1 ONE-WAY BICYCLE PATH
- 2 BUS STOP & SHELTER
- 3 PARALLEL PARKING
- 4 SHADE TREES
- 5 SIDEWALKS
- BIKE PATH



KEY PLAN

WOOD STREET

Phase 2 Street Improvements

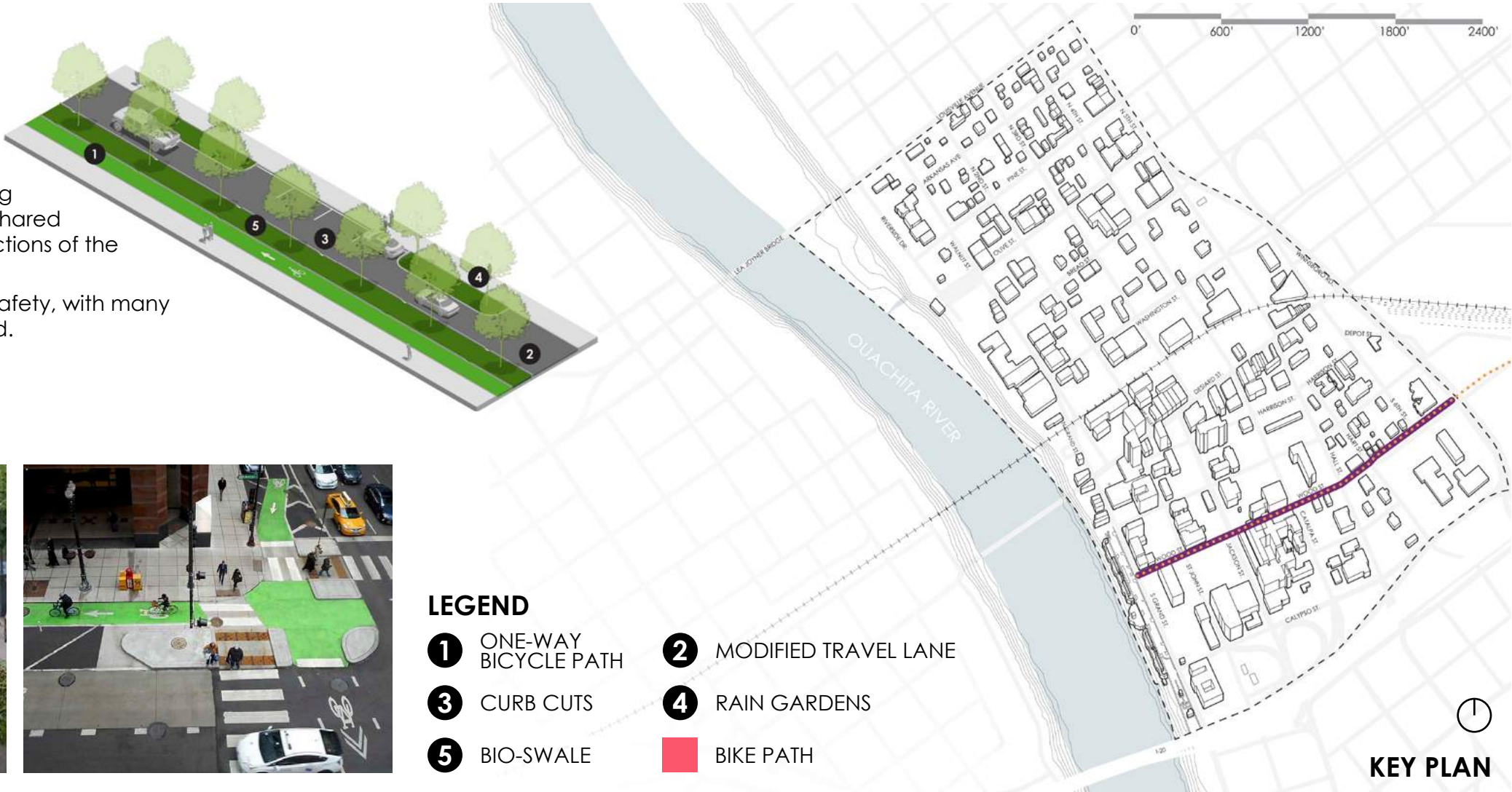
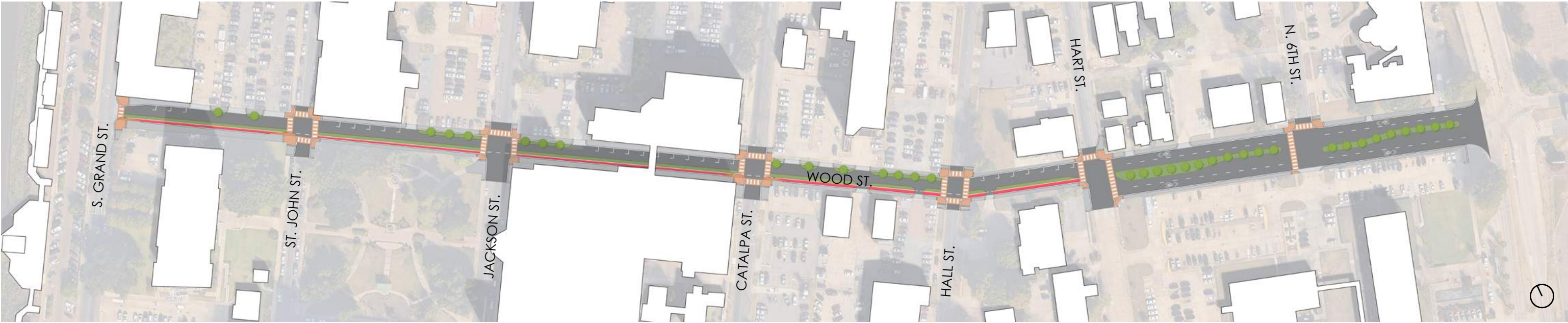
The Wood Street improvements take into consideration the need for street parking near the RiverMarket and in the Medical District, as well as bike accessibility throughout the area. The bike path is protected by green space on one side of the street with parking on the other side. Where the street divides, the bike path becomes a shared lane due to roadway size constraints. The medians in those divided sections of the streets will be extended to allow for more green space.

The Wood Street sidewalk improvements focus heavily on pedestrian safety, with many crosswalks allowing pedestrians to have the right-of-way when needed.

PRECEDENT IMAGES



CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

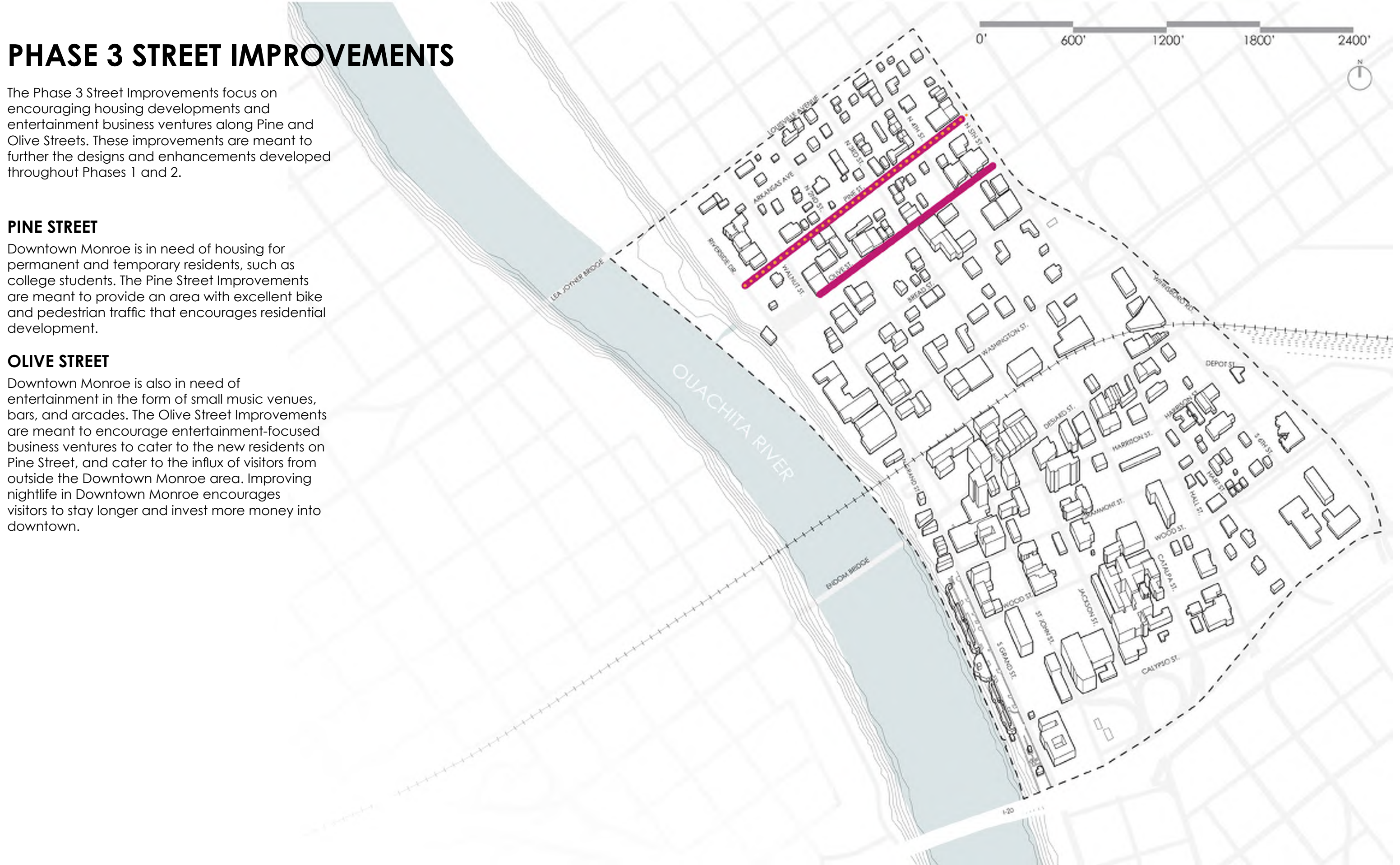
- 1 ONE-WAY BICYCLE PATH
- 2 MODIFIED TRAVEL LANE
- 3 CURB CUTS
- 4 RAIN GARDENS
- 5 BIO-SWALE
- BIKE PATH

KEY PLAN

The Phase 3 Street Improvements focus on encouraging housing developments and entertainment business ventures along Pine and Olive Streets. These improvements are meant to further the designs and enhancements developed throughout Phases 1 and 2.

Downtown Monroe is in need of housing for permanent and temporary residents, such as college students. The Pine Street Improvements are meant to provide an area with excellent bike and pedestrian traffic that encourages residential development.

Downtown Monroe is also in need of entertainment in the form of small music venues, bars, and arcades. The Olive Street Improvements are meant to encourage entertainment-focused business ventures to cater to the new residents on Pine Street, and cater to the influx of visitors from outside the Downtown Monroe area. Improving nightlife in Downtown Monroe encourages visitors to stay longer and invest more money into downtown.



PINE STREET

Phase 3 Street Improvements

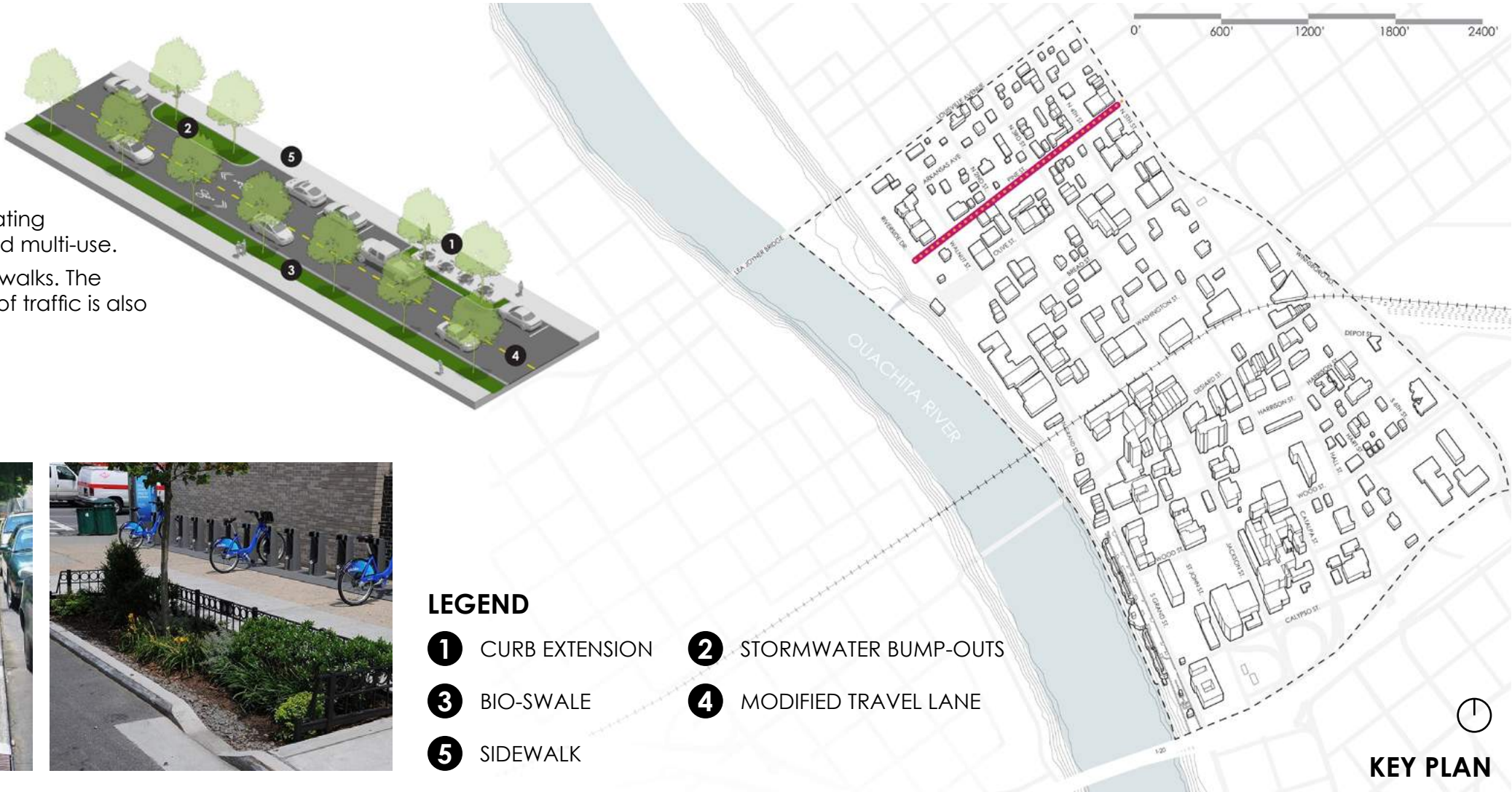
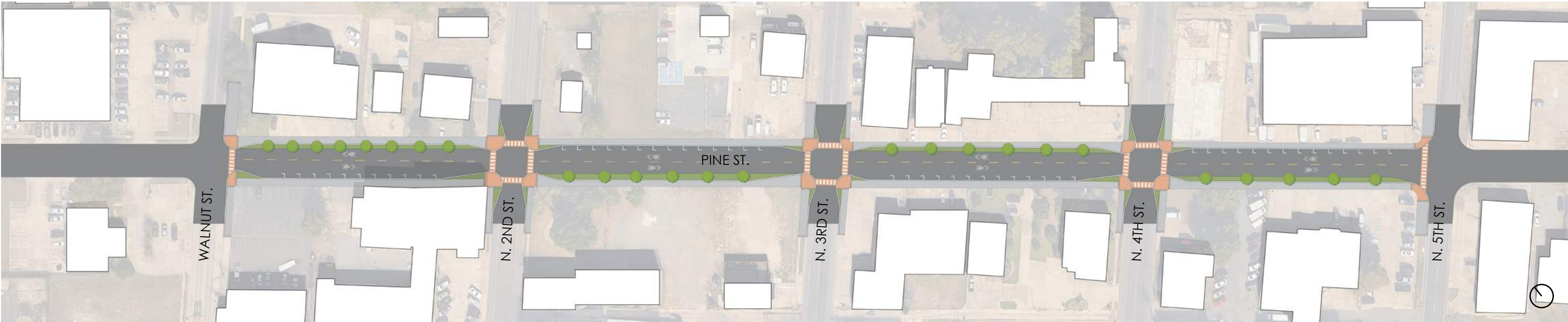
The Pine Street improvements balance the need for street parking in an area intended for residential housing, with the need for green spaces to provide shade, a cooling effect, and potentially provide stormwater management. Each block has a crosswalk, anticipating high pedestrian traffic as residents move in. Seating and bike racks can be placed among the green spaces for variety and multi-use.

Several blocks along Pine Street currently do not have continuous sidewalks. The sidewalk improvements emphasize this need for continuity. Each lane of traffic is also designated as a shared bike lane.

PRECEDENT IMAGES



CONCEPT PLAN



OLIVE STREET

Phase 3 Street Improvements

The Olive Street improvements are similar to the Pine Street improvements. Both balance the need for street parking and multi-use green spaces. Because Olive Street is meant to be an entertainment district, the need for exterior sidewalk seating is greater than on Pine Street. Crosswalks are placed at every intersection for pedestrian safety.

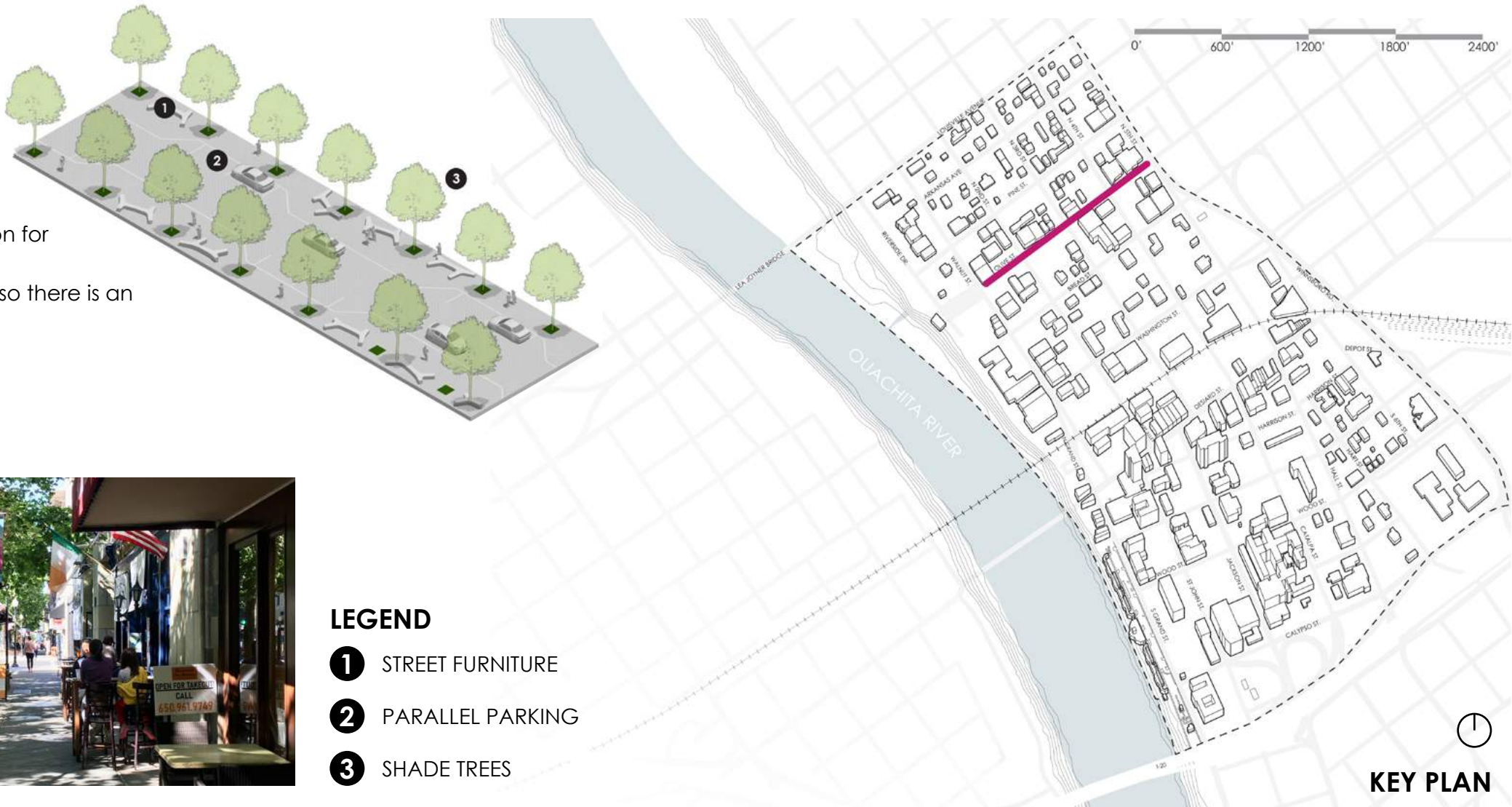
There are blocks along this street that do not currently have sidewalks so there is an emphasis on sidewalk continuity here as well.

PRECEDENT IMAGES

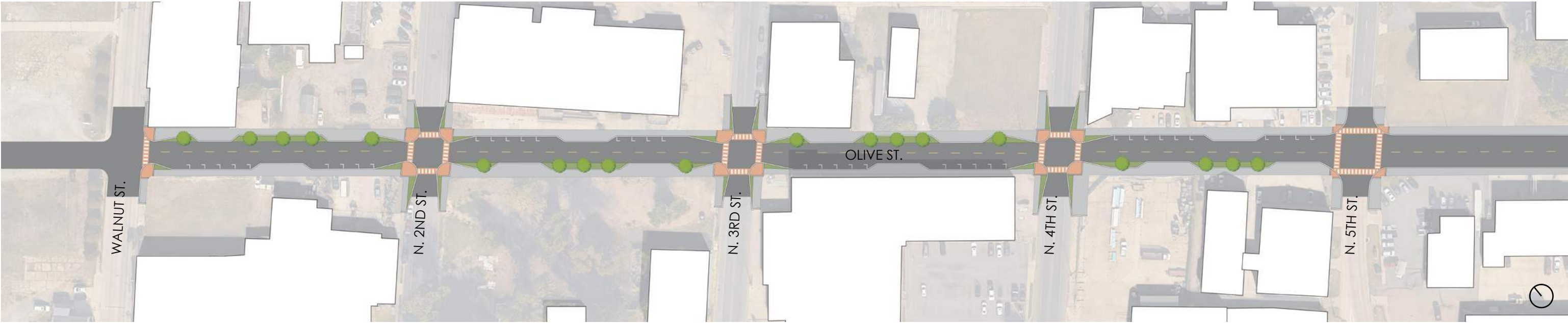


LEGEND

- 1 STREET FURNITURE
- 2 PARALLEL PARKING
- 3 SHADE TREES



CONCEPT PLAN





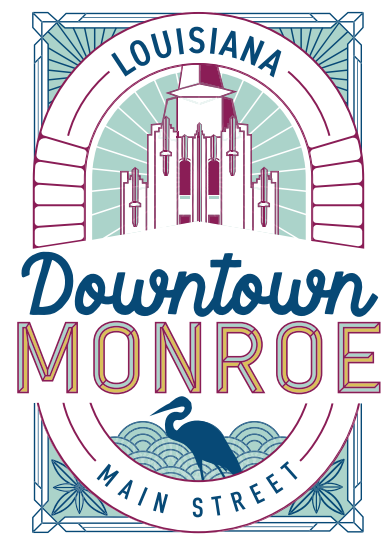
BRANDING + MARKETING

DISTRICT BRANDING

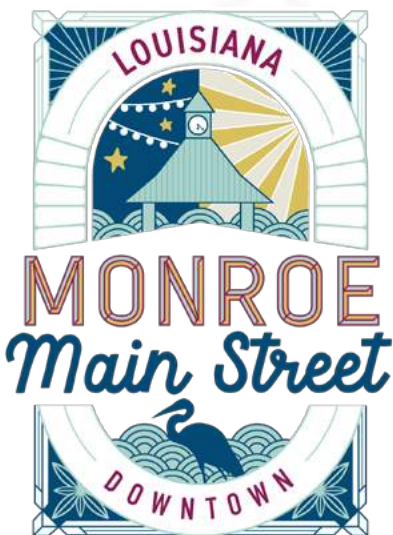
As identified in the City of Monroe Downtown Strategic Plan Phase 1, current clusters in building use allow for the distinction of multiple districts within Downtown Monroe.

Phase 2 shows a proposed building use diagram identifying five districts in Downtown Monroe: a Medical District, Civic District, Riverfront District, Main Street / Arts District, and Bridgetown District. In addition, as reported in the Phase 2 booklet, the branding of new and found districts will foster activation and programming in Downtown Monroe.

The City of Monroe worked with Kinetix to create a branding package for Downtown Monroe and Monroe's Main Street District. See logos below.



DOWNTOWN - MAIN LOGO



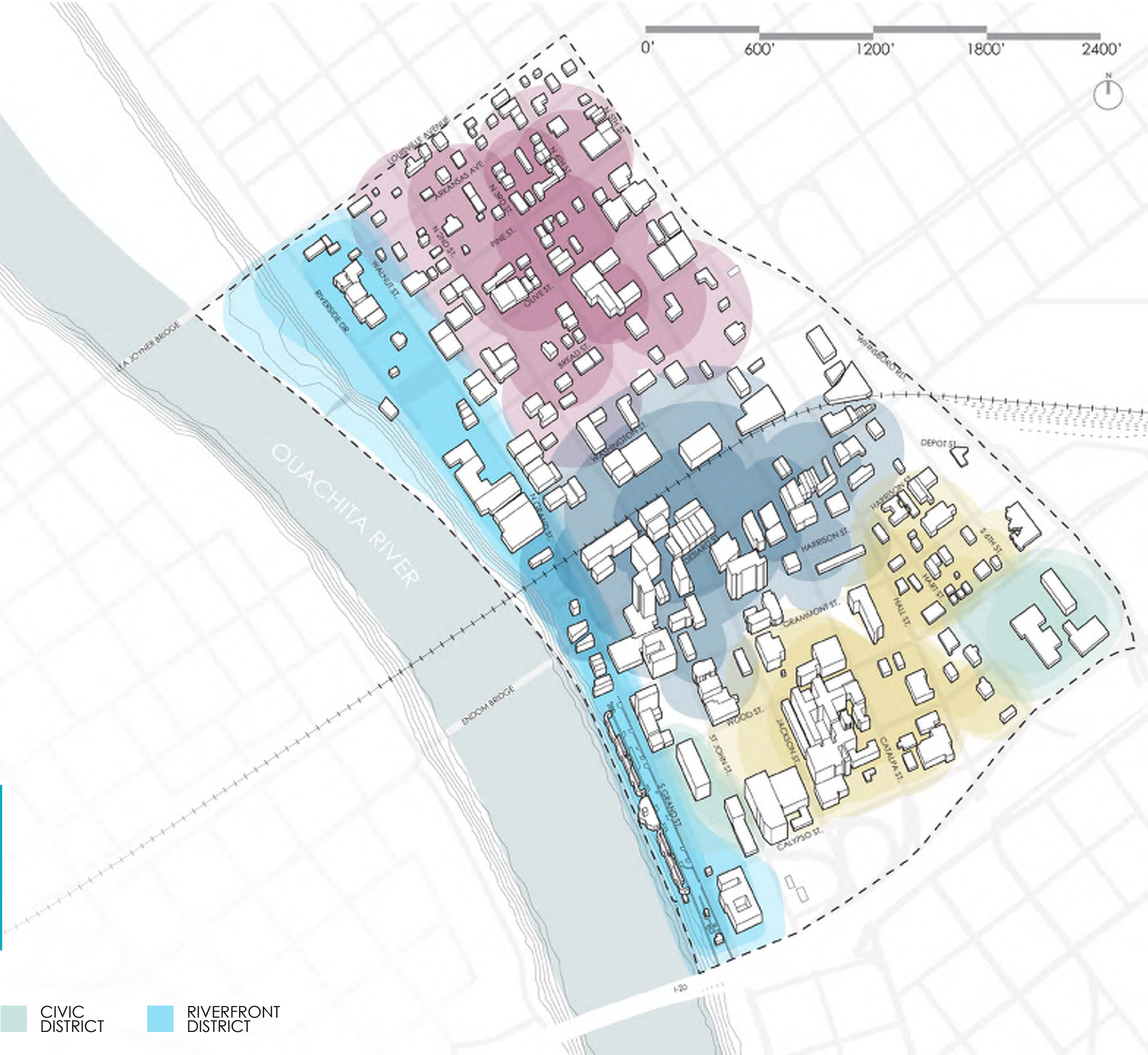
MAIN STREET - MAIN LOGO

NEXT STEPS

City of Monroe Downtown Strategic Plan Phase 3 proposes the City to engage with a branding agency to continue marketing efforts for the other districts in the downtown area.

LEGEND

- BRIDGETOWN DISTRICT
- MAIN STREET / ARTS DISTRICT
- MEDICAL DISTRICT
- CIVIC DISTRICT
- RIVERFRONT DISTRICT



GATEWAYS

The creation of gateways for Downtown Monroe not only supports a sense of place, but also signals vehicles to be more cautious, and creates an opportunity for a branding identity for the City.

LEGEND

- PRIMARY
- SECONDARY
- TERTIARY

PRIMARY

For the Primary Gateway structures, it is recommended to solicit local artists to design and help guide the identity of each district through the structure of the gateways.

SECONDARY

The Secondary Gateways can involve subtle changes or simple indentations in the roadways to notify vehicles to be more aware of pedestrians. Lighting and art installations are also appropriate to add character to these interstitial spaces. Secondary Gateways can be designed and planned during the street improvement process.

TERTIARY

As downtown continues to develop, Tertiary Gateways can be implemented to identify transitions between sub-districts and increase pedestrian activity. Colorful sidewalks, street murals, and other low-budget interventions are appropriate for these tertiary locations.

NEXT STEPS

1. Apply for grants for funding.
2. Budget funds if there is no grant funding.
3. Put out a call to artists to design gateways.

PRIMARY GATEWAYS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



1

DESIARD ST. & S GRAND ST.
(ENDOM BRIDGE)

This gateway is a connection to Downtown Monroe from West Monroe, with many existing businesses and planned projects nearby. Having a vibrant entrance to downtown at this intersection will encourage repeat visits.



2

LEA JOYNER BRIDGE &
RIVERSIDE DR.

This gateway is another connection to Downtown Monroe from West Monroe on the opposite side of the catchment area. With close access to the Riverwalk and Levee Trail, this gateway would encourage visitors to continue through the paths created in this Strategic Plan.



3

N. 4TH ST. & LOUISVILLE AVE.

This gateway is a main commuter entrance into Downtown Monroe. Because many people are already traveling this route, making their commute more lively will encourage them to stop in the downtown area more often.



4

DESIARD ST. AND S 6TH ST.

This gateway connects Downtown Monroe to the rest of the city. Encouraging visitors to travel down DeSiard Street as they enter downtown will increase the likelihood that they will stop at one of the many businesses on DeSiard Street.

PRIMARY GATEWAY INSPIRATION IMAGES



SECONDARY GATEWAYS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



S GRAND ST. AFTER OVERPASS
This gateway is a connection to Downtown Monroe from South Monroe and leads directly to the RiverMarket. Making this underpass more lively and inviting would encourage an exchange of visitors between the downtown area and South Monroe, lessening the feeling of separation created by the I-20.



WASHINGTON ST. & N 6TH ST.
This gateway is another connection between Downtown Monroe and the rest of the city, but Washington Street leads to the University of Louisiana Monroe. Making this underpass more vibrant and welcoming, in addition to adding a bike path, would encourage students to visit the downtown area more frequently.



SECONDARY GATEWAY INSPIRATION IMAGES



TERTIARY GATEWAYS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



N 5TH ST. & PINE ST.
This gateway is planned to become a connection between a residential portion of Downtown Monroe and the rest of the city.



N 5TH ST. & S OLIVE ST.
This gateway is planned to become a connection between the rest of the city and Downtown Monroe's entertainment and nightlife.



WOOD ST. & WINNSBORO ROAD
This gateway connects the Medical District in Downtown Monroe to the rest of the city.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE: ASPHALT ART GRANT

The grant is open to all cities in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. The Project Team may include various collaborative partners and must include a Lead City Agency, e.g. Department of Transportation, Cultural Affairs, or another appropriate agency. The application must identify the entity or individuals responsible for project management and artistic direction.

See Asphalt Art Guide in Phase 2 Booklet Appendix.

TERTIARY GATEWAY INSPIRATION IMAGES



DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

The Downtown Monroe Walking Tour was created for history and architecture enthusiasts!

The tour is approximately 2 miles long and can be completed in one day. Each of the thirty stops includes a brief history of the structure or the current programming that occurs at each stop.

Tour participants can start the day with free parking and the purchase of a coffee at Standard Coffee. As the participants stroll around downtown, the tour suggests snack stops to encourage supporting local businesses. Including a suggested start and end time with an overall tour duration can help curate the timing of overlap with the farmer's market while aligning snack stops with meal times.

NEXT STEPS

1. Fact check information.
2. Optional: Get testimonials and stories from community members on tour stops to add to tour.
3. Decide how tour will be presented to public. Some options include reading digital format (PDF or location specific app), reading physical format (booklet/pamphlet), audio walking format, etc.
4. Engage graphic design consultant to format and publish tour for distribution to community and tourists.

LEGEND

- WALKING PATH
- PATH START/END
- ART
- ARCHITECTURE
- HISTORY

WALKING TOUR STOPS

- 1 SAENGER THEATER

2 DELTA THEATER

3 NEWS STAR BUILDING

4 MONROE FURNITURE COMPANY

5 ART ALLEY MURALS

6 OUACHITA NATIONAL BANK BUILDING

7 IRIS MURAL

8 THE PALACE

9 CENTRAL SAVINGS BANK & TRUST CO.

10 FRANCES TOWER

11 ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

12 FIRST MONROE CHURCH

13 CASTLE HALL

14 OUACHITA NATIONAL BANK BUILDING (VANTAGE BUILDING)

15 OUACHITA NATIONAL BANK

16 VANTAGE STATE BUILDING

17 OUACHITA GRAND PLAZA

18 GARRETT HOUSE

19 RIVERMARKET

20 OUACHITA PARISH COURTHOUSE

21 HOTEL MONROE BUILDING

22 AUSTIN'S BY THE RIVER

23 ENDOM BRIDGE

24 FERD-LEVI BUILDING (RESTAURANT COTTON)

25 SUGAR BROTHERS GROCERY & OPERA HOUSE

26 RAILROAD BRIDGE

27 COCA-COLA MURAL

28 COCA-COLA BUILDING

29 MILNER MOTORS BUILDING

30 BLACKMON AUTO COMPANY BUILDING

31 LEE-RODGERS CHEVROLET COMPANY BUILDING

32 WELCOME TO MONROE MURAL

33 NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHILDREN'S MUSUEM

34 WASHINGTON PLAZA

35 HARVEY'S DANCE HALL

36 "FINDING HOME" MURAL

37 SILVERSTEIN'S WOMEN'S STORE

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

*Information from the National Register of Historic Places



1. SAENGER THEATER

301 Desiard St. | c. 1912, Demolished 1972
Originally opened as the Sugar Bros. Opera Theater, known for its Moller organ, which was so large it required the removal of a portion of the theater wall to install it. In 1916, the building was sold to the Saenger Brothers and reopened as Saenger Theater in 1920. In the early days of vaudeville, the theater was host to many famous actors such as Al Jolson, Jack Benny, W.C. Fields, George Burns, and Gracie Allen. The space also hosted local high school talent shows and amateur nights. During the 1930's, the theater's Moller Pipe Organ entertained radio audiences on station KMLB. In 1970 the theater closed its doors permanently. The theater fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1972.



3. NEWS-STAR BUILDING

114 N. 2nd St. | c. 1930
Three-story neo-classical brick commercial building with cast concrete garlands and swags in entablature and swan neck pedimented door. Windows on side elevation are replacement, windows on façade are original.*



Adjacent to the Monroe Furniture Co Building (#4), which suffered a fire in 1938 and was rebuilt in 1939.



5. ART ALLEY MURALS

c. 2018 - Present
Main Street Monroe Murals is an ongoing project featuring local and regional artists in Downtown. Artists use available wall space to beautify the downtown district. A collection of murals along Art Alley on the south facing wall includes: the Revolution Mural by Rae Tedeton and "Hello Sunshine" by Dollar Sign Design Co. The Outside Gallery, on the north wall, has a revolving mural every several months. Murals have included "First Sight and Understanding" by Inique Harris and "Rise Above Stigma" by Black Creatives Circle of Northeast Louisiana and Northeast Delta HSA.



2. DELTA THEATER

115 N. 3rd St. | c. 1941
Two-story masonry shell of structure dates to ca. 1912, when constructed as a livery. Substantial alterations include filling in a basement and removing a portion of the second floor to transform into the Delta Theatre late 1941. Opening gala held 1/17/1942, promoted as "Monroe's Most Luxurious Little Theatre." Ticket booths removed and replaced with a roll up garage door, but retains angled marquee, movie poster display frames, and large stucco arch on upper half of façade.*



4. MONROE FURNITURE COMPANY BUILDING

132 N. 2nd St. | c. 1939
Four-story building plus basement. Design Architect, Robert Heller of New York; Supervising Architects, J.W. Smith & Associates of Monroe. Heller designed the 'Air Flow Fan' around 1937 and was a leader in the world of modern industrial design. Façade consists of glass storefront and large blank brick wall. Floors 1-3 have ribbons of metal casement windows and decorative brick detail between each floor. Compared to historic images of the building, it has not been altered much and the storefront is currently boarded over.*



6. OUACHITA NATIONAL BANK BUILDING

141 Desiard St. | c.1925
8-story, brick, neo-classical office building. Cornice ornamented with dentils, modillions and anthemions, upper story set in frieze; low-key chicao style. During the 1970's the Monroe Chamber of Commerce moved to a new home in the 141 Building in Desiard Street. Now houses residential lofts.

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

*Information from the National Register of Historic Places



7. IRIS MURAL

Corner of Art Alley & DeSiard St. | Created in July 2022

The mural was created by Jay Davis (Design Artist), Nick Bustamante and Whitney Causey (Painters), Christie Echols (Property Owner) and features a quote by Anais Nin, "And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."



8. THE PALACE

216 DeSiard St. | c. 1925
Formerly known as the Palace Department Store and closed in 1982. Six-story brick neo-classical commercial building with terra-cotta sheathing. Decorative features include pilasters, reeded panels, medallions, anthemions above cornice, and a Vitruvian scroll. Storefront is modern replacement glass and upper floor windows are currently boarded over.*



9. CENTRAL SAVINGS BANK & TRUST CO.

300 DeSiard St. | c. 1923
Faced in Indiana limestone, hinting to the financial stability of the banking institutions which constructed them. Two-story neo-classical bank featuring portico with papyrus capitals on columns and pilasters. Two additions have been added to the left side of the building facing Desiard St., but the entire building is considered contributing.*



10. FRANCES TOWER

300 Harrison St. | c. 1931

Eleven-story brick and terra-cotta Modernistic skyscraper with stylized classical motifs in spandrel panels, vertical shafts between windows, and rooftop finials. Building also features an elaborately articulated two-stage water tower on the roof. All windows are replacements within the original opening size. Storefront has been replaced within the original columns. Designed by Wyatt C. Hedrick & Co., Architects, Ft. Worth.*



11. ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

121 Jackson St. | c. 1899

Brick gothic church with frontal tower and contrasting light terra-cotta trim. Its massiveness is reminiscent of the mid-Victorian Gothic Revival. Original stained glass windows are intact and covered with protective Plexiglass. Premiere Architect: Nicholas J. Clayton of Galveston, TX. The Rectory Building, built in 1935, is a two-story brick vaguely Gothic residence. Central entrance is outlined in white painted stone and features an arched door. Original metal casement windows are found on façade and side elevations.*



12. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

201 St. John St. | c. 1911

Two-story pedimented neo-Palladian brick church with dome, red tile roof, and stained glass windows throughout. There are two entrances on each side of the pedimented central bay.*

The historic First Monroe building is owned by St. Francis Medical Center and features in their recently completed master plan.



13. CASTLE HALL

125 St. John St. | c. 1892

Originally started as a Knights of Pythias Lodge in 1892. The Knights of Pythias were chartered in 1864 by an act of Congress. It was the first fraternal organization to be formed that way and was designed to care for the widows and orphans left after the Civil War. An annex was added to the building in 1908, and the 3rd floor was added in 1921. Restored in 2016 and now houses a restaurant space and nine luxury apartments.

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

*Information from the National Register of Historic Places



14. OUACHITA NATIONAL BANK BUILDING (VANTAGE BUILDING)

130 Desiard St. | c. 1921

Built in 1921 to house Ouachita National Bank, The local institution, which was established in Monroe in 1887, occupied the building for 70 years. The building was bought by Vantage at an auction in 2003 and underwent extensive renovations. The building is known as Monroe's first skyscraper, and, at 12 stories, is the only high rise building in Northeast Louisiana to classify as a true "skyscraper." The building was designed by architect Alfred S. Gottlieb, in the Italian Renaissance style, based on Roman classic design. The foundation extends 12 feet below street level. The Lotus Club occupies the top of the building and retains original tiffany windows.



15. OUACHITA NATIONAL BANK

106 St. John St. | c. 1906

Built in 1906 as the first home of Ouachita National Bank. Designed in the manner of a Roman temple. Anthemia decorate the pediment at its crest and outer corners. The bank's finely detailed facade, influenced by elaborate turn-of-the-twentieth-century Beaux-Arts classicism.



16. VANTAGE STATE BUILDING

122 St. John St. | c. 1925

Originally built in 1925 as the Virginia Hotel. In the 1960's was used as a office building by the State. Restored in 2017 to house additional offices for the Vantage company. The original 6-story building had a rooftop garden for events, a ballroom, restaurant, and other businesses including a news and cigar stand, a pressing shop, a barber shop, a beauty parlor, and a pharmacy. Rumor is that the original drug store furnishings are still in the building and displayed on the mezzanine level. The original milk glass skylight on the mezzanine level was replicated, marble floors and plaster moldings were restored. Rooftop is still open and rented out for events.



17. OUACHITA GRAND PLAZA

501 S. Grand St. | c. 1924-1930

Three-story neo-Jacobean brick building with Flemish gable parapet and cast cement trim. Tudor Revival, H.H. Land architectural style.* 1989, the Ouachita Parish High School, built in 1924, was transformed into the Ouachita Grand Plaza, a senior citizens housing development.



18. GARRETT HOUSE

520 S. Grand St. | c. 1840

Once the office of a noted Monroe attorney and statesman. 200 yards from the site of the original Fort Miro. Garrett was one of the most prominent attorneys in Louisiana.



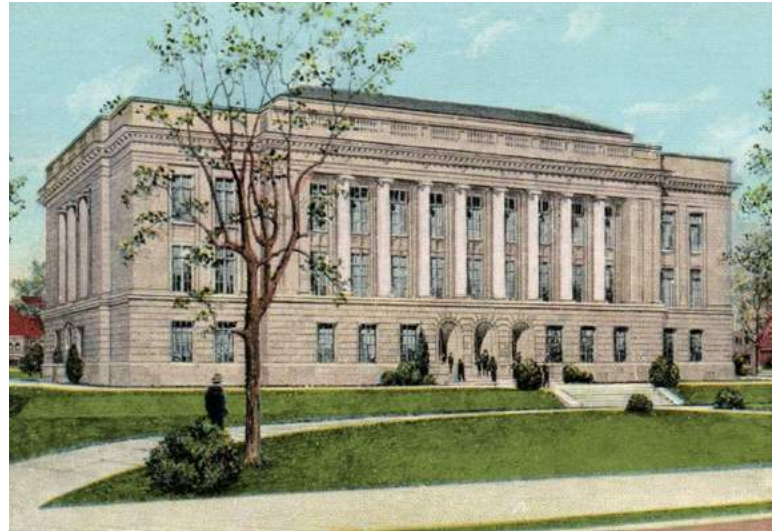
19. RIVERMARKET

316 S. Grand St. | c. 2012

In order to utilize the city's connection to the Ouachita River, Monroe constructed a small boardwalk in the early 2000's. Enhancements were made in 2012 to create a French-style market atmosphere with covered pavilions. The boardwalk developed into a community gathering place, hosting Festival Days, markets featuring artisan crafts and produce, live music, and small business launching pads for budding entrepreneurs. The RiverMarket continues to host special events and community activities.

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

*Information from the National Register of Historic Places



20. OUACHITA PARISH COURTHOUSE
301 S. Grand St. | c. 1924
Four-story neo-classical parish courthouse with limestone facing. Features impressive colossal columnar piano nobile; c. 1950 wings styled to resemble existing building.*



22. AUSTIN'S BY THE RIVER
100 S. Grand St. | c. 1890
Two-story stuccoed Italianate commercial building. Stucco worked into race face stone pattern with piers and voussiors. Original windows replaced with stained glass. A formed modern awning was removed in 2016.*



24. FERD-LEVI BUILDING
101 N. Grand St. | c. 1893
Two-story brick Italianate commercial building with shallow arch fenestration, brick pilasters, a corner entrance, a parapet formed of molded brick panels, and elaborate cast-iron storefront. Cast iron manufactured by Pullis Brothers Foundry, St. Louis, MO.*



21. HOTEL MONROE BUILDING
227 S. Grand | c. 1900
The historic Hotel Monroe Building is a three-story Italianate stuccoed commercial building with shallow arch fenestration on all three floors, pressed metal cornice, and central gable parapet. Not to be confused with the Walnut St. Hotel Monroe project set to open in 2024, this building also has a second floor gallery with simple balustrades supported by a mix of original and replacement metal columns.*



23. ENDOM BRIDGE
The DeSiard Street Bridge (Endom Bridge) is what remains of one of the fourteen surviving vehicular swing bridges in the State of Louisiana. The original swing span represents the only Pratt type through truss with a sloped top chord in the State of Louisiana. It was financed and built by the City of Monroe and represents an important part of local and regional history for its contribution to the development of the local and regional economy.

Information from the Library of Congress



25. SUGAR BROTHERS GROCERY & OPERA HOUSE
120 Walnut St. | c. 1891
The Sugar Brothers Grocery and Opera House was known throughout north Louisiana as operators of one of the largest wholesale business houses in the area. The buildings are being redevelopment and will open as Hotel Monroe in 2024.

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

*Information from the National Register of Historic Places



26. RAILROAD BRIDGE

Though an original wooden bridge connecting what is now West Monroe and Monroe was built in 1851, a portion of the bridge toppled into the river, and the rest of that bridge was destroyed during the Civil War. In 1880, a contract to rebuild the bridge was let to Col. C. Shaler Smith of St. Louis for \$144,000. With the exception of wooden stringers and cross-ties, the superstructure of the bridge was made of wrought iron. In 1882, the railroad bridge opened to connect industrial traffic between Mississippi and Texas. In 1907, planks were added to the bridge to enable pedestrian traffic.



28. OUACHITA CANDY COMPANY BUILDING

209-219 Walnut St. | c. 1920-1926
Two-story commercial buildings of a deep red 'Tapestry brick' and cast concrete; Parapet caps contain six courses of corbelled brick, with one course being in a dentil pattern; storefront windows at street level have been covered with wood panels; a two-pane high transom band runs below the exposed cast concrete of the second floor; a ribbon of steel-framed windows on the second floor are located below the exposed concrete of the roof decking. Deep canopy over the sidewalk has been removed since the building was individually listed in the National Register in 2013.*



30. BLACKMON AUTO COMPANY BUILDING

300 Walnut St. | c. 1918
Two-story brown brick building; five bays wide and five bays deep; wider bays feature display windows at the street level with transoms above (boarded over currently); diamond shaped cast stone details and large dentil blocking below the second floor window sills highlight the Walnut St. façade and the first bay along Washington St. In 1922, the building was purchased by Monroe Auto Supply Company; decorative mosaic floor tile visible on the ground level.*



27. COCA-COLA MURAL

In August 2016, Brooke Foy and Emery Thibodeaux of ARROW Public Art restored the four Coca-Cola murals throughout Monroe and West Monroe, including this one on the historic Ouachita Candy Company Building, formerly the Coca-Cola Bottling Company. The artists contacted Coca-Cola archivists to get correct images from books printed around 1957, worked to get the right recipe for true Coke red and used the correct industrial enamels to make the murals as true to the originals as possible.



29. MILNER MOTORS BUILDING

212-214 Walnut St. | c. 1918, 1924, 1935
Two-story masonry building of deep red brick laid in a Flemish bond. Bays on the first floor are filled with large replacement display windows, capped with a series of smaller transom sashes comprised of three small panes over two larger panes of glass. Decorative cast concrete sills and lintels highlight the second floor windows along Walnut Street and in the first bay of Washington Street. Decorative cast stone details are also present in the pilasters of these bays.*



31. LEE-RODGERS CHEVROLET COMPANY BUILDING

305 Walnut St. | c. 1932
One-story, three-bay commercial structure with shallow clay-tiled canopy overhanging the sidewalk; short parapet is covered in stucco and steps up to meet a central diamond-shaped detail; two smaller diamond-shaped details are located near the top of the parapet. Storefront below canopy is currently boarded over between the knee wall and canopy. While the storefront windows are currently boarded over and entrance replaced with a roll up garage door, the main components that make up with Spanish revival styled building remain.*

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

*Information from the National Register of Historic Places



32. GREETINGS FROM MONROE MURAL

N. Walnut St. | July 2017

Created by Brooke Foy and Emery Thibodeaux (ARROW Public Art)

The Monroe mural has 6 letters that incorporate imagery from important locations or businesses in our community. The "M" contains the Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo; the "O" contains Century Link; and in the "N," the library clocktower and the Warhawk from ULM are depicted. The "R" contains the Masur Museum; the second "O" contains the Monroe Regional Airport and the Chennault Aviation & Military Museum; and the "E" depicts the Biedenharn Gardens and Museum.



33. NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

323 Walnut St. | c. 1998

Sponsored by the Ouachita Medical Alliance Society (NELACM) outreach program, the museum opened 1998. As the museum began receiving an increase of visitors from Mississippi and Arkansas, they eventually doubled in size in 2004. The expansion allowed for additional permanent exhibits. Today, the museum sees over 50,000 visitors a year. There are current efforts in place to re-locate the museum to a new site in Forsythe park.



34. WASHINGTON PLAZA

300 Washington St.

Washington Plaza is an early 20th century warehouse that has been renovated and converted into private office and retail suites. The huge, original heart pine beams and antique brick are retained in the four-story atrium space.



35. HARVEY'S DANCE HALL

500 DeSiard St. | c. 1906

Two-story masonry commercial building with curved corner at the intersection of Desiard and Hall Streets. Cast iron storefront at street level was manufactured by the St. Louis iron works of Christopher & Simpson. Windows are crowned with shallow arches of cream-colored brick with a limestone keystone. A tall ornate masonry parapet is supported by pilasters of red brick, inset with panels of cream-colored brick. A band of glazed white and green bricks laid in a checkerboard pattern runs between the pilasters. The bricks are laid at an angle, so as to produce a textured surface.*



36. "FINDING HOME" MURAL

This mural by Nick Bustamante and Whitney Trisley Causey is located in the courtyard of 428 DeSiard St. The mural is based off of an original painting by local artist Nicholas Bustamante, which explores the beauty of Louisiana and the rich culture of the region, specifically referencing images of Black Bayou.



37. SILVERSTEIN'S WOMEN'S STORE

342-344 DeSiard St. | c. 1922, 1942

One-story three-bay, steel-framed building with brick veneer; decorative cast stone cap along front façade represents garland swags and a shield at the center façade. This was the location of Silverstein's Women's Store until 1973.*



PRIVATE SECTOR PROJECTS TARGET DEVELOPMENTS

INCENTIVE MATRIX & EDUCATION

Available federal, state, and local economic incentives can be tricky to navigate. Creating and hosting a living matrix on the City of Monroe's website could help educate and encourage the use of these incentives, thus spurring more growth and development. Furthermore, engaging a consultant or finding an incentives champion within the City could promote education, outreach, assistance, update and seek out new incentives.

The matrix below is an example of how economic incentives can be presented to the public. This list compiles applicable incentives that are specific towards the Downtown Monroe Strategic Plan projects. Therefore, this is not an exhaustive list of all incentives that could be used in Monroe. This list does not include industry and job specific incentives.

More information about the existing incentives can be found can be found in Phase 1 Booklet under Potential Funding Sources (page 2.13) and proposed incentives can be found in Phase 2 Booklet under Proposed Economic Incentives (page 13.2).

NEXT STEPS

1. Hire a consultant or make someone that works for the City to be the champion of economic incentives and educating.
2. Evaluate incentives listed and add job and industry specific incentives to the matrix.
3. Engage a web designer to create the compiled matrix with hyperlinks to websites and other educational information for each incentive.
4. Publish and update quarterly.
5. Economic Incentive champion or consultant to hold seminars on how to utilize matrix, hold office hours for public assistance and outreach to local developers and businesses to encourage the use of incentives.
6. Economic Incentive champion or consultant to review proposed incentives to see if adoption is needed or applicable and seek out new incentives that would make the most impact for Monroe.

EXISTING INCENTIVES

Brownfield Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X						
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X
Enterprise Zone (EZ)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X
Healthy Food Retail Program (HFRP)	X					X	X	X									
Historic Tax Credits (State)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X							
Historic Tax Credit (Federal)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X							
HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)		X									X						X
Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants - Outdoor Recreation Acquisition, Development and Planning				X													X
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)		X	X					X	X	X							X
Main Street Façade Grant	X		X					X	X								
National Endowment of the Arts Grants and Partnerships			X	X	X		X	X									X
New Market Tax Credit (NMTC)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X						X		
Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X				X			
Recreational Trails				X													X
Restoration Tax Abatement (RTA)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X					X
Rural Business Development Grant Program	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X		
Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL) & Grant Program (REDG)	X		X				X										X
Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program (CDBG Recipients')	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Veteran Affairs' Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program														X			
Veteran Affairs' Acquired Property Sales for Homeless Providers Program										X			X				
Veterans Support Housing Program										X			X				

PROPOSED INCENTIVES

Fresh Food Retailer Initiative	X						X	X	X								X
Gap Financing	X	X	X				X	X	X	X							
Home Ownership Incentives		X					X	X		X							
Neighborhood Housing Improvement Funds (NHIF)		X	X				X								X		
Sales Tax Exemption on Building Materials	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X							
Small Business Grant Programs																	

CATEGORIES	COMMERCIAL	RESIDENTIAL	MIXED-USE	RECREATIONAL	ENTERTAINMENT	RETAIL	NEW CONSTRUCTION	RENOVATION	HISTORIC PRESERVATION	AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUEST	REMEDiate BLIGHT	VETERANS AFFAIRS'	LIMITED APPLICATION CYCLE	ROLLING APPLICATION CYCLE
Brownfield Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Enterprise Zone (EZ)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X
Healthy Food Retail Program (HFRP)	X					X	X	X						
Historic Tax Credits (State)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X				
Historic Tax Credit (Federal)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X				
HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)		X								X				X
Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants - Outdoor Recreation Acquisition, Development and Planning				X										X
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)		X	X				X	X	X	X				X
Main Street Façade Grant	X		X				X	X						
National Endowment of the Arts Grants and Partnerships			X	X	X		X	X						X
New Market Tax Credit (NMTC)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X				X	
Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			X	
Recreational Trails				X										X
Restoration Tax Abatement (RTA)	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			X
Rural Business Development Grant Program	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	
Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL) & Grant Program (REDG)	X		X				X							X
Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program (CDBG Recipients')	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Veteran Affairs' Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program												X		
Veteran Affairs' Acquired Property Sales for Homeless Providers Program									X			X		
Veterans Support Housing Program									X			X		
Fresh Food Retailer Initiative	X						X	X	X					X
Gap Financing	X	X	X				X	X	X	X				
Home Ownership Incentives		X					X	X		X				
Neighborhood Housing Improvement Funds (NHIF)		X	X				X						X	
Sales Tax Exemption on Building Materials	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				
Small Business Grant Programs														

TARGET DEVELOPMENTS

The Monroe Downtown Strategic Plan's Target Developments include a primary focus on preservation, mixed-use, residential, and retail, specifically grocery store, developments. Vacant historic buildings, five of which were identified in Phase 2 as potential historic renovation projects will be catalysts for continued revitalization of Downtown Monroe.

As researched in Phase 1, Downtown Monroe currently has numerous vacant buildings over 50 years of age that may be eligible for listing in the National Register as certified historic structures.. Preservation of Monroe's historic buildings is critical to maintaining the city's history and culture, as well as bringing in visitors to boost economic growth.

As a secondary focus in the Target Developments section, DeSiard St. infill, entertainment, recreation, retail, and industrial developments are suggested for Downtown Monroe. Continual development of natural clusters will be encouraged during the maintenance of the strategic plan, such as the existing businesses and building uses located along DeSiard Street.

LEGEND

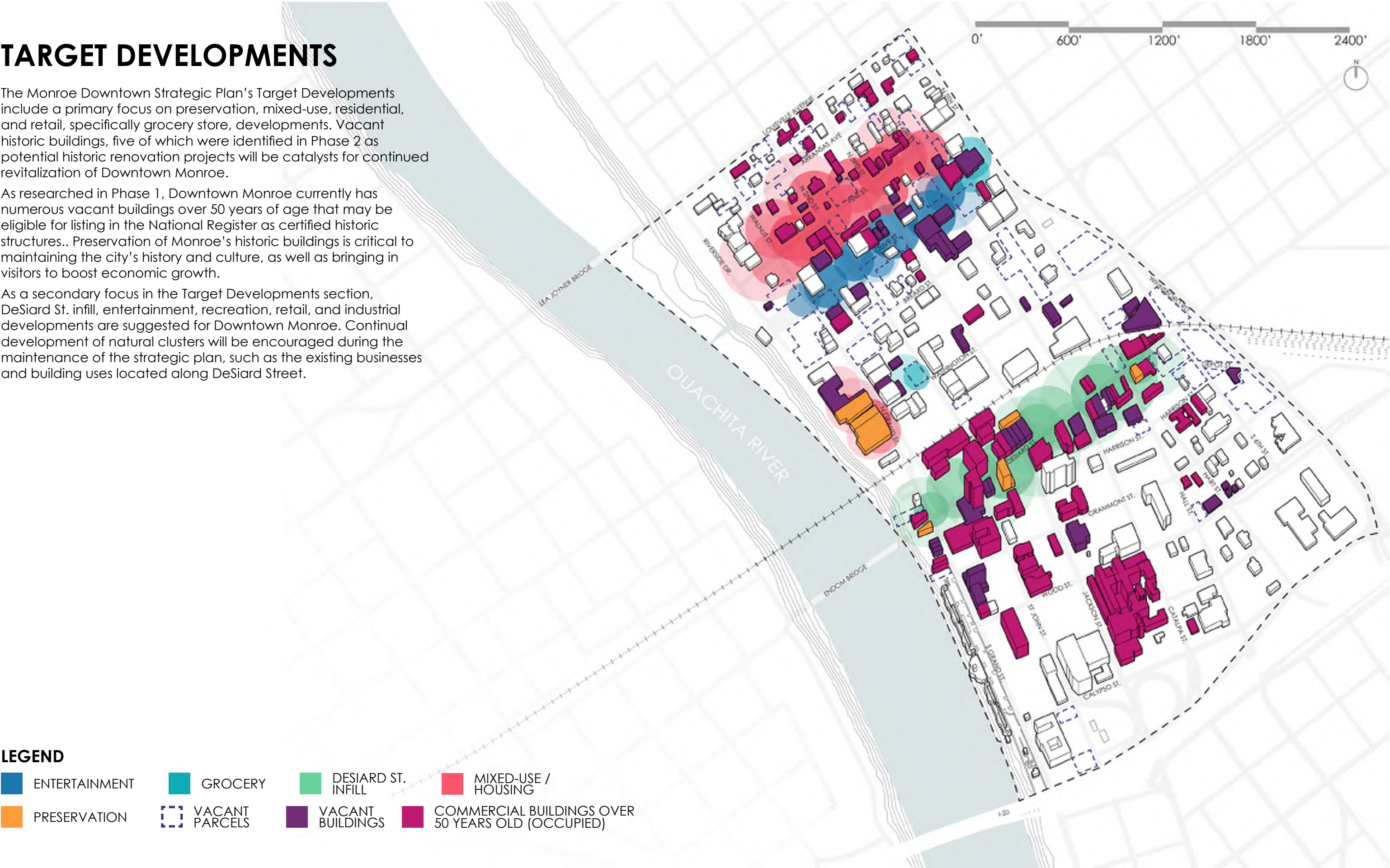
- ENTERTAINMENT

PRESERVATION
- GROCERY

VACANT PARCELS
- DESIARD ST. INFILL

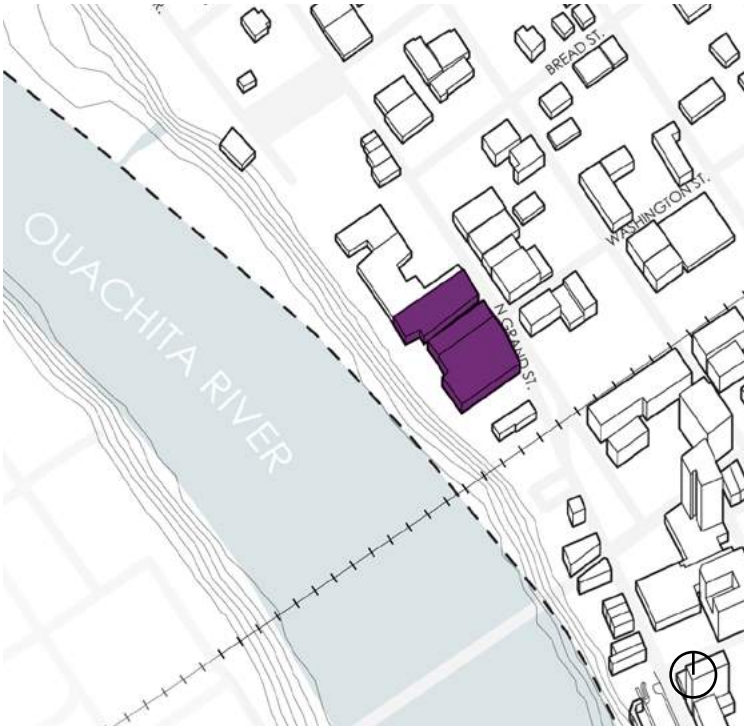
VACANT BUILDINGS
- MIXED-USE / HOUSING

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS OVER 50 YEARS OLD (OCCUPIED)

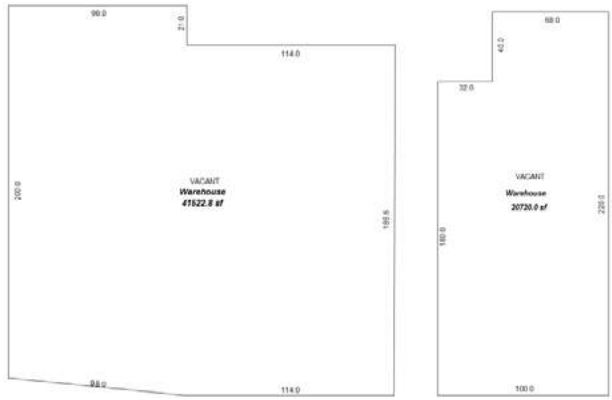


TARGETED HISTORIC PRESERVATION: OUACHITA CANDY COMPANY

The Ouachita Candy Company building, originally known as the Ouachita Valley Bottling Works, was first constructed in 1920-1926 and housed the first mass bottling of Coca-Cola in the nation. In an effort to revitalize this major historic structure downtown, the City of Monroe purchased the building and property, including the riparian rights behind the building to the water's edge.



EXISTING FLOOR PLAN APPROX. 62000 SF



REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The City intends to work with a developer in order to complete an adaptive re-use of the structure into a mixed-use development. Recommended programming for the mixed-use building includes ground floor retail/commercial spaces, an entertainment venue, event space, grocery store, market rate apartments, and a rooftop bar.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Apartments
- Event Space
- Retail
- Grocery Store
- Entertainment

PRECEDENT PROJECTS



DADA DISTRIKT RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX
BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC



ST. ANNS THEATER
BROOKLYN, NY



SODA FACTORY LOFTS
WILLIAMSBURG, NY



TARGET DEVELOPMENTS

MONROE DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN PHASE 3 | CITY OF MONROE, LA

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TARGETED HISTORIC PRESERVATION: OUACHITA CANDY COMPANY

HYPOTHETICAL LAYOUT

A hypothetical layout was developed for the adaptive re-use of the building in order to illustrate a preliminary financial model for a Public-Private development.

Hard costs for the development include the cost of construction, acquisition costs, and contingency funds. Soft costs include Legal fees, accounting fees, architectural fees, development fees, and pre-opening operating expenses.

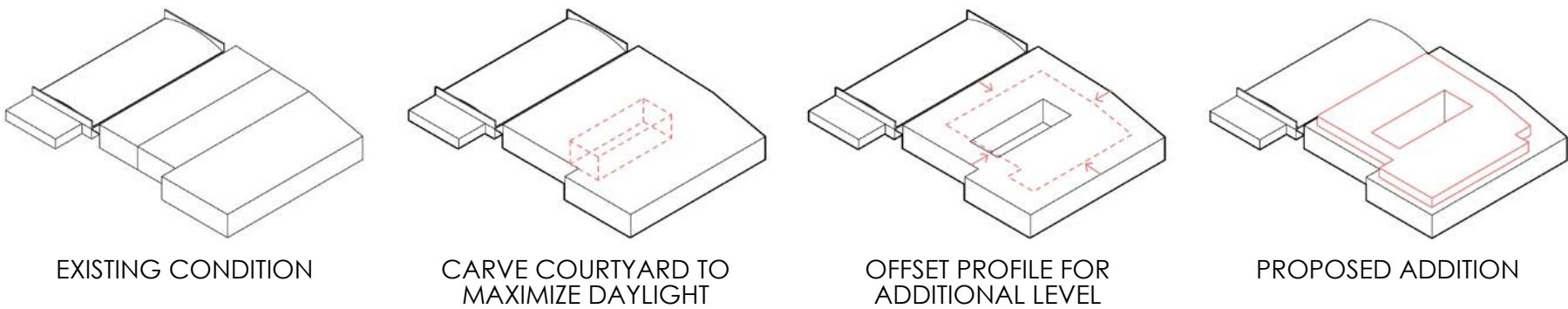
Sources of funding for the development could include Partner Equity (10%), the sale of State and Federal Historic Tax Credits (35%), and Senior Debt Loan Financing (55%).

- In order to offset the cost of development, the City could offer the following:
- Offset the basis of acquisition costs to zero.
 - Waiver of building permit fees.
 - Provide a pre-paid lease agreement as Owner Equity.
 - Reduce sales tax on construction materials.



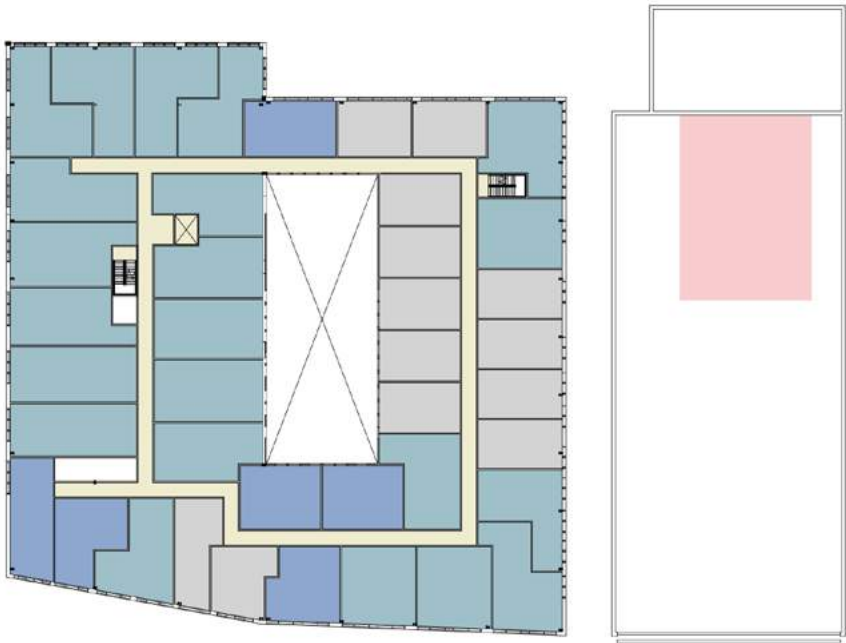
LEVEL 1

MASSING DIAGRAM

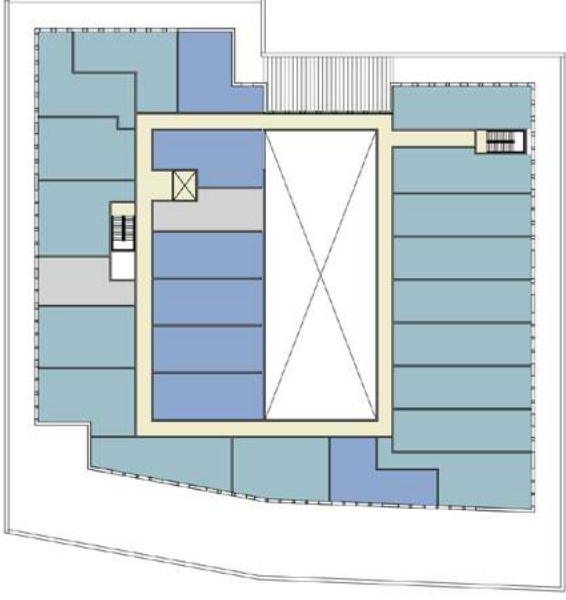


LEGEND

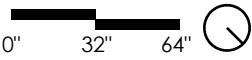
2 BED	STUDIOS	SUPPORT	BOWLING	EVENT
1 BED	LIVE + WORK	GROCERY	FITNESS	TERRACE



LEVEL 2

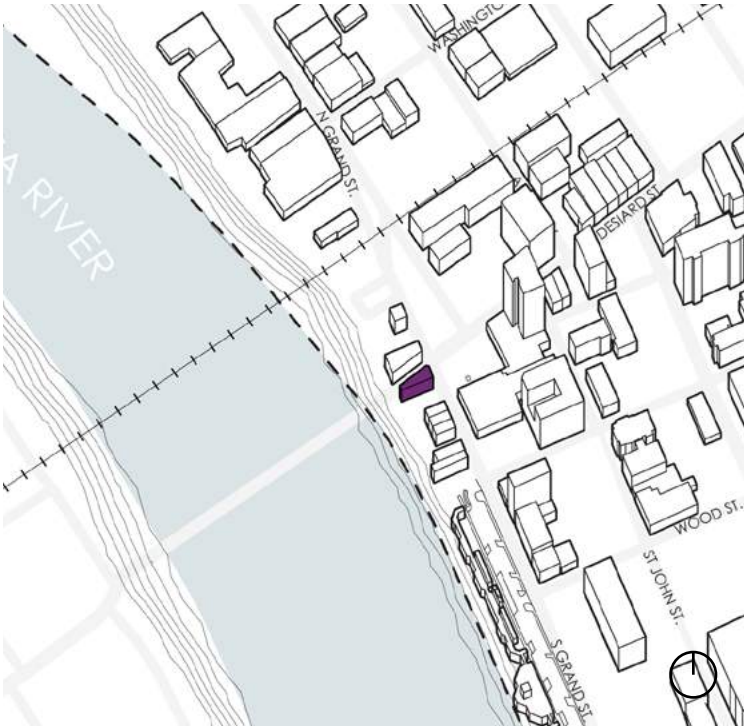


LEVEL 3



TARGETED HISTORIC PRESERVATION: AUSTIN'S ON THE RIVER

Austin's Restaurant building was built in 1890 and sits on the corner of DeSiard St. & S. Grand St. It is one of the two buildings that frame arrival via the Endom Bridge into Downtown Monroe. The DeSiard St. & S. Grand St. intersection was identified as a primary gateway during Phase 2 of Downtown Monroe Strategic Plan.



PRECEDENT PROJECT



RALPH'S ON THE PARK | NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

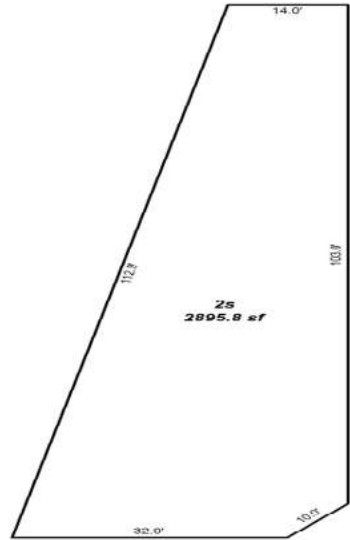
This site could easily be named "Monroe's Most Endangered Historic Structure." Although well maintained and preserved, the prominent site has remained vacant and the building is in need of substantial renovations. As a contributing structure within the Downtown Monroe Historic District (NR# 86002202), this building is eligible for both State and Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits.

The property Owner/Developer is strongly encouraged to pursue a full renovation of the property in order to bring the historic structure back into commerce. Recommended actions may include the preparation of a financial model (pro-forma) for renovation, including estimated construction costs, available financial incentives, and additional sources of funding. A structural analysis and building envelope analysis are recommended to determine the scope of construction. Solicitation of potential Historic Tax Credit investors may be available to bridge gaps in project financing. The city is encouraged to offer additional incentives for redevelopment, including Façade Improvement Grants, Property Tax Abatement, Retail Tenant Improvement Programs, Small Business Loans, Etc.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Restaurant
- Merchandise Retail
- Cultural Center
- Visitor's Center
- Oyster Bar

EXISTING FLOOR PLAN APPROX. 2900 SF



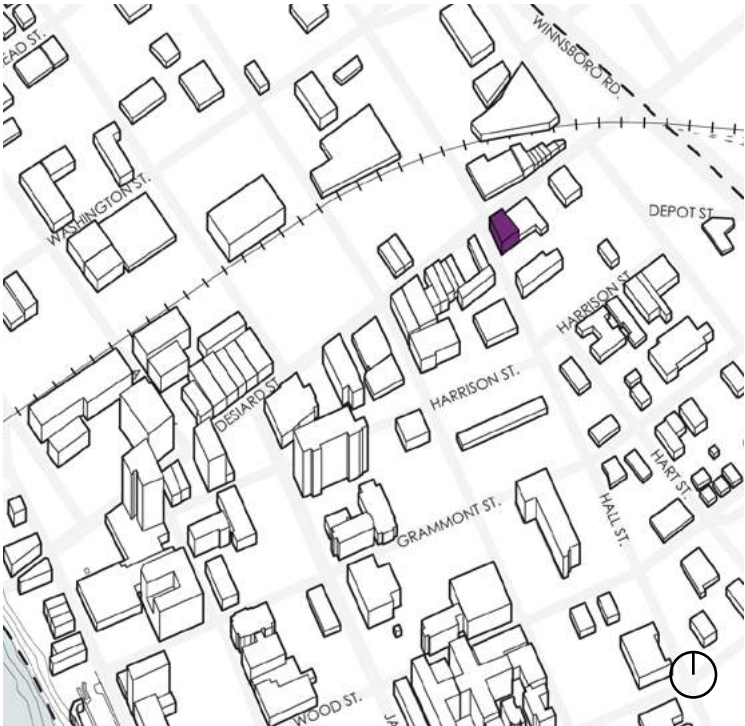
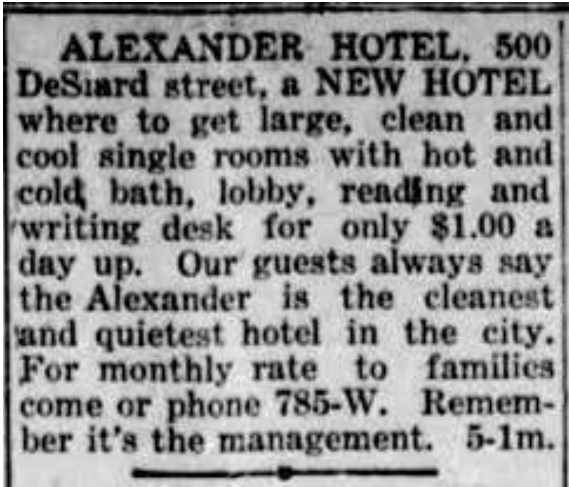
TARGET DEVELOPMENTS

MONROE DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN PHASE 3 | CITY OF MONROE, LA

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TARGETED HISTORIC PRESERVATION: HARVEY'S DANCE HALL

Harvey's Dance Hall, historically known as the Alexander Hotel, was built in 1906 and sits at the corner of DeSiard St. and Hall St. This beautiful brick building is an icon and an anchor for DeSiard St. as you're driving to the railroad tracks. Stories have been told that the reason the building is curved is so that railroad freight containers can make the turn from Hall St. to the railroad tracks.



PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Restaurant
- Event Venue
- Live Music Venue
- 2nd Floor Apartments
- Short Term Rental Units
- Piano Bar
- Book Bar
- Listening Room
- Recording Studio Pods
- Coworking Space
- Cat Cafe

REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

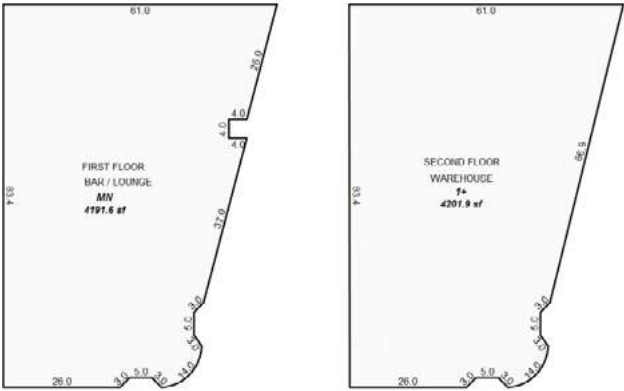
The exterior of this historic structural remains well maintained and preserved. As a contributing structure within the Downtown Monroe Historic District (NR# 86002202), this building is eligible for both State and Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits.

The property Owner/Developer is strongly encouraged to pursue a full renovation of the property in order to bring the historic structure back into commerce. Recommended actions may include the preparation of a financial model (pro-forma) for renovation, including estimated construction costs, available financial incentives, and additional sources of funding.

A structural analysis and building envelope analysis are recommended to determine the scope of construction. Solicitation of potential Historic Tax Credit investors may be available to bridge gaps in project financing.

The city is encouraged to offer additional incentives for redevelopment, including Façade Improvement Grants, Property Tax Abatement, Retail Tenant Improvement Programs, Small Business Loans, Etc.

EXISTING FLOOR PLAN APPROX. 4200 SF



PRECEDENT PROJECTS



SOUTHALL DRUGS | FLORENCE, ALABAMA



THE NINES PIANO BAR | NYC, NEW YORK

TARGETED HISTORIC PRESERVATION: DELTA THEATER

As one of the last theaters built in Downtown Monroe, the former Delta Theater is now just a shell of the once thriving building. With a previous seating capacity of approximately 600, all seats were located on the main level, with no balcony space. The building sits at a prominent location near the future Amtrak development site and the gateway to Ambler Alley.



PRECEDENT PROJECT
ZONY MASH | NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



- PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**
- Performing Arts Center
 - Art Gallery
 - Event Space
 - Live Music Venue

EXISTING FLOOR PLAN
APPROX. 5600 SF

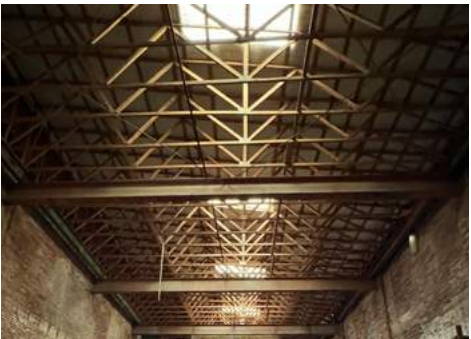


REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As a contributing structure within the Downtown Monroe Historic District (NR# 86002202), this building is eligible for both State and Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. The property Owner/Developer is strongly encouraged to pursue a full renovation of the property in order to bring the historic structure back into commerce. Recommended actions may include the preparation of a financial model (pro-forma) for renovation, including estimated construction costs, available financial incentives, and additional sources of funding.

A structural analysis and building envelope analysis are recommended to determine the scope of construction. Solicitation of potential Historic Tax Credit investors may be available to bridge gaps in project financing. Operation of the venue may be sourced to non-profit arts-based organization. Donations may be solicited from crowd-based funding sources or community initiatives to provide capital for improvements to the building.

The city is encouraged to offer additional incentives for redevelopment, including Façade Improvement Grants, Property Tax Abatement, Retail Tenant Improvement Programs, Small Business Loans, Etc.

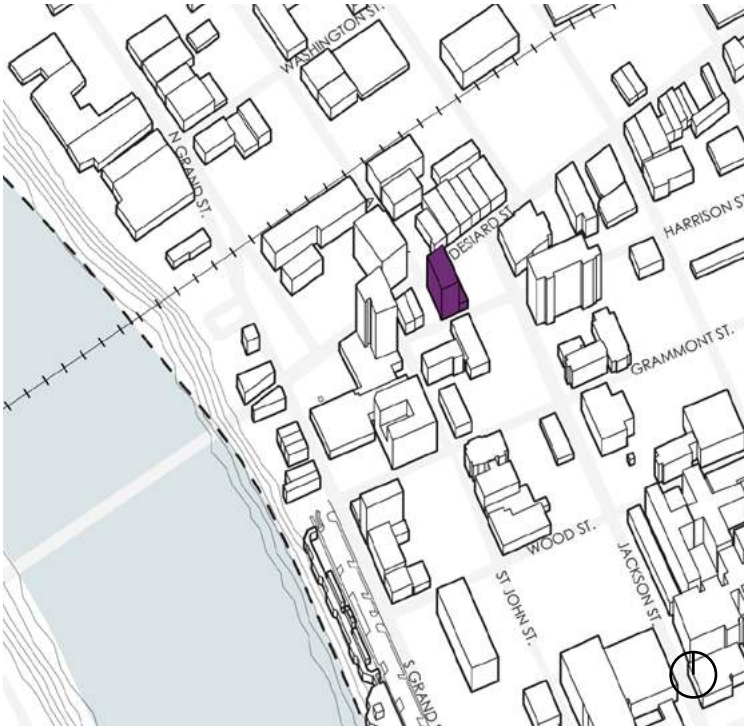
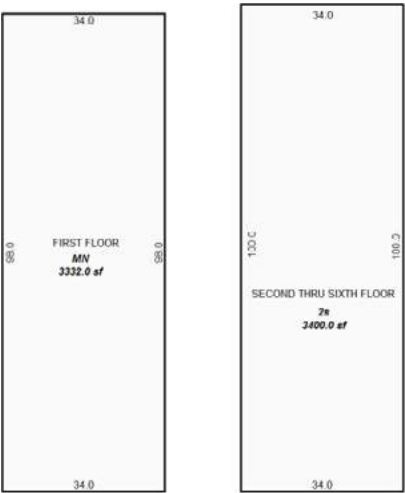


TARGETED HISTORIC PRESERVATION: THE PALACE

The Palace building has been an essential part of the Monroe skyline since 1925. Known for it's iconic rooftop water tower and current life as a community arts center and a flexible venue space, the Palace is well positioned on DeSiard Street in Downtown Monroe, in the center of the city's downtown redevelopment efforts.



EXISTING FLOOR PLAN APPROX. 3400 SF



PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Hotel
- Short Term Rental Units
- Apartments
- Ground Floor Retail
- Event Venue
- Art Gallery
- Community Center

PRECEDENT PROJECT

THE GRADY | LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As a contributing structure within the Downtown Monroe Historic District (NR# 86002202), this building is eligible for both State and Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. The property Owner/Developer is strongly encouraged to pursue a full renovation of the property in order to bring the historic structure back into commerce. Recommended actions may include the preparation of a financial model (pro-forma) for renovation, including estimated construction costs, available financial incentives, and additional sources of funding.

A structural analysis and building envelope analysis are recommended to determine the scope of construction. Solicitation of potential Historic Tax Credit investors may be available to bridge gaps in project financing.

The city is encouraged to offer additional incentives for redevelopment, including Façade Improvement Grants, Property Tax Abatement, Retail Tenant Improvement Programs, Small Business Loans, Etc.

DESIARD STREET DEVELOPMENT

The Circulation Study conducted in Phase 1 identified a large number of vacant storefronts in existing buildings as well as vacant lots along DeSiard Street. In order to establish this main street as a pedestrian corridor, it is essential to activate the route with a continuous collection of occupied spaces.

Even active storefronts may appear vacant to a passerby due to poor facade treatment, lack of sidewalk programming. The city can develop additional incentives for current property owners to make facade improvements such as signage, awnings, and lighting.

POTENTIAL INCENTIVES

- 1. Historic Tax Credits (State and Federal)
- 2. Facade Improvement Grant
- 3. Small Business Loans

RECOMMENDED PROGRAM

- A. Ground Floor Commercial
- B. Upper Floor Residential
- C. Mixed-Use New Construction

NEXT STEPS

Economic development team to outreach to local developers and businesses that could be a good match for the proposed projects and development. If projects aren't feasible, economic development team to work with developers to use and find more incentives that could make projects feasible.



EXISTING CONDITIONS



LEGEND

VACANT PARCELS

VACANT BUILDINGS

PROPOSED RAILROAD STATION

PARKING

GREEN SPACE

PROPOSED INFILL DEVELOPMENT

PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION

TARGET PRESERVATION SITE (REFER TO PAGES 19.4 - 19.8)

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS OVER 50 YEARS OLD (OCCUPIED)

HOUSING & ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPMENT

In Phase 2, a lack of identity was recognized for the area of downtown northeast of the Riverfront and northwest of Main Street. Through community engagement this area was named Bridgetown. From market research, it was identified that Bridgetown should be the LIVE-WORK-PLAY area. Focusing Pine Street on medium density housing and Olive Street on entertainment and multi-use developments falls in line with current zoning regulations. The intent for these streets are to be pedestrian oriented which means consistent building frontage at the street. Due to existing conditions and the proposed intent, it is recommended that the following adjustments are made to zoning in these areas.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Riverfront (RF) & Neighborhood Business District (B-2): Front and corner side yard setback to be 0 ft
- Riverfront (RF) & Neighborhood Business District (B-2): Interior side yard setback to be 5 ft for all multi-family

POTENTIAL INCENTIVES

HOUSING

Low Income Housing Tax Credit
Enterprise Zone
HOME Investment Partnership Program
Restoration Tax Abatement

COMMERCIAL RESTAURANT/BAR, VENUE & GROCERY STORE

Healthy Food Retail Program
Tax Increment Financing
Historic Tax Credits (renovations)
Restoration Tax Abatement (renovations)

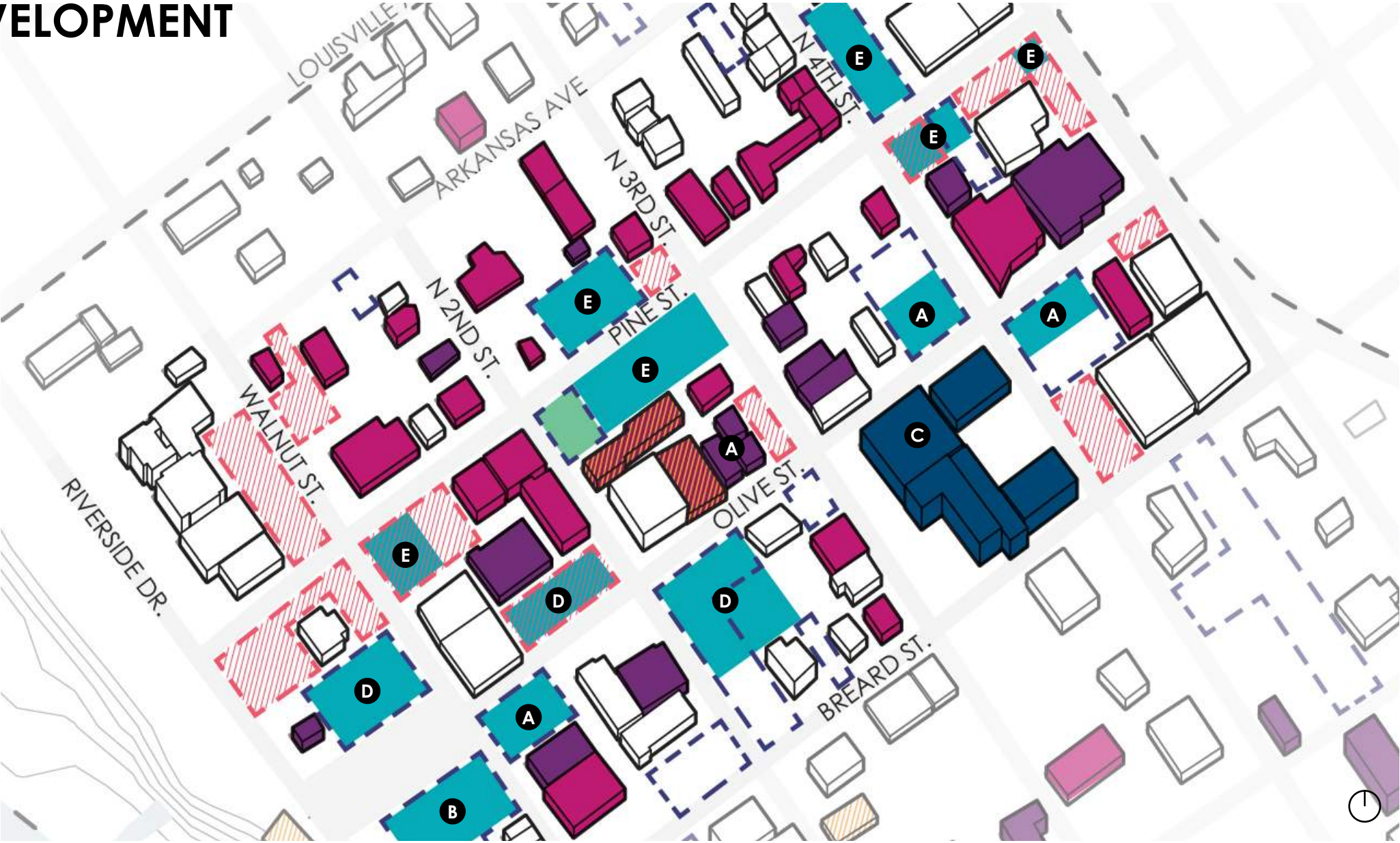
Enterprise Zone
New Market Tax Credit

RECOMMENDED PROGRAM

- A. Restaurant / Bar
- B. Music / Wedding Venue
- C. Mixed-Use Grocery Store, Housing & Restaurant / Bar
- D. Mixed-Use Restaurant & Housing
- E. Medium Density Housing

LEGEND

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  VACANT PARCELS |  VACANT BUILDINGS |  BREWERY, BAR AND/OR RESTAURANT |
|  PARKING |  GREEN SPACE |  PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT |
|  PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION |  COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS OVER 50 YEARS OLD (OCCUPIED) | |



EXISTING CONDITIONS





STRATEGIC PLAN MAINTENANCE

LET'S
DANCE.

MAINTENANCE, TRACKING & UPDATING POLICY

A strategic plan is a living document that should continually referenced and updated. By engaging in the strategic planning process, the City, it's constituents, and stakeholders have committed to working toward achieving common goals. To fully benefit from the effort, the plan must be integrated into daily activities, regularly monitored, revisited, and updated.

ACTIONS:

DISCUSS THE PLAN REGULARLY

- Include a short discussion about some aspect of the Strategic Plan as an agenda item for every DEDD and City meeting agenda.
- Schedule monthly meetings for the first year of implementation to monitor progress and consider any needed corrections.
- Toward the end of the plan's first year, schedule an in-depth review to create an action plan for the next 12 months.

LOOK AT YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Celebrate and announce your successes.
- What did it take to make the vision happen?
- Did the final project fall in line with the original goals and values?

ALLOCATE RESOURCES

- If some items were delayed or not done at all, figure out why and how you can address blockages.
- If necessary, adjust project timeframes, add capacity, and dedicate human resources.

HOW IS SUCCESS DEFINED?

The vision statement developed in Phase 2 should serve as a constant guide for implementing and revisiting the Strategic Plan. Monitor progress toward the Inclusive, Active, and Cultural goals that were established by unified community feedback.



WE ARE
Oneroe

INCLUSIVE | DIFFERENT TOGETHER | COMMUNITY | UNITY

Monroe is committed to cultivating and preserving a culture of inclusion and connectedness. Creating shared spaces for people to connect is a driving force behind many of the initiatives outlined in this plan.

Access to free attractions such as the levee path, rivermarket programming, art alley and ambler alley promotes inclusive spaces that are open for everyone. -Incentives for small business to open in vacant storefronts downtown help develop the next generation of business owners.



WE ARE
Funroe

ACTIVE | VIBRANT | HEALTHY | SOCIAL

Monroe is a clean, green, and sustainable city. Monroe has an active connection to nature and the riverfront.

Street improvements and bike routes create an opportunity for active engagement in the downtown area, as well as additional sustainable infrastructure and increased green space.

The expansion of the riverwalk creates a continuous pedestrian path, promoting outdoor exercise and social interaction.



WE ARE
Monroe

PROUD | CULTURE | FOOD | MUSIC

Monroe embraces its unique culture through historic preservation, food, and music, cultivating a sense of pride in its community.

The development of a cultural and historic walking tour highlights Monroe's extensive collection of historic architecture, as well as local cultural institutions.

Promoting the Bridgetown district as a destination for food, music, and entertainment allows Monroe to grow these industries.

NEXT STEPS

RIVERWALK - LEVEE PATH

- 1. Engage consultants to design and detail Levee path with continued coordination with the Tensas Basin Levee District and the US Army Corp of Engineers.
- 2. Apply for grants or pursue funds to complete project.
- 3. Build all at once or in phases.

RIVERWALK - EASEMENTS

- 1. Obtain legal property boundary surveys for parcels.
- 2. Engage legal council to establish servitude for right-of-way sidewalk over parcels.
- 3. Fund construction of sidewalk and annual maintenance.

RIVERWALK - URBAN PATH

- 1. Engage consultants to design Phases 1 and 2.
- 2. Apply for grants or pursue funding to complete project.

RIVERWALK - PATH & PLAZA

- 1. Bury power lines on riverfront and Walnut Street and obtain an easement on private properties noted on the previous page.
- 2. Engage consultants to further develop the riverwalk plans with continued coordination with the Tensas Basin Levee District and the US Army Corp of Engineers.
- 3. Apply for grants or pursue funds to complete project.
- 4. Build!



ENDOM BRIDGE - PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- 1. Coordinate with West Monroe and DOTD to outline expectations and restrictions for pedestrianization of bridge.
- 2. Coordinate with West Monroe to plan for a continuous pedestrian path to complete the "loop."
- 3. Create a team of engineers and local artists to design shade structure and artistic concept for bridge.
- 4. Apply for grants and pursue funding to complete project.

RIVERMARKET PROGRAMMING

- 1. Engage a consultant to add amenities for both passive and planned activities.
- 2. Apply for grants or pursue funds to complete project.
- 3. Advertise space and create more planned events.

ART ALLEY

- 1. Apply for grants or pursue other funding to complete project.
- 2. Engage local artist to design street graphics.
- 3. Paint!
- 4. Coordinate with railroad governing entity to outline expectations and restrictions.
- 5. Engage engineers to design and coordinate crossing.
- 6. Budget funds to complete project.
- 7. Build!

AMBLER ALLEY NORTH & SOUTH

- 1. Obtain legal property boundary surveys for parcels.
- 2. Engage legal council to establish servitude for right-of-way between buildings and over private property.

DOG PARK

- 1. Apply to the Bark For Your Park grant.
- 2. Secure funding if not through grant.
- 3. Engage the following parties: landscape architect, civil engineer, branding / marketing Team

STREET & SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

- 1. Apply for grants, or pursue funding to complete project.
- 2. Engage the following parties to design streets: landscape architect and civil engineer.
- 3. Prepare timeline for each street's construction to be done at once or in phases.

DISTRICT BRANDING

- 1. Engage with a branding agency to continue marketing efforts for the other districts in the downtown area.

GATEWAYS

- 1. Apply for grants for funding.
- 2. Budget funds if there is no grant funding.
- 3. Put out a call to artists to design gateways.

DOWNTOWN MONROE WALKING TOUR

- 1. Fact check information.
- 2. Optional: Get testimonials and stories from community members on tour stops to add to tour.
- 3. Decide how tour will be presented to public. Some options include reading digital format (PDF or location specific app), reading physical format (booklet/pamphlet), audio walking format, etc.
- 4. Engage graphic design consultant to format and publish tour for distribution to community and tourists.

INCENTIVE MATRIX & EDUCATION

- 1. Hire a consultant or make someone that works for the City to be the champion of economic incentives and educating.
- 2. Evaluate incentives listed and add job and industry specific incentives to the matrix.
- 3. Engage a web designer to create the compiled matrix with hyperlinks to websites and other educational information for each incentive.
- 4. Publish and update quarterly.
- 5. Economic Incentive champion or consultant to hold seminars on how to utilize matrix, hold office hours for public assistance and outreach to local developers and businesses to encourage the use of incentives.
- 6. Economic Incentive champion or consultant to review proposed incentives to see if adoption is needed or applicable and seek out new incentives that would make the most impact for Monroe.

TARGET DEVELOPMENTS

- 1. Schedule meetings with property owners to review development scenarios.

DESIARD STREET DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING / ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPMENT

- 1. Economic development team to outreach to local developers and businesses that could be a good match for the proposed projects and development. If projects aren't feasible, economic development team to work with developers to use and find more incentives that could make projects feasible.

SPECIAL THANKS

MAYOR & EXECUTIVE STAFF

Friday Ellis, City of Monroe Mayor
Lynda McMahan, Executive Assistant to Mayor
Kelsea McCrary, Economic & Cultural Development Officer
DJ Fortenberry, Community Relations Liaison
Jimmie Bryant, Chief Operations Officer
Meghan Risinger, Executive Grant Writer
Nirali Patel, Monroe Main Street Director
Morgan McCallister, City Engineer

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Carday Marshall, Sr. Councilman District 4
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Brandon Creekbaum, Assistant City Attorney
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DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Larry Brattton, DEDD Chairman
Fred Hill, DEDD Vice Chairman
Simran Emaus, DEDD Treasurer
Aimee Kane
Ivan Thomas
Lee Denny
Holmes Kerrico

PROJECT TEAM

John T. Campo Jr., President | Founder
Miriam Salas, Partner | Studio Director
Mary Gilmore, Director of Interior Designer
Janina Scalfano, Senior Architect, Project Lead
Isabella Zannier, Designer
Kareem Elsandouby, Designer
Midge Bishop, Designer

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Melissa Saye, Director of Children's Museum
Stefan Nodarse, Curator at Masur Museum
Ralph Calhoun, Biedenharn Museum Director
Evelyn Stewart, Director, Masur Museum
Barry Stevens, Northeast LA Arts Council President & CEO
Vitus Shell, Artist & Tech Art Professor
Brooke Foy, ULM Art Professor and Downtown Arts Alliance
Jason Byron Nelson, TrickButton
Jarod Stokes, Downtown Arts Alliance
Sheteria Laye-Webb, Duke's Bar & Grill
Chris Williams, ULM Fraternity & Sorority Life Director, Student Development and SGA Advisor
Michael Echols, Vantage Health Care
Christie Echols, Echo Design
Pam Parsons Dupuy, Layton Castle
Nell Calloway, Chennault Aviation Museum
Ross Slacks, NELA African American Heritage Museum
Abigail Handy, Northeast LA Arts Council
Chef Cory Bahr
Ron Berry, ULM President
Ashley Ellis, BESE District 5 Representative Monroe City & School District Principal Neville Jr High School
Brian Davis, Executive Director, LA Trust for Historic Preservation.
Provided Phase 1 drone photos.
Chap Breard, President at MoeBiz, Board Chairman NLEP
Jasmyne McConnell, Bayou Title
Joe Holyfield, Holyfield Construction President
John Rea, Realtor, John Rea Realty
Michael Jordan, CreateLore
Seth Hall, Chief Strategy Officer, ULM
Adrienne LaFrance-Wells, West Monroe Main Street Director
Sheila Snow, Discover Monroe-West Monroe
Kevin Crosby, Lazenby Engineering
Amy Keifenheim, Monroe Civic Center Director
Melissa Thaxton, Monroe Civic Center Marketing Manager / Event Coordinator
Alex Holland, Atlas Community Studios
Rick Taylor, Executive Director of Hattiesburg Convention Center
Neal Lewis, Vicksburg District US Army Corp of Engineers
Michael Mason, Vicksburg District US Army Corp of Engineers
Brandon Waggoner, Tensas Basin Levee District
Matt Varnell, Tensas Basin Levee District

PHASE 2 STEERING COMMITTEE

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Beverly Lewis, Ochsner LSU Health - Monroe Medical Center
Jamie Hanks, University of Louisiana Monroe
Joe Farr, Thomas & Farr Agency
John Jones, Technology of Rural America
Karen Gant, LSU & Southern University School of Nursing Professor
Kendall Bennett, District 5 Appointee
Kenya Roberson, Monroe Regional Black Chamber of Commerce
Melissa Mann, Lumen Technologies, Inc.
Roy Heatherly, Monroe Chamber of Commerce President



PHASE 2 CONSULTANTS

Katrina Branson, Holistic Vibes
Volkert Engineers
MSA Professional Services, Inc.
CSRS
Carbo Landscape Architecture



THANK YOU

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