

Fair Oaks Mall

Reimagined. Repurposed.

A Master Plan guiding the future of Fair Oaks Mall, Donner Park and Center, Surrounding Area Connectivity, and Land Use

Columbus, Indiana | July 2020

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the stakeholders and residents of the Columbus, Indiana community who helped shape this master plan and its recommendations.

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Introduction & Executive Summary





Introduction

Like many North American communities, the City of Columbus has faced a declining retail environment over the past decade that has seen the shuttering of mall properties throughout the country at an alarming rate.

Community leaders worried that the decline of Fair Oaks Mall could affect nearby areas, resulting in the deterioration of properties around the mall. Leaders were also looking for creative ways to satisfy community health, wellness, and recreation needs at one location. To address both issues, the City of Columbus and Columbus Regional Health (CRH) partnered to form the Fair Oaks Community Development Corporation (FOCDC), a not-for-profit corporation, on October 4, 2018. The FOCDC purchased the Fair Oaks Mall on December 14, 2018, and in June 2019 the FOCDC started the formal process of planning its future and four inter-related components:

Fair Oaks Mall

Donner Park and Center

Surrounding area connectivity

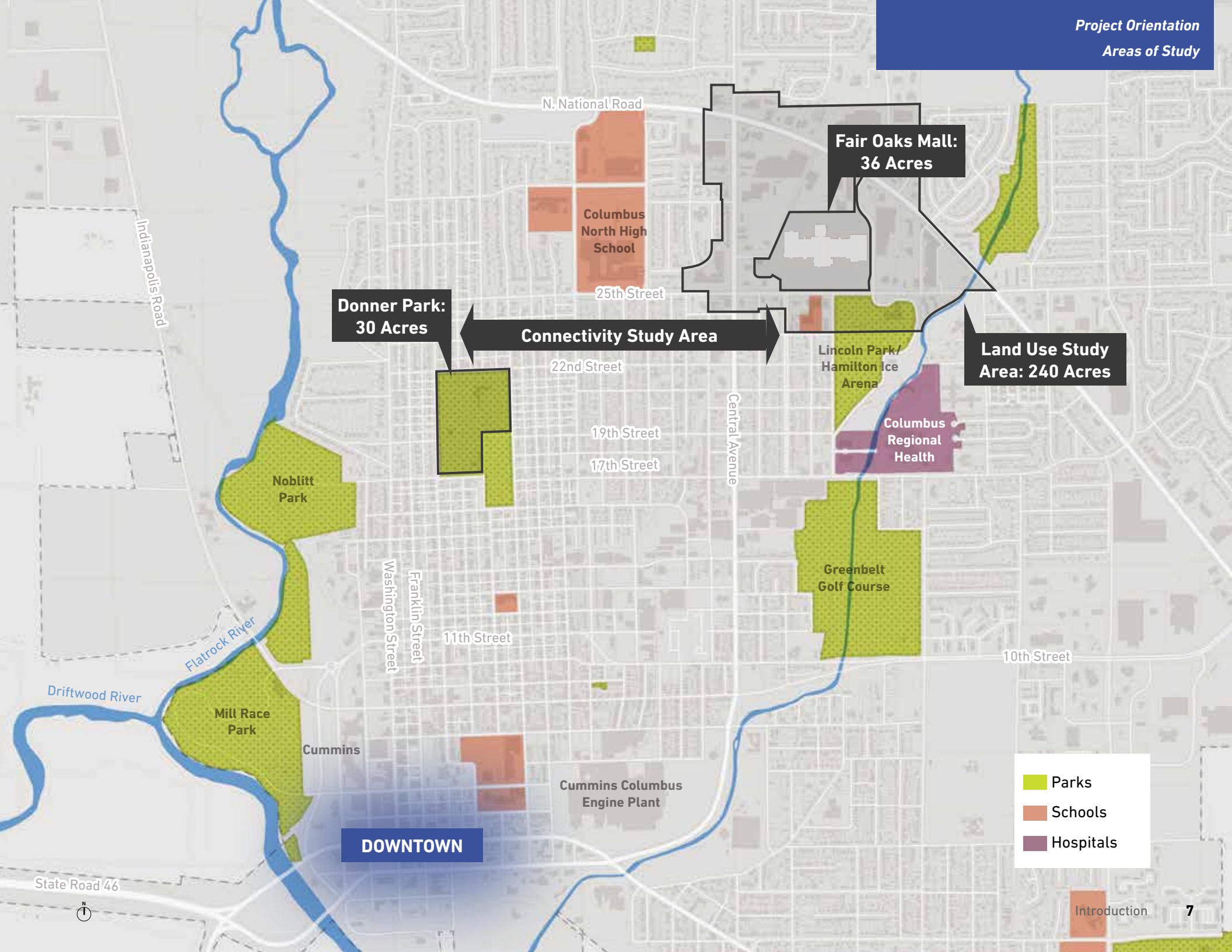
Surrounding area land use

The Fair Oaks Mall Reimagined. Repurposed. Master Plan is a result of the convergence of the following opportunities:

- To repurpose Fair Oaks Mall and its property for the public good through the FOCDC's partnership.
- To address the need for a new indoor sports complex in the community (as identified by the 2017 Columbus Parks and Recreation Master Plan and parallel feasibility study).
- To strategically locate the Columbus Parks and Recreation headquarters at Fair Oaks Mall, instead of its current location at Donner Center and to develop a plan to improve Donner Center and Park.
- To provide CRH with a consolidated location for comprehensive healthcare services near its flagship campus.
- To transform Fair Oaks Mall into a new community health, wellness, and recreation facility.
- To improve pedestrian connectivity within the north-central area of the city.
- To support reinvestment in the area surrounding Fair Oaks Mall.
- To engage the public to understand what they would like to see as the next iteration of Fair Oaks Mall.
- To create a place for complementary community organizations and businesses to thrive.

A ten-person design committee provided leadership and guided the consultant team throughout the planning process. The design committee included representatives from FOCDC, community organizations, schools, and non-profits. This group met seven times throughout the planning process and was instrumental in understanding, influencing, and supporting the visioning objectives and master plan recommendations. The committee's interest and advocacy were critical to the project's success and directly correlated with the positive energy generated during public meetings. This group also helped shape project storefront materials, website content, public input materials, along with draft and final documents.

This master plan is intended to describe concepts for the future Fair Oaks Mall and Donner Park and Center. The select details it provides, such as the size of uses within the buildings and their proximity to each other, are intended to be illustrative and capture key master plan conclusions. This plan does not represent a design. The concepts it provides are expected to evolve over time and be adapted as additional information becomes available through subsequent detailed design efforts. This master plan will inform future policy and budgeting decisions with respect to investment at Fair Oaks Mall and Donner Center and Park. This master plan also outlines key connectivity enhancements that will link these assets to the community and one another. Lastly, over time lands surrounding Fair Oaks Mall are anticipated to redevelop. This master plan provides guidance for desired uses and formats for future development in this area.



- Parks
- Schools
- Hospitals

Executive Summary

Approach

The **Fair Oaks Mall Reimagined. Repurposed.** Master Plan focuses on four distinct areas of study. The planning approach towards each of these components involved developing a clear and deep understanding of existing conditions and identifying opportunities to improve their future. A linked strategy connects the four study areas.

Fair Oaks Mall

The Fair Oaks Mall study area focuses on the existing 412,750 s.f. mall building and 36-acre site. The conceptual master plan envisions the mall as a vibrant community health, wellness, and recreation facility with indoor spaces, outdoor spaces, and enhanced connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, open spaces, and institutions.

Donner Park and Center

The Donner Park and Center study area includes the existing 21,589 s.f. Donner Aquatic Center facility and 32.5-acre park. The conceptual master plan proposes a purpose-built facility to replace Donner Center and long-term improvements to access, connectivity, parking, recreational amenities, shelters, trails, and aquatics facilities within Donner Park.



Surrounding Area Connectivity

The surrounding area connectivity study focused on broader strategies to link Fair Oaks Mall, Donner Park and Aquatics Center, Lincoln Park and Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena, Columbus Regional Hospital, neighborhoods, schools and significant landmarks, and existing and planned trail systems. New multimodal facilities, street modifications, and intersection improvements are recommended to enhance connectivity and safety within this area.

Surrounding Area Land Use

The surrounding area land use study considered high-level opportunities for redevelopment beyond Fair Oaks Mall, recognizing that repurposing the mall will catalyze investment in surrounding properties over time. Changes could include more active, walkable, and complementary residential, hospitality, and commercial development. This study identified potential future land uses that could occur as the private market reinvests in surrounding properties over time.

Design Committee Collaboration

The design committee was highly engaged and influential throughout the planning process. Each of the seven highly-collaborative work sessions with the design committee provided the planning team with guidance to move forward to the next step in the planning process.

During work sessions, the planning team shared analyses, precedent and case study research, and building, site, and district-level ideas.

At the building and site scales, test-fits allowed the design committee to understand the possibilities for Fair Oaks Mall and Donner Center. The initial site and building programs were connected, and as ideas took shape for these two places, the team stepped back to functionally and programmatically distinguish and connect them.

These two catalytic sites affect the surrounding area. Attention was given to linking these sites to the broader community and retrofitting corridors to enhance the way people reach destinations. Consideration was also given to the future opportunity to realize new land uses around the Fair Oaks Mall property to complement investment in the facility. Throughout the study of these project components, the design committee provided insight and rigor to the planning process.



Executive Summary

Project Vision

Definitions

Throughout the master planning process, issues, assets, and opportunities for the four study areas were identified as part of internal and external engagement and research. This process was iterative and engaged the design committee in multiple meetings. As the team developed an understanding of current conditions, evaluated opportunities, and integrated best practices and case study research, three descriptors were used to guide the overall project direction:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Wellness is an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence.

Recreation refers to all those activities that people choose to do to refresh their bodies and minds and make their leisure time more interesting and enjoyable.

Source: World Health Organization and National Institute for Health

Theme

A theme of Holistic Wellness emerged early during the planning process:

Holistic Wellness is the pursuit of health and wellbeing throughout the interconnected dimensions of self and community.

Vision

The guiding definitions and project theme were advanced through a process of learning, discovery, research, and dialogue, resulting in an overall project vision that guided master plan development and detailed recommendations:

***Creating place through health,
wellness, and recreation***



Objectives

This process was rooted in objectives developed by FOCDC at the project onset and subsequently supported by the design committee. The objectives of this process were to:

- **Engage the public** and a targeted group of stakeholders in a robust manner to obtain input on the opportunities and recommendations for the four areas of study.
- **Develop a conceptual master plan** for the adaptive re-use of Fair Oaks Mall as a community health, wellness, and recreation facility and related site improvements. Key features may include quality greenspace and connectivity, bringing the outside in, a continuum of health and wellness services, and a catalytic investment that will transform the north-central part of Columbus.
- **Develop a conceptual master plan** for Donner Park and Center focused on exploring the future of Donner Center and making improvements to the park.
- **Identify connectivity improvements** for the area between Fair Oaks Mall and Donner Park and Center, schools, significant landmarks and institutions, and the People Trail system.
- **Prepare a strategy** for long-term complementary land uses for the area surrounding Fair Oaks Mall.

Creating Place Through Health, Wellness, and Recreation



The area around the Fair Oaks Mall and Donner Park currently includes a number of health, wellness, and recreation amenities. The implementation of this master plan has the potential to connect these amenities further and enhance the emerging greenbelt through this portion of the community.



Fair Oaks Mall

Site

The Fair Oaks Mall property, now controlled by the FOCDC partnership of the City of Columbus and Columbus Regional Health (CRH), provides an opportunity to adapt the mall into a thriving community health, recreation, and wellness facility. A vision for an active, community-oriented site surrounding the facility was created. The area surrounding the mall should include enhanced connectivity, and quality greenspace, and bring the vibrancy of the outside space into the building through quality access and transparent spaces. Recommended improvements by category include:

Vehicular Connectivity

At major intersections and decision points, intersection treatments, streetscape improvements, wayfinding signage, a clarified loop road system, and a signature open space will help define the facility and its front door for visitors and staff. New vehicular drop-offs will enhance the visitor experience and help to direct them to their chosen destination.

Parking

Parking improvements will be phased as the building is improved over time, using as much existing parking infrastructure as possible, upgrading pavement, and adding landscape to scale the asphalt and improve efficiency. This plan recommends shared parking between the City of Columbus, CRH, on-site partners, and Lincoln Park so that each can benefit from flexible parking within close proximity. Parking improvements would likely occur first along the south side of the building along with improvements to the entry sequence. Future enhancements will be timed with capital projects such as the indoor sports complex to the north of the site. Westward parking expansion would be tied to demolition and replacement of an existing on-site storage building.

Pedestrian System

Today, the site is largely oriented toward the vehicle and not the pedestrian or bicyclist. Good access to the site for other modes of transportation is important to its function as a community health, wellness, and recreation hub. Creating a new streetscape with a pedestrian path on 25th Street, a loop trail around the site, a new multi-use trail along Herman Darlage Drive, and a new signature open space leading to the facility's main entrance will transform how people enter and experience this site. Furthermore, these improvements are an integral part of enhancements to pedestrian connectivity within the broader area surrounding Fair Oaks Mall.

Amenities

This community-oriented place will have a new “front door” that symbolically and functionally changes the character of the building and site. The foreground of this feature is a signature open space envisioned to be active and highly-programmed. An initial phase of this area would include replacing surface parking with lawn, landscape, and paths. Later phases would add gathering spaces, water play, shelters, art, seating, lighting, and outdoor dining spaces.

Site Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Signature Open Space **A**

CRH Entry and Dropoff **B**

Public Entry and Dropoff **C**

Parkside Entry **D**

Plaza Space **E**

Main Entrances **F**

Parking **G**

Loop Road **H**

25th Street Multi-Use
Path **I**

Herman Darlage Drive
Multi-Use Path **J**

Loop Trail **K**

Intersection
Improvements **L**

Outdoor Flex/Program
Space **M**

Main Drop-off Plaza **N**



Fair Oaks Mall

Building

This master plan's vision establishes the future of the mall as a health, wellness, and recreation center, operated in partnership between the City of Columbus and CRH and representing their important cooperative relationship in bringing the city's recreational offerings and CRH's health services to patrons across the community, whether they are initiating, maintaining, rehabilitating, or adapting their personal wellness journey. This new facility will allow guests to engage in a range of health and wellness services centralized at one location in the community.

Overall, the existing mall building is in good structural condition and has favorable attributes for an adaptive re-use strategy. The existing mall building will be renovated with its current footprint intact, excluding the former Goody's space, which is expected to be demolished to make way for the future indoor sports complex. A new front door along the 25th Street frontage will create a new arrival experience and punctuate this as a transformed place. Recommended improvements by category include:

Facade

Conduct general updates and facade repairs after conducting a full facility condition assessment. Make cosmetic and access control improvements to all entrances. Improve the southern facade to be more modern, transparent, and welcoming. Provide flexibility for interior programmed spaces to spill out into outdoor areas for outdoor learning, fitness, and dining. Improve the northern facade as the indoor sports complex is constructed.

Mechanical Systems

Conduct a full building mechanical system analysis to determine upgrades and replacements and their respective timelines. Mechanical systems will account for a large portion of the renovation cost.

Interior

Develop a modern and dynamic facility by maintaining the integrity of the building's superstructure and updating its interior. Create spaces for the City of Columbus, CRH, partner, and shared areas within the facility. Create individual entries along the south face for City of Columbus and CRH access control. Maintain the existing central concourse while making aesthetic upgrades to public-facing areas. Determine the phasing of interior improvements that allow for the build-out of this facility over time while preserving the ability to occupy currently leased spaces.

Indoor Sports Complex

The indoor sports complex proposed for the north side of the mall complex is a significant addition to the site. The fieldhouse will be designed for flexibility in accommodating community events, recreation programming, as well as regional sports tournaments. This complex will replace the former Goody's anchor on the north side of the mall complex and activate this side of the facility.

Building Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Parks & Recreation Offices	A
Indoor Sports Complex	B
Indoor Sports Complex Support	C
Multi-Purpose Activity Court	D
Fitness/Group Exercise	E
Catering/Demonstration Kitchen	F
Complementary Retail, Parks and Recreation, or Community Space	G
Concourse/Walking Path	H
Columbus Regional Health (CRH)	I
Shared City of Columbus and CRH Space	J
Child Watch/Preschool	K
Meeting/Activity Rooms	L
Locker Rooms	M
Hydrotherapy	N
Cafe	O
Storage	P
Community Partner Space	Q
Maker Space	R
Public Restrooms	S



Donner Park

Site

The master plan recognizes the importance of Donner Park as a historic neighborhood park with important community aquatics offerings. Long-term opportunities in the park seek to preserve the inherent landscape character while sensitively adding, expanding, or updating facilities, amenities, and connectivity. Recommended improvements by category include:

Vehicular Connectivity

There is an opportunity to create new formalized drop-off areas near the aquatics center within the park that will better serve that facility and the greater park. This improvement will also create a better flow between parking lots and entry drives.

Parking

Parking lots are functional and sufficient to support park needs but could benefit from modest improvements to pavement, striping, and landscaping. Parking south of 17th Street should be formalized and landscaped to serve pickleball players in this area. This plan also recommends removing a small parking lot aligned with 19th Street to provide space for the 17th/19th Street trail connection traversing the park.

Pedestrian System

While there are many sidewalks within Donner Park, there isn't a cohesive system of pedestrian trails. This plan recommends developing a formal loop trail around the park, connecting it to programmed areas, and the planned 17th/19th Streets trail connection. Further connectivity improvements could be achieved by linking pathways focused on gateways into the park, entrances to the aquatics center, and programmed areas.

Amenities

Today, this park is well-loved, but there could be additional investment in park amenities that will supplement the current offerings. This master plan recommends preserving the wooded nature of the park, but strategically incorporating additional programmed spaces. Excluding the Donner Center building, which is addressed separately, there is a real opportunity to improve the Donner Center and its connection to Donner Park. Site improvements proposed for Donner Center include the development of plaza spaces around the perimeter of the building that could tie into programmed areas, including aquatics. The existing lap-pool is recommended to have its movable floor repaired. Longer-term aquatics expansion is possible east into the lawn area.

Aside from Donner Center, existing buildings within the park could be improved. Improvements are needed to restroom facilities and existing shelters. There is an opportunity to transform the historic shelter house into an all-season facility. The area around the historic shelter house and existing restrooms could include a new plaza space that could help activate this area for community gatherings and connect into trails. Supplemental programmed space recommended for Donner Park consists of a natural playground, an upgraded conventional playground, expanded pickleball courts, and multi-sport courts. Finally, this park could be upgraded in general with enhanced lighting, landscaping, and wayfinding signage.

Site Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Donner Center Offices/
Community Space **A**

Aquatics Expansion Area **B**

New Drop-off and Resurfaced
/ Restriped Parking Lots **C**

All Season Shelterhouse
Update/Expansion **D**

Improved Trail Network **E**

Loop Trail **F**

Future Activity/Event
Location **G**

Natural Play Area **H**

Multi-Sport Expansion Area **I**

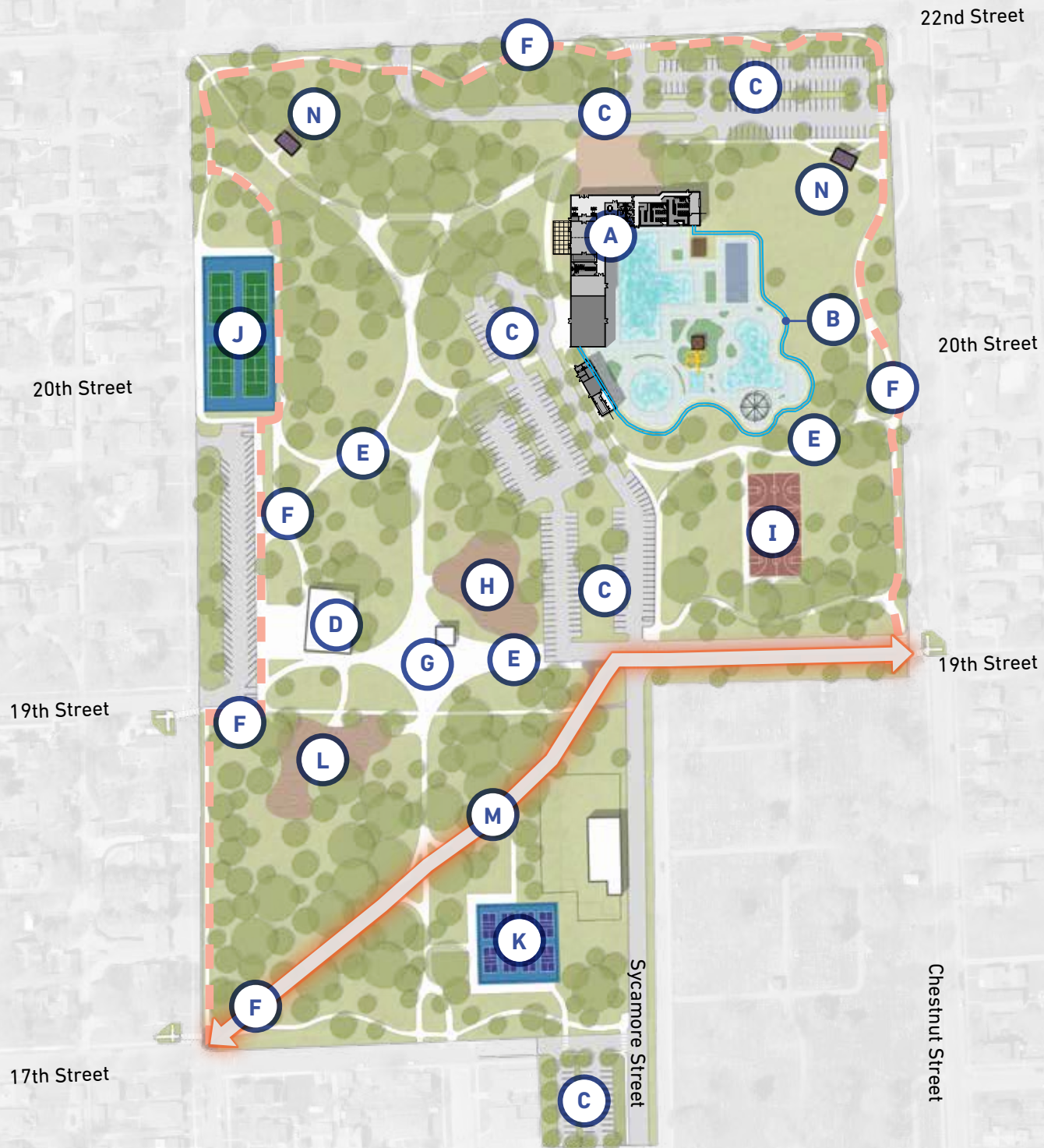
Tennis Court Viewing Area
Improvements **J**

Pickleball Expansion Area **K**

Updated Playground **L**

17th/19th Trail Connection **M**

Picnic Shelter **N**



Donner Center

Building

Donner Center is an aging facility that has reached the end of its useful life. While it is structurally sound, the building suffers from water leaks at the rooftop spectator seating, and as a concrete block building, it is difficult and expensive to renovate. The master plan recommends that Donner Center be replaced over time with a new facility with a smaller, more efficient footprint that can be operated with a higher degree of flexibility and accessibility for all users. The basement pool mechanical systems will likely be retained, as it is cost-prohibitive to relocate these systems. In the future, as expansion occurs, new mechanical systems could be located at grade.

Donner Center could be replaced with a modern facility with more open views to the park and an expanded aquatics area. This building could occupy a smaller footprint than the current Donner Center and utilize modern building techniques and materials. This facility is planned to have flexible community rooms and a catering kitchen accessible from both the pool deck and the park. This future facility could have larger and more modern public restrooms, family restrooms, locker rooms, and offices for aquatics staff. Enhancements to the aquatics support areas will maximize the facility's functionality and include capacity for future aquatics programming expansion. Modular seating systems could address spectator seating for swim meets. The adjacent concessions building can be remodeled into a facility servicing the aquatics center and the park.

Building Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Locker Rooms **A**

Administrative/Lifeguard
Offices **B**

Meeting Rooms **C**

Restrooms **D**

Patio **E**

Storage **F**

Storage/Future Aquatics
Mechanical **G**

Concessions **H**

Lobby **I**

Catering Kitchen **J**

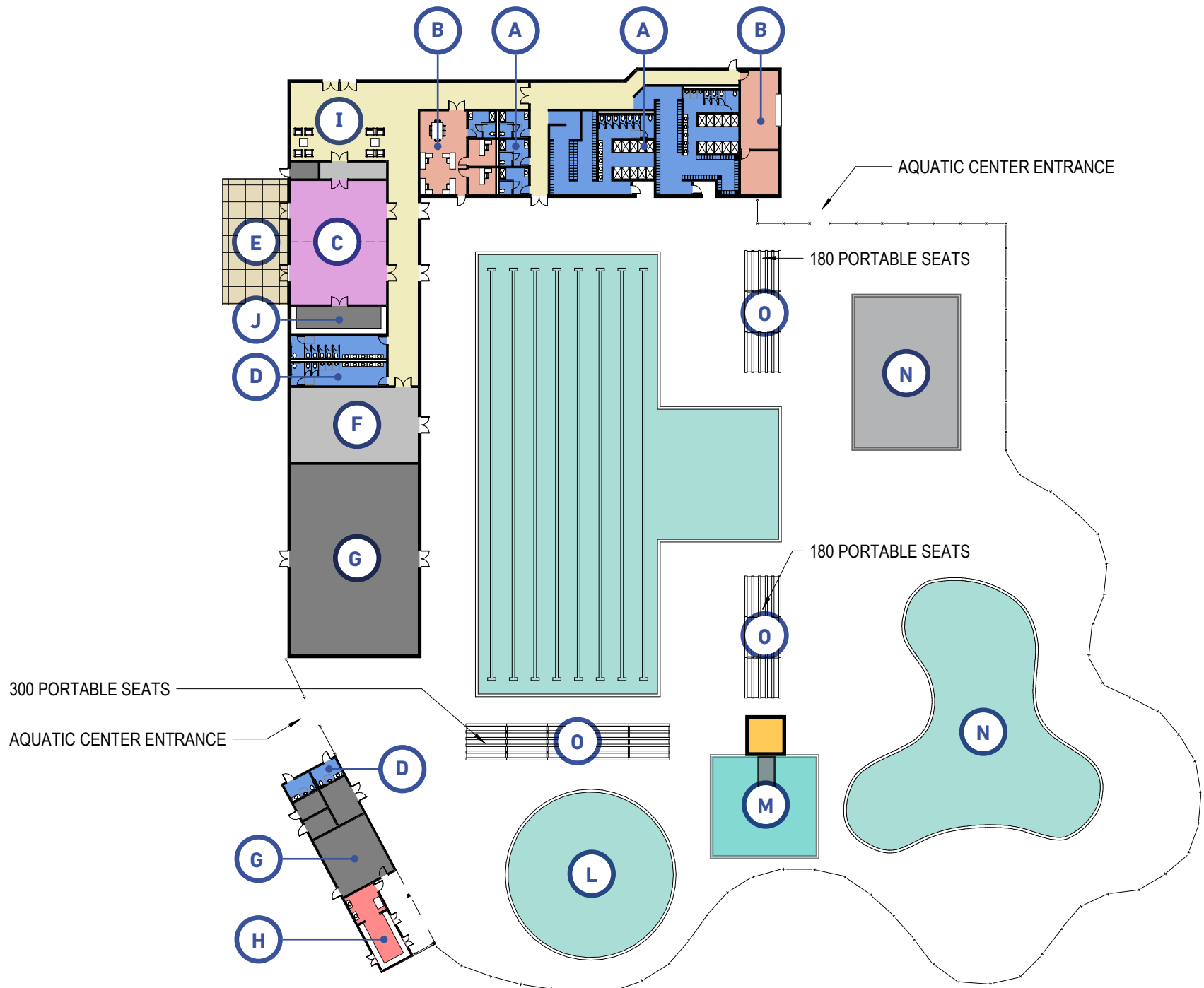
Existing 50m Pool /Diving Well **K**

Existing Leisure Pool **L**

Existing Waterslide **M**

Potential Aquatics Expansion **N**

Portable Spectator Seating **O**



Surrounding Area Connectivity

Connectivity

Good connectivity is important to link Fair Oaks Mall, Donner Park and Center, the nearby neighborhoods, and surrounding destinations. As a starting point for developing connectivity recommendations for this study, several previous city-led studies and plans were referenced.

This plan recommends improvements to corridors that will connect existing trail infrastructure with parks, schools, and other destinations within proximity to each other. Primary connections are east/west followed by secondary north/south connections, all of which are linked to connect destinations and other trails. Recommended improvements by category include:

25th Street

Improve 25th Street from Home Avenue east past the intersection of US 31/National Road by incorporating a multi-use path on the north side of the road, improving existing sidewalks, and enhancing intersections. Over time, a portion of 25th Street may undergo a road diet (narrowing of lanes), which would create additional green space along the Fair Oaks Mall frontage. This green space along the 25th Street frontage adjacent to Fair Oaks Mall can generate signature pedestrian experience leading to the facility's front door.

Herman Darlage Drive

Enhance Herman Darlage Drive by installing a multi-use path that connects to the mall loop trail, and 25th Street multi-use path.

Hawcreek Avenue

Construct a multi-use path on Hawcreek Avenue from 25th to 19th Streets.

Home Avenue

Improve connectivity along Home Avenue between 25th and 19th Streets by installing a cycle track (on-street bike facility).

17th/19th Trail Connection

A major east/west connector is the planned 17th and 19th Streets trail, which will link existing trails to parks across town. This trail is expected to be implemented as sidewalk improvements and traffic calming along streets and as a stand-alone trail within Donner Park.

Connectivity Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

25th Street (west of Central): Potential road diet and multi-use path

A

25th Street (east of Central): Potential road diet and multi-use path

B

Herman Darlage Drive: Multi-use path

C

Hawcreek Avenue: Multi-use path

D

Home Avenue: Cycle track

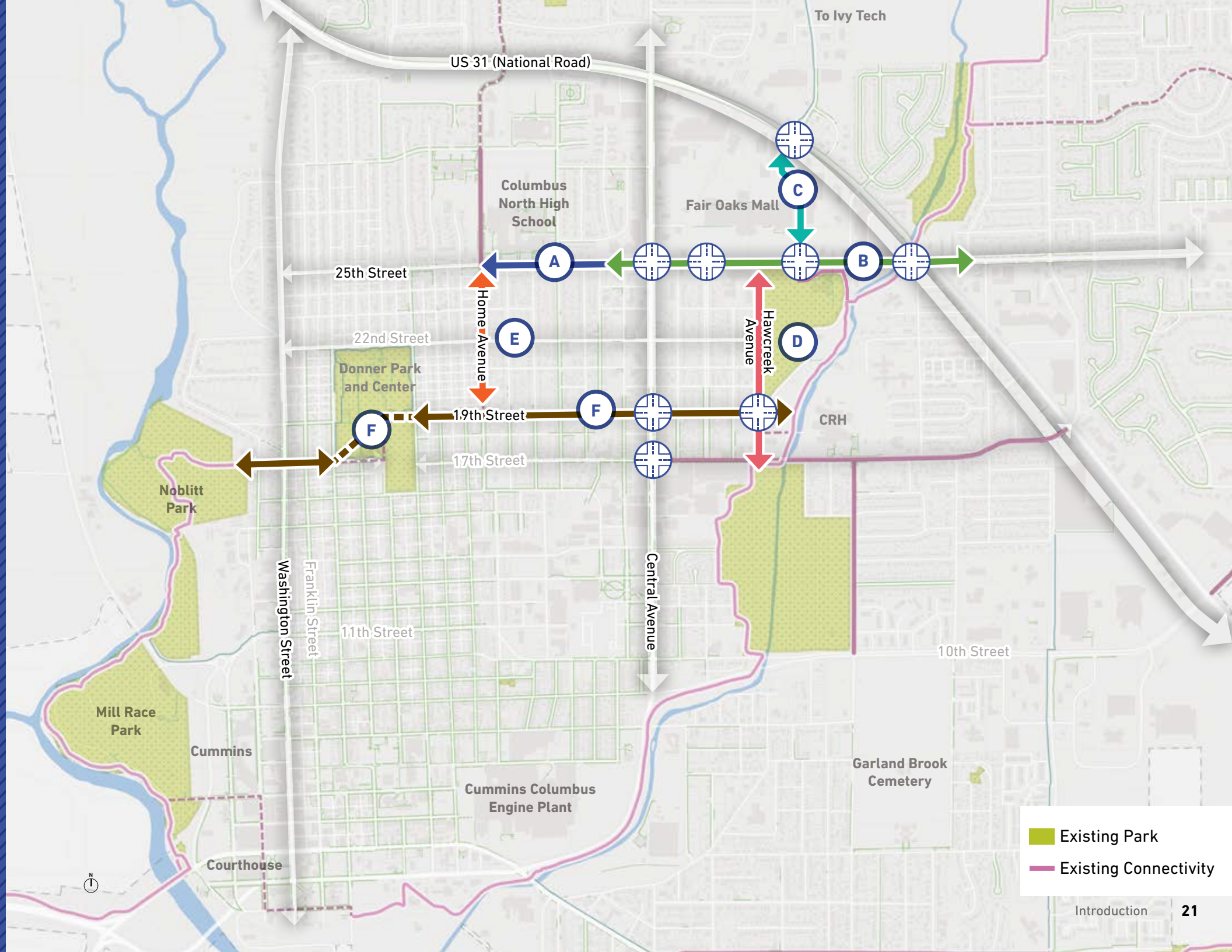
E

17th/19th Streets: Park Trail and Bike Boulevard

F

Intersection Improvement





Existing Park

Existing Connectivity

Surrounding Area Land Use

Future Land Use

The area surrounding the Fair Oaks Mall complex could realize investment after the mall is redefined as a hub for community health, recreation, and wellness. These sites can transition into a more walkable mixed-use village, denser housing, and complimentary hospitality, retail, and restaurants. The map on the following page identifies several sites that could see future investment that would support a more active district.

Complementary land uses envisioned for this area include:

- Mixed-use development (residential with retail and/or office)
- Multifamily development
- Hospitality development
- Stand-alone retail or restaurant development
- Stand-alone office space
- Structured parking if higher densities occur over time

Potential Opportunity Sites

Conceptual Master Plan

Former Kroger, potential multi-family, stand-alone retail or restaurant, or hospitality development. **A**

Current Bob Poynter Car Dealership, potential mixed-use or hospitality development. **B**

Various vacant properties, potential stand-alone retail or restaurant, hospitality or stand alone-office. **C**

Existing, complementary restaurants and other uses to be provided with improved pedestrian connections to the mall. **D**

Significant street intersection, potential district gateway including signage, landscaping, and other features. **E**

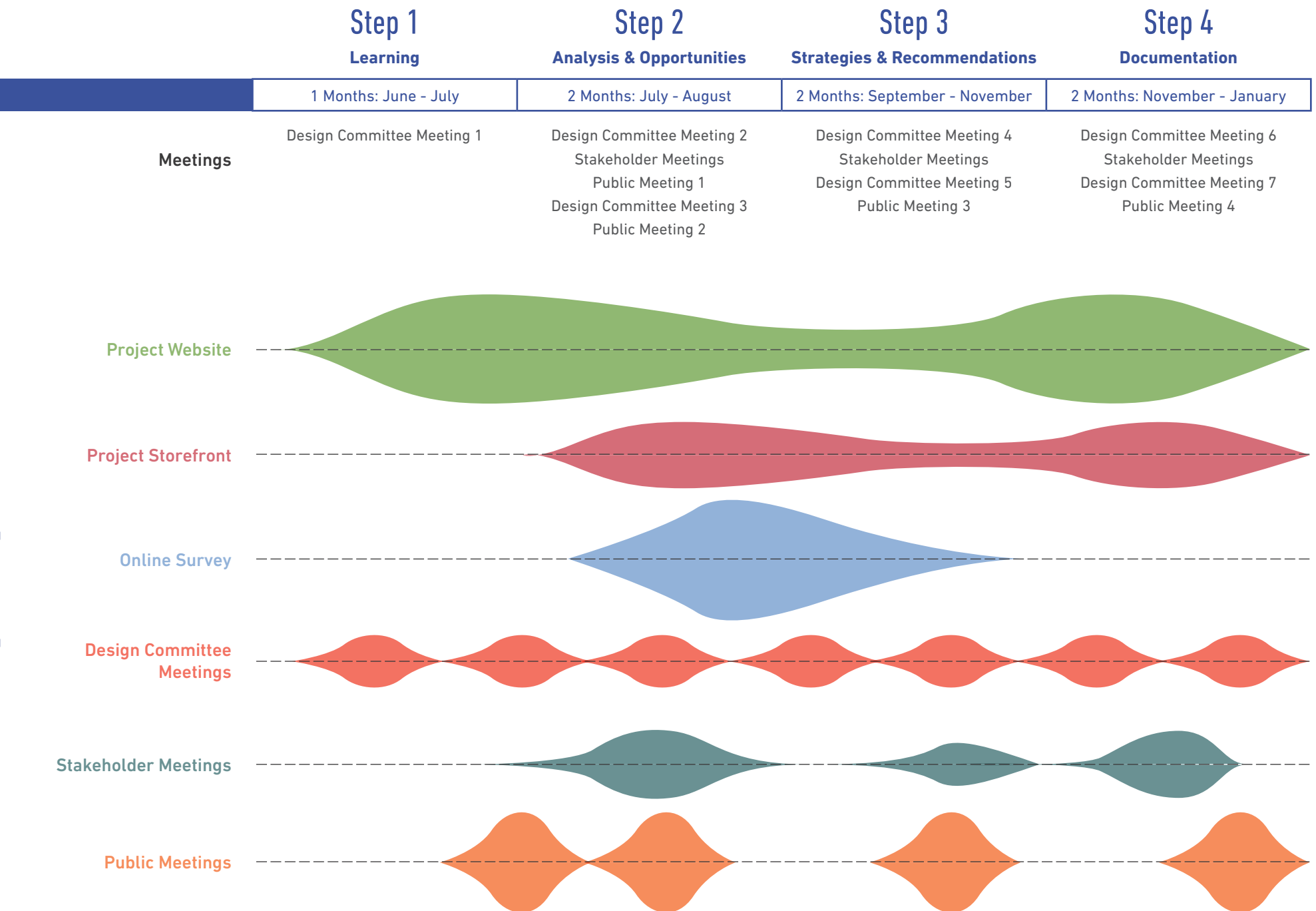


Process

Project Steps

Fair Oaks Mall Reimagined. Repurposed. was an eight-month planning process comprised of four steps defining phases of work. The planning process included engagement throughout each step, including numerous in-person and online opportunities designed to reach a diverse audience. The goal of the engagement process was to reach as many individuals as possible by focusing on flexible engagement. The FOCDC is grateful for the time and dedication the design committee, stakeholders, and public lent to this process, both in-person and online. This highly engaged community of contributors made a significant impact by helping shape the recommendations contained within this plan. The following graphic summarizes the major components of the four-step process, and the next page explains the spectrum of community engagement:





Engagement

Engagement Strategy

The study areas of this master plan are complex in nature, cover significant geography of the city, have a diverse population of residents, employees, employers, and visitors, and are home to many school-aged and college students. These factors were considered in the development of a public engagement and communications plan. The process employed a multifaceted engagement approach to ensure maximum participation, consisting of the following:

- **Online engagement through a project website** - reimaginefairoaksmall.com (4,187 unique visitors and 7,469 page views) and an online survey (over 2,700 responses).
- **In-person involvement through four public meetings** (with over 600 total attendees), seven design committee meetings, and a presentation to the IU J. Irwin Miller architecture program.
- **In-person participation in 15 stakeholder meetings (over 50 people engaged)** in groups of people organized by focus/category whose work has a direct impact on the planning effort. These groups included; the City of Columbus and Columbus Regional Health leadership, schools and higher education, non-profits, foundations, sports organizations, potential partners, realtors/developers, anchor employers, and neighbors.
- **Supplemental outreach** through print and digital media, social media, Mentimeter (live mobile polling), flyers, e-mail blasts, and a project storefront at Fair Oaks Mall.

This process was successful, generated enthusiasm, and built support for the recommendations within this master plan.



600+
*Public workshop attendees
(4 workshops)*

500+
*In-meeting and
storefront comments*

50+
*Stakeholders
engaged*

2,700+
*Online survey
responses*

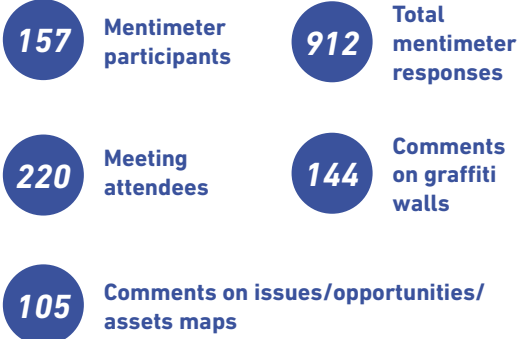


7,450+
*Interactions with project
website*



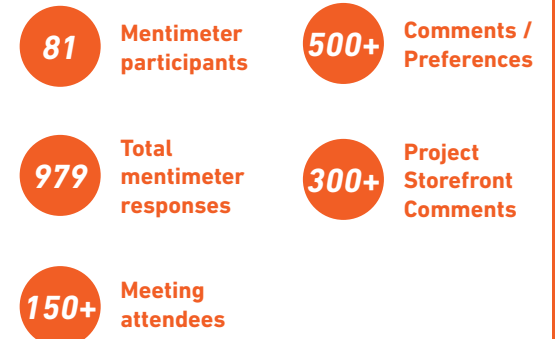
Public Meeting 1

July 11, 2019



Public Meeting 2

August 13, 2019



Public Meeting 3

November 11, 2019



Public Meeting 4

February 11, 2020





Opportunities & Recommendations





Market Analysis

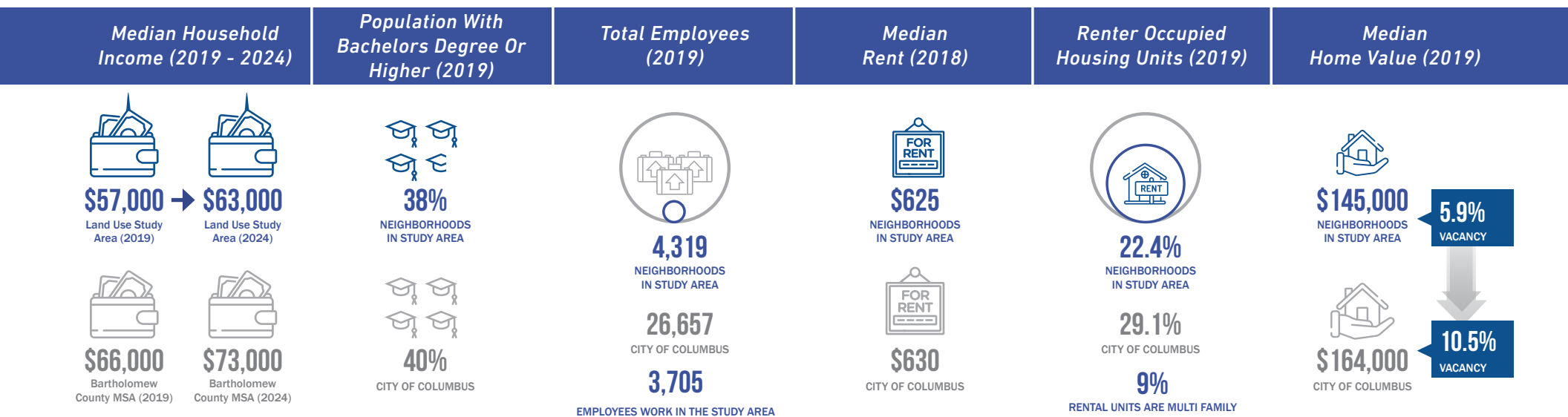
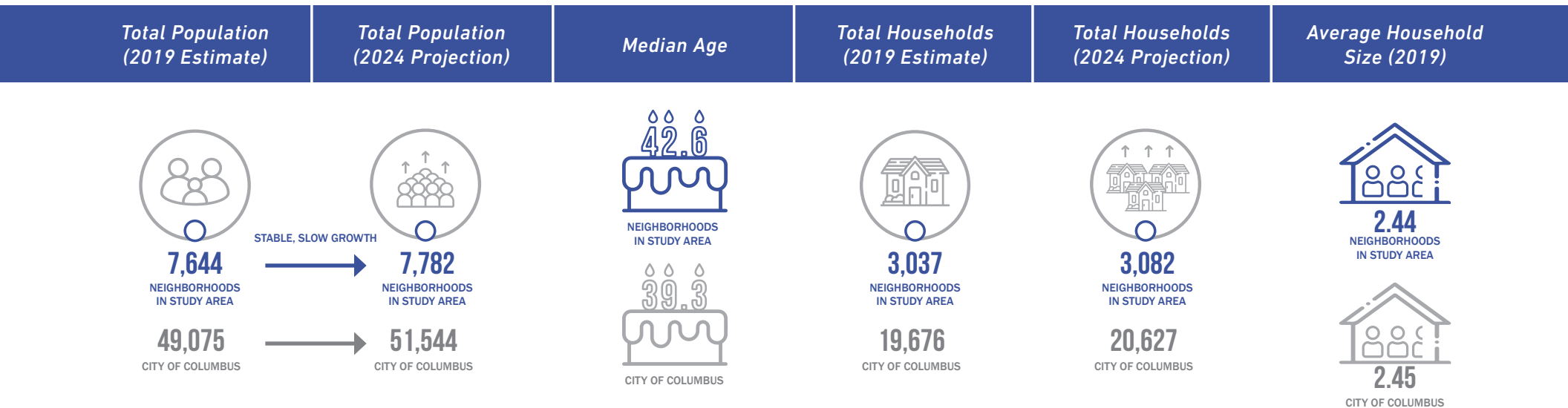
Community Snapshot

Methodology

This study evaluated current community demographics and projected changes to this baseline information. The market analysis provided a snapshot of what could be expected if conditions in the market continue in their current trajectory. However, the investment in a health, wellness, and recreation facility is the type of transformational change that can positively influence the market.

Demographics

Demographic research yielded a snapshot of the community today and a projection of the community over the next five years. Overall, Columbus and the study area exhibit demographics favoring a stable market. Based upon 2019 statistics, 7,644 people lived in the land-use study area, which is approximately 15% of the City of Columbus population. The community is projected to grow at a rate of 0.95%, and while growth is slow, incomes, job prospects, and home values are stable. Overall, demographics indicate a positive market that will support modest gains in new businesses, services, and homes/apartments. The investment in a new health, wellness, and recreation facility at Fair Oaks Mall may further positively influence the market by potentially catalyzing redevelopment of properties around the mall.



Market Analysis

Projections

Market Demand

This study evaluated residential, retail, and office demand and created projections to understand how the market could respond.

Residential

Vacancy is low and there is some, but not much single-family demand in the area. The latter can partially be attributed to the lack of new and available product. Though multi-family units comprise a small portion (9%) of the land use study area dwellings, the city overall has seen a high demand for new and existing multi-family units. Stability and affordability illustrate the desirability of the study area.

Retail

Though the Fair Oaks Mall is experiencing high vacancy rates, the land use study area is otherwise relatively healthy. Most demand is generated by new businesses looking to establish in the area rather than existing businesses looking to expand. Retail tenants value location and building type more than building age or amenities.

At the time of this study, there was relatively low vacancy in strip centers, neighborhood commercial, and outlot properties near Fair Oaks Mall. The availability of these properties fuels a healthy market, and there could be an opportunity to expand offerings as properties become available over time.

Conversely, there is high-supply and very low demand for enclosed regional mall spaces. Efforts to occupy much of this space with a community health and wellness focus will activate the mall and create additional demand.

Visibility and accessibility foster desirable lots adjacent to major thoroughfares (US 31, Central Avenue, and 25th Street).

Opportunities for recreation and experiential retail exist within the land use study area.

Office

A small amount of non-healthcare office could be absorbed annually over the next five years. At the mall, CRH's new facility and planned consolidation of other offices could create a health-oriented synergy at Fair Oaks, which could enhance demand.

Hospitality

Demand for hospitality was not studied in detail, however, stakeholders indicated that new health, wellness, and recreational programming of the mall may increase demand for new hotel product. At present, there is no demand for such a facility in the mall vicinity.

X-Factors

What can change the market?

X-factors can change the current trajectory of the market. Investment in a health, wellness, and recreation facility at Fair Oaks Mall, as well as new open space on the mall property, can lead to a much brighter future for the surrounding area.

Housing demand can further increase with continuing job growth in Bartholomew County. New multi-family housing in a mixed-use walkable environment could attract Millennials and Baby Boomers.

Hospitality demand can further increase in support of the new health, wellness, and recreation facilities.

		5-Year	Annual Absorption
FIVE-YEAR RESIDENTIAL DEMAND	Residential (dwelling units)	90	18
	Low	70	14
	High	100	20
FIVE-YEAR RETAIL DEMAND	Retail (Square Feet)	10,000	2,000
	Low	5,000	1,000
	High	15,000	3,000
FIVE-YEAR OFFICE (NON-HEALTHCARE) DEMAND	Non-Healthcare Office (Square Feet)	16,000	3,200
	Low	12,000	2,400
	High	20,000	4,000

Source: Greenstreet

Fair Oaks Mall

Existing Conditions

Key Considerations

The 412,750 s.f. Fair Oaks Mall building and corresponding 36-acre site were analyzed for future adaptive re-use opportunities.

Built in 1989, Fair Oaks Mall has seen a decline in tenants and visitors over the past several years, despite its past vibrancy. At the time of this plan, the 56 retail/restaurant/office units were mostly vacant, with a handful of stores and restaurants, a retail anchor, and an office tenant remaining. The structure and surrounding property all suffer from deferred maintenance and general decline.

The mall building occupies 27% (9.5 acres) of the site. It does not have a clear primary entrance and the exterior facade is dated and lacks windows. The building is clad with a mix of brick and EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems) and is in fair to poor condition.

The mall structure is steel and masonry and is structurally sound. The Dunham's space and former Carson's space and have the highest ceiling heights at 20'-8" and 23' respectively. This height is favorable for some sports, but not all. Existing structural bays vary throughout the mall, but average 34' x 40' on center. This spacing is desirable for most of the uses that would exist within community health, recreation, and wellness facilities with the exception of large gymnasium or field-house spaces.

Mechanical systems within the mall vary in condition and require further evaluation. They are likely to be replaced during renovations.

The interior of the mall is in fair condition and provides flexibility for adaptive re-use. During this process, it was determined that the mall structure would remain, except for a potential demolition of the northern anchor, to make way for future recreational use.

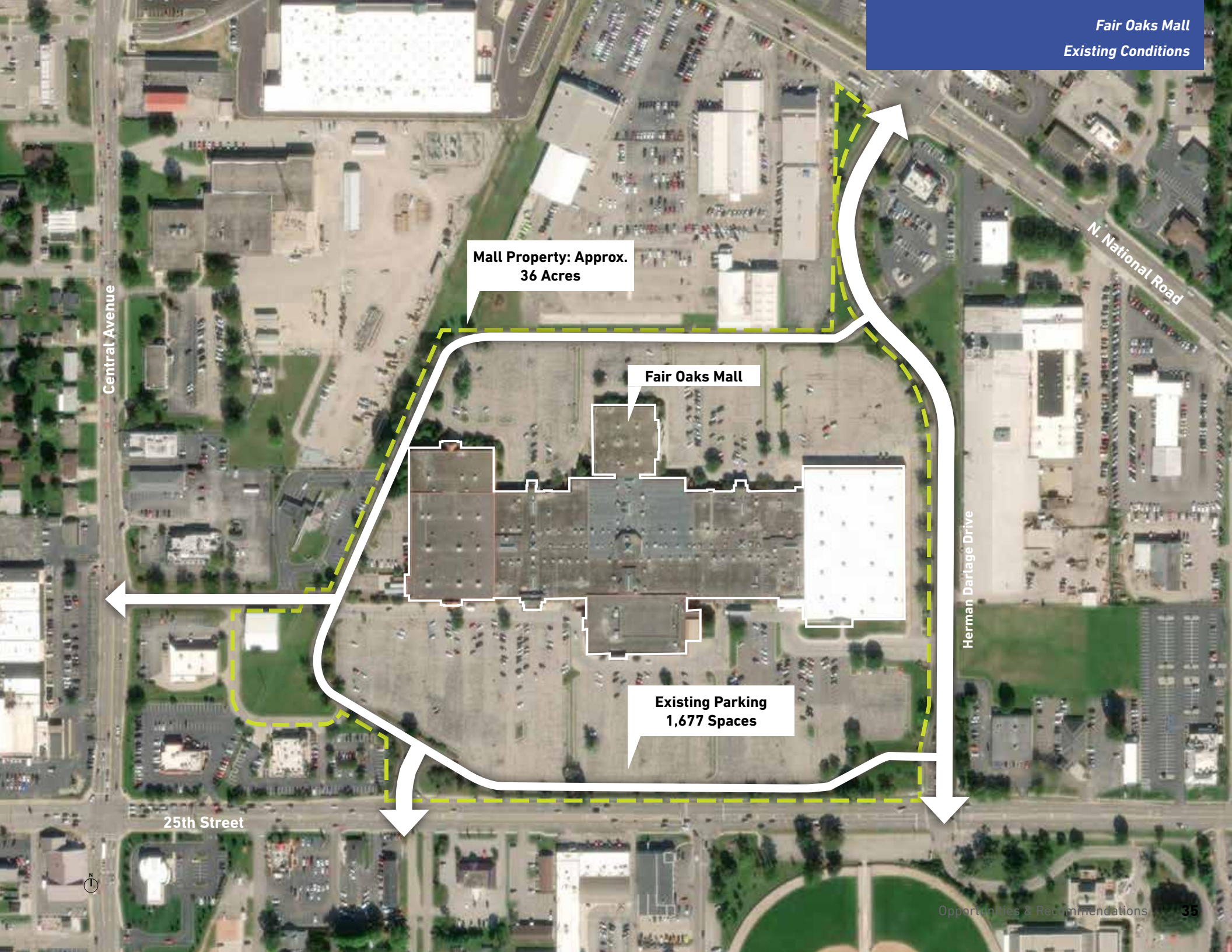
Of the 36-acre property, 55% (19.5 acres) is comprised of parking or drive aisles. The surface parking lots are generally functional, but will require repaving and striping.

Though 18% of the site is open space, much of it consists of small, isolated lawns and minor planting beds along building foundations or property edges. The available open space is neither programmed nor of a high-quality.

Overall, the site is not pedestrian-friendly. It lacks crosswalks, trail connections, and meaningful greenspace, all of which lend safety and a favorable impression.

Access to the site is from its perimeter. Good access points exist at US 31, Herman Darlage Drive, 26th Street, and 25th Street. From these access points, a loop road encircling the property connects to parking areas.





Fair Oaks Mall

Due Diligence

Analysis and Opportunities

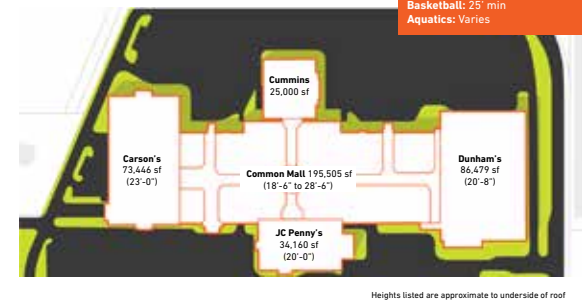
Thorough examination of building and site informed proposed reuse strategies. While this information is not provided in detail within this summary, many aspects of scale, function, longevity, and usefulness were explored. This due diligence provided a foundation for recommendations. Studies included:

- **Assets, issues and opportunities** inventory, conducted as part of the stakeholder and public meeting process, to identify a baseline condition.
- **Parks and recreation level of service** summary to understand what is offered in the market today, and what might be needed in the future and build a programming list.
- **Stakeholder engagement** to understand needs and wants from a community perspective.
- **Case study research** looking at comparable community, health, and wellness adaptive re-use facilities.
- **Existing site** circulation, loading areas, and building ingress and egress.
- **Building and site modifications** and adaptive re-use scenarios.

Building Analysis

Project Orientation

Fair Oaks Mall | Existing Conditions



Recreation Overhead Clearances
 Turf Sports: 20' min
 Volleyball: 23'-25' min
 Basketball: 25' min
 Aquatics: Varies

Heights listed are approximate to underside of roof

Recreational Needs Analysis

Level of Service Summary

2017-2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan indicates that based on current & projected population growth, the City of Columbus is...

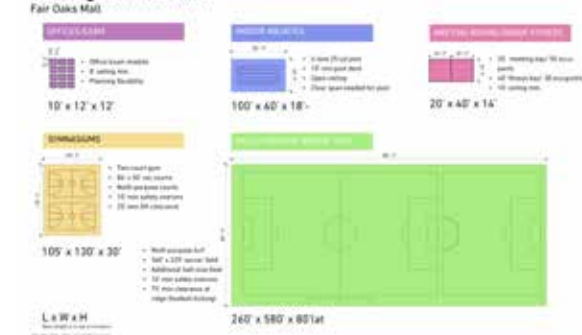
- Asset rich in many outdoor parks & rec amenities
- Deficient in football & gymnastics facilities
- Deficient in all indoor recreation facilities
- Projected to become deficient in outdoor playgrounds
- Projected to become deficient in outdoor swimming pools
- Projected to become deficient in outdoor tennis/pickleball facilities

Facility	Population Served	Facility	Population Served	Facility	Population Served
Baseball/Softball	100,000	Baseball/Softball	100,000	Baseball/Softball	100,000
Basketball	100,000	Basketball	100,000	Basketball	100,000
Community Center	100,000	Community Center	100,000	Community Center	100,000
Day Camp	100,000	Day Camp	100,000	Day Camp	100,000
Football	100,000	Football	100,000	Football	100,000
Gymnasium	100,000	Gymnasium	100,000	Gymnasium	100,000
Ice Rink	100,000	Ice Rink	100,000	Ice Rink	100,000
Multi-Purpose Facility	100,000	Multi-Purpose Facility	100,000	Multi-Purpose Facility	100,000
Nature Center	100,000	Nature Center	100,000	Nature Center	100,000
Playground	100,000	Playground	100,000	Playground	100,000
Swimming Pool	100,000	Swimming Pool	100,000	Swimming Pool	100,000
Tennis	100,000	Tennis	100,000	Tennis	100,000
Track	100,000	Track	100,000	Track	100,000
Unimproved Land	100,000	Unimproved Land	100,000	Unimproved Land	100,000
Water Park	100,000	Water Park	100,000	Water Park	100,000
Winter Sports	100,000	Winter Sports	100,000	Winter Sports	100,000
Youth Center	100,000	Youth Center	100,000	Youth Center	100,000

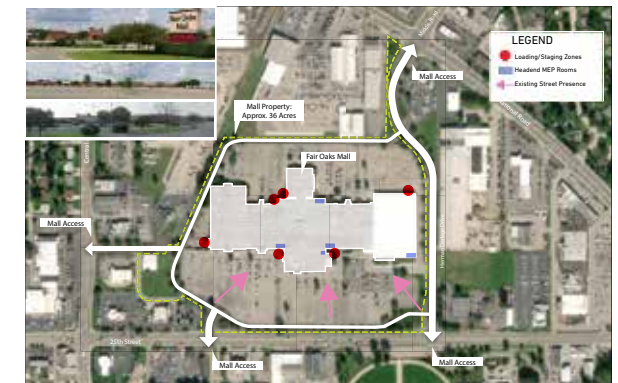
Note: Chart courtesy of Browning Day Hoffman provided per the 2017-2021 City of Columbus Parks and Recreation System Master Plan.

Planning Module Studies

Fair Oaks Mall

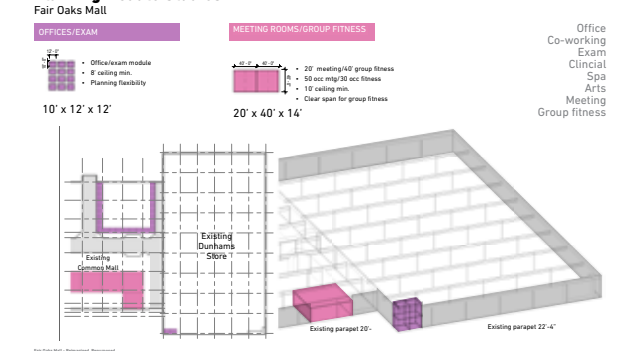


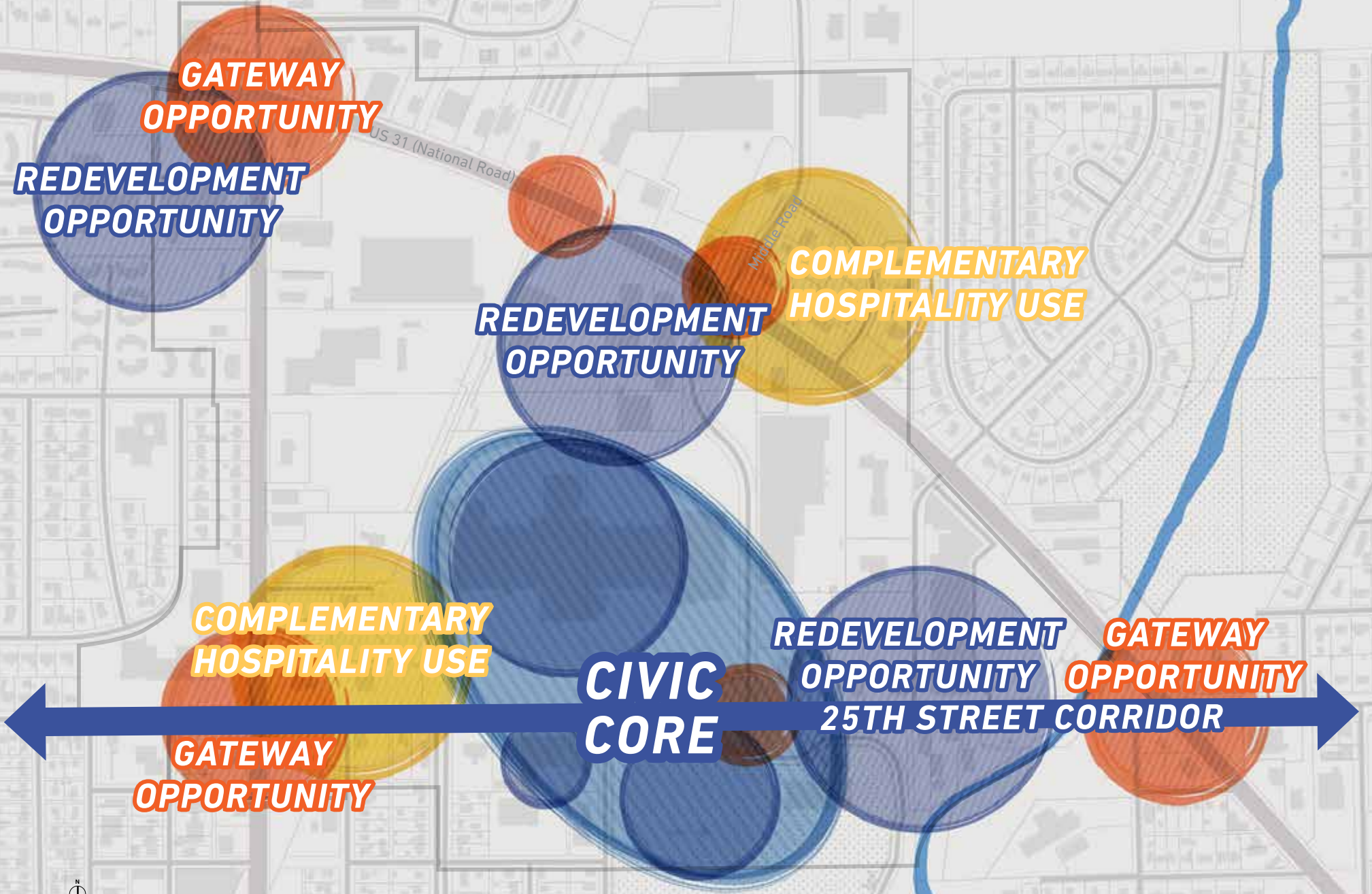
Site Analysis



Planning Module Studies

Fair Oaks Mall





Fair Oaks Mall

Site

Vision

The Fair Oaks Mall property provides the City of Columbus, Columbus Regional Health, and future complementary community and retail partners a phenomenal opportunity to adapt the existing mall asset into a thriving community health, recreation, and wellness facility. The master plan recommendations cast a vision of adaptive re-use of the mall and property into an active community core.

The approach to this community-oriented place will center around a new “front door” and signature open space. Taken together, these elements will dynamically transform the function and impression of the site.

The signature open space is envisioned to be a highly-programmed and welcoming space with landscape and activity zones. This space would link 25th Street to the facility’s front door.

Flanking both sides of the signature open space are drop-off areas and plazas designed to conveniently and comfortably connect users to the facility. The split nature of these areas facilitates separate, but nearby entrances for City of Columbus space, CRH spaces, complementary partner spaces, and shared spaces. The City of Columbus and other community partners will utilize the eastern drop-off zone, as well as other entrances around the building. Similarly, CRH visitors and patients will utilize the western drop-off zone.

Adjustments to existing parking areas will help scale asphalt surfaces and delineate one parking area from another. Rather than one large parking area to the north and one to the south, two smaller parking areas are proposed on each building side.

The mall ring road will move inward to provide a larger open-space and buffer along 25th Street. This space will accommodate a multi-use path connecting to other site and community paths as well as a zone for additional tree and landscape plantings.

Improvements to key intersections and entrances into the site will enhance connectivity as well as vehicular and pedestrian safety. Notably, the westernmost access point along 25th Street will be adjusted to better align with Caldwell Place.

Branded entry signage and wayfinding signage will improve the user experience and navigation to the site and facility.

Following is the Fair Oaks Mall site conceptual master plan, more detailed recommendations, diagrams, and precedent imagery. This site-specific information is intended to be used in concert with the Fair Oaks Mall building conceptual master plan and recommendations, as detailed later in this chapter.

Site Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Signature Open Space **A**

CRH Entry and Dropoff **B**

Public Entry and Dropoff **C**

Parkside Entry **D**

Plaza Space **E**

Main Entrances **F**

Parking **G**

Loop Road **H**

25th Street Multi-Use
Path **I**

Herman Darlage Drive
Multi-Use Path **J**

Loop Trail **K**

Intersection
Improvements **L**

Outdoor Flex/Program
Space **M**

Main Drop-off Plaza **N**



Central Avenue

26th Street

25th Street

Caldwell Place

Hawcreek Avenue

Herman Darlage Drive

US 31 (National Road)

Fair Oaks Mall

(gathering space & Herman Darlage Drive path connection)

Possible future parking if maintenance/storage building is relocated.

Connection to Lincoln Park and Hamilton Center and Haw Creek/People Trail

Potential future connection to US 31

Fair Oaks Mall

Site

Vehicular Connectivity Recommendations

Connectivity recommendations for Fair Oaks Mall are summarized below:

- Shift the southern portion of the existing mall ring road north 30' to provide a larger space for trail and streetscape amenities along 25th Street. The ring road will likely need to be redefined and landscaped as related parking lot improvements are made.
- Develop two vehicular drop-offs along the facility's south entrances. The eastern drop off will serve as the public front door for the facility and connect directly to the entry plaza and signature open space.
- A ColumBUS Transit bus stop may be integrated adjacent to the eastern drop off area. This zone could also be used by school buses.
- The western drop-off will serve CRH patients. The CRH drop off will connect to an entry plaza and facility entrance with access control specific to CRH. This location is designed close to patient parking and would allow for emergency vehicle use. Additional access points and controls will likely be required between internal and external spaces.
- Realign the westernmost 25th Street entrance further east to align with the Caldwell Place intersection.
- Invest in intersection improvements at 25th Street and Caldwell Place, 25th Street and Herman Darlage Drive, US 31/National Road and Herman Darlage Drive, and 26th Street and Central Avenue.
- The Duke Utility easement on the west side of the site continues relatively unobstructed from 25th Street to US 31/National Road. There is potential to develop an additional access point from the Kroger driveway into the mall site and adjacent properties.
- Wayfinding signage is also a key component of improving connectivity to the site and within the site. Develop clear signage welcoming visitors to the health, wellness, and recreation space, helping them to navigate the site, and locate appropriate destinations and entrances.



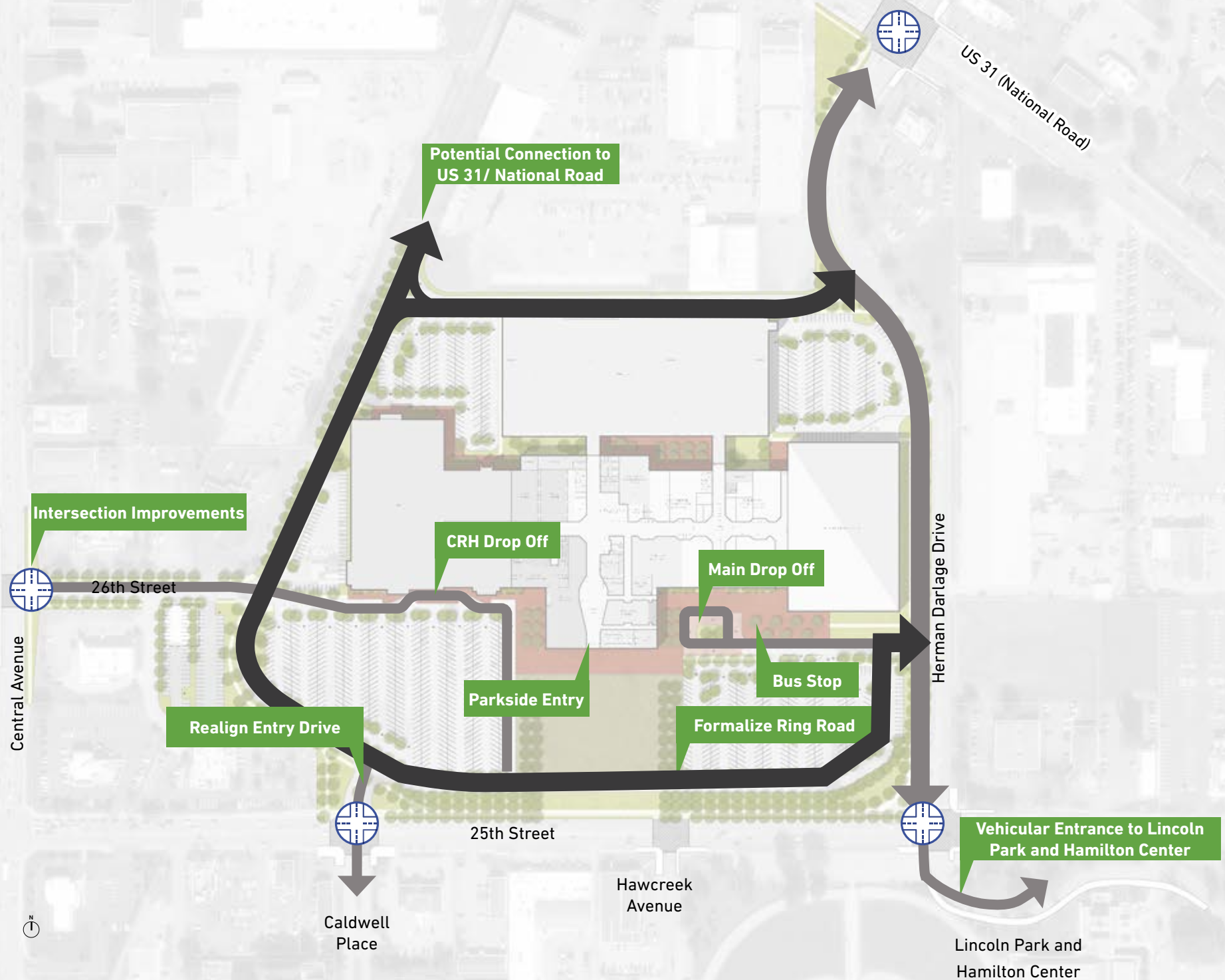
Streetscape Amenities Example



Wayfinding/Signage Example



Intersection and Entry Plaza Example



Fair Oaks Mall

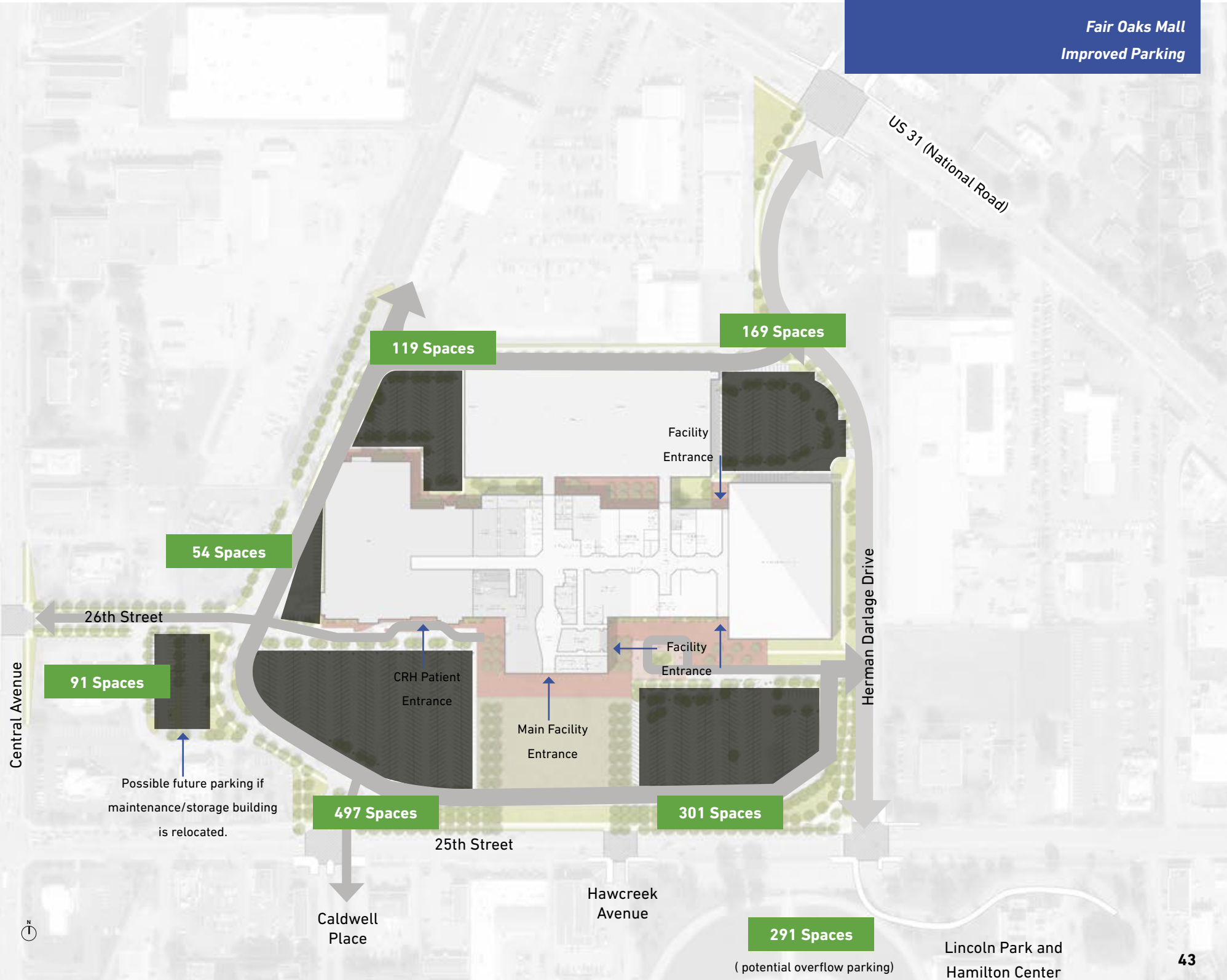
Site

Parking Recommendations

Parking recommendations for Fair Oaks Mall are summarized below:

- Re-use much of the existing parking lots to minimize costs, but at a minimum mill and resurface, restripe, and update planted islands and medians within the lots. Updates to stormwater infrastructure may also be completed as parking lots are addressed.
- Prioritize CRH patient parking near the CRH main entrance, however, all other parking is intended to be shared for visitors and CRH and Parks and Recreation staff. Staff movement through the building from parking to their workspace is anticipated to support overall wellness and provide exposure to facility programming and businesses.
- As parking needs grow, remove the existing storage building on the west side of the site and replace it with a parking lot. This storage space will, however, need to be replaced elsewhere at the facility prior to the building's removal.
- Utilize parking in Lincoln Park as overflow parking for major events.





Site

Pedestrian System Recommendations

Pedestrian system recommendations for Fair Oaks Mall are summarized below:

- Creating a new streetscape and a new signature open space leading to this facility's main entrances will transform how people enter and experience this site.
- By moving the ring road north, more programmable space is created between it and 25th Street. This area should include a multi-use path that connects into the rest of the site's pedestrian system and continues west along 25th Street, eventually to the Columbus North High School. This 25th Street path also provides a link to complementary restaurants at the intersection of 25th Street and Central Avenue.
- The walking loop around the perimeter of the site connects into the multi-use path along 25th Street and creates multiple routes around the facility, including a one-mile walking loop. This walking loop will complement the internal loop formed by the facility's existing indoor concourse. It is envisioned that appropriate landscape and site furnishings, wayfinding and interpretive signage, and outdoor exercise equipment could be located along this trail.
- The trail segment along Herman Darlage Drive links the facility to the rest of Columbus for those traveling on foot or by bicycle. To the north are complimentary restaurants and a private fitness center, and the Middle Road side path provides a link for neighborhoods to the north and east. To the south, the trail connections through Lincoln Park to the Haw Creek People Trail. Added measures for pedestrian safety and comfort should be specifically included as part of intersection improvements along this route.





Fair Oaks Mall

Site

Amenity Recommendations

Amenity recommendations for Fair Oaks Mall are summarized below:

- The front door to the health, wellness, and recreational facility will be a signature open space. This amenity is designed to be implemented in phases. Initially, the investment in the open space may be limited to a simple landscape, basic site furnishings, and hardscape to complement the planned improvements to the front facade of the mall. Over time, a programmed space, including flexible gathering spaces, enhanced lighting, public art, a small water feature or splash pad, and shelters could be added. This dynamic space could offer complementary programming to the community health, recreation, and wellness facility.
- The area between the building and the parking lots will feature improved landscape, lighting, and plaza spaces that welcome users into the facility. Additional terraces along the building's south face would accommodate spill out spaces for outdoor exercise and dining space.
- Storage areas could also be accessed from the perimeter of the building as the facility is developed.



Open Space Amenities Example



Outdoor Dining Space Example



Gathering Space Example



Gathering Space Example



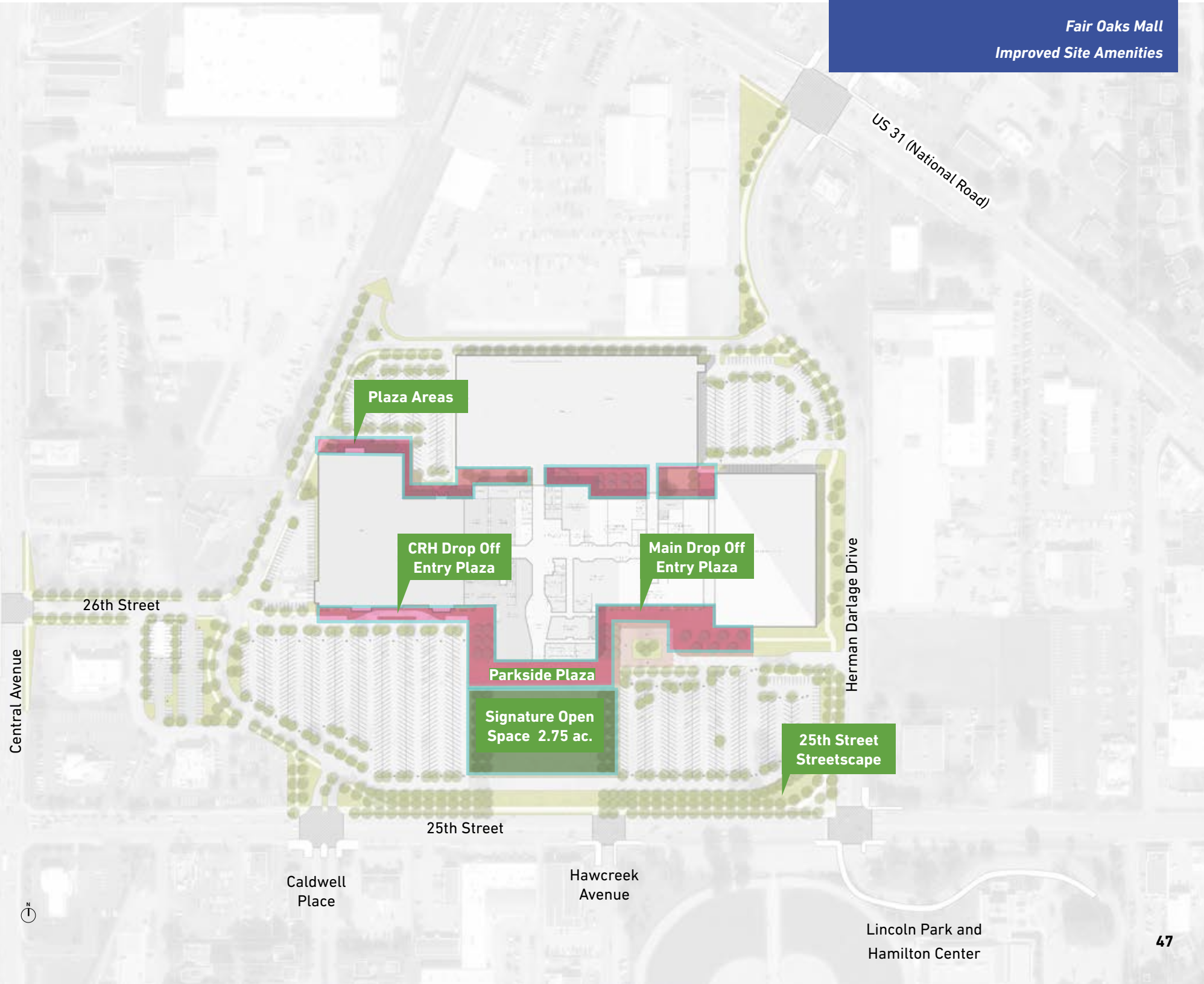
Flexible Open Space Example



Plaza Space Example



Water Feature Example



Fair Oaks Mall

Building

Vision

As previously noted, a new “front door” along 25th Street, at the former J.C. Penney’s store location, will act as a primary organizing element.

Upon entering the new wellness facility here, guests will be greeted by Parks Department staff with a welcoming customer service desk and new administrative offices. A new, state-of-the-art fitness facility, adaptive fitness center, group fitness rooms, locker rooms, and hydrotherapy suite are co-located between City Parks Department services and Columbus Regional Health. These spaces represent the important symbiotic relationship between the City’s recreational offerings and CRH’s health services and also provide patrons access to services, whether they are embarking upon, maintaining, rehabilitating, or adapting their wellness journey.

A new indoor sports complex and multi-purpose activity court are proposed on the north side of the facility. These highly flexible spaces provide important indoor activity space for turf and hard court sports such as soccer, football, baseball, softball, lacrosse, basketball, volleyball, and pickleball, among others. The indoor sports complex will support community recreation programs and attract regional sports tournaments to the facility. Event support spaces such as team and officials changing rooms, tournament flex rooms, concession/cafe, public restrooms, and ample adjacent storage will allow facility operators to adapt the sports complex to serve a multitude of needs.

A key focus of the facility is a holistic approach to community wellness. While recreational and health services programs are a highly visible aspect of the facility master plan, community spaces such as meeting rooms, activity rooms, a maker space, a demonstration kitchen, and child watch services play a crucial role in providing space for social interaction, formal and informal meetings, and cultural arts programming within the facility. These spaces are inclusive in nature and provide important activity space for patrons who may not be traditionally interested or engaged in recreational programs or health services.

The new community health, wellness, and recreation facility will be a welcoming environment with access to people of all ages, abilities, and interests. Throughout the master plan, space for complementary community and/or retail partnerships, informal meeting and gathering spaces, and a gracious concourse/walking path provide space for people to visit, explore, gather, recreate, shop, and focus on their personal wellness and community wide health.

Following is the Fair Oaks Mall building conceptual master plan, including more detailed recommendations, diagrams, and precedent imagery. This building-specific information is intended to be used in concert with the Fair Oaks Mall site conceptual master plan and recommendations, as detailed earlier in this chapter.

Building Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Parks & Recreation Offices

A

Indoor Sports Complex

B

Indoor Sports Complex
Support

C

Multi-Purpose Activity Court

D

Fitness/Group Exercise

E

Catering/Demonstration
Kitchen

F

Complementary Retail,
Parks and Recreation, or
Community Space

G

Concourse/Walking Path

H

Columbus Regional Health
(CRH)

I

Shared City of Columbus and
CRH Space

J

Child Watch/Preschool

K

Meeting/Activity Rooms

L

Locker Rooms

M

Hydrotherapy

N

Cafe

O

Storage

P

Community Partner Space

Q

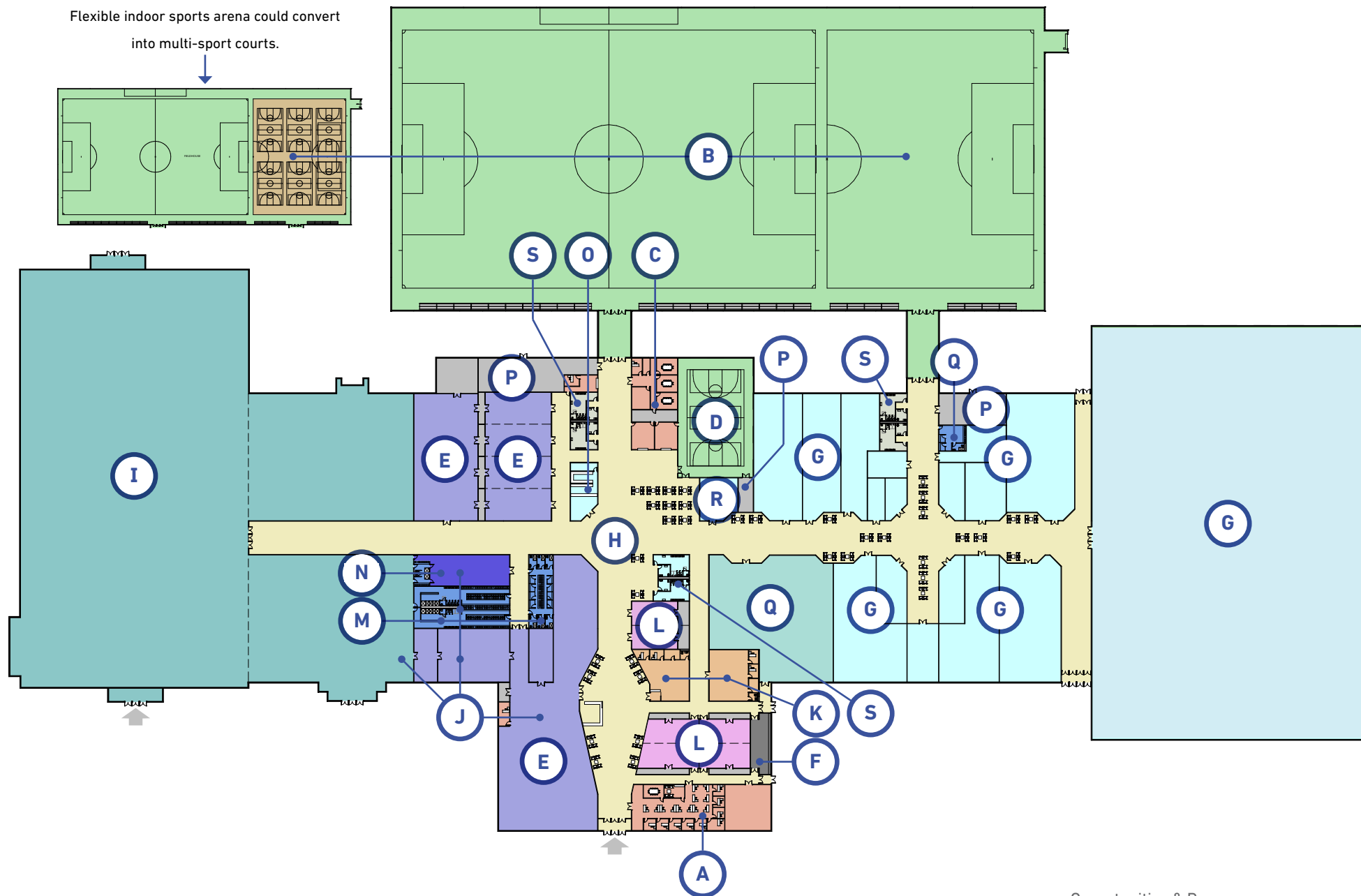
Maker Space

R

Public Restrooms

S

Flexible indoor sports arena could convert into multi-sport courts.



Fair Oaks Mall

Building

Facade Recommendations

Facade recommendations for Fair Oaks Mall are summarized below:

- Create a new entry experience on the south side of the health, wellness, and recreation facility with central entrances off the signature open space and drop-off areas.
- Make cosmetic updates to the other entries and study access control in further detail as the project enters the design phase.
- Update portions of the southern facade to create more transparency between the interior and exterior spaces.
- Make general facade updates and repairs after conducting a full condition assessment during the design phase.
- Improve the northern facade, consecutive to the construction of the planned field sports facility.

Mechanical System Recommendations

A full building mechanical system (MEP) analysis is recommended as the project enters the design phase. As the first phase of mall renovation is considered, the MEP analysis can help determine which components will be replaced or upgraded initially, and what could occur later in the development of the facility.



Facade Example



Facade Transparency Example



Entry and Facade Example



Entry and Facade Example



Streetscape and Entry Experience Example



Facade Example



Facade Example

Program Area

Area Square Footage

Parks and Recreation Offices

Open Office	1,700 SF
Private Offices	950 SF
Conference Room	200 SF
Break Room	200 SF
Shared Administration	1,600 SF

Indoor Sports Complex 150,000 SF (city #)

Indoor Sports Complex Support

Ticketing	400 SF
Event Operations	1,700 SF
Equipment Checkout	950 SF
Referee Locker Rooms	350 SF

Multi-Purpose Activity Court 6,800 SF

Fitness

Fitness Area	14,400 SF
Group Exercise	6,400 SF
Group Fitness	6,000 SF
Consultation/Training	950 SF
Adaptive Fitness/Rehab	2,900 SF
Cardiac Center	950 SF
Supervisor's Office	200 SF

Catering/Demonstration Kitchen 850 SF

Complementary Retail/Community Space 85,150 SF

Concourse/Walking Path 57,000 SF

Columbus Regional Health (CRH) 107,300 SF

Shared City of Columbus and CRH Space 25,000 SF

(separately listed programs, not included in total)

Child Watch

Child Sitting Room	1,300 SF
Offices	200 SF
Restroom	100 SF
Break Room	100 SF

Preschool Room

Child Activity Room	1,500 SF
Offices	200 SF
Restroom	100 SF
Break Room	100 SF

Multi-Purpose Meeting Rooms 4,000 SF

Multi-Purpose Activity Rooms 1,650 SF

Locker Rooms

Women's	1,400 SF
Men's	1,400 SF
Family	1,500 SF

Cafe 1,100 SF

Storage 8,000 SF

Community Partner Space 10,300 SF

Maker Space 1,200 SF

Public Restrooms 3,000 SF

Future Recreation Space 42,650 SF

Total 526,750 SF

Note: Program and square footages are conceptual, and will be further developed and detailed during the design phase of the project.

Fair Oaks Mall

Building

Interior Recommendations

Interior recommendations for Fair Oaks Mall are summarized below:

- Develop a modern and dynamic health, wellness, and recreation facility by maintaining the integrity of the building's superstructure and repurposing the interior of the Fair Oaks Mall building.
- Create programmed spaces within four categories of spaces within the facility. Areas included shared spaces (CRH and City of Columbus), CRH specific spaces and offices, City of Columbus Department of Parks and Recreation offices and programmed spaces, and partner spaces.
- Remodel the south entrance interior to create a central entry with access control, offices, and proximity to programmed spaces within the central concourse.
- Retain the integrity of the existing central concourse while upgrading its appearance to provide circulation for users of the facility and continued use by walkers.



Group Fitness Program/Space Example



Cafe Example



Locker Room Amenity Example



Adaptive Fitness Example



Interior Concourse Space Example



Complementary Retail Example



Interior Concourse Area Example



Indoor Sports Complex Example



Multi-Purpose Sport Court Example



Fitness Area Example



Multi-Purpose Meeting Room Example



Reception Area Example



Training/Consultation Space Example

Fair Oaks Mall

Indoor Sports Complex

Multi-Purpose Fieldhouse Considerations

The multi-purpose fieldhouse addition proposed for the north side of the mall complex is one of the largest and most compelling recommendations of the master plan.

The fieldhouse will be a large multi-purpose community space whose structural system will be studied further during the project design phase. The fieldhouse will be designed to accommodate community events, recreation programming, as well as regional sports tournaments. The fieldhouse is intended to be flexible and allow for both turf and hardcourt sports. The fieldhouse has numerous key planning drivers that will be studied in detail during project design.

Key Planning Drivers

- Structural system selection
- Proper field/court layouts for multiple sports
- Accommodation of safety zones and overruns
- Proper overhead clearance
- Adequate storage
- Multi-sport equipment
- Proper HVAC
- Incorporation of natural light

In addition to these key planning drivers, there are additive elements of multi-purpose fieldhouse design that will be studied during project design:

Additive Planning Elements

- Flexible Spectator Seating
- Observation platforms
- Enhanced daylighting and finish materials
- Indoor/outdoor connectivity
- Enhanced Acoustics
- Enhanced HVAC
- Enhanced Audio/Visual Systems

Structural System Selection

One of the earliest and most critical decisions regarding the multi-purpose fieldhouse will be the selection of the structural system for the fieldhouse. Fieldhouses by nature require large open span areas with adequate overhead clearances to accommodate multiple sports. Common structural systems for fieldhouses include traditional steel-framed structures, pre-engineered building structure, and air-supported structures. Each option provides pros and cons to the project.

Traditional Steel Framed Construction

Pros:

- Structure can be designed to support any needed size or clearance
- Structure can be designed to accommodate any imposed loads for hanging multi-sport equipment
- Structure can be clad in highly insulative building materials to improve energy efficiency
- Structure allows for flexibility in architectural design and optimized windows/openings

Cons:

- Highest first cost option for construction

Pre-engineered Building

Pros:

- Structure provides lower first cost option and exceptional value per square of building area
- Structure exterior can be clad in multiple finishes, can achieve adequate insulation for energy efficiency

Cons:

- Structure has limited ability to accommodate imposed hanging loads for sports equipment
- Structure has limited architectural flexibility for windows/openings

Air-Supported Structure

Pros:

- Structure provides lowest first cost for construction
- Structure allows for good daylight through transparent membrane

Cons:

- Structure has limited ability to accommodate imposed hanging loads for sports equipment
- Structure has no architectural flexibility for windows/openings
- Structure requires positive air pressure for inflation and air locks at all pedestrian/vehicular entries
- Structure is costly to run due to continuous energy consumption required for inflation
- Structure requires clearance around perimeter and formal maintenance program for snow removal



Traditional Steel Framed Building Example



Pre-engineered Building Example



Air Supported Structure Example

Donner Park and Center

Existing Conditions

Key Considerations

The 21,589 s.f. Donner Center building, adjacent outdoor aquatics space, and 32.5 acres Donner Park were analyzed for future adaptive re-use or replacement opportunities.

Donner Park was created in 1917, and for the past 100+ years has been an important part of the Columbus community. The park is characterized by large stands of mature trees and lawn space expanses perfect for passive recreation and family gatherings. The park also has a sizeable historical shelter; tennis, pickleball, and basketball courts; and trails throughout.

This park is well used and appreciated by the community but suffers from poor wayfinding, a lack of east/west connectivity, and needs more programmed zones and activity spaces. This park also needs improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Donner Park is an important community park but has a residential neighborhood setting. Due to the duality of this park's use and context, opportunities for improvements sought to maximize its value to the community while also limiting the intensity of its use and minimizing possible negative impacts to surrounding homes.

Donner Center, anchoring the northern part of Donner Park, was built in 1947 and has undergone several renovations throughout its 70+ year life. This facility has been well used over the decades for pool associated activity, community functions and gatherings, and Columbus Parks

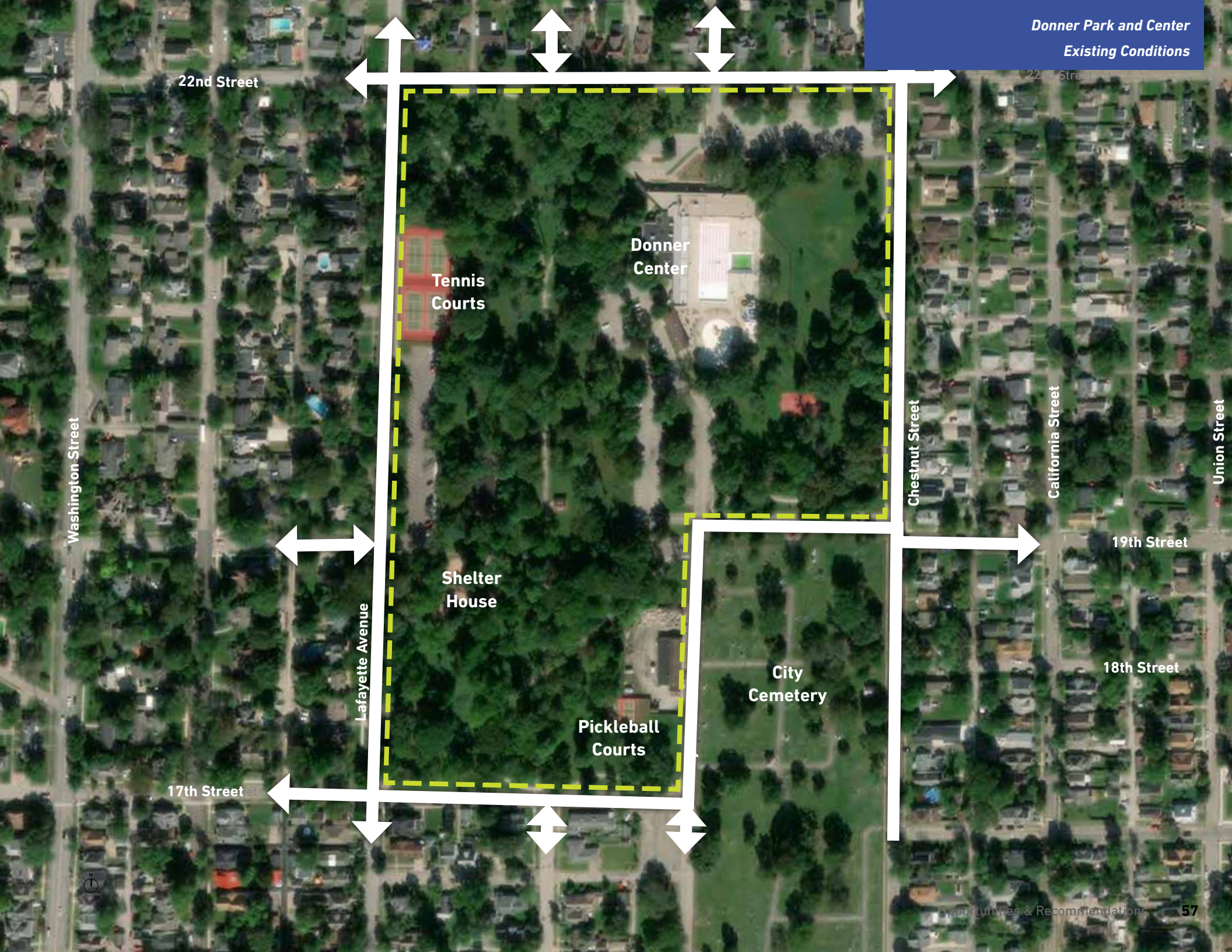
Department administrative offices. As the community health, wellness, and recreation facility is built at Fair Oaks Mall, it is anticipated that Columbus Parks Department's administrative functions will move to the mall, necessitating a new plan for Donner Center's available space.

The building is clad with brick and is in poor condition. The structure is a load-bearing masonry structure that is difficult and expensive to renovate. The structure suffers from deferred maintenance and water infiltration issues from the bleacher seating integrated into the building.

During this process, it was recommended that the Donner Center structure would be replaced with a newer, more efficient facility over time, but that basement mechanical systems would remain intact.

Adjacent to the structure is a 50-meter lap pool, a diving well, a children's leisure pool, and slide. The external facilities are popular with over 300 daily attendees during busy summer days. This facility also hosts several well-attended swim meets throughout the aquatics season. The external aquatics facilities are in relatively good condition, but the movable floor on the lap pool needs replacement. There is space east of the existing facility for future expansion of aquatics programming.





22nd Street

22nd Street

Washington Street

Lafayette Avenue

Chestnut Street

California Street

Union Street

Tennis Courts

Donner Center

Shelter House

Pickleball Courts

City Cemetery

19th Street

18th Street

17th Street



Donner Park and Center

Due Diligence

Analysis and Opportunities

Thorough examination of building and site informed proposed re-use and replacement strategies. While this information is not provided in detail within this summary, many aspects of scale, function, longevity, and usefulness were explored. This due diligence provided a foundation for recommendations. Studies included:

- **Assets, issues and opportunities inventory**, conducted as part of the stakeholder and public meeting process, to identify a baseline condition.
- **Parks and recreation level of service** summary to understand what is offered in the market today, and what might be needed in the future and build a programming list. This summary used existing planning in the community to determine LOS needs.
- **Stakeholder engagement** to understand needs and wants from a community perspective. This process included Donner specific meetings.
- **Existing park circulation and access**, facilities, and uses, and facility conditions.
- **Building and site modifications** and adaptive re-use/replacement scenarios.

Building Analysis



Donner Park & Center Recap: Level of Service Summary

- Donner Outdoor Aquatics Center features:
- 8-lane 50m pool
 - 11'-4" deep diving well with 2 boards
 - 20' tall water slide
 - Leisure pool with play structure and fountains
 - Concessions space
 - 22,000sf of deck space
 - Inadequate locker rooms, office, mechanical spaces

Facilities LOS: Columbus Only									
Facility/Activity	Capacity	Current # of Facilities	2017	2027	2037	2047	2057	2067	2077
8-lane	8-lane	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
11'-4" deep	11'-4" deep	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
20' tall	20' tall	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leisure pool	Leisure pool	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Concessions	Concessions	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
22,000sf	22,000sf	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Inadequate	Inadequate	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Locker rooms	Locker rooms	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Office	Office	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mechanical	Mechanical	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ADA	ADA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2017	2017	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2027	2027	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2037	2037	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2047	2047	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2057	2057	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2067	2067	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2077	2077	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Note: Chart courtesy of Browning Day Mullins Stewart per the 2017-2021 City of Columbus Parks and Recreation System Master Plan

Fair Oaks Mall - Reimagined. Repurposed.

Donner Center Master Plan Concept #2 Rebuild Strategy



Considerations:

- Demolishing existing facility and replacing with a more economical structure
- New offices, pool supportive locker rooms and restrooms and 50 person classroom
- Maintaining existing pool mechanicals in basement (capping portion of existing basement)

Site Analysis





Donner Park and Center

Site

Vision

Donner Park is and will continue to be an important and iconic part of the City of Columbus Parks system. This process identified long-term opportunities for the preservation of existing assets, expansion/updating of existing facilities and programmed zones, and improving connectivity to and throughout the park.

Master plan recommendations emphasize the preservation of Donner Park's character and strategic integration of improvements that complement the existing park. Aside from enhancements to Donner Center, explained later in this plan, suggestions to improve Donner Park over the long-term were identified. These recommended improvements ensure that Donner Park will continue to be used and programmed to its fullest extent for another 100+ years.

Stakeholders indicated that the stands of mature trees within the park are very important to the community, thus the improvements to the park respect and preserve these trees. It's also essential to acknowledge that the underplanting of new trees to replace mature trees nearing their end of life should be undertaken as improvements to the park are made.

A center of activity is envisioned for the middle of the park, near the historic shelter house, playground, and restroom, that could be used for community gatherings. Developments such as a new natural playground, replacement of the existing playground, renovation of the historic shelter house into an all-season facility, and new shelters will further activate this zone.

Connectivity issues within the park were addressed by recommending several new trails connecting east/west and to the proposed 17th/19th People Trail connection, between Noblitt, Donner, and Lincoln Parks. Furthermore, improvements to existing parking lots to update drop-off areas and maximize the number of parking spaces and functionality of the lots are recommended as Donner Center undergoes a replacement and future expansion.

The park is known for active sports such as tennis, pickleball, and basketball, as well as informal games in the large lawn area to the northeast side of the park. This plan recommends improvements to the tennis courts with new viewing areas and expansions to the pickleball courts and basketball courts.

Lastly, branded entry signage and wayfinding signage will improve the user experience at the site and facility for all visitors.

Following is the Donner Park site conceptual master plan, more detailed recommendations, diagrams, and precedent imagery. This site-specific information is intended to be used in concert with the Donner Center building conceptual master plan and recommendations, as detailed later in this chapter.

Site Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Donner Center Offices/
Community Space **A**

Aquatics Expansion Area **B**

New Drop-off and Resurfaced
/ Restriped Parking Lots **C**

All Season Shelterhouse
Update/Expansion **D**

Improved Trail Network **E**

Loop Trail **F**

Future Activity/Event
Location **G**

Natural Play Area **H**

Multi-Sport Expansion Area **I**

Tennis Court Viewing Area
Improvements **J**

Pickleball Expansion Area **K**

Updated Playground **L**

17th/19th Trail Connection **M**

Picnic Shelter **N**



Donner Park and Center

Site

Connectivity Recommendations

Connectivity recommendations for Donner Park are summarized below:

- Create a drop-off area to the west of the Donner Center at the northern access road terminus. Design the entry drive to include a drop-off for Donner Center users. Integrate the drop-off into an entry plaza at the northern Donner Center entrance.
 - Improve the entry drive off Sycamore Street to the north, and reconfigure drive to allow for better drop-off and parking lot circulation. This area will allow emergency vehicles to access from the northern parking lot off 25th Street on grass pavement or sidewalk.
 - Modify the northern parking lot only to have one entry/exit off Chestnut Street.
- Remove parking area just south of 19th Street at Sycamore Street to allow for a better 17th and 19th Trail connection.
 - Improve and landscape the parking area just south of 17th street at Sycamore Street, and sign for pickleball and cemetery use.

Parking Recommendations

Parking recommendations for Donner Park are summarized below:

- Mill, resurface, and restripe all parking areas throughout Donner Park and update planted islands and medians within the lots. Updates to stormwater infrastructure should occur at the same time.



Plaza Space Example



Nature Play Example



Signature Entry Example



Donner Park and Center

Site

Pedestrian System Recommendations

Pedestrian System recommendations are summarized below:

- Formalize a loop trail around the perimeter of Donner Park that connects into programmed areas, amenities, and Donner Center.
- Enhance existing trails throughout the park by adding connections (especially east/west) and resurfacing existing trails.
- Create an enhanced trail experience with lighting and amenities along with the 17th and 19th Street People Trail connection.
- Upgrade connectivity around Donner Center to include two points of entry into the aquatics center and new entry plazas around building entrances.
- Enhance connectivity to the tennis and pickleball courts by upgrading sidewalks leading from the parking lot and trails to the courts.



Branding Example



Trail Example



Trail Example



Trail Example



Trail Example



Trail Experience and Amenities Example



Donner Park and Center

Site

Amenity Recommendations

Connectivity recommendations are summarized below:

- Create an outdoor plaza space at the main entrance to Donner Center on the north side of the facility and the west side of the facility. These spaces can serve a dual purpose as welcoming spaces and outdoor flex spaces used for events, group fitness, and outdoor classrooms.
- Improve Donner Center by replacing the lap-pool liner, and repairing the movable floor. Consider long-term expansion of the aquatics facility further eastward and include a potential splash pad and other outdoor aquatics amenities to supplement what exists today.
- Improve the historic shelter house located on the west side of the park into an all-season facility by enclosing the open sides with glass doors that can be opened during warm weather months.
- Construct several smaller open-air shelters throughout the park to meet the demand for such facilities.
- Remodel the existing restroom facility, located within the center of the park to include new fixtures, lighting, and improve the facade.
- Create a new nature play area, which may consist of play elements constructed of natural materials that simulate fallen trees and a dry stream bed.
- Replace existing playground equipment, with new, ADA accessible equipment.
- Create a new plaza space near the historic shelter house, restrooms, and playgrounds that can serve as a central gathering place within the park.
- Enhance pickleball courts by adding five new courts, and upgrading the fencing and concrete spectator area to include additional seating and amenities.
- Upgrade tennis courts by adding a new spectator seating area around the perimeter.
- Expand the existing basketball court into a multi-sport court.
- Enhance lighting, benches, and other user amenities throughout the park.
- Install wayfinding and interpretive signage throughout the park with a consistent design and constructed of similar materials to aid in the user experience.



Open-Air Shelter Example



Sport Courts Example



Nature Play Example



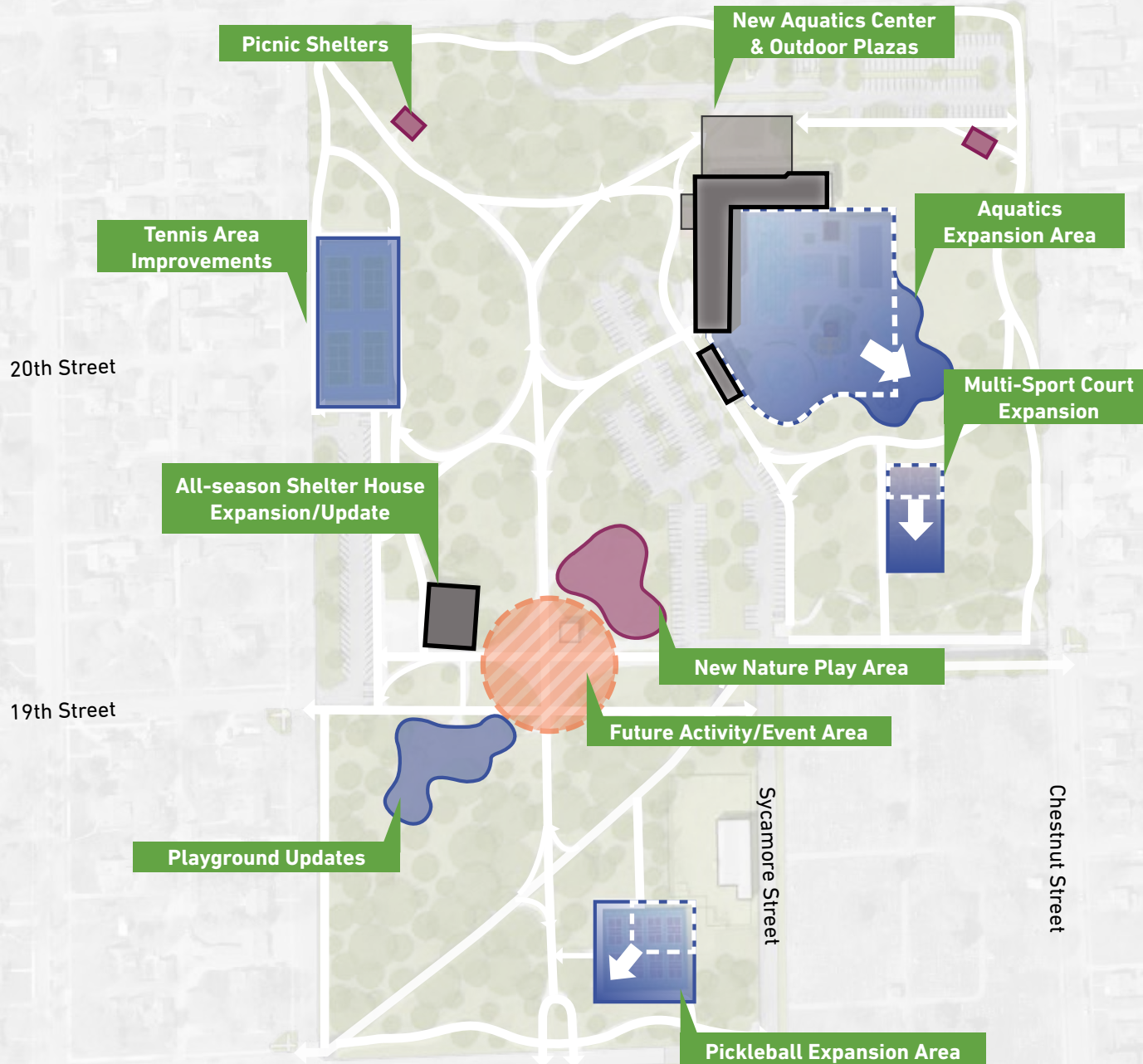
Aquatic Amenity Example

22nd Street

20th Street

19th Street

17th Street



Donner Park and Center

Building

Vision

For generations, Donner Park and Center have served a critical role in providing outdoor aquatics, meeting room space, and Parks Department administration space for the Columbus community. The conceptual master plan focuses on preserving the neighborhood feel of the park and providing opportunities for growth and enhancement without turning Donner into a regional water park or tourism attraction.

Donner Center is an aged facility that has reached the end of its useful life. The master plan recommends that Donner Center be replaced over time with a new facility that provides new community meeting rooms with a catering kitchen and indoor and outdoor connection to the park through an all-seasons patio. New public restrooms are proposed to serve the community meeting rooms and the Aquatic Center spectator seating load for peak events, such as swim meets.

Preservation and investment in the upkeep of the existing pools are an important aspect of the master plan. As Donner Center evolves, new aquatic amenities such as a splash pad and new leisure pool are proposed to help extend the seasonality of the aquatic center and provide more inclusive offerings. To facilitate a future aquatics expansion, a new Donner Center needs larger locker rooms and family changing rooms; more efficient administrative and lifeguard offices; a new ticketing and aquatic center entry point; and expanded storage in a new facility. Basement pool mechanical systems are proposed to remain, as is the existing concession building. Repurposed facilities would need to be renovated.

Building Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

Locker Rooms **A**

Administrative/Lifeguard
Offices **B**

Meeting Rooms **C**

Restrooms **D**

Patio **E**

Storage **F**

Storage/Future Aquatics
Mechanical **G**

Concessions **H**

Lobby **I**

Catering Kitchen **J**

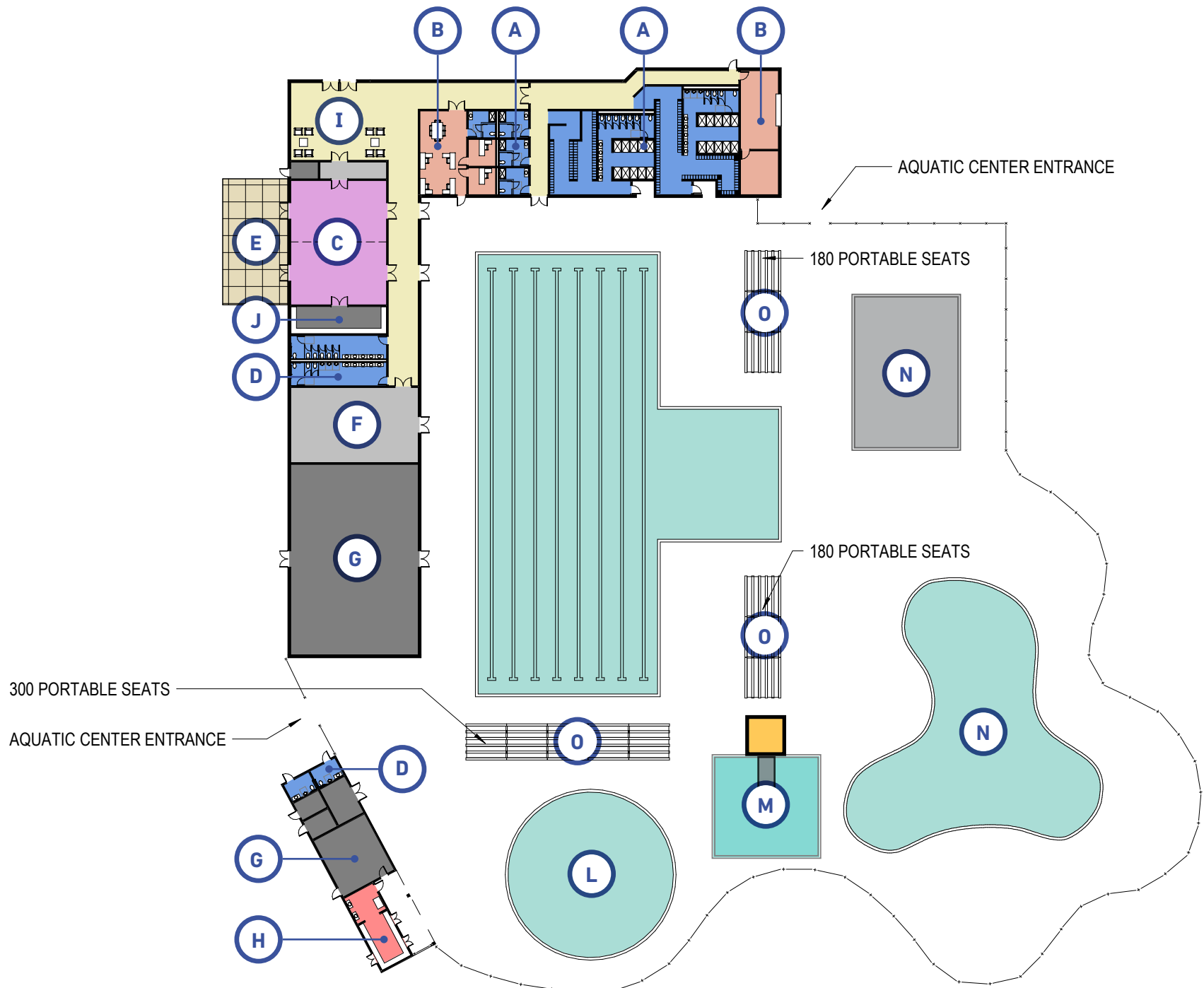
Existing 50m Pool /Diving Well **K**

Existing Leisure Pool **L**

Existing Waterslide **M**

Potential Aquatics Expansion **N**

Portable Spectator Seating **O**



Building

Recommendations

Recommendations for Donner Center are summarized below:

- Replace the existing Donner Center structure with a modern, efficient building smaller in footprint to better service aquatics users. This facility is suggested to have much more open views to the park and aquatics area. This building will include enhanced locker rooms and restrooms, a small classroom space and catering kitchen, and offices for aquatics center employees. To reduce costs, pool mechanical equipment is recommended to be retained in the basement of the building, accessed by the existing stairs.
- Remodel the existing concessions building to include new service spaces offering sales both on the park side of the building and the aquatics side of the building and upgrade restrooms within this building.



Aquatics Area Example



Indoor Community Space Example



Recreation and Aquatic Center Example



Outdoor Fitness Programming Example

Aquatic Center Program Area Area Square Footage

Locker Rooms	
Women's	1,100 SF
Men's	1,100 SF
Family	300 SF
Administrative/Lifeguard Offices	
Offices	200 SF
Open Office Area	500 SF
Restroom	100 SF
Ticket Office	600 SF
Cash Office	200
Meeting Rooms	1,600 SF
Restrooms	600 SF
Patio	1,100 SF
Storage	1,450 SF
Storage/Future Aquatics Mechanical	3,600 SF
Lobby	1,500 SF
Catering Kitchen	350 SF
Total	14,300 SF

Concessions Building Program Area

Concessions	350 SF
Storage/Future Aquatics/Mechanical	800 SF
Restrooms	150 SF
Total	1,350 SF



Note: Program and square footages are conceptual and will be further developed and detailed during the design phase of the project.

Surrounding Area Connectivity

Existing Conditions

Key Considerations

This study evaluated thoroughfares between Fair Oaks Mall, Donner Park and Center, Lincoln Park and Hamilton Center Community Center and Ice Arena, the surrounding neighborhood, and generally this part of Columbus. Primary focus was placed on the following:

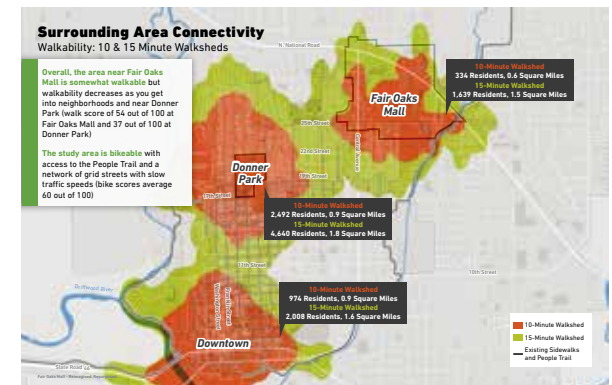
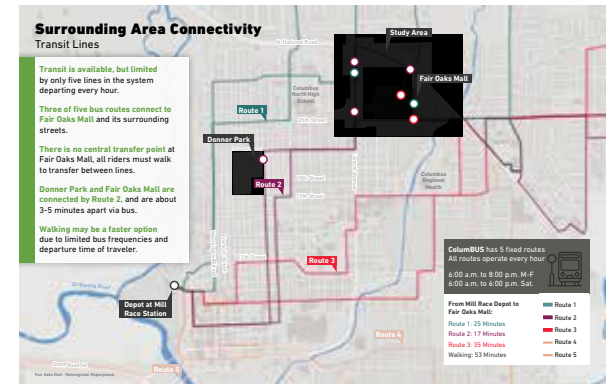
- **25th Street** from National Road/US 31 to Washington Street
- **22nd Street** from Hawcreek Avenue to Washington Street
- **19th Street** from Donner Park to Lincoln Park and Hamilton Center
- **17th Street** from Donner Park to Noblitt Park
- **Central Avenue** from National Road/US 31 to 22nd Street
- **Home Avenue** from 25th Street to 19th Street
- **Duke Energy utility corridor**

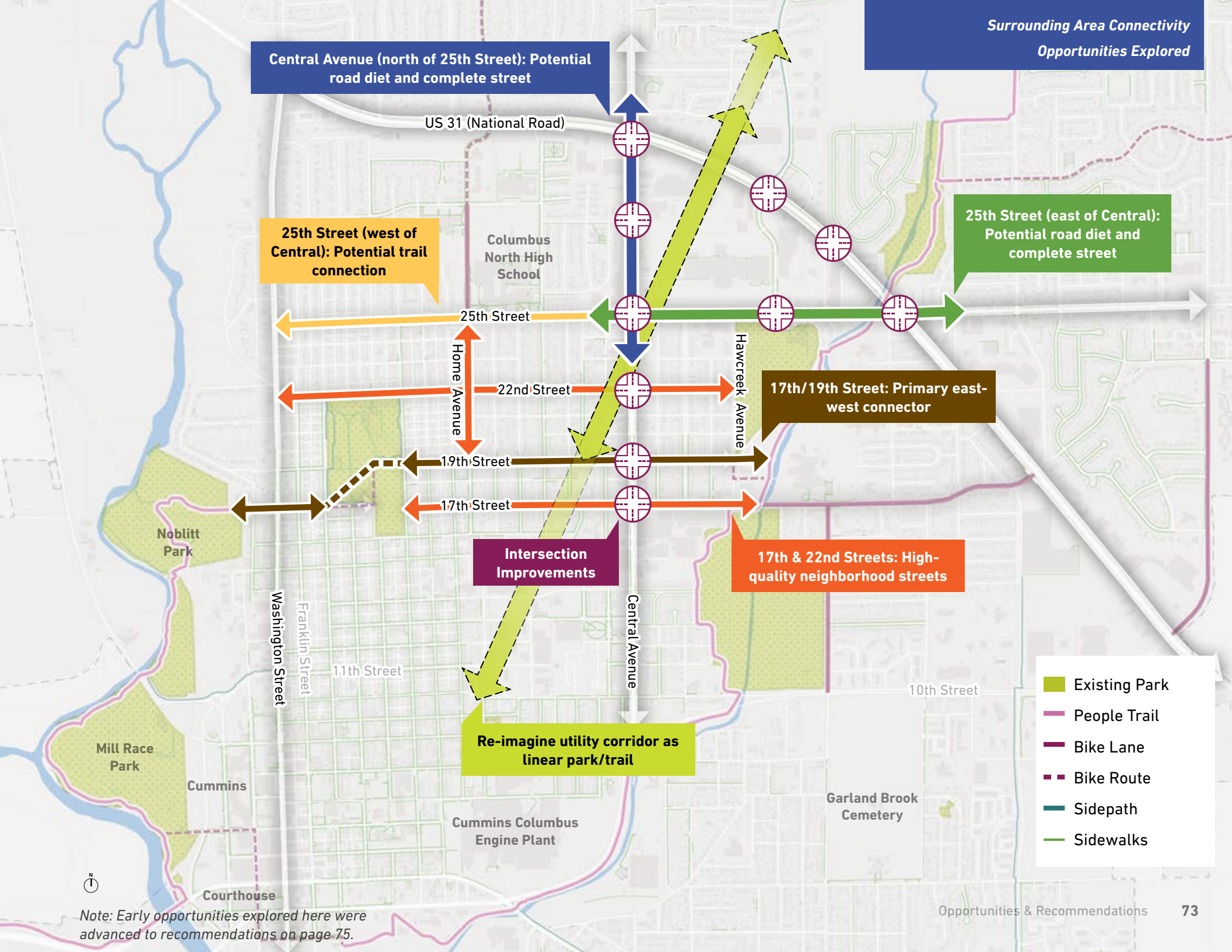
Due Diligence

Analysis and Opportunities

The analysis focused on understanding opportunities to right-size streets to accommodate enhanced streetscape and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, understand the potential for intersection improvements, explore road diets, and identify high quality connections to the People Trail.

Connectivity Analysis





Note: Early opportunities explored here were advanced to recommendations on page 75.

Surrounding Area Connectivity

Connectivity

Vision

Analysis and stakeholder engagement resulted in recommendations for targeted connectivity improvements between existing destinations and the health, wellness, and recreation facility at the former Fair Oaks Mall.

The following information complements existing mobility planning previously prepared by the City of Columbus and is intended to be supplemental to those plans with specific detail about this project.

This study identified 25th Street as a primary link with several different zones of varying condition. Recommendations for 25th Street east of Central Avenue to US 31 (National Road) are envisioned to be phased with improvements to Fair Oaks Mall. The first phase of improvements could allow travel lanes on 25th Street to remain but expand a linear park and multi-use path northward onto the Fair Oaks Mall property to create a signature pedestrian experience along the facility's primary frontage. Over time, the second phase of this project could be implemented, putting this zone of 25th Street on a road diet. This reallocation of space would reduce a travel lane in each direction and provide additional open space along both the north and south sides of the road while maintaining phase one improvements.

Recommendations for 25th Street west of Central Avenue to Home Avenue call for a road diet to reallocate available space within the existing ROW. In doing so, the sidewalk on the north side of the road could be upgraded to a 10' multi-use path connecting to Columbus North High School. Corridor improvements at this zone of 25th Street connect to a recommended cycle track on Home Avenue, which will link into the planned 19th and 17th Street People Trail connector. These improvements will drastically improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and quality of experience in this area.

An integral improvement to the transformation of Fair Oaks Mall is a new multi-use path around the mall ring road and along Herman Darlage Drive. This will complement enhancements on 25th Street, as well as the proposed multi-use path down Hawcreek Avenue.

Various improvements to intersections are proposed to enhance pedestrian safety and aesthetics. These improvements will collectively improve north/south and east/west connectivity throughout this part of town, expand upon the network already established by the People Trail, and encourage safer and more direct links to destinations.

Connectivity Recommendations Conceptual Master Plan

25th Street (west of Central): Potential road diet and multi-use path

A

25th Street (east of Central): Potential road diet and multi-use path

B

Herman Darlage Drive: Multi-use path

C

Hawcreek Avenue: Multi-use path

D

Home Avenue: Cycle track

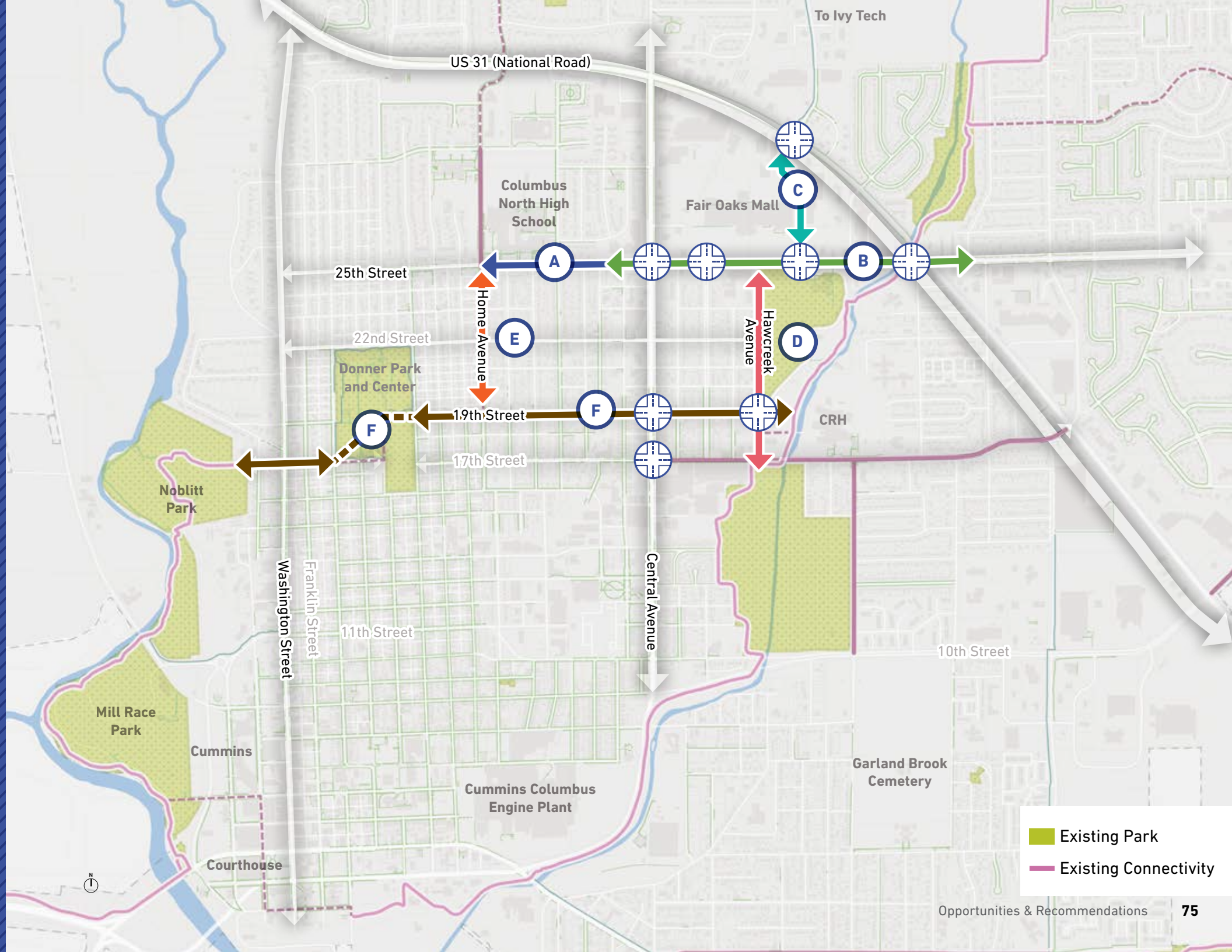
E

17th/19th Street: Park Trail and Bike Boulevard

F

Intersection Improvement





US 31 (National Road)

To Ivy Tech

Columbus North High School

Fair Oaks Mall

25th Street

22nd Street

Donner Park and Center

19th Street

17th Street

11th Street

10th Street

Washington Street

Franklin Street

Central Avenue

Noblitt Park

Mill Race Park

Cummins

Courthouse

Cummins Columbus Engine Plant

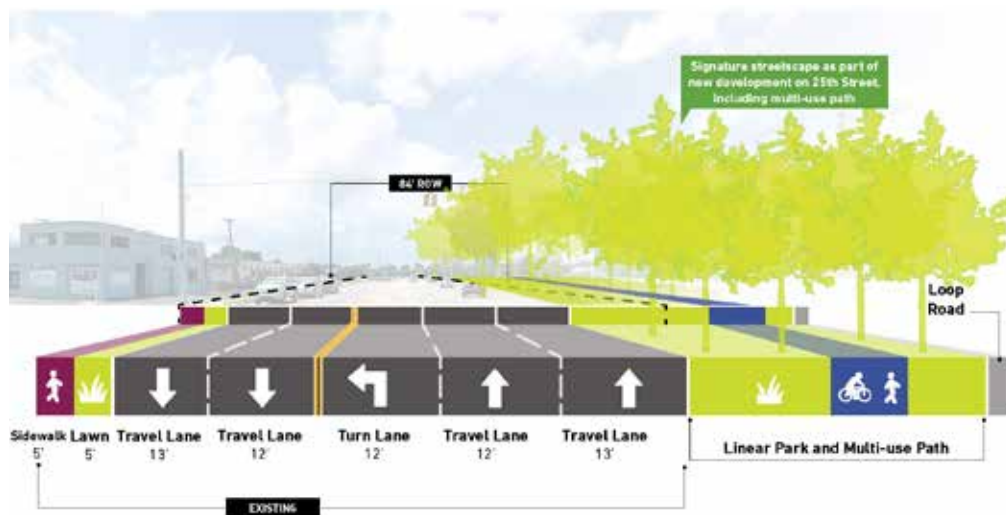
Garland Brook Cemetery

CRH

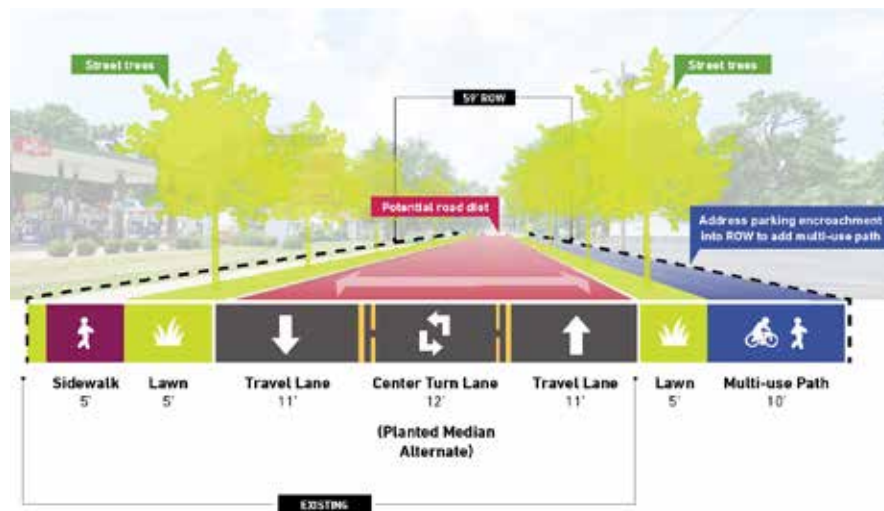
- Existing Park
- Existing Connectivity

25th Street improvements

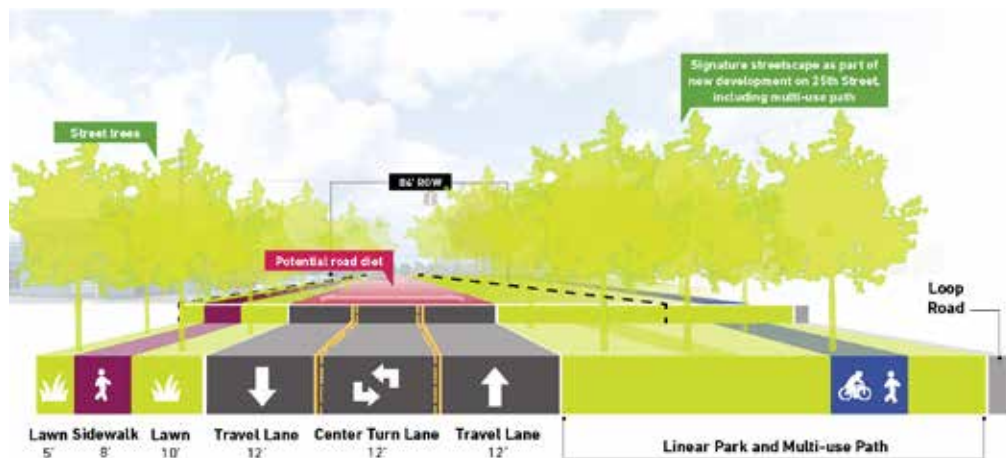
25th Street (east of Central Ave.) Phase 1



25th Street (west of Central Ave.)



25th Street (east of Central Ave.) Phase 2



Linear park and multi-use path



19th Street (east of Donner Park) 17th Street (west of Donner Park)



Surrounding Area Land Use

Existing Conditions

Key Considerations

The transformation of Fair Oaks Mall into a community health, wellness, and recreation facility will affect surrounding land use. Investment in this facility will be a stabilizing factor that will likely positively influence the private market to invest and redevelop other properties in the vicinity.

Today, this area is a blend of existing highway oriented commercial retail and office land uses in its core, with single- and multi-family residential land uses dispersing around its edges. There is some industrial land use in this area that will likely remain active for some time. This area also has significant public facilities with several schools and parks.

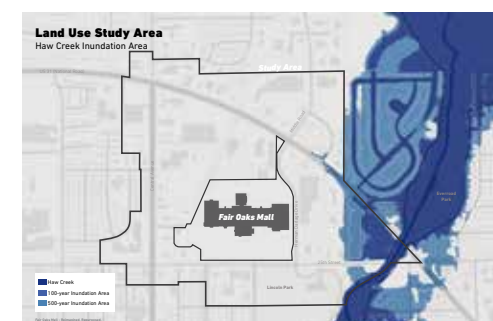
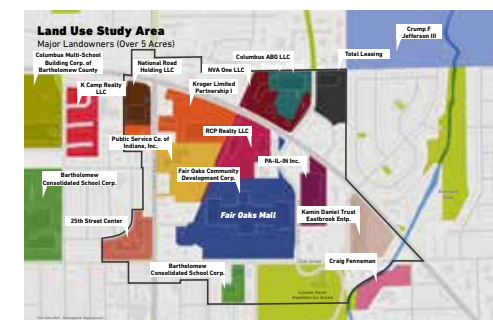
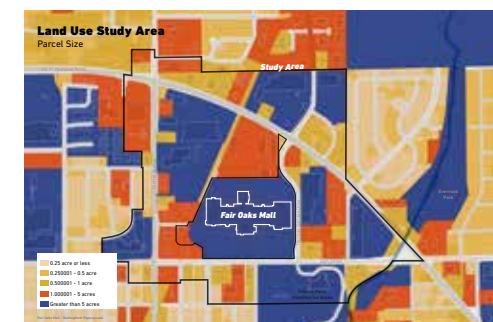
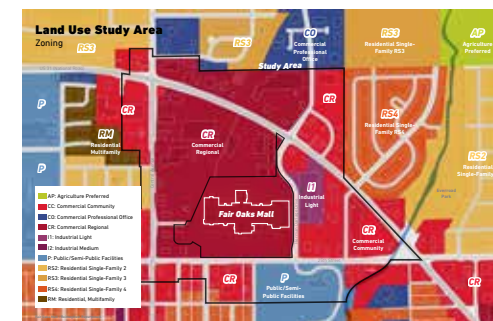
While this area has diversity in land uses, much of the commercial development is aging and underutilized. Ownership in the mall area is fragmented, with various entities controlling portions of the study area, and a large number of owners. Current development patterns have resulted in a superblock scale around the mall, generally bound by 25th Street, Central Avenue, and National Road. There is some 100-year floodplain impact on the east side of the study area near the intersection of 25th Street and National Road/US 31.

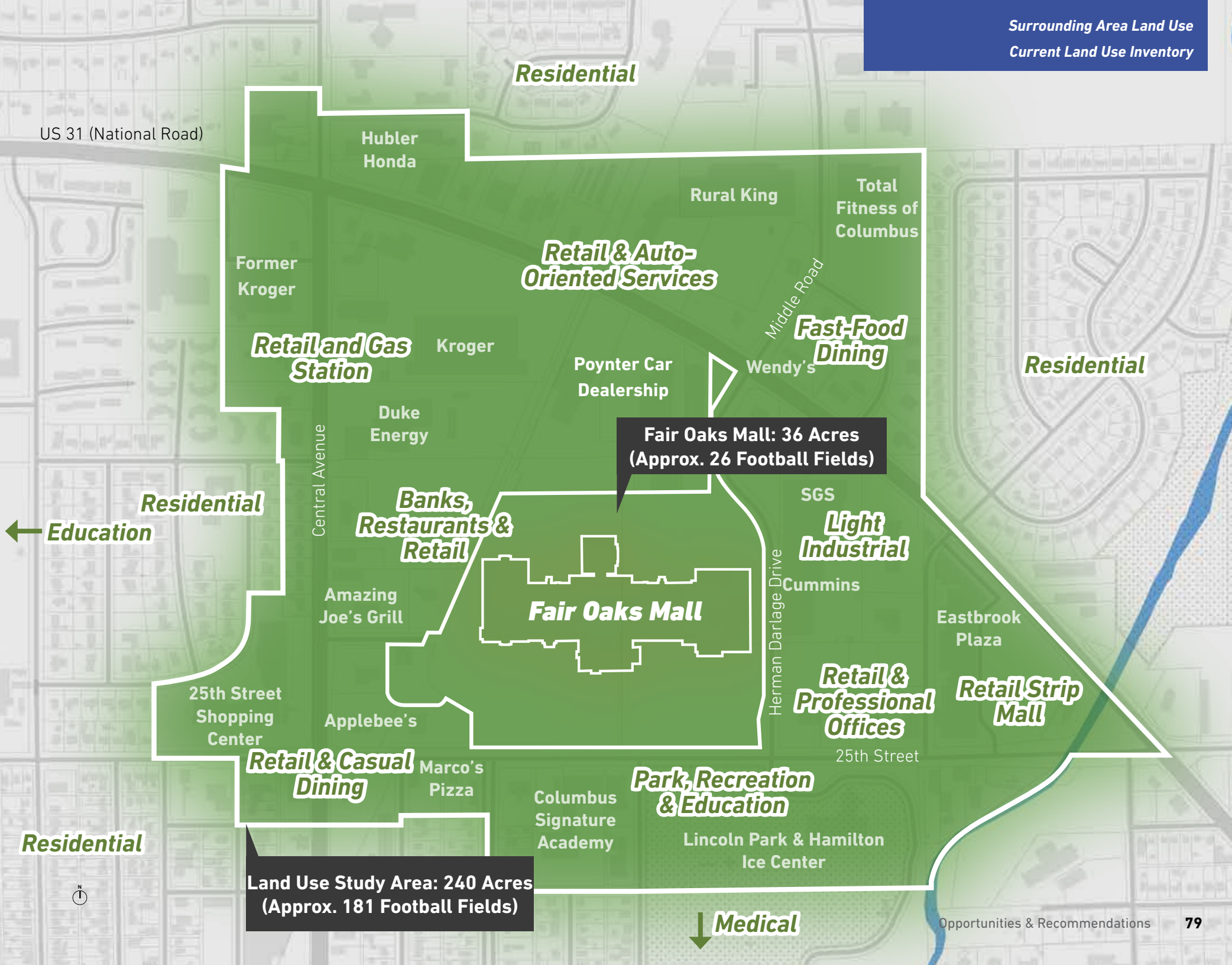
Due Diligence

Analysis and Opportunities

The analysis focused on understanding opportunities from a land use and redevelopment perspective. Current conditions were examined along with demographics and the market, explored earlier in this document. Opportunities were further identified by meeting with the local realtor and development community and property owners. Several key opportunity areas are likely to redevelop as the community health, wellness, and recreation facility catalyzes redevelopment in this area.

Land Use Analysis





Surrounding Area Land Use

Future Land Use

Vision

With investment in a health, wellness, and recreation facility, redeveloped sites around the mall have an opportunity to transition into a more walkable village format with a mixing of uses, denser housing and complementary hospitality, retail, and restaurants. This could change the area around the mall into a much more active district with amenities for those visiting the facility.

The map on the following page identifies several opportunity sites that could redevelop following the transformation of Fair Oaks Mall and suggests potential future land uses for these locations.

Complementary land uses envisioned for this area include:

- Mixed-use development characterized by ground-floor office, retail and restaurant uses, and upper floor residential uses. Parking is usually in the side or rear of mixed-use development and not fronting major streets.
- Multifamily development characterized by surface or tuck under parking fitting into the context of this place and designed with a compact, walkable focus connected to this area could occur over time.
- Hospitality development focused on servicing visitors to the health, wellness, and recreation facility and serving the city could locate here, given favorable access and the potential to draw on a visitor market.

This development should maintain high-visibility and could benefit from a shared parking scenario if in close proximity to the mall. In addition, this type of development could help bring larger tournaments to an indoor sports facility.

- Stand-alone retail or restaurant development focused on servicing the businesses in the area and the users of the health, recreation, and wellness facility. This development could occur at major intersections and surrounding the mall, eventually replacing some retail and restaurant uses with a newer product. Connectivity to major streets and adjacent uses and shared parking could also improve the quality of this development.
- Stand-alone office space could develop, as areas around destinations such as a community health, wellness, and recreation facility can attract new professional offices and medical offices.
- Structured parking is not recommended as a land-use but rather should be considered if higher densities occur over time. This could be done creatively, not as a multi-story garage, but a one-level deck with wrapped mixed-use, multifamily, or hospitality development.

Potential Opportunity Sites

Conceptual Master Plan

Former Kroger, potential multi-family, stand-alone retail or restaurant, or hospitality development.

A

Current Bob Poynter Car Dealership, potential mixed-use or hospitality development.

B

Various vacant properties, potential stand-alone retail or restaurant, hospitality or stand alone-office.

C

Existing, complementary restaurants and other uses to be provided with improved pedestrian connections to the mall.

D

Significant street intersection, potential district gateway including signage, landscaping, and other features.

E



Mixed-Use Development



Multi-Family Residential Development



Hospitality and Amenities



Retail and Restaurants



Professional/Medical Office



