
Seventh Street Developer Response Project

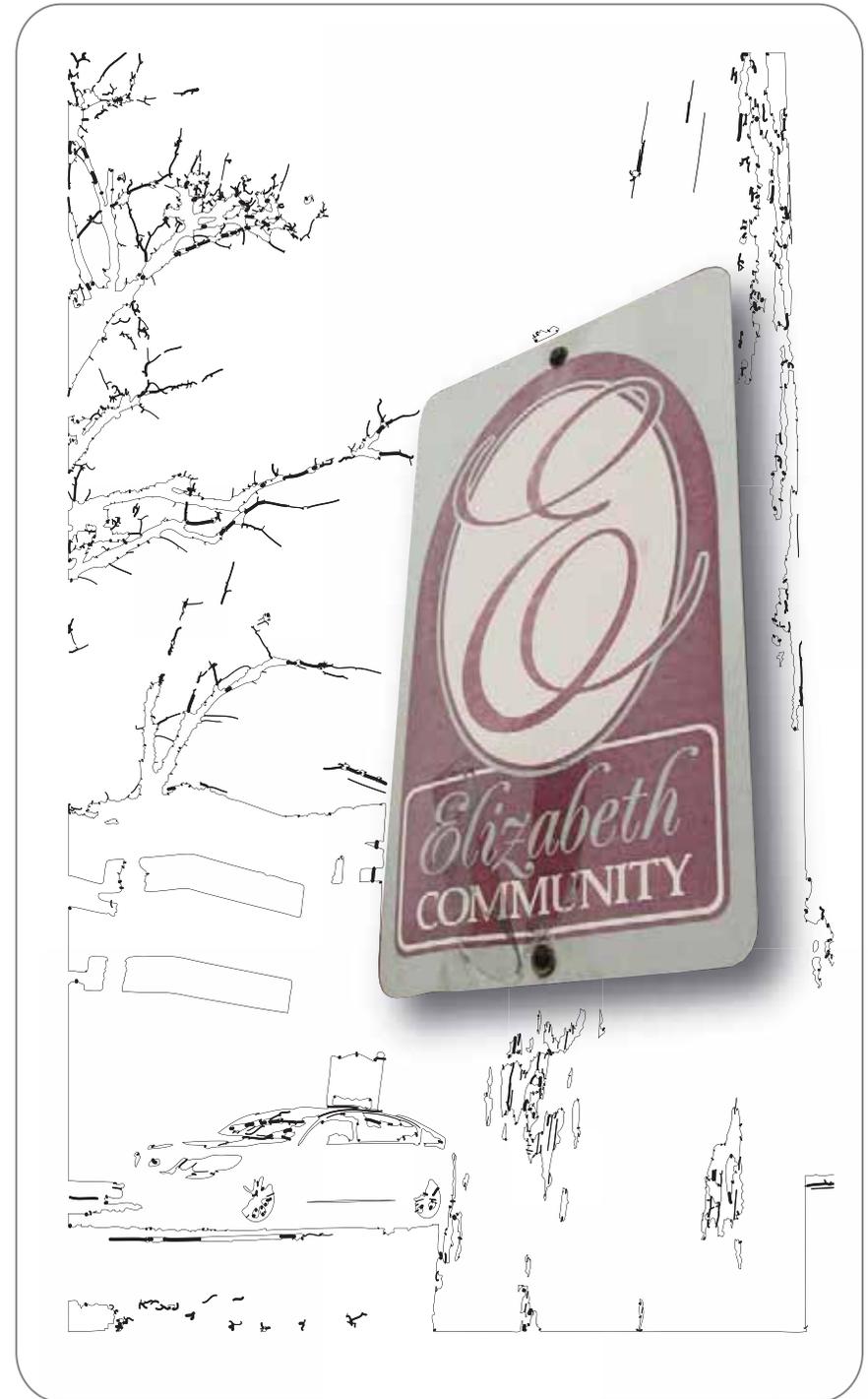
Workshop Summary Report

April - May 2008



Prepared for
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department

by
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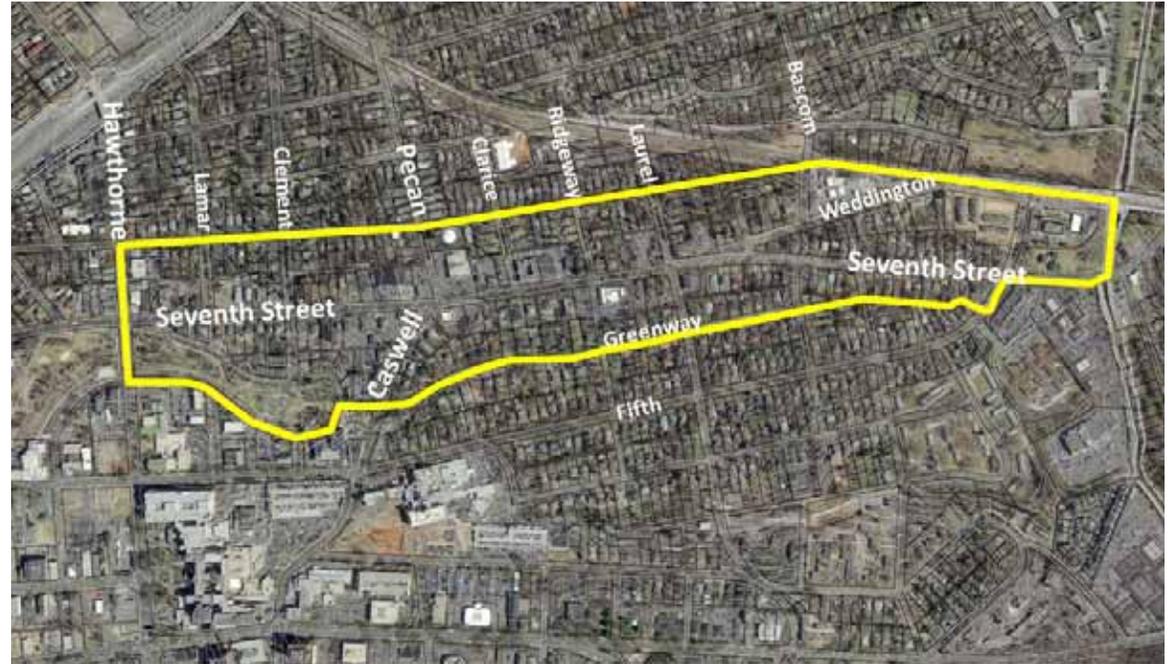
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Overview



Study Area

Executive Summary

This Developer Response Project was borne of a desire to create a set of land use and urban design guidelines to lead public decision making in the face of the potential redevelopment of multiple sites along the Seventh Street corridor in Elizabeth. Potentially controversial rezoning petitions, assemblage of properties by developers, and the absence of an updated area plan were cause for concern among Elizabeth residents and property owners. This concern led them to request the City of Charlotte provide some guidance and direction for the coordinated orderly development of this mixed-use street.

Currently lacking the resources required for a new small area plan for the Elizabeth neighborhood, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department agreed to conduct a developer response process for Seventh Street. The process involved gathering input and information from key stakeholder groups, developing a set of guidelines for development, working with the stakeholders in design sessions to discuss and refine the guidelines, and ultimately preparing a plan

document as the final work product. The planning firm of Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin of Orlando was engaged by the City to facilitate this developer response and prepare the final report.

Development pressures on Seventh Street made it desirable to “fast track” the developer response process. By the very nature of this type of planning exercise, participation was limited to key neighborhood representatives, certain developers and commercial property owners, and City/County staff. This small but diverse group produced an impressive amount of work in a relatively short time, and a broad range of thought was heard, discussed, and incorporated into this document.

Initial stakeholder interviews were conducted by the Glatting Jackson project team over a two-day period in early-April 2008, supplemented with additional interviews throughout the process. Work sessions were held in late April and again in May. This report summarizes the recommendations of the consultant,

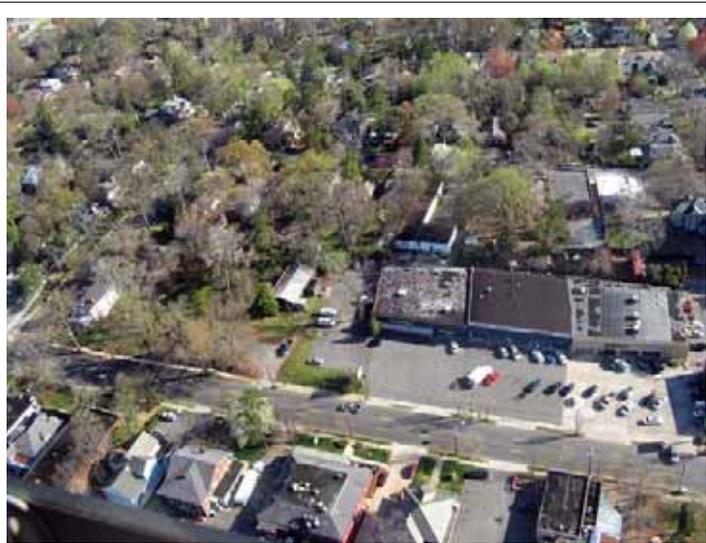
developed with considerable input from the stakeholders and refined through the application of the developer response process. These recommendations represent a blending of individual preferences, opinions, and wishes of all participating stakeholders.

This is not an area plan for Elizabeth, nor is it a formal policy document. It has not been adopted by elected officials, and does not carry any legal authority. Rather, it is a guide for City and County staff, commercial property owners, and residents, who should use the recommendations of this report as a basis for guiding and evaluating potential and actual development projects in the Seventh Street neighborhood.

Potential Developers / Development Areas

Boulevard Company

- Controls site approximately one and one-half acres in area, commonly known as the Roy White Flowers property.
- Currently zoned B-1.
- Proposed program:
 - 93 dwelling units/acre.
 - 137 units (±).
 - 10,000 (±) square feet of retail.
 - Four and one-half stories.
- Possible rezoning to MUDD.
- Several lots on the west end are restricted to residential use.
- Boulevard Company also controls some parcels on the opposite side of Seventh Street (LaTeaDa's).



Aerial view toward the north showing the site controlled by The Boulevard Company.

Winter Properties

- Controls approximately seven acre triangular site bounded by Seventh, Weddington, and Fifth Streets.
- Currently zoned R-22 MF (multi-family).
- Proposed program:
 - Mix of condos and townhomes.
 - Up to four stories.
 - Limited retail (potential drug store).
- The site could be divided into blocks that create the ability to phase development and adjust over time.
- There is the potential for angled on-street parking on underutilized Weddington Avenue.
- Potential to connect Bascom Street with Cameron Avenue creating a better north-south connection across the railroad tracks.
- Would consider incorporating Queen City Lumber site into potential development but current owners are not interested in selling.



Aerial view toward the southeast showing portion of the site controlled by Winter Properties.

Conformity Corporation

- Controls site east of Roy White Flowers – connects thru block to north via laundry site.
- Concerned about the “transitional right-of-way (ROW)” limiting already small development sites and setting the stage for unwanted road widening.
- Envisions parts of the corridor (around nodes like the Pecan/Caswell intersection) as up to 5 stories.
- Envisions pedestrian connection in the Pecan/Clement block to connect to Independence Park, with new public space “event” on the Roy White Flowers Site.

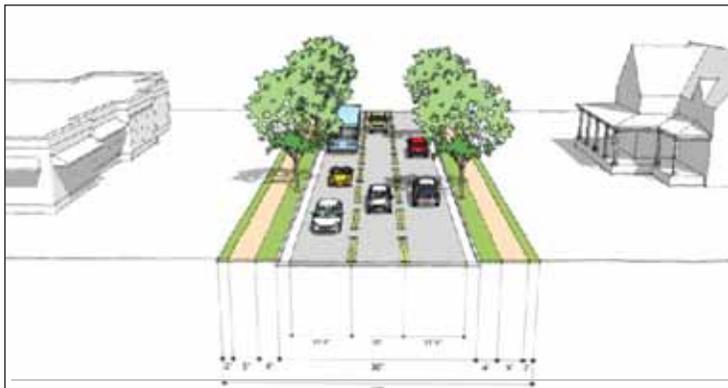
Streets and Transportation

Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT):

- Seventh Street is recommended to be widened to four lanes in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- It is classified as a Major Thoroughfare with an 80' right-of-way (ROW).
- Independence Boulevard is the "workhorse" corridor carrying most of the commuter traffic.
- CDOT's practice has been to apply the "transitional right-of-way" as 14 feet from the existing right-of-way (\pm 65 feet).
- CDOT has a 6-step process for defining the appropriate cross-section of the corridor that examines land use and transportation context.
- Three potential street cross-sections have been examined and considered:
 - Retain the existing three lanes with reversible center lane.
 - Four lanes reversible (i.e. two in one direction, left turn lane, one in other direction).
 - "Road diet" (one lane in each direction with a shared center turn lane which could be landscaped at key locations).

Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS):

- A streetcar is planned for Hawthorne Lane with a stop on the east side of Seventh Street.
- The Number 27 bus on Seventh Street has 15 stops (both sides) and is one of the highest ridership routes.
- All bus stops need "bus pads" at a minimum (concrete pads that connect the sidewalk to the curb).
- Most in-bound stops in the corridor would support transit shelters given ridership levels.
- The State route designation makes implementing shelters in the ROW time consuming and difficult given the coordination and approval necessary.



Schematic depiction of the current Seventh Street cross-section in the three-lane reversible portion of the corridor.



View along Seventh Street at Pecan intersection showing typical sidewalk conditions in this portion of the corridor.



View along Seventh Street at east of Pecan intersection showing reversible lane condition.

Elizabeth Neighborhood Issues

Traffic/Transportation

- Identified need for left turn lane at Hawthorne Lane.
- Identified the desire to have a left turn lane to eastbound Pecan Avenue
- (although not if it requires reconfiguring the intersection, the Starbucks building should remain at all costs).
- The neighborhood will not allow a 4-lane widening.
- Would love to see a “road diet”.
- Bikeway/greenway connection is on Greenway Avenue.

Overall Corridor Character

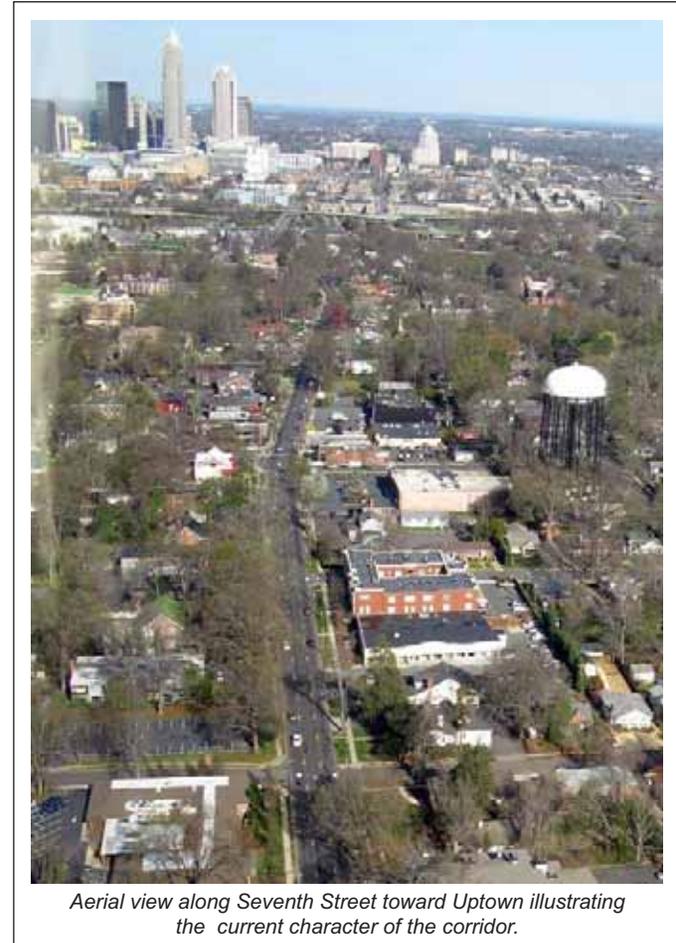
- The character of the strip needs to be a “seam,” both sides of the street should “communicate”.
- No “canyons”.
- Diversity, pedestrian, environmental.
- Desire “jumbled up,” “organic” character, think Dilworth is “boring,” “sanitized”.
- Don’t want half or full block development that results in “sameness” .

Winter Property

- No commercial on the Winter property.
- Could support more density here.
- Access should be focused on Weddington Avenue rather than Seventh Street.
- Support for new streets and blocks as way to slow traffic on Seventh Street.

Pecan/Caswell Node

- The “center” or “heart” of the area is Pecan and Caswell Streets.
- Sees the Pecan/Caswell node as retail focused with small amount of additional residential, type and scale of retail desired will not support parking deck access.
- The plan should start with figuring out the “center” and then work out from there (unlike current proposal on the Roy White Flowers site).
- Neighborhood Services zoning district protects the existing pattern (no change in foot print, access or driveways).
- Building heights: four stories (60 feet) maximum at center scaling down to three or two stories.
- Desire public space adjacent to Starbucks building, opens up the street façade, creates rhythm along the street.
- Wants mid-block pedestrian path(s) to Independence Park (like the existing Trolley Walk).



- Alleys could be pedestrian paths, place to relocate utilities in the long-term, concerned about traffic dumping out from alleys into neighborhood streets.
- Concerned about on-street parking overflow from new commercial development.
- Keep street edge activated, no monolithic facades, multiple points of “contact” - like the courtyard in the Williamson Project on Clarice (Conformity).
- Support density on Elizabeth Avenue, not on Seventh Street.

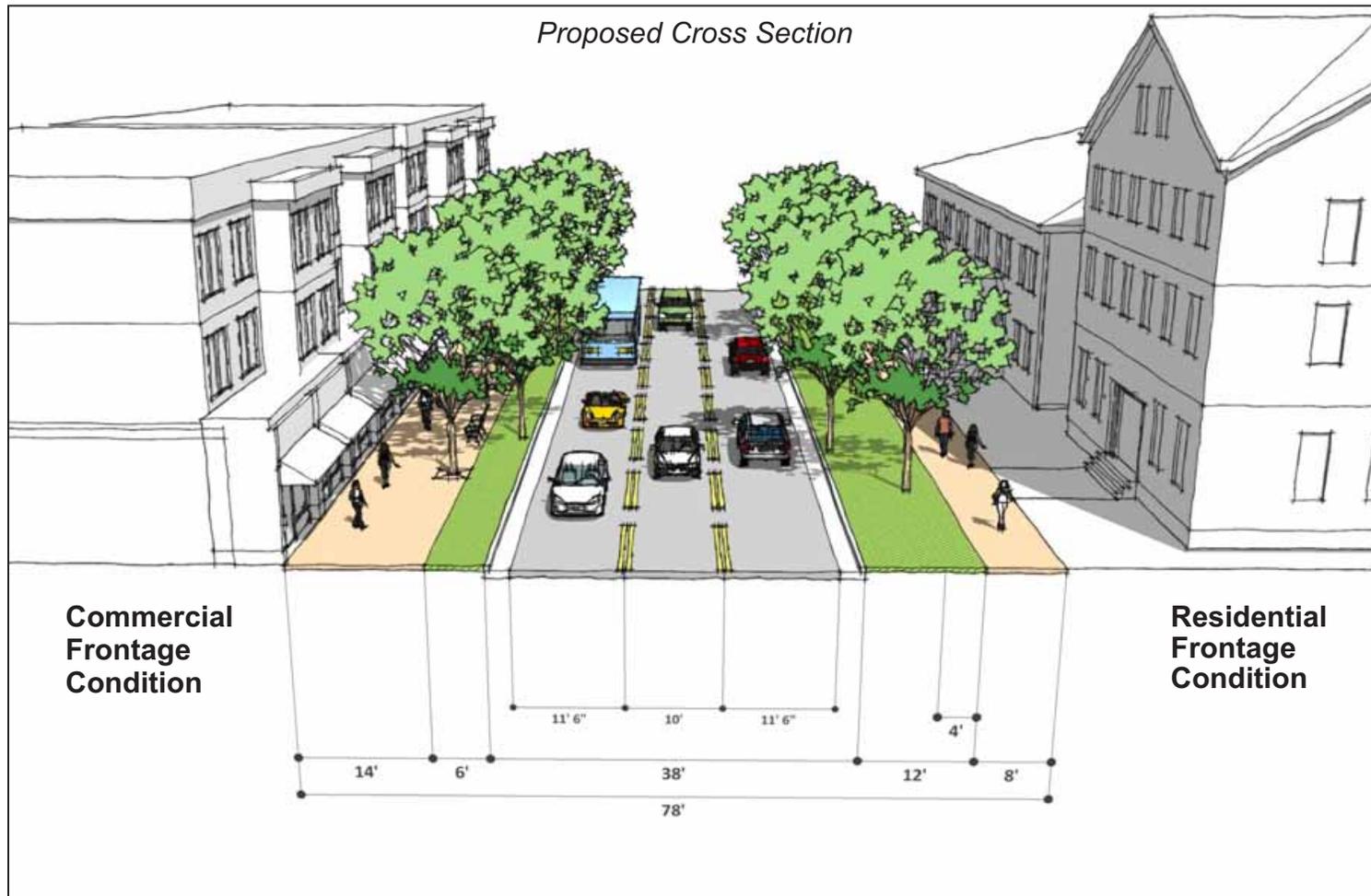
Guiding Principles

The design team developed the following principles, based on input from the charrette participants, to guide development along Seventh Street. The following pages describe in more detail how development may be executed consistent with the principles.

1. Recognize Seventh Street's role as a neighborhood seam that must support both pedestrian and vehicular uses.
2. Enhance the unique character of the built environment by differentiating forms in nodes and corridors and focusing development to reinforce the nodes.
3. Develop node locations that respond to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.

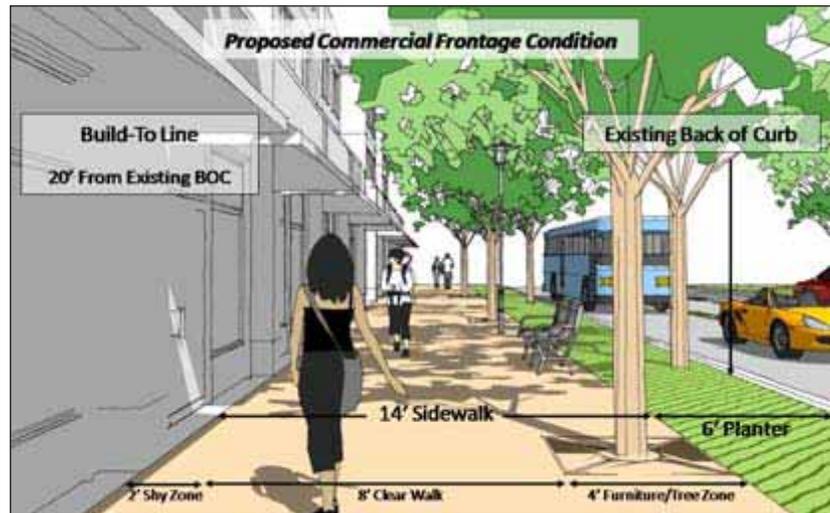
Guiding Principle One

Recognize Seventh Street's role as a neighborhood seam that must support both pedestrian and vehicular uses.



Guiding Principle One

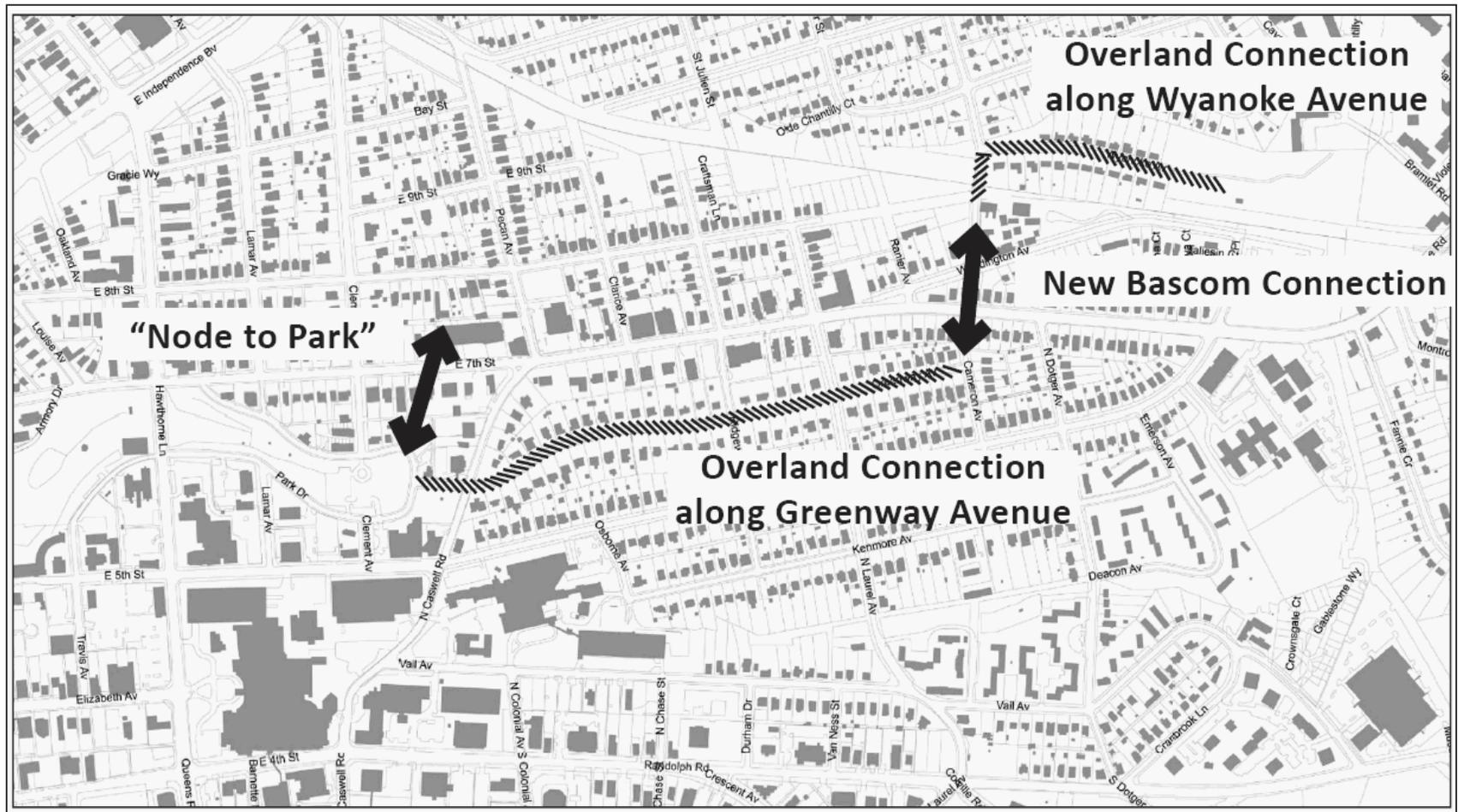
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Guiding Principle One

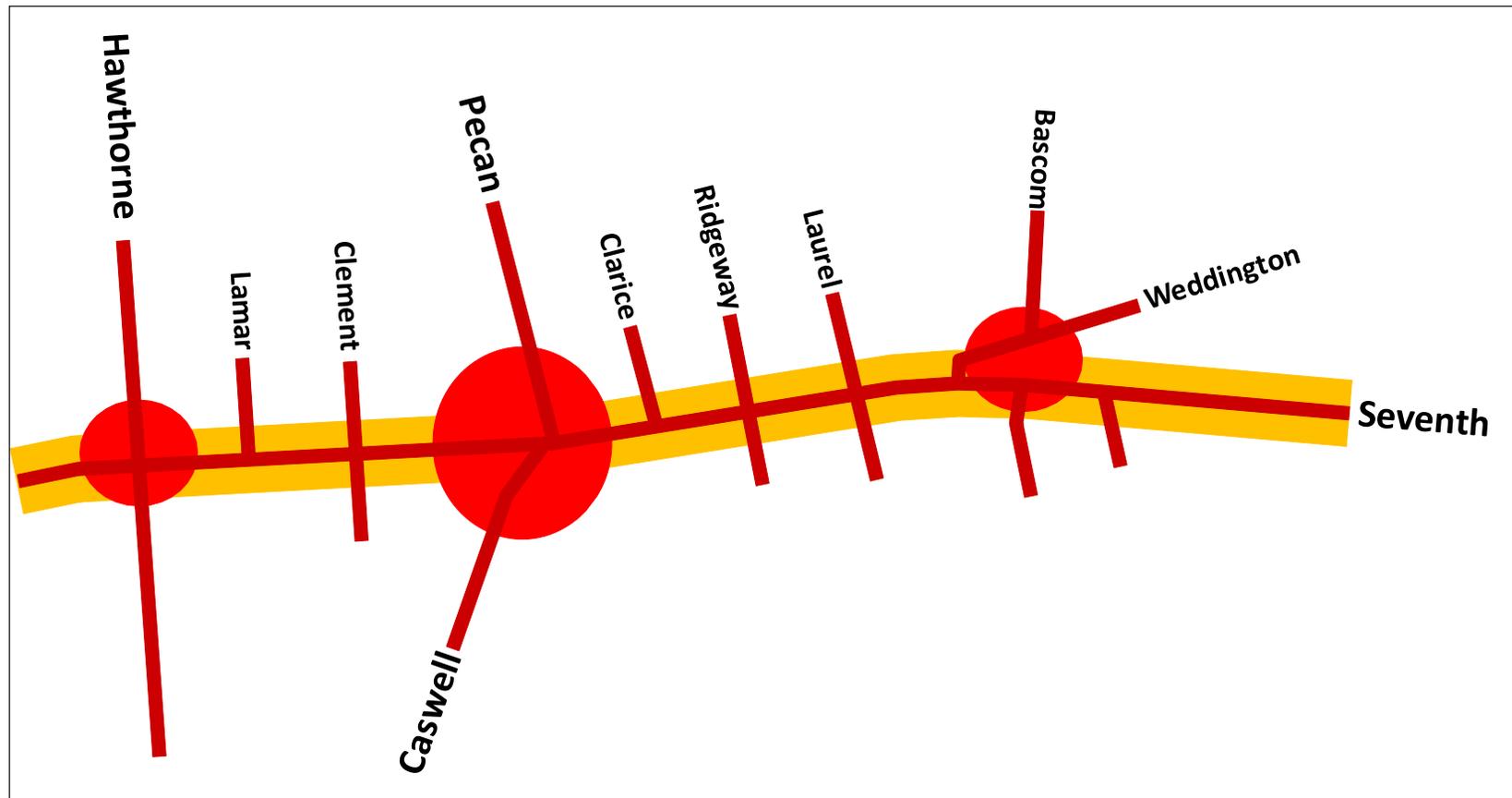
Recognize Seventh Street's role as a neighborhood seam that must support both pedestrian and vehicular uses.

Proposed Mid-Block Pedestrian Crossings



Guiding Principle Two

Enhance the unique character of the built environment by differentiating forms in nodes and corridors and focusing development to reinforce the nodes.

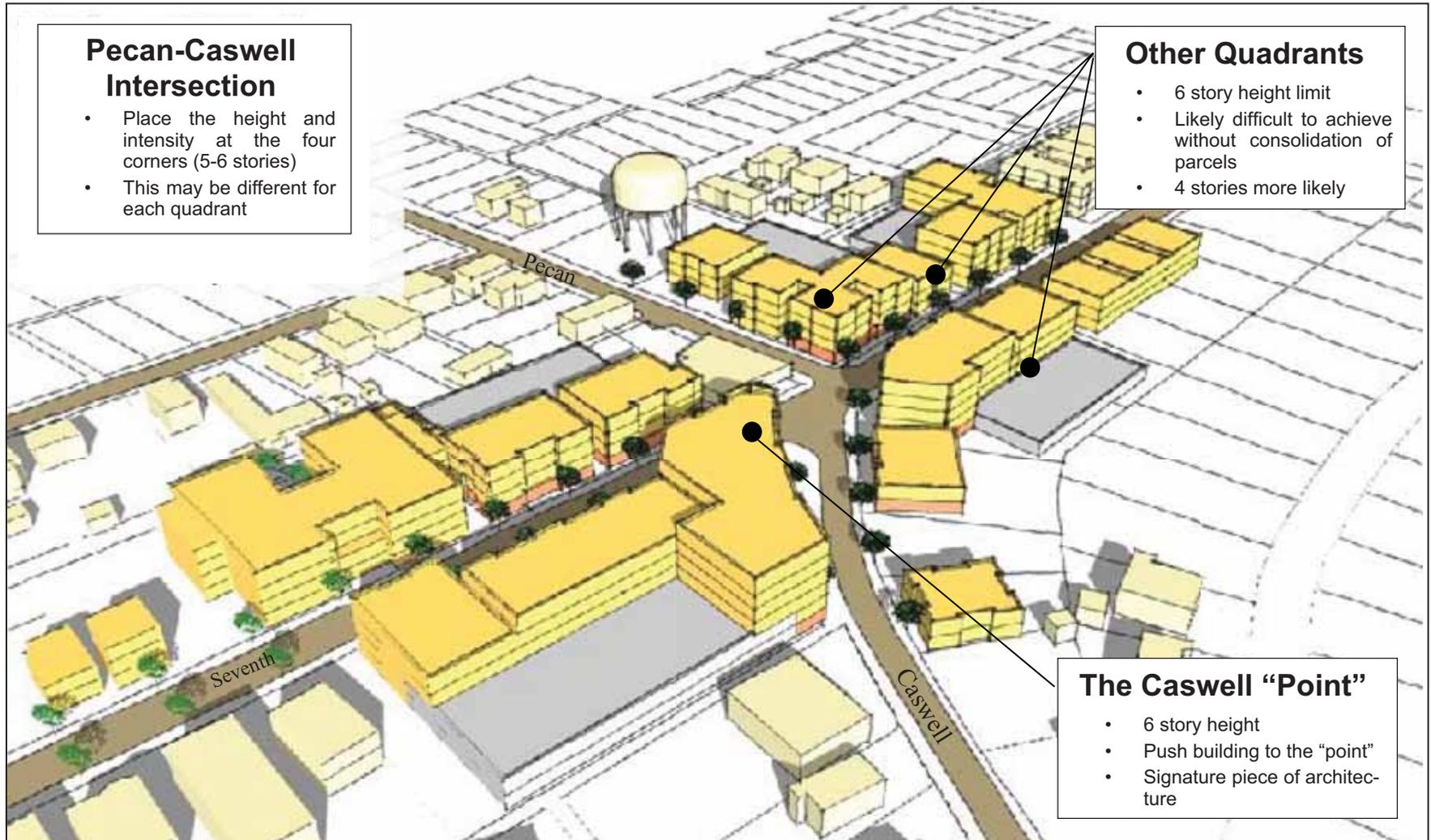


Nodes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mix of retail and residential uses• 2-3 Stories at Hawthorne node• 3-5 Stories at Bascom node• 3-6 Stories at Pecan node

Corridors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mix of residential and office uses• Limited retail• 2-3 Stories

Guiding Principle Three

Develop node locations that respond to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.



Guiding Principle Three

Develop node locations that respond to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Pecan Node - *Height and Massing*

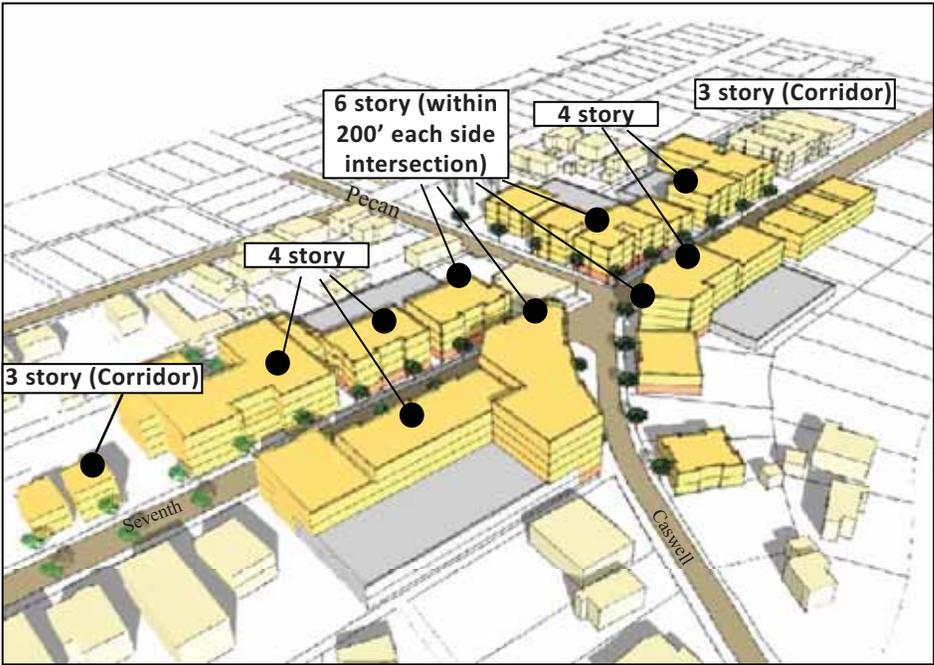


View from Seventh Street to southwest corner of Caswell and Seventh showing relative height and massing of a six-story building at the “Point” of the Pecan Node.

Guiding Principle Three

Develop node locations that respond to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Pecan Node - Height and Massing



Node to Corridor



Node to Neighborhood

Guiding Principle Three

Develop node locations that respond to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.

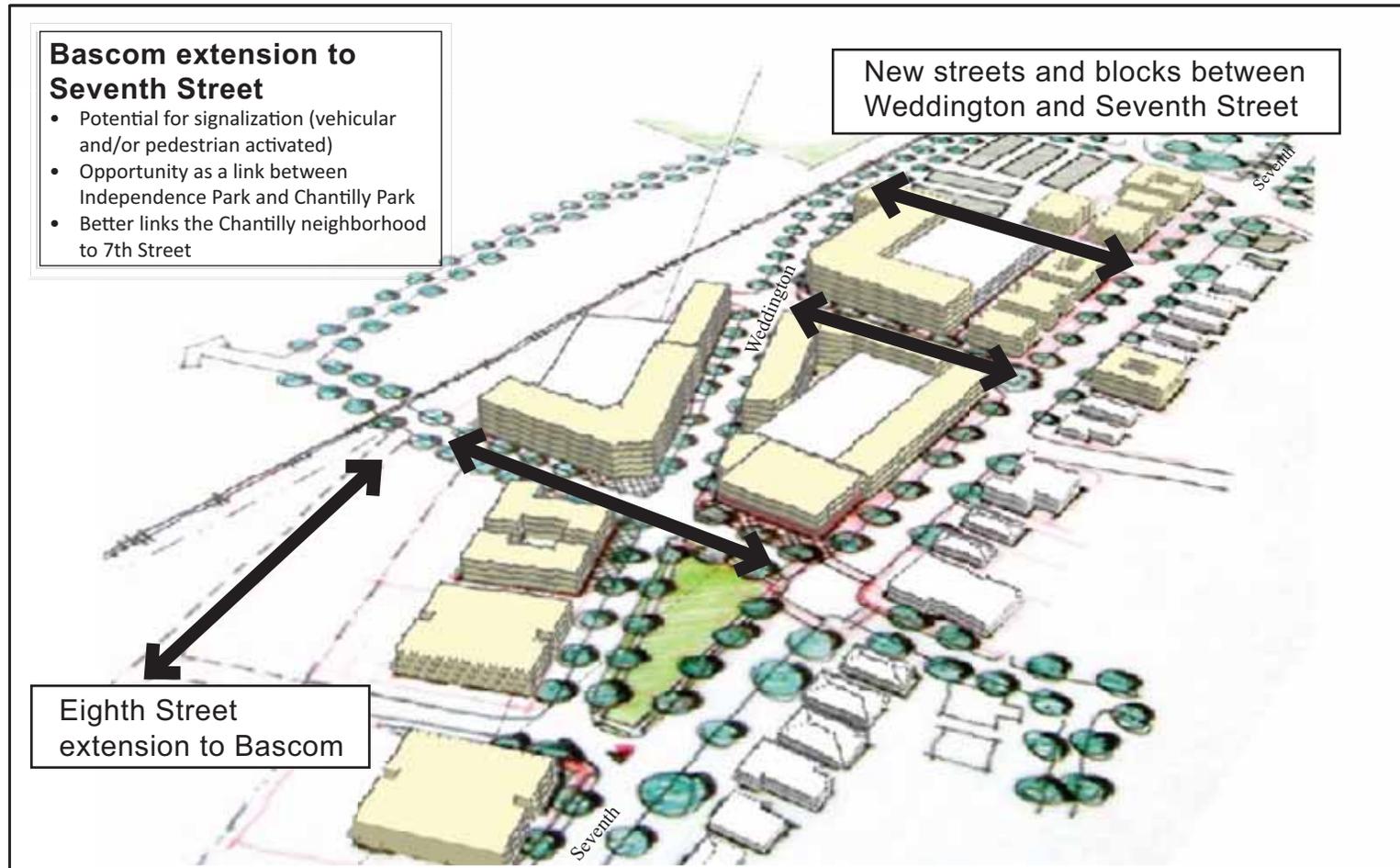
The Bascom Node - *Building Height and Massing*



Guiding Principle Three

Develop node locations that respond to the context of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Bascom Node - *New Street Connections*



Conclusion

This report illustrates the consultant's recommendations for how development should occur on Seventh Street between Hawthorne Lane and Fifth Street. It provides guiding principles for residential density, building height, massing, design, connectivity, and streets and sidewalks, especially for key potential development areas on Seventh Street.

This is not an area plan, nor is it a formal policy document. It has not been adopted by elected officials, and does not carry any legal authority. However, the recommendations outlined in this report will be used as a resource for evaluating development proposals, rezoning petitions, transportation and roadway plans, public improvements, and similar activities.

