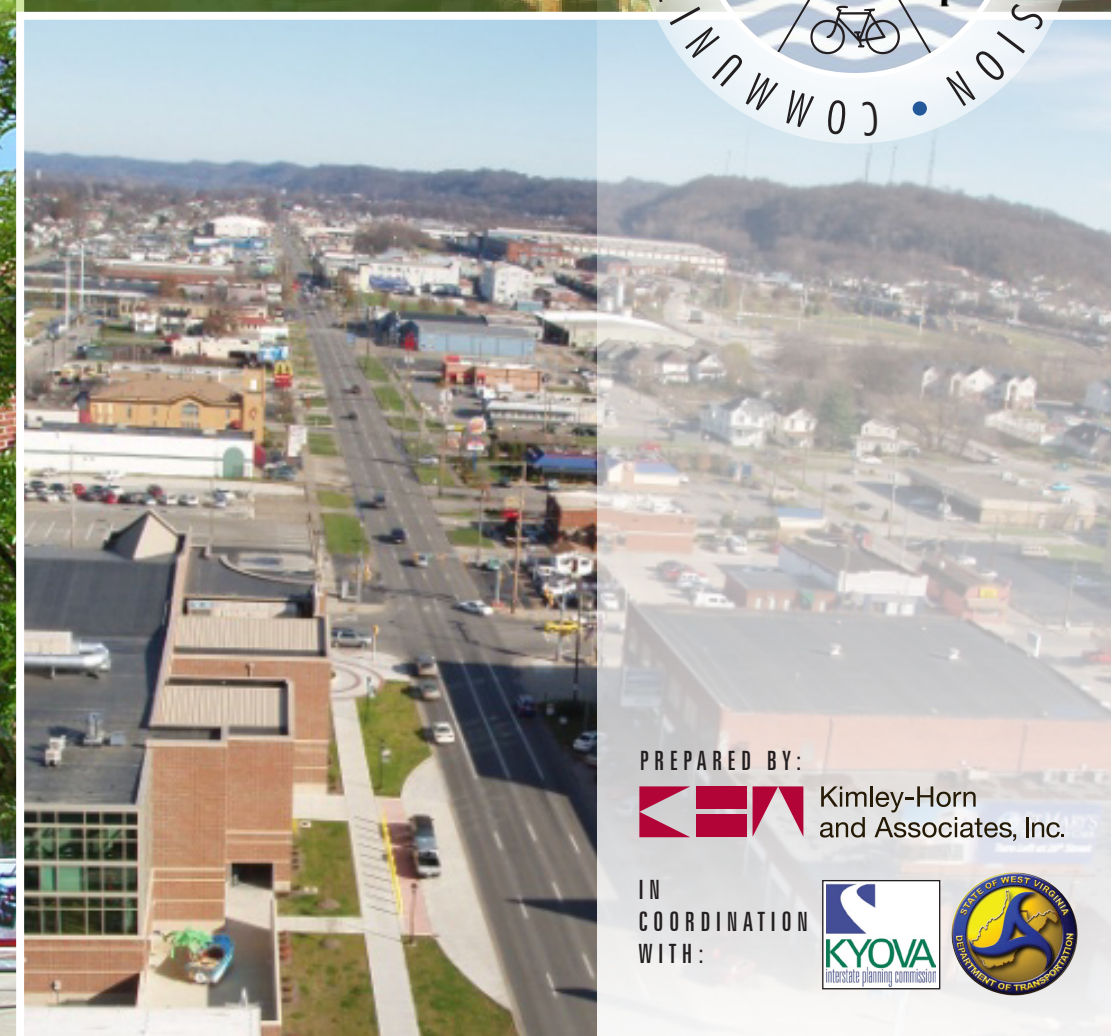
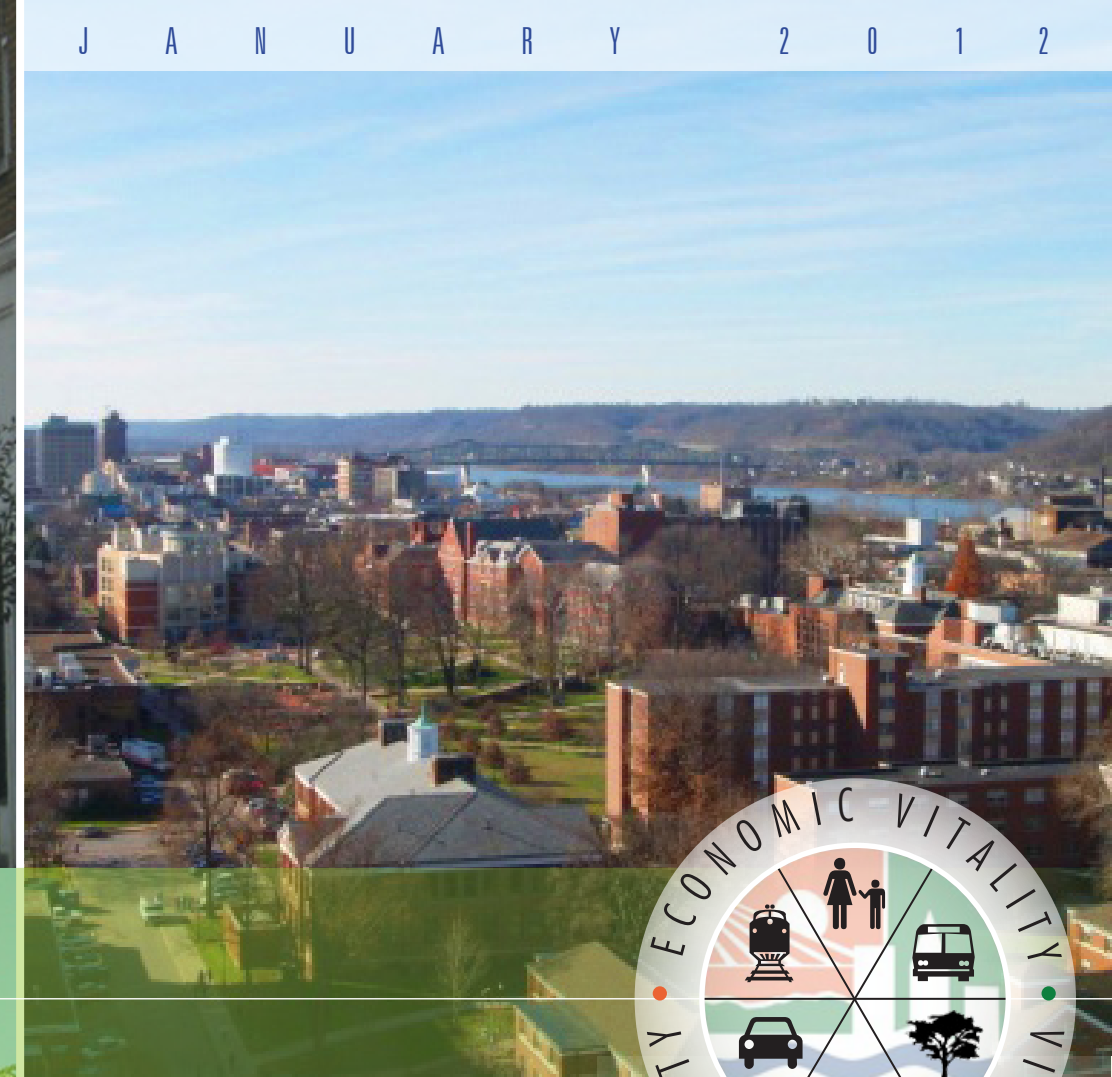




Downtown Huntington

WEST VIRGINIA
ACCESS STUDY



PREPARED BY:
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IN
COORDINATION
WITH:
 

Acknowledgements

This study was developed by Kimley-Horn and Associates in collaboration with Michael Baker Corporation, HDR Engineering, RLS & Associates, and E.L. Robinson. The process was guided by a Core Team of city staff and representatives from West Virginia Department of Highways, the KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission, Create Huntington, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, local realtors, and business owners. The general public also provided input for this plan though the public design charrette. All of their efforts are greatly appreciated.

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Introduction

The KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission, in partnership with the City of Huntington, sponsored the development of a Downtown Huntington Accessibility and Mobility Study for the central business district. This effort was designed to consider the transportation elements germane to a successful downtown setting: parking, streetscaping, connectivity, bicycle and pedestrian strategies, transit, and the connection between transportation infrastructure and the built environment.

The *Downtown Huntington Access Study* was structured as an inclusive planning process rather than a technical exercise, mainly through a transparent process that included public surveys, one-on-one interviews, a public design charrette, and an open door policy. The process was supported by a core team that allowed citizens to participate in a meaningful way. This committee was composed of local stakeholders and agency representatives as well as local advocates.

This project is not intended to be a substitute for a comprehensive downtown master plan but does represent a supportive framework for continued investment and improvements in the downtown and surrounding environs. This project is being conducted concurrently with the KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.



Guiding Principles

During early discussions with project participants, a series of conversations were synthesized into a set of Guiding Principles for the consultant team. These principles were intended to provide a framework for considering the creation of ideas, options, and final recommendations. In short, the results of this study are intended to support:

Transportation and Safety — Provide a balanced transportation strategy for all travel modes, with a priority placed on the creation of a walkable and vibrant downtown setting.

Network Organization — Identify a framework around which to organize the transportation system and promote standards for access, design, and wayfinding.

Modal Accommodations — Improve the modal accommodations for alternate travel modes and travel demand management.

Community Connection — Impart a visual, cultural, and physical connection between community assets.

Local Land Use Initiatives — Promote the implementation of quality infill and redevelopment opportunities that are consistent with a downtown development form in the central business district.

Beautification and Streetscape — Enhance visual appearance and promote a sense of place that is representative of Huntington.

Economic Vitality — Promote a healthy and sustainable business environment where revitalization of existing commercial properties, redevelopment of strategic locations, and continued reinvestment in healthy businesses is encouraged.

Community Values

Several themes continually emerged at the design charrette that reflected the priorities and values of participants. Although not formalized, these themes guided recommendations for the *Downtown Huntington Access Study*. They include the following:

Preserve Neighborhoods — Participants confirmed the desire to maintain the integrity of neighborhoods within the downtown area as well as those located adjacent to and within proximity to the downtown.

Repurpose Existing Commercial — Numerous vacant and/or underutilized buildings in the downtown should be targeted for repurposing and investment.

Human Scale Development — The design and scale of new development within the downtown should be consistent with urban places, and not design queues associated with the suburban form of development. Buildings should address the street, with parking in the side or rear of buildings and architecture that will interest pedestrians. Charrette participants would like to see more distinct and memorable places, walkable places, and public spaces in the study area.

Gateways — Participants expressed a desire to create recognizable entrances to the study area to help establish a unique identity, distinguish it from adjacent jurisdictions, and convey a sense of pride in their community.

Town and Gown — Participants expressed a desire to build on the connection between Marshall University and Downtown Huntington.

Study Area

While Downtown Huntington is an expansive place, this study places an emphasis on the area that lies between the Ohio River to the north, 3rd Street to the west, 16th Street (Hal Greer Blvd) to the east and the CSX rail line to the south. Although this is the physical representation of the study area, numerous recommendations covered in this study go beyond these limits due to their relationship to the downtown.



Project Workbook Overview

Premises of the Project Workbook

The Project Workbook is intended to address general concerns and specific issues identified at the inception of the project, as well as those identified during the course of the charrette.

The Project Workbook catalogs the planning efforts, outlines the issues, and systematically presents recommendations to achieve the community's transportation vision for Downtown Huntington. The workbook evolved based on the following premises:

- The workbook documents transportation issues and concerns for the study area and provides a series of recommendations based on planning, analysis, and public input.
- The workbook has been organized to provide a visual representation of local issues as well as specific recommendations to meet the community's needs. Its design takes advantage of the sketches, graphics, maps, and diagrams developed during the charrette to more effectively convey ideas.
- The workbook is not intended to educate the reader on standard planning practices. Rather, it focuses on the processes and results specific to the *Downtown Huntington Access Study*.

Components of the Project Workbook

The topics discussed during the charrette were as varied as the complexities of a downtown setting. However, this study is intended to address transportation related subject matter. Therefore, the workbook intends to be a clearinghouse for issues associated with downtown transportation systems and other related subjects.

The components of the workbook are described in the following subsections.

Process and Framework

Following this introductory chapter, the workbook presents a brief overview of the planning process as well as preliminary study area evaluation that forms the foundation of the issues and recommendations that will be presented.

- **Planning Process:** Intense collaboration allowed for a planning process tailored to the unique dynamics of the study area. This is summarized here with a focus on the public design charrette.
- **Resource Maps:** The actions and recommendations of the *Downtown Huntington Access Study* are rooted in a comprehensive evaluation of the study area. An overview of this evaluation is presented here in the form of various resource maps.

Study Elements

The remainder of the workbook is organized around three interrelated main study elements, with issues and recommendations presented according to these elements. Given the overlap between the elements, some repetition is expected. All issues identified and recommendations developed as part of the study are assessed in terms of the guiding principles and community values.

- **Transportation Mobility:** In order to promote the vitality of the downtown area, traffic needs to effectively move within the area while also serving the region as a whole. This section deals primarily with an assessment of existing traffic conditions, including traffic volumes and system performance, and provides conclusions regarding opportunities for improvements that are structured around a street hierarchy and set of design criteria.

- **Sustainable Transportation:** Transportation means more than moving vehicles from the western edge of the study area to the eastern edge. Effective transportation balances the needs of all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users, and motorists. This section offers recommendations on non-motorized transportation as well as transit, and includes thoughts on priority streetscapes for the downtown.
- **Community Vitality:** The design of places, how we navigate within them, and the interface of the public realm with the building realm combine to contribute towards the real and perceived image and overall vitality of a community. Placemaking creates more livable communities, identifiable character, and a higher quality of life by celebrating the uniqueness of a community. This section will focus on key features in the community, development opportunities, placemaking, and wayfinding to and within the downtown. Issues and recommendations for encouraging enhanced community vitality are presented here.

Moving Forward

This section offers a summary of the collective recommendations, cost estimates, and a corresponding action plan for the results of the study. The planning process has generated considerable interest in creating a desirable future for Downtown Huntington and the surrounding neighborhoods. The workbook concludes with a "Call to Action," encouraging interested citizens and key staff members to champion the priority recommendations of the study.

Workbook Structure

The *Downtown Huntington Access Study* presents a context sensitive approach to transportation planning in an urban setting. The result is a balanced approach to transportation planning. The

Project Workbook presents not only the approach, but also a realistic future envisioned for Downtown Huntington.

The heart of the workbook is the series of general issues and specific projects and recommendations presented in Chapters 4 through 6. The relationships between projects and issues may create repetition, but it is in this repetition that overarching themes emerge. Issues and projects are presented in a consistent format throughout these chapters. Each begins with a broad summary of existing conditions and an overview of the element's role in the downtown area. Following the summary page, each issue or project uses the same format:

- **Issue** — States the issue concisely
- **Observation** — Summarizes existing conditions and highlights particular problems
- **Discussion** — Expands upon the problem statement by identifying causational factors and expressing the problem's impact on the desired outcome for the study area
- **Recommendation** — Puts forth a specific directive to mitigate the problem

Where applicable, photos, sketches, diagrams, and maps are used to illustrate existing conditions and/or recommendations.



Planning Process

Transparency and collaboration provided the core strategies for establishing trust among the participants in this planning process. The project team (including agency representatives), the consultant team, and other participants in the planning process created a forum that allowed for a shared learning experience and timely communication among participants. Major elements of the planning process included:

Core Team

The core team was established to assist the consultant team in guiding the planning process. The primary focus of the core team was to offer background and insight regarding local conditions and to offer feedback on alternative strategies developed throughout the planning process. The team was composed of a diverse group of professionals, including representatives from Economic Development, Traffic Engineering, Community Planning and Development, West Virginia Department of Highways, the KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission, Create Huntington, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, local realtors, and business owners.

Orientation and Walking Tour

At the outset of the charrette, an orientation meeting was held with the core team. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss project history, project protocols, project approach, land use considerations, transportation, design standards and criteria, schedule, and deliverables. During orientation, participants were provided with an overview of the charrette schedule. They assisted with the identification of planning issues and themes, and also were requested to encourage public participation. After the orientation meeting, members participated in a walking tour with consultant team members. During the tour, consultant team members interacted with core team

members to learn about local issues and conditions. The consultant team also provided a fresh set of eyes, sharing their observations with the core team.

Public Design Charrette

The corridor design charrette occurred June 7-9, 2011, in Downtown Huntington at the KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission office. This provided an intensive workshop environment where engineering, planning, and design ideas were generated, filtered, and discussed openly by participants. A seven-member, multidisciplinary team of community planners, landscape architects, transportation planners, and engineers was assembled for the event. Conducting the charrette design studio in a central location allowed public access for more than 12 hours each day, infusing public participation and the community's direct involvement into the decision-making process. The on-site location also provided easy access to agencies, stakeholders, and information, as well as allowing the project team to quickly assess existing conditions and changing dynamics within the immediate area.

The consultant team worked together with citizens and stakeholders to evaluate ideas intended to promote a sustainable and vibrant downtown that will contribute to the quality of life of local residents. Over the course of the three-day event, more than 70 participants visited the temporary charrette studio to watch the design team in action, take part in key focus group meetings, offer feedback, and put forward their vision for the project.

The opening reception was held on Tuesday, June 7th. On this evening, the project team engaged the local citizenry by presenting the project history, previous planning efforts, and an overview of existing conditions. Most importantly, the evening allowed the project team to introduce the charrette concept and identify the events and times at which the public could directly

interact with planners and engineers.

During the following days, a series of focus group meetings were conducted to obtain public feedback on a variety of specific issues. In total, seven focus group meetings were facilitated on the following subjects:

- Business Owners and Developers
- Parking
- Streetscape and Aesthetics
- Traffic Mobility
- Wayfinding and Gateways
- Town and Gown
- Bike/Pedestrian/Transit

A pin-up session was held the evening of the second day. This session allowed for an informal presentation of the day's activities and progress. The consultant team pinned up the day's drawings and discussion notes to make them available for public feedback and criticism. As a result of this session, the design team received valuable feedback that led to the approval, refinement, or rejection of various concepts being contemplated for the study area. The short feedback loop allowed the team to make changes on the fly to general themes and specific recommendations.

Project Website

All information prepared in support of the Downtown Huntington Access Study was uploaded to a project website maintained by the KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission:

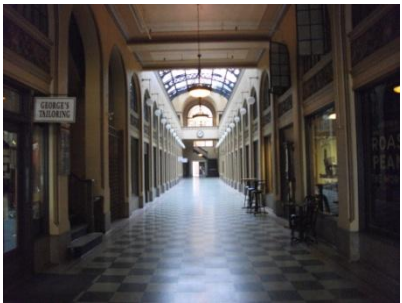
www.wvs.state.wv.us/kyova/HuntingtonDT/index.htm

Information posted to the project website included meeting advertisements, resource maps, the public design charrette schedule, imagery of concepts from the public design charrette, and draft report materials.

Final Presentation

A final presentation was conducted on the last day of the charrette. This meeting was used to discuss the consultant's recommendations and affirm that the study results realized the vision and goals as communicated by participants during the planning process. The consultant team presented illustrative plans and concepts that represented a transportation mobility strategy, street hierarchy, ways to enhance the viaducts, wayfinding, and development strategies. Comments from the meeting were used to guide any required changes to exhibits and recommendations prior to the creation of the project workbook.





The actions and recommendations of the Huntington Downtown Access Study are rooted in a comprehensive evaluation of the study area. An overview of this evaluation is presented here in the form of various resource maps.

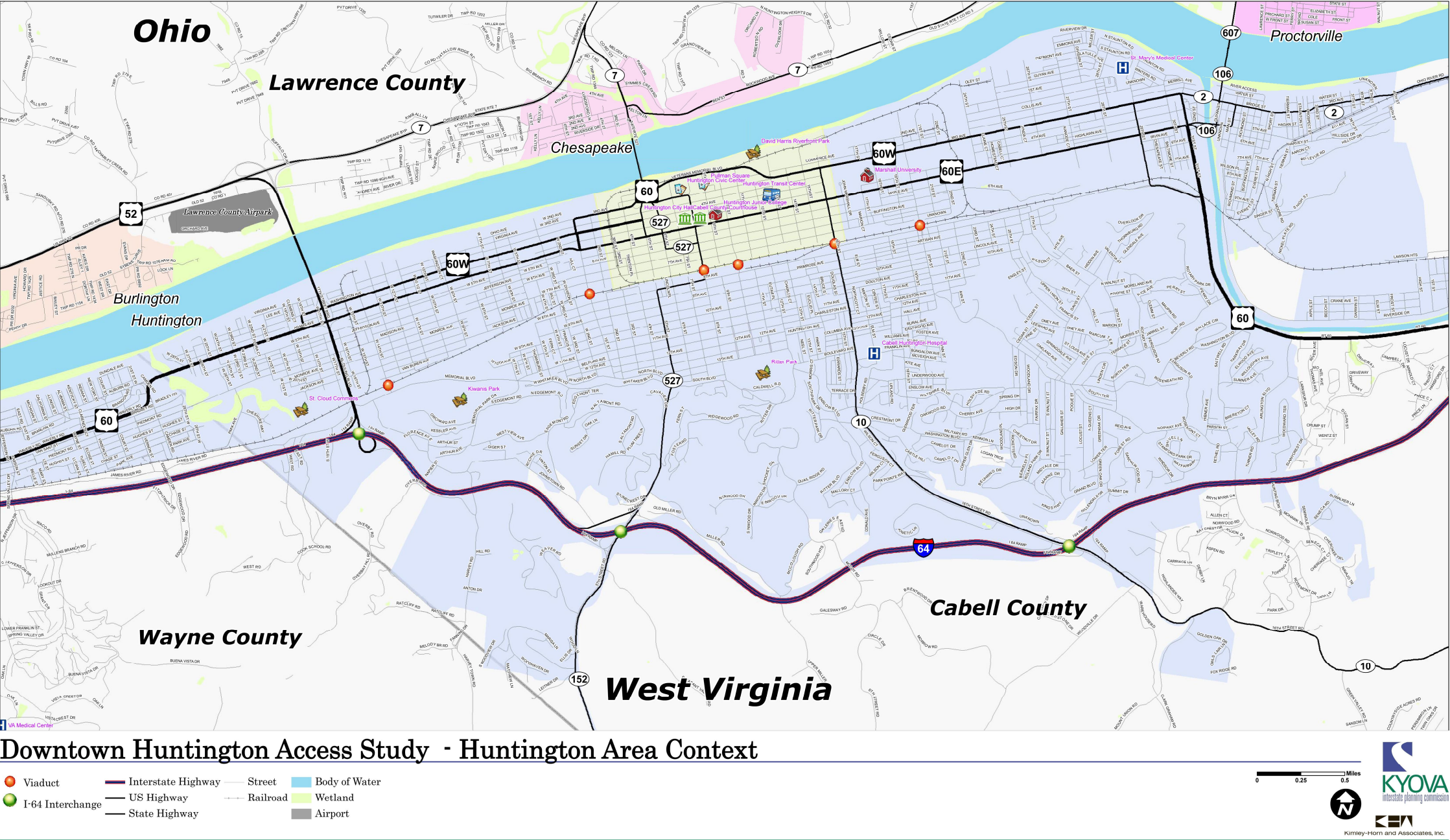
The data, courtesy of the KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission and the City of Huntington, was used to create a series of resource maps. These maps illustrate existing conditions of the built environment and serve as the foundation for recommendations made in later chapters of the workbook.

Area Context

The Huntington Area Context map shows how the city is organized as well as its relation to the surrounding areas.

Huntington is located in Cabell County, bordered by Interstate 64 and the Ohio River. It also is bisected by an active railroad line. The area has five parks, two hospitals, one university, and one junior college. In addition, within the immediate downtown area there is a concentration of civic amenities and attractions. The Civic Center, Courthouse, City Hall, Huntington Junior College, and Pullman Square are all closely located in the downtown core. Marshall University holds a prominent place in the community and is located at the eastern edge of downtown. The Robert C. Byrd Bridge offers direct access into the downtown area from Ohio.

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Downtown Huntington Access Study



Downtown Walking Sheds

A walking shed is the basic building block of walkable neighborhoods. It is the area encompassed by a specified walking distance from a neighborhood center (such as a school or park), or civic amenity. This map defines the walking sheds as the area covered by a five-minute walk (1/4 mile) or a 10-minute walk (1/2 mile).

The walking sheds in Downtown Huntington are based on the Civic Center, Pullman Square, the Courthouse, City Hall, Huntington Junior College, the Riverfront Park, the Transit Center, and Marshall University.

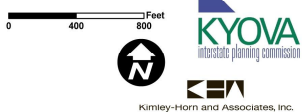
The lack of connectivity between the five-minute walking sheds coincides with a disconnect observed between the heart of downtown and Marshall University. Updating the linkages between the downtown core and the University would lead to an increase in pedestrian and bicycle traffic and unification between these two significant areas within Huntington.

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
and Downtown Huntington Access Study



Downtown Context - 1/4-Mile and 1/2-Mile Walking Sheds

- Viaduct
- Interstate Highway
- Street
- Body of Water
- I-64 Interchange
- US Highway
- Railroad
- Wetland
- State Highway
- Airport

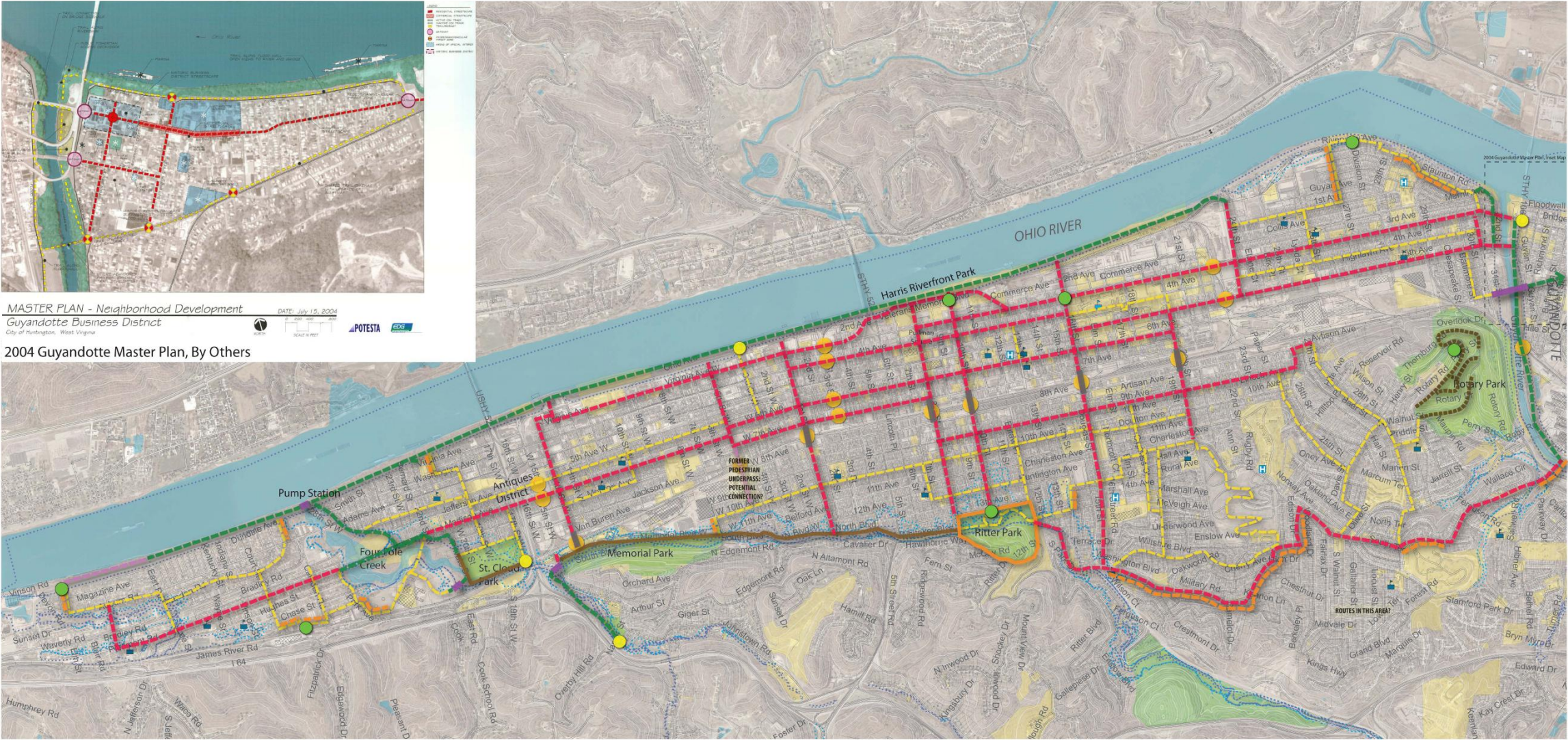


Preliminary PATH System

This map shows the existing and potential bicycle and pedestrian trails in Huntington. A trail in this map is not only defined as an accessible route such as a sidewalk, but also as a specifically designated bicycle and/or pedestrian route.

The existing pedestrian trails are located around Ritter Park, with a shared bicycle/pedestrian trail that connects Memorial Park to Ritter Park. There also is a shared trail that follows along half of the boundary of St. Cloud Commons, but does not connect to the existing trail at Memorial Park.

The gaps in connectivity between the open spaces throughout Huntington can create an underutilization of the existing public open spaces. This becomes a missed opportunity to have the city connected through a dynamic greenway/multi-use trail system, thereby increasing quality of life.



Preliminary PATH System

Paul Ambrose Trail for Health
Huntington, WV

Author: Shannon Simms
Date: January 2011



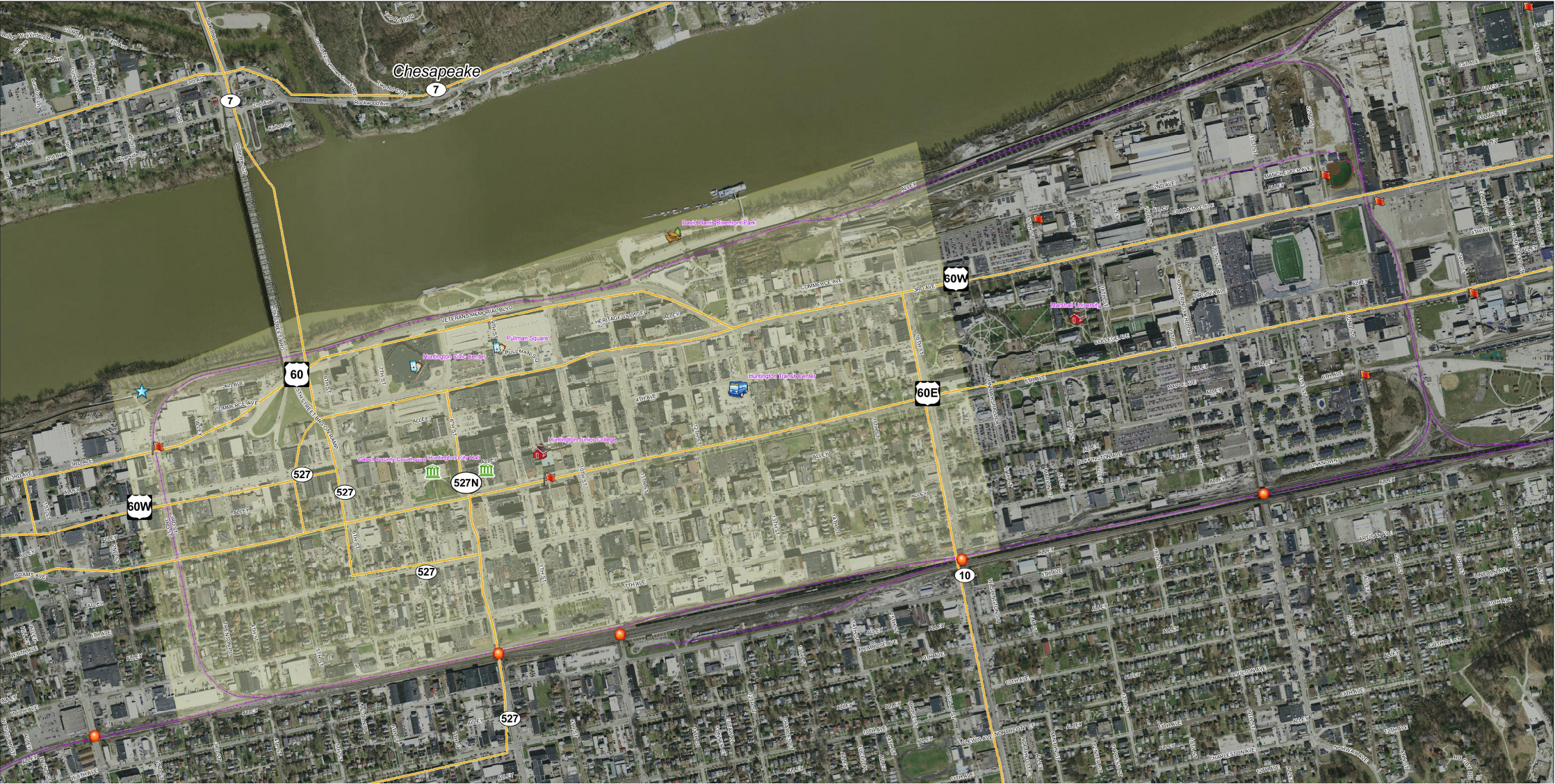
Huntington Freight Context

This map shows the vehicular and rail freight routes that run through Downtown Huntington.

These routes primarily run east-west on US Highway 60, 3rd Avenue, and 5th Avenue, and north-south on West Virginia State Route 10 (16th Street). These roads are the primary roads running through Huntington.

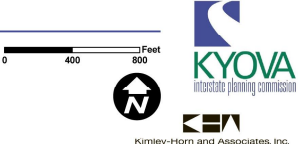
When streets have to act as main streets as well as freight routes, conflict can arise out of the coexistence of large transportation trucks and vans with everyday traffic. “Main Streets” are traditionally intended to account for local access, with strong design cues and dedicated elements for pedestrians and bicyclists. They tend to encourage slower travel speeds in support of safety and local business. Conversely, freight vehicles would prefer direct routes with higher speeds, lower congestion, and large turning radii. However, most communities need these streets to accommodate both. This requires careful design and a coordinated transportation strategy.

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
and Downtown Huntington Access Study



Freight Context - Downtown Huntington

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| — Freight Route | ● Viaduct | — Interstate Highway | ■ Body of Water |
| — Rail Line | ● I-64 Interchange | — US Highway | ■ Wetland |
| ★ Intermodal Terminal Facility | ■ Hazardous Waste Site | — State Highway | ■ Airport |
| | | — Street | |

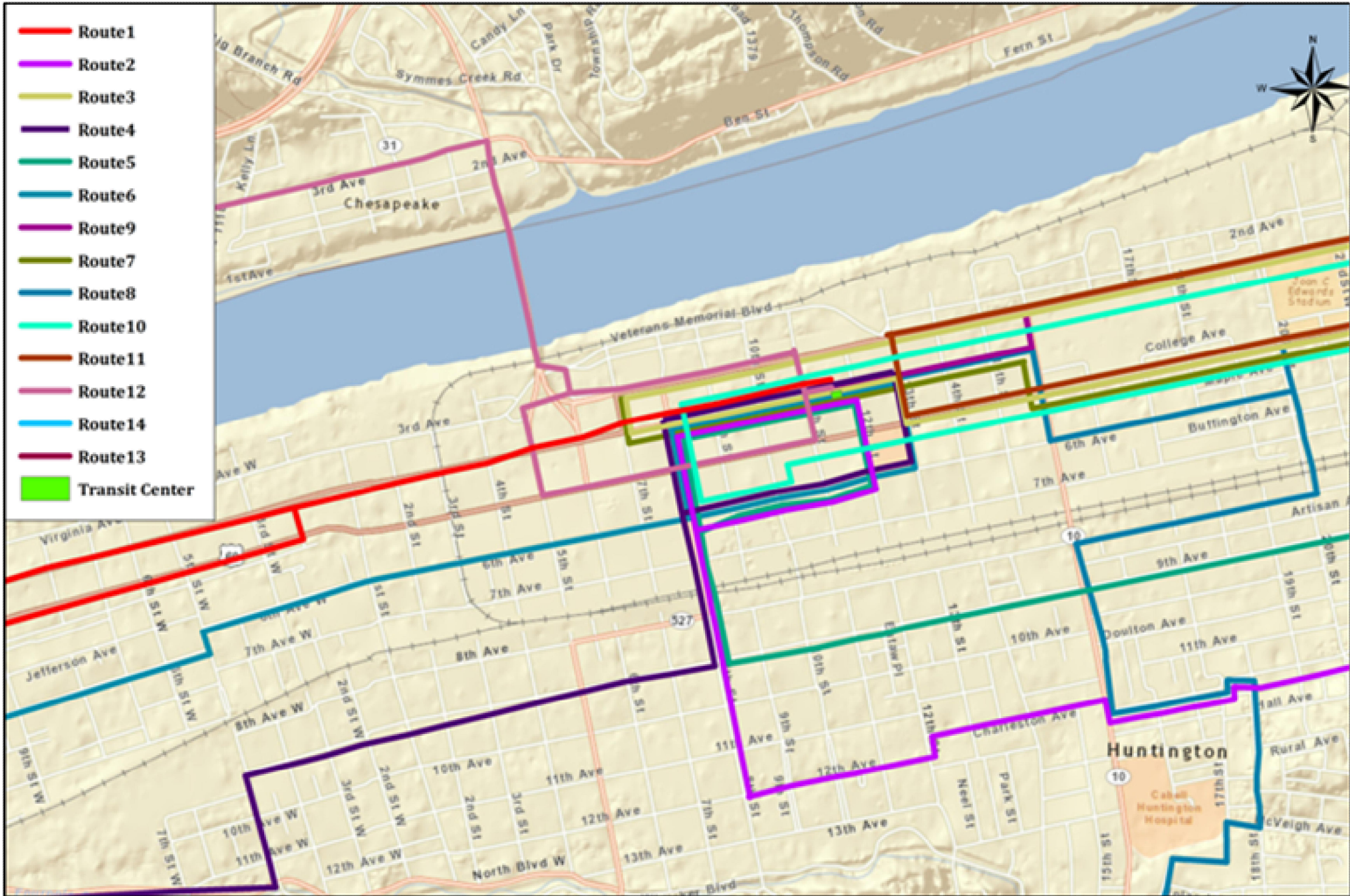


Downtown Huntington Transit

The Downtown Huntington Transit map shows which streets have existing Tri-State Transit Authority bus routes. Much of the downtown area has easy access to a bus route.

Huntington appears to be well serviced by their bus routes, but the overall efficiency also will depend on location of bus stops and the frequency of buses.

TTA Routes in Downtown Huntington



Roadway Context

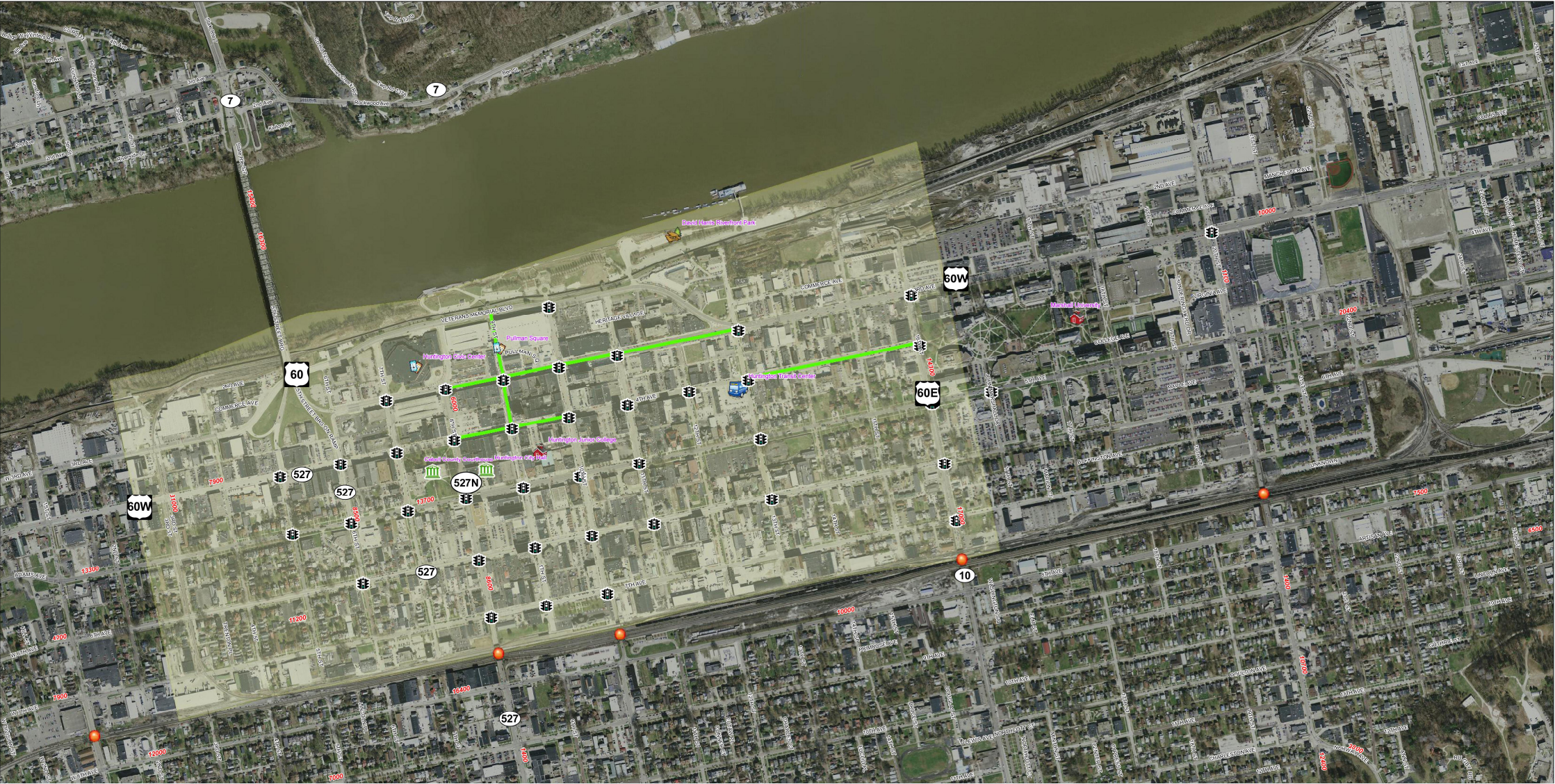
The Downtown Huntington Roadway Context map shows traffic signal locations and recently improved streetscapes, as well as average daily traffic volumes on certain roadways, collected in 2007.

Most intersections in the downtown area are controlled by a traffic signal. In total, twelve blocks in the downtown have an improved streetscape.

There has been some question as to whether all the traffic signals in the downtown area are necessary. There is a possibility that alternative traffic control—such as stop signs or traffic calming devices—may suffice in certain locations.

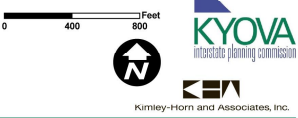
The lack of streetscape improvements throughout the rest of the downtown leads to a lack of unity and comfort for pedestrians. Unsightly streetscapes can also detract from the local environment, especially in retail and residential corridors.

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
and Downtown Huntington Access Study



Roadway Context - Downtown Huntington

- Signalized Intersections
- Existing Streetscape
- Interstate Highway
- Viaduct
- ADT (2007)
- US Highway
- I-64 Interchange
- State Highway
- Street

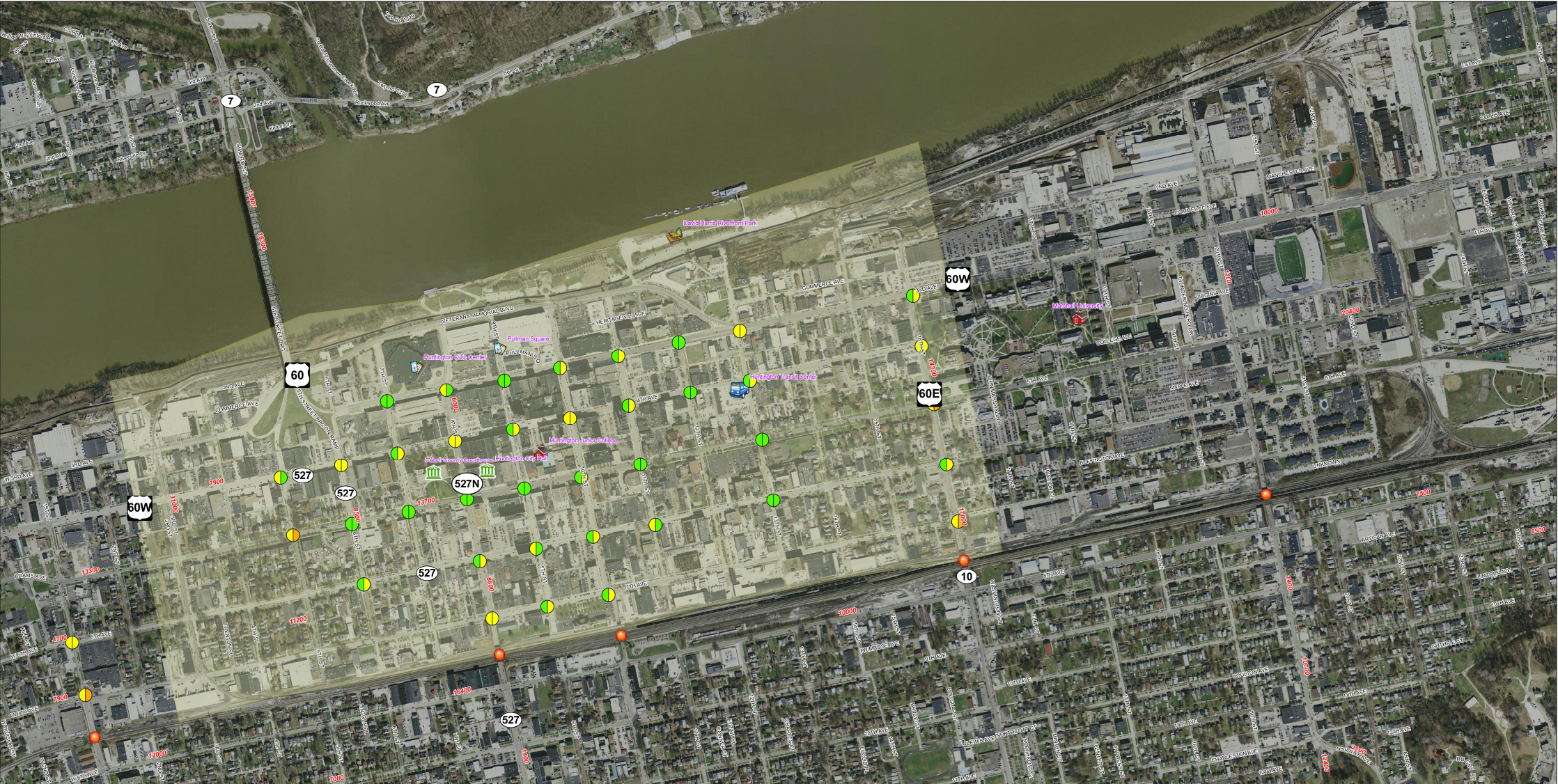


Downtown Huntington
Intersection Level of Service

The Level of Service (LOS) map communicates the relative performance of traffic operations (how efficiently the intersection accommodates traffic). Grades A through F are assigned in the reporting of LOS. In downtown settings, it is not unusual to have failing intersections because the central business district tends to be one of the largest destinations in a community. In addition, there is a need to sacrifice some intersection performance for things like human scale streets, lower travel speeds, pedestrian crossings, and transit.

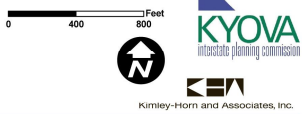
In Downtown Huntington, all the intersections are operating at LOS A, B, or C. This may suggest that the downtown roadways were designed to accommodate higher volumes than presently being experienced or that there is excess roadway capacity.

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
and Downtown Huntington Access Study



Intersection Level of Service - Downtown Huntington

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 2006 Intersection LOS | ● Viaduct | — Interstate Highway |
| ● LOS A | ● I-64 Interchange | — US Highway |
| ● LOS B | ### ADT (2007) | — State Highway |
| ● LOS C | | — Street |



Introduction

This chapter examines best practices in transportation planning that promote travel mobility choices, and outlines roadway and intersection improvements that collectively ensure the safety and efficiency of the transportation network. Key corridors in Downtown Huntington require careful planning and the resolve to protect the investment as development pressures occur. Based on sound engineering and planning principles, strong community outreach, and a solid implementation plan, this document addresses physical changes to specific corridors while building upon the community's vision for the downtown area.

Traffic congestion, safety, and access to downtown are among the most pressing issues facing Huntington. Improvements are needed to effectively connect commuters, residents, and shoppers with their destinations. This chapter discusses multimodal issues and observations to set the stage for the detailed recommendations that follow.

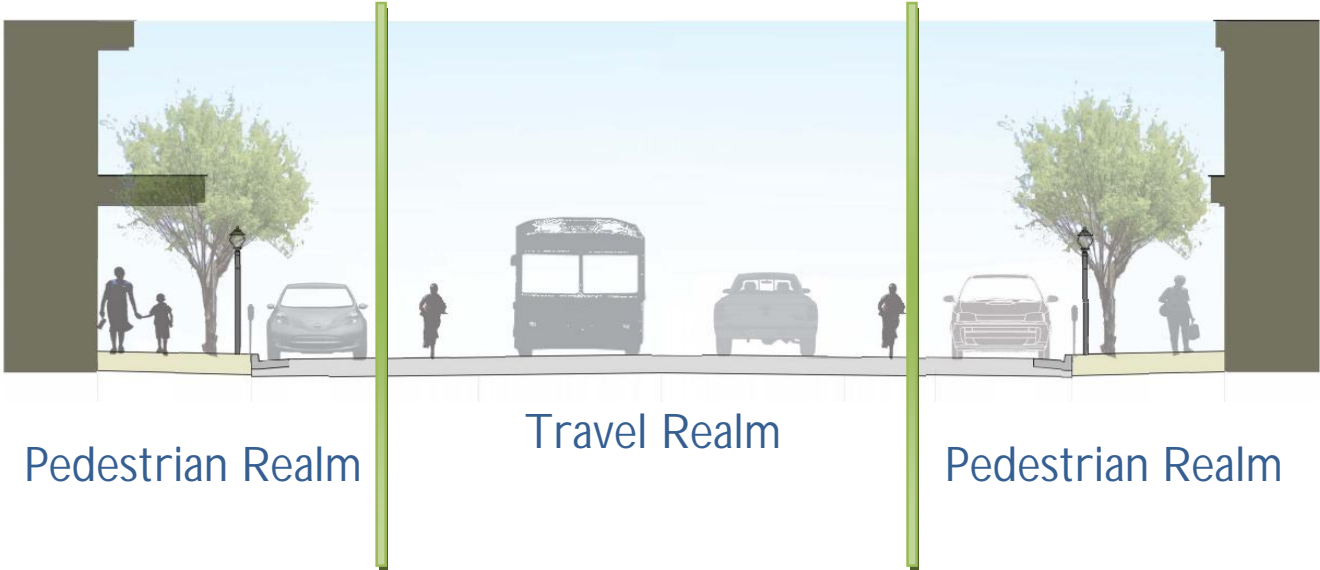
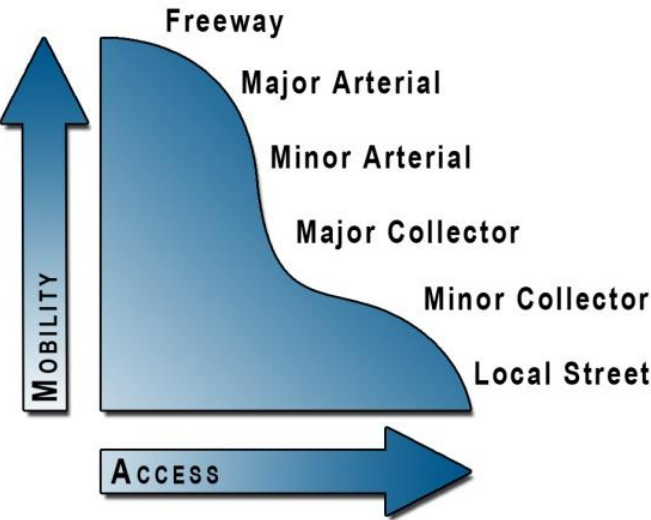


Downtown Huntington (3rd Avenue) in 1905, with its rich history of providing vibrant streets that catered to safe and convenient mobility, whether by auto, foot, bicycle, horse and buggy, or trolley.

Huntington's past success has been influenced significantly by its great transportation system. Its port, rail access, street cars, interstate facility, and broad system of public streets contribute to a diversity of interconnected and intermodal travel. Given the environmental constraints of the area and the one-sided nature of travel movements that have historically focused on east-west travel along the Ohio River, this planned integration between travel modes is vital.

Mobility and Access – Guiding Principles

As residential, commercial, and industrial growth occurs and more vehicles take to the road, roadway improvements are needed to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety. These improvements often enhance mobility at the expense of access. The classification of streets by functionality defines the street in terms of roadway design and character. This simplifies the communication among policy makers, planners, engineers, and the general public. One of the unique demands in creating and sustaining a successful transportation system is blending access and connectivity functions with the preservation of mobility. The neighborhoods and activity centers in and around Downtown Huntington have varying needs and priorities.



An integral part of the public design charrette was the creation of a *Street Design Priority Matrix*. To link transportation and development character, this planning tool was created to serve as a local representation of the complete streets/context sensitive solutions philosophy. The tool, customized to the study area, provides a matrix that communicates the elements of each type of street, including:

Travel Realm

- Number and width of travel lanes
- Traffic operations
- Design for large vehicles
- Access management
- Multimodal intersection design

Pedestrian Realm

- Wide sidewalks with amenities
- Standard sidewalks with verge
- Multi-use paths
- Urban design features

A System of Downtown Streets

When considering the design of streets, we must understand the purpose of the street and the context through which it passes. The first observation of Downtown Huntington is an urban context with streets serving cars, trucks, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit vehicles. For this reason, multimodal design consideration tends to be a priority.

During the Downtown Huntington planning charrette, participants and the project team identified a set of special streets within the downtown. Vibrant downtowns include a diversity of street types, each of which play a role in a healthy interconnected system of streets. A brief description of each type follows.

Urban Connectors (UC)

Urban Connectors are the streets that make up the grid of most downtown settings. These streets are where local land uses take access, alleys intersect, on-street parking is prevalent, and roadway scale is paramount. Maintaining a human scale on these streets encourages a diversity of users and does not over represent a single travel mode. Urban

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Connectors are the canvas where downtowns take shape, overlaid on a framework of higher order streets. The interconnected system of streets and regular block length (400-500 feet) allows roadway capacity to be a lower priority in exchange for urban street features such as on-street parking, generous sidewalks, street trees, and street furniture.

Local Examples: 4th Avenue, 6th Avenue, 11th Street, and 13th Street

Green Streets (GS)

Green Streets are special streets specifically identified as corridors that connect people with significant green infrastructure and defining nodes in the community. In Huntington, these streets will connect Ritter Park to Riverfront Park and Marshall University to the core of downtown. These streets could become an organizing feature of the downtown by creating a north-south and east-west framework for priority movements of bicyclists and pedestrians. Priority should be given to non-motorized travel modes with multimodal intersection design playing an important role so that a broader spectrum of users finds safe passage. As the name implies, these streets should be a priority for landscaping and street trees as well as street maintenance.

Candidate Roadways: 4th Avenue and 10th Street

Mobility Corridors (MC)

These workhorse streets offer commuters an efficient way into and around the downtown. They often are designated truck routes and therefore require design details that accommodate large vehicles. Given their role in the system, traffic capacity and operations are a priority—coordinated traffic signals, access management, and roadway capacity (especially at critical intersections). Despite their workhorse status, the downtown context still requires attention to the presence of pedestrians and bicyclists and multimodal intersection design remains a priority. Mobility Corridors play a role beyond downtown by providing connections

between regional transportation corridors such as interstates and major state routes.

Local Examples: Midland Trail and Hal Greer Boulevard

Grand Boulevard (GB)

Grand Boulevards often are signature roadways in a community. They are by definition “Great Streets.” These streets often have relatively high traffic volumes but accommodate the traffic within an envelope of a well-designed roadway characterized by landscaped medians, street trees, and ceremonial intersection treatments. Given their context and traffic volumes, multimodal design features are very important. Despite relatively high volumes, the traffic is effectively tamed by defining features of the road (e.g., canopy trees, vehicular and pedestrian-scale lighting, banners, etc.). A primary function of Grand Boulevards is to move traffic. However, since they tend to pass through special places in the community, the movements are expected to integrate with their surroundings and complement local land use.

Candidate Roadways: 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue (Potential conversion from one-way streets to two-way boulevards as discussed later in this chapter.)

Downtown Urban Street Design Priorities

Downtown streets are dynamic pieces of infrastructure that over time must respond to evolving needs, changes in mode split, and emerging technology. Many downtown streets began as horse and buggy streets, transitioned to streetcar routes, and finally transformed into one-way, auto-dominated streets. Across the nation, these streets are now undergoing a renaissance, reinforcing the relationship between land use, urban form, economic vitality, and mobility.

Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach to urban street design misses out on this opportunity, participants in the Downtown Huntington planning charrette identified a system of streets that help

revitalize the downtown in a way that promotes multiple travel modes without compromising the regional system performance. As investments in downtown infrastructure are considered, the following street design matrix will empower decision makers with a recipe of priorities for each type of street in the downtown. Likewise, the matrix helps the City prioritize maintenance and improvement programs and provides a framework around which partnerships for an improved downtown can rally. Additional considerations include the need for connectivity and on-street parking and bicycle accommodations.

The resulting matrix communicates the priorities for each street element as it relates to the functionality of the roadway. It also indicates high priority items that should not be compromised during the design process. The matrix reinforces the relationship between transportation and land use by recognizing the need for a different set of design priorities based on community context.

The Street Design Priority Matrix describes the elements of street typology for those described in this chapter as well as other in the study not specifically discussed. The table details and prioritizes the multimodal building blocks that form a complete street.

Street Design Priority Matrix

	Urban Connectors	Green Streets	Mobility Corridors	Grand Boulevards
Travel Realm				
Number and width of travel lanes				
Intersection vehicular capacity				
Design for large vehicles				
Medians				
Bicycle lanes				
Multimodal intersection design				
Pedestrian Realm				
Wide sidewalks with amenities				
Standard sidewalks with verge				
On-street parking				
Other Elements				
Interconnected street system				
Access management				
Urban design features				

- High Priority
- Medium Priority
- Low Priority

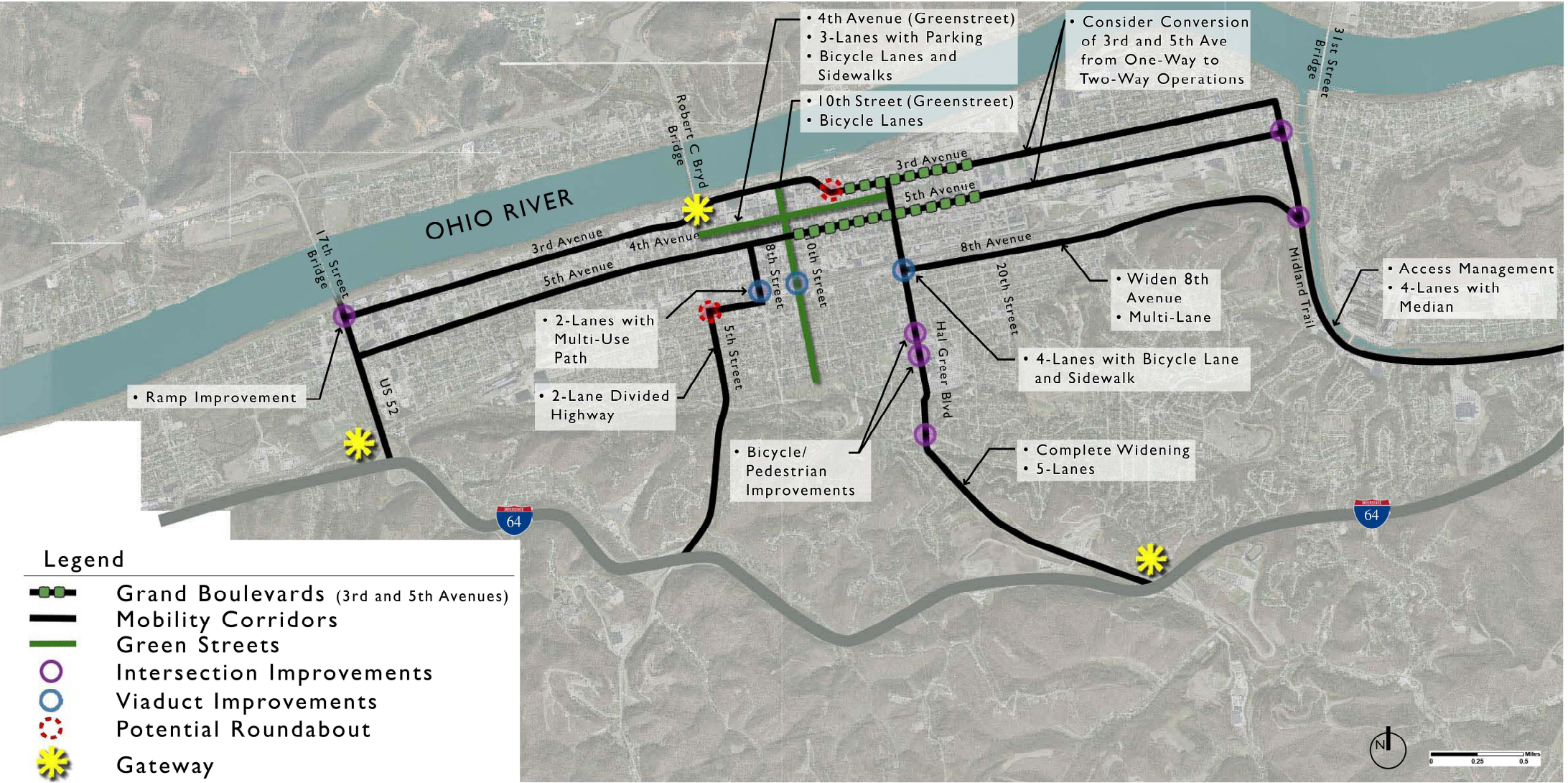
Regional Context

A healthy, vibrant downtown caters to walkability and vibrant recreational activity and entertainment. The backbone of any successful downtown is a network of connected, appropriately designed, and well-maintained streets that provide motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians options for accessing its central business district and moving between the regional activity centers and arterials.

Preferred Access Strategy

The *Preferred Access Strategy* was developed by charrette participants to identify the street network hierarchy relative to the Street Design Priority Matrix. This strategy identifies where emphasis should be placed on improving key facilities within the study area. Grand Boulevards—including 3rd and 5th Avenues, Hal Greer Boulevard, Midland Trail, US 52, and 5th Street—provide the backbone of the street network. These streets provide direct access from the interstate and points east-west along the Ohio River. Green Streets—including 4th Avenue and 10th Street—allow safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access to destinations such as Marshall University, Downtown Huntington, Ritter Park, and the Harris Riverfront Park.

Observations and priorities established through the Preferred Access Strategy were used to guide the corridor and intersection-specific recommendations included in this chapter.



PREFERRED ACCESS STRATEGY

Huntington, West Virginia

Issue:

One-way to Two-way Street Conversion

Observation: 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue are major east-west mobility corridors that provide access to regional routes, including Midland Trail, Hal Greer Boulevard, US 52, 17th Street Bridge, and the Robert C. Byrd Bridge. They also provide connections to key destinations, such as the Marshall University campus, Downtown Huntington, Big Sandy Superstore Arena, Pullman Square, and other major shopping and entertainment areas. Currently, 3rd Avenue carries approximately 10,000 vehicles per day (vpd), while 5th Avenue supports 13,700 to 20,400 vpd. It is believed that these streets were converted to one-way operation in the mid-nineteenth century to accommodate the increased traffic demand associated with the growth and

industrial activities of Downtown Huntington. However, over the past two decades, Downtown Huntington has seen a net out-migration of residential and industrial growth. In fact, based on existing traffic operations, no signals within the downtown planning district operate worse than a level of service (LOS) C along either corridor.

Recommendation: Traditionally, one-way streets are not considered business friendly given the reduced access and impact on circulation. Many downtowns are converting the one-way pairs back to two-way operation in an effort to support revitalization efforts. Given the relatively low occupancy and underutilization of some downtown blocks, the charrette participants and planning team members suggest the conversion of 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue be considered. Conversion may have the net effect of enhancing access to businesses and civic uses along both corridors while maintaining an adequate level of service. A detailed feasibility study is recommended to confirm the cost and impacts of conversion. Quantitative and qualitative corridor levels of service analyzed during the design charrette suggest that this conversation can likely be accommodated and that acceptable LOS can be maintained with the conversation. Traffic conditions would need to be analyzed further to ascertain the full impact of this conversion as a part of the proposed feasibility study.

Intersection LOS (Year 2021)		
Location	Existing	Two-Way Conversion
3 rd Street		
3rd Ave. and Hal Greer Blvd. (16 th Street)	C	C
3rd Ave. and 18th Street	B	A
3rd Ave. and 20th Street	C	C
4 th Street		
4 th Ave. and Hal Greer Blvd. (16 th Street)	C	B
5 th Street		
5 th Ave. and Hal Greer Blvd. (16 th Street)	E	C
5 th Ave. and John Marshall Dr.	C	A
5 th Ave. and 17th Street	B	B
5 th Ave. and 18th Street	B	E
5 th Ave. and 20th Street	E	E



Right: 3rd Avenue two-way and Grand Boulevard conversion looking east toward downtown

Issue: Intersection Improvements

Observation: The Preferred Access Strategy helps identify the character that downtown roadways could assume in the future. This vision cannot be achieved without simultaneously addressing the needs of intersections along these corridors. In light of the relatively high levels of service currently observed at downtown intersections combined with the desire to enhance multimodal mobility, the opportunity exists to modify these intersections to better serve their intended purpose.

Recommendations:

3rd Avenue at 16th Street / 3rd Avenue at 20th Street

These intersections currently operate under one-way conditions along 3rd Avenue. Through the one-way to two-way conversion discussed previously, these intersections should be converted to two-way operation. Other recommended design features include high visibility crosswalks, directional signage, dedicated left turn lanes, street trees, and pedestrian count-down signals.

5th Avenue at 16th Street / 5th Avenue at 20th Street

Fifth Avenue operates as a one-way facility through these intersections. Similar to 3rd Avenue, design features at these two intersections should include high visibility crosswalks, directional signage, dedicated left turn lanes, street trees, and pedestrian count-down signals.

3rd Avenue at Veterans Memorial Boulevard

This intersection functions as a point of divergence for traffic destined downtown and through traffic heading for the Robert C. Byrd Bridge. Currently, WVDOT is evaluating the design feasibility for converting this intersection to a two-lane roundabout. Based on preliminary concepts, it appears that this roundabout will require significant right-of-way. The roundabout is projected to operate at LOS A in the AM peak period compared to LOS B in its existing configuration.



Issue: Corridor Improvements

Observation: The Preferred Access Strategy identified key corridors that could be improved to better serve the Downtown Huntington area. The downtown will benefit from corridor improvements that go beyond the study area, enhancing connections from other parts of the region. Many of the major entryways into downtown take place on these corridors, making their operations and appearance all the more important to the concept of a cohesive downtown area.

Recommendations:

Hal Greer Boulevard

Hal Greer Boulevard is a multilane boulevard (with a median) from I-64 to Washington Boulevard. At this intersection, it transitions to a multilane urban street with unlimited access as it connects into 3rd Avenue. The traffic along Hal Greer Boulevard ranges from 14,300 to 18,700 vpd with a daily capacity of 28,000 vpd for the divided boulevard section and a 20,000 vpd capacity for the urban boulevard section. In terms of importance to the Huntington community, Hal Greer Boulevard was identified as the highest priority access off of I-64.

Based on feedback provided by charrette participants (including those from Marshall University and Cabell-Huntington Hospital), some of the mobility issues with Hal Greer Boulevard include the lack of pedestrian amenities at key intersections along the facility, as well as adequate pedestrian crossings and lighting. Safe passage via walking or bicycling at the viaduct was a priority issue.

The following improvements are recommended:

- Complete five-lane widening of Hal Greer from Charleston Avenue to 10th Avenue, including sidewalk improvements on both sides.
- Replace existing viaduct with a new bridge to accommodate proper height clearance, four travel lanes, dedicated five-foot bike lanes, separate walkways, and pedestrian lighting.
- Construct pump station and separate stormwater retention in accordance with the findings referenced in 2010's *Hal Greer Boulevard Underpass Storm Water Reduction Conceptual Planning Study*.
- Implement pedestrian improvements at the intersections of Washington Boulevard, Charleston Avenue, and 13th Avenue to include high visibility crosswalks, pedestrian countdowns, ADA compliant curb ramps, and pedestrian level lighting.

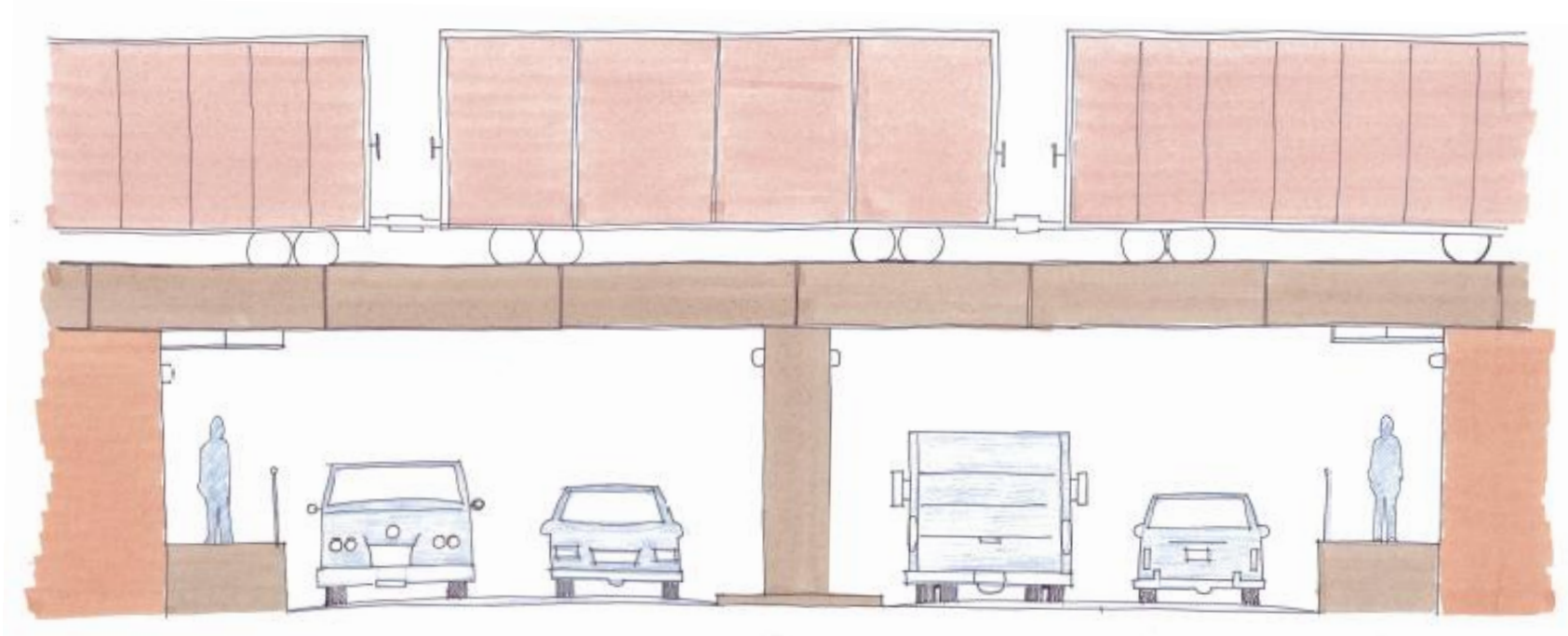
US 60/Midland Trail

Midland Trail is a primary route that connects Pea Ridge and points east to Downtown Huntington. With its connection to I-64, this corridor serves as an east-west commuter route to residents and visitors outside the planning area. Midland Trail is a five-lane roadway from I-64 to Roby Road and a four-lane divided facility from Roby Road to 31st Street. Traffic ranges from 34,100 vpd north of Roby Road to 37,400 vpd south of Roby Road. Development along the corridor is a mix of residential, shopping, and light industrial. The conflict between corridor mobility and access to abutting development has created an unsafe environment for travelers. Throughout the corridor, several areas have uncontrolled access to adjacent development, making left turns unpredictable.

The following improvements are recommended:

- Improve Midland Trail from I-64 to Roby Road with access management applications, including a plantable median (specific segments only), driveway consolidation and removal, sidewalks, and street trees.
- Improve US 60 from Roby Road to 3rd Avenue with access management applications, including driveway consolidation and removal, sidewalks, and street trees.
- At Midland Trail and 31st Street, construct merge lane for southbound Midland Trail ramp.
- At US 60 and 5th Avenue, (1) narrow east leg of intersection to include two bidirectional lanes for 5th Avenue and one lane for northbound ramp and (2) install new signal heads for all approaches.

Hal Greer Boulevard viaduct

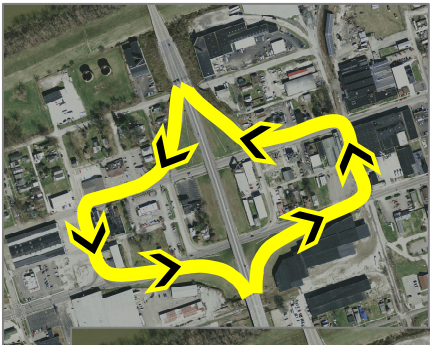


US 52

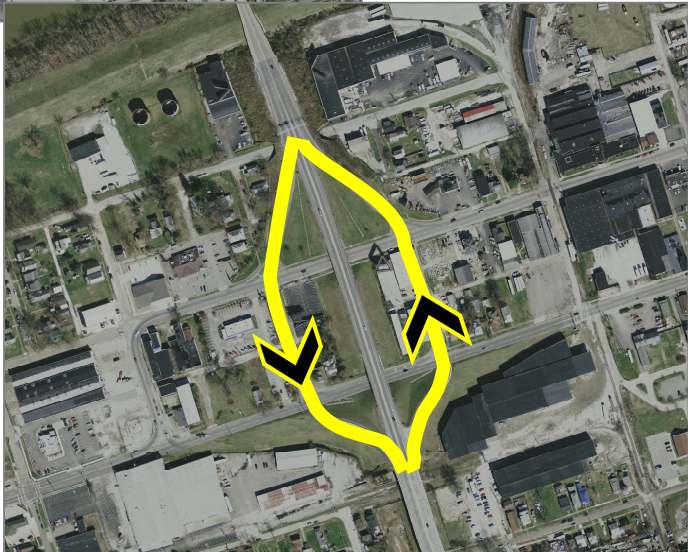
US 52 provides access to west Huntington via I-64 and the 17th Street Bridge over the Ohio River. It is a multilane controlled-access facility from I-64 to Adams Avenue where it transitions to two lanes across the Ohio River. Charrette participants described it as confusing to motorists due to the split diamond configuration. In addition, the lack of acceleration and deceleration lanes creates problems for merging vehicles at the interchanges.

The following improvements are recommended:

- Construct a complete split diamond interchange at Adams Avenue and Washington Avenue (US 60). This improvement is a simple modification that includes extending the existing on- and off-ramps at Adams Avenue directly into the one-way pair at 16th and 17th Streets.



Existing Ramp Configuration



Revised Ramp Configuration

5th Street

Designated a mobility corridor, 5th Street carries approximately 12,000 vpd and provides access between I-64 and downtown via 8th Street. This three-lane (two southbound lanes and one northbound lane) facility transitions through a residential community. Charrette participants identified the need to address speeding vehicles along 5th Street. It narrows to two lanes at the North Boulevard bridge. However, 5th Street is unique, as it is the only mobility corridor that does not provide direct access to downtown. This circuitous route does not make 5th Street an ideal mobility corridor. A new bridge across the existing railroad tracks is cost prohibitive and was not supported by charrette participants.

To protect access and maintain community cohesion, the following improvements are recommended:

- Improve 5th Street to a two-lane divided (plantable median) facility from I-64 to Whitaker Boulevard. This improvement would protect access and mobility along the corridor while limiting impacts to adjacent property owners. The improvements also address speeding vehicles along 5th Street with the implementation of a plantable median.
- Install a one-lane roundabout at the intersection of 5th Street and North Boulevard, creating a gateway to the residential community.

4th Avenue

Fourth Avenue has been identified as a Green Street by charrette participants. As mentioned earlier, the intent of a Green Street is to cater to multimodal accommodations and landscaping as opposed to serving primarily vehicular mobility. Priority should be given to non-motorized travel with multimodal intersection design playing an important role so a broader spectrum of users finds safe passage. Today, 4th Avenue connects Marshall University to Downtown Huntington with multiple lanes and existing sidewalks.

The following improvements are recommended:

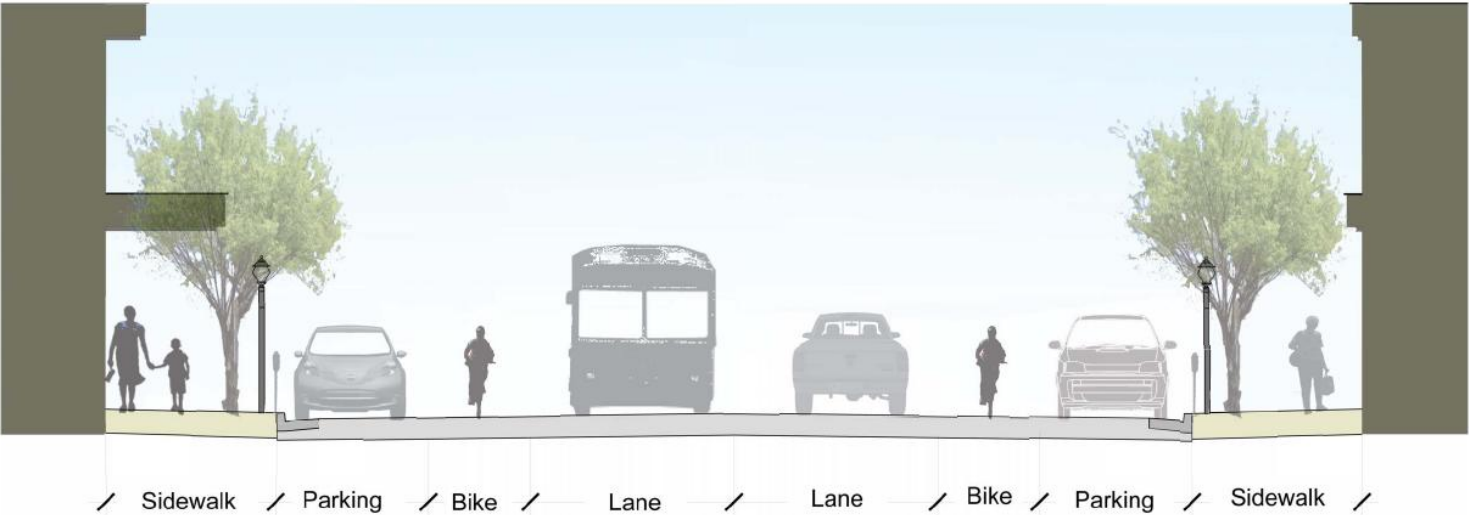
- Improve 4th Avenue to complete street standards, including three lanes with parallel parking (at select locations), bike lanes, and street trees (replaced and maintained).

8th Avenue

8th Avenue currently serves as a cross town connector and a vital link between Hal Greer Boulevard and Midland Trail when the viaducts flood. This important mobility corridor is vital to east-west traffic circulation and is an essential link for emergency service vehicles. Currently, some sections of 8th Avenue are multilane, while the remaining sections are two-lane.

The following improvements are recommended:

- Widen 8th Avenue to a multilane facility from 20th Street to 29th Street with sidewalks on one side (at a minimum). This would complete the 8th Avenue multilane from Hal Greer Boulevard to Midland Trail. Right-of-way will be minimized if a four-lane undivided cross section is implemented. However, left turn lanes should be provided at key intersections.
- Prohibit left turns on northbound 8th Street onto 8th Avenue during AM peak hours. Left turns from southbound 8th Street onto 8th Avenue are already prohibited during PM peak hours.



Fourth Avenue Improvements

Two Lanes Undivided Roadway
with Parallel Parking and Bike Lanes Both Sides

10th Street

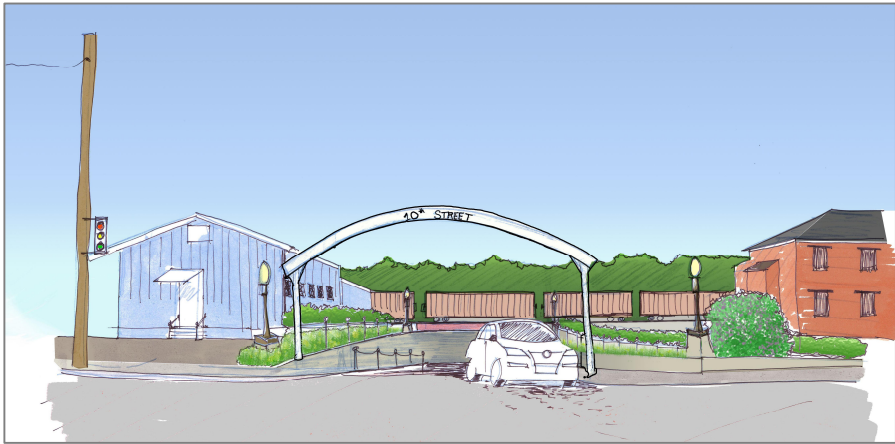
With connections to Ritter Park and River Front Park, the 10th Street corridor is identified as a Green Street and is expected to cater to more than vehicular traffic.

The following improvements are recommended:

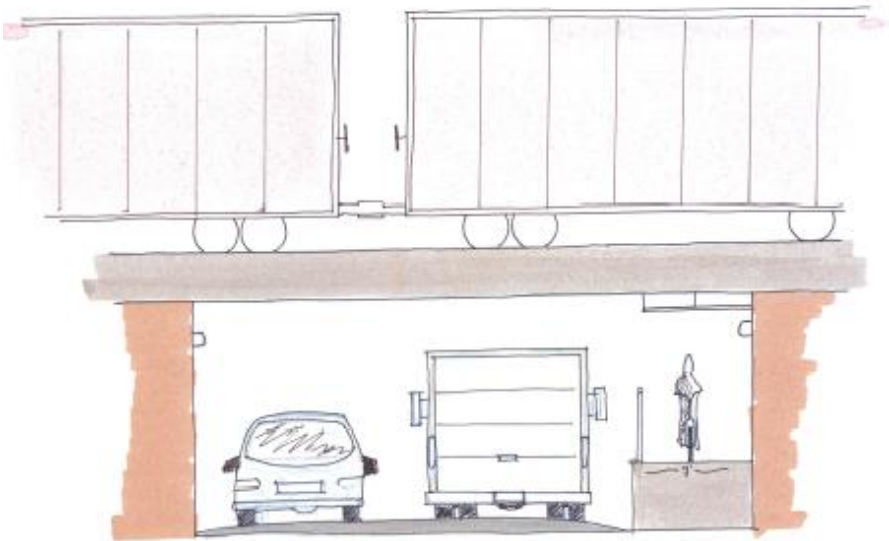
- Restripe 10th Street to include bike lanes or widen outside lanes for bicyclists, install (or repair) sidewalks on at least one side, and improve landscape with shrubbery and street trees throughout corridor.
- Improve the existing viaduct at the railroad tracks aesthetically with gateway treatments, pedestrian lighting, refurbished sidewalk, and sandblast/painting.
- Improve the offset intersection of 10th Street and 7th Avenue with new stop bars, high visibility crosswalks, pedestrian count-down signals, and ADA curb ramps.



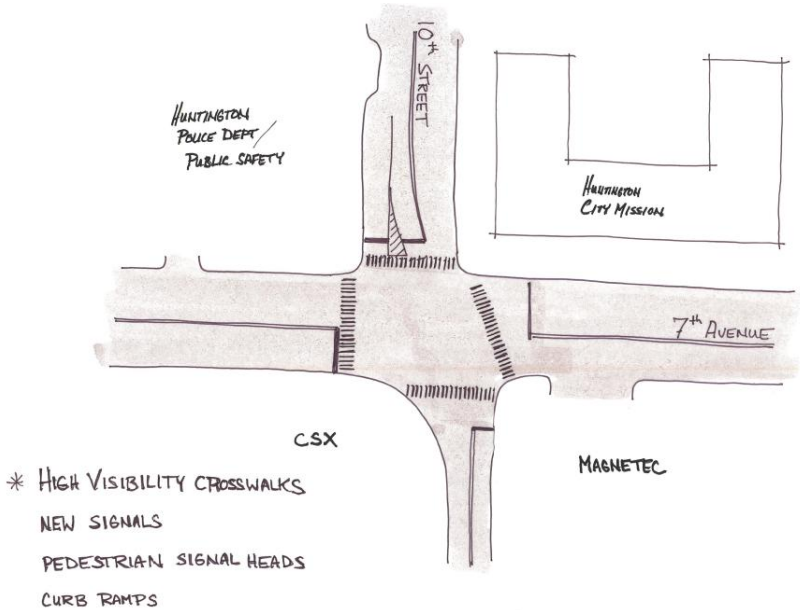
10th Street improved with addition of street trees, repaired sidewalks and grassed planting strip between back of curb and sidewalk.



10th Street viaduct gateway treatment



10th Street viaduct cross section



10th Street and 7th Avenue intersection improvements

Introduction

Downtown Huntington is a diverse civic destination with multiple activity nodes. Major activity centers such as Pullman Square, Big Sandy Superstore Arena, Marshall University, and the city and county government facilities draw people from around the area and throughout the tri-state region. The existing public street network in the study area is a healthy and expansive grid that includes sidewalks on both sides of downtown streets. Transit routes serve the downtown area with connections to a variety of destination points around Huntington.

The opportunity to connect activity points through bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities is high, given the abundance of schools, hospitals, restaurants, shopping areas, civic uses, and parks. Many of these facilities are within easy walking distance of one another. Since the average pedestrian can travel about ¼ mile in five minutes and ½ mile in ten minutes, they are more likely to

conduct walking trips within that distance. The figure below highlights some of the major destinations and key activity points within Downtown Huntington, all within this five- to 10-minute walking distance.

The need for walkability extends beyond simply serving users traveling to and around downtown. All trips—whether conducted primarily by automobile, bus, or bicycle—begin and end with a walking component. This fact highlights the need for logically placed transit services and parking facilities within the study area. A truly sustainable transportation system considers all travel modes and components of the trip.

Reality Check

Although Downtown Huntington’s street and sidewalk network is expansive, many areas are in poor condition. Furthermore, several significant gaps exist in the system. Maintenance and safety has become a number one issue in this area with bicycle

and pedestrian mobility. During the charrette, participants expressed frustration with the poor condition of sidewalks, lack of healthy street trees, and the absence of a designated bicycle network. A review of existing facilities shows many sidewalks are damaged or deteriorating, a sign of aging infrastructure. Maintenance deficiencies along existing streets and sidewalks also extend to the street trees, with many that are dead, dying, or poorly maintained. A need to enhance the ancillary facilities that serve bicyclists and pedestrians—such as crosswalks, street benches, enhanced lighting, bicycle racks, and traffic calming devices—was also expressed.

The need to better define the demand areas for parking also exists, so current and proposed facilities can be better marked and sited. While a parking supply issue does not exist in the study area, available parking in areas that lack demand does not always compensate for high-demand areas with limited parking. Similarly, transit routes, stops, and operations have to be cognizant of the desired travel patterns of their users in order to maximize their effectiveness.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility

Existing Conditions

Several existing or ongoing bicycle and pedestrian projects are located in the Downtown Huntington area. Harris Riverfront Park and Ritter Park both include a system of walking paths. Greenway projects currently are being pursued to enhance connectivity in the area. Improvements have also been made on 9th Street between 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue and on 3rd Avenue around Pullman Square that create a more pleasant and safer walking and gathering environment for pedestrians.

As noted earlier, the study area is served by an extensive sidewalk network, providing connections between major Downtown Huntington destinations such as Marshall University and Pullman Square. To

encourage regional non-motorized connectivity, a sidewalk exists on the east side of the Robert C. Byrd Bridge that connects Huntington with Chesapeake, Ohio.

Curb ramps throughout the downtown are being improved to be ADA compliant as part of the signal coordination project that is currently ongoing. These improvements will enhance the ease of pedestrian flow and access throughout the downtown.

Like many communities, there are a series of natural and man-made obstacles that threaten the connectivity of the non-motorized travel network. Issues in Huntington include the viaduct system, the railroad, the Ohio River, and a series of one-way street systems. The viaducts located at 8th, 10th, and 16th streets create a barrier with limited or narrow walkways, unlit and dirty conditions, dilapidated handrails, and constrained vehicle travelways. These barriers contribute to an unpleasant environment for pedestrians and bicyclists from downtown to the south neighborhoods and Ritter Park. One-way traffic patterns on 3rd and 5th Avenues create problems with high-speed vehicles, circulating downtown, and accessing Marshall University via bicycle. A set of recommendations that includes green streets, spot improvements, and system connectivity enhancements will be necessary to address many of these issues.



Downtown Context - 1/4-Mile and 1/2-Mile Walking Sheds



Multimodal Planning Initiatives

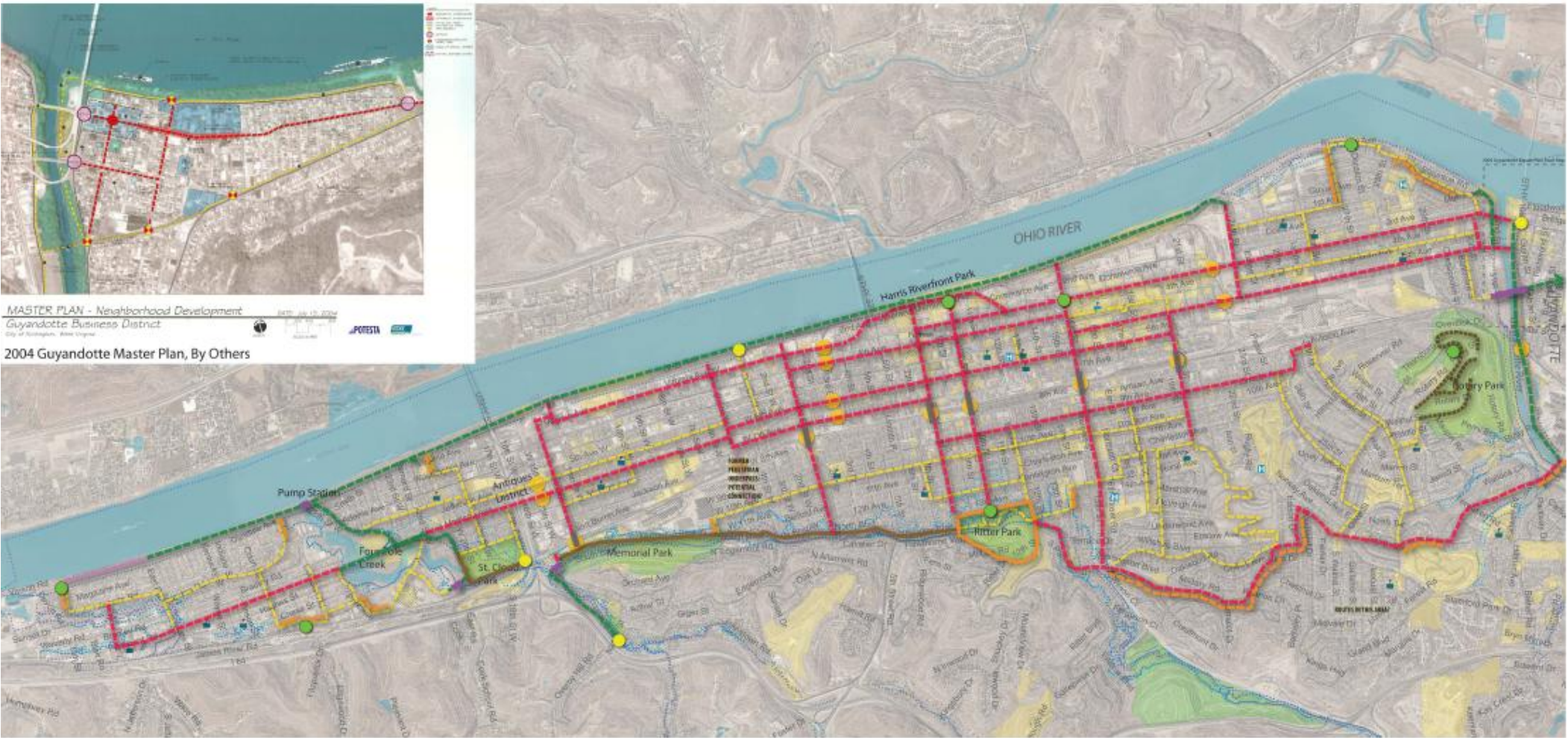
The City of Huntington has been working towards the creation of a proposed bicycle and pedestrian network. The map on this page demonstrates the recommended network for the Paul Ambrose Trail for Health (PATH) with existing and proposed bicycle trails, on-street bicycle facilities, multi-use trails, signed bike routes, and sidewalks. The City is working to design and pursue funding for some of the proposed facilities. A few segments currently are being designed, including the trail along the Ohio River from the east side to Harris Riverfront Park and on the west side of the city near 3rd Street to the western limits of the city.

The PATH system, as envisioned, will ultimately provide connections to existing bike paths and pedestrian centers such as Kenova, Ceredo, Ritter Park, Huntington’s central business district, Memorial Park, and across the Robert C. Byrd Bridge.

In Downtown Huntington, the recommendations for this system include on-street pavement markings and signage for bicycles on 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, 6th Avenue, 8th Street, 10th Street, 16th Street, and Veterans Memorial Boulevard. Widths for bicycle lane markings with on-street parking should be established in accordance with other Green Street design standards. The recommendations for 4th Avenue and 10th Street should also follow these standards.

The following bicycle and pedestrian recommendations build upon the PATH efforts. Some of the recommendations in the PATH study have been vetted and modified based on the findings of this study and the public design charrette. In many cases, specific recommendations along key corridors are outlined in detail to move towards implementation.

A range of improvements are recommended for Downtown Huntington. Recommendations include improvements to create “Green Streets,” conversion to two-way traffic patterns, enhancing existing viaducts, and completing the ongoing bike plan.



Preliminary PATH System

Paul Ambrose Trail for Health
Huntington, WV

Author: Shannon Simms
Date: January 2011

Legend

- School
- Hospital
- Phase 1 Trailhead
- Phase 2 Trailhead
- Exempt Property

- Continuous Wetland
- Floodplain
- 1% Annual Chance of Flooding
- Parkland

- Existing Trail (Bicycles and Peds)
- Existing Trail (Peds Only)
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Proposed On-Road Bicycle Facility
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail
- Proposed Signed Bike Route

- Planned Park Trail
- Potential Trail (Further Study Required)
- Proposed Bridge
- Existing Viaduct
- Railroad Crossing



0 1,000 5,000 feet



Issue: Green Streets

Observation: Huntington currently has a large population of dependent and recreational bicyclists throughout the region. Downtown Huntington also serves as a node for connections to regional trails for long distance bicyclists. A windshield review has indicated that many downtown streets are not marked appropriately for bicyclists (lane markings or signs). As a result, many ride on sidewalks not wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists. Huntington needs to provide facilities that encourage and enhance bicycle and pedestrian movements. These facilities (referred to as Green Streets) will provide connections to businesses, destinations, neighborhoods, and parks.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that 4th Avenue between downtown and Marshall University and 10th Street between downtown and Ritter Park be developed as “Green Streets” by providing bicycle accommodations, sidewalks, and aesthetic enhancements along with improvements to the viaducts. Recommended improvements and schematics for 4th Avenue and 10th Street are below.

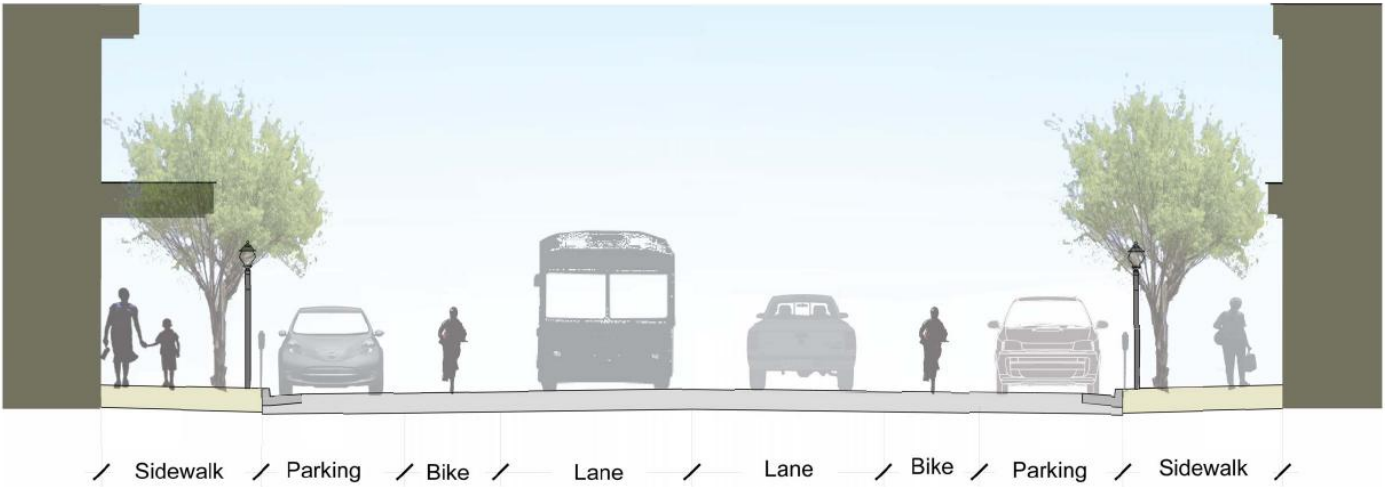
4th Avenue

Bike lanes in the downtown area are limited to a short segment of 4th Avenue. The city has initiated a restriping exercise to include lane markings and signs on 4th Avenue between 8th Street and 12th Street. As a result, 4th Avenue is beginning to feel like a “Main Street”.

The bicycle-friendly concept being initiated on this corridor should be extended to further enhance connectivity for bicyclists to downtown activity points. Additionally, enhancements to intersection treatments in this section will contribute to the bicycle and pedestrian-friendly environment.

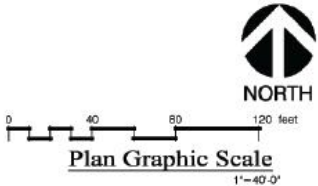


Fourth Avenue Improvements



Fourth Avenue Improvements

Two Lanes Undivided Roadway
with Parallel Parking and Bike Lanes Both Sides



10th Street

Tenth Street is a unique corridor that directly connects two of the community's most treasured assets—Ritter Park and Harris Riverfront Park. Unfortunately, this corridor presents several obstacles for bicyclists and pedestrians. The viaduct is uninviting to non-motorized use, and provisions for on-street bike lanes and sidewalks are sporadic or nonexistent. The desire to enhance bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for this corridor was expressed throughout the public charrette process.

With this in mind, it is recommended that dedicated bicycle accommodations be provided along the entire section of 10th Street from Veterans Memorial Boulevard to 13th Avenue, including the following segments and design treatments:

- Veterans Memorial Boulevard to 7th Avenue – Install bike sharrows and repair/close gaps in the sidewalk network.
- 7th Avenue to 8th Avenue (viaduct) – Refurbish the viaduct area and enhance the overall appearance with improvements that could include sandblasting and painting walls, replacing handrails, installing pedestrian-level lighting, and creating gateway features. Due to the constrained nature of this entryway, bicyclists should be allowed on the sidewalk and roadway through the viaduct.
- 8th Avenue to 13th Avenue – Install bike sharrows and repair/close gaps in the sidewalk network.

To encourage recreational use and promote a healthy environment, a renewed focus on improving and protecting the existing infrastructure in Downtown Huntington is needed. One aspect neglected over the past several years is maintenance of existing corridors. Additional recommendations for 10th Street include improving ongoing maintenance efforts such as tree pruning, tree replacement, resurfacing pavement, repairing damaged sidewalks, and installing planting strips.

10th STREET = GREEN STREET

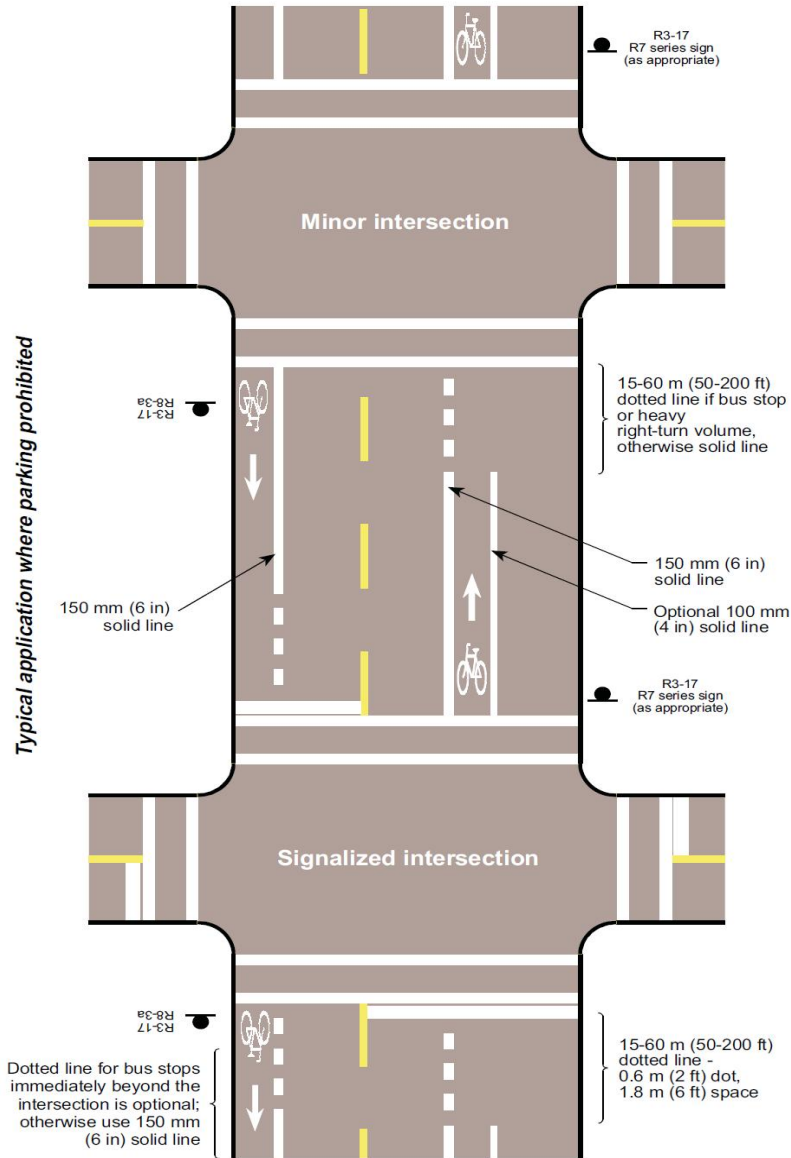
Representation of enhanced viaduct appearance: new handrail, pedestrian scale lighting, sandblasting and painting, and revised overhead "ceiling" in improved lighting. The decorative archway emulates the same entry feature installed at Ritter Park.

Issue: One-way to Two-way Street Conversion

Observation: Chapter 4 discusses the concept of changing the current one-way pair operations of 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue to two-way conditions. Public charrette participants expressed a desire to see these roadways become Grand Boulevards, incorporating a range of amenities that would serve automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit uses. Since many of the notable destination points in Downtown Huntington are located along 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue, multimodal amenities along these corridors will help connect potential patrons with these activity centers.

Recommendations:

The intent of pedestrian recommendations for 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue is to improve travel safety by slowing traffic speeds and removing on-street parking. In order to preserve the functionality of these corridors, recommendations should also minimize impacts to corridor and intersection levels of service. By converting these corridors to two-way operation and placing well-marked crosswalks in locations likely to be utilized by pedestrians, the likelihood of a pedestrian-vehicle collision should be reduced. Keeping parking away from the crosswalks will enhance visibility of pedestrians entering the intersection. Wider sidewalks can be created using the area gained from the elimination of on-street parking, resulting in a buffer space between pedestrians and vehicle traffic that fosters a more inviting overall experience for all users.



Below: 3rd Avenue two-way and Grand Boulevard conversion looking east toward downtown



Existing 3rd Avenue adjacent to Marshall University

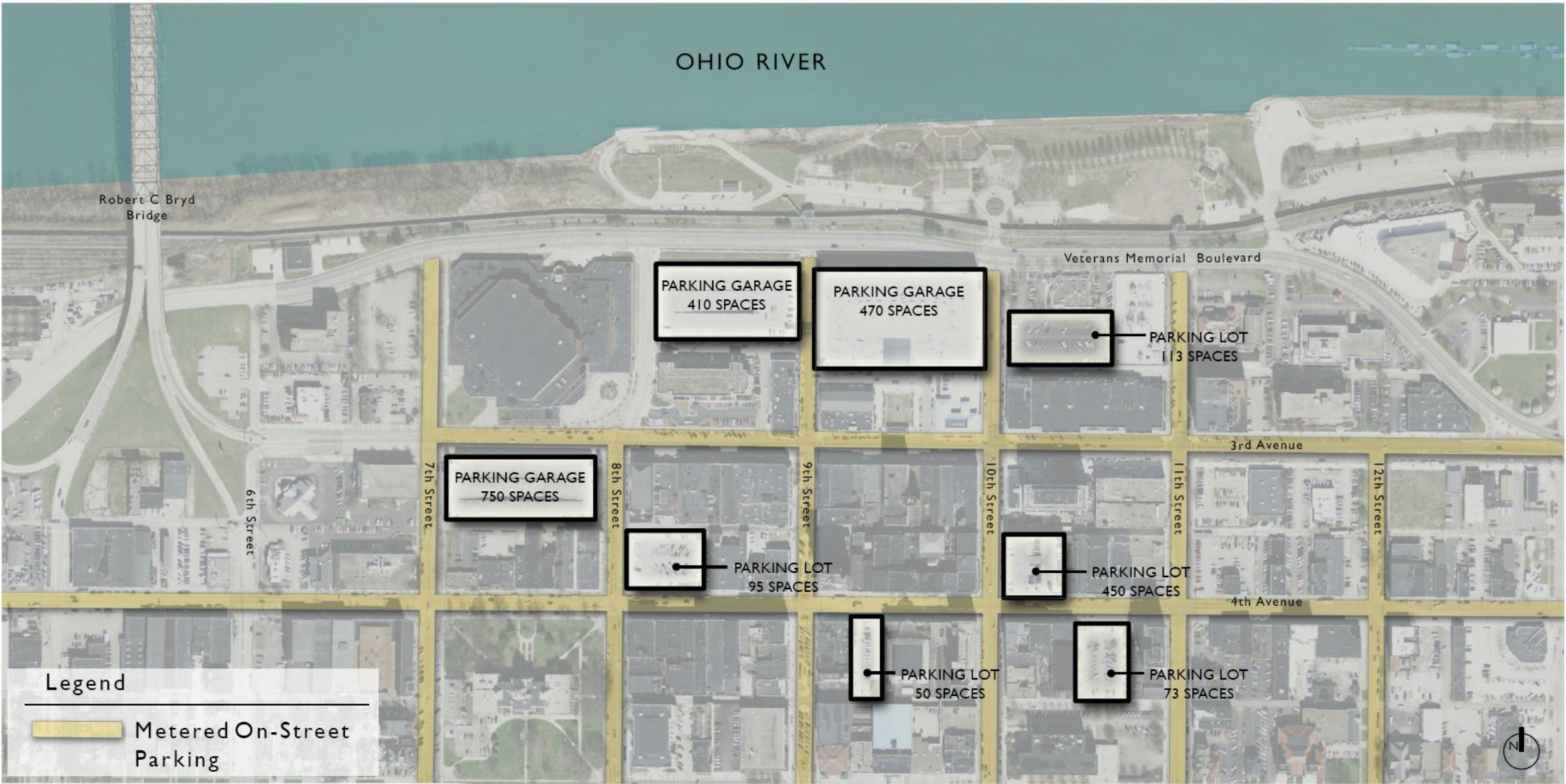


Issue: Parking Supply and Demand

Observation: Parking supply seems ample considering the size and occupancy of the downtown area. However, the wayfinding, appearance and enforcement of parking may need refinement.

In preparations for the charrette, an informal inventory of parking supply was conducted (see exhibit to the right). During the charrette, qualitative assessments of parking occupancy were performed. These observations suggested that weekday parking supply was more than adequate to accommodate the demand of downtown parkers. The addition of the Pullman Square parking deck has greatly improved conditions. In addition, the presence of on-street parking represents the best opportunity for affordable and close proximity parking for nearby merchants.

Recommendations: When evaluating parking in a downtown environment, considerations must be given to the proximity of parking to the destination, duration of parking, cost of parking, and perceived safety (especially in evening hours). Given the extreme cost of parking decks, a formal parking study is recommended prior to any future capital investments in structured parking. In addition, a detailed assessment of public surface lots is recommended as part of any downtown revitalization efforts. Priority should be given to improving the quality of public surface parking lots (pavement condition, addition of lighting and landscaping) and coordinated wayfinding and signage directing parkers to public lots.



DOWNTOWN PUBLIC PARKING INVENTORY

Huntington, West Virginia

Issue: Transit Service Enhancements

Observation: Providing healthy and convenient modal choices for residents and visitors to Huntington is one the guiding principles of establishing a livable community. A baseline understanding of existing services and gaps in the system will help to identify opportunities for enhanced transit services and amenities.

Downtown Huntington is a critical area for TTA fixed route service. Nearly all TTA routes begin and end in the downtown area. Downtown Huntington has one of the highest concentrations of employment in the region. As the second largest university in West Virginia, Marshall University also serves as a major downtown destination point. The entire downtown area is within a block of at least one TTA bus route. As a result, transit is, and will continue to be, an integral part of the development and vitality of the downtown.

Existing TTA Bus Service

The Tri-State Transit Authority (TTA) operates a radial fixed-route transit system based at its bus terminal at 4th Avenue and 12th Street. TTA's West Virginia-based, fixed-route service consists of nine radial routes, the Pullman-Marshall University Shuttle, and three evening routes. TTA also serves the larger region through its Ironton, Ohio/Huntington, the Ironton Circulator, and the Ironton/Ashland Kentucky route.

With a few minor exceptions, TTA operates nearly the same fixed-route schedule on Saturdays as it does on weekdays. Most routes begin around 6:00 a.m. and end at 7:15 p.m. Routes 9 (Milton), 5 (Walnut Hills), and 7 (Barboursville) operate until about 8:15 p.m. Additionally, three routes operate up to 11:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays. TTA operates the Pullman-Marshall University shuttle from noon to 11:15 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays.

Fourteen vehicles are operated by TTA on its fixed routes during the weekday peak and midday

periods. Twelve vehicles are in operation between 7:15 p.m. and 8:15 p.m. as the evening routes are being put into service and six daytime routes are ending. After 9:00 p.m. there are six vehicles in service.

Most routes run every sixty minutes. Route 4 (Harveytown), Route 8 (Hal Greer Boulevard), and the Ironton/Huntington route run approximately every 120 minutes. In addition, the Pullman-Marshall University Shuttle runs every 20 minutes. For all routes, revenue hours total 170.6 on weekdays, and 163.8 on Saturdays. Routes 7 (Barboursville) and 9 (Milton) generate the highest weekday revenue hours of all the individual routes. On Saturdays, routes 5 (Walnut Hills) and 9 (Milton) have the greatest number of revenue hours.

The majority of TTA routes begin and end their service at the 4th Avenue terminal. Most of these routes circulate through the downtown area, serving key activity nodes such as Marshall University, Pullman Square, Cabell County Courthouse, Cabell-Huntington Hospital, and St. Mary's Medical Center. The map on this page depicts the TTA route alignments in the downtown area.

Passenger access along these routes is mostly by way of "flag stops," where passengers hail buses to stop and pick them up. Formal bus stops exist in front of Pullman Plaza on 3rd Avenue and at the TTA Bus Terminal. The Pullman Plaza stop was established primarily for the Pullman Shuttle that connects downtown Huntington with Marshall University.

TTA currently provides direct connections between Marshall University and Downtown Huntington. Several TTA routes operate to and from downtown along 3rd and 5th Avenues through the Marshall University campus. This connection was greatly enhanced with the start of the Pullman Shuttle, a free shuttle running directly between Marshall University and Downtown Huntington. It runs every 20 minutes between noon and 11:20

p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays. Ridership averages about 300 passengers daily when Marshall University is in session.

Issues and Opportunities

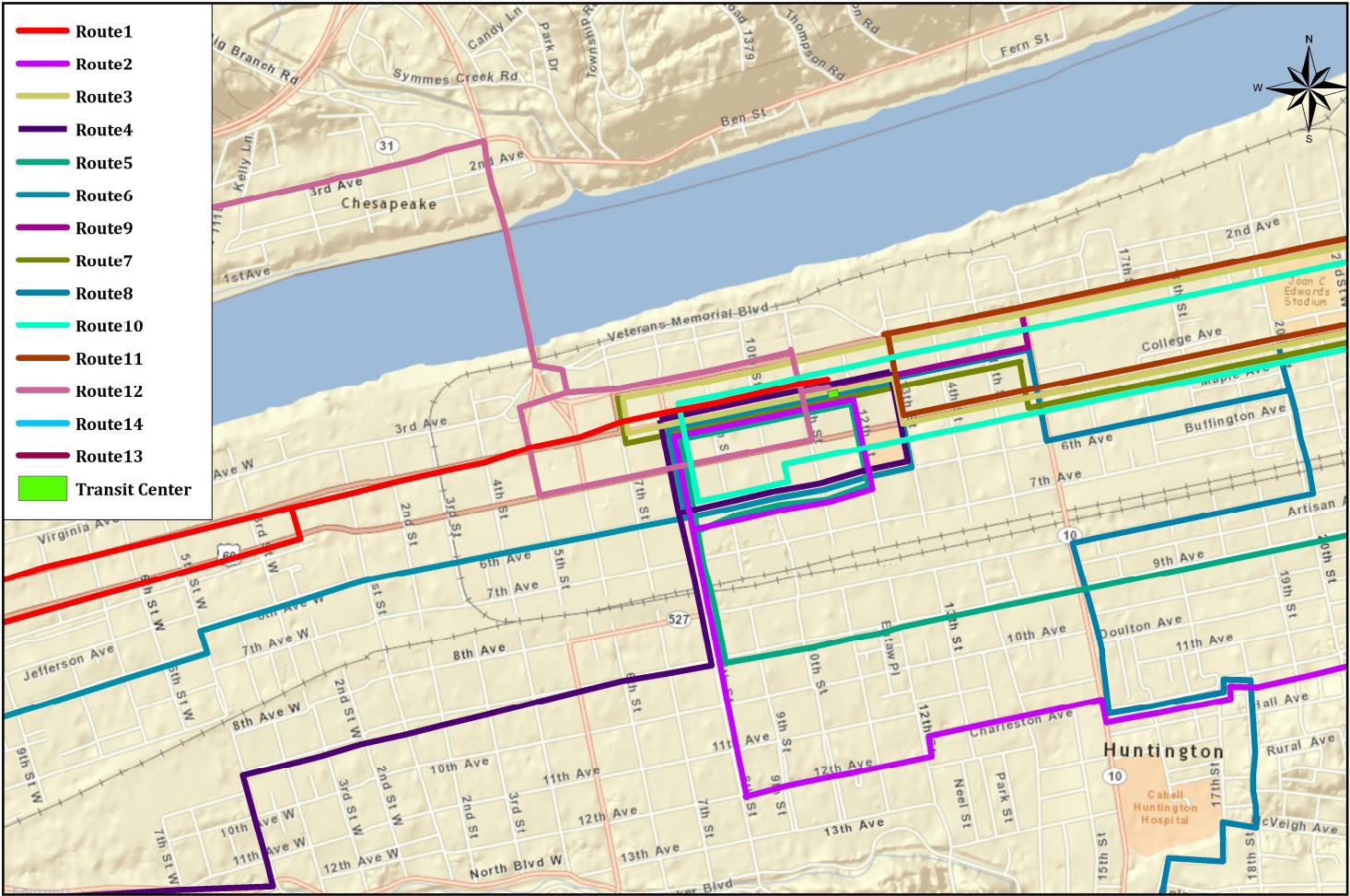
During the public charrette, numerous issues were identified and discussed pertaining to the transit service, including:

- Enhancing coordination between TTA and other transit and paratransit providers
- Extending the Pullman Shuttle service to include additional destinations such as Ritter Park

- Improving coordination between fixed-route transit service, AMTRAK, and Intelligent Transit intercity bus
- Coordinating streetscaping, pedestrian improvements, and bicycle improvements with enhancements to the transit network

There was also a discussion of the amenities available at trip endpoints for transit users. While a number of bus shelters exist throughout the TTA service area, including Downtown Huntington, there is a lack of bus stop signage due to TTA's flag stop system. Well-designed bus stop signs can serve as a form of advertising. Due to the dearth of signage for the TTA system, TTA has a lower profile than transit systems with attractive eye-

TTA Routes in Downtown Huntington



KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

catching signs. The flag stop system also makes it difficult for new and unacclimated passengers to identify routes and use the bus service. Enhancing bus stops would create obvious places to access the system, raise TTA's profile, and help attract riders.

Recommendations:

The following improvements were developed based on stakeholder interviews and discussion with the general public. These potential improvements would enhance transit service in Downtown Huntington:

Enhanced Bus Stops at Key Downtown Locations

Enhanced bus stops should be created at three to four downtown locations. These can include sheltered areas, benches, route information kiosks, and other amenities. This will not only make stops safer and more comfortable for passengers, but also will help advertise the bus service and improve its image by creating safe and appealing bus stop locations. Potential locations include:

- 4th Avenue/10th Street
- Pullman Square/3rd Avenue
- 4th Avenue/8th Street
- 3rd Avenue/12th Street

Potential financing for the construction of these enhanced bus stops include a number of sources of capital funding. These include Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 and other capital funding programs, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, community development grant programs, and other applicable grants. Local matches for any of these grants would likely need to be provided by TTA.

TTA Bus Stop Signage to Include the Downtown Wayfinding System

Designing bus stop signs to include the TTA logo and color scheme will help advertise the service and make bus stops easier to find. These improved signs should be incorporated into the proposed enhanced bus stops. The current flag stop system used elsewhere in downtown would not be affected.

Transit Corridors along 3rd and 4th Avenues

Since many of the TTA routes operate along 3rd and 4th Avenues, a coordinated approach to the design of bus stops, signage, and passenger amenities will help create transit corridors. Sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements should also be incorporated along these streets as part of an overall improvement of access to TTA bus service. These

improvements can be implemented gradually as existing sidewalk and street infrastructure is redeveloped.

Bus Circulation

The mobility of transit vehicles in the downtown area could be improved with the construction of strategic amenities. These physical improvements could include the construction of pull-outs to remove buses from travel lanes, use of exclusive lanes to increase bus operating speeds, and other measures as appropriate. These improvements can be implemented gradually as existing sidewalk and street infrastructure is redeveloped.

Pullman Shuttle Extension

The Pullman Shuttle has been a successful route linking Marshall University with Downtown Huntington. Several public comments suggested that this service, or something similar, be extended to Ritter Park south of downtown along 8th Street. Public comments also suggested that this Shuttle remain fare free. The estimated annual operating cost for this extension is \$200,000.

With a fare free service, issues are raised regarding how this service is financed. Since the primary beneficiaries of the Pullman Shuttle are Marshall

University students, a potential way to finance this service, as well as to provide other transportation benefits, is a U-Pass program. U-Pass programs are normally tailored to the special needs of local university students and corresponding transit providers. It benefits students by providing free, unlimited use of the local public transit system. This may include the Pullman Shuttle as well as all TTA routes. This would provide improved access to downtown, malls and other shopping destinations, and medical facilities to Marshall University students. For universities that have off-campus classrooms or research centers, a U-Pass program can provide the necessary connection from these facilities to the main campus.

Common ways to finance a U-Pass program are through student fees or a university general fund appropriation. Obtaining student acceptance, designing easy-to-use pass programs, and marketing those programs can present challenges. The roles of the transit system and the university must be clearly defined and effective communications will need to be established if a U-Pass program is to be successful.

Introduction

Community Vitality can be defined as an opportunity for a transformative change in how the downtown, adjoining neighborhoods, area infrastructure, and employment are considered, as well as the ability to retain and recruit within this same realm. The traditional approach suggests a model where these interests are competing for space, priority, and protection from one another. This approach is evident in the current conditions where there is an inherent disconnect between neighborhoods, commercial centers, and employment nodes. A comprehensive approach to downtown planning will result in improved economic vitality, quality of life, and liveability.

These observations led to the following Guiding Principles:

Community Connection — Impart a visual, cultural, and physical connection between community assets.

Local Land Use Initiatives — Promote the implementation of quality infill and redevelopment opportunities that are consistent with a downtown development form in the central business district.

Beautification and Streetscape — Enhance visual appearance and promote a sense of place that is representative of Huntington.

Economic Vitality — Promote a healthy and sustainable business environment where revitalization of existing commercial properties, redevelopment of strategic locations, and continued reinvestment in healthy businesses is encouraged.

Community Vitality

Issue: Infill Development

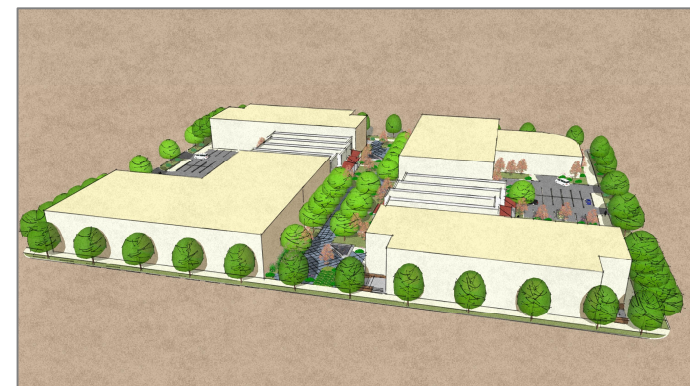
Observation: Aside from Pullman Square, the majority of newer commercial operations in the study area are single story linear buildings with individual access points along corridors and single purpose parking lots.

Discussion: The existing linear development pattern results in a one-dimensional use of property, and reduces the value and accessibility of parcels behind the primary road frontage. This has the effect of limiting the synergy between uses and reduces the effective value and revenue potential for spaces located behind this first tier of properties.

Recommendations:

- Discourage further encroachment of commercial uses into existing neighborhoods.
- Promote the creation of human scale development with improved connectivity between parcels.
- Encourage a multi-dimensional approach to development that does not rely on orientation to major thoroughfares, thereby unlocking the value of adjacent parcels.
- Promote the consolidation of smaller properties as redevelopment occurs to improve the chances for coordinated and interconnected development.
- Create incentives for mixed-use development.
- Promote the repurposing/rehabilitation of existing commercial operations through locally managed incentives and programs.

During the charrette, planners developed a conceptual master plan for the property located between 3rd and 4th Avenues and 12th and 13th Streets. This demonstration plan exhibits the qualities of urban design that are desirable in the downtown area. The development program includes a hotel, attached townhomes, flexible commercial spaces, and common open space. The inclusion of high quality amenities will be necessary to attract individuals to live in the downtown. Other characteristics include modest parking, proper building orientation, and human scale design.



These images are representative concepts for infill development



Issue: “Fix the Street”

Observation: The Existing Streetscape

The streets in Downtown Huntington were laid out at the beginning of the last century in a traditional square or grid pattern and are oriented at right angles to each other. At that time, much of the population of the city lived and worked in or near the heart of the community which was bounded by the elevated CSX railway, the Ohio River, and residential neighborhoods.

The Avenues

The numbered “avenues” run parallel to the Ohio River and are typically longer in length than the streets. Each is contained in a generous 80- to 100-foot-wide right of way. Today, 3rd and 5th Avenues are one-way, multi-lane streets that handle the split westbound and eastbound traffic of US Route 60. 4th Avenue is a main path of travel between Marshall University and the downtown area, containing many local businesses that provide services used by students.

The Streets

The “streets” are arranged so they run perpendicular to the Ohio River. The numbered streets were designed to be much shorter in length than the avenues, with a slightly narrower 70- to 80-foot right of way. A network of alleys, located at the midpoints of each street, runs parallel to the avenues. These streets were originally designed to support the function of the avenues and funnel traffic to them. Today, 10th Street is one of the major points of access into the downtown area.

The current use of these avenues and streets is very different than the way they were originally planned. A majority of those who work and partake in services offered in Downtown Huntington commute and live away from the downtown area. Others live on or near the main campus of Marshall University. The reduced demand for swift movement of a large volume of vehicles along this robust street network has given Huntington the opportunity to shift the focus of these roadways from cars to a mix of cars and people.

The Main Street Concept

Historically the “Main Street” of a community was the heart of its downtown. These Main Streets played a major role in the retail and service life of the town or city. The sprawl created by the late twentieth century suburb caused the decline of many of these streets. Today, Main Streets have again become increasingly popular places to be.

During the course of the charrette, those participating expressed a desire for a more modern and user-friendly downtown with a street life that embraces and welcomes those walking, biking, shopping, eating, and sitting. The following streetscape concepts, discussed here and in the Green Connector Street section below, were developed in support of that vision.

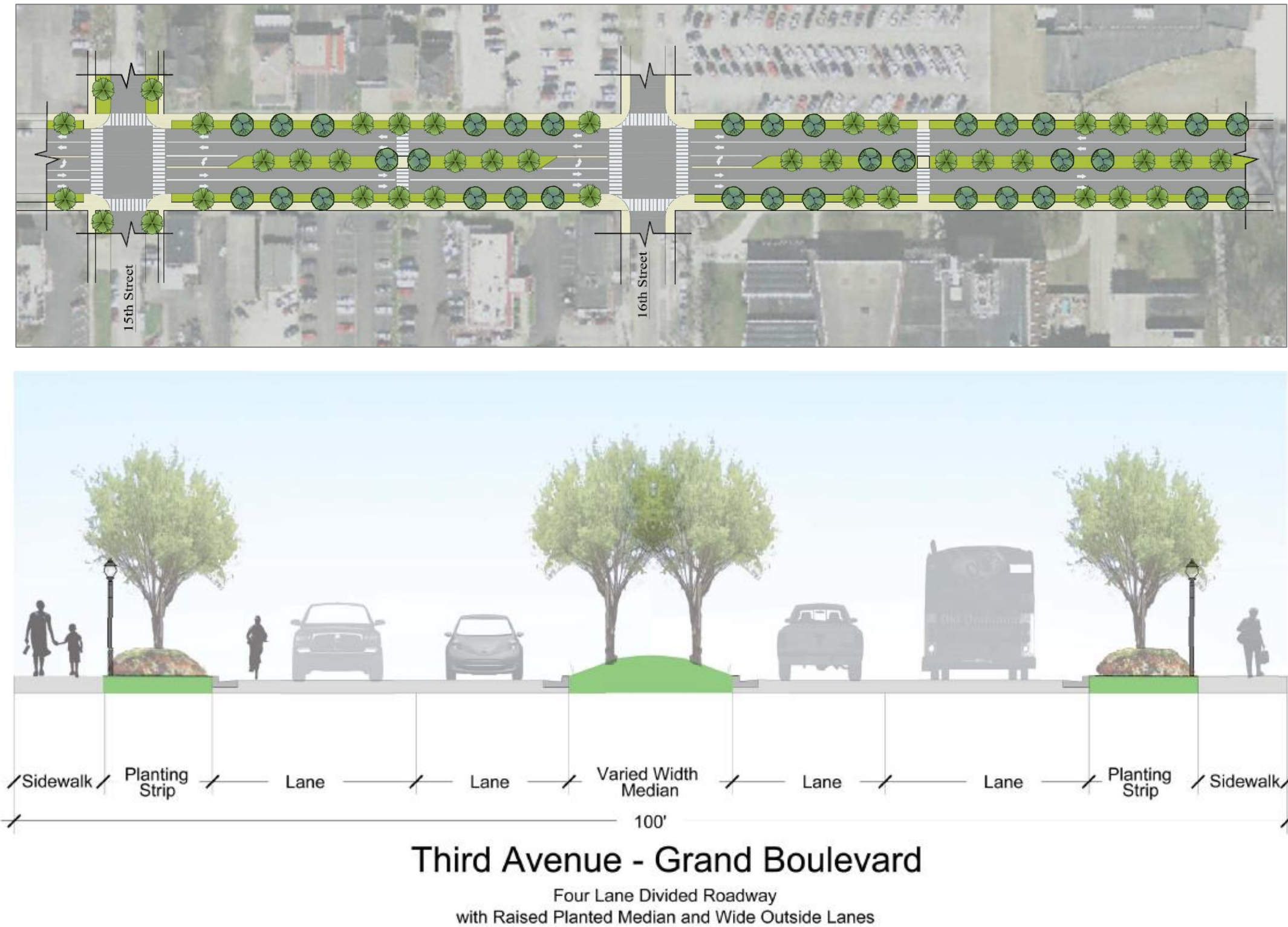


Third Avenue

*“The Grand Boulevard” -
Changing Traffic Patterns*

As it exists today, 3rd Avenue is an underutilized four-lane, one-way street with parking and sidewalks on both sides. It is located within an overly-generous 100-foot right of way. A portion of 3rd Avenue runs through Marshall University and students must cross it to move between parked cars and classrooms.

The “Grand Boulevard” concept, as envisioned, would reconfigure 3rd Avenue from 13th Street to 20th Street. It would change the traffic pattern from its current one-way configuration to a four-lane, two-way layout. This new “Grand Boulevard” would include a raised landscaped median and a tree-lined sidewalk. On-street parking would be eliminated and bicyclists and motorists would share the outside lane. Curb ramps and crosswalks would be placed at intersections and midpoints along each block. Those crossing the Grand Boulevard would encounter a place of refuge at its center, while the overhead canopy of green provided by many trees would produce a cool, shaded place for those walking along its sidewalks.

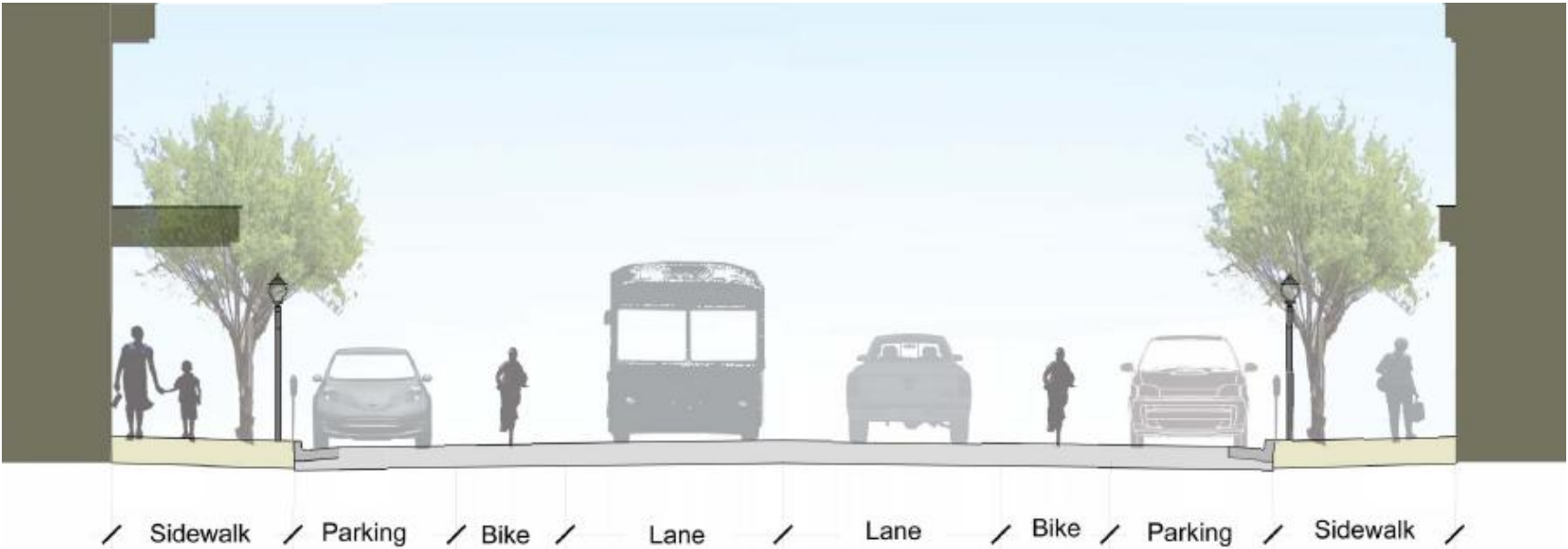


Fourth Avenue

*“The Main Street Huntington” -
A Pedestrian and Bicycle Friendly Corridor*

Over the past several years, the City of Huntington has been working to convert 4th Avenue, also known as “Old Main,” into a pedestrian and bicycle friendly corridor. A few blocks of 4th Avenue have already been streetscaped using state and federal grant funds. Grants are in place to cover costs for construction of an additional section of 4th Avenue. A typical roadway cross-section for this improved street includes two 2-way travel lanes and two bike lanes with on-street parking and sidewalks on both sides. Painted striping for the bike lanes will soon be in place on those blocks already renovated, as will a new asphalt pavement overlay.

The City is to be commended for its past streetscaping efforts and should be encouraged to continue to build upon these successes. The western end of 4th Avenue between 8th and 5th Streets remains unimproved, as do the 10th through 13th Street blocks of 4th Avenue. These are the logical next areas to improve to reach the overall goal of completing the Main Street corridor.



Fourth Avenue Improvements
Two Lanes Undivided Roadway
with Parallel Parking and Bike Lanes Both Sides

The Green “Connector” Street

Weaving through Huntington’s West End neighborhoods and core downtown, 10th Street functions as a vital north-south axis connecting Harris Riverfront Park to Ritter Park. This well traveled street is used by many local commuters on a daily basis to access the downtown area. 10th Street was built inside a generous 80-foot right of way with sections near Ritter Park between 11th and 13th Avenues divided by a wide, grassy lawn panel. From 11th Avenue to 8th Avenue and the viaduct, 10th Street exhibits a more typical residential flavor with two 2-way travel lanes, on-street parking, a lawn panel, and a sidewalk on either side. North of this point, a more urban section was constructed.

One of the many goals expressed by various citizens attending the charrette was a “greening” of this thoroughfare, making it something people would desire to walk and bike along as they traveled between the City’s two main public parks.

Green Design Elements

Green design elements to be used along 10th Street should include new planted areas and/or the revitalization of existing green spaces. Each would contain a mix of trees and shrubs used in conjunction with the narrower pavement section discussed below. These spaces would provide a visual and physical connection to public and open spaces. To establish a sense of community, a neighborhood association would be created with the responsibility of creating and maintaining these public spaces.

Existing 10th Street and proposed improvements



Traffic Calming

The existing geometry of 10th Street might be adjusted from its current configuration to calm traffic. A narrower pavement width would encourage drivers to slow down and result in a safer and more appealing pedestrian environment. Street furnishings and signage should be employed to entice travelers to stop and patronize existing neighborhood businesses. Visually identified and signalized crosswalks, where appropriate, would add to the safety of pedestrians.

Weaving a Thread Through the Neighborhoods and the Downtown

A sense of community could be established for the neighborhoods along 10th Street by the creation of a neighborhood association. They would be responsible for the creation and maintenance of these public spaces. Use of “branded” signage will contribute to the identity of the area. Small gateway and wayfinding placards also would be a welcome addition.

A Park to Park Connection

The City of Huntington is very fortunate to contain two well established and visually diverse public parks. Tenth Avenue provides a vital connection between the downtown Harris Riverfront Park and Ritter Park. Many of the measures discussed above, deployed in concert with one another, would result in a revitalized and repurposed “Green” 10th Street.



10th STREET = GREEN STREET

Huntington. West Virginia

Placemaking

Placemaking embodies the movement to create more livable communities, identifiable character, and a higher quality of life. The process of placemaking celebrates the uniqueness of a community and identifies the physical improvements or planning initiatives necessary to create a sense of unity and turn a space into a destination. Placemaking not only identifies the character of an area with architecture, streetscapes, and branding, but also connects the social fabric of those who live, work, and visit in an area.

Placemaking rarely happens spontaneously. It is the result of deliberate actions by a community. This generally happens as an outcome of a community planning initiative or through complementary designs by private developers. The most successful communities create great places through a combination of public investments and partnerships with the private sector. Specific placemaking issues identified by design charrette participants include the need for additional public spaces, the need to define a sense of place, the need for design guidelines, and the need to create more opportunities for “green.”



Additional Public Spaces

When talking about public spaces, it is easy to think parks and plazas fulfill the same purposes. The parks in Huntington are great for walking, gatherings, or programs, but are located primarily in residential areas away from the downtown. While the Harris Riverfront Park is adjacent to downtown, Pullman Square is the only public space in the downtown core. The creation of smaller pocket parks or urban plazas promotes human contact, social activities, and community involvement. The best public spaces are safe, welcoming, and accommodating for a diversity of users; are well maintained; relate well to adjacent uses; reflect local culture or history; and include visually interesting features. In more formal settings, these spaces also can be programmed with events, and can become opportunities for local retailers and businesses to showcase their products and services.

Recommendations:

- Identify strategic locations where neighborhoods/businesses could benefit from the creation of public spaces.
- Encourage the creation of public spaces in new development and redevelopment plans. Promote the use of human-proportioned architectural features and site design elements to encourage human activity.



Sense of Place and Wayfinding

When considering the vastness of Downtown Huntington, the study area lacks an identity or “sense of place” to distinguish it from other areas of the community. This is seen at a regional level as well as a local, downtown level.

At the regional level, it is important to identify the key wayfinding and gateway locations of the community. People should be able to easily and clearly see which route is their best option to access various destinations within Huntington. This is true from I-64 from Ohio, and within the city itself. If Huntington as a city is difficult to access, then the destinations within the area will find it difficult to be viable.

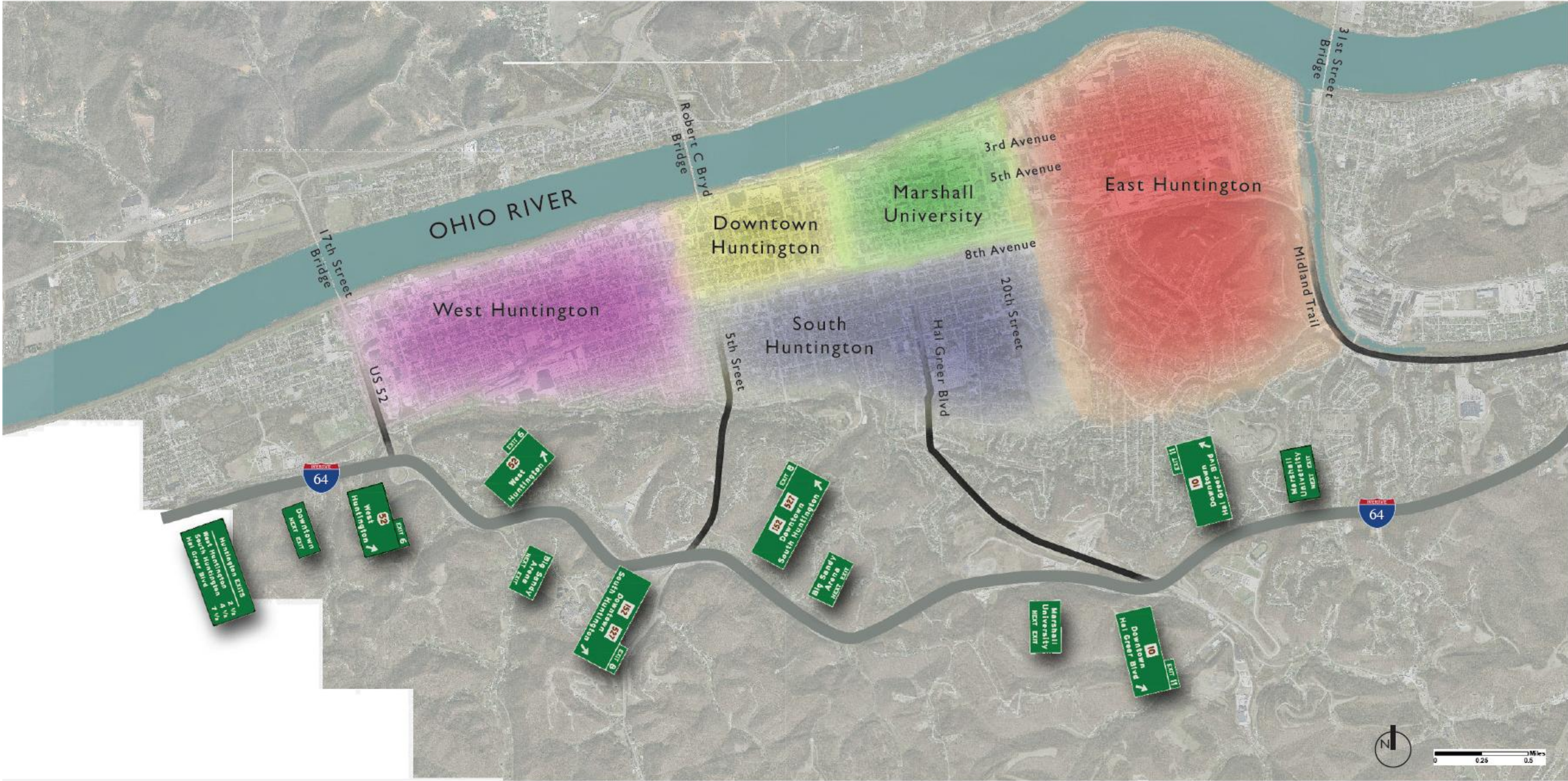
There have been efforts made with some streetscapes and signage, but a lack of maintenance and building vacancies has left much of the downtown unimproved. As a result, many residents, visitors, and area employees do not consider spending time in the area outside of Pullman Square. It is important to note that wayfinding plans can be capital intensive in their implementation, and are therefore often implemented in phases over multiple funding years.

The identity of a community comes from its environment, culture, and tradition. A branding of that identity represents community pride and distinguishes a community in the marketplace. This identity should be apparent in every facet of the community.

It is necessary to connect the “centers” within a downtown through quality corridors where the public infrastructure compliments an attractive and vibrant built environment. In these corridors, reliance on the automobile is reduced through human scaled design that promotes parking and walking between destinations, as well as navigation by bike riders and pedestrians. 10th Street and 4th Avenue present opportunities in Huntington where this could occur.

Devoid of a reinforced identity, the corridor that connects the downtown core and Marshall University quickly becomes a forgettable place that lacks investment by the community and property owners.

The exhibit on the following page identifies specific areas or districts in the downtown, as well as a recommended wayfinding signage strategy, that appropriately align motorists with routes to desired destinations.



WAYFINDING STRATEGY

Huntington, West Virginia

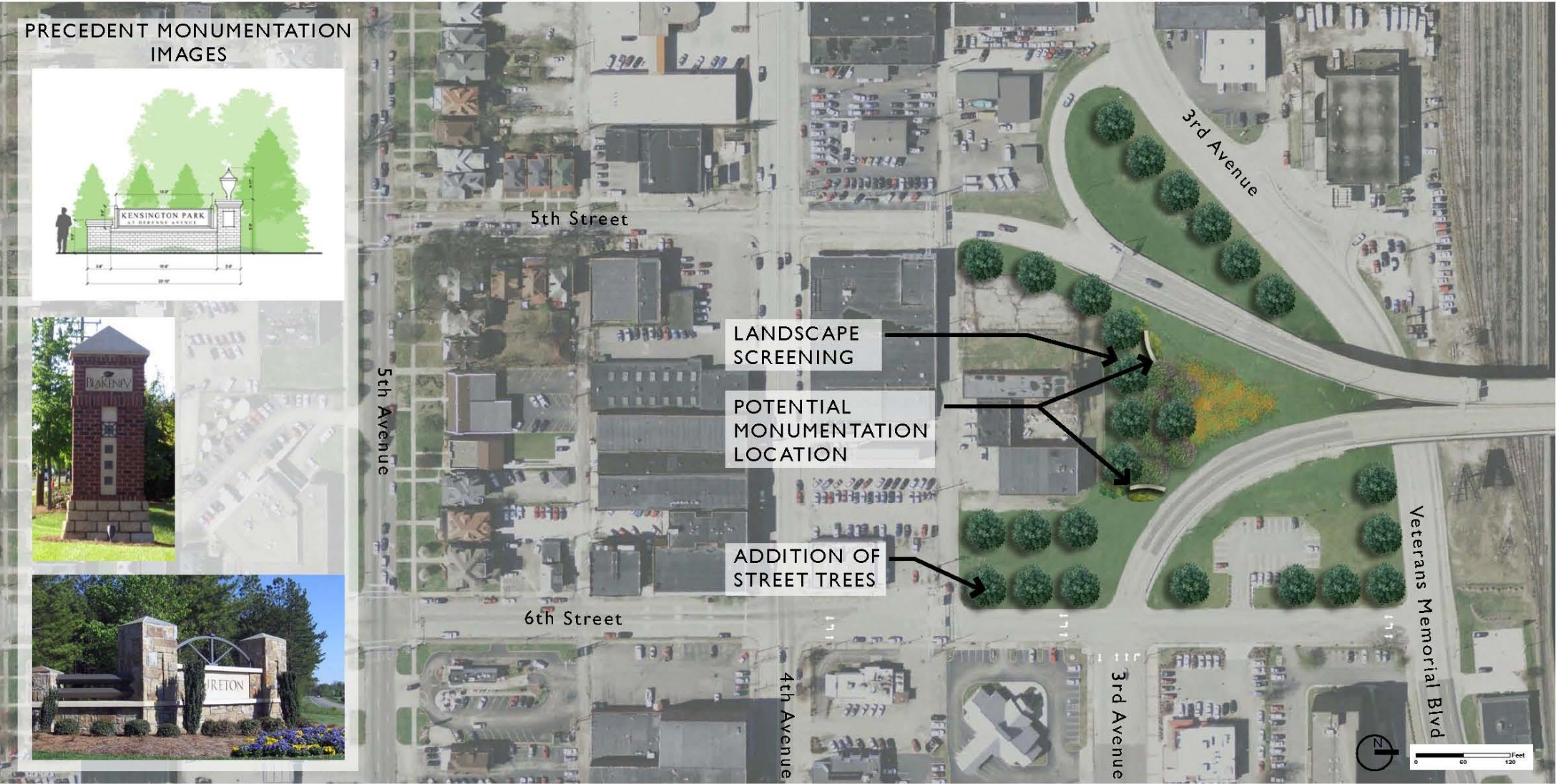
Gateways

One of the first ways to establish a defined character for a certain area is to announce that one has entered a place that is different and new. This is often accomplished with gateway treatments. Gateways help distinguish an area from neighboring communities by identifying boundaries and sub-districts within a community. As part of this study, the consultant team conducted an assessment to identify locations that would benefit from enhanced gateways.

A premier example of a location that could benefit from an enhanced gateway is the Robert C. Byrd Bridge. This bridge terminus represents the first and last impressions of motorists traveling to and from Ohio. The exhibit shows how the area around the bridge can become an improved gateway into the city and also act as a wayfinding opportunity. Currently, this can be a tricky thoroughfare for travelers, and many drivers unknowingly find themselves on a bridge to Ohio. By providing improved signage, people can be made aware that they are either leaving or entering the city. Landscape and maintenance of the gateway areas make an impression, therefore upkeep and care of the area must be maintained.

Recommendations:

- Create a uniform brand and marketing plan for the study area. This plan should be used consistently to provide the community with an easily recognizable identity. The brand identity and marketing plan should highlight elements of the study area that make it unique.
- Promote mixed-use, compact development in the study area that includes well-designed places for people to gather that encourages them to spend time and money in the area.



ROBERT C BYRD BRIDGE GATEWAY

Huntington, West Virginia

Design Guidelines

Signage and streetscapes throughout Huntington vary in character and maintenance. Many are in disrepair and detract from the visual appearance of the corridor.

Overall site design is a critical component for quality development. Design guidelines should promote compatibility within a development and its surrounding environment, allow creativity and diversity of design, protect property values, neighborhood quality, as well as provide a safe and attractive environment for residents and visitors.

Design guidelines can address specific details such as lighting, bollards, trash receptacles, and trees, or it can address the overall feel of the community (historic, modern, etc.). When individual pieces are consistent throughout the City, it begins to create a sense of unity and cohesion.

Recommendations:

- Develop design guidelines that address site layout, building orientation, tree preservation, architectural character, parking configurations, landscaping, screening, lighting, and signage.
- Encourage integration with adjacent uses, including connectivity and improved accessibility by cars, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- Promote programs for small businesses to improve the look and functionality of their property and place of business (façade improvements, enhanced landscaping, and maintenance).



Green Opportunities

Very few green areas exist in the downtown. There are several opportunities to “green up” main corridors, primarily 10th Street and 4th Avenue.

Well landscaped areas, greenspace, and streetscapes contribute to the quality of community spaces. These areas make communities visually appealing while also attracting people and businesses to the area.

Recommendations:

- Require tree islands in new parking fields
- Encourage retrofitting existing development with enhanced green space through incentives
- Add street trees
- Maintain existing street trees
- Replace dead or overgrown trees
- Identify strategic streets which could benefit from enhanced streetscaping (See chapter 4).



Call to Action

Downtown Huntington is in the midst of a renaissance. New development initiatives are being paired with public infrastructure improvements, creating an air of excitement and opportunity in an area that previously was in a state of decline. The *Downtown Huntington Access Study* seeks to build on the momentum already established in this area. In order to continue attracting interest and promoting economic development in the area, the community needs to be proactive when addressing needs and issues.

The ultimate success of the *Downtown Huntington Access Study* rests on the ability of local and regional officials and leaders to carry out the study recommendations. This effort is made easier by describing a series of defined planning initiatives to move the process forward. In simple terms, a well-crafted set of planning initiatives, paired with an understanding of future planning steps and potential funding sources, can provide a framework or “blueprint” for implementation. It is important to note that the recommendations set forth in this document are designed to function independently of one another or as a unit. It will be up to decision-makers at the regional and municipal level to identify those recommendations that are most desired to be moved forward into implementation.

From the outset of the study, a key objective was to develop cost-effective recommendations (at a variety of scales) that set the stage for additional improvements to the downtown area in the future. With a diminishing return on the dollar and the reality of limited funding opportunities, a set of strategic priorities has become more important than ever.



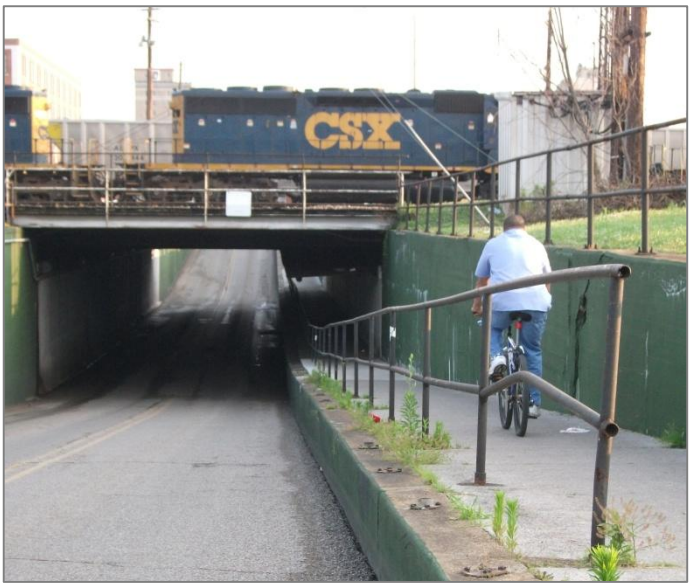
Next Steps

To implement the recommendations developed as a part of this study, a strong base of support will need to be fostered and developed. Support from affected agencies, businesses, and citizens will send a strong message to potential funding agencies. Widespread grassroots support will help guide transportation and land use policies that encourage quality design and environmental stewardship while promoting economic vitality. The following action items will help move the recommendations in the *Downtown Huntington Access Study* into implementation:

- Present the findings of the *Downtown Huntington Access Study* to the KYOVA TAC and TCC.
- Incorporate the recommendations of the study into the *KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* and the *2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program*.
- Apply the recommendations of this study during the development review process. Use this study as a tool to review proposed development projects as they locate and are implemented within the downtown area.
- Create a Standing Committee composed of KYOVA, the City of Huntington, and other agencies to help incorporate the findings of this study into future development and infrastructure improvements.
- Develop a Downtown Master Plan with an emphasis on revitalization, recruitment, housing, open space, infill development, transportation and finance.

Prioritizing Recommendations

The following sections of this chapter identify a series of planning initiatives explored as a part of the *Downtown Huntington Access Study*. For ease of use, the recommendations are broken out by the chapters in which they were discussed. For many of the recommendations, agencies have been identified that would likely be responsible for championing or implementing each initiative. Estimated cost ranges have also been established for some of the infrastructure improvement recommendations. Ultimately, these recommendations can be administered concurrently or as priorities as regional initiatives present the opportunity to do so.



Planning Initiatives – Transportation Mobility (See Chapter 4 for Project Details)		
	Cost Estimate (thousands) ^A	Responsible Party
3 rd Avenue and 5 th Avenue – One-way to two-way street conversion **	\$3,000 to \$5,000 [^]	WVDOH/ KYOVA/ City of Huntington
3 rd Avenue and 5 th Avenue – Following two-way conversion, adapt corridors into Grand Boulevards**	\$5,000 to \$7,000 [^]	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
3 rd Avenue at Veterans Memorial Boulevard roundabout**	\$1,000	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
Hal Greer Boulevard – Replace viaduct with new bridge**	\$11,000	WVDOH/ KYOVA/ City of Huntington
Hal Greer Boulevard – Construct pump station and separate stormwater retention facility	\$4,000	City of Huntington/ WVDOH
Hal Greer Boulevard – Implement pedestrian improvements at Washington Boulevard, Charleston Avenue, and 13 th Avenue intersections	\$150 [^]	City of Huntington/ KYOVA
US 60/Midland Trail – Construct access management features between I-64 and Roby Road**	\$1,200	KYOVA/ WVDOH/ City of Huntington
US 60/Midland Trail – Construct access management features between Roby Road and 3 rd Avenue**	\$500	KYOVA/ WVDOH/ City of Huntington
US 60/Midland Trail – Construct merge lane at Midland Trail and 31 st Street	\$50	WVDOH/ KYOVA/ City of Huntington
US 60/Midland Trail – Implement laneage and signal improvements at US 60 and 5 th Avenue	\$50	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH

^A Cost estimate includes estimated design cost and twenty percent contingency. Probable construction cost estimate is engineer’s approximation in current year dollars and is subject to change based on increased construction materials, design, or time of implementation. Right-of-way acquisition costs are not included in the estimates. All values are subject to change.

** Identified for potential inclusion in the *KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.

[^] Estimated construction cost is per corridor or intersection.

Planning Initiatives – Transportation Mobility (Continued - See Chapter 4 for Project Details)		
	Cost Estimate (thousands) ^A	Responsible Party
US 52 – Construct split diamond interchange at Adams Avenue and Washington Avenue (US 60)**	\$150	WVDOH/ KYOVA/ City of Huntington
5 th Street – Improve to a 2-lane divided facility from I-64 to Whitaker Boulevard**	\$2,500	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
5 th Street – Install one-lane roundabout at 5 th Street and North Boulevard intersection**	\$450	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
4 th Avenue – Improve to complete street standards**	\$1,500	City of Huntington/ KYOVA
10 th Street – Restripe to include bicycle facilities, construct sidewalk, and enhance appearance**	\$2,300	City of Huntington/ KYOVA
10 th Street – Improve viaduct with aesthetic and pedestrian-level enhancements**	\$350	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
10 th Street – Improve intersection of 10 th Street and 7 th Avenue	\$50	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
8 th Avenue – Widen to multilanes with sidewalk on one side between 20 th Street and 29 th Street**	\$1,500	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH

^A Cost estimate includes estimated design cost and twenty percent contingency. Probable construction cost estimate is engineer’s approximation in current year dollars and is subject to change based on increased construction materials, design, or time of implementation. Right-of-way acquisition costs are not included in the estimates. All values are subject to change.

** Identified for potential inclusion in the *KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.

Planning Initiatives – Sustainable Transportation (See Chapter 5 for Project Details)	
	Responsible Party
4 th Avenue – Convert to a Green Street between Downtown and Marshall University, including bike lanes and pedestrian intersection enhancements**	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
10 th Street – Convert to a Green Street between Veterans Memorial Boulevard and 13 th Avenue, including bicycle amenities, pedestrian enhancements, and viaduct improvements**	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
3 rd Avenue and 5 th Avenue – Enhance intersections and corridors with pedestrian facilities through one-way to two-way conversion**	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
Conduct a downtown parking study	City of Huntington
Invest in public surface lots (lighting, landscaping and wayfinding)	City of Huntington
Construct advanced bus stops at key Downtown locations**	TTA/ City of Huntington
Design TTA bus stop signage to incorporate Downtown wayfinding system	TTA/ City of Huntington
Enhance bus circulation with bus pull-outs, bus lanes, signal improvements, and other supporting infrastructure**	City of Huntington/ TTA/ KYOVA
Extend Pullman Shuttle service to include other desirable destination points**	TTA/ Marshall University
** Identified for potential inclusion in the KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.	

Planning Initiatives – Community Vitality (See Chapter 6 for Project Details)	
	Responsible Party
Develop and implement comprehensive, uniform wayfinding strategy	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
Implement gateway treatments as described in Chapter 6	City of Huntington/ KYOVA/ WVDOH
Develop downtown design guidelines	City of Huntington
Investigate the creation of business improvement programs	City of Huntington
Invest in the maintenance of high priority streets, especially Green Streets (infill and maintain street trees, repair sidewalks, lighting)	City of Huntington

** Identified for potential inclusion in the KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

KYOVA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Funding Strategies

Improvements to the downtown area will require careful planning and collaboration between multiple agencies and entities. KYOVA and the City of Huntington have been successful in pursuing funding in a coordinated and strategic manner in previous efforts, setting the stage for future progress.

The *Downtown Huntington Access Study* contains a variety of recommendations, ranging between small and large in scale, and covering a variety of infrastructure and aesthetic needs. With this in mind, it is not expected that all of the listed items would be completed during a 5-, 10-, or even 20-year timeframe. However, initiating this process and aggressively pursuing available funding will help KYOVA and the City of Huntington take advantage of the momentum gained with the development of this study.

- Work with WVDOH to include high priority transportation recommendations in the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Aggressively pursue CMAQ funds through WVDOH. CMAQ funds can be used for a range of transportation projects, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements and congestion relief projects. KYOVA and the City of Huntington have pursued and received these funds in the past.
- Pursue Enhancement Grants to construct bicycle and pedestrian recommendations outlined in Chapter 5. State and federal grants can play an important role in implementing strategic elements of the transportation network. Several grants have multiple applications, including Transportation Enhancement Grants and State and Federal Transit Grants. The Enhancement Grant program, established by Congress in 1991 through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), ensures the

implementation of projects not typically associated with the road-building mindset. While the construction of roads is not the intent of the grant, the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is one of many enhancements that the grant targets. This could play an important role in enhancing the pedestrian safety and connectivity in the downtown area.

- Consider providing a tax incentive to existing property owners and developers located within the central business district for enhancing their property values through aesthetic design treatments, in accordance with the recommendations from this study.
- Pursue grant funding from Active Living by Design (ALbD) to promote walkability in Downtown Huntington. ALbD is a program that seeks to bring together the health care and transportation communities to create an environment that encourages residents to pursue active forms of transportation, such as walking and bicycling. Grants are awarded each year to a selected number of communities, who are then required to produce a local match. These grants can be used to create plans, change land use policies, institute education policies, and develop pilot projects. Website: www.activelivingbydesign.org
- Pursue funding from the Recreational Trails Program to construct additional sections of the Paul Anderson Trail for Health in accordance with this Study. According to the FHWA, “the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Federal transportation funds benefitting recreation including hiking, bicycling, in-line skating,

equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles.”

- Partner with Marshall University to provide enhanced services to students. Services such as the Pullman Shuttle confer the majority of their benefits to Marshall University students. To expand and enhance these programs, TTA and the City of Huntington can work with the school to identify the most desirable amenities. Funding mechanisms such as the U-Pass system (see Chapter 5 for details) can provide the means for extending services to targeted user groups.

Conclusion

Downtown Huntington is a place of history, pride, commerce, civic activity, and is the heart of the community. Like most American cities, the infrastructure is fast approaching its useful lifespan and is in need of repair. Furthermore, the downtown has reached a tipping point and is in need of renewed energy. If the downtown is to experience a renaissance, it will need to be a priority of the entire community. A series of partnerships between government, civic groups, neighborhoods, and business leaders will be required to rally behind the cause of furthering the initiatives outlined in this report.

Recent investments like Pullman Square suggest the downtown is still a viable location to invest and that the community desires a downtown that will be a central gathering place.

The downtown has transitioned over the years from a dirt street, horse and buggy town, to a railroad community, to a place of commerce dominated by cars and commuters. One is left to imagine the next transformation. Through leadership and commitment, it will no doubt be a place that continues to attract people.

While the list of initiatives included in this study is lengthy, the community should not be discouraged. It does not take high dollar projects to make a difference. Often, the greatest projects are those that involve the people. Simple clean-up and repair projects go a long way at improving the image and attitudes of citizens. It is our recommendation to take incremental steps – tackle small projects that make a difference while simultaneously seeking partnerships to implement larger initiatives and capital investments.

