

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

City Center Small Area Plan



RICHMOND PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
PDR

DRAFT - June 7, 2021

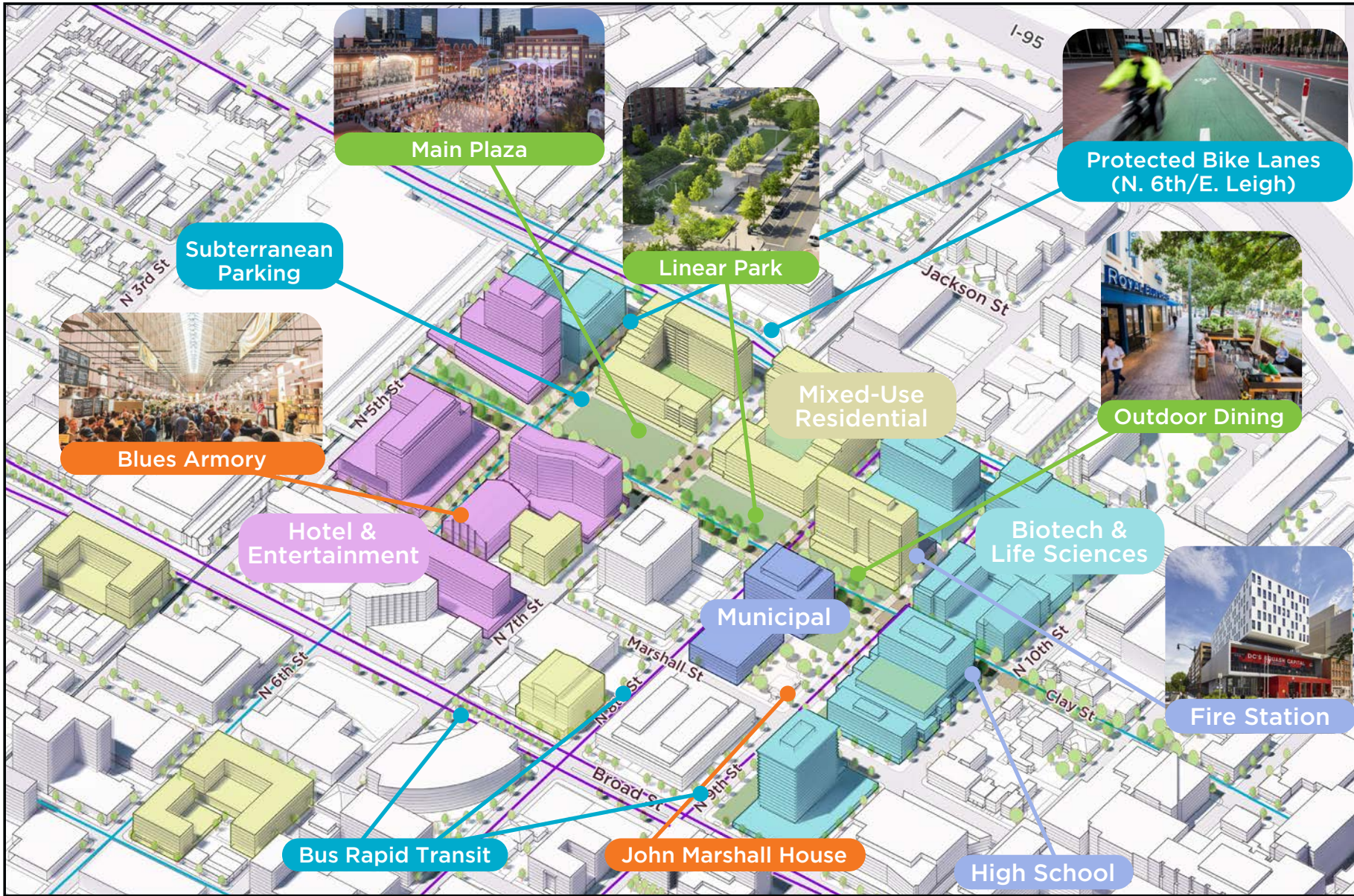


FIGURE 1 // Executive Summary of City Center with Development Clusters

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Project Scope

Purpose

The City Center Small Area Plan outlines a strategy for redeveloping vacant and under-utilized parcels in Downtown Richmond, which are predominantly City-owned. The Plan describes the vision, guiding principles, and strategies for the City Center area in order to create a more equitable, sustainable, and beautiful Downtown in alignment with *Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth* and the Pulse Corridor Plan.

The Dept. of Planning and Development Review (PDR) created the City Center Plan in response to City Council Resolution 2020-RO09, with the following objectives:

- Engage the Richmond community to identify the key elements that must be located in the primary study area and that shall be included in a future request for offers (RFO).
- Set the stage for potential developers to feel excited about responding to another RFO by gaining general public consensus and thereby minimizing developer risk.
- Guide the redevelopment of Downtown to establish a mixed-use destination that drives activity outside of typical business hours, provides for regional entertainment attractions, and adds to the Downtown tax base
- Leverage adjacencies by connecting with the Convention Center, VCU Health, and the VA Bio+Tech Park.
- Build strong connections with adjacent neighborhoods including Jackson Ward, Monroe Ward, Gilpin, and Shockoe Bottom.
- Incorporate the City Center Small Area Plan into the *Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth* master plan document.

Study Area

City Center is the name of study area, which is generally the area from E. Franklin Street to E. Leigh Street and from N. 10th to N. 5th Streets in Downtown Richmond. The City Center area is part of Downtown Richmond, Virginia and bounded by VCU Health/VA Bio+Tech Park, the State Capitol, Monroe Ward, and Jackson Ward, as shown in Figure 2. The focus of the City Center planning effort is on the City and RRHA properties that are vacant and/or underutilized in the City Center area, approximately 26.2 acres in total as shown in Figure 3 and Table 1.

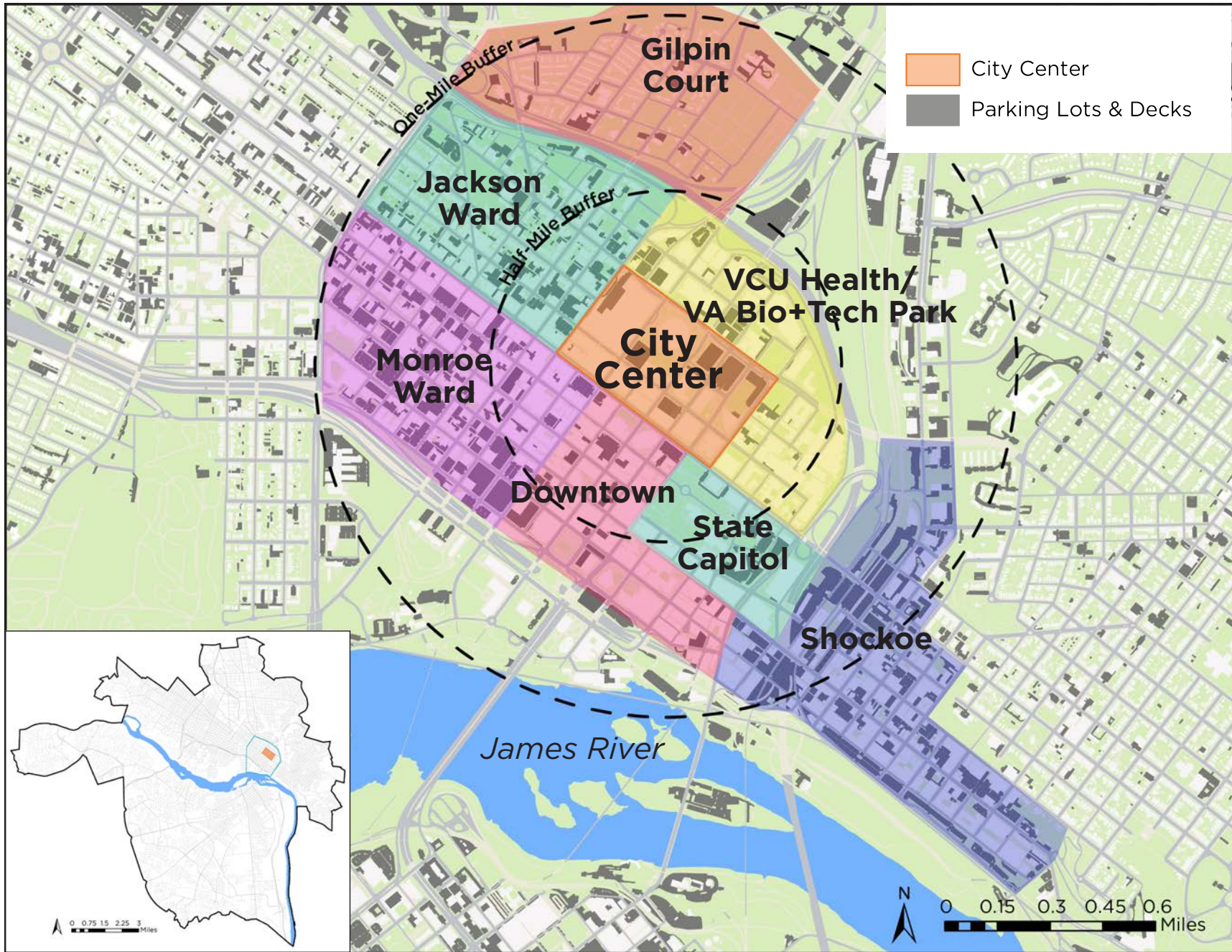


FIGURE 2 // City Center Context Map

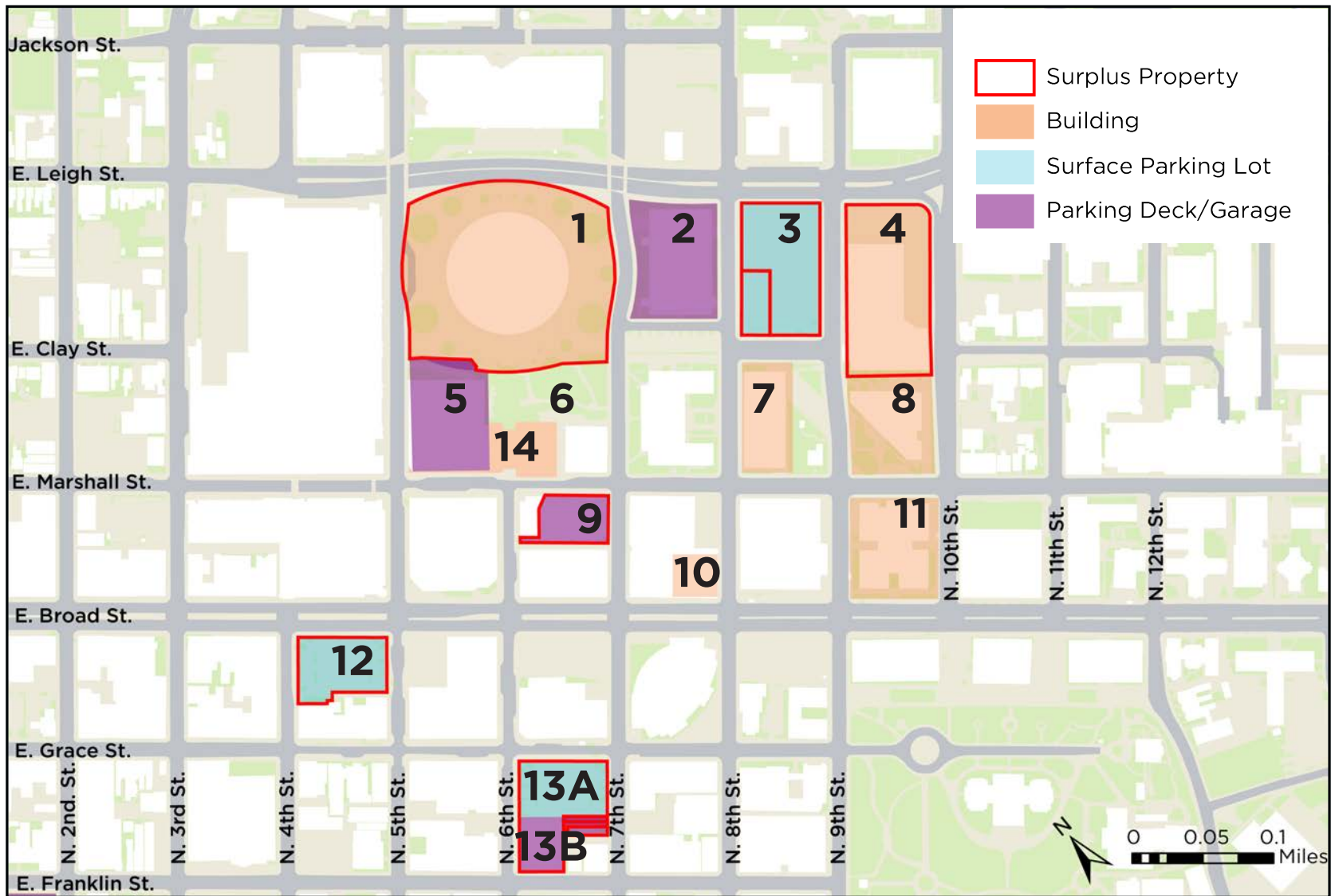


FIGURE 3 // Selected City- and RRHA-Owned Parcels in City Center

TABLE 1 // City- and RRHA-Owned Parcels in City Center

Label	Parcel Name	Ownership/Status	Parcel Acreage	Surplus Property ¹	Condition Rating ²	Maintenance Cost ³
1	Coliseum	COR/Vacant	7.4	x	Poor	Unknown
2	Coliseum Parking Deck	COR/In Use	1.9		Good	\$1.3M
3	9th/Clay Surface Parking Lot	COR/In Use	2.1	x	Fair	N/A
4	Public Safety Building	COR/Vacant - In redevelopment	3.0	x	Critical	\$20.97M
5	5th/Marshall Parking Garage	COR/In Use	1.6		Good	\$1.5M
6	Coliseum Public Open Space	RRHA/In Use	1.0		Poor	N/A
7	John Marshall Courts Building	COR/In Use	1.5		Poor	\$18.7M
8	Social Services Building	COR/In Use	1.6		Poor	\$4.5M
9	6th/Marshall Parking Garage	COR/In Use	0.8	x	Critical	\$7M
10	Theater Row Building	COR/In Use	0.4	x	Poor	\$11.2M
11	City Hall	COR/In Use	1.8	x	Poor	\$50.5M
12	4th/Broad Surface Parking Lot	COR/In Use	1.1		Good	N/A
13A	6th/Grace Surface Parking Lot	COR/In Use	1.0	x	Good	N/A
13B	6th/Franklin Parking Garage	COR/Vacant	0.5		Critical	Unknown
14	Blues Armory Building	RRHA/Vacant	0.5		Poor	Unknown

1: Properties surplus by City Council via Res. No. 2021-R024 on April 26, 2021.

2: Condition rating provided by Department of Public Works.

3: Cost of immediate maintenance provided by Department of Public Works.

Process

PDR developed the Small Area Plan over a 12-month period that included internal meetings with City staff and leadership, two public workshops, two public surveys, and several focus group interviews. At the beginning of the plan development process, the idea of including a new or renovated arena was part of the development program. However, in December 2020, Henrico County announced that they are going to build an arena-anchored project; therefore, the City removed the arena concept from the City Center program.

Phase 1: Priorities and Preferences

During a virtual workshop in June 2020, the City shared a series of examples of revitalized downtowns with and without arenas. The survey results showed that the community generally supported a set of baseline elements (open space, office, mixed-income residential, multi-modal transportation, and gridded street network), neighborhood amenities (restaurants, cafes, grocery store, retail, and services), and community benefits (retail/office for local businesses, public open space, and equity-ownership by minorities). The survey results also showed general support for an arena, strong support for a movie theater, and little support for a resort casino in the area.

Phase 2: Framework Alternatives

During a second virtual workshop and survey in July 2020, the City shared 3 framework alternatives that located the arena and public open space in various configurations and included recommendations for relocating City functions. The survey results and conversation during the workshop confirmed strong support for a mixed-use development and open space. Other elements that continued to need further discussion included the relocation of City government uses, the bus transfer facility, and the arena.

Phase 3: Stakeholder Interviews

From September to November 2020, PDR conducted over 10 group interviews with property owners, non-profit organizations, community groups, elected officials, City staff, and other stakeholders with interest in the City Center area. During those interviews, PDR heard that a lot of residential units need to be added to the area to support businesses and that the housing should be at various price levels and provide rental and ownership options. Interviewees stated that flexible public open space and strong connections to adjacent neighborhoods are essential.

Phase 4: Draft Plan

From December 2020 to May 2021, City staff developed the draft City Center Small Area Plan and released the plan for public review and comment in May 2021.



History

Today City Center is completely unrecognizable from its land use and urban form 100 years ago (Figure 4). Annexed by the City in the late 18th and early 19th century, the area blossomed due to its proximity to important buildings like the State Capitol. Broad Street soon became the City's most critical commercial center - especially after the burning of Main Street during the Civil War and as it developed into the central corridor for the streetcar system implemented in the late 1880s.

Post-Reconstruction Era, "Jackson Ward" was created as a political boundary meant to neutralize the new voting power of the recently-emancipated Blacks. Jackson Ward and its surrounding areas, over the next few decades, became a thriving center for Black businesses and entertainment due to events like the establishment of Maggie Walker's Consolidated Bank & Trust and the opening of the Hippodrome Theater. As segregation and Jim Crow policies expanded, Broad Street became an entertainment hub for white Richmonders, especially from N. 7th to N. 9th Streets - coined "Theater Row." Department stores, notably Thalheimer's and Miller & Rhoads, were the cornerstone of Downtown retail throughout the 20th Century.

As the city's development expanded further from the original Downtown areas, white residents moving to the periphery, known as "white flight," became the norm. From the turn of the century until the 1950s, City Center's racial composition shifted from majority-white to majority-black. Nevertheless, the development of the City's first Master Plan, the creation of all-Black public housing, and the construction of the Richmond-Petersburg

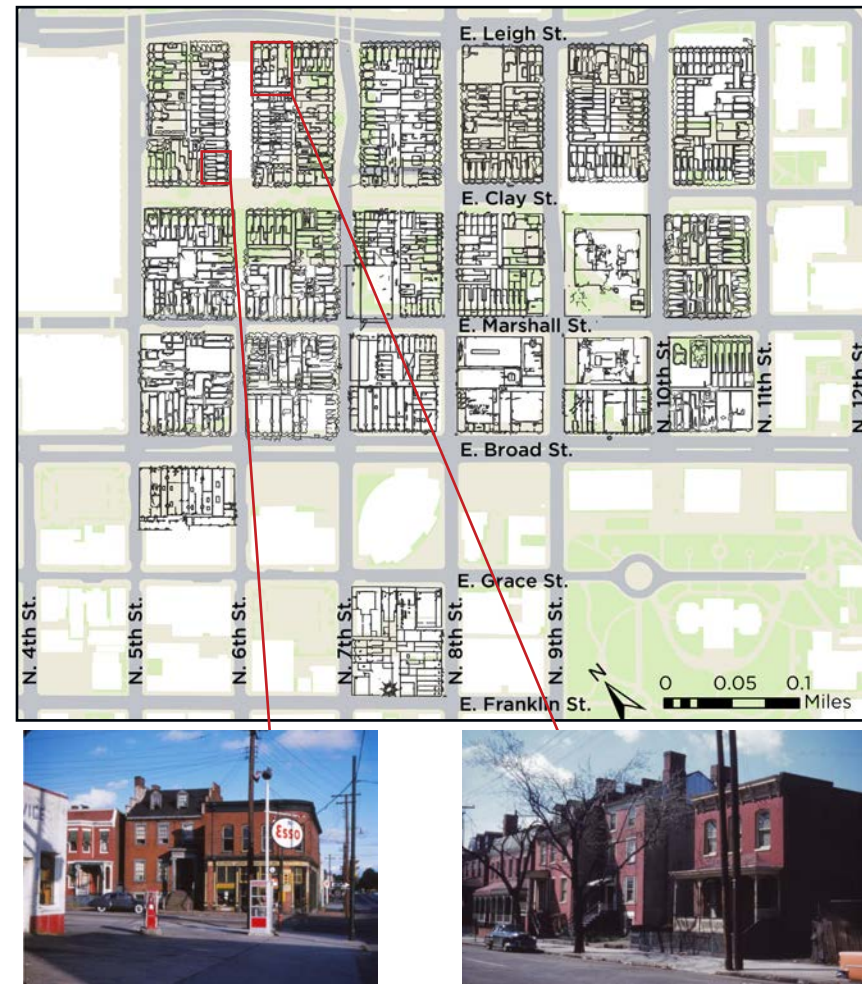


FIGURE 4 // 1924 Block Layout and 1955 Site Photographs
Source: 1924 Sanborn Insurance Maps (Library of Virginia); The Valentine Museum

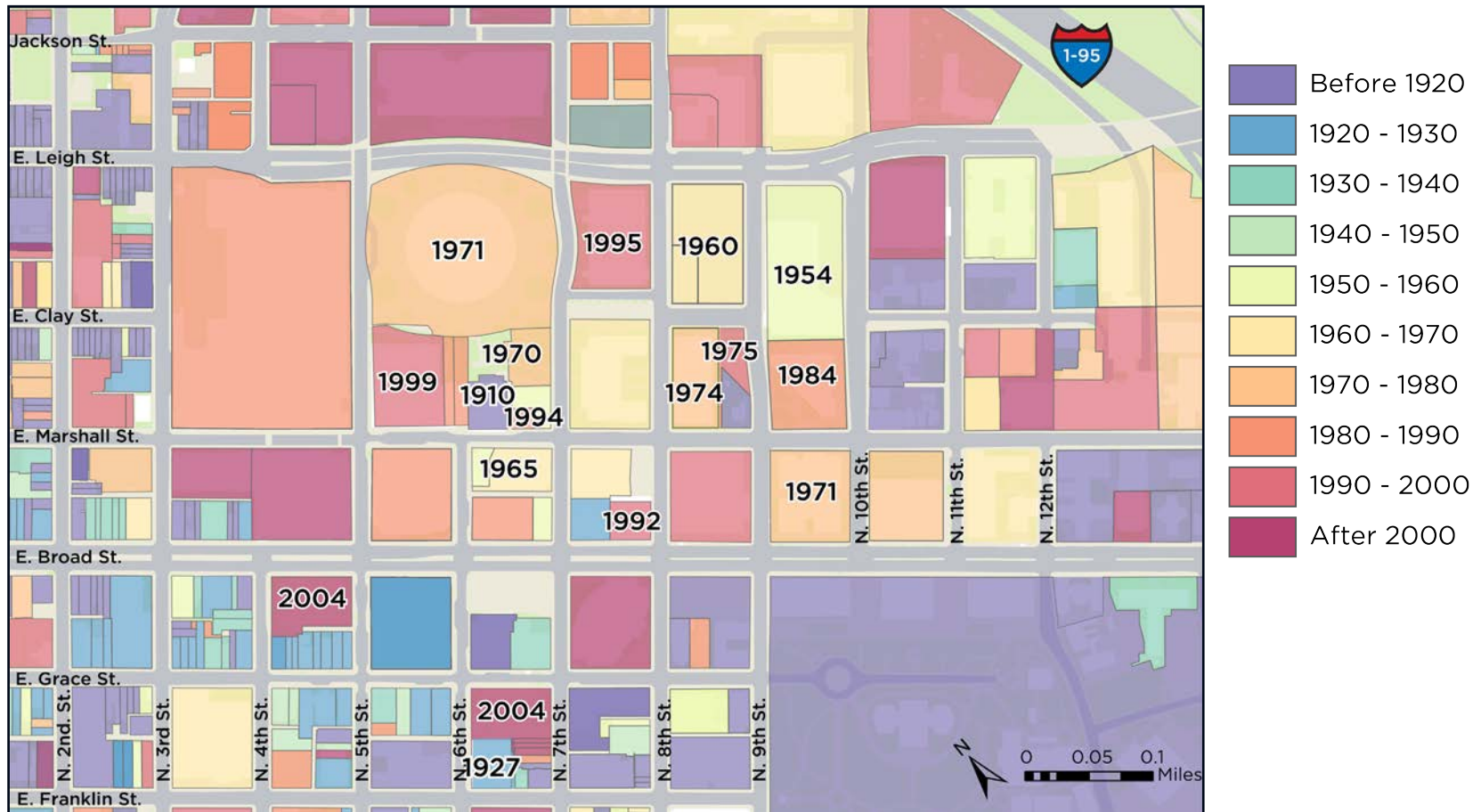
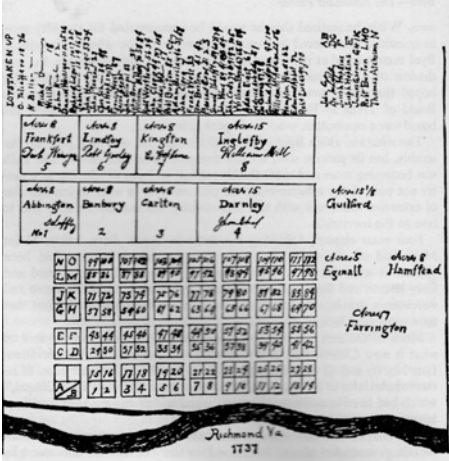


FIGURE 5 // Year of Construction for Existing Buildings

Turnpike (now I-95) all had a hand in displacing thousands of Black residents and destroying their homes within and adjacent to City Center. Demand for parking in Downtown increased with the rise of the automobile and continued white flight to Henrico and Chesterfield Counties; many buildings, such as the 6th Street Market and John Marshall High School’s track field, as well as homes and businesses, were converted into parking garages or demolished and turned into surface parking lots to serve the Downtown commuters.

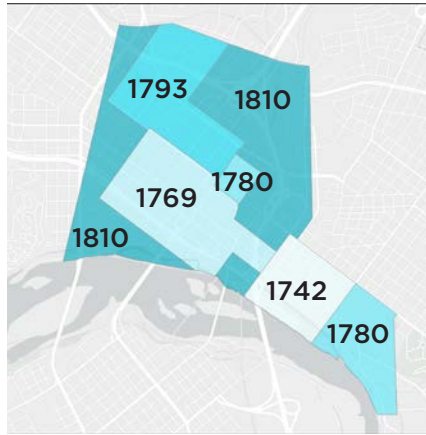
The growing pace of white flight to the counties had increasingly negative economic impacts for Downtown and the city as a whole. As Henrico and Chesterfield’s populations boomed, politicians and planners in Richmond attempted strategies to regain prominence and population, such as the 1970 Chesterfield annexation, the building of the Coliseum in 1971, a new 6th Street Marketplace in 1985, and the Convention Center in 1986 (Figure 5). Ultimately, Downtown Richmond suffered in the late decades of the 20th Century and into the 2000s. Over the past century, communities, homes, and residents were displaced and replaced with large, non-residential buildings and a City Center that would only be inhabited from “9 to 5.”

Major Downtown Richmond Milestones



1737

Richmond is founded and the city is platted by Major William Mayo for William Byrd II. The streets and blocks run parallel to the James River and encompass an area of only 0.23 square miles.



1742

King George II grants a charter to William Byrd II to establish Richmond as a town.

1769

Areas west of the original town boundaries are annexed, going as far west as today's 1st Street.

1730

1740

1750

1760

1770

1780

1790

1800

1810

1788

John Marshall House is built (N. 9th and E. Marshall). Marshall lives there until his death in 1835. Today, it's the last remaining structure in Downtown built in the 18th century besides the Capitol.



1782

Richmond is incorporated as a city with a population of 1,800 - half of whom are enslaved people or free Africans.

1780

The state capitol is moved from Williamsburg to Richmond.

The area just North of the Capitol is annexed.

1792

The Virginia Capitol building is completed.



1793

Much of present-day Jackson Ward and Gilpin Court are annexed, generally Monroe to N. 9th above E. Broad.

After the success of the 17th Street Marketplace, the City unsuccessfully attempts to establish a second market, Shockoe Market Hall, at E. Broad and 12th.

1810

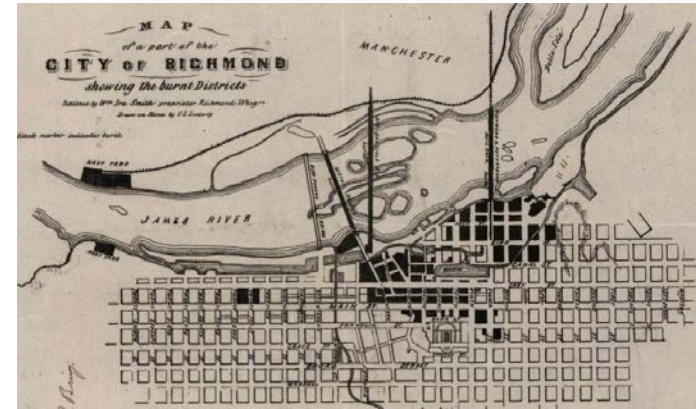
Richmond annexes a little under 1 square mile from Henrico, including much of present-day Downtown.



1834

The Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad becomes the first railroad to enter the City with a station located at N. 8th and E. Broad Streets.

The Second Market is expanded across E. Marshall Street. It becomes the largest market in Richmond by the end of the 19th Century.



1854

Southgate Farm is subdivided and dozens of lots are sold between N. 3rd Street and N. 6th Street, north of Jackson Street. This area becomes mainly inhabited by German immigrants and later, black residents. It's then known as "Navy Hill" to honor the soldiers of the War of 1812.

1844

The Medical Department of Hampden-Sydney College (now part of VCU Health) moves into its first building, the Egyptian Building (E. Marshall and College St.)



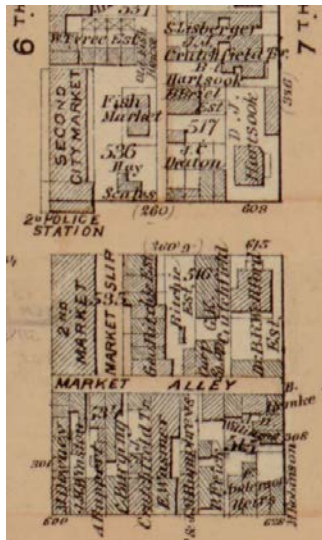
1845

H Street is renamed Broad Street, as it had become a place of convergence for the major north-south and east-west streets in the region with its unusual width.



1865

Much of the Main Street commercial corridor is burned in a fire set by Confederate Troops evacuating the City at the end of the Civil War. Consequently, the Broad Street corridor, which included the 6th Street Market, becomes the premiere commercial core.



1816

A "New" or "Second" market is established at the southeast corner of N. 6th and E. Marshall.

1820

1830

1840

1850

1860

1867

Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church is organized by Rev. John Jasper and moves to its current site on Duval Street in 1869. The present church is built in 1887. The site was threatened by the construction of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike in the 1950s, but was saved due to Rev. Jasper's fame. Today, it's the only building remaining on the north side of Duval Street.



The streetcar helped create neighborhoods further from Downtown that carried racial deed restrictions. By the mid-1920's, black residents had taken over older, formerly-white areas in Downtown.



1869

Richmond Public Schools are created. Navy Hill School (6th and Duval) had unofficially been operating as a school for Black children with Black teachers before this date. For many years, Navy Hill School was the only school in the city with Black faculty.

1888

Miller, Rhoads, and Gerhart (later Miller & Rhoads Department Store) opens at 509 E. Broad.

1871

Jackson Ward is created in an attempt to contain and neutralize the voting power of Richmond's recently emancipated Black population, leading to increased racial empowerment. Though it was thought to be originally named for Stonewall Jackson, the sesquicentennial celebration in 2021 re-contextualized the neighborhood by honoring Giles B. Jackson, a black resident of Jackson Ward who was born enslaved but later became the first black person to practice law before the Supreme Court of Virginia, among other achievements.

1889

Streetcar system is implemented, connecting Richmonders further from Downtown. Broad Street was the center of the elaborate streetcar network.



1890

By 1890, Richmond's development had shifted westward to the point where Broad Street replaced Main Street as the main corridor for commercial activity.



1910

Blues Armory is built as the headquarter for the Richmond Light Infantry Blues – one of the nation's most historic military units. It served as a multi-level building that housed a public market at the bottom floor.

1909

John Marshall High School (N. 8th and E. Marshall) is opened. The building is demolished in 1961.

1906

The General Assembly mandates segregation on public transit.

1905

Maggie L. Walker founds Consolidated Bank & Trust (N. 1st and E. Marshall), the oldest surviving Black-operated bank in the US. She becomes the first woman bank president.

1904

After the Virginia Passenger and Power Company announces that it would segregate streetcars, the Richmond Streetcar Boycott begins & lasts until 1906.

1914

The Hippodrome Theater (N. 2nd and E. Leigh) opens as a vaudeville and movie theater for Black performers, later becoming a celebrated musical locale attracting legendary greats, such as Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, and Duke Ellington. It becomes an anchor for entertainment in Jackson Ward.

During the early 20th Century, the north side of E. Broad between N. 7th and N. 9th Streets developed into "Theater Row," with notable theaters like The Bijou, The National, and The Colonial Theater. This area became a hub for entertainment such as movies and live performances.



Jackson Ward was known as “Black Wall Street” and “Harlem of the South” due to the thriving Black businesses and entertainment venues. During its heyday from the 1920s through the 1940s, it was one of the most active and well-known centers of African-American life throughout the US, and the hub of black professional and entrepreneurial activities in the city and the state.

1922

Thalhimer's moves to its final location at Broad between N. 6th and N. 7th.

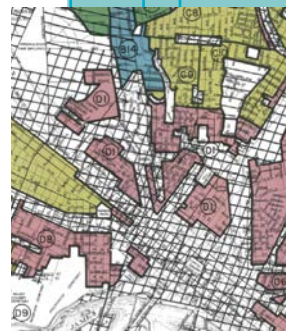
The National Theater is built at N. 7th and E. Broad.

1920

1930

1937

The Home Owner's Loan Corporation creates “residential security maps” detailing areas where the federal government should and should not give loans. The consequences led to the phenomenon of ‘redlining,’ where black-majority areas were denied loans.



1940

1940

Richmond Housing Authority (now called the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority) is established through a New Deal program.

Downtown Population: 28,329*

1943

The first public housing project in Richmond, Gilpin Court, starts construction in the area formerly known as “Apostle Town.” Because it was funded by the federal government, wartime efforts meant that the new housing would only allow defense workers. Only 25 of the original residents of this area qualified to live here, displacing hundreds of Black Richmonders.

1942

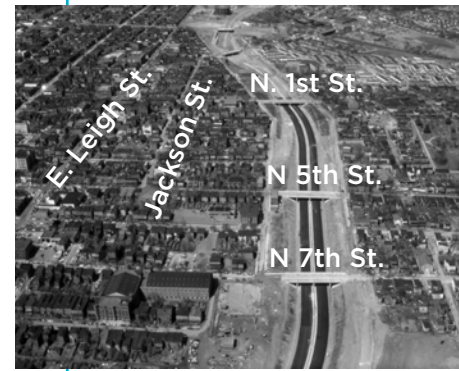
St. Louis planning consultant Harland Bartholomew is tasked with overhauling the City's Zoning Ordinance. He creates specific districts for large single-family homes, known as exclusionary zoning. The majority-black areas in Center City are surrounded by Industrial Zoning.

1946

The first citywide, long-range Master Plan for the City of Richmond is completed by Harland Bartholomew and adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council.

1957

Construction of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike (now part of I-95) is complete and Jackson Ward, a historically Black neighborhood, is divided by a major highway - resulting in the demolition of a significant portion of the neighborhood. The project displaced 10% of the city's Black population at the time.



27,335

1948

The streetcars cease operation and many are burned and replaced with Buses.

1950

The first 10 professional Black firefighters are hired by the City to work at Engine Company No. 9 Fire Station (N. 5th and Jackson).

1950

17,547

1960

1960

John Marshall High School is closed. The site becomes a Federal building. The athletic fields are turned into a surface parking lot (N. 8th/E. Leigh).

1965

Navy Hill School is closed.

1964

The 6th St. Marketplace is replaced with a parking garage.

After World War II, the ubiquity of the automobile and federal loan programs fuel white flight to the suburbs, causing an influx of black residents in those formerly-white areas.

*Census tracts generally between Belvidere to the west, train tracks N. of Gilpin to the north, James River to the south, and I-95 to the east

1968

Engine Company No. 9 Fire Station is demolished.



1985

The ground floor of the Blues Armory is converted to retail and restaurant space for the 6th Street Marketplace (N. 6th, E. Clay St., E. Marshall St.).



1971

City Hall is built at N. 9th and E. Broad.

The 13,000-seat Coliseum was completed, stretching 2 city blocks. It was in operation until 2018.

1976

The Blues Armory is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1986

Greater Richmond Convention Center is built (E. Marshall, N. 3rd, and N. 5th Streets).



As white flight to Henrico and Chesterfield increased the proportion of black residents in Richmond, white politicians wanted to prevent increased black political clout. In 1970, they annexed 23 sq. mi. of Chesterfield to dilute the black population, adding 47,000 mostly white residents. Overnight, the black population decreased from 52% to 42%.

1977

Henry L. Marsh becomes the first black mayor of Richmond, and 5 of 9 City Council seats are won by Black Richmonders.

1990

Miller & Rhoads Dept. Store closes its doors.

1992

Thalhimer's Dept. Store closes its doors.

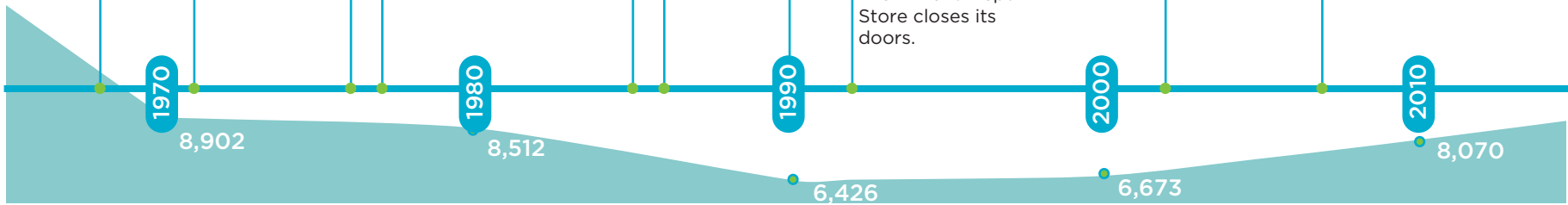
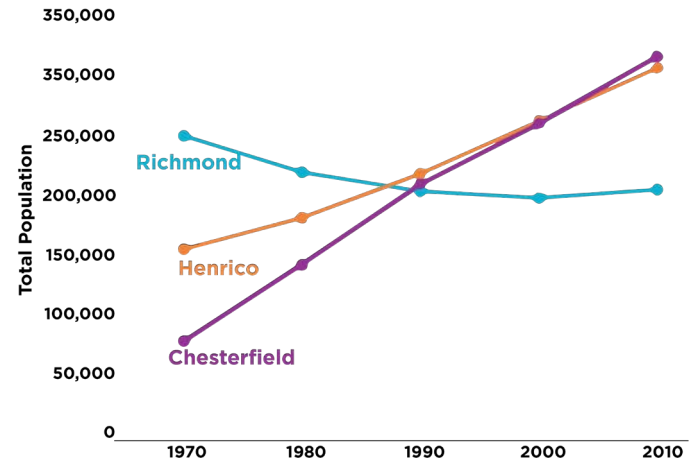
2002

Richmond Convention Center is expanded, now spanning 6 blocks.

2007

The 6th Street Marketplace closes.

After the 1970 annexation, Richmond's population began to decline as Henrico and Chesterfield's populations skyrocketed over the next several decades. Directly related to the population decline was the City's tax revenue and the decline of Downtown itself. Only recently has Richmond seen a resurgence in population.



Existing Conditions

Demographics

For the purposes of this plan, Downtown includes Census Tracts 302 and 305 (Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10). Downtown has had a recent resurgence in population since its lowest point in 1990. Today, almost all of the population in Downtown lives west of N. 4th Street. A large portion of the Downtown population in Monroe Ward is likely VCU students, since the Monroe Park Campus is adjacent to the western boundary. From 2000 to 2019, the share of people ages 18-34 increased from 50.8% to 73.2% (Figure 7). In the block group that includes Jackson Ward (E. Broad, N. 3rd, N. Belvidere, I-95), non-Hispanic white is the minority. However, an increase in the Non-Hispanic White population has been the trend in Downtown overall since 2000 (Figure 6). Asians are overrepresented in Downtown, compared to the Richmond City share of Asians (2.1%). Educational attainment throughout Downtown has also increased since 2000. For the first time, the majority of adults over 25 in Downtown had at least a Bachelor's degree in 2019.

FIGURE 6 // Race and Ethnicity in Downtown, 2000-2019

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2014-2019); Census 2000, 2010

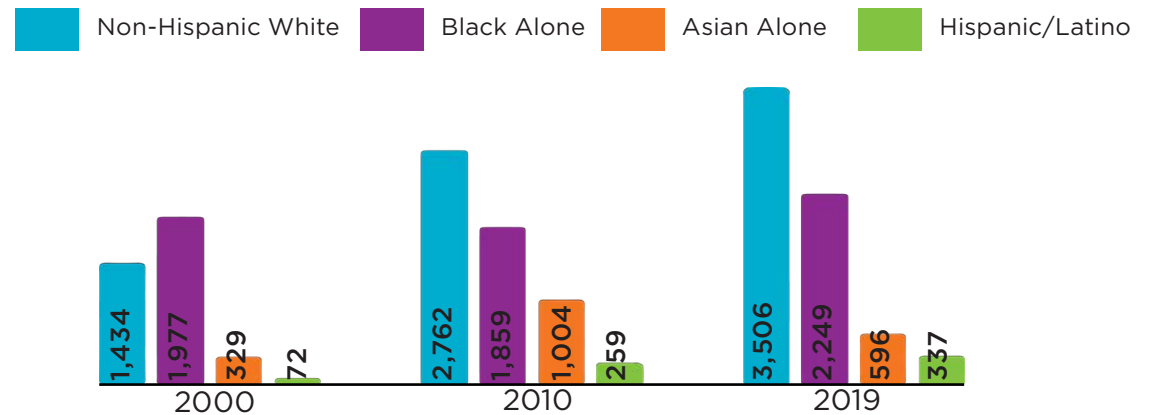
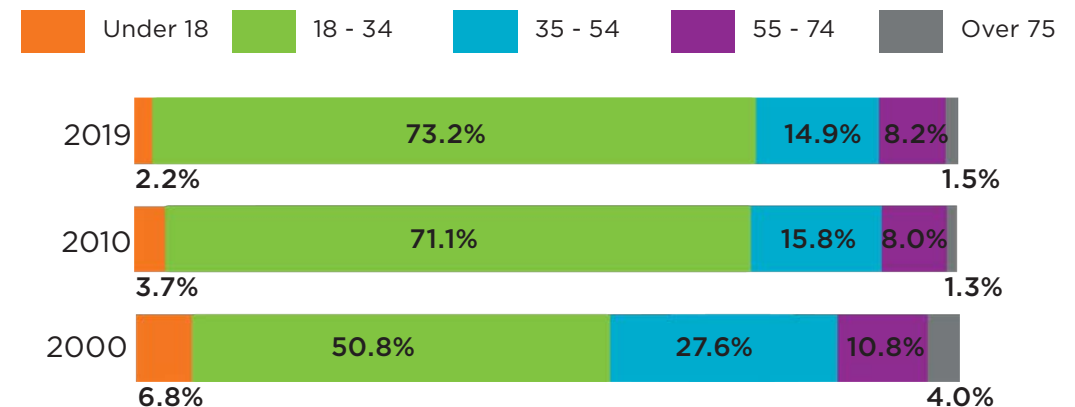
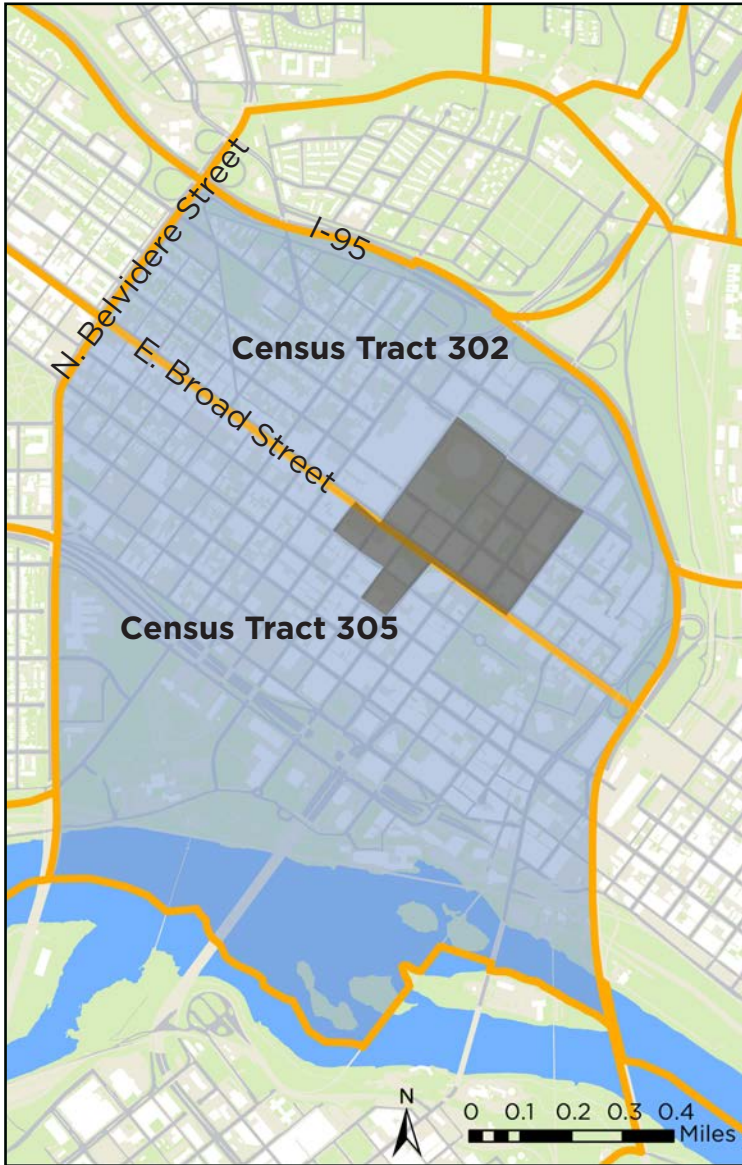


FIGURE 7 // Age Breakdown in Downtown, 2000-2019

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2014-2019); Census 2000, 2010





- Census Tracts
- Downtown Tracts
- City Center Area

FIGURE 9 // Selected Demographic Indicators for Tract 302, 2000-2019

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2014-2019); Census 2000, 2010

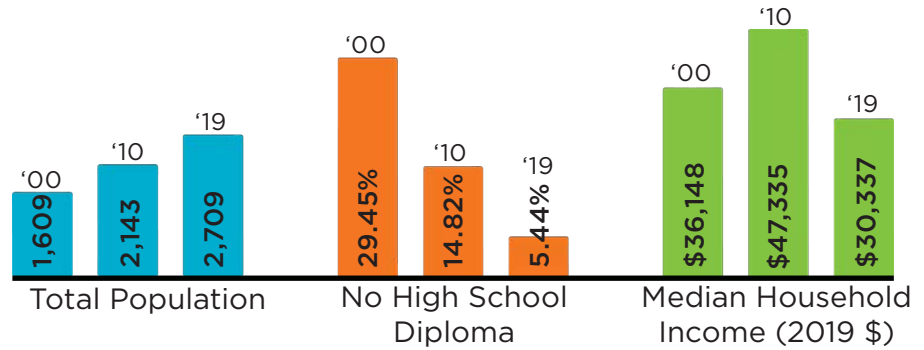


FIGURE 10 // Selected Demographic Indicators for Tract 305, 2000-2019

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2014-2019); Census 2000, 2010

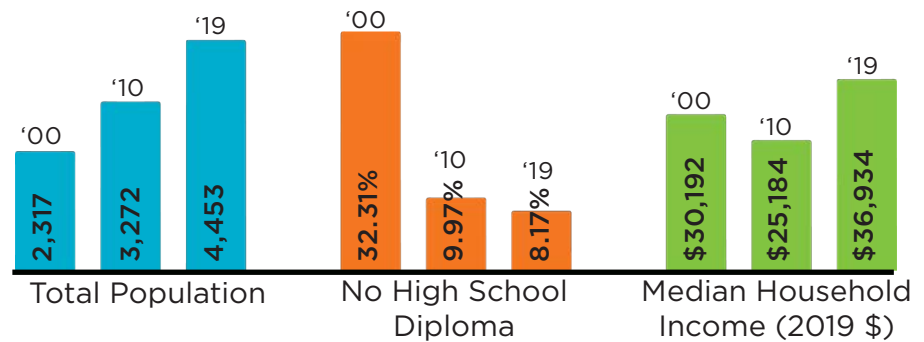


FIGURE 8 // Census Tract Map

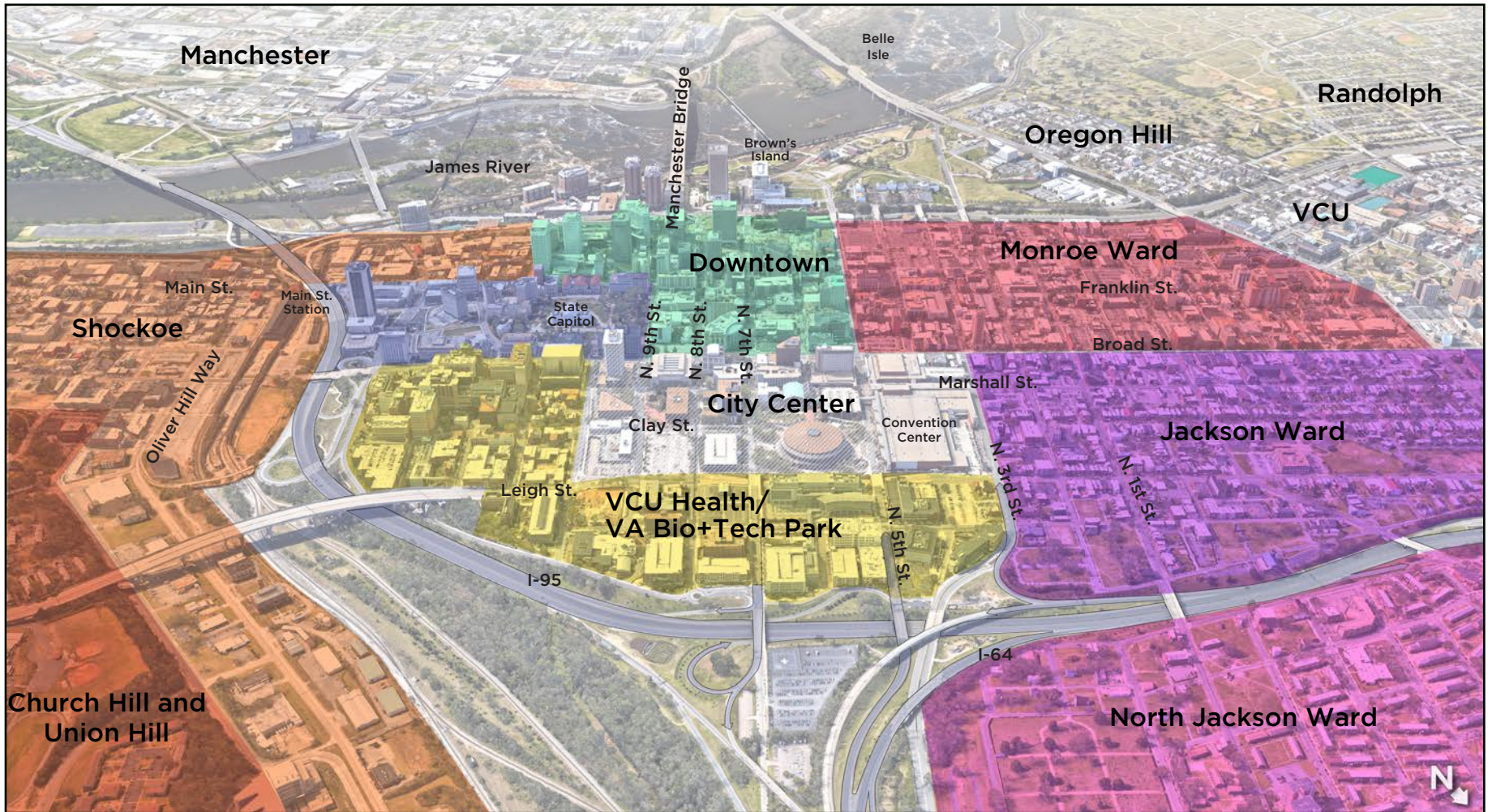


FIGURE 11 // Adjoining Neighborhoods Map

Adjoining Neighborhoods

City Center is a void surrounded by established neighborhoods (Figure 11). To the west of the Convention Center is historic Jackson Ward, with Gilpin north of I-95/64. To the south is the State Capitol and other State government buildings, and further west is Monroe Ward. To the east is VCU's BioTech campus and

VCU Health. Beyond I-95 is Shockoe Bottom, and further east is Church Hill and Union Hill.

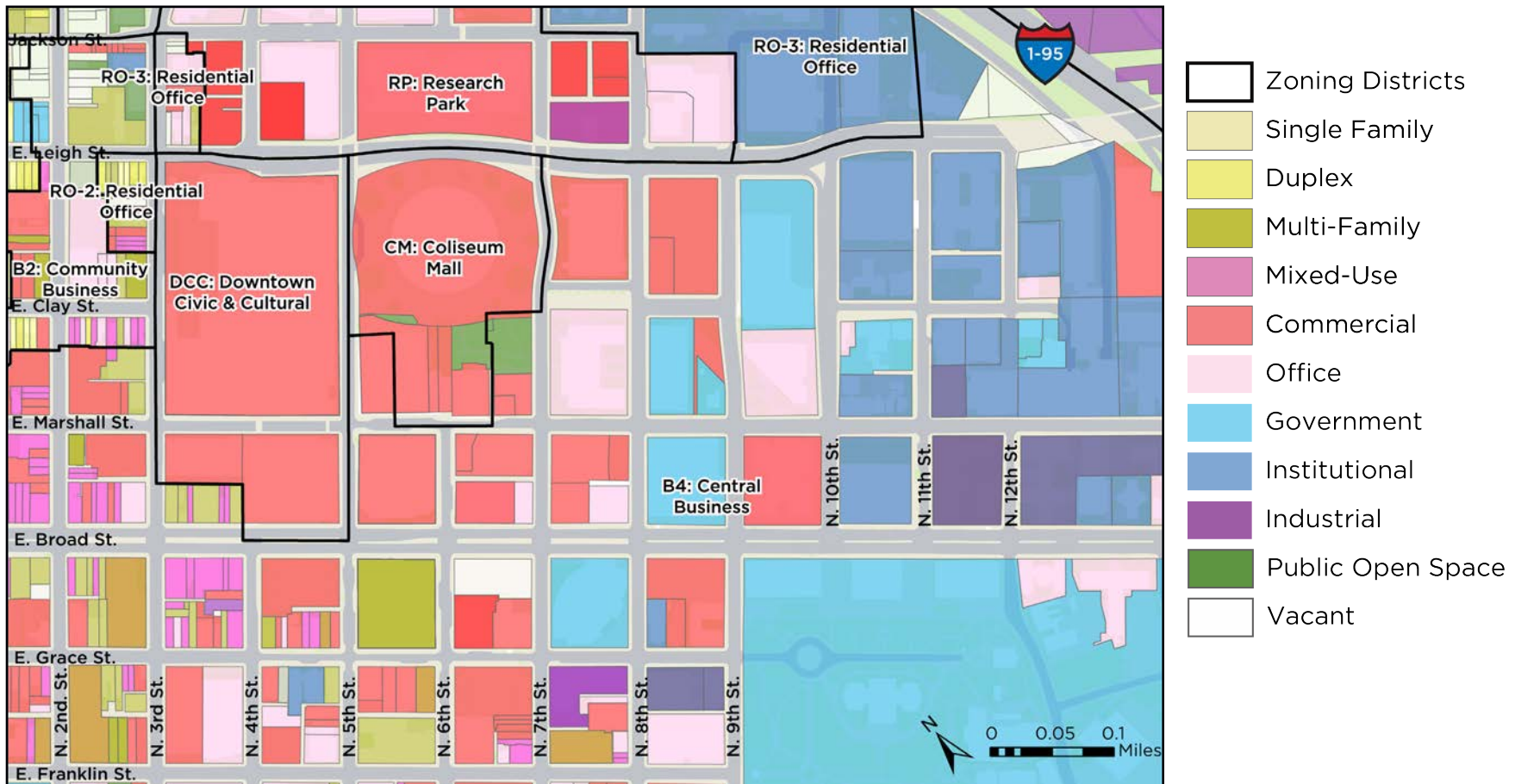


FIGURE 12 // Current Land Use
 Source: City of Richmond Appraisal Office

Current Land Use & Zoning

Land uses in this area are mostly commercial, government, and office (Figure 12). The area lacks residential uses, so it is mostly uninhabited outside of typical work hours. There are notable local, state, and federal government uses, including City Hall, the State Capitol, and federal office buildings. Several of the parcels have surface parking lots or parking decks. The Richmond Coliseum - closed since 2018 - is vacant. The Coliseum has its own Coliseum

Mall [CM] zoning district, and the Convention Center is within the Downtown Cultural and Civic [DCC] zoning district. The rest of Downtown, south of E. Leigh Street, is zoned B-4: Central Business. The surrounding areas have less intense Residential Office [RO] and Community Business [B-2] zoning. Some of the Biotech buildings north of E. Leigh are zoned Research Park [RP].

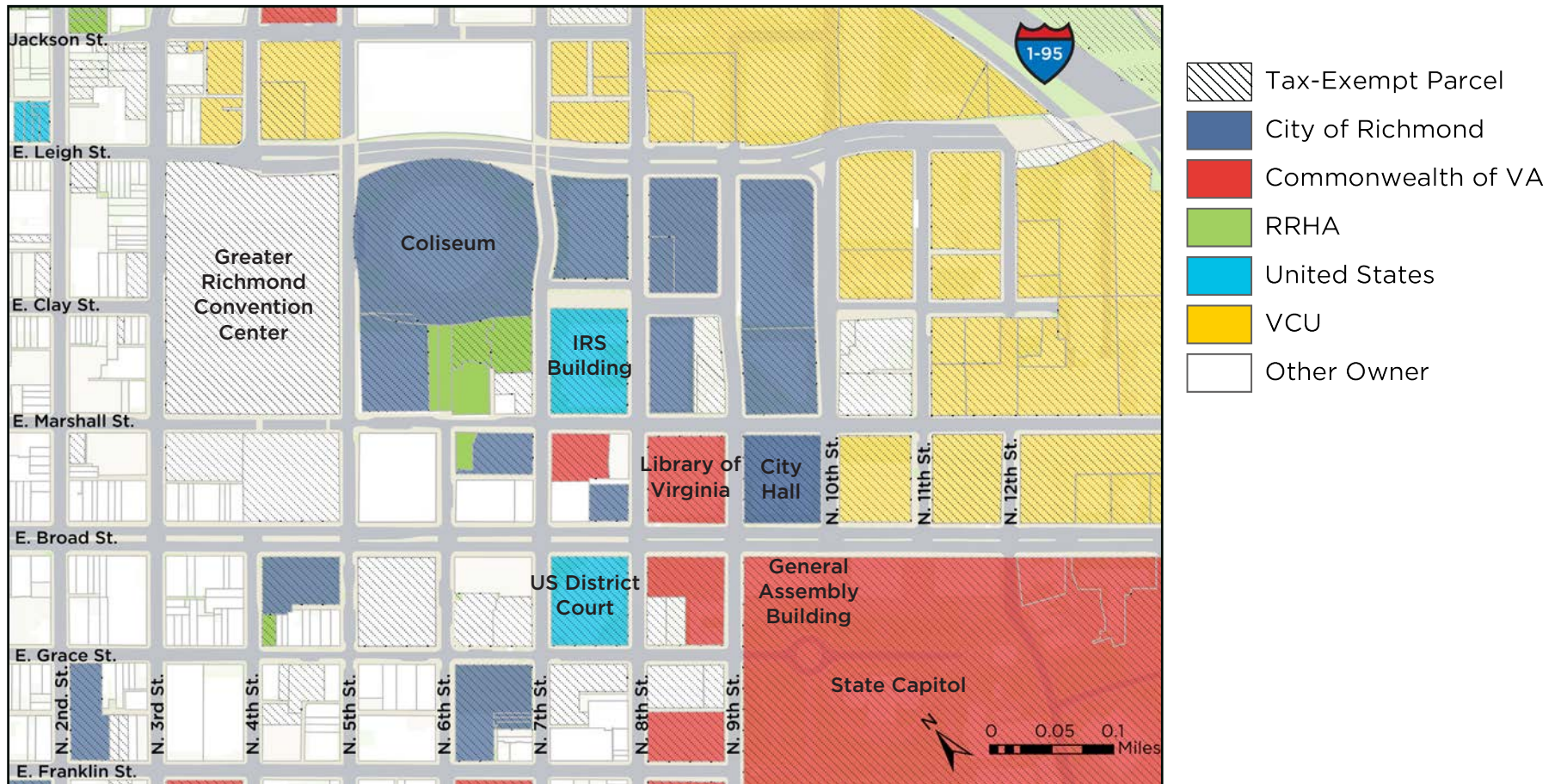


FIGURE 13 // Ownership and Tax-Exempt Status

Major Tenants

Most of the parcels in the area are tax-exempt because they are owned by the city, state, or federal government (Figure 13). The most notable owner is the City of Richmond, controlling the majority of parcels between N. 5th, E. Broad, N. 10th, and E. Leigh Streets. The Commonwealth of Virginia owns the Library of Virginia and a State-owned parking deck. Meanwhile, VCU Health owns most of the parcels east of N. 10th Street. The IRS building and the US District Court are federally-owned. The Richmond

Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) owns six parcels south of the Coliseum, including the Blues Armory, none of which are tax-exempt. Other privately-owned parcels include the Marriott Hotel and a few other LLCs.

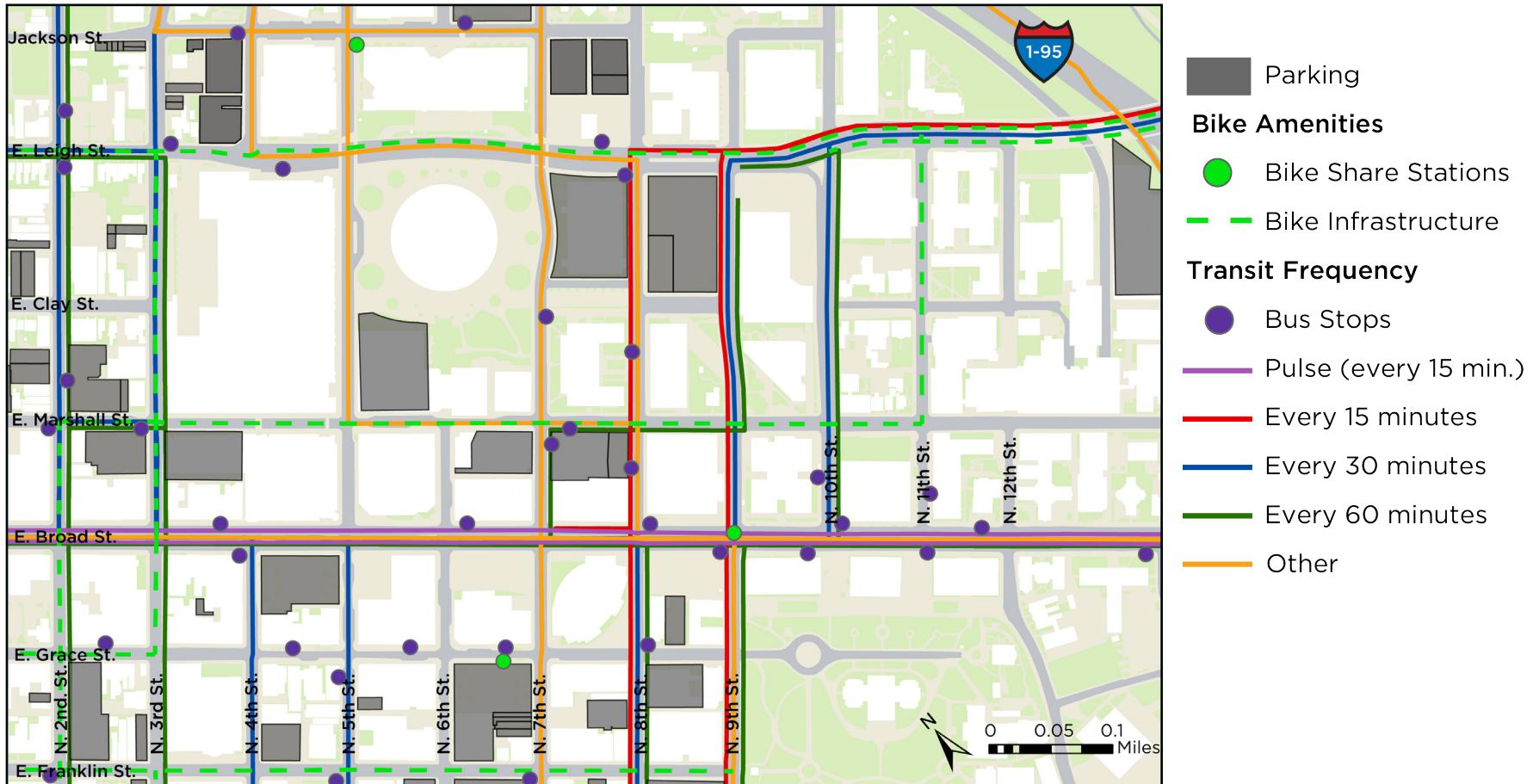


FIGURE 14 // Non-Car Network

Transportation Network

Although the area is next to walkable neighborhoods, there are many barriers to walkability in the area. I-64/95 is a barrier to the north and east; extreme changes in elevation south and east may inhibit some pedestrians. The ‘superblocks’ created by the Coliseum and Convention Center act as a barrier as well. Grade changes adjacent to the Coliseum on E. Leigh Street and E. Clay Street make walking on those streets uninviting and/or unsafe. Pedestrian and bike amenities are lacking in this area. With the

lack of greenspace and abundance of surface parking lots and other impermeable surfaces, walking in the heat can be unpleasant and even hazardous for vulnerable populations.

This area sits at the convergence of many Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) bus routes, including the Pulse Bus Rapid Transit line. N. 8th, N. 9th, and N. 10th Streets all have multiple GRTC routes (Figure 14).

Existing Plans

Pulse Corridor Plan (2017)

The Pulse Corridor Plan directs future development at key nodes along the Pulse Bus Rapid Transit line. City Center is located in the Government Center Station Area which the plan envisions to evolve into a 24-hour neighborhood with “new development that matches the intensity of existing buildings but also includes active ground floor uses that enliven the sidewalks, and creates real opportunity to more fully engage the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park and VCU Health campuses with the balance of Downtown.” The station area recommendations for the Government Center Station Area and the other Downtown Station Areas include:

- **SA.40:** Develop a small area plan for the opportunity area around the VCU Medical Center, the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park, Blues Armory, the Coliseum, and City-owned land. Include VCU Health and the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park in the planning process. Explore public-private/non-profit partnerships to redevelop properties to make the area a dynamic live-work environment.
- **SA.44:** Reconnect the street grid as opportunities present themselves in order to establish a more fine-grained street pattern, while preserving the existing gridded street network by not closing any additional streets in the Downtown core.
- **SA.45:** Using City-owned lots, especially in the opportunity area around the Coliseum and the lot across from the Convention Center, develop affordable housing with a mix of uses.

- **SA.46:** Continue to develop the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park area by attracting biotech companies to the Biotech Research Park.



Hold the Corner



Appropriate Setbacks/Stepbacks



Entrance Faces the Street



Transparency



Façade Articulation



Screened Parking/Services

FIGURE 15 // Six Form Elements from Pulse Plan

Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth (2020)

Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth is a plan to create a more equitable, sustainable, and beautiful future for all Richmonders; so that when Richmond celebrates its 300th birthday in 2037, Richmonders can collectively see how equity- and sustainability-centered actions resulted in a beautiful city where all Richmonders thrive. The Department of Planning and Development Review (PDR) developed this new citywide Master Plan with extensive community engagement to plan for and guide Richmond's future growth. Richmond 300 includes five topic visions that will guide how the city should physically grow over the next 20 years. The Guiding Principles for the City Center Plan are based on these topic visions:



High-Quality Places: Richmond is a well-designed city of communities interconnected by a network of Nodes, public facilities, and open spaces providing services to residents, businesses, and visitors.



Equitable Transportation: Richmond prioritizes the movement of people over the movement of vehicles through a safe, reliable, equitable, and sustainable transportation network.



Diverse Economy: Richmond is home to a variety of businesses and industries that offer opportunities for quality employment and capital investment.



Inclusive Housing: Richmond is a city where all people can access quality housing choices.



Thriving Environment: Richmond is a sustainable and resilient city with healthy air, clean water and a flourishing ecosystem.

Richmond 300 identifies five Priority Growth Nodes where the City is encouraging the most significant growth in population and development over the next 20 years. City Center is located within the Downtown Core Node. The Primary Next Steps for achieving the vision for this node from *Richmond 300* include:

- **Coliseum Plan:** Develop the Coliseum Area Framework Plan with community engagement.
- **Coliseum Redevelopment:** Create and issue a Request for Proposals for the Coliseum area using the guidance from the Coliseum Area Framework Plan to reposition City-owned assets into revenue-generating properties.
- **Life Sciences Cluster:** Market and expand growth opportunities for life science-focused businesses and supporting entities clustered near VA Bio+Tech Park and VCU Health (Goal 11).
- **Downtown Marketing & Services:** Continue to market Downtown as the cultural, business, government, and recreation destination of the Richmond Region and support cleaning, event, and placemaking services throughout Downtown.
- **Non-Car Connectivity:** Improve non-car connectivity by encouraging urban design that promotes walking, continuing to improve transit access, and developing on-street bike facilities and greenways to Jackson Ward, the Riverfront (per the Riverfront Plan), Church Hill, and other areas.

Vision and Guiding Principles

The Vision: City Center is a dynamic place that attracts residents, employees, students, and tourists. City Center’s grand park and interconnected smaller open spaces are the cultural, recreational, and commercial spine of the neighborhood. New buildings reflect the prominent Downtown location with substantial height and distinctive architecture that engages the public realm. City Center is a health tech innovation district that attracts and grows life science industries and start-ups. As a mixed-income community, City Center is a diverse neighborhood that includes supportive, workforce, and market-rate housing. The Greater Richmond Convention Center, historic sites, museums, and theaters thrive with the addition of hotels, restaurants, new entertainment venues, and programmable open space.

Guiding Principles

- **Making City Center a High-Quality Place:** Intentionally redevelop City-owned properties within City Center to create a walkable, beautiful, and distinctive neighborhood with high standards of urban design. Establish a series of connected public open spaces that enrich and enliven City Center. Integrate a diverse mix of uses to complement the surrounding context and incorporate activated ground floors to enliven the area.
- **Connecting with Safe & Equitable Transportation:** Prioritize the movement of people over the movement of vehicles through a safe, reliable, equitable, and sustainable transportation network, promoting easier and safer access to and through City Center. Seamlessly connect City Center to Richmond neighborhoods and other nearby attractions through enhanced pedestrian, bike, transit, and vehicular access and connectivity.
- **Diversifying City Center’s Economy:** Diversify City Center’s economic portfolio from primarily government uses to uses that leverage the adjacent educational institutions and VA Bio+Tech Park to create an Innovation District where these anchor institutions connect with start-ups, business incubators, accelerators, and other life science institutions. Enhance and complement existing tourist attractions through the development of hotels and entertainment venues. Provide opportunities for local, small, and minority-owned business to be a part of the redevelopment of City Center.
- **Creating Inclusive Housing Options:** Leverage City-owned properties in City Center to expand the availability of housing options at all income levels, increasing the number of dwellings Downtown to bring people closer to jobs and frequent transit.
- **Stimulating a Thriving Environment:** Develop City Center as a sustainable and resilient neighborhood with a built environment that enhances and protects natural assets. Reduce air and water pollution through green transportation, building and infrastructure design, and construction methods. Ensure that residents have equitable access to nature and a healthy community by increasing the tree canopy, greenspace, and access to healthy foods.

Plan Overview

Development Clusters

Hotel & Entertainment: Situated adjacent to the eastern edge of the Greater Richmond Convention Center, the Hotel and Entertainment Cluster includes the development of over 800 hotel rooms (Figure 16). A Headquarters Hotel could locate on Block 1A and connect directly into the Convention Center and include active ground floor uses to engage with the open space. While the existing parking garages on Blocks 5 and 9 may remain in the near-term, these present opportunities for additional hotel and mixed-use development. Block 6 can accommodate several mixed-use buildings in addition to rehabilitating the Blues Armory Building to accommodate uses, such as, meeting spaces and a food hall. This cluster could incorporate other entertainment venues including a movie theater, performances spaces, and art galleries. All buildings should include active ground floor uses including retail and restaurants. Buildings should engage with the adjacent streets and open spaces to enhance the pedestrian environment.

Residential: City Center’s redevelopment could include over 2,000 residential units with neighborhood amenities including a grocery store. Block 2 should be developed with mixed-use buildings to serve the residents and employees within City Center and the surrounding neighborhoods. A fire station to serve Downtown should be included in Block 3 within a mixed-use building.

Life Sciences and Office: City Center will become an Innovation District to encourage the growth of entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, specifically in the Life Science fields. The Life

Science and Office Cluster benefits from proximities to Reynolds Community College, VCU Health, and the VA Bio+Tech Park with mixed-use office buildings being shown near the edges of City Center in Blocks 4 and 8. This cluster also includes a public high school on Block 8 which could build partnerships with adjacent higher education institutions and life science anchors.

Municipal: City functions should be realigned and consolidated to reduce the footprint of City facilities in the City Center area. Explore the creation of a STEM-focused public high school and a fire station within City Center.

Networks

Street Network: City Center has a gridded street network through the reintroduction of N. 6th Street from E. Broad Street to a new connector road parallel to E. Leigh Street and E. Clay Street from N. 10th Street to N. 5th Street.

Bicycle Network: Introduce bike lanes on N. 5th, N. 7th, and Leigh Streets.

Transit Network: Develop N. 8th Street, N 9th Street, and/or E. Marshall Street as a transit mall with dedicated bus lanes and bus parking. Incorporate enhanced transit on N. 8th and N. 9th Streets to include potentially a North-South BRT (Bus Rapid Transit).

Open Space Network: Develop open spaces of varying scales on E. Clay Street and N. 10th Street.

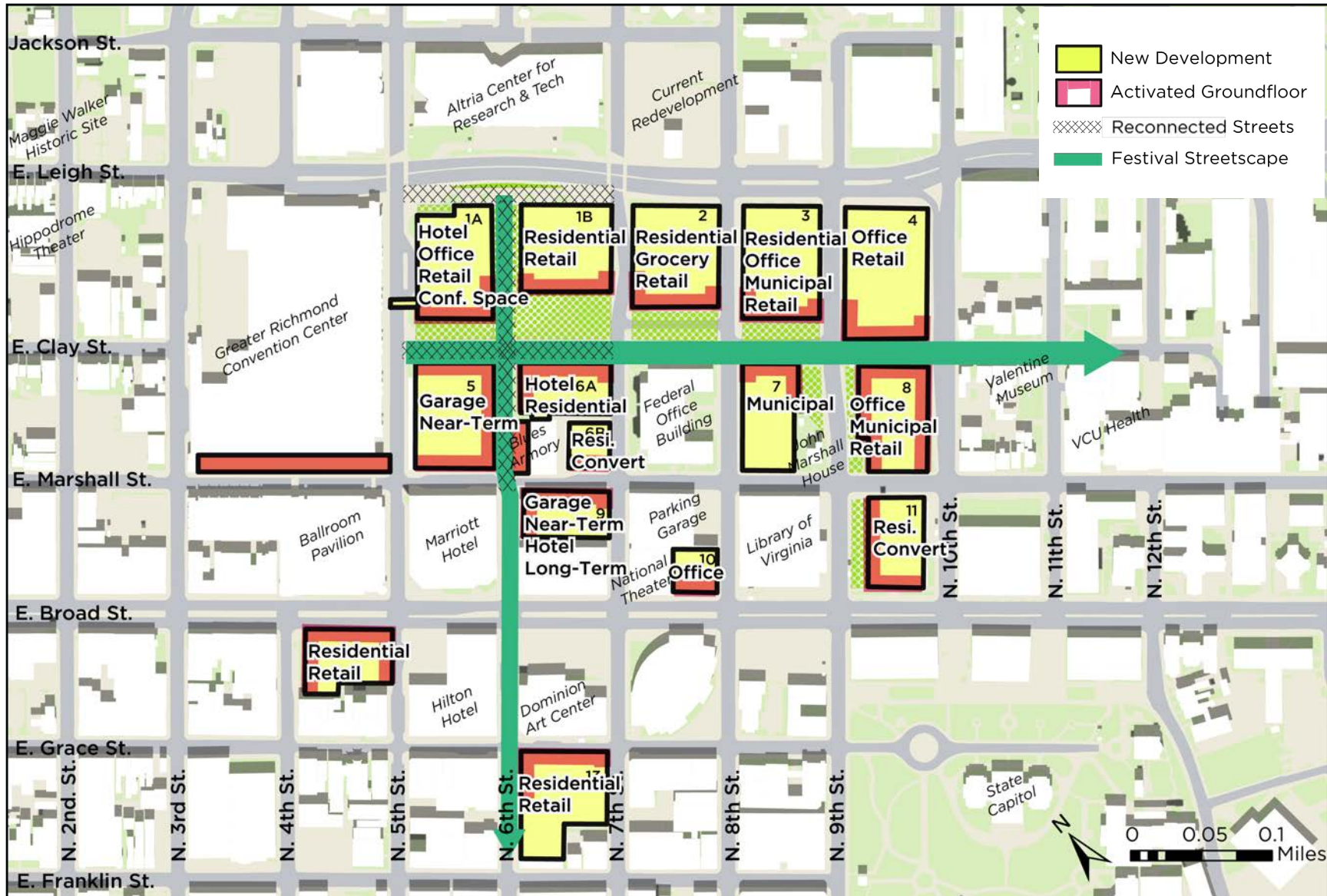


FIGURE 16 // Site Plan with Potential Development Clusters

High-Quality Places

Guiding Principles: Intentionally redevelop City-owned properties within City Center to create a walkable, beautiful, and distinctive neighborhood with high standards of urban design. Establish a series of connected public open spaces that enrich and enliven City Center. Integrate a diverse mix of uses to complement the surrounding context and incorporate activated ground floors to enliven the area.

City-Owned Assets

Efficiently manage City-owned land and facilities.

City Center is home to multiple City-owned assets including City Hall, the John Marshall Courts Building, the Richmond Coliseum, and multiple parking lots and garages (Figure 17). While some civic uses will remain in the area including City Hall functions, other uses will be relocated or eliminated to allow for the redevelopment of the parcels by private parties. The majority of the City-owned structures have significant maintenance issues and continued maintenance to prolong their useful life is not appropriate (Figure 3).

Objective:

Utilize a real estate management and disposition strategy, prioritizing increasing jobs, housing, access to parks, and other basic needs of low-income and traditionally marginalized communities. (See the Equitable Development Scorecard for specific requirements for private development on City-owned land).

Strategies:

- Continue to study the needs of City functions in this area following the release of the Department of Public Works Facilities Plan in Fall 2021.

- **John Marshall Courts Building:** Explore options for a new Courts Building, including a major renovation of the existing building, rebuilding another Courts Building on the same parcel, or relocating the Courts Building elsewhere.
- **City Hall:** Explore options for City Hall, including a major renovation of the existing building, rebuilding another City Hall on the same parcel, or relocating City Hall elsewhere in City Center. Evaluate which City services and offices need to be located in the new City Hall building and which uses can be located outside of City Center. Design City Hall to be welcoming to citizens and engage with the street. Explore incorporating amenities in to complement the Transit Mall, including restrooms and GRTC information.
- **Richmond Coliseum:** Demolish the Coliseum, re-establishing the street network and city blocks that existed prior to the 1970s. Private development on the Coliseum site should complement the adjacent Convention Center and include significant open space.
- **Theater Row Building (730 E. Broad Street):** Evaluate the needs of existing City uses and potentially relocate to a centralized City Hall building and/or off-site locations to allow for the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of this building.

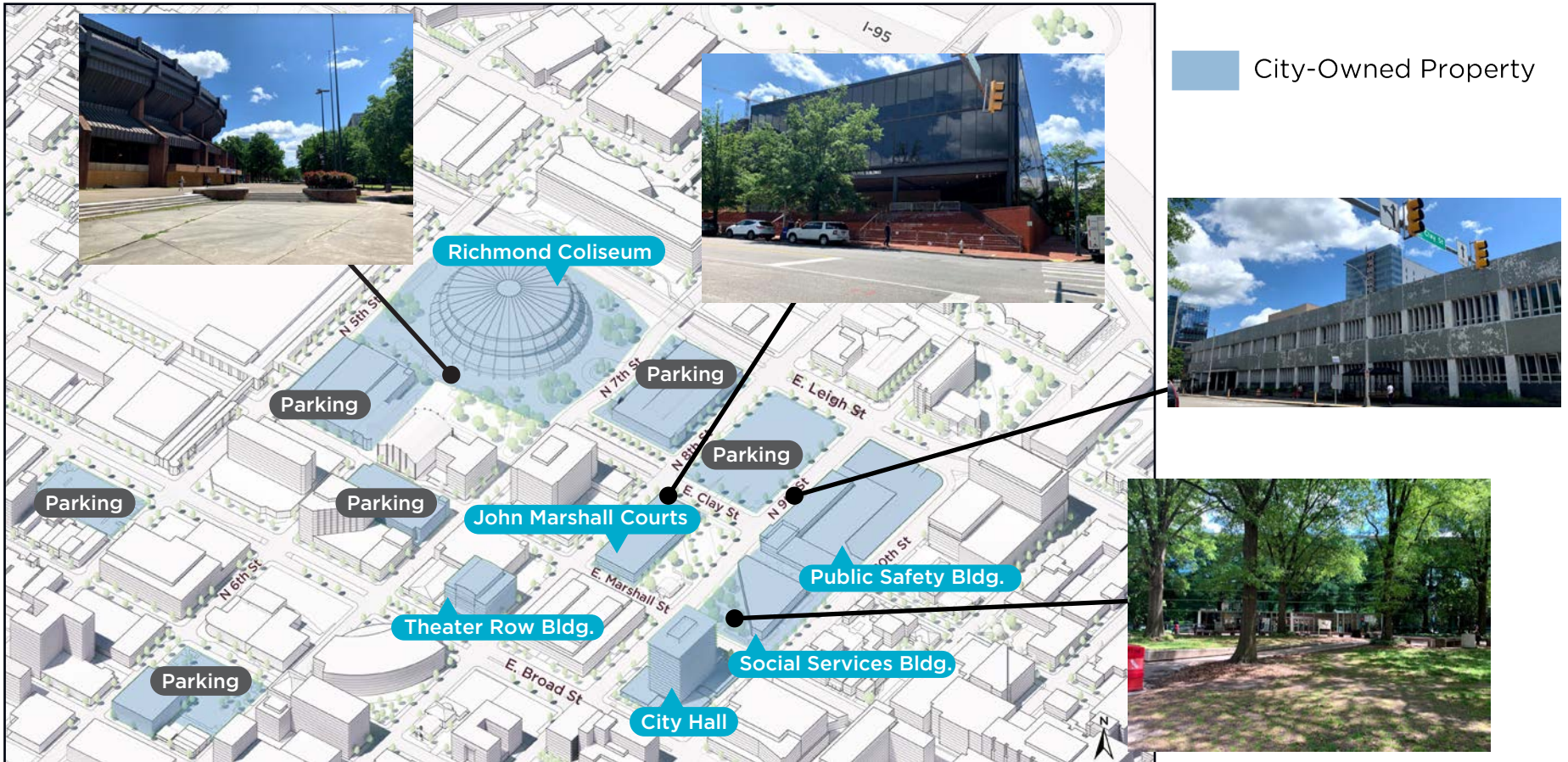


FIGURE 17 // Existing Conditions

- **Department of Social Services Building:** The City’s social service delivery model is moving towards providing services within the communities they serve, and therefore a centralized DSS building may no longer be needed. Some DSS services could be relocated to the City Hall building and in locations throughout the City. Private development on this site should complement the adjacent VCU Health Campus and potentially include municipal uses as well.
- **Public Safety Building:** In 2021, the City approved the sale of the Public Safety Building for the purpose of providing for the private development of a mixed-use project that will serve the VCU Health facility.
- **Parking Lots:** Redevelop City-owned surface parking lots and parking decks to a higher and better use, while also providing multi-modal transportation options.
- **New Fire Station:** To meet the demands of the increased population Downtown, a new fire station should be included in the redevelopment of City Center. At the request of the Fire Department to meet service needs and have access to primary through-streets, the station should be located on the block between E. Leigh, E. Clay, N. 8th., and N. 9th. This station does not need to be a standalone use and can be included in a mixed-use building.

Open Space

Define the area with great public open spaces.

Currently, City Center's public open spaces are not activated and lack trees, plantings, and other green space. While Festival Park hosted Friday Night Cheers and other events when the Coliseum and 6th Street Marketplace were active destinations, today it sits vacant. The open space near the John Marshall Courts Building is composed of hardscaping and limited vegetation. The City Center Plan proposes to create open spaces of various scales adjacent to active uses (Figure 18). These public spaces will provide various destinations for residents, visitors, and Downtown workers.

Objective:

Increase neighborhood and citywide access to, and through, with a well-designed network of open spaces within City Center which provide destinations for City Center residents and visitors.

Strategies:

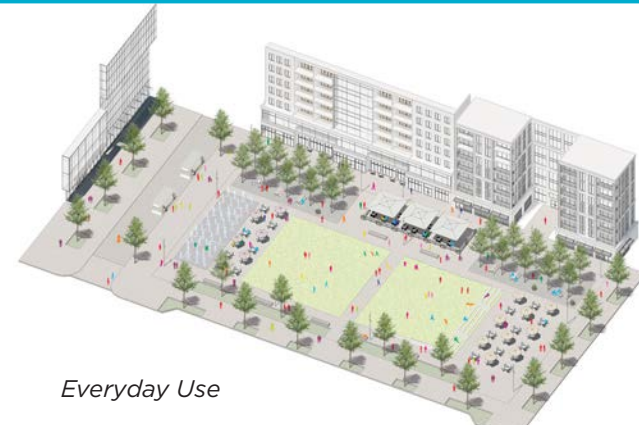
- Create great public spaces through the development of multiple signature open spaces in City Center. Program the open spaces with events throughout the year. Incorporate elements such as outlets to support food trucks, playgrounds,

fountains, and street furniture to make each of the spaces unique and offer different features and amenities. The plan proposes three forms of open space:

1. **Large Signature Open Space:** accommodates citywide and community events (See description of flexible open space).
 2. **Linear Open Space:** provides neighborhood amenities and regional destinations including areas for civic engagement, playgrounds, engaging public art, outdoor dining, and recreational amenities.
 3. **Smaller Open Spaces:** provide opportunities for outdoor dining and interaction with the adjacent ground floor commercial uses. These open spaces provide visual connectivity into the City Center from major intersections including 5th and Clay Streets and 9th and Broad Streets.
- Make flexible open spaces, such as festival streets, that draw residents and visitors to City Center through programming initiatives. Develop E. Clay Street and N. 6th Street as festival streets which can be temporarily closed to vehicular traffic to allow for incorporation of these streets in the adjacent open spaces.

Signature Open Space

The main plaza at the intersection of 6th and Clay Streets can be programmed for various activities and serve as a citywide convening space. The space can host concerts, festivals, outdoor movies, and holiday events including ice skating and tree lighting. The park also is active with everyday uses such as outdoor dining through movable seating, active and passive recreation, and amenities for families including water features and playgrounds. The main plaza can also host events programmed by the Convention Center to expand their offerings to potential conference organizers.



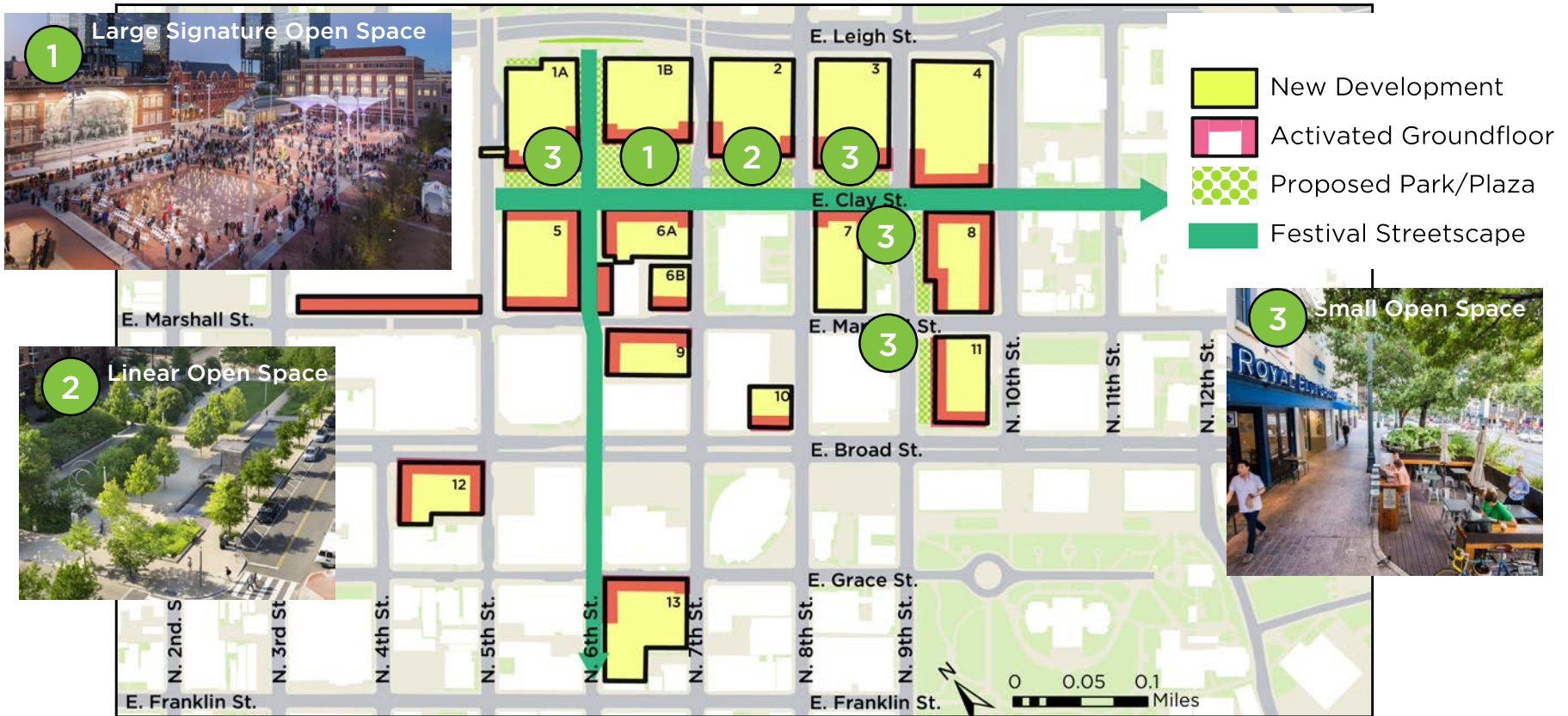
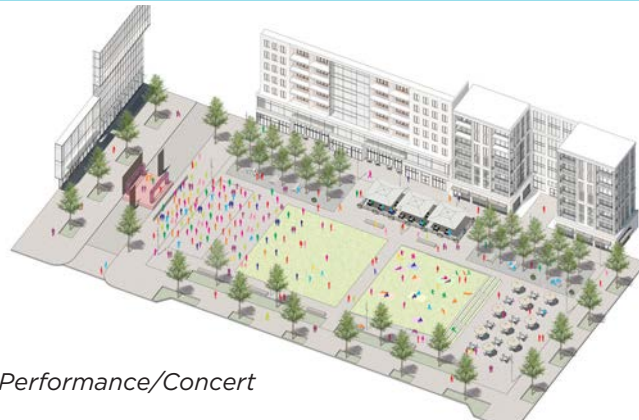


FIGURE 18 // Green Space



Outdoor Performance/Concert



Ice Skating Rink

Urban Design

Create a distinctive neighborhood with high-quality design and activated streets.

Urban design refers to how the built environment looks and feels, how buildings relate to one another, and how the “public realm” (streets, sidewalks, parks, etc.) enables such uses to function. Currently, most buildings within City Center have limited engagement with the public realm due to lack of good building design and active ground floor engagement. The design of the new buildings as a part of the redevelopment of City-owned assets will contribute to a new dynamic neighborhood (Figure 19).

Objective:

Develop City Center into a high-quality, distinctive, well-designed, walkable neighborhood that is accessible to all ages and abilities through best practices of urban design and activated ground floor uses.

Strategies:

- On development sites that encompass most of a city block or block frontage, require multiple buildings and/or façade articulation to increase visual interest, require massing that is responsive to the human scale, and include pedestrian through-block connections through existing super blocks to reestablish a street grid.
- Require buildings to meet the six design elements outlined in the Pulse Corridor Plan: Hold the Corner, Appropriate Setbacks/Stepbacks, Entrances Face the Street, Transparency, Façade Articulation, and Screened Parking/Services.
- Require the podiums of tall buildings to reflect the human scale, with design elements and active uses on the ground level.

- Develop public art projects to elevate City Center’s unique character and history through creative placemaking.
- Implement public realm standards to include shade trees, bike parking, bike share, signage, public art, screened parking, street furniture, pedestrian-level lighting, and other elements in the public right-of-way that enhance placemaking and walkability.



Responsibilities of the Public Realm:

- A** Thoroughfares designed for vehicle speeds below 25 mph for a sense of comfort and safety.
- B** Sidewalks shaded with street trees.
- C** On-street parking serves as a buffer for people walking and dining, helps reduce vehicle speeds, and provides convenient parking for shoppers and guests.
- D** Defined “Furnishing Zone” allowing placement of trees, bicycle parking, parking meters, street lights, and other streetscape elements.
- E** Walkways are wide enough to allow at least two people to walk side-by-side comfortably.
- F** Encourage outdoor dining so long as an adequate walkway width is maintained.

Responsibilities of the Private Realm:

- 1** Location of all off-street parking, both surface and structure, screened from street view.
- 2** Shopfronts maximize transparency with clear windows.
- 3** Main building entries face the sidewalk to increase activity on the street.
- 4** A sufficient amount of openings facing the street, such as windows and doors, create interest and enhance security.

FIGURE 19 // Rendering of north side of E. Clay Street between N. 8th and N. 9th, facing west

Historic Preservation

Preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources.

The City Center area is home to several historic structures that should be protected while allowing for adaptive reuse of structures and growth within City Center (Figure 20). Efforts must be made to protect these historic resources while allowing for the adaptive reuse of structures and growth within City Center. Connections to historic resources within City Center and other parts of Downtown should be prioritized.

Objective:

Support growth that preserves the historical urban fabric and enhances understanding of City Center's multifaceted past.

Strategies:

- Preserve culturally, historically, and architecturally significant buildings, sites, and structures in City Center:
- Rehabilitate Blues Armory, utilizing preservation best practices to accommodate new uses, which may include a food hall, entertainment venue, and conference space.
- Create a new open space adjacent to John Marshall House that complements the historic resource. John Marshall House should remain as a cultural asset within City Center.
- Connect City Center to cultural and historic resources throughout Downtown through wayfinding and strong streetscapes.
- Broaden the constituency for historic preservation by more equally representing, preserving, and sharing the sites related to traditionally underrepresented groups, such as Blacks, who were displaced from this area in the mid- to late-20th Century.



Blues Armory



John Marshall House

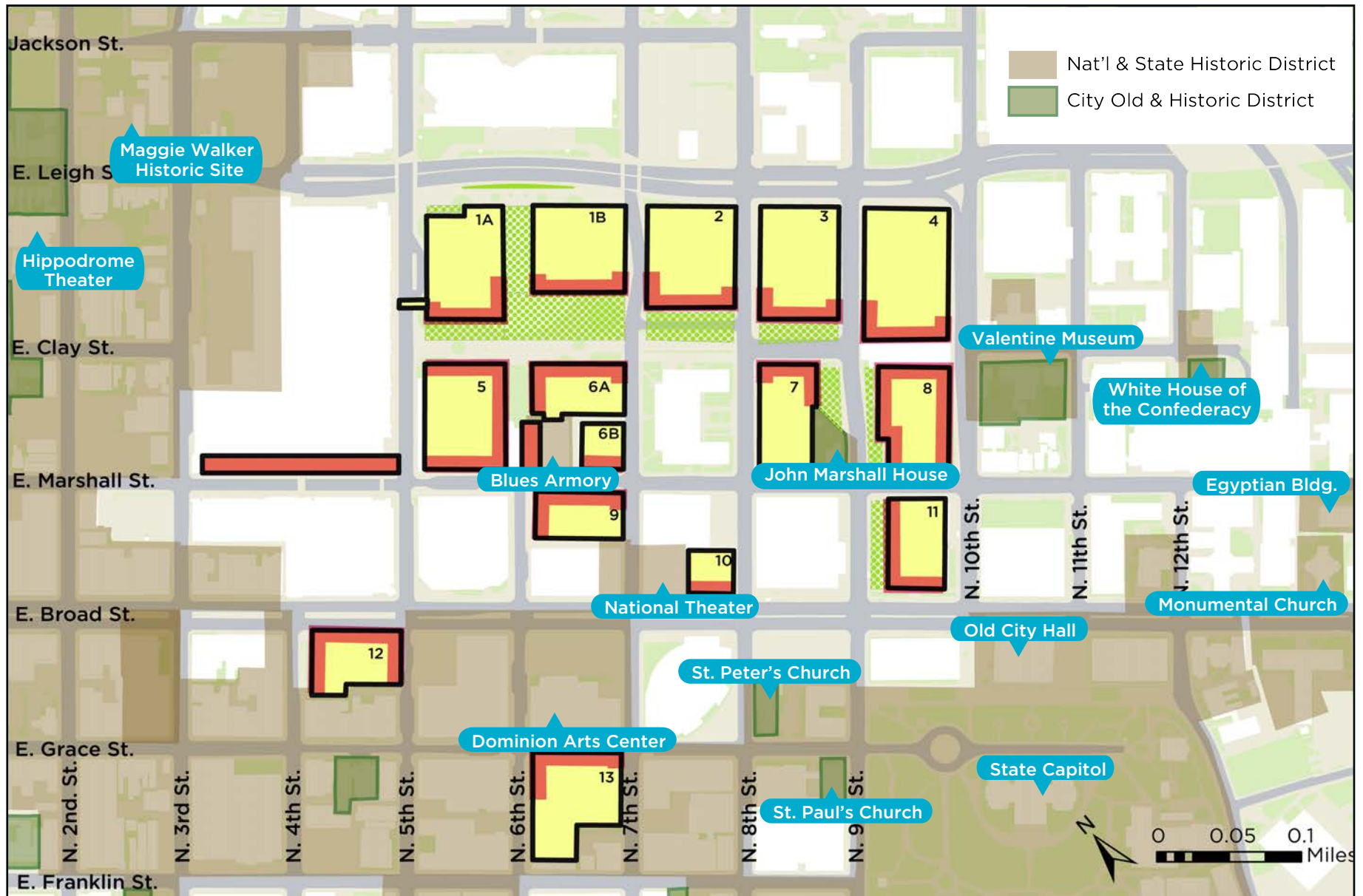


FIGURE 20 // Historic Sites

Equitable Transportation

Guiding Principles: Prioritize the movement of people over the movement of vehicles through a safe, reliable, equitable, and sustainable transportation network, promoting easier and safer access to and through City Center. Seamlessly connect City Center to Richmond neighborhoods and other nearby attractions through enhanced pedestrian, bike, transit, and vehicular access and connectivity.

Bicycle Infrastructure

Expand the bicycle network.

Objective:

Expand and improve on-street networks and amenities serving bicyclists and other non-motorized vehicle users.

Strategies:

- Expand, improve, and maintain on-street bike connections, prioritizing the creation of separated or buffered bike lanes on 5th Street, 7th Street, and Leigh Street (Figure 19).
- Expand the bike sharing program to include more stations within City Center.
- Install amenities (e.g., shelters, benches, parking, maintenance tools, restrooms, water fountains with bottle-refill stations) through City Center.
- Require secure and easily accessible short-term and long-term bicycle parking and storage facilities within new development projects.

Pedestrian Experience

Enhance access and safety.

Objective:

Improve the pedestrian experience throughout City Center by improving sidewalks and improving pedestrian crossing and streetscapes for all ages and abilities.

Strategies:

- Require developers to construct sidewalks as a part of development projects per the Better Streets Manual to include a clear width travel way, a building frontage zone, and a furniture or buffer zone.
- Require developers to design and build projects to provide and maintain street trees on both sides of at least 60% of new and existing streets within the project (and on the project side of bordering streets) or to provide and maintain trees that supply shade over at least 40% of the length of sidewalks on streets within or contiguous to the project within ten years of installation.
- Improve street furniture, plant shade trees, and install pedestrian-level lights and other streetscape improvements.
- Create a festival street on Clay and 6th Streets that can be closed to vehicles on certain occasions.

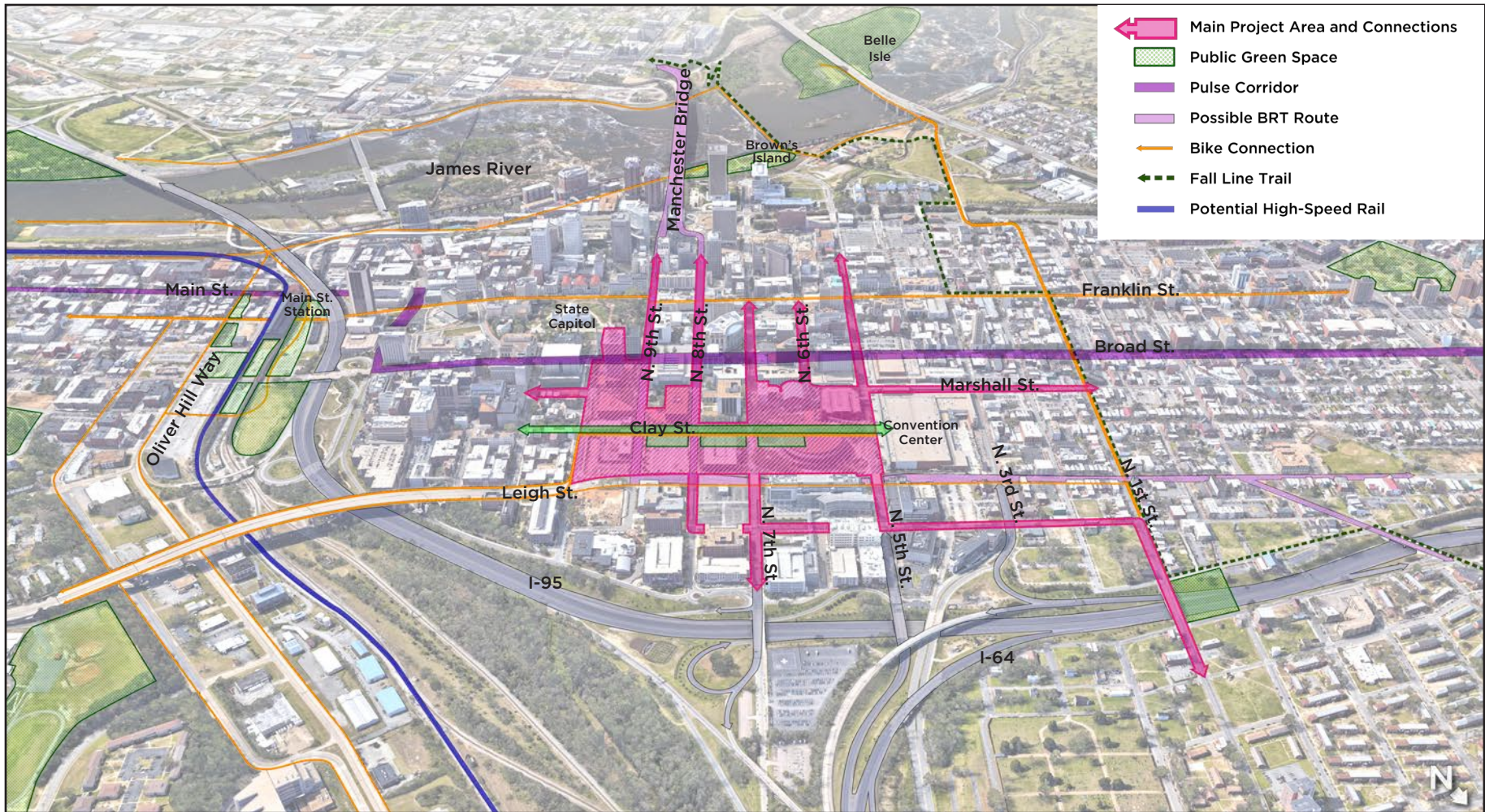


FIGURE 21 // Neighborhood Connections

Streets and Connections

Reconnect the urban grid.

Objective:

Strengthen the street network in City Center by preventing superblocks and encouraging gridded street networks to knit together the surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategies:

- Reconnect 6th Street from Leigh Street to Broad Street.
- Reconfigure Clay Street to bring it to grade between 5th and 7th Streets and reconnect the street between 9th and 10th Streets. Design Clay Street with festival street features such as a curbless right-of-way that uses bollards and paving to differentiate pedestrian and vehicular areas.
- Construct a street parallel to Leigh Street to connect 5th and 7th Street while allowing Leigh Street to remain below grade to provide access to parking beneath the development at the existing Coliseum site.

Parking

Implement innovative parking solutions.

Objective:

Implement parking strategies that effectively manage supply and demand of parking in City Center and limit the development of surface parking lots.

Strategies:

- Demolish the Coliseum and use the Coliseum pit as subterranean parking that is accessed from E. Leigh Street.
- Determine the need for City-owned parking decks/surface parking lots in the near-, mid-, or long-term, and prioritize the redevelopment of surface parking lots.
- Discourage the creation of new surface parking lots or parking garages in City Center. Surface parking lots are prohibited in the current Zoning district.
- Encourage the development of innovative parking solutions including automated parking decks to minimize the square footage required to store vehicles.
- Encourage any new parking garages to incorporate other wrapped, activated uses.
- Encourage the shared use of parking by requiring the developers of City-owned parcels to make all appropriate parking on their project site available to the public for parking after standard business hours (weekday evenings after 6:00 p.m., weekends, and all legal holidays) until 12:00 midnight or until the close of business of retail operations, whichever is later.

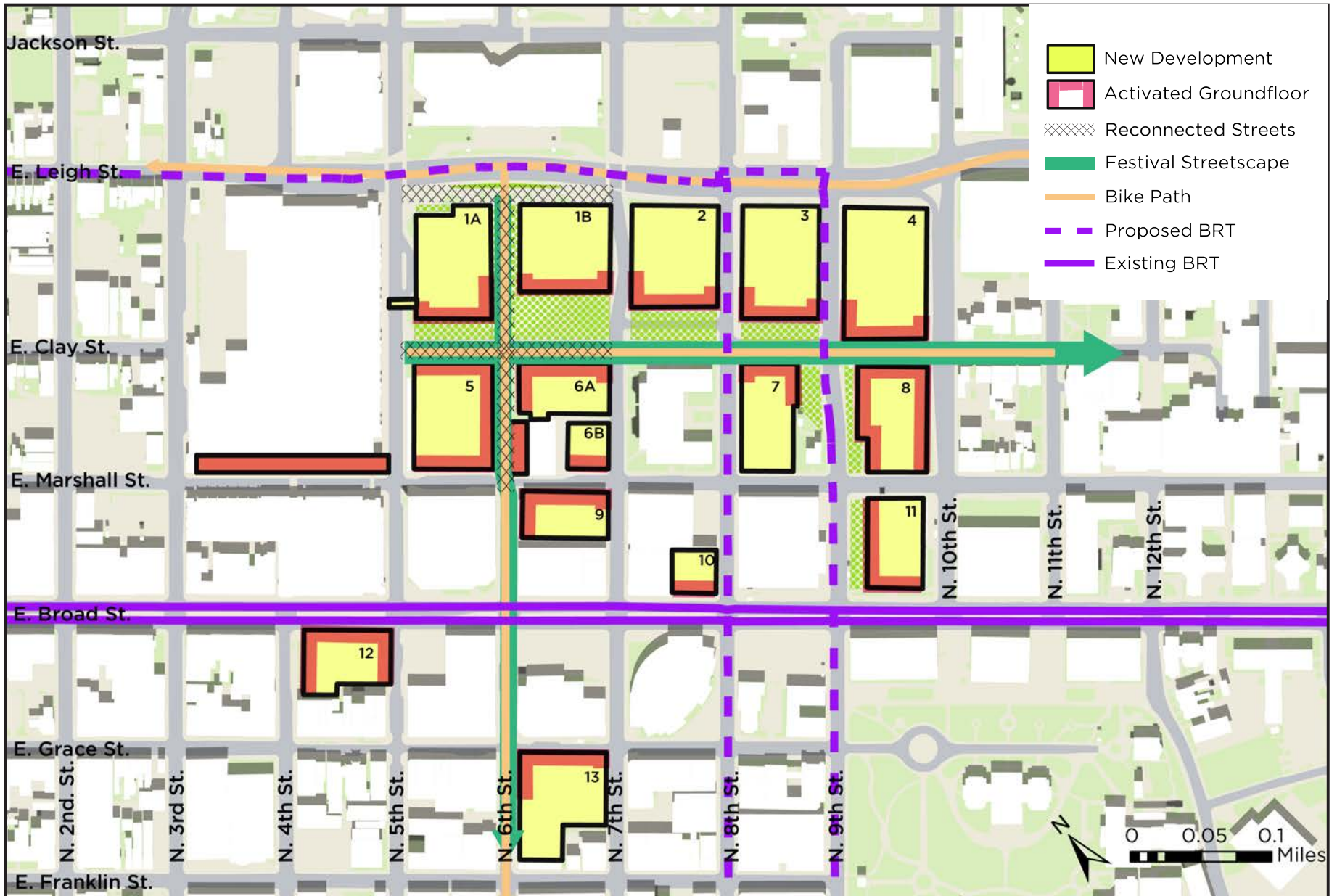


FIGURE 22 // Proposed Connections & Enhancements

Transit

Develop a connected, multimodal destination.

GRTC has been pursuing the creation of a permanent multi-modal Transportation Terminal for the past two decades. The multi-modal transportation terminal will allow for improved supervision of on-time performance, coordinated scheduling, reduced congestion along Broad Street, reduced bus travel mileages and idling times, and protection from the elements for riders while providing them with a safe, secure place to wait for the bus. GRTC's ideal location is within Downtown Richmond near the center of existing GRTC ridership activity and with good proximity to the Pulse corridor. Since 2014, a Temporary Transfer Plaza has existed on 9th Street from Marshall to Leigh Street. Creating a permanent transfer plaza within City Center will help improve the transit system as a whole and improve the connectivity of City Center to the region (Figure 23).

Objective:

Improve the performance of the transit system throughout the network through the development of a GRTC Transit Mall within City Center and the addition of enhanced Bus Rapid Transit through City Center.

Strategies:

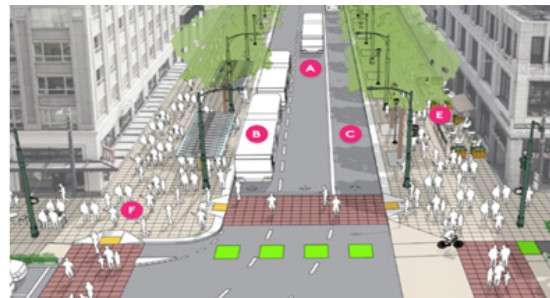
- Explore developing a transit mall along N. 8th Street, N. 9th Street, and/or E. Marshall Street to include dedicated bus bays and improved transit stop amenities such as shelters, benches, trash cans, and bike parking. Additional complementary amenities such as restrooms and ticket sales should be included in the adjacent existing and new development.
- With community input, develop a North-South Bus Rapid Transit route that connects City Center to South Richmond along 8th or 9th Street(s).



Nicollet St. Transit Mall, Minneapolis



16th St. Transit Mall, Denver



Third Ave. Transit Mall, Seattle

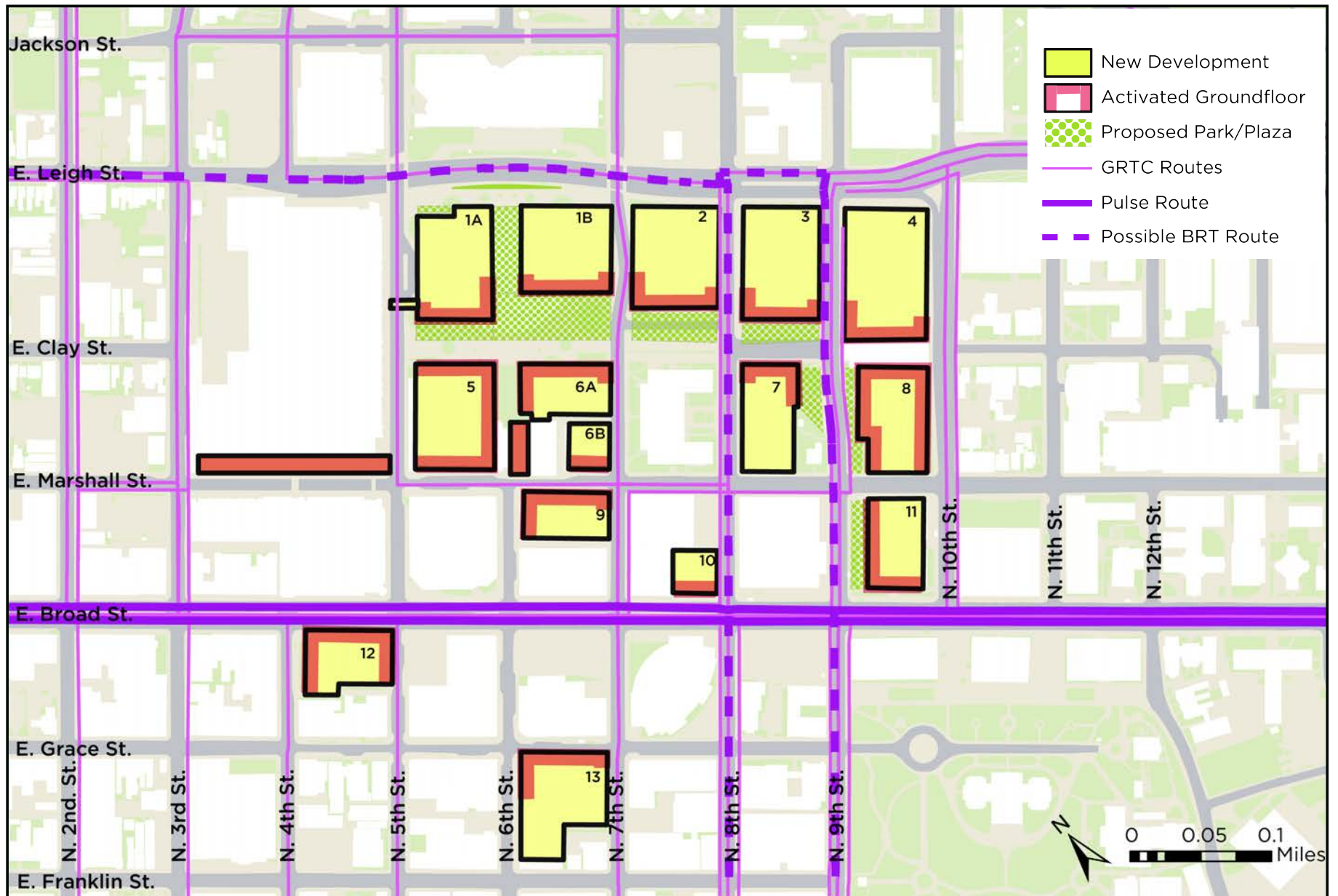


FIGURE 23 // Transit Network

Diverse Economy

Guiding Principles: Diversify City Center’s economic portfolio from primarily government uses to uses that leverage the adjacent educational institutions and VA Bio+Tech Park to create an Innovation District where these anchor institutions connect with start-ups, business incubators, accelerators, and other life science institutions. Enhance and complement existing tourist attractions through the development of hotels and entertainment venues. Provide opportunities for local, small, and minority-owned business to be a part of the redevelopment of City Center.

Innovation District

Cluster and connect innovation.

Objective:

Attract additional life science-focused industries, start-ups, and entrepreneurs to spur job creation Downtown through establishment of an Innovation District.

Strategies:

- Encourage the development of a life-science cluster on existing City-owned property adjacent to the VCU Health and VA Bio+Tech Park to facilitate the sharing of ideas and “open innovation.”
- Develop marketing materials for City Center, highlighting the area as an Innovation District with employment and educational opportunities as well as offering housing, open space, and retail in a transit-accessible location.
- Explore opportunities to develop a public high school within City Center that will build partnerships with adjacent higher education institutions including Reynolds Community College, VCU Health, Virginia Union University, the University of Richmond, and life science anchors.
- Extend innovation programming to other parts of the city.

- Explore the creation of a Technology Zone and other new economic incentives to encourage the creation of an Innovation District.

Tourism

Connect and enhance tourist destinations.

Objective:

Develop tourism and attractions in City Center to further increase tourism in Downtown as a whole, elevating Richmond’s image and continuing to delight existing and future residents, employees, and visitors.

Strategies:

- Encourage the development of hotel rooms in City Center including a Headquarter Hotel within walking distance of the Convention Center.
- Develop City Center as a unique destination through creative placemaking and branding.
- Create more cultural, art, and entertainment destinations of varying sizes to attract acts and visitors, leveraging nearby assets like The National, Hippodrome, Dominion Theater, and the Convention Center.
- Expand wayfinding signage throughout City Center, connecting City Center to other attractions throughout Downtown.

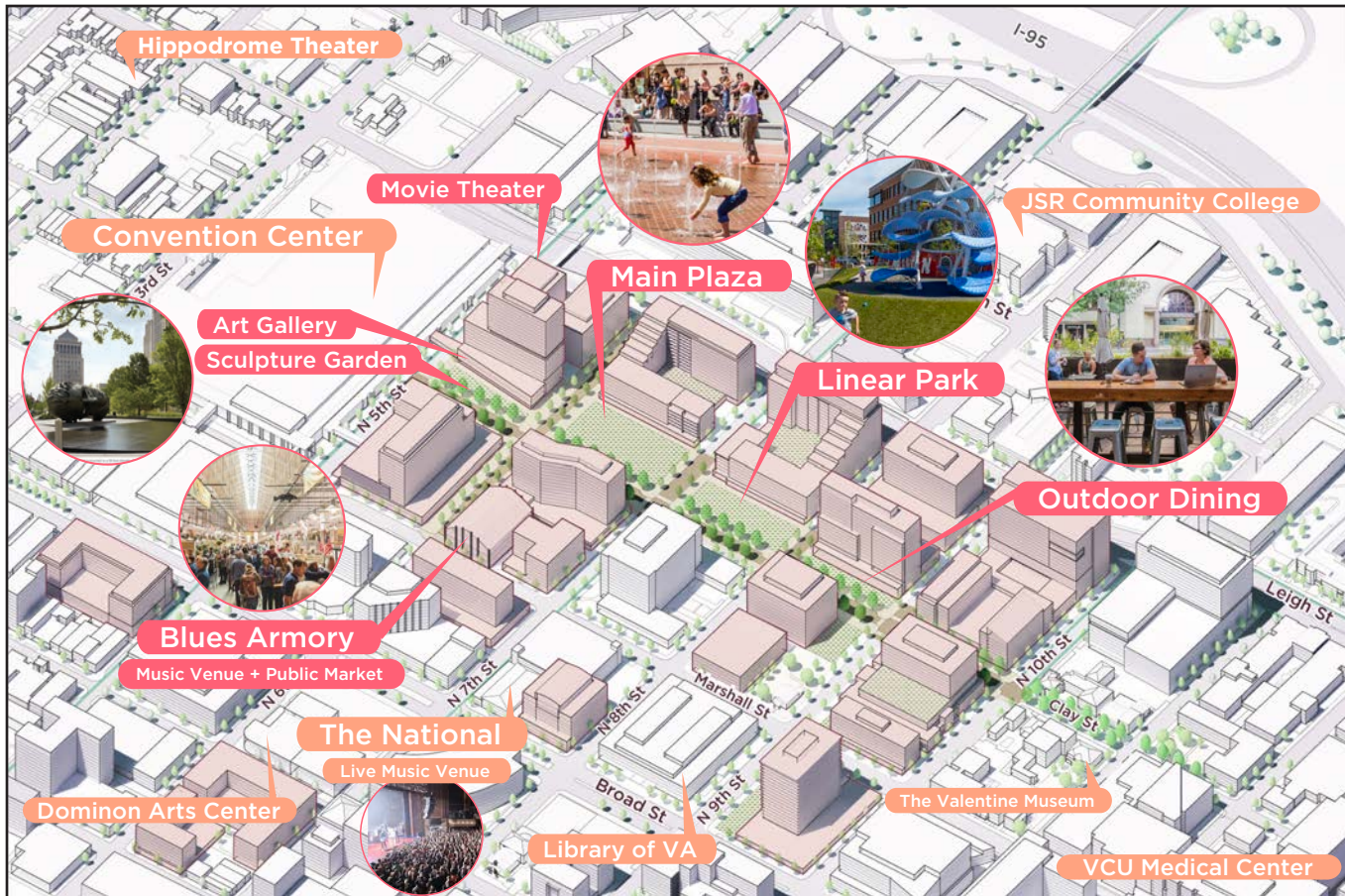


FIGURE 24 // Potential Future Destinations Map

Note: The conceptual massing diagram illustrates the potential shape and scale of buildings and open space; however as these areas develop, the exact design and scale of the buildings and spaces may be different from what is depicted in this conceptual illustration.

Business and Job Opportunity

Expand access to business opportunities.

Objective:

Implement equitable economic development strategies to expand business and job inclusivity and opportunity.

Strategies:

- For projects on City-owned property, provide opportunities for local, minority-owned, and emerging small business employment and growth.

- Encourage a range of employment opportunities that provide on-the-job training and facilitate upward mobility through investment in workforce development initiatives and collaboration with employers to create a pipeline of employees for existing and future positions.
- Support existing small businesses.

Inclusive Housing

Guiding Principles: Leverage City-owned properties in City Center to expand the availability of housing options at all income levels, increasing the number of dwellings Downtown to bring people closer to jobs and frequent transit.

Housing

Create housing options for all in City Center.

Currently, there are limited housing units within City Center. The City Center Plan prioritizes developing residential units in this transit- and job-accessible neighborhood. With its Downtown location, City Center can accommodate dense residential and mixed-use developments. City Center should provide a diverse housing stock and become a mixed-income neighborhood with both rental and homeownership opportunities.

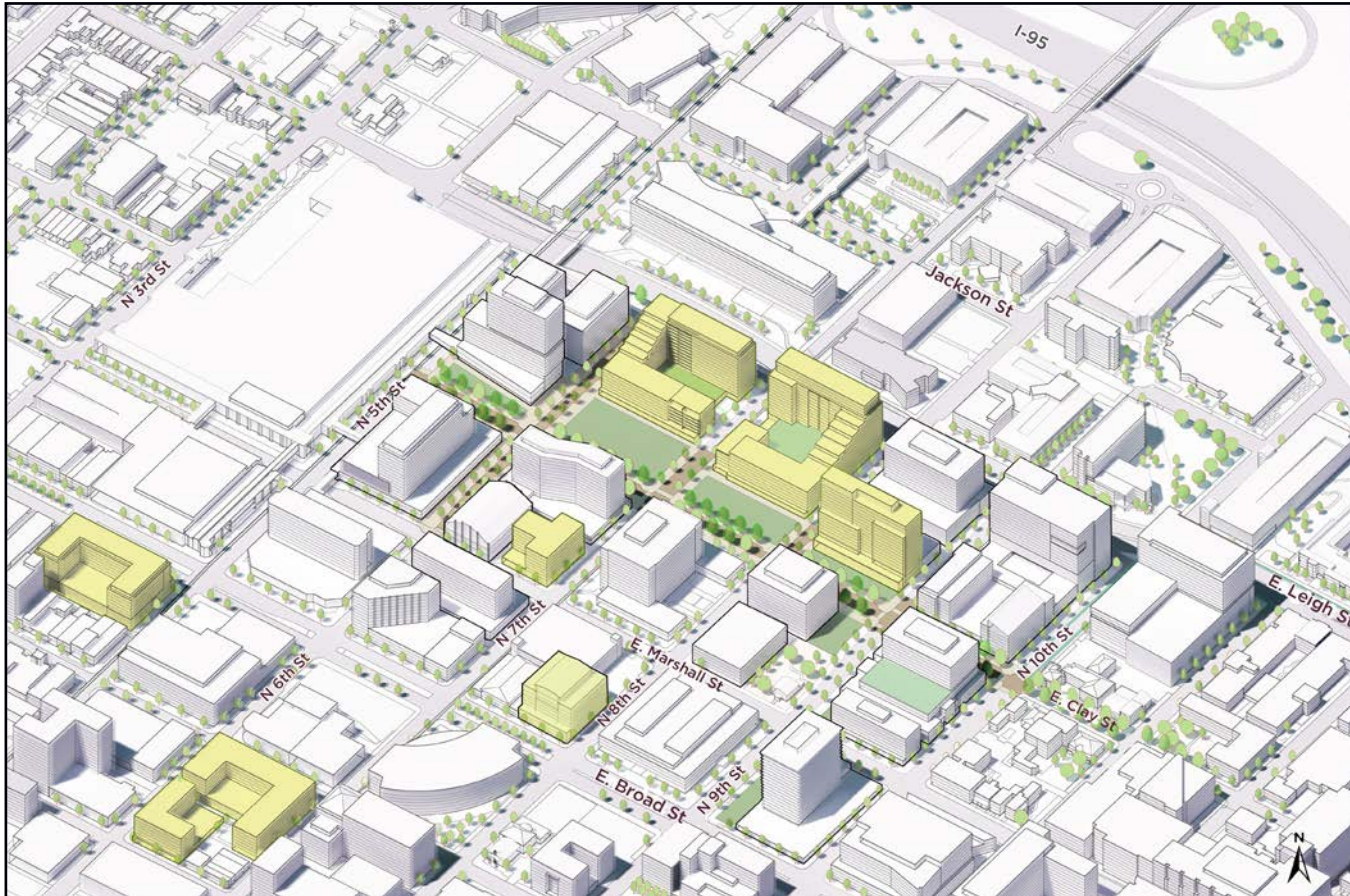
Objective:

Expand the availability of housing options Downtown at all income levels through the development of a mixed-income neighborhood in City Center.

Strategies:

- Encourage the development of a mixed-income neighborhood with varied housing types throughout the City Center. These housing types need not be included in the same building but may be developed in multiple projects throughout City Center.
- Encourage the creation of housing affordable to households earning incomes at or below 60 percent of the area median income (AMI), with the goal of having at least 20% of the total units created on City-owned land at or below 60% AMI.

- Explore the creation of an affordable housing tax-increment finance (TIF) zone for land in City Center and direct the future incremental tax revenue funds from the TIF to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for funding mixed-income projects within the TIF zone.
- Through the disposition of publicly owned parcels, seek to develop these types of housing products: supportive housing, ownership products (e.g. cooperative housing), market-rate housing, and workforce housing.



Potential Residential

FIGURE 25 // Housing Opportunities

Note: The conceptual massing diagram illustrates the potential shape and scale of buildings and open space; however as these areas develop, the exact design and scale of the buildings and spaces may be different from what is depicted in this conceptual illustration.



Mixed-Use Apartments in Amsterdam



Mixed-Use Apartments, DC



Converted Theater Apartments, Queens



Mixed-Use Fire Station/Apts., DC

Thriving Environment

Guiding Principles: Develop City Center as a sustainable and resilient neighborhood with a built environment that enhances and protects natural assets. Reduce air and water pollution through green transportation, building and infrastructure design and construction methods. Ensure that residents have equitable access to nature and a healthy community by increasing the tree canopy, greenspace, and access to healthy foods.

Clean Air

Objective:

Improve air quality within the city by reducing and/or offsetting greenhouse gas emissions through the design and development of City Center (Figure 26).

Strategies:

- Reduce air pollution related to transportation by increasing the number of residents in City Center, improving walking, biking, and transit infrastructure, and creating opportunities for electric vehicle charging stations.
- For development on City-owned land:
 - Require projects to earn the prerequisites and credits needed to achieve the appropriate LEED GOLD certification (Neighborhood Development, etc.) using the LEED green building rating system.

- Require plans for diverting from landfill disposal the demolition, construction, and land clearing debris generated by the development projects, to include recycling and/or reuse of waste generated during demolition and/or construction.

Clean Water

Objective:

Establish and expand green stormwater infrastructure in City Center.

Strategies:

- Include green infrastructure in the development of new open space and rights-of way.
- Reduce litter in City Center by encouraging more trash/recycling receptacles and more frequent cleaning/management of areas with a lot of litter so that litter does not flow into city waterways.

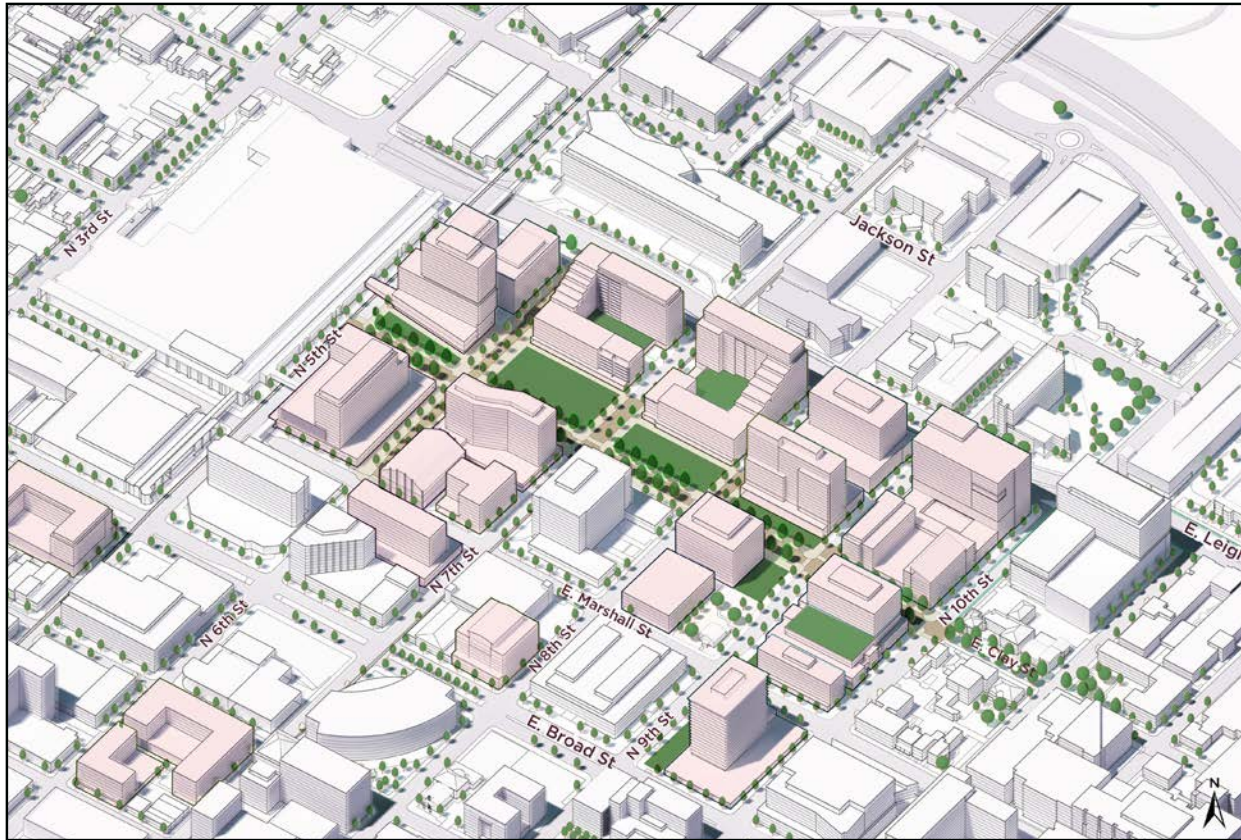
Resilient and Healthy Communities

Objective:

Develop City Center as a resilient community that is able to efficiently adapt to the effects of climate change.

Strategies:

- Explore developing City Center as an eco-district.
- Create a public greenspace network and require greenspace to be included as a part of private developments.
- Increase the tree canopy in City Center by requiring street trees as a part of development on City-owned parcels.
- Encourage redevelopment of City-owned or private surface parking lots and parking garages into mixed-use developments and/or park areas.



Potential Greenspace

FIGURE 26 // Thriving Environment

Note: The conceptual massing diagram illustrates the potential shape and scale of buildings and open space; however as these areas develop, the exact design and scale of the buildings and spaces may be different from what is depicted in this conceptual illustration.

Access to Healthy Foods

Residents of Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods including Jackson Ward have expressed the desire for a grocery store. While a traditional suburban grocery store may not work in City Center, the increased residential population proposed in this plan would make City Center a more desirable market for a grocery store which could locate within a mixed-use development.

Objective:

Expand access to the local healthy food system.

Strategies:

- Encourage the development of a grocery store within City Center through the development of substantial residential population.
- Encourage the development of a food hall as a part of the redevelopment of City Center to serve both residents and visitors to the area.
- Explore opportunities for alternative models of grocery stores including member-owned food co-ops.

Phasing

Given the size and breadth of the City Center development program, this plan suggests the following phasing to guide the development of City- and RRHA-owned parcels, as shown in Figure 27.

Phase 1

The first phase of the redevelopment of City Center is the demolition of the Public Safety Building and development of a mixed-use complex including an office tower, Ronald MacDonald House, Doorways facility, childcare center, structured parking, and the reconnection of Clay Street from 9th to 10th Street.

Phase 2

The second phase includes the redevelopment of 3 surface parking lots and a parking deck. The redevelopment of these parcels should include residential units, with a mix of tenure and affordability. The parcels may also include office and retail uses as driven by market demand. Parcel 3 should include the development of a new fire station that can be incorporated into a mixed-use facility and the creation of open space for outdoor dining and amenities along Clay Street.

Phase 3

The third phase of City Center includes the demolition of the Coliseum and creation of a hotel, entertainment, residential, and office complex surrounding the main plaza and linear park. Phase 3 also includes the reconnection of Clay Street from 5th to 8th

Street, the reintroduction of 6th Street from Marshall to a new street running at-grade parallel to Leigh Street (which will remain as is).

Phase 4

The fourth phase includes the creation of a new City Hall on the same parcel as the John Marshall House and a public open space.

Phase 5

The fifth phase envisions the redevelopment of buildings that formerly housed City government uses into a public high school, and residential and office uses, along with open space fronting 9th Street.

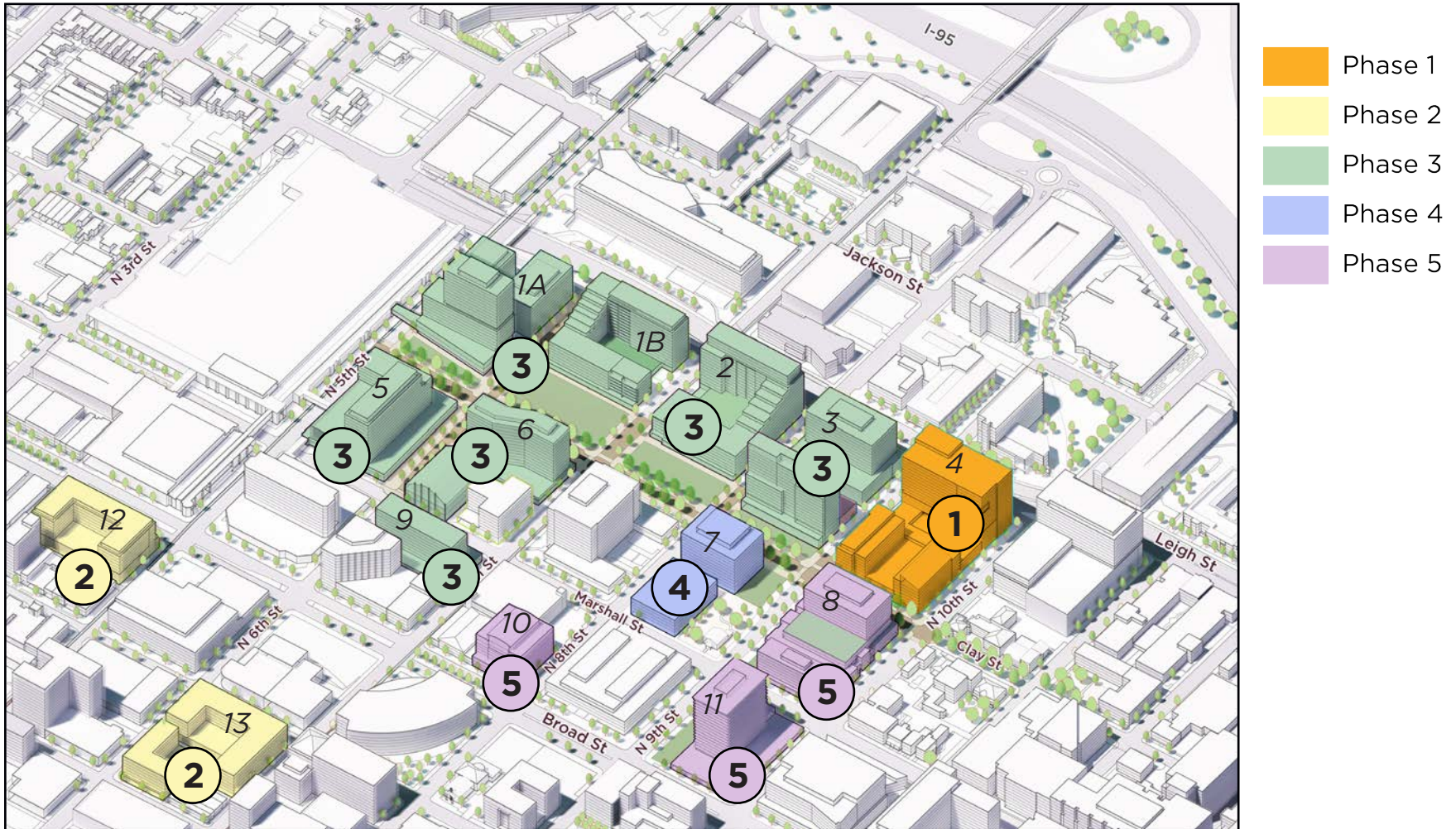


FIGURE 27 // Phasing Map

Note: The conceptual massing diagram illustrates the potential shape and scale of buildings and open space; however as these areas develop, the exact design and scale of the buildings and spaces may be different from what is depicted in this conceptual illustration.

Equitable Development Benefits

As the City works with the private sector to redevelop City-owned land, the City should consider including the following benefits into development agreements. The exact benefits will vary depending on the parcels that are redeveloped and the proposed development program. For instance not all projects will include residential units and not all residential buildings need to be mixed-income; however, the development of City Center should include at least 20% of the total units affordable to people earning 60% or less of the area median income.

Employment

- Commitment to pay workers a minimum of \$15/hour or the prevailing wage rate for the City of Richmond.
- Participate in and provide apprenticeship programs.
- Require health insurance and retirement benefits for all full-time employees.
- Create job training and workforce development programs.
- Coordinate job fairs and training programs with the City's Office of Community Wealth Building to seek to employ and train Richmond residents.

Business Participation

- For construction, achieve a goal of at least 40% minority business enterprise participation.
- Give local community businesses and minority businesses preference when hiring consultants, contractors, and developers, and when seeking tenants for retail and office space.

Ownership and Wealth Creation

- Create a community wealth building fund that permits community members to make smaller dollar investments up to 5% of the total project value to build wealth and ownership in the project from the community and/or surrounding neighborhoods.
- Develop for-sale housing affordable to households earning at or below 60% of the area median income, potentially introducing cooperative housing models to the City Center area.
- Develop at least 20% of the residential units affordable to households earning at or below 60% of the area median income.

Site and Building Design

- Design buildings to be high-performing and energy-efficient buildings, using programs such as LEED Gold Standards as a benchmark.
- Utilize permeable pavers and other green infrastructure to minimize stormwater runoff.
- Reduce the heat island effect by planting shade trees and utilizing building materials with low albedo ratings.
- Develop on-site renewable energy.
- Create a combined heat energy district.

Transportation and Public Realm

- Provide on-site electric vehicle charging stations.
- Provide indoor bike parking and bicyclist changing/showering facilities.
- Improve the right-of-way and design buildings to create excellent urban design to support walking and access for all ages and abilities.
- If on-site parking is provided, enter parking sharing agreements with adjacent users.
- Where indicated, provide open spaces per the City Center Small Area Plan and develop the design for the open space with public input.

Municipal

- Develop a new City Hall building.
- Develop a new fire station integrated into a mixed-use facility.
- Develop a public high school that focuses on health tech career training.



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