



# Jefferson Parish Smart Growth Conceptual Design Metairie Road and Oakwood Area

## Final Report

Prepared for the Regional Planning Commission for Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, and Tangipahoa Parishes, and Jefferson Parish

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## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Oakwood Study Area.....	2
Metairie Road Study Area .....	3
Chapter I. Introduction.....	5
1.1 Purpose and Background.....	5
1.2 Why Smart Growth?.....	5
1.3 Smart Growth Planning Context.....	6
Chapter II. Process .....	8
2.1 Project Management Committees .....	8
2.2 Public meetings .....	8
Chapter III. Smart Growth Strategies .....	9
Public Right-of-Way Strategies .....	9
Chapter IV. Oakwood Area Conceptual Designs .....	11
4.1 Current challenges and opportunities.....	11
4.2 Proposed improvements.....	21
Chapter V. Metairie Road site conceptual design .....	31
5.1 Current challenges and opportunities.....	31
5.2 Proposed Improvements .....	39
Chapter VI. Conclusion.....	53

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Study Area Concept Diagrams .....	1
Figure 2: Hector Avenue, Before and After.....	2
Figure 3: Public Meeting, Oakwood Center.....	3
Figure 4: Metairie Road at Severn, Before and After .....	4
Figure 5: Causeway Corridor Smart Growth Concept.....	6
Figure 6: Westbank Expressway Smart Growth Concept .....	6
Figure 7: Bicycle Master Plan - Recommended Routes .....	7
Figure 8: Fat City Sample Streetscape Enhancements .....	7
Figure 9: Project Process.....	8
Figure 10: Preferred Sidewalk Design.....	9
Figure 11: High Visibility Crosswalk.....	9
Figure 12: Curb Extension (Gainesville, Fla.).....	10
Figure 13: Green Drainage Infrastructure (Portland, Oregon).....	10
Figure 14: Historic Development of Oakwood Study Area.....	11
Figure 15: Aerial View of Oakwood Study Area.....	12
Figure 16: Oakwood Study Area Building Age.....	13
Figure 17: Oakwood Study Area Housing Units by Type .....	13
Figure 18: Oakwood Area: Land use conditions.....	14
Figure 19: Oakwood Study Area Land Use Map .....	15
Figure 20: Oakwood Area Circulation .....	16
Figure 21: Oakwood Study Area Circulation Conditions .....	17
Figure 22: Oakwood Area Street Grid Connections .....	18
Figure 23: Oakwood Center Relative to Local Shopping Centers .....	18
Figure 24: Oakwood Center Relative to Regional Shopping Centers... 18	18
Figure 25: Public Meeting, Oakwood Study Area.....	19
Figure 26: Oakwood Study Area - Areas of Focus .....	21
Figure 27: Westbank Expressway at Whitney Ave - North.....	22
Figure 28: Westbank Expressway at Whiney Ave - South.....	23
Figure 29: Whitney Avenue Traffic Calming Concept.....	24
Figure 30: Whitney Ave at Hector Ave.....	25
Figure 31: Hector Avenue.....	26
Figure 32: Hector Avenue at Wright Avenue .....	27

Figure 33: Hector Avenue, Shared Use Trail & Planting Concept .....28

Figure 34: Historic Development of Metairie Road Study Area .....31

Figure 35: Future Land Use, Metairie Road Study Area.....32

Figure 36: Metairie Road Study Area: Land Use Conditions .....32

Figure 37: Circulation, Metairie Road.....34

Figure 38: Metairie Road Study Area Circulation Conditions .....35

Figure 39: Metairie Road Street Connectivity .....36

Figure 40: Former Bayou Metairie and Current Drainage .....36

Figure 41: Public Meeting, Metairie Road.....37

Figure 42: Metairie Road Study Area – Areas of Focus .....39

Figure 43: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 1 .....40

Figure 44: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 2.....41

Figure 45: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 3A.....42

Figure 46: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 3B .....43

Figure 47: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 3C.....44

Figure 48: Metairie Road at Severn Perspective.....45

Figure 49: Metairie Road at N. Causeway Blvd.....46

Figure 50: Causeway Underpass Concept.....47

Figure 51: Metairie Road at Labarre Road.....48

Figure 52: Metairie Road at Metairie Court .....49

Figure 53: Metairie Road at Metairie Court - Strip Mall Concept.....50

## List of Tables

Table 1: Public Comment Themes: Oakwood Area..... 19

Table 2: Oakwood Area Summary of Challenges and Opportunities ..20

Table 3: Estimated Cost of Improvements: Oakwood Study Area .....29

Table 4: Public Comment Themes, Metairie Road Study Area ..... 37

Table 5: Metairie Road Summary of Challenges and Opportunities..... 38

Table 6: Estimated Cost of Improvements: Metairie Road Study Area51

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to propose conceptual designs for “smart growth” enhancements in two areas: Upper Metairie Road, from Arlington Drive to Severn Avenue, and the area surrounding and including the Oakwood Center shopping mall.

**Smart growth is characterized by compact, mixed use development in which housing, jobs, schools and services are located near each other and easily accessible via a range of transportation options.** This involves planning land use in concert with different transportation modes, including walking, bicycling and transit, in addition to driving. Smart growth often means infill development in and revitalization of older neighborhoods. This study is the latest in several efforts the Parish has undertaken to grow “smart,” including the Fat City Redevelopment, Bicycle Master Plan and Fairfield development.

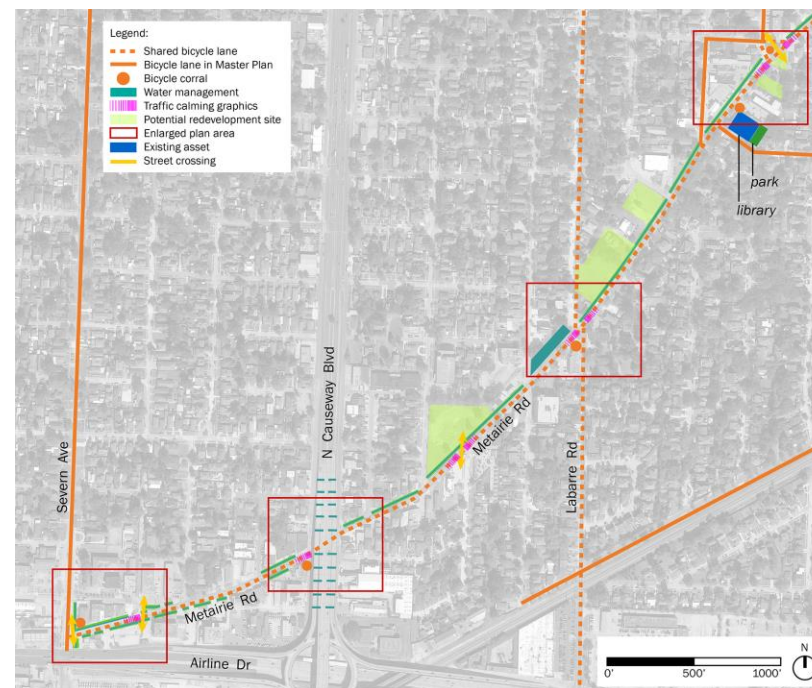
Figure 1: Study Area Concept Diagrams (Left: Oakwood; Right: Metairie Road)

*Basemap Source: Esri 2015*



**The process for proposing conceptual designs in these areas included consultation with key stakeholders and participation of the community members at public meetings.** The Consultant Team worked closely with Regional Planning Commission and Jefferson Parish Planning Department staff throughout all project phases, organized four meetings of Project Management Committees, and hosted two public meetings – one for each study area – to obtain feedback on proposed design alternatives.

All recommendations outlined in this report will require further review by DOTD and Jefferson Parish to determine feasibility and compliance.



## Oakwood Study Area

Developed largely in the 1960s and 1970s, the Oakwood Study Area is characterized by low-density, separate residential and commercial land uses, and is anchored by two major physical features: the Oakwood Center shopping mall and the elevated Westbank Expressway – a state highway. However, the area holds great potential for developing into a walkable and well-connected community. It draws workers, commuters and shoppers from throughout the region via several modes of transportation, functioning as a regional crossroads that is positioned to sustain efficient, pedestrian- and transit-oriented infill development.

Specific challenges the Parish should address in the short-term are balancing safe and convenient access between motorists, pedestrian, cyclists and transit riders, and promoting land redevelopment that accommodates and encourages this balance. The existing pattern of expansive parking lots separating buildings from streets, and the high-speed Westbank Expressway hinder pedestrian accessibility.

A full list of recommended improvements for this study area is presented in Section 4.2. Key recommendations include:

- Replace one motor vehicle lane in each direction of Whitney Avenue with six-foot-wide buffered bicycle lanes; install striping, signage and pavement legends,
- Install high visibility crosswalks and ADA-compliant curb ramps across Westbank Expressway at target locations,
- Conduct a drainage study to evaluate feasibility of installing approximately 125,000 SF total bioretention landscaping to improve stormwater management between Whitney Avenue and Terry Parkway, and approximately 175,000 SF total between

Figure 2: Hector Avenue, Before and After



Whitney Avenue and Stumpf Blvd. Modify existing concrete channels and drains,

- Build new five-foot wide sidewalks a minimum of five feet from the roadway curbs of Westbank Expressway frontage roads and Whitney Avenue,
- Install bio-retention strips in landscape buffers,
- Redevelop mall sites including the “Dollar Tree” property and adjacent mall entrance and vacant parcels on Hector Avenue for pedestrian orientation, and,
- Construct a 12’ wide shared-use trail from the West Jefferson Health Center to Wright Avenue. Plant approximately 110 shade trees, and construct approximately 56,000 SF total bioretention landscaping between trail and roadway to improve stormwater management.

## Metairie Road Study Area

An initial assessment of the Metairie Road Study Area found that it already contains many ingredients for smart growth development: pedestrian scale and building orientation, ready access to transit, and a mixture of land uses adjacent to one another. Specific challenges the Parish should address in the short-term are delineating clear pedestrian circulation routes parallel to and across Metairie Road, providing opportunities for convenient parking that do not conflict with pedestrian circulation, and promoting land redevelopment that reinforces the study area’s “main street” character.

A full list of recommended improvements for this study area is presented in Section 5.2. Key recommendations include:

- Establish Metairie Road as a shared bike lane by installing shared lane markings and signage,

Figure 3: Public Meeting, Oakwood Center



- Tailor parking regulations to make business more viable, such as permitting on-street spaces and spaces underneath the Causeway Boulevard overpass to count toward off-street requirements,
- Reduce a lane of traffic between Severn Avenue to permit more room for pedestrians and vehicle parking,
- Expand and improve E-4 bus stop area at intersection with Severn Avenue,
- Replace existing sidewalks with bio-infiltration strip and install new, 5' wide sidewalks behind strip,
- Install pedestrian countdown signals (four heads, two poles) at Causeway Boulevard,
- Demarcate roadway and sidewalks under overpass with different paving material or color, repaint concrete and steel and consider adding new lighting,
- Install approximately 7,500 SF total bioretention landscaping for stormwater management in large right of way at Labarre Road, and,
- Add high-visibility crosswalks, bike racks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, new or repaired sidewalks, and bio-infiltration strips at Labarre Road and Metairie Court.

Figure 4: Metairie Road at Severn, Before and After





# Chapter I. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and Background

The purpose of this study is to propose conceptual designs for public right-of-way enhancements in two areas that the Jefferson Parish Planning Department has identified as targets for “smart growth” development: Upper Metairie Road, from Arlington Drive to Severn Avenue, and the area surrounding and including the Oakwood Center shopping mall.

The project goals are to improve connectivity and economy in the study areas and Parish overall by:

1. Linking existing development patterns of residential and commercial through better connectivity and more pedestrian-oriented development,
2. Beautifying and enhance pedestrian environment,
3. Improving transit access and safety, and
4. Improving the business environment (e.g. Lower the vacancy rate, increase foot traffic).

## 1.2 Why Smart Growth?

Smart growth is characterized by compact, mixed use development in which housing, jobs, schools and services are located near each other and are easily accessible via a range of transportation options. This involves planning land use in concert with different transportation modes, including walking, bicycling and transit, in addition to driving. Smart growth may be planned as new development or take the form of infill development through revitalization of older neighborhoods. Section III of this study describes select smart growth strategies in additional detail.

Growing “smart” carries several benefits:<sup>1</sup>

1. Stabilizes and improve residential and commercial property values;
2. Makes businesses and jobs more accessible to the workforce and customers;
3. Makes efficient use of limited public resources for infrastructure;
4. Improves public health by providing more opportunities for walking and bicycling, and improving traffic safety; and,
5. Protects natural resources and preserves open space.

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<sup>1</sup> Litman, Todd, *Understanding Smart Growth Savings: Evaluating Economic Savings and Benefits of Compact Development, and How They are Misrepresented by Critics*, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 28 May 2015.

### 1.3 Smart Growth Planning Context

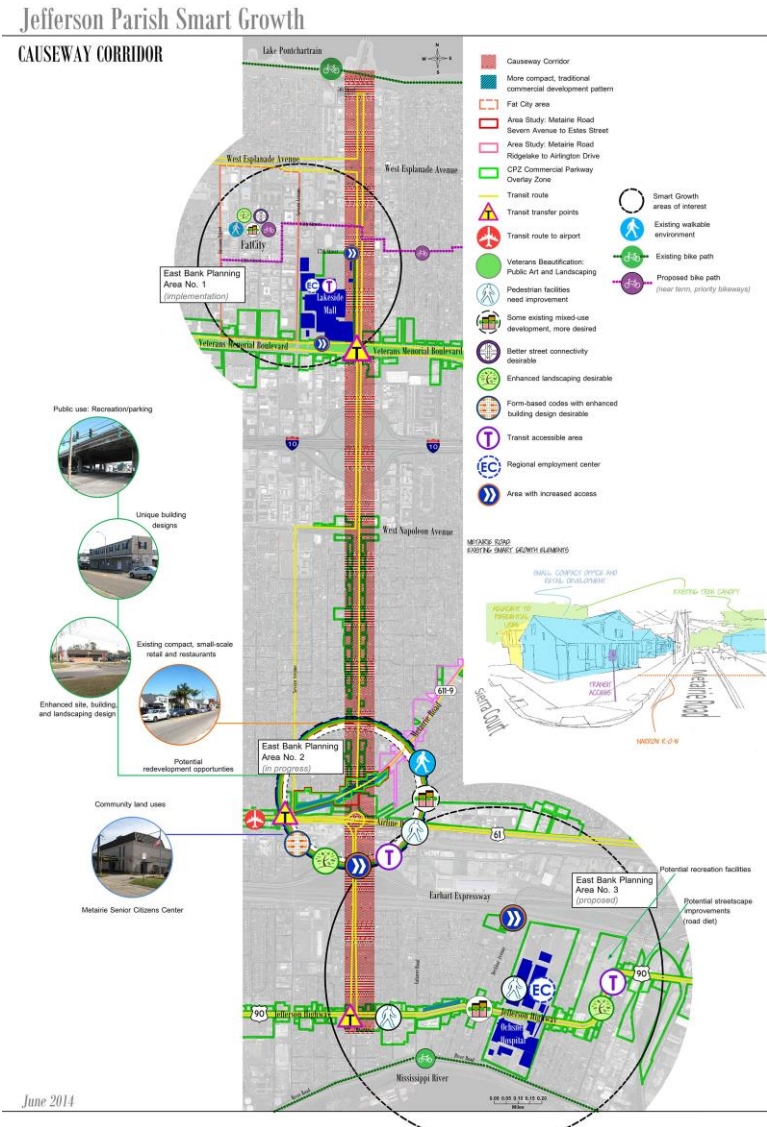
In 2014, the Jefferson Parish Planning Department identified corridors on the east and west banks of the Parish to target for smart growth strategies. These are the Causeway Corridor, which links Fat City, Metairie Road, and the Ochsner Medical Center on Jefferson Highway (Figure 5). The Westbank corridor is the Westbank Expressway, which connects the planned community Fairfield, Westwego, Gretna and the Oakwood Center (Figure 6). This study emerges from this strategic framework for guiding smart growth throughout the parish.

In April 2014, the Parish Council adopted the Jefferson Parish Bicycle Master Plan, which recommends a network of on- and off-street bikeways to build and numerous land use policy, encouragement and enforcement strategies to improve cycling conditions (Figure 7). Several streets within this project’s study area are targeted for bikeways and bicycle facilities.

Figure 6: Westbank Expressway Smart Growth Concept



Figure 5: Causeway Corridor Smart Growth Concept



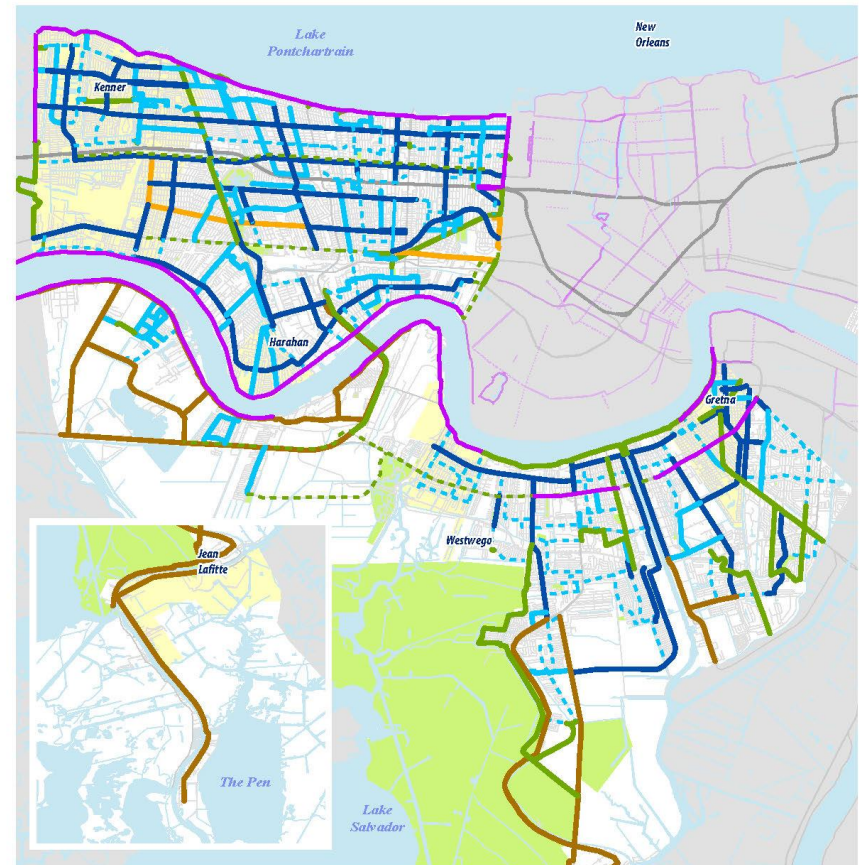
As part of its Jefferson EDGE 2020 Strategic Plan, JEDCO facilitated a vision and redevelopment plan for [Fat City](#), which recommends numerous regulatory, parking, infrastructure, public services and financing strategies to encourage a compact, mixed-use, attractive and accessible district. The RPC and Jefferson Parish have since developed a feasibility study to make [Severn Avenue](#), from Veterans Memorial Boulevard to West Esplanade Avenue, a complete street, with landscaping and bicycle and pedestrian enhancements.

Figure 8: Fat City Sample Streetscape Enhancements



Source: Jefferson EDGE 2020 Strategic Implementation Plan: Fat City Redevelopment

Figure 7: Bicycle Master Plan - Recommended Routes



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Base layers source: Regional Planning Commission 2012 December 26, 2013

**LEGEND**

- Existing Bikeways
- Recommended Routes**
  - Greenway
  - Side Path
  - Cycle Track
  - Paved Shoulder
  - Bike Lane
  - Bicycle Boulevard
  - Sharrow
  - Parks & Playgrounds Incorporated Areas

0 1.5 3 Miles

## Chapter II. Process

In late 2014, RPC and Jefferson Parish selected a consultant team comprised of GCR Inc. and Waggonner & Ball Architects (Consultant Team) to complete project management, stakeholder engagement, and design concept development tasks. The Consultant Team worked closely with RPC and Jefferson Parish Planning Department staff throughout all project phases to organize a Project Management Committee, schedule and advise on public outreach events, and review project deliverables.

### 2.1 Project Management Committees

Project Management Committees (PMC) for each study area were assembled to guide the consultant team's analysis, review its findings, and recommend strategies for Jefferson Parish and DOTD to advance. They included representatives of neighborhood and business associations within the study areas, Parish Department of Engineering, Jefferson Transit, Councilmembers and DOTD. A full roster of committee members is included in Appendix A.

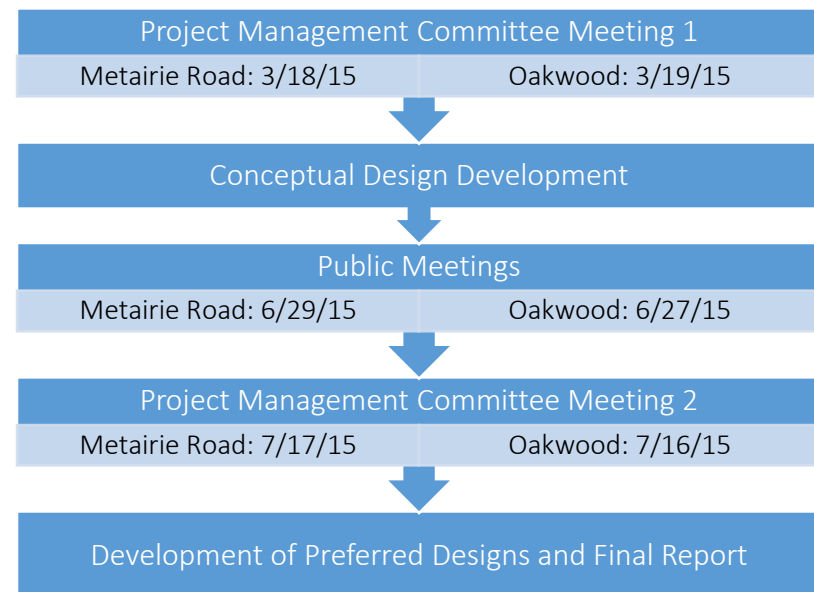
At the first PMC meetings, the consultant team presented initial findings regarding existing challenges and opportunities within the study areas, and solicited input from committee members to inform proposed improvements. At the second meeting of the PMC, the consultant team presented proposed design alternatives and collected committee member feedback.

### 2.2 Public meetings

Public meetings in each study area were held between the two PMC meetings to give residents, area workers, business owners and other stakeholders the opportunity to view preliminary design concepts and provide feedback to the project team. The project team announced the

meeting directly to PMC members and neighborhood association leaders, and the Parish posted meeting information on its website and through press releases to local media. At each public meeting, attendees viewed large format displays of existing challenges and opportunities and proposed designs. Project team staff engaged attendees individually to explain the proposed design concepts, respond to questions, and solicit feedback. Sections 4.1.4 and 5.1.4 each detail the feedback received at the Oakwood Area and Metairie Road public meetings, respectively. All public comments collected at the meetings are available in Appendix B.

Figure 9: Project Process



## Chapter III. Smart Growth Strategies

Several physical and regulatory strategies are available to support smart growth redevelopment. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, yet rather a selection of high-impact, feasible, short- and medium-term strategies that Jefferson Parish may employ to achieve the project goals. These are referenced throughout the “Proposed improvements” sections.

### Public Right-of-Way Strategies

A number of evidence-based, previously used public right-of-way strategies are available to provide immediate impacts in the study areas. These include sidewalks, crosswalks, curb extensions, pedestrian countdown signals, bike lanes and trails, bike racks, and bioretention landscaping.

#### Sidewalks

Streets with sidewalks have been found to reduce pedestrian crashes by up to 88%.<sup>2</sup> A minimum 5’ wide sidewalk provides enough room for two people to walk side-by-side, and a minimum 4’ wide planting strip creates a buffer that separates pedestrian activity from parallel, vehicular traffic (Figure 10).

#### Crosswalks

Marked crosswalks indicate preferred pedestrian street crossing locations and warn motorists to expect pedestrian crossings. High visibility crosswalks are particularly helpful in mid-block crossing locations (Figure 11).

Figure 10: Preferred Sidewalk Design



*Source: Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System*

Figure 11: High Visibility Crosswalk



*Source: Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System*

<sup>2</sup> FHWA, An Analysis of Factors Contributing to "Walking Along Roadway" Crashes: Research Study and Guidelines for Sidewalks and Walkways. Report No. FHWA-RD-01-101, FHWA, Washington D.C., 2001.

## Curb Extensions

Curb extensions expand the curb line into the roadway, usually into a parking lane, thereby reducing pedestrian crossing distances. The narrower roadway typically calms motor vehicle traffic, improves pedestrian visibility, and creates more space for pedestrian activities.

## Pedestrian Countdown Signals

Pedestrian countdown signals communicate when (and for how long) pedestrians are allowed to cross a signalized intersection. They are especially useful when signal phasing is complex.

## Lane Reduction/Bike Lane

Bicycle lanes are at least 5-feet wide and provide dedicated space for cyclists to travel in roadways. Existing streets may be retrofitted to accommodate bicycle lanes by reducing the width or number of travel or parking lanes.

## Green Drainage Infrastructure and Street Trees

By storing and allowing infiltration of stormwater, bio-retention strips, bioswales and raingardens, known collectively as green drainage infrastructure, help prevent stormwater flooding and ease pressure on traditional drainage systems. These measures can also beautify streetscapes.

Street trees are recommended for planting in the public right-of-way. They should be selected from the following species: American Elm; Oak (Water or Shumard); Sycamore; Crape Myrtle; Magnolia (Southern or Oriental); Honey Locust; Sugar Maple; and Bald Cypress.

These treatments and others may be used independently or combined in a variety of formats to retrofit streets for pedestrian safety, streetscape attractiveness and creating an inviting environment.

Figure 12: Curb Extension (Gainesville, Fla.)



Figure 13: Green Drainage Infrastructure (Portland, Oregon)



*(Photo: Kevin Robert Perry)*

## Chapter IV. Oakwood Area Conceptual Designs

### 4.1 Current challenges and opportunities

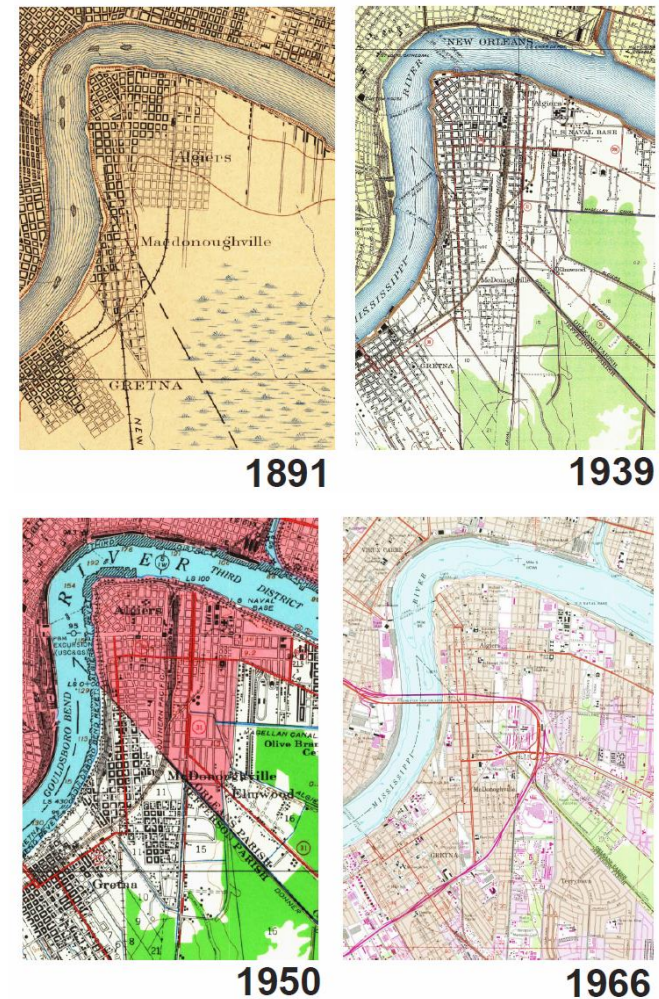
Development of conceptual designs for the Oakwood Area stemmed from in-depth analysis of existing challenges and opportunities in the study area. This included a review of several factors, including its historic development, land use and circulation patterns, as well as consideration of public input. This section summarizes these findings.

#### 4.1.1 Historic development

Development in the study area began in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in McDonoghville, between the Mississippi River and present-day Whitney Avenue. The gridiron street pattern remains today. The remaining portion of the study area remained largely undeveloped until the 1950s, as residential development from the neighboring McDonoghville area began to extend away from the Mississippi River (Figure 14).

The construction of the West Bank Expressway in the 1960s and layout of neighborhood streets drove much of the commercial and residential development farther from the river. West of Whitney Avenue, the elevated expressway cut directly through the historic McDonoghville street grid. While this project improved regional mobility for automobiles, it created a significant physical barrier to neighborhood traffic circulation.

Figure 14: Historic Development of Oakwood Study Area



Source: U.S. Geological Survey Historical Topographic Map Explorer (<http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs/>)

Figure 15: Aerial View of Oakwood Study Area





### 4.1.2 Land use

The Oakwood Center shopping mall was constructed in 1966. Most buildings in the study area today were constructed in the 1960s. This peak building period preceded that of the Parish by a decade (Figure 16).

Residential, commercial and, to a lesser extent, industrial, land uses prevail through the study area, but are largely segregated from one another. Single and two-family, detached residential structures are predominant in McDonoghville to the west of the mall site, and in Terrytown to the east of the mall site. Multifamily developments are concentrated immediately to the south of the mall site. The study area has a higher proportion of multifamily (2 units per structure or more) residential structures than the parish as a whole – particularly 5-19 unit structures (Figure 17).

Vacant residential parcels are scattered throughout the McDonoghville neighborhood. Large vacant commercial parcels are present between the mall parking lot and Hector Avenue.

Figure 16: Oakwood Study Area Building Age

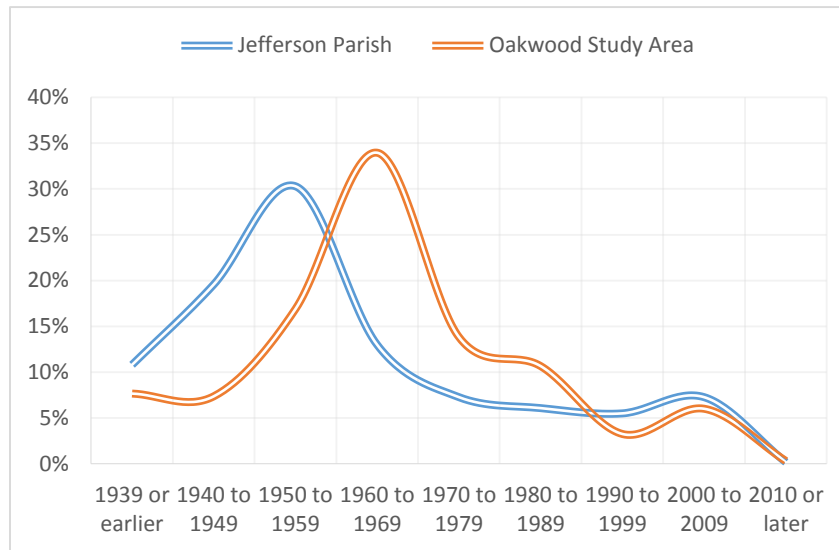


Figure 17: Oakwood Study Area Housing Units by Type

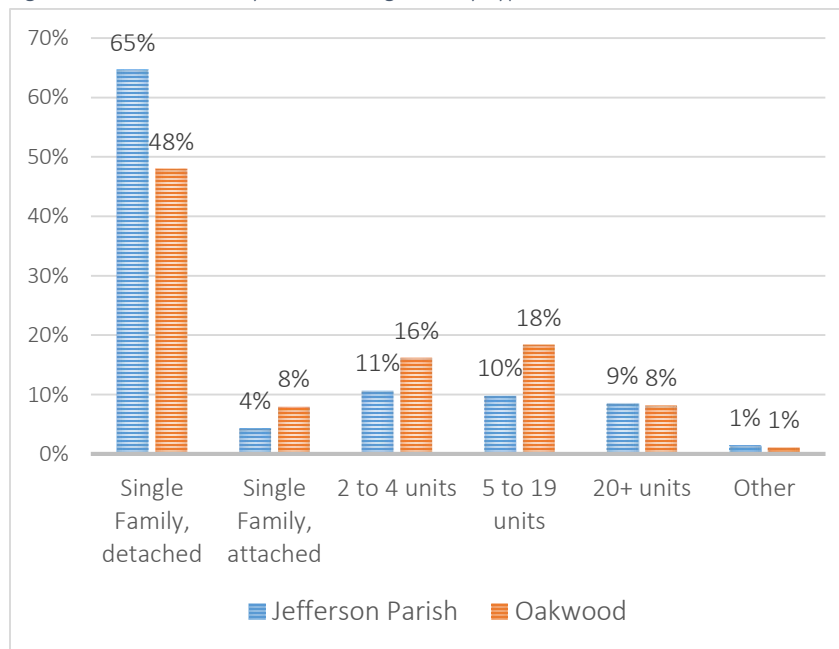


Figure 18: Oakwood Area: Land use conditions

Clockwise from top left: Multifamily housing located south of the mall site; Single family housing located south of mall site; Hotel construction on Whitney Avenue; Auto-oriented retail on Westbank Expressway; Parking separates entrances from sidewalks at Westbank Expressway; Vacant land south of mall site.

*Credits: GCR Inc. and Waggonner & Ball Architects*



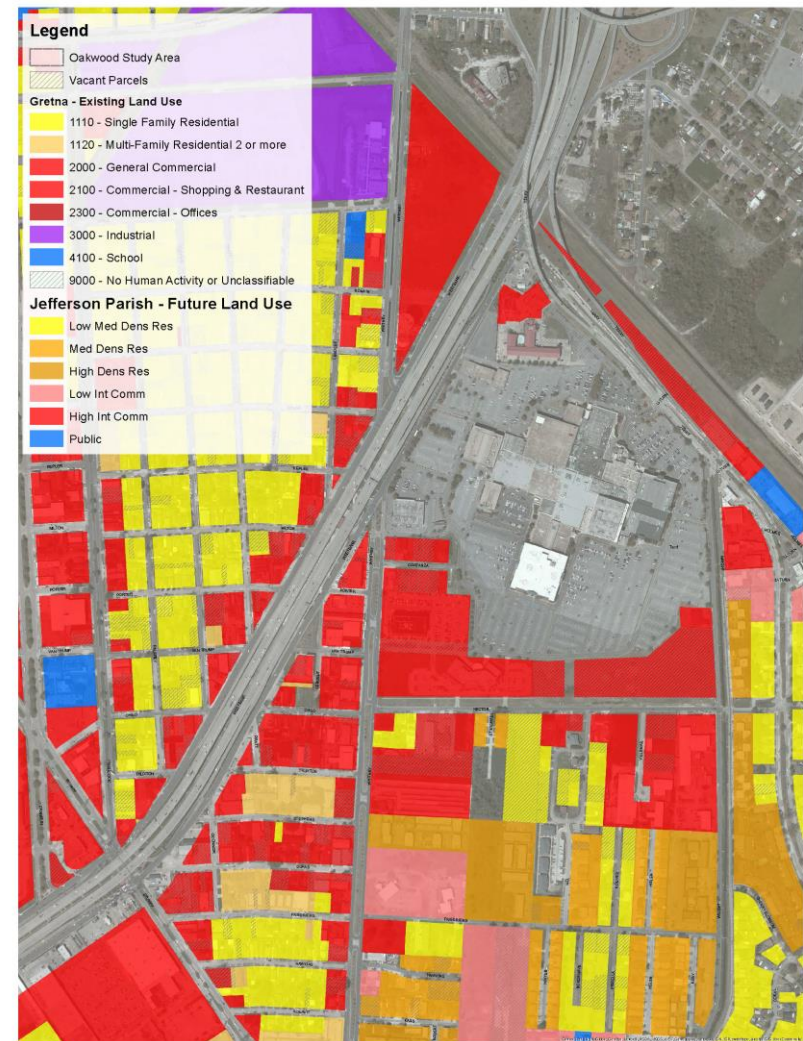
Figure 19: Oakwood Study Area Land Use Map

Commercial uses line the main traffic arteries Westbank Expressway, Whitney Avenue, Terry Parkway, and Hancock Avenue. These include restaurants, office buildings, hotels, pharmacies, storage facilities, and fitness centers. Hotels are currently under construction at the triangular shaped parcel located between the Westbank Expressway, Whitney Avenue and the Orleans Parish boundary.

Parking lots consume significant shares of the commercial properties, and are frequently located between the property line abutting the public right-of-way and the set-back structures. Figure 19 shows the land use classifications for the study area.

# Land Use

Jefferson Parish Smart Growth - Oakwood Study Area



DOTD Project Number H.010170.1 / RPC Project SGEJEFF-MROC  
 Date: 6/30/2015

0 0.125 0.25 Miles

This map was prepared using GIS data provided by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and the Louisiana State University Center for Transportation Studies (LSU-CTS). The map is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract or any other legal document. The map is subject to change without notice. The map is not to be used for any other purpose without the express written consent of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and the Louisiana State University Center for Transportation Studies (LSU-CTS).

### 4.1.3 Circulation

The Westbank Expressway frontage roads are the principal artery through the study area, carrying neighborhood traffic as well as regional traffic to and from the elevated expressway. From Terry Parkway to Stumpf, the Westbank Expressway surface roads measured over 45,000 average daily vehicles.<sup>3</sup> It varies from four to six 12' lanes of traffic divided by a wide median. The posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour.

Whitney Avenue carries over 11,000 average vehicles per day on its four 12' lanes, which are also divided by a median.<sup>4</sup>

The Wilty Transit Terminal is located just to the southeast of the intersection of these traffic arteries. As the Westbank transit hub for Jefferson Transit, it serves hundreds of daily boardings and alightings, and generates pedestrian traffic across Westbank Expressway frontage roads.

Walking conditions vary throughout the study area. Short block sizes, a connected street grid, and prevalent sidewalks make McDonoghville a walkable neighborhood. Sidewalks are less frequently available, however, to the east of the expressway, and some that are available are narrow and located immediately adjacent to high-speed roadways.

Much of the street network south of Hector Avenue and Chilo Street lacks sidewalks altogether, as shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Oakwood Area Circulation

## Circulation

Jefferson Parish Smart Growth - Oakwood Study Area



<sup>3</sup> Regional Planning Commission, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Figure 21: Oakwood Study Area Circulation Conditions

Clockwise from top left: Westbank Expressway frontage road sidewalks are immediately against the roadway; Whitney Avenue south of Westbank Expressway; Shared use trail underneath Westbank Expressway overpass; Hector Avenue sidewalk, south of mall site; Existing sidewalk under Westbank Expressway; Westbank Expressway crossing at Wilty Terminal

*Credits: GCR Inc. and Waggoner & Ball Architects*



*Roadway Connectivity and Proximity to Competing Shopping Districts*

Figure 22 illustrates that the Oakwood Center (red dot) is well connected to major roads (black lines), but that numerous local streets dead-end (gray circles) or are otherwise disconnected from direct access to the site.

Figure 23 shows the Oakwood Center in comparison to local shopping centers. The shopping mall is within three miles of much of the commercial activity on the west bank, the Crescent City Connection, and the historic commercial districts in New Orleans.

Figure 24 shows the Oakwood Center in comparison to other regional shopping centers on the east bank of Jefferson Parish (Elmwood area, Lakeside Mall, Esplanade Mall). Much of the New Orleans area population within five miles of the Oakwood study area resides closer to Oakwood than the east bank shopping centers.

Figure 22: Oakwood Area Street Grid Connections

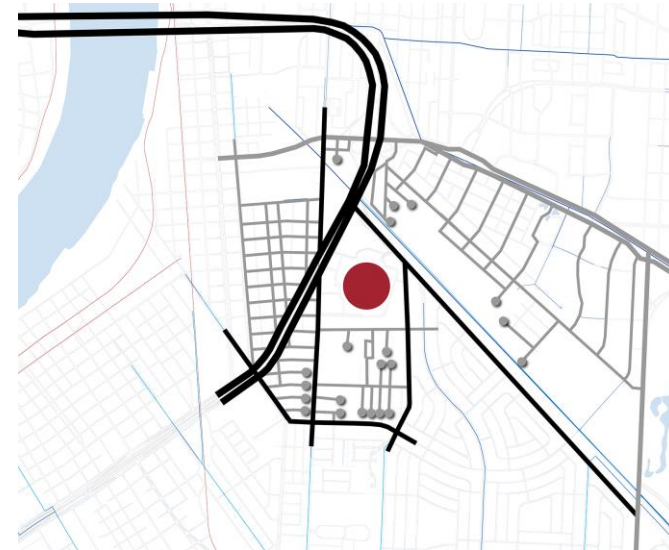


Figure 23: Oakwood Center Relative to Local Shopping Centers

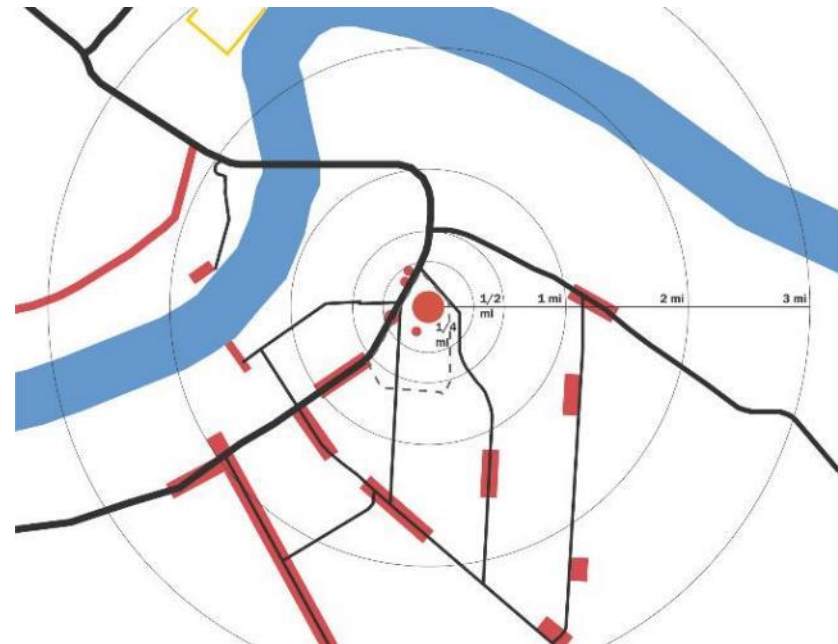
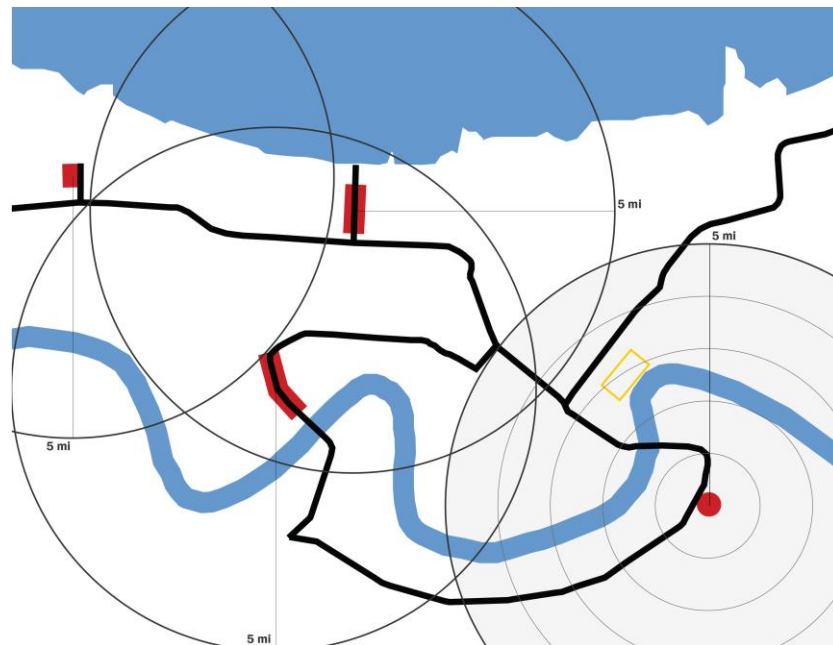


Figure 24: Oakwood Center Relative to Regional Shopping Centers



### 4.1.4 Public Input

A public meeting was held the afternoon of Saturday June 27 at the Oakwood Center. Between 30 and 40 attendees engaged with the exhibit and project team staff, and provided five written comment cards. Table 1 summarizes feedback from these comment cards. All public comments collected at the meetings are available in Appendix B.

Table 1: Public Comment Themes: Oakwood Area

What do you like about the area?	What would you like to see changed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy access from the highway if driving</li> <li>• The mall</li> <li>• A lot of open space and room to grow</li> <li>• Bike path</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of sidewalk accessing mall</li> <li>• More bike paths</li> <li>• More commercial/residential development</li> <li>• Open shopping areas</li> <li>• Make it easier and safer to cross the Westbank Expressway frontage roads</li> </ul>

Figure 25: Public Meeting, Oakwood Study Area



Credit: GCR Inc. and Waggoner & Ball Architects

### 4.1.5 Summary of Challenges and Opportunities: Oakwood

#### Study Area

The assessment shows that the Oakwood Study Area holds great potential for developing into a walkable, well-connected and vibrant community. By drawing workers, commuters and shoppers from throughout the region via several modes of transportation, the area functions as a regional crossroads that is positioned to sustain efficient, pedestrian and transit-oriented infill development.

Specific challenges the Parish should address in the short-term are balancing safe and convenient access between motorists, pedestrian, cyclists and transit riders, and promoting land redevelopment that accommodates and encourages this balance.

Table 2 summarizes these challenges and opportunities.

Table 2: Oakwood Area Summary of Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Westbank Expressway frontage roads offer poor pedestrian facilities.</li> <li>• Main roadways are high speed and high volume</li> <li>• Complex traffic signal cycles make safe crossings difficult even at crosswalks.</li> <li>• Limited number of traffic signals fail to create breaks in traffic.</li> <li>• Barriers to movement include canals, large roadways, vacant parcels, fences, and parking lots.</li> <li>• Many buildings are set back far from the street</li> <li>• Surface parking lots separate pedestrian areas and building entrances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High transit ridership and transferring takes place at the Wilty Terminal</li> <li>• Many pedestrians observed using Westbank Expressway frontage roads</li> <li>• McDonoghville neighborhood offers walkable street grid and link to historic downtown Gretna</li> <li>• Terrytown is stable residential neighborhood adjacent to mall site</li> <li>• Existing mix of land uses (hotels, Oakwood mall, smaller shopping centers, and single- and multi-family housing)</li> <li>• Westbank Expressway and wide supply of parking make access easy via personal vehicle</li> <li>• High traffic volumes on Westbank Expressway are attractive to retailers</li> </ul>



## 4.2 Proposed improvements

Five focus areas were selected for targeted improvements, shown in Figure 26. These are shown in detail in Figure 27 through Figure 33. Key recommendations are:

- Replace one motor vehicle lane in each direction of Whitney Avenue with six-foot-wide buffered bicycle lanes; install striping, signage and pavement legends
- Install high visibility crosswalks and ADA-compliant curb ramps across Westbank Expressway at target locations
- Conduct a drainage study to evaluate feasibility of installing approximately 125,000 SF total bioretention landscaping to improve stormwater management between Whitney Avenue and Terry Parkway, and approximately 175,000 SF total between Whitney Avenue and Stumpf Blvd. Modify existing concrete channels and drains.
- Build new five-foot wide sidewalks a minimum of five feet from the roadway curbs of Westbank Expressway frontage roads and Whitney Avenue.
- Install bio-retention strips in landscape buffers.
- Redevelop mall sites including the “Dollar Tree” property and adjacent mall entrance and vacant parcels on Hector Avenue for pedestrian orientation
- Construct a 12' wide shared-use trail from the West Jefferson Health Center to Wright Avenue. Plant approximately 110 shade trees, and construct approximately 56,000 SF total bioretention landscaping between trail and roadway to improve stormwater management

Figure 26: Oakwood Study Area - Areas of Focus

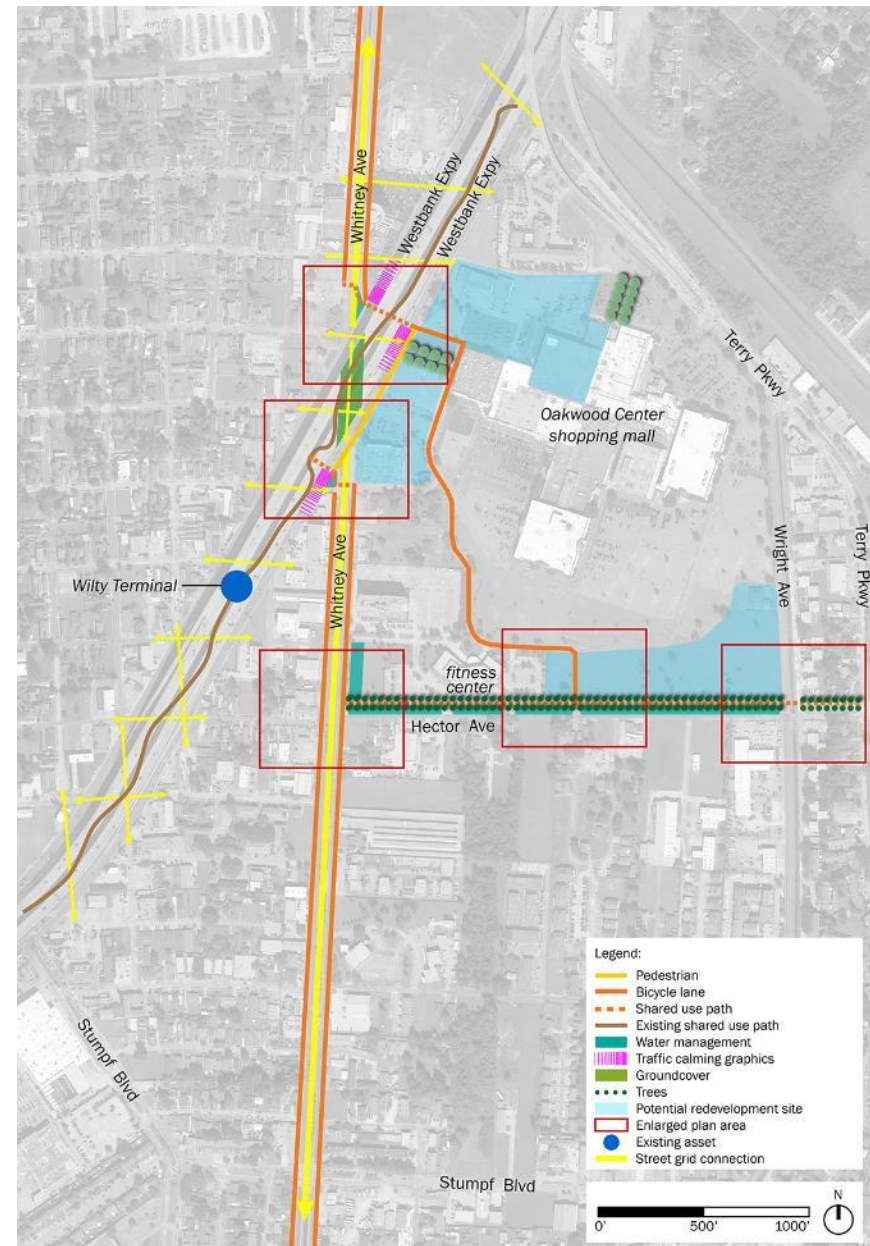
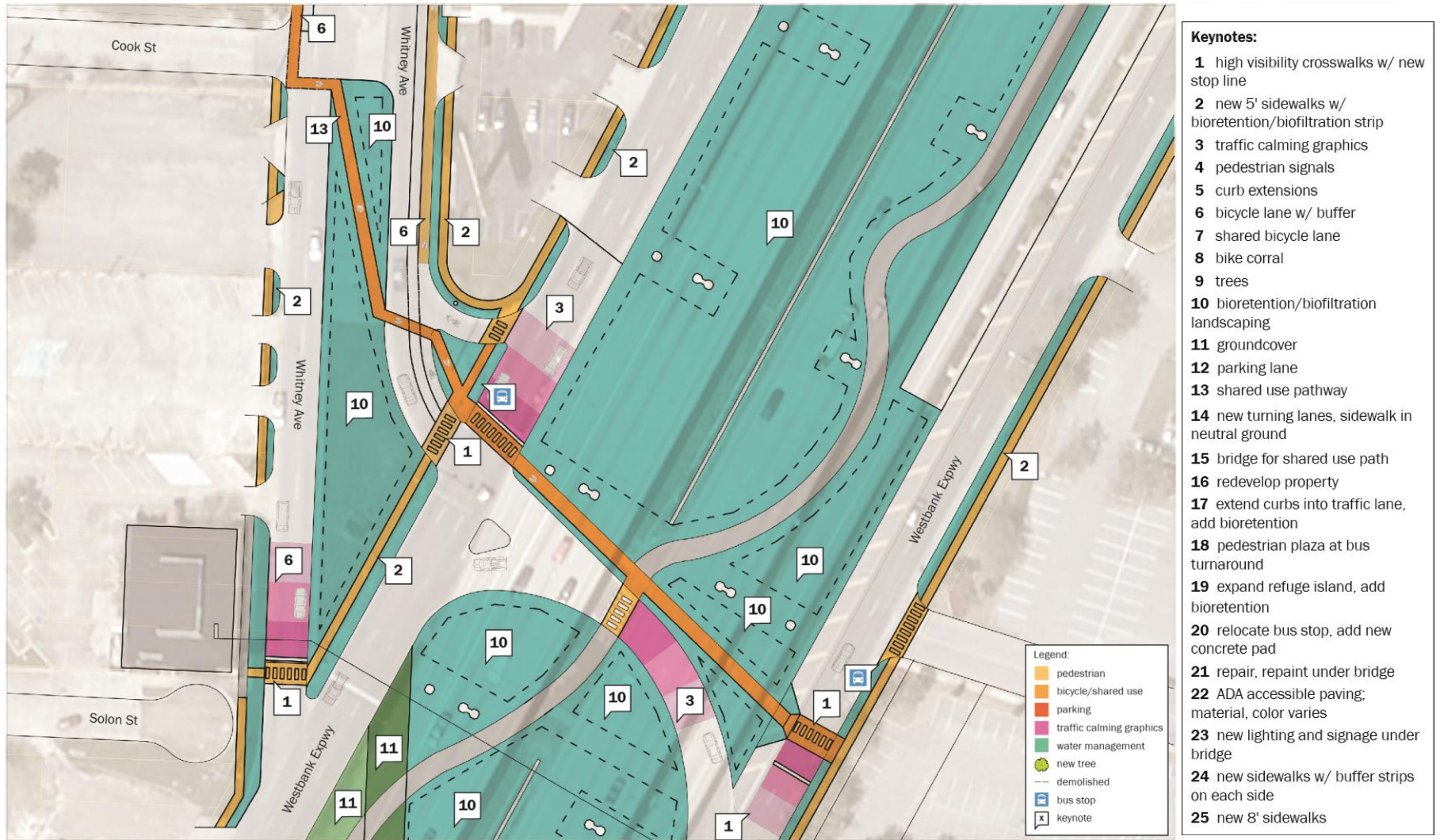


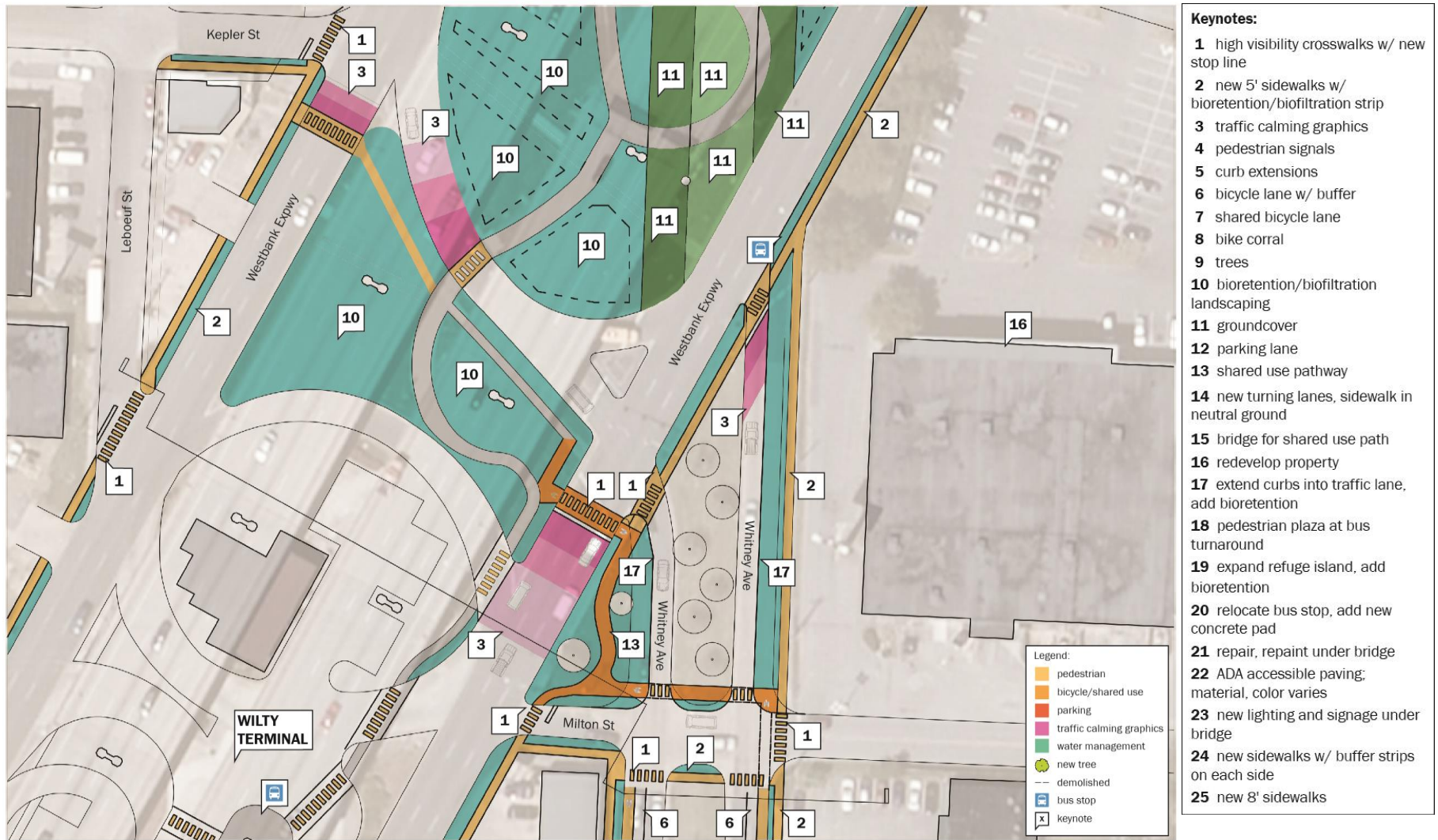
Figure 27: Westbank Expressway at Whitney Ave - North



**Westbank Expressway at Whitney Ave - North**

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Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 28: Westbank Expressway at Whiney Ave - South



**Westbank Expressway at Whitney Ave - South**

Waggonner & Ball Architects

Figure 29: Whitney Avenue Traffic Calming Concept

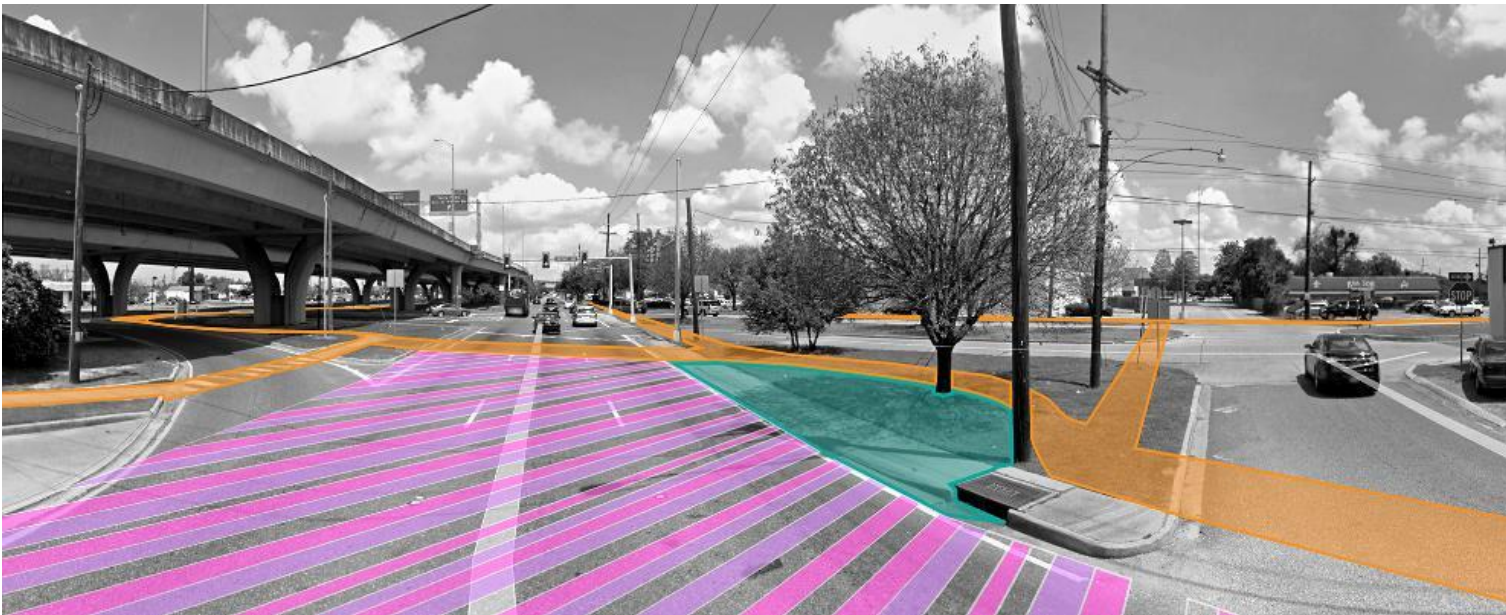
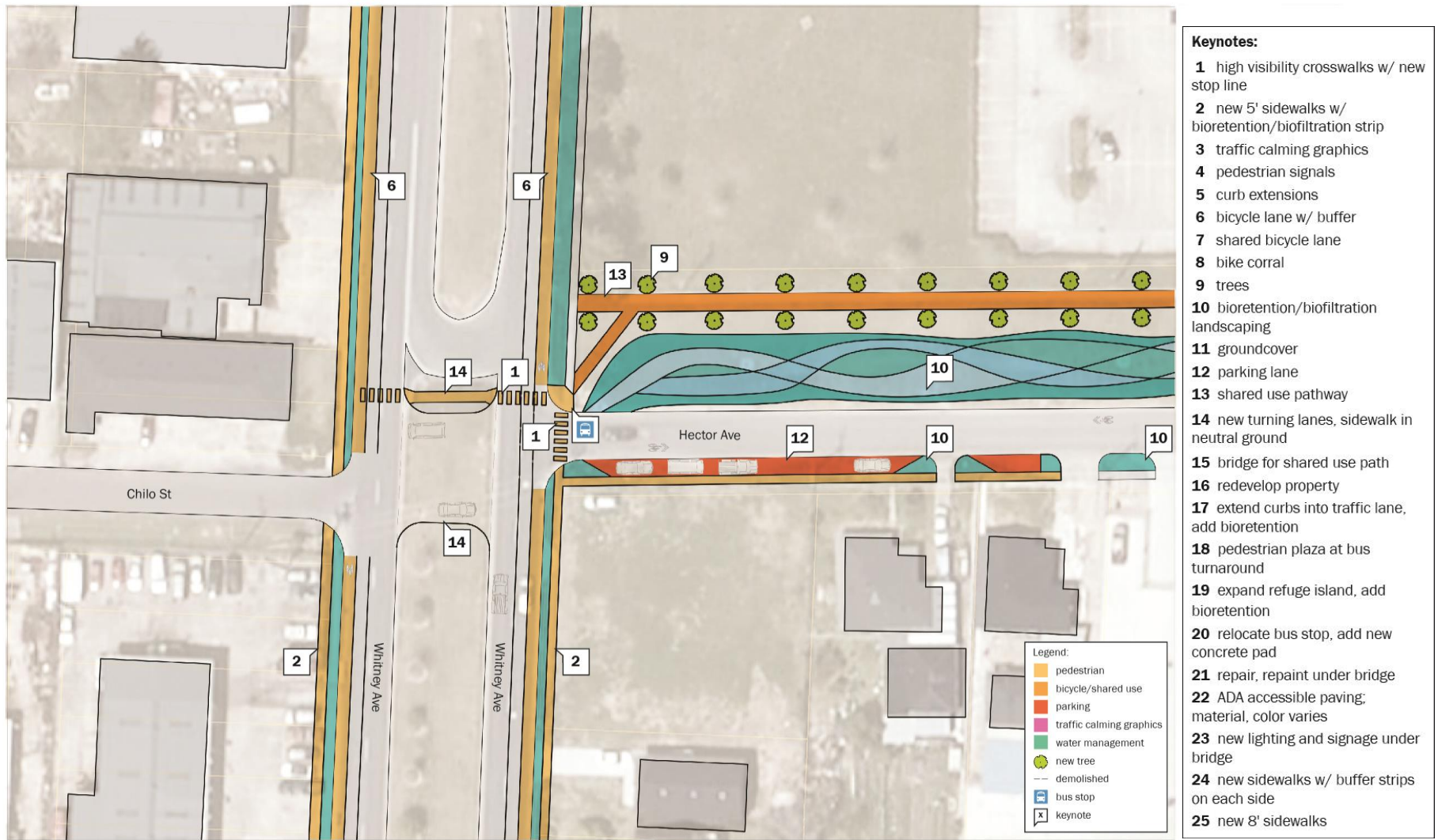


Figure 30: Whitney Ave at Hector Ave



**Whitney Ave at Hector Ave**

Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 31: Hector Avenue

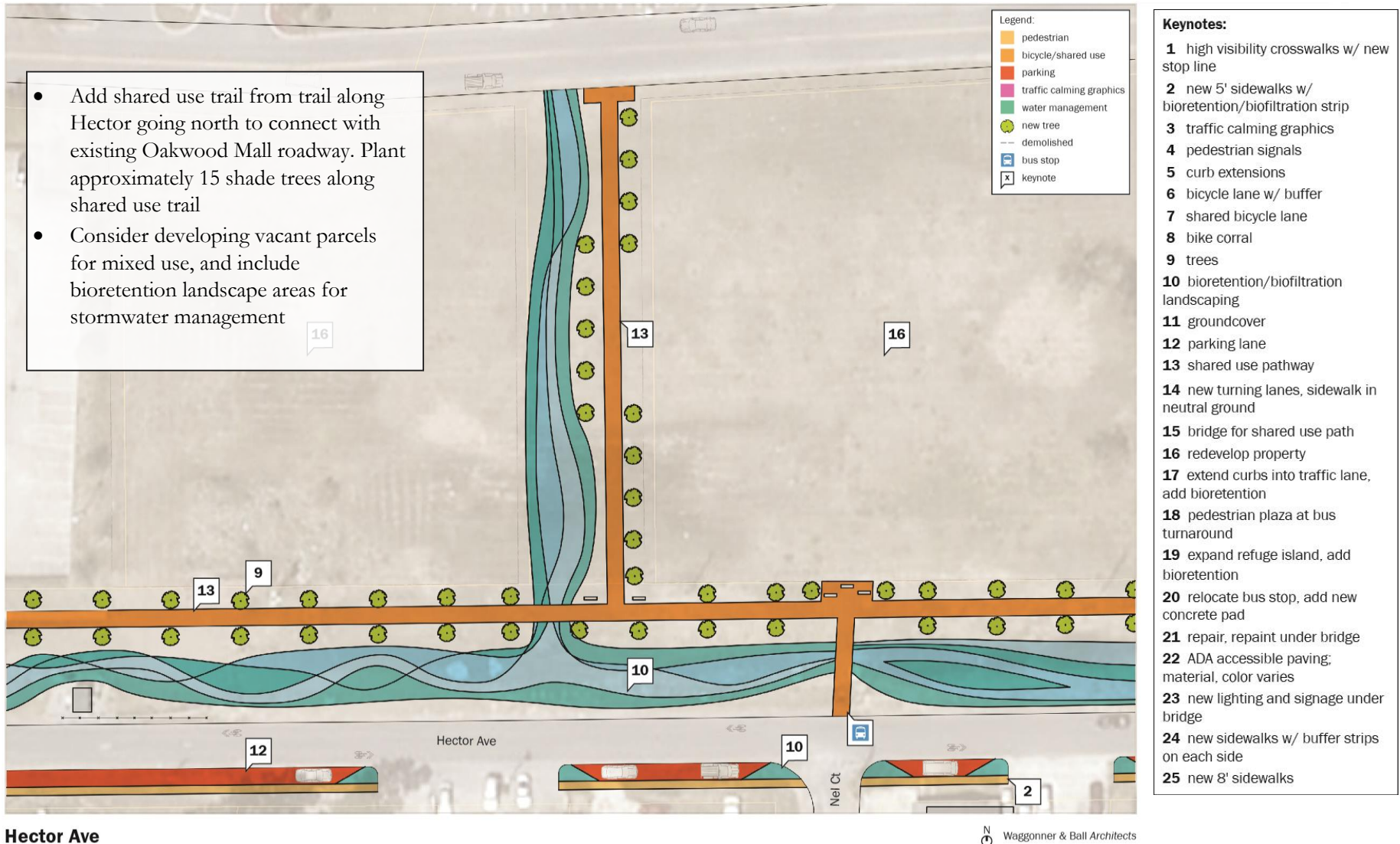
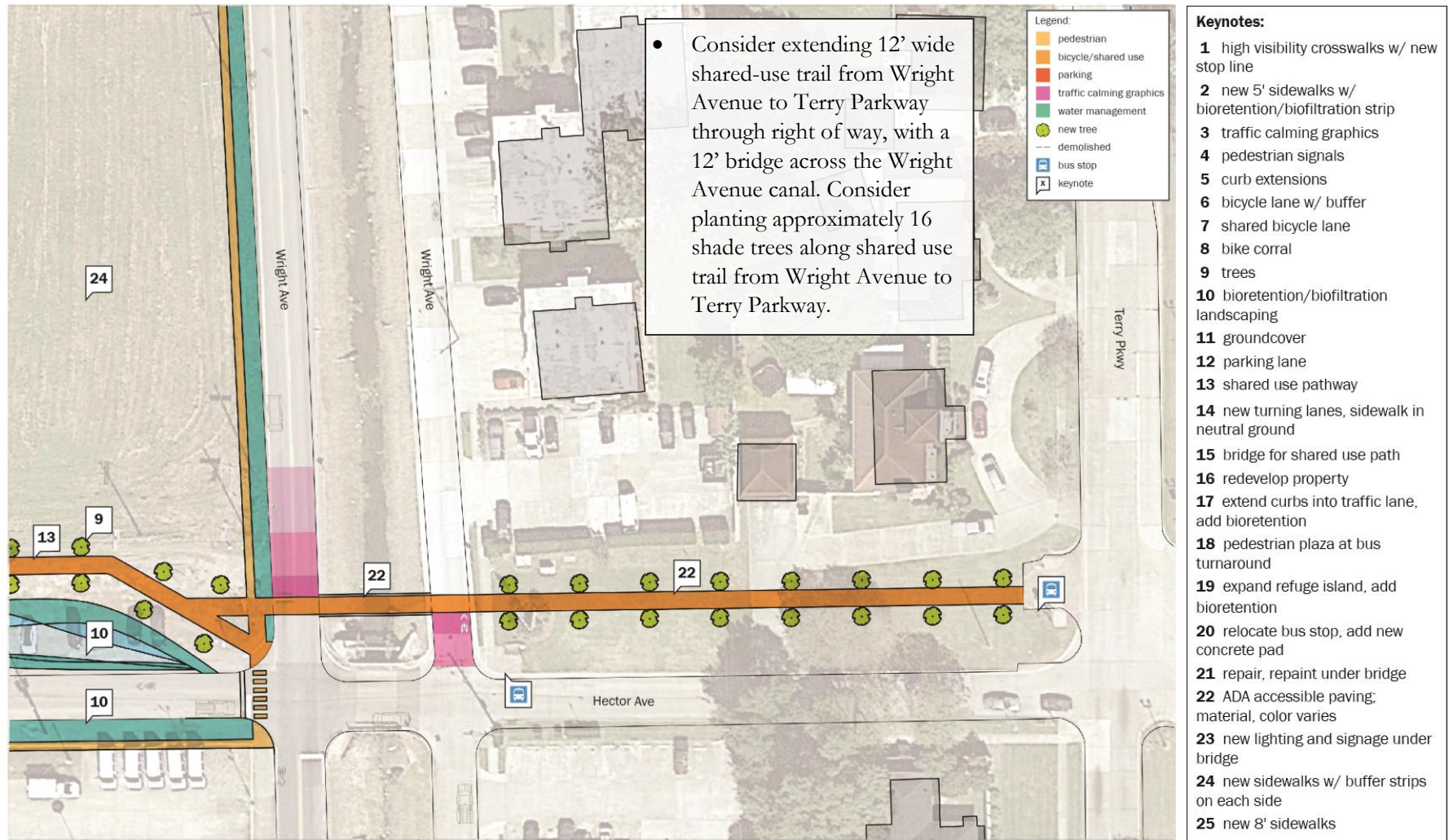


Figure 32: Hector Avenue at Wright Avenue



Hector Ave at Wright Ave

N  
Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 33: Hector Avenue, Shared Use Trail &amp; Planting Concept



Above: A wide right-of-way exists between Hector Avenue and the property line at the south side of the shopping center. Drainage basins dot the length of this low-lying area.

Right: A shared-use trail, line of shade trees and landscaped bioswale are proposed to reduce stormwater runoff into the drainage system, provide a recreational path to connect Whitney Avenue and the fitness center to Wright Avenue and the Terrytown neighborhood, and define the undeveloped landscape south of Oakwood Center.





## Estimated Costs: Oakwood Study Area

Table 3 shows a preliminary statement of probable cost for the recommended improvements. These are derived from approximating quantities based on standard pay items and recent bid prices. The costs include a 25% contingency. Engineering, surveying, inspection and other support tasks are not included.

Table 3: Estimated Cost of Improvements: Oakwood Study Area

Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>Bike lanes with buffer striping</b>				
Whitney Ave	8000	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 160,000.00
Wright Ave	7800	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 156,000.00
<b>Bioswales</b>	46530	SF	\$ 25.00	\$ 1,163,250.00
<i>approximately 2'-0" deep w/ native grasses over granular sub base w/ permeable drainage pipe below</i>				
<b>Curb extensions/bumpouts at corners</b>	10	EA	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 150,000.00
<b>Curbs</b>	1000	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 20,000.00
<b>Groundcover landscaping</b>	36000	SF	\$ 10.00	\$ 360,000.00
<b>High visibility crosswalks</b>	18	EA	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 45,000.00
<b>High visibility crosswalks w/ traffic calming colors</b>	18	EA	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
<b>Large bioswales, Hector Ave</b>	55000	SF	\$ 30.00	\$ 1,650,000.00
<i>approximately 4'-0" deep w/ native grasses over granular sub base w/ permeable drainage pipe below</i>				
<b>Lighting under elevated expressway</b>	40	EA	\$ 750.00	\$ 30,000.00
<b>New ADA accessible sidewalk ramps</b>	110	EA	\$ 750.00	\$ 82,500.00
<b>Parking lanes with water storage, 8' wide</b>	1040	LF	\$ 85.00	\$ 88,400.00
<b>Pedestrian bridge, timber walkway with rails</b>	420	SF	\$ 30.00	\$ 12,600.00
<b>Remove existing curbs and repair roadway</b>	750	LF	\$ 15.00	\$ 11,250.00
<b>Shared bike lane markings</b>	22	EA	\$ 225.00	\$ 4,950.00
<b>Shared use path, pervious asphalt - 12' wide</b>	2635	LF	\$ 133.00	\$ 350,455.00
<b>Shared use paths, pervious asphalt - 8' wide</b>	530	LF	\$ 100.00	\$ 53,000.00
<b>Sidewalks, new - 5' pavers</b>	16550	LF	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,655,000.00

Sidewalks, repaired - 4' pavers assumed	1000	LF	\$ 40.00	\$ 40,000.00
Street trees	150	EA	\$ 500.00	\$ 75,000.00
Striping: stop lines, lane markings, etc.	3000	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 60,000.00
Traffic calming painted graphics	10000	SF	\$ 13.00	\$ 130,000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$ 6,227,405.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 1,556,851.25
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 7,784,256.25</b>
<b>Alternate 1</b>				
Sidewalks, new - 5' pavers with water storage	16550	LF	\$ 125.00	\$ 2,068,750.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 517,187.50
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 2,585,937.50</b>
<b>Alternate 2</b>				
Large bioswales, under elevated expressway	300000	SF	\$ 30.00	\$ 9,000,000.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 2,250,000.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 11,250,000.00</b>

## Chapter V. Metairie Road site conceptual design

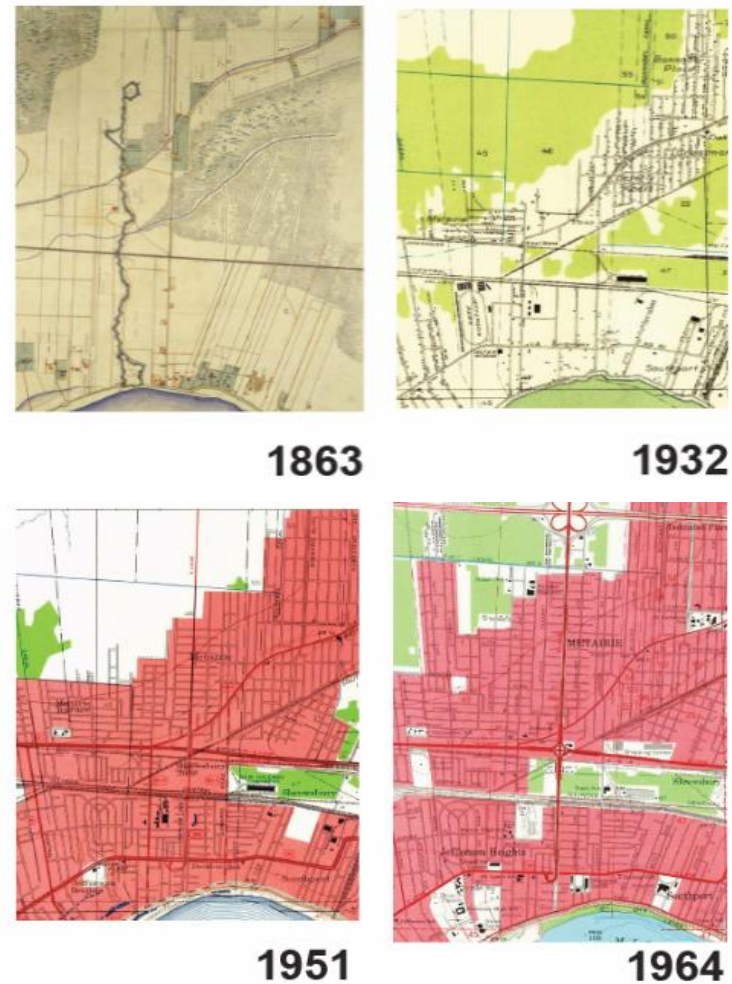
### 5.1 Current challenges and opportunities

#### 5.1.1 Historic development

Metairie Road follows Metairie Ridge – relatively high ground that served as a trail dating to pre-European settlement. A bayou traced this ridge on the lakeside of the thoroughfare, and has since been filled to accommodate urban development. As development spread from neighboring New Orleans, neighborhood streets were laid out stemming from Metairie Road. By the 1950s, these subdivisions spread to the Mississippi River and reached Interstate 10 to the north, which was constructed in the 1960s.

As a result of this development pattern, Metairie Road is the spine of Old Metairie, Harang Heights and Beverly Knoll neighborhoods to the south of the road. Most local traffic must rely on it to access other areas of the East Bank. The roadway therefore serves a high level of traffic relative to its width.

Figure 34: Historic Development of Metairie Road Study Area



### 5.1.2 Land use

Properties fronting Metairie Road from Causeway Boulevard to Arlington Drive are largely zoned C1: Neighborhood Commercial, which permits neighborhood-serving retail and personal services uses, and mixed commercial/residential, and allows a maximum height of forty-five feet. Low density residential-zoned parcels surround either side of Beverly Gate Road, and comprise most of the properties fronting the neighborhood streets stemming from Metairie Road. Properties facing Metairie Road between Severn Avenue and Causeway Boulevard are zoned for C1: Neighborhood Commercial yet are envisioned as “Neighborhood Mixed Use” in the Parish’s Future Land Use Map, which provides for compact development of single and multifamily residential and small scale commercial uses.

Figure 35: Future Land Use, Metairie Road Study Area

## Land Use

Jefferson Parish Smart Growth - Upper Metairie Road Study Area

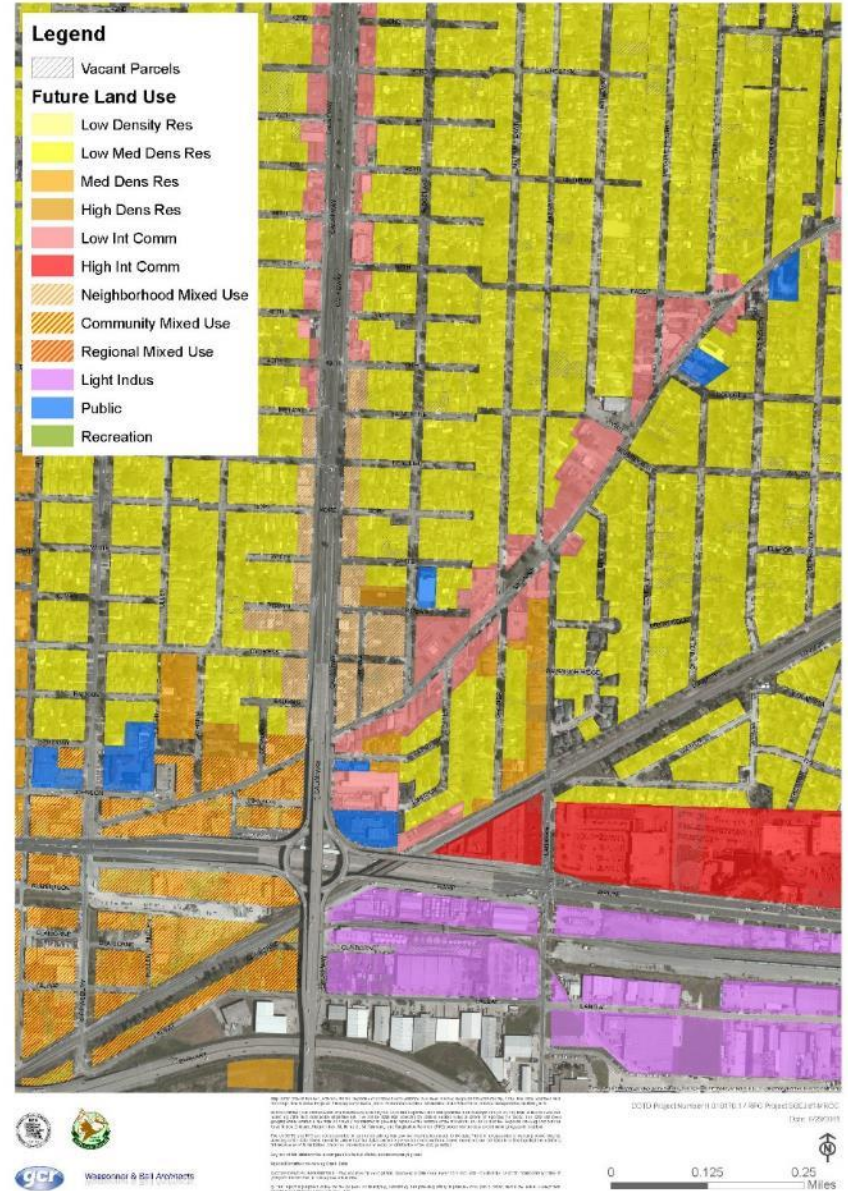


Figure 36: Metairie Road Study Area: Land Use

Clockwise from top left: Small businesses are prevalent in the corridor; While most homes in the surrounding neighborhoods are single-family detached, the area also has a high number of attached dwellings, relative to the Parish; One of two larger vacant properties for lease on the corridor; Strip mall style development dots the corridor; Detached, single family homes face Metairie Road; A recently constructed café fits the C1 neighborhood commercial zoning;

*Credits: GCR Inc., Waggoner & Ball Architects, Google Streetview*



### 5.1.3 Circulation

Metairie Road is the principal artery through the study area, carrying neighborhood traffic as well as regional traffic between the intersection with Severn Avenue and Airline Highway and the Orleans Parish border. It is a two lane roadway, but a turning lane is present at a handful of intersections. A 2011 traffic count measured 14,591 average daily vehicles.<sup>5</sup> The posted speed limit along Metairie Road is 30 miles per hour.

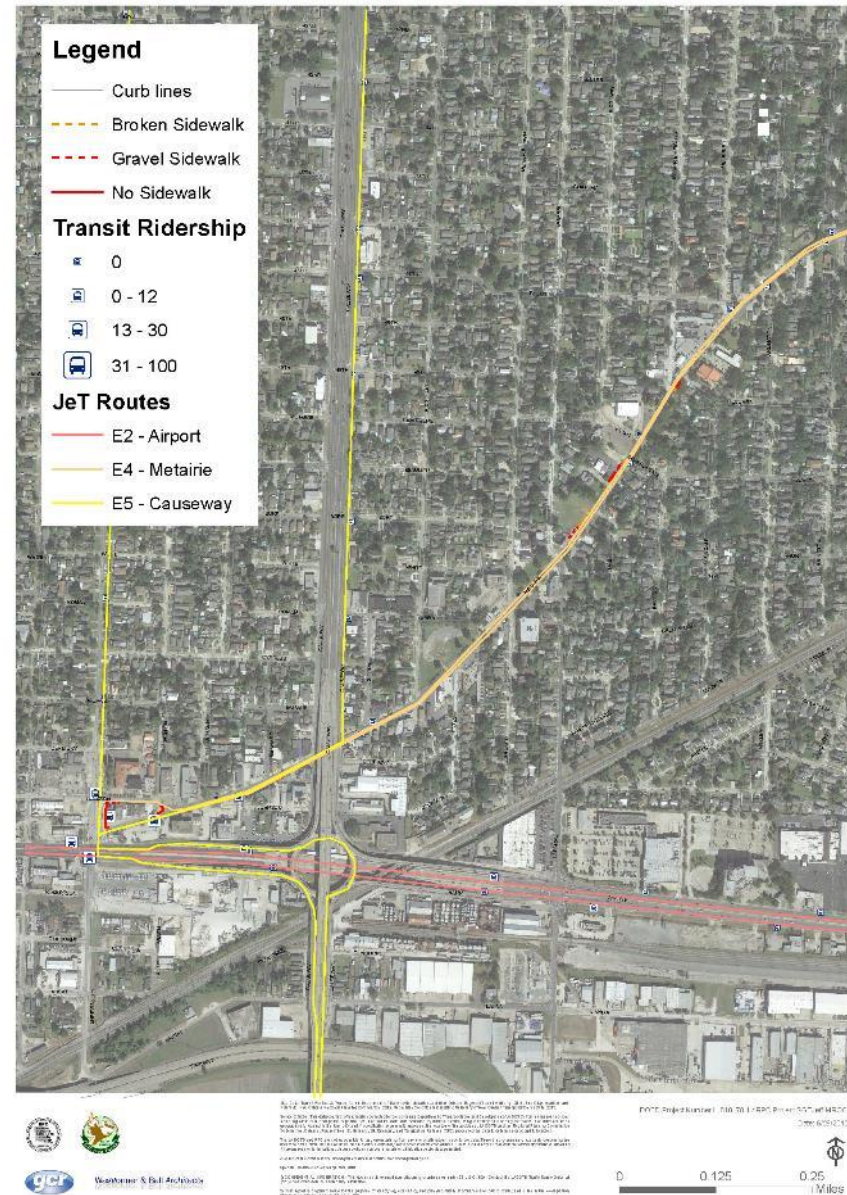
Parking is largely limited to small driveways and off-street spaces located between the property line and the fronts of buildings. Frequently, parked cars interfere with pedestrian circulation routes, due to inadequate space to accommodate both needs. Pedestrians must walk around these vehicles, sometimes requiring stepping into the roadway, as shown in Figure 38.

The E-5 Causeway, E-4 Metairie Road, and E-2 Airport Jefferson Transit Routes intersect at the Severn Avenue terminus of Metairie Road. Transfers are common at this location, which require riders to cross Metairie Road to and from Airline Highway, at Severn Avenue.

Figure 37: Circulation, Metairie Road

## Circulation

Jefferson Parish Smart Growth - Upper Metairie Road Study Area



<sup>5</sup> Regional Planning Commissions

Clockwise from top left: The E-4 Metairie Road bus stop terminus at Severn Avenue; Parking areas are informal along many blocks, and can disrupt pedestrian routes; Plentiful off-street parking exists under the Causeway Boulevard overpass; Many block segments already feature clear, shaded pedestrian routes; Blocks without street-fronting parking areas tend to have clearer pedestrian spaces.

*Credits: GCR Inc. and Waggonner & Ball Architects*

Figure 38: Metairie Road Study Area Circulation Conditions



Many of the neighborhood streets stemming from Metairie Road dead end or do not connect to major roadways. This design funnels neighborhood traffic onto Metairie Road. This traffic is good for business exposure, but can reduce pedestrian safety and convenience.

In Figure 39, the dark black line denotes the study area of Metairie Road, the black dashed line denotes the full extent of Metairie Road, and gray lines denote local roads, with circles indicating dead ends.

Figure 39: Metairie Road Street Connectivity

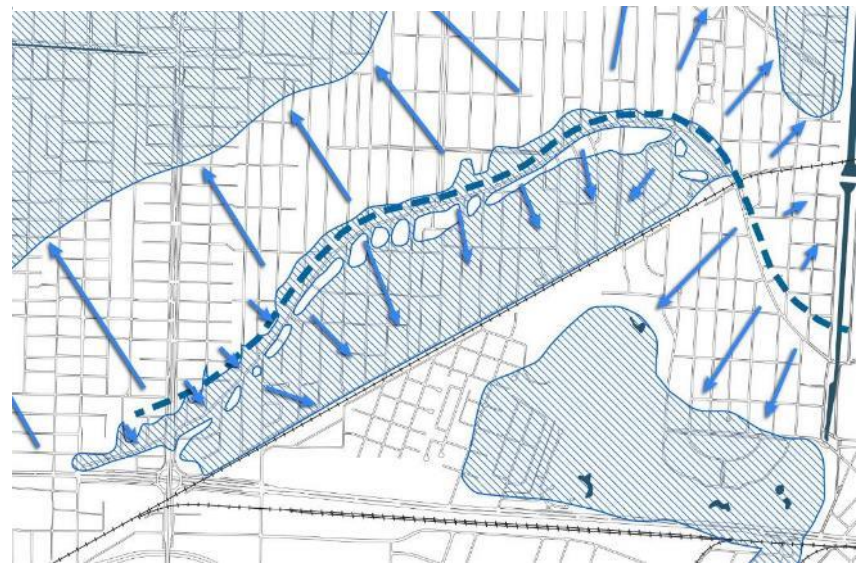


*Drainage*

Historically, Bayou Metairie flowed along the north side of Metairie Road and created a natural ridge of higher ground until it was covered and filled during the mid-20th century. Today, water naturally flows away from the ridge into lower areas.

In Figure 40, the dashed blue line denotes the historic location of Bayou Metairie, blue arrows denote water flow, and light blue areas indicate flooding.

Figure 40: Former Bayou Metairie and Current Drainage





### 5.1.4 Public input

The Metairie Road study area meeting was held the evening of Monday, June 29, 2015 at the Old Metairie Library. 20 to 30 individuals attended and provided four written comment cards. Table 4 summarizes feedback from these comment cards. All public comments collected at the meetings are available in Appendix B.

Table 4: Public Comment Themes, Metairie Road Study Area

What do you like about the area?	What would you like to see changed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mature trees</li> <li>• Small town feel</li> <li>• Small shops</li> <li>• Locally owned businesses</li> <li>• Well established family neighborhood</li> <li>• Convenience to all areas of East Jefferson</li> <li>• Neighborhood feel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More landscaping and green spaces for gathering</li> <li>• Spruce up some businesses in the area of Causeway</li> <li>• Cafés, bookstores, etc.</li> <li>• Less commercial encroachment into the residential neighborhood</li> <li>• Improve movement of traffic</li> <li>• Smaller bus sizes</li> <li>• More crosswalks with lights</li> <li>• More compact designs that fit with the neighborhood feel</li> </ul>

Figure 41: Public Meeting, Metairie Road



*Credit: GCR Inc.*

### 5.1.5 Summary of Challenges and Opportunities: Metairie

#### Road Study Area

This assessment shows that the Metairie Road Study Area already contains many ingredients for smart growth development: pedestrian scale and building orientation, ready access to transit, and a mixture of land uses adjacent to one another. Specific challenges the Parish should address in the short-term include delineating clear pedestrian circulation routes parallel to and across Metairie Road, providing opportunities for convenient parking that do not conflict with pedestrian circulation, and promoting land redevelopment that reinforces the study area’s “main street” character.

Table 5 summarizes these challenges and opportunities.

Table 5: Metairie Road Summary of Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small lot sizes limit opportunities for off-street parking</li> <li>• Numerous properties are vacant</li> <li>• Narrow right-of-way limits opportunities for walking/bicycling facilities and on-street parking</li> <li>• Poor sidewalk conditions, especially lakeside of roadway near Severn</li> <li>• Limited traffic controls prevents easy crossing of Metairie Road</li> <li>• Limited parking supply</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively compact mixture of residential and commercial land uses already exists</li> <li>• Development is mostly built up near the street, promoting easy pedestrian access to businesses</li> <li>• Two larger, vacant properties are ready for redevelopment</li> <li>• Access is available to multiple transit routes at intersection with Severn Avenue and Airline Highway</li> <li>• Narrow roadway creates pedestrian scale</li> <li>• As one of few east-west arteries in East Jefferson, Metairie Road is important segment for vehicular and bicycle routes</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Proposed Improvements

Four focus areas were selected for targeted improvements, shown in Figure 42. These are shown in detail in Figure 43 through Figure 53. Key recommendations are:

- Establish Metairie Road as a shared bike lane by installing shared lane markings every 200 feet and installing shared lane signage
- Tailor parking regulations to make business more viable, such as permitting on-street spaces and spaces underneath the Causeway Boulevard overpass to count toward off-street requirements
- Reduce a lane of traffic between Severn Avenue to permit more room for pedestrians and vehicle parking
- Expand and improve E-4 bus stop area at intersection with Severn Avenue
- Replace existing sidewalks with bio-infiltration strip and install new, 5' wide sidewalks behind strip.
- Install pedestrian countdown signals (four heads, two poles) at Causeway Boulevard
- Demarcate roadway and sidewalks under overpass with different paving material or color, repaint concrete and steel and consider adding new lighting
- Install approximately 7,500 SF total bioretention landscaping for stormwater management in large right of way at Labarre Road.
- Add high-visibility crosswalks, bike racks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, new or repaired sidewalks, and bio-infiltration strips at Labarre Road and Metairie Court.

Figure 42: Metairie Road Study Area – Areas of Focus

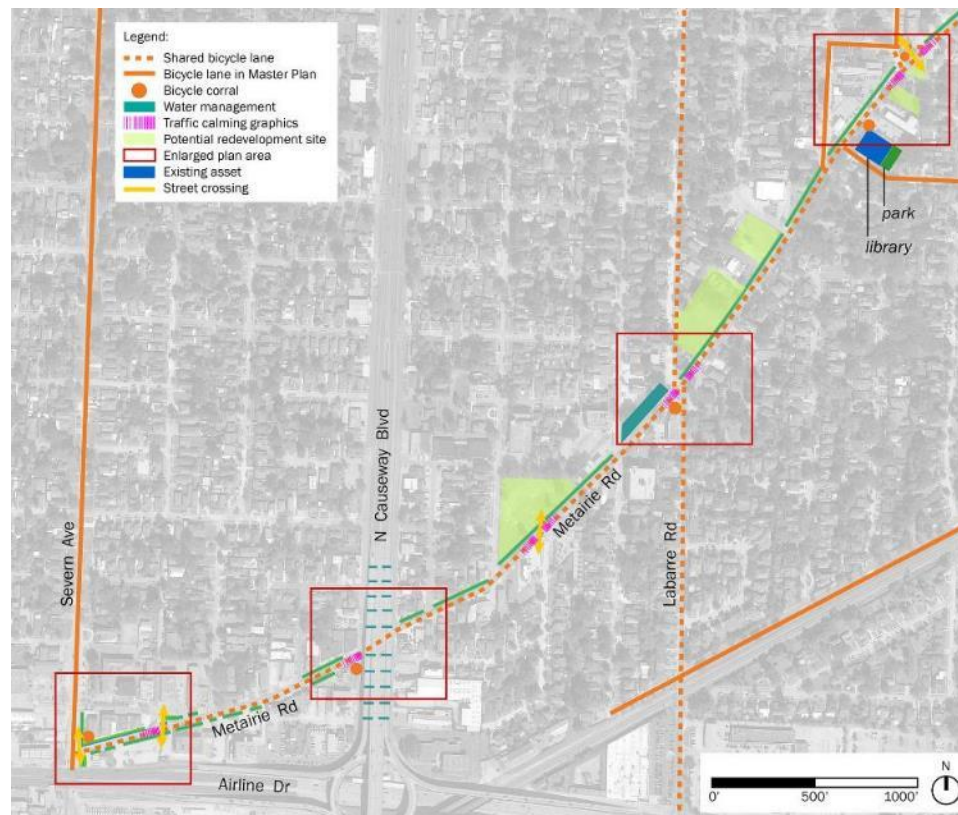
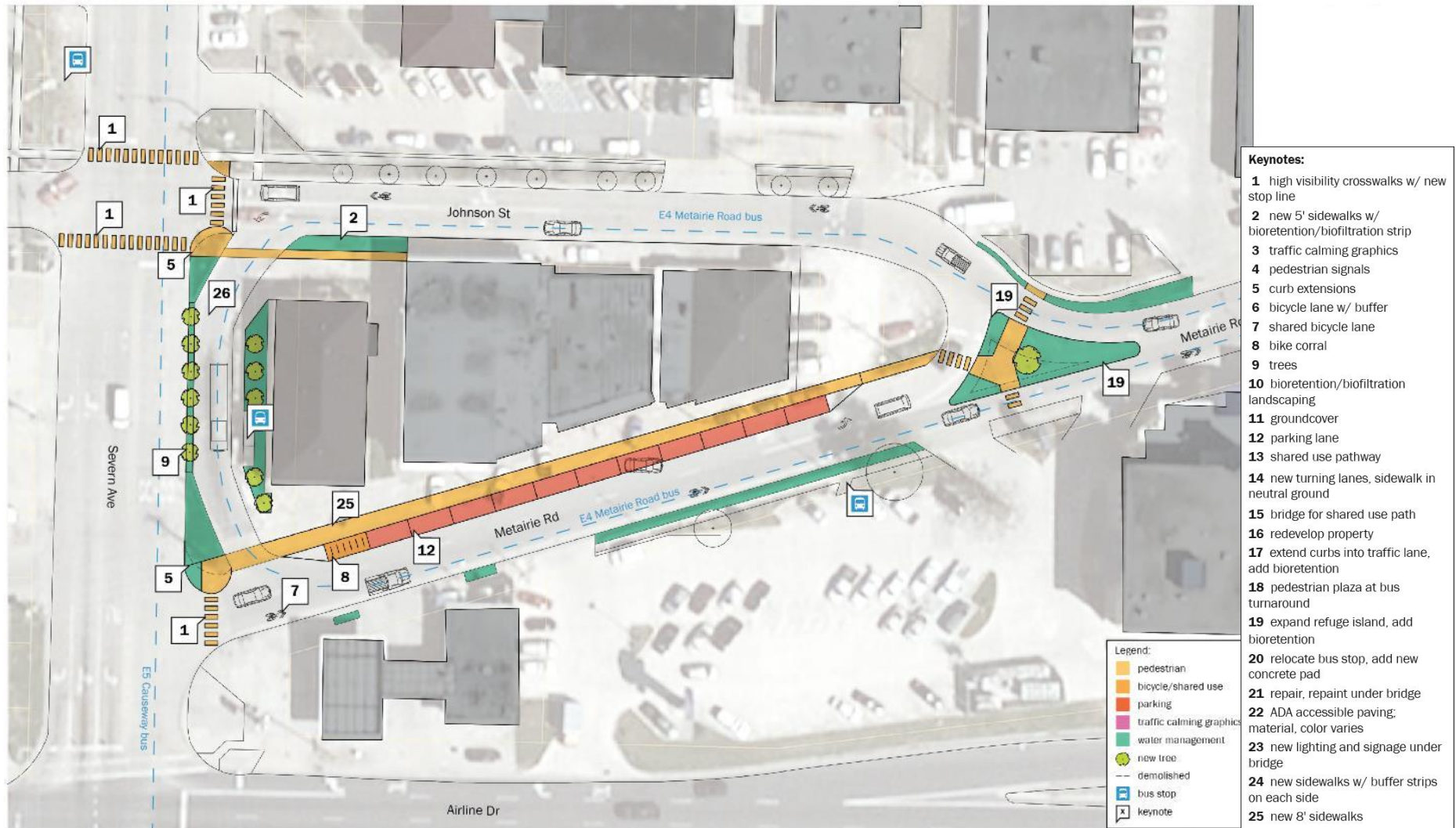


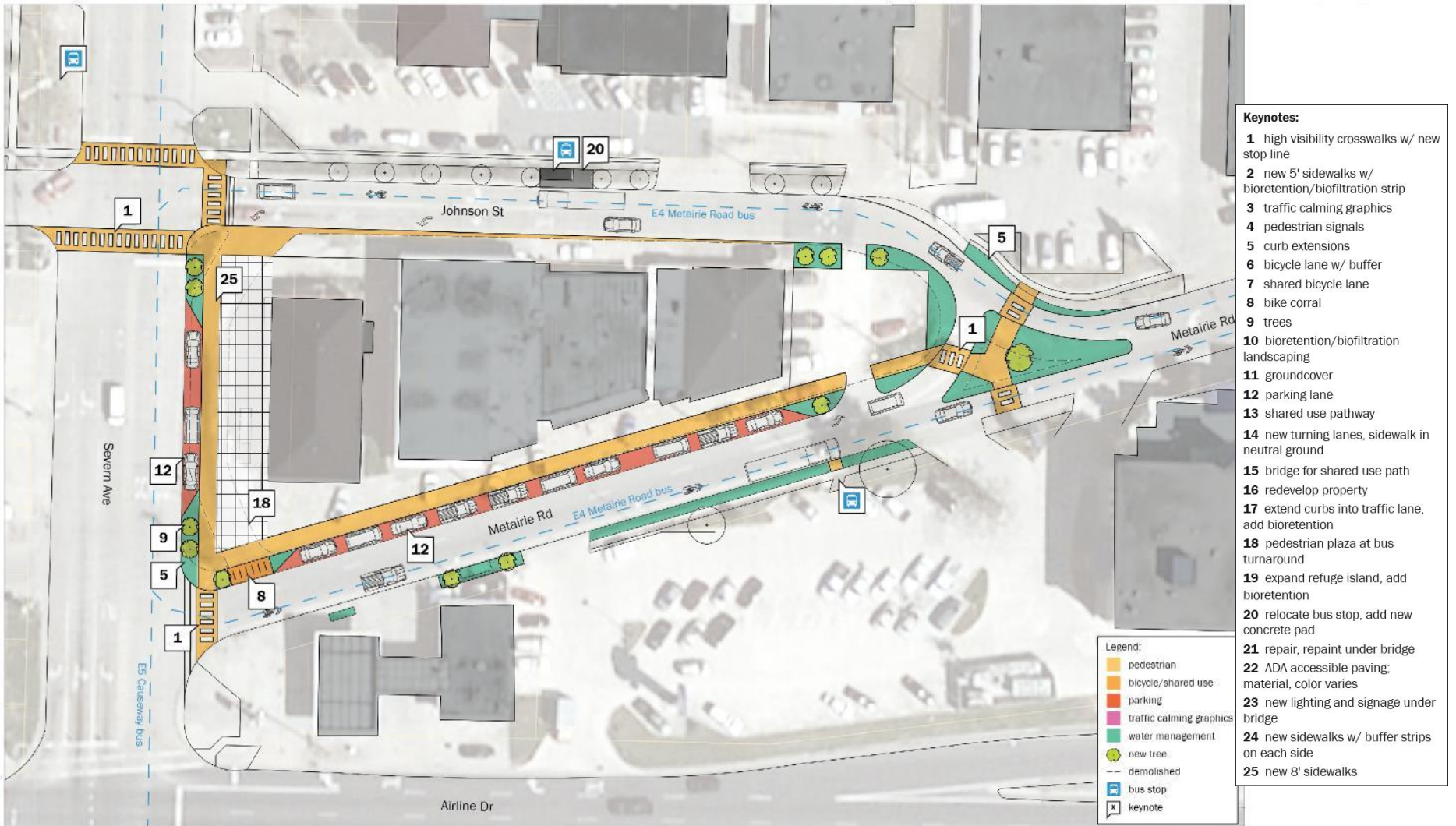
Figure 43: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 1



**Metairie Rd at Severn Ave - Option 1**

Waggoner & Ball Architects

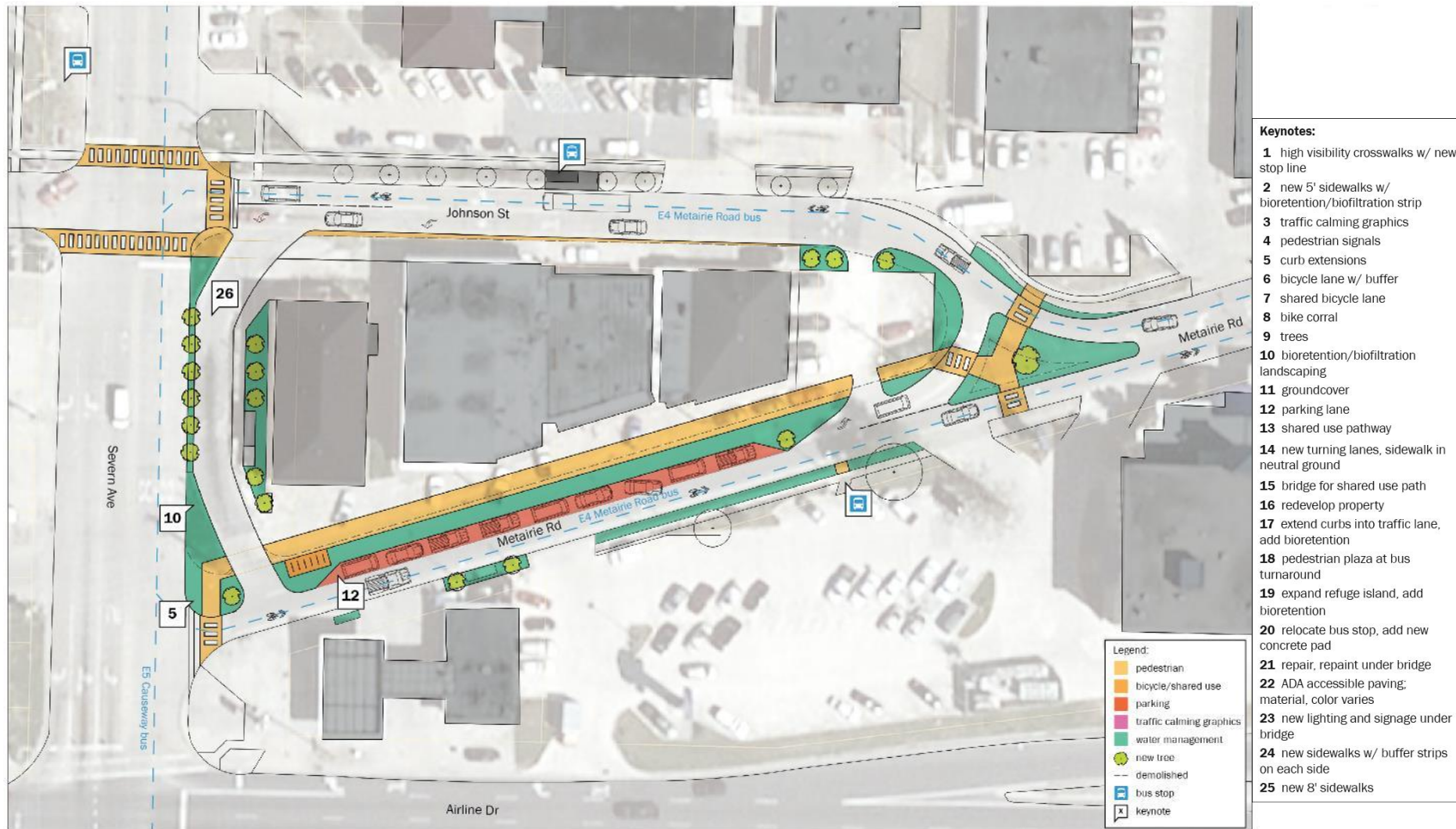
Figure 44: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 2



Metairie Rd at Severn Ave - Option 2

N  
Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 45: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 3A



- Keynotes:**
- 1 high visibility crosswalks w/ new stop line
  - 2 new 5' sidewalks w/ bioretention/biofiltration strip
  - 3 traffic calming graphics
  - 4 pedestrian signals
  - 5 curb extensions
  - 6 bicycle lane w/ buffer
  - 7 shared bicycle lane
  - 8 bike corral
  - 9 trees
  - 10 bioretention/biofiltration landscaping
  - 11 groundcover
  - 12 parking lane
  - 13 shared use pathway
  - 14 new turning lanes, sidewalk in neutral ground
  - 15 bridge for shared use path
  - 16 redevelop property
  - 17 extend curbs into traffic lane, add bioretention
  - 18 pedestrian plaza at bus turnaround
  - 19 expand refuge island, add bioretention
  - 20 relocate bus stop, add new concrete pad
  - 21 repair, repaint under bridge
  - 22 ADA accessible paving; material, color varies
  - 23 new lighting and signage under bridge
  - 24 new sidewalks w/ buffer strips on each side
  - 25 new 8' sidewalks

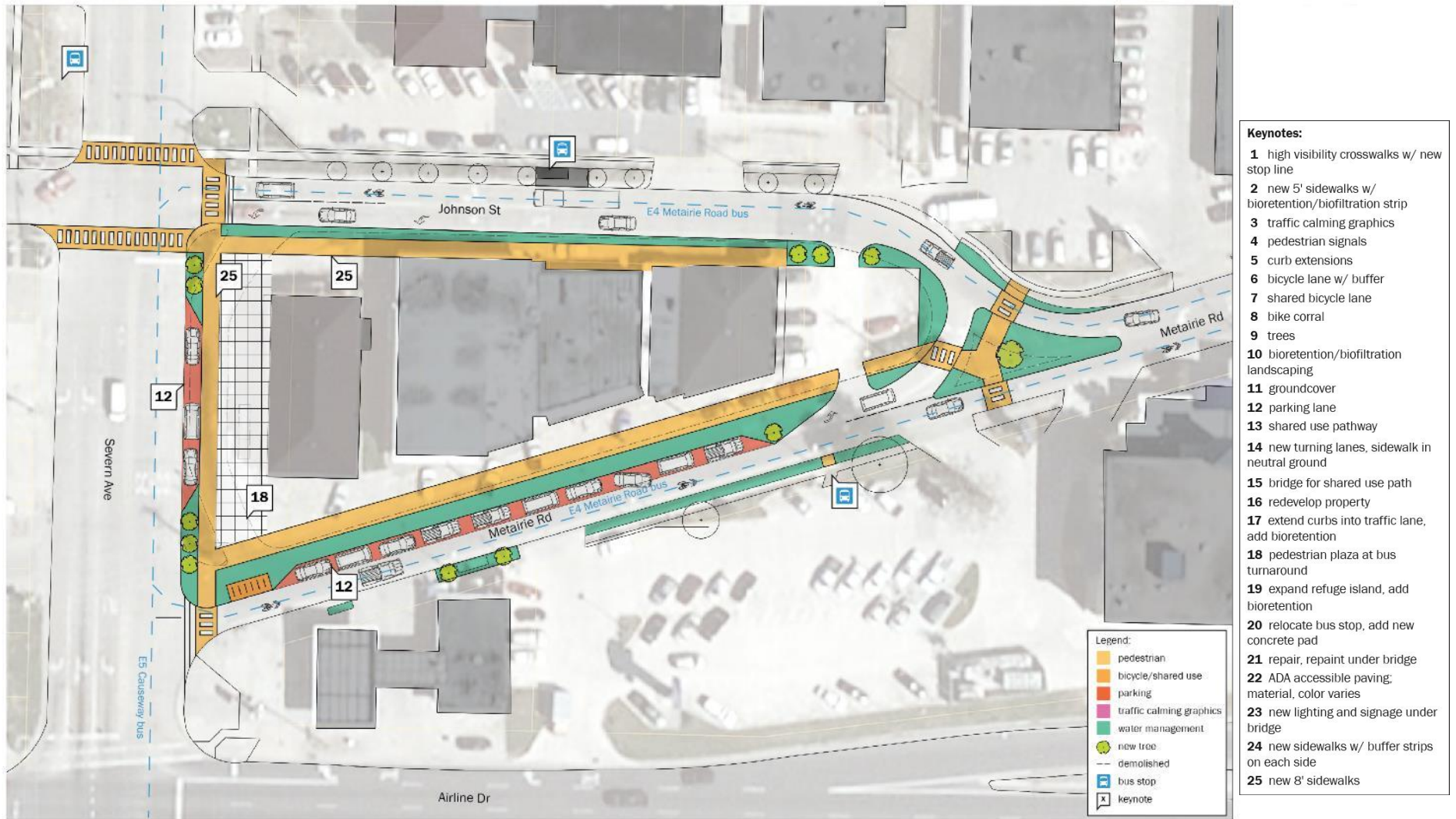
**Legend:**

- pedestrian
- bicycle/shared use
- parking
- traffic calming graphics
- water management
- new tree
- demolished
- bus stop
- keynote

**Metairie Rd at Severn Ave - Option 3A**

N  
Waggoner & Ball Architects

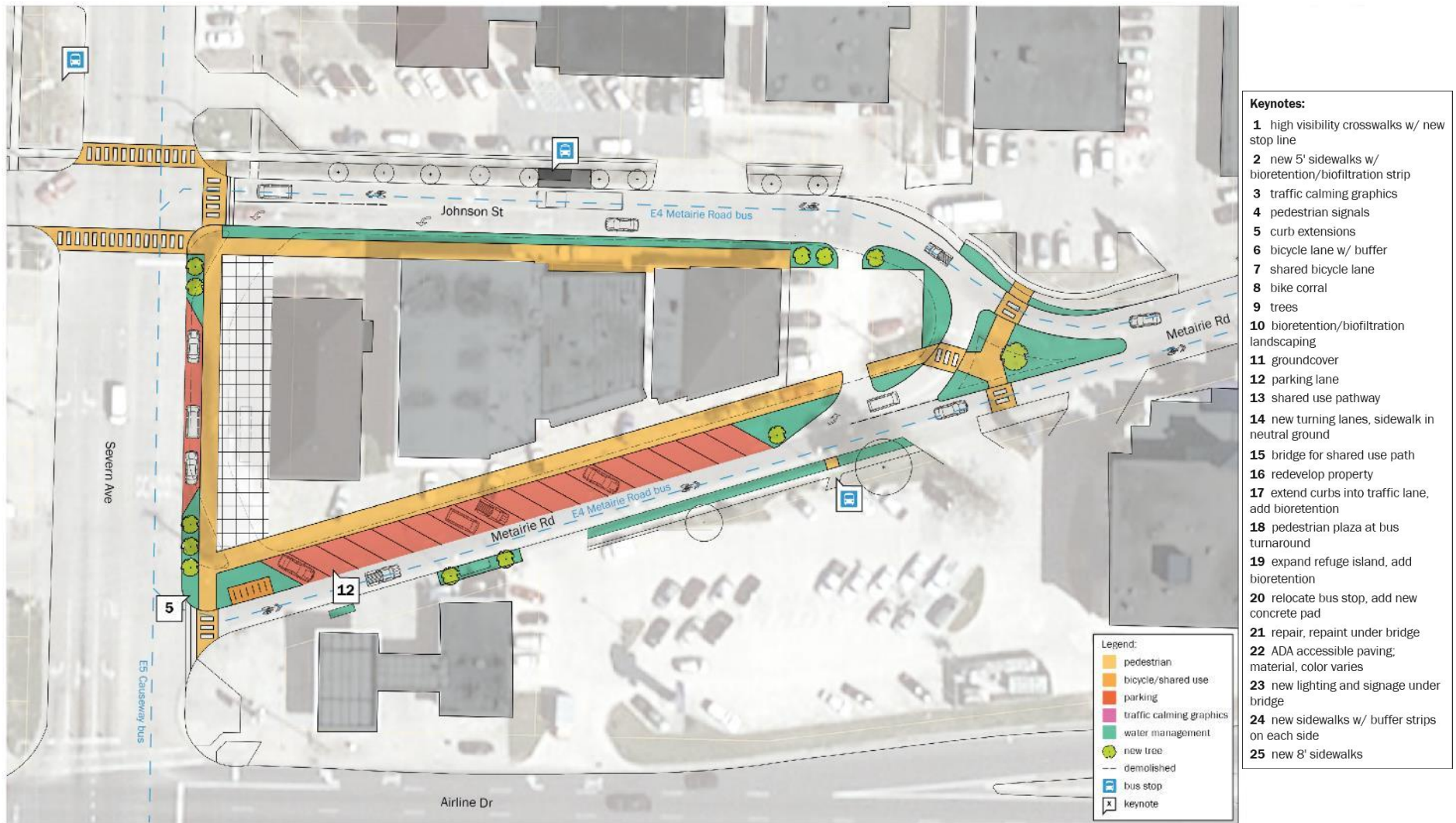
Figure 46: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 3B



**Metairie Rd at Severn Ave - Option 3B**

N  
Waggonner & Ball Architects

Figure 47: Metairie Road at Severn Avenue, Option 3C



**Metairie Rd at Severn Ave - Option 3C**

N  
Waggoner & Ball Architects



Figure 48: Metairie Road at Severn Perspective

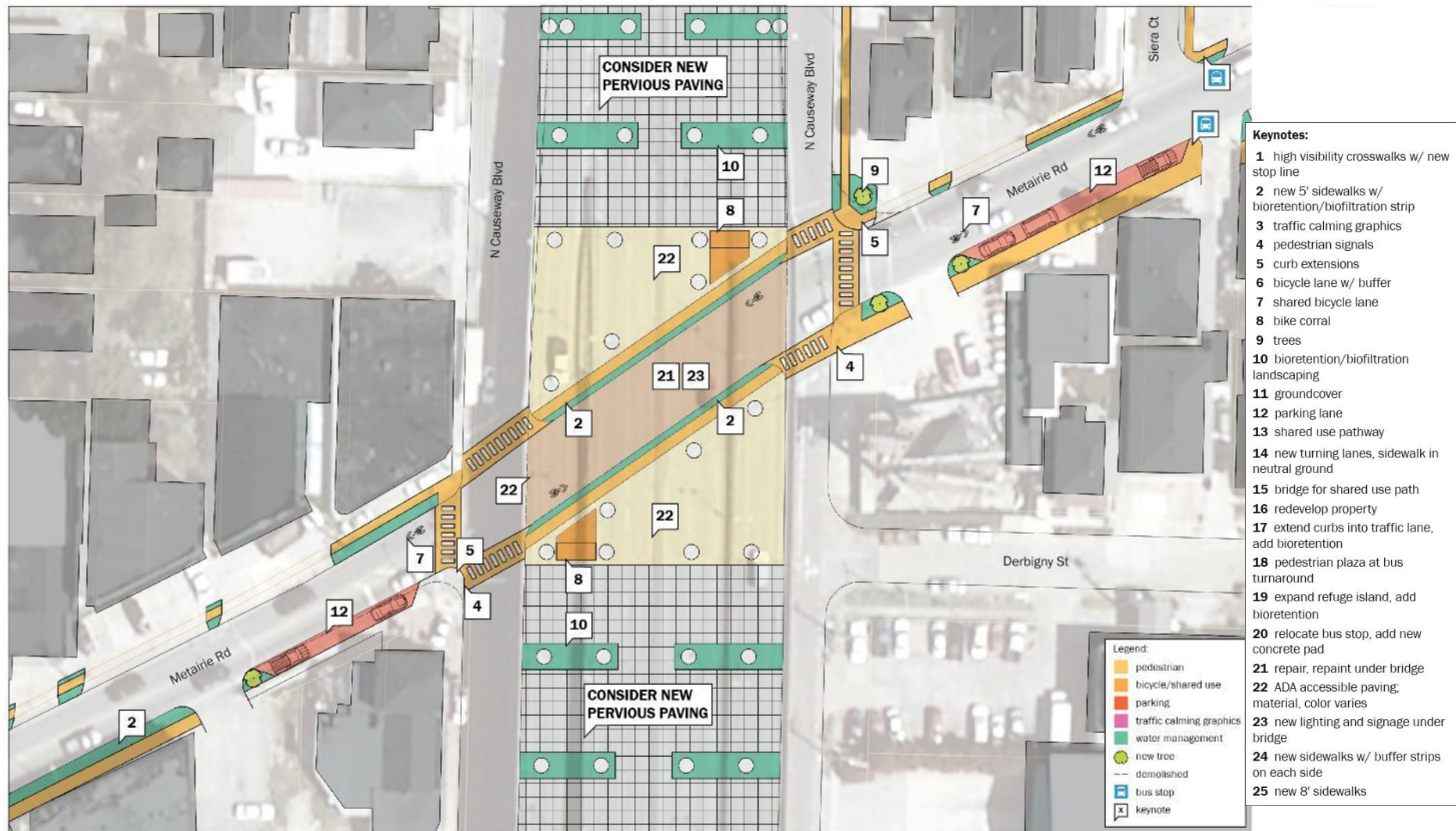


Above: Metairie Road, downriver direction, from Severn Avenue, has two lanes of traffic in one direction.

Right: Option 3A or 3B, which both propose converting the left travel lane into a parallel parking lane, and installing shared lane markings for cyclists.



Figure 49: Metairie Road at N. Causeway Blvd.



- Keynotes:**
- 1 high visibility crosswalks w/ new stop line
  - 2 new 5' sidewalks w/ bioretention/biofiltration strip
  - 3 traffic calming graphics
  - 4 pedestrian signals
  - 5 curb extensions
  - 6 bicycle lane w/ buffer
  - 7 shared bicycle lane
  - 8 bike corral
  - 9 trees
  - 10 bioretention/biofiltration landscaping
  - 11 groundcover
  - 12 parking lane
  - 13 shared use pathway
  - 14 new turning lanes, sidewalk in neutral ground
  - 15 bridge for shared use path
  - 16 redevelop property
  - 17 extend curbs into traffic lane, add bioretention
  - 18 pedestrian plaza at bus turnaround
  - 19 expand refuge island, add bioretention
  - 20 relocate bus stop, add new concrete pad
  - 21 repair, repaint under bridge
  - 22 ADA accessible paving; material, color varies
  - 23 new lighting and signage under bridge
  - 24 new sidewalks w/ buffer strips on each side
  - 25 new 8' sidewalks

**Legend:**

- pedestrian
- bicycle/shared use
- parking
- traffic calming graphics
- water management
- new tree
- demolished
- bus stop
- x keynote

**Metairie Rd at N Causeway Blvd**

N  
Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 50: Causeway Underpass Concept

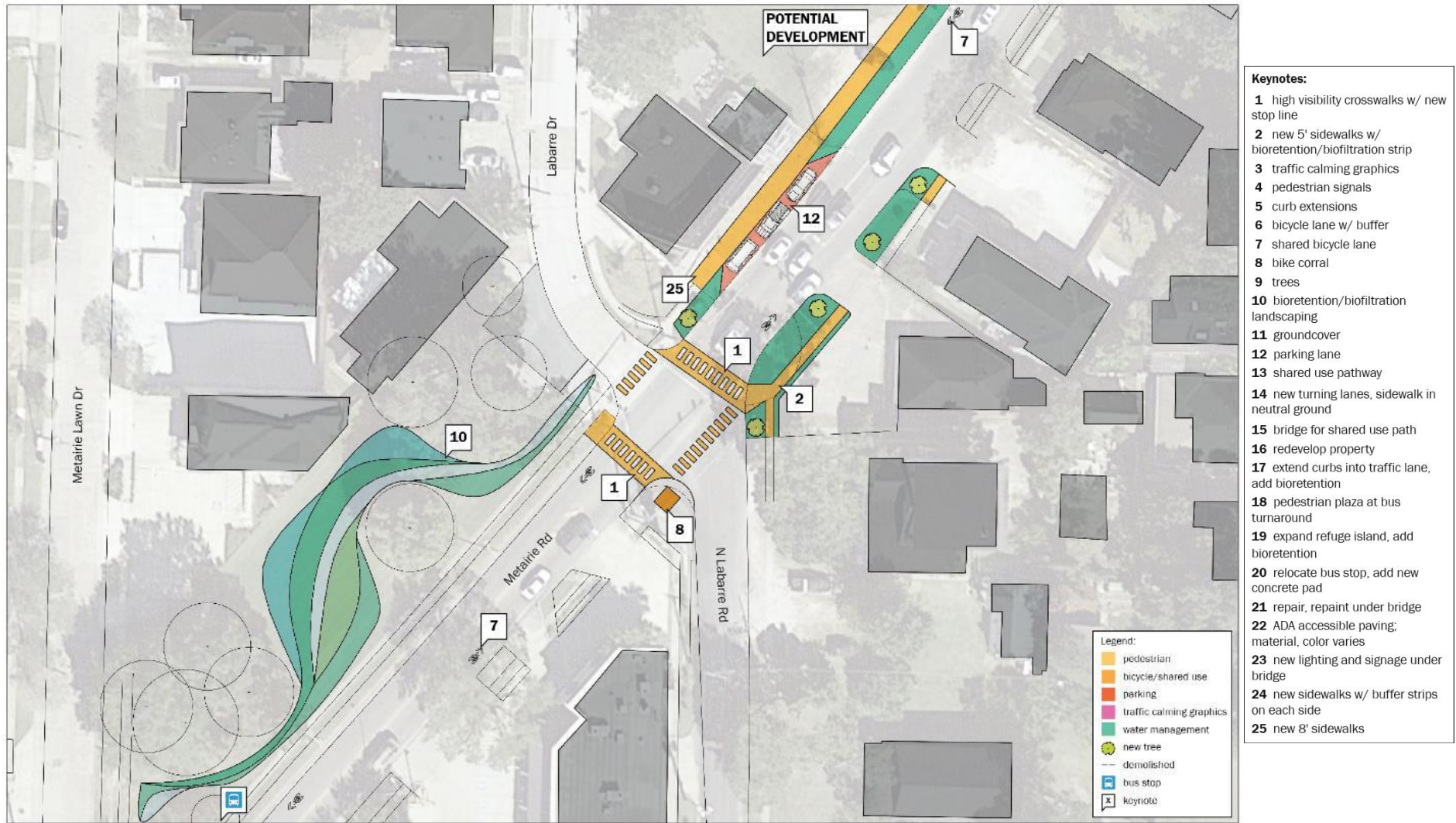


Above: The Causeway Boulevard overpass.

Right: Pavers, lighted bollards, seating and painted concrete would improve the appearance of this space.



Figure 51: Metairie Road at Labarre Road



**Metairie Rd at Labarre Rd**

Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 52: Metairie Road at Metairie Court



- Keynotes:**
- 1 high visibility crosswalks w/ new stop line
  - 2 new 5' sidewalks w/ bioretention/biofiltration strip
  - 3 traffic calming graphics
  - 4 pedestrian signals
  - 5 curb extensions
  - 6 bicycle lane w/ buffer
  - 7 shared bicycle lane
  - 8 bike corral
  - 9 trees
  - 10 bioretention/biofiltration landscaping
  - 11 groundcover
  - 12 parking lane
  - 13 shared use pathway
  - 14 new turning lanes, sidewalk in neutral ground
  - 15 bridge for shared use path
  - 16 redevelop property
  - 17 extend curbs into traffic lane, add bioretention
  - 18 pedestrian plaza at bus turnaround
  - 19 expand refuge island, add bioretention
  - 20 relocate bus stop, add new concrete pad
  - 21 repair, repaint under bridge
  - 22 ADA accessible paving; material, color varies
  - 23 new lighting and signage under bridge
  - 24 new sidewalks w/ buffer strips on each side
  - 25 new 8' sidewalks

- Legend:**
- pedestrian
  - bicycle/shared use
  - parking
  - traffic calming graphics
  - water management
  - new tree
  - demolished
  - bus stop
  - keynote

**Metairie Rd at Metairie Ct**

N  
Waggoner & Ball Architects

Figure 53: Metairie Road at Metairie Court - Strip Mall Concept



Above: Strip mall driveway aprons create continuous conflict zones between vehicles and pedestrians.

Right: Clearly defining pedestrian and vehicle routes by installing planting strips and street trees would improve pedestrian safety and comfort.



## Estimated Costs: Metairie Road Study Area

Table 6 shows a preliminary statement of probable cost for the recommended improvements. These are derived from approximating quantities based on standard pay items and recent bid prices. The costs include a 25% contingency. Engineering, surveying, inspection and other support tasks are not included.

Table 6: Estimated Cost of Improvements: Metairie Road Study Area

Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>Bike corrals with racks, curbs, striping</b>	5	EA	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Bioswales</b>	12800	SF	\$ 25.00	\$ 320,000.00
<i>approximately 2'-0" deep w/ native grasses over granular sub base w/ permeable drainage pipe below</i>				
<b>Bollards</b>	16	EA	\$ 500.00	\$ 8,000.00
<b>Concrete pad for bus stops</b>	250	SF	\$ 10.00	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Curb extensions/bumpouts at corners</b>	8	EA	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
<b>Curbs</b>	1750	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 35,000.00
<b>Decorative paving or colored asphalt</b>	5000	SF	\$ 15.00	\$ 75,000.00
<b>Driveway for bus turnaround, with water storage</b>	200	LF	\$ 300.00	\$ 60,000.00
<b>High visibility crosswalks</b>	32	EA	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 80,000.00
<b>High visibility crosswalks w/ traffic calming colors</b>	10	EA	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
<b>Landscaping, miscellaneous</b>	1	LS	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
<b>Large bioswale at Labarre</b>	7500	SF	\$ 30.00	\$ 225,000.00
<i>approximately 4'-0" deep w/ native grasses over granular sub base w/ permeable drainage pipe below</i>				
<b>Lighting under Causeway bridge</b>	10	EA	\$ 750.00	\$ 7,500.00
<b>New ADA accessible sidewalk ramps</b>	20	EA	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 30,000.00
<b>Parking lanes with water storage, 8' wide</b>	900	LF	\$ 85.00	\$ 76,500.00
<b>Pedestrian signal heads at existing poles</b>	4	EA	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
<b>Pedestrian signal heads on new poles</b>	2	EA	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
<b>Relocate and reinstall bus shelter</b>	1	LS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Remove existing curbs and repair roadway</b>	1200	LF	\$ 15.00	\$ 18,000.00

Shared bike lane markings	50	EA	\$ 225.00	\$ 11,250.00
Sidewalks, repaired - 4' pavers assumed	1000	LF	\$ 40.00	\$ 40,000.00
Sidewalks, new - 5' pavers	2115	LF	\$ 100.00	\$ 211,500.00
Sidewalks, new - 8' pavers with water storage	900	LF	\$ 200.00	\$ 180,000.00
Street trees	40	EA	\$ 500.00	\$ 20,000.00
Striping: stop lines, lane markings, etc.	600	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 12,000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$ 1,622,250.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 405,562.50
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 2,027,812.50</b>
<b>Alternate 1</b>				
Sidewalks, new - 5' pavers with water storage	2115	LF	\$ 125.00	\$ 264,375.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 66,093.75
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 330,468.75</b>
<b>Alternate 2</b>				
Pervious concrete at existing public parking under Causeway overpass	30150	SF	\$ 6.00	\$ 180,900.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 45,225.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 226,125.00</b>
<b>Alternate 3</b>				
Pervious concrete at existing parish facility parking under Causeway overpass	17350	SF	\$ 6.00	\$ 104,100.00
Contingency, 25%				\$ 26,025.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 130,125.00</b>



## Chapter VI. Conclusion

This study proposes a multitude of public investments that Jefferson Parish can make to encourage smart growth development in two study areas. Though the areas have individual contexts and challenges, they each hold great opportunity to promote accommodate efficient land use and balanced transportation access for residents, workers, commuters and shoppers.

The Oakwood Study Area is ripe for large scale commercial and residential infill redevelopment, thanks to its large swaths of undeveloped land, easy access and proximity to the region's center.

Metairie Road is already appealing as one of the few historic "main streets" of Jefferson Parish. Larger development sites have become recently available which could strengthen the neighborhood feel and bolster services to nearby residents and workers.

By implementing the recommended public right of way strategies, Jefferson Parish will improve business conditions and quality of life in Metairie Road and the Oakwood Area, attracting new investment and residents. Jefferson Parish should work closely with RPC and DOTD to determine the appropriate projects that are both feasible and consistent with DOTD standards.

