GREENING THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY TRAIL: RECONNECTING AND REMEMBERING

Greening America's Capitals | Montgomery, Alabama

Adopted on April 25, 2013, by the Planning Commission

GREENING AMERICA'S CAPITALS

Greening America's Capitals is a project of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Transportation to help state capitals develop an implementable vision of distinctive, environmentally friendly neighborhoods that incorporate innovative green building and green infrastructure strategies. EPA is providing this design assistance to help support sustainable communities that protect the environment, economy, and public health and to inspire state leaders to expand this work elsewhere. Greening America's Capitals will help communities consider ways to incorporate sustainable design strategies into their planning and development to create and enhance interesting, distinctive neighborhoods that have multiple social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Montgomery, Alabama, was chosen as one of the four state capital cities and the District of Columbia to receive this assistance beginning in the fall of 2011, concluding with a site visit in early 2012.

More information is available at http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/greencapitals.htm.

GREENING AMERICA'S CAPITALS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SPECIAL APPRECIATION:

The design team wishes to recognize Auburn University Professor Charlene Lebleu and her Landscape Architecture students for their participation in the workshop. The team especially thanks the Montgomery residents and community leaders who participated in the workshops and public meetings.

Note: All images courtesy of 2D Studio and NHB Group unless otherwise noted.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Selma to Montgomery Civil Rights Trail traverses a historically significant African American neighborhood in the city of Montgomery, Alabama. City staff chose this segment of the trail as the site for the Greening America's Capitals project with the goal of developing a vision for a more attractive and sustainable neighborhood that could improve the experience for residents and visitors alike. This project fits into a larger, multi-agency effort that includes a collaboration between the National Park Service and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop the entire trail from Selma to Montgomery to reflect the importance of its history, to be a destination for tourists and visitors who come to honor the American civil rights movement, and to showcase best practices in environmental protection to other communities throughout the city and state.

The city applied to EPA for this design assistance, and EPA hired a design team that led a three-day design workshop that included presentations and stakeholder discussions on historic preservation, economic revitalization, and green infrastructure—the practice of using trees and landscaping to manage and treat stormwater runoff. The team held two public open houses during which residents and stakeholders noted that, in addition to improvements to the streets along which the trail runs, the appearance of the entire neighborhood also needs improvement. Many people commented about improving the façades of houses and building new homes and businesses on vacant lots.

The design team developed design options that could improve the walking and biking experience along the streets, particularly beneath the freeway overpasses, while also improving the appearance of the neighborhood. Elements of the design options include redesigning the road to accommodate bicyclists in the same lane as vehicle traffic; increased lighting (particularly beneath the overpasses); more visible crosswalks; and new street trees to add much-needed shade. Historic interpretive signs and public art would be added along the sidewalks to make the walking experience more interesting and to educate people about the community's history and culture. Green infrastructure elements, like rain gardens planted with native plants and permeable paving in the parking lane would help capture stormwater runoff and allow it to naturally soak into the ground, reducing flow into storm sewers. The design options offer ideas for the design of new residential and commercial development that could be built on the many vacant lots in the neighborhood. Combined, these elements improve the neighborhood for residents while also capturing the story of the civil rights struggle and the trail's impact at a watershed moment in American history.

Figure 1: Design concept of the cultural trail under the interstate interchange at night.


Figure 2: View of the cultural trail at the intersection of Oak Street and Fairview Avenue.

01 | WORKSHOP

The design team conducted a three-day workshop (see Appendix A for the schedule). The team helped residents, city staff, and elected officials explore historic preservation and economic revitalization, green infrastructure, and pedestrian and bicycle mobility. In a well-attended public meeting, numerous stakeholders and citizens provided valuable insight and passionate input that influenced development of the project's vision.

Public design sessions allowed stakeholders, city of Montgomery staff, design students, and neighborhood residents to "put pen to paper" in order to map, draw, and develop ideas about how the trail corridor could be improved and transformed. Three working groups focused on green infrastructure, transportation issues, and the neighborhood's architectural and historical character.

Staff from EPA, the city of Montgomery, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, the Federal Highway Administration, the Alabama Office of Housing and Urban Development, and St. Jude Educational Institute (formerly St. Jude Hospital), as well as numerous residents, participated in a collaborative discussion about implementation. The design team introduced innovative ideas to catalyze public engagement and enthusiasm while the city pursues major funding sources.

At a concluding open house event, project partners, residents, and the local media reviewed the goals, ideas, and concepts developed in the workshop and shared their reactions and ideas with the design team.

Figure 3: Public meeting where residents voiced their ideas for how to improve their neighborhood.

Figure 4: Auburn University students participating in the public charrette.

02 | PROJECT AREA

The city of Montgomery chose the study area in an effort to revitalize and restore the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail while also improving the conditions of the surrounding neighborhood. A segment of the trail runs beneath the I-65/I-85 interchange on South Holt Street and West Jeff Davis Avenue—an area that is currently unsightly, noisy, and not pedestrian friendly. With its northern boundary at the intersection of South Holt Street and Day Street, the project study area includes the area surrounding the I-65/I-85 interchange (see Figure 8), and extends south on Oak Street to West Fairview Avenue. Streets crossing the trail include Mobile Street, Grady Street, South Holt Street, West Jeff Davis Avenue, and Oak Street (see Figure 7). Landmarks in the area include the Mt. Zion AME Church on South Holt Street, the LAMP High School on West Jeff Davis Avenue, and the St. Jude Educational Institute on West Fairview Avenue.

Figure 5: St. Jude Educational Institute—the site of the last campsite for marchers during the 1965 march.

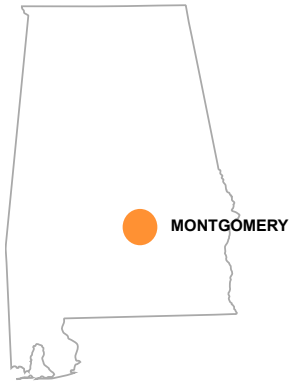
Figure 6: Current pedestrian experience at the Interstate interchange above Holt Street looking south.

Figure 7: One of many vacant lots along Oak Street.

KEY

1. St. Jude Educational Institute
2. Genetta Park
3. LAMP High School
4. Mt. Zion Church AME Church
5. Alabama State University
6. Troy University, Montgomery Campus
7. Greyhound Station, Site of the Bus Boycott
8. Riverfront Park
9. Civil Rights Museum
10. Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
11. State Capitol
12. City Hall

Project Boundary
Historic Trail



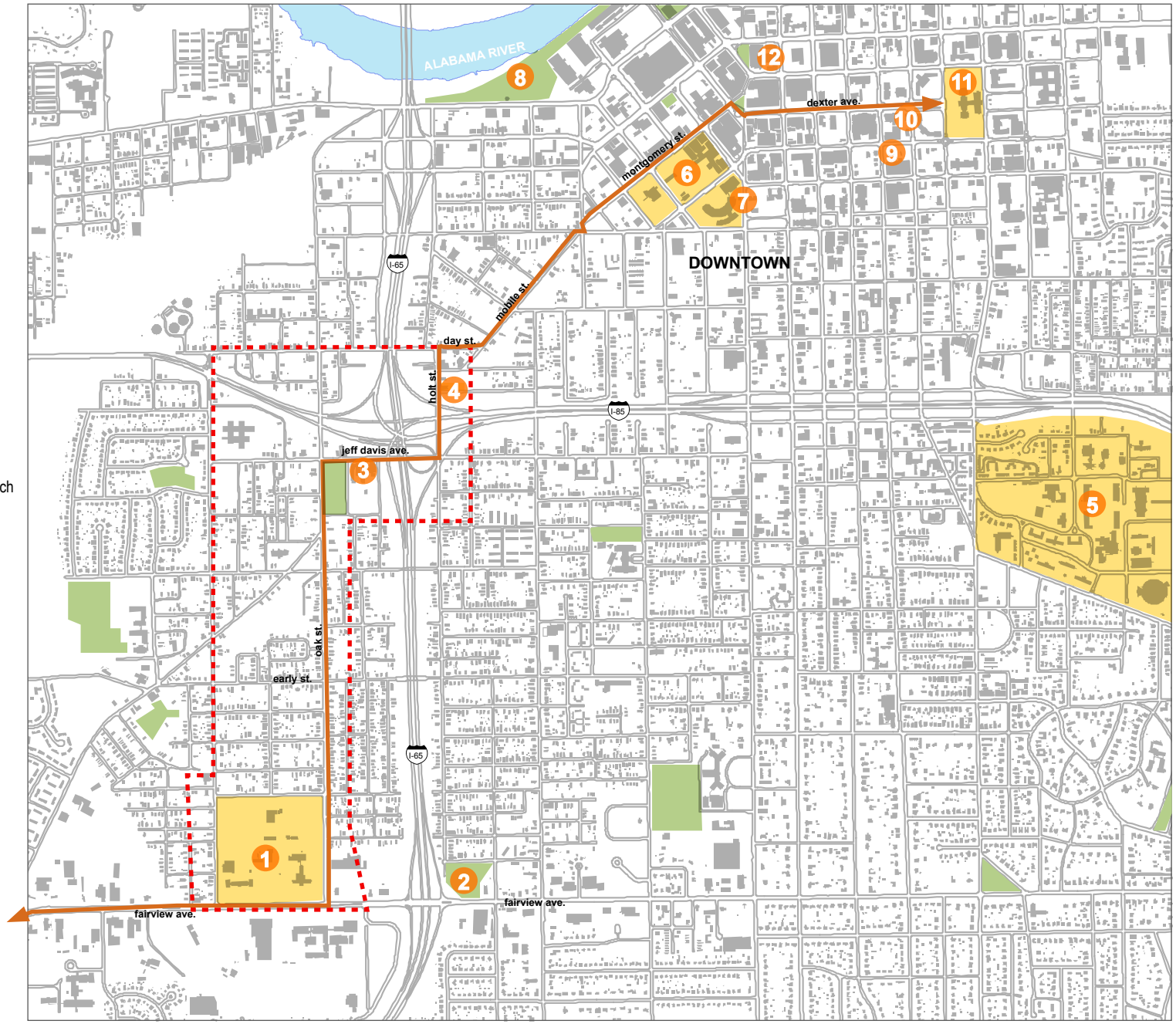


Figure 8: Site context and sites of interest.

HISTORY

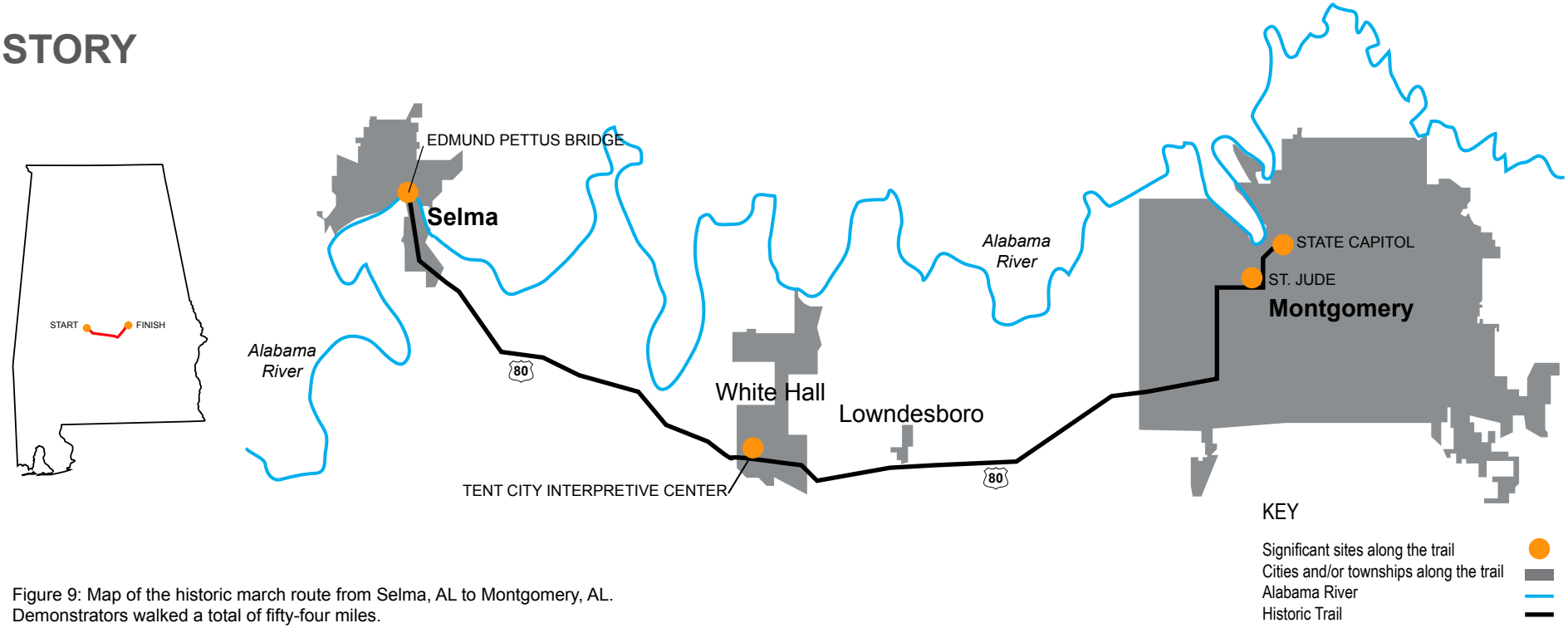


Figure 9: Map of the historic march route from Selma, AL to Montgomery, AL. Demonstrators walked a total of fifty-four miles.

As a center of African American culture and daily life in Montgomery, the community in which the study area corridor is located witnessed many events that shaped the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. The community is perhaps best known for its association with the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March, which was one of the political and emotional peaks of the civil rights movement. The Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March grew out of the voting rights movement in Selma, Alabama. Efforts to register African Americans to vote were met with resistance from whites. In 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders congregated in Selma to help local residents overcome the state's discriminatory voter registration policies. The events ultimately led to demonstrators protesting which resulted in violent opposition. On Sunday, March 21, 1965, thousands of demonstrators set out from Selma to Montgomery in what would become a successful voting rights march. Demonstrators walked a total of fifty-four miles, approximately twelve miles per day, and slept in fields along U.S. Highway 80 in Dallas, Lowndes, and Montgomery Counties. The Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March culminated with a speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. to the 25,000 marchers and activists gathered at the Capitol in downtown Montgomery.

As the struggle for equal rights was playing out on the national stage, Montgomery's African American community witnessed many local events including the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the 1965 Voting Rights March, and others that influenced the national movement. The community's African American churches including Mt. Zion AME Church and Holt Street Baptist Church- played extremely important roles in the progress of the civil rights movement. Many leaders of the Civil Rights Movement lived in the community. Mrs. Rosa Parks lived with her husband, Raymond Parks, and her mother, Leona McCauley, at Cleveland Court Apartments #634. Mrs. Parks was riding the bus home on December 1, 1955, when she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger thereby violating Montgomery's bus segregation laws. In response to the arrest of Mrs. Parks, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was formed on December 5, 1955 by black ministers and community leaders in Montgomery, Alabama, under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Edgar Nixon. The MIA was instrumental in guiding the Montgomery bus boycott, a successful campaign that focused national attention on racial segregation in the South and catapulted Dr. King into the national spotlight. The combined actions of Mrs. Rosa Parks and bus boycotts resulted in a Supreme Court ruling that segregation on city buses was unconstitutional.

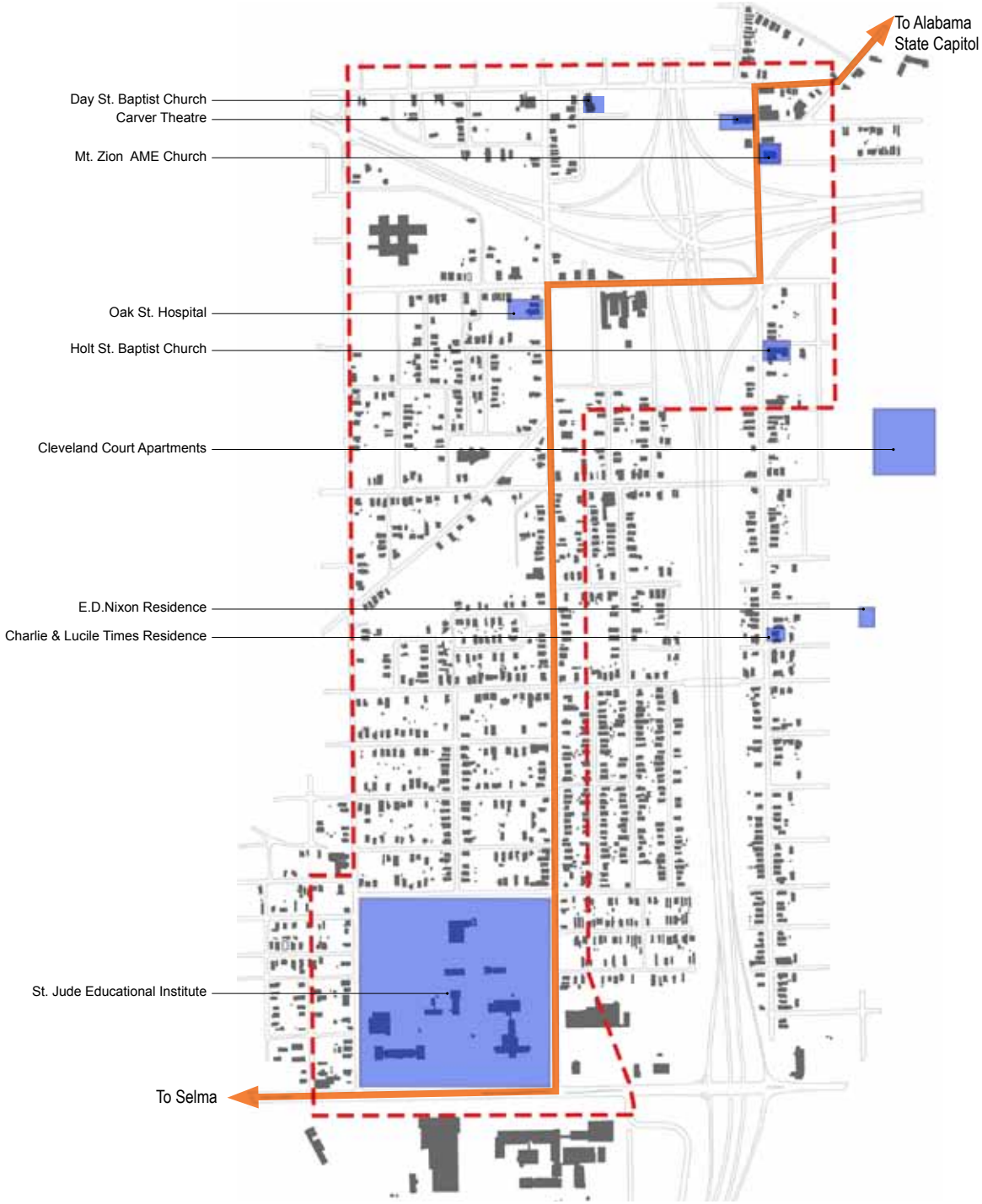


Figure 10: Map showing historic sites associated with the Civil Rights movement and the sites of interests that specifically relate to the trail.

On March 25, 1965, the final day of the historic march from Selma to Montgomery, marchers left St. Jude and continued to the steps of the Alabama State Capitol. By the time the crowd reached the capitol, it had swelled to nearly 25,000 people. In front of these thousands of people, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered one of his most famous speeches, "How Long? Not Long."

Our feet are tired, but our souls are rested… From Montgomery to Birmingham, from Birmingham to Selma, from Selma back to Montgomery, a trail wound in a circle long and often bloody, yet it has become a highway up from darkness… We are on the move now… We are moving to the land of freedom… Let us therefore continue our triumphant march to the realization of the American dream… The road ahead is not altogether a smooth one… There are no broad highways that led us easily and inevitably to quick solutions… But we must keep going… We will go on with the faith that nonviolence and its power can transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows… I know you are asking today, "How long will it take?"… I come to say to you this afternoon, however difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long… How long? Not long.

"Our God is Marching On! (How Long? Not Long)" Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, King Papers Project. Stanford University. (Speech available in its entirety on the King Papers Project website).

Dr. King's eloquent speech proved true: On August 6, 1965, with Dr. King present, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law.

Figure 11: View of the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. AP wire photo, March 21, 1965.

Figure 12: National Guard marching through the streets of Montgomery. Newspaper photograph, collection of Kitty Chamberlain.

Figure 13: View of the crowd gathering at the capitol in Montgomery. Newspaper photograph, collection of Kitty Chamberlain.

Following the march, the area continued to prosper until the construction of Interstates 65 and 85 in the late 1960s and 1970s. In Montgomery, the interstates caused the removal of many commercial, residential, and religious buildings and physically divided the western neighborhoods from the downtown. As a result, many of the remaining business and residential properties were abandoned. This pattern of decline continued for many years. Despite the construction of the interstate, the community retained its sense of place, and its residents have maintained a strong collective cultural identity. The current land use pattern in the neighborhood, though far less vibrant, is a reminder of the rich diversity of this area in years past. Churches, schools, and other civic institutions like St. Jude still have a strong influence in the community. Today, the city of Montgomery is focused on removing barriers and promoting economic development in the neighborhoods surrounding the study area to revitalize the community and reestablish prosperity.

Figure 14: Map of the neighborhood before the installation of Interstate 65, circa 1958. Image courtesy of the city of Montgomery, AL.

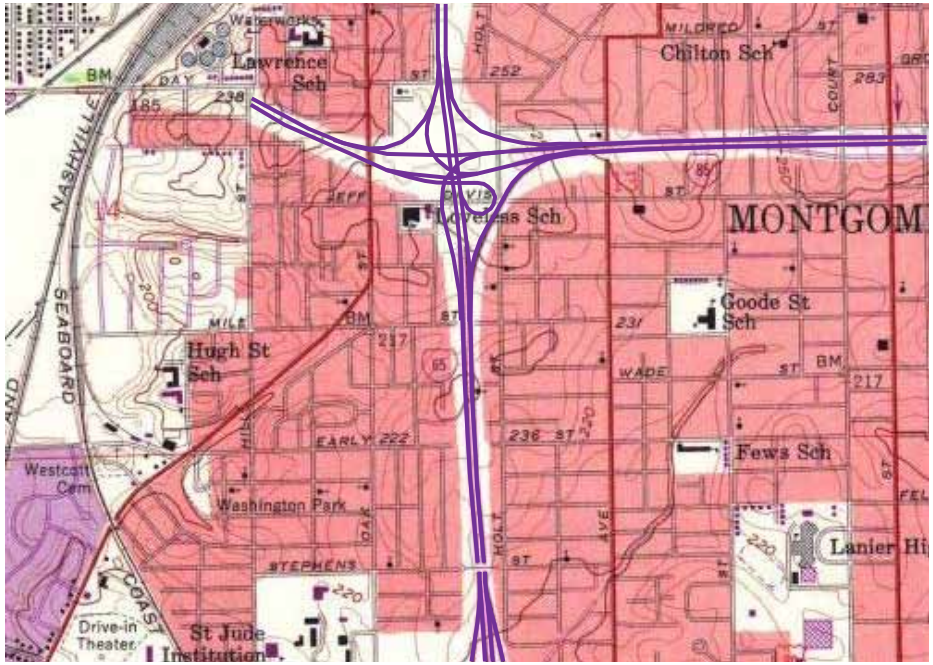


Figure 15: Map of the neighborhood post-Interstate 65 depicting how the neighborhood was dissected, circa 1972. Image courtesy of the city of Montgomery, AL.

LAND USE

Figure 16: Historic Mt. Zion AME Church.

Although the study area has lost population in recent years, the land use pattern in the community remains largely the same as it was during the 1950s and 1960s when the neighborhood was a bustling, community. Today, the neighborhood is primarily residential, with several nodes of commercial use along Oak Street, West Jeff Davis Avenue, and Holt Street. Several active churches (see Figure 16), schools, and historic sites are the cultural and social hearts of the neighborhood.

KEY

- Historic trail
- Single-family residential
- Mult-family residential
- Commercail/business district
- Institutional
- Light industrial
- General urban open (T4-O)*
- General urban restricted (T4-R)*

*NOTE: The graphic includes the southern boundary of Montgomery's Smart Code zoning district. T4 refers to "Transect 4", between suburban and urban center.

Figure 17: Existing zoning and land use.

TRANSPORTATION

Access to transit and walkability are important to the neighborhood residents. With the West Fairview Avenue Transit Station several blocks to the west, the study area is served by several Montgomery Area Transit System (MATS) bus routes that go to downtown, area schools, the bus terminals and shopping districts.

In addition to the existing transit routes, some members of the community have a desire to add a historic bus route tour or shuttle that would travel the length of the historic trail. The bus would provide locals and tourist with firsthand experience of the distance that the marchers traversed.

KEY

Route 10
Route 11
Route 12
Proposed historic trail
Study area

Existing bus stop

Proposed Stop for historic bus route

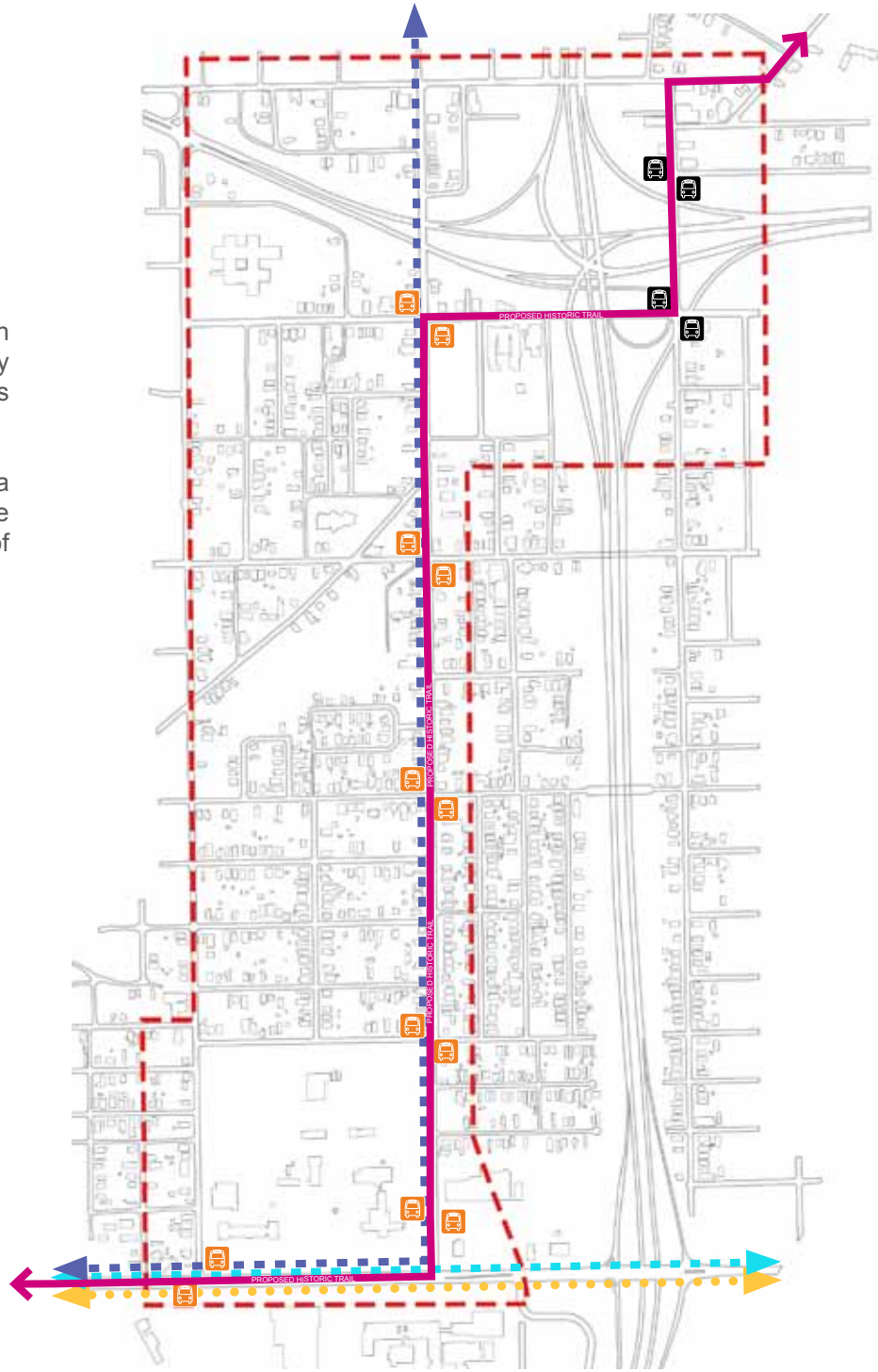


Figure 18: Transit routes and stops.

OPEN SPACE AND VACANT PROPERTIES

During the workshop, the design team identified several vacant properties that could possibly be used for infill or redevelopment (see Figure 19). The city of Montgomery identified the need to beautify and improve the interstate right of way in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation.

KEY

- Existing open space
- Vacant lots
- Interstate right of way
- Project site boundary

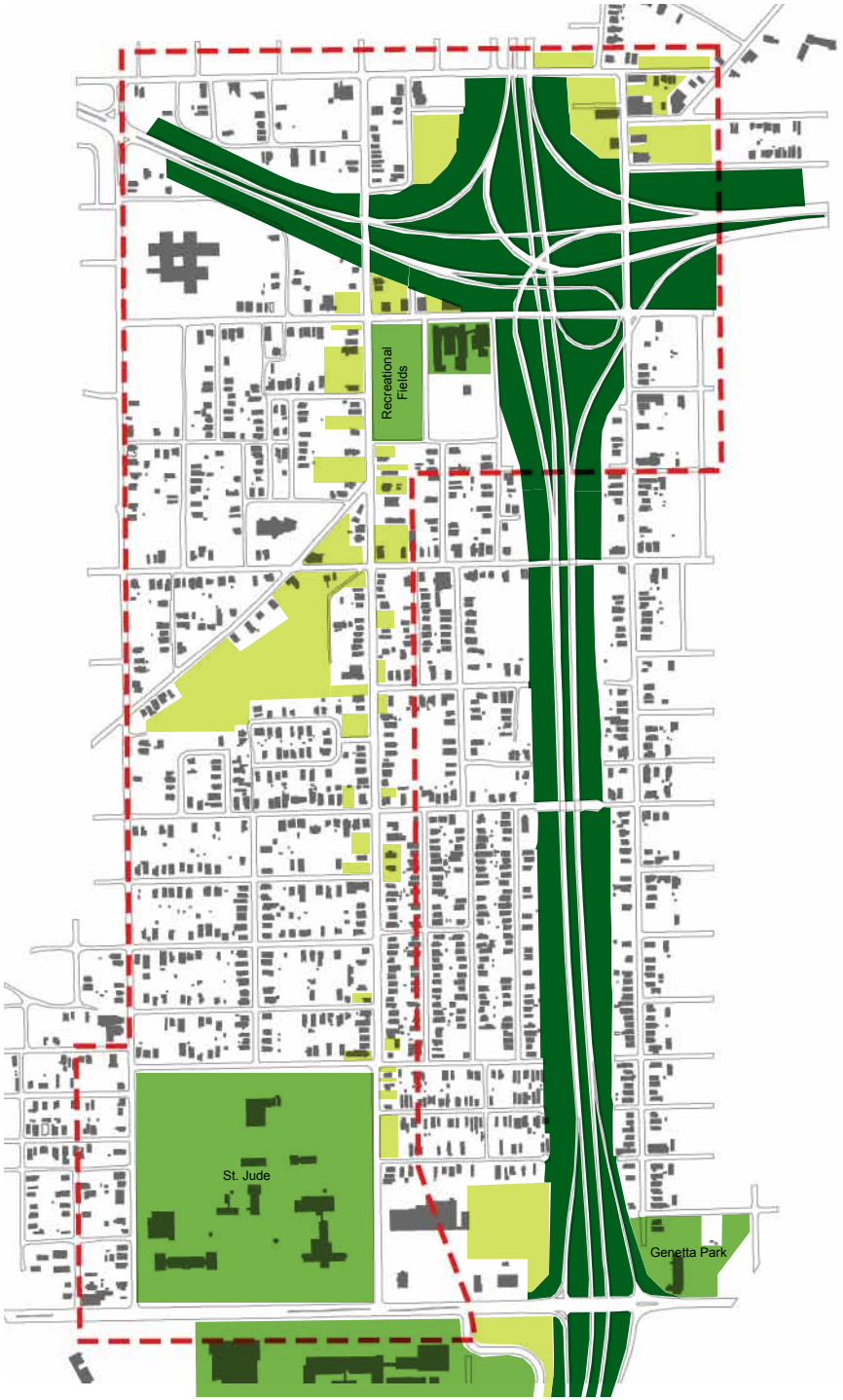


Figure 19: Open space and vacant lot diagram.

STORMWATER AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Figures 20 and 21 illustrate the city's current stormwater system and options for incorporating green infrastructure elements into the trail and neighborhood. Figure 20 illustrates the three sub-watersheds within the site boundary, which all drain to tributaries of the Alabama River. The state lists one of the streams, Genetta Stream, as an impaired water body not meeting water quality standards for a variety of pollutants. The large number of abandoned and dilapidated homes in the sub-watershed has contributed to sewage leaking into and mixing with stormwater runoff.

KEY

- High point
- Low point
- Stormwater surface drainage
- Street flow
- Ditch
- Stream
- 100-year floodplain
- Sub-watershed
- Project site boundary
- Direction of surface drainage

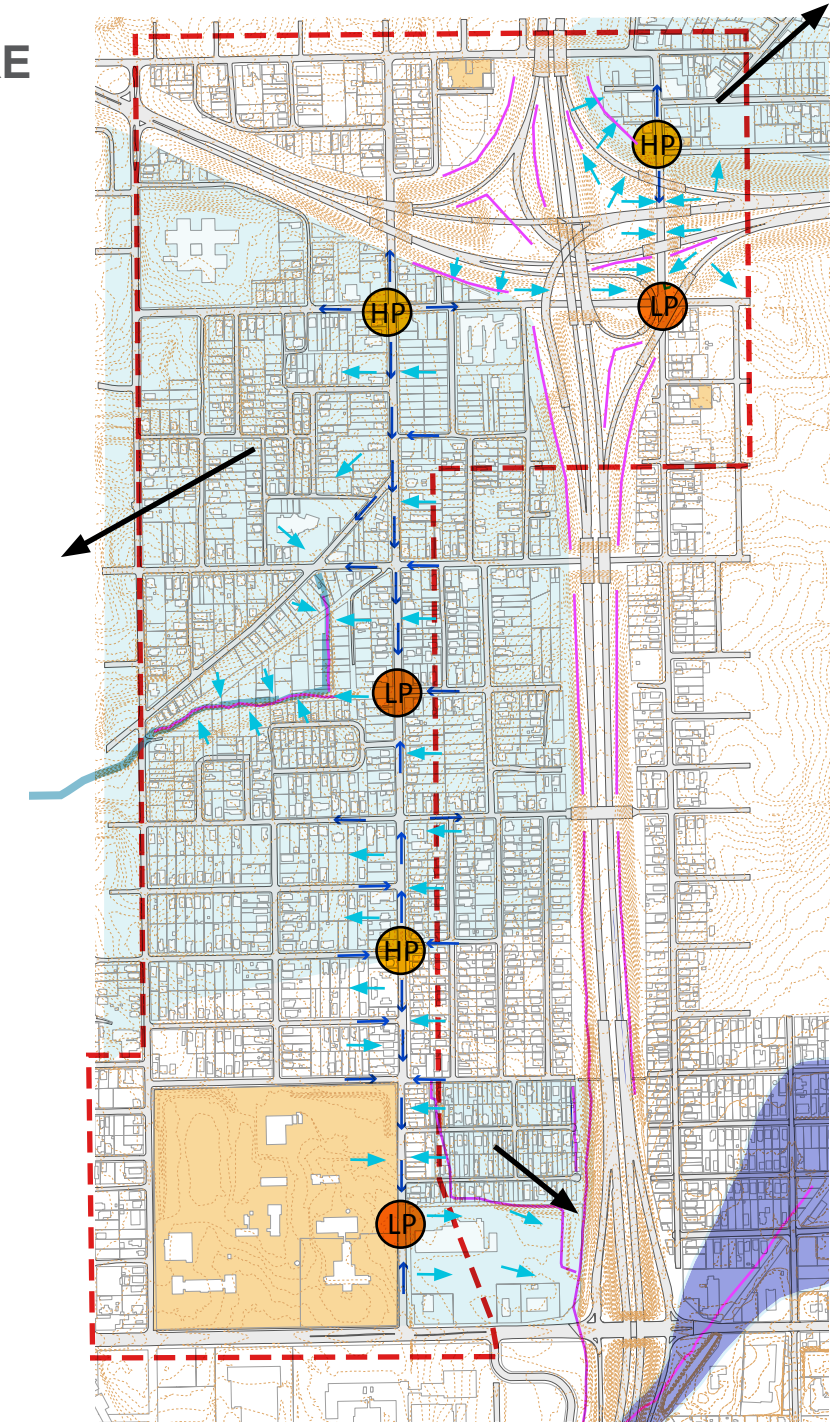


Figure 20: Stormwater flow map.

Green infrastructure uses natural elements like trees and plants, as well as permeable paving and rain barrels, to capture, manage, and treat stormwater runoff. Green infrastructure can also improve the public realm by making streets and sidewalks more attractive and can help establish a distinctive sense of place. The stormwater management improvements can be a catalyst for redevelopment of the many dilapidated properties and vacant lots in the project area. These green infrastructure strategies are illustrated in more detail in the Design Options section where green infrastructure and pervious surfaces are added into the streetscape in a variety of ways. Figure 21 is an overview diagram illustrating how a variety of green infrastructure elements such as rain gardens connect the project site with the historic trail corridor. The design team strategically selected vacant parcels to help capture and remediate stormwater flows along the corridor. The parks and mini-parks would provide areas to introduce additional plantings, cultural amenities, and signs educating people about the historic trail. The design option also includes using permeable paving in parking lots and parallel parking strips.

KEY

- Existing open space
- New parks and mini-parks
- Stormwater planters with street trees
- Project site boundary

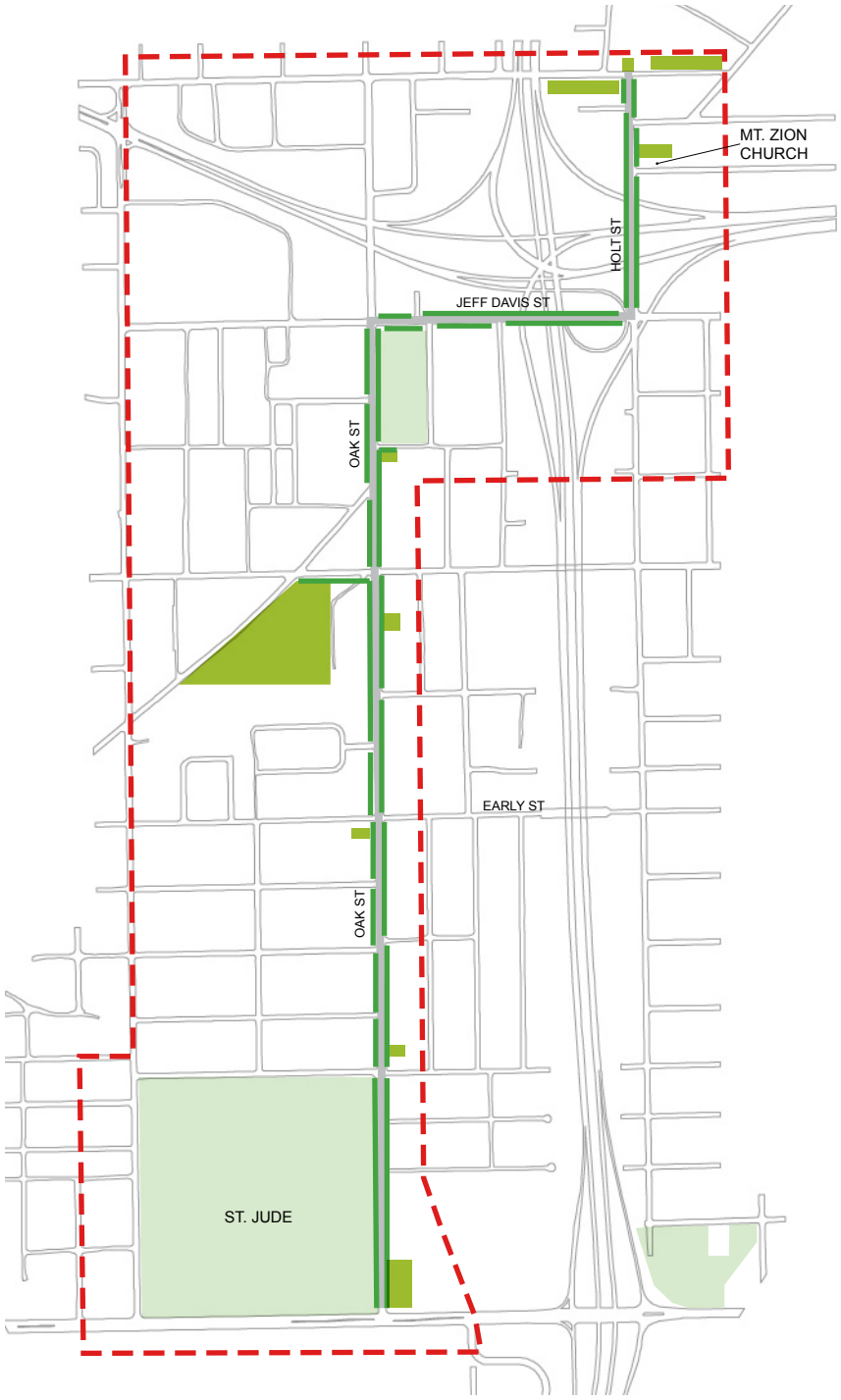


Figure 21: Green infrastructure elements diagram.

03 | DESIGN OPTIONS

The design team included suggestions from workshop and public meeting participants in the development of design options to develop a cohesive streetscape design. The team developed multiple options; the designs presented in this report are the ones that the city preferred.

Key design options include:

- Remarking the street designating bike lanes sharing the lane with vehicles—referred to as a “sharrow”. This was selected because the city wanted to maintain the original curb-to-curb width and a separate bike lane could not fit into it.
- Add rain gardens along the sidewalk that can collect stormwater from the street and allow it to soak into the ground rather than enter the sewer system, but also to improve the look of the street, possibly making it more attractive to new businesses.
- Add permeable paving to parking lanes to further allow stormwater to soak into the ground.
- Add trees to the street to provide shade for pedestrians.
- Make crosswalks more visible and add pedestrian bulb outs at some corners to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians and provide more space for rain gardens.
- Create locations for public art and educational and wayfinding signs.
- Add energy-efficient and/or solar-power street lights particularly under the freeway interchange.
- Locate small seating areas and mini-parks along the trail on currently vacant lots.
- Develop housing and retail designs that fit into the existing character of the neighborhood, but also add some contemporary elements.

The design options presented in this section are for three district areas, or “nodes,” along the trail (see Figure 22).

KEY

Project boundary

Historic trail

Nodes

1. Oak Street and Fairview Avenue
2. Oak Street and Early Street
3. Holt Street and Day Street

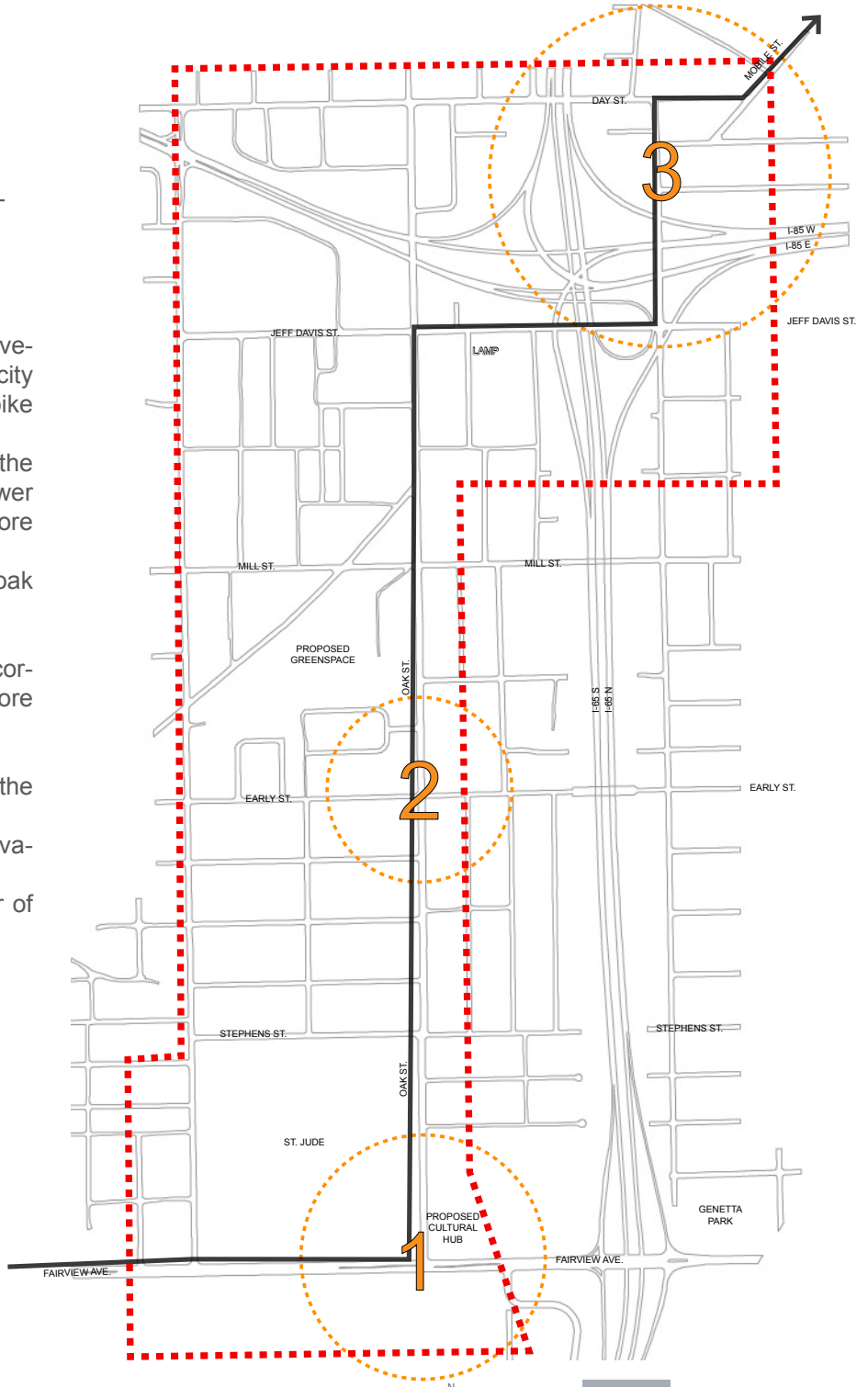
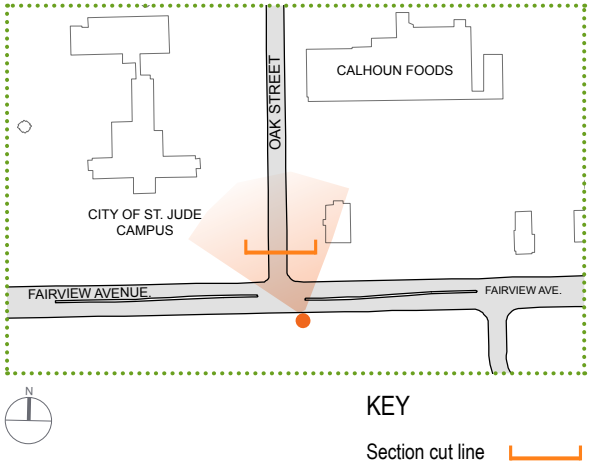


Figure 22: Potential nodes along the trail.

1

Node 1 is located next to St. Jude, a significant historic site along the trail, and the Fairview Avenue gateway to the Oak Street neighborhood. Design options include more visible crosswalks at the intersections, historic markers and education signs, rain gardens along the sidewalks, permeable paving used in the parking lanes and sidewalks, and the beginning of the sharrow lane configuration. There is an existing pedestrian tunnel that runs parallel to Oak Street connecting users to Carver High School just south of Fairview Avenue. Design options include modification of the tunnel with the addition of new lighting, security cameras, signage, and aesthetic enhancements to blend the element into the proposed landscape and promote safety and welfare for all users. Figure 23 illustrates a cross-section of Oak Street near Fairview Avenue. Figure 24 illustrates the intersection improvements, and Figures 25 and 26 depict the intersection before and after the design concept is applied.



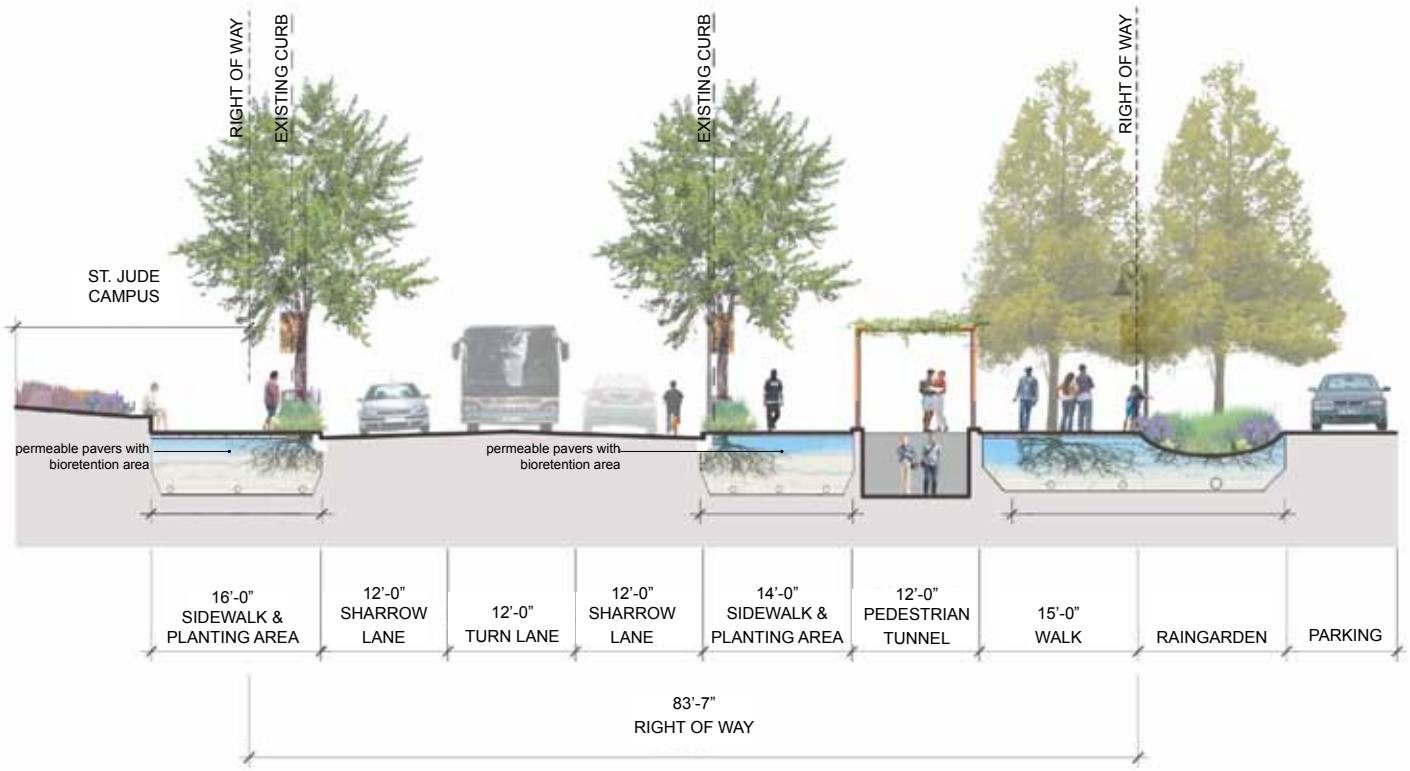


Figure 23: Cross-section of Oak Street illustrating the design concept. Image not to scale.

1

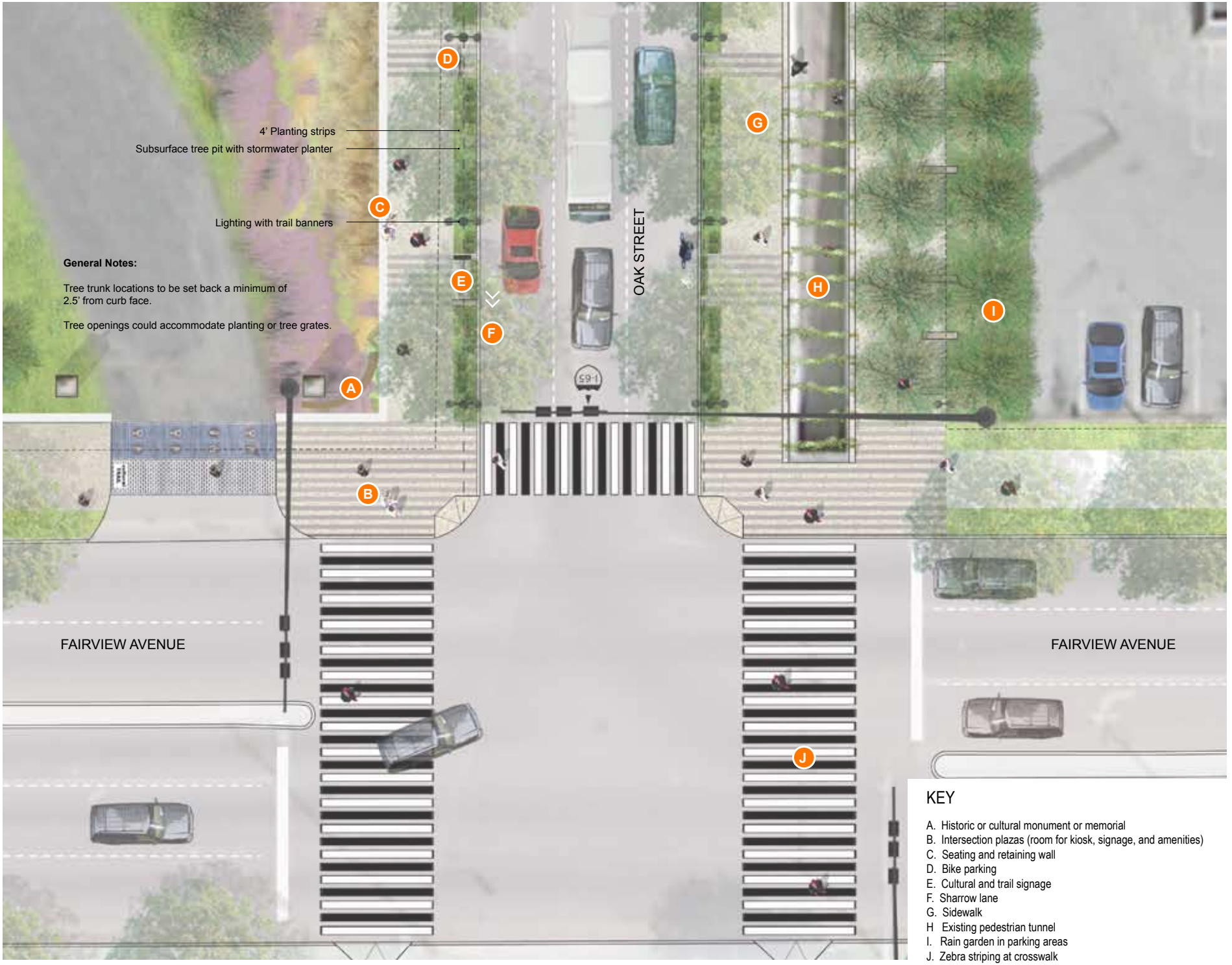


Figure 24: Design concept for node 1 at the Oak St and Fairview Avenue intersection.

1

Figure 25: Existing view looking north up Oak Street.

Figure 26: Perspective of the cultural trail at the intersection of Oak Street and Fairview Avenue.

Figure 26 illustrates a view up Oak Street seen from Fairview Avenue. The design option includes stormwater design, space for monuments or memorials, and a seating wall along the St. Jude property line. A sculpture framing the entrance to St. Jude, the last camp site before the protesters marched to the capitol the next day, would emphasize St. Jude's importance to the march and would mark a transition into the historic neighborhood.

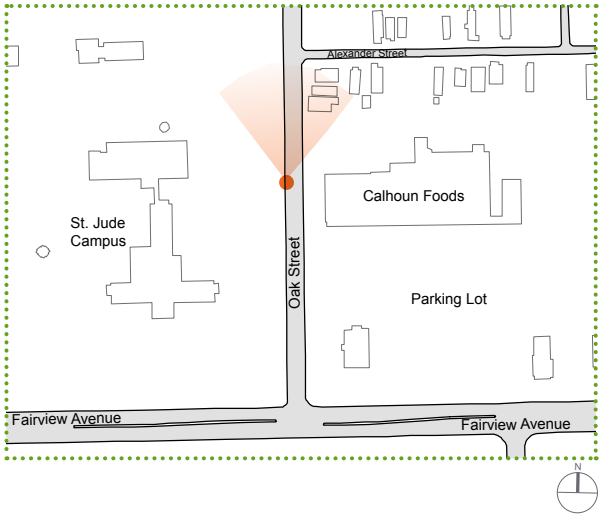


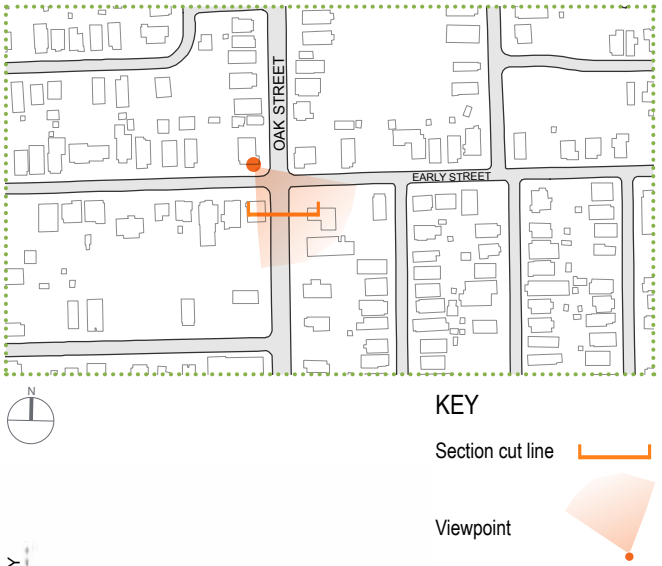
Figure 27: Existing conditions along Holt Street near St. Jude.

Figure 28: Design option for cultural and trail signage along the western side of Holt Street.

Figure 28 shows how the planted spaces along the sidewalk could house memorials, educational signs about the history of the trail, and artwork. For an example of a trail that uses art and interesting interpretive elements, see the Glick Peace Walk case study on page 35. The parking lanes are permeable paving that will allow stormwater to soak into the ground directly and not have to flow into the sewer system.

2

Figure 29 depicts the design option's improvements along node 2 including rain gardens; permeable paving in the parking lane and sidewalk to allow water to soak into a bioretention area; and street trees to provide shade. Figure 30 depicts the intersection and streetscape improvements along Oak Street and Early Street.



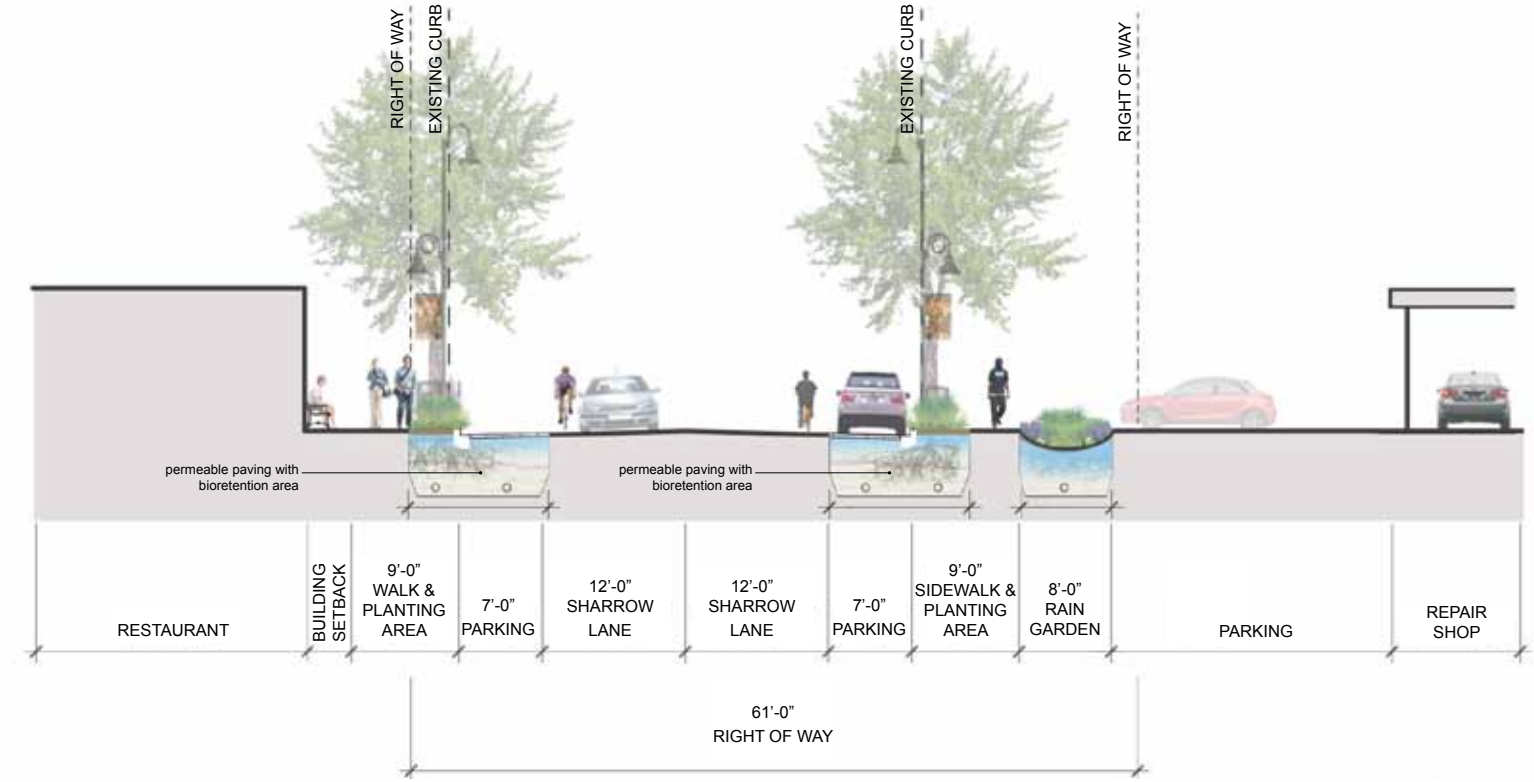


Figure 29: Cross-section of Oak Street illustrating the design concept for node 2. Image not to scale.

2

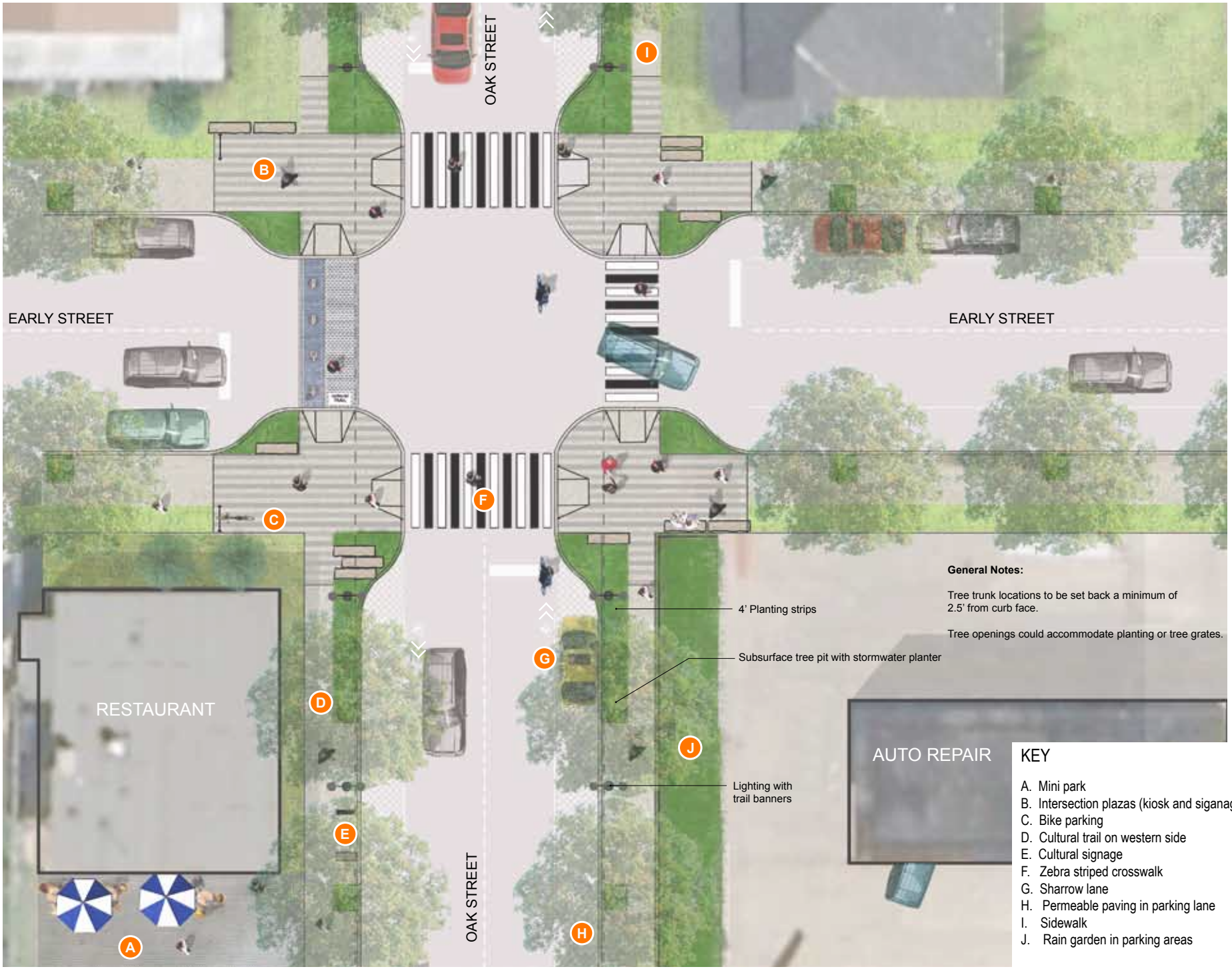


Figure 30: Design concept for node 2.

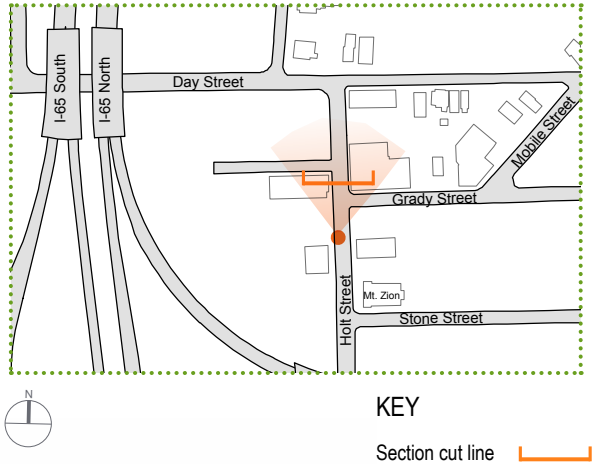
Figure 31: Existing view looking south at the Oak Street and Early Street intersection.

Figure 32: Perspective of the design option at the Oak Street and Early Street intersection.

The streetscape design uses complete streets principles of accommodating pedestrian and bicyclists, but also includes green infrastructure elements. The green infrastructure elements not only manage stormwater, but also make the neighborhood more attractive. The design also takes into consideration the site's historic context by staying within the historic rights-of-way. Figure 32 depicts the design concept for the intersection and streetscape improvements along Oak Street and Early Street.

3

Figure 33 depicts the design option's spatial characteristics and improvements in node 3 including permeable paving in the parking lane, rain gardens along the sidewalk, and new trees and lighting.



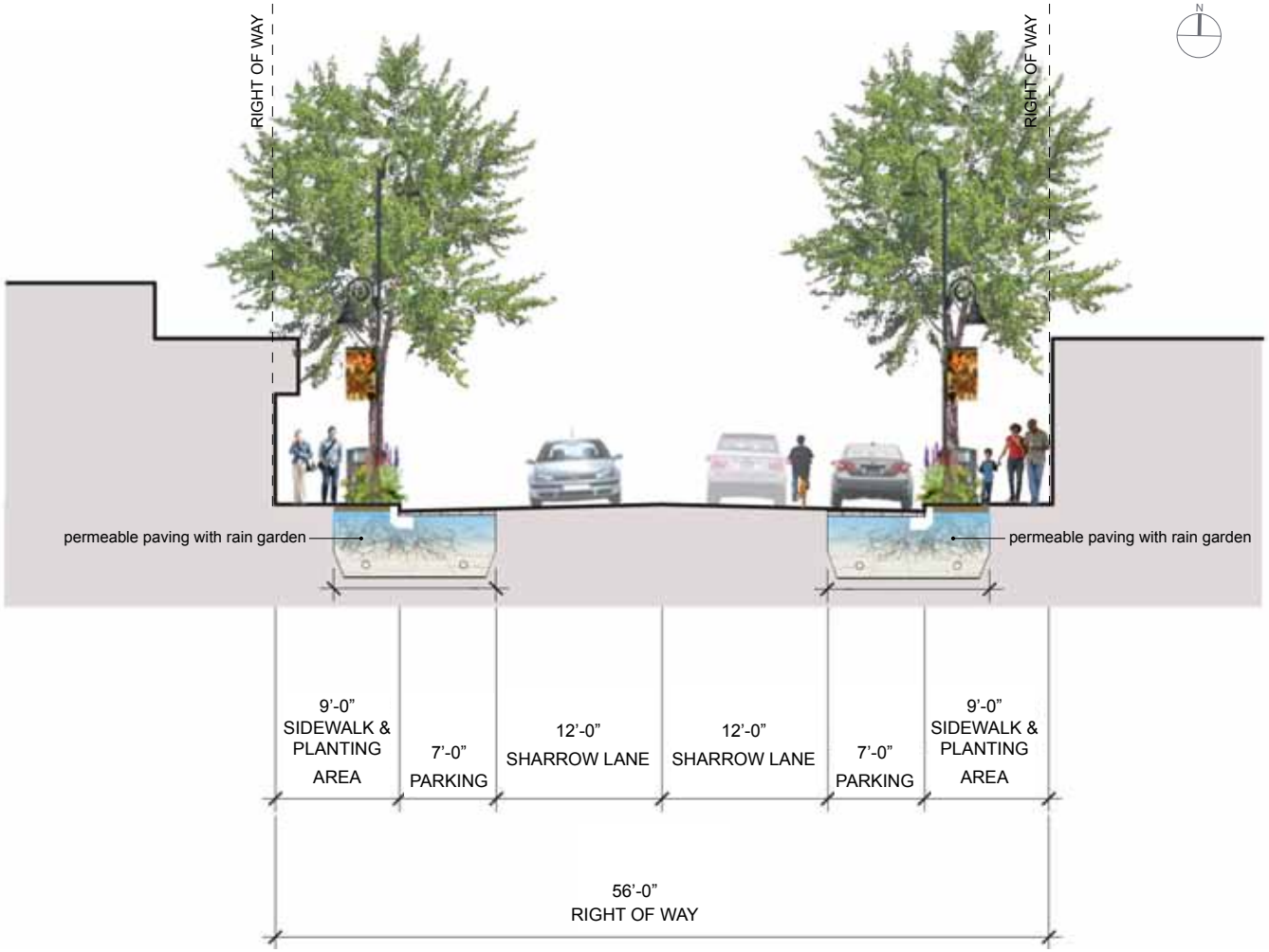


Figure 33: Cross-section of Holt Street in node 3. Image not to scale.

3

Figure 34: Design concept for node 3 streetscape.

3

Figure 35: Existing view looking north along Holt Street.

Figure 36: Design concept of stormwater planters, sharrow, and permeable paving in parking lane.

Figure 36 depicts the design concept's streetscape improvements in node 3. Street trees, improved wayfinding signage, and cultural and educational signage are placed along the sidewalk. Stormwater planters are placed between the sidewalk and curb. These planters collect runoff from the street and sidewalk and allow it to soak, or infiltrate, naturally into the ground. Permeable paving in the parking lanes also allows stormwater to infiltrate. Beneath the parking lane, a structural soil can be used that supports the weight of a car and allows more subsurface space for tree roots to grow. For an example of a trail that uses green infrastructure, see the Indianapolis Cultural Trail case study on page 36.

3

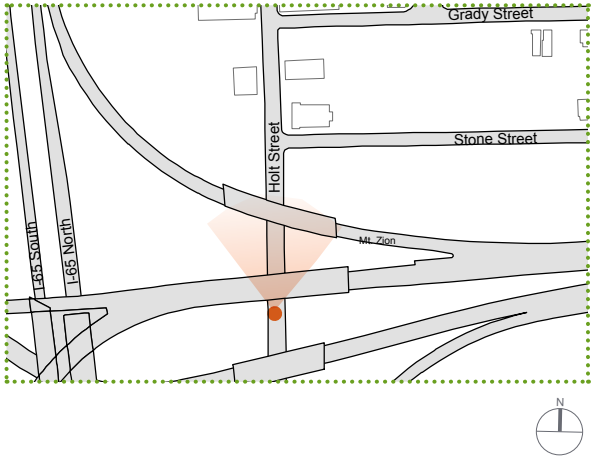


Figure 37: Existing view looking north along Holt Street.

Figure 38: Design concept of the cultural trail under the interstate interchange.

Figure 38 shows how green infrastructure could delineate the trail as it passes beneath the freeway overpasses and how the existing fencing could be “green screens” that provide more greenery along the trail. Trellises over the sidewalk could be used for holding banners and lighting to further celebrate the historic trail route.

3

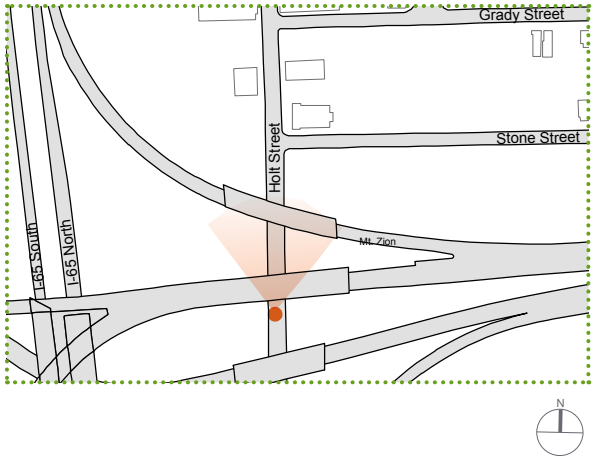


Figure 39: Existing view looking north along Holt Street.

Figure 40: Design concept of the cultural trail under the interstate interchange at night.

Figure 40 illustrates how lighting under the bridge could improve safety and add visual interest. The repeated vertical steel elements located throughout the trail could be used as arbors or to display signage that lights up at night. As public art, inspirational words could be projected onto the interstate infrastructure and the street. For an example of a trail that uses interesting lighting under freeway overpasses, see the Buffalo Bayou case study on page 37.

POTENTIAL DESIGNS FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL INFILL

Figure 41: Residential floor plan.

Figure 42: Residential facade, Option 1.

Figure 43: Residential facade, Option 2.

Figure 44: Residential facade, Option 3.

This section offers plans and elevations for new residential and commercial buildings that could be constructed on vacant or blighted lots in the neighborhood. The prototypes maintain the architectural styles and scale of the existing neighborhood but also offer contemporary architecture that could fit well into the neighborhood. For an example of a residential infill project that successfully blends into an existing neighborhood, see the Project Row Houses case study on page 38.

HOUSING TYPES

Architects on the team developed a functional floor plan with modern amenities that could be built on the neighborhood lots and contribute to the neighborhood's charm. Three options are illustrated for a home's façade that have building details common in the neighborhood such as porches (the floor plan illustrated in Figure 41 corresponds to Option 2). Existing housing stock could also be improved to make the neighborhoods along the trail attractive to people of all ages and income.

Figure 45: Commercial facade.

Figure 47: Commercial facade.

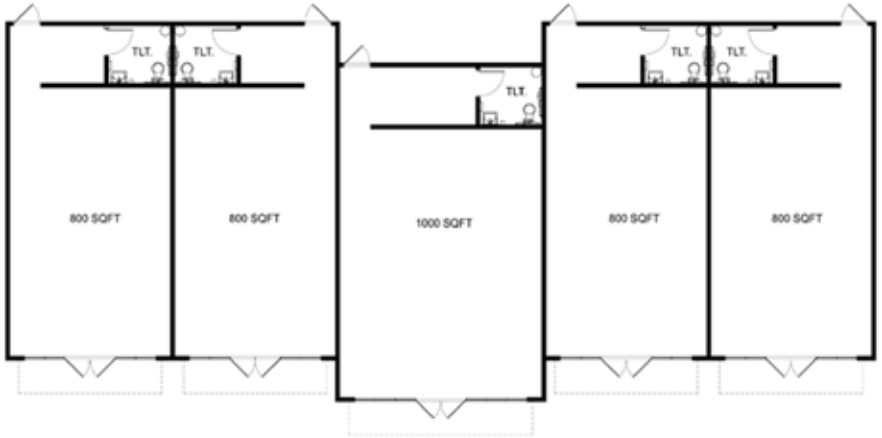


Figure 46: Commercial floor plan.

Figure 48: Commercial floor plan.

COMMERICIAL BUILDING TYPES

The design option scales potential commercial infill to complement adjacent homes. Commercial development along the trail, serving both residents and visitors, would encourage pedestrian and biking traffic. Residents would be able to live and work in the neighborhood reminiscent of the era of the Selma to Montgomery March. Contemporary design elements could be incorporated into the historic fabric to embrace the community's desire to revitalize the neighborhood.

COMMERCIAL INFILL CONCEPTS

Figure 49: Existing view looking south at the intersection of Oak Street and Early Street.

Figure 50: Design concept for commercial infill at the corner of Oak Street and Early Street in node 2.

Architects on the team developed overlays to depict how the design options could promote infill and invite restoration of existing buildings throughout the project site.

COMMERCIAL INFILL CONCEPTS

Figure 51: Existing view looking north along Holt Street.

Figure 52: Design concept for commercial infill along Holt Street in node 3.

HOUSING INFILL CONCEPTS

Figure 53: Existing view looking north along Oak Street.

Figure 54: Design concept for infill housing along Oak Street.

04 | IMPLEMENTATION

The design concept presented in this report provides the city of Montgomery with green streetscape design concepts that accommodate walking, biking, and driving. The city requested ideas on how to implement the design options in a way that maintains public enthusiasm while the city procures funding. The implementation plan outlined in this section presents ideas that the city could consider, depending on which, if any, elements of the design concept the city chooses to pursue. This sample plan would be completed before the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights March in 2015. Commemorative events during 2015 will attract leaders and thousands of visitors from across the globe who will visit Montgomery to honor the foot soldiers of America's civil rights movement.

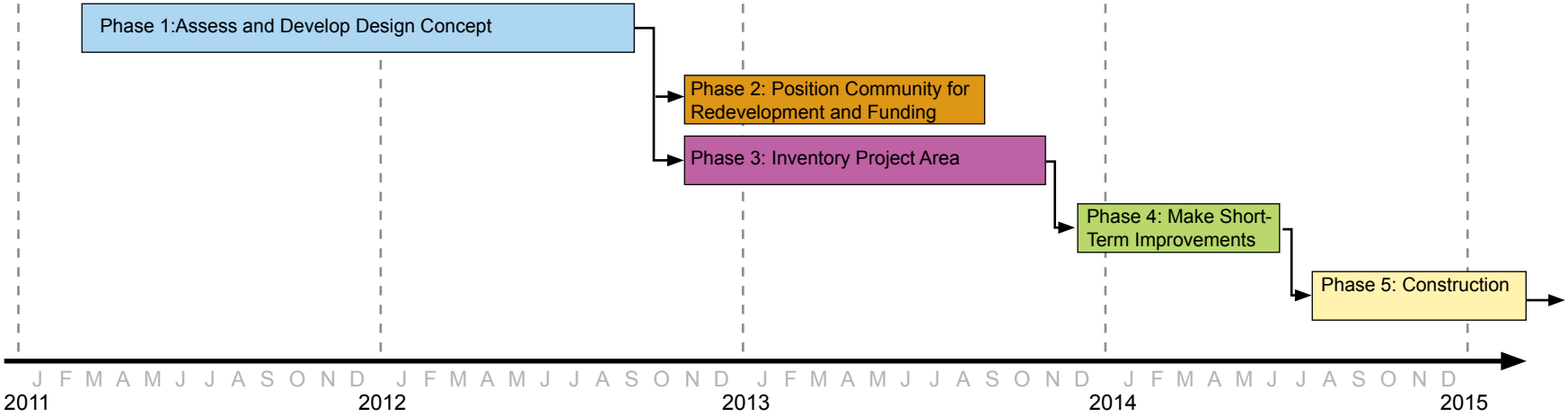


Figure 55: Potential implementation plan. The overall implantation timeline is an estimate and for illustration purposes only. The timeline will continue to evolve and is subject to change.

A list of funding sources for implementation are included in Appendix B.

The implementation plan for the design concept is divided into five phases:
Phase 1: Assess and Develop Design Concept
Phase 2: Position Community for Redevelopment and Funding
Phase 3: Inventory Project Area
Phase 4: Make Short-Term Improvements
Phase 5: Construction

IMPLEMENTAITON PLAN

PHASE 1: ASSESS AND DEVELOP DESIGN CONCEPT

This phase was initiated with development of this design concept through the Greening America's Capitals program. If necessary, the city can pursue detailed design work.

PHASE 2: POSITION COMMUNITY FOR REDEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING

Step 1: Adopt an overlay district
Workshop participants discussed the benefits of a defined overlay district. The overlay district provides parameters for the application of resources necessary to fund capital improvements. In addition, the overlay district provides opportunity to revise codes, ordinance and standards to promote sustainability. For example, the overlay could encourage the use of green infrastructure and other environmentally sustainable practices such as water harvesting using rain barrels and cisterns, and use of renewable energy by using solar-powered street lighting.

Step 2: Begin looking for funding
Securing funding can often take a long time, so the city might want to develop a comprehensive funding strategy as soon as possible.

Step 3: Adopt development guidelines
Workshop participants discussed the value of incorporating sustainable design guidelines to guide future development in the project area. Participants identified some elements that could provide environmental and other community benefits, including rain gardens, rain barrels, stormwater planters, permeable driveways and walkways, native vegetation, and deciduous tree canopy for summer shading. Development guidelines would encourage developers to maintain the historic character of the district with approved housing typologies that complement the neighborhood. The workshop discussions gave the city a basis for initiating development of context-sensitive guidelines that explain environmentally sustainable and architecturally appropriate design for the corridor.

Step 4: Begin construction documents and cost estimate
The city could develop construction drawings and cost estimates for the entire corridor. These documents are necessary to procure funding for ultimate construction.

PHASE 3: INVENTORY PROJECT AREA

Step 5: Identify blighted houses and commercial structures
The city can inventory blighted houses and commercial structures fronting the corridor. Demolition would target properties that are beyond reasonable cost for repair. Funding to demolish blighted properties is available through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Demolishing unsightly structures would immediately improve the look of the historic corridor and surrounding neighborhood. In addition, parcels cleared of uninhabitable structures are more likely to attract developers to build homes. A demolition initiative would also complement a "Mow to Own" initiative used in other communities and described in Figure 56.

Step 6: Identify key community leaders to create community buy-in

To begin energizing revitalization efforts, the city could solicit institutions in the overlay district to participate. It could target churches, schools, and civic and nonprofit organizations to get them involved. The city could challenge students in the three nearby high schools to take part in making their community better and could encourage scouting troops, service clubs, and local college fraternities and sororities to meet their community service commitments in this corridor along the historic civil rights trail. The city could bestow community service awards on groups and individuals who exhibit civic leadership with active engagement and hands-on contributions.

Step 7: Develop a prioritized list of locations for cleanup and repair

Another recommendation made by workshop participants was the potential to immediately improve the corridor's appearance with a community cleanup campaign. Residents who attended the public meetings and workshop complained of numerous unkempt properties in the community. With the help of the community members identified in Step 6 the city could develop a prioritized list of specific locations and conditions that need attention: for example, clearing overgrown rights of way; replacing or repairing broken, damaged, and rusted fencing; pruning overgrown trees and shrubbery on city property; enforcing nuisance ordnances for property owners who endanger the health and safety of their neighbors with practices such as parking cars on sidewalks or lawns and refusing to keep properties mowed and free of unsightly debris.

PHASE 4: MAKE SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

Step 8: Repair sidewalks and signage

Upon completing Step 7, the city could undertake a public works initiative to repair sidewalks and signage. Actions might include mowing overgrown grass, edging, cleaning, repairing hazards such as broken or buckled sections of the sidewalk, and repairing or replacing faded or damaged signs.

PHASE 5: CONSTRUCTION IMPLEMENTATION

Step 9: Phased construction

Since project funding is likely to come from multiple sources, a phased approach to implementation is likely more feasible. A phased construction plan would give the city a reasonable framework to prioritize a sequence of improvements. Phasing plans are difficult to formalize until the city has determined the project timeline and cost estimate by developing construction documents (see Step 4). Two potential approaches to phased construction of streetscape improvements are:

Phasing Plan A prioritizes primary gateways, followed by the continuous linkage of segments along Oak Street, from West Fairview Avenue to West Jeff Davis Avenue, to South Holt Street, and Day Street and concluding at Mobile Street.

Figure 56:"Mow to Own", Residents participating in the workshop were concerned about the amount of abandoned and blighted properties in the project area. An innovative concept to control blighted and unkempt properties is being pioneered by the city of Sandusky, Ohio. Property owners are given the opportunity to acquire adjacent properties in exchange for maintaining the property. Benefits for the property owners include increased property values; increased community pride; and the chance to add on to their existing homes, plant a garden, or find some other productive use for the acquired property. Benefits for the city include reduced maintenance costs for mowing and trash removal, and reduced crime. The city of Montgomery could tailor a similar program in a manner that protects the interests of both the homeowner and the city as partners in stabilizing the neighborhood and improving quality of life. Image courtesy of The Blade Media Group.

Before starting work, the city could solicit stakeholder input about the order of the construction phases to best serve the needs of the people directly affected by the streetscape redesign.

Phase 1: Gateway at Fairview Avenue and Oak Street.
Phase 2: Gateway at South Holt Street and Day Street.
Phase 3: Oak Street from Fairview Avenue to Early Street.
Phase 4: Oak Street from Early Street to West Jeff Davis Avenue.
Phase 5: West Jeff Davis Avenue to South Holt Street.
Phase 6: South Holt to Day Street to Mobile Street.

Phasing Plan B would construct the improvements through phases that would complement and build upon one another. Plan B addresses the entire project corridor for each phase.

Phase 1: Improve the street surface by resurfacing, restriping, and adding stamping and surface treatments denoting the trail route.
Phase 2: Repair sidewalks.
Phase 3: Improve lighting.
Phase 4: Connect the sidewalk system by completing any missing segments.
Phase 5: Install street trees and landscaping at nodes and gateways.
Phase 6: Improve signage and wayfinding.
Phase 7: Install public art at key locations along the corridor.

GLICK PEACE WALK

Location: Indianapolis Cultural Trail in Indianapolis
Organization: Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.
More information available at www.indyculturaltrail.org/Glick-Peace-Walk.html

Funding and Management: The Glick Peace Walk is managed by the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc. It cost $2 million and was funded by a private donation.

Overview: The Glick Peace Walk is a two-block section of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail with memorial gardens that honor 14 people who worked peacefully to improve life for all. The Peace Walk's integration of memorials and interpretive elements with the cultural trail's bike, pedestrian, and stormwater management strategies could be a model for the Selma to Montgomery Trail to combine commemoration with green infrastructure, complete streets, and green street design.

Memorial Gardens: Design elements of the memorial gardens give visitors a deeper understanding of how these people, including Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Booker T. Washington, overcame challenges and dedicated their lives to the greater good of society. The Peace Walk is meant to inspire visitors to pursue their dreams and make the world a better place.

Interpretive Elements: In each memorial, a flat panel of lit glass references the "watershed moment" when the individual achieved greatness. Each person's portrait is etched and illuminated in glass encased in a 12-foot stainless steel "sail." Terrazzo plazas feature an image from the person's life. A steel timeline with embedded LED lights points out key moments in each person's life that are further described in an interpretive sign nearby.

Figure 57: Cultural signage and sculpture. Used with permission from GRT Glass Design.

Figure 58: Peace Walk grand opening event. Used with permission from GRT Glass Design.

INDIANAPOLIS CULTURAL TRAIL

Location: Indianapolis
Organization: Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.
More information available at www.indyculturaltrail.org

Funding and Management: The trail is the result of a public-private partnership led by the Central Indiana Community Foundation, the city of Indianapolis, and several nonprofits. A six-member Cultural Trail Management Team and the staff and board of Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc., manage the trail.

Overview: The Indianapolis Cultural Trail is an eight-mile urban greenway with bike and pedestrian paths that connects downtown neighborhoods, cultural districts, and other amenities and attractions. Montgomery could examine the ways that the bike and pedestrian paths, stormwater management, public art, and historic commemoration fit together as a model for making the Selma to Montgomery trail an attractive greenway in addition to a nationally significant historic trail.

Stormwater Management: The trail uses rain gardens in planters and bioswales (long linear rain gardens) and stormwater planters to manage stormwater. The planters reduce runoff, flow rate, volume, and pollutants from stormwater.

Public Art: Public art, a primary component of the trail, is installed at various points along the trail and often includes innovative lighting.

Figure 59: Rain garden along the trail. Used with permission from Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.

Figure 60: The Cultural trail accommodates pedestrians and cyclists Photograph by Monica Murphy. Used with permission from Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.

Figure 61: Sculptures and educational signage. Used with permission from Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.

BUFFALO BAYOU: Interstate Interchange Enhancement

Location: Houston
Organization: Buffalo Bayou Partnership
More information available at www.buffalobayou.org

Funding and Management: The Buffalo Bayou Partnership is a nonprofit coalition of civic, environmental, government, and business representatives that works to revitalize and transform the Buffalo Bayou.

Overview: The Buffalo Bayou and its 10-mile system of trails, parks, and open space is the "green spine" of Houston. The Buffalo Bayou Promenade, a 1.2-mile link between trails and Houston's downtown, incorporates site-specific design solutions to mitigate a network of freeway overpasses to create a trail that is both environmentally responsible and culturally rich. The Selma to Montgomery Trail faces similar challenges with freeway overpasses and could benefit from exploring Buffalo Bayou's design strategies.

Landscaping and Planting: Removing invasive species and installing native vegetation significantly improved wildlife habitat. Trees shade the trails and the bayou, and gardens incorporate native vegetation. Groves of trees soften the infrastructure, buffer noise, and bring down the scale of the freeways.

Lighting: Lighting treatments brighten the bridges, overpasses, trails, and water, making the environment more pleasant for pedestrians.

Public Art and Interpretation: Public art, a wayfinding system, and interpretive signage include both sculptural and textual elements that welcome visitors and provide insight into the history of the Buffalo Bayou and the city of Houston.

Figure 62: Before and after images of the trail under the interstate intersection. Image courtesy of ASLA.

Figure 63: Lighting along the trail adds visual interest and improves safety for pedestrians Image courtesy of ASLA.

PROJECT ROW HOUSES

Location: Houston
Organization: Project Row Houses and Row House Community Development Corporation
More information available at www.projectrowhouses.org.

Funding and Management: Project Row Houses is a nonprofit organization funded by individuals; foundations; corporations; and other community-based, artistic, and educational organizations and institutions. A small staff and board of directors manage Project Row Houses.

Overview: Project Row Houses is a neighborhood-based arts organization focused on "community as its canvas." Its vision of PRH is to use a historic housing type as a platform for public art and community revitalization in one of Houston's oldest African American communities. Project Row Houses could be a model for the section of the Selma to Montgomery Historic Trail that traverses historically important residential neighborhoods in Montgomery.

Mixed-use Redevelopment: Project Row Houses focuses on programs that encompass arts and culture, neighborhood revitalization, low-income housing, education, historic preservation, and community service. The project includes 40 properties, 12 artist exhibition spaces, seven houses for young mothers, artists' residences, office space, community gallery, park, and low-income residential and commercial tenants. A program called Green House Collective maintains an organic community garden at one of the original row houses.

Figure 64: Installation spaces. Project Row House "We are the People." Used with permission from Project Row Houses.


Figure 65: Live-work spaces. Used with permission from Project Row Houses.

Figure 66: Community spaces. Photograph by Carrie Sloan, used with permission.

06 | APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A

The design team conducted a three day workshop that was open to the public and all stakeholders. The workshop process was interactive and provided all who participated an opportunity to contribute ideas, and concerns for consideration in the design development process. Appendix A represents the workshop schedule that took place from January 31st through February 2nd, 2012.

Greening the Selma to Montgomery Trail: Reconnecting & Remembering

GREENING AMERICA'S CAPITALS

DESIGN CHARRETTE

January 31 – February 2, 2012

Schedule of events

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31

9 AM – 4:30 PM **Technical Forums** *25 Washington Avenue (3rd, 4th floors)*

- 9:00 AM Introduction
- 10:00 PM Historic Preservation & Economic Revitalization
- 1:00 PM Green Streets & Environmental Streetscape
- 3:30 PM Pedestrian Mobility & Complete Streets for Environmental Sustainability

6 PM – 8 PM: **Public Meeting: Assess Evolving Plan**
Loveless Community Center (921 W. Jeff Davis Avenue)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

10 AM – 6 PM: **Design Studio** *25 Washington Avenue (3rd, 4th floors)*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2

9 AM – 10 AM **Action Plan & Implementation Strategies**
1 Dexter Plaza, City Council Chambers

11 AM – 1 PM **Open House** *1 Dexter Plaza, City Council Chambers*

You are invited—

Greening the Selma to Montgomery Trail: Reconnecting and Remembering Charrette joins community residents and other stakeholders, design professionals and government agency leaders in a collaborative process to develop best practices to guide the transformation of this historic area.

- Montgomery's project redesigns a one-mile segment of the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail (Oak St./ West Fairview Ave. intersection to Holt St. to Day St./Mobile St. intersection) to improve the streetscape for walking/ biking, to include natural stormwater management solutions, to improve housing and commercial buildings, to develop commemorative public art, and to create better connections between neighborhoods in an area crisscrossed by major highway overpasses.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is providing design assistance to the City of Montgomery through its Greening America's Capitals program to pursue attractive, efficient, green development to stimulate economic development, provide more housing and transportation choices and reduce infrastructure and energy costs.
- 2DStudio will lead a project team of urban planners, architects, landscape architects and historic preservationists to develop a conceptual master plan for the area.

APPENDIX B

FUNDING SOURCES

The design concept presented in this report will require multiple funding sources to fund design development, and construction. Because the trail achieves multiple community goals, the city can target various sources related to transportation improvements, stormwater management, public art and arts-related economic development, and historic preservation. The following list of potential sources is not meant to be a complete list of available resources.

TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), formerly known as the Transportation Enhancements Activities Program, is a U.S. Department of Transportation program that provides funding for programs and projects such as: on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities; infrastructure projects for improving access to public transit; community improvement activities; environmental mitigation; recreational trails; and safe routes to school projects.

Additional information is available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Funding to build green infrastructure focuses on reducing pollution caused by stormwater runoff and improving water quality.

Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds
The Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund are low-interest loan programs intended to finance public infrastructure improvements in Alabama. The programs are funded with a blend of state and federal capitalization funds. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management administers the funds, performs the required technical and environmental reviews of projects, and disburses funds to recipients. Benefits of a state revolving fund loan include:

- The interest rate is about 1.5 to 2 percent less than the prevailing municipal bond rate available to AAA-rated municipalities
- The interest rate is fixed, with a 20-year payback period.
- Loan repayment does not begin until construction is completed, although capitalized interest accrues.
- The loan recipient is not required to pay any ongoing trustee expenses or rebate expenses normally associated with a local bond issue.

Additional information is available at http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/cwsrf/cwsrf_index.cfm.

Projects that strengthen compliance with federal and state regulations and/or enhance protection of public health are eligible for consideration to receive a state revolving fund loan. If a project qualifies, the engineering, inspection, and construction costs are eligible for reimbursement.

EPA URBAN WATERS SMALL GRANTS

Urban Waters grants support projects that improve urban waters and promote community revitalization. EPA awards grants ranging from $30,000 to $60,000 for projects that help improve water quality and revitalize the community. The goal of these grants is to fund research, studies, training, and demonstration projects that will restore urban waters by improving water quality through activities that also support community revitalization and other local priorities.

Additional information is available at www.epa.gov/urbanwaters.

PUBLIC ART, EDUCATION, AND MUSEUMS

The design concept encourages the city to incorporate public art and memorials as a common thread in streetscape design. Some structures could be rehabilitated to serve as places for art and education while enhancing the appearance of the neighborhood.

National Endowment for the Arts “Our Town” Grants

Through its Our Town program, the National Endowment for the Arts provides grants, ranging from $25,000 to $150,000, for creative placemaking projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Our Town will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to:

- Improve their quality of life.
- Encourage creative activity.
- Create community identity and a sense of place.
- Revitalize local economies.

Our Town applications must involve two primary partners: a nonprofit organization and a local government entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as state level government agencies, foundations, arts organizations and artists, nonprofit organizations, design professionals and design centers, educational institutions, real estate developers, business leaders, and community organizations, as well as public and governmental entities.

Additional information is available at http://www.nea.gov/grants/apply/OurTown/index.html.

America’s Historical and Cultural Organizations Planning and Implementation Grants

America’s Historical and Cultural Organizations grants provide support for museums, libraries, historic places, and other organizations that produce public programs in the humanities. Grants support the following formats:

- Exhibitions at museums, libraries, and other venues.
- Interpretations of historic places, sites, or regions.
- Book or film discussion programs; living history presentations; and other programs at libraries, community centers, and other public venues.
- Interpretive websites.

Planning grants support the early stages of project development, including consultation with scholars, refinement of humanities themes, preliminary design, and audience evaluation. Implementation grants support scholarly research and consultation, and design development

Additional information is available at www.neh.gov/files/grants/ahco-implementation-jan-9-2013.pdf

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation funding provides another potential funding source that could complement the design concept's incorporation of existing structures with potential for rehabilitation and productive reuse.

National Trust for Historic Preservation Funds
These funds are available only to National Trust members of the Forum or Main Street and support projects with a mission to build sustainable communities, reimagine historic sites, promote diversity and place, and protect historic places on public lands. National Trust Preservation Fund grants are awarded for planning activities and education efforts focused on preservation. Planning activities can include support for obtaining professional expertise in areas such as architecture, archaeology, engineering, preservation planning, land-use planning, and law.

Additional information is available at www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/documents/preservation-funds-guidelines-eligibility.html.

Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation
This fund aims to save historic environments to foster an appreciation of our nation's diverse cultural heritage. Grants from the Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation generally range from $2,500 to $10,000. Public agencies and nonprofit organizations are eligible, and grants can be made for activities and projects such as:

- Obtaining the services of consultants with expertise in areas such as architecture, planning, economics, archeology, fundraising, media relations, education, or graphic design.
- Obtaining professional advice to strengthen management capabilities.
- Designing, producing, and marketing print and video communications materials.
- Sponsoring preservation conferences and workshops.
- Designing and implementing innovative preservation and education programs.

Additional information is available at www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/documents/johanna-favrot-fund.html.

Preserve America
The Preserve America matching-grant program provides planning funding to designated Preserve America Communities to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning. Through these grant projects, our country gains a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Montgomery is not a Preserve America community, but it could apply for designation and become eligible for Preserve America grant funds.

Additional information is available at www.preserveamerica.gov/PAcommunities.html.

National Park Service Save America's Treasures

The federal Save America's Treasures program protects our nation's endangered and irreplaceable cultural heritage. Grants are available for preservation and/or conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and historic structures and sites. Grants are awarded to federal, state, local, and tribal government entities and nonprofit organizations through a competitive matching-grant program administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Additional information is available at www.nps.gov/history/hps/treasures.