

CITY OF BELL
NEW BELL DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN



PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT
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TABLE OF CONTENTS & HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The table below points readers of this Specific Plan to those chapters of the Plan that are most relevant to different subset of users including City staff, property owners, developers, community members, and more.

Key Specific Plan Chapters by User Group					
Chapter	Plan Adopting Authority or Community Member	Property Owner/Developer		Development Review Authority (CD Director or Planning Commission)	City Operating Departments (non-planning)
		Major Site	Other		
1 (Vision and Introduction)	●	●	○	●	●
2 (Land Use)	○	●	●	●	○
3 (Public Realm)	○	●	○	●	●
4 (Infrastructure)	○	○	○	●	●
5 (Implementation)	●	○	○	○	●
● = More Relevant ○ = Less Relevant					

Ch 1: Vision and Introduction.....05
Presents the master plan/vision and urban design framework for the New Bell District Specific Plan Area.

Ch 2: Land Use.....23
Presents regulatory standards for real estate development in the Specific Plan area. The standards regulate both the physical form and use of property.

Ch 3: Public Realm.....41
Contains design guidelines and regulatory standards for public right-of-way and publicly-accessible open spaces in the Specific Plan area.

Ch 4: Infrastructure.....63
Contains an analysis of the infrastructural needs of the area to accommodate the Specific Plan.

Ch 5: Implementation.....75
Highlights major activities that the City and community can undertake to realize the plan vision and identifies procedures and funding sources.

1. VISION AND INTRODUCTION

VISION FOR THE NEW BELL DISTRICT

The New Bell District will be the City's primary gathering place and center for dining, shopping and urban living. It will be emblematic of the new chapter that has begun in Bell's history, reversing decades in which municipal government primarily looked out for itself, leaving the community to stagnate. Instead, the New Bell District will implement the commitment of Bell's new leadership to bring in investment and amenities into the City for the good of its residents, leading to opportunities for advancement, enjoyment and improving quality of life.

Along with the rest of the Southeast Los Angeles region, Bell is a working-class community. For many years, Bell residents who have attained greater success have relocated into other areas of Southern California due to the lack of quality amenities present in the community. Yet in doing so, they often trade away their ties to culture, community and place, and overlook the ways in which Bell residents and businesses are innovating today.

The New Bell District will bring together resources from within and outside the city to offer a variety of dining, shopping and entertainment experiences. From beloved Southern California staples to first-time entrepreneurs, from the traditional Mexican cuisines of the City's majority population to the fusion and global creations of its younger generation, the New Bell District will draw people from across the Southeast Los Angeles region, to experience the unique and authentic vibrancy of a downtown district that blends our community's history and future.

Additionally, the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element calls for the development of 229 new units of housing. The New Bell District will open up significant new housing opportunities along Atlantic Avenue (where housing was previously not permitted), providing a greater variety in housing choices and helping to alleviate the housing crisis. Housing is an important component to the financial feasibility of the vision.

Given the compact and walkable setting of the City, the New Bell District will be a pedestrian-friendly area which encourages exploration on foot for people of all ages, incomes and abilities. Comfortable sidewalks, mid-block crossings, street-facing storefronts, and new, activated open spaces will characterize the physical environment of the New Bell District, which is described in detail on the pages that follow.



Atlantic Avenue - Existing Condition and Future Vision

NEW BELL DISTRICT FRAMEWORK

The New Bell District extends for one mile along Atlantic Avenue from the City's northern to southern border, and for five blocks along Gage Avenue between Flora Avenue and King Avenue. Included within the area are City Hall, the historic James George Bell House and three of the City's four major shopping centers: Bell Palm Plaza, Northgate Market, and CVS/O'Reilly's. Two schools, Bell High School and Nueva Vista Elementary School, are immediately adjacent to the west.

Gage Avenue is characterized by pre-1939 small commercial and mixed-use buildings which are aging but have good, pedestrian-friendly bones. Atlantic Avenue, on the other hand, was developed after the implementation of Euclidean zoning, which separated commercial from residential uses and over time imposed higher automobile parking requirements. Between the 1930s and 1950s, the street was filled with simple single-story commercial buildings with parking behind. After the 1960s, however, portions of the street became replaced with larger, automobile-oriented, multi-tenant shopping centers. All of these types of buildings have struggled somewhat in recent years due to lack of investment. Off Gage and Atlantic, streets are mostly characterized with small-scale multifamily and single-family residential uses in fair to excellent condition.

The City of Bell owns several major parcels with development potential, which will need to be the catalysts in revitalizing the area. Successful development on city-owned property will constitute the 'spark' used to kindle action on the part of private property owners.



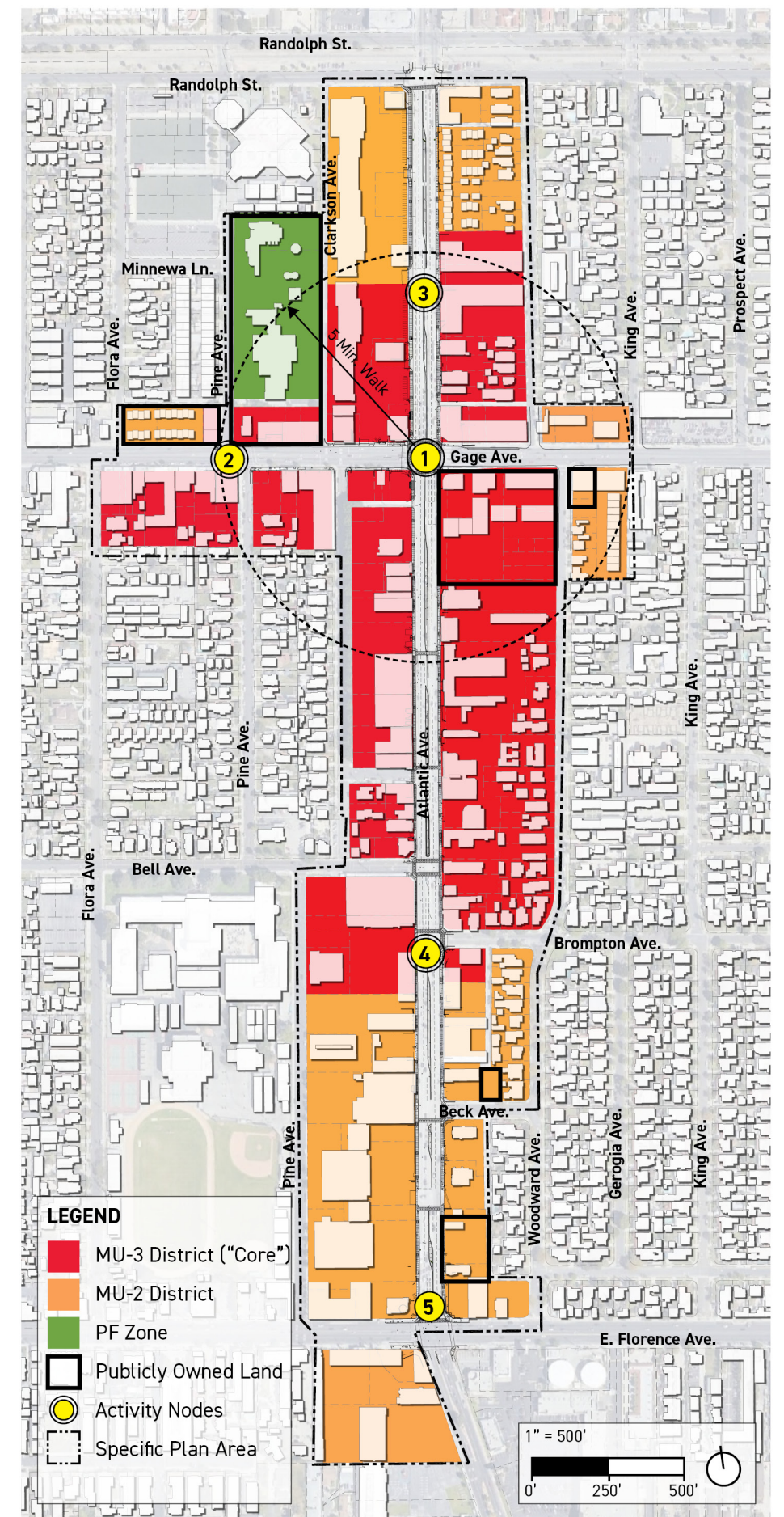
Gage Avenue Block (Example of pre-1939 development)

One of the keys to building a walkable district is concentration of pedestrian-friendly attractions and commercial uses. Thus, the primary focus area for dining, entertainment, pedestrian-friendly retail, open space, and public investment will be concentrated on Atlantic and Gage Avenues within a roughly five-minute walk of their intersection, and slightly more to the south where pedestrian-friendly uses already exist. This "Core" area, which is shown in red and corresponds to the MU-3 district, centers on the most important corner in the City and already contains several existing good quality blocks with minimal vehicular interruptions. Key nodes of activity, retail and open space will exist at the corner of Atlantic and Gage and the entries into the MU-3 district from the north, west and south.

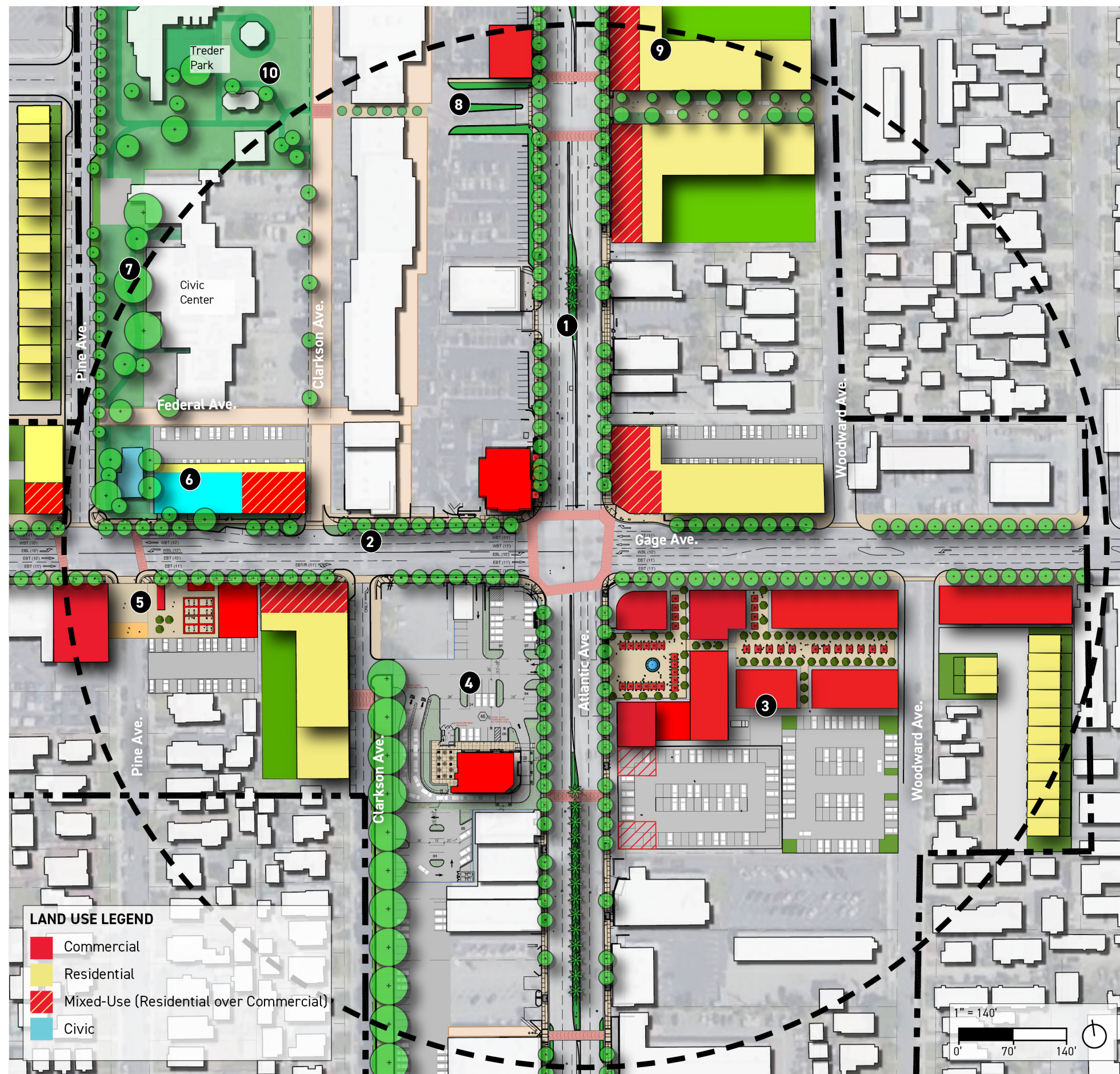
The other areas of the New Bell District, shown in orange, correspond to the MU-2 district and will be a more flexible combination of uses including shopping centers, mixed-use developments, multi-family residential buildings and convenience retail. Streetscape improvements and design standards will be implemented to improve pedestrian-friendliness, such as Jack's Car Wash, which is an opportunity for drive-through or other convenience retail, and electric vehicle charging. The used car dealership at the southeast corner of Atlantic and Randolph presents a possible multifamily residential opportunity; it may be augmented with the property of the WSS shoe store, which has been recently relocated.



Atlantic Ave Used Car Dealership + Former WSS Opportunity Site



New Bell District Urban Design Framework



Core Urban Design Framework

NEW BELL DISTRICT CORE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The five-minute walk radius (approximately 1,200') from the corner of Atlantic and Gage Avenues constitutes the “Main and Main” of Bell. Short- and medium-term development potentials are clustered around the primary node, at Atlantic and Gage Avenues, and two smaller nodes at Gage and Pine Avenues, and Atlantic Avenue/Bell Palm Plaza Driveway extension.

The key components of the envisioned build-out of the district are:

1. New streetscape treatment and trees on Atlantic Avenue (page 46, Ch 3)
2. New streetscape treatment and trees on Gage Avenue (page 48, Ch 3)
3. Redevelopment of Shoe City site into a central public plaza, retail/restaurant center, and a district parking garage (page 14-15)
4. New destination drive-through restaurant at Western Auto site (page 16-17)
5. Linkage of brewery and food hall through a public plaza/temporary closure of Pine Avenue at Gage (page 18-19)
6. Repositioning publicly-owned Bell House and library into more activated civic/commercial/residential sites (page 18-19)
7. Connecting the Civic Center to Downtown through a linear park along Pine Avenue (page 50, Ch 3)
8. Establishing a new/stronger connection between the Civic Center and Treder Park, Atlantic/Palm Plaza driveway node, and neighborhoods through Bell Palm Plaza (page 56, Ch 3)
9. North Atlantic secondary node with development and plaza/shared street extending Bell Palm Plaza Driveway to the east
10. Treder Park and Bell Community Center serve as open space and recreational amenities to the district

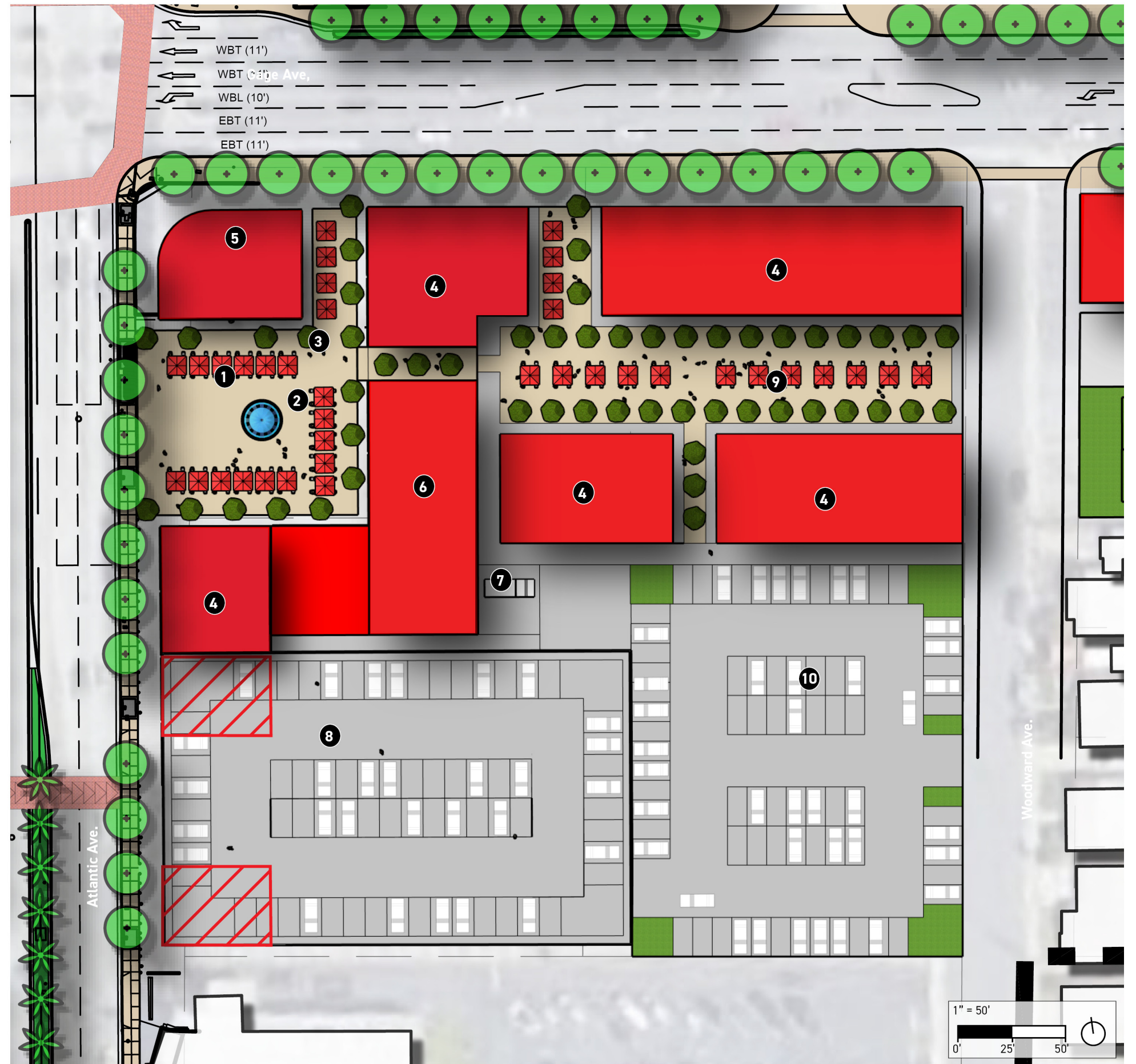
SHOE CITY SITE CONCEPT

The southeast corner of Atlantic and Gage Avenues is the largest and most important single development site in the central city of Bell. Formerly home to a "Shoe City" shoe store and Sopp Chevrolet dealership, the site was acquired by the City of Bell in 2009 for redevelopment purposes, and it has remained vacant since, except for COVID testing and other intermittent uses. The concept for this site was the subject of two Council study sessions and numerous conversations.

The vision for the site consists of a single-story retail development occupying the main corner of the site, around a central public plaza, and district parking facilities.

In total, the illustrated development concept contains 42,446 square feet of retail and 196 public parking spaces. Alternative concepts, such as a 100% commercial concept, are also possible.

1. Bell Central Plaza. 10,000-15,000 square foot rectangular plaza oriented to Atlantic Avenue with visibility to Gage Avenue, and providing visibility to commercial uses. Mix of spaces, including shaded spaces with comfortable seating, and an open hardscaped area to be programmed regularly with festivals and events to draw in and engage the local community.
2. Fountain, quiosco, or other central feature to serve as meeting point and visual interest for the community
3. Outdoor dining/spill-out space from restaurants, cafes and similar uses
4. Retail and Entertainment Uses. Variety of modestly-sized commercial spaces occupied by restaurants, cafes and specialty shops. The areas denoted by red hashes along Atlantic Avenue are ground floor commercial spaces along the parking frontage.
5. Iconic building (roughly 5,000 square feet) with corner architectural feature and high transparency to corner and central plaza; possible food hall or anchor restaurant
6. Two story feature of site overlooking Central Plaza, variety of commercial spaces including restaruants and retail



Shoe City Site Concept - Plan View

SHOE CITY SITE CONCEPT



Shoe City Site Concept - Rendering

7. Loading area for retail uses.

8. District parking garage with storefront retail uses in the first floor along the Atlantic Avenue frontage. The garage might begin in the first iteration as a surface lot and be converted into a vertical structure as needs dictate. If this happens, the parking lot should be sized to ensure future feasibility of the garage.

9. Open hardscaped plaza area, mix of program including shaded spaces to support public and commercial use

10. Surface parking serving commercial uses and the district; potential future development site

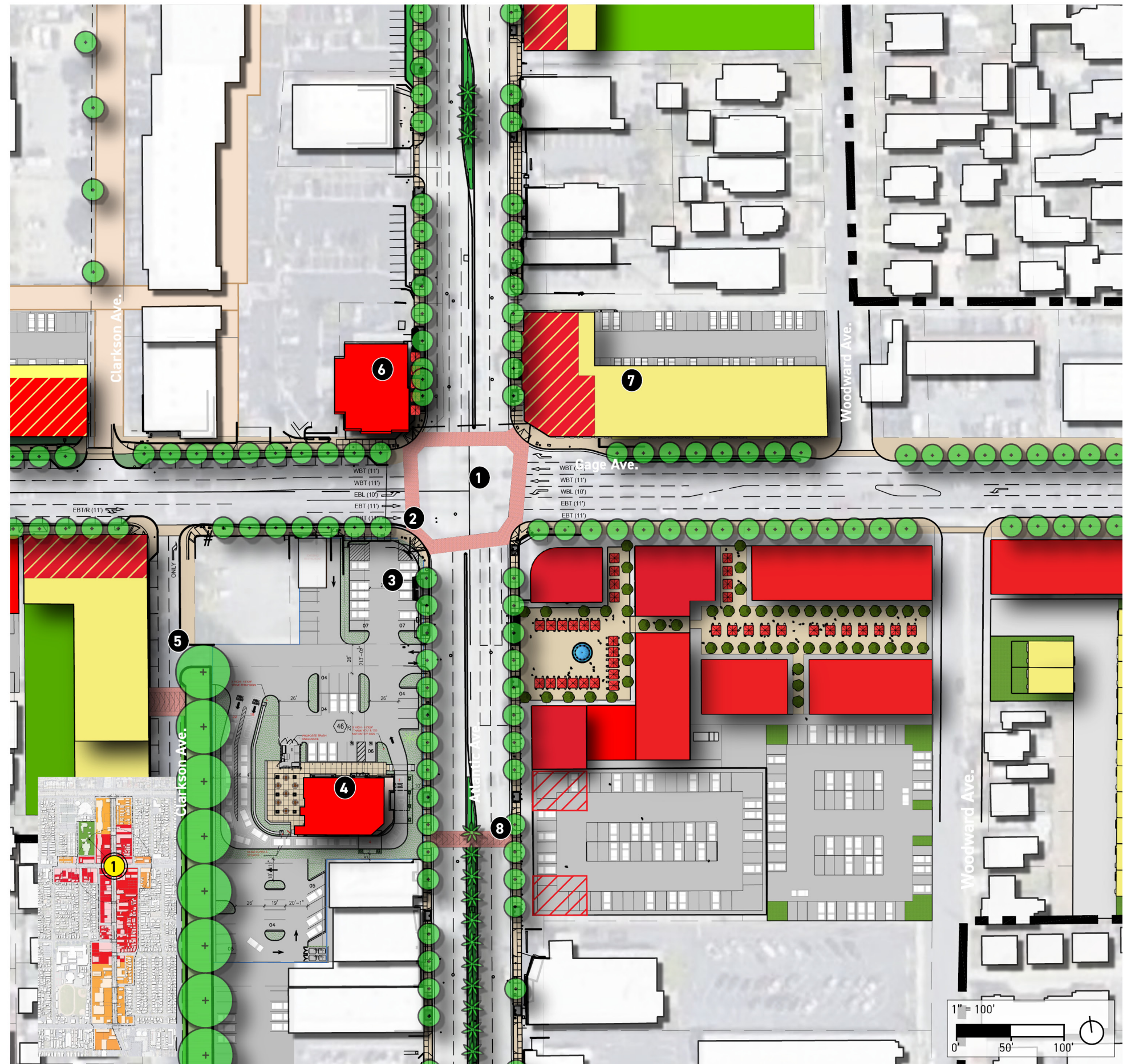
OTHER CORNERS OF ATLANTIC & GAGE

The corner of Atlantic and Gage Avenues is intended to be the most important intersection (the “Main and Main”) of the City of Bell. As such, all four corners of the intersection should communicate that the New Bell District is a vibrant, culturally interesting and walkable attraction for people from throughout the area.

While the Shoe City site (SE corner, see page 14-15) is the largest site at the intersection, with the greatest potential for commercial uses and public space, the three other corners also need to contribute to this “feel.” The Shoe City site is not large enough to be a major draw in its own right; it is not a regional shopping center or mall. The design of the site is open, seeking to draw people from and send them to neighboring properties through the sidewalks on Atlantic and Gage Avenues.

On the northeast and northwest and southwest corners of the intersection, the City envisions development that creates a sense of place along the street, with development up to the corner, and is supportive of the major anchor and open space at the Shoe City site. The northeast corner should take the form of a public-private partnership, eliminating the pocket Biancini Park, which is currently not well used and quite exposed to the busy intersection. The open space lost on this site will be made up by a much more functional plaza at Shoe City.

On the southwest corner of the intersection, the City has entered into an agreement with In-N-Out Burger to develop a new drive-through and dine-in restaurant. This new outlet of the beloved Southern California chain will undoubtedly bring new people into the New Bell District and serve as a hub of activity. Vehicular queueing concerns should be mitigated to the best of the City's ability, accommodating queues on-site as much as possible, minimizing impacts on major streets and residential frontages, and where necessary accommodating parking needs across the street at the Shoe City site public parking facility. It is hoped that the presence of this parking facility can eventually clear room onsite for the redevelopment of the corner of the Atlantic/Gage intersection itself, into a supportive commercial use providing a worthy counterpart to the envisioned development on the other three corners of the intersection.

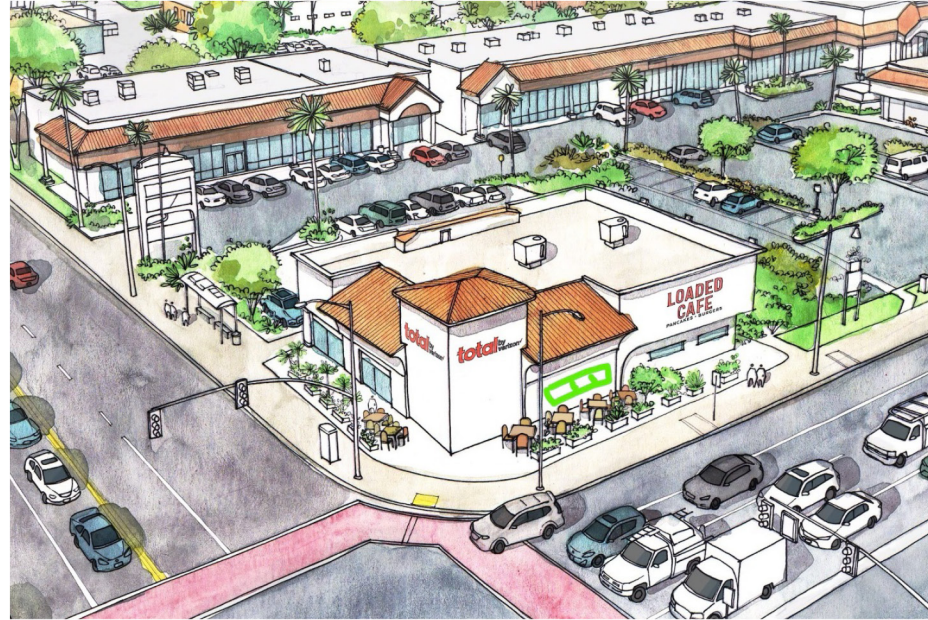


① Atlantic and Gage Primary Activity Node

OTHER CORNERS OF ATLANTIC & GAGE



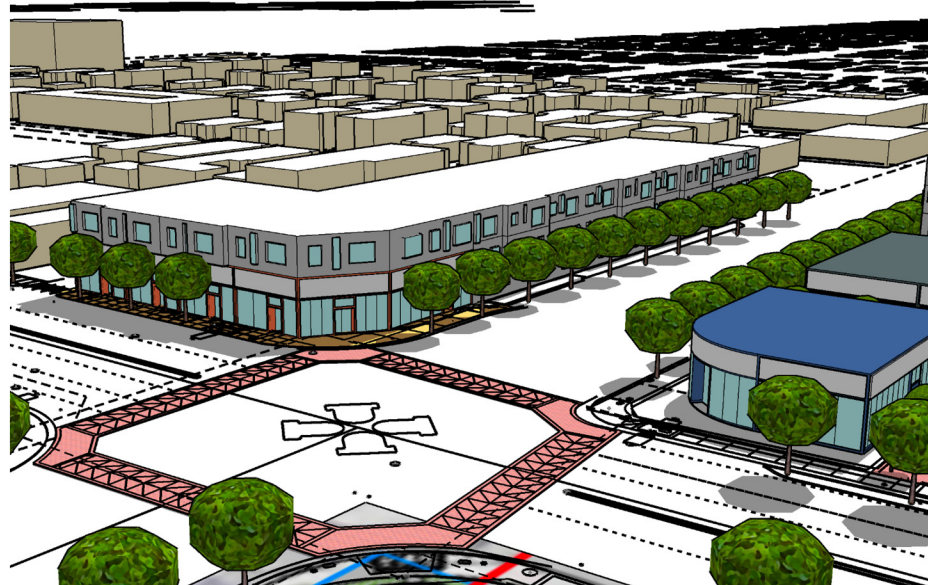
1. High-Energy Street Corner. Source: Old Pasadena Mgmt District.



3. Proposed Northwest Corner Remodel to Engage Street Corner



5. Raised crossing on Clarkson Avenue separating residential from drive-through entry



7. Northeast Corner Potential Mixed-Use Building

1. Intersection treatment (see page 48, Ch 3) with bulb-out and potential long-term scramble crossing

2. Gateway plaza/monument opportunity created by eliminating eastbound right turn lane

3. Storefront retail development opportunity. Parking could be accommodated in structure on the Shoe City site, or at property on the southeast corner of Gage and Clarkson, freeing up this key corner for a street-facing retail development linking the four corners of Atlantic and Gage, and providing a linkage westward to Gage and Pine secondary node.

4. Destination drive-through restaurant with outdoor dining

5. Clarkson Avenue as access point for drive-through restaurant; explore short, raised crossing south of the drive-through access point to separate residential neighborhood from high-traffic commercial uses. South of access point, incorporate lush-canopy ficus trees into linear park (see page 50, Ch 3).

6. Repurposing and remodel of The Medicine Cabinet pharmacy into restaurant and more active retail uses. Encourage direct pedestrian and visual connections to street and prime corner.

7. Replacement of pocket park and older retail strip with modestly-scaled mixed-use building orienting commercial uses to corner and to Atlantic Avenue. Gage Avenue sidewalk to be widened, eliminating substandard parallel parking spaces. Residential parking to be accessed from alley.

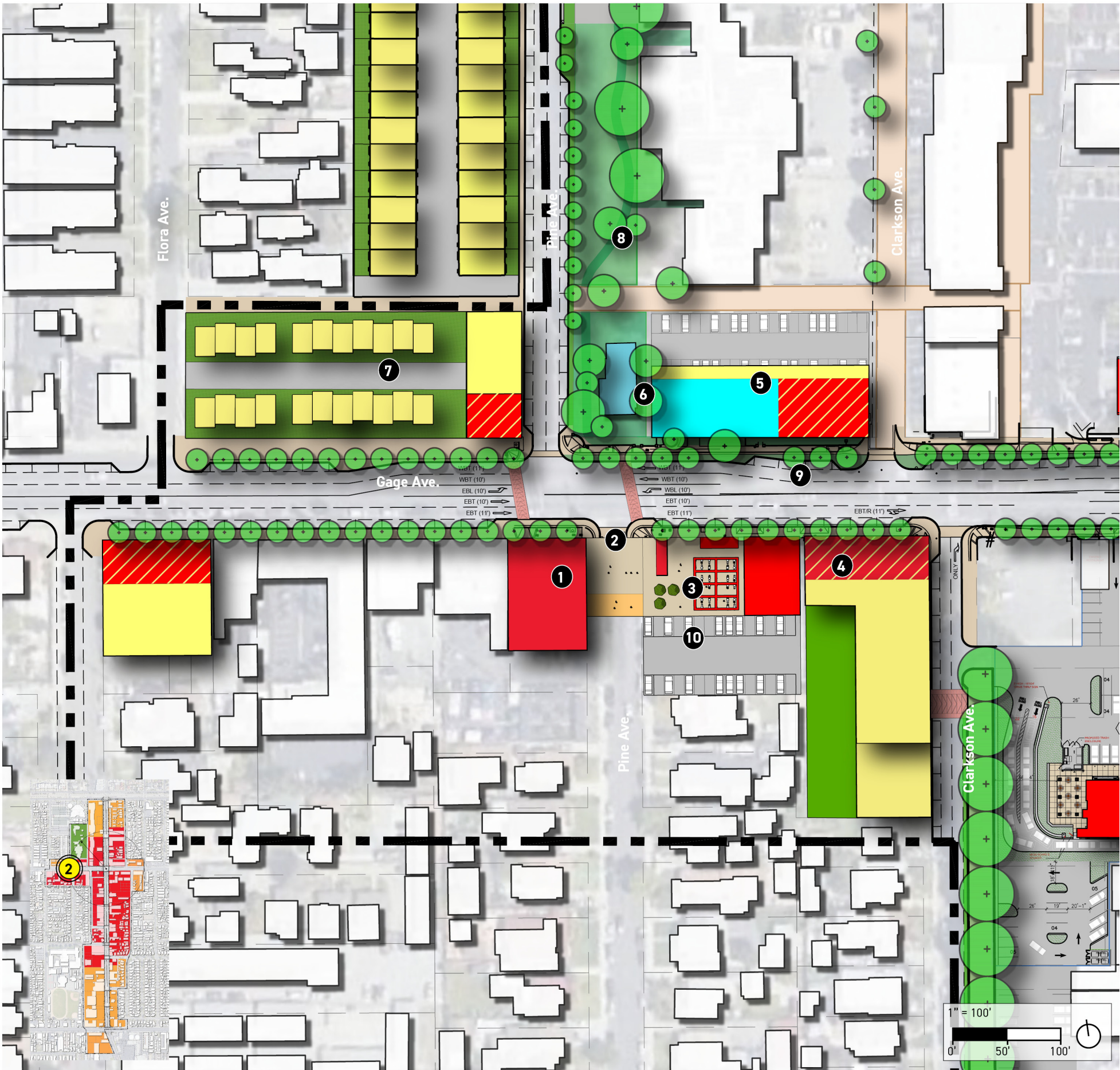
8. Mid-block crossing linking district parking resource to drive-through restaurant and retail uses on west side of Atlantic Avenue

GAGE/PINE SECONDARY NODE

Two blocks west of the corner of Atlantic and Gage Avenues, the intersection of Gage and Pine Avenues will form an early hub of activity in the revitalization of the New Bell District. This intersection contains some of the highest-quality existing buildings in the district, including the historic James George Bell House, two brick commercial buildings with intact, high-transparency storefronts, and a two-story 1920's mixed-use building. The intersection is also the entrance to the Bell Civic Center, which contains City Hall, the Police Department, Library, County Fire Department, the Community Center/Treder Park, which hosts Bell's major events, city meetings, and recreational programs, and the large soccer field at Nueva Vista Elementary School. Several properties are publicly-owned and or are currently the subject of economic development efforts in which the City is involved.

Similar to Atlantic and Gage, the four corners of the intersection of Gage and Pine will form the hub of activity in this area, with a brewery, food hall, historic cafe, and new mixed-use development. Facilitating crossing the street is important to link the corners together; crossing distances across Gage Avenue will be shortened, while crossing across Pine Avenue (southern leg) will be made nearly seamless by turning that leg into a tabled crossing/plaza.

The proposed plan envisions a significant reworking of open space in the area. Futsal Park, an underutilized indoor-soccer court, currently occupies the northwest corner of the intersection, along with the Bell Technology Center. This park is intended to be replaced with vertical development, but the currently underutilized City Hall and Bell House yard will be redesigned into a linear park with green path elements, and the tabled crossing/plaza will create an urban focal point for this portion of the district.



② Gage/Pine Secondary Activity Node

GAGE/PINE SECONDARY NODE



8. Linear Park connecting City Hall and Treder Park



6. James George Bell House



2. Proposed Food Hall and Tabled Crossing to Brewery

1. New brewery to replace former BorderX Brewing in good-quality brick building

2. Tabled pedestrian crossing/plaza connecting brewery with food hall. The pedestrian crossing will be at sidewalk level through the length of the potential plaza, requiring vehicles passing through the crossing to slow down and come up to sidewalk level. Additionally, removable or retractable bollards should provide the ability to close the street completely to cars on a temporary basis, for events or at high activity times (e.g. weekend evenings), or on a permanent basis to discourage commercial traffic from parking on the residential portion of Pine Avenue.

3. Food hall in historic brick building and current parking lot at the southeast corner of Gage and Pine Avenues. Area in current parking lot to be designed as an open, permeable environment for pedestrians; current plan is for vendors to be located in repurposed shipping containers.

4. Replacement of Chase Bank dominated with drive-through with pedestrian-friendly mixed-use structure, potentially with first-floor bank. Important linkage toward primary node at Gage and Atlantic Avenues.

5. Upgrading of County library and adjacent Civic Center parking into mixed-use building with ground-floor library and commercial use, and upper floor affordable housing. A senior population might make frequent use of the library, while a student or young professional population might provide the impetus to transform the library into a public co-working environment. Potential relocation of Bell Technology Center. Shared parking behind (Civic Center/library for daytime, residential at night).

6. Adaptive reuse of historic James George Bell House into offices for city department or nonprofit organization, with possible opportunity to incorporate cafe or other porch-activating use.

7. Townhouse development spanning Pine Avenue and Gage Avenue, punctuated with small loft building at corner providing a ground-floor commercial space to engage the intersection.

8. Linear park connecting City Hall and Treder Park to secondary node

9. Gage Avenue streetscape redesign into linear park with new on-street parking on the north side of the street (page 48, Ch 3)

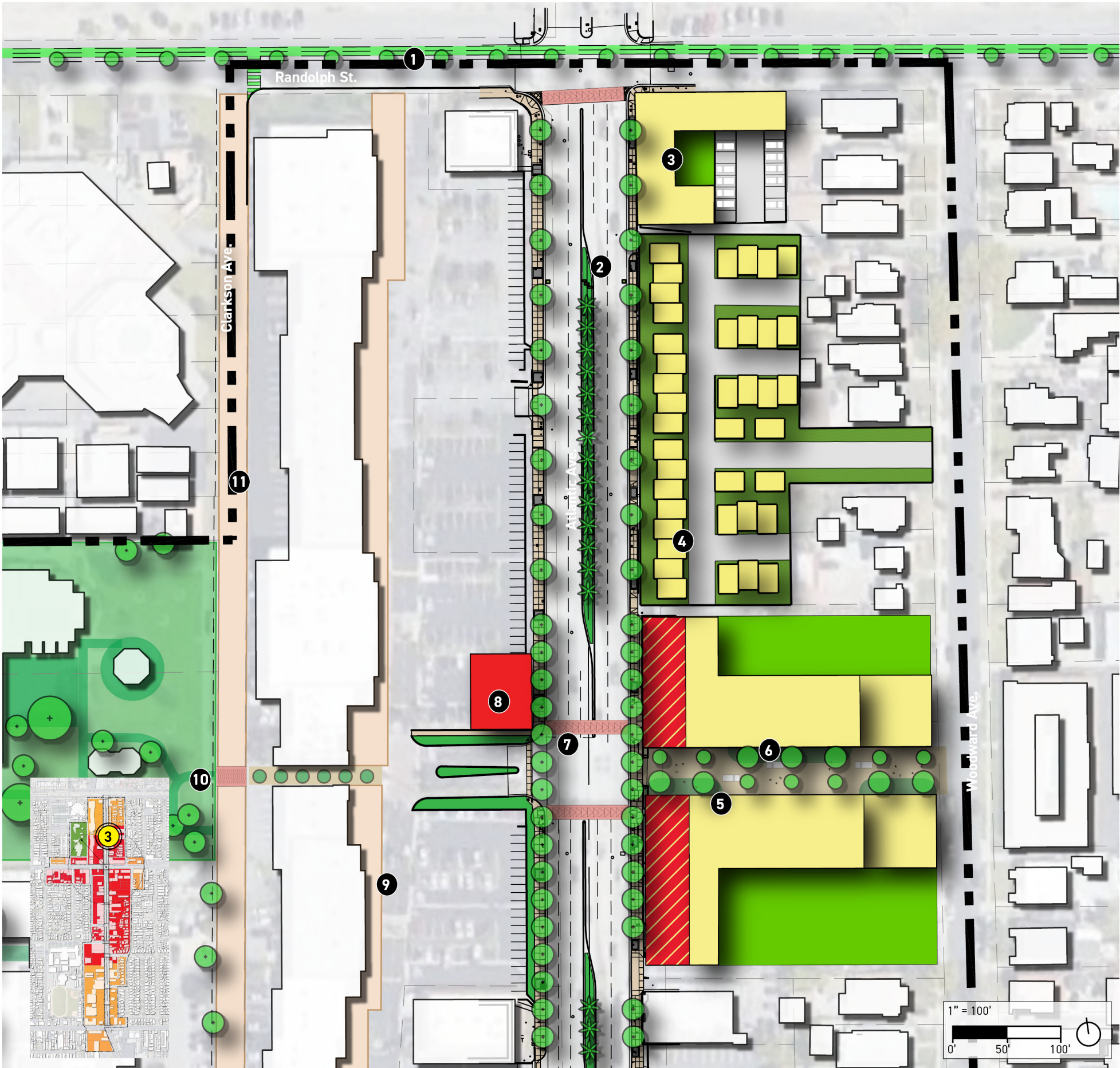
10. Electric vehicle charging lot serving residents and visitors

NORTH CITY GATEWAY AND PALM PLAZA SECONDARY NODE

The northern portion of Atlantic Avenue presents some of the greatest opportunities for development in the Specific Plan area. The east side of the street is populated by a used car dealership, a former WSS shoe store and an oversized, surface-parked Bank of America. Each of these properties presents a significant opportunity to convert into residential development: either affordable or market-rate apartments, or for-sale townhomes.

The corner of Bell Palm Plaza Driveway and Atlantic Avenue is envisioned as the northern gateway into the Core area. Like the Gage and Pine Avenue node, this gateway is defined by a commercial node, a plaza, a signalized intersection providing access to parking facilities, and a transition in the streetscape design. The plaza takes the form of a shared street with possesses both space for people and space for cars; however, the space for cars can be closed off during special events to create a larger open plaza space.

Ultimately, this shared street/plaza forms part of a larger east-west connection in this part of the New Bell District connecting residents in existing and new neighborhoods to an enhanced Treder Park, the Bell Community Center, and the Nueva Vista Elementary School fields, which together form the most significant recreational facility in the City of Bell. Bicycle connections to this area (and to the elementary school itself) are strengthened through signage, drainage and safety interventions along Clarkson Avenue.



③ North City Gateway and Palm Plaza Secondary Activity Node

NORTH CITY GATEWAY AND PALM PLAZA SECONDARY NODE



3. Gateway residential building



5. Shared street plaza. Source: Christian Philips Photography



8. Corner commercial building. Source: LoopNet



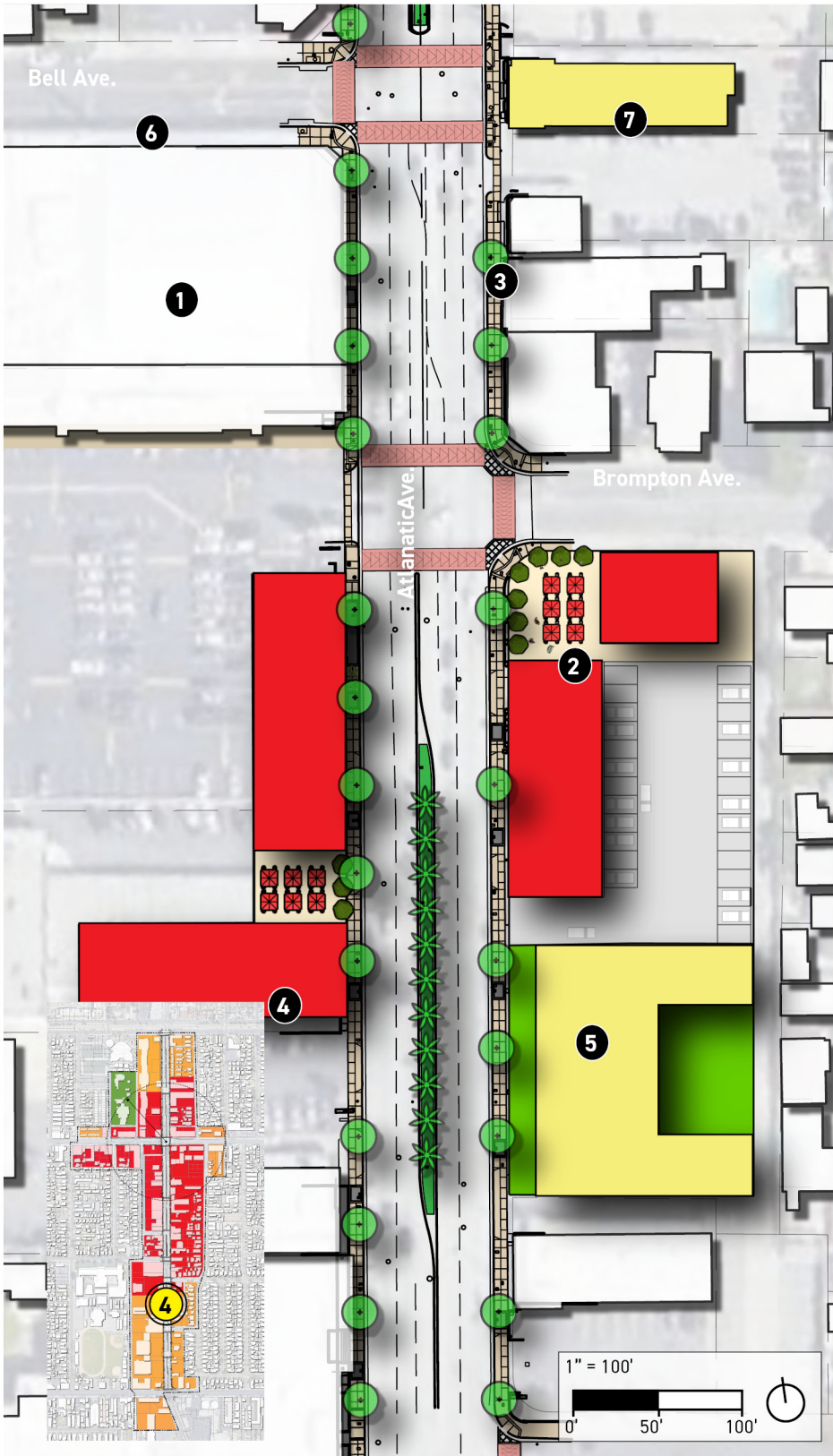
10. Passthrough between Bell Palm Plaza and Treder Park, to be enhanced

1. Rail to River bicycle facility connecting to LA River Bicycle Path and Metro A and Southeast Gateway Lines
2. Existing City gateway entry sign leading into palm-lined median
3. Well-designed residential apartment building marking entry into City
4. Residential townhome development with stoops to Atlantic Avenue and vehicular access to Woodward Avenue
5. Shared street plaza forming northern gateway into the Main Street Core (MU-3) area. Used as driveway to provide access to new, adjacent buildings and Woodward Avenue; can also be closed to cars and opened to pedestrians for special events.
6. Mixed-use buildings flanking and activating shared street plaza; commercial on Atlantic Avenue; residential common spaces and/or live/work units possible along plaza; heights and massing oriented away from abutting lower-density residences on Woodward Avenue.
7. Main Street Core gateway intersection with new crosswalk on north side connecting to existing pedestrian walkway through Bell Palm Plaza parking lot
8. New Bell Palm Plaza retail space complementing gateway intersection
9. "Plaza" area at Bell Palm Plaza extended to form a straight line, continuing plaza environment north- and southward along face of businesses. Made possible through reorientation of parking lot to form north-south aisles, which are more efficient.
10. Enhanced passthrough connection between front of Bell Palm Plaza and Treder Park, connecting to other recreational facilities, Civic Center and Pine Avenue Linear Park
11. Clarkson Avenue low-speed street/bicycle way connecting to Rail to River bicycle facility (Randolph Avenue) with new crossing. Motorized vehicles limited to employee parking and service.

ATLANTIC/BROMPTON SECONDARY NODE

Like the Gage/Pine and Bell Palm Plaza/Atlantic nodes, the area around Northgate Market at Brompton Avenue and Atlantic Avenue serves as a secondary node in the New Bell District and a gateway into the “Main Street Core” area (see page 13). Northgate Market is a popular center that significantly benefits the City and its residents. However, its large parking lot and blank wall along Atlantic Avenue reduce the pedestrian-friendliness of the street. Given the strong interest in commercial development in this area, the plan directs this interest towards enhancing the New Bell District's character.

- 1. Northgate Gonzalez Market. Recent mural at corner of Atlantic and Bell Avenues has helped the building respond better to its context; opening of “false windows” along Atlantic Avenue facade would also help.
- 2. New commercial development with corner plaza forming southern gateway to Core area. (Current development also has corner plaza.)
- 3. Increase in frequency of street trees north of gateway
- 4. New pedestrian-oriented strip commercial development complementing Northgate Market with convenience food, beauty or other small retail uses typical of neighborhood centers anchored with market. Development benefits from easy parking access but is oriented toward Atlantic Avenue and includes open space passthrough for optimum pedestrian access to all units.
- 5. Residential or mixed-use development opportunity
- 6. Connection to Bell High School; important to bring large high school population into the New Bell District for patronage. Connection should be strengthened with street trees.
- 7. Potential to convert budget motel to affordable housing



④ Atlantic/Brompton Secondary Activity Node



1. False windows on a public frontage. Source: Google Maps



2. Corner plaza. Source: PN Hoffman

SOUTHERN GATEWAY

The intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Florence Avenue has the highest traffic volumes in the City of Bell. As such, it is a sought-after location for commercial uses, including convenience retail. The City has been able to attract interest from major national chains, such as the Starbucks on the northwest corner, which has proven very successful since its opening in the early 2000s. More commercial uses are planned for this corner, but new standards should ensure that these uses strengthen the City's vision of a southern gateway that reflects positively on the City's image and possesses a level of pedestrian-friendliness in support of the larger development plan for the New Bell District.

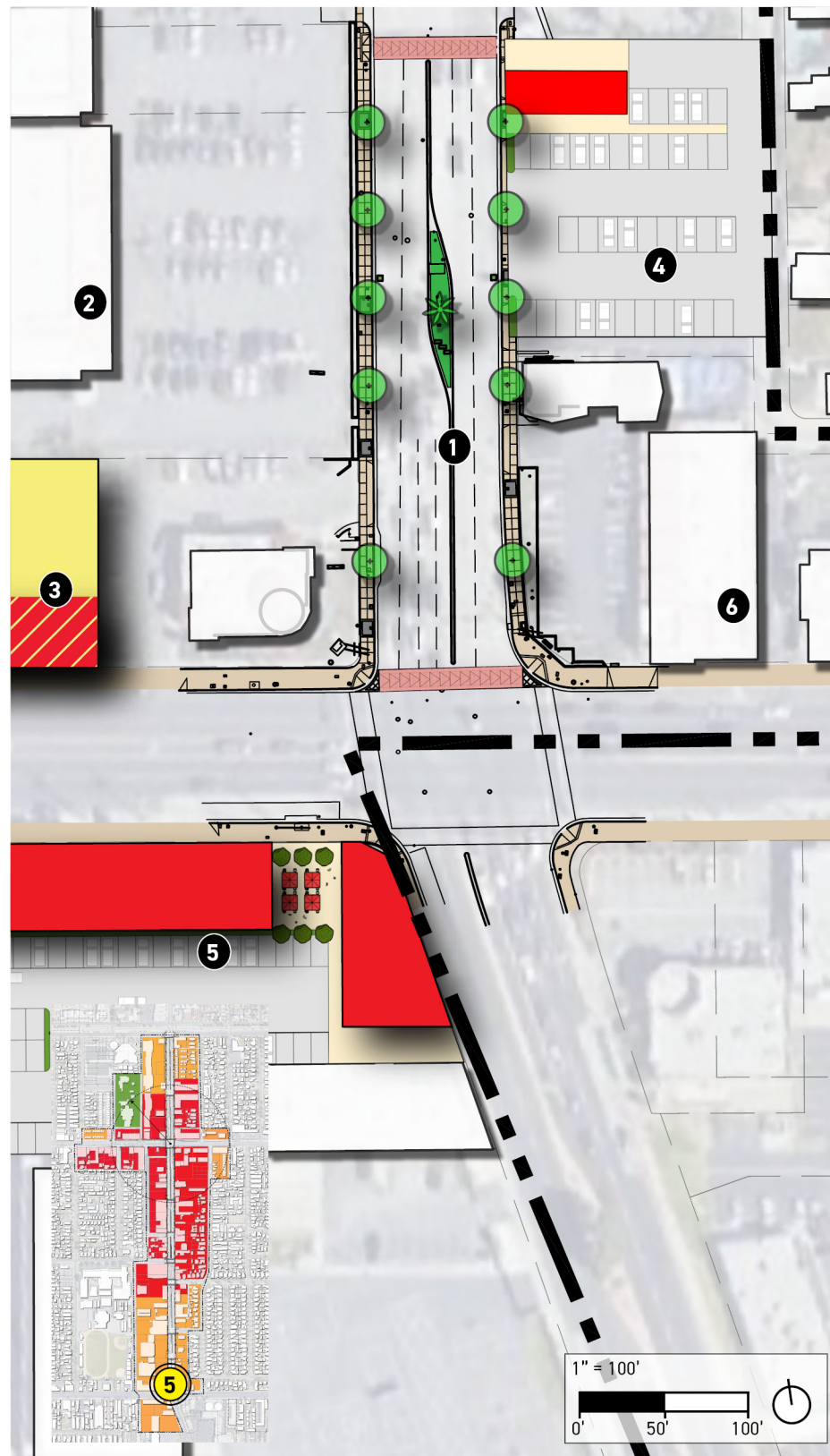
1. City gateway sign and colored crosswalk at intersection indicating transition from Cudahy to Bell

2. CVS/O'Reilly's shopping center. Despite existence of credit tenants, the center is a large longer-term opportunity for renovation or redevelopment, given large size of existing buildings for tenants, lack of maintenance, and relatively low FAR. Opportunity to replace very large pole signs on Atlantic and Florence Avenues with structures that engage the street.

3. Residential or mixed-use development opportunity along Florence Avenue transitioning to Florence Avenue MU-1 zone corridor.

4. New commercial use with strip commercial spaces, spill-out open space and one drive-through pad with lane aligned to edge of property

5. Recently constructed sidewalk improvements along Florence Avenue connect Atlantic Avenue to other development potentials



⑤ South City Gateway



1. City gateway sign



2. CVS/O'Reilly's shopping center

PLANNING PROCESS

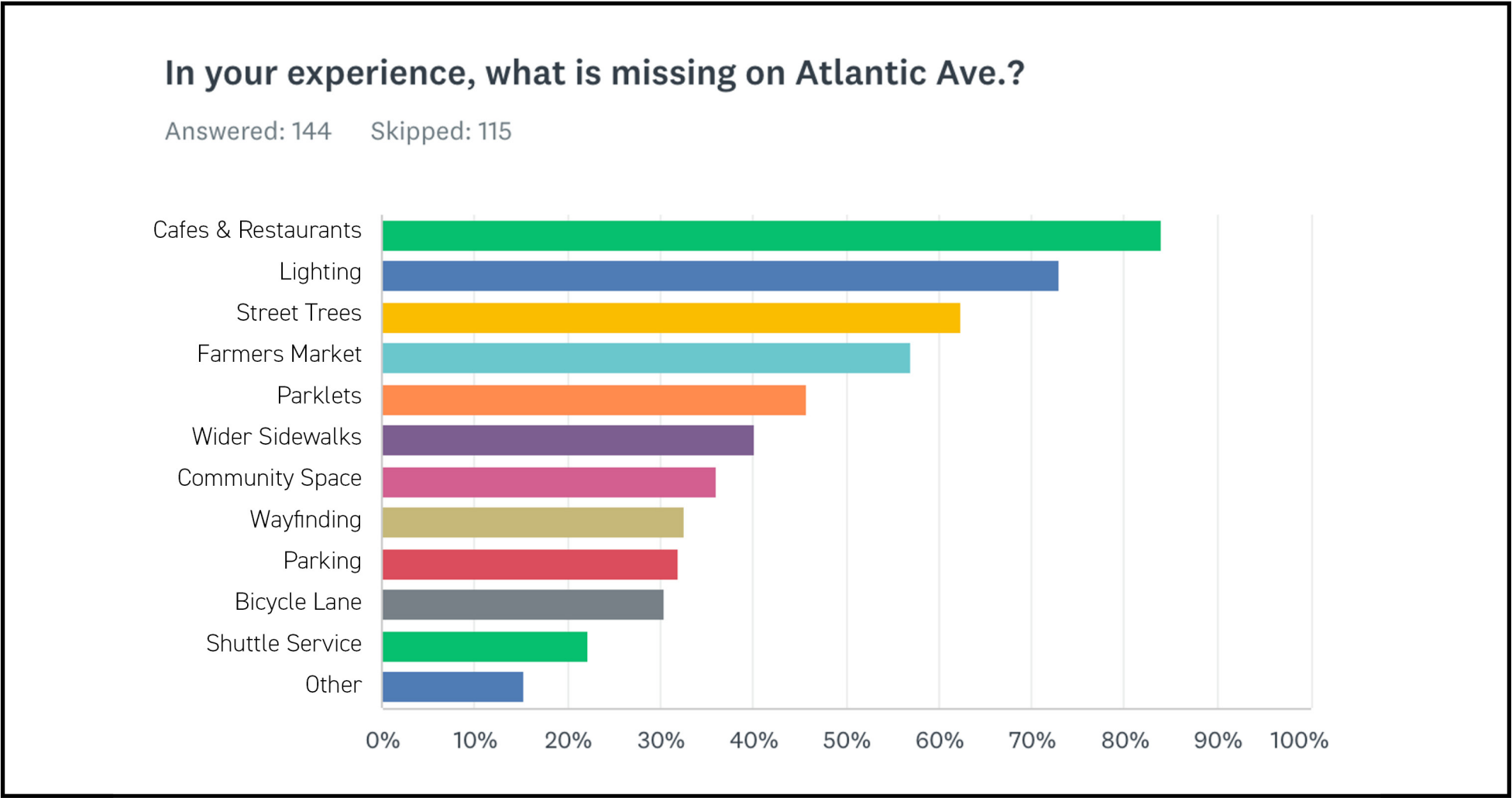
The approach for the New Bell District Specific Plan integrated the primary considerations of People, Economics, and Place-making. Throughout technical studies, planning recommendations and the community discussion and decision-making process. Alternatives were explored and concepts iterated upon until all three considerations could be satisfied. This approach allowed for the building of consensus in Bell and the creation of an implementable specific plan.

People

A key component of developing this Specific Plan has been solicitation of input from the public. Engagement efforts have included an in-person and online surveys, two City Council Study Sessions, and individual Councilmember interviews.

The in-person and online survey, which closed for comments in July 2022, which received 259 individual responses from community members, including Bell residents, business owners, and property owners of sites located within the specific plan area. Survey responses were collected through the following methods: Online surveys, canvassing of businesses along Atlantic Avenue (such as businesses in Bell Palm Plaza), engagement with leadership of local schools (during attendance at a monthly school administration meeting), in-person engagement at City events, grocery stores (such as Northgate Market), Border X Brewery, and other community hubs/events. In-person engagement was conducted in both English and Spanish. The major finding from the survey responses was the community's desire for a pedestrian-friendly, walkable commercial corridor with plentiful dining and shopping opportunities, like Uptown Whittier or the Pasadena Playhouse District.

Two City Council Study Sessions (held in September 2022 and September 2023) were held to present the Council with alternatives for the New Bell District Specific Plan and gain clear feedback on the Council's preferred direction, which is represented in the plan. Additionally, the planning team conducted personal interviews with every councilmember, addressing specific questions and soliciting feedback on an individual level. The councilmembers voiced diverse opinions, but agreed on three key points. First, all councilmembers agreed on the need to redevelop the New Bell District, most importantly the city-owned former Shoe City site on the southeast corner of the Atlantic and Gage Avenues intersection. Second, the councilmembers desire the development of new eateries and commercial uses in the New Bell District.



Community Survey Results



Community Engagement Event in Wilcox Park



The Arroyo Group's People, Economics, Place Process

PLANNING PROCESS

Last, the councilmembers desire new, diverse dining options in the New Bell District that appeal to the City's younger residents. To back up these desires, the Council recently strengthened its Economic Development Division, formalizing its commitment to the commercial revitalization of the New Bell District.

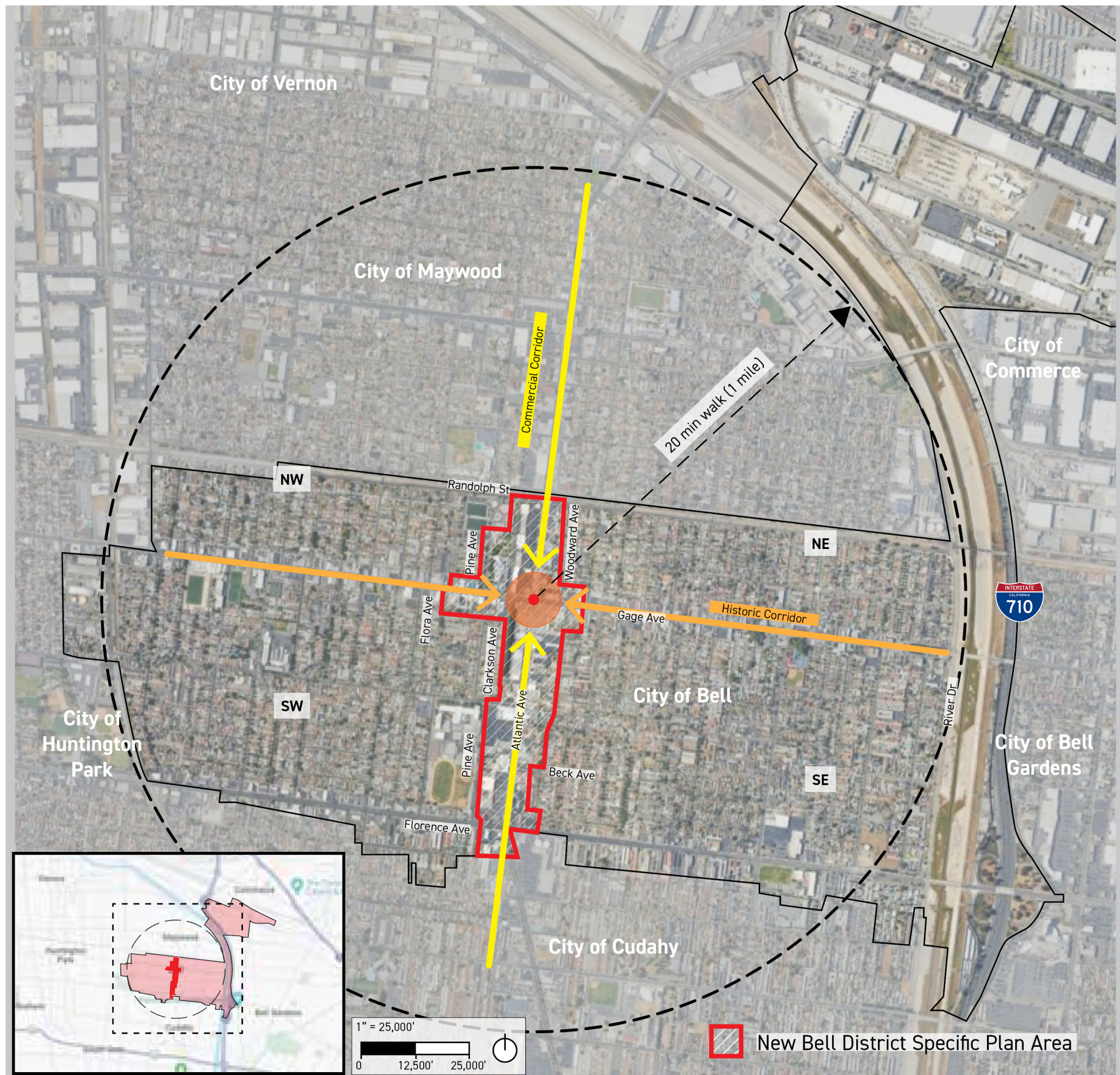
Economics

The economic analysis undertaken during the baseline studies step of the process found that the low-income nature of the community poses challenges for business attraction and redevelopment. Larger-format national retailers are unlikely to be interested in the area with the exception of drive-thru restaurants. Residential uses are needed for the creation of a feasible redevelopment in the New Bell District. Essentially, 100% residential developments or mixed use developments are feasible redevelopment strategies in the District. The analysis also found that leveraging the publicly-owned land in the New Bell District for catalytic developments would be crucial for the successful redevelopment of the District, including primarily the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection of Atlantic and Gage Avenues. Additionally, the analysis emphasized the importance of bringing new dining and commercial uses that cater to the City of Bell's younger and second generation residents into the District.

Place-making

The largest consideration of Place-making opportunities is the New Bell District's location at the center of the City's two most important corridors, Atlantic and Gage Avenues, which ensure good accessibility but also limit the opportunities for recapturing vehicular space for pedestrian use. Nevertheless, the City's small, compact size and high density nature support the development of a pedestrian friendly commercial district within walking distance of the majority of the City's residents. This potential is strengthened by the building streetwall that exists among significant portions of Atlantic and Gage Avenues. Both streets possess buildings from the 1920's-1940's which give parts of the area a "main street" feel. Some of these buildings are made of brick and in excellent condition, setting the tone for future development of the area.

The People, Economics, and Place-making considerations informed the direction of the New Bell District Specific Plan. As a result of these considerations, The New Bell District has been envisioned for redevelopment into a pedestrian friendly, walkable center for dining, shopping, and urban living that caters to all generations of Bell's residents. The entire Specific Plan is to be considered by applicants submitting any proposals for new construction or rehabilitation within the Specific Plan area. City Staff will be consulting all sections of the Plan in making recommendations for project approvals.



Place Factors: Citywide Context Map

ADMINISTRATION

Relationship to Zoning Code

Adoption of the Specific Plan applies zoning designations for the Specific Plan area, which incorporate all of the standards for land use and development set forth in Chapters 3 and 4 of this document. Where land use regulations and/or development standards of Chapter 17 (Zoning) of the Bell Municipal Code are inconsistent with the Specific Plan, the standards and regulations of the Specific Plan shall prevail and supercede the applicable provisions of the Municipal Code.

The Specific Plan does not convey any rights not otherwise granted under the provisions and procedures contained in the Municipal Code and other applicable ordinances, except as specifically provided herein. Any issue not specifically covered in the Plan shall be subject to Chapter 17 of the Bell Municipal Code.

Interpretation

The Community Development Director or their designee shall interpret the use categories listed in this Plan. Where this Plan imposes a greater restriction upon the use of buildings or land or requires larger open spaces than are imposed or required by the Municipal Code or other ordinances, rules, regulations or by easements, covenants or agreements, the provisions of this Plan shall prevail. Whenever there is any question regarding the interpretation of the provisions of this Plan or their application to any specific case or situation, the Director of Community Development shall interpret the intent of this Plan.

General Plan Consistency

The New Bell District Specific Plan is consistent with the Bell General Plan. It implements numerous policies of the General Plan, including those listed below.

Land Use and Sustainability Element Policy 26: The City of Bell shall continue to promote the support and revitalization of the commercial districts in the City. The City shall continue to enhance the “Central City Area,” promote the creation of smaller commercial neighborhood centers at key intersections, and discourage further strip commercial development. The City shall also strive to minimize or eliminate conflicts while at the same time marketing the City as an optimal location for new business opportunities as well as business retention.

Land Use and Sustainability Element Policy 27: The City of Bell shall strengthen commercial and industrial uses by working in conjunction with existing and prospective merchants and investors, encouraging mixed-use projects that contain a variety of compatible uses, and working

with the Chamber of Commerce.

Land Use and Sustainability Element Policy 28: The City of Bell shall encourage mixed-use projects in key locations to provide additional market support and patronage of local businesses. This concept will be encouraged in the future infill development of underutilized and blighted commercially zoned parcels. The City shall encourage the assembling of adjoining small or odd shaped parcels in order to create more viable developments. Finally, the City shall market the new Mixed-Use land use designation to the development community.

Mobility and Circulation Element Policy 7: The City of Bell shall require new developments to include design features to mitigate adverse impacts upon the local circulation system. All new development projects must promote and facilitate walkable streets, bus transit, bicycling, parking, efficient goods movement, and other components of the transportation system. Transit related improvements shall be identified as part of the conditions of approval through the design and environmental review processes.

Mobility and Circulation Element Policy 13: The City of Bell shall explore new and innovative ways to enhance the utility of surface parking lots and parking structures. For example, new parking structures may be designed so that the ground levels could be occupied by retail or commercial establishments.

Mobility and Circulation Element Policy 17: The City of Bell shall require new commercial and industrial developments to provide bicycle racks and/or lockers. These improvements must be identified as conditions of approval set forth by the Planning Commission.

Mobility and Circulation Element Policy 18: The City of Bell shall consider the closure or abandonment of certain streets or rights-of-way to promote the separation of commercial and residential traffic and to remove existing hazardous circulation patterns. The Planning and Public Works Departments shall conduct a citywide study to identify hazardous circulation patterns.

Housing Element Goal 2 Policy 3: The City of Bell shall assist developers in the identification of land suitable for new housing developments for all incomes. The City shall continue to provide developers with information concerning potential development sites and identify publicly owned land suitable for affordable and mixed-income housing.

Housing Element Goal 5 Policy 3: The City of Bell shall encourage development of underutilized housing sites that could accommodate future affordable housing needs as well as other types of potential infill development.

Housing Element Goal 5 Policy 5: The City of Bell shall explore opportunities for new residential development within those areas of the City occupied by vacant, obsolete commercial, and industrial uses.

Housing Element Goal 5 Policy 8: The City of Bell shall ensure that new higher-density residential projects are compatible in design with adjacent residential areas. This will be achieved through the continued review of development projects by the Planning Commission, through the Building and Planning Division's plan reviews, and through Plan Checks.

Housing Element Goal 5 Policy 9: The City of Bell shall explore new land use designations, such as mixed-use, for key areas of the City that could accommodate such development. New commercial development located along Gage Avenue, Atlantic Boulevard, and Florence Avenue shall be encouraged to explore mixed-use development that includes residential uses within the development.

ANTICIPATED GROWTH & ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

The Specific Plan is adopted with a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). This MND allows for streamlined environmental review for projects consistent with the Specific Plan. The MND, along with all fiscal, transportation and infrastructure analyses prepared with this Specific Plan, used the development change (buildout) assumptions at left to evaluate potential effects of the plan. These assumptions do not assume that every property in the Specific Plan area is developed to its maximum intensity, but rather makes an estimation of likely development to occur between 2024 and 2040. Development which does not exceed the intensity of uses assumed for buildout may tier off the MND for its environmental clearance.

Land Use Category	Existing Conditions	Proposed Plan Development Changes	Future Condition under the Proposed Plan
Residential (units)	373	584	957
Residential (sqft)	317,207	556,110	873,317
Commercial (sqft) ³	786,546	-24,333	762,213
Civic (sqft)	36,580	-2,451	34,129
Hotel (rooms)	20	-20	0
Hotel (sqft)	8,000	-8,000	0
Total Square Footages	1,148,726	521,326	1,670,616

Table 1: New Bell District Proposed Plan Development Summary

1 Sites depicted in Chapter 1 (Vision).
3 Includes light industrial, automotive, and vacant commercial uses

2. LAND USE

STRUCTURE OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT



Retail, Entertainment and Activated Streetscapes



Outdoor Dining and Landscaping



Mixed-Use



Multi-Family Residential

Chapter 2 contains the land use and zoning for the New Bell District. It includes a zoning map of the district, describes the zoning districts and purpose of each, as well as the general use restrictions in each zoning district, describes development standards for the zoning districts that are unique to the New Bell District, and includes design guidelines for the district.

Where this Chapter details differing or additional standards for the Specific Plan area, the standards within this Chapter prevail over the standards within the Municipal Code.

The basis for the land use and zoning in this chapter includes:

- Applicable recommendations of the prior zoning code
- Existing conditions analyses, including field project area character analyses
- Market demand analysis
- The community's vision for the New Bell District

These land use and zoning regulations support the community's vision for the New Bell District as the City's primary gathering place and center for dining, shopping and urban living, which authentically blends the community's past, present and future. The regulations allow mixed-use development (residential and commercial) for the first time to increase the feasibility of new development.

DISTRICTS AND PERMITTED USES

MU-2 and MU-3 Districts

The New Bell District contains two mixed-use districts, the MU-3 and MU-2 districts. The MU-3 district is a main street district that creates a walkable commercial environment with the potential for residential uses above and/or behind the commercial frontage. The MU-2 district is a flexible district that permits 100% residential, commercial, and mixed-use development.

The district regulations, including use regulations, development standards, and design standards, for the MU-3 and MU-2 districts are detailed within this Chapter. Where different standards are given in this Chapter, this Chapter prevails over the Municipal Code within the Specific Plan area.

Permitted Uses

The MU-3 district is the city’s main street district and is established to provide a vibrant and walkable area that supports a mix of businesses, provides a range of housing types, and serves as the attractive and inviting center for the City of Bell. This district radiates out from the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Gage Avenue. The MU-3 district allows for commercial and mixed-use development. The district promotes the development of higher residential density mixed-use projects. The MU-3 district does not allow 100% residential uses, as the district requires commercial frontages on the ground floor of mixed-use developments.

The MU-2 district provides opportunities for commercial, mixed-use, and higher density 100% residential development. This district is mostly located along Atlantic Avenue and sparingly along Gage Avenue.

Public Facilities (PF) Zoning District and Permitted Uses

The PF zone is intended to provide regulations for the use and development of publicly owned land in order to implement the City's adopted General Plan. Uses permitted in the PF zone include public facility uses, public parking facility uses, fire stations, police stations, government buildings, government structures, government offices, government service facilities, government maintenance yards, open space, parks, recreation facilities, theaters and auditoriums, walking trails, children's play areas, picnic facilities, and athletic fields. Development standards for developments in the PF zone shall be as specified through a conditional use permit process, which is the approval process for all developments in this zone.

Housing Element Site Overlay Regulations

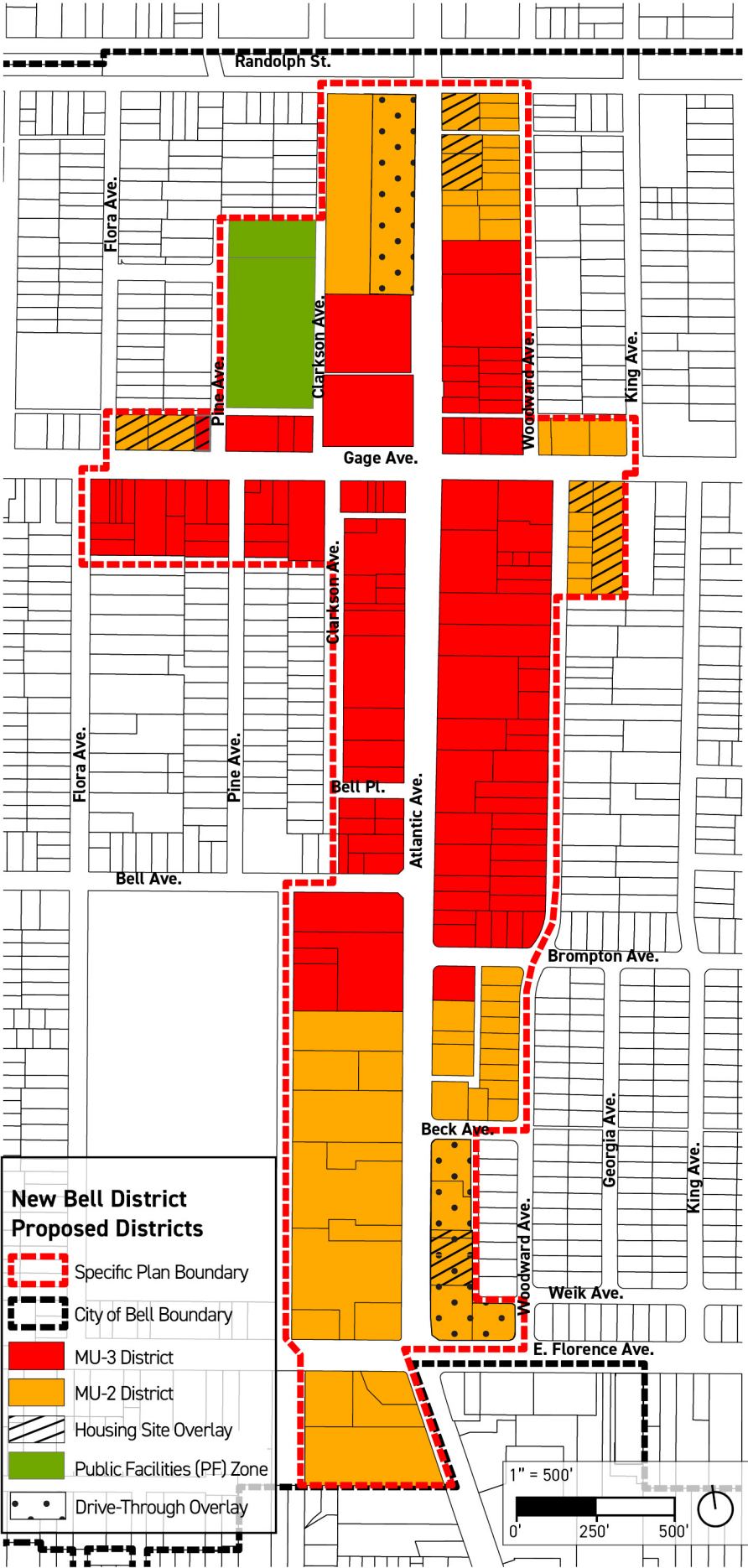
Housing Site Overlay sites shall allow 100% percent residential use and residential uses shall occupy at least 50% of the total floor area of a mixed-use project. Housing Element Overlay sites shall permit the by right development of housing projects that have designated at least 20% of their units as affordable to low income households.

Drive Through Overlay.

Drive-through retail uses are permitted in the drive-through overlay only, subject to a Conditional Use Permit and adherence to the Drive-Through Standards (page 40). No more than one drive-through use is permitted per parcel or shopping center.

Flexibility for Nonconforming Uses.

Any building or structure which has been rendered nonconforming by the development and design standards of this Plan may be upgraded in-situ, without need to comply with all applicable Specific Plan development and design standards, provided that such work does not expand the gross building area by more than 10% and does not increase the degree of the nonconformity. This provision may be used one time.



Districts Map

PERMITTED USES LIST

Permitted Uses List		
<i>"P" = Permitted Use; "C" = Conditional Use Permit required, "L" = Use Not Allowed, "A" = Accessory, "T" = Temporary Use</i>		
Use Classification	MU-2	MU-3
Primarily Residential Uses		
Multi-family Housing (3 units or greater)	P	P
Live/Work	P	P
Caretaker Residential	-	-
Residential Care Facilities	P	P
Transitional Housing	P	P
Homeless Shelters/Shelters for the Unhoused	-	-
Small Family Day Care Home	-	-
Large Family Day Care Home	-	-
Single-Room Occupancy	C	C
Supportive Housing	P	P
<i>Accessory Residential Uses (See subclassifications below)</i>		
Guest House	A	A
Home Occupations	A	A
Accessory Dwelling Unit	A	A
Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit	A	A
Primarily Office Uses		
Professional Office	P	P
Office, Walk-In Clientele	P	P
Medical and/or Dental Clinic	P	P
Office Manufacturing	C	C
Media Production Studios	P	C
Primarily Retail Sales		
Retail Sales	P	P
Production Retail	C	C
Restaurant	P	P
Restaurant with Alcohol Use	C	C
Market	P	P
Art Galleries	P	P
Bars and Nightclubs	C	C
Theaters	P	P

Use Classification	MU-2	MU-3
Personal Services	P	P
Big Box Sales	C	C
Drive-Through Retail	- ¹	-
Temporary Retail	P	P
Hotel	P	P
Spaces for Large Gatherings	C	C
Automobile Sales	-	-
Adult or Sexually-Oriented Business	-	-
Primarily Production/Industrial Uses		
Light Industrial	-	-
Warehousing	-	-
Research and Development Labs	-	-
General Manufacturing	-	-
Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Facilities	-	-
Trade and Vocational Schools	P	P
Data Center	-	-
Specialty Agriculture Growing Facility	-	-
Energy and Utility Operations	C	C
Recycling/Waste Management and Remediation	-	-
Heavy Industrial	-	-
Civic/Institutional		
Public Facilities	P	P
Education	-	-
Religious and Assembly	P	P
Accessory Uses		
Properties under these districts may be used for accessory uses, provided that such uses are incidental to, and do not substantially alter the character of any permitted principal use, including but not limited to:		
Accessory uses, buildings or structures	A	A

¹ Drive-through uses are permitted in the MU-2 District within the Drive-Through Overlay.

Use Classification	MU-2	MU-3
Building materials, storage of, only when used in construction of a building or structure and then only during the construction and for thirty (30) days thereafter, including the contractor's temporary office, provided that any such accessory use shall be located on the lot where the building project is taking place or on a lot abutting the construction site	A	A
Limited live entertainment in conjunction with other permitted businesses;	A	A
Transportation, Communications, and Utility Uses		
Airports and heliports	-	-
Limitations on Permitted Uses		
<p>Every use in the MU-2 and MU-3 districts shall comply with the following:</p> <p>A. All outdoor storage permitted under this section shall be maintained in an area of a lot, approved by the director, completely enclosed by a view-obscuring fence or wall and paved with macadam or asphaltic pavement in accordance with adopted city standards therefore. Surfacing of such area shall be designated, constructed, and maintained so as to dispose of all surface water.</p> <p>B. All outdoor storage permitted under this section shall be limited to commodities sold at retail on the premises.</p> <p>C. Any commercial use which uses or produces hazardous materials, petroleum products, greases or oils shall be required to install and maintain an interceptor or clarifier and shall dispose of such hazardous materials, petroleum products, greases and oils only in accordance with applicable local, state and federal law. All preexisting commercial uses not in compliance with this permitted uses list shall be required to comply with this list within ninety (90) days of the effective date of the this Specific Plan.</p>		

REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESSES

Review and Approval Processes

See the Review Authority Table on this page for the final review authority of each type of application. See the Bell Municipal Code for types of applications not defined within this Specific Plan.

Minor Exceptions to Development Standards

Minor deviations from certain development standards shall be termed Minor Exceptions. The Minor Exceptions allows for limited relief from development standards when doing so results in improved design or functionality of a proposed structure or addition. The Director of Community Development, or their designee, may approve a Minor Exception from the standards described in this Specific Plan, provided that it can be determined that it is exempt from CEQA and makes the following findings:

1. The Minor Exception will enhance project design or accommodate site constraints that prevent full compliance with Specific Plan requirements;
2. The Minor Exception, including any imposed conditions, will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements within the Specific Plan Area; and
3. The Minor Exception will be consistent with the objectives of the Specific Plan.

Said Minor Exceptions shall consist of the following:

- Building setback deviation – up to 10 percent.
- Height of fence or wall deviation on – up to 10 percent.
- Projections into required setbacks – up to 10 percent.
- Building height increase – up to 10 percent.
- A decrease of not more than 5 percent of the total open space as provided
- Reduction on in off -street parking requirements – up to 10 percent.

Any request for a Minor Exception that is of significant enough nature such that it constitutes a project pursuant to CEQA (Public Resources Code Section §21065) and does not qualify for a Categorical or Statutory Exemption shall be required to apply as a variance and shall not be eligible for a Minor Exception pursuant to this Chapter.

Type of Application	Community Development Director Ministerial Approval ¹	Planning Commission Discretionary Approval ²	City Council Approval (After Planning Commission Recommendation)
Conditional Use Permit		x	
Transportation Demand Management Plan	x		
Amendments to Approved Sign Program	x		
Minor Exceptions	x		
Specific Plan Amendments			x
Substantial Conformance Change	x		
Sign Plan	x		
Special Event Permits	x		
Temporary Use Permits	x		
Variance		x	
Interpretations	x		
Minor Site Plan Review ³	x		
Site Plan Review ⁴		x	

Review Authority Table

- 1

No public hearing is required.
- 2

All decisions of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council.
- 3

The community development director shall have the authority to approve applications for minor commercial/industrial construction as follows:

a.

Projects meeting criteria established in BMC 17.92.040(B)

b.

Additions to buildings with less than 1,000 square feet of existing gross floor area that result in an increase of not more than 50%.

c.

Additions to buildings with 1,000 to 10,000 square feet of existing gross floor area that results in an increase of not more than 25%.

d.

Additions to buildings with more than 10,000 square feet of existing gross floor area that result in an increase of not more than 15%.
- 4

Projects meeting criteria established in 17.92.040(C)(1)

LOT STANDARDS

The MU-3 district and MU-2 district regulations for lot and density standards are detailed in the Lot and Density Standards table on this page.

Lot Standards		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
Maximum Density (units per acre)	60 du/ac	60 du/ac
Minimum Lot Size (square feet)	5,000 sf	5,000 sf
Minimum Lot Width (feet)	50 feet	50 feet
Minimum Lot Depth (feet)	70 feet	70 feet
Maximum Floor Area (FAR)	2.5	2.5

Lot Standards

HEIGHT STANDARDS

Building Height Standards

This section details the MU-3 and MU-2 building height regulations for developments within the Specific Plan area. The building height standards within this chapter prevail within the Specific Plan area.

For applicable concessions, see the City's density bonus standards and procedures on page 43 of this Chapter.

Step-back from Atlantic Avenue

For lots fronting on Atlantic Avenue in the MU-3 district, the height along the frontage of new developments should match the height along the frontage of the adjoining structure or structures. If there are two adjoining structures with different heights along the frontage, the new development should match one of the heights along the frontage. If there are no adjoining buildings next to the new development, the height along the frontage of the new development should match the average height along the frontage of the buildings on the block. In no case shall the maximum height along the frontage exceed 25 feet. Behind the established height along the frontage, the building may rise to the applicable zone height limit with a stepback of 15 feet from the property line.

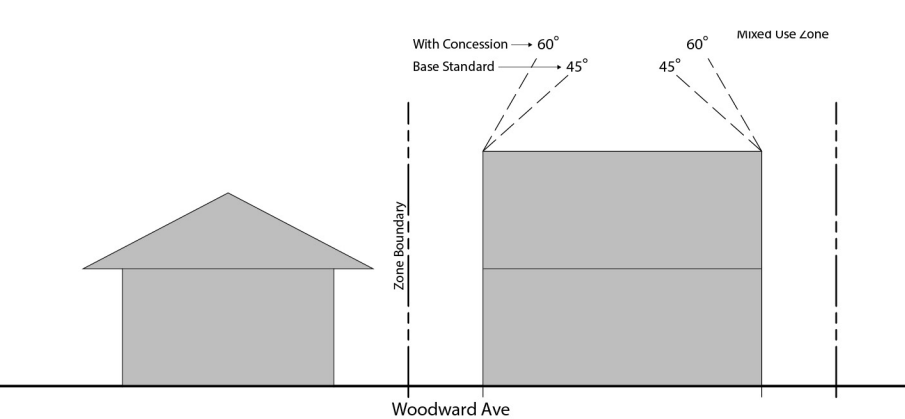
Woodward Avenue Transitional Height Side Stepback Standards

For new developments abutting Woodward Ave that share a side lot line with a lot occupied by a single-family residence, there shall be a 45° side stepback above the second story. With a density bonus concession, there shall instead be a 60° side stepback above the second story.

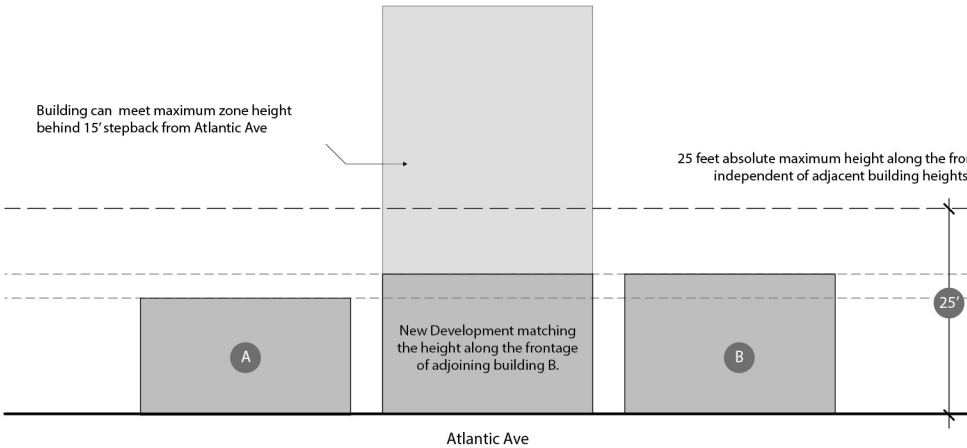
Maximum Building Height Regulations		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
Maximum Height, Primary Structure	55 feet or 4 stories, whichever is less	55 feet or 4 stories, whichever is less ¹
Maximum Height, Accessory Structure (except for ADUs)	15 feet or 1 story, whichever is less	
Transitional Height for lots fronting on Woodward Avenue (see diagram below)	45 degree side stepback above second story when abutting a single family residence lot	

Building Height Regulations

¹ 65 feet or 5 stories, whichever is less, along west side of Atlantic Avenue between alley south of Gage Avenue and Bell Place, see page 34.



Woodward Avenue Transitional Height Side Stepback Regulations. (front elevation view)



Maximum Height of Atlantic Avenue Frontage. (front elevation view)

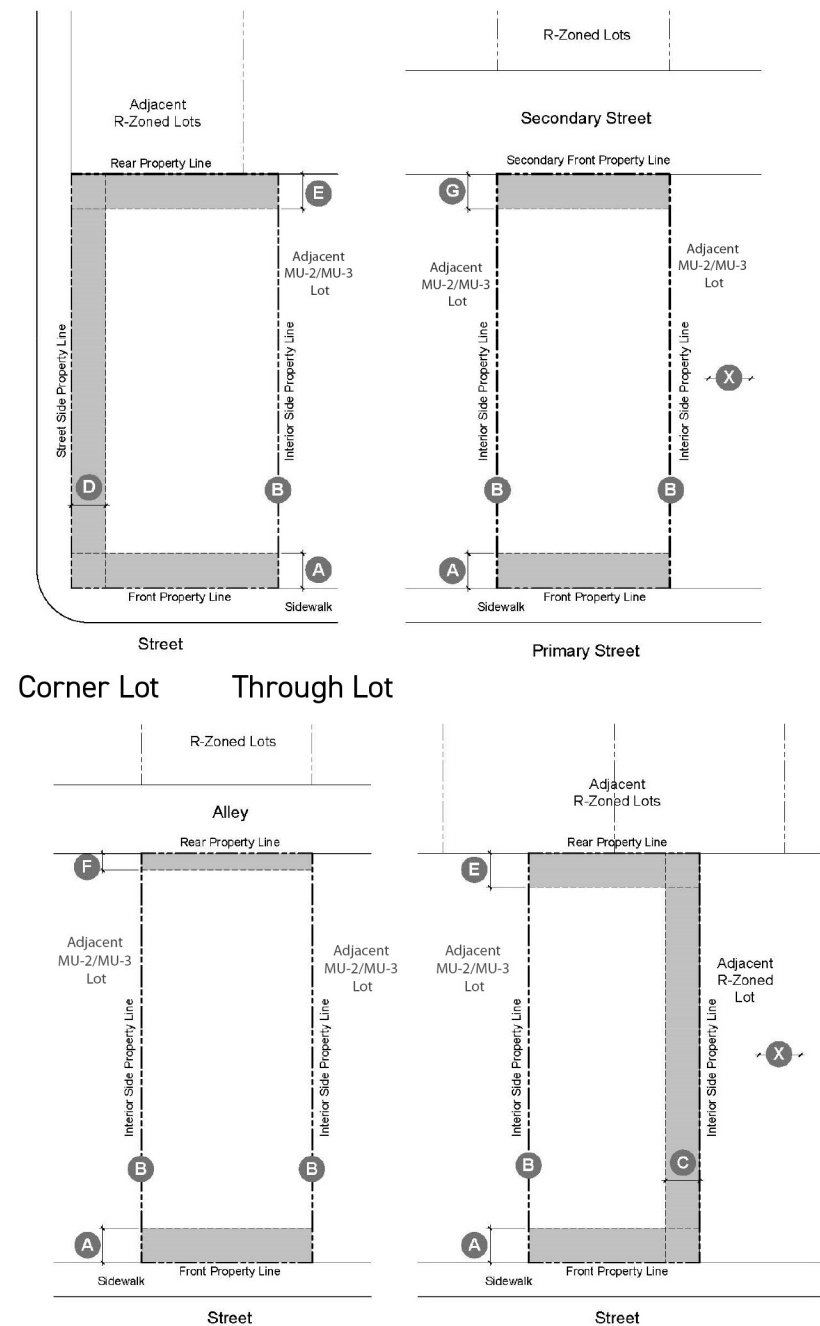
BUILDING SETBACK STANDARDS

This section details the MU-3 and MU-2 building setback standards for developments within the Specific Plan area. The building setback standards within this chapter prevail within the Specific Plan area.

Minimum Building Setbacks		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
A. Front Setback ^{1 2}	0 feet ³	0 feet ⁴
A. Front Setback (fronting on Woodward Avenue)	10 feet	10 feet
A. Front Setback (fronting on Gage Avenue Linear Park, north side of Gage Avenue between Pine Avenue and Atlantic Avenue)	N/A	10 feet
B. Side Setback (When not abutting an R-zoned lot)	0 feet	0 feet
C. Side Setback (When abutting any R-zoned lot) on the side adjoining residentially zoned lot	10 feet	10 feet
D. Side Setback (At street side for corner lots and reversed corner lots)	0 feet	0 feet ⁵
Side Setback (lots abutting Woodward Avenue)	5 feet ³	5 feet ⁶
E. Rear Setback (When abutting any R-zoned lot)	10 feet	10 feet
E. Rear Setback (When not abutting an R-zoned lot)	0 feet	0 feet
F. Rear Setback (When separated from any R-zoned lot by a public alley)	5 feet	5 feet
G. Rear Setback (When separated from any R-zoned lot by a street, or along Woodward Avenue)	10 feet	10 feet
G. Rear Setback ⁷ (Along Clarkson Avenue, between alley south of Gage Avenue and Bell Place)	N/A	65 feet

Minimum Building Setback Regulations

- 1 Some properties may require dedication. See Chapter 4.
- 2 For through lots, the commission shall determine which line of the lot shall be the front line.
- 3 For properties fronting on Florence the following regulations apply: 1) New redevelopment between 2 properties with zero setbacks and where buildings touch, the new redevelopment has to match the zero setback and will have 100% frontage build-out. 2) If the property does not fall under the criteria of Regulation 1, the redevelopment must provide a minimum distance of 10' between any building face and the roadside curb.
- 4 For properties fronting on Gage or Florence the following regulations apply: 1) New redevelopment between 2 properties with zero setbacks and where buildings touch, the new redevelopment has to match the zero setback and will have 100% frontage build-out. 2) If the property does not fall under the criteria of Regulation 1, the redevelopment must provide a minimum distance of 10' between any building face and the roadside curb.
- 5 Ensure sidewalk width of at least 10 feet
- 6 Transitional height requirements also apply. See page 28.
- 7 See page 39.



Interior Lot with Rear Alley Interior Lot Adjacent to R-Zoned Lots

REQUIRED BUILDING LOCATION STANDARDS

This section details the MU-3 and MU-2 building location standards for developments within the Specific Plan area. The building location standards within this chapter prevail within the Specific Plan area.

Buildings shall occupy a minimum percentage of the Build-to-Zone. The Build-to-Zone is defined as a specific distance beyond the building setback from the front property line.

Corner Build Area Regulation.

Buildings shall be located within 10 feet of the required setback line within 30 feet of the street corner.

Frontage Improvements Regulation.

The area between buildings and the property line shall be improved as part of a wider sidewalk, as outdoor dining/seating area or with landscaping.

Exceptions. These requirements may be modified or waived by the Director upon finding that:

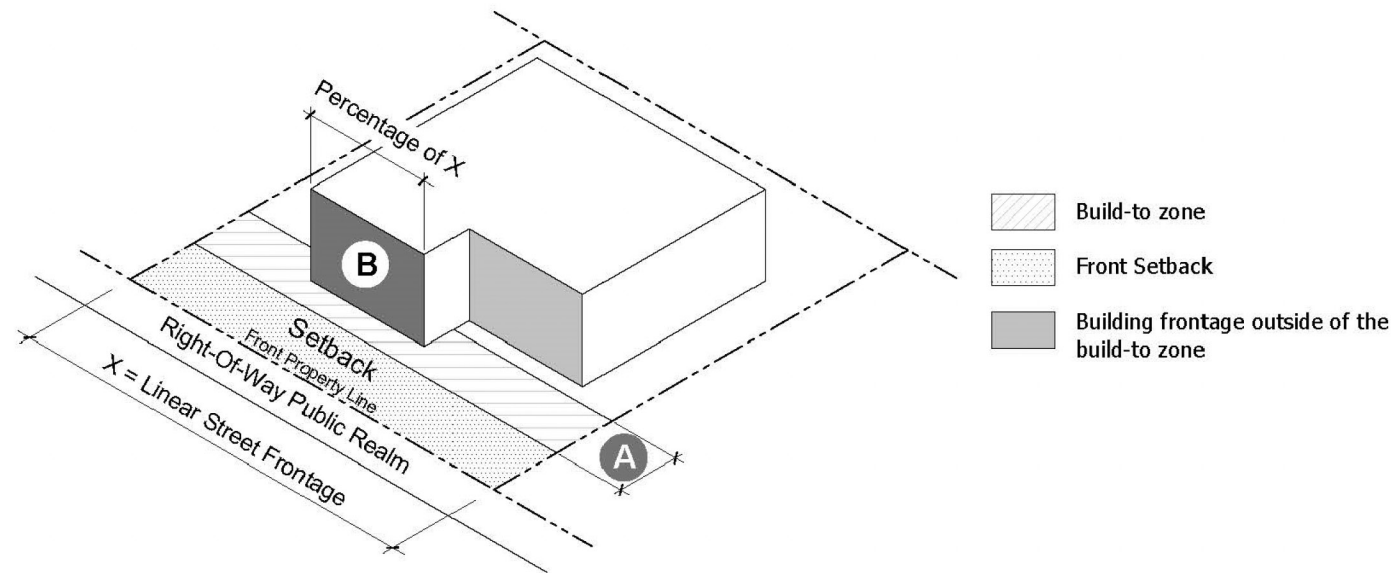
- a) Entry courtyards, plazas, entries, or outdoor eating areas are located adjacent to the property line and buildings are built to edge of the courtyard, plaza, or dining area; or
- b) The building incorporates an alternative entrance design that creates a welcoming entry feature facing the street.

Distance Between Buildings.

See the “Minimum Distance Between Buildings on the Same Lot” table in this section.

Build-to Zone Standards		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
A. Build-to Zone Depth	10 feet	
B. Building % minimum within build-to zone (Linear street frontage)	50%	100%

Build-to Zone Standards



Build-to Zone Standards Diagram

Minimum Distance Between Buildings on the Same Lot (feet)		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
Primary to Primary Structure	10 feet	10 feet
Primary to Accessory Structure	6 feet	6 feet
Accessory to Accessory Structure	6 feet	6 feet
For all of the standards listed above, Fire Department requirements supersede minimum distance standards.		

Distance Between Buildings Standards

ACTIVE FRONTAGE STANDARDS

This section details the MU-3 and MU-2 active frontage standards for developments within the Specific Plan area. The active frontage standards within this chapter prevail within the Specific Plan area.

Active frontages are building frontages with active uses where there is a visual engagement between those at the street and those on the ground floor. Active uses are uses that generate many visits, in particular pedestrian visits, over an extended period of the day. Active uses may be shops, cafes, other social uses, and shared accessory spaces. Higher density residential and office uses also can be active uses for particular periods of the day by providing additional entries to individual units or ground floor office spaces.

Active Frontage Qualifying Uses.

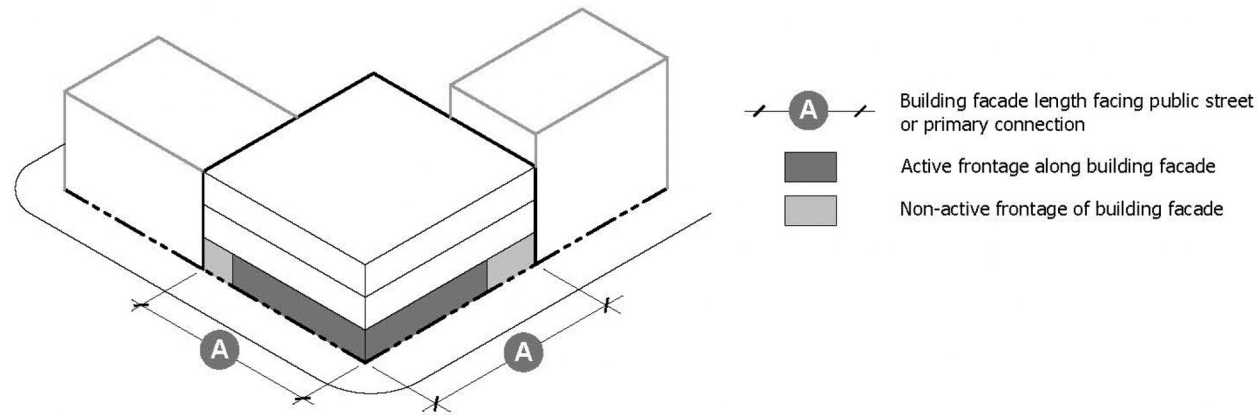
Active frontage types shall consist of one or more of the following ground-floor uses allowed in the Active Frontage Qualifying Uses table at left.

Active Frontage Requirement.

Active Frontages are required for a minimum of 80% of the primary building facade along Atlantic or Gage Avenues, and building facades along a public plaza. Active frontages in these locations shall also wrap onto any side streets or pedestrian walkways for at least 20 feet.

Active Frontage Requirement		
Standard	Minimum %	Maximum %
Active frontage of building facade	80	-
Non-active frontage of building facade	-	20

Active Frontage Requirement



Active Frontages Standard Requirement Diagram

Active Frontage Uses			
	MU-3, Primary Frontage	MU-3, Secondary or Woodward Frontage	MU-2
Storefront Commercial ^{1/3}	x ¹	x	x
Ground Floor Office		x	x
Live/Work		x	x
Ground Floor Residential		x	x
Ground Floor Residential Accessory Spaces	x ²	x	x

1 Excludes barber shops and beauty salons.
2 Maximum of 25 feet of frontage length

Active Frontage Qualifying Uses

Storefront Commercial Minimum Depth in MU-2 and MU-3 Districts	
Standard	Storefront Commercial Minimum Depth
Storefront Commercial Minimum Depth in MU-2 and MU-3 Districts	20 feet ^{1 2}

1 A minimum of 50% of frontages shall have a minimum depth of greater than 40 feet.
2 Corner Space shall have a minimum depth of 40 feet on all sides.
Storefront Commercial Minimum Depth in MU-2 and MU-3 Districts

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is the amount of transparent area on a building façade. It intends to provide visual interest along the public realm and promote natural surveillance by encouraging visual connections between the public realm and the interior of a building. Each applicable façade shall provide no less than the minimum transparency listed by use.

To be considered transparent, window and door glazing shall meet the following requirements in the Transparent Area Standards table.

In addition to glazing, muntins, mullions, window sashes, window frames and door frames no more than 3 inches wide may be considered transparent area when integral to a window or door assembly with glazing meeting the requirements above.

In the MU-2, and MU-3 districts, exterior walls facing and within 20 feet of a front or street side lot line or pedestrian walkway shall include windows, doors, or other openings per the minimum transparency standards listed on the table below. Multi-level garages are not required to meet this transparency requirement.

Transparent Area Standards		
	Visible Light Transmittance	External Reflectance
Ground story	More than 60%	Less than 20%
Upper stories	More than 30%	Less than 40%

Transparent Area Standards

Required Transparency by Frontage Type			
Frontage Type	Transparency (min.)		Maximum Dead Wall ¹ Width (ft.)
	Ground story (min.)	Upper stories (min.)	
A. Storefront Commercial	65%	30%	20 feet
B. Multi-unit Residential	30%	20%	20 feet
C. General Frontages ²	40%	30%	20 feet

Active Frontage Qualifying Uses

- 1
- Dead wall is a blank wall unbroken by windows or other openings.
- 2
- General frontages include offices, restaurants, markets, and any other uses that do not fall under the categories storefront commercial or multi-unit residential.

Note: These requirements may be reduced or waived by the Director upon finding that they are not compatible to the proposed use or if the street-facing building walls will exhibit architectural relief and detail and will be enhanced with landscaping in such a way as to create visual interest at the pedestrian level.

VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING STANDARDS

This section details the MU-3 and MU-2 district vehicular access and parking standards for developments within the Specific Plan area. The vehicular access and parking standards within this chapter prevail within the Specific Plan area.

Maximum Surface Parking Lot Frontage.

Maximum surface parking lot frontages, as a percentage of frontage width, are given in the table at right. The intent of enforcing a maximum surface parking lot frontage is to establish a prominent and continuous street wall that promotes a multimodal, pedestrian-friendly environment while reducing the visual dominance and negative pedestrian impacts of large, street-facing surface parking lots.

Vehicular Access Hierarchy.

Parking area access shall be provided from the following, in order of preference:

- a) From an alley.
- b) In the absence of an existing or proposed alley, access shall be from a driveway shared with a property abutting the development site.
- c) In the absence of an alley or shared driveway, access shall be from the side/lesser street abutting the development site.
- d) In the absence of a side street, from a curb cut/driveway along the primary frontage.

Limitations on Location of Parking.

- Off-street parking spaces shall be located to the rear of principal buildings whenever possible. Above ground parking may not be located within 40 feet of the property line along a primary street. Exceptions may be granted where the Director makes the following findings:
- b) The design incorporates habitable space built close to the public sidewalk to the maximum extent possible.
 - c) The site is small and constrained such that underground parking or surface parking located more than 40 feet from the street frontage is not feasible.

Driveways and Curb Cuts.

These standards shall apply to driveways and associated curb cuts providing vehicular access to parcels improved with commercial, mixed-use and/or multi-family residential development projects. Alley frontages are exempt from these standards.

- a) Driveways shall be a minimum of 50' from any street intersection. For parcels less than 75 feet wide, driveways shall be located along the lot line farthest from the intersection.
- b) Each development project site shall be limited to one curb cut, including driveways and private/service streets, per 250 feet of public street frontage, or two curb cuts per street frontage, whichever is less (unless otherwise required for emergency vehicle access). Mid-block connections are excluded from this requirement.
- c) Driveways shall be a minimum of 3' from a property line or include a shared driveway access with adjoining parcel.

Screening, Landscaping and Drainage.

- a) Nonresidential parking areas abutting residentially zoned/used parcels shall have a six (6) foot high solid, architecturally treated, masonry wall to properly screen the parking area(s), subject to approval by the Review Authority. All wall treatments shall occur on both sides.
- b) Parking areas abutting public rights-of-way shall provide a three (3) to three and one-half (3.5) foot-high landscaped screen across the entire parking frontage except for driveways. Landscape screening may include hedge row plantings or landscaped berms.

Maximum Parking Frontage ¹		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
A. Maximum Surface Parking along Primary Street Frontage	30%	0%
B. Maximum Surface Parking along Side Street Frontage	70%	50%

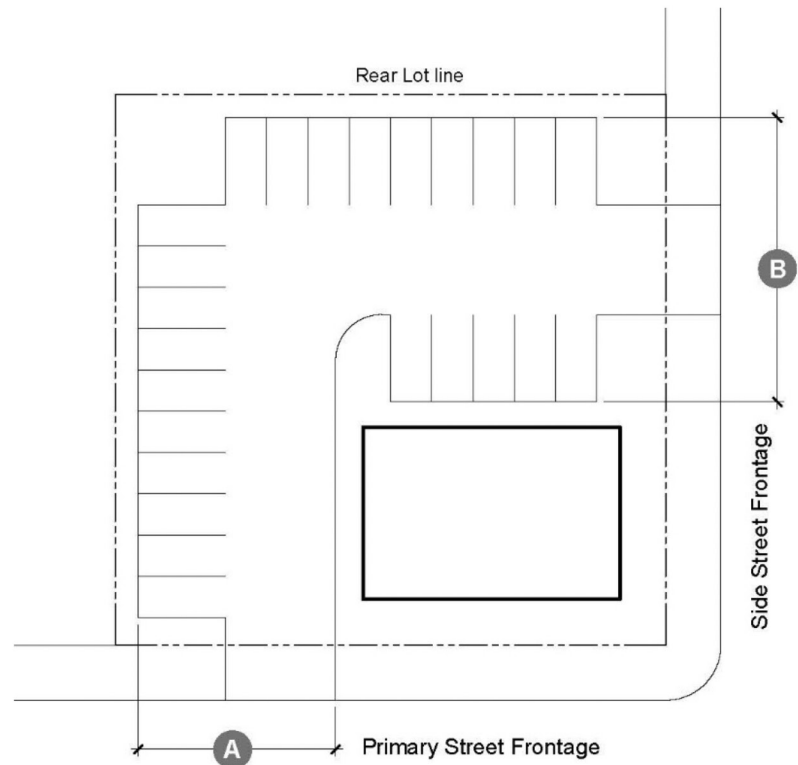
Maximum Parking Frontage Width

¹ Applies to new development and major additions or renovations. Parking lot frontage measurements shall include the combined frontage length of any paved and/or drivable surface that functions as part of a parking lots circulation, such as, but not limited to, drive aisles and parking spaces.

c) Design requirements for paved parking lots shall at minimum require proper water infiltration based on soil and grading conditions. Design of all landscaping/irrigation shall ensure they will only supply the needed quantity of water and that these systems are fine tuned to avoid use of unneeded water as well as avoiding over spray and runoff. Developers should provide planters and planted areas which incorporate drought-tolerant groundcovers, shrubs, and trees. All areas shall be maintained in a manner in which will readily dispose of all storm run-off and all surface water so as to eliminate any puddles or standing water in compliance with all National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements adopted by the city.

Driveway Width.

Minimum driveway width is specified in Bell Municipal Code Chapter 12.08.170. The maximum driveway width along Atlantic or Gage Avenues within the New Bell District Specific Plan area is 22 feet.



Maximum Parking Frontage Diagram

DWELLING UNIT FLOOR AREA AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

The MU-3 and MU-2 district regulations for dwelling unit floor areas are detailed in the Minimum Dwelling Unit Floor Areas table.

For applicable concessions, see the City's density bonus standards and procedures on page 43 of this Chapter.

Pedestrian Connectivity.

For sites of over 1 acre with frontage on Atlantic Avenue and a parallel street (Woodward, Clarkson or Pine Avenues), the development shall provide a publicly-accessible pedestrian pathway through the site connecting the parallel street to Atlantic Avenue.

Public Open Space Requirement - 100% Commercial Developments.

100% commercial developments along Atlantic Avenue in the Specific Plan area located on sites larger than 20,000 square feet must provide a minimum of 2,500 square feet of public open space in the development. The open space shall be visible and accessible from Atlantic Avenue. Additionally, at the time of project submittal, applications shall include a work of art, including the artist fee for design, structural engineering and fabrication, if applicable, subject to review and approval by the Planning Commission.

Public Open Space Incentive.

Should a development choose to provide public open space that is consistent with the Specific Plan Vision or that provides a significant public benefit, the following development incentives may be granted: +1 story for all development types or +20 du/ac to the maximum density for mixed-use developments. The development incentive may be granted through the City's Site Plan Review process.

Minimum Dwelling Unit Floor Areas		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
Single Room Occupancy (SRO)	250 square feet	
Studio	400 square feet	
One bedroom	600 square feet	
Two bedrooms	750 square feet	
More than two bedrooms	750 square feet plus 150 square feet per bedroom over two	

Minimum Dwelling Unit Floor Areas Regulations

Open Space Standards		
Standard	MU-2	MU-3
100% Residential Uses		
Minimum Common Open Space	100 sf of open space per unit ¹	100 sf of open space per unit ¹
Minimum Private Open Space	50 sf of open space per unit	50 sf of open space per unit
Mixed-Use (open space required only for residential uses)		
Minimum Common Open Space	100 sf of open space per unit ¹	100 sf of open space per unit ¹
Minimum Private Open Space	50 sf of open space per unit	50 sf of open space per unit

Open Space Standards

¹ Developments with less than 10 units are exempted from the common open space requirement.

Landscaping Standards
Standards
25% of the required open space for a development must be landscaped.
Any area on the primary frontage not built to the build-to zone shall be landscaped or have active uses.

Landscaping Standards

MU-3 DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

These standards and guidelines address important design considerations for achieving active, pedestrian oriented, and human-scaled commercial and mixed-use development, while reinforcing a sense of place and vibrancy throughout the New Bell District. The primary intention of the MU-3 district design standards/guidelines is to create a continuous line of shopfronts along Atlantic and Gage Avenues which create a pedestrian friendly experience in Bell's center. These standards/guidelines focus on frontage conditions and only apply to MU-3 parcels which front upon Atlantic and Gage. Shopfronts may serve retail, office or lobby uses, but are best suited for uses that serve the general public.

Relationship Between the Sidewalk and Shopfront Frontage.

A shopfront shall have no setback from the established property line after any required dedications, aside from recessed entryways, which should occupy no more than 30% of the frontage and be recessed at no greater than 10 ft. There should be no obstruction, slope, or stair between the sidewalk and the front door of the shopfront. There shall be no gates along shopfront frontages.

Forecourts may be used to add variety to a line of shopfronts or provide space for outdoor dining behind the property line. Forecourts can be built by adding activated exterior space in front of the main shopfront entry to form a court shape. Additionally, along public plazas or other off-street open spaces, a gallery may be built by building additional stories above the open space, creating a colonnade in front of a row of shopfronts, or by placing a simple roof on top of it.

Building Modulation and Articulation.

Building form and articulation should be used to emphasize public entrances and contribute to the creation of a cohesive environment. Architectural details and elements that will create a human scale at the street level, such as awnings, canopies, arbors, and trellises, which also provide shade over public sidewalks and walkways, should be incorporated. The appropriate use of other architectural details, including reveals, course lines, decorative cornices, columns, etc., is also encouraged as a means of creating interest, variety, and distinctive design fitting within the character of the district.

For buildings of three stories or more, the ground floor should be distinguished from upper floors through differences in the wall plane (e.g. required step-back along Atlantic Avenue), color, texture or material changes, and/or variations in fenestration size or pattern. Buildings of this height should also incorporate noticeable variations in depth in the wall plane at least every 50 feet along street-facing facades.

Building Façade Elements.

Retail storefronts should have large display windows and clearly demarcated store entrances to create a strong and direct relationship with the street, provide visual interest and encourage pedestrian activity. Street-facing facades of all buildings shall incorporate windows and openings providing light to adjacent spaces and rooms, and to create visual interest and provide "eyes on the street."

Transparency.

The minimum transparency standards are listed on page 31 of this section. The transparent windows shall begin no higher than two feet above the ground plane and shall extend at least eight feet above the ground plane. Windows and openings shall provide clear and transparent view into the ground floor retail uses or shall display merchandise to reinforce a pedestrian scale. Excessive displays or signs on the windows shall be avoided to allow visibility into the interior of the stores from the street.

Signage and Awnings.

The maximum sign area for each wall sign shall be one and one-half square feet per lineal feet of building frontage, up to a maximum of 80 square feet. Signage shall be centered on the building frontage and shall be located above any awning. Additional signage type (perpendicular hanging signs) are permitted on shopfront frontages.

Architectural Style.

The architectural style and use of materials should be consistent throughout the entire building. Differences in use of architectural details may occur where the intent is to differentiate between the residential and commercial scale and character of the structure(s). Each project should possess an identifiable architectural theme and be of high-quality design and materials. New development should complement the architectural character of adjacent historic buildings; however, imitation and mimicry of historic architectural styles should be avoided. New buildings should not appear to have been constructed in a past era, and references to period architecture should be interpreted in a contemporary manner. Excessive and overly gratuitous ornamentation should be avoided.

Materials, Finishes and Color.

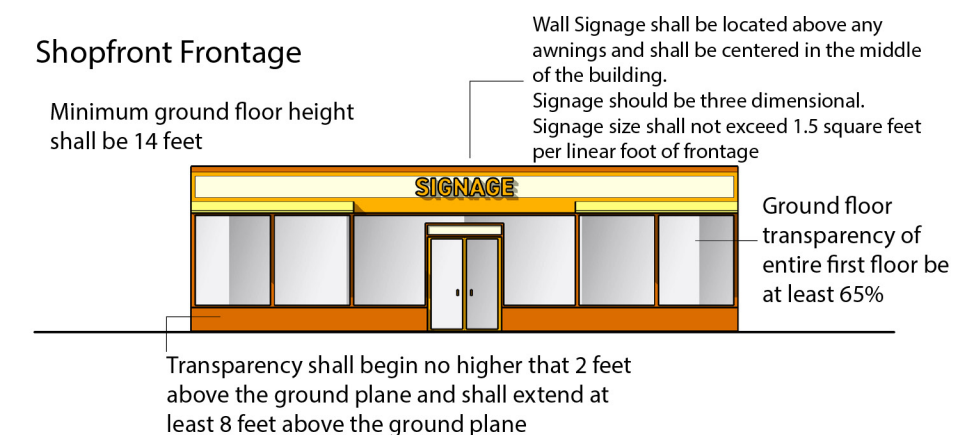
Gage Avenue, and to some extent Atlantic, has a historic main street character that has been maintained from earlier periods in in Bell. High-quality materials and finishes consistent with the architectural style, scale, character and design theme of the historic buildings should be used where appropriate. This includes the utilization of brick, masonry, and similar industrial materials that relate to the historic character of Bell's main streets. Where new buildings are not proximate to such historic buildings, new buildings may also use materials utilized on adjacent storefronts, provided that they meet the guidelines below.

Materials and finishes should unify a structure's appearance and be selected to work harmoniously with each other. Exterior design and building materials should reflect permanence and quality. Graffiti-resistant materials and paints are strongly encouraged. The number of materials and colors used on the exterior of an individual building shall be limited so that there is visual simplicity and harmony. Standards and guidelines regarding exterior building color of non-residential buildings are included in the Bell Municipal Code Chapter 17.25. Pastel colors should be avoided.

Minimum Dimensions.

The floor to ceiling height of the ground floor for commercial developments with shopfront frontages shall be a minimum of 14 feet and should relate to the heights of adjacent buildings of similar heights where possible. All such commercial spaces shall have a minimum depth of 20 feet.

Shopfront Frontage



Components of New Bell District Shopfront Frontages

MU-3 DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Awnings



Discouraged: Lack of/shallow awnings on shopfront frontages



Encouraged: Awnings on shopfront frontages

Transparency



Discouraged: Lack of transparency



Encouraged: Transparency on the shopfront frontage

Shopfront Frontages



Discouraged: Gates on shopfront frontages



Encouraged: Unobstructed shopfront frontages

Shopfront Setback



Discouraged: Shopfront setback from the sidewalk



Encouraged: Shopfront fronting directly onto the sidewalk

Floor Height



Discouraged: Low floor to ceiling height for ground floor



Encouraged: Proper floor to ceiling height for ground floor

Building Facade Material



Discouraged: Entire building painted with accent color



Encouraged: Earthy color and brick material

MU-2 DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Like in the MU-3 district, building design in the MU-2 district should help active, pedestrian-friendly and human-scaled development. However, there is no singular character to areas in the MU-2 district, and the large variety of existing and anticipated development types in the MU-3 district, including storefronts, residential uses, large auto-oriented shopping centers, and drive-throughs, requires a broader menu of frontage solutions.

Design Guidelines by Active Frontage Use

As described on page 31, buildings must dedicate 80% of the primary building façade, and facades along a public plaza, to active frontages. In the MU-2 district, five uses qualify as active frontages. Guidelines for the design of each are given below:

Storefront Commercial – Storefront commercial uses should be designed as shopfronts. Shopfront design in the MU-2 district should comply with the MU-3 district standards given on the previous spread. However, it is not required that buildings in the MU-2 district provide zero setback; compliance with build-to zone requirements is all that is required.

Ground Floor Office – Ground floor offices should be designed as shopfronts when they are public-serving, such as real estate or tax offices. Other, larger offices can incorporate a lobby as a primary point of entry into the building, and fill in the rest of the frontage with common spaces and other uses which will not lead to makeshift attempts to increase privacy by reducing transparency to the street. A minimum ground-floor transparency of 55% is required. Low landscaping may be installed between entry points.

Live/Work – Live/work units along the ground floor frontage of new construction buildings should generally be designed as shopfronts, ideally with separate doors leading to upper-floor living spaces. These separate doors can be provided from a common alcove.

Ground Floor Residential – To ensure privacy, ground floor residential units should be raised from sidewalk level by two or three feet. Living rooms should occupy the first floor, with sleeping areas on the second floor, in a mezzanine, or along another edge of the building. Providing individual unit entries from the sidewalk, through a stoop, is encouraged. Ground floor residential should be buffered from the sidewalk by landscaping, but must adhere to build-to zone requirements, except in the case of stoops leading to private patios, in which case the patios can satisfy the requirement. A modest level of transparency should be ensured. While low walls with gates into individual front yards and front doors are permissible, continuous walls that block off the first floor entirely from the sidewalk are expressly prohibited.

Ground Floor Residential Accessory – Lobbies, gyms, community rooms, property management offices, or social services in the case of affordable housing are all appropriate uses for the ground floor frontage in the MU-2 district. These types of uses follow the same principles as ground floor office uses, described above.

Structured Parking Guidelines.

Structured parking does not count as an active frontage under the standards from page 31. Structured parking along any street frontage in any zone should be buffered by landscaping at least five feet deep, and that softens the view of the garage and the cars inside. A minimum ground-floor transparency of 15% is required.

Building Modulation and Articulation.

Building form and articulation should be used to emphasize public entrances and contribute to the creation of a cohesive environment. Architectural details and elements that will create a human scale at the street level, such as awnings, canopies, arbors, and trellises, which also provide shade over public sidewalks and walkways, should be incorporated. The appropriate use of other architectural details, including reveals, course lines, decorative cornices, columns, etc., is also encouraged as a means of creating interest, variety, and distinctive design fitting within the character of the district.

For buildings of three stories or more, the ground floor should be distinguished from upper floors through differences in the wall plane (e.g. required step-back along Atlantic Avenue), color, texture or material changes, and/or variations in fenestration size or pattern. Buildings of this height should also incorporate noticeable variations in depth in the wall plane at least every 50 feet along street-facing facades.

Materials, Finishes and Color.

Materials and finishes should unify a structure's appearance and be selected to work harmoniously with each other. Exterior design and building materials should reflect permanence and quality. Graffiti-resistant materials and paints are strongly encouraged. The number of materials and colors used on the exterior of an individual building shall be limited so that there is visual simplicity and harmony. Standards and guidelines regarding exterior building color of non-residential buildings are included in the Bell Municipal Code Chapter 17.25. Pastel colors should be avoided.

MU-2 DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Active Frontage Use Examples



Storefront Commercial



Storefront Commercial



Ground Floor Residential



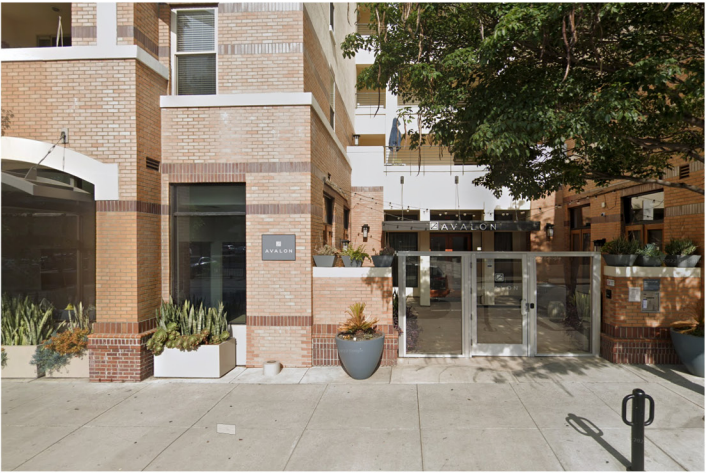
Ground Floor Residential



Ground Floor Office



Ground Floor Office



Ground Floor Residential Accessory



Ground Floor Residential Accessory



Live/Work



Live/Work

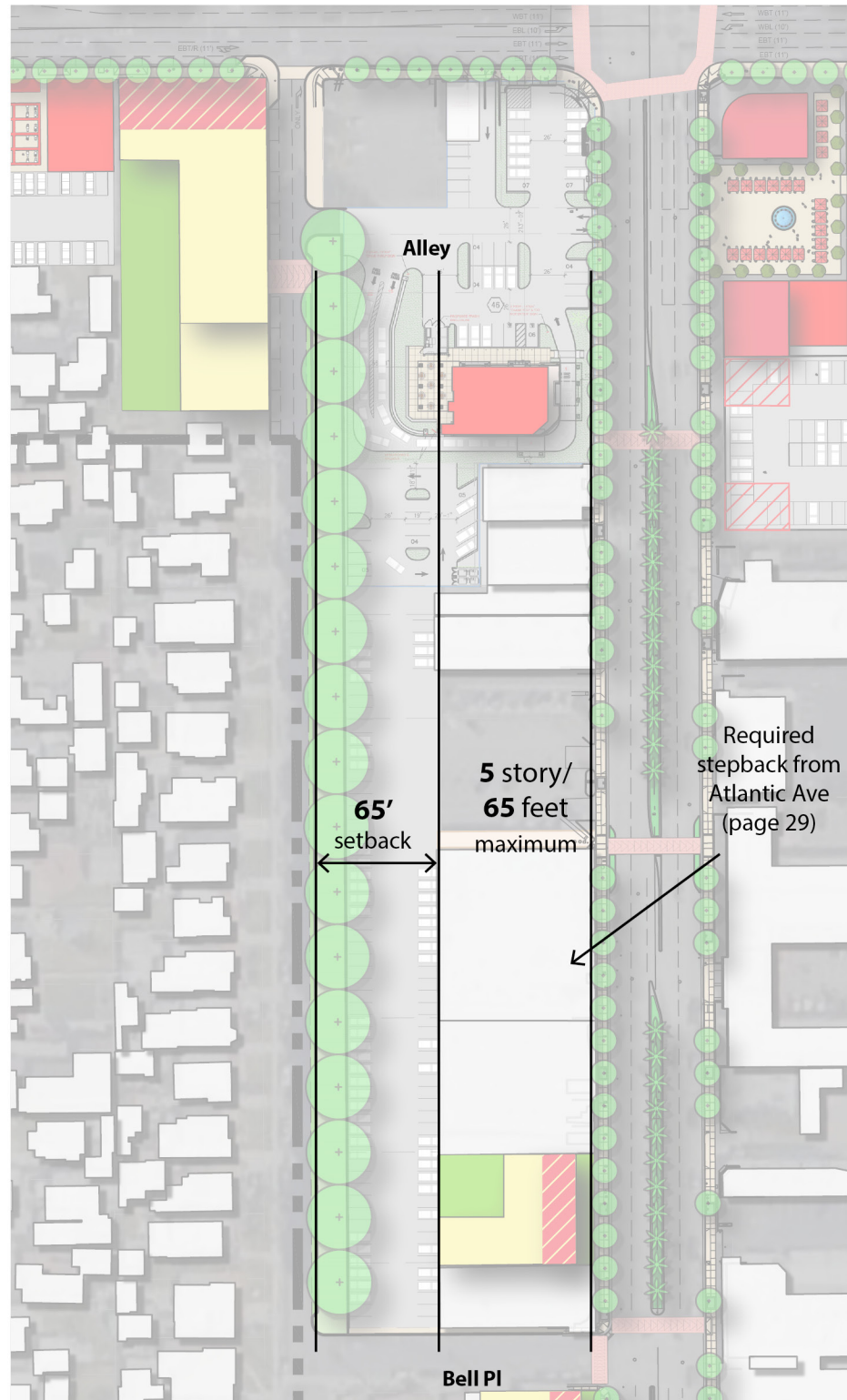


Structured Parking



Structured Parking

WOODWARD AND CLARKSON AVENUE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



Height transitions toward the scale of existing structures along Woodward Avenue



Surface parking lot with limited width fronting on residential street, like Woodward Avenue

Woodward Avenue

The existing structures on Woodward Avenue are typically one-story, low density residential bungalow type homes with small front yards. New developments sharing a lot line with these single-family lots on Woodward Avenue should complement the existing conditions as much as possible. The existing front setbacks fronting on Woodward Avenue range from 10 feet to 27 feet, with an 18-foot average. New developments fronting on Woodward Avenue should match the front setbacks of adjacent structures.

New developments fronting on Woodward Avenue shall feature a pitched roof form to match the existing conditions.

Developments abutting Woodward Avenue are required to comply with transitional height requirements along their side property lines when adjacent to existing single-family uses (see page 24). In addition, projects should step down towards the avenue. This stepping down will provide a scale transition from low-density residential structures to the higher density residential projects.

The maximum width of a surface parking lot or structure fronting on Woodward Avenue shall be 100 feet. These parking facilities need not comply with the maximum parking frontage percentage of lot width given on page 33.

Additionally, see pages 27 and 28 of Chapter 2 (Land Use) for additional Woodward Avenue standards and guidelines.

Clarkson Avenue

The east side of Clarkson Avenue, between the alley just south of Gage Avenue and Bell Place, has a collection of mature ficus trees that provide shade like no other trees in the City. Beneath them lies a parking lot that provides important and well-located public parking to Atlantic Avenue shoppers; the parking lot is coordinated through a covenant among the property owners in this area which ensures that access and efficient layout will always be preserved.

In order to preserve these important trees and ensure the continuity of the shared parking resource, all buildings within this area shall be set back 65' from the property line along Clarkson Avenue. The height limit for these properties shall be 65 feet or 5 stories, whichever is less, provided that the existing trees are maintained.

DRIVE-THROUGH GUIDELINES

As noted in the permitted uses list, drive-through uses are permitted in the Drive-Through Overlay subject to a conditional use permit within the New Bell District Specific Plan area. Drive-throughs can have a detrimental effect on pedestrian-friendly districts; they encourage people to stay in their cars and not visit other businesses, and they can cause congestion on roadways or dedication of excessive amounts of space to on-site circulation areas. Nevertheless, drive-throughs are a highly-demanded service and can attract many people. Standards for drive-through uses within the Specific Plan area are given below.

Drive-Through Queue Line Position

The drive-through queue line either be located behind the building, as seen from the street, or be shielded from the street with decorative semi-transparent screening. An exception may be made from this standard with Community Development Director approval.

Pedestrian Entry to Street

Entries for buildings associated with a drive-through use shall be oriented to public spaces and streets.

Ingress Driveway Position

Ingress driveways for vehicles shall be placed in such a location to create the maximum vehicle queue length possible for the site.

Speaker System and Menu Board

The drive-through queue should be serviced by at least one speaker system and menu board for ordering prior to vehicles reaching the payment window.

Signage Permitted

Drive-through signage may include a wall sign with the business name and/or logo, oriented to the main entry, a sign(s) denotating the drive-through driveway entrance, and a locator sign(s) at key visibility sights from the street directing drivers to the drive-thru driveway entrance. Additional signage along drive-through path shall be limited to face inwards only. No additional signage or marketing shall face the public right of way.

In addition, as a part of the conditional use permit process, the City's appropriate approval authority shall evaluate the site plan to avoid and mitigate any detrimental effects on pedestrian and vehicular circulation in the surrounding area. The approval authority may also waive Required Building Location standards (page 30), Maximum Surface Parking Lot Frontage standards (page 33), or Vehicular Access Hierarchy standards (page 33).



Example of Main Entry to Street and Queue Behind Building



Example of Street-Oriented Wall Signage and Outdoor Dining



Example of Drive-Through Window Screening



Example of Drive-Through Locator and Driveway Entrance Signage

SIGNAGE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Public Signage

Appropriate types of public signage in the area include:

- Gateway Signs at the entries to the City, district entries and freeway exits
- Banners throughout the New Bell District
- Pedestrian monument wayfinding signs

See Chapter 4 for more information about these signs.

Murals

Mural Wall Signs are encouraged, especially in the MU-3 district. They may be initiated by the public or private sector and require the consent of the owner of the structure upon which the mural is to be painted. Planning Commission approval is required.

Private Signage

Private signage is regulated by the Sign Regulations in the Bell Municipal Code, Chapter 17, Article 84. The Citywide standards shall guide signage, except where modified in this section.

Private signage shall be made of permanent materials. It shall be appropriately sized, scaled, and centered for the specific storefront, and all types of signs shall be coordinated to have a compatible style and colors.

Appropriate types of private signage allowed in the area include:

- Projecting Signs are encouraged along sidewalks in the MU-3 district, as long as they are pedestrian-scaled.
- Wall Signs
- Window Signs as regulated in the Bell Municipal Code.
- Awning Valance Signs, provided that lettering is no greater than 8 inches high and is located within the middle 70 percent of the valance (edge) area

The following types of signage may not be appropriate:

- Box Signs or Illuminated Box Signs
- Pole Signs are prohibited by the Bell Municipal Code
- Monument Signs in the MU-3 district



Discouraged: Large Pole Signage



Encouraged: Mural Wall Sign

SIGNAGE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



Discouraged: Oversized signage



Encouraged: Wall Signage above awning and Projecting Pedestrian Sign



Encouraged: Wall Sign, Awning Edge Sign and Window Sign



Discouraged: Two-dimensional box signs



Encouraged: Multi-tenant projecting pedestrian sign



Required: Wall Signs shall be of channel letter design (BMC 17.84.050.B.4)

DENSITY BONUS STANDARDS AND PROCEDURE

Density Bonus Standards

Projects may request to utilize a density bonus through Chapter 17.62 of the Municipal Code. The on-menu concessions that apply within this Specific Plan area are as follows:

1. Height. An additional 1 story over the maximum number of stories allowed in the underlying district.
2. Floor Area Ratio. A percentage increase in the Floor Area Ratio equal to the percentage of Density Bonus for which the Housing Development Project is eligible, not to exceed 35%.
3. Minimum Unit Sizes. An exemption from the minimum unit sizes as required per the BMC.
4. Open Space. Up to 20% decrease from an open space requirement provided that the landscaping for the Housing Development Project meets minimum standards.
5. Transitional Height. Side stepback above the second story to be 60 degrees instead of 45 degrees.

Under these density bonus regulations, 100% affordable projects automatically qualify (without proving need) to receive 5 concessions and market rate inclusionary projects may request one or more concessions based on the number of affordable units.

Density Bonus Procedure

Requests for on-menu Density Bonus incentives will be processed ministerially through the Planning Department, thereby rendering these requests exempt from analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A project that solely requests Density Bonus on menu incentives, and is not subject to other entitlements, will not trigger analysis under CEQA.

The City's "menu of incentives" articulates in objective terms the most applicable and commonly requested development standard modifications pertaining to multifamily housing, which were preevaluated as providing for affordable housing costs. The City's intent in creating on-menu incentives was to streamline the approval requests for a set of known, objectively calculated, and standardized incentives. Determining whether a project satisfies the BMC requirements for an on-menu incentive involves little to no personal judgement and involves determination of whether the application conforms to applicable objective requirements. This is in contrast to off-menu incentive or waiver requests, which are unknown, non-standard, have no clear statutory limitations, and were not publicly pre-evaluated prior to the date of project application. Due to this difference, off-menu incentives will continue to be processed as

discretionary requests subject to review by CEQA.

The interpretation which treats on-menu incentives as ministerial actions exempt from CEQA review is consistent with CEQA. Ministerial actions are exempt from CEQA (Public Resources Code [PRC] §21080(b) (1)). Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15369, CEQA defines a ministerial decision as one that involves little or no personal judgement by the public agency or official as to the wisdom or manner of carrying out the project. A ministerial decision involves the use of fixed or objective standards rather than subjective decision making. The agency or official merely applies the governing statute, ordinance, regulation or other fixed standard to the facts.

A project that solely requests Density Bonus on-menu incentives, and is not subject to other entitlements, will not trigger analysis under CEQA.

3. PUBLIC REALM



PUBLIC REALM

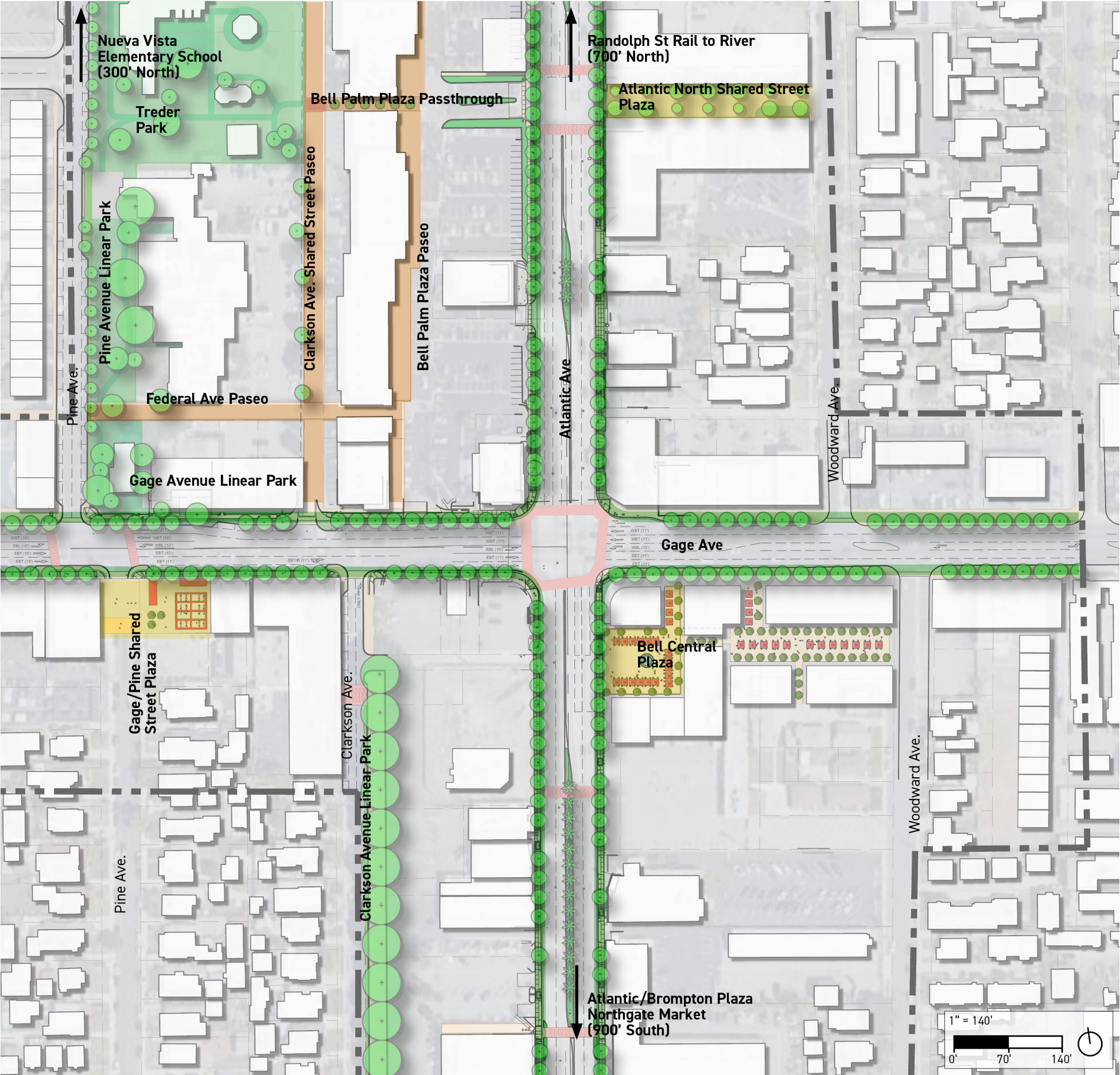
Bell has an active public realm. Community parks are brimming with activity, sidewalks are populated with people walking and biking, and front yard gatherings bring life to residential neighborhoods. However this activity stems more from the City's high population density, its older commercial buildings and grid street pattern than from the design of its streets, sidewalks and public spaces. In the New Bell District in particular, sidewalks are narrow, green space is disconnected, and shade is lacking. As a result, when people have options to go out and enjoy themselves, they often choose other communities.

This chapter describes concepts and guidelines meant to guide the transformation of Bell's public land into a fabric that supports the vision of the Plan to create a shopper- and pedestrian-friendly corridor at the center of the City. The changes envisioned here will require further consideration and design by the City of Bell prior to implementation, which may occur in a variety of methods as described in Chapter 6. However, developers should note that they are required to upgrade adjacent sidewalks to Plan standards except where the City finds that doing so would create an inconsistency that is detrimental for the district.

The changes envisioned here will help to diversify and expand the City's open space resources, reduce urban heat island effect, and treat and infiltrate stormwater. Even more so, they will complement private development to create exciting, active centers – places people want to be.

PUBLIC REALM MAP AND OPEN SPACE PROGRAMMING MATRIX

The map at right shows key elements of the planned public realm in the New Bell District. The Plan creates a wide variety of spaces, providing interest and attraction for many different types of people, at different times of the day, week and year, with different activities. Active plazas serve as central nodes for the City and district and as places to “hang out” and spend an evening, especially when activated with local events. Streetscapes, augmented with passthroughs, form the backbone of the district and connect people with new businesses and places in a convenient and comfortable setting. Linear parks treat stormwater and provide spaces for exercise and respite from the city. All of these types are linked together, encouraging the exploration of the district on foot, and creating a uniquely livable setting for residents of Bell at the center of the community.



PUBLIC REALM MAP AND OPEN SPACE PROGRAMMING MATRIX

Programming Opportunities	Open Space Locations							Users			
	Primary Streetscapes: Atlantic Ave Gage Ave	Linear Park: Pine Avenue Gage Avenue Clarkson Avenue South	Plazas Bell Central Plaza Gage/Pine Shared Street Plaza North Atlantic Shared Street Plaza Atlantic/Brompton Plaza	Paseos/ Passthroughs: Bell Palm Plaza Paseo Federal Ave Paseo Passthrough to Parking Clarkson Ave.	Recreational Greenways: Randolph St Rail to River	Active Recreational Parks: Nueva Vista Elem School Field	Recreational / Civic Parks: Treder Park	Families with Children	Couples / Singles (Local Residents)	Visitors from Outside (Regional Market)	Empty Nesters/Grew up and returning to Bell
Activities											
Outdoor Dining	x		x	x		x		x	x		x
Shopping/Strolling	x		x	x				x	x	x	x
Entertainment	x		x					x	x	x	x
Gathering/Hanging Out	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x
Family-Oriented Activities	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			
Dog-Friendly Activities					x	x	x	x	x		
Remote Working		x	x	x		x			x		
Recreation/Physical Activity		x			x	x	x	x	x		x
Events											
Farmers Market							x	x	x		
Seasonal Events							x	x	x		
Art Show/Art Walk/Arts and Crafts Show			x	x					x	x	x
Food/Tasting Events			x					x	x	x	x
Outdoor Movie Night			x				x	x	x		
Small Music and Cultural Programs			x					x	x	x	x
Large Music and Cultural Programs							x	x	x	x	x
Community Informational Fairs			x				x	x	x		
Bell 5K							x	x	x	x	x
Elements											
Public Art	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Pedestrian Lighting	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Public Wi-Fi Hot Spots			x				x	x	x	x	x
Interactive Play and Gaming Features		x	x					x			
Interactive Lighting and Experiential Art Installations		x	x					x	x	x	x
Multi-purpose Seating and Benches			x	x				x	x	x	x
Planting and Urban Greening	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Focal Points and Accent Paving	x		x	x				x	x	x	x
Food Trucks			x			x	x	x	x	x	x
Temporary Road Closure Elements			x					x	x	x	x
District Branding Elements	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Trees/Shading and Human Comfort	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

ATLANTIC AVENUE STREETSCAPE

The Atlantic Avenue Streetscape

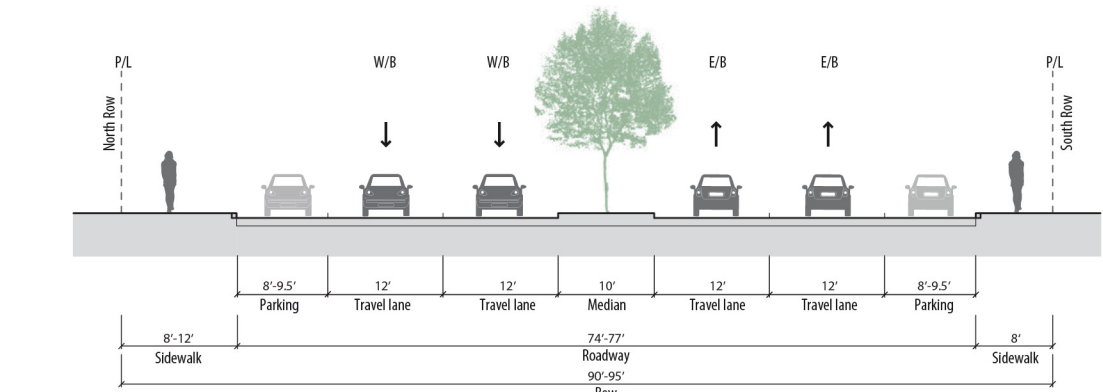
The right-of-way of Atlantic Avenue ranges from 90 to 95 feet wide, with varying widths of sidewalk between 8 and 12 feet; however, the City's general plan establishes a 100-foot cross-section. When this cross-section is built out, there will be sidewalks of 11.5 to 13 feet on both sides. Curb lines need not move.

The sidewalk dedication shall not be required where there is a redevelopment between two properties with zero front setbacks and where the buildings touch. In this case, right-of-way shall not be dedicated and all of the new building shall be constructed up to the property line, except as required for utility or fire services or to establish a publicly accessible open space. Flexibility on this standard may be granted at the discretion of the City Manager.

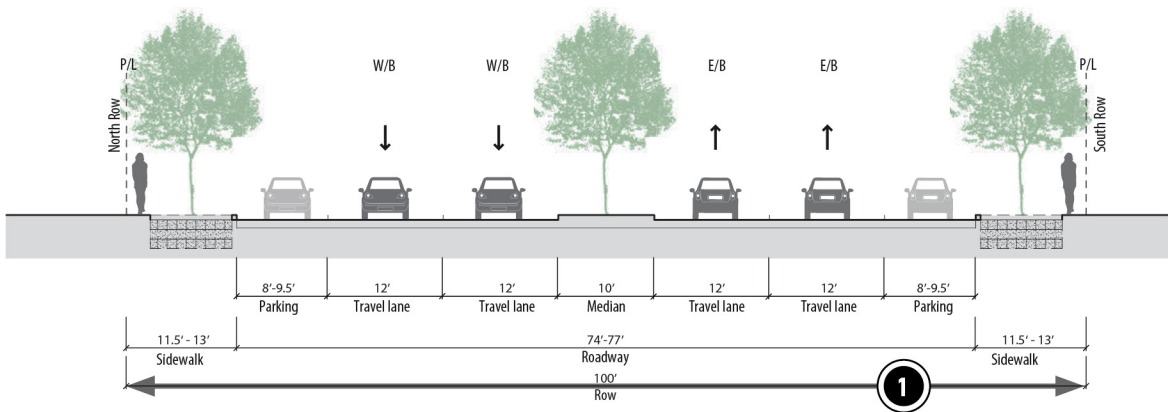
The Importance of Shade and Human Comfort

The project community survey has revealed that street trees are among the top three priorities for the Bell community along Atlantic Avenue. Countless studies¹ have been conducted on the correlation between street trees and successful shopping districts, not only due to trees' ability to enhance placemaking and soften spaces through urban greening but also, at a more functional level, their ability to provide shade and human comfort for people to exist in outdoor spaces. Opportunities to create as much shading as possible should be a primary objective for streetscape improvements within the district.

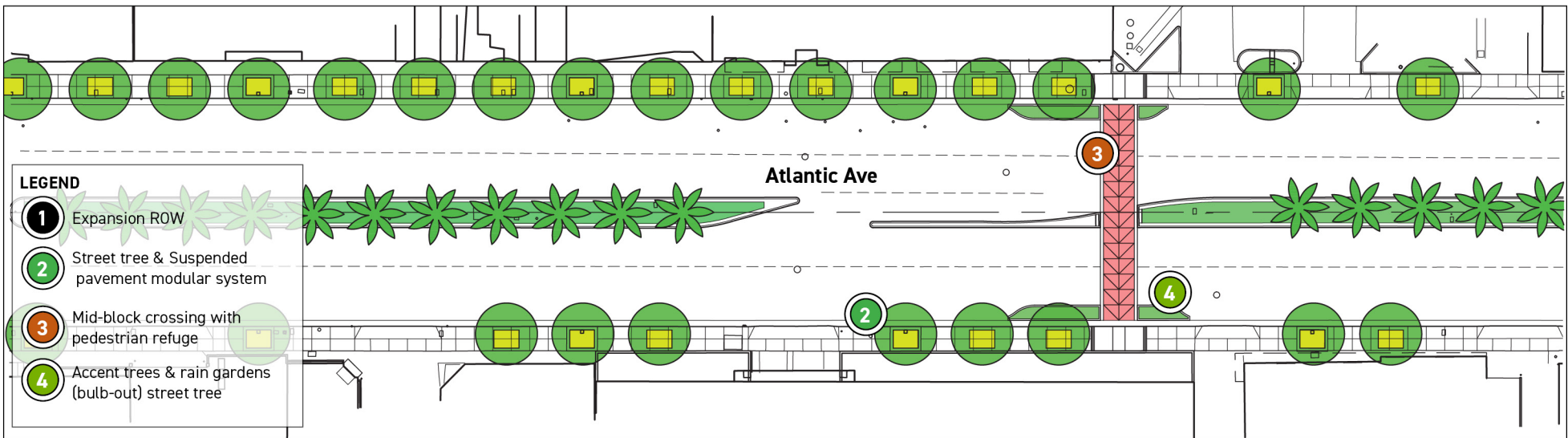
In the 2019 construction plans for the Atlantic Avenue Improvements (not yet constructed as of 2024), the City planned to undertake additional street tree planting with crape myrtle trees in new curbside bulb-outs placed in limited locations along the street. While this design would provide strong accent and placemaking properties with its bold, flowering canopy, the limited extent of the bulb-outs and the trees' small growth habit and canopy size would offer very limited amounts of shade on the sidewalk.



Existing Cross-Section - Atlantic Avenue



Proposed Cross-Section - Atlantic Avenue



Incorporation of Street Trees into Atlantic Avenue Improvements Design

¹ One such study: Wolf, Kathleen L. 2005. Business district streetscapes, trees, and consumer response. Journal of Forestry. 103 (8): 396-400.

ATLANTIC AVENUE STREETSCAPE



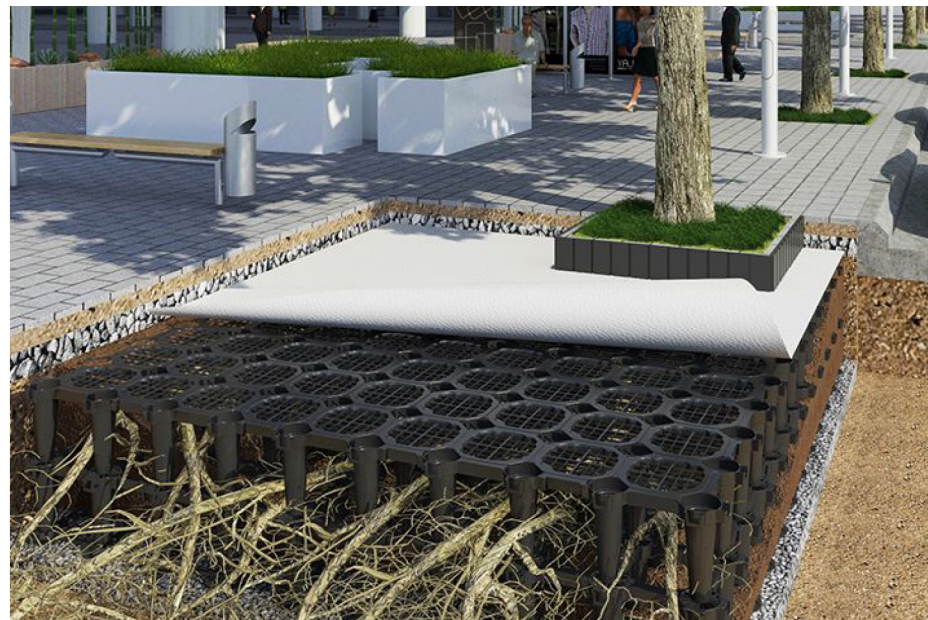
Main street streetscape with appropriate tree cover.



Crepe myrtle (accent tree) and brisbane box (sidewalk tree).



The size that street trees can grow is dictated by the amount of soil volume they have.



Suspended pavement modular system with root growth areas.

The addition of open tree planters for new trees within the existing streetscapes would likely narrow the pedestrian walkways to unacceptable widths for an urban shopping walk, but sub-surface root growth areas would allow the surface streetscape areas to be maintained and provide the landscape infrastructure needed for larger street tree growth. This Specific Plan proposes root growth areas of approximately 6' x 8' around the tree trunk. A suspended pavement modular system (see image at left) would be used to support the sidewalk above. Maximizing aeration points to the root zones below paving areas will help facilitate root growth and may require a porous paving surface or regular hardscape openings in the surface sidewalk.

Recommended Changes to Atlantic Avenue Streetscape Improvements
In light of the above and feedback from the community and City staff, the Specific Plan recommends the following changes to the Atlantic Avenue Streetscape Improvements construction documents.

Add street trees, grates and suspended pavement modular system within the sidewalk area

Remove bulb-outs with accent trees except where pedestrian crossings are being accommodated

Remove remodeling of Biancini Park

Further, the recommended improvements have been separated into the following categories of priority/timeline:

High Priority - street trees, furniture and lighting improvements

Low Priority - update accent paving with colored concrete pavers, planter pots, wayfinding improvements, median landscaping

Implemented with Public Parking Facilities - mid-block crossings and bulb-outs with accent trees/rain gardens

GAGE AVENUE STREETScape

Gage Avenue is the City's historic main street, but in the vicinity of Atlantic Avenue it lacks pedestrian continuity and is relegated to the design of a secondary, vehicular-priority street. Under this Specific Plan, the portions of Gage Avenue within the New Bell District (Pine Avenue to King Avenue) will be transformed to become pedestrian assets connecting the Civic Center and Gage/Pine secondary node (see page 18) to the central point of the New Bell District.

The greatest opportunity for transformation lies upon the north side of the street between Pine Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, which can be transformed into a linear park connecting to the Pine Avenue linear park (see page 52). This area is currently characterized with a wide unused curbside lane which becomes an underutilized right turn lane at the intersection of Pine Avenue; this can be replaced with on-street parking and a landscaped, bioretention zone with trees. The sidewalk is narrow, but in front of the Bell House and Library there are landscaped setbacks with large trees; this environment can be extended eastward toward Atlantic Avenue as properties redevelop. Hardscape paving should be incorporated as well to provide space for pedestrians and cyclists who may be using the area.

On the south side of the street, and on both sides east of Atlantic Avenue, a more standard pedestrian-friendly sidewalk is envisioned, with opportunities for widening into the roadway east of Atlantic Avenue. Street furniture and trees can match those along Atlantic Avenue until such time as a distinct style is determined for the length of Gage Avenue throughout the City.

The General Plan currently classifies Gage Avenue as a major Arterial with a 100 ft. right-of-way; however, it is not recommended that any dedication take place except as may be preferred by the property owner to assist in the maintenance of the linear park.



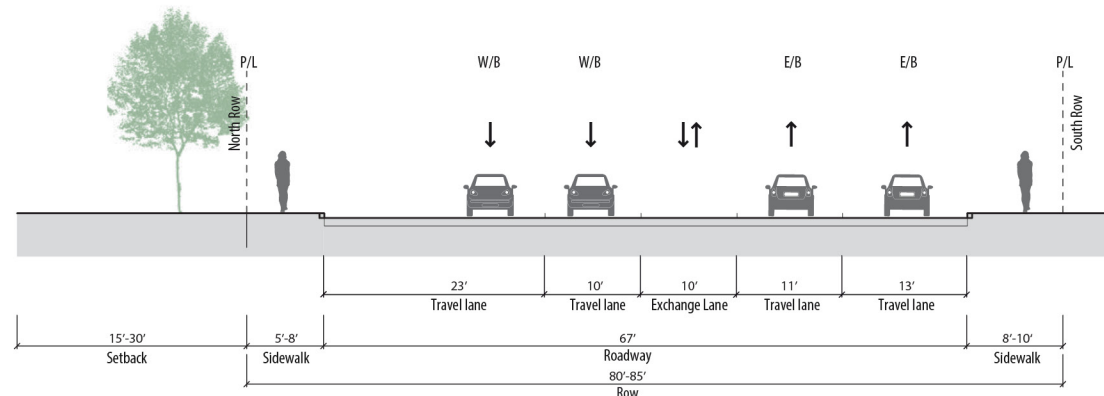
2. Sidewalk extension with landscaping and pathways to parallel parking space



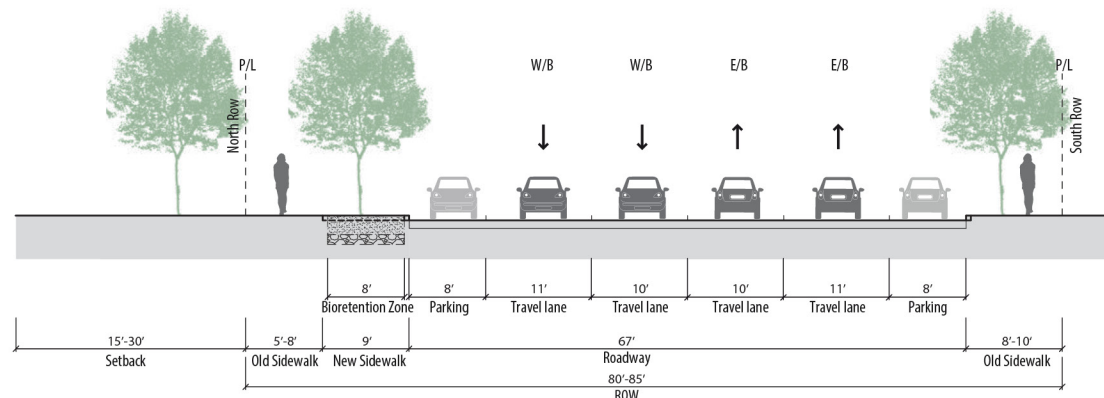
2. Bioretention area added outside existing curbs, avoids disrupting stormwater and other utilities

GAGE AVENUE STREETScape

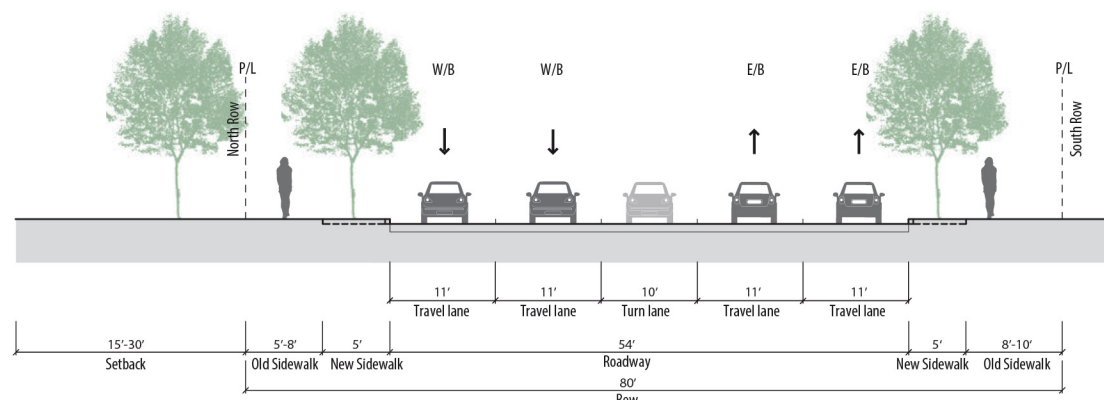
1. Linear Park path wraps from Pine Avenue into beginning of Gage Avenue Linear Park
2. Construction of new bioretention area in current underutilized roadway areas, with tree planting
3. Large existing trees and setback in front of library and Bell House to be retained and incorporated into park; new development subject to setback requirements
4. New on-street parking adjacent to food hall
5. Bulb-outs slow vehicles making right turns, creating a safer environment for pedestrians
6. Opportunity for bulb-out and/or bus stop improvement
7. Curb realignment to eliminate unnecessary small right turn lane
8. Despite more constrained dimensions, sidewalk extension provides needed buffer to existing and future development from roadway.



Existing Cross-Section - Gage Avenue



Proposed Cross-Section - Gage Avenue (Pine to Atlantic Avenue)



Proposed Cross-Section - Gage Avenue (Atlantic Avenue to King Avenue)

PINE AVENUE LINEAR PARK

Bell’s City Hall, Recreation Center, Vista Hermosa Elementary School and Treder Park are important community facilities that feel “hidden” to those who aren’t familiar with the area. These facilities can be connected to the various nodes in the New Bell District through a linear park along Pine Avenue encompassing the area currently occupied by the James George Bell House’s side yard, City Hall’s front entry, and the diagonal parking in front of City Hall. This linear park will continue elements of the Gage Avenue Linear Park described on the previous page, as it wraps around the Bell House. It will provide stormwater treatment, a short exercising path, and seating areas.

Key features include:

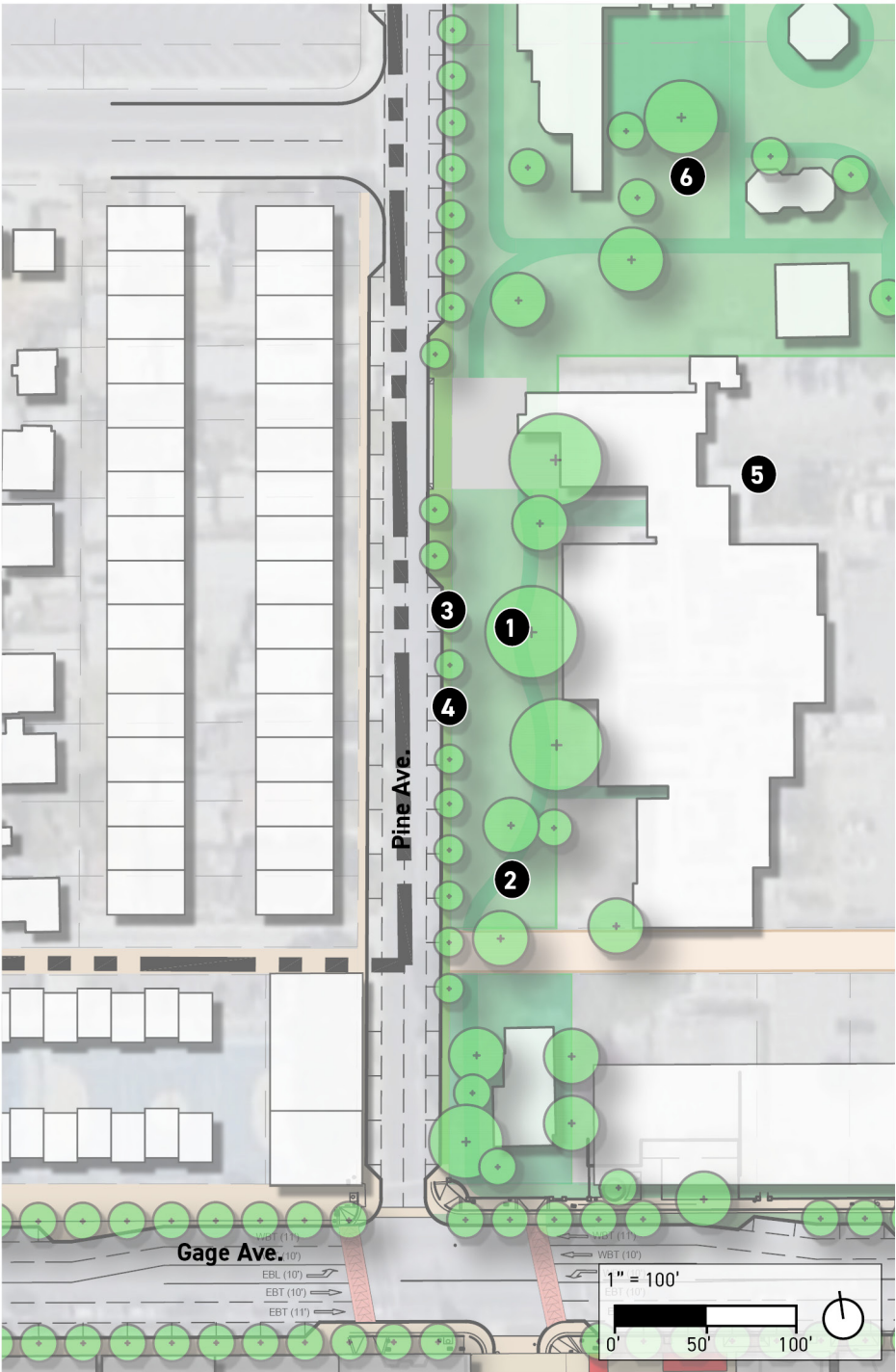
- 1. Existing trees preserved and provide excellent shade canopy for park users. Lighting added to ensure usability at night.
- 2. Curvilinear path through park
- 3. 5' width added to park by converting diagonal parking to parallel parking and restoring curb to its original location at street gutter. Parking supply is anticipated to remain similar as additional spaces are added on the west side of the street with redevelopment.
- 4. Bioretention zone in former diagonal parking area
- 5. Evaluate reorientation of fire station to Clarkson Street
- 6. Treder Park to be upgraded to serve needs of newly increasing urban residential population, with features such as a playground and improvement of hardscape Community Center exterior space into stage area.



Area in front of Bell House and City Hall available for linear park



Linear Park example. Source: sierramadregardens.com



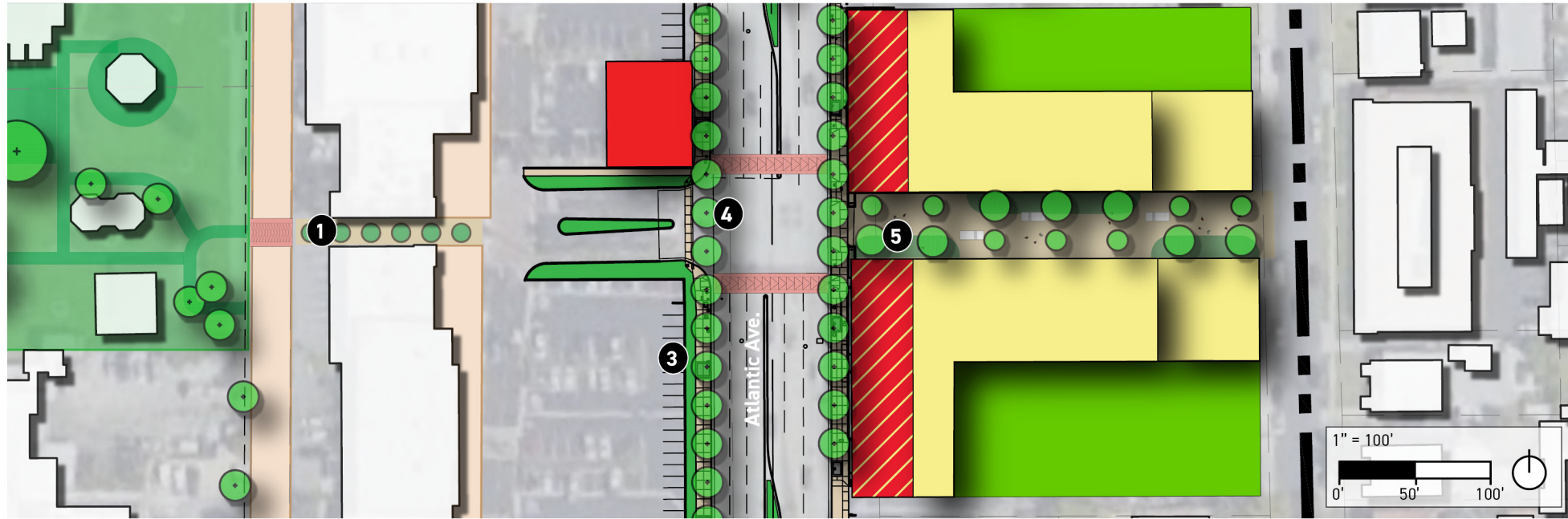
Pine Avenue Linear Park - Plan View

BELL PALM PLAZA AND ENVIRONS

As described on page 13, this page describes a new set of east-west connections highlighted by a northern gateway plaza to the MU-3 district.

Key features include:

1. Enhancement of Bell Palm Plaza passthrough with removal of landscaping, addition of murals or windows, and marked crossing of Clarkson Avenue, providing better connection to Treder Park
2. Widening of paseo in front of Bell Palm Plaza shops to activate stores, as seen in the central plaza area of the shopping center currently. Elimination of one row of perpendicular parking immediately adjacent to stores.
3. Parking landscaped strip opportunity for bioretention
4. Existing signal at Bell Palm Plaza Driveway; complete crosswalks around intersection.
5. Shared street plaza can be designed asymmetrically and with curves to further slow vehicles. Bioretention zones can be placed in areas where greater planting and/or screening is needed, and at grade or with curbs to best capture water from the street. Driveways can also be accessed from the shared street.



New pedestrian system linking Civic Center, Bell Palm Plaza and new North Core Gateway Shared Street Plaza



The driveway between WSS and Bank of America is currently used as a cut-through to the Woodward Ave neighborhood.



Opportunity for bioretention strip treating water from parking lot

CLARKSON AVENUE NORTH

Randolph Avenue will soon be part of the regionally important Rail-to-River bicycle corridor, connecting 17.7 miles via Class I and Class IV paths from the Los Angeles River to Inglewood. With such an important bicycle corridor at the edge of the area, it is critical that safe bicycle linkages be made allowing cyclists to access the center of the New Bell District. Atlantic Avenue is too fast and has too much traffic for safe bicycle movement, but Clarkson Avenue presents an interesting opportunity. This street currently feels more like an alley, providing perpendicular parking and back-of-house uses for Bell Palm Plaza and the Civic Center. By accentuating the low-speed nature of the street even more, it can provide a relatively safe travel way for bicycles, while continuing to provide parking and vehicular access for adjoining uses.

Key Features:

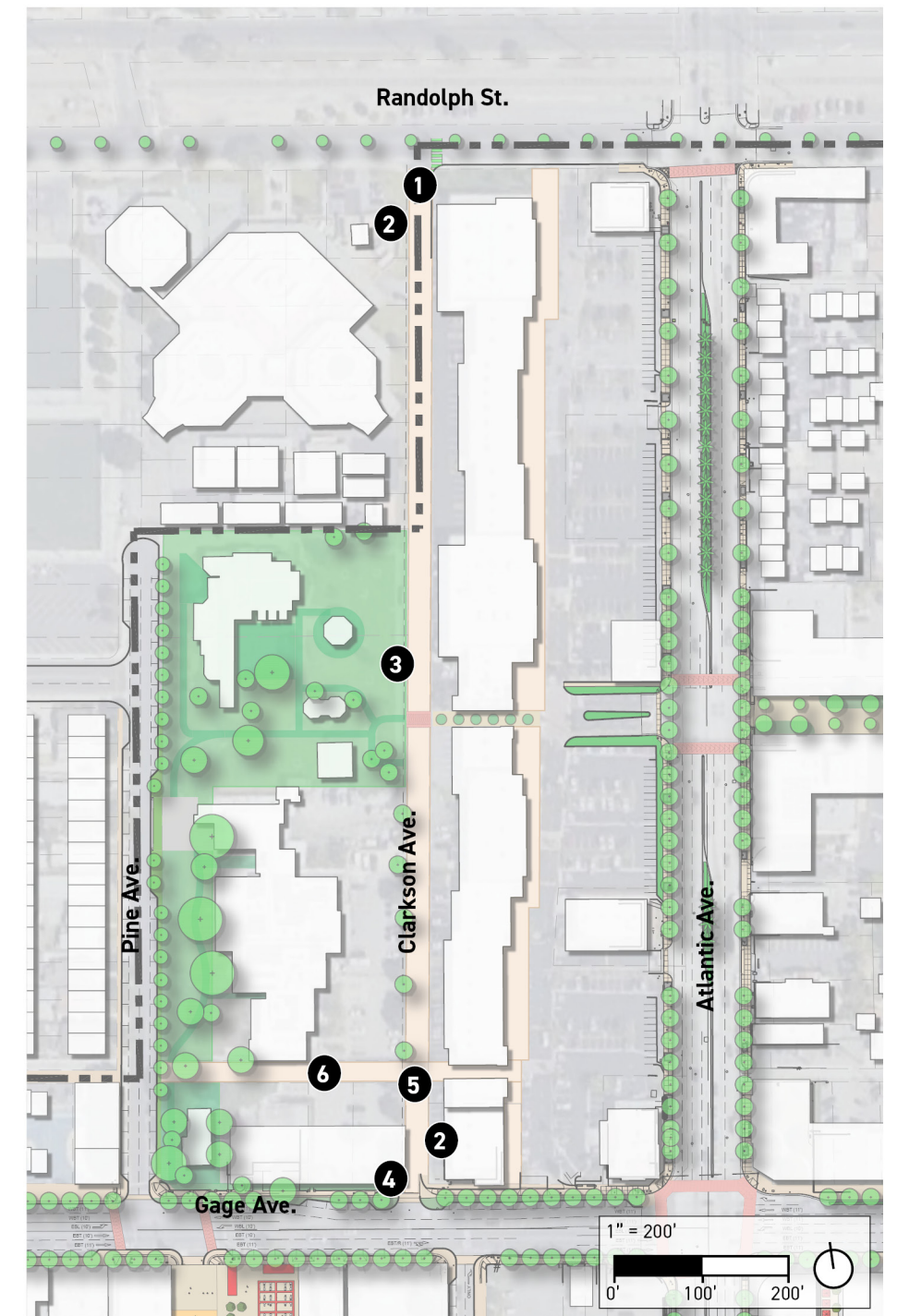
1. Rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) with pedestrian and bicycle push buttons crossing connecting Clarkson Avenue to north side of Randolph Street
2. Potential signage and/or gates emphasizing that street is for local traffic only
3. Bioretention, landscaping and tree area along Treder Park edge. Parallel parking may be removed.
4. Connection to Gage Avenue, with low-speed bicycle use of sidewalk
5. Artistic or other type of painting on roadbed, to help emphasize that this is not a normal street
6. Federal Avenue paseo can serve as connecting bikeway to Clarkson Avenue for local connections. Potential extension of paseo westward behind Futsal Park with redevelopment



Clarkson Avenue functions as a service way



Bicycle alley/shared street



Clarkson Avenue North - Plan View

CLARKSON AVENUE SOUTH

The final linear park segment, the portion of Clarkson Avenue south of Gage Avenue, is marked by the largest trees and best shade in the City of Bell. A block-long line of closely spaced ficus trees divides the street from the shared parking lot serving businesses on the west side of Atlantic Avenue. Diagonal parking on the northbound lanes forces the sidewalk into the immediate proximity of the ficus trunks, whose roots have completely destroyed it.

Instead of cutting down these trees, the Specific Plan recommends that the sidewalk be removed and replaced with a landscaped area which can have a decomposed granite path running through it. The path would connect those in the southern part of the Specific Plan area toward the other linear park segments along Gage and Pine Avenues. It would also create a shaded walkway for people who may need to park off-site to come to the destination drive-through restaurant just north, and for residents of Clarkson Avenue, who have no shade on the sidewalk on the west side of the street. To create sufficient space for this, the diagonal parking along the street will be removed, and a bioretention zone can be added in the area just above the street's existing gutter. Counts conducted for this Specific Plan that these spaces are just 42% full at peak hour. The loss of these spaces can also be made up through addition of on-street parking on Gage Avenue and/or the construction of the district parking structure.



Clarkson Avenue South - Plan View



Existing sidewalk condition; located too close to ficus trunks



Existing tree canopy

STREETSCAPE PALETTE

The primary streetscape elements to be used on the sidewalks of Atlantic and Gage Avenues are:

1. Street Trees – Brisbane Box, 48” box, 33’ O.C. within the MU-3 district, 50’ O.C. within the MU-2 district.
2. Lighting – Current roadway lights on Atlantic Avenue are spaced approximately 50’ apart. Remove every other light pole, leaving approximately 100’ between poles. Replace bell-shaped housing and arm with Philips Fidji, or similar, and add pedestrian arm on opposite side, lighting the sidewalk at 12’ – 18’ height. Alternatively, replace removed poles with new standalone pedestrian lights.
3. Bike Racks – SKT0 available from Forms & Surfaces, 100’ O.C.
4. Trash Cans – Available from Forms & Surfaces, 100’ O.C.
5. Benches – Backed bench available from Forms & Surfaces, facing the street, at bus stops or at back of sidewalk in front of walls, setbacks, or other areas which do not have a direct visual relationship or access to the street.
6. Accent Paving – Concrete pavers available from Belgard, replacing existing brick pattern in existing locations
7. Crosswalk Paving – Pavement paint product available from GAF, replacing existing brick pattern in existing crosswalks and new crosswalks as they are created
8. Planter Pots – Concrete pots available from Hart Concrete Design, two within each accent paving area
9. Accent Trees – Crape Myrtle, 48” box, in bulb-out areas with crosswalks. Ensure sufficient visibility.
10. Median Planting – Date Palm, Dward Bougainville, Dwarf Bottleck, and blue chalk sticks to planted in medians.

Specific elements may be supplanted with other elements as dictated by the Public Works Department. On Gage Avenue, a different style of furniture and lighting may be used if/when determined through a study of the design of the entire street.



Proposed Atlantic Ave - Street tree and lighting spacing

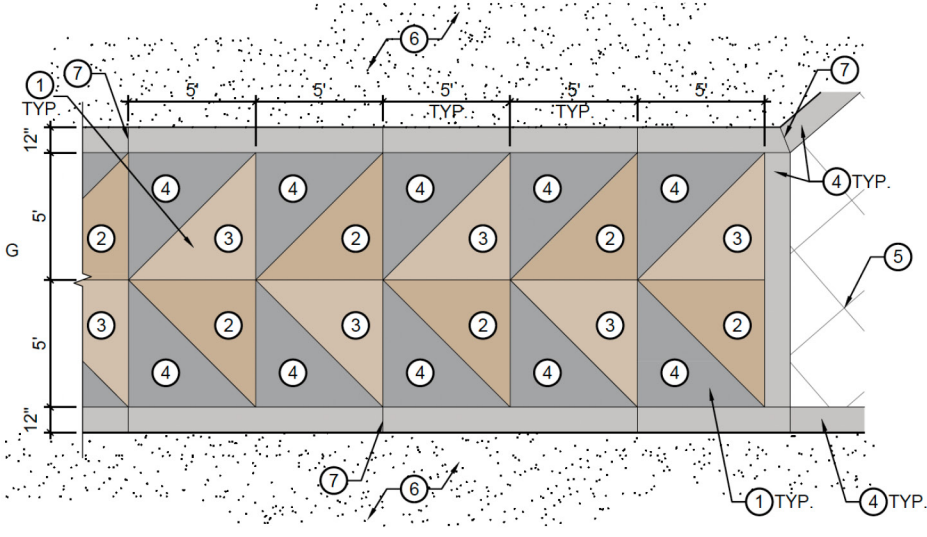


Example of adding pedestrian lighting to existing light poles.



Existing Bell themed vehicular lighting along Atlantic Avenue.

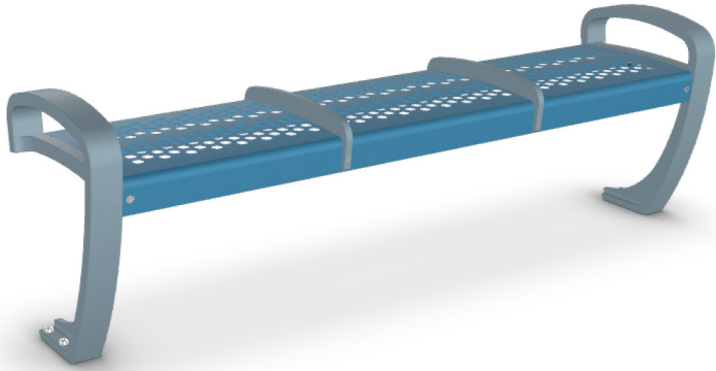
STREETSCAPE PALETTE



Crossing Pattern



Tree Grates



Bench Seating



Concrete Paver



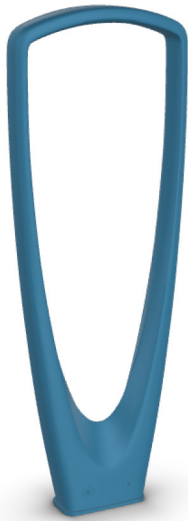
Concrete Banding



Brisbane Box



Street Light



Bike Racks



Litter Bin

PLAZA AND PASSTHROUGH GUIDELINES

Plazas, shared streets and passthroughs are key elements of the public realm of the New Bell District, optional, encouraged and required elements are shown in the table at right. In addition, the following guidelines apply. Additionally, they should incorporate specific design features that reinforce the identity of the New Bell District, such as the (They should be designed to be accessible, inclusive and accommodate a range of activities and user types as identified in the Open Space Programming Matrix on page 47).

Plazas

Plazas are planned for the northern, southern and western entries into the Core area, as well as the Bell Central Plaza at the Shoe City development site.

- 1. The MU-3 gateway entry plazas are all located at street corners and should be shaped in a manner to be highly visible to passers-by.
- 2. A central focal element, such as a sculpture or fountain, is encouraged, especially in the central plaza.
- 3. Land uses adjacent to plazas should provide a high level of activity; primary entrances should front on plazas and encourage transit through the space.

Shared Street Plazas

The plazas along Pine Avenue at Gage Avenue (western gateway), and Bell Palm Plaza Driveway (northern gateway) are shared streets, meaning that they will at least at some times also be open to vehicular traffic. They should comply with all plaza guidelines, as well as the following:

- 1. Shared streets must retain a driveable way that is navigable to drivers unfamiliar with shared streets. It should, however, create friction to ensure that drivers slow to a target speed of 10 mph while crossing, using strategies such as offsetting the roadway layout, speed tables, and paving that creates a noticeable rumble.
- 2. The drivable way may also need to function as a fire lane; if so, it should comply with all applicable fire code requirements.
- 3. The drivable way may also need to accommodate loading; this can be handled on-street as long as circulation remains possible around the loading area.
- 4. Retractable or removable bollards should be installed at the ends to clearly mark when the shared street is closed to vehicular traffic.

Elements	Plaza	Shared Street	Passthrough
Outdoor Dining	Encouraged. Outdoor dining may spill out into the plaza but may not utilize a majority of the public plaza.	Encouraged. Outdoor dining may spill out into the shared street but may not block circulation on the shared street.	Encouraged. Outdoor dining may spill out into the shared street but may not block circulation within the passthrough.
Seating	Encouraged. Seating is encouraged to be different from streetscape furniture, to be more comfortable, and to be diverse in style/type.	Encouraged. Movable seating is recommended. Seating is encouraged to be different from streetscape furniture, to be more comfortable, and to be diverse in style/type.	Optional. Seating is encouraged to be different from streetscape furniture, to be more comfortable, and to be diverse in style/type.
Lighting	Required. Variety of lighting solutions are encouraged, including wall lights, pole lights, string lights, and more.	Required. Variety of lighting solutions are encouraged, including wall lights, pole lights, string lights, and more.	Required. Variety of lighting solutions are encouraged, including wall lights, pole lights, string lights, and more.
Trash Cans	Required.	Required.	Required.
Shade	Required. Natural shade (trees) encouraged.	Required. Natural shade (trees) encouraged. Can use canopies over shared streets.	Required. Natural shade (trees) encouraged.
Unique Paving	Encouraged.	Encouraged.	Optional.
Bicycle Racks	Encouraged.	Encouraged.	Optional.
Public Art	Required. The recommended public art type is a piece of art to be featured as the focal point of the plaza.	Required. The recommended public art types are paving, vertical features, and murals.	Required. The recommended public art types are paving and murals.



Plaza View

PLAZA AND PASSTHROUGH GUIDELINES

Passthroughs

1. Passthroughs should be retained in locations where they currently exist and added where feasible where ever a key destination or access point, such as a parking lot, is located away from Atlantic or Gage Avenues in a mid-block location.
2. At least eight feet of clear, publicly-accessible walkable space shall be provided along the length of each passthrough.
3. Passthroughs shall remain open to the public from at least 9 am to 9 pm, daily.
4. Passthroughs may be located on the interior of buildings.
5. Vertical elements and signage should be used to signal the presence of the passthrough and the destination that lies at the end of it, such as a public parking facility.



Bell Palm Plaza passthrough, to be opened up



Exterior Passthrough



Interior Passthrough. Source: Yelp



Overhead Passthrough Signage, to indicate parking locations

GATEWAYS

Gateways are any type of urban design intervention which marks the entry point into a particular city or district, so that a traveler perceives a threshold between the area outside the city/district and that within. For the New Bell District, gateways are particularly important for the following reasons:

- Atlantic Avenue traverses five contiguous smaller cities (Maywood, Bell, Cudahy, and South Gate, and Lynwood) between the La River and I-105.
- Gateways will help create a new identity for Bell.
- Gateways can also mark the difference between the more flexible MU-2 district and the active-commercial MU-3 district, thereby helping to concentrate pedestrian activity in the MU-3 district.

As seen in the map at right, two sets of gateways are proposed: City Gateways and Core Area Gateways. City Gateways consist of monuments in the median with the name "BELL" written vertically along it. These monuments are effective and will be enhanced by improved landscaping and maintenance surrounding them.

Core Area Gateways use an entirely different design language so they do not compete with the City Gateways. The Specific Plan area is small, and as such creating an overt system of different districts indicated through signage, naming and additional monuments may be confusing. Therefore, the differentiated Core Area will be through a change in the intensity of streetscape interventions, creating a more pedestrian-focused core which coheres with land use regulations requiring ground-floor storefront commercial uses. Street trees will be more frequent, and furniture may also be more frequent. Furthermore, Chapter 6 recommends that if funding is limited, streetscape improvements be implemented within the Core area first.

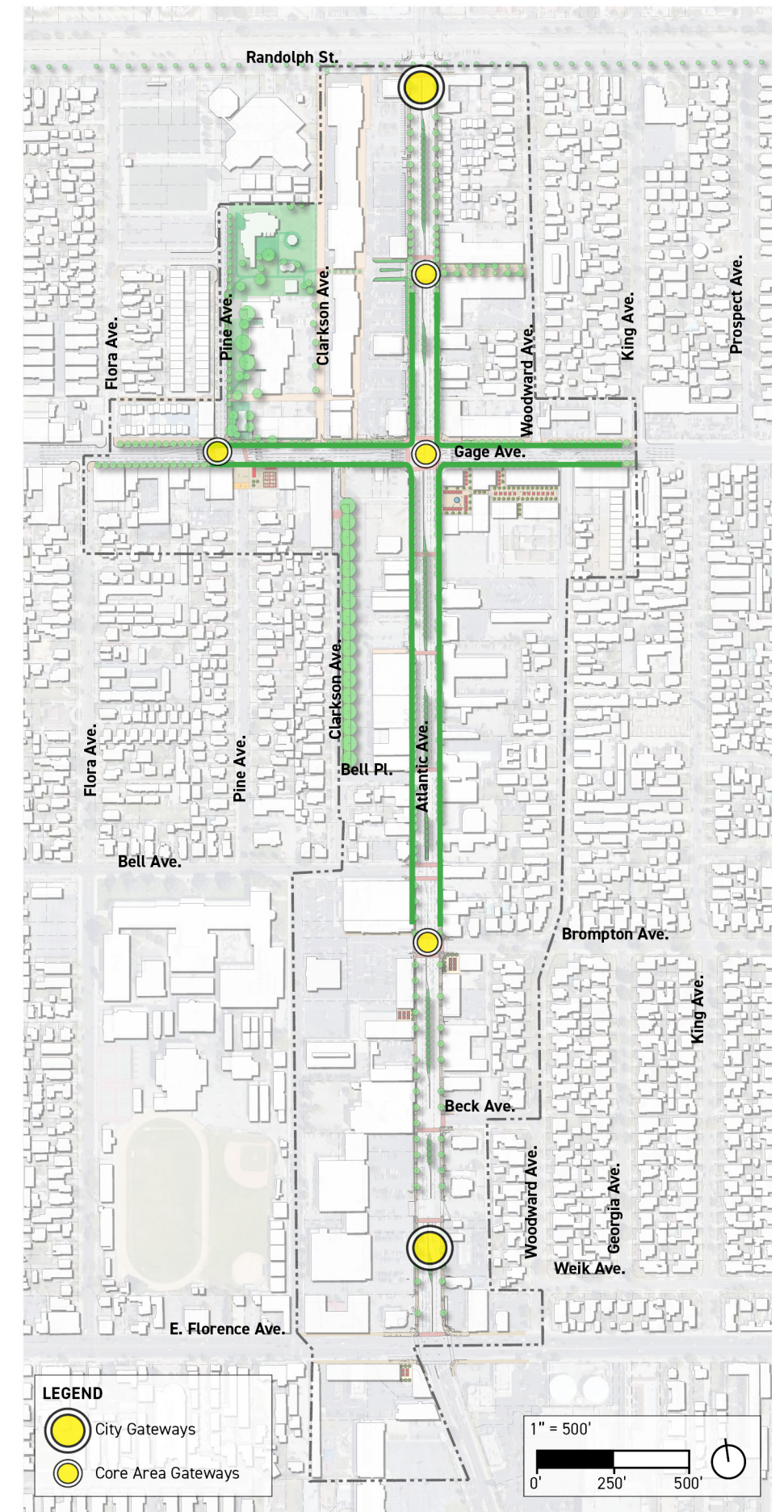
The change in intensity of streetscape interventions would be capped with plazas on the north, west and south sides of the Core area, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The plazas function as anchor points, encouraging walking along the entire length of the Core area, and as thresholds differentiating the urban character of the MU-2 from the MU-3 district.



City Gateway Monument



Banners



WAYFINDING

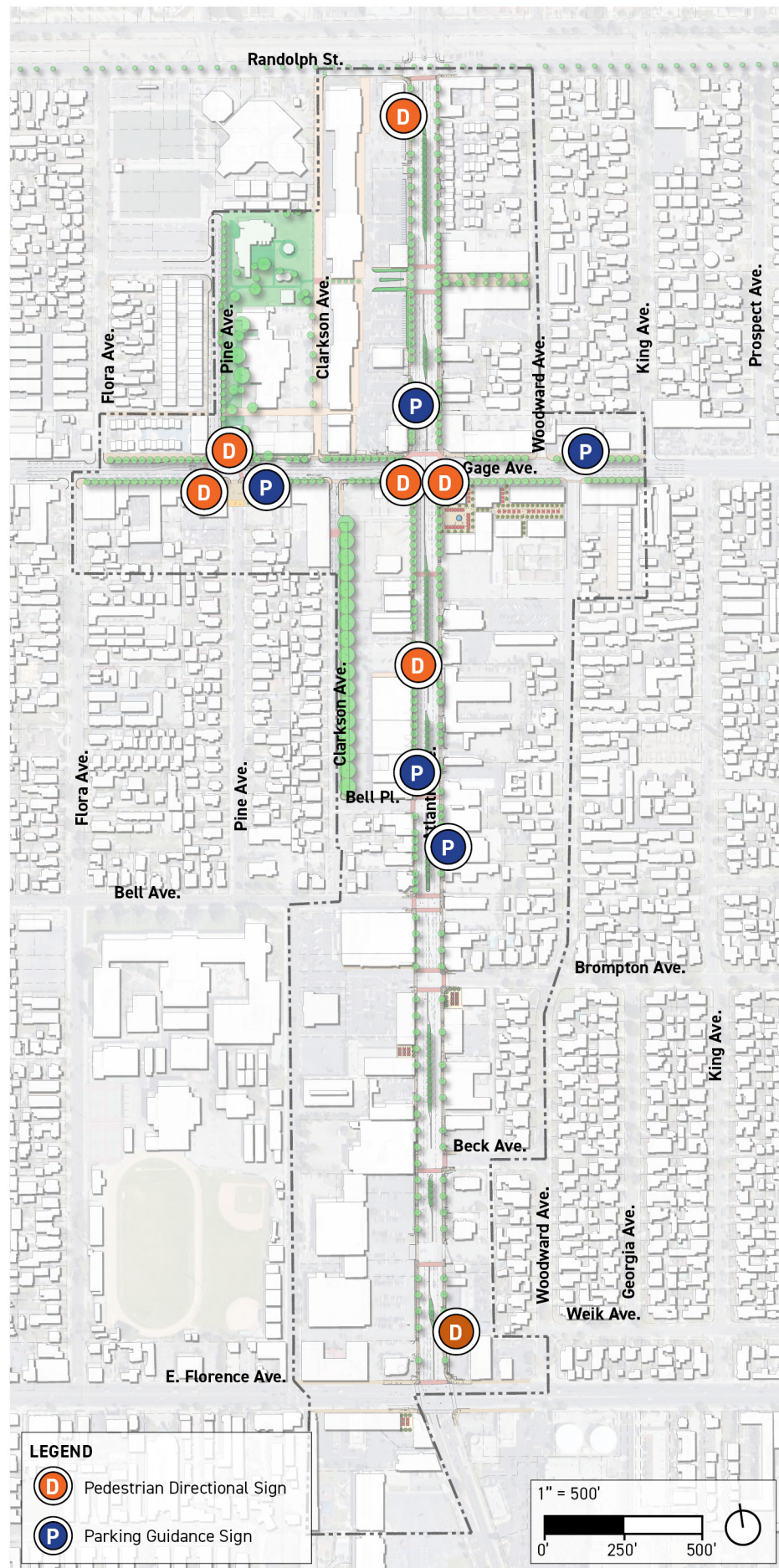
Wayfinding signage is critical to help people using different modes of transportation access destinations and mobility facilities which are not located in their immediate vicinity. Different modes of transportation require different signage. The types of signs are described below and located on the map at left.

D. Pedestrian directional signs – Providing directions at eye level and with pedestrian-sized lettering. These signs have already been designed as a part of the Atlantic Avenue Streetscape Improvements project.

P. Parking sign – Parking signs provide directions for drivers to public parking facilities.

Public transit signs are described on page 60, and bicycle wayfinding signs are described on page 61.

The City of Bell should also ensure that information regarding all important transportation facilities, including public parking facilities once established, are updated on Google Maps and similar digital wayfinding tools.



D. Pedestrian Directional Sign (see construction plans for design)



P. Parking Guidance Sign

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Bell is a community that makes high use of public transit; the New Bell District is served by “La Campana” (the City of Bell’s own transit line), and LA Metro routes 110 (Gage Ave.), 111 (Florence Ave.) and 260 (Atlantic Ave.). Some of the highest loads on each of these routes occur within the City of Bell, meaning that bus riders represent a significant percentage of the total number of people traveling along these roads at any given time.

With the forthcoming construction of Metro’s Southeast Gateway Line, Bell will be much better tied into the regional transit system, and transit travel times should decrease greatly for many Bell residents. Nevertheless, the future station serving Bell, Florence/Salt Lake, will be located 1.38 miles away from the corner of Atlantic and Gage. Last-mile connections through bus or bicycle will be necessary for residents, employees and visitors to the New Bell District.

Given this, this Plan recommends a study of bus connection to provide better and potentially quicker access to the Southeast Gateway Line and New Bell District. Routing changes to “La Campana” could be considered, along with enhancements to bus routes which already connect the New Bell District to Florence/Salt Lake, such as the 111 (Florence Avenue). Currently, bus speeds in Bell during peak hour range from 3.8 mph to 28.2 mph; future potential signal modifications or bus priority lanes would reduce transit times, bus bunching, enabling more people to rely on transit instead of clogging the City’s roads.

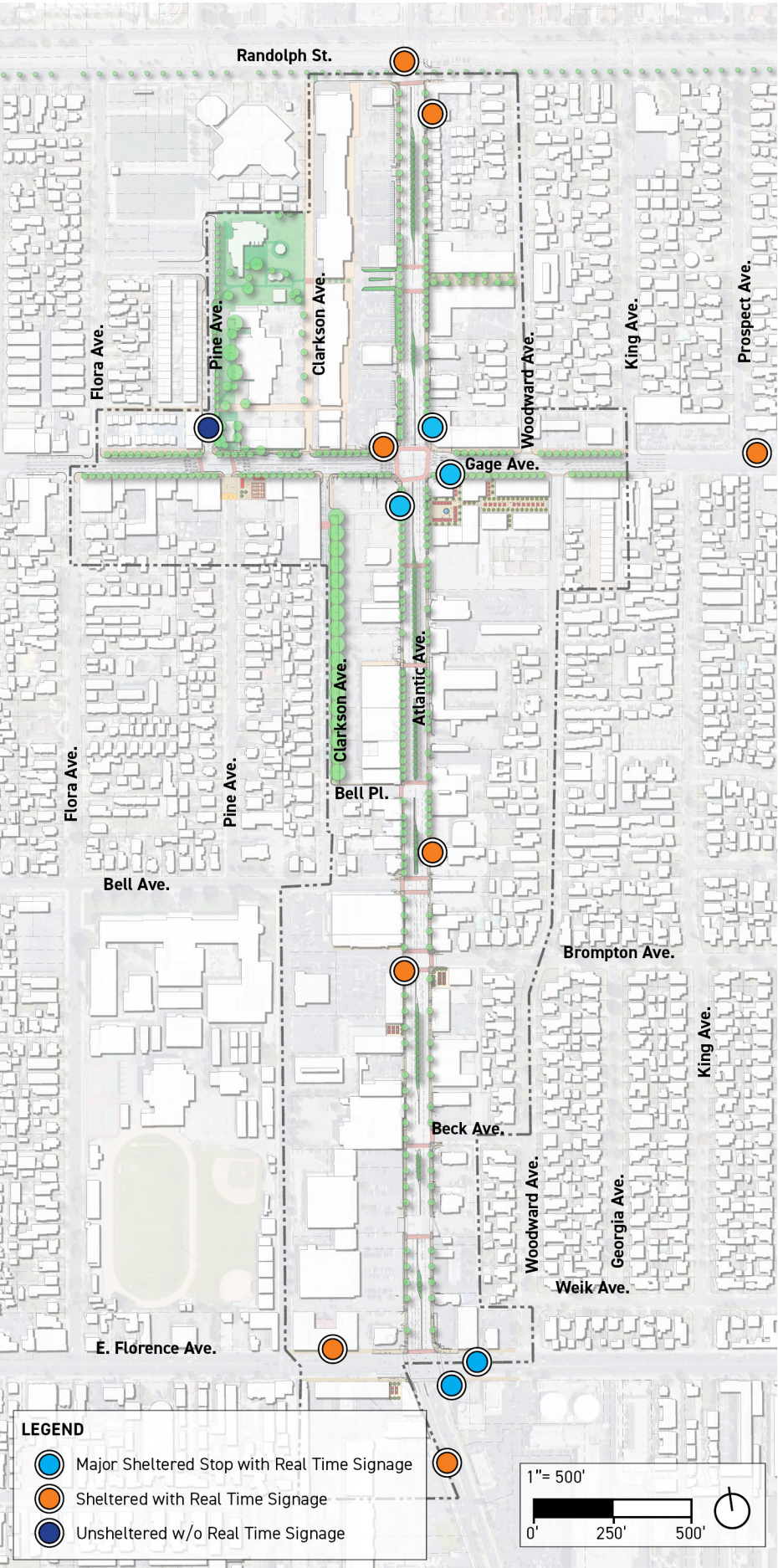
All transit stops should be protected in their current locations; private development must accommodate transit stops by providing additional setback if necessary or reorienting entries to maintain adequate path of travel. Several transit stops are lacking in shelters, and should be provided with them. Real-time signage should be added to all Metro bus stops. Additionally, the corners of Atlantic/Gage and Atlantic/Florence should be upgraded considerably where space allows, with extra seating and digital displays in keeping with current Metro efforts.



Major Sheltered Stop with Extra Seating, Digital Displays and Real-Time Signage. Source: metro.net



Standard Bus Stop Shelter with Real-Time Signage



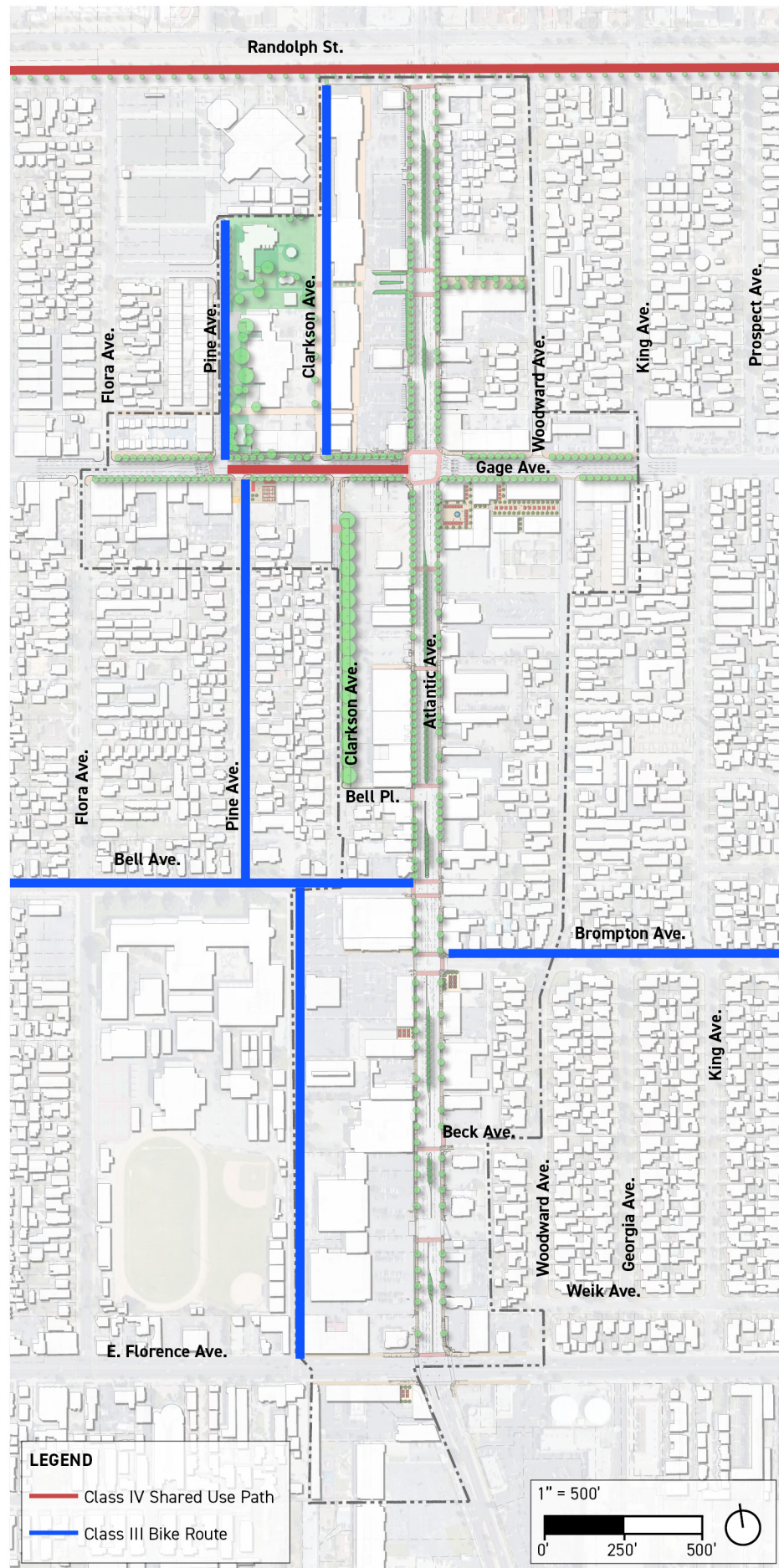
BICYCLE NETWORK

By developing the New Bell District at the very center of the City, within a one-mile radius of almost all its residents, the City is creating a great opportunity for bicycle transportation. Almost all residents will be within a 5- to 7-minute bicycling distance from the New Bell District.

The City's Bicycle Master Plan establishes a grid of low-stress bicycle friendly streets along Bell/Brompton Avenues and several north-south streets, and the Housing Element commits to implementation of signage and traffic calming improvements needed to make these bicycle friendly streets effective. The Specific Plan builds on these blocks by emphasizing quiet cycling routes off Atlantic, Gage and Florence Avenues, with key connectors allowing cyclists to access their destinations on the major corridors. Cyclists may be required to bike short distances along major streets; for this reason, the

Bicycle racks should be provided for short-term bike parking along Atlantic and Gage Avenues as described on page 56, in plazas, open spaces and linear parks. Additionally, new residential uses shall provide at least one long-term, secure bicycle parking space per four units.

Bicycle route signs should be provided at all street intersections of bicycle routes. Bicycle detection should be added at signalized intersections involving bicycle routes: Gage/Pine and Bell-Brompton/Atlantic.



Class III Bike Facility



Class IV Bike Facility

PARKING

Utilizing baseline data and future parking considerations, this section focuses on strategies related to required parking for current land uses in the area and future land uses included within the Plan, assuming the development buildout described in Chapter 1.

Current on-street and off-street parking conditions were reviewed in the Core area, in order to understand the level of parking demand. This included review of the three major shopping centers/lots along Atlantic Avenue: Bell Palm Plaza (northwest of the Atlantic Avenue/Gage Avenue intersection), Northgate parking lot (southwest of the Atlantic Avenue/Bell Avenue intersection), and CVS/O'Reilly parking lot (northwest of the Atlantic Avenue/Florence Avenue intersection). Bell Palm Plaza is the largest of the three, with more than 330 parking spaces, while the Northgate and CVS/O'Reilly lots consist of just over 200 parking spaces. These parking lots are generally 35-55% occupied during peak weekend conditions, with Bell Palm Plaza being roughly 40% occupied.

On-street parking along Atlantic Avenue is currently unmarked (does not require payment), with a 2-hour restriction between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The majority of the parking demand occurs on the east side of the street, as the major shopping centers with excess off-street parking spaces are located on the west side of the street. The highest parking utilization occurs in the section between Gage Avenue and Brompton Avenue (approximately 65-70% utilized). Along Clarkson Avenue, on the east side, parking spaces are marked (perpendicular spaces between Randolph Street and Gage Avenue and angled spaces between Gage Avenue and Bell Avenue). Between Randolph Street and Gage Avenue, on the east side, parking is mostly reserved for employees of businesses within the Bell Palm Plaza. Between Gage Avenue and Bell Avenue, the angled spaces on the east side are approximately 40-45% utilized, while the west side of the street is primarily residential usage (parallel, unmarked spaces).

With full buildout of the Plan, the Core area would experience a net loss of approximately 108 spaces (total of both on-street and off-street). An estimate of future parking demand by non-residential uses was calculated using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation manual, considering the future retail, restaurant, and office-type uses. Combined with the potential new parking demand from future non-residential uses and the availability of current parking facilities in the area, a "leftover" parking demand of approximately 140 to 170 spaces is forecast. This excess demand could be satisfied with the construction of a new two to three story parking structure at the former Shoe City site. If this project is pursued, it is recommended that the removal of parking spaces in certain areas, such as the angled parking along Clarkson Avenue south of Gage Avenue, be staggered such that adequate parking is still available before the parking structure is completed (i.e., during construction).

Alternatives to construction of a parking structure should also be considered, given the roughly \$5-10 million cost of building a structure and the current availability of off-street parking (at the major shopping center lots, for example) during peak conditions. These alternatives may include acquiring portions of currently private parking lots within the area. One example is the retail lot east of Clarkson Avenue, south of Gage Avenue. However, currently, there is no funding source to pay for this acquisition and operation. As mentioned, the Shoe City site could potentially be developed in the near-term such that sufficient space is left open to allow for building a parking structure in the future.



Note: Parking utilization reflects peak Saturday conditions

Parking Utilization



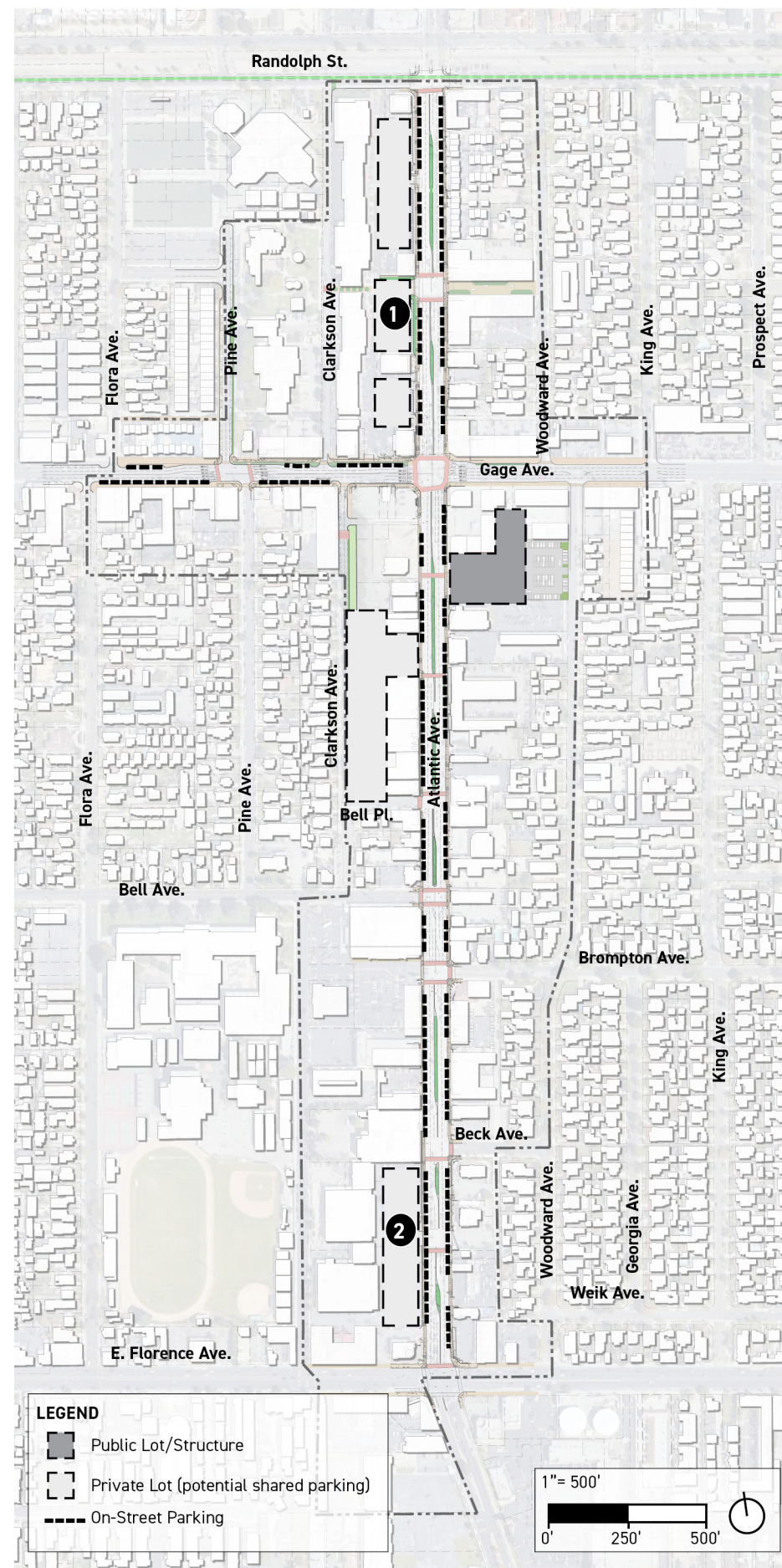
1. Bell Palm Plaza (looking southbound from northeast corner)



2. CVS/O'Reilly lot (looking southbound from northeast)



Atlantic Avenue unmarked curb parking. (northbound)



PARKING

Given the future demand and capacity considerations, the Plan should utilize a combination of the following parking management strategies:

- Aim to reduce demand for parking and include elements such as Travel Demand Management (TDM) interventions, promoting alternative modes, and establishing intervention thresholds based on monitoring of parking occupancy and parking compliance.
- Utilize location tools to influence/affect where people park, with the goal of spreading the demand across the area or utilizing remote parking facilities, as well as signage strategies.
- Utilize time considerations to establish parking frequency, turnover, and duration.
- Incorporate pricing tools that consider paid parking programs and demand-based pricing.
- Incentivize development by lowering the cost of providing parking via shared structures or lots, through a strategy of City acquisition of optimal sites.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE



INTRODUCTION

The intent of the infrastructure chapter of the New Bell District Specific Plan is to evaluate the existing, approved and future utility needs of the area, to generate a comprehensive plan for the efficient and effective provision of wet utility services - potable water, wastewater, and stormwater - and dry utility services - electrical and communication. This chapter also aims to provide a qualitative forecast on future infrastructure needs based on the anticipated growth and development in the New Bell District.

This chapter will highlight specific zones within the Bell District where utility infrastructure upgrades and solutions may be required to meet the future needs of the district. The assessment will be based on the buildout presented in Chapter 1 and could include recommendations for the installation of new infrastructure and or upgrades for the efficient and sustainable management of the existing utility services. The overall goal of this chapter is to provide a framework that can guide the implementation of utility infrastructure needs of the New Bell District in a coordinated and efficient manner, while ensuring the delivery of reliable and high-quality utility services to the residents and businesses in the community.

Approach and Goals

A sustainable future vision for the New Bell District SP Area not only calls for the development of infrastructure solutions, but also nature-based solutions. To support the influx of population from proposed land uses and the collateral increase in residents, it will be important for the City to incorporate green infrastructure measures as a critical stormwater management solution throughout the district. These practices will promote water quality improvement and ecological enhancement but also allow for the integration of education and public realm enhancement.

Infrastructure Goals and Policies

1. Ensure the long term provision of water resources to serve new and existing land uses
 - Reduce freshwater demand through water conservation and targeted utilization of potable uses. (Resource Management Element Policy 25)
 - Consider integrating wastewater reuse technologies into new developments to reduce potable water use for non-potable uses (such as irrigation) and expand recycled water infrastructure in the Plan Area. (Resource Management Element Policy 24)
2. Establish enhanced stormwater management networks to improve water quality and promote urban ecology
 - Implement green infrastructure strategies to reduce runoff, improve water quality and promote infiltration, and support urban ecology and livability.
 - Leverage stormwater enhancements in coordination with right of way enhancements.

POTABLE WATER

Distribution Network

The entire City of Bell is served by five water companies, the jurisdictions and distribution zones of which can be seen in Figure 1. The New Bell District SP Area receives its potable water from the Golden State Water Company, which serves the majority of the City of Bell and has approximately 3,750 connections in the City. The distribution system in the New Bell District Specific Plan Area, as seen in Figure 2 on the right, consists of cast iron pipes ranging from 6-inch to 16-inch in diameter. The primary thoroughfares of Atlantic Avenue and East Gage Avenue have 12-inch diameter potable water lines, while the secondary streets, such as Bell Avenue, Pine Avenue, Clarkson Avenue, and Woodward Avenue consist of pipes ranging from 8-inch to 10-inch in diameter. Other main water lines are found on major roadways and connect to the water lines in the adjacent cities of Bell Gardens and Cudahy. Figure 2 shows the existing potable water infrastructure within the New Bell District.

Capacity and Proposed Improvements

Current water conservation programs aimed at reducing potable water consumption entail implementing durable water-saving fixtures and devices, as well as deploying weather-based irrigation controllers and landscaping with drought-resistant and low water-intensive vegetation, despite minimal existing irrigation demands.

Integrating greywater systems or systems designed for greywater use at both the building and district scales fosters future adaptability and water sensitivity. Establishing a framework for alternative water use and reuse strategies during the initial stages of development presents opportunities for reducing implementation costs and enhancing resilience. Capital improvements, aligned with resilience opportunities, will ensure that future development isn't constrained or negatively affected by the absence of current opportunities.

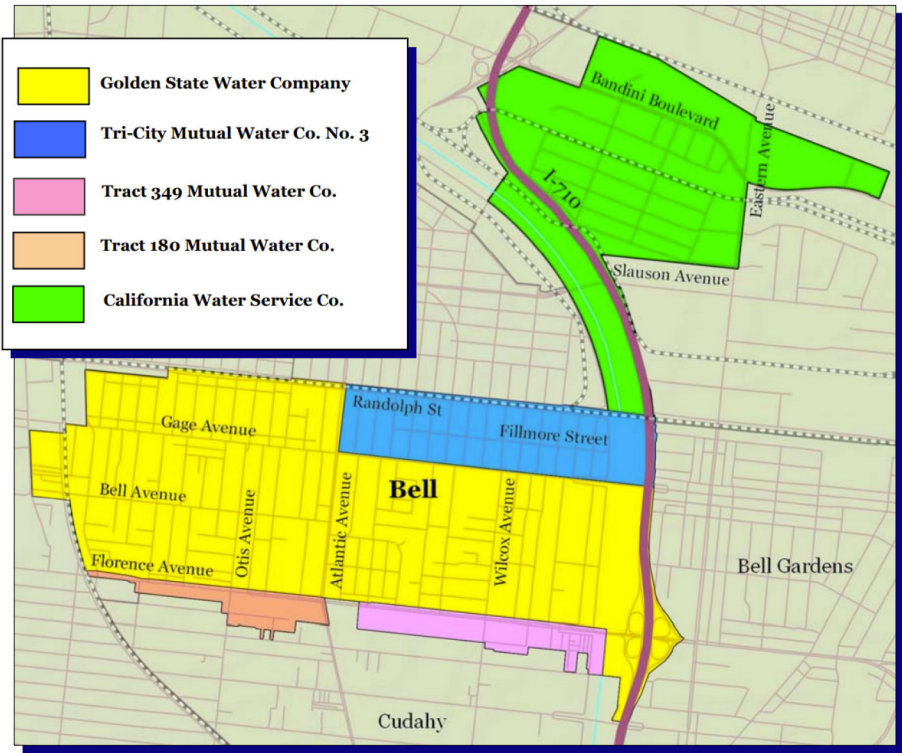


Figure 1: City of Bell Water Service Providers¹. As seen above, the majority of New Bell District is served by the Golden State Water Company.

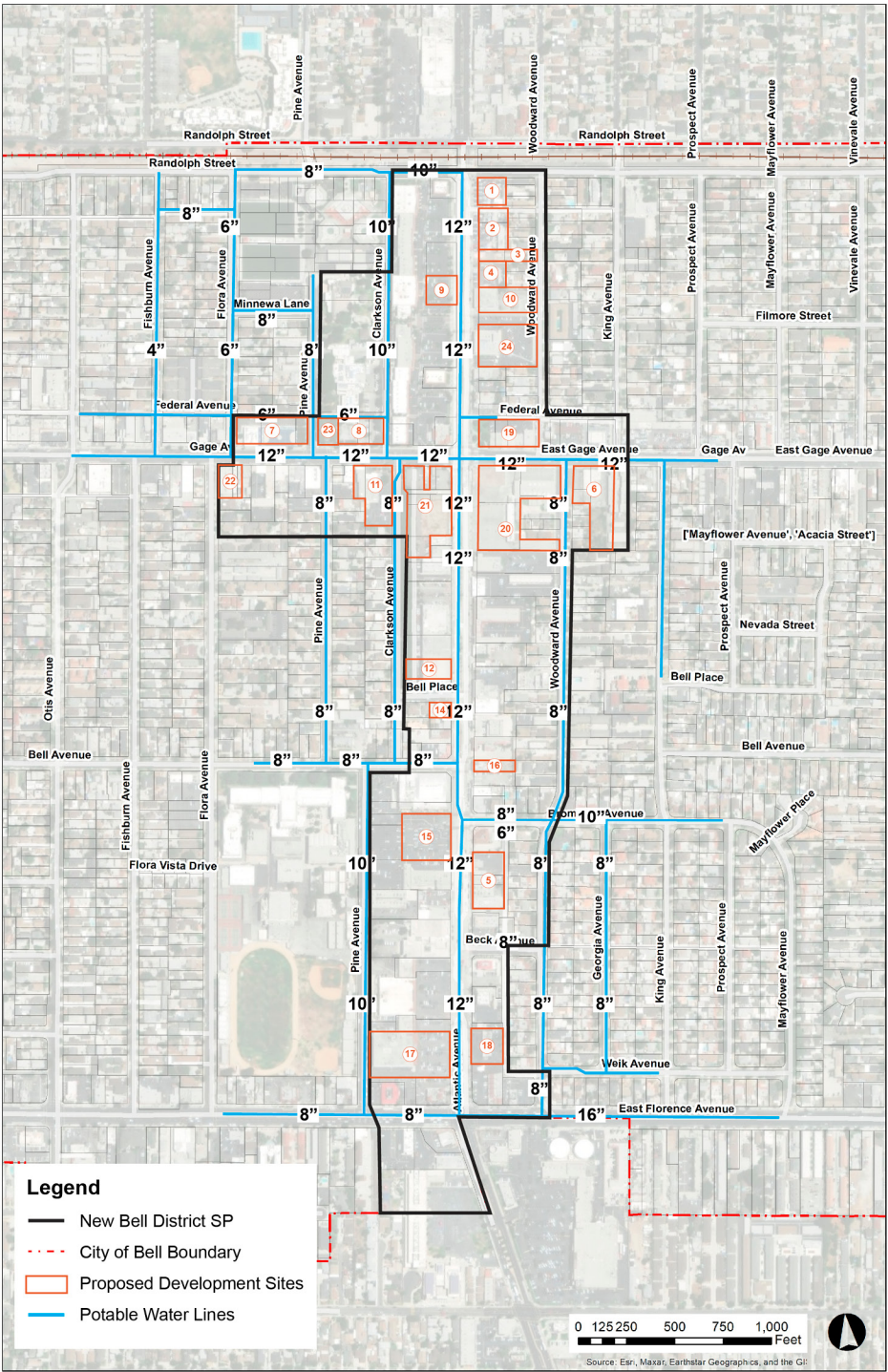


Figure 2: Existing Potable Water Infrastructure in the New Bell District.

¹ City of Bell 2030 General Plan Background Report, page 19.

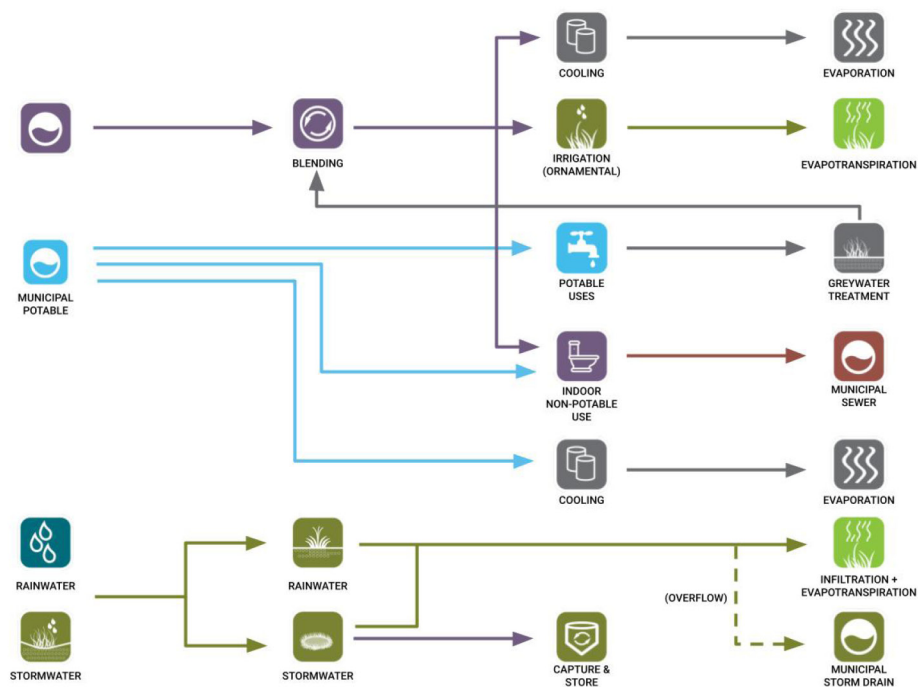


Figure 3: Potential Water Sustainability Opportunities for the New Bell District SP Area.

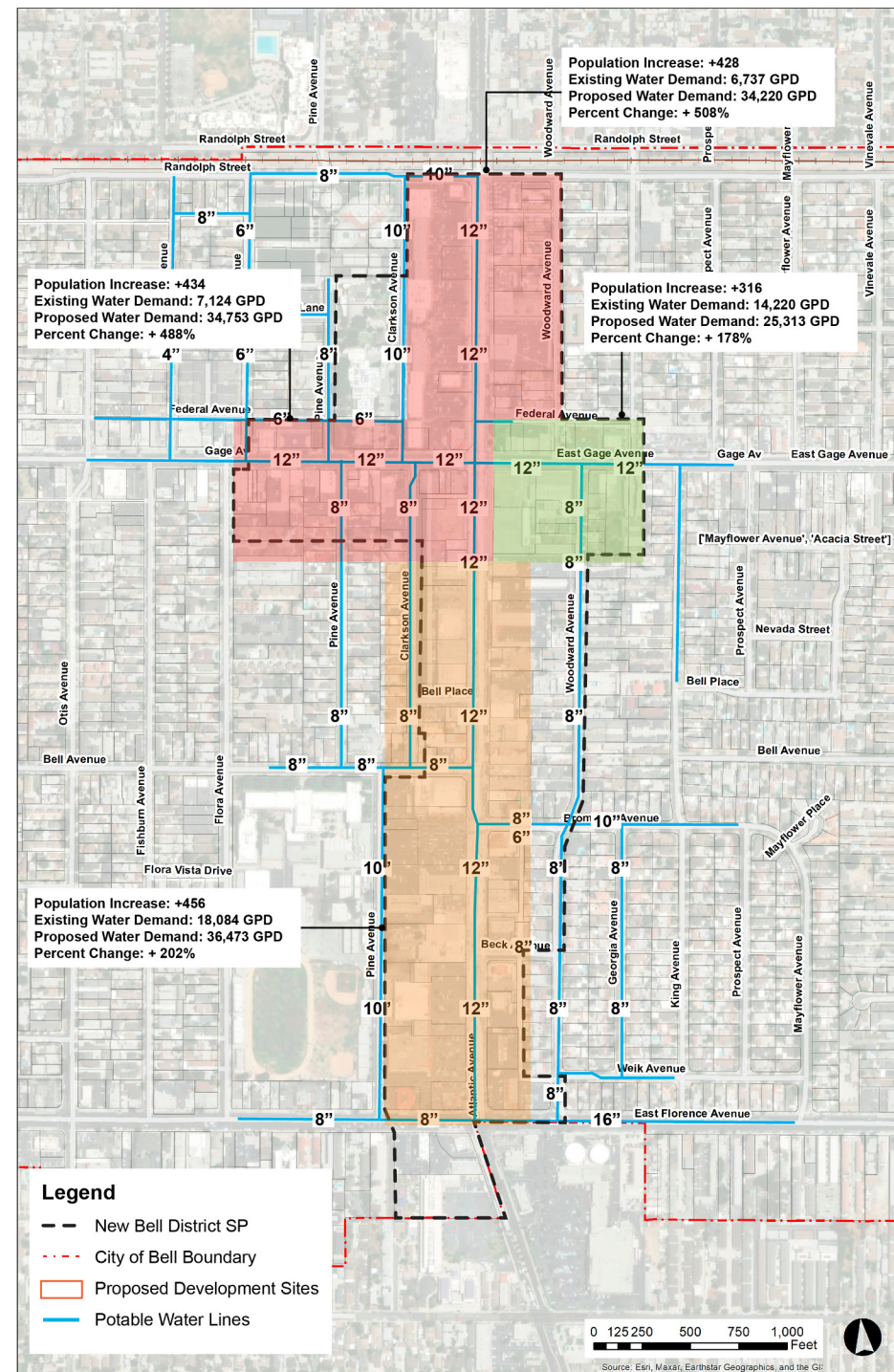


Figure 4: Proposed Potable Water Infrastructure Improvements and Upgrades for the New Bell District.

POTABLE WATER

While no operating capacity issues currently exist in the City of Bell, the potential future reliance on imported water may result in cost and procurement implications for serving additional demands generated by the proposed densified development. To account for new and uncertain demand factors based on projected population growth and available supplies, The City of Bell should commit to establishing alternative and innovative policies and programs to meet water demand, conserve supplies, and increase reuse. Such policies include expanding the implementation of LID and other on-site retention and infiltration measures, as well as policies that enhance and expand water conservation measures and establish mandates and incentives to limit demand to ensure a future of water sustainability.

Based on the proposed zoning plan of the Bell Specific Plan, it can be seen that the majority of the Specific Plan Area will result in an increase in population density and will require a higher demand for water service as future sites are developed. With this change it will be important for the city to conduct a water service distribution analysis that can be adjusted to accommodate future demands and to better make recommendations for water main upgrades.

Figure 4 to the left illustrates the zones of proposed development upgrades and corresponding approximate potable water demand which factors in the proposed land use changes and potential increases in population densities. Within the New Bell District Specific Plan - as with several cities in Los Angeles County - concerns regarding potable water infrastructure arise at choke points, where smaller pipe sizes meet larger pipe sizes that are inadequate due to changes in demand, as can be seen at the intersections of Bell and Atlantic, Brompton and Atlantic, Pine and East Gage, and Clarkson and East Gage, to name a few. These issues can be addressed by installing larger connection points in the water network. Any new development within these zones should coordinate with the City of Bell to evaluate system capacity and necessary upgrades within the system. At this time its more likely that the areas highlighted in red would require water main upgrades during full buildout conditions. The timing, phasing and final program of these developments will dictate exact upgrades necessary.

WASTEWATER

Distribution Network

The City of Bell owns the City's sewer infrastructure, which consists of 37 miles of gravity sewer main with 8,611 lateral connections. Sewage generated by the City is handled by the Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD).

The sewer lateral lines are owned and maintained by the city and the three trunk lines located in Bell are maintained by the LACSD. The primary county-owned sewer trunk that serves the New Bell District SP Area is the Wright Road Trunk Sewer - a 24-inch diameter line in Atlantic Avenue¹. Through a review of the City of Bell GIS utility mapping information as well as the 2019 Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP), it is noted the majority of the sewer mains that connect to the development within the district are 8-inch in diameter, some of which are undersized under current conditions.

Figure 5 depicts the sanitary sewer lines within the New Bell District SP Area that are deficient in capacity, that have been noted and considered in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in the 2019 SSMP.

Demand

Based on the City of Bell SSMP, a portion of the New Bell District was among 4 designated areas within the City of Bell that required sanitary sewer improvements. These had been estimated by engineers and a cost analysis was conducted to determine that the total cost for repairs and improvements would total roughly \$1.25 million. The details and estimates of the proposed sizes and improvements were grouped into projects and are listed in Table 1, which has been indicated in Figure 5.

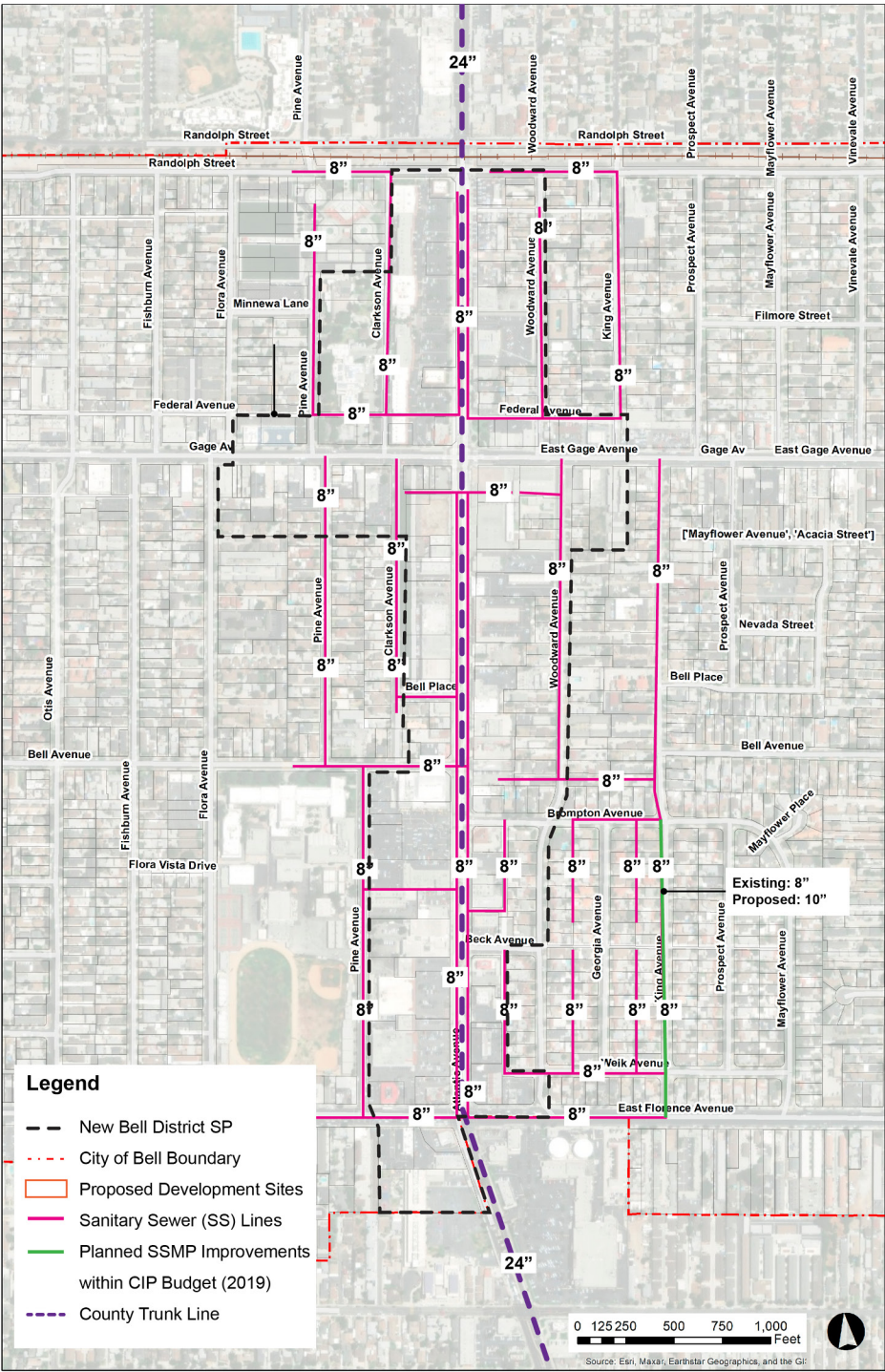


Figure 5: New Bell District Existing Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure.

Project Number	Segment	Proposed Size	Quantity	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Project Cost
5	King Ave from Florence Ave to MH North of Brompton Ave	10"	1,430	Linear Feet	\$200	\$286,000	\$633,150
	Manhole		7	EA	\$8,000	\$56,000	
	Indirect Costs		1	LS	\$127,000	\$127,000	
	Construction Subtotal					\$489,000	
	Engineering / Contract Admin / Inspection / Contingency (35% of construction cost)					\$164,150	
TOTAL							\$633,150

Table 1: Portion of the 2019 City of Bell Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) Capital Improvement Plans, that fall within the New Bell District Specific Plan. It can be seen here that the 2019 SSMP only referred to one stretch of King Avenue to be upsized. However, as can be seen in Figure 6, there are more sanitary sewer lines that may need to be upsized.

1 City of Bell 2030 General Plan Background Report, page 19.

WASTEWATER

Capacity & Proposed Improvements

The primary existing land uses for the New Bell District range from commercial, to medium density residential, and some minor institutional land uses. As the proposed land uses for the New Bell District consist of similar uses with additional mixed use developments, resulting to a decrease of roughly 25,000 square feet in commercial uses, a decrease of 2,500 square feet in institutional uses, but an increase of approximately 630 residences within the Specific Plan Area, it can be surmised that the majority of the changes in land use will accommodate the increase in sewer capacity. However, based on the pipes that are recommended to be upsized in the 2019 City of Bell Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (SSMP) highlighted in Figure 7 below, there are some areas that would require attention in future phases of the specific plan, namely those along the proposed development sites along Atlantic Avenue and East Gage Avenue, and along King Avenue and East Florence Avenue, noted in Figure 6.

In order to further improve the sanitary sewer system in the New Bell District SP Area, strategies such as water conservation and on-site reuse must be encouraged to not only decrease sewage flow, but also ease the burden (both infrastructurally and financially) on the existing sanitary sewer system. Implementing on-site water reuse would not only be cost-effective than expanding the existing system, but it would also aid in urban cooling and carbon sequestration, and additionally aid in avoiding other capital costs. It would also benefit the New Bell District SP Area to harness the opportunity of recycled water generation for non-potable uses, such as irrigation, cooling, flushing, etc. at a variety of scales in the area. This can not only be done through on-site reuse, or district-scale reuse facilities, but also through soft infrastructure such as streetscape bioretention, examples of which are seen Figure 7.

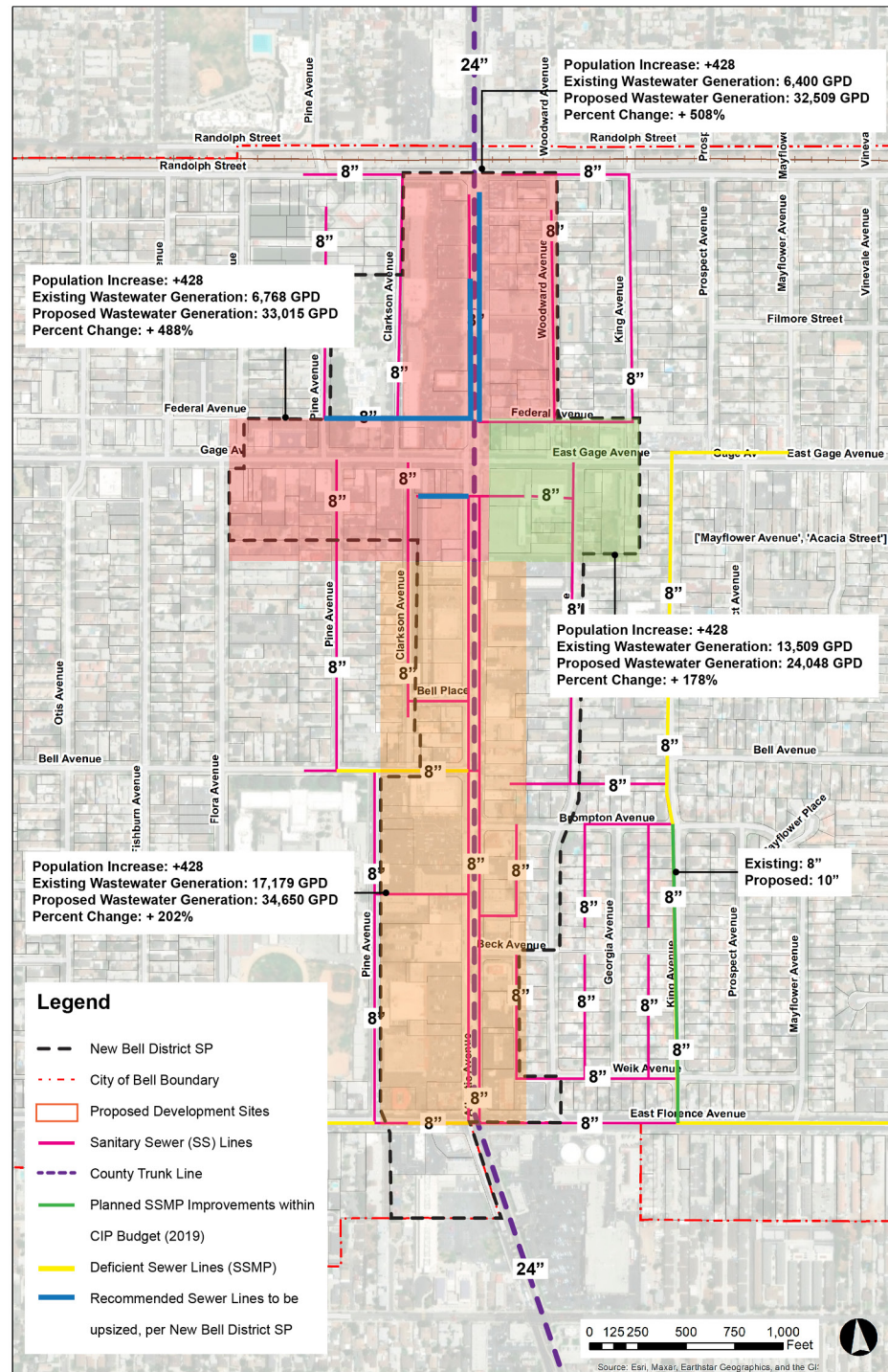


Figure 6: Proposed Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements and Upgrades for the New Bell District



Figure 7: Reference streetside bioswales.
(Above: NACTO, Below: Eric Fischer, Flickr)

HYDROLOGY & STORMWATER

Distribution Network

The City of Bell is located in the Los Angeles River - Upper Reach 2 watershed. The vast majority of the existing land usage within the New Bell District Specific Plan Area varies between commercial and medium-density residential.

A majority of storm drains in the City of Bell are owned and maintained by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) that connect directly to the Los Angeles River. Drainage lines are located on north-south streets and are connected to the Los Angeles River by drainage lines on east-west streets¹. Figure 8 shows the stormwater infrastructure in the New Bell District SP Area. Storm drain lines primarily lie under Gage Avenue, Pine Avenue, Bell Avenue, and Florence Avenue.

Figure 9 shows the drainage flow paths across the New Bell District SP Area. For the most part, the region is extremely flat, with intersections such as Atlantic Avenue and East Gage Avenue at lower elevations, as well as portions along Atlantic Avenue, indicating stormwater runoff would likely collect at these intersections, while the infrastructure would direct runoff to the LA River. Overall, the New Bell District SP area slopes to the southeast, as the elevation drops roughly 5 feet across the length of the area.

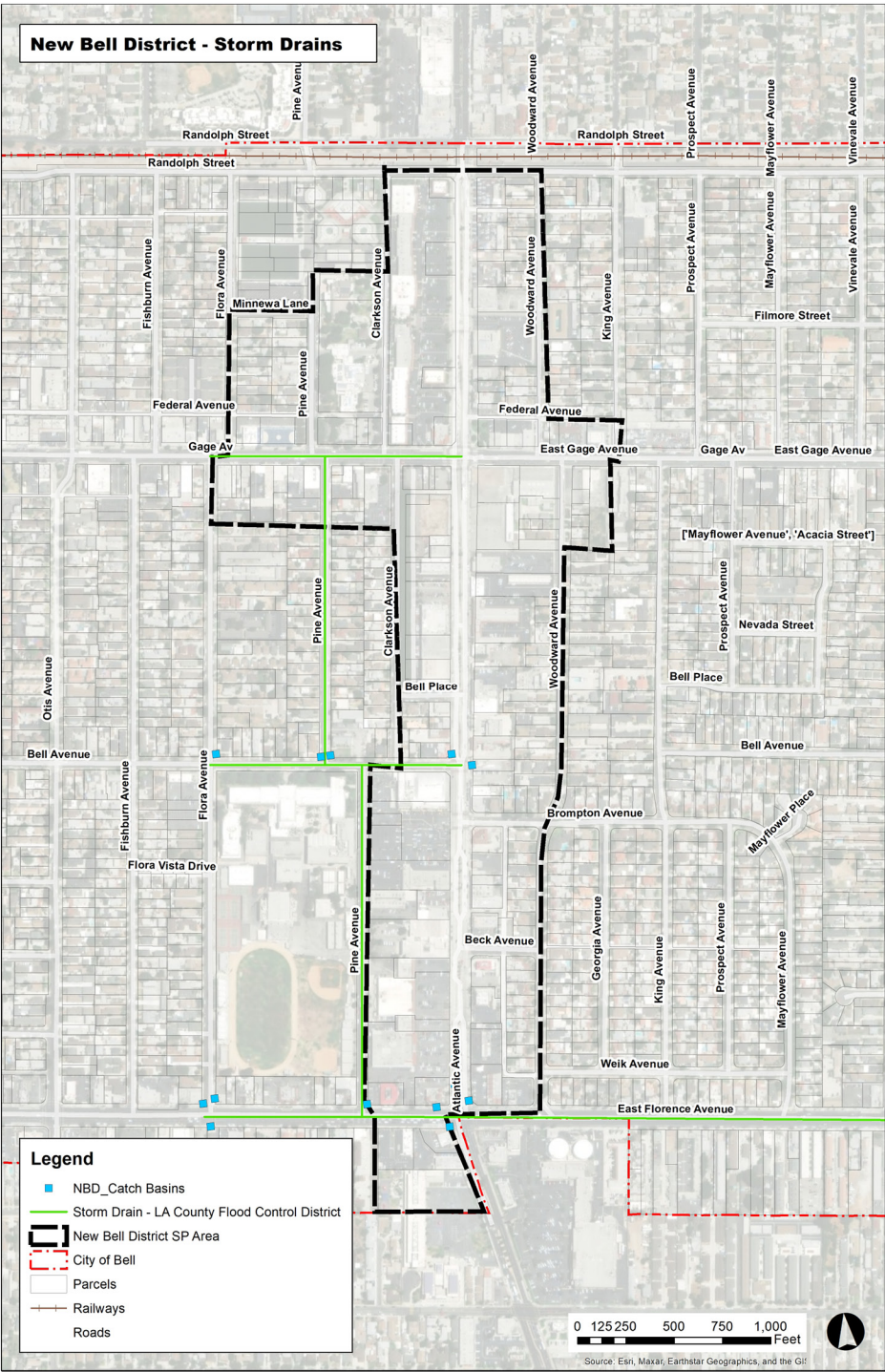


Figure 8: New Bell District Stormwater Infrastructure

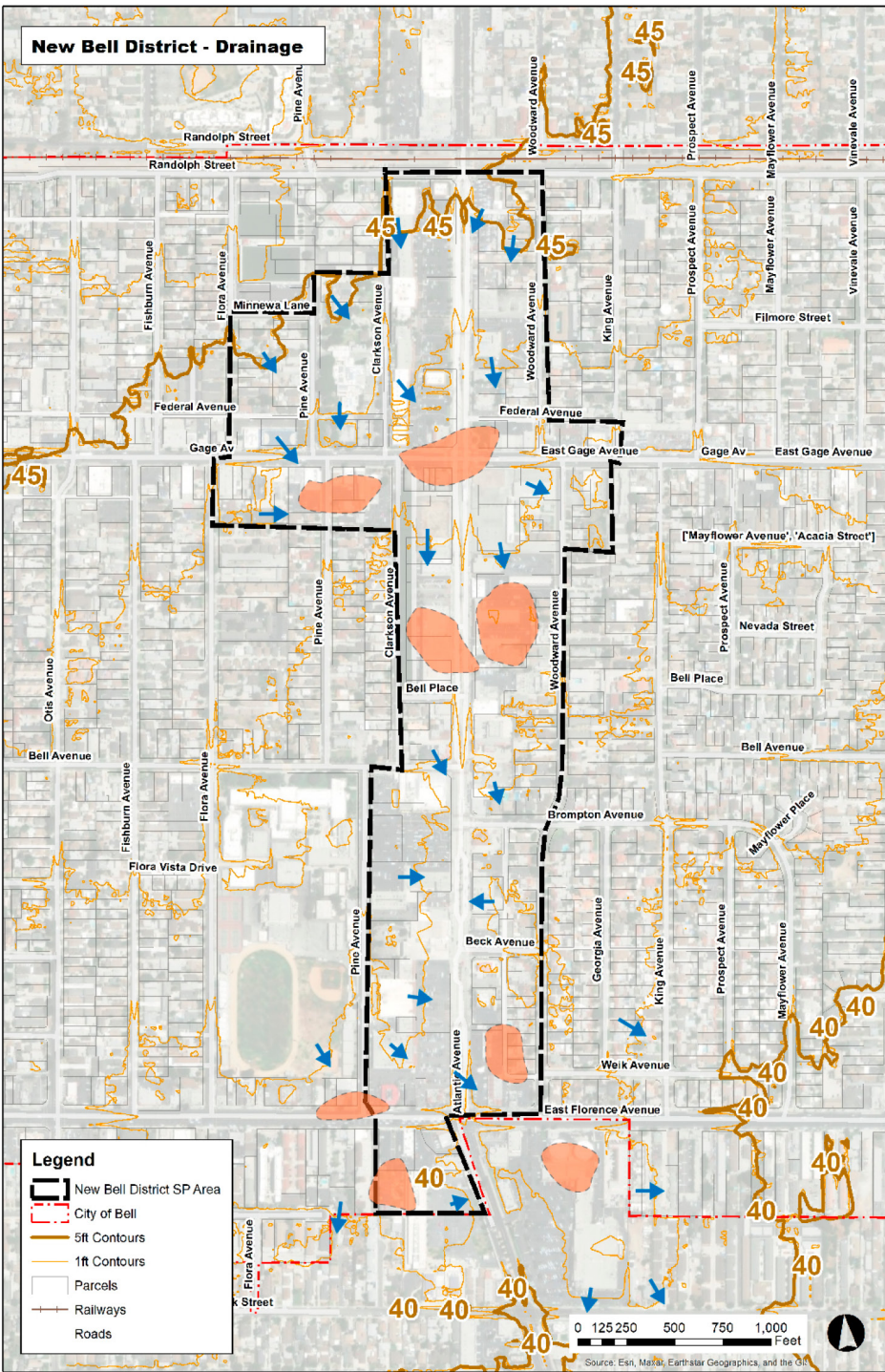
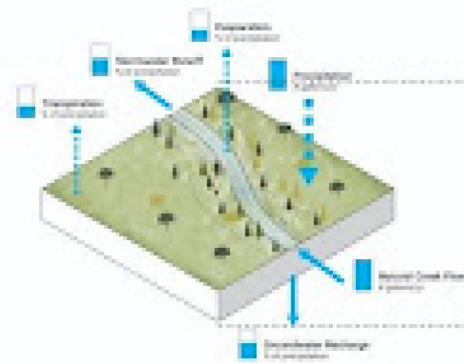


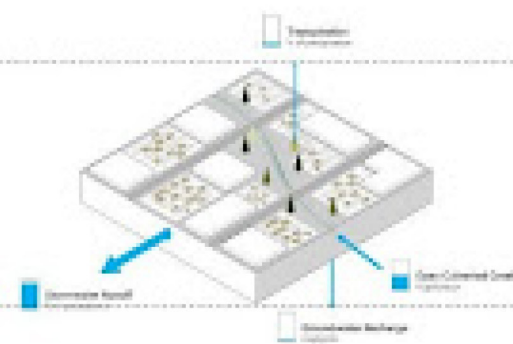
Figure 9: New Bell District Drainage Flow Paths. Orange highlights indicating relatively flat areas where runoff may stagnate.

HYDROLOGY & STORMWATER

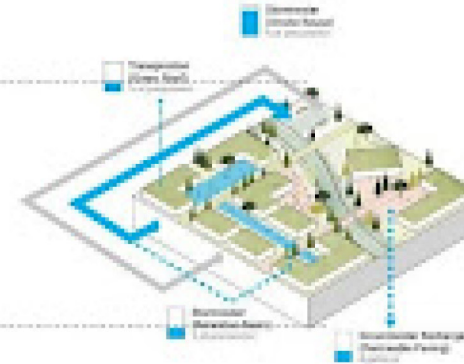
Pre-Development Hydrology



Present Conditions



Future Net Positive Vision



Capacity & Proposed Improvements

Stormwater is part of the eco-hydrological water balance. If left unchecked, urban runoff can be a liability that can cause erosion, pick up pollutants, and damage aquatic life. If managed with pre-development hydrology in mind, stormwater can become an asset that allows native ecologies to thrive. To protect the local ecosystem and decrease the amount of untreated stormwater released in the New Bell District SP Area, it is necessary to expand stormwater management strategies to include businesses and non-municipal facilities in the region.

Figure 10: Striving for a Net-Positive Vision of the New Bell District SP Area by keeping pre-development hydrology in mind.

HYDROLOGY & STORMWATER

As seen in Figure 11, a hybridization of traditional stormwater best management practices (BMPs) with integrated stormwater infrastructure will not only create opportunities to minimize the impact on the conveyance system, but will also drastically improve the region's natural waterways and groundwater protection on a public realm, parcel, and district scale. Incorporating water quality measures and improvements in the SP Area should involve methods that slow down, collect, treat, and potentially reuse stormwater at both individual property and district levels. By integrating green infrastructure, it will be possible to address issues such as the collection of water on impermeable surfaces and runoff that harms both the Los Angeles River and its watershed. Implementing enhanced low-impact development (LID) and green infrastructure systems both at streetscape and site scale can help to improve the overall stormwater performance of the district.

The New Bell District should incorporate water quality enhancements that slow, collect, treat and even reuse stormwater at both the parcel and district level. If implemented at larger scales, stormwater credits may be obtained across portions or the entirety of the district to meet water quality and retention goals even when opportunities are not feasible at individual sites.

The proposed stormwater management plan for the New Bell District discusses several key concepts along critical avenues in the district that work together to provide a district-scale strategy.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the plan proposes to convert underutilized roadway areas into new linear bioretention facilities along Pine Avenue, Clarkson Avenue and Gage Avenue. Additionally, plazas, shared streets present opportunities for permeable pavers, bioretention areas, and other types of green infrastructure. Smaller areas may also be possible along Atlantic Avenue in the vicinity of bulb-out crossings.

Overall, these various strategies depicted along the above mentioned corridors will not only reduce urban heat island effect, but would also reduce stormwater runoff, improve water quality, slow traffic, improve pedestrian safety, and allow for both landscape beautification and green infrastructure opportunities across the entire district. The development of urban greenspaces and green infrastructure systems alongside complete streets networks supports urban ecology, livability and pedestrian circulation in the New Bell District. These strategies include multi-benefits of water conservation and resiliency, flood resilience, and enhanced biodiversity. Improvements to habitat creation and stormwater treatment minimizes infrastructure required for stormwater management and maximizes public realm amenities.



Figure 11: Proposed Stormwater Management Strategies in the New Bell District

ELECTRICITY

Land Use Type	City of Bell Electrical Rate (cents / kilowatt-hour)	State of California Electrical Rate (cents / kilowatt-hour)	Percentage Comparison (%)
Residential	15.98	15.43	Bell is 4.17% greater.
Commercial	11.81	13.41	Bell is 11.93% less.
Industrial	8.16	10.49	Bell is 22.21% less.

Table 2: City of Bell Electrical Rates, compared to the state-wide average, based on primary land uses¹.

¹ <https://www.electricitylocal.com/states/california/bell/>

Distribution Network

Electrical power service to the City of Bell is provided by Southern California Edison (SCE). SCE maintains a substation at Elizabeth Street and Salt Lake Avenue in the City of Cudahy (south of the New Bell District SP Area), and overhead and underground lines in the City to serve the energy demands of local residents and businesses.

Demand

Critical data and analysis on electrical infrastructure in the New Bell District Specific Plan has not been furnished within the available documentation. The requisite information shall be supplied by the responsible party, and subsequent evaluations and assessments should be undertaken as new development is advanced.

Recommendations

The City of Bell should prioritize and provide incentives for the production of renewable energy at both the building and district scale within the New Bell District SP Area. This can be achieved by utilizing underutilized spaces, such as open-air parking areas, rooftops, alleyways, and road medians to contribute towards energy sustainability goals the City would have identified in its 2030 General Plan. Additionally, the existing Tesla EV Charging lot located at the intersection of East Gage Avenue and Pine Avenue will be expanded to include public parking, but will regardless continue to provide EV charging as well.

NATURAL GAS

Distribution Network

Natural gas service to the City of Bell is provided by the SEMPRA, a large North American public utility company with focus on electrical and natural gas infrastructure. Among its operating companies are Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) - the nation's largest natural gas distribution utility that delivers clean, safe and reliable energy to over 20 million consumers through 5.9 million meters in over 500 communities - provides natural gas to the City of Bell. SEMPRA maintains a network of underground natural gas lines serving residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the City. Figure 13 shows the natural gas infrastructure in the New Bell District SP Area. As can be seen in the figure below, the major gas pipelines through the SP Area reside under Randolph Street, East Gage Avenue, Atlantic Avenue, and East Florence Avenue. A natural gas transmission line and Arco pipelines also extend along the UPRR tracks on the western end of the City (west of the SP Area).

Recommendations

The City of Bell should strive to replace diesel-fueled vehicles with battery electric if viable, and the City's existing bus network to electric as well, which could result in a significant reduction of natural gas use. Use of natural gas for residential, commercial, and mixed-use land uses could further be reduced with the incorporation of electrification systems or energy conservation measures.

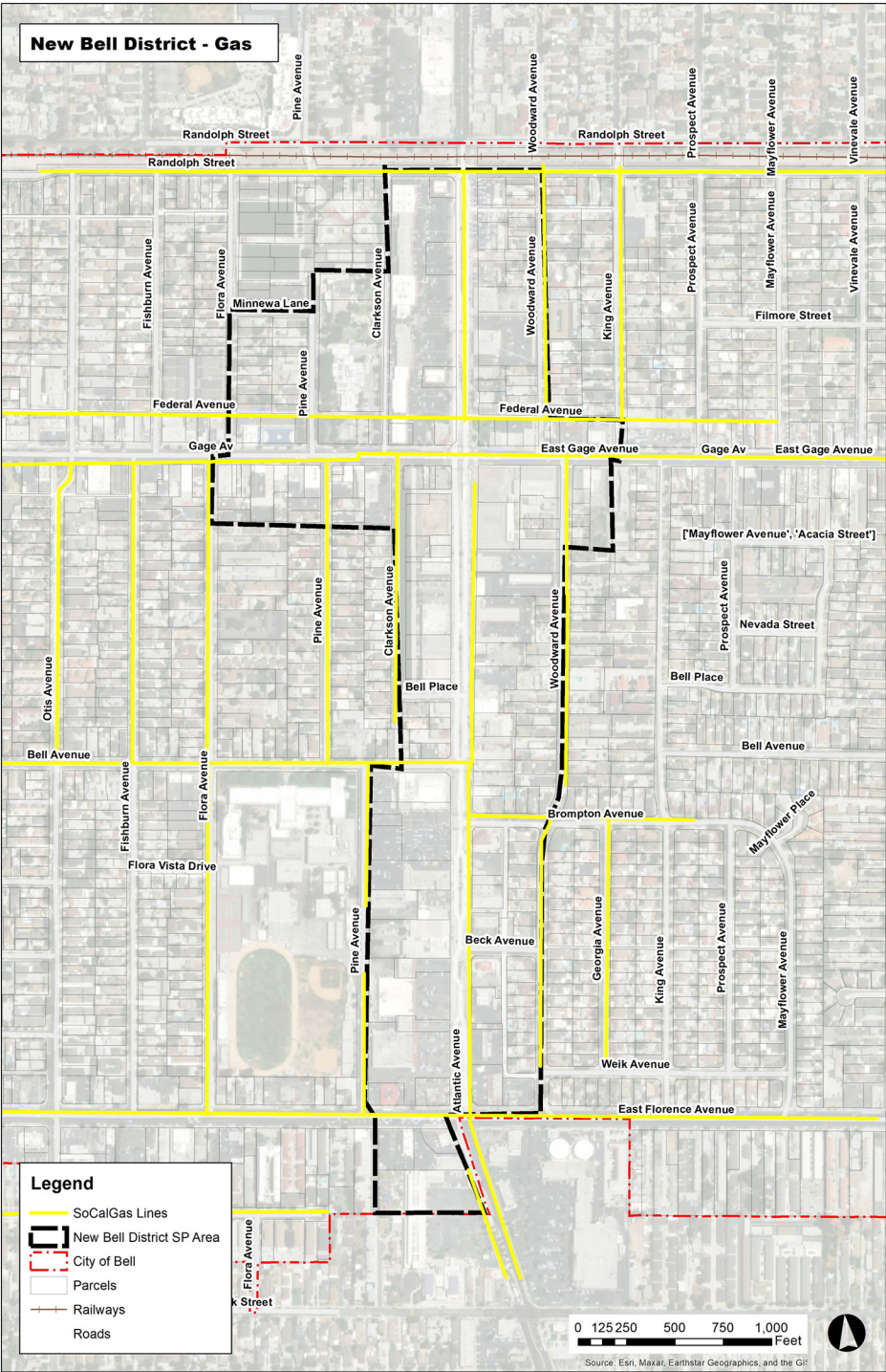


Figure 13: New Bell District Natural Gas Infrastructure

DATA & COMMUNICATIONS

Distribution Network

Figure 14 shows the communications infrastructure in the New Bell District SP Area. As can be seen in the map below, the SP Area has communication and fiber lines owned by Charter Communications (primarily along Pine Avenue and Woodward Avenue) and Crown Castle Communications (primarily along Clarkson Avenue).

Recommendations

A potential opportunity for communication system improvements would be to petition for the expansion of high speed optic-based broadband internet services across the New Bell District. Not only will this upgrade deliver high-speed connectivity and bandwidth to the heavily residential community in this area, there are added benefits for business and property owners, such as cost-sensible solutions to encourage future development while increasing broadband access. Such improvements to data connectivity in the New Bell District SP Area would likely encourage commercial growth in the region, while also pushing for better connectivity for current and future within the City of Bell and its surrounding cities.

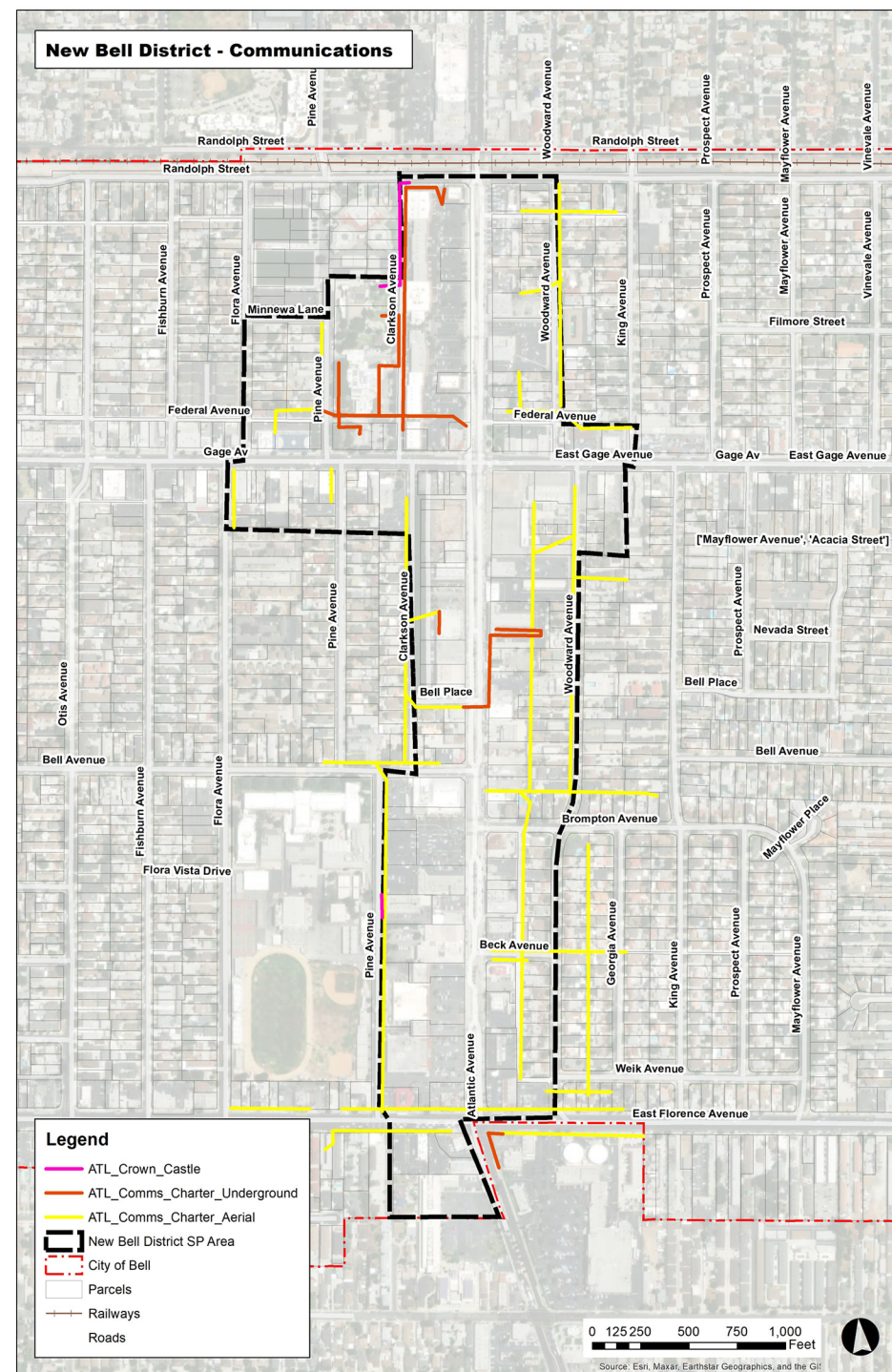


Figure 14: New Bell District Communications Infrastructure

5. IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

The City of Bell envisions transformative change for the New Bell District in accordance with this Specific Plan. Successfully implementing the plan will require creativity, flexibility and persistence. The current leadership has inherited a community distrustful of local government, especially as it relates to financial management and raising taxes or fees on local residents, property owners or businesses. Also, the community continues to be mostly comprised of lower-income households, which makes prospective businesses or developers hesitant to enter the market.

Despite this, the City has been and can continue to restore trust and build momentum for the execution of the plan through “quick wins,” and a step-by-step, approach to plan implementation. In 2022, the City strengthened its economic development office, which has helped shift perspectives among the community and business owners, and has resulted in potential new development projects, such as the anticipated construction of In-N-Out Burger at the southwest corner of Atlantic and Gage.

The New Bell Specific Plan will be implemented primarily through the Community Development Department, in coordination with the Public Works Department and other departments, under the supervision of the City Manager's office. Strengthening the capacity of these departments is critical for the City as it seeks to implement the Specific Plan. Consistency of staff and vision, along with visible project successes, will help instill confidence from property or business owners, who will play a key role in executing the plan by redeveloping properties, mobilizing business investment and improvements, strengthening local business associations, and/or making collective decisions to fund local capital improvements and services through assessments and fees.

As outlined on the next page, full implementation of the plan will require substantial financial resources. While the City has limited funding sources at its disposition currently, there are various other sources available. The community's designation as a disadvantaged area under SB 535 grants the City priority in many types of grant applications. Additionally, redeveloping publicly-owned properties could generate revenue that can be reinvested in the district.

Ultimately, developing the area according to the Plan is expected to have a positive impact on the City's General Fund, enhancing its ability to provide services to the entire community without needing to raise general taxes in the future.



Source: wehotimes.com

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The capital improvements program for the New Bell District Specific Plan includes 18 infrastructure projects which are required to fully implement the Specific Plan's public realm and infrastructure recommendations. While the full cost is estimated at \$17 – 33 million, there are a wide variety of funding sources and mechanisms which can be used to meet these needs, including grants, formula funds, development proceeds, and development conditions. The highest-cost project is the central parking structure.

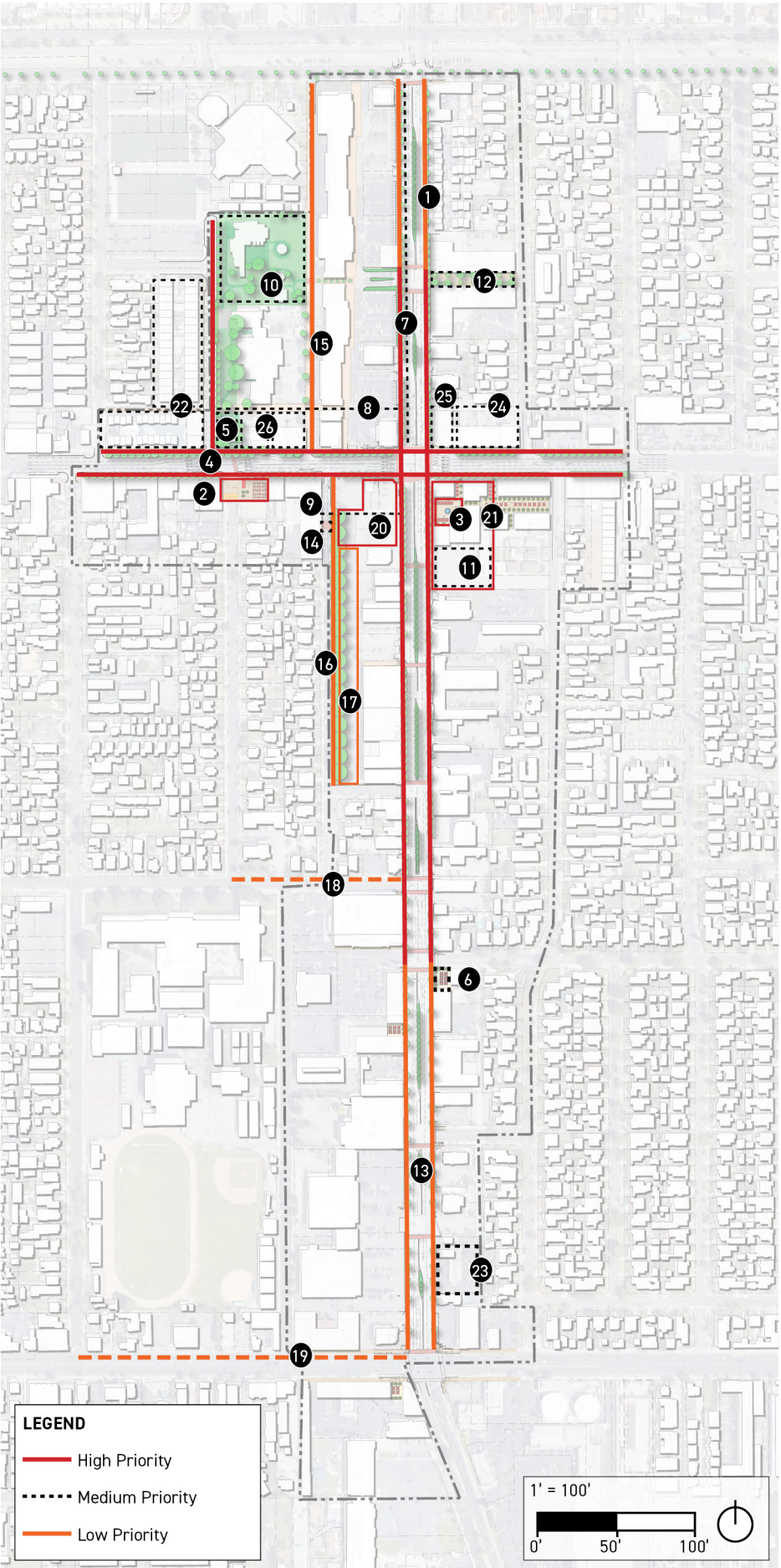
Projects are ranked by priority and timeline. Short-term (0- to 5-year) projects are those related to projects already in discussion or development, while medium- (5-10 year) and long-term (10+ year) projects relate to new proposals of the Specific Plan. High-priority projects are related to major placemaking improvements which will significantly advance the desirability and livability of the New Bell District.

Public land development

As illustrated in Chapter 2, seven significant publicly-owned sites are recommended to be redeveloped through the Specific Plan:

- 20. Western Auto (SW corner Atlantic/Gage) – destination drive-thru restaurant
- 21. Shoe City (SE corner Atlantic/Gage) – entertainment commercial/mixed-use development
- 22. BCHA Gage/Pine sites and Futsal Park – residential townhome or affordable housing
- 23. Jack's Car Wash – drive-thru or charging station
- 24. Gage/Woodward – podium residential
- 25. Biancini Park – residential/retail mixed-use
- 26. Library (County-owned) – affordable housing with new library

The development of these properties is a critical implementation item, not only for the benefits that these projects bring, but also because these developments would demonstrate market viability for later projects to be built on privately-owned land, and because the City can closely steer the development of these properties to include amenities that fit the vision of the Specific Plan. As discussed on the next spread, development also brings in income which can fund capital improvements.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN			
	Capital Improvement Project	Reference (page number)	
Key			
1	Atlantic Avenue Streetscape Improvements - High Priority	46.	
2	Gage/Pine Flexible Shared Street Plaza	49.	
3	Bell Central Plaza	14.	
4	Gage Avenue Streetscape Improvements and Pine Avenue Linear Park	49.	
5	Bell House remodel	19.	
6	Southern Core Gateway Plaza	58.	
7	Sewer Improvements - Atlantic Ave (Randolph to Gage)	66.	
8	Sewer Improvements - Federal Way (Pine to Atlantic)	66.	
9	Sewer Improvements - South of Gage (Clarkson to Atlantic)	66.	
10	Treder Park Modernization	21.	
11	Central Parking Structure	14.	
12	Bell Palm Plaza Driveway Shared Street Plaza	51.	
13	Atlantic Avenue Streetscape Improvements - Low Priority	46.	
14	Clarkson Avenue Speed Table	17.	
15	Clarkson Avenue North Shared Street	52.	
16	Clarkson Avenue South Linear Park	53.	
17	Western Parking Lot Acquisition	62.	
18	Sewer Improvements - Bell Avenue (Pine to Atlantic)	66.	
19	Sewer Improvements - Florence Ave (Flora to Atlantic)	66.	

Key	Publicly-Owned Land Development	
20	SW corner Atlantic/Gage (Western Auto)	17.
21	Shoe City Site	14.
22	City-owned Gage/Pine sites	19.
23	Jack's Car Wash Site	23.
24	Gage/Woodward Site	17.
25	Biancini Park	17.
26	Library Site	19.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

Commercial façade improvement program

The City has a current commercial façade improvement program, funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The program should be expanded within the New Bell District, with targeting to properties adjacent to development sites.

Explore Establishing a Parking Authority

Parking-related funding mechanisms identified in the previous sections, including the Parking Benefits District and the Parking Assessment District, could be implemented and managed under a City Parking Authority. The Parking Authority is established by the powers vested in the City under the California Streets and Highways Code section 32650 and is administered by a board from among the members of the City Council and City Staff. The establishment of a Parking Authority allows for the coordination and consolidation of revenue streams (parking fees and assessments) to fund larger capital facilities through its capacity to issue bonds. The Authority is responsible for the effective management of these funding programs and the mandated reporting requirements to the City Council. Additionally, the Parking Authority is responsible for parking management, including developing and implementing parking pricing strategies.

Future Planning Studies

Recommended future plans and studies include:

1. [Prepare Development Impact Fee Nexus Studies](#) to evaluate the funding requirements from the various categories of capital needs to provide services to new development and service population growth at established levels of service (LOS).
2. Economic Development Strategic Plan – A comprehensive economic development strategy that goes beyond real estate development that leverages local and regional economic dynamics, including strenghts, weeknesses, opportunities and threats.
3. Gage Avenue Specific Plan – A Specific Plan for Gage Avenue would spur additional development east and west of the New Bell District and determine a streetscape concept that could integrate, inform and/or modify the recommendations of this Specific Plan related to the character of Gage Avenue.
4. First/Last Mile and Transit Study – A study related to transit service and access from Bell to the future Southeast Gateway Line may consider additional bicycle facility improvements, transit speed and reliability enhancements, and possible rerouting of La Campana.

					Leveraging Development			Grants				Financing Districts		
	Priority	Timeline	Cost Estimate Low	Cost Estimate High	Condition of Development	Development Impact Fee	Public Land Dvpmt Proceeds	Affordable Housing Grants	Transportation Funds	Open Space Grant	Water Grant	Special Assessment District/ LLAD - Atlantic Ave	Community Facilities District	Parking Benefit District
	High	Short	\$1,090,000	\$2,040,000										
	High	Short	\$110,000	\$210,000										
	High	Short	\$900,000	\$1,690,000										
	High	Medium	\$1,500,000	\$2,800,000										
	Medium	Short	\$520,000	\$980,000										
	Medium	Medium	\$210,000	\$390,000										
	Medium	Medium	\$750,000	\$1,390,000										
	Medium	Medium	\$240,000	\$450,000										
	Medium	Medium	\$90,000	\$160,000										
	Medium	Long	\$890,000	\$1,670,000										
	Medium	Long	\$5,850,000	\$10,910,000										
	Low	Long	\$1,700,000	\$3,180,000										
	Low	Short	\$1,880,000	\$3,510,000										
	Low	Short	\$20,000	\$40,000										
	Low	Long	\$310,000	\$590,000										
	Low	Long	\$870,000	\$1,630,000										
	Low	Long	Unsure											
	Low	Long	\$210,000	\$390,000										
	Low	Long	\$400,000	\$750,000										

Operations and Maintenance

In addition to capital improvements, the New Bell District may generate new operational and maintenance demands. Increasing the level of service on maintenance tasks such as power-washing sidewalks, cleaning trash bins, and maintaining landscaping will help make the New Bell District feel like a welcoming and special place. Regular events should also be planned by the City, local businesses/ organizations, or a future Business Improvement District, to bring in new clientele and activate public spaces; this will also require promotion of the events and the district.

Operations and maintenance can be funded through the City’s General Fund, any financing district, or a Business Improvement District.

Total by Priority Level			
High		\$3,600,000	\$6,740,000
Medium		\$10,250,000	\$19,130,000
Low		\$3,690,000	\$6,910,000
Total		\$17,540,000	\$32,780,000

Total by Timeline			
Short		\$4,520,000	\$8,470,000
Medium		\$2,790,000	\$5,190,000
Long		\$10,230,000	\$19,120,000
Total		\$17,540,000	\$32,780,000

FUNDING AND FINANCING MECHANISMS

The table on this page presents a list of funding and financing mechanisms that can be considered for implementation of the New Bell District Specific Plan. The most promising mechanisms for each project are presented in the table on the previous page and are described below.

Condition of Development

Development projects shall upgrade adjacent sidewalks to Plan standards except where doing so would create an inconsistency that is detrimental for the district. In addition, changes in the roadway described by the Plan may also be imposed as a condition of development where these are required for traffic/roadway safety mitigation purposes in keeping with State law (e.g. construction of speed table on Clarkson Avenue to deter neighborhood cut-through traffic) or where the construction of these improvements is beneficial to the development (e.g. Gage/Pine Flexible Shared Street Plaza).

Development Impact Fees

Development Impact Fees (DIFs) can be used to fund new public facilities or the expansion of existing public facilities necessary to meet the public services demands from new growth. DIFs are one-time fees that local governments can charge only new development for capital needs necessary to provide and maintain an acceptable level of service. These fees must meet the requirements set by California law under the Mitigation Fee Act AB 1600, 1987 and further amended by AB 602, 2022. The requirements under *GC § 66001(a)* include: 1) identifying the purpose of the fee; 2) identifying the use to which the fee will be put; and 3) establishing a ‘Nexus’ or a reasonable relationship between the fee amount and the type of development it is imposed upon, including the need for such public facility for the type of development charged. DIFs do not require voter approval but are governed by annual and 5-year reporting requirements, as recently amended in 2024 under AB 516. This requires that charging authorities present an audit of the fees collected, fund balances and the usage of such fees toward specifically identified infrastructure projects, including their start dates and completion status. DIFs cannot be used to issue bonds.

Increased growth within the New Bell District will create the need for additional infrastructure improvements as described in this Specific Plan. As such, the City should consider preparing a nexus study and imposing DIFs, which may be phased in over time or waived in the short-term depending on the needs of current projects in predevelopment. Development impact fees are appropriate funding mechanisms for capital improvements which derive primarily from growth, such as sewer improvements, but also potentially open space projects.

Funding Method	Definition	Voting Requirement	Primary Use
Development Impact Fee (DIF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monetary payment levied on a private developer to fund the public facilities necessary to serve new development or infill growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">City Council vote; no public vote.Subject to notice and hearing requirements.Must meet statewide standards and procedures designed to limit local abuse of discretion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capital improvements necessitated by new development. Cannot issue bonds.
Special Benefit Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Charge imposed on a particular piece of real property for a local public improvement or service of direct benefit to that property in excess of the benefit received by the general public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple majority vote of affected property owners.Votes are tabulated according to the proportionate financial obligation of the properties (i.e. one “vote” for each dollar of assessment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capital improvements.Operations and maintenance.Must directly benefit property owners who pay the assessment. Can issue bonds.
Lighting and Landscape Assessment District (LLAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Types a special benefit assessment districts created to pay for the costs of public landscaping improvements that provide special benefits to parcels within the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple majority vote of affected property owners.Votes are tabulated according to the proportionate financial obligation of the properties (i.e. one “vote” for each dollar of assessment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lighting and landscaping improvements and/or operations and maintenance of specific in-tract landscaping or general landscaping of common areas adjoining parcels. Can issue Bonds.
Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District (LLMD)			
Landscape Maintenance District (LMD)			
Mello-Roos Special Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tax levied within a “Mello-Roos District” to generate revenue for a specific purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Two-thirds voter approval to pass.In proposed districts with less than 12 registered voters, voting is among landowners.In proposed districts with 12+ registered voters, voting is among all registered voters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capital improvements.Operations and maintenance.Can finance projects and services with both local and general benefits. Can Issue bonds.
Business Improvement District (BID)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public/private partnership that allows business or property owners to collectively pay for services to supplement those provided by the municipality in order to revitalize and improve commercial neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple majority vote of business or property owners (depending on the type of BID) within the proposed district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Small-scale capital improvements (BIDs cannot issue bonds which limits their ability to finance large-scale capital projects).
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct federal grant intended to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing and economic opportunities, and/or improve community facilities and services, principally to benefit low- and moderate-income persons or neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Voter requirements not applicable.Block grants are made by formula every year and give grantees the discretion to undertake specific activities.Funding is determined by a formula based on need as determined by U.S. Census data released every 10 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Construction of public facilities.Infrastructure improvements.Facilitate the provision of affordable housing.
Source: Stanley R. Hoffman Associates, Inc.			

FUNDING AND FINANCING MECHANISMS

Affordable Housing Grants

While most affordable housing grants and loans are provided to developers to finance the construction of housing, two state programs, Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) and Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG), provide funding for public infrastructure constructed by the developer as a part of the project. AHSC funds transportation improvements that reduce carbon emissions within proximity to the housing development, while IIG can fund a broad range of infrastructure integrally related to the housing development. AHSC and IIG are typically pursued by developers of 100% affordable rental housing.

Transportation Funds

Streetscape projects are generally applicable funds for formula transportation funds granted to the City of Bell from such sources as SB1, Propositions A and C, and Measures M and R. The City has considerable discretion over the usage of these funds, and may thus direct some of these funds to streetscape projects in the New Bell District.

Competitive grants may also be a possibility; however, grants for programs like the Active Transportation Program are often highly competitive and dependent on demonstrating a high level of safety enhancement (existing high collision rate and improvements) as well as connectivity.

Open Space Grants

Open space grants, like the State's Clean California Local Grant Program, provide municipalities funds for greening and beautification, such as landscaping improvements and construction of new open spaces/parks. The Clean California Local Grant Program is a competitive program focusing on beautifying and improving local streets and roads, as well as restoring pride in public places. The County's Measure A funds (Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks and Beaches), on the other hand, could be used for improvements to existing parks such as Treder Park.

Water Grants

Water grants offer funds for certain types of capital improvements, such as sustainable stormwater improvements and sewer improvements. In 2018, Los Angeles County residents passed Measure W to create the "Safe, Clean Water Program". This program funds and creates projects that capture and clean stormwater, while also providing quality of life improvements. The fundamental step in the Safe, Clean

Water Program was the establishment of a property tax of 2.5 cent per square foot of impermeable surface area, which would raise approximately \$300 million annually to capture and treat stormwater in order to increase water supply and improve water quality.

The Federal government's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program provides funds to municipalities for stormwater system improvements and sewer improvements, as part of larger complete streets improvement plans. The RAISE program often provides grant award amounts ranging from \$1.4 million to \$25 million for these projects. Lastly, the County's Measure W (Safe Clean Water Program) funds local stormwater system improvements.

Special Assessment District/LLAD

Special Assessment Districts (SADs) are established to levy an annual charge or assessment on property owners for the funding of capital improvements and services within that designated area that are over and above those received outside. These assessments are proportional to the "special benefit" received by the property from the planned improvements and services and is calculated based on an apportionment methodology. The assessment cannot be based on property valuation or not ad-valorem, just like in the case of CFDs. District formation requires a 50% +1 share of votes of property owners, with property owner votes being weighted by the assessment amount. The proceeds received through the SAD can be used to issue bonds. SADs can also be used for operations and maintenance.

Lighting and Landscape Assessment Districts (LLADs) are a type of Special Assessment District, established and operating on the same principles. The scope of LLADs is more focused, as the name indicates, on lighting and landscaping and can be used to fund capital improvements and operations and maintenance. These are variously also called, depending on their scope, Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District (LLMD) and Landscape Maintenance District (LMD). Proceeds from these districts can be used to issue bonds.

Another variation on the SAD concept, is the Parking Assessment District. California law empowers cities to create special districts for the funding of parking facilities. This can be done either through the establishment of a Parking Authority or through a Business Improvement District. Property owners could agree to assess themselves an annual charge for the funding of parking and mobility-related capital facilities, including parking garages, and parking fee collection infrastructure.

The benefit of this type of financing mechanism is that it provides paying property owners a clear nexus to the benefits they are receiving, making it more likely to gain approval. Either of these types of districts could be used along Atlantic Avenue, for example, to pay for streetscape improvements. Fees might be assessed in a variety of ways, but one clear method would be to allocate them based on the amount of frontage they possess on the street.

Community Facilities Districts (Mello Roos Districts)

Community Facilities Districts (CFDs), set up under the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 (hence "Mello Roos" districts), are formed to levy a special tax within a designated geographical area for the funding of specifically identified community facilities, infrastructure improvements and services. The setting up of a CFD in areas with 12 or more registered voters requires a two-thirds voter approval. For areas with less than 12 registered voters, it is based on a two-thirds vote among property owners. The tax amount is charged annually on the property tax bill. This amount is charged to property owners based on an apportionment methodology, which however cannot be ad-valorem or based on property value. CFDs can be used to meet the capital funding requirements for a wide variety of infrastructure and services, including street and landscape improvements, parks and open spaces, and community facilities such as libraries and museums, including ongoing annual operations and maintenance costs. This makes CFDs flexible mechanisms available to local governments in California to provide infrastructure and service needs. CFD revenues can be used to issue bonds.

A CFD could fund just about any capital improvement identified in the plan; however, it may be more difficult to obtain approval from property owners than a SAD/LLAD given the higher threshold and relative breadth of investments that it can fund.

Parking Benefit District

Parking Benefit Districts (PBDs) are a financing and parking management tool, where parking revenues generated within the district, both on-street and off-street, are reinvested within the area for the provision of new parking facilities, sidewalk enhancements, and ongoing operations and maintenance. While there are no public parking revenues currently, if success produces high demand in the future, metered parking could help support the funds needed to construct a central parking garage and/or other transportation-related improvements.

FUNDING AND FINANCING MECHANISMS

Public Land Development Proceeds

Where possible, developers of public land properties should be required to implement public capital improvements as a condition of development of their projects. Additionally or instead, however, funds received from these property transactions can be used to construct capital improvements elsewhere in the district.

Having a plan for use of these funds, executing it and reporting on it, is key to retain public trust. The City may consider depositing these funds into a reserved account for capital projects Citywide or in the New Bell District. Projects whose proceeds are to be invested in capital improvements may be best structured as property sales or capitalized ground leases, where those whose funds are intended as ongoing revenue may be best structured as ground leases with annual payments. If structured as one-time funds, however, development of the six publicly-owned sites in the New Bell District Specific Plan could provide from the high single-digit millions to the low tens of millions in one-time revenue which could be used in the Specific Plan area.

Business Improvement Districts

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are a type of assessment districts and can be business-based or property-based (PBIDs). These are effectively public-private partnerships that allow business and/or property owners to collectively pay for services to supplement those that are already provided by the municipality towards economic revitalization and district marketing. District formation is governed by the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989 and the Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994. BIDS and PBIDS are formed with a simple majority of votes of business or property owners, respectively, proportional to the benefit received (such as frontage, parcel acreage, square foot of use, etc.) for an initial term of 5 years, followed by 10-year renewals. The district is operated and managed by a non-profit entity, which has annual reporting responsibilities to the host jurisdiction. Revenues realized from these districts are generally used for smaller capital improvements, street furniture, lighting and landscaping and signages, and for enhanced services, such as district security and district marketing, towards realizing economic development goals. BIDs cannot issue bonds, and therefore, large capital projects are harder to fund.

During outreach for the project, business owners generally did not express support for the formation of a Business Improvement District in the New Bell District area. However, as economic conditions improve, BIDs and PBIDs can be considered.

