

Topeka River South

AREAWIDE PLAN

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

February 20, 2020

EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant

- Used for sites impacted by petroleum or hazardous substances
- Environmental site assessment and cleanup/reuse planning
- To support property sale or redevelopment activities
- Areawide Planning is an approved activity of the grant



Brownfield Grants and Area Wide Planning

Project Goals

& Desired Outcomes

- Focus on sites with greatest redevelopment potential
- Encourage site reuse projects (infill development)
- Transform underutilized properties into community assets
- Restore the environment and protect human health





We are here!

Visit 1

Learn the
Place

Review previous
studies, visit with
stakeholders

Visit 2

Explore the
Possibilities

Assemble
potential
reinvestment and
redevelopment
options

Visit 3

Turn Plans
into Action

Assemble public-realm
green space options,
identify planning
priorities

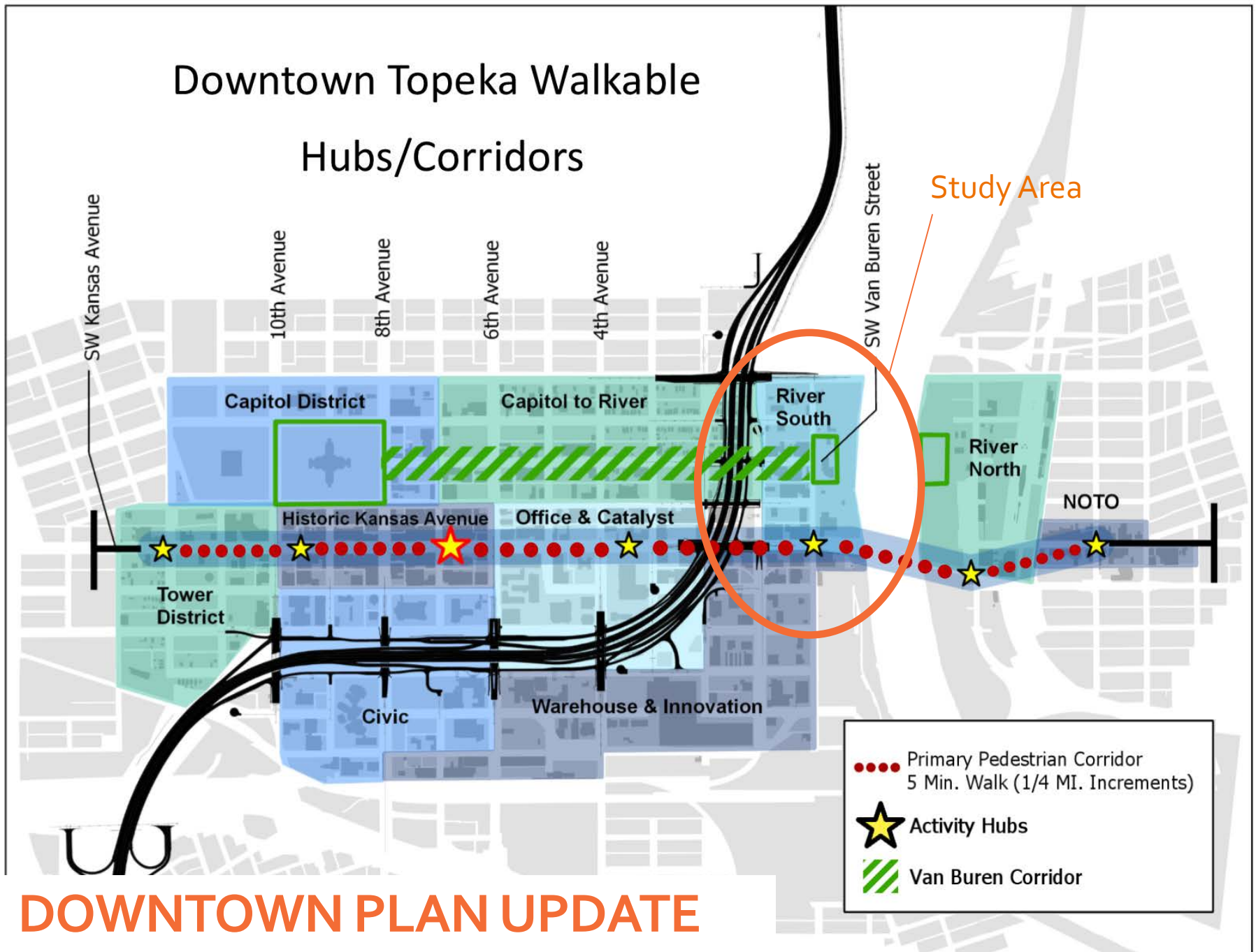
Visit 4

Implement
Priorities

Document and
present plan
recommendations

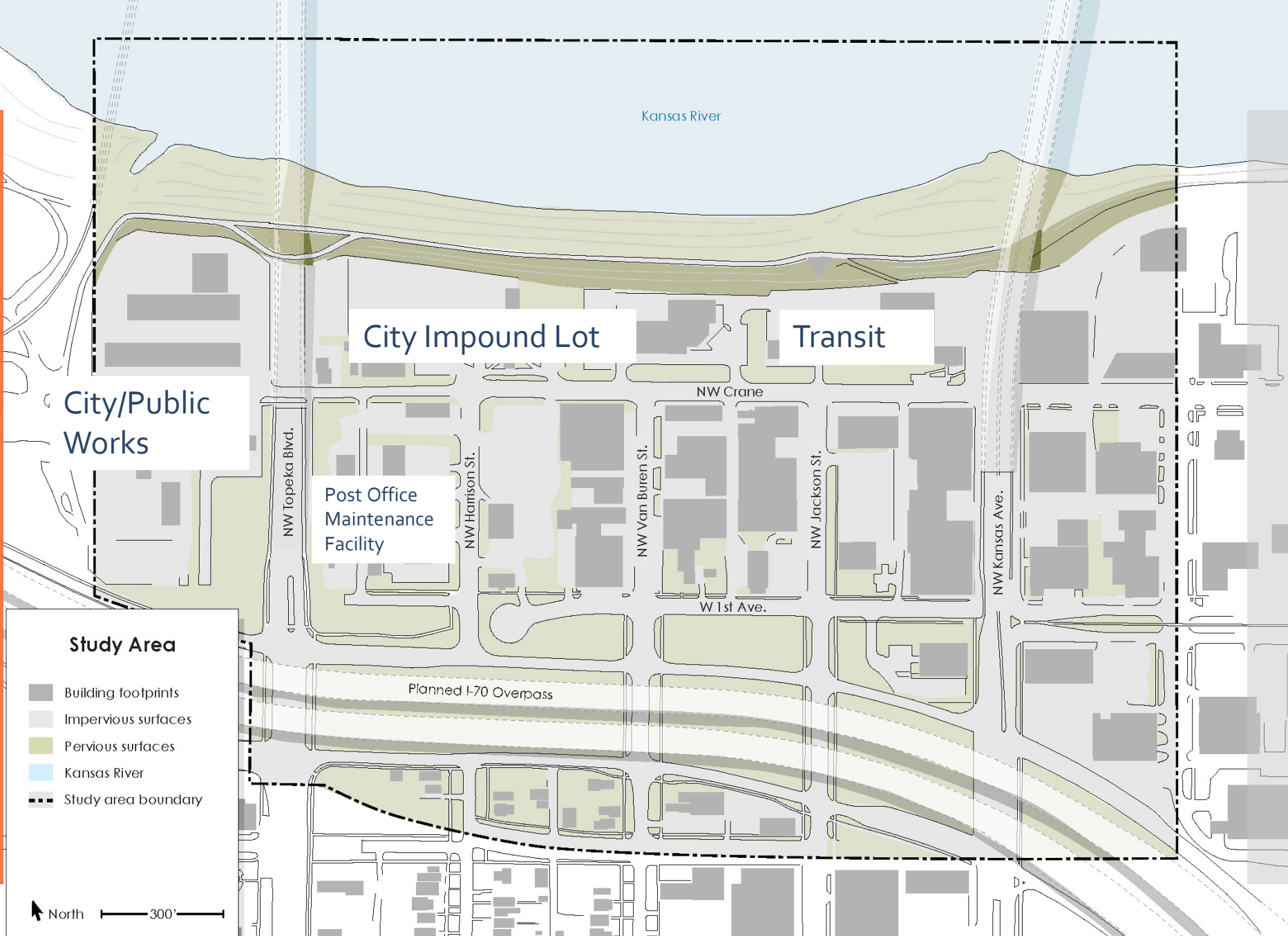
Study Process

Downtown Topeka Walkable Hubs/Corridors





EXISTING CONDITIONS



Kansas River

City Impound Lot

Transit

City/Public
Works

Post Office
Maintenance
Facility

NW Topeka Blvd.

NW Harrison St.

NW Van Buren St.

NW Jackson St.

NW Kansas Ave.

NW Crane

W 1st Ave.

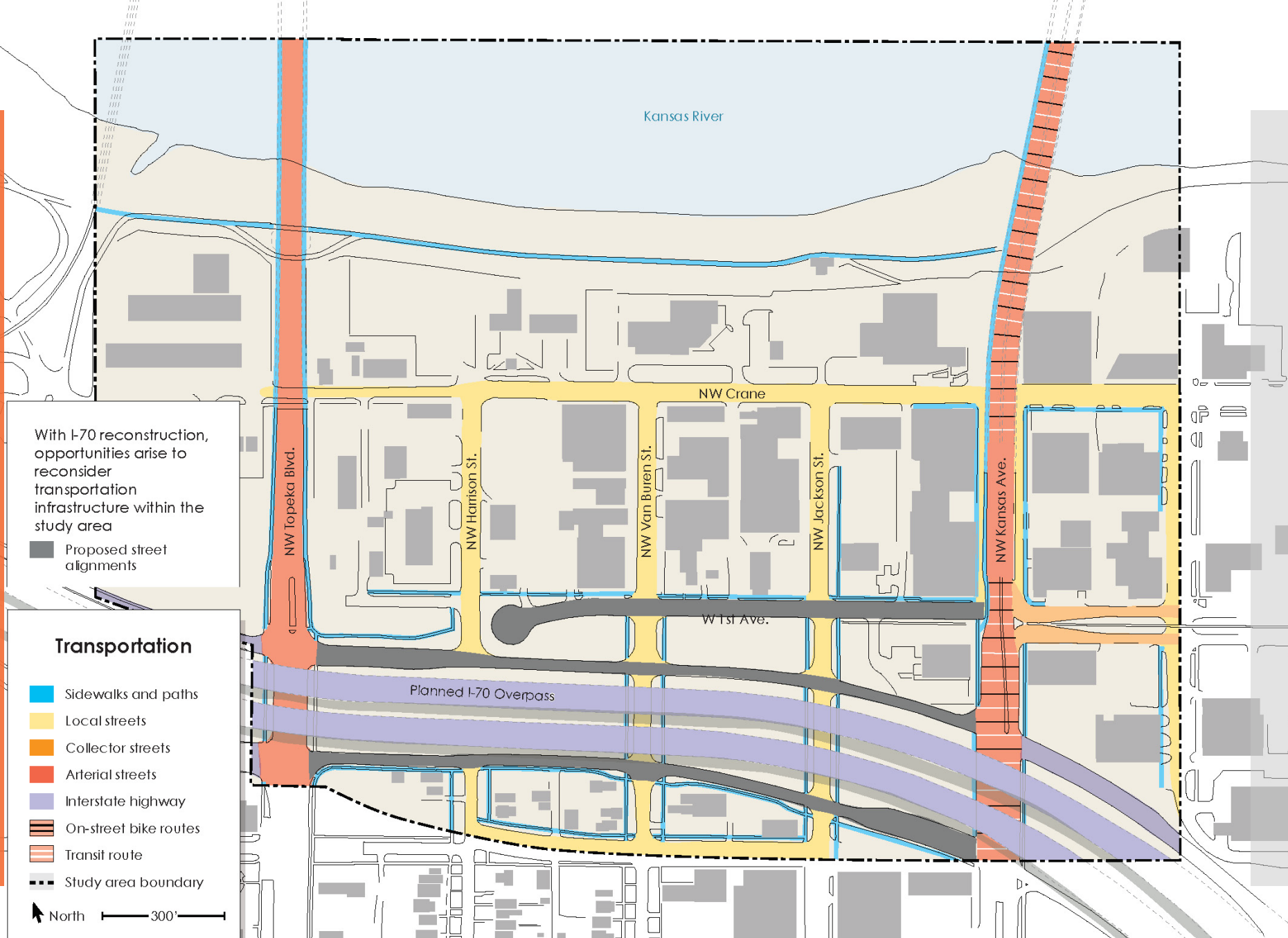
Planned I-70 Overpass

Study Area

- Building footprints
- Impervious surfaces
- Pervious surfaces
- Kansas River
- Study area boundary

North 300'

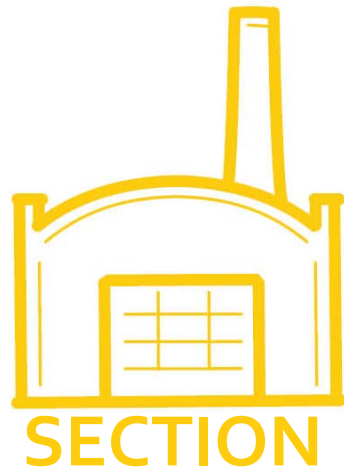






KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES





2

PREVIOUS STUDIES AND INITIAL FEEDBACK

Riverfront Masterplan (2008)

- Mixed use neighborhood on both sides of river
- **Principles:**
 - Encourage sustainable lifestyles
 - Connect across and along River
 - Redevelop underutilized land to mid-density, mixed-use
 - Vitality through recreation, retail, residential, office
 - Accessibility through existing character, sidewalks, trails
 - Increase investment, development



NOTO Arts District Masterplan (2016)

- Across river from River South
- Recommendations:
 - historic preservation
 - medium density infill housing
 - focus on arts culture
 - improvement district management
 - grant allocation



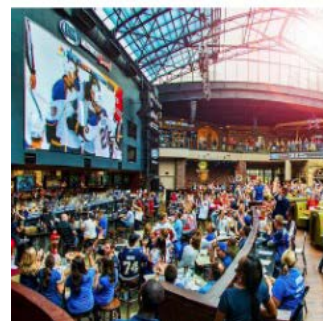
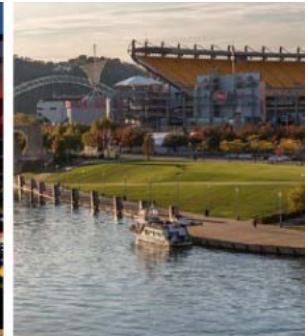
Pappan's Ferry Charette (2018)

- Directly opposite from River South
- Prioritized elements:
 - Levee/River connections
 - Historic trail elements
 - Park features
 - Interpretive
 - Media



Downtown Market Study (2019)

- **Vision:** entertainment district, active nightlife, river views
- **Target:** young adults, young professionals, visitors, tourists, business travelers
- **Product:** new commercial, upscale apartments, entertainment uses
- Recommends anchor – hotel, conference center, baseball field, high-quality park with regular programming
- 850-950 new downtown housing units (Is this enough?)



1

While slow to modest growth is expected in Topeka in the next two years, most of this growth is projected to be concentrated in households without children, and who prefer urban living. This creates an unprecedented opportunity to increase Downtown Topeka's housing supply which, in-turn, triggers growing retail activity and vitality along Downtown Streets.

2

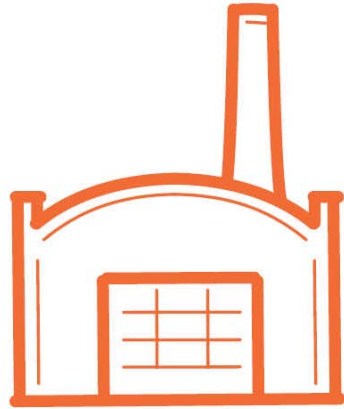
The size of the Topeka Metro workforce is projected to be flat or to decline over the next two decades, triggering a critical imperative to attract and retain essential talent for the creative and knowledge industry jobs for investment in the region.

3

All the region's net population growth in the next two decades is projected to be concentrated among residents who are 65 or older, a population that increasingly relies on fixed incomes and is impacted by property tax increases. This creates a growing fiscal imperative to make use of Downtown's ability to attract younger and higher-income households who can support a growing share of City revenues and to take advantage of Downtown's related ability to attract talent and the jobs, and investment that follow.

4

Topeka, like most of America, is moving rapidly toward becoming a "majority minority" metro, dramatically increasing the social imperative to enhance Downtown as a "common ground" that is viewed as the shared heart of a diverse region.



SECTION

3

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Downtowns deliver 13-64% of citywide tax revenue



Downtowns are demographically diverse with large portions of a city's foreign-born, non-white, and middle-income populations



Downtowns support a variety of retail, infrastructure, and institutions



Downtowns provide a high quality of life that attracts employers, investment, visitors, and residents.



Downtowns are inherently better able to rebound from economic, social, and environmental shocks and stresses.

DOWNTOWN INDICATORS

2015-2045
1-2 person
Households
growth:

65%

Unemployment

2.8%

Knowledge
industry share of
jobs

40%

Median hshld
income vrs US:

113%



MISSION

- Grow downtown as a REGIONAL...
- **Economic engine**—jobs
- **Fiscal engine**—tax base
- **Amenity engine**—housing
- **Civic heart**—common ground
- **Cultural celebration**—arts “infrastructure”

Walkable



South Bay Retrofit,
Boston

Connected



Brooklyn Village
Redevelopment,
Center City
Charlotte

Diverse



Downtown
Brockton (MA)

Green



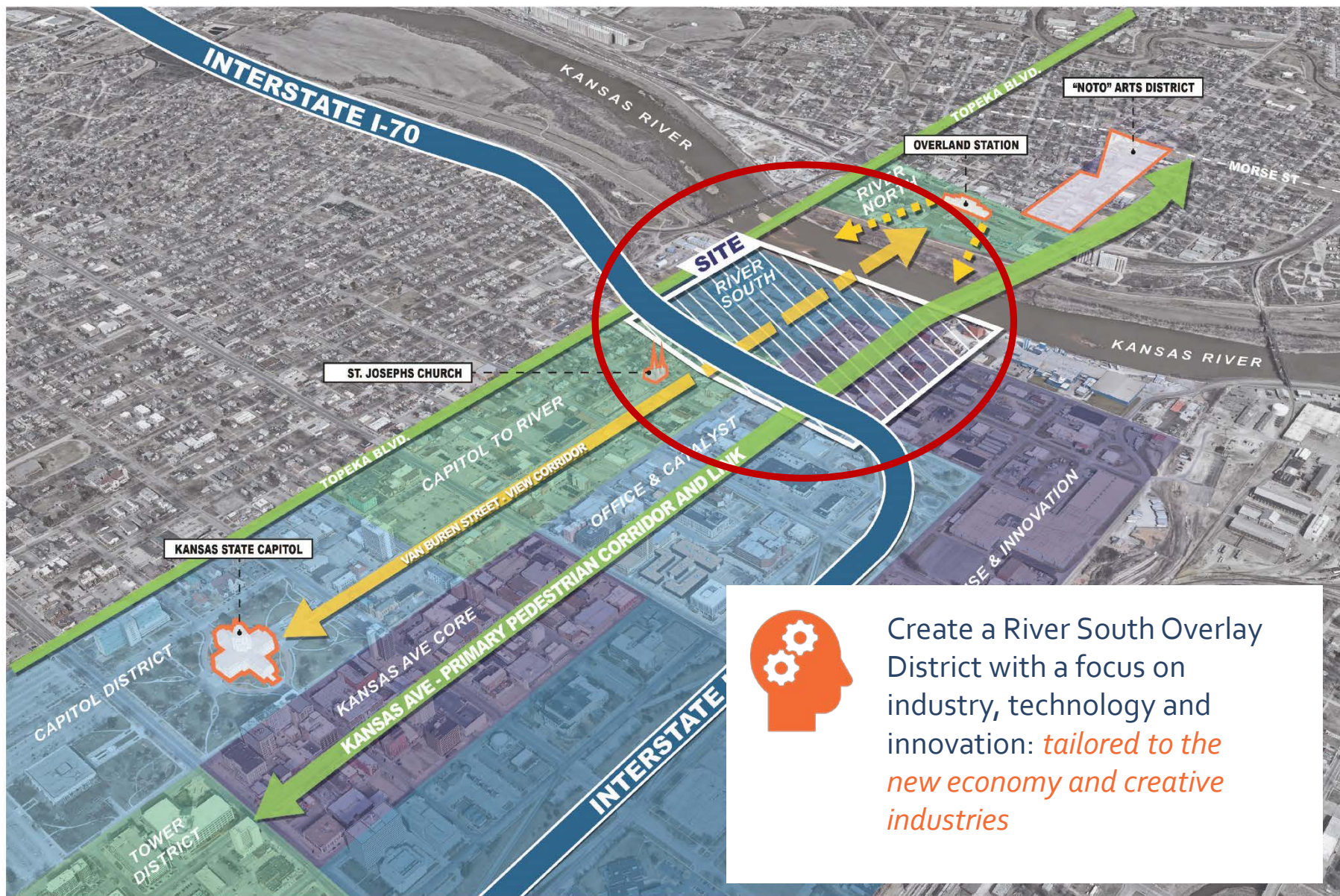
Calgary Downtown
Riverfront

Authentic



Water Street,
Downtown Tampa





Create a River South Overlay District with a focus on industry, technology and innovation: *tailored to the new economy and creative industries*

The Rise of Innovation Districts: A New Geography of Innovation in America

Bruce Katz and Julie Wagner

Introducing Innovation Districts

As the United States slowly emerges from the Great Recession, a remarkable shift is occurring in the spatial geography of innovation.

For the past 50 years, the landscape of innovation has been dominated by places like Silicon Valley—suburban corridors of spatially isolated corporate campuses, accessible only by car, with little emphasis on the quality of life or on integrating work, housing, and recreation.

A new complementary urban model is now emerging, giving rise to what we and others are calling “innovation districts.” These districts, by our definition, are geographic areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators, and accelerators.¹ They are also physically compact, transit-accessible, and technically-wired and offer mixed-use housing, office, and retail.

Innovation districts are the manifestation of mega-trends altering the location preferences of people and firms and, in the process, re-conceiving the very link between economy shaping, place making and social networking.²

In recent years, a rising number of innovative firms and talented workers are choosing to congregate and co-locate in compact, amenity-rich enclaves in the cores of central cities. Rather than building on green-field sites, marquee companies in knowledge-intensive sectors are locating key facilities close to other firms, research labs, and universities so that they can share ideas and practice “open innovation.”

Instead of inventing on their own in real or metaphorical garages, an array of entrepreneurs are starting their companies in collaborative spaces, where they can mingle with other entrepreneurs and have efficient access to everything from legal advice to sophisticated lab equipment. Rather than submitting to long commutes and daily congestion, a growing share of metropolitan residents are choosing to work and live in places that are walkable, bike-able, and connected by transit and technology.

Led by an eclectic group of institutions and leaders, innovation districts are emerging in dozens of cities and metropolitan areas in the United States and abroad and already reflect distinctive typologies and levels of formal planning. Globally, Barcelona, Berlin, London, Medellín, Montreal, Seoul, Stockholm and Toronto contain examples of evolving districts. In the United States, districts are emerging near anchor institutions in the downtowns and midtowns of cities like Atlanta, Baltimore, Buffalo, Cambridge, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and San Diego. They are developing in Boston, Brooklyn, Chicago, Portland, Providence, San Francisco and Seattle where underutilized areas (particularly older industrial areas) are being re-imagined and remade. Still others are taking shape in the transformation of traditional exurban science parks like Research Triangle Park in Raleigh-Durham, which are scrambling to meet demand for more urbanized, vibrant work and living environments.

Innovation districts represent a radical departure from traditional economic development. Unlike customary urban revitalization efforts that have emphasized the commercial aspects of development (e.g., housing, retail, sports stadiums), innovation districts help their city and metropolis move up the value chain of global competitiveness by growing the firms, networks, and traded sectors that drive

WHO DELIVERS INNOVATION DISTRICTS

The list of institutions and individuals that are driving the growth of innovation districts is as varied as the economic composition of districts themselves. The following list provides a sample of the leaders at the vanguard of this trend in the United States and abroad:

- **Mayors and local governments**, such as former Mayor Tom Menino of Boston, former Mayor Joan Clos of Barcelona, and the Stockholm city government.
- **Major real estate developers and major land owners**, such as Vulcan Real Estate in Seattle's South Lake Union and the Brooklyn Navy Yard.
- **Managers of research campuses**, such as the Research Triangle Park Foundation in Research Triangle Park and the Texas Medical Center in Houston.
- **Anchor companies**, such as Quicken Loans in Detroit, Comcast in Philadelphia, and Amazon in Seattle's South Lake Union.
- **Advanced research institutions**, such as Washington University in St. Louis, Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh, Drexel University in Philadelphia, and MIT in Cambridge.
- **Advanced medical campuses**, such as the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh.
- **Philanthropic investors**, such as the New Economy Initiative and the Kresge Foundation in Detroit and the former Danforth Foundation in St. Louis.
- **Incubators, accelerators, and other economic cultivators**, such as Barcelona Activa in Barcelona, the Cambridge Innovation Center in Cambridge, and the BioGenerator in St. Louis.
- **Social networking programmers**, such as Venture Café Foundation in Boston and Cambridge and High Tech Campus Eindhoven.

“The trend is to nurture living, breathing communities rather than sterile compounds of research silos.”

1. Innovation Districts **further the ability of cities and metropolitan areas to grow jobs** in ways that both align with disruptive forces in the economy and leverage their distinct economic position.
2. Innovation districts can specifically empower **entrepreneurs as a key vehicle for economic growth and job creation**.
3. Innovation districts can **grow better and more accessible jobs** at a time of rising poverty and social inequality.
4. Innovation districts can reduce carbon emissions and **drive denser residential and employment patterns** at a time of growing concern with environmentally unsustainable development.
5. Innovation districts can **help cities and metropolitan areas raise revenues and repair their balance sheets** at a time when federal resources are diminishing, and many state governments are adrift.

Source: Brookings, 2014



Photo courtesy of Winston-Salem Journal



Key Ingredients for an Innovation District:

- **Economic Assets** (firms, institutions, and organizations that drive, cultivate or support an innovation-rich environment)
- **Physical Assets** (publicly and privately owned spaces: buildings, open spaces, streets and other infrastructure— designed and organized to stimulate new and higher levels of connectivity, collaboration, and innovation.
- **Networking Assets** (relationships between individuals, firms and institution that have the potential to generate, sharpen, and/or accelerate the advancement of ideas.)



Types of Physical Assets



Physical Assets in the Public Realm

Spaces available to the public such as parks, plazas and streets that become hotspots of energy and activity.



Physical Assets in the Private Realm

Privately-owned buildings and spaces that stimulate innovation in new and creative ways



Physical assets that knit the district together

Specific investments aimed to eliminate barriers that hinder relationship building and connectivity



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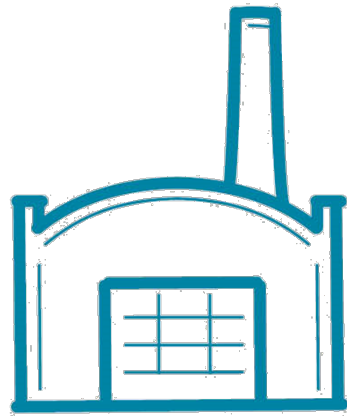
Photo by Paul Crosby



Physical assets that knit the district together

Specific investments aimed to eliminate barriers that hinder relationship building and connectivity





SECTION

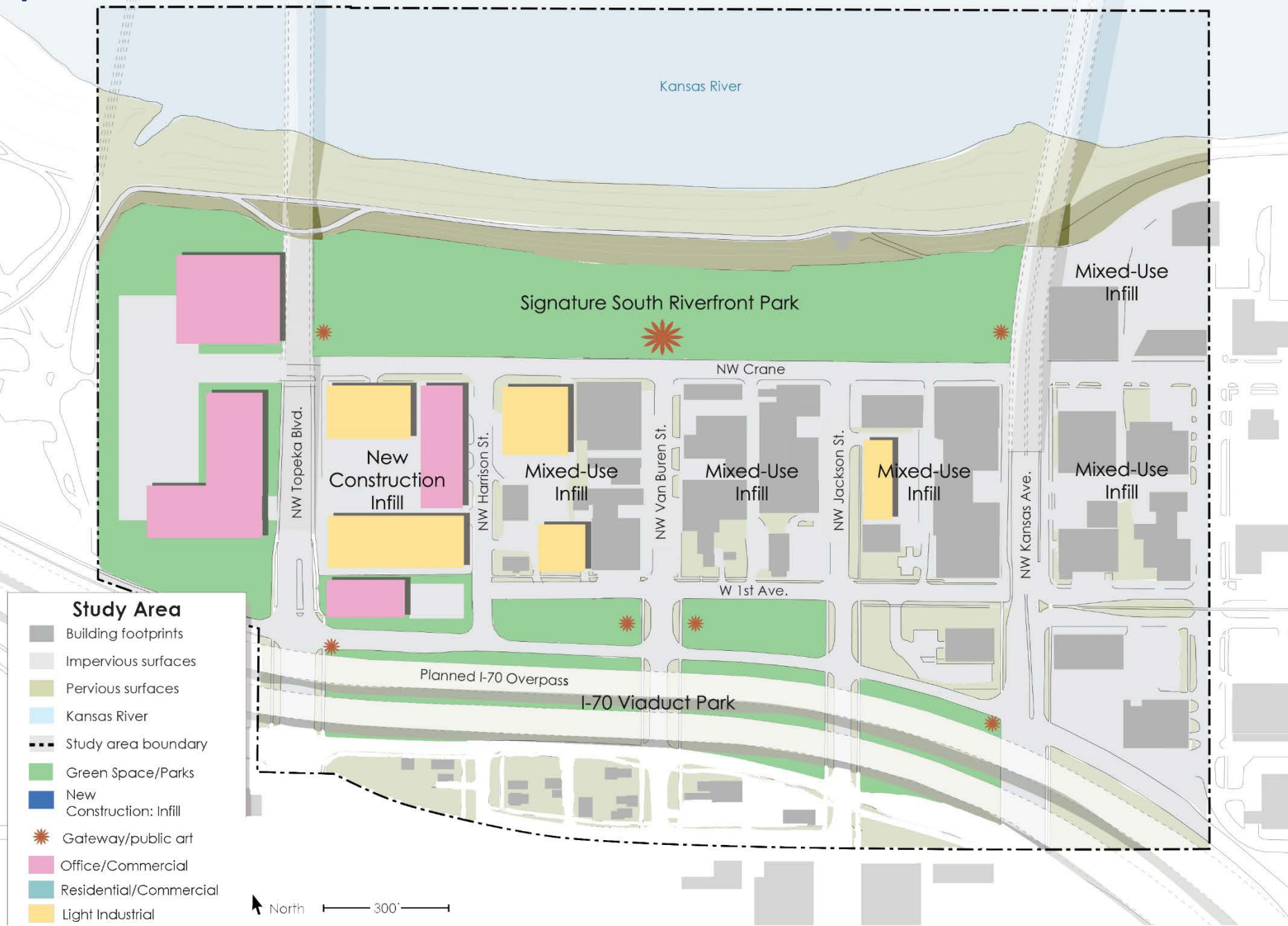
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LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

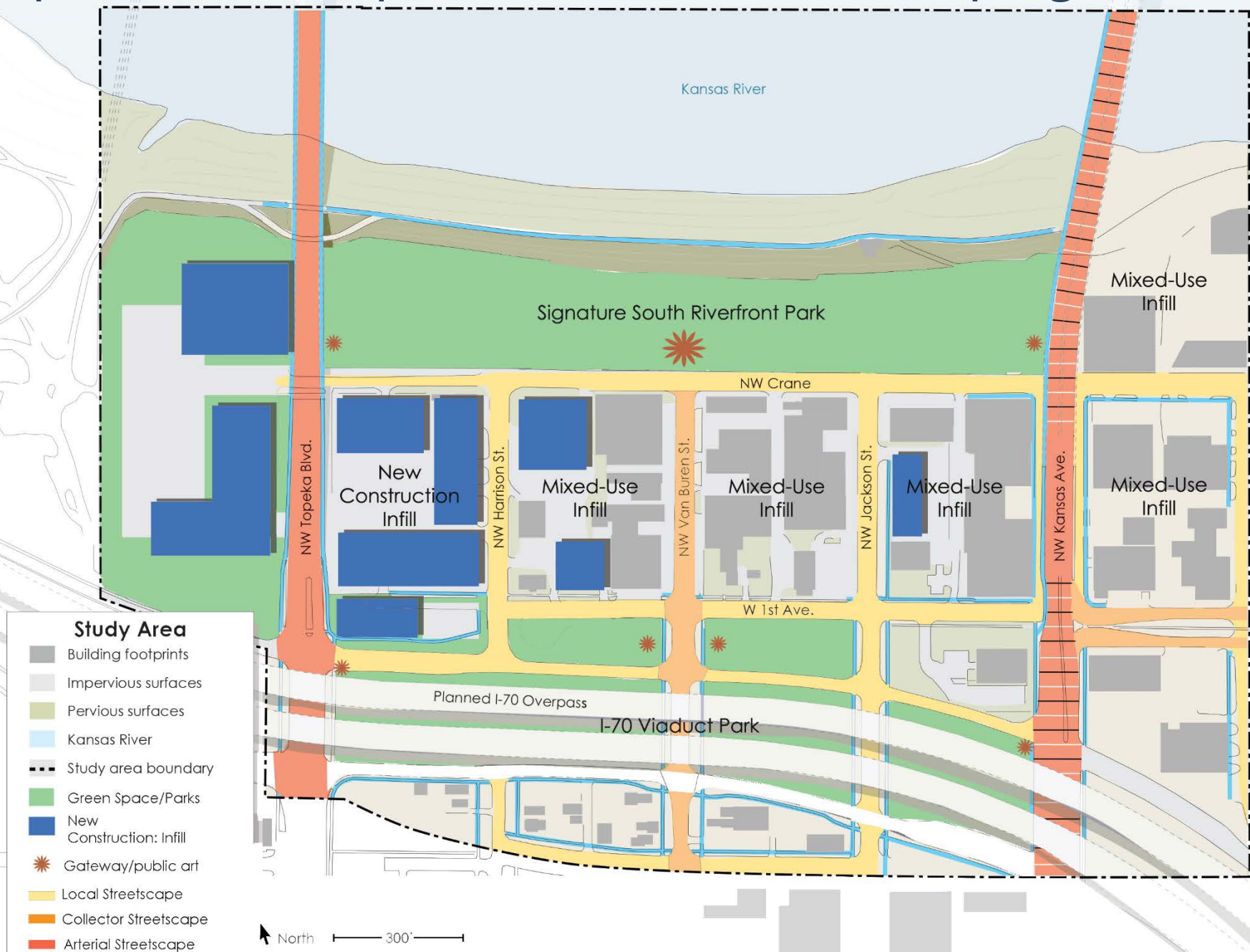
Option A: New Construction Infill



Option A: Land Use



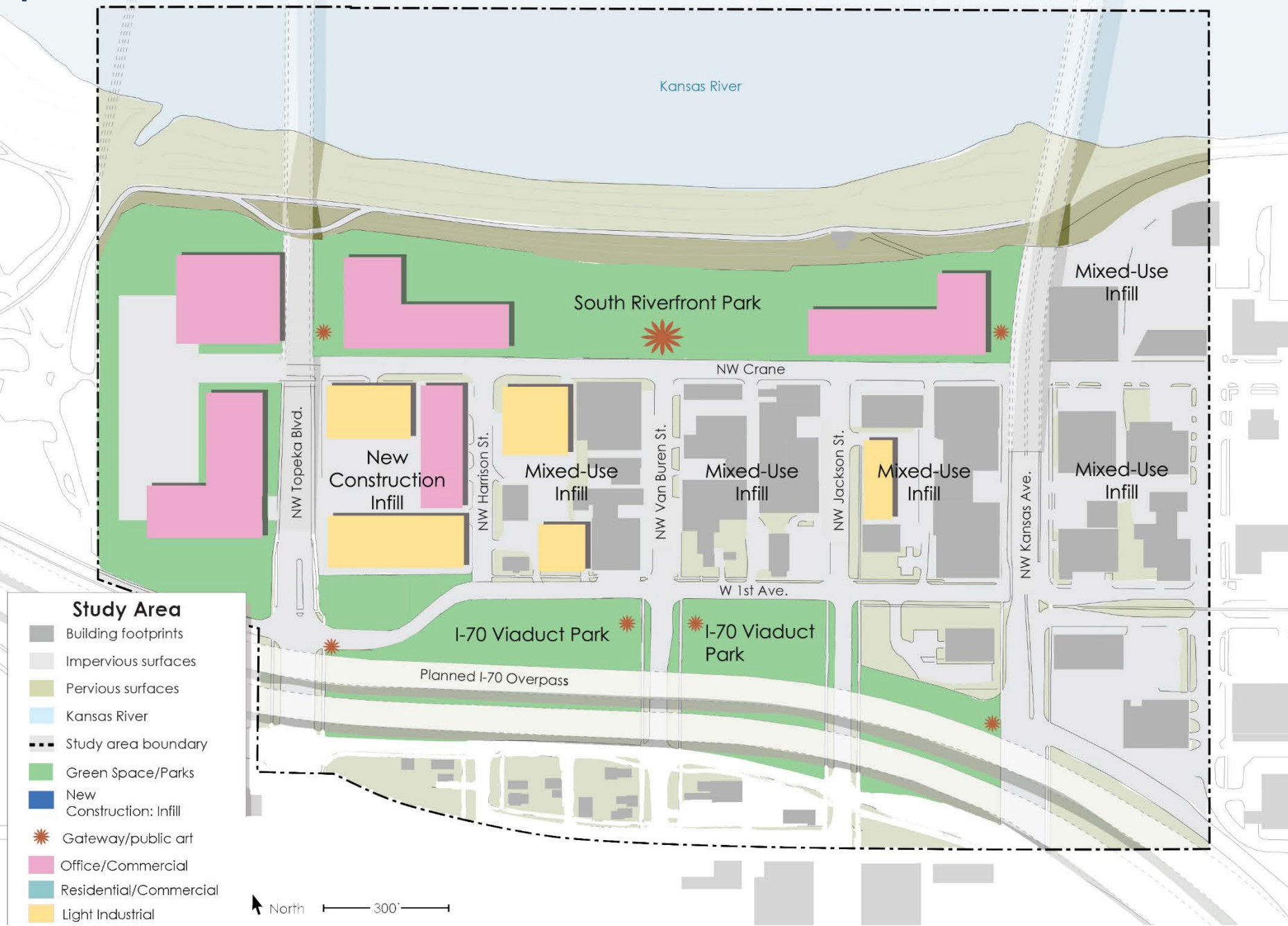
Option A: Transportation and Streetscaping



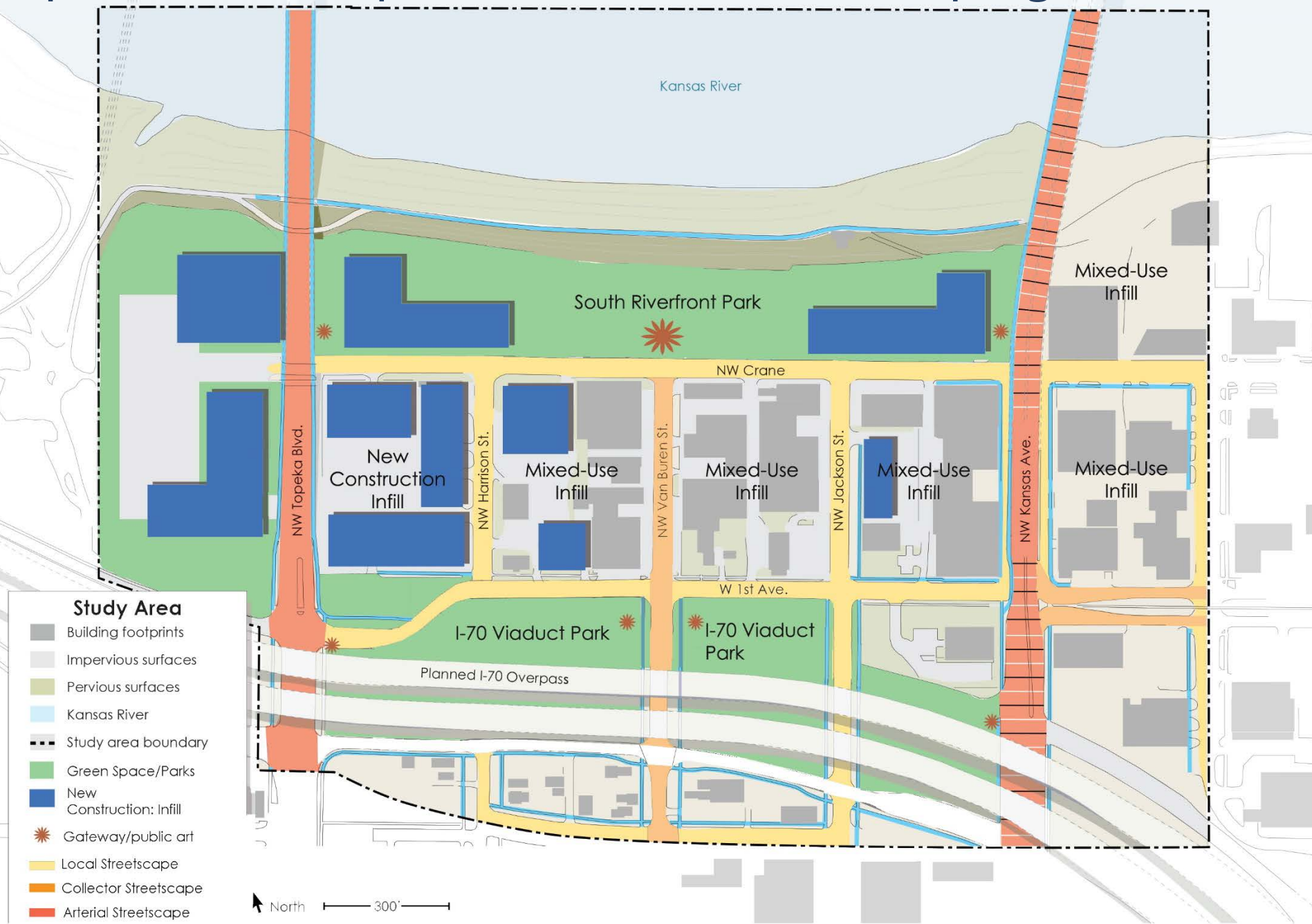
Option B: New Construction Infill



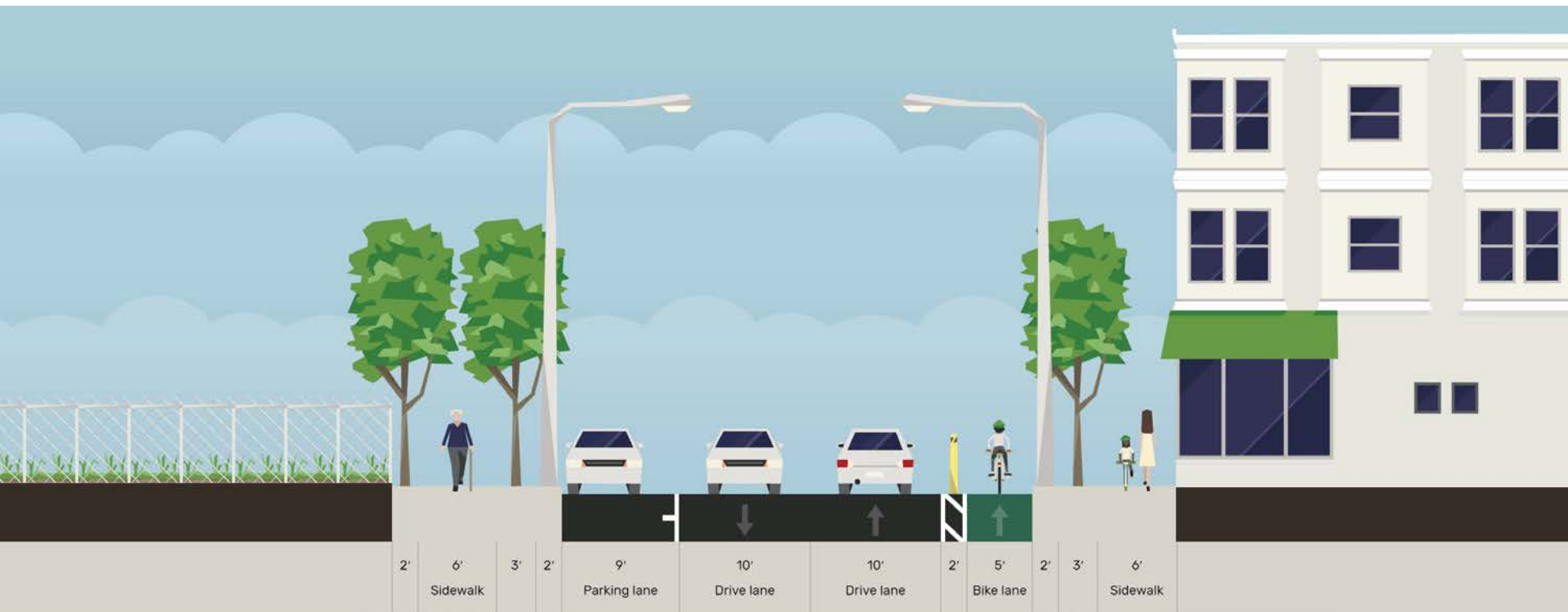
Option B: Land Use



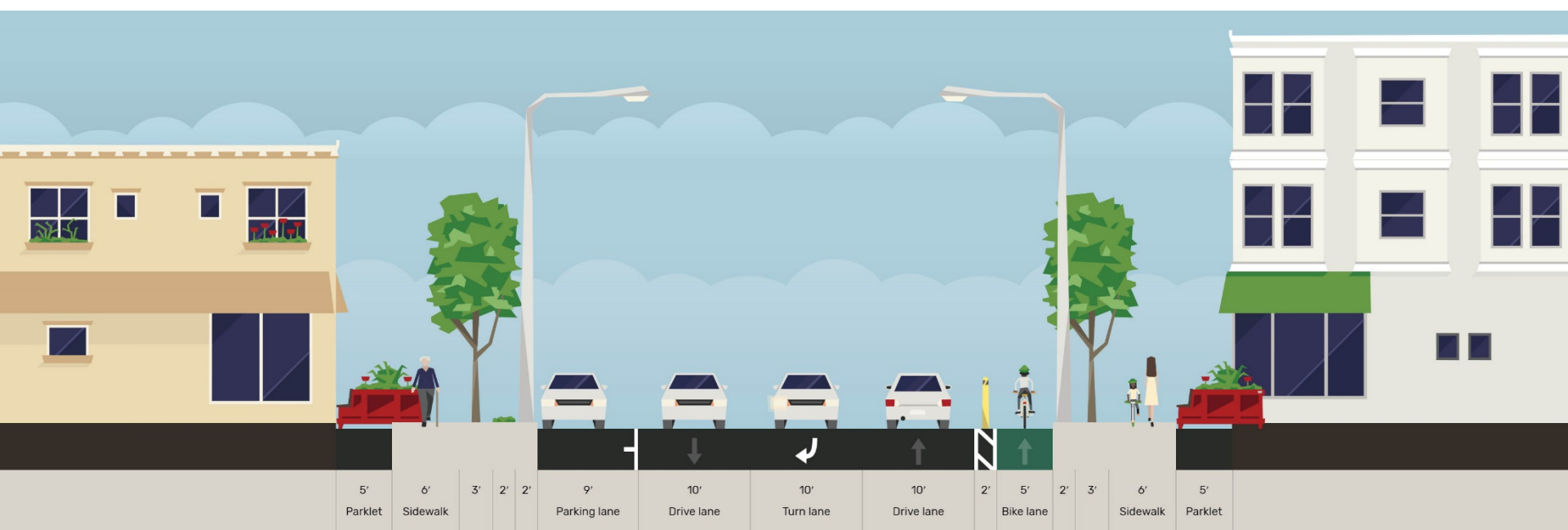
Option B: Transportation and Streetscaping



Example Local Road Cross-Section

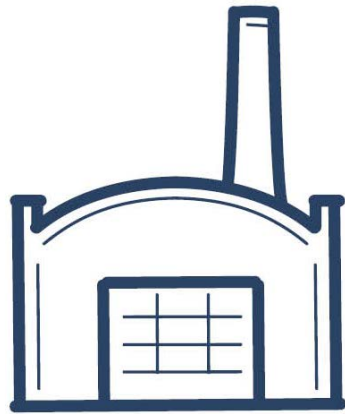


Example Collector Road Cross-Section



Example Arterial Road Cross-Section



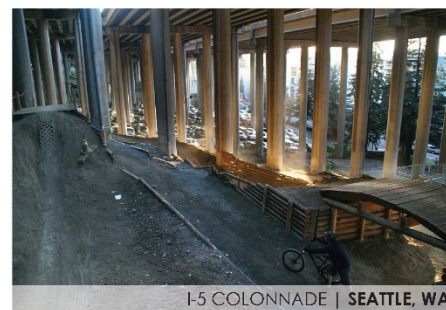
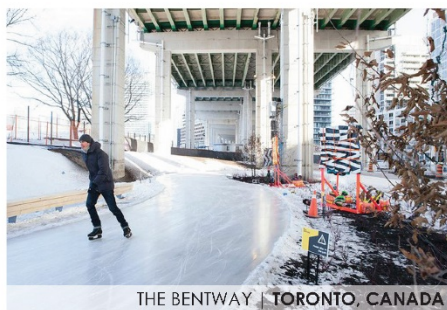
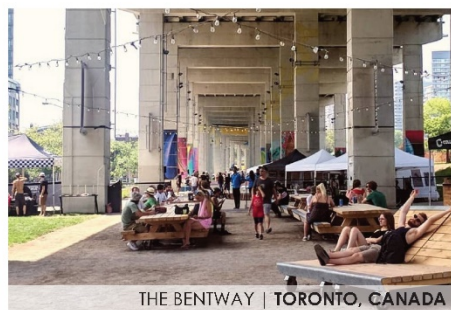


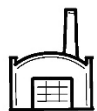
SECTION

5

OPEN SPACE CONSIDERATIONS

I-70 UNDERPASS PARK





TOPEKA
RIVER SOUTH

SOUTH RIVERFRONT PARK



SURLY BREWING CO. | MINNEAPOLIS, MN



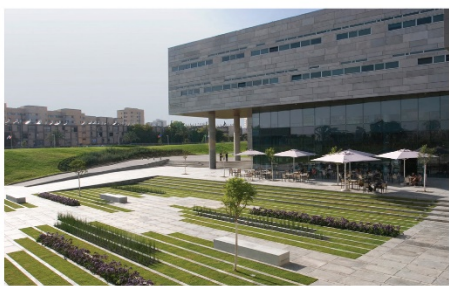
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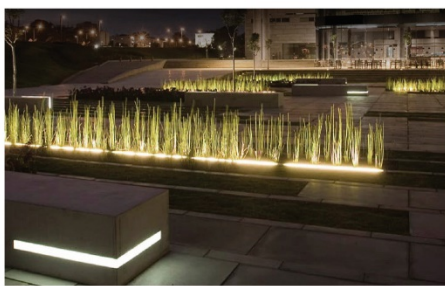
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BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY | BE'ER SHEVA ISREAL



BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY | BE'ER SHEVA ISREAL



THE BOXYARD | TULSA, OK



PLAYA JEFFERSON COMPLEX | PLAYA VISTA, CA



BAR K DOG BAR | KANSAS CITY, MO



SEAPORT INNOVATION DISTRICT | BOSTON, MA



CORNELL TECH UNIVERSITY | NEW YORK, NY



CORNELL TECH UNIVERSITY | NEW YORK, NY

NORTH RIVERFRONT PARK



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Next Steps