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The Beechmont Plan

September 2017

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Anderson Township | Hamilton County, Ohio



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Introduction

Beechmont Avenue developed in a much different way than many people would picture a “Main Street.” Less than 100 years ago, Beechmont Avenue was a dirt road parallel to a rail line. The changes we have seen over the last 100 years include explosive growth in the mid-1900s, ultimately resulting in a five-lane road by 1970.

Much of the commercial growth that occurred during this time was unplanned and happened quickly. By the mid-1990s, the rapid growth that had been occurring in Anderson Township moved east into Clermont County and the Township along with partners Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Hamilton County and the Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce began to plan for the future of this corridor.

In the last 16 years numerous studies have been conducted on the Beechmont Corridor, yet it remains one of the most challenging elements of the Township and one that garners a variety of opinions.

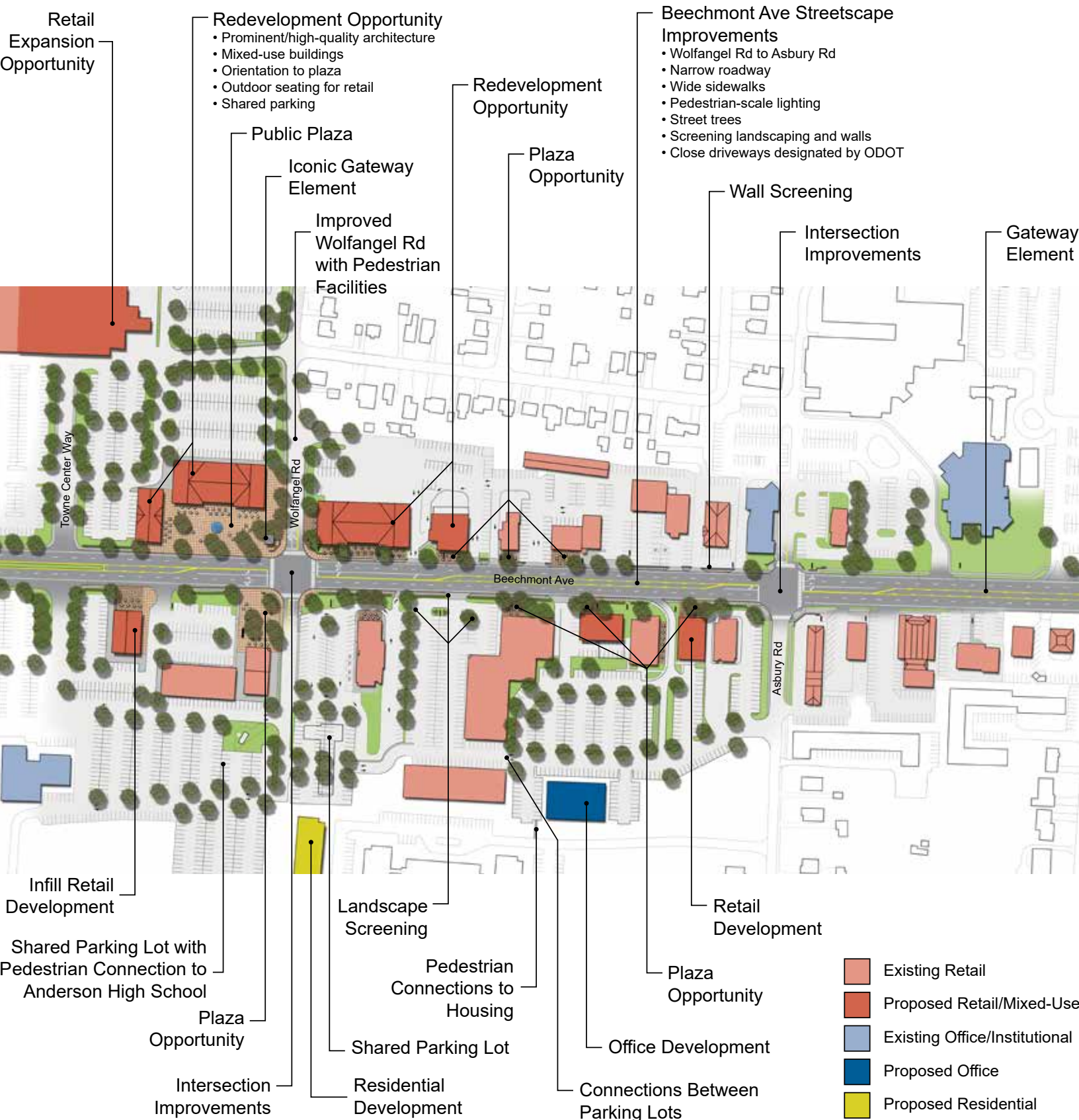
Previous studies including the Beechmont Vision Plan, Beechmont Landscape Plan, Beechmont Corridor Update Study, and the Downtown Anderson Plan have been incorporated here into one comprehensive document for the Beechmont Avenue area.

Beechmont Avenue at Paddison Road, 1955



Beechmont Avenue near Eight Mile, circa 1912





Previous Plans

1996 – BEECHMONT CORRIDOR PLAN

The Township’s first Beechmont Corridor Plan took on the task of charting the future of the road, by taking a puzzle piece at a time and making changes. This plan was awarded the Outstanding Plan Award by the Ohio Planning Association. The goals of this plan were: To promote safer access to businesses, allow for the smooth flow of traffic, and to create an environment that would encourage economic vitality. Implementation of these goals began immediately and continued through the 1990s.

2001 – LANDSCAPE PLAN

The Landscape Plan was created in response to residents’ comments about the need to “green” Beechmont Avenue. The Township worked with a consultant and study team to identify the need to address the visual quality of the Beechmont Corridor, finally developing the Landscape Plan.

2005 – ANDERSON TWP COMP PLAN

Anderson’s first Comprehensive Plan was prepared, containing several key goals for Beechmont Avenue, including: multi-modal transportation, sidewalks, and making the area a regional destination.

2009 – ANDERSON TRAILS PLAN

The Anderson Trails Plan, which won the Ohio Planning Association’s Plan Implementation Award, provided recommendations for pedestrians and bicyclists along Beechmont.

2011 – COMP PLAN UPDATE

Anderson Township developed an updated Comprehensive Plan that carried forward many of the same goals for the Beechmont Avenue area as the 2005 Plan.

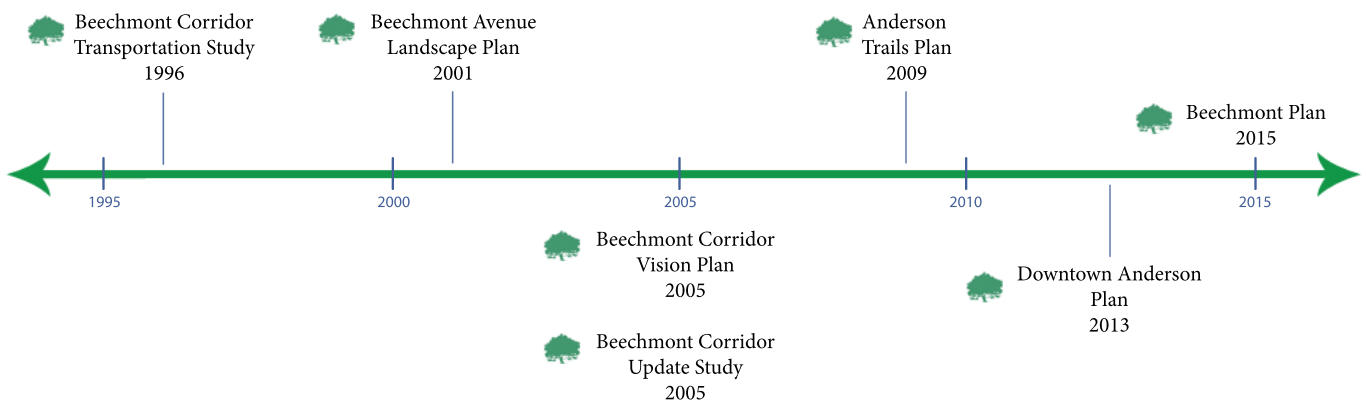
2013 – DOWNTOWN ANDERSON VISION PLAN

Downtown Anderson Vision Plan was developed as an addendum to the Beechmont Corridor Vision Plan and sought to create a plan for the area of Beechmont Avenue between Towne Center Way and Asbury Road: ‘Downtown.’ The Plan was intended to complement the previous efforts effort, not replace those plans. The 2013 Downtown Plan encouraged walkability, streetscape improvements, and new development that would create a sense of place. The Economic Development Committee oversaw the effort.

2017 – THE BEECHMONT PLAN

These are just a few of the many efforts intended to address the Beechmont Corridor. These studies have all identified the need to continue the transformation of the Beechmont Avenue Corridor. While these efforts all had a slightly different focus, each built upon and recognized the recommendations contained in prior work. At this time we desire one consolidated plan addressing the needs of the area and a vision for the future.

BEECHMONT PLAN TIMELINE





Existing Conditions

Average Number of Cars on Beechmont per Day (2002)

17,800

Salem Road West to Mt. Washington

33,700

Salem Road East to Union Township

Beechmont Avenue is a five lane urban arterial, beginning within the east side of the City of Cincinnati, extending east through Clermont, Adams and Scioto Counties. The study area is a narrow, heavily developed residential and commercial corridor. Congestion and safety problems had been noticed in the past, but over the last several years, improvements in access management and cross connections of neighboring properties have made progress in traffic conditions and the ability of drivers to access different commercial destinations along the corridor. Beginning in 2015, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) began implementation of an access management plan that will improve conditions along the SR 125 corridor from Five Mile Road to the Clermont County line and beyond.

Field studies and traffic analyses were performed documenting operating conditions below acceptable standards. Some improvements have been made by synchronizing signalized intersections, from Five Mile Road to the Clermont County border.

In the commercial realm, business properties have been in flux over the last 20 years, with several businesses moving or closing their doors because of lack of access from the deteriorating traffic conditions and the economy in the last seven years. Conditions are improving with new development taking place along the Beechmont corridor because of the improving traffic conditions from the work done by Anderson Township, Hamilton County and the ODOT's access management and improved signalization work. The Township has helped spur re-development of the failing Beechmont Mall property by working with the investor to improve the water runoff of the existing property. The new development has prospered and is now adding more retail.



Existing Conditions

SIGNAGE

Signs along Beechmont offer a mixed bag of billboards, dominating pylons and large corporate signs, some more on the scale of a freeway sign. The scale of these elements makes it difficult for other small-scale wayfinding and safety signs to be seen. Anderson Township recently published new sign language in its zoning code to further address signage issues and encourage the use of low monument signs.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The lack of architectural guidelines for buildings along the corridor has resulted in a wide range of building styles that do not promote a sense of place. This gives the Township the wrong identity at its core. The Township acknowledges that one style or character will not be achievable or appropriate. However, design guidelines and standards are needed to help achieve a more holistic, but energetic identity.

SIDEWALKS

Currently, the pedestrian is an afterthought for most of Beechmont Avenue. Sidewalks are widespread with little continuity. Parking lots front right onto the corridor with no regard to accessibility. Pedestrians do not feel safe; customers have trouble going from one store to the next without hopping in their car. A pedestrian space must be defined to provide a safe and welcoming zone.

OVERHEAD UTILITIES

The overhead utilities are one of the most dominating visual forces along the corridor. Through discussions with Duke Energy, the Township determined that the burial of these services was cost prohibitive. Estimates by Duke Energy ranged well in excess of \$50 million. Relocating the utilities to the rear of the buildings also proved to be logistically very difficult, once again due to excessive cost and lack of permanent easement space. The Township is therefore left with finding ways to limit their visual impact. Section K further addresses overhead utility issues.



Existing Conditions



CURB CUTS

A 1996 survey of Beechmont Avenue showed 286 driveways within the 3.5-mile study area, including 221 entrances to roughly 120 commercial developments and 65 residential drives – an average of a one driveway every 65 feet and 1.8 driveways per commercial development. This spacing results in vehicles turning onto and off of Beechmont Avenue at nearly any point along the corridor – all potential conflict points.

Many properties within the study area have two, three or even four driveways. Some even feature a “continuous driveway” with access the entire length of the property. These arrangements allow vehicles to enter/exit Beechmont Avenue all along the corridor, greatly increasing the impact of the adjacent properties on the roadway. In some cases, the road has become part of the parking lot circulation, drastically reducing capacity in these areas.

Plan Goals

Taking into consideration the themes and goals of the prior plans and efforts, this document combines the previous studies into a single format to act as a guide for development along the Beechmont Corridor.

IMPROVE SAFETY AND REDUCE CONGESTION

A 1996 survey of Beechmont Avenue showed 286 driveways within the 3.5-mile study area, including 221 entrances to roughly 120 commercial developments and 65 residential drives - an average of a one driveway every sixty five feet and 1.8 driveways per commercial development. This spacing results in vehicles turning onto and off of Beechmont Avenue at nearly any point along the corridor – all potential conflict points.

Access control is an effective method for reducing congestion. Fewer, but better designed driveways can reduce conflicts between turning and through traffic, meaning fewer accidents and reduced congestion. An increase in mainline roadway capacity also increases the ability for traffic to access the roadway from adjacent properties, increasing not only mainline traffic flow, but also accessibility. Shared parking areas and driveways can remove additional trips from the public system further increasing available capacity.

DEVELOP CROSS ACCESS

“The ability to provide access between adjacent parcels is a critical element in improving traffic flow along Beechmont Avenue and improving access to the corridor’s businesses. These access connections can take several forms, from public service roads, to informal parking lot connections . . . they provide the ability of vehicles to visit several businesses without traveling out onto Beechmont Avenue, lowering to total number of vehicles on Beechmont, reducing turning moves and increasing the utilization of signalized intersections.”

IMPROVE SENSE OF PLACE

Beechmont is the identity that the business market supports. Beechmont requires unity and inclusive support from the wide region of which Anderson is a central community.

<need a quote from landscape plan about sense of place> quote about the entry walls and street furniture?

PUBLIC POLICY CHANGES

Improved coordination between offices, updated standards, grants, etc. The community is structured with clear definition centered on the Beechmont Corridor. The Beechmont Corridor Context Plan at right, illustrates the community context framed by Clough Pike to the north and 1-275 to the south. The Beechmont Corridor’s approximately one mile inside this frame. The 1-275 interchange serves Beechmont Corridor at the east and connects to Mt. Washington community at the west.

The distribution of neighborhoods, community facilities and commercial businesses are derived from the network of circulation. The sector green breaks (1 through 8) are developed in response to community flow patterns from the corridor. Green breaks will enhance identity.

The front door on Beechmont will take on a new quality supportive of community aspiration. Each sector green break plays a critical role within the entire visual context of the corridor.

Access Management

“Studies show increasing signal spacing and restricting left-turns can increase capacity of a primary arterial by as much as 50%, with corresponding increases in safety”

The concept of access management is an attempt to coordinate the safe and efficient use of roadways while providing for the necessary vehicular access to adjacent land through comprehensive planning and responsible enforcement. This concept does not necessarily involve wholesale closing of driveways and access restrictions, but rather, it involves a comprehensive, system-wide approach to providing access to adjacent property, while maintaining the integrity of the roadway system.

Access control is an effective method for reducing congestion. Fewer, but better designed driveways can reduce the conflicts between turning and through traffic, meaning fewer accidents and reduced congestion. An increase in mainline roadway capacity also increases the ability for traffic to access the roadway from adjacent properties, increasing not only mainline traffic flow, but also accessibility. Shared parking areas and driveways can remove additional trips from the public street system further increasing available capacity.

Access management is not anti-growth as many businesses fear. The reduction in access-related congestion, improved intersection operation and reduced accidents can substantially improved travel time along the corridor by reducing stops and slower moving vehicles. This reduction in potential vehicle conflicts and improvement in travel time results in tangible improvements as well as improved potential customer’s perception of Beechmont Avenue.

Roadway capacity increases can be expected once system-wide improvements are implemented. Increasing signal spacing and restricting left turns can increase capacity of a primary arterial by as much as 50%, with corresponding increases in safety. This 50% increase is similar to widening a four-lane roadway to six lanes, without the major property takes required of a major roadway widening project. In most cases, the impacts of closing driveways and modifying parking lots is much smaller than major widening and the required property takes of parking areas, buildings and possibly entire parcels.

COMMON ACCESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

- Establish roadway hierarchy
- Signal coordination and spacing
- Limit speed differential
- Spacing of median openings
- Raised medians to control left turns
- Proper intersection spacing
- Service roads and/or drives
- Limit conflict points
- Proper driveway design and spacing
- Deceleration turn lanes
- Shared driveway/parking
- Combined curb cuts
- Private connections between adjacent parcels

Access Management



Since the township has initiated furthering cross access, over 30 cross access points have been created. Fifteen of these cross access points are shown in the figure above.



With more cross access points, connections are able to be made between adjacent parcels allowing circulation within adjacent parking lots relieving traffic on Beechmont Avenue. This is displayed in the figure above.

Access Management

CROSS ACCESS BETWEEN PARCELS



Providing access between adjacent parcels is a critical element in improving traffic flow along Beechmont Avenue and improving access to the corridor's businesses. Access connections can take several forms, from public service roads, to informal parking lot connections. No matter what form connections take, they provide the ability of vehicles to visit several businesses without traveling out onto Beechmont Avenue, lowering the total number of vehicles on Beechmont, reducing turning moves and increasing the utilization of signalized intersections. Access connections are very popular with shoppers, improving the attractiveness of visiting businesses, similar to the larger, one-stop shopping centers or malls.

When surveyed, nearly all business owners want a traffic signal at their entrance. While signals cannot be added at every drive, providing cross access between parcels connect several businesses together. Without access between parcels, only businesses on the corner of a signalized intersection can take advantage of the signal.

Providing access can allow traffic from several adjacent businesses to connect to the side streets, effectively providing these businesses with a traffic signal.



Access Management

PUBLIC ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Reducing the impact of access is important, but capacity analyses showed that some intersections simply did not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the volume of traffic passing through. In these cases, it is important for the public agencies to show their commitment to traffic flow in the corridor. Eliminating these capacity restraints is critical to efficient traffic flow and reducing the delay and number of stops within the corridor. Additional turn lanes on the side street is an effective strategy to reduce the required green time on the side streets, increasing mainline capacity and traffic flow.

CURB CUT (DRIVEWAY) IMPROVEMENTS

A critical element in improving the ability of traffic to flow smoothly along Beechmont Avenue is reducing the impact of individual driveways. Reducing the total number of driveways is but one element in reducing the impacts of these driveways on the Beechmont traffic flow. Reducing the impacts of individual driveways can often be as important as eliminating drives.

PUBLIC POLICY CHANGES

In 1996, access controls, driveway permits and zoning controls were not adequately coordinated to effectively guide access within the corridor. In the past 10 years of time, all major plans and policies affecting development within the corridor have been updated and coordinated.

ODOT adopted an Access Management Manual in 1998, recommending the access spacing based on the roadway function, volume, stopping sight distance, land use and operating speed.

The Hamilton County Engineer's Office adopted their own Access Management Manual in 2004 that governs access on County roadways, including most of the side streets within the corridor.

Anderson Township has developed or revised several policies and plans within the past 10 years, with a major focus on properly designed and coordinated access.

Landscape



STREET TREES

Street trees should be utilized to create continuity of tree and shrub elements. Street tree planting areas should be considered in 1,200 linear foot increments with trees at a maximum of 50' on center. Location for trees should respond to community flow, gateway and potential for providing green street frontage. Sensitivity to tree conflict with presence of utility affected tree choices should also be considered.

SITE TREES

Site development/redevelopment should include trees positioned at right angle to the road, including evergreen screening, to help screen buildings, signage and parking plots and creating more of a focus on street frontage. Tree lined private drives off the road will assist in green continuity.

LANDSCAPE MEDIANS

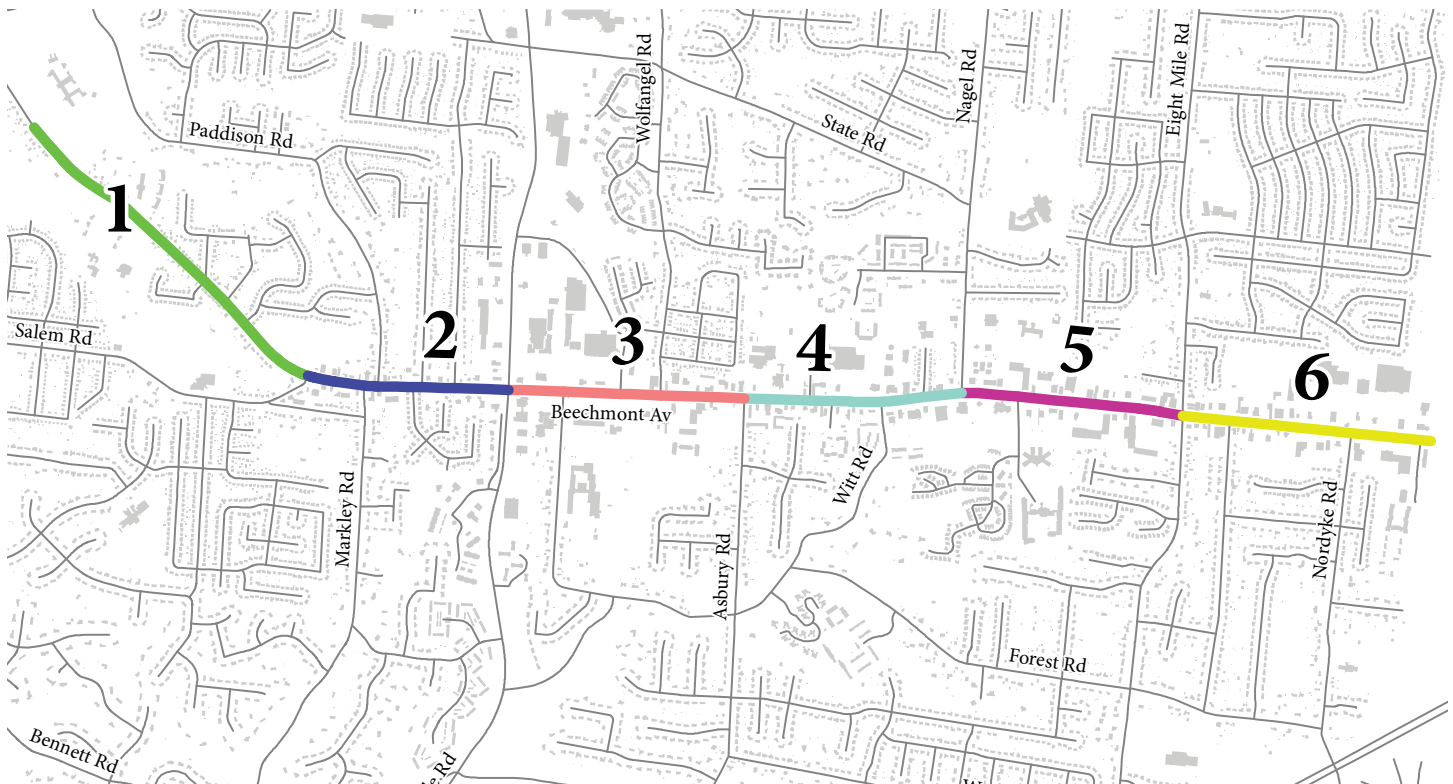
Green roadside continuity should be supported by landscape medians where indicated. Median improvements in the public right-of-way managed by ODOT will require a successful lobby and working relationship with the State to develop funding and scheduling consistent with private improvements.



Plan Organization & Neighborhoods

The 3.4 mile stretch of SR 125 (Beechmont Avenue) within Anderson Township can be separated into six unique typologies, which are identified within this plan as “neighborhoods”. These neighborhoods each have a unique character and therefore require a unique design, improvement and development and redevelopment strategy.

The Beechmont Plan is organized by these neighborhoods, each numbered 1–6 moving from east to west across the corridor, and provides recommendations for each based on the land use, development intensity, character and level of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.



Plan Organization & Neighborhoods

The plan encourages more residential-type development in character for Neighborhoods 1 and 2, where a concentration of residential activity forms. These areas should promote thoughtfully-designed open space areas for play and relaxation.

At the point where the character transitions to more dense, mixed-use development as you move towards the Clermont County line, efforts should promote a more mixed-use development pattern. Higher density residential should be encouraged in the form of “live-over-work” apartments and condominiums. There are several deep parcels with the capability to include living quarters off the corridor and still within the limits of the study area.

A true mix of residential, retail and office is most desirable; however, the Township understands that this will be market driven by demand and responded to by developers. Shared parking is strongly recommended. This will allow for peak hours to be accommodated among abutting parcels without the need for vast areas of parking that only are fully utilized for peak events. Retail centers will expand their capacity after normal business hours when workers leave their offices. Internal walking paths are highly encouraged to help facilitate pedestrian movement from one establishment to the next. The customer should be able to park the car and visit several businesses without the need to drive to each location. Sidewalks along Beechmont Avenue will contribute greatly to this effort.

By defining separate areas along Beechmont Avenue, each individual area begins to take on its own character and identity. Using this approach for focused visual enhancements will begin to transform the 3+ mile long corridor into unique, but compatible series of mixed-use neighborhoods. Following is a brief description of the suggested location for each of these six neighborhoods. Note that one of them (between Five Mile and Asbury Roads) has been identified as Downtown Anderson and studied in further detail to suggest how it might be transformed in the future. Use of building placement and character, streetscape enhancements, better pedestrian features, improved vehicular access and circulation and existing building facade improvements all focus on enhancements within the neighborhood. Examples in the focus neighborhood can be applied to other mixed-use neighborhoods in order to establish their individual identity. All elements should still be within the context of a cohesive overall Beechmont Corridor image.

Neighborhood One

Neighborhood One begins at the City of Cincinnati corporate limit and extends east to a point just west of Salem Road. This area has primarily a mix of dense residential and single-family houses. It incorporates the west end gateway and has large areas of visual release into natural, non-formal landscape areas. This sets a good tone for the image of Anderson Township. Beech Acres and The Mount Washington Care Center are in the center of this neighborhood. The eastern edge includes the Guardian Angels Cemetery. The emphasis on a residential community is a positive image as the corridor begins to transition to a mixed-use area east of Salem.

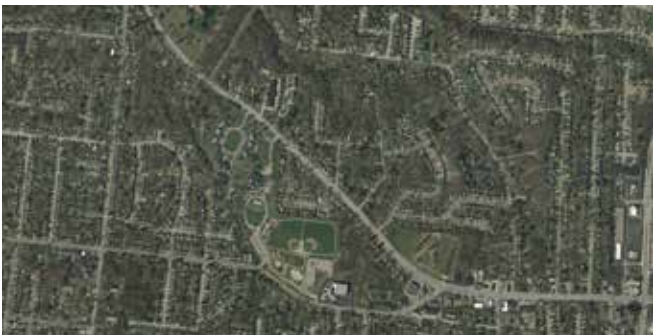
As part of the Beechmont Corridor Landscape Study, an Anderson Township Gateway feature which includes a welcome sign is located on the western boundary along Beechmont Avenue. Trees have been planted based on recommendations of the Landscape Study to create a Green Break connecting the large lawns of Mount Saint Mary's, the Athenaeum of Ohio and Beech Acres. Going east from Beech Acres, trees and a landscape wall with a decorative fence and large trees dress the area following the recommendations of the Landscape Study and allow the installation of a sidewalk from

Neighborhood One should focus on the residential character and its green, semi-rural feel. Streetscape elements should be more traditional in design and should include pedestrian lighting, benches and trash cans at bus stops, street trees to help hide the visual impact of the utility lines and a hedge row where needed to create an edge that helps define a pedestrian zone.

Sectors one and two of the Beechmont Landscape Plan are located in the Neighborhood One. Sector one falls to a low drainage area that bounds the Mount Saint Mary property and Beech Acres. The location of the gateway to Anderson moving eastward, has great visual impact with the downward slope. Both sectors contain greenbreaks and have been completed.

Walk-through Observations

- Traditional residential character
- Homes close to street
- No sidewalks
- Minimal parking
- Hilly terrain
- Large, established trees
- Established landscaping
- Minimal signage
- Power lines less visible



Neighborhood One



Neighborhood One

RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Character

Promote traditional residential design elements



Access Management

Combine unnecessary driveways



Landscape

Green median with trees and shrubs
Enhance low lying woodland areas
Promote street trees and landscape enhancement on private property



Gateway Feature

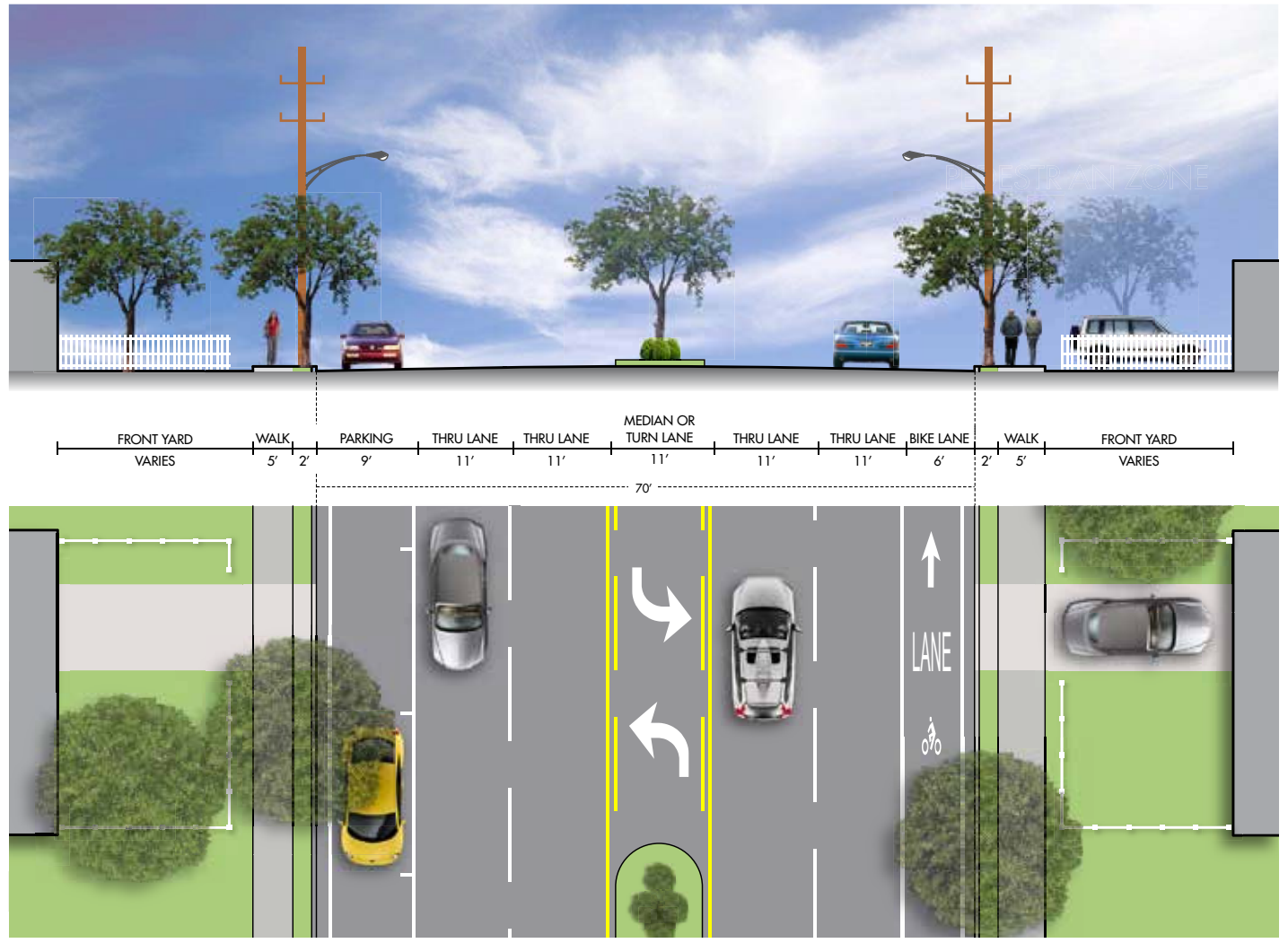
Enhance existing gateway signage with stone design similar to other Beechmont Avenue walls
Add landscaping to draw attention to gateway signage



Neighborhood One

Streetscape Design

- 5' sidewalks on both sides of Beechmont
- Where possible, reduce through lane width and widen landscape median area
- On-street parking in front of residences
- Climbing bike lane








Neighborhood One





Neighborhood One



Legend


-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

 Trees - New

 Trees - Existing

 Study Area



0 25 50 Feet







Neighborhood One

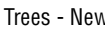


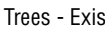
Neighborhood One



Legend

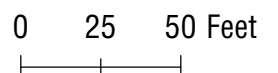
-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

 Trees - New

 Trees - Existing

 Study Area

U-Turn



Neighborhood One



Neighborhood One



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area

Landscape Median



0 25 50 Feet






Neighborhood One





Neighborhood One



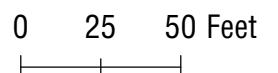
Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

 Trees - New

 Trees - Existing

 Study Area



Neighborhood One



Neighborhood One



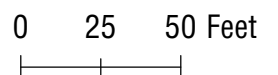
Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area



Neighborhood One



Neighborhood One



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area

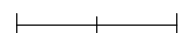
Close Driveway

ing Lot Connection

Consolidate Driveways at Signal



0 25 50 Feet



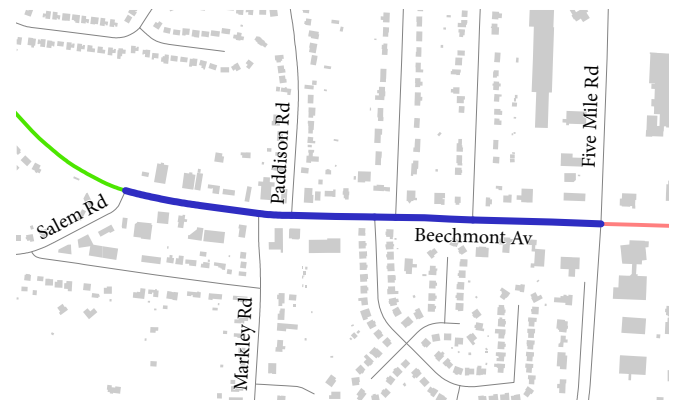
Neighborhood Two

This neighborhood transitions from mostly residential, park and institutional uses, to a mixed use of residential, office and small commercial centers. A number of the former residences have been converted to offices while maintaining elements of a residential environment. It is recommended that this architectural character continue so that the current occupied residences along both sides of Beechmont remain in a compatible environment. Parking should be placed to the side or rear of the building. New commercial buildings should have a residential scale and use of materials. Similar to neighborhood 1, streetscape, pedestrian and landscape enhancements are recommended to retain elements of a residential area.

The commercial frontage west of Paddison and Markley provides negligible opportunity for enhancement beyond independent business facade / sign upgrades. The parking requirements with limited frontage are constraints. Potential for treatment eastward to Five Mile provides opportunity. Lots are larger, parking pattern allows green frontage and the existing mature green on residential property masks the utility poles on the south side. The larger lot, independent business properties provide ample potential and appropriate grades of slope for trees. Several properties are improperly planted to serve views from the road. Landscape treatment toward the Five Mile intersection would receive priority. Existing trees should be evaluated with intent to provide a continuous ground plane and tree alignment capability.

Walk-through Observations

- Traditional residential character
- Homes close to street
- 4' sidewalks with 2' landscape strip
- Minimal parking
- Hilly terrain
- Large, established trees
- Commercial signage
- Power lines more prominent



Neighborhood Two



Neighborhood Two

RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Character

Paddison and Five Mile: promote traditional residential design similar to Neighborhood One



Salem to Five Mile: Focus mixed-use, two-story development to front Beechmont Avenue



Landscape

Green median
Promote landscape enhancement on private property



Commercial Parking

Locate to the side or rear of the building



Salem to Paddison: Use sidewalks, walls and landscape to separate roadway from parking areas



Signage

Encourage neighborhood/residential-scale signage for commercial properties



Neighborhood Two

Streetscape Design

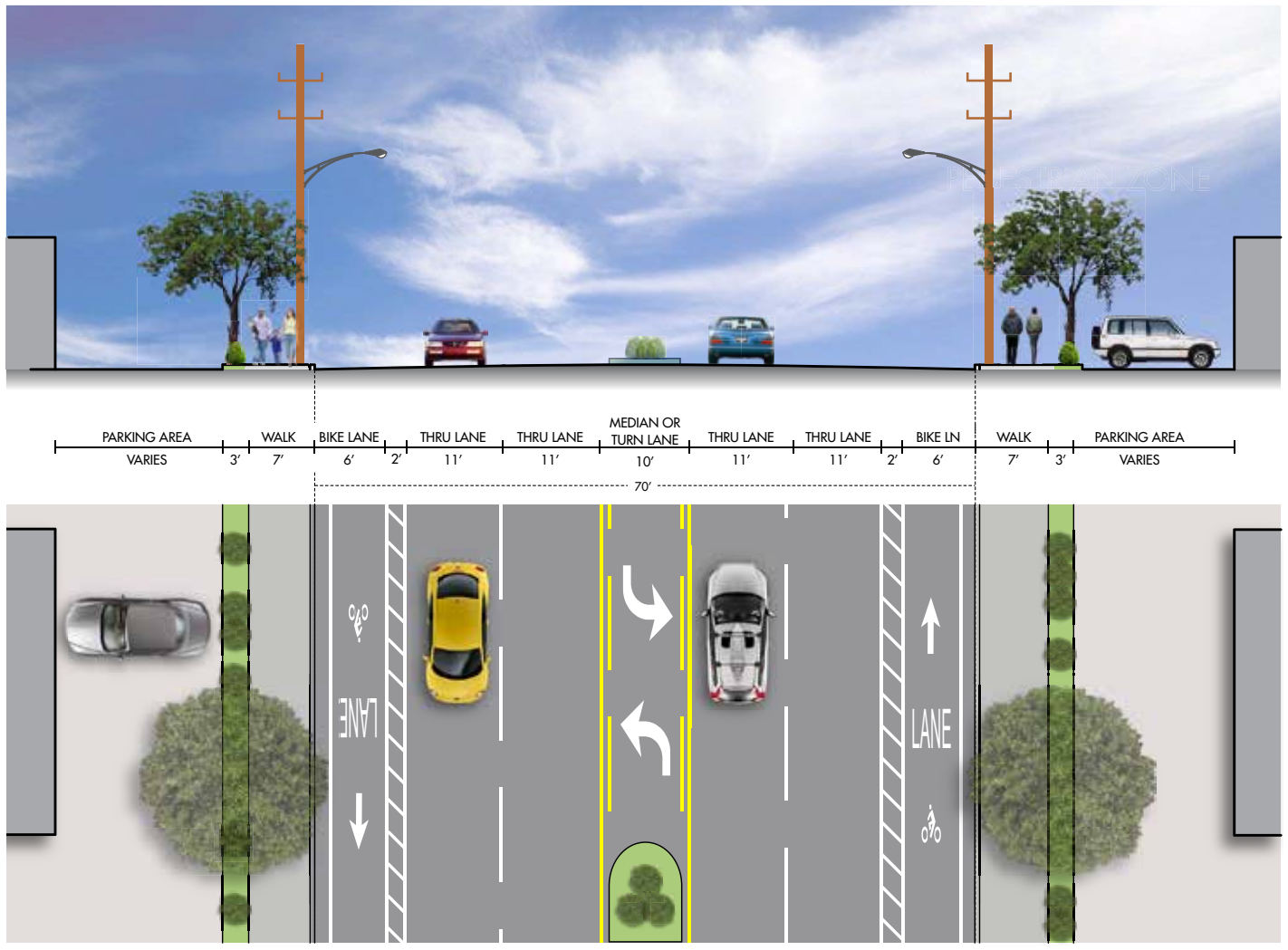
Focus on creating continuity of sidewalks in this area

Encourage 7' sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides of Beechmont

Add on-street parking areas in front of residential land uses

Promote 3' landscape strip of stone walls between back of sidewalk and parking/building areas in areas with more commercial uses to help hide parking areas (Salem to Paddison)

Walls should be designed to match existing Beechmont Avenue walls



Neighborhood Two



Neighborhood Two



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area



0 25 50 Feet

Neighborhood Two



Neighborhood Two



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area

Neighborhood Two



Neighborhood Two



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area

Beechmont Av

Consolidate Driveways

Neighborhood Three

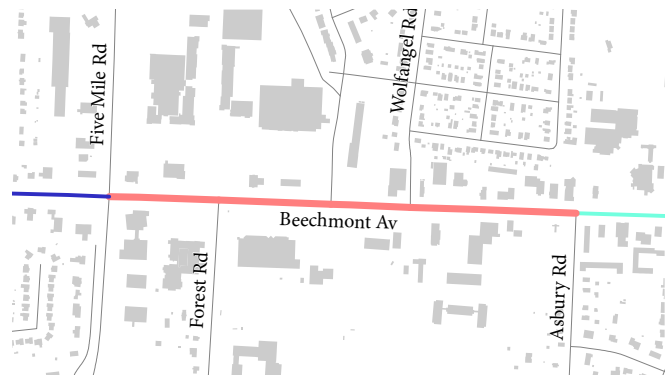
Neighborhood Three begins at Five Mile Road and extends to Asbury Road. This area has a variety of use groups and building types. The Anderson Towne Center, larger scaled office buildings, a vacant big box building, two car dealerships, a strip center and a large box entertainment facility are some of the major elements in this area. There are several chain establishments including fast food restaurants, as well as locally run businesses. Single family homes are immediately adjacent to this area. The sub-area of Forest Road to Asbury Road has been identified as “Downtown Anderson.”

Neighborhood 3 should focus on the Anderson Towne Center as a design catalyst. Mixed-use is highly encouraged. It is proposed that many of the future buildings fronting Beechmont be placed 10–15 feet from the right-of-way while maintaining adequate sight distance for vehicles entering and exiting Beechmont. Buildings should either be a minimum of two stories or have a mass that is equivalent to two stories in height. This will help define an edge that identifies the pedestrian space, brings the storefronts up closer to the street and allows the parking to be placed toward the side and rear of the facility. Access to the businesses will be from an access way that is to the rear of the property. This drive will link several parcels and will allow for improved access to and from the properties. Vehicular access, safety and the visual character will be improved. The Beechmont Corridor Update Study describes these access improvements in more detail.

In 2013, the Downtown Anderson Plan (see Appendix A) was developed to create a further in depth look at Neighborhood Three, first established in the Beechmont Corridor Vision Plan in 2005. The Downtown Anderson Plan suggests how the area should be developed moving forward using building placement and character, streetscape enhancements, pedestrian facilities, improved vehicular access and circulation and building façade improvements. Downtown Anderson is the economic and civic center of Anderson Township, providing residents and visitors an experience that is walkable and connected, with public spaces that are activated by retail, civic functions, employment and housing.

Walk-through Observations

- Dense, urban character
- Opportunity for pedestrian focus/connectivity
- Diverse building stock, located close to street
- 7' sidewalks
- Some areas of established landscape
- Lots of signage
- Power lines very prominent



Neighborhood Three



Neighborhood Three

RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Character

Street-facing retail



Outdoor plazas that engage the street



Landscape

Street trees, landscape and walls along sidewalk



Access Management

Parking lot connections between neighboring properties



Buildings that promote a pedestrian-friendly environment



Architecture

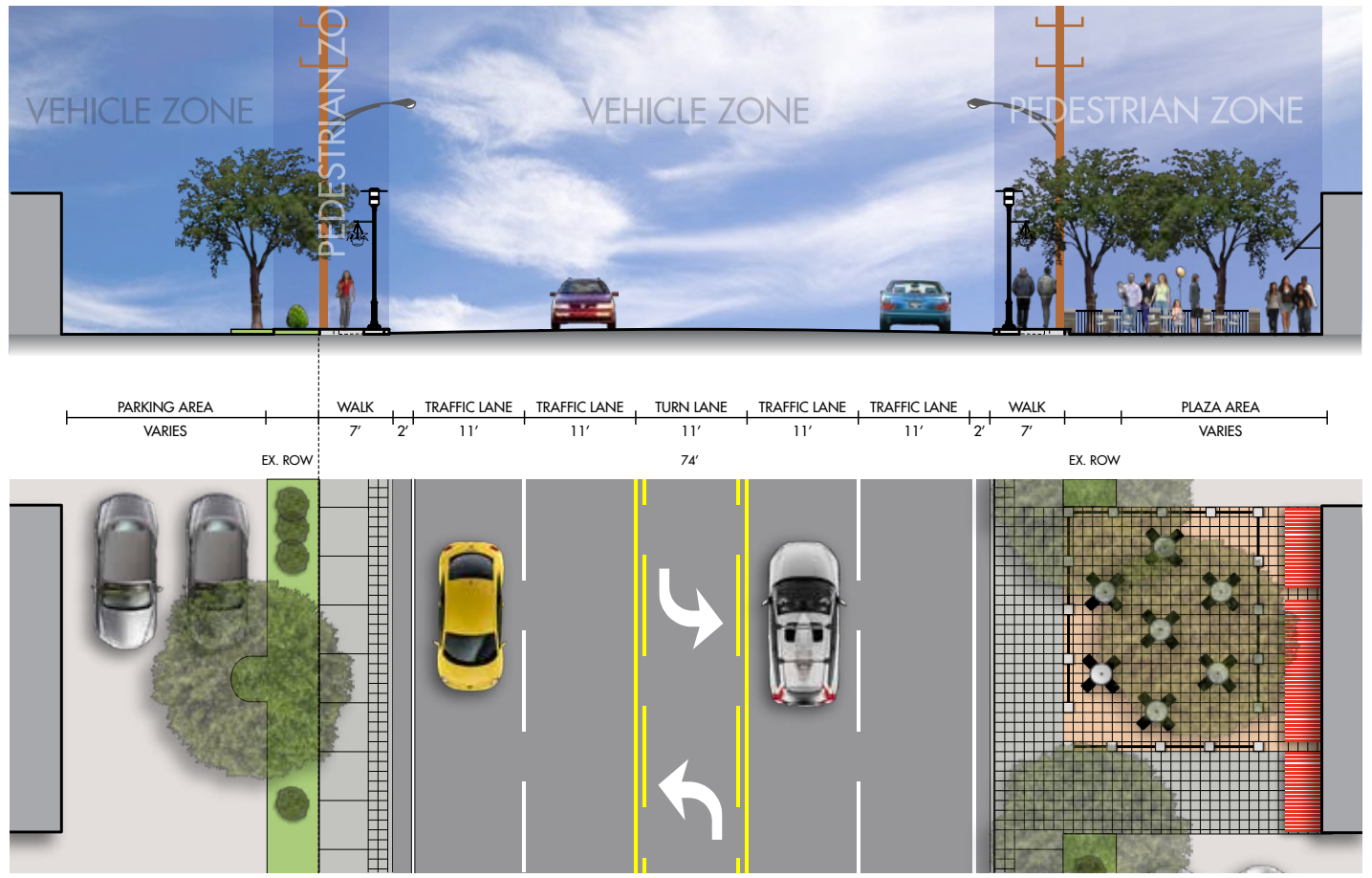
Two-story massing with unique elements



Neighborhood Three

Streetscape Design

- Construct 7' sidewalks on both sides of Beechmont
- Promote a landscaping at the back of the sidewalk
- Screening walls along parking areas (between street and parking areas)
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows) for bicyclists



Neighborhood Three



Neighborhood Three



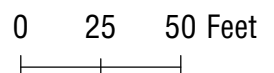
Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area








Neighborhood Three



Neighborhood Three



Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

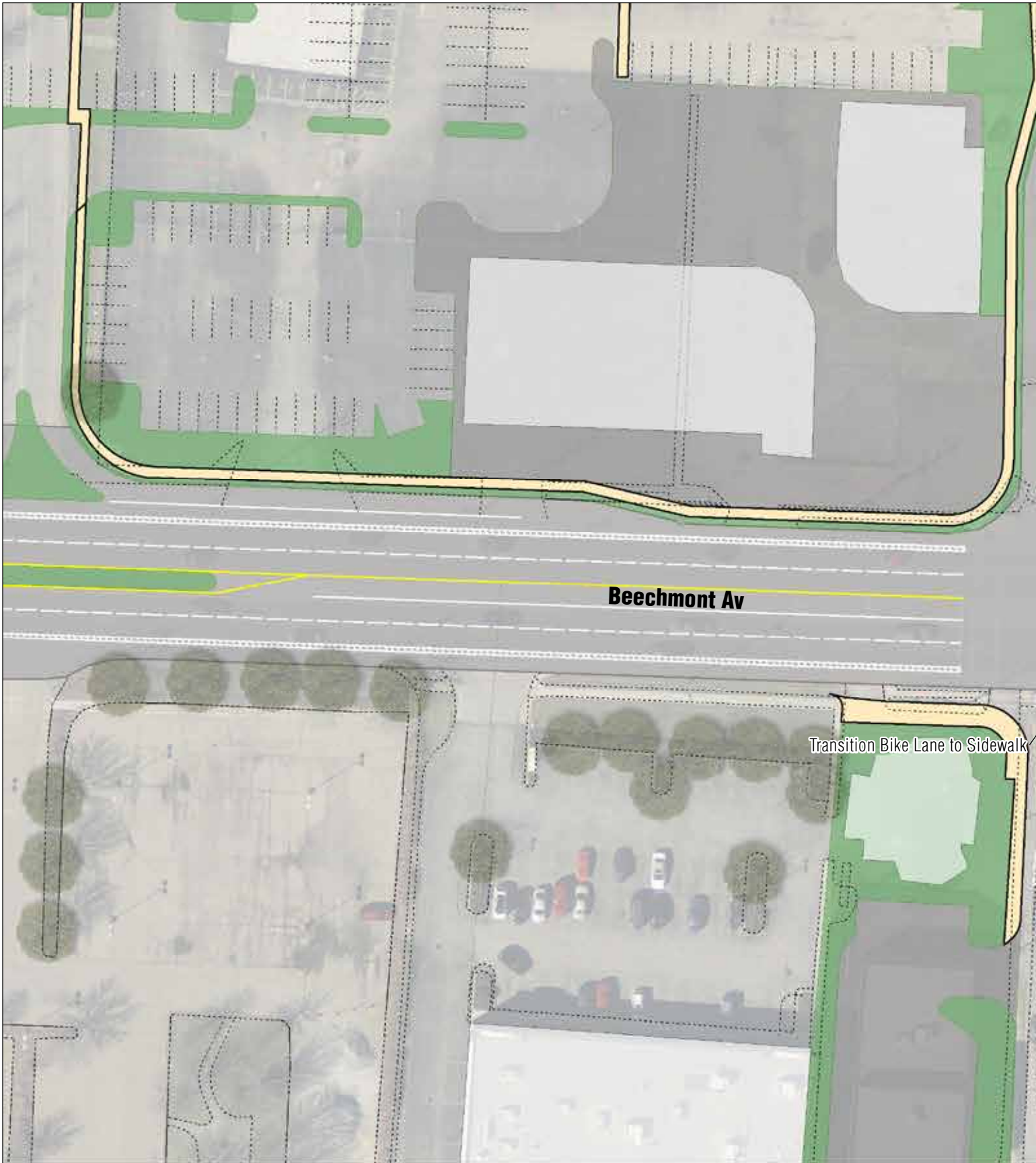
Trees - New

Trees - Existing

 Study Area

Landscape Median

Neighborhood Three













Wolfangel Rd

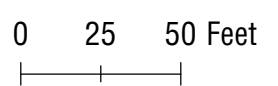
Parking Lot Connection

Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

-  Trees - New
-  Trees - Existing

-  Study Area








Neighborhood Three



Neighborhood Three



Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

 Study Area

Neighborhood Four

Neighborhood Four begins at Asbury Road and terminates at Nagel Road. The Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, a multi-tenant big box, the Township Government Center and several car dealerships define this area. A mixed-use environment of chain restaurants, auto focused businesses and office buildings are also prevalent. This neighborhood should focus and capitalize on the Township's Government Offices, which is in the center of this neighborhood and the center of the Corridor's business/commercial environment. Integration of business properties with services roads will improve wayfinding and traffic safety. Heightened identity and wayfinding legibility will be promoted with landscape continuity.

New buildings should have a first floor frame of substantial material (brick, stone, precast concrete, metal or concrete masonry units). These frames may or may not have a base element. A storefront should reside inside the frame and a knee wall, if desired, should be of a contrasting material. This infill material can be wood or chosen from the list above. EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems) should not be used in either the frame or the infill material on the first floor. The second story mass needs to be a contrasting material from the frame and can include any of the substantial materials as well as wood or EIFS. It is recommended that multi-tenant buildings, such as strip centers not be homogenous in appearance. The massing should reflect separate tenant spaces. The concepts above still apply, but the design and material should not be copied from tenant space to tenant space. Awnings and lighting should be incorporated, and signs should be modest in scale — per the Township's sign regulations. The street address should be prominently displayed on the awning or façade.

Streetscape elements should be in a traditional language, but not that of neighborhood 1 and 2. Slightly more contemporary forms are OK as the streetscape will begin to shift in this direction in Neighborhoods 5 and 6. Benches, planters and trash cans should be placed at the bus stops, nodes and other areas that develop the need. Bike racks should be placed as the Township feels fit. Pedestrian lighting should be placed at regular intervals to achieve continuity. Pedestrian walks should also be completed in these areas.

Walk-through Observations

- Lacking sidewalk connectivity
- Larger lot areas and buildings
- Auto-oriented development
- Minimal landscaping
- Building facades lack quality materials
- Transition from Downtown Anderson to retail



Neighborhood Four



Neighborhood Four

RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Character

Substantial, quality building materials



Varied massing of buildings



Access Management

Parking lot connections between neighboring properties



Closing unnecessary driveways



Landscape

Street trees, landscape and walls along sidewalk



Awnings and Lighting



Neighborhood Four

Streetscape Design

Focus on continuity of sidewalks and filling-in gaps

Construct 5' sidewalks on both sides of Beechmont

Promote a landscape area or stone walls between back of sidewalk and parking/building areas in areas with more commercial uses to help hide parking areas



Neighborhood Four



Neighborhood Four



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area

Landscape Median



0 25 50 Feet

Neighborhood Four



Neighborhood Four



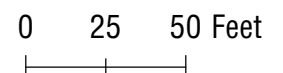
Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area



Neighborhood Four



Neighborhood Four



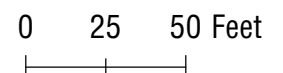
Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area



Neighborhood Four



Neighborhood Four



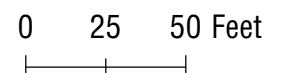
Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area



Neighborhood Five

Neighborhood Five is defined to the west by Nagel Road and to the east by Eight Mile Road. This neighborhood includes St. Timothy’s Church, multiple strip malls that dominate the character and several smaller retail and office use buildings. The New England Club, The Anderson and Whittshire Glen are entered through this area, but stand back off of the corridor.

Nagel is a critical connector with priority green potential. The Comboni property and St. Timothy Church have appropriate location to create a significant green break at Nagel Road. The residential property on Nagel continues a strong green context. The property owners on the frontage can work together to create a major change in creating continuity. Linkage to condominiums on the sloped terrain south would benefit from the new legibility. Several large format retail centers have potential to add green improvements that will build the character of their location.

Neighborhood Five has large and small strip centers that are prevalent. This building type should have facades designed in such a way as to identify individual tenant spaces as described above. Additional streetscape elements, stonewall and pedestrian elements are recommended along the street frontage typically set back about 30 feet from Beechmont. The streetscape elements should transition from the traditional character of neighborhoods through 4 to the contemporary character of neighborhood 6.

Walk-through Observations

- Lacking sidewalk connectivity
- Auto-oriented development
- Buildings set back further from the street
- Greenspace opportunities
- Building facades lack quality materials
- Deeper lots



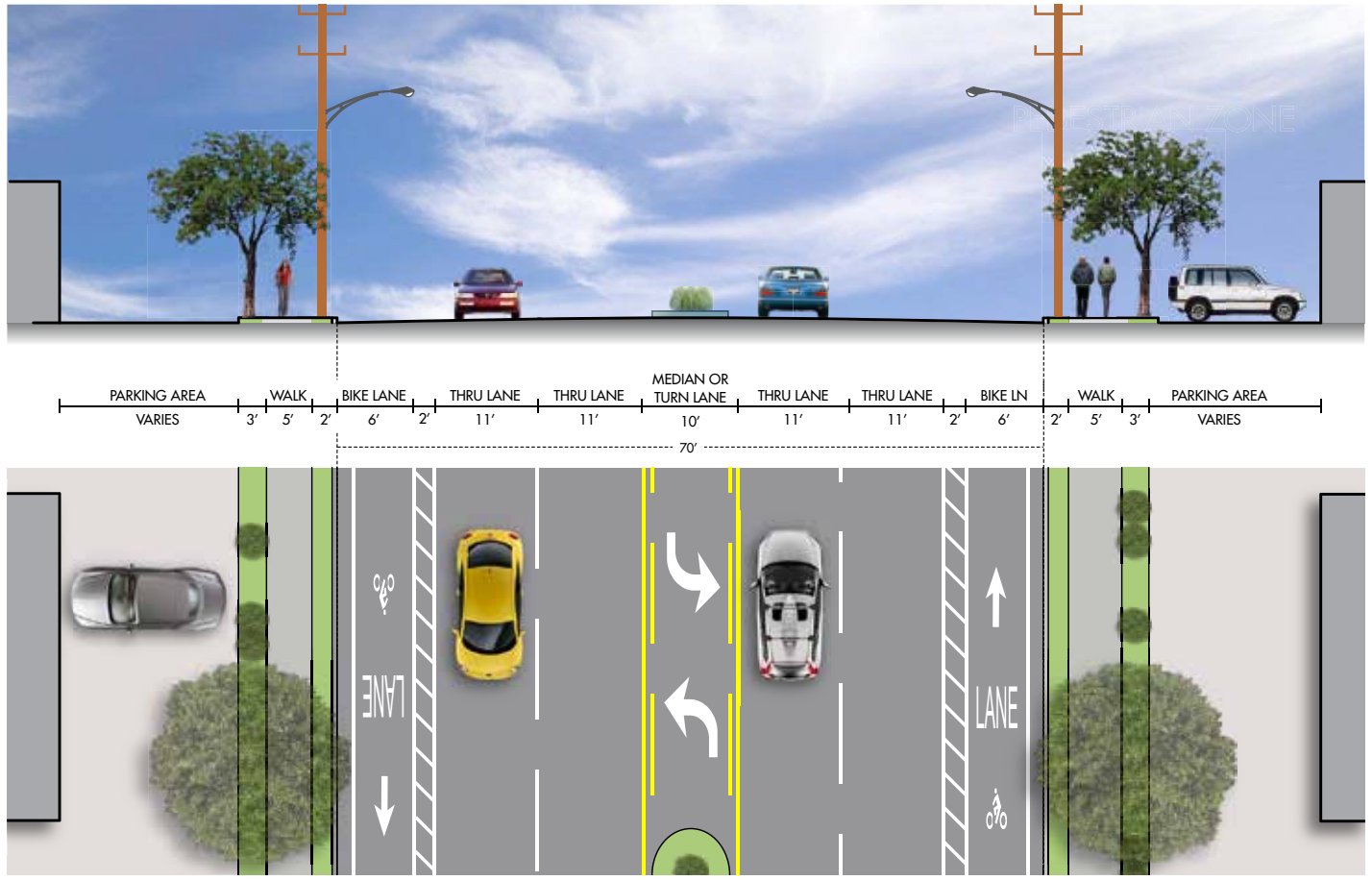
Neighborhood Five

Streetscape Design

Focus on continuity of sidewalks and filling-in gaps

Construct 5' sidewalks on both sides of Beechmont

Promote a landscape area or stone walls between back of sidewalk and parking/building areas in areas with more commercial uses to help hide parking areas



Neighborhood Five



Neighborhood Five



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area






Neighborhood Five



Neighborhood Five



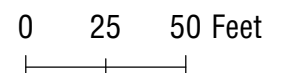
Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

 Study Area








Neighborhood Five



Neighborhood Five




Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

 Study Area

0 25 50 Feet


Neighborhood Five



Neighborhood Five



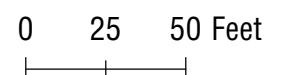
Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

Study Area



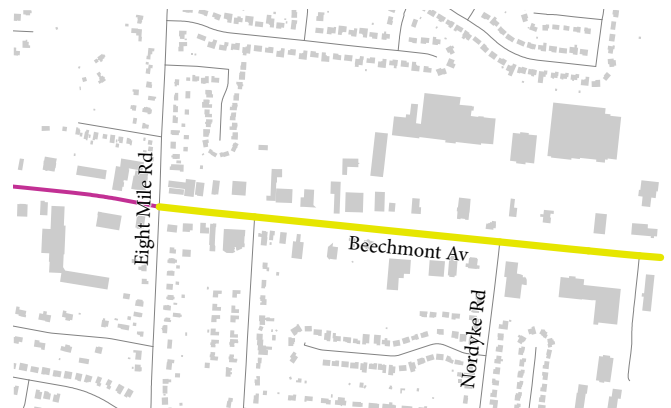
Neighborhood Six

Neighborhood Six extends east from Eight Mile Road to the Hamilton County/ Clermont County line. While serving as the East Gateway, car dealerships and big box retail dominate this area. Smaller office and retail businesses co-exist. This Eastern Gateway needs a different character to be able to hold its own in this highly congested area. A more contemporary visual enhancement character is recommended, primarily due to the influence of the new car dealerships. This should be reflected in the streetscape elements as well.

Neighborhood 6 is dominated by big box retail and car dealerships. Many big box retailers have multiple tenants that historically occupied an outlet. Banks, pharmacies and fast food restaurants are being incorporated into these large buildings set further back from Beechmont. The deep set commercial zones on the north side(900'), three times the depth of the auto locations on the south. They have become one large mixed-use tenant. The facade should reflect this diversity through massing, material selection and other facade elements. The architecture should be contemporary, such as the car dealership shown below. A more modern streetscape should be employed to reflect the contemporary architecture in this area.

Walk-through Observations

- Gateway into Township
- Lacking sidewalk connectivity
- Auto-oriented development
- Buildings set back further from the street
- Greenspace opportunities
- Building facades lack quality materials
- Deeper lots



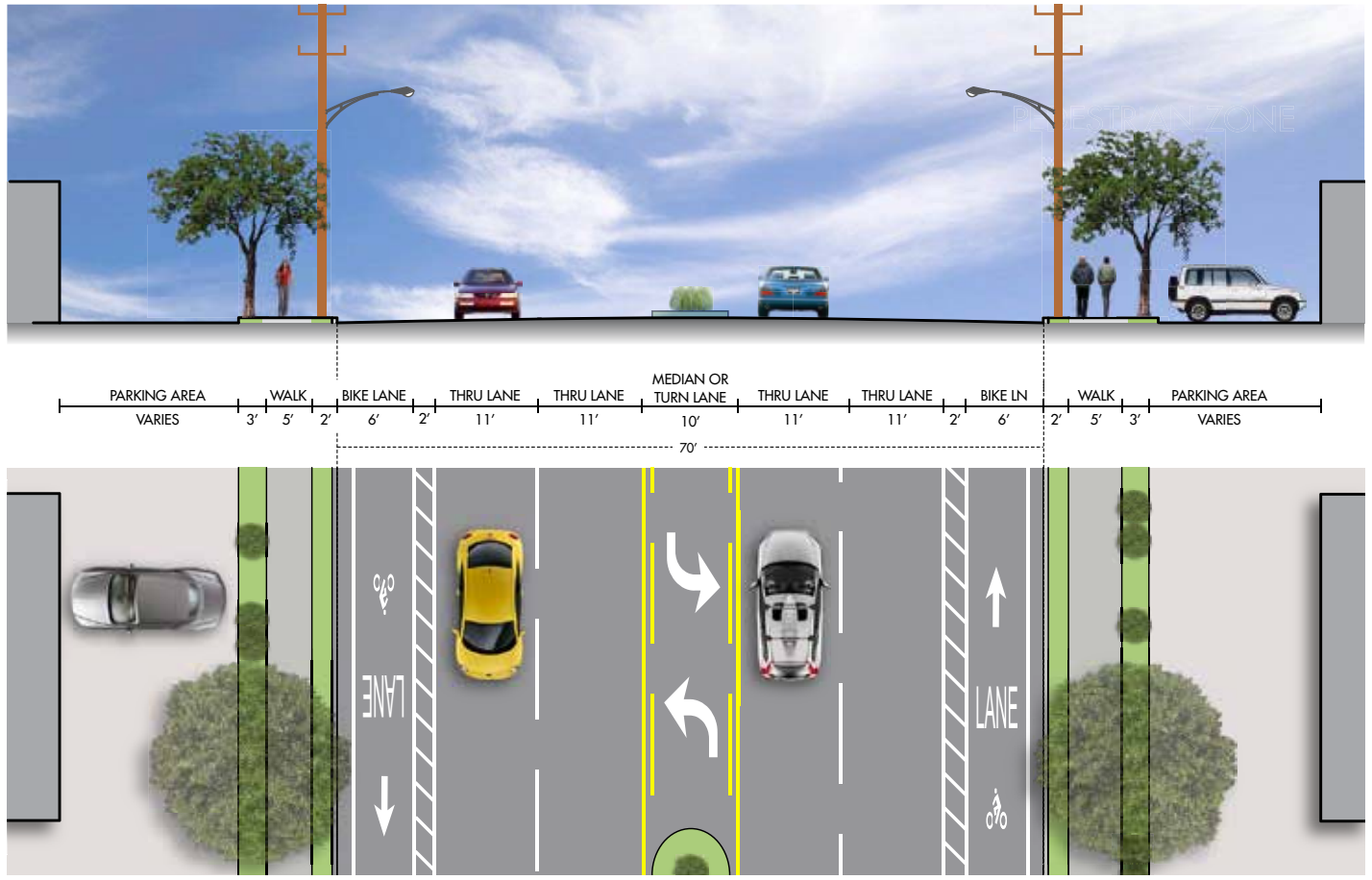
Neighborhood Six

Streetscape Design

Focus on continuity of sidewalks and filling-in gaps

Construct 5' sidewalks on both sides of Beechmont

Promote a landscape area or stone walls between back of sidewalk and parking/building areas in areas with more commercial uses to help hide parking areas








Neighborhood Six





Neighborhood Six



Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

 Trees - New

 Trees - Existing

 Study Area






Neighborhood Six



Neighborhood Six



Legend


-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

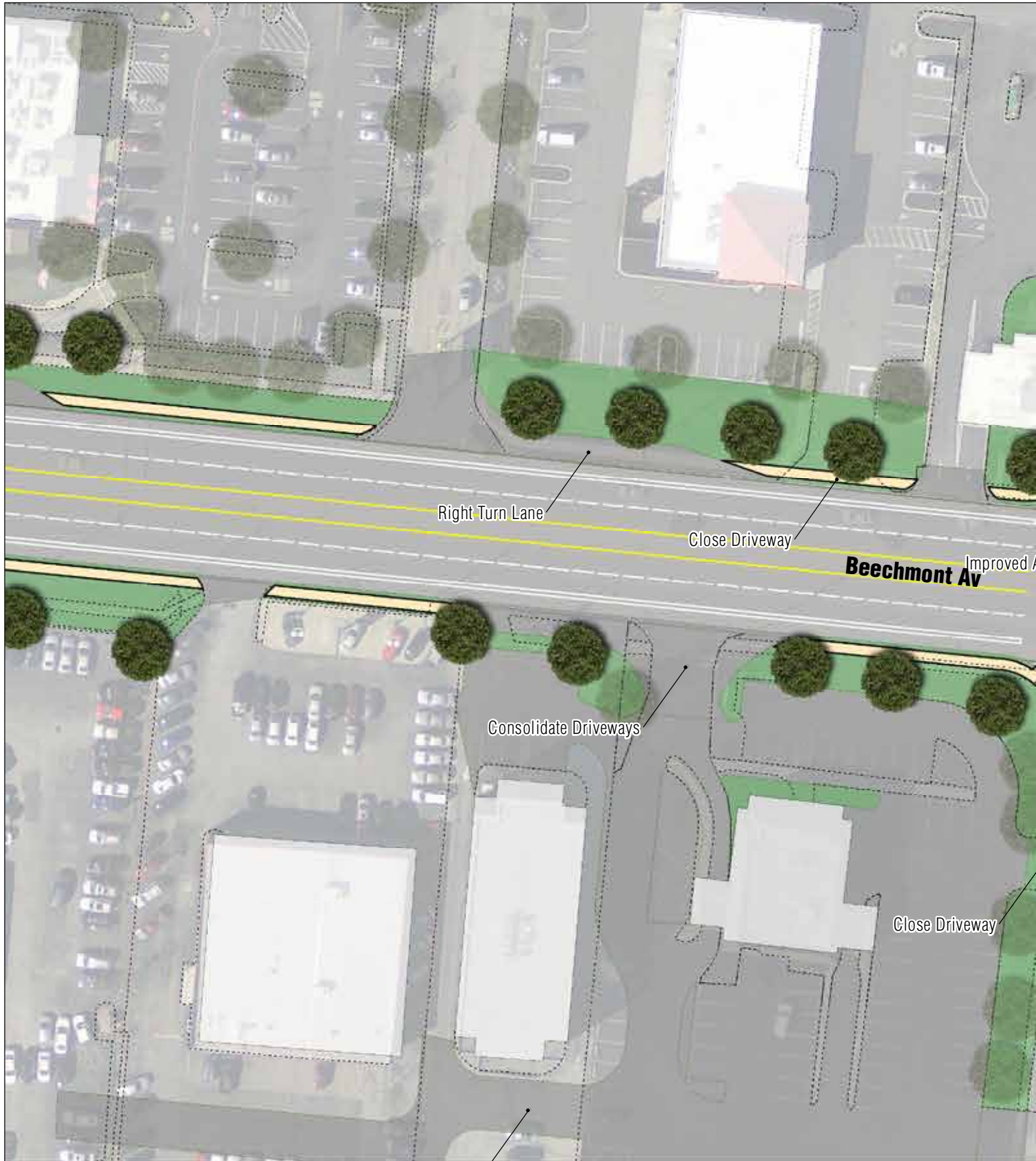
Trees - Existing

 Study Area



0 25 50 Feet


Neighborhood Six



Neighborhood Six



Legend

- Buildings
- Sidewalk
- Landscape Area
- Driveway
- Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

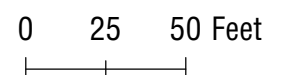
Trees - Existing

Study Area

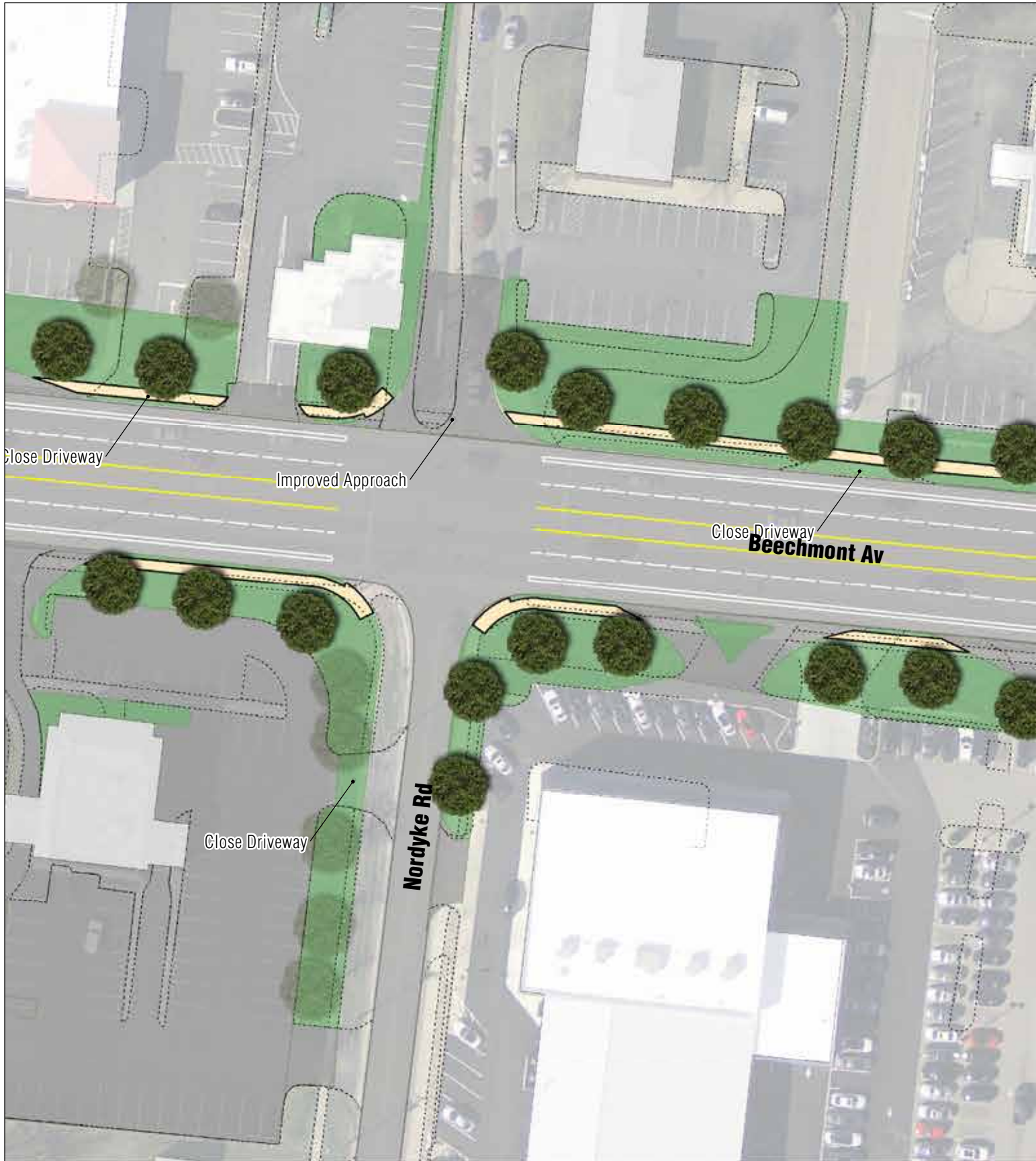
Approach

Close Driveway

Nordyke Rd








Neighborhood Six



Neighborhood Six




Legend

-  Buildings
-  Sidewalk
-  Landscape Area
-  Driveway
-  Beechmont Ave

Trees - New

Trees - Existing

 Study Area

0 25 50 Feet


Implementation Strategies

Anderson Township officials have been promoting a spirit of cooperation with the business and developer community for many years. It remains the Township's desire to encourage and leverage significant improvements within the Beechmont Corridor over time.

ODOT INTERFACE

The Downtown Anderson Plan 2013 suggested the Township to work closely with Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). This plan provide recommendations on how significant physical improvements may take place and the Township should continue working with ODOT. As ODOT has the permit and maintenance responsibilities on Beechmont Avenue (SR125) within Anderson Township, any improvements planned within the right of way must obtain a permit from ODOT.

BUSINESS/PROPERTY OWNER INTERFACE

As many of the recommendations set forth in the Vision Plan, Corridor Plan, and this Plan involved the design, configuration and/or appearance of buildings on private property, dialogue and interface with private property owners and tenants is critical to the success and implementation of this Plan. Throughout development of this Plan, such conversations occurred, but moving forward these should include:

- Continued contact with every property owner regarding the Township's desire to promote visual enhancements in the Area.
- Create the vehicle and offer incentives as a catalyst to get owner/businesses to participate with improvements to existing structures. This could include a "Design Resource Pool" that can provide initial concepts for physical improvement to selected properties that is funded by Anderson Township. Detailed design will then become the responsibility of individual property owners.
- Provide guidelines (as described in the Vision Plan, Corridor Plan and design guidelines) to property owners who are considering remodeling or redeveloping their property.

Implementation Strategies

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

In conjunction with the aforementioned dialogue with ODOT, utility providers, and property owners, the following tools are suggested as strategies to help advance the recommendations set forth in the Corridor Plan:

- Develop design standards that would apply to new construction and substantial redevelopment, while also offering a guide for property improvements, planned unit development modifications, etc.
- Develop signage guidelines that encourage the visual enhancements desired by the Township and the option to remove undesirable signs using TIF funds for the private property.
- Allocate a portion of TIF (Tax Increment Funds) Funds for investment in physical improvements and seek grant funding to assist with public improvements to calm traffic and safely facilitate pedestrian, bicycle and transit use within the area.
- Utilize the Township's Economic Development Committee, along with other groups, to set up an Advocacy Committee whose mission is to transform Beechmont Avenue. Include residents, property owners, businesses, public officials and technical design professionals.
- Explore the use of a Development Authority, Community Improvement Corporation, or other entity to facilitate redevelopment of the Beechmont Corridor.

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Appendix A: Downtown Anderson



KZFD DESIGN

DOWNTOWN ANDERSON PLAN

ANDERSON TOWNSHIP
HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO

July 2013



**ANDERSON TOWNSHIP “DOWNTOWN ANDERSON” PLAN
July 2013**

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INTRODUCTION

As an addendum to the 2005 Beechmont Corridor Vision Plan, a Focus Area Study was developed for the area between Towne Center Way and Asbury Road, due to its character, location and suitability of properties for redevelopment. This Focus Area, or "Downtown Anderson" Plan, suggests how the area should be developed moving forward, using building placement and character, streetscape enhancements, pedestrian facilities, improved vehicular access and circulation and building façade improvements. The land use and building changes were expected to be market driven by the individual developers and property owners.

Since the adoption of the Vision Plan in 2005, this portion of Beechmont Avenue has continued to develop and properties have begun to redevelop in accordance with the Study. Over the past several years this portion of Beechmont Avenue has become increasingly referred to as Anderson's "Downtown" due to its central location and economic importance. With recent redevelopment focused in this area, and proposed new investment and commerce planned for this area, the Township has initiated an update to its Vision Plan for this portion, or neighborhood, of Beechmont Avenue.

This Downtown Anderson Plan is intended to complement the existing 2005 Vision Plan only for the subject neighborhood. Thus, corridor-wide recommendations from the Vision Plan remain intact and are still being pursued, and guidance for other neighborhoods along Beechmont have not changed from that suggested in the 2005 Vision Plan. It is anticipated that a forthcoming overarching Beechmont Plan will then incorporate the recommendations of this Plan, those from the Vision Plan (including recommendations for the corridor and those for other "neighborhoods"), and the Beechmont Corridor Plan.

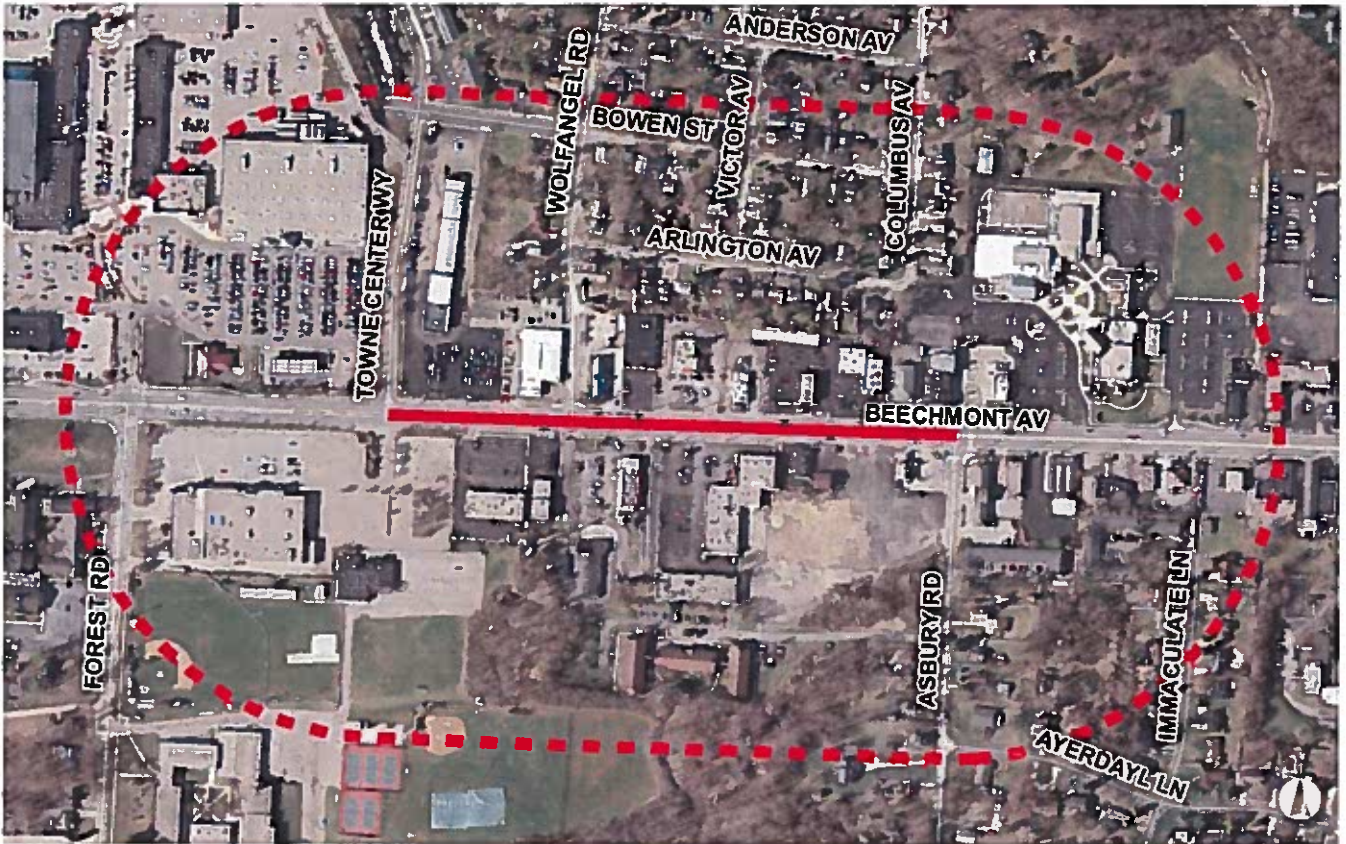
Background

In 2011, the Anderson Township Economic Development Committee established a number of goals, one of which being an update to the Vision Plan for Beechmont Avenue, in particular the area between Towne Center Way and Asbury Road. Work began in early 2012 and this ultimately was dubbed "Downtown Anderson", due to their interest in encouraging a more walkable environment in this area to provide a greater link between the destinations in this "neighborhood" uses. Recent, ongoing, and forthcoming private development, coupled with potential future public investment in the streetscape area, is intended to create a new sense of place that differentiates this part of Beechmont from the rest of the corridor.

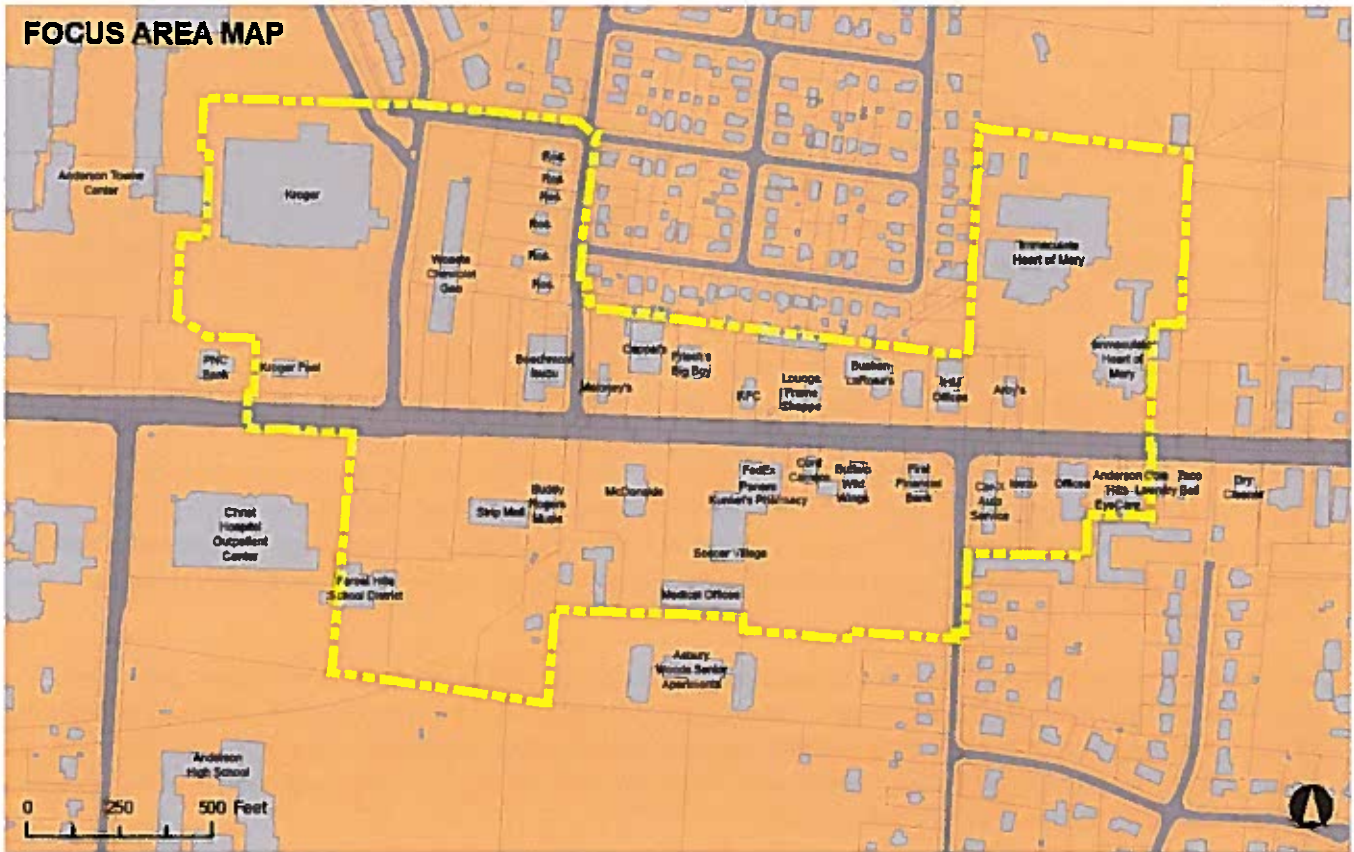
While this effort was overseen by the Economic Development Committee, several meetings were held with property owners and tenants in this area, as well as the community at large. The resulting plan is intended to be an update of the Vision Plan for this targeted area, therefore replacing the design and streetscape recommendations for Neighborhood 3 from the 2005 Vision Plan. Ultimately, this plan will serve as a guide for redevelopment, as well as the basis for streetscape improvements, in this area.

Focus Area Description

The "Downtown Anderson" study area is a unique section of Beechmont Avenue just east of the Five Mile Road intersection with a variety of uses, building types and visitors. The study area lies within the boundaries of Towne Center Way and Asbury Road, and includes parcels on both sides of the street. The Focus Area serves as a transition zone along Beechmont Avenue, with residential neighborhoods and office-oriented development to the west and auto-oriented commercial to the east.



FOCUS AREA MAP



The area's urban, compact development pattern, access to transportation facilities, mixture of diverse land uses, concentrations of people and regional destinations have led this area to be considered the "downtown" of Anderson Township. While this area's land uses resemble a downtown, the area lacks the urban character, appearance, walkability and public spaces for civic functions that are vital to a vibrant "downtown."

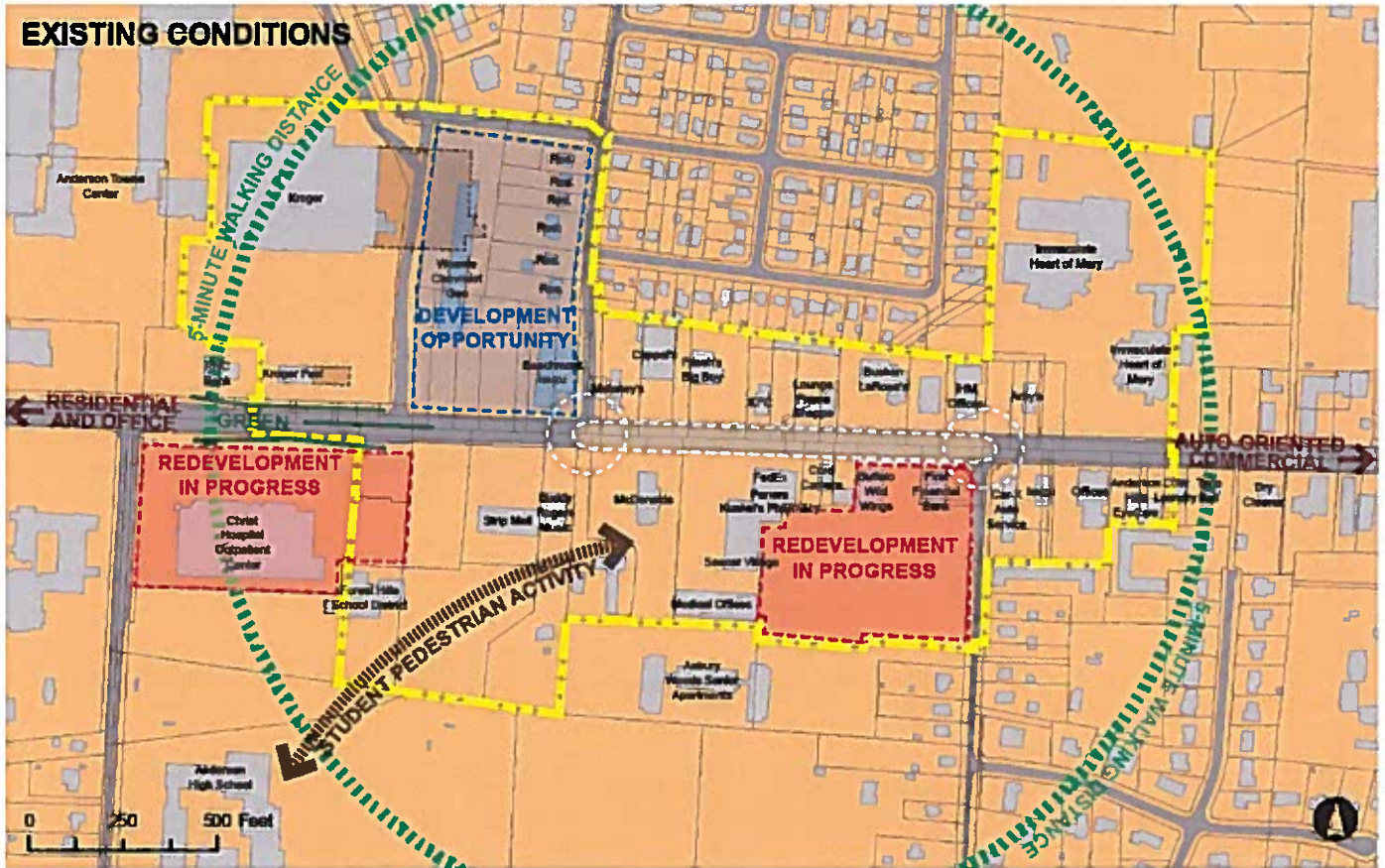
The Focus Area includes large- and small-scale commercial, grocery, restaurants, fuel, school, church, office and medical office buildings which are surrounded by residential, creating a confluence of diverse uses in this two-block segment of Beechmont Avenue. Buildings are located closer to the street, bringing a unique character that is atypical of most of Beechmont Avenue and range in size from smaller, individual retail stores to big-box retail. Significant destinations including Anderson Towne Center, Kroger, Immaculate Heart of Mary and Anderson High School are all within walking distance and bring visitors of various age groups from the surrounding areas. Students, shoppers and retail employees have the opportunity to walk from one destination to another to grab a quick lunch at the nearby restaurants.

Visually, the area is paved from building-to-building across Beechmont Avenue with roadway, parking, utilities and signage being the noticeable visual elements. Trees and landscaping are almost nonexistent, leaving a harsh environment for pedestrians. Opportunities exist for pedestrian movement within the Focus Area, but it is obvious the automobile is the primary mode of transportation on Beechmont. Sidewalks are not continuous, do not meet ADA Guidelines in some areas and are frequently broken up by curb cuts, driveways and parking lots, making driving from one destination to another the most viable option. The existing five foot wide shoulders meet minimum bicycle facility guidelines, but do not provide an atmosphere that is bicycle-friendly. Buildings are oriented toward parking lots, furthering the disconnect between nearby destinations. Street lighting is provided though utilitarian, cobra head-style fixtures, which provide adequate lighting but are neither inviting nor scaled to the pedestrian.

Larger parcel sizes, convenience and ability to assemble larger properties have made the Focus Area a prime location for redevelopment. Recent investments include redevelopment of the former King Pin bowling alley site into a mixed-use development and the potential expansion of Kroger. New buildings are being built closer to the street, with parking located to the side and/or rear. Township policies promote sidewalks, shared parking, reduced curb cuts and compact, mixed-use development.



The Anderson Towne Center has continued to be an asset to the Downtown Anderson area and a catalyst for nearby redevelopment that has occurred since its completion in 2004. The Towne Center's adjacency to Anderson Center serves as a significant connection tying two of the economic and civic drivers of the area. An important part of that relationship is the Towne Center Way roadway itself. Continued development and improvements should be encouraged along Towne Center Way including hospitality, housing and out-lot development, all of which will be reinforced by pedestrian and vehicular improvements to Wolfangel Road, where future sidewalks are being design to connect to the north and State Road.



Based on existing conditions, a series of design sessions held with Township staff and community meetings, the following set of guiding principles were developed for the study area:

Guiding Principles

1. Establish a unique, downtown identity and character
2. Create a walkable and accessible pedestrian-oriented environment
3. Develop vibrant and active outdoor gathering spaces
4. Guide redevelopment of existing properties oriented towards "open spaces"

VISION

Downtown Anderson is the economic and civic center of Anderson Township, providing residents and visitors an experience that is walkable and connected, with public spaces that are activated by retail, civic functions, employment and housing.



Downtown Anderson is...

- an area that promotes walking by providing safe, appealing and comfortable street environments that are connected to buildings, while improving access to surrounding buildings and neighborhoods through improved transportation facilities and shared parking opportunities.
- a place with a central outdoor space where the public feels welcome, is encouraged to come together and is recognized as the heart of the community.
- an economic generator for the Township, with diverse uses that are designed to take advantage of the surrounding built environment.

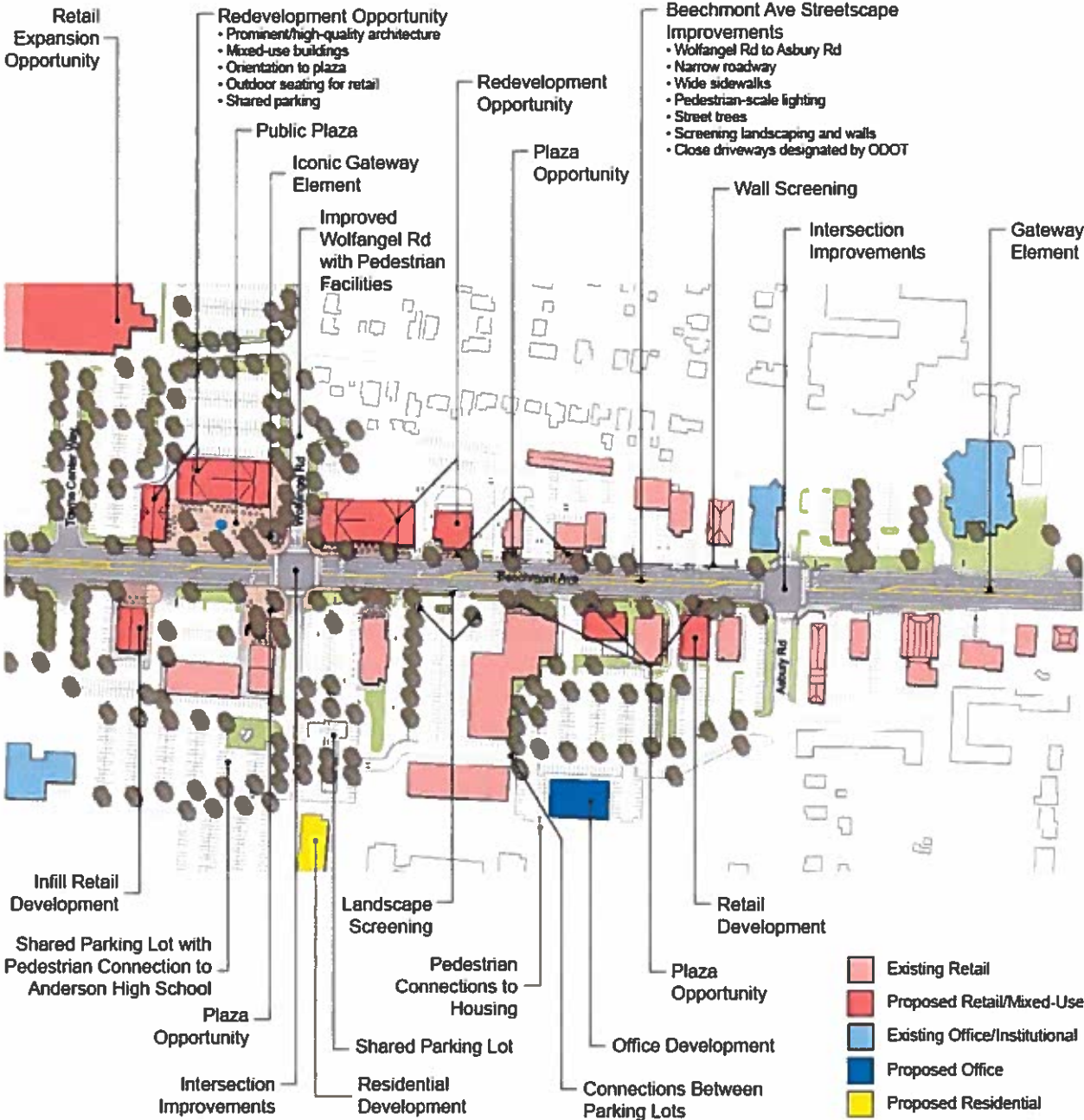


The vision for Downtown Anderson incorporates the following strategies within the Focus Area:

- Streetscape improvements and improved pedestrian facilities
- Central outdoor public plaza
- Site planning and design guidelines for redeveloping properties
- Architectural character guidelines for buildings
- Private plazas that engage the street

DOWNTOWN ANDERSON CONCEPT PLAN

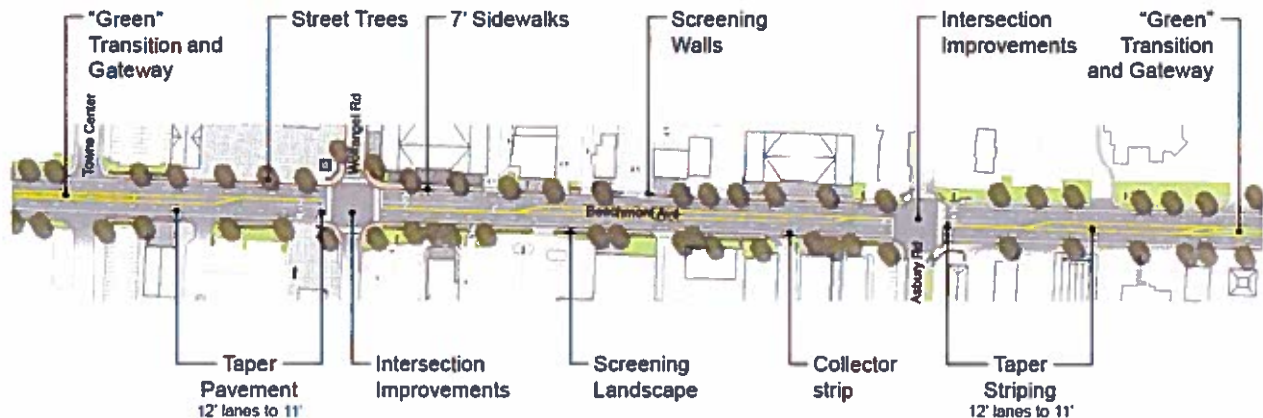
This plan is a summary characterization of the concepts and objectives of this Focus Area Study for Downtown Anderson and should be used as a general framework to guide future growth and development. Should other properties within the Focus Area, not identified in this plan, redevelop they should follow the principal design concepts identified for other properties.



The Township should encourage permeable pavement types, pavers and other hard surfaces in the streetscape, plazas and parking lots and promote integration of stormwater best management practice (BMPs) into future public and private improvements.

Streetscape Improvements

The streetscape improvements in Downtown Anderson will reclaim pedestrian and greenspace from the roadway and provide drivers with the sense of arrival through an aesthetic that creates a “downtown” feeling and pedestrian-scaled elements. This will be established through a unique streetscape treatment that is different than most of Beechmont Avenue, beginning with gateway elements at each end of the Focus Area and narrowing the overall street width between these elements. Similar to the existing median at Towne Center Way and landscaping/trees in front of Anderson Towne Center and the Christ Hospital Outpatient Facility, the eastern gateway will consist of an overall “greening” of the street and potentially a “flush” median that does not create a barrier or restricts turns.



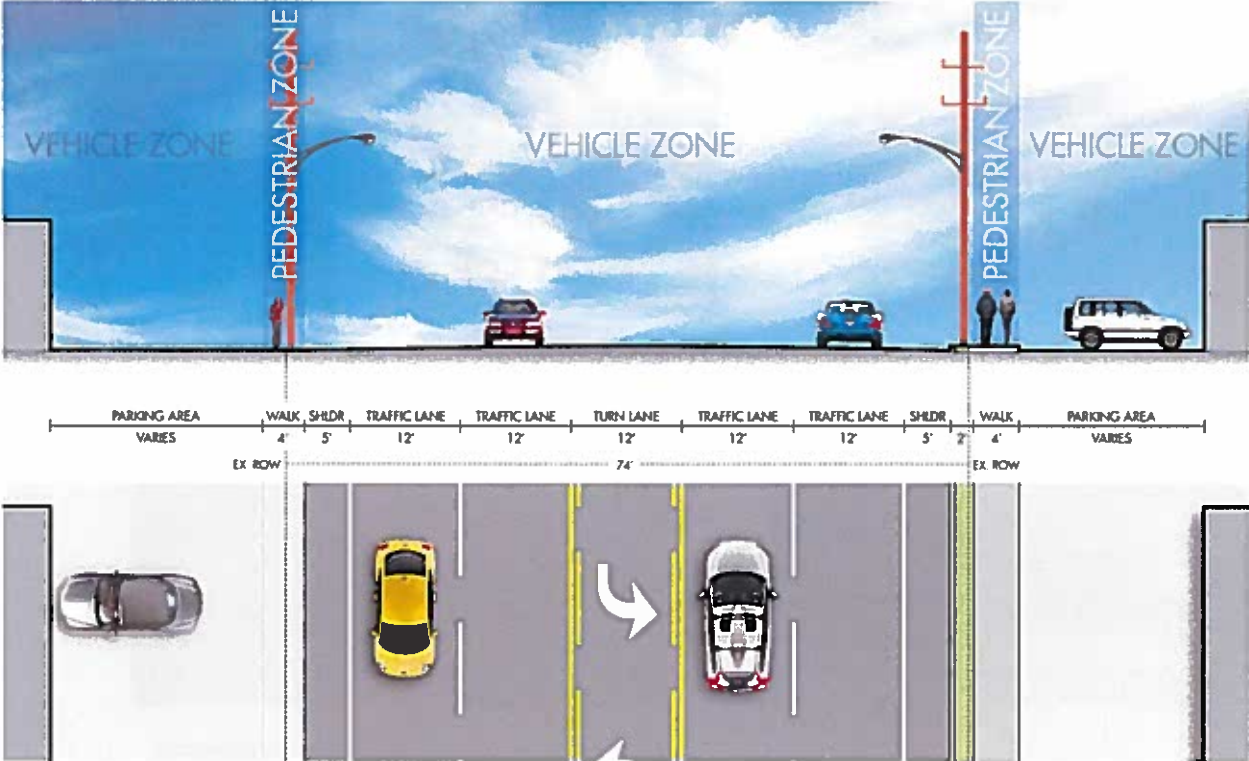
Between Wolfangel Road and Asbury Road, streetscape features include narrowing travel lanes from 12' to 11' wide and 7' wide sidewalks including a collector strip (of distinctive material, color or joint pattern that is complimentary to the existing walls), pedestrian-scale lighting every 80' and street trees every 40' where they do not impact sight distance. Wide sidewalks with curb ramps, pedestrian-scale lighting and trees will create a safe and inviting public realm with visual interest. Landscape and stone walls should be used to screen parking areas. Public rights-of-way and/or travel routes should be retrofitted in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines, as applicable. Collector strip materials should have a natural texture and may include stone, brick or colored/patterned concrete. The materials should be durable and complement previous improvements to the streetscape environment without being overstated or garish. Vertical elements (ex: lighting and mast arms) should be dark grey or black in color to compliment other streetscape materials.

Improved intersections at Wolfangel Road and Asbury Road will feature stone walls consistent at other intersections along Beechmont Avenue, but will also include larger sidewalks for pedestrians, seating if bus stops are present, pedestrian lighting, striped crosswalks and new mast arms for traffic signals.



Bicycle travel within this two-block downtown section will be supported through strong share the road practices, including the possibility of Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows) to aid bicyclists with proper positioning in the outside lane, to encourage proper bicycling operation and to alert motorists where they are likely to encounter bicyclists within the roadway. The current use of "Share the Road" signs and bicycle safe drainage grates will be continued.

Existing street section:



Proposed street section:



Streetscape Elements

To soften the harshness of the existing streetscape, streetscape features should introduce more natural materials, such as wood, stone and light colors, in addition to screening landscaping and walls.

Bus stop bench and trash receptacle



Planter



Pedestrian lighting



Intersection mast arm



Screening wall



Screening wall between street and parking



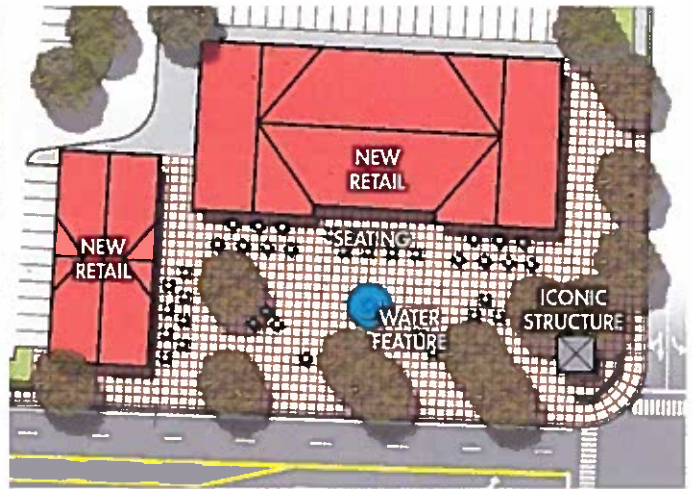
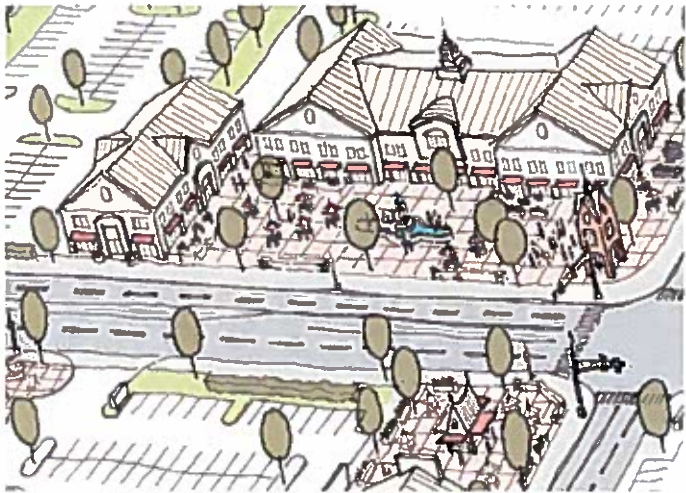
Combination of screening landscape and screening wall between street and parking



Collector strip material

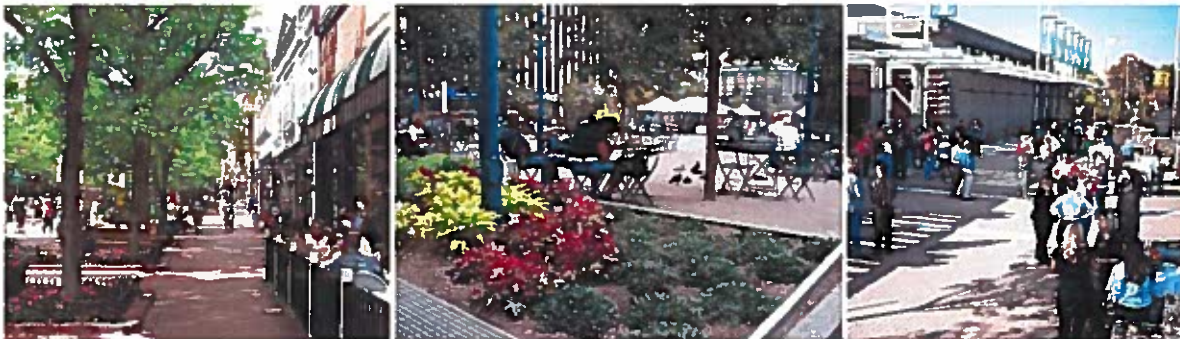


Central Public Plaza

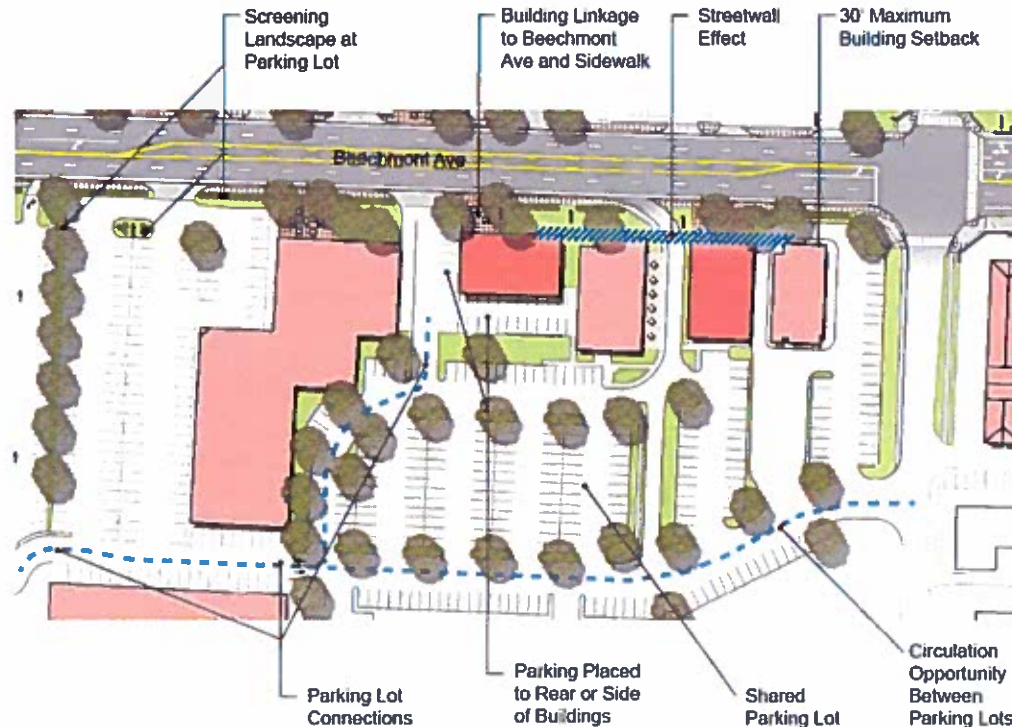


Objectives: Enhance existing development and promote reinvestment in the Downtown Anderson area through the creation of a central outdoor space that is activated by surrounding retail, employment and housing.

Because of its strategic location, at the pedestrian center of the area (including improved accessibility with new sidewalks from the north), the northwest corner of Beechmont Avenue and Wolfangel Road should feature a public outdoor plaza space of approximately 14,000 SF for events and gatherings, surrounded by new retail and/or mixed-use space. Buildings should be oriented towards the plaza, be two-story or greater in height (or have a mass that is equivalent to two stories in height) to provide a scale that is appropriate for the larger open space and feature prominent, high-quality architecture. Buildings should have an entry facing the plaza to allow for use of the plaza space by businesses and customers. A unique, iconic structure will be located in the southwest corner of the plaza and will serve as a wayfinding element and the demarcation of Downtown Anderson. This plaza should incorporate hardscape design elements from the streetscape improvements.



Site Planning and Design



Objectives: New development and redevelopment in Downtown Anderson should promote an urban, walkable, connected environment through a sense of enclosure along the sidewalk, urban streetwall effect, connected parking areas and buildings oriented towards Beechmont Avenue.

- To create a greater sense of enclosure along street corridors, when possible, buildings should be located between 10' and 30' from the property line along Beechmont Avenue.
- To achieve the development of a streetwall effect, the following should be considered to promote buildings that front along Beechmont Avenue.
 - Building frontage should cover a minimum of 60% of the parcel width fronting the street
 - Parking should be placed to the side or rear of buildings
 - Vehicular amenities such as ATMs and drive-thru windows should be located to the side or rear of buildings
- New buildings should be oriented towards Beechmont Avenue and the redevelopment of existing buildings should consider orientation/linkage to Beechmont Avenue through sidewalks/plazas.
- Parking lots visible from the street should be screened with low walls and/or landscaping to minimize their appearance.
- The development of buildings on out-parcels extending towards the street are strongly encouraged to break up the scale of large parking areas.
- Parking lot connections between neighboring properties and parking lots should be considered to promote shared parking situations.
- Internal streets, street extensions and vehicular drive connections to adjacent developments should include facilities to accommodate streetscape elements for pedestrians and landscaping.
- Property owners should be encouraged to design, construct and/or retrofit pedestrian travel routes between Beechmont Avenue and the principal entry to businesses, in accordance with ADA Accessibility Guidelines, to enable the widest spectrum of people, regardless of age or ability, to participate in community life.
- Bicycle friendly connections between neighboring properties and parking lots should be considered.

Architecture

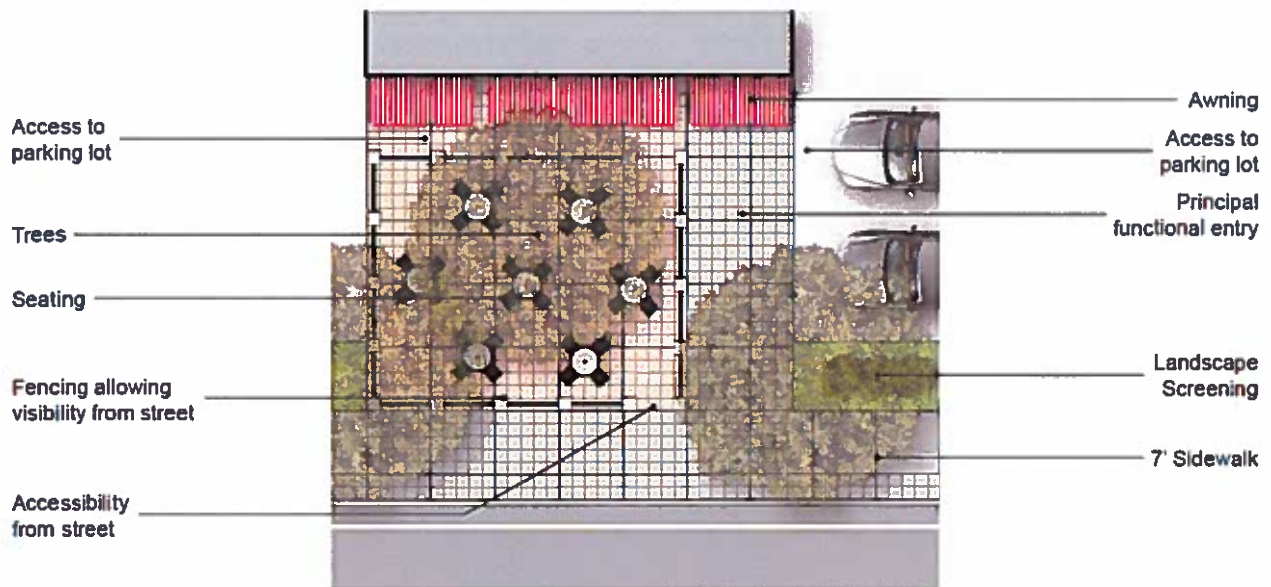
Objectives: Buildings along the Downtown Anderson focus area should promote a pedestrian-friendly environment. The design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings should create a special environment unique to the Focus Area. Special attention to the design of architectural forms, massing, detailing and use of materials and color for each building should be given in order to shape the downtown, urban appearance and human scale of the business district.

- The architectural forms and massing of the buildings should encourage a special urban environment with two story massing, corner towers and roof forms such as gables and dormers that create a unique environment.
- Façade treatments should utilize lasting materials organized to breakdown large areas of facades and encourage pedestrian interaction with the streetscape with display windows and transparency.
- Unique architectural elements should be encouraged to create a special downtown environment. Human scaled architectural elements – cornices, door pediments, recessed openings, divided pane windows, architectural window headers and trim, flower boxes, building mounted light fixtures and awnings, dormers, cupolas, projecting rooflines, covered walkways – integrated with the overall building structure contribute to the unique pedestrian environment of the Downtown Anderson area.
- Freestanding accessory and vehicular-oriented structures should be integrated with the design character of the building and placed to separate vehicular traffic from the pedestrian oriented environment of Downtown Anderson.
- The building should feature a principal functional entry on the front façade facing the street that is connected to Beechmont Avenue sidewalks.
- All ground-level retail uses that face a public street should have clear glass on at least 60% of their façades on the first floor.
- If a façade extends along a sidewalk, no more than 40 feet of its length should be blank (without doors or windows).
- Awnings and lighting should be incorporated and signs should be in keeping with the architecture and scale of the buildings – per the Township’s sign regulations.



Private Plazas that Engage the Street

Objectives: Establish a connection between Beechmont Avenue, sidewalks, private buildings and their entrances through the creation of quality, active outdoor spaces for pedestrians and patrons.

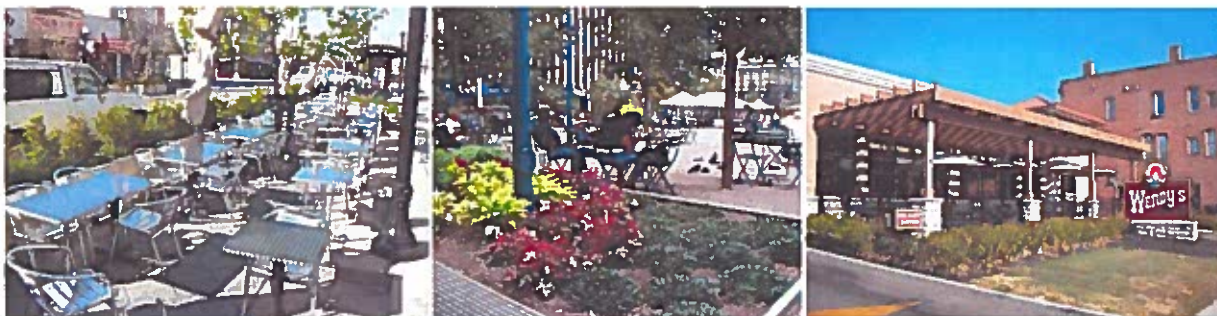


The existing space between the street/sidewalk and existing businesses is an opportunity to add additional vibrancy to the street outside of the right-of-way by means of increasing pedestrian and green space, and easing the hard streetscape formed by buildings bordered by parking lots. These amenity spaces should be flexible and designed based on the building, tenant and commercial use.

A plaza should be visually interesting with evidence that it is an open, active space, should be oriented towards the street and promote an accessible route to the business. These spaces could include functional and visual amenities, including seating, trees, tables, plantings, kiosks and art for the purpose of providing pedestrians a break from the street.

Uses for plaza spaces could include the following:

- Restaurant outdoor seating
- Eating and drinking
- Garden or park space
- Music performances
- Art shows
- Reading, sitting and relaxing



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES & TOOLS

Anderson Township officials have been promoting a spirit of cooperation with the business and developer community for many years. It remains the Township's desire to encourage and leverage significant improvements within the Beechmont Corridor over time. This plan provides recommendations on how significant physical improvements may take place. However, while most of these large scale improvements will occur on private property, the public right-of-way (R/W) along Beechmont Avenue, offers opportunities for more immediate and cohesive improvements that will help to establish a sense of place in Downtown Anderson.

The following recommendations provide a number of ways, over the next 18-24 months, that Anderson Township can begin the transformation of Beechmont Avenue into a more visually attractive place in the future.

1. Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Interface

It is recommended that Anderson Township continue to work with ODOT regarding what they will allow within the Beechmont Corridor R/W. The improvements suggested within this Plan have been discussed with ODOT and are consistent with their recommendations and past implementation efforts along the corridor. As ODOT has the permit and maintenance responsibilities on Beechmont Avenue (SR125) within Anderson Township, any improvements planned within the right of way must obtain a permit from ODOT.

Corridor enhancements contained within this Plan germane to ODOT are as follows:

- a. Restriping and narrowing of the lane widths to better utilize the existing 5' shoulder and better accommodate pedestrians while maintaining traffic flow.
- b. Textured or colored paving within a portion of the center lane for the eastern gateway to the neighborhood (as a raised median in that area is not feasible as access provisions are in place).
- c. Enhancement of pedestrian crossings and nodes (zebra striping, cross walk special treatment, signalization, location, etc.).
- d. Supplemental pedestrian lighting that may fall within the R/W.
- e. Accommodations for non-motorized transportation (sidewalks, sharrows, etc.).
- f. Accommodations for public transportation (loading areas, etc.)
- g. Low stonewalls that may fall within portions of the R/W.
- h. Wayfinding signage.
- i. Landscaping.

In addition, continued coordination should occur with ODOT with regards to redevelopment proposals and access management along the corridor, consistent with the excellent working relationship that has been formed with ODOT on safety improvements along the corridor.

2. Utility Provider Interface

A similar discussion with Duke and utility representatives has focused on options to reduce adverse visual effects from the above ground electric utilities. Similar to during development of the Vision Plan and subsequent implementation efforts, meetings were held with Duke to discuss possible utility (primarily electric) service options. A variety of strategies and issues were discussed with Duke's Technical and Standards Group, to help understand the options available. These included:

- a. Option to hang selected streetscape elements from existing utility poles.
- b. Program for consolidating or cleaning up the existing overhead utility network, beginning with the south side of the roadway since the high transmission, 69K volt, line runs along the north side and must be entirely above or below ground between Markley Road and Mt. Carmel-Tobasco Road.

- c. Consolidation to reduce the number of utility poles.
- d. Feasibility of placing some of the service lines to individual existing buildings underground.
- e. Discussions of service options with other utility providers, such as Cincinnati Bell, Time Warner, etc.

3. Business/Property Owner Interface

As many of the recommendations set forth in the original Vision Plan and this Plan involved the design, configuration and/or appearance of buildings on private property, dialogue and interface with private property owners and tenants is critical to the success and implementation of this Plan. Throughout development of this Plan, such conversations occurred, but moving forward these should include:

- a. Continued contact with every property owner with regard to the Township's desire to promote visual enhancements in the Area.
- b. Create the vehicle and offer incentives as a catalyst to get owners/businesses to participate with improvements to existing structures. This could include a "Design Resource Pool" that can provide initial concepts for physical improvement to selected properties that is funded by Anderson Township. Detailed design will then become the responsibility of individual property owners.
- c. Provide guidelines (as described in the Vision Plan, this Plan, and draft design guidelines that are being developed) to property owners who are considering remodeling or redeveloping their property.

4. Implementation Tools

In conjunction with the aforementioned dialogue with ODOT, utility providers, and property owners, the following tools are suggested as strategies to help advance the recommendations set forth in this Plan:

- a. Develop design standards that would apply to new construction and substantial redevelopment, while also offering a guide for property improvements, planned unit development modifications, etc.
- b. Develop signage guidelines that encourage the visual enhancements desired by the Township and the option to remove undesirable signs through the use of TIF funds for demolition of private property.
- c. Allocate a portion of TIF (Tax Increment Funds) Funds for investment in physical improvements and seek grant funding to assist with public improvements to calm traffic and safely facilitate pedestrian, bicycle and transit use within the area.
- d. Utilize the Township's Economic Development Committee, along with other groups, to set up an Advocacy Committee whose mission is to transform Beechmont Avenue. Include residents, property owners, businesses, public officials and technical design professionals.
- e. Explore the use of a Development Authority, Community Improvement Corporation, or other entity to facilitate redevelopment of the Beechmont Corridor.

CONCLUSION

Anderson Township has long since lacked a traditional "Downtown" area. However, redevelopment pressures at the center of Beechmont Avenue, between Towne Center Way and Asbury Road, adjacent to the Anderson Towne Center, provide a unique opportunity to capitalize on private investment and target public improvements to create such a physical focus for the community. By working with developers, property owners, business, residents, government agencies, utility providers and other key stakeholders, Anderson Township can foster the realization of the 2005 Vision Plan and help facilitate "Downtown Anderson". This concentration of a new focus or pattern of development will not only revitalize this area, but will hopefully encourage the expansion of other patterns of development in the other neighborhoods of the corridor, consistent with the 2005 Beechmont Vision Plan.