

Petaluma Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay

November 14th 2023



List of Figures & Tables

<i>Figure 1</i>	Project Timeline	4	<i>Figure 20</i>	Chp 7 - Guidelines for New Construction, Petaluma Historic Commercial Downtown Design Guidelines (pg 39)	50
<i>Figure 2</i>	Evolution of Overlay Options	5	<i>Figure 21</i>	Chp 7 - Guidelines for New Construction, Petaluma Historic Commercial Downtown Design Guidelines (pg 38)	51
<i>Figure 3</i>	Downtown Petaluma Context	7	<i>Figure 22</i>	Special Conditions: Confronting Residential Use	52
<i>Figure 4</i>	Land Use - Petaluma General Plan 2025	9	<i>Figure 23</i>	Special Conditions: Abutting Historic Resource	53
<i>Figure 5</i>	Zoning	13	<i>Figure 24</i>	Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zone - Subarea A	56
<i>Figure 6</i>	Petaluma Combining Historic District	15	<i>Figure 25</i>	Street Section Along Petaluma Boulevard	57
<i>Figure 7</i>	Petaluma Historic Resources	17	<i>Figure 26</i>	Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zone - Subarea B	58
<i>Figure 8</i>	Existing Land Use	23	<i>Figure 27</i>	Street Section Along Western Avenue	59
<i>Figure 9</i>	Downtown Character	25	<i>Figure 28</i>	Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zone- Subarea C	60
<i>Figure 10</i>	Building Height Analysis - Study Area North and Southeast View	27	<i>Figure 29</i>	Street Section Along Keller Street	61
<i>Figure 11</i>	Building Height Analysis - South and Southeast on Washington View	29			
<i>Figure 12</i>	Building Height Analysis - Northwest and Southwest on Petaluma Boulevard & D Street	31	<i>Table 1</i>	Stepbacks General	42
<i>Figure 13</i>	Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay and Historic Districts	37	<i>Table 2</i>	Development Standards - MU2 + Overlay	43
<i>Figure 14</i>	Overlay Alignment with General Plan	38-39	<i>Table 3</i>	Stepbacks when Confronting a Residential Use	52
<i>Figure 15</i>	Overlay Subareas Vision	41	<i>Table 4</i>	Stepbacks Abutting Historic Resource	53
<i>Figure 16</i>	Overlay Primary Streets	42	<i>Table 5</i>	“By-Right” Uses - Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones	55
<i>Figure 17</i>	Development Standards Diagram - MU-2	44-45	<i>Table 6</i>	Design Standards - Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones	55
<i>Figure 18</i>	Development Standards Diagram - Conditional Use Permit	46-47			
<i>Figure 19</i>	Development Standards Diagram - Conditional Use Permit and Additional Criteria	48-49			

Table of Contents

01 *Background*.....01

02 *Character of Downtown*.....21

03 *Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay*.....35

01 Background



Purpose of the Study

The work of this study is a result of a collaborative effort in partnership with the Petaluma Planning City Staff. The study has been guided by the vision for the City's General Plan Update and prepared to explore opportunities to encourage new commercial, housing, retail and other projects in downtown Petaluma that have the potential to contribute to the City's vitality and economic health.

One of the most important documents that guides long term planning for the City is the General Plan. The current General Plan 2025 was adopted in 2008. Its land use policies and related zoning to implement those policies tend to favor low density development in what is generally considered the City's "downtown". Conditions in Petaluma and Sonoma County have changed enormously since that time.

The General Plan Update effort began in 2020 with the intent to adopt a new plan in 2025. Among the many thoughts that have been articulated thus far in visioning workshops and meetings are the following:

General Plan Update Visioning Principles:

- Promote more affordable housing and a diversity of housing options
- Prioritize infill development in appropriate locations
- Encourage economic growth and development
- Enhance historic downtown and preserve historic character
- Expand pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- Provide public gathering spaces
- Promote a diverse mix of uses



Process and Participants

The process to study and provide recommendations for a building form overlay began in April 2023 with an initial findings report developed by the applicant's (EKN Development) consultant - Page/. A prior version of this report titled 'Petaluma Building Form Overlay in Downtown' was first published in June 2023. Feedback and comment from the Petaluma Planning Commission, the Petaluma Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee and members of the general public was sought through Study Sessions in the months of June, July, August and October 2023 and a public meeting organized by KnowB4YouGrow in July 2023.

The initial proposal for the overlay was largely coterminous with the study area. This was significantly reduced in later iterations based on detailed study of opportunity sites in Downtown and considerations of development impact on the existing historic districts and residential areas in Downtown.

Figure 1: Project Timeline

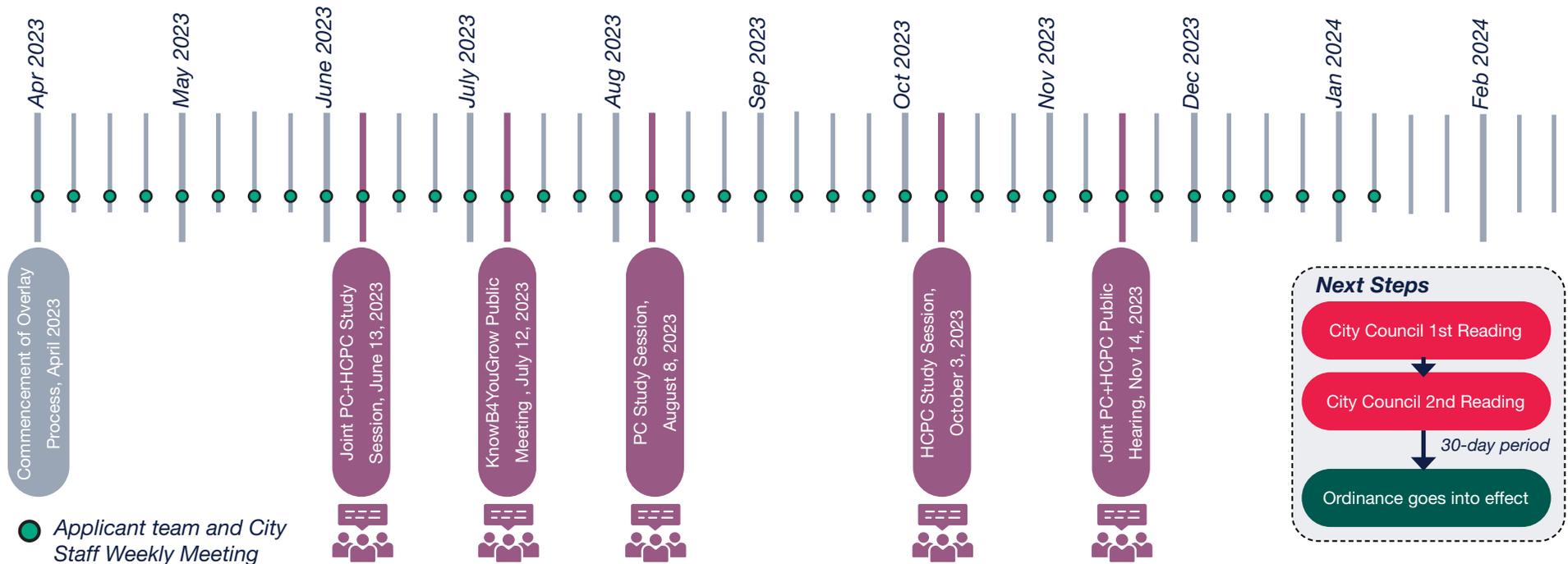


Figure 2: Evolution of Overlay Options



-  Study Area
-  Overlay Boundary (June 2023)
-  Overlay Boundary Option Areas (Oct 2023)



Study Area

Boundaries

The initial study area determined by City Staff and the applicant team included 14 blocks spanning from Washington Street to the north, Petaluma Boulevard to the east, D Street to the south and Howard, Liberty and D Streets to the west.

The aerial on the next page shows the parcels within the study area as well as whatever buildings, open space or parking lots are found on these sites. The northeast areas along Petaluma Boulevard and Washington Street are more continuously developed with fewer empty or underdeveloped sites than some other areas. Similarly, the residential areas to the southwest can be seen to include more developed lots with landscaping such as trees and lawns.

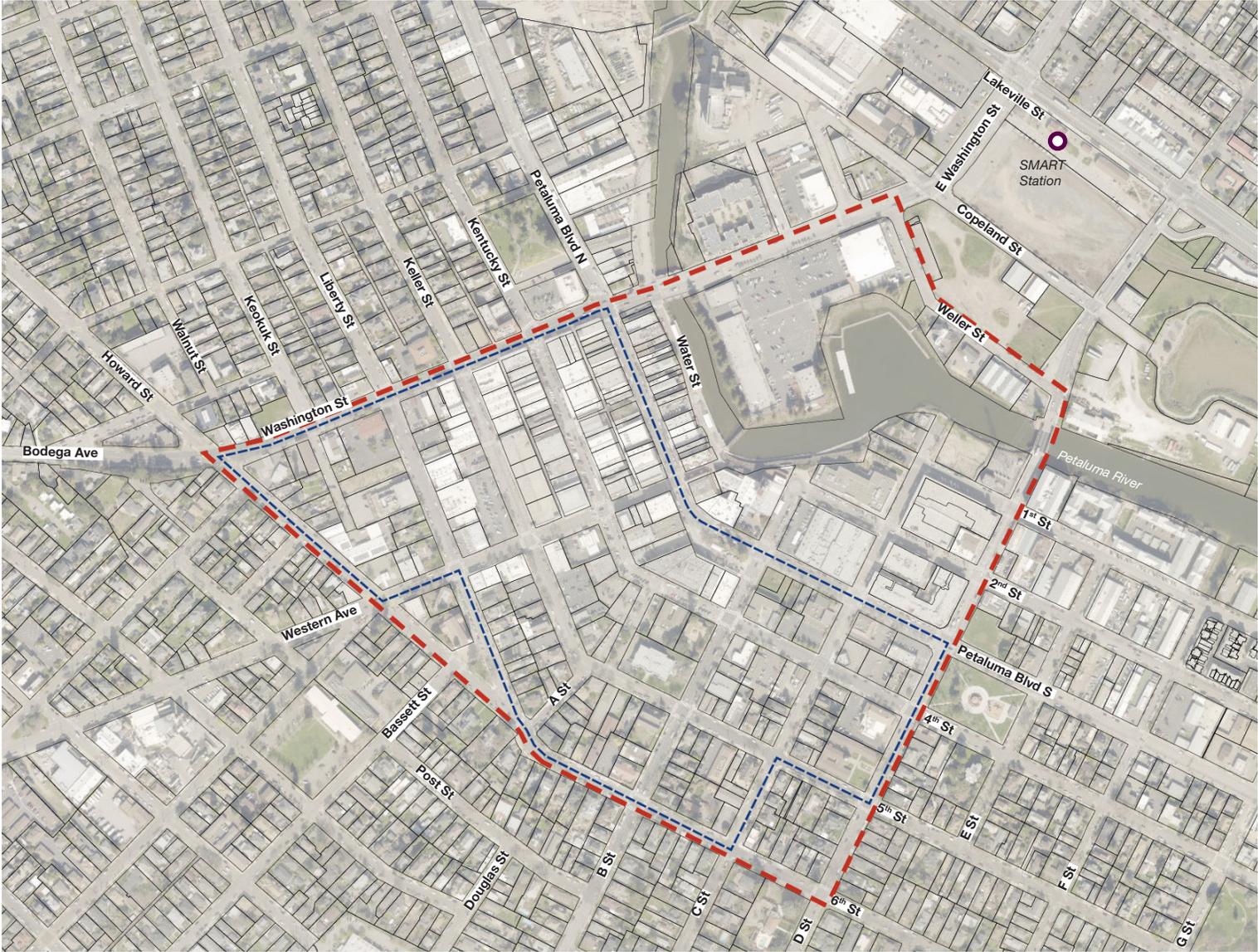
Areas to the northwest and southeast are among the least developed, with more vacant sites as well as many small buildings on large lots dominated by parking, often along the street frontage. These underdeveloped sites are not conducive to pedestrian activity.

Planning History/Context

The study area is proposed within the “Downtown Subarea” in the General Plan 2025 where mixed-use and civic facility zoning currently exist. The Theater District Overlay Zoning which expired on August 4, 2023 has also predefined a portion of this area.

Additional documents regulating this area include the 2008 Petaluma General Plan, the Implementing Zoning Ordinance (IZO), and the Central Petaluma Specific Plan, as described in the following pages.

Figure 3: Downtown Petaluma Context



-  Study Area
-  Theater District



General Plan - Land Use

The 2025 Petaluma General Plan identifies fifteen guiding principles that define a framework for development. The development of Downtown is guided by four of these principles:

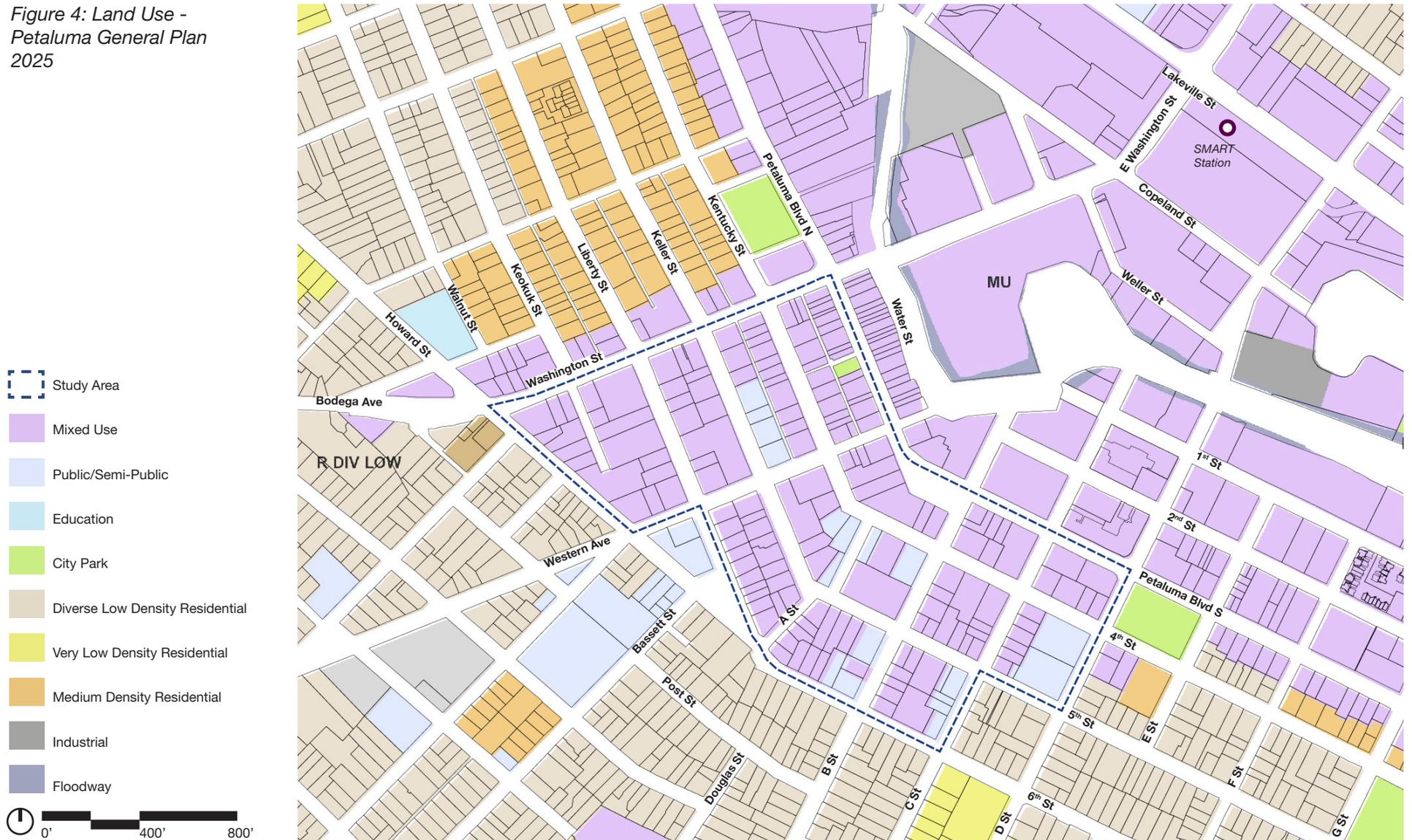
- 7. Enhance Downtown by preserving its historic character, increasing accessibility and residential opportunities, and ensuring a broad range of businesses and activities.*
- 8. Foster and promote economic diversity and opportunities.*
- 9. Expand retail opportunities to meet residents' needs and promote the city's fiscal health, while ensuring that new development is in keeping with Petaluma's character.*
- 10. Continue efforts to achieve a jobs/housing balance, emphasizing opportunities for residents to work locally.*

The General Plan identifies the study area as the Downtown district of Petaluma. It identifies as Goal 2-G-3:

Advance Downtown Petaluma as a focus of civic and cultural activity in the community, retain a strong pedestrian orientation and scale, preserve and enhance building of historic and architectural importance.

The General Plan designates majority of the study area as Mixed Use. This designation allows a wide variety of building and site uses as reflected in the businesses and activities currently in the area, including retail, residential, service commercial, and office. It sets a maximum FAR (floor area ratio) at 2.5 and a maximum residential density of 30 dwelling uses per acre.

Figure 4: Land Use -
Petaluma General Plan
2025



General Plan - Policies

The General Plan also identifies several policies addressing the development of Downtown. These policies are specific statements that guide the City's action and support the goals of the General Plan Elements, including:

Land Use, Growth Management and Built Environment Element:

- 1-P-1: Promote a range of land uses at densities and intensities to serve the community's needs within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).*
- 1-P-2: Use land efficiently by promoting infill development, at equal or higher density and intensity than surrounding uses.*
- 1-P-3: Preserve the overall scale and character of established residential neighborhoods.*
- 1-P-6: Encourage mixed-use development, which includes opportunities for increased transit access.*
- 1-P-7: Encourage flexibility in building form and in the nature of activities to allow for innovation and the ability to change over time.*
- 1-P-11: Allow land use intensification at strategic locations along the arterial corridors leading to Downtown and Central Petaluma, including aging commercial and industrial sites.*
- 1-P-12: Encourage reuse of under-utilized sites along East Washington Street and Petaluma Boulevard as multi-use residential/commercial corridors, allowing ground-floor retail and residential and/or commercial/office uses on upper floors.*

Community Design, Character, and Green Building Element:

2-P-3: Maintain landmarks and aspects of Petaluma's heritage that foster its unique identity.

2-P-5: Strengthen the visual and aesthetic character of major arterial corridors.

2-P-14: Promote the development and intensification of the Downtown commercial core as both a visitor destination and a neighborhood retail center.

2-P-17: Pursue the development and promotion of cultural activities and facilities, such as museums, meeting halls, community theatres, public art galleries and shows, and outdoor gathering places within the Downtown area.

2-P-57: Foster connections to the river from surrounding areas and ensure that new development adjacent to the river is oriented toward it.

Mobility Element:

5-P-4: New development and/or major expansion or change of use may require construction of off-site mobility improvements to complete appropriate links in the network necessary for connecting the proposed development with existing neighborhoods and land uses.

Economic Health & Sustainability Element:

9-P-12 Maintain and expand Downtown as a hub of commercial and retail activity with residential opportunities.

9-P-13 Expand and diversify Petaluma's retail base.

9-P-19 Insure the long-term fiscal health of Petaluma, as the City continues to develop, balancing fiscal concerns with economic, social, environmental, and cultural values.

Zoning

Parcels in the study area are predominantly zoned MU-2 under the City of Petaluma Implementing Zoning Ordinance (IZO) with a limited number zoned Civic Facility/ Civic Use. The IZO carries out the policies of the Petaluma General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the City, consistent with the General Plan. Current zoning in the study area allows for a maximum height of 45' for MU-2 and 25' for Civic Facilities.

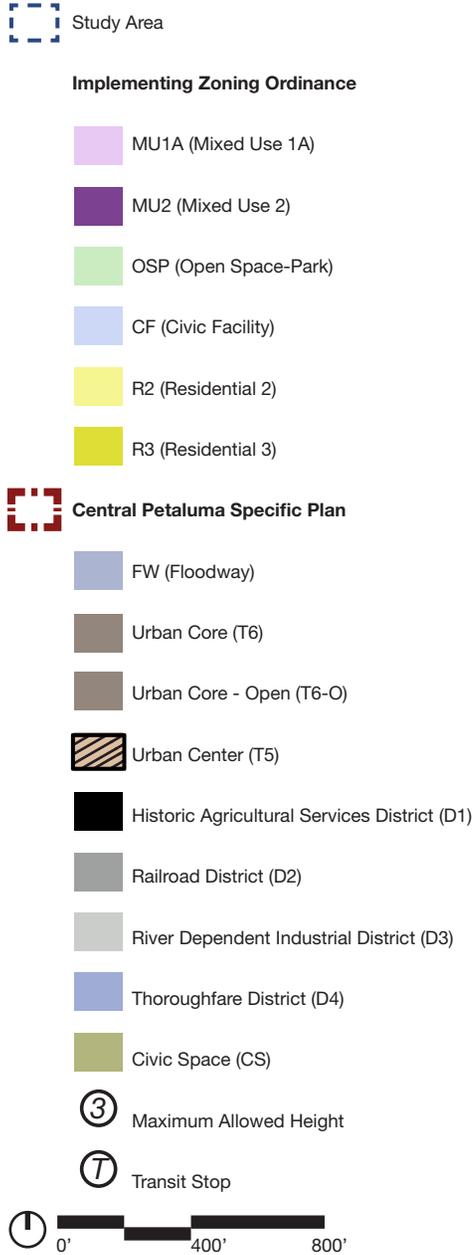
The City has two Mixed Use zones, MU-1 and MU-2. The MU-2 district allows uses to be somewhat taller and denser than the MU-1 district, which is largely found across the Petaluma River beyond. The MU-2 district allows a wide variety of uses and is consistent with and implements the mixed-use land use classification of the General Plan. The district designation as defined in the IZO guides building form as well as allowable uses.

The Public/Semi-Public use designation is intended for civic facilities as well as religious or educational sites.

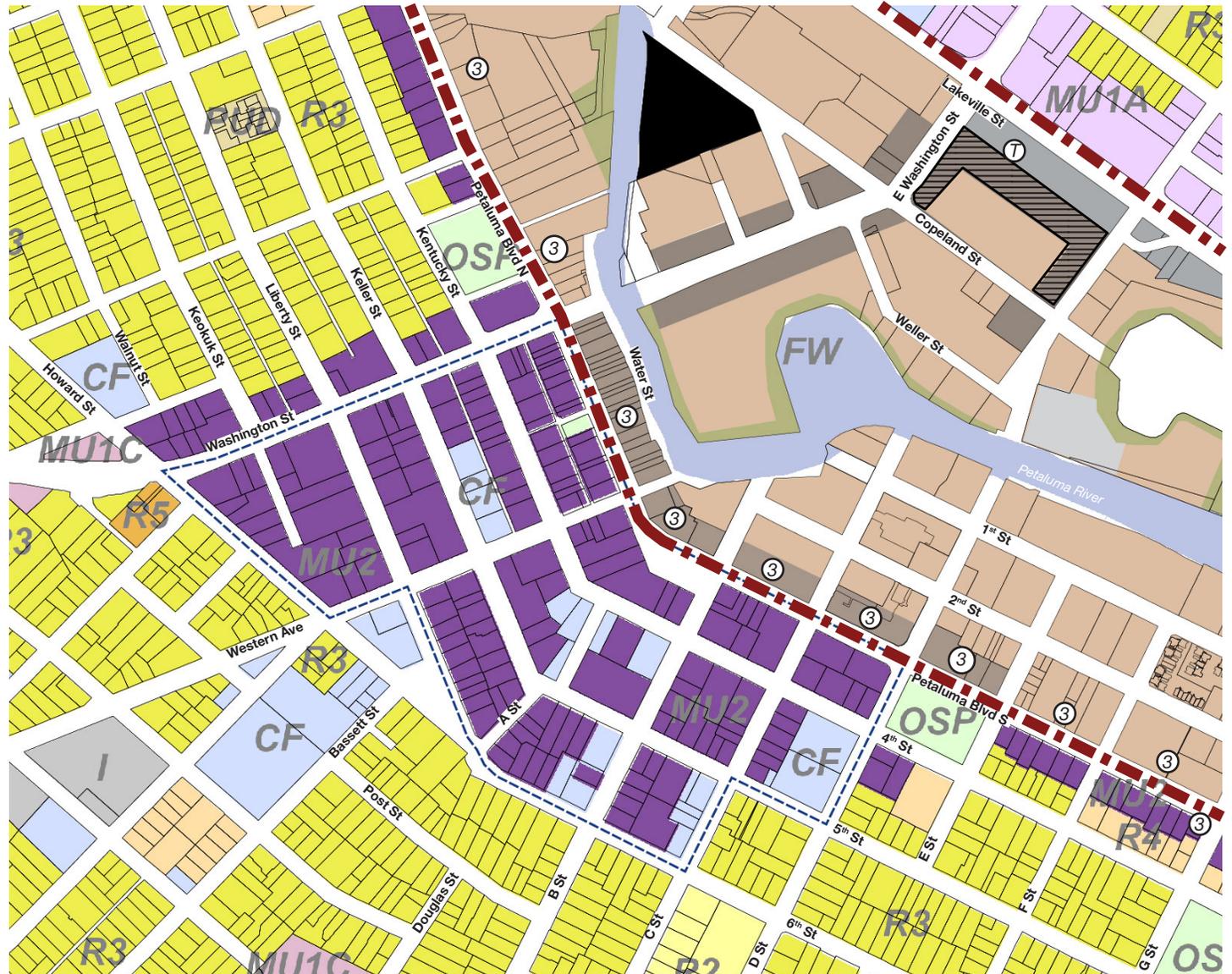
Adjacent to the study area, north of Petaluma Boulevard and extending to Lakeville Street, parcels are governed by a SMART Code under the Central Petaluma Specific Plan (CPSP) which was adopted in 2003. A Specific Plan provides a vehicle to examine specific areas and districts in greater detail than would be possible in a General Plan. The SMART Code provides a “kit of parts” for building a pedestrian-oriented urban district with a focus on the scale and character of new development and its relationship to the public realm.

Per the CPSP Zoning Map and Downtown Regulating Plan, most of the parcels are zoned for development up to 5-storied tall and parcels along the Washington Street corridor are zoned for development that is up to 6-storied tall.

Figure 5: Zoning



Sources: "City of Petaluma: General Plan 2025", 2008, May 2021 Revision, "Central Petaluma Specific Plan, June 2003



Historic Districts

The study area includes portions of two of the City's historic combining districts - the Historic Commercial District, and the A-Street Historic District. The Downtown Historic District lies to the east and the Oakhill-Brewster Historic District lies across Washington Street to the north.

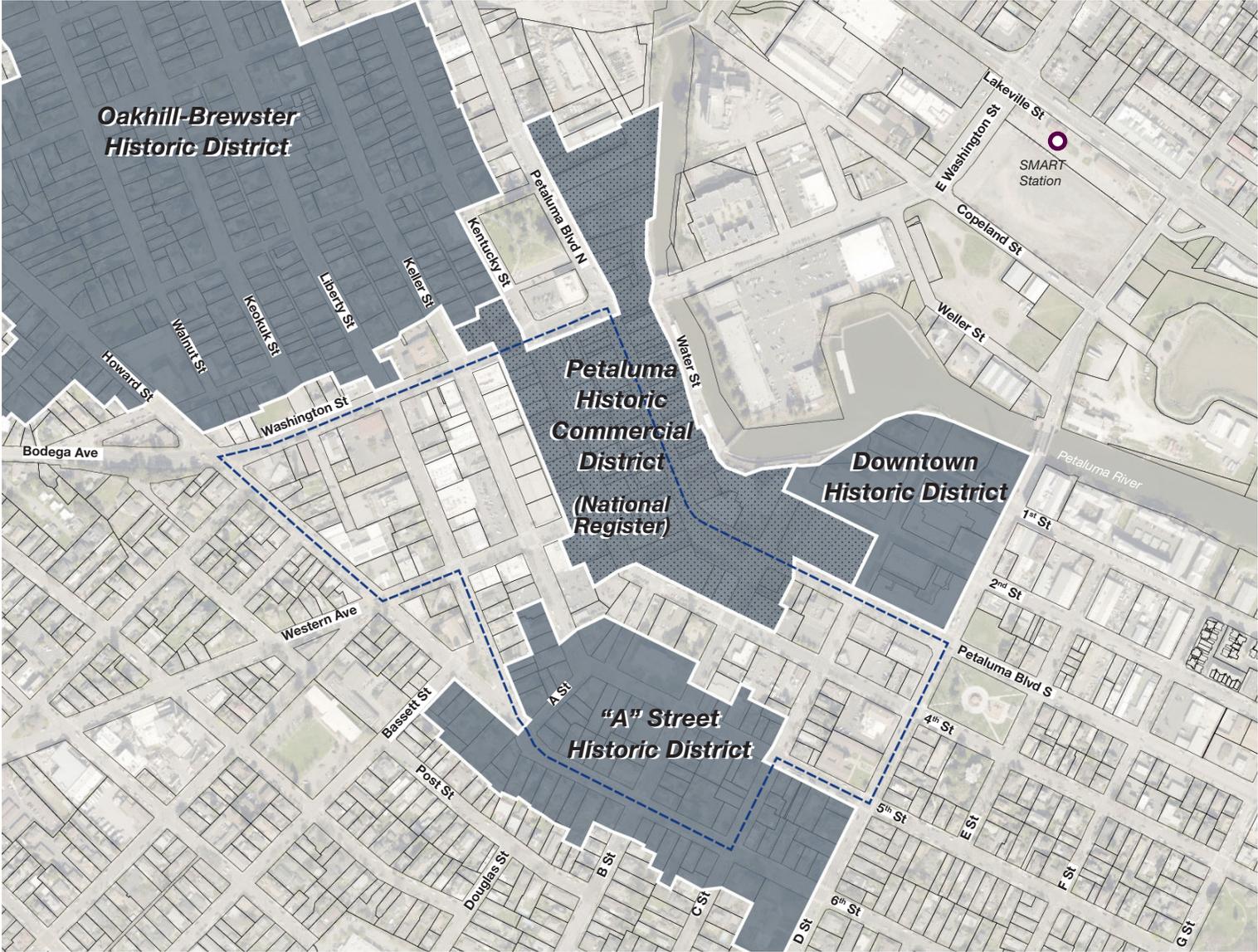
The Historic Commercial District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR# 95000354) on March 31, 1995, and adopted as a City Landmark with a Historic Overlay Zoning on September 7, 1999. The district exhibits a period of significance spanning from 1854 to 1945 featuring prominent architectural styles such as Late Victorian, Italianate, and Streamline Moderne. As noted within the National Register form, the buildings within the district demonstrate district unity by their built lot lines composition, storefronts with recessed entrances and flanking display windows, flat roofs with parapets, and elaborate ornamentation. Building range in size from simple one- or two-story commercial buildings to much taller and more ornate structures.

The A-Street Historic District contains an eclectic mix of residences, churches, and apartments nearly all built before 1925, illustrating a cross-section of architectural history over the 65-year period of the neighborhood's development from 1860 to 1925. In general, except towers and steeples, buildings in the district are one- or two-stories in height.

Contributing buildings in these historic districts help define the unique character of the urban environment in Petaluma and establish key relationships between the private and public realm, especially at street level. Most structures meet both the front and side lot lines, forming a continuous street facade. Guidelines for New Construction in the Petaluma Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines encourage new construction on vacant lots, but with attention to good design and consideration of the design of neighboring structures.

The Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay is intended to be applied over the existing historic districts where overlaps occur. This additional layer of development standards would support the historic district guidelines to work with the district's character and not against it.

Figure 6: Petaluma Combining Historic District



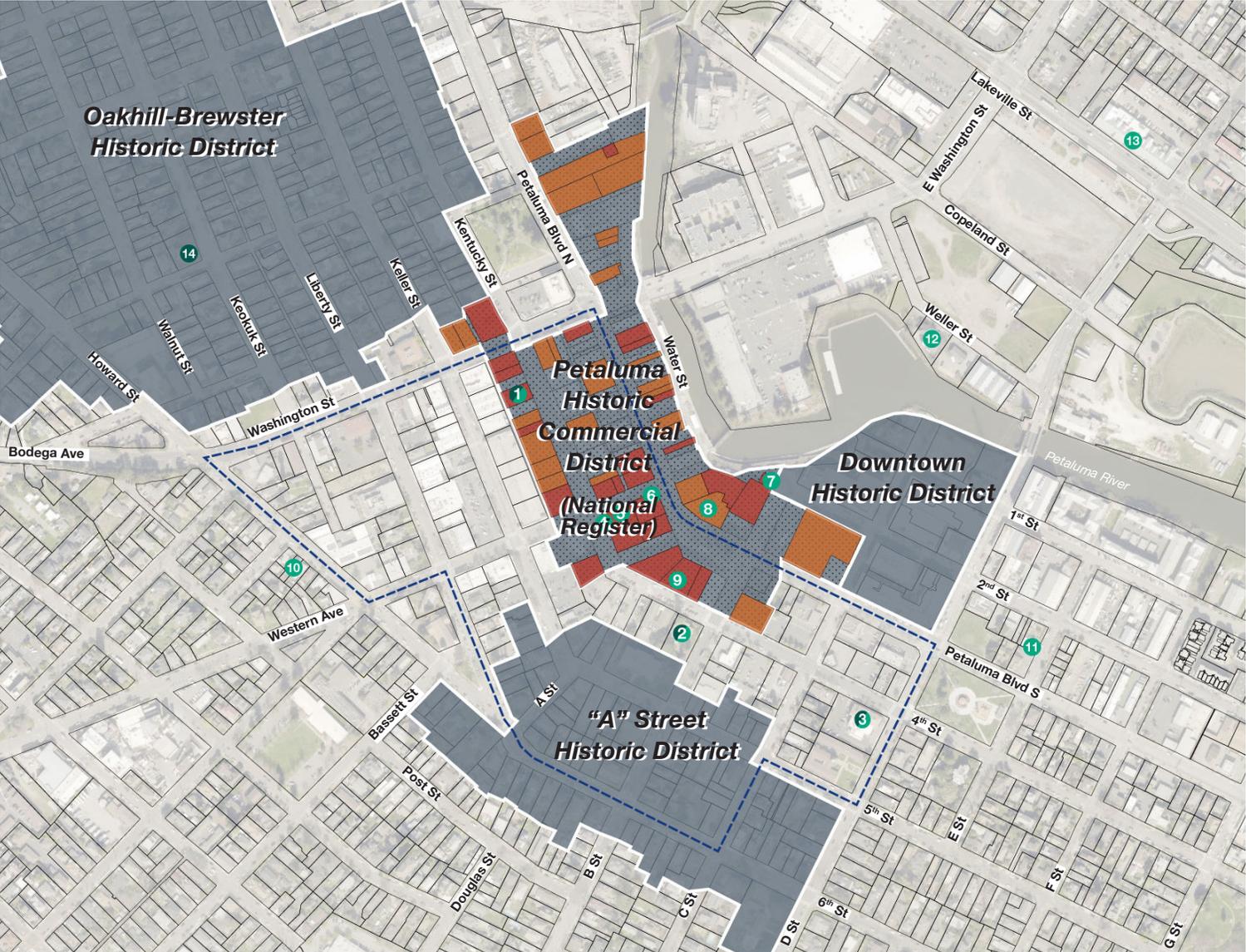
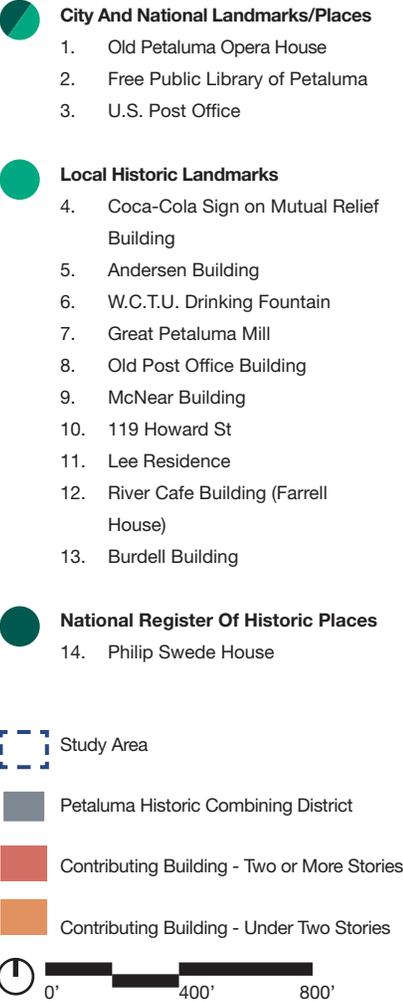
Contributing Buildings in the Historic Commercial District

The Petaluma Historic Commercial District is an area of approximately 23 acres and supports historic resources, identified as contributing, non-contributing, and local landmarks. The district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also listed as a local historic district. The district is representative of the City's commercial development from the mid-nineteenth century to the Second World War and contains a mix of diverse commercial architecture not found anywhere else in Sonoma County.

The historic significance of the district is based not only on its uniqueness, but also on its high degree of integrity and architectural and functional cohesiveness, which helped the district remain a functional vibrant downtown. Contributing factors include:

- Originally recorded with 63 contributing structures out of 96
- Compared to non-contributing buildings, contributing buildings are larger and more prominent
- Contributing buildings, in general, share two important characteristics: complete lot coverage (extending to the sides and front of the parcel) and storefronts with recessed entrances and flanking windows. These characteristics are also shared by many non-contributing buildings, which enhances the overall cohesiveness of the district
- Since streets have maintained their original uses, patterns and, in some cases, their widths, all buildings face a street and today's user experience of the district is closely comparable to the post-WWII era (when the youngest contributing buildings were completed)
- Contributing buildings are consistent in use, including commercial, services and office and mixed-use (including apartments)
- Prominent contributing buildings rise to three- or four-storeys.

Figure 7: Petaluma
 Historic Resources



Contributing Buildings in the Historic Commercial District



A view looking northeast along Western Ave shows the Mutual Relief Building and Masonic Building



The American Trust Building and Old Fellows Hall



Masonic Building on Petaluma Boulevard N



The McNear's Mystic Theater on Petaluma Boulevard



Petaluma Seed Bank



Old Petaluma Opera House

Building Character in the A-Street Historic District



8 Keller Street



2 Liberty Street



9 6th Street



16 6th Street



600 B Street



423 A Street

02 Character of Downtown

Study Area Existing Land Use

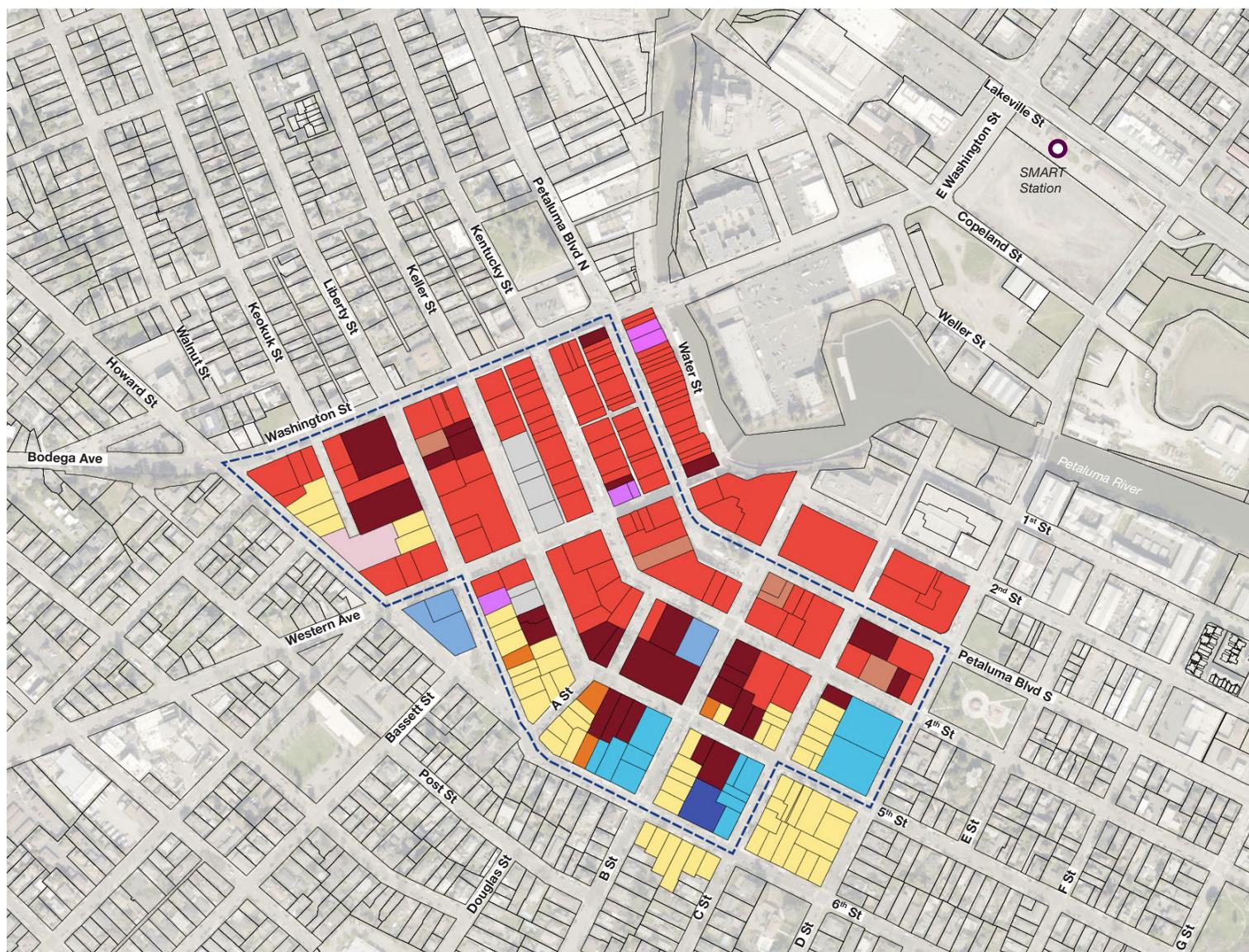
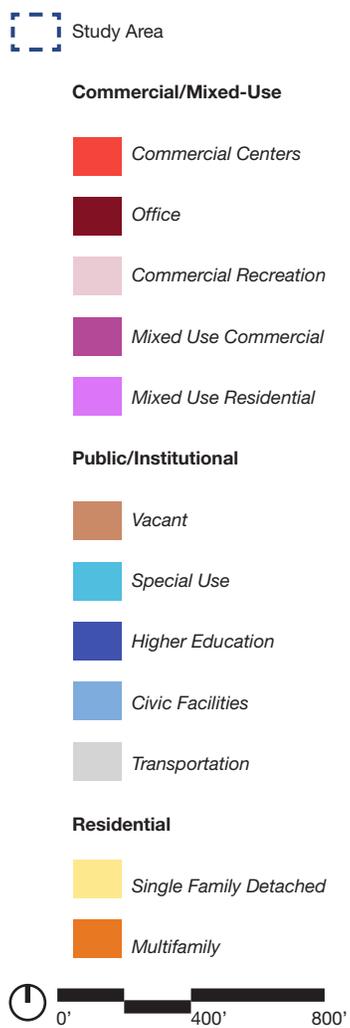
Currently, the distribution of land uses in the study area are mostly commercial, office and civic use. Most of the residential uses are concentrated towards southern boundary of the study area along Howard Street.

The predominant types of commercial use are retail services, business parks, auto shops, and other professional services. Most of the retail activity clustered in the study area includes a variety of boutique shops (e.g., restaurants, cafes, bars, clothing stores, and antique shops) on a walkable street grid. Commercial uses along the Washington Street and Petaluma Boulevard corridors are a mix of strip malls, auto-oriented shopping centers, and some freestanding retail.

The public/institutional uses in the study area includes a broad range of community-serving uses, including schools, civic buildings, religious centers, parking and transportation facilities, and utilities, among others.

A mix of both low and higher density housing (e.g., multiplexes and apartments) can be found in the study area, with a concentration of single family homes along Howard St/6th Street, with some along A, B and C Streets.

Figure 8: Existing Land Use



Building Heights and Character

To better understand the character of the study area, building heights were studied. Approximate heights were determined using digital information from Google Earth and visual surveys from site visits.

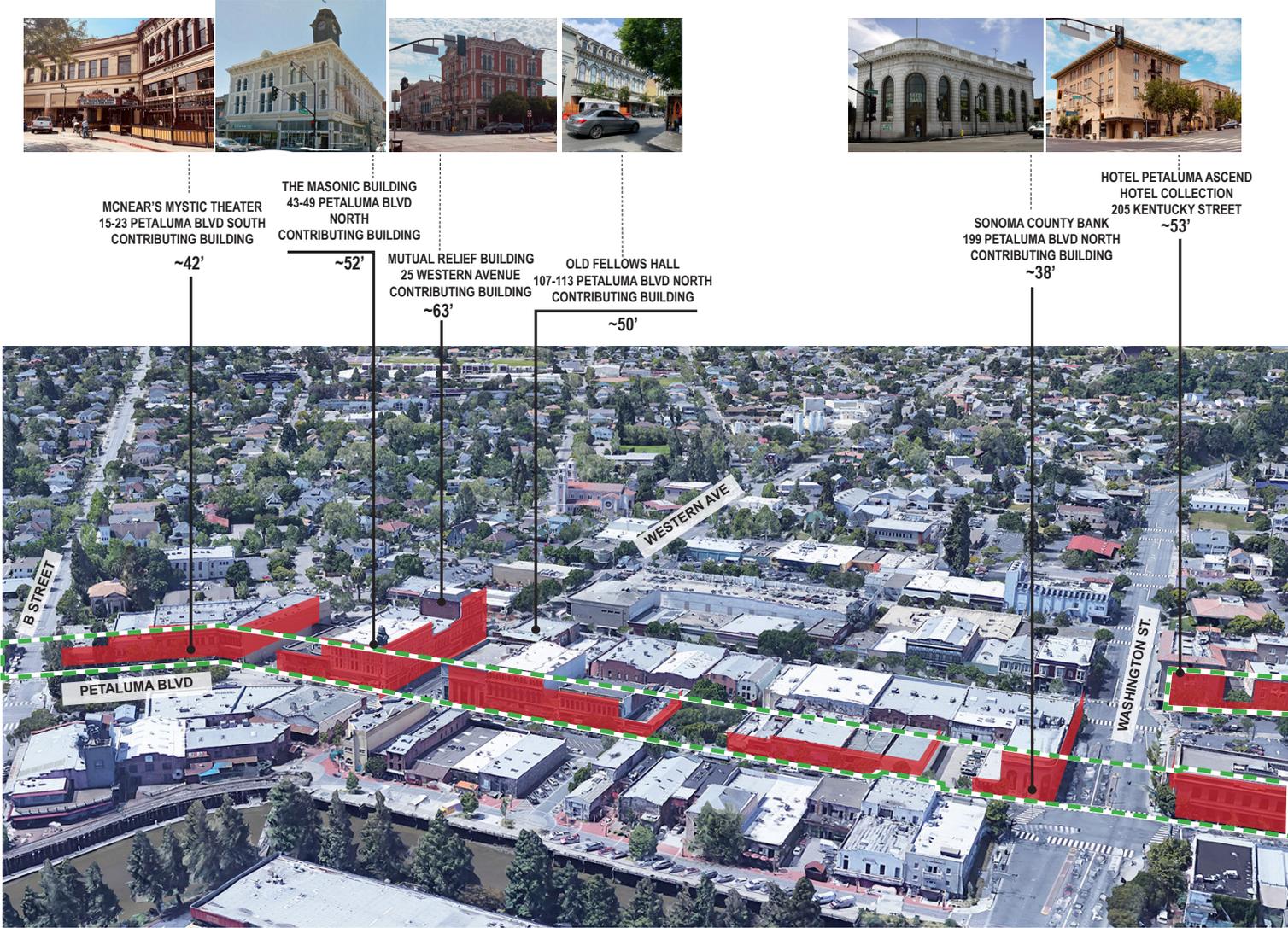
Building heights in the study area vary widely. Single story buildings, often surrounded by surface parking lots, occur throughout the area, even along Petaluma Boulevard as well as further west. At the same time many taller historic buildings are clustered along Petaluma Boulevard, especially between Washington Street south to B Street. Taller buildings also occur along Washington Street from Petaluma Boulevard. Many buildings within the study, including historic buildings are 60' or taller.

In general building heights generally decline from east to west, with one- and two-story residential buildings dominating close to Howard, Liberty and 6th Street.

The diagram on pg. 25 represents the approximate height of buildings along Petaluma Boulevard between C Street and Washington Street. This street wall assessment shows that most facades along Petaluma Boulevard are between 38' and 52' in height.

Along Petaluma Boulevard

Figure 9:
Downtown Character



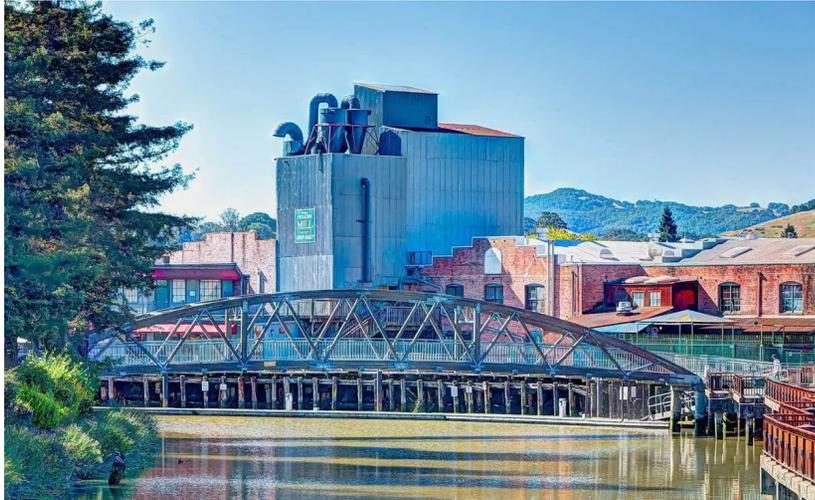
Looking North and Southeast from Study Area

Several tall historic landmarks are located in proximity of the study area, including:

- Hotel Petaluma, 53'
- The Great Petaluma Mill, 60'
- St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, 91'
- Petaluma Grain Tower, 171'



Hotel Petaluma



The Great Petaluma Mill



St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church



Petaluma Grain Tower



Figure 10: Building Height Analysis: Study Area North and Southeast View

 Study Area

Looking South and Southwest along Washington St.

In this portion of the study area, building heights are heterogeneous, with a mix of tall and short buildings. Heights range from 25' to 75'.



Looking down Keller Street towards Western Ave (Phoenix Theater on the right in image)



Looking northwest on Washington Street (Petaluma Hotel on the right in image)



Looking north towards the river on Western Ave (Mutual Relief Buildings on the right in image)



Looking north on Kentucky Street

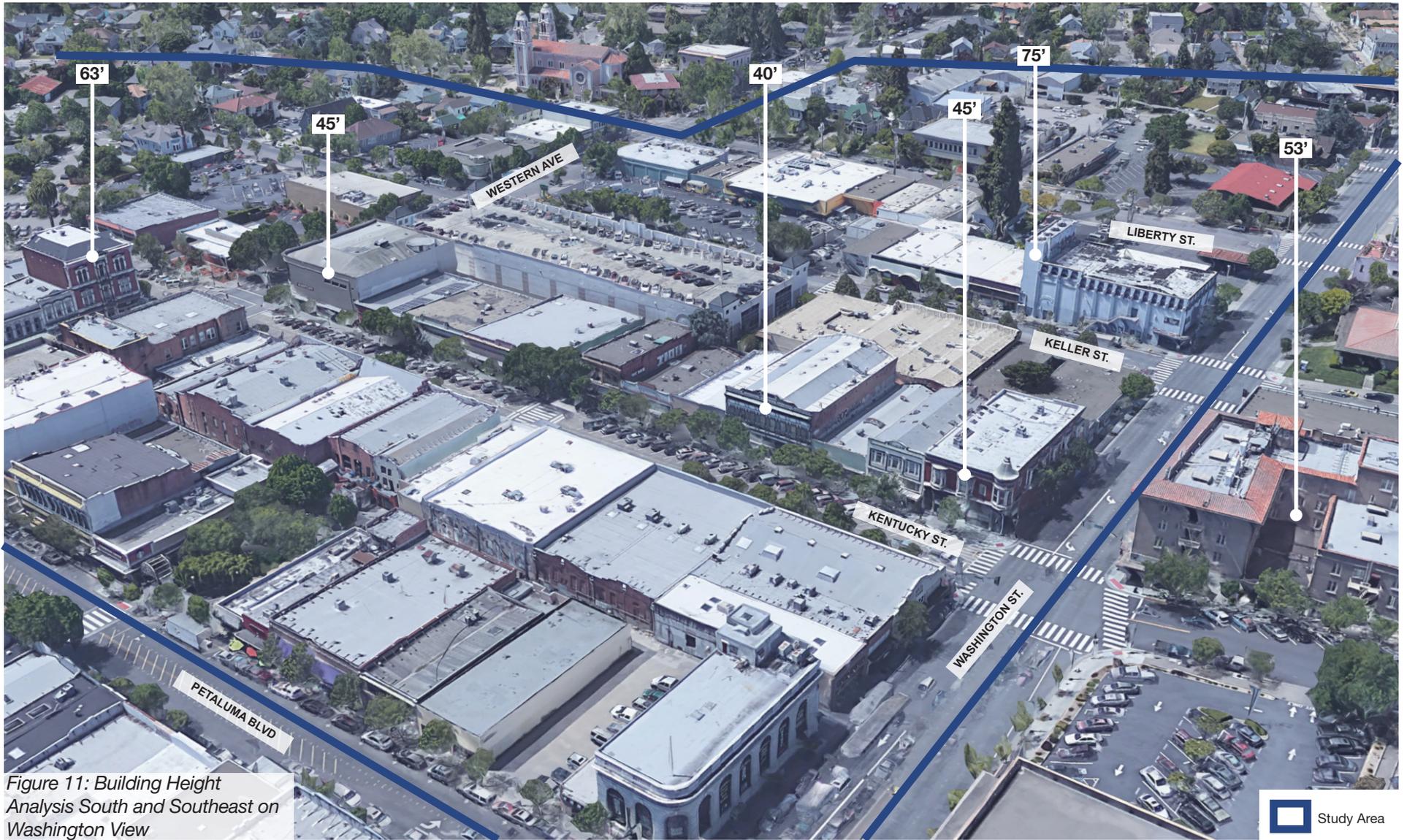


Figure 11: Building Height Analysis South and Southeast on Washington View

 Study Area

Looking Northwest and Southwest along Petaluma Boulevard and D St.

A mix of tall and short buildings can be observed also looking Northwest and southwest along Petaluma Boulevard and D Street. Residential buildings are shorter, around 25', while civic uses are taller, including:

- Old Post Office Building, 35'
- Petaluma Historic Library and Museum, 48'
- United Methodist Church, 58'
- Unitarian Universalists of Petaluma Church, 73'



On 5th Street looking northwest (North Bay Revival Center on the left in image)



Looking south down A Street



Lower density 1-2 story commercial and residential structures along 5th Street



Looking north towards the river along B Street



Figure 12: Building Height Analysis Northwest and Southwest on Petaluma Blvd & D St.

 Study Area

Opportunity Sites

Opportunity sites in the study area are characterized by their potential to add value in creating a vibrant, safe, active, and pedestrian-friendly downtown. These sites have potential for redevelopment/increased development intensity and the ability to add to the sense of place within Downtown.

They include vacant lots, vacant structures, and low-density developments on lots dominated by parking. Designation as an opportunity site doesn't reflect current commercial activity; instead, it reflects the degree to which the site is developed. These sites present an opportunity for infill development that can enhance and complement the surrounding urban form over time.

Truly "vacant" sites are few. These parcels are infill sites that have no development or improvements on them and are not currently not dedicated to any use (e.g. parking).

There are a few vacant structures throughout the study area. These are not identified as historic resources, are unoccupied and have fallen into severe disrepair. The revitalization of these parcels is an important opportunity to provide new amenities to downtown.

Surface parking lots are found throughout the study area. These include parking lots associated with low scale, one-story office or other commercial uses, such as the 7-Eleven at D Street. With typically little to no landscaping, these parcels tend to break up the urban form of a block and offer no pedestrian amenities. Driveways also often pose a hazard to pedestrians and in some cases are located too close to an adjoining intersection for safety.

Vacant Lots



Vacant lot at Petaluma Boulevard S and B Street

Vacant Structures



Vacant Structure at Petaluma Boulevard S and D Street

Surface Parking Lots



Parking lot along Keller Street between Western Ave and A Street (looking northeast)



Vacant lot on Washington Street



Vacant Structure at 4th Street and C Street



Parking lot between Washington Street and Court Street

03 Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay

Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay

Goals and Principles

The proposed Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay intends to provide additional development standards for parcels within its boundary without changing the underlying IZO. The development standards and criteria for the Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay are guided by a set of goals. These are directed to-

1. Encourage higher density, mixed-use infill developments that prioritize additional housing in the downtown core.
2. Acknowledge, reflect, protect and compliment the downtown's historic context and its historic resources.
3. Activate and encourage neighborhood and cultural tourism-oriented uses.
4. Spur economic growth by creating attractive development opportunities in downtown.
5. Enhance the pedestrian experience with high quality streetscapes that include primary entrances that face the street, links towards the Petaluma River with access and visibility, and context sensitive building designs.
6. Improving quality of life in the downtown and around the Petaluma River.

The following pages highlight the alignment of the General Plan policies to the goals of the Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay.

An in-depth analysis of parcels in the study area guided a determination of the Overlay boundaries. Overlay Subareas A, B, and C preserve concentrations of historic buildings throughout the Downtown by focusing on Opportunity Sites located outside of Downtown's historic districts. In the image to the right, each Subarea is depicted in relationship to the Commercial Historic District and the A-Street Historic District.

Figure 13: Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay and Historic Districts

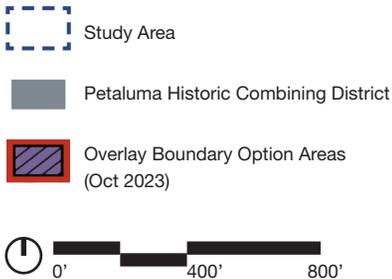
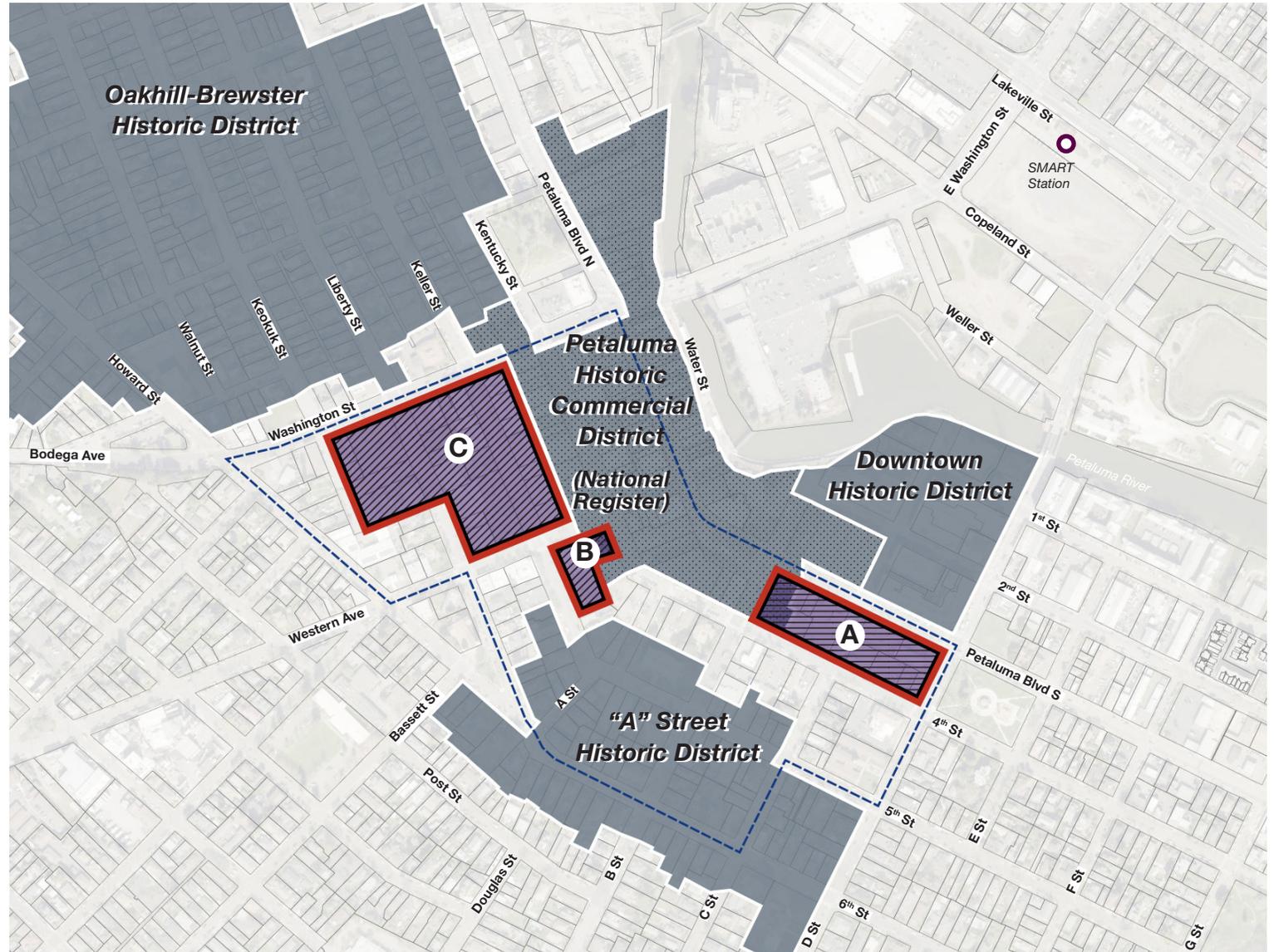


Figure 14: Overlay Alignment with the General Plan

Element	General Plan Policies
Land Use, Growth Management, and the Built Environment	1-P-1: Promote a range of land uses at densities and intensities to serve the community’s needs within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).
	1-P-2: Use land efficiently by promoting infill development, at equal or higher density and intensity than surrounding uses.
	1-P-3: Preserve the overall scale and character of established residential neighborhoods..
	1-P-6: Encourage mixed-use development, which includes opportunities for increased transit access.
	1-P-7: Encourage flexibility in building form and in the nature of activities to allow for innovation and the ability to change over time.
	1-P-11: Allow land use intensification at strategic locations along the arterial corridors leading to Downtown and Central Petaluma, including aging commercial and industrial sites.
	1-P-12: Encourage reuse of under-utilized sites along East Washington Street and Petaluma Boulevard as multi-use residential/commercial corridors, allowing ground-floor retail and residential and/or commercial/office uses on upper floors.
Community Design, Character, and Green Building	2-P-3: Maintain landmarks and aspects of Petaluma’s heritage that foster its unique identity.
	2-P-5: Strengthen the visual and aesthetic character of major arterial corridors.
	2-P-14: Promote the development and intensification of the Downtown commercial core as both a visitor destination and a neighborhood retail center.
	2-P-17: Pursue the development and promotion of cultural activities and facilities, such as museums, meeting halls, community theatres, public art galleries and shows, and outdoor gathering places within the Downtown area.
Mo- bility	5-P-4: New development and/or major expansion or change of use may require construction of off-site mobility improvements to complete appropriate links in the network necessary for connecting the proposed development with existing neighborhoods and land uses.
Economic Health & Sustainability	9-P-12: Maintain and expand Downtown as a hub of commercial and retail activity with residential opportunities.
	9-P-13: Expand and diversify Petaluma’s retail base.
	9-P-19: Insure the long-term fiscal health of Petaluma, as the City continues to develop, balancing fiscal concerns with economic, social, environmental, and cultural values.

Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay Goals

1 Encourage higher density, mixed-use infill developments	2 Acknowledge, reflect, protect and compliment historic context and resources.	3 Activate and encourage neighborhood and cultural tourism-oriented uses.	4 Spur economic growth with attractive development opportunities	5 Enhance the pedestrian experience	6 Improving quality of life in the downtown and around the Petaluma River.
1-P-1			1-P-1	1-P-1	1-P-1
1-P-2				1-P-2	
1-P-3	1-P-3			1-P-3	1-P-3
1-P-6			1-P-6	1-P-6	1-P-6
1-P-7	1-P-7	1-P-7	1-P-7	1-P-7	1-P-7
1-P-11		1-P-11	1-P-11	1-P-11	1-P-11
1-P-12	1-P-12	1-P-12	1-P-12	1-P-12	1-P-12
	2-P-3	2-P-3	2-P-3	2-P-3	2-P-3
	2-P-5	2-P-5	2-P-5	2-P-5	2-P-5
2-P-14		2-P-14	2-P-14	2-P-14	2-P-14
	2-P-17	2-P-17	2-P-17	2-P-17	2-P-17
					2-P-57
5-P-4		5-P-4	5-P-4		
		9-P-12	9-P-12	9-P-12	9-P-12
			9-P-13		
9-P-19	9-P-19	9-P-19	9-P-19	9-P-19	9-P-19

Overlay Subareas Vision

All three Overlay Subareas present opportunities for new development that can catalyze economic development, bring new housing to Downtown and have a positive impact on the pedestrian network and open spaces that characterize an active and vibrant Downtown.

Subarea A is an approximately 3.09-acre subsection located between Petaluma Boulevard S, and 4th Street, and it includes the two blocks bound by B Street and D Street. This subarea presents a tremendous opportunity to articulate the southern gateway into Petaluma's Downtown through new development that reflects the character of Petaluma's Historic Commercial District. This area also presents an opportunity to extend the active street frontages and pedestrian-oriented character of Petaluma Boulevard beyond B Street, all the way to Walnut Park.

Subarea B is an approximately 0.93-acre subsection of located along Western Avenue on the block between Keller Street and Kentucky Street. Western Avenue is an important pedestrian and retail corridor that traverses through Downtown, and across the Petaluma River via the Trestle Footbridge. One of the tallest buildings in Downtown, the Masonic Building is on Western Avenue. This subarea presents a unique opportunity for infill development along Western Avenue that holds the street edge and activates the pedestrian realm with new uses reflecting the character of the Petaluma Historic Commercial district which it is adjacent to.

Subarea C is an approximately 8.16-acre subsection of Downtown Petaluma located between Washington Street and Western Avenue, containing the blocks between Court Street and Telephone Alley. Parcels within the subarea currently occupy a range of single uses including restaurants, offices, theaters, stores, parking lots, auto shops, and vacant properties. Parcels in this subarea presents an opportunity for new housing in Downtown surrounded by a number of supporting retail and commercial uses. There is an opportunity to envision an urban neighborhood in this subarea complete with a mix of uses and a robust network of pedestrian connections and open spaces such as parks and plazas.



View of Subarea A on Petaluma Boulevard and D Street looking north

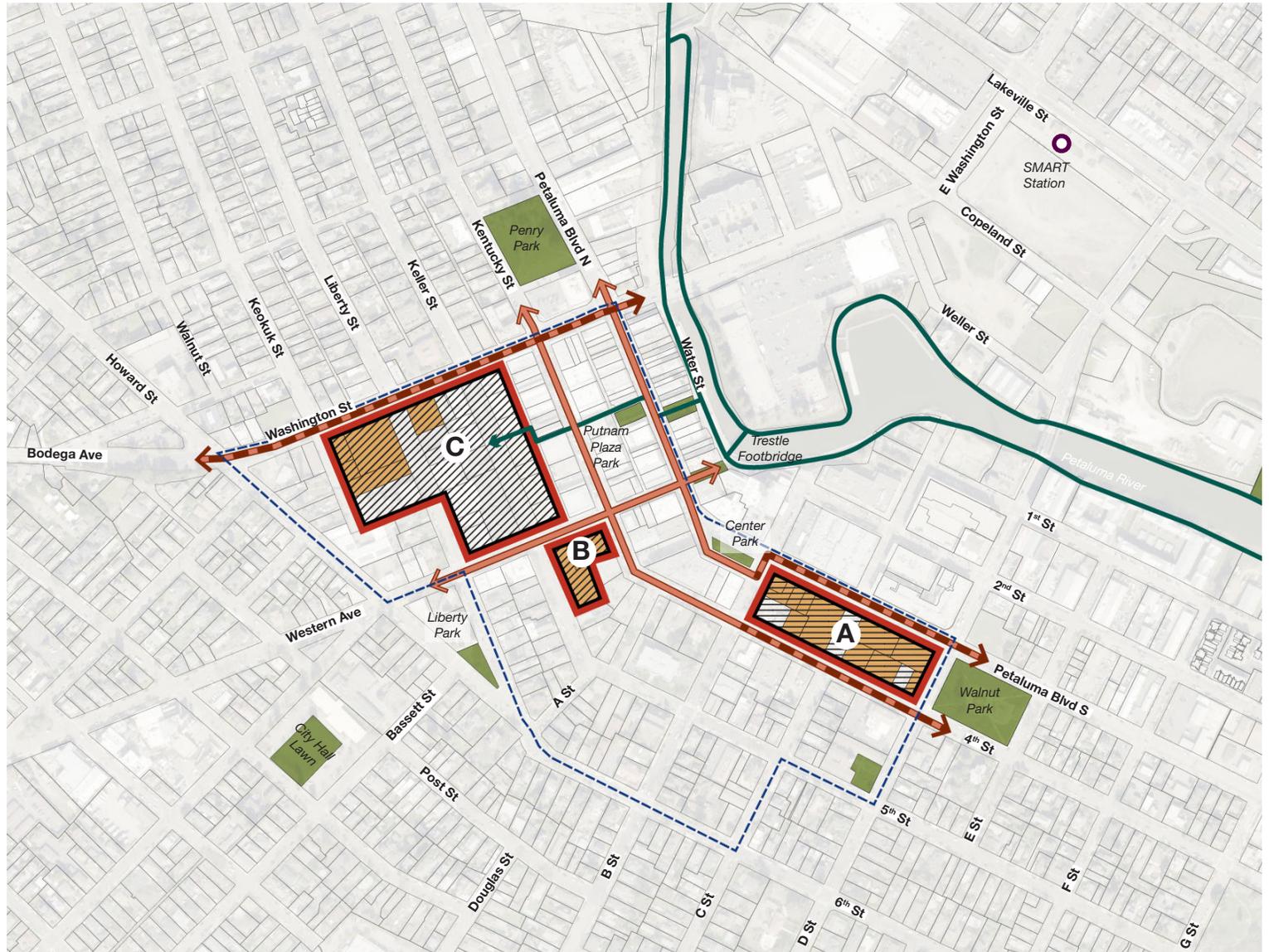
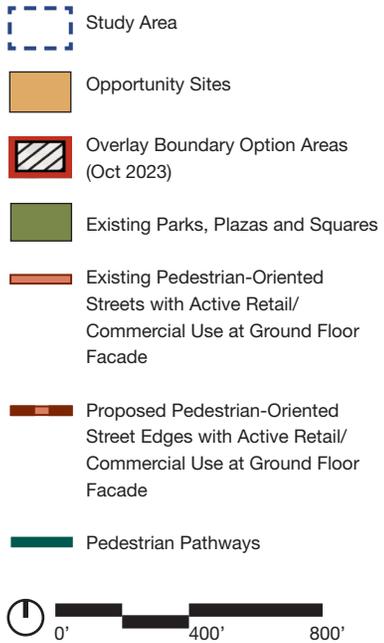


View of Subarea B, on Western Avenue looking east



View of Subarea C, on Washington Street looking east

Figure 15: Overlay Subareas Vision



Building Form

The Overlay would replace setback¹ development standards found in the IZO with new building configuration requirements (bulk and mass controls) that provide the City with more specific control over building height, as well as specific stepbacks² for new development that would control how a building relates to a residential use or historic resource/contributing building within a historic district.

An absolute maximum height of 60' requiring a conditional use permit and absolute maximum height of 75' requiring a conditional use permit and satisfying additional criteria are proposed to be allowed within the overlay subareas. Front (8') and side (5') stepbacks at higher floors are proposed to preserve the scale and character of the existing urban fabric in Downtown. Petaluma Boulevard, Kentucky Street, Western Ave and Washington Street are identified as primary streets for the purpose of this overlay.

A ground-floor activating use is required along pedestrian/facade activating frontages for all new development within the overlay.

Illustrative development standards, pedestrian/facade activation frontages, conditional use permit criteria and additional criteria for additional height are outlined in the following pages.

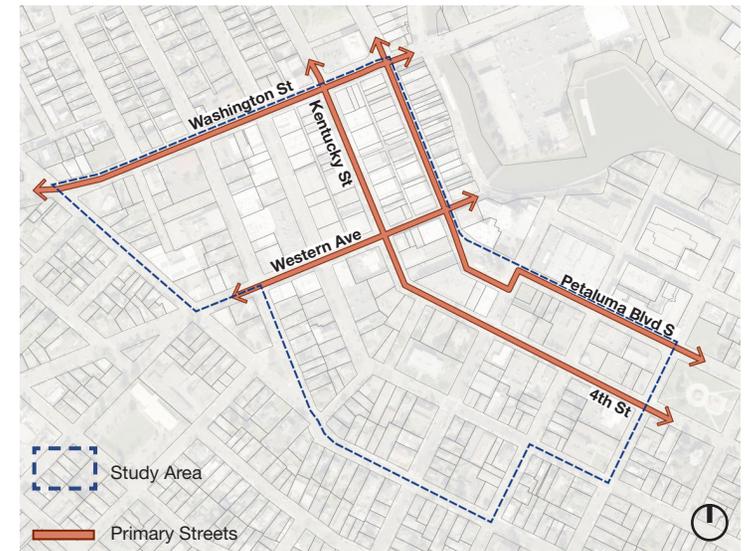


Figure 16: Overlay Primary Streets

Table 1: Stepbacks General

	0-45'/4-stories	Above 45'/4-stories (whichever is less)	Above 60'/5-stories (whichever is less)
Primary Street Frontage	NA	8' Min	16' Min
Other Street Frontage (excluding an alley)	NA	5' Min	5' Min

¹ The minimum horizontal distance between a lot line and the wall or parapet of a building. Buildings may be required to setback from front, side, or rear lot lines.

² A stepback requires that any portion of a building above a certain height is pulled away from a property line.

Table 2: Development Standards - MU2 + Overlay

	Current Standards MU2 & CF	Overlay Standards (June Study Session)	Overlay Standards (Proposed Today)
Lot Area (Min)	2,000 SF	No Change	No Change
Lot Depth (Min)	N/A	No Change	No Change
Lot Width (Min)	N/A	No Change	No Change
Height (Max)	45'	60' by right 75' w/qualifying criteria	60' w/Conditional Use Permit 75' w/CUP +qualifying criteria
Minimum Ground Floor Height	N/A	N/A	14' floor-to-floor for any Building over 45'
Exceptions to height limit allowed?	Yes; Per Section 12.020.D	No, any building over 45' is limited to an overall Max of 60'/75'	
Setbacks	When not abutting an R District		
Front (Min/Max)	0-10'		0' ¹
Rear (Min)	0'		0'
Street-side (Min)	0'		0'
Interior Side (Min)	0'		0'
		Change to not allow a front yard setback was made to reflect the historic building pattern in the downtown - see Exhibit 13	
Upper Floor Stepbacks?	None	Yes, See Exhibit 4 for details	
Lot Coverage (Max)	80% Maximum	No Limit	
		80% 100% Lot Coverage with Conditional Use Permit ¹ (Change intended to reflect the historic building pattern in the downtown - see Exhibit 13)	
Floor Area Ratio (Max)	2.5	6.0	
Parking	Per IZO Chapter 11	The parking and loading standards contained in IZO Chapter 11 will not be modified by the Overlay.	

Note: Table 2 presents a comparison of current development standards and an evolution of new standards for the proposed overlay.

Building Form Development Standards

MU-2 (45' Height with Exceptions By-Right)

Currently, the maximum allowable building height for a principal building in the Mixed Use 2 (MU2) zoning district is 45 feet (IZO Table 4.10).

IZO Section 12.020 provides for modifications to the maximum building height for certain types of structures such as church spires, belfries, cupolas and domes, monuments, water towers, fire and hose towers, silos, observation towers, distributions and transmission towers, lines and poles, windmills, chimneys, smokestacks, flag poles, and other unique instances; however, in general, it doesn't allow for usable space to be constructed over 45 feet.

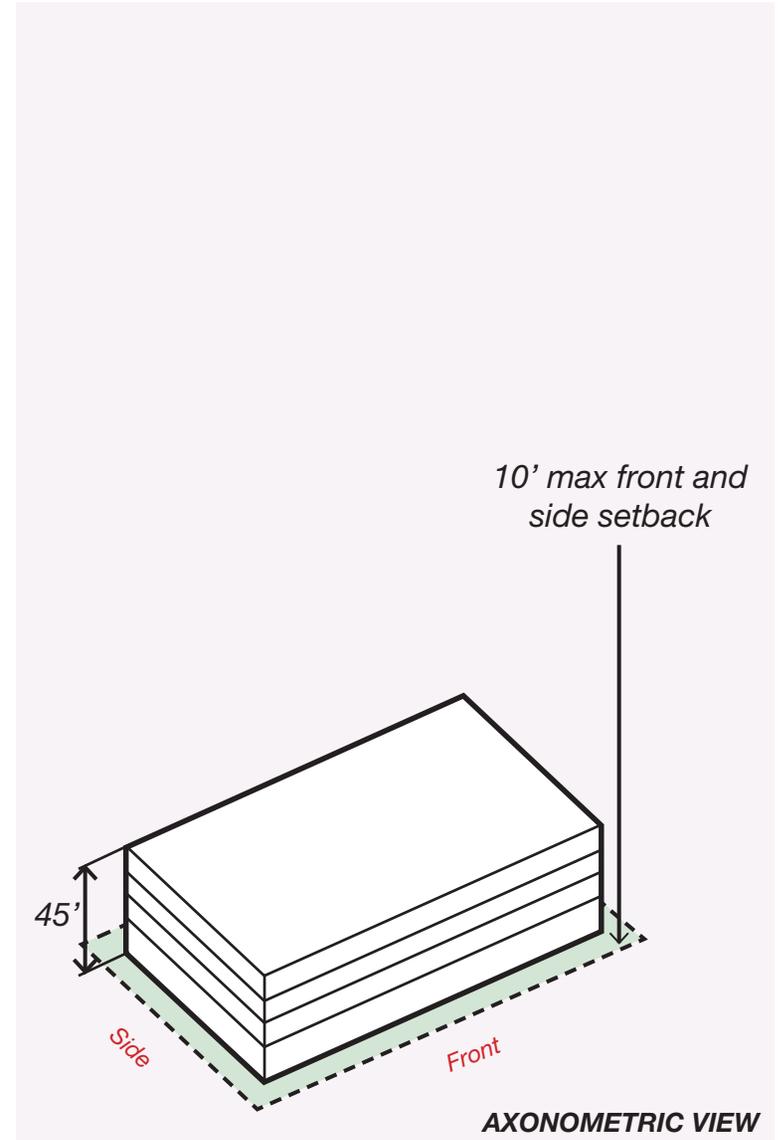
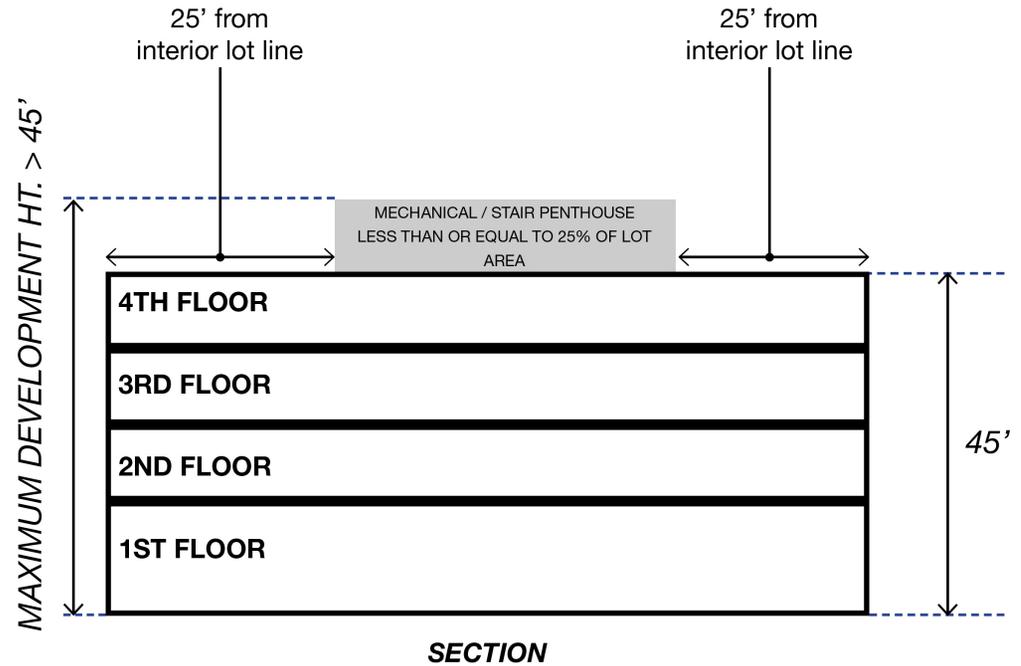
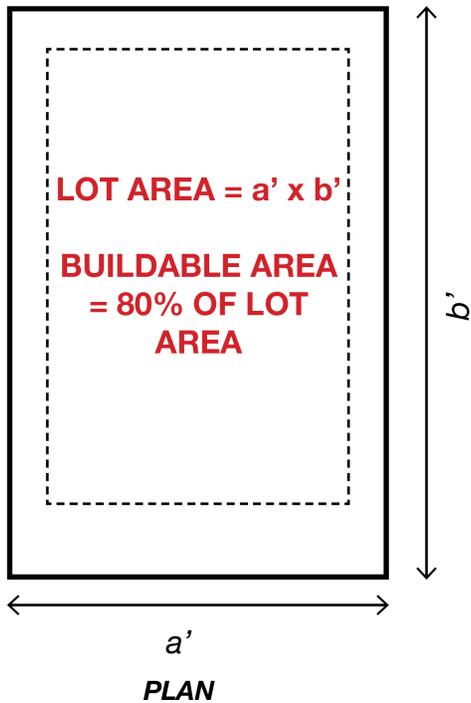


Figure 17: Development Standards Diagram - MU-2



ALLOWABLE LOT COVERAGE = 80%

ALLOWABLE FAR = 2.5

ALLOWABLE TOTAL USABLE AREA = LOT AREA x FAR

**MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT HEIGHT = 45'
(SOME EXCEPTIONS)**

Code Section 12.020 – Modification to Maximum Height Limit

Current Text

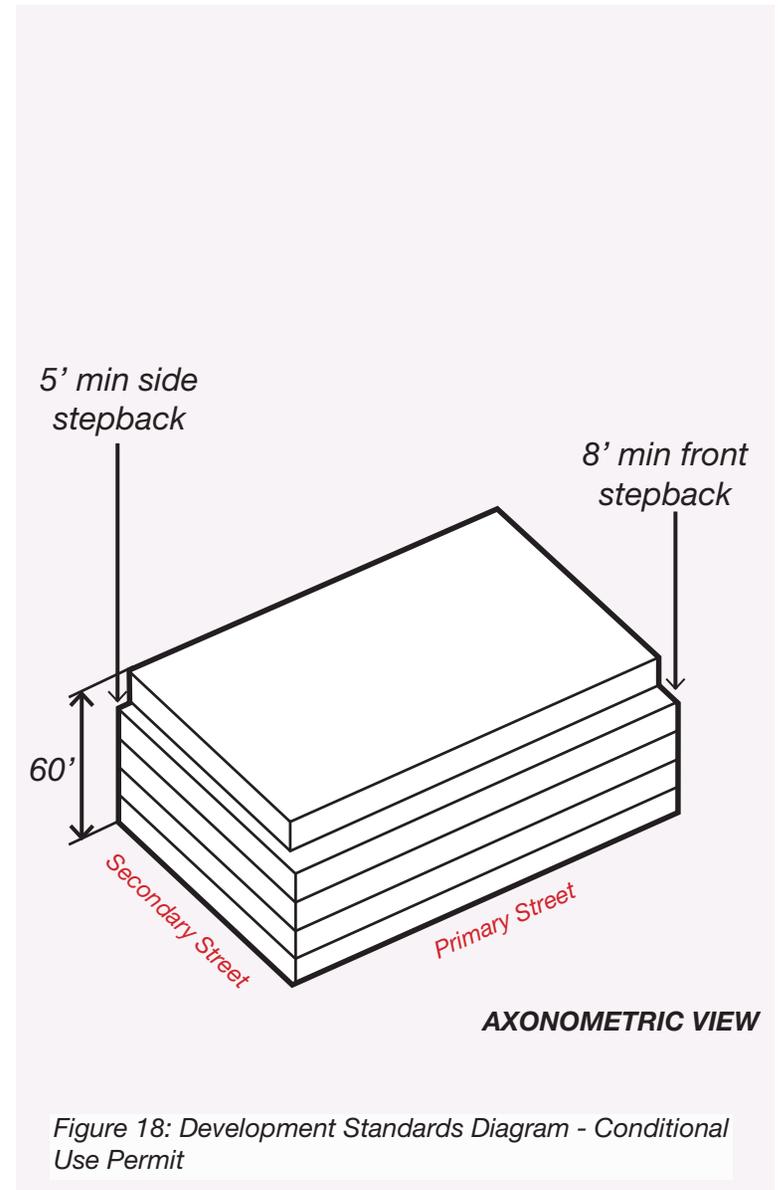
The maximum height prescribed in Tables 4.6 to 4.13 shall not apply to ...

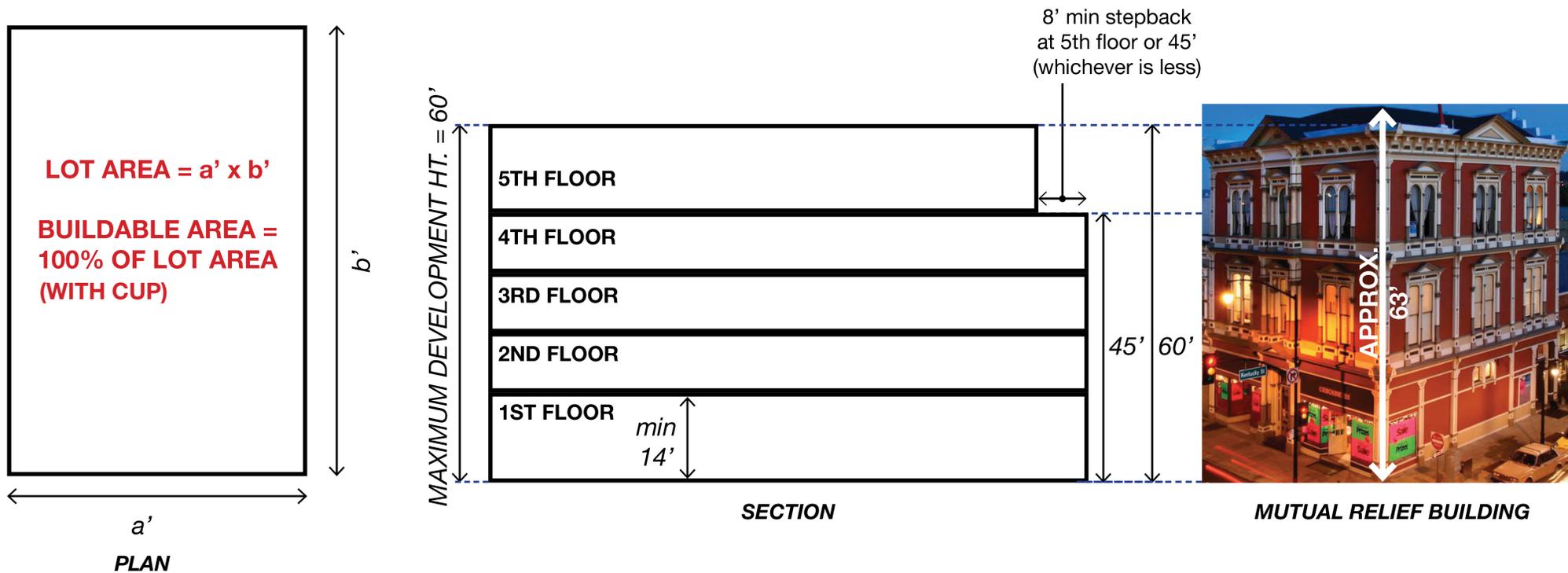
D. Elevators and stair penthouses, water tanks, monitors and scenery lofts, provided no linear dimension of any such structure exceeds fifty (50) percent of the corresponding street lot line frontage; or to towers and monuments, fire towers, hose towers, cooling towers, gas holders or other structures, where the manufacturing process requires a greater height. Provided, however, that any structure above the height otherwise permitted in the district shall occupy no more than twenty-five (25) percent of the area of the lot and shall be distant not less than twenty-five (25) feet from every interior lot line.

Proposed Allowable Maximum Height with Conditional Use Permit (CUP) = 60 Feet

The by-right height limit would remain at 45 feet. Additional height up to 60 feet would be allowed, subject to Conditional Use Permit approval provided that certain additional review criteria (findings) are met. These findings are:

- That the additional height is consistent with the applicable purposes of the Overlay;
- That the additional height makes a positive contribution to the overall character of the area and that the building will be compatible with its surroundings. The “positive contribution” and “compatibility” will be assessed using a combination of visual studies, line-of-sight drawings, photo simulations, 3-D modeling, and view shed analysis;
- That the additional height would not cause an adverse change in the significance or integrity of a historical resource that is onsite or adjacent to the site;
- That the additional height will not unduly restrict access to light and air from adjacent properties or the public right-of-way, or otherwise be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; and
- That the building design expresses a relationship to an existing datum line or lines of the street wall or adjacent historic resource, if any.





ALLOWABLE LOT COVERAGE = 100% (WITH CUP)

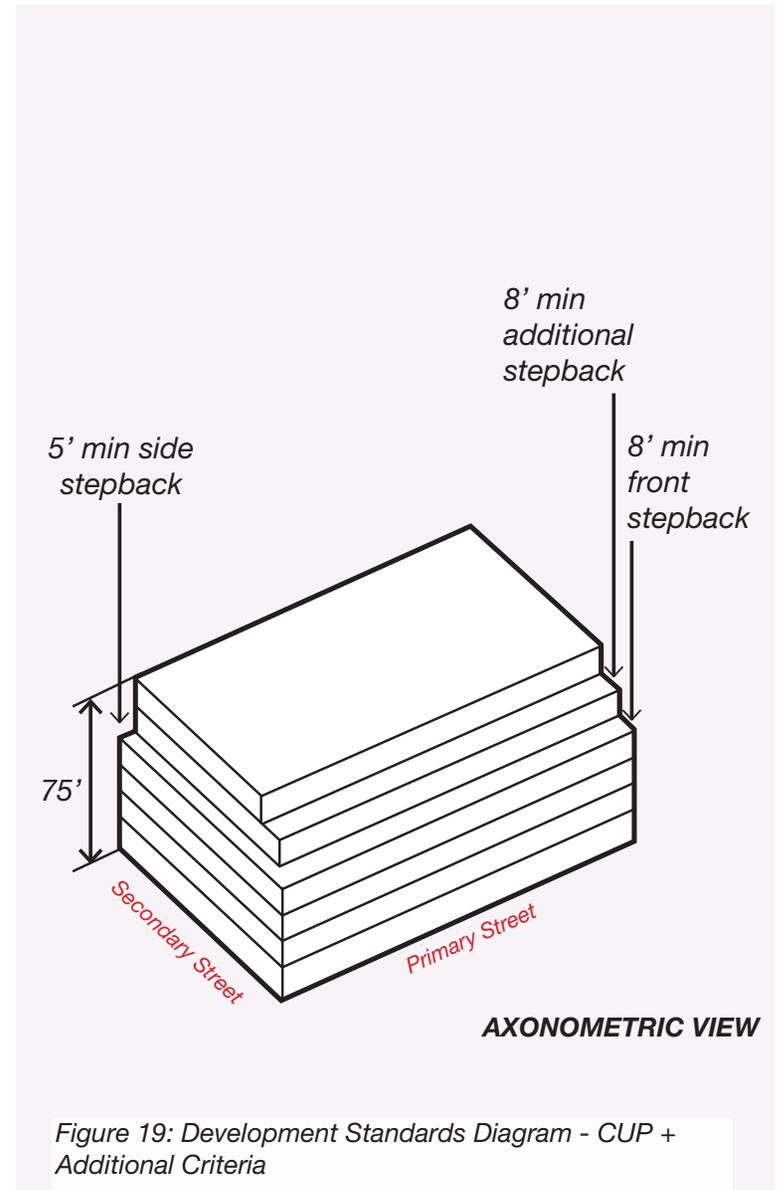
ALLOWABLE FAR = up to 6

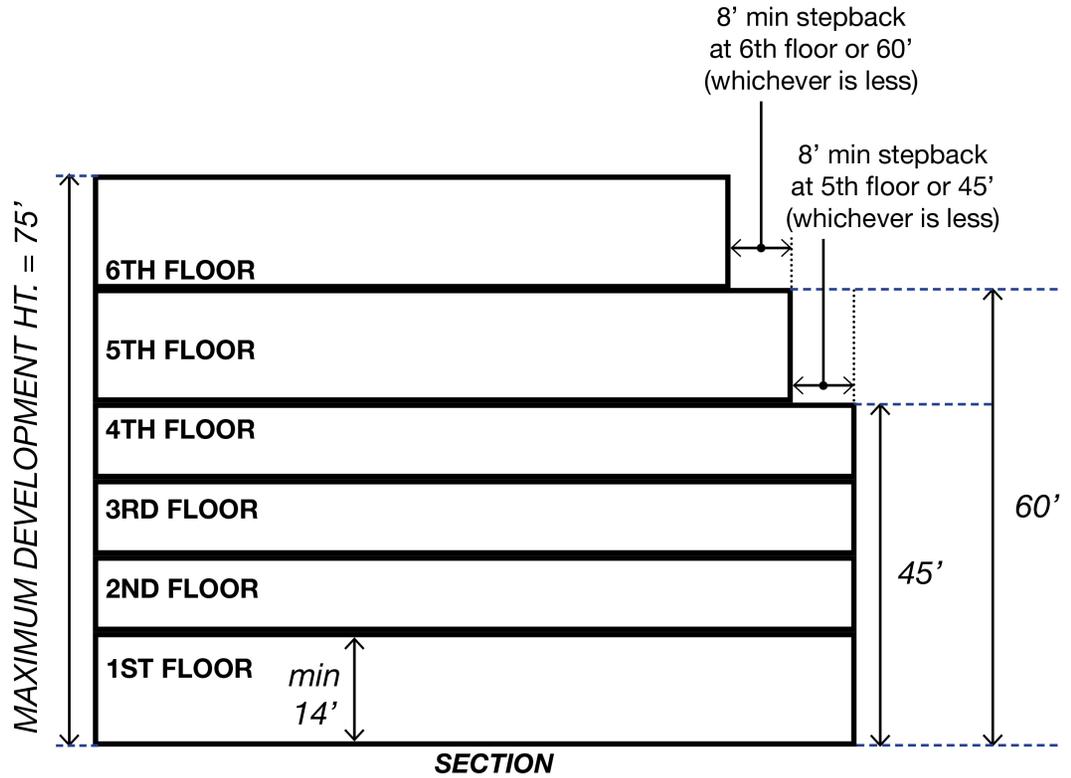
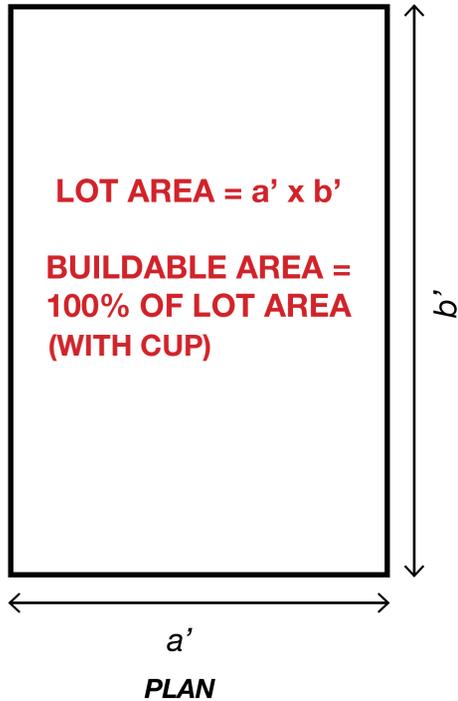
ALLOWABLE TOTAL USABLE AREA = LOT AREA x FAR

MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT HEIGHT = 60' (NO EXCEPTIONS)

Overlay (75' Maximum Height Subject to Conditional Use Permit Approval + Community Benefits)

- Improves the existing streetscape by providing widened sidewalks, additional street trees, new mid-block walkways/paseos, public plazas, parks, etc. For a project that would widen the sidewalk by increasing the ground floor building setback, a public outdoor amenity space shall be included in the design, and this space shall be designed and configured to provide adequate space for pedestrian movement and activity;
- Provides publicly accessible private open space, such as a street-level park or rooftop open space that is open to the public at least 12 hours per day and at least 260 days per year;
- Demonstrates exceptional architecture/design. “Exceptional” architecture/design may be demonstrated by any of the following:
 - The use of innovative, creative or original architectural concepts, materials, or building techniques;
 - The use of visual elements that contribute positively to the built environment, such as well-proportioned facades, pleasing materials, and unique features;
 - The use of innovative building systems or forms, and/or the use of creative design, to increase building efficiency and to reduce energy consumption;
 - The use of low impact development and green infrastructure features in sustainable design and landscaping; or
 - The use of high-quality building materials that contribute to long-term durability and visual quality.
- Respects and/or preserve cultural, historical, or archaeological resources that exist or occur onsite or within the Overlay;
- Exceeds the minimum number of Inclusionary Dwelling units required by IZO
- Exceeds the minimum number of bicycle parking spaces required by IZO; or
- Provides all required parking below grade.





ALLOWABLE LOT COVERAGE = 100% (WITH CUP)

ALLOWABLE FAR = up to 6

ALLOWABLE TOTAL USABLE AREA = LOT AREA x FAR

MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT HEIGHT = 75' (NO EXCEPTIONS)



Criteria to Exceed 80% Lot Coverage (with Conditional Use Permit)

Additional lot coverage of up to 100% may be allowed if a Conditional Use Permit is granted, and if any of the following are true for a project:

- The development improves the existing streetscape by providing widened sidewalks, additional street trees, new mid-block walkways/ paseos, public plazas, parks, etc.;
- The additional lot coverage would reflect the prevailing development pattern in the for the abutting and adjacent parcels;
- The development includes adequate provision for recycling and solid waste;
- The development includes adequate space for street trees, or
- The development includes other measures to enhance the pedestrian environment.

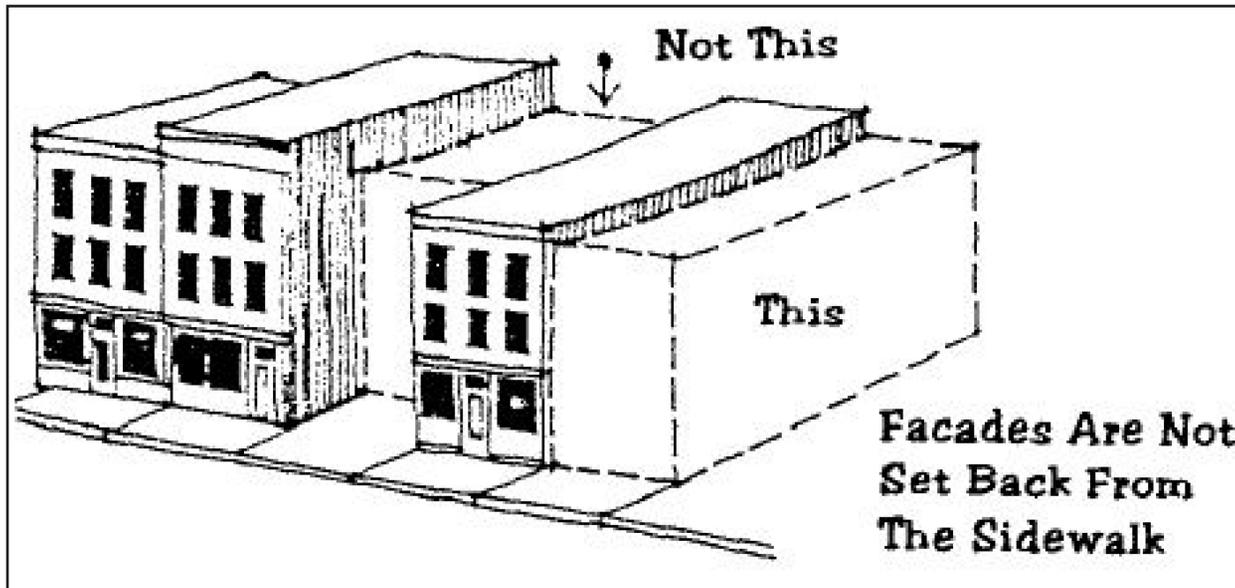


Figure 20: Chp 7 - Guidelines for New Construction, Petaluma Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines (pg 39)

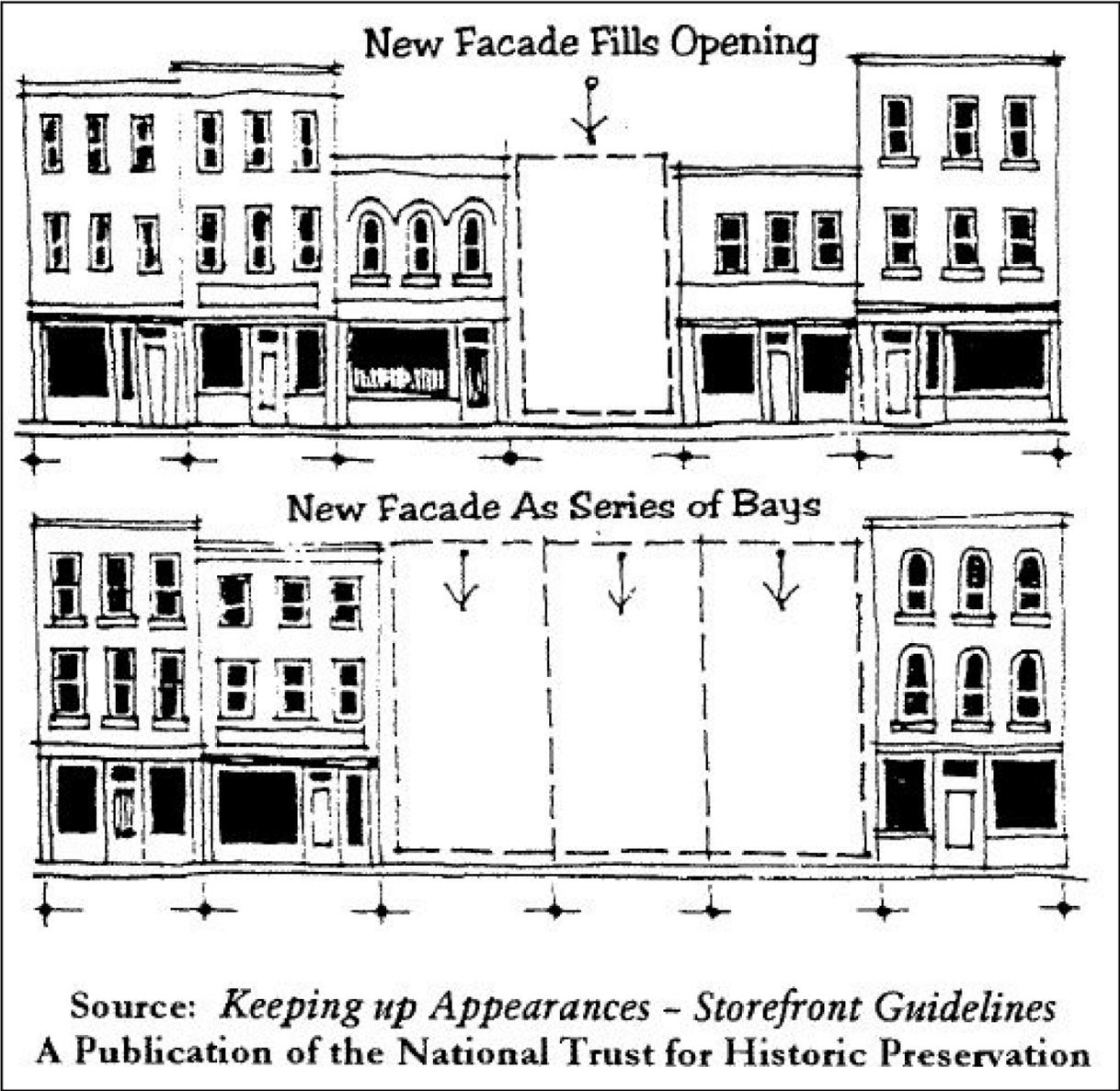


Figure 21: Chp 7 - Guidelines for New Construction,
 Petaluma Commercial Historic District Design
 Guidelines (pg 38)

Special Conditions

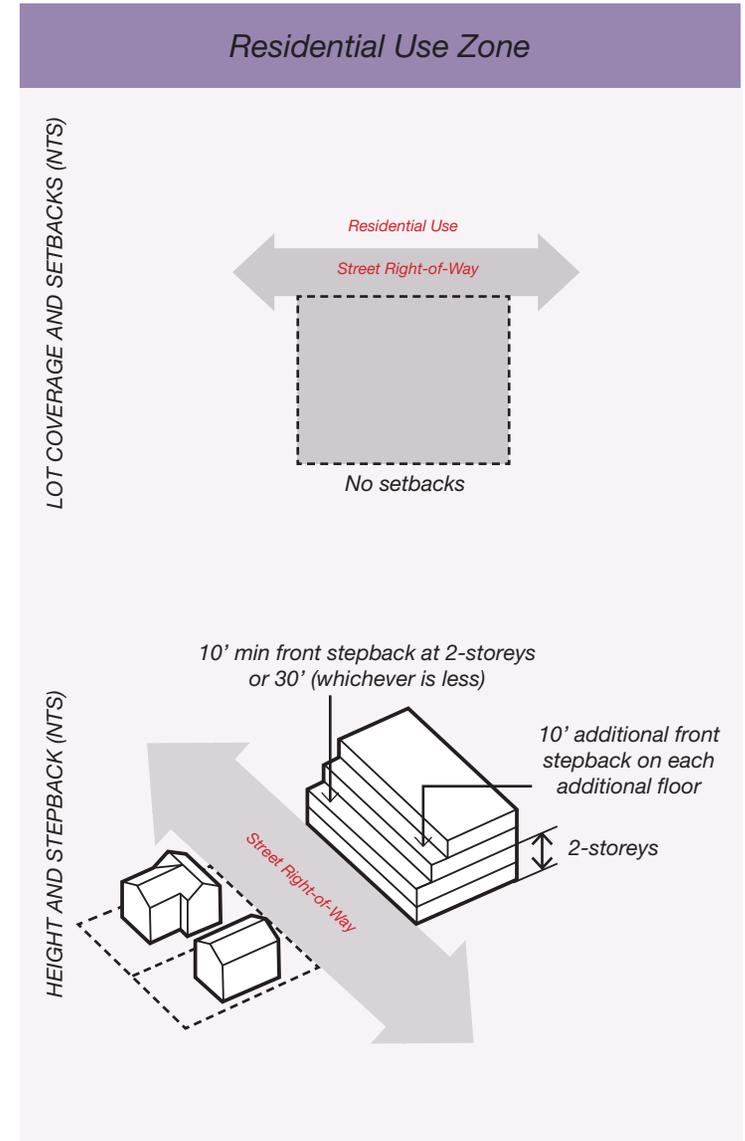
Confronting Residential Use

When confronting a residential use, new development would be required to step back 10' horizontally from the property at a height of 30' or 2-stories (whichever is less). The development would also be required to step back an additional 10' horizontally for every story above 30' or 2-stories (whichever is less).

Figure 22: Special Condition: Confronting Residential Use

Table 3: Stepbacks when Confronting a Residential Use		
	Stepbacks (based on Building Height)	
	0-30'/ 2-stories	At 30'/2-stories (whichever is less)
Primary Street Frontage	NA	10' Min
Other Street Frontage (excluding an alley)	NA	5' Min

Note: Additional 10' stepback to be applied for every story above 30'



Abutting a Historic Resource

When abutting a historic resource, new development would be required to step back 10' horizontally on the interior side and 8' on the rear if abutting a historic resource at 30' or 2-stories (whichever is less). Stepbacks at higher levels follow the general requirement of the overlay development standards.

Figure 23: Special Condition: Abutting Historic Resource

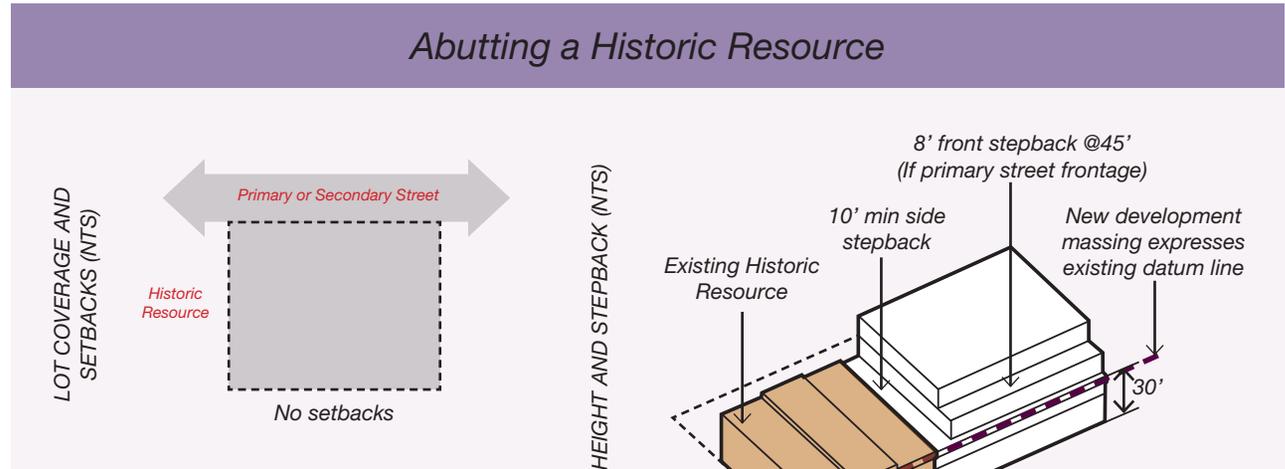
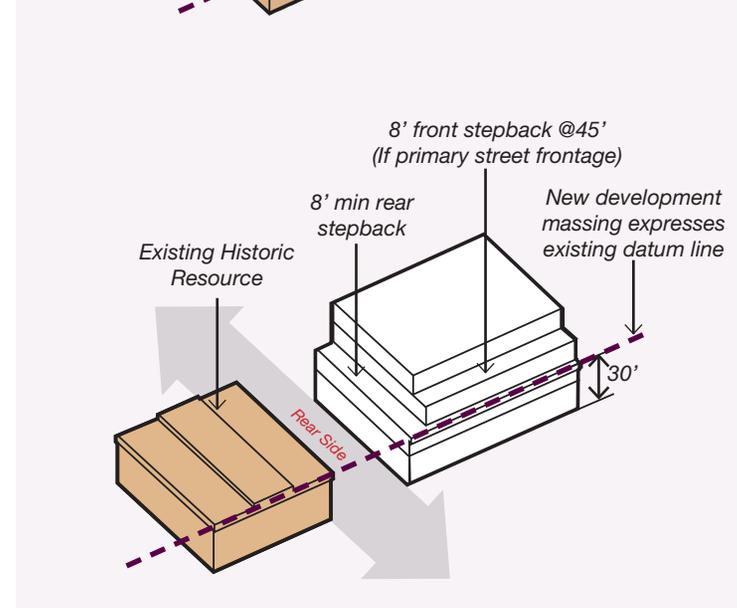


Table 4: Stepbacks Abutting Historic Resource

	Stepbacks (based on Building Height)			
	0-30'/ 2-stories	Above 30'/2-stories (whichever is less)	Above 45'/4-stories (whichever is less)	Above 60'/5-stories (whichever is less)
Primary Street Frontage	NA	0	8' Min	16' Min
Other Street Frontage (excluding an alley)	NA	0	5' Min	5' Min
Interior Side, abutting historic resource	NA	10' Min	10' Min	10' Min
Rear, abutting historic resource	0	8' Min	8' Min	8' Min



Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones

Discussions with the Petaluma Planning Commission and the Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee raised concerns about the conflict between the allowable uses under the IZO MU2 designation which currently prevents ground floor residential use and the goals of the Overlay to promote and incentivize new housing in Downtown.

To address this concern and to identify appropriate frontages to cluster pedestrian-oriented commercial and retail uses that can enhance and extend the pedestrian experience in downtown - Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones were identified for each of the subareas.

Within the Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones, the overlay would allow for a more limited range of land uses than what is presently allowed in the MU2 District for any new ground floor area within 30' of the public right-of-way. These uses were chosen because they stimulate pedestrian activity along the sidewalk, support other retail and pedestrian-oriented uses that exist in downtown, and provide an amenity to other uses located in the area such as residential or offices uses. Table 5 (on pg. 53) lists these uses.

New ground floor area not identified as a Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zone in the overlay may be occupied by a multi-family residential use or any other use identified in the MU2 District as a permitted or conditional permitted use.

For each zone, new controls on facade design and internal layout ensure that these uses activate the street experience. Design guidelines for these zones include:

- Orienting buildings so that primary facades and key pedestrian entries face primary streets or plazas.
- Locating entrances such that they are easy to find and appropriately scaled based on the prominence of function and amount of use.
- Locating private parking lots, driveways and loading areas behind buildings, with access from side or rear streets to facilitate active pedestrian edges along primary frontages.
- Reflecting the rhythm of facades that characterize Downtown, with sensitivity to the traditional building sizes and storefronts.
- Expressing facade components in ways that will help pedestrians establish a sense of scale with relation to the building.
- On corner parcels, incorporating special features such as cut corners, inviting entrances, and special base designs.
- If a street wall pattern is clearly established, buildings should have the same setback as surrounding buildings to maintain a sense of scale.
- Landscaping in this zone should be planned and scaled to complement the existing adjacent landscaping and building forms.

Table 6 (on pg. 53) lists the design standards for the Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones.

Table 5: “By-Right” Uses - Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones

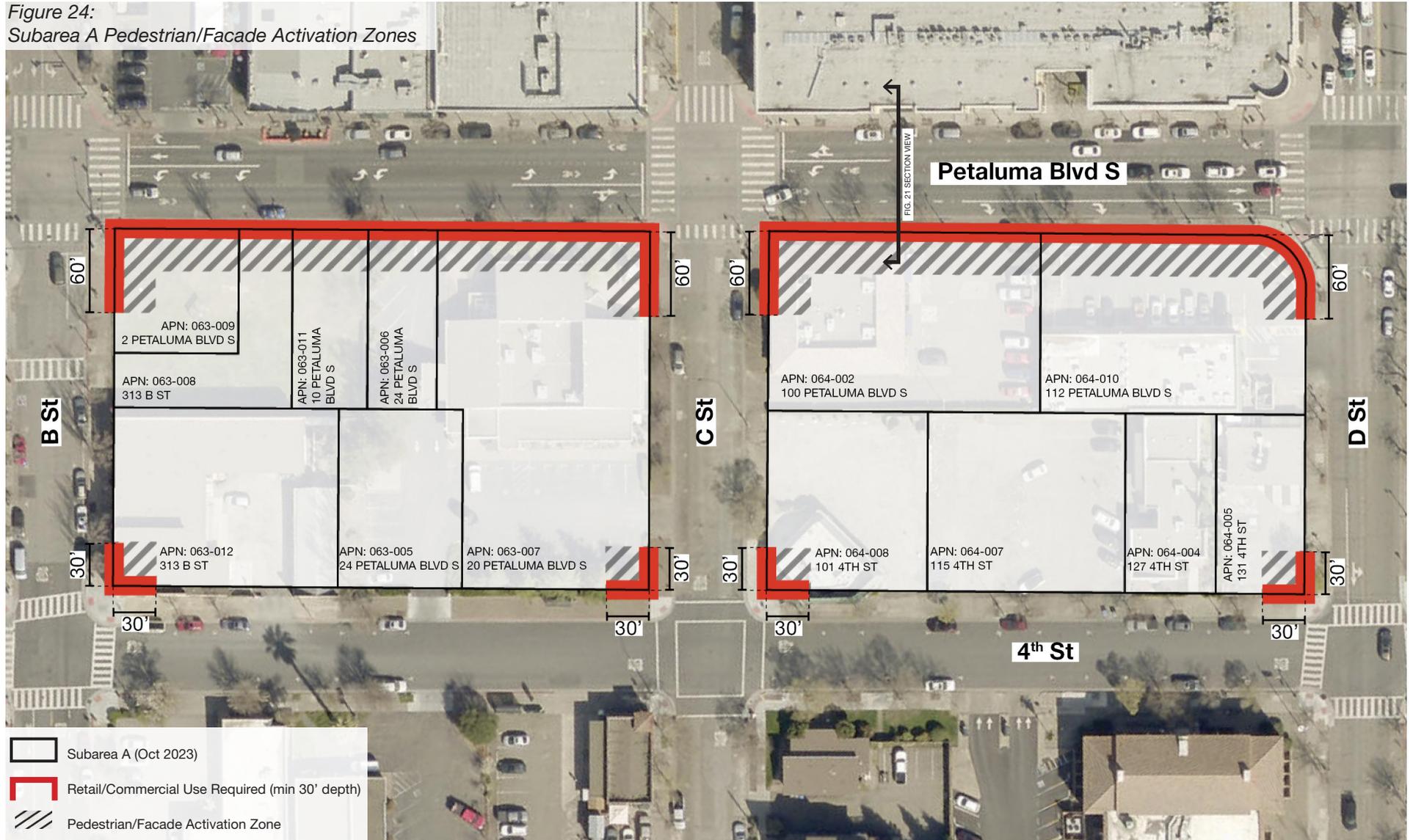
Artisan Shop
Fitness/Health
General Retail, 25,000 sf or Less
Studio - Art, Dance, Martial Arts, Music, etc
Restaurant, Café, Coffee Shop
Personal Services
Groceries/Specialty Foods, 25,000 sf or Less
Library, Museum, Art Gallery
Bank, Financial Services

Table 6: Design Standards - Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones

	Standard	Applies to
Storefront Transparency	60% min glazing	First floor facades facing sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor spaces.
Blank Walls	30’ max length	First floor facades facing sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor spaces.
Interior Partitions or shelving above 36’ in height when parallel with storefront	30’ min setback	First floor tenant spaces facing sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor spaces. Does not apply to any partition that is perpendicular to the storefront or any shelving that is abutting a wall.
Window Signs	15% max coverage	First floor windows facing sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor spaces.

Overlay Subarea A

Figure 24:
Subarea A Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones



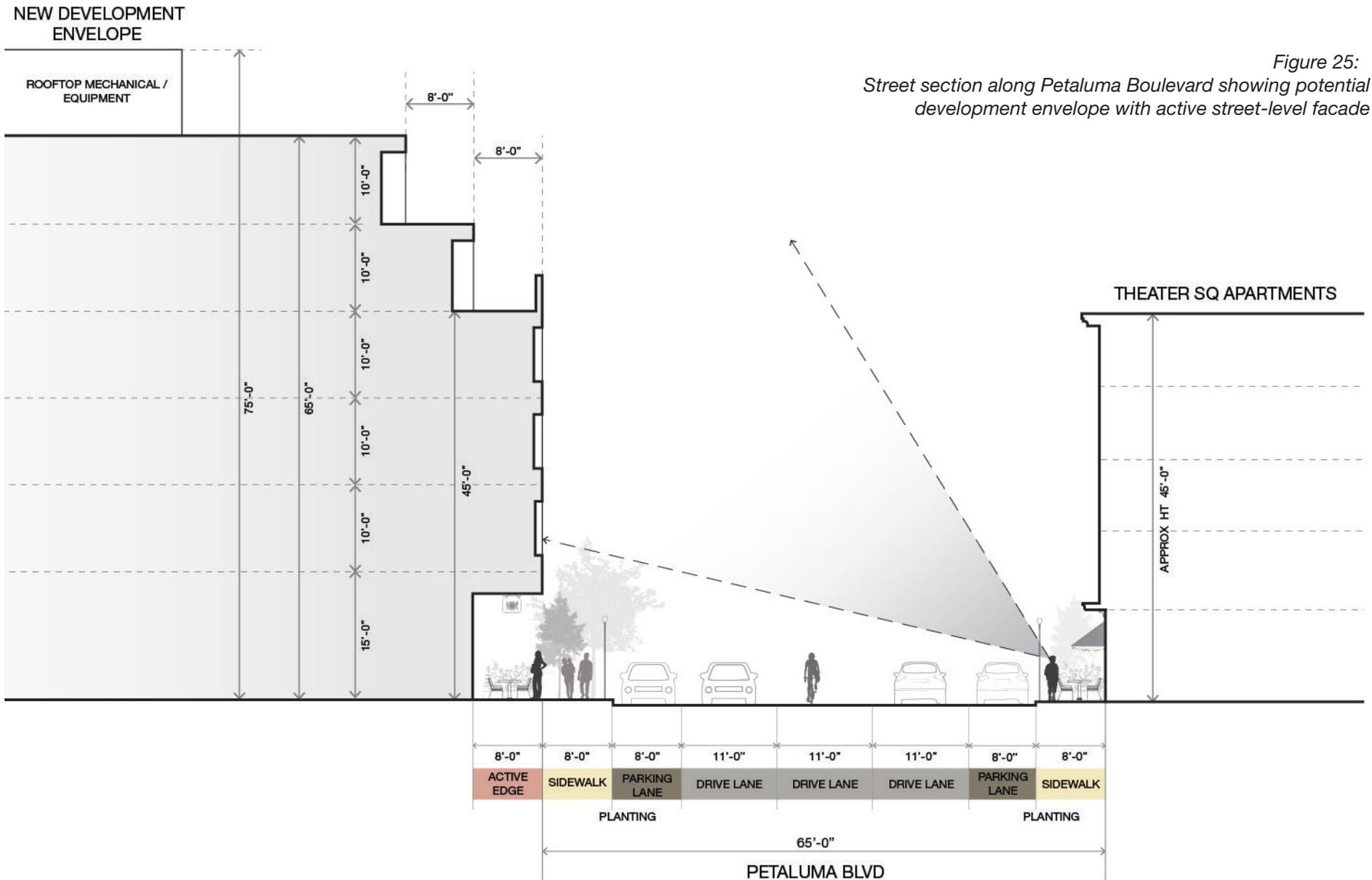


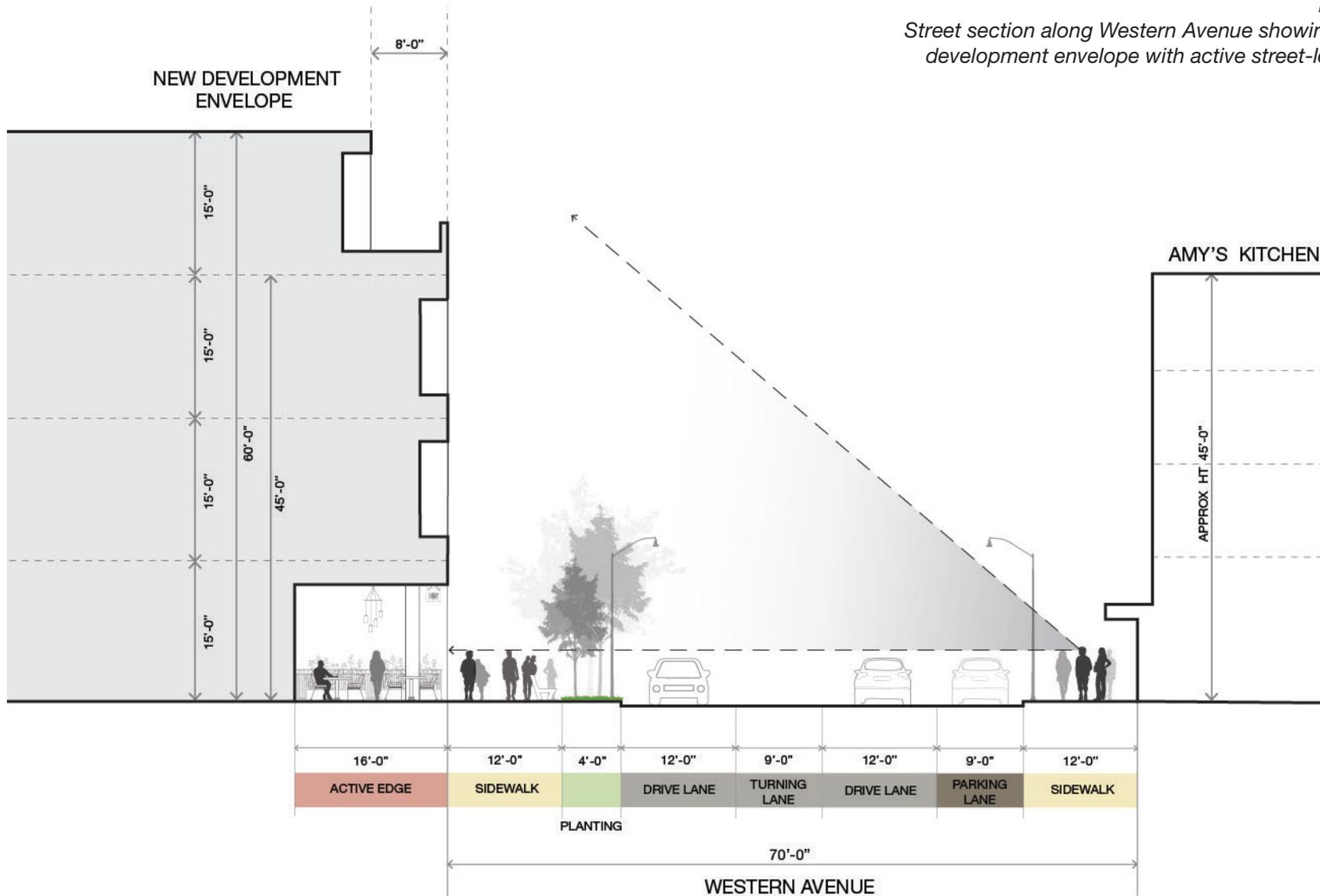
Figure 25:
Street section along Petaluma Boulevard showing potential development envelope with active street-level facade

Overlay Subarea B

Figure 26:
Subarea B Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones

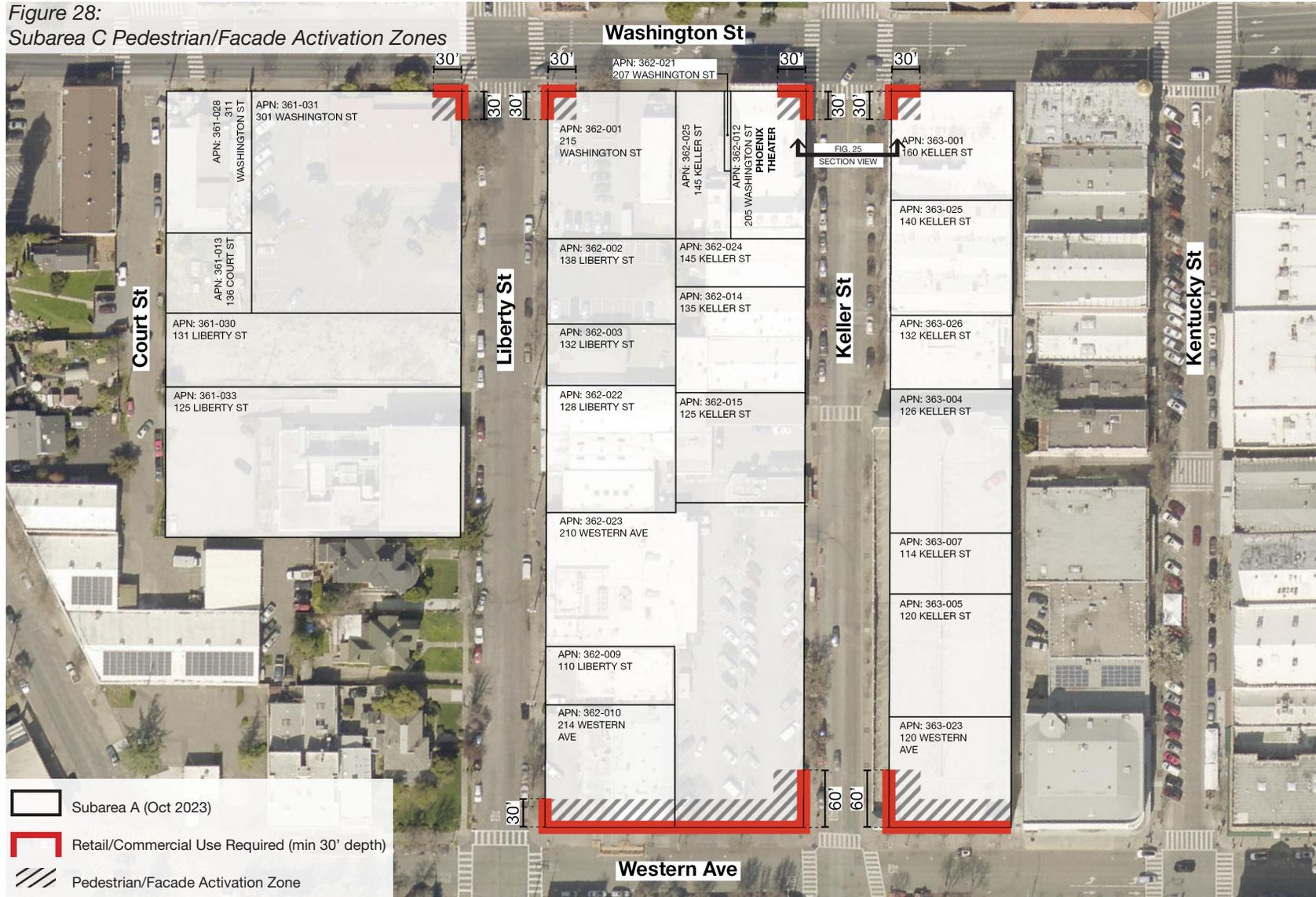


Figure 27:
Street section along Western Avenue showing potential
development envelope with active street-level facade



Overlay Subarea C

Figure 28:
Subarea C Pedestrian/Facade Activation Zones



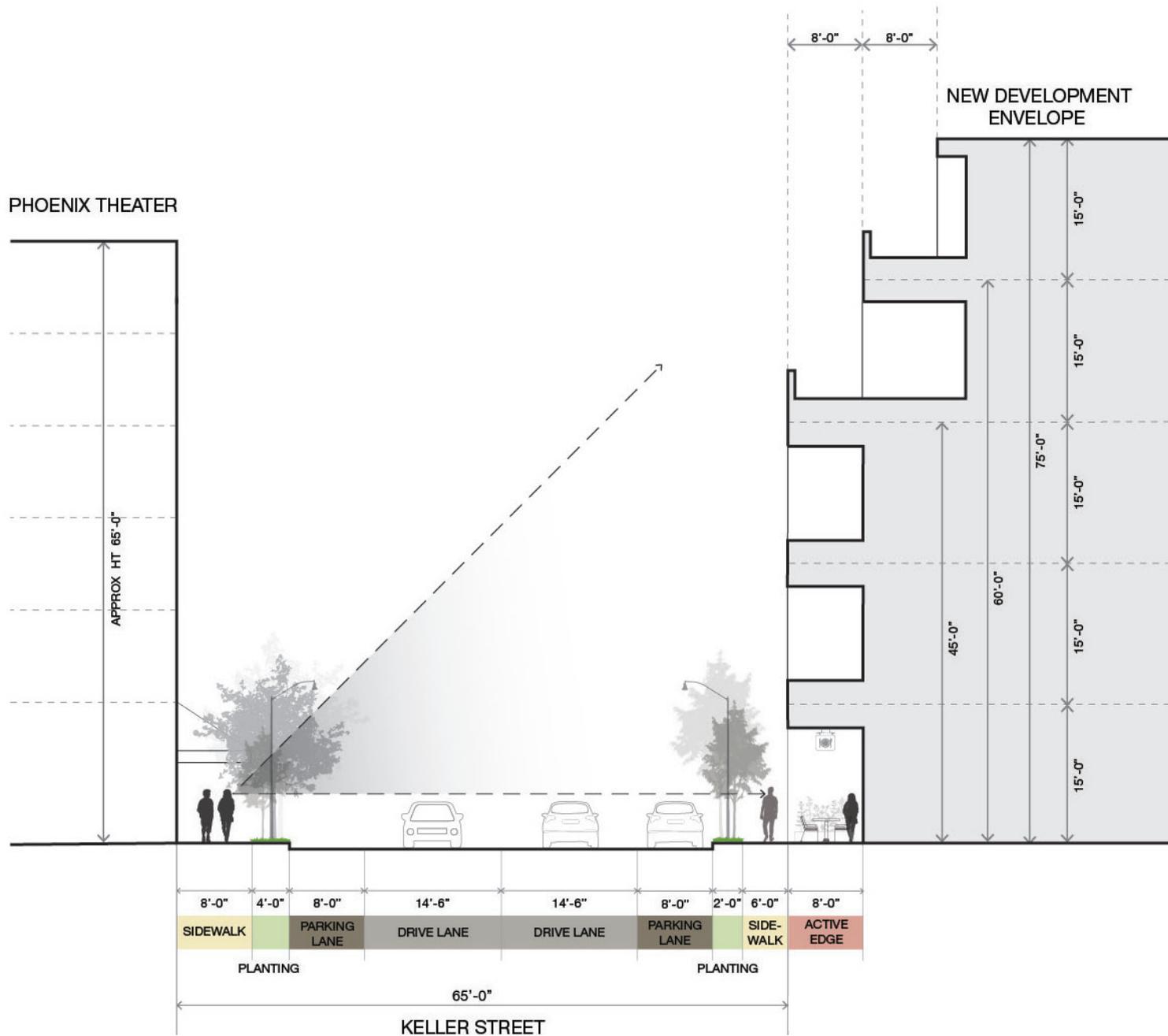


Figure 29:
Street section along
Keller Street showing
potential development
envelope with active
street-level facade

