Wheaton Redevelopment Concepts

Scenarios for the Wheaton CBD

Montgomery County
National Main Street Center
Department of Park and Planning
Allison Platt and Associates

Downtown Wheaton

Need and Purpose

- No single vision for Wheaton's future existed within the community. Many individuals had strong ideas, but there was no consensus.

- To create a vision that reflects the community's desire for Wheaton as an attractive and economically vibrant place.

Process

- Initiative by Montgomery County
- Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee
- Community focus groups by National Main Street Center
- Surveys by Montgomery County with merchants, property owners, and real estate professionals
- Joint Design Team:

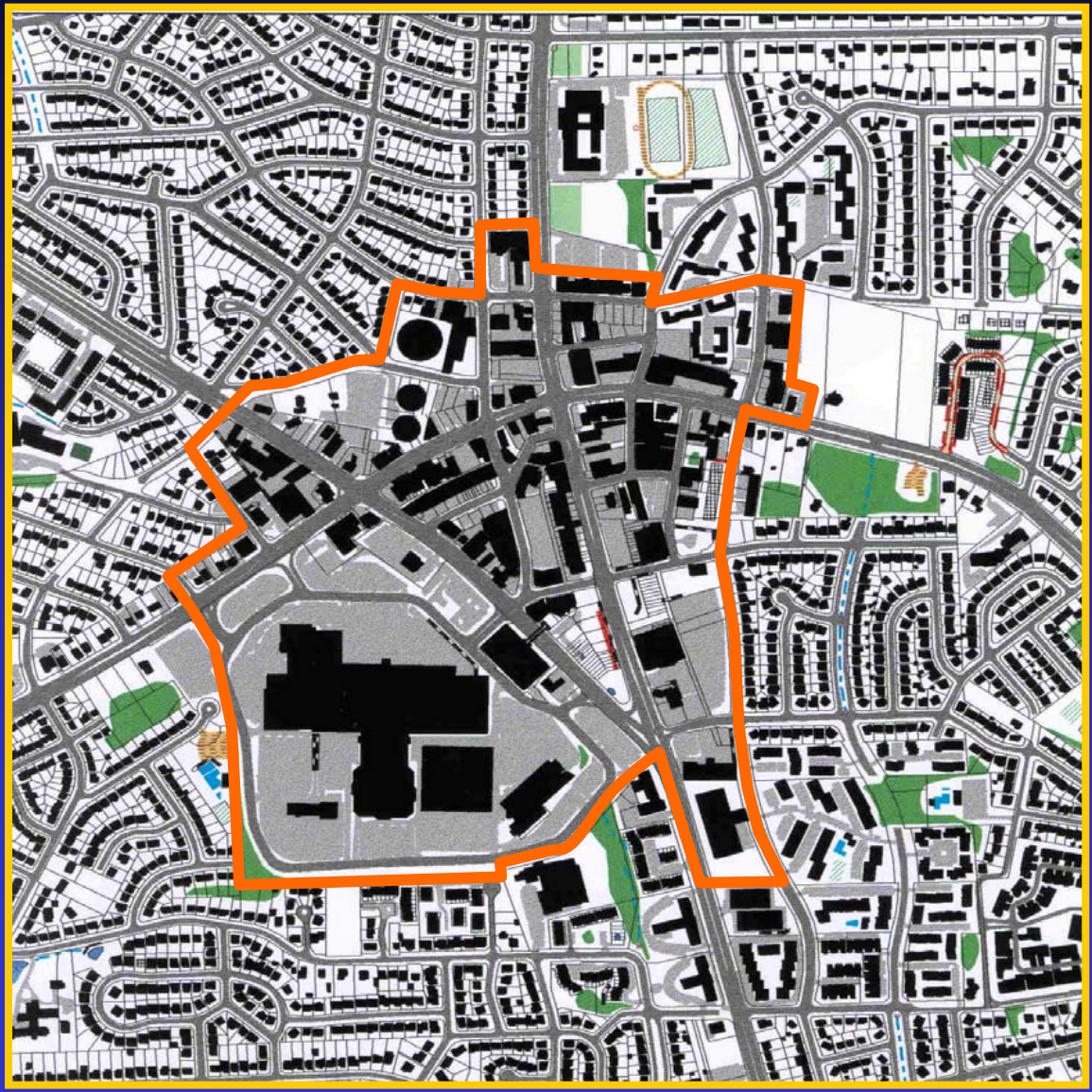
  National Main Street Center

  Department of Park and Planning

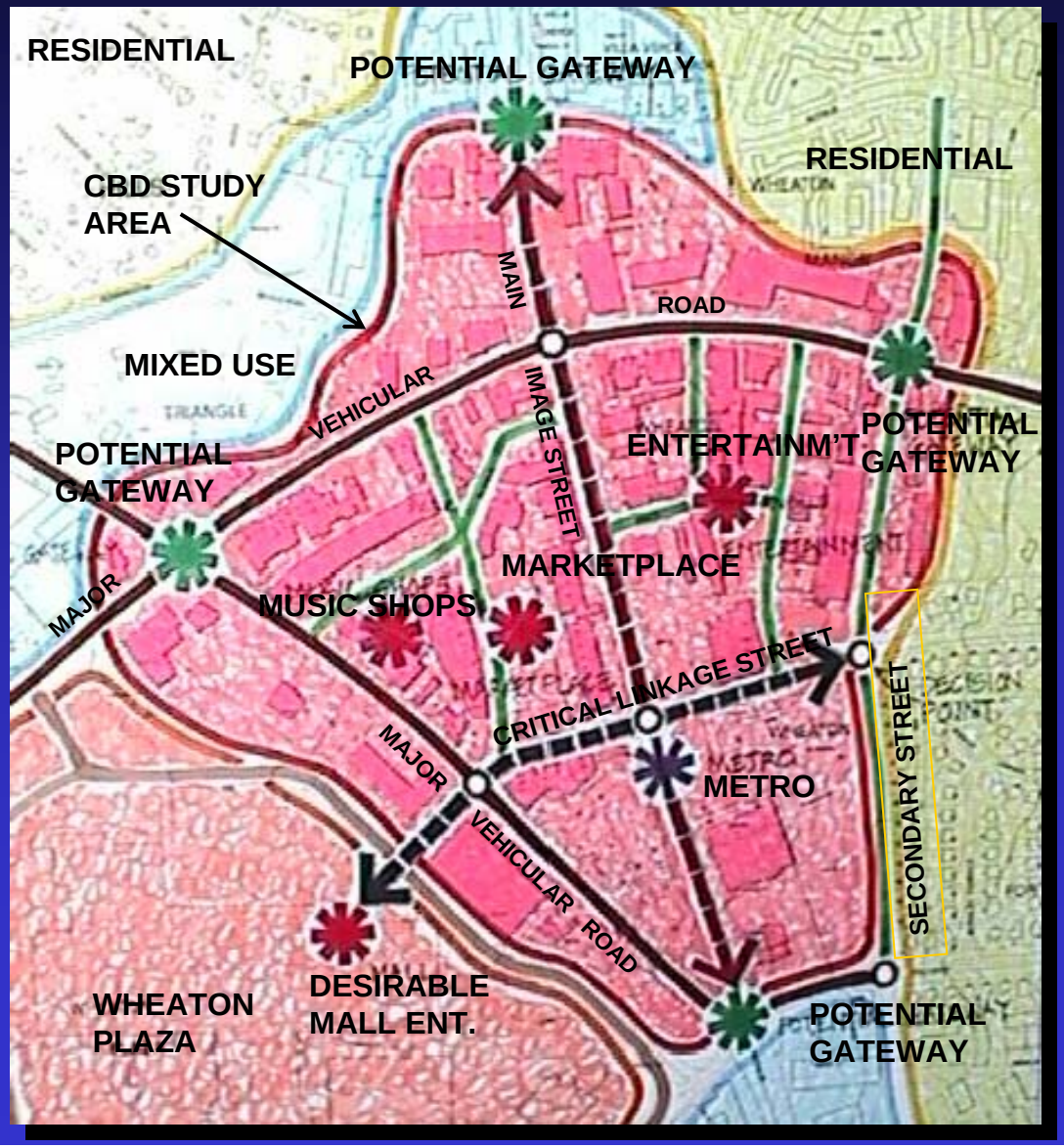
  Montgomery County

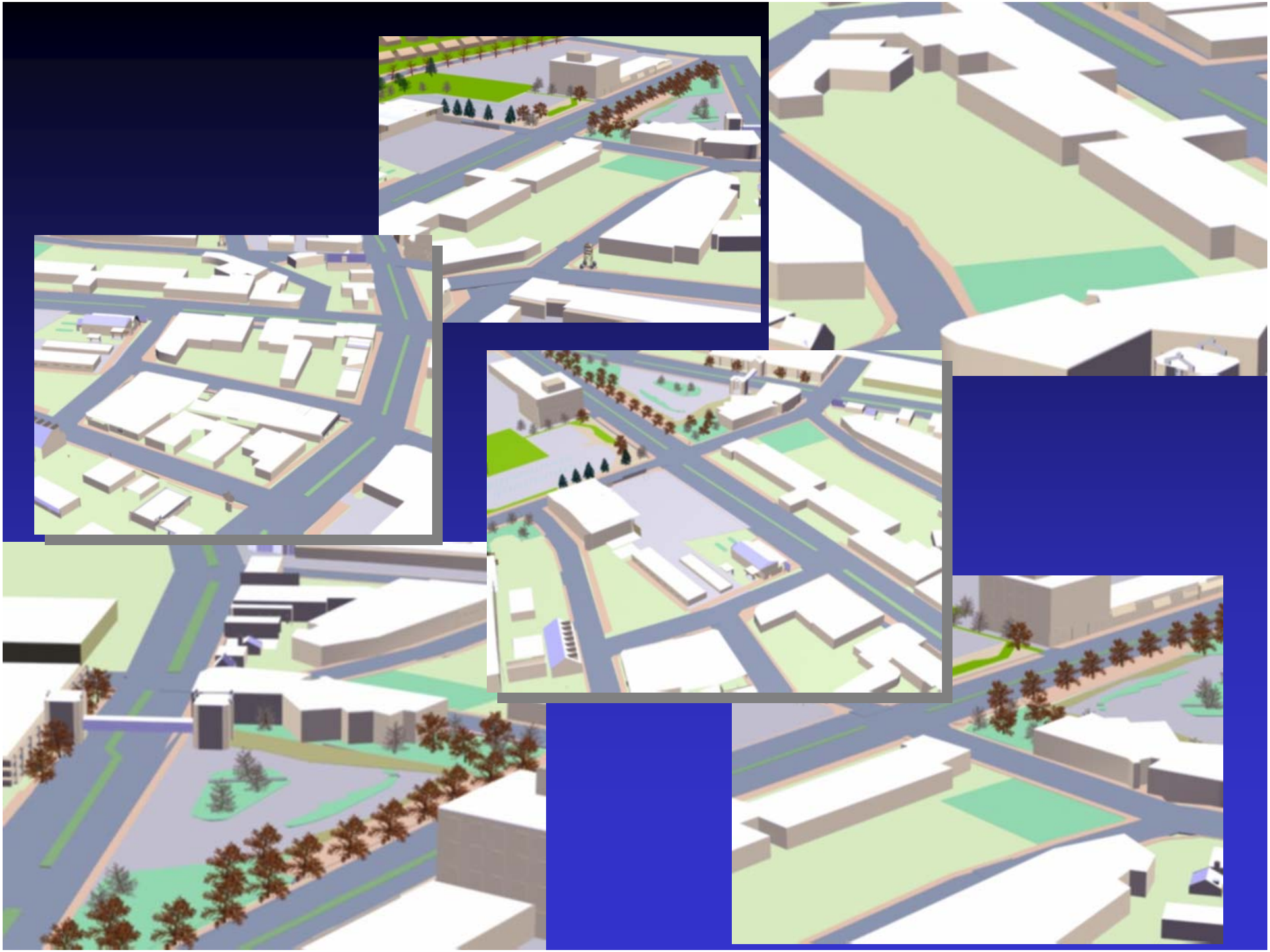
  Allison Platt & Associates
- Design Charrette
- Final product

Charrette Study Area



Urban Design Analysis





Results of Focus Groups

- Preserve existing businesses
- Strengthen ethnic restaurant niche
- Create a town center on Lot 13
- Provide wide sidewalks with outdoor cafes
- Make it Safe, Secure, Clean and Attractive
- Must keep the diversity
- Preserve small town feeling

Results of Focus Groups (2)

- Mix of parking in front & zero lot line
- More office is OK
  - 2-4 high rise buildings, 8-12 stories
  - 5-10 mid-rise buildings, 3-5 stories
  - Retail on the first floor
- Housing should be market rate
  - high-rise or mid-rise buildings
  - 200-1000 new units in CBD
  - transition between existing single-family and new high-rise development
- Make Westfield more upscale
- Want a hotel
- Underground Veirs Mill Road
- Shuttle between marketplace and the mall

Results of Retail Surveys

- Not many strong opinions, except want it to improve -- cleaner & safer
- Fear displacement & rising rents
- Want to remain in Wheaton
- Need more parking
- Want owners to reinvest/make improvements in their properties
- Want more offices & entertainment that draws younger people as customers
- Accessibility is big strength

Results of Real Estate Professionals Surveys

- Like the demographics, transportation & stable neighborhoods
- Issues with the image, community opposition, assemblage
- See opportunity for new residential
- Not sure there is office market
- High density ok, high-rise uncertain (economics, soil conditions)
- Interest in video production space/flex space & music venues
- Town center would add value
- No demand for hotel

Development Scenarios

Scenario I: Wheaton as a “Fixer Upper”

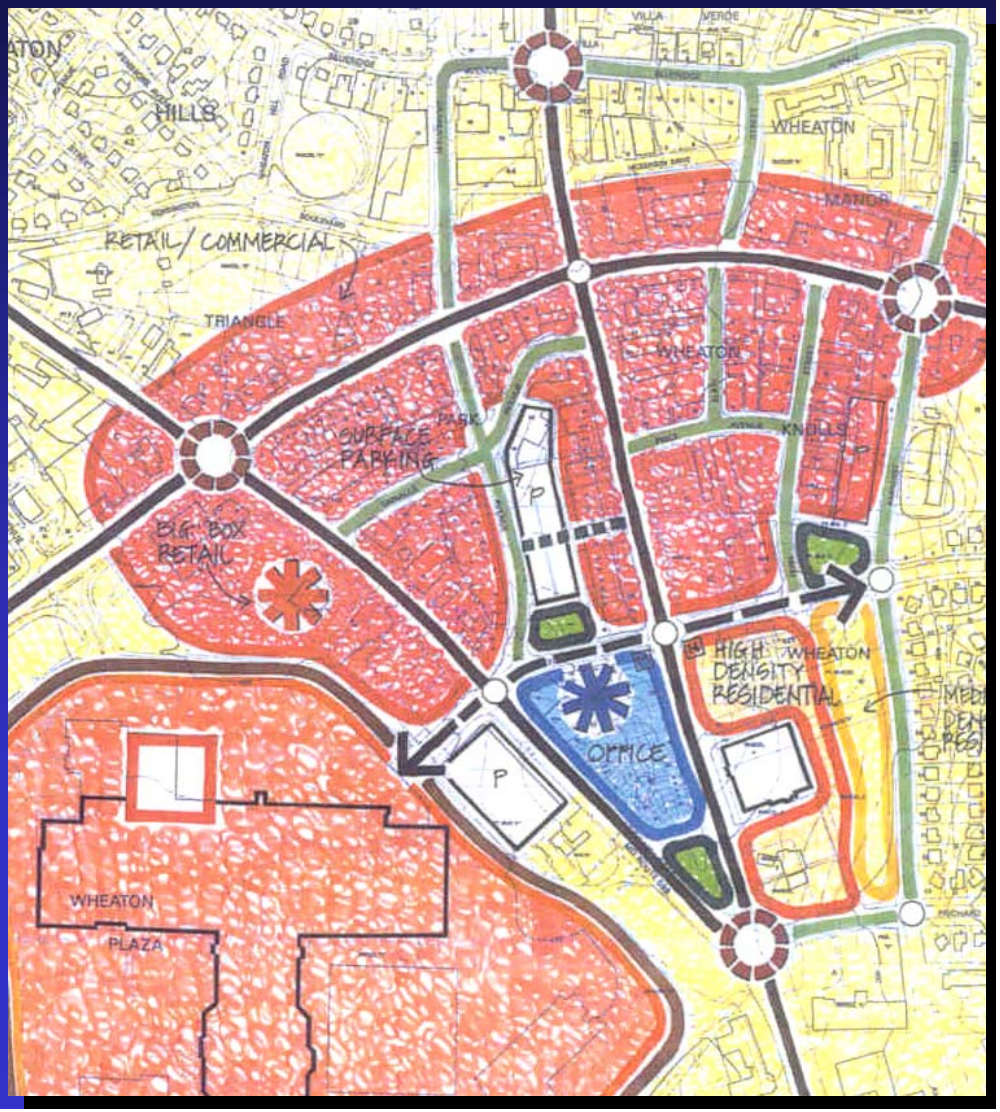
Scenario II: Wheaton as an Entertainment District

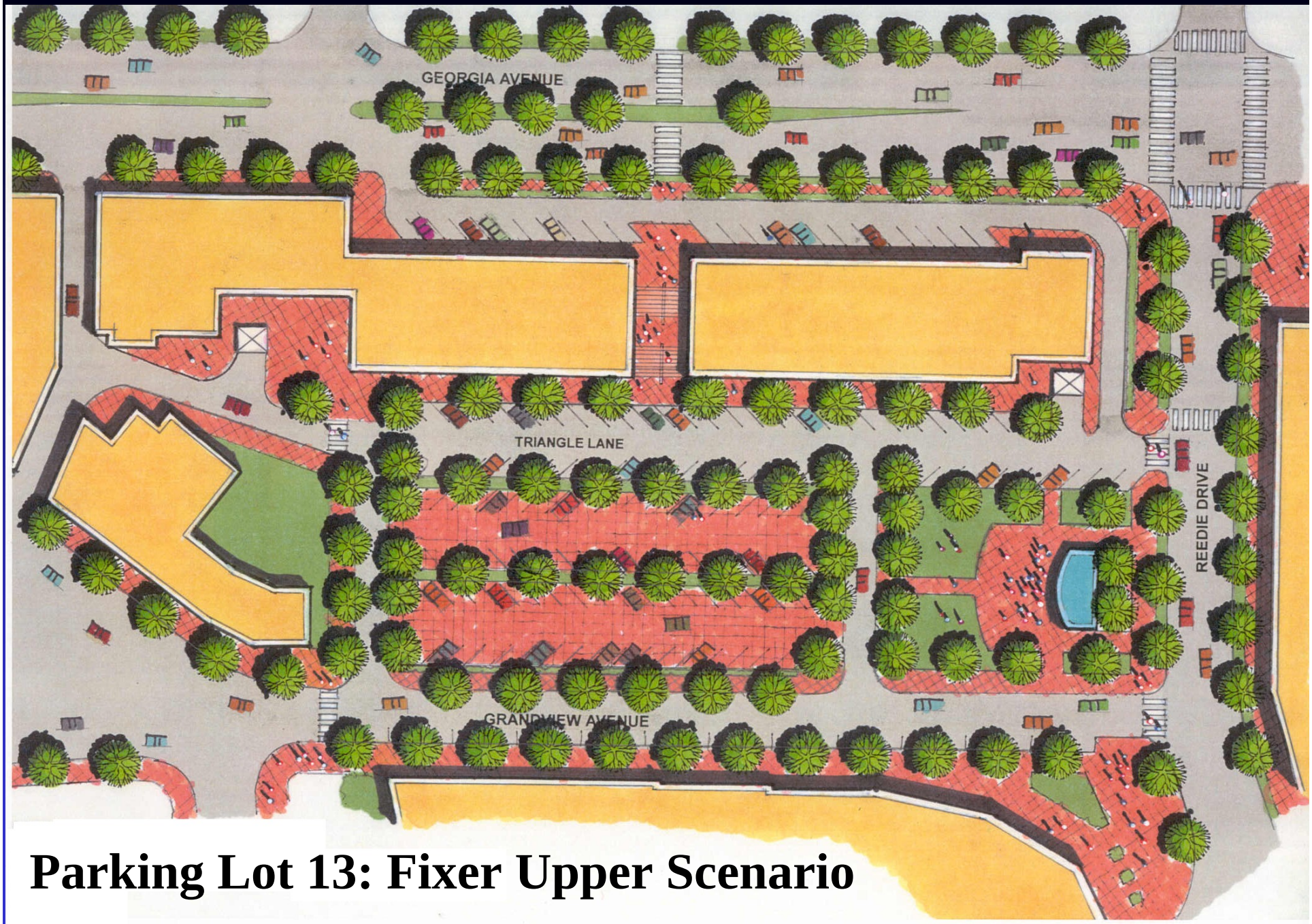
Scenario III: Wheaton as a Residential Village

Scenario IV: Wheaton as an Office Town Center

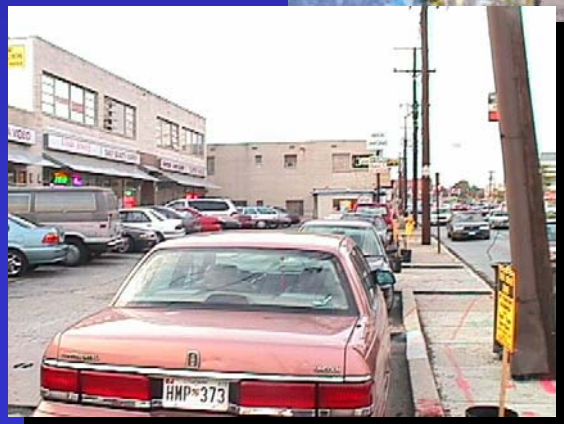
Scenario I:
Wheaton as a "Fixer Upper"

1. Small scale improvements
2. Incremental development
3. Emphasis on existing businesses
4. Retention of eclectic image
5. Infill opportunities
6. Parking north of Lot 13
7. Add surface parking





Parking Lot 13: Fixer Upper Scenario

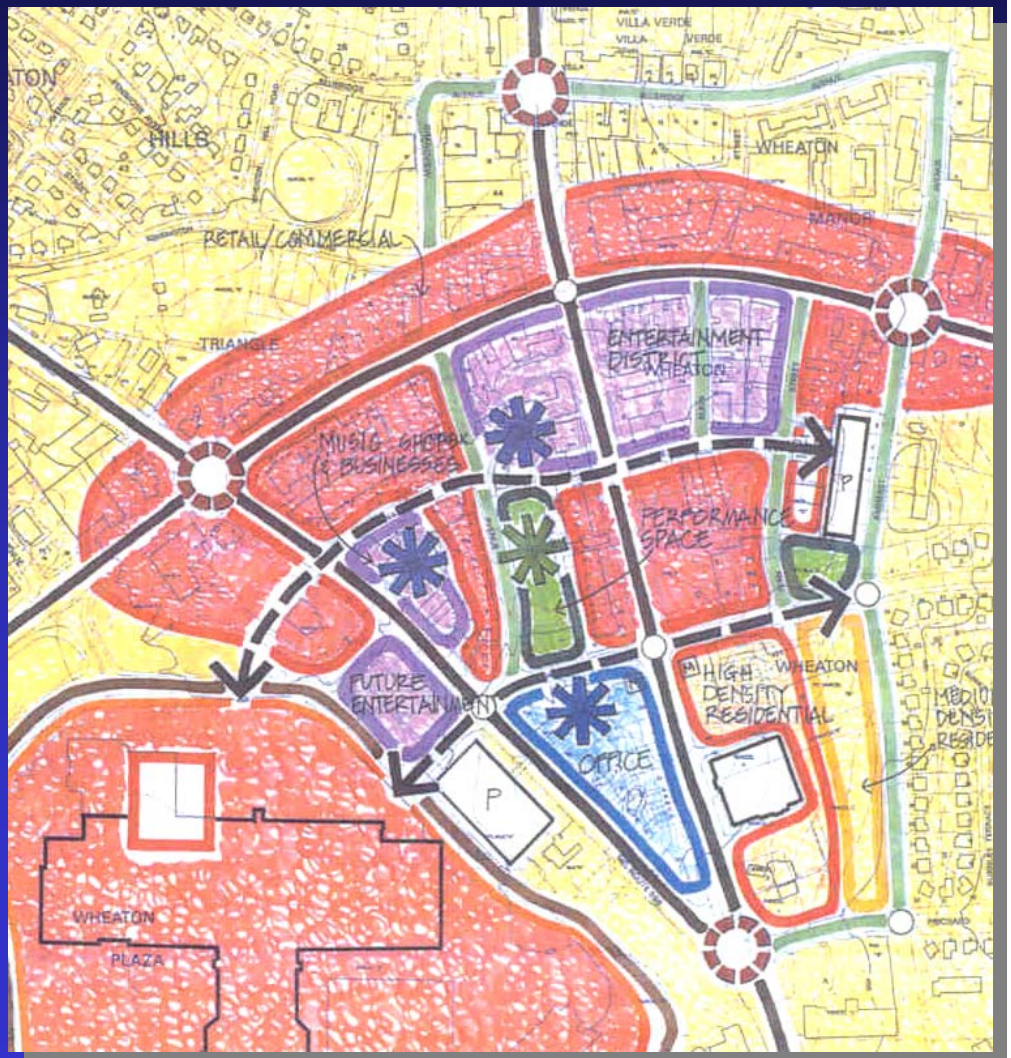


Wheaton as a "Fixer upper"

(West side of Georgia Avenue looking north)

Scenario II:
Wheaton as an Entertainment District

1. Center for music, entertainment, equipment, and production
2. Outdoor performance space
3. Major music performances
4. Non-profit/arts incubator space (live/work space)
5. Strengthen restaurant uses
6. Night club cluster
7. Housing east of Georgia Ave
8. Studio/production space



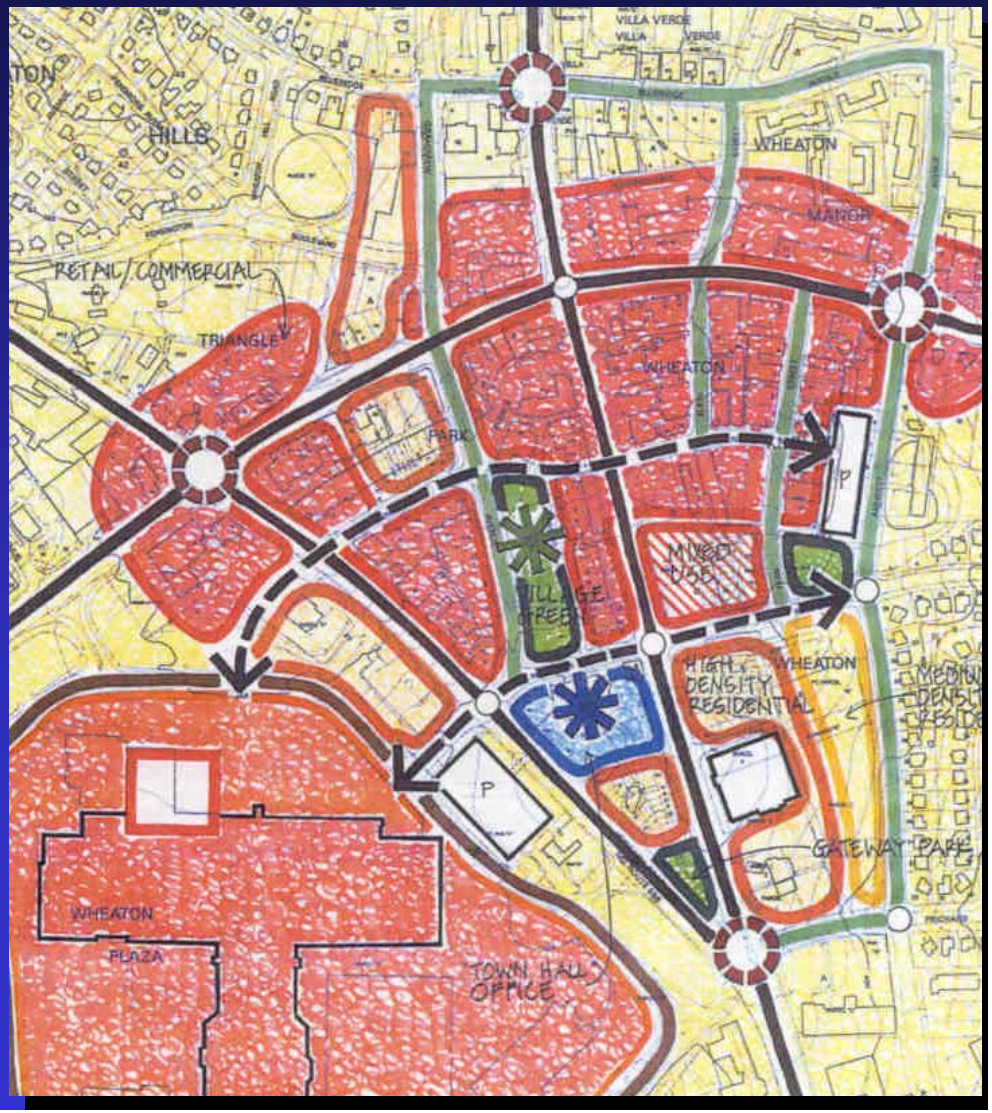
Parking Lot 13: Entertainment District Scenario

Wheaton as Entertainment District

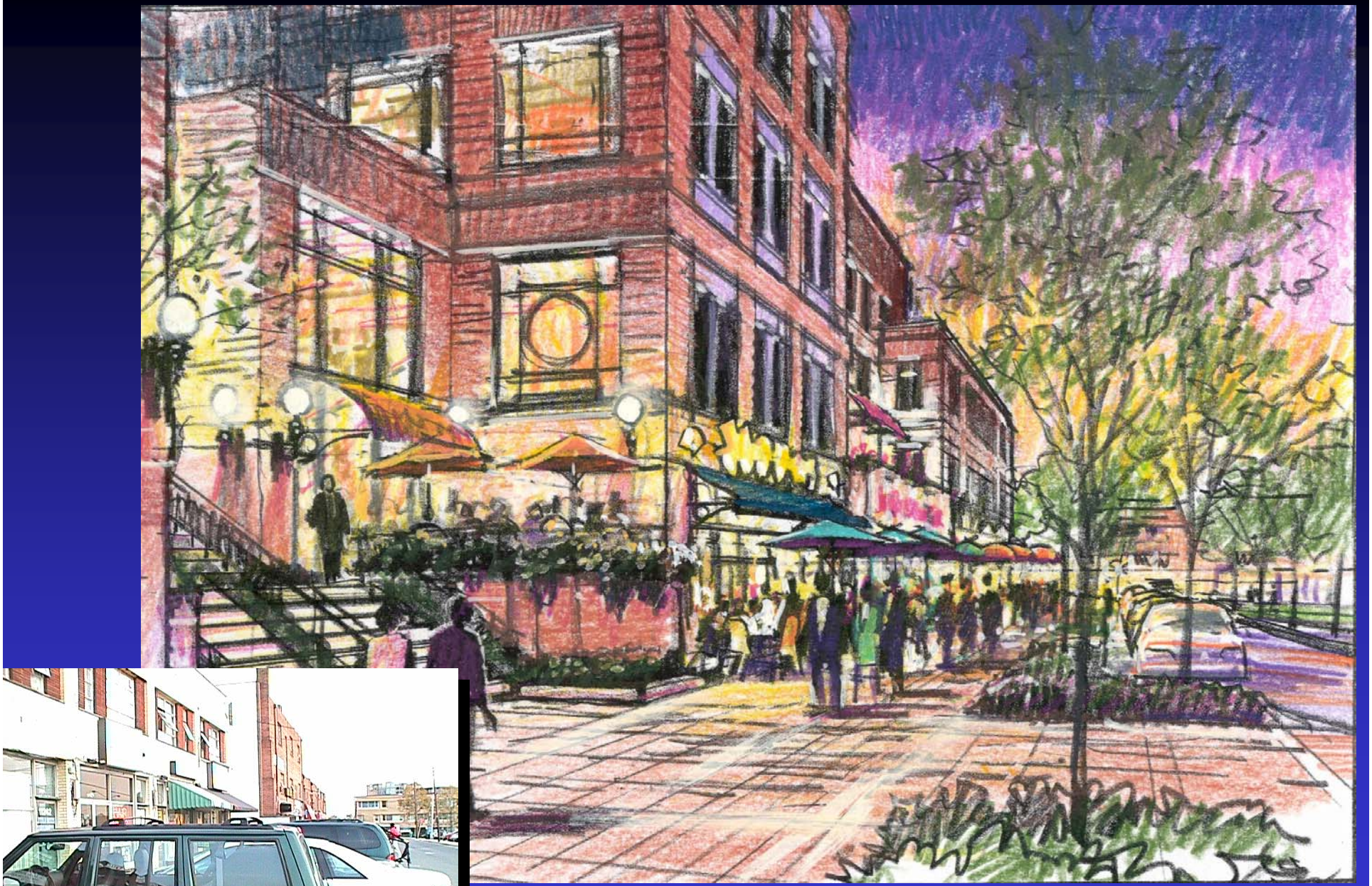
(Parking Lot 13 from Veirs Mill at Reedie Drive)

Scenario III:
Wheaton as a Residential Village

1. Mixed Residential (town houses,apartments, mid-density)
2. Services for residents (retail, tech center, grocery stores)
3. A major civic building
4. “Village Green”
5. Strengthen “restaurant row”



Parking Lot 13: Residential Village Scenario

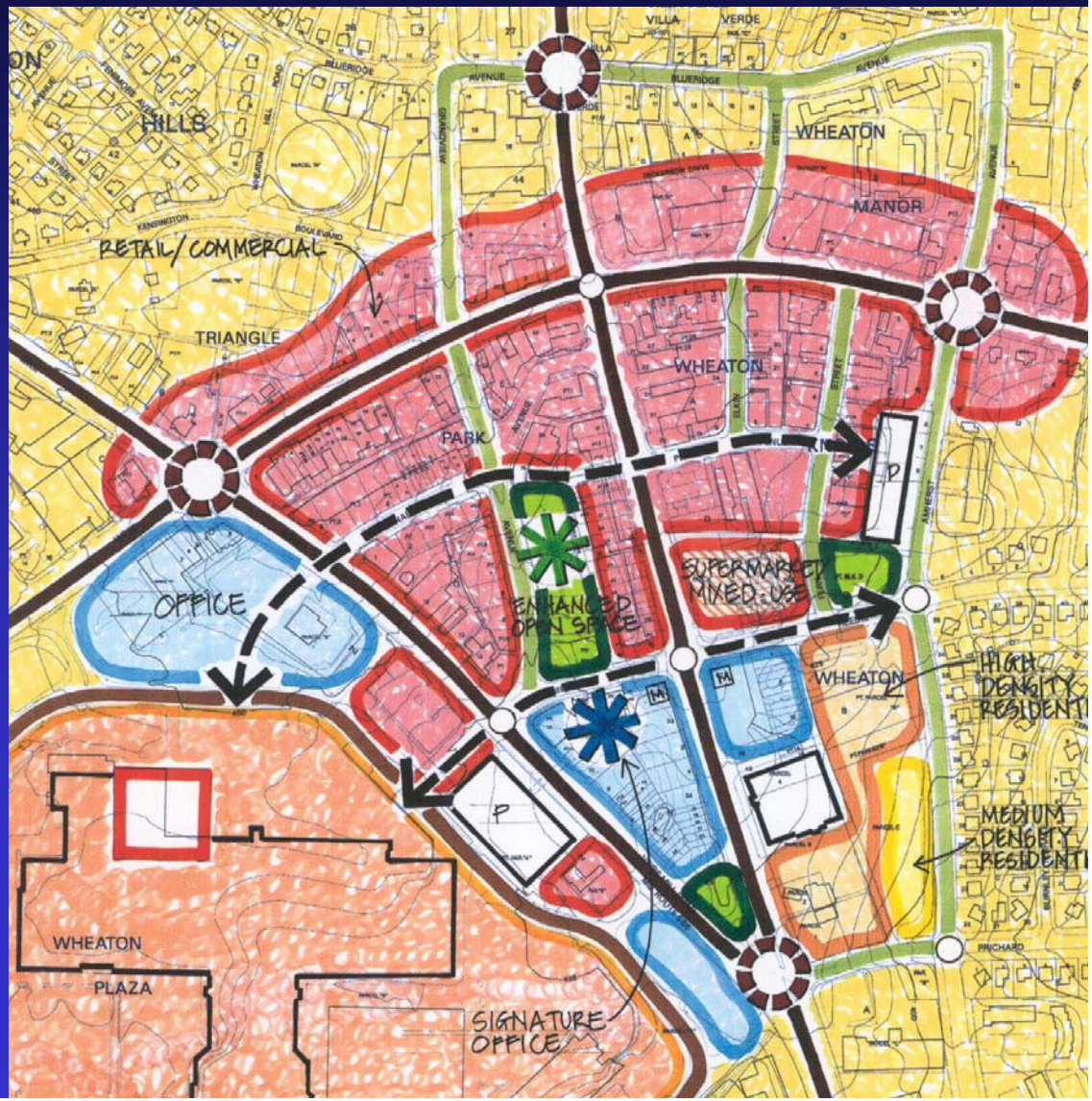


Wheaton as a Residential Village

(Triangle Lane looking south)

Scenario IV:
Wheaton as an Office Town Center

1. Predominantly office uses around Metro
2. Some housing near Metro
3. Ground floor retail
4. Green spaces to "buffer" high rises
5. Retail in Metro garage on Reedie Drive
6. "Big Box" in Wheaton Plaza (on Veirs Mill)

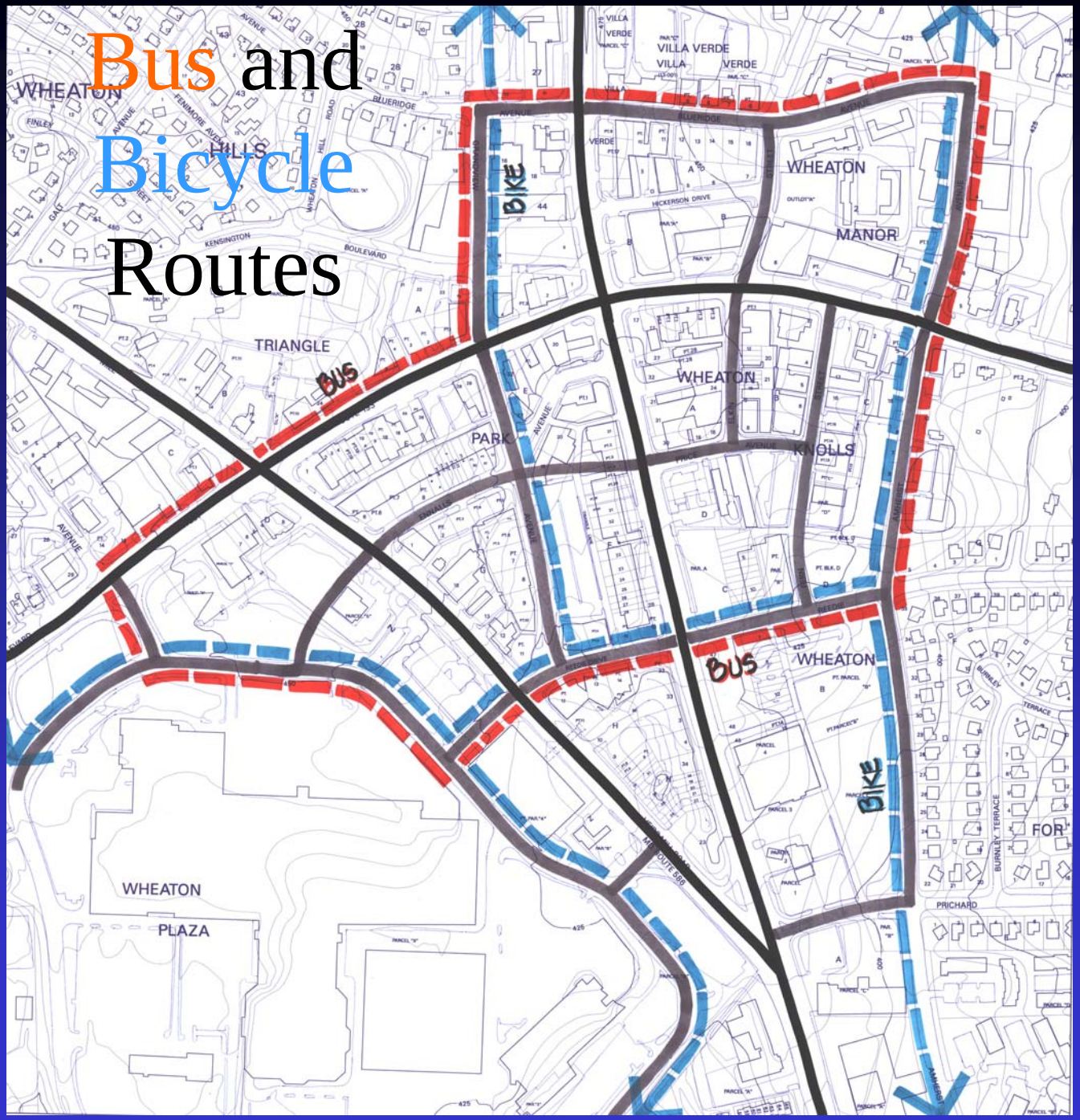


Parking Lot 13: Office Town Center Scenario

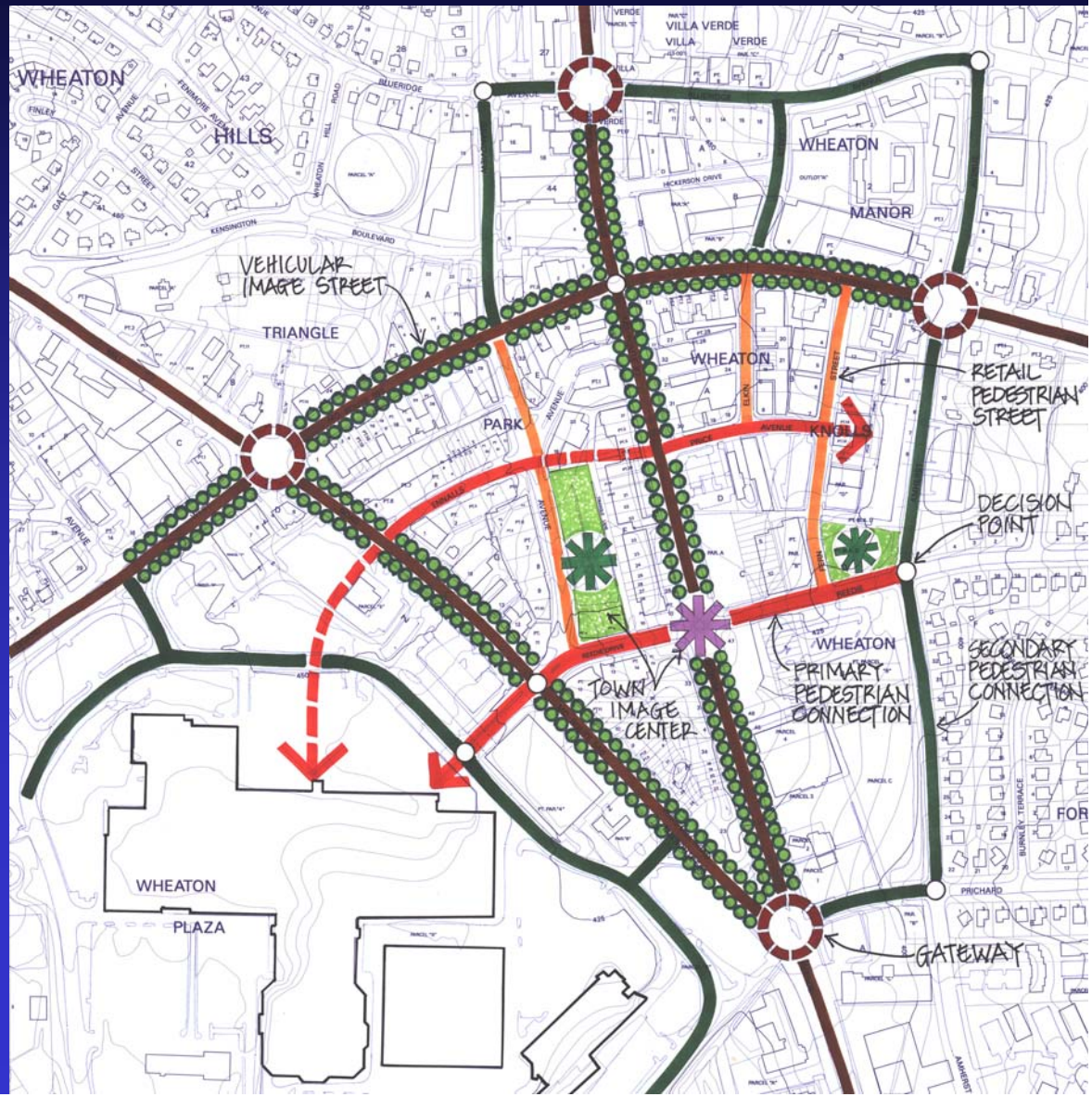
Wheaton as Office Town Center

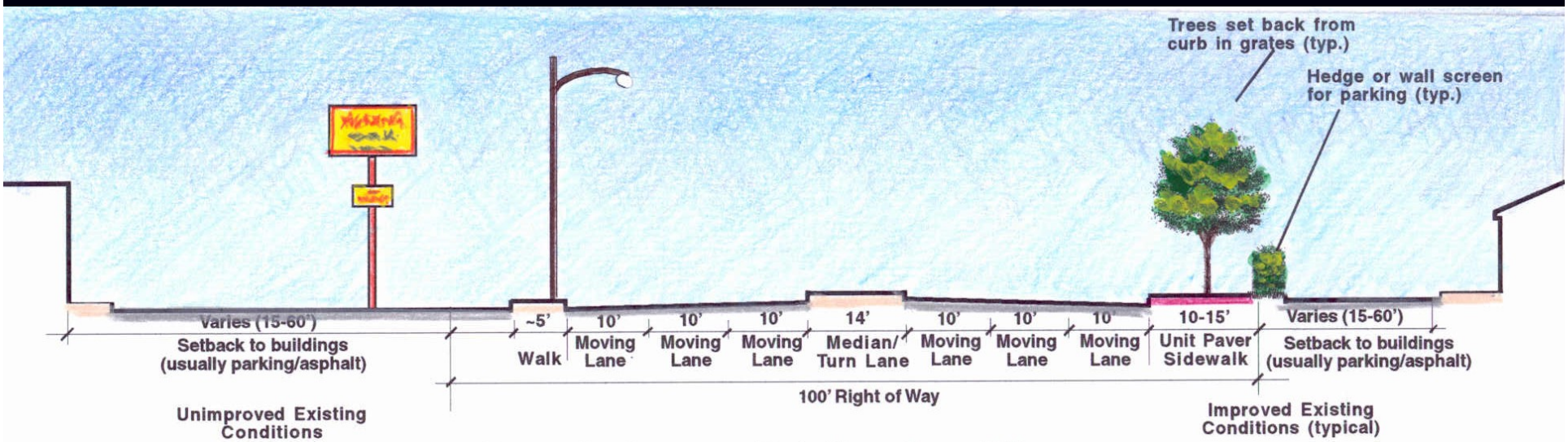
(Georgia Avenue looking south at Reedie Drive)

Bus and Bicycle Routes

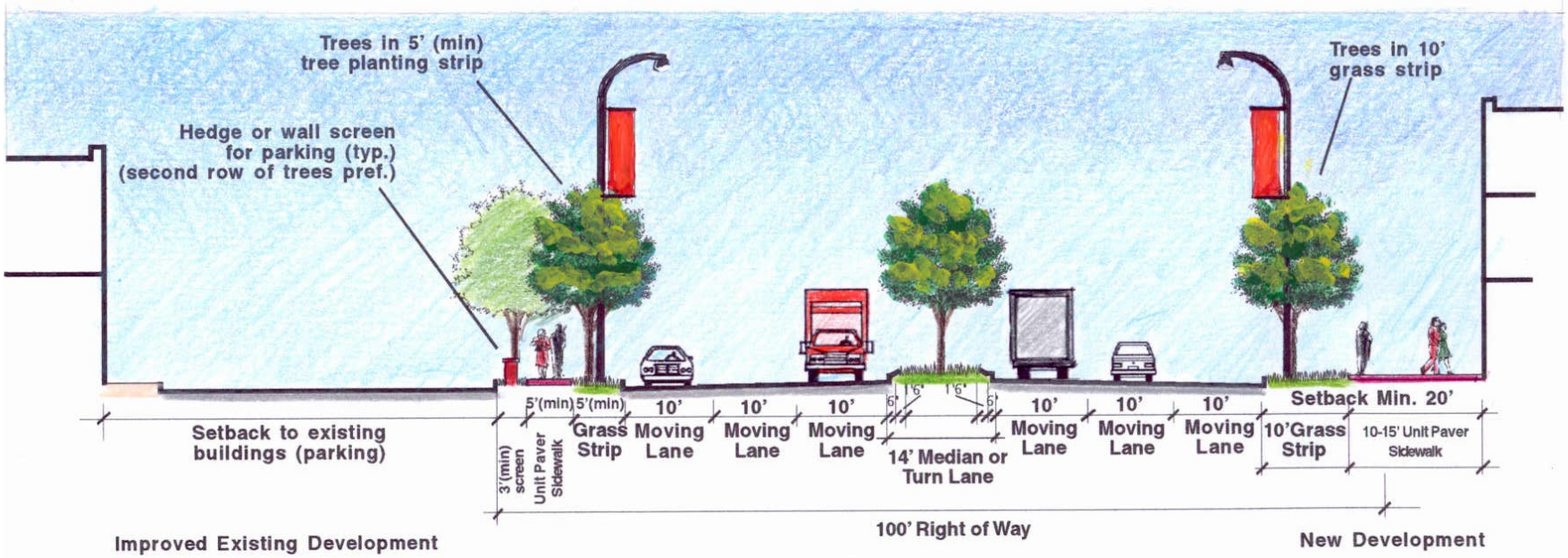


Open Space and Streetscape Hierarchy

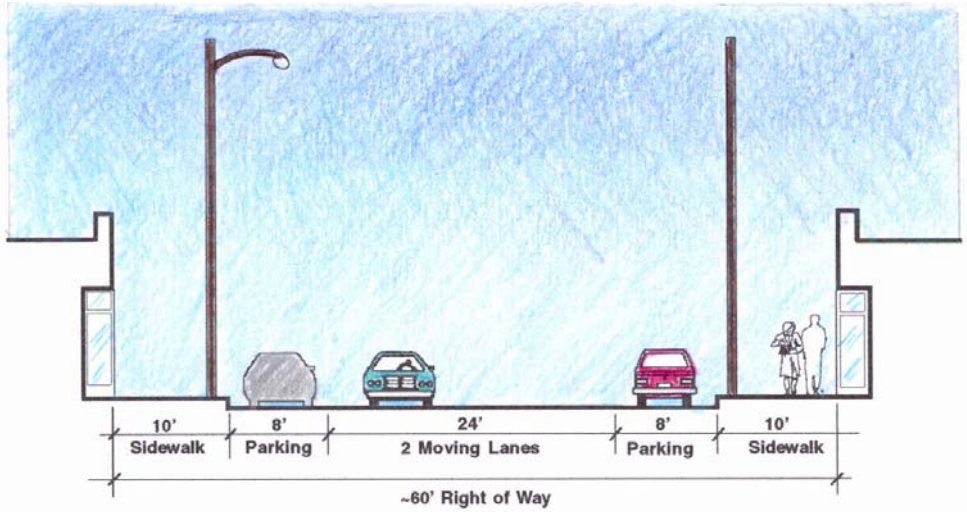




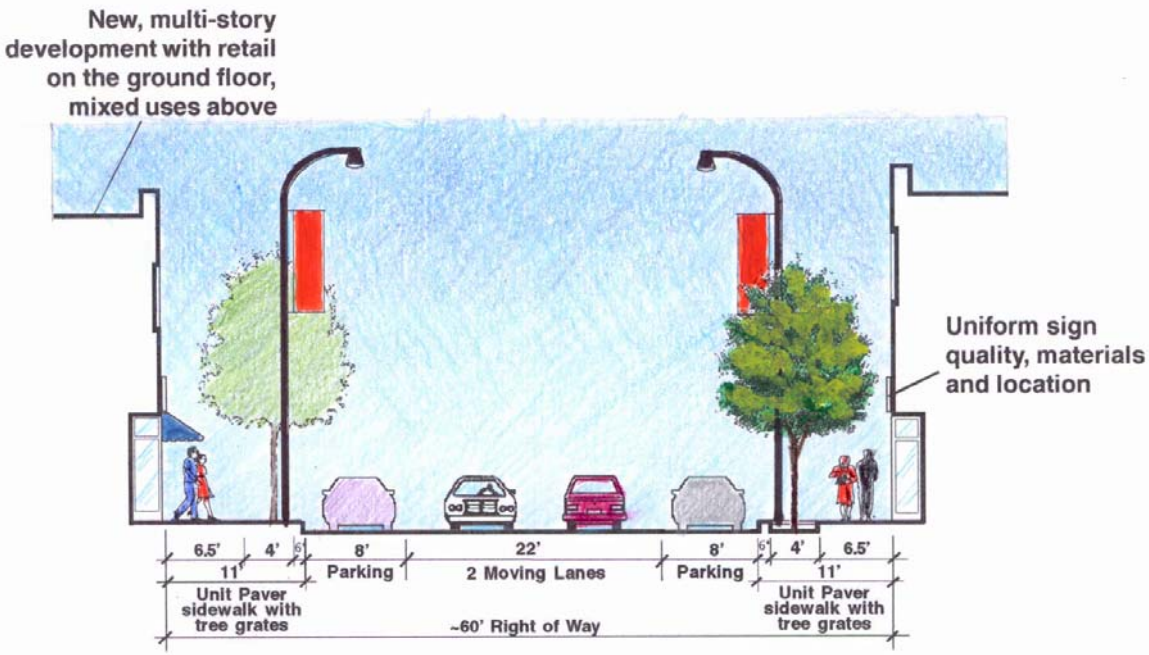
Georgia Avenue Existing Conditions



Georgia Avenue Proposed Improvements

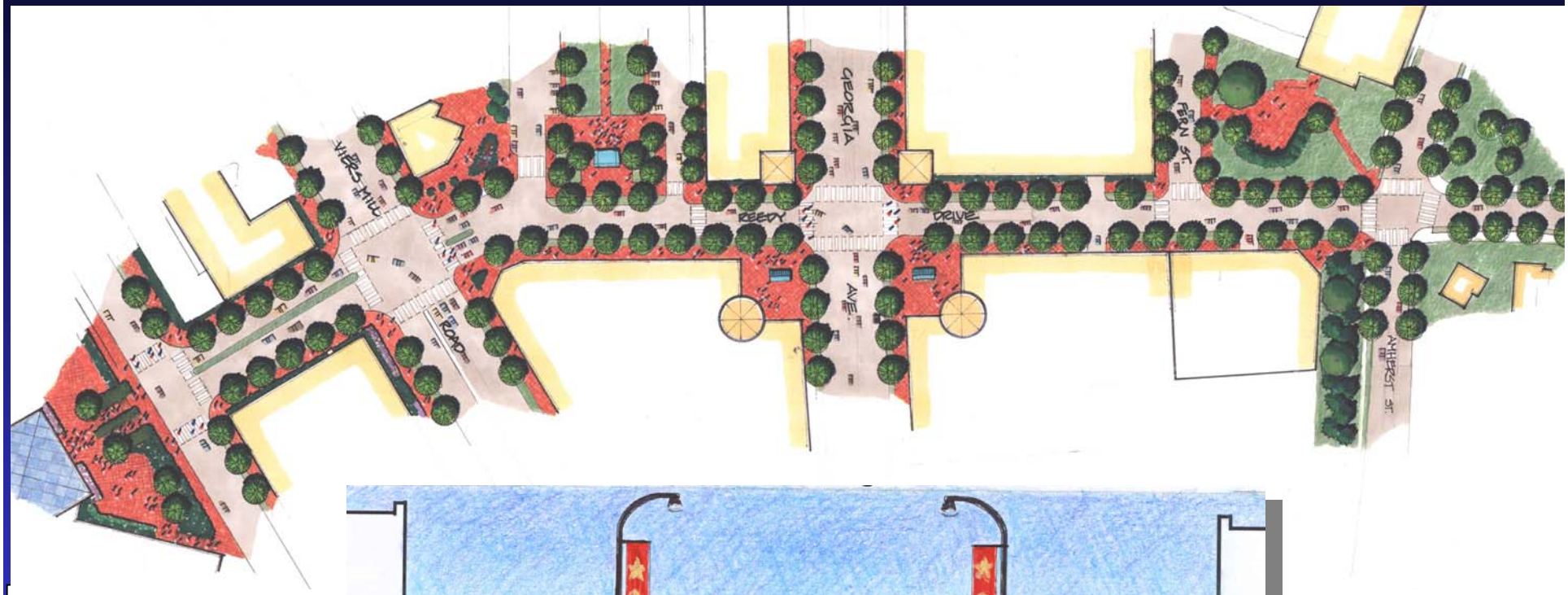


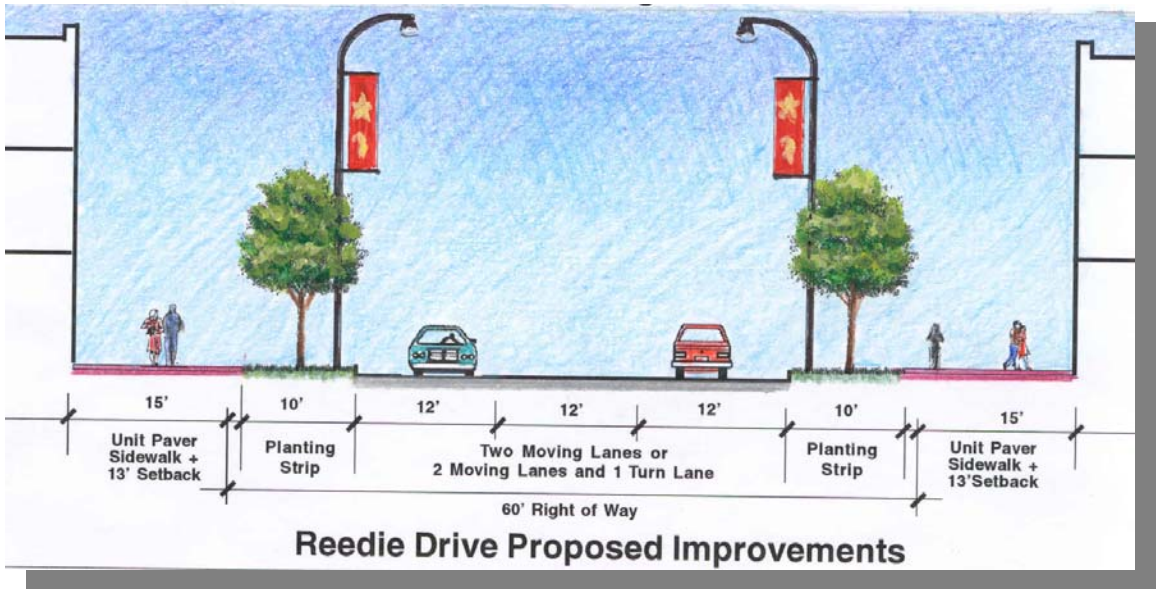
Secondary Pedestrian Streets
Existing Conditions



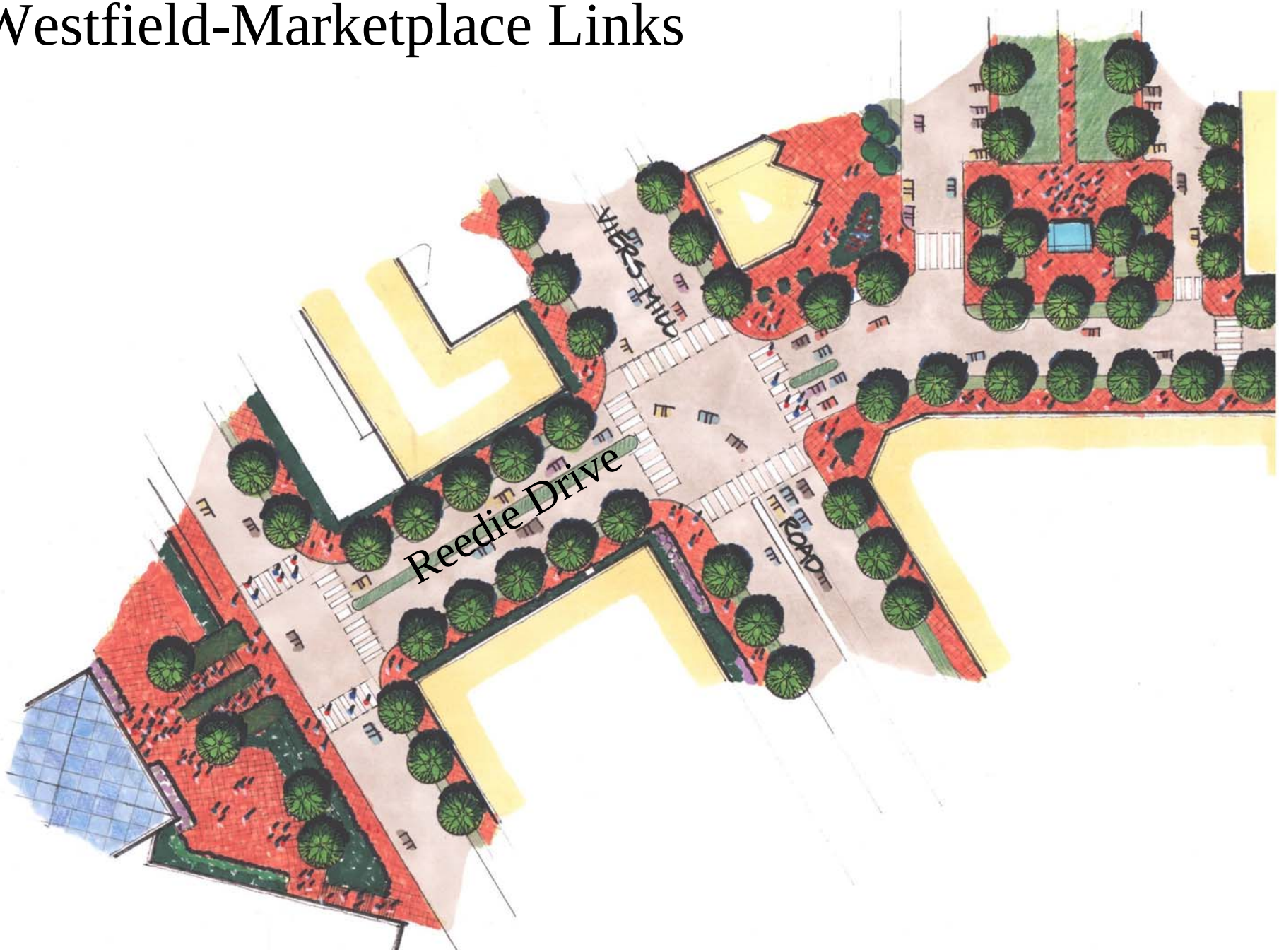
Secondary Pedestrian Streets
Proposed Improvements

Reedie Drive Streetscape





Westfield-Marketplace Links



MALL

Next Steps

- Final report and drawings
- Present findings to participants and the general public
- Develop an implementation strategy
- Develop work plans for each committee to implement

Credits

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AND, the Wheaton Redevelopment Steering Committee and the focus group participants