



Plan Vision **3**

## Plan Principles

The plan vision incorporates Mount Rainier’s existing positive attributes and potential opportunities to create a revitalized mixed-use town center. The M-U-TC’s physical character, land uses, transportation connections, and cultural assets inform the plan vision to transform the area into a walkable, vibrant, and attractive locale for residents and visitors. An analysis of the area considered the streetscapes, the visual composition of buildings, and the unique elements that define Mount Rainier. Three distinct districts were identified within the M-U-TC: 34th Street, Rhode Island Avenue, and the Civic Core/City Center. Each district has a distinct role within the plan vision.

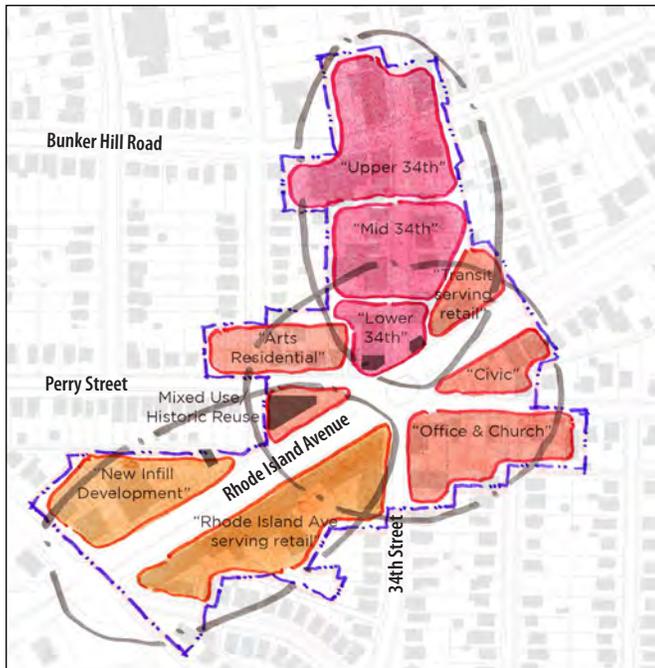


FIGURE 9: DIAGRAM OF THE INITIAL DISTRICTS CONCEPT.

### 34th Street: The “Neighborhood Main Street”

This district consists of parcels with primary frontage on 34th Street north of the Rhode Island Avenue/34th Street traffic circle. The area, which includes local retail businesses and cultural venues, is defined by one- to three-story structures placed close to the street. This creates an intimate streetscape. This local main street will be the primary focus area for façade improvements and

the preferred location for local neighborhood-serving retail tenants. The intersection of 34th Street and Bunker Hill Road is the cultural center for community activity. Existing retail, new businesses, and cultural festivities will enhance the street. The intersection of 34th Street and Bunker Hill Road will be made a more inviting space for pedestrian activity with the introduction of special paving in the street right-of-way. A medium-scale single row of trees will align each side of the street and provide shade to pedestrians.

### Rhode Island Avenue: The “Boulevard/Gateway”

This district, which consists of parcels with frontage on Rhode Island Avenue, is the main transportation corridor through the M-U-TC area from points east and west. The avenue will be a wide tree lined boulevard aligned with primarily four- to five-story buildings. It will be the preferred location for new development and destination retail with a regional attraction. The pedestrian experience will be enhanced by wide sidewalks with special paving patterns, outdoor café seating, and a double row of large street trees extending the full length of the avenue within the M-U-TC area on the north side. Rhode Island Avenue will also feature new dedicated bicycle lanes that will serve as another mode of transportation. A landmark building at the northeast corner of Eastern and Rhode Island Avenues on the city-owned redevelopment parcel, coupled with the building across Rhode Island Avenue, will create a formal gateway into Mount Rainier from the west.

### The Civic Core: The “City Center”

This district is composed of parcels with primary frontage adjacent to the traffic circle at 34th Street and Rhode Island Avenue. It includes retail and institutional uses, such as City Hall, the public library, and a transportation hub. This area, which is the symbolic center of the M-U-TC, will feature one- to three-story buildings, a transit hub, and new gathering space in front of City Hall. A new landmark sculpture/monument will anchor the center of the traffic circle.

# Urban Design Plan

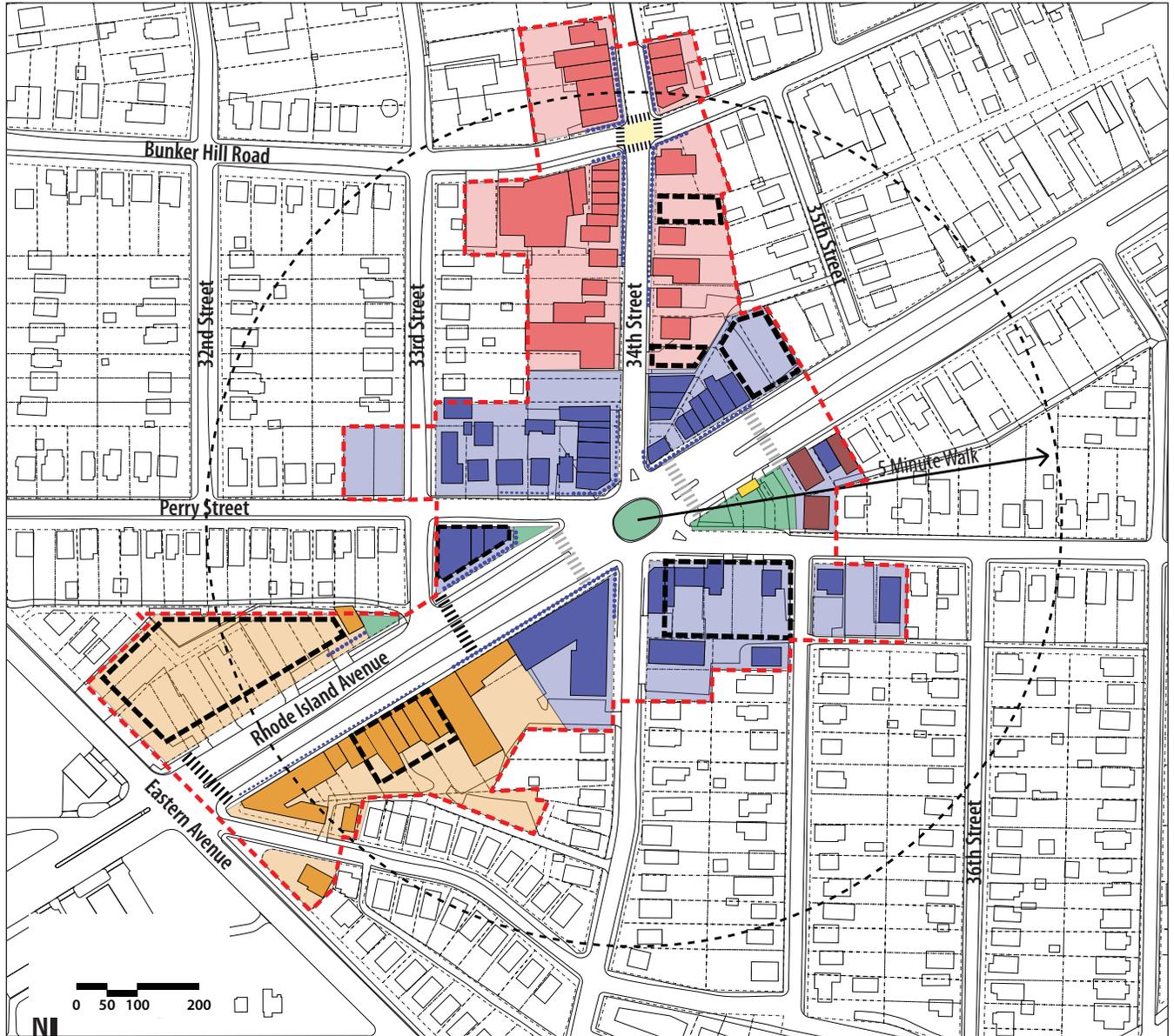


FIGURE 10: THE URBAN DESIGN PLAN.

The urban design plan describes the framework for interrelated plan elements such as the three districts, potential land-use, retail focus, pedestrian improvements, bus hub, significant civic buildings, and infill opportunities. The urban design plan provides detailed boundaries for district areas, retail storefront focus zones, open space, major development opportunities, and infrastructure improvements within the M-U-TC area.

## LEGEND

- District—Rhode Island Avenue
- District—Upper 34th Street
- District—Civic Core/City Center
- Open space
- New infill/major renovation opportunity sites
- Parcel
- Civic buildings
- Retail storefront focus
- Commercial/office optional focus
- Existing crosswalk
- New crosswalk
- Five-minute walk
- Bus transit stop
- M-U-TC Boundary

# Illustrative Plan



FIGURE 11: ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN FOR THE M-U-TC AREA.

The illustrative plan for the M-U-TC area depicts key design recommendations for specific locations, such as 3200–3220 Rhode Island Avenue, Upper 34th Street, and 3300–3310 Rhode Island Avenue. The plan represents future development patterns based on the plan vision framework described in this chapter. The illustrative plan is not an exact depiction of future development, rather, it represents one of many possible future development scenarios.

The core components of this illustrative plan, in terms of new infill, minor renovations, and major renovations, reflect the recommended directions future development and redevelopment should take as the development plan is implemented.

## District Recommendations

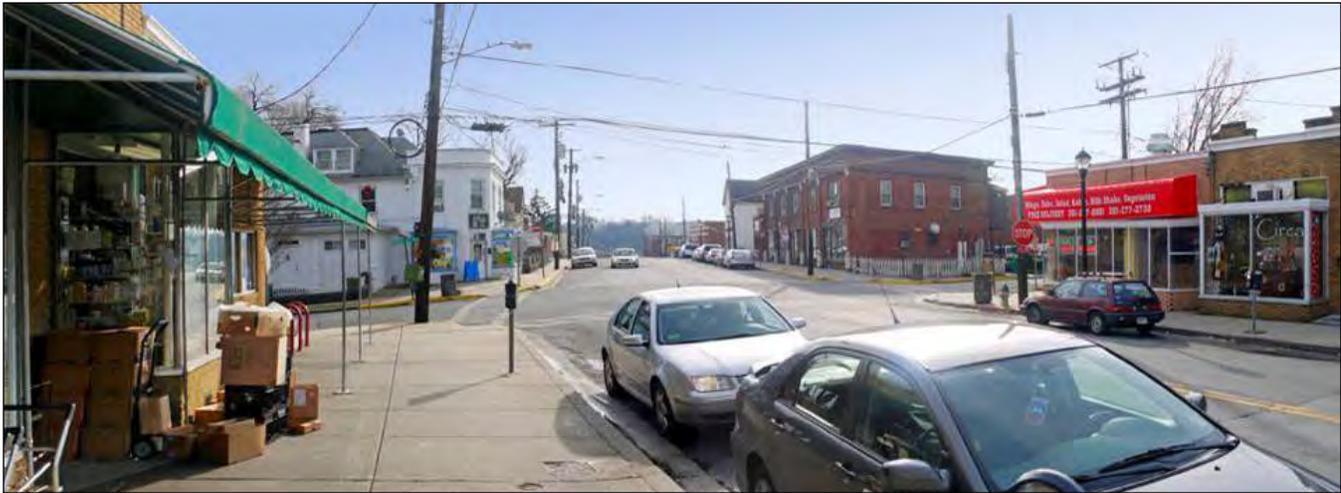


FIGURE 12: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE THREE DISTRICTS.

This section details specific design and plan recommendations for the following three districts:

- Upper 34th Street
- Rhode Island Avenue
- Civic Core/City Center

## Upper 34th Street: The Neighborhood-Serving Main Street



EXISTING CONDITIONS: 34TH STREET, LOOKING SOUTH TOWARD THE LIGHTBOWN BUILDING (SE CORNER).

34th Street is a revitalized, neighborhood-serving main street with the following:

- **Neighborhood-serving retail:** Small-scaled, two- and three-story retail buildings serve the surrounding community.
- **Retail storefronts:** New pedestrian-scaled signage, attractive and simple fenestration, colorful facades, awnings and porches, and outdoor seating create vibrant retail storefronts.
- **On-street parking:** Parallel parking slows down and protects pedestrians from traffic.
- **Parking lots:** Shared-use parking lots serve multiple users.
- **Historic character:** Façades of most buildings are restored to their historic character.
- **Mix of retail:** Various types of retail, including restaurants, are evident all along the street.
- **Mixed-use:** Residential uses are found on the second and third floors above retail.
- **Bicycle route:** Shared-lane markings and bikeway signage identify 34th Street as a bicycle route.



A MAIN STREET IN THE DEL REY COMMUNITY, ALEXANDRIA, VA.



MAIN STREET—OUTDOOR SEATING AND COLORFUL RETAIL STOREFRONTS.

### Upper 34th Street: Existing and Future Street Sections

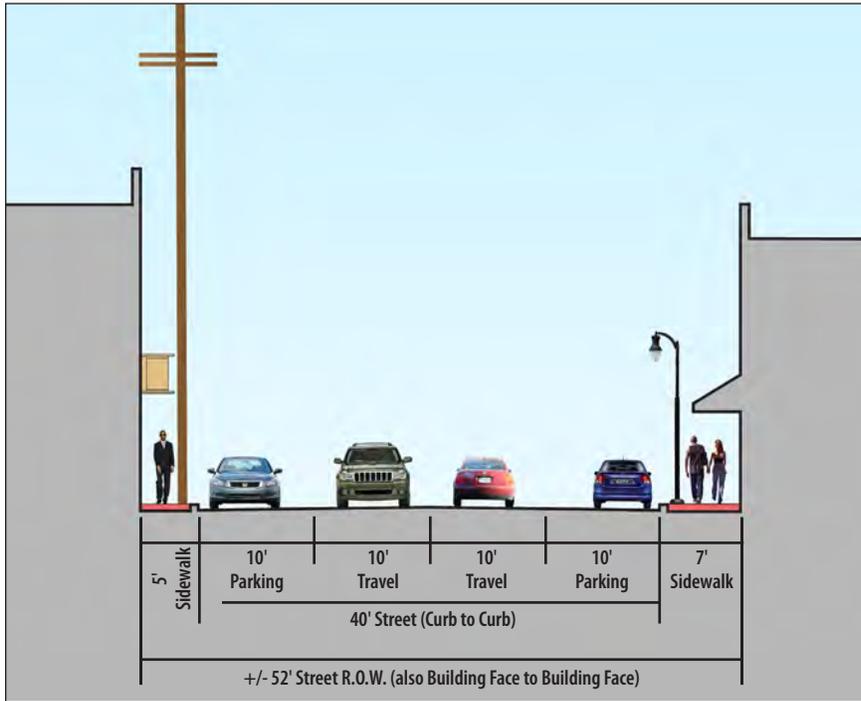


FIGURE 13: EXISTING CONDITIONS—34TH STREET, LOOKING SOUTH.

In order to create pedestrian precincts along both sides of 34th Street, the current location of curb lines and sidewalk profiles will be changed through the implementation of the proposed design standards. The proposed street section for 34th Street between the circle and its intersection with Bunker Hill Road will maintain the existing travel lane width of ten feet in each direction and will extend both curb lines two feet into the parking lane in order to provide wider sidewalks. Additionally, street trees will be planted on islands between parking spaces to complement the existing streetscape. Shared lane markings and bikeway signage will designate the bicycle lanes.

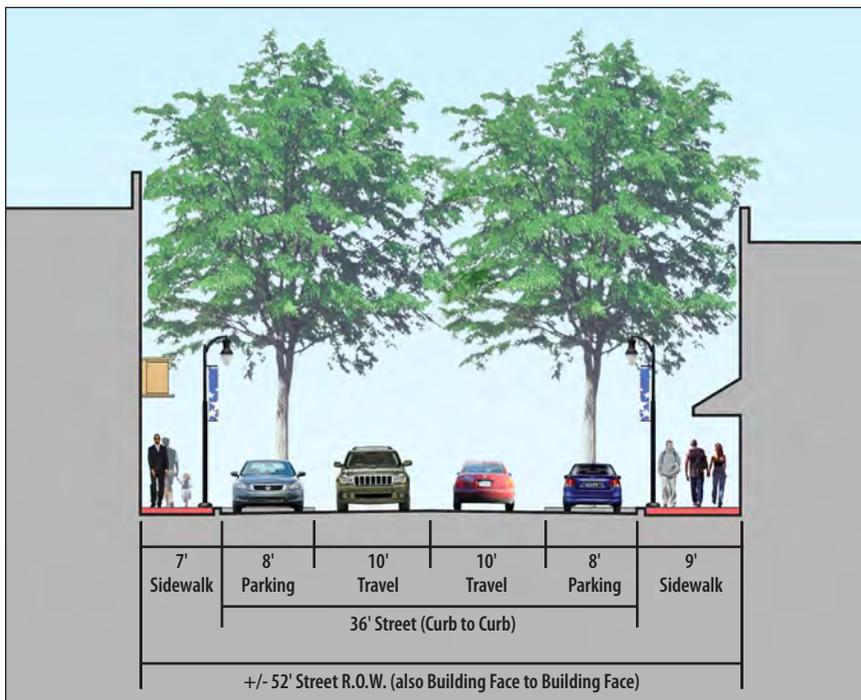
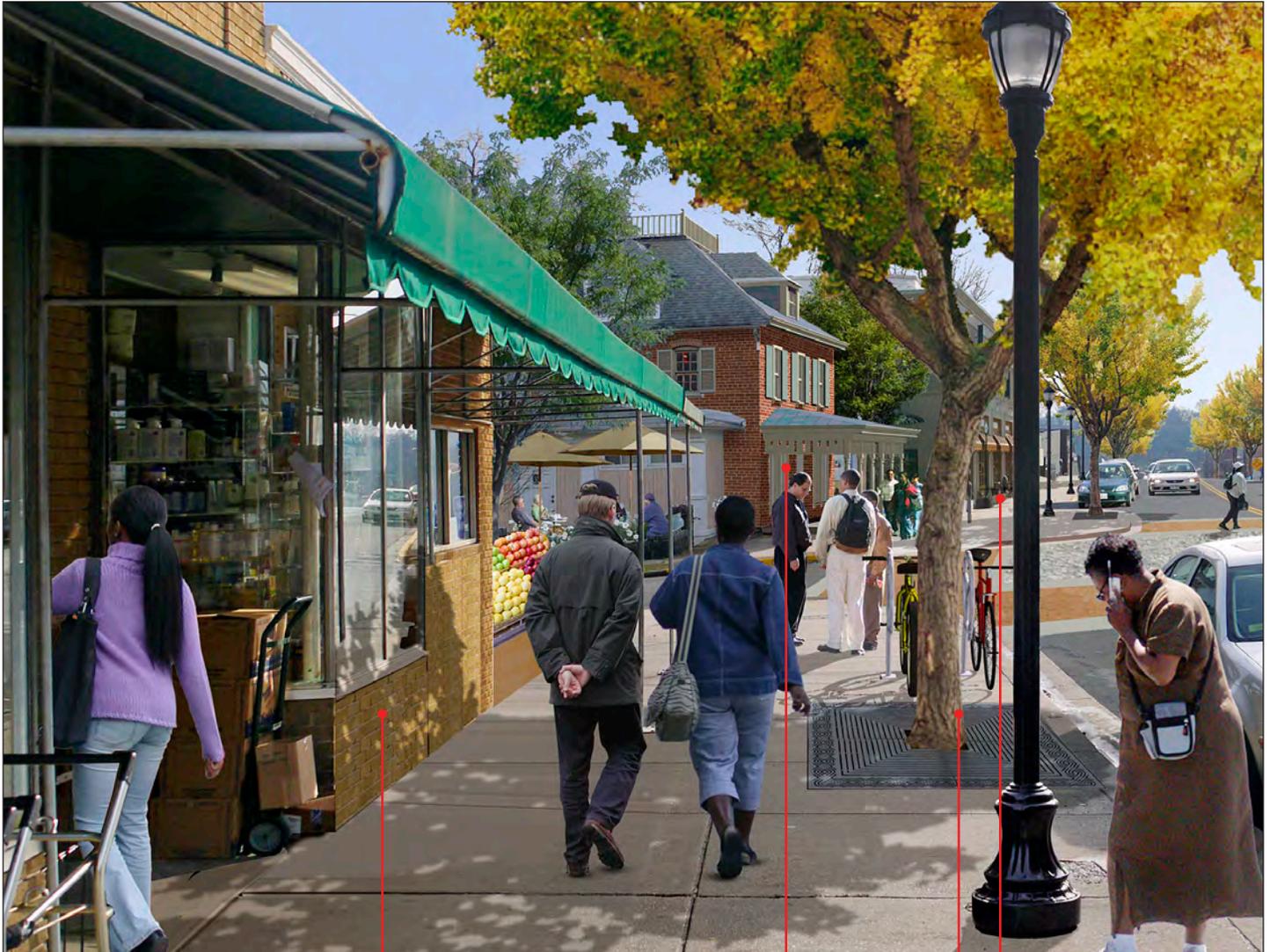


FIGURE 14: PROPOSED CONDITIONS—34TH STREET SOUTH OF BUNKER HILL ROAD, LOOKING SOUTH.

## Upper 34th Street: Future Vision



Refurbish the storefront for 4005 34th Street. Set up vegetable/fruit display on sidewalk.

Renovate 3401 Bunker Hill to original façade for new retail or restaurant.

Build mixed-use infill building with ground-floor retail space.

Introduce new street trees in grates and new bike racks.



KLEIN'S BAKERY, CIRCA 1905.



Introduce new crosswalks, curb extensions, and special paving at the intersection of 34th Street and Bunker Hill Road.

Expand pedestrian sidewalks with street trees located on both sides of the street.

Refurbish façade for new ground-floor retail tenant/restaurant and café seating.

Introduce new retail signage.

Restore retail storefronts to its original character.

Introduce new pay-on-foot parking meters.

Introduce shared lane for bicycle traffic.

## Upper 34th Street: Recommendations



1. Add new pedestrian crosswalks with special paving at the intersection of 34th Street and Bunker Hill Road.

2. Add tree boxes in curb extensions within the parking lane from the traffic circle to Bunker Hill Road. Place trees in tree boxes within the sidewalk area north of Bunker Hill Road.

3. Renovate existing parking lots to include landscaping, permeable paving, and low walls along the street frontage.

4. Create areas for a “low-impact development” stormwater drainage rain garden at the lower end of 34th Street, north of the Rhode Island Avenue traffic circle.

5. Renovate existing buildings such as Klein’s Bakery (see historic photo on page 30).

6. Create places for vibrant street activity by using the existing building setback areas.

7. Create places for historically-sensitive front-porch additions to existing buildings up to the building setback.

8. Build new mixed-use infill buildings with ground floor retail space.

9. Move overhead utility lines to an underground location.

FIGURE 15: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPPER 34TH STREET.

## Rhode Island Avenue: The Tree-Lined Boulevard



EXISTING CONDITIONS: RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, LOOKING WEST TOWARDS THE SINGER BUILDING.

The plan vision imagines Rhode Island Avenue as a vibrant, grand boulevard that will identify and reflect the Mount Rainier community by employing the following elements:

- **Wide, multilane thoroughfare:** Design a pedestrian-friendly streetscape that will encourage slower auto speeds and yet still allow for adequate traffic flow.
- **Landscaped median:** Enhance an existing feature that will be unique to the Mount Rainier section of Rhode Island Avenue.
- **Pedestrian sidewalks:** Widen sidewalks to create places for social interaction and outdoor retail seating. Add special paving designs and patterns to give the boulevard a unique *“sense of place.”*
- **Larger, mixed-use buildings:** Renovate existing buildings and design infill buildings to meet the street with proper orientation and land use. Create spaces to support retail/restaurants with outdoor seating.
- **Urban furniture:** Use functional, durable street lamps, benches, bike racks, chairs, and tables that will enhance and promote the pedestrian experience.



BOULEVARD: MIXED-USE/PUBLIC SPACE CONDITION.

- **Street trees:** Plant trees and other landscaping elements to provide a sense of enclosure, protect pedestrians and cyclists, and help slow down traffic.
- **Bicycle paths:** Add a cycle track and widen sidewalks to accommodate for bicycle enthusiasts, commuters and casual cyclists.

## Rhode Island Avenue: Existing and Future Street Sections

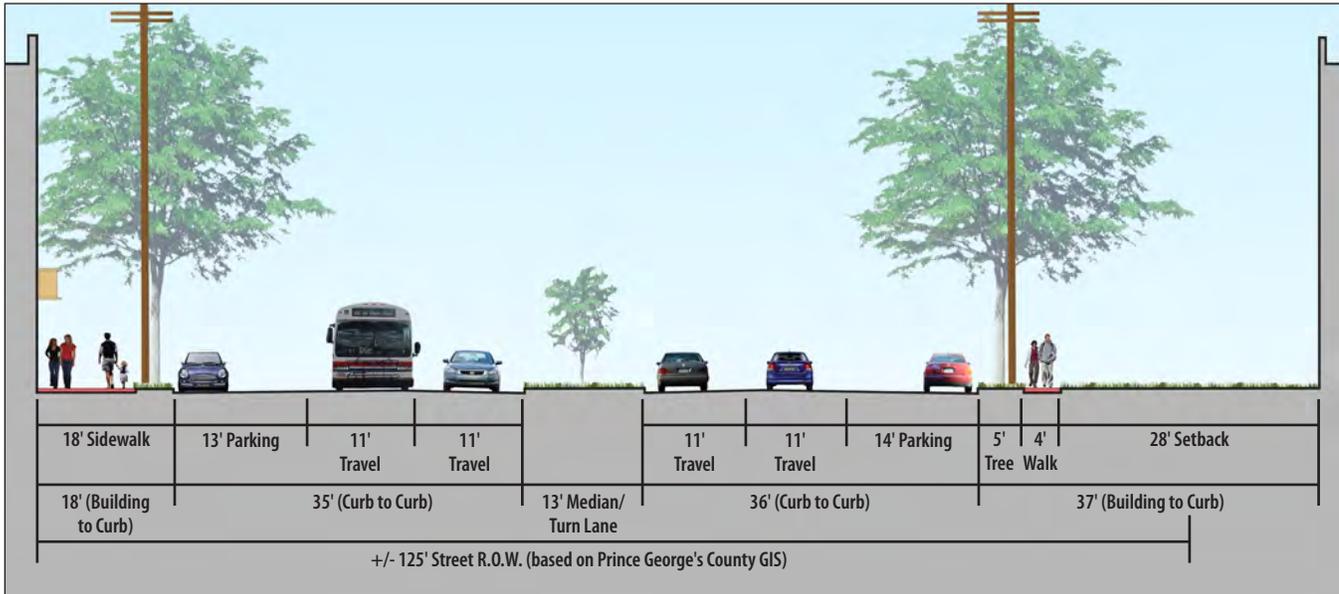


FIGURE 16: EXISTING STREET SECTION: RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, WEST OF TRAFFIC CIRCLE, LOOKING WEST.

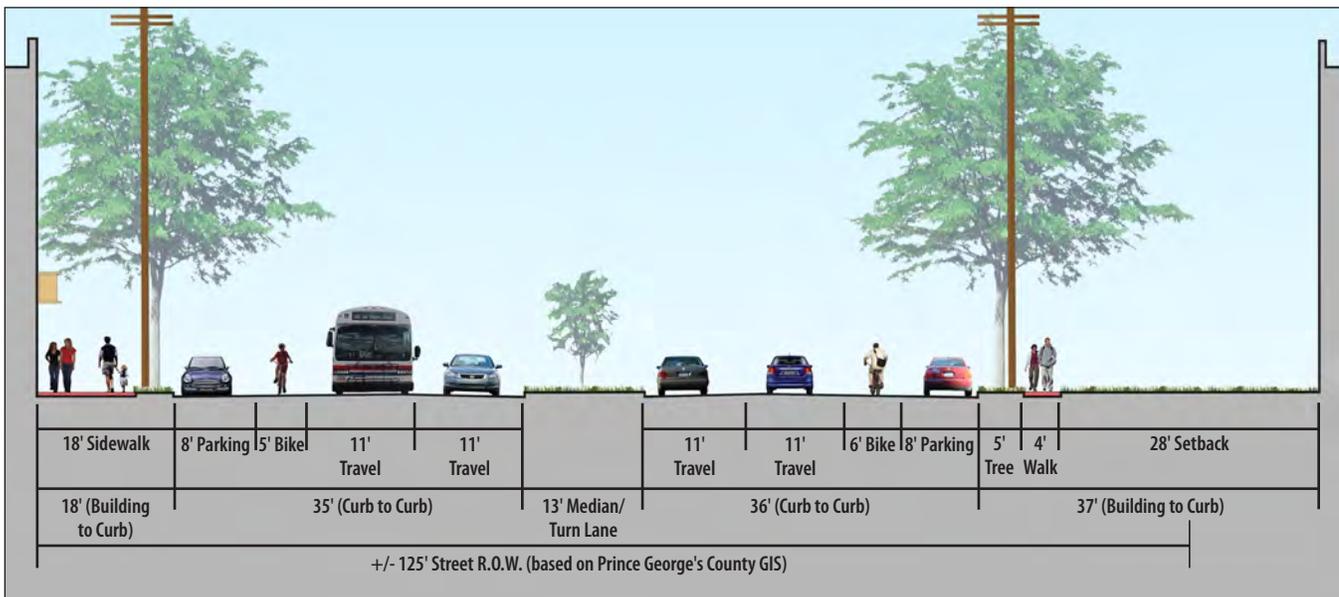


FIGURE 17: PROPOSED SHORT-TERM STREET SECTION—RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, WEST OF TRAFFIC CIRCLE, LOOKING WEST.

In order to create pedestrian precincts along both sides of Rhode Island Avenue, the current location of curb lines and sidewalk profiles will be changed through the implementation of the proposed design standards.

The proposed street configuration for Rhode Island Avenue maintains the State Highway Administration (SHA) designed 11-foot travel lanes (two in each direction, four in total) and the existing 13-foot median.

The north curb line of Rhode Island Avenue will be extended by six feet, and the south curb line by three feet to allow for two 11-foot travel lanes and one eight-foot parking lane in each direction. A new 6-foot wide cycle track, which is an exclusive right-of-way for bicycles, will be located along the new curb lines.

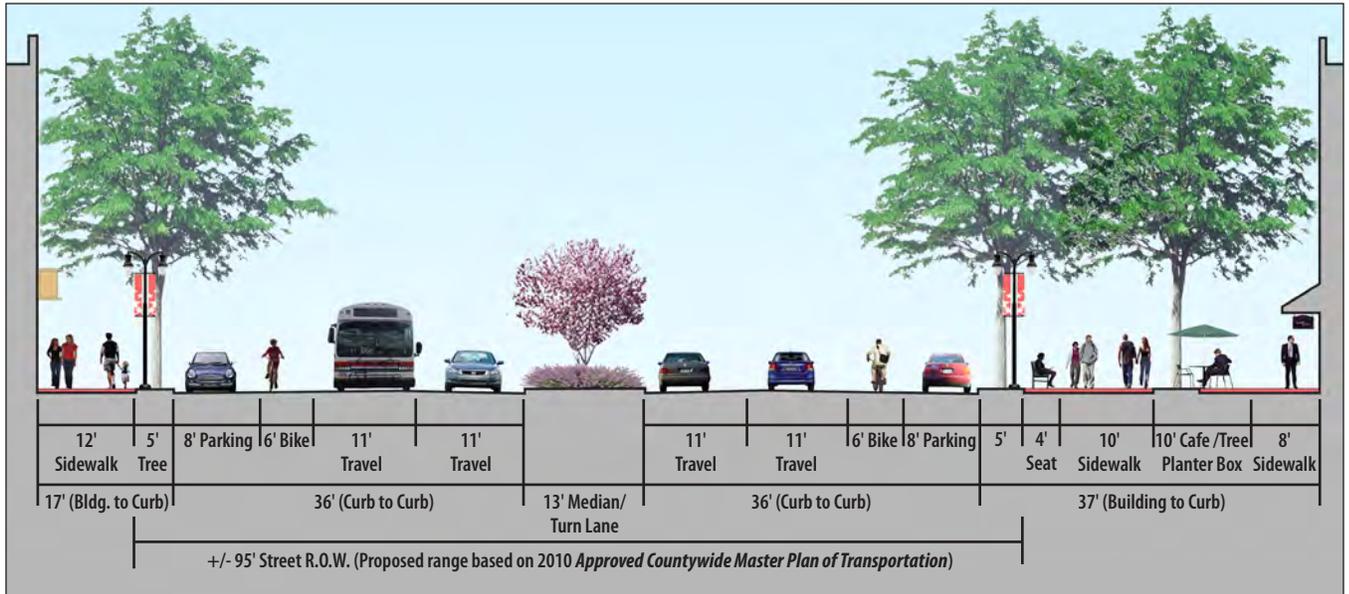


FIGURE 18: PROPOSED MID-TERM STREET SECTION—RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, WEST OF TRAFFIC CIRCLE, LOOKING WEST.

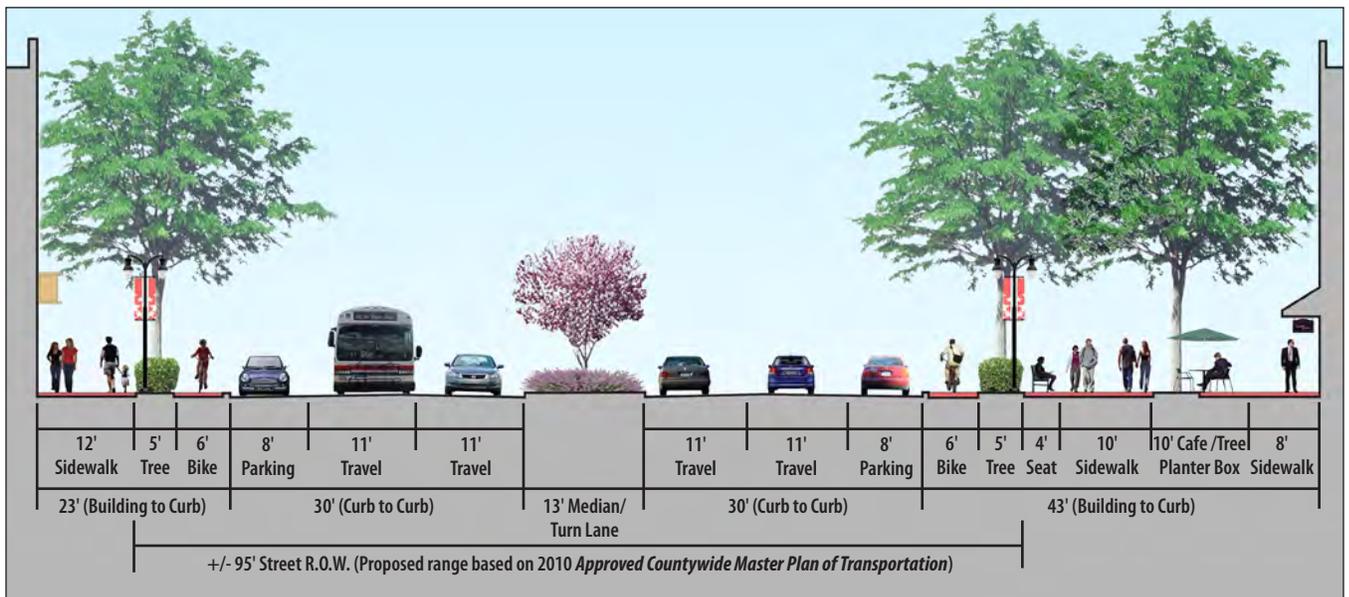
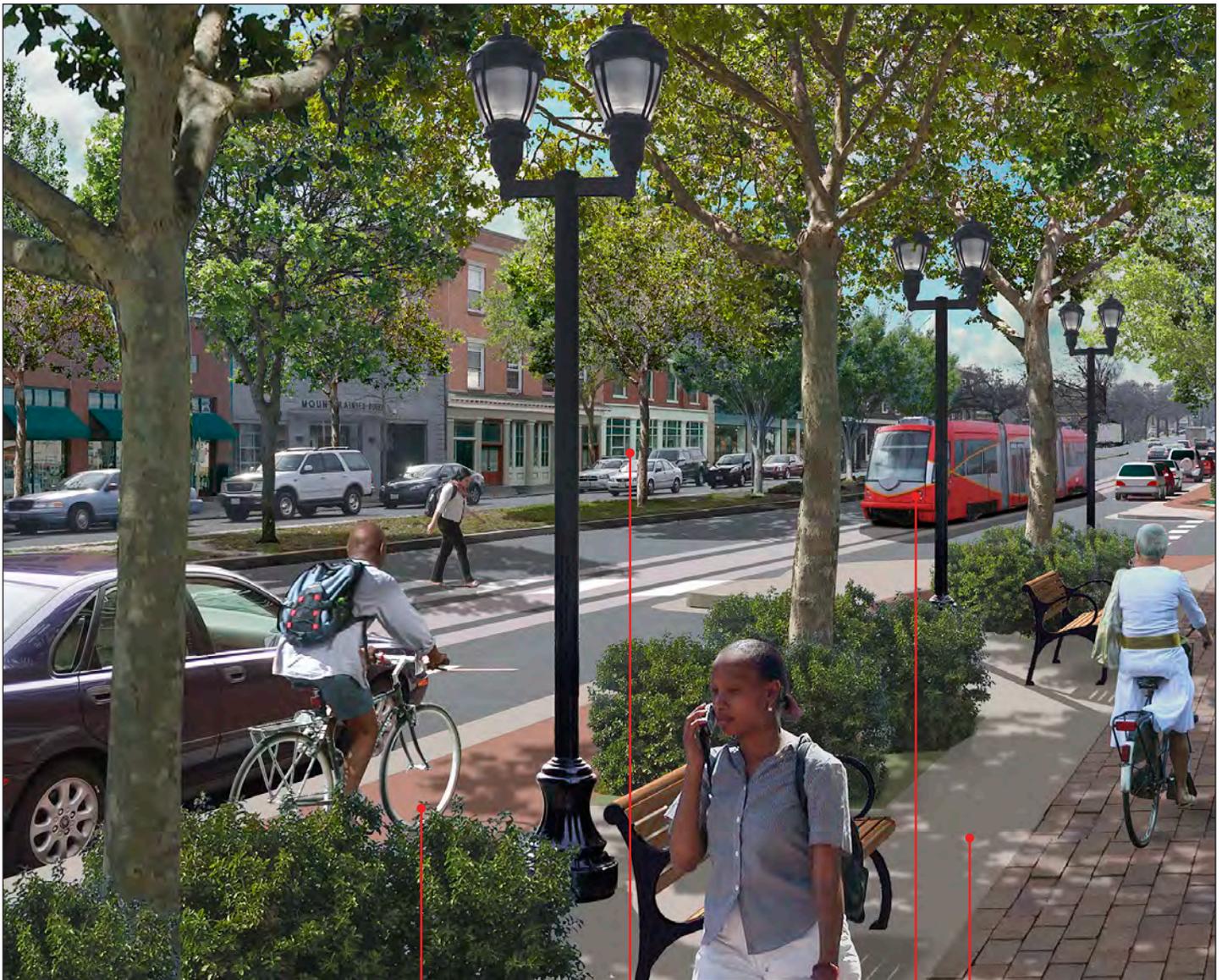


FIGURE 19: PROPOSED LONG-TERM STREET SECTION—RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, WEST OF TRAFFIC CIRCLE, LOOKING WEST.

Additionally, new crosswalks with special textured features—such as stamped concrete—that emphasize the pedestrian crossings, will be installed on Rhode Island Avenue at Eastern Avenue and 33rd Street.

## Rhode Island Avenue: Future Vision

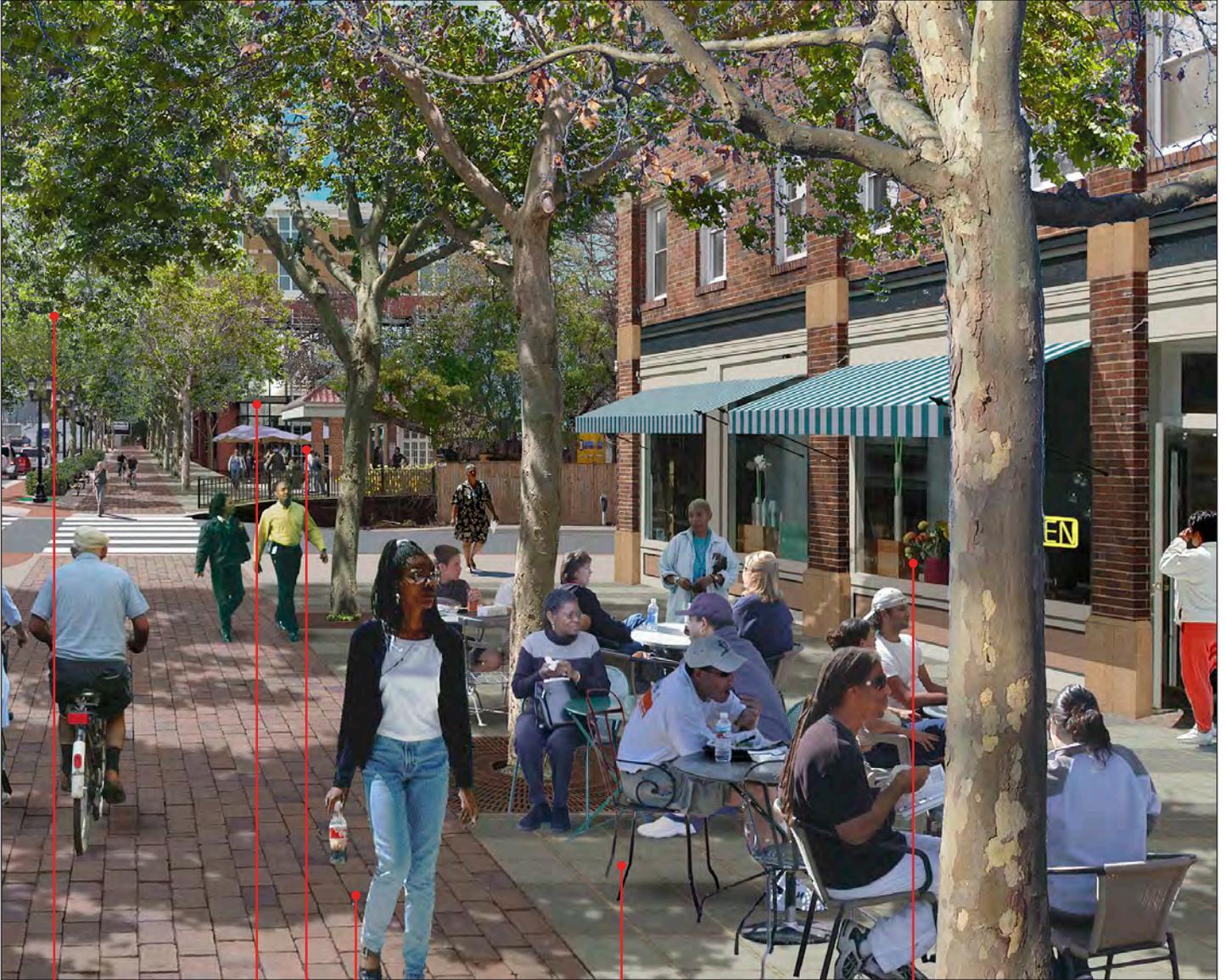


Introduce new cycle track zone.

Refurbish building façades.

Install street trees and pedestrian seating in the streetscape zone.

Consider incorporating design elements into the newly redesigned boulevard that will support the potential DC street car line.



Install a double row of street trees.

Install new primary sidewalk streetscape zone.

Create an area, designed with special paving, for café seating in the streetscape zone.

Refurbish 3300 Rhode Island Avenue with new ground-floor retail tenants.

Construct multipurpose community flex space.

Renovate 3220 Rhode Island Avenue and convert to retail use with outdoor seating.

## Rhode Island Avenue: North Infill Opportunity Site



FIGURE 20: SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN.

The combined 3200–3220 Rhode Island Avenue sites will be redeveloped into a signature, mixed-use building and will serve as the northern part of the gateway into Mount Rainier. A four- to five-story infill residential building will face Rhode Island Avenue. Large townhouses will face Eastern Avenue. The former gas station site, 3220 Rhode Island Avenue, will be adaptively reused as small-scale café/retail space with a landscaped public plaza, and integrated as part of a new community flex space. This two- to three-story community flex space will measure approximately 75 feet by 40 feet and will serve multiple community functions. Office and commercial space will be located above the flexible space.

This new mixed-use building will be designed in a manner that is sensitive to the existing surrounding residential fabric. Its highest point will be located at the intersection of Rhode Island and Eastern Avenues. The building will step down away from this intersection in order to acknowledge the scale of—and serve as a transition to—the adjacent existing single-family neighborhood context. This building configuration will reduce the impact of shadows on the surrounding residential neighborhood.

A solar study was conducted to show how shadows might be cast from the new mixed-use building at two hour increments during the day. This study was conducted in order to assess the impact of the redevelopment on the adjacent residential neighborhood.



FIGURE 21: BUILDING SOLAR STUDY: MAY 21ST.

## Rhode Island Avenue: Recommendations



FIGURE 22: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RHODE ISLAND AVENUE.

1. Include areas for café seating and bike lanes along the newly designed Rhode Island Avenue streetscape.
2. Create a mid-block pedestrian crossing.
3. Renovate existing buildings with the addition of rooftop floors.
4. Renovate existing buildings.
5. Construct a small-scale community flex space.
6. Build infill multifamily residential buildings at the gateway to the M-U-TC area.
7. Build townhouses adjacent to existing single-family homes.
8. Move overhead utility lines to underground locations.
9. Provide AASHTO designated bike lanes along Rhode Island in the short- and mid-term by using extra space currently allocated for on-street parking.

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## Civic Core: The City Center



EXISTING CONDITIONS: RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, LOOKING EAST TOWARDS CITY HALL.

Mount Rainier’s civic buildings serve as a focal point and anchor to the community. The Mount Rainier City Hall, library, Eastern Star Building, and police station reinforce downtown as being a special place through the following proposed improvements:

- **City Hall:** Construct a new community presentation platform and staircase.
- **Civic green and plaza:** Transform the bus turnaround into a green civic space.
- **Eastern Star Building:** Restore the historic exterior, renovate the interior with a grand hall, exploit the potential for a part-time gallery/arts space, create a new façade facing the green.
- **Mount Rainier Library:** Continue to develop designs for a new/renovated library.
- **Transit Center:** Create a modern transit structure with opportunity for collaboration with artists.



PROPOSED CIVIC GREEN AT BUS TURNAROUND.



TRAFFIC CIRCLE, CIVIC GREEN AND MUNICIPAL CENTER.

## Civic Core/City Center: Future Vision



Renovate the Mount Rainier Library.

Create a modern transit structure.

Renovate 3405 Rhode Island Avenue, a historic building, with a modern addition facing the civic green.

Install special paving for pedestrian crosswalk.

Construct an elevated landscape terrace/performance space.



Construct public gathering space in the new civic green.

Restore landscaping and urban seating area.

Construct infill development along Perry Street East (as a temporary use, add parking on open lots).

Install special paving around traffic circle.

## Civic Core/City Center Recommendations

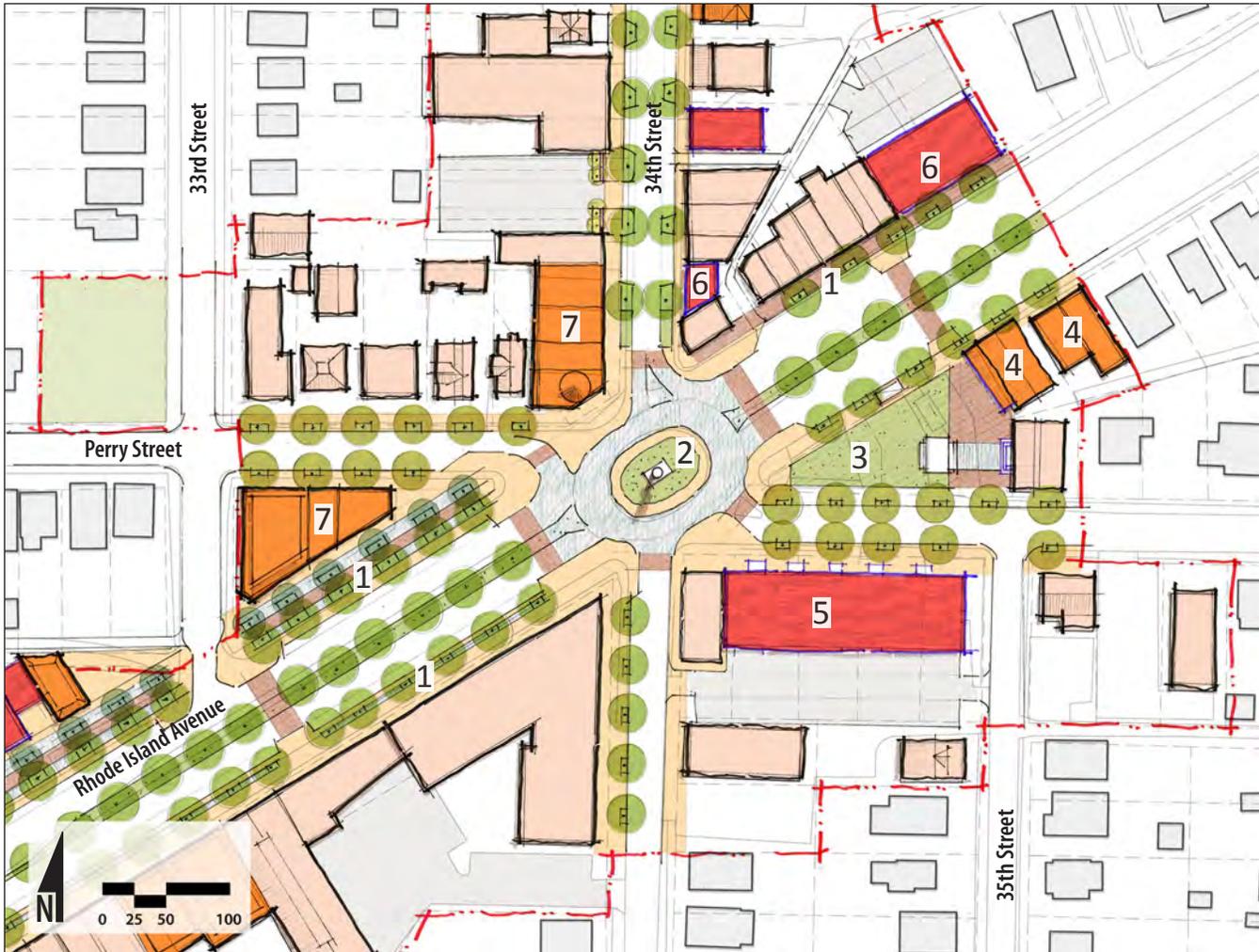


FIGURE 23: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CIVIC CORE/CITY CENTER.

1. Include areas for café seating and bike lanes along the new Rhode Island Avenue streetscape.
2. Create special paving and a new landmark monument at the Rhode Island Avenue circle.
3. Create a new civic green and plaza adjacent to the City Hall.
4. Renovate the municipal buildings.
5. Build infill multifamily residential or commercial office buildings.
6. Build mixed-use infill buildings.
7. Renovate major interior and exterior architectural elements.

## Land Use Recommendations

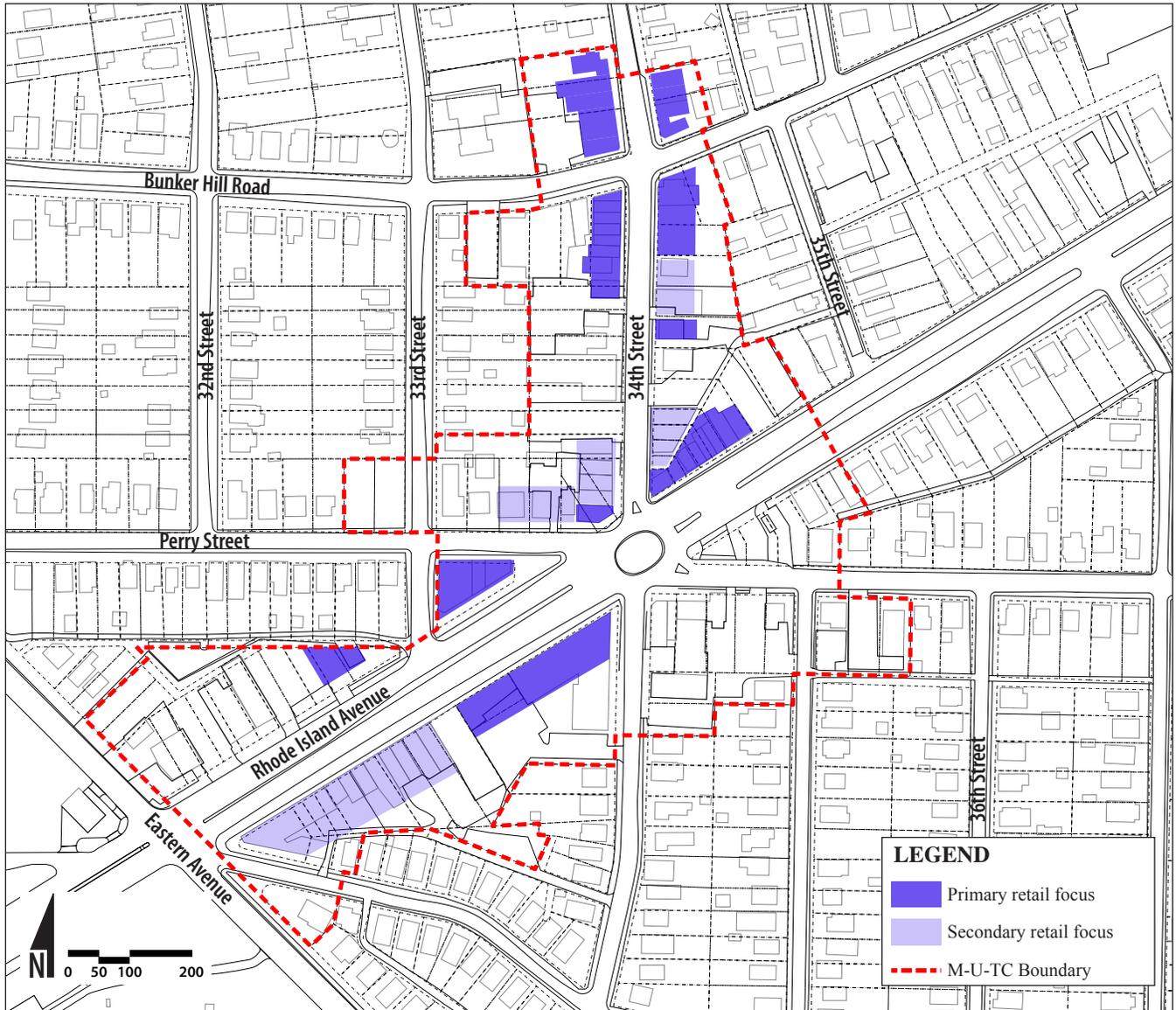


FIGURE 24: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RETAIL FOCUS AREAS.

### Retail Uses

In many ways, retail land uses represent the principal face for the mixed-use town center area. The interaction between retail space, consumers, passing traffic, and the surrounding community impact the M-U-TC’s image and its prospects for future economic activity and development. Beyond active occupied retail spaces, the M-U-TC is heavily influenced by the number and character of vacant or underutilized commercial spaces in the area.

The quantity of existing retail space (approximately 90,000 square feet) exceeds today’s market demand of approximately 60,000 square feet. However, long-term growth is anticipated. In order to be beneficial to the area, retail properties and operating businesses should be of a sufficient size and mix and also self-sustaining, even if surrounded by vacant storefront space. Additionally, retail plays a vital role in attracting investment in other land uses, such as residential.

With respect to the plan vision and its implementation, retail land uses should be supported by considering the following principles:

- Provide an attractive and contiguous retail street frontage at economically sustainable locations to advance the pedestrian precinct. Utilize Mount Rainier’s large inventory of existing retail space that can easily accommodate future storefronts.
- Maintain a critical mass of different types of retailers adjacent or proximate to each other in order to promote combined patronage, which helps to re-tenant vacated space, and encourages the ongoing investment of retailers in a given location.
- Focus retail uses at the intersections of 34th Street and Bunker Hill Road and along Rhode Island Avenue, extending from the traffic circle.
- Attract new retailers to help elevate the level of activity and image of the entire mixed-use town center area and support existing retail users.

## Other Commercial Uses

Aside from traditional retail uses, the M-U-TC area has a variety of other existing commercial uses, most notably professional office and contractor services firms. These other commercial uses are located on the ground floor of retail-oriented properties. Other similar uses may occupy second level space of buildings or former residential buildings. These alternative land uses perform a vital role in drawing customers and clients to the M-U-TC area, and provide some amount of employee-related economic support of other M-U-TC businesses during the day. While sustaining and growing these smaller-scale commercial land uses should occur in tandem with advancing the goals of the plan vision, their impact is limited to incremental gains in economic development.

## Residential Uses

Residential land uses are interspersed within the area and help to define the character of the M-U-TC and the greater Mount Rainier area. The plan vision foresees both residential-related redevelopment and infill development as major development opportunities for the M-U-TC area. Future development may benefit from incorporating the following strategies and characteristics:

- Add new housing and residents to provide a broad spectrum of benefits, including shoring up retail vitality, reconnecting the streetscape, helping to alleviate crime and safety concerns, and adding to the tax base.
- Create opportunities for alternative market-based ownership housing types in the M-U-TC area, such as rowhouses, flats, and other forms of multifamily housing that can draw on the local and regional market for support.

## Historic Preservation/Adaptive Reuse Recommendations

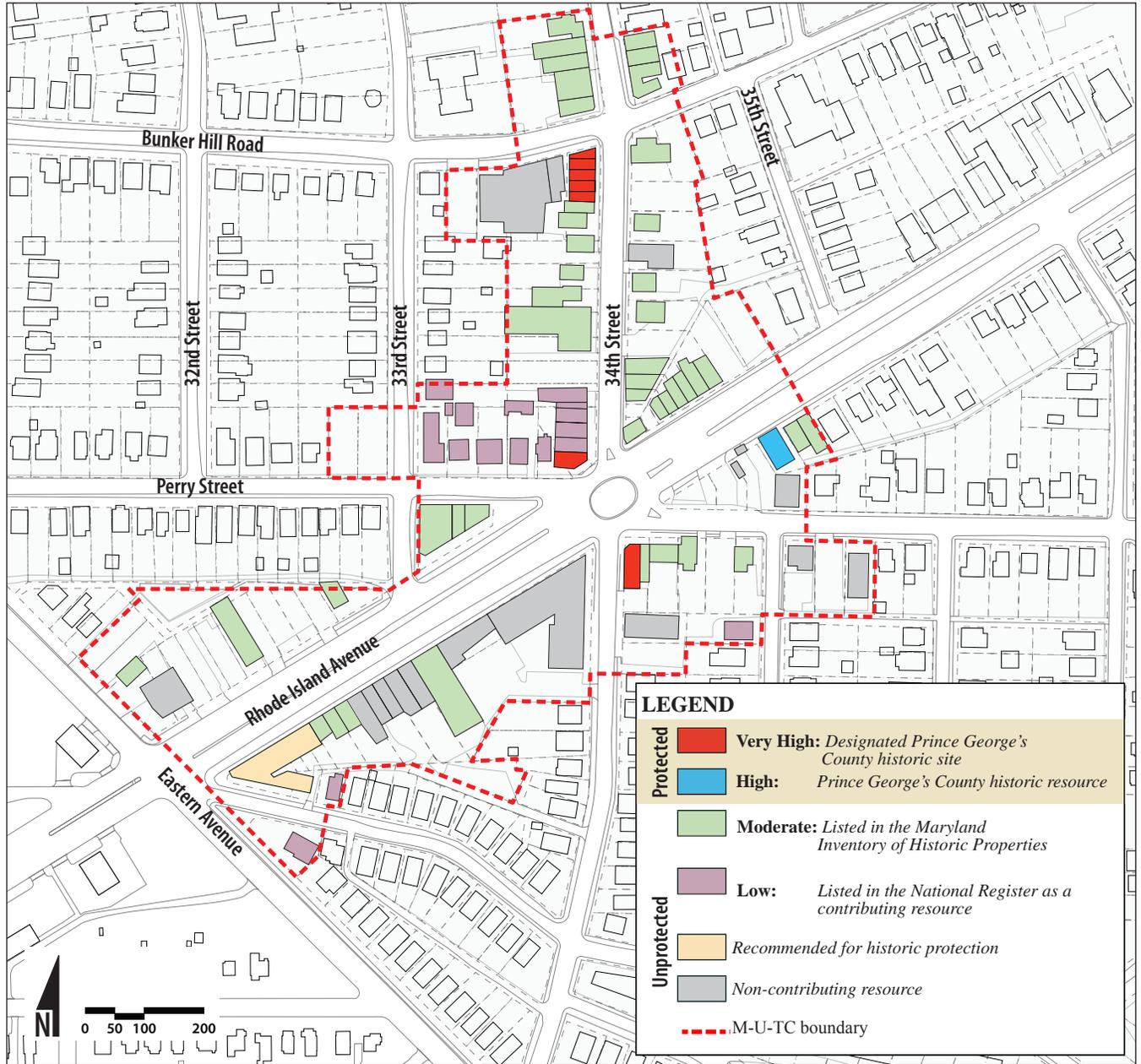


FIGURE 25: PROTECTED AND UNPROTECTED HISTORIC PROPERTIES.

### General Historic Improvement Significance and Actions

The Mount Rainier Historic District is a prime example of a community that changed the character of western Prince George's County during the early twentieth century. The historic district is also important for its expansive and diverse collection of vernacular inspired buildings erected during the period between 1900 and 1940.

The mixed-use town center falls within the boundaries of the Mount Rainier National Register Historic District. Identified as the community's downtown from its early stages of development, the mixed-use town center has historically contained an eclectic collection of residential, commercial, and mixed use buildings that maintained the character of a small town "Main Street." In support of the vision of the plan, preserving and restoring the "Main Street" character will require

the implementation of distinct, yet vital, historic improvement actions:

- Restore historic property by removing non-contributing additions.
- Maintain and repair historic materials and retain the property’s form, details, and existing historic character.
- Alter and add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property’s historic character.
- Build new structures that are sympathetic in massing to the historic character of the area.

## General Improvement Areas

### 34th Street

The intersection of Bunker Hill Road and 34th Street is an important focal point for restoring the “Main Street” feel. The buildings typically have high integrity and will require basic maintenance and repair of existing windows, storefronts and porches, as well as repairs to masonry and other minor façade improvements. A few buildings—including 3401 34th Street and the flat fronts, 3807–3815 34th Street—will require restoration of their façades, the removal of non-contributing additions, and the replacement of non-contributing building materials. Vacant lots suitable for construction should follow the scale, massing, and styles reflective of the area.

### Civic Core/City Center

Most of the structures in the Civic Core have a high level of integrity. Adaptive reuse should be more prevalent, especially for properties south and east of the traffic circle, including properties along east Perry Street and Star/Potts Hall (3405 Rhode Island Avenue). The Prince George’s Bank (3800 34th Street) and the Sanitary Grocery Company Building (3401 Perry Street) have been designated as Prince George’s County historic sites. Both sites will require restoration and maintenance and repair because of their high integrity. Other buildings, such as 3300 Rhode Island Avenue and its adjacent properties, as well as the group of transit

oriented retail (3410–3248 Rhode Island Avenue) will require similar restoration and repair.

### Rhode Island Avenue

Because of the large portions of vacant/developable land and the lack of historic integrity of the properties within the Rhode Island Avenue district of the M-U-TC, specific improvement actions will be oriented to adaptive reuse and new construction. Infill construction shall be sympathetic to the nature of the surrounding buildings in scale, massing, and quality. The character of existing buildings shall be retained even with the addition of floors or changing of uses. An exception is the historic gas filling station (3220 Rhode Island Avenue), which is a proposed Prince George’s County historic site. Restoration, maintenance, and repair of the gas filling station will be required because of its poor condition in order to preserve an important landmark in the development of Historic Mount Rainier.

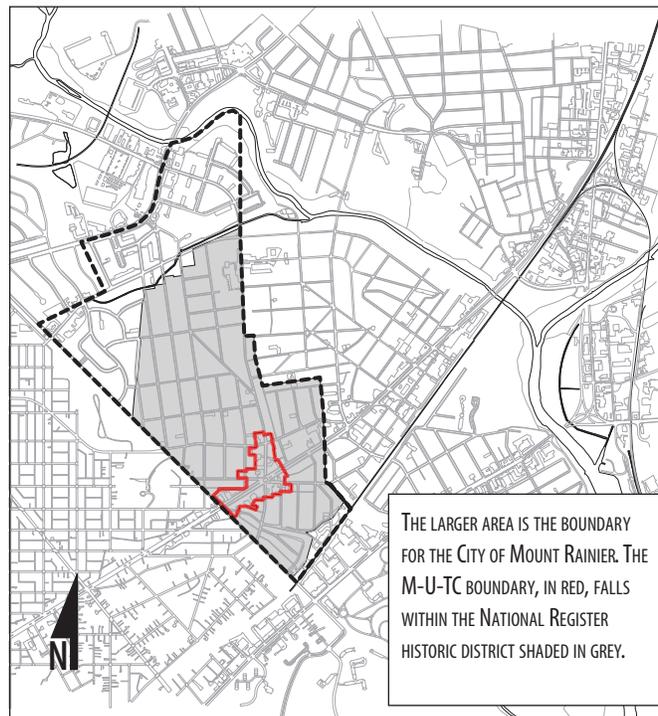


FIGURE 26: M-U-TC, MOUNT RAINIER, AND HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.

## Environmental/Sustainability Recommendations



FIGURE 27: LOCATION OF PERMEABLE PARKING AREAS AND RAIN GARDENS/GREEN STREETS PROTOTYPE.

### Sustainable Strategies

The M-U-TC area is located within the greater Anacostia River watershed. The water quality in the Anacostia River has been compromised and degraded over many years and redevelopment should consider the inclusion of urban environmental design elements that will have a low impact on natural resources within the community.

Redevelopment practices will need to incorporate strategies that help to improve water quality, reduce flooding in neighboring communities, manage stormwater quantities, and diminish erosion and siltation

in the river. These strategies integrate, the most current methods for sustainability in urban environmental site design. Rain gardens, infiltration trenches, urban tree canopy, permeable pavers, bioretention ponds, and green roofs are all appropriate site design details that may, in combination, create a more sustainable community and help mitigate water degradation and associated stormwater run-off problems.

With respect to stormwater management, the plan vision calls for the construction of two rain gardens, with native plant species, on both sides of 34th Street, and the use of permeable paving in any anticipated future share parking lots within the M-U-TC. Both of these measures will help to capture and clean water runoff from 34th Street.

## Transportation Recommendations

The plan vision's primary transportation objective is to develop a district that is pedestrian-friendly along both Rhode Island Avenue and 34th Street. The implementation of several transportation improvements such as the enhancement of pedestrian crossings, the provision of curb extensions and wider sidewalks, the installation of pedestrian signals, and the conversion of the existing bus turnaround depot into a public park, will accomplish this objective.

### Pedestrian Precinct

#### *Rhode Island Avenue Elements*

The plan recommends the installation of curb extensions at the intersection corners of Rhode Island Avenue with Eastern Avenue and with 33rd Street along the north and south sides of Rhode Island Avenue from Eastern Avenue to the circle. The introduction of curb extensions minimizes the crossing distances for pedestrians while maintaining the existing width of the travel lanes along Rhode Island Avenue. The plan vision also recommends a raised off-street bicycle track on both sides of the existing Rhode Island Avenue curb between Eastern Avenue and the traffic circle. In this street configuration, an independent travel way will be separated from the proposed sidewalk with landscaping along that same section of Rhode Island Avenue.

Additionally, the plan recommends the installation of a crosswalk on the Prince George's County side of Rhode Island Avenue at its intersection with Eastern Avenue. This modification will require additional pedestrian signals, as well as adjustment of the existing traffic-signal timing.

The plan recommends a new pedestrian crosswalk on Rhode Island Avenue, just east of its intersection with 33rd Street, with an accompanying pedestrian-activated crosswalk signal. Pedestrians will be able to activate this signal to stop vehicular traffic along Rhode Island Avenue, allowing them to cross safely. When the signal is not activated, traffic moves without having to stop.

Another recommendation supports the installation of a pedestrian-activated crosswalk signal located just west of the circle on Rhode Island Avenue. This signal will

activate the traffic signal just east of the circle and will allow pedestrians to cross Rhode Island Avenue with greater ease.

#### *34th Street Elements*

The plan recommends the widening of sidewalks on both sides of 34th Street so that they extend further into the roadway, while still retaining two ten-foot travel lanes on 34th Street from the circle to Bunker Hill Road. Widening the sidewalk to provide for improved pedestrian circulation on 34th Street is a key component of making this street a more attractive retail destination for prospective patrons. In addition to widening the sidewalk, the plan proposes the installation of curb extensions along both sides of 34th Street to allow for the placement of trees along the street between the circle and Bunker Hill Road.

The plan also proposes curb extensions at the intersection of 34th Street and Bunker Hill Road for the southeast, southwest, and northeast corners of the intersection. This improvement will facilitate pedestrian crossings at this four-way stop intersection. In addition, it is recommended that textured crosswalks be installed and that the interior of the intersection be patterned to reinforce it as the center of the retail activity on upper 34th Street.

### Shared Parking

The need for additional parking to support existing and new retail uses and infill development can be accommodated through the use of shared parking strategies. Potential locations for shared parking include:

- The lot behind 4000 34th Street (potential to provide 24 spaces).
- The lot south of 3841 34th Street (potential to provide 16 spaces).
- The lots 3802–3820 34th Street south of the Metropolitan Church of God during times when there are no church services.
- The northern portions of 3424–3428 Rhode Island Avenue.
- 3411 Perry Street
- 3503 Perry Street

## Civic Green and WMATA

Historically, Mount Rainier was established as a street car community adjacent to the District of Columbia. The turnaround area within the Civic Core served as the terminus for that street car system. The existing Metro bus turnaround area currently serves as a transit hub for the residents and businesses of Mount Rainier. The three bus lines using this facility provide connections for the immediate surrounding neighborhood to other modes of transportation, such as the Metrorail system. It is envisioned in the future that the Civic Core, which is centrally located adjacent to a major thoroughfare, will support additional modes of transportation, including either the extension of the proposed District of Columbia's Rhode Island Avenue street car system or a bus rapid transit (BRT) system. *The Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* recommends extension of the BRT system from the District of Columbia to the planned circumferential fixed guideway transit (Purple Line) between Bethesda and New Carrollton.

In the near- and medium terms, the plan recommends the retention of the existing bus turnaround operations

that support the transit facility adjacent to the Mount Rainier City Hall. As a long-term vision, the development plan recommends the creation of a civic green adjacent to the Mount Rainier City Hall that will create a sense of place by enhancing the Civic Core. This investment will also support future development opportunities along the Rhode Island Avenue transit corridor. This future civic green may accommodate the existing bus lines through a modified bus turnaround area and potential future new modes of transportation. A more detailed evaluation of feasible options should be considered as part of a subsequent corridor study in order to ensure quality and efficient transit service, which would support the plan's ultimate vision for the area. This study should consider the prioritization of bus circulation based on future additional modes of transportation, and the location, design, and maintenance of future bus stops, bus lay over areas, shelters, lighting, and passenger amenities. Partners in the study of the corridor should include WMATA, Prince George's County, the City of Mount Rainier, and the District of Columbia.



ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH OF THE CIVIC GREEN.

**RIGHT: THE PROPOSED LOCATION FOR A MARC STATION.**  
**BELOW: THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR EXTENSION OF THE FUTURE DC STREETCAR SYSTEM INTO PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY.**



## Proposed MARC Station

Together with the 2009 *Approved Port Towns Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, this plan recognized the potential for a MARC station that will serve as a local mode of transportation enabling nearby residents to access Union Station to the south or points north such as Baltimore and the Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. The main route from the Mount Rainier Civic Core to the potential station has been identified as 34th Street to Wells Avenue by way of Otis Street.

The plan recommends that limited parking be made available to support the station on the north side of the tracks. Any major parking facilities to support this station should be located on the south side of the train tracks in Cottage City, given its proximate access to Bladensburg Road and the surrounding industrial land uses. The implementation of a new MARC station would ultimately require coordination with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), the county, and the city.

## Extension of the DC Streetcar System

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) has started construction of a new streetcar line in Anacostia, tracks are currently

being laid on H Street and Benning Road for a second line, and planning is underway for additional segments across the city. The entire 37-mile proposed streetcar system will take at least 7-10 years to build, which fits into the medium-term time frame established by this plan (see the Implementation Chapter).

Ultimately, the DC Streetcar system will include a line along Rhode Island Avenue extending from Florida Avenue to the District Line at Eastern Avenue. The implementation of the first phase of the DC Streetcar system does not include the Rhode Island Avenue line, which is preliminarily programmed in Phases 2 and 3 of the streetcar development, pending funding. The Rhode Island Avenue line has not been designed at this point; nor have cross-sections or alignments been determined.

This plan envisions extending the streetcar system into Prince George's County through the M-U-TC area. This extended streetcar system should operate along the curb travel lane and have curb extensions that allow patrons to access the streetcars at the designated stops. The plan vision incorporates this type of operation into its overall roadway geometric requirements. A future DC Streetcar extension will make travel to and from the District of Columbia much easier for Mount Rainier residents, workers, and visitors, and it will complement existing transit options.

## Arts and Arts Community Recommendations

### Role of the Arts/Gateway Arts District

This plan envisions that both the Mount Rainier artists and their art act as key catalysts for revitalization of the M-U-TC area. The plan creates new opportunities for artists to engage with the local community.

The City of Mount Rainier is an important part of the Gateway Arts District. The city's arts identity is a significant resource for marketing and promoting development in the mixed-use town center area. An existing arts community helps distinguish the M-U-TC area from other locations and attracts outside interest in the community. Arts targeted projects may help leverage external funding sources, and the artists, themselves, may help expand the visibility of the arts in the M-U-TC area in order to implement the plan vision. Because of its established arts community and previous efforts, Mount Rainier is well positioned to explore new opportunities to visibly promote its art community and exhibit its art in new development projects.

### Pop-up Galleries

As an interim arts strategy for the M-U-TC area, the plan proposes that the city and county make available selected venues, called "pop-up" galleries, in city-owned and county-owned vacant or underutilized storefront properties that, with minimal operational costs, may energize and activate art spaces along the M-U-TC's commercial corridors. These spaces may be used for visual and/or performing arts activities.

The City of Mount Rainier would play a key role in the implementation of this strategy by selecting the storefronts. The city would also manage the general maintenance and operations activities of the spaces for limited periods of time. Depending on the type of arts activities, the city would determine the associated fees for events held in the storefronts. For example, non-profit activities might be charged a minimal or subsidized fee for use of the venue. Events that charge admission or sell art could contribute a percentage of sales towards building maintenance costs. Artists would be responsible for setting up and preparing the spaces for exhibits or performances.

### Public and Utilitarian Art Program

In the proposed Public and Utilitarian Arts Program, the city will identify key open spaces, public parks, and/or publicly-visible privately owned sites to display or provide venues for work by local artists. This will feature art (graphics, signage, sculpture, metalwork, fabric art, etc.) in public places. Artists will compete for city sponsored sites and opportunities to feature their art at city-sponsored events or in city-generated media, such as the graphic design of the city newsletter, web site, and logo. Art locations would be "leased" for a designated period. At the end of a specified time period, new artists and art would be selected for the city art spaces. Proposed exhibit spaces could be small or large but should be able to accommodate various types of art such as: permanent or temporary murals, insets and bas relief on walls, metal work, or performance art (dance or repertory theater).

The program details would include a city appointed jury to select visual and performance art; an inventory of predetermined venues, including Gateway Arts events and outdoor art spaces; and the establishment of a municipal fund to cover the city's portion of the shared general maintenance, insurance, and security costs with the Gateway CDC, and artists.

### Signage and Wayfinding Program

The proposed Signage and Wayfinding Program combines the talents of local artists and historians to create a Mount Rainier heritage trail signage system. Local artist-inspired and designed signage may be used to create heritage trails and/or direct pedestrian traffic through the M-U-TC area. Heritage trail signage will feature information about places and events that have historical significance to Mount Rainier. Additionally, wayfinding signage will help visitors locate city services and merchants within the M-U-TC and act to "brand" the mixed-use town center area.

