

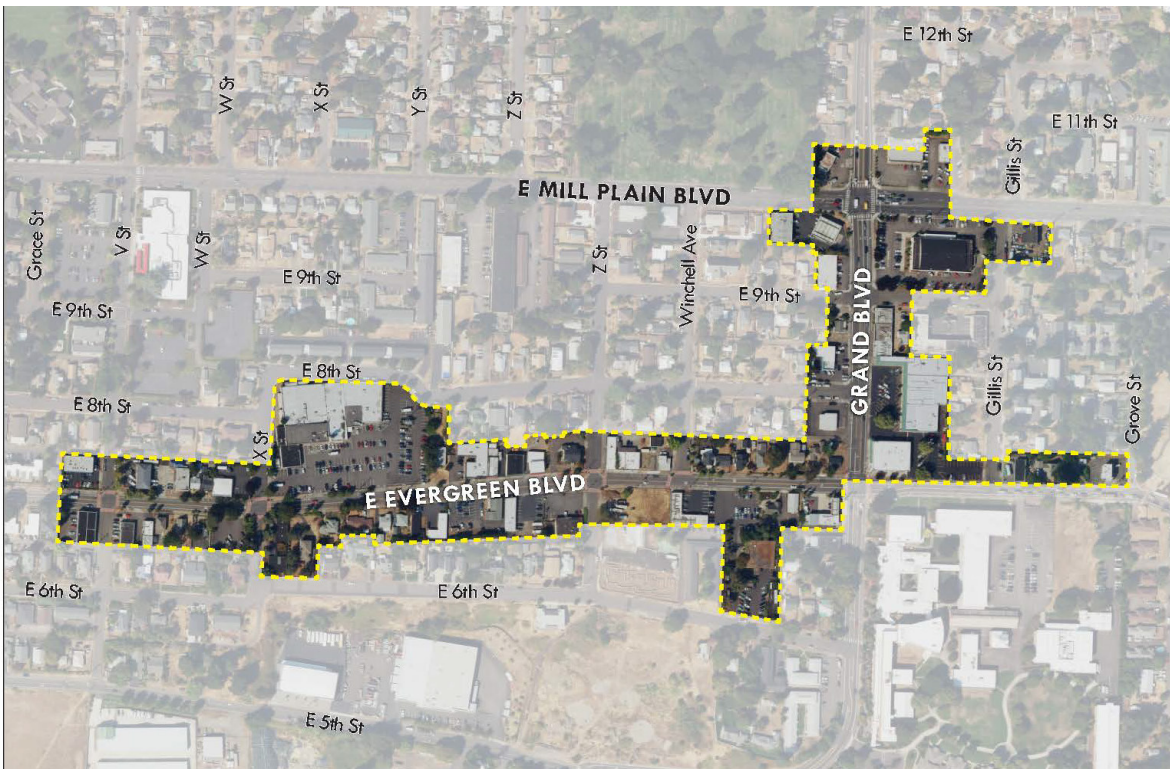
**DATE:** September 10, 2021

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Bryan Snodgrass, Principal Planner, Community and Economic Development Department

**RE:** September 20 workshop review of the Evergreen and Grand component of the Commercial Corridors Strategy

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The September 20 workshop is intended to update the City Council on the status of the Evergreen and Grand corridors planning process and the resulting Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridor Strategy (Attachment A) which is now available for review. The Draft Strategy will be reviewed at a virtual community meeting to be scheduled in the coming weeks, and pending input is anticipated to be scheduled for Planning Commission and City Council adoption hearings later this fall and

winter. As a strategy document the draft does not including specific zoning changes or other implementation measures, which are anticipated to be brought forward later in 2022.

The overall Commercial Corridors Strategy project was originally initiated in 2019 to enhance existing commercial corridors, increase walkability, ensure access to services and amenities, support job growth, and increase housing opportunities. The larger project was originally envisioned to also cover the St. Johns/St. James couplet and Fourth Plain and Mill Plain Boulevards, but has out of necessity focused on Evergreen and Grand during the pandemic. Future work on the couplet and Mill Plain and Fourth Plain will be integrated into the City's Comprehensive Plan update process. Current work on the Evergreen and Grand corridors may allow for revisitation of the St. Johns/St. James couplet in its own planning process; however, timelines and resources are still uncertain.

The Draft Strategy goals and objectives are consistent with what was previously discussed at the last Council workshop on March 8, 2021. Three sub-portions of the area are identified, a predominantly commercial mixed-use corridor on Grand Boulevard, a predominantly residential mixed-use corridor on Evergreen, and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) hub at the intersection of Grand and Mill Plain Boulevards.

The Draft Strategy recommends relaxing existing mixed-use building requirements along Evergreen Boulevard by allowing new apartment buildings with or without first floor commercial uses, but continuing to require first floor commercial on most of Grand Boulevard. New standards are recommended for active street front edges, whether commercial or residential.

Building height limits are proposed to be modulated from the current maximum of 50 feet, with slight height reductions in some areas and increases in others. A limit of five stories/65 ft. is recommended on portions of the Mill Plain and Grand intersection, four stories/50 ft. on most of Grand and parts of Evergreen, and three stories/40 ft. on other parts of Evergreen.

Parking standards are recommended in recognition of the importance of right-sizing parking on the viability of commercial and residential developments. A standard of one off-street parking space per residential unit is proposed for both single and multi-family housing along the corridors. One space per 1,000 square feet is proposed for commercial uses. Ground floor retail parking requirements are proposed to be eliminated, with these uses relying on the on-street network for parking needs.

Other regulatory recommendations are as follows:

- Prohibit new uses potentially inconsistent with corridor visions, such as big-box retail; motor vehicle repair, sales and rental; gas stations; self-storage; and drive-thru establishments. Existing uses can be maintained.
- Adopt standards that support activating vacant and underutilized spaces.
- Develop regulations that provide additional access enhancements in the BRT Hub corridor area that take into consideration first/last mile solutions and universal design best practices.
- Allow for non-mixed-use housing types on smaller parcels, where appropriate.
- Explore providing flexibility for nonconforming uses, such as existing small businesses, adaptively reused single-family homes fronting the corridors, etc.

- Consider disincentivizing chains and capping commercial business sizes to accommodate small-scale retail and maintain the fine-grained development pattern of the corridors
- Explore allowances for interim/temporary uses such as food cart pods.
- Create standards for ground floor residential to ensure streetfront activation and interest.
- Develop design guidelines bolstering local identity and street activation that considers development affordability
- Encourage streetscape improvements in all redevelopment projects.

Non regulatory implementation recommendations are:

- Create a business district to support art, events, and other placemaking
- Extend the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program calibrated to implement the vision and goals for the corridors and add workforce housing
- Attract and retain neighborhood-serving businesses
- Establish a storefront improvement program to support existing businesses
- Establish a signage and placemaking program along Grand Boulevard and in the BRT Hub
- Identify opportunities to support houseless communities and promote community safety
- Explore strategies to maintain economic diversity and housing affordability, especially for low- and moderate-income households
- Consider height bonuses in exchange for attainably priced workforce housing units
- Improve connectivity to nearby destinations such as downtown Vancouver, the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, and the Pearson Field Airport as an economic development strategy.
- Leverage environmental remediation funding opportunities as an incentive to develop eligible sites

The Draft Strategy also contains various transportation recommendations to be implemented in the Transportation System Plan (TSP) update.

As noted, the Draft Strategy will be reviewed at a virtual community meeting anticipated in the early fall. Community and stakeholder input provided in previous meetings and follow up surveys in March 2020, August 2020 and February 2021 was documented in the March 2021 Council workshop [materials](#).

Attachments:

A: Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridor Strategy Public Comment Draft



GRAND BLVD E EVERGREEN BLVD

# EVERGREEN & GRAND

## COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS STRATEGY

**PUBLIC COMMENT DRAFT: SEPTEMBER 2021**



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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Acronym:  
CED: Community and Economic Development

Cover Photo Source: Google Maps

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The City of Vancouver is located within the ancestral territory of the Chinook, Klickitat, and Cowlitz people, among other tribes — all of whom have a rich and enduring relationship with the Columbia River and surrounding forests, coasts, and plains that spans over 10,000 years.

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# GLOSSARY

## 'Active Edge' Development Standards

Regulations that support and create walkable pedestrian environments through targeted setbacks and transparency requirements.

## Adaptive Reuse

The renovation and/or rehabilitation of existing structures in order to reuse them for purposes that they were not originally built for.

## Average Daily Trips (ADTs)

The total number of trips, both in-bound and out-bound, within a 24 hour weekday period, generated by a particular use or development.

## Building Form, Massing, and Scale

The shape, orientation, and size of buildings as well as their physical placement within a parcel.

## Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

A bus-based transit system that is designed to be higher capacity, more reliable, and more frequent than a conventional bus system.

## Canyon Effect

A visual and environmental effect on corridors that occurs when tall structures flank both sides of a street.

## Development Standards

Regulatory code that addresses issues like building height, setbacks, lot coverage, and lot area.

## Easement

A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for use by the public, a corporation or another person or entity.

## Gentrification

The process of neighborhood change that leads to a shift in socioeconomic composition of neighborhoods due to the in-migration of higher income, in-migrants leading to displacement of lower income residents and businesses.

## Horizontal Mixed-Use

A form of development that incorporates multiple uses on a single parcel but not necessarily within a single building.

## Micromobility

A form of personal transportation using lightweight vehicles like electric scooters or bicycles.

## Multimodal

When describing a street or transportation network, multimodal means it provides options for people to get around on foot, on bicycles, in transit, or in motorized vehicles.

## Nonconforming Uses

A use of land, building, structure or use which lawfully existed at the time of its original construction, but does not conform with contemporary development regulations.

## Overlay Zone

A designated area within a base zoning district for which specific land use regulations apply, in addition to the base zoning requirements.

## Placemaking

The practice of leveraging community assets and inspirations to create public spaces that champion and support community health and vibrancy.

#### Public Realm

Space that the general public has access to, including streets, sidewalks, parks, and civic plazas.

#### Right-of-way

Land that is controlled by the city and reserved for public use such as for streets and sidewalks.

#### Right-size Parking

Parking standards that provide just enough parking to meet demand, taking into consideration surrounding land uses as well as transit and mobility access.

#### Setbacks

The minimum allowable horizontal distance from a given point or line of reference, such as a property line, to the nearest vertical wall or other element of a building, structure, or edge of vehicle parking area.

#### Traffic Calming

The use of design features to improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. This can include for example speed humps, curb extensions, or narrowing traffic lanes.

#### Transit-Oriented Development

Residential and commercial centers designed to maximize access by transit and non-motorized transportation.

#### Transportation Demand Management

The application of strategies to reduce travel demand and/or redistribute demand to allow for more efficient use of transportation infrastructure, such as programs to encourage carpooling and transit usage.

#### Vertical Mixed-Use

A form of development that includes multiple uses within the same building with typical developments reserving ground floors for commercial use.

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# CHAPTER 1

## BACKGROUND



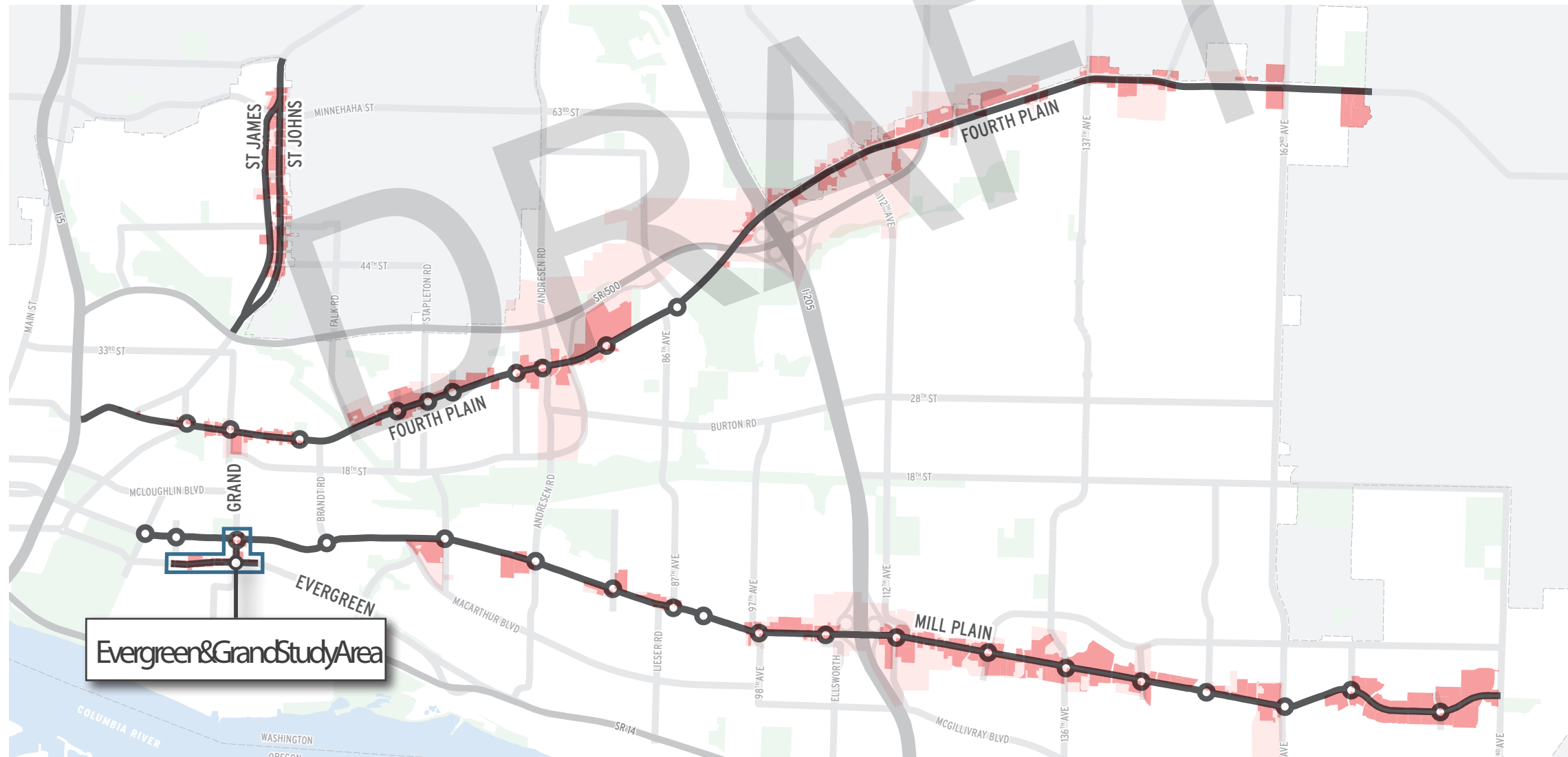


# WHAT IS THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS PROJECT?

The Evergreen and Grand corridors are part of the Commercial Corridors Strategy (CCS), a larger citywide effort initiated in 2019 to improve major commercial corridors and nearby areas throughout Vancouver where residents work, shop, live, and travel. The CCS is a community planning process intended to enhance existing commercial corridors, increase transportation options, ensure access to services and amenities, support job growth, and increase housing opportunities on the corridors.

The overall process originally included study corridors in three general areas: the St. Johns/St. James couplet, Fourth Plain and Mill Plain, and Evergreen and Grand as shown in Figure 1. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project focus shifted to the Evergreen and Grand study area, and future work on the remaining study corridors is expected to be integrated into larger citywide planning processes and undertaken as resources allow.

FIG. 1: COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR STRATEGY CITYWIDE MAP





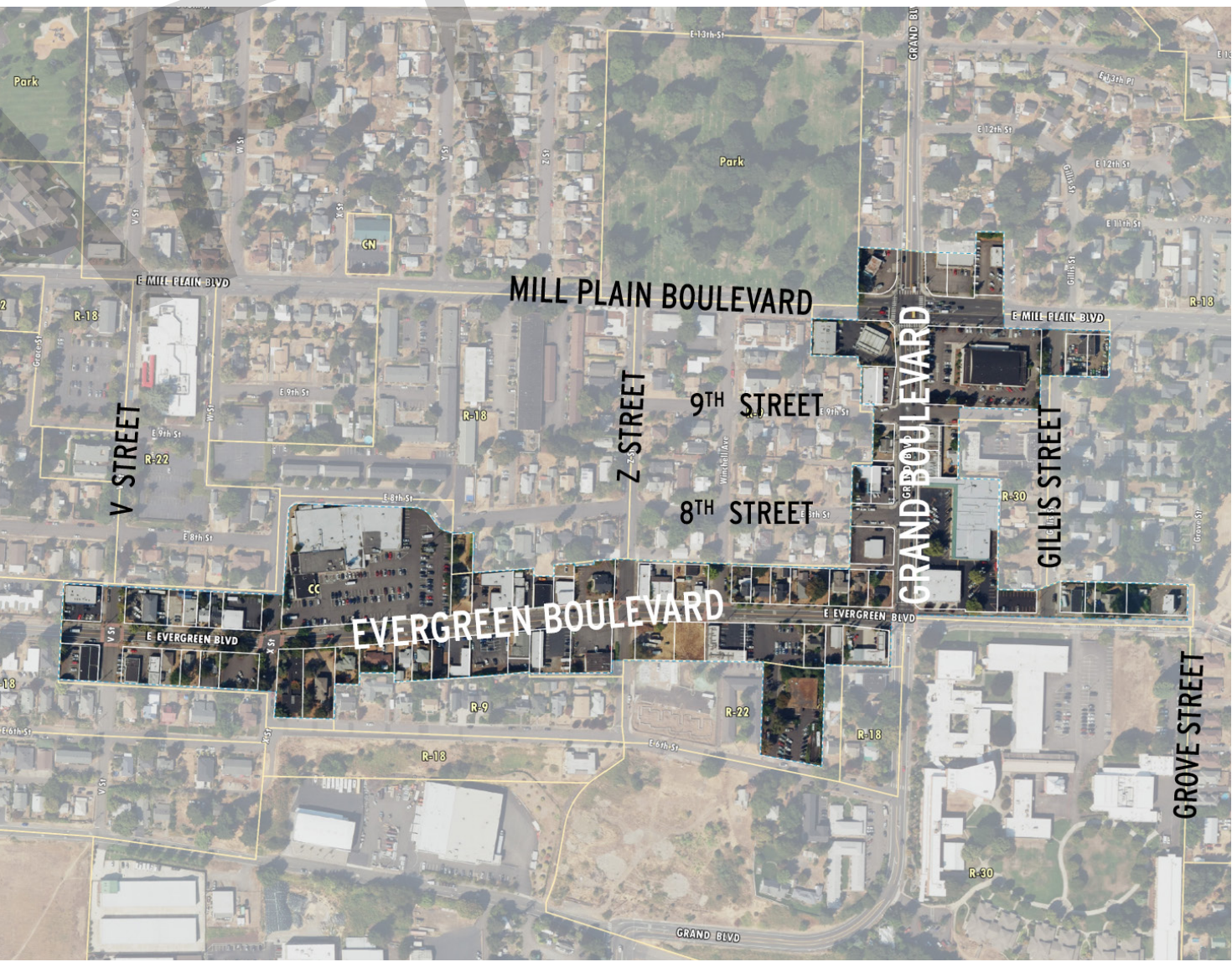
# EVERGREEN AND GRAND COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS STRATEGY

The Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy report is a subarea plan for the study area (as shown in Figure 2), and the culmination of the two-year community planning process that evaluated the types of uses that are allowed, regulatory standards for new development, parking and access, the pedestrian environment, and other issues identified by the community and stakeholders.

The Strategy report includes three primary components.

1. A long-term community vision with accompanying goals and objectives
2. Corridor vision concepts that establish a land use framework for the study area and highlight three complementary land use areas with anchor development sites
3. A set of recommendations that consider short-term regulatory changes, as well as mid- to long-term policies, programs, and tools to help achieve the vision over time

FIG. 2: EVERGREEN AND GRAND STUDY AREA



The City Council adopted a six-month moratorium on new development along Evergreen and Grand Boulevards in November 2019 but lifted it in May 2020 in recognition of local economic conditions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.



FIG. 3: EVERGREEN AND GRAND COMMERCIAL DISTRICT ILLUSTRATION



# PUBLIC PROCESS

The Strategy was refined through outreach and engagement efforts held at each stage of the process, as outlined below. Community and stakeholder feedback helped to identify priorities for future development of the corridors, establish a long-term community vision, and refine recommendations to achieve the vision and goals. The project team also held workshops with the Planning Commission and City Council at key milestones to review and provide feedback throughout the process. The full description and detailed summaries of community engagement efforts can be viewed in Appendix A.

## Issues and Opportunities

The project team evaluated corridor conditions, conducted a market analysis, and gathered community and stakeholder input through an in-person kick-off open house and online survey on issues, opportunities, and priorities for future development of the corridors. See below sections for more detailed information on the results of this work.

- Issues, Opportunities, and Priorities (Chapter 2)
- Corridor Conditions Summary (Appendix B)
- Market Opportunities Analysis (Appendix C)

## Community Vision

Issues, opportunities, and priorities identified during the first stage of community outreach helped shape a vision for the area that includes specific goals and objectives. These were then reviewed and refined through a virtual open house and online survey to ensure they reflected community priorities.

- Community Vision (Chapter 3)
- Vision, Goals, and Objectives (Appendix D)

## Corridor Vision Concepts and Recommendations

Public feedback on the corridor vision concepts and initial recommendations was gathered through a virtual open house and online survey, and stakeholder meetings with key property owners along the corridors. The full set of recommendations included in this Strategy report includes short-term recommendations for regulatory changes, and mid- to long-term recommendations for policies, programs, and tools to achieve the community vision over time.

- Corridor Vision Concepts (Chapter 4)
- Recommendations (Chapter 5)

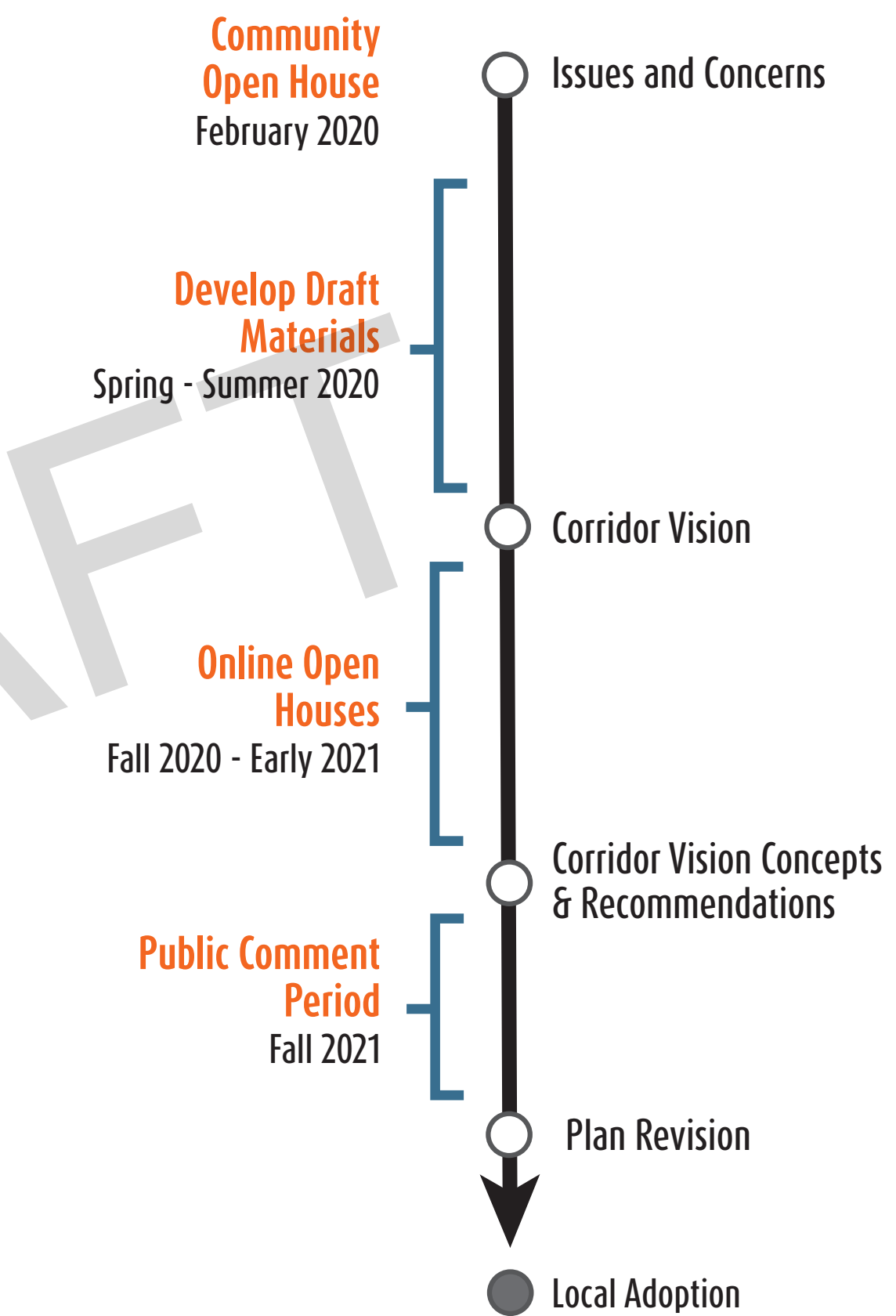


FIG. 4: PROJECT TIMELINE





# CHAPTER 2

## CURRENT CONDITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES



# CURRENT CORRIDOR CONDITIONS

Evergreen and Grand Boulevards are locally-oriented commercial corridors that boast an emerging small business district. They are located east of downtown Vancouver and the Fort Vancouver Historic Reserve and adjacent to established neighborhoods. There are a variety of existing land uses in the study area, including commercial, retail, shopping and dining, office, automotive, and institutional, and buildings are generally smaller-scale and oriented to the street, with varied setbacks and some parking located in front of buildings. There are also single-family residential homes on Evergreen Boulevard, some of which have been adaptively reused for commercial purposes over time and contribute to the unique character of the corridors.

As a general rule, successful commercial areas need somewhere between 5,000-15,000 average daily trips (ADT) of vehicle or multimodal traffic for businesses to thrive. While trip mode is shifting as people increasingly choose multimodal travel options, the importance of visibility for small businesses remains a key consideration. In addition to trips, retail success requires rooftops, as nearby residential development provides some demand for commercial retail uses within a business district. Given nearby residentially-driven demand and the importance of visibility, the market study for this area indicates that Grand Boulevard is the more suitable market for new commercial development with approximately 10,000 average daily trips, proximity to the forthcoming Mill Plain BRT extension, and existing small retailers. There is the potential to accommodate a thriving commercial retail environment along Grand with improvements to the design and orientation of buildings, parking, the pedestrian environment, and other multimodal infrastructure in the roadway as part of future development.

Evergreen Boulevard is more intimate than Grand, with a narrower right-of-way, lower trip volumes (4,000-6,000 ADT) and existing traffic calming measures and crossing improvements that reduce speeds, improve safety for vulnerable road users, and enhance the pedestrian environment. With low trip volumes, a walkable pedestrian environment, and the existing uses, market demand along this corridor is primarily for new residential development and other uses that provide basic needs and services for the neighborhood. Residential and other complementary commercial uses would help to support existing businesses and the success of new retail in the study area. With the presence of existing on-street parking, there is also the opportunity for additional spaces to serve commercial retail and create a buffer between pedestrians and moving traffic.

At the north end of the study area C-TRAN will also be constructing a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that will run along Mill Plain Boulevard. The future Mill Plain BRT will have three stations within a five-minute walking distance of the corridors, providing opportunities to benefit existing commercial businesses and connect people to both the Evergreen and Grand commercial corridors and other community destinations throughout the City. Strong demand for residential units around the study area coupled with the future Mill Plain BRT also makes the intersection at Grand and Mill Plain Boulevards a prime location for higher-density multi-family development affordable to a variety of incomes.

# EXISTING ZONING

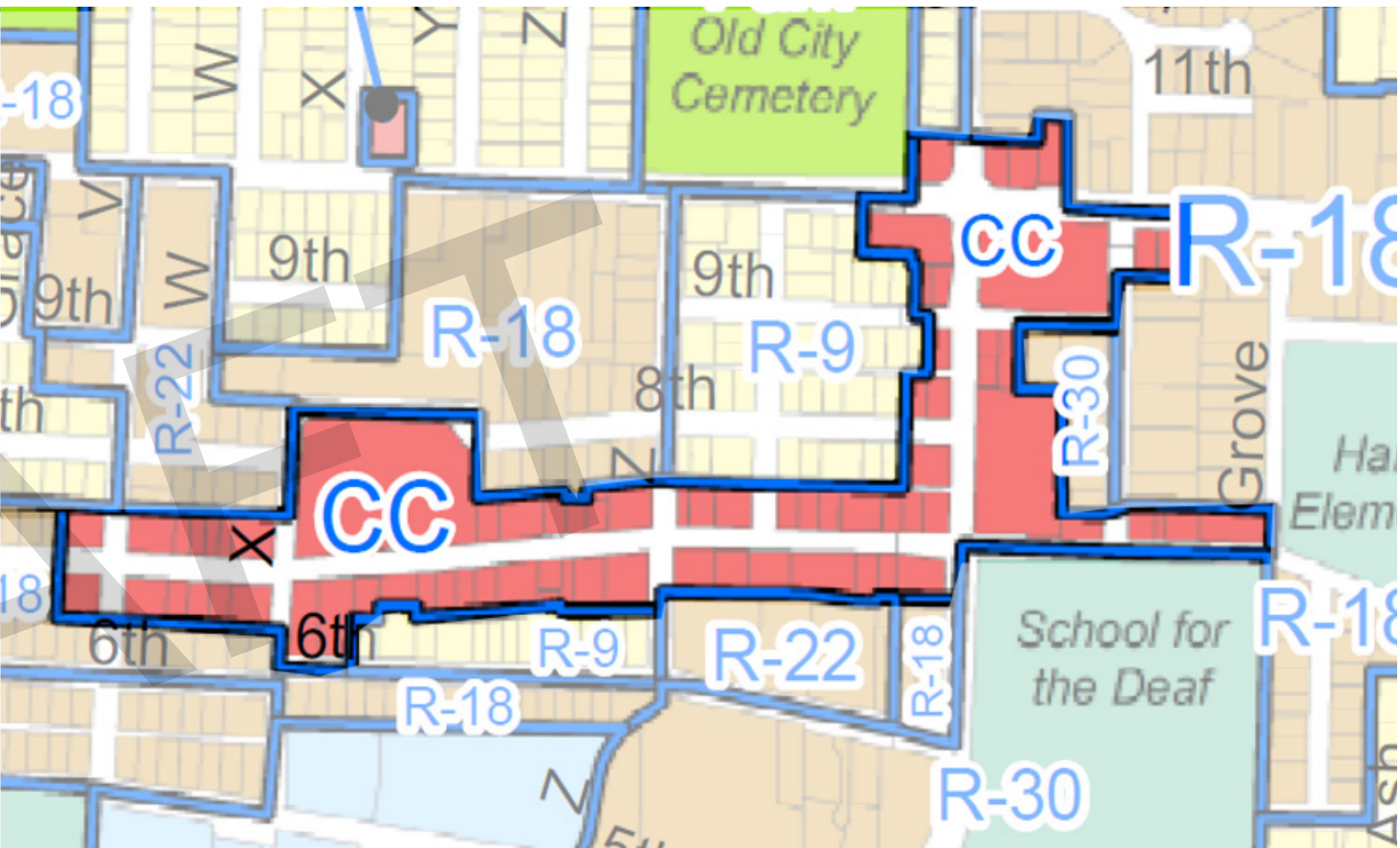
Current zoning throughout the study area is Community Commercial (CC), which is intended to provide for retail goods and services purchased regularly by residents of several nearby neighborhoods, accommodate offices, institutions, and mixed-use housing, and provide significant opportunities for walking, bicycle and transit trips encouraged through building and site design, landscaping, and access. However, some development standards and allowed uses within the CC zone do not recognize the unique built environment of these specific corridors, and may result in development that doesn't fully meets the zone's intent.

Allowed uses within the CC zone include both allowances and limitations that are not appropriate for a vibrant, neighborhood-serving commercial corridor. This includes limitations on residential uses; limitations on lodging; less restrictive retail allowances including big box retail; auto repair, sales and rental; gas stations; and self-storage. Some development standards in this zoning district also do not recognize the fine-grained and more urban development patterns that currently exist on both Evergreen and Grand.

The Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy seeks to address these issues, ensuring that development regulations recognize the unique built environment that exists in this area and promote development consistent with the intent of the zoning. In addition to regulatory changes, the Strategy identifies recommendations for other non-regulatory policies, programs, and tools that are intended to be implemented over time to help achieve the long-term vision and goals for the corridors.

The full Corridor Conditions Summary and Market Analysis conducted for the study area can be viewed in Appendices B and C.

FIG. 5: EXISTING ZONING DESIGNATION



## COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL (CC)

- Intended to provide for retail goods and services purchased regularly by residents of several nearby neighborhoods.
- Current regulations and allowed uses do not support development that meets the zone's intent or the vision and goals established through this process.

# ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following summary provides a high-level overview of issues and opportunities identified through the planning process that reflect community priorities for future development along the Evergreen and Grand commercial corridors. This input shaped the long-term community vision, goals, and objectives for the corridors with a focus on what types of land uses are appropriate and how people can best access them.

The Issues & Opportunities Community Engagement Summary can be viewed in Appendix A.

## ISSUES

- Recent developments seen as out of context and character with the surrounding neighborhood
- Perceived poor condition and function of existing buildings and the public realm
- Lack of access to parks, open space, and community gathering spaces
- Concerns about gentrification and maintaining affordability and diversity in housing types as development occurs
- Some existing land uses do not support walking and biking or a unique identity for the small business district
- Safety for pedestrians and bicyclists and lack of safe access throughout the corridor, especially for people accessing Harney Heights Elementary School and the Washington Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- Impacts from the homelessness crisis

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Accommodate small-scale retail, eating and drinking establishments, and other active uses such as restaurants and breweries, food carts, community event space, a local grocer or satellite farmers market, and complementary uses that provide basic needs and services to neighborhood residents
- Promote publicly-accessible parks, plazas, and community gathering spaces where appropriate on the corridors
- Encourage a range of housing types that are affordable to a variety of incomes
- Proactively address gentrification and displacement
- Limit uses that do not contribute to a walkable and vibrant commercial corridor
- Undertake streetscape improvements to make the corridor more livable and inviting, such as sidewalk and lighting improvements, more landscaping and street trees, etc.
- Provide adequate parking and on-street spaces for businesses
- Ensure development is consistent with the scale and character of the corridors
- Create 'anchor points' that contribute to a distinct and authentic identity for the corridors
- Improve walkability and safety for people walking, biking, using mobility devices, and using micromobility such as scooters



# CHAPTER 3

## COMMUNITY VISION





# COMMUNITY VISION

Community feedback and data on issues and opportunities gathered during the first stage of the planning process was used to develop a long-term vision that reflects community priorities for future development of the corridors, as well as supportive goals and objectives for land use, mobility, parking, urban design, and economic development. The outcome of these visions, goals, and objectives will elevate the corridors' existing status as a small business district.

## VISION

Promote equitable and diverse corridor development that is vibrant, sustainable, and mixed-use.

Foster development that recognizes and builds upon the neighborhood's unique setting, history, and character.

FIGS. 6 & 7: FEBRUARY 2020 KICK-OFF COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE



# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Land Use	Goal Strengthen current businesses while providing an appropriate mix of commercial and residential uses.
Mobility	Goal Establish a balanced, multi-modal network of motor vehicle, transit, walking, and biking routes through the corridors.
Parking	Goal Provide adequate parking to serve existing uses and future development.
Urban Design	Goal Create public and private spaces that are inclusive, integrated, and contribute positively to the livability of the corridors.
Economic Development	Goal Provide ample opportunities for small-scale, locally-owned businesses to thrive.

## LAND USE

A mix of residential and commercial uses is generally needed to create vibrant and healthy corridors in the long-term. Currently, there is a strong demand for housing citywide with commercial and retail uses playing a secondary and supporting role. As the region emerges from the current pandemic, infill or redevelopment of the corridors should ‘fill the gaps’ of land uses that are missing like income-based housing, restaurants, retail shops, and plazas and other community gathering spaces.

**Goal** Strengthen current businesses while providing an appropriate mix of commercial and residential uses.

### Objectives

- Provide viable opportunities for new retail and dining uses that attract local and regional businesses.
- Support a mix of uses that serve the daily needs of surrounding neighborhood residents and employees.
- Encourage transit-supportive uses near the planned Mill Plain Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station at the intersection of Mill Plain and Grand.
- Allow a variety of housing types to serve a range of needs, preferences, ages, and incomes.
- Discourage additional motor vehicle related uses (service and repair shops, gas stations, etc.) in the corridors.
- Discourage nuisance uses that may lead to increased crime, or excessive traffic or noise.
- Foster street-oriented uses that create walking and biking activity throughout all business hours, all days, and all seasons.

## MOBILITY

Transportation and mobility improvements should maximize opportunities for corridor residents, visitors, and employees to safely and efficiently traverse and visit the corridor as well as accessing the future Vine BRT planned for Mill Plain Boulevard. Implementation of many of the Mobility objectives will be incorporated into the current Transportation System Plan update and subsequent implementation activities.

**Goal** Establish a balanced, multi-modal network of motor vehicle, transit, walking, and biking routes through the corridors.

### Objectives

- Provide safe and direct sidewalk and bike lane routes and intersection crossings within and to the corridors for all users regardless of age or physical ability.
- Foster safe and comfortable connections to and from transit, including the planned Mill Plain Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and existing bus routes.
- Limit excessive traffic speed through effective speed reduction and/or traffic calming measures.
- Maintain access for emergency, service, maintenance, delivery, and personal vehicles to businesses.

# PARKING

Providing appropriate parking can reduce the impacts on surrounding neighborhoods as well as support commercial businesses and residential development along the corridor. ‘Right-sized’ parking reduces the total infrastructure costs for development, which can limit or discourage redevelopment or otherwise unnecessarily increase the cost of housing and commercial rents.

**Goal** Provide adequate parking to serve existing uses and future development.

## Objectives

- Support existing and future retail uses by providing adjacent short-term curbside vehicle parking, bike parking, and micromobility parking, as appropriate.
- Minimize impacts of vehicle parking on the active transportation environment (walking, biking, using mobility devices, using micromobility, accessing transit).
- Limit excessive spillover parking into adjacent neighborhoods.
- Consider ‘right-sized’ parking approach to support corridor vibrancy and affordability.

# URBAN DESIGN

The public realm must contribute positively to the economic vitality and livability of the corridors. Evergreen and Grand Boulevard should be more than a conduit for moving people through the neighborhood. They should include “placemaking” improvements that result in a setting that spurs high-quality desirable development and makes people want to visit businesses on the corridor.

**Goal** Create public and private spaces that are inclusive, integrated, and contribute positively to the livability of the corridors.

## Objectives

- Create opportunities for cultural, community, and other amenities that attract customers and strengthen businesses.
- Encourage safe and active public spaces that are inclusive, accessible, and comfortable for all residents, customers, employees, and visitors.
- Encourage new public spaces that contribute to the livability and economic vitality of the corridors.
- Foster a distinct identity and improve corridor aesthetics by increasing the amount of cohesive landscaping and streetscape features.
- Promote sustainable design for buildings, sites, and streets.
- Ensure form, massing, and scale of new development is context-sensitive and supports and strengthens the livability and vitality of the corridors.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

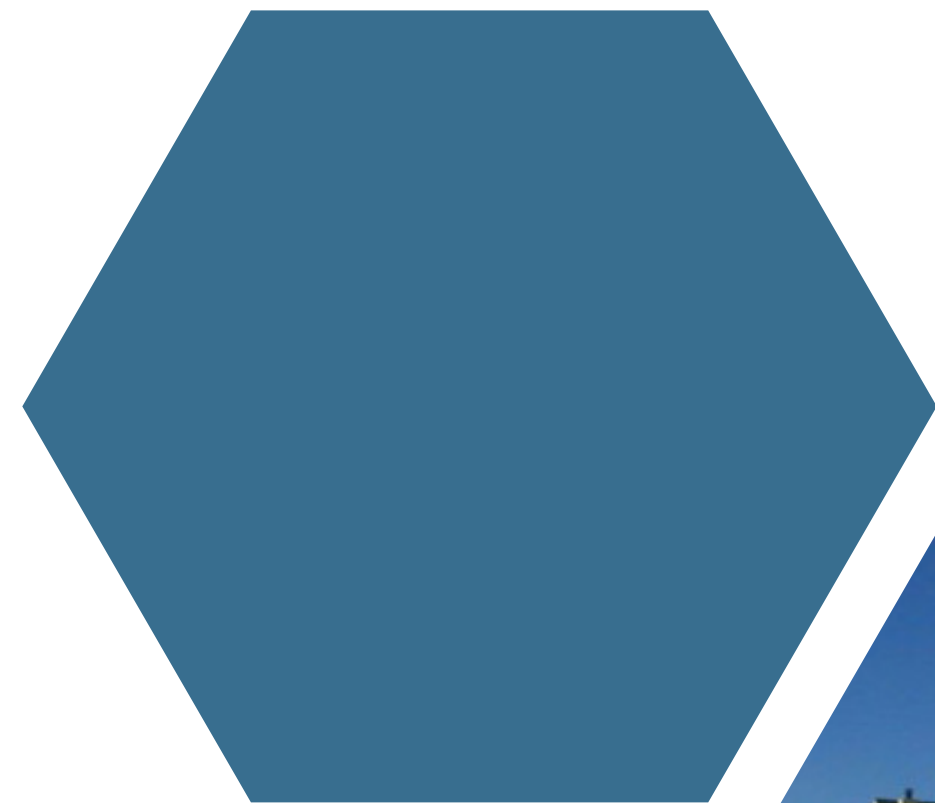
Small, locally-owned businesses make neighborhood districts unique and interesting places to visit. Actions taken that generate sustained developer interest should be done in a way that prioritizes the success and vitality of existing and future local, neighborhood-serving businesses located along the corridors.

**Goal** Provide ample opportunities for small-scale, locally-owned businesses to thrive.

### Objectives

- Maximize redevelopment opportunity sites.
- Discourage gentrification and displacement by identifying policies, programs, or other measures to address affordability concerns and wealth creation opportunities for residents and businesses.
- Provide regulatory flexibility to foster innovation and creativity.
- Strengthen existing local and small businesses by establishing programs and tools to support their economic viability.
- Implement policies, programs, and other tools to mitigate impacts of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and support small business recovery and resilience.





# CHAPTER 4

## CORRIDOR VISION CONCEPTS

# CORRIDOR VISION CONCEPTS

The corridor vision concepts are intended to establish a land use framework to achieve the vision and goals for the study area and were shaped by a mix of best practices in planning and urban design as well as public input. The concepts consider current and future real estate market conditions, the feasibility of different development typologies, and the neighborhood's history and character.

The diagram on the following page provides an easy-to-understand description of 'big ideas' and establishes a land use framework for the study area. It includes three distinct yet complementary land use areas— a Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor, Residential Mixed-Use Corridor, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Hub. Anchor development sites (indicated by 'A' in Figure 4) are also shown where either existing use enhancements or future redevelopment could catalyze positive change. A summary of each vision concept area is provided below:

## VISION CONCEPT AREAS

### Grand Boulevard Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor

Located along Grand Boulevard at the crossroads of the corridors, extending from the intersection of Evergreen Boulevard north to Ninth Street. Land uses and infrastructure improvements should establish a unique neighborhood 'heart' that is vibrant and recognizable to create a compact commercial core for the District.

### Evergreen Boulevard Residential Mixed-Use Corridor

Encompasses parcels along Evergreen Boulevard from the western edge of the study area to near Grand Boulevard. A greater emphasis on residential development that complements and strengthens existing desirable commercial uses is envisioned here.

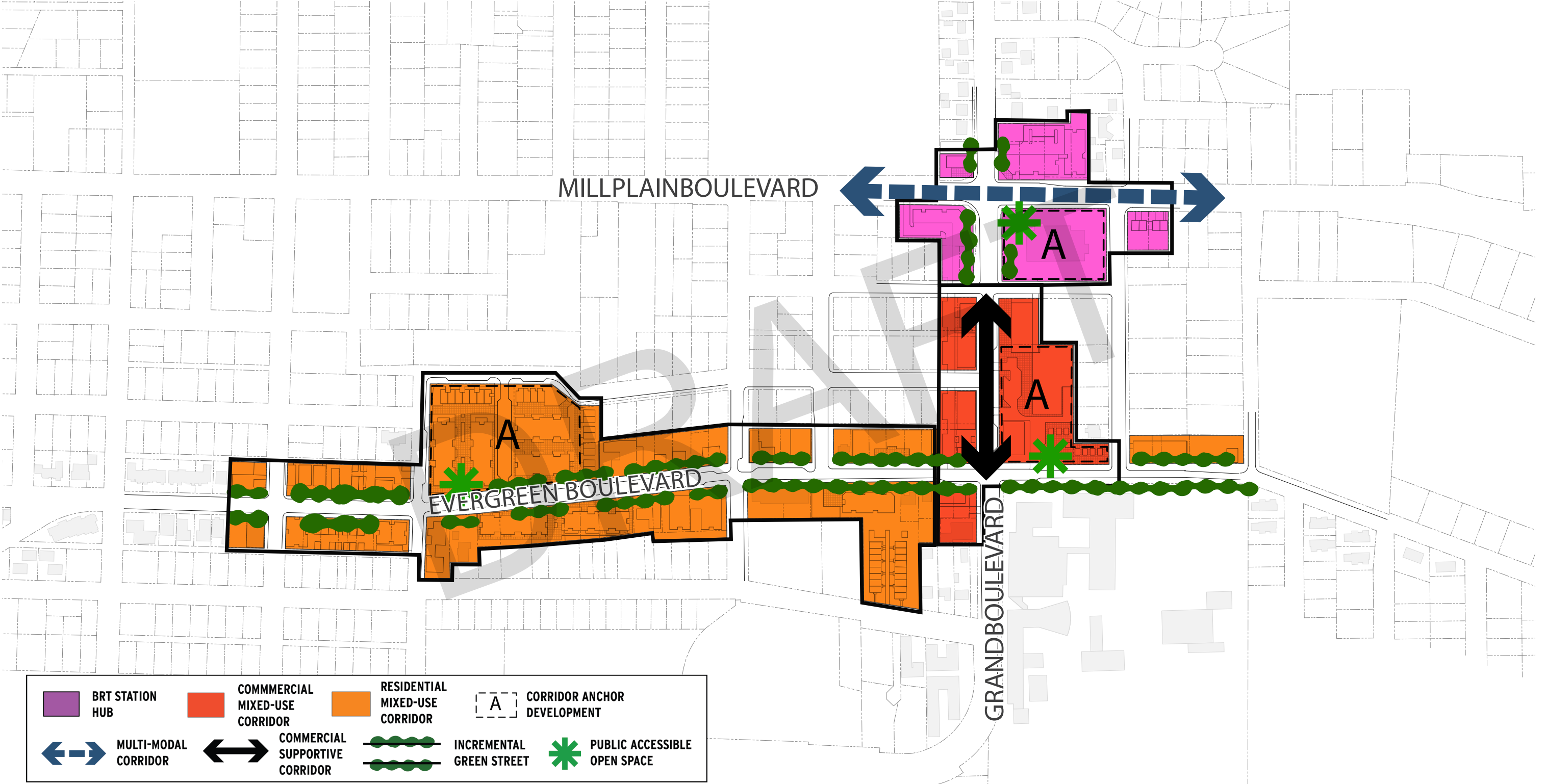
### Mill Plain/Grand Intersection Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Hub

Includes parcels at the intersection of Mill Plain Boulevard and Grand Boulevard. There is a planned BRT station that will be built in this area, providing premium transit access to the City's two largest employment hubs—downtown and the Columbia Tech Center. The strategy envisions changes that address the needs of those who are transit-dependent and will benefit most from the future Mill Plain BRT.

The Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors are largely situated within the Hudson's Bay neighborhood. In the 1998 Hudson's Bay Neighborhood Action Plan, the Hudson's Bay Neighborhood Association coined this area as "the original 'East Vancouver,' where businesses served neighborhood residents as well as the road users of Evergreen Boulevard and 5th Street which were once the primary highways to Camas and the Columbia Gorge.



FIG. 8: EVERGREEN AND GRAND CORRIDOOR VISION CONCEPTS MAP

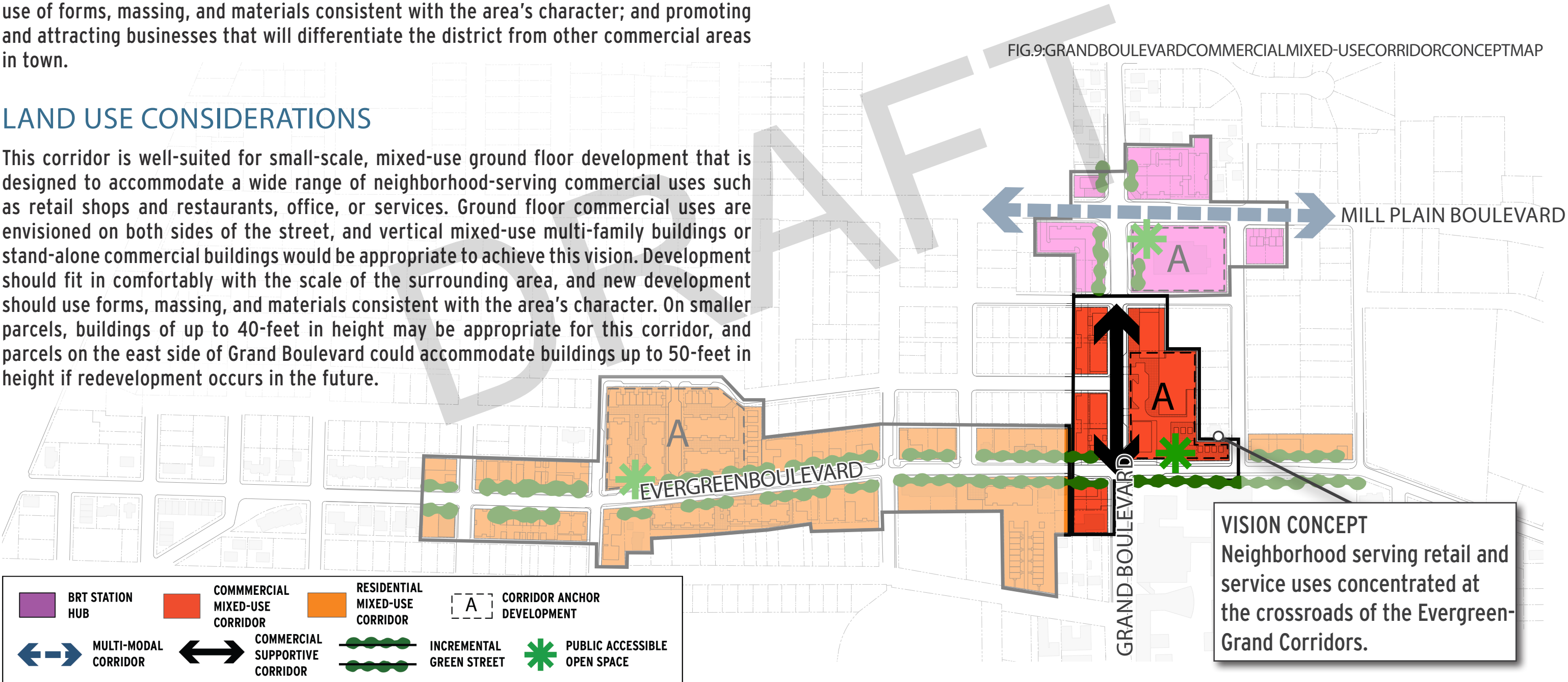


# COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE CORRIDOR CONCEPT

The Grand Boulevard Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor envisions neighborhood-serving retail and service uses at the crossroads of the Evergreen and Grand corridors where there is an existing concentration of commercial uses and potential opportunity sites, as well as higher levels of visibility. Critical elements for commercial success in this area include a new emphasis on small-scale ‘entrepreneur-friendly’ mixed-use development; promoting use of forms, massing, and materials consistent with the area’s character; and promoting and attracting businesses that will differentiate the district from other commercial areas in town.

## LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

This corridor is well-suited for small-scale, mixed-use ground floor development that is designed to accommodate a wide range of neighborhood-serving commercial uses such as retail shops and restaurants, office, or services. Ground floor commercial uses are envisioned on both sides of the street, and vertical mixed-use multi-family buildings or stand-alone commercial buildings would be appropriate to achieve this vision. Development should fit in comfortably with the scale of the surrounding area, and new development should use forms, massing, and materials consistent with the area’s character. On smaller parcels, buildings of up to 40-feet in height may be appropriate for this corridor, and parcels on the east side of Grand Boulevard could accommodate buildings up to 50-feet in height if redevelopment occurs in the future.





ANCHOR SITE

The anchor site for this corridor vision concept provides the opportunity to catalyze mixed-use development by attracting businesses that will help to foster a unique identity for the corridors. In addition to providing the land use framework to encourage building improvements, recommendations brought forward as part of this process should also promote flexibility to make improvements or renovations that draw neighborhood-serving businesses to locate here.

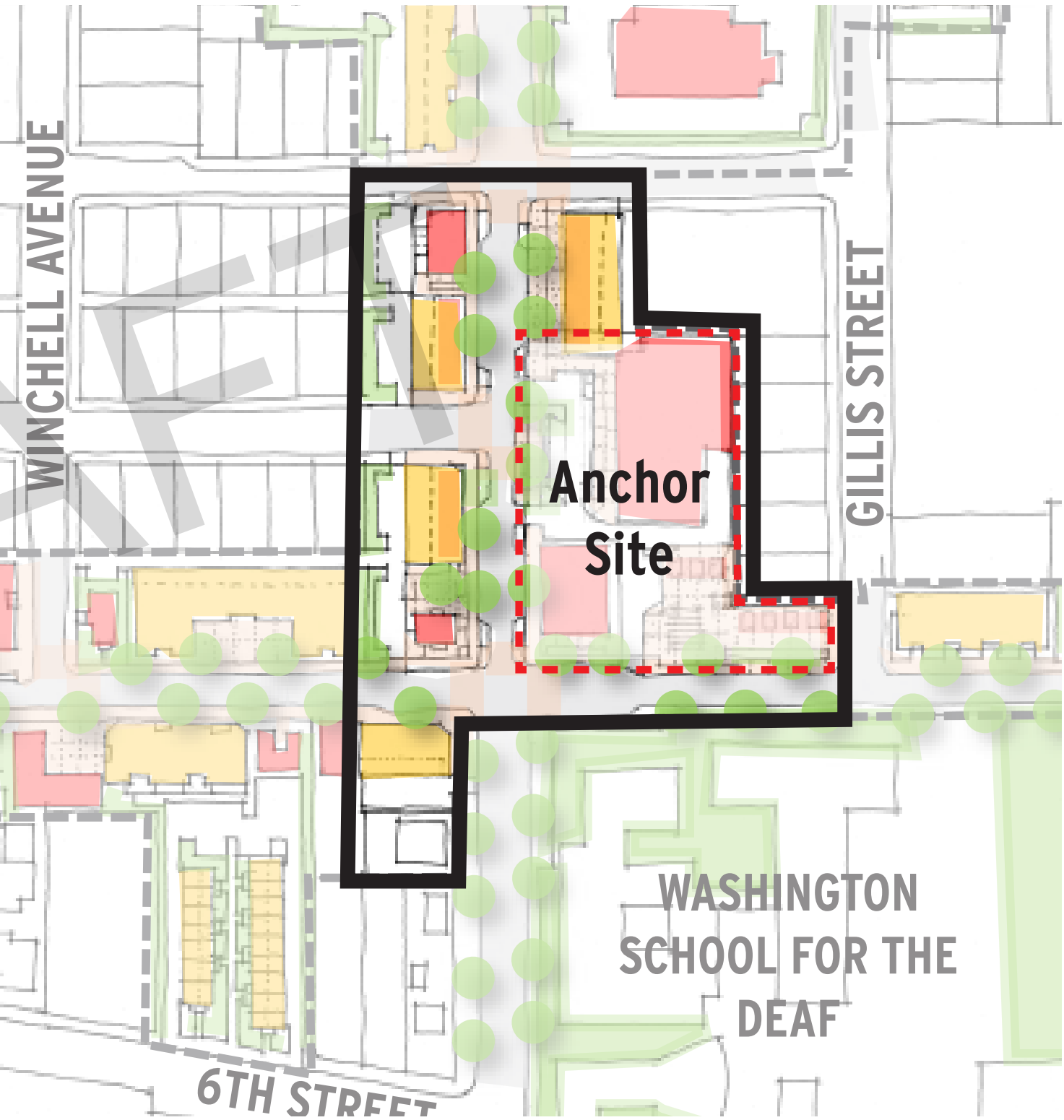
FIG. 10: EXISTING COMMERCIAL SHOPPING CENTER



FIG. 11: POTENTIAL ENHANCED COMMERCIAL



FIG. 12: COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE CORRIDOR ANCHOR SITE





# PUBLIC REALM CONSIDERATIONS

The public realm vision for this area includes wider sidewalks with street trees, streetlights, and benches; reducing crossing distances for those walking, especially vulnerable users; and decreasing speeds to improve safety, access, mobility, and storefront visibility. The vision for the public realm, right-of-way, and streetscape considerations that result from this process will be used to inform Vancouver Moves, the City’s Transportation System Plan update currently underway, including how the street is classified in the future and design changes that will enhance and strengthen commercial uses and the pedestrian experience.

## PUBLIC REALM VISION

- Wider sidewalks with street trees, streetlights, and benches
- Reduce crossing distances for those walking biking, using mobility devices, and using micromobility
- Decrease speeds to improve safety, access, and mobility

FIG. 13: PARKING ALTERNATIVES - SEATING



FIG. 14: PARKING ALTERNATIVES - STREET CAFE



FIG. 15: ACTIVATED SIDEWALK WITH STREET TREES AND FURNITURE



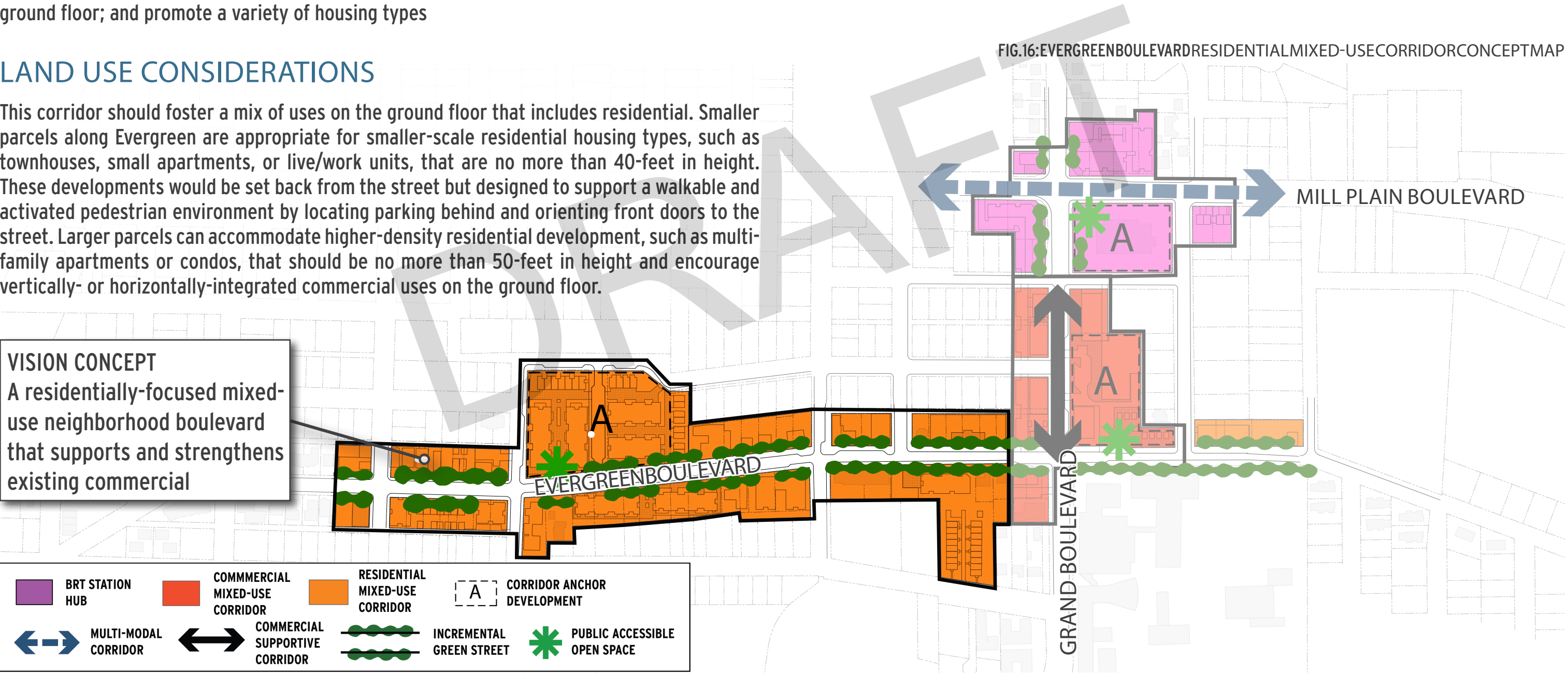
# RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE CORRIDOR CONCEPT

The Evergreen Boulevard Residential Mixed-Use Corridor envisions new development along Evergreen Boulevard to be generally residentially-focused while supporting and strengthening existing commercial uses, with uses and buildings that are compatible with the neighborhood context and contribute to an active and safe public realm. This corridor should foster a mix of uses; encourage rather than require ground floor commercial; allow for live/work units on the ground floor; and promote a variety of housing types

## LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

This corridor should foster a mix of uses on the ground floor that includes residential. Smaller parcels along Evergreen are appropriate for smaller-scale residential housing types, such as townhouses, small apartments, or live/work units, that are no more than 40-feet in height. These developments would be set back from the street but designed to support a walkable and activated pedestrian environment by locating parking behind and orienting front doors to the street. Larger parcels can accommodate higher-density residential development, such as multi-family apartments or condos, that should be no more than 50-feet in height and encourage vertically- or horizontally-integrated commercial uses on the ground floor.

**VISION CONCEPT**  
A residentially-focused mixed-use neighborhood boulevard that supports and strengthens existing commercial





# ANCHOR SITE

The anchor site for this area may be appropriate for the addition of new multi-family development to support the existing commercial uses and small businesses along Evergreen and provide publicly-accessible amenities and spaces for neighborhood residents and visitors.

FIG. 17: RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE CORRIDOR ANCHOR SITE

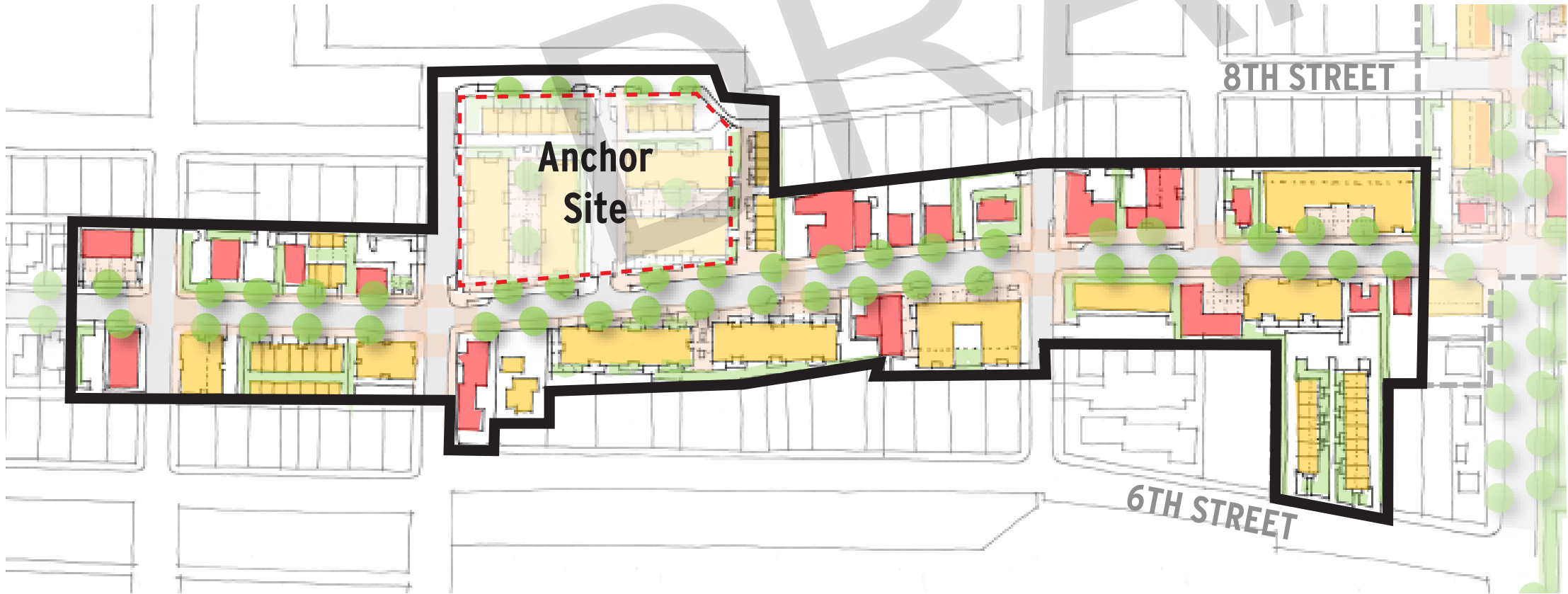


FIG.18:THREETOFOURSTORYAPARTMENTS



FIG. 19: PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE WALKWAYS

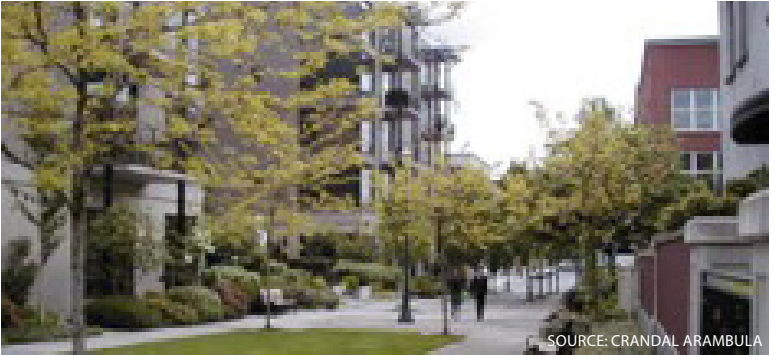


FIG. 20: PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE COURTYARDS





# PUBLIC REALM CONSIDERATIONS

The vision for the public realm in this area includes refocusing the street primarily as a neighborhood boulevard rather than a street primarily for commerce; extending and unifying the streetscape character along Evergreen; and providing a public plaza or other family-oriented publicly accessible urban open space as part of any redevelopment project . Plazas and open space provided as part of development should be accessible to the public but privately owned and maintained.

## PUBLIC REALM VISION

- Refocus street as a neighborhood boulevard rather than a street for commerce
- Extend/unify the streetscape character of Officers' row along Evergreen
- Provide additional family-oriented publicly-accessible open space as part of any redevelopment project

FIG. 21: LANDSCAPED SETBACKS



FIG. 22: WIDENED SIDEWALK/LANDSCAPED PARKWAY



FIG. 23: STREET FURNITURE IMPROVEMENT





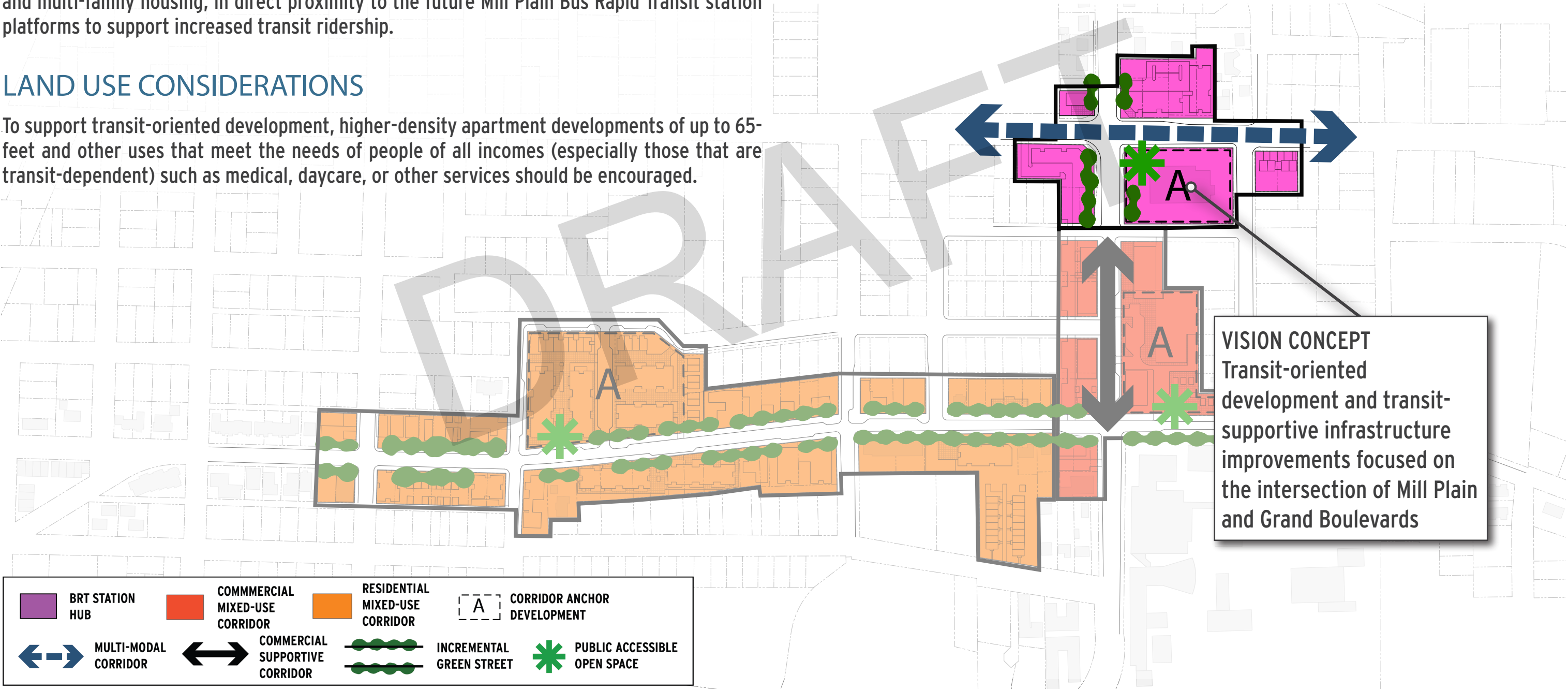
# BUS RAPID TRANSIT HUB CONCEPT

The Mill Plain/Grand Intersection BRT Hub is envisioned to accommodate transit-oriented development and transit-supportive infrastructure improvements focused on the intersection of Mill Plain and Grand Boulevards. This area should concentrate trip-generating and transit-supportive uses and amenities, such as commercial uses that serve as weekday destinations and multi-family housing, in direct proximity to the future Mill Plain Bus Rapid Transit station platforms to support increased transit ridership.

## LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

To support transit-oriented development, higher-density apartment developments of up to 65-feet and other uses that meet the needs of people of all incomes (especially those that are transit-dependent) such as medical, daycare, or other services should be encouraged.

FIG.24:MILLPLAIN/GRANDINTERSECTIONBUSRAPIDTRANSITHUBCORRIDORCONCEPTMAP





# ANCHOR POINT

The anchor site in this area could accommodate a destination commercial or employment use, if it were to redevelop or be adaptively used in the future.

FIG. 25: BUS RAPID TRANSIT HUB CORRIDOR ANCHOR SITE

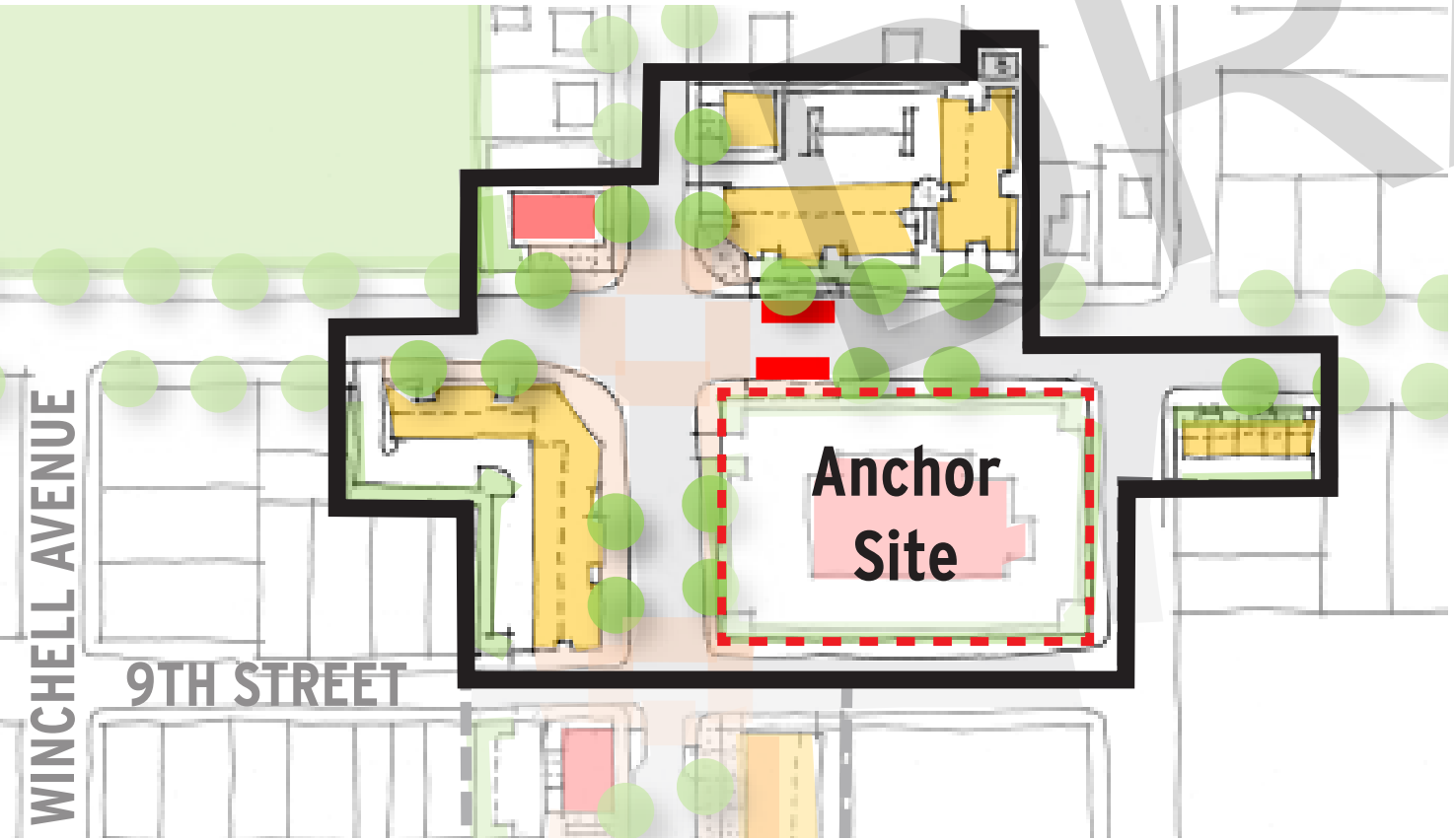


FIG. 26: INTERNATIONAL AIR & HOSPITALITY ACADEMY



FIG. 27: EXAMPLE MIXED USE WITH GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL USE AT ANCHOR SITE





# PUBLIC REALM CONSIDERATIONS

The vision for the public realm in the BRT Hub includes siting future uses so that they create a BRT station environment that is safe and active during all hours of transit operations and all seasons of the year, while ensuring that the surrounding street network provides multimodal access to transit. With the presence of both the Washington State School for the Blind and the Washington School for the Deaf near this area, the transportation system and transit access should be safe and comfortable for all users.

## PUBLIC REALM VISION

- Site future uses so that they create a BRT station environment that is safe and active during all hours of transit operations and all seasons of the year
- Ensure that the surrounding street network provides multi-modal access to transit

FIG. 28: BUS RAPID TRANSIT STATION



FIG. 29: BRT STATION SPACE ACTIVATION







# CHAPTER 5

## RECOMMENDATIONS



# RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes recommendations for implementation strategies that will collectively achieve the long-term vision established with the community through the commercial corridors planning process. The full set of refined recommendations includes short-term changes to development standards to ensure goals for the corridors are met as development occurs, as well as other mid- to long-term recommendations for policies, programs, and tools intended to be implemented over time. The recommendations reflect feedback received from the community, property owners, Planning Commission, and City Council throughout the planning process, and are intended to work together to achieve the community vision, goals, and objectives over time.

## Vision

Promote equitable and diverse corridor development that is vibrant, sustainable and mixed use.

Foster development that recognizes and builds upon the neighborhood's unique setting, history, and character.

## Goals

### Land Use

Strengthen current businesses while providing an appropriate mix of commercial and residential uses.

### Mobility

Establish a balanced, multi-modal network of motor vehicle, transit, walking, and biking routes through the corridors.

### Parking

Provide adequate parking to serve existing uses and future development.

### Urban Design

Create public and private spaces that are inclusive, integrated, and contribute positively to the livability of the corridors.

### Economic Development

Provide ample opportunities for small-scale, locally-owned businesses to thrive.

# REGULATORY CHANGES

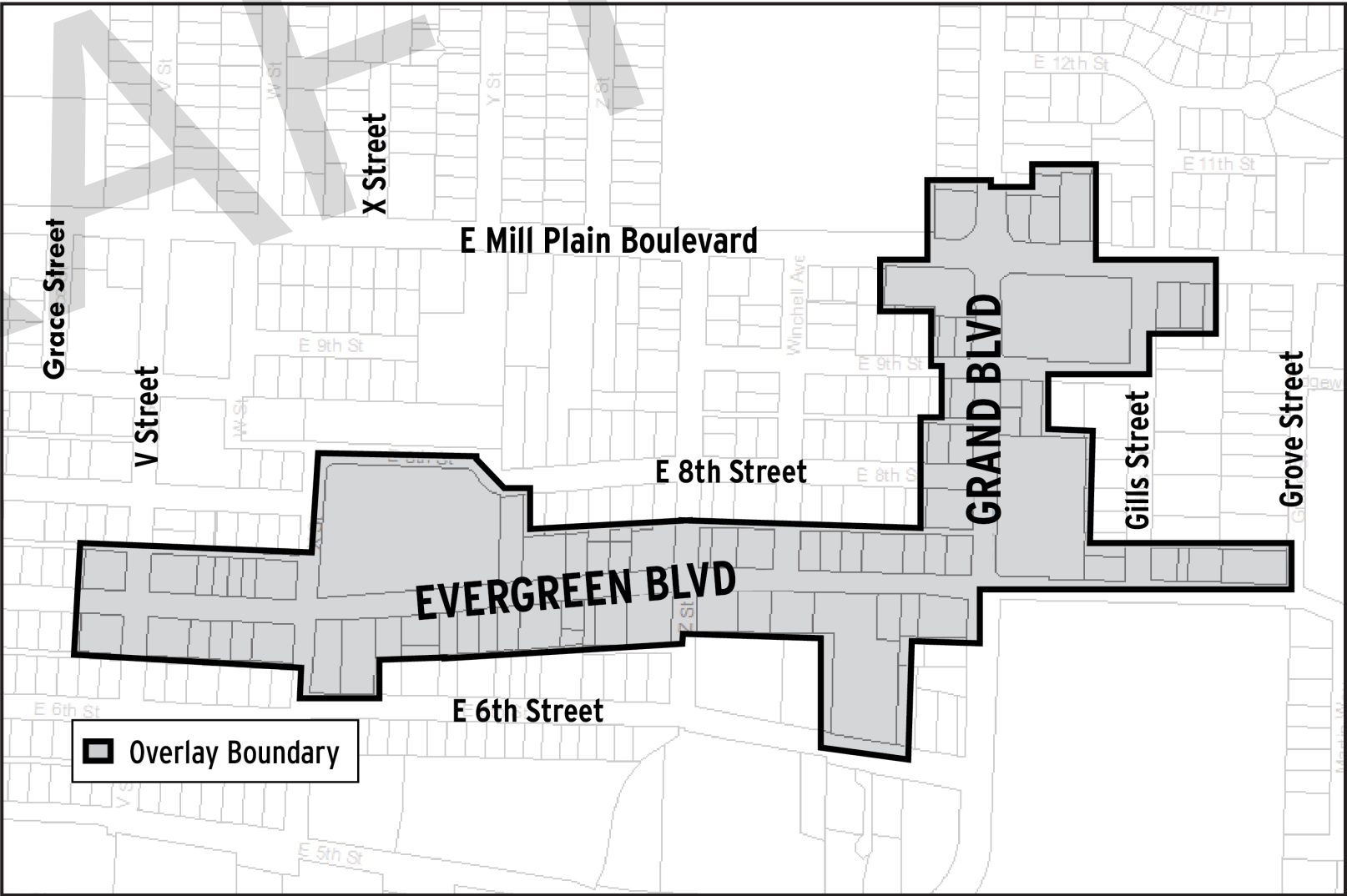
Short-term regulatory changes – likely achieved through an overlay zone or similar tool – can be used to tailor development standards to address issues with the current zoning and ensure regulations recognize the vision and concepts for the overall the Evergreen and Grand District and each unique area. The regulatory recommendations resulting from this process include changes to ground floor commercial use requirements, building height limitations, minimum off-street and shared vehicle parking requirements, bike parking requirements, standards for buildings to achieve an ‘active edge’ at the ground floor, parking design and screening requirements, and others for consideration as part of short-term Strategy implementation.

## STUDY AREA OVERLAY

The Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors overlay includes the following development regulations to ensure the intent and community vision is met:

- Commercial ground floor use requirements
- Building height limitations
- Parking requirements
- Standards for buildings to achieve an ‘active edge’ at the ground floor

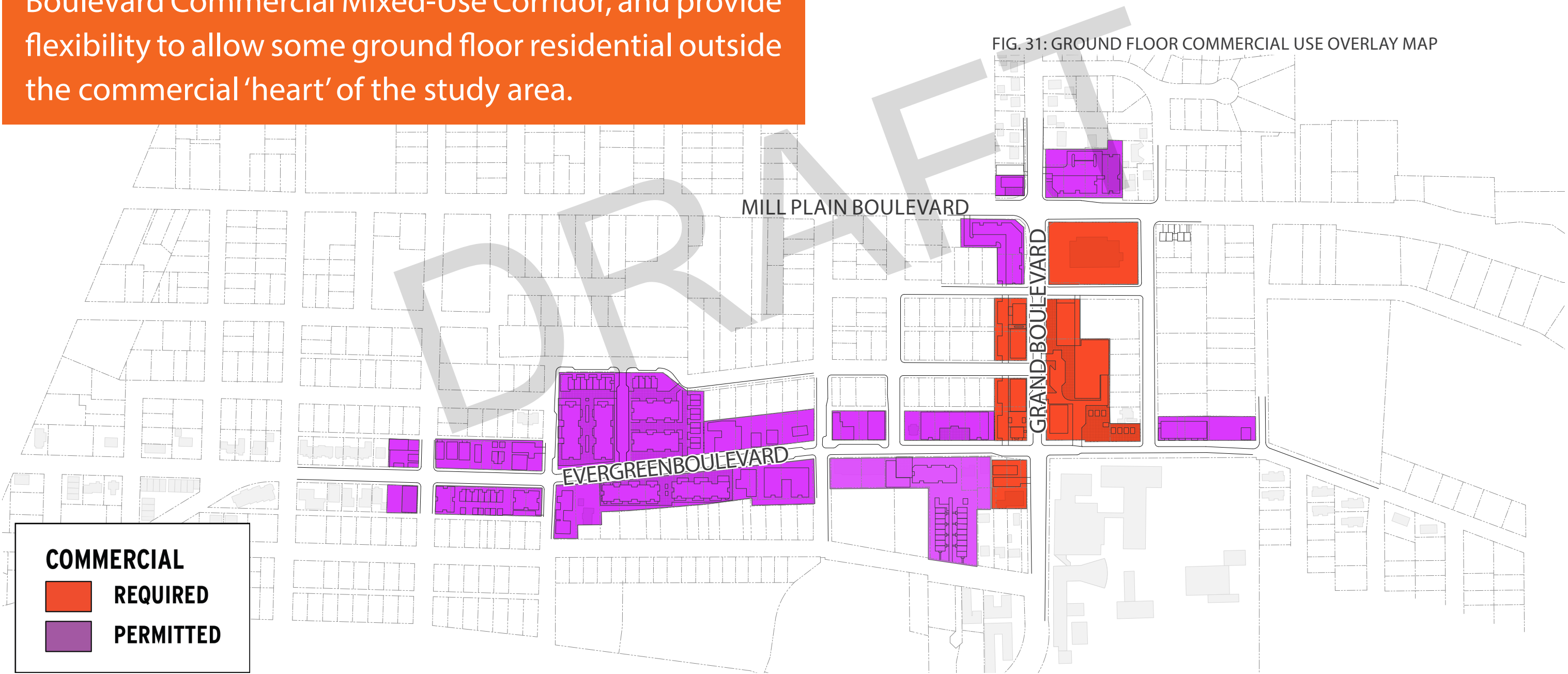
FIG. 30: EVERGREEN AND GRAND OVERLAY ZONE



# GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL USER REQUIREMENTS

## RECOMMENDATION

Continue to require ground floor commercial in the Grand Boulevard Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor, and provide flexibility to allow some ground floor residential outside the commercial ‘heart’ of the study area.





Concentrating new commercial uses in the Grand Boulevard Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor concept area along Grand Boulevard supports providing daily goods and services for area residents, employees, and visitors, and accessibility to those who walk, bike, roll, or take transit. The linkage to the future BRT station on Mill Plain also presents opportunities for ‘chaining’ trips—or grouping errands or other activities into one trip instead of returning home in between each one—which is an important consideration for transit users.

In the Evergreen Boulevard Residential Mixed-Use Corridor concept along Evergreen and on smaller parcels in the Mill Plain/Grand Intersection BRT Hub, allow some ground floor residential uses to foster a mix of uses and provide flexibility outside of the commercial ‘heart’ of the study area. Providing flexibility in these areas allows for more variety in commercial development, like live/work spaces integrated vertically into a building or horizontally-developed commercial that’s attached to or within a larger building. This approach would help to meet the corridor concept for this area as a neighborhood boulevard and support the viability of existing commercial development along Evergreen.

FIG. 32: COMMERCIAL BUILDING WITH REQUIRED GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL



FIG. 33: VERTICAL MIXED-USE



FIG. 34: HORIZONTALLY-MIXED LIVE WORK COMMERCIAL

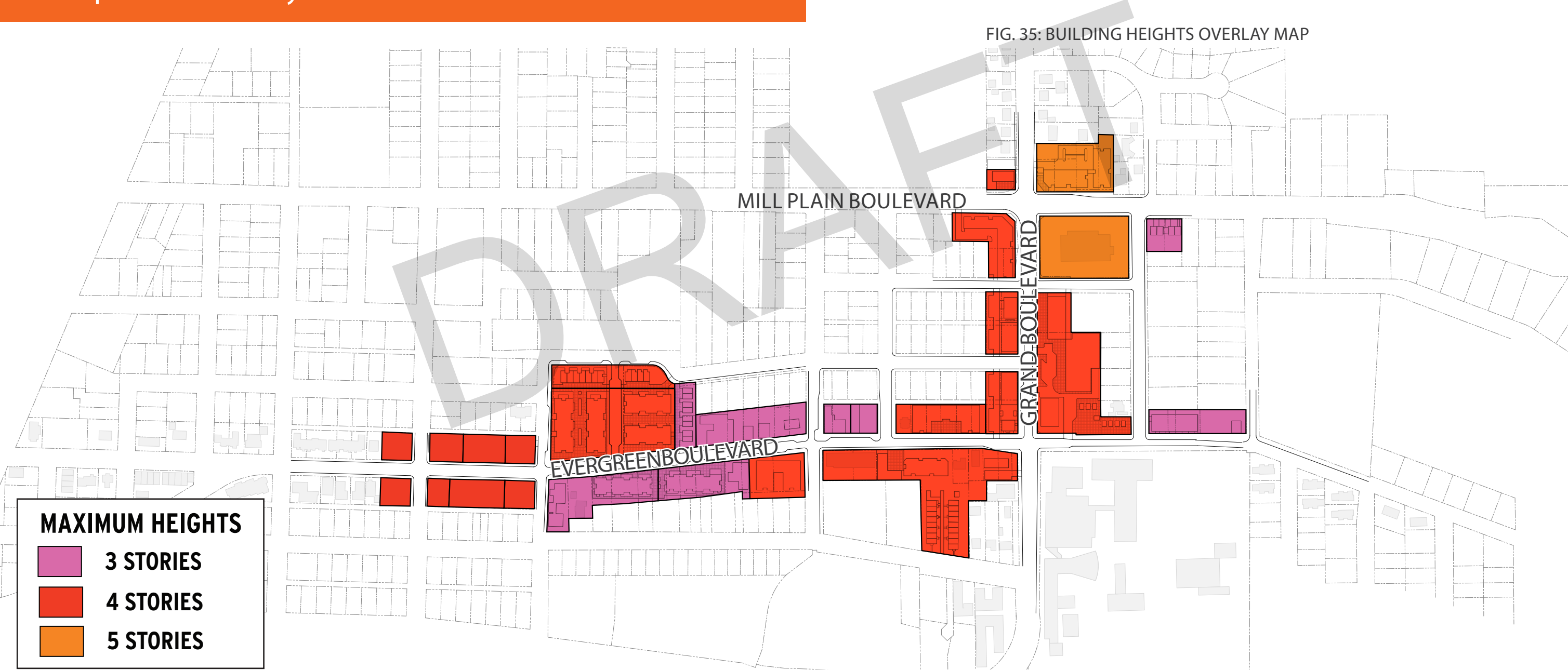




# BUILDING HEIGHTS

## RECOMMENDATION

Tailor maximum building heights to align with the corridor vision concepts for the study area.



The recommended maximum building heights for the study area are tailored to align with the three corridor vision concepts, be responsive to community and stakeholder feedback received throughout the process, and balance development feasibility. Stepdowns or increased setbacks will be required on parcels that abut low-density residential zones.

The current maximum building height under Community Commercial zoning is 50-feet, which is conducive for 3- and 4- story buildings. To achieve five stories in the Mill Plain/Grand Intersection BRT hub corridor concept at Mill Plain and Grand, the permitted height in feet would need to be increased to 65-70 feet.

FIG. 36: DIAGRAM OF RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS





### 3 STORIES

Three stories, or a maximum of 40 feet, can be appropriate on more narrow, residentially-oriented streets with smaller commercial parcels that abut existing single-family zoning. This proposed scale is lower than what is currently allowed under existing zoning and is being recommended to address community concerns about the impact of taller buildings near areas that will continue to be zoned for single family development and the potential canyoning impact of taller buildings on narrower streets. Three stories is most common for multi-family, townhome, and small-lot mixed-use commercial, as well as most attainable housing types such as walk-up apartments where no elevator is required.

FIG. 37: 3-STORY APARTMENT



FIG. 38: MIXED-USE 3-STORY APARTMENT



### 4 STORIES

Four stories, or a maximum of 50 feet, is consistent with what is effectively allowed under existing zoning, and is a typical height for neighborhood residential infill and one of the most common multi-family housing types in the region. This development scale is generally economically viable for the corridors and can accommodate ground floor commercial with residential apartments above.

FIG. 39: MIXED-USE 4-STORY APARTMENT



FIG. 40: MIXED-USE 4-STORY APARTMENT





5 STORIES

Five stories, or a maximum of 65 feet, is more urban in scale and would be appropriate to support higher-density transit-oriented development in the BRT Hub and not adjacent to single-family. This is an increase from what is currently allowed under existing zoning, and buildings at this scale often require a change in construction type that may be viable with some additional flexibility in height.

FIG. 41: 5-STORY MIXED-USE APARTMENT



FIG.42:5-STORY MIXED-USE APARTMENT WITH STREET IMPROVEMENTS



FIG. 43: 5-STORY MIXED-USE APARTMENT

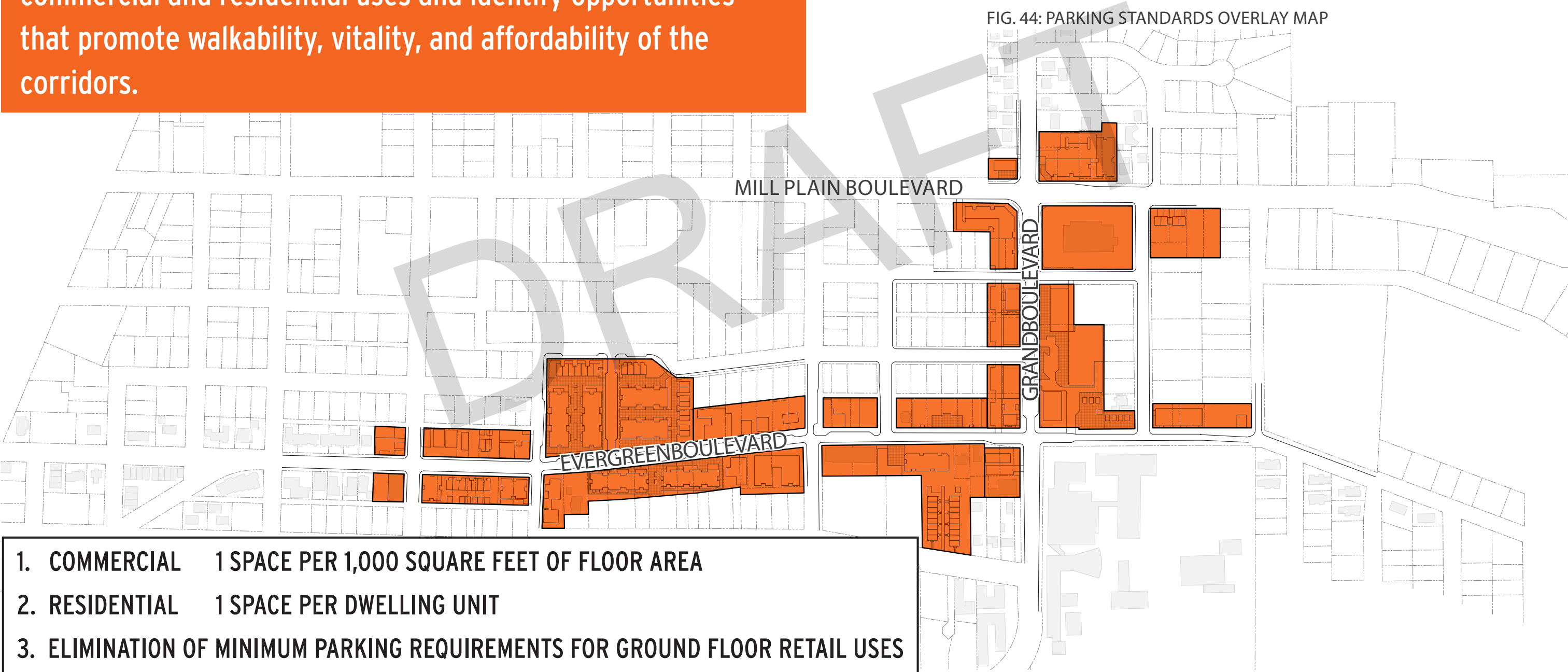




# PARKING

## RECOMMENDATION

Adapt minimum off-street parking requirements that support commercial and residential uses and identify opportunities that promote walkability, vitality, and affordability of the corridors.



Parking requirements that adapt to the specific uses of a development can help reduce costs to both developers and tenants while still limiting spillover parking and impacts to surrounding neighborhoods. Eliminating minimum parking requirements for ground floor retail uses—excluding office uses—and providing additional on-street parking opportunities in front of businesses along the corridor will provide access to corridor amenities and reduce the minimum parking requirements for developments. Additionally, setting a minimum off-street parking requirement of at least one space per 1,000 square feet of floor area for ground floor office uses and any commercial uses above the ground floor as well as one space per residential dwelling unit is recommended for the study area to ensure that right-size parking is provided.

Additional requirements should also be considered such as requiring parking to be located behind buildings on larger parcels, requiring shared driveways and access easements between abutting developments to consolidate the number of driveways along the corridors, as well as screening parking areas from view to meet parking and urban design goals for the study area. Shared parking should also be an option for larger, abutting developments as well as shallow, small properties where on-site parking will be difficult.

These standards better recognize the mix of uses along the corridors, as well as access to the corridors via connecting streets, sidewalks, existing bus service and future Mill Plain BRT. Other parking elements should also be considered, such as mandatory micromobility parking requirements for vehicles such as electric scooters, providing incentives such as reduced parking minimums for opting in to a shared parking or accessway easement, or implementing a Transportation Demand Management program that supports the use of multiple modes to travel to and through the corridors.



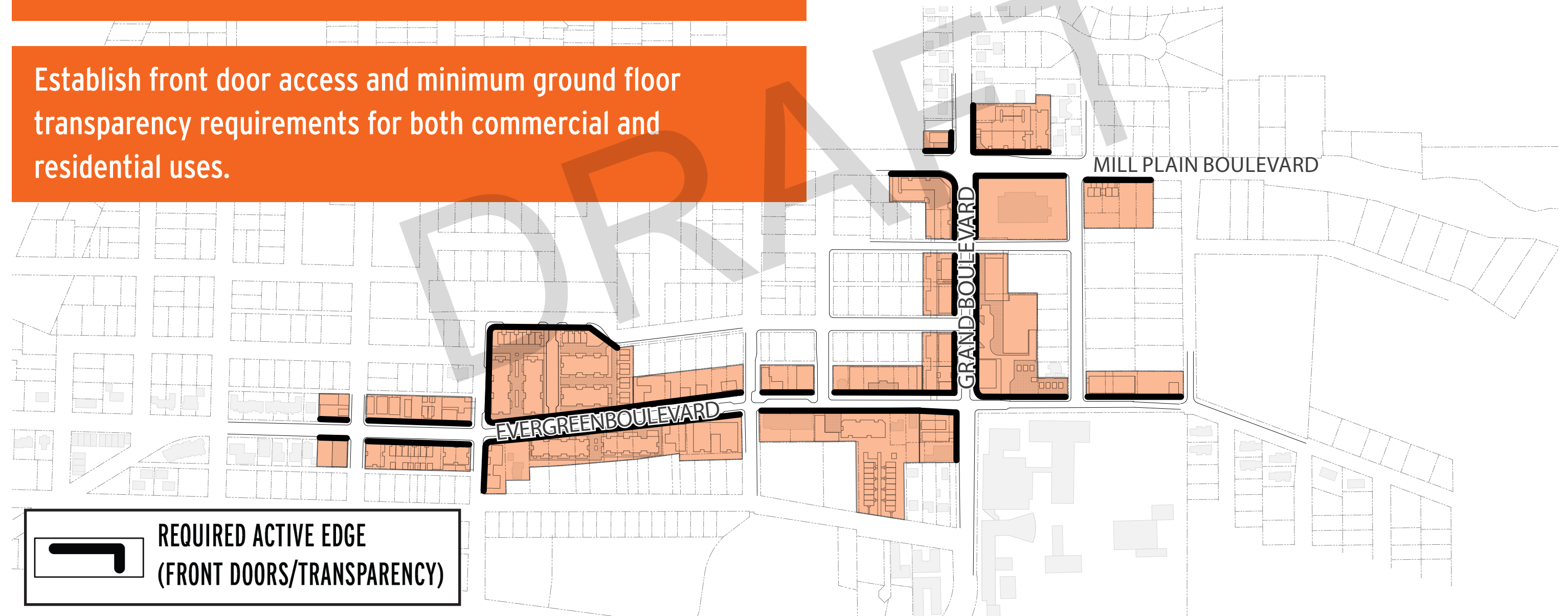
# 'ACTIVE EDGE' DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Require a maximum front setback of 0-5 feet at the ground floor only regardless of building height.

Establish front door access and minimum ground floor transparency requirements for both commercial and residential uses.

FIG. 45: 'ACTIVE EDGE' DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OVERLAY MAP





Placing and orienting ground floor uses toward Evergreen and Grand Boulevards and creating an ‘active edge’ frames and encloses the public street to create a walkable pedestrian environment. To meet this vision, a maximum front setback of 0-5 feet regardless of building height is recommended, which would not prevent upper floors of a building from stepping back farther to help prevent the canyon effect and support a scale and design that complements neighborhood character.

### GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL

A higher minimum transparency requirement for commercial uses of 75% of the ground floor façade provides visibility of goods and services, and front door access from the street results in street-oriented buildings rather than parking lot-oriented buildings. Visibility of indoor spaces also animates the street where there are restaurants, pubs, and other types of retail uses. For commercial retail uses, buildings built to the sidewalk with front doors facing the street provide easy access for pedestrians and essential visibility for those traveling along adjacent roadways.

### GROUND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL

For residential uses, a more moderate minimum transparency requirement of 50% is recommended to support eyes on the street while also recognizing the importance of privacy. By orienting front door access from the street rather than from parking lots and garages, residential development built to these standards supports increased pedestrian activity, reduces or eliminates visual impacts of surface parking, and puts eyes on the street often resulting in safer street environments.

FIGS. 46 & 47: COMMERCIAL TRANSPARENCY



FIGS. 48 & 49: RESIDENTIAL TRANSPARENCY AND FRONT DOORS ORIENTED TOWARD THE STREET





FIG. 50: GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL EXAMPLE



FIG. 51: GROUND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL EXAMPLE



# OTHER REGULATORY CHANGES

The following standards are other regulatory changes to consider as part of near-term Strategy implementation that would complement the main recommendations outlined in this section, and support the vision and goals established for the corridors.

- Prohibit uses that do not support the vision for the corridors as a walkable and vibrant neighborhood-serving commercial corridor. These include new uses like drive-thru establishments; big-box retail; motor vehicle repair, sales and rental, and gas stations; and self-storage, among others .
- Adopt standards that support activating vacant and underutilized spaces.
- Develop regulations that provide additional access enhancements in the BRT Hub corridor area that take into consideration first/last mile solutions and universal design best practices.
- Allow for non-mixed-use housing types on smaller parcels, where appropriate.
- Explore providing flexibility for nonconforming uses, such as existing small businesses, adaptively reused single-family homes fronting the corridors, etc.
- Investigate strategies to disincentivize chains in the study area.
- Cap commercial businesses to a certain size to accommodate small-scale retail and maintain the fine-grained development pattern of the corridors
- Explore allowances for interim/temporary uses such as food cart pods.
- Create standards for ground floor residential to ensure streetfront activation and interest.
- Develop design guidelines that will help bolster the historic identity of the Hudson's Bay neighborhood and ensure consistent street activation of future developments in a way that considers development affordability.
- Encourage streetscape improvements in all redevelopment projects.



# OTHER IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

## MID- TO LONG-TERM POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND TOOLS

The long-term vision and goals for the Evergreen and Grand commercial corridors cannot be achieved solely through changes to development standards. The following are recommendations for other mid- to long-term policies, programs, and tools—intended to be implemented over time as city resources allow—that can contribute to the full realization of the long-term vision of a vibrant, active commercial district.

- Create a business district organization to support art, events, and other placemaking activities
- Extend the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program calibrated to implement the vision and goals for the corridors and add workforce housing
- Attract and retain neighborhood-serving businesses that provide community amenities and basic needs and services
- Establish a storefront improvement program to support existing businesses
- Establish a signage and placemaking program along Grand Boulevard and in the BRT Hub
- Identify opportunities to support houseless communities and promote community safety
- Explore strategies to maintain economic diversity and housing affordability, especially for low- and moderate-income households
- Consider height bonuses in exchange for attainably priced workforce housing units
- Improve connectivity to nearby destinations such as downtown Vancouver, the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, and the Pearson Field Airport as an economic development strategy.
- Leverage environmental remediation funding opportunities as an incentive to develop eligible sites
- Work with the City Parks & Recreation department to identify opportunities for urban open space in proximity to the corridors
- Work with the City Economic Development department to extend the City's existing Street Eats program to the corridors
- Work with the City Stormwater, Surface Water, and Groundwater Utility program to identify Ecology grant opportunities for water quality retrofits, low impact development, and other green infrastructure improvements.

# TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The currently underway Vancouver Moves project is an in-depth planning process to update the citywide Transportation System Plan (TSP). Vancouver Moves explores transportation needs and priorities in partnership with Vancouver residents, employees and visitors, and examines existing travel conditions for all users of the City’s transportation system. While the Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridor Strategy is focused on land uses, the following recommendations for streetscape and right-of-way improvements were identified – consistent with the vision and goals for mobility and the public realm established through this process – to inform Vancouver Moves for how the street system in this subarea should be classified and planned to support adjacent land uses along the corridors.

FIG.52:RAISEDCROSSWALKWITHCURBEXTENSIONS



FIG. 53: STREET FURNITURE



FIG. 54: PEDESTRIAN ISLAND



FIG. 55: ON-STREET PARKING



## Recommendations for the Entire Study Area

Create a cohesive, walkable, and safe multimodal environment providing access to and through the study area, increase signage to improve user safety and comfort, consider integration of stormwater and other sustainability best practices into right-of-way, traffic calming and streetscape improvements, and explore Transportation Demand Management strategies in the study area to support safe and easy use of multiple modes. Determine appropriate access management along the corridors, ensuring that building orientation and site access are located on either Evergreen or Grand or side streets in order to optimize both user safety and economic vitality. Explore funding strategies for transportation investments that serve the entire district, such as improvements to the intersection of Mill Plain and Grand.

## Grand Boulevard Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor

Roadway and streetscape improvements, including reducing speed limits and implementing traffic calming; adding on-street parking; and providing flexibility to allow construction and maintenance of parking-alternative uses such as outdoor dining, seating, or bike parking on a temporary or permanent basis, and other temporary activation or interim uses to improve placemaking.

## Evergreen Boulevard Residential Mixed-Use Corridor

Streetscape improvements including widened sidewalks to 12-15 feet to accommodate retail, pedestrian, landscaping, and street furnishing zones. Increase street trees and other landscaping features add street furniture, lighting, benches, and bike racks that are accessible by users of all abilities; and evaluate an enhanced pedestrian crossing at the intersection of V Street and Evergreen Boulevard to improve safety for people crossing the street.

## Mill Plain/Grand Intersection BRT Hub

Design transportation infrastructure and streetscape improvements to facilitate multi-modal access to transit, and promote accessibility for people of all abilities around the future BRT station platforms.



