



# Downtown Visioning Workshop Summary

## Springfield Comprehensive Plan

April 29, 2021 | 6:00-7:30 p.m.

On April 29, 2021, the City of Springfield hosted a virtual Downtown Visioning Workshop on Zoom. The workshop was part of the public outreach process for the development of the Downtown Subarea Plan for the new Comprehensive Plan, *Forward SGF*. Attended by 37 individuals, this workshop was an opportunity for residents, business owners, and other community stakeholders to offer their input and feedback regarding Downtown Springfield and the subarea plan.

The workshop included an overview of the Forward SGF planning process, planning work completed to date, and a breakout room session to gather input from participants regarding issues, opportunities, potential projects, and key assets within the Downtown. An online engagement platform, Miro, was used to virtually draw and post comments on a map of the Downtown study area (each group's map is included at the end of this summary). Input from this workshop will help to guide the planning process and will be considered during the development of the Downtown Subarea Plan. The following is a summary of feedback received from participants during the breakout room session, grouped under overarching topics:

### NOTE ON SUMMARY CONTEXT

*The following is a summary of the thoughts, comments, and opinions received in the workshop. The items identified in this summary are not recommendations or observations of the consultant, but rather represent feedback and comments received from those who participated in the workshop.*

### UNIQUE DOWNTOWN ASSETS

The following were identified as Downtown assets that participants wish to be preserved and/or maintained:

- Entertainment options and supporting uses (e.g., Moxy Hotel, street festivals, sports facilities, etc.)
- Public art (e.g. murals, sculpture walk)
- The activated Robberson Avenue alleyway
- Founders Park
- Hammons Field
- Jordan Valley Park
- Springfield Expo Center (underutilized)
- Park Central Square (the Square)
- Discovery Center
- History Museum on the Square
- Historic Buildings
- Hollywood Theaters
- Theaters on Park Central E
- Abou Ben Adhem Shrine Mosque
- Daylighting Jordan Creek project
- Places of worship

## DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following are developments or redevelopments participants would like to see occur Downtown:

- Expand the Square's footprint by a block and connect to Jubilee Park.
- Transform the Expo Center into a Downtown Convention Center with a hotel that draws heavy foot traffic that helps activate Downtown.
- Rehabilitate industrial and older buildings into art spaces and other uses to bring people Downtown.
- Attract a new urban grocery store or co-op tenant to the property at the southwest corner of Walnut Street and South Avenue (401 South Avenue).
- Support a mix of uses Downtown with active storefronts (e.g. retail, entertainment, residential, etc.)
- Fill in gaps in development along St Louis Street and eliminate swaths of empty space.
- Eliminate parking lots, improve connectivity, increase density through infill development within the area bounded by St Louis Street, Jefferson Avenue, Benton Avenue, and Tafficway Street.
- Redeveloped the expansive parking lot located in the heart of Downtown at Park Central and Patton Avenue into a higher use (e.g. residential or office).
- Pursue infill redevelopment at the parking lots at Olive Street/Boonville Avenue and Walnut Street/Robberson Avenue.

## ROADWAY NETWORK

The following are improvements to roadways, parking, and vehicular connectivity participants would like to see:

- Reduce traffic noise (e.g. motorcyclists) and speed of cars.
- Implement traffic calming at Boonville Avenue and Water Street as traffic currently does not stop along Boonville Avenue and it can be difficult to turn east/west.
- Re-evaluate one way streets.
  - Get rid of the Jefferson Avenue and Campbell avenue one way streets as it slows traffic down.
- Improve street designs for ride share drop offs and automated cars.

## PARKING

The following are improvements to parking participants would like to see:

- Turn surface parking lots into green/outdoor office space with public Wi-Fi.
- Convert excess parking spaces into public gathering spaces since there are already two parking garages.
- Centralize parking garages to reduce clutter of parking lots; this will direct people to park in concentrated areas and then walk to visit and shop around Downtown.
- Locate new parking garages to the south or west since there are already garages towards the north.
- Create a multi-level parking garage with a park on the roof and businesses on the ground/second floor, located south or southwest of Jubilee Park that complements the Discovery Center.
- Assess whether there is an excess of on-street parking and consider pedestrian-oriented uses instead to make the most out of the rights-of-way, such as sidewalk cafes.
- Remove on-street parking on Walnut Street and South Avenue and use that space for people.
- Establish a parking enforcement plan to make sure on-street parking is being used by customers (not residents or employees) as spots need to turn over regularly.
- Locate parking to the rear of buildings to reduce parking lots along street frontages (first 10 feet of private property) and maximize on-street parking.

- Begin incorporating structured parking into new construction.
- Add a parking garage in the southeast.
- Eliminate some off street parking near the Square.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

The following are improvements to public transit participants would like to see:

- Expand the transit center and strengthen transit connectivity (e.g. transit-only lanes).
- Consider creative alternatives for public transit (e.g. golf carts).
- Create a Downtown trolley system for longer trips or for those with mobility impairments.

## PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE NETWORK

The following are enhancements for improved walkability, bike connectivity, and safety participants would like to see:

- Improve pedestrian access and wayfinding throughout the entire Downtown area.
- Establish no-car zones or shared streets that reinforces a walkable environment (e.g. Walnut Street, Mill Street, or Phelps Street).
- Support wide, accommodating, and attractive sidewalks to promote walking and provide space for pedestrian amenities like seating.
  - Narrow car lanes and widen sidewalks along St Louis Street between Jefferson Avenue and South Avenue.
- Improve sidewalks from Mill Street to Water Street, which are currently uneven and a safety hazard to pedestrians.
- Connect the Jordan Valley Greenway Trail, which is currently fragmented, to create synergetic connections between key Downtown parks, trails, dog parks, and destinations.
- Extend the bike lane on Boonville Street south of Mill Street.
- Create trails and enhance sidewalks to improve pedestrian connectivity to and from Jordan Valley Park.
- Relate Jubilee Park enhancements to the Renew Jordan Creek efforts.
- Improve pedestrian connections between all catalyst sites and new developments.
- Support micromobility options like scooter or bike shares.

## URBAN DESIGN & STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

The following are improvements to the streetscape, built environment, and Downtown character participants would like to see:

- Enhance Water Street and Mill Street to draw more people into the vicinity.
- Activate South Avenue and Walnut Street to allow for more restaurant/retail to expand onto sidewalk.
- Continue streetscape beautification efforts.
- Enhance Downtown connections to Government Plaza, Ozarks Technical Community College and Drury University campuses, and C-Street.
- Fill in frontages along Saint Louis Street to connect University Plaza area to Downtown.
- Improve design standards for historic district.
- Establish standards for unified branding, wayfinding, and signage Downtown.
- Better connect the Jordan Valley Park block to the Downtown.

- Focus streetscaping efforts on Boonville Avenue, College Street, South Avenue, and St Louis Street near the Square for:
  - Aesthetical pleasing and clean streetscapes
  - Complete Streets
  - Stormwater improvements
  - Connections to Jordan creek with a green boulevard
  - Bollard streetscaping
  - Shared-street concept

## PARKS, PLAZAS & GATHERING SPACES

The following are opportunities for parks, plazas, festivities, public gathering spaces participants would like to see:

- Establish Downtown Springfield as the street festival capital, incorporating greenery, urban character, and art.
- Create a designated space for “urban camping” in one of Downtown’s green spaces (e.g. West Meadows or The Commons) that is highly controlled and open for hikers, bikers, or campers traveling through the region. Leverage as a source for economic activity and provide amenities like RV hook ups.
- Finish redeveloping The Commons as well as other public gathering areas and connect with the Tafficway Subarea Plan.
- Activate The Commons as the “master entrance” into Downtown, potentially with a dog park.
- Improve ADA accessibility at Founders Park that is caused by the grade change between Water Street and Olive Street.
- Increase accessibility to the Jordan Creek Daylighting project area for pedestrians and bicyclists and enhance the space as a relaxation spot/public gathering area.
- Rethink the Square and consider a design highly unique to Springfield that creates a reason for people to visit (e.g. square with retractable roof).
- Increase and maintain outdoor dining spaces to create a better street experience and slow traffic. Consider patio expansion in the sidewalk for restaurants.
- Keep Jubilee Park green, maintain the art sculptures, and consider adding a playground for kids.
- Incorporate more green spaces in Downtown.
- Create “complete streets” by activating public rights-of-way as public gathering spaces.
- Leverage the Jordan Creek restoration and regeneration.
- Close off streets on occasion for festivals and special events (e.g. South Avenue).

## OTHER

- Enhance Downtown as “a place to go to, not through.”
- Focus improvements and density in the “urban core” (bounded by Water Street, Jefferson Avenue, Pershing Street, and Campbell Avenue).
- Identify different districts within Downtown with unique personalities that contribute to the whole of Downtown. Balance the areas and ensure they are inclusive for as many community members/demographics.
- Reduce sprawling development (build up rather than out).
- Establish a brewery district.
- Support new development as existing buildings are rehabilitated and become occupied.

# Visioning Topics

- Unique Downtown Assets
- Development/Redevelopment Opportunities
- Roadway Network
- Pedestrian Network
- Urban Design & Streetscape Improvements
- Parks, Plazas & Gathering Spaces
- Other Topics

- Context
- Downtown Boundary
  - Jordan Creek - Exposed
  - Catalyst Site
  - Railroad
  - Jordan Creek - Underground

Entertainment options, Moxv, Street Festivals, Sports, Ball Park.

Public art, murals, sculpture walk - continue/bolster

Make SGF the street festival capital. Green, urban, and art.

No-car zones. No-car thoroughfare for public gatherings (ex: Walnut, Phelps) In a block or two outside of the square

Issue is racers/speeding cars

Noise of traffic in Downtown, bad for businesses, residents have moved out due to motorcyclist groups

Expand the square footprint by a block, connect to Jubilee Park

Urban camping in green space. Merge open space. Glamping Downtown (tents, RV hook ups, etc.) (not homeless, urban, controlled site) NW corner north of the new bus station. People can stay for festivals. - West Meadows

SGF is a dead zone for folks who are hiking/biking/camping in the region. Camping within Downtown may be key, source of economic activity.

Rethink the Square, something highly unique to SGF (e.g. retractable roof)

Usually empty, scary, or dirty.

Need to create a reason for people to gather there.

Expand the transit center, strengthen transit

Transit-only routes

Idea for transit: golf carts

Attract a new urban grocery store/co-op tenant (In process) - Issue is who is going to operate it.

Pay \$5 for parking and get \$5 worth of free groceries with ticket

Expansive parking lot in the heart of Downtown, should be redeveloped into office or residential

Ped-oriented alley is an asset

Turn surface parking lots into green/outdoor office space with public wifi.

Connect the Jordan Valley Greenway Trail, right now is very fragmented

Synergetic connectivity to key parks, trails, dog parks, destination

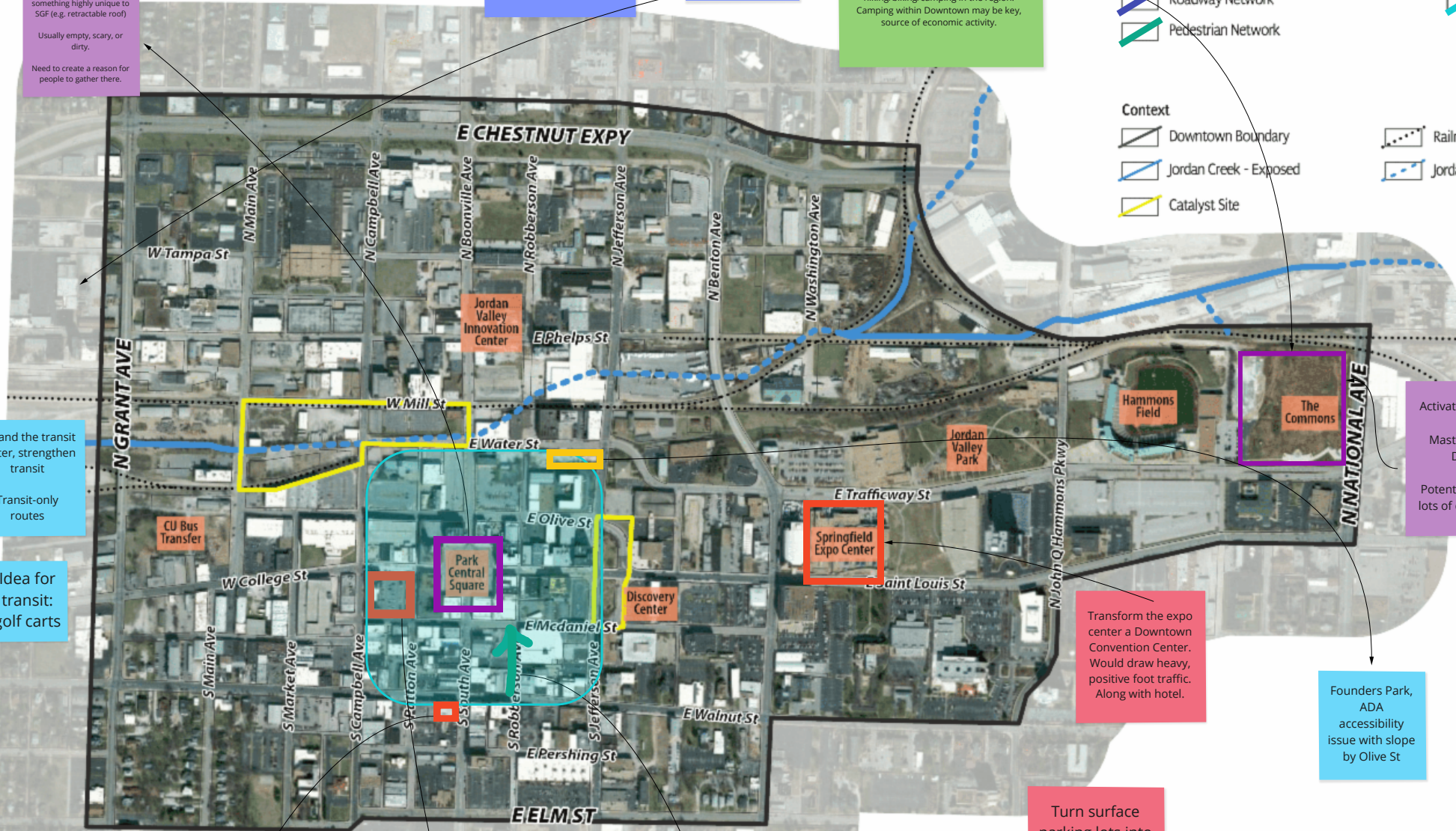
Activate the Commons

Master entrance to Downtown

Potentially a dog park, lots of dogs Downtown

Increase pedestrian seating and space for pedestrian amenities

## Park Catalyst Site



### Visioning Topics

- Unique Downtown Assets
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#### Context

- Downtown Boundary
- Jordan Creek - Exposed
- Railroad
- Jordan Creek - Underground

Getting close to Jordan Creek. Not visible. Physical barrier needs to be resolved

Mill St. - if cut off traffic.

Bike lane extension on Boonville St south of Mill St

Water to Mill - sidewalk (uneven sidewalks); can be a safety hazard to pedestrian.

Potential relaxation spot - gathering space for people by Jordan Creek

Convert excess parking spaces into public gathering spaces (there's already two parking garages)

Rehab older/industrial building into arts space and other uses to bring people into Downtown Springfield

Designated trail and enhanced sidewalks from Jordan Valley Park to enhance pedestrian connection

Multi-level parking with park on the rooftop and businesses on the ground and some upper floors

Keep Jubilee Park 'green' The art sculptures are great.

Can be located south / southwest of here. Complement the Discovery Center

Playgrounds for kids? Give children healthy to do outside

Keep more green spaces in Downtown

Utilize Water & Mill to draw more people into the vicinity.

Founders Park-an asset as a gathering space

Centralized parking garage; less clutter; one parking spot for people to get to then walk and shop around Downtown Springfield.

More traffic calming needed at Boonville and Water

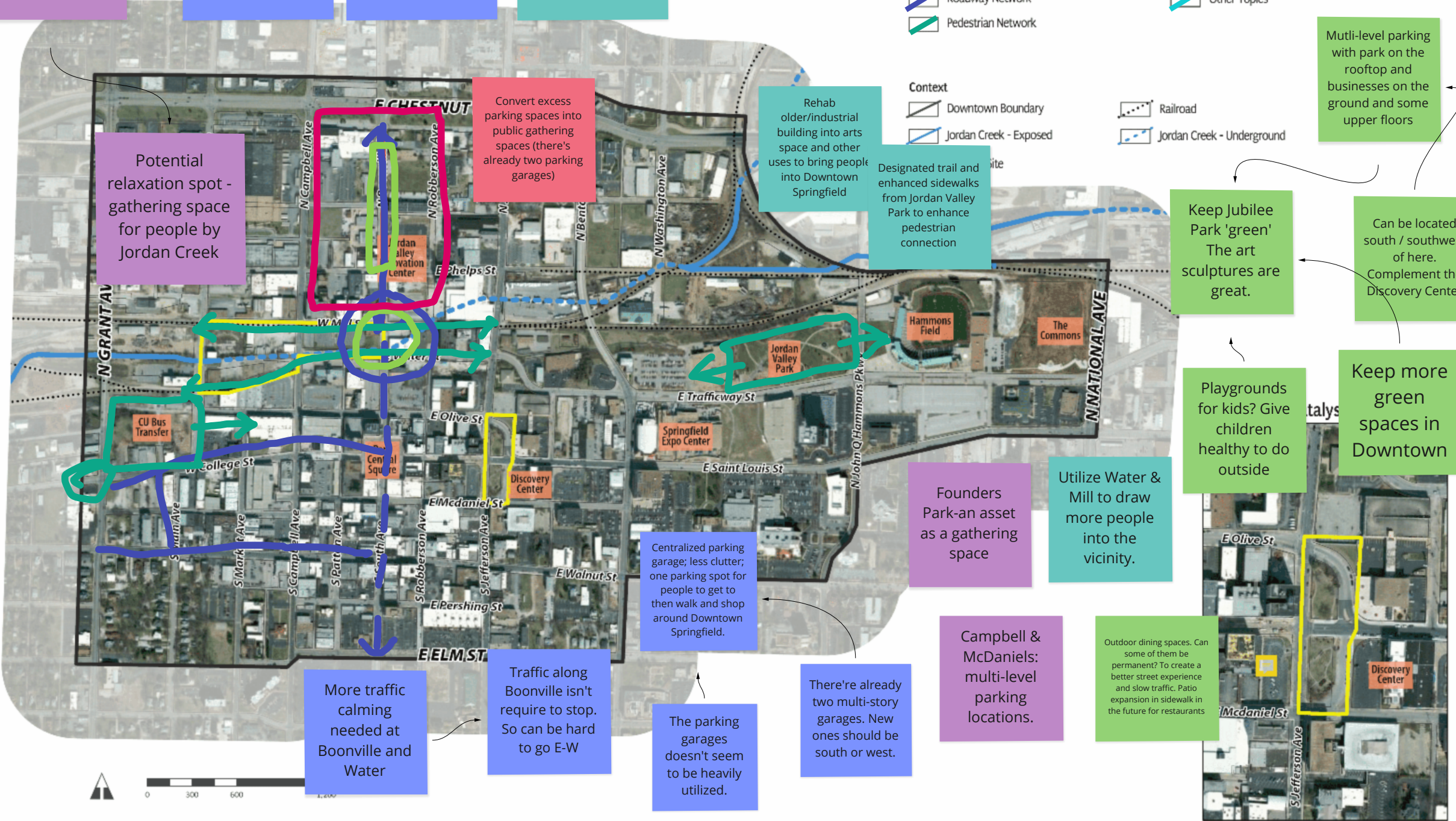
Traffic along Boonville isn't require to stop. So can be hard to go E-W

The parking garages doesn't seem to be heavily utilized.

There're already two multi-story garages. New ones should be south or west.

Campbell & McDaniels: multi-level parking locations.

Outdoor dining spaces. Can some of them be permanent? To create a better street experience and slow traffic. Patio expansion in sidewalk in the future for restaurants



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### Context

- Downtown Boundary
- Jordan Creek - Exposed
- Catalyst Site
- Railroad
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Get rid of Jefferson and Campbell one way streets - it slows traffic down. With one way streets, downtown is a median. (not good!) Downtown looks great entering from the south on Jefferson

"Downtown is a place to go to, not through"

activate South and Walnut to allow for more restaurant/retail to expand onto sidewalk

Do we have the right amount of on-street parking, or too much? Alt uses - sidewalk cafes, etc? Need to get the most out of our ROWs. Keep sidewalk cafes?

Streetscape beautification should continue

the outdoor streets/public ROW should be a gathering place - don't have to make more parks - "Complete Streets"

More outdoor eating

Activate the perimeter & build connections between

Historic buildings

Renovate and repurpose existing structures

Every parking lot is a potential catalyst site - need to build denser - put more people downtown - more infill development

Narrowed street and widen sidewalks - like on PCE

theaters

Start adding structured parking into new construction

Should relate to Renew Jordan Creek efforts

on the other hand it's nice to have green space in Downtown!

Need mix of uses - not all retail, all housing, etc - need active storefronts

Fill in frontage to connect UP area to Downtown

Ped cxns between all the catalyst sites and new developments

Downtown trolley for longer walks or mobility impaired

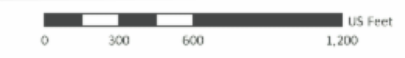
Scooters? Bike share? (micromobility)

Wide, accommodating and attractive sidewalks make people more willing to walk



Commons - connect to plans for Trafficway? Venue? What is the purpose of this space?

### Jubilee Park Catalyst Site



Downtown Signage branding program that is aesthetic and wayfinding. Uniformity across districts

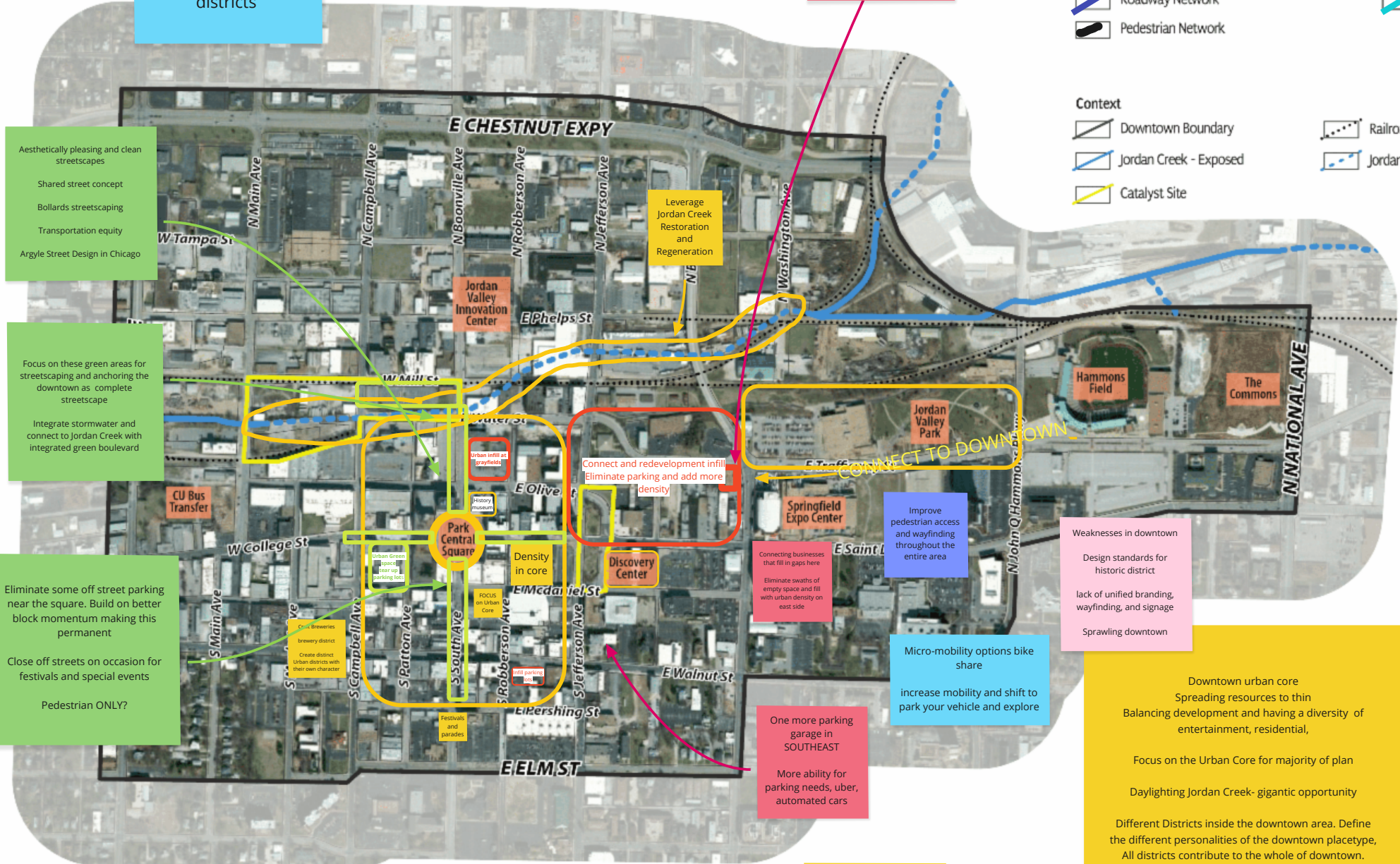
Example of business connecting east to west  
 HOLDFAST BREWERY- Relationship with corner and park. Interesting stop- fill in gaps with more business like this  
 235 N Kimbrough Ave, Springfield, MO 65806

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Aesthetically pleasing and clean streetscapes  
 Shared street concept  
 Bollards streetscaping  
 Transportation equity  
 Argyle Street Design in Chicago

Focus on these green areas for streetscaping and anchoring the downtown as complete streetscape  
 Integrate stormwater and connect to Jordan Creek with integrated green boulevard

Eliminate some off street parking near the square. Build on better block momentum making this permanent

Close off streets on occasion for festivals and special events  
 Pedestrian ONLY?

Leverage Jordan Creek Restoration and Regeneration

Connect and redevelopment infill  
 Eliminate parking and add more density

Improve pedestrian access and wayfinding throughout the entire area

Connecting businesses that fill in gaps here  
 Eliminate swaths of empty space and fill with urban density on east side

Weaknesses in downtown  
 Design standards for historic district  
 lack of unified branding, wayfinding, and signage  
 Sprawling downtown

Micro-mobility options bike share  
 increase mobility and shift to park your vehicle and explore

One more parking garage in SOUTHEAST  
 More ability for parking needs, uber, automated cars

All churches preserved  
 Major Assets

### Jubilee Park Catalyst Site



Downtown urban core  
 Spreading resources to thin  
 Balancing development and having a diversity of entertainment, residential,  
 Focus on the Urban Core for majority of plan  
 Daylighting Jordan Creek- gigantic opportunity  
 Different Districts inside the downtown area. Define the different personalities of the downtown placetype, All districts contribute to the whole of downtown. Balance the areas and have it be all inclusive for as many members/demographics of the community










## Visioning Topics

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-  Development/Redevelopment Opportunities
-  Roadway Network
-  Pedestrian Network
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-  Other Topics

### Context

-  Downtown Boundary
-  Jordan Creek - Exposed
-  Catalyst Site
-  Railroad
-  Jordan Creek - Underground

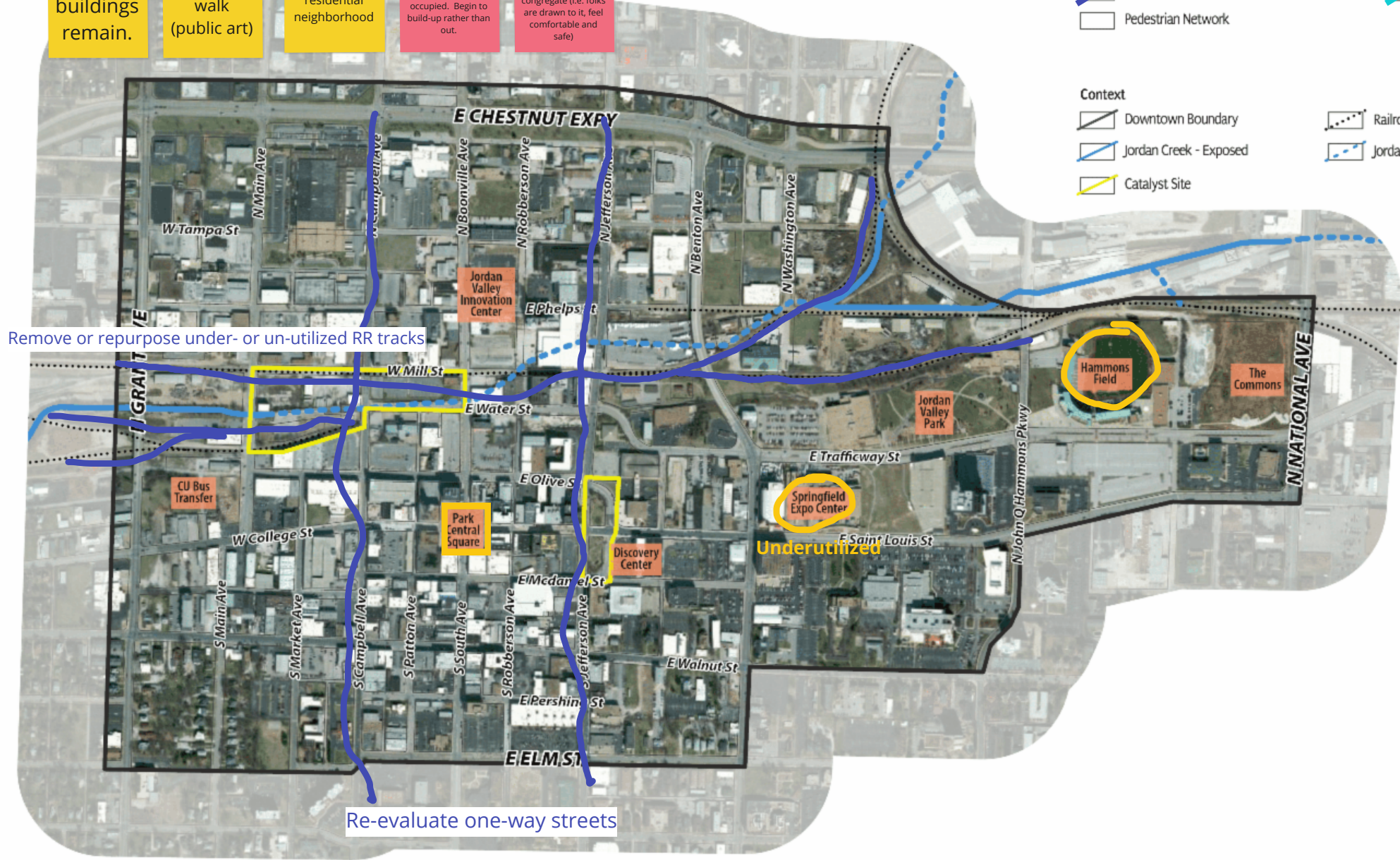
Older buildings remain.

Sculpture walk (public art)

Emerging residential neighborhood

New development as existing buildings are rehabbed and occupied. Begin to build-up rather than out.

"Meaningful" active public spaces where people naturally congregate (i.e. folks are drawn to it, feel comfortable and safe)



Jubilee Park Catalyst Site

