

AMERICAN RETROFIT: THE RETURN OF STREETS



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#StreetDesign



STREET DESIGN

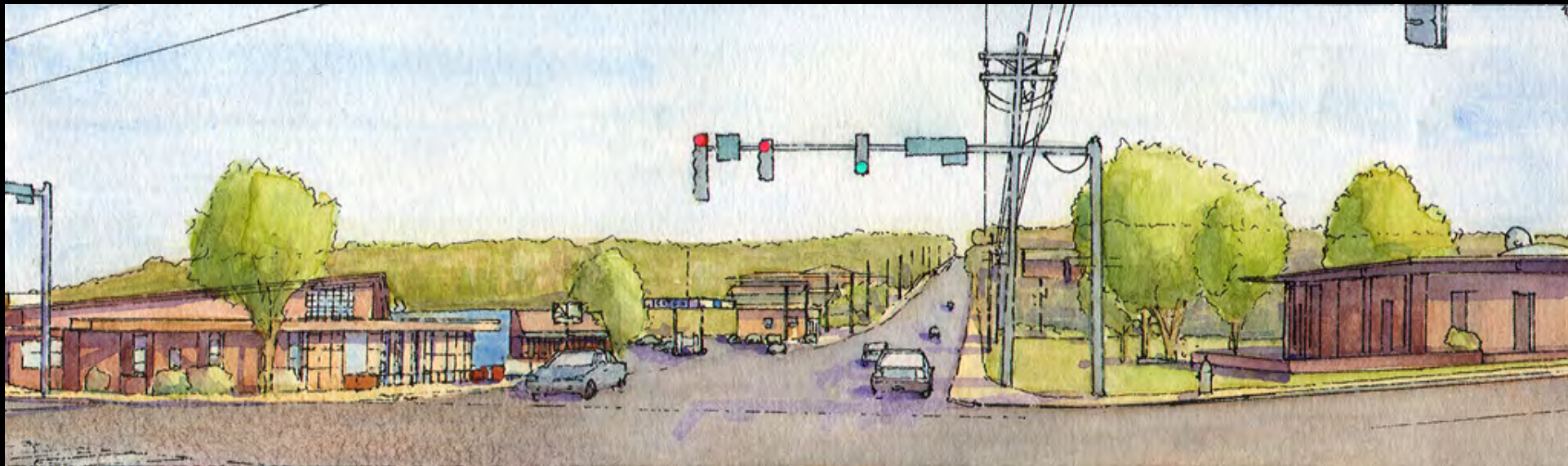
The Secret to Great Cities and Towns



VICTOR DOVER
JOHN MASSENGALE

foreword by HRH The Prince of Wales
afterword by James Howard Kunstler

WILEY











CHANGE OVER TIME





Bull Street, Savannah GA



STREETS
ARE
COOL



Rue de Bellechasse, Paris



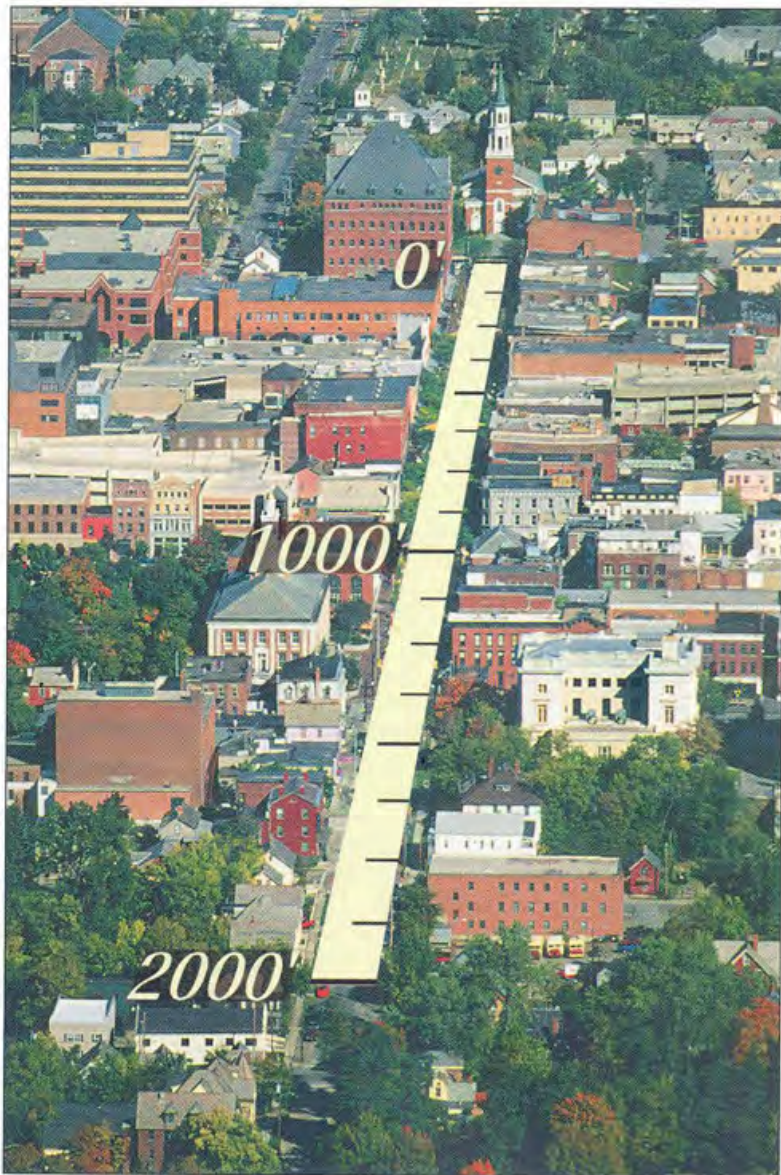
Main Street, Galena IL



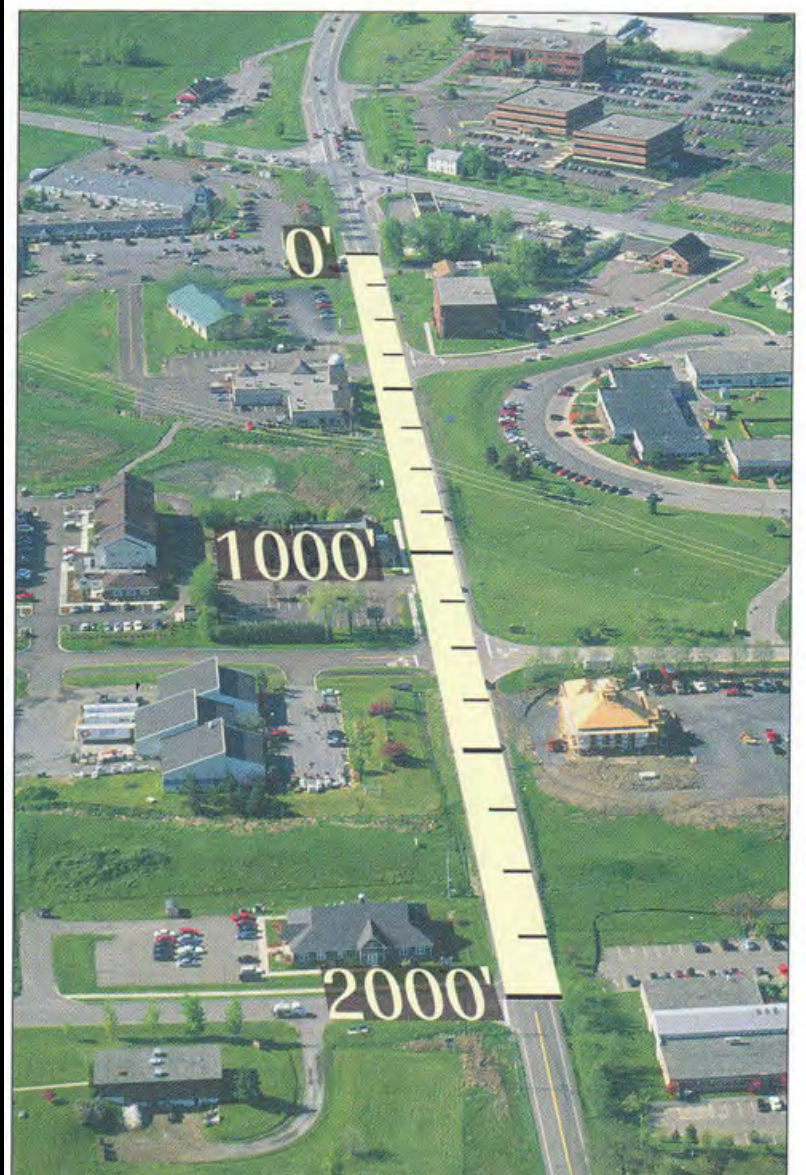
Main Street, Ann Arbor MI



Bird Road, Miami FL



8.2 Aerial view of Church Street in Burlington, Vermont.



8.3 Aerial view of Tafts Corners in Williston.



CHAPTER FIVE

NEW STREETS

TWO VERY DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTS from the early 1980s are important landmarks in the recent history of urban design and street design. Battery Park City, a ninety-two-acre extension of Manhattan in the Hudson River that was built on landfill from the construction site of the World Trade Center, has office towers, mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, and stores. Seaside, Florida, an eighty-acre development on the Florida panhandle, is a resort built in the form of a town. What the two places have in common is that their streets were designed with many of the placemaking principles outlined in this book. Both projects were a radical departure from conventional practice of the time. The histories of both demonstrate how auto-centric regulations across the country hinder the making of good streets.

It wasn't that people didn't understand the principles; by the early 1980s, they had been talked about and

praised for at least two decades. Jane Jacobs wrote the enormously popular *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* in 1961. Bernard Rudofsky published *Streets for People*¹ (also very popular) in 1969, and William H. "Holly" Whyte had been publishing his influential studies of how people use urban space since the late 1960s.² Despite professional acceptance of the theories, however, most of the sprawl in America was built after the publication of *Death and Life*. Many planners endorsed these works, but the American Planning Association and its members continued to promote regulations based on an auto-centric separation of uses, with road standards established by the engineering profession's anti-urban Functional Classification system. "The pseudoscience of planning," Jacobs wrote, "seems almost neurotic in its determination to imitate empiric failure and to ignore empiric success."³



J. D.

South Main, Buena Vista CO



Swift Street, South Main, Buena Vista CO



CHAPTER FOUR

RETROFITTED STREETS

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF PLACES in America where retrofitted streets are most valuable and useful: auto-centric suburban and exurban sites where the residents and their elected representatives have decided to make walkable streets and communities; and walkable or once-walkable places where the public realm has been damaged by the application of engineering principles that favor the car, making the roads worse for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users than they once were.

The first description fits almost every American place built since 1945. The second includes most American neighborhoods, towns, or cities built before that: there are few American places that have not kicked the pedestrian to the side of the road and then narrowed the sidewalk. Most in the second group also suffered from the flight of businesses to shopping malls and strip centers—not to mention the self-inflicted damage of tearing down Main Street buildings for parking lots that were supposed to help the downtown compete with those outlying businesses. Experience shows that competing with shopping centers on the shopping centers' terms (convenient driving and parking¹)

rather than playing up the strengths of town centers (walkability and a public realm where people want to be) is a losing strategy.

There are few American places that have not kicked the pedestrian to the side of the road and then narrowed the sidewalk.

For a variety of reasons, including climate change, dependence on foreign oil, rising oil prices, and a growing desire among many to live in walkable towns, cities, and neighborhoods, the job of retrofitting main streets and neighborhood streets to make them more pedestrian-friendly has begun across the country. At the same time, the nation's population continues to grow, and there is a burgeoning movement to retrofit appropriate places in suburbia with new, walkable centers. We have come to see that our pattern of abandoning old buildings and existing patterns of development in favor of cheaply-built strip buildings with short life spans is inefficient and expensive

◀ Yorkville Promenade, New York, New York. See Figure 4.80.



Dorn Avenue, South Miami FL



Dorn Avenue, South Miami FL



The Hometown Plan for South Miami



Columbia Pike, Arlington VA



Columbia Pike, Arlington VA



Downtown Kendall, Miami-Dade County



Boundary Street, Beaufort SC



Boundary Street, Beaufort SC



Boundary Street, Beaufort SC

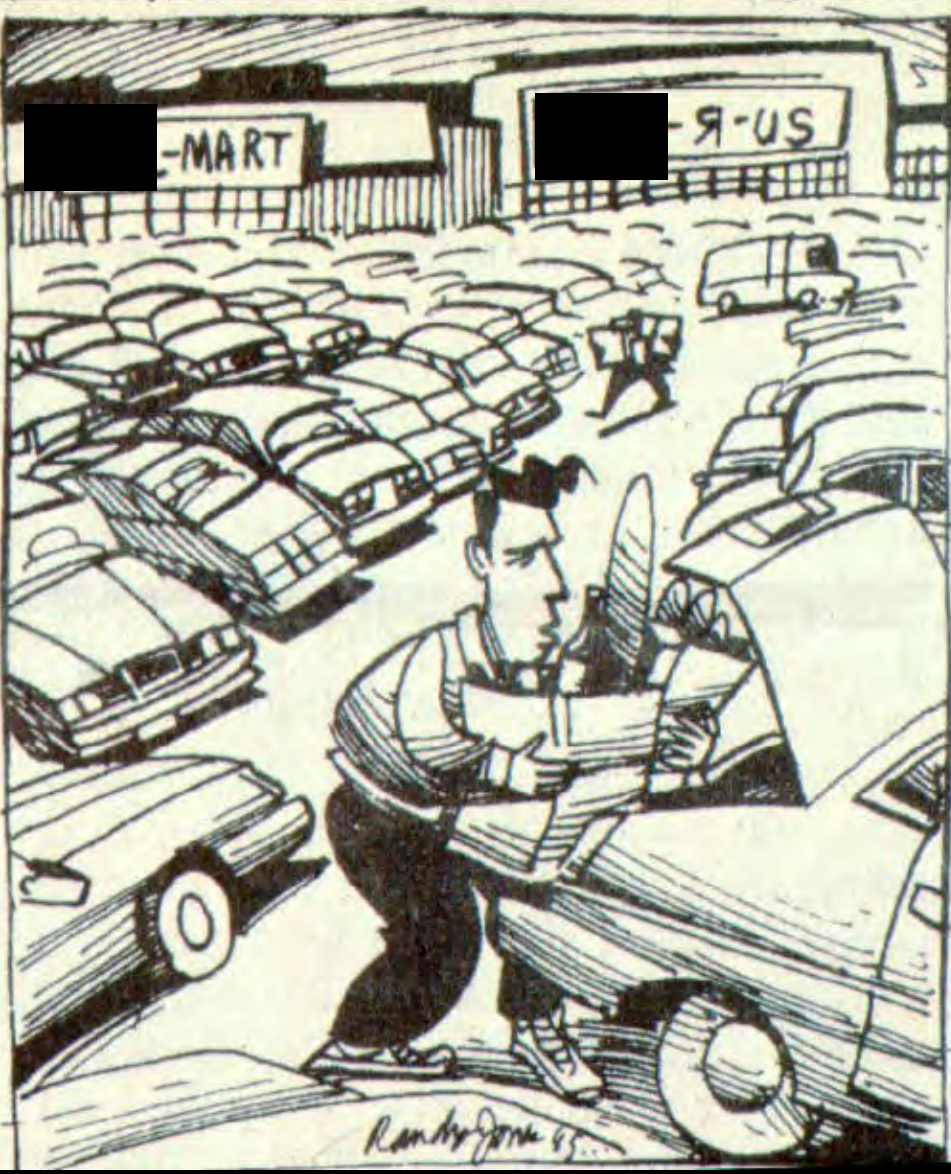
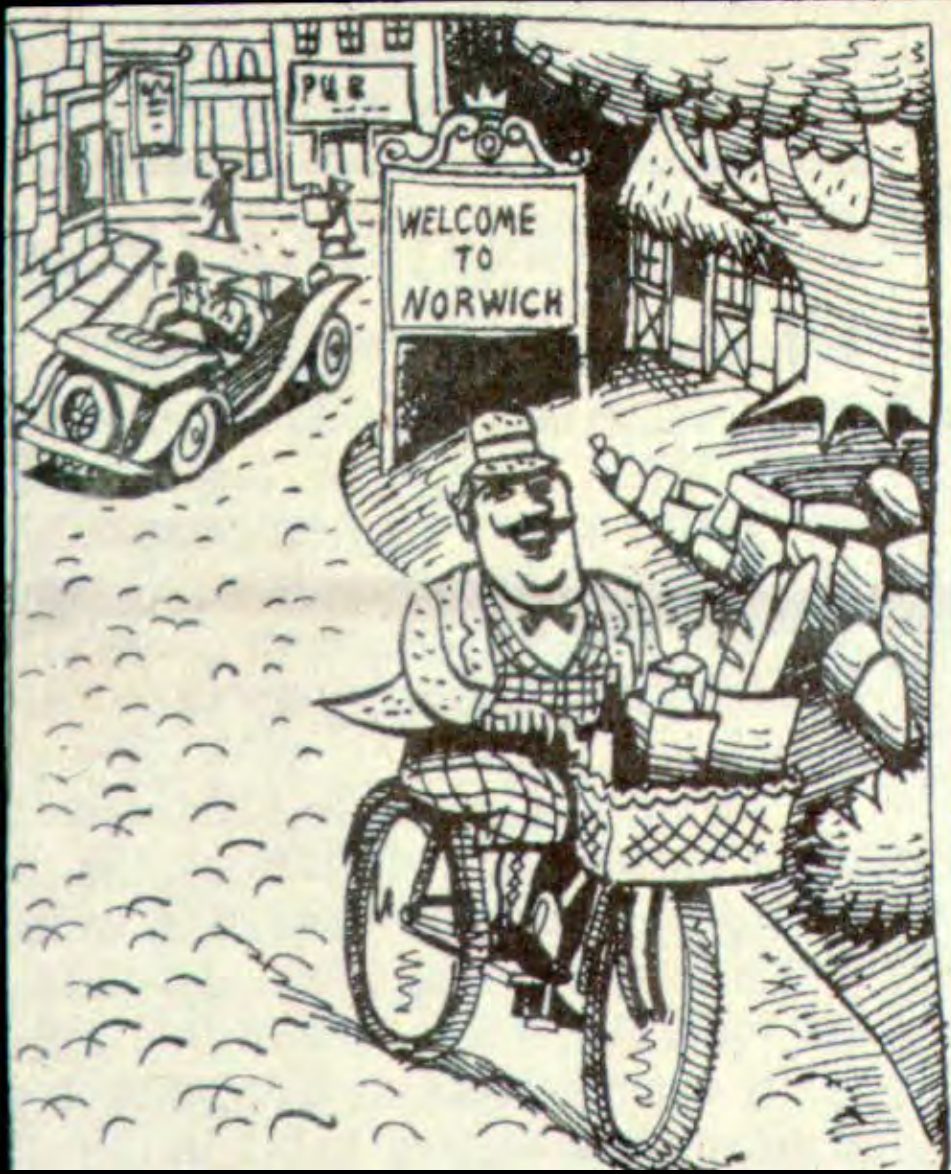


Boundary Street, Beaufort SC



Jamestown Mall, St. Louis MO

Revived interest in livable communities





Jamestown Mall, St. Louis MO

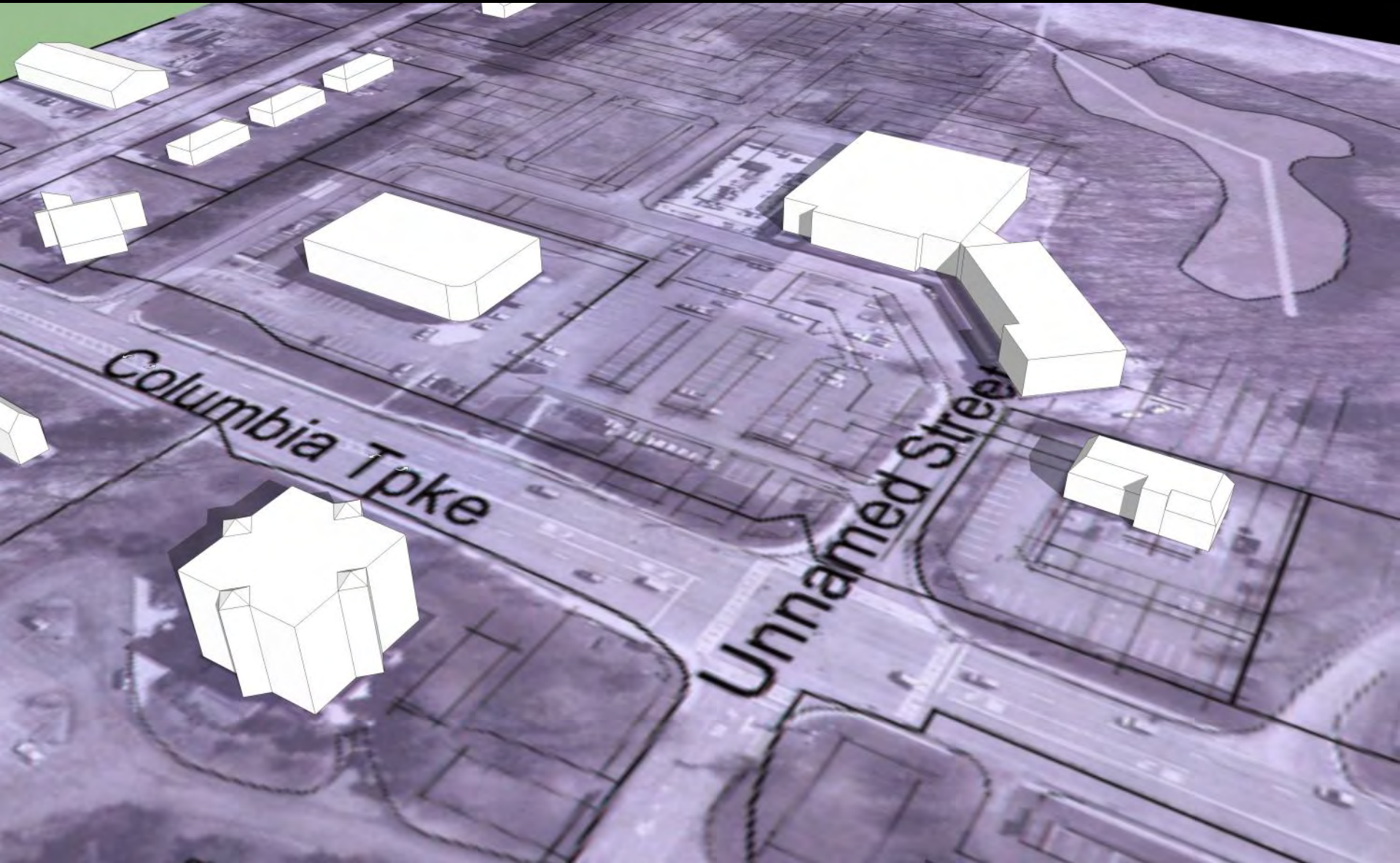


Jamestown Mall, St. Louis MO



Schodak, NY

Change over time



Existing conditions

Change over time



Step 1 – Create a sense of place with the very first new buildings

Change over time



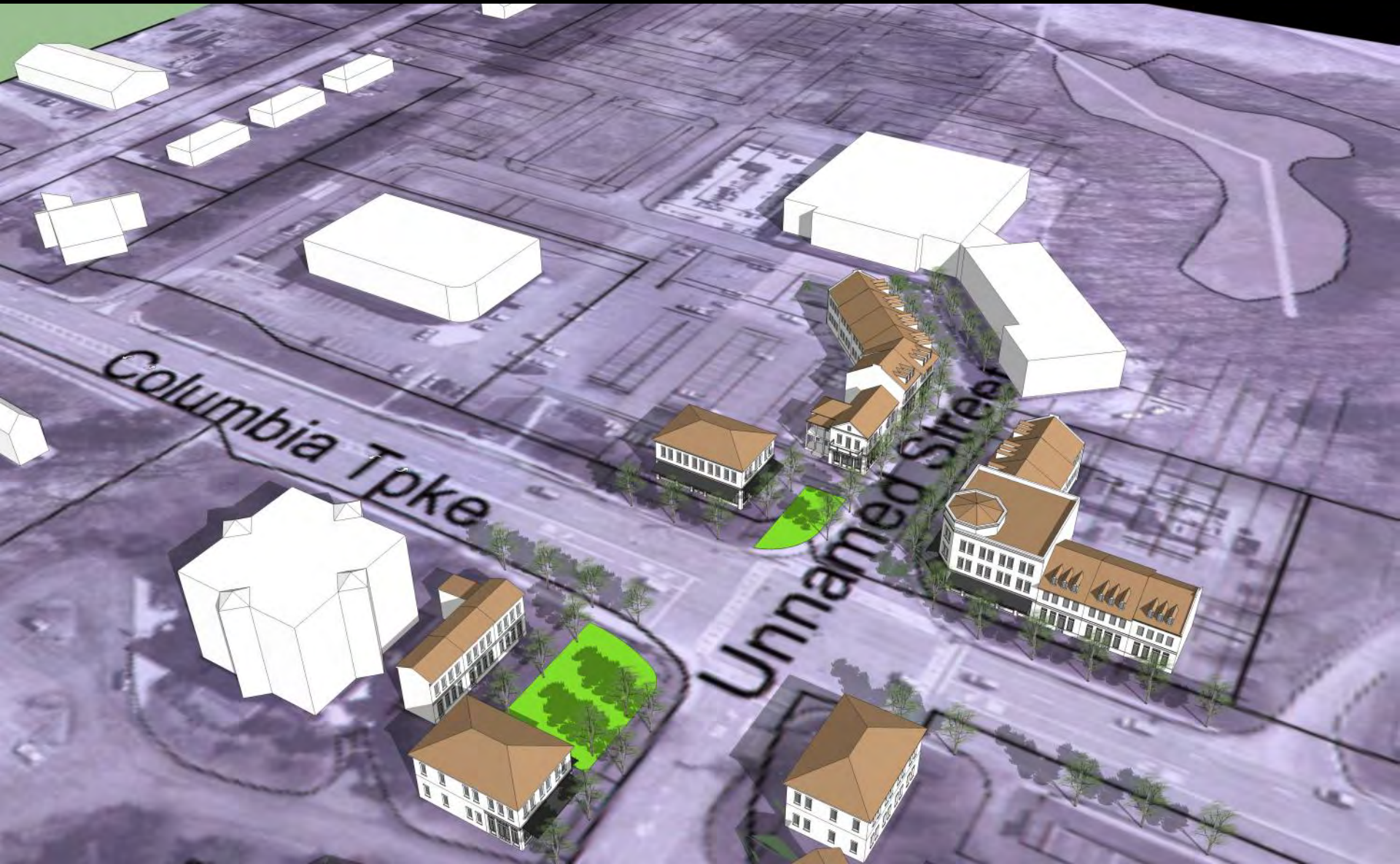
Step 1 – Create a sense of place with the very first new buildings

Change over time



Step 1 – Create a sense of place with the very first new buildings

Change over time



Step 2 – Add buildings incrementally, making complete streets

Change over time



Step 3 – Add buildings incrementally, making complete streets

Change over time



Step 4 – Opportunity for a larger square, framed by the fronts of buildings

Change over time



Step 5 – Extend the walkable core, diversifying uses

Change over time



Step 6 – Strengthen connections and find lost space as values increase

SHAPED

COMFORTABLE

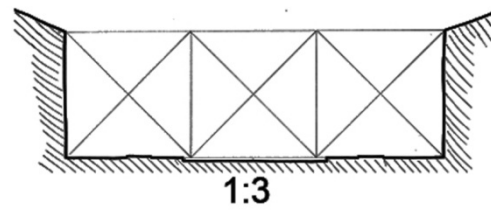
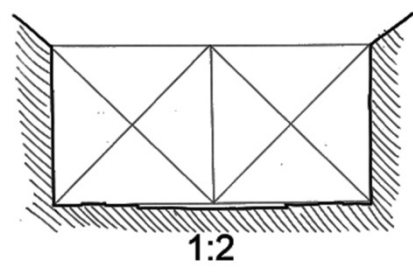
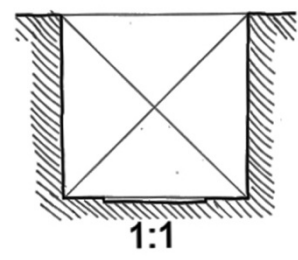
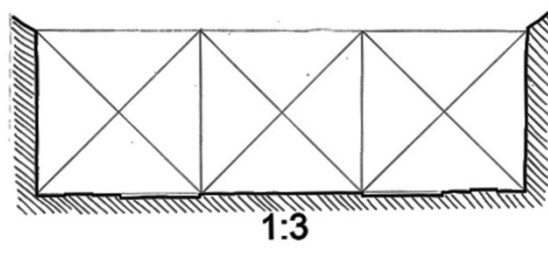
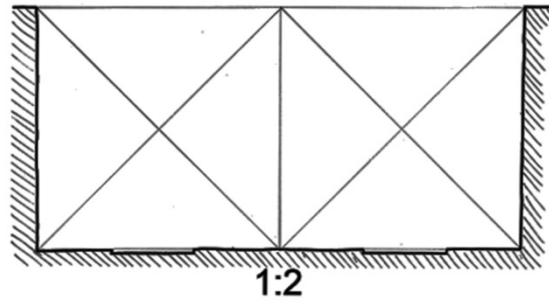
CONNECTED

SAFE

MEMORABLE



Main Street, Great Barrington MA



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COMFORTABLE

CONNECTED

SAFE

MEMORABLE



Ramblas, Barcelona



American classic: Elm Street

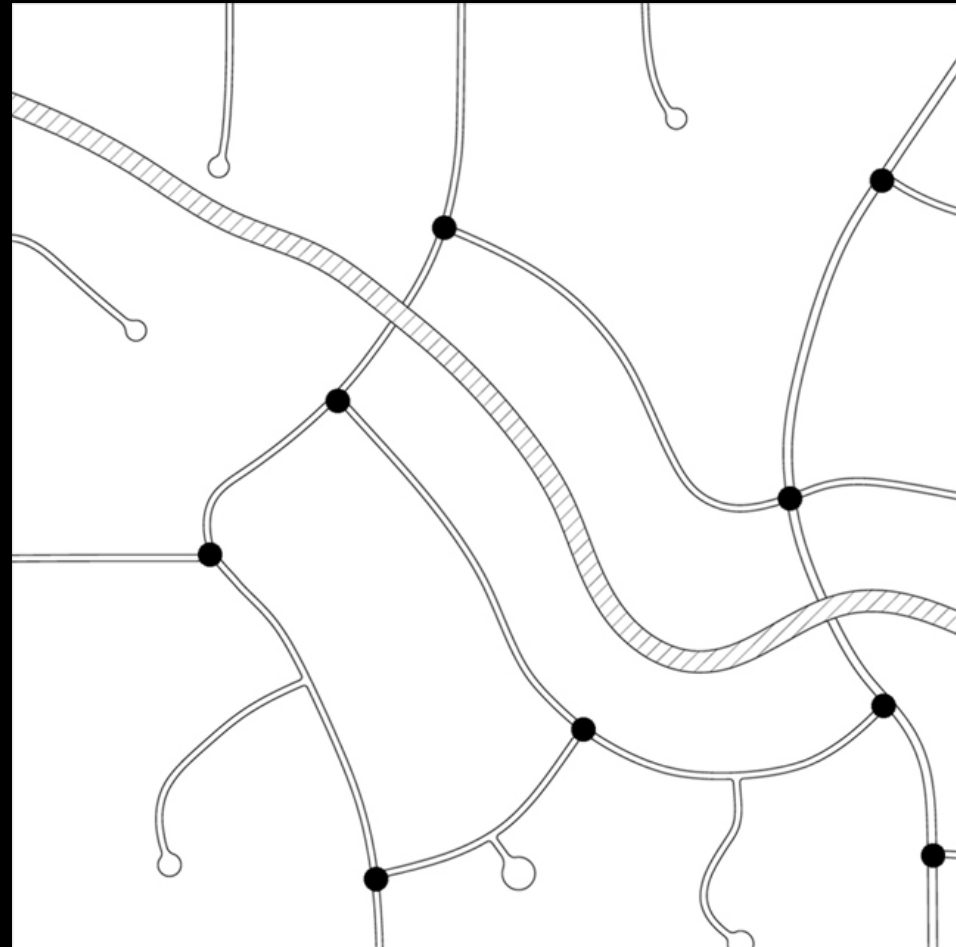
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COMFORTABLE

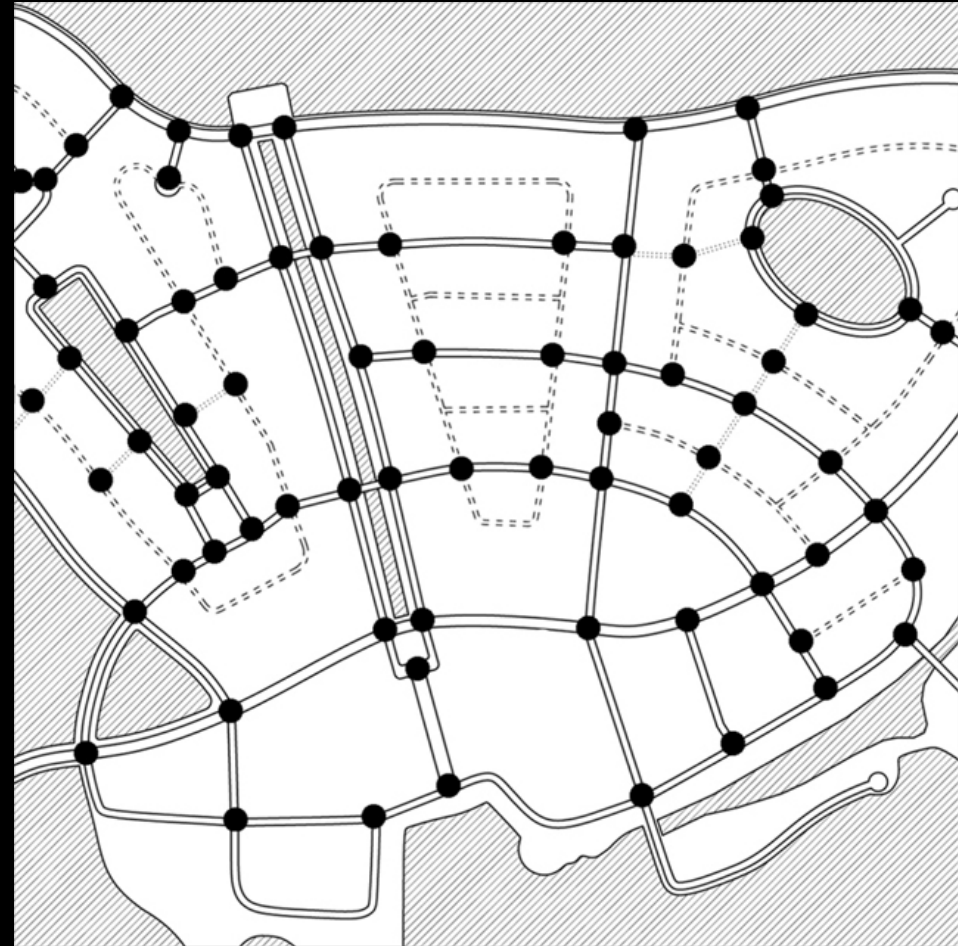
CONNECTED

SAFE

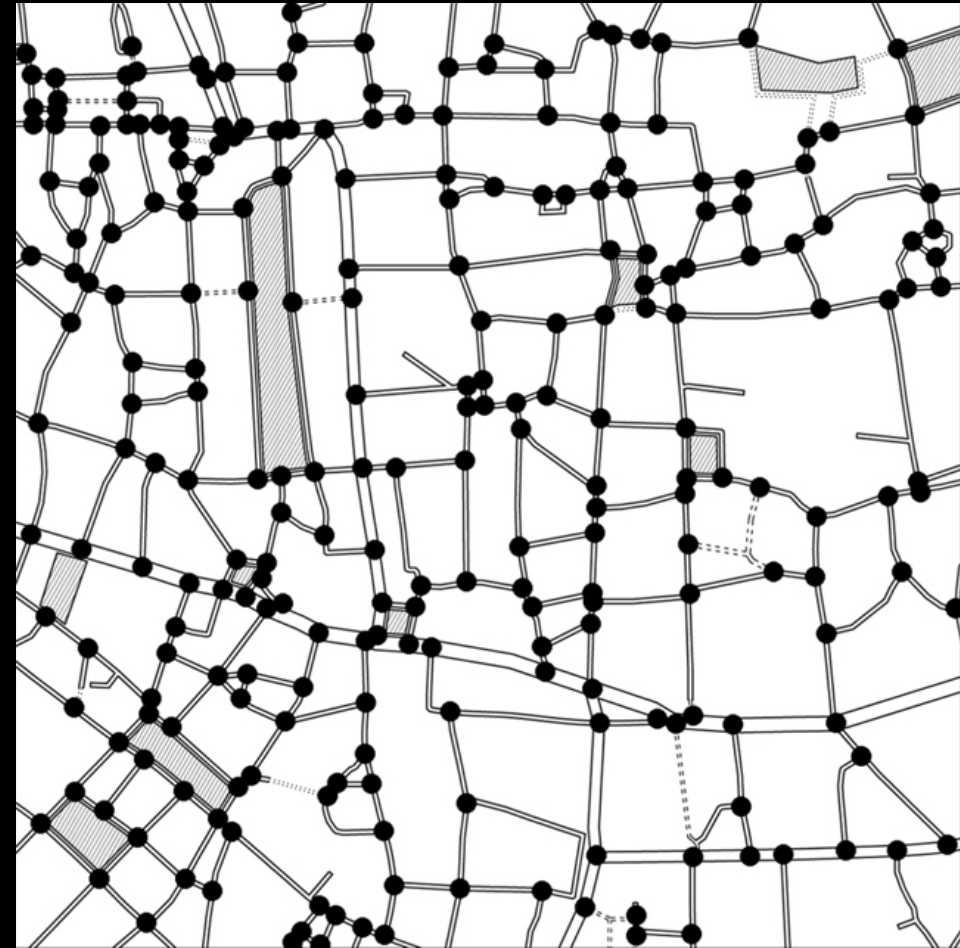
MEMORABLE



The Woodlands, Texas – 36 intersections per square mile

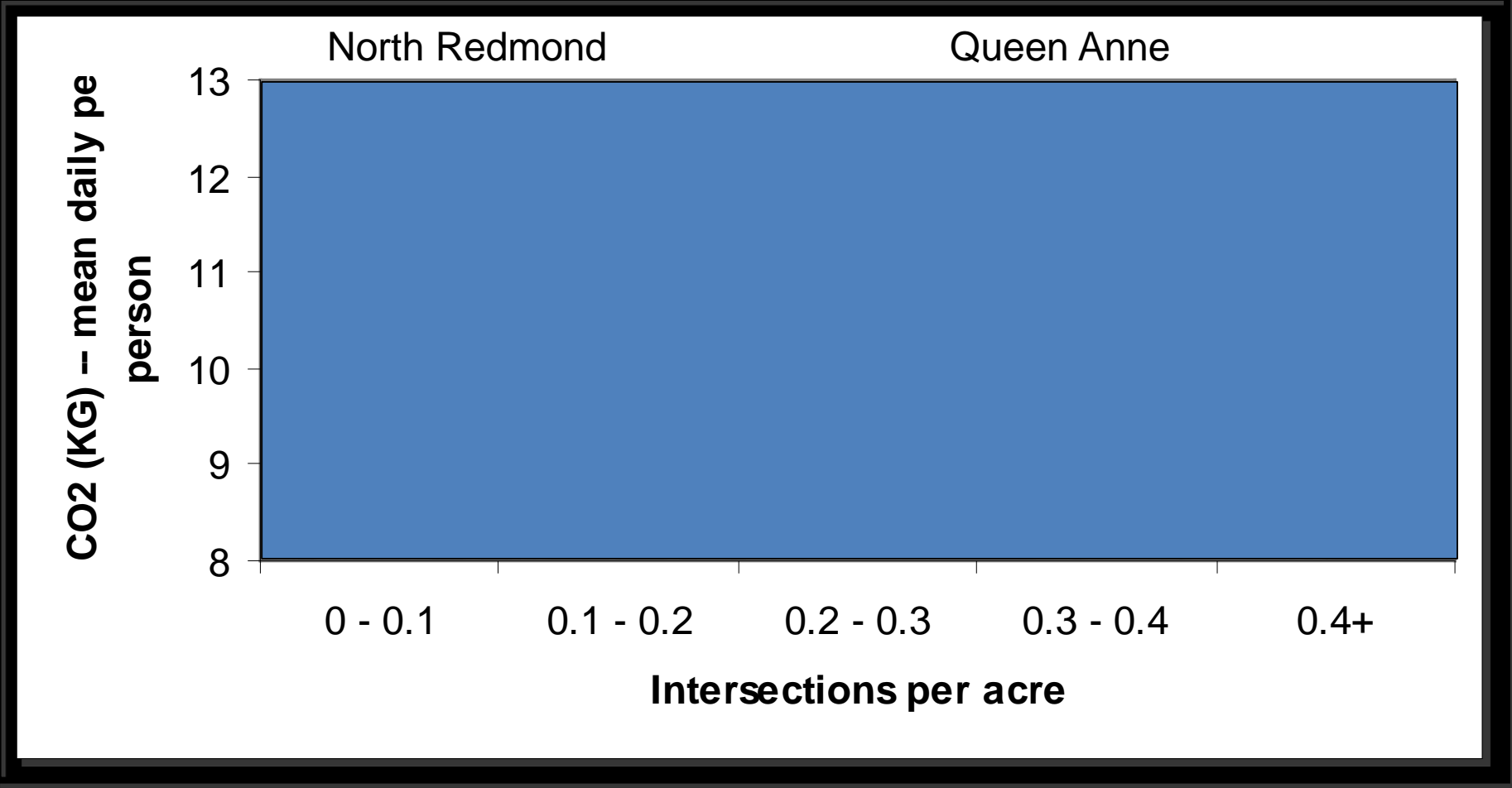


Celebration, Florida – 377.8 intersections per square mile



Rome, Italy – 1029.2 intersections per square mile

Lower the carbon footprint: ? Connect the streets



Source: LUTAQH final report, King County ORTP, 2005

SHAPED

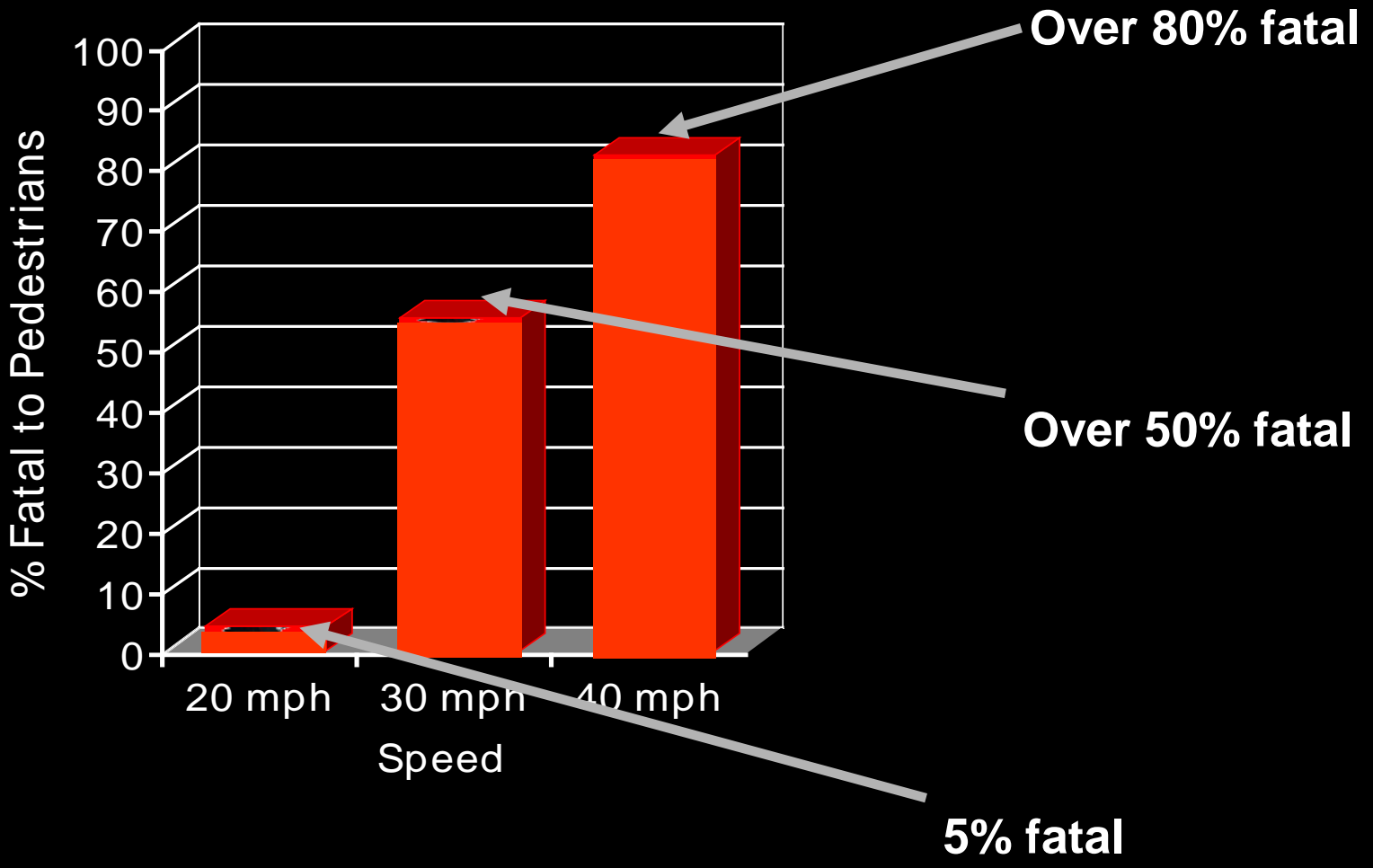
COMFORTABLE

CONNECTED

SAFE

MEMORABLE

Speed kills





Not Paris



THANKS FOR MAKING US #1
GRAN SPOON
DOGA



PUSH
BUTTON
FOR
WALK
SIGNAL





Strändwagen, Stockholm

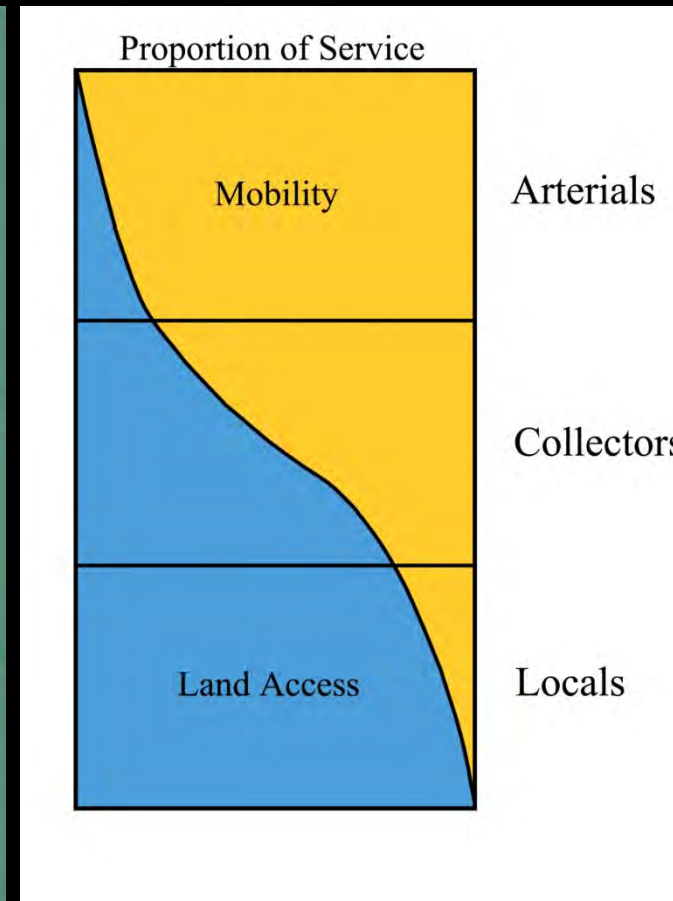
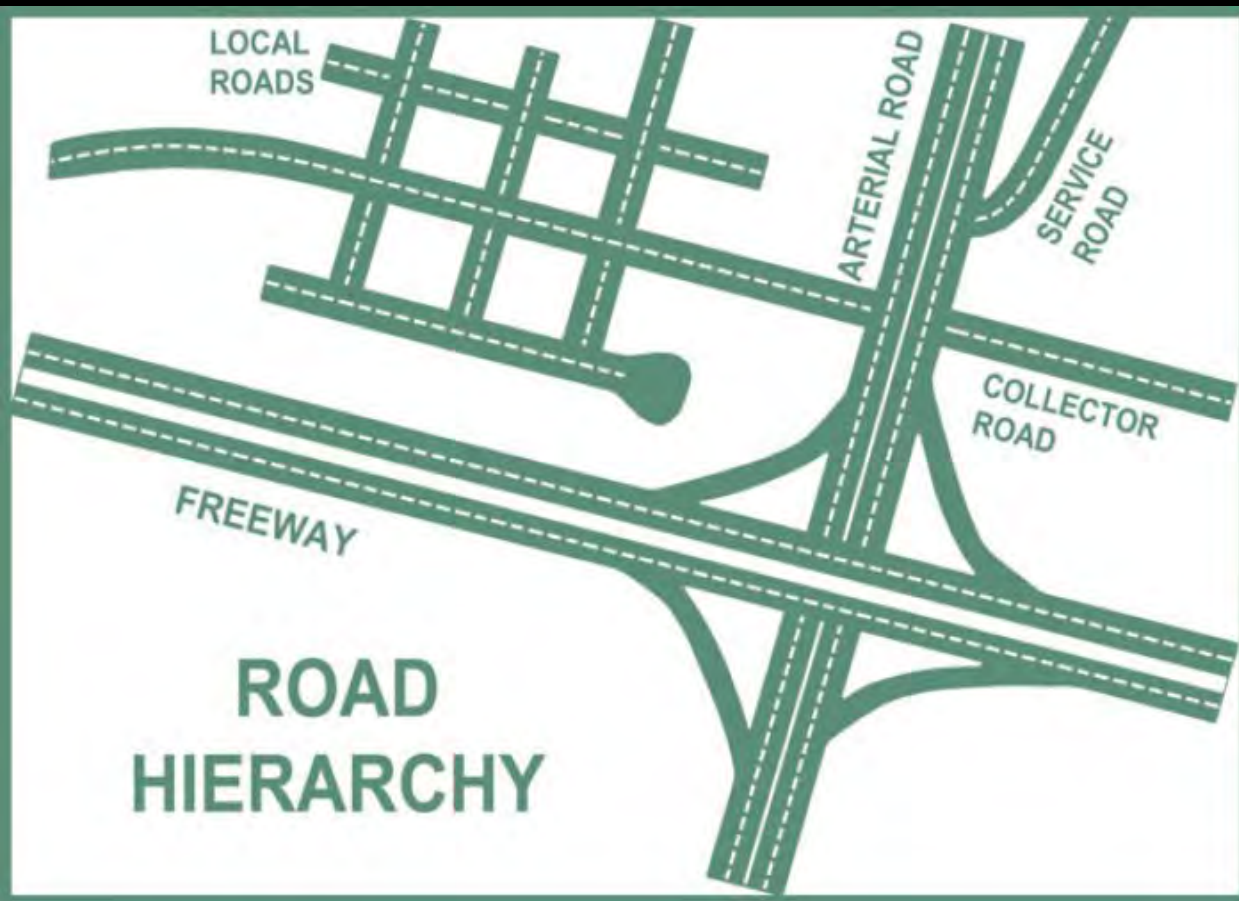


“Complete Street”? Fort Lauderdale FL

BEGIN
LEFT TURN LANE
←
YIELD TO BIKES

5
←
5

East 4th Street, Long Beach, C A



Petitioning US Department of Transportation (US DOT) ▾

United States Department of Transportation: Update Functional Classification System To Improve the Walkability of American Cities and Towns

Public demand for walkable neighborhoods, towns and cities is often thwarted by auto-dominated guidelines that force anyone designing streets to favor the car over pedestrians, cyclists and transit. A simple but powerful change is proposed in this petition: update the FHWA Functional Classification System by defining separate Urban, Suburban and Rural Area Types. New and more specific design guidance could then transform streets and make America's places more safe, walkable and livable.

Sign this petition

with 1,447 supporters



First Name

Last Name

Email

Why is this important to you?
(Optional)

Sign >

Display my signature on Change.org

By signing, you accept Change.org's [terms of service](#) and [privacy policy](#).

Recent signatures

Adrienne Heller CHAPEL HILL, NC 26d

Sarah Patrick BERKELEY, CA 39d

Wade Walker DAVIDSON, NC 42d

Ian Colgan INDIANAPOLIS, IN 42d

To:

US Department of Transportation (US DOT), Policy Office

We the undersigned urge the US DOT to create new design standards for streets in walkable neighborhoods, towns, and cities by changing the Rural and Urbanized Area Type Classifications into Rural, Suburban, and Urban Area Types. Our towns and cities have suffered too long from



EST. 1977

POTBELLY

THE VERY FIRST

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The very first Potbelly Deli, Chicago IL



Newpoint Road, Lady's Island SC



Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah GA

SHAPED

COMFORTABLE

CONNECTED

SAFE

MEMORABLE



High Street, Oxford



Avenue d'Iena, Paris



Avenue d'Iéna, Paris



The world's most
 thrilling contradiction.

The new Porsche
 Panamera S E-Hybrid

Click to search
 available inventory ▶

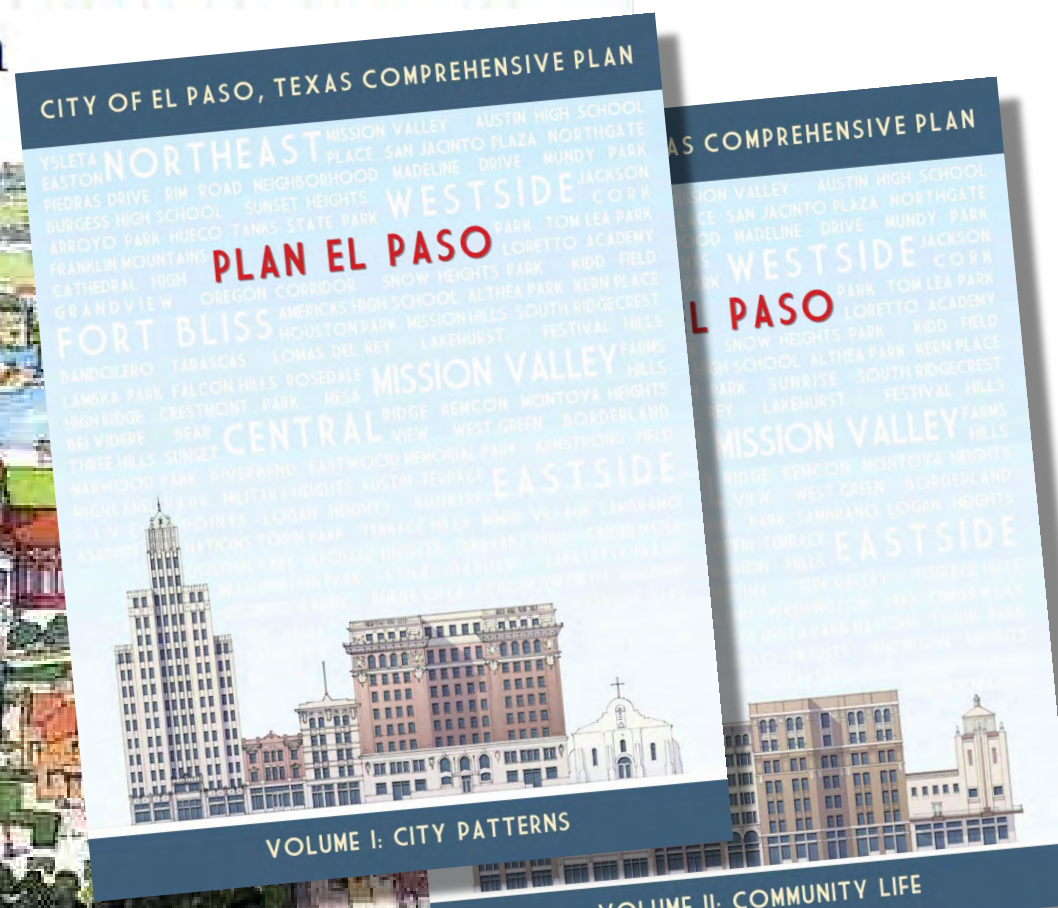


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URBAN WONK

How El Paso Ended Up With America's Best Smart Growth Plan

KAID BENFIELD MAR 08, 2012 12 COMMENTS

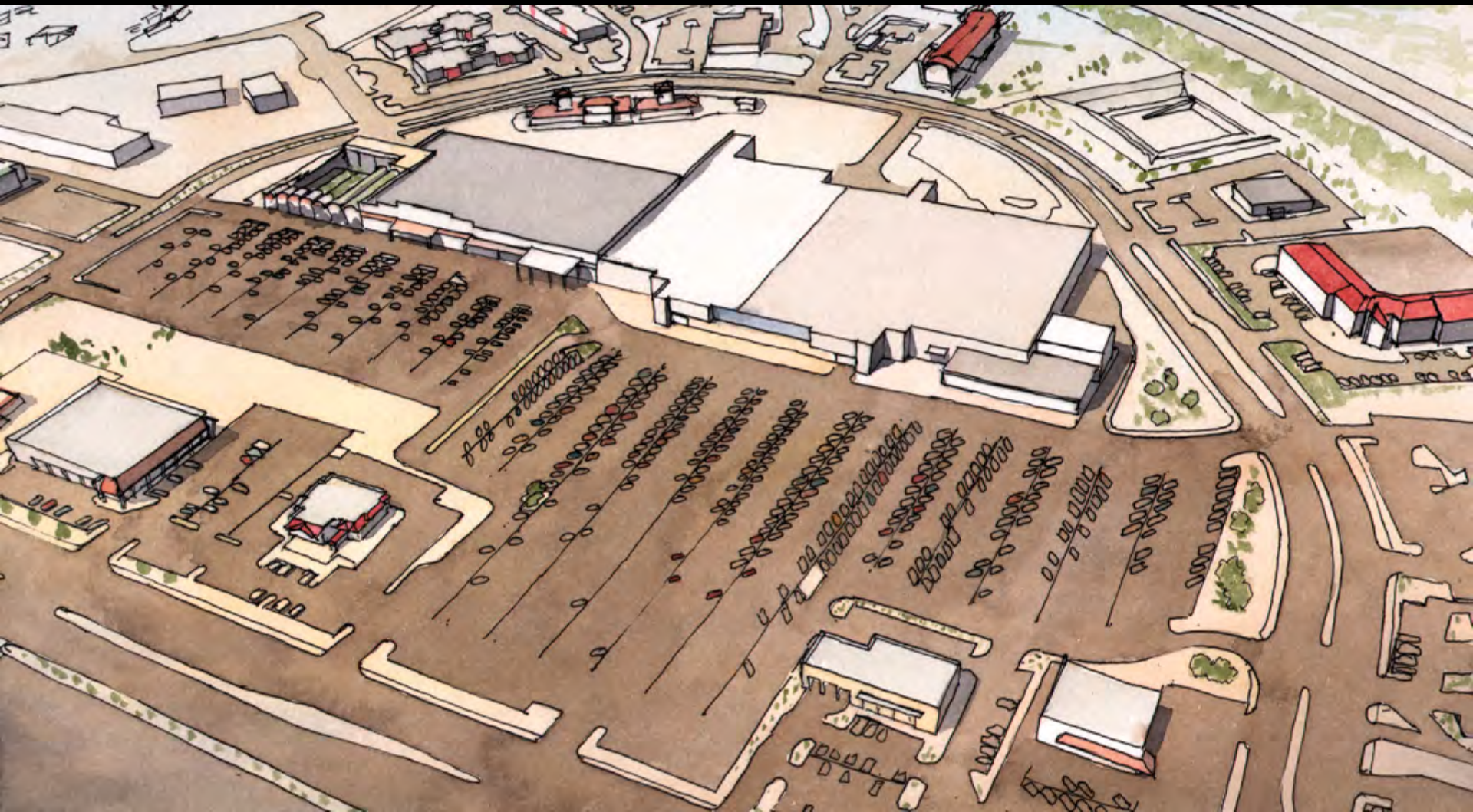


Remcon Circle



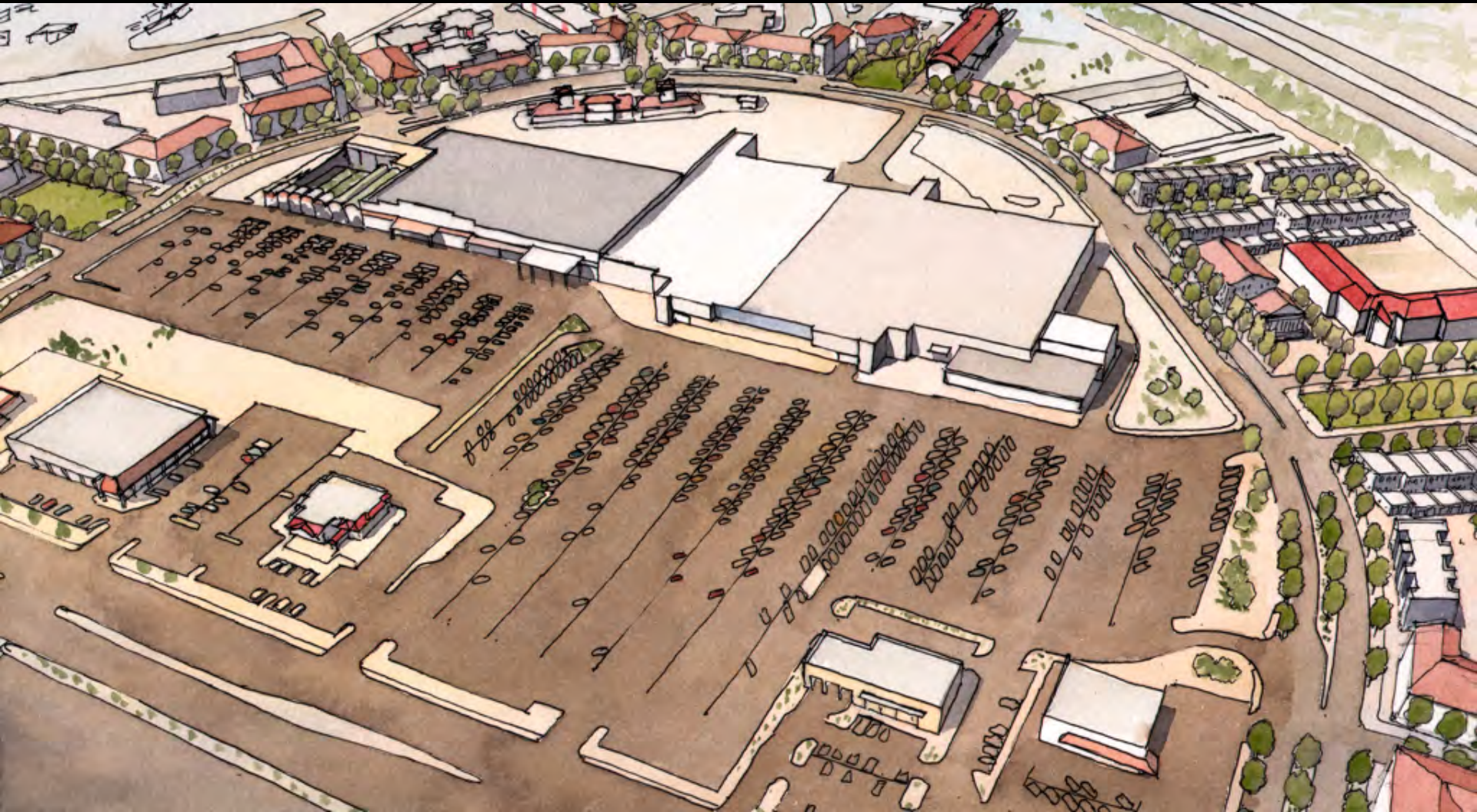
Expanded commitment to transit

Remcon Circle



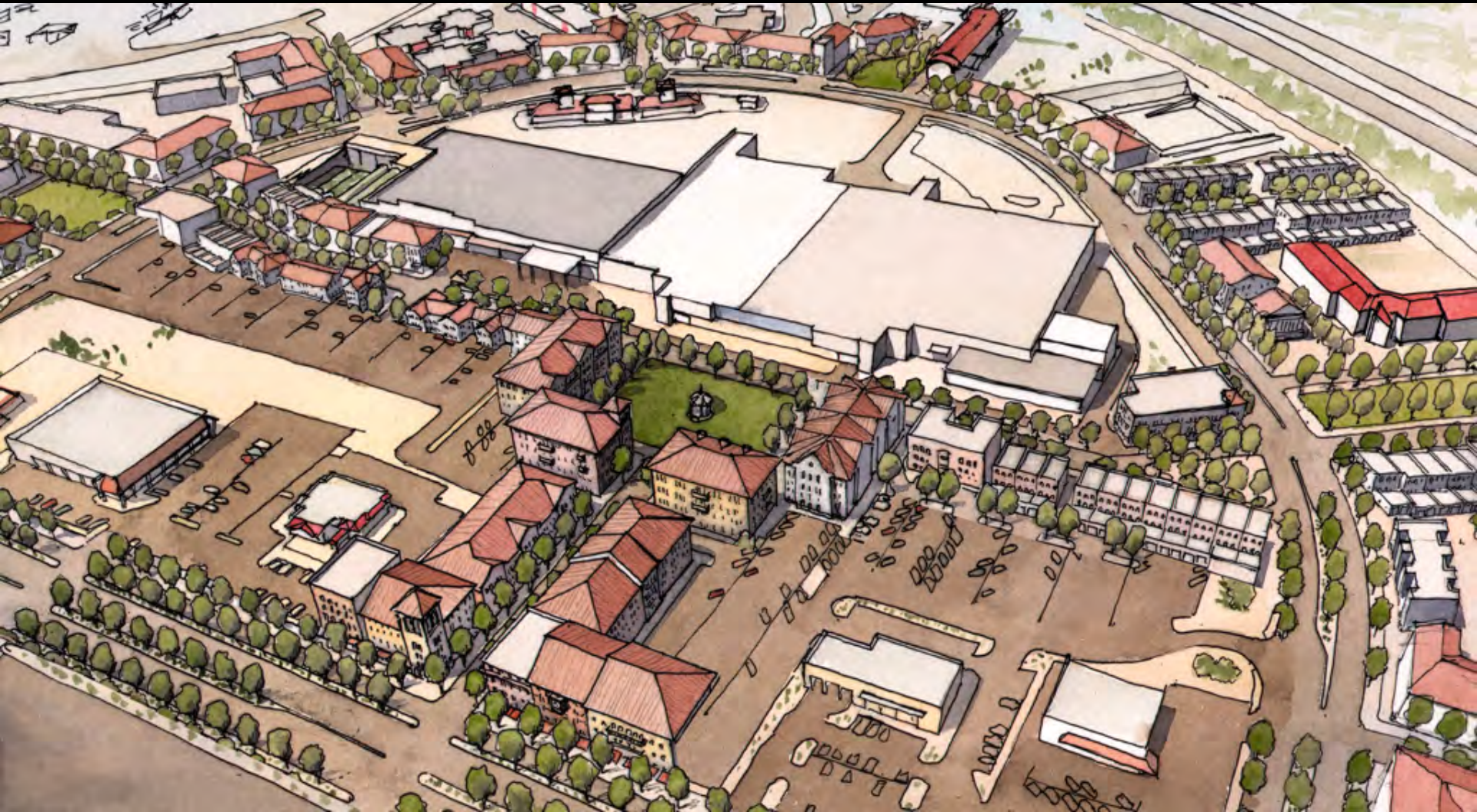
The Walmart area on Mesa

Remcon Circle



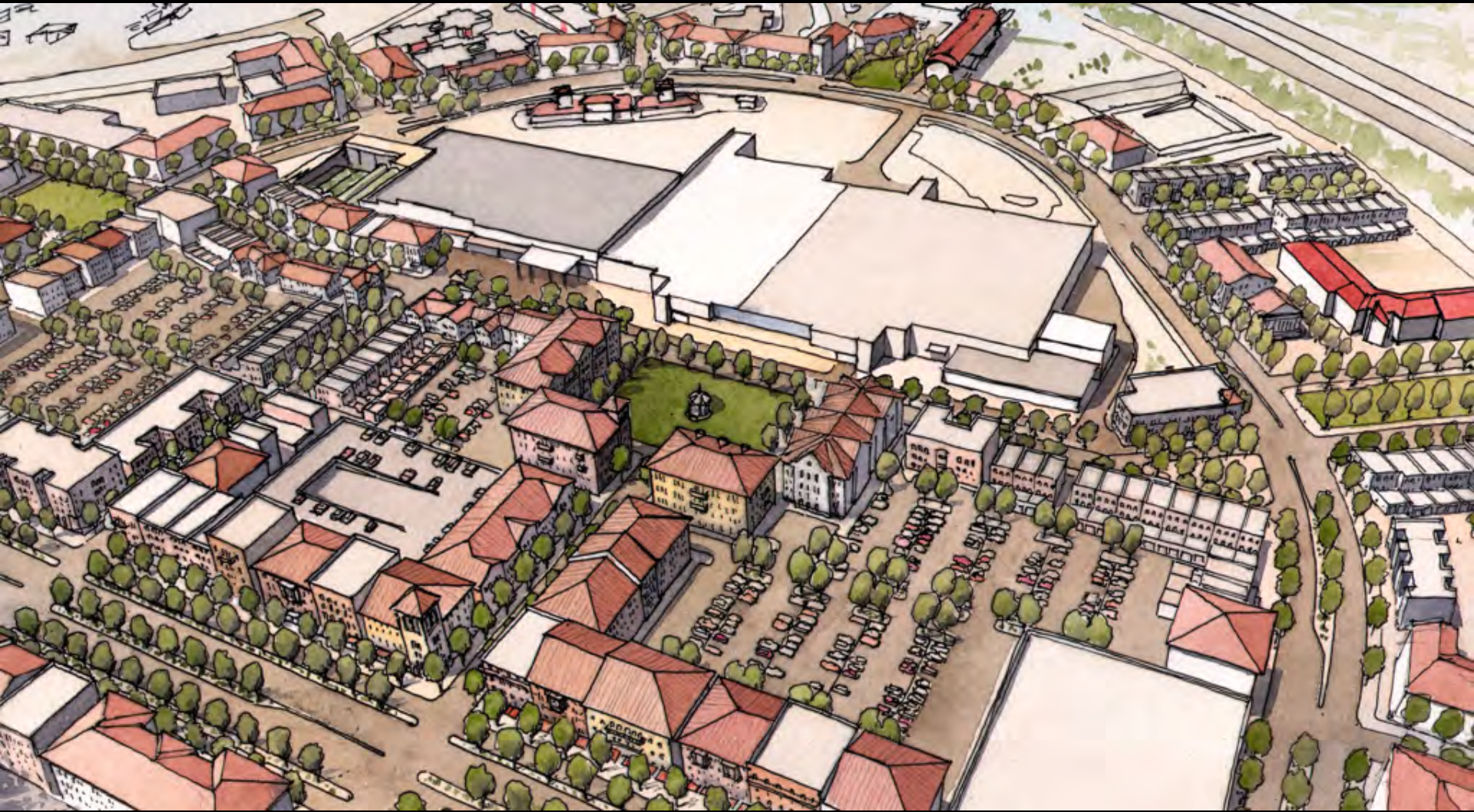
The Walmart area on Mesa

Remcon Circle



The Walmart area on Mesa

Remcon Circle



The Walmart area on Mesa




Remcon Circle



The Walmart area on Mesa

TOPSHELF

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Dec 3, 2013, 4:43pm EST | **UPDATED:** Dec 4, 2013, 1:16pm EST

Wal-Mart squeezes its offerings into urban-style box on H Street (Video)



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Northpark Mall, El Paso TX (R.I.P.)

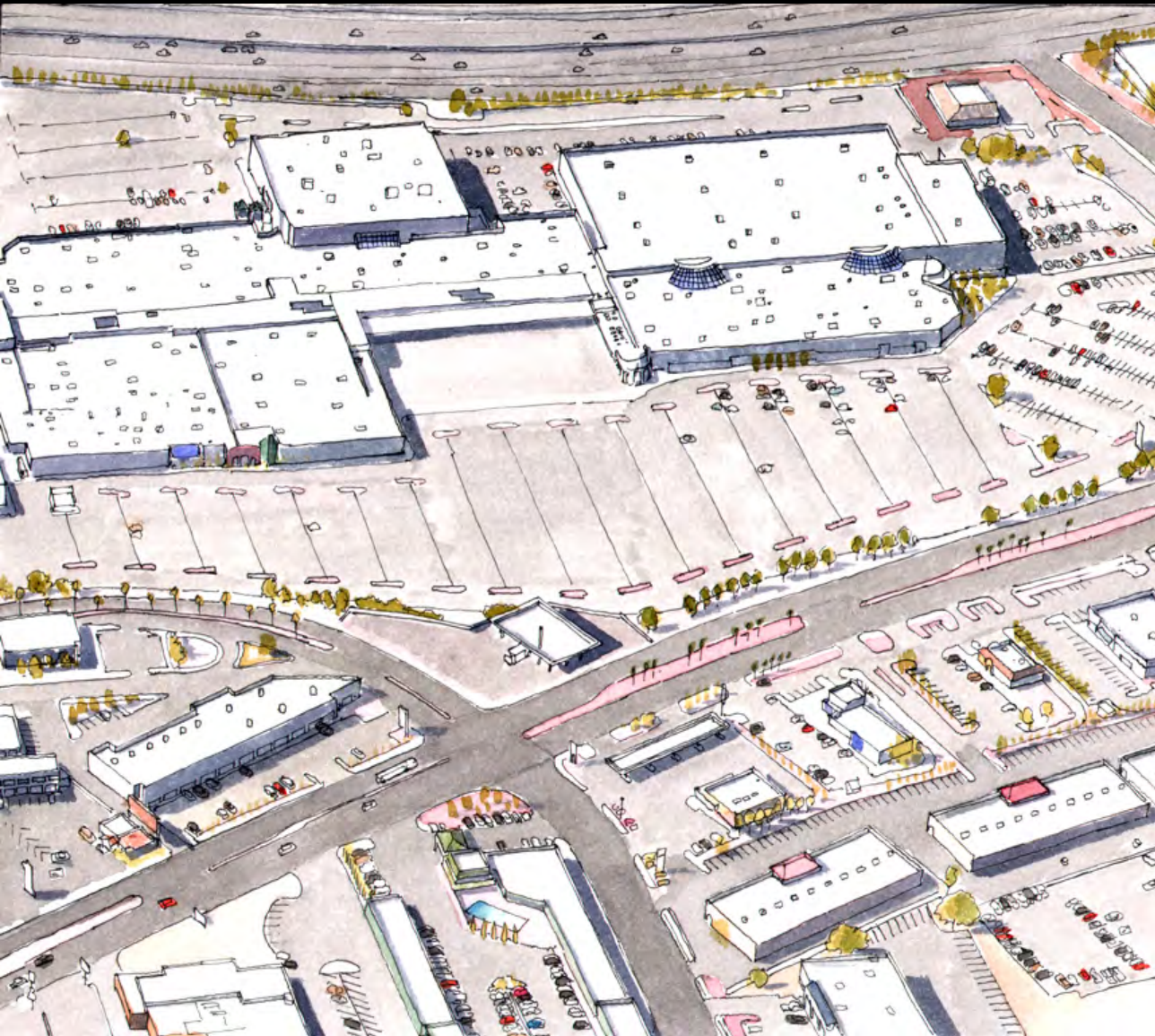


Mall Retrofit, El Paso TX



Northgate Street, El Paso TX

Bassett Town Center



Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



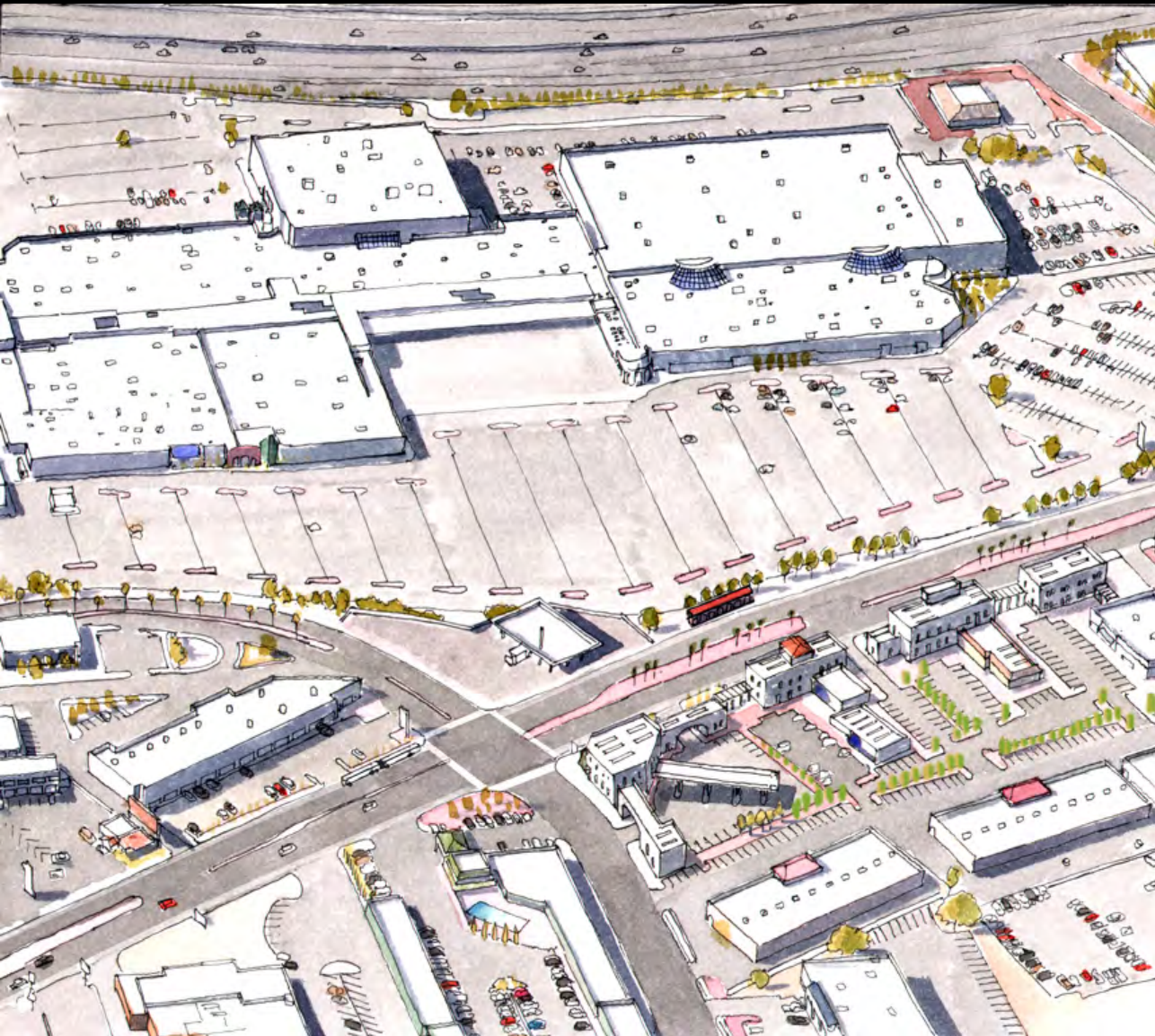
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



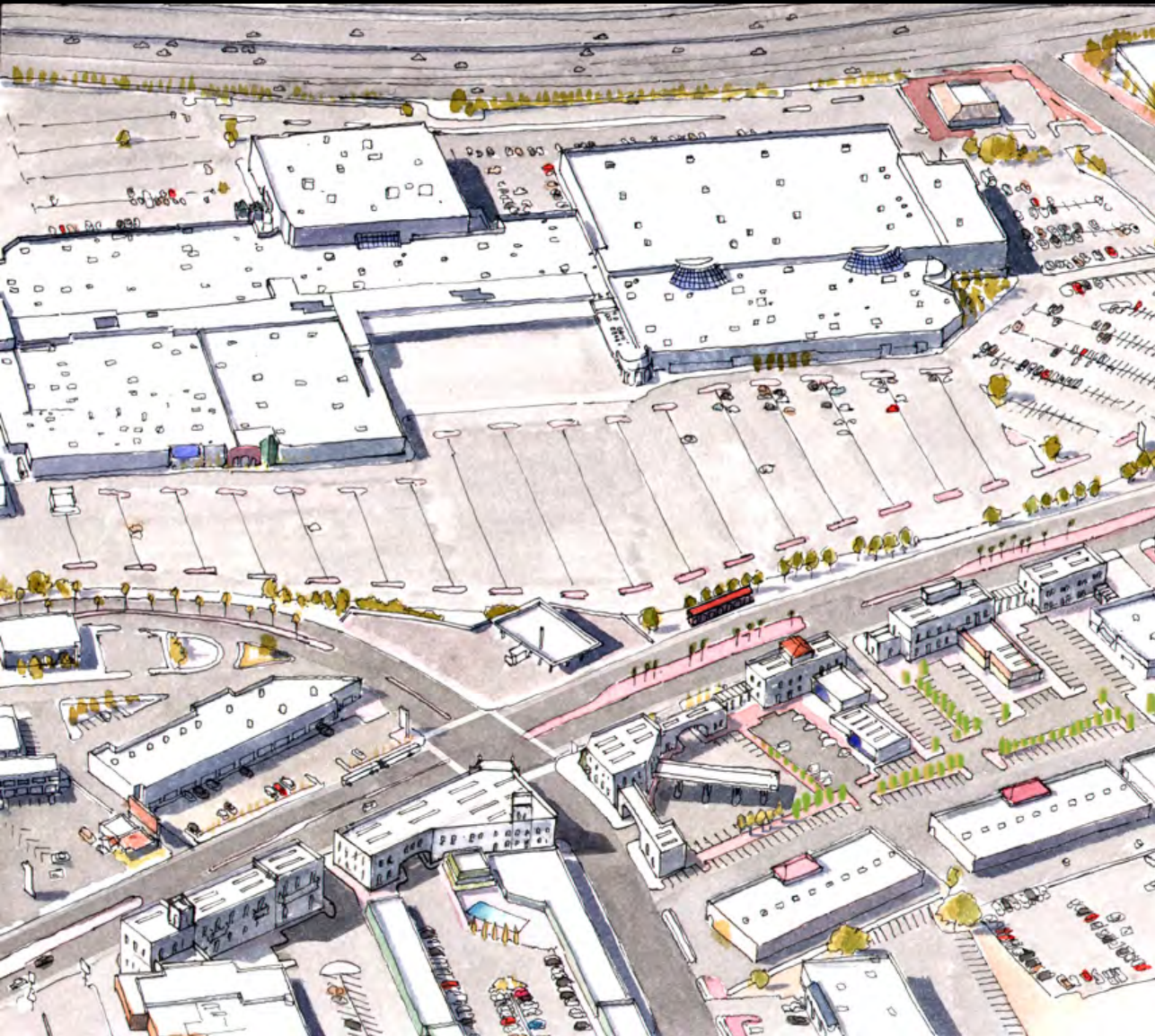
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



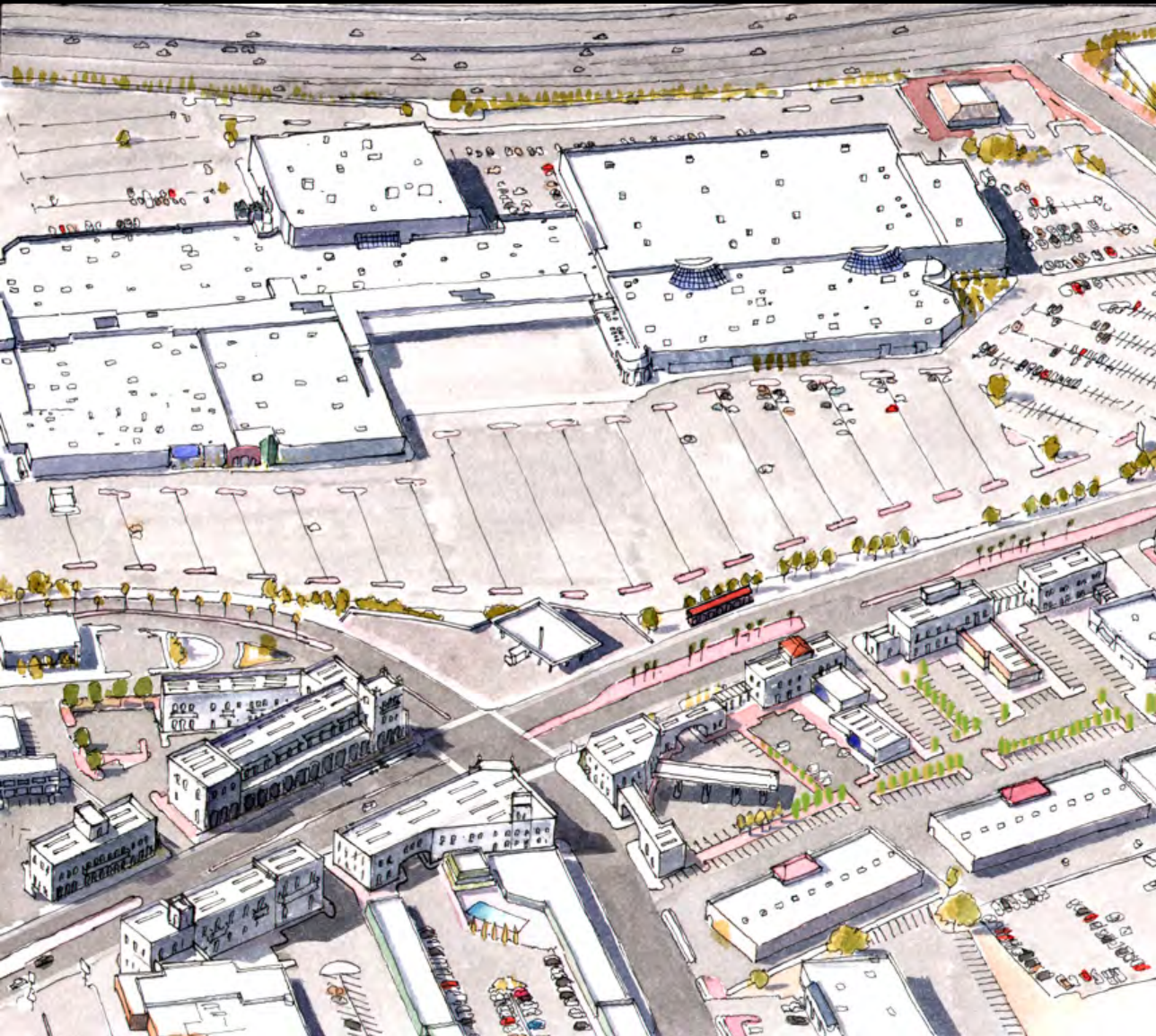
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



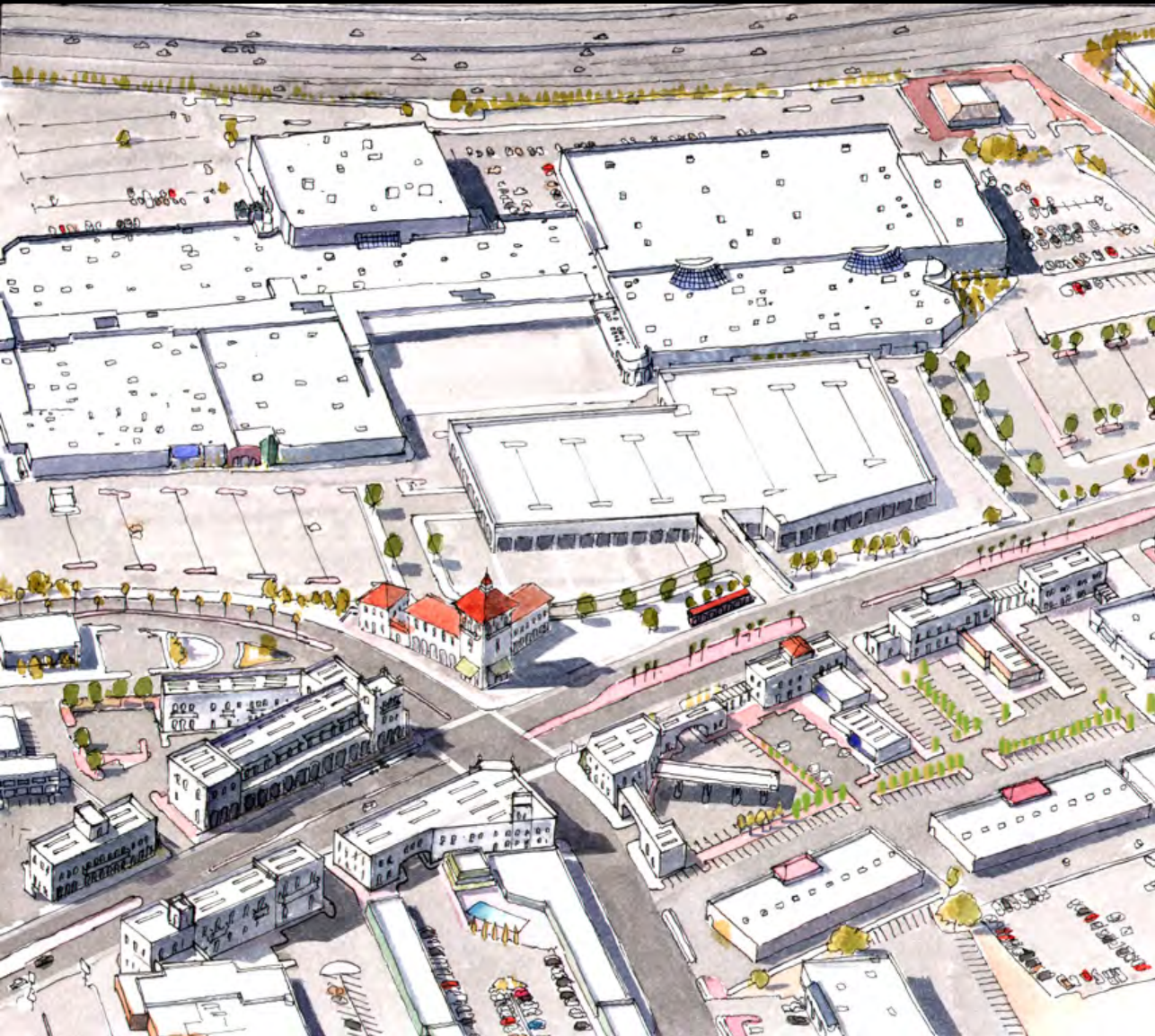
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



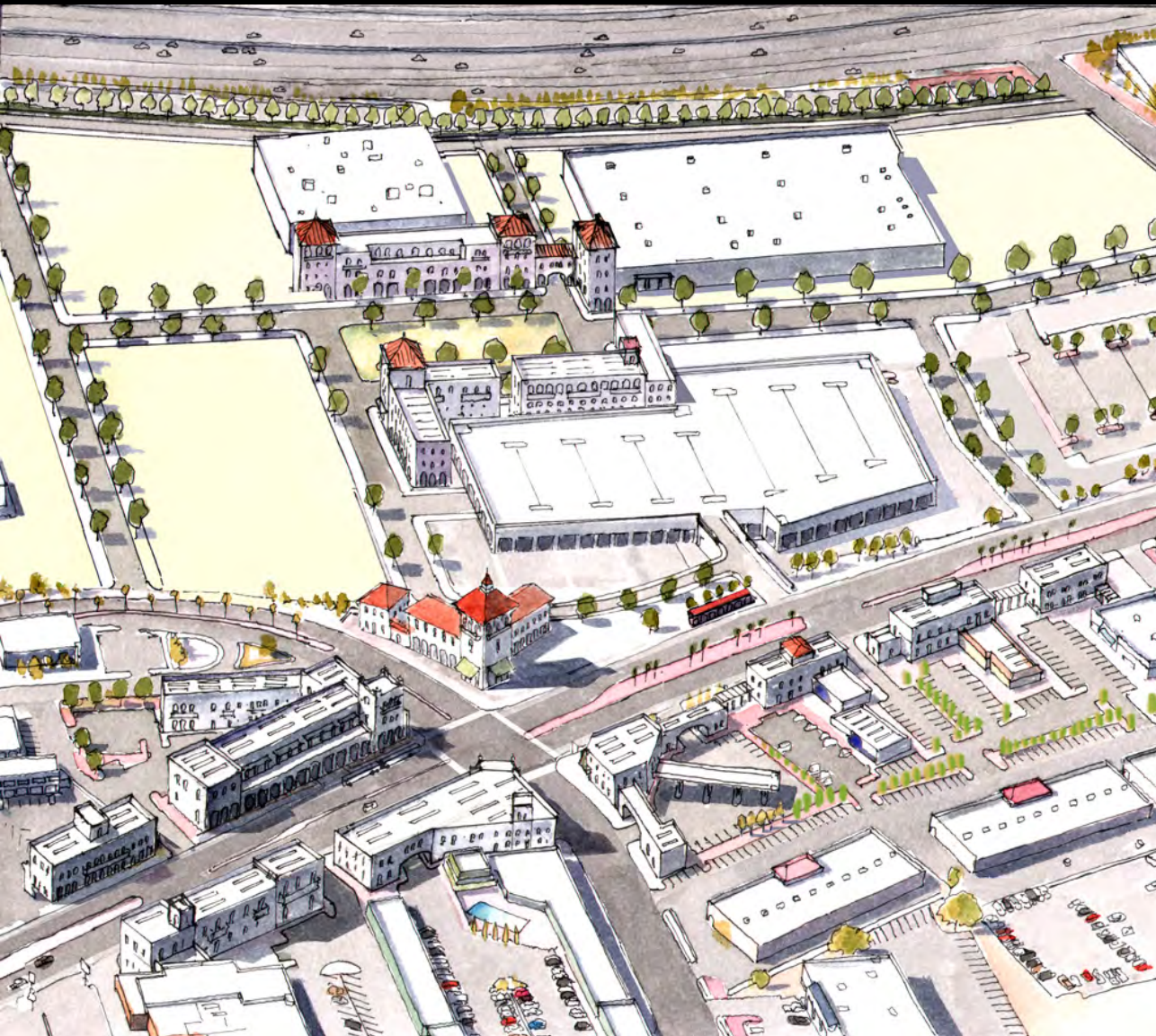
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



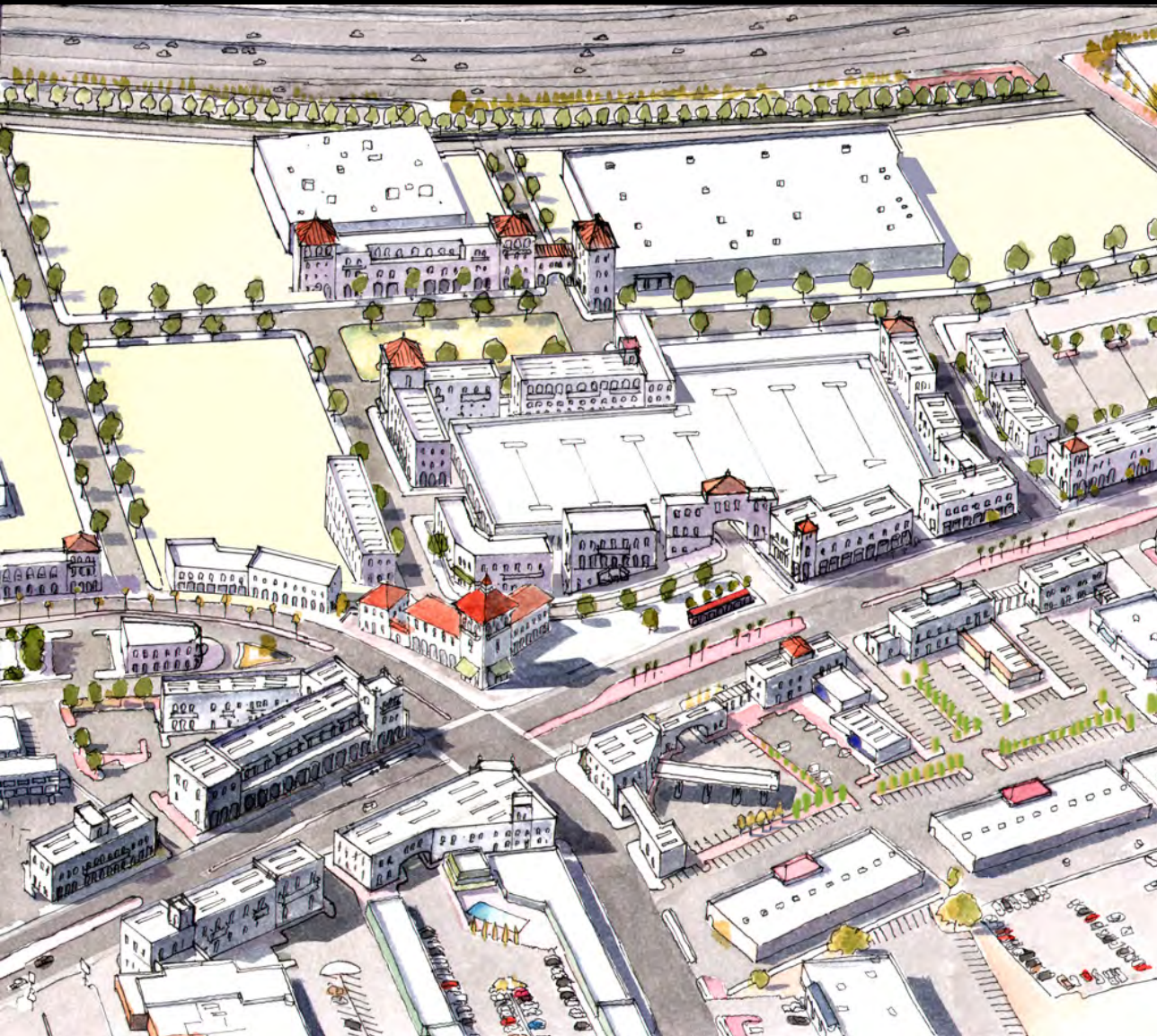
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



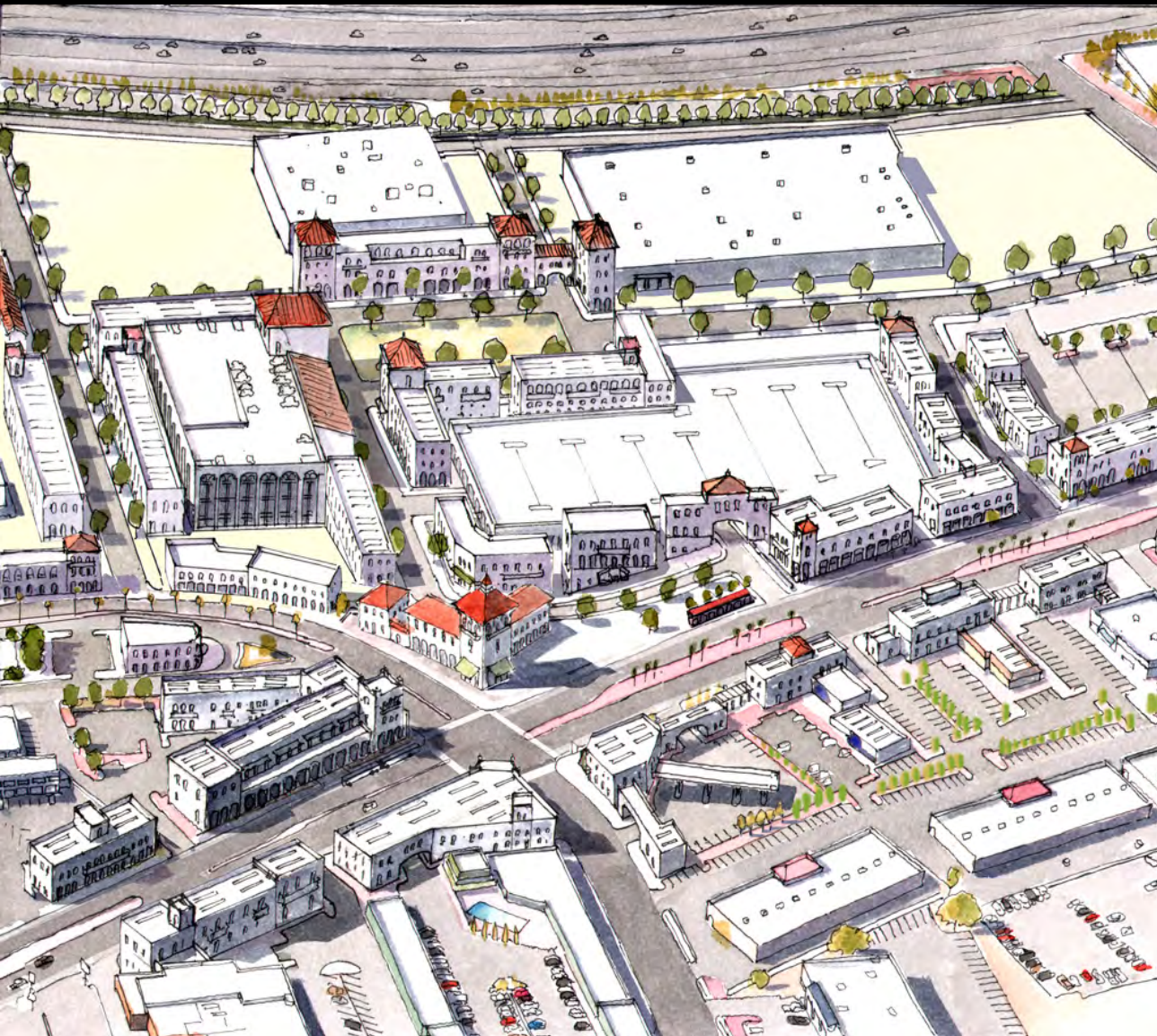
Mall transformation

Bassett Town Center



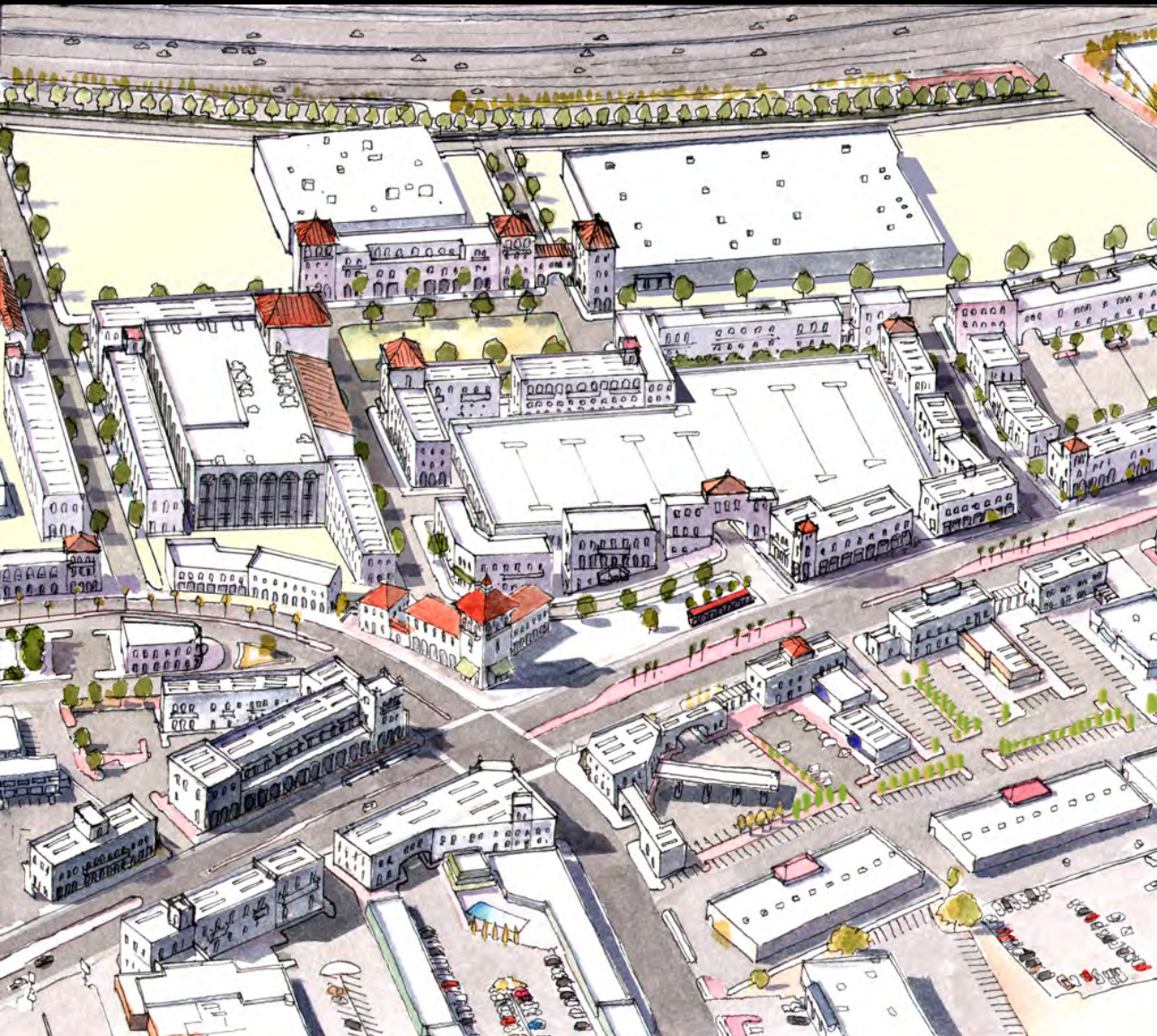
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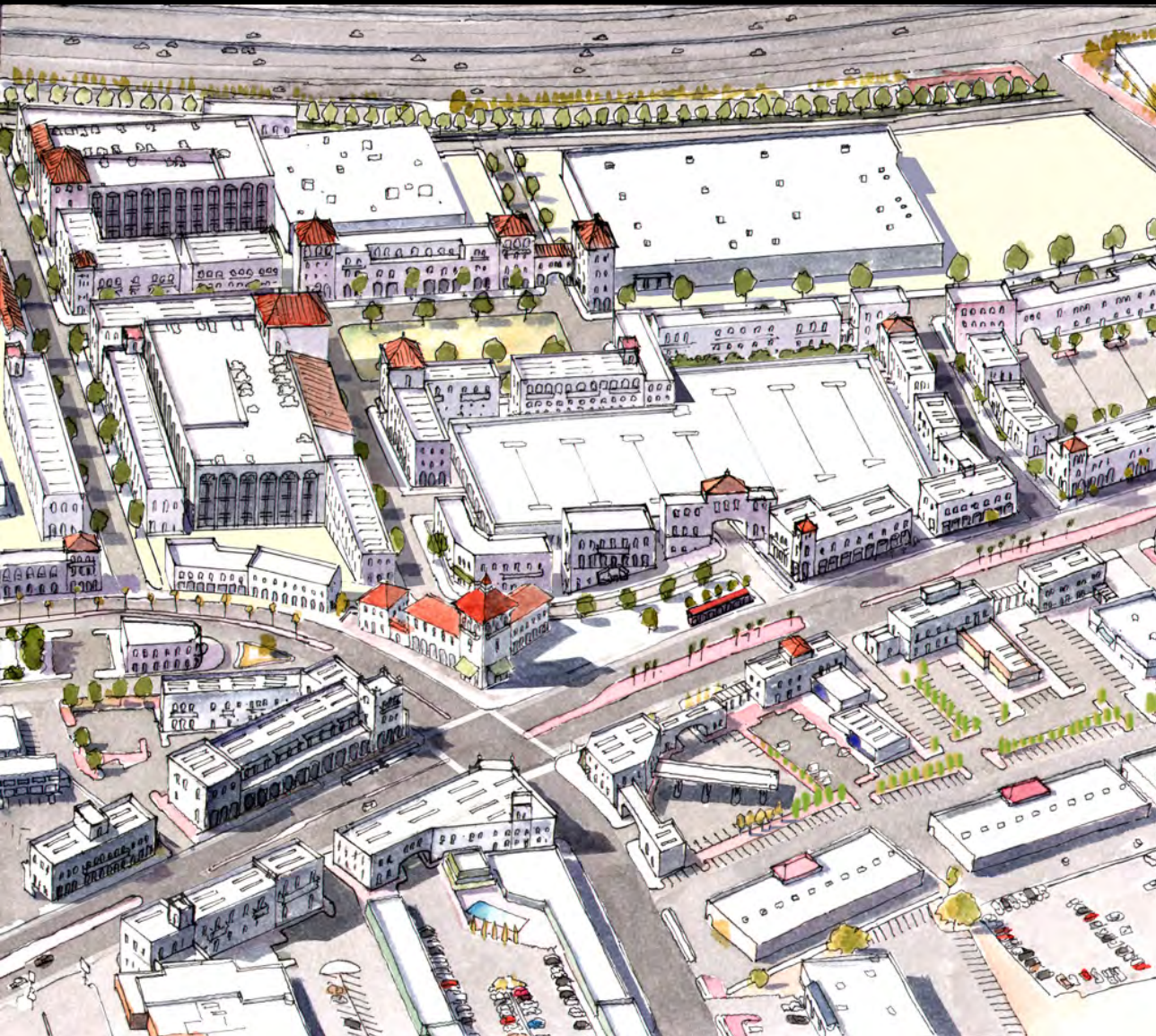
Mall transformation

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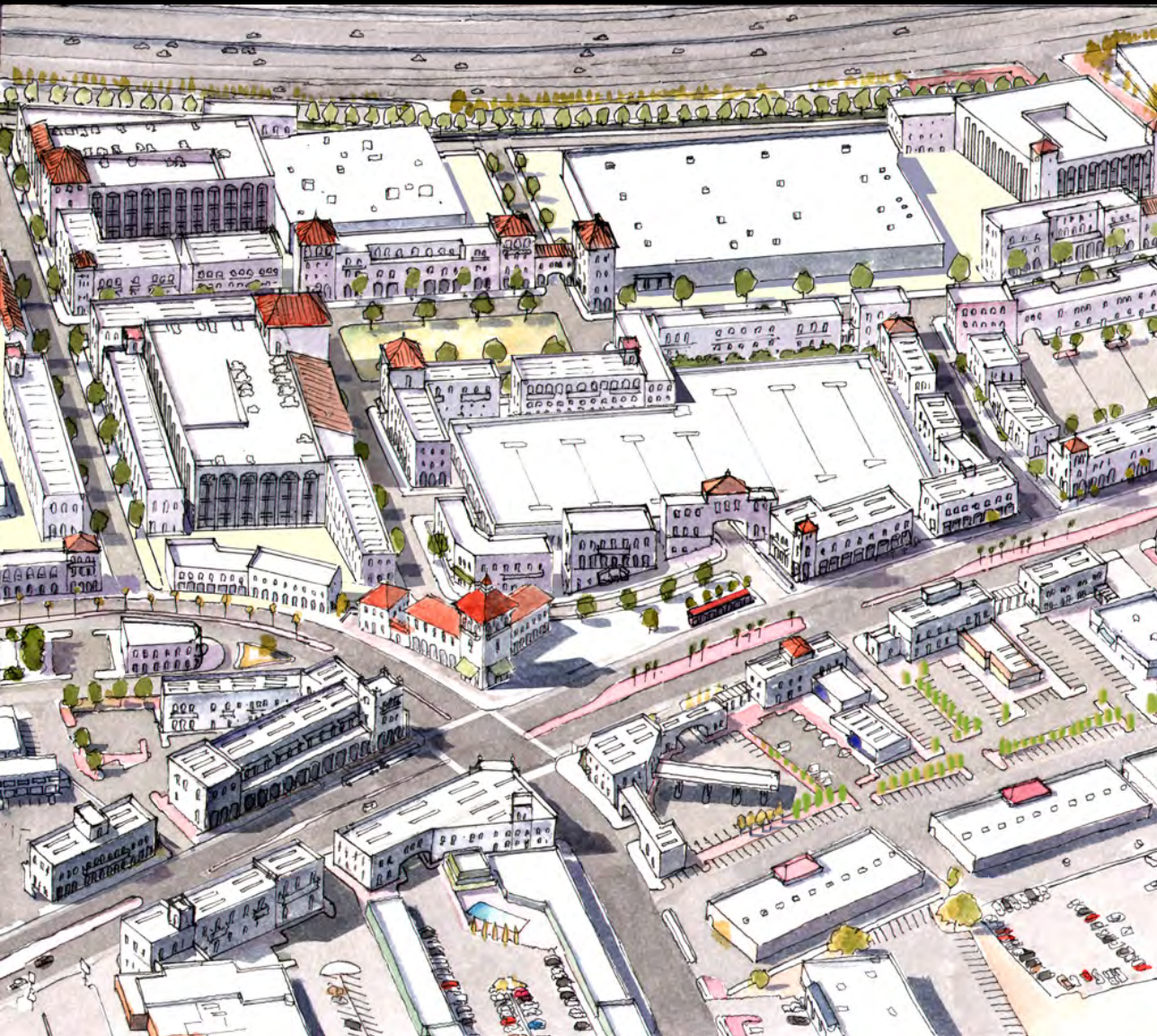
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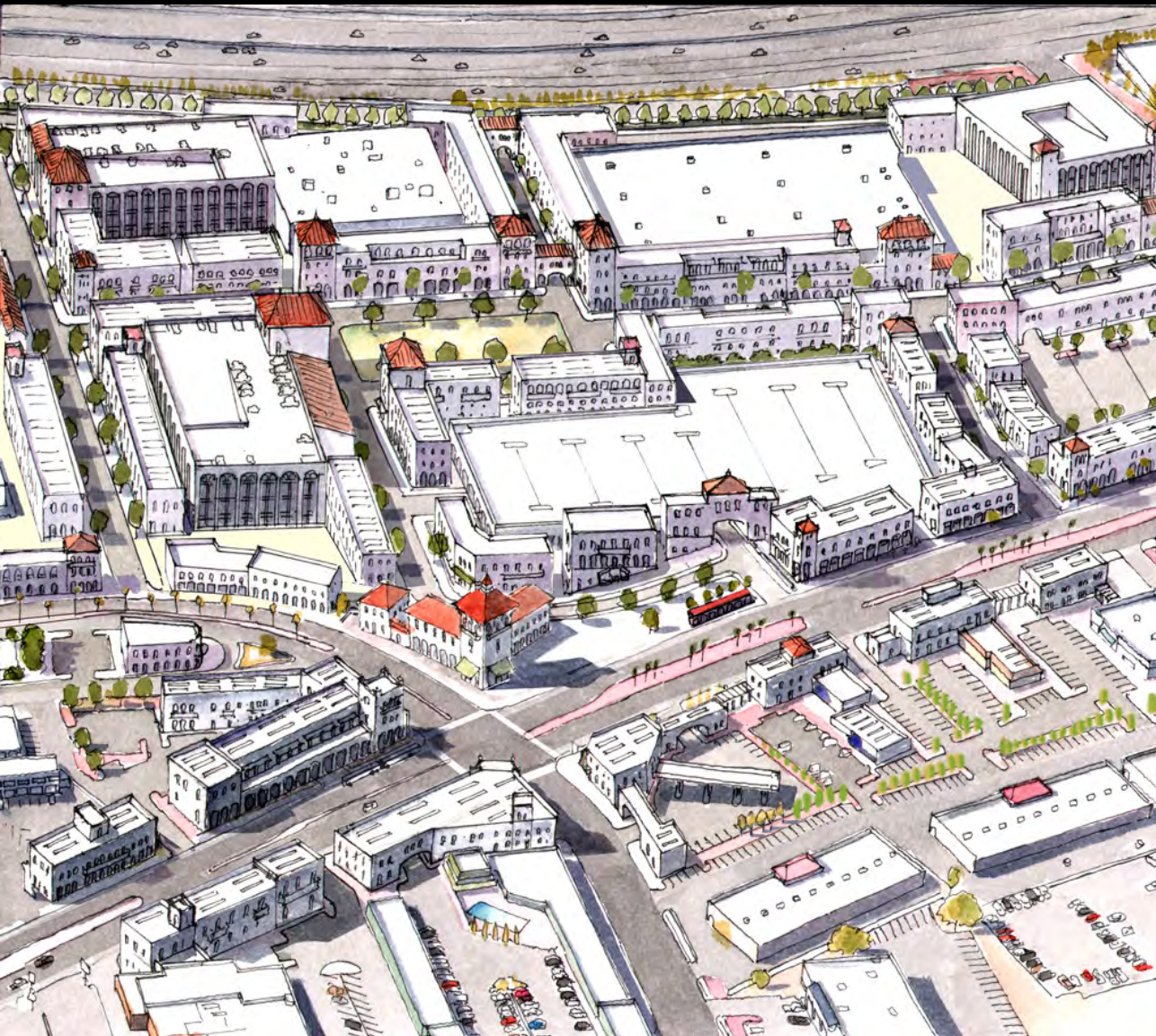
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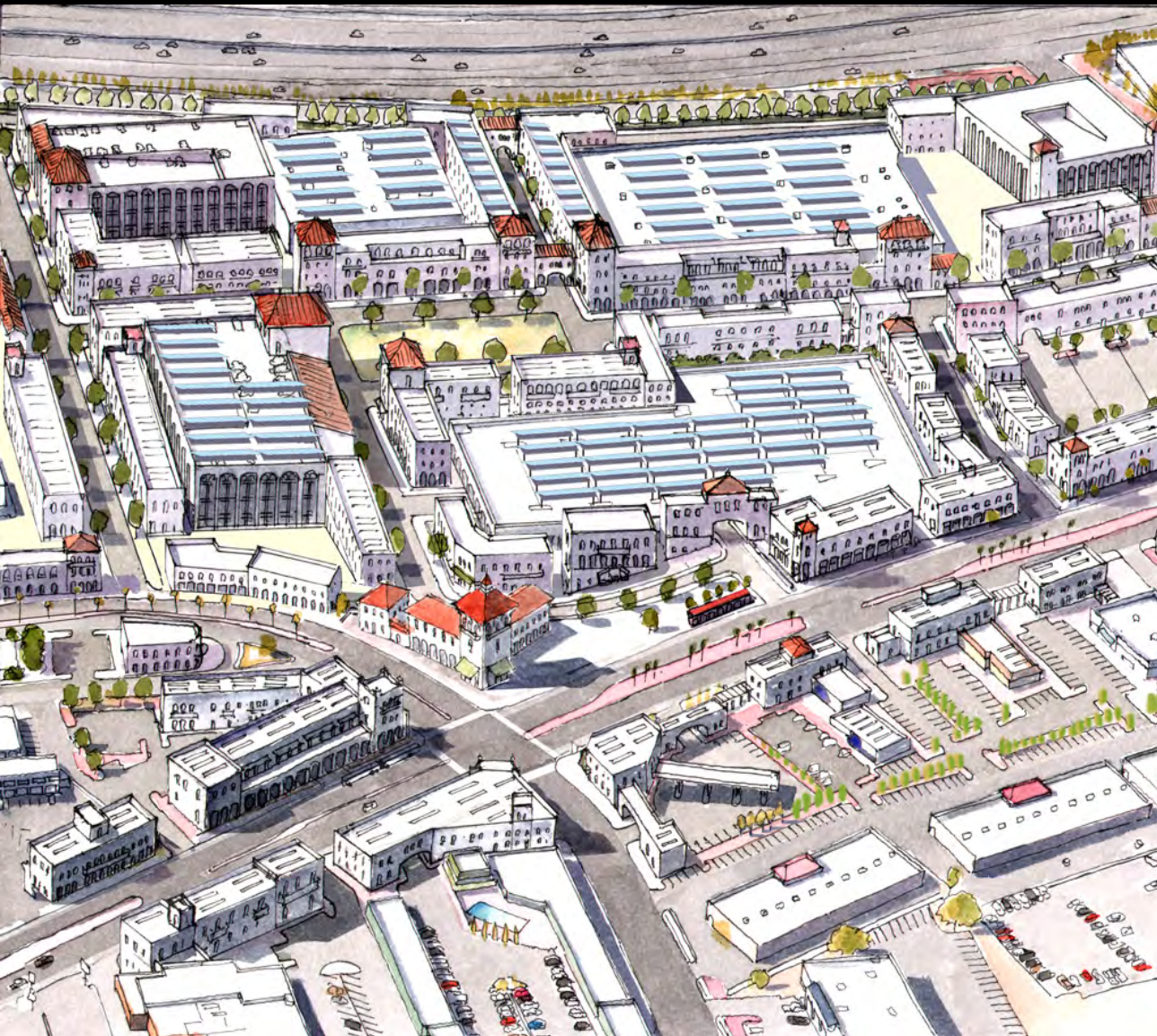
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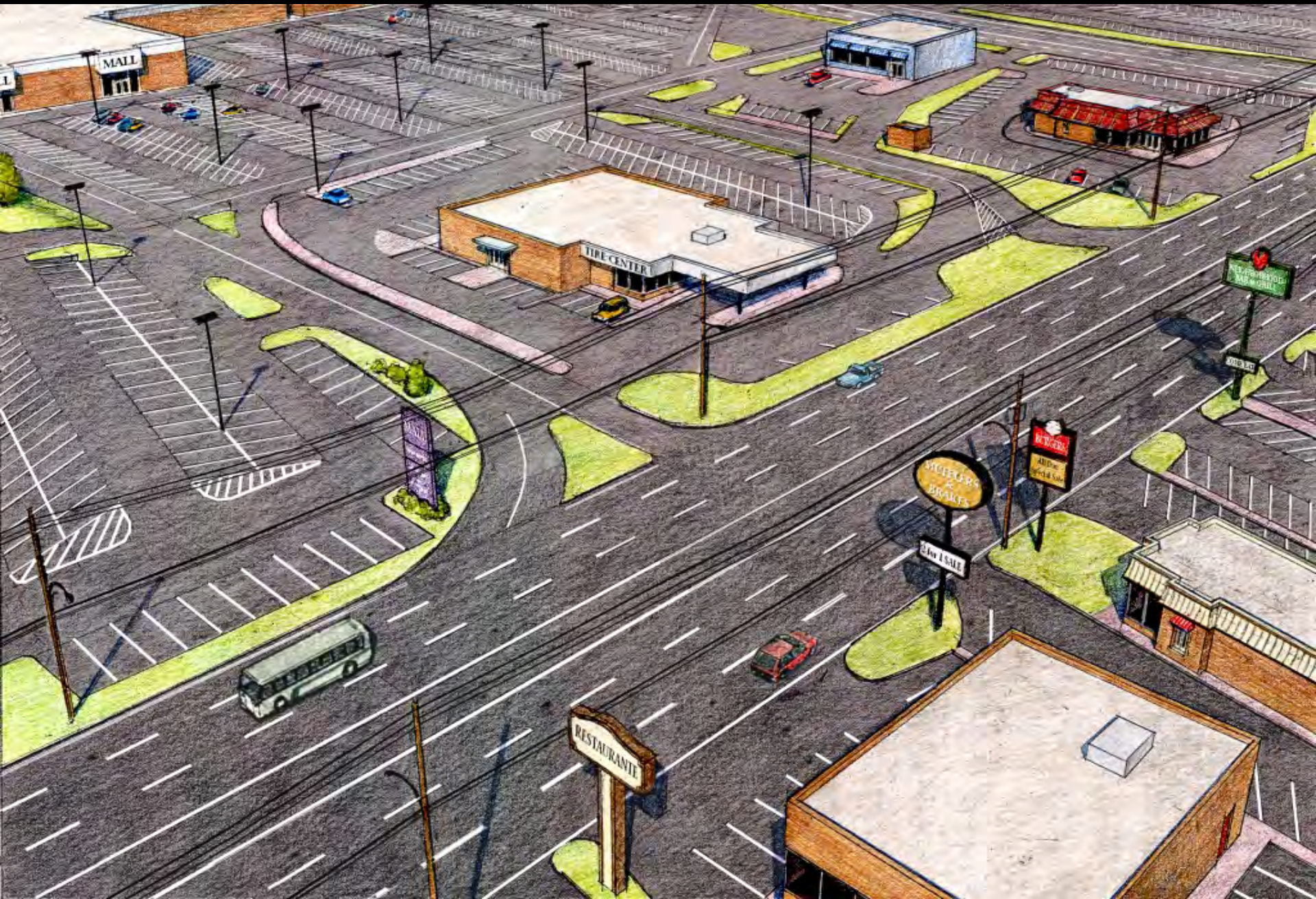
Mall transformation

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Mall transformation

Visualizing Change



Visualizing Change





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