THE FORUM

Making a Place for the Community of Eastside Bend

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Public Space Placemaking Fall Term Final Report, December 2024

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Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive redevelopment proposal for The Forum, a 35-acre site in Eastside Bend, Oregon. The proposal is grounded in the community's needs and aligned with the city's goals for sustainable development. Our demographic, economic, and housing analyses highlight the need for diverse housing options and economic opportunities to support the city's growing population. The proposal integrates placemaking principles and third place research, drawing on successful case studies to create a dynamic, inclusive community space.

Our proposal addresses the existing conditions of the site, emphasizing the immense opportunity available through the transformation of this underutilized area into a vibrant, mixed-use community with high-density residential space. Key elements include the creation of 1,500 to 3,000 housing units, a 6-acre park, and central community spaces such as a marketplace and plaza. This approach not only meets Bend's climate-friendly area requirements but also fosters community engagement and equity, creating a resilient and inclusive urban environment.

Our vision is that this reimagined Forum will enable a complete community to flourish in the heart of Eastside Bend, where residents' basic needs can be met and spaces for home, work, and play are all nearby. The Forum will feature accessible, mixed-used, connective public spaces that are flexible, welcoming, and authentic to Bend's identity as well as supportive of its goals.

Background and Context

Project Introduction

The City of Bend, Oregon is working to implement Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC), a statewide program to steer urban development toward measurably improved outcomes in housing production, transportation, climate resilience, and community equity. A potential candidate for Climate Friendly Area (CFA) designation is Bend's Eastside neighborhood, which includes a 35-acre square commercial site.

Through partnership with the University of Oregon's Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP), the City of Bend has tasked first year graduate students in the Community and Regional Planning Program to develop design proposals across four focus areas for this 35-acre site. This report summarizes the design proposal put together by Sarah Bausmith, Cheyenne Dickenson, and Sarah Charlesworth, who approached this project as a team from the perspective of "public space placemaking." Placemaking aims to strengthen the connection between people and the spaces they share by creating places that are not only functional, but also beautiful and meaningful to the community.

Designing a place that centers community means focusing on creating public space with a wide range of uses and activities, ensuring that the space is human-scale and pedestrian-oriented. Accessibility and inclusivity must be prioritized, socialization and a sense of comfort must be fostered, and ample opportunity for collaboration and connection must be provided. These elements allow for the growth of a place's unique identity and nurture strong community ties.

Methods

On October 11, 2024, the student cohort traveled to the City of Bend to meet with city officials and conduct a site visit. First, students were given several presentations from city staff, which covered recent population and employment trends, introduced Bend's goals regarding planning and growth management, and discussed key challenges that the city is currently facing. This information provided context for our site visit and allowed our teams to get a sense of city staff's perspectives and priorities for this project. Once at the 35-acre project site, students and staff walked the perimeter sidewalks, made two crossings at Highway 20 and 27th Street, and circled the interior of the site to gain a better understanding of the look and feel of the site as a pedestrian. We took photos and notes throughout the site visit, then compiled a SWOT analysis and mapped existing conditions and opportunities. This site visit allowed us to situate our approach to the project based on our firsthand experience of the site.

Over the course of the following seven weeks, we conducted independent analyses of the economic and social conditions of the City of Bend, focusing on comparisons between the state of Oregon, Deschutes County, and Census Tract 19.03. Directly adjacent to the 35-acre project site, we assumed that Census Tract 19.03 represents the core constituency of people who will be most directly impacted by our design proposal. Understanding the socioeconomic conditions of the tract is imperative to developing a proposal that meets the needs of these neighboring communities. Our analysis focused on the general trends and patterns between the state, regional, and local levels to draw generalized conclusions about the Eastside community and discuss implications relevant to this project site.

We also conducted reviews of the City of Bend's core planning documents, including the Comprehensive Plan, Development Code, Urban Form Report, Housing Needs Analysis, and Economic Opportunities Analysis. Finally, we collected comparative case studies and research on topics related to this project to ground our proposal in scholarly evidence and real-world examples. This report compiles the demographic, economic, and housing analyses, as well as the case studies and theoretical research conducted by our team to form a robust final design proposal.

Context

History

The City of Bend, nestled in the heart of Deschutes County, Oregon, has a rich history closely tied to the Cascade Mountains and the region's natural resources. Founded in the early 1900s, Bend began as a small logging town, capitalizing on the vast forests of the Cascades. The Deschutes River, which flows through the city, was crucial for the timber industry, providing power for the mills and a water source for early settlers. This early economic activity laid the foundation for Bend's growth and development, attracting workers and their families to the area (The Old, 2022).

Figure 1. Downtown Bend, 1938 (Deschutes County Historical Society)

As the timber industry declined in the mid-20th century, Bend faced significant economic challenges. However, the city's stunning natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities began to attract tourists and new residents. The rise of tourism, along with the development of the craft brewing industry and a burgeoning technology sector, helped diversify Bend's economy. These changes brought new employment opportunities and spurred further growth, transforming Bend from a struggling former timber town into a vibrant, economically diverse community (Visit, 2024).

Over the past few decades, Bend has experienced rapid population growth, driven by its high quality of life and attractive natural surroundings. This growth has led to challenges such as an increased demand for housing, pressure on critical infrastructure, and urban sprawl, resulting in a greater need for sustainable, equitable development. Despite these challenges, Bend continues to thrive, maintaining its unique blend of natural beauty, economic vitality, and community spirit.

Many American cities are plagued by issues of urban sprawl such as inefficient land use, increased reliance on cars, environmental degradation and traffic congestion. The proliferation of surface parking lots and increasingly vacant big box stores detract from the vibrancy of urban centers, often resulting in economic decline and reduced community engagement. The City of Bend is not unique in its need to deal with these challenges, but it is unique in how thoroughly it has outlined clear goals for a different form of development in the future.

City of Bend: Current Goals

The City of Bend's Comprehensive Plan outlines the following community goals:

- Create and Preserve Great Neighborhoods
- Protect and Enhance Bend's Natural Beauty, Heritage and Natural Environment
- Plan and Sustain a Strong Diverse Economy
- Create Housing Options and Affordability
- Foster a Balanced Transportation System
- Ensure Quality Design and Attractive Development
- Preserve and Enhance a Strong Active Downtown
- Create Connections to Recreation and Nature
- Build Cost Effective Infrastructure
- Promote Public and Civic Involvement
- Create Clear and Consistent Implementing Ordinances
- Manage Growth

To meet these goals, Bend has conducted needs and opportunities assessments, and established action plans in the following areas:

Climate and Resilience

In 2019, Bend established a Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP), to achieve its goal of reducing community-wide fossil fuel use by 40% by 2030, and by 70% by 2050. CCAP lays out a set of strategies to guide city and community action toward reducing fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

In 2022, the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission adopted the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) rules to help meet the state's goal of reducing GHG emissions while increasing transportation and housing choices and creating more equitable outcomes for all Oregonians. The City of Bend is one of several major metropolitan areas across the state required to update their land use and transportation plans to encourage more sustainable development and reduce emissions. In practice, this means creating more walkable, mixed-use communities and designating specific Climate Friendly Areas (CFAs). A CFA is a "complete community", where residents can live, work, and meet most of their daily needs without a car.

Bend conducted a study in 2023 to gather community input on preferred CFA locations throughout the city. Through this process, Eastside Bend was identified as a potential CFA candidate. CFAs will

help Bend reach its climate goals set out in the CCAP, as well as address housing and transportation needs while limiting displacement and gentrification.

Housing and Affordability

As Bend's population has grown, housing has become less affordable. Bend's Comprehensive Plan identifies a need for over 17,000 new housing units by 2028. The plan also calls for a greater diversity of housing choices.

In 2016, the city conducted a Housing Needs Analysis (HNA) to inform housing planning and manage projected population growth through to 2028. This analysis shows that Bend's current housing policies do not support the population's current and future housing needs. To address this misalignment, the HNA recommends shifting away from the trend of building 75% single-family detached units toward a more proportionate mix of 55% single-family detached, 10% single-family attached, and 35% multifamily units by 2028. This will provide a wider variety of housing options and ensure a greater supply of affordable housing. The report also proposes measures to maximize residential land use capacity within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), enable development of more dense housing in mixed use areas, and encourage market-led housing construction.

Parallel to its community engagement study on CFAs, Bend conducted an Anti-Displacement Analysis in 2023 in the context of forthcoming CFA location designations. This report analyzed which locations throughout the city have vulnerable residents at risk of displacement. It discusses the efforts and actions that the city is currently taking to promote affordable and new housing, as well as actions to mitigate or avoid potential displacement. Residents in Eastside Bend are shown to have the lowest incomes and highest risk of displacement compared to the rest of the city. As a result, the potential Eastside CFA area (including our project site) is included in the city's Anti-Displacement Strategy Area.

Parks and Open Space

The City of Bend is well-known for being an active, outdoor recreation-oriented community and as such prides itself on having beautiful parks and protecting its natural landscapes. Adopted in 2018 and updated in 2024, the Bend Park and Recreation District (BRPD) Comprehensive Plan aims to strengthen community vitality and foster healthy, enriched lifestyles through parks, trails, and recreation. This plan provides specific targets in two areas: 1) park size and proximity to residents, and 2) trail use, length, and proximity to residents.

The plan sets out the goal of having 7.85 acres of parks per 1,000 residents, with most homes having a park within a half mile walking distance. The plan also sets a target of having 1 mile of trail per 1,000 residents, and for trails to be designed as both recreational amenities and longer-distance active transportation routes.

To reach these goals by 2028, 162 acres of additional neighborhood and community parks still need to be developed. The plan also shows 32 areas, including many areas across Eastside Bend, that are currently beyond a half-mile walking distance from an existing park and will therefore need a new park or a safer crossing to an existing park. BRPD already owns about 54 acres of undeveloped community and neighborhood park land, so it will need to acquire and develop an additional 108 acres of park land by 2028 to meet its target. To meet trail targets by 2028, an additional 23 trail miles will need to be developed.

Transportation

The Transportation System Plan (TSP) is part of the city's Comprehensive Plan and lays out how to maintain and improve Bend's existing transportation system. The city currently focuses on increasing connection with safe routes to walk, bike and take transit, recognizing the continued need for automobiles. However, Bend aims to move away from auto-oriented design to save money, offer transportation options for those who can't drive or afford a car, and reduce emissions. In 2023, under new CFEC guidelines, Bend removed minimum parking requirements for new developments as part of its effort to reduce car dependency.

TSP delineates more than 60 policies and actions to support key transportation goals, summarized here: (1) create an interconnected network of complete streets to provide safe, optimized travel for all transit modes; (2) reduce GHG emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT); (3) coordinate with transit service providers to maximize equity and efficiency of public transportation, and (4) coordinate with ODOT to implement highway improvements.

To achieve these goals, Bend aims to implement a Low Stress Network, Transportation Safety Action Plan, Safe Routes to School plan, and Pedestrian Master Plan, moving toward a "vision zero" (i.e. zero injuries or fatalities due to traffic collisions). The TSP recommends establishing mobility hubs and expanding service to underserved areas. Finally, the plan discusses the importance of engaging with the community to identify transportation issues and to prioritize marginalized and vulnerable populations in transportation system design.

Economic Development

By 2028, Bend expects to be home to more than 60,000 jobs, forecasting 21,943 new employees between 2013 and 2028. Bend's Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA), part of the city's Comprehensive Plan, establishes a vision of a diverse, sustainable economy that provides living wage jobs to a growing population.

Bend's economy is subject to broader economic forces and must plan accordingly. Bend receives 2.4 million visitors annually. According to the tourism website "Visit Bend", this travel and tourism activity generated an estimated 8,500 jobs in the region and provided the city with $3.7 million in transient room tax revenue in 2014. One key challenge for Bend is seasonal variation in tourism: most of the tourist activity occurs during the summer, and the city faces a noticeable decline in business during the off-season. Another challenge is that Oregon in general has a relatively low economic diversity compared to other states, increasing the risk of economic volatility. Finally, although Bend's population is younger on average than the state, the fastest growing age group is people over 45.

To create more buffers between a volatile market and to bolster economic development, the EOA suggests that Bend's economy can lean into its unique industries (e.g. aerospace, craft brewing), small businesses, and high-quality natural resources.

Community Development

A non-governmental coalition of community members developed a 2024-2028 Vision Action Plan for Bend through extensive community input, which builds off the Bend 2030 Community Vision Report endorsed by the City Council. It articulates four goals for the community of Bend: (1) a robust, diversified and equitable economy; (2) smart, well-planned and sustainable growth; (3) inclusive, engaged and caring community; and (4) a protected, stewarded and healthy environment. To measure progress toward these goals, the Action Plan recommends, among other

things, balancing the income-to-housing cost ratio, increase availability of all housing types, improving community health and safety metrics, and reducing VMT and overall energy use.

Recommended tactics in support of these goals include creating complete communities and mixed-use development, improving public transportation systems, building affordable and workforce housing, supporting small businesses, designating and protecting park space, prioritizing community gathering places like public markets, expanding childcare services, and programing to support cultural exchange. These goals align strongly with the City's Comprehensive Plan and reaffirm that the most important priorities align with community needs.

Community Analysis

The community profile created from the following demographic, economic, and housing analyses has helped our team develop a more comprehensive understanding of the population of Eastside Bend, and has allowed us to form a design proposal that better serves the community's needs.

Demographic Profile

Our team created a demographic profile using 2018–2022 ACS data across three geographies: 1. Oregon, 2. Deschutes County, 3. Census Tract 19.03. As of the 2022 ACS, this census tract area is home to just over 6,300 people - about 3% of Bend's total population. We analyzed demographic data that covered total population, age, race, income, poverty rates, and educational attainment.

The state of Oregon, Deschutes County, and Census Tract 19.03 broadly follow the same trends across demographic areas. However, the population in Eastside Bend is distinct from the county and state populations in four key areas:

1. **The area has a younger population compared to Deschutes County**. Nearly half of the census tract (48%) is between the ages of 18-44, with an especially large percentage of the population between the ages of 25-34. See Figure A1. Deschutes County has a comparatively older population, with a greater percentage of its population between the ages of 55-74. This means that the census tract population is markedly younger than the county in which it lies.

2. **Incomes are high, but so is the poverty rate**. After adjusting for inflation, the census tract median income rose more than $12,000 between 2018 and 2022, to nearly $86,000. By contrast, the state and the county median income rose by about $2,000 and $3,000 respectively. The census tract's household income is 4% higher than the county and 11% higher than the state. While the median income has risen over the past several years, poverty remains a perennial problem. Despite a comparatively higher median household income, the poverty rate in our Bend census tract is much higher than the state or county. The census tract has a poverty rate of 15%, which is more than double that of the state (7%), and almost triple the county poverty rate (6%). See Figure A2. The poverty rate is highest amongst families with children. See Figure A3.

3. **More than half of children live in single-parent homes.** The data shows that 27% of children under 18 live with single parents statewide and 26% county-wide. In contrast, 52% of children in the census tract live in single-parent homes. See Figure A4.

4. **Racial diversity is low, but the Hispanic population is growing**. The state, county, and census tract all have a predominately white population. People who identify as Hispanic

make up the second largest racial group at around 14% for the state, and 8% for the county and census tract. However, the Hispanic and Latino population in Bend more than doubled between 2000 and 2013, growing by nearly 6,000 people and is expected to continue to grow.

Demographic Implications

Considering the key trends, we might characterize the community near the project site as predominantly white, working-class, with a growing Hispanic and Latino population. Residents here likely struggle with the high cost of housing, are budget-conscious, and work full-time. Families with children are especially vulnerable, often relying on single-parent incomes to make ends meet. These families require amenities that are affordable and close to home. It would be inappropriate to cater this space to a wealthier population in the way that downtown does. At the same time, we should make this area desirable, attractive, and fun but overall *useful* for people of all ages. For instance, we know that our project site has one of the only large grocery retailers on the Eastside, so it is important to retain that amenity in our design. It will be beneficial for our site to have areas outside home, work, or school for people to gather.

While the tract's population is currently younger than average, it also indicates the potential for future demographic changes as the current population ages and potentially has children. We must design this site with shifting age demographics in mind, and focus on creating intergenerational, multicultural, multi-use spaces. This will allow the site redevelopment to serve the needs of the current population as well as future generations. Multi-purpose spaces and amenities could satisfy the needs of the different populations, with a variety of more active uses such as biking trails, picnic tables, playground grounds, chess boards, festivals and events. Cafes, bars, bookstores, and gyms are commercial spaces that could have a secondary function as community space.

Investment via redevelopment of the 35-acre project site would create the risk of gentrification and displacement of existing residents, especially given the higher rate of poverty in this tract compared to the broader county and state average. Our proposal for this site must be designed to address this issue, including prioritizing affordable housing options, activities and spaces that do not necessarily require spending money, and design choices that cultivate community resilience (such as community gardens or mutual aid centers).

Economic Profile

This economic profile uses county- and national-level employment data by sector for 2010 and 2020 from the Oregon Regional Economic Analysis Project (REAP). Using this data, our team compared total employment numbers and percent change across the datasets, calculated population-employment ratios and location quotients and completed a shift-share analysis. Based on this analysis, we observed five key economic trends:

1. **Local growth is so significant that it outpaces national trends.** Across all sectors, Deschutes County is performing significantly better than the national average – of the total 34,684 jobs gained between 2010 and 2020, 25,627 were due to competitive share. See Figure B1. This competitive advantage may be due to the draw of well-paying jobs in the county. The Bend metropolitan area ranked 4th in the nation for the largest positive percent change in average household income between 2019 and 2022 (Lehner, 2023). When employees have a strong chance to make a good income in a particular area, that place will have a more attractive employment market compared to other areas.

2. **The county's employment has grown more than its population.** Over 10 years employment has increased 38% in the county, in contrast to the population growth of 26% over the same period. See Figure B2. This may indicate that the county has created employment opportunities beyond the capacity of its residents or of its workforce housing. This may also suggest that Bend is dealing with worker shortages, as the population is unable to keep up with employment market demand.

3. **Sectors with the most growth also indicate city expansion.** The growth in the construction, real estate, rental and leasing sectors correlate with, and may be related to, rapid population growth in the county. Over the last several decades, the population of Deschutes County has grown at a faster rate than any other county in the state of Oregon (Deschutes, n.d.). As the population grows, infrastructure must be built to accommodate the influx of people to the area. Construction workers are needed to build new houses, schools, roads, and businesses. Real estate agents are in high demand in a market with strong in-migration trends and a growing economy.

4. **Healthcare leads as the largest employment sector.** With a 13% share of the total employment, the healthcare and social assistance sector dominates; it also added the largest raw number of jobs (5,100) over the decade. See Figure B1. The St. Charles Health System is the largest employer in the city of Bend, in Deschutes County, and across all Central Oregon (EDCO, n.d.). Summit Medical Group and PacificSource are also major employers in this region, creating a robust market for healthcare-related employment. The St. Charles Hospital of Bend is located about one mile north of the project site. This means that hospital employees may make up a greater proportion of residents directly adjacent to the site. Transit routes to and from the hospital should be prioritized, and public health is likely a priority for local community members.

5. **Site redevelopment offers economic development opportunity.** The 35-acre project site could provide economic development opportunities for these sectors that are already ripe for expansion. See Figure B3. The management sector could find utility in the office space created on this site, which could support co-working hubs and small business incubators. The education sector could be bolstered with dedicated childcare or pre-K space on this site, which would support working families. Retail and food businesses will find ample opportunities in the commercial space on our site. The construction and utilities sectors will be essential for the actual redevelopment phase of this site.

Economic Implications

All signs point to growth in Bend. Expansion around the 35-acre project site is especially likely given its proximity to St. Charles Hospital, the largest employer in Bend. With such a strong job market, there is a draw for people to move into the city. While this is a positive sign of the strength of Bend's economy, it could also lead to decreased availability of housing stock for the growing population and would therefore reduce housing affordability. The Bend Chamber of Commerce is already responding to this, having launched a multi-faceted Workforce Housing Initiative in 2021 "with the goal of connecting with employers and community partners to build more workforce housing as quickly as possible to help alleviate the worker shortage in Bend" (Bend Chamber, 2024).

The design of this site must be flexible and able to accommodate future growth. Accordingly, our team's proposed design for this site should offer high-density, affordable housing as well as economic development opportunities for workers across a wide range of sectors.

Housing Profile

To create this housing profile, our team analyzed census data on housing tenure, housing type, number of units per housing structure, rent costs, house value, and income for Oregon, Deschutes County, and Census Tract 19.03 from the 2022 5-Year ACS. Using this data, we compared rent and home value to income, total renter- versus owner-occupied units, and number of units per structure across geographies. Based on this analysis, we drew four key conclusions about housing market conditions and housing needs in Eastside Bend:

1. **High percentage of renters compared to owners.** Around half of all residents in the census tract are renters, versus about a third of all residents at the state and county levels. See Figure C1. The Eastside has an especially high number of rental units compared to the rest of the city. This also means that there is a lower percentage of home ownership in this area, suggesting a lower degree of financial stability and weakened ability to build equity and generational wealth.

2. **The Eastside has the highest concentration of middle- and high-density housing**. Deschutes County has a higher concentration of single-family housing (over 80%), meaning that the Eastside has likely taken on the burden of dense housing types for the city and county. See Figure C2. More dense housing structures might help to alleviate this issue of housing affordability. "Nationwide, the majority of the rental supply consists of apartments. In 2022, 64 percent of occupied rental units were in multifamily structures with two or more units, most of which were apartment properties. Attached and detached single-family homes are also an important source of rental supply in the nation, with 31 percent of renters residing in that type of unit as of 2022" (U.S., 2024).

3. **Renters are more cost-burdened than homeowners, but both owners and renters are feeling the pressure.** Analysis of local-level data shows a greater percentage of severely cost-burdened households compared to the county and state. See Figure C3. Nearly half (42%) of households in the census tract are spending more than 30% of their income on housing, demonstrating that a large share of these households are dealing with financial, and potentially housing, insecurity. A 2024 report from the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University noted that, since 2001, median rents have risen by 21% while the median annual income for renters has risen just 2%. Rent prices spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation has been rising at alarming rates causing 'real wages' to decline nationwide. Renters across all income categories are compelled to put a higher percentage of their total income towards rent payments (Ludden, 2024).

4. **Home prices are out of proportion with income**. As of 2024, Oregon has one of the highest housing price-to-income ratios among all states in the country (Jones, 2024). According to a 2016 memo on "Definitions of Affordable Housing", Nick Meltzer, Sadie DiNatale, Bob Parker and Rebecca Lewis note that "the cost of an 'affordable' home [has historically been about] 2.6 times a household's income." In 2022, the census tract's median household income was $85,122 while the median house value was $456,300. This means that the average home buyer would need to pay more than 5 times their annual income for a house, and that homeownership is generally unaffordable.

Housing Implications

Overall, Oregon is dealing with challenging housing market conditions. While the data analyzed does not provide insight into housing availability, it does shed light on affordability. The data

demonstrates that renters and prospective home buyers are struggling to afford their preferred housing options. This pattern is taking place across the US but is being acutely felt in Oregon, and most importantly, in the census tract, with a larger gap between median incomes and costs.

This analysis paints a grim picture of the current housing market challenges and the precarious situation for those seeking housing in these markets. However, it also demonstrates a great opportunity on this project site. This analysis makes it abundantly clear that a main priority of the Eastside CFA, specifically the Costco site's redevelopment, must be building new, dense, affordable housing structures. There is a clear need in the community for more affordable housing as well as the construction of higher-density housing. Increasing housing availability can also help keep prices low and mitigate the risk of extremely cost-burdened individuals becoming unhoused.

Bend officials already recognize the need for more housing at a more affordable price within their city. In November 2024, the Bend City Council began considering a proposed UGB expansion, which city planners say is explicitly aimed at helping cost-burdened residents avoid being priced out of the market. Critics of this move have already voiced their opposition, calling for the city to focus on infill rather than expansion (Martínez, 2024). This project site represents a unique opportunity for infill affordable housing development. State officials also recognize this issue: "our current system plans for and invests in too little housing. The outcome is undersupply, rising home prices, segregation and displacement in some communities, and deepening inequities across all communities. Together, we must plan for and build the housing we need, where we need it" (Oregon Department, 2022). With state and local governments ready to act, this analysis is a critical piece of the puzzle toward a more equitable housing market in Eastside Bend.

Summary and Implications

The community around our 35-acre project site is vulnerable, facing financial and housing insecurity. They are young adults who may have just moved to the city for a well-paying job, but now struggle to pay rent or even to find appropriate housing at all. They are single parents working hard to provide for their children. They are nurses, construction workers, retail and service workers. These community trends play a key role in our team's argument for improved design and greater amenities for Bend's Eastside community.

In areas with a high concentration of people, there should be a proportionate concentration of public services and amenities. Eastside Bend has an especially high concentration of younger, cost-burdened people lacking connection and stability, whose lives could be vastly improved with more careful investment into their community.

The city should consider equal distribution of high-density and affordable housing throughout the city, especially in areas with lower density, to encourage equal availability of amenities in all neighborhoods and better social cohesion with a greater mix of people living in proximity to each other. Investing in public amenities such as parks, libraries, and community centers can foster social connections and build systems of community support among residents. Cultural amenities like art galleries, music venues, and theaters can enrich the community's cultural fabric, attract tourism, and provide employment opportunities, thus boosting the local economy. By addressing these community needs through our project site redevelopment, Eastside Bend can become a more equitable and vibrant neighborhood, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for all its residents.

Research

Placemaking

The practice of placemaking in the context of urban development evolved as a response to auto-dependent design and a sense of placelessness among the American public. In his book "Placemaking: Developing Town Centers, Main Streets, and Urban Villages" Charles Bohl characterizes placemaking as a development strategy in response to the social isolation inherent to urban sprawl. City dwellers are on a "quest for community" (2002). Nico Larco and Kaarin Knudson summarize the issues in their Sustainable Urban Design Handbook: "what is clear is that urban design itself has historically been used as a tool to isolate communities, reject diversity, and limit opportunities. Urban designers have a responsibility to better understand both the intentions and the outcomes of our work in this regard and to center community needs that contribute to a more equitable future" (Larco & Knudson, 2024).

The Project for Public Spaces defines placemaking as "a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value…placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution." Mark Wyckoff explains that placemaking is the process by which we create quality places, describing quality places as "places where people and businesses want to be. They are active, unique locations, interesting, visually attractive, often with public art and creative activities. They are people-friendly, safe, and walkable with mixed uses; they have good building dimensions relative to the street, and quality façades; they are often alluring with pizzazz" (2013). Yet the presence of these characteristics does not ensure that a redevelopment project will be a quality place, only that it has the potential to contain it.

Community Role

Placemaking strategies rely on significant engagement by local residents and participation in the process; they are partnerships between the public, private, and/or non-profit sectors; and placemaking projects are multi-faceted strategies often occurring incrementally over a long period of time. "However, placemaking can also be used to create and implement larger scale transformative projects and activities that can convert a place [and]…that serves as a magnet for people and new development" (Wyckoff, 2013).

Cultural Planning

Cities can implement cultural planning to map cultural resources and lean into the community's unique identity. Cultural planning assumes that culture is locally created and locally valued and it includes "arts, heritage, libraries, for-profit commercial and cultural industries… the built environment… landscapes, local traditions, dialects, festivals and local customs, the diversity and quantity of leisure opportunities, the cultural activities of youth and other communities of interest, local products, and skills in crafts, design, new media, manufacturing, etc. Broadly speaking, cultural resources encompass all those things that together define the unique identity and sense of place of that community (Baeker, 2005).

According to Baeker, cultural planning also calls for "silo-busting," or crossing those institutional barriers between communities and the various public agencies, private, and non-profit sectors, and establishing multi-stakeholder advisory groups – creating a container for intersectional dialogue and problem-solving. Recognizing that "cultural assets…have shared value and

contribute to the imagination, happiness, pride, social connections and dreaming of that unique place," the Australian Government's CAMRA Project has begun this process of cultural mapping and has developed an extensive toolkit for local governments to inform their placemaking endeavors (Gibson et al, 2013).

Developer and City Role

A November 2024 article by the Urban Land Institute describes how a development company can be successful in embracing "placemaking as a new part of its strategic focus and ethos. Creating a successful mixed-use project today demands more than just building the traditional hardware…it also requires good 'software'—the ability to activate a project with programming, activity, and energy, so that the place is somewhere people want to be…achieving that activation [in part, by] bringing programming and activation operations people onto the design team" (Mattson-Teig, 2024). Glenn Murray described "a vision of cities and local economies built on authenticity, quality of place, and creativity." Suggesting that municipalities have a role in placemaking as well, he calls on local governments to rethink public works as public arts. Developers and cities can both implement placemaking strategies with the use of culture mapping (Baeker, 2005).

Resiliency

Edward Relph frames the subject of placemaking in the context of climate change, anticipating "energy costs to rise dramatically, and the spatially distributed ways of modern life will be seriously compromised" in his article, A Pragmatic Sense of Place. From this perspective, placemaking strategies can be implemented to promote climate and community resiliency in the face of an increasingly unstable world. Placemaking aims to create environments that are adaptable, sustainable, and long-lasting.

Placemaking encourages more dense, mixed-use development centered around walkability, thus discouraging reliance on cars and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Creating a sense of place involves reconnecting to the greater ecological system of which that place is a part. This may look like preserving or restoring the natural ecosystems and planting native vegetation. Incorporating green infrastructure like parks and urban gardens can mitigate the effects of climate change by reducing urban heat islands and managing stormwater runoff, while offering public space for building strong community networks.

Moreover, placemaking emphasizes the use of local knowledge and resources, which can lead to more resilient and self-sufficient communities. By integrating community input, placemaking ensures that public spaces meet the specific needs of their users, making them more likely to be maintained and valued over time (Project, 2007). This community-driven approach builds social cohesion and empowers residents to take an active role in climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. By creating multifunctional spaces that serve various purposes—such as social gatherings, markets, and recreational activities—communities can better withstand economic and environmental disruptions. These spaces become community hubs, fostering trust and mutual support among residents. This holistic approach not only improves the physical environment but also builds a stronger, more connected community capable of facing future challenges.

Placemaking is Essential for Sustainable Development

While programming activation into development projects is a step toward balancing out the previous "geography of nowhere" era of urban planning, it fails to recognize a fundamental principle of placemaking – engaging local residents and empowering them to participate in the

process, projects, and activities that comprise a multi-faceted strategy of transformation. The literature contends that, in this way, placemaking is more than mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development. You can't simply install a vibrant, dynamic, equitable sense of place like a lamp post or a building. Many developers are realizing "there must be connecting agents that foster collaboration and integration for a thriving ecosystem… Developers do need to consider a new approach to mixed-use that starts first with a key question: what does a place need to be?" (Mattson-Teig, 2024).

The deepest sense of place seems to be associated with being at home, being somewhere you know and are known by others, where you are familiar with the landscape and daily routines and feel responsible for how well your place works.

Edward Relph, 2008

Larco and Knudson address this in the Sustainable Urban Design Handbook. "To align with an ethic of sustainability, these processes must meaningfully and representatively engage the community with decisions about development and the distribution of urban resources. Historically and presently, urban design decisions have not effectively engaged or benefited underserved communities in terms of development, equitable access, and resource distribution" (Larco & Knudson, 2024).

Third Places

The term "Third Place" was first coined in 1989 by sociologist Ray Oldenburg to describe an informal public gathering space that is neither home ("First Place") nor the workplace ("Second Place"). By defining this concept, Oldenburg sought to draw attention to a dilemma: third places, he argued, are integral to a healthy society, but their importance is often overlooked and undervalued. He also argued that the decline of third places has contributed to the feelings of isolation, alienation, and general dissatisfaction expressed by many in the American public. Since its introduction, the concept of "third places" has been incorporated across academic disciplines including (but not limited to) planning, public health, and economics. The study of third places (and lack thereof) has generated a more robust understanding of the relationships between social cohesion, public space, urban design, physical and mental health, community resiliency, and quality of life.

In his book "The Great Good Place", Oldenburg (1989) defines third places through eight key traits: (1) they are neutral spaces; (2) they are inclusive and do not prioritize social status; (3) they are centered around conversation; (4) they are accessible and accommodating; (5) they have "regulars"; (6) they are unassuming and ordinary in appearance; (7) they offer a sense of playfulness; and (8) they provide a level of comfort and familiarity, sometimes being considered "a home away from home." Third places can be defined not just by the characteristics they exhibit, but also by the benefits they provide to a community. For example, Jeffres et al. (2009) states that "third places function as unique public spaces for social interaction, providing a context for sociability, spontaneity, community building and emotional expressiveness". Goosen et al. (2020) contextualizes third places as just one "component of well-defined public places designed to enhance civic identity, quality of life, social capital and community revitalisation, whilst improving

economic development." In short: third places are equalizing, welcoming spaces that are publicly accessible regardless of socioeconomic status which foster social interaction.

Place is space with human value or 'meaning' added to it.

Goosen & Cilliers, 2020

Third places come in many forms. Rhubart et al. (2022) categorize third places into five types: (1) free and publicly available, e.g. parks, religious organizations, civic centers, libraries; (2) social services, e.g. childcare centers, emergency services; (3) low-cost commercial, e.g. coffee shops, bars; (4) creative, athletic, and entertainment, e.g. spectator sports, fitness centers, bowling alleys, museums; and (5) personal services, e.g. salons, barbershops. Third places improve quality of life by promoting public health, strengthening social bonds, and supporting democratic values, thereby creating a more healthy, vibrant, resilient community.

Public Health

Third places have demonstrably positive impacts on one's physical and mental health. Places such as public parks, gyms, pools, and basketball courts encourage physical activity and provide spaces for relaxation and recreation. Wang'ombe (2024) notes that " access to green spaces within urban environments has been consistently linked to increased physical activity levels, reduced risk of chronic diseases, and improved overall health status among residents".

Maas et al. (2009) investigate how green spaces in residential areas contribute to health through social mechanisms. People with greater access to public green spaces reported better health outcomes, which were partly due to more frequent social interactions and stronger social networks. These findings suggest that the health benefits of public green spaces are not only due to physical activity but also to the social cohesion they foster. Kaźmierczak's (2013) study of local parks in inner-city neighborhoods supports Maas' argument, stating that the interactions that occur within such public third places help to build friendships and acquaintances, contributing to stronger community bonds.

Socially engaging third places give aging adults a purpose to leave their house and build social support networks, encouraging pedestrianism and confidence (Finlay et al., 2019). Regular social engagement via third places helps to reduce cognitive decline, as does exposure to nature (e.g. parks) (Wang'ombe, 2024). Public spaces that provide exposure to a natural environment and stimulating social experiences are also linked to improved cognitive development and reduced depression and anxiety in children and adolescents (Wang'ombe, 2024).

Jennings and Bamkole (2019) also point out the direct correlation between social interaction, mental health, and physical health: "positive social cohesion can … support health related behaviors such as decreased smoking, less alcohol consumption, and increased use of preventative healthcare services. Conversely, people who are socially isolated tend to be less healthy and susceptible to stress, depression, and cardiovascular issues" (Jennings & Bamkole, 2009). Finlay et al. (2019) highlight how the closure of third places could lead to increased loneliness, stress, and alienation, as these spaces play a significant role in buffering against these issues within community. People with low levels of local trust and diminished social networks are more likely to report poor health. (Jennings & Bamkole, 2009). While the structured networks of social support fostered through third places are beneficial to individuals' well-being, they are also crucial for the broader health of a community.

Social Cohesion

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "a society is 'cohesive' if it works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers its members the opportunity of upward social mobility". Goosen and Cilliers (2020) describe social cohesion as "the extent to which a society is socially just, coherent, united and functional, providing positive social relationships within a bonded network and environment that allows its members to flourish in solidarity". Rhubart et al. (2022) draw the connection between third places and social cohesion:

> *Third places connect people to networks of social capital, support, resources, and information that may lead to economic opportunities, professional connections, or support accessing services and benefits, particularly among historically marginalized and disadvantaged groups. For example, libraries connect individuals to a range of resources and information, including job search support, learning materials, and literacy development. Libraries, recreational facilities, and social services can also facilitate social capital, particularly for low-income populations as individuals connect with resources and wider networks of support and relationships. Similarly, routine organizations such as churches and childcare centers facilitate social connections for low-income populations that lead to information, services, and material goods. Social capital stemming from third places can also yield community-level benefits, such as facilitating community-scale entrepreneurial activity or producing social connections that spur local economic development. The perceived quality of third places, along with other local services, can play a role in whether people want to remain in their communities.*

Dolley (2020) argues that community gardens function as third places that require cooperation, social interaction, and mutual support, thereby strengthening community bonds and enhancing neighborhood resilience. Littman (2022) contends that third places support marginalized youth, including those who are unhoused, LGBTQ, or people of color. The literature argues that these places foster a sense of belonging and community, helping young people build supportive relationships and cope with social marginalization. Finlay et al. (2019) conclude, "beyond single instances of individual-level social interaction, third places can serve to generate social surplus: collective feelings of civic pride, acceptance of diversity, trust, civility, and overall sense of togetherness within a locale through sustained use and connection among residents."

Democratic Principles

Third places have historically played an important role in promoting democratic engagement and civic participation. Take, for example, taverns in the American Revolution, French cafes in the French Revolution, and London coffee houses during the Enlightenment. Public squares were often the venues of public discussion and debate, dating back to ancient Rome (Oldenburg, 1989). According to Jeffres et al. (2009), third places can "foster commitment to local politics via informed public discourse".

"Third places are often overlooked, yet represent essential sites to address society's pressing challenges, including isolation, crime, education, addiction, physical inactivity, malnutrition, and sociopolitical polarization" (Finlay et al., 2019). Mattson (1999) argues that public spaces are essential for fostering civic interaction and social cohesion, which are foundational to a healthy democracy. Democracy also rests on citizens' "ability to associate with other citizens in a civil manner, respect other citizens, and join with them in common projects involving dialogue", and that the "creation of public spaces that [encourage] civic interaction and discourse" should be

prioritized (Mattson, 1999). Even the basic process of community members coming together to shape and define the public realm is inherently democratic (Goosen & Cilliers, 2020).

Public vs Private Space

While a core tenant of third places is public accessibility, Oldenburg did not originally conceptualize "third places" as publicly owned by definition. As Finlay et al. (2019) put it, "public facilities and institutions… constitute third places; but so do commercial businesses and certain privately-operated organizations". However, some scholars critique the privatization of public spaces, arguing that this has negative impacts on third places.

Mattson (1999) connects the decline of third places to suburbanization, privatization, and the rise of commercial spaces like shopping malls. "Though the acceptability of 'Wal-Mart' as a third place may depend upon one's political or philosophical inclinations, the reliance on 'commercial' private venues for public interactions deserves more than cursory examination" (Jeffres et al., 2009). Kaźmierczak (2013) also critiques the privatization of public space, arguing that it reduces cultural meaning, and decreases draw to such third places. "An increasing proportion of urban space is privately developed and managed, thus becoming commodified and exclusionary. Coupled with the continued priority given to cars, a large proportion of public space in the city has lost its cultural meaning and human purposes leaving little common ground to strengthen urban society" (Kaźmierczak, 2013).

Third Places Are Critical to Community Well-Being

Since the birth of the term, "third places" have been noticeably declined in number in American society. Oldenburg discussed the disappearance of third places in the same book he defined the term, saying that the reduction in these spaces has led to an erosion of community, increased social isolation, and a shift away from public life to more private lifestyles (e.g. single-family homes in car-oriented suburban developments). He cited reduced funding for public goods and rising costs as reasons for the increasing elusiveness of third places (Oldenburg, 1989). Rhubart et al. (2022) investigate the uneven distribution of third places, revealing significant disparities along socioeconomic and racial lines. Neighborhoods with higher poverty rates tended to have fewer third places. Neighborhoods with fewer people of color had the most third places. Rural areas generally had fewer third places compared to urban areas. These disparities highlight the role of third places in fostering social capital and upward mobility, and the need for equitable access to these vital community resources.

Case studies

Superblocks: Barcelona, Spain

Cities across the world have implemented different strategies for retaking streets from automobiles. What makes Barcelona's Superblock plan different is its system-wide implementation potential, not only for the reorganization of streets, but for the transformations of intersections as public space. (Lopez et al, 2020). Many cities and researchers in the international community are curious about the impact of this model, and whether it is a viable solution for helping reach diverse goals related to health, climate, and social cohesion. (Nieuwenhuijsen et al, 2024). How effective are Superblocks at creating those conditions and can those lessons be translated to other cities' urban forms?

Description

A major portion of Barcelona's area is set in a unique grid of chamfered octagonal blocks. The original scheme from the Cerda plan of 1855 left the middle of these blocks open, but as development progressed, the centers filled in, with no permeability to the street. Domination of the city streets followed through the 20th century. In 2000, a local agency consortium proposed the idea of over five-hundred Superblocks ("Superilles" in Catalan) across Barcelona, driven by the elevated noise, pollution, and collisions associated with cars. The city first implemented Superblocks in 2016 (Nieuwenhuijsen et al, 2024), and as of 2024, has thirty-one in development (Amati et al, 2024).

Salvador Rueda, the originator of the Superblock model, describes it as: "made up of a grid of basic roads forming a polygon, approximately 400 by 400 m, with both interior and exterior components and around 5000–6000 inhabitants per Superblock. The interior is closed to motorized vehicles and above ground parking and gives preference to pedestrian traffic in the public space. Though the inner streets are generally reserved for pedestrians they can be used by residential traffic, services, emergency vehicles, and loading/unloading vehicles under special circumstances. The perimeter, or exterior, of Superblocks is where motorized traffic circulates, and makes up the basic roads" (see Figure 2). The new model results in new land use allocations, more green areas, reduced car networks, and increased potential for improved social and health outcomes (Lopez et al, 2020).

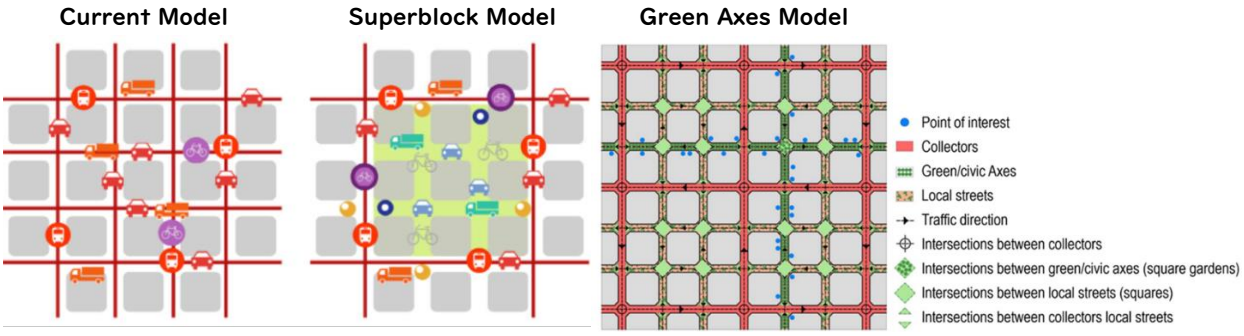

Figure 2: Existing street network condition of Barcelona and the model proposed in the Barcelona Urban Mobility Plan 2013-2018, left (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2014) and Diagram incorporating the 'green axes' plan with Superblocks, right (Magrinyà et al, 2023).

A new planning framework introduced in 2020 called the "green axes" plan brings a new and substantial infusion of additional green space. This is an evolution of the Superblock strategy whereby an active mobility network extends at regular intervals through the whole city, creating

continuous corridors of vegetation and greenspaces which transforms the previous model to one of separated squares to an interconnected human-scale network (Figure 2). Existing green spaces can connect to facilitate an improved urban ecology and drainage while increasing the number of residents who have access to greenspace and the associated social and health benefits. (Magrinyà et al, 2023). Furthermore, the linear nature of the axes allows extension to parts of the city that do not follow the Cerda block structure. The full implementation of the green axes will increase capacity and destinations for bike travel significantly, although at present, there have not been sizeable changes in car traffic, other than it now concentrates in the arterials. Many believe this traffic displacement is an interim condition of incomplete networks (Nello-Deakin, 2024; Anguelovski et al, 2023).

Effect on Public Health

As public health was a major contributor to the formation of Superblocks, there is a corresponding analysis of the public health effects in the literature. Superblocks have been "estimated to help reduce harmful environmental exposures" with limited studies emerging on air quality, noise pollution, heat and the associated reduction in mortality and improvement in quality of life (Mueller et al 2020; Alsina-Pages et al 2021). A major contributor to the argument for public health in Superblocks is the increase in greenspace resulting from landscaping in public spaces within them.

Government messaging about the increased greenspace often centers on sustainability goals related to climate change (Lopez et al, 2020), or the individualized health benefits of a more active lifestyle with less attention on the gains for public space and corresponding social influence on public health (Frago and Granziano, 2021). Amati et el (2024) discusses the essential human activity of play as a condition that necessitates "still or slow mobility" to occur, which is a condition created in the inner Superblocks. Moreover, green or play spaces contribute to community relationship building, place attachment, community identity, and overall social trust (Oscilowicz, 2020). However, in addition to supplanting cars for trees, nascent public spaces will need deliberate design support to inspire use. Some of the pilot Superblocks demonstrated that can be accomplished with the "deployment of light and mobile infrastructure such as seating and markings on the ground" (Amati et al, 2024). So, heavy infrastructure changes are not necessary to see the benefits of reclaimed space; more tactical urbanist approaches can suffice.

Effect on Equity

The access to healthier, greener spaces in improved areas of Barcelona unfortunately contends with the risk of displacement of residents. Anguelovski et al (2023) classifies the Superblock program as "transformative planning," or a radical change in the city's urban fabric with potential to catalyze spatial injustices. Furthermore, the article recounts that initial Superblocks "were chosen out of convenience, and to minimize interruptions to city traffic. Thus, social and environmental equity considerations were not part of the site selection process….The intervention was…rather as a marketable and flagship program that needed to be implemented on a site where it was most likely to be successful. As an innovative and risky urban transformation, success was defined by neighborhood and political acceptance, rather than measurable improvements in environmental quality" (Anguelovski et al, 2023).

By nature, the perhaps 'radical' changes to a chunk of the city, creates differing internal and external relationships. One significant external condition is the displacement of traffic, but more impactful changes occur within the block (Nello-Deakin 2024). On one hand, women with children and seniors, who are two groups most likely to suffer from car-oriented environments, are observed as among the most benefitted groups in some Superblocks (Anguelovski et al, 2023). On the other hand, Nello-Deakin (2024) states: "pedestrianised streets risk becoming a victim of their

success, experiencing significant public space and gentrification pressures." This is based on qualitative surveys of residents who say they suspect that displacement from improvements is likely happening, but that the fundamental problem with housing is a lack of regulation of the rental market, and that it's difficult to separate from the district and city-wide displacement pressures. Most residents in that study prefer the pedestrianized streets, which is echoed by resident groups like the Poblenou Association of Neighbours or the larger Neighbours' Associations Federation of Barcelona (Frago & Graziano, 2021). Overall, authors agree that any inequal effects of the Superblock program could be mitigated by more widespread implementation, where benefits or pressures are equally distributed, and mobility networks connect to produce the desired change in transportation. Broader questions of mobility access remain for essential workers who live on the periphery of the planned area. (Anguelovski et al, 2023).

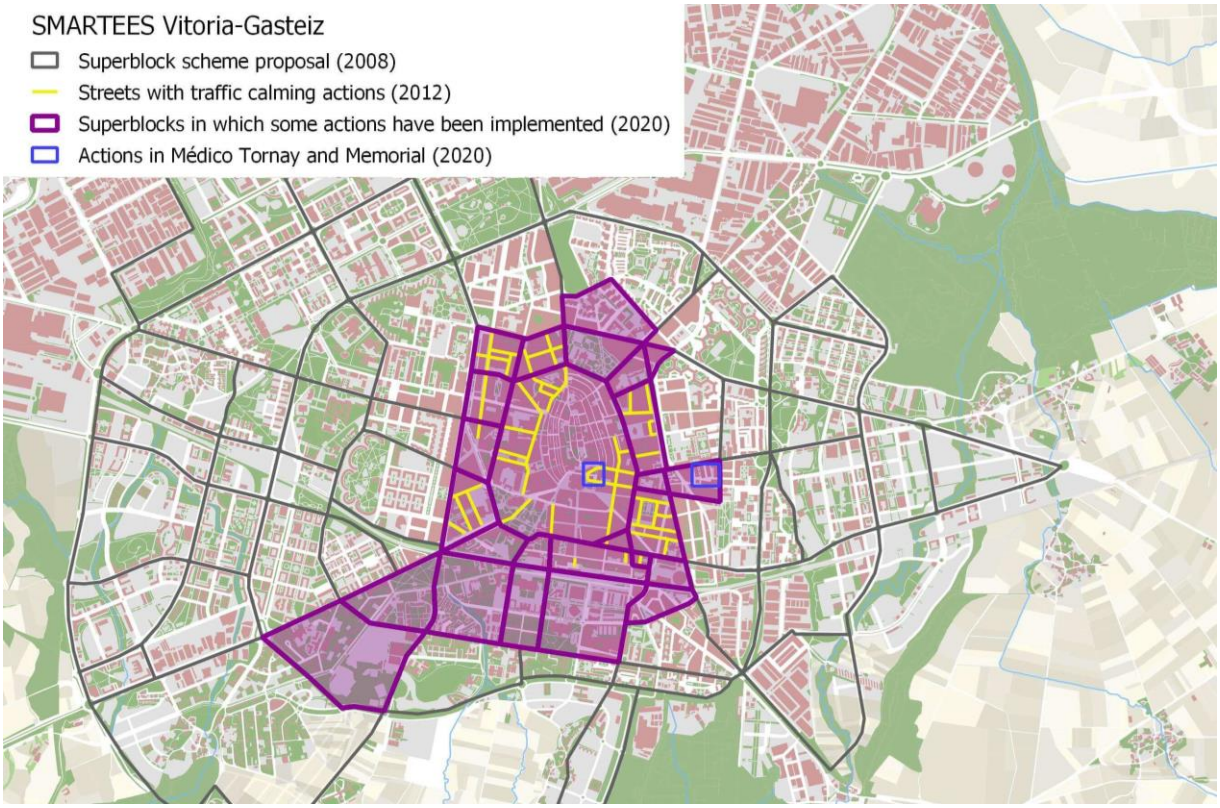

Figure 3: Superblock adaptation in the mid-size city of Vitoria-Gasteiz in Spain's Basque Country (Lopez et al, 2020).

Implications

If the Superblock and green axes model implemented by Barcelona is regarded as successful, the next question is whether the design can translate to other cities. At least in Spain, so far, the answer has been yes. Several Superblock plans are constructed or approved in several Spanish cities, such as Vitoria-Gasteiz, which can be seen in Figure 5. Many more city councils across the world are following suit. For example, Vienna now has "Suprgrätzl"; in Panama there is a study to convert the Casco Viejo (Caballero et al, 2022); in Bogota "Barrios Vitales"; in Argentina's capital Buenos Aires and Ecuador's capital Quito - some blocks are not as large as in Barcelona, "but it is precisely this scalability that makes the urban planning concept so attractive" (IAA, n.d.). Other researchers like Sven Eggimann are developing methods to analyze cities to quantify and map the potential for Superblock implementation based on street networks and comparing that to areas in need of green space (Eggimann 2022a; 2022b).

Beyond the interest of city governments in and spatial capacity for Superblocks, planners should consider how to achieve community buy-in for these types of transformational top-down urban schemes. As much as Barcelona is a case study for a new urban design, it is equally interesting from the perspective of local politics. Experimental "bottom-up" approaches that empower community members can be both an effective way to package larger scale changes, and a vehicle of their own for important change (Zografos et al 2020; Frago & Morcuende 2024).

Key Take-Aways

The Superblock model from Barcelona represents a promising approach to urban planning that can enhance public health, sustainability, and equity. For cities in the western United States with large, outdated, commercial blocks seeking redevelopment, the Superblock framework may be a useful tool for orienting designs for places that both increase connectivity and public space while reducing auto dependency. However, careful consideration of gentrification in a local context is essential to ensure that the benefits are widely shared and potential negative impacts mitigated; best done by making simultaneous system-wide improvements. Some benefits emerge in isolation, as nodes throughout an urban area, but the greatest benefits will emerge from complete mobility systems that connect all parts of a city.

Mosaic District: Fairfax, VA

The Mosaic District is comparable in size, historical land use, and development goals to the Forum. This case study examines how the Mosaic District redevelopment prioritized multi-modal accessibility and utilized innovative financing to create a lively, mixed-use downtown. This case provides a useful comparison to Bend, providing an example for tactics that Bend may want to replicate on this site, as well as a way to think about how Bend may want to approach this site redevelopment differently.

Description

Background: Downtown Merrifield

Washington D.C.'s population has grown steadily in recent years, with a corresponding growth of the neighboring Maryland and Virginia suburbs. As suburban population density increased, the single-use commercial center of Merrifield in Fairfax County, Virginia struggled. The downtown area included an aging multiplex movie theater, mid-rise office buildings with increasing vacancies, large parking decks, piecemeal retail stores, and a car-oriented street pattern (see Figure 4).

Despite a degraded downtown, Merrifield is in an affluent county eager to provide incentives for redevelopment (Williamson, 2022). The average household income in Merrifield is well above the national average. Merrifield is about 15 miles from D.C., bordered by major highways and commuter rail, with increasing housing demand. These factors suggested a strong potential consumer base in the area. In 1998, Fairfax County designated Merrifield as one of seven "Commercial Revitalization Areas" (CRA) (Fairfax, n.d.). This designation showed the county's commitment to improving economic conditions, appearance, and function of the downtown commercial district of Merrifield (Fairfax, 2017).

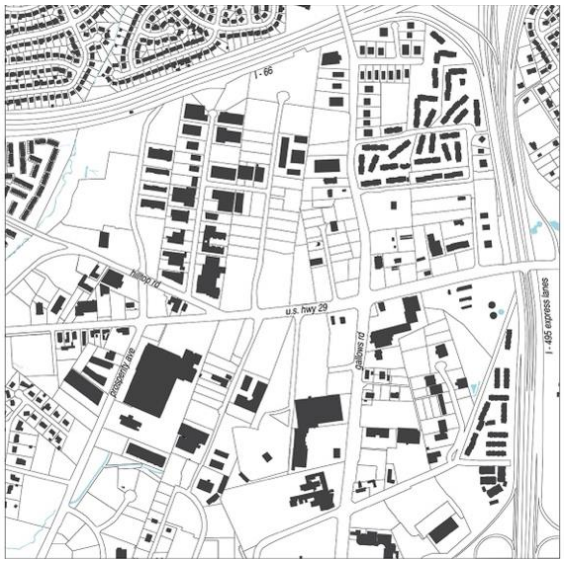

Figure 4. Map of Merrifield Commercial District prior to redevelopment, in 1980 (Williamson, 2022)

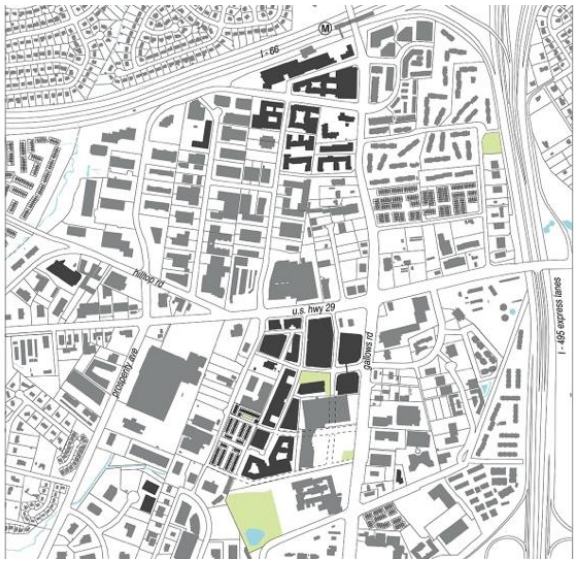

Figure 5. Map of Mosaic District today (Williamson, 2022)

Design

In 2006, retail development company Edens purchased the multiplex and several adjacent properties. Construction on the pedestrian-friendly complex of residential, retail, office, and park space began in 2009 and was completed in 2018 (Williamson, 2022). Edens emphasized the need for "third spaces" and prioritized creating welcoming, attractive, and engaging public spaces that foster a sense of community and combat social isolation. The "Mosaic District" was named for the "mosaic" of neighborhoods that surround and contribute to the community of Merrifield.

The District provides over 500k sq. feet of retail space centered around a 2-acre public green space (see Fig. 2). It includes more than 1,000 multifamily rental units and townhomes, a hotel, and over 70k sq. feet of office space (Community, n.d.). The site features stormwater management, green roofs, and a metro shuttle, for which it obtained LEED certification (Williamson, 2022). The previously traffic-congested streets running through the downtown area were redeveloped into a highly walkable street network and appropriately sized blocks. In the six years since the project's completion, it has become a vibrant gathering place with regular community events in the central square and a thriving retail and dining scene.

Financing

Merrifield's CRA designation allowed Fairfax County to establish the Mosaic District Community Development Authority (CDA) in 2009, which was the county's first CDA to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund public infrastructure (Fairfax, n.d.). TIF is method of public funding that allows localities to pay for community improvement projects by diverting future property tax revenue from a designated area. TIF assumes that a development project will increase property values and therefore increase property taxes. These increased property taxes after development can be collected for an agreed-upon period and used to reimburse original investments or loans used to fund the project (Tolstikhin, 2024). Creating public-private partnerships through like TIF allows projects to fill vital funding gaps and complete projects more cost-effectively.

Although the Merrifield CDA did not use TIF to fund affordable housing, this is another common use if the financing tool. Cities like Portland, Oregon and Madison, Wisconsin enacted laws that require a percent of TIF funds to be set aside for affordable housing (Tolstikhin, 2024). Because

redevelopment and improvement projects inherently increase property value, these projects put the surrounding community at risk of gentrification. Using TIF funding to ensure availability of affordable housing may help mitigate displacement.

Implications

Public Space

The design of the Mosaic District reduces car dependence by creating more pedestrian friendly streets. The District provides a diverse array of shopping, dining, and entertainment destinations, where users can meet many of their needs within a short walking distance. In 2020, a circulator system was launched to transport people between the nearest metro rail station and the Mosaic District as a "last mile" solution (Community, n.d.). Edens chose to retain private ownership over the streets within the District, which allows them to close streets for festivals, pop-up art galleries, and a weekly farmers market, thus prioritizing pedestrian mobility and safety over cars.
Beyond being physically accessible to its users, the Mosaic District provides users access to social life and community. The "village green" public central plaza serves as a gathering place for the local community, including a splash pool for children, an open lawn, benches and tables, and a large outdoor movie screen. Development projects are most successful when they foster an enduring sense of "place", giving users access to community connections, interpersonal interaction, and social trust. Murals by local artists are integrated throughout the site. Even small design details, such as the Edens choice to design each storefront with a different façade, create visual interest and uniqueness rather than a uniform style which can feel sterile and inauthentic. As a result, the Mosaic District looks and feels more like a "marketplace" than a strip mall.

Figure 6. Multiple Transportation Options (Williamson, 2022)

Figure 7. Yoga in the Public Green (Williamson, 2022)

Key Take-Aways

Public-private partnerships can benefit a community improvement project by splitting the financial risks while improving efficiency of a project. TIF specifically could be a useful tool in Bend's case to create affordable housing and to potentially reduce gentrification impacts of the proposed site improvement. To maintain continuity from the previous site, Edens retained certain key retailers in

the redeveloped District, such as Target. This could inform how to deal with the existing businesses on the Bend site.

Although the Mosaic District was not able to change the car-dependent infrastructure surrounding the project site, the developers and CDA designed interim solutions, like a shuttle to the metro, circular bussing system, and increased pedestrian pathways. They are also seeking to improve broader transportation infrastructure within the county in the future. This reflects a similar situation in Bend, where while we might not be able to design a place where car dependency does not exist, we can create a proposal that heads in this direction.

The District is a great example of retrofitting a single-use commercial area into a multi-use, walkable, community oriented space. By focusing on third places and development based on community needs analysis, the District effectively implemented placemaking principles to create unique and interesting places for community members to meet their needs. Grocery stores, retail, entertainment, and dining options recreation surround the central plaza and green space for programmed and unprogrammed gathering. There is an emphasis on connective networks throughout the site. These are the same outcomes that Bend is hoping to achieve in The Forum.

Echo Street West: Atlanta, GA

The redevelopment of the east side of Bend presents a unique opportunity to create a vibrant, sustainable, and community-focused urban environment. Echo Street West is a 19-acre development in Atlanta that transformed a former industrial area to a multi-use center that accommodates housing, retail, office, and open public space. It connects to the goals for The Forum in its mixed-use redevelopment, development along a new multi-modal transit corridor, collaboration with multiple stakeholders, and attention to placemaking.

Figure 8: Overview of Echo Street West in relation to downtown Atlanta. The largest mass timber office is seen at center. (Echo Street West Retail Leasing)

Description

Background

This site is in Atlanta's Westside in the English Avenue neighborhood. The location is between railroad lines and a highway in an area formerly occupied by historic industrial and other commercial buildings; some which had been vacant for decades alongside other undeveloped lots. In 2018, the city acquired a portion of land bordering this site for its Beltline project, which aims to take advantage of a series of abandoned railroad tracks to link the city through greenways, bike trails, and light rail (Schillaci, 2024). With that work completed, it positioned lands along the Beltline as development opportunities which were not previously attractive to investors. The city further directed this interest by establishing a special zoning district for English Avenue that allowed for mixed use development so long as it met specific criteria related to historic preservation, sustainable transportation, and housing (City of Atlanta).

Design

Adjacent to the new Beltline trail segment, Lincoln Property Company completed as of 2023: a 300-unit multi-story housing complex (20% reserved for households earning up to 80% of the area's median income) (Green, 2023), mass timber office structures, entertainment and event spaces, an artist village, and multiple open or green spaces for community connection and recreation. Lincoln envisioned this as a first phase of development, as there are more underutilized lots in the area.

Echo Street West's design reflects a sensitivity to the area's identity. One way that was done was by repurposing several existing buildings. An old mechanic shop adapted into the informal dining and event space Westside Motor Lounge, while old tanks have been repurposed as landmarks, paying homage to the site's industrial past (Figure 9). The architecture of the larger 275,000 square foot mass timber indoor-outdoor office building designed by RIOS, evokes the area's industrial history using wood, steel, and an external structure resembling a trestle bridge (Figure 8). The firm attributes the use of mass timber to meeting sustainability goals while visually linking materials to the natural environment.

Figure 9: Adaptive reuse examples. Left: an industrial tank used for signage. Right: a former industrial building repurposed as an event venue. (Echo Street West Leasing Brochure)

Outcomes

Lincoln's $265 million investment in English Avenue marks one of the largest private financial commitments in the area to date (Green, 2023a). Direct displacement was not a concern, as there

were no residences at this site, and much of the industrial and commercial areas were vacant (Schillaci, 2024). Still, there is concern for gentrification pricing out local communities, especially where Atlanta installs the Beltline. One study reported that property values within a half mile of the Beltline rose between 18% and 26% (Immergluck & Balan, 2018). During the initial phase of construction, the developers tried to be conscious of this affect, and made efforts to involve the local community in events, promote construction job fairs locally, give grants to local organizations, and have local minority-owned businesses in the retail areas (Green, 2023b; Lincoln, 2022).

Despite the excitement generated by the project, there are now concerns about the project's success due to the 300,000 square feet of unleased office space. Lincoln Properties created the plan around 2020 to attract tech companies, given its strategic location between the Microsoft campus and Georgia Tech. Yet the project faces challenges amid the record-high 23.7% office vacancy rate in Atlanta this year; a Midtown Atlanta office real estate report highlights this project as a significant factor amidst the downturn in demand for office space post-pandemic (Jonathan, 2024). After a year of vacancy of this flagship building, the developer is looking to sell off the building for a significant discount (TRD, 2024). Time will tell if the site achieves the designers' original intent, and if development continues at this scale around English Avenue.

Implications

Community-Centric Design

In Echo Street West, the local identity was considered in the form and materials of the new construction. In Bend, the important local materials are wood, especially pine, stone, and brick. Further consideration is needed to think about what forms are unique to that area, or what would reflect the history or ecology in a meaningful way. Likewise, while the adaptive reuse of the historic industrial buildings is admirable, The Forum does not have an equivalent. Instead, the site has many non-descript commercial buildings which could be adapted by updating the exteriors, which conserves cost and time while updating the look and feel. Another major difference is that the commercial spaces in Bend are very much in use, and the community may have strong feelings about familiar, useful, vibrant commercial spaces taken away – it may be in their interest to preserve some of the structures to provide continuity. This is one benefit of a phased design: time to adjust and adapt.

The developer also appeared aligned with neighborhood goals in a way that both benefited the community and eased their path to tax credits and permitting. One former landowner had failed in this regard, proposing a plan with density that neighbors considered inappropriate for the area (Walljasper, 2020). It demonstrates that it is possible to have a public-private partnership that benefits the developer, the municipality, and local residents. If a city or developer intends for a dramatic change in density, it is best to engage residents in their planning process to assess their needs and preferences and help educate on the benefits and costs of that change. For Bend this could be substantial affordable housing and diversified job opportunities, both during construction and after.

Sustainability and green space

The prominence of open space, green space, and community space demonstrates how high-density mixed use can integrate to a seamless urban-nature interface (Figure 10). There is also an attention to transitional transportation, where the design acknowledges the use of cars, but car-related infrastructure does not dominate. The design minimizes surface parking and wide roads in favor of a below ground garage, and narrow streets intended for multi-modal use. There is also a strong relationship to the Beltline showing consideration of micro-mobility as a significant mode of

transport, and how starting with a greenway network connecting major economic centers can spur revitalization. I believe Bend could use the Beltline as evidence to advocate for a similar network in Bend – that it is possible to retrofit bike and pedestrian corridors.

Figure 10: Concept design of mixed-use space adjacent to Beltline (Echo Street West Residential Leasing)

Sustainability in materials was another key take-away. One way the design achieved this was through the reuse of existing buildings, as mentioned in the previous section. However, beyond cost or continuity, there is a positive environmental impact from conserving existing building material. For The Forum, there needs to be a compelling spatial use argument for replacing a building, because there is substantial economic and environmental impact with redevelopment. Using sustainable materials like mass timber in the rebuild is one mitigating solution, and Echo Street West office buildings are visual examples of what that can look like. Interestingly, the commercial office space is the least successful structure in Echo Street West. While they are attractive buildings, they demonstrate that spaces built with specific intended uses result in inflexibility and unsustainability.

Key Take-Aways

Echo Street West serves as a compelling model for the redevelopment of Bend's east side, offering an example of community-centric and sustainable design. By prioritizing local identity using region-specific materials and adaptive reuse of existing structures, Bend can create a development that resonates with its residents and congruent with its unique character. Furthermore, the integration of affordable housing and economic development initiatives in Echo Street West highlights the importance of aligning development goals with community benefits. Engaging local residents in the planning process and ensuring that housing options are accessible to lower-income households will be crucial for the success of Bend's redevelopment. Additionally, the emphasis on green spaces and sustainable materials demonstrates how high-density, mixed-use developments can advance climate goals.

Granville Island: Vancouver BC

Throughout most of the 20th century, Granville Island was an industrial epicenter with dozens of manufacturing facilities and processing plants. Canada's National Harbor Commission (NHC) managed the 'Industrial Island' that played a prominent role in Canada's economy as a manufacturing center and hub in the regional supply chain. During the economic heyday of the 1940s, as many as 1,200 people worked on the island. Fires leveled some of the anchor industries in the late 1950s, and an economic recession hit in the 1960s. Business owners abandoned their manufacturing facilities, leaving an industrial wasteland in the heart of the city. By the early 1970s, the few manufacturers still operating on Granville Island were smokestacks, polluting the air of Vancouver's high-density neighborhoods nearby. Runoff from the island was polluting the waters and the remnants of the industrial era littered the 35-acre island (History, 2024).

Figure 11: A sawmill at Granville Island in 1917 (City of Vancouver Archives)

Figure 12: Overview of present-day Granville at night (Mountain Living, 2015)

Description

Today, Granville Island is a vibrant marketplace and arts and cultural district that the Project for Public Spaces acclaimed as "One of the World's Great Places," paying respect to the island's role as a formative project in the history of placemaking as an urban design principle (2009).

Residents formed ad-hoc community groups and started speaking out about the industrial blight advocating for a clean-up initiative. The Canadian government dedicated $20 million and transferred the management of the island from the NHC to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) (Fazel, 2016). In 1978, the Granville Island Reference Document was adopted by the Vancouver Planning Department.

Granville Island is owned by the Canadian federal government and managed by the CMHC, which leases the market space, shops, and studios to residents and business owners, providing revenue for public works, public spaces, and cultural programs (Fazel, 2016). In 2016, the CMHC pulled together a large, diverse group of community leaders, professional specialists, and technical consultants to create the Granville Island 2040 Report, a comprehensive planning document with

four primary goals: 1) Improving Access, 2) Expanding the Public Market & Creating a Market District, 3) Embracing Arts & Innovation, and 4) Restoring and Sustaining the Public Realm (2017).

Granville Island is built on a sandbar peninsula on the traditional fishing and gathering grounds of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. Today, Granville Island supports Indigenous culture and heritage with several shops featuring authentic creations and the Wikkaninnish Gallery representing First Nations artists. Sculptures and murals by native artists occupy public space throughout the island (Granville, n.d.).

Figure 13: Public murals by Debra Sparrow and the Chain & Forge (Sarah Delaney, 2018)

Figure 14: Restaurant patio dining at Granville (New York Institute of Technology)

Outcomes

The historical context, the sympathetic leadership, the industrial decay, the community's vision, and many other unique factors all coalesced to create the Granville Island of today. Now, nearly 50 years after this redevelopment project began, Granville Island is a world-class tourist destination and a favorite neighborhood haunt for locals.

It's a welcoming, walkable, festive space with an impressive indoor public market focusing on fresh, local goods. It's an arts district encompassing dozens of local artisans and craft studios anchored by a school of art and design. There's a prestigious roster of culinary delights for the foodies, as well as dozens of vendors, coffee shops, bars, a brewery, and a craft distillery. A separate maritime market pays homage to the island's roots as an important harbor – selling boats, fishing gear, and all things oceans. There's a special market scaled down in size for kids. Various street performers – musicians, dancers, jugglers, magicians, poets – busk around the island. Overall, they have managed to weave an impressive number of public amenities into the 35-acre island, no less than 15 acres of which are plazas and open public spaces that connect the shops, studios, and markets, creating a haven for artists and entrepreneurs.10.5 million people visit Granville Island annually.

Figure 15: Granville indoor public market. (Grant Harder)

Implications

Form-Based Codes

When redevelopment of the island began in the 1970s, the CMHC employed a public engagement strategy to see past the industrial blight and envision a new future for the island. Yazaman Fazel writes in their paper for the Vancouver Heritage Foundation, “The most significant aspect of this era is the participation of the local people in the federal government decision-making process. Instead of the government dictating the local businesses on what to do (production, transportation, etc.) on this land. Vancouverites would decide on what they wanted on the Island” (Fazel, 2016).

The CMCH also outsourced professionals, notably Norman Hotson Architects among others, to help coalesce the community’s vision and bring it to life. Summarizing the results of the public engagement process, the CMHC established a broad mandate to ensure that the island is “accessible to everyone, existing buildings are reused when possible, and space is allocated for a variety of land uses (limiting retail to arts and crafts, maritime products, and a public market).” These became the guiding principles of the regulatory framework codified in the Granville Island Reference Document (City of Vancouver, 1999). For such a resource-intensive and complex redevelopment project, the Granville Island Reference Document is surprisingly lightweight. The Project for Public Spaces writes, “Unlike most land use plans, the Reference Document does not establish any zoning or other criteria for urban works such as street profiles. Nor does it prescribe how the vision shall be implemented…this framework…set the stage for Granville Island to develop in a very unique and organic way” (Project, 2009).

The Reference Document covers a handful of key elements with few regulations. Land use policy determines the square footage allowed to be built in various capacities, allocating 15 acres, nearly half of the available land, to public open space. Building codes are replaced by a series of drawings that are taken to be inspirational rather than prescriptive, captioned with very brief guidelines. This

sparse regulatory framework leaves much room for interpretation. Business owners, artists, residents, developers and consultants filled in the blanks as they went along by applying cultural, rather than regulatory, standards.

Adaptative Reuse

Granville Island was the world's first major industrial clean-up initiative turned urban redevelopment project and there was a lot of uncertainty whether it would be successful. (Fazel, 2016). The loose plan was to recycle the industrial landscape and create a place meant for people. In the 2014 interview, Hotson described getting to know the existing buildings and pathways and imagining how they could be used for different purposes. For example, their design placed the Public Market in the furthest corner near the dock to create a common draw and pull the flow of people through the site while enabling the flow of goods from the water rather than the roads. In this way, he says, the island inspired itself. He notes that some of his influences in urban design were streetscapes in Western Europe, Pike Place Market in Seattle, Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco, and festival markets in Baltimore and NYC.

He talked about measuring the buildings, making diagrams, and taking stock of their potential use. They demolished the buildings that could not be saved and renovated the rest, salvaging and repurposing everything they could. For example, they shaped a massive pile of concrete rubble into an amphitheater and landscaped it, creating a place for public performances. In one case, they lowered the roof of a building to improve the acoustics by fully dismantling the building, cutting the walls to size, and reassembling it. Preserving many of the buildings and retaining some of the historical and industrial design elements like the materials used, the roof style, and the original color schemes (and new construction incorporating those same design elements) tied the place together visually and paid homage to the island's industrial roots, bolstering Granville's authenticity. In a sense, the redevelopment even recycled the conceptual framework of the island as a place of industry, replacing the heavy industry of the past with a multitude of local artists, artisan crafters, and cottage industries, creating a new economic engine that keeps the island dynamic and full of activity (Hotson, 2014).

Key Take-Aways

Although Granville Island is in Canada and governed by laws different from those of our project site in Bend, many of the placemaking principles are applicable and encouraged within the city and state goals and regulations. Faced with some very big and unique challenges, the architects leveraged those challenges into placemaking opportunities throughout the process. Participatory planning helped build strong community ties and improve long-term results. The flexible framework of the form-based codes enabled development to happen organically, while maintaining a strong sense of place. They scaled down the infrastructure and built public paths and plazas connecting the shops and destinations, making it feel comfortable, safe, and inviting for people to move around and engage with the environment.

Granville Island is an inspiring model that demonstrates the principles of adaptive reuse**,** community engagement**,** mixed-use development**,** public space design**,** and cultural integration can be helpful in the context of retrofitting urban sprawl to meet affordable housing and climate challenges and play a vital role in transforming big-box stores and parking lots into vibrant, inclusive, and climate-friendly places that support diverse, healthy, dynamic communities.

Site Analysis

Site History

Figure 16: State of development in Eastside Bend in 1994. Site outlined in white. (Google Earth)

Our project site is located on the northeast side of Bend, between Purcell Boulevard and 27th Street with Highway 20/Greenwood Avenue to the south and Forum Drive to the north. It has a total area of about 35 acres, currently comprised of 12 parcels with 29 storefronts and 1,400 parking spaces. The land was first developed in the 1990's with the installation of a Costco in 1993, and other large shopping structures added by 1997. The location provided easy access to shopping opportunities for people travelling in vehicles along the major traffic corridors, while making use of land on the fringe of Bend's development (Figure 16), orienting businesses here to city and county-wide needs. Built based on a car-dependent planning style that dominated the era, the developers were not concerned with walkable access to or within the site. This commercial site was given the lofty title of "The Forum Shopping Center," in what was likely more of a marketing strategy for would-be tenants of the space than an attempt to foster this place's identity for the community.

As city development progressed, more of the medium density communities we see today sprang up, with apartment-style housing surrounding the upper half of the site. Though in proximity to many daily needs – shopping, restaurants, and other services – nearby residents are faced with the auto-centric paradigm of this built environment, having to drive to resources sometimes only a few hundred feet away. No other viable safe alternatives exist without substantial risk or discomfort to the pedestrian. With Bend's most recent Comprehensive Plan, commercial areas like The Forum are being examined in a new light: as areas needing attention to orient better to their locality, increasing access for all ages and abilities, with opportunities distributed equitably across the city. Most notably, Bend's 2023 Climate Friendly Areas Study identified the Eastside commercial area, including The Forum, as a potential Climate Friendly Area (CFA), receiving the highest support amongst community members. The site requires significant modification to meet the required goals of that designation.

Existing Conditions

Figure 17: Present-day site context (Compass Commercial)

Surface parking lots cover most of the land on this site. The rest of the square footage is dedicated to a range of retail stores, from the now-vacant "big-box" warehouse that, until recently, housed the region's only Costco, to smaller local and chain businesses in nondescript, strip mall-style commercial architecture. Several businesses, such as McDonald's, Whole Foods, and Safeway buzz with activity, while others like OfficeMax and Sherwin-Williams sit relatively empty.

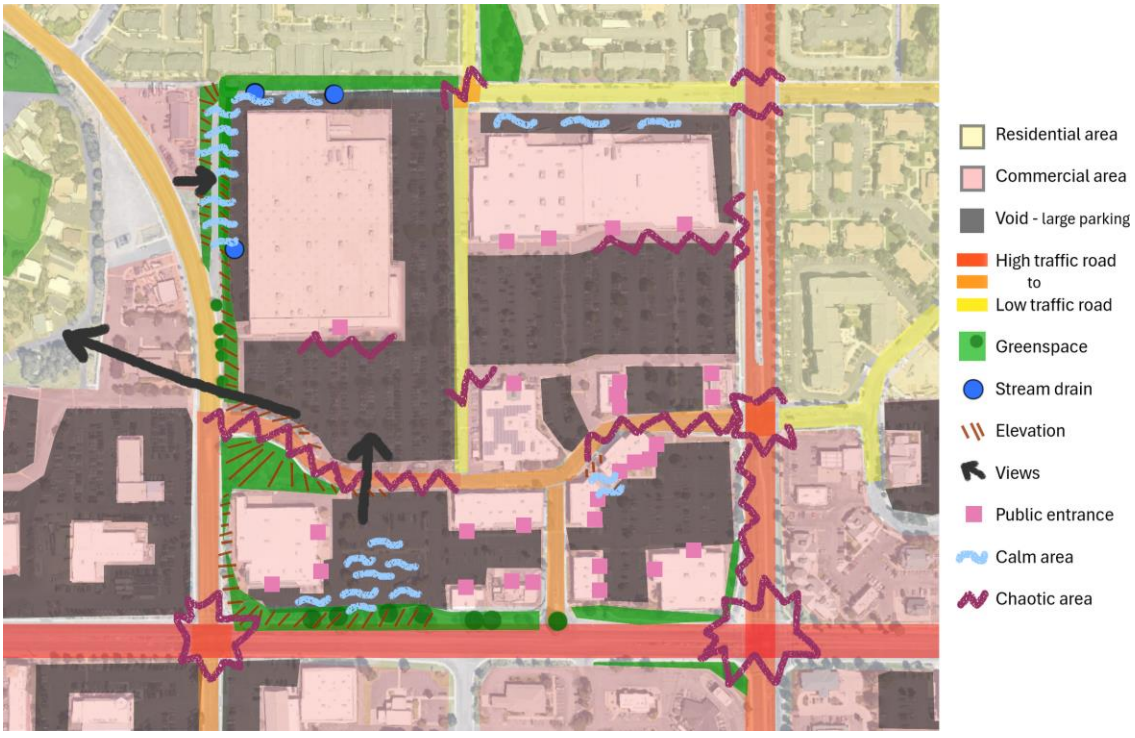

Figure 18: Existing Site Conditions Map

Figure 19: Looking north from the sidewalk on Highway 20 to the mostly empty T-Mobile/OfficeMax parking lot. (Cameron Coronado)

Neighborhoods currently lack safe, convenient connections to the Forum. Highway 20 and 27th street border to the south and east; both high-traffic roads with high speeds, and few pedestrian crossings.

Figure 20: Intersection of Highway 20 and 27th Street (Cameron Coronado)

The longest stretch without crosswalks is the quarter mile where The Forum borders Highway 20 to to the south. The only pleasant parts of this particular stretch are the large mature pines and meandering path, although the winding sidewalk would be difficult to navigate for those with limited mobility.

Figure 21: Looking east along Highway 20. (Cameron Coronado)

In terms of existing roads within The Forum, there are few defined paths for cars. Instead, cars can move freely across vast paved surfaces. There are even fewer, if any, defined paths for traversing the site on foot without being a nuisance to traffic, which presents both a logistical and psychological barrier to walking. We expect that most people drive between stores here that do not share frontage, as few pedestrians could be observed at an otherwise lively time of day.

Figure 22: Looking North along 27th Street. This wide, busy, driveway has no markings or other safety features for pedestrians. Is this even acting as a driveway, or is it really a street entrance? (Cameron Coronado)

Sidewalks frame the perimeter of the site. Two sets of stairs that allow pedestrians to navigate considerable grades and sparse trees throughout the site are the only amenities offered to pedestrians. There are scattered landscaped areas with curbs to establish boundaries between parking lots moreso than to provide any real shade or welcoming atmosphere to people.

Figure 23: Looking north onto Micks Drive. Note the lack of crosswalk at the base of the stairs and low peripheral visibility from the retaining walls. (Cameron Coronado)

Despite its challenges, the site offers numerous opportunities. Several of these opportunities make the area a good candidate for redevelopment in the context of the CFA framework. With Costco gone, the largest parcel of land can be considered for redevelopment, offering a blank canvas. Obviously, there still is a lot of material in the 250,000 square foot building, so careful consideration of adaptive reuse or total replacement is necessary. If the purpose of the site is reoriented more toward the immediate community, it is possible that substantially less cars will travel here from far distances. That is both a threat (less customers for businesses) and an opportunity (transforming the transportation infrastructure to increase local multi-modal traffic). The topography on the east side of the site with significant grade changes creates a different, more calm, environment than anywhere else on the site, with shelter from sound, wind and traffic.

Figure 24: Looking north, Costco building to the right. To the left is a steep grade that creates a quiet zone that could be better utilized for intentionally calm areas for people. (Cameron Coronado)

Some of the smaller existing structures appear more likely to fit to a new design, especially on the southeast corner. They orient towards each other in 'conversation', with the middle space acting as an outdoor 'room' where the buildings line the perimeter, creating an internal relationship that could be developed with pedestrian plazas and greenspace instead of only parking lots.

Figure 25: SE corner of The Forum looking south. These buildings have a higher potential of reuse because of their size and orientation. (Google)

Across the site there are clear views to Pilot Butte, which is only a half mile away. Not only could amenities here better celebrate those views, but transportation corridors could connect directly to that state park, linking communities along the way. Several roads or paths along the exterior could be easily adapted to meet for this purpose, or to simply better connect the roads in a coherent network.

Figure 26: Looking east to Pilot Butte from the vacant Costco parking lot, November 2024 (Google)

Adjacent neighborhoods to the north and east contain medium to high-density housing complexes built on regular gridded streets that, if connected, could improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the site for residents. Many people already travel to this site for the various retail locations, making it a well-known and popular location along public bus routes (though service is currently infrequent). Above all, redesigning this site to become a Climate-Friendly Area could inspire further redevelopment along the Highway 20 corridor, thus exponentially expanding the positive climate and equity impacts.

Figure 27: Looking east towards the surrounding apartment buildings. Openings to the site are oriented to cars from the busy streets, not to people or local streets. (Google)

Cultural Assets

Figure 28: Culture map of Bend, with a 1-mile radius drawn around The Forum

In the context of the city, the Eastside has relatively few cultural assets (Figure 28). Casting a one-mile radius around The Forum, there are a handful of parks, but none have safe direct paths for getting there. There is also a bowling alley, which would require crossing Highway 20. The only substantial assets are two identity-based non-profit centers, the Central Oregon Collective and the Latino Community Association. The East Bend Library Branch, the only indoor public gathering place for this area, is closing in December 2024. Eastside residents would benefit from more options for cultural pursuits, community gathering spaces, and improved access to the spaces they already have.

Internal	**Strengths** • Large site can contain multiple uses • Already a hub of activity with essential services that makes it a well-known location which many people travel to • Structures with potential for reuse • Some mature trees • Interesting elevation changes • Already leveled, and engineering in place for retaining walls and slopes • East/west road bifurcates at a logical place	**Weaknesses** • Unwalkable, no pedestrian connection • Majority of land for parking • Mostly commercial chain retailers • No gathering/activity uses, no public space • Nondescript commercial architecture • Buildings far apart • Loud, busy traffic with poor visibility • Plants on site may not be fit for ecology • Minimal shade • CG zoning allows for this type of development
External	**Opportunities** • Medium/high density residential around site • Amenities needed on east side of Bend • Costco leaving will likely result in less outsider traffic in/around site • Proximity to St. Charles Hospital, and community non-profits • Logical street network logical to connect to • Pilot Butte proximity/views • Recent development in Bend shows a willingness for new ideas	**Threats** • Limited public transit to and from site • Potential of displacing surrounding residents if site improved w/o significant housing added • Fast traffic on Highway 20 with heavy trucks • Unsafe or absent pedestrian crossings • No safe connecting bike paths • Climate: increasing heat, drought, smoke • Removal of Costco could weaken viability of other businesses (and jobs) left behind • Closing of East Bend Library = no public spaces

Figure 29: SWOT analysis of The Forum summarizing existing conditions

Design Proposal

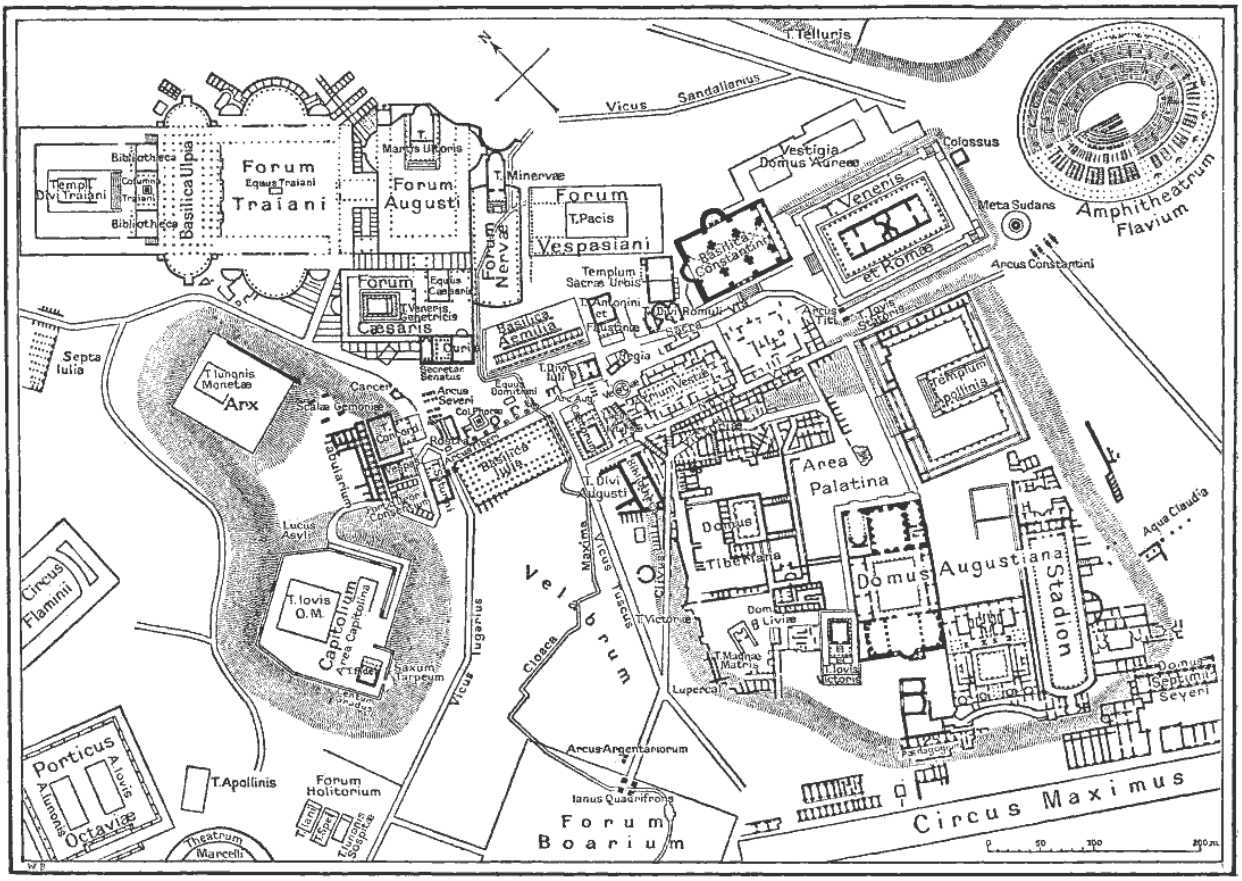

Figure 30: Map of downtown Rome during the Roman Empire (Wikimedia Commons)

Think of some spaces today that are vibrant and engaging where you feel connected to your community. What specific elements make that place special? In consideration of the history of development at this site, we invite you to begin at the idea of a forum. Forums are gathering places that have been central to the design of human settlements since ancient times. A forum was a public meeting place, a marketplace, and a place to exchange ideas and connect with community. There were markets, public squares and facilities, places of worship and entertainment.

It may be a kind of marketplace, but The Forum otherwise fails to live up to its namesake. There is an ironic disconnect between the name and the experience of the place. It is not a place to gather, celebrate, worship, or entertain. It is simply a place to drive to in a car alone or in small groups, to acquire specific commodities, and to return home to one's private residence. Our proposal keeps the name "The Forum" as a guide and aims to create a place that truly embodies the identity of a forum; to be a place designed to bring people together.

Vision

Our vision is that this reimagined Forum will enable a complete community to flourish in the heart of Eastside Bend, where residents' basic needs can be met and spaces for home, work, and play are all nearby. The Forum will feature accessible, mixed-used, connective public spaces that are flexible, welcoming, and authentic to Bend's identity as well as supportive of its goals.

Placemaking Strategies

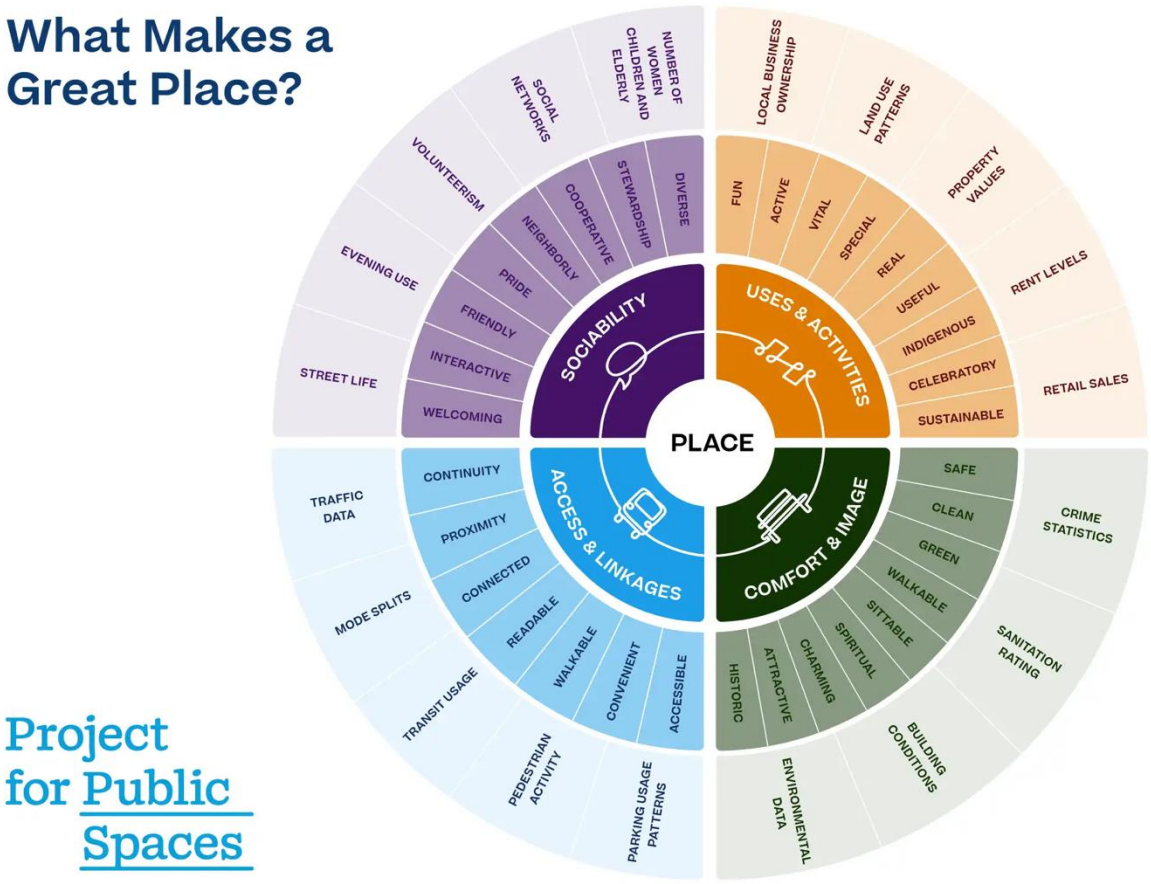

Figure 31: "The Place Diagram" (Project for Public Space)

The Place Diagram, developed by the Project for Public Spaces, is a tool used to evaluate the success of public spaces. It consists of three concentric rings: the innermost ring represents key placemaking attributes (sociability, uses and activities, access and linkages, and comfort and image), the middle ring represents intangible qualities about a place (such as safety, cleanliness, and the presence of people), and the outer ring represents measurable data (like pedestrian counts and economic performance). Using this diagram, our team focused on key placemaking tactics in our design proposal to enhance the quality of urban life through public spaces:

1. **Mixed-Use Development**: Creating dynamic, multifunctional spaces where people can live, work, shop, and socialize, fostering a vibrant and cohesive community.
2. **Affordable Housing Options**: Ensuring diverse and inclusive communities, allowing people of all income levels to live, work, and participate in civic life. A generous quantity of housing also buffers against displacement from gentrification.
3. **Streets as Places**: Designing streets to be more than just thoroughfares for vehicles by adding pedestrian-friendly features like wide sidewalks, ground floor commercial space, public seating, and greenery.
4. **Community Engagement**: Involving local residents in the development process to ensure that the space meets their needs and reflects their desires, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.

Downtown Bend, OR

Figure 32: Downtown Bend at Wall St. and Minnesota Ave. (Visit Bend)

In a local context, historic downtown Bend exemplifies successful placemaking strategies, creating an active, vibrant, and walkable environment. The area is visually appealing with its diverse architecture and abundant trees. Designed with people in mind, it offers human-scale design and a variety of activities, fostering a strong sense of community and making it an attractive location for both residents and businesses. Downtown Bend boasts over 200 unique shops and restaurants, housing, and public spaces, showcasing the area's potential for vibrant community life (Visit Central Oregon). Travel guides highlight its combination of natural beauty, history, and culture, offering activities for all seasons, including festivals, parades, tours, and farmer's markets, along with fine dining and nightlife (AllTrips, n.d.). Cultural events such as gallery walks, museum tours, and performances further enhance its appeal, demonstrating effective placemaking in action.

Established near the turn of the last century, downtown Bend's development reflects historic trends with compact, mixed-use buildings on a legible grid, close to prime river access. The design prioritizes pedestrian transportation, ensuring walkable access to essential errands. The block structure is easy to navigate, offering multiple routes and a sense of security for pedestrians with buildings close to the sidewalk. Incredibly, all that cultural richness, variety of activity, and activity fits into roughly the same 35 acres as we have available at The Forum.

Figure 33: Comparison: Downtown Bend and The Forum

Proposal Details

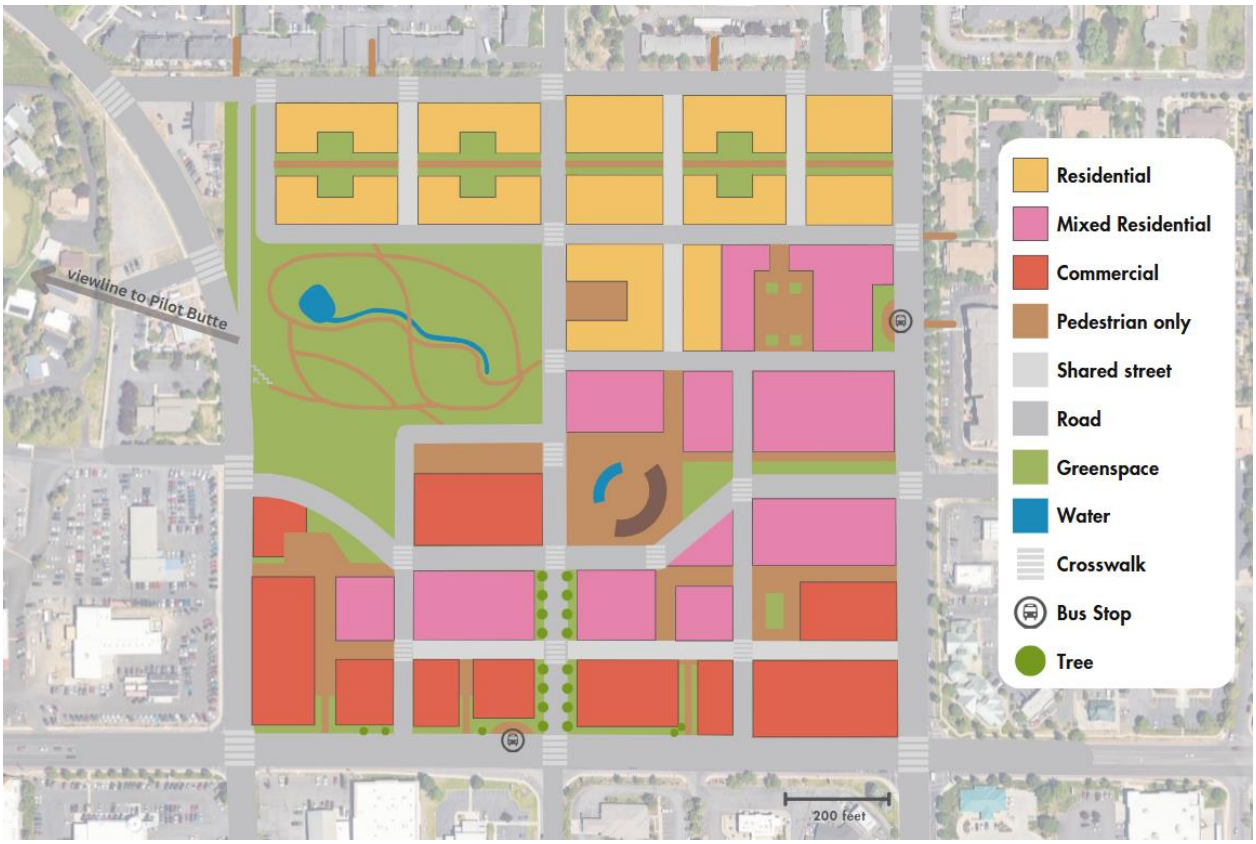

Figure 34: Public Space Placemaking: Site Design Proposal Map

Figure 34 represents our final design proposal. Our design formulates open space as "public rooms" where plazas ground the surrounding multi-story buildings around a coherent "center", supporting community connection and space for outdoor dining, markets, and other events or programming. These different zones are unique and identifiable from within the site, offering different flavors of experience to the user. At the same time, each space would be welcoming and useful to all, especially of all ages, abilities, and incomes. This especially true for the generous allocation of housing, for which a substantial portion should be

Features throughout the site connect users to unique aspects of Bend's identity. The natural park is an urban respite, offering an opportunity for the public to engage with the native ecology of the high desert, including a stream and pond (that now lies buried underground). From the plazas there are views to Pilot Butte; upper terraces and rooftops could also take advantage of the view. The rest of the landscaping at the site would prioritize climate-resilient species. Architecture would support a sense of place by using local materials like pine or stone and feature local design styles.

The design would move away from a car-centric place to a human-centric place. This design proposal is organized so that commercial buildings block the sights and sounds of Highway 20 and 27th Street, while creating a closer relationship to those streets. Connection to the adjacent neighborhoods would be strengthened by adding or improving crosswalks to the perimeter of the site and creating a network of bike- and pedestrian-only paths. In addition to the bus island on the south side of the site along Highway 20, this design encourages mobility and transportation beyond the use of a car (see Appendix D for more details on how to transform Highway 20). Together this would add more clarity to where cars travel, slow down traffic, and free up space for use by *people*.

Use of Space

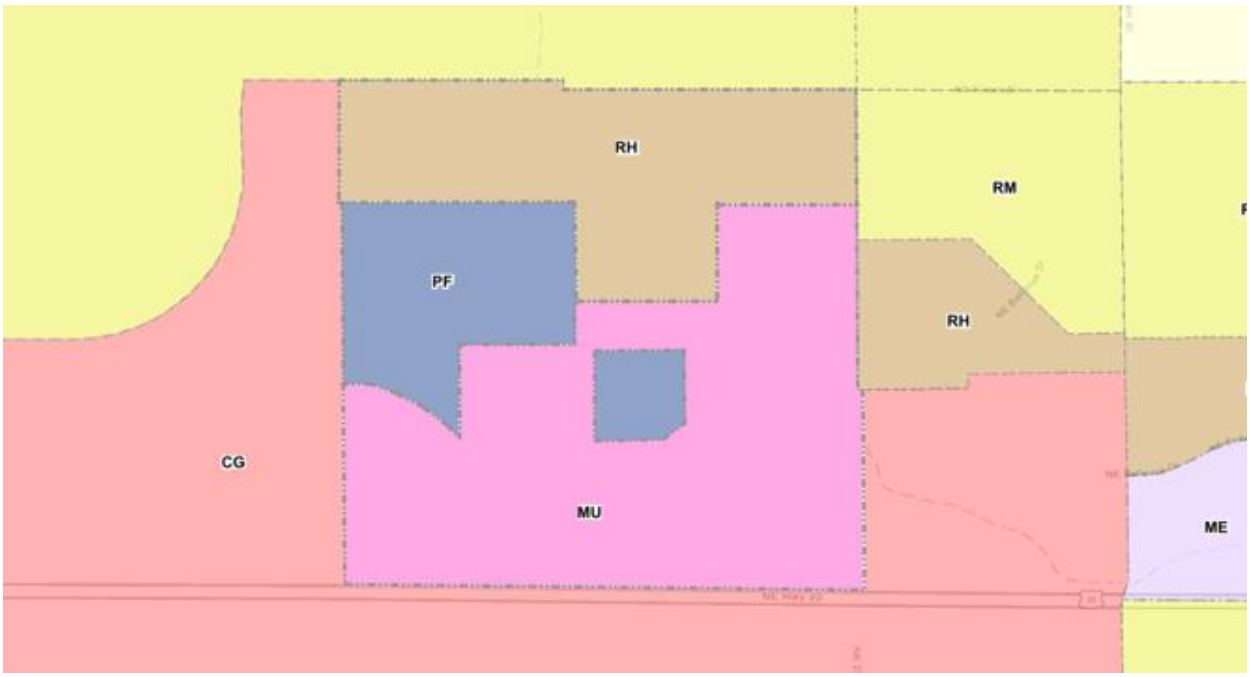

Figure 35: Proposed Zoning Changes Site Map

Zoning

To encourage denser development with a closer relationship to the street, all areas with commercial use in our proposal will be zoned Mixed Use. Along the north is a section of High Residential, to ensure dense housing, and to create a transition zone from Medium Residential to the north. This transition reflects the zone pattern seen to the east of the site. Importantly, you can see (in blue) that parks and open space are central to this design. The center blue square may stand out– any strong community core is surrounded with people and activity, which is why we designed this plaza to be surrounded by mixed use development. There are places where such plazas are privately owned, but our team highly recommends that this plaza to be a true publicly owned place to ensure equitable access.

Currently, the entire area is zoned General Commercial (CG). The Bend Development Code (BDC) defines CG is as: “a broad mix of commercial uses that have large site requirements, are oriented to the higher classification roadways and provide services to the entire City and surrounding area.” Mixed use development, where commercial and residentials uses combine, is permissible under the CG zone type. In addition, all types of commercial uses, including industrial uses under 5,000 sq. ft., are permissible. The maximum allowable building height for a CG building, with residential uses above the ground floor, is 65 feet. There are no other requirements for lot coverage, building size, or residential density aside from allowances for adjacent residential zones like additional setback requirements (BDC 2.2). Ultimately, to keep the CG zoning would allow for redevelopment with parking, setbacks, and pedestrian amenities similar to the existing layout. If the city wants to move away from this urban typology in this area, a zone change will be necessary.

MU zones, on the other hand, are “intended to provide opportunities for vibrant mixed-use centers” with “a variety of commercial and residential uses” that encourage “a pedestrian-friendly environment” (BDC 2.3.100). The rezoning recommendations included in this proposal diversify and intensify the use of the space overall, thereby retaining approximately the same amount of space available for mixed-use and commercial as is currently in use as CG.

Land Use

For our design proposal we have calculated the area covered by each major use type – commercial, residential, and public land – to better understand the use of space (Table 1). This is measured based on the specific building footprints as indicated in Figure 34. There is roughly 12.5 acres for ground commercial, 12 acres for residential, 6 acres for the park, and 10.5 acres for plazas, streets, paths, and smaller greenspaces. That means there is a total 16.5 acres, or 47%, dedicated to public open space, if one considers streets to fit that category.

	MU Commercial	MU Vertical Mixed	RH High Density Res.	PF Public Park	PF Public Plaza	Streets, Paths & Greenspace
Acres	6	6.5	6	6	1	9.5
% of Total Acres (35)	17%	19%	17%	17%	3%	27%

Table 1: Distribution of acreage for design proposal, based on building footprints.

Housing

Considering the combined 12.5-acre footprint for housing (RH and MU vertical mixed use with ground retail), the assumption of an average unit size of 1,000 square feet, and 10% allowance for walls and shared space, this design provides for a maximum of 2,936 units if the maximum building heights –equal to six stories – were used (Table 2). Considering the average household size in the area is about 2 people, this translates to housing for approximately 6,000 people. We made additional calculations based on a three-story building height. However, according to minimum zoning standards, this design only requires about 126 units (21.7 units on 6 acres). If the city wants to ensure a denser housing typology, it will need to work with a developer who shares the same vision, create a master planned area, or otherwise alter residential zoning minimums.

Zone Type	Min Density Units/Acre	Max Density	Max Height	Acre Footprint	Total Units Max (6 floors)	Total Units Min (3 floors)
RH	21.7	n/a	60ft*	6	1409	705
MU (residential)	n/a	n/a	75ft	6.5	1527	763
			Totals	12.5	2936	1468

Table 2: Housing zone attributes and calculations for units, based on RH and MU building footprints

**10ft must be allocated to affordable housing*

Street Network

In Figure 36, dark gray represents more "conventional" streets where cars have dedicated lanes, cyclists may share those lanes or have dedicated lines at the margins, and pedestrians stay to the sidewalks. In contrast, light gray represents shared streets where pedestrians have priority. Sometimes called 'woonerfs' after their popular use in the Netherlands, these commonly feature narrow brick-laid surfaces, parking, greenery, and buildings with a close relationship to the street.

If all the internal streets, Forum Drive, and Purcell Blvd. were to have on-street parking on both sides, this site could accommodate about 4 miles of linear parking space, or over 1,000 angled parking spots. Developers would have the option of adding below ground parking or a parking garage, if they deemed the investment worthwhile. Overall, the design allows for an adequate

amount of parking, especially if the Eastside were holistically redeveloped with other transportation options made viable via strong multi-modal connections to other areas of town.

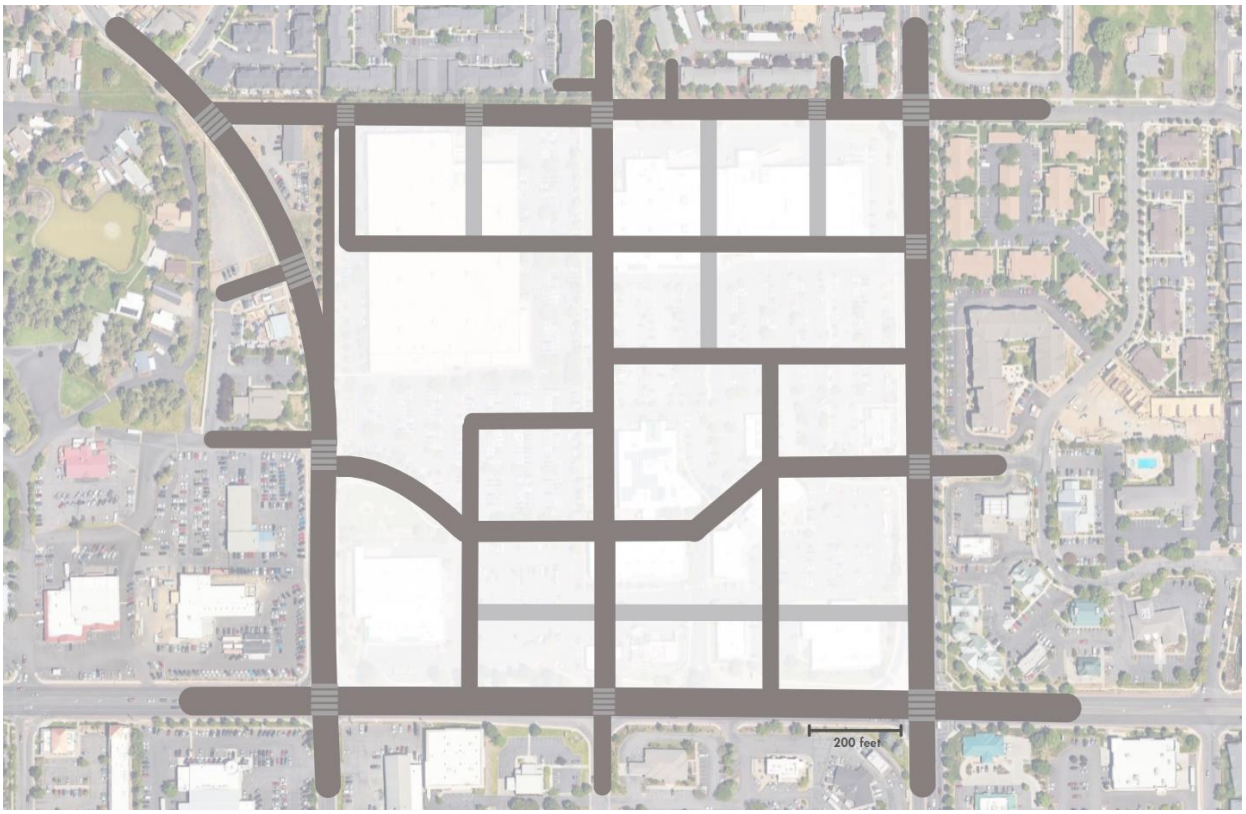

Figure 36: Proposed street network

Figure 37: Cultural areas within the design, shaped by the built environment

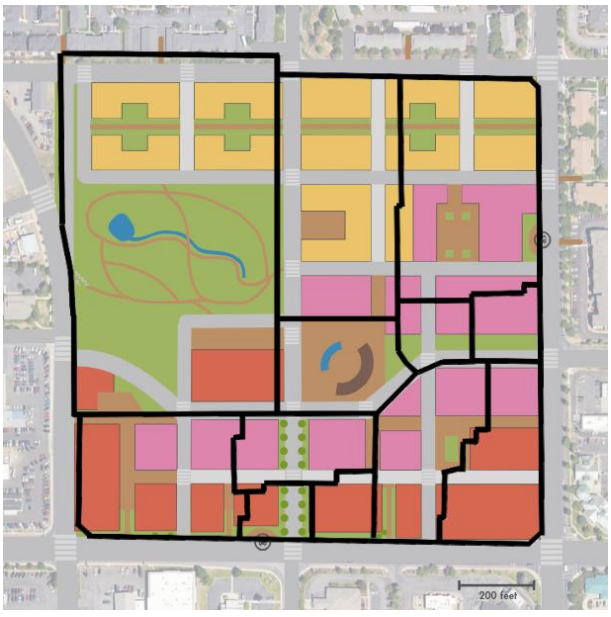

Figure 38: Proposed design with existing parcel boundaries overlaid

“Places within a Place”

The gradient of land use and the street structure naturally provides unique identities within the site. The north side is the most removed from the busy roads, and thus would make for a safe, calm residential area. The public park abuts the residential area, providing necessary open space to accommodate the density of people. Some ground floor commercial space begins on the east side of the park, maintaining the quiet environment of the residential area and providing amenities like a day care, library, or yoga studio. The southern area will house the busier mixed-use and commercial space. The southeast corner could provide for everyday errands, like a grocery store, post office, and pharmacy. We imagine the southwest corner as a hub of arts and entertainment, with bars, galleries, and a music venue (Figure 37).

These quadrants mostly follow existing parcel boundaries (Figure 38), so it is feasible to achieve this redevelopment in phases without radically disrupting how the community currently uses this site. The following pages elaborate on how each region could look on the ground, with inspiration taken from real places across the world that demonstrate effective use of placemaking strategies.

Plazas

Figure 39: Old St. Francis School, Bend OR

Figure 40. Heritage Square, Flagstaff AZ

Figure 41. Findlay Market, Cincinnati OH

Figure 42. Midtown Plaza, Carmel IN

At the center of the design is a generous public plaza with ample seating, and a water feature. The plaza is positioned as an outdoor 'room'. One of the “windows” is a direct sightline to Pilot Butte, which is an important landmark that anchors the experience of this place within the landscape. We’ve placed several smaller public plazas and pedestrian-only streets throughout the Forum, adding flexible space for programming and connection as people.

Marketplace

Figure 43. Denver, CO

Figure 44. The Yard, Salem OR

Figure 45. Granville Station Market, Vancouver BC

Figure 46. Grand Central Market, Los Angeles CA

Another community space to point out is the large building west of the plaza. This is designed to be an indoor marketplace with semi-permanent vendors and space outside for temporary markets or dining. A few notable examples of such public markets include the Granville Station Market in Vancouver BC, the Grand Central Market in LA, and the West Side Market in Cleveland. Typically showcasing a multitude of local vendors arts, crafts, and practical goods, as well as produce from area farms and regional cuisine, the public market has been an intrinsic aspect of city life for millennia, and inseparable from the concept of a forum. For example, one of the legendary public markets in Palermo, Sicily, 'La Vucciria' has been in operation for centuries, so long that exact dates are unknown. Its name translates to 'many voices', or 'hubbub', in reference to the lively and dynamic atmosphere of the place (City of Palermo, n.d.).

Park Space

Figure 47. Ponderosa Park, Bend OR

Figure 48. 103rd St. Community Garden, NYC

Figure 49. Hidden Creek Park West, Hillsboro OR

Figure 50. Square des Batignolles, Paris FR

Our proposed park incorporates Bend's native ecology and adds opportunities for exercise, play and engagement for people of all ages and abilities. We really felt that adding water back into this site was important, as a stream used to be here before it was buried underground. The actual layout is a roughly to-scale replica of one of the Square des Batignolles in Paris, which, in just over 4 acres, offers a tranquil meandering path to a pond, two playgrounds, a small carousel, an architectural folly, dog park, and chess tables. While not as common in Oregon, a density of services in this size area is possible and would provide a rich array of amenities capable of serving the density we're suggesting for The Forum.

Bend's Parks and Recreation District 2024 Comprehensive Plan identified this specific area of the Eastside as a high priority for a new park, which requires acquisition of new land to develop.

Housing

Figure 51. The Standard, Flagstaff AZ

Figure 52. Vauban, Germany

Figure 53. Putnam Point and Lofts, Bend OR

Figure 54. Echo Street West, Atlanta GA

For housing, we envision a mix of mid- to high-density buildings with interesting architecture and safe surroundings. This plan could add between 1500 to 3000 housing units, providing much needed housing for up to about 6,000 people. Putting housing in proximity to public spaces, important amenities, and connective transportation networks ensures that residents have access to the resources they need to thrive. A variety of housing options for single residents, large and small families, and people of all income levels would set the stage for a diverse community and help balance inequities. Ensuring that residents of all income levels have access to high-quality public amenities would enhance the quality of life for lower-income individuals, alleviating some of the challenges associated with financial insecurity. Additionally, higher-income residents would enjoy a rich array of cultural opportunities within a diverse and vibrant community, which are often less accessible in suburban areas.

Streets and Pathways

Figure 55. Groningen, Netherlands

Figure 56. Somerville MA

Figure 57. Lafayette Crossing, Fate TX

Figure 58. Copenhagen, Denmark

This community is knitted together by multi-modal roads, with options for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Scaling the design for people, rather than cars, doesn't negate access for cars but it does mean that drivers must be considerate to ensure safety. The adage, "life is about the journey, not the destination" suits our intentions for this legible grid of connectivity. More than just access ways; roads, plazas and pathways in this proposal are public spaces in and of themselves, with opportunities for greenery, gatherings, public art, programmed entertainment and spontaneous socialization. Major streets create connections between the neighborhoods on either side. Smaller pathways between the streets invite residents in from these neighborhoods to enjoy the many destinations within the area or efficiently access goods, services, and employment opportunities.

Arts and Culture

Figure 59. Scottsdale, AZ

Figure 60. Bend, OR

Figure 61. Museum at Warm Springs

Figure 62. Bend, OR

There is room for art in all our public spaces. Art grounds public spaces in a greater identity. A community's culture and heritage can be represented through public art, events, and programming. It can be a mechanism for collaborative public participation in the creation of place.

Low Impact Alternative

This low impact alternative retains key elements of our team's primary proposal while reusing more of the existing buildings on the site. This alternative would involve changing the zoning on this site to mixed-use and constructing a more legible street grid with shorter block lengths. This option allows for a simpler zoning change – from fully general commercial to fully mixed-use (MU). However, this will also reduce the total number of residential units that could be built on this site compared to our primary plan since it would not include high density residential zoning, and there is a less overall residential footprint.

In the Northwest corner parcel, this alternative approach retains the Costco building. The building would be divided with a food market in the north, and a plaza in the center. The south side of the Coscto building could become an indoor recreation center with room for a roller rink, concert venues, and indoor rock climbing. A smaller park is created beneath the former Costco building, still allowing for multiple compact uses and preserving the view to Pilot Butte.

In the Southwest corner, existing strip mall buildings get divided up for use by smaller local businesses with entrances added to face new external plazas. In the southwest corner, additional commercial structures can be added to density the existing commercial space and create more walkable retail areas. These commercial buildings will also orient towards internal pedestrian plazas, and wide streets can be designed to allow for on-street parking.

In the Northeast corner, Safeway will stay in its current location. "Donut" parking can preserve parking space while hiding it from major streets. A series of pedestrian-only paths will allow for safe, enjoyable travel throughout the site.

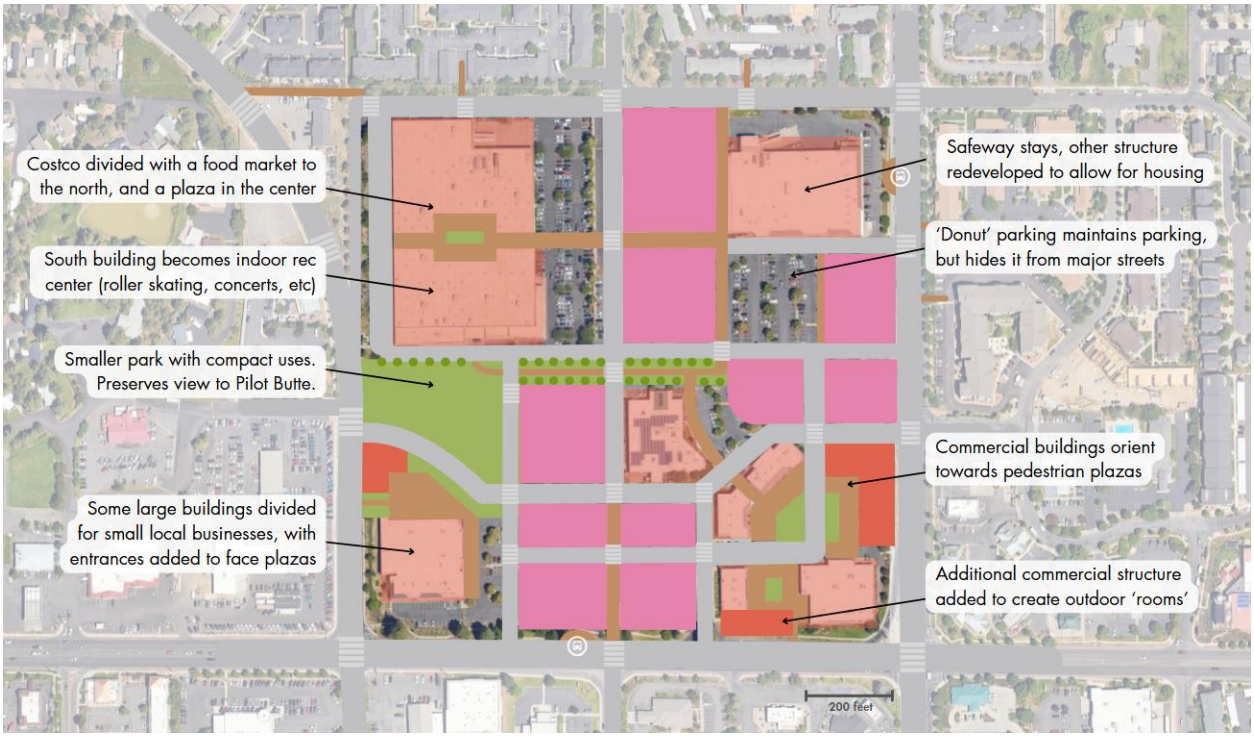

Figure 63. Low-Impact Alternative Proposal Site Map

Implementation Strategies

Recognizing Community Engagement

This site is being designed for the community and thus the design must be informed by the community. We can propose a site redevelopment plan that we think will best suit the needs of the Eastside community, but if that community ultimately feels excluded from or does not connect with the implemented design, even the best plan will be unsuccessful. Placemaking research tells us that designing for people, with people, is how to create a long-lasting, adaptable, resilient place.

For this redevelopment project, it is critical to meet community members where they are at. Keeping in mind that this community is primarily lower-income families, it will be important to provide food, transportation, and childcare to encourage participation. Additionally, because the Eastside has a larger Hispanic- and Latino-identifying population, providing engagement materials in both English and Spanish will likely improve overall response rates.

Engagement priorities:

1. Commit to an iterative process.
2. Prioritize engagement of underrepresented voices.
3. Create opportunities for community members to be in decision-making roles.
4. Nurture a sense of community ownership in the process.
5. Engage with the intent to build trust and understanding.
6. Provide clarity and transparency throughout the process.

Engagement can be led by the City of Bend Planning Commission with support from other relevant city advisory boards, committees, and commissions outlined in Bend Municipal Code Chapter 1.20. We recognize that the City of Bend has already conducted citizen participation and consultation processes for many other projects (e.g. for the 2023 - 2027 Consolidated Plan). Therefore, we recommend ensuring that the engagement process proposed here is implemented in alignment with any other established City of Bend community engagement plans.

Implementation Process

To bring this design proposal to life, we have identified the following implementation process:

Figure 64. Implementation Phasing

Phase 1 (2025 – 2026)

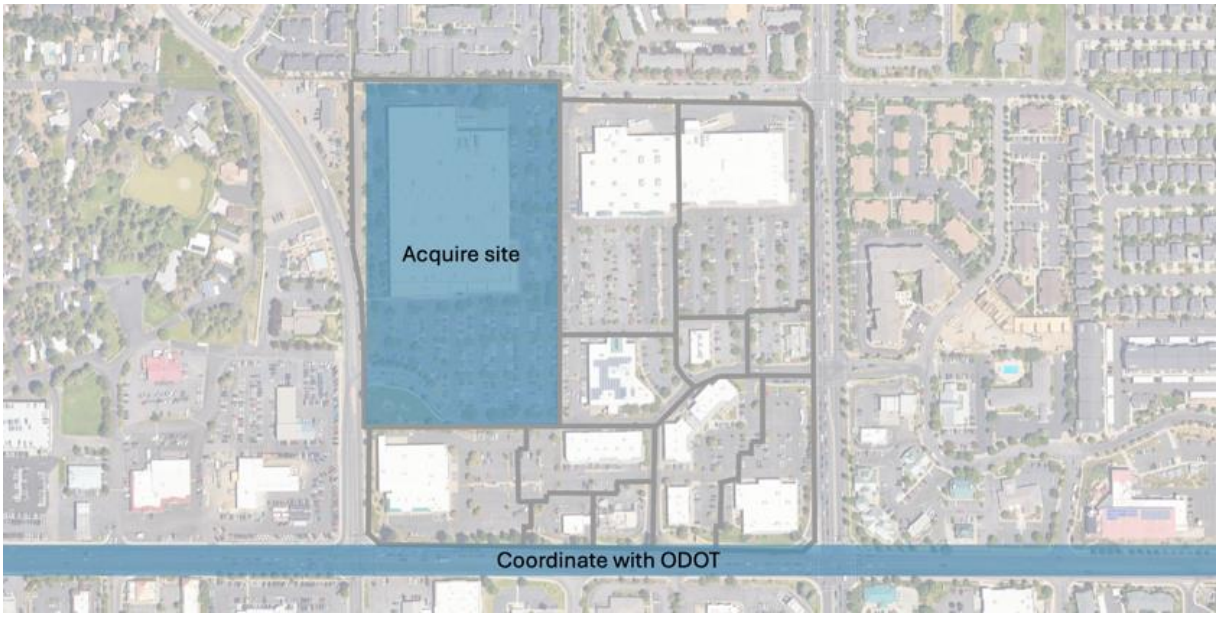

Figure 65. Implementation Phase 1 with parcel lots outlined in gray.

In Phase 1, the city should focus on planning and preparation for this redevelopment. It begins with the City Council designating the Eastside CFA in 2025 and making any necessary coding and zoning changes to allow for planned mixed-use development. The City of Bend Planning Commission should prioritize redevelopment of the Forum as a first step toward achieving CFEC goals in the area. It is logical to focus initial development of the Forum in this NW corner because Costco recently vacated this parcel, leaving it underutilized and unlikely to sell given the challenges of the parcel (in particular, how large the building is). City should acquire the Northwest parcel of the Forum (which is the former Costco site – see Figure 65).

After the NW parcel has been acquired, the city should prepare the site for Phase 2 which involves building affordable housing and a park on the parcel. This means that the city should put out a request for proposal for an affordable housing developer, like Kôr Community Land Trust. Bend's 2023 Anti-Displacement Report states, "Within a CFA, the city could take specific steps to publicly purchase vacant or underutilized sites in order use them for affordable housing." While the term 'land banking' tends to imply that these will be saved or preserved for future use, the housing crisis in Bend is an immediate problem. Acquiring sites as quickly as possible would be ideal. These sites could be sold for the cost of titling using the city's Surplus Land Program, or some combination of tax exemptions and system development waivers available within the city's Affordable Housing Program could be applied as incentives. Doing so would ensure that "groups at risk of displacement within a designated CFA would have the option of remaining within their neighborhood, even if the land values within a CFA rise" (City of Bend, 2023). The City Parks and Recreation Department should also prepare to establish a public park on the south half of this parcel. Finally, the city should contact the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and begin collaborating on traffic calming measures along major external roads, like Highway 20.

Phase 1 Community Engagement

Community engagement should kick off immediately after designating the Eastside CFA in Phase 1 This initial engagement would involve identifying neighborhood associations (such as Larkspur and Mountain View Neighborhood Districts), business associations (such as the Bend Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Bend Business Association, and the Oregon Small Business Development

Center Network), affordable housing organizations (like the Foundation for Affordable Housing, Thistle & Nest, RootedHomes, and Thrive Central Oregon), and other local community groups (like Central Oregon Collective, Latino Community Association, and Bend YIMBY). It will also be beneficial to meet with business owners and employees who currently work in the Forum.

Public meetings can be held to discuss redevelopment plans, gather initial input, and build relationships. During these meetings, trusted representatives from the community can be identified for further engagement in future phases. This phase may include putting up flyers in and around the project site, tabling at the entrance of stores onsite and at various community events and plugging into existing community group meetings or communications (like sending surveys in a local newsletter or presenting at a monthly neighborhood meeting).

Phase 2 (2027 – 2029)

Figure 66. Implementation Phase 2

Phase 2 marks the beginning of city-led construction and would be a good time to create a public page on the city's website for the project. The city should take the lead in building primary North/South and East/West roads within the Forum, and the Parks department should develop the park. At the same time, a developer should build affordable housing - an estimated 250–500 units of affordable housing could be built during this phase in the Northwest corner parcel. Traffic calming measures should be implemented along major external roads, which will likely be the result of a collaborative effort between the City of Bend and ODOT. It is critical to preserve Safeway (one of the only grocery stores in Eastside Bend) throughout the development process so that residents can meet their basic grocery needs even during construction.

Our proposal includes an indoor marketplace in the southeast corner of this parcel as an integral piece of public community space. The city could construct this marketplace, or the city could partner with a private developer to build it.

Phase 2 Community Engagement

Moving into Phase 2, a community advisory group should be established with representatives from key stakeholder groups. This advisory group will help guide the redevelopment process by informing design, community need, desired amenities, and programming. The city and developers

on this site should consult with this group on decisions throughout the development through more targeted surveys, focus groups, or design charettes. This phase will involve less general awareness-building than Phase 1 and will instead focus on deeper, more intensive feedback and iteration processes.

Phase 3

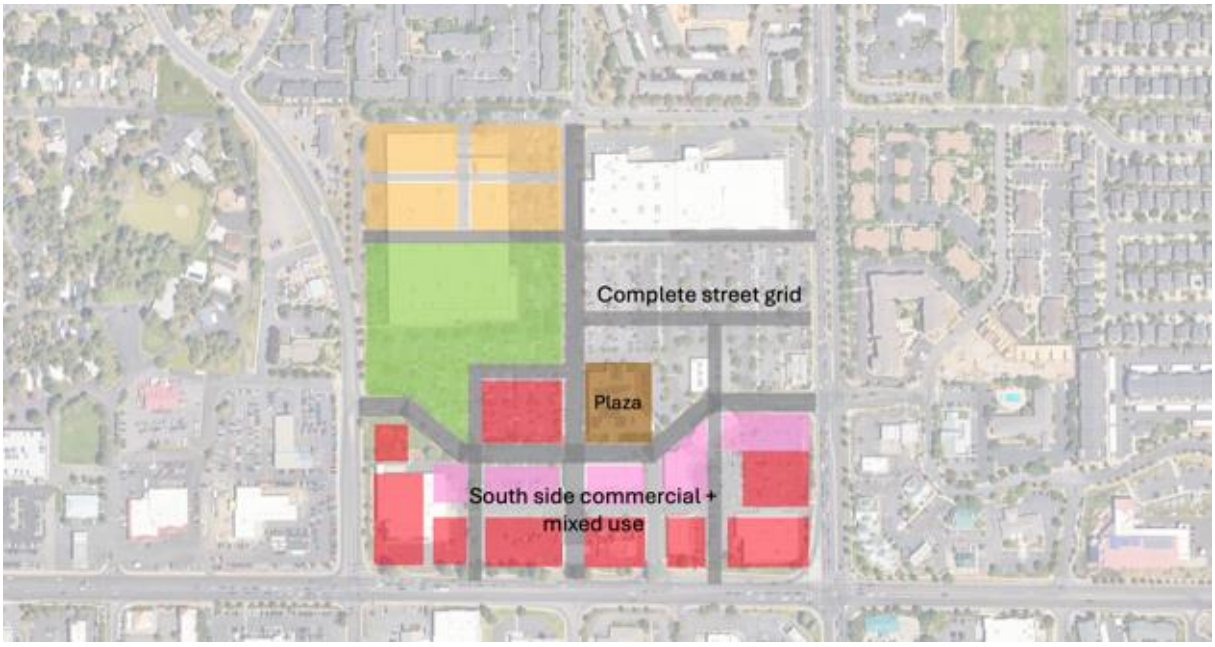

Figure 67. Implementation Phase 3.1

Phase 3 covers the rest of the redevelopment of the Forum and is when the city will hand over construction responsibilities to developers. The city (or developers, with support from the city) should build shared roads to complete the grid throughout the Forum. The city can explore and establish public-private partnerships to ensure support for this project and offer incentives for developers to continue development of the Forum as a complete community. Specifically, the city could utilize its Affordable Housing Fund, Community Development Block Grant program, expedited permitting, and tax and systems development charge exemptions to support mixed-use, higher-density, multi-unit residential construction on this site.

We recommend prioritizing redevelopment of the South side of the Forum after the Northwest redevelopment. This approach will give residents in the NW corner a break from construction pollutants and noise. Phase 3.1 will focus on filling in mixed-use and commercial space on the South side of the site, with the possibility to retain several existing commercial buildings and thus reduce total cost and time needed for development. Building the central plaza would also be beneficial at this stage to further embed these important central public spaces.

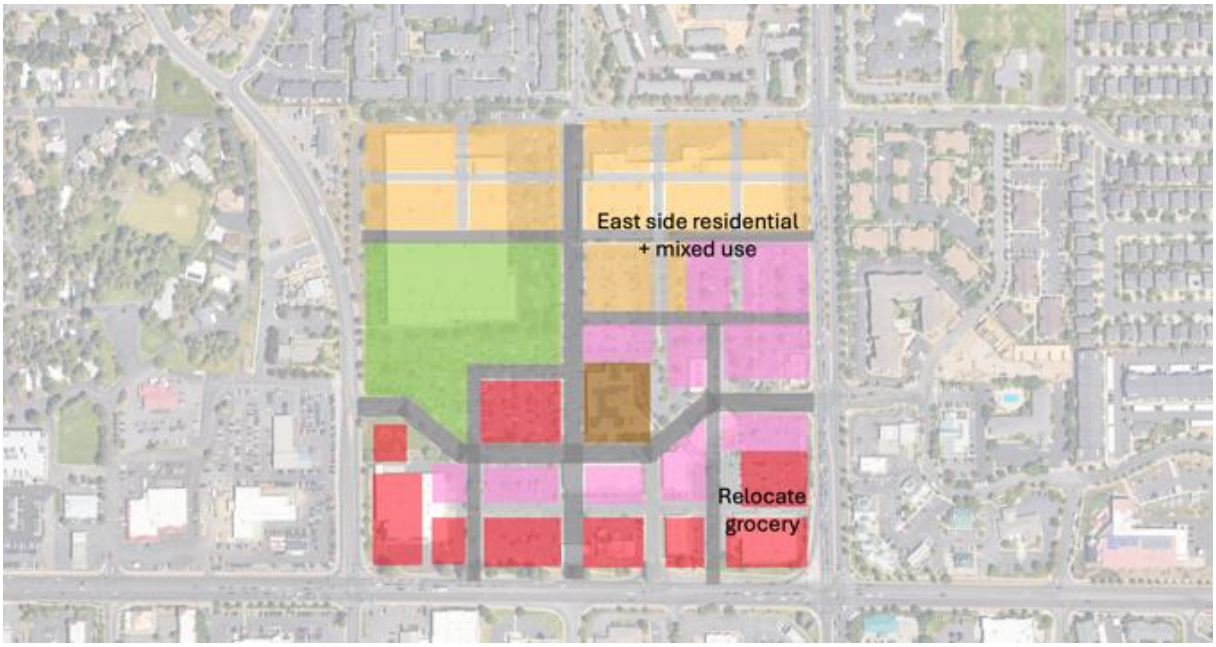

Figure 68. Implementation Phase 3.2

Then Northeast side construction can follow in Phase 3.2, adding more high-density residential and mixed-use development until the Forum is completed.

Phase 3 Community Engagement

In Phase 3, a long-term community engagement plan for The Forum should be formalized. This could be achieved in many ways – our team has summarized two options below that might be suitable for this project:

1. **Collaborate on a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)**. CBAs are legal agreements between community groups and developers, outlining specific items that a developer agrees to fund or provide in exchange for community support of a development project. "Benefits can include commitments to hire directly from a community, contributions to economic trust funds, local workforce training guarantees and more." CBAs can be powerful tools for local government, since they need support from constituencies, and developers need government support for things like zoning approvals, "developers have clear incentives to accommodate community interests. When synergistic development models like CBAs are employed, developers experience reduced risk and communities' profit from improved cost/benefit positions. Thus, CBAs are mutually-reinforcing, since all three stakeholder groups gain, albeit uniquely" (U.S., n.d.).
2. **Establish a permanent "community hub" space within the Forum**. This means first identifying a suitable central space within the redeveloped Forum and potentially land banking the space for future generations of community members. The city and developers could collectively fund an upfront grant to help community members get the hub up and running. Once the community center is established, it can become a vibrant, adaptable, and valuable resource for everyone in the community.

Note that none of these long-term engagement options are mutually exclusive – it is possible to implement all these plans in parallel. Ultimately, we recommend deferring to community members as to what kind of long-term engagement plan they would like to see implemented.

Funding Strategies

To meet affordable housing production goals, developers need incentives that make such endeavors profitable. Imbalances in the housing market have driven unsustainable housing development patterns that favor expensive, single-family housing on large lots, resulting in the inequitable distribution of resources that characterizes the current housing crisis.

Providing incentives such as Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE) and system development charge waivers is one strategy that the City has been using to coax developers into creating higher-density, affordable housing. Continuing to offer these programs and administer a multitude of state and federal programs such as Community Development Block Grants and Affordable Housing Tax Credits, is recommended but historical development patterns show they will likely not be sufficient to meet the ambitious goals. The current MUPTE presents a significant disadvantage in respect the fact that it expires after 10 years, at which point there is no compelling reason for landlords not to charge market rates, increasing the percentage of cost-burdened households and the likelihood of displacement for those closest to the poverty line.

Our team has identified a multi-faceted funding strategy for the first phase of the proposal that fits within the city's goals, recommendations, budget priorities, and housing assistance programs.

If the city were to designate the site as a CFA, the city could purchase the Costco parcel under the 'site acquisition' strategy identified in the Anti-Displacement Report. Additionally, the Parks and Recreation General Plan Project 17 has funding earmarked for acquiring parkland in underserved areas. The city would then be able to issue a Request for Proposal for an affordable housing developer, ultimately selling the land that is zoned for housing within the Costco parcel to the developer for the cost of titling under the city's Surplus Land Program. Perhaps conditions could be attached to this transfer of ownership that would require affordable rental rates continue into perpetuity. The developer could avail itself of several assistance programs such as Community Development Block Grants and Affordable and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, as well as foundation grant programs.

The city could initiate Phase 2 of the proposal *and* leave it open for developers to grow into by establishing rights-of-way throughout the entire site and building the roads and shared paths that comprise the grid. The Anti-Displacement Report recommends 'funding offsite infrastructure' to offset the overall cost of development with the intention that those savings would translate to lower rents. Building the roads and shared paths would have significant advantages. The city could build the roads to specifications that prioritize pedestrians and maximize on-street parking. Incorporating many amenities to the roads and shared paths would not only increase the overall quality of the area, but consistent design elements on all the roads and shared paths would also unify the development throughout the phases, the unique characteristics of each parcel, and the style of each developer. It would also establish the layout of the parcels, ensuring that development would proceed according to plan. In other words, establishing rights-of-way and building the roads with amenities and thoughtful, consistent design elements could really tie the room together.

Conclusion

Our proposal establishes a vibrant, community-oriented, mixed-use, high-density residential area in the heart of Eastside Bend, effectively meeting both city goals and community needs. Incorporating a generous mix of affordable and market-rate housing ensures sustained affordability and mitigates future displacement, fostering a stable and inclusive community. The inclusion of ample park space not only promotes recreational opportunities and community interaction but also incentivizes healthy activities, enhancing the overall well-being of residents. Multi-modal paths and improved roadway designs prioritize pedestrian and bicycle access, significantly enhancing connectivity and supporting active transportation. These strengthened connections to other parts of town, coupled with increased smaller commercial spaces, provide robust economic opportunities and resilience for the greater Eastside community.

This proposal aligns seamlessly with Climate-Friendly Area (CFA) requirements, supporting infill development and mitigating urban sprawl. By focusing on placemaking strategies, this proposal improves equity and creates a resilient, connected community. The holistic, place-focused, community-centered approach will make Eastside Bend a model for sustainable urban living.

Our vision for The Forum is to create a complete community where residents can meet their basic needs and enjoy spaces for home, work, and play all within close proximity. This reimagined Forum will feature accessible, mixed-use, connective public spaces that are flexible, welcoming, and authentic to Bend’s identity. By integrating community input and prioritizing public space, our proposal aims to create a resilient and inclusive urban environment that enhances the quality of life for all residents.

Implementing this proposal would not only address the immediate needs of Eastside Bend but would also set a precedent for future urban development in the region. By prioritizing sustainability, inclusivity, and community engagement, we are confident that this redevelopment will serve as a catalyst for positive change, driving economic growth, and fostering a vibrant, cohesive community. This strategic vision ensures that Eastside Bend will thrive as a dynamic, resilient, and equitable urban area, fully aligned with the city's long-term goals and aspirations.

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AI Statement

AI was used in this report to summarize research materials and our team's existing work to develop first drafts of some sections of our report. These drafts were then changed and rewritten thoroughly by our team to produce the final report

Appendix

Appendix A. Demographic Analysis Data

Figure A169. Age Distribution of Census Tract

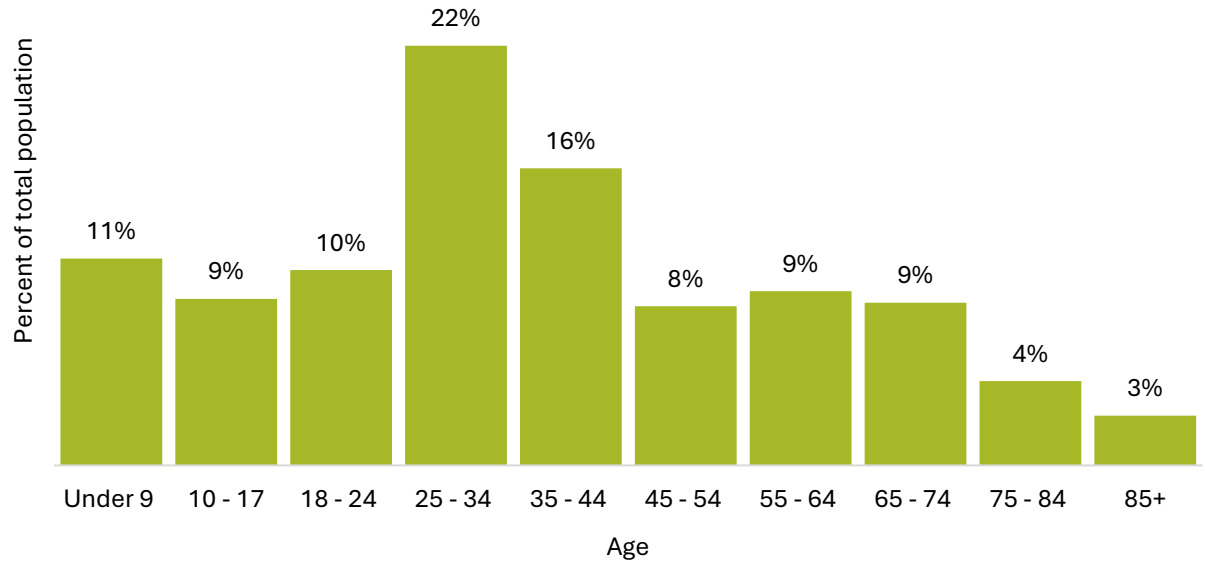


Figure A2. Percent of Families Below the Poverty Line Across Geographies

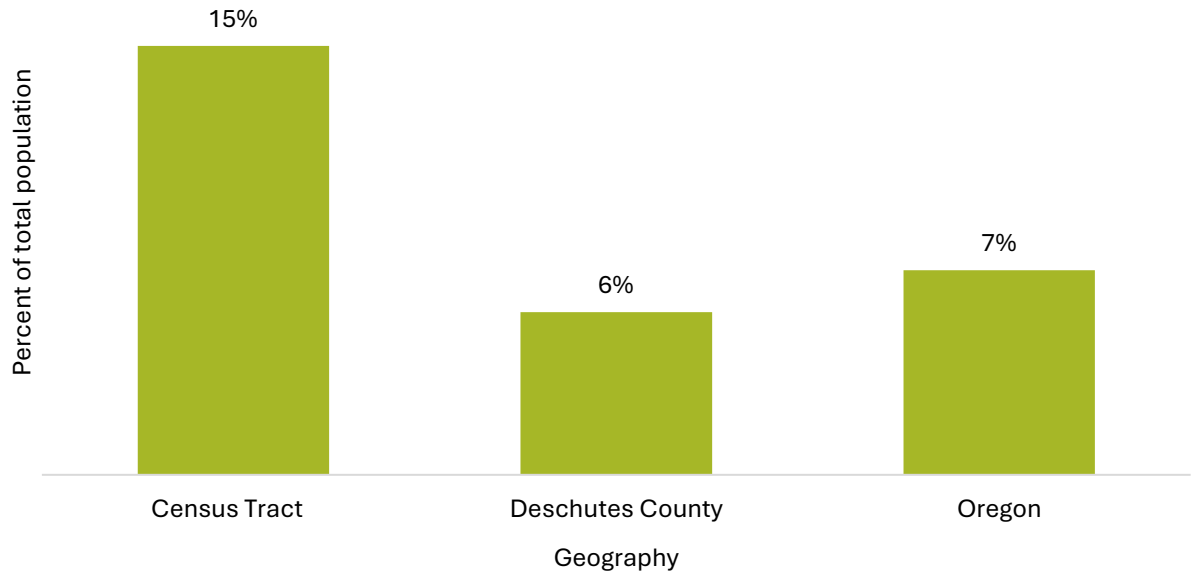
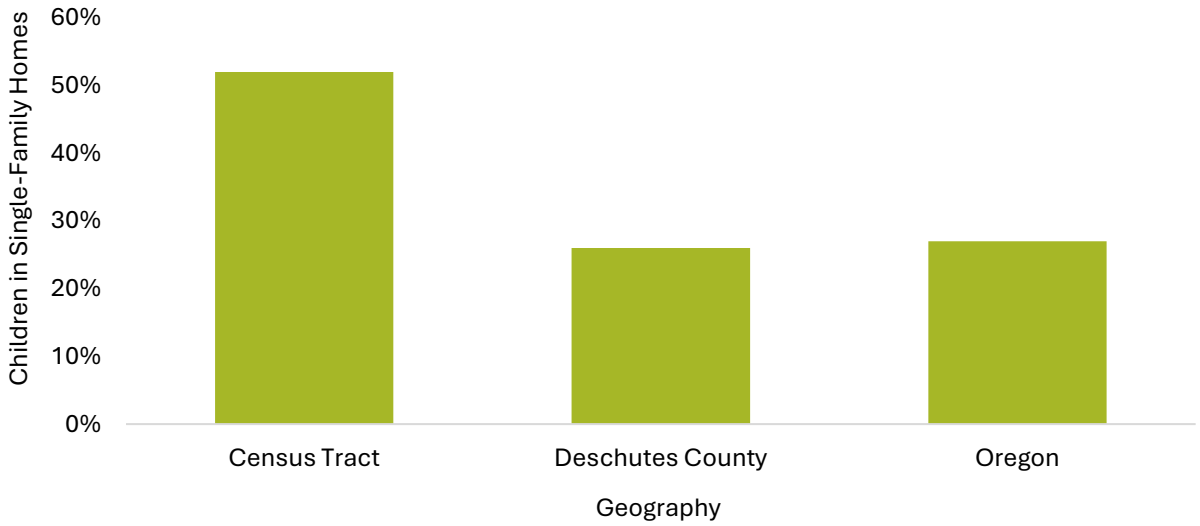


Figure A3. Poverty Rate by Family Type Across Geographies

Family Type	Census Tract	Deschutes County	Oregon
Married Couple With Related Children	5%	1%	2%
Married Couple: No Related Children	0%	2%	2%
Single Male With Related Children	0%	1%	1%
Single Male No Related Children	0%	0%	0%
Female With Related Children	10%	2%	3%
Female No Related Children	0%	0%	1%
Total % of Households Below Poverty Level	**15%**	**6%**	**7%**

Figure A4. Percent of Children in Single-Family Homes Across Geographies



Appendix B. Economic Analysis Data

Figure B1. Shift Share Analysis for Deschutes County 2010 - 2020

Sector	National Growth Rate Component	Industrial Mix Component	Competitive Share Component
Farm employment	167	(195)	5
Nonfarm employment	9,194	166	25,347
Private nonfarm employment	8,282	1,877	23,815
Forestry, fishing, & related activities	78	(14)	122
Mining	32	(112)	62
Utilities	33	(30)	28
Construction	638	825	3,202
Manufacturing	446	(191)	1,834
Wholesale trade	191	(139)	926
Retail trade	1,192	(944)	2,553
Transportation & warehousing	141	757	1,481
Information	187	(175)	362
Finance & insurance	427	167	563
Real estate & rental & leasing	718	394	880
Professional, scientific, & technical services	652	728	2,790
Management of companies & enterprises	35	74	801
Administrative & waste mgmt services	567	140	722
Educational services	146	30	303
Health care & social assistance	1,118	794	3,188
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	319	(485)	927
Accommodation & food services	822	(693)	2,322
Other services, except public administration	540	(130)	1,632
Government & government enterprises	912	(1,106)	927
Federal, civilian	106	(123)	1
Military	46	(87)	60
State & local	760	(873)	843
State government	96	(91)	(9)
Local government	664	(813)	884
Totals	9,361	(314)	25,637
Percent total	27%	-1%	74%

Figure B1 Key:	**National Growth Rate Component**	**Industrial Mix Component**	**Competitive Share Component**
	Greater job growth due to natl. influence	Greater growth rate than natl. avg.	Greater jobs growth due to competition
		Slower growth rate than natl. avg.	

Figure B2. Population and Employment Growth in Deschutes County

	2010	2020	Growth Rate
Population	157,733	198,253	26%
Employment	90,548	125,232	38%

Figure B3. Location Quotients for Deschutes County

Sector	2010	2020
Total employment	1.0	1.0
Wage & salary employment	0.9	0.9
Proprietors employment	1.4	1.4
Farm proprietors employment	1.3	1.1
Nonfarm proprietors employment	1.4	1.4
Farm employment	1.2	0.9
Nonfarm employment	1.0	1.0
Private nonfarm employment	1.1	1.1
Forestry, fishing, & related activities	1.7	1.6
Mining	0.5	0.5
Utilities	1.0	0.9
Construction	1.3	1.5
Manufacturing	0.7	0.8
Wholesale trade	0.6	0.7
Retail trade	1.3	1.2
Transportation & warehousing	0.5	0.6
Information	1.1	1.0
Finance & insurance	0.9	0.8
Real estate & rental & leasing	1.7	1.5
Professional, scientific, & technical services	1.0	1.1
Management of companies & enterprises	0.3	0.7
Administrative & waste mgmt services	1.0	0.9
Educational services	0.7	0.6
Health care & social assistance	1.1	1.1
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	1.6	1.6
Accommodation & food services	1.3	1.3
Other services, except public administration	1.0	1.1
Government & government enterprises	0.7	0.6
Federal, civilian	0.6	0.5
Military	0.4	0.4
State & local	0.7	0.6
State government	0.3	0.3
Local government	0.9	0.8

Figure B3 Key:

Export commodity
Not self-sufficient
Self-sufficient

Appendix C. Housing Analysis Data

Figure C1. Housing Tenure Across Geographies

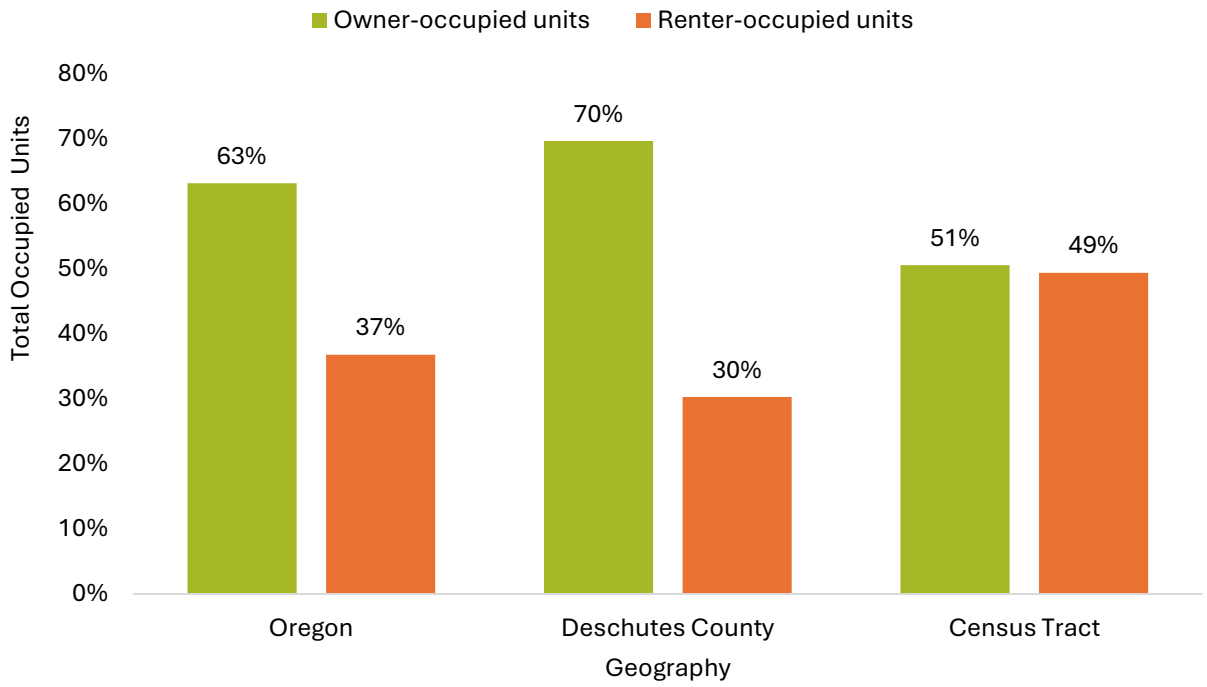


Figure C2. Housing Units Per Structure: County vs. Census Tract

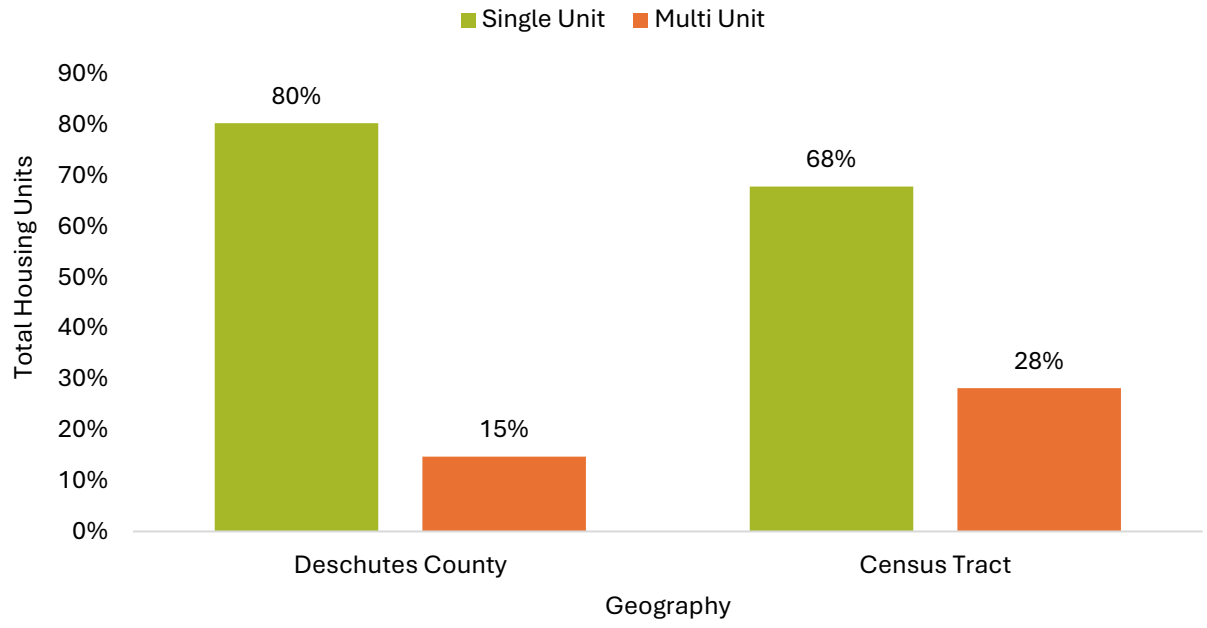
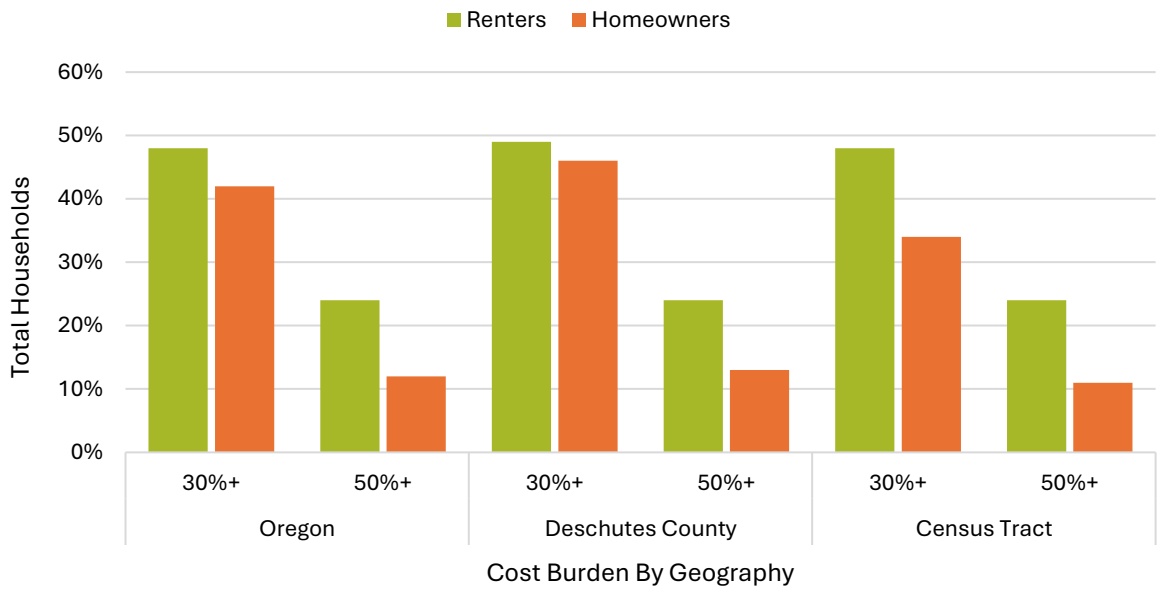


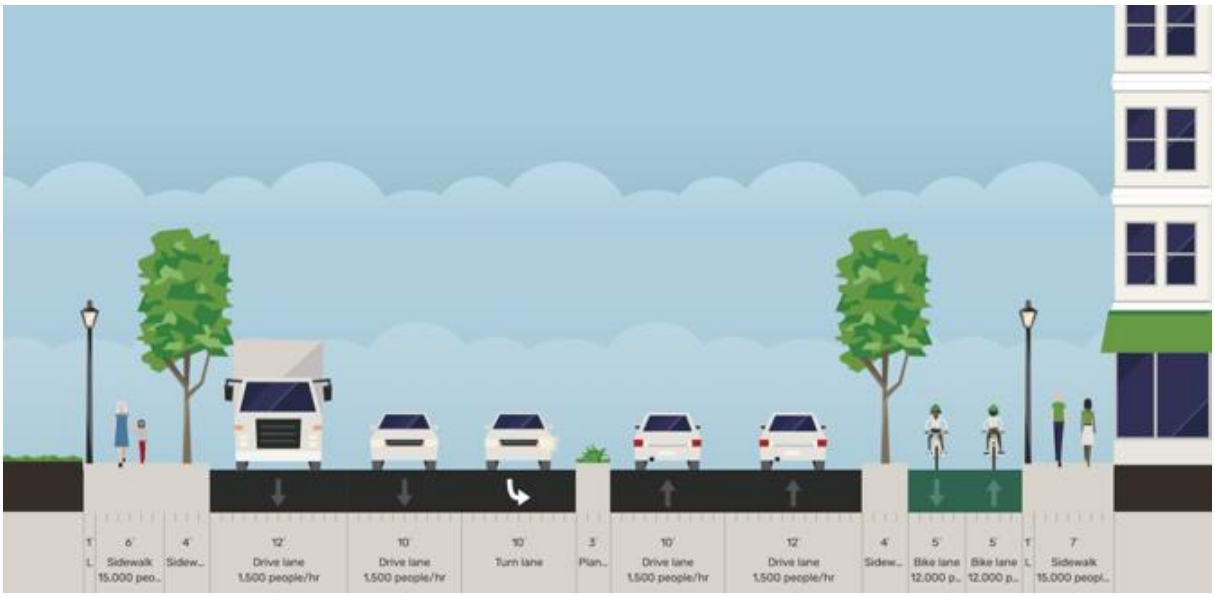
Figure C3. Cost-Burdened Households Across Geography and Tenure

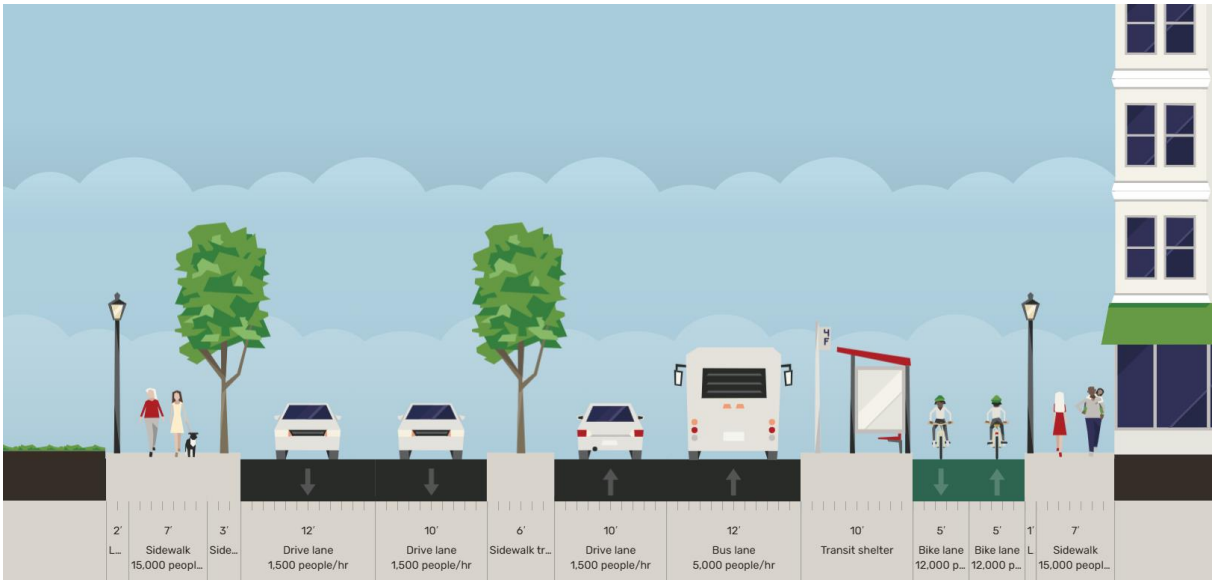


Note. "30%+" represents households that are paying 30% or more of their annual income on housing, which is considered "cost-burdened". "50%+" represents households that are paying 50% or more of their annual income on housing and are considered "severely cost-burdened".

Appendix D. Highway 20 Redesign

Figure D170. Highway 20/Greenwood Avenue Proposed Redesign at intersection (top) and mid-street (bottom) looking west towards downtown Bend. This is based on a 90 foot right of way.





Designed in Streetmix