



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

Heather Stouder, Director

215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Ste 017
P.O. Box 2985
Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2985
Phone: (608) 266-4635
Fax (608) 266-6377
www.cityofmadison.com

To: City of Madison *Board of Parks Commissioners*

From: Greater East Towne Planning Team
Rebecca Chare, Linda Horvath, Kirstie Laatsch, Ryan Jonely, Chris Wells, Bill Fruhling

Date: **August 2, 2021**

Subject: Greater East Towne Area Plan Project Update

The City of Madison has been concurrently planning for the futures of both the Odana Area and the Greater East Towne Area. As shown in Map A, attached, the Greater East Towne Planning Area (GETAP) is roughly bounded by the railroad tracks on the south, East Washington Avenue on the north, Interstate 39/90 on the east and Mendota Street on the west. In Attachment #1, Staff has provided a summary of Public Engagement. In Attachment #2: Planning staff have provided a variety of Draft Maps.

Questions for the Board of Parks Commissioners

In addition to your general comments and feedback on the draft land use, transportation and Parks & Open Space concept maps, Planning Division staff requests that Commissioners provide specific comments on the following:

1. **Parks and Open Space** (including Stormwater) - *Please refer to Map C: Public Parks and Map D, Natural Features for more information.* The draft concept includes three new potential parks/open space areas within the plan area to serve existing and future residents, employees and visitors. We seek Commissioner's thoughts on:
 - i. Potential Expansion of Mayfair Park on the west side of the planning area.
 - ii. Potential Park overlay recommendation for creating a new park somewhere adjacent to and along the Starkweather Creek Natural area to take advantage of pathway and natural areas connections.
 - iii. Urban Plaza. This plan allows for the creation of a 6-acre urban plaza space made up of three blocks centered within an extended Independence Lane. This plaza space could have a mixture of hard and soft spaces, designed to accommodate festivals, farmers' markets, small playgrounds and activities to support an urban mixed-use center. These types of spaces have become very central to other mall redevelopments across the country. Staff recommends that this space be considered public to be welcoming to all Madison residents, but would likely need to be programmed and managed by a separate quasi-public entity, such as a Business Improvement District (BID) or Community Improvement District (CID) to be truly successful.
 - *Commissioners' thoughts about an urban plaza space along a newly extended Independence lane as an organizing neighborhood feature.*
 - *Could this area be managed/maintained by a different entity, but remain a public space? (i.e. a Business or Community Improvement District (BID or CID))*

- iv. Starkweather Creek Watershed Study- the City’s Engineering Division is about to start a watershed study for Starkweather Creek. Recommendation from that study will be central to the future open space and stormwater management network along the southern border of this plan. The parks and open space overlay reflects the opportunities and the natural Features map illustrates some of the wetlands and other recreation constraints of the area closest to the Creek. This plan intends to allow a large area to be flexible to meet both recreational and stormwater needs, and envisions a cohesive space along the creek could be co-managed by City Divisions.
 - *Commissioners’ ideas on opportunities for collaboration with Stormwater/Parks/others on Starkweather Creek, greenway, and other natural connections in the watershed?*

- 2. **Draft Future Land Use Recommendations** - Please refer to Map B for Draft Recommended Land Uses
 The general land use recommendations are flexible to be adaptable and resilient to changing conditions going forward, as long as development adheres to certain principles and accommodates recommended public improvements. Staff believe that this plan offers great opportunity for growth along the planned Bus Rapid Transit Line, and could add many thousands of new residents in a new and complete urban neighborhood. Staff also believes that this is possible with or without the redevelopment of the East Towne Mall, although redevelopment of some or all of the mall area would facilitate much more additional economic and residential growth. Our regional growth planning projections show that 2500+ units could easily be built in the next 15-25 years, while still leaving capacity as continued redevelopment occurs. Depending upon many factors regarding density, building heights, land use type, and design, a full build out of the area could accommodate an additional 16,000 people, 9,500 new dwelling units and 27,000 new employees for a total of 18,000 people, 10,000+ dwelling units and potentially up to 28,000 employees.

- 3. **Pedestrian & Bicycle Network** - Please refer to Map E: Bicycle & Pedestrian Network for more information.
 - i. *We ask Commissioners’ thoughts on how to use the transportation system to better connect Parks Facilities and the Open Space network with Pedestrian, Bicycle and street network, as well as the future BRT.*

- 4. **Community Facilities** – Other thoughts on what else is needed to serve thousands of new residents, such as greenway connections to the planned Reindahl Park Imagination Center/other?

- 5. **What are we missing?**

Next Steps/Timeline

Staff anticipates moving forward with the GETAP process according to the following approximate timeline, which is subject to adjustment based on feedback received from the Commission, other BCCs, and members of the public:

Estimated Timeframe	Activity
August – Sept 2021	Visiting BCCs for topic-specific GETAP review/discussions: TPPB, BPC, EDC, PC
October – November 2021	Revise concepts based on previous public feedback, Plan Commission feedback, and other BCC feedback; draft plan text
December 2021	Plan Commission discussion of draft document with revised concepts/maps
January 2022	Introduce GETAP at Common Council; referral to BCCs for review
February 2022	Common Council – consider adoption

Greater East Towne Area Plan

Attachment #1: Public Participation Summary

The Greater East Towne team partnered with the Odana Area Plan for much of the initial public engagement. There is a full and complete listing of public comments from zoom meetings, focus groups and other events [at this link](#). We conducted an online, Mall Madness issue prioritization exercise, where 174 people participated, and top priorities included affordable housing and more natural spaces and stormwater management, with safer pedestrian and bike routes, and more entertainment following close behind. An Issues and Opportunities Zoom Series included 450 participants. A [summary of comments can be found here](#). An online mapping exercise was also used to gather thoughts and feedback for those who were not able to attend.

Traditionally Underrepresented Communities

The public engagement plan included a robust outreach effort to reach and connect with members from several of Madison's traditionally underrepresented communities. Feedback from the ***Black, Latino and Hmong Chambers of Commerce*** focused on making sure the future of the area is welcoming to all area residents and businesses, the necessity of proactive economic development to help grow businesses owned by people of color, and creating a business incubator and preserving affordable retail space. We also reached out to the ***Madison Network of Black Professionals and the East High School Raza United/Black Student Union*** for in depth discussions of the plan.

CityZine Social Practice Art interviews

Social Practice Artist Borealis engaged LGBTQ+, Indigenous and other communities for in depth interviews on the future of creating a new community at both East Towne and the Odana Area.

"I'm sitting here asking myself if I have ever seen a bird in some of these west side areas. I mean, I'm being kind of dramatic, but there is just so much pavement and concrete that it's hard to even visualize life in some of these areas. I sometimes fantasize about what it would be like for an alien to fly overhead and look down. What would they think all that concrete is for? Especially in the areas with no cars in them?"

Business and Property Owner Outreach occurred through a business roundtable facilitated by project consultant SEH. Key takeaways include: retail is over represented and there is a need for more food industry (restaurants/catering/etc); the poor transportation network is a barrier to economic growth, and won't support a mixed use, walkable, bikeable character without changes; and the area needs a sense of place, including parks and open spaces.

Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT) Outreach included visits with the Brentwood/Northport and Darbo/Worthington NRTs both in the in the fall of 2020, and again in the spring of 2021 to present information on the GETAP and gather thoughts and feedback from these areas.

Friends of Starkweather Creek input prioritized creating equitable and sustainable access to Starkweather Creek and other high-quality natural areas. They suggested that the city create new parks, natural areas, pedestrian and bicycle amenities on existing impervious surfaces or in ways that minimize impacts on existing natural areas, while appropriately managing the meadows and prairies around the creek.

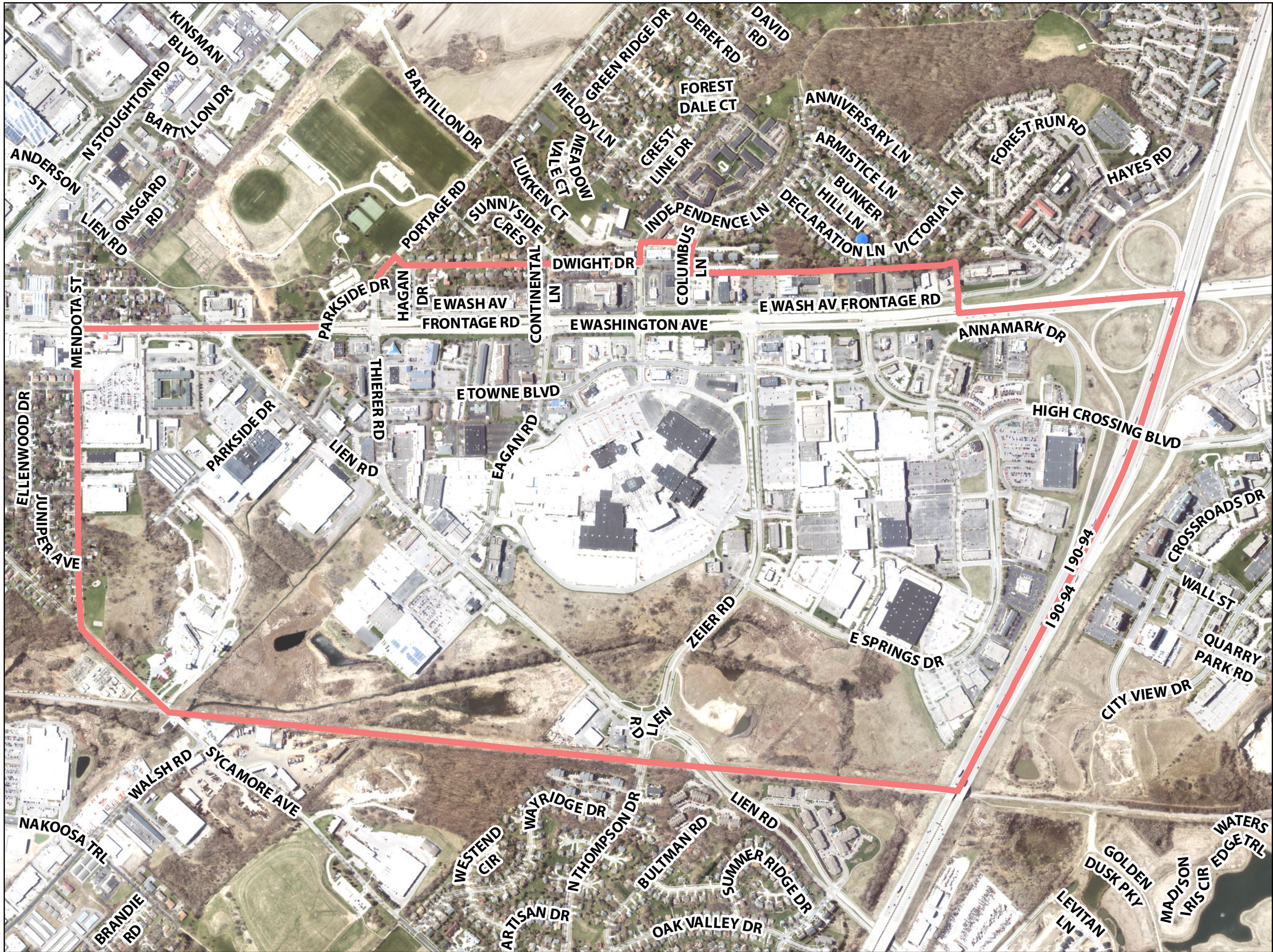
Concept Presentation Meetings were held on May 24 and 26 ([presentation link](#)) to present and discuss future street and bicycle networks, planned land use, future park space, and planned maximum building heights. About 50+ people attended.

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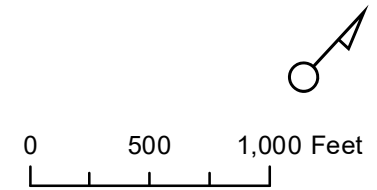
Attachment #2: Map Packet

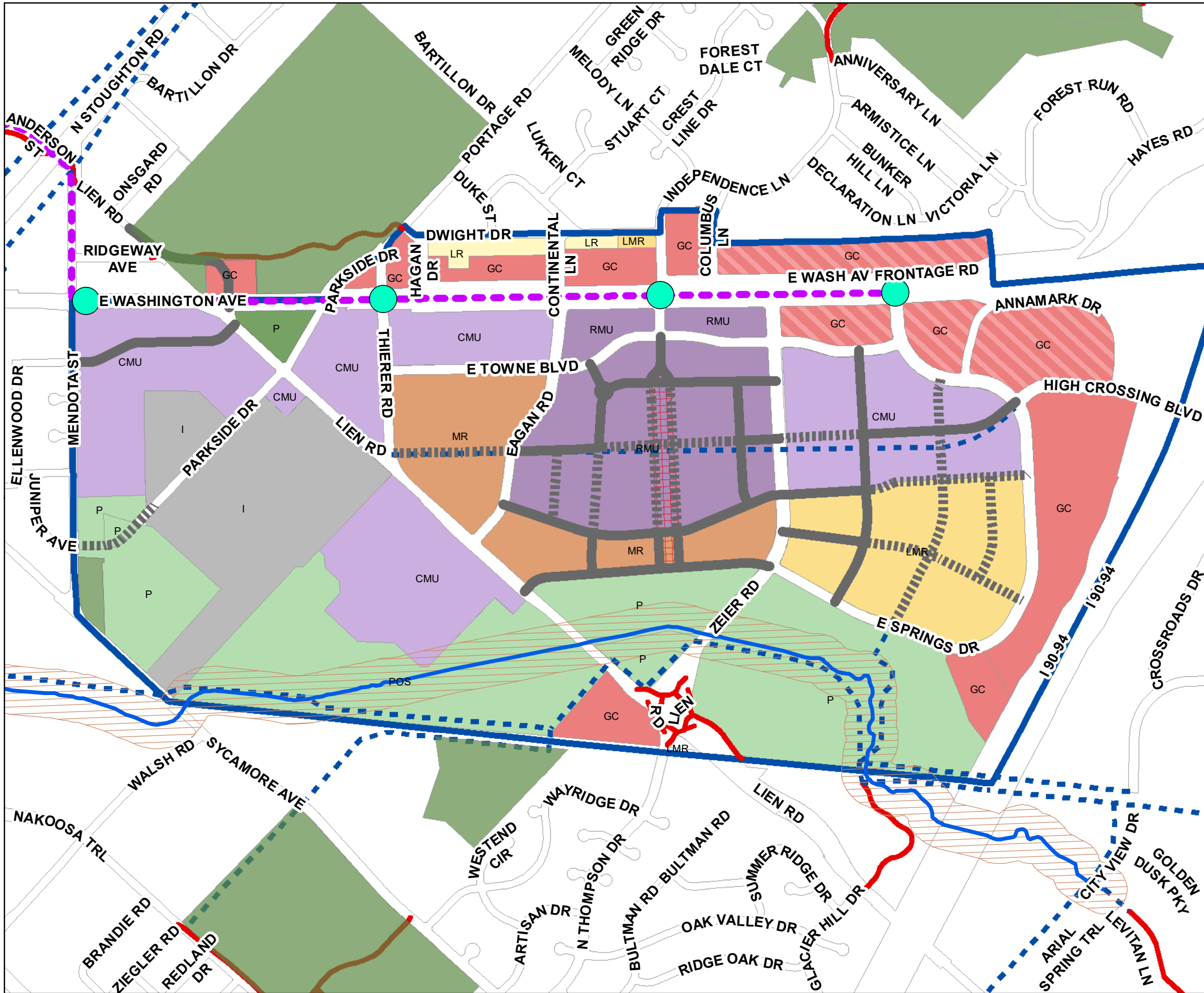
- Map A: Planning Area Boundary
- Map B: Future Land Use
- Map C: Parks and Open Space
- Map D: Natural Features
- Map E: Future Street Network
- Map F: Bicycle & Pedestrian Network



Map A: Planning Area

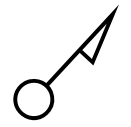
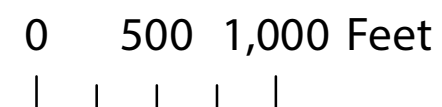
 Planning Area

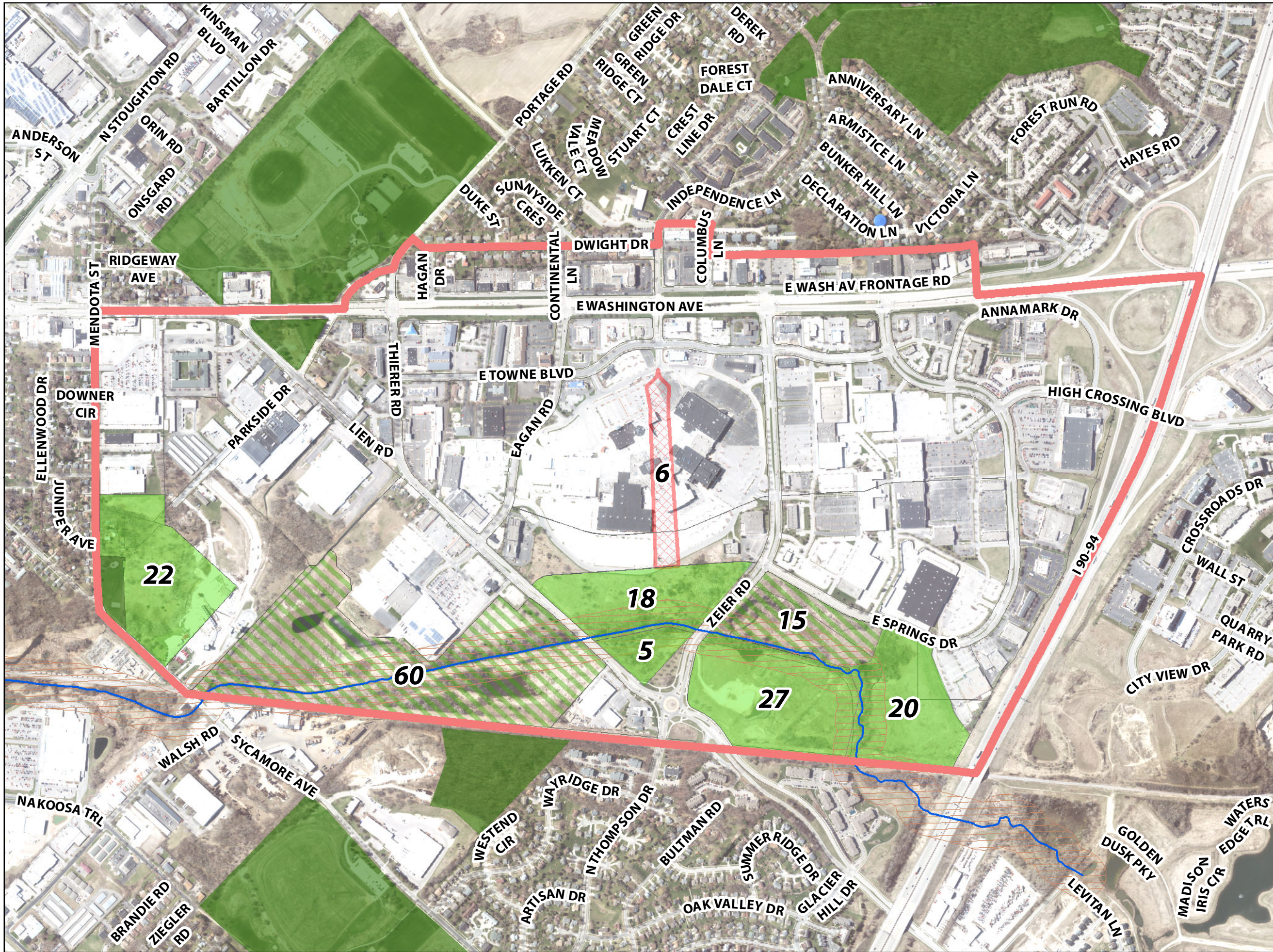




Map B: LAND USE CONCEPTS

- RMU - Regional Mixed-Use
- CMU - Community Mixed-Use
- E - Employment
- GC - General Commercial
- I - Industrial
- LR - Low Residential
- LMR - Low Medium Residential
- MR - Medium Residential
- P - Parks and Open Space
- # Building Heights
- Potential Urban Plaza
- BRT Stations
- BRT Lines
- Potential Streets**
- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Bike Path**
- Existing
- Planned
- Starkweather Creek
- 200' Buffer of Starkweather Creek
- Existing Parks

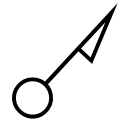


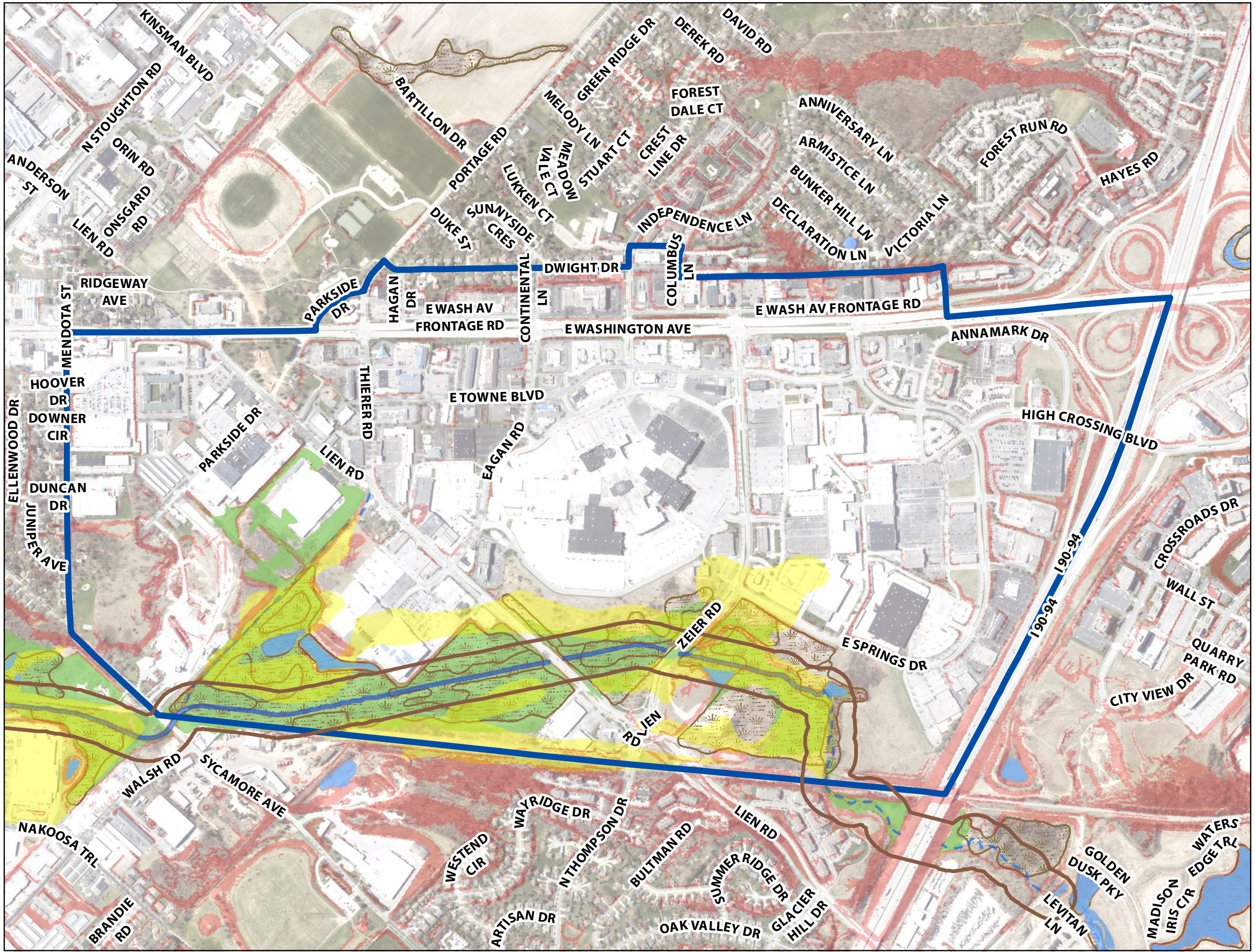


Map C: Parks and Open Space










- Existing Parks
- Potential Parks
- Potential Stormwater Space
- Potential Urban Plaza
- # Acreage
- Starkweather Creek
- 200' Buffer of Starkweather Creek

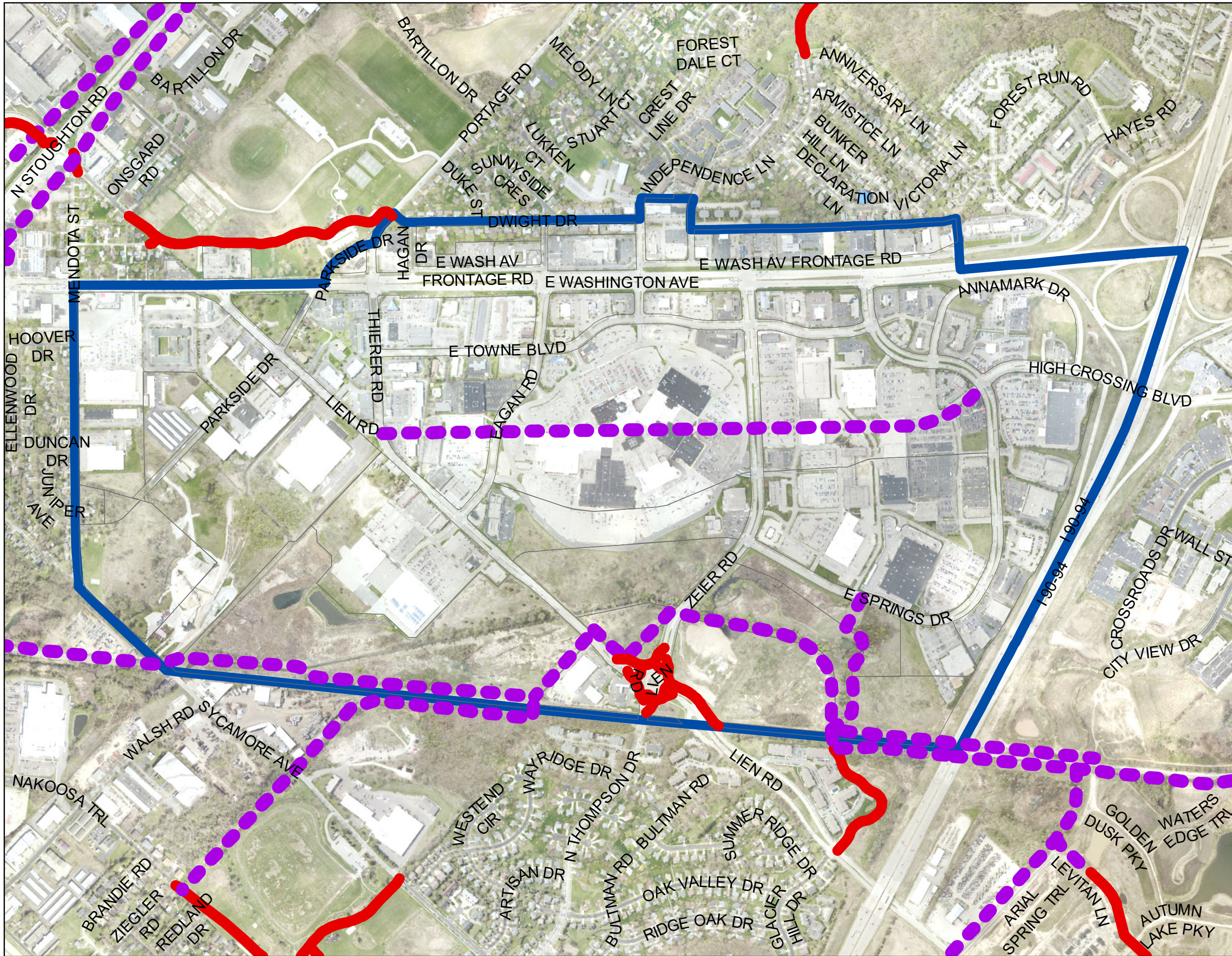
0 500 1,000 Feet





Map D: Natural Features


-  Planning Area
-  Slope 12% and Greater
-  Surface Water
-  Perennial Stream
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Wetlands
-  Delineated Floodplain
-  Hydric Soils
-  200' Buffer of Starkweather Creek



Map F: Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

 Existing

 Planned

 Planning Area

