

**Kansas City Area Transportation Authority**

**North/South Corridor Alternatives Analysis**

**Transit Supportive  
Land Use Assessment**

August 2008



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# Section 1: Introduction

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## ***1.1 Purpose of Report***

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is preparing an Alternatives Analysis (AA) and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to evaluate alternatives that would provide high-capacity transit service in an area defined as the Kansas City North/South Corridor. The project study area is an approximate 12-mile transit corridor between the intersection of I-29 with North Oak Trafficway and US-169 in the northern portion of Kansas City, Missouri. The corridor includes the Kansas City metropolitan region's most concentrated employment and residential areas and many of the region's significant institutional and cultural attractions, including the North Kansas City business district, the Kansas City Central Business District, Crown Center district, and Country Club Plaza district.

The North/South Corridor AA was initiated following voter approval in November 2006 of a citizen-led initiative for a 27-mile light rail route. The AA was split into Phase I, which has been completed, and Phase II, which is currently underway.

The two primary goals of Phase I of the AA were to conduct a comprehensive technical and financial analysis of the November 2006 plan, and to develop a more financially and technically realistic concept for a light rail starter line. The analysis of the November 2006 plan was completed in August 2007, and concluded that the initiative was neither technically nor financially feasible as approved. Technical difficulties arose from significant roadway elevation and grade changes, inadequate existing bridge capacity, and significant infringement on publicly-owned park land. The Plan was determined to be financially infeasible because it would require the diversion of a local tax from its current designated support of the existing bus system to support the approved light rail line. This reallocation would result in significant cuts in bus service unless alternative bus service funding was put in place; no alternative bus funding sources were identified in the voter-approved initiative.

In response to the plan that passed in November 2006, the second goal of Phase I of the AA was to develop a feasible plan for implementing light rail. As a result, KCATA, working with the City of Kansas City, MO, other local governments and stakeholders, and the Citizen's Task Force, developed a high-capacity transit concept that is financially feasible, responds to the preference for light rail voiced by the voters of Kansas City in November 2006, and could serve as the first phase of a regional transit system.

Phase II of the AA will continue the North/South corridor work through the refinement and evaluation of the Phase I-recommended Build alternative, No-Build alternative, and Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative. Phase II will result in an AA/DEIS.

An assessment of the transit supportive character of the land abutting the potential alignment is an important component of the FTA New Starts application. This Transit Supportive Land Use Report is an analysis of existing conditions and current plans and policies affecting development patterns within the proposed transit corridor in relation to New Starts criteria (described later in this section). The Report also includes key recommendations based on both this land use analysis and the real estate market analysis, which assesses the future development potential within seven market areas (identified later in this section). Implementation of these recommendations could result in improved land use rankings for station areas when measured against New Starts criteria.

## 1.2 New Starts Criteria

In its evaluation of the land use affecting potential New Starts-funded projects, the FTA considers the following transit supportive land use categories and factors:<sup>1</sup>

1. Existing Land Use
2. Transit Supportive Plans and Policies, including the following factors:
  - a. Growth management
  - b. Transit supportive corridor policies
  - c. Supportive zoning regulations near transit stations
  - d. Tools to implement land use policies
3. Performance and Impacts of Policies, including the following factors:
  - a. Performance of land use policies
  - b. Potential impact of transit projects on regional and use
4. Other Land Use Considerations, including exceptional economic development (which the FTA has identified has being “of particular significance” during the Fiscal Year 2009 evaluation cycle), historic, community preservation, or other factors, if applicable. Specifically, the FTA is:

“... particularly interested in quantifiable economic development benefits which can be clearly distinguished from a) the transportation system user benefits which comprise one variable of FTA’s measure for cost effectiveness, and b) land use impacts which are reported and evaluated in support of the transit supportive land use plans and policies criteria. Specifically, FTA desires to avoid both the double-counting of benefits and the crediting of benefits to projects which may be more appropriately attributable to other supporting local economic development initiatives, policies, and/or incentives by isolating the specific impacts resulting from the presence of fixed guideway transit in a given corridor.”<sup>2</sup>

The FTA applies these criteria to evaluate candidate transit improvement projects seeking Federal funding assistance under the New Starts program. Funding for New Starts is an extremely competitive process, with numerous projects from across the nation seeking funds. Therefore, the extent to which a project can demonstrate commitment to transit supportive land uses and policies can be critical to the awarding of Federal funding support.

## 1.3 Methodology

This Transit Supportive Land Use Report has been prepared based on an analysis of existing conditions and policies affecting each of ten selected station locations within the transit corridor. For the purpose of this analysis, station area is defined as the area encompassing a half-mile radius around a proposed station. A half-mile radius, which represents a comfortable ten-minute walking distance, is generally the walk-access ridership base for a station, and is also the service area considered as part of the New Starts criteria.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Transit Administration, Office of Planning, *Guidelines and Standards for Assessing Transit Supportive Land Use, May 2004*, “Table 3: Land Use Rating Categories, Factors, and Supporting Factors.”

<sup>2</sup> Federal Transit Administration, Office of Planning and Environment, “FY 2009 New Starts and Small Starts Evaluation and Rating Process.” July 20, 2007.

The following steps were undertaken in preparation of this report:

- Existing Land Use and Development Patterns – principle data sources included:
  - Existing land use data from the cities of Kansas City and North Kansas City
  - Existing conditions analysis and maps included in the comprehensive and neighborhood plans of the cities of Kansas City and North Kansas City
  - Bus route maps from KCATA
  - Interviews with Kansas City staff, North Kansas City staff, local development professionals, and community organizations

Information obtained from these data sources was supplemented by field surveys to develop an understanding of the land uses and development patterns within the station areas. In addition to existing land use, this included an analysis of access and circulation patterns in the station areas, including the street network and major vehicular, pedestrian, and bus routes.

- Current Plans and Policies – Relevant current official land use plans, policies and development regulations for the station areas were collected and reviewed to estimate the extent of transit-supportive conditions that currently exist or are proposed for the future. The review focused on future plans for the station areas, including type and intensity of proposed development, parking management strategies, pedestrian and bike improvements, and design guidelines to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. The review of current policies focused on the ability of existing zoning regulations to support the creation of comparatively dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environments with reduced parking requirements near proposed transit stops.
- Real Estate Market Analysis – A real estate market analysis was completed for seven selected market areas (which encompass the ten station locations) to estimate the future residential, commercial, and office development potential through the year 2030 (performed by Valerie Kretchmer Associates, Inc.). During this analysis, several interviews were conducted with key persons, including representatives from Kansas City, North Kansas City, developers, real estate professionals, and community organizations. These interviews were critical to gaining an understanding of real estate development trends and preferred development patterns within the corridor.

This report presents the assessment of transit supportiveness of the proposed stations and the market areas in two formats:

- A summary table which ranks the stations and corridors relative to the New Starts criteria, and
- A narrative highlighting existing characteristics and policies that influence the transit-supportive character of the station areas as outlined in the New Starts criteria, and implementation recommendations that could potentially result in a more favorable New Starts ranking. The implementation recommendations are generally organized as planning initiatives, recommended policy updates, and improvement projects.

## **1.4 Report Organization**

The report is organized in three main sections:

1. **Section 2: Executive Summary** – This includes an overview of the project conditions, a summary of the real estate market analysis (full report is included in the Appendix), a ranking of the transit supportive land uses in the station areas, and a brief explanation of the ranking results.

2. **Section 3:** Transit Supportive Land Use – Conditions and Policies in the Station Areas – This section includes a detailed explanation of existing conditions and policies for each station area, providing the rationale for the rankings in the summary table in Section 2. The existing conditions analysis is followed by recommendations that could potentially improve the current ranking of the stations under the New Starts program.
3. **Appendix:** The Appendix includes the complete real estate market analysis report and the land use policy analysis which was conducted for Phase I of the Alternatives Analysis.

## Section 2: Executive Summary

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### 2.1 Overview of Corridor Conditions

The North/South Corridor Alternatives Analysis study area is an approximately 12-mile long corridor that travels from the junction of I-29 and the North Oak Trafficway through North Kansas City and the Kansas City Central Business District to the University of Missouri – Kansas City (Figure 1). Eastern branches under consideration would extend to Prospect Avenue along either Linwood Boulevard, or Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard and Swope Parkway.

For the purposes of this assessment, seven key market areas were identified:

1. Waterworks Area,
2. River Market,
3. Downtown,
4. Crossroads,
5. Midtown,
6. Prospect Avenue at Linwood Boulevard, and
7. Prospect Avenue at Brush Creek Boulevard.

These seven market areas (Figure 2) were selected because they represent the typical land uses found along the entire alignment, are areas whose existing land use pattern could be significantly affected by the implementation of a transit system, or are areas whose existing land use pattern would impact the success of a new transit system. While a real estate market analysis was conducted to address the conditions within these entire market areas, the land use assessment is focused on the land within a half-mile radius of the ten selected station locations located within the seven market areas (Figure 2):

1. 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue / Armour Avenue and Burlington (Waterworks Area),
2. 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue / Armour Avenue and Swift (Waterworks Area),
3. 1<sup>st</sup> Street (River Market),
4. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (River Market),
5. 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand (Downtown),
6. 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand (Crossroads),
7. Armour and Main (Midtown),
8. 39<sup>th</sup> Street and Main (Midtown),
9. Troost and Linwood (Prospect Avenue at Linwood Boulevard), and
10. Prospect Avenue and Swope Parkway (Prospect Avenue at Brush Creek Boulevard).

As previously discussed, the seven market areas and ten station locations that have been subject to detailed analysis were chosen because they represent the type of land uses that are typical along the entire alignment, but also because they represent the locations along the alignment that are subject to the greatest degree of change in land use based on the implementation of a light rail system. The Waterworks market area is in North Kansas City and is characterized by a mixture of manufacturing and industrial uses, residential, and smaller-scale commercial uses. River Market is currently transitioning from railroad and industrial uses to mixed-use development supported by residential development. The Downtown market area

includes a number of surface parking lots and aging parking structures, as well as a mixture of lower-density and under-utilized parcels in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Street areas. The Crossroads market area, which has historically functioned as a storage and transfer point between Union Station and the Downtown, has undergone conversion of older loft spaces to art studios and galleries. The Midtown market area is surrounded by established residential neighborhoods, the residents of which have expressed sensitivity to the potential impacts of a light rail line on existing businesses and homes. The Linwood market area is characterized by comparatively weak retail development and vacant lots surrounded by single- and multi-family residential uses. The Brush Creek Corridor market has a number of vacant and underutilized parcels which could be redeveloped to support a park-and-ride facility at the southern terminus of the light rail line.

Each of these market areas has an existing developmental pattern or projected population or business growth that could be guided and supported by the implementation of a light rail transit system.

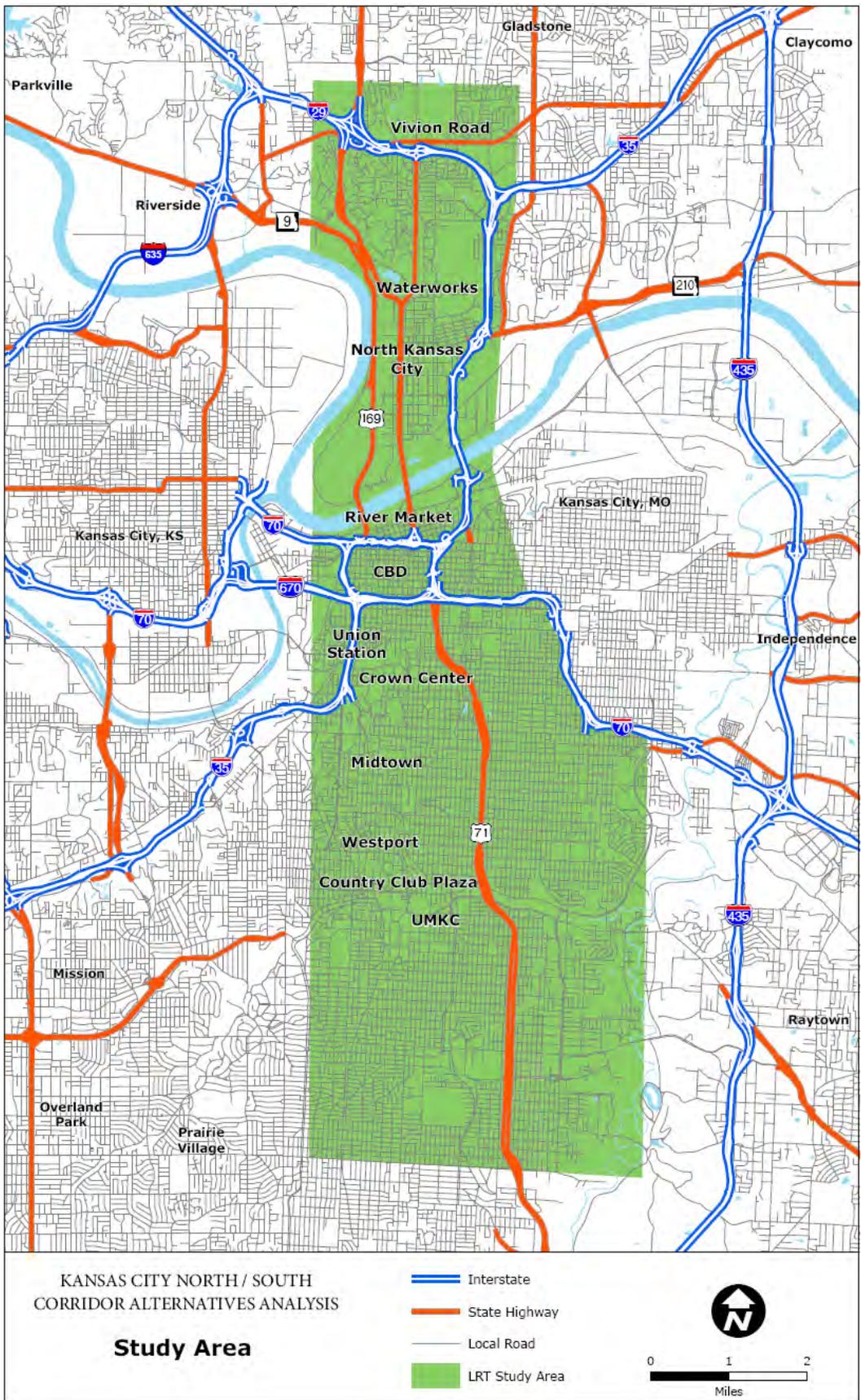


Figure 1: North/South Corridor Alternative Analysis Study Area

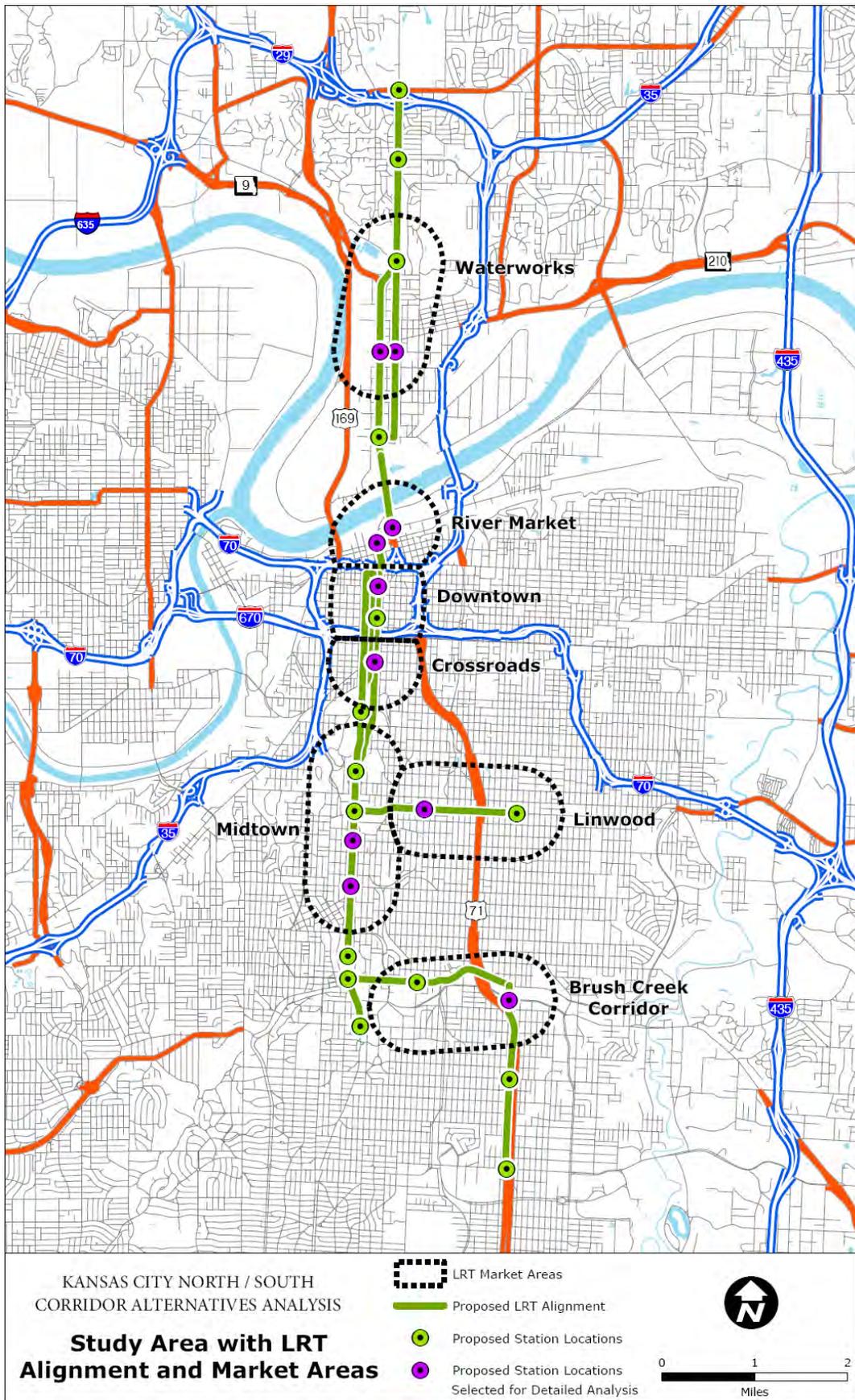


Figure 2: Study Area with Potential Alignment, Market Areas, and Station Locations

## Existing and Forecasted Population Density

Population density within the half-mile radius of a station location is an important measure of transit-supportive land use in the FTA New Starts criteria. Higher population density implies a greater potential ridership base, a measure which could increase the transit system's effectiveness ranking, in turn affecting the KCATA's chances for securing Federal funding. Figure 3 and Figure 4 illustrate the Year 2000 population density and Year 2030 forecasted population density, respectively, for the study area by United States Census tract. Both the Year 2000 and 2030 data are based on information provided by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), the region's metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Figure 5 illustrates the change in population over the forecast period of 2000 to 2030, while Figure 6 illustrates the percentage change in population during that same period of time.

The population densities illustrated in Figure 3 and Figure 4 have been categorized and mapped according to the FTA ranking criteria outlined in *Guidelines and Standards for Assessing Transit-Supportive Land Use*, published in May 2004 by the FTA. These maps indicate tracts with comparatively higher population density and the impact of the population growth scenario currently forecasted by MARC. While the population density of the Year 2000 tracts along the alignment ranges from medium-high to low, projected growth patterns into Year 2030 will result in stable or higher population density within almost all of the tracts that make up the seven market areas: the exceptions are along the eastern leg of Linwood and southern Brush Creek Corridor leg.

The City of Kansas City believes that the projected re-densification of the urban core, through which this alignment passes, is the product of supportive public policies, programs, and planning initiatives. The implementation of a light rail system in conjunction with transit-supportive policies and based on the capacity of the real estate market could function to further increase these population densities.

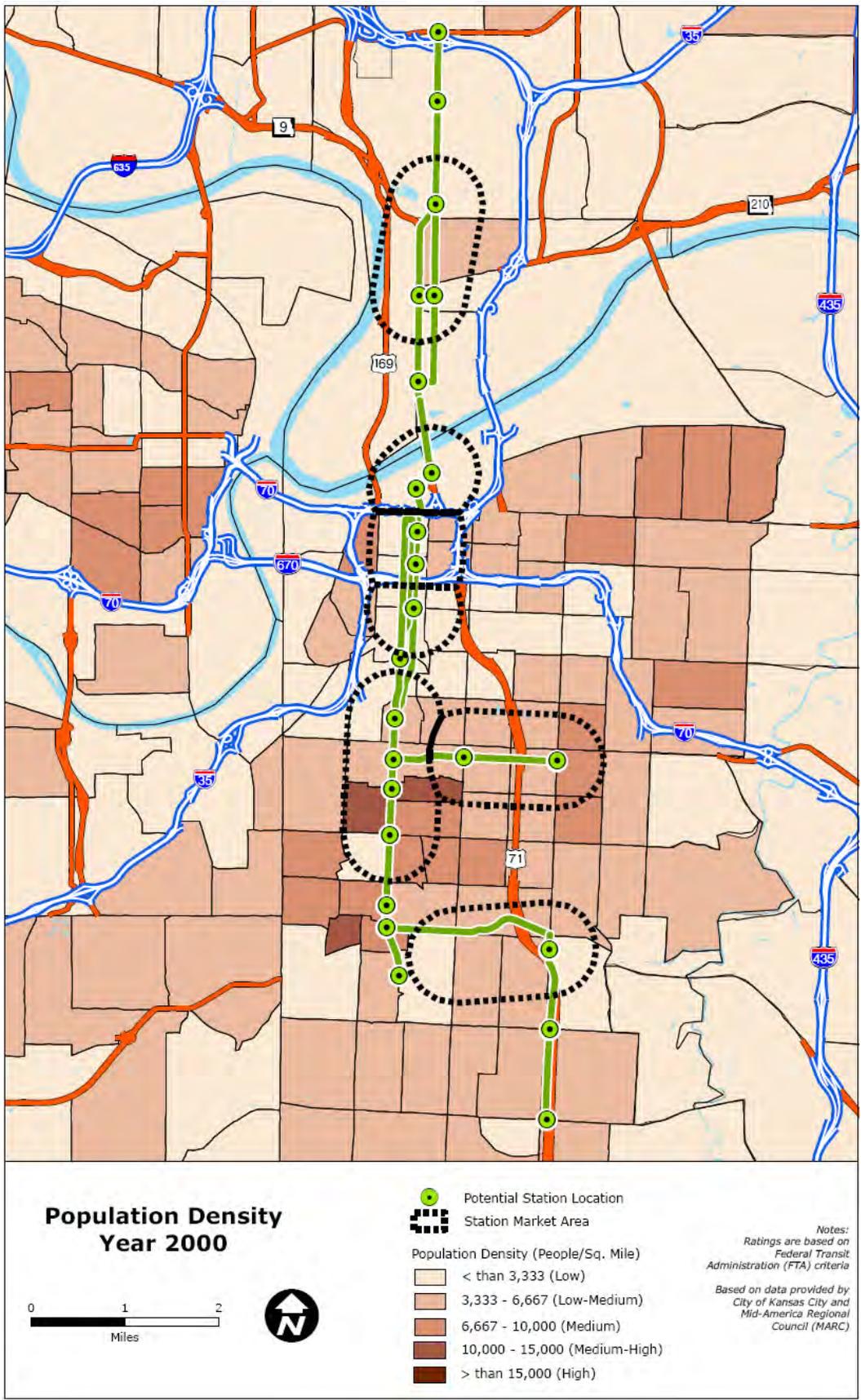
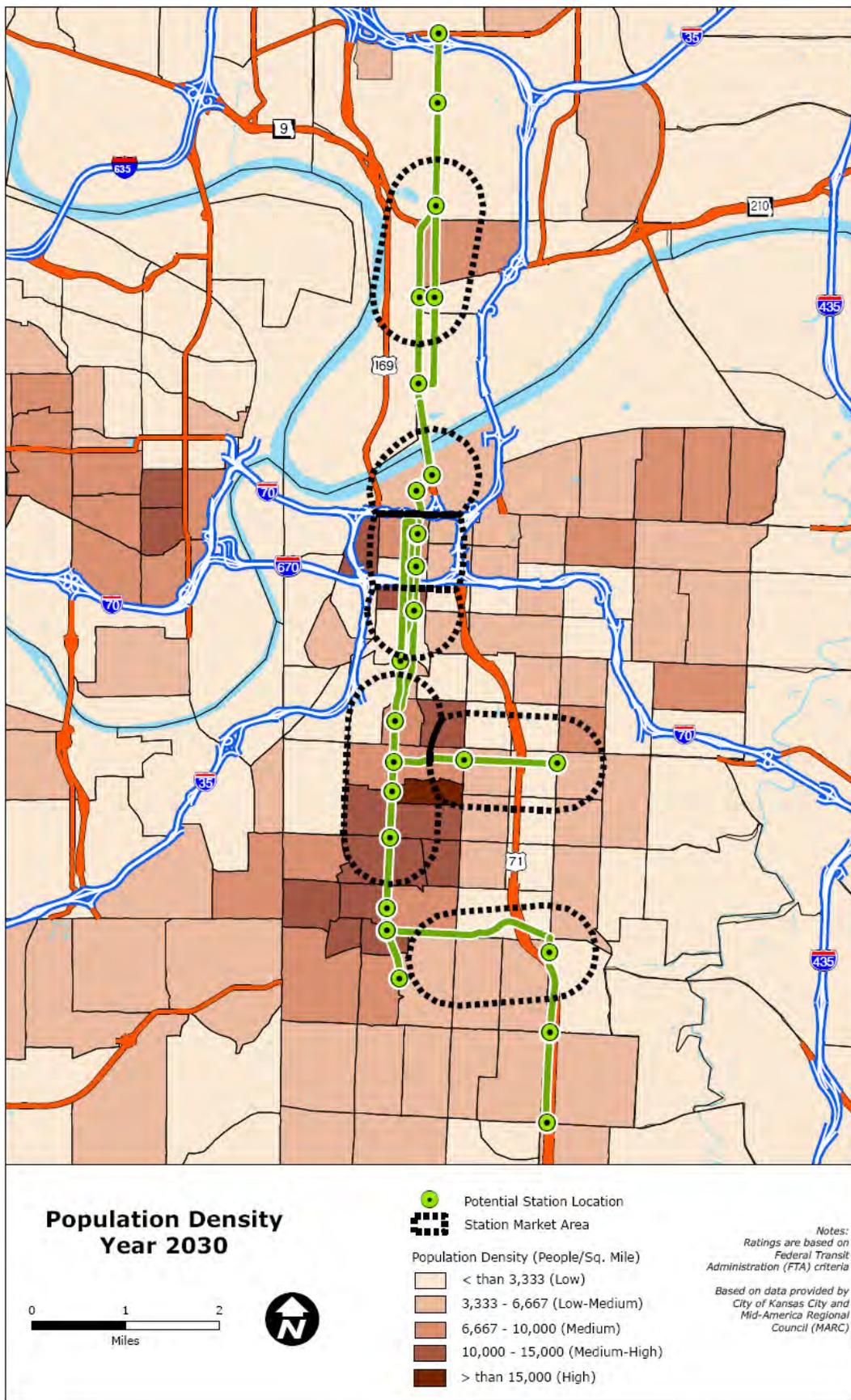


Figure 3: Year 2000 Population Density by US Census Tract



**Figure 4: Year 2030 Population Density by US Census Tract**

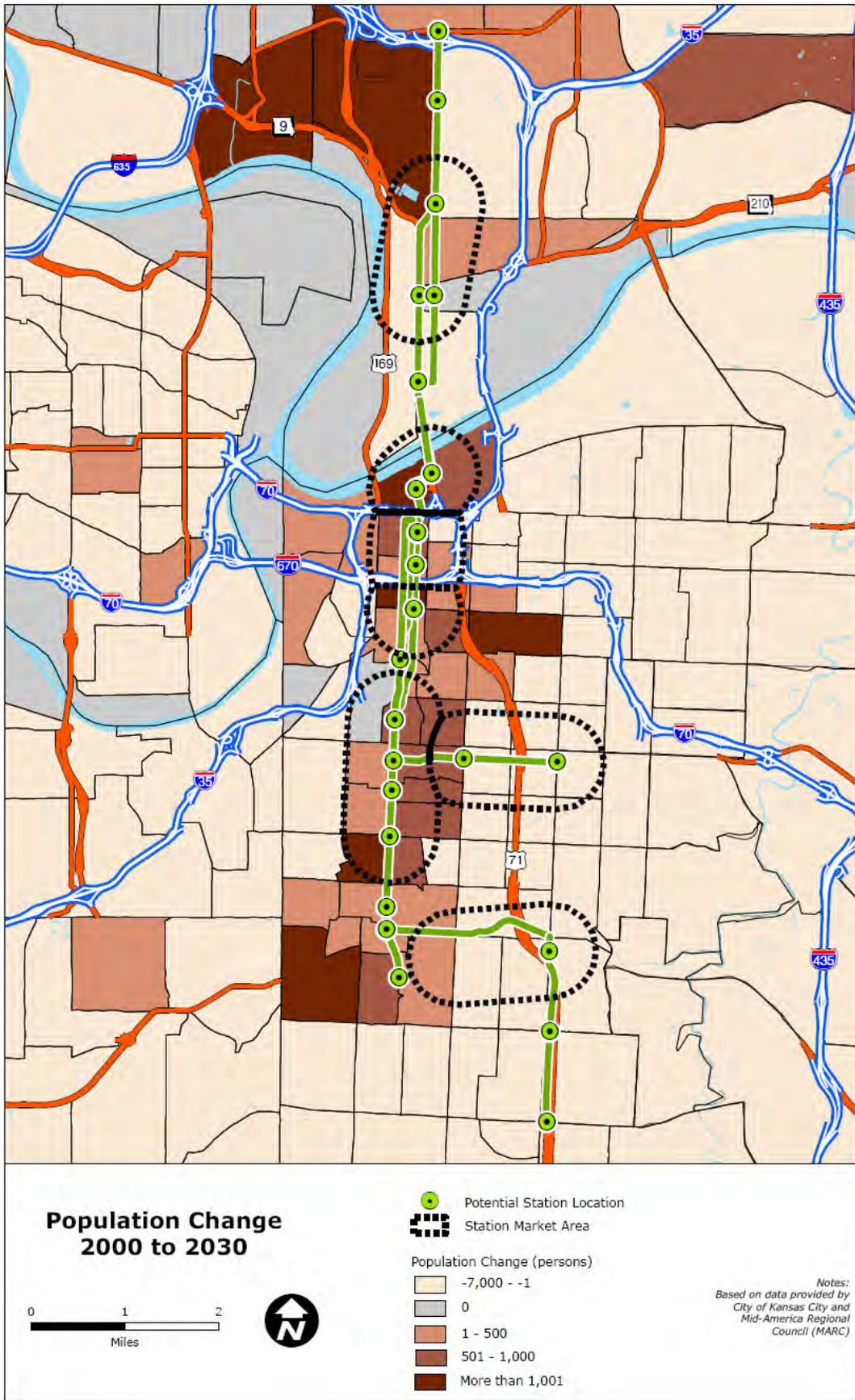


Figure 5: Population Change, 2000 - 2030 by US Census Tract



## 2.2 Market Analysis: Overview and Summary Results

Light rail systems have guided infill development and supported broad economic growth for cities across the country. The positive economic outcomes associated with an investment in light rail do not simply result from the transit system's construction: these positive outcomes are the result of a combination of market demand and public sector actions that have been coordinated with light rail construction. Kansas City, then, must determine whether enough market demand currently exists or could be generated within the corridor to produce the level of development necessary to support light rail.

The first step in this process is to determine where future real estate development is or could occur within the market areas. Valerie Kretchmer and Associates (VSKA) has completed a real estate market analysis for the seven market areas, which is included in its entirety in Appendix A. A summary of the analysis, which outlines the summary trends for household, office, and retail space growth by market area, is presented in Table 1.

SUMMARY OF POPULATION, HOUSEHOLDS AND EMPLOYMENT  
IN THE LIGHT RAIL MARKET AREAS AND KANSAS CITY  
2005-2030

| Market Area               | Population     |                |               | Households     |                |               | Employment     |                |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                           | 2005           | 2030           | Change        | 2005           | 2030           | Change        | 2005           | 2030           | Change         |
| Waterworks                | 7,729          | 7,850          | 122           | 4,040          | 4,157          | 117           | 18,621         | 19,486         | 865            |
| River Market              | 1,946          | 3,862          | 1,917         | 1,241          | 2,726          | 1,485         | 3,059          | 3,530          | 471            |
| Downtown                  | 3,345          | 4,170          | 826           | 1,907          | 3,229          | 1,322         | 69,887         | 78,499         | 8,612          |
| Crossroads                | 1,271          | 3,510          | 2,239         | 451            | 1,716          | 1,265         | 26,225         | 29,914         | 3,689          |
| Mid Town                  | 11,350         | 14,736         | 3,387         | 6,674          | 9,165          | 2,491         | 29,133         | 36,928         | 7,795          |
| Linwood Corridor          | 10,418         | 8,451          | (1,967)       | 4,291          | 3,669          | (622)         | 4,770          | 6,301          | 1,531          |
| Brush Creek Corridor      | 7,370          | 5,848          | (1,522)       | 2,828          | 2,372          | (456)         | 9,669          | 12,509         | 2,840          |
| <b>Market Areas Total</b> | <b>43,428</b>  | <b>48,429</b>  | <b>5,001</b>  | <b>21,433</b>  | <b>27,034</b>  | <b>5,601</b>  | <b>161,363</b> | <b>187,165</b> | <b>25,802</b>  |
| <b>Kansas City</b>        | <b>444,724</b> | <b>465,201</b> | <b>20,477</b> | <b>185,715</b> | <b>208,276</b> | <b>22,561</b> | <b>484,800</b> | <b>624,000</b> | <b>139,200</b> |

Source: City of Kansas City; MARC.

**Table 1: Summary of Population, Households, and Employment in the Light Rail Market Area and Kansas City, 2005 – 2030**

Kansas City's light rail market areas are projected to grow by 5,000 people, 5,600 households and 25,800 employees during the period between 2005 and 2030. The largest increases in population and households are projected to be in the Midtown, Crossroads, River Market and Downtown market areas. The number of households within the combined market areas is forecast to grow by 26 percent over the 25-year period, a far higher rate than that which is projected for the entirety of Kansas City or North Kansas City. Employment growth is projected to be highest in the Downtown, Midtown and Crossroads areas. The Linwood and Brush Creek Corridors are projected to decrease in population and households but increase in employment.

The Downtown has experienced higher than metropolitan area-average office space vacancy rates as more offices are moving into the suburbs and existing Downtown buildings are converted to residential uses. Not included in these statistics, however, are several large-scale single-user and government buildings, including the H&R Block headquarters, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, and Richard Bollings Federal Building. The Country Club Plaza and Crown Center office markets have exhibited more stable vacancy rates.

At year-end 2007, the Central Kansas City area, which includes Downtown, Crown Center and the Country Club Plaza areas, exhibited significantly lower retail vacancy rates than in the surrounding metro area. This statistic indicates an unmet demand for retail space within the

central city core. The Midtown and Brush Creek Corridor market areas have had the most substantial increase in taxable retail sales of all the market areas since 2000.

Based on projected household and employment growth, the market areas through which the proposed transit alignment passes can be characterized as some of the fastest growing in the Kansas City area.

## **2.3 Transit-Supportive Land Use Ranking Approach**

As previously discussed, the ten selected stations within the seven market areas were analyzed and assigned ranks based on their transit-supportive character in relation to the New Starts criteria.

A five-point ranking system was used for this analysis: a brief explanation of the ranking criteria is presented below. The rankings help to assess the overall transit supportive environment in a station area based on existing conditions and policies.

Criteria used to establish station area rankings: *(Note: Rankings are based on a scale of 1 to 5; 1 indicates a "low" rank, 3 indicates a "medium" rank, and 5 indicates a "high" rank.)*

- Station area population densities
  - According to FTA parameters
- Assessment of supportiveness of existing land uses
  - Low – mostly lower-density residential uses primarily within the half-mile station area (1)
  - Medium – a mix of residential, commercial, and / or employment uses within the half-mile station-area at a modest density (3)
  - High – strong mix of uses, particularly a high percentage of residential uses within the half-mile station area (5)
- Existing street network connectivity – access patterns
  - Low – street network density is low; broken / unconnected network within the half-mile station area; limited sidewalks (1)
  - Medium – street network is not high density; network is in place but circuitous / irregular; minor sidewalk and access issues (3)
  - High – street network density is high; network is more or less on a contiguous grid; complete sidewalk system (5)
- Intermodal capability at station locations
  - No multimodal access is planned or available at the station area; only automobile accessibility is provided (1)
  - Bus service is planned for the station area; a sidewalk network is in place (3)
  - The station is already served by one or more bus routes; has strong bicycle and pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhood (5)
- Supportive parking policies
  - Supportive parking policies or regulations are absent (1)
  - Policies and recommendations for shared parking, structured parking, and / or reduced parking in place with evidence of impact on station areas (3)

- Mixed use / reduced parking requirements; constraints on parking supply in place (5)
- Extent to which there are properties subject to change for transit supportive uses
  - Recently built or largely protected environment with minimal development / redevelopment opportunities unforeseen (1)
  - Low- to medium-density development opportunities for varied land uses (3)
  - Opportunities for high-density mixed-use projects, especially within the half-mile station areas (5)
- Degree to which current community / neighborhood plans support TOD
  - Plans do not address TOD at that location (1)
  - Plans address TOD possibilities and the use mix in the area (3)
  - Plans provide clear direction in mix of uses, development patterns, access improvements, and development implementation (5)
- Degree to which current zoning is consistent with TOD and market
  - Zoning regulations are completely inconsistent with market-oriented uses and encourage improper development pattern (1)
  - Zoning mix is appropriate for the area, relatively aligned with density opportunities (3)
  - Zoning has considered TOD needs in the area and specifically addresses station area uses, density, design, and access (5)
- Market / economic support for development at station area
  - Limited market support for residential, commercial, employment and mixed uses (1)
  - Relatively reasonable market support for two or more uses in the station area (3)
  - Strong market support for identified uses (5)
- Degree of alignment between market opportunities and plan recommendations
  - Limited market support for residential, commercial, employment and mixed uses (1)
  - Relatively reasonable market support for two or more uses in the station area (3)
  - Strong market support for identified uses (5)

## ***2.4 Transit Supportive Land Use Ranking Results***

The following table (Table 2) presents the results of the transit-supportive land use ranking exercise. The most influential categories, defined as those characteristics which would most significantly impact the transit-supportive character of a station area, are highlighted in red and discussed in Section 2.5. Station area performance in these categories can become key differentiators in the overall evaluation process because of their significant impact. The “Average Station Ranking” score is the average of each station area’s performance in all nine categories. The “Average Market Area Ranking” is the composite score of all station area rankings within a market area.

| Market Area          | Station                                       | Transit-Supportive Existing Land Use | Existing Street Network Connectivity | Infermodal Capability | Supportive Parking Policies | Properties Subject to Change to Transit-Supportive Uses | Degree to which Current Citywide / Neighborhood Plans Support Transit | Degree to which Current Zoning Supports TOD and Market | Degree to which Market Appears to Support Development | Degree of Alignment Between Market and Plan | Summary Points | Average Station Ranking | Average Market Area Ranking |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Waterworks           | 18th Avenue / Armour Boulevard and Burlington | 3                                    | 5                                    | 4                     | 2                           | 2   | 3   | 2  | 4   | 5   | 30             | 3.3                     | 3.4                         |
|                      | 18th Avenue / Armour Boulevard and Swift      | 4                                    | 5                                    | 4                     | 2                           | 3   | 3   | 2  | 4   | 5   | 32             | 3.6                     |                             |
| River Market         | 1st Avenue and Riverfront                     | 2                                    | 3                                    | 2                     | 4                           | 5   | 5   | 5  | 5   | 3   | 34             | 3.8                     | 4.3                         |
|                      | 3rd Avenue and Grand                          | 5                                    | 5                                    | 5                     | 4                           | 5   | 5   | 5  | 5   | 5   | 44             | 4.8                     |                             |
| Downtown             | 9th Avenue and Grand                          | 5                                    | 5                                    | 5                     | 4                           | 5   | 5   | 5  | 5   | 5   | 44             | 4.8                     | 4.8                         |
| Crossroads           | 18th Avenue and Grand                         | 4                                    | 5                                    | 4                     | 4                           | 4   | 5   | 5  | 5   | 5   | 41             | 4.8                     | 4.8                         |
| Midtown              | Armour and Main                               | 5                                    | 5                                    | 4                     | 4                           | 3   | 5   | 4  | 5   | 3   | 38             | 4.2                     | 4.2                         |
|                      | 39th and 40th Avenues / Westport and Main     | 4                                    | 5                                    | 5                     | 4                           | 3   | 5   | 4  | 5   | 3   | 36             | 4.2                     |                             |
| Linwood              | Troost and Linwood                            | 4                                    | 5                                    | 5                     | 4                           | 5   | 5   | 4  | 2   | 2   | 36             | 4.0                     | 4.0                         |
| Brush Creek Corridor | Prospect Avenue and Swope Parkway             | 3                                    | 4                                    | 4                     | 4                           | 5   | 4   | 4  | 3   | 3   | 34             | 3.8                     | 3.8                         |

Table 2: Transit-Supportive Land Use Ranking Matrix

The Average Market Area Rankings are presented below in Table 3. The first series provides the overall ranking based on the nine categories; the second series is the average of each market area's ranking within the four most influential, or key differentiator, categories.

| AVERAGE OF PERFORMANCE IN ALL NINE CATEGORIES BY MARKET AREA |              |          |            |         |         |                      |
|--|--------------|----------|------------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Waterworks   | River Market | Downtown | Crossroads | Midtown | Linwood | Brush Creek Corridor |
| 3.4  | 4.3          | 4.9      | 4.6        | 4.2     | 4.0     | 3.8                  |

| AVERAGE OF PERFORMANCE IN KEY DIFFERENTIATOR CATEGORIES BY MARKET AREA |              |          |            |         |         |                      |
|--|--------------|----------|------------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Waterworks   | River Market | Downtown | Crossroads | Midtown | Linwood | Brush Creek Corridor |
| 3.0  | 4.6          | 5.0      | 4.5        | 4.1     | 3.8     | 3.8                  |

**Table 3: Results of Transit-Supportive Land Use Ranking by Market Area**

## **2.5 Summary of Ranking Results**

Table 2 and Table 3 indicate that several of the market areas exhibit a comparatively strong transit-supportive environment when evaluated in the context of existing conditions, the presence of transit-supportive plans and policies, and market development potential.

The following six outputs of the ranking process have been identified as policy conclusions to be considered during the remainder of the evaluation process:

1. The rankings of the market areas that had either the least supportive public policies or which were judged most subject to change were the most affected (either negatively or positively) when evaluated solely on its performance in the four most influential categories.
2. The overall ranking for the Midtown market area was negatively affected by the disconnect between development market potential and the level of development defined in the neighborhood plan: the market would support a much greater density of development than the plan allows.
3. Overall rankings for the River Market area were negatively impacted by the matrix's emphasis on existing land use and infrastructure: while this area is subject to the greatest degree of change based on the implementation of a transit system, existing industrial uses, vacant land, and sparse infrastructure negatively skewed the market area's overall ranking.
4. The overall ranking for the Waterworks market area was negatively impacted by an absence of transit-supportive public policies. This absence precludes properties from becoming transit-supportive regardless of market demand.
5. Kansas City's proposed Development Code and existing citywide and neighborhood plans have had a substantially positive impact on station area rankings.

6. The Linwood market area ranked comparatively highly because of existing transit-supportive uses and plans, which masks the impact of a market that does not currently support market-rate development within the area.

The station-area specific land use analysis presented in the following section provides recommendations that can be undertaken to enhance each station area's transit-supportive character, and as a result, their potential ranking within the New Starts process.

## **Section 3: Transit-Supportive Land Uses**

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### ***3.1 Transit-Supportive Land Use in Market Areas - Existing Conditions, Policies and Recommendations***

#### **Market Area: Waterworks**

Both of the Waterworks market area station locations are in North Kansas City, which was conceived of in the late 1800s as a master planned town whose purpose was to leverage its own economic growth from the trade and industry activity occurring in Kansas City. Today, North Kansas City remains an economic engine that is home to over 1,000 companies, including many industry leaders, located within its 4.2 square miles. This economic vitality exists despite a comparatively small residential population: 4,708 in 2000, representing an eight percent increase from 1990.<sup>3</sup>

Both Burlington and Swift have been designated as two of the planning areas identified within the City's Master Plan (2003). The Plan also recognizes and "reinforces North Kansas City's regional image as defined by industrial development."<sup>4</sup> This articulated desire to continue to cultivate the city's image as an industrial center also provides clear direction for future land use decisions, economic development activity, and priorities for public investment. It is important to include station locations on both Burlington and Swift in this assessment to highlight the differences in land uses (discussed below) along both of these corridors, and how transit could affect these uses.

#### **Potential Station Location: 18th Avenue and Burlington**

Burlington is the primary north-south corridor for vehicular traffic through North Kansas City, providing connections both to the south and downtown Kansas City over the Heart of America Bridge, and into Kansas City north through junctions with both the North Oak Trafficway and Highway 9. The high vehicular capacity and connectivity of Burlington, in combination with the adjacent freight railroad right-of-way, has both influenced and supported Burlington's industrial and manufacturing character.

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<sup>3</sup> City of North Kansas City, "North Kansas City: The Tradition of Progress Lives On," <http://www.nkc.org/council/index.htm?usid=580>.

<sup>4</sup> City of North Kansas City, "Master Plan 2002-03 Revision, (2003): 1.

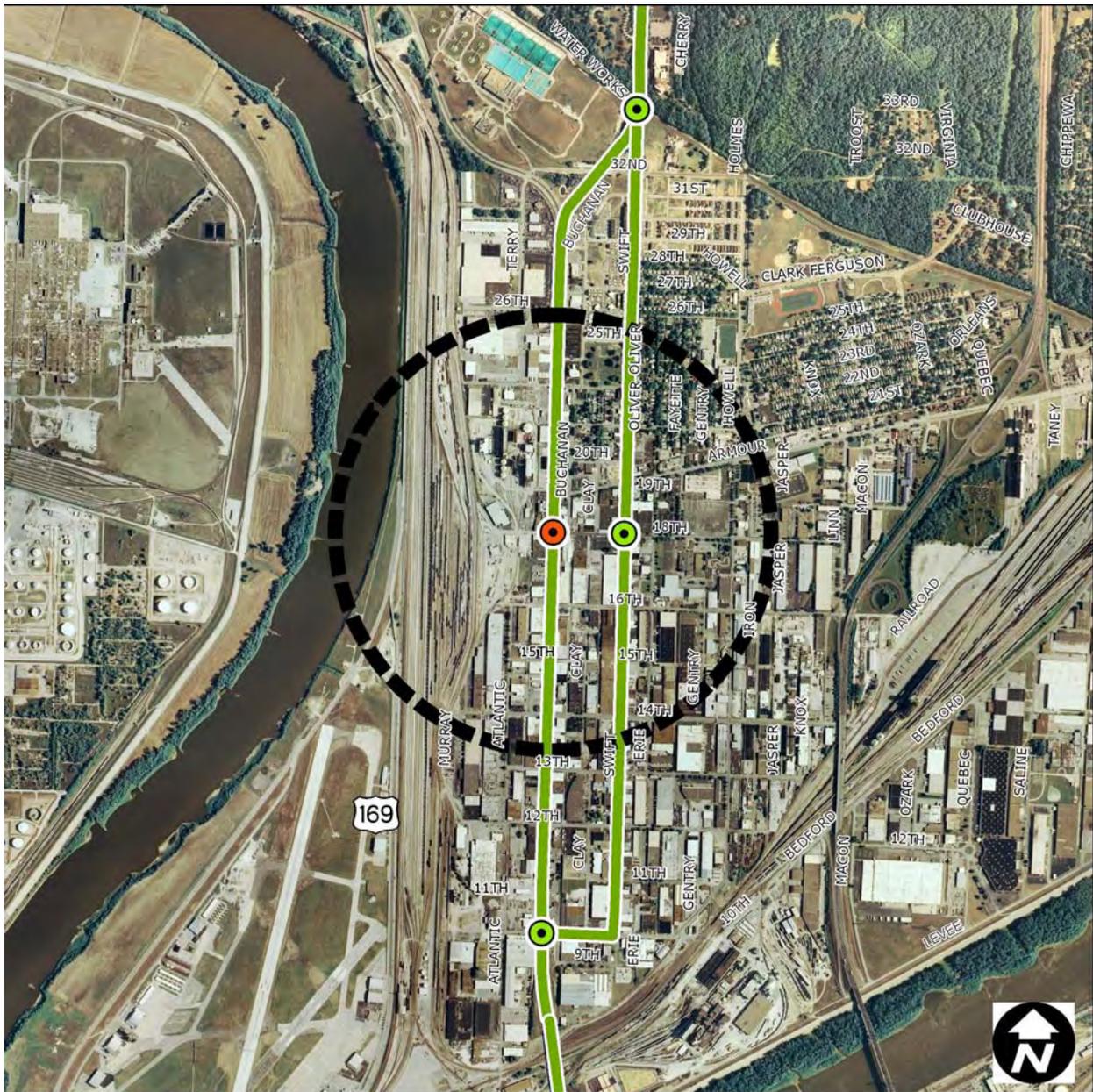


Figure 7: Potential Station Location at 18th Avenue and Burlington

## Existing Conditions

### Existing Land Use and Development Patterns

Existing land uses along Burlington are predominantly lower-density manufacturing and industrial uses (M1 and M2) supported by service and retail businesses (C1, C2, C2B, C3) in one- or two-story structures. These buildings are generally older; many are out-dated and face challenges in supporting the infrastructure needs of modern industry. One notable exception to this pattern of lower-density development is the former Archer Daniels Midland site on Burlington between 18<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, which is in the process of being demolished. One multi-story building will be retained, and the City is currently evaluating possibilities for the redevelopment of this site.

The City has expressed a desire to retain the manufacturing and industrial character of this corridor. The implementation of a transit system along one of the main corridors in North Kansas City could help to meet this goal through the reinforcement of the existing land uses

while providing an opportunity to update the access to and appearance of these uses. The proposed station location at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington would provide service to the existing businesses along Burlington, while also providing direct access to Armour Road, which links Burlington with the retail and civic core of North Kansas City.

### **Existing Population Density**

As illustrated in Figure 3, existing population density within the proposed station area ranks as low to low-medium. By 2030, MARC projects that densities in some low areas will increase to low-medium. Because of the comparatively small amount of residential population within North Kansas City and current zoning that largely prohibits residential uses within the station area, this relatively low density of population is not unexpected. North Kansas City's orientation as a center of commerce and industry and the station's location on Burlington will result in ridership patterns that depend on employee rather than residential usage.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

As previously discussed, Burlington Street is the major north-south arterial through North Kansas City, providing connections between the Northland and Kansas City's Central Business District. There are three general purpose lanes and one parking lane in each direction, and turn lanes at selected intersections to further facilitate traffic flow. Because North Kansas City is laid out on a grid system of streets, easy east-west access opportunities exist along the length of the street and provide connectivity to the residential, commercial, and industrial uses to the east and the industrial uses to the west.

#### ***Street Network Density***

North Kansas City's grid provides a fairly consist, high-density and well-connected street network. The exceptions to this grid network, where they occur, lie on the western side of Burlington where heavier industrial and manufacturing uses occupy larger parcels that abut the existing freight railroad. Roadway access is still available, but at a lower frequency than exists throughout the rest of North Kansas City.

#### ***Transit***

Burlington is one of the primary transit corridors through North Kansas City and is utilized by several KCATA bus routes, including the 37, 38, 38X, 129, 132, 133, 133X, 142, and NKC MetroFlex on demand service. These routes typically run north-south through North Kansas City, connecting the Northland with downtown Kansas City. Headways vary between routes and day of the week. The proposed station location would serve as a connector to existing bus routes, particularly the routes that travel east-west along Armour Road.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

The combination of industrial and manufacturing uses along Burlington with the high traffic volumes of the street itself combine to create an environment that is currently neither bicycle- nor pedestrian-friendly. An incomplete sidewalk network exists along Burlington Street and there are no bike lanes. The heavy traffic volume and the larger scale of the vehicles associated with adjacent land uses create an environment that is comparatively hostile to bicyclists. Block lengths are long and multiple curb cuts create an environment that is better suited to automotive rather than pedestrian usage. Existing retail uses, including an Avis rental car facility on the southeast corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington and a gas station on the northeast corner of Armour Road and Burlington, further reinforce the automotive orientation of Burlington Street.

## **Urban Design Conditions**

The industrial and manufacturing character of the corridor is manifested in an urban design condition that accommodates the freight rail and truck access required by existing businesses. Specifically, multiple curb cuts and numerous access points provide vehicular entry to comparatively large parcels that are dominated by one-story structures which are generally oriented to side and rear parking lots rather than the street frontage. Some of the existing commercial and retail structures do accommodate pedestrian usage, however, through smaller-scale buildings with pedestrian-friendly signage and a large amount of window space on Burlington Street.

As discussed previously, the sidewalk network is incomplete; the existing sidewalk is often poorly maintained, narrow, and interrupted by street signs, fire hydrants, and light poles. There is very little landscaping and no street furniture. Medians provide some landscape buffering down the center of Burlington Street, but only portions of these medians are landscaped.

## **Market Conditions**

North Kansas City is considered a desirable residential location because of its high level of public services, safe neighborhoods and highly-rated school district. The majority of residential development occurring in the Waterworks market area is multi-family rental units that are moderately-priced. Retail uses are limited and predominantly oriented to small retail and service businesses, or restaurants serving the large daytime employment-based population. Because North Kansas City is better known for its industrial uses, it does not currently support a significant amount of office uses. Development and redevelopment opportunities exist in the business district on Swift Street between 12<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenues, as well as at the intersection of Armour Road and Burlington Street. This area is expected to remain industrial in character, but additional demand for retail will develop as the population grows.

## **Current Plans and Policies**

### **Current Plans**

The City of North Kansas City adopted its current Master Plan in 2003.

### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The Master Plan divides the city into a series of planning areas and corridors, one of which is the Burlington Street Corridor. While this station area also covers additional corridors and areas, including the Downtown, Armour, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Swift between 12<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenues, the most relevant planning efforts are outlined for the Burlington Street Corridor. The first planning goal identified for this area is to “continue to enhance gateway features and visual enhancements along the corridor,” which is to be achieved through:

- Improved connections into downtown North Kansas City and adjacent areas at 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as well as Armour Road through the use of alternative access points,
- The construction of mixed-use projects that improve multi-modal mobility because Burlington Street is a primary transit route into North Kansas City, and
- Focused pedestrian connections towards key intersections.

The second planning goal is to “encourage a development pattern that supports existing uses and automobile movement in the corridor,” through:

- Minimized curb cuts and improved alley access,
- The use of shared access points and cross easement access where curb cuts are necessary, and

- Reduced setbacks in order to create greater visual continuity.

City staff has indicated that there is no desire to change the land uses that are along Burlington Street, but to improve their appearance and increase the opportunity for multi-modal travel within the corridor.

### ***Parking***

North Kansas City's zoning code expresses parking requirements in minimums: R1-A, R1-B, and R-3 districts require two spaces per dwelling unit, and R-4 requires one per one-bedroom dwelling unit and two for two or more bedroom units. These are not considered transit-supportive levels of parking. The C-1, C-2, and C-3 districts require 4.5 off-street parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area, which is also not considered transit-supportive. The C-2 district, however, does not require parking for commercial uses, but requires one space per bedroom for residential uses, to a maximum of two spaces, which is considered to be transit-supportive. Manufacturing districts require one space per 1,000 square feet of total floor area, a level which is also considered to be transit-supportive. For all of these districts, with the exception of C-2, all structures must provide this parking in garages or open areas which are exclusively designated for parking.

The code does allow for some parking reduction strategies, however. The C-1, C-2B, and C-3 districts allow the parking requirement to be met by the spaces in a City-owned public parking facility, as long as the commercial property is located within 300 feet of the facility. Additionally, there is non-metered on-street parking available on both sides of Burlington Street.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

The Master Plan recommends pedestrian-friendly design at key locations throughout the city, including the downtown, but does not specifically recommend them for Burlington Street. The character of the existing development, the pattern of existing land use, and the future land use goals outlined for Burlington Street in the Master Plan are focused on facilitating traffic flow rather than improving the pedestrian environment. The stated planning strategy of focusing pedestrian connections at key intersections prioritizes vehicular traffic by requiring pedestrians to travel further to access connection points. The goal of this strategy is to reduce conflict between pedestrians and drivers, but it is pedestrians, rather than drivers, whose behavior must be modified to reach this goal.

### ***Design Guidelines***

Design guidelines are enforced for the C-2 and C-2b commercial districts, both of which are mapped within the station area. The zoning code specifies that "all applications for building or land use permits in the C-2 retail business district shall be evaluated to determine that it conforms to or enhances the character of the district. When reviewing a plan, the planning commission shall determine the compatibility of the proposed development with adjacent buildings, structures, and uses."<sup>5</sup> The evaluation criteria for both districts include:

- A zero building setback,
- Exterior public spaces are encouraged to enhance pedestrian activity,
- Buildings shall be considered in terms of their relationship to the height, massing, materials, and colors of adjacent buildings,
- Buildings shall maintain a pedestrian orientation at the street level,
- Buildings shall be located to front towards public streets,
- Paving materials shall be appropriate to their location and purpose,

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<sup>5</sup> City of North Kansas City, "The Code of the City of North Kansas City," (2001): 17.48.080.

- Buildings shall avoid long, monotonous, uninterrupted walls or roof planes,
- Visible facades shall be architecturally emphasized through fenestration, entrance treatment, and details, and
- Exterior light fixtures shall be compatible with the style, materials, colors, and details of the buildings.

These design guidelines are enforced through a series of pre-development meetings with City staff.

## **Current Policies**

### ***Zoning ordinance***

There are currently 14 zoning districts in North Kansas City categorized into residential, commercial, manufacturing, planned district, and gaming. The relevant districts mapped within the half-mile radius of the proposed station location at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington include M-1, M-2, C-1, C-2, C-2B, C-3, R1-A, R1-B, and R-4. The City does not offer any overlay districts. The Northgate Village Planned Unit Development (PUD), the city's only PUD, is a \$100 million, 800-unit mixed-use planned development built according to pedestrian-friendly guidelines that is located at the northern end of the proposed transit alignment between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenues along Swift Street.

The residential districts abutting the transit alignment do not, however, allow any mixing of uses, and no residential uses are permitted in the C-3 commercial or either of the manufacturing districts. The C-1 commercial district allows single-family dwellings and garden-type apartment buildings, and the C-2, C-2B commercial district allows residential usage limited to above-ground floors and for which residential is not the principle use of the structure.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

Given the industrial and manufacturing character of the city, it is logical for North Kansas City to protect residential uses from any adverse impacts associated with these businesses by segregating uses. The City may want to consider, however, allowing mixed-use developments within a half-radius of the proposed transit stations in order meet the stated goals of focusing pedestrian connectivity, increasing multi-modal transportation opportunities, and encouraging pedestrian-friendly development.

Because of this existing separation of uses, the City may want to consider creating Transit-Oriented Development overlay zones within a half-mile radius of proposed transit station locations to facilitate higher-density, mixed-use development in selected locations. This would allow the City to maintain the industrial identity of the city while allowing for transit-supportive development within targeted locations, including the intersection of Burlington and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

The City utilizes a number of financial and policy incentives to stimulate new development and retain existing employers and residents. For example, the City has invested \$10 million in the creation and installation of a city-wide fiber optic network to ensure that businesses and residents have access to high-quality technological infrastructure.

The City, however, does not offer any development or policy incentives for the construction of transit-oriented or pedestrian-friendly development. Like its neighbor, Kansas City, North Kansas City faces the development challenges that are associated with infill development. It is an established community that is landlocked and has no opportunity for physical expansion, and provides very limited opportunity for greenfield development. Because of this, the City may want to consider assisting developers with parcel assembly to mitigate one of the development obstacles associated with infill development. Reduced parking requirements and streamlined

permitting review are two more incentives that the City may want to consider in order to encourage a pattern of development that is transit-supportive while still supporting the vehicular traffic circulation patterns necessary to support existing industrial and manufacturing businesses. Existing industrial business have expressed concerns about maintaining truck access to their facilities after the construction of a rail transit line. The City must work with these business owners to ensure that their mobility needs are met.

### ***Improvement Projects***

The City should implement streetscape improvements along the length of Burlington Street, including targeted improvements at the proposed station location, in order to create a more aesthetically-pleasing environment for both motorists and pedestrians and to buffer industrial and manufacturing facilities both from the street and from adjacent land uses. Streetscaping can provide visual cues to the industrial nature of the corridor, while still safely accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists through the implementation of bike lanes, paved sidewalks, landscaping, street furniture, and signalized crossings.

# Potential Station Location: 18th Avenue and Swift

## Introduction

The proposed station location at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Swift is about one-fifth of a mile east of the proposed 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington station, but the difference in character and scale of development is notable. Only one of these two proposed station locations will be chosen, and this choice will be largely based on the differences in existing and future land use and development patterns. Whereas Burlington Street supports manufacturing and industrial uses as a high-capacity thoroughfare, the development along Swift is characterized by smaller-scale retail and commercial uses mixed with comparatively smaller-scale manufacturing and industrial facilities.

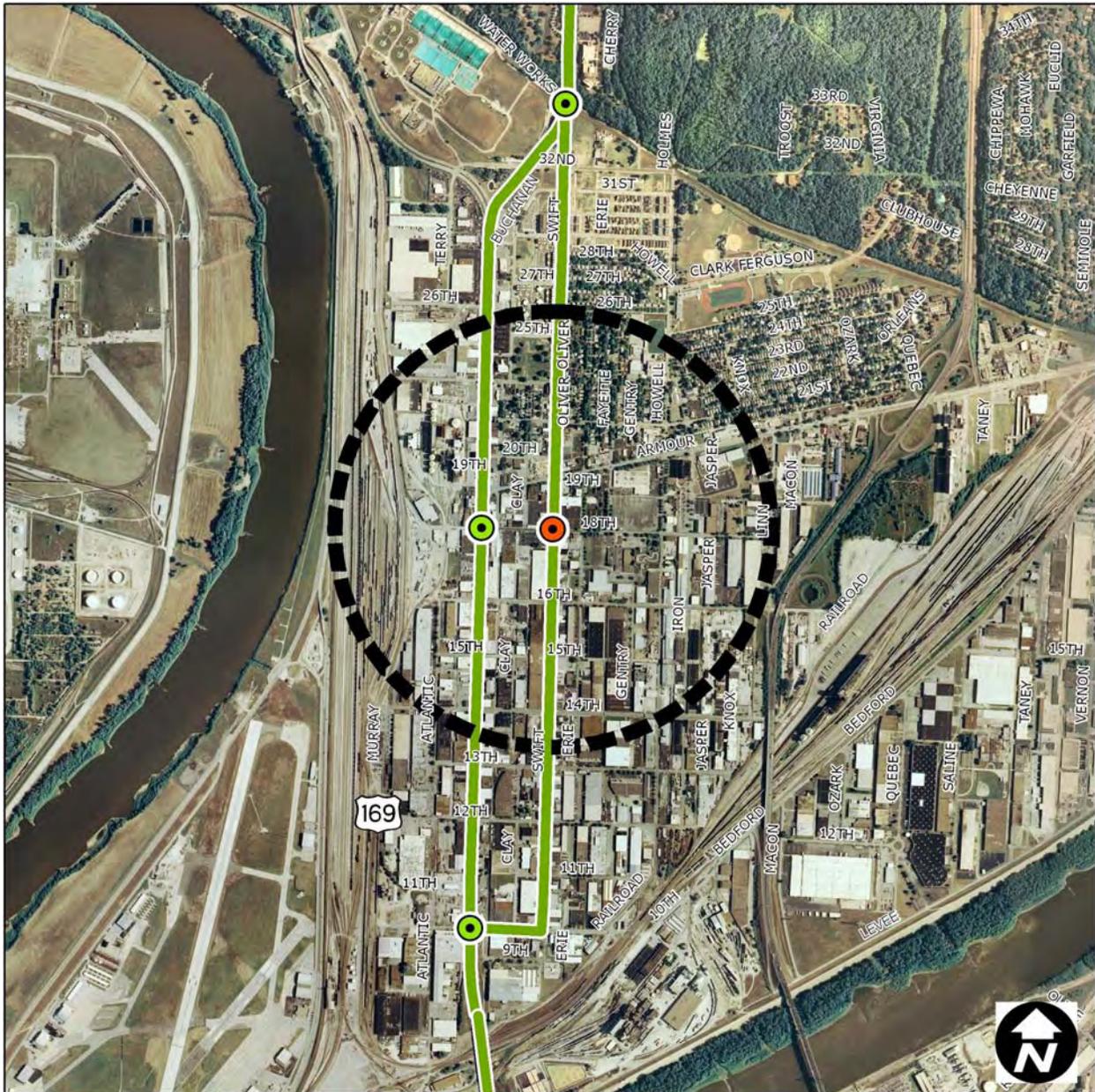


Figure 8: Potential Station Location at 18th Avenue and Swift

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Existing Land Use and Development Patterns**

The northern edge of the half-mile station radius passes through the Northgate Village Development, the city's only Planned Unit Development, which is a mixture of senior housing, market-rate and affordable condominiums, and rental units with space for supportive retail. The development straddles Swift Street from East 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. While this development also falls within the station area for the proposed station location at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington, its impact on character and scale of development is much more apparent along Swift Street. South of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, single-family residential uses transition to commercial uses until reaching the commercial and retail center of North Kansas City at the intersection of Swift and Armour Road. Between Armour and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is approximately the southern boundary of the station radius, the eastern side of Swift retains a smaller-scale commercial and retail character, while the western side supports lower-density one- and two-story manufacturing uses.

### **Existing Population Density**

Because of this station's proximity to the proposed location at Burlington and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the population density characteristics are the same: currently between low and low-medium and projected to increase to low-medium in some areas by 2030. Because Swift Street bisects the Northgate Village Development and adjacent single-family residential, it is possible that the marginal increase in proximity and greater visibility could encourage higher rates of ridership.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

Unlike Burlington Street, Swift Street has only one general purpose lane in each direction, has turning lanes at some intersections, and supports diagonal on-street parking. There is no median south of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Because the city is laid out on a grid network, however, a smaller-capacity road does not necessarily reduce accessibility to or connectivity with other roadways. Drivers along Swift can still access the residential neighborhoods at the northern end of the station radius and the manufacturing, industrial and commercial uses on connecting streets throughout the balance of the station area.

#### ***Street Network Density***

As mentioned above, North Kansas City's grid provides a fairly consist, high-density and well-connected street network. The only major exception to the complete grid is the western side of Swift between 16<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenues, which is one large parcel supporting a two-story manufacturing building.

#### ***Transit***

Swift shares some of the Metro bus routes with Burlington, including the 38 and 133, as well as the 135. The area along Armour between Swift and Burlington offers transfer opportunities between a number of the Metro routes that travel through North Kansas City.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

The scale of Swift, as previously described, in combination with the variety of land uses, is much more conducive to pedestrian and bicycle activity than Burlington. While there is no designated bike lanes, the lighter traffic volume and urban design conditions encourage drivers to reduce speeds and become more aware of non-vehicular traffic. An intact sidewalk network and average block lengths encourage pedestrian usage and allow direct pedestrian connections. Clearly-marked pedestrian crossings, comparatively fewer curb cuts than Burlington, and fewer traffic lanes than Burlington also contribute to an environment that invites pedestrian use.

## **Urban Design Conditions**

The character and urban design conditions of Swift change when moving from the residential portion at the northern end of the station area, through the commercial node at Swift and Armour, to the manufacturing and industrial uses at the southern end. The residential area is characterized by single-family homes and Northgate Village along Swift, which is designed as a boulevard-style street with a median and landscaping. Well-maintained open space, light traffic volume, and the well-maintained sidewalk network contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic increase near the commercial node at Armour and Swift, which is characterized by attractive landscaping, visually distinctive sidewalk paving, street furniture, lighting, curb bump-outs, and pedestrian-scale retail with appropriate signage and consistent street frontage. South of this commercial node, this scale and pattern of pedestrian-friendly development continues along the eastern frontage of Swift, while the western side more quickly transitions to manufacturing and industrial uses. These uses tend to be larger in scale and oriented away from the street frontage with side and rear vehicular access and multiple curb cuts within single blocks.

The current Master Plan provides strategies to improve the pedestrian-friendly nature of the corridor's urban design, including:

- Encouraging new development in this area to extend the streetscape and building character of downtown into the Swift Corridor, and
- Encouraging any new buildings in the transitional areas along Swift to maintain the scale and orientation of buildings in the downtown area with primary entrances, porches, and stoops addressing the street.

## **Market Conditions**

Because of this station area's proximity to the potential station location at 18<sup>th</sup> and Burlington, the market conditions are similar. North Kansas City is considered a desirable residential location because of its high level of public services, safe neighborhoods and highly-rated school district. The majority of residential development occurring in the Waterworks market area is multi-family rental units that are moderately-priced. Retail uses are limited and predominantly oriented to small retail and service businesses, or restaurants serving the large daytime employment-based population. Because North Kansas City is better known for its industrial uses, it does not currently support a significant amount of office uses. Development and redevelopment opportunities exist in the business district on Swift Street between 12<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenues, as well as at the intersection of Armour Road and Burlington Street. This area is expected to remain industrial in character, but additional demand for retail will develop as the population grows.

## **Current Plans and Policies**

The City of North Kansas City adopted its current Master Plan in 2003.

### **Current Plans**

#### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The Master Plan divides the city into a series of planning areas and corridors, six of which affect this station area: Downtown, Northgate Village, Armour Road, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Burlington Corridor, and Swift Street between 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. The most relevant planning areas are Northgate Village and Swift between 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. The planning goal for Northgate Village is to sustain the design character and development goals of the Northgate Village redevelopment process by working to ensure that the area remains a diverse, high-quality neighborhood. This goal will be achieved through:

- Continued monitoring of the development process to ensure that redevelopment is consistent with the vision of the TIF plan,
- The integration of redevelopment projects occurring outside Northgate Village development boundaries with commercial and residential development that is occurring within the project boundaries, and
- Ongoing improvements to perimeter property through its redevelopment, rehabilitation or maintenance.

The goals of the corridor along Swift between 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are to apply development, design, and streetscape standards similar to Downtown North Kansas City and reinforce the residential character of Northgate Village and the boulevard character of Swift Street north of 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue. These goals will be achieved through:

- Exploring opportunities to visually break up the paved area on Swift from 18<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Streets through planting or implementing a boulevard street configuration,
- Promoting a consistent setback and orientation of buildings the entire length of Swift, particularly between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenues,
- Investigating strategies for private owners to use alleys for vehicular access and parking so that new development can maintain reduced building setbacks and form a consistent frontage along the street, and
- Promoting and reinforcing transitional uses along Swift from 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, including live/work units, office, light industrial and retail uses.

### ***Parking***

While Burlington Street offers parallel on-street parking, Swift Street has diagonal on-street parking in addition to public surface parking lots. The general parking requirements outlined in the City's zoning ordinance and discussed above also apply to this station area.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

The City's Master Plan identifies Swift Street as "a north-south corridor, which has the potential to develop as a more pedestrian or multi-modal corridor given the variety of land uses and the extension of commercial activity south of Downtown." While this statement acknowledges the desire to become a more pedestrian corridor, the planning goals and strategies do not provide specific activities to achieve this vision.

### ***Design Guidelines***

The design guidelines that are applicable to this station area are the same as those described for the potential 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington station location, including:

- A zero building setback,
- Exterior public spaces are encouraged to enhance pedestrian activity,
- Buildings shall be considered in terms of their relationship to the height, massing, materials, and colors of adjacent buildings,
- Buildings shall maintain a pedestrian orientation at the street level,
- Buildings shall be located to front towards public streets,
- Paving materials shall be appropriate to their location and purpose,
- Buildings shall avoid long, monotonous, uninterrupted walls or roof planes,
- Visible facades shall be architecturally emphasized through fenestration, entrance treatment, and details, and

- Exterior light fixtures shall be compatible with the style, materials, colors, and details of the buildings.

## **Current Policies**

### ***Zoning Ordinance***

Because of its close proximity to the potential 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington station location, this station location contains many of the same zoning districts. The relevant districts mapped within the half-mile radius of the proposed station location at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Swift include M-1, M-2, C-1, C-2, C-2B, C-3, R1-A, R1-B, and R-4.

As is the case in the potential 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burlington station location, the residential districts abutting the transit alignment do not allow any mixing of uses, and no residential uses are permitted in the C-3 commercial or either of the manufacturing districts. The C-1 commercial district allows single-family dwellings and garden-type apartment buildings, and the C-2, C-2B commercial district allows residential usage limited to above-ground floors and for which residential is not the principle use of the structure.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

While the character and land use patterns of the Swift and Burlington corridors are largely dissimilar, similar planning initiatives could be used to both preserve existing and plan for future planning goals: the City may want to consider allowing mixed-use developments within a half-mile radius of the proposed transit stations in order to meet the goals outlined in the Master Plan. These goals include using the same development, design, and streetscape standards as the downtown while encouraging pedestrian-friendly development and reinforcing the residential character of Swift north of 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue in the Northgate Village area.

In order to achieve the fine-grained pattern of development that would effectively support the variety of uses within the Swift Corridor, the City may want to consider creating Transit-Oriented Development overlay zones within a half-mile radius of proposed transit station locations. This would allow the City to maintain the residential identity of Northgate Village, while allowing for commercial uses at Armour and Swift, and protecting industrial and manufacturing uses at the southern end of the station area.

The City may also want to consider implementing varying streetscape and gateway elements to further identify transition points between land uses, as well as wayfinding signage to destinations such as City Hall, Northgate Village, the casinos, and I-29. Despite the comparatively small geographic size of North Kansas City, it supports a number of diverse and distinctive land uses. Additional signage and district branding could serve to highlight this variety while effectively directing vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

Because both the Burlington and Swift stations are subject to the same incentives offered by the City of North Kansas City, similar policy recommendations to encourage transit-supportive development are applicable to both. As discussed above, the City utilizes a number of financial and policy incentives to stimulate new development and retain existing employers and residents, including the new \$10 million citywide fiber optic network. The City's emphasis on investment in modern telecommunications infrastructure is in the process of being leveraged to support the creation of a technology center and business incubator along Swift between 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenues. This project could contribute to the creation of a high-tech industry cluster in North Kansas City, a process which has been facilitated by the siting of Cerner Technology in the northeast corner of the city.

The City does not offer any development or policy incentives for the construction of transit-oriented or pedestrian-friendly development. When adaptive re-use opportunities occur, like the construction of a technology center and business incubator in a former manufacturing and industrial facility, the City should ensure that regulations such as parking requirements and urban design standards reflect the new use for the structure, rather than its former use. In the case of the incubator, a location near the proposed transit line in conjunction with staffing levels below those necessary to operate a manufacturing facility could result in reduced parking requirements. As land uses within the corridor transition, planning and development policies should adapt to encourage a higher level of transit-supportive development.

### ***Improvement Projects***

The infrastructure of this corridor, particularly at the intersection of Armour and Swift, is largely well-maintained and pedestrian-friendly. Because the implementation of a rail transit system will function to reduce the need for parking spaces, the City should consider developing a few of the existing public surface parking lots as open green space, or assess the possibility of redeveloping them as transit-supportive office, retail, and /or commercial uses. If the construction of the light rail line will result in a reduction of the on-street parking supply, the City may want to consider building structured parking to provide more parking spaces in less space than is required for surface parking lots.

## **Market Area: River Market**

River Market is an area that is currently transitioning in land use pattern from railroad and industrial uses to mixed-use development, spurred by proximity to the downtown and the availability of large, underutilized parcels of land and former industrial and manufacturing structures. Several large residential projects are currently in the planning or construction phases, including the Columbus Park and Mile Post Station developments. Additionally, the United States General Services Administration is considering a move down to the riverfront from its current south Kansas City site. Single- and multi-family residential pockets currently exist in this area, as does the City Market retail development.

### **Potential Station Location: 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Riverfront**

#### **Introduction**

This station area is unique because it is located at the riverfront and at the bottom of a comparatively steep grade, both of which are geographic characteristics that will require the construction of an elevated rail line and station. This area's development pattern has long been influenced by its geographic and topographic characteristics, from freight railroad right-of-ways laid along the riverfront to transport cargo from ships on the Missouri River to inland markets, to the Heart of America Bridge providing cross-river connections to North Kansas City, as well as access to I-29, I-35, and I-70. This area is also unique because the undeveloped land along the riverfront is owned by one property owner, a condition which allows a more coordinated approach to development than is typically possible amongst a group of smaller property owners.

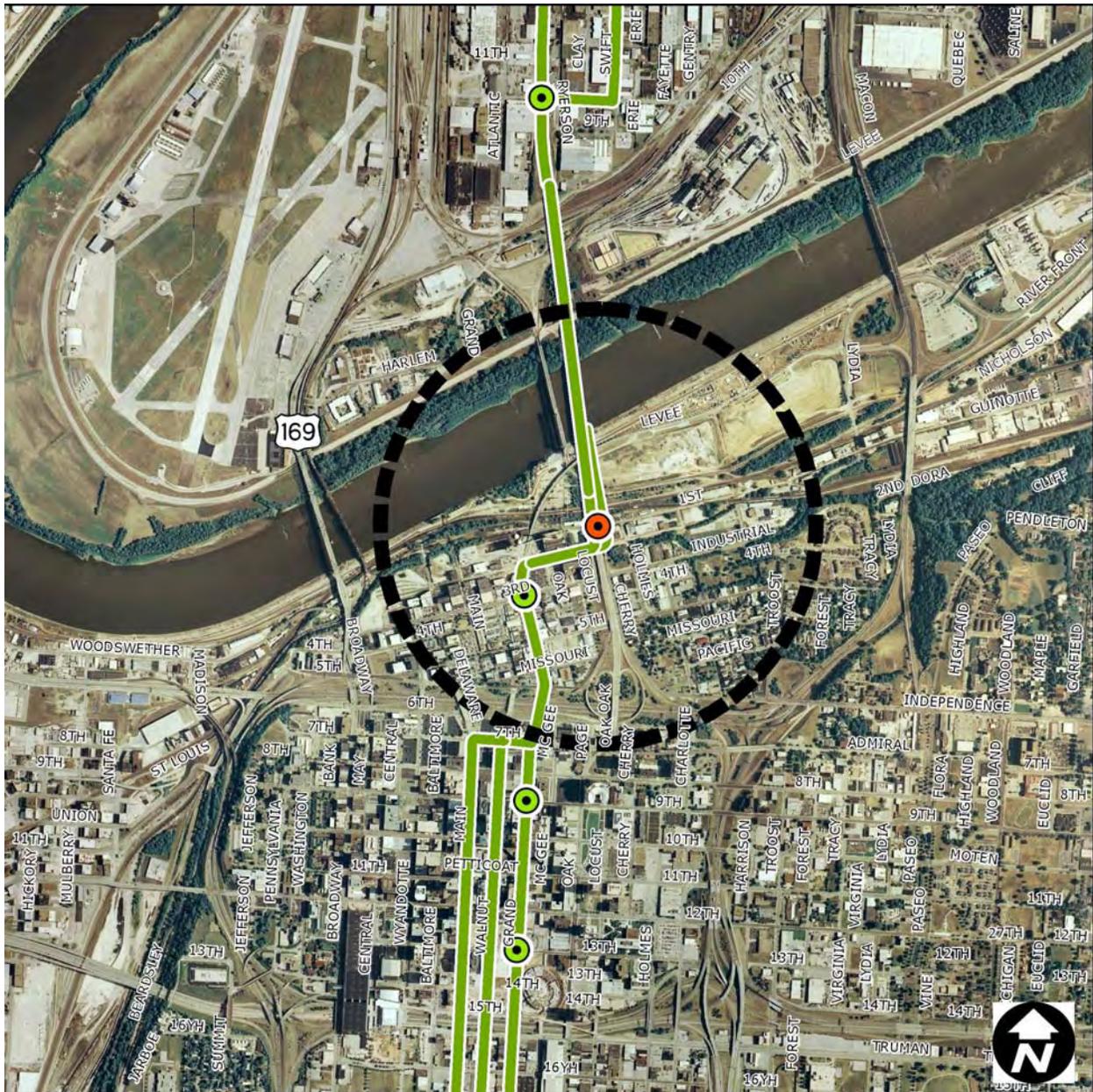


Figure 9: Potential Station Location at East 1st Street and Riverfront

## Existing Conditions

### Existing Land Use and Development Patterns

The industrial and manufacturing activity of the past has left a legacy of sizable parcels of vacant land and large structures in close proximity to the riverfront which are generally unsuitable for modern industrial needs. Some redevelopment activity has already occurred in this area, however, as developers have turned these old structures into rental or condominium housing units and new development is constructed on formerly vacant parcels. Due to the nature of past uses for this land in combination with geographic constraints, the riverfront area is considerably less pedestrian- and vehicular-accessible than the remainder of the station area. The City Market retail development is supported by adjacent ethnic markets, which are within walking distance of both the higher-density condos and apartments on the west side of Cherry Street, as well as the lower-density single- and multi-family housing on the eastern side of Cherry Street. Public utility facilities stretch from the Heart of America Bridge on the east to

East 2<sup>nd</sup> and Main Streets. Columbus Park and the Richard L. Berkeley Riverfront Park are large, open, public parklands stretching along the riverfront east from the Heart of America Bridge. The eastern half of the station area is low-density industrial and manufacturing uses which transition to residential south of 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The firm geographic boundaries of the river, the Heart of America Bridge, and I-35/I-70 contribute to a defined sense of space, even though the built environment is typically low-density.

### **Existing Population Density**

As illustrated in Figure 3 and Figure 4, the population density of this station area is expected to grow from an existing classification of low density to low-medium density by 2030. Because this area is undergoing a transition in land use from non-residential manufacturing and industrial uses to a higher concentration of residential uses, it is important note that, as shown in Figure 6, the percentage population change between 2000 and 2030 is projected to exceed at least 50 percent on the east side of the Heart of America Bridge, and more than 100 percent on the west side.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

The Heart of America Bridge and presence of multiple highways combine to reduce the necessity for non-local drivers to cut through the River Market area. Because of these adjacent high-capacity roadways, traffic volumes in River Market are comparatively low, but retain excellent connectivity to these larger roadways through multiple access points and interchanges. The grid street network is largely intact, which allows efficient circulation throughout the area.

#### ***Street Network Density***

As mentioned previously, River Market retains the grid street network on which both Kansas City and North Kansas City are laid. North of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, however, the freight railroad right-of-way marks the transition point to open space, which has limited roadway access, down to the riverfront.

#### ***Transit***

The northern terminus of the KCATA's MAX BRT bus route is on the northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Main, which also functions as a park-and-ride facility. The MAX operates along Main Street, connecting River Market to the Loop, Crown Center and Country Club Plaza before terminating at 51<sup>st</sup> Street. The Metro bus system operates within the River Market area, including the 110 and 126 lines.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

The River Market area has an incomplete sidewalk network and does not provide designated lanes for bicyclists. With the exception of intersections with I-35/I-70, traffic volumes and speed are conducive to supporting a pedestrian- and bike-friendly environment, which could be further supported by the implementation of supportive design guidelines.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

Because of the diversity of land uses within the market area, the character of urban design varies greatly. The City Market area is well-maintained and landscaped, with attractive public plaza areas, decorative street lighting, banners, and parking spaces that are placed either to the rear of structures or effectively buffered from the roadway through landscape screening. The MAX BRT park-and-ride facility is also well-maintained, with attractive curb bump-outs to accommodate buses outside the right-of-way as they pick up and drop off passengers. The residential and commercial uses on the western side of Grand are well-maintained, but the comparatively large number of surface parking lots detracts from the perception of a consistent

street wall or frontage. The industrial uses along Main between 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Independence Avenue are visually and functionally incompatible with the City Market, which is located across the street. Limited landscaping, poor sidewalk condition, excessive curb cuts, and surface parking lots which abut the street contribute to the unpleasant aesthetic environment.

On the eastern side of Cherry Street, the industrial uses bound by 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and Campbell are low-density with extremely limited landscaping, poor sidewalk conditions, and a large number of paved surface parking lots. South of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, as the land uses transition to residential, the urban design conditions greatly improve. Columbus Park is a nicely-maintained open space surrounded by a mixture of well-maintained single- and multi-family residential uses.

### **Market Conditions**

Extensive redevelopment has occurred in the River Market area in the past several years and continued development activity is likely. Much of the activity has been in residential development, including new construction and adaptive reuse of former industrial loft buildings. Rents widely range in the area, due to the mix of market rents and affordable units. The majority of residents in this area live and work downtown. This area has a high degree of specialty retail concentrated in the City Market, but basic retail goods and services are lacking. Office space is primarily occupied by advertising, graphics, architecture and other creative firms. The U.S. General Services Administration is currently evaluating sites for a new building in either the Downtown or River Market area. Several redevelopment opportunities exist in this area, including Columbus Park, east of the Heart of America bridge, and a large site owned by the Port Authority, which could include a significant number of new residential units in conjunction with a mix of office, retail and entertainment uses.

### **Current Plans and Policies**

Three plans are relevant to this potential station location: the FOCUS Kansas City Master Plan (1998), the Kansas City Downtown Corridor Strategy (2005), and the Second Street Infrastructure and Development Plan (2005).

#### **Current Plans**

##### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The FOCUS Kansas City Plan identifies planning goals and initiatives for the Riverfront / River Market District as part of the Central Business Corridor Initiative, including:

- Development of the Riverfront with new mixed-use development,
- Continued support and enhancement of the River Market,
- Encouragement of live-work loft development, and
- Investment in the revitalization of Columbus Park.

The Kansas City Downtown Corridor Strategy identifies the River Market area as an emerging neighborhood built on loft construction and adaptive reuse, but does not offer specific guidelines for future growth.

The Second Street Infrastructure and Development Plan recommends future TOD development that integrates parking with a mix of uses, including commercial-retail, entertainment, office, public uses, and residential development. The Plan explicitly promotes a balanced mix of uses for the area, indicating that:

- Future uses within the corridor should include a mix of residential, retail, office and entertainment uses,

- There should be no expansion of existing industrial uses, although existing industrial may continue operations in a similar manner, and
- Within multi-story structures, retail and office uses are encouraged on the first floor, while office and residential uses are recommended for the upper levels.

The future land use plan outlined in the document reiterates these recommendations, and encourages the conversion of former warehouses to residential loft space.

A number of development projects are in the planning stages within this station area, including:

- Columbus Park: mixed-use, mixed-income development on 22 acres between the Heart of America Bridge and Gillis Street,
- Reconfiguration of Main Street south of the MAX BRT park-and-ride lot at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Main to widen the street, and
- Potential redevelopment of the 55-acre Port Authority site by the United States Government Services Administration.

As rail use continues to decrease because of reduced manufacturing and industrial activity, increased access and circulation to the riverfront parcels should function to spur redevelopment.

### ***Parking***

Required parking ratios for the entire City of Kansas City are expressed in minimums:

- Residential uses: one per dwelling unit,
- Office, administrative professional, or general: one per 1,000 square feet, and
- Retail: 2.5 per 1,000 square feet.

Lots containing more than one principal use must provide parking in an amount equal to the total requirements for all principal uses.

The proposed City Development Code allows the City planning director to authorize up to a 25 percent reduction in office parking ratio for uses located within 500 feet of a transit stop with 30-minute or more frequent service during the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. Parking exemptions are proposed for parcels within 500 feet of a rapid transit stop, which include:

- Office and manufacturing uses are not required to provide off-street parking spaces for the first 10,000 square feet of gross floor area,
- Retail sales-related uses are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, and
- Restaurants are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 2,000 square feet of gross floor area.

The River Market area could also be mapped as part of the Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) zoning designation under the proposed Development Code. Within these districts, small commercial businesses may be eligible for existing parking requirement exemptions. If the area is mapped as a Pedestrian-Oriented overlay district (P/O) under the proposed code non-residential uses are not required to provide off-street parking unless such uses exceed 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, in which case off-street parking must be provided for the floor area in excess of 4,000 square feet.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

The KCMO Citywide Trails Plan, administered by the City's Park District, was developed to guide the development and maintenance of a city-wide trail system for pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian use. In October 2007, the City was granted \$2.5 million by the Federal government

for trail construction and maintenance in Kansas City, including the bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Missouri River on the Heart of America Bridge.

Additionally, the City has a number of existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments. The proposed Development Code also allows for reduction in required vehicular parking in exchange for the provision of bicycle, scooter, and motorcycle parking. This policy functions to encourage the use of bicycles while promoting a development pattern that is less reliant on the accommodation of automobiles.

### ***Design Guidelines***

The proposed Development Code requires site plan review for all development, with the exception of detached houses. This reflects an expansion in the types of development that require site plan review from the current development code. Site plan review is meant to ensure that developments meet existing City regulations and policies. A number of districts, including residential, manufacturing, overlay, and special use districts require certain design features, including landscaping buffers and rear parking lot placement. The proposed code also requires that infill residential development “reflect the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood in terms of building orientation, setbacks, and height.”<sup>6</sup> This requirement is applicable to residential buildings in R districts that are located on blocks where 50 percent or more of the lots on both sides of the block are occupied by existing residential buildings. These contextual setbacks, heights, entrance, and garage requirements ensure that infill development will be compatible with and not overwhelm existing development.

Because the River Market area is eligible to be mapped as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) district, additional standards for building facades, ground floor uses, and parking may be applicable.

### **Current Policies**

#### ***Zoning Ordinance***

Kansas City is currently updating its development ordinance. The City believes that this revision is necessary to modernize outdated uses and concepts, reduce inconsistency among zoning classifications, reduce the number of zoning districts to ensure new districts better reflect desirable development patterns, address excessive parking requirements, and develop bicycle parking requirements.<sup>7</sup> Stated purposes for the revision include:<sup>8</sup>

- Accommodating mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development patterns,
- Promoting pedestrian, bicycle and transit use, and
- Maintaining orderly and compatible development patterns that promote and appropriate mix of land uses and protect and conserve property values.

While zoning maps will be altered to reflect new district classifications, no changes in boundaries will occur. This proposed code will equip the City with a number of new regulatory tools with which to more effectively guide development activity in a transit-supportive manner, including the creation of new overlay districts, expanded participation in development plan reviews, and the creation of a new “D” classification representing the Downtown district. Each of these changes will have implications for land uses allowed within a half-mile radius of the proposed station locations.

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<sup>6</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, “Development Ordinance, Public Hearing Draft, February 20, 2008,” 100-13.

<sup>7</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations Revision Process, <http://www.kcmo.org/planning.nsf/devmgt/ZonOrdRevisProces?opendocument>.

<sup>8</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, “Development Ordinance, Public Hearing Draft, February 20, 2008,” 10-2.

The current zoning for this area includes manufacturing (M2a and M2b), residential (R4), and designation as an Urban Redevelopment district, a mixture which reflects the area's existing land uses. As mentioned previously, the proposed Development Code would make the station area eligible for designation as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) district. This district may be established to:<sup>9</sup>

- Implement the goals and policies of the Downtown Land Use and Development Plan,
- Maintain and enhance the downtown core as a high-intensity, mixed-use center,
- Attract a mix of residential and neighborhood-serving uses in the areas adjacent to the downtown core,
- Create and enhance pedestrian-oriented streets to preserve retail vitality and enhance the quality of life for downtown residents, workers, and visitors,
- Establish standards for building facades, ground floor uses, and parking that enhances the vitality and appeal of the downtown area, and
- Provide a streamlined review and approval process for development proposals that are consistent with the Downtown Land Use and Development Plan.

The current M-1 and M-2a manufacturing districts are both translated as M1-5 in the proposed code. This district does not define a minimum lot size, allows a maximum FAR of 1.4, and a maximum height of 40 feet. As in the Downtown, Office and Business districts, setbacks are based on proximity to residential usages. This density, when developed to the maximum, meets the threshold of transit-supportive development. The current R-4 designation will be translated to R-1.5 in the proposed development code, and allows multi-family construction on 3,000 square foot minimum lots, with 1,500 minimum lot space per unit. Structures must be less than 45 feet tall and sited to allow at least 15 percent of the lot be reserved for front setback.

In addition to the Downtown districts, the proposed development code also allows the creation of Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay districts (P/O). This district allows certain streets to be designated as "pedestrian-oriented" and may preserve and enhance development that follows a certain criteria. Development in this district is intended to promote street-level activity, economic vitality, and pedestrian safety through a variety of urban design tools.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

The transitional activity currently occurring in this area provides a unique opportunity for the City to guide future redevelopment. The eligibility of this area for designation as a DX district facilitates the creation of a transit-supportive development environment, but the City must work closely with developers to ensure that new construction and redevelopment are designed to achieve the planning goals currently established for this area. Because of the potential station's proximity to the riverfront and location within the open space that is currently being evaluated for redevelopment, the City should ensure that any planning decisions and subsequent site and building designs consider both the physical structure of the station and the impact of light rail on anticipated need for parking spaces.

While the area is eligible to be mapped as a Downtown (D) district, which allows a denser, mixed-use pattern of development, or as a Pedestrian-Oriented overlay district (P/O), the City should also consider the creation of a transit overlay district. These overlays, mapped in a half-mile radius around transit stations, could create a regulatory and policy environment that specifically requires the incorporation of all elements of transit-supportive development, including density, mix of uses, walkability, and pedestrian-scale design.

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<sup>9</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, "Development Ordinance Executive Summary."

## ***Policy Recommendations***

The City currently offers a wide variety of financial incentives to support and encourage development, and, in September 2007, the City Council passed a city-wide Economic Development and Incentive Policy (EDIP) in order to strategically align development priorities with the City economic development investments. As part of this process, the document outlines six policy outcomes that are expected to result from City-funded developments:<sup>10</sup>

1. Create quality jobs,
2. Strengthen the economy and build the wealth of the Kansas City,
3. Sustain a high quality of life,
4. Promote stewardship of the City's resources,
5. Maintain and develop affordable, quality, housing opportunities, and
6. Promote comprehensive opportunities for education, skills development and lifelong learning.

The third policy outcome, sustaining a high quality of life, specifically referenced public transit as a way to “promote ‘transit-oriented design,’ promoting the use of public transportation as a tool of economic development.”<sup>11</sup>

The document also outlines 22 factors that the City should consider when evaluating a project for funding, one of which is the project's ability to “promote access to and financial support for public transit.”<sup>12</sup>

In addition to ensuring that development projects in the River Market that are financially assisted by the City support transit investment, the City should explore the possibility of offering additional regulatory and policy incentives to encourage transit-supportive development. This could include expedited permit review, additional parking requirement reductions, and the provision of density bonuses in exchange for the inclusion of transit- and pedestrian-friendly amenities within new developments.

## ***Improvement Projects***

While portions of the station area already include transit-supportive elements such as well-maintained sidewalks, rear-oriented parking, and comparatively high-density residential units, other portions of the station area are facing challenges to achieving transit supportiveness. Specifically, City infrastructure investment in the manufacturing and industrial areas, including sidewalk construction, landscaping, and lighting installation, would improve the pedestrian environment while not negatively impacting the functionality of the existing businesses. Creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the industrial area bound by Cherry Street, Campbell, 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Street would facilitate station access by the residents who live just south of this area. In coordination with future development along the riverfront, the City should also target sidewalk and roadway installation and upgrades for the parcels north of 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

While well-maintained open space currently exists on the western side of Oak Street as it approaches the Heart of America Bridge, the City may consider additional landscaping and the installation of wayfinding signage under and near the bridge to provide direction to the two proposed stations within River Market, as well as key landmarks, including the City Market and riverfront.

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<sup>10</sup> City of Kansas City, Economic Development and Incentive Policy Task Force, “Final Recommendations,” (August 30, 2007): 2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 48.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Grand**

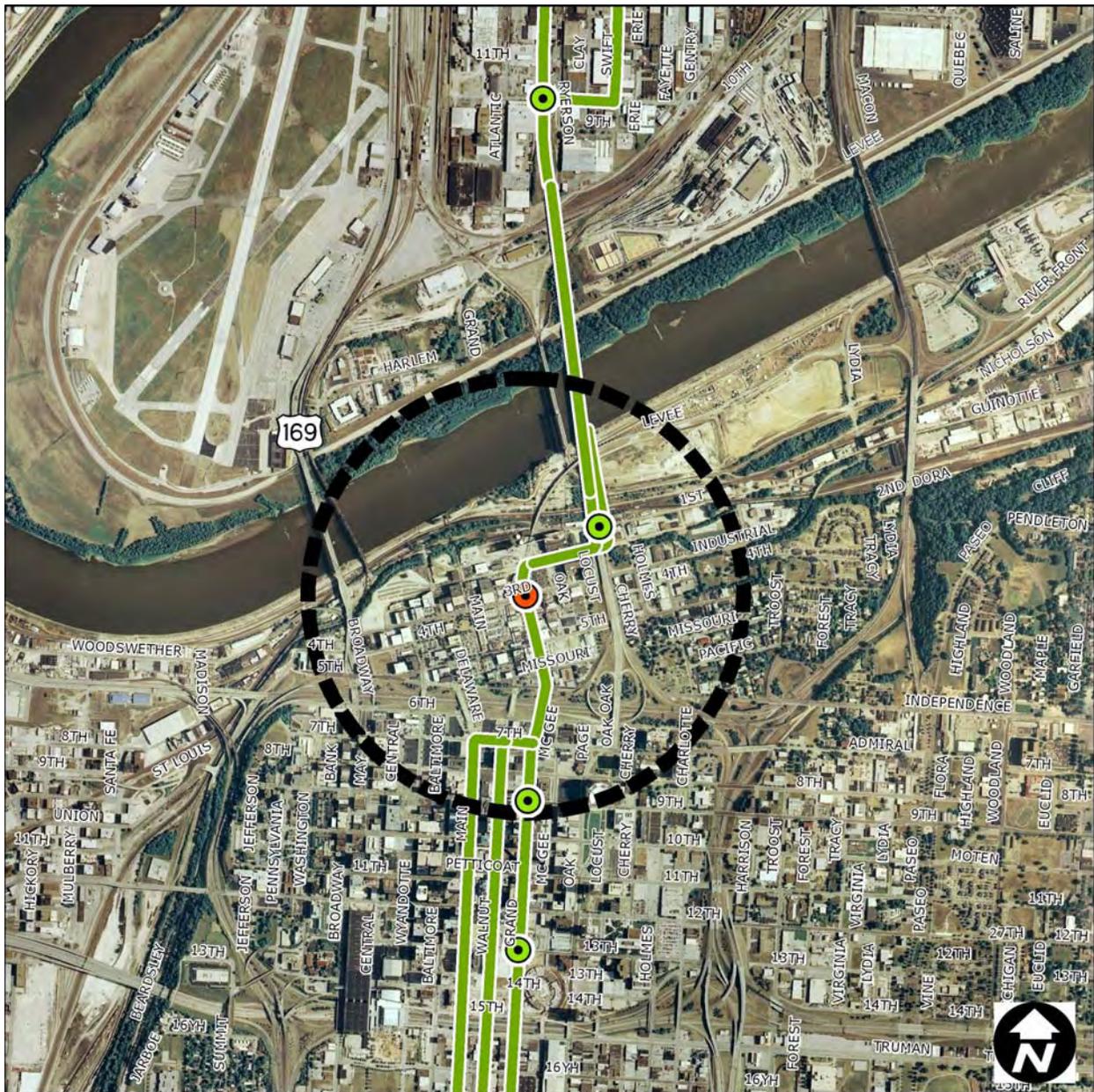
### **Introduction**

Because of this potential station location's proximity to the 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Riverfront station, many of the existing land use and development patterns, population density, and plans and policies are similar. This station area, however, is located about a quarter-mile south and west of the 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Riverfront station, extending south of I-35/I-70 and west to the Broadway Bridge. Because of the physical barrier created by I-35/I-70 and the potential location of a station at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand (discussed below), it is likely that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street station location's influence on land use and development patterns would be confined to the River Market rather than extending over the highway and into the Loop. This proposed station would be located in the existing park-and-ride facility and northern terminus for the MAX BRT.

### **Existing Conditions**

#### **Existing Land Use and Development Patterns**

This station area is a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial uses that is similar to those found in the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area. Several high-density residential structures are located between 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Independence, Main and Broadway, but are surrounded by lower-density industrial uses that are often located in or next to large surface parking lots. The northwestern edge of the station area is cut off from access to the river by the Broadway Bridge and existing freight rail lines. This station area also includes the City Market, public utility facility along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, the Heart of America Bridge, and the parkland east of the bridge.



**Figure 10: Potential Station Location at 3rd Street and Grand**

### **Existing Population Density**

Due to their close proximity, the existing and projected population density for this station area is the same as for the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area. As illustrated in Figure 3 and Figure 4, the population density of this station area is expected to grow from an existing classification of low density to low-medium density by 2030. Because this area is undergoing a transition in land use from non-residential manufacturing and industrial uses to a higher concentration of residential uses, it is important note that, as shown in Figure 6, the percentage population change between 2000 and 2030 is projected to exceed at least 50 percent on the east side of the Heart of America Bridge, and more than 100 percent on the west side.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### **Roadway Access**

Because the station area is laid out on an intact grid network, it provides good access to local roadways, the adjacent interstate highway, and the Broadway Bridge.

## ***Street Network Density***

The grid network maintains good density throughout the station area, with the exception of the northwest corner, which is north of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and west of Delaware. This area is characterized by larger parcels with limited vehicular access that abut freight rail lines to the north and the Broadway Bridge to the west.

## ***Transit***

This station location, like the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area, contains the northern terminus of the MAX BRT and its park-and-ride facility, as well as multiple existing Metro bus routes, including the 57, 100, and 173. While the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station location would also offer easy transfers to the MAX, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street station would be sited within the existing MAX park-and-ride lot and would offer direct connections to the MAX system.

## ***Bike / Pedestrian***

There is an incomplete sidewalk network and no designated bicycle lanes within the station area. As is the case in the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area, traffic volume and speed would be conducive to the creation of a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment if it were to be supported by appropriate urban design elements.

## **Urban Design Conditions**

Inadequate landscape buffering, numerous curb cuts, and an excess of surface parking lots have resulted in an urban design environment where the mixture of residential, industrial, and commercial are not mutually supportive. The frontage of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street west of Wyandotte is an example of poor streetscaping in combination with underutilized industrial parcels. The residential uses along 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets west of Main have minimal setbacks and adequate landscaping and parking facilities.

As was discussed for the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station location, the City Market area is well-maintained and landscaped, with attractive public plaza areas, decorative street lighting, banners, and parking spaces that are placed either to the rear of structures or effectively buffered from the roadway through landscape screening. The MAX BRT park-and-ride facility is also well-maintained, with attractive curb bump-outs to accommodate buses outside the right-of-way as they pick up and drop off passengers.

## **Market Conditions**

Because of this station location's proximity to the potential station location at 1<sup>st</sup> Street and the riverfront, the market conditions are similar. Extensive redevelopment has occurred in the River Market area in the past several years and continued development activity is likely. Much of the activity has been in residential development, including new construction and adaptive reuse of former industrial loft buildings. Rents widely range in the area, due to the mix of market rents and affordable units. The majority of residents in this area live and work downtown. This area has a high degree of specialty retail concentrated in the City Market, but basic retail goods and services are lacking. Office space is primarily occupied by advertising, graphics, architecture and other creative firms. The U.S. General Services Administration is currently evaluating sites for a new building in either the Downtown or River Market area. Several redevelopment opportunities exist in this area, including Columbus Park, east of the Heart of America bridge, and a large site owned by the Port Authority, which could include a significant number of new residential units in conjunction with a mix of office, retail and entertainment uses.

## **Current Plans and Policies**

### **Current Plans**

Two plans are relevant to this potential station location: the FOCUS Kansas City Master Plan (1998) and the Second Street Infrastructure and Development Plan (2005).

## ***Future Land Use and Development***

The same FOCUS Kansas City planning goals and initiatives are applicable to this station location as they were to the 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Riverfront location:

- Development of the Riverfront with new mixed-use development,
- Continued support and enhancement of the River Market,
- Encouragement of live-work loft development, and
- Investment in the revitalization of Columbus Park.

Because of proximity to the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area, this location is subject to the same recommendations under the Second Street Infrastructure and Development Plan. The Plan explicitly promotes a balanced mix of uses for the area, indicating that:

- Future uses within the corridor should include a mix of residential, retail, office and entertainment uses,
- There should be no expansion of existing industrial uses, although existing industrial may continue operations in a similar manner, and
- Within multi-story structures, retail and office uses are encouraged on the first floor, while office and residential uses are recommended for the upper levels.

The future land use plan outlined in the document reiterates these recommendations, and encourages the conversion of former warehouses to residential loft space.

A number of development projects are in the planning stages within this station area, including:

- Residential lofts at 200 Main Street,
- New construction and loft rehabs at Wyandotte and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and
- New residential construction at Oak and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets.

## ***Parking***

The developments in this station area are subject to the same parking requirements and exemptions as those in the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area. This includes required minimums of:

- Residential uses: one per dwelling unit
- Office, administrative professional, or general: one per 1,000 square feet, and
- Retail: 2.5 per 1,000 square feet.

Eligible exemptions outlined in the proposed City Development Code allows the City planning director to authorize up to a 25 percent reduction in office parking ratio for uses located within 500 feet of a transit stop with 30-minute or more frequent service during the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. Parking exemptions are proposed for parcels within 500 feet of a rapid transit stop, which include:

- Office and manufacturing uses are not required to provide off-street parking spaces for the first 10,000 square feet of gross floor area,
- Retail sales-related uses are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, and
- Restaurants are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 2,000 square feet of gross floor area.

This station area, like 1<sup>st</sup> Street, is part of the River Market area, and will also be mapped as part of the Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) zoning designation under the proposed Development Code. Within these districts, small commercial businesses may be eligible for existing parking

requirement exemptions: non-residential uses in the DX district outside of the Crossroads area are not required to provide off-street parking unless such uses exceed 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, in which case off-street parking must be provided for the floor area in excess of 4,000 square feet. This station area could also be subject to the parking exemptions allowed under the proposed Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay district, as previously discussed.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

This station area would also benefit from the \$2.5 million awarded to the City by the Federal government for trail construction and maintenance in Kansas City, including the bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Missouri River on the Heart of America Bridge.

Additionally, the station area is also affected by the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments. The proposed Development Code also allows for reduction in required vehicular parking in exchange for the provision of bicycle, scooter, and motorcycle parking. This policy functions to encourage the use of bicycles while promoting a development pattern that is less reliant on the accommodation of automobiles.

### ***Design Guidelines***

This station location is subject to the general City design guidelines as previously discussed and, because of its location within the area that may be mapped as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) district, may be subject to additional standards for building facades, ground floor uses, and parking.

## **Current Policies**

### ***Zoning Ordinance***

The current zoning for this area includes manufacturing (M1, M2a and M2b), residential (R4), and designation as an Urban Redevelopment district, a mixture which reflects the area's existing land uses. The existing classifications either do not allow a mixture of uses, or only allow it by special permit. As mentioned previously, the proposed Development Code would make the station area eligible for designation as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) district, which would allow transit-supportive mixture of uses.

This station area is subject to the same zoning requirements as the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station: the current M-1, M-2a, and M-2b manufacturing districts are all translated as M1-5 in the proposed code. This district does not define a minimum lot size, allows a maximum FAR of 1.4, and a maximum height of 40 feet. As in the Downtown, Office and Business districts, setbacks are based on proximity to residential usages. This density, when developed to the maximum, meets the threshold of transit-supportive development. The R-4 designation will be translated to R-1.5 in the proposed development code, and allows multi-family construction on 3,000 square foot minimum lots, with 1,500 minimum lot space per unit. Structures must be less than 45 feet tall and sited to allow at least 15 percent of the lot be reserved for front setback.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

As is the case at the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station location, the eligibility of this area for designation as a DX district facilitates the creation of a transit-supportive development environment, but the City must work closely with developers to ensure that new construction and redevelopment are designed to achieve the planning goals currently established for this area. The City should specifically coordinate with the owners of the utility facility north of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, City Market, and the industrial business owners along Grand between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets to ensure that future redevelopment plans support the light rail station. As the redevelopment of this area occurs, the City can also work with private property owners to ensure that planned infrastructure

improvements support the existing mixture of land uses while effectively buffering them from one another.

As was recommended for the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area, the City may also want to consider the creation and mapping of a transit-oriented development district in order to provide comprehensive planning tool and mechanisms that encourage transit-supportive development patterns.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

Because of comparatively low traffic volumes and a generous off-street parking supply, the City should consider offering substantial parking requirement reductions in return for the provision of pedestrian-friendly amenities by developers. This would encourage ridership while supporting the redevelopment of existing surface parking lots. This City should also work with the owner of the railroad property northwest of Delaware and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to explore redevelopment opportunities.

### ***Improvement Projects***

Because of the similar mixture of land uses, this station would benefit from improvements that are similar to those recommended for the 1<sup>st</sup> Street station area. Specifically, City infrastructure investment in the manufacturing and industrial areas, including sidewalk construction, landscaping, and lighting installation, would improve the pedestrian environment while not negatively impacting the functionality of the existing businesses.

As was recommended for the area around the Heart of America Bridge, the City may consider additional landscaping and the installation of wayfinding signage under and near the Broadway Bridge to provide direction to the two proposed stations within River Market, as well as key landmarks, including the City Market and riverfront.

## **Market Area: Downtown**

### **Potential Station Location: 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand**

#### **Introduction**

This potential station location, at the northern boundary of the Loop, could serve as a gateway entry point into Kansas City's central business district via the Heart of America Bridge. The area currently includes a number of surface parking lots and aging parking garage structures, many of which are subject to change, in addition to adjacent residential loft conversions and civic office uses. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Street areas, in particular, contain a lower-density mixture of uses and underutilized parcels whose redevelopment could be catalyzed by investment in transit. Redevelopment activity in this area would increase the linkages between the River Market area and Downtown.

Because of the physical barrier created by I-35/I-70 and the potential location of a station at 3rd and Grand (as discussed previously), it is likely that the 9th Street station location's influence on land use and development patterns would be confined to the Loop rather than extending over the highway and into the River Market area.

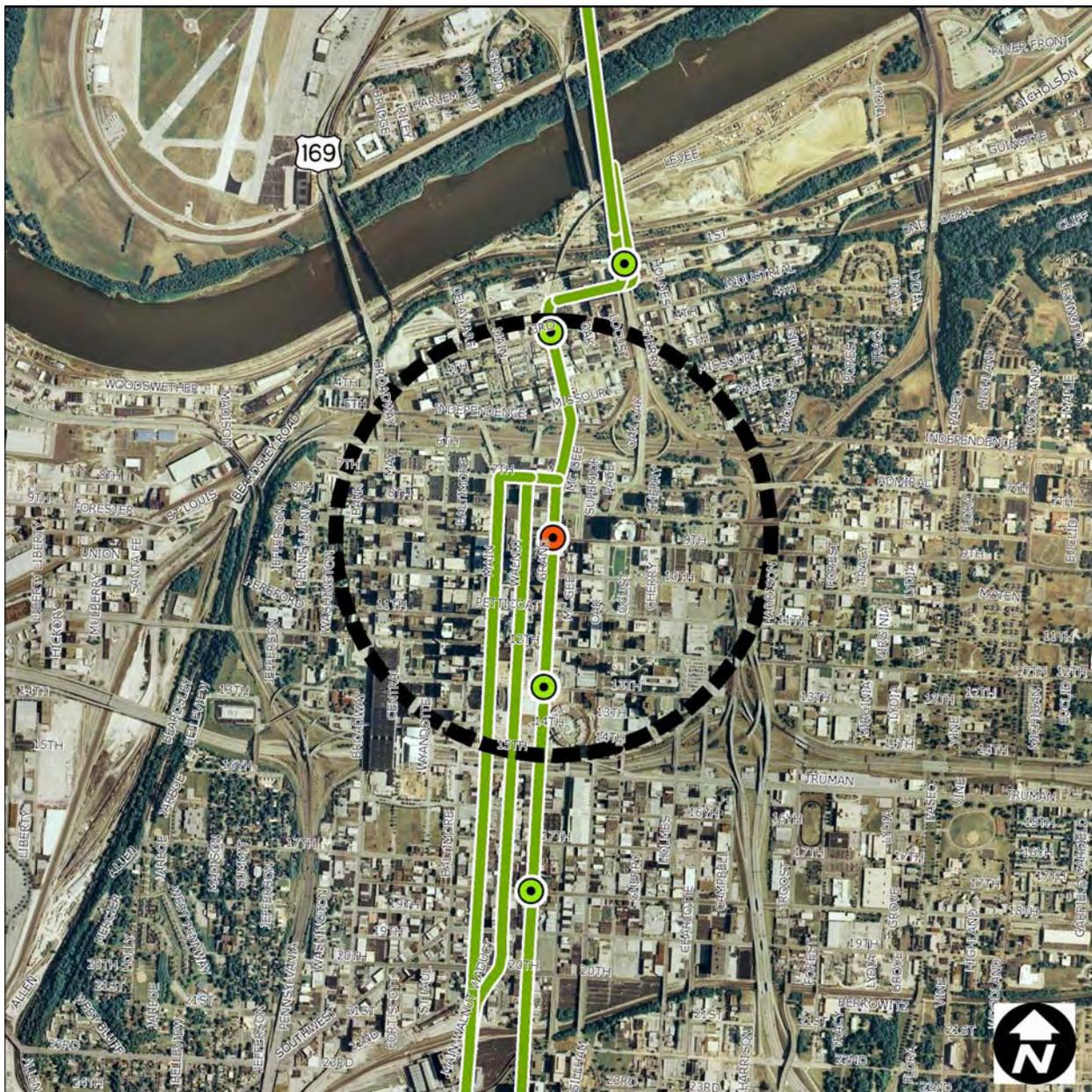


Figure 11: Potential Station Location at 9th Street and Grand

## Existing Conditions

### Existing Land Use and Development Patterns

This potential station location is located at the northern end of the CBD and covers the majority of the development within the Loop. This immediate station area can be characterized as comparatively higher-density civic, commercial, and office space interspersed with surface parking lots and parking garages. Between Central and Oak Street north of 9<sup>th</sup> Street, approximately half of the 24 blocks are surface parking lots or are otherwise undeveloped. While the majority of civic uses are concentrated east of McGee between 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets, the existing United States Federal Courthouse on the northeast corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Main would be directly adjacent to the proposed station location. The balance of the CBD is commercial and office space, with the exception of the Bartle Hall Convention Center between approximately 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets and the newly opened Power and Light District development, which is between Baltimore and Main, across from the new Sprint Center.

The Power and Light District is an eight-block entertainment district featuring restaurants and bars, entertainment options, a live music venue, office space, a gym, and a grocery store (scheduled to open in Fall 2008). The development is also scheduled to have a condominium component along Main between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets. The \$850 million mixed-use development began a staggered opening in October 2007, was at approximately 50 percent occupancy in March 2008, and is currently leased out at about 90 percent. The District, which has positioned itself as the anchor of \$5 billion worth of complementary development efforts in downtown Kansas City,<sup>13</sup> is located across the street from the new Sprint Center. This new \$275 million arena opened in October 2007, and can seat up to 18,500 visitors. In addition to hosting concerts, the arena has held a variety of NCAA basketball tournaments and there have been ongoing discussions with both the NBA and NHL to explore the possibility of creating an expansion team or relocating a team from another city to this site.

While residential occupancy has greatly increased in the past 10 years and office space use has marginally increased, the Downtown office space has higher vacancy rates than the national average. Class C office space has been converted to residential uses, contributing to this increase in residential occupancy. In many cases, these residential loft conversions saved older buildings which may have been demolished otherwise. While these residential uses in converted buildings exist throughout the Downtown, supporting retail and commercial services have been slower in locating around these conversions.

A number of the city's cultural institutions also exist within the northeast portion of the station area, including the Lyric Theatre, which houses both the Lyric Opera and Kansas City Symphony, and Kansas City's Central Library. Commercial uses and surface parking lots surround these cultural institutions, as well as some comparatively high-density multi-family housing.

### **Existing Population Density**

While the population density of the station area calculated from the 2000 U.S. Census ranks in the low to low-medium category, this density is projected to increase to low-medium to medium by 2030. The majority of the station area (the eastern portion being the exception) is projected to increase in population by more than 100 percent during this period. Because the Loop can be characterized as a commercial, rather than residential center, it is important to note that while ridership rates will be augmented by residential usage, it is the employment-based and related users that will drive ridership.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

This area has excellent roadway and highway access, including access to a number of bridges which cross the Missouri River. Because the station area is within the heart of the Downtown core, it is a regional destination with multiple ingress and egress routes, including the I-35/I-70 loop, the Heart of America Bridge, and major north-south connectors such as Main, Walnut and Grand.

#### ***Street Network Density***

Reflecting its location within the CBD on a grid system, this area has a high degree of street network density. Due to its central city location, this station area also has the most intact grid network of any of the station areas. This density facilitates dispersed vehicular movement while creating an environment of consistent block lengths that allows pedestrians to efficiently walk between destinations.

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<sup>13</sup> Kansas City Power and Light District: District News, <http://www.powerandlightdistrict.com/district-news.cfm>.

### ***Transit***

This station area includes a number of bus routes, including MAX service throughout the Downtown, many of which use the 10<sup>th</sup> and Main Transit Plaza, located within the station area. This Plaza is currently undergoing renovation to provide additional passenger amenities.

### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

The station area is characterized by signalized intersections, a complete network of sidewalks, and well-marked crossings, all of which encourage pedestrian usage. There are not, however, any bicycle lanes despite the fact that the scale of the streets and the volume of traffic are both conducive to bicycle usage.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

The urban design condition of the immediate station area is heavily influenced by the numerous surface parking lots. Corner surface parking lots have a particularly negative impact because they effectively eliminate the street wall at intersections, which contributes to a gap-tooth pattern of development. North of 9<sup>th</sup> Street between Central and Oak Streets, as previously discussed, approximately half of the land use is surface parking. The numerous parking garages in the Downtown, with a few notable exceptions, are not contextually sensitive to surrounding buildings and the exteriors are not designed at a pedestrian-friendly scale. There is also very limited streetscaping in the immediate station area, and the ground floor uses within the adjacent office buildings are typically not pedestrian-friendly.

The Power and Light District, however, is specifically designed to accommodate and encourage pedestrian usage through landscaping, signage, sidewalk upgrades, street furniture, lighting, and the extensive use of windows at street level. The 10<sup>th</sup> and Main Transit Plaza and Ilus W. David Park that stretches between the City Hall and Federal Courthouse at 9<sup>th</sup> and Oak are both examples of well-maintained public open spaces. The western edge of the station area touches the Quality Hill neighborhood, which is high-quality, established residential characterized by red brick structures, brick sidewalks, attractive landscaping, and a pedestrian-friendly scale of development. This neighborhood originally housed the families who owned the adjacent stockyards, and the character of the neighborhood has been largely preserved since that time.

There are also numerous surface parking lots along the eastern edge of the station area, stretching from 13<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Streets between Cherry and Charlotte. As in other parts of the station area with a high proportion of surface parking lots, minimal landscaping, the lack of street wall, and few pedestrian amenities contribute to a poor urban design environment.

### **Market Conditions**

Extensive public investment in infrastructure, entertainment and cultural venues, combined with tax abatement and TIF as incentives for private development, have resulted in significant residential and entertainment developments over the past few years. This complements the Downtown's role as a key employment center for the city and metro area. Rents and housing prices widely range in the area, due to the mix of market rents and affordable units. The largest planned development is East Village, a 12-city block development that will have 700 multi-family units and 85,000 square feet of retail. Retail is abundant Downtown, with the largest additional space being constructed in the KC Power and Light District. With increased residential development, demand for basic retail stores and services will increase. The Downtown is currently home to many large-scale private and public sector employers. The U.S. General Services Administration is currently evaluating sites for a new building in either the Downtown or River Market area. Several underutilized sites, including many currently used for surface parking lots, exist Downtown.

## **Current Plans and Policies**

### **Current Plans**

There are three plans which govern development within the Downtown area: FOCUS Kansas City, the Kansas City Downtown Corridor Strategy (2005), and the Downtown Land Use and Development Plan (2003).

### ***Future Land Use and Development***

A number of planning initiatives for the Downtown Loop were outlined in the FOCUS plan, including:

- Commit 10 – 15 percent of capital improvement funding to the Downtown Loop,
- Create a Special Benefit District for the Downtown Loop,
- Create and implement urban design guidelines,
- Implement a multi-modal transit system within the Loop and connect to transit systems of the metropolitan area,
- Augment existing residential alternatives and create a new residential district in the northeast quadrant,
- Create an entertainment-based nightlife Downtown by clustering new entertainment facilities inside the Loop and near the Convention District,
- Support the initiatives of the preservation plan for preservation and adaptive re-use of historically desirable buildings and amenities,
- Create a series of gateways to the Loop at entrances and bridges including the development of commercial structures spanning the highways at two critical points,
- Enhance security within the Loop,
- Create America's cleanest downtown,
- Reserve space for expansion of the Convention Center, and
- Add new skywalks and tunnels to complete existing network in highest density areas and convention district.

The Kansas City Downtown Corridor Strategy outlines a several strategic projects to implement the Plan's vision of the downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood, including:

- The construction of a new social center at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Harrison, and
- Reuse of the former Federal building at 811 Grand.

The Downtown Land Use and Development Plan also identifies a number of future land use opportunities and strategies, including:

- The conversion of surface parking lot to new uses,
- The use of existing vacant parcels for small-scale in-fill redevelopment,
- The redevelopment of vacant historic buildings, and
- The inclusion of mixed-use and anchor development parcels at targeted locations throughout the Downtown.

### ***Parking***

The developments in this station area are subject to the same parking requirements and exemptions as those in the River Market area and throughout the rest of the city. This includes required minimums of:

- Residential uses: one per dwelling unit
- Office, administrative professional, or general: one per 1,000 square feet, and
- Retail: 2.5 per 1,000 square feet.

Eligible exemptions outlined in the proposed City Development Code allows the City planning director to authorize up to a 25 percent reduction in office parking ratio for uses located within 500 feet of a transit stop with 30-minute or more frequent service during the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. Parking exemptions are proposed for parcels within 500 feet of a rapid transit stop, which include:

- Office and manufacturing uses are not required to provide off-street parking spaces for the first 10,000 square feet of gross floor area,
- Retail sales-related uses are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, and
- Restaurants are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 2,000 square feet of gross floor area.

Parking requirements could be greatly reduced within the station area depending on the application of the proposed overlay districts: no off-street parking is required for properties that are mapped within the DC (Downtown Core) zoning district and non-residential uses in the DX district outside of the Crossroads area are not required to provide off-street parking unless such uses exceed 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, in which case off-street parking must be provided for the floor area in excess of 4,000 square feet.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

This station area, like those in the River Market area, is affected by the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments. The proposed Development Code also allows for reduction in required vehicular parking in exchange for the provision of bicycle, scooter, and motorcycle parking. This policy functions to encourage the use of bicycles while promoting a development pattern that is less reliant on the accommodation of automobiles.

The implementation of a Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay District would facilitate the improvement of pedestrian facilities through the encouragement of ground floor transparency, the provision of doors and entrances on the street frontage, and landscape screening, among, other urban design tools.

### ***Design Guidelines***

This station location is subject to the general City design guidelines as previously discussed and, because of its location within the area that may be mapped as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) or Downtown Core (DC) district, may be subject to additional standards for building facades, ground floor uses, and parking.

### **Current Policies**

#### ***Zoning Ordinance***

The existing zoning for the immediate station area is a mixture of commercial (C3b and C4), manufacturing (M1), and Urban Redevelopment (UR). The existing classifications either do not allow a mixture of uses, or only allow it by special permit. As mentioned previously, the proposed Development Code would make the station area eligible for designation as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) district, which would allow transit-supportive mixture of uses.

The Downtown Core (DC) district, which could be mapped within the station area, is primarily intended to promote high-intensity office and employment growth within the downtown core. The

DC district regulations recognize and support downtown's role as a center of regional importance, and the regulations are primarily intended to accommodate a broad mix of office, commercial, public, recreation, and entertainment uses. The DC district is also designed to accommodate both high-density and mixed-use residential development.

Commercial and business uses within the corridor fall into the B1, B3, and B4 categories, as defined within the proposed code. The downtown core was previously designated C4, which has been translated to DC-15 (Downtown Core district) in the proposed code. B1 allows a maximum FAR of 2.2, B3 allows 3, and B4 allows 4. These FARs all exceed the minimum level of development that is considered transit-supportive. The proposed code also requires context-sensitive frontages when commercial or business establishments are located on streets with residential usages: "Front setback required only when O- or B-zoned lot abuts R-zoned lot with frontage on the same street. In such cases, the O- or B-zoned lot must match the actual front setback of the building that exists on the abutting R-zoned lot, or if no building exists on the abutting R-zoned lot, the O- or B-zoned lot must provide at least 50% of the front setback that applies to the abutting R-zoned lot."<sup>14</sup> This requirement will result in visually consistent, context-sensitive development.

As in the River Market area, the current M-1, M-2a, and M-2b manufacturing districts are all translated as M1-5 in the proposed code. This district does not define a minimum lot size, allows a maximum FAR of 1.4, and a maximum height of 40 feet. As in the Downtown, Office and Business districts, setbacks are based on proximity to residential usages. This density, when developed to the maximum, meets the threshold of transit-supportive development.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

The eligibility of this area for designation as a DX or DC district facilitates the creation of a transit-supportive development environment, but, as is the case in River Market, the City must work closely with developers to ensure that new construction and redevelopment are designed to achieve the planning goals currently established for this area. Specifically, the City should work with developers to redevelop existing surface parking lots and parking garages into transit-supportive mixed-use developments. The reuse of these parcels will be catalyzed by their proximity to transit, which reduces the need for parking, and proposed zoning overlay districts will reduce the requirements for parking spaces.

Despite the fact that two of the three plans adopted for this area are relatively current, the recent boom in Downtown development and the construction of landmark projects such as the Power and Light District, the Sprint Center, and the Kaufmann Center for the Performing Arts, in particular, may necessitate the updating of these plans to reflect the impact of these developments.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

While the parking policies proposed for overlay districts within the Downtown are transit-supportive, new development or redevelopment should conform to a pedestrian-friendly set of urban design standards, like those outlined in the proposed Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay district.

The City is proposing to offer streamlined review and approval processes for development proposals that are consistent with the Downtown Land Use and Development Plan. The City may want to also consider offering financial incentives or other considerations to developments that provide additional pedestrian amenities or which utilize green building elements. As was recommended for the River Market area, the City may also want to consider the creation and

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 100-21.

mapping of a Transit-Oriented Development district in order to provide comprehensive planning tool and mechanisms that encourage transit-supportive development patterns.

### ***Improvement Projects***

While the station area has a complete network of sidewalks, some areas have little or no landscaping and no street furniture or trash receptacles, which contribute to a hostile pedestrian environment, particularly at the northern edge of the Loop. The City should consider investing in distinctive lighting, a uniform landscaping palette, and additional individualized banners and wayfinding signage for each of the Loop's neighborhoods. Some signage already exists, but could be expanded and more consistently located throughout the Loop. While the grid system encourages pedestrian usage, better signage and improved pedestrian facilities will provide further incentive for pedestrian use.

## Market Area: Crossroads

### Potential Station Location: 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Introduction

The Crossroads market area is currently undergoing redevelopment through private market initiatives without significant City intervention. Drawn by comparatively lower property values, artists have taken up residence in this neighborhood, which had historically been a storage and transfer point between Union Station and the Downtown. The structures are typically larger-scale loft spaces which have been converted to residential usage and for art studios and galleries. The location of a transit station at this site would support this redevelopment and serve the increasing residential and business population, in addition to providing a key link to redevelopment further east in the 18<sup>th</sup> and Vine Street area.

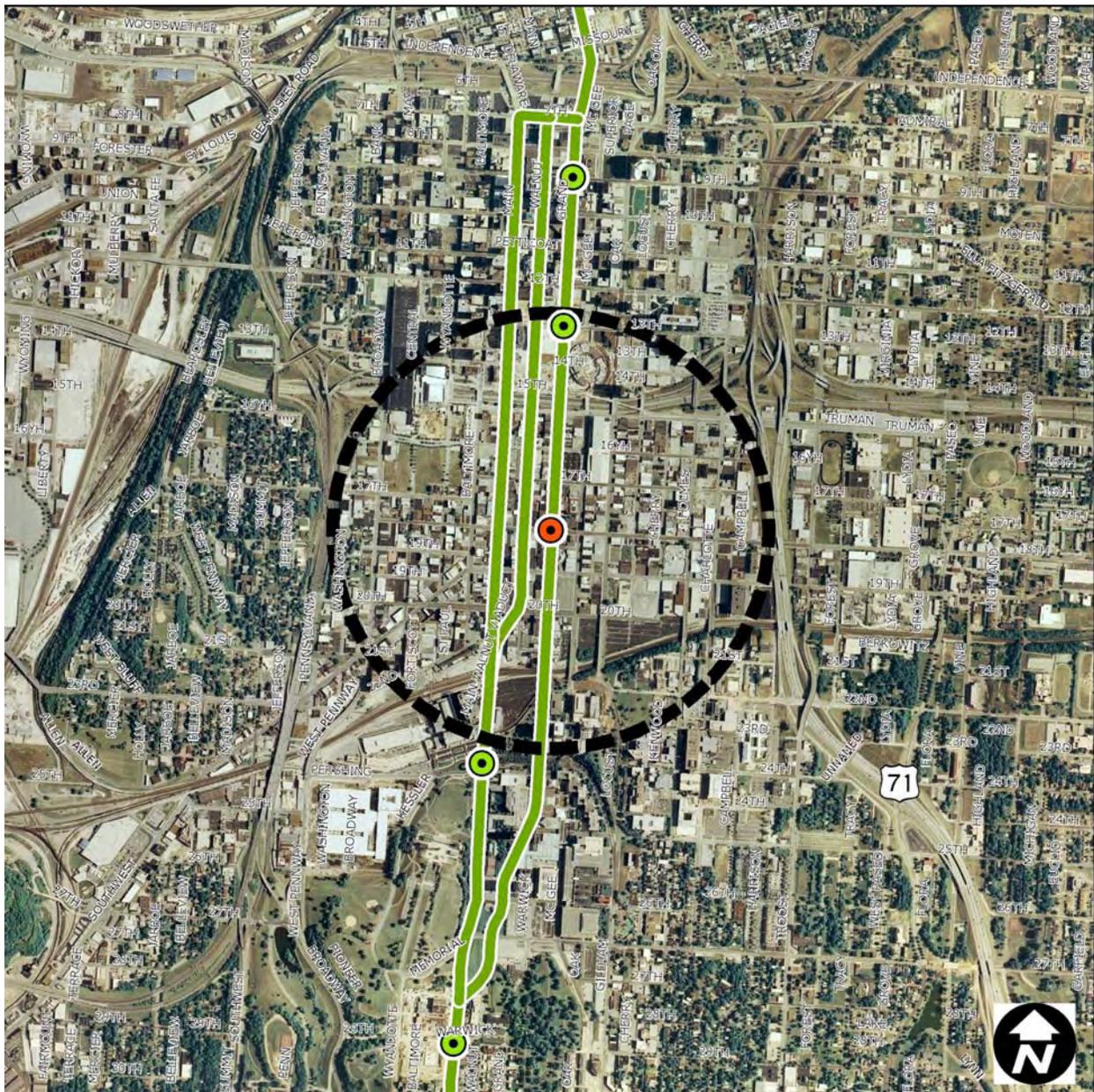


Figure 12: Potential Station Location at 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Existing Land Use and Development Patterns**

The Crossroads market area, and the station location in particular, can be characterized as comparatively low-density commercial and industrial uses surrounded by numerous surface parking lots. The eastern half of the station area has a high proportion of low-density industrial uses on large parcels of land, while the western half is a mixture of smaller-scale commercial and industrial uses with comparatively fewer surface parking lots. While the station area reaches north of I-35/I-70 into the Loop, Sprint Center, and the Power and Light District, and also reaches south into the Union Station area, it is unlikely that this specific station location would have an impact on the land use patterns of those areas. Because of the physical barriers created by both roadways and rail tracks, and potential station locations that are closer in proximity, the impacts of this station location will most likely occur south of Truman and north of the railroad right-of-way.

Landmark structures in this station area include the headquarters of the Kansas City Star, the former TWA headquarters, and the Western Auto Building, which has been converted from office to residential loft uses. Remaining buildings are typically older brick structures that range between three and five stories. As previously mentioned, portions of the station area have been converted by artists from industrial uses to galleries, showrooms, and workshops, as these artists were lured to the area by inexpensive property and large indoor spaces. Redevelopment activity is also currently underway on both Walnut and Main Streets.

### **Existing Population Density**

Of the four US Census tracts in the station area, all of which currently rank as low density, one is projected to increase in density to medium-high and another is projected to increase to low-medium by 2030. This growth trend may result from the conversion of industrial loft structures to residential units. The population in three of the four Census tracts, as shown in Figure 6, is projected to increase by more than 100 percent by 2030.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

The station area has excellent roadway access because of its grid street network orientation and access to Bruce R. Watkins Drive and I-35/I-70. There are also multiple viaducts connecting the Crossroads area to both the Downtown and Union Station areas.

#### ***Street Network Density***

The existing grid network has resulted in a high density of streets. Southwest Street, in the southwest quadrant of the station area, deviates from the grid system at a 45 degree angle, but maintains and enhances street network density because it is laid out in addition to, rather than replaces, the adjacent grid network.

#### ***Transit***

Numerous bus routes provide both north-south and east-west service through the Crossroads market area, including the 25, 53, and 123. The area is also serviced by MAX, whose route travels along Main Street.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

While there are no bike lanes within the station area, the comparatively low traffic volumes, particularly on the peripheral streets within the station area, and grid system contribute to environment that is bicycle-friendly. The implementation of a bike lane along major connectors, such as Grand, Main and Walnut would provide further encouragement to bicyclists. Certain parts of the station area, including those within the immediate station area, are pedestrian-

friendly because of existing land uses, including bars, restaurants, and offices, while other parts of the station area, such as those east of Locust, include industrial uses and site design that are not pedestrian-friendly. While a Union Station / Pershing Road station location would be within walking distance of this station area, the poor pedestrian environment along the viaduct over the railroad tracks creates a deterrence to pedestrians making this connection.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

The urban design conditions of the station area vary greatly, from new construction and loft redevelopment projects that anchor the southern and northern edges of the station area, to a gap-tooth pattern of development, particularly between 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Truman along Grand, that is typical of the rest of the station area. This latter pattern may be the function of the off-street parking requirements of adjacent commercial uses. These requirements could be reduced or eliminated based on policy decisions made by the City. Redevelopment on these smaller-scale infill parcels, as well as the larger surface parking lots, such as those on the northeast corner of 29<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand, provide an excellent opportunity to encourage a pedestrian-friendly scale of redevelopment that could include transit-supportive uses.

### **Market Conditions**

The resurgence of the Crossroads market over the past decade is the result of local artists moving into older, multi-story loft buildings that formerly served as manufacturing and storage facilities. The area is known for its art galleries, studio, restaurants and unique stores. Over three-quarters of the area's residents are renters, although many rental buildings are being converted into condominiums. Traditional retail development in the area is lacking, but as the number of galleries and studios has increased, more restaurants have opened. The most significant addition to the district is the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, now under construction. Because of the nature of the area, the Crossroads market area is not likely to be the location for large office tenants, but rather will continue to cater to creative businesses. Several underutilized sites exist in the area which are typically used as existing surface parking lots.

## **Current Plans and Policies**

### **Current Plans**

The FOCUS Kansas City Plan, the Downtown Land Use and Development Plan, and the Kansas City Downtown Corridor Strategy all contain relevant planning recommendations and guidelines for the Crossroads market area.

### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The FOCUS Plan makes two specific recommendations as part of the Central Business Corridor Initiative:

- Encourage further development of the Gallery District, and
- Encourage live-work development.

While the Downtown Land Use and Development Framework does not offer specific recommendations for the Crossroads market area, it does acknowledge that increasing connections between this area and the Downtown will increase development opportunities and better connect residents to jobs, goods, and services.

The Kansas City Downtown Corridor Strategy recommends the evaluation of shared parking strategies to reduce the number of surface parking lots, the implementation of which would spur infill development and improve urban design conditions. The Strategy also recommends the implementation of a wayfinding system and streetscaping upgrades along key corridors, including Baltimore, Main, and Grand Boulevard.

## ***Parking***

In addition to the requirements that are applicable to the entire city and the proposed exemptions that accompany the area's potential status as a DX or DC district, the proposed Development Code offers area-specific exemptions:

- Retail sales-related uses in the Crossroads area are not required to provide off-street parking for the first 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, which includes general retail sales, food and beverage retail sales, and other uses that are primarily involved in the sales of goods to the general public, and
- Restaurants in the Crossroads area are not required to provide off-street parking spaces for the first 2,000 square feet of gross floor area.

These proposed parking regulations would support existing smaller-scale retail and restaurant uses by reducing parking requirements. The subsequent reduction in demand for surface parking lots will encourage a denser pattern of development.

## ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

The Crossroads area is subject to the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments.

This area, which is currently undergoing reinvestment and redevelopment, is subject to even greater change with the implementation of a light rail transit system. The creation of a Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay district along the corridors identified in the Downtown Corridor Strategy plan would facilitate the improvement of pedestrian facilities through the encouragement of ground floor transparency, the provision of doors and entrances on the street frontage, and landscape screening, among other urban design tools.

Additionally, the station area is also affected by the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments, as previously described.

## ***Design Guidelines***

This station location is subject to the general City design guidelines, as previously discussed and, because of its eligibility to become a Downtown district, may be subject to additional standards for building facades, ground floor uses, and parking under the proposed Development Code.

## **Current Policies**

### ***Zoning Ordinance***

This area is currently zoned for a mixture of manufacturing (M1), commercial (C4), and an Urban Redevelopment district. The details of allowed development levels under these designations are discussed in previous station area descriptions. While the current zoning allows only for a selected mixing of uses, the proposed Development Code would enable the station area to fully transition to a transit-supportive mixture of residential, retail, office, with supporting industrial. As mentioned previously, the proposed Development Code would make the station area eligible for designation as a Downtown Mixed-Use (DX) district, which would allow transit-supportive mixture of uses.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

This area has transitioned on its own from an industrial storage and transfer point to an arts district supported by small-scale retail, commercial, office, and adjacent residential uses. The

City should work with existing neighborhood groups to ensure that redevelopment plans support the existing independent retailers and establishments and acknowledges the unique character of the area. Preservation and protection of the “Old Film Row,” which was a former motion picture distribution center and is currently undergoing renewal, should also be a planning priority.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

In order to support the transition of this area to an arts district, and to protect the smaller-scale retailers, art galleries, and practicing artists who live and work here, the City may want to consider creating a Neighborhood Character Overlay district, as defined in the proposed Development Code. This district designation is a tool that is meant for areas of the city not qualifying for or wanting landmark status, but which need specific protections to ensure stabilization while encouraging neighborhood investment.

A ten-year tax abatement on the improvements to property used by artists was passed by Kansas City Council in 2007. This provides a targeted financial incentive to retain existing arts-based tenants and property owners. The City may also want to consider coordinating efforts with industrial property owners to ensure that as their structures transition from industrial to artistic uses, the City is able to ensure effective adaptive re-use.

### ***Improvement Projects***

First Fridays, when various galleries and studios open their doors on the first Friday of the month and participants walk between venues to view artwork, have been overwhelmingly popular. The City could encourage pedestrian use of the district on every day of the month through sidewalk maintenance, lighting improvements, landscaping improvements, wayfinding signage, and the placement of street furniture.

## **Market Area: Midtown**

The Midtown market area is characterized by a mixture of retail, commercial, office, and industrial uses along Main Street, surrounded by single- and multi-family residential uses. The existing zoning code allows a half-block depth of open zoning along Main Street, which has resulted in this pattern of development. Because neighborhood residents have expressed concerns about the implementation of a light rail system down Main Street and its associated impacts on business access and adjacent residential neighborhoods, recommended land use and development patterns must be contextually-sensitive. Neighbors are concerned that increased levels of development within the existing commercial areas would encroach on historically significant residential areas. Many existing commercial uses are subject to change, however, and transit investment could catalyze context-sensitive redevelopment in compliance with the nodal pattern of development called for in the adopted Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan.

The Main Street Corridor, which stretches from Downtown to the Brush Creek Corridor, is home to a larger percentage of young adults with high levels of education than the citywide average, and high rental rates and a high percentage of non-family households paired with a lower than citywide average median income suggests that the corridor has a large population that is beginning professional lives and are mobile in their housing choices.<sup>15</sup> This is also a population base that would be likely to use transit.

### **Potential Station Location: Armour and Main**

#### **Introduction**

This potential station location would serve a comparatively high-density residential and mixed-use neighborhood, as well as provide access to and connections with Linwood Boulevard, a major east-west arterial. Implementation of light rail at this location would support the existing land uses while encouraging a more nodal pattern of development, as recommended in the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan.

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<sup>15</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, "Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan," (2003).

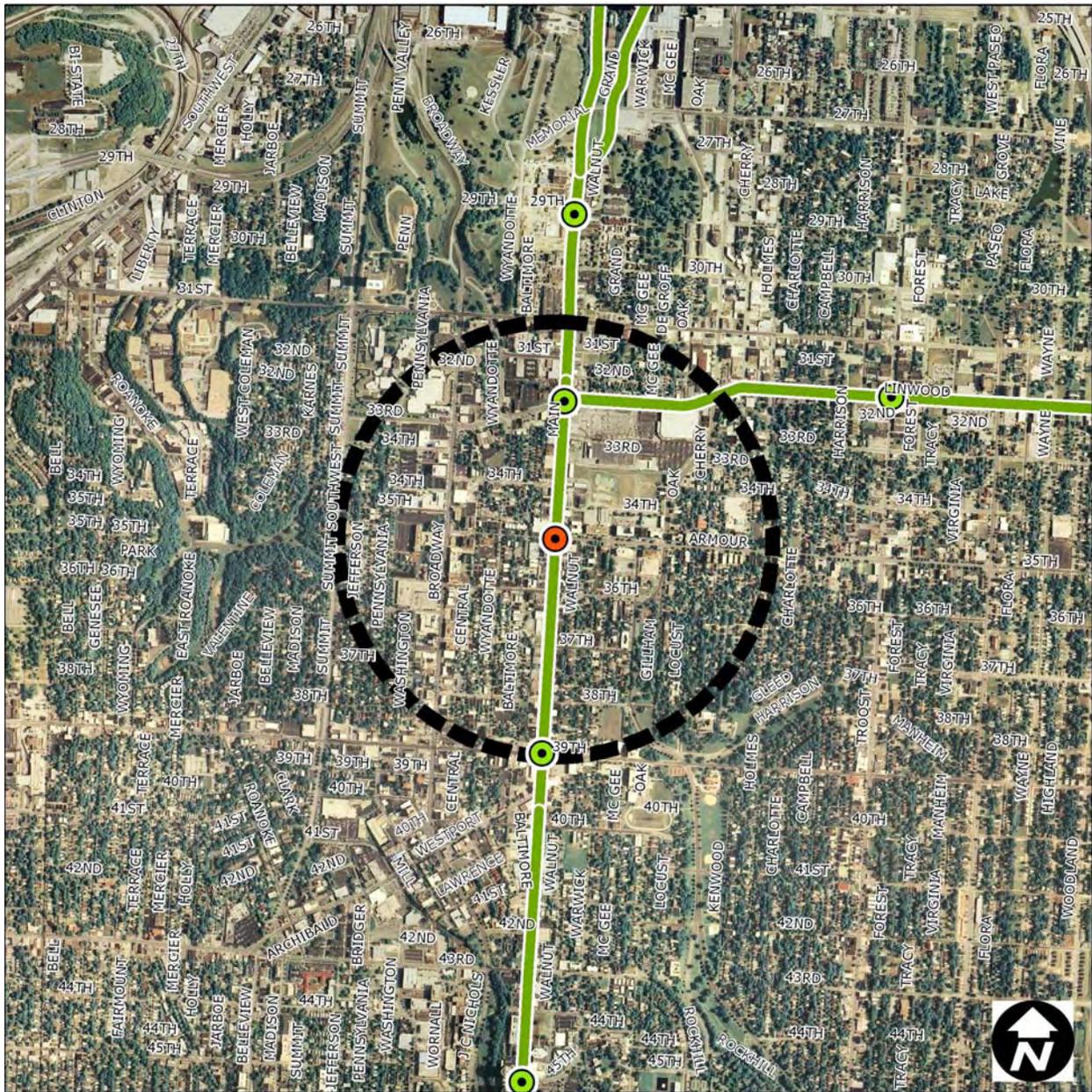


Figure 13: Potential Station Location at Armour and Main

## Existing Conditions

### Existing Land Use and Development Patterns

As previously discussed, the half-block of open zoning allowed under the current zoning code has resulted in a mix of small-scale retail, commercial and industrial uses along Main Street which are immediately adjacent to single- and multi-family uses. The northern end of the station area is comprised of larger-scale office buildings, which transitions to a mixture of retail and office uses, including a large, suburban-style retail complex, including a Home Depot and McDonald's, at Linwood and Main. In addition to this new construction, the Linwood intersection contains old, multi-story structures which have been renovated and are used to house various retail activities. The development pattern along this portion of Main is of inconsistent density, as old lower-density industrial lots are interspersed with both the new construction and existing rehabbed buildings. The four corners of Armour and Main are occupied by a Public Storage self-storage facility, a Burger King, an office building, and a US Bank. The southern half of this

station area falls within the half-mile radius of the next proposed station location at 39<sup>th</sup> and Main Streets, and is largely smaller-scale retail and commercial uses in older structures of consistent one- or two-story density.

Residential pockets exist between Central and Wyandotte and south of Linwood between Broadway and Main. On the eastern side of the station area, residential uses are north of Linwood, south of Armour and east of Oak Street.

### **Existing Population Density**

The existing pockets of single- and multi-family residential contributed to population density rankings ranging from low-medium to medium-high based on the 2000 US Census. By 2030, these rankings are projected to increase in range from medium to high, with the most densely populated area on the eastern side of Main Street between approximately 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and 37<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

This area has good roadway access, which is supported by a mixture of main arterials, like Main Street and Linwood Boulevard, with a network of collector streets. Within the station area, a strict hierarchy of streets is maintained: the arterial streets, including Main, are larger-scale and can accommodate more capacity than local residential streets. Because the high incidence of residents utilizing on-street parking restricts capacity on the residential streets, through drivers typically utilize arterials.

#### ***Street Network Density***

The existing grid system contributes to a high-density street network. As mentioned above, however, the hierarchy of streets reduces the overall capacity that can be accommodated on the street network within the station area.

#### ***Transit***

The MAX BRT line runs along Main Street with several stops within the station area. The Metro also provides service in the station area. Because Linwood is a major east-west arterial, a proposed station location at the intersection of Armour and Main would provide an excellent opportunity for inter-modal connections.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

Despite the fact that Linwood and Main are both multi-lane, high-capacity roadways, the pedestrian environment within the station area is good. Sidewalks are well-maintained, there is adequate lighting, and there is a pocket park at the southern end of the station area. While the quality of the pedestrian environment varies slightly through the corridor, perhaps at its weakest between Linwood and 34<sup>th</sup> Street, the comparatively small scale of the retail and density of adjacent housing contributes to pedestrian usage. There are no bike lanes in the area, and the combination of high-capacity traffic and numerous curb cuts create an environment that is not particularly conducive to bicycle travel.

This station area is also affected by the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments, as previously described.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

The urban design conditions of the corridor vary according to land use: the northern end of the corridor is mostly larger, relatively new construction office buildings with little emphasis on pedestrian amenities. The commercial uses around Linwood are auto-oriented, particularly the shopping center on the southeast corner. South of Armour, the scale of the commercial uses is

reduced and becomes more pedestrian-friendly as one- and two-story older retail stores are street-oriented with a high percentage of ground floor transparency, pedestrian-scale signage, and a more consistent street wall.

### **Market Conditions**

The Midtown market area is most heavily influenced by development plans at Crown Center and the Plaza. Extensive residential development is occurring in the area, which is evenly distributed between rental and for-sale units. Rental rates tend to be lower than the Downtown market area because the building stock in the Midtown market tends to be older. The largest retail concentration is located at Linwood and Main, with limited retail presence elsewhere along Main. Most of the office space is concentrated near Crown Center and the Plaza. Several underutilized sites exist in the Midtown market, as well as a series of sites and buildings for sale along Main Street that would be appropriate for rehab or demolition for new construction. There is demand for additional larger format retailers, although the likelihood finding suitable sites that will satisfy both the neighborhood residents and retailers poses challenges.

### **Current Plans and Policies**

Three plans are relevant to this area: the FOCUS Kansas City Plan, the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan (2003), and the Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan (2008).

#### **Current Plans**

##### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The FOCUS Kansas City plan offers a variety of recommendations for future land use patterns within the station area:

- Locate light rail stops to promote higher-density development,
- Encourage redevelopment of Armour Boulevard,
- Improve Linwood Boulevard streetscape,
- Implement mixed-use zoning in Midtown, and
- Encourage larger-scale development.

The Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan identifies specific land use, transportation, aesthetic, and neighborhood preservation issues that are relevant to the Main Street corridor, outlines community planning goals, and provides recommendations for achieving these goals. The general land use concept of the Plan centers around a pattern of nodal development at key intersections which would be buffered by lower-density uses. The intersection of Armour and Main is identified as one of these nodes.

The Plan identifies the Burger King and Public Storage site as potential redevelopment opportunities and identifies some infill opportunities within the station area west of Main Street and along Armour. Recommended uses include:

- 1-6 story attached condominiums,
- 3-6 story office buildings,
- Walk-in restaurants, and
- A small hotel.

The Plan also includes specific recommendations outlining which land uses should be avoided within the node, including:

- Big-box commercial,

- Loan and finance companies,
- Adult media stores,
- Package liquor stores, and
- Auto-related uses.

The potential implementation of a transit line is also addressed. Transportation planning goals were outlined, including the following:<sup>16</sup>

- “Improvements to Main Street shall be designed to enhance the safety, security, and ease of transit use, [and]
- Main Street shall be an important route to any future improvement to the City’s transit system. Any improvement must be sensitive to maintaining and enhancing the historic development patterns on Main Street and the adjoining residential neighborhoods.”

Action steps identified to achieve these goals include:

- Working with local groups to provide bicycle parking racks to promote increased bicycle use,
- Working with businesses and residents to explore shared parking strategies,
- Working with the KCATA and City to obtain funding for streetscape improvements, and
- Constructing a transit-oriented mixed-use parking structure near the recommended 39<sup>th</sup> Street node.

The Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan identifies a series of goals that are designed to help implement the vision for the corridor that was outlined in the Main Street Corridor Land use and Development Plan. These goals include:<sup>17</sup>

- Improve the multi-modal environment of the corridor,
- Provide a clear transition between commercial areas and residential neighborhoods while still providing strong connections for pedestrians and motorists,
- Improve ease of orientation and “sense of place” throughout the corridor,
- Reinforce north/south and east/west connections within corridor,
- Increase the sense of safety and visual aesthetics of Main Street,
- Provide consistency in design elements to help unify the corridor, while maintaining the unique strengths of each activity node,
- Provide a safe and pleasant separation of pedestrians and vehicles, and
- Utilize public investment in infrastructure and aesthetics to encourage private reinvestment in the corridor.

This Plan divides the corridor into a series of nodes, including a node at Armour and Main. Streetscape element recommendations include:<sup>18</sup>

- Edge treatments where buildings are set back from property line,
- Sidewalk width maximized within the existing right of way between curb and property line,

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<sup>16</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, “Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan,” (2003): 39.

<sup>17</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning Development, “Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan”, (2008): 7.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

- Secondary crosswalk markings at selected locations with properly aligned curb ramps,
- Street lights on east side of Main Street, and
- Neighborhood markers at selected locations to provide a transition between commercial and residential areas.

### ***Parking***

An inadequate existing parking supply is consistently referenced through the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan. Many of the 4- to 12-family residential buildings were constructed when streetcars operated along Main, and subsequently do not have private, designated parking. Other neighborhood residents are concerned that any reduction in the on-street parking supply along Main would force visitors to park on residential streets, which would negatively impact the quality of life for the existing residents. This station area is subject to the same parking requirements and exemptions as the rest of the City.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

The Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan recommends a land use and development pattern that is pedestrian- and transit-friendly. Specifically, the Plan states that “mixed-use development at the nodes shall be designed to support pedestrian-oriented activities and increased transit use on Main Street. These areas shall be planned to encourage a diversity of activity, safety for pedestrians and smaller-scale elements and storefronts at the street level to encourage diversity of activity.”<sup>19</sup> Streetscape improvements are recommended throughout the plan, and are included as an implementation tool.

### ***Design Guidelines***

The Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan outlines a series of urban design guidelines for the corridor to encourage pedestrian-scale buildings, architectural details, and access patterns. The following key issues were addressed and recommendations for implementation were provided:

- Linkages,
- Architectural character and materials,
- Build-to lines and setbacks,
- Access,
- Parking
- Streetscape,
- Signage, and
- Lighting.

While these are the recommendations are building design and orientation, this market area is subject to the same design review as the rest of the city.

## **Current Policies**

### ***Zoning Ordinance***

The station area is currently zoned for a mixture of residential (R1b, R3, R4) and commercial uses (C1, C2, C3a2), with one Urban Redevelopment district identified at the southeast corner of Linwood and Main. That district is now the site of a shopping center which includes retail uses such as Home Depot and McDonald's, as well as an office and retail building. Of

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<sup>19</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, “Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan,” (2003): 45.

particular concern are the “open zoned” parcels that front along Main Street and are a half-block deep: the market pressure that can accompany the construction of a transit station may result in development that is out-of-scale or contains inappropriate uses for the surrounding neighborhood. Despite the fact that the new code will require these parcels to undergo development plan review, the creation of TOD overlay districts or special districts would be most the effective tool for ensuring neighborhood-compatible and transit-supportive development.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

The residential community in the Midtown market area has clearly expressed a desire to utilize a nodal pattern of development in order to accommodate and retain existing retail, commercial, and office uses along Main Street in a manner that does not negatively impact the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Because the results of the market assessment indicate a greater demand for this non-residential type of development than can be accommodated under the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan, the City may want to collaborate closely with area residents to design a development pattern within the recommended nodes that satisfies market demand while meeting the standards of the community. This could be achieved through increased density at targeted nodes, node-specific design guidelines and site layouts, and relaxed parking requirements.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

As has been previously recommended, the City may want to consider the creation and mapping of a transit-oriented development district in order to provide comprehensive planning tool and mechanisms that encourage transit-supportive development patterns. This is particularly important in the Midtown area, where active and organized neighbors have specific concerns regarding land use and development patterns that need to be incorporated into any planning effort. A TOD district would allow the City and neighbors the opportunity to ensure that future development around the station is transit-supportive while not negatively impacting the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### ***Improvement Projects***

A number of detailed and transit-supportive infrastructure and landscaping improvements are outlined in the recently-published Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan. The implementation of these recommendations would improve the pedestrian environment along Main while encouraging the owners of private property to reinvest in their own property’s landscaping and physical appearance.

# Potential Station Location: 39<sup>th</sup> and Main Streets

## Introduction

This station area overlaps with that of the proposed Armour and Main station location. The northern edge of the station area reaches Armour, and the southern boundary stretches down to 43<sup>rd</sup> Street. The station area also includes Westport Road, which runs through the popular Westport retail and entertainment district.

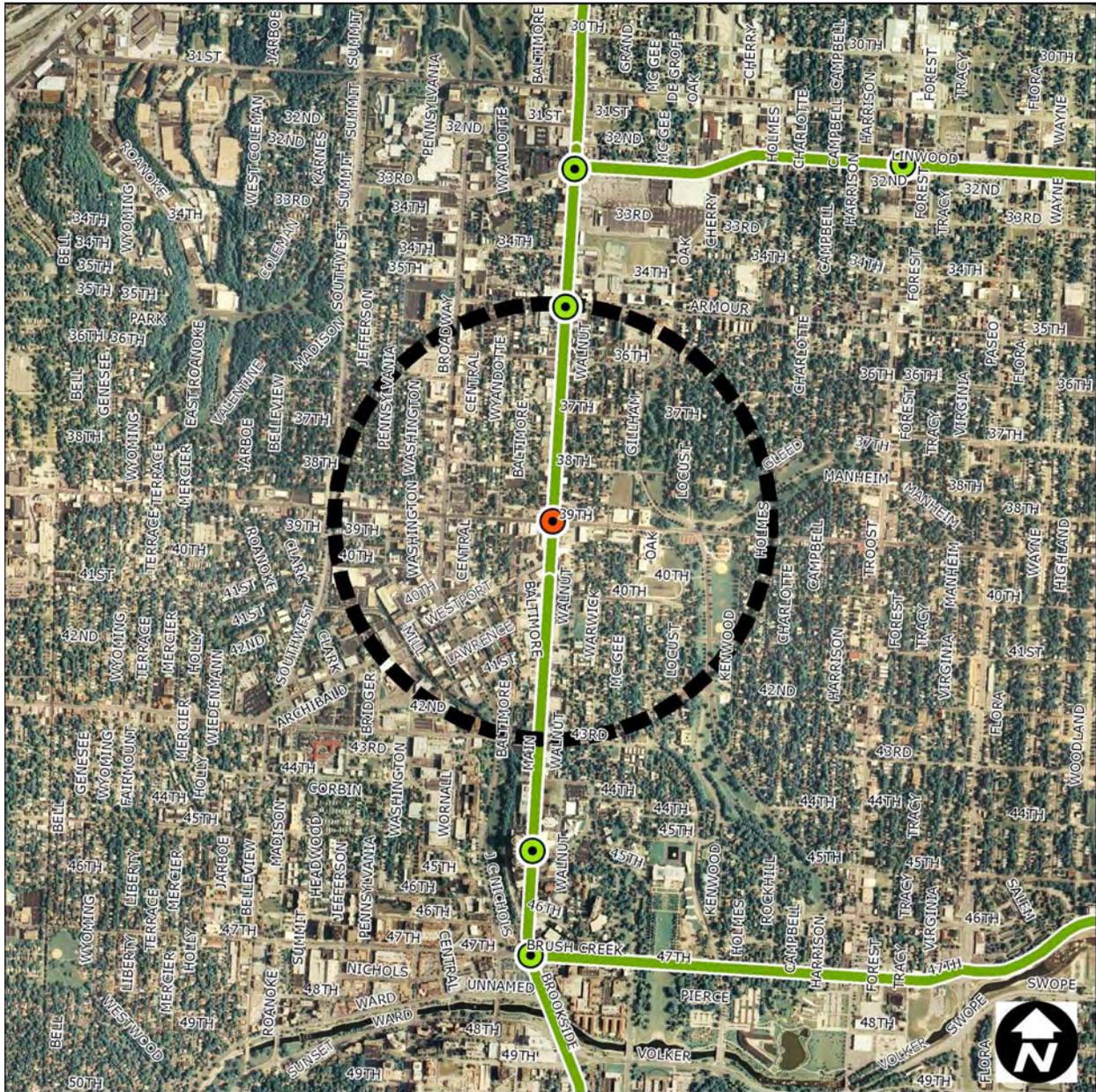


Figure 14: Potential Station Location at 39th and Main Streets

## Existing Conditions

### Existing Land Use and Development Patterns

This station area continues the same mix of commercial, retail, and residential uses that is found in the station area at Armour and Main, but in different proportions. The retail and commercial along Main Street are at a smaller-scale and typically occupy older single-and two-story historical structures that occupy block-long street frontages. There is a greater proportion

of medium- and high-density residential uses in this station area, and, in addition to Main Street, commercial uses are also concentrated in the Westport shopping and entertainment district, which is in the southwest quadrant of the station area. Solid commercial uses occupy the four corners of the 39<sup>th</sup> and Main Street intersection. Commercial uses tend to get larger in scale and increasingly auto-oriented at the southern end of the station area. The station area also contains a number of institutional uses, including multiple churches and schools.

### **Existing Population Density**

The existing population density within the station area ranges from low to medium-high, and is projected to increase to a medium and medium-high rankings by 2030. According to the population projections conducted by MARC, the two station areas at the southern end of the Midtown market area will have the highest population density of the entire study area by the year 2030. As was previously discussed, the demographic characteristics of this population increase can be expected to produce a high proportion of transit riders.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

This station area also contains a number of arterials, such as Main Street and Westport Road, in addition to numerous collector roads, creating an environment of plentiful roadway access. The grid network of streets is shifted in the southwest corner of the station area, but high levels of roadway access are maintained through a series of diagonal streets.

#### ***Street Network Density***

The street network density of the station area is high due to the grid configuration. Similar to the conditions found in the Armour and Main station area, the hierarchy of streets reduces the overall capacity that can be accommodated on the street network within the station area.

#### ***Transit***

The MAX BRT line operates along Main Street, and the Metro provides multiple bus routes through the station area. In addition to east-west and north-south connections, the 51 offers southwestern service along Westport to the Country Club Plaza area.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

The station area is characterized by high-quality sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and well-marked pedestrian crossings. In addition to white pavement markings, some key intersections use unique pavement to visually reinforce the presence of the pedestrian crosswalk. A pedestrian-friendly environment is further reinforced by the scale and density of existing structures and the mixture of uses. While traffic capacity is not lower than at the Armour and Main location and there is no bike lane, two situations function to create a more bicycle-friendly environment: the scale of development encourages motorists to reduce speed and the diagonal intersection of Westport and the resulting angled traffic flow requires motorists to focus more intently on circulation patterns.

Additionally, the station area is also affected by the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments, as previously described.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

The character of this station area is smaller-scale retail and commercial supported by single- and multi-family housing on surrounding blocks. The multi-family residential is, with a few exceptions, 4- to 12-unit buildings that are generally well-maintained. Overall, the quality of residential uses is inconsistent, often varying widely within a single block. The commercial and retail uses along Main Street are typically in well-maintained one- and two-story historic

structures whose design is pedestrian-friendly. There are, however, notable examples of infill development that follow a more suburban-style pattern of development with large setbacks and parking lots that front Main Street. Despite these exceptions, the station area can be characterized as transit-supportive because of the number of pedestrian-scale buildings and pedestrian amenities.

### **Market Conditions**

Because of this station area's proximity to the potential station location at Armour and Main, the market conditions are very similar. The Midtown market area is most heavily influenced by development plans at Crown Center and the Plaza. Extensive residential development is occurring in the area, which is evenly distributed between rental and for-sale units. Rental rates tend to be lower than the Downtown market area because the building stock in the Midtown market tends to be older. The largest retail concentration is located at Linwood and Main, with limited retail presence elsewhere along Main. Most of the office space is concentrated near Crown Center and the Plaza. Several underutilized sites exist in the Midtown market, as well as a series of sites and buildings for sale along Main Street that would be appropriate for rehab or demolition for new construction. There is demand for additional larger format retailers, although the likelihood finding suitable sites that will satisfy both the neighborhood residents and retailers poses challenges.

### **Current Plans and Policies**

Three plans are relevant to this area: the FOCUS Kansas City Plan, the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan (2003), and the Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan (2008).

#### **Current Plans**

##### ***Future Land Use and Development***

Because this station area falls into the same City-defined planning area as the proposed station location at Armour and Main, many planning recommendations and goals overlap. The same planning recommendations outlined by the FOCUS Kansas City plan are relevant for this station area, including:

- Locate light rail stops to promote higher-density development, and
- Implement mixed-use zoning in Midtown.

In addition to the intersection of Main and Armour, the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan identifies 39<sup>th</sup> Street as a potential development node location.

The Plan identifies the Hawthorne Plaza Apartments as an adaptive re-use site and encourages mixed-use redevelopment with structured parking for the parcel at 3920 Main Street, which is now a CVS Pharmacy. The Plan supports mixed-uses at this node and the encouragement of smaller entertainment venues. Any construction should continue historic patterns of development that face the street and provide structured parking. Neighborhood boundaries are not to be altered. Recommended uses include:

- 1-6+ story market-rate condominiums,
- 1-3 story office buildings,
- Walk-in restaurants, and
- Small entertainment venues and theaters.

The Plan also includes specific recommendations outlining which land uses should be avoided within the node, including:

- Big-box commercial,

- Adult media stores,
- Package liquor stores, and
- Auto-related uses.

Action steps identified to achieve these goals include:

- Designing and implementing an identity campaign for the node that communicates its character as a smaller venue entertainment area,
- Eliminating graffiti,
- Supporting the renovation of the Hawthorne as market-rate housing,
- Participating in continuing discussions regarding the implementation of transit service, and
- Supporting historic preservation of candidate structures.

The Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan also identifies 39<sup>th</sup> and Main as a node, and provides detailed block-by-block recommendations, including the following for the block between 39<sup>th</sup> Street and Westport:

- Pedestrian lights (existing conduit exists on the east side of Main Street between 39<sup>th</sup> Street and Westport Road) along both sides of Main Street,
- Street lights on east side of Main Street,
- Street trees (35' on center, min.) where sidewalk is a minimum of 10' wide,
- Edge treatments where buildings are set back from property line,
- Gateway markers near the intersection of Westport Road and Main Street, and
- Sidewalk width maximized within the existing right of way between curb and property line.

### ***Parking***

In addition to on-street parking, the station area contains a number of surface parking lots that provide a plentiful parking supply. As is the case in the Armour and Main station area, retailers fear that any reduction in parking supply would negatively impact business, and neighbors are concerned about the potential for parking for retail uses on their residential streets. While this area is currently subject to the same parking requirements as the rest of the city, potential overlay districts that would reduce parking requirements or incentivize their placement away from the street frontage could further increase the pedestrian environment of the station area.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

As is the case for the station area at Armour and Main, the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan recommends a land use and development pattern that is pedestrian- and transit-friendly. Specifically, the Plan states that “mixed-use development at the nodes shall be designed to support pedestrian-oriented activities and increased transit use on Main Street. These areas shall be planned to encourage a diversity of activity, safety for pedestrians and smaller-scale elements and storefronts at the street level to encourage diversity of activity.”<sup>20</sup> Streetscape improvements are recommended throughout the plan, and are included as an implementation tool.

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<sup>20</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, “Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan,” (2003): 45.

## ***Design Guidelines***

As discussed above, the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan outlines a series of urban design guidelines for the corridor to encourage pedestrian-scale buildings, architectural details, and access patterns. The following key issues were addressed and recommendations for implementation were provided:

- Linkages,
- Architectural character and materials,
- Build-to lines and setbacks,
- Access,
- Parking
- Streetscape,
- Signage, and
- Lighting.

While these are the recommendations are building design and orientation, this market area is subject to the same design review as the rest of the city.

## **Current Policies**

### ***Zoning Ordinance***

The zoning classifications in this area are a mixture of residential, commercial and Urban Redevelopment districts, the details of which have been previously discussed for other station areas. As in the case of the station area at Armour and Main, the “open zoned” parcels that front Main Street are a half-block deep, and the market pressure that can accompany the construction of a transit station may result in development that it is out-of-scale or contains inappropriate uses for the surrounding neighborhood. Despite the fact that the new code will require these parcels to undergo development plan review, the creation of TOD overlay districts or special districts would be most the effective tool for ensuring neighborhood-compatible and transit-supportive development.

## **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

### ***Planning Initiatives***

The planning initiatives recommended for this station area are the same as those recommended for the station location at Armour and Main. The residential community in the Midtown market area has clearly expressed a desire to utilize a nodal pattern of development in order to accommodate and retain existing retail, commercial, and office uses along Main Street in a manner that does not negatively impact the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Because the results of the market assessment indicate a greater demand for this non-residential type of development than can be accommodated under the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan, the City may want to collaborate closely with area residents to design a development pattern within the recommended nodes that satisfies market demand while meeting the standards of the community. This could be achieved through increased density at targeted nodes, node-specific design guidelines and site layouts, and relaxed parking requirements.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

As was recommended for the River Market area and the station location at Armour and Main, the City may want to consider the creation and mapping of a transit-oriented development district to provide a comprehensive planning tool and mechanisms that encourage transit-

supportive development patterns. This is particularly important in the Midtown area, where active and organized neighbors have specific concerns regarding land use and development patterns that need to be incorporated into any planning effort. A TOD district would allow the City and neighbors the opportunity to ensure that future development around the station is transit-supportive while not negatively impacting the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### ***Improvement Projects***

A number of detailed and transit-supportive infrastructure and landscaping improvements are outlined in the recently-published Main Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan. As was previously recommended, the implementation of these recommendations would improve the pedestrian environment along Main while encouraging the owners of private property to reinvest in their own property's landscaping and structural appearance.

**Market Area: Prospect Avenue at Linwood Boulevard**  
**Potential Station Location: Troost and Linwood**  
**Introduction**

This station area is characterized by comparatively sparse retail activity interspersed with vacant lots. Many parcels are subject to change, and the station area would benefit from the infrastructure reconstruction that accompanies transit investment. It is important to note, however, that the construction of a light rail transit station does not automatically spur high levels of redevelopment. Private sector market demand, infrastructure investment, and public sector policies and regulations must all combine to leverage an investment in transit for broader economic development. This station area has suffered from consistent under-investment during the past several decades, resulting in a comparatively gap-tooth pattern of development with evidence of deferred maintenance. Redeveloped commercial and retail uses would be supported by the surrounding single- and multi-family residential uses. A station at this location would also serve as a transfer point between light rail and the planned Troost Avenue BRT.

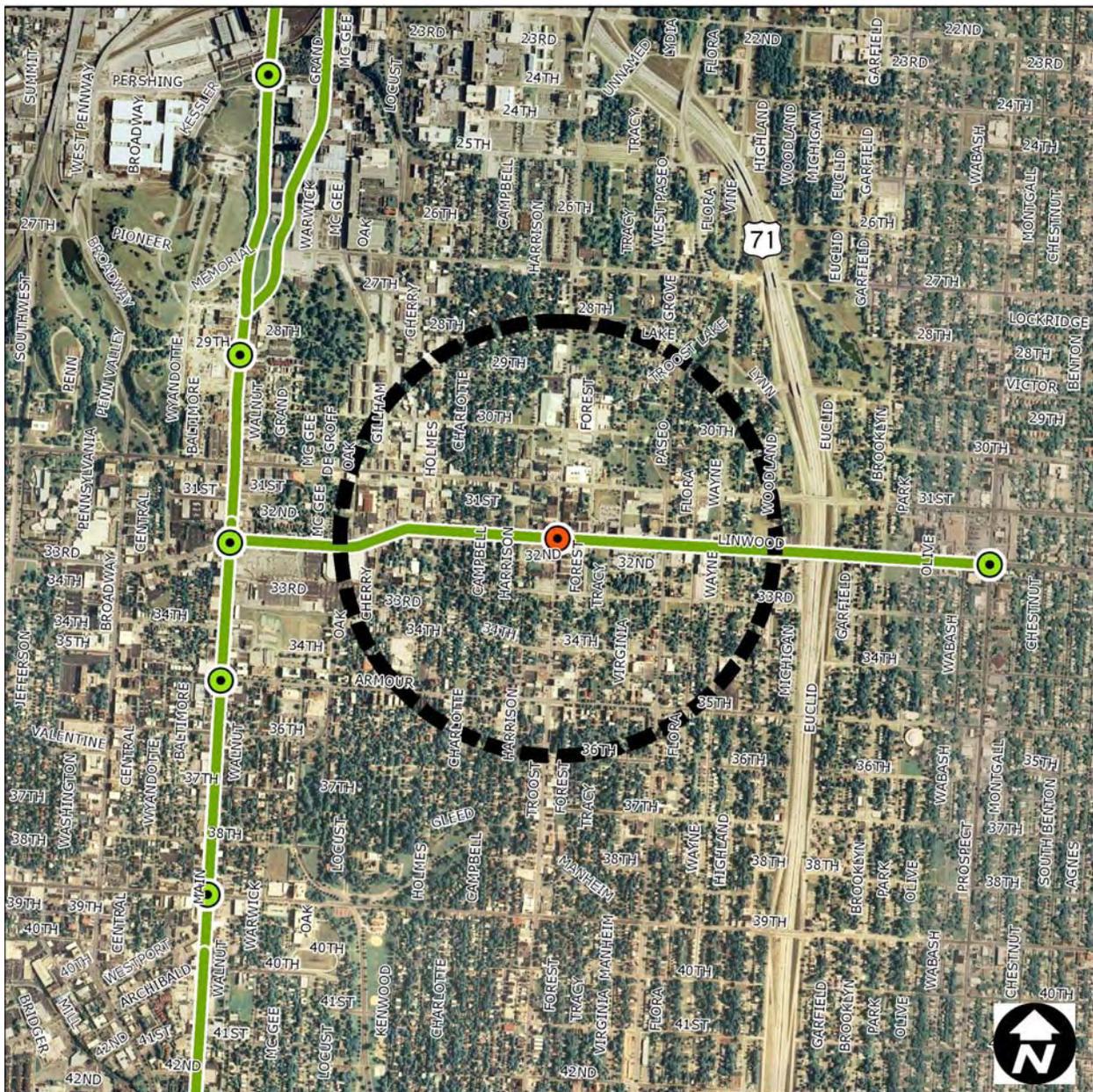


Figure 15: Potential Station Location at Troost and Linwood

## Existing Conditions

### Existing Land Use and Development Patterns

The station area is a mixture of commercial, industrial, single- and multi-family residential, and institutional uses. The development on the four corners of the immediate proposed station location is emblematic of the cycle of disinvestment and depressed economic status of the neighborhood that was mentioned earlier. A Family Dollar store sits on the northwest corner of Linwood and Troost, while an appliance / restaurant equipment / real estate auctioneer occupies the historic art deco structure on the northeast corner. Directly across from this structure, on the southeast corner, is a vacant lot, while a vacant art deco commercial building occupies the southwest corner.

Residential density varies by block, with a cluster of multi-family housing units along Armour at the southern end of the station area. Numerous vacant lots are interspersed with low- and medium-density residential in the blocks between 33<sup>rd</sup> and Armour and Forest and The Paseo.

Several of the multi-family residential structures along Linwood, particularly east of Tracy, are surviving examples of the architectural style that was popular in the early twentieth-century. There are multiple institutional uses along Linwood, including a Scottish Rite Temple, which recall the avenue's important role in the cultural history of the city. The Central Patrol Division of the Kansas City Police Department is located at 1200 East Linwood.

### **Existing Population Density**

The existing population density within the station area ranges from low-medium to medium-high, and is projected to shift in range from low to high by 2030. The northeast corner of the station area is projected to lose population, while the northwest and southwest portions are expected to experience population increases.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

The area's roadway access, like other station areas throughout the study corridor, is a mixture of main arterials, like Linwood, Armour and Troost, supported by a grid network of collector streets. Bruce R. Watkins Drive, which falls just outside of the station area to the east, is easily accessed from the station area.

#### ***Street Network Density***

The station area has a high-density street network resulting from the grid configuration, which is largely intact. This network density creates an environment that supports efficient vehicular traffic patterns while encouraging pedestrian usage.

#### ***Transit***

The station area is currently well-served by Metro bus routes, and a BRT route along Troost has won Federal funding. Construction on the BRT line is expected to begin in the Fall of 2008. The implementation of a rail line along Linwood would provide excellent opportunities for inter-modal connections with both the existing Main Street and planned Troost BRT lines, as well as the existing Metro lines, improving mobility options for existing residents and businesses.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

While there is an intact sidewalk network and comparatively low traffic volumes, the combination of the four-lane width of Linwood and high proportion of vacant lots does not create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Some of the residential streets, which are smaller-scale and typically have more landscaping than Linwood, are better suited for pedestrian and bicycle use.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

The station area currently has weak urban design quality. While the historic structures along Linwood and some of the newer residential construction meet high architectural and design standards, their positive aesthetic influence is overshadowed by the poor quality of more recent infill development and the high incidence of vacant lots. The retail use housed in the art deco building on the northeast corner of Linwood and Troost is an example of adaptive re-use occupying historical structures in a manner that is not contextually sensitive. The Family Dollar store across the street maintains good street frontage, but has extremely limited ground floor transparency and few architectural details.

### **Market Conditions**

Limited private sector development has occurred in the Linwood market area since 2000, although several community services and education buildings have been expanded or built since that time. The residential housing stock is older and many buildings are in need of rehabilitation. Limited numbers of condominiums exist, and many rental buildings include government-subsidized units. As redevelopment sites become scarce in nearby

neighborhoods, this area is poised to attract redevelopment. Retail and office spaces are limited in the Linwood market area, with more of the retail concentration located in the Midtown market area. Numerous vacant lots exist in the Linwood corridor that could be redeveloped for residential and retail use.

## **Current Plans and Policies**

This station area is subject to the planning guidelines outlined in the FOCUS Kansas City Plan and the Troost Corridor Plan (1998).

### **Current Plans**

#### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The FOCUS Kansas City Plan identifies the 31<sup>st</sup> Street / Linwood and Troost area as a potential mixed-use center in its Plan for the Heart of the City. The plan identified the stable building stock, community anchors, new police station, and vital history as advantages for the area. The Plan states that Troost's "significance as the racial dividing line makes this node an important place in the city for redevelopment efforts. Redevelopment should be made in concert with the more extensive plans to replace strip development to the south with higher density to support retail node and symbolic gestures such as fountains or parks."<sup>21</sup>

The Troost Corridor Plan divides the Troost corridor into four zones, including one between 28<sup>th</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Streets, and offers actions and implementation strategies for supporting redevelopment, including:<sup>22</sup>

- Assist in the preparation of a master plan for the three community anchors in this area: Nazarene Publishing, Interstate Bakeries, and St. Vincent's/Operation Breakthrough,
- Lease/acquire and improve property at the corner of Linwood Boulevard and Troost for an outdoor market for sale of goods and produce,
- Restore the historic commercial facades of the east and west sides of the 3100 block of Troost in conjunction with business attraction incentives,
- Construct a City-owned, lighted and landscaped parking lot in this area, and
- In the area between Linwood and Armour Boulevards, remove blighted structures and create a land bank to support the construction of new mixed-use development.

#### ***Parking***

Because of the comparatively low density of commercial and residential uses, the existing parking supply is more than adequate to meet the demand. As infill development occurs at key intersections throughout the area, however, the City should work to ensure that parking is located away from the street frontage. This area is currently subjected to the same parking requirements, which are described above, as the remainder of the city.

#### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

Both the FOCUS Kansas City Plan and the Troost Corridor Plan emphasize the importance of pedestrian usage and linkages. The Troost Corridor Plan recommends these linkages to and from Troost through streetscaping, lighting, and security upgrades. Specific corridors identified include 33<sup>rd</sup> Street between Kenwood and the Paseo, Troost between 30<sup>th</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Streets, Linwood between Harrison and Wayne, and along the Paseo from 29<sup>th</sup> to 34<sup>th</sup> Streets.

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<sup>21</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, "FOCUS Kansas City Plan" (1998): 65.

<sup>22</sup> City of Kansas City Department of Planning and Development, "Troost Corridor Plan" (1998): 15.

Additionally, the station area is also affected by the City's existing requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments, as previously described.

### ***Design Guidelines***

This station location is subject to the general City design guidelines, as previously discussed; no additional design guidelines are included in the Troost Corridor Plan.

### **Current Policies**

#### ***Zoning Ordinance***

The station area is currently a mixture of residential (R3 and R4), commercial (C2, CP2, and C3a2), manufacturing (M1), Urban Redevelopment, and Planned Development districts. Within the proposed zoning code existing classifications are translated into R-1.5, R-2.5, B2-2, B3-2, B4-5, and M1-5. The R-2.5 residential classification is slightly lower density than the R-1.5 district, which was previously described. R-2.5 requires a minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet, a minimum of 2,500 square feet of lot area per unit to a maximum of 40 feet. The M1-5 district does not define a minimum lot size, allows a maximum FAR of 1.4, and a maximum height of 40 feet. As in the Downtown, Office and Business districts, setbacks are based on proximity to residential usages. This density, when developed to the maximum, meets the threshold of transit-supportive development.

The Business districts within the station area allow for above ground-floor residential uses in mixed-use buildings and do not require minimum lot areas. Allowed FARs range from 2.2 (B-2 districts) to 4.0 (B-4 districts). These FARs all exceed the minimum level of development that is considered transit-supportive. The proposed code also requires context-sensitive frontages when commercial or business establishments are located on streets with residential usages: "Front setback required only when O- or B-zoned lot abuts R-zoned lot with frontage on the same street. In such cases, the O- or B-zoned lot must match the actual front setback of the building that exists on the abutting R-zoned lot, or if no building exists on the abutting R-zoned lot, the O- or B-zoned lot must provide at least 50% of the front setback that applies to the abutting R-zoned lot."<sup>23</sup> This requirement will result in visually consistent, neighborhood-sensitive development.

### **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

#### ***Planning Initiatives***

The neighborhood must work with the City to understand what types of development would be supported by market demand within the station area. While there is a large supply of underutilized and vacant parcels which are subject to change based on a transit system investment, this change will only happen in the context of a supportive market: public sector investment alone will not spur it. Rather than developing at a lower-density than would be supported by the availability of parcels for development, the City should ensure that sustainable development is clustered at targeted locations. Physical dispersion of redevelopment projects will dilute potential synergy between businesses, weakening their broader positive economic development impacts.

#### ***Policy Recommendations***

Following the completion of the recommended planning initiatives, the City can then target incentives and policies to attract and retain appropriate businesses to the area. This can be achieved through tax abatement, streamlined permitting, fee waivers, parking requirement reductions, or through a variety of other tools.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 100-21.

### ***Improvement Projects***

The cycle of disinvestment within the station area has left existing infrastructure in a state of disrepair. The City should invest in sidewalk upgrades, landscaping, and streetscaping, as well as the installation of new lighting, street furniture, and bus shelters. The City may want to consider coordinating streetscape upgrades, particularly those recommended for bus shelters, with the planned construction of the Troost BRT line. In combination with pedestrian-friendly design guidelines, these public sector improvements could catalyze reinvestment by private property owners.

# Market Area: Prospect Avenue at Brush Creek Corridor

## Potential Station Location: Prospect Avenue and Swope Parkway

### Introduction

This station area's location is constrained by Brush Creek to the north and Bruce R. Watkins Drive to the west and south. The triangular parcel which results from these natural and man-made features offers a unique opportunity to site a park-and-ride station while also servicing the residential neighborhoods which surround the station area from its southeast and southwest.

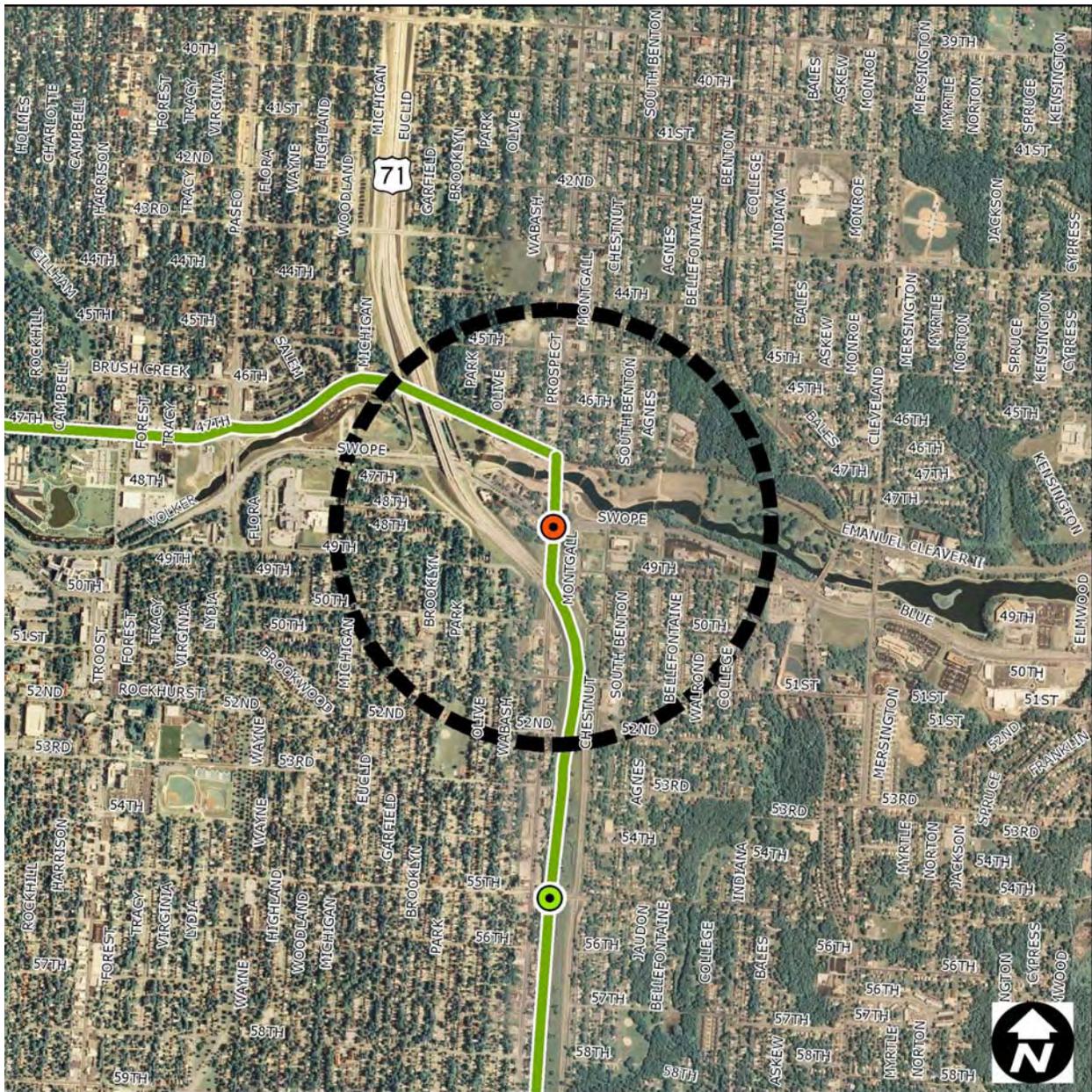


Figure 16: Potential Station Location at Prospect Avenue and Swope Parkway

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Existing Land Use and Development Patterns**

The existing land uses at the proposed station location include a gas station on the southeast corner of Swope and Prospect, open green space at a steep grade on the southwest corner, an abandoned commercial structure on the northwest corner, and a multi-story senior housing complex on the northeast corner. Moving west along Swope Parkway towards Bruce R. Watkins Drive, multi-family housing is adjacent to smaller-scale commercial uses, a day care center, a church, and a Job Corps facility. The uses along Swope east of Prospect include a church, open space, and a lower-quality strip-mall style development.

South of the Bruce R. Watkins Drive overpass, Prospect Avenue has a mixture of single-family homes and auto-oriented commercial uses. Low-density, bungalow-style residential uses occupy the southeast and southwest portion of the station area, including new residential construction along Chestnut Avenue between 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Streets. North of Brush Creek, Prospect is fronted by an assortment of land uses: a gas station, a church, single-family residential, parking lots, commercial uses, and auto-oriented uses. The remainder of the station area north of Brush Creek, with the exception of a U.S. Naval facility east of Prospect along Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard, is low-density residential.

### **Existing Population Density**

The existing population density for station area ranks from low to low-medium. By 2030, the population density in the northwest portion of the station area is expected to decline to a low ranking. The density rankings in the other three Census tracts are projected to remain the same.

### **Existing Transportation Facilities and Conditions**

#### ***Roadway Access***

Because of Brush Creek and Bruce R. Watkins Drive, this station area has the least integrated system of roadways. Bruce R. Watkins and Prospect are the only two options for crossing Brush Creek within the station area, and access from the residential areas along the southwest and southeast corners of the station area are somewhat limited because of physical boundaries created by Watkins Drive.

#### ***Street Network Density***

Despite some access issues resulting from Watkins Drive and the Brush Creek, the three neighborhoods in the station area is laid out on a grid network, which results in a high street density.

#### ***Transit***

The area is currently well-served by multiple north-south and east-west Metro lines, including lines along both Swope and Prospect.

#### ***Bike / Pedestrian***

The scale and mix of uses at the southern end of the station area is fairly pedestrian-friendly, including the underpass of the Bruce R. Watkins Drive, which is relatively new, well-lit, and clean. The western half of Swope Parkway could be considered pedestrian-friendly because of sidewalks and the presence of a carriageway along the northern edge of the street. The eastern half of Swope maintains a sidewalk along its southern edge, but provides no sidewalk along its northern edge. This inconsistency, the volume of traffic, and the infrequent pedestrian crossing opportunities discourage pedestrian use along Swope east of Prospect.

Good sidewalk facilities exist in the southern residential portion of the station area, but the residential areas at the northern end of the corridor have inconsistent sidewalks. The sidewalks

along Prospect north of Brush Creek are poorly-maintained, and the lack of landscaping, condition of existing structures, and mix of uses do not contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Additionally, the station area is also affected by the City's current requirements for the provision of bicycle parking, including short-term bike parking facilities at multi-family residential buildings and non-residential developments, as previously described.

### **Urban Design Conditions**

Urban design conditions vary greatly throughout the station area: the residential uses at the southern end of the station area are in consistently fair to good condition. The commercial and multi-family uses along Prospect are of comparatively lower-quality. In particular, the abandoned commercial structure on the northwest corner of Swope and Prospect detracts from the appearance of the intersection and offers an ideal redevelopment or renovation opportunity. If the park-and-ride lot were to be constructed on the southwest corner of this intersection, adjacent commercial uses on all three corners would be subject to redevelopment as transit-supportive, mixed-use projects built at a pedestrian-scale. Redevelopment along the northern edge of Swope should acknowledge the aesthetic value of Brush Creek and incorporate it into site design. The senior citizen housing on the northeast corner of the intersection is a stable use and in good condition.

The urban design conditions along Prospect north of Brush Creek are extremely weak: incompatible, gap-tooth development in poorly-maintained structures front on crumbling sidewalks with very little landscaping. The low-density residential on the blocks surrounding Prospect also varies greatly in condition, from well-maintained houses that have seen significant investment to structures that are suffering from severe disinvestment.

### **Market Conditions**

The Brush Creek market area is influenced by the institutional uses on the west side of the market area and the south side of Brush Creek, which limit the land available for commercial and residential development. The rental rates and sales prices of the housing stock decrease moving east from Country Club Plaza to Prospect Avenue. Retail space is relatively limited east of Country Club Plaza. This limited supply for space drives up rental rates, which makes it more difficult for property managers to lease space. There is a limited supply of and demand for office space in the market area. While opportunities for redevelopment exist, however there are currently no specific plans for redevelopment projects.

### **Current Plans and Policies**

Two plans provide planning and development frameworks for the stations area: the FOCUS Kansas City Plan and the Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan (1998).

#### **Current Plans**

##### ***Future Land Use and Development***

The FOCUS Kansas City Plan encourages the revitalization of the Brush Creek Corridor through its Central Business Corridor Initiative. Recommendations include:

- Developing light rail stations with accessible connections, and
- Supporting activities of the corridor's institutions and not-for-profits.

The Brush Creek Corridor Plan recommends mixed-use development from Prospect west to Olive and one block north and south of Swope Parkway, and more intense land uses from Swope Parkway to 47<sup>th</sup> Terrace and Woodland Avenue to Bruce R. Watkins Drive. Other recommendations include:

- Investing in public infrastructure to enhance development sites, and

- Applying various City, state and federal development tools to support reinvestment.

### ***Parking***

The limited number of existing commercial uses and availability of on-street and surface parking lots has resulted in a much greater supply of parking than demand. As infill development occurs at key intersections throughout the area, however, the City should work to ensure that parking is located away from the street frontage. Because of the possibility of a park-and-ride facility, the City should evaluate the possibility of used shared parking strategies to reduce parking requirements for new construction and redevelopment. This area is currently subjected to the same parking requirements, which are described above, as the remainder of the city.

### ***Plans to Improve Pedestrian Facilities***

Beyond the pedestrian linkages which are recommended within the FOCUS Plan, the Brush Creek Corridor Plan does not recommend any additional improvements to pedestrian facilities.

### ***Design Guidelines***

The Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan outlines a series of design guidelines, which are based on the 1995 Brush Creek Design Guidelines document. Areas addressed include:

- Access,
- Architectural character / details,
- Build-to-lines and setbacks,
- Connections,
- Density and bulk,
- Heights,
- Lighting,
- Open space,
- Parking,
- Signage,
- Streetscape,
- View corridors, and
- Signage.

### **Current Policies**

#### ***Zoning Ordinance***

The station area currently includes residential (R-2, R-3, and R-4) and commercial (C-2 and CP-2) uses. Under the proposed Development Code, the residential uses will translate to R-5, R-2.5 and R-1.5 district respectively, and commercial uses will translate to B3-2 and B2-2 respectively. With the exception of the R-5 district, all residential districts allow multi-unit housing. Minimum lot areas range from 3,000 to 5,000 square feet and maximum heights range between 35 and 45 feet. Minimum lot widths range from 30 to 45 feet, and minimum lot area per unit ranges from 1,500 to 5,000 square feet. These residential districts do not allow neighborhood-serving retail.

The commercial districts allow residential uses above the ground floor in mixed-use buildings, and single-purpose residential buildings by special permit. While there are no minimum lot areas or minimum lot widths, maximum FARs range from 2.2 to 3.0

### **Recommendations to Improve Transit-Supportive Land Use**

#### ***Planning Initiatives***

The current land uses within the station area are subject to change, and their redevelopment could be catalyzed by the implementation of a rail transit system. By targeting planning and infrastructure improvements at the intersection of Prospect and Swope, east and west of the station location along Swope, and along Prospect north of Cleaver, the City can support the

transit system while adhering to the development vision laid out in the Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan.

Because of the existing separation of uses, the City may want to consider creating a Transit-Oriented Development overlay zone within a half-mile radius of the proposed station location in order to facilitate higher-density, mixed-use development in selected locations.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

Because this station location could potentially function as a park-and-ride facility, the City may want to consider offering parking reductions at new transit-supportive developments. The City may also want to explore the use of design guidelines specific to the station area which encourage visual access to the Brush Creek Corridor and adjacent parkland.

New development along Prospect north of the creek should also be subject to more pedestrian-friendly design guidelines, including increased ground floor transparency, better signage, and improved landscaping.

### ***Improvement Projects***

Because the area has an incomplete sidewalk network both north and south of the creek, the City may want to invest in sidewalk construction in order to improve pedestrian facilities. The sidewalks north of Prospect are in need of repair and upgrading. When sidewalk maintenance is undertaken in this area, the City may consider installing new lighting, street furniture, landscaping, and trash receptacles in order to create a more aesthetically-pleasing and pedestrian-friendly environment. The City may also want to consider installing wayfinding signage to the station location in areas south of the Bruce R. Watkins Drive overpass.

## ***3.2 Assessment of Growth Management Plans and Initiatives in the Region***

Kansas City does not currently adhere to an adopted growth management plan. In a recent survey of the metropolitan area, researchers found that “the nature of growth regulation differs between Kansas and Missouri, with stronger planning and growth management in Kansas than in Missouri, where jurisdictions run the gamut from exclusionary to accommodating.”<sup>24</sup> The metropolitan area was low density (3.5 persons per urbanized acre) in 1982, and lost density through 1997 as nearly 125,000 more acres of urbanized land were added to the area, representing a 30 percent increase, while population only grew 16 percent.<sup>25</sup> This study found that while the region has a “moderate form of urban containment,” the disparity in growth management policies between the states contributed to uneven growth patterns: between 1982 and 1997, density dropped by 14 percent on the Missouri side but only dropped three percent on the Kansas side of the metropolitan area, a pattern which has left the Kansas side with a higher built density than the Missouri side of the metropolitan area.<sup>26</sup>

While MARC coordinates and facilitates a number of inter-jurisdictional planning initiatives which promote sustainable development patterns, including MetroGreen and Creating Quality Places, the region’s municipalities have not yet collaborated on the creation of a regional growth management strategy. The creation and adoption of a growth plan would assist in guiding future growth in a sustainable pattern that meets the growth needs of individual communities within a broader regional framework.

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<sup>24</sup> The Brookings Institution, [http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20060810\\_Kansas.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20060810_Kansas.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

**APPENDIX A – KANSAS CITY LIGHT RAIL  
MARKET ANALYSIS REPORT**

**APPENDIX B – KANSAS CITY LIGHT RAIL  
MARKET ANALYSIS APPENDIX**

**APPENDIX C – LAND USE POLICY ANALYSIS:  
A NATIONAL REVIEW OF TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE POLICIES  
AND AN ANALYSIS OF EXISTING REGULATIONS**