



# Planning for the Central Lower San Antonio Neighborhood

Oakland, CA

Summer 2004



Department of City and Regional Planning  
Institute of Urban and Regional Development

University of California, Berkeley

For the Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Making Connections Planning Committee

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At IURD we believe communities are built as a joint effort, therefore, we appreciate the Casey Foundation setting the stage for Lower San Antonio to re-build itself with the Making Connections comprehensive community initiative in Oakland. It is truly a shared endeavor. We are proud to assist in the work.



# Contents

- Executive Summary** ..... 1
  - The Lower San Antonio Neighborhood
  - Physical Environment
  - Recommendations
  - Facts-At-A-Glance
  
- Introduction** ..... 5
  - Making Connections in the Lower San Antonio
  - The UC Berkeley Graduate Student Planning Class
  - Proximity and Boundaries
  
- Social and Economic Analysis** ..... 11
  - Population and Demographics
  - Churches, Community Institutions, and Schools
  - Retail Business
  - Manufacturing and Industrial Business
  
- History, Physical Form, and Natural Factor Analysis** ..... 21
  - History of the Neighborhood
  - Topography, Hydrology, and Natural Hazards
  - Man-made Hazards and the Public Urban Forest
  - Public Open Space System
  - Neighborhood Streets
  - Transportation Environment and Issues
  
- Public Realm Proposals** ..... 35
  - Broad Brush Strategy and Phasing
  - Connecting Open Spaces
  - San Antonio Park
  - Pedestrian Bridge to the Waterfront
  - Street Problems and Solutions
  - Street Improvements
  
- Proposals to Guide Private Development** ..... 57
  - Broad Brush Strategy and Phasing
  - Zoning Strategies
  - Site Specific Proposals



# Executive Summary

## The Lower San Antonio Neighborhood

Oakland's Lower San Antonio neighborhood contains some of the earliest residential areas in the City, dating back to the mid-nineteenth century. Now, the area is one of the most diverse communities in the Bay Area. The 2000 Census indicates that 72% of the residents rent and 28% own their homes, and that the average household size is 3.84 people. The area has many assets, including three parks, schools, access to many bus lines, community services and close proximity to Lake Merritt and downtown Oakland. There are dozens of active non-profit organizations directly serving the residents. The area is attractive to those who know about it, yet unknown to many people in the Bay Area, often leaving it overlooked by

outsiders as a place to live, build or invest.

To some degree, this anonymity has allowed the area to remain less gentrified than it could have become in the past 10 years (as have the nearby districts of China Hill and the Fruitvale); however, with the pressures of the housing real estate market in the East Bay, the new Fruitvale Transit Village completed and a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line planned for International Boulevard, development is bound to accelerate in the Lower San Antonio.

It is important to anticipate and plan for the impacts and opportunities these developments will have on the community. Housing developments can catalyze and support local businesses and jobs; the

BRT line will entail redesign of the street and could be great for improvements to pedestrian and bike use, as well as safety and a sense of place; more residents can become active voices to advocate for more appropriate park programming that the community deserves; and finally, an enhanced sense of place provided by better designed public spaces can allow for people to come out and enjoy the rich heritage and cultural diversity already alive and well in the area.

# Executive Summary

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## Physical Environment

The San Antonio District of Oakland is located about 2 miles southeast of downtown. The area is a predominantly residential neighborhood, but there are also a number of retail and light industrial businesses located primarily along International Blvd, East 12<sup>th</sup> St., and 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. Most of the housing above International Blvd is single-family homes, but there is a moderate number of multifamily units located on International and 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. San Antonio Park, at the center of the neighborhood, is one of the largest city parks in the city of Oakland and its oldest.

However, the area is distinctly lacking in civic amenities. There is no post office or library. In addition, the elementary schools are subject to overcrowding. While there are a number of ethnic restaurants and small food stores, there is no all-purpose grocery or drug store in the neighborhood, and no financial institutions.

Retail rents in the lower San Antonio are lower than in the rest of Oakland, and businesses in the area are predominantly small and locally owned. There is a high number of automotive service businesses in the area, especially on International Blvd and East 12<sup>th</sup> St. Additional light industry, including a number of food processing and distribution facilities, is located on East 12<sup>th</sup> St.

Streets rarely attract a great number of pedestrians; the sidewalks lack amenities and crossings are difficult. The safety of children, particularly en route to school or the park, is an area of community concern. While the area is well served by conventional buses, it lacks access to rapid transit. The nearest BART stations are at Fruitvale and Lake Merritt. However, the city is currently considering creating a Bus Rapid Transit system along International Blvd.

The San Antonio area has a rich history that is reflected in its physical attributes. Two street grids meet at 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. Alleys were likely used as service entries for mansions that originally dotted the subdivision. The residential areas of the lower San Antonio were built out by the 1910s, and much of the housing stock reflects these early origins.

Unlike many other residential areas in Oakland, the neighborhood is relatively close to the shoreline. The current shoreline is mostly landfill, but as originally laid out, the town sat on a bluff overlooking a harbor. The neighborhood retains this character, with a gently rising grade providing views of the estuary as one reaches the park.

Like the rest of Oakland, the area is susceptible to earthquake and fire hazards. In the event of either, the area may be harder hit than the rest of the area because of its older housing stock and lack of financial resources.

The bounds of the specific area studied in this document are 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 21<sup>st</sup> Street and the Oakland Estuary. This region is distinguished by several dominant physical characteristics: (1) San Antonio Park, one of the largest in the city; (2) a specialized system of alleys that creates a grid pattern of smaller, divided blocks unique to this neighborhood; and (3) direct proximity to the Oakland Estuary, which for miles in either direction is buffered by wide blocks of industrial and shipping zones as well as the transportation spine comprised of BART, the I-880 freeway, and the railroad tracks.

The plan study area connects areas that have recently completed planning work and begun to construct some improvements. Our analysis looks at the Lower San Antonio broadly, and the proposals in the second half of this document are intended to complement the work on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Eastlake ends of our plan study area.



## Recommendations

The time is ripe for investigating the possibilities to develop private and public places in Lower San Antonio. The neighborhood has many vacant and underutilized sites. The Lower San Antonio Collaborative has put a lot of thought into what it wants to see and happen in the community. Residents are mobilizing, community based organizations are working hard, and city agencies and officials, financial institutions and funding sources are in the wings ready to participate in revitalization efforts. Some of the proposals in this book are bold and some are subtle. They are all intended to spark discussion and breed new ideas. Take your pick:

- Create a new plaza at the intersection of 12th Street and 14th Avenue
- Establish a circuit of tree-lined “greened” streets for safe and concentrated pedestrian movement
- Connect open spaces throughout the area
- Redesign the west edge of San Antonio Park for community uses such as community gardens and a marketplace
- Realign the pedestrian bridge to have a better connection to the waterfront
- Realign 14th and 15th Avenues at Foothill Boulevard to make traffic smoother and slower, and create a park in the middle

- Expose the creek running under 14th Avenue through the new park
- Make 12th Street 2-way again while also creating a green buffer zone between the street and the railroad tracks
- Expand and redesign the park at 12th Street and 14th Avenue
- Redesign International Boulevard to allow for bus rapid transit, a median, street trees and wider sidewalks for merchants and pedestrians
- Redesign Foothill Boulevard and 21st Street with a planted median containing a bike lane, street trees, bulb-outs and crosswalks to slow traffic and make way for pleasant and safe routes to school
- Plant street trees throughout the neighborhood
- Provide more affordable housing in the immediate neighborhood
- Support public transit by increasing residential density on International Blvd and 14th Avenue, such as along 15th Avenue between International Blvd. and 12th Street
- Create buildings that activate the public realm, such as a library on 16th Avenue across from San Antonio Park
- Encourage local retail, such as a grocery store across from the proposed park at 14th Avenue and Foothill Boulevard

## Central Lower San Antonio Facts-At-A-Glance

Politics:

Study Area Councilmembers:

District 2: Danny Wan

District 5: Ignacio de la Fuente

Redevelopment Zone: Central City East

Demographics (2000 Census):

Census tract: 4059

Race: Asian & Pacific Islander-41.2%;  
Hispanic-33.2%; Black-18.3%; White-  
3.8%; American Indian-0.3%; Other-3.2%

Median Age: 27.6 years

Average Household Size: 3.84

Average Family Size: 4.25

Homeowners: 28%, Renters: 72%

Median household income:

Tract 4059: \$28,677

Oakland: \$40,055

Alameda County: \$55,946

Public Schools:

Garfield Elementary and Roosevelt  
Middle



Intersection of 22<sup>nd</sup> St and International Boulevard



# Introduction

## Making Connections in the Lower San Antonio

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, with a local team of community based organizations and technical assistance providers, has undertaken an ambitious comprehensive community initiative in ten national sites, one of which is Oakland's Lower San Antonio. The effort is a multi-pronged approach to help promote family neighborhood strengthening in a variety of ways, from a targeted effort toward one particular challenge to engaging in a full array of strategies all at once. The mission of the Collaborative states:

*“We are a culturally diverse coalition founded to celebrate the strengths of the Lower San Antonio community, promoting empowerment so that families can live with peace, dignity, and opportunity.”*

The Casey Foundation is working to help promote family neighborhood strengthening in a variety of ways, from a targeted effort toward one particular challenge to engaging in a full array of strategies all at once. It is up to those involved in the Collaborative to decide how to proceed in their community. Efforts are concentrated around three premises that the Foundation believes are essential to successful outcomes for these families:

1. Creating the opportunity to earn a decent living and build assets
2. Building close ties with family, neighbors, kin, faith communities and civic groups
3. Having reliable services close to home

From its investment in the Lower San Antonio, the Casey Foundation seeks to see outcomes in these areas:

1. Families have increased earnings and income
2. Families have increased levels of assets
3. Children are healthy and ready to succeed in school
4. Families, youth and neighborhoods increase their civic participation
5. Families and neighborhoods have strong informal supports and networks
6. Families have access to quality services and supports that work for them

## The UC Berkeley Graduate Student Planning Class



UC Berkeley's planning program is built on the premise that the physical environment, and particularly public space, acts as a living room in a home –setting the tone for a whole host of relationships and interactions. We think that improvements to the physical environment, in direct response to what is going on the natural, social and economic conditions in a community, can help a community thrive. For example, imagine a neighborhood where parents can walk their children from school while talking to each other about homework and what sports they will play at the park instead of worrying about being hit by cars. Before they arrive at the park, they stop at a corner store to pick up some pretzels and fresh juice, sit at the outdoor tables and overhear a conversation about a mural that kids will be painting over the weekend. Once they get to the park, the younger kids have play structures and the older kids have soccer and basketball practice, and mothers can see if there are any tomatoes in the community garden that they can use for

dinner. The children can have healthy snacks, something to do after school and the whole family has healthy food options. They need the kind of neighborhood that encourages these options.

The work you see in this book was done in the context of a graduate planning studio course taught by professor Elizabeth Macdonald that focuses on physical issues and urban design, held at UC Berkeley in the spring of 2004. UC Berkeley graduate students built upon existing visions and feedback from the Collaborative, and they used all of the currently available plans and studies for the area to provide visions for the overall design of International Boulevard and the immediately surrounding neighborhood. We worked broadly on the whole boulevard and focused on particular sites. Some of the particular sites we focused on were recommended for housing sites in the recent IURD study, "Affordable Housing Sites in the Lower San Antonio," that the Housing Committee is using to guide its work.

Our original interest in doing this project was that the Lower San Antonio neighborhood has such an interesting history, and International Boulevard holds much promise as a public place and commercial corridor. We also wanted to continue work that UC Berkeley's Institute of Urban and Regional Development was doing in Lower San Antonio to identify development potential that could benefit the community.

### How did the studio class work?

Professor Macdonald taught the class, Community Partnerships Director Heather Hood worked with the Collaborative Planning Committee and the class, and the students worked for four months to listen, look, understand, consider, imagine, propose and revise their thinking. The first half of the studio course was spent looking at and trying to understand qualities of the existing physical environment, natural and man-made, and the social and economic contexts in which it is situated. Working individually and in teams, students engaged in empirical observations and other forms of data collection, including meetings with local community members and service providers. Following analysis of the gathered data, students prepared the graphics that communicate the findings, identified the opportunities and constraints that derive from them, and presented their interpretation of the implications to the Collaborative.



The second half of the studio was spent preparing a neighborhood plan for the study area. The plan dealt primarily with physical issues including land use and urban form, housing, streets and open spaces, and transportation, but there are direct implications for economic development and community development issues. Students worked both in teams and individually for the different aspects of the class. Finally, in May, they presented their work at UC Berkeley to a set of planning and urban design critics and then to the Collaborative at an afternoon presentation, hosted by East Bay Asian Youth Center, in the heart of the plan study area.



We built this study on the hard work and information created by others. In addition to the feedback provided by participants in the community sessions, we were inspired by the analysis, ideas and insights offered in the following documents created over the years:

### **RECENT PLANS**

#### **Draft 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Community Action Plan**

Urban Ecology, October 2003

#### **The Clinton Park Plan**

Urban Ecology, August 1999

#### **EastLake Mainstreet Commercial Revitalization Strategy**

East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, 1998

#### **Lower San Antonio Neighborhood Plan**

Neighborhood Planning Council, 1997

### **RECENT STUDIES**

#### **Affordable Housing Potential in the Lower San Antonio**

Institute of Urban and Regional Development, October 2003

#### **Market Analysis for Proposed Development Project, Lower San Antonio District**

Bay Area Economics, December 2001

#### **Lower San Antonio Community Profile**

East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), October 1996



#### **San Antonio Neighborhood Analysis: Community Information, Resources and Recommendations**

Michelle Sugden-Casatillo and the Institute of Urban and Regional Development, 1996

#### **Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey: 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Commercial District**

City of Oakland, 1996

### **RECENT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

#### **Oak-to-Ninth Mixed-Use Development Response to RFQ**

Oakland Harbor Partners, 2003

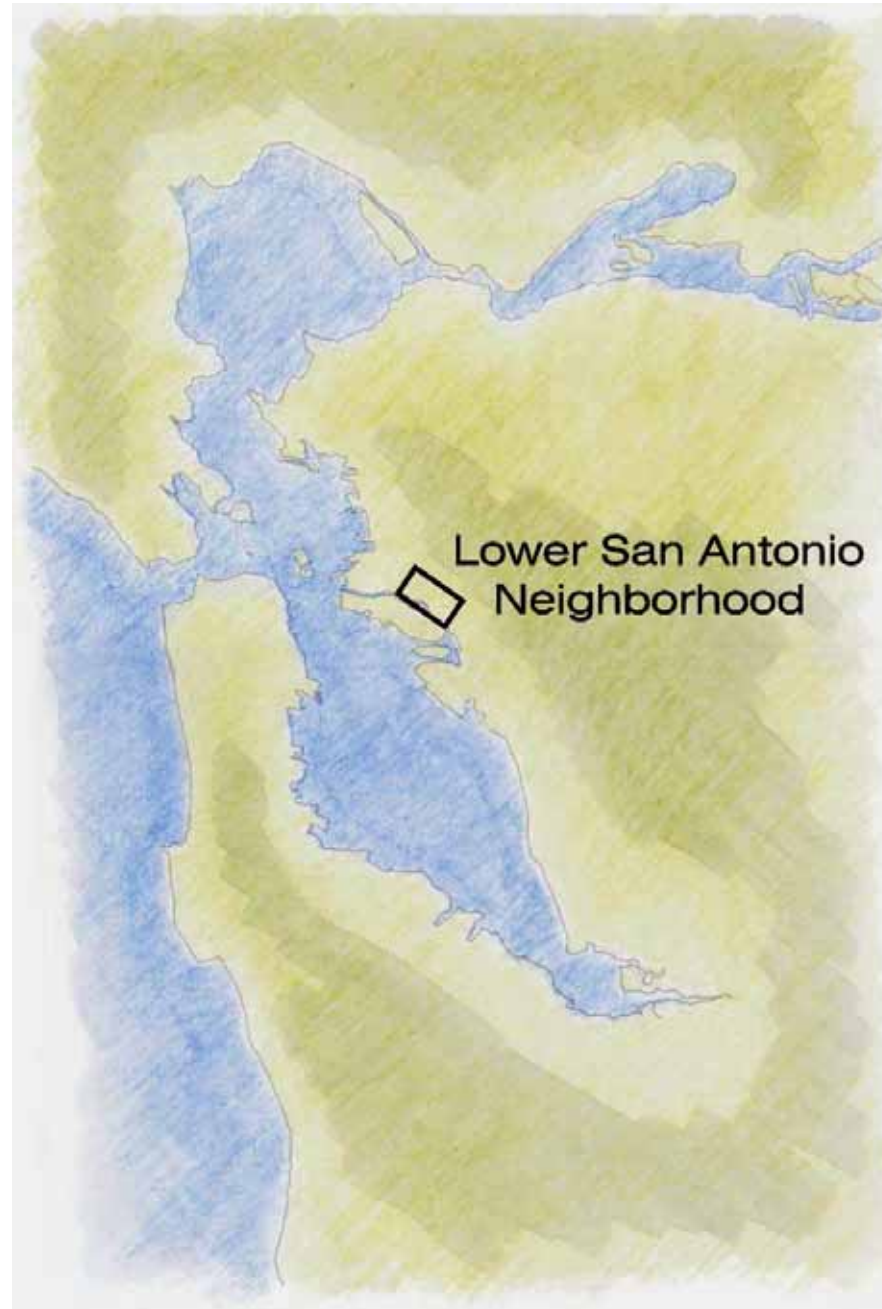
#### **Oak-to-Ninth Possibilities for Organizing PolicyLink, May 2003**

## Proximity and Boundaries

The San Antonio District is a neighborhood in Oakland, located about 2 miles southeast of downtown. The neighborhood is bounded by the Eastlake district in the north and the Fruitvale district to the south, both subjects of recent planning efforts. Even closer is the recent plan prepared by Urban Ecology for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Commercial District.

The project that the class has undertaken is specifically directed at a part of the neighborhood that has been overlooked by these recent efforts, bounded by 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 21<sup>st</sup> Street, and the Oakland Estuary. We call this area the Central Lower San Antonio. This overlaps with a large portion of the Casey Foundation's target area.

For the purposes of targeted data collection and analysis of the neighborhood's specific residents, we have used census tract 4059, bounded by International Blvd, East 22 St., 13<sup>th</sup> Ave., and 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave, which roughly approximates the residential portion of the study area.







Manufacturing and Industrial Use Analysis of International Blvd (p. 18)

# Social and Economic Analysis

“Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises.”

*-Demosthenes  
Philosopher (384 BC - 322 BC)*

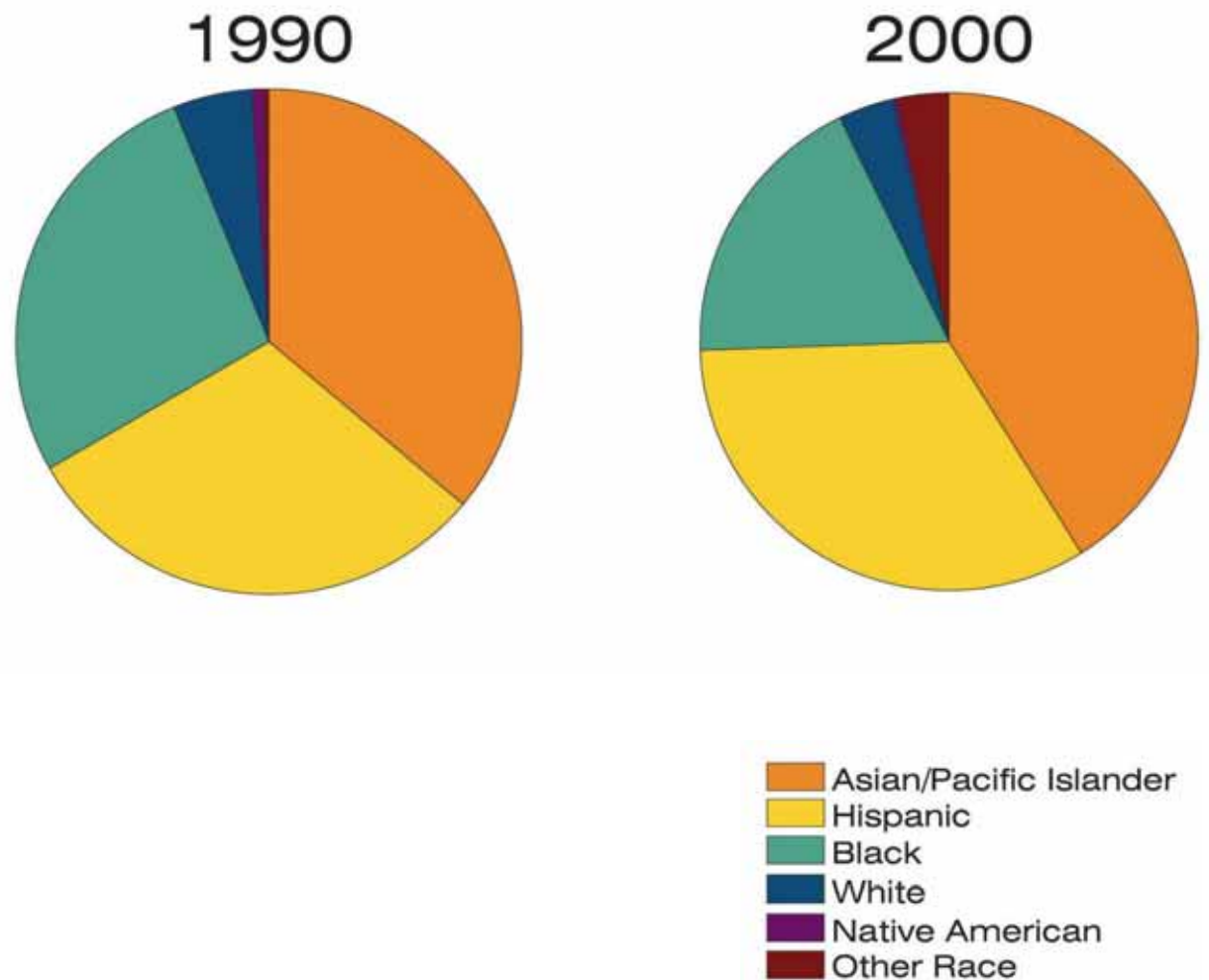
## Population and Demographics

Hispanic, Asian, and Black populations dominate the Central Lower San Antonio, represented here by census tract 4059. Over the past 10 years, the percentages of Hispanic and Asian populations have increased. There is also a strong spatial influence of these two populations on the study area, with the Asian-dominated Eastlake district to the north and the Hispanic-dominated Fruitvale district to the south.

The area has a significantly higher school age population and significantly larger household and family size than the city of Oakland.

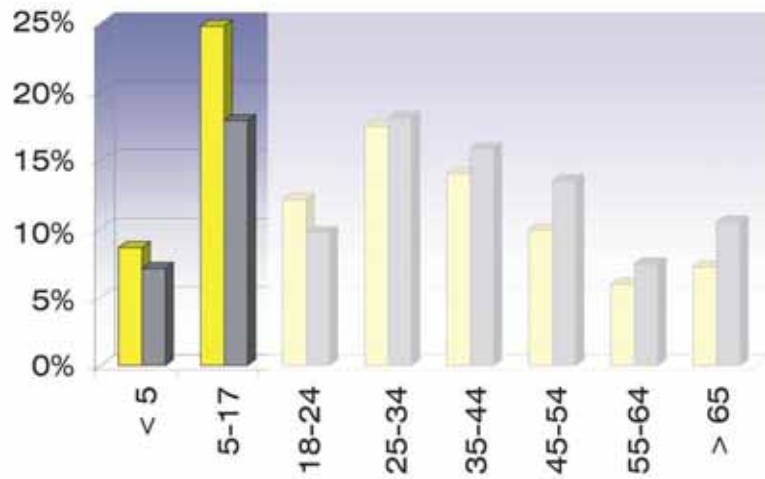
Roughly one-quarter of the homes in Tract 4059 are owner-occupied, compared to approximately 40% in the city as a whole.

Family and per capita incomes are also much lower than the citywide average, placing great strain on family wage-earners to support large families.

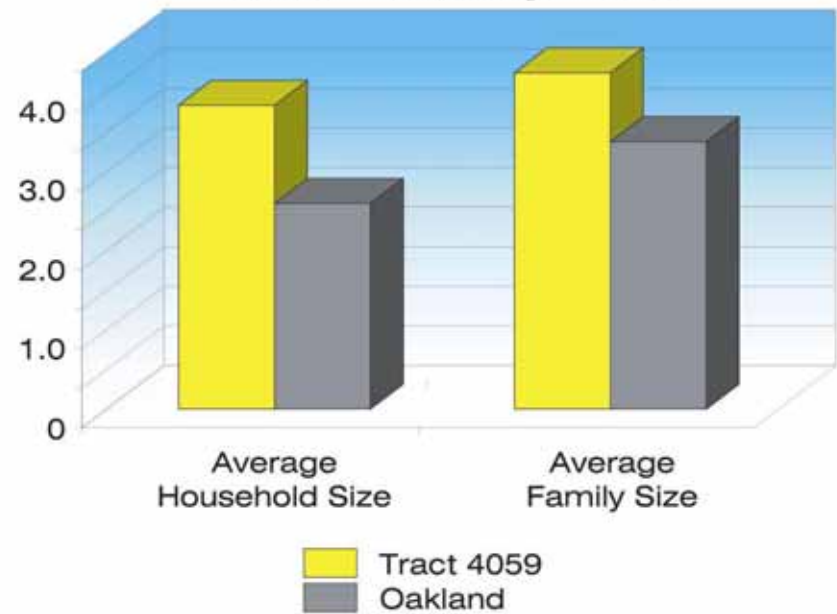




Age by Percent



Average Household and Family Size



Source: US Census 1990, 2000

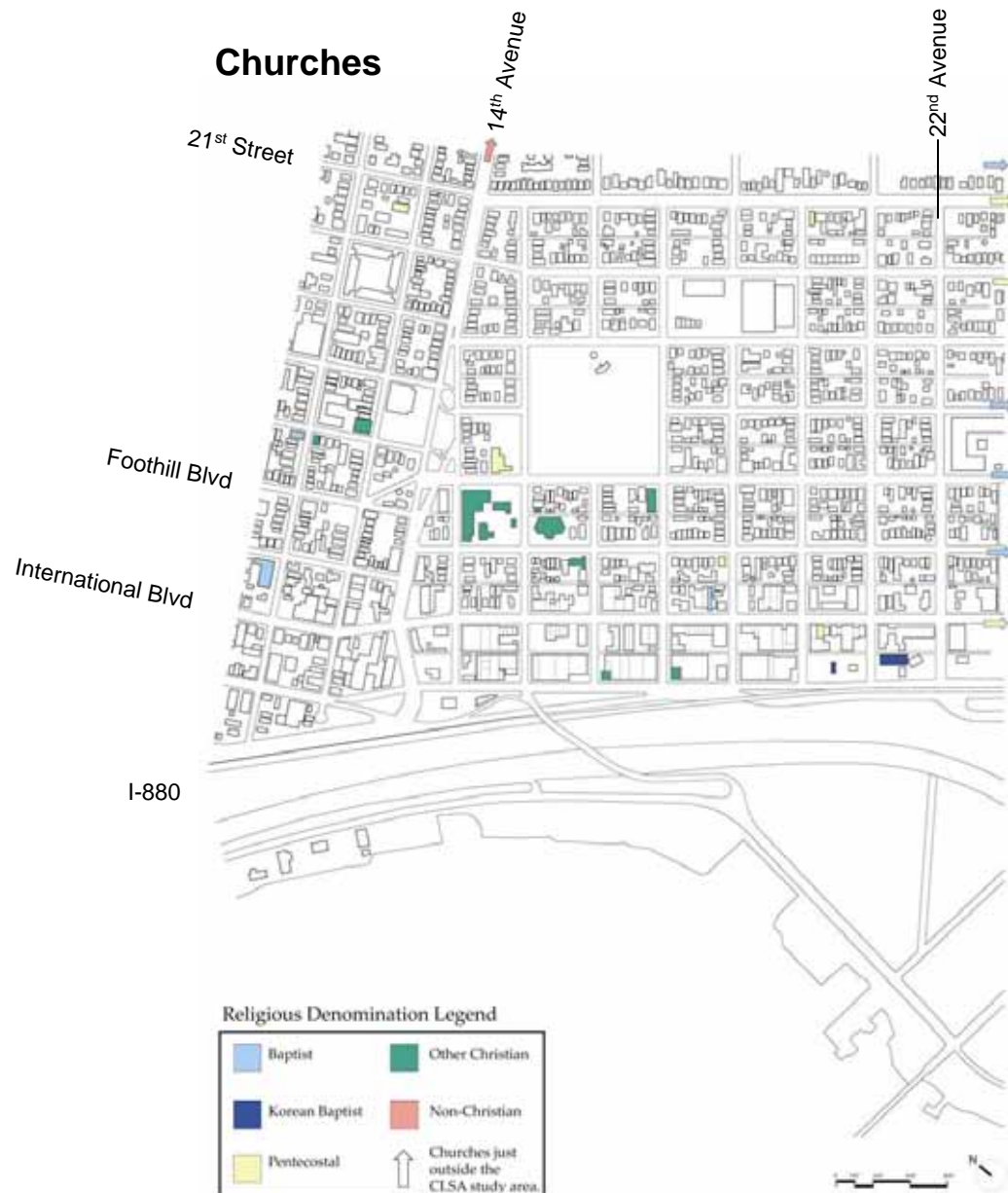
## Churches, Community Institutions, Schools

The diversity of congregations reflects the multiculturalism of the neighborhood; churches form place-based identity markers for each group.

The neighborhood has a number of non-profit organizations that serve the community's needs. Many of these organizations cater to a large immigrant population, often offering services in many languages. Most of these organizations are located along bus routes for greater accessibility.

There is a shortage of public services in this part of Oakland. The closest police station and post office are in downtown Oakland, and the nearest library is in Fruitvale.

The neighborhood is served by several schools, although many of the classes are overcrowded and understaffed, and after-school programs do not serve the neighborhood's needs.



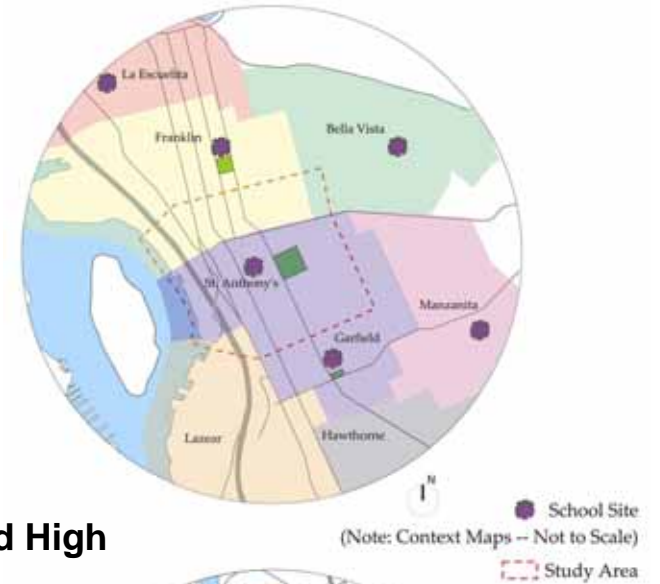
## Community Organizations



(Note: Context Map -- Not to Scale)

Fruitvale Transit Village

## Elementary Schools

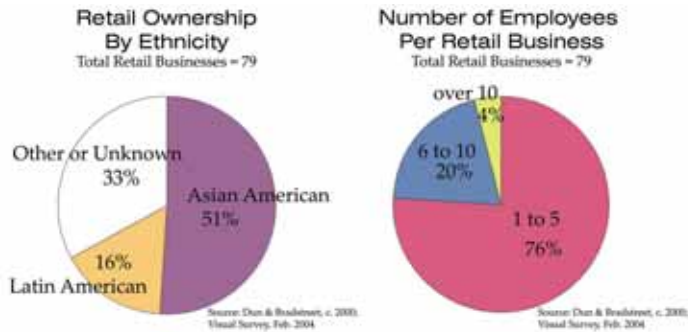


## Middle and High Schools

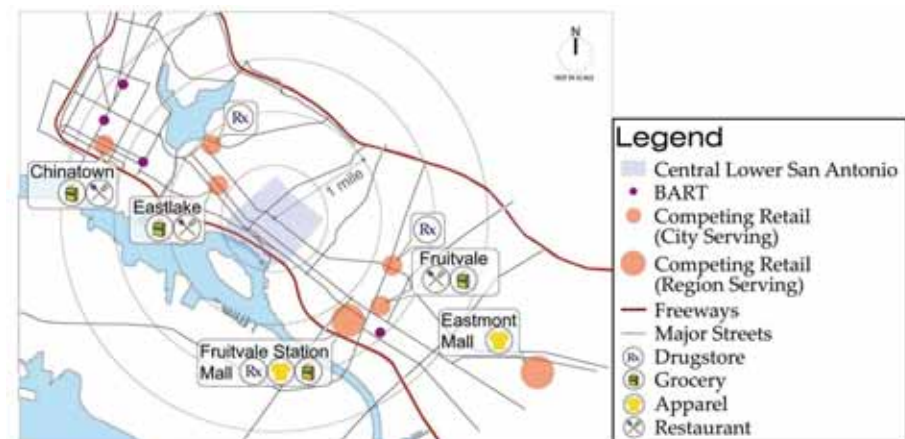
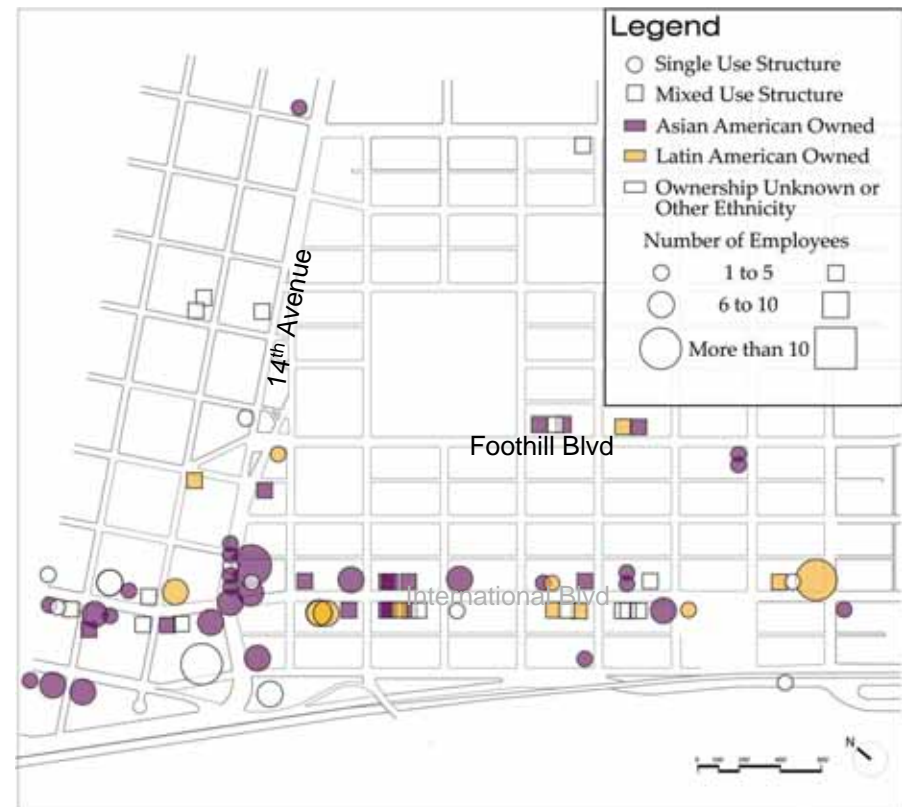


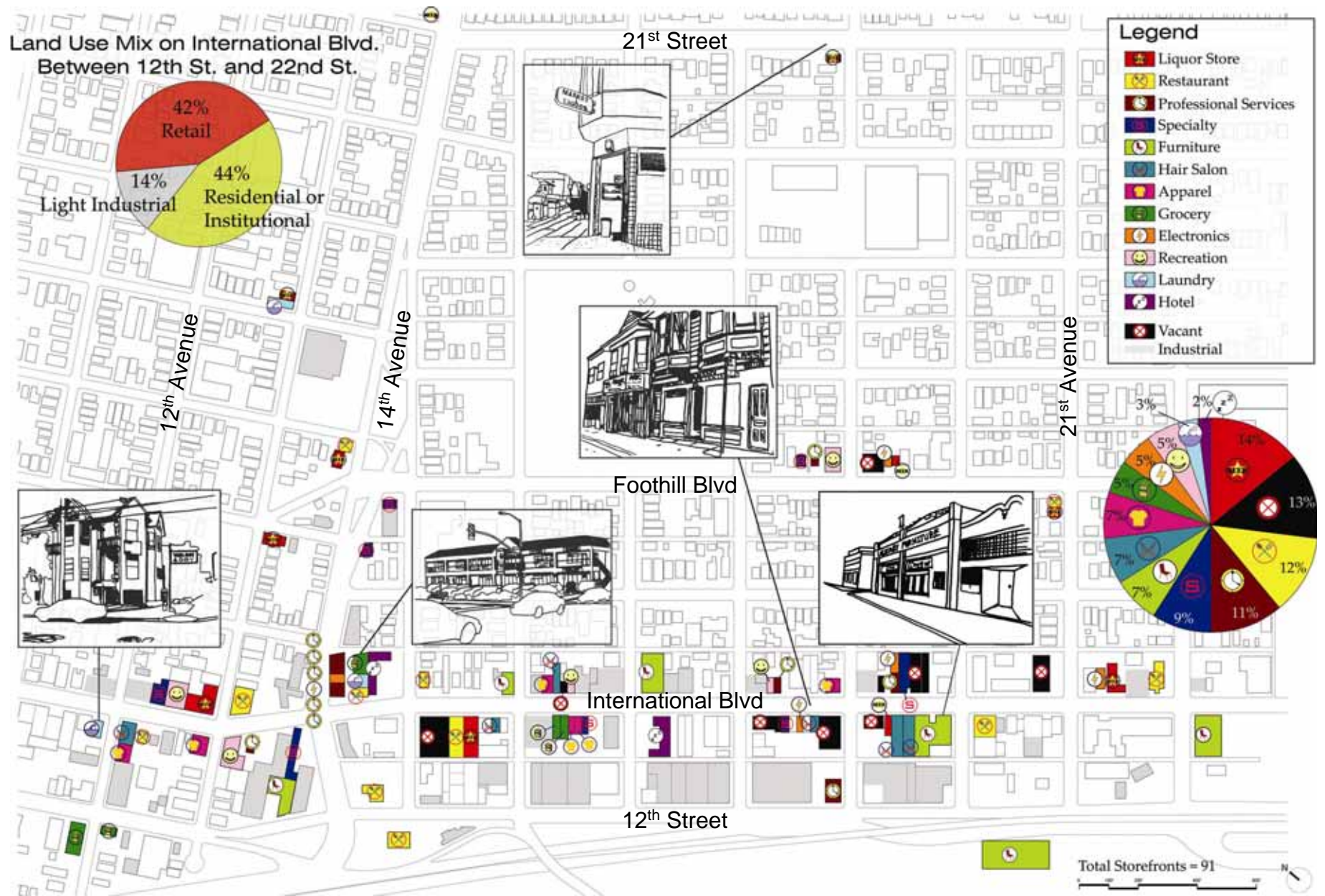
# Retail Business

Retail businesses in the neighborhood are characterized by small size and a high proportion of Asian American ownership. Additionally, the businesses nearest the major intersection of International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue are housed exclusively in single-use structures. Mixed-use structures are present along International Blvd and elsewhere in the neighborhood, in less congested areas.



Small, family-run businesses are viable in the neighborhood because it enjoys low retail rents compared to the rest of the city of Oakland. Additionally, the low retail rents make it unlikely that substantial new commercial development will occur in the future.





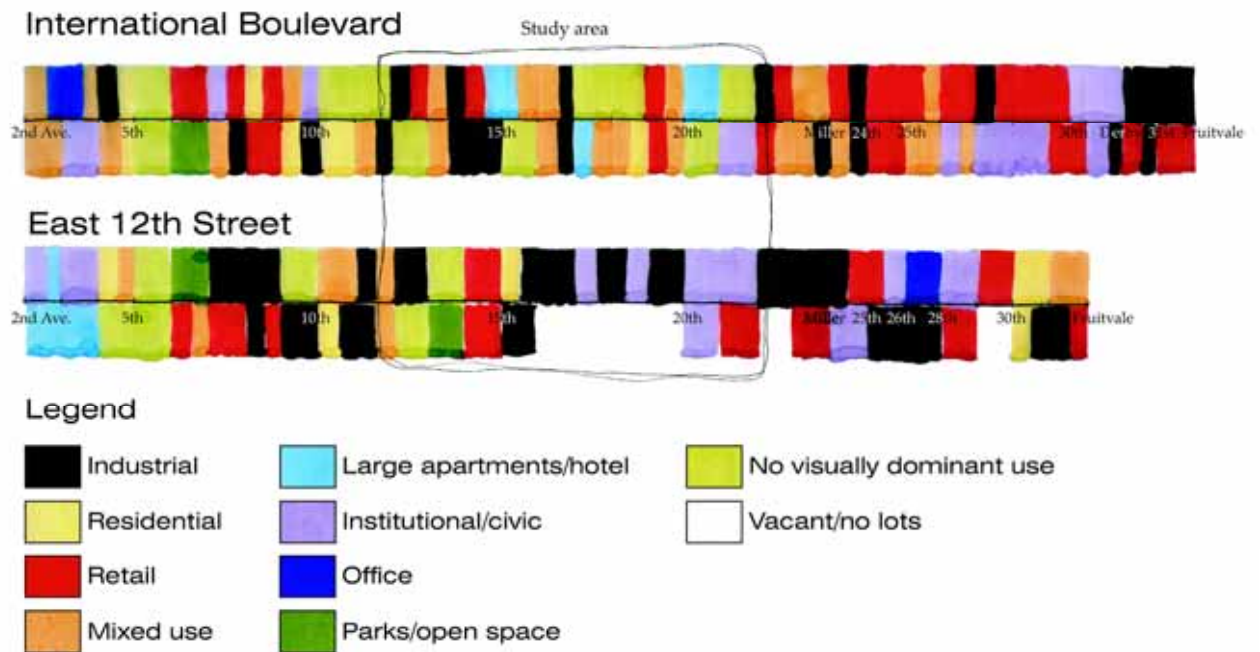
# Manufacturing and Industrial Business

Many manufacturing and industrial businesses are concentrated in the neighborhood. These uses give the area a distinct character.

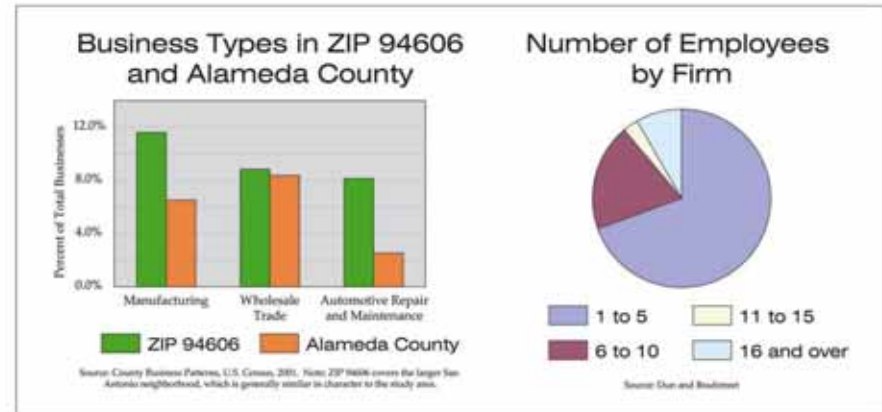
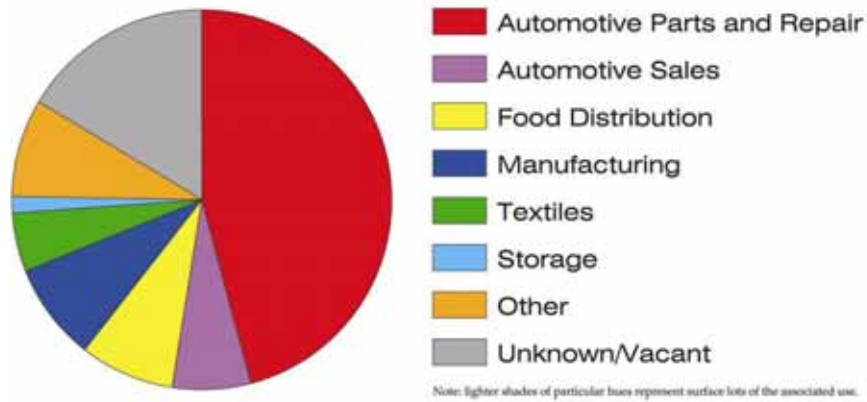
East 12<sup>th</sup> Street serves as an industrial corridor in use and in character. Many businesses are auto repair shops or wholesalers. There are many former warehouses.



On International Blvd., the mix of uses is more finely-grained. Manufacturing or industrial buildings often stand side-by-side with restaurants, shops, and even single-family homes.



Source: Windshield survey, 2004





San Antonio Park



# History, Physical Form, and Natural Factor Analysis

“They always say time changes things,  
but you actually have to change them  
yourself.”

*-Andy Warhol  
Artist*

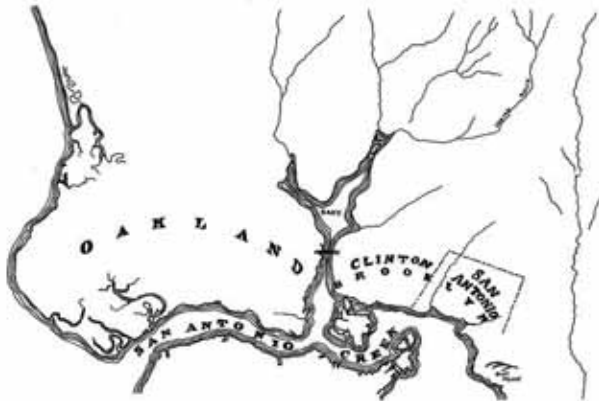
# History of the Neighborhood

## Prior to 1850

Ohlone Indians originally inhabited the area but were driven out soon after Spanish and Mexican settlement in the early 1800s. In the 1820s, a Rancho land grant was given by Spain to Don Luis Maria Peralta, which contained the land that comprises present-day Lower San Antonio neighborhood. In the 1840s, after Peralta divided the land among his four sons, Antonio Maria Peralta established "Rancho San Antonio," giving the area its historic title. The Rancho was used mainly for cattle grazing and farming. The first commerce in the area was established at the 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue landing, where hides were traded at the water's edge. The Rancho plaza, located in present day San Antonio Park, held various festivities, including fights pitting bears against bulls. Anglo settlers also began to appear in the area in the 1840s to harvest redwoods on ranch land in the foothills as Antonio Peralta began to subdivide and lease his land.

## 1850 - 1905

Soon after California became a state in 1850, a settler from New Jersey named James Larue founded the village of San Antonio, building a wharf and market and establishing ferry service to nearby Oakland and San Francisco. Larue officially subdivided the land and renamed Peralta Plaza "Independence Square" in 1854, the same year that the City of Oakland was incorporated. San Antonio and the nearby town of Clinton consolidated to form the town of Brooklyn in 1856. In the 1860s, the Oakland railroad reached Larue's wharf, forcing ferry service to shut down. Central Pacific Railroad tracks were laid along 12<sup>th</sup> Street as part of the transcontinental railway in 1869, which contributed to the establishment of the area as an industrial corridor by the 1870s. In 1872, Brooklyn was annexed by Oakland. In 1892, electric streetcar service to East Oakland running along 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets connected the neighborhood to downtown.



c. 1850  
Oakland and Brooklyn



1903 Building Footprint Plan  
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

## 1905 - 1955

In 1905, the City of Oakland renamed Independence Square “San Antonio Park” and planted lawns and trees, many of which still exist today. Infill development continued, although structures being built during this period were much smaller than in the past. During World War I, many of the large Victorian mansions were converted into rooming houses. In the 1920s, 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets were paved and became major traffic carrying streets. Marshland along the estuary was filled to allow for increased industrial development. In the 1930s, construction activity in the neighborhood slowed as a result of the Depression. 12<sup>th</sup> Street was designated part of Route 17 and served as the major automobile route from Oakland to San Jose until the six-lane East Shore Freeway is opened in 1949, connecting Richmond to San Jose. Post-World War II construction activity boomed, and industrial and commercial growth resulted.



## 1955 – 2004

In the 1950s, urban renewal and building code enforcement resulted in the demolition of many older single-family homes, replaced in some cases by apartment buildings. The East Shore Freeway (renamed the Nimitz Freeway in 1958) was expanded and required demolition of buildings along 12<sup>th</sup> Street. These and other roadway changes resulted in the one-way streets and fragmented medians found today in the neighborhood. BART construction began in the 1960s and contributed to further commercial demolition along 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Residents mounted historic preservation campaigns beginning in 1982, when former downtown Brooklyn was designated a historic district along 12<sup>th</sup> Street between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues. In 1988, 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue was added to the list of historic districts. In the 1990s, driven by the desire to reestablish a neighborhood identity, the area began to develop commercial revitalization plans.



# Topography, Hydrology, and Natural Hazards

In the study area, hills are located close to the shoreline, which is a very rare occurrence in Oakland. This yields views that are unique, particularly among lower income neighborhoods of the city.

Creeks that once flowed near 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue carved gentle valleys and ravines that remind residents of the topographic character of the neighborhood. The creeks were moved into culverts underground to provide more developable land and control floods.

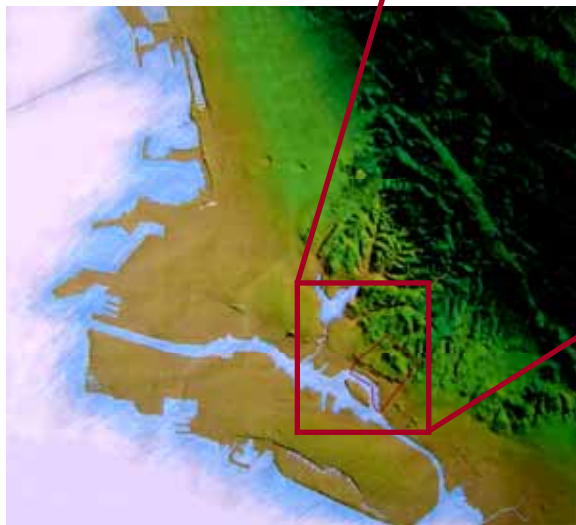
Topography is important to consider for planning bike and pedestrian routes with gentle slopes or designing height controls to preserve views.

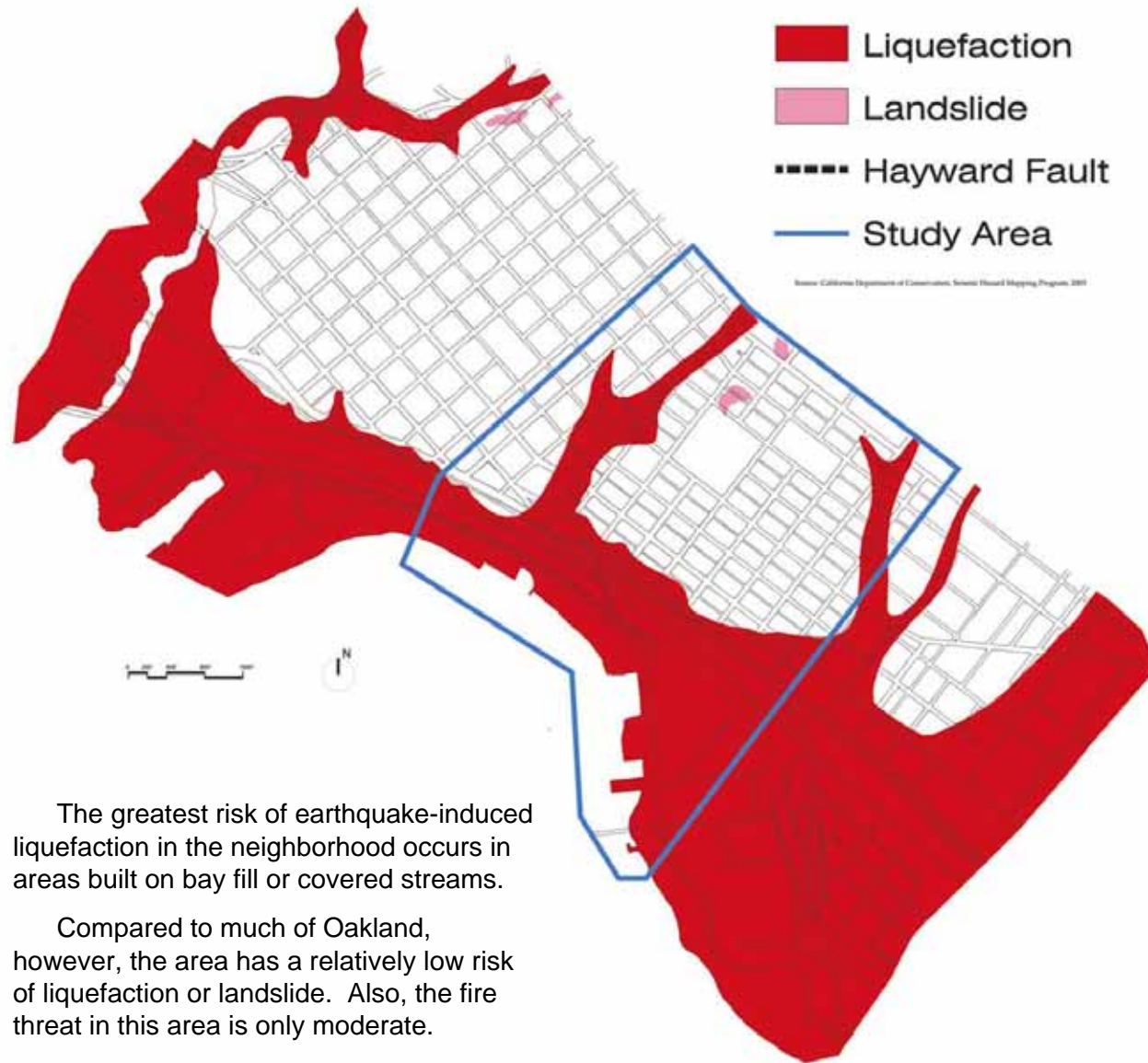


Source: USGS



Source: The Oakland Museum of California





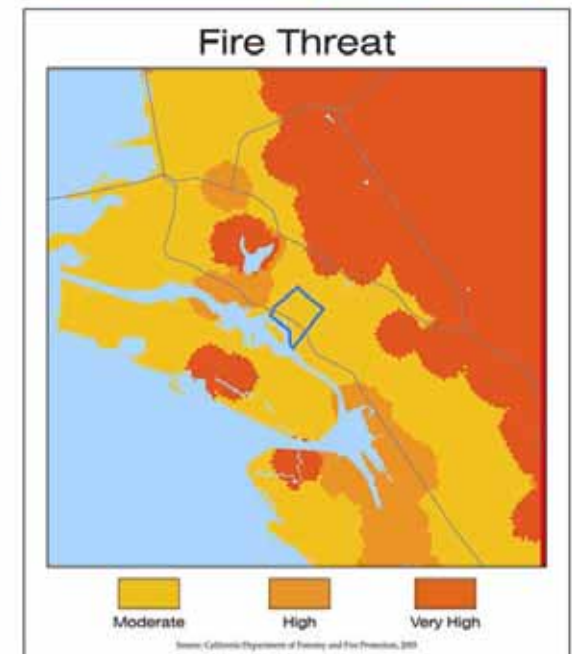
The greatest risk of earthquake-induced liquefaction in the neighborhood occurs in areas built on bay fill or covered streams.

Compared to much of Oakland, however, the area has a relatively low risk of liquefaction or landslide. Also, the fire threat in this area is only moderate.

Area Overview



Fire Threat



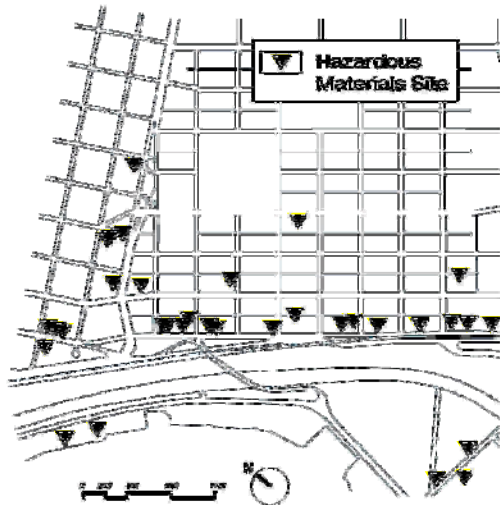
## Man-made Hazards and the Public Urban Forest

On still days, air pollutants such as carbon monoxide, fine particulates, and volatile organic compounds are heavily concentrated near the freeway. On breezier days, these pollutants are blown toward the neighborhood. This map shows the concentrations predicted by an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) model.

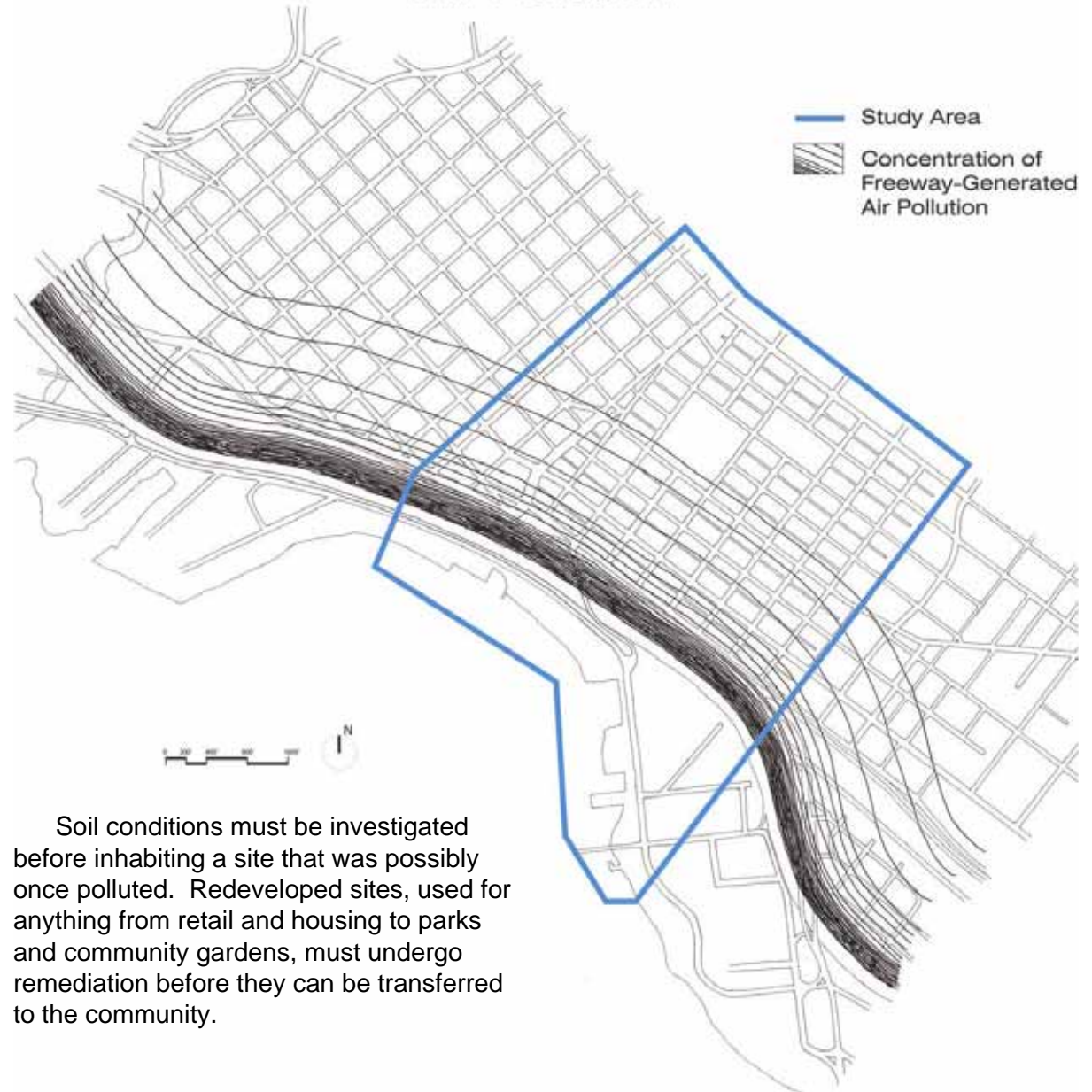
The neighborhood's soil is likely to have lead in it, both from leaded gasoline and from lead paint on houses built before 1978.

Many of the industrial sites and auto repair shops along East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, International Boulevard, and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue store, generate or treat hazardous materials.

### Hazardous Materials



### Air Pollution



Soil conditions must be investigated before inhabiting a site that was possibly once polluted. Redeveloped sites, used for anything from retail and housing to parks and community gardens, must undergo remediation before they can be transferred to the community.

Trees increase pedestrian safety, improve air quality, give added life to commercial districts, and have numerous other sociological and ecological benefits. They filter some pollutants from the air and entrap others from surface runoff. They also block noise generated by heavy train and automobile traffic.

Some areas in the neighborhood have a wealth of trees, while others are relatively barren. This provides opportunities to build on and augment areas that deserve extra attention.

21<sup>st</sup> Street



14<sup>th</sup> Avenue Median



16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street



International Blvd

## Public Open Space system

The street pattern in the study area allows connections to be made to and between valued features such as San Antonio Park, as well as open space that exists in medians along 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Street. However, the freeway, BART and train tracks prevent easy access to the waterfront. Open space located in the medians is identified as underutilized and having potential for use as an urban park.

Furthermore, the neighborhood's open spaces make it unique in comparison to other districts of a similar size and with a strong identity. Downtown Oakland's open space is more fragmented and dispersed. San Antonio Park is one of the largest open spaces in Oakland. Fruitvale has substantially less park space than the neighborhood.





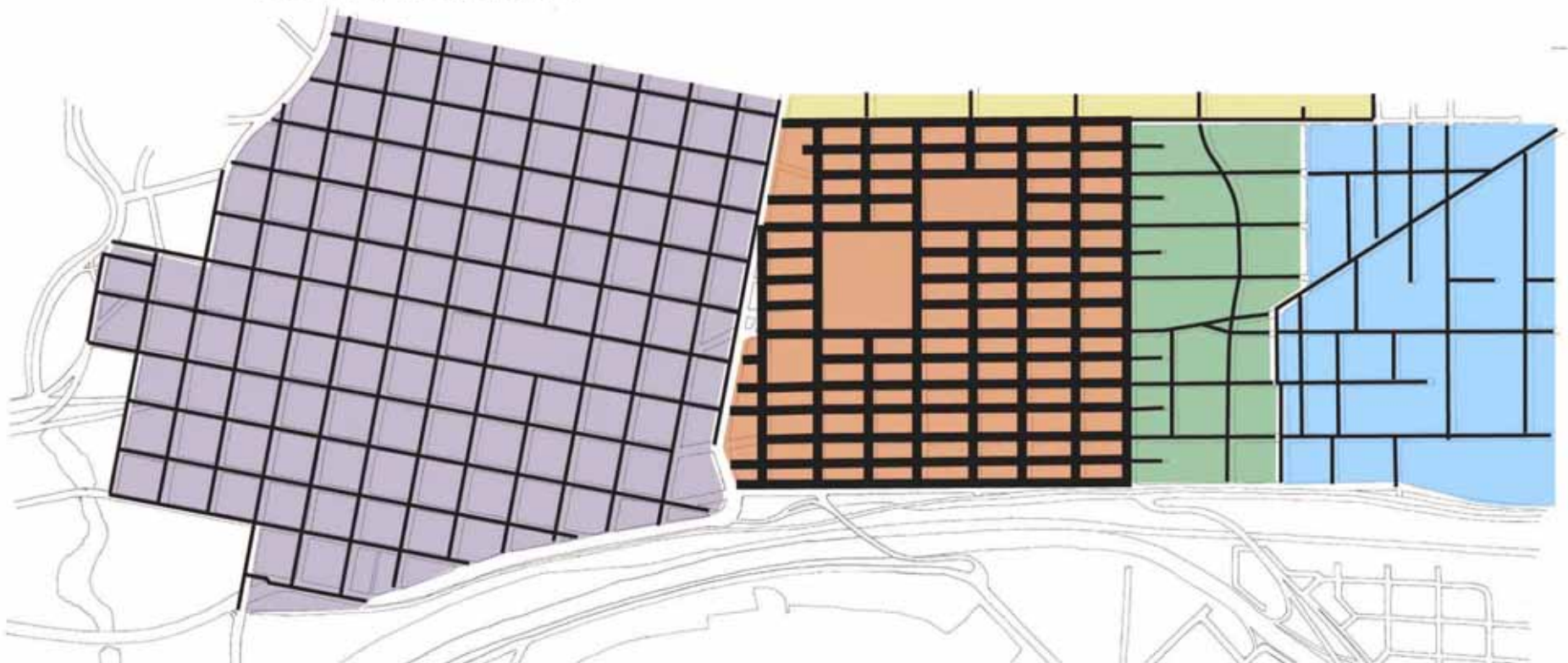


## Neighborhood Streets

The grid pattern provides a distinct urban layout that is different from surrounding areas. There is a more finely grained street pattern created by the neighborhood's unique alleyways, which occur nowhere else in Oakland.

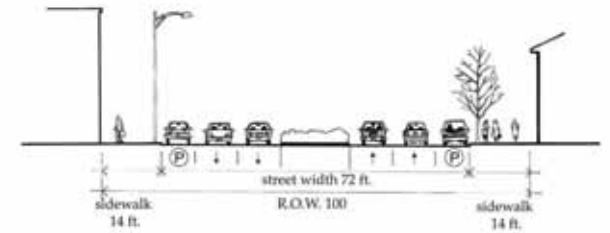
The pattern is strong and regular. The public spaces and institutions stand out quite clearly. A major grid shift occurs on the northwest side of the neighborhood due to the original settlement patterns of the area.

The city streets that come into the neighborhood from the northwest change in width from 60 feet to 80 feet after crossing 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They taper back down to 60 feet after crossing 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. These wider rights-of-way provide more publicly owned land than in adjacent areas.

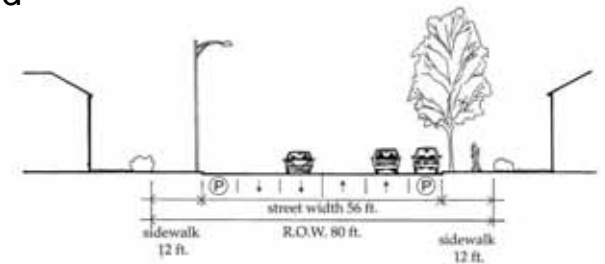




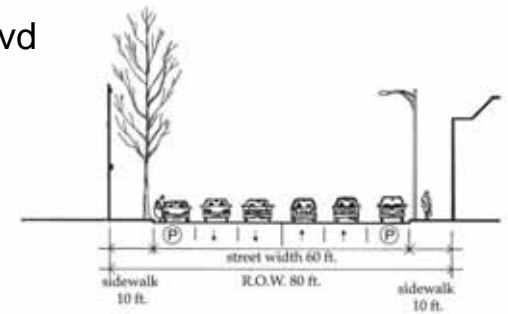
14<sup>th</sup> Avenue



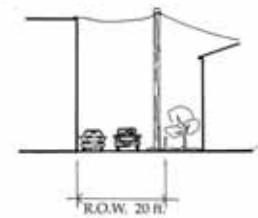
Foothill Blvd



International Blvd

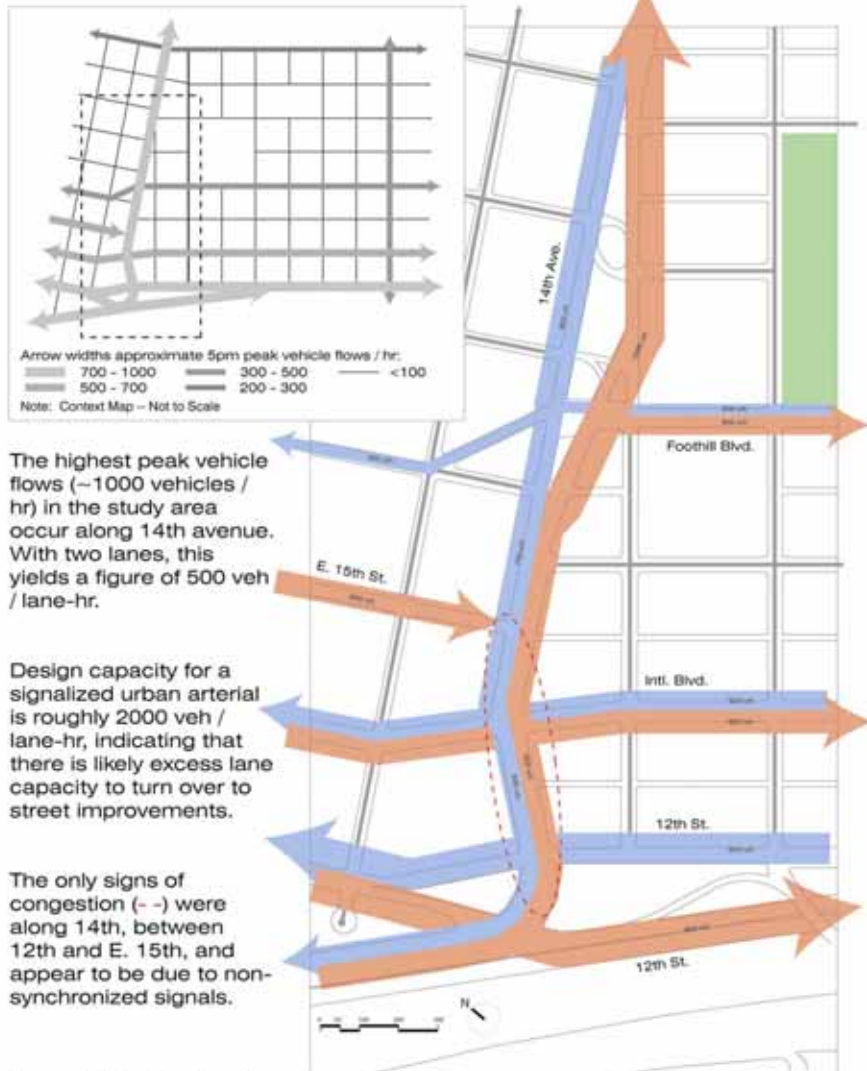


Typical Alleyway



# Transportation Environment and Issues

## Vehicle Flows



Source: Neighborhood Observation

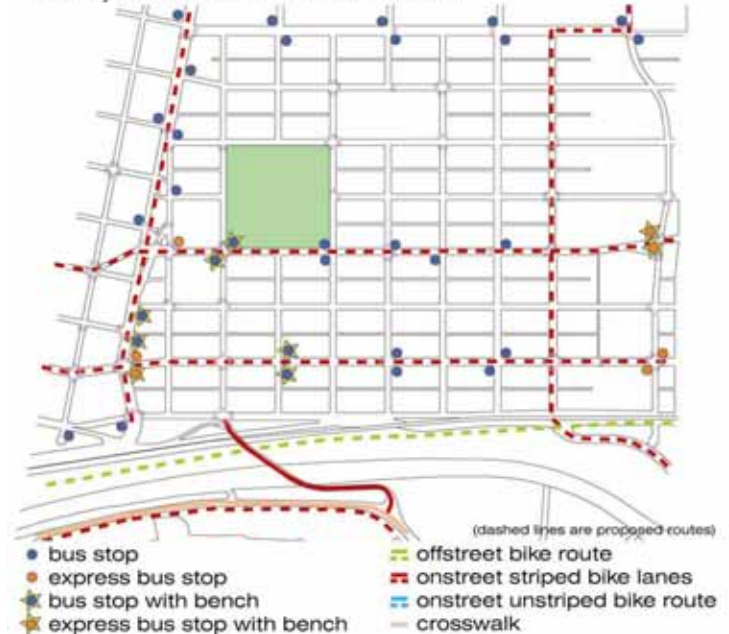
Arrow widths proportional to 5pm peak vehicle flows:

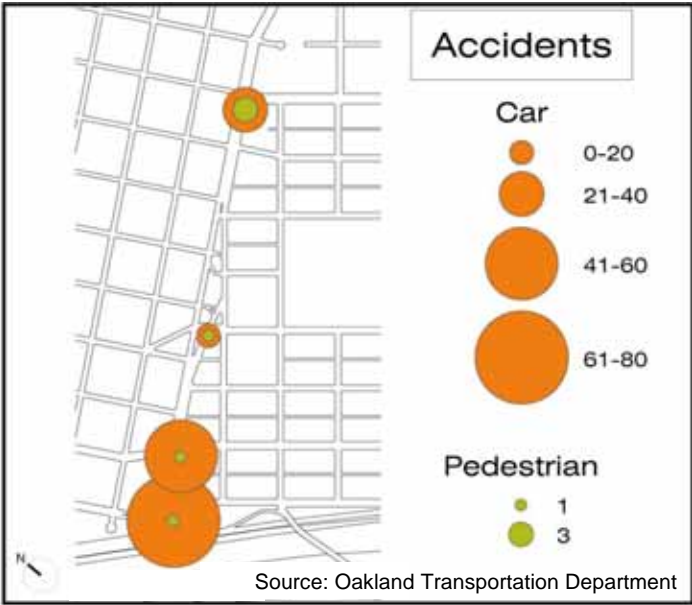
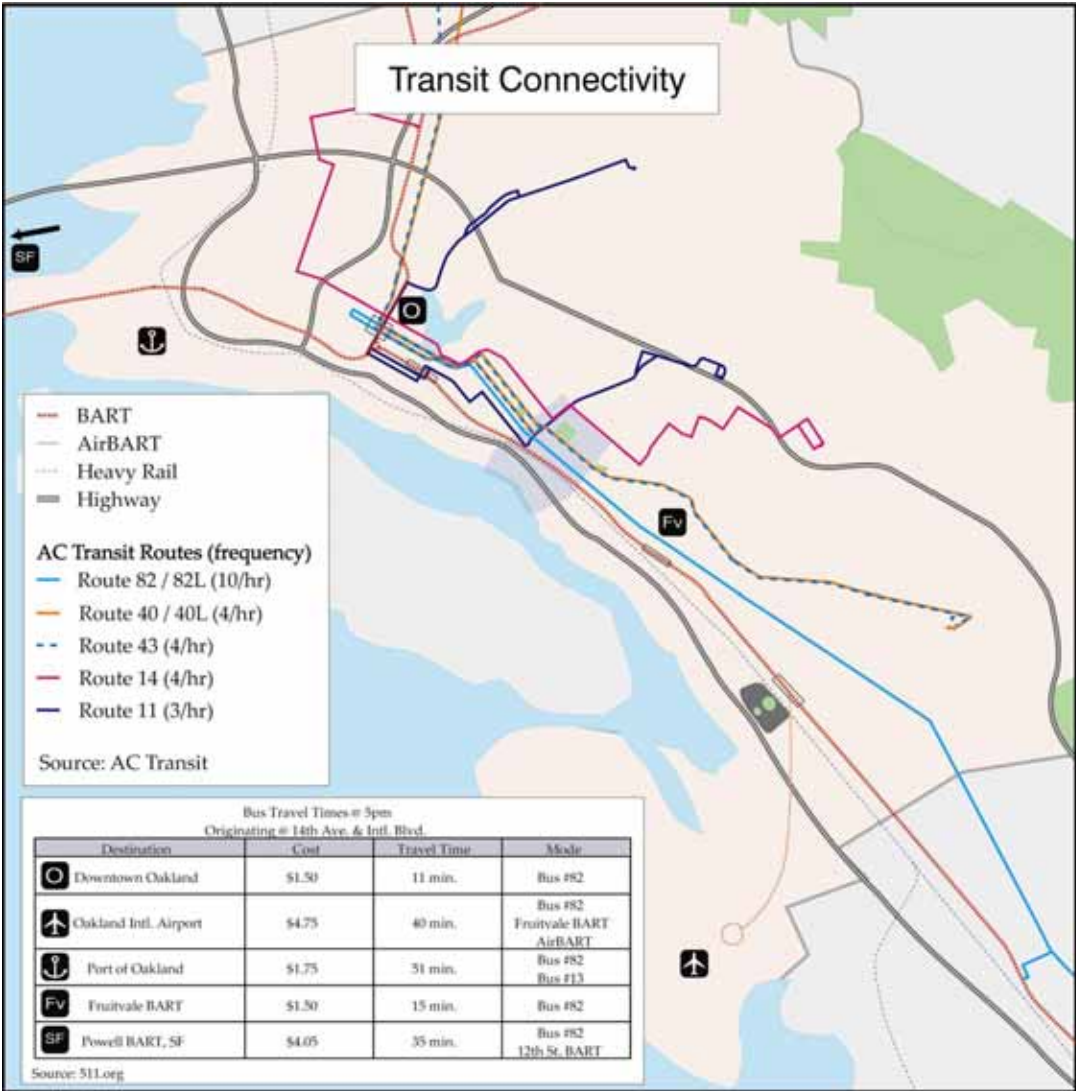
- Outbound from Oakland Downtown
- Inbound to Oakland Downtown

## Stop Signs and Signals



## Bus, Bike and Pedestrian





### Bus Rapid Transit

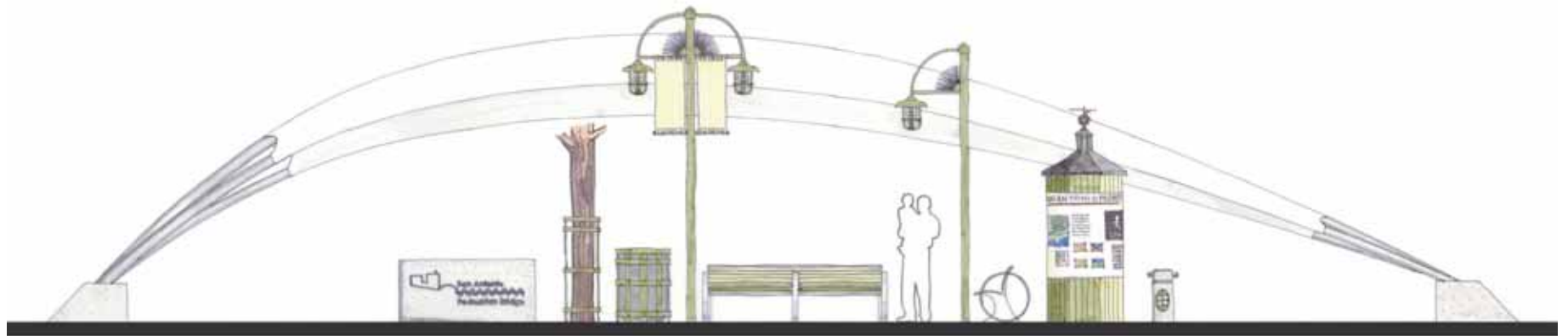
International Boulevard through the Lower San Antonio Neighborhood is a proposed corridor for AC Transit's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System.

BRT would require street redesigns to include dedicated lanes along International Blvd. with median platforms and shelters.

BRT stops are envisioned along Intl. Blvd. at both 14th Ave. and 23rd Ave. Transit time improvements of 10 - 15% are envisioned over existing bus service.

Source: AC Transit

Note: Context Map – Not to Scale



Proposed plaza at the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> St and 14<sup>th</sup> Ave

# Public Realm Proposals

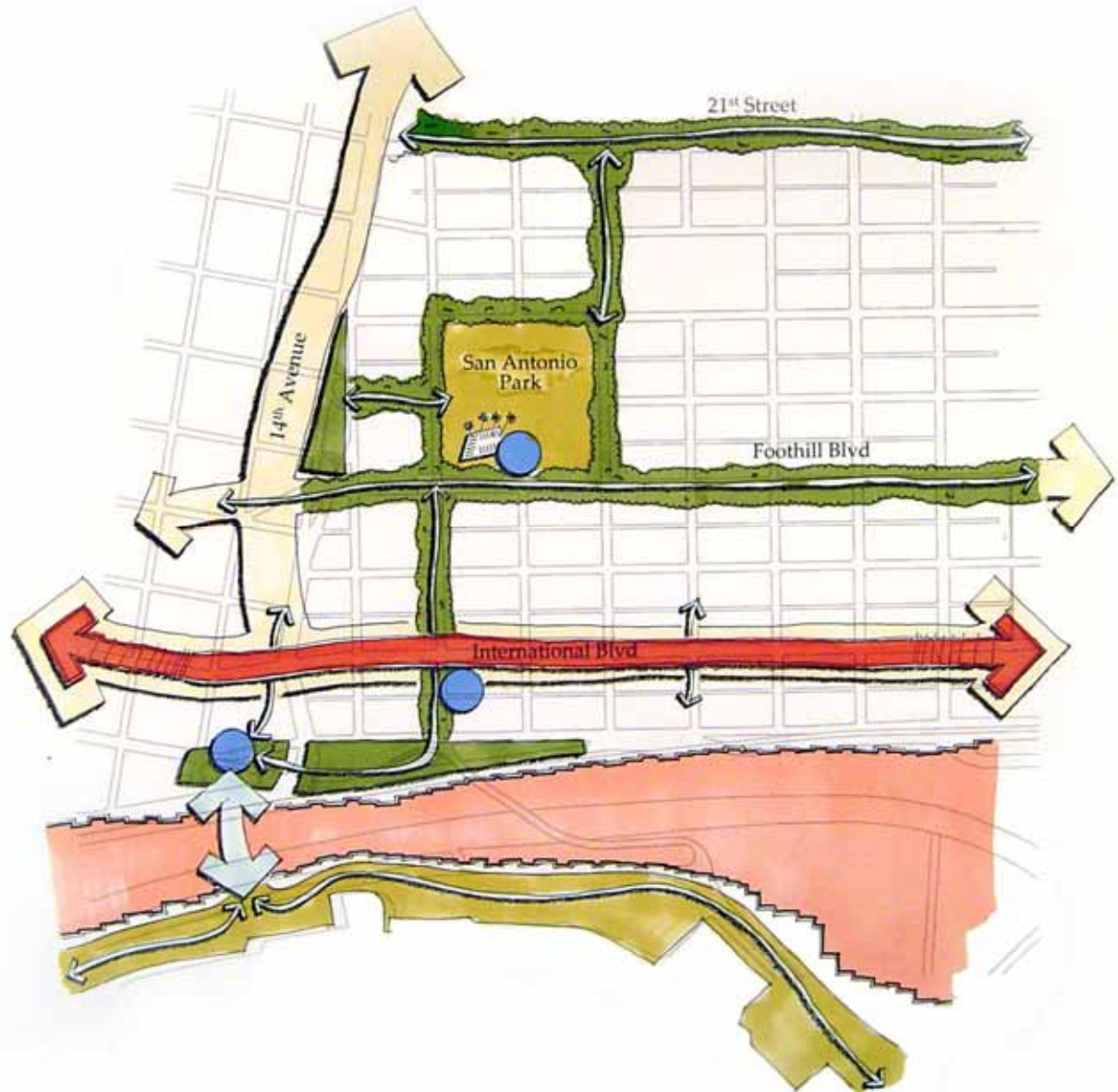
“My home is not a place, it is people.”

*-Lois McMaster Bujold  
Writer*

## Broad Brush Strategy and Phasing

### Goals:

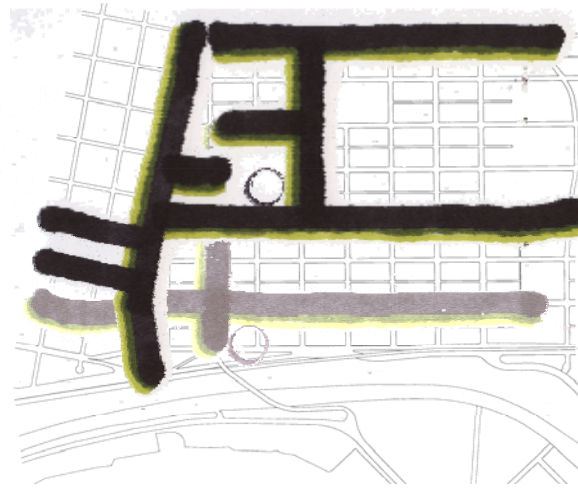
1. Simplify confusing intersections along International Blvd., 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue
2. Prioritize movements in the order of public transit first, pedestrians and bicycles next, and automobile through movements last where all three occur
3. Enhance the neighborhood's identity and sense of place through street greening, public art and historical education in high traffic and visibility areas
4. Increase open space in the neighborhood
5. Connect and augment new and existing open spaces
6. Reunite the neighborhood with the waterfront







Short term phasing will focus on International Blvd in order to work in concert with AC Transit's bus rapid transit project, providing input and guidance from a neighborhood level planning process. Also, the first connections in the open space system should be made along 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue from San Antonio Park to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.



Medium term phasing will focus on residential improvements, largely completing the open space system of green streets. Improvements will occur in San Antonio Park, helping to anchor the open space network. Major street improvements and realignments will occur along 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Foothill Blvd, 15<sup>th</sup> Street, and 21<sup>st</sup> Street.



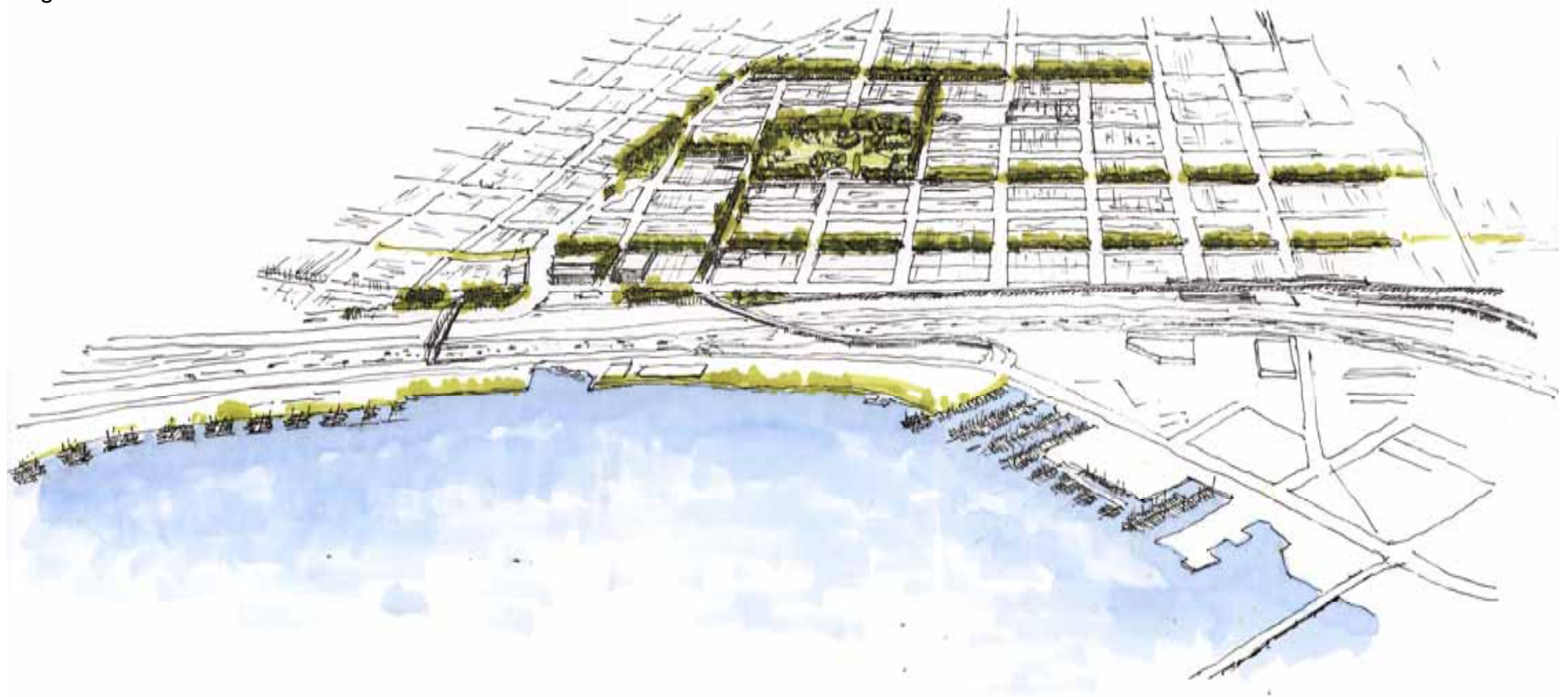
Long term phasing will reconnect the neighborhood to the waterfront via a pedestrian bridge or improvements to the existing bridge, and a larger park is created from the realignment of intersections along 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

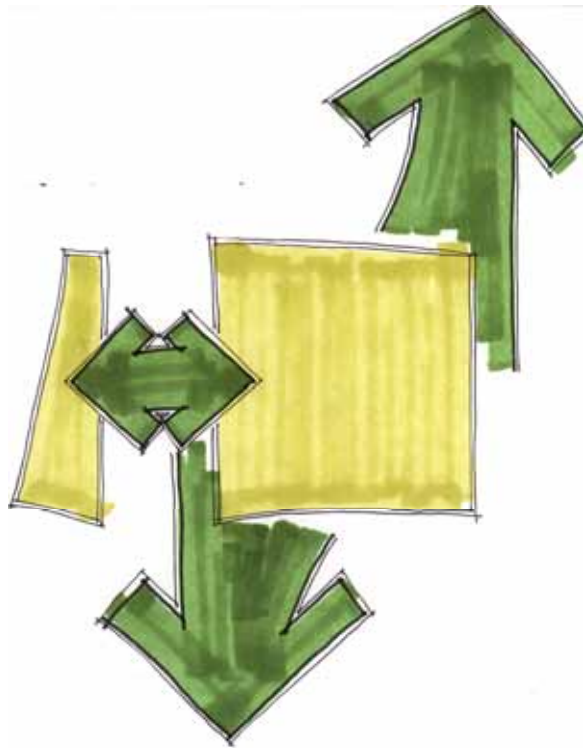
## Connecting Open Space

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Fragmented open spaces exist in isolated pockets throughout much of the City as a result of past development that has focused mainly on the provision and accommodation of roads and buildings.

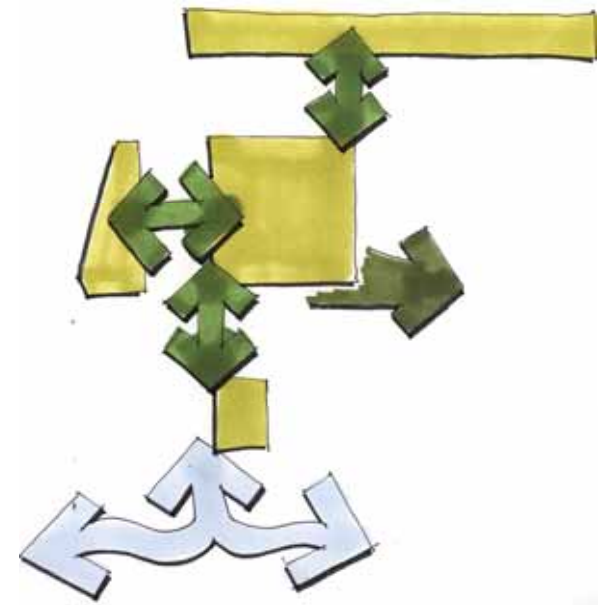
Creating an integrated, connected network of green streets and open spaces will provide a safer venue for residents of all ages to exercise and move about the neighborhood.





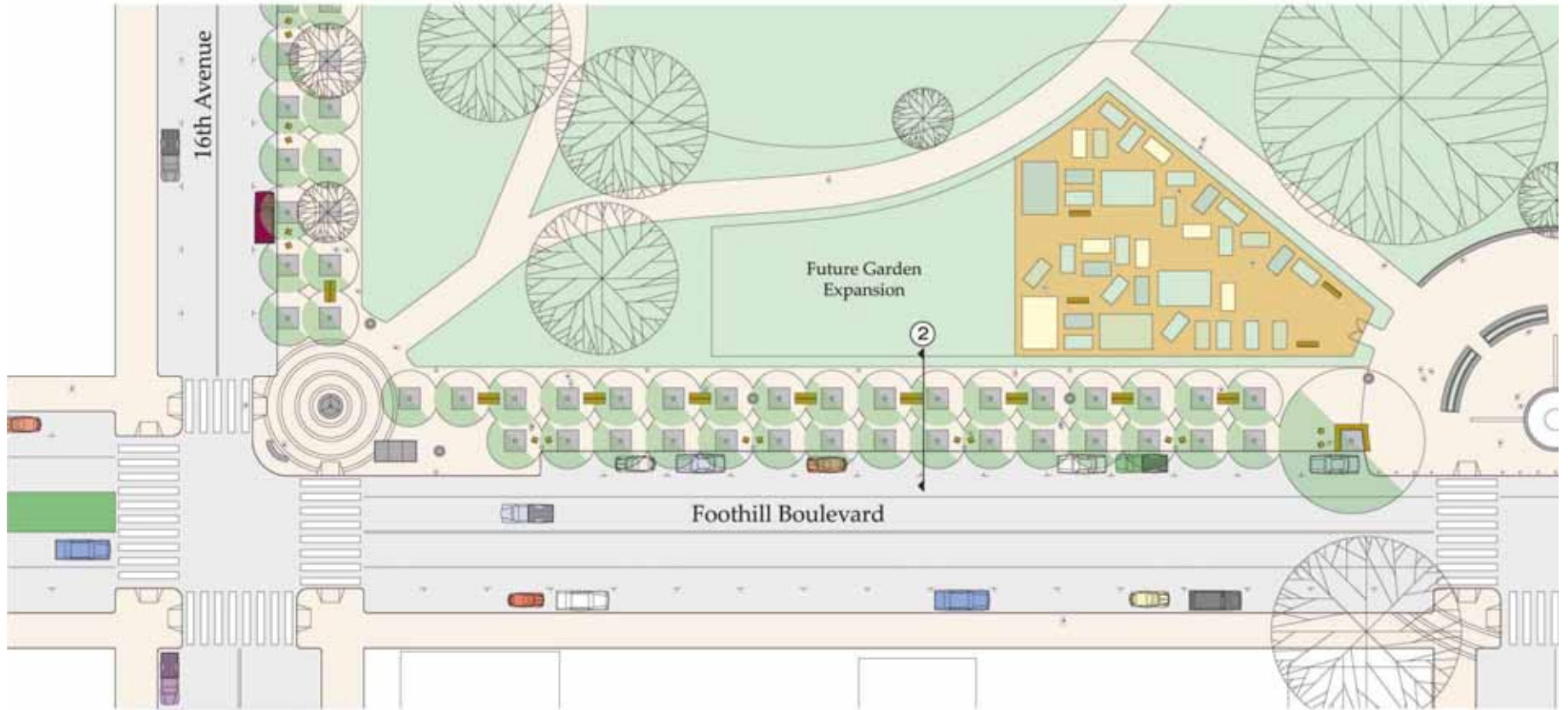
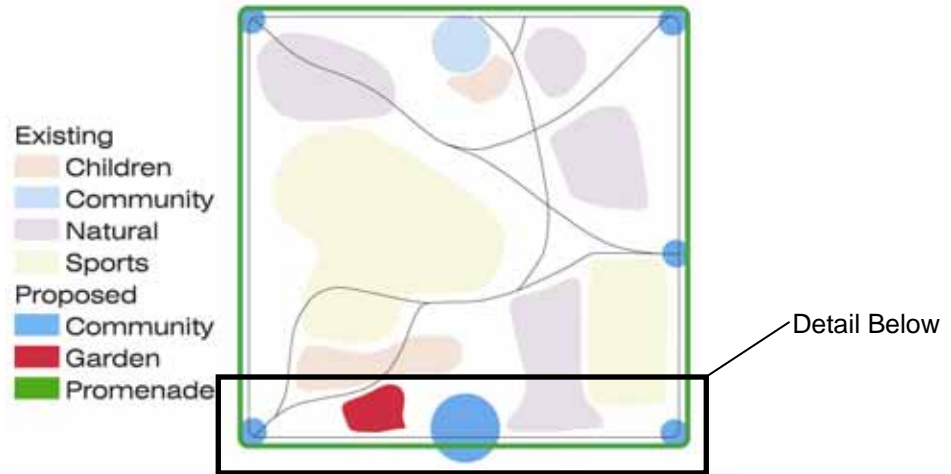
By using the strength and size of San Antonio Park as a centerpiece to the neighborhood's open space system, "arms" of open space reach out into the neighborhood, increasing the number of residents who are in immediate contact with park space and enhancing the park's influence on the neighborhood.

Assembling open space begins to create a network of green corridors for residents to circulate to significant open space and community destinations, or simply through the neighborhood for exercise. Important destinations and connections to the park that should be recognized are future median parks in 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, library, grocery, and housing development projects, and reconnection of the neighborhood to the waterfront.



# San Antonio Park

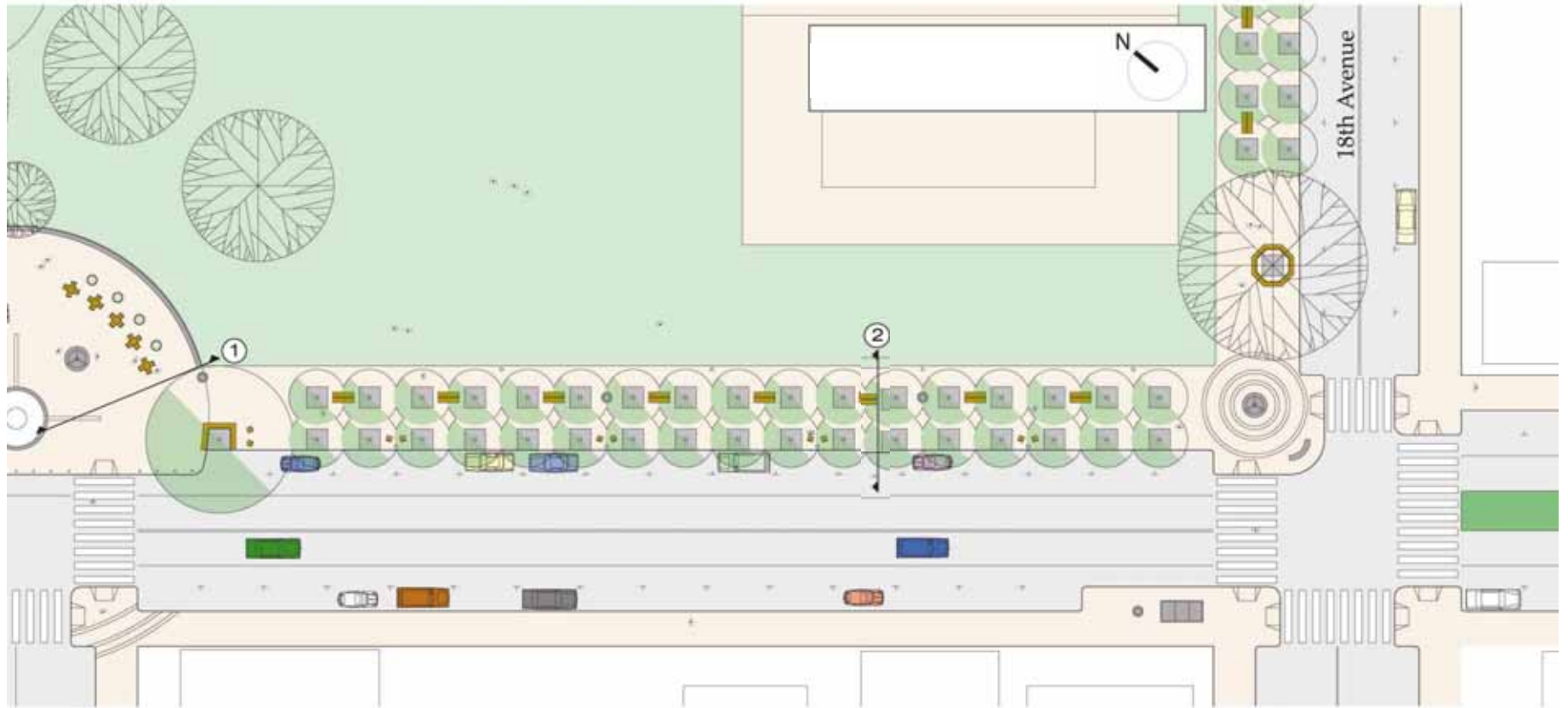
San Antonio Park is a significant neighborhood asset, currently dominated by sports facilities and informal natural areas. The proposal adds another layer at the perimeter, giving the park additional area in the form of a tree-lined promenade. A community garden, formal central plaza mirroring the symmetry of the gazebo across the park, and corner extensions with kiosks documenting historical and educational community-building information help the park reach out to the neighborhood.



Section 1: Plaza



Section 2: Promenade



## Pedestrian Bridge to the Waterfront

The existing bridge across the freeway and train tracks is not inviting for pedestrians. It is too long, not clearly marked or made accessible, dangerous for people on foot or bicycles, and not clearly associated with a waterfront connection.

Creating a better connection will add another destination to the neighborhood open space system and be safer for all users.

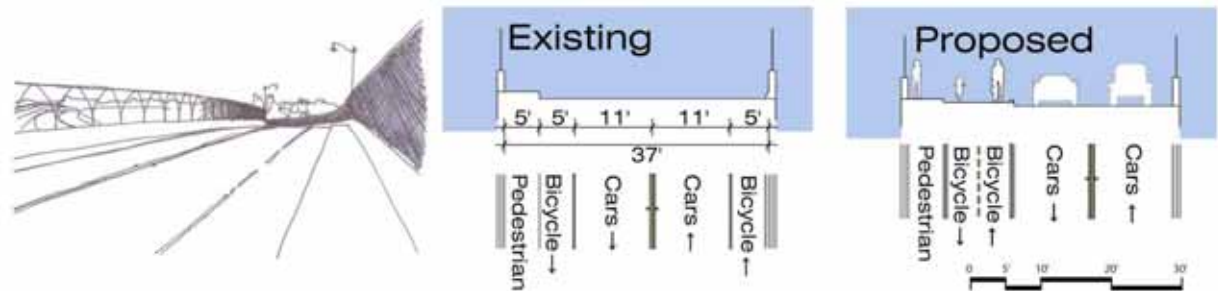
The low-cost option will make changes to the existing 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge. Reconfiguring traffic patterns will consolidate bicycles in both directions to one side and make use of subtle changes in grade to better buffer pedestrians from

automobile traffic.

A staircase for pedestrians will shorten the walking distance across the bridge by approximately 50%.

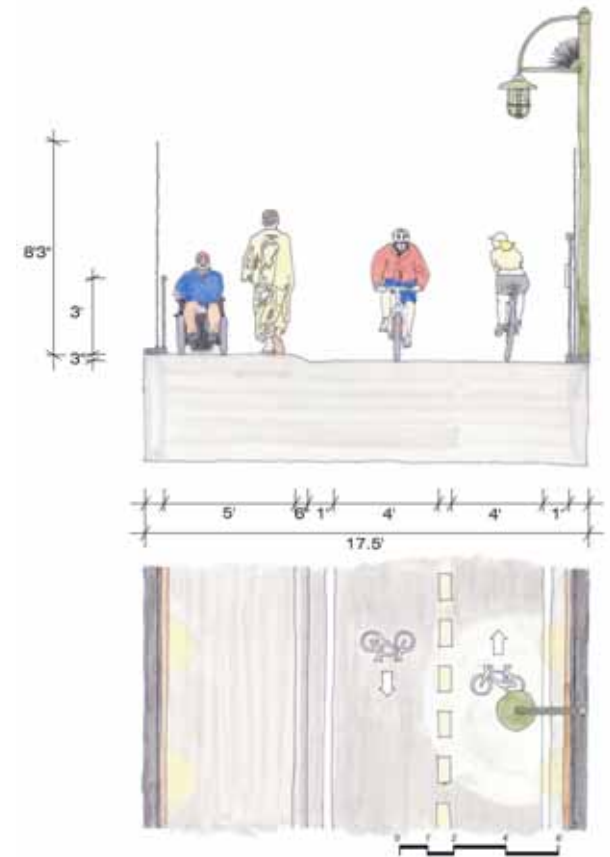
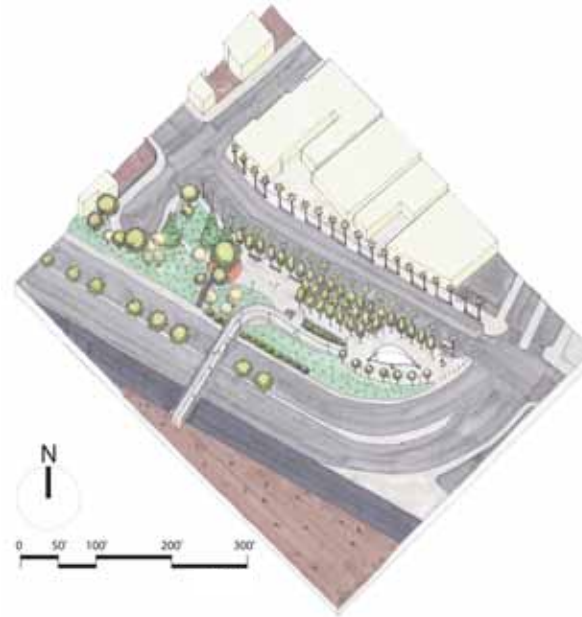
This option creates more park space out of reassembled medians along 12<sup>th</sup> Street and doesn't require any regulation of I-880 traffic.

### Low-Cost Option



## New Bridge Option

The new pedestrian bridge is easier, safer, and more pleasant to cross than the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge. Its footprints call for revitalization of a surrounding area into a pleasant park and connection with the regional trail system. Construction requires no regulation of traffic on the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge and is an efficient use of open space. A bridge like this becomes a significant landmark, like the Berkeley pedestrian bridge crossing I-80 near the University Avenue exit, which in turn can help to build a stronger sense of community. Most notably, this option provides an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible route not present on the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge.



Section and Plan of New Bridge



## Street Problems and Solutions

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Excess street widths create unpleasant pedestrian crossings and encourage fast-moving traffic.



Confusing intersections are dangerous for cars and pedestrians and can restrict residents from safely using open space.

Little or no bus stop amenities make the wait unpleasant.





Trees can make streets and sidewalks comfortable places for pedestrians, cars, and bicycles.



Benches, shelters, and information can make bus and BRT stops much more pleasant places.



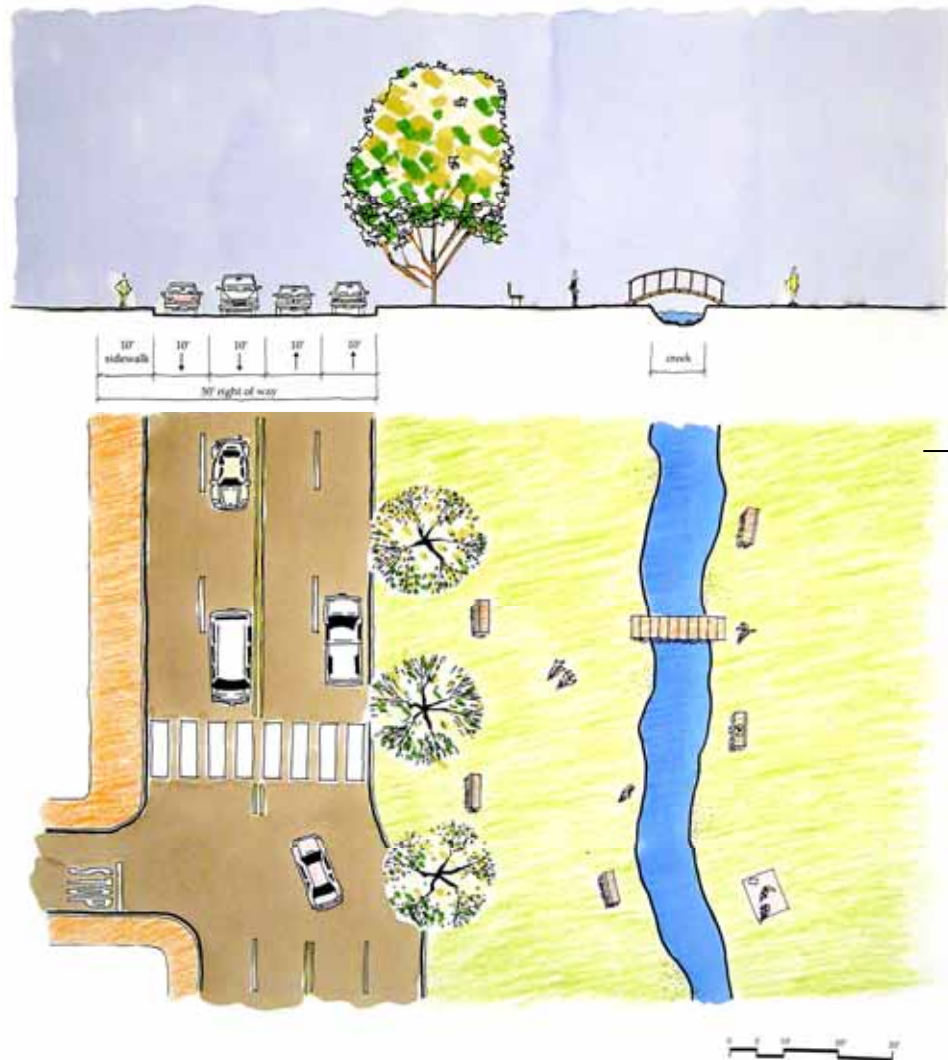
Corner “bulb-outs” and center medians reduce actual crossing distances, making street crossing safer and more pleasant.

## Street Improvements to 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenues

Unnecessary streets that once divided the medians are removed, reassembling a large amount of land into usable open space. The street grid is restored, eliminating triangular-shaped blocks along Foothill and returning Foothill and E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street west of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue

to carrying two-way traffic.

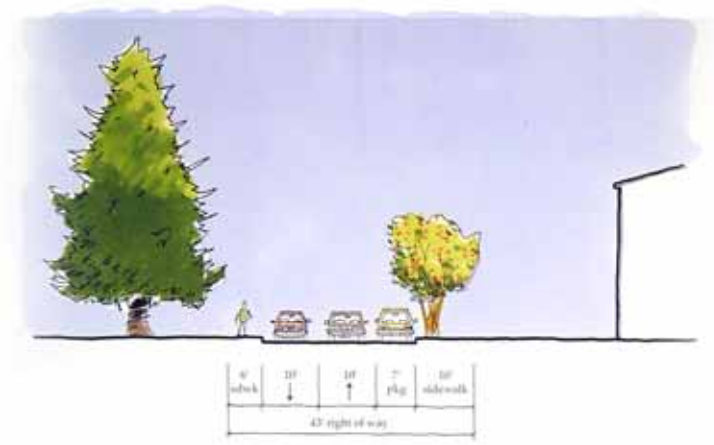
When storm water culverts fail, it can be less expensive to daylight the creek than undergo costly repairs. The presence of culverts beneath the street makes this possible here.



Existing

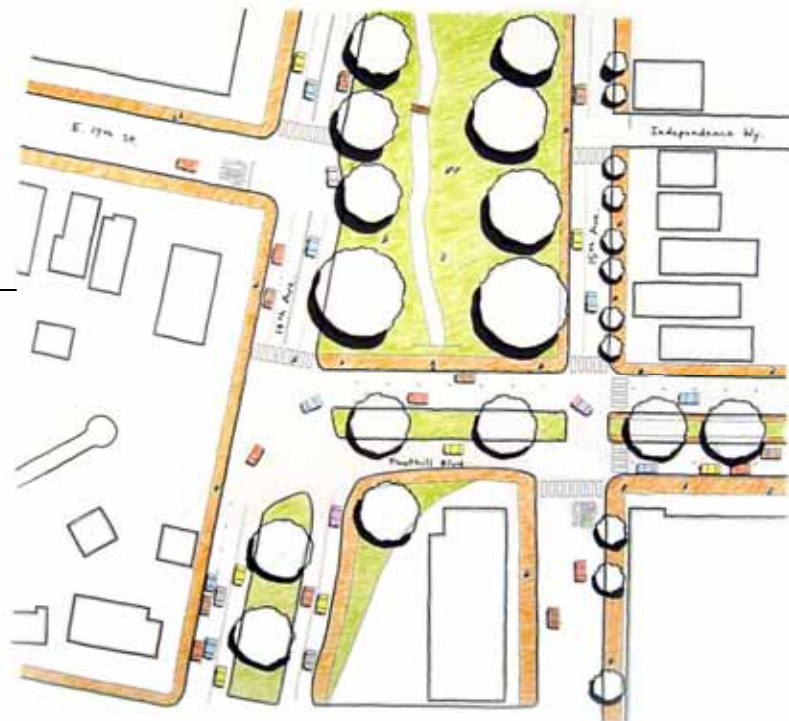


Proposed



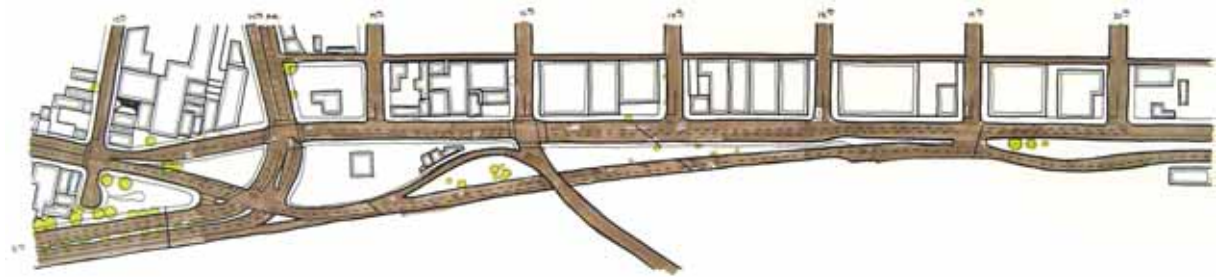
In the new street pattern, 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue carries the traffic that was once on 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue above Foothill Blvd. The proposed design for 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue reestablishes its character as a local neighborhood street bordered on one side by a park.

Through traffic is encouraged to use 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue rather than neighborhood streets. The new street alignment jogs slightly to preserve several large trees. Wider medians and improved crosswalks make the street more pedestrian friendly.



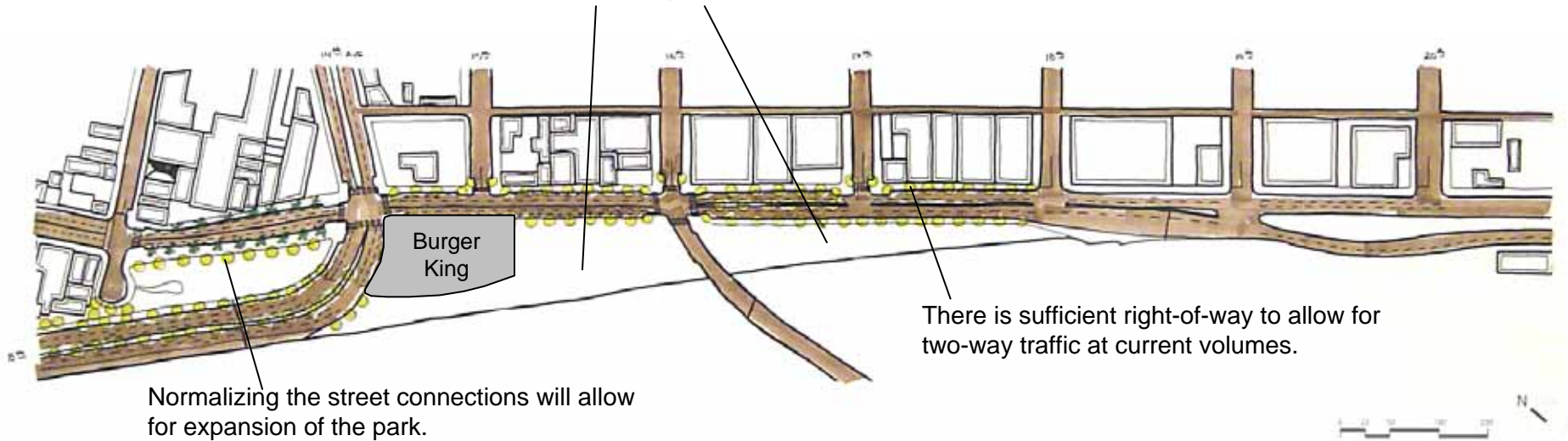
## Street Improvements to 12<sup>th</sup> Street

East 12<sup>th</sup> Street is bleak and industrial, characterized by large buildings with blank walls facing the street. The intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue is confusing and rife with accidents. In addition, the small park located there suffers from poor connectivity to the neighborhood.



Existing

The large area formed after reconfiguring the streets could be used for open space or new development.

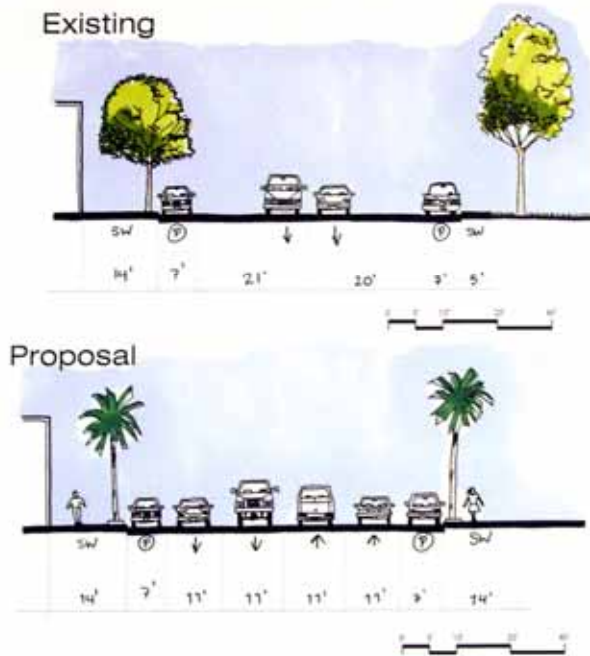


Normalizing the street connections will allow for expansion of the park.

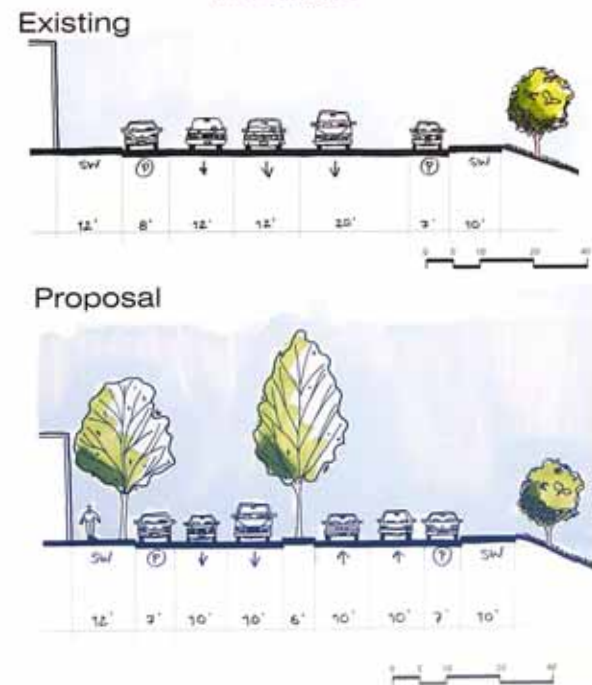
There is sufficient right-of-way to allow for two-way traffic at current volumes.

## Proposed

### East 12th St. at 14th Avenue



### East 12th St. at 17th Avenue



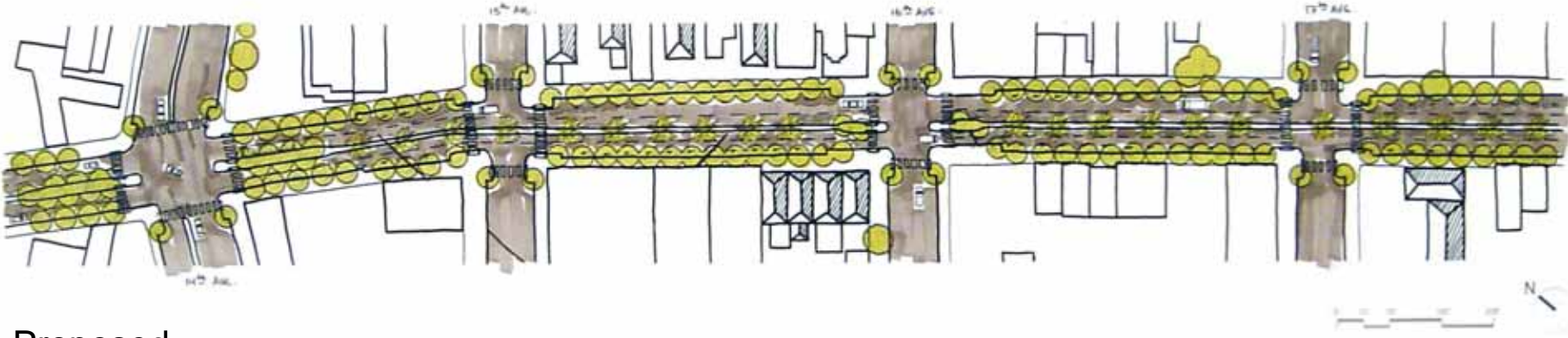
# Street Improvements to International Blvd

International Blvd is currently quite uninviting for pedestrians. Many blocks have no street trees and crosswalks are infrequent.

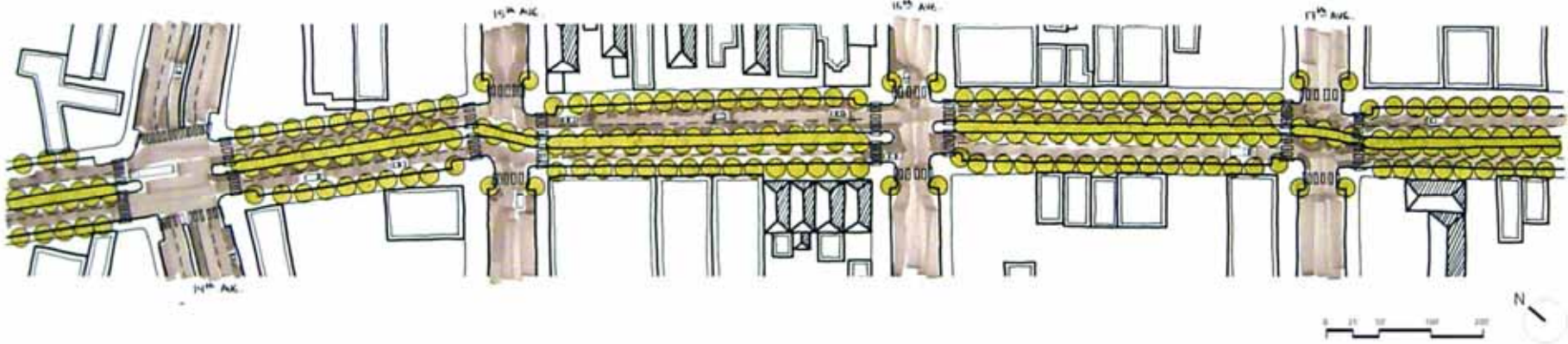
AC Transit's proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) Service will force lane reconfiguration. Dedicated bus lanes would restrict auto traffic and likely generate a center median. Both proposals include bulb-outs and increased tree canopies.



Existing



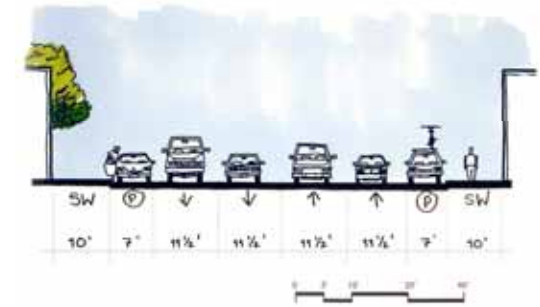
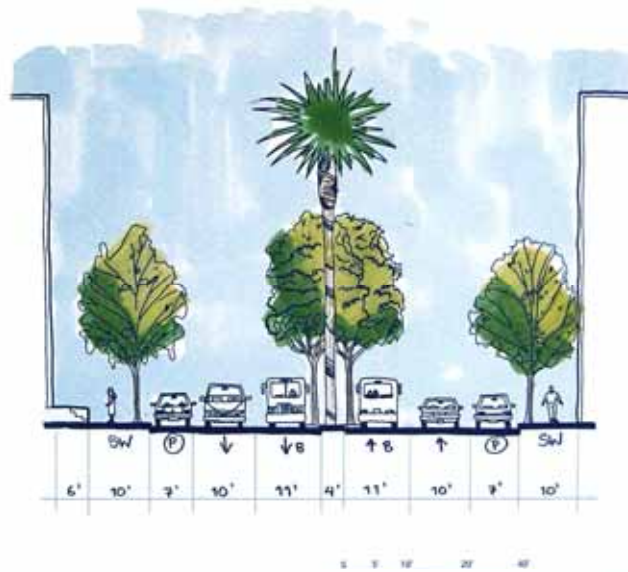
Proposed



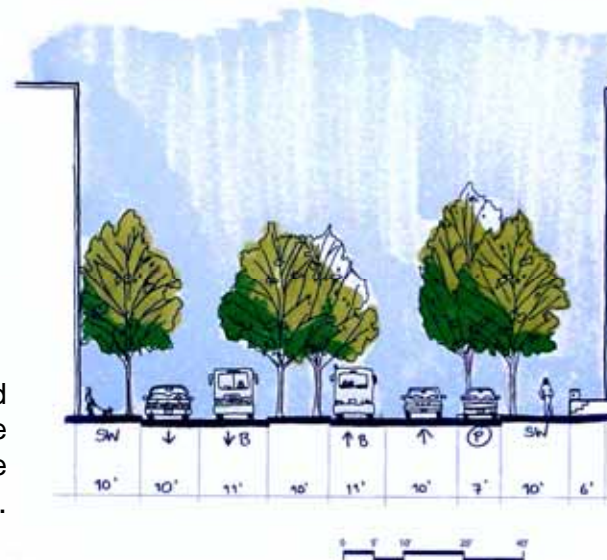
Proposed

Existing

The preferred proposal will retain parking on both sides, along with a narrow median planted with palm trees.



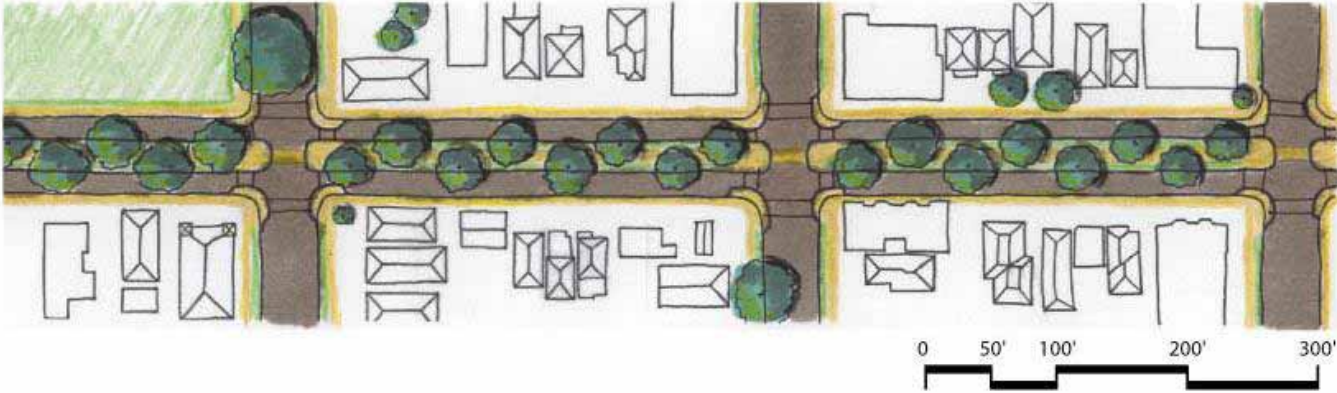
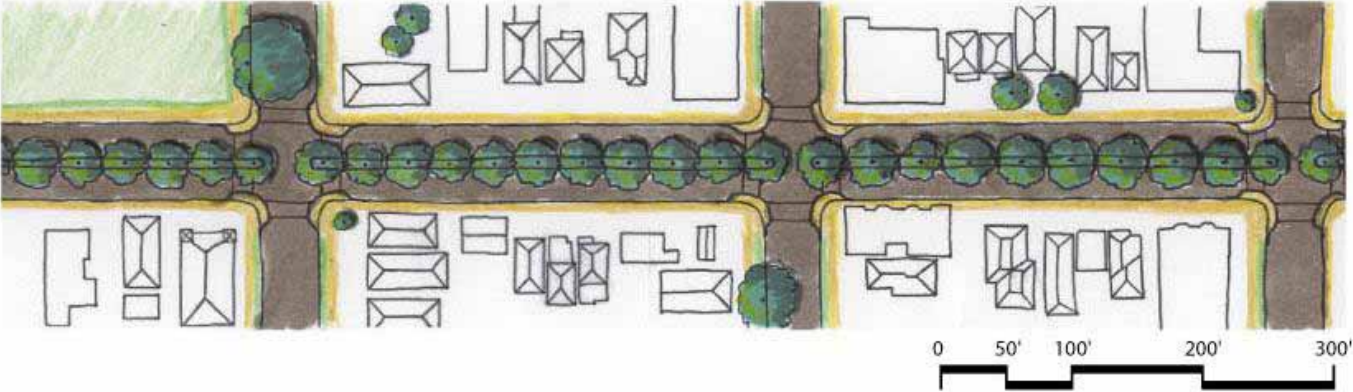
The alternative proposal creates wider and more serpentine medians but requires the elimination of parking from one side of the street.



# Street Improvements to Foothill Blvd

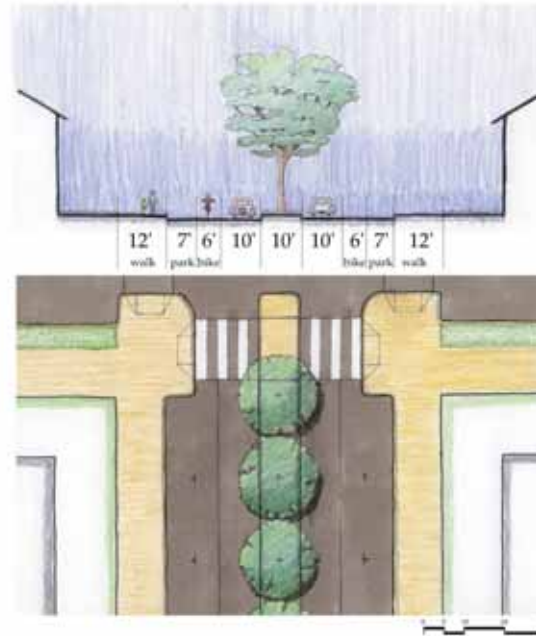
Foothill Blvd borders San Antonio Park and is characterized by fast traffic and difficult crossing conditions. There is excess traffic carrying capacity; the street narrows to one lane in each direction south of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. There are no existing bike lanes.

Proposals include reassignment of excess travel lanes to create a median and bike lanes. Pedestrian crossings are simplified and shortened through the use of bulb-outs, a green connection to the park is created to the southeast, and the neighborhood is better connected to the 15<sup>th</sup> Street bike lanes.

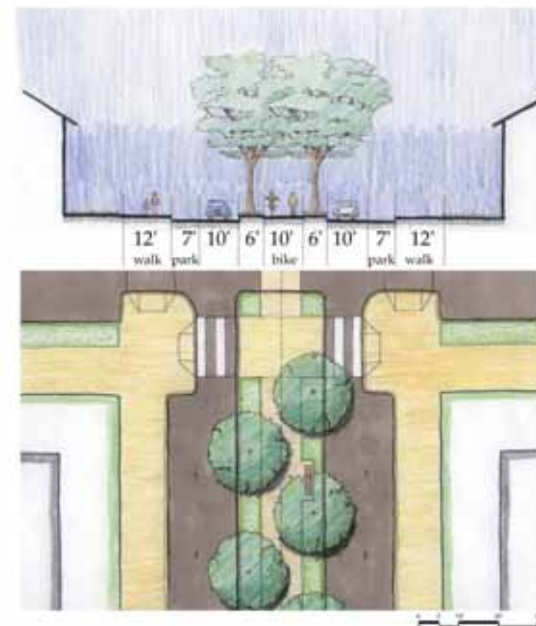




The first proposal creates side bike lanes and an aesthetic median with regular tree planting.



The second proposal creates an activated median containing bike traffic in both directions, staggered tree planting, and pedestrian space.



## Street Improvements to 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Typical Neighborhood Streets

Two different street grids meet at East 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Because there is so much space separating the grids, the street is excessively wide.

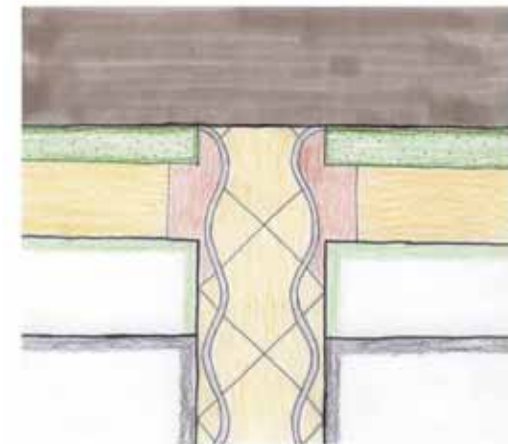
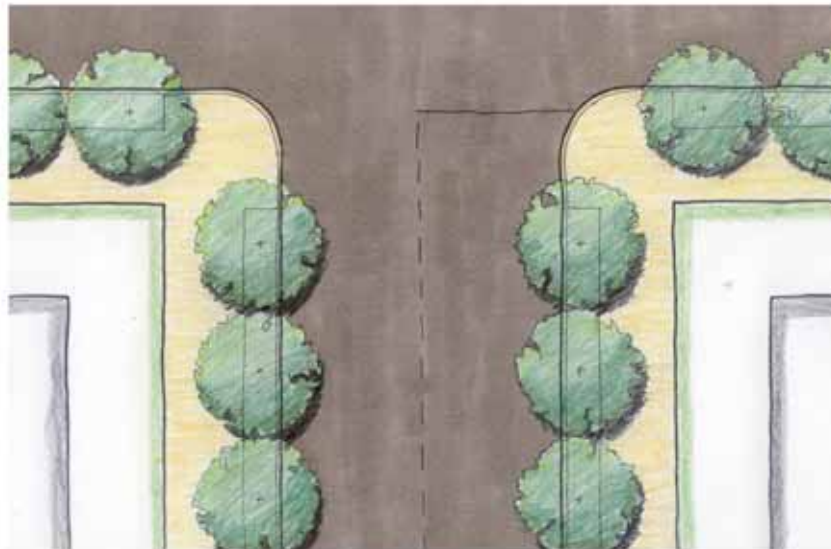
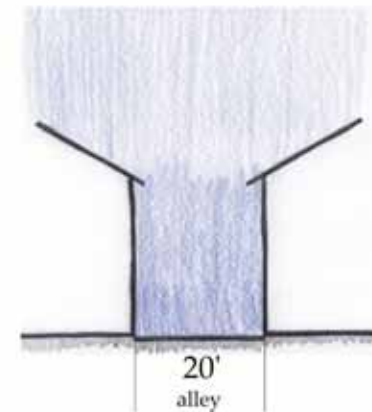
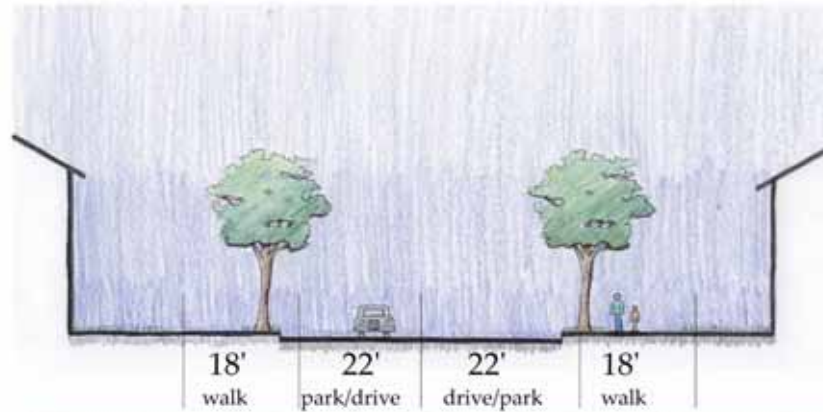
By adding a large median and planting trees along the sidewalk, the street becomes far safer to cross and much more pleasant. The neighborhood could use the median space for new public amenities, such as an additional or alternative community garden site or a dog park.



Existing neighborhood streets could be improved by planting regularly spaced street trees no more than 20-25 feet apart. This will create an enclosed, residential atmosphere that slows traffic and makes streets safer and more pleasant. A good tree for this situation is the crape myrtle, which grows approximately

15-20 feet tall with pink flowers in the summer and fall. In some successful programs, active neighborhood involvement has occurred in the planting and maintenance of trees, making some cities much more receptive to greener streets.

The alleys, which are unique to this part of Oakland are used primarily for parking and rear property access, but could be transformed into neighborhood spaces. Paving, as seen below, or something as simple as brick accents could be used to bring the attention of pedestrians to the alley space.





Potential development site across from 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue median at 17<sup>th</sup> St

# Proposals to Guide Private Development

“We know we want to feel good walking down the street. We just have to get it done.”

*-Suzanne Takehara  
Community member*

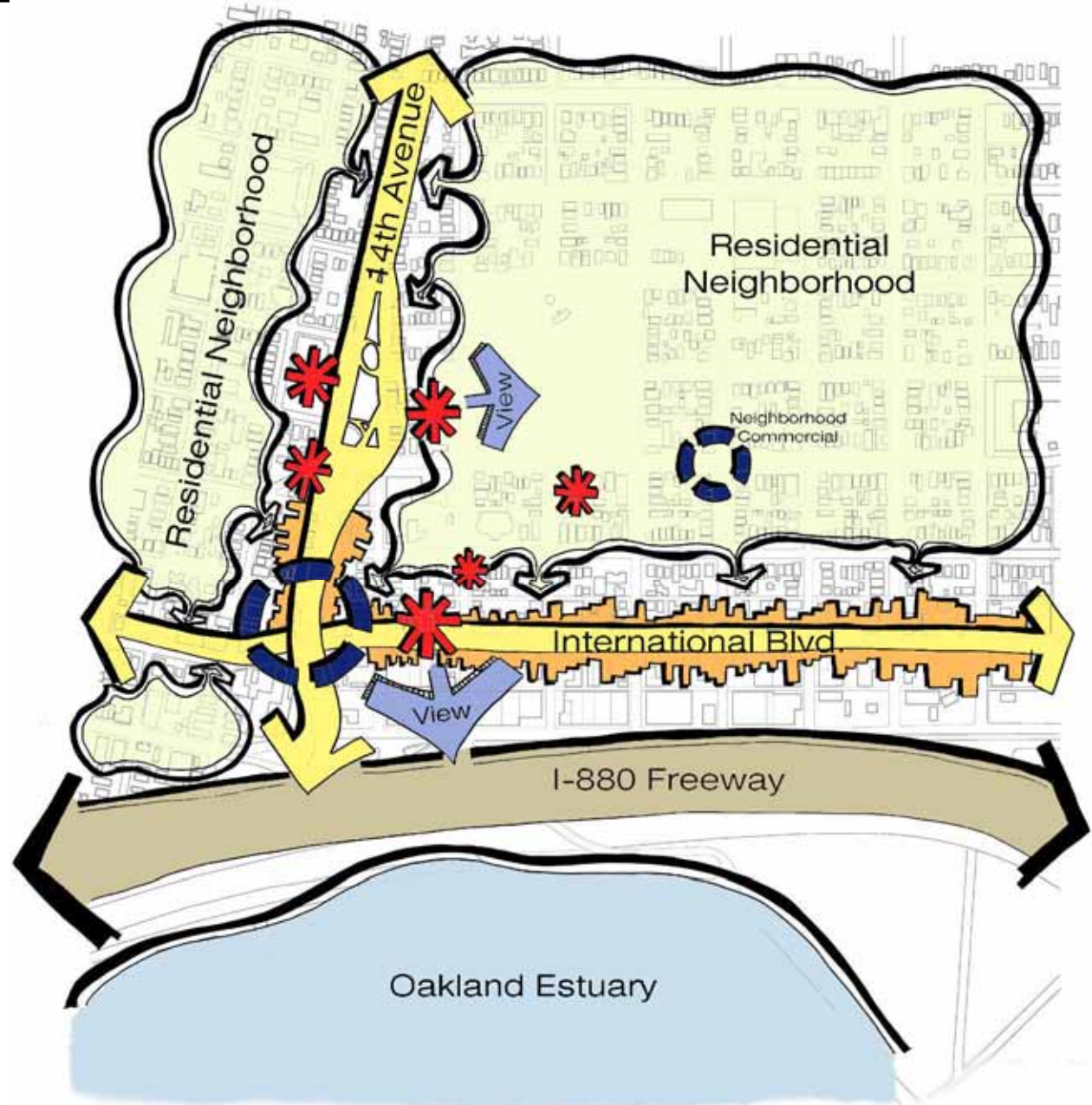
## **Broad Brush Strategy and Phasing**

### **Goals:**

1. Provide more affordable housing in the immediate neighborhood
2. Support public transit by increasing residential density on International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue
3. Create buildings that activate the public realm
4. Encourage local retail

### **Strategies**

1. Amend zoning code to allow increased building heights and higher-density residential developments along transit corridors
2. Encourage affordable and moderate market rate housing development on underutilized sites
3. Increase civic amenities
4. Encourage mixed-use commercial and residential nodes at transit stops on International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Ave
5. Require high density residential and commercial development to comply with design guidelines

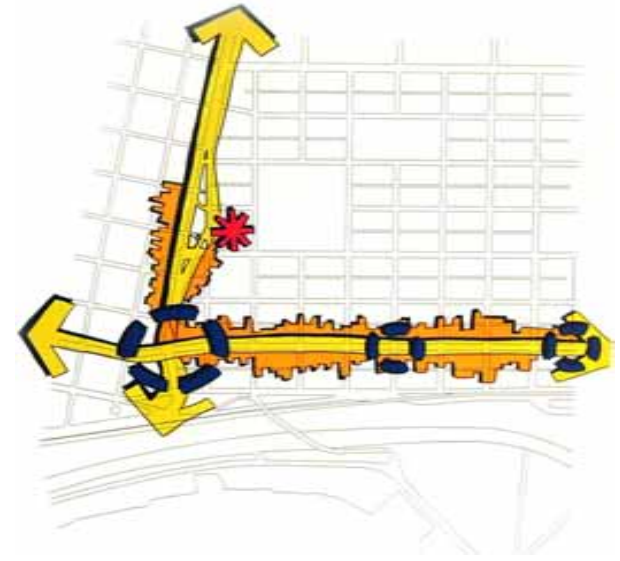




Short term phasing will amend zoning codes to increase height limits on International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, permit residential development on East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, and encourage mixed-use development at the intersection of Foothill Blvd and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Affordable housing development of underutilized sites on International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be encouraged.



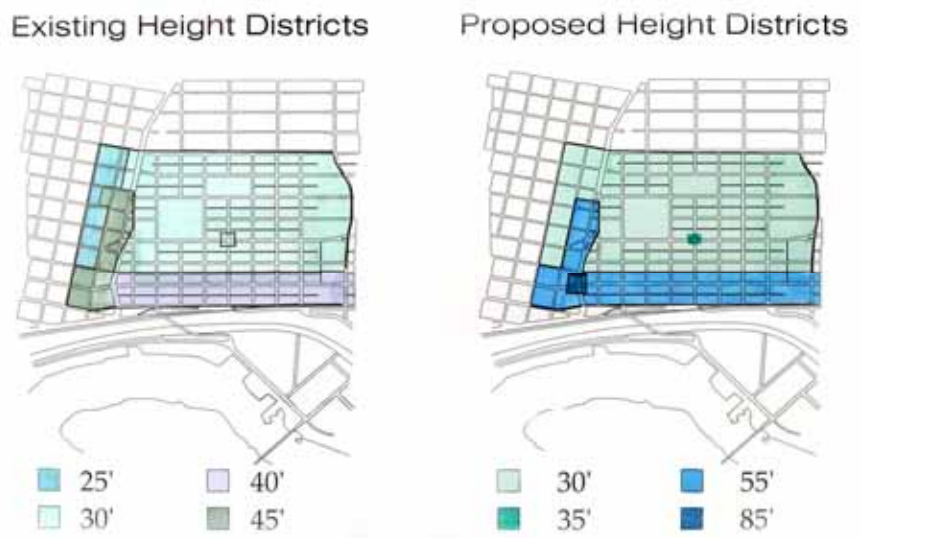
Medium term phasing will encourage development of moderate market-rate, high-density housing and a mixed-use residential project with a large grocery store on underutilized sites.



Long term phasing will encourage the creation of a high-density mixed-use node at the intersection of International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as well as other future BRT stops along International Blvd (intersections of 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenues). It will also encourage the development of high-density affordable and market-rate housing along the entire length of International Blvd and part of the way along 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and it encourages the construction of a library adjacent to the park.

# Zoning Strategies

In addition to increasing allowable height and adjusting land uses, design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use development should be employed that will encourage a safe street environment and healthy residential and commercial development.

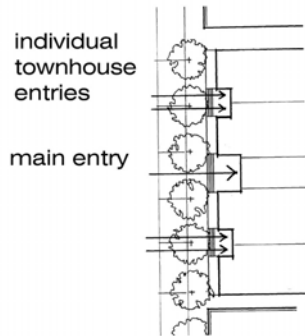




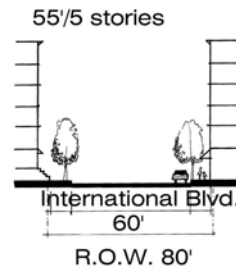
**Design Guidelines**

Where there are no existing trees, development must include one sidewalk street tree for every 20 feet of building frontage.

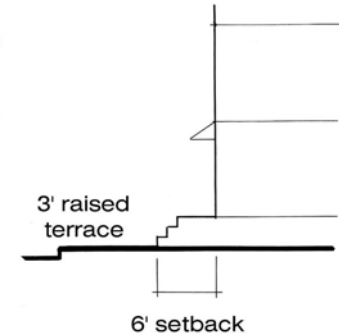
Residential units must have individual ground floor residential entrances.



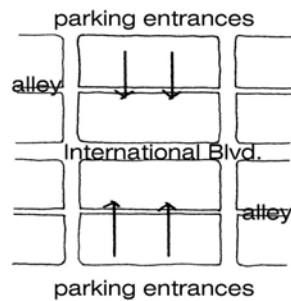
Buildings should be constructed to maximum allowable heights in order to create a sense of street enclosure.



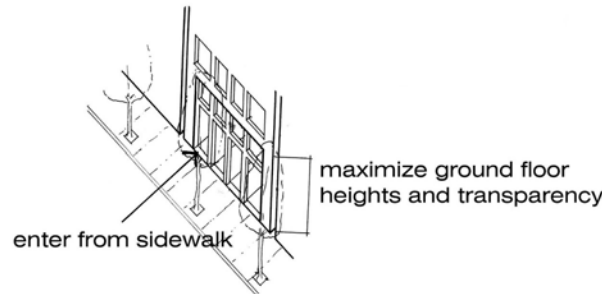
Residential units must have a minimum six-foot front setback with a minimum three-foot raised terrace.



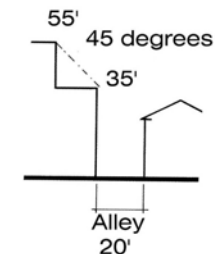
Parking garage entrances and frontages must be minimized. Parking frontages will not be permitted on International Blvd and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. All off-street parking for development on International Blvd must be accessed from the rear alley.



Retail ground floor transparency and ceiling heights must be maximized. Retail entrances should be accessible directly from the front sidewalk.



Building heights on the northeast side of International Blvd must be limited to 35 feet in order to provide adequate light to the residential alley. Building heights may then be increased to 55 feet along a 45 degree setback.



## Site Specific Proposals Overview

Underutilized sites were identified in a 2003 report by IURD. Of these, sites with prominent location and potential for beneficial development projects were selected.

Building on needs expressed by the community and deficiencies noted in analysis phases, site specific proposals are presented to suggest starting points for future development.



# Site Specific Proposal A

Project Type: Affordable Housing, Commercial, and Community Use

Potential Developer: Non-Profit Housing Developer

Occupancy Type: Rental

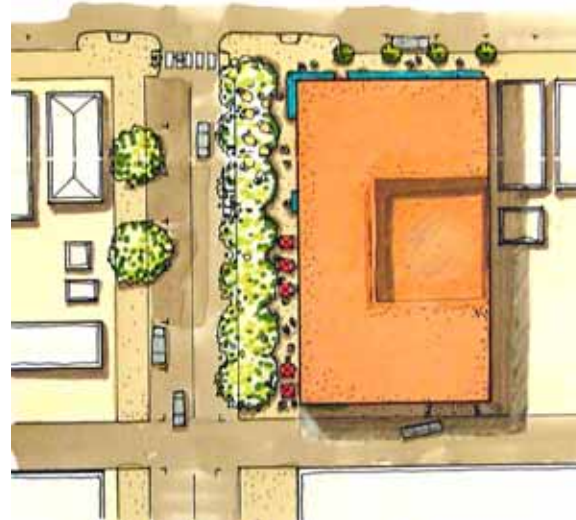
Number & Type of Units: 21 Residential Units, 2,400 sq. ft. of Commercial Space

On Site Amenities: Community Vending and Food Preparation Facility, On-Site Parking

Total Project Area: 11,200 sq. ft.

Parking Ratio: 0.5 spaces/dwelling unit

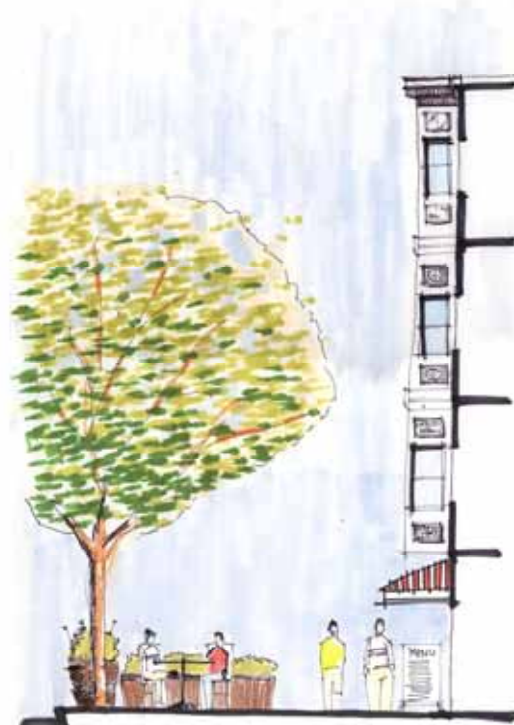
Phasing: Short Term



Site Plan

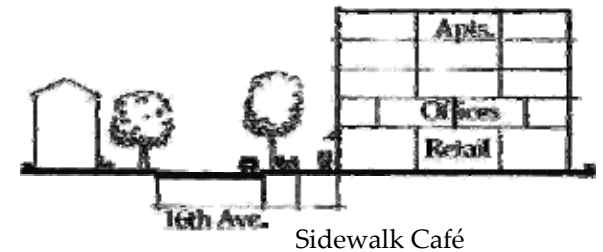


Floor Plan



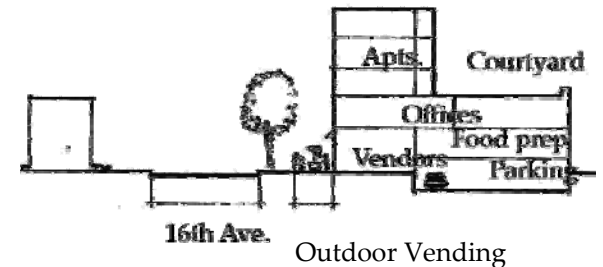
Section Through Vending and Eating Area

Section Through Sidewalk Café and Retail with Apartments Above, Facing International Blvd



Sidewalk Café

Section Through Outdoor Vending and Food Prep Area with Offices, Apartments, and Courtyard Above



Outdoor Vending

## Site Specific Proposals B

Project Type: Mixed Use

Potential Developer: Market-rate Non-Profit

Occupancy Type: Rental

Number & Type of Units: 66 Residential Units, 1 Grocery Store

On Site Amenities: Supermarket and Parking

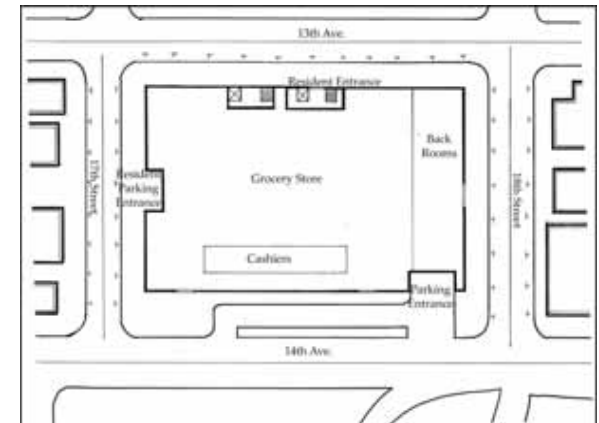
Total Project Area: 48,600 sq. ft.

Parking Ratio: 0.6 spaces/dwelling unit

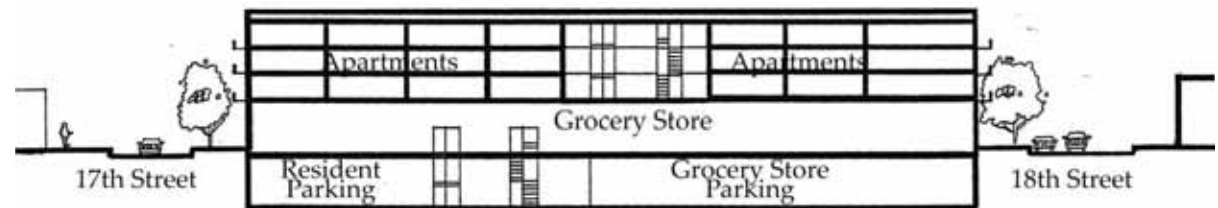
Phasing: Short/Medium Term



Site Plan



Floor Plan



Section Through Grocery Store with Apartments Above and Parking Below

# Site Specific Proposal C

Project Type: Affordable Housing/Mixed Use

Potential Developer: Non-Profit

Occupancy Type: Rental

Number & Type of Units: 82 Residential Units, 5-7 Commercial/Flexible-Use Units

On Site Amenities: Underground Parking

Total Project Area: 27,500 sq. ft.

Parking Ratio: 0.4 spaces/dwelling unit

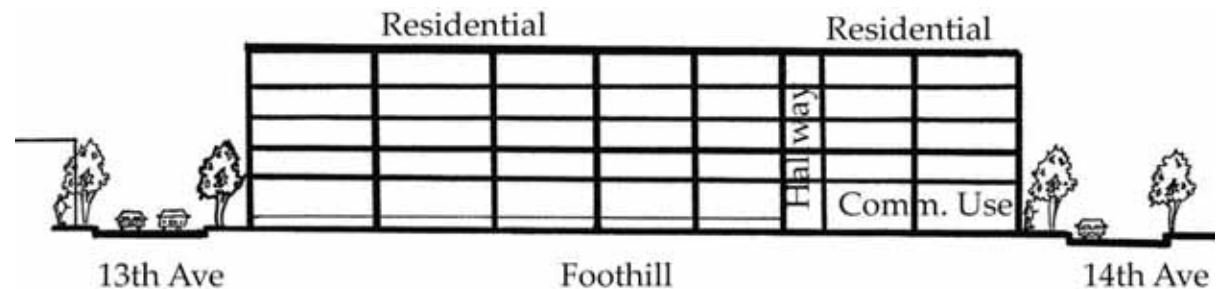
Phasing: Medium Term



Site Plan



Floor Plan



Section Through Apartments with Ground Floor Retail Beneath

# Site Specific Proposal D

Project Type: Affordable and Market Rate Housing, Commercial

Potential Developer: Non-Profit and Market-Rate Development Partnership

Occupancy Type: Rental and For Sale

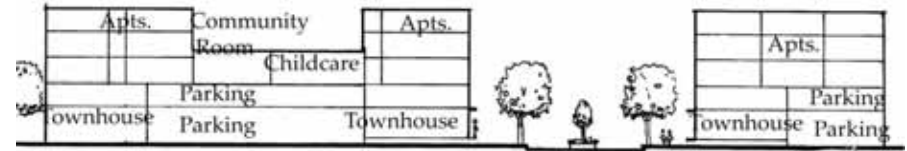
Number & Type of Units: 117 Residential Units, 19,000 sq. ft. of Commercial Space

On Site Amenities: Child Care Center, Community Room

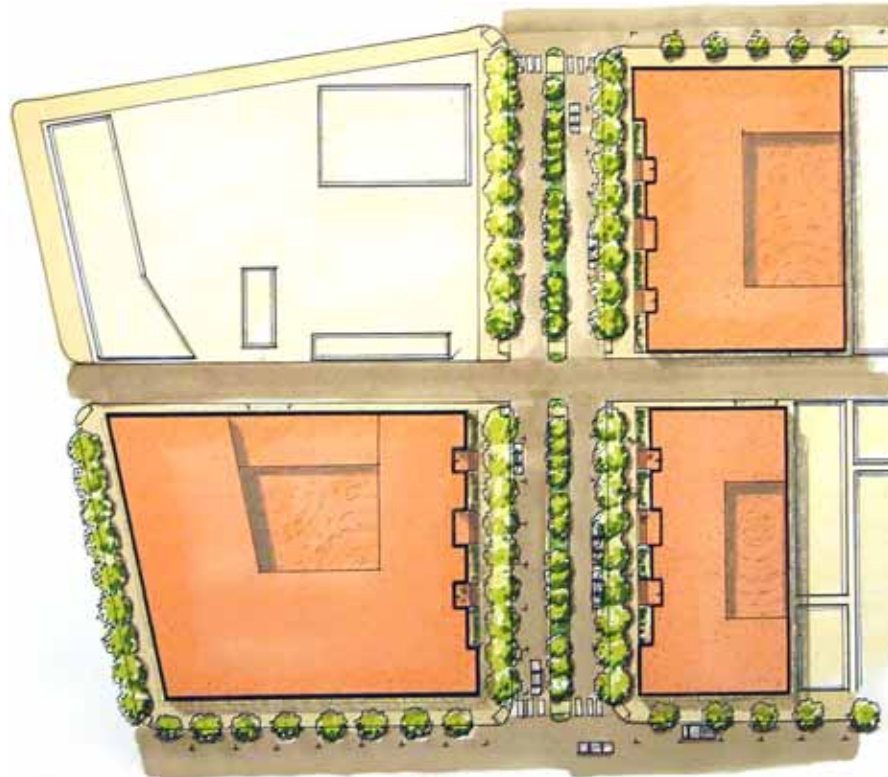
Total Project Area: 47,000 sq. ft.

Parking Ratio: 0.7 spaces/dwelling unit

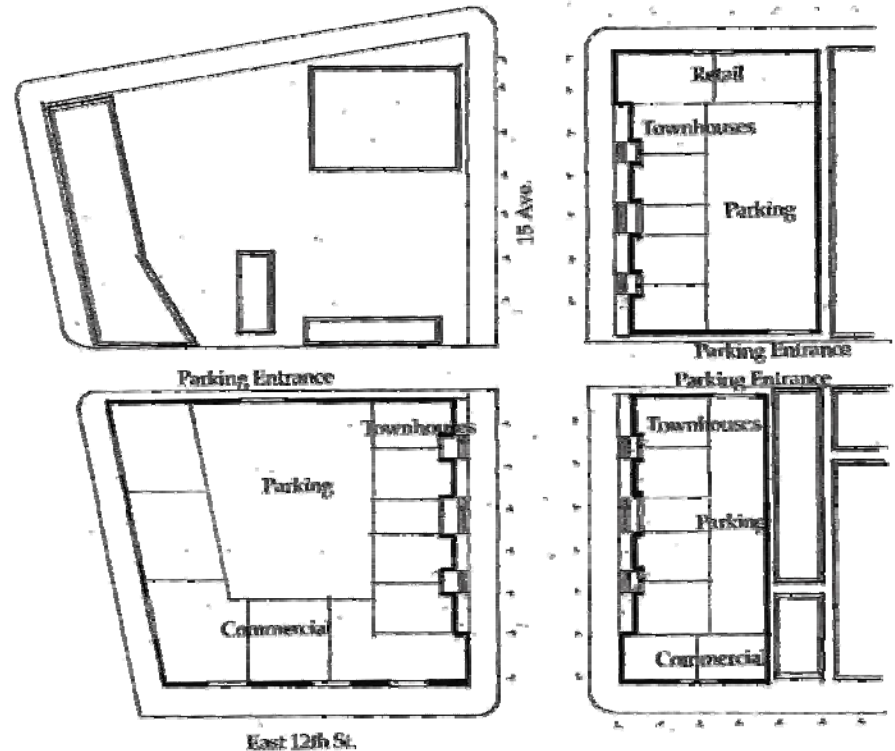
Phasing: Medium Term



Section Through 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Townhouses, Mid-block Between Alley and E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street



Site Plan



Floor Plan

# Site Specific Proposal E

Project Type: Civic

Potential Developer: City Capital Improvement Funds/Oakland Public Libraries

Occupancy Type: Public Facility

Number & Type of Units: 1 Library

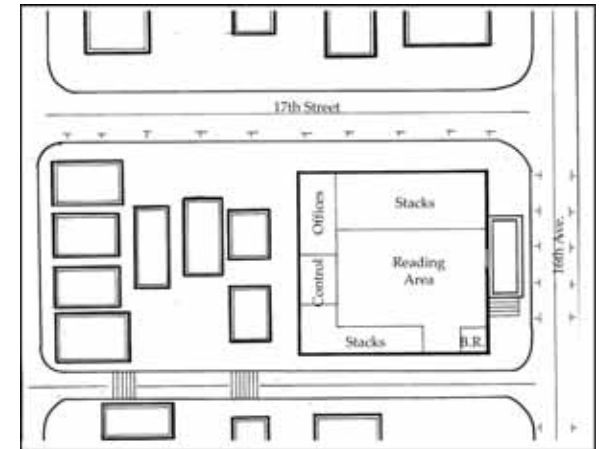
On Site Amenities: Plaza recreation, community reading room

Total Project Area: 19,215 sq. ft.

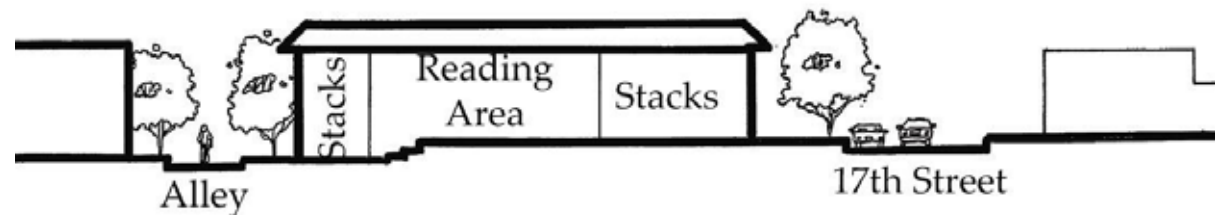
Phasing: Long Term



Site Plan



Floor Plan



Section Through Library

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## Next Steps

We intended the studio work to be useful for the Lower San Antonio community and those who care about it. The Planning Committee of the Lower San Antonio Collaborative will be the steward of the document. We recommend sharing the analysis and proposals with more people to gather feedback –including the City Council and staff, the City staff who provided information and feedback, the merchants and neighborhood associations, the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council, the local school principals and parent teacher organizations, staff of the community based organizations and as many residents who are interested. Find out what they think and host a meeting to prioritize the issues and ideas that will make the most meaningful and enduring impact.

