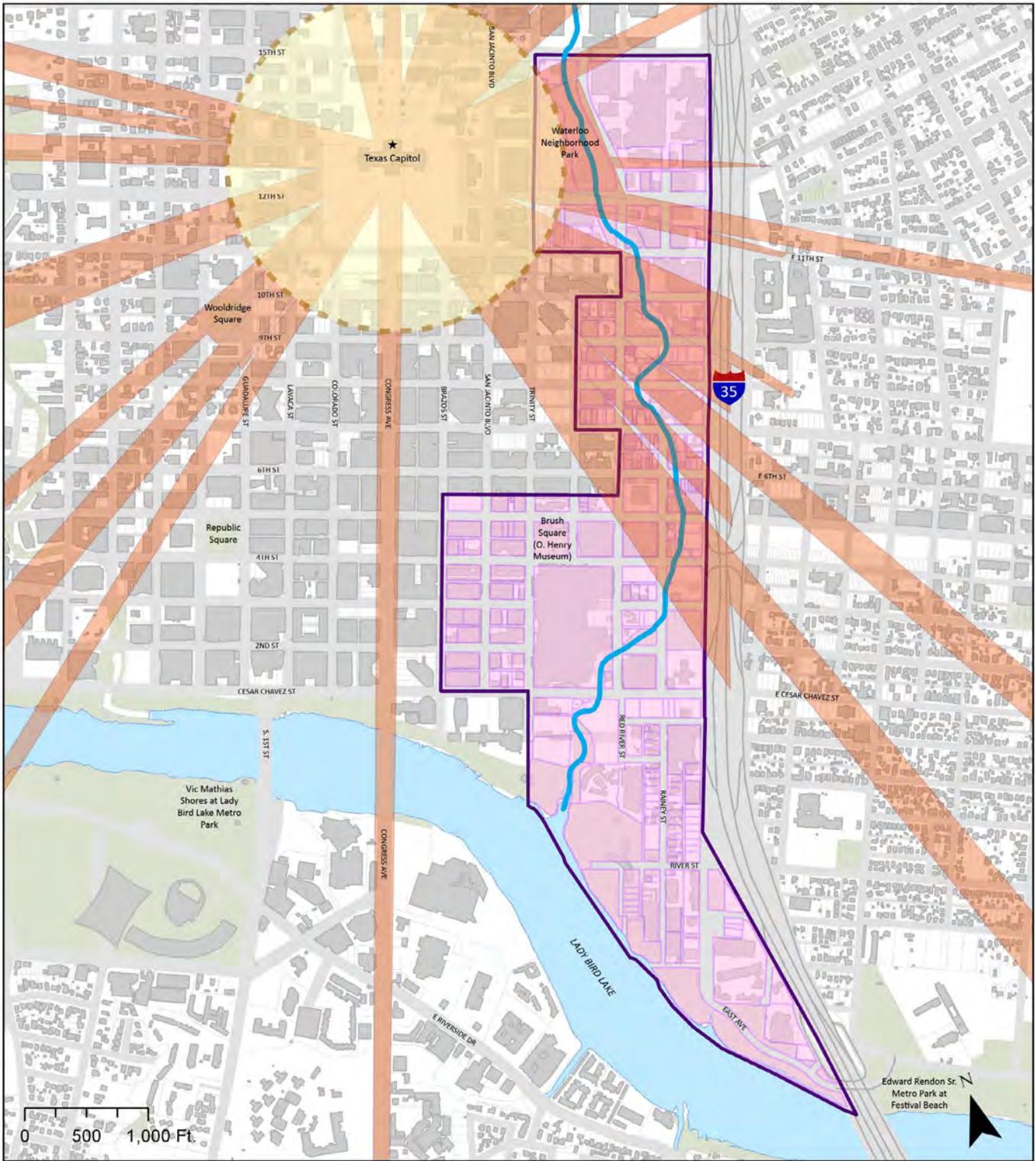


### Palm District- Downtown Density Bonus Map

CITY OF AUSTIN | PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT  
 Created on 02.12.2020



- Palm District Study Area
- Street Centerline
- Lakes
- Waller Creek
- 50 Feet
- 90 Feet
- 100 Feet
- 120 Feet
- 200 Feet
- 400 Feet
- No Height Limit
- Areas Ineligible for Density Bonus

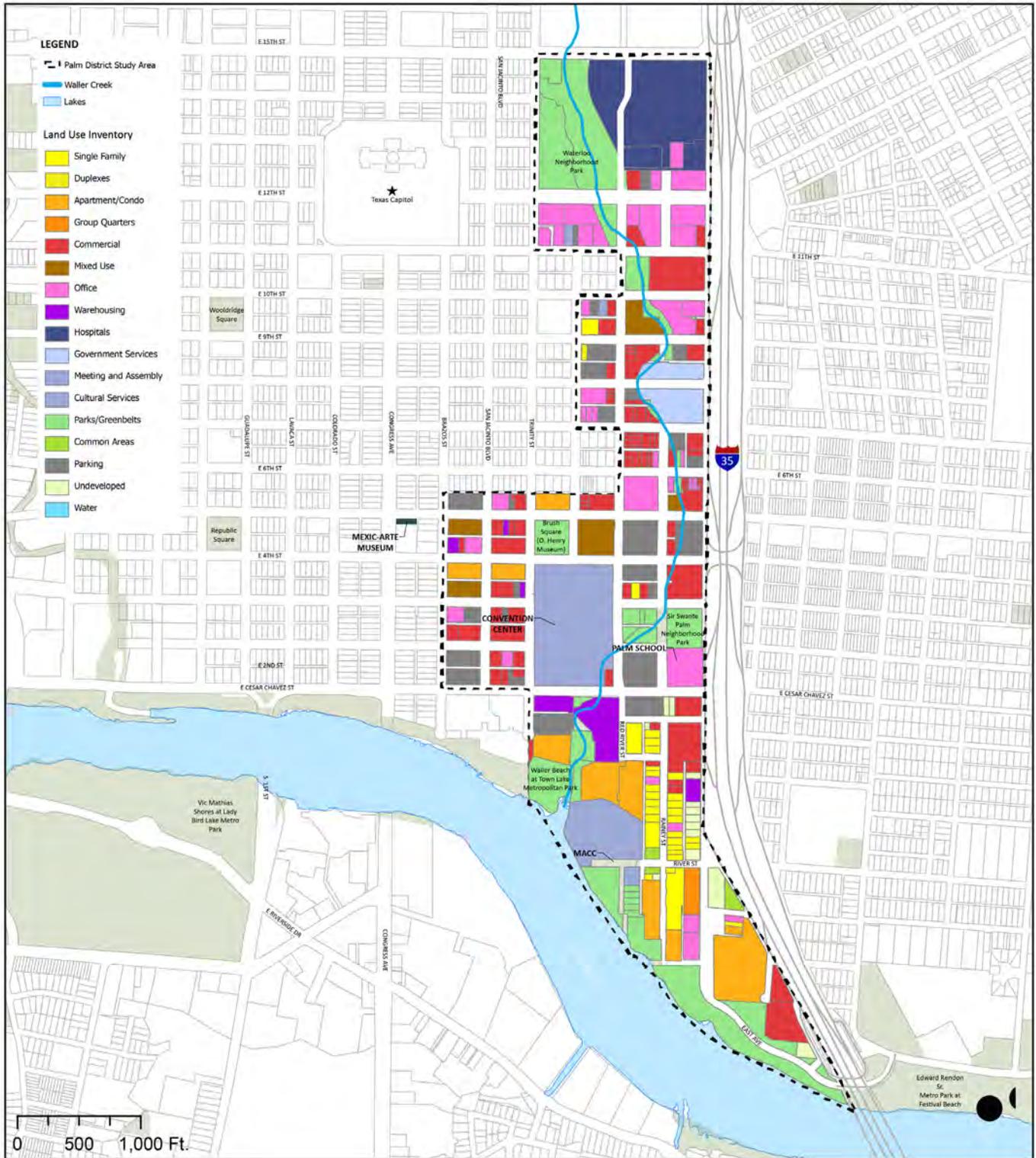


### Palm District- Capitol View Corridor/ Capitol Dominance Overlay

CITY OF AUSTIN | PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT  
 Created on 02.12.2020



- Palm District Study Area
- TCAD Parcels
- City of Austin Parks
- Capitol Dominance Overlay
- Lakes
- Capitol View Corridors Overlay
- Waller Creek



**Palm District - Land Use Map**  
 CITY OF AUSTIN | PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT  
 Created on 10/12/2022

# ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The Housing and Planning Department led an outreach and engagement process bringing together the thoughts and ideas of a broad range of community stakeholders and institutional partners to inform and develop the goals and future vision for the Palm District. This robust community engagement strategy was grounded using an equity lens. Intentional steps were taken to elevate the voices of community members that have cultural and historic ties to the district, some of whom no longer live in the vicinity of the district due to gentrification and displacement caused in part by past planning decisions.

It must be noted that early engagement efforts were entirely moved online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **Organizational Briefings and Inter-agency Coordination**

Beginning in 2019, staff held regular briefing meetings with various city boards and commissions, key city departments, external organizations, and community-based organizations and invited them to participate in the planning process. City departments and external partners were consulted on the various products created throughout the planning process including the draft Vision Framework, American Institute of Architects workshops, the framework desired outcomes, preferred scenarios, and plan document.

## **Targeted Outreach to East Austin Thought Leaders**

In late Summer 2021, Martha P. Cotera (dba Information Systems Development) was contracted to engage East Austin community members with cultural and historic bonds to the Palm District. A series of interviews, focus groups, and small group meetings were held with East Austin Mexican-American community leaders, current and former elected officials, Palm School alumni, Rainey Street Historic District residents and advocates, and current and former East Austin residents. Also targeted were organizations such as Raza Roundtable, PODER, HABLA and Nuestro Grupo/Academia Cuauhtli, Mexic Arte Museum, La Peña, with well documented involvement in the district.

The interviewers gathered interviewees' stories, desires, and thoughts about the Palm School and Park, the Rainey Street Neighborhood, Waterloo Greenway, the potential 5th Street Heritage Corridor, and other aspects of the Palm District.

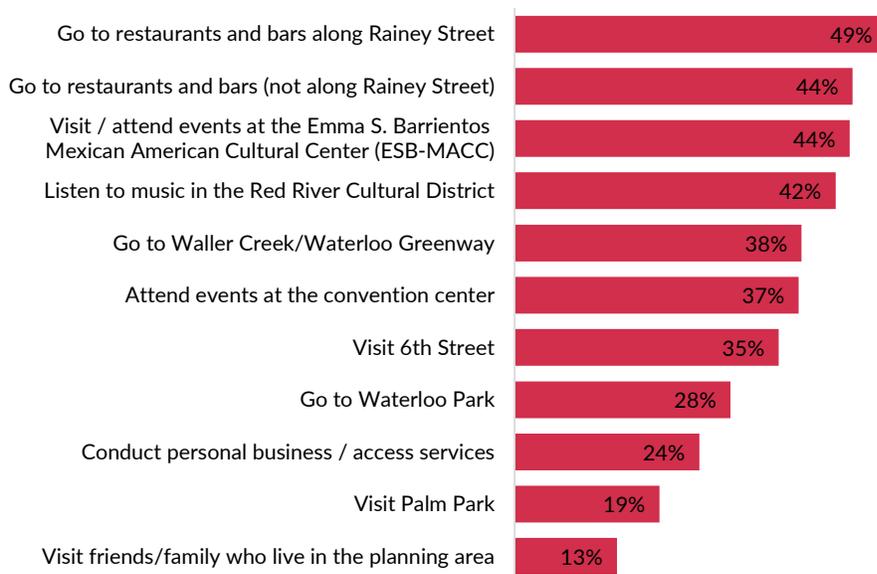
From her work with the East Austin stakeholder groups, Martha Cotera produced an in-depth report that includes a historic framework outlining the Mexican-American contributions and political efforts in the City of Austin and in the planning area specifically. The report includes the challenges of both displacement and the work of advocacy for the preservation of historic and cultural features in the Palm District. East Austin community stakeholders also provided a comprehensive list of recommendations for key areas of the Palm District. Many of the recommendations from the report and from input gathered through other plan process exercises have been incorporated into the Palm Plan recommendations. The full Martha P. Cotera report is part of the plan appendices.

### Community Visioning Forums

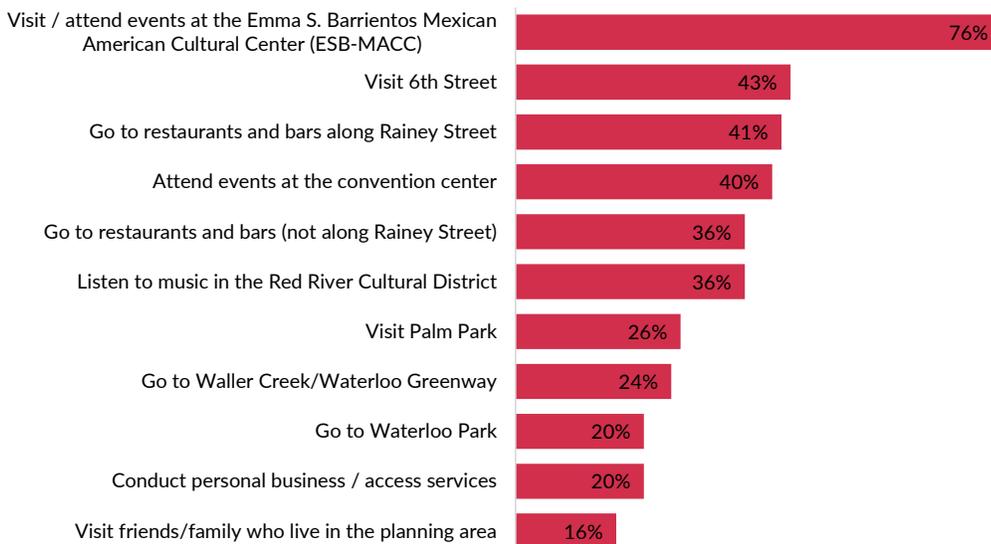
The visioning process kicked off in Spring 2021 with a series of Community Visioning Forums that were open to the public and took place virtually online. The goal of these meetings was to solicit input from a broad range of community stakeholders and to allow them to share their impressions of the district. Over 150 participants combined joined one of two virtual sessions.

For community members and stakeholders who could not attend the visioning forums, an online survey and interactive map of the district provided opportunities for them to share their input and impressions of the district. Recommendations and input received during this phase helped in the creation of the desired outcomes of the draft Vision Framework.

#### Why do you visit?



#### Hispanic or Latinx Response



Answers to questions in the visioning survey were segmented for respondents who self-identified as Hispanic/Latinx.

### **Partnership with American Institute of Architects**

The City Council Resolution authorizing staff to begin planning efforts in the Palm District encouraged seeking out design assistance from the American Institute for Architects (AIA) via the Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) grant. The grant application was accepted in 2019, but as efforts began to take shape, the Covid 19 pandemic struck, halting and altering plans for the AIA design team. HPD staff coordinated with AIA during the Spring and Summer of 2021 to hold a smaller-scale, virtual design event scheduled for late July.

The AIA team hosted a stakeholder workshop on Friday, July 23, 2021. The workshop was attended by 62 individuals representing key district organizational and institutional stakeholders. AIA design and planning experts then spent the weekend developing independent recommendations which were reported back to the community during a public webinar the following Monday.

The recommendations of the AIA report were made by an unpaid volunteer team of AIA-affiliated national experts and while the recommendations reflect a talented body of experience and insight from beyond Austin, these recommendations have not been officially endorsed by the City of Austin.

For the full AIA Communities by Design Report see the appendices section.

### **Downtown Austin Alliance Scenario Workshops**

Five in-person focus group workshops were held in August 2022. The workshops were hosted by Downtown Austin Alliance and led by a design team from Asakura Robinson. The session groups were split into three geographies (north, central, south) of the district to capture detailed input from stakeholders who lived, worked, and had specific knowledge of projects and history of those geographies. Three scenarios were then developed by Asakura Robinson based on the work done during the focus group exercises and from the conversations with stakeholders. The scenarios were then presented to stakeholders and to the public for input via an online survey. The results from the survey and stakeholder input produced the preferred scenario found in this plan.

### **Engagement Tools**

The SpeakUp Austin! website served as the centralized hub for all Palm District Planning Initiative online engagement efforts. SpeakUp Austin! received roughly 3.6 thousand visits since its launch. The initial Palm District Visioning online survey was launched in May 2021. The results were collected from May to November 2021. Survey respondents who chose to self-identify were 55% Hispanic or Latinx, a segment of the community that was targeted for in-depth stakeholder engagement. Recommendations and input received during this phase helped in the creation of the desired outcomes of the draft Vision Framework.

Over 3,000 informational postcards were mailed out to property owners and utility account holders within 500 feet of the district. Postcards, flyers, window and yard signs were distributed throughout the district and the surrounding East Austin area by stakeholder partners and volunteers.

Social media posts by HPD and our partners announced project events and shared promotional materials. The project team maintained an interest list for the project and provided regular updates to the list.

Press releases were issued providing information about the project and announcements of the various events and workshops. The project and visioning forums received coverage in local print and television news stories.

*Vision Framework* Follow up Survey – over 75 participants weighed in on the draft *Vision Framework*. Many of the comments called for more specific actions targeted to achieve the desired outcomes.

Scenarios Survey - over 390 participants reviewed draft district development scenarios via survey and provided input on elements that should be included in the preferred scenario.

### Language Access

Throughout the planning process, materials and activities have been made accessible in English and Spanish. Core materials have been translated including website, survey, flyers, postcards, historic timeline, and videos. Interpretation services were provided at virtual community visioning forums and the American Institute of Architects Webinar. Targeted outreach to East Austin thought leaders has included Spanish language interviews and meetings as requested.

Comments from the community stakeholders and institutional partners during the vision workshops, vision survey, framework feedback survey, scenario workshop and survey, and plan feedback survey contributed to the production of this plan.

**Get involved.  
Usted puede participar.**

The Housing and Planning Department is leading a planning process to help guide future decisions for the Palm District. Your input is needed to help shape the future of the area.

El Departamento de Vivienda y Planificación está iniciando un proceso de planificación que ayudará a guiar decisiones en el futuro para el Distrito Palm. Tus ideas son necesarias para darle forma al futuro de esta área.

# VISION STATEMENT

The Palm District is a vibrant historic hub of downtown where the past is honored, culture is celebrated, and the future is shaped.



Dense transit-oriented development is balanced with history and natural spaces creating physical connections that invite people to move easily to and through the district.



The district is a dynamic place, growing and evolving, while actively retaining families and individuals who have traditionally called this place home.



Creativity and innovation are cultivated, and people from Austin and beyond are welcome to live, relax, work, play, learn, and connect with others.

# VISION FRAMEWORK

As the district evolves, the plan will guide development and programming to achieve the vision for a vibrant, accessible and successful district. Informed by an understanding of area history, the elements of the vision are inclusive growth, culture, connection and nature. The desired outcomes for each of these elements are outlined in the following sections.



## INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Growth in the district will provide a prosperous future for longtime and recent residents and for established and new businesses. This future will provide opportunities to prioritize and celebrate the district's cultural and historical institutions. Focusing on these important assets will enhance the entertainment, live music, tourism, convention, and innovation market sectors.



## CULTURE

The district will become a destination that celebrates its multi-cultural heritage by supporting and expanding the Red River Cultural District's live music and entertainment economy and by preserving and enhancing the Mexican-American heritage community assets and their stories.



## CONNECTION

Physical, cultural and social connections will be strengthened within downtown and between East Austin and downtown.



## NATURE

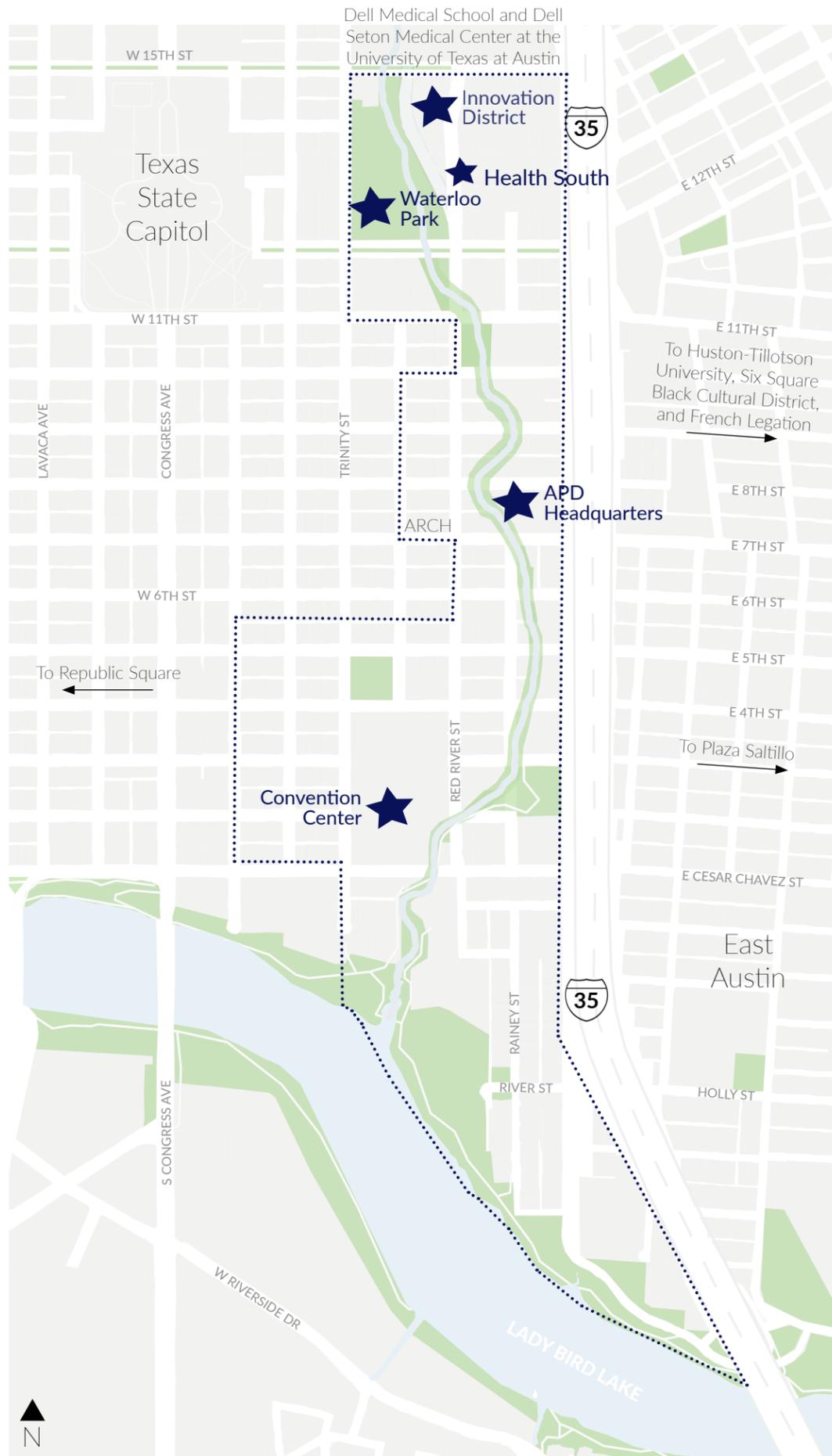
The natural environment will be preserved and enhanced by restoring existing natural and open spaces and pursuing high standards of sustainable design and development with a focus on green infrastructure.

# KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES

Key Opportunities identified on the following map series represent sites that are controlled by a variety of public and private entities, and not all sites are under the direct ownership of the City of Austin. Opportunity sites are sites that are likely to serve as key anchors supporting placemaking and helping to achieve desired outcomes in the District over the years ahead.

The Vision is intended to provide an aspirational view of how the district could develop over time. Implementation will require a range of actions by the City of Austin and its partners. While Palm Park is currently owned by the City of Austin, the adjacent Palm School is owned by Travis County, and Travis County has been undertaking a process to explore options for this site. For additional information on the Palm School site please visit - <https://www.traviscountytx.gov/planning-budget/economic-development-strategic-investments/palm-school>.



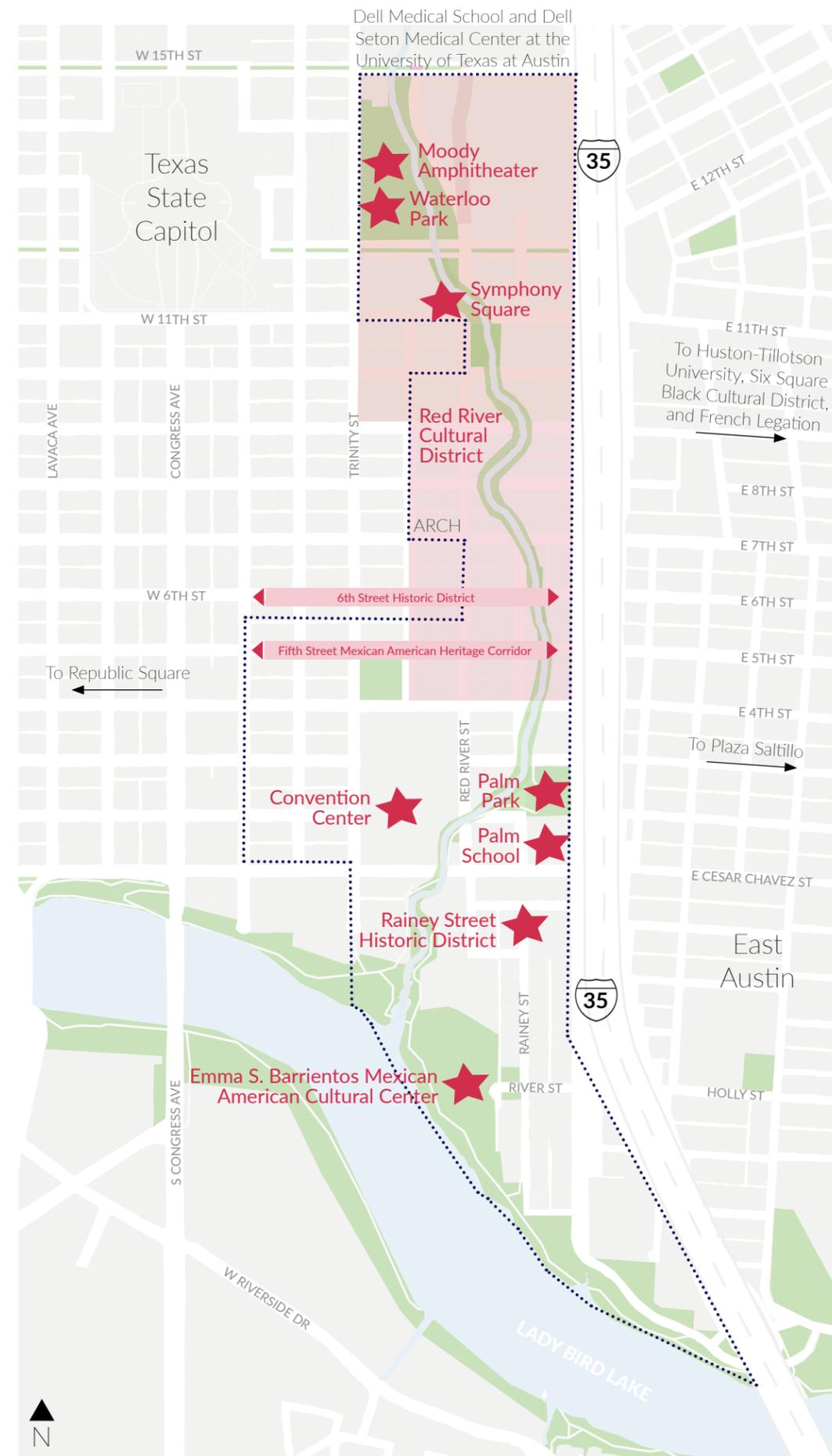


**INCLUSIVE GROWTH VISION FRAMEWORK**

- ★ Key Opportunities
- ▭ Palm District
- Parks
- Waterways

**INCLUSIVE GROWTH PARTNERS & COORDINATION RESOURCES**

- » Housing and Planning
- » Capital City Innovation
- » Waterloo Greenway Conservancy
- » Austin Convention Center
- » Downtown Austin Alliance
- » Travis County
- » Homeless support services providers
- » Housing Authority of City of Austin
- » Austin Economic Development Corporation
- » Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

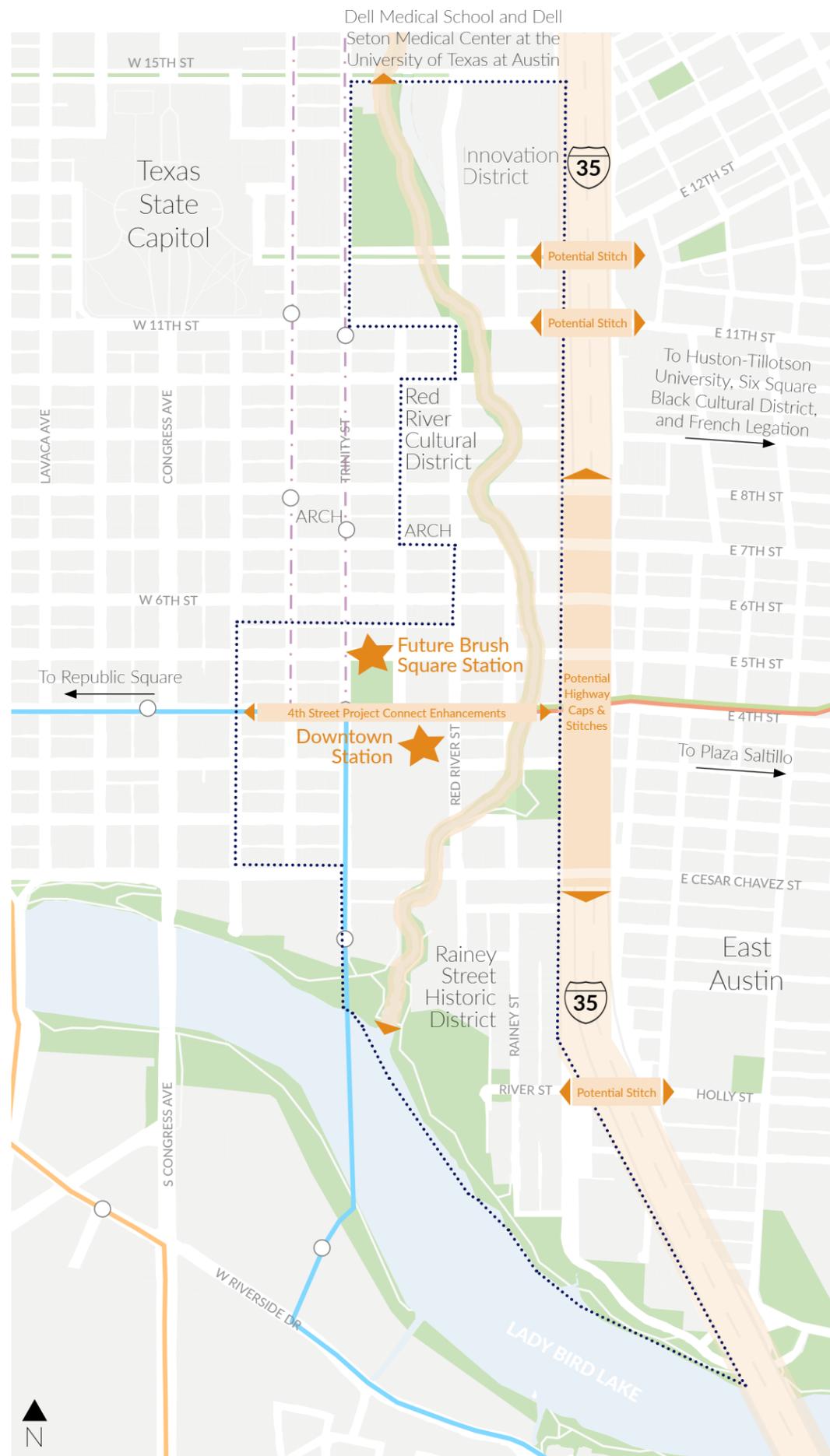


**CULTURE VISION FRAMEWORK**

- ★ Key Opportunities
- ◀▶ Key Corridors
- ▭ Palm District
- Parks
- Waterways

**CULTURE PARTNERS & COORDINATION RESOURCES**

- » Austin Convention Center
- » Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center
- » George Washington Carver Museum
- » Huston-Tillotson University
- » Six Square Cultural District
- » Red River Cultural District
- » Mexic-Arte
- » La Peña
- » Tejano Trails
- » Waterloo Greenway Conservancy
- » Travis County
- » Downtown Austin Alliance
- » Preservation Austin
- » Austin Parks & Recreation
- » Austin History Center
- » Austin Economic Development
- » Visit Austin
- » Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

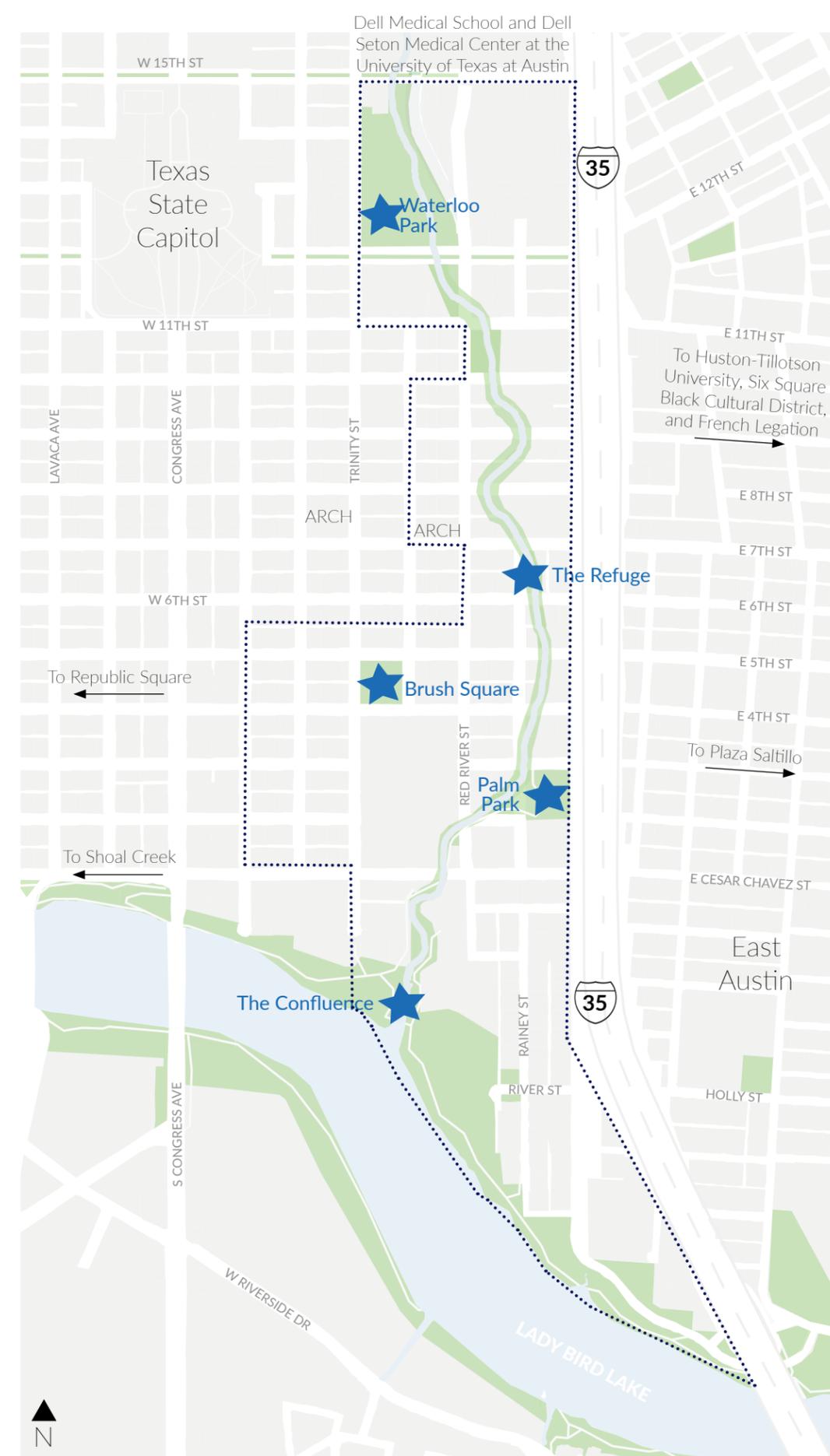


### CONNECTION VISION FRAMEWORK

- ★ Key Opportunities
- ◀▶ Key Corridors
- ⋮ Palm District
- Parks
- Waterways
- ↔ I-35 Redesign
- Project Connect Light Rail
- Project Connect MetroRail
- Project Connect Transit Stations
- - - Project Connect MetroRapid (BRT)

### CONNECTION PARTNERS & COORDINATION RESOURCES

- » CapMetro
- » Austin Transit Partnership
- » Waterloo Greenway Conservancy
- » Austin Transportation
- » Downtown Austin Alliance
- » Austin Energy
- » Austin Watershed Protection
- » Austin Water
- » Austin Parks & Recreation
- » Waller Creek Local Government Corporation



### NATURE VISION FRAMEWORK

- ★ Key Opportunities
- ⋮ Palm District
- Parks
- Waterways

### NATURE PARTNERS & COORDINATION RESOURCES

- » Waterloo Greenway Conservancy
- » Waller Creek Local Government Corporation
- » Austin Parks & Recreation
- » Austin Watershed Protection
- » Austin Public Works
- » Austin Office of Sustainability
- » Trails Conservancy

# DESIRED OUTCOMES

The following desired outcomes for the Palm District came directly from community, partner, and stakeholder input during the visioning phase of the planning process.

The desired outcomes are synthesized statements that express the recommendations and visions for how the Palm District should develop and grow. The desired outcomes were then grouped into the four thematic elements from the draft Palm District Vision Framework.





# INCLUSIVE GROWTH

## AN INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE, AND PROSPEROUS PALM DISTRICT...

- Acknowledges and prioritizes history and cultural heritage and integrates these concepts into new development and any redevelopment in the area.
- Establishes anti-displacement policies, such as a right to return, for the District's existing, lower income residents.
- Makes housing a priority, not just a luxury, for all socioeconomic groups. All development should produce affordable housing and preserve existing affordable housing.
- Increases the real and perceived sense of safety in the District by providing lighting, accessibility, signage, staffing, and a continuum of care that includes adequate shelter and services for people experiencing homelessness.
- Leverages redevelopment opportunities and increased transit options to increase housing density and walkability with options to live, work, learn, and play.
- Supports all aspects of the local creative economy and artists of color.
- Promotes destinations for families and children.
- Creates and promotes recreational spaces and destinations as downtown amenities.
- Ensures the redevelopment and expansion of the Convention Center providing a world-class community-friendly facility that contributes positively to Austin and Central Texas's economy, and enhances the surrounding public realm.
- Ensures that the economic benefits of the Innovation District reach all Austinites, especially historically excluded populations.
- Promotes a thriving retail environment to foster small business ownership or creation, and to support economic well-being, including first-floor retail activations.
- Encourages private development to positively contribute to the public realm.
- Provides a variety of affordable options for people to access and get around the district.
- Creates opportunities to use publicly-owned properties for dense, mixed-income housing, as well as places for cultural celebration, and to preserve those sites that are of historical, social, and cultural significance.



## A CULTURALLY RICH AND DIVERSE PALM DISTRICT...

- Honors the presence and experiences of American Indians, Mexican Americans/Tejanos, Latinos, African Americans, as well as the Chinese, Greek, German, Lebanese, and Jewish immigrants who lived and worked in the District through interpretive projects such as Texas Historical Commission's Undertold Marker program and enhanced Waterloo Greenway cultural programming.
- Preserves and promotes physical cultural resources and architecture.
- Creates welcoming places for Austin's and Central Texas's Mexican American population.
- Incorporates cultural uses in the future plans for Palm School.
- Expands Austin's musical identity as the Live Music Capital of the World by including and promoting local Tejano/Latinx/Spanish-language music and culture and includes the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, Palm Park, and Brush Square as performance venues during citywide events.
- Creates a sense of identity and place through public art by local artists.
- Utilizes the redevelopment of the Convention Center to create gathering spaces for the local community that foster a sense of belonging.
- Uses the redesign of I-35 to create gateways into Downtown and East Austin that celebrate the District's rich cultural identity and history.
- Engages Huston-Tillotson University, Six Square, and other institutions to identify and preserve remaining historic resources associated with African American history, including the former Freedman community and Black-owned businesses along Sixth Street and Red River Street.
- Enhances the pedestrian life of the district by promoting active, street-level uses such as restaurants and retail, with an emphasis on fostering businesses owned by people of color and locally-owned businesses.
- Preserves performance venues in the Red River Cultural District through incentives, public private partnerships, and regulatory tools such as transfer of development rights, historic and landmark designations, and the Iconic Venue Fund.
- Conserves the history of the District through preservation of historic structures, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and thoughtful integration of historic structures into new development.



### A WELL-CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE PALM DISTRICT...

- Leverages the lowering and replacement of I-35 to create better and more attractive connections between East Austin and the District.
- Creates a cohesive and complimentary edge to new, urban-designed boulevards with slower travel speeds that will replace traditional frontage roads that exist along the I-35 corridor today.
- Leverages potential wider, larger connections across new freeway caps at Palm Park, Holly Street, and other key crossings along I-35 to create a seamless connection between downtown, Waterloo Greenway, and East Austin/Salttillo.
- Encourages walking, biking, public transit, and creates accessible pedestrian paths that guide people through the district to all amenities.
- Provides continuity and connectivity from Rainey Street up to the Innovation District.
- Leverages Waterloo Greenway as a pedestrian pathway (open year round, twenty-four hours a day) linking Lady Bird Lake to Palm School, Palm Park and Waterloo Park.
- Creates a series of signature locations, such as in the Innovation District, Red River Cultural District, and Rainey Street National Historic District, that are worthy of celebrating.
- Increases safety and visibility on pedestrian paths and along connections between amenities such as the Butler Trail to Rainey Street and to Cesar Chavez.
- Increases circulation through Waterloo Greenway investments with universally accessible bridges and trail connections.
- Leverages the significant transit investments under the Project Connect transit vision to foster placemaking.
- Creates a more welcoming pedestrian experience in and around the Convention Center by improving the pathways and connections linking it to other parts of the District and to the rest of Downtown.
- Increases sustainability and resilience of utility and infrastructure networks throughout the District by implementing autonomous technologies, supporting expansion of District cooling and the reclaimed water network, and supporting stormwater management through engineered and green infrastructure approaches.
- Creates better pedestrian infrastructure and vehicle circulation for Rainey Street and East Sixth Street and connections crossing Cesar Chavez Street.



# NATURE

## AN ECOLOGICALLY HEALTHY PALM DISTRICT...

- Serves as a natural recreational area for everyone and a respite from the hardness of the Central Business District.
- Creates an interconnected ribbon of green spaces throughout Downtown connecting the Waterloo Greenway, the Roy and Ann Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail, and the Shoal Creek Trail which facilitates travel through Downtown and beyond.
- Creates a welcoming Palm Park though better lighting and improved amenities to make it more attractive to visitors.
- Improves the Waterloo Greenway, south of Palm Park to the Confluence, through lighting, interpretive signage, and other amenities, to invite visitors and residents to explore and experience Waller Creek.
- Enhances ecological function of Waller Creek and Lady Bird Lake.
- Increases tree canopy in the district, specifically along Red River Street and on pedestrian and bicycle pathways.
- Enhances sustainability of the district by using standards of nationally recognized rating systems such as the Sustainable SITES Initiative for site development.
- Promotes the proposed Waterloo Greenway Plan that provides a 1.5-mile park system and 35 acres of connected greenspace.
- Restores natural creek and delta areas including creek bank stabilization, re-planting landscape with new plants and trees, and new east-west connections.
- Connects Palm Park area with the hike & bike trail through a creek-level trail.
- Improves public health through quality access to nature, active transportation options, and other healthy community initiatives including Waterloo Greenway programming designed to bring people closer to nature.
- Focuses on native/regional plants that are resilient and suited to our climate, providing a sense of place, educational opportunities, and long-term maintenance benefits.
- Manages stormwater in the District with fine-grained solutions throughout that keep our water clean and make the District more resilient to future flooding.

# SCENARIOS

Building upon the stakeholder input received during the two-day Palm District Future Scenarios Focus Group workshops (August 5th and 6th, 2022), the Asakura Robinson design team generated three possible future scenarios for the District. The scenarios are differentiated by the three purposes they represent: Live, Work, and Play.

NOTE: The following scenarios represent visualizations of potential future development in the district. The visualizations include sites that are controlled by a variety of public and private entities, and not all sites are under the direct ownership of the City of Austin. These scenarios are intended to provide an aspirational view of how the district could develop over time; they do not bind individual property owners or the City of Austin and partner agencies. Implementation would require a range of actions by the City of Austin and its partners.

**Palm School:** The Palm School site is owned by Travis County, and Travis County has been undertaking a process to explore options for this site. See <https://www.traviscountytx.gov/planning-budget/economic-development-strategic-investments/palm-school> for additional information.

**Austin's Cap and Stitch Program:** The Texas Department of Transportation is currently evaluating options the reconstruction of I-35 through the federally-required environmental review process, and the City is working in tandem with that process to explore possible approaches for capping I-35 and/or designing enhanced bridges (stitches) over the freeway that could be used for a range of purposes in the future. In 2023 Our Future 35 will be working with community members to identify preferred concepts and program elements for new caps and stitches. The following scenarios assumes construction of caps and stitches and small-scale development for visualization purposes only. See <https://austintexas.gov/ourfuture35> for additional information.

The Live Scenario focuses on increasing the amount of mixed-income housing developed through density programs and promoting supportive, goods, services, and activities in the Palm District.

The Live Scenario:

- Increases the amount of supportive goods and services such as pharmacies, downtown-scaled grocery stores, dine in casual and fast casual restaurants, coffee shops, dry cleaners, and cultural activities.
- Locates new housing, supportive retail and services, on publicly-owned land and sites currently used for surface and structured parking.
- Improves localized transit options by implementing a circulator route within the District along Red River Street to link the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, Convention Center, Downtown Station, Red River Cultural District, Waterloo Park, Innovation District, and the Dell Seton Medical Center at the University of Texas, as well as the Dell Medical School, and the University of Texas' School of Nursing.
- Leverages the Waterloo Greenway trail to create safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle transportation choices.

- Potential cap and stitch development over I-35 may support by providing amenities for the growing resident populations

The Work Scenario focuses on growing the number of jobs by increasing new office and mixed use development throughout the district. A primary objective of this scenario is to promote more daytime, evening, and nighttime activities.

The Work Scenario:

- Promotes business and work supportive retail such as office services like printing, delivery services, dry cleaners, and diners in and near these developments.
- Offers more flexible office and creative spaces to support the growing numbers of people who commute to the District as well as those who live and work there.
- Expands opportunities for new work and/or rehearsal spaces for the Palm District's creative and innovation job sectors.
- Leverages I-35 caps and stitches to provide programming and amenities, potentially including, but not limited to, new business incubation space, gathering places, and employment opportunities that will encourage new economic and community activity. The potential caps and stitches at 11th and 12th Street offer strong links to the neighboring Innovation District. Develops underutilized and aging creek-side properties for mixed use developments, with ground floor commercial space of varying heights (due to the Capitol View Corridors) to establish a more vibrant District identity.

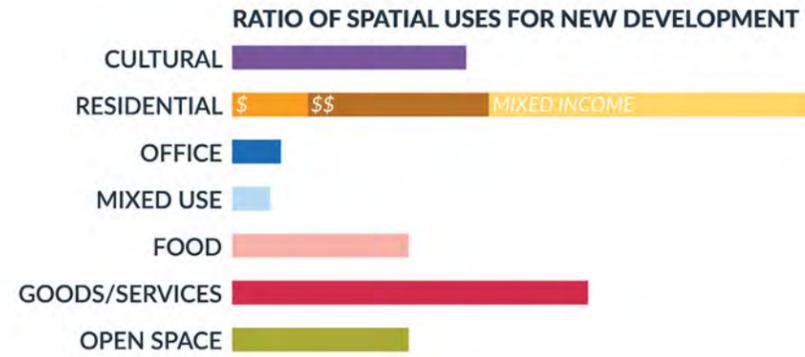
The Play Scenario maximizes the amount of greenspace in the Palm District by building upon the reimagining of Waller Creek with the Waterloo Greenway, and promotes additional open spaces such as skate parks and recreational playscapes for people of all ages and abilities.

The Play Scenario:

- Leverages I-35 caps and stitches to provide programming and amenities, potentially including, but not limited to, small scale commercial, entertainment, and open spaces to build east/west connection.
- Introduces two new hotels with entertainment spaces between East 6th and East 7th Streets to support new tourist and entertainment investments, existing music venues, and other cultural assets in the District.
- Repurposes existing publicly owned buildings between 10th and 11th Streets to meet the District's housing and office needs.

# LIVE

Scenario 1



## LEGEND

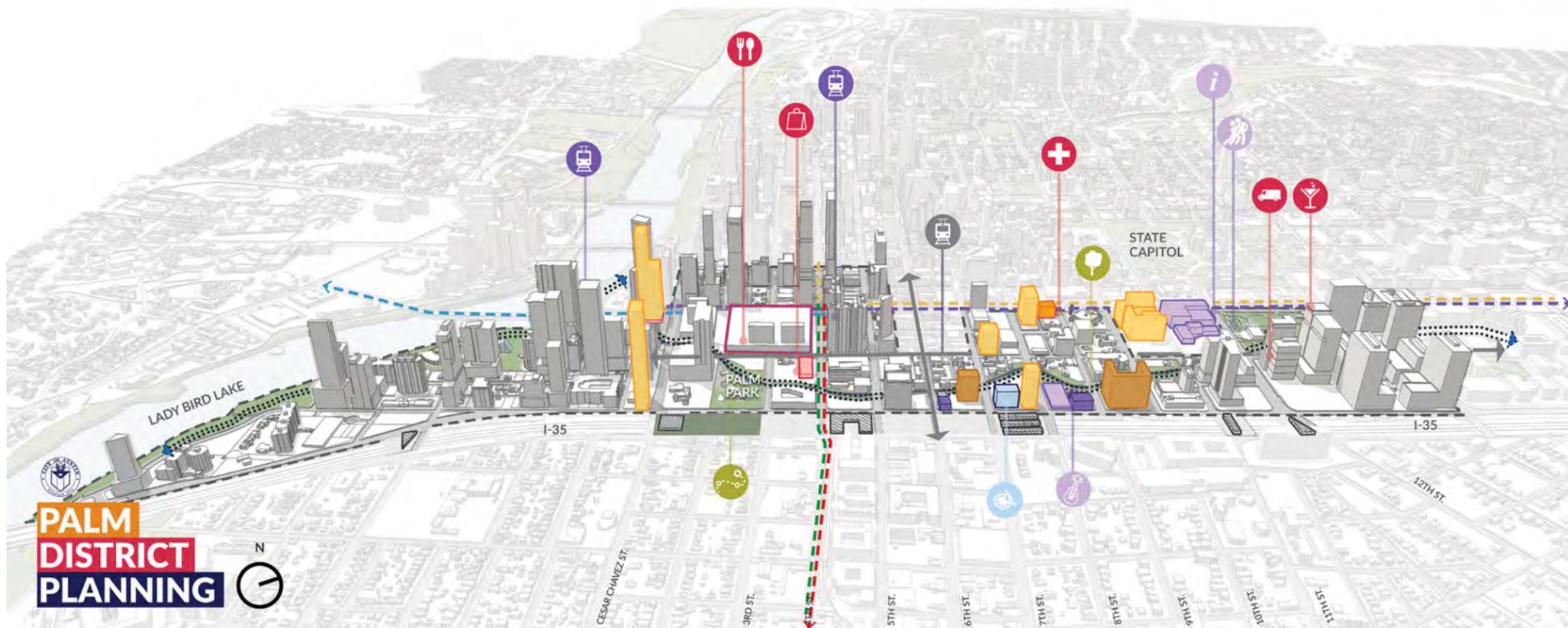
- Goods / Services**
- Food / Restaurants
  - Bar / Pub
  - Food Truck / Street Vendors
  - Retail
  - Health Services
- Residential**
- Low Income
  - Market Rate
  - Mixed Income
  - Hotel
- Office**
- Class A Office
  - Artist Studio / Creative Office
  - Mixed Use
- Cultural**
- Music Venue
  - Theatre
  - Visitors Center
- Open Space**
- Park
  - Trail Connections
- Other**
- Parking
  - Project Connect Stations
  - Streetcar Improvements

## Connectivity

- Streetcar
- Waterloo Greenway Trail
- Project Connect Blue Line
- Project Connect Red Line
- Project Connect Green Line
- Project Connect Purple Line
- Project Connect Gold Line

## Scenario Notes

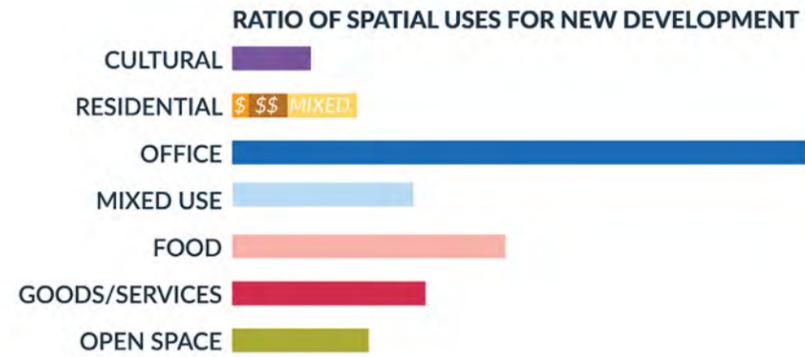
- » Taking advantage of density initiatives, the Live scenario significantly increases mixed income housing to support the building of a more vibrant and diverse community.
- » Strategic placement of goods and services including pharmacies, mixed-scale groceries, and eateries within a ten minute walkshed of each other.
- » The Live scenario interventions propose re-purposing surface lots and parking garages to provide largely public-owned land for more services and housing.
- » In support of new Project Connect rail lines and the Waterloo Greenway trail expansion for bike and pedestrian connection, the Live scenario also proposes the use of a public transportation circulator to move residents along Red River and connect them to key cultural sites like Waterloo Park, the Red River Cultural District, and the Mexican American Cultural Center.
- » The Live scenario envisions Palm District as an area with all day activity, including a range of cultural and necessary elements required to thrive in the area. Potential I-35 Cap & Stitch development can support in building more service provision for the growing resident population.



\*\*Renderings are for illustrative purposes only; Cap and Stitch design to be developed as part of the Our Future 35 community process.

# WORK

## Scenario 2



### LEGEND

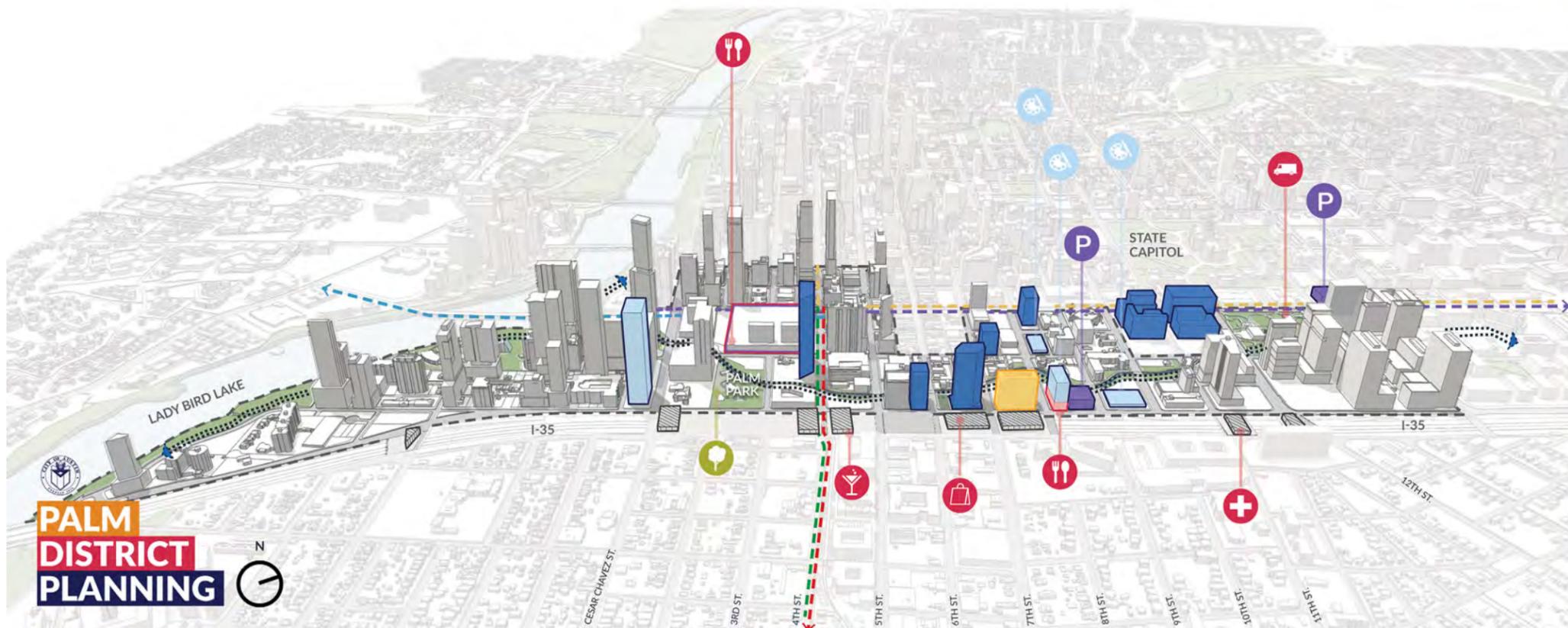
- Goods / Services**
  - Food / Restaurants
  - Bar / Pub
  - Food Truck / Street Vendors
  - Retail
  - Health Services
- Residential**
  - Low Income
  - Market Rate
  - Mixed Income
  - Hotel
- Office**
  - Class A Office
  - Artist Studio / Creative Office
  - Mixed Use
- Cultural**
  - Music Venue
  - Theatre
  - Visitors Center
- Open Space**
  - Park
  - Trail Connections
- Other**
  - Parking
  - Project Connect Stations
  - Streetcar Improvements

### Connectivity

- Streetcar
- Waterloo Greenway Trail
- Project Connect Blue Line
- Project Connect Red Line
- Project Connect Green Line
- Project Connect Purple Line
- Project Connect Gold Line

### Scenario Notes

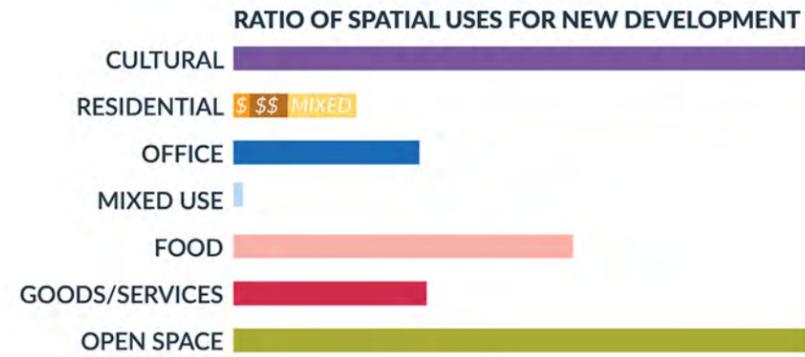
- » The Work Scenario creates new office and mixed use opportunities throughout the district, with the goal of introducing more daytime, evening, and night activity across Palm District.
- » Strategic placement of work-centric services like printers, cafes, and dry cleaners around proposed sites of new investment.
- » This scenario offers more creative workspaces and flexible office environments to support the district's growing resident and workforce, and also create new work or practice spaces for Palm District's creative and innovative industries.
- » The Work Scenario leverages the I-35 Cap & Stitch to envision new business incubation space, gathering places, employment opportunities that will encourage new economic and community activity. The 11th and 12th Street Cap & Stitch areas offer strong links to the neighboring Innovation District.
- » Creek-side real estate is also seen as an opportunity area for more mixed use, mixed-height development that encourages ground floor commercial areas for a more vibrant neighborhood identity.



\*\*Renderings are for illustrative purposes only; Cap and Stitch design to be developed as part of the Our Future 35 community process.

# PLAY

## Scenario 3



### LEGEND

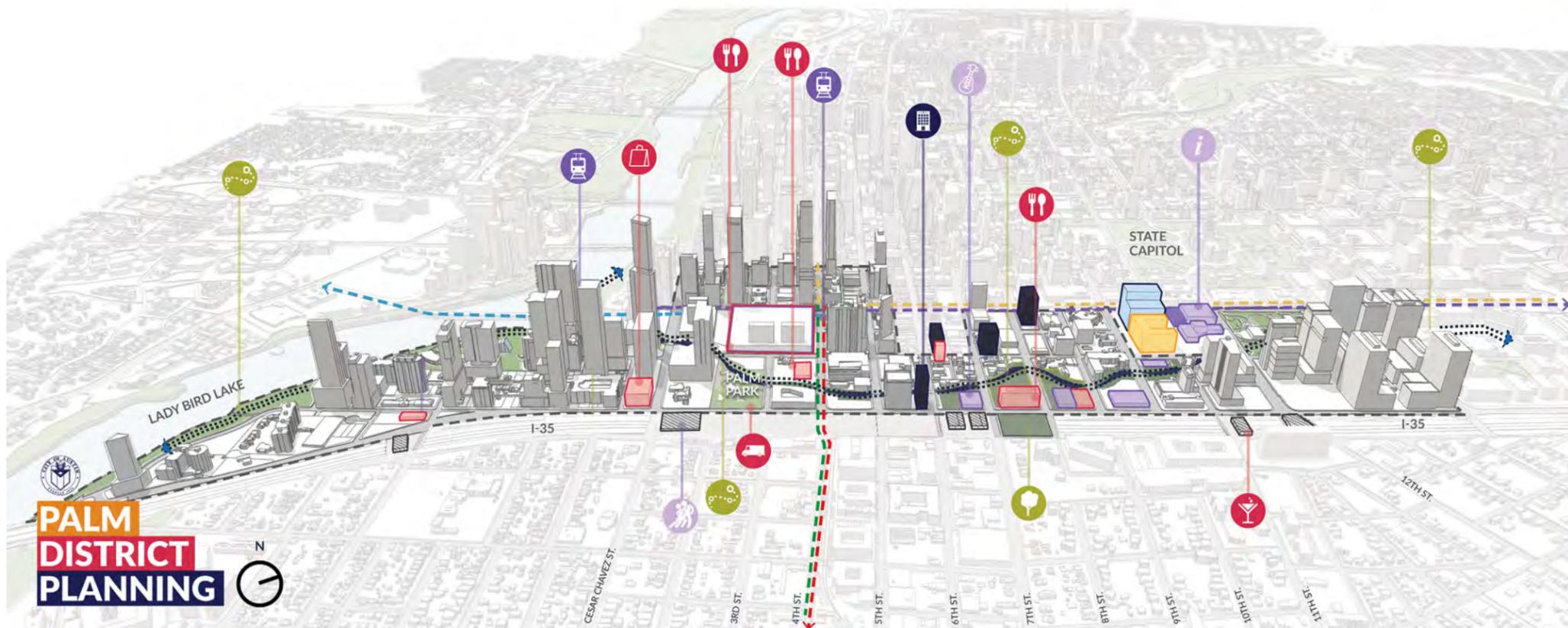
- Goods / Services**
  - Food / Restaurants
  - Bar/Pub
  - Food Truck / Street Vendors
  - Retail
  - Health Services
- Residential**
  - Low Income
  - Market Rate
  - Mixed Income
  - Hotel
- Office**
  - Class A Office
  - Artist Studio / Creative Office
  - Mixed Use
- Cultural**
  - Music Venue
  - Theatre
  - Visitors Center
- Open Space**
  - Park
  - Trail Connections
- Other**
  - Parking
  - Project Connect Stations
  - Streetcar Improvements

### Connectivity

- Streetcar
- Waterloo Greenway Trail
- Project Connect Blue Line
- Project Connect Red Line
- Project Connect Green Line
- Project Connect Purple Line
- Project Connect Gold Line

### Scenario Notes

- » The Play scenario maximizes greenspace in the area, spotlighting the influx of investment in Waterloo Greenway and making additional recommendations for programed open spaces, like skate parks and recreational play spaces for people of all ages and abilities.
- » The scenario proposes more small scale commercial, entertainment, and open space spaces on the I-35 Cap & Stitch to build E-W connection.
- » In support of new tourist and entertainment investment, bolstering the existing music and cultural assets in the area, the Play scenario also introduces two new hotels between 6th and 7th streets incorporating entertainment spaces.
- » This scenario also calls for the strategic re-purposing of existing government buildings between 10th and 11th streets to meet housing and office needs in the area.
- » The Play scenario envisions Palm District as a city-wide destination that celebrates the area's rich history through street-level intervention. Additional recommendations include expanding area-wide interpretive signage and creative placemaking that acknowledges the rich cultural heritage of the district.



\*\*Renderings are for illustrative purposes only; Cap and Stitch design to be developed as part of the Our Future 35 community process.

# PREFERRED SCENARIO

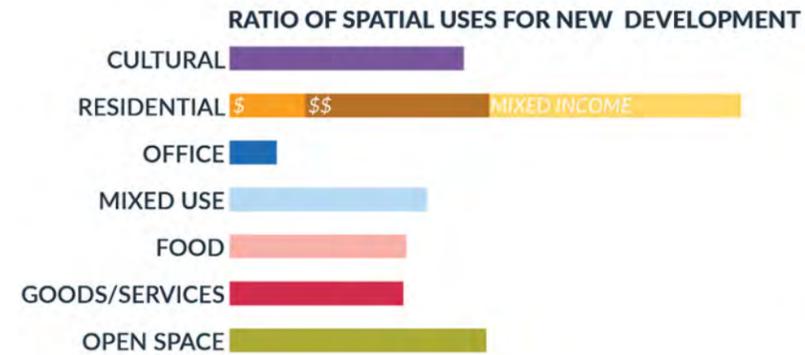
The Preferred Scenario builds on the Live, Work, Play scenarios. Through feedback via the online survey most respondents favored the Live scenario and emphasized a desire for more housing in the future growth of the Palm District. Taking advantage of density initiatives, this scenario significantly increases mixed income housing to support a more vibrant and diverse community.

The Preferred Scenario:

- Envisions the Palm District as thriving, 24-hour a day community.
- Prioritizes a strategic placement of goods and services, such as pharmacies, mixed-scale groceries, and eateries within a ten minute walk of residences.
- Prioritizes mixed use buildings with ground floor spaces for retail, entertainment, recreation, cultural activities, and services.
- Creates new work or practice spaces for the Palm District's creative and innovation industries by proposing strategic repurposing of existing government buildings between 10th and 11th streets.
- Supports new tourist and entertainment investments and bolsters existing live music and cultural spaces by introducing two new hotels with entertainment venues.
- Supports Project Connect and the Waterloo Greenway trail expansion by proposing a transit circulator along Red River, connecting riders to key locations like Waterloo Park, the Red River Cultural District, and the Mexican-American Cultural Center.
- Promotes the potential I-35 Cap & Stitch that could create opportunities to expand the Palm District's retail and commercial environment and create more open and green space to support the eastern edge of Downtown.

# PALM DISTRICT

Preferred Scenario



## LEGEND

### Goods / Services

- Food/ Restaurants
- Bar/Pub
- Food Truck/ Street Vendors
- Retail
- Health Services

### Residential

- Low Income
- Market Rate
- Mixed Income
- Hotel

### Office

- Artist Studio/ Creative Office
- Mixed Use w/ Office

### Cultural

- Music Venue
- Theatre
- Visitors Center

### Open Space

- Park
- Trail Connections

### Other

- Parking
- Project Connect Stations
- Streetcar Improvements

### Connectivity

- Dillo/Streetcar
- Waterloo Greenway Trail
- Project Connect Blue Line
- Project Connect Red Line
- Project Connect Green Line
- Project Connect Purple Line
- Project Connect Gold Line

## SCENARIO NOTES

-This scenario envisions Palm District as an area with all day activity, including a range of cultural and necessary elements required to thrive in the area.

-Taking advantage of density initiatives, this scenario significantly increases mixed income housing to support the building of a more vibrant and diverse community.

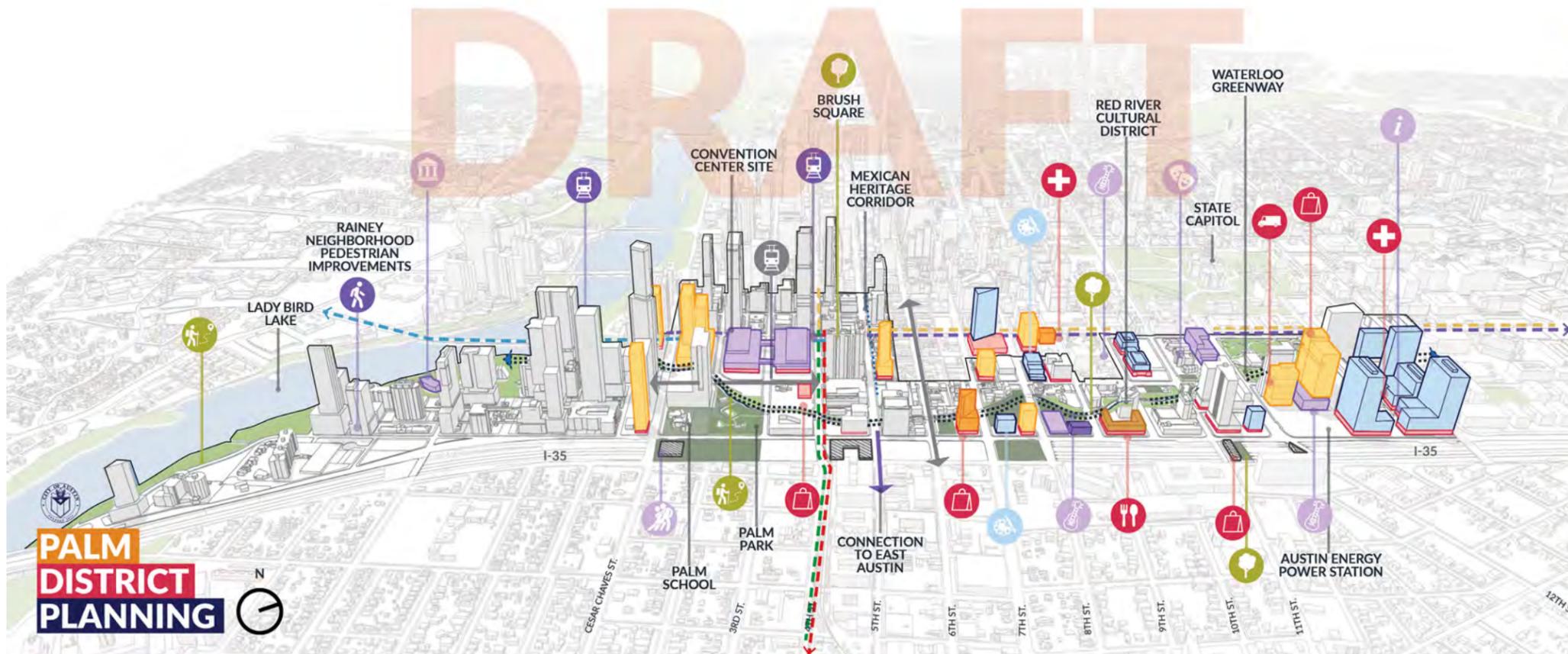
-It prioritizes a strategic placement of goods and services including pharmacies, mixed-scale groceries, and eateries within a ten minute walkshed of each other. This scenario prioritizes mixed use residential buildings with ground floor goods and services.

-This scenario also creates new work or practice spaces for Palm District's creative and innovative industries. It proposes the strategic repurposing of existing government buildings between 10th and 11th streets to meet housing and office needs in the area.

-In support of new tourist and entertainment investment, bolstering the existing music and cultural assets in the area, the scenario also introduces two new hotels and entertainment spaces.

In support of new Project Connect rail lines and the Waterloo Greenway trail expansion for bike and pedestrian connection, this scenario also proposes the use of a public transportation circulator to move residents along Red River and connect them to key cultural sites like Waterloo Park, the Red River Cultural District, and the Mexican American Cultural Center.

-Potential I-35 Cap & Stitch development can support in building more service provision for the growing resident population as well as providing additional greenspace.



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# IMPLEMENTATION

*PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT NOTE: As we move toward adoption of the plan later this year, staff will be continuing to work with implementation partners to add detail to the implementation section related to funding, sequencing, and governance. However, we can't implement this plan without YOU!-- we invite community members to provide feedback on the ideas that you have for moving toward the vision, desired outcomes, and preferred scenario presented by this Plan.*

Implementation of the Palm District Plan will require support from multiple public and private sector partners. While many of the recommendations identified build on work that is already underway, some of the longer term actions may require that additional funding or sponsors be identified.

## **Governance**

Implementation of the Plan will require on-going collaboration. There are several options for governance as this plan moves into the implementation phase:

### **Tier 1: COA Housing and Planning Department monitors and reports on implementation of the Plan.**

Under this option, Housing and Planning Department staff would monitor implementation of this plan (as we monitor implementation of other adopted small area plans) and would report on implementation at regular intervals over time. City Council or others could use implementation reporting to guide future decision making and policy guidance.

**Tier 2: Build on governance structures that already exist in the district.** Under this option, the City would partner with existing organizations to coordinate implementation of various aspects of the plan that are aligned with the missions of those organizations. For example, the City could partner with the ESB-MACC to coordinate across cultural entities in support of the cultural outcomes of the plan.

**Tier 3: Develop or identify a governing entity to serve as coordination lead.** Under this option, a governing entity would be established or identified that would provide robust governance for future implementation of the plan. Many community members, including the East Austin thought leaders interviewed by Martha Cotera, provided input that new governing entity should be created to coordinate implementation of various aspects of the plan, in particular the enhancements to cultural assets that would be needed to implement the plan. However, there may also be existing governing entities that could step into this role.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

This section includes a list of concrete actions that the City and others should take to move toward the desired outcomes identified in this Plan. In some cases one action may help to move closer to multiple desired outcomes. These actions have been identified through the planning process by agency, organizational, and community stakeholders. The actions are intended to be feasible, and in many cases are already moving forward as part of one or more ongoing initiatives in the district.

## **Sponsors:**

Austin Convention Center  
Capital City Innovation  
Downtown Austin Alliance  
ECHO  
Homeless Strategy Office  
Preservation Austin  
Travis County  
Waterloo Greenway Conservancy  
AE - Austin Energy  
AHC - Austin History Center  
ATD - Austin Transportation Department  
APD - Austin Police Department  
AW - Austin Water Department  
CPO - Corridor Program Office  
DSD - Development Services Department  
EDD - Economic Development Department  
FSD - Financial Services Department - Real Estate  
HPD - Housing and Planning Department  
OoS - Office of Sustainability  
PARD - Parks and Recreation Department  
TxDOT - Texas Department of Transportation  
WPD - Watershed Protection Department

# UNDERWAY

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
NTR_6	Implement the Waller Creek Master Plan to transform Waller Creek into a restorative and welcoming place for all Austin residents and out-of-town visitors.	Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, PARD	Nature
CLTR_2	Expand opportunities for cultural space in the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) expansion.	PARD	Culture
CLTR_4	Complete Heritage Wayfinding Program ensuring it is bilingual and accessible to diverse visitors and that it honors the history of Palm District's diverse communities	EDD	Culture
IG_7	Ensure that people experiencing homelessness have the opportunity to access to shelter and a continuum of care.	ECHO, Homeless Strategy Office	Inclusive Growth
IG_15	Ensure Live Music Fund Guidelines are promoted to Mexican-American and Black musicians and assist with access to City funding for local acts	EDD	Inclusive Growth
IG_18	Continue to fund Iconic Venue Fund	EDD	Inclusive Growth

# 1-3 YEARS

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
CLTR_3	Create opportunities for cultural spaces to locate at the expanded Convention Center , Innovation District, and the Palm School site and through the redesign of Palm Park.	Convention Center, Capital City Innovation, Travis County, FSD-Real Estate, PARD,	Culture
CLTR_5	Incorporate cultural uses and programming into the Palm School site in addition to site restoration.	Travis County	Culture
CLTR_7	Ensure I-35 Cap & Stitch alternatives incorporate cultural uses that provide space for diverse communities	CPO, PARD	Culture
CLTR_8	Implement the Heritage Wayfinding for African American Cultural Heritage District and include points of interest such as Freedman Communities found within and near the Palm District.	EDD	Culture
CLTR_11	Create opportunities for the implementaion of the 5th Street Mexican-American Heritage Corridor and larger Mexican-American Cultural District.	EDD	Culture
IG_1	Incentivize new development to include ground floor retail spaces to provide opportunities for: local-serving goods, services, entertainment, and cultural spaces to foster complete communities in the Palm District.	HPD	Inclusive Growth
IG_2	Incentivize new development to positively contribute to the public realm such as improved streetscape designs, public art, and pedestrian-oriented design for the ground floor spaces.	HPD	Inclusive Growth
IG_3	Promote/incentivize denser, mixed-income housing.	HPD	Inclusive Growth

# 1-3 YEARS

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
IG_8	Improve street lighting throughout Palm District.	APD, AE	Inclusive Growth
IG_9	Develop policies and programming to support small business development and retention for existing businesses and those locating in ground-floor retail spaces.	EDD	Inclusive Growth
IG_10	Ensure that the redevelopment and expansion of the Neal Kocurek Memorial Convention Center results in a world-class facility with a more open design that repairs the surrounding public realm.	Convention Center, HPD, ATD	Inclusive Growth
IG_13	Identify opportunities to develop publicly subsidized housing that can be made available to historically displaced residents.	HPD	Inclusive Growth
IG_14	Using the development regulations proposed in the Waller Creek Master Plan as a baseline, engage community stakeholders to develop code amendments that meet the intent of the Waller Creek Master Plan and the goals and desired outcomes of the Palm District Plan.	HPD	Inclusive Growth
IG_16	Include public and open spaces in the redesign of the Austin Convention Center and enhance connectivity through the site.	Convention Center	Inclusive Growth
IG_19	Create a public engagement strategy to solicit wide-ranging community input from residents, property owners, business owners, intuitions, and Austin's design community during the design process to ensure that the Convention Center's redesign is pedestrian-friendly and reflects the broader community's values.	Convention Center	Inclusive Growth

# 1-3 YEARS

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
IG_21	Create policies and opportunities to preserve music venues in the Red River Cultural District	EDD	Inclusive Growth
NTR_3	Partner with area property owners to locate and construct an additional district cooling facility in the Palm District as redevelopment occurs in order to support expansion of the downtown district cooling network.	AE	Nature
NTR_7	Engage the community, including people with historic connection to Palm Park, to regain its status as a community gathering place which provides recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities.	Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, PARD	Nature
NTR_10	Implement Phase Two of the Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, the Confluence, to help restore the ecological health of Waller Creek and Lady Bird Lake.	Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, PARD	Nature

# 3-5 YEARS

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
CNCT_10	Identify opportunities to improve mobility and circulation along East 6th Street through Austin Core Transportation Plan.	ATD, APD	Connection
CNCT_2	Create a pedestrian-friendly environment with connections linking the Palm District's northern and southern attractions to the Downtown Station.	ATD	Connection
CNCT_3	Create safe and easy-to-use bicycle connections linking the Palm District's many attractions to the Downtown Station.	ATD, ATP	Connection
CNCT_4	Remove pedestrian mobility barriers and create better connections to the Convention Center from the other parts of the Palm District and the rest of Downtown.	Convention Center, ATD	Connection
CNCT_5	Create safe, accessible, and welcoming north-south pedestrian and bicycling connections along the Waterloo Greenway Conservancy from Lady Bird Lake and Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail to Waterloo Park linking all of the Palm District's many amenities.	ATD, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy	Connection
CNCT_6	Develop safe and accessible east-west connections to and across the Waterloo Greenway Conservancy.	ATD, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy	Connection
CNCT_7	Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections across East Cesar Chavez Avenue.	ATD	Connection
CNCT_8	Improve pedestrian circulation within the Rainey Street National Historical Register District.	ATD	Connection

# 3-5 YEARS

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
CLTR_10	Recognize the history of the people who lived, went to school, and worked in the Palm District through the strategic placement of interpretive and commemorative installations.	EDD, Austin History Center	Culture
IG_11	Promote, recruit, program the reimagined Neal Kocurek Memorial Convention Center to become a significant economic driver for the Austin and Central Texas economy.	Convention Center	Inclusive Growth
IG_12	Incorporate elements into the development and programming of the Innovation District spaces such as educational pathways for underrepresented students, promotion of health and wellness, and inclusive arts initiatives that support diversity, equity, and inclusion.	Capital City Innovation, Downtown Austin Alliance	Inclusive Growth
NTR_5	Expand reclaimed water network to support additional portions of Palm District as redevelopment occurs.	AW	Nature
NTR_8	Improve the pedestrian experience throughout the Palm District by the introduction of street trees.	HPD, ATD	Nature

# 5-10 YEARS

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
CNCT_12	Use the opportunities created by the redesign and reconstruction of I-35 to create better and more welcoming connections between East Austin and Downtown.	ATD, CPO, TXDOT	Connection
CNCT_13	The frontage roads along the redesigned and reconstructed I-35 should function as lower speed boulevards.	ATD, CPO, TXDOT	Connection
CNCT_14	Improve pedestrian and bicyclist mobility throughout the Palm District by creating and improving north-south and east-west connections to include wider, shaded activated sidewalks and continuous, dedicated bike lanes.	ATD, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy	Connection
IG_20	New development along the redesigned and reconstructed I-35 frontage roads should create a welcoming pedestrian environment.	ATD, CPO, TXDOT	Inclusive Growth

# ONGOING/LONG-TERM

#	Recommendation	Sponsor (s)	Theme/Outcomes
CNCT_9	Improve vehicular circulation within the Rainey Street national Historical Register District.	ATD	Connection
CLTR_6	Ensure cultural and public spaces encourage programming to include Tejano, Latino, and Mexican American arts and music.	PARD, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, Convention Center	Culture
CLTR_9	Preserve historic sites in the district.	HPD, Preservation Austin	Culture
IG_4	Leverage publicly-owned sites for affordable and mixed-income housing. See IG_13 in 1-3 Year table for additional housing goal.	Travis County, Office of Real Estate, APD, HPD	Inclusive Growth
IG_5	Incentivize greater levels of affordable housing in the Palm District.	HPD	Inclusive Growth
IG_6	Incentivize the preservation of existing affordable housing in the Palm District.	HPD	Inclusive Growth
NTR_11	Enhance the sustainability of the district by using standards of nationally recognized rating systems such as the Sustainable SITES Initiative for site development.	Sustainability, HPD, DSD, AE, WPD, AW	Nature
NTR_2	Promote the design and programming of the Palm District's parks to be family-friendly.	PARD, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy	Nature

# LOOKING FORWARD

The Palm District, the eastern edge of Downtown Austin, is experiencing and will continue to experience transformative change through the remainder of this decade and into the next. In no other place in our city will there likely be the concentrated investments in infrastructure, parks, cultural facilities, and public and private development. The Palm District Plan should be used as a guide for that transformation in order to ensure that as the district changes it grows into a truly special place where the past is honored, culture is celebrated, and the future is shaped.

The plan's adoption is only the first step in moving toward its Vision. There are two important steps still needed to codify the guidance provided by this Plan. The first is to amend the *Downtown Austin Plan* to incorporate the changes created by the Palm District Plan reconcile those or discrepancies established by its adoption. The second is to implement parts of the Palm District Plan by initiating code amendments to the [Land Development Code](#).

In addition, the plan will be implemented through multiple significant initiatives that are underway in the district, and the City will work with its partners to ensure that the guidance provided by the plan informs these initiatives, including:

- The redesign and reconstruction of IH 35 and the [My 35 Program](#)
- The redesign and reconstruction of the Neal Kocurek Memorial Austin Convention Center
- Continued development of parks and trails as part of the Waterloo Greenway
- Travis County-led work to identify a future plan for the [Palm School site](#)
- The ongoing work of the Economic Development Department, Red River Cultural District, ESB-MACC and others to support the vitality and health of the creative ecosystem and the live music industry
- The implementation of the Project Connect Transit Improvements
- The re-imagining of East 6th Street being undertaken by property owners and partners
- The future re-imagining and redevelopment of the Austin Police Department's Headquarters site by the City in coordination with Waterloo Greenway
- Continued implementation of improvements throughout the Innovation District and its interface and integration with Red River Cultural District

Together, Austin can create a district where the past is honored, culture is celebrated, and the future is shaped.