

MASS AVE *NEXT*

Land Use Workshop

AUGUST 12TH, 2026



...what's next?

Intro + Outline

1

Where We Are in Process

Discovery is complete — Opportunity I.D. is underway

2

Engagement Recap

Engagement and existing conditions in brief

3

Emerging Key Themes

Four themes arising from the issues we heard and measured

4

Land Use Framework

5

Activity!

Milestones through the final report, and where DMD can plug in



6

months into a
12-month plan

*Final report:
Dec 2026*

DRAFT

Study Area

Mass Ave Cultural Arts District →



Strategic Framework

Where We Are in Process



Since our July check-in: Phase I deliverables closed out, five focus groups completed (June–July), and Phase II framework structure defined. Today's update previews the themes and site-level work now taking shape.

Phase I Recap

What We Did — Engagement + Analysis

100+

check-ins at the “Map Your Mass” kickoff at Bottleworks

200+

geocoded comments on the 8’ corridor map + phone booth

7 Pop Ups

Coffee with a planner series, individual events

5

focus groups held June–July across the district’s core topics

Focus group topics:

Arts & Culture

Built Environment

Safety & Security

Placemaking & Identity

Mobility & Connectivity

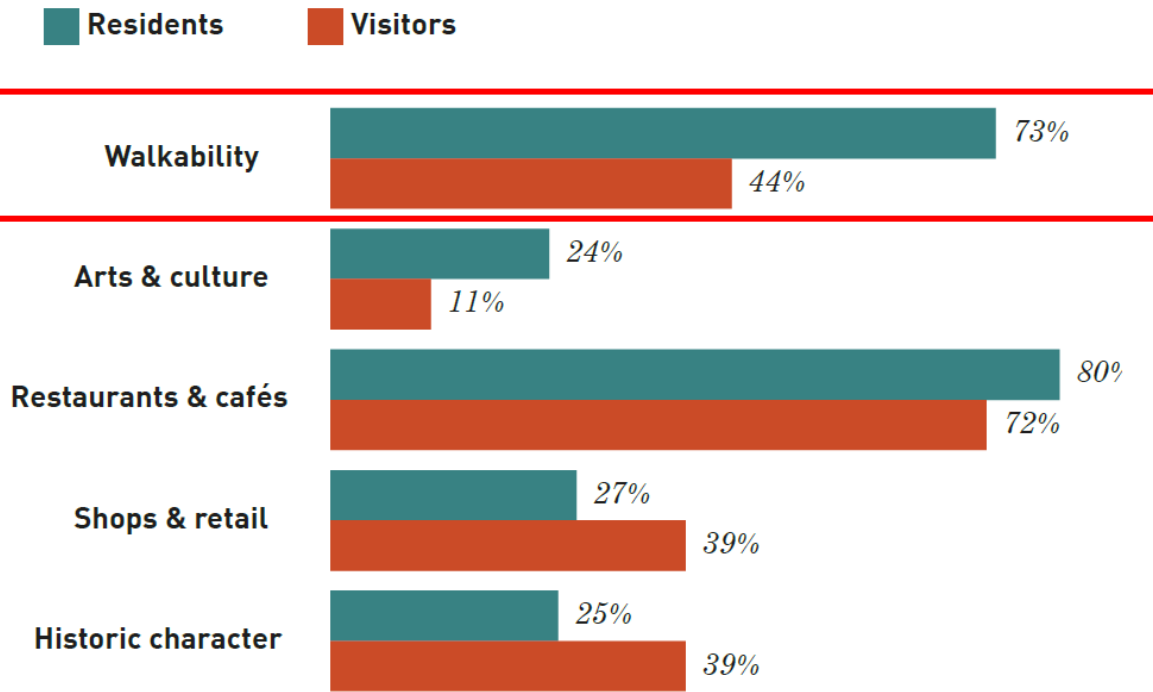


Phase I Recap

The district already feels walkable and full of dining options to visitors – not as much to residents.

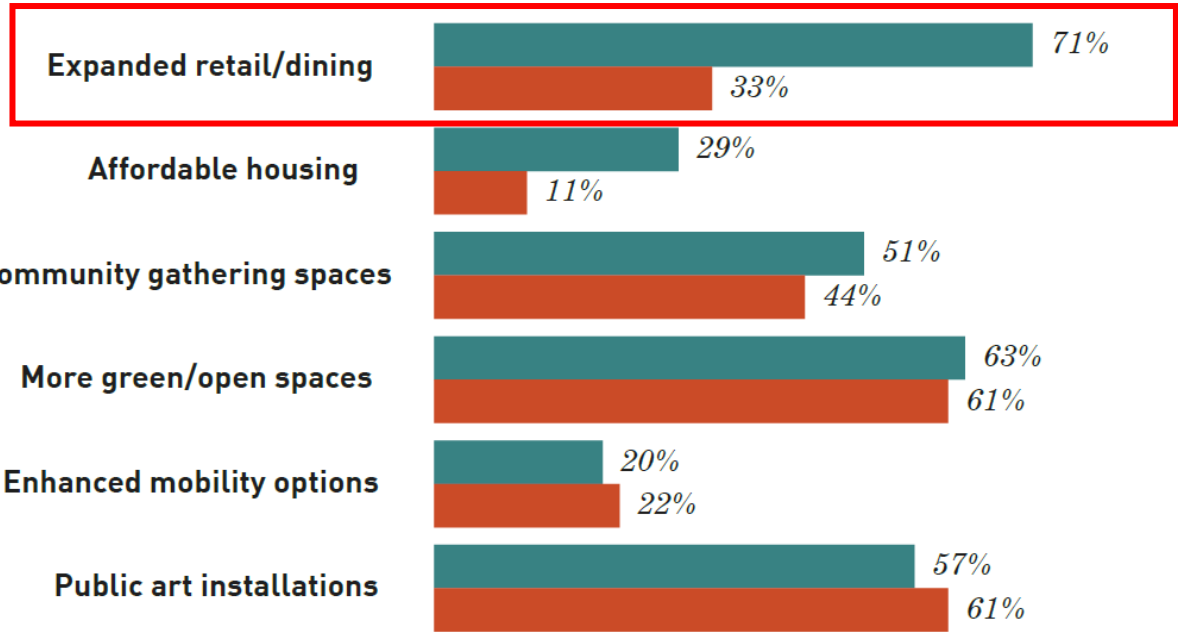
Visitor vs. Resident Breakdown (What People Love)

83 respondents, self-selected, choose-all-that-apply.



Visitor vs. Resident Breakdown (What People Want)

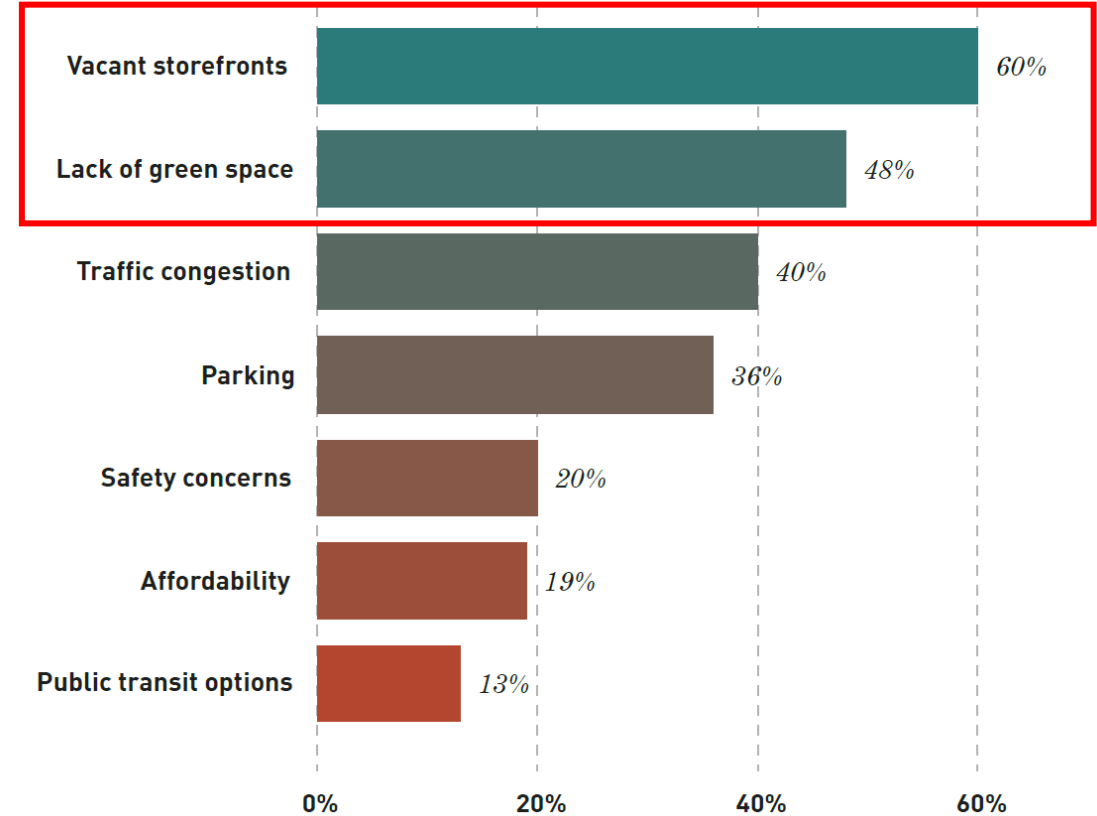
83 respondents, self-selected, choose-all-that-apply.



Phase I Recap

Biggest Challenges on Mass Ave (by mention)

83 respondents, self-selected, choose-all-that-apply.



Vacant storefronts and lack of green space were the two most cited concerns across the board.

Community Comments

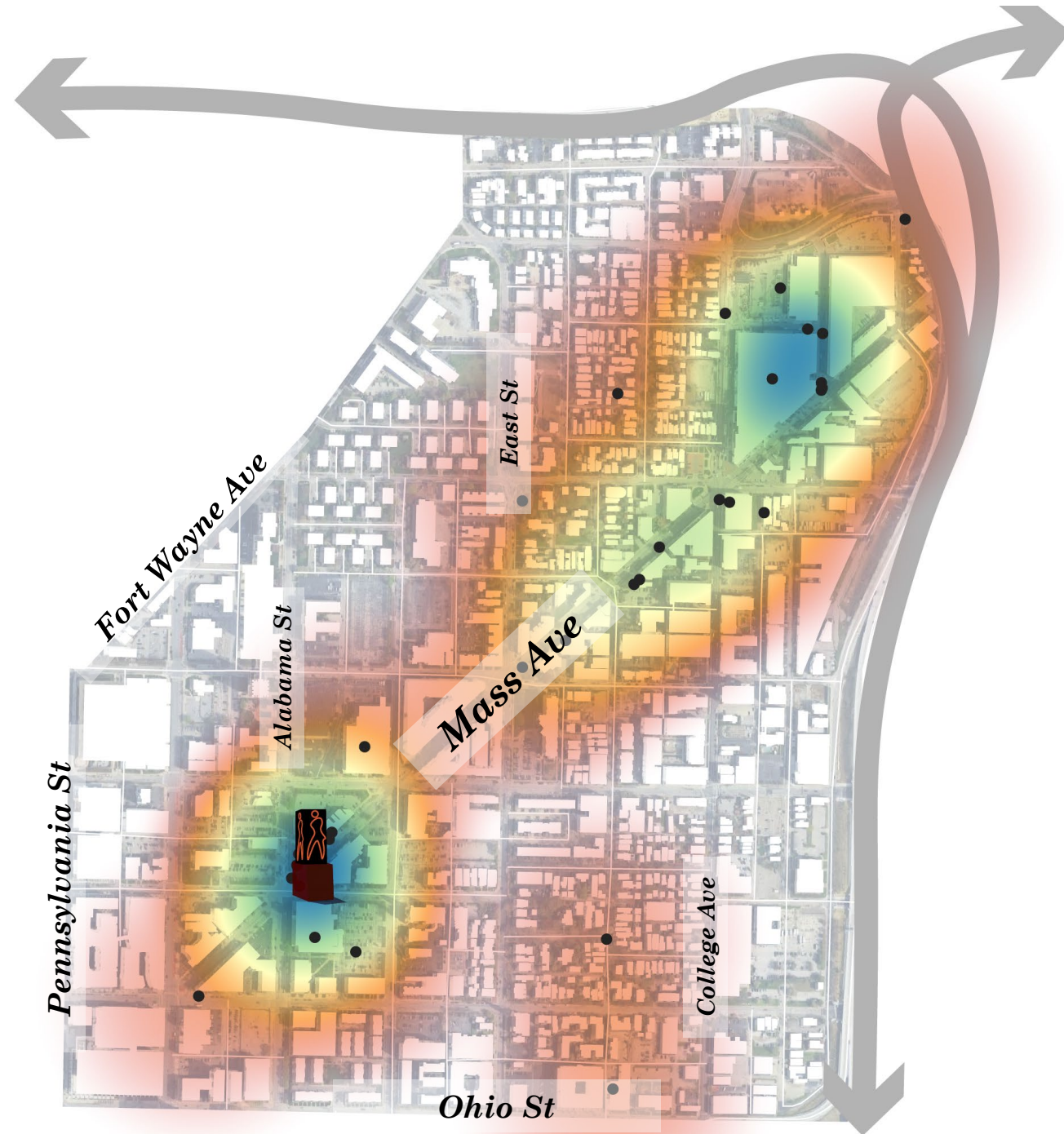


Community Comments



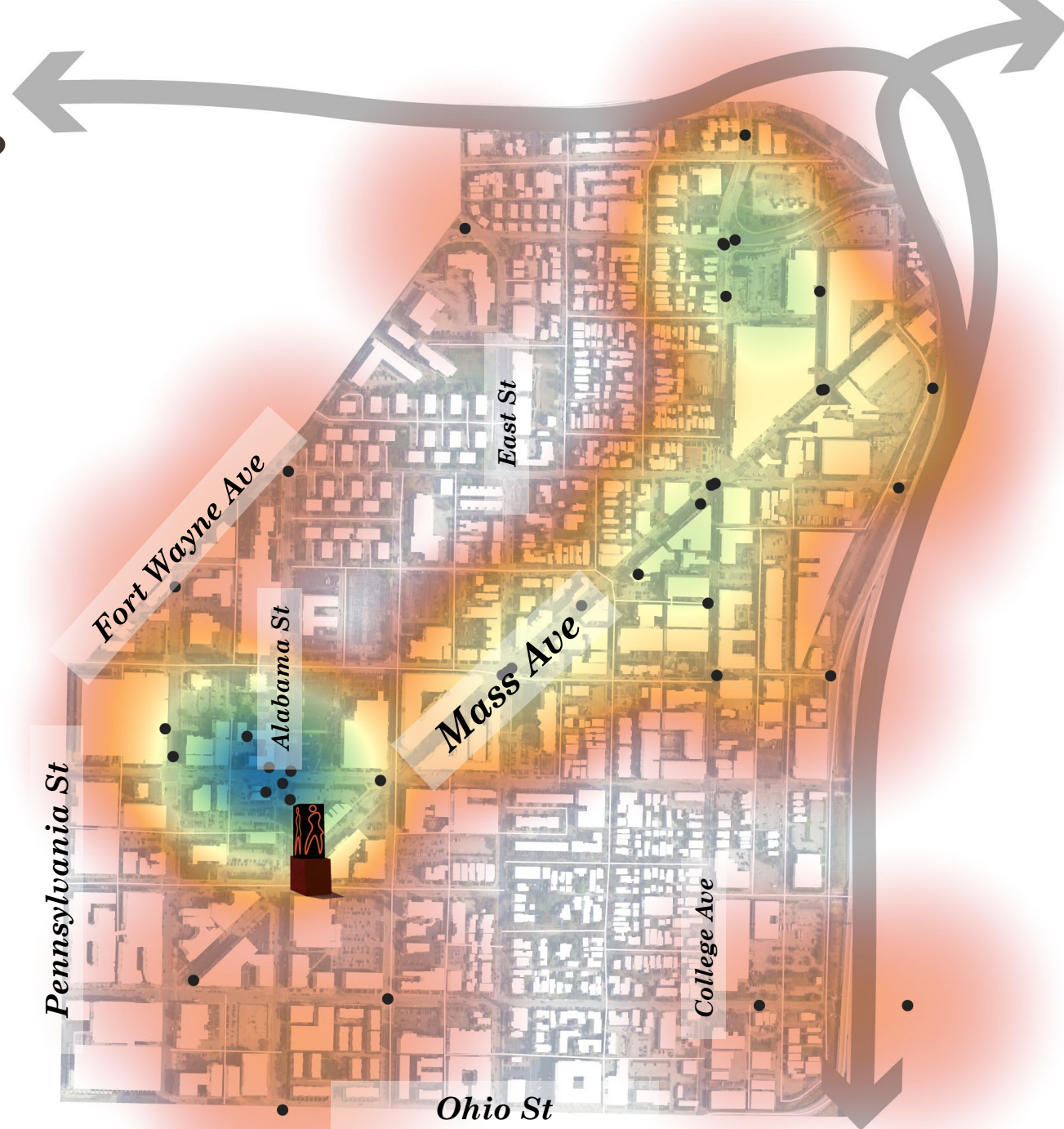
What Places Do You Value Today?

**The 300 and 800 blocks create a
dumbbell of interest in the
district.**



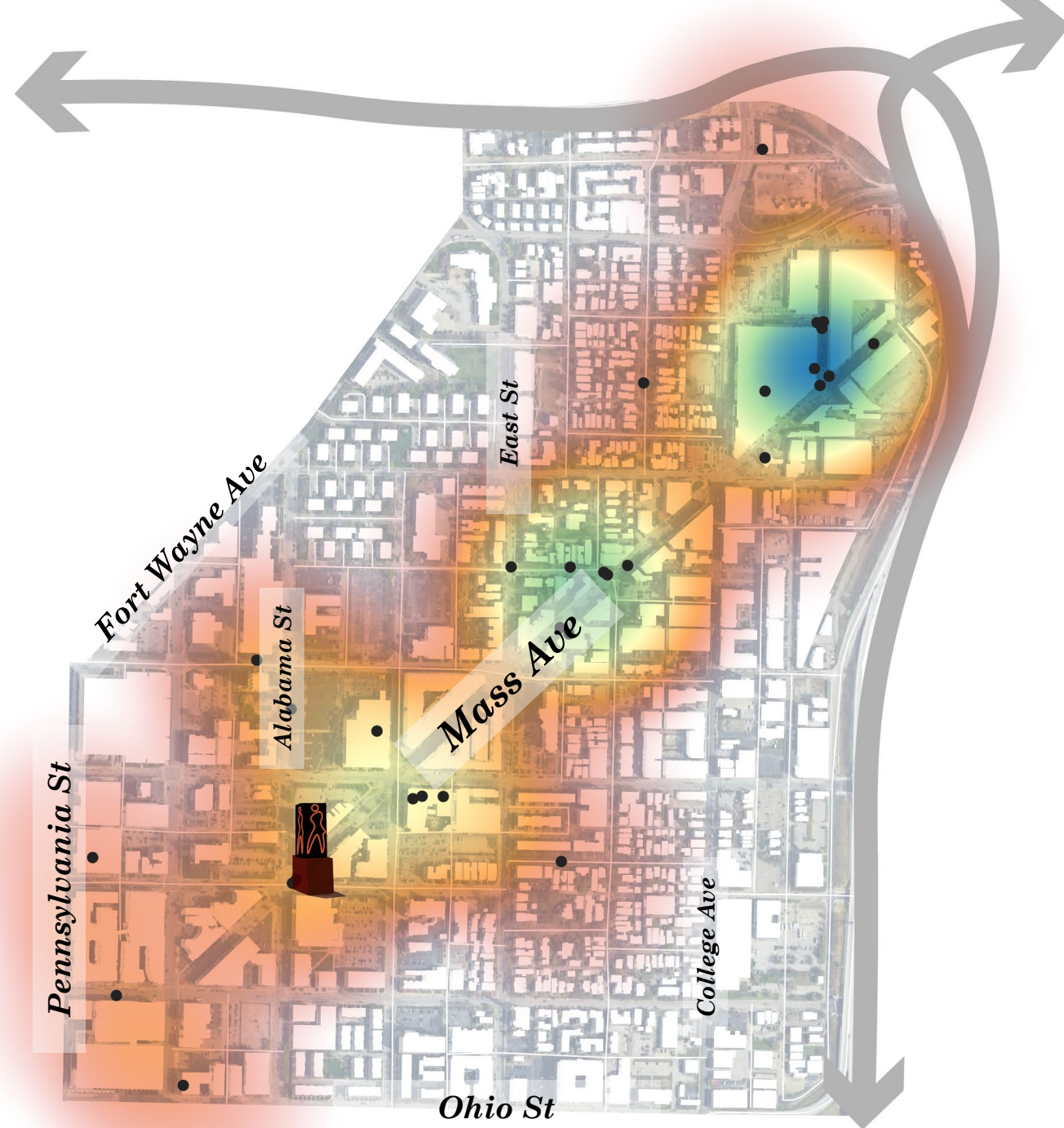
Where Do You Experience Discomfort?

The Marathon station and surrounding shelters come up as a red flag for visitors.



Where Do You Feel Comfortable?

**Comfort is felt in Bottleworks
and the 600 block.**



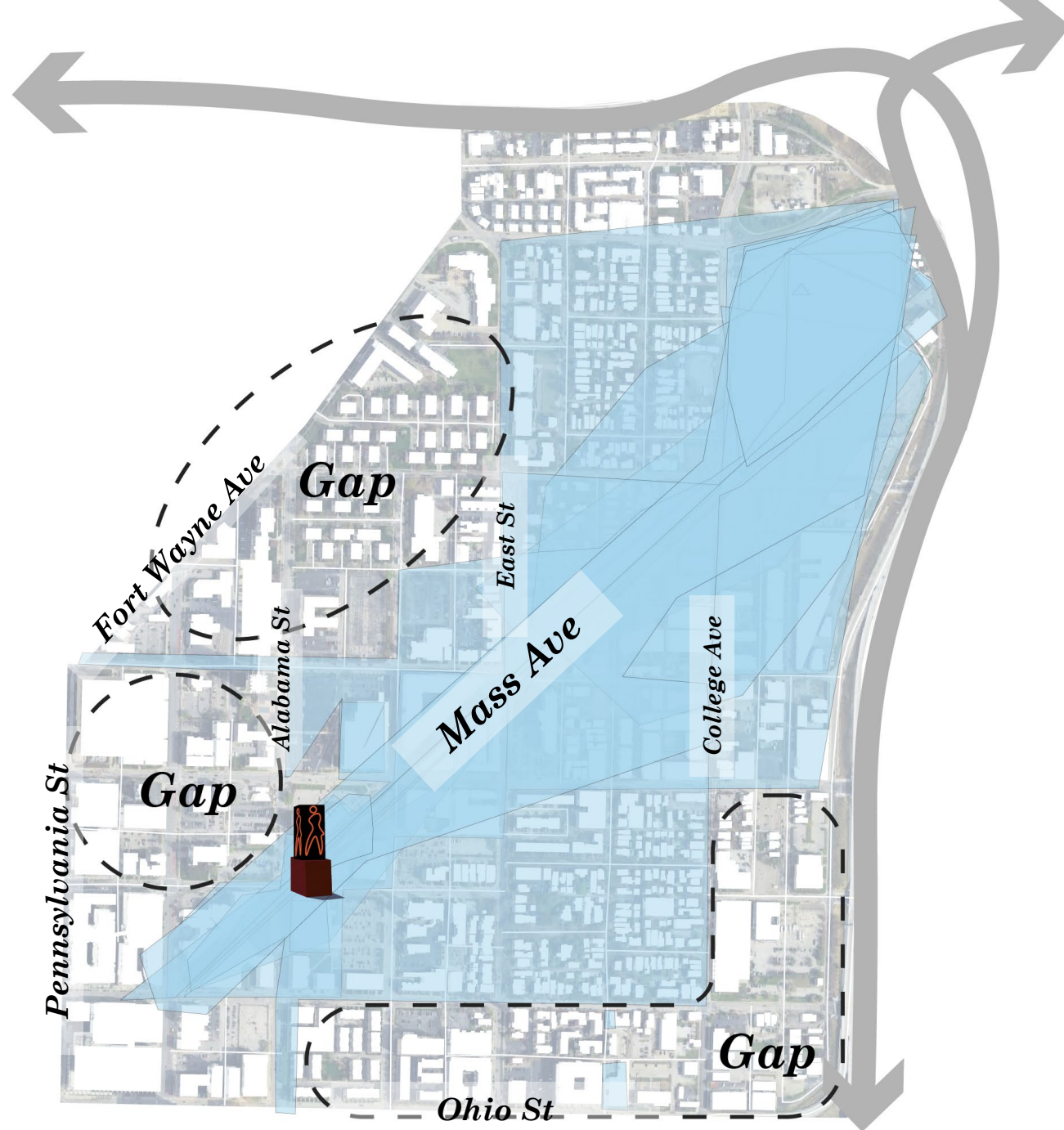
Where Do You Move Between?

There are large gaps in activity nodes along the Cultural Trail south of the Ave and north of the trail.



Where Do You Spend Time?

There is a large gap of where people hang out on the northwest edge and southern edge of the district.



Where Mass Ave is Missing Something?

Respondents commonly referred to Fort Wayne Ave as an opportunity spot.



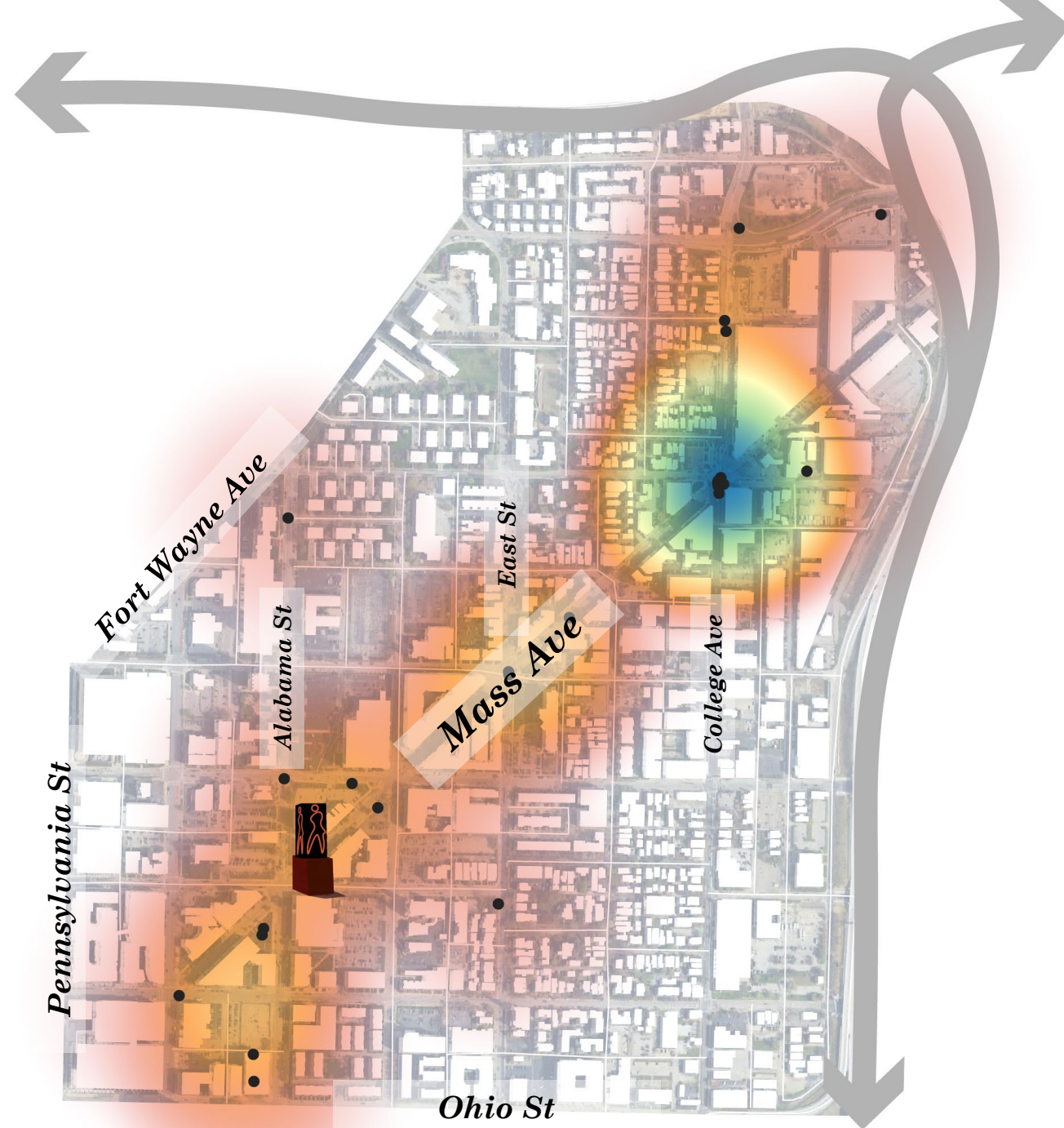
Where the District Should Change?

**The Marathon, Roberts Park,
and Salvation Army area
garnered most attention for
change.**



Where You Would Like to See Improvements?

The six-way intersections and the southern end of the Ave garnered attention, with College/Mass intersection getting the most.



Phase I Recap

What We Learned — Headline Findings



The brand is larger than the experience

Arts & culture ranks last in what people love today, yet public art is the #2 most-wanted addition. **The gap between reputation and lived experience is the plan's central tension.**



Ownership is concentrated; land is underworked

Top-10 owners control ~35% of district assessed value. Parking, vacant, and industrial parcels hold ~17% of land but under 3% of value — the district's largest untapped asset.



The district is bifurcating

Mile Square side lost population (–15%, 2020–24) while Bottleworks side grew (+19%). Recommendations must respond to both stories, not the corridor average.



Residents and visitors want different futures

60% of residents want a vibrant neighborhood, not a destination. Growth has been nearly all rental, single-person households — QoL investment is the retention lever.

Getting to “Emerging Principles”

Going back to the origin of Cultural Districts in 2003

WHAT IS A CULTURAL DISTRICT?

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF INDIANAPOLIS [Browse](#)

a collaborator. The Corsaro Group, RKR Associates, Three Sixty Group, and other experts finished off the group of strategic partners.

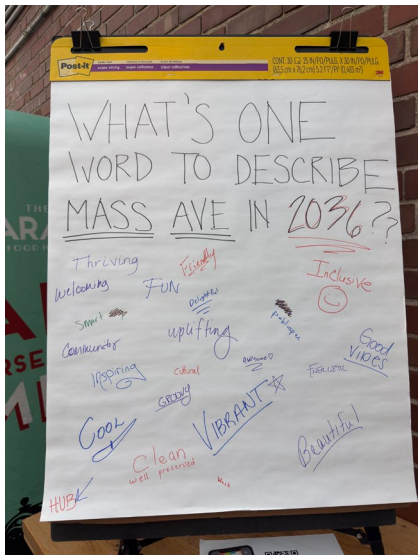
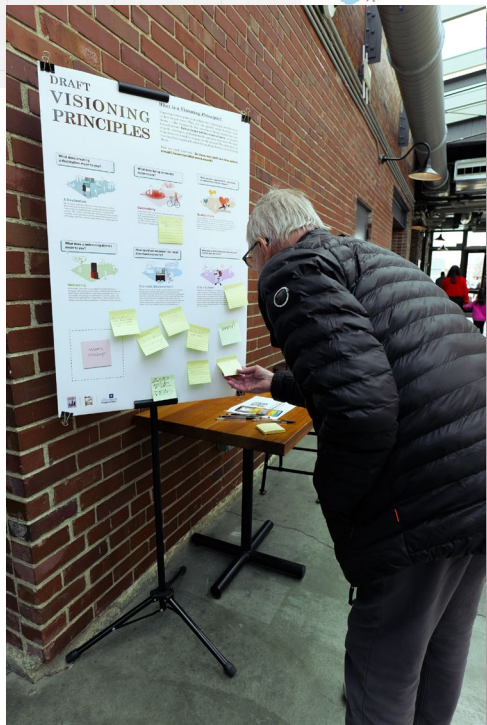
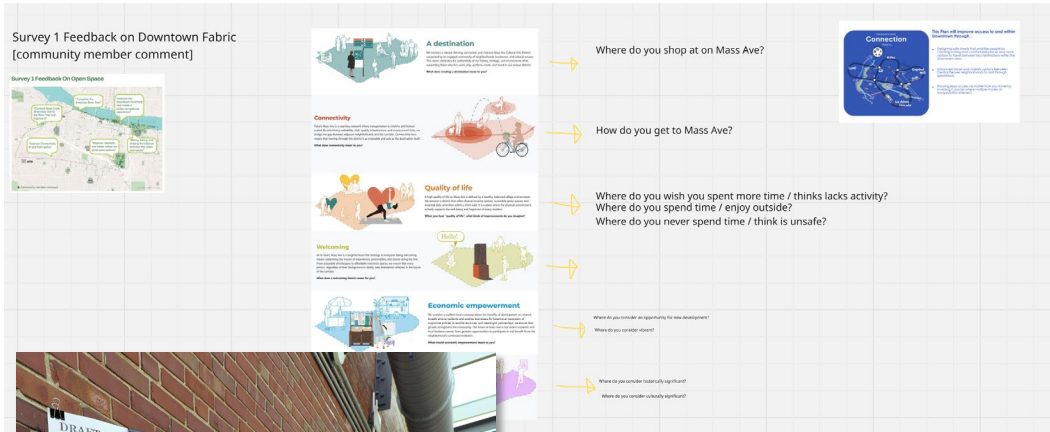
Over the course of five years, the group agreed on the fundamental effort to “strengthen Indianapolis and Central Indiana as a unique destination to attract new visitors by facilitating the growth of “cultural districts” or hubs which offer a critical mass of cultural activities.” The team designed and implemented a pilot program to develop cultural district criteria and a self-nominating process to select prospective districts in Indianapolis. A neighborhood’s designation as a cultural district hinged on whether it had and supported a cultural, business, or neighborhood association; offered a critical mass of cultural and hospitality events; attracted a critical mass of visitors; maintained a business hub; walked a walkable boundary; and had a critical mass of cultural and hospitality assets.

Each district received vital advice to ensure adherence to a cultural district plan with benchmarks to measure success, IDI and its partners worked with each district’s lead organization, cultural and hospitality partners, stakeholders, and neighbors. Each cultural district was required to inventory its cultural and hospitality assets, determine its strengths and weaknesses, assess how to develop culturally, and evaluate marketing priorities. The consulting team also applied for a Cultural Tourism grant focusing on one or more key priorities.



Synthesizing Themes from Community Input

People: Public Engagement



Working phone allowed folks to leave messages to "Mass Ave's future"



Comments were left on a scaled 8' long map of the Ave!



200+
Geocoded
Comments



100+
Check-ins



Neighbors got to write their thoughts on draft visioning principles

Draft Visioning Principles

MASS AVE IS...

A Destination

Delineate + celebrate the Ave; more patios, live music, local business

Connected

Safer intersections, Monon extension, better links under the highway

Livable

More trees, greenspace over empty parking, more residential

Empowered

Fill retail, infill over land banking, neighborhood-serving business

A Cultural Hub

Streets as stages; restore + maintain public art; widen the Cultural Trail

Welcoming

Third spaces for kids, senior housing, watch rising rents

Each principle is paired with a geocoded comment map on the project hub — community input is spatially anchored, not anecdotal.

Emerging Key Themes

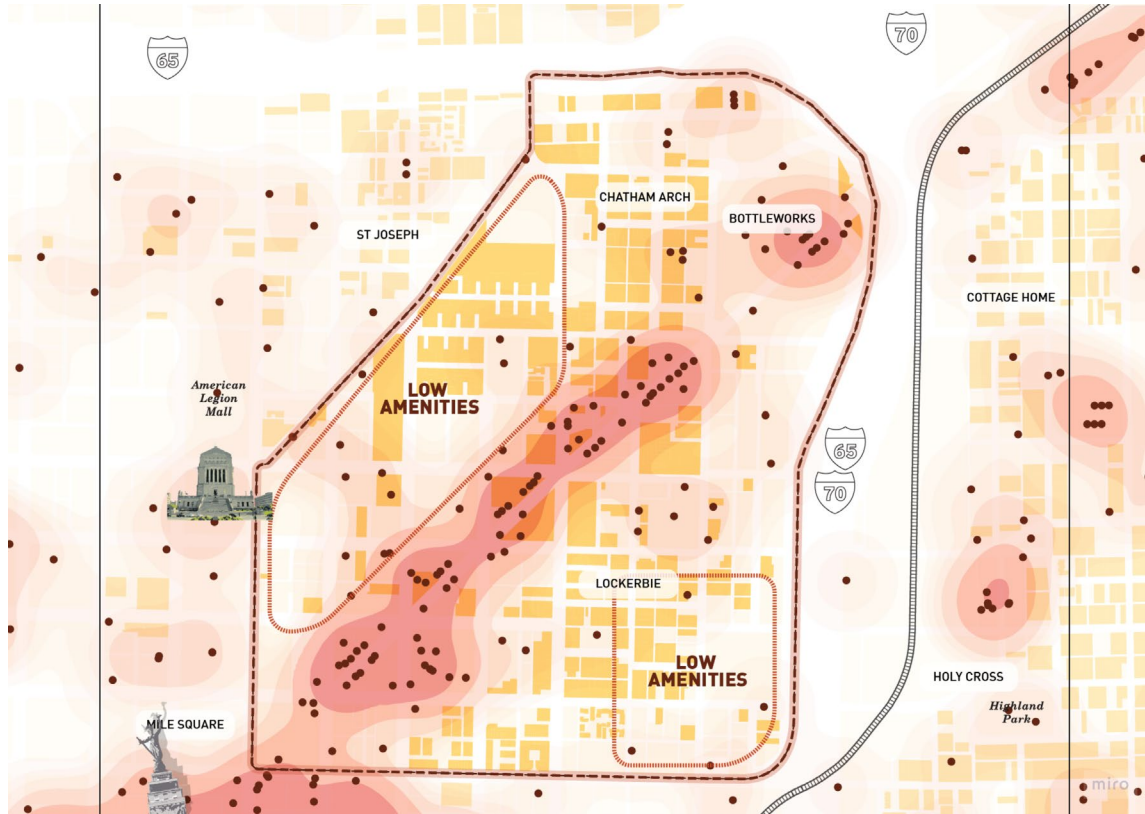
Level-Setting

From Issues → Themes

Four key themes are emerging from what the community told us and what the data confirmed. They will organize the vision, the frameworks, and the recommendations that follow.

Phase II Frameworks

Challenges Become Opportunity



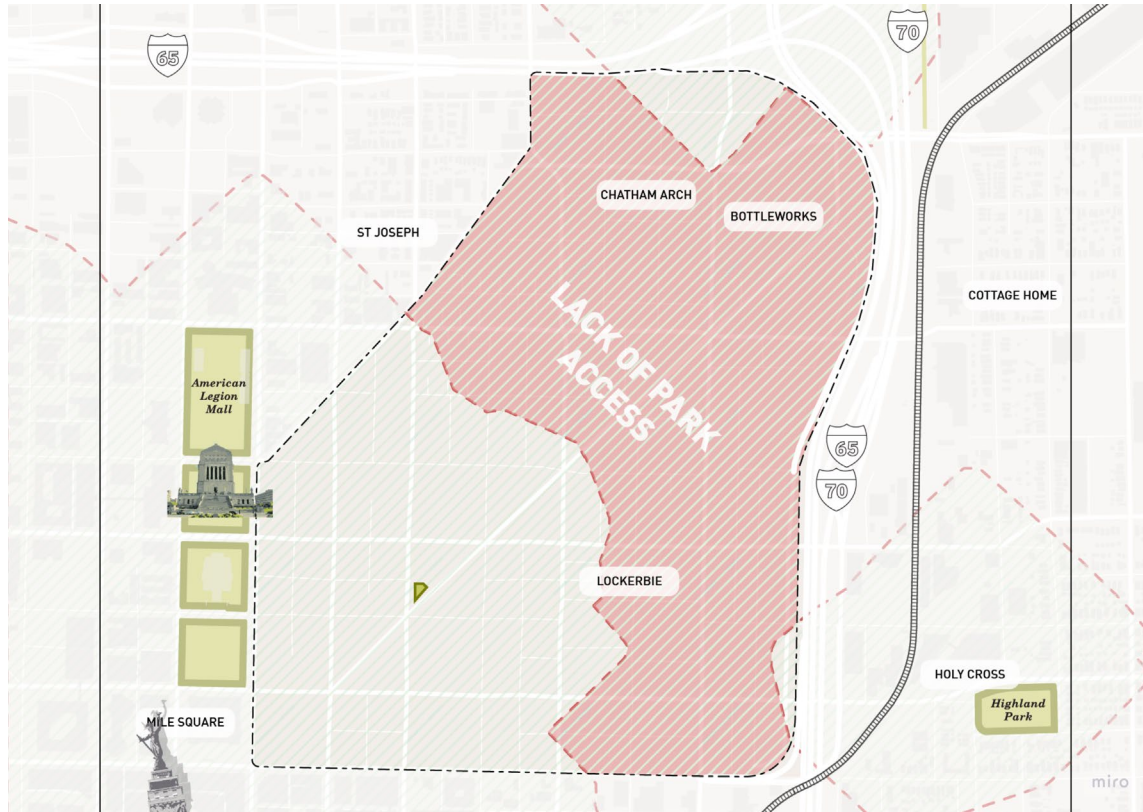
Inconsistent Investment >>> Activate Market



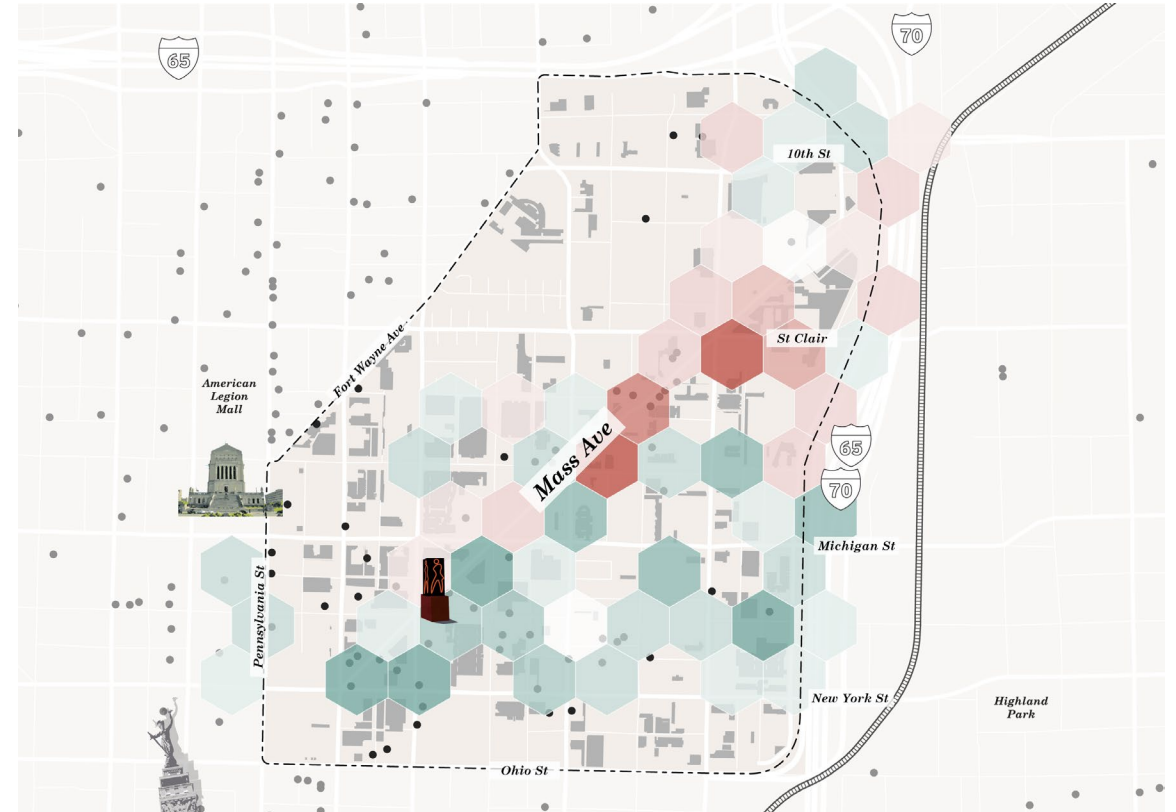
Barriers to Connect >>> Better Connection

Phase II Frameworks

How the Themes Become Site-Specific



Lack of Recreation >>> Create Play



Experience ≠ Brand >>> Develop Public Realm

Phase II Frameworks

Frameworks follow the ABCs

Inconsistent Investment >>> **Activate Market**

Barriers to Connect >>> **Better Connection**

Lack of Recreation >>> **Create Play**

Experience ≠ Brand >>> **Develop Public Realm**

Emerging Frameworks

Level-Setting

What is a district framework?

An urban design framework organizes key challenges into actionable scenarios and strategies guided by a unifying idea (e.g. “Land Use” or “Mobility”).

Place Frameworks

How the Themes Become Site-Specific

Land Use

Infill, housing mix, and ground-floor activation — targeting the parcels where value-per-acre lags the district.

Connections

Intersections, trails, and links under the highway — making movement through the district as good as the destination.

Open Space

Greenspace, third places, and the public realm — converting underused land into the commons residents asked for.

Arts + Experience

Cultural folkways and the places that produce it, public art and programming, understanding where existing activity occurs and where future opportunity lay

4-6 concepts per framework. Each pairs a real site with a design move, fiscal-productivity math, and the policy tools that can fund it.

Place Frameworks

➤ ***Land Use***

Connectivity

Open Space

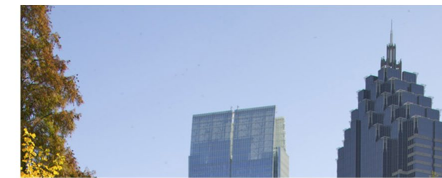
Arts & Experience



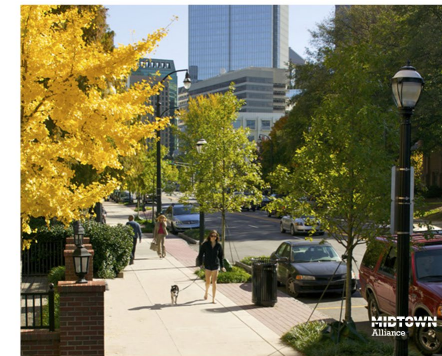
Land Use

Design and policy targets:

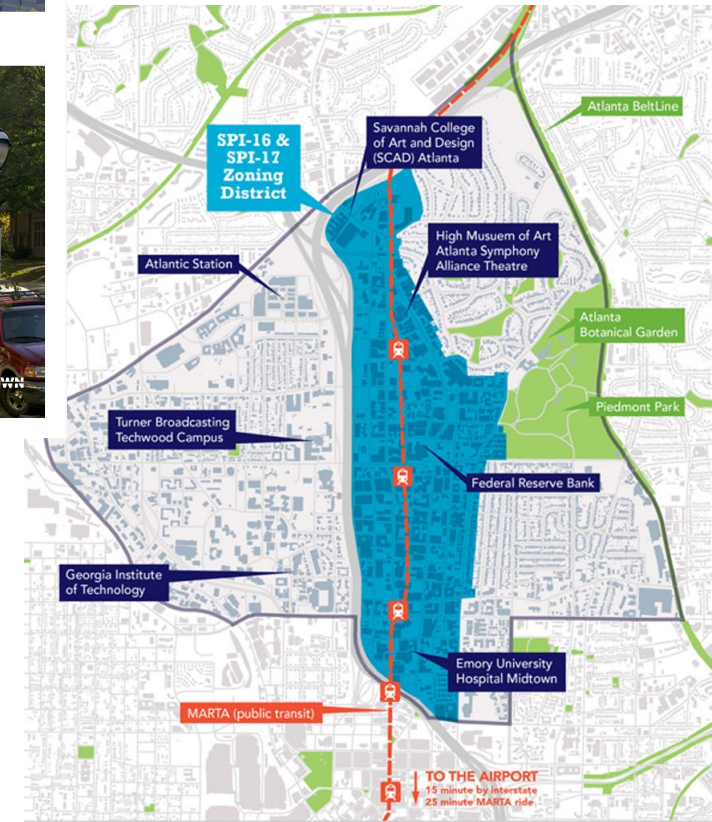
- Preserve integrity of existing neighborhoods with infill housing (refer to Marion County Infill Housing Guidelines)
 - Enable dense, mixed-use development and shared parking
 - Require pedestrian-oriented development practices
 - Ensure appropriate height, use, and density transitions to established neighborhoods
- Providing land use strategies to help sustain and ensure long-term health of Mass Ave Cultural Arts District
- Understand how community benefits could be derived from new development in the district



Midtown Owner's Manual
A GUIDE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT



MIDTOWN
Atlanta



Phase II Frameworks

Land Use

What opportunities exist to maximize land use in and around the district? What do those sites and strategies look like?



Land Use

**23% of the district
has a FAR under 0.5**

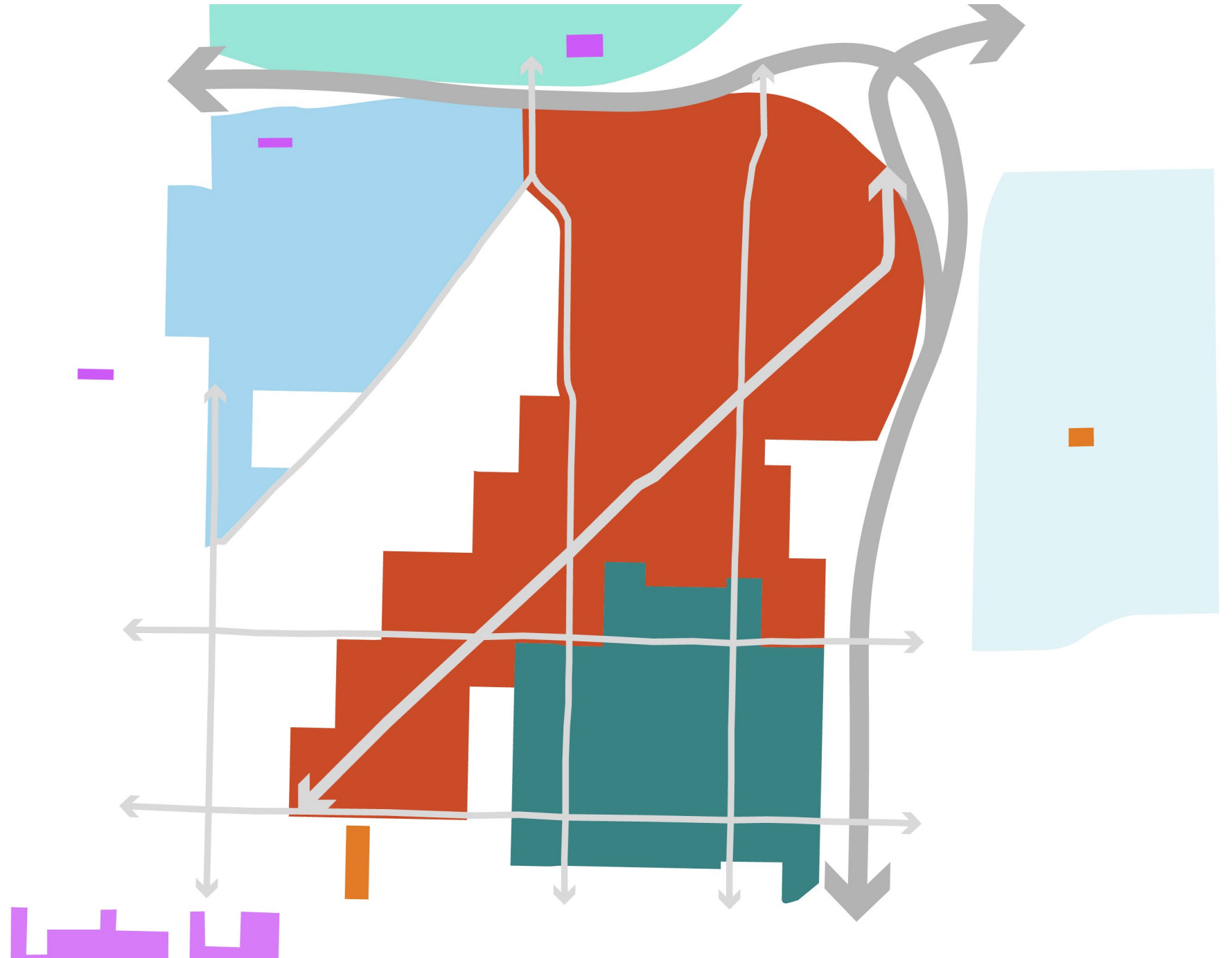


Land Use

**10% of the district
is parking**

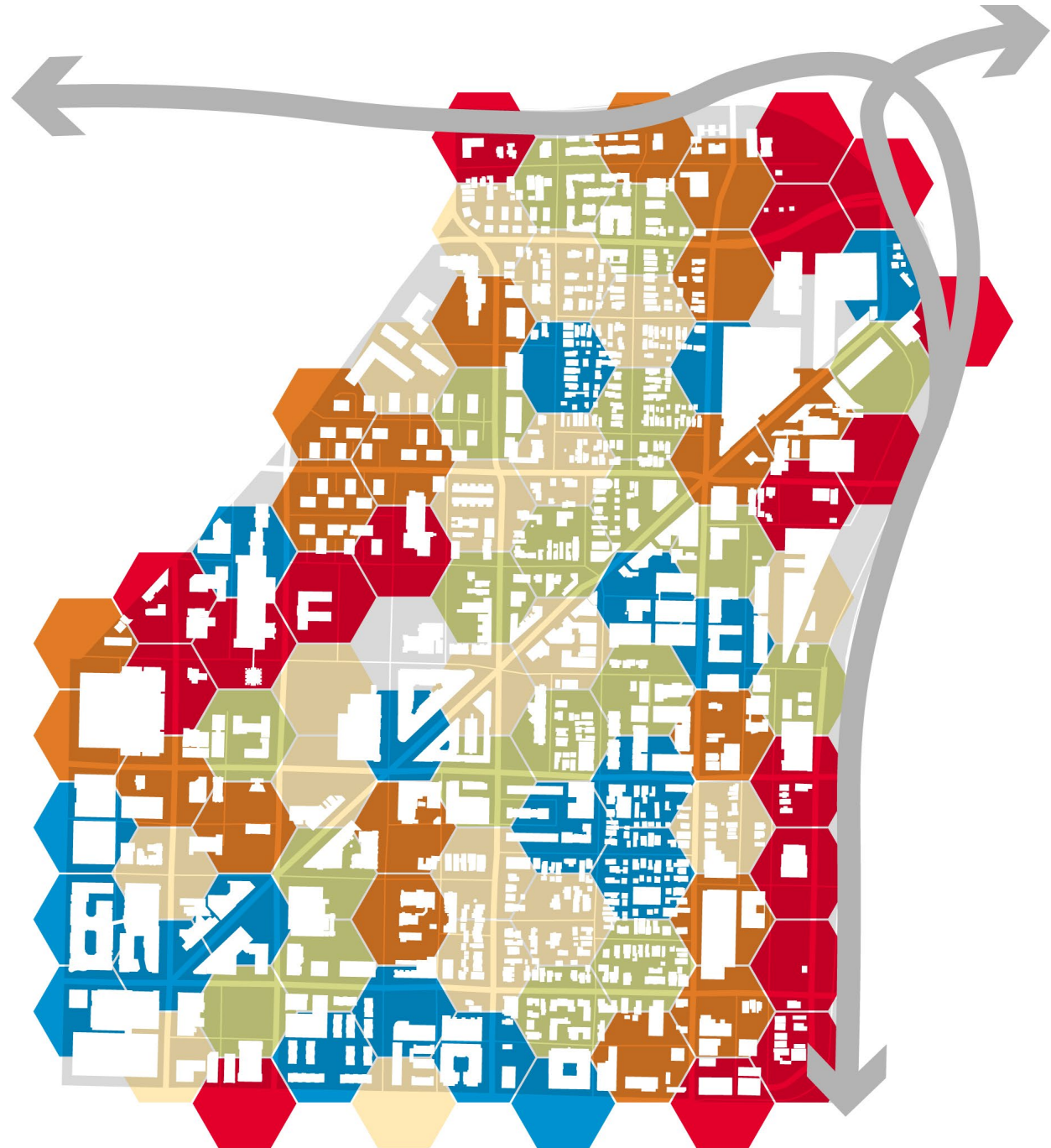


**70% of the district
is historically
protected**



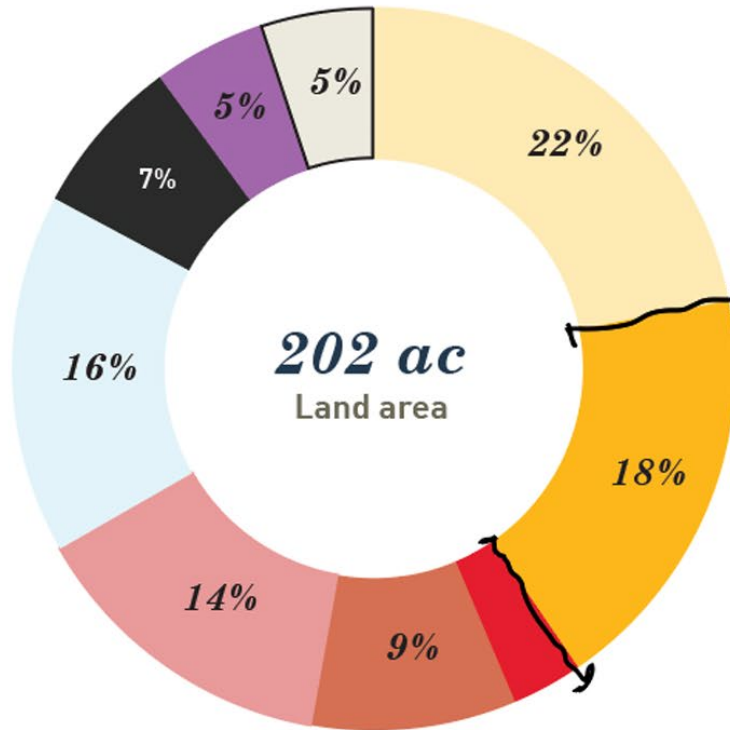
Land Use

**Fiscal productivity
index of the district
reinforces survey
results**

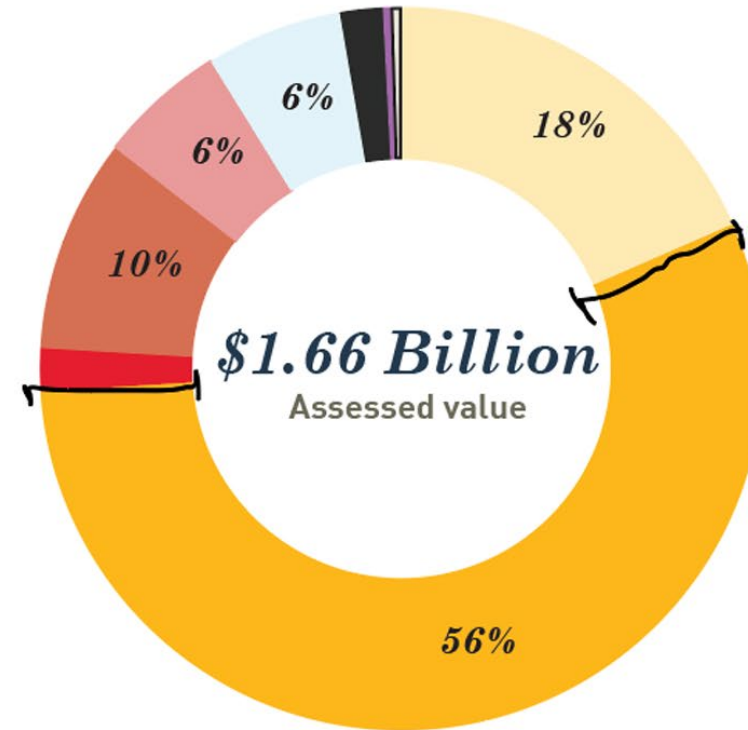




Land Area



Assessed Value



Residential — House / 2-3 Family
Residential — Multifamily / Condo

Commercial — Office
Commercial — Other

Parking
Industrial

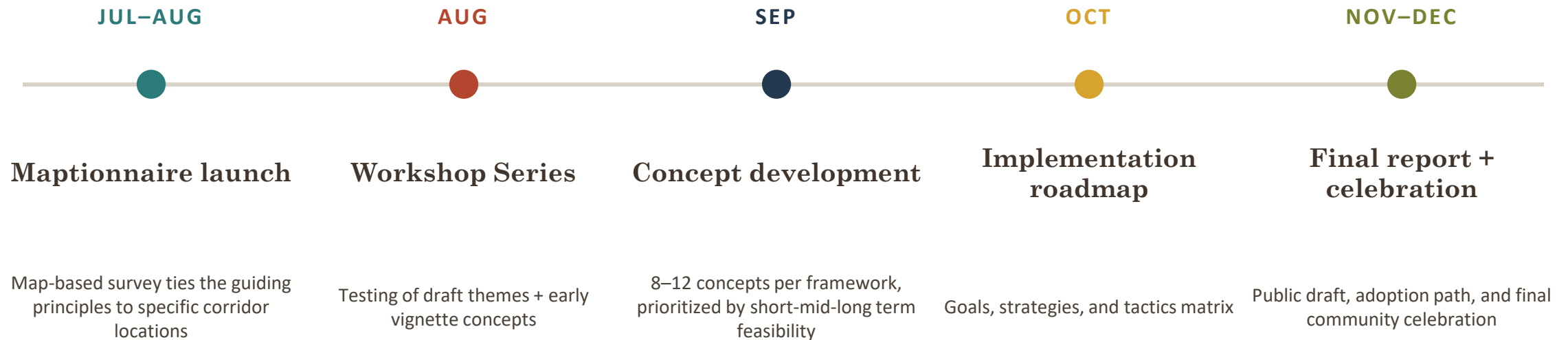
**Multifamily residential
contains just 18% of the land
but 56% of the value**

Your Turn!

Next Steps

What's Next

July – December 2026



Ask of DMD + DPW: early coordination on right-of-way and intersection projects (College Ave safety work as precedent), and input on the policy alignment matrix before it goes to the board.

Mark your Calendar!

Upcoming Workshops

Connectivity - Tuesday, August 18, 3:30 PM



Mass Ave Next Vision Plan

Land Use Workshop 8/12/2026

Thank you!

next.massaveindy.org

...what's next?