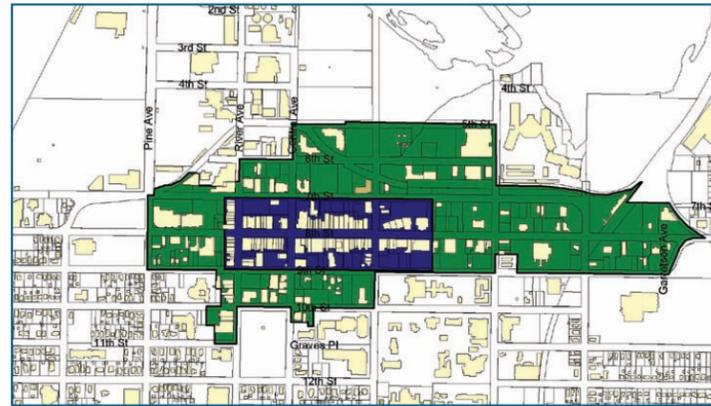


SHARPENING THE VISION

PART TWO

City Master Plan
Land Use, Zoning and District
Mapping Updates
for
Downtown Holland, Michigan
October 2007



- East 8th Historic Dis
- National Register an
Historic District
- Washington Blvd Hi
- Holland Historic Dis
- Individual Listings on
National Register
- Other Historically +/o
Architecturally Import

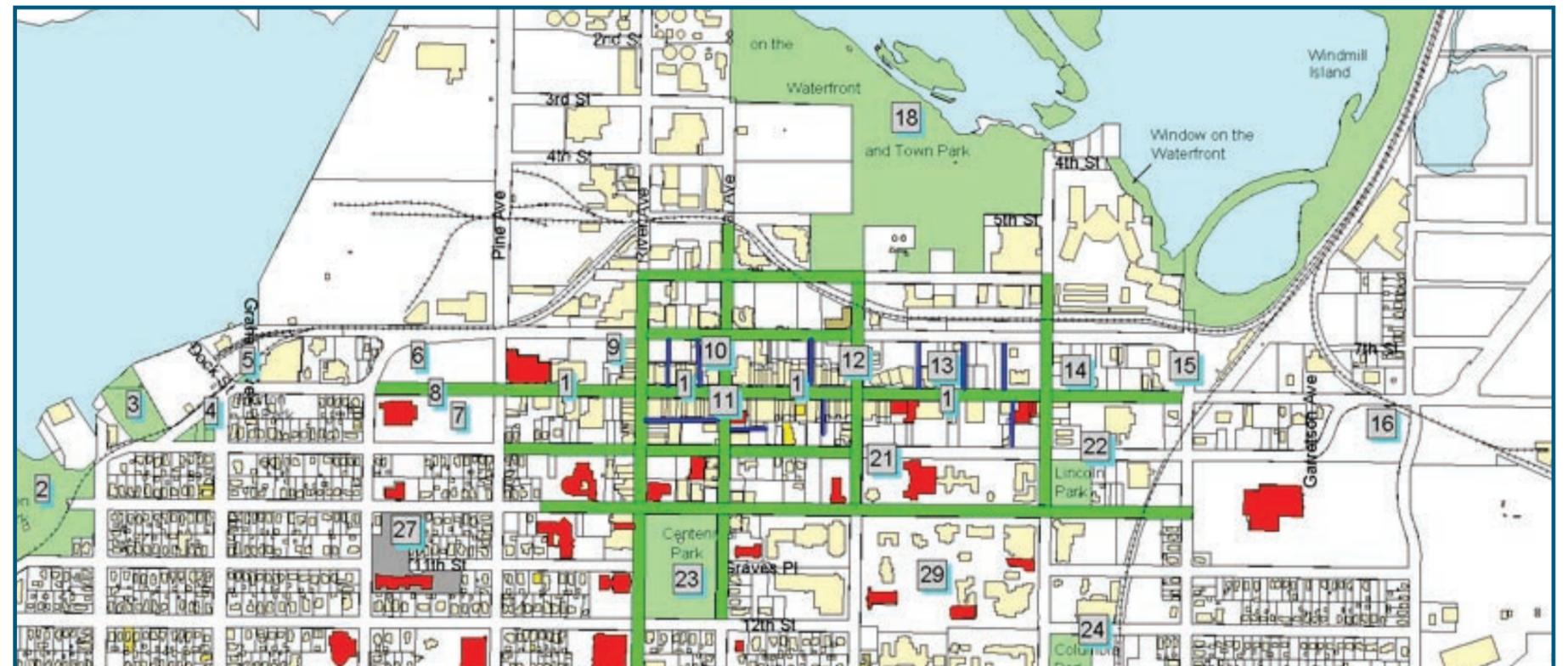
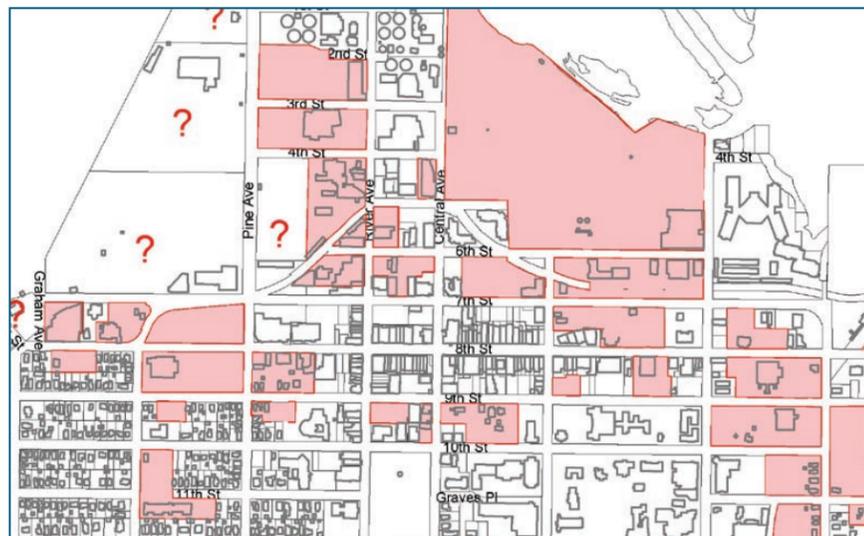
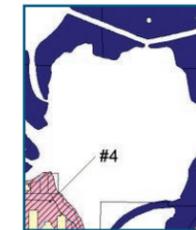
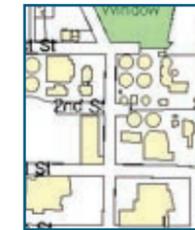


TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	page 2
KEY CONSIDERATIONS	page 3
Heritage, Culture and Historic Resources	
Gathering Places and Connecting Paths	
Getting Around	
Sustainability	
LAND USE PLAN	page 11
Existing Land Use	
Properties Susceptible to Change	
Recommended Land Use Plan Changes	
PROPOSED ZONING MODIFICATIONS	page 13
C-3 Boundary Adjustments	
Changes in C-3 Dimensional Requirements	
Changes in C-3 Downtown Parking Requirements	
MANAGEMENT ISSUES	page 18
Downtown Development Authority District	
Principal Shopping District	

MAPS

1. Historic and Cultural Resources	page 5
2. Gathering Places and Key Connecting Paths	page 6
3. Getting Around	page 7
4. Areas Susceptible to Change	page 10
5. Existing Downtown Land Use Plan	page 11
6. Recommended Changes to Downtown Land Use Plan	page 12
7. Existing Downtown Zoning	page 16
8. Potential Changes to Downtown Zoning	page 17
9. Downtown Development Authority District Boundary	page 19
10. Existing Principal Shopping District Assessment Boundaries	page 20
11. Potential Principal Shopping District Assessment Boundaries	page 21



INTRODUCTION

PART 1 of Sharpening the Vision outlines an update to the 1995 Downtown Strategic Plan, a comprehensive statement of intentions, vision, and opportunities for Downtown. This is a strategic framework combining policy and programmatic initiatives with significant future public and private projects and activities. This is also a work program for Downtown public and private individuals, businesses, and organizations that will assure that pursuit of the visionary program is on track and implemented. These endeavors will build on the successful projects achieved in Downtown Holland before 1995, and the success achieved since the original publication of “Broadening the Vision: A Strategic Plan for Downtown Holland” in 1995. These successes continue to make Downtown one of the most outstanding and distinctive small urban centers in America.

PART 2 of Sharpening the Vision focuses on a few key areas where public land use policy and public attention and promotion can provide incentive and facilitate the various public and private initiatives identified in Part 1. When combined with the Visioning and Identification of Themes and Unifying Elements (the Framework) described throughout Part 1, Part 2 also fulfills the City responsibility for presenting and adopting a Master Plan for the Downtown area, consistent with Michigan Public Act 285, as amended, covering Municipal Planning.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the broad themes that speak to the diversity of uses, activities, and programs and provide special character to Downtown, that is-

Downtown Holland as...

A Place to Be, to Experience, to Engage...

A Place for Family and Youth...

A Place to Live...

A Place of Culture, History, and Growing Diversity...

A Place to Shop, to Dine, and to Be Entertained...

A Place to Work...

A Place to Invest...

A Place of Environmental, Economic, and Social Sustainability...

Attention should be paid to the balance of these activities and associated improvements that collectively define one's experience in the Downtown. It is this balance, within the Framework described in Part 1, that establishes the heart of the Land Use Plan as further described below. A few additional areas of consideration deserve brief focus and assist in rounding out the scope of the Land Use Plan and Master Plan Update herein described.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND HISTORIC RESOURCES.

Downtown is an active and fascinating environment in part because it has evolved over a period exceeding 150 years. Both obvious and subtle reminders of the evolution of the Downtown and, indeed, the entire community can be found as one walks about the sidewalks, streets and open spaces. In addition to the often noted Holland historic neighborhoods that flank the Downtown immediately to the south and west, within Downtown can be found two National Register Historic Districts and numerous individual historic structures. As has been well documented in Part 1, Downtown is home to a diverse offering of arts and cultural organizations and institutions, and public art has been integrated throughout the pedestrian experience through both permanent installations and through temporary exhibits and special events.

The accompanying map (Map 1, page 5) illustrates the rich historical fabric and highlights as well the diverse and rich arts and cultural offerings and elements that can be found throughout the Downtown area. To fully engage Downtown, one must engage the heritage and culture of the community.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA and Historic District Commission should work together to identify and adequately document additional historic properties within the Downtown area, evaluate their possible inclusion as National Register designated properties and/or their possible inclusion as districts or landmarks within the scope of the City's local Historic District Ordinance, and develop walking tours and create other opportunities to recognize and celebrate these historic resources. A new phase of installing historic markers on various Downtown properties would help to promote community awareness of these important resources.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should continue to collaborate with the PSD and Downtown arts and cultural organizations to develop walking tours and create other opportunities to promote and celebrate the rich arts and cultural offerings found throughout the Downtown.

GATHERING PLACES AND CONNECTING PATHS.

Downtown Holland is an exciting place for all sorts of activities and gatherings. This is due, at least in part, to the interesting environment created by the incremental nature of growth and development in Downtown and its immediate surrounding area including Hope College and Holland's historic neighborhoods. Gathering places abound, including such varied venues indoors as theaters, churches, schools, restaurants with banquet rooms, corporate and institutional meeting/conferencing spaces, and community facilities with large group meeting spaces such as City Hall, the Library, the Police and Court Buildings. These are in addition to the largest of indoor gathering places- the new DeVos Fieldhouse and the Civic Center. Gathering places also include outdoor spaces such as Centennial, Window on the Waterfront, and Kollen Parks; corner and pocket parks such as the privately owned Musician's Park, National City Plaza, and Pledge

of Allegiance Park; and the incrementally established places along our sidewalks embraced for sidewalk cafes and performing artists.

This system of public and private places reflecting both historic and contemporary character, and the exceptionally detailed sidewalk connections in between, provides a wonderful setting for the casual pedestrian as well as for the users of any one particular facility. In fact, the Downtown provides an attractive, walkable, fun and interesting venue for much larger gatherings. As Holland adds hotel rooms in convenient relationship to Downtown, imagine the opportunity for large organizational conferencing and exhibitions in a Downtown perceived in its entirety as the conference venue. As a visitor attends a conference that is dispersed throughout our walkable downtown, thanks to possible new initiatives at coordinating the use of meeting spaces, the visitor is treated to the full Downtown shopping, dining, and living experience. Charleston, South Carolina has embraced this opportunity and their entire Downtown is a showcase engaged by visitors on a daily basis. Other communities where huge convention centers have been built in more remote locations fail to see the benefits of comprehensively integrating events, places, and connections.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should work with the PSD, Chamber of Commerce, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau in creating collaborations between these various indoor and outdoor gathering places with opportunities for connecting separate activities to form Downtown-wide public events and this collaboration should work to explore Downtown Holland's collective capacity for hosting conferences, conventions, and other substantial gatherings, potentially further enhancing the community's role as a visitor destination. (Map 2, page 6)

GETTING AROUND.

Part 1 speaks repeatedly about the absolute need for the pedestrian to have priority as he/she moves about the Downtown. This priority extends beyond simply the ability to move from one place to another at will, without fear of conflict with vehicles, but also to the quality of the pedestrian experience, the vitality of surrounding activities, the attractiveness of passing storefronts and streetscapes. From the view of the motorist, once they recognize that the pedestrian does have priority,

the motorist should be able to relax and enjoy the experience of being Downtown as well, enjoying the changing scene as pedestrians move about and as storefronts and floral plantings and other streetscape conditions are constantly changing. Traffic within the pedestrian environment should be recognized as a necessity but also as a non-intrusive part of the street scene.

A great deal of attention has been paid over the past decade to the reconstruction and enhancement of our street infrastructure, often with the introduction of pedestrian-sensitive enhancements. As time goes on, there will be further opportunities to influence the character of the street network as it traverses and serves the Downtown. It is vital that the Downtown interests have a place at the table as decisions are reached regarding improvements and changes that will impact how folks move around Downtown. The single remaining major improvement project is the potential roundabout in the Eastern Gateway. The DDA should be very involved in the planning and design of this feature, and with assuring Downtown property owners, residents, and visitors have an opportunity to contribute to this process.

Two other elements of Downtown mobility that deserve greater attention are bicycles and public transit. In a compact and walkable town, with a sizeable college-age and younger population, it should not be a surprise that the use of bicycles offers great potential for reducing the number of motorized vehicles Downtown and for providing access to those under driving age to frequent the Downtown. Efforts should be pursued to make biking a more accepted mode of travel, with better accommodations for parking and riding, and with employers being encouraged to provide additional incentives and benefits for biking to and from work. Opportunities for bike rentals or “free use” of bikes should be fully explored, including collaborations between bike use/availability and transit ridership.

Transit ridership is growing in the Holland area. MAX Transit is preparing plans to relocate its bus offices and pulse center to the Depot Downtown. Not only will this result in potential coordination with AMTRK and the Indian Trails Bus System with regional service, but bringing all 7 bus routes through the Depot gives ready access to all riders to Downtown Holland. Part 1 also talks about the future potential to utilize the existing CSX rail spur west of the Depot as a shared rail/trail route for a Downtown trolley line. With numerous communities, including nearby Grand Rapids, exploring

the potential for a return of trolleys, perhaps Holland has a similar opportunity utilizing the existing CSX spur route running east/west through Downtown, and perhaps even connecting to a new loop trolley/streetcar line serving the central neighborhoods, Hope College, Downtown, and a number of potential redevelopment sites in the central area of the community. Great advances have been made as well in the area of “bus rapid transit” in both operation and design, efforts that might supplement the more traditional MAX Transit vehicles with innovative use and routing.

(Map 3, page 7)

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should collaborate through a formal review process with the PSD and the City’s Traffic Committee to assure changes to traffic movements, street configurations, on-street parking, crosswalk placement and design, speed limit and other regulatory requirements, and other similar physical and regulatory changes are compatible with the intention of a pedestrian priority throughout Downtown and support safe and attractive and convenient connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should collaborate with City Transportation and Planning staff, local biking advocacy organizations, and community health representatives to enhance the conditions for biking to, from, and within Downtown.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should collaborate with the MAX Transit system in creating opportunities for better integrating transit into the daily life of Downtown Holland. This includes assuring adequate service within and to Downtown, appropriate placement of bus stops and routing information. Special attention should be focused on the potential for a free-ride zone that could connect riders within possibly two miles of Downtown and allow those using the system within Downtown free or reduced cost access. This also includes stepping out of the box and exploring the potential for bringing the CSX rail spur traversing Downtown into friendly hands and pursuing transit, trolley, or other improvements that can make this a vital component of getting around Downtown and connecting Downtown with other areas. It is further urged that attention be paid to efforts in Grand Rapids and elsewhere to return streetcars and bus rapid transit to the service of Downtown areas, an opportunity to be explored within Holland’s Downtown and Central neighborhoods.

SUSTAINABILITY.

The following definition of “sustainability” is our starting point: “To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by balancing environmental, economic, and social equity concerns”. This is a theme we are seeing emerge nationally and increasingly being embraced locally as there is increasing recognition that in order to set the course for a more responsible future, efforts must occur at the local, grassroots level in these areas of environmental, economic and social responsibility. West Michigan has established itself as a leader in this area, combining an extraordinary natural environment with a very positive built environment (and its nucleus of a corporate tradition particularly through the furniture industry) that has elevated the importance of paying attention to such issues.

Downtown Holland can take center stage in this effort recognizing and striving to enhance and protect the area’s unique natural setting with Lake Macatawa and the Macatawa River Greenway, with initiatives to become leaders in the area of energy conservation and sustainable building construction, and in the model programs in place providing improved neighborhoods immediately surrounding downtown. All this is occurring as Holland keeps an awareness of its history and heritage close while looking to the future.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should collaborate with the City and area-wide public and private leadership in these sustainability areas to develop an understanding of how Downtown growth and actions relate to a broader City-wide Vision for Sustainability that looks ahead decades while establishing a course for responsible growth and change.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007

National Register Historic Districts

-  West 8th Historic District
-  East 8th Historic District

National Register and Local Historic Districts

-  Washington Blvd Historic District
-  Holland Historic Dist

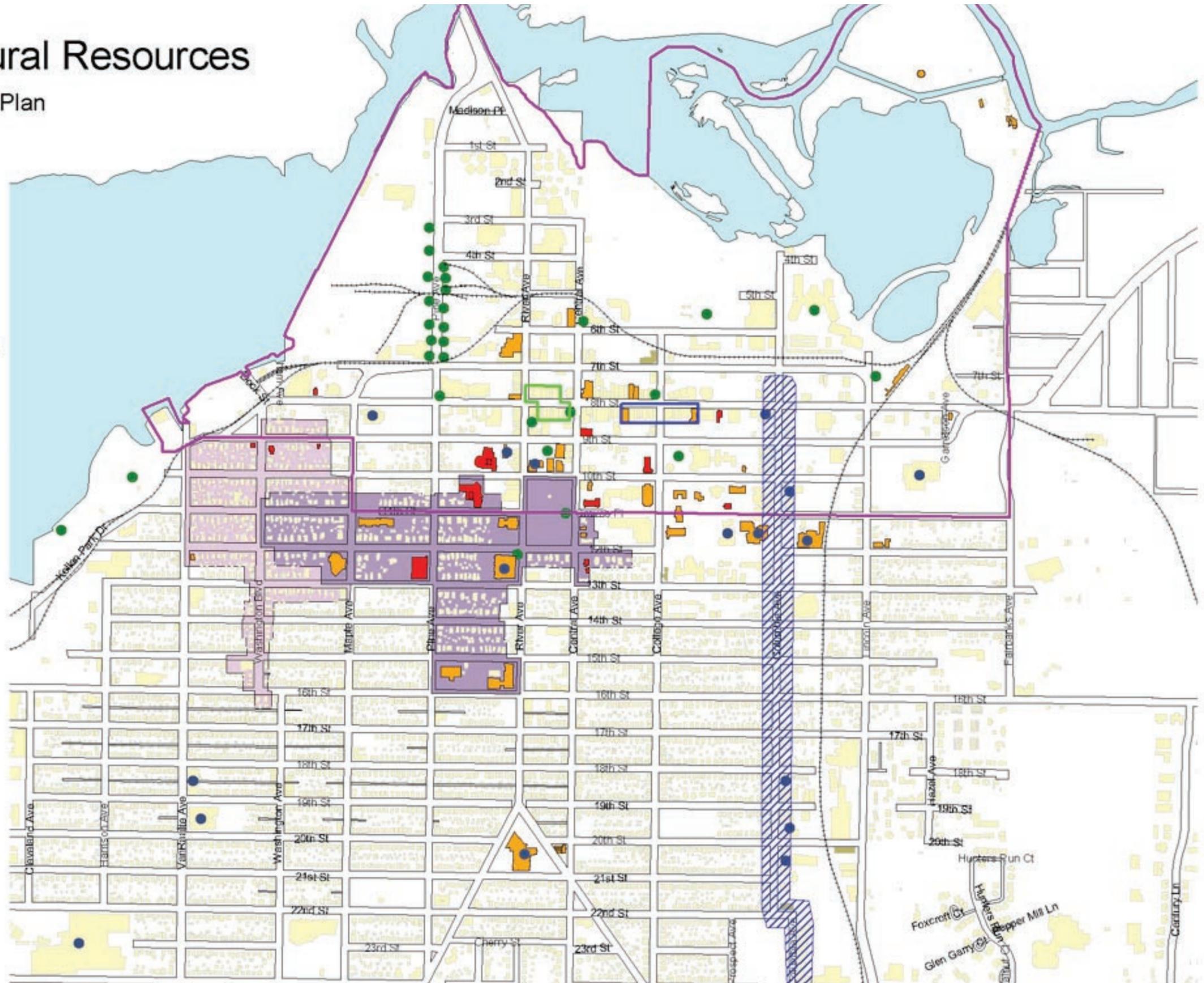
-  Individual Listings on National Register

-  Other Historically +/- Architecturally Important Buildings

-  Arts\Culture Venue

-  Public Art

-  Columbia Arts District

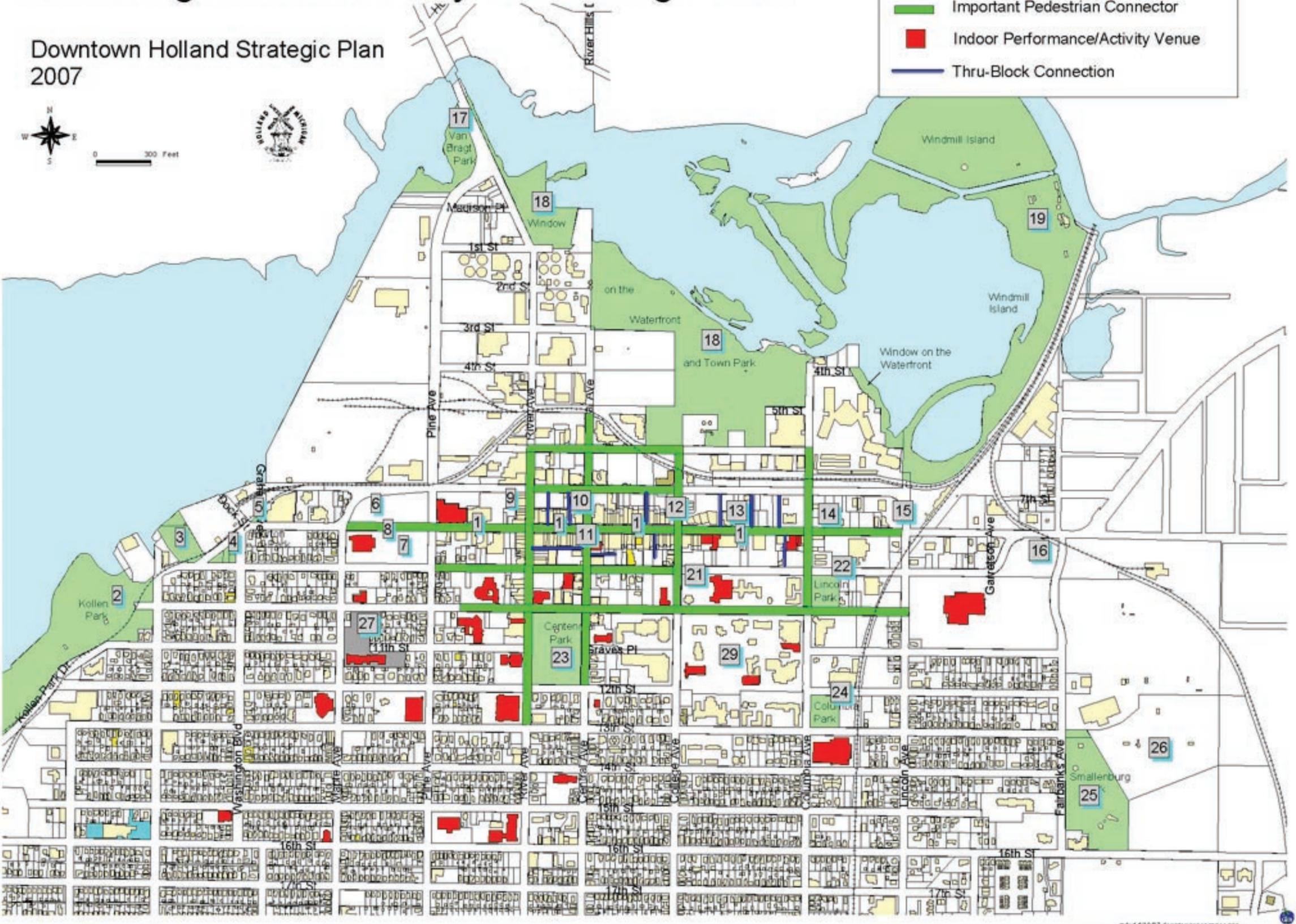


Gathering Places and Key Connecting Paths

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007



	Open Space Location
	Important Pedestrian Connector
	Indoor Performance/Activity Venue
	Thru-Block Connection

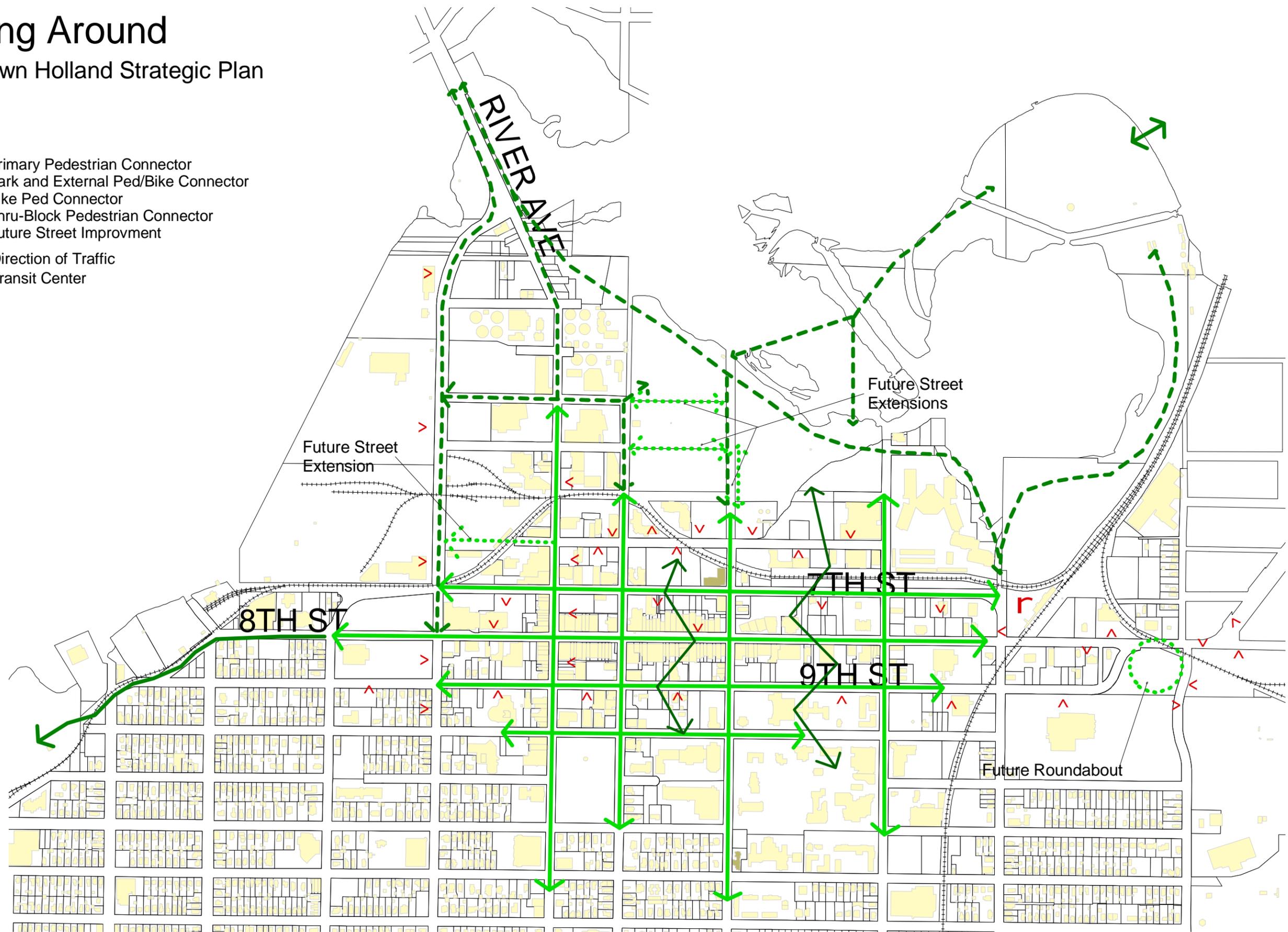


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Getting Around

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007

-  Primary Pedestrian Connector
-  Park and External Ped/Bike Connector
-  Bike Ped Connector
-  Thru-Block Pedestrian Connector
-  Future Street Improvement
-  Direction of Traffic
-  Transit Center



LAND USE PLAN

EXISTING LAND USE PLAN:

The 1992 Master Plan for the Physical Development of the City essentially did not engage a discussion of a Future Land Use vision for the area north of 9th Street, relying instead on the on-going work of the MainStreet/Downtown Development Authority to set that framework. The existing Land Use Plan itself is shown on the following page and indicates simply the core of Downtown designated Community Commercial, an area of General Industry to the northwest, areas of Public/Quasi-Public use to the west (Civic Center) and south (Hope College), Offices to the north, and Multi-Family Residential to the northeast (Freedom Village).

The 1995 "Broadening The Vision: A Strategic Plan for Downtown" established a much more detailed and articulate frame of reference for considering change in the Downtown, and broadened the land area that was thought about directly in the context of Downtown. That 1995 Plan captured the basis for Downtown growth over the past decade and is the starting framework for considerations advanced in this 2007 Strategic Plan update. (Map 4, page 8)

PROPERTIES SUSCEPTIBLE TO CHANGE:

Downtown's need for modifications to its Land Use Plan becomes more clear when a "Susceptibility to Change" map is reviewed. Notice on the accompanying map that, despite what might be the common perception that Downtown is quite full or built-out, numerous parcels can be viewed as "susceptible to change" either because properties are currently underutilized, because there are aging or inefficient buildings and/or businesses, because the pressure of continuing redevelopment better positions certain properties for re-sale and redevelopment, or because in a longer term vision, such properties might not be currently used in the highest and best way. (Map 6, page 11)

RECOMMENDED LAND USE PLAN CHANGES:

The following Land Use Plan changes are recommended for adoption with this Strategic Plan adoption and update of the City's Master Plan.

a. Change to Community Commercial:

Changes have already occurred over the last 15 years in Downtown that logically place a number of properties more appropriately within the "Community Commercial" land use designation. For purposes of clarity, this Plan is recommending the retention of the term "Community Commercial" with the intention that this describes a mixed use designation where a variety of commercial (office and retail), residential, recreational, and institutional uses come together and thrive as a result of the intensity of diverse uses. It is also intended that designation is broad enough to include "light manufacturing" often associated with research and development or high-tech activity, those "industrial" activities that are not disruptive due to noise, heavy trucking demand, or similar negative impacts. Property that should readily be shifted into the Community Commercial land use designation includes:

1. Property west of Pine Avenue to Maple Avenue, from 7th to 9th Streets;
2. Property north of 6th Street to 5th Street, from west of River to just west of College Avenue;
3. Property north of 7th Street to 5th Street from Central to College, north of 7th Street to the CSX spur between College and Columbia, and north of 7th Street to the marsh between Columbia and Lincoln Avenues;
4. The Depot property;
5. The Post Office property between Lincoln and Columbia; and
6. The Haworth Inn and Conference Center on the south side of 9th Street.

b. Change to Public Park:

With the establishment of a Public Park land use designation in the 1992 Plan and its use in a number of updates to the Master Plan since, there are a few areas that clearly fall into an existing and foresee-

able use that is "purely" public park. Unlike Window on the Waterfront Park and Windmill Island where there may be some opportunity and desire to carefully think through a broader set of uses that might go on those properties in the context of evolving edge property opportunities, other properties appear appropriate for designation as public park including: Van Bragt Park, intermittent parcels located out in the Macatawa Marsh (intermittent due to changing water levels), Kollen Park and Centennial Park. The City's parcel on the north side of the Macatawa River has been placed in the Public Park category even with substantial land use change going on around it. Any future change of use for this area should be in the context of a coordinated and collaborative process of study involving the City and Township in the context of the Park of Parks framework and the Macatawa River Greenway system.

c. Addition of Special Planning Areas:

For this Master Plan Update, the Plan takes the path of identifying specific areas where change is anticipated and where a designation of Community Commercial might not fairly reveal the opportunities envisioned in these areas that would be consistent with the Part 1 Framework. The Plan has further resisted the temptation to identify the entire Downtown as a Special Planning Area (SPA) with relatively unlimited flexibility because adjacent development decisions or investment decisions have relied on the specific nature of what exists on those properties.

Areas identified as benefiting from further study and needing more extensive flexibility in terms of density and land use have been suggested as the following Special Planning Areas. All such future planning should be within the context of the framework presented in Part 1 of the Plan. The numbering of SPA areas correlates with the City-wide Land Use designations of such areas.

SPA 6: Located within Downtown's Western Gateway, this area is comprised of a mix of restaurant, industrial, working waterfront industrial, retail, assisted living and single family residential, and institutional uses. Future redevelopment of this area should build upon the framework described in Part 1 of this plan, and could include a fairly diverse range of uses all working together to provide special character and connection between the core of Downtown and the waterfront.

SPA 7: Located along the southern edge of the Western Gateway area, this area serves as a transition between Downtown and the historic neighborhood to the south. As drawn, the area adjoins three churches and includes a number of single family homes. Inclusion as a SPA is intended to allow some flexibility in what might otherwise be a typical residential district to accommodate edge buildings and uses that could complement both the commercial core and edge residential uses. It is not intended simply to open a residential area to parking uses supporting the commercial Downtown, but rather to allow building uses that could result from a more careful study focus on this area that support both sides of 9th Street and complement the historic character of the residential area. Properties fronting both 9th Street and Pine Avenue in this SPA area face substantial traffic which may be supportive of some commercial use as a possible alternative to the purely residential use occurring currently. It is envisioned that such compatible commercial investment might help to encourage some investment in an area that shows signs of deterioration.

SPA 8: This area also includes the head of Pine Avenue and is immediately encountered as one crosses the River Avenue Bridge heading southbound. This area is today designated for industrial use and is occupied by a used car dealership, Brewer's City Dock, the BPW's James DeYoung Power Plant, and the Padnos Company. As described in Part 1 of this Strategic Plan, these properties are active, functioning uses in a key location where alternative possibilities are limitless. Brewer's City Dock, the Power Plant, and Padnos are uses central to continuing development in the Holland area each with a dependency on water access. The intention is not to eliminate these uses but rather to engage these property owners in a broader thinking about the future of their operations and the future of properties on both sides of Pine Avenue. Following careful and creative community dialogue, continuation of an industrial land use designation may be most prudent, or a mixed use designation that could encourage additional alternative investment might be more logical.

SPA 9: This Special Planning Area depends upon the opportunity and intensity of activity along the northern gateway routes of Pine and River Avenues. Presently designated for Industrial uses, this area is characterized by aging and underutilized industrial and roadway

corridor commercial uses. Further careful and intensive study of this area in a process involving current owners and potential developers could identify substantial redevelopment efforts or improvement opportunities that could transform these areas in a manner compatible with the expanding Downtown core. Future uses might include a continuation of current uses but also might include a diversifying of use with a character and intensity of activity that would enhance the condition of all these properties.

SPA 10: This Special Planning Area offers some of the more immediate and exciting opportunities for change that can be supportive of Downtown in a number of vital ways. This area includes not only the publicly owned lands embracing Van Bragt Park and Window on the Waterfront Park (a sizeable portion of the broader opportunity described in Part 1 as the Park of Parks), but also includes privately owned properties along both Central Avenue and 6th Street that are in various situations relative to use. A few properties sit underutilized (vacant sites or vacant/underutilized buildings), on-going industrial and contractors operations, and the City Board of Public Works retains a peaking unit in this area as a hedge on electricity production/pricing. As Part 1 of this Plan indicates, extension of the Downtown street grid, utilization of waterfront properties, extension of greenway activities and connections, and enlivening the north end of Downtown with additional mixed development and connections to Windmill Island and to the Core of Downtown all make this area a pivotal grouping of properties where great flexibility in future land use may be needed to accomplish a diverse and extraordinary complement to diverse adjacent Downtown land uses. Further intensive planning for this area is warranted.

SPA 11: This Special Planning Area embraces the approach to and area of Windmill Island that was the subject of an unsuccessful effort at redevelopment as a new residential and commercial neighborhood in the City. While efforts are underway trying to identify an appropriate future for this resource, further and more public discussion is needed to define an appropriate vision for this wonderful City-owned resource. While the 1992 Land Use Plan called for park development, the update to the plan embraced with the village concept called for a mixed residential, commercial, cultural, and institutional range of uses. Part 1 of this Strategic Plan Update encourages further study, likely with

a reduced intensity of use relative to the Village concept and a greater attention to Park aspects in future changes. Land Use designation for these properties should be supportive of the most creative use of this environmentally challenging property.

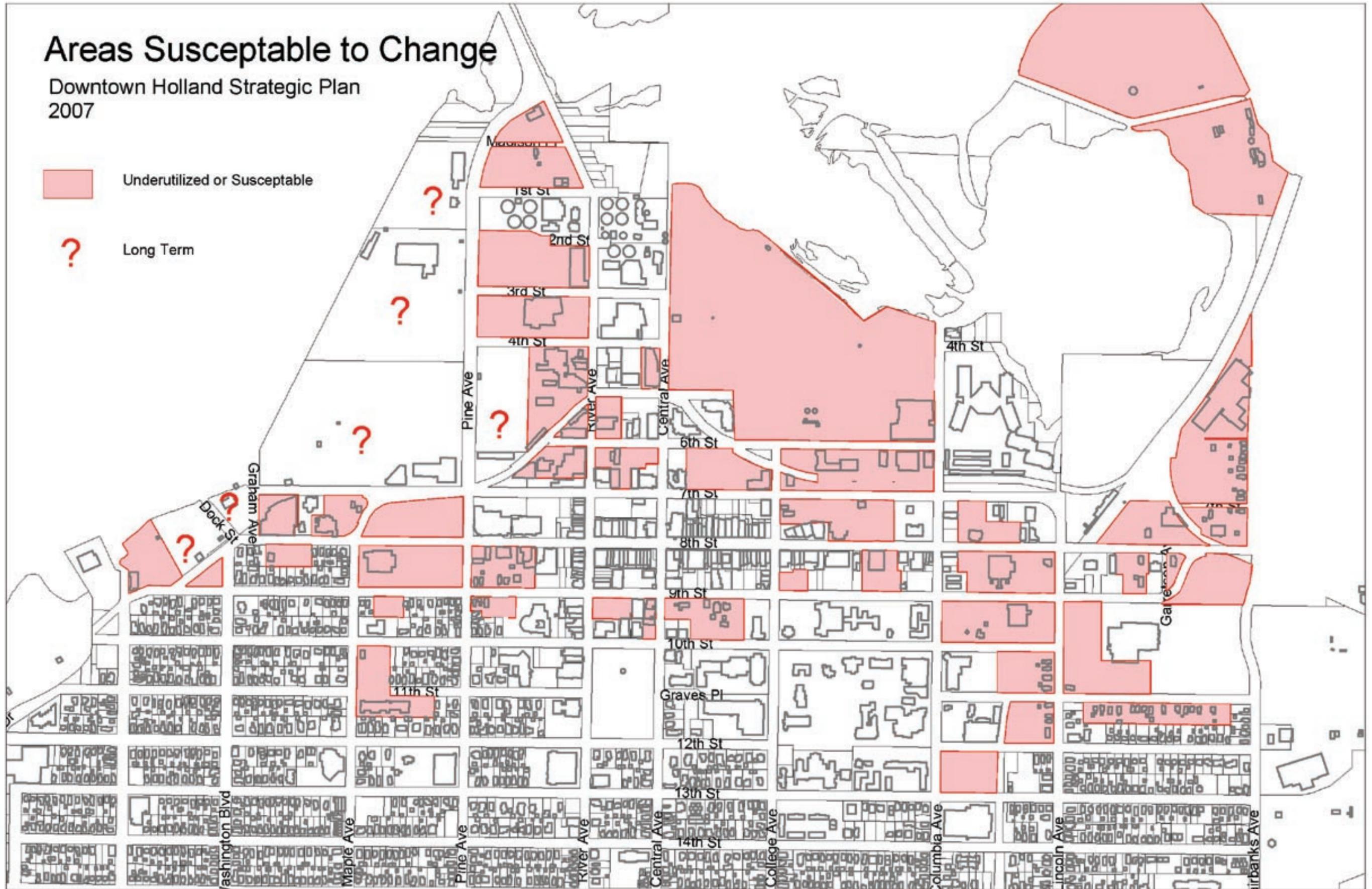
SPA 12: Lying to the east of the main line of CSX Railroad, this Special Planning Area includes property within the City north of 8th Street and east of the Depot, including the small residential/industrial/commercial neighborhood along the north extension of Fairbanks. With a widely varying existing set of uses, and in absence of an agreed upon plan for the future of this area as is now being sought through a collaborative effort between the City and Township Planning Commissions and staff, flexibility in land use designation can serve to allow creative planning to support this area's role as a gateway to Downtown as well as its opportunity for redefinition and a diverse range of reinvestment. (Map 5, page 9)

Areas Susceptible to Change

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007

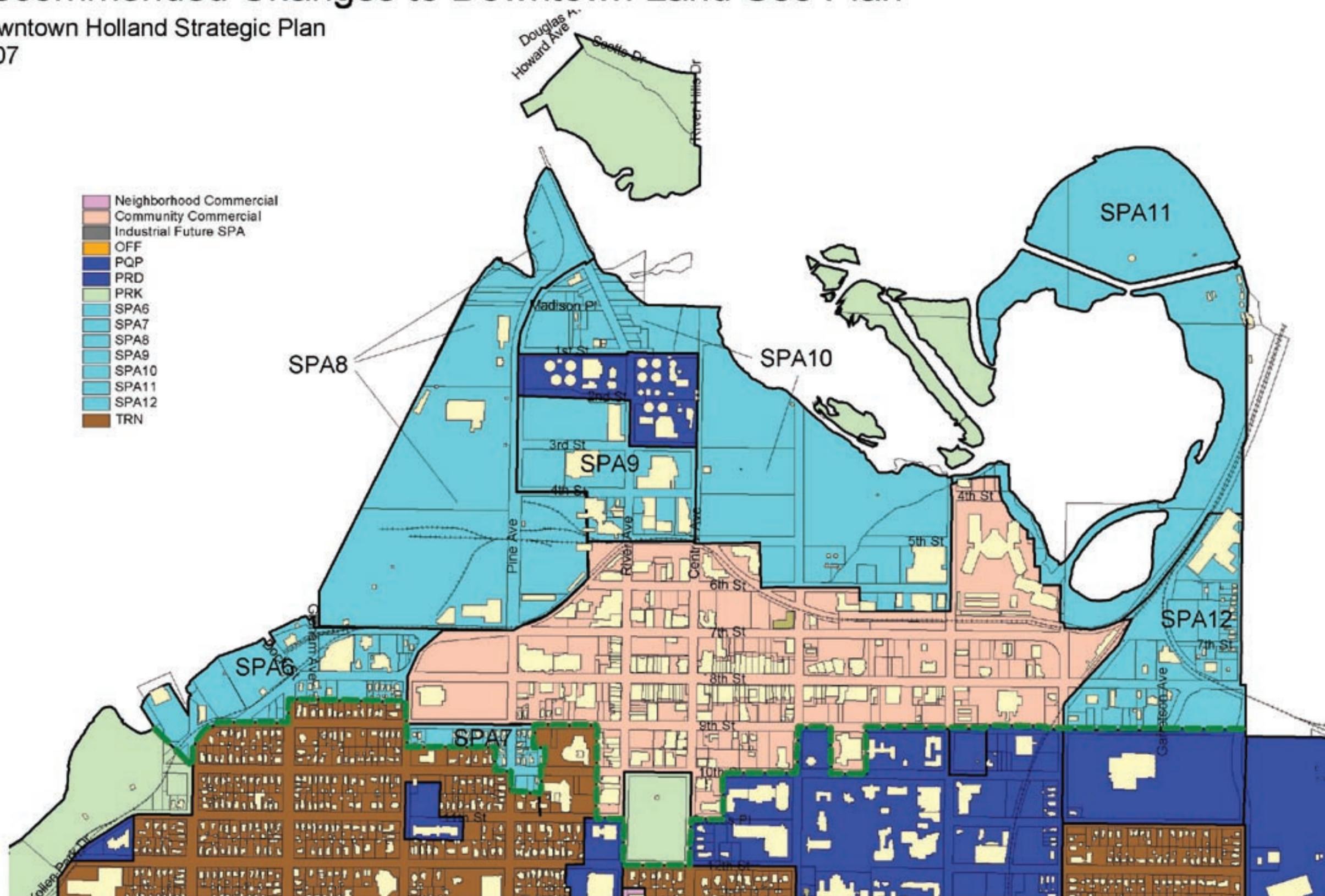
 Underutilized or Susceptible

 Long Term



Recommended Changes to Downtown Land Use Plan

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007



POTENTIAL ZONING MODIFICATIONS

In 2002, a comprehensive update of both the zoning map and zoning ordinance was undertaken as an implementation of recommendations from the 1995 Strategic Plan. On the whole, it is not felt that substantial changes are warranted at this time. There are a number of “fine-tuning” changes to both boundaries and zoning ordinance text that warrant further discussion and possible change. (Map 7, page 16)

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA should collaborate with the Planning Commission and Downtown property owners and development interests to examine the following possible Zoning-related changes. Further study recommended.

C-3 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ZONING BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS:

The following Zoning Map changes are proposed for expanding the C-3 Downtown Zoning District, moving from west to east across the Downtown:

1. Property on the north side of 8th Street, east of the former Thermatron building, south of the CSX rail spur, and east to Maple Avenue from I-1 industrial and C-2 highway commercial to C-3 central business district.
2. Property on the both sides of 8th Street, east of Maple, south of the CSX rail spur, and east to Pine Avenue from PUD planned unit development to C-3 central business district.
3. Property north of the Holland Rescue Mission on the west side of River, from a distance 250 feet west of River Avenue right-of-way to River, north to 4th Street; and east of the River approximately 165 feet, then south to 5th Street, then east to Central Avenue, and south to 6th Street, all from I-1 industrial to C-3 central business district.
4. Property north of the CSX spur and Depot between Columbia Avenue and the CSX main line zoned PUD to C-3 central

business district.

5. All property between the CSX main line and Fairbanks Avenue north of the exiting C-3 zone district and 8th Street currently zoned I-1, C-2 and R-3 to C-3 central business district.
6. Area south of 9th Street encompassing the Haworth Conference Center from ED educational district to C-3 central business district, excluding the attached dormitory.
7. Property on the east side of Central Avenue encompassing the Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Centennial Park, and property on the west side of River Avenue encompassing Holland City Hall, from R-2 one and two family residential to C-3 central business district. (Map 8, page 17.)

CHANGES IN C-3 ZONING DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

The language of the C-3 Ordinance has been exercised a number of times since its adoption. As should be expected, the introduction of flexibility into the ordinance to allow the Planning Commission to adjust requirements per the Optional Plan Review Process has been challenging. The results to-date have arguably been quite successful in achieving or assuring that the character of new buildings in the downtown- as defined by such factors as building massing, setback, window area, and access, has been compatible and positive.

Issues which should be reviewed in greater detail include:

1. Definition of Industrial Uses.

The C-3 Zoning Text is specific to prohibit manufacturing, processing, industrial storage, or other industrial uses. This should be examined in light of research and development types of activities or production of limited numbers of small components such as in high-tech computer-based activities that might be very compatible with Downtown activities but are herein prohibited.

2. Required front yard.

The ordinance calls for a maximum front yard of 6 feet along “A” Streets. This has generally been a workable dimension through the core

of Downtown. Along 8th Street in the Eastern Gateway area, this has been more challenging as the street width is wider here and properties on the south side of 8th Street are without a curb strip of grass and the pedestrian sidewalk is immediately curbside. When a building is placed from 0 to 6 feet back from the edge of sidewalk/property line, the area along the frontage feels quite compressed and close to traffic. Additional yard area is allowable to provide an enhanced pedestrian area therefore the Commission has some latitude here, a situation that can be seen resolved in the Priority Health building on 8th Street.. While there has been some desire by applicants to allow parking in front of buildings along this stretch of 8th Street in a manner similar to Paragon Bank (constructed prior to the new regulations), one of the most important character-defining features of Downtown has been the placement to the side or rear of parking. This issue deserves continued discussion.

3. Required side yards.

One of the more difficult requirements has been the requirement that buildings along “A” streets be built to the side property lines. Again the Planning Commission does have latitude to allow greater setback and has allowed greater setback where a through block pedestrian connector is provided. In return, developers have gained the ability to provide windows on side elevations. This requirement should be studied with an eye toward what the resulting character will be if this exception continues to be regularly granted. The risk is that we will not have a continuous building wall along the street as the core of downtown has, but rather a frequently divided street wall with through-block connections, whether or not the connections are otherwise necessary for access.

4. Vehicular access to a site along an “A” street.

Another challenging requirement is the general prohibition of vehicular access to a property from an “A” street. This requirement should be further reviewed to assure adequacy of standards that allow flexibility for the Planning Commission.

5. Criteria for optional plan review.

The Planning Commission should have some flexibility in determining whether an adequate number of the criteria have been satisfied

in order to allow the flexibility intended by the ordinance. Currently, language says that all criteria must be met. This may be excessive and should be reviewed.

6. Site Plan Standards:

In addition to zoning district ordinance requirements, an additional set of standards were adopted as part of the site/development plan review process that apply specifically to development within the C-3 central business district. Generally, these requirements have been reviewed and applied in a manner that has resulted in buildings compatible with Downtown. Provisions requiring use of compatible materials and other compatibility factors such as scale and proportion of window openings have been questioned by individuals wondering if there ought to be some more formal and involved process of design review. This is an area for further discussion by concerned Downtown parties and City reviewing bodies.

7. Submission for Review.

A requirement of the Site Plan ordinance is that a copy of development plans be submitted to the DDA Board for their information prior to action by the Planning Commission. There are times, however, when plans are provided to the DDA Board prior to Planning Commission action, but the Board does not meet until after Commission action. Further discussion on this issue is important to help define a process that allows adequate review and comment by the DDA Board without delaying the approval process.

CHANGES IN C-3 DOWNTOWN PARKING REQUIREMENTS:

In 2004, as a response to the adoption of A Downtown Parking Strategic Plan in the Fall of 2003, City Council established a Downtown Parking Board to facilitate the implementation of that Strategic Plan. One of the areas that clearly was a question at that time was the existing ordinances lack of a parking requirement for new construction Downtown.

The City's current zoning requirement for parking within the C-3 Central Business Zone District (the zone designation that effectively

covers the entire study area) calls for the following:

“No off-street parking is required for non-residential uses within the C-3 Central Business District. All non-residential uses located in the C-3 Central Business District shall be deemed participants in a community parking program per Section 39-52 and any applicable city adopted policies therein, and shall be exempt from parking requirements of Article IV of this Chapter. Parking for any new residential use shall be provided in accordance with the requirements set forth in Article IV of this Chapter. Where on-site parking for that residential use is not available, parking requirements may be met in accordance with the policies promulgated by the city or its downtown development authority for the use of its designated downtown public parking areas for long term and/or overnight parking.”

Over a long period of time, existing businesses and property owners have become quite accustomed to the availability of parking as it has occurred in a variety of public and private parking lots. When issues arose in the past, the current assessment program was established that requires payment of an assessment into the Downtown Parking program if a property is located within 400 feet of a publicly owned and/or leased parking lot.

The current challenge facing Downtown is that there has been and is continuing to be another wave of building construction that is able and encouraged to build sizeable buildings of various uses without a requirement to provide parking. If they fall within 400 feet of a public lot, they too become part of the assessment program. Some, and probably most, developers recognize that they will have some degree of difficulty leasing or selling space in their new buildings unless they provide some amount of parking. Others simply assume that any availability in the public parking system gives them flexibility to add their building without contributing to the parking supply.

This is a challenging situation as the City and Downtown want to encourage Downtown development and believe the Downtown parking system is the appropriate approach for assuring adequate parking through a “shared parking” philosophy. The desire is not to have a series of new buildings, each set with its own parking lot and quickly becoming disconnected with surrounding properties. In a time of diminishing public capital resources and disappearing properties that are simple conversions to surface parking, the challenge is how

to assure an adequate supply of shared public and private parking in convenient-enough locations that everyone participates and benefits.

There are two general approaches that must work in tandem to address this issue. Some amount of parking needs to be provided by new development, with enough flexibility that should a developer not control adequate land for parking, a contribution to a Downtown Parking Fund could assure provision of additional parking. The second approach is to develop other avenues to accumulate adequate resources for the provision of additional public shared parking.

1. Zoning Requirement.

The Downtown Development Authority, Planning Commission, and City Council should examine parking requirements and consider modifying the parking requirement within the C-3 zone district as follows:

- Review the current parking schedule found in Zoning Ordinance Section 39-48 and provide an alternative schedule for Downtown that recognizes the ability to share parking, the desired use of transit and non-motorized access, and adjustments for monthly, hourly, and local conditions and variations. The National Main Street Center has participated in the publication of a parking manual for small cities, “Parking: The Parking Handbook for Small Communities”, that can provide a point of comparison for such a revised schedule, as does the 1996 Walker Parking Study where Table 3 presents adjusted parking demand ratios. In each case, various demand ratios are presented according to specified uses.
- In an effort not to discourage continued Downtown revitalization and in recognition of the significant public “Community Parking” program and Downtown parking assessment program, considers requiring only one half (1/2) of the newly created Downtown parking schedule.

2. In-Lieu Fee Option.

Further, in concert with the establishment of a Downtown Parking Fund intended to serve as a pooling of funding for expansion of the supply of Downtown parking spaces (as described later), an In-Lieu Fee Option should be provided whereby a developer may make a con-

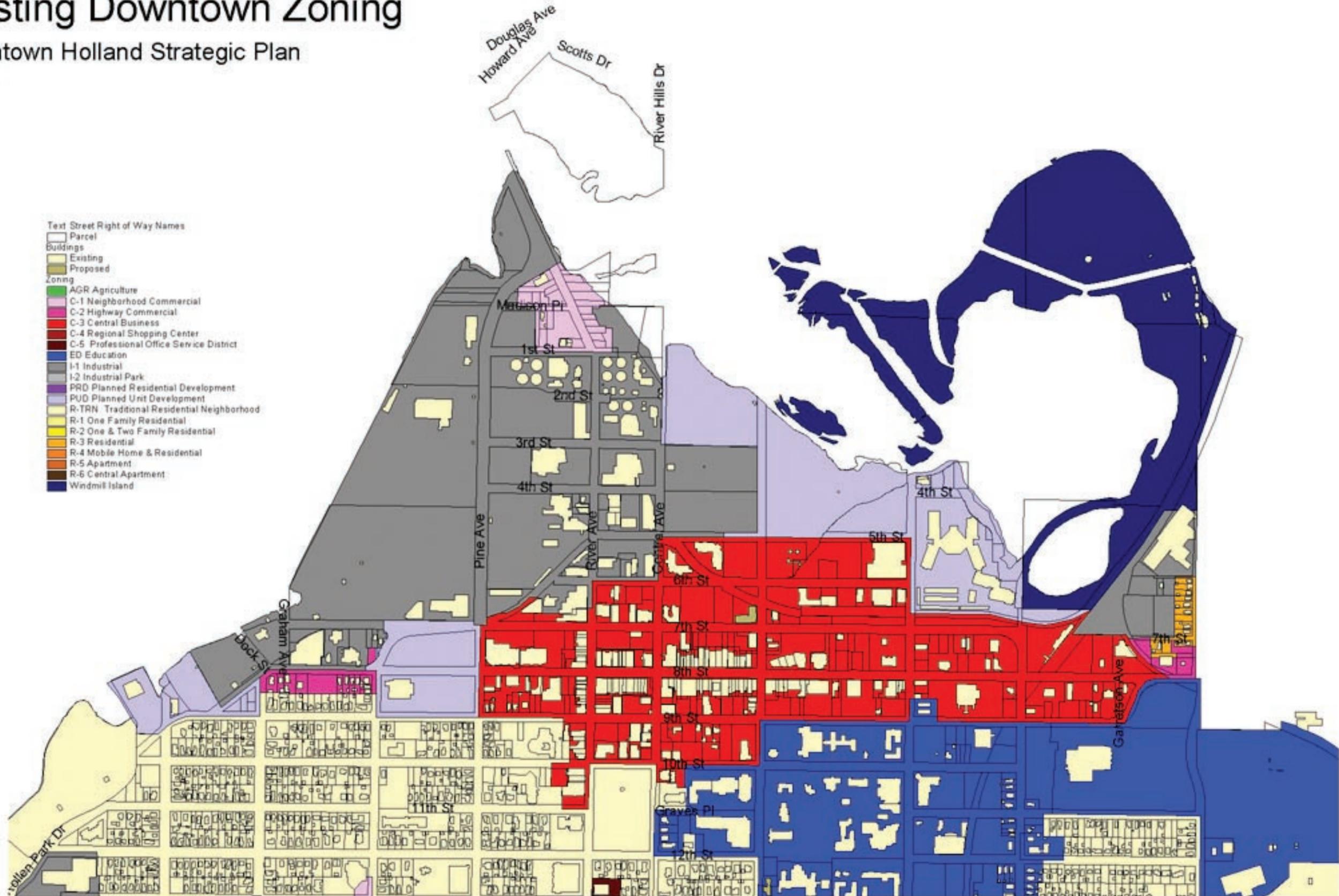
tribution to the parking fund instead of satisfying the zoning parking requirement on-site. This is intended to provide flexibility within the zoning ordinance to allow a developer the ability to contribute to the expansion of the parking supply in response to demand that is generated by new development or re-use of existing buildings, while not forcing the provision on-site where:

- a) space may not exist to accommodate such parking;
- b) where the placement of parking on a particular site or portion of the site is not as desirable as further building construction; and
- c) where construction of parking through a shared public program better serves multiple users of the Downtown parking system.

The amount of the In-Lieu Fee payment per parking space should reflect the costs of providing such a space (land cost and parking space construction cost conservatively calculated using 300 square feet per space reflecting the space and one half of the aisle serving the space, as well as a factor added for realizing an opportunity cost to the developer for alternative use of land). The intent should be to establish the fee bearing some relation to the direct cost of land acquisition and parking space construction in the amount of between \$2,500 and \$10,000- more than the direct cost of building a surface parking space but less than the cost of providing a space within a parking structure. This requires further refinement both in terms of ordinance drafting and the amount of the fee.

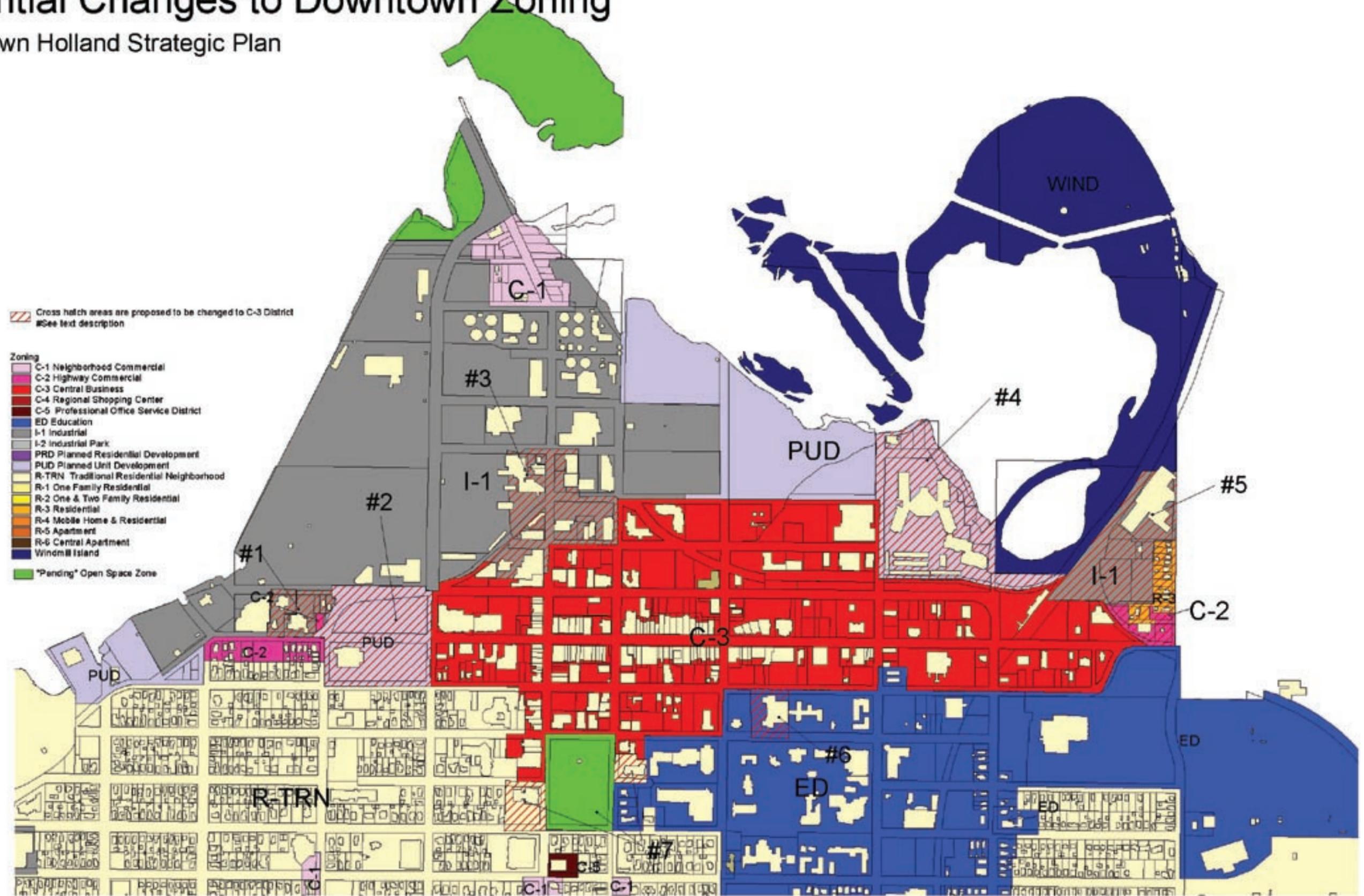
Existing Downtown Zoning

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007



Potential Changes to Downtown Zoning

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
2007



MANAGEMENT ISSUES

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

The history and role of the Downtown Development Authority is described in detail on pages 71-72 of Part 1. While the original boundaries of the Authority district were generously drawn and even today fully embrace the area which the Plan describes as Downtown, the DDA continues to levy the maximum allowed by statute, a nearly two mil assessment for the operation of the District. The immediate charge to the DDA Board is to take the Strategic Plan and prioritize efforts for the coming year, and work through the adequacy and effectiveness of staffing to achieve those priorities.

Master Plan Recommendation: At this time, no adjustments are necessary to the boundary of the Downtown Development Authority District. This results in no greater revenues being generated due to the millage assessment. See the accompanying map for a display of the current DDA boundaries. (Map 9, page 19)

PRINCIPAL SHOPPING DISTRICT.

The history and role of the Principal Shopping District is described on pages 71-72 of Part I of this Plan. In looking at the marketing and promotion of Downtown, it is increasingly apparent that activities in one area of Downtown frequently create a ripple effect of extending that activity and sense of vitality to other parts of Downtown. As well, efforts are increasingly being made to link activities and extend the perception and reality that Downtown is vibrant and activities abound in as extensive an area. Boundaries, which by policy are located within C-3 Downtown Zone District boundaries, have been established in order to organize an assessment district, with the Core area paying a higher assessment due primarily to proximity to those businesses and activities for which the marketing is typically targeted. As the extent of Downtown business grows, as restaurants, retail shops, and service businesses extend out beyond the historic core, so too can the definition of Core area extend to embrace those businesses. With the expansion that continues to occur Downtown, the time is right

for the PSD Board to consider the following possible expansions of the assessment boundaries of the Shopping District. (Map 10, page 20)

a. To Eliminate Confusion:

Delete the reference to an overall PSD-eligible district where, per current PSD policy-properties within the C-3 Central Business District and PUD Planned Development District are eligible for inclusion with the PSD. More appropriate policy would be to reference properties within the C-3 and contiguous areas of PUD zoning. Eliminate use of this map for normal reference in favor of mapping the approved assessment district.

b. Expand Core Assessment Boundary:

- i. To west: from River west to Pine, 7th to 9th Streets.
- ii. To south: between River and Central south from 9th to 10th Streets, and south along the west side of River from 9th Street to 11th Street including those properties fronting River.
- iii. To east: between College and Columbia from 7th to 9th, including the Haworth Center.
- iv. To north: River to College between 6th and 7th.

c. Expand Perimeter Assessment Boundary:

- i. To north and east: In addition to the core extending to the north, the Plan recommends that the edge district extend from the new (recommended) core boundary north to the railroad right-of-way between Pine and River, to 4th Street between River and Central including the first 100 feet of properties fronting River on the west side of River Avenue; and the entire area south of the Macatawa Marsh east of Central Avenue over to Hamilton Rail spur and south to 9th Street and the Core of the district.
- ii. To south: No change proposed.

- iii. To west: From Pine to Maple between 7th and 9th Streets, and properties fronting on north side of 8th Street, east of the former Thermatron building, now owned by Padnos and used for storage.

d. Use of Transition Area:

There is no recommendation for use of this designation unless such a transition becomes necessary politically. (Map 11, page 21)

e. Policy Questions:

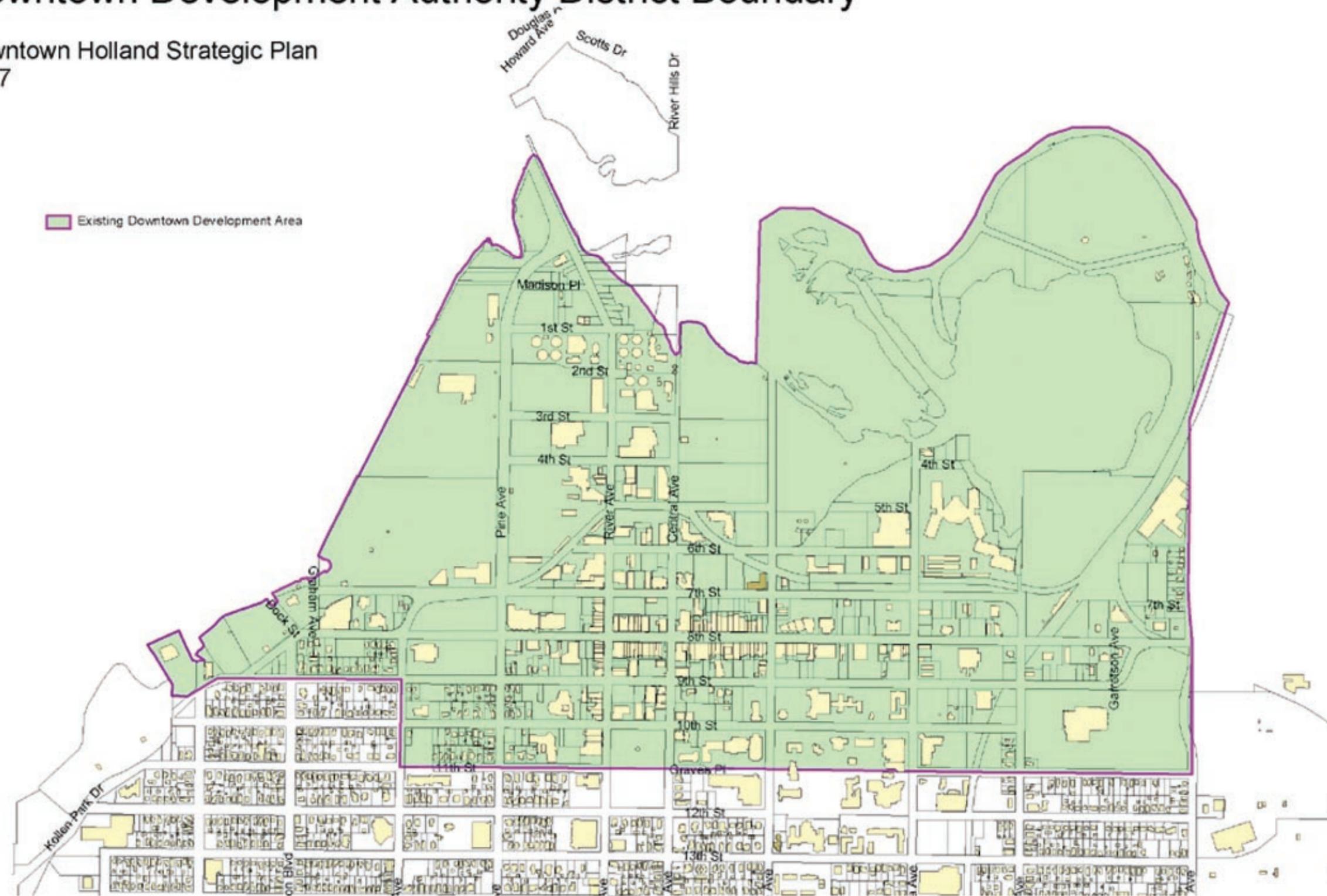
The PSD should review the language of the assessment and determine:

- i. whether the language limiting PSD designations to property zoned C-3 and PUD continues to make sense (see also (a) above); and
- ii. whether expansion of the boundary should be accompanied by an overall increase in assessment collections, or whether the same or similar amount should be collected but divided from more contributors, presumably lowering PSD assessments per property.

Master Plan Recommendation: The DDA encourages the PSD to continue to examine opportunities to expand their boundaries for assessment purposes and adjust their policies as necessary in order to continue and expand their effective marketing of the Downtown and their promotion of the wealth of festivals, special events, and daily high-quality special environment.

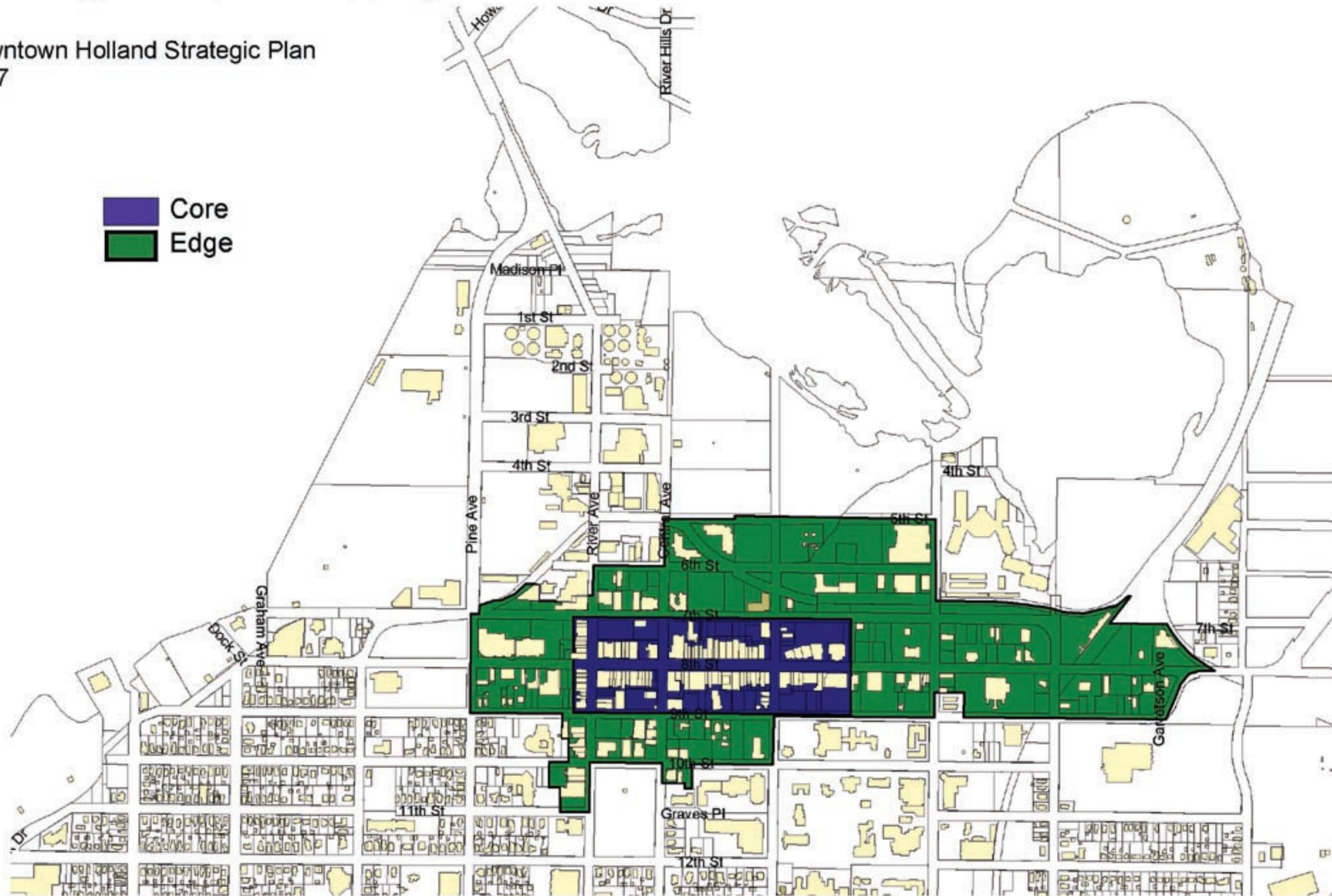
Downtown Development Authority District Boundary

Downtown Holland Strategic Plan
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Existing Principal Shopping District Assessment Boundaries

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Potential Principal Shopping District Assessment Boundaries

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