ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: RE-ESATBLISHING COMMUNITY: A RENEWED VILLAGE CENTER FOR EDMONDSON VILLAGE, BALTIMORE, MD

Jessica Lynn Leonard, Master of Architecture, 2007

Thesis directed by: Professor Karl DuPuy, AIA
School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

This thesis proposes to reintroduce a "sense of place" into a community that has undergone rapid and severe physical, social, and economic changes. It examines how the built and natural environment can stabilize and recenter a community through the development of a renewed village center.

Southwest Baltimore's Edmondson Village serves as a transition between the urban and suburban patterns of the city. The community's decrepit shopping center is located along Edmondson Avenue (Route 40) and is central to wealthy, middle, and lower class neighborhoods. It is surrounded by important civic and educational buildings, making it an ideal location for neighborhood revitalization and ultimately a new village center.

The addition of a metro station on the city's proposed Red Line, along with a pedestrian focused, mixed use, mixed income development are essential elements in re-establishing an identity for Edmondson Village. Creating coherent public spaces are vital to fostering an environment where people can interact outside of the private realm. The village center serves as a home, shopping area, and gathering place for the residents of the community.

RE-ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY: A RENEWED VILLAGE CENTER FOR EDMONDSON VILLAGE, BALTIMORE, MD

by

Jessica Lynn Leonard

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DEDICATION

To my parents for all of their love, support, and encouragement.

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between people and architecture, a person's reaction to architecture, and how it affects us, are topics of great interest. The places we live and work, the streets and paths we use to get around, and the places we choose to visit, demonstrate how architecture and the built environment play an important role in the way we experience life. The way these places are designed and their relationship to one another determine the type of interactions and experiences that occur there. Communities are an important part of people's lives, and they are strengthened by individuals and their participation and involvement in society. They serve as a structured entity to organize people and as a means for personal growth. Neighborhoods are historically one of the most common generators for community. Baltimore is a city of neighborhoods and has seen dramatic change within them. For example, Edmondson Village located in southwest Baltimore, has experienced dramatic racial, economic, and social change in the past sixty years. Despite these changes, the residents of Edmondson Village still have a strong sense of pride and ownership over their neighborhood, but they currently lack a viable center to unite the community and provide places for social interaction. The Edmondson Village shopping center, which has lost its historic character and reason for being, is an ideal site to test the thesis that the built environment can encourage social relationships and foster community development.

This thesis is about creating a place for community. It examines how the built environment can re-establish "place" and afford the possibility of social interactions to strengthen the social ties that make a "community." In order to create a sense of place and re-establish a community, it is necessary to understand the term community and its

value in society. The term community and its importance in society is defined in the first chapter. The notion of 'losing' community is addressed and different ways to generate and re-establish community are laid out. The social aspects are distinguished from the physical aspects of community in order to understand the aspects that are relevant to community design.

In the second chapter, a framework is constructed for understanding the urban neighborhood. The physical urban design issues that are critical to the redevelopment of Edmondson Village into an active and prosperous mixed-use neighborhood are addressed. In order to create this type of environment, it is necessary to look at architecture and site design, density and scale, streets, public space, and the mix of appropriate land uses. This chapter separates the urban components of neighborhood, center and edge, streets, blocks, and buildings, and analyzes their role and function in designing a viable urban neighborhood.

In the third chapter the specific Edmondson Village site is described and analyzed. The current condition of the surrounding neighborhoods and the potentials for redevelopment are studied and the context, history, and demographics of the area are described. The elements that generate community and those that should be retained in the redevelopment of the area and village center are identified.

The fourth chapter is an investigation of the program and the types of buildings necessary to help foster social interactions and generate community. Based on the analysis in the second and third chapter, the different elements necessary for generating community and creating a viable village center can be identified. It is essential to reconnect the physical elements to the center of the neighborhoods and provide ways to

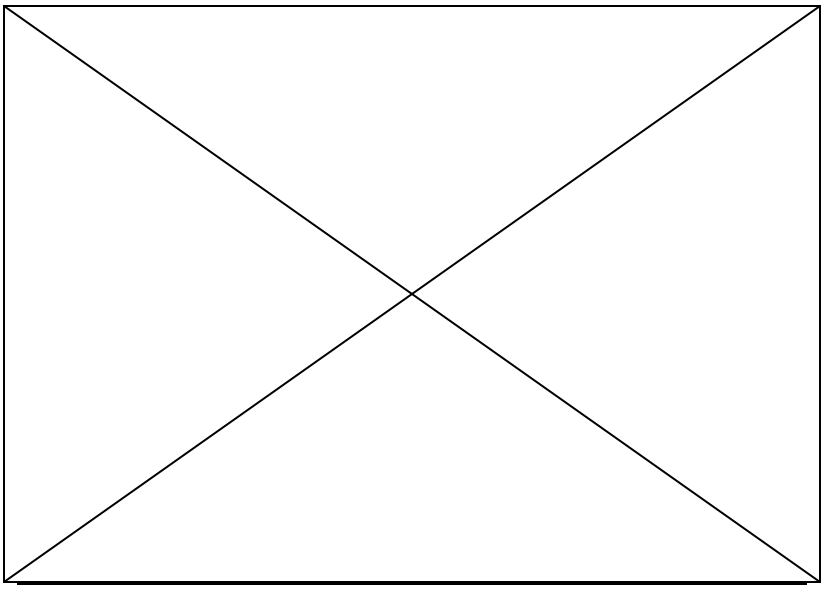
move from the residential neighborhoods to the public spaces and the commercial activity. In order to have a viable center, it needs to be active throughout the day and night. A combination of residential and commercial development in the village center is necessary to support the Red Line Transit stop and generate enough revenue for the businesses.

From the previous examination, it is possible to propose a series of design strategies at three different scales- the urban (diagram), architectural (dimension), and building (detail). At the urban design scale the primary concern is with connectivity and density. The connection to park and open space, the layout of the street grids, location of important civic buildings and the center, and the arrangement of different housing types and their relationship to each other are all important factors. The urban scale focuses on establishing places that facilitate social interaction and provide boundaries to help generate community. The architectural scale is concerned with the organization and design of the village center and with the layout of different housing types. It further develops the spaces laid out at the urban scale and focuses on the human scale and the relationship between the user and the space and buildings. The building scale focuses on the character and detail of each building. This is an essential element in creating a sense of place and a sense of community. In order to design the most appropriate units for this neighborhood, the layout and configuration of each building type are explored in both plan and section. Finally, a design solution is presented to test the thesis.

CHAPTER I: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY

"Philosophers as far back as Aristotle say that it is only through interaction in communities that we are able to acquire and practice good habits that make it possible for us to be truly happy."

-Sidney Brower



[Orser, Baltimore Sun]

Figure 1: Edmondson Village Shopping Center 1947
The Edmondson Village Shopping Center was one of the first suburban shopping centers in the country. It was a place for residents to shop and gather. It was a true 'village center' that had a theater, bowling alley, and community building which provided entertainment and encouraged leisure activities.

In order to design for communities, it is necessary to understand how communities work, why they are important, and what functions and design strategies can help to foster and generate them. The notion of community and its role in our lives has been apparent since the beginning of time and has played more than a minor theme in the history of cities and neighborhoods. The foundation of community is a framework of shared beliefs, interests, and commitments that unite various individuals, groups, and activities. People come together because of a shared history or interest to create a community which is then manifested in loyalty and a distinctive identity. David McMillan, a social scientist, describes the sense of community as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together."[1] Sidney Brower, a professor at the University of Maryland, explains it is through community that "we learn about social responsibility, friendship, love, good and bad, status and role, order and disorder, and guilt and innocence."[2] It is also how information is passed on from generation to generation and how children are socialized. It can serve both the emotional and physical needs for its members.

Being around people with similar backgrounds and shared experiences offers necessary emotional support through a gained trust and sense of belonging among members. Through their involvement and commitment to the community, a sense of loyalty is also felt between members, extending their emotional support. Communities help establish a group identity and provide a network for social interactions. By choosing to join a community, individuals invest in membership and feel a sense of belonging.

Ultimately, communities are an important part of people's lives, and they are strengthened by individuals and their participation and involvement in society.

These qualities define the social aspects of community. They explain the extent to which individuals value community and the role that it plays in their lives. Since community is an important aspect of society, the idea that we may be losing it is cause for concern. Some of the reasons that we are losing a sense of community, are that neighborhoods are no longer walkable or pedestrian friendly and there are a smaller number of places that encourage leisure and recreation activities. Residents "yearn for old-time neighborhoods with their pedestrian-oriented streets, small scale, walk-to stores and workplaces, convenient public transportation, active public areas, and local institutions."[3]

One way to encourage community development and social interaction is through the physical and natural environment. In his manuscript, Sidney Brower describes eleven properties that promote community generating neighborhoods (Figure 2). These properties are consistent with other research on the topic and are used in this thesis to understand different tools for designing for community. Providing buildings and arranging houses in a manner that promotes social interaction is an essential design strategy to fostering community. While you cannot force people to interact and be social, you can provide places that will increase the likelihood that social interaction will happen. Reinforcing and strengthening existing boundaries is also necessary. By using these strategies, the size of the community will be determined and public places will be provided to encourage leisure time. The character of the building can help generate a collective memory and sense of place.

Eleven Properties for Community Generating Neighborhoods

1. They attract people who are predisposed to getting along with one another;
2. They have community organizations that serve as a vehicle for collective decision making and action;
3. They are a suitable size for a community;
4. **They include facilities that bring people together under conditions that are conducive to meeting and interacting;**
5. **They arrange houses, spaces, and related uses in such a way as to facilitate social contact among residents;**
6. They create conditions under which individual residents stand to benefit from the success and lose from the failure of the collective;
7. They encourage leisure-time use;
8. They cater to stable, long-term residents;
9. **They have clear physical boundaries;**
10. They remind residents of events in the collective memory;
11. **They are well-composed and have a distinctive visual identity.**

Figure 2: Sidney Brower's Eleven Properties for Community Generating Neighborhoods
Out of these eleven properties numbers 4, 5, 9, and 11 are directly related to the design of this thesis.

While this thesis focuses on the role the built environment plays in creating a community and a sense of place, it is understood that design strategies and tactics are executed in order to create an environment that will foster social interactions and allow individuals to develop meaningful relationships. This thesis uses design as a tool to develop a relationship between the neighborhood, streets, blocks, buildings, and open space that will increase the probability that community will occur. The balance of these relationships will result in a both a neighborhood as a place to live and a neighborhood as a place to encourage and develop community. The components and relationships of the urban neighborhood will provide guidelines for executing the necessary properties that are needed to generate community oriented neighborhoods.

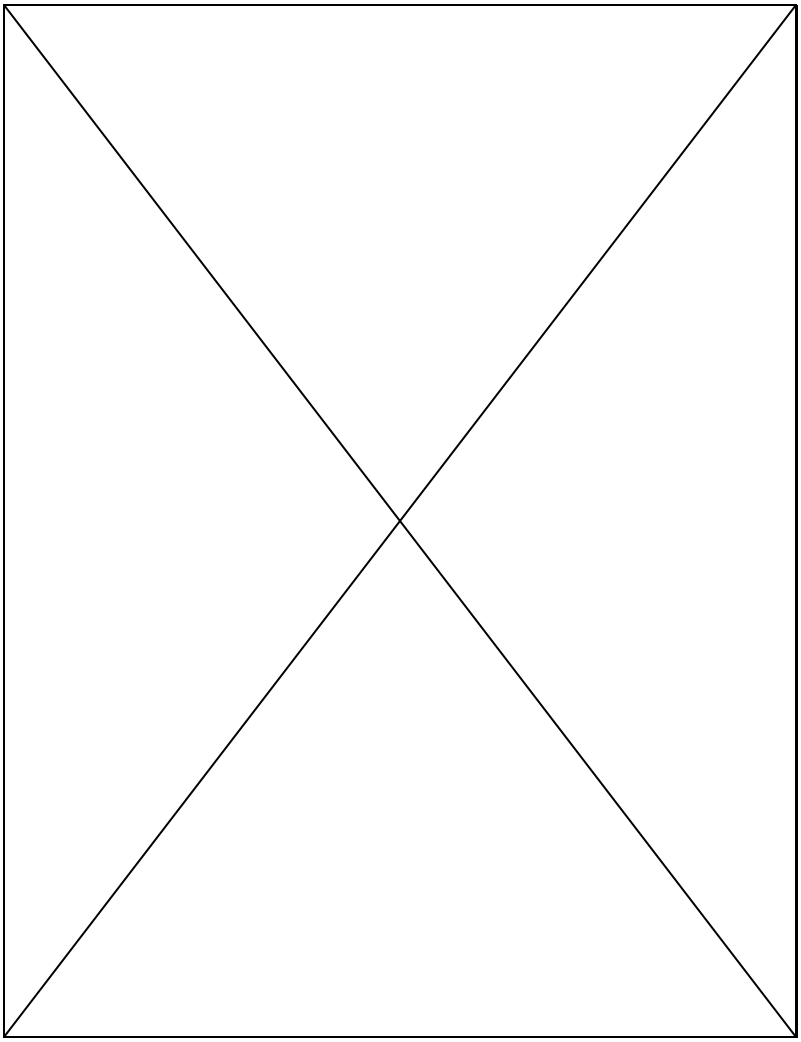


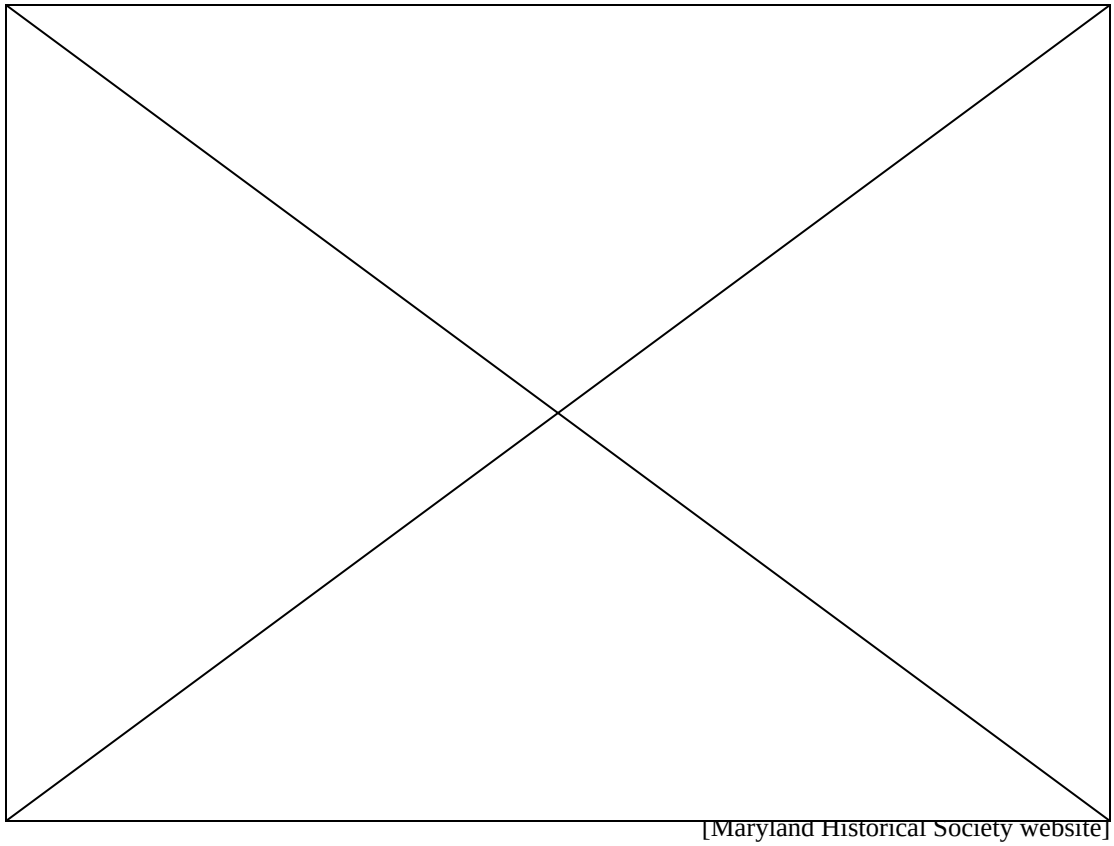
Figure 3: Leon Krier's Diagram of Community [Krier]

As Leon Krier shows in Figure 3, cities are made of “communities.” He describes a city with an identity independent from others, but still relating to the larger whole. This thesis embraces this concept and accepts his time-honored graphic as a foundation for designing for communities.

CHAPTER II: UNDERSTANDING THE URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

"Urban design is the intersection of architecture and planning, and one of its main foci is the way buildings relate to each other to create the public domain of cities, towns, and villages. It is the agent of transformation from abstract 'space' to humanized 'place'."

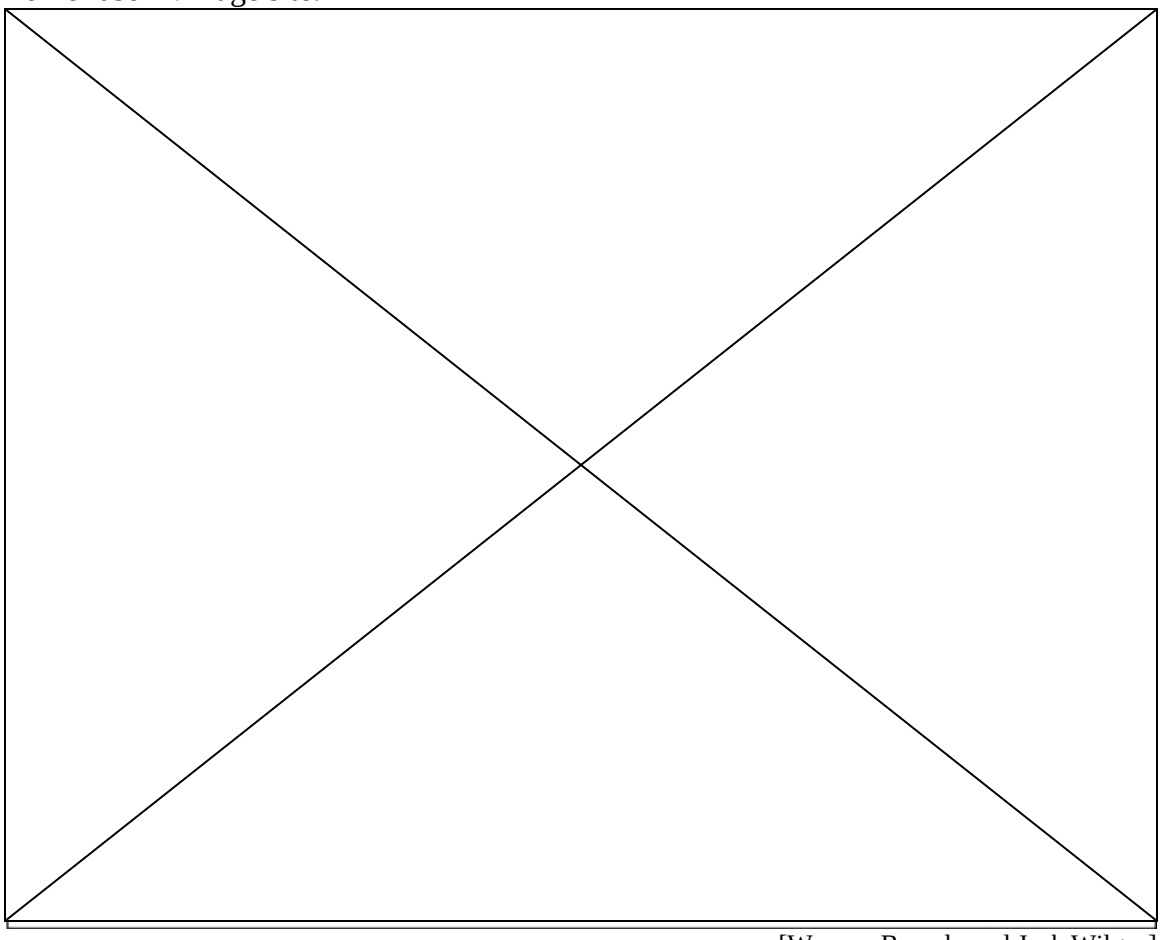
- David Walters



[Maryland Historical Society website]

Figure 4: Aerial Photo of City Hall Area, 1919
Image shows the complexity of the city and the integration of numerous urban elements.

In order to design "community," it is necessary to understand the physical elements of the neighborhood and how they relate to each other. This chapter provides a framework for understanding the urban neighborhood and the elements that define it. These elements include centers and edges, the street, the block and the building. Studying what others consider the ideal neighborhood, offers a framework for executing the design properties from chapter one and a framework for analyzing and designing the Edmondson Village site.



[Warren, Beverly and Jack Wilgus]

Figure 5: View of Mount Vernon Place 1873, Baltimore Md.
The view from the top of the 250 foot steeple of the First Presbyterian Church at Madison and Park Avenues looking toward Mount Vernon Place shows the complexity of the urban neighborhood and the integration of different building types.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhoods are the building blocks of cities and towns. They are a foundation for community and the result of relationships between urban components. Neighborhoods vary from city to city and within a particular city. Leon Krier sets up a list of guidelines and ideal sizes for the different components that make up a city. He starts with the urban quarter (neighborhood) and builds up to the entire metropolis.

Guidelines and Ideal Sizes for the Components of the City

Urban Quarter (neighborhood):
- The quarter should not exceed 80 acres in area and 10,000 residents/users.
- It should be organized around a hierarchy of streets and squares and the entire neighborhood should be contained within a ten minute walking radius (1/2 mile).
- The street grid should respond to and highlight the physical, topographic, natural, and historic features of the site.
- It functions as a city within a city and should be self-sufficient in preschool and elementary education, daily shopping, employment, and cultural and health facilities.

Borough:
- Up to four neighborhoods form a borough.
- A borough is self-sufficient in secondary education, weekly shopping and markets, local leisure, sports and entertainment as well as local administration and services and cultural facilities.

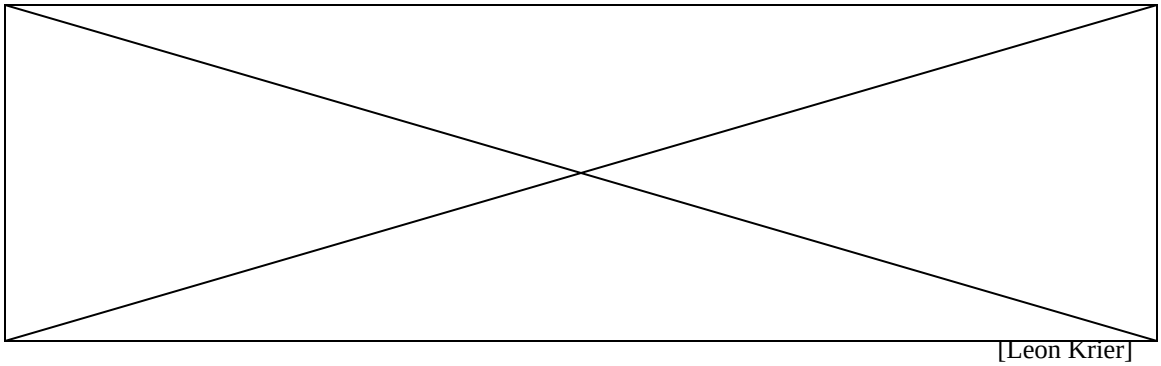
Town:
- Up to five boroughs make a town.
- A town is self-sufficient in monthly and periodic shopping, regional administration, and sports and leisure facilities.

City:
- An undetermined number (X) of towns make up a city.

Metropolis:
- An undetermined number (Y) of cities form a metropolis.

Figure 6: Leon Krier's Guidelines and Ideal Sizes for the Components of the City
These sizes and building requirements are for an ideal city. Edmondson Village in Baltimore does not meet all of Krier's requirements, but these guidelines set up a framework for the relationship between the site and the city and the types of functions and buildings that should be provided at each scale.

The city is both a cohesive whole, and an entity defined by a multitude of parts. These parts exist at various scales. A complex urban plan must be resolved with simplicity and legibility and articulated into public and private spaces. There needs to be a hierarchy between monuments and the urban fabric, between streets and squares, and between architecture and buildings.



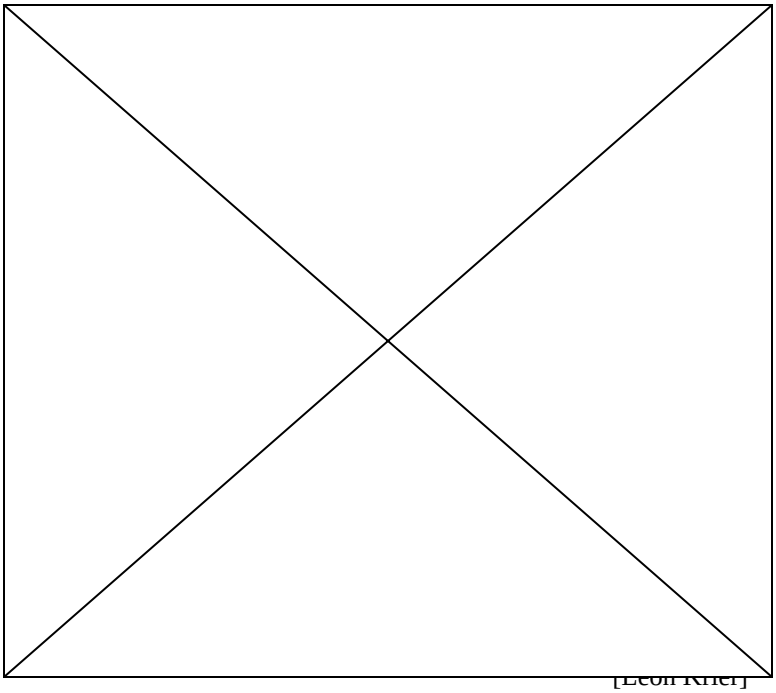
[Leon Krier]

Figure 7: Leon Krier's Civitas Diagram
The diagram shows the relationship between the public and private elements of the city. The integration of public and private buildings, spaces, and functions is necessary to have a viable city and neighborhood. The public spaces encourage community development and meet the needs of residents living in the neighborhood.

Successful integration of these elements is essential for a viable city. By integrating the public spaces with the private spaces the opportunities for social interaction are increased and the monuments and civic buildings serve as navigation tools throughout the city. Edges, streets, blocks, and buildings are all essential components to the organization of the city as a whole. These components are also seen at the smaller neighborhood scale. In order to understand the nature of the urban neighborhood, it is important to identify and describe these components and understand how these parts are organized relative to one another and to the larger city as a whole.

Centers and Edges

Centers and edges both contribute to the physical form of the city and neighborhood. Centers serve as a means for organization and a hub for activity. Centers provide hierarchy through use of solid and void. Nodes, landmarks, and intersections can all serve as centers for a neighborhood. A significant void (plaza, park, garden) provides a place for people to congregate and a form to organize other elements. In these cases, a center is an occupiable space that is meant to be experienced. A single object (landmark) or intersection can also center a neighborhood through identity and circulation. These objects are meant to be viewed and experienced from a distance. No matter what their nature, centers are essential to a viable neighborhood in order to establish a sense of place, increase opportunities for social interaction, and provide a framework for organization.



[Leon Krier]

Figure 8: Leon Krier's Diagram of boundary and center in the neighborhood
The diagram explains the importance of having a center in a neighborhood. Boundaries help establish community, but a center is necessary for maintaining it.

Edges serve as important organizing features within a neighborhood, holding together generalized areas. According to Kevin Lynch in The Image of the City, edges act as lateral references and are usually boundaries between two kinds of areas. The strongest types of edges are visually prominent, continuous in form, and provide impenetrable boundaries. They may close one area off from another or they may serve as a seam between two areas that joins them together. They also reinforce paths and create a liner to guide the pedestrian or highlight a boundary.[4] Physical elements such as water, parks, gardens, large squares, streets, and buildings can all serve as and begin to delineate boundaries for neighborhoods and unite two or more neighborhoods by providing a center.

The Street

The street serves many different functions in the city. Streets are outdoor rooms not only used for access, distribution, and orientation, but as a space of economic and social exchange. They hold potential for interaction, recreation, shopping, and experiencing the outdoors. They are qualified by a "strict relationship between building type, form of property, and the form of the public space."[5] The city street does not exist without the buildings that define it, and these buildings are built on blocks that form the framework for their evolution of the buildings.

The introduction of the automobile, however, changed the relationship between the pedestrian and the street. Instead of the street being a destination for human activity, it was transformed to a means for getting from place to place. Streets were seen as thoroughfares and neighborhoods that were once safe to walk through were interrupted

with speeding cars avoiding traffic on main streets. The challenge facing planners today and a goal of this thesis is to design a street that is pedestrian focused, but still acknowledges and accommodates the realities of the automobile. In order to achieve this integration, the pedestrian and the automobile must be thought of as a both/and scenario not an either/or scenario.

Like the urban fabric, streets can be designed and analyzed at different scales. At the urban scale, the layout of streets is seen as a diagram. At the urban scale it is important to establish a hierarchy of streets and understand that ultimately the street grid determines the shape and size of the block. A variety of street types allows for a diversity of visual experiences and a greater ability to accommodate different levels and types of traffic. In decreasing width size, the different types of streets include the Boulevard, Avenue, Main Street, and Residential Street.

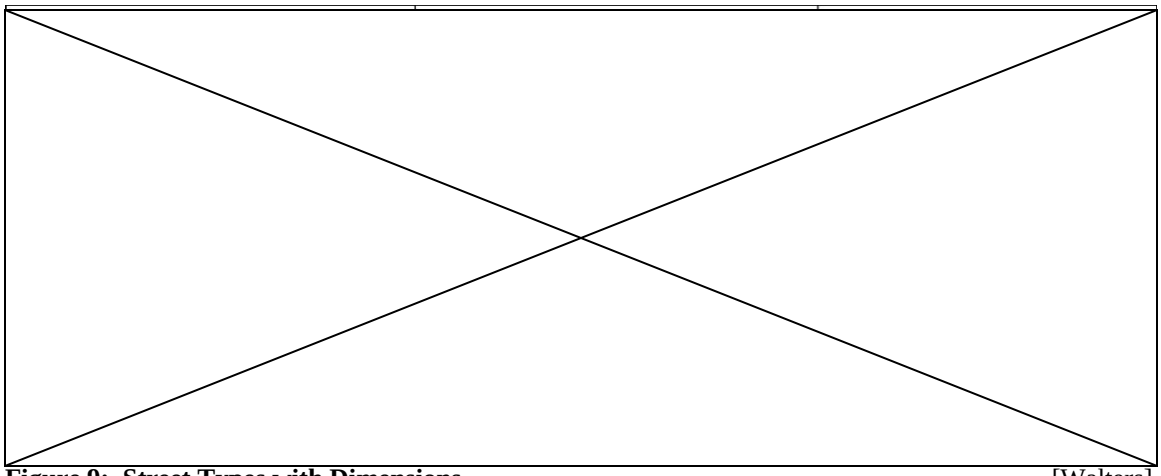
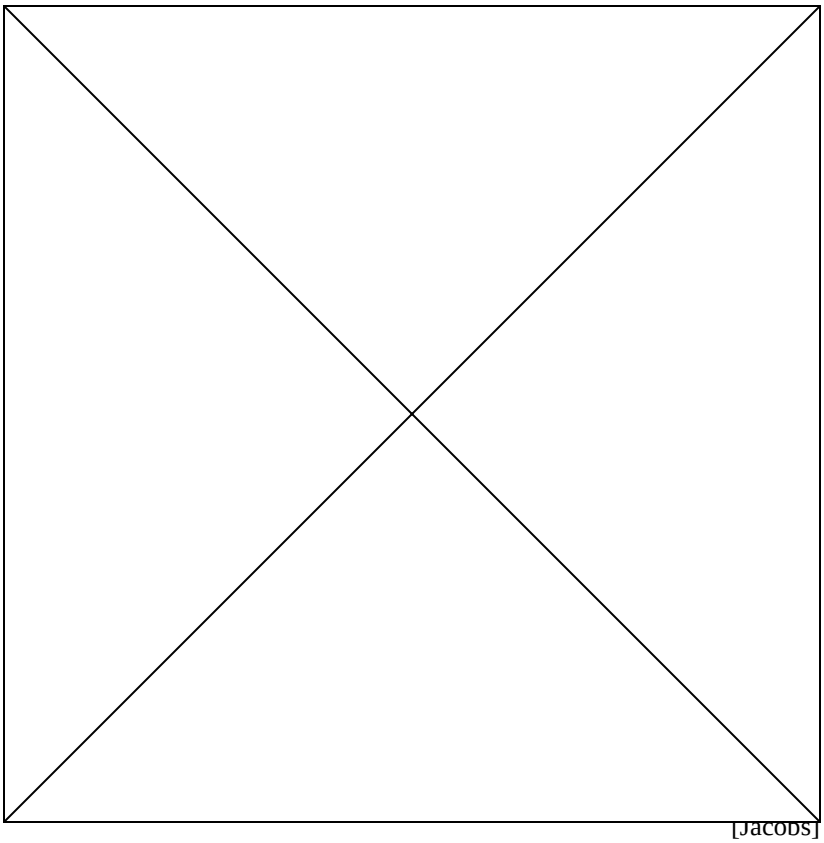


Figure 9: Street Types with Dimensions [Walters]
The drawing highlights the desire for street trees and on street parking on all streets. In Baltimore, main streets and residential streets are the most common.

At the architectural scale, the street is seen dimensionally and through its relationship to the building. Building height and street width ratios have a tremendous impact on the experience of the street. A width: height ratio of 1:4 is considered the minimum for providing a sense of enclosure.[6] The continuity of building facades also

has an important impact on the quality of the street. While the vertical dimension is important as an enclosing element, the horizontal surface determines the extent of the enclosure. In other words, the street is not experienced as a section, but as a perspective. Buildings provide an edge or façade to the street. A break in the continuous façade can provide a moment of pause or feeling of discontinuity. These matters need to be considered during the design process. The perception of a street determines who is the invited guest, the pedestrian or the automobile.

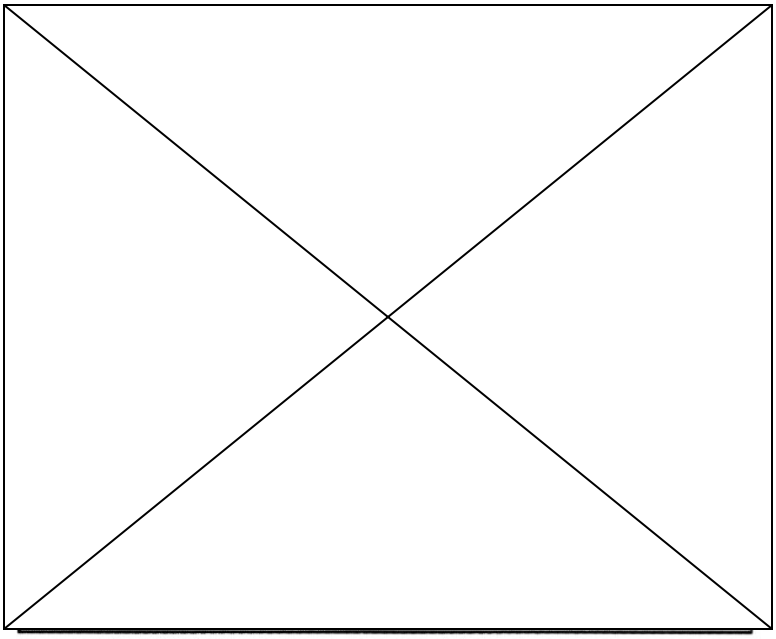


[Jacobs]

Figure 10: Street sections with perspectives showing the height to width ratio of the street
The height of the building and width of the street determine the character of the street and the pedestrian and vehicular experience moving through it.

The sense of enclosure is also determined by the experience of walking along the sidewalk. The street is divided into five zones and the dimension of these zones impacts the pedestrian experience. The building is the first zone which creates a façade and

character for the street. It also plays a significant role in determining the sense of enclosure. The second zone is the pedestrian zone, the sidewalk. The materials and width determine the pedestrian experience. This zone can also provide space for café seating or merchandise. In the third zone, the landscaping and trees create shade and establish enclosure. The fourth zone is for on-street parking which provides a barrier between the pedestrian and the moving traffic. The final zone is the travel lanes where the number and width of the lanes affects character and quality of the street from building face to building face.



[Walters 254]

Figure 11: The Basic Elements of a Pedestrian – Oriented Street
The relationship and dimensions of these five zones forms a basis for this thesis. In order to encourage interaction and establish a sense of place, the street needs to a place that accommodates both the pedestrian and the automobile and allows for a pleasant experience.

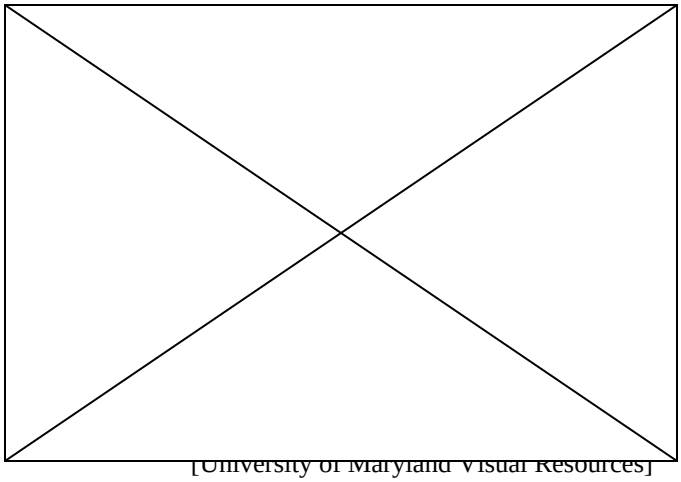
At the detail scale, materials, furniture, and landscape are essential in determining the character of the street. These elements all establish the overall spatial quality of the street and how they are used by the pedestrian and the automobile. Streets lined with trees provide numerous benefits. The trees help create a unified horizontal façade, they

add texture and color, and functionally serve to protect the pedestrian from sunlight and wind. Trees and on street parking also protect the pedestrian from moving cars. Elements like street lights, benches, and paving patterns play an important role in determining pedestrian traffic patterns and contributing to feelings of comfort and security. Narrow streets with little to no street furniture are typically fast paced pedestrian corridors. Trees, benches, lighting, and a change in paving patterns generally cause the pedestrian to move at more leisurely pace and they are more likely to engage in conversation with other people or stop and shop at store along the street. Lights also add an increased sense of security making people more willing to use the shops and restaurants at night.

The Block

It is argued that the building block must be identified as "the most important typological element in the composition of urban spaces, the key element of any urban pattern." [7] The importance of the block, however, is that it does not exist in isolation. It is the result and combination of all the other elements in the urban fabric. Simply put by Leon Krier, it is "a plot of land defined all around by a multitude of planned and unplanned paths, roads, and streets." Roads and paths determine the shape of the block and the types of buildings placed on the block determine its significance. The street layout determines the blocks' relationship with the site, center, and its ability for extension. The width and depth of the block are determined by the types of buildings on the plot.

When considering appropriate block sizes for a neighborhood, issues such as self-defense, visual interest, sense of place, sense of security, social contact, and social isolation are all important things to consider. The location, size, and type of block influence the way these issues are perceived by the user.



[University of Maryland Visual Resources]

Figure 12: Aerial of Atlantic City, NJ
Atlantic City blocks are too long and wide. While there is a grid, they do not accommodate good land use. There is little to no consistency in the 'urban' fabric. Residences are knocked down in order to build large skyscrapers and the buildings do not hold the edge.

In European cities the smallest and typologically most complex building blocks are found in the urban centers. Blocks tend to grow larger and are separated by wider and longer streets towards the periphery of the city. In order to accommodate high densities, blocks should be small to gain the maximum amount of light and air for each unit. A good size for a block is 200 by 500 feet. New York blocks are generally 200 by 500-700 feet. The size of the block also determines the type of buildings that are placed on it. Narrow blocks are more conducive to row houses and small buildings, while larger blocks are more suitable for detached houses, houses with courtyards, and apartment buildings. Smaller blocks allow for more intersections which encourages chance meetings and social interaction between neighbors. People are more likely to walk places

when blocks are smaller as well. When designing for community, this is an important factor to consider in order to provide opportunities for interactions to occur.

Finally, in addition to understanding the location and size of a block, it is important to understand the different geometries in which a block can be formed. There are primarily four different types of block geometries; the rectangle, square, triangle, and polygon. The triangle and polygon are not commonly used because they are inefficient in terms of economic development. They are typically a result of circumstance instead of a conscious planning decision. The square block is typically enclosed on all four sides with buildings creating large open space for a courtyard or parking. The problem with square blocks is that they have fronts on all four sides and there is no hierarchy to the block. Square blocks are frequently transformed into two rectangular blocks separated by an alley. The rectangular block is the most common and efficient type of block because of its ability and potential to be sub-divided into deep, narrow lots, which conserves the length of utility lines and the number of required streets. The rectangular block has fronts on the longer side providing hierarchy and less front/back issues. The square and rectangular blocks are most conducive to facilitating social interaction and creating a sense of place.

The Building

Like streets, buildings perform an important urban function in creating outdoor rooms and serving as elements of enclosure within the city. A building façade can create a picturesque skyline and provide visual interest and variety. A building can stand alone as an icon, terminate an axis, or fit into a unified composition of repetitive bays. The

repetitive nature of buildings begins to set up organizing principles such as datum lines, rhythm, repetition, symmetry, hierarchy, and scale that then inform the overall composition of the neighborhood and city.

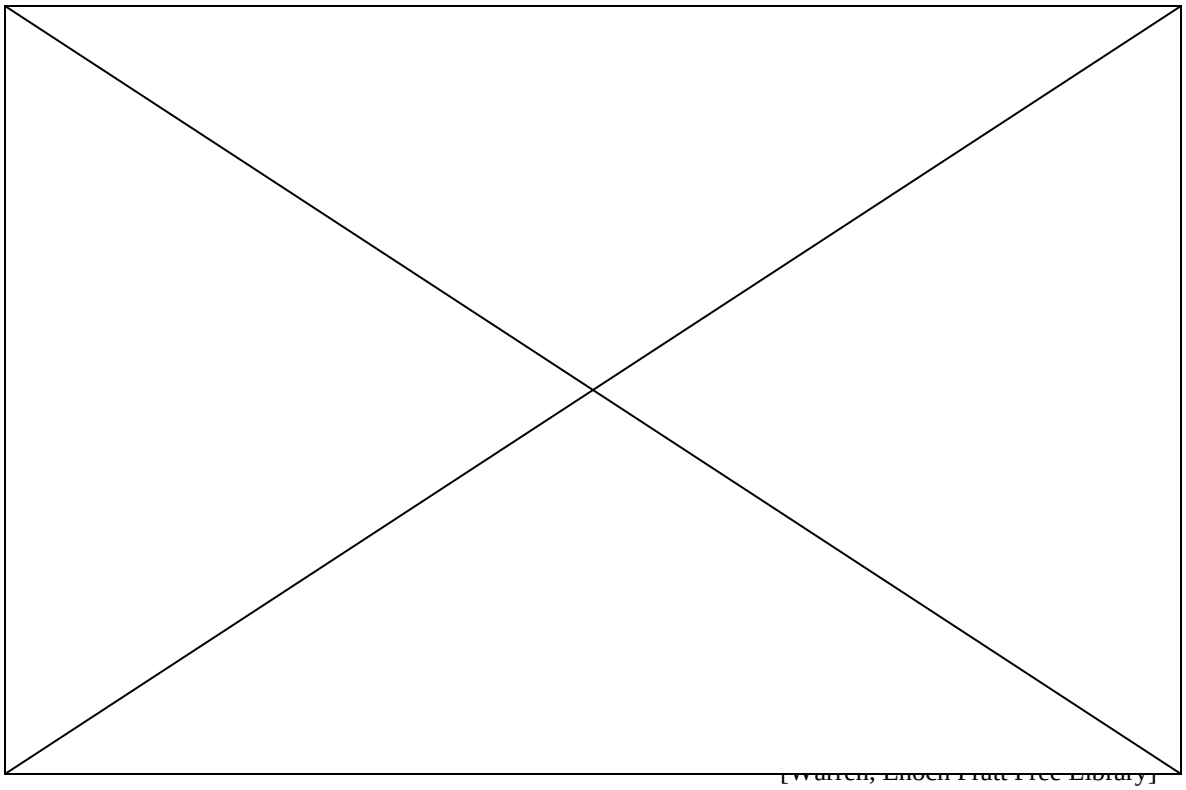
Different building types serve different functions and are therefore laid out in different ways. Public and symbolic buildings are typically situated on public squares and are visible from streets and avenues throughout the area. Residential buildings and places of work are situated along streets, courts, alleys, and avenues. The public buildings are dispersed throughout the residential fabric. The organization of these buildings helps to create boundaries and delineate public and private spaces. Successful integration of the public and private sector allows for a greater number of individual needs to be met and increased chances for social interaction.

Understanding these components and their relationship to one another provides a framework for analyzing existing site conditions, outlining goals and objectives, and developing design strategies. Delineating boundaries and establishing a center is also important for the design of community. The organization of streets, blocks, and the building typologies will define the character of the neighborhood and its ability to foster community activity. In the following chapters it is important to consider the different elements that make up a neighborhood and their relationship to one another.

CHAPTER III: THE SITE AND ITS ROLE IN COMMUNITY

"It is the stability of a place that permits people to identify with it, and indeed social stability and physical stability (the architecture of place) go hand in hand."

- Norman Crowe



[Warren, Enoch Pratt Free Library]

Figure 13: View of Pratt Street Wharves and Baltimore City, 1849
Image shows the complexity of the city and the integration of urban elements. The Washington Monument is in the background, north of the City. The harbor and the monuments shaped the early identity and character of the city.

UNDERSTANDING BALTIMORE AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS

Founded in 1729, Baltimore is currently the 12th largest city in the United States, with 651,154 residents; it is commonly called "Charm City" for its resident's well-established concern for the quality of life. Considered a southern town, Baltimore owes much of its early growth and prosperity to its desirable location. It is located farther west than any other major Atlantic port, making it ideal for the shipping industry. Its economy, cultural life, and geography, all influenced its local development.

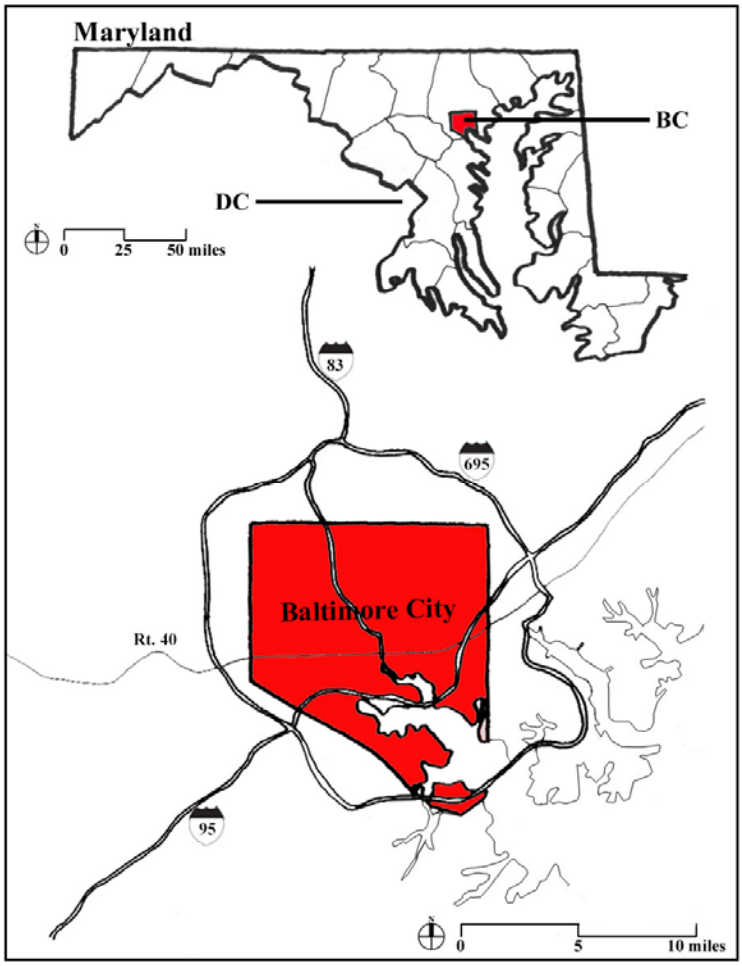


Figure 14: Baltimore City in relation to the state of Maryland and surrounding county.
Baltimore City is located in the central part of Maryland along the Patapsco River. The major roads used to access the city are Interstate 83 from the north, 695 and Route 40 from the east and west, and Interstate 95 from the south and north-east.

Baltimoreans tend to have roots in clearly identified neighborhoods. Since the 18th century, Baltimore has been subdivided into distinguishable neighborhoods. The original three communities, Jones Town, Baltimore Town, and Fells Point, each developed its own character and provided different amenities for its residents. Jones Town, east of the Jones Falls and centered along Front and Gay Streets, was modeled after a little community in England with markets, theaters, and picturesque houses. Baltimore Town, west of the Jones Falls, was less developed and contained some homes and farms. Fells Point, southeast of Jones Town along the harbor, became the center for families of sailing men and a thriving community of wharves, warehouses, and a shipyard where many skilled workers settled.[8]

After the initial consolidation into Baltimore City, neighborhoods focused around squares, theaters, inns, and churches. These public buildings became the heart of the city and places for social interaction and community gathering. The area around the Washington Monument was surrounded by fine homes and it became the center of fashion and culture for Baltimore. Church-centered neighborhoods involving nationality groups were the strongest and most easily distinguishable neighborhoods of early Baltimore. Immigrants from France, Ireland, Russia, Poland, Italy, Lithuania, and China all centered their communities around religious buildings. Churches served as a place to gather and a way for cultures to retain their identity and culture. Public food markets also became a center for communities. With the growing population, more markets were built and ultimately these areas became neighborhood shopping centers. These early neighborhoods were held together by a common identity among residents, viable public buildings, and understood boundaries.

As the city continued to grow these unifying characteristics were less evident; today there are fewer and fewer distinguishable neighborhoods, especially in the inner-city areas. Some neighborhoods still retain their original character and close community, but many neighborhoods have artificial boundaries and have lost their original identity. The natural growth of the city and the influx of immigrants during the 19th century, forced many original residents to abandon the once fashionable neighborhoods characteristic of Monument Square. These residents moved out of their established neighborhoods and moved to the newer areas of the city causing Baltimore to lose some of its earliest neighborhood identities.[9] As the old residents moved to newer places in Baltimore, they were replaced by new immigrant populations that retained their Old World customs, traditions, and values, establishing new neighborhood patterns based on ethnic communities. By the early 20th century, after accumulating a degree of wealth, these ethnic communities also moved out of their neighborhoods and dispersed throughout the city and suburbs.

By the 1930s, Baltimore, like many other large cities, experienced a large influx of Southern migrants, both black and white. In the 1950s, Baltimore's population peaked at 949,708 which ranked it as the sixth-largest city in the country, but this new migration of southerners resulted in the flight of established residents to the suburbs. This flight led to more dispersion of the population and further breakdown of neighborhood identities.

While these changes have caused the unifying characteristics of many city neighborhoods to disappear, in some areas squares, parks, churches, markets, and shopping areas remain focal points for neighborhoods providing historic continuity and community identity. Today, Baltimore is comprised of over 270 neighborhoods, each a

distinct community with different histories, traditions, and characteristics. "The neighborhoods contain more than 750 neighborhood associations, block clubs, and other kinds of formal and informal groups organized by residents to promote and ensure the health, safety, and well being of their neighborhoods."[10]

Edmondson Village in Southwest Baltimore is no exception to these trends. The neighborhood serves as a transition between the urban and suburban patterns of the city and has experienced rapid economic and social change. There are still active community organizations and neighborhood pride, but the area is lacking the urban and architectural focal points that provide a sense of place, community identity, and places for people to interact.

EDMONDSON VILLAGE

Neighborhoods play an essential role in community. They are defined by boundaries, provide public spaces, civic and institutional buildings, and community organizations for residents to meet and members to foster relationships. Baltimore is the city of study because historically it is a city of neighborhoods with strong community identity. Within Baltimore, Edmondson Village was chosen because it is a neighborhood that lacks a center in an urban environment. Within Edmonson Village, the historic shopping center site presents an opportunity to re-knit a struggling neighborhood by providing a mixed use village center as an integral part of the community. Despite suffering from dramatic social and economic change, Edmondson Village residents still have a strong sense of pride and ownership in their neighborhood. This thesis investigates the development of a village center and its ability to re-center a community and establish a sense of place.

Figure 15: Edmondson Village site in relation to Baltimore City and the surrounding county.
Located in Southwest Baltimore along Route 40, Edmondson Avenue, it is approximately one mile east of the city line and four miles west of the inner harbor in downtown Baltimore.

For the purpose of this thesis, Edmondson Village includes the neighborhoods of Edmondson Village, Allendale, Uplands, Ten Hills, Hunting Ridge, and Rognel Heights. These neighborhoods are divided into four quadrants which form a village. These quadrants equate back to Leon Krier's diagram on page 8 with the notion of a city as a group of communities. Each neighborhood acts as an urban community and together they form a larger community that exists within the city of Baltimore.

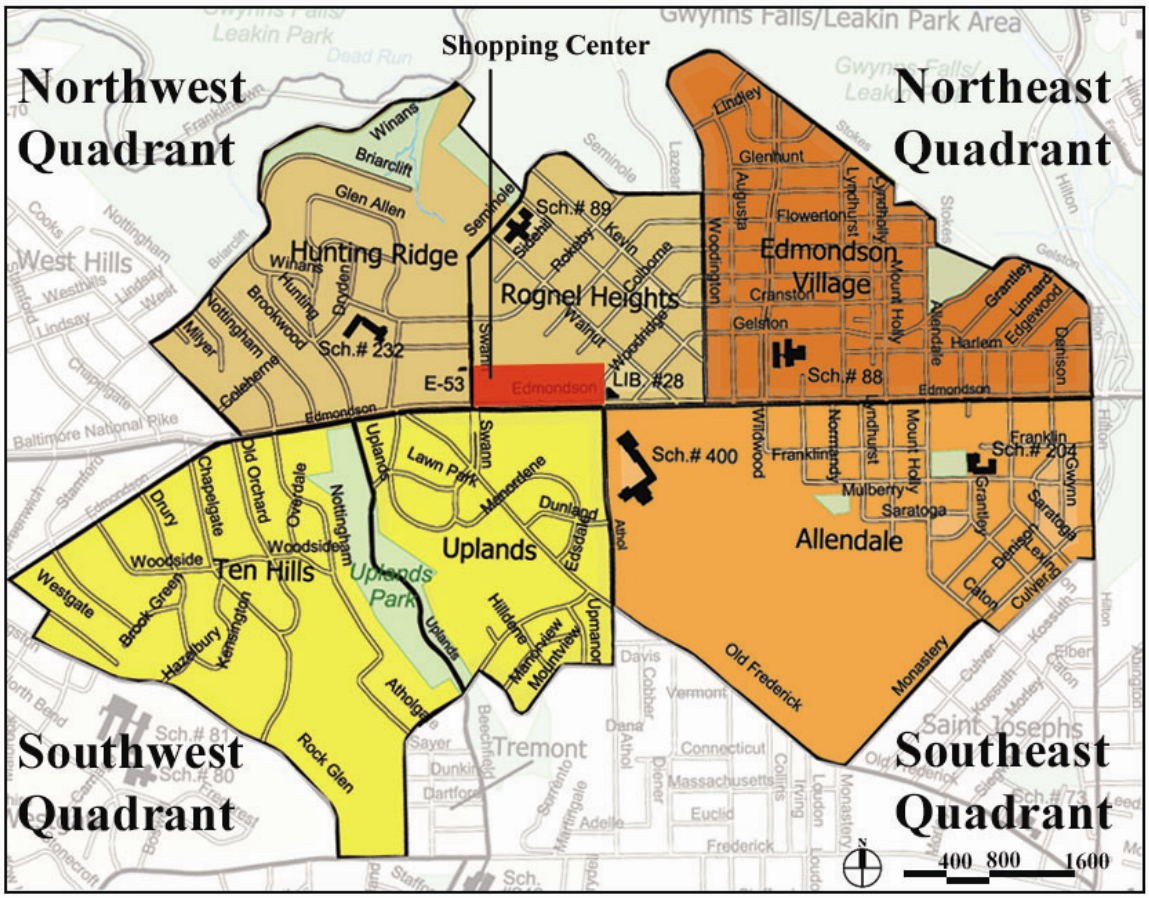


Figure 16: Edmondson Village Quadrants
The six neighborhoods of Edmondson Village are divided into four quadrants which form a village. The northeast quadrant includes Edmondson Village, the Southeast quadrant includes Allendale, the Southwest quadrant includes Uplands and Ten Hills, and the Northwest quadrant includes Hunting Ridge and Rognel Heights.

Housing Typologies

Each neighborhood in Edmondson Village has its own character and set of boundaries. They differ in size, density, and residential type, but overall they relate to each other through materials and scale. Some neighborhoods are better connected to each other and to institutional buildings and public space in the area, while others are more segregated.

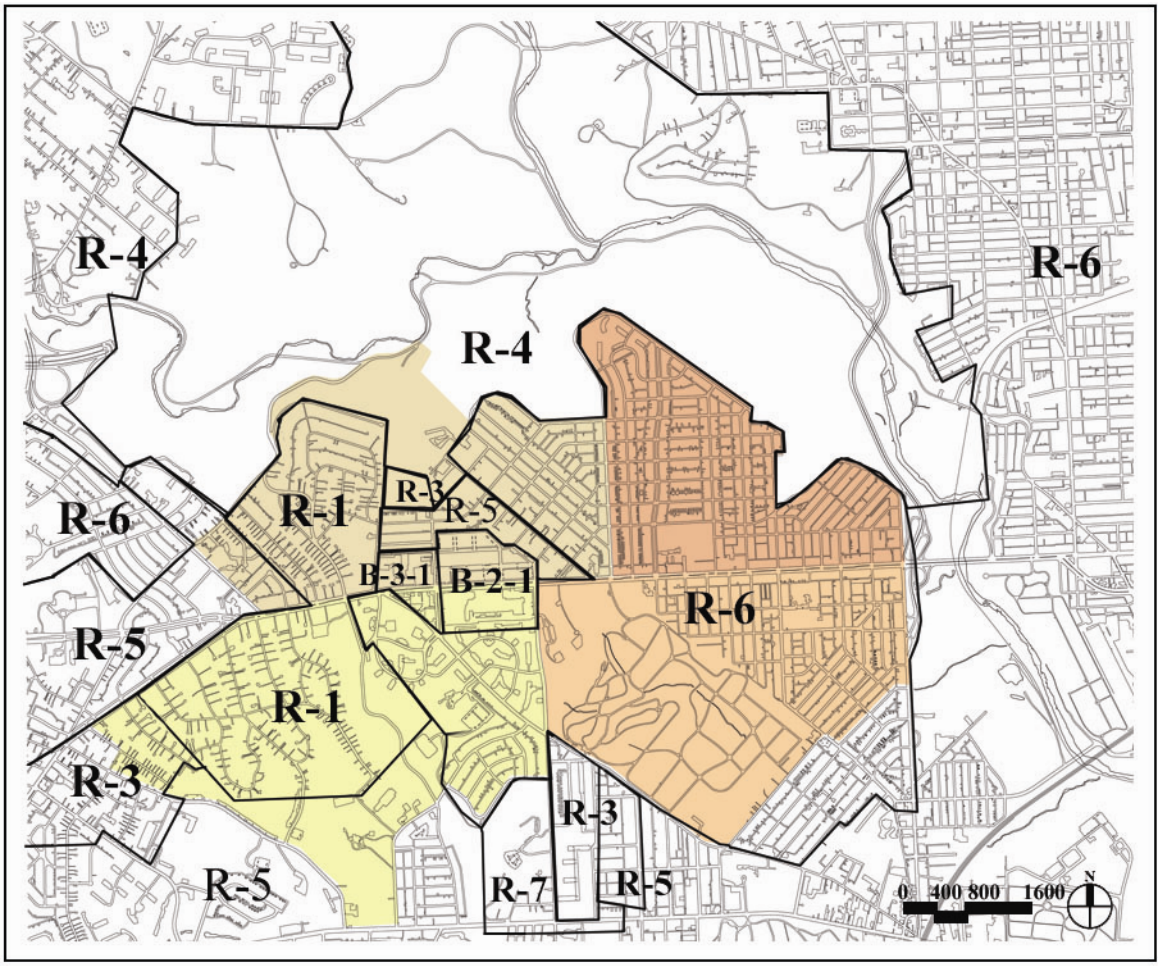


Figure 17: Edmondson Village and surrounding neighborhoods zoning diagram
Edmondson Village and its surrounding neighborhoods are predominantly zoned residential. R-1 and R-3 zones are single family residence districts and the other 'R' zones are general residence districts. This allows for a variety of housing types and the ability to increase density around the village center. The current Edmondson Village shopping center is B-2-1 zoning, which is a community business district. Edmondson Square is B-3-1, which is a community commercial district. This limits the amount of commercial allowed on the site and sets up a center for commercial, public, and community functions. Edmondson Village Shopping Center - B-2-1: FAR 0.8. Minimum lot area: $550ft^2$ per rooming unit, $750ft^2$ per efficiency unit, $1{,}100ft^2$ per other dwelling unit. Yards: front: 20ft deep; interior side yard: none required; street corner side: 15ft deep; rear yard: 30ft deep.

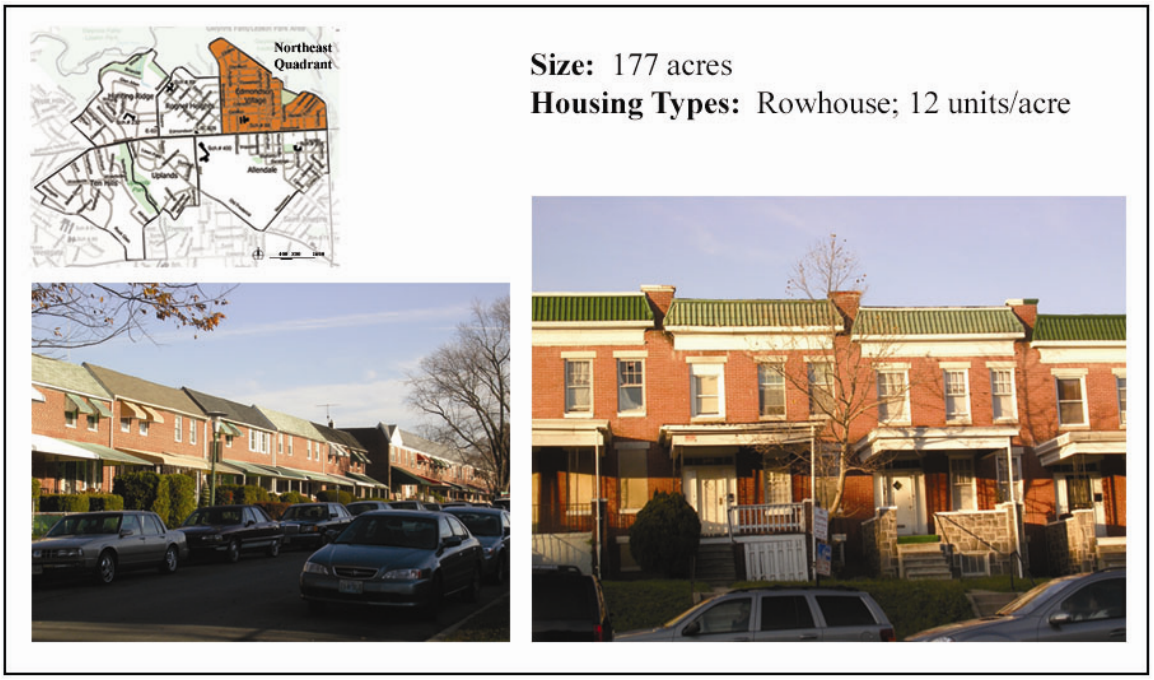


Figure 18: Northeast Quadrant, Edmondson Village housing types
Edmondson Village is characterized by rowhouses. The houses vary slightly throughout the neighborhood, but all are set back from the street with porches.

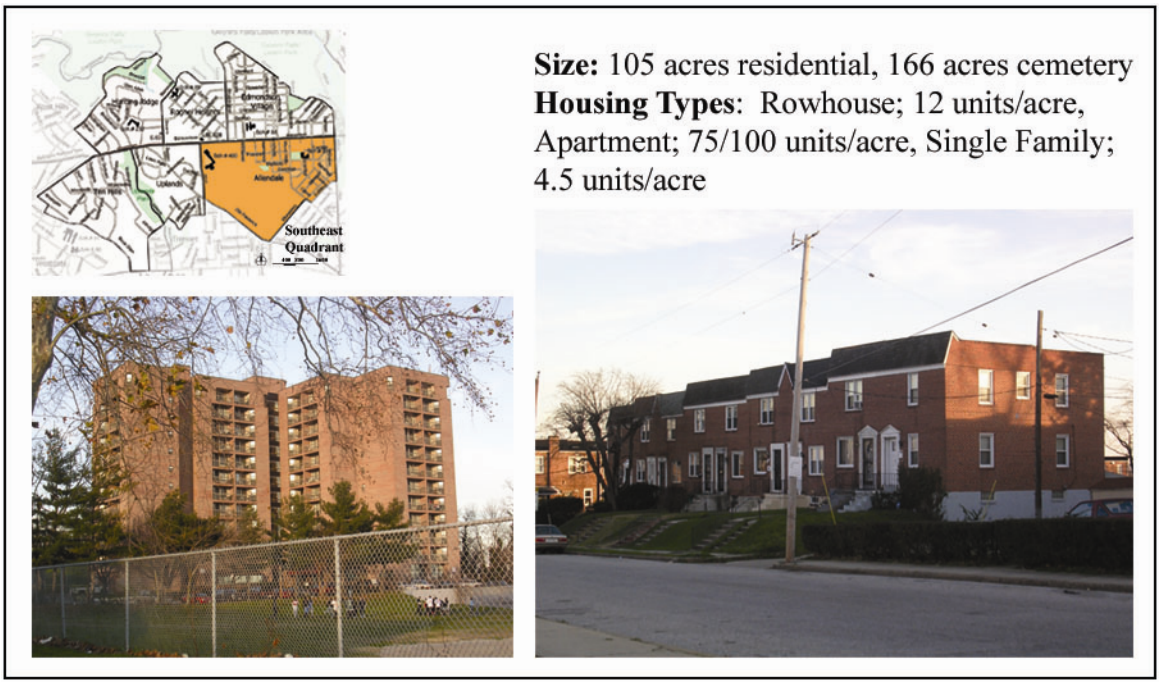


Figure 19: Southwest Quadrant, Allendale housing types
Allendale has a mix of housing types, but is predominantly rowhouses. Like Edmondson Village the houses vary throughout the neighborhood and not all houses have porches. There is one tower apartment building in the center of the neighborhood with playing fields around it, providing places for people play sports and meet. The cemetery takes up most of the neighborhood and provides a natural boundary to the area.

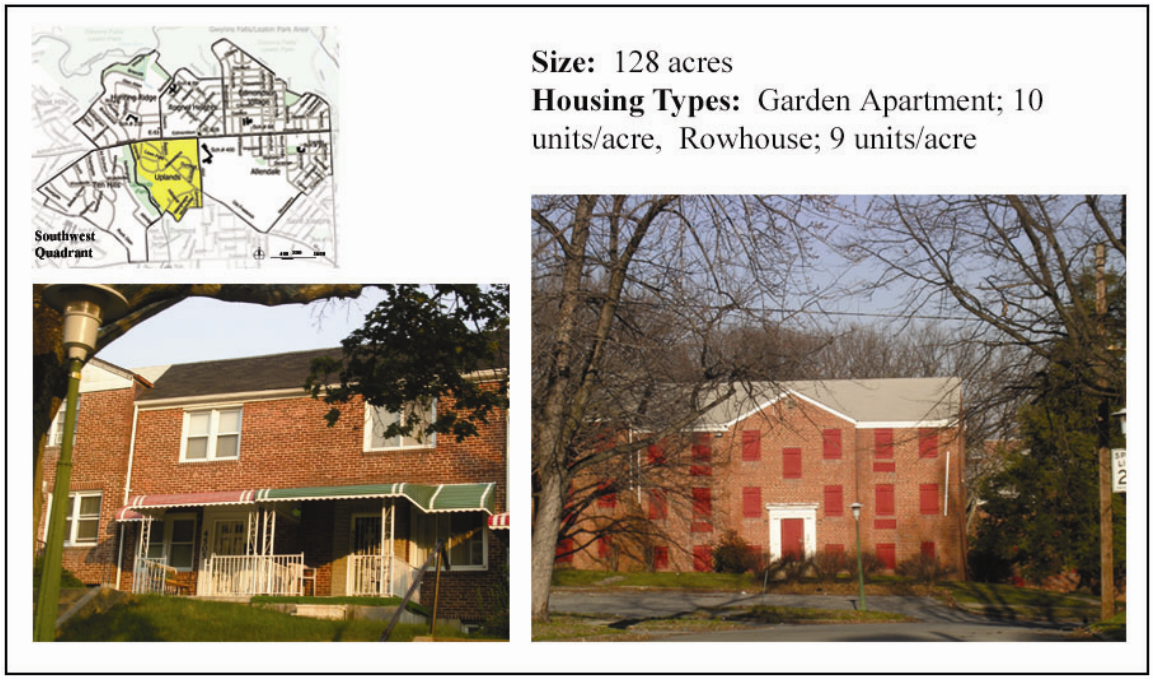


Figure 20: Southwest Quadrant, Uplands housing types
There were approximately 997 units of the Uplands Apartments spread over eight irregularly shaped blocks in the early 1950s. It was remodeled in the 1980s as subsidized housing. Currently these garden apartments are abandoned. The few streets with rowhouses were active with people during the day.

Figure 21: Southwest Quadrant, Ten Hills housing types
The houses in Ten Hills are the largest single family homes in the area. They all have large lots and are surrounded by trees. The southern portion of the neighborhood, towards Uplands, has ranchers and a few low density apartments.

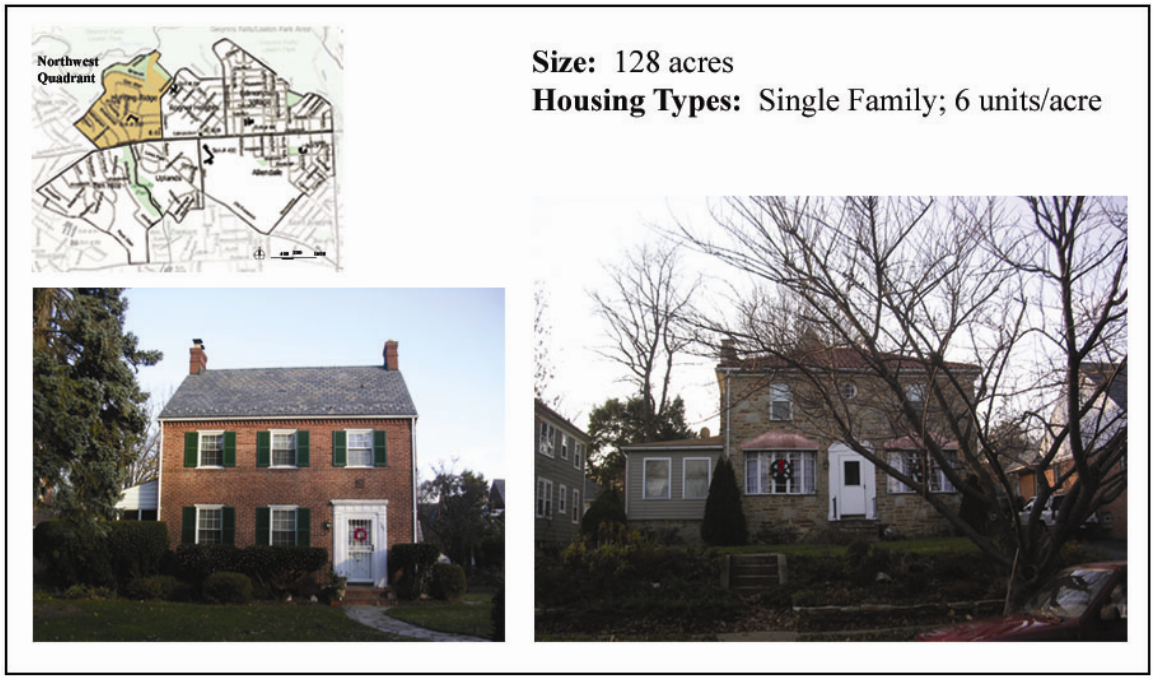


Figure 22: Northwest Quadrant, Hunting Ridge housing types
Hunting Ridge has large single family homes, but the houses are closer together than the houses in Ten Hills. This neighborhood had a diverse population and people were outside talking and maintaining their lawns.

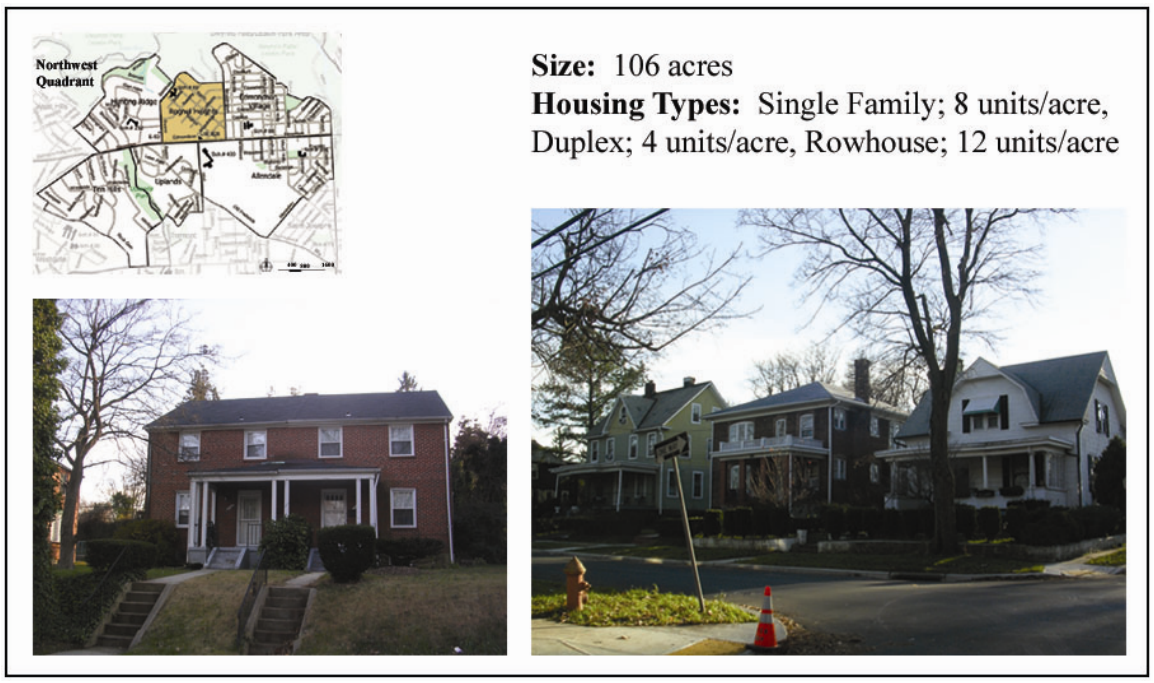
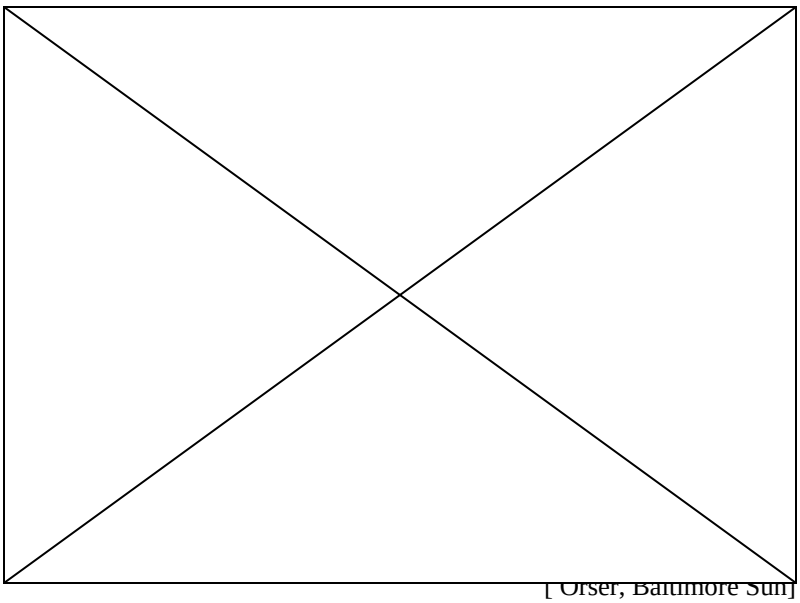


Figure 23: Northwest Quadrant, Rognel Heights housing types
Rognel Heights wraps the commercial area of the existing shopping center. The shopping center is surrounded by single family homes that are on smaller lots than the other neighborhoods. There are also a few blocks of duplexes that are a transition between the Hunting Ridge and Rognel Heights neighborhoods.

Figure 24: Edmondson Village Housing Densities
The density calculations were based on the following assumptions: the dwelling units per acre were taken from the middle of the street (not the property line) and every 600 square feet = 1 person. This averaged to 3 people for single family homes, 2.5 people for rowhouses and duplexes, and 2 people for garden apartments. The density around the shopping center needs to be increased. This includes infill housing in the neighborhoods, the redevelopment of Uplands, and mixed use housing on the shopping center site.

Edmondson Village Shopping Center and Related Property

The Edmondson Village Shopping Center was developed on an eleven acre site in 1947 as one of the nation's first planned suburban shopping centers. The buildings were built in the style of Colonial Williamsburg suggesting stability and tradition in a setting that encouraged new customer behavior. Twenty-nine stores were built set back from the street and with a garage that could accommodate 700 automobiles. Recreational facilities (a theater and bowling alley) were located among the stores and a clubroom for neighborhood activities was provided to help consumers adjust to the new purchasing activities. These amenities in addition to the trees, shrubberies, dormers, and fake chimneys added a residential quality to the center making it easier for residents to adapt to the changes.[11]



[Orser, Baltimore Sun]

Figure 25: Edmondson Village Shopping Center, 1947
The original shopping center was a place for community activity and a central place for children to meet, adults to shop, and partake in leisure activities.

In his book, Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story, Edward Orser recalls interviews with original residents about how they used the shopping center and surrounding institutional buildings. He explains that for families, the

churches in the area served as hubs for both religious and social life. He later states that "the development of Edmondson Village's commercial facilities played an important role in the form a patterned youth culture took in the postwar community."[12] The movies, bowling alley, drug stores, and ice cream shops, all provided places not only for consumption but for gathering. The management of the shopping center facilitated this community activity by providing facilities for a teen center and sponsored dances in the parking lot.[13] This history provides a snapshot of the vitality and identity the shopping center had for the Edmondson Village community. By re-introducing community oriented facilities and places for gathering, a new sense of place can be created.

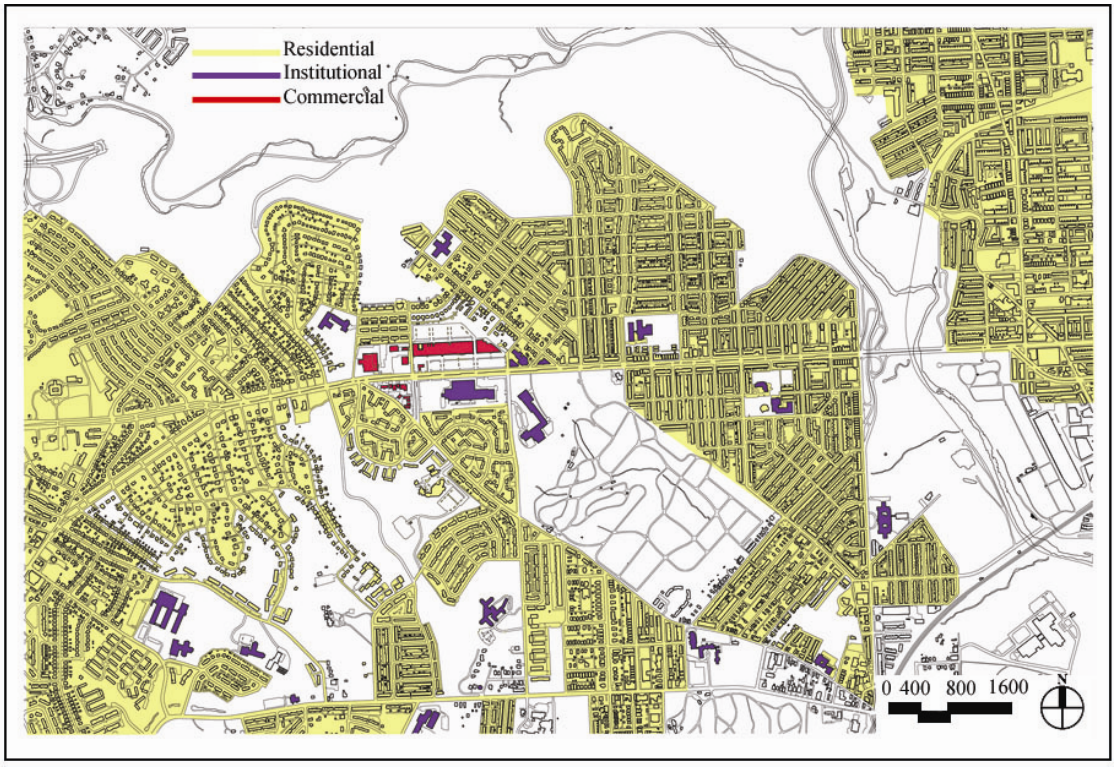


Figure 26: Edmondson Village Land Use Diagram
The Edmondson Village Shopping Center and Edmondson Square provide the only commercial uses along this section of Route 40. The institutional buildings are scattered throughout the neighborhoods. The high school, skills center, library, and church are all located at the Route 40 and Athol Road intersection. The majority of the land is residential and is surrounded by park land and cemetery.

West View Shopping Center

Ingleside Shopping Center

Figure 27: Closest Shopping Centers to Edmondson Village

West View Shopping Center and Ingleside Shopping Center are located 2.35 miles west of Edmondson Village. The stores include low to mid-end retail, primarily clothing, cleaning, banking, beauty shops, and drug stores. Besides a few fast food places there are limited places to eat. West View Shopping Center has a movie theater, but neither suburban center provides pedestrian-friendly open spaces. Major stores include Lowes, Value City, Sams Club, Safeway, RiteAid, and Blockbuster.

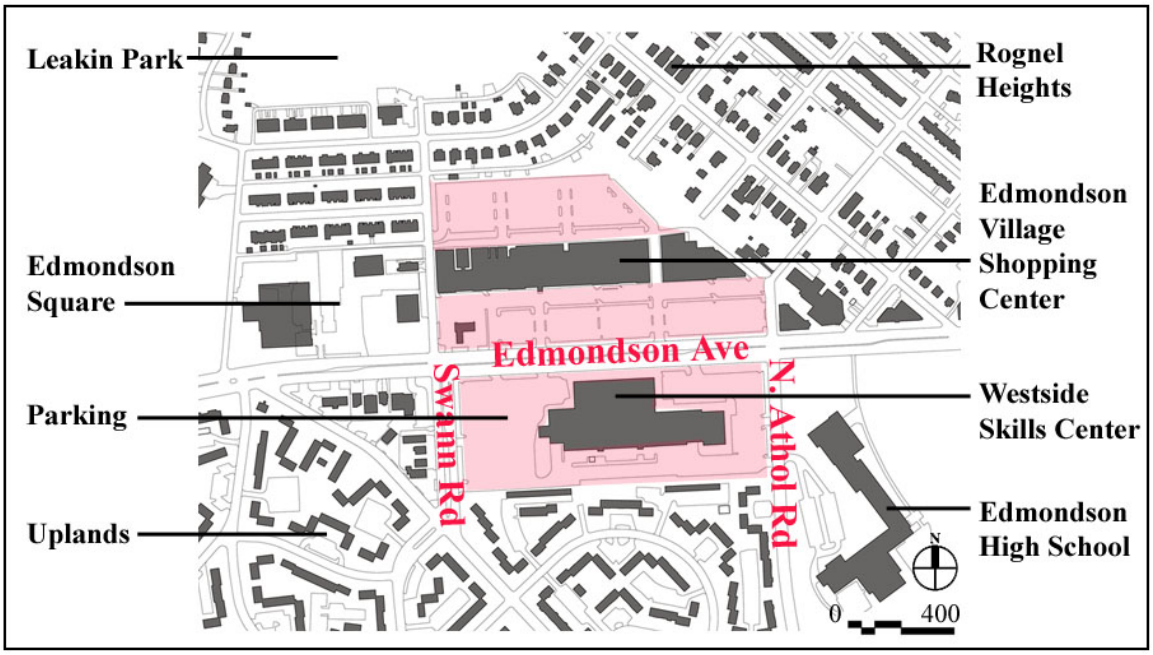


Figure 28: Edmondson Village Shopping Center and related Properties
The Edmondson Village shopping center is 744,000 square feet (1,240 feet along Edmondson Ave and 600 feet along Swann Road). Edmondson Square is 760 feet along Edmondson Ave and 400 feet along Swann Road. Both shopping centers are surrounded by parking lots. The lot for Edmondson Village has 700 spots and also serves the library and the church. The current housing around the shopping center in is low density with primarily detached housing, duplexes, and abandoned garden apartments.

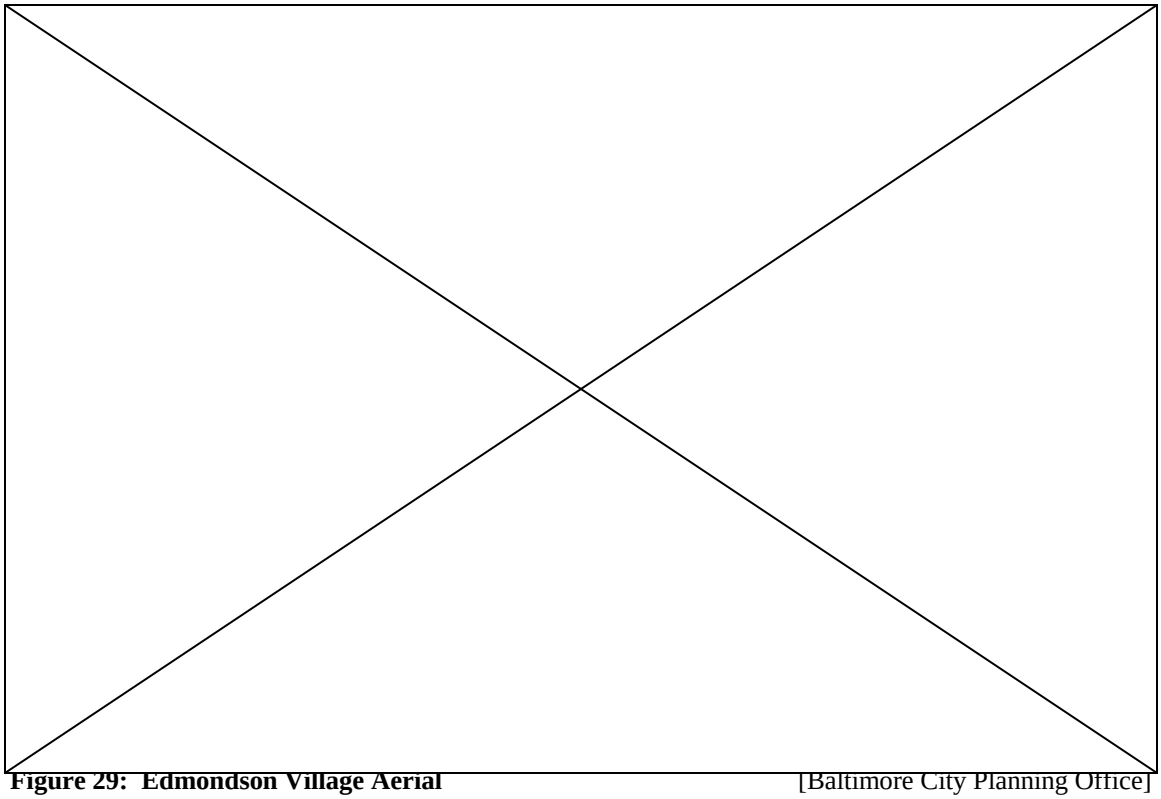


Figure 29: Edmondson Village Aerial [Baltimore City Planning Office]
The aerial photograph shows the character of the fabric surrounding the shopping center. It also shows the large amount of surface parking on the site.

Edmondson Square contains a Giant, Advanced Auto Parts, and a discount party store. It is currently not connected to the Edmondson Village Shopping Center.

The Shopping Center contains University Care Medical Center, laundry and cleaners, physical therapy, Family Dollar, a pawn shop, beauty shops, Subway, and Popeyes.

The Shell Station anchors the west side of the shopping center along Swann Rd. Despite the traffic along Rt 40, there are not many gas stations.

Besides the shopping centers, the only commerical along this part of Rt 40 is the strip of stores across from Giant. They include a liquor store, beauty shop, and a few offices.

Figure 30: Commercial Buildings in Edmondson Village

There is limited number of commercial buildings along Route 40. Most of the stores are convenience and low-end stores and there are few retail stores or offices. In order to provide a center that is used by residents, the stores need to better serve their needs and cater to a variety of income levels.

The Centeral Church of Christ and the Church of God are both located along Edmondson Avenue and share parking from the shopping center.

Started in 1882, Enoch Pratt is the oldest free public library in the state serving all races, both rich and poor. This branch opened in 1952 on Edmondson Ave.

Edmondson High School has grades 9-12 with an enrollment of 1,066 students. They currently have below average test scores and student teacher ratios.

Originally a Hecht Company, the West Side skills center is currently a vocational skills center serving six high schools.

Figure 31: Civic and Institutional buildings around the Edmondson Village Shopping Center
The cluster of civic and institutional buildings at the Athol Rd intersection provides a framework for places for people to gather. These essential buildings provide necessary functions to the community reinforcing the proposed location for the village center at the location of the current shopping center.

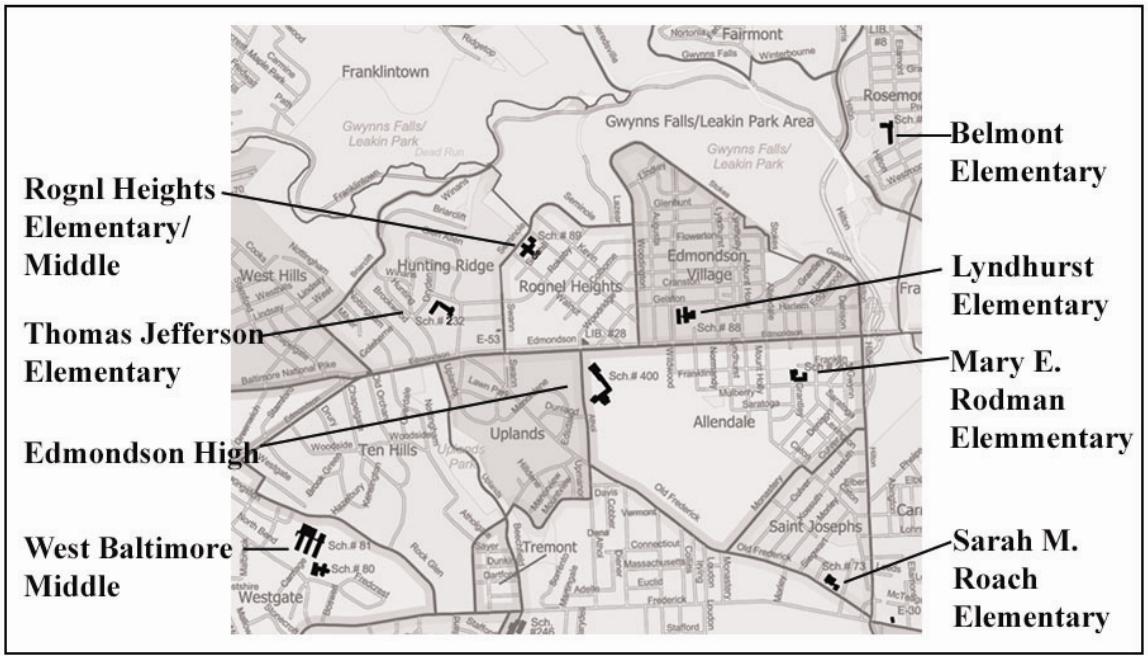


Figure 32: Existing Schools in the Edmondson Village Area

Currently there are six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school in the area. The only neighborhoods without elementary schools are Uplands and Ten Hills. There is one neighborhood serving the village, fitting with Krier's ideal city. There is potential to make a better connection across Edmondson Avenue to the high school and provide appropriate open space for the existing schools.

Natural Features

The four neighborhood quadrants in Edmondson Village are all surrounded by parkland. The northwest, northeast, and southeast quadrants are all bounded by Leakin Park and the Gwynn Falls Trail. The Gwynn Falls Trail was part of the Olmstead Brothers major park plan in 1904 for the rapidly expanding city of Baltimore. The Brothers recommended that Baltimore acquire land along the major stream valleys, Gwynn Falls, Jones Falls, and Herring Run, to create a system of tree-lined parkways. The fourteen mile Gwynns Falls Trail begins in Leakin Park and generally follows the Gwynns Falls stream to the Middle Branch and the Inner Harbor of the Patapsco River (shown on page 42). It is a continuous recreation corridor that connects over thirty neighborhoods in west and southwest Baltimore. It provides places for biking, fishing, picnicking, and community gathering.[14]

In addition to Gwynn Falls/Leakin Park, Upland Park provides another significant open space within Edmondson Village. Uplands and Ten Hills in the southwest quadrant are separated by Uplands Park. Currently this park is reflective of the condition of the Uplands neighborhood. Seemingly forgotten, this park does not provide places for recreation and gathering. Divided by Uplands Parkway, and mostly overgrown, there is an opportunity to connect the park to Leakin Park and provide functional recreation spaces.

The other significant open space in the area is the New Cathedral Cemetery. The Cemetery is owned and operated by the Archdiocese of Baltimore and provides a clear boundary between neighborhoods. Even though it is fenced in, it allows for views into the natural landscape and brings people from all over the region into the area.

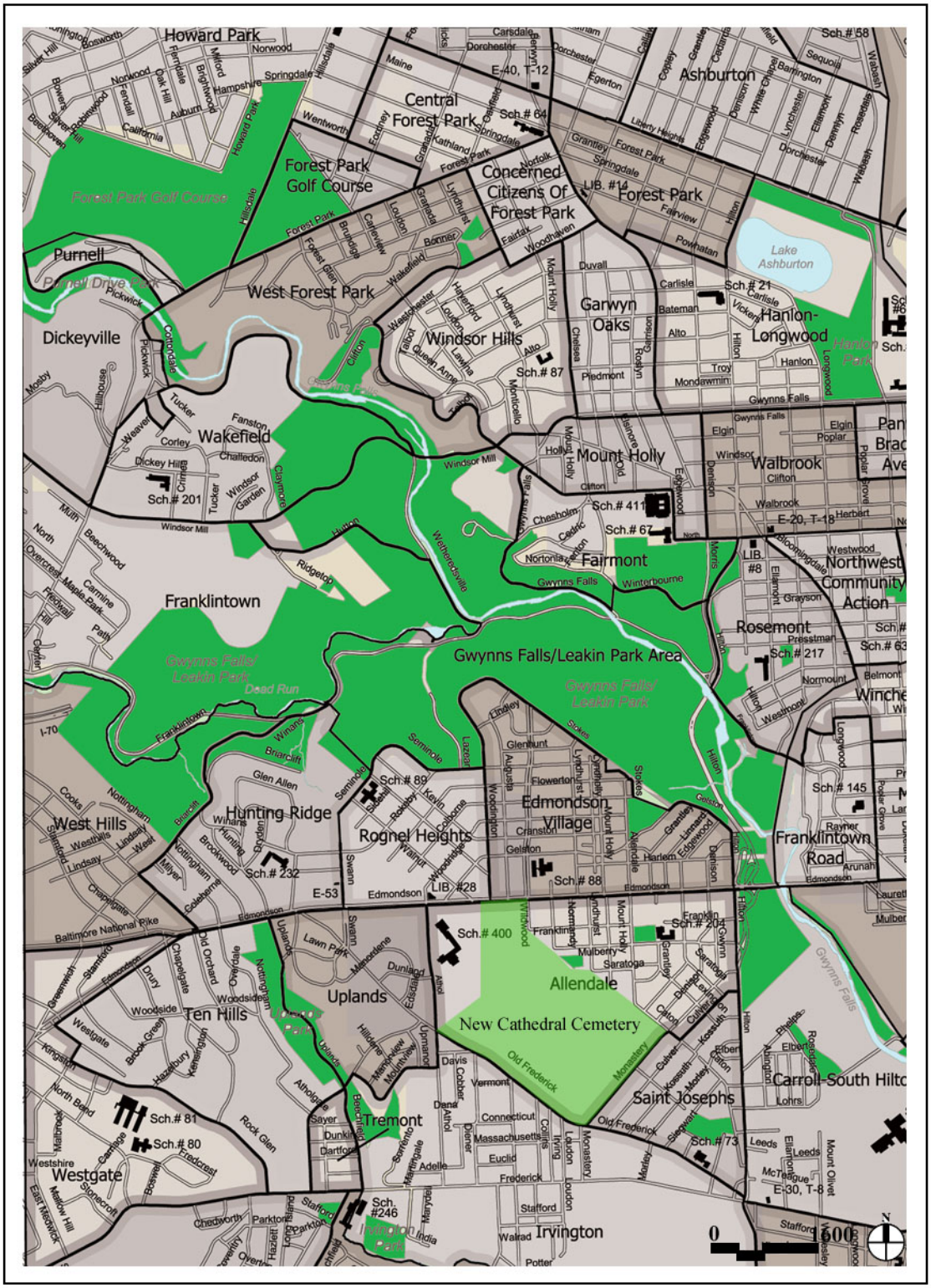


Figure 33: Parks and open space surrounding the Edmondson Village area
The four quadrants are all surrounded by park land, but lack connections into these open spaces. There is an opportunity to better connect the neighborhoods to the park system and make connections into the neighborhoods north of the park. With the redevelopment of Uplands, Uplands Park can be fully utilized and reconnect with Ten Hills. The smaller parks throughout the neighborhoods can be fully integrated into the park system as well.

HISTORY

Prior to the 19th century, typical neighborhoods were mostly residential in character, relying on the city center for most of its social and economic needs. The city center was primarily comprised of the civic, religious, and commercial institutions. The onset of the Industrial Revolution by the 19th century, however, forever changed the pattern of urban settlement and reestablished the idea of living outside of the city.

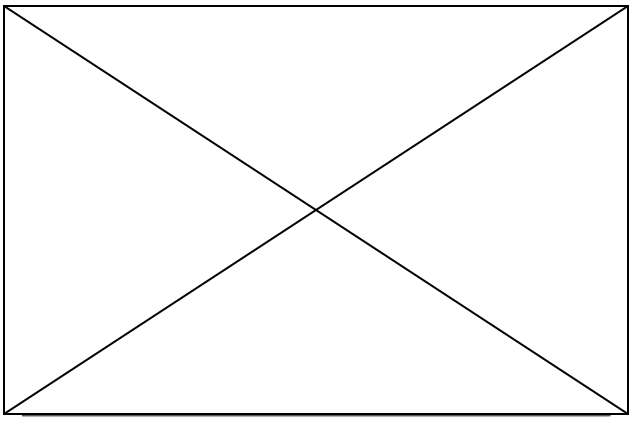
The desire to live in the suburbs has a long history. Two thousand years ago, the elite Romans had suburban villas outside of city. The country was seen as a place for retreat and relaxation. The Industrial Revolution brought major advances in technology and industry and with the advent of the railroad and streetcar; it was now possible to settle beyond the physical limits of the central city. The development of manufacturing industries created the need for new building types and the advancement in technology allowed for high-rise office towers, factories and mills, and large warehousing facilities. People flocked to the city in search of jobs causing the urban populations to reach record highs. The increase in manufacturing and jobs was good for the economy, but caused rapid change within the city that caused the wealthy and middle class to begin rethinking where they lived.

Despite the rapid movement to and growth of the city, city life all over the country quickly began to be viewed negatively. The downtown was dirty, filled with smoke from the factories, and the sewer and water systems were unclean. The increase in the immigrant population also made the city a less desirable place to live for the affluent families. The city was an inappropriate place for women and children, so wealthy families began to move out of the cities. At first these houses were just summer homes

where the wife and children would live during the summer months and the father would come on the weekends. These developments became the original suburbs of the city.

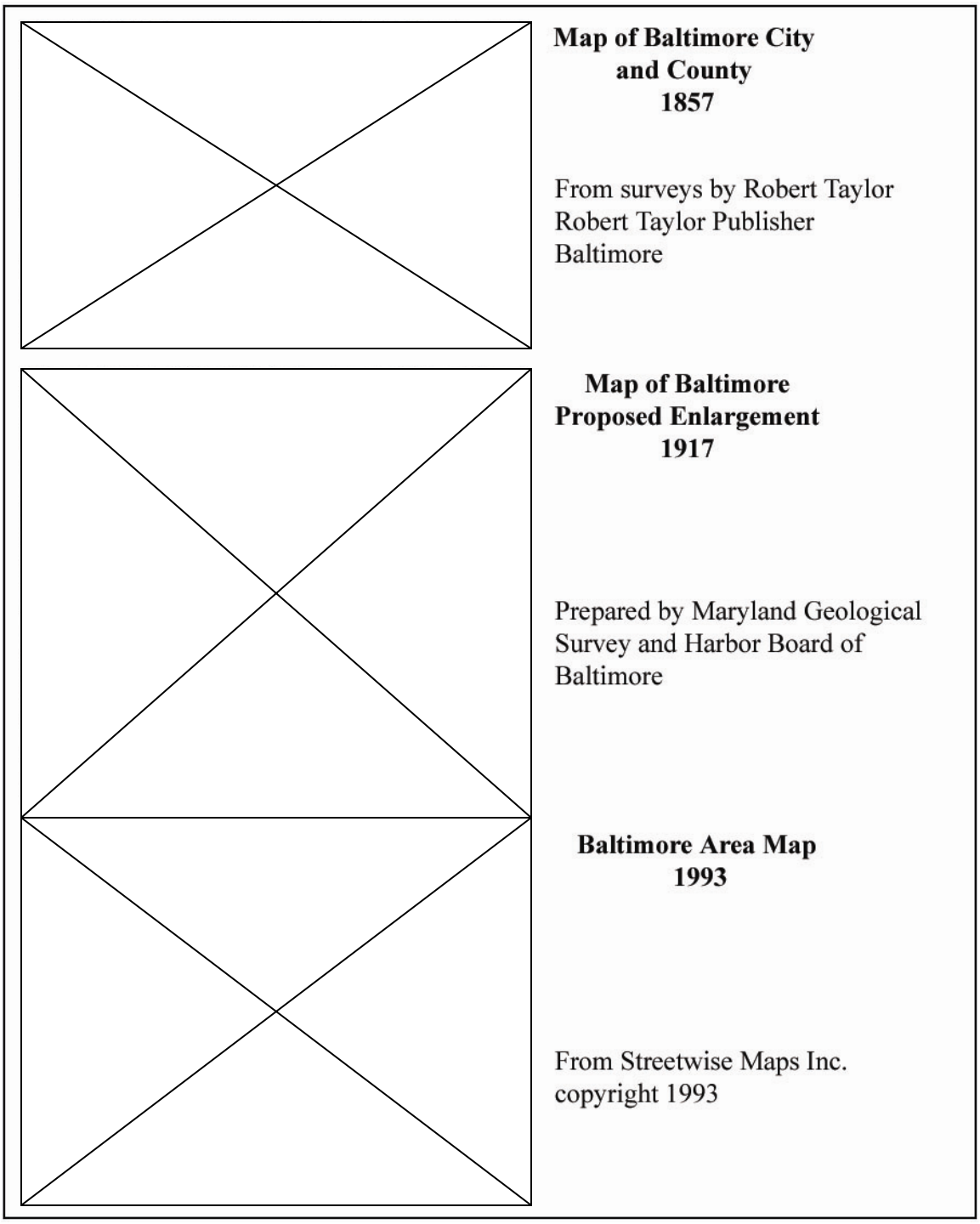
Baltimore was no exception to this phenomenon. Developments like Roland Park in the late 19th century were developed and marketed towards upper and middle class families focusing on the amenities of fresh water and a clean sewer system. Roland Park was located on a hill, so it was believed that the breeze would eliminate the stale air and smells from the city and provide captivating views into the countryside.

In Southwest Baltimore, Edmondson Village also developed as one of the original suburban neighborhoods in the city. Edmondson Village was developed in the 1920s as a suburban community for Baltimore's white middle class. In 1947, Edmonson Village Shopping Center was built as one of the nation's first planned suburban shopping centers. From 1955-1965, however, the neighborhood experienced a dramatic shift in population. In just ten years, the twenty thousand white residents were replaced by an equal number of African American residents. This dramatic racial change severely altered the community and the role and function of the Village Shopping Center. In the last few decades, the neighborhood has suffered from high drug and crime rates and a growing disconnect between residents and the community.



[Orser, *Warfield's* Business Record]

Figure 34: Baltimore City Territory 1730-Present



Map of Baltimore City and County 1857

From surveys by Robert Taylor
Robert Taylor Publisher
Baltimore

Map of Baltimore Proposed Enlargement 1917

Prepared by Maryland Geological Survey and Harbor Board of Baltimore

Baltimore Area Map 1993

From Streetwise Maps Inc.
copyright 1993

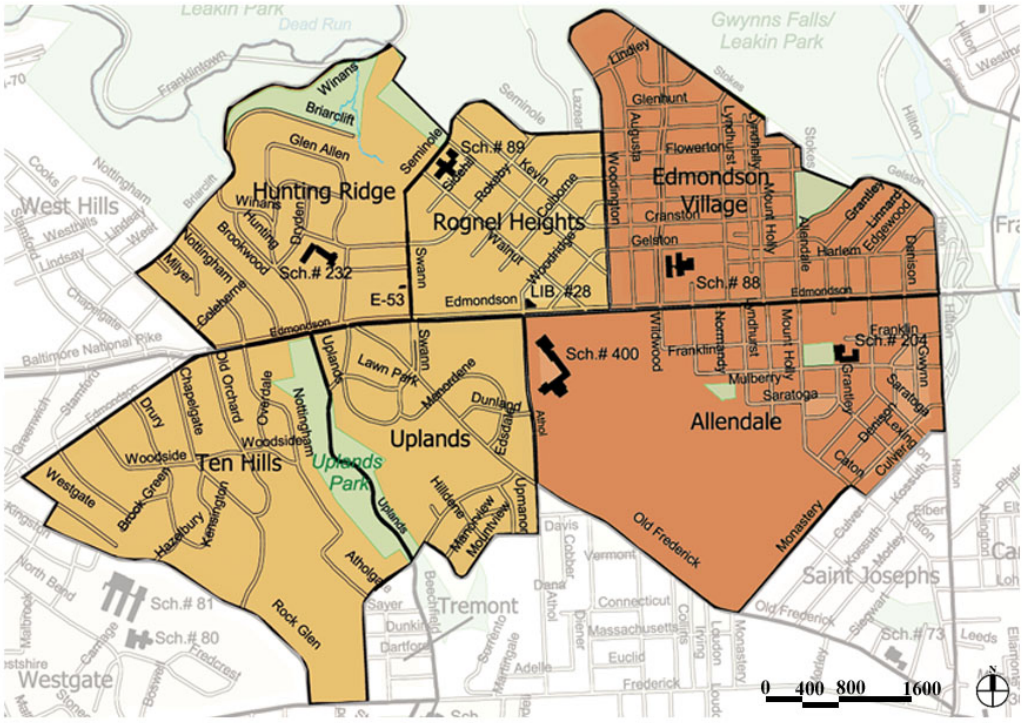
Figure 35: Edmondson Village area represented in three time periods
Prior to the 18th century, the Baltimore city boundary was significantly smaller than it is today. Edmonson Village did not exist, but Fredrick Road (now Old Fredrick Road) was an existing road into the country. By 1917 the city limits expanded and Edmondson Village was on the boarder of the city line. The proposed city limits extended to their current boundary which put the entire site inside the city line. By the 1940s the street grid was formed, and the cemetery and Leakin Park existed. With the shopping center built in 1947, the roads in Rognel Heights were formed, but the Uplands area was still not developed. Today, Edmondson Village serves as a transitional neighborhood between the city and the county.

Social and Economic Changes

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, racial change began to occur on a massive scale in Edmondson Village. The change was triggered by systematic blockbusting, "the intentional action of a real estate operative to settle an African American household in an all white neighborhood for the purpose of provoking white flight in order to make excessive profits by buying low from those who fled and selling high to those who sought access to new housing opportunities."[15] Entire neighborhoods were transformed from predominantly all-white to predominantly all –African American in a relatively short period of time. These changes affected both the white and African American residents in the area. Edward Orser interviewed a white resident and an African American resident from that time to understand their experiences. Marilyn Simkins, a white former resident, gave the following explanation for why whites panicked and fled the neighborhood: "They saw a very secure world changing very drastically, and they couldn't accept it. This was distasteful, and in some respects it was forced down their throats, and they felt they had no other choice, I guess." Margaret Johnson, a pioneer from the era of initial African American settlement in the same neighborhood, described her own feeling about the flight of her white neighbors: "They were friendly, but they were prejudiced. They didn't want to live where colored people did…. They don't have to say it…. They didn't tell you [why they moved]; they just moved!" These statements provide emotions that range from anger to pain to wistfulness to bewilderment.[16] They both testify to the trauma of radical racial change from two different sides. "It is a trauma whose legacy continues to be felt in their lives and in the lives of countless other former and present residents of Edmondson Village."[17]

The changes and stresses that occurred in Edmondson Village forever altered the close, tight-knit community that existed until the 1950s. The shopping center and Hecht Company Department Store were the centers of urban and community life. Residents not only used the center to meet their everyday needs, but as a place to meet and socialize. When the existing residents moved out, the city neglected the infrastructure and maintenance of the neighborhood, making it hard for new residents to adjust and have the same experiences as old residents.

These drastic social changes make Edmondson Village an ideal neighborhood to study the role architecture plays in re-establishing community. It is important to understand both the built and social history of the area and the residents. Edmondson Village has a rich history within Baltimore, and both old and current residents are still affected by the transformation that occurred. In order to have a successful project, the residents' needs and concerns need to be evaluated, addressed, and incorporated into the design strategies.



Hunting Ridge, Rognel Heights, Uplands, Ten Hills*

Total Population: 7,004

by age:
- under 5: 7.1%
- 5-19: 21.5%
- 20-44: 35.6%
- 45-64: 24.2%
- 65 and over: 11.5%

by race:
- White: 17.9%
- African-American: 79.9%
- Asian: 0.8%
- Hispanic or Latino: 0.8%

Total Households: 2,894
Total Housing Units: 3,089
Average household income: $37, 932
Average family income: $46,765

Edmondson Village, Allendale*

Total Population: 7,489

by age:
- under 5: 6.2%
- 5-19: 22.9%
- 20-44: 30.6%
- 45-64: 22.8%
- 65 and over: 17.5%

by race:
- White: 6.4%
- African American: 91.9%
- Asian: 0.3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 0.8%

Total Households: 2,696
Total Housing Units: 2,953
Average household income: 30,656
Average family income: $35,224

*calculations are approximate and based on acres

Figure 36: Edmondson Village Demographics
The Edmondson Village area has a total population of approximately 14,500 people. The income of the western neighborhoods is slightly above the city average and the eastern neighborhoods are equal to the average income. With the majority of the population in school or working, there needs to be sufficient schools and recreation places and transportation to get to school and to work.

ANALYSIS

The point of this analysis is to look at the current condition of the site and the potentials for redevelopment. The analysis determines the village center location and the types of program elements needed to sustain the community and create a viable urban neighborhood.

Figure 37: Topography of Edmondson Village and surrounding neighborhoods
Valleys occur along the Gywnn Falls and Upland Park. The land gradually rises as it moves closer to Edmondson Avenue. The shopping center is located on the high point and is relatively flat making it an ideal site for redevelopment.

Figure 38: Edmondson Village space positive and space negative diagrams
The space positive/negative drawings show the variety in the street grid and the diversity of housing types in the area. The current street grid in Uplands and Rognel Heights does not allow for connections to the shopping center or to Edmondson Avenue. It also shows the large amount of open space surrounding the site. There is an opportunity to reorganize the street grid to provide better access between neighborhoods, to the center, and to the open spaces.

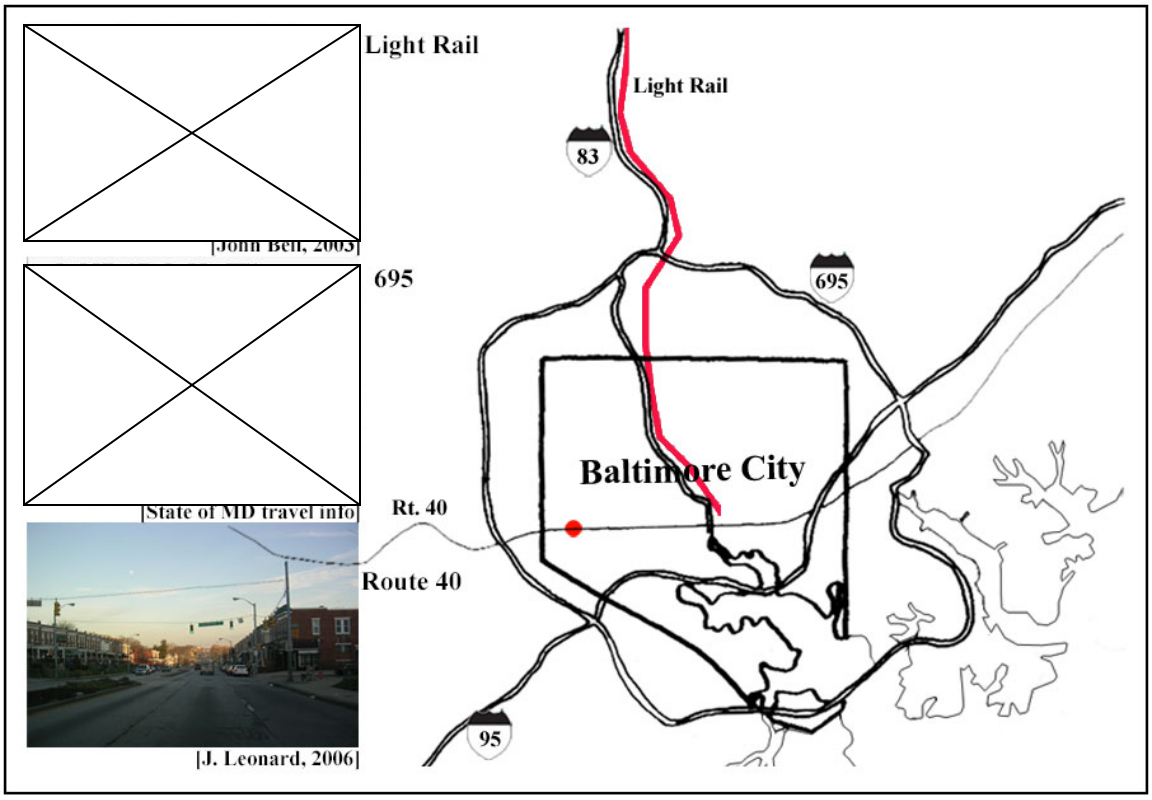


Figure 39: Major Highways and Light Rail in and around Baltimore
The light rail and metro system in Baltimore is primarily north-south and only goes through the center of the city. The light rail is 30 miles long and now connects to BWI. The only major road in Baltimore that is near Edmondson Village is Route 40 which moves in the east-west direction across the city.

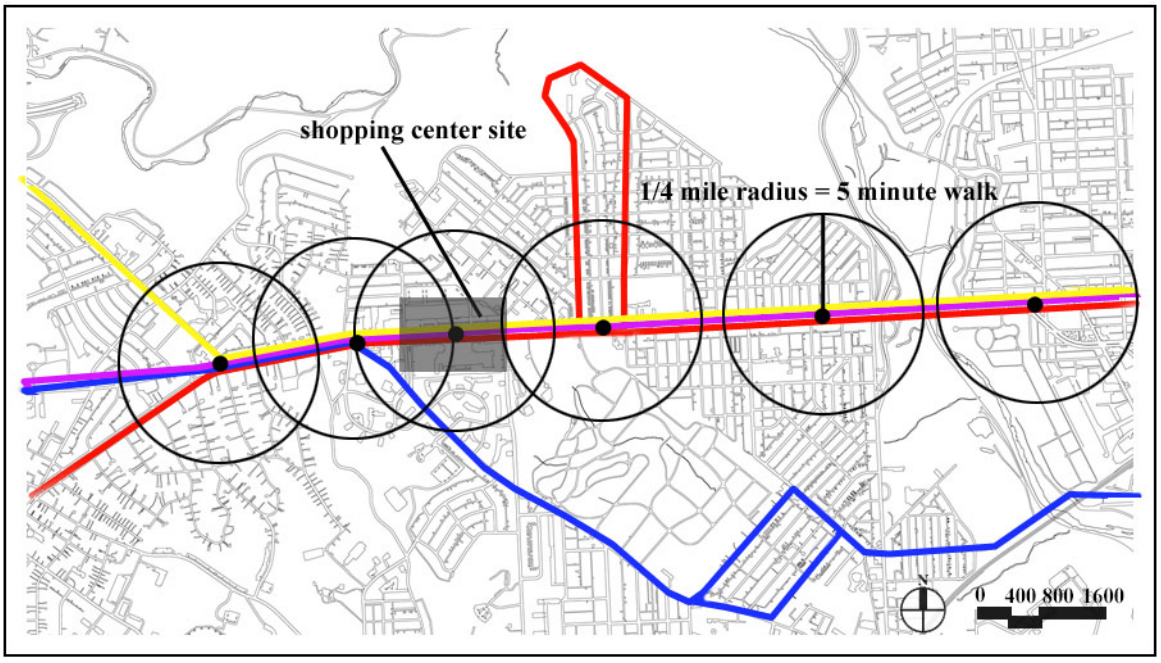


Figure 40: Bus Routes in and around Edmondson Village
There are four bus routes that run through Edmonson Village. The major stops are along Edmondson Avenue, leaving most residents with more than a five minute walk home. To encourage public transportation, the public transit system needs to better serve the entire Edmonson Village community.

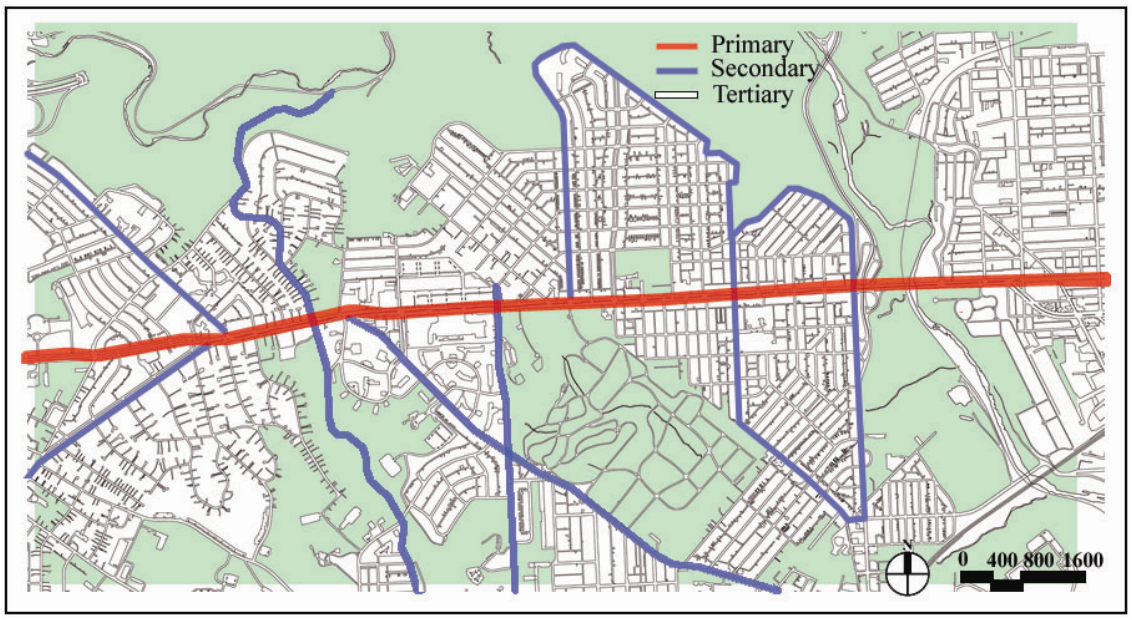


Figure 41: Major Streets in Edmondson Village
Route 40/Edmondson Avenue is the major road through the site. Six lanes wide, it is a major route through the city and Baltimore Country. The secondary roads are typically two to four lanes wide and provide access into Edmondson Village from the surrounding neighborhoods. They also provide opportunities to serve as major connectors to open space, public buildings, and the town center. The residential streets are the tertiary streets and typically have on street parking plus two moving lanes.

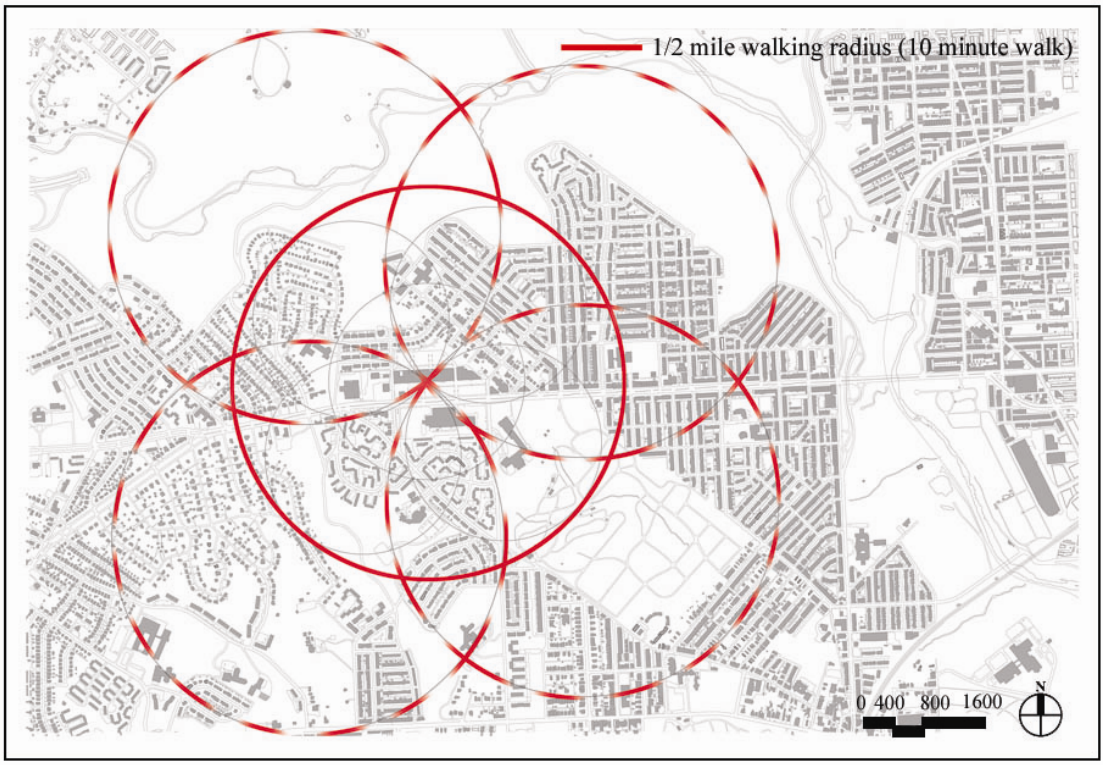


Figure 42: Edmondson Village Walkability Diagram
The circles represent the buildings and streets within a half mile (10 minute) walking radius from the center of the shopping center. The density in this area needs to be increased in order to support the businesses and the red line stop. The dashed circles represent the areas that use the village center.

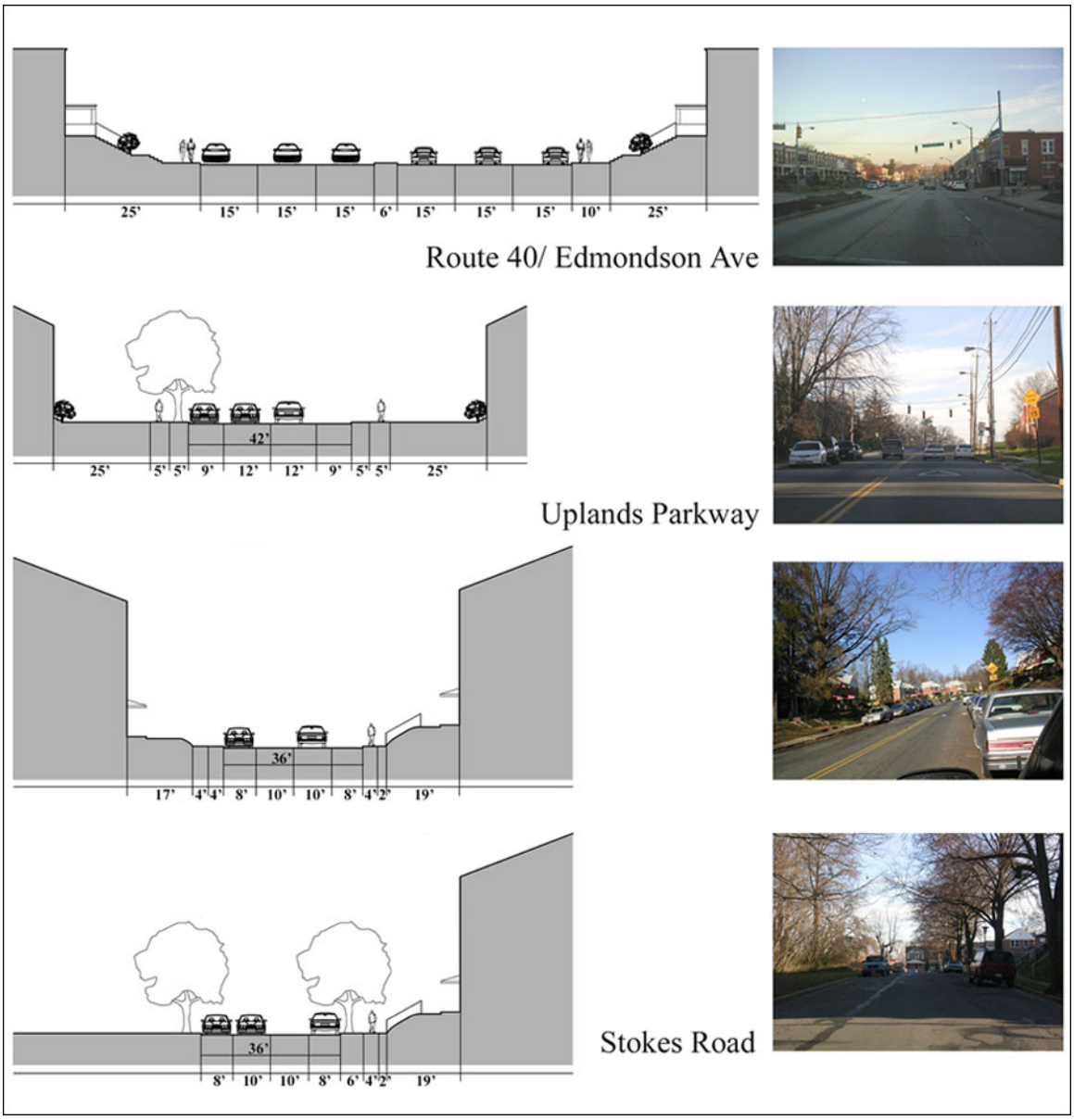


Figure 43: Street Sections in Edmondson Village

Each type of street adds character to Edmondson Village. Edmondson Avenue does not have any street trees and in places does not have a lane for parking. The street is not pedestrian friendly which encourages unnecessary driving and limited connection between neighborhoods. The secondary and tertiary streets are more conducive to pedestrian activity and many streets have large trees along the sidewalks.

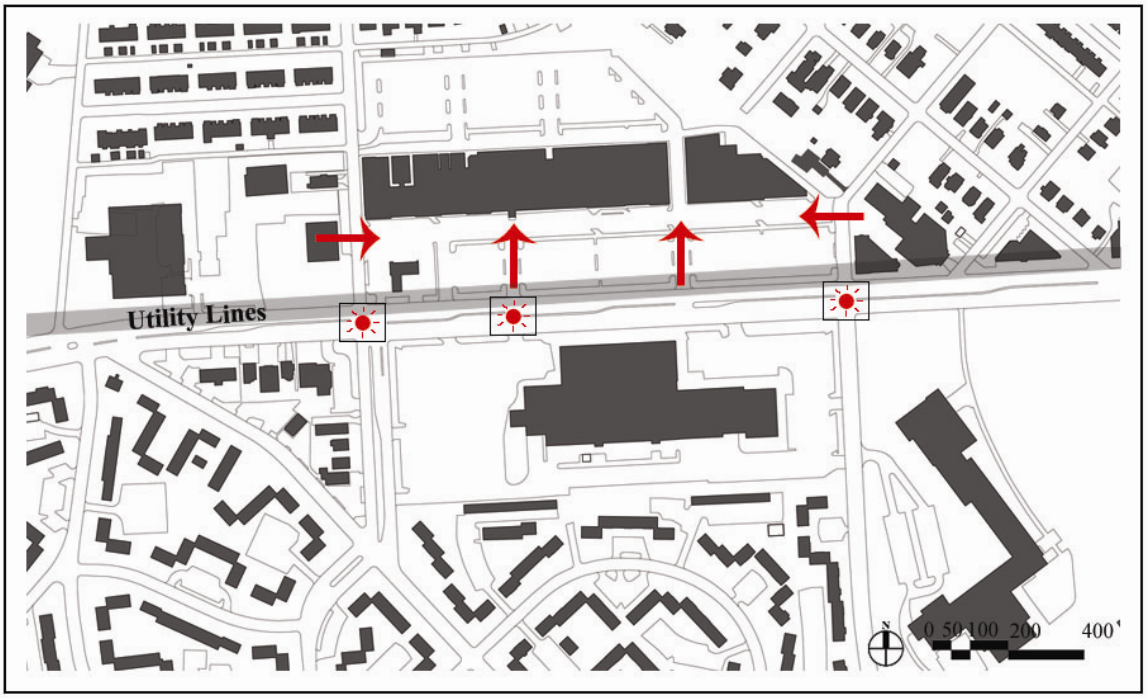


Figure 44: Traffic Lights and Access from Edmondson Avenue
There are three traffic lights along Edmondson Avenue and four entrances into the Edmondson Village Shopping Center. The lights slow traffic and allow cars to turn in and out of the shopping center, but do not help the pedestrian experience along the street. Edmondson Avenue is a barrier, and this issue needs to be addressed in order to provide connections across the street.

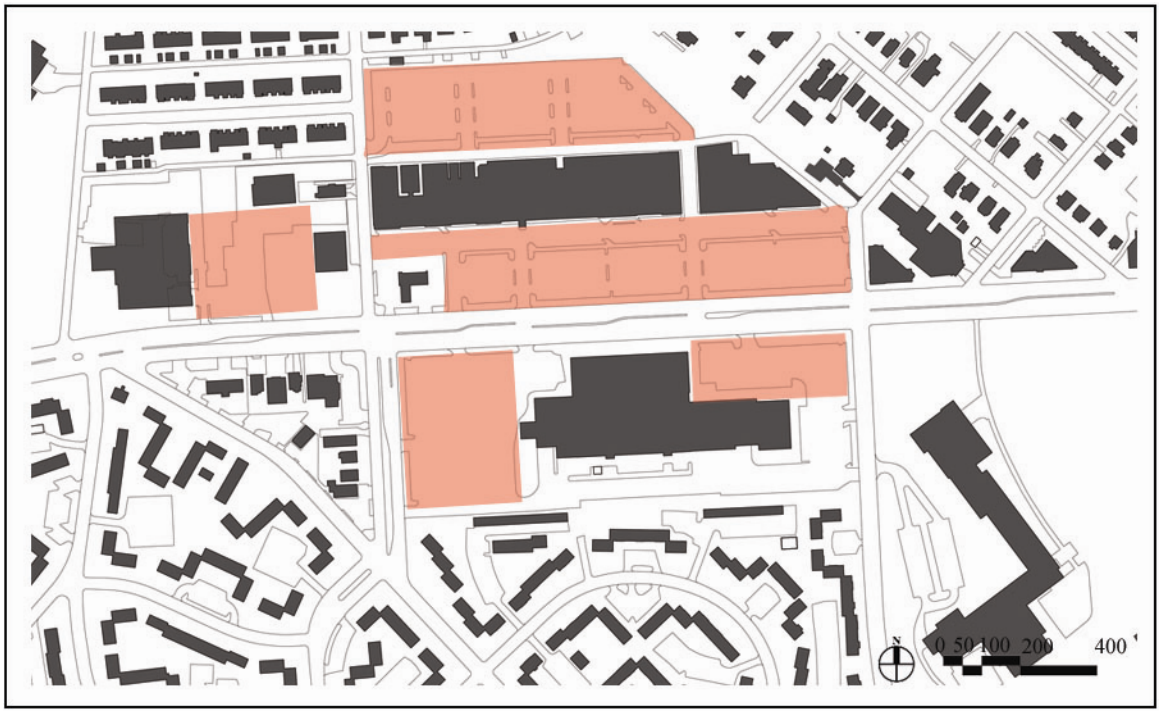


Figure 45: Parking in and around Edmondson Village Shopping Center
There are 700 parking spaces in front of the shopping center serving the shopping center, library, and churches. There are approximately 1,100 total parking spots around the site for all the commercial and institutional buildings. New design strategies need to accommodate and redistribute these spots.

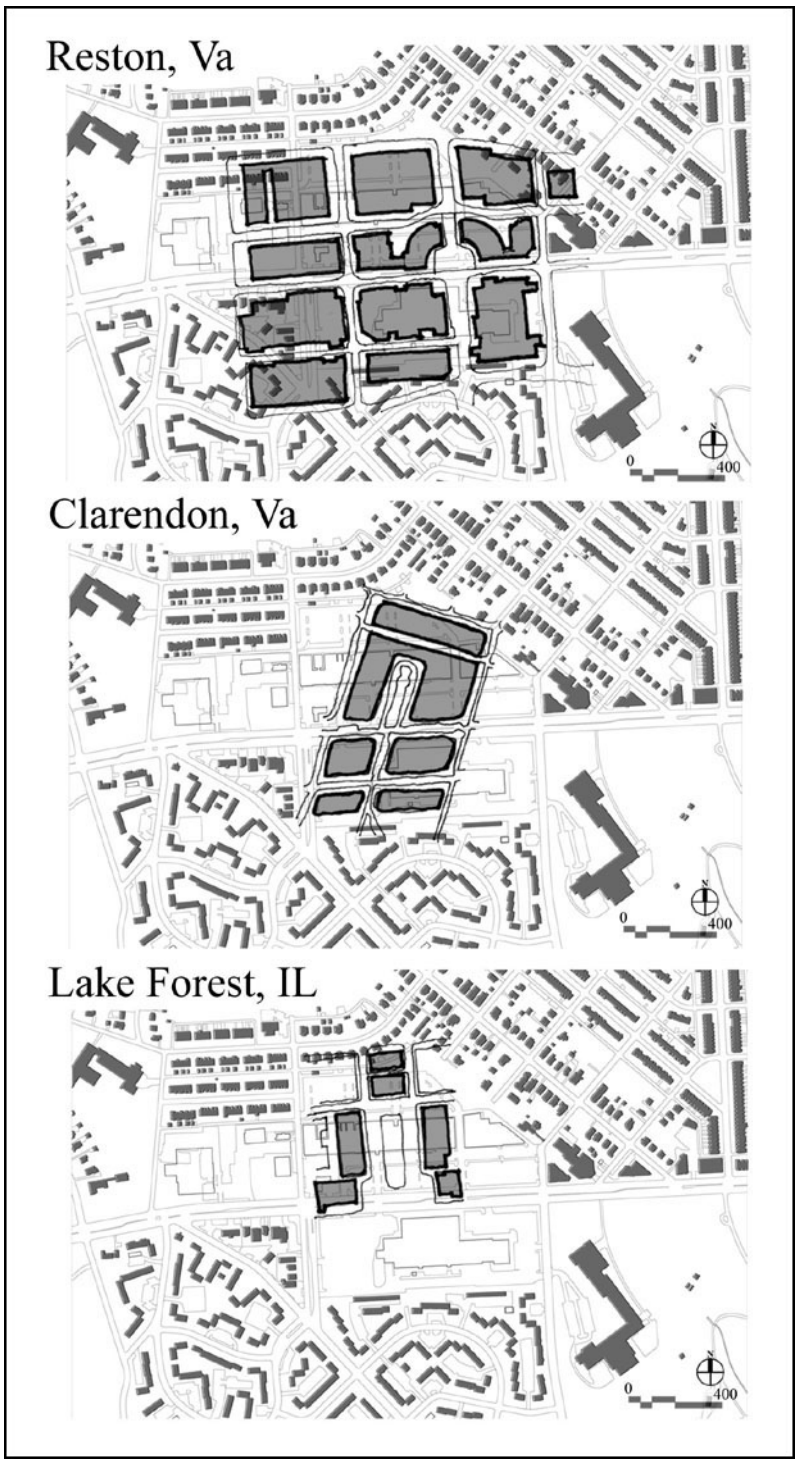


Figure 46: Site Comparisons
Image shows that a section of Reston Town Center fits mostly in the site. Clarendon Town Center is smaller, but with housing and parking can take up most of the site. Lake Forest Illinois is smaller than the site.

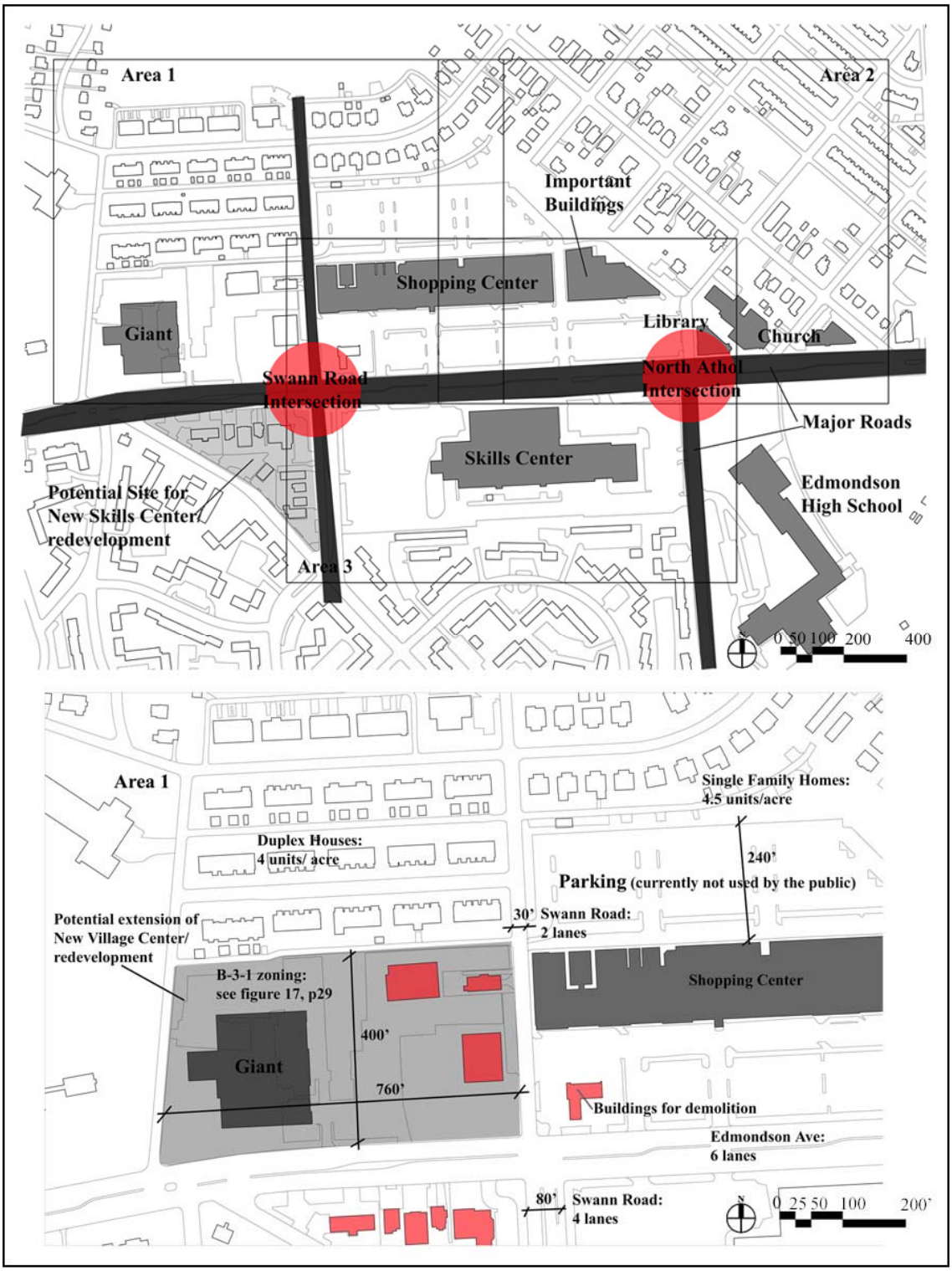


Figure 47: Site Dimensions and Focus Areas

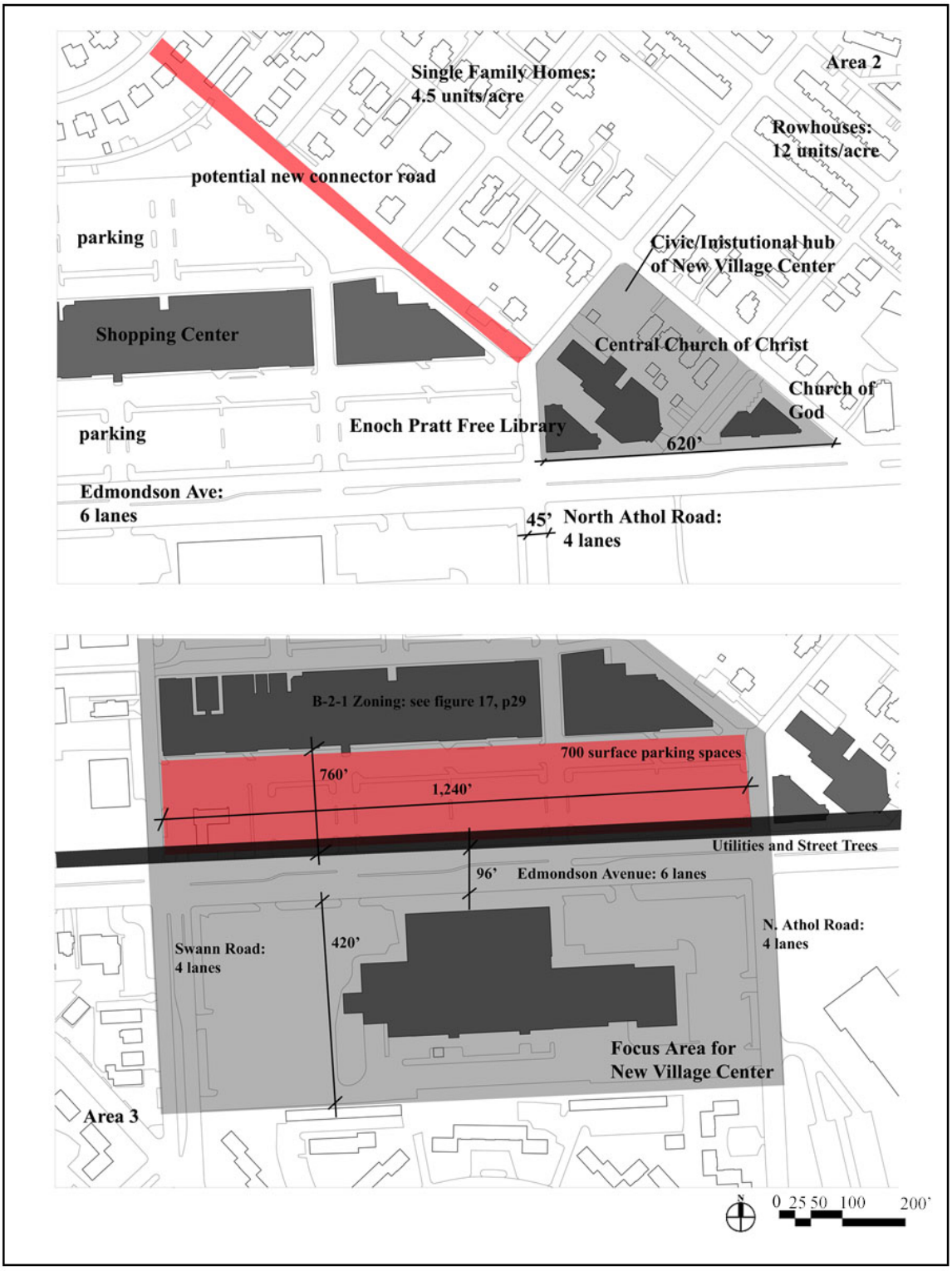


Figure 48: Site Dimensions and Focus Areas

Through the analysis in this chapter, four main issues are realized. The first issue is connectivity. The parks and open space provide a great amenity and boundary to the site, but it is not easily accessible. Better connections need to be made between neighborhoods as well. Connecting streets and providing better public transportation will strengthen connections.

Re-establishing a village center is the second issue. With limited retail on the site, it is essential that it serves the residents in the community. Since there are two large shopping centers within 5 miles of the site, residents will not be doing all their shopping at the village center. The center should provide basic necessities and places for interactions and leisure activities to occur such as community related facilities, specialty stores, restaurants, entertainment, and open space. Connections to and within the village center need to be improved and the nature of Route 40 needs to be addressed. Creating streets that encourage pedestrian activity and allow people to cross Edmondson Avenue will increase the likelihood that they will use the center and public transportation.

The notion of edge is another issue. Having clear boundaries is an important part of community. The northern neighborhoods have clear boundaries from Leakin Park and Route 40, but the edge conditions are unresolved. Single family homes in Hunting Ridge are free standing objects on the edge of the park and the other neighborhoods have a road along the park but the houses do not face the open space. The edge conditions need to be addressed along the parks and open space and these resolutions will also work to make better connections from the neighborhoods to the parks.

The fourth issue is density and housing typologies. The low density within the half mile radius of the village center needs to increase in order to sustain the development

and retail spaces. Housing needs to be integrated into the village center in order to keep it active throughout the day and into the evening. The abandoned Uplands neighborhood buildings and the entire site need to be redeveloped as well. Currently there are only a few apartment buildings in the area. A variety of housing types will allow for diversity in income level and a broad range of ages.

The resolution of these issues provides an environment that fosters community activity and establishes a renewed sense of place for an area trapped between the urban and suburban patterns of the city. The addition of the Red Line and new Village Center serves to reconnect Edmondson Village to the greater Baltimore and Maryland area while still providing an identity and sense of community for residents.

CHAPTER IV: THE PROGRAM AND ITS ROLE IN COMMUNITY

"Places that are visually prominent should also be socially significant, focal points in the composition should coincide with centers of community life, and historical references should be meaningful to the residents."

- Sidney Brower

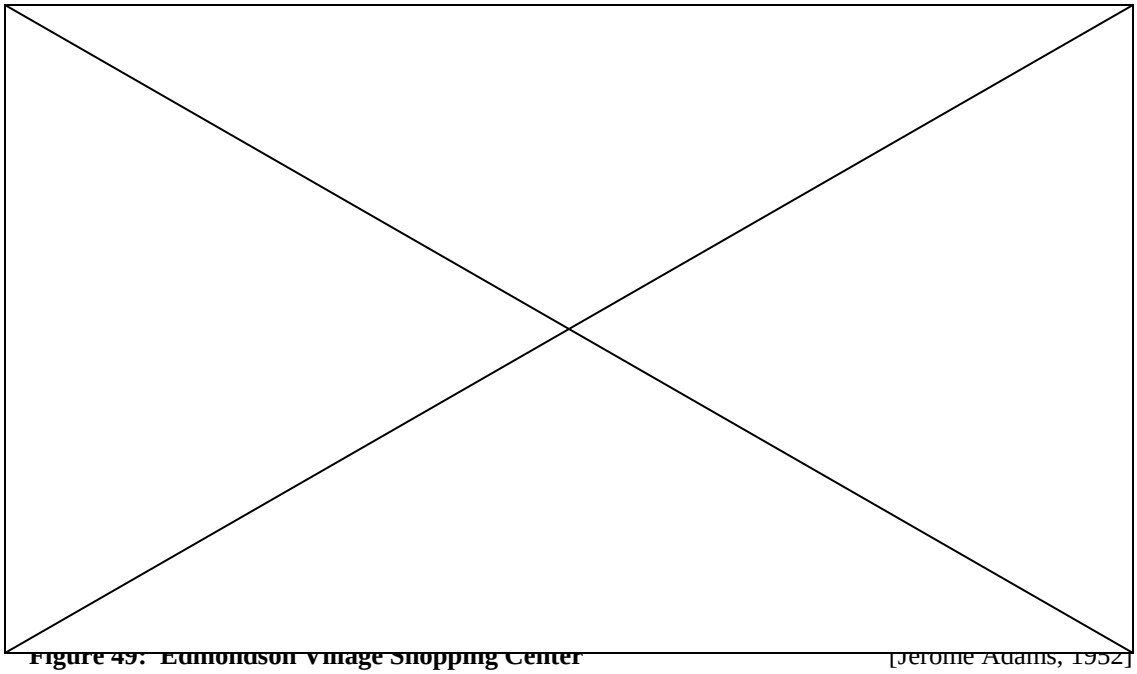


Figure 49: Edmondson Village Shopping Center [Jerome Adams, 1952]
In its early years, the shopping center served as a true 'village center' providing places for social interaction, shopping, and an identity for the community.

OBJECTIVES

The program for this thesis is explored at three scales; the urban, architectural, and building scale. Each of these scales works together with its counter parts to re-establish a sense of community. At the urban scale, the street grid and public spaces establish relationships between elements at the architectural and building scale. At the urban scale, the street grid is reconfigured to make better connections between neighborhoods, public spaces, and the village center. New housing types are added to increase density and redevelop the abandoned Uplands neighborhood. Necessary institutional and civic buildings are also proposed to provide places for people to come together and provide resources for the community.

At the architectural scale, the village center and the red line stop are designed. At this scale the layout and configuration of the village center is determined in order to center the neighborhoods, increase connectivity, and create a renewed sense of place for the community. The character and aesthetic quality of the spaces is developed and the pedestrian connections across Edmondson Avenue are addressed. The red line stop is located within the village center to bring people together, activating the area throughout the day.

At the building scale the village center is designed in detail. This scale focuses on the mixed use character of the buildings and the relationship between the commercial and residential spaces within the complex. This focuses on the relationship between the internal and external components of the buildings and the way the buildings work to enhance and define the open spaces in and around the site.

THE URBAN SCALE

At the urban scale, the primary concern is access, connectivity, and density. The daily movement of people in urban areas has become one of the most complex and difficult problems facing public officials today. From a community standpoint, the numerous automobile trips often required in the urban and suburban environments are counter productive to the leisure enjoyment of a high quality of satisfaction from community life. Designing for the car contributed to the decline of urban form in city centers as buildings were demolished and replaced with parking lots.[18]

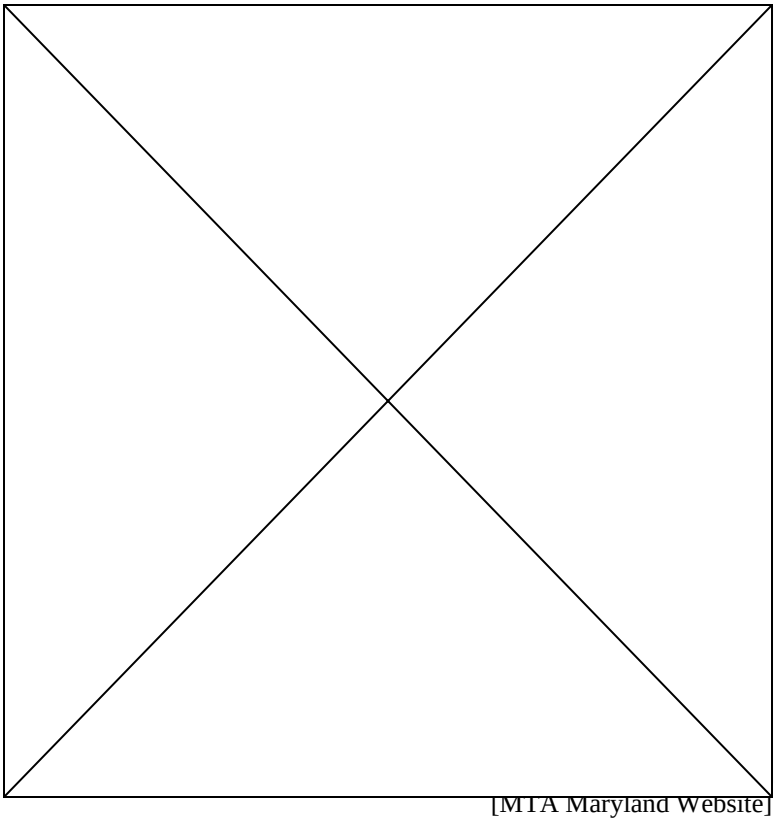
Residents, workers, and shoppers must be able to access the site in four ways: by walking, by car (Edmondson Avenue), by bus, and by metro (Red Line). Additional streets and the continuation of existing streets are needed to make stronger connections to Leakin Park and the village center. These streets are to be a mixture of secondary and tertiary (residential) streets. A major connection is to be made from Uplands Parkway to Leakin Park creating a greenway through the neighborhoods. The majority of the streets have on street parking and tree lined sidewalks to provide a safe and pleasant pedestrian experience throughout the neighborhoods and on the way to the village center.

Conneticut Avenue in Cleveland Park, DC integrates trees, mixed use development, and metro access along the street. The successful integration of these types of elements is necessary in Edmondson Village to provide a better pedestrian environment and viable village center. Bus routes must also serve more residents by extending routes into Rognel Heights, Hunting Ridge, and Ten Hills. These routes should run on secondary streets to limit the noise and congestion on residential streets.

[J. Leonard, 2006]

Figure 50: Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park, DC
Connecticut Avenue is a similar size to Edmondson Avenue, but generous sidewalks, landscaping (street trees), and mixed use buildings make the street a safer and friendlier pedestrian environment.

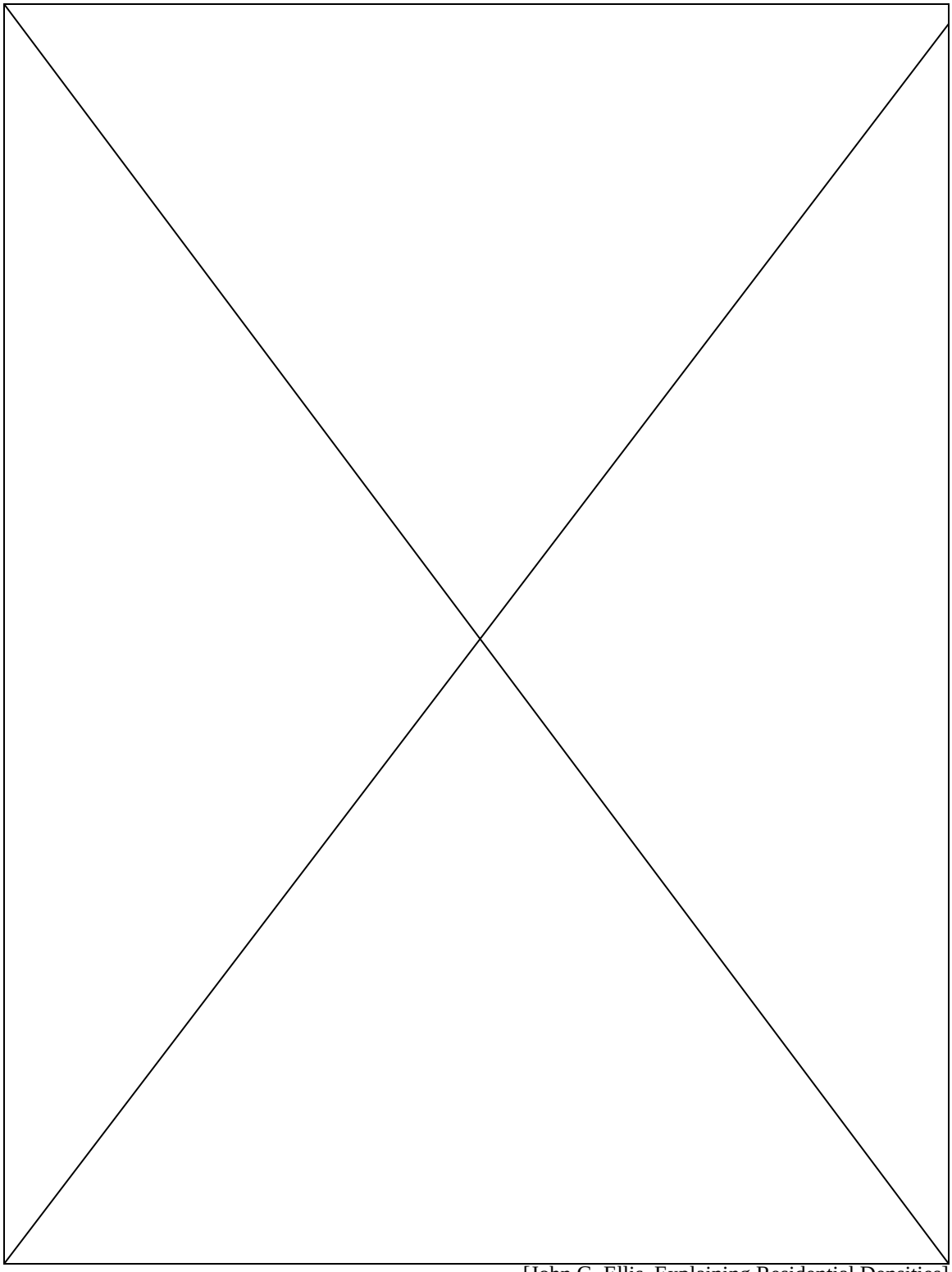
In order to allow transportation for residents in and out of the city, a new metro is introduced as part of the Baltimore Region Transit Plan that was adopted in 2002. The proposed Red Line is to stop at the Edmondson Village Center. The Red Line is a 10.5 mile east-west corridor connection the Woodlawn area of Baltimore County, Edmondson Village, West Baltimore communities, downtown Baltimore and the communities in the vicinity of the of the Inner Harbor East and Fells Point/Patterson Park. The Red Line provides service connecting to Baltimore's existing transit system, metro subway, light rail, and MARC lines, allowing residents in Edmondson Village to travel into the city and throughout the region without having to drive.



[MTA Maryland Website]

Figure 51: Baltimore Region Transit Plan
The Regional Transit Plan was adopted in 2002 and will serve as a major connector between Baltimore County neighborhoods and the City. The Red Line will directly connect Southwest Baltimore to downtown.

In order to support the village center and fill in the inconsistent neighborhood fabric, additional housing is to be added to increase the area's density. "Increasing residential density increases the frequency and intensity of use of shared spaces increasing opportunities for interaction."[19] The village center should contain mixed use commercial and residential buildings and the surrounding fabric is to be town houses. The Uplands neighborhood is to be redeveloped with attached housing. The new streets provide better connections to Edmondson Avenue and the village center. Apartment buildings are to be mixed into the Uplands development and additional apartment buildings should be added along Leakin Park drive. The housing in the existing neighborhoods should be infill, matching the character and scale of the existing fabric.



[John G. Ellis, Explaining Residential Densities]

Figure 52: Residential Density Matrix
The density chart shows the different sectional and plan configurations for the housing typologies in the Edmondson Village neighborhoods. The types are to be used for new and infill housing in the urban redevelopment plan.

THE ARCHITECTURAL SCALE

The heart of this thesis lies in the village center. In order to re-establish a viable community and a sense of place that existed when the shopping center was first built, a new village center is necessary to center and reunite the existing neighborhoods. The urban village center is to be surrounded by commercial, office, retail, and residential units keeping it active twenty-four hours a day. This important exterior void should contain a significant pedestrian piazza and green space that is not only be used by people shopping and working in the center, but also by residents and children as a place to play and gather.

[J. Leonard, 2006]

Figure 53: Plaza in Reston Town Center
The open space in Reston Town Center is paved brick. The plaza provides space to café seating, performers, and holiday celebrations. Across the street there is an ice skating rink surrounded by mixed use buildings. The rink provides a place for social activities and recreation. The town center is not just a place to shop, but also a place to meet and gather.

The scale of the mixed-use buildings should provide enough density to sustain the center, but also relate to the context of the existing Baltimore fabric. The mixed use buildings should contain one to two stories of commercial and four to five stories of residential like the Market Commons shopping center in Clarendon, Virginia.

[J. Leonard, 2006]

Figure 54: Clarendon Village Center, Virginia
Clarendon Village Center has two stories of commercial space and four stories of residential that provide views into the center. A parking garage for shoppers and residents is also integrated into the design.

The commercial buildings must cater to the diverse population of the surrounding neighborhoods providing a food store, a medical center, restaurants, coffee shops, and retail. A theatre and/or bowling alley is also a potential component of the center providing places for recreation and leisure activity. The existing high school, vocational school, library, and churches serve as significant components and amenities to the center. The Athol Road and Edmondson Avenue intersection is to be an important node for community activity and a gateway into the center from downtown. Additional density should also be added to the Vocational school to provide support services to the school and community. These services include a beauty salon, auto-shop, and restaurants to provide work for students at the school and necessary services for the community.

The housing directly around the village center is to be attached town houses. These houses have communal green spaces and pedestrian access directly into the village

center. The town houses are to be three stories and serve as a transition between the taller mixed use buildings and the single family residences around the center.

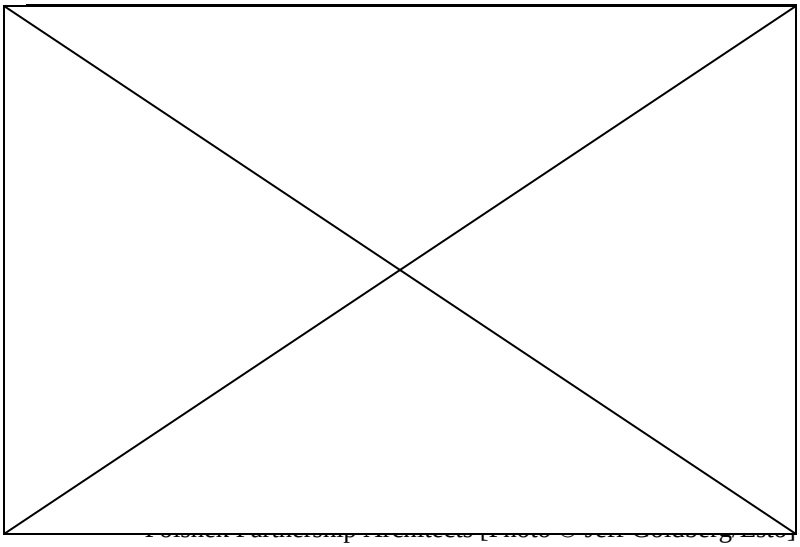
[J. Leonard, 2006]

Figure 55: Town Homes near Reston Town Center
The houses near Reston Town Center demonstrate the scale and material quality of the houses that are needed in Edmondson Village. These houses have a shared courtyard in the back and each unit has a private garage.

The red line stop is to be located under a pavilion at the edge of the green space. The pavilion should be a featured object in the central space and easily accessed by both shoppers and commuters. Buses also need stop between the major intersections to allow residents to travel to the center. The current Edmondson Village Shopping Center has approximately 700 parking spots. The new center must redistribute these spots and add additional spots for residents with both on street parking and parking garages. The garages should be incorporated into the design and house commercial spaces on the ground floor.

THE BUILDING SCALE

A mixed use building is necessary for the success the village center and re-establishing community. Having residents on top of commercial activity gives them direct access to the shops and keeps the center active twenty-four hours a day. In the building scale, the specific focus is on the design of the residential and commercial units of the village center. The residential component may be either single or double loaded depending on the design parti. The units are to have two to three bedrooms and be a combination of duplexes and flats. Washington Court in New York City is an example of the character and unit typology that fosters community activity, can re-establish a sense of place in Edmondson Village, and provide functional living and commercial spaces. The rich combination of brick, limestone, and terracotta and the scale of the detailing on its three street facades relate the building to its neighborhood.[20] These materials and the scale of the building relate to the Baltimore neighborhoods, but would introduce a new typology into the area to increase density and commercial activity.



Polshek Partnership Architects [Photo © Jeff Goldberg/Esto]

Figure 56: Washington Court Apartment
Located in New York City, the residential units on the four floors above street level commercial are duplexes, and the attic floor contains flats, all with fireplaces and small balconies overlooking the garden.

Arcades will be added to parts of the commercial level to protect pedestrians and shoppers from sun and inclement weather. Like the arcades in Reston Town Center, the arcades in Edmondson Village Center should not wrap the entire building. Breaks in the arcade provide spaces for street furniture, café seating, and landscape.

[J. Leonard, 2006]

Figure 57: Arcade at Reston Town Center
The arcade provides a covered walkway for pedestrians. The arcade becomes part of the façade, but does not overpower the building or the sidewalk.

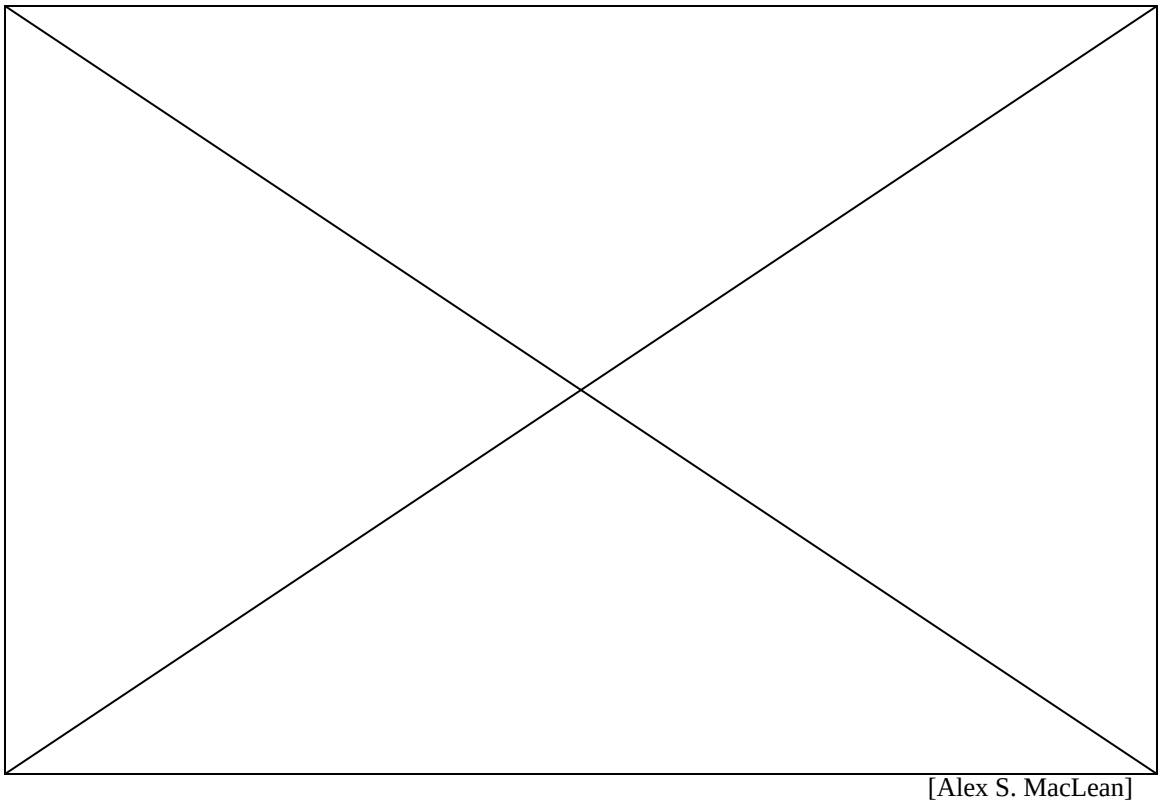
The program elements in this chapter are meant to be guidelines for design strategies and a foundation for designing for a community. The square footages are to be determined during the design development phase and based on the orientation of the

center and its relationship to the street and the existing fabric. In order create an environment that fosters community and brings people together the issues of access, connectivity, and density need to be addressed at each scale. At each scale there should be places that provide opportunities for social interaction and/or leisure activity. This can be in the form of a park, plaza, courtyard, lobby, or an individual building. The character of the buildings and spaces created should relate to the existing context, but at the same time provide a new sense of place and reason for being. This can be achieved through materiality, scale/hierarchy, details, or landscape. Using examples like Clarendon, Reston Town Center, and Washington Court, design strategies can be generated to accomplish these goals.

CHAPTER V: DESIGN STRATEGIES

"Design must be based on knowledge of how people and environments interact…"

- Amos Rapoport

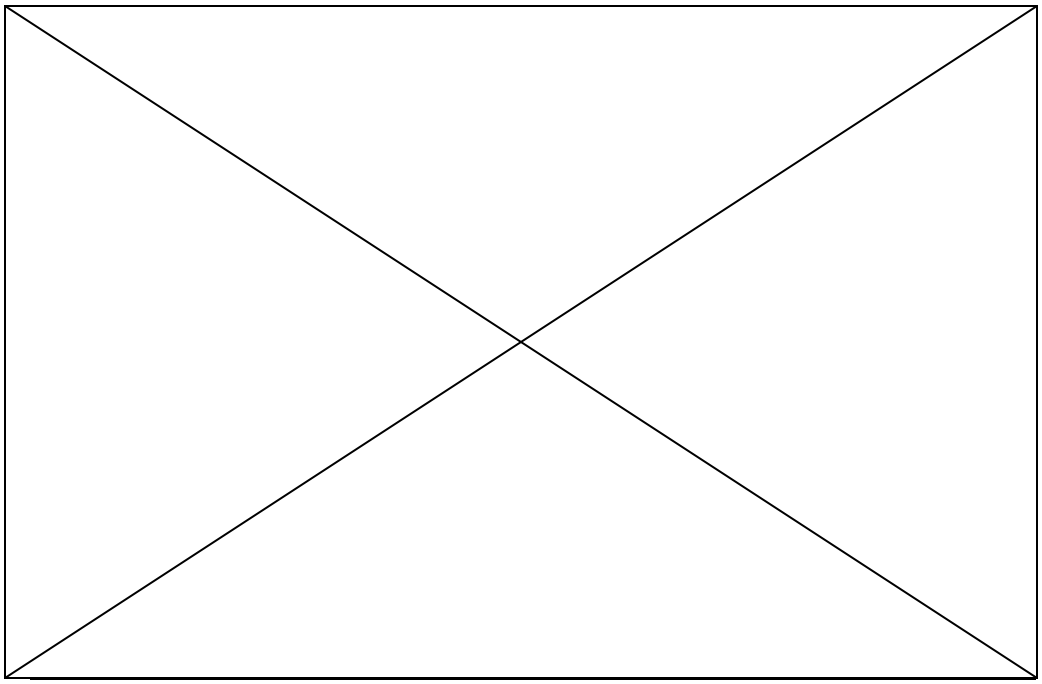


[Alex S. MacLean]

Figure 58: Aerial of Market Square in Lake Forest, Illinois
Market Square in Lake Forest provides architectural form and open space that fosters community activity.

Based on the previous analysis and guidelines, design strategies can be generated. The goal of these partis is to generate and foster community and create a viable urban neighborhood. The design strategies focus on the organization of the village center, but the overall redevelopment plan must include design interventions throughout the four quadrants.

Parti I: Original Edmondson Village Shopping Center



[Baltimore City Planning Office]

Figure 59: Aerial Photo of Edmondson Village Shopping Center
The photo shows the current relationship between the shopping center, Skills Center, High School, Church, Library, and housing. There is currently no green space, but the shopping provides a front to Edmondson Avenue and relates to the Skills Center.

The first parti relates to the current organization of the shopping center. The mixed use building is a bar building looking out on a green plaza. It provides public spaces like the Parc de Bercy in Paris. The plaza is anchored by two residential towers framing the center. The Red Line Pavilions can be placed at the end of the green space or a single pavilion can be located in the center of the void.

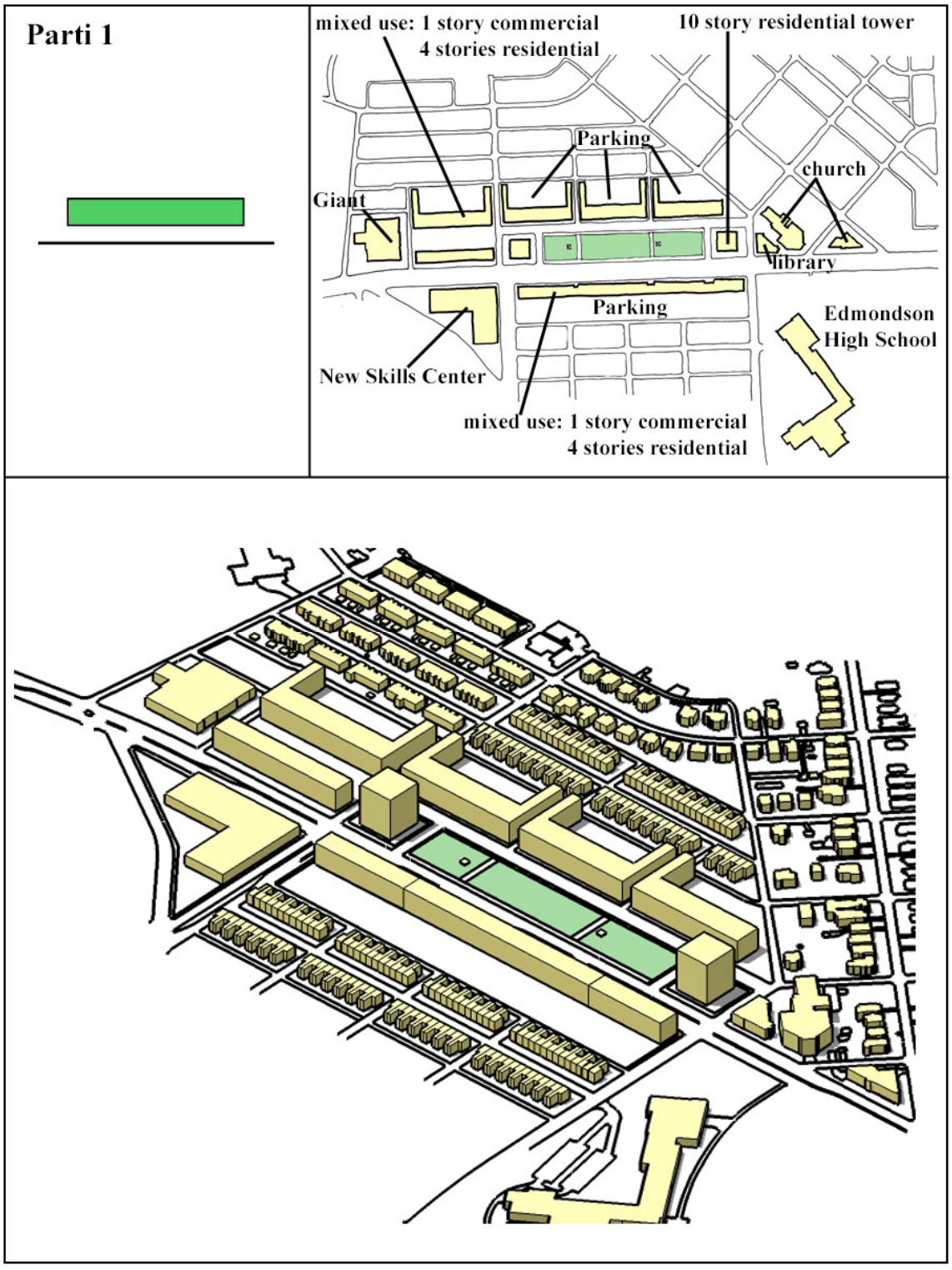


Figure 60: Parti I: Edmondson Village Scheme

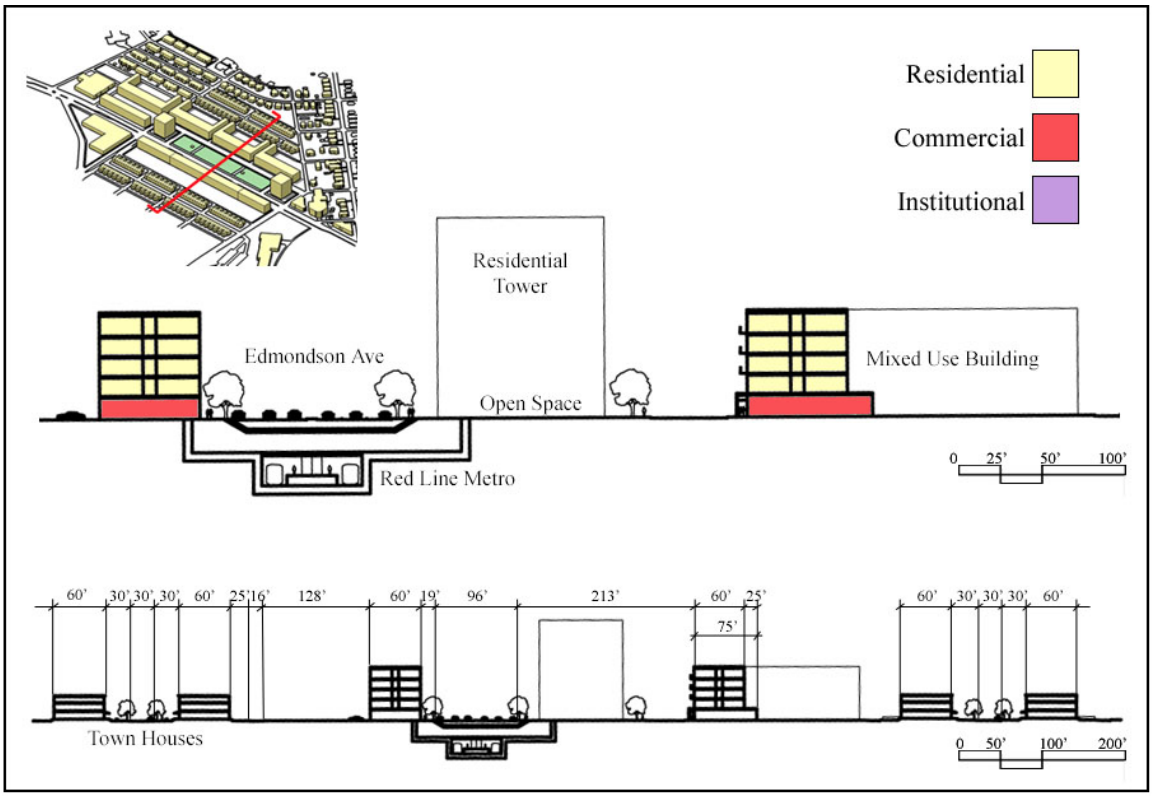


Figure 61: Section for Parti I

This scheme provides a large public green space along Edmondson Avenue. The residential towers increase the density around the center and break up the consistency of Edmondson Avenue. The towers have potential to establish a new sense of place and identity for the area because the scale of these buildings contrasts with all of the existing fabric. The skills center has been relocated to the existing commercial block. This provides institutional buildings at both of the intersections framing the Village Center (Swann and Athol). The potential weakness of the scheme is that it does not directly address the North Athol Road and Swann Road intersections. If the towers have multiple entrances they can begin to have a relationship to the institutional buildings and hold the street edge.

Parti II: Market Common Shopping Center- Clarendon, Virginia

[Google Earth]

Figure 62: Aerial View of the Market Common shopping center in Clarendon, Virginia
The shopping center fronts a major street and has a mixed use building surrounding the public space. The center is surrounded by a parking garage and townhouses and commercial buildings across the street.

Parti II places the open space perpendicular to Edmondson Avenue. Similar to the Piazza Navona, the public space is surrounded on three sides by mixed use buildings. The fourth side is left open providing a view across Edmondson Avenue and connecting to the Skills Center. The Red Line Pavilion is and featured object located at the end of the axis along Edmondson Avenue.

Walking Experience

- one way road with on street parking in addition to garage
- trees and benches along the sidewalk
- mixed use; residential and commercial

View from 2nd Level Balcony

- integrations of uses/spaces
- 2 levels of commercial in the back; provides outdoor seating & more dynamic section
- open space is broken down into different sections/uses; playground, fountain, seating, pavilion

Entry from Residential Area

- access provided from residential fabric
- commercial wraps corner
- provides view of playground and apartments

Figure 63: Market Common shopping center, Clarendon, Virginia
The images show the character of the center and also provide precedents for design.

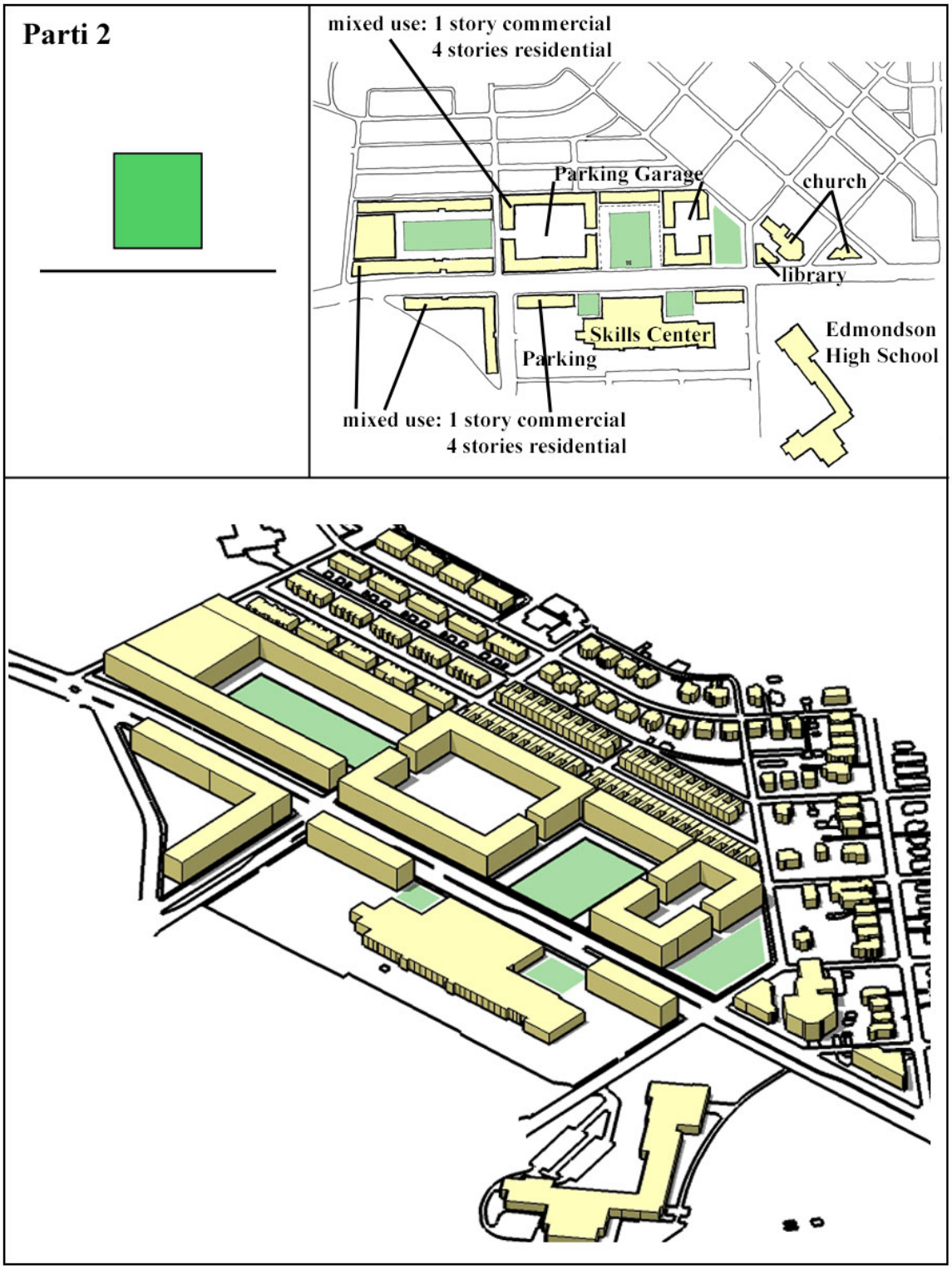


Figure 64: Parti II: Clarendon Market Common Scheme

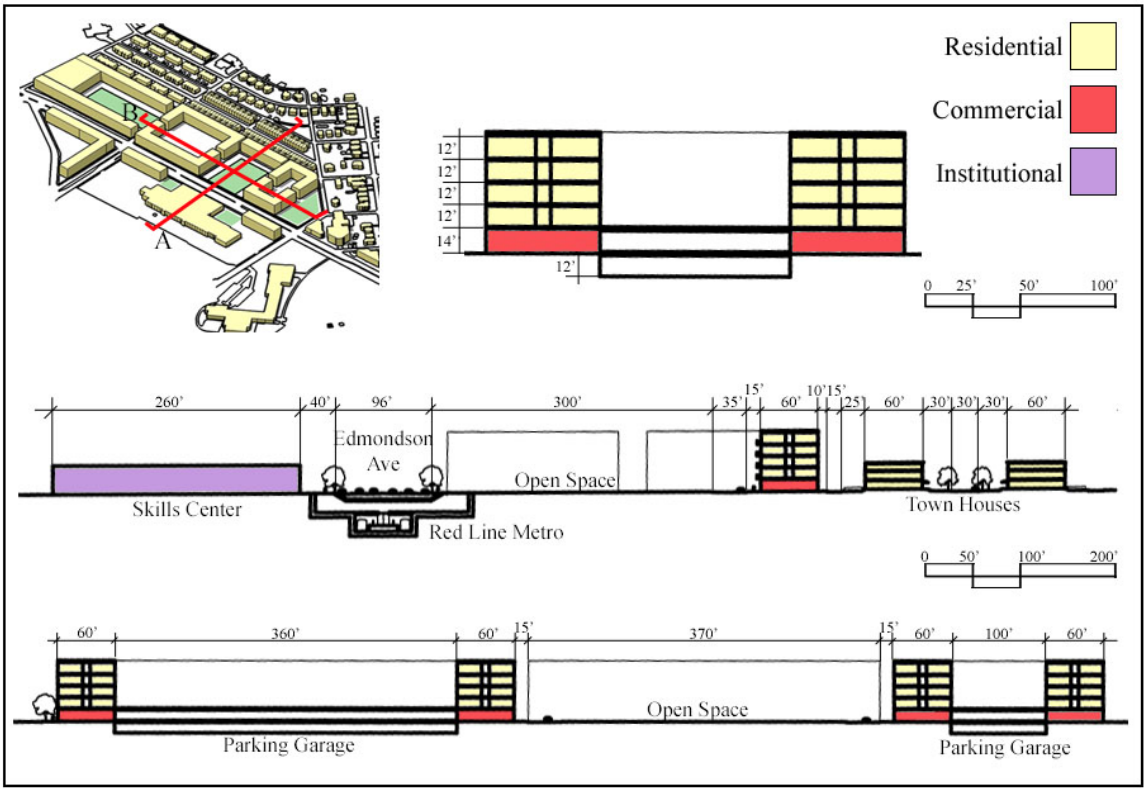


Figure 65: Sections for Parti II

This scheme pulls the commercial activity farther off Edmondson Avenue. It allows for parking around the U-shape green space and an additional parking garage with commercial activity along Edmondson Avenue. The shape provides a more intimate space than the first parti because the buildings are closer to the space. The downside is that shadows are cast across the space at different times of the day. The mixed use buildings along Edmondson Avenue keep the consistent streetscape, but do not provide a significant void like Parti I. The existing skills center is left in place ending the void across Edmondson Avenue.

Parti III: Reston Town Center

[Google Earth]

Figure 66: Aerial View of Reston Town Center in Virginia.
Reston Town Center combines multiple scales and uses around the center. The void extends through the space and extends on both sides of the street.

Parti III is based on Reston Town Center and is a partial combination of the first two partis. Like with Parti II, the open space is perpendicular to Edmondson Avenue, but is a more significant void like Parti I. The Red Line Pavilion can be placed on either side of Edmondson Avenue and should be a featured object along the axis.

Entry into Center

- walk from surface parking lot or garage
- green space and paved plaza
- mixed use buildings

View Across Street

- street runs through center; slow traffic and brick paving
- mixed use buildings wrap the corner; continuous facade
- ice skating rink provides place for recreation

View Back to Entry

- entry 'towers' form threshold into space and extend arcade
- plaza has cafe seating, benches, and a fountain
- curved buildings soften the edge of the space

Figure 67: Reston Town Center, Virgina
Reston town center has a higher density than the other centers and has multiple public spaces.

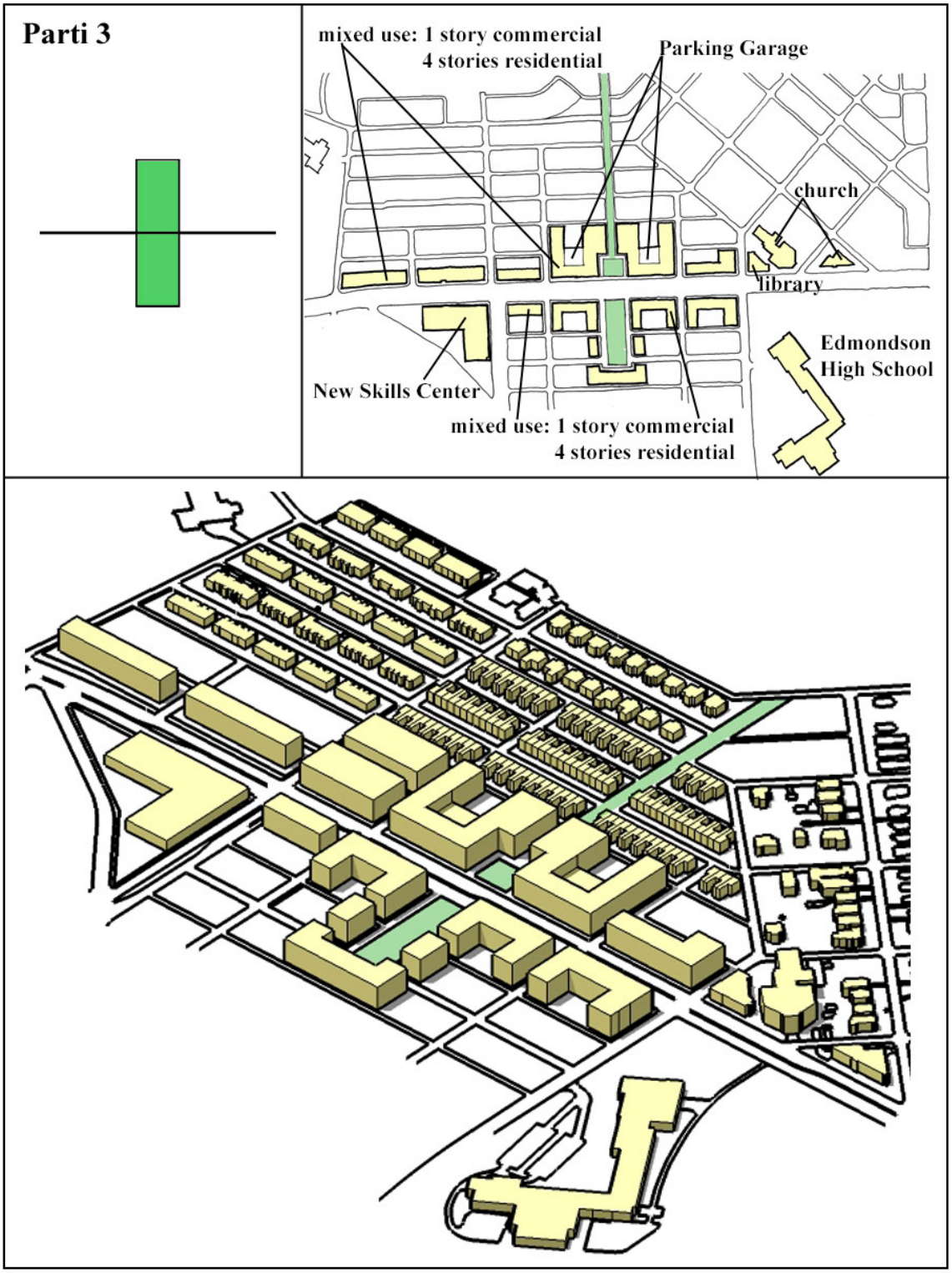


Figure 68: Parti III: Reston Town Center Scheme

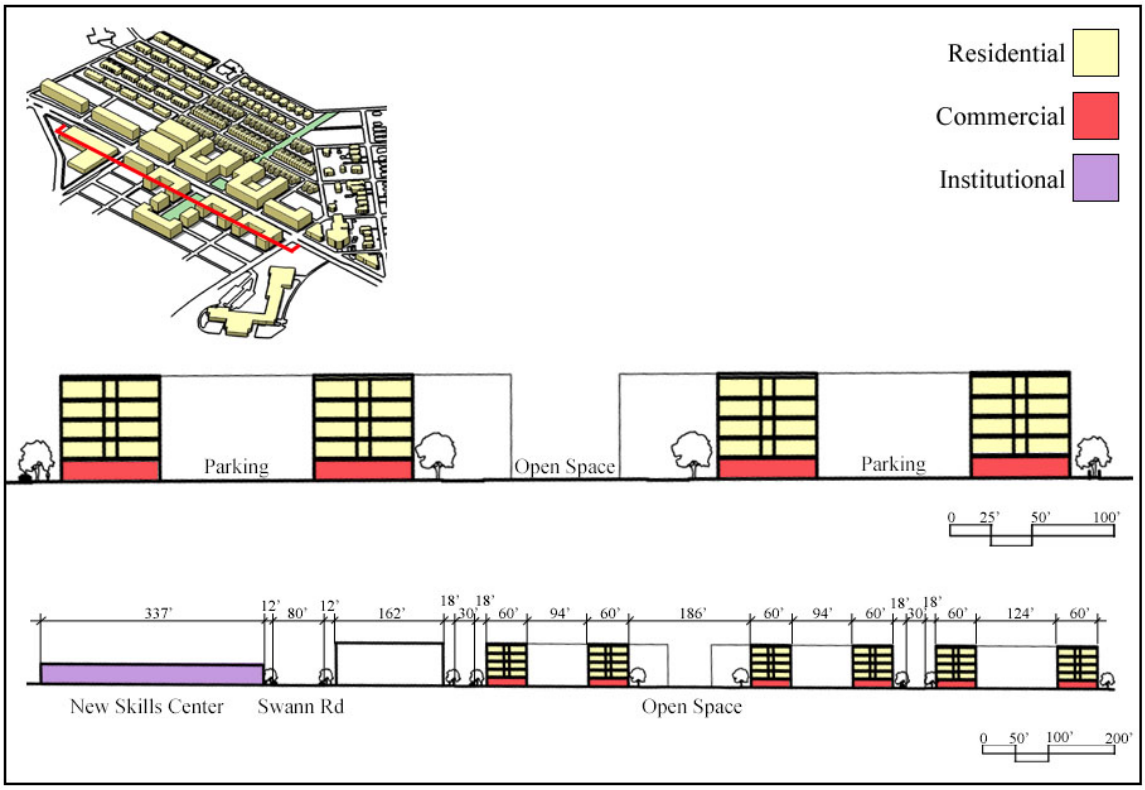


Figure 69: Section for Parti III

This scheme provides the greatest connection to Leakin Park and into the residential fabric. The streets along the greenway would be for pedestrians, providing increased access to the center. The street edge is held along Edmondson Avenue, but the increased scale breaks up the consistency and gives hierarchy to the space. The increased commercial area provides extra space for more community spaces such as a theater, bowling alley, or rec center. Like with parti I, the skills center has been relocated providing institutional buildings at both intersections (Swann and Athol). The potential problem with this scheme is the connection to the existing institutional building at the North Athol Road intersection.

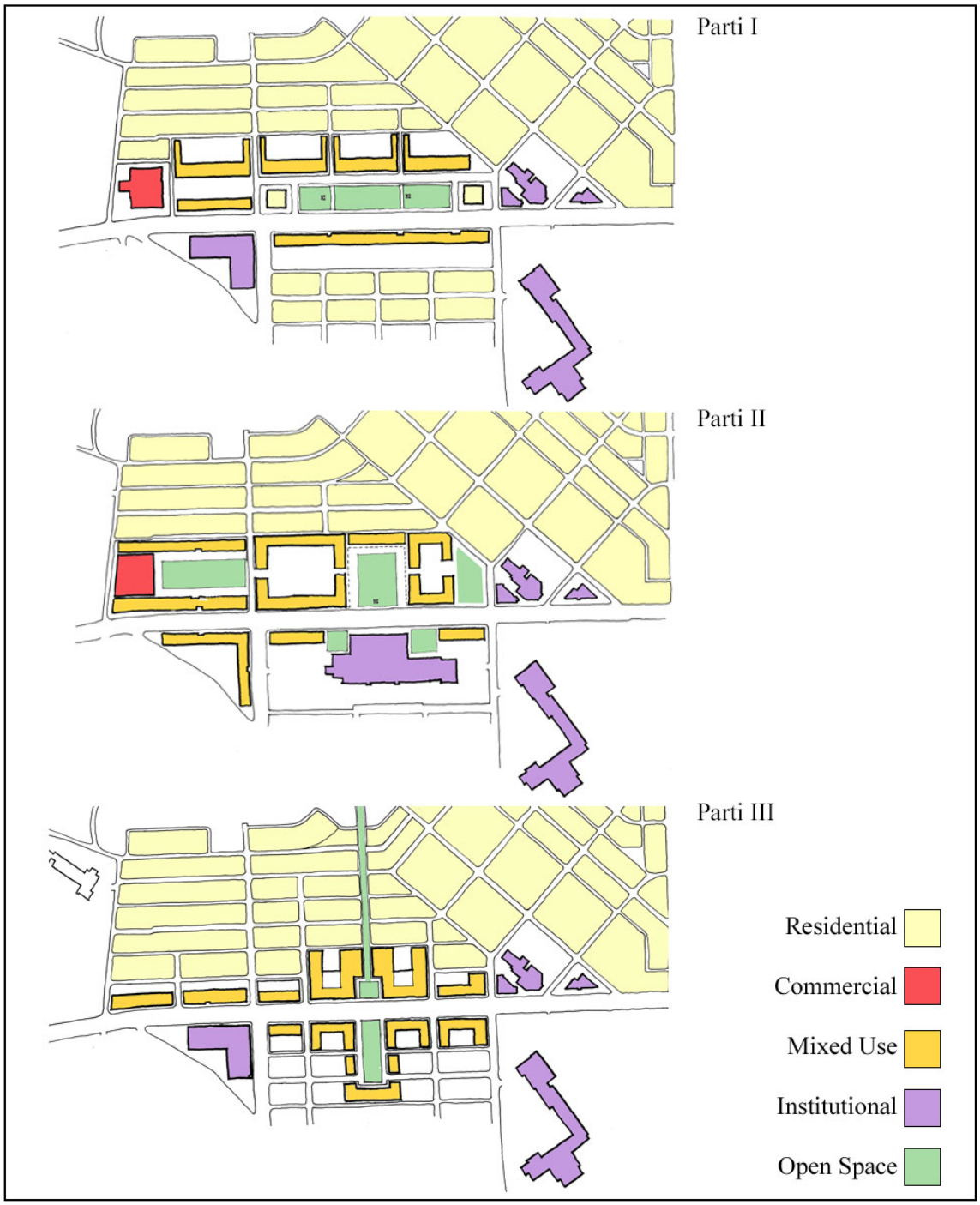


Figure 70: Land Use Diagram
The diagram shows the different combination of land uses. The majority of buildings added are mixed to increase the density around the center.

CHAPTER VI: DESIGN CONCLUSIONS

"We must not build housing, we must build communities."

- Mike Burton

Figure 71: Edmondson Village Proposed Site Axon
The proposed site axon shows the relative heights of the buildings and their relationship to green space.

Throughout the design process, four of Sidney Brower's 'Eleven Properties for Community Generating Neighborhoods' were explored and used as a foundation in order re-establish a place and community for Edmondson Village.

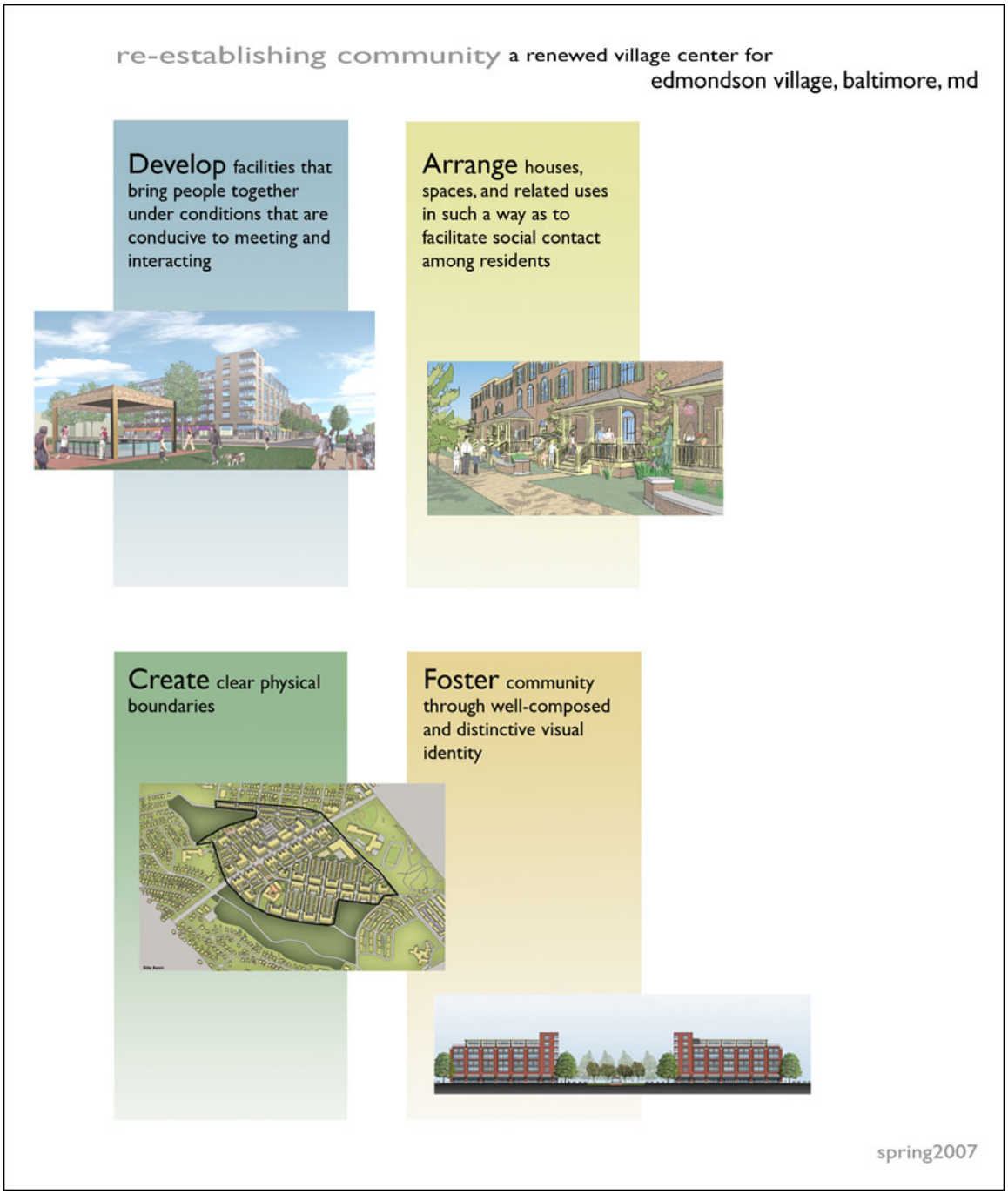


Figure 72: Four of Sidney Brower's Eleven Properties for Community Generating Neighborhoods
These four properties are the foundation for the new design of Edmondson Village.

Community buildings (churches, schools, and libraries) and open space are the primary facilities that bring people together and that are conducive to people meeting and interacting. Commons Park and the metro, serve as a major gathering place and point of interaction within the community. The residential streets and houses have porches, street trees, and common green space to facilitate social contact among residents and provide an environment that promotes pedestrian activity. The Gywnn Falls Park, Uplands Park, and New Cathedral Cemetery provide clear boundaries for the community and link the different neighborhoods together. The new commercial core along Edmondson Avenue (Route 40) provides a distinct visual identity for the Edmondson Village as well.

In order to execute the four design principles, four design strategies were developed and then implemented at three design scales: the urban scale, the architectural scale, and the building scale. Based on the site and program analysis the core issues for the site were lack of access and public transportation, lack of a viable commercial core, low density and little variety in housing types, and little connection to green space. These issues became the design strategies for the proposed development. Each strategy was diagramed then implemented in order to re-establish a viable community and place for Edmondson Village. The following sections show the graphic analysis and design for the final presentation. The presentation is broken down into design strategies and tactics. The tactics were developed at three scales: the urban scale, the architectural scale, and the building scale.

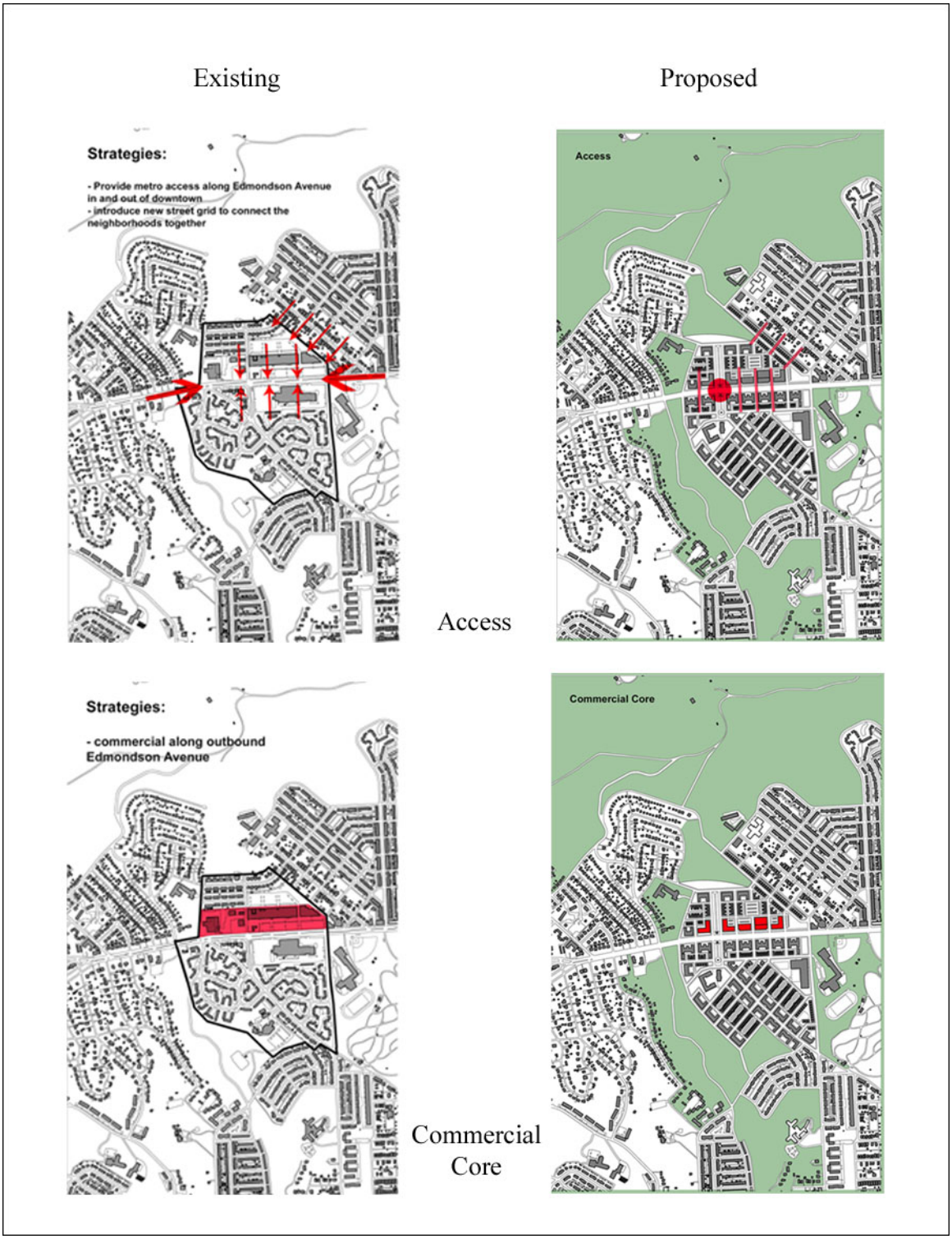


Figure 73: Design Strategies- Access and Commercial Core
Edmondson Avenue needs better access in and out of downtown, across Edmondson Avenue, and from the neighborhoods to the commercial core. An addition road was also added to connect the neighborhoods directly with Gywnn Falls Park. The commercial core is located on the outbound (North) side of Edmondson Avenue holding the street edge and creating a distinct visual identity for the area.

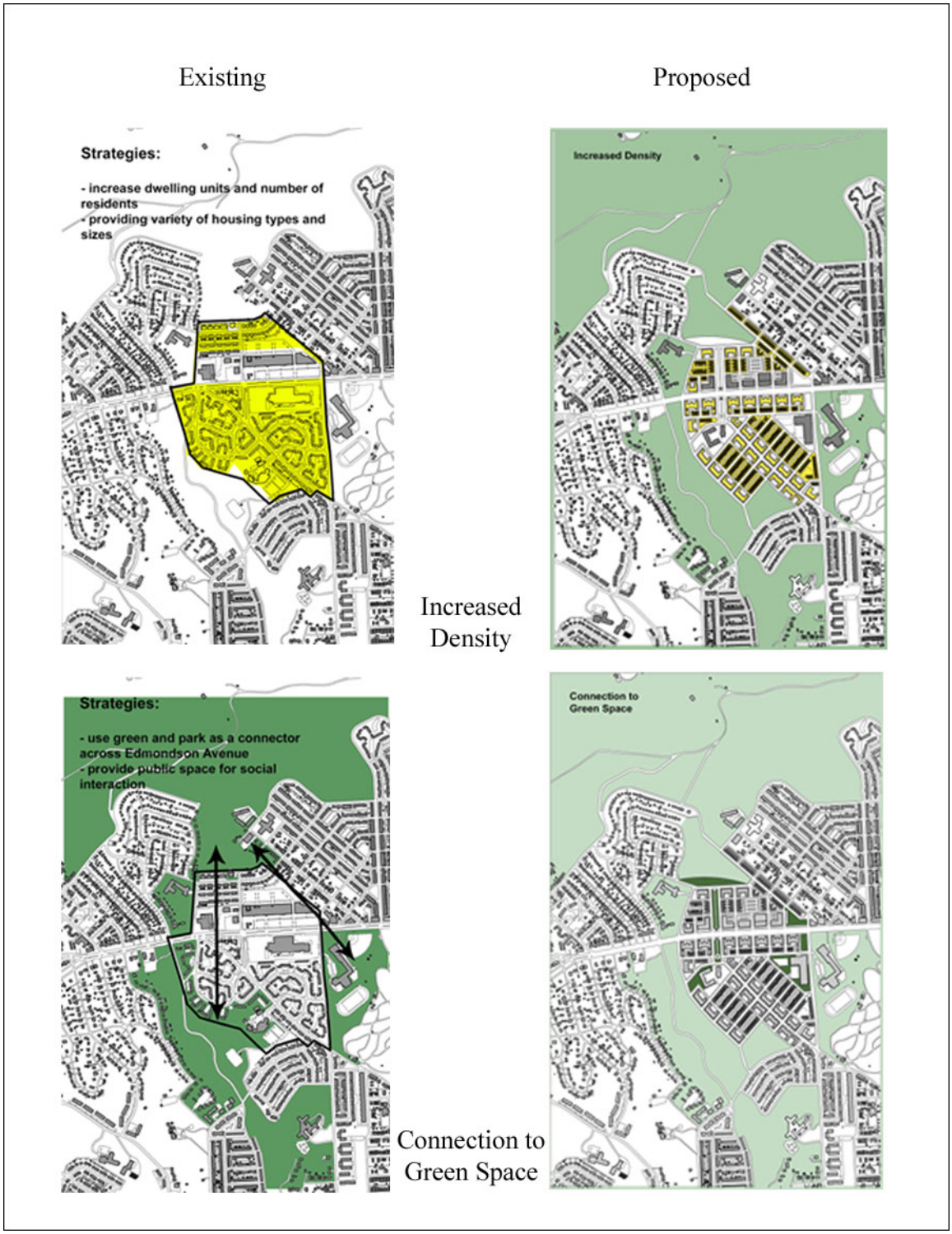


Figure 74: Design Strategies- Increased Density and Connection to Green Space
New housing types, high rise and low rise apartments and townhomes, were added to increase density and provide more variety in the neighborhood. Green space was not only used as a natural boundary, but also as a way to connect the neighborhoods together and provide places conducive to meeting and gathering.

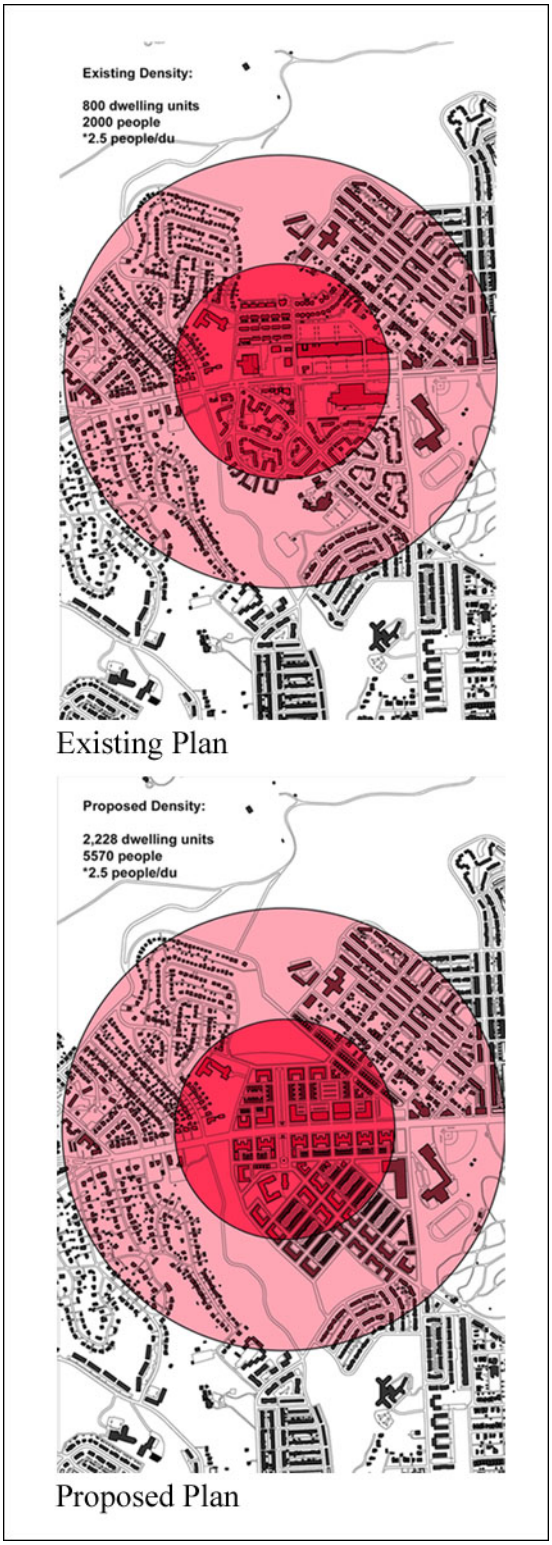


Figure 75: Existing and Proposed Density
The proposed plan provides approximately 1,400 more dwelling units and 4,000 more people.

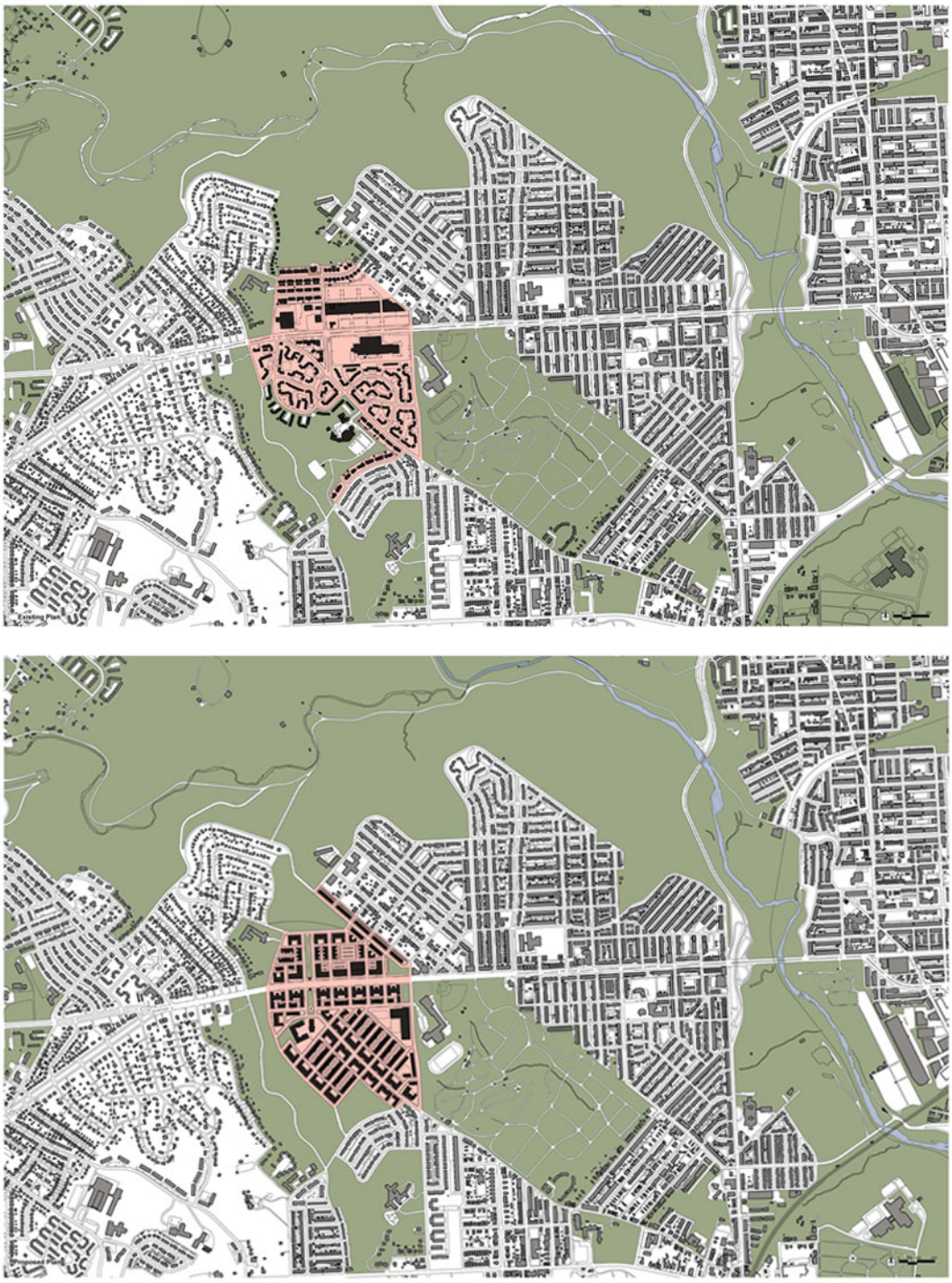


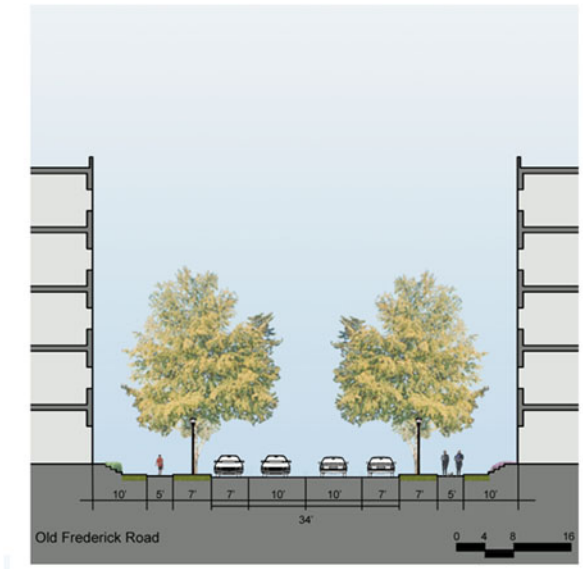
Figure 76: Existing and Proposed Plan

Figure 77: Proposed Site Plan
Commons Park links the North and South side of Edmondson Avenue. Three new housing types are introduced to increase density and provide more diversity in the neighborhood. High density apartments are located along major roads and facing parks. Low rise apartments front single family detached houses and have communal green space and circulation for increased social activity. Townhomes provide opportunity for home ownership and are different sizes to allow for diverse family sizes and incomes.

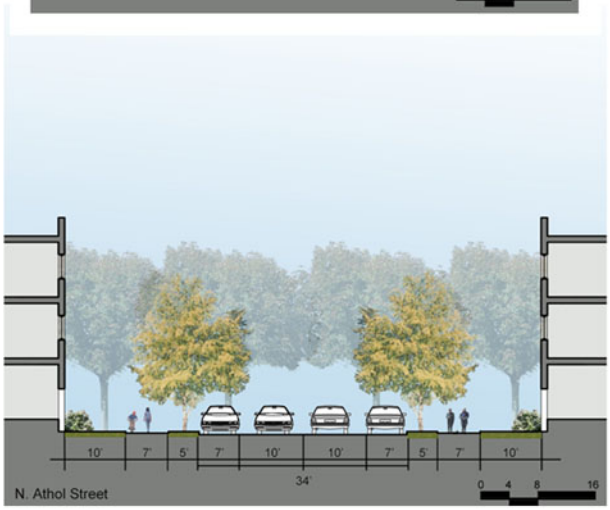
Figure 78: View looking down Edmondson Avenue

Figure 79: Edmondon Avenue Section

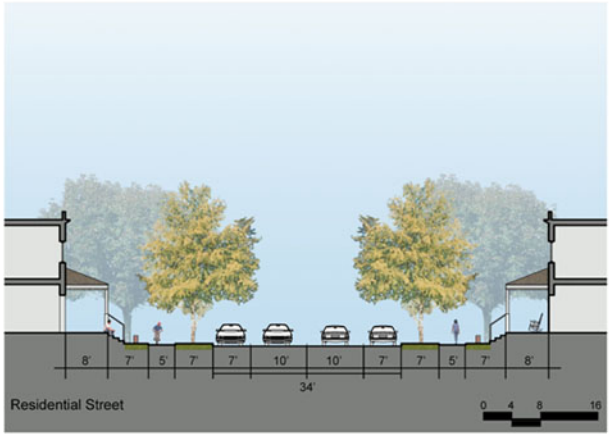
The section shows the deceased width of Edmondson Avenue with an added lane for retail parking. On the North side of the street there is housing above retail. The metro also runs under Edmondson Avenue, stopping at Commons Park.



High Rise Apartment:
- greater street enclosure
- minimal street setback
- 6 stories high



Low Rise Apartment:
- communal outdoor spaces
- greater street setback
- 3 stories high



Townhouse:
- porches for increased social interaction
- large street setback
- 2-3 stories high

Figure 80: Residential Street Sections

View of Commons Park and the Metro

View East on Edmondson Avenue

Figure 81: View of Public Spaces

Public green space is used to connect across Edmondson Avenue and provide places that are conducive for people meeting and gathering. Retail stores, café seating, metro access, green space, and public buildings all work to increase the likelihood that community will occur.

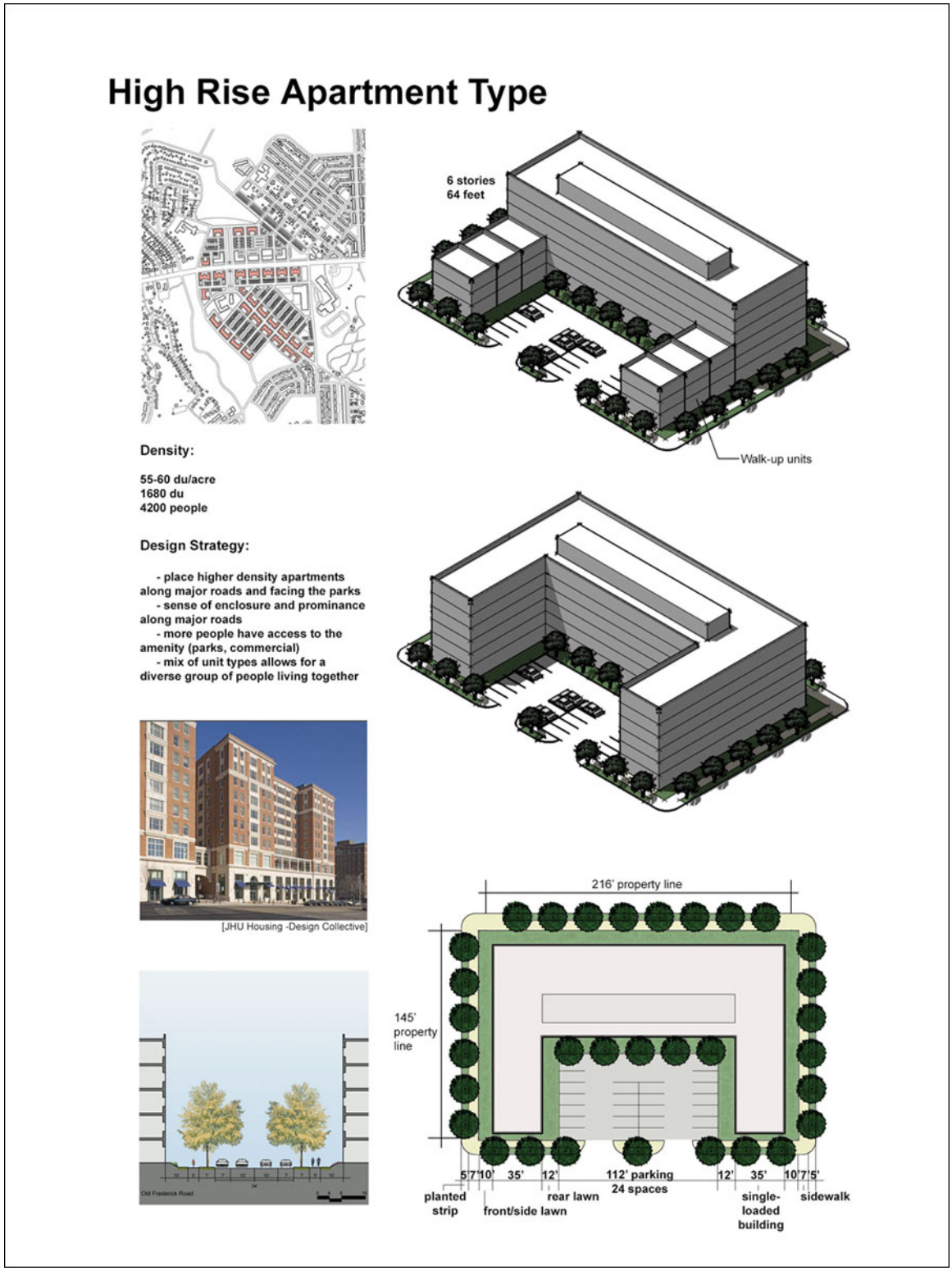


Figure 82: High Rise Apartment Type

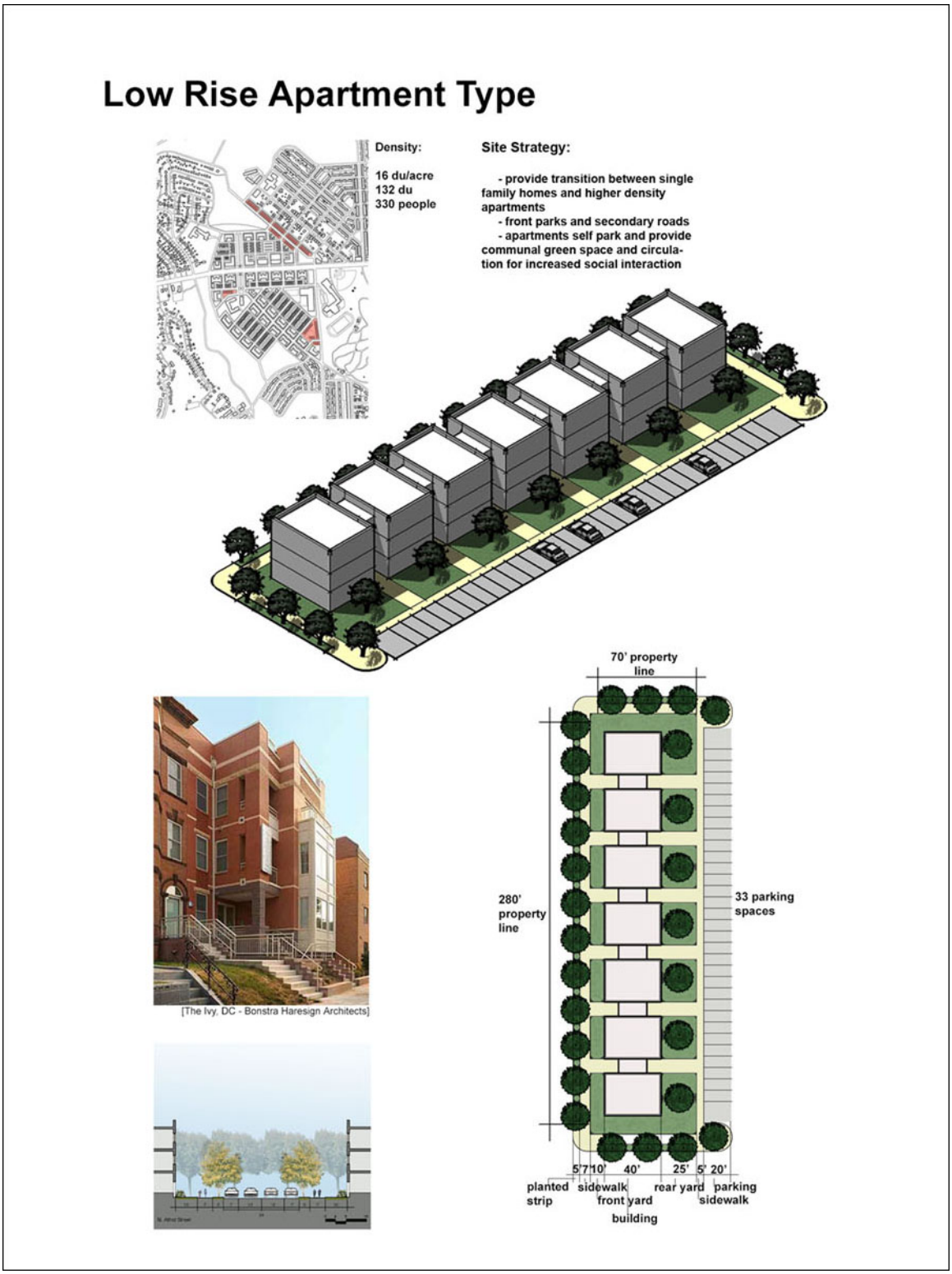


Figure 83: Low Rise Apartment Type

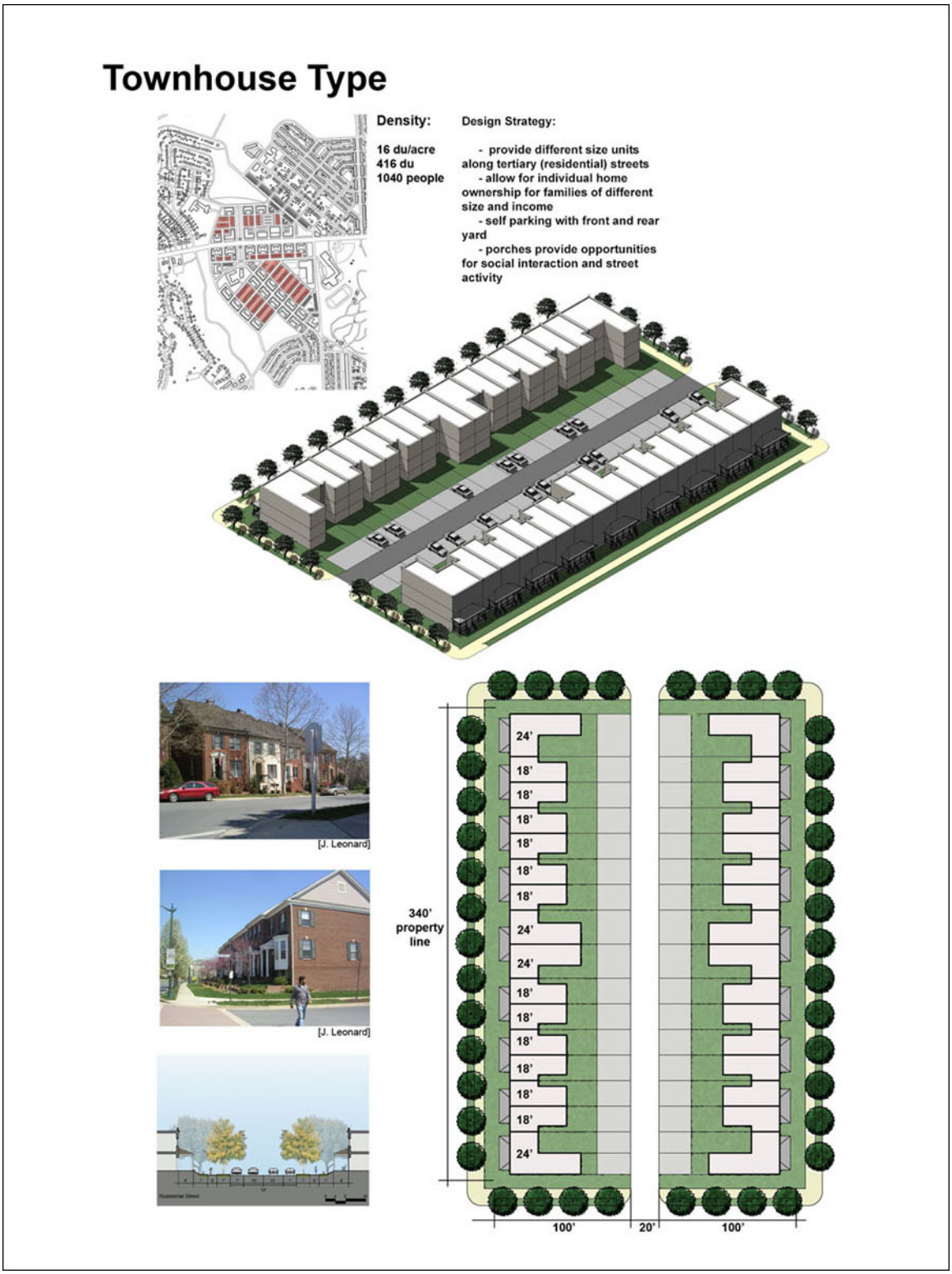


Figure 84: Townhouse Type

Figure 85: View of Residential Street
Townhouses have porches and front yards to increase social activity and interaction. The street trees and large sidewalks encourage pedestrian activity.

Figure 86: North Edmondson Avenue Mixed Use Elevation
The mixed use elevation along the North side of Edmondson Avenue creates a distinct visual identity and place for the community. The materials and details still relate to the exiting character of Baltimore, but provide a new scale and modern image for Edmondson Village.

Figure 87: Day and Night View of Commercial Street, Edmondson Avenue
Large sidewalks, street trees, and parking, provide and ideal environment for retail stores keeping Edmondson Avenue active with people throughout the day and night. Having housing and offices above the retail puts more people on the amenity and offers opportunity for increased social interaction.

Figure 88: Ground Floor/Retail Plan of Mixed Use Building on Edmondson Avenue

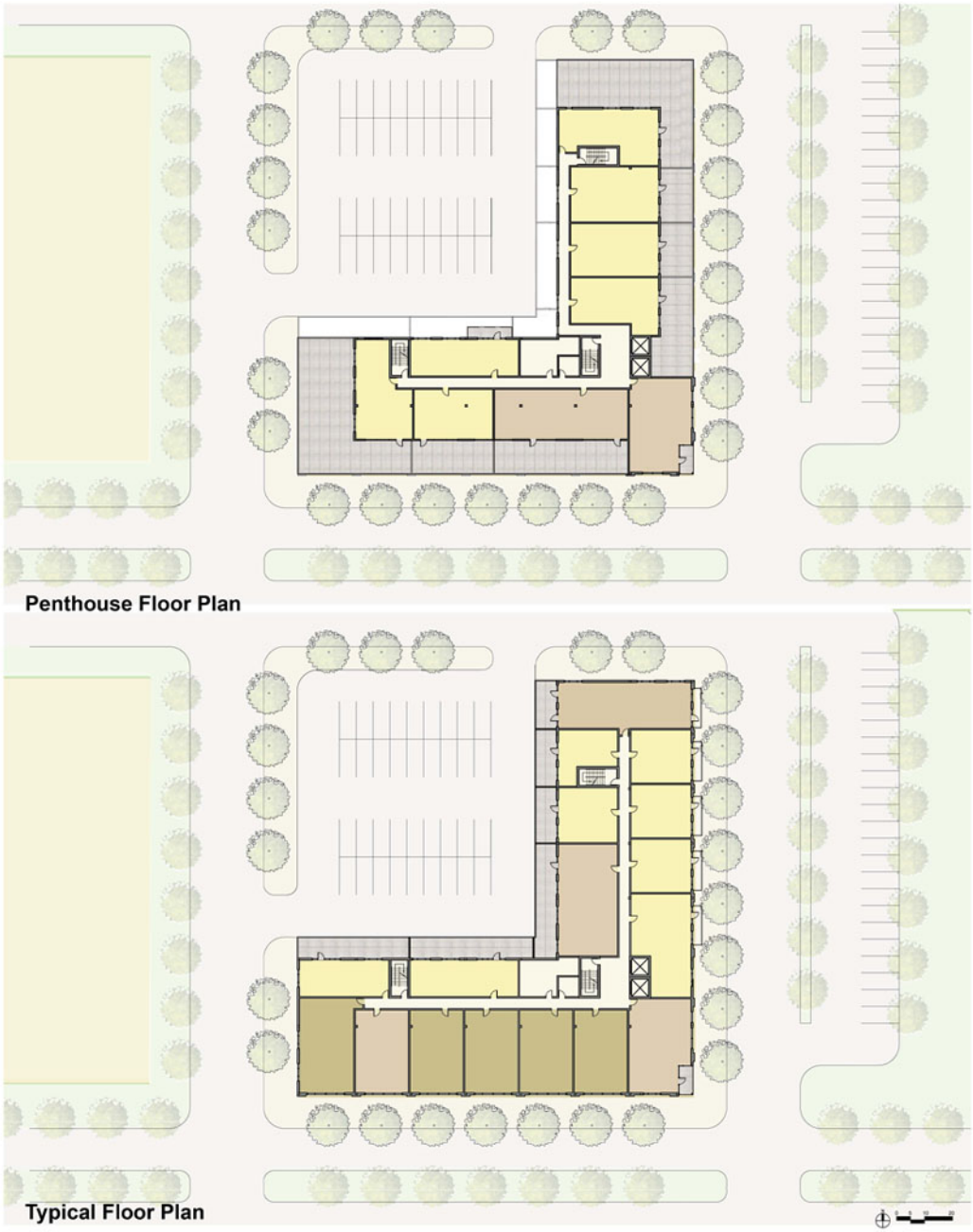


Figure 89: Typical Housing Floor and Penthouse Plan of Mixed Use Building on Edmondson Avenue

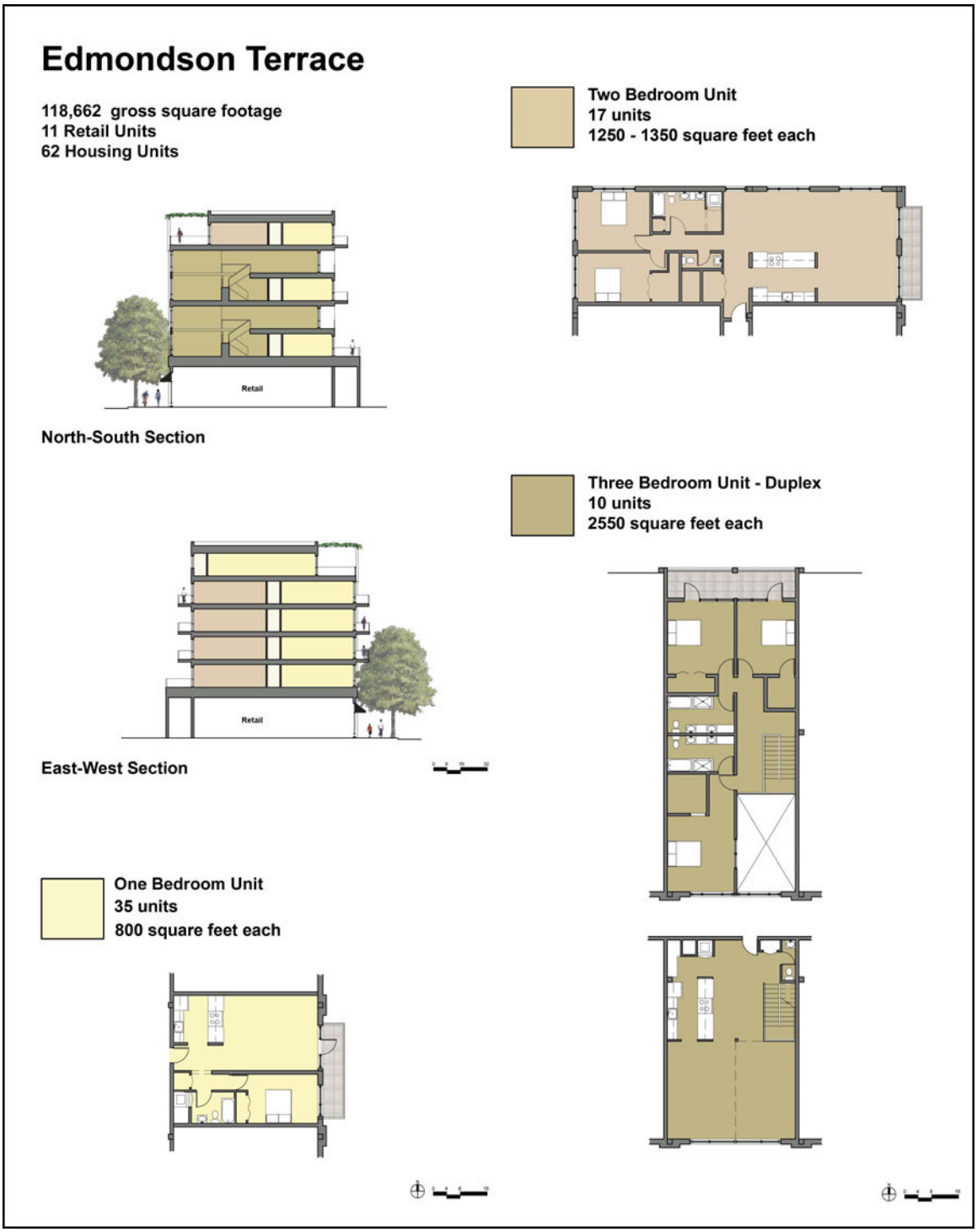


Figure 90: Typical Unit Plans for Housing on Edmondson Avenue
There is a mix of one, two, and three bedroom units to allow for diversity within one building.

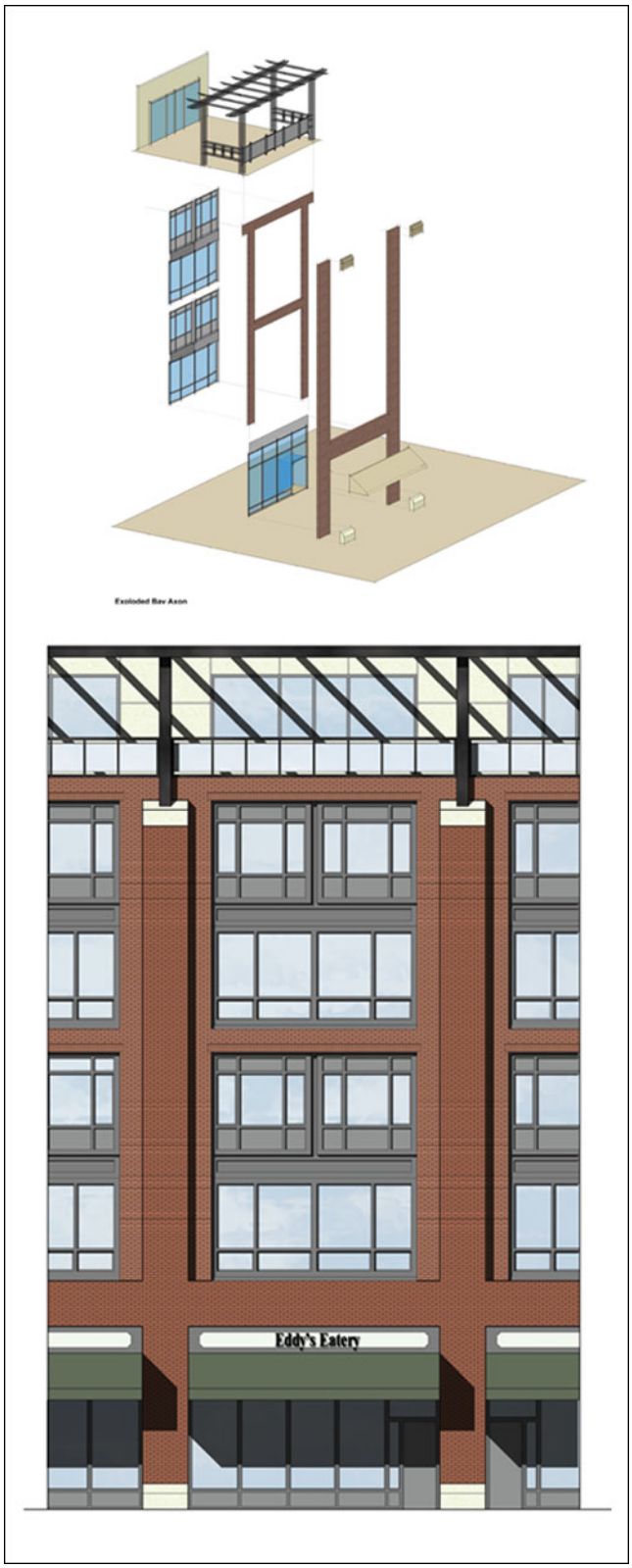


Figure 91: Exploded Axon and Typical Bay of Mixed Use Building on Edmondson Avenue

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Endnotes

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