



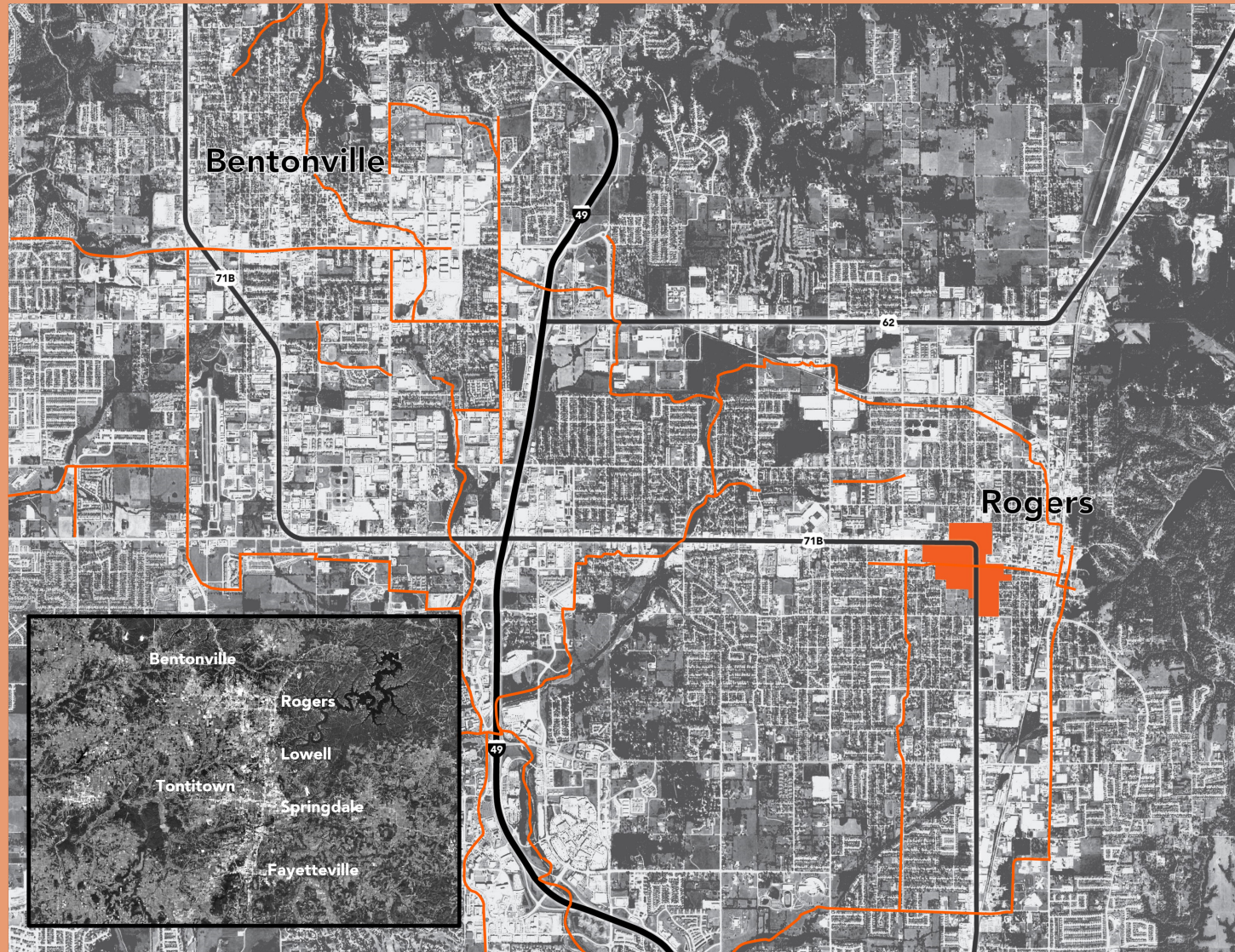
LA PLAZA

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PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

The La Plaza District holds a pivotal role within the rapidly evolving landscape of Northwest Arkansas, serving as a strategic gateway that connects the unique character of Rogers to the broader regional growth of the corridor. Situated as a critical nexus within the city, La Plaza acts as a bridge between the historic, walkable core of downtown Rogers and the expanding demands of an increasingly diverse population. Its location is not merely geographic; it is an opportunity to elevate Rogers' regional identity by providing a transit-oriented, multicultural urban village that bridges the gap between local heritage and the area's future.

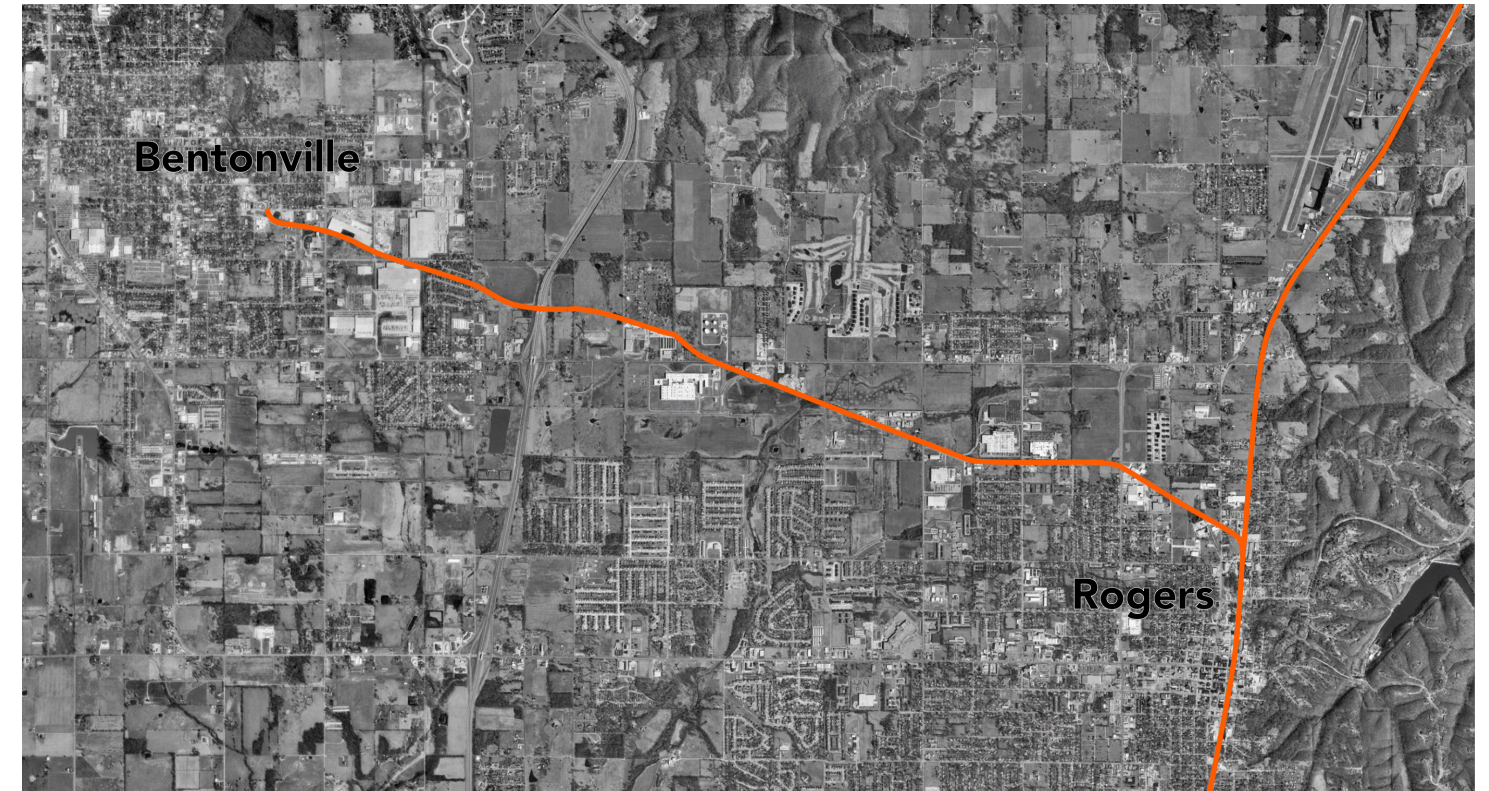


Northwest Arkansas Regional Context

Northwest Arkansas (NWA) is a fast-growing region with a population exceeding 600,000 people. New residents are consistently drawn to the area by its strong job market and an active, outdoor-focused lifestyle.

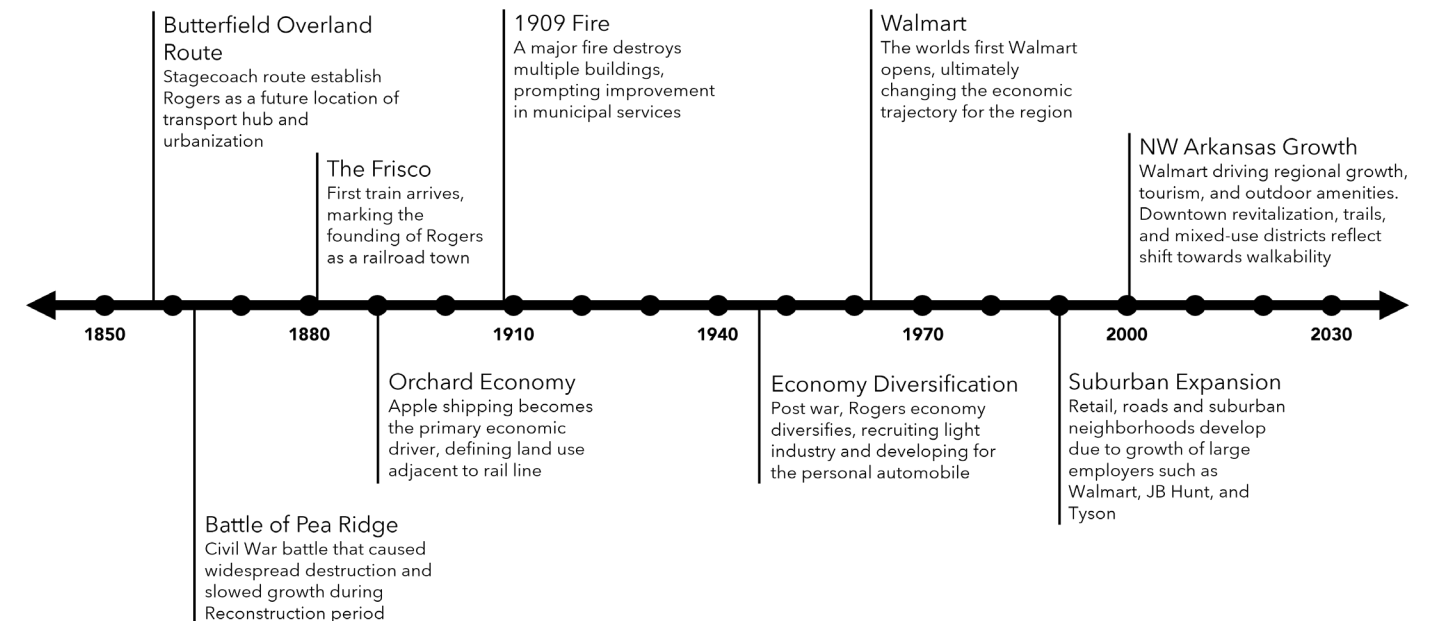
Across the region, growth is being shaped by both regional connectivity and a strong sense of place. A network of major corridors, including I-49 and key east-west arterials, ties Rogers closely to Bentonville, Springdale, and Fayetteville, making it part of a highly accessible, multi-city employment landscape.

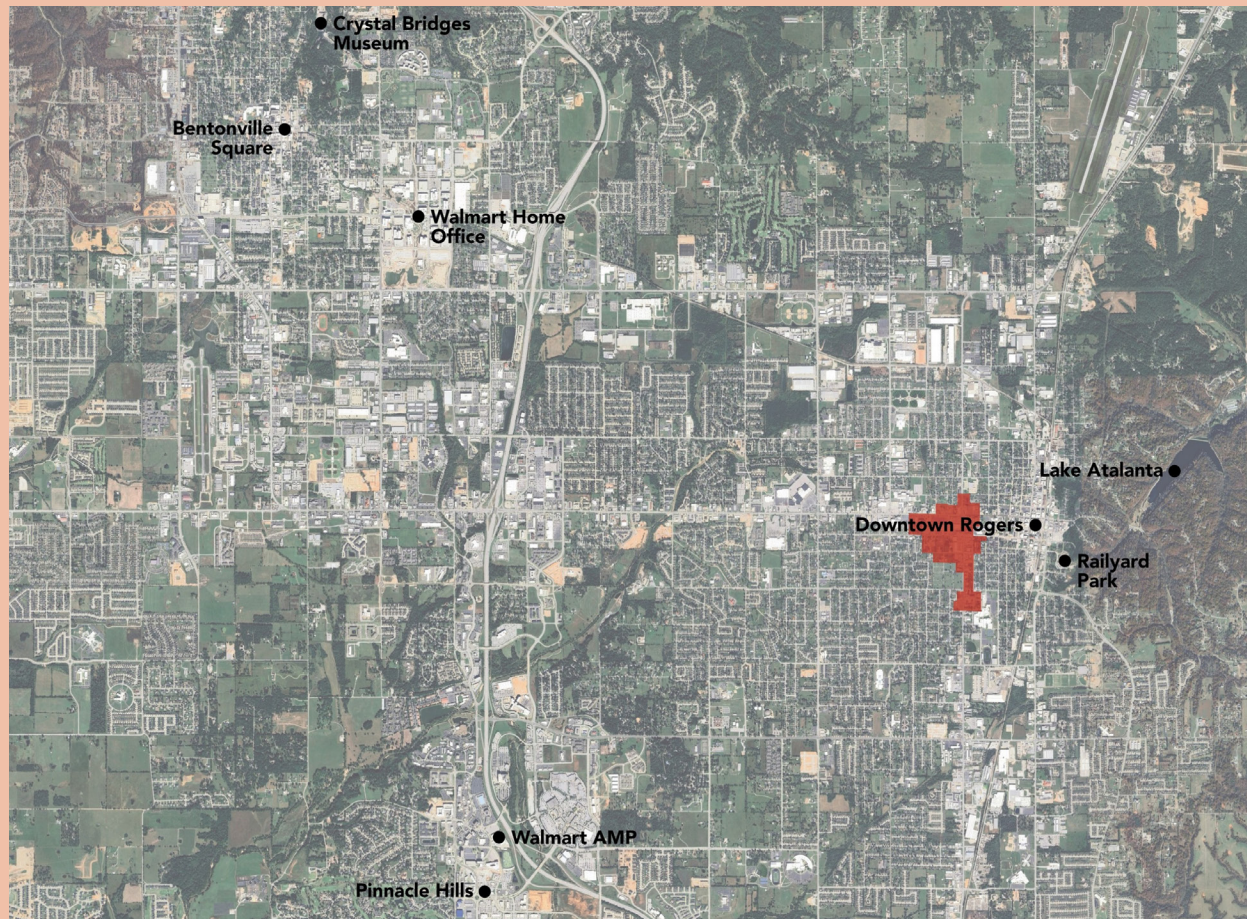
The region has invested heavily in quality-of-life infrastructure, particularly its nationally recognized trail system, which supports a growing culture of cycling for both recreation and daily movement. This combination of highway access and trail connectivity has helped define how people live and move in the region, reinforcing its appeal to new residents and employers alike.



Rogers History

The city of Rogers was founded in 1881 as a vital rail town for the Frisco line. While the surrounding region remained mostly rural until recent years, Rogers originally built its foundation on a robust agricultural economy. The area's early economic growth and trade were largely driven by key commodities, specifically tobacco, lumber, apples, and poultry.

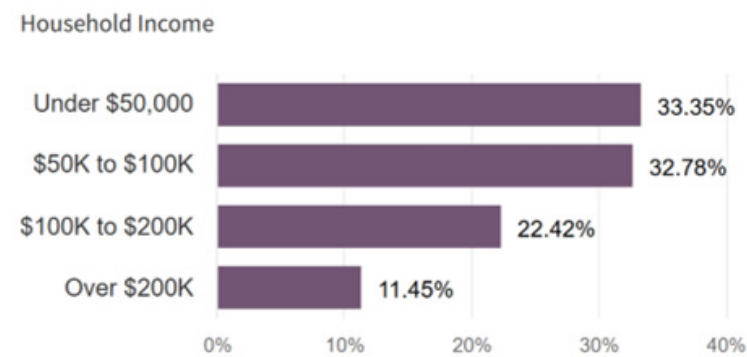




Major Points of Interest & Major Players

The strategic focus for Rogers centers on growing and diversifying its local economy by reinvesting in legacy industrial or commercial spaces and investing in regional music and cultural production. These initiatives are anchored by a powerful corporate presence—serving as the home base for the headquarters of Walmart, J.B. Hunt, and Tyson Foods—alongside major manufacturing employers like Bekaert, First Brands (Clorox), Kennametal, Mundo-Tech, and Preformed Line Products.

A look in the Economics

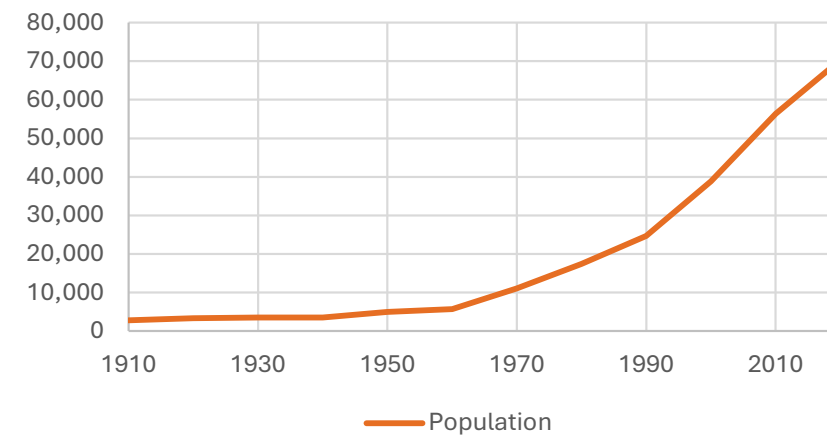


Source: Social Explorer

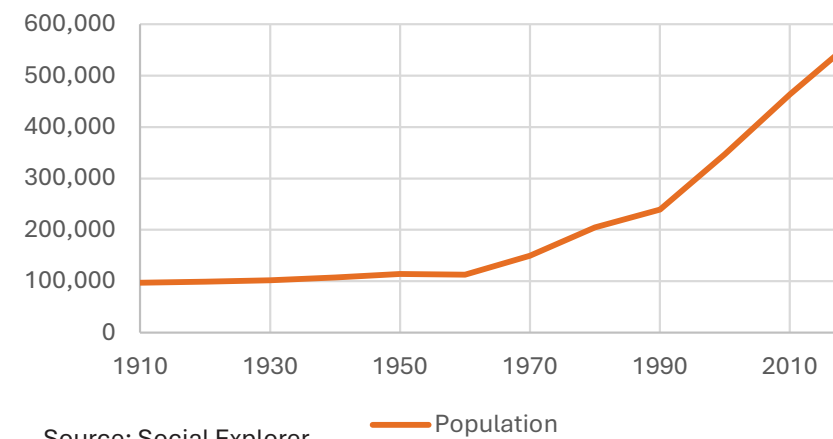
The local economic profile features a per capita income of \$38,004 alongside a median household income of \$69,582. While the poverty rate sits at 9.62%, the community also faces wealth disparities, as evidenced by a 0.48 Gini score which indicates a higher-than-average degree of inequality. Balancing these income metrics is an indexed average cost of living of 86.8, suggesting that everyday expenses remain relatively affordable compared to national benchmarks.

Rogers Population

City of Rogers



Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers MSA

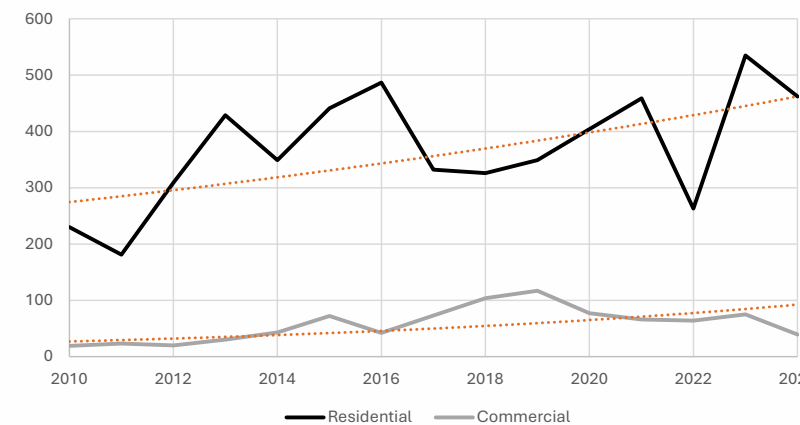


Source: Social Explorer

Rogers has experienced steady growth for decades, driven by quality of life, access to outdoor amenities, and strong job access. The city’s population grew from around 56,000 in 2010 to about 70,000 in 2020 and has continued to rise since, reflecting a strong local economy and sustained in-migration.

This growth is tied to broader trends across Northwest Arkansas, particularly in Benton County, one of the fastest-growing areas in the state. Rogers benefits directly from this momentum, alongside nearby cities like Bentonville and Springdale. Within this context, it continues to serve as both a residential and employment center, with growth visible in new neighborhoods, suburban expansion, and ongoing development along key corridors.

New Construction Permits



New construction building permits provide a clear indicator of a community’s appetite for growth and help reveal emerging development trends. Recent data shows continued momentum in both residential and commercial activity, signaling sustained investment and expansion.

In 2024, Rogers issued 462 new construction permits for residential projects and 39 for commercial development, reflecting strong demand for housing alongside steady commercial growth.

What makes Rogers, Rogers?



A City of Firsts

Rogers is also a city of firsts, with a legacy rooted in moments that have shaped both the region and the country. The city is home to the first Walmart store, which marked the beginning of a company that would transform global retail. That spirit of ambition continues to define the city today. From its early role as a rail and trade hub to its proximity to major corporate headquarters, Rogers has consistently been a place where new ideas take hold.



A Place of Many Places

Rogers is a place of many places, where distinct neighborhoods, landscapes, and experiences come together to form a layered and evolving city. From established downtown blocks to newer suburban communities, from trail systems and open space to commercial corridors, each part of the city offers something different while still contributing to a shared identity.

Gateway to Nature

Rogers sits at the edge of the Ozarks, with quick connections to lakes, trails, and open spaces. An expanding network of greenways and bike trails links neighborhoods to parks and regional destinations, supporting both recreation and everyday mobility. This proximity to nature, paired with intentional investment in outdoor infrastructure, has become a defining part of Rogers' identity and a key reason people choose to live in the area.

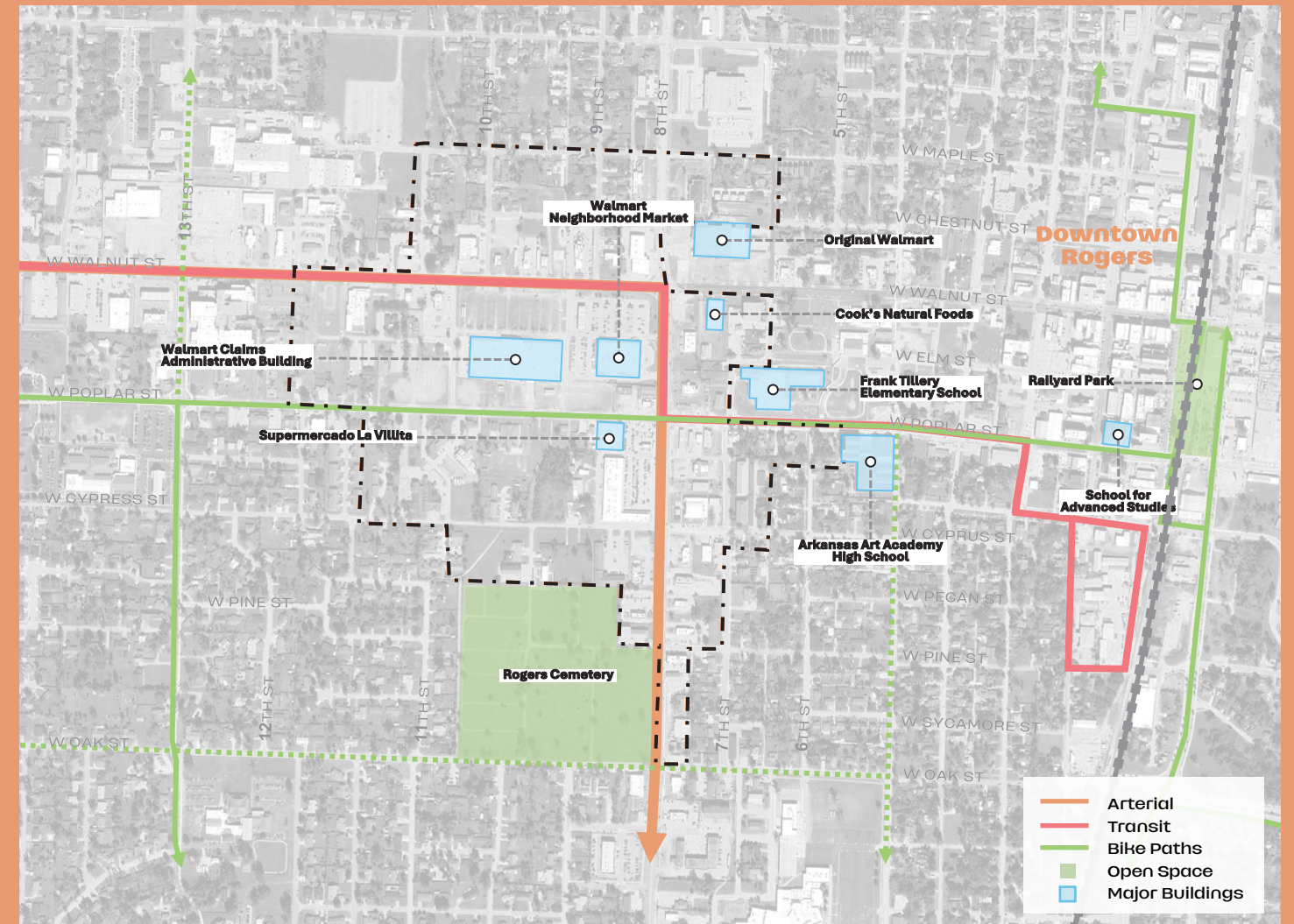


Community Oriented

Rogers is deeply community-oriented, with a culture that values inclusion and supports the people and businesses that shape the city. This is reflected in its strong network of local businesses, neighborhood initiatives, and public spaces that bring residents together. The city has also embraced its growing Hispanic and Latino population, which has become an integral part of Rogers' identity, contributing to its culture, economy, and sense of place.



A Closer Look at Rogers



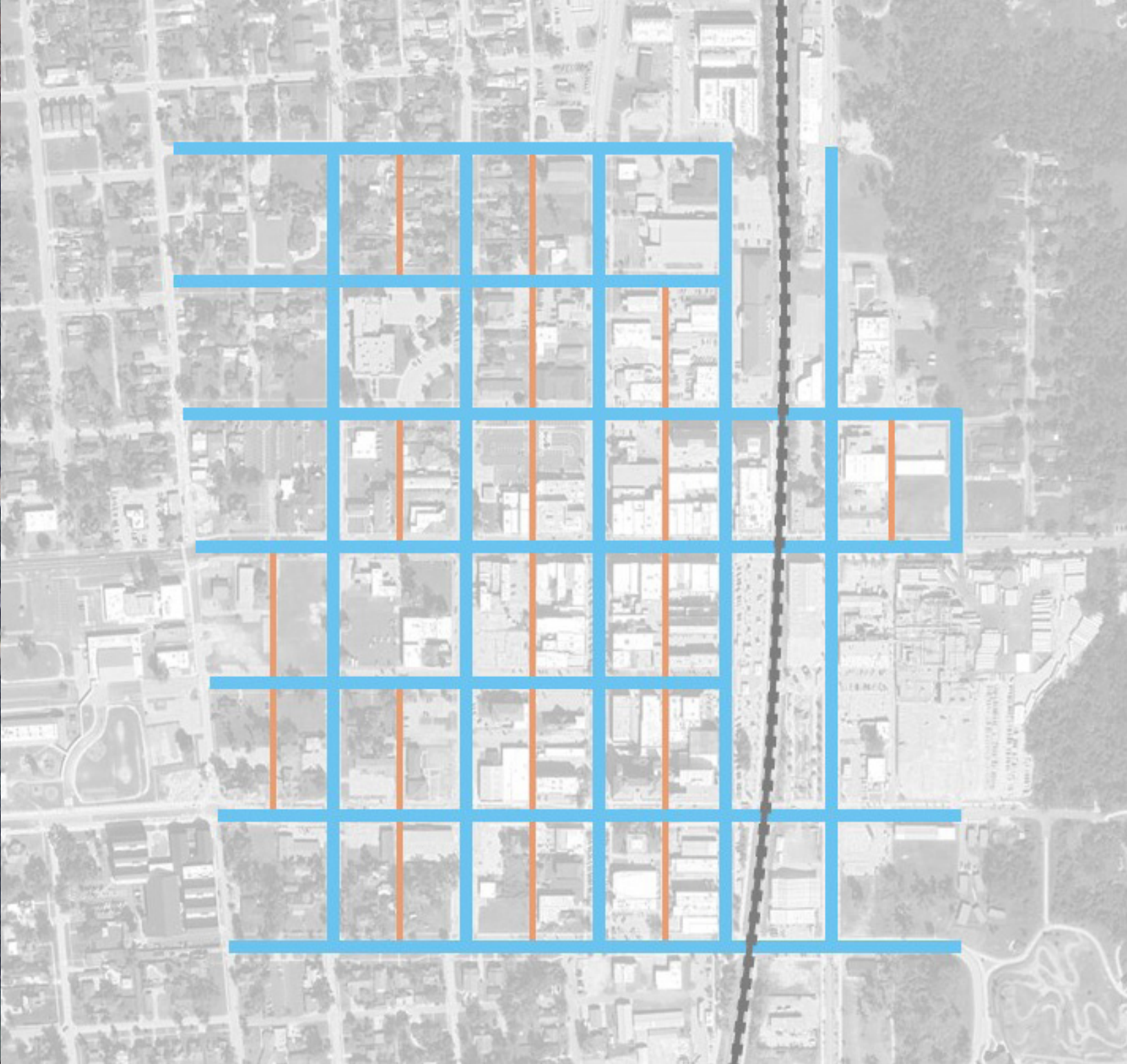
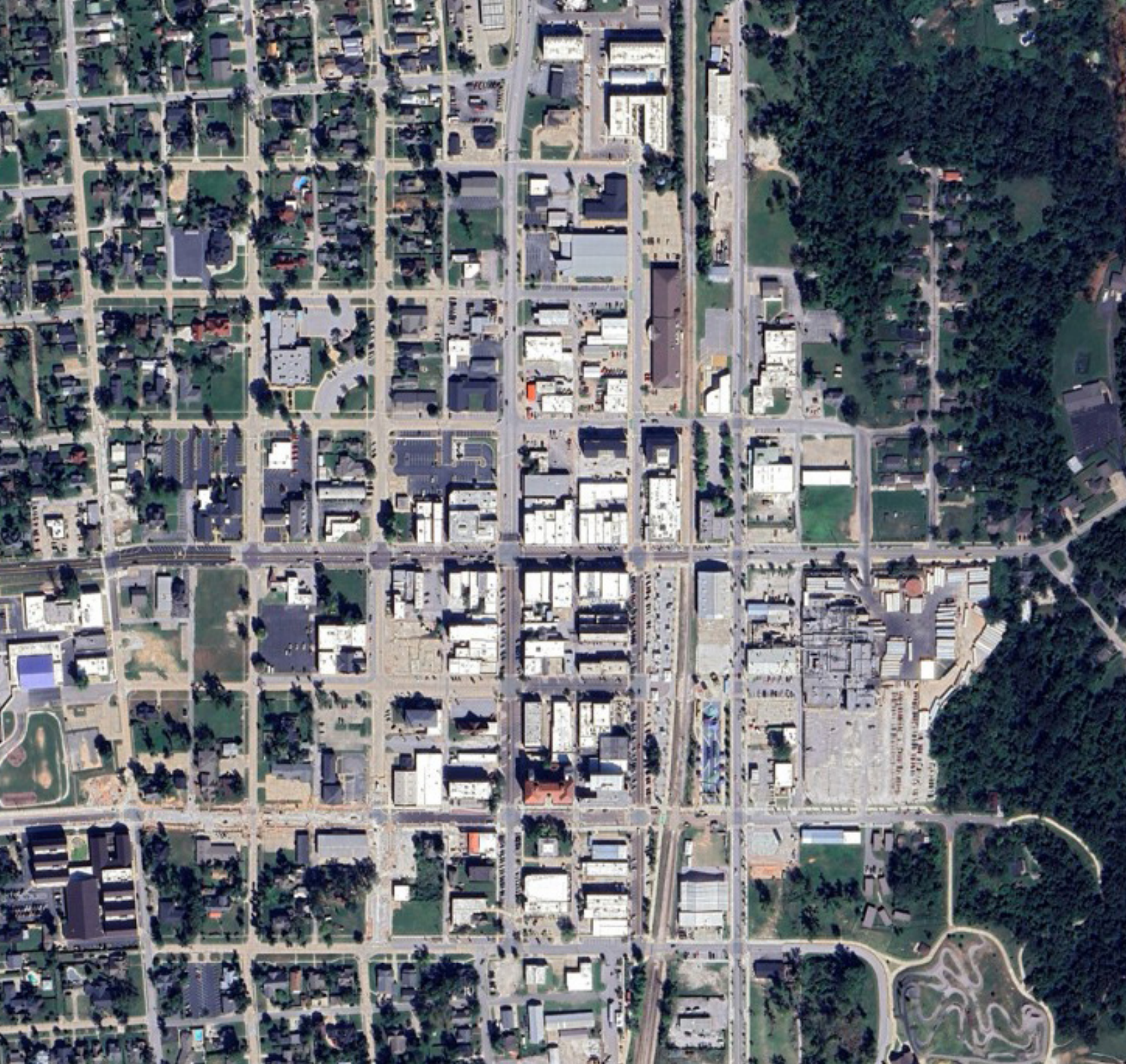
Site Connectivity & Community Integration

The project site is well positioned to build on the established grid of Downtown Rogers, maintaining a direct connection to the historic core while reinforcing a walkable, cohesive urban fabric. Anchored by this framework, the site benefits from strong regional and local access, supported by a network of arterial streets, transit options, and an expanding system of cycling infrastructure.

The district is highly integrated with existing community assets, sitting just a 5-minute walk from Downtown Rogers and a 10-minute walk from Rallyard Park. Proximity to essential services, including the Walmart Neighborhood Market, Frank Tillery Elementary School, and the Arkansas Art Academy, further anchors the site as a critical localized public gathering space.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

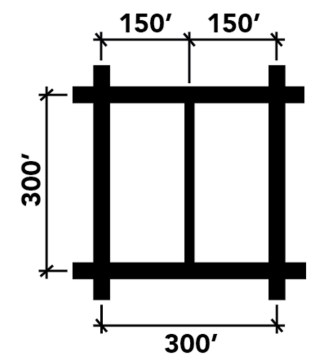
The La Plaza District Plan establishes an adaptable framework centered on streets, blocks, parcels, and buildings to meet evolving community needs. By utilizing a building typology matrix, the plan ensures that new developments respect the historic, walkable grain of Downtown Rogers while introducing human-scaled elements like “paseos”—intimate pedestrian corridors—and activated plazas. These “third places” function as communal anchors, designed to bridge the gap between private buildings and public life. Ultimately, this approach creates a resilient urban fabric, allowing the district to evolve organically while maintaining a cohesive, culturally vibrant character.



Lessons from Historic Urban Fabric

Rogers' historic downtown reflects a pattern common to railroad towns across the country, with streets aligned to the rail line to support commerce and movement. This simple framework created a connected fabric of neighborhoods anchored by compact blocks and a mix of building types and uses. The grid keeps routes direct and destinations close, supporting walkability and everyday activity. Frequent intersections improve connectivity and make it easy to move through downtown on foot, by bike, or via transit, while offering multiple paths through the area. When envisioning a future for La Plaza, this structure provides a strong example of what a walkable, people-oriented, resilient urban form looks like.

The 300'x300' block featuring a central alley maximizes both public-facing street life and private-side functionality. By incorporating a mid-block alley, the design effectively shifts service-oriented activities—such as trash collection, utility access, and off-street parking—away from the primary pedestrian frontages, resulting in a cleaner and more inviting streetscape.



A Quick Comparison

Downtown Rogers has evolved into a remarkably vibrant destination, anchored by the lively Railyard Park which serves as a central social hub for the community. The area's energy is further amplified by a thoughtful network of little pocket plazas and public spaces that encourage gathering and pedestrian interaction throughout the district.



Our Site



W Elm Street looking East towards S 11th



Legacy commercial form, S 8th Street

Downtown Rogers



E Walnut Street looking West towards N 2nd



Historic building form, S 1st Street

Testing Different Street Networks



Downtown Rogers



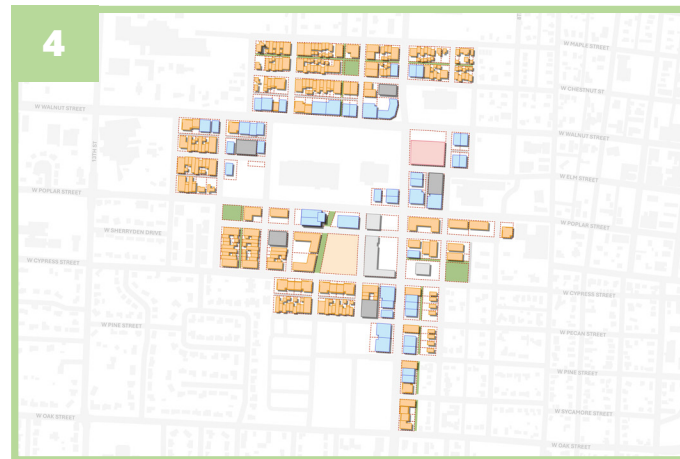
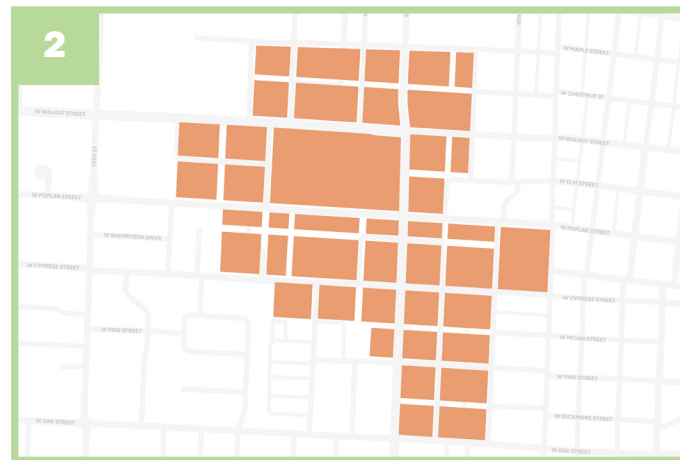
Pinnacle Hills

In addition to testing how the downtown Rogers grid integrates with our site, we also evaluated the layout of the nearby Pinnacle Hills area. Comparing these two models reveals a distinct contrast in block scale, where the downtown Rogers grid highlights the benefits of a more compact, highly connected, and pedestrian-oriented street network.

STREETS. BLOCKS. PARCELS. BUILDINGS.

The proposed planning framework organizes development around four core elements: **Streets, Blocks, Parcels, and Buildings**, prioritizing incremental growth and human-scale connectivity.

Establishing the Planning Framework

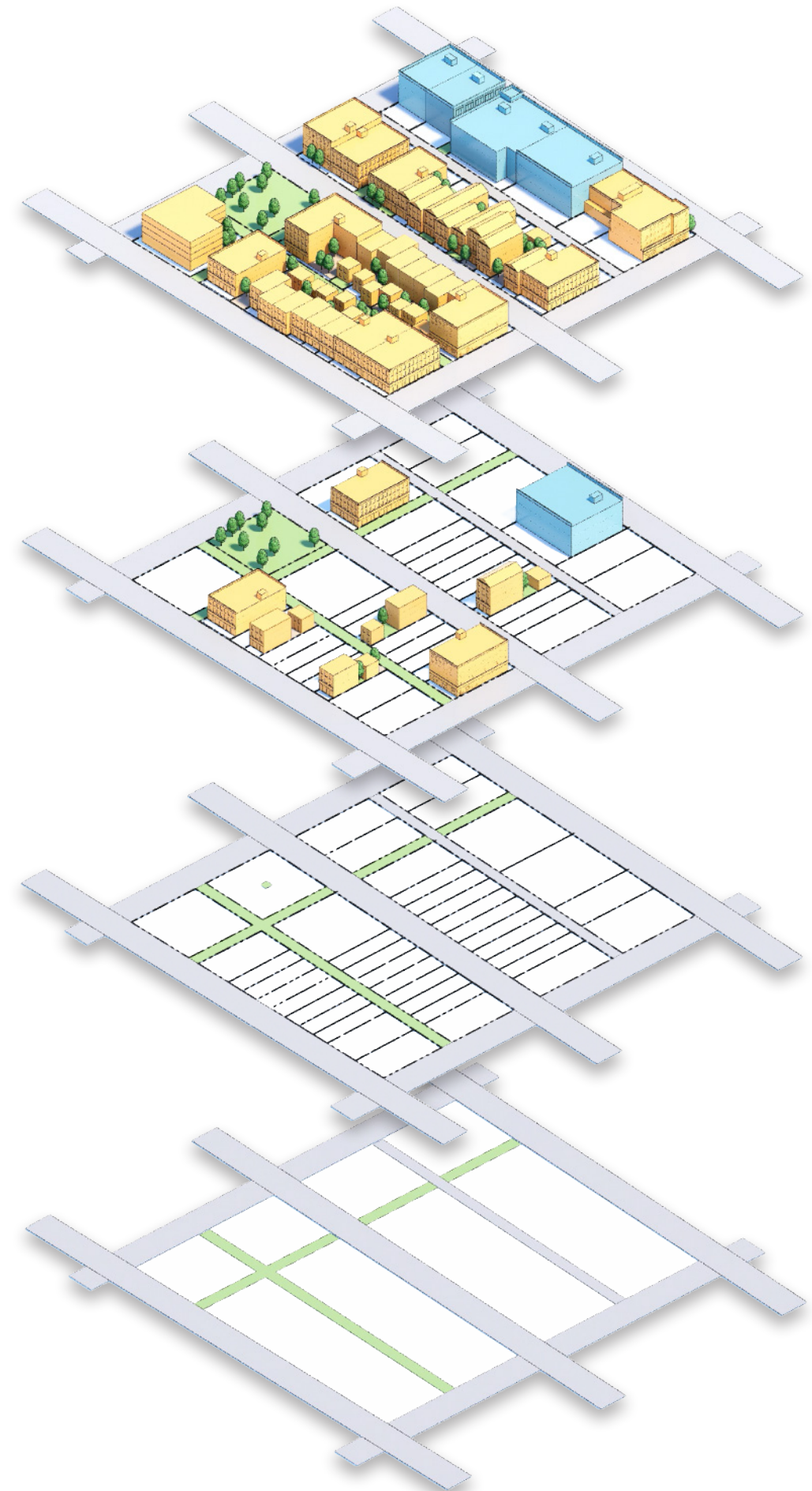


1 Streets: A foundational grid that supports walkability and everyday activity through frequent intersections and direct routes.

2 Blocks: Compact areas enclosed by the street system that form the primary physical fabric of the neighborhood.

3 Parcels: Subdivided units within blocks that allow for a mix of building sizes and varied development density.

4 Buildings: Incremental development featuring a diverse typology tailored to specific parcel widths.



Resetting Streets

Resetting the street network is the most critical move in repositioning La Plaza as a walkable district. The current street pattern departs from the historic grid, having been shaped to prioritize the personal vehicle. Reestablishing a more tightly-knit street network structure will support a more human-scaled network, composed of shorter blocks, frequent connections, and safe, legible crossings that support everyday movement on foot.

Today, the streets within the site are narrow and lack consistent sidewalks, limiting comfort and accessibility. Tree canopy is sparse, particularly following storm damage in 2024, leaving little shade along key routes. Buildings are set back from the street, with large yards and driveways separating active uses from the public realm, further weakening the connection between people and place.

Downtown Rogers offers a clear model for how this can function differently. Its compact 300 by 300 foot grid, reinforced by mid-block alleys, supports a more active and walkable environment. Alleys handle servicing and access, allowing building frontages to engage directly with the sidewalk and keeping the pedestrian realm continuous, active, and well-defined.



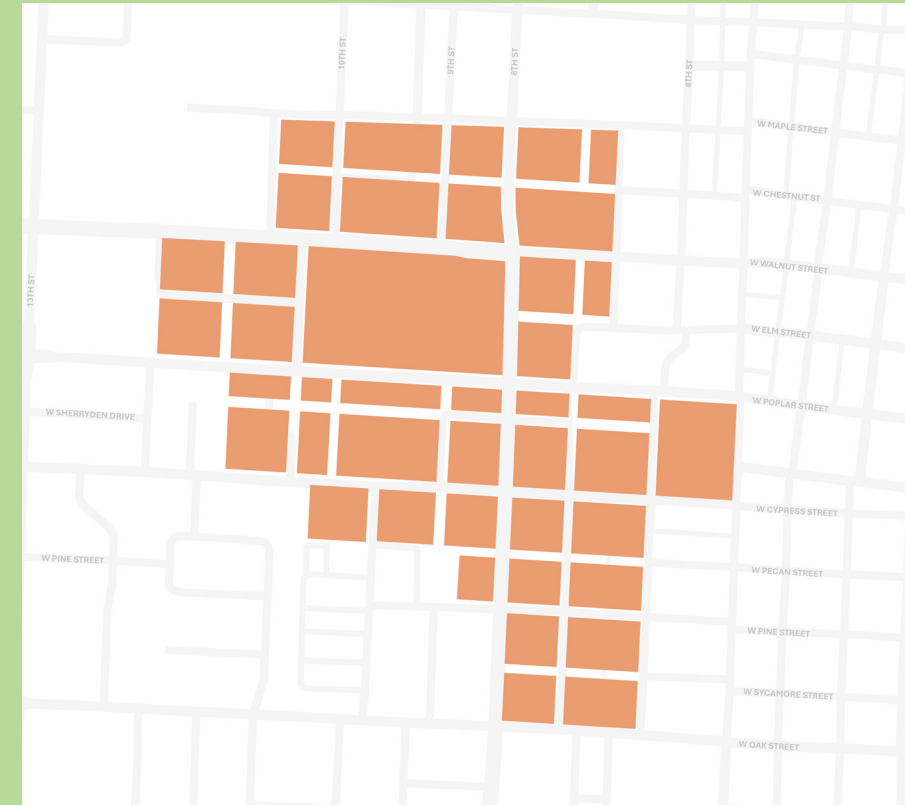
Existing Street Conditions



Downtown Rogers Street

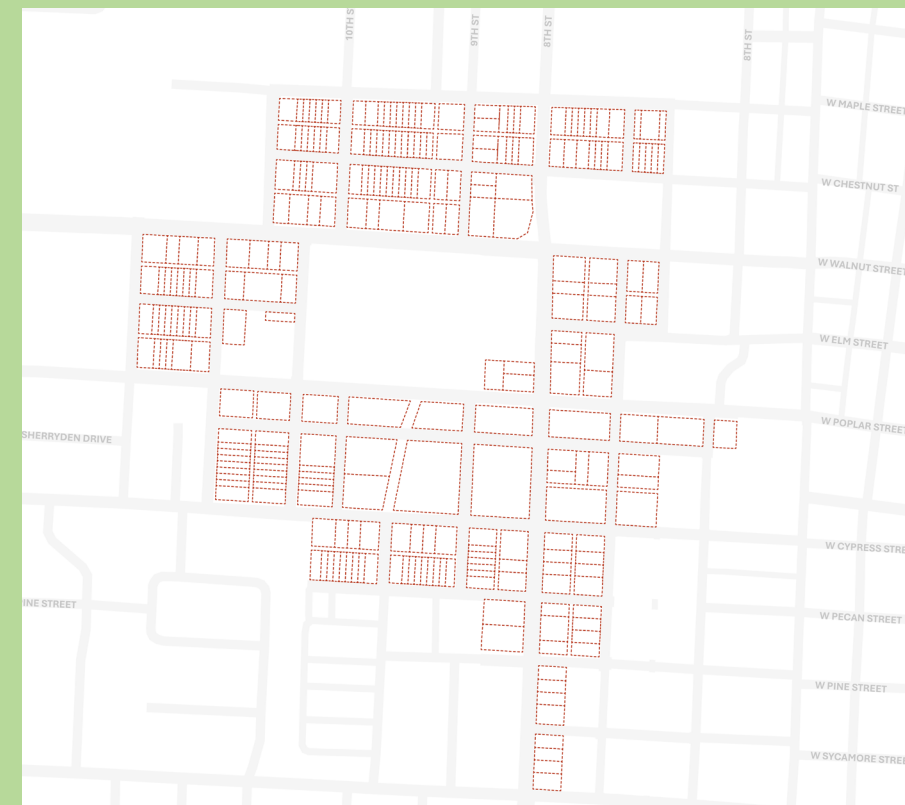


Blocks



The site layout is organized into a fine-grained grid composed primarily of 300'x300' blocks, each featuring a centered alley to facilitate service access and enhance pedestrian frontages. The large, prominent block currently visible in the center of the diagram represents a Walmart property that remains under observation; we are actively engaging with the Walmart community to discuss the possibility of further subdividing this parcel to better align with the site's overall block scale and connectivity goals.

Parcels

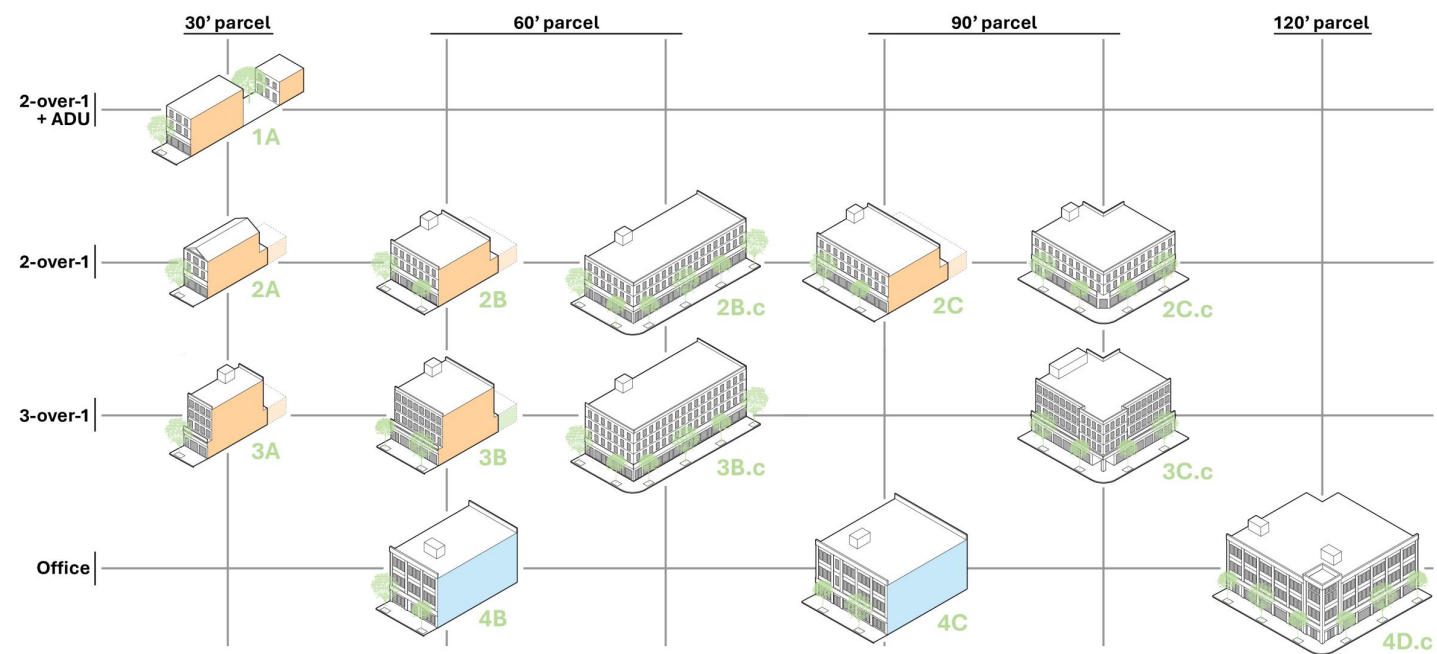


Most blocks are further subdivided into smaller parcels at 30-foot increments. This fine-grained division is intentionally crafted to encourage incremental growth, allowing for a diverse range of smaller, locally scaled projects to emerge over time. Furthermore, these compact parcels offer the versatility to be easily combined, providing developers with the adaptability needed to accommodate larger building footprints or evolving site requirements as the neighborhood matures.

Buildings

The building development strategy centers on incremental growth, utilizing a diverse building typology tailored to specific parcel widths. A comprehensive building matrix has been developed to accommodate variations in parcel width, height, and use, serving as a foundational toolkit for deployment across different site scenarios. For parcels requiring double frontages, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are integrated to activate both sides, while the majority of typologies prioritize retail frontage to foster vibrant, pedestrian-oriented streets.

Central to this vision is a profound respect for the existing community fabric. Several key structures—including the Cash Village, the supermarket, the Boys & Girls Club, various Walmart properties, and a collection of historic family buildings—will remain as vital anchors on the site. Rather than pursuing large-scale displacement, the approach emphasizes collaborative, additive growth alongside local residents. By starting small and proceeding incrementally, the project offers a flexible palette of design possibilities, empowering the community to shape the neighborhood’s future while honoring its existing character.



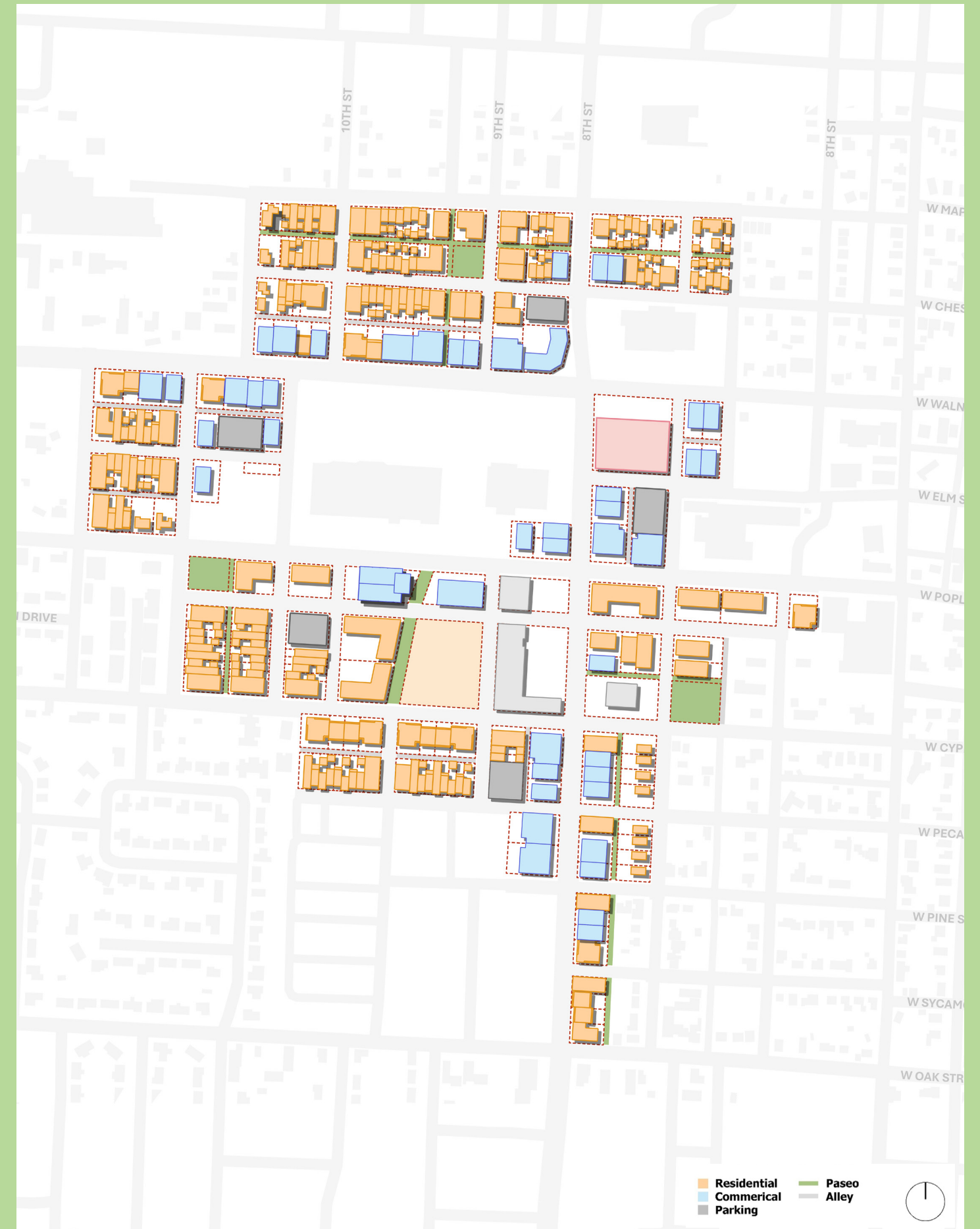
2-over-1



3-over-1

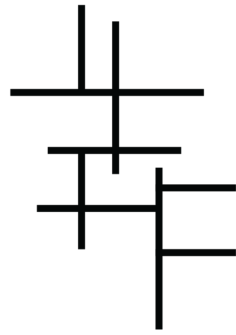


Offices

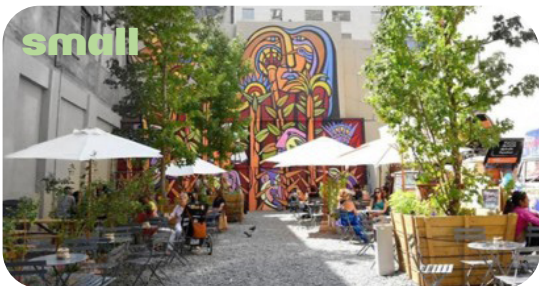


ORGANIZING ELEMENTS

With the development framework in mind, two key organizing elements—paseos and plazas—were employed to structure the site to enhance site connectivity and public life.



The first organizing element consists of paseos, which are human-scaled, pedestrian-only pathways lined with storefronts. These pathways are further energized through the inclusion of recreational elements and public art, ensuring they remain highly activated destinations for the community.



The second element involves the integration of plazas, which provide accessible, safe, and comfortable open public spaces. These plazas are designed in varying scales—ranging from single-parcel pocket plazas to medium-sized infill spaces and larger full-block plazas—to suit different site conditions.



The site layout utilizes a hierarchy of public spaces to foster community connectivity. The beige-colored area functions as the primary central plaza, which is complemented by a series of medium-sized green plazas distributed throughout the site. Small pocket plazas are strategically tucked into residual nooks and crannies between buildings, activating these underutilized spaces and providing intimate areas for social interaction.

These public spaces are linked by a network of paseos, also highlighted in green, which serve as essential pedestrian connections running both north-to-south and east-to-west to bridge the site with downtown Rogers. While these paseos are not strictly designated at this stage, they are envisioned as future opportunities for transformation; as the site evolves, these paths offer a flexible framework to shift from traditional service alleys into vibrant, pedestrian-oriented corridors.

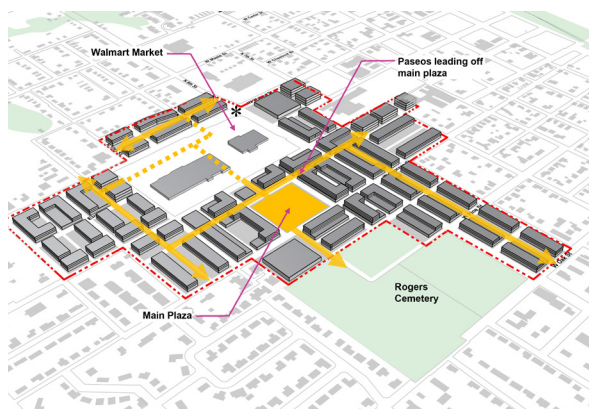
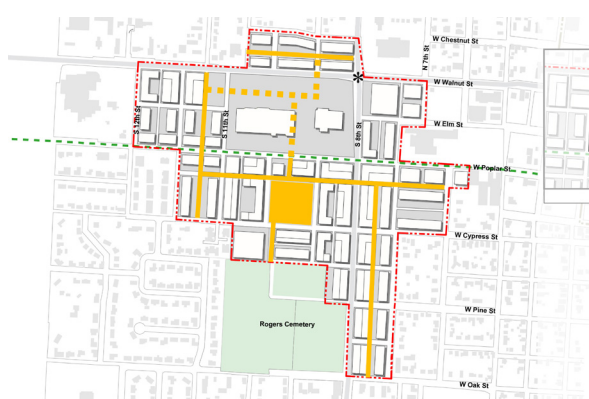
TESTING SCENARIOS

To ensure long-term resilience, the planning process utilizes a highly adaptable and flexible framework that allows for the rigorous testing of multiple development scenarios. Rather than relying on a static master plan, the strategy uses a modular approach to test various configurations of blocks, streets, and building types against shifting community needs and market conditions. This flexibility ensures that civic anchors and public spaces can be effectively interchanged or re-sited, allowing the design team to evaluate different outcomes while maintaining the project's core vision. By simulating these varied scenarios, the plan remains inherently responsive, ensuring that the district can evolve organically without sacrificing its cohesive character.

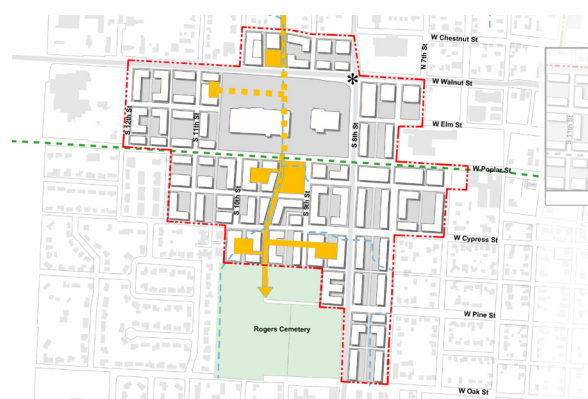
Series 1

At the beginning of this project, we started by evaluating two distinct site planning scenarios based on the idea of paseo and plaza. The first scenario focused on a centralized design, prioritizing a primary plaza situated immediately south of the Walmart properties, which served as the anchor for a network of paseos extending in all directions to facilitate seamless connectivity. The second adopted a distributed approach, featuring a series of pocket plazas along a major spine; this version also proposed daylighting the covered Osage Creek within the utility easement to serve as a central ecological feature. feature of the public realm.

Scenario 1 - Dispersed Paseos



Scenario 2 - Plazas



Series 2

Following positive community feedback on both the paseo and plaza concepts, the design strategy integrated these elements into a cohesive framework. Three parcel layout options were then tested to optimize density. The first prioritized minimal disruption, adhering to existing parcel lines to preserve the maximum number of current buildings. The second and third iterations introduced densification by modifying parcel widths in 30-foot increments; the second tested a standard development model, while the third applied the same modifications to explore a more varied building approach.

Scenario 1 - Minimum Parcel Disruption



Scenario 2 - Parcel Modification (Regular)



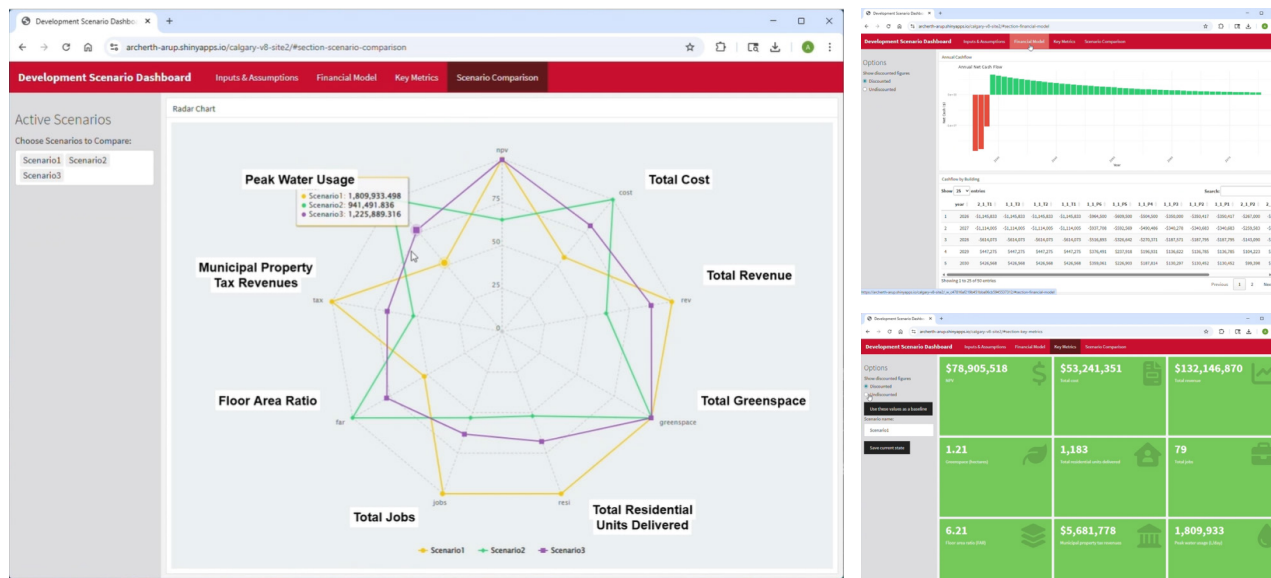
Scenario 3 - Parcel Modification (Varied)



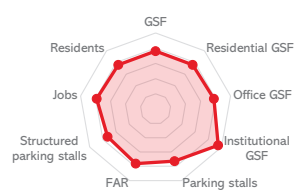
Model & Scenario Evaluation

With each of the scenarios, a comprehensive spatial model is created incorporating detailed data for both existing conditions and proposed site configurations. These models serve as a foundational resource, generating essential development metrics such as land-use distribution, economic impact, density, spatial efficiency, and accessibility.

These metadata is then extracted from the spatial model and processed through Arup's Analytical Modeling Tool, a specialized R dashboard designed to synthesize complex project information. The resulting insights will then be used to rigorously evaluate each scenario against established performance targets and site constraints. By organizing these findings into a standardized format, the process ensures that each option can be effectively compared and measured to support informed decision-making throughout the project.

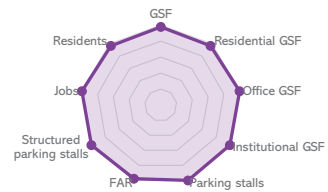


Snapshots from the Analytical Modeling Tool



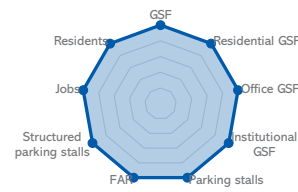
Gross square feet: **4.8 million**
Jobs: **5,000**
Residents: **15,500**

Scenario 1
Minimum Parcel Disruption



Gross square feet: **6.2 million**
Jobs: **6,500**
Residents: **19,500**

Scenario 2
Parcel Modification (Regular)



Gross square feet: **6.3 million**
Jobs: **6,500**
Residents: **20,000**

Scenario 3
Parcel Modification (Varied)

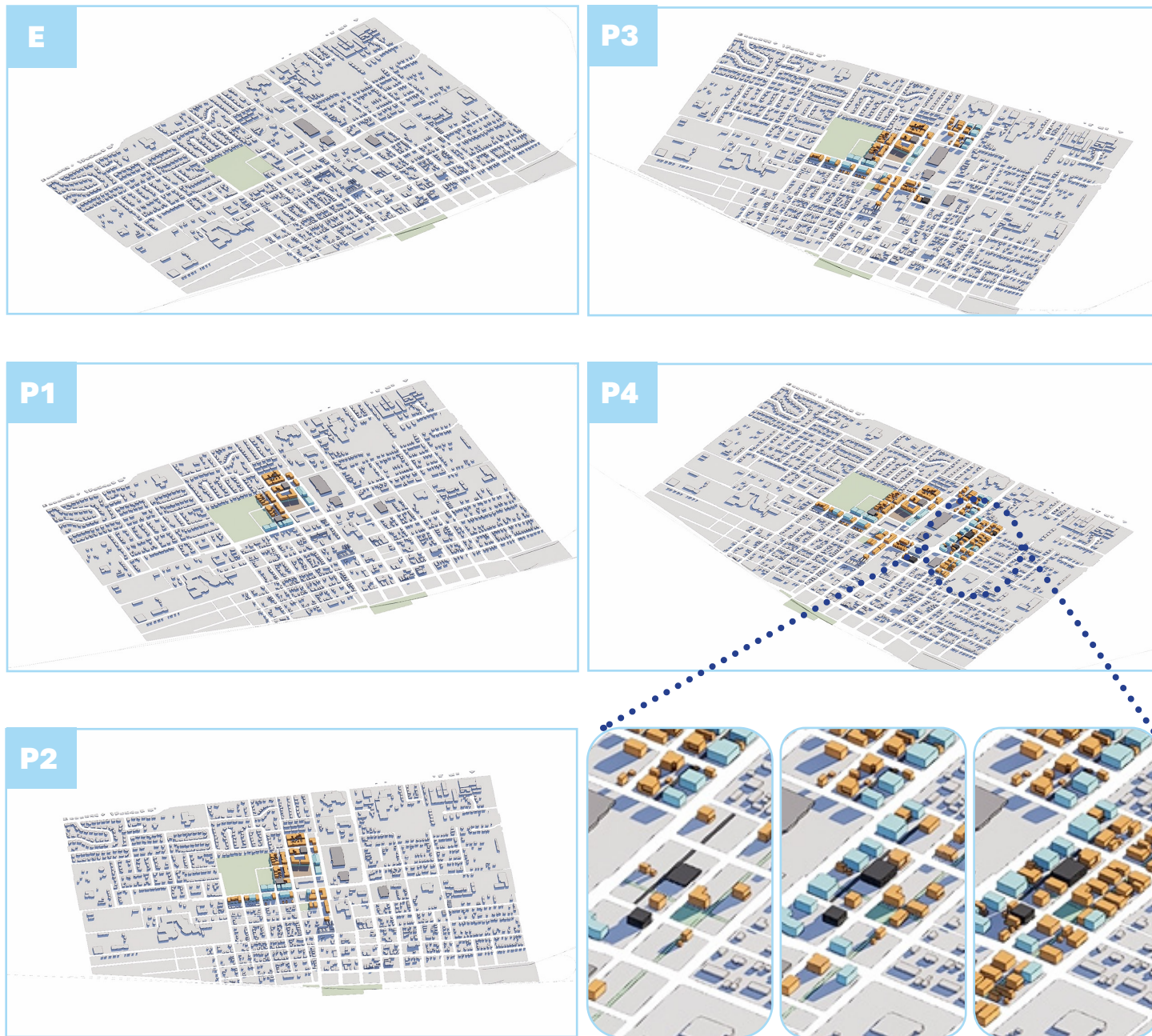
Final Scenario

Following an evaluation of the performance metrics and careful consideration of community feedback, the final design scenario was established. This approach balances data-driven outcomes with the practical needs of the community. During a mid-point charette, stakeholders emphasized the importance of retaining certain existing buildings due to their role as respected anchor spaces; consequently, the models were adjusted to ensure these structures were fully integrated into the final plan.



PHASING & INCREMENTAL GROWTH

The development is structured into four phases using an “infrastructure-first” model. By establishing the street network first, the surrounding land is unlocked, avoiding a rigid, block-by-block sequence. This approach fosters organic growth, allowing individual parcels to come online as project needs evolve.

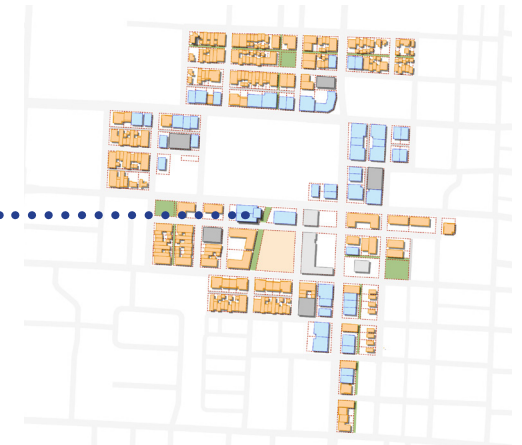


Anchor Buildings

The framework’s high adaptability also allows for the direct incorporation of community feedback regarding the need for major civic anchors. Several destination programs—including a mosaic market, a natatorium, and an auditorium—were tested across various sites. Due to the inherent flexibility of the layout, these anchors can be successfully integrated into multiple locations, ensuring the plan remains resilient regardless of their final placement.

Mosaic Market

A mosaic market is a dynamic community hub that blends permanent retail, rotating pop-up stalls, food vendors, and event spaces. It utilizes the trust lot in the site and is located close to the main plaza, where retail stalls and outdoor seating can bleed into one another, creating a seamless flow of foot traffic.



Auditorium

A large space designed for public gatherings, performances, or presentations. The auditorium is strategically located next to the main plaza so it can spill its events out into the plaza, allowing the public realm to act as an extension of the building’s lobby or stage.



Natatorium

As a specialized facility housing indoor aquatic programs for fitness, competition, and recreation, the natatorium is strategically positioned along Walnut Street. This location leverages the high volume of arterial traffic to ensure the civic institution remains prominent and easily recognizable to the public.



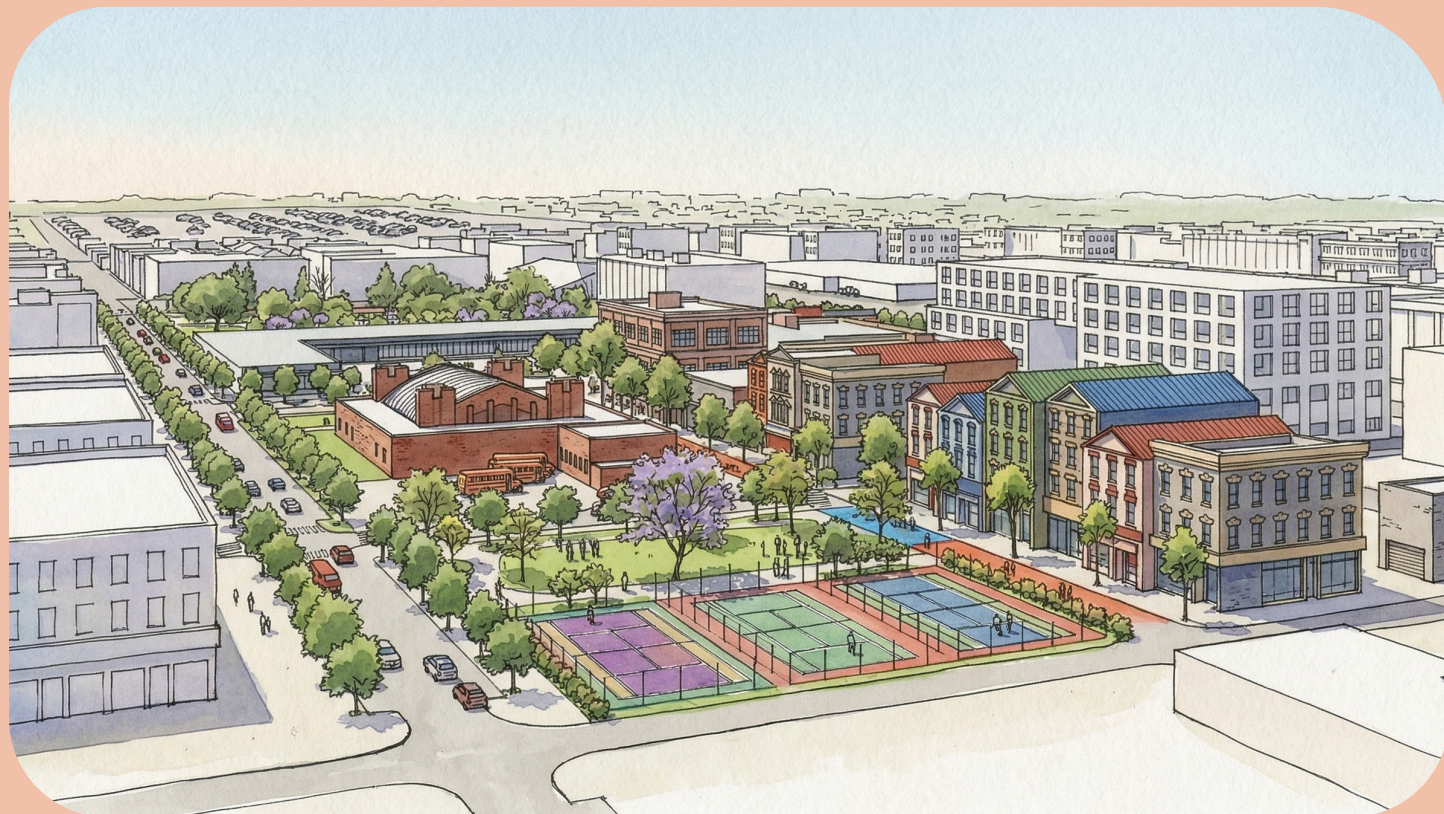
EXPERIENCING LA PLAZA

The objective for the La Plaza District—a multicultural, transit-oriented urban village and CNU Legacy Project—is to create a unified, walkable district that seamlessly integrates commercial, cultural, and residential spaces. This vision centers on a primary community gathering hub that reflects the region’s unique identity while establishing a direct connection to downtown Rogers. By prioritizing thoughtful design and the creation of versatile “third places,” the project aims to foster social interaction and explore the feasibility of a major regional destination. Ultimately, the initiative seeks to unite developers, landowners, civic leaders, and design professionals in a collaborative coalition to carry this vision through to successful implementation.

SMALL PLAZA



MEDIUM PLAZA



LARGE PLAZA



SMALL PLAZA

Littered throughout the site, small, overlooked urban nooks are turned into a functional destination. By using large mural backdrops and cantilevered shade and tons of seating, the area is separated from the higher-traffic pedestrian flow in the paseos.

MEDIUM PLAZA

The medium plazas are designed for programmatic flexibility and to serve the immediate neighborhood. These plazas feature dedicated sports courts and small parks and puts most residents within a 5-minute walk of a park.

LARGE PLAZA

The Main Plaza serves as a vital “localized public gathering space,” offering a safe, comfortable, and accessible open environment for the community. As a large, full-block anchor within the district, this activated space integrates diverse recreational and social amenities, including expansive green lawns, a central water feature with pedestrian bridges, an amphitheater for public performances, and shaded seating areas.

PASEO



PASEO

The paseo functions as a pedestrian-only, human-scaled corridor designed to improve connectivity and facilitate social interaction. This vibrant space features active street-level frontages, shaded outdoor dining, and mobile food vending that encourage community engagement. Integrated lighting and varied seating areas create an inviting environment that supports a regional lifestyle centered on outdoor activity.

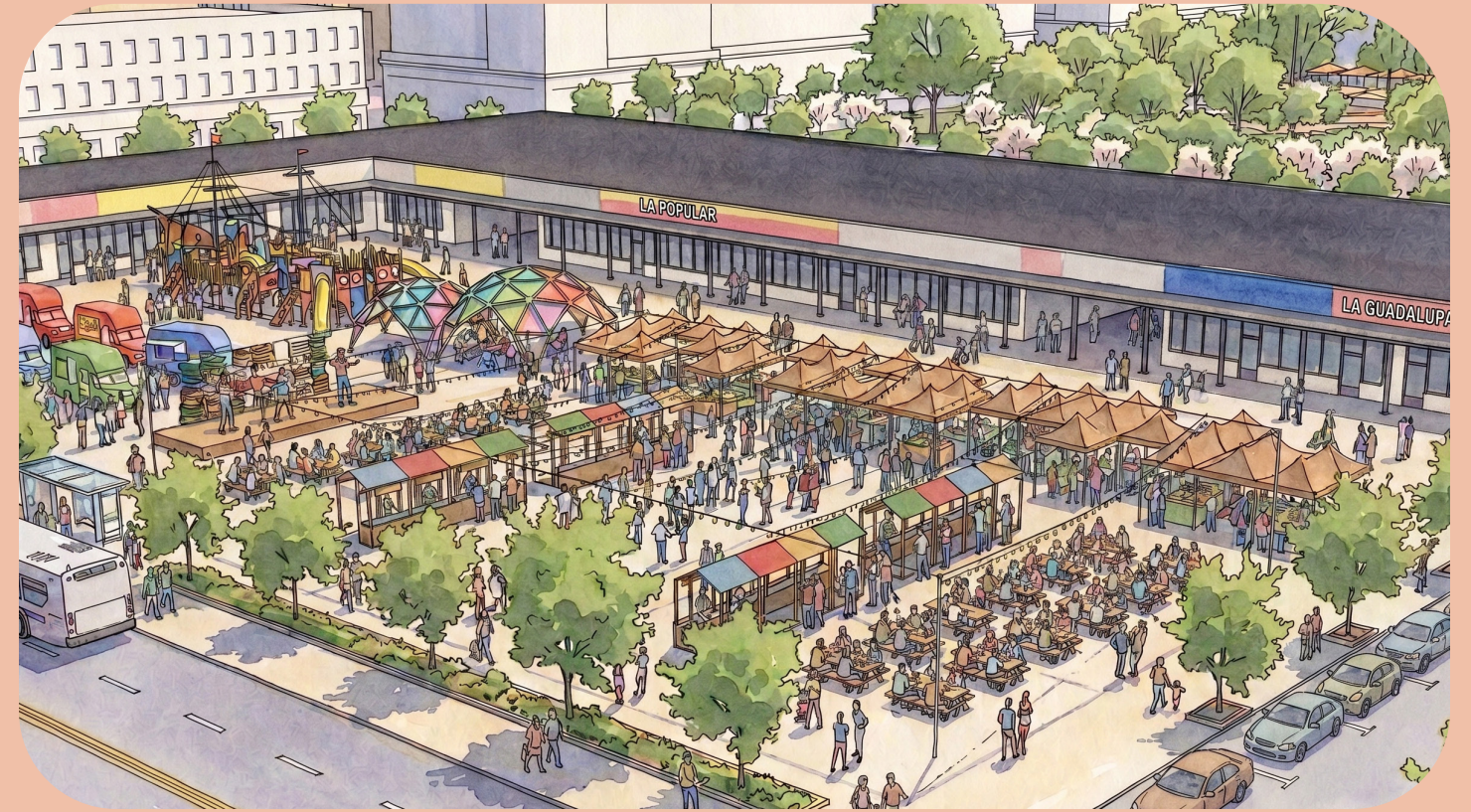
PARKING LOT ACTIVATION

Parking lot activation transforms underutilized parking spaces into vibrant, multi-use community hubs during the weekends, integrating diverse elements such as food trucks, open-air markets, and children's play structures to encourage immediate social interaction. By supporting local businesses like La Popular, these activated lots create culturally rich commercial environments within existing infrastructure.

MOSAIC MARKET

The Mosaic Market is envisioned as a culturally vibrant commercial hub that anchors the district's economic activity. This open-air pavilion accommodates a diverse array of local vendors alongside stalls for fresh produce, clothing, and artisanal goods. By combining these retail offerings with communal seating areas, the market functions as a highly activated public space that fosters social interaction.

PARKING LOT ACTIVATION

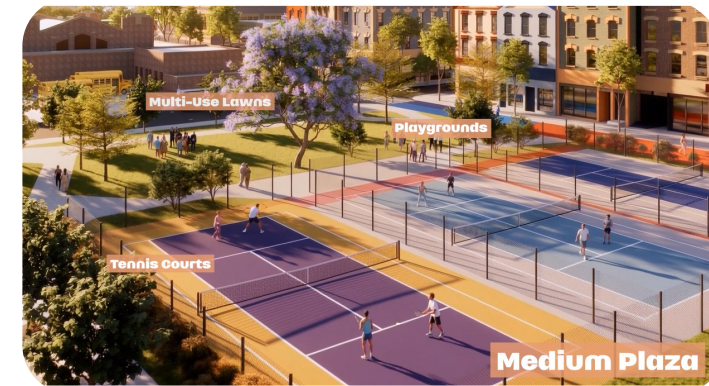


MOSAIC MARKET



A CINEMATIC WALK-THROUGH OF LA PLAZA

A short, immersive animation was prepared to guide viewers through the project, seamlessly stitching the various functional areas together. By transitioning between these distinct zones, the animation creates a cohesive narrative that illustrates how the individual elements integrate to form a unified, vibrant vision for the new La Plaza.



APPENDIX

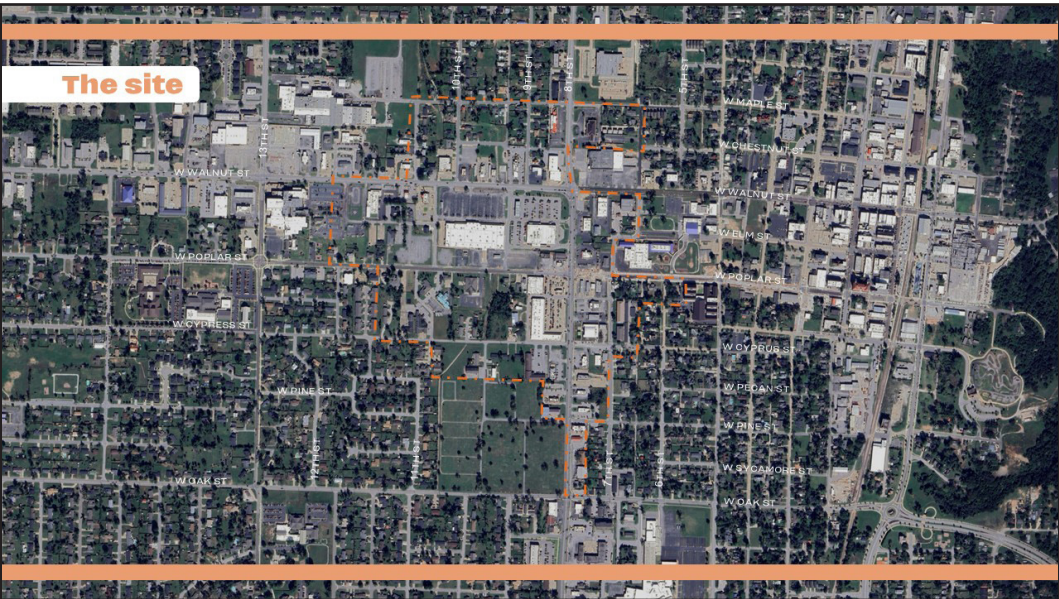
La Plaza District Plan



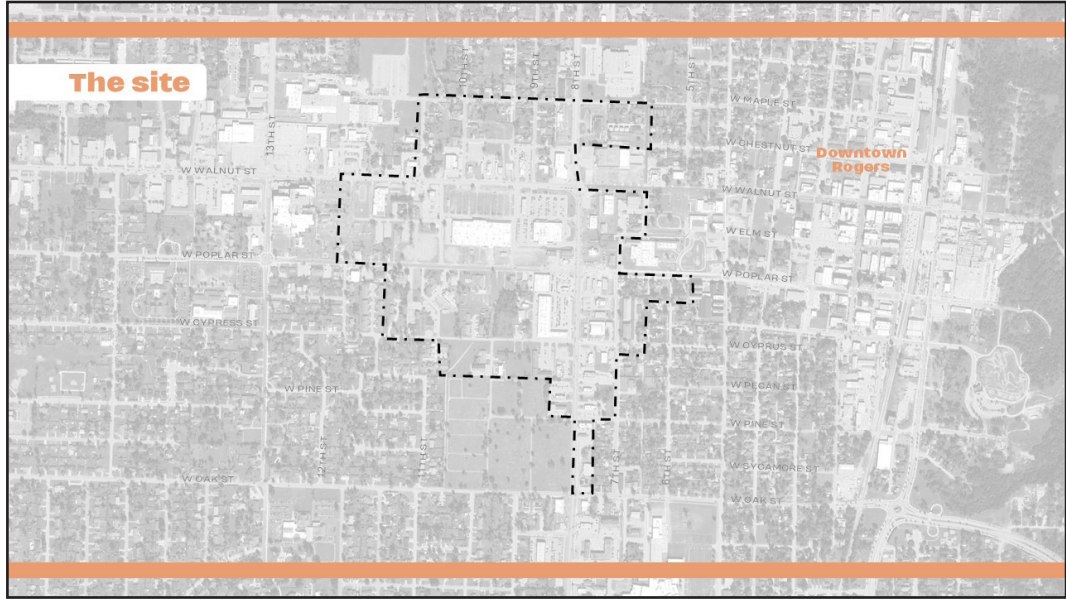
The cornerstones



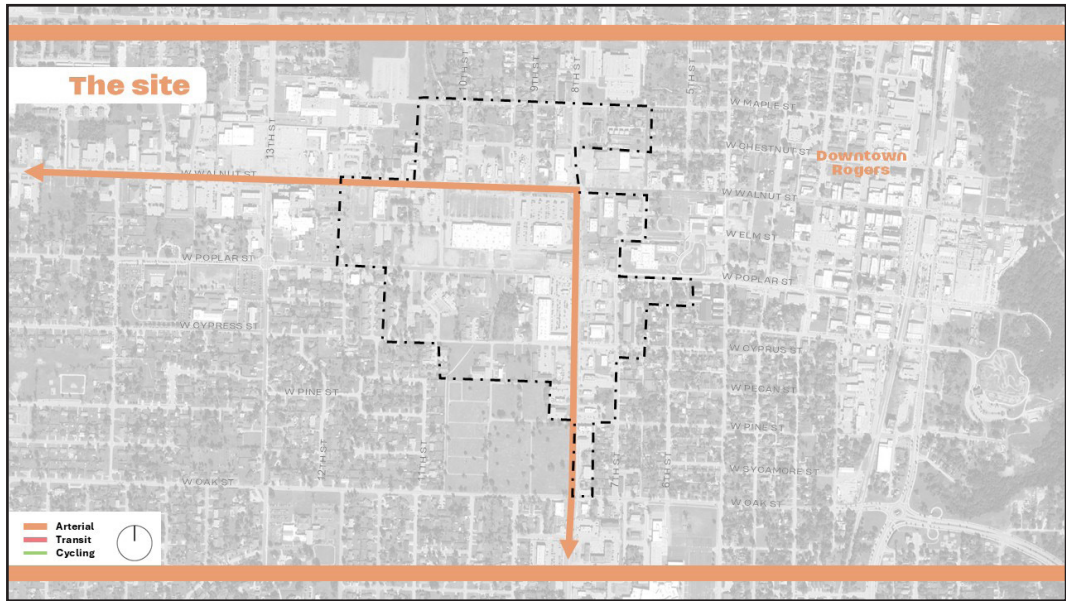
The site



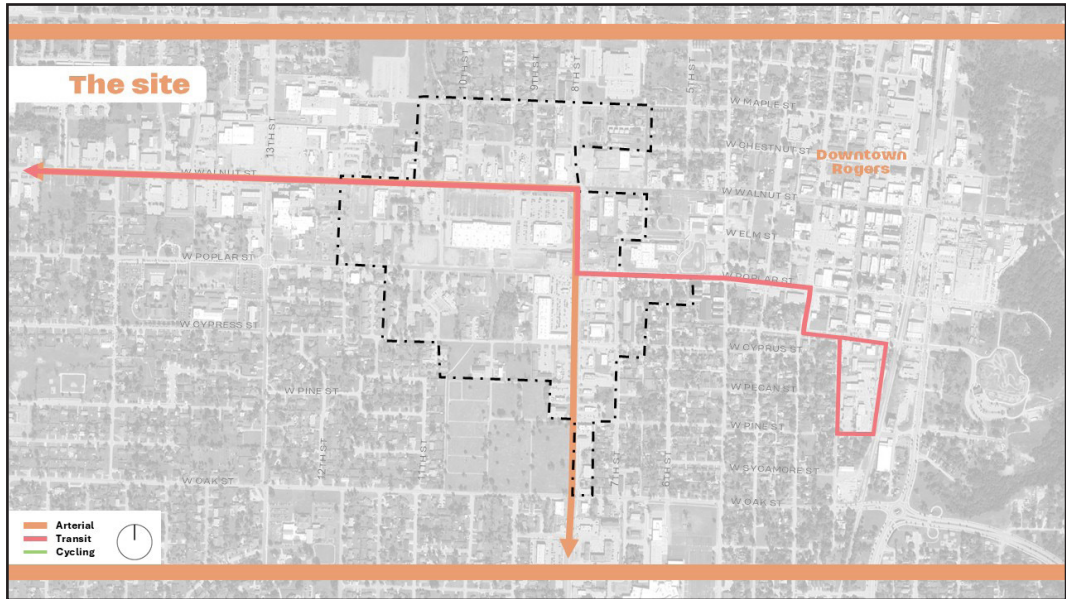
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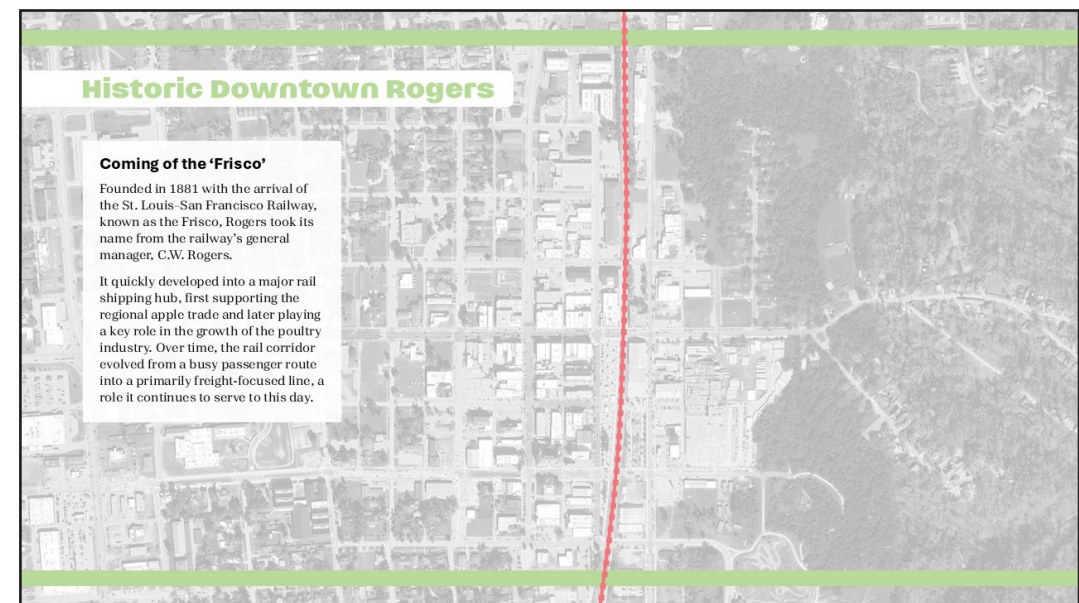
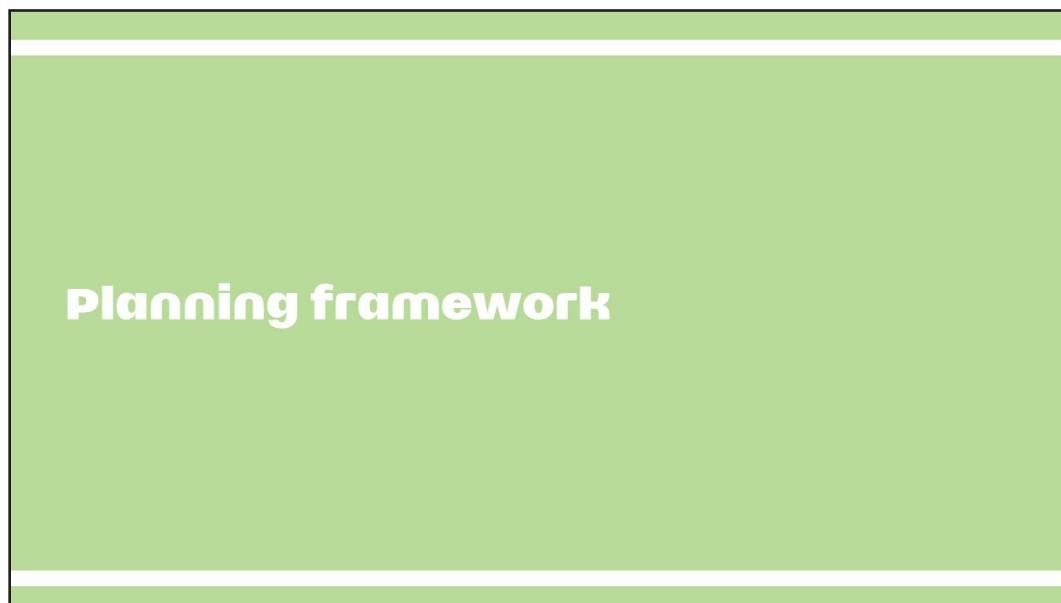
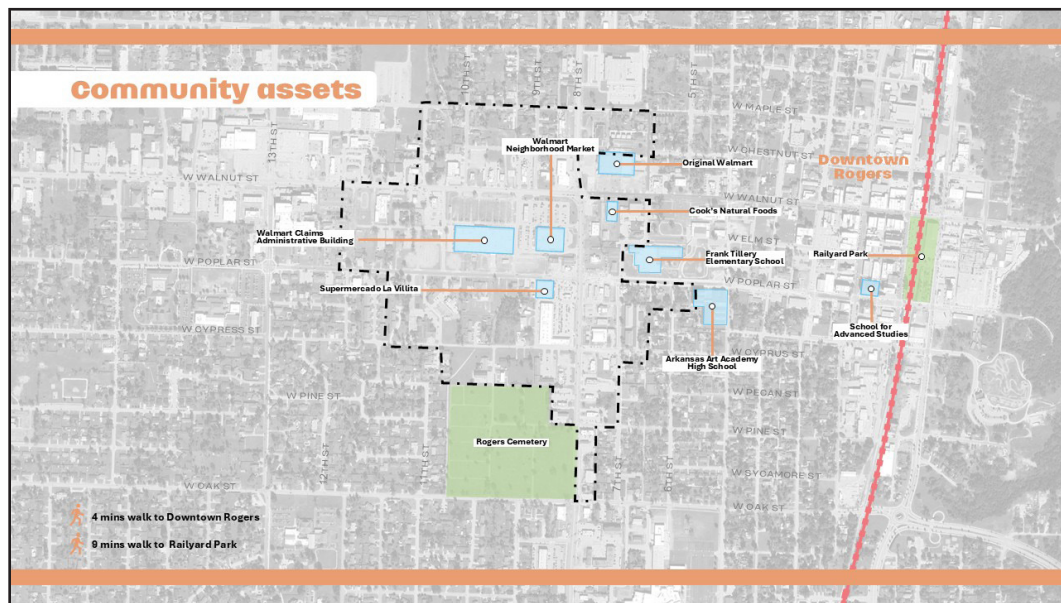
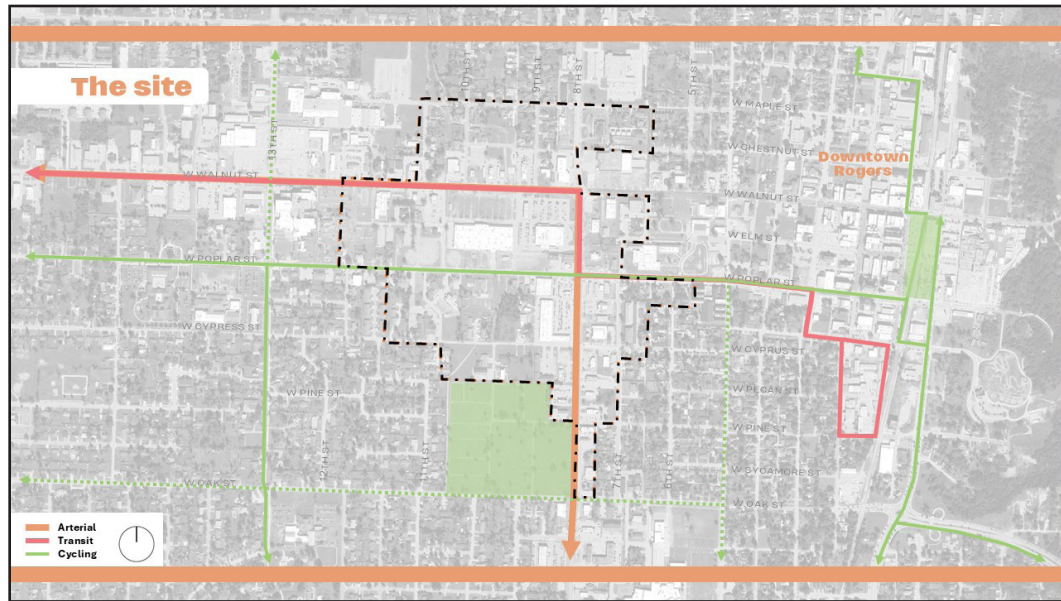


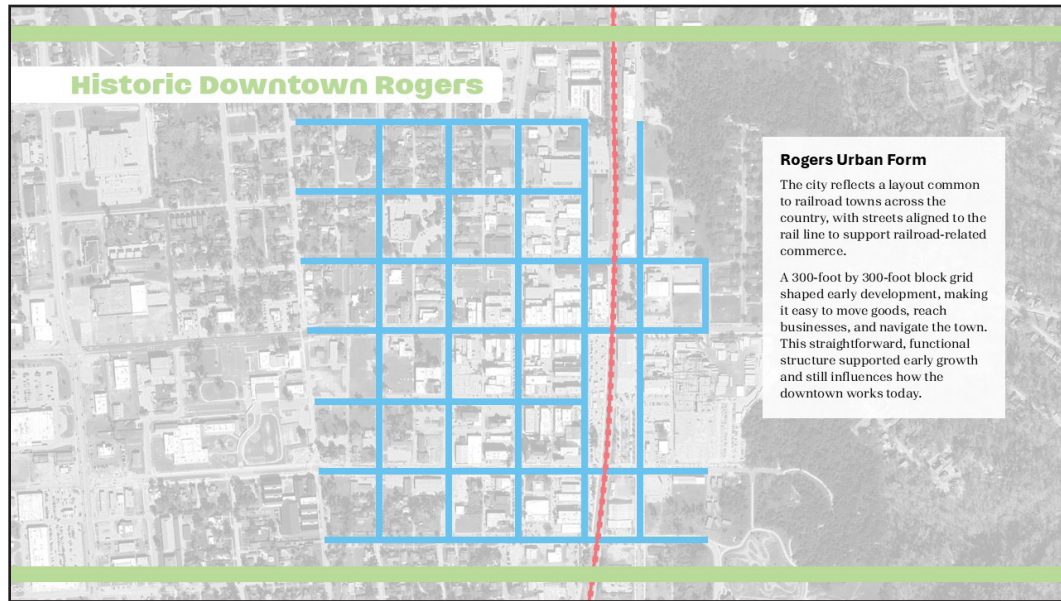
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The site





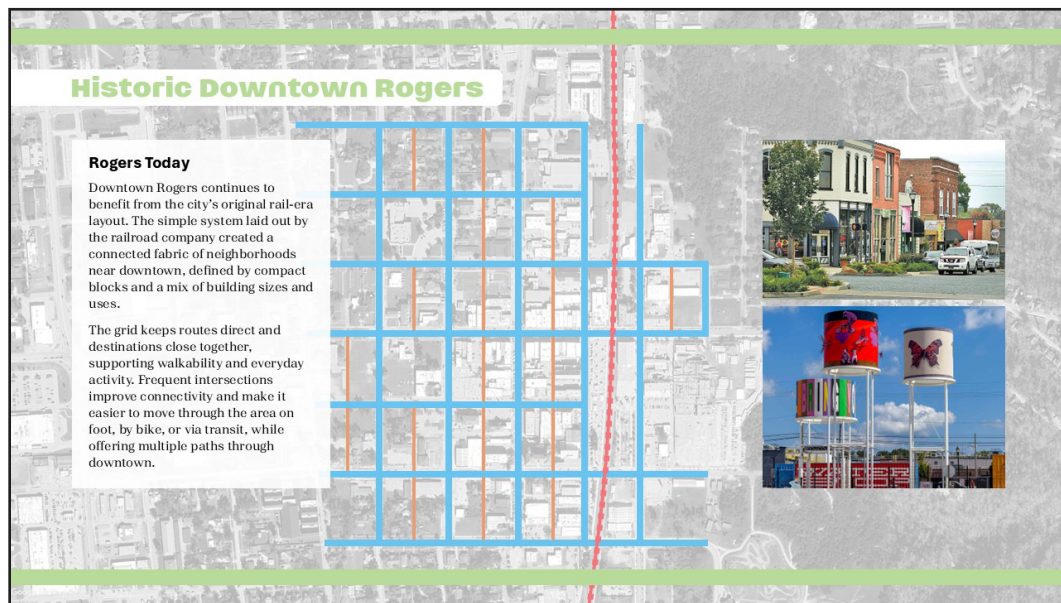


Historic Downtown Rogers

Rogers Urban Form
 The city reflects a layout common to railroad towns across the country, with streets aligned to the rail line to support railroad-related commerce.
 A 300-foot by 300-foot block grid shaped early development, making it easy to move goods, reach businesses, and navigate the town. This straightforward, functional structure supported early growth and still influences how the downtown works today.

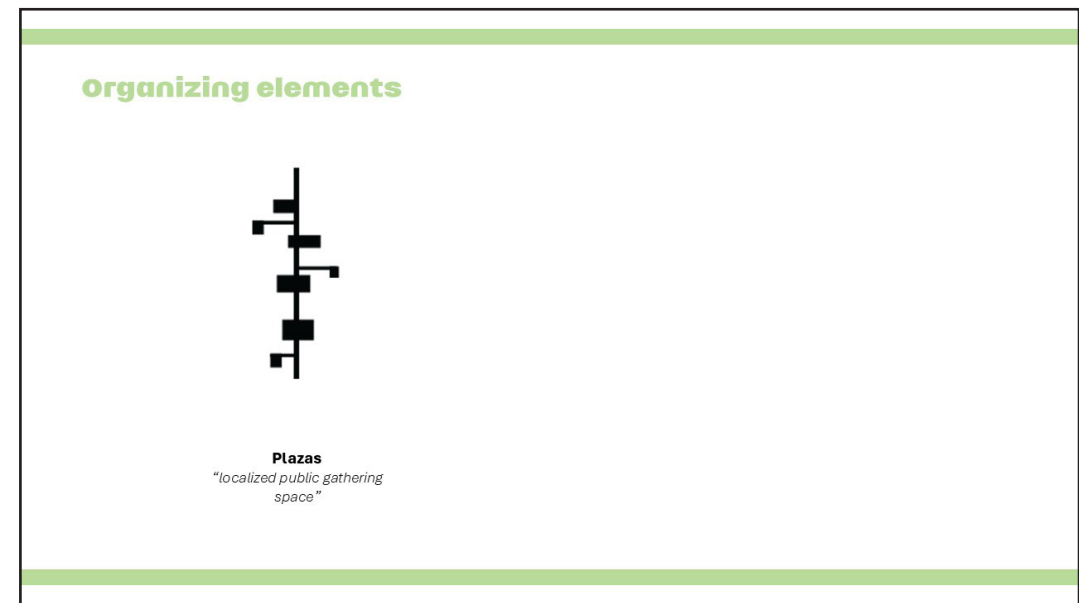


Resetting development patterns



Historic Downtown Rogers

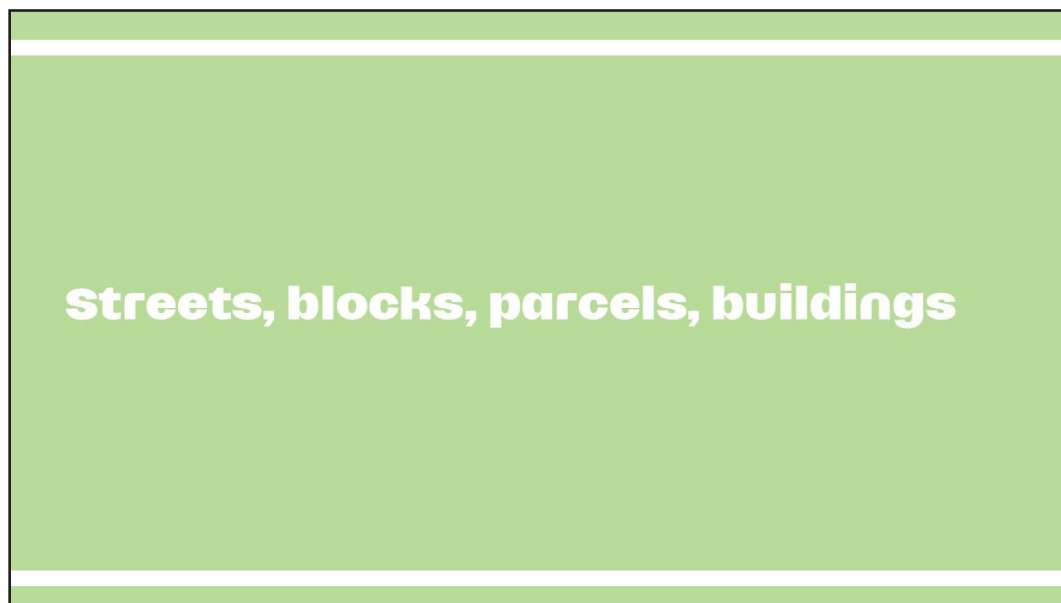
Rogers Today
 Downtown Rogers continues to benefit from the city's original rail-era layout. The simple system laid out by the railroad company created a connected fabric of neighborhoods near downtown, defined by compact blocks and a mix of building sizes and uses.
 The grid keeps routes direct and destinations close together, supporting walkability and everyday activity. Frequent intersections improve connectivity and make it easier to move through the area on foot, by bike, or via transit, while offering multiple paths through downtown.



Organizing elements



Plazas
"localized public gathering space"



Streets, blocks, parcels, buildings



Organizing elements



Small Plazas
"localized public gathering space"

Organizing elements



Medium Plazas
"localized public gathering space"

Organizing elements



Large Plazas
"localized public gathering space"



Paseos
"pedestrian-only, human-scaled pathways"

Organizing elements



Large Plazas
"localized public gathering space"

Organizing elements



Large Plazas
"localized public gathering space"

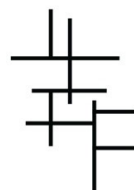


Paseos
"pedestrian-only, human-scaled pathways"

Organizing elements



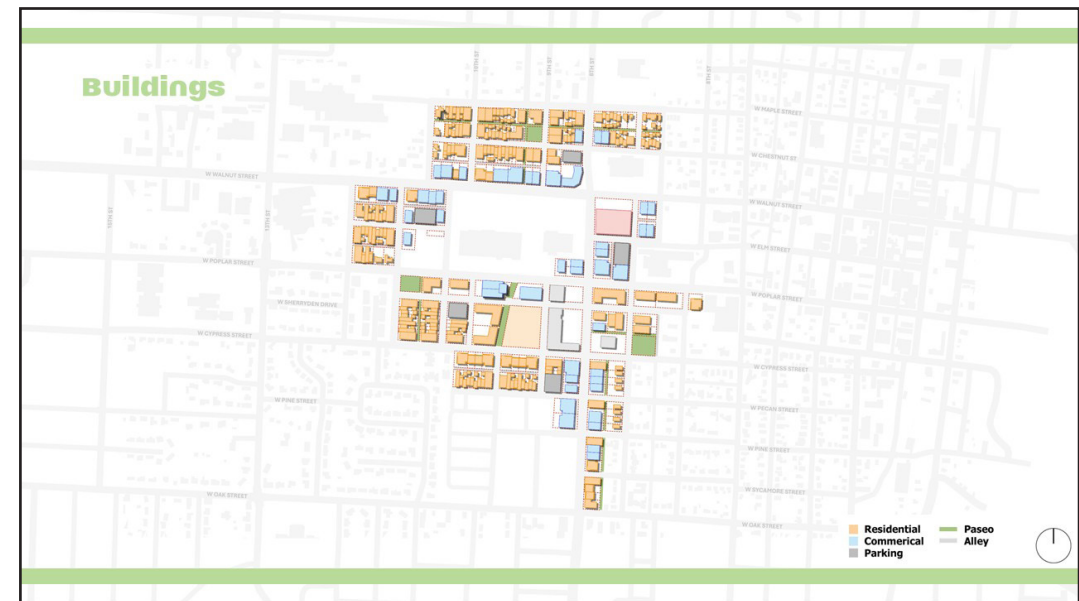
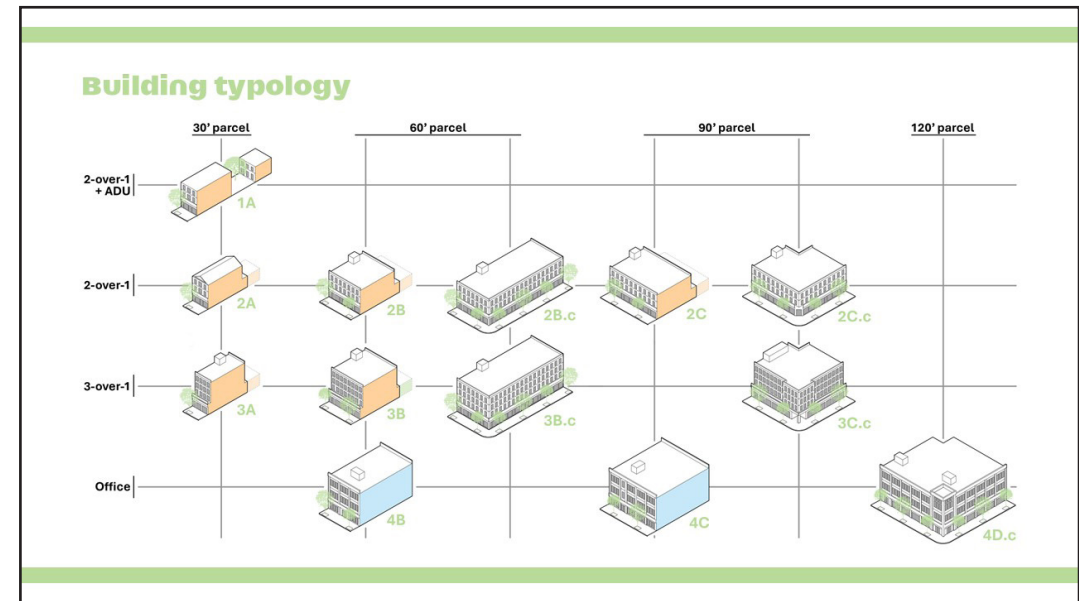
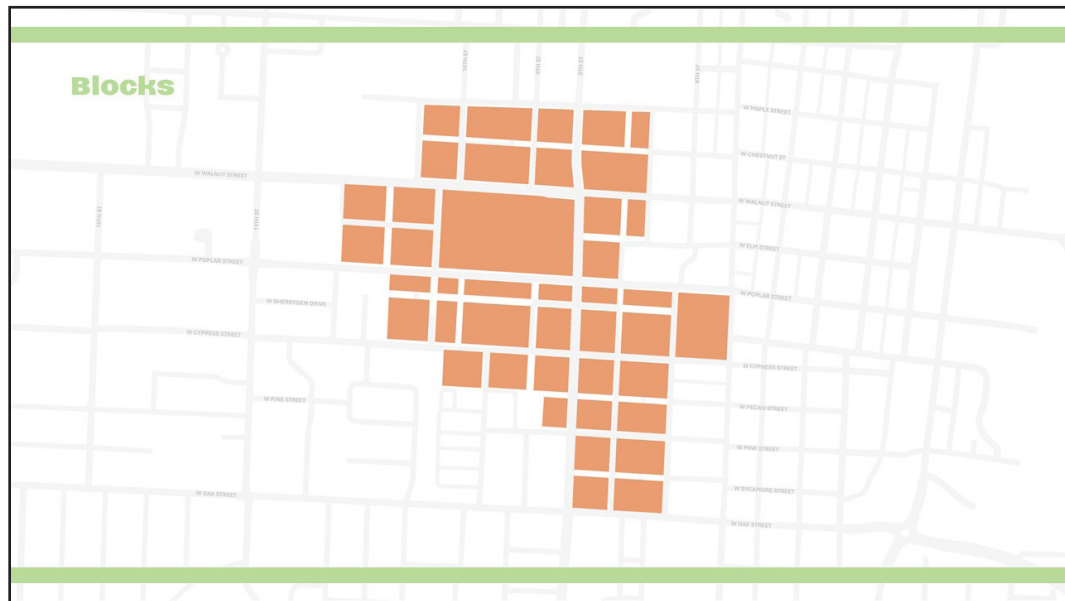
Large Plazas
"localized public gathering space"

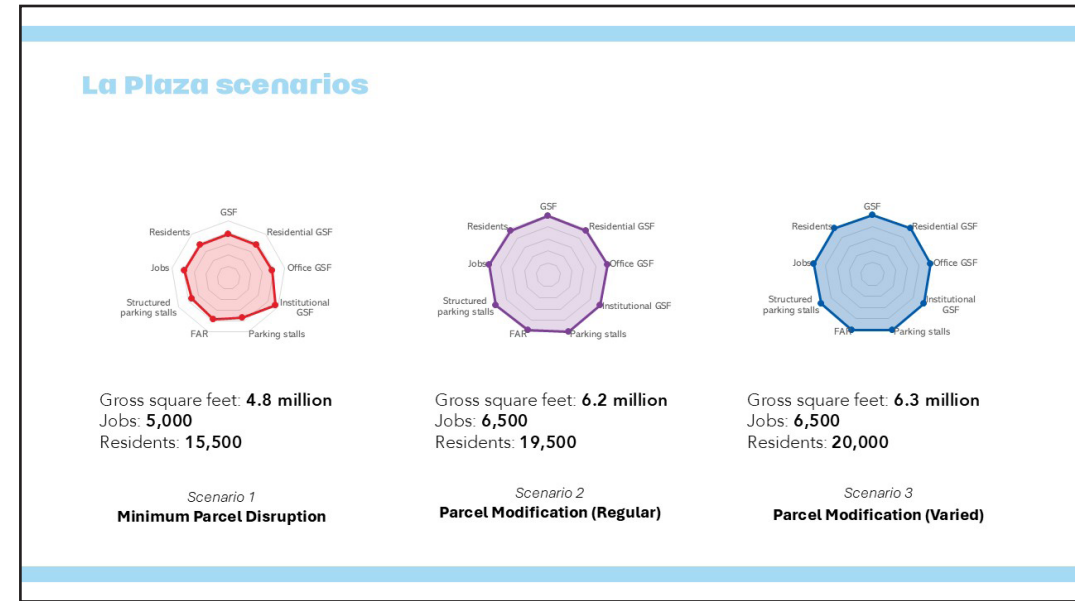
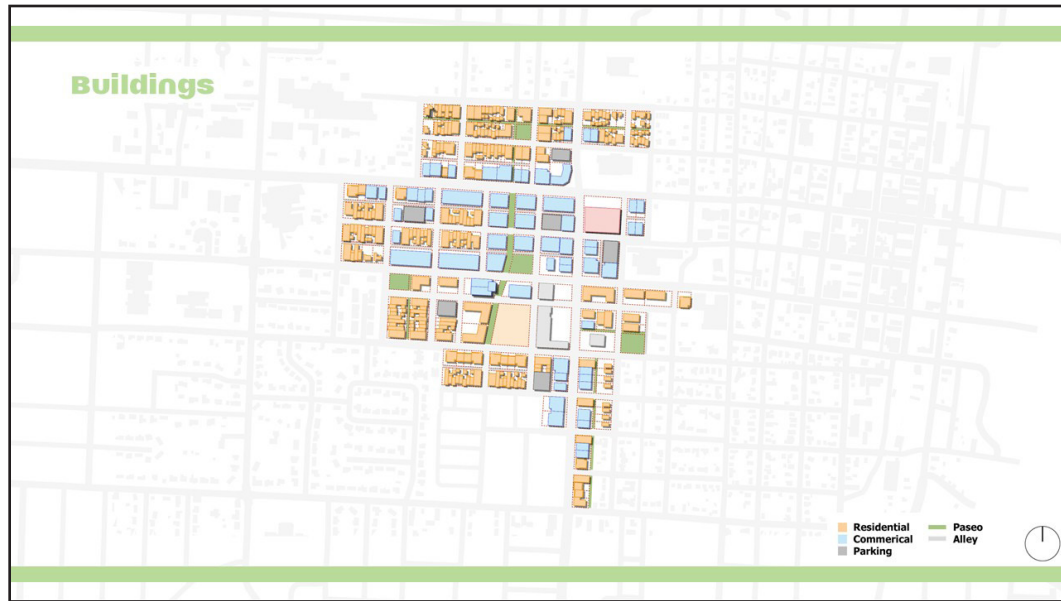


Paseos
"pedestrian-only, human-scaled pathways"

Streets







Testing scenarios

