

THAYER  
STREET

PLANNING  
STUDY

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Thayer Street Planning Study Area

## INTRODUCTION

Thayer Street is considered the most active and well-utilized commercial corridor within the City's historic College Hill neighborhood. Businesses along Thayer Street encompass a vibrant and eclectic mix of restaurants and retail that attracts nearby residents and outside visitors, but largely caters to students from nearby collegiate and secondary institutions. Simultaneously located at the heart of the Brown University campus, adjacent to two local historic districts, and surrounded by one of the most established neighborhoods in Providence, the future of the Thayer Street study area impacts several engaged parties, often with competing interests. In response to the concerns of the institutions, local preservationists, residents and developers surrounding Thayer Street as a growing community, transit and institutional hub, a thoughtful planning process was initiated to balance these interests, while also establishing a framework for future growth and development.

The Thayer Street Planning Study Area (District) comprises 29 acres and over 90 businesses that are bounded to the north by Lloyd Avenue, to the east by Hope Street, to the south by Waterman Street, and to the west by the rear lot line of the parcels that face onto the western side of Thayer Street. The study was commissioned by the City of Providence, Department of Planning & Development and supported by funding from Brown University. The request for the study was driven, in part, by the community's reaction to a private development proposal for a dense, new multifamily housing development at 257 Thayer Street. Unveiled in the spring of 2012, the proposed development comprised almost an entire block in the center of Thayer Street, and required the demolition of nine existing residential structures. After several iterations of design review, a change in zoning, and a Comprehensive Plan change, the 257 Thayer Street project received final approval from both the City Plan Commission and the Providence City Council in November 2012. Due to the level of concern voiced by the community during the development review process, the City Council requested that the Department of Planning & Development conduct a comprehensive planning analysis of the Thayer Street corridor.

Building on information compiled by several previous studies, including, but not limited to, the *Providence Tomorrow: College Hill, Wayland and Fox Point Neighborhood Plan* and the *College Hill Parking Task Force Report*, this study offers a detailed assessment of the current challenges facing the District's future, and offers proposed solutions. It provides specific strategies and targeted actions for harnessing the potential of the District, and recommends policy and funding priorities. Design recommendations are included as part of the study to ensure that future physical changes respect the eclectic character, pedestrian scale and historic resources of the College Hill community. These recommendations

are intended to preserve and complement historic buildings, improve the streetscape for pedestrians, and allow for a vibrant mix of appropriate uses. In partnership with a consultant team, planning department staff and a representative Stakeholder Committee have directed the study's focus, and the development of implementation strategies that address regulatory concerns, identify public realm improvements and guide long-term development.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The key challenges facing the District include attracting diverse retail options, retaining community character, preserving historic resources, restoring a positive sense of security, improving parking management, and enhancing accessibility. These challenges are very similar to those that have faced many other university-proximate retail districts, such as the Delmar Loop (Washington University) in St. Louis, Missouri and the University City District (University of Pennsylvania) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Supported by strong management authorities, private developers, the respective university and the municipal government, the successful transformations of these two retail districts were dependent on the following factors:

***Non-retail uses bring in a diverse customer base.*** Diverse uses, such as office, higher-end multifamily residential and hotels bring non-students to a retail district. These uses support more diverse retail and food and beverage offerings at a range of price points.

***A safe, clean and attractive physical environment supports a vibrant and walkable retail street.*** A retail district must be walkable to attract customers. Walkable streets are generally those that are clean and safe. Other improvements can include façade, streetscape, and public realm enhancements.

***Adequate multimodal access attracts new customers.*** Parking management, public transit and adequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure make a retail district accessible to those who live within, and beyond, walking distance.

***A strong marketing strategy led by a management entity that provides services and promotes the retail district.*** The most successful retail districts have a strong entity that manages and coordinates marketing and various, other on-going efforts, including creating and supporting a brand; providing “clean and safe” services; networking with consumers, brokers, and tenants; and working closely with major stakeholders to solicit direct or indirect investments in the district.

These factors for success were used to generate the following priority actions to be taken for the District to remain a key community destination for the City of Providence, the College Hill neighborhood and Brown University.

**1. Create an attractive, clean and safe retail corridor.**

Improving the perception of cleanliness and creating an attractive public realm are important first steps in a long-term strategy to market the area. Retailers and restaurants that are looking for commercial space have a number of choices in the greater Providence market, so it is important that the physical environment of the District is as attractive as competitive retail nodes. Similarly, potential customers have other options for shopping that feel clean, safe and accessible, and the District must meet those standards.

Recent events have compromised the sense of safety in the District. While efforts should be made to increase police presence in the area, the Thayer Street District Management Authority (TSDMA) should establish a more comprehensive “clean and safe” program, similar to the “Yellow Jackets” employed by the Downtown Improvement District. Such a program would employ a privately-managed team of “Ambassadors” that would monitor the District from the morning until the mid-evening, during which time they would be responsible for maintaining all elements of the District’s public realm. Wearing an identifiable uniform that reflects the TSDMA’s brand and logo, the Ambassadors would perform activities such as removing litter, cleaning sidewalk and street debris, tending to plantings and landscaping, reporting suspicious or dangerous activity to the Providence Police Department, removing and reporting acts of vandalism and graffiti, and generally providing several sets of additional eyes and ears in the District. The team’s presence and involvement would not only create a cleaner environment, but also give District users a better sense of safety and security.

Several public realm improvements are proposed to improve the District’s physical appearance, including repaving and restriping Thayer Street, replacing and removing outdated signage, replacing and adding street trees, installing a parklet, and installing benches and bike parking, where feasible. Additionally, sidewalk and curb extensions at specific blocks along Thayer Street are proposed to provide small pockets of public amenities such as seating, street trees, artwork, bike parking and bus stop shelters. The transformation of Fones Alley and Cushing and Olive Courts into ‘Green Alleys’ is recommended to improve the use, appearance and sustainability of these areas, as well as create larger, pedestrian-friendly, public gathering areas.

***2. Advance regulatory changes to attract new uses.***

Regulatory changes can be accomplished in the near-term, and involve the coordination of the policies and decisions of the College Hill Neighborhood Association, the TSDMA, the Board of Licenses, the Zoning Board, City Council and the Department of Planning. Immediate actions include establishing probationary measures for new and prospective tenants seeking licenses, monitoring the behavior and performance of existing license holders, and ensuring that all license violations and disturbances are reported to the Providence Police Department, the Licensing Police and the Board of Licenses for proper penalization. Additionally, supporting the completion of an architectural survey of the District will inform future plans for redevelopment by identifying which existing structures are historically significant and contribute to the physical environment. Longer-term regulatory changes involve rezoning specific areas of the District to better support diverse uses and encourage reinvestment in the corridor.

***3. Improve multimodal access to the area.***

Future transit improvements, such as the proposed streetcar, will improve accessibility to the District; however, the District needs to accommodate a range of transportation modes, including walking, cycling and automobiles, in order to reduce vehicle trips and parking demand, and prosper as a community destination. Creating a public realm that is comfortable, attractive and safe for pedestrians and cyclists encourages use of alternative transportation modes and increases the distance that employees and customers are willing to walk to parking spaces. Establishing a value for public parking with meters is a powerful tool to better manage parking and ensure availability in prime locations. Working with major employers to reduce employees' auto dependence and establish remote employee parking areas will also ensure convenient parking for customers within easy walking distance to retailers. Ensuring that all sidewalks are ADA accessible, and that Thayer Street is appropriately signed and striped for bicyclists, are initial steps to improving the accessibility of the area.

***4. Expand the role of the TSDMA to strengthen its impact.***

Interviews and stakeholder meetings held over the course of several months indicate that there are systemic issues that must be addressed in order to make the District a place where area residents, visitors, new retailers and upscale restaurants want to be, and remain. The TSDMA must play an active role in addressing these issues by leading implementation, operating as the 'face' of the District, and actively promoting future successes.

**5. Encourage key landowners in the District to be actively involved in its transformation.**

Large land owners in the District, such as Brown University and other private land owners, can play an important role in positively shaping its future. The university retail district case studies provided by the consultant team convey the importance of institutional investment in neighborhoods and the value that long-term stewardship can provide. In numerous cases, universities and private landowners have transformed adjacent retail districts by diversifying the mix of retailers and enhancing the quality of architecture.

For instance, in St. Louis, Washington University has employed an incremental, opportunistic strategy of identifying specific parcels for purchase in the Delmar Loop, instead of large swaths of land. The University identifies specific buildings or parcels, based on a long-term investment strategy, and either waits until the building or parcel is listed, or approaches the owner. In some cases, the University has no clear plans for a parcel, but acquires it for its strategic location (such as a building on a main intersection, or a building that has a use that is uncomplimentary to the University experience). The University recently bought a three-story building located at a major intersection leading to its new north campus, and repurposed it for apartments above a ground floor bakery café. Similarly, when a failing supermarket adjacent to the campus closed, the University contacted the owner about buying the entire shopping center.

Brown University, as well as other large landholders in the District, should be encouraged to facilitate its reactivation. This can be accomplished by allowing limited Brown University functions and operations, such as academic research activities and performance arts, to occur outside of the Institutional Zone. The intent of allowing these uses would be to promote offshoot, private investment in the District that would attract and sustain the types of users to support the desired retail diversity. Regulatory controls would be established to prevent wholesale institutional expansion in the District, addressing the appropriate amounts of such uses, and limiting their location to areas within the District's commercial core, between Thayer and Brook Streets.



# 1 PROCESS



## 1.1 STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Mike McCormick	<i>Brown University</i>
Allison Spooner	<i>College Hill Neighborhood Association</i>
Josh Eisen	<i>Resident/Homeowner</i>
Ed Bishop	<i>Developer</i>
Yvonne Graf	<i>Providence City Council</i>
Karen Jessup, PhD & Paul Wackrow	<i>Providence Preservation Society</i>
Amy Pettine	<i>Rhode Island Public Transit Authority</i>
Ann Newman	<i>Rhode Island School of Design</i>
Paul Griesinger	<i>Thayer Street District Management Authority</i>
Gary Esposito	<i>The Wheeler School</i>
Bonnie Nickerson & Emily Kish	<i>Department of Planning &amp; Development</i>

The Department of Planning & Development led the planning process under the advisement of a Stakeholder Committee of representatives of interested community groups, institutions and the surrounding College Hill neighborhood.

The Stakeholder Committee was assembled by the Department of Planning & Development and included representatives from the College Hill Neighborhood Association, the Providence Preservation Society, the Rhode Island School of Design, Brown University, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, the Thayer Street District Management Authority, The Wheeler School, City Council, a local developer, and a resident and homeowner residing in the District.

Providing needed, on-the-ground knowledge, the Stakeholder Committee was critical in framing the issues surrounding the District, identifying the goals to be accomplished by the study, ensuring that presentation material was suitable for the public, monitoring the development of the preliminary and final concepts, and reviewing the draft and final recommendations.

## 1.2 VISIONING SESSIONS

In lieu of hosting a large public meeting to address existing conditions, a series of small Visioning Sessions were held with the College Hill Neighborhood Association, Brown University, the Thayer Street District Management Authority, the Providence Preservation Society and a group of merchants along Thayer Street. These intimate focus group sessions allowed planning staff and the consultant team to discuss and address individual concerns and perspectives regarding future development and change in the District.

During the sessions, participants were asked several questions related to the key issues surrounding the future of the District, which included development, retail diversity, streetscape, parking, transit infrastructure, and management and operations of the District. The questions solicited targeted feedback from the participants regarding their opinions and recommendations for improvement on specific topics related to each issue; however, participants were also invited to raise their own topics of concern.

The questions asked at the Visioning Sessions included:

### **Development**

- *Do you have concerns about redevelopment and infill development in the study area (height, scale, massing, use, building orientation, transportation impacts, etc)?*
- *Are there any areas or buildings in particular that should be considered for redevelopment?*
- *Should the current aesthetic (building materials, awnings, façade treatment, signage, etc) of the study area inform the look of future development? How so?*

### **Retail Diversity**

- *What distinguishes the study area from other retail/commercial areas in Providence?*
- *What types of retail would encourage you to visit Thayer Street more often?*
- *What other types of uses would you like to see in the study area?*

### **Parking**

- *Do you think that parking demand in the study area exceeds the current parking supply?*
- *What contributes to parking demand in the study area?*
- *How can parking be better managed?*

### *Topics that received general consensus included:*

- *Concern about overall safety*
- *High concentration of students*
- *Decent, existing, neighborhood-serving retail*
- *Adequate parking supply to support demand*
- *High levels of pedestrian activity*
- *Serves as the East Side transit hub*
- *Desire to keep Pembroke Field*
- *Desire to maintain the existing human scale and character of development*
- *Desire to maintain architectural diversity*
- *Consolidate dumpster locations and better manage trash removal*
- *Need stronger land use controls, development regulations and code enforcement*
- *Respect the historic context and increase preservation*
- *Improve/widen sidewalks*
- *Better accommodate pedestrian access with outdoor seating areas*
- *Desire more upscale and diverse retail offerings*

*Topics that generated disagreement included:*

- *Restore historic properties when possible vs. Integrate modern and historic architecture*
- *High rents are dictating uses vs. Existing floor plates are dictating uses*
- *Retain on-street parking vs. Create a Thayer Street Pedestrian Mall*
- *Potential conference center vs. Restricted institutional expansion*
- *District is fine as-is vs. Cushing and Brook Streets could be redeveloped*
- *Residential vs. Mixed-use district*
- *Hotel vs. No hotel*

**Streetscape**

- *What types of streetscape amenities and art installations would you like to see in the study area? Any place in particular?*
- *Where do you witness people gathering in the study area? Where could you picture people gathering in the study area?*
- *What makes the study area unique?*
- *How can the character of the study area be enhanced (e.g. uniform design of signage, planting, sidewalk treatment, etc)?*

**Transit Infrastructure**

- *How can the top of the bus tunnel better serve as a transit hub?*
- *Is current transit service suiting your needs? If not, how so?*
- *What amenities would better support, and encourage, transit ridership in the study area?*
- *Are existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the study area adequate to support transit, or are improvements needed? If so, where?*

**Management & Operations**

- *Do you think there are any issues or challenges in the study area regarding the location, timing, or aesthetics of loading/deliveries, recycling and trash collection and removal, streetscape maintenance, etc.?*
- *Are these issues concentrated in any particular location/s within the study area?*

Participants' responses and suggestions were recorded and used as a guide in developing the draft recommendations. The feedback received revealed several areas of consensus on specific topics, as well as diverse opinions on others.

## 1.3 PUBLIC MEETINGS

### **PUBLIC MEETING #1 (6 • 26 • 2013)**

The first public meeting provided the design team and planning staff with the opportunity to present their findings from the Visioning Sessions, as well as gauge the public's level of comfort with increased density and more intense and diverse land uses. A brief summary of the subjects that received general consensus, as well as those that received opposition, was provided to give the public a sense of the perceived issues and ideas regarding future growth and development in the District, as well as establish a platform for the proposed land use recommendations.

Following the presentation of findings, the team discussed the draft short-term recommendations for improving the District, which addressed the community's overall concerns regarding enforcement of existing regulations and treatment of the physical environment, including the historic resources that contribute to it. The recommendations for improving the physical environment included a District-wide parking management strategy, enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities, overall streetscape enhancements, and a branding and marketing strategy to be employed by the Thayer Street District Management Authority. The recommendations for regulatory revisions included limiting the number of liquor licenses issued, enforcing, and perhaps limiting, the hours of operation of food and beverage businesses in the District, standardizing the outdoor seating requirements, and providing design recommendations that both encourage quality design and protect significant historic resources, for the built environment and the public realm.

The greatest concern of the community for the District is its ability to appeal to a customer base beyond the student market. Based on this feedback, the marketing consultant researched comparable university retail districts that have struggled with the same issues as the District. Their analysis discovered that, by attracting a specific set of land uses, the retail districts were able to diversify their user groups and eventually diversify retail offerings within each district. The specific land uses employed by the comparable retail district—multifamily residential, office and a hotel—were integrated into three different development scenarios for the Thayer Street District. Each scenario was presented at the public meeting to gauge participants' levels of comfort with various land use schemes and scales of potential development. During the discussion of each scenario, the team demonstrated the potential benefits and challenges associated with each land use scheme.

The audience was asked to vote either in favor of, or against, each development scenario that was presented; the first being solely the physical improvements presented in the short-term recommendations, the second being additional multifamily residential use with ground floor retail, and the third being additional office use with the

potential for a hotel. Given that developer interest in the area already exists, and that additional improvements to the area would likely only increase this interest, it was important for the community to understand that physical improvements and regulatory enforcement in the District, alone, would not address the issue of how to channel and guide future development interest. The majority of participants overwhelmingly voted for the first scenario, and almost all participants voted for an additional, if not both of, the proposed alternative land use schemes shown in scenarios two and three. This feedback demonstrated that the College Hill community also acknowledges that private investment in the District is needed not only to stimulate new retail interest in the District, but to also fund enhancements to the public realm.

Overall, it was felt that the community was much more receptive to diversification of land uses and increased density than previously thought. However, the community was quite clear that regulatory revisions must accompany any changes to the existing land use structure to ensure that the quality of life of the College Hill community is rightfully maintained, and that the character of the area is not compromised.

## **PUBLIC MEETING #2 (12 • 11 • 2013)**

The Stakeholder Committee and planning staff used the second public meeting to present the goals, strategies and actions established to respond to the challenges facing the District, discuss the proposed land use and implementation plans for ensuring that the recommendations for the District are realized, and facilitate a panel discussion between meeting participants and the Stakeholder Committee. The presentation focused on the relationship between the goals, strategies and actions and the implementation plan, and the impact of the market analysis findings on the proposed land use plan.

It was understood by the City and the stakeholders that many members of the College Hill community felt discouraged by previous commitments to improve and enhance the District that had not been formally executed due to lack of leadership and accountability. Therefore, planning staff and the Stakeholder Committee worked diligently to produce a meaningful implementation tool that holds the City and members of the community responsible for completing targeted actions within aggressive time frames to rebuild the reputation of the District. It was critical to share this effort with the community to restore their confidence in the commitment of the City and several devoted stakeholder groups to reestablishing Thayer Street as a vibrant and diverse neighborhood corridor.

Following the presentation, the Stakeholder Committee introduced themselves, their roles and key interests in the project, and provided synopses of their responsibilities moving forward. This activity encouraged attendees to engage with Stakeholder Committee members who had worked closely on the project, and who share many of their interests and concerns.

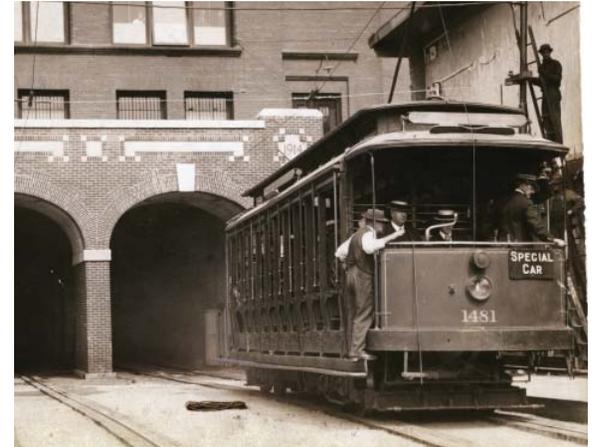
Finally, the Stakeholder Committee and planning staff addressed questions and concerns from attendees. Key feedback from the question and answer period included bringing to the attention of staff truck traffic in the single-family residential section of the District, concerns about existing loading policies and enforcement, the need to restrict late night on-street parking in the northern section of the District, and the request to reduce the amount of ground floor retail facing existing, single-family residential development in the northern section of the District.



## 2 CONTEXT



Thayer Street Planning Study Area, 1875



Historic streetcar



Thayer Street, 1970

## 2.1 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Early development of the East Side of Providence was initially hindered by the area's challenging elevation, but later flourished with the introduction of "grip" cars in 1888, which connected the City's downtown to Thayer Street. Records indicate that Thayer Street was first designated as Cross Street in 1799, and later named after Dr. Williams Thayer in 1823.

The pattern of development shown in the 1875 map of the study area is measurably sparser and less dense than what exists today. Over time, uses within the District transitioned from primarily single-family residential to commercial, which also impacted the density of development. Home to the 1636 settlement site of Roger Williams, the College Hill neighborhood still encompasses a wide range of architectural styles, from Early Colonial to Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century triple-deckers.

The Thayer Street Planning Study Area falls within the National Register for Historic Places, College Hill Historic District. Designated in 1970, the College Hill Historic District encompasses 4,860 acres that are bound by the Providence and Seekonk Rivers, and Olney, Hope, and Governor Streets. The Thayer Street District is largely located between the local College Hill and the Stimson Avenue Historic Districts, which are both protected by zoning overlays, although a handful parcels in the northern section of the Thayer Street Planning Study Area are protected by the College Hill Historic District Overlay. Designated in 1960 and expanded in 1990, the local College Hill Historic District Overlay comprises approximately 945 properties. Currently, a group of College Hill residents, in coordination with the Providence Preservation Society, is developing a proposal to expand the local College Hill Historic District. Located just east of Hope Street in the East Side of Providence, the local Stimson Avenue Historic District comprises approximately 32 properties. This residential enclave contains a collection of Queen Anne and Colonial Revival single-family homes, predominantly built in the 1880s and 1890s.



Historic Districts

## 2.2 PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

### ***Thayer Street Master Plan***

The 1992 Master Plan identifies many of the issues that still exist in the District, including community concerns about maintenance, the lack of coordinated management and parking, and narrow sidewalks. Several of the Plan's recommendations have been implemented, including establishment of the Thayer Street District Management Authority. The plan also explored ideas such as parking under Pembroke Field, and providing sidewalk seating and outdoor dining within on-street parking lanes.

### ***College Hill, Fox Point, Wayland Neighborhood Plan***

This 2008 study summarized ideas from residents, business owners and community stakeholders during a week-long planning charrette in May 2008. Recommendations for Thayer Street included widening sidewalks, burying utilities and utilizing various historic preservation tools.

### ***College Hill Parking Task Force Report***

Following the submission of Brown University's 2006 Institutional Master Plan, the City Plan Commission requested that Brown lead College Hill stakeholders in addressing parking and traffic issues. The key recommendations of the 2008 report included establishing a plan for on-street parking, encouraging public transportation use, reducing institutional and commercial parking demand, improving the safety and efficiency of College Hill streets and increasing parking enforcement.

### ***Brown University Institutional Master Plan***

This 2011 plan frames Brown's construction and building rehabilitation program for the next five to ten years. Key to this study is Brown's ambitions to improve the public realm in and around the campus, which includes building improvements associated with The Walk. The plan also details Brown's ongoing Transportation Demand Management Plan and parking strategy.

### ***RIPTA Core Connector Study***

A proposed streetcar alignment connecting Thayer Street with the Jewelry District and Upper South Providence is proposed to begin operating in 2017. This 2012 report provides information on the proposed streetcar alignment and its associated environmental impacts.



## 2.3 CONCURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS



257 Thayer Street rendering

### ***Bike Providence***

The City has recently completed a comprehensive bike study. The recommendations for both this study and the bike study were coordinated during the simultaneous planning efforts.

### ***257 Thayer Street***

Gilbane Development Corporation recently consolidated and rezoned nine parcels between Meeting and Euclid Streets to accommodate a four-story, 95-unit, mixed-use, multifamily residential and retail project.

### ***Olive Street***

Now under the ownership of Brown University, plans have been drafted by the University for improving delivery and loading areas, and completing its pedestrian corridor, The Walk. The draft design identifies new planting and hardscape surfaces, as well as the reorientation of the delivery access to the Biomedical Center, west of The Walk.

### ***Brown University School of Engineering***

Brown is in the process of raising funds to construct approximately 80,000 SF of new teaching space to expand its engineering program. The project will be proximate to the Barus and Holley Building, which is located on the block bound by Hope, George, Waterman and Brook Streets.

### ***Top of the Tunnel Improvements***

RIPTA has secured funding to renovate the interior infrastructure of the existing bus tunnel, which terminates on Thayer Street, to accommodate a future streetcar. Part of this funding will be used to enhance the bus stop on Thayer Street to better serve as a transit hub for pedestrians and cyclists.

### ***The Wheeler School***

Construction has begun on a new 18,000 SF performing arts center, which will comprise a 400-seat assembly and performance venue. Located on Angell Street, between Brooke and Hope Streets, the project is expected to be completed by Fall 2014.



The Wheeler School performing arts center rendering





### 3 ANALYSIS



### 3.1 DISTRICT CHARACTER



*Residential character*

Now considered College Hill's commercial corridor, Thayer Street began as a primarily residential district that gradually evolved into a mixed-use residential and retail hub for both students and residents. The transition of uses over time has left its mark architecturally, creating an eclectic mix of low commercial buildings intermingled with wood-frame residential buildings that have been converted into a variety of uses, including professional offices, shops, restaurants and student residential rentals. The variety of architectural styles unique to the District adds to its charm, eccentricity and attractiveness to the surrounding residential and college communities.

The District's largest neighbor, Brown University, has expanded northward and eastward from its original campus footprint to include modern dormitories, academic buildings and a recreational center. Despite gradual institutional expansion, pockets of the original 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century residential neighborhood have remained intact alongside streets perpendicular to Thayer Street, providing variety and rhythm to the streetwall. Additionally, there have been a number of successful, contemporary additions to the District's traditional building fabric, including The Wheeler School expansion.

#### DENSITY AND MASSING

Existing building heights in the District generally comprise two or three floors, with a mean height of 32 feet. A few exceptions to this exist on Thayer Street, where building heights reach four floors; however, fewer than a third of these structures are 40 feet or higher. Although most existing structures in the District do not exceed 40 feet, the current height limit for much of the District is 45 feet, or four floors. Recent development proposals have capitalized on current height restrictions, calling for the replacement of lower density residential development with higher density, mixed-use development at the 45-foot maximum. The Institutional Zone, which encompasses Brown's campus, allows for a maximum building height of 75 feet.

Front yard setbacks in the District are fairly predictable off of Thayer Street. On residential streets, front yard setbacks average between 10 and 15 feet, while on primary streets, such as Hope Street, setbacks are generally twice as large, reflecting the larger homes that historically fronted such streets. Covered porches frequently extend into typical setbacks within the District, providing visual variety and a welcoming sense of activity on the street.



### 3.2 LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

*The District comprises approximately 80 retail businesses, excluding ground floor offices. An estimated 165,000 SF of ground floor retail space exists within a variety of footprints, largely under 10,000 SF:*

<i>&lt; 2,500 SF</i>	<i>33%</i>
<i>2,500-10,000 SF</i>	<i>58%</i>
<i>10,000 SF+</i>	<i>9%</i>

The pattern of land use in the District is fairly consistent with a neighborhood retail corridor. Approximately 80 businesses are located within the District, along both sides of Thayer, Waterman and Angell Streets, comprising commercial and retail uses. The majority of commercial uses along Thayer Street include small retail stores and restaurants, while the commercial uses along Angell and Waterman Streets comprise professional offices within repurposed residential structures.

Uses in the District transition from commercial to institutional just west of Thayer Street, along the border of Brown's campus. Institutional uses are also located in the southeastern section of the District, where The Wheeler School is located, as well as throughout the central portion of the District, in office buildings owned by Brown.

Directly east of the Thayer Street commercial corridor, uses scale down to single-family homes that have been converted into multifamily student rentals. In the northern section of the District, at the intersection of Thayer and Bowen Streets, the character of the area transitions from neighborhood commercial to traditional, single-family residential.

The District comprises several, large parcels under single ownership, such as Brown University and The Wheeler School, as well as several, smaller parcels under single ownership. Land consolidation can often be a barrier to denser, mixed-use development, as acquisition of several properties under different ownership can be an expensive and lengthy process. The current pattern of land ownership, areas of existing, established residential homes, and location of potentially historic resources were all factors in determining which areas of the District would be best-suited for redevelopment in the future.



### 3.3 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

#### PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Thayer Street has some of the highest pedestrian volumes in all of Providence. Brown's new pedestrian corridor, The Walk, located just west of Thayer Street, has shifted some pedestrian activity away from Thayer Street; however, there are still twice as many pedestrians as vehicles at the intersections of Thayer and Angell Streets and Thayer and Waterman Streets during peak times. The District's second highest pedestrian volumes are experienced at the intersection of Thayer and Meeting Streets.

Pedestrian accommodations at the signalized intersections of Thayer and Waterman Streets and Thayer and Angell Streets are generally ineffective. The pedestrian signals at these intersections are not automated, and therefore require pedestrians to push the button to receive the 'Walk' indication. Also, the signal cycle lengths at these intersections are over a minute long, which motivates pedestrians to cross without waiting for the 'Walk' indication, or walk into the street to find a gap in traffic to cross. Additionally, decorative crosswalks at intersections along Thayer Street have faded significantly, which decreases visibility at intersections. Many intersections in the District are missing curb ramps or contain curb ramps that are inaccessible, making walking challenging and unsafe, especially for pedestrians with limited mobility.

The Thayer Street streetscape is cluttered with at-grade utility poles, retail signs (e.g. sandwich boards) and outdoor seating areas that limit pedestrian mobility along already constrained sidewalks. Numerous restaurants offer outdoor seating that encroaches into the sidewalks and leaves less than minimal passage for pedestrians. If, for instance, more street trees or sidewalk benches were to be added to the District, the remaining sidewalk width could not accommodate outdoor seating with a reasonable area for passing pedestrians. Frequently, outdoor seating constricts the walkable areas to less than the minimum five feet, and forces pedestrians to weave along the sidewalk, between trees and light poles, to avoid outdoor diners. Due the narrowness of the sidewalks, there are few, if any, streetscape amenities; trees are infrequent, benches are absent, and the street intersections are crowded with signal poles, trash receptacles and signage.



*Pedestrian activity on Thayer Street*

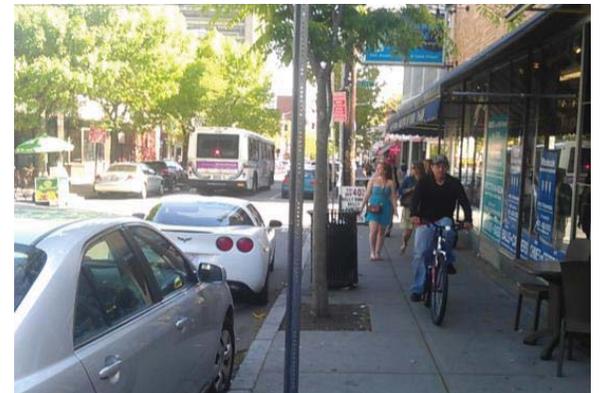


*Limited pedestrian mobility*

## BICYCLE FACILITIES

Many bicyclists behave incorrectly on Thayer Street, traveling in both the north and south directions, directly adjacent parked cars, and on sidewalks. Observations indicate that cyclists traveling north on the street, against the one-way pattern of traffic, primarily do so on the east side of the street. The street currently lacks bicycle travel guide signs and markings.

Bicycle parking is provided in three locations in the District: Angell Street, west of Thayer Street; Olive Street, west of Thayer Street; and Thayer Street, south of Bowen Street. Due to the lack of formal bicycle parking within the District, cyclists park their bikes in congested areas along sidewalks, which further contributes to the cluttered appearance of the streetscape. Additionally, the lack of bicycle facilities limits the accessibility of the District to cyclists. Although the shoulder lane markings on Angell and Waterman Streets are too narrow to be used as bike lanes, they may be perceived and used as such. These narrow lanes do not offer adequate protection for cyclists from cars.



*Inadequate bicycle facilities*



## LOADING ZONES

There are seven loading zones in the District, each with a different dimension and varying hours of operation. Most deliveries to the District occur in the morning and/or early afternoon hours; however, deliveries from a particular beverage distributor typically occur in the late afternoon, and the CVS deliveries occur in the late night/early morning. Some vendors service multiple businesses while parked in one loading zone, which can take three to four hours, while other, less complex deliveries occur in shorter intervals. Based on conversations with managers of retail and restaurant establishments along Thayer Street, current loading zone locations and operating times are sufficient, or more than sufficient, for their purposes. These conversations also indicated that the regulated hours of operation in loading zones are often compromised during the day by illegally-parked vehicles.



Thayer Street loading zones

## TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE

Seven bus lines currently serve Thayer Street, providing connections to downtown Providence, East Providence, and Pawtucket. Five of these lines use the Thayer Street transit tunnel. The entrance to the transit tunnel is a primary bus stop; however, the waiting area is small, offers minimal protection or separation from street traffic, and lacks a waiting area. Due to the inadequate waiting space for riders at the transit tunnel, riders wait in front of the adjacent Starbucks and Ben & Jerry's.

Some bus stops on Thayer Street are located mid-block, in areas without parking restrictions. At these stops, riders are required to wait on the sidewalk at the bus stop sign and walk in between parked cars to board the bus. The current bus stop locations are not ADA compliant and provide limited visibility of riders moving between parked cars.

The transit network lacks real-time transit information that would help transit riders better coordinate and plan their trips, as well as attract new customers seeking improved transit reliability. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) recently released real-time transit data to the public, which third party developers used to generate free and low-cost mobile applications; however, without a mobile device, riders do not have access to information regarding delays or schedule changes, apart from the printed schedules at the bus stops.

The Department of Planning & Development and RIPTA are working together to establish and operate a streetcar service that would utilize the transit tunnel on Thayer Street and terminate in Fones Alley, just across Thayer Street from the top of the tunnel. Streetcars traveling to Thayer Street would have headways of ten minutes, as opposed to the 20-50 minute headways of the current bus service. When constructed, RIPTA will truncate existing bus routes 40 and 92 at the transit tunnel to accommodate the proposed streetcar route. Passengers on these routes traveling beyond the transit tunnel would transfer to the streetcar to continue their trip. The plans for the streetcar include adding a traffic signal at the transit tunnel entrance on Thayer Street to allow the streetcar to cross Thayer Street to Fones Alley, switch tracks, and return to the transit tunnel.



*RIPTA service*



Existing Transit

## PARKING SUPPLY

Existing regulations include short-term, long-term, and unrestricted parking; details include:

- The allowance of parking on both sides of Thayer Street for the majority of the length of the corridor.
- The overall provision of short-term parking on Thayer Street (two- or three-hours).
- The provision of either short-term or unrestricted parking along side streets within a block of Thayer Street.
- The prohibition of parking from 8AM to 10AM on several blocks in the District to discourage daytime employee parking.
- The prohibition of parking from 7AM to 4PM within the “School Zone” around The Wheeler School.
- The allowance of 15-minute parking outside of Blue State Coffee, at the intersection of Cushing and Thayer Streets.
- The provision of metered parking along Angell and Waterman Streets, west of Thayer Street.
- The allowance of valet parking, by permit only, along certain sections of Thayer Street.

Due to the limited availability of on-street parking within proximity of businesses along Thayer Street, motorists tend to ‘cruise’ the District in search of a parking space. This behavior not only contributes to traffic congestion in the area, but also discourages potential patrons from visiting the District. The tendency of employees from surrounding businesses to park in short-term spaces also contributes to traffic congestion, reduces the number of premium, close-in spaces that are available for patrons, and causes a routine ‘shuffle’ between spaces. Parking enforcement effectiveness is compromised by the inconsistency of current parking regulations, which require enforcement officers to monitor the District in short intervals that are often impractical; therefore, officers typically monitor the District in intervals longer than the posted regulations (e.g. screening Thayer Street every three to four hours, although some short-term parking regulations are two or three hours). The difficulty of enforcing current on-street parking regulations leads to motorists parking on the street beyond the posted limits.

The 2012 Memorandum of Agreement between Brown University and the City of Providence includes a 20-year lease of 250 on-street parking spaces by Brown. These parking spaces are designated for permit holders, only, between 8AM and 12PM on weekdays. Between 12PM and 6PM on weekdays, and all weekend, the spaces are available to the public for two-hour parking.

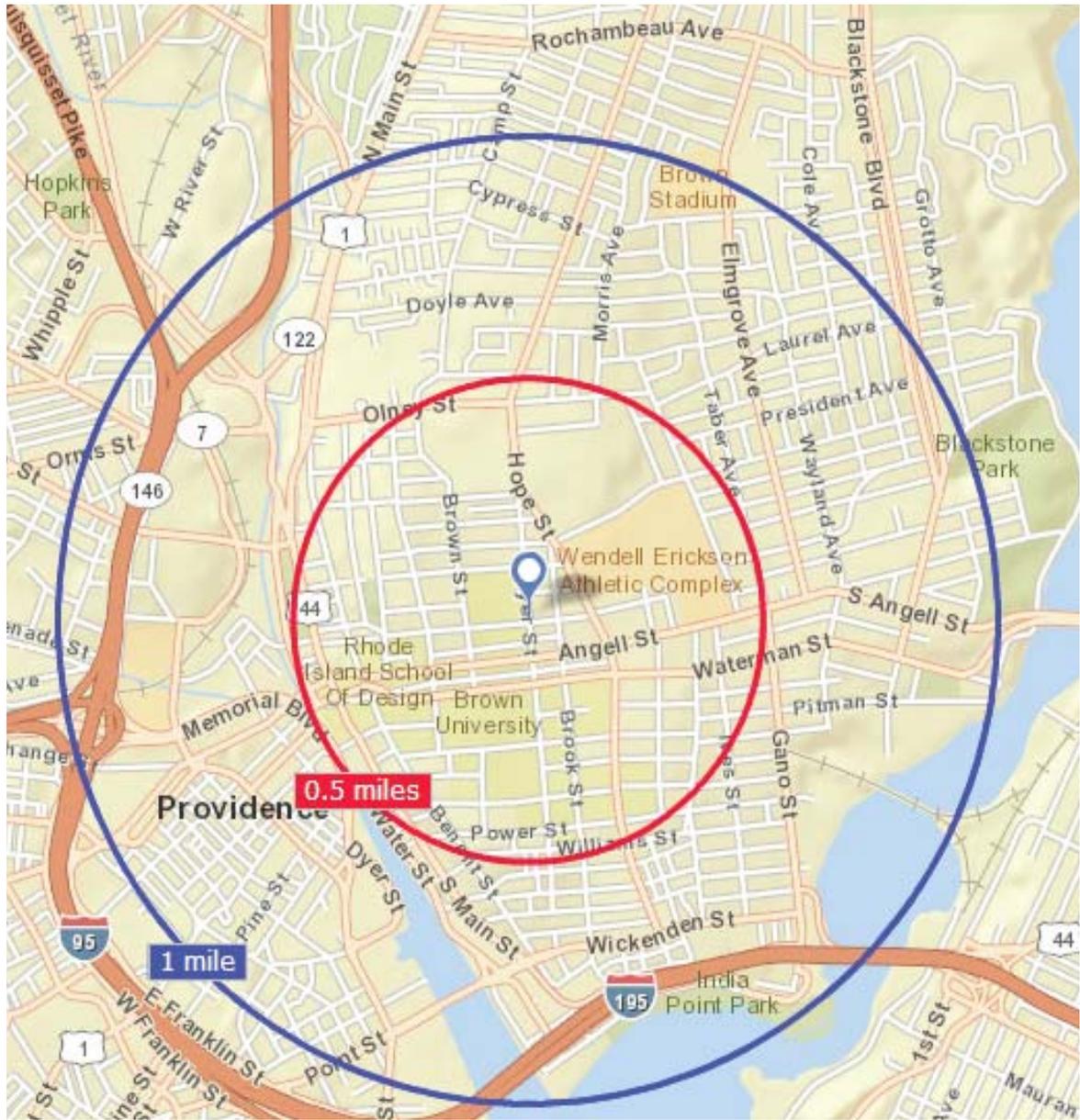


*Thayer Street Parking*

- Short-Term Metered Parking
- No Parking
- 15-Minute Parking
- 2-Hour Parking
- 3-Hour Parking
- No Parking: 8am - 10am
- Loading Zone
- (School Zone) No Parking: 7am - 4pm
- Unrestricted Parking
- Brown-Owned



Existing Parking Regulations



Primary and Secondary Trade Areas

### 3.4 ECONOMIC MARKET

#### CUSTOMER BASE

Local students, residents, and workers represent the customer base for shops and restaurants in the District. The primary trade area for the District represents consumers who are most likely to patronize businesses regularly, and who reside, work, or go to school within a half-mile radius of the District. Within this area, students represent almost half of the customer base.

Due to the dense concentration of students in the District, its demographic composition differs from the demographics of Providence as a whole:

	½-Mile Radius	Citywide
<i>Residents are mostly students.</i>	63% students	16% students
<i>Residents are younger.</i>	22.4 median age	28.5 median age
<i>There are fewer family households.</i>	31% families	56% families
<i>Despite a large student population, College Hill is quite affluent.</i>	\$56,364 median income	\$34,753 median income
<i>The population is denser.</i>	52,121 people/mi <sup>2</sup>	9,676 people/mi <sup>2</sup>

Students, residents, and workers within a half-mile of the District represent a \$121 million market for goods and services. Those within a one-mile radius represent another \$146 million of spending potential, for a total of \$267 million; however, merchants in the District currently capture only \$69 million in sales. Analysis indicates that, while there is substantial retail spending potential, consumers go elsewhere to shop and dine. Although it is unrealistic to expect that all of this spending could be captured in the District, this analysis indicates that there exists a need to diversify the current retail offerings.

**Primary Trade Area (½ mile radius)**

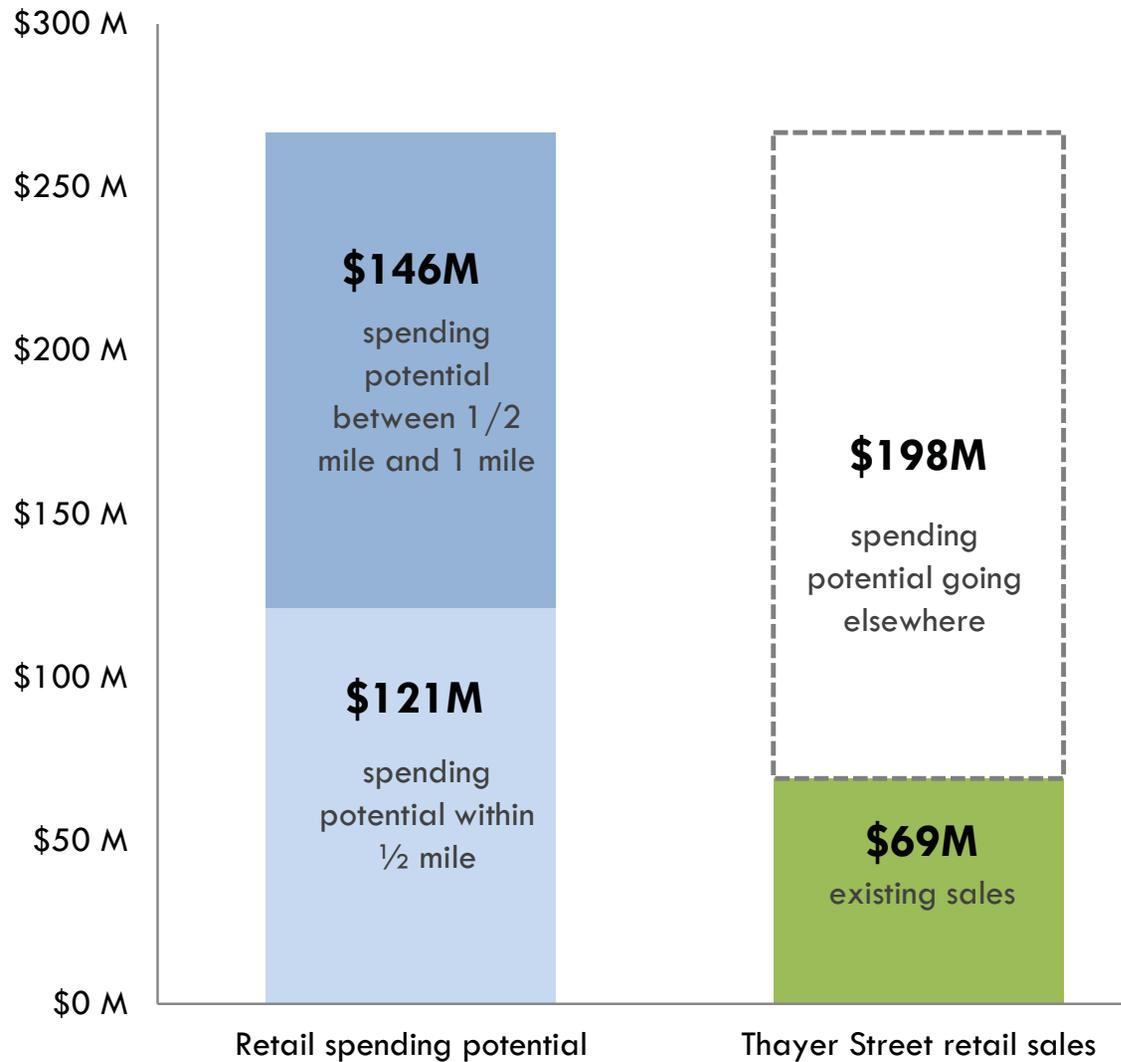
Students	10,475
Undergraduate	8,105
Graduate	2,370
Residents	2,740
Workers	10,900
<b>Total Shoppers</b>	<b>24,115</b>

**Secondary Trade Area (1-mile radius)**

½-mile shoppers	24,115
½-1 mile residents	18,440
<b>Total Shoppers</b>	<b>42,555</b>

*Student counts include total student body, and not just those who live within the area. This includes 6,133 undergraduate and 1,947 graduate Brown students, as well as 1,972 undergraduate and 424 graduate RISD students.*

*According to the U.S. Census, total residents in the primary trade area, including students, is 10,240. However, this trade area accounts for all Brown and RISD students, not just those living within 1/2 -mile of the study area; therefore, when combined, the number of students and residents is higher. Students belong in the primary consumer group because, although they may not live in the 1/2 -mile radius, they spend substantial amounts of time on campus.*



<b>1/2-Mile Market Area</b>	
Undergraduates	\$40 M
Residents	\$23 M
Workers	\$58 M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$121 M</b>
<b>1/2-Mile to 1-Mile Market Area</b>	
Residents	\$146 M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$267 M</b>
Shoppers are going elsewhere for:	
Grocery	
Home Furnishings	
Electronics	
Personal Care	
General Merchandise	



## RETAIL COMPOSITION

The District is perceived to be primarily food- and student-oriented, but in fact has other offerings. Approximately 50 percent of the storefronts in the District are food and beverage, with most serving fast, casual fare at low price points. Because many of the food and beverage tenants are clustered in concentrated areas, they are perceived to constitute the majority of storefronts in the District.

Non-food retail comprise approximately 25 percent of the tenants in the District, while personal service businesses comprise the remainder. Fashion and accessories at varying price points represent the largest category of non-food retail. These tenants are predominantly local merchants, with some national brands. Despite a significant portion of the tenants being non-food related, the scattering of these tenants in the District dilutes their physical impact on the character of the street.

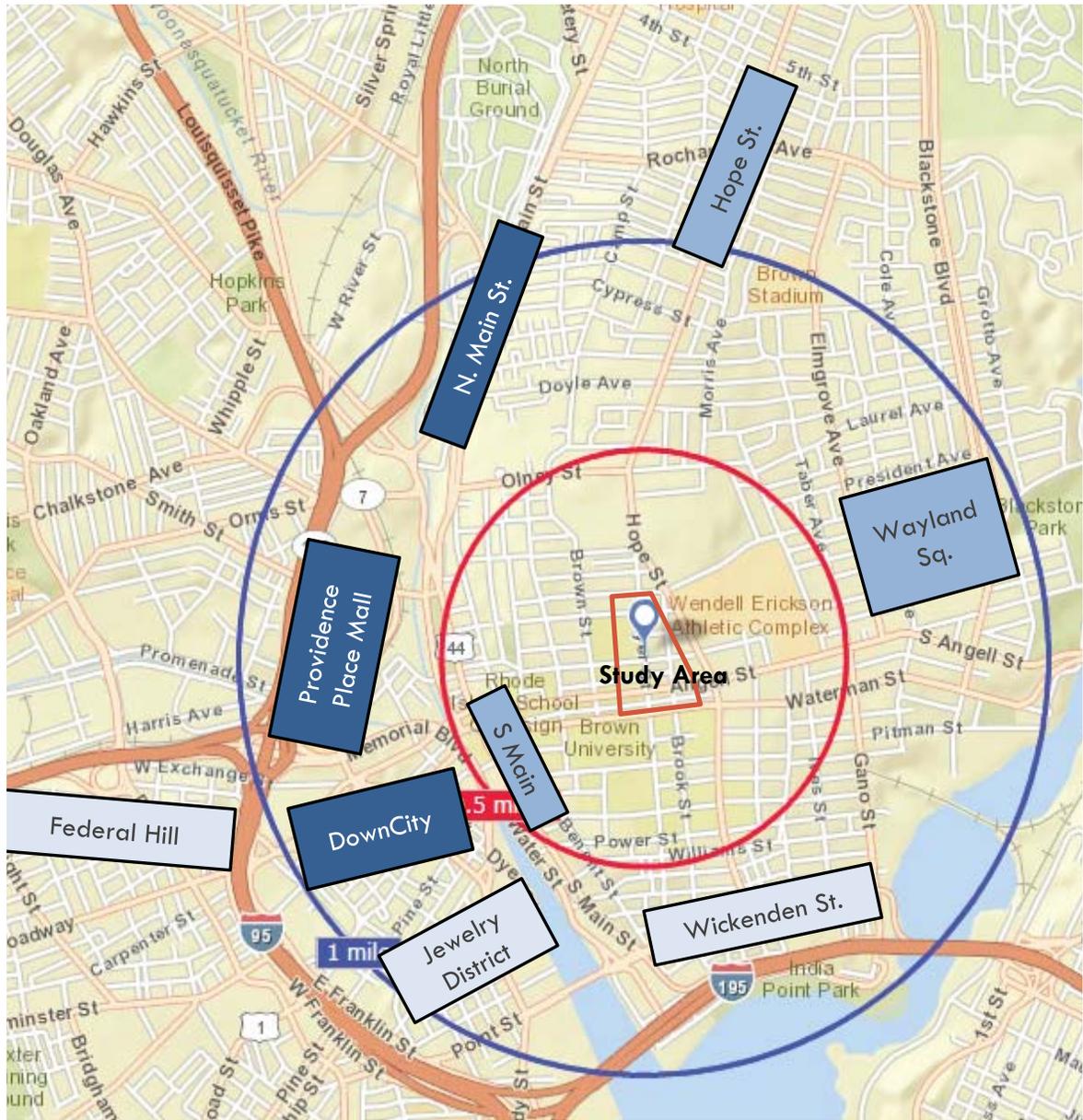
## RENTS AND VACANCIES

Thayer Street is a strong retail corridor with captive student and residential audiences and very few vacancies, thus, it commands the highest retail rents and revenues in Providence, which range from \$30 to \$75 per square foot. Between Meeting and Waterman Streets, average rents on Thayer Street are estimated to be \$40-50 per square foot. While the high rents indicate a strong economy, they also create barriers to entry for many retailers. For instance, retail rents in Downtown Providence range between \$20 and \$25 per square foot, which are significantly lower than those in the District. Coupled with a vacancy rate of 20-25 percent, Downtown has been a very affordable market for new and entry-level retail and restaurant concepts. Other popular and competitive retail clusters in Providence, such as Wayland Square, Wickenden and Hope Streets, also command lower rents and have more available space to lease.

Real estate values are accordingly high on Thayer Street. Recently, several properties on Thayer Street were purchased, including 213-221 Thayer Street, across from the future streetcar station, and 249 Thayer Street. The former was purchased for \$2.8 million, the highest per square foot real estate sale on record for the City, while the latter was purchased for \$2 million.



*Thayer Street retail*



- More National and Regional Retail
- More Local/Neighborhood Retail
- Restaurant Cluster

*Demographic comparisons show that areas with similar demographics can support a more diverse retail mix. Residents on both Thayer and Wickenden Streets are close in median age and comprise similar percentages of family households, yet restaurants and retail offerings on Wickenden Street are more upscale than those on Thayer Street. Despite having a lower income, Wickenden's retail options have a wider variety of price points, and may be a model for Thayer Street.*

	Thayer	Wayland	Wickenden
Median Income	\$55,891	\$61,981	\$40,901
Median Age	22	32	24
% Family Households	31	34	26
Population Density	52,529	32,070	38,732

## COMPETITIVE RETAIL SUPPLY

Providence has numerous retail clusters that provide diverse and popular offerings within one mile of the District. These other retail clusters capture much of the customer base spending of those who reside within the District's primary and secondary trade areas. While the District cannot be a substitute for national and regional retail destinations such as Providence Place Mall, it can emulate more diverse, smaller scale, neighborhood retail districts and restaurant clusters.

**Providence Place Mall** has several national chains, upscale retail options, higher price point dining options and an IMAX theater.

**North Main Street** is an auto-oriented corridor that contains national retailers, such as Whole Foods, fast-food establishments and a few local businesses.

**Downtown** has seen increasing diversity in its retail base, with new independent restaurants and shops moving into the area. The area contains a mix of locally- and nationally-owned ground floor businesses, most with large office spaces above, but still has a relatively high ground floor retail vacancy rate.

**Hope Street** is a small district with retail that caters to area residents, and includes locally-owned food and beverage options and retailers.

**South Main Street** is home to smaller, locally-owned, high-end retailers and a few food and beverage options.

**Wayland Square** is an upscale retail cluster that has a mix of tenancies, with locally-owned retail, some office space, and two food markets.

**Federal Hill** is best known for its dining options and its historic landmark, the Arch at Atwells. Despite somewhat narrow sidewalks, the area is pedestrian-friendly. The dining options on Federal Hill are priced higher than those offered on Thayer Street.

**The Jewelry District** has been undergoing a transformation since the relocation of the highway, which created stronger connections to Downtown and new available land. Real estate investments in the district have included Brown's medical school, new office tenants and several new restaurants, such as The ROI and CAV.

**Wickenden Street**, like Thayer Street, is a popular student destination. With a less active nightlife than Thayer Street, Wickenden offers dining options for a range of price points, locally-owned retail and residential uses.

## OFFICE MARKET

Downtown Providence, the City's established office cluster, is in recovery. Today, vacancy rates are below 10 percent for the first time since 2004. There is approximately one million square feet of available space Downtown, including 150,000 square feet of Class A office space. When compared to the Class B market, the Class A office market has been driven in part by a "flight to quality," in which tenants with expiring leases have sought newer space in more efficient buildings. The Class B/C office market, however, is not faring as well, with a 19 percent vacancy rate Downtown. The Downtown Class B/C office market experienced an average annual net absorption of 22,400 SF, and negative space absorption of 120,000 SF in 2012.

## OFFICE DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The majority of new office development has been concentrated in both Downtown and the Jewelry District, which command average lease rates that range from \$31/SF in Capital Center, to \$19/SF on Westminster Street and in the Jewelry District. Recent commercial development in these areas has included the new Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island's headquarters building Downtown, and the Hasbro expansion in the Jewelry District. Additionally, recent gains in employment have been attributed to the growth of the "Eds and Meds" market sector in the Jewelry District, which includes Brown's new medical school facility. It is expected that this sector will continue to be a catalyst for future development.



*Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island*



*The Arcade*



*Westminster Lofts*

## MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL MARKET

Residential growth is strongest in Downtown, largely due to the recent 86 percent increase in the area's population. In turn, new, multifamily residential buildings in the Downtown have an occupancy rate of over 90 percent and command the highest rents in the region. Since 2000, the majority of multifamily development has been concentrated in Downtown.

There is a diverse supply of multifamily housing stock in College Hill and the East Side, which is primarily occupied by undergraduate and graduate students, but also home to singles and younger working families. Vacancy rates in this area are relatively high. Faculty who live in College Hill tend to occupy the area's higher-quality, single-family housing stock. Further impacting the demand for multifamily housing is the five percent drop in the College Hill population between 2000 and 2010.

## MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

In 2006, Cornish Development completed the Westminster Lofts in Downtown, an adaptive reuse of a historic building that now includes 200 dwelling units. Completed in 2013, the Providence G offers a new, luxury, mixed-use complex that combines three renovated Downtown buildings and provides approximately 50 dwelling units. The newly renovated Providence Arcade, also in Downtown, features a variety of retail options and approximately 50 "micro-loft" residential units. In College Hill, plans for a new, four-story, mixed-use residential and retail development with 95 apartments was approved for 257 Thayer Street in early 2013. It is anticipated that this development will cater primarily to students.

Also of note is the recent agreement with Brown, the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College to redevelop the South Street Power Station, located in the Jewelry District. As proposed, this development would include graduate student residences, as well as office and retail space for the institutions.

## HOTEL MARKET

Ten hotels and three bed and breakfasts are located within a mile of the District, and range from upper-midscale to upper-upscale class. Seven of these hotels are located in Downtown. Hotel occupancy rates increased from 63 percent to 68 percent between 2007 to 2012, despite the construction of two hotels in the Downtown, indicating modest demand and growth. An average occupancy rate of 68 percent could be adequate to support an additional hotel in the City, given an industry standard of 70 percent; however, the current average daily rate of \$140/night has not increased substantially in recent years, despite increases in occupancy.

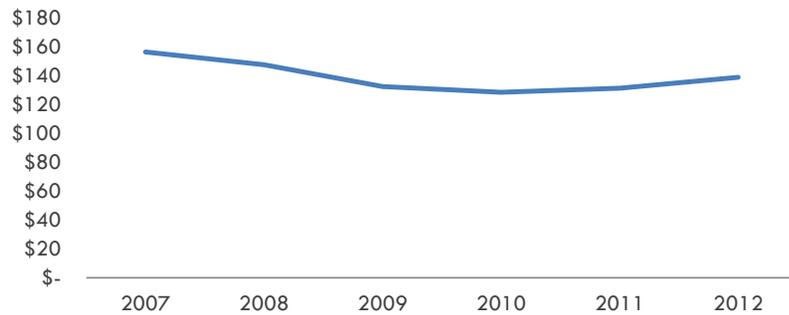
## HOTEL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Two new hotels have been built in Downtown Providence since 2007. In total, 382 new hotel rooms were added to the market, increasing the overall supply from 1,913 rooms to 2,295 rooms. Preliminary conversations indicate that a hotel in College Hill would be well-used by University guests. Brown indicated that it received approximately 120,000 visitors in 2011, a number of which were from out of town. Currently, visitors to Brown and RISD, such as alumni, scholars, and families, must stay Downtown.

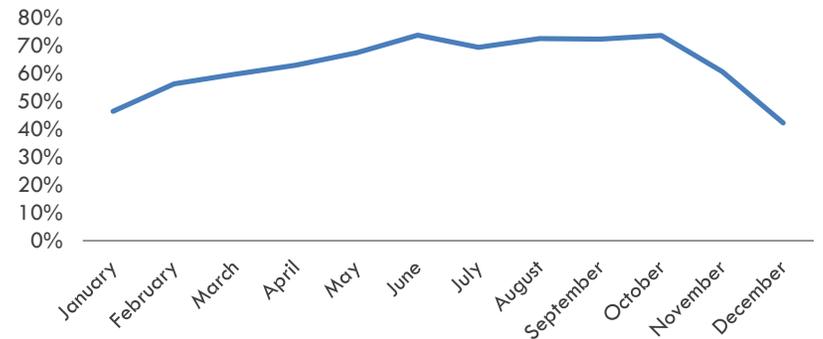


*Hampton Inn & Suites Providence Downtown*

**Average Daily Rate (ADR)**



**Average Occupancy Rate by Month, 2007 - 2012**





**Hotel Veritas (Cambridge, MA )**  
 31 guest rooms / 4 floors



**The Study at Yale (New Haven, CT)**  
 124 guest rooms / 6 floors

**ANALYSIS OF BEST PRACTICES**

An analysis of the elements that created the successful, university-proximate retail districts, University City and the Delmar Loop, guided the goals and actions presented in section 4. As discussed earlier in the study, the success of these retail districts can be attributed to the wide range and balance of commercial, residential and retail options that cater broadly to residents, students, faculty and visitors. While Thayer Street has adequate ground floor space to support a thriving retail district, adding office, residential, and hotel uses, as shown in the following analysis, will bring higher-spending consumers that would further support the District as a community retail destination. Below are estimated impacts that hypothetical additions of office, residential, and hotel uses could have on converting some existing retail and restaurants uses into more upscale uses. For example, industry standards suggest that:

**100 NEW OFFICE WORKERS** = **700 SF** of upscale retail and restaurants

**200 NEW RESIDENTS** = **2,000 SF** of upscale retail and restaurants

**150 NEW HOTEL ROOMS** = **3,700 SF** of upscale retail and restaurants

### ***The Delmar Loop (Washington University); St. Louis, Missouri***

The Delmar Loop contains a range of restaurants, bars, small boutiques and live entertainment venues that serve students, local residents, and visitors to St. Louis. Having begun to decline in the 1970s, the area continued to suffer from a poor reputation and lack of clean and safe initiatives for several decades. Due, in large part, to the investment of one property owner, the area has improved significantly. Local boutique retailers have since been joined by regional and national retailers and restaurants, creating a balanced mix of retail at varying price points. A recent, University-supported study recommended the development of a retail recruitment strategy, a community improvement district and a redevelopment plan for land surrounding the nearby MetroLink Stations. Upcoming additions to the area include a University-owned, mixed-use, student apartment building with a ground floor grocer, which will be completed in 2014.

#### ***Retail***

- Primarily local retail
- Mix of national and local restaurants
- Vibrant nightlife for students and local residents

#### ***Non-Retail***

- Boutique hotel
- Movie theater
- Live performance venue
- Historic attractions, cultural uses

#### ***Governance Entity***

The Loop Special Business District, founded in 1980, has led change, with active involvement from WashU. The current budget is approximately \$100,000, funded through tax on area businesses; however, WashU supplements this for special studies and projects.

#### ***Programming***

Several community events, including an Ice Carnival in the winter that draws 10,000 visitors.

#### ***Marketing***

- Website (Lease the Loop) markets the area to real estate brokers and tenants
- Part-time marketing employee creates brochures and conducts online marketing
- District engages the St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission to advertise the area to tourists

#### ***Physical Investments***

- Streetscape improvements
- Security cameras

#### ***Access***

- Light rail connection to downtown St. Louis
- Parking structure that is underutilized due to organized street parking



*The Pageant*



*Delmar Boulevard*



The Porch at 30th Street Station

### **University City (University of Pennsylvania); Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

University City is a secondary retail destination that largely serves students, hospital visitors and nearby residents. In response to rising crime in the area in the 1990s, the University of Pennsylvania started the West Philadelphia Initiatives, which focused on a “clean and safe” program, real estate development and education. In 1998, the University of Pennsylvania financed the construction of a complex that houses a hotel, bookstore, and many of the national retailers now found in the area. Additionally, the University partnered with a grocer to construct a new grocery store in 2000.

#### **Retail**

- National retail brands
- Restaurant mix (fast-food to high-end, celebrity chefs)
- No active student nightlife in immediate area

#### **Non-Retail**

- Two national flag hotels
- Movie theater
- Grocery store

#### **Governance Entity**

The University City District (UCD) partnership was created in 1997 through Penn’s West Philadelphia Initiatives. The District also includes Drexel University, Penn Presbyterian Hospital, residents, and businesses. UCD funding comes from institutions and businesses.

#### **Programming**

UCD-hosted events (farmers market)

#### **Marketing**

Online ads for events and retail opportunities

#### **Physical Investments**

- UPenn focus on street-facing development
- The Porch at 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station
- Launched Philadelphia’s Parklet program
- Pedestrian plazas
- SEPTA station improvements

#### **Access**

- Parking garages
- Regional rail (Amtrak)
- Subway (SEPTA)
- Bus (local UCD shuttle)



36<sup>th</sup> Street





## 4 GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



**With the right interventions, the District can successfully attract and support businesses and restaurants that appeal to a broad base of customers.**

**GOAL 1** Restore Thayer Street as a diverse district that attracts and retains new residents, visitors and businesses.  
*non-retail uses bring in a diverse customer base.*

**GOAL 2** Establish Thayer Street as an attractive and vibrant community destination that is accessible by foot, bike, car and public transit.  
*adequate access by car and public transit attracts customers from outside the immediate area.*

**GOAL 3** Create a welcoming and eclectic environment that preserves existing, historic resources and structures, and competes with other community retail destinations.  
*a safe, clean and attractive physical environment supports a vibrant and walkable retail street.*

**GOAL 4** Strengthen management of the District.  
*a strong marketing strategy led by a management entity that provides services and promotes the district.*

## RESTORE THAYER STREET AS A DIVERSE DISTRICT THAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS NEW RESIDENTS, VISITORS AND BUSINESSES.

### **DIVERSIFY RETAIL USES.**

A balance of uses is necessary to reach a broader variety of patrons, rather than a single target market that can detract from perceptions of safety or comfort. Longer-term efforts must be made to ensure that the area does not become dominated by drinking and entertainment establishments to the detriment of other uses. Enhanced license regulation and enforcement can restore a balance to the District and reduce upward pressure on rents caused by the profitability of liquor sales. Stabilized rents will allow other uses to compete for limited space on Thayer Street and ensure a balance between goods and services and food and beverages.

- 1. Establish and enforce probationary limitations on new and prospective tenants seeking licenses to operate businesses in the District.*
- 2. Maintain existing zoning regulations regarding entertainment uses, which only permit incidental entertainment uses in the District.*
- 3. Target marketing efforts to new tenants that satisfy unmet demand in the District, including the Personal Care, Apparel, Home Furnishings & Gifts and Jewelry & Accessory sectors, as well as diversify the price point and mix of retail and restaurant offerings.*

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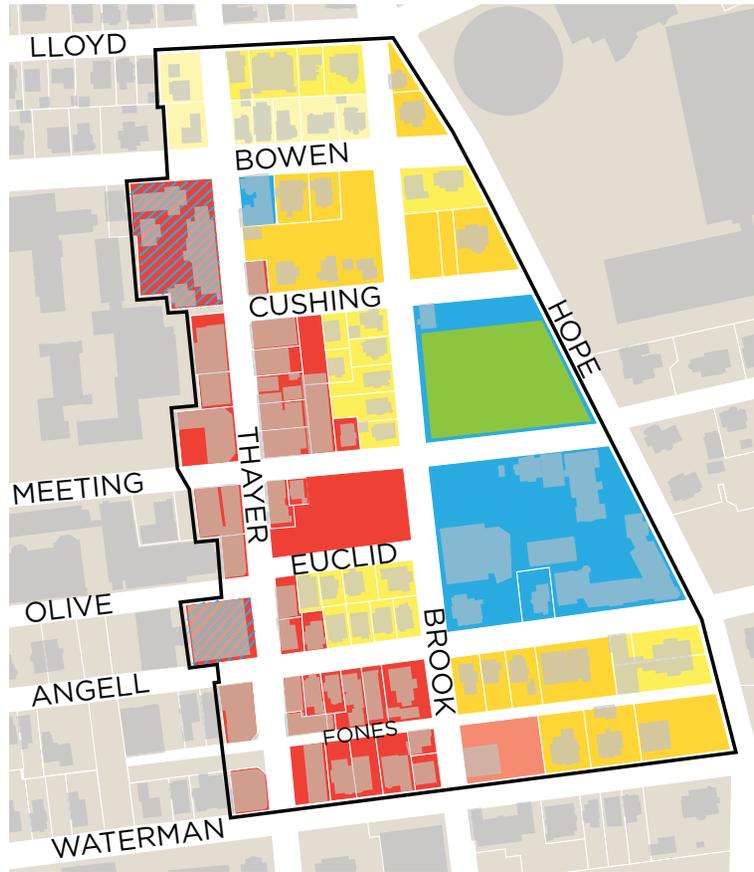
**RESTORE THAYER STREET AS A DIVERSE DISTRICT THAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS NEW RESIDENTS, VISITORS AND BUSINESSES.****ATTRACT NEW EMPLOYERS AND RESIDENTS.**

The long-term, economic health of the District depends on the diversity of uses that support it. While Thayer Street has adequate ground floor space to support a thriving retail district, adding office, residential, and hotel uses will bring higher-spending consumers to further support the District as a community destination. Office space, start-ups, tech incubators, higher-quality housing and a hotel could increase the diversity of the neighborhood, and, in turn, enhance the quality of offerings on Thayer Street. Market analysis suggests that 200 new residents, 100 new office workers and 150 hotel guests could, for instance, support up to 6,000 square feet of new, or more upscale, retail or restaurants on Thayer Street.

- 1. Encourage Brown University to engage and coordinate with key landowners to redevelop and reactivate the District as a mixed-use neighborhood node.*
- 2. Market shared office space to start-up firms, incubator businesses and local freelancers seeking more affordable lease options.*
- 3. Encourage locating office space on upper floors of new, mixed-use buildings as density in the area increases.*
- 4. Capitalize on the higher spending potential and flexible schedules of University-affiliated visitors with an appropriately scaled hotel.*
- 5. Capture the “non-undergraduate student” housing market of University-affiliated graduate students, faculty and staff who desire housing proximate to campus, with higher-end, multifamily residential development.*
- 6. Rezone specific areas of the District to promote more diversity, including multifamily housing, neighborhood-serving commercial, professional office and hotel uses that respect the height and character of the existing neighborhood and historic buildings (see Recommended Land Use Map).*

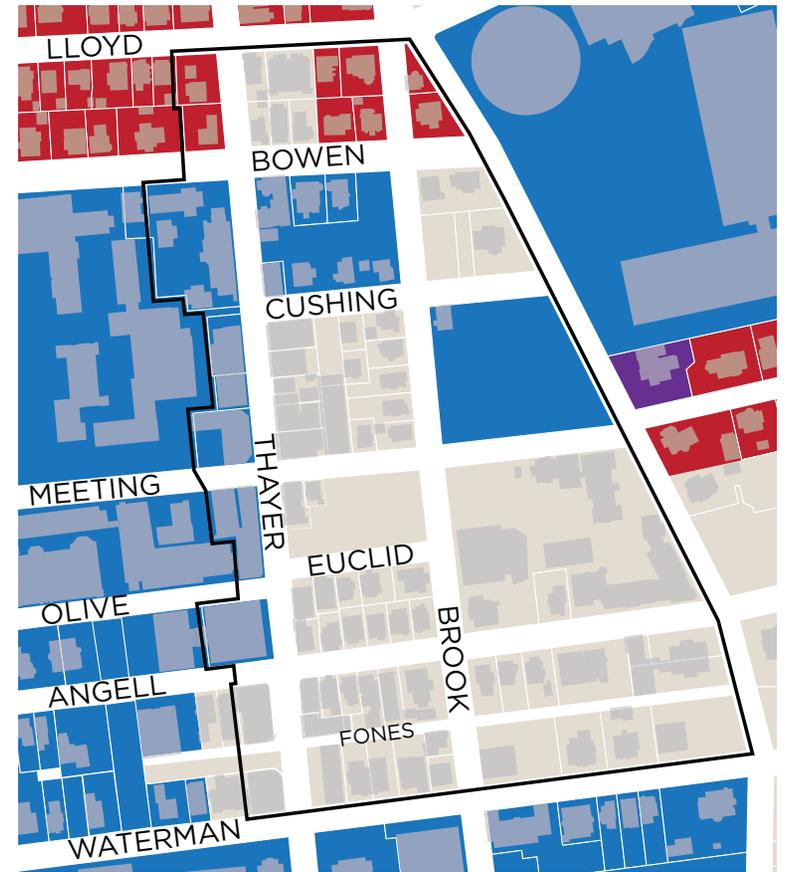
RESTORE THAYER STREET AS A DIVERSE DISTRICT THAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS NEW RESIDENTS, VISITORS AND BUSINESSES.

Existing Development Pattern



- |                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Single-Family Detached Residential             |  Residential/Retail Mixed-Use       |
|  Multifamily Detached Residential               |  Institutional                      |
|  Adaptive Reuse Residential Professional Office |  Commercial/Institutional Mixed-Use |
|  Commercial                                     |  Open Space                         |
|  Commercial Mixed-Use                           |                                                                                                                        |

Existing Overlay Districts



- |                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Historic Overlay Zone                   |
|  Institutional Overlay Zone              |
|  Historic and Institutional Overlay Zone |



ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.

### PRIORITIZE THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT.

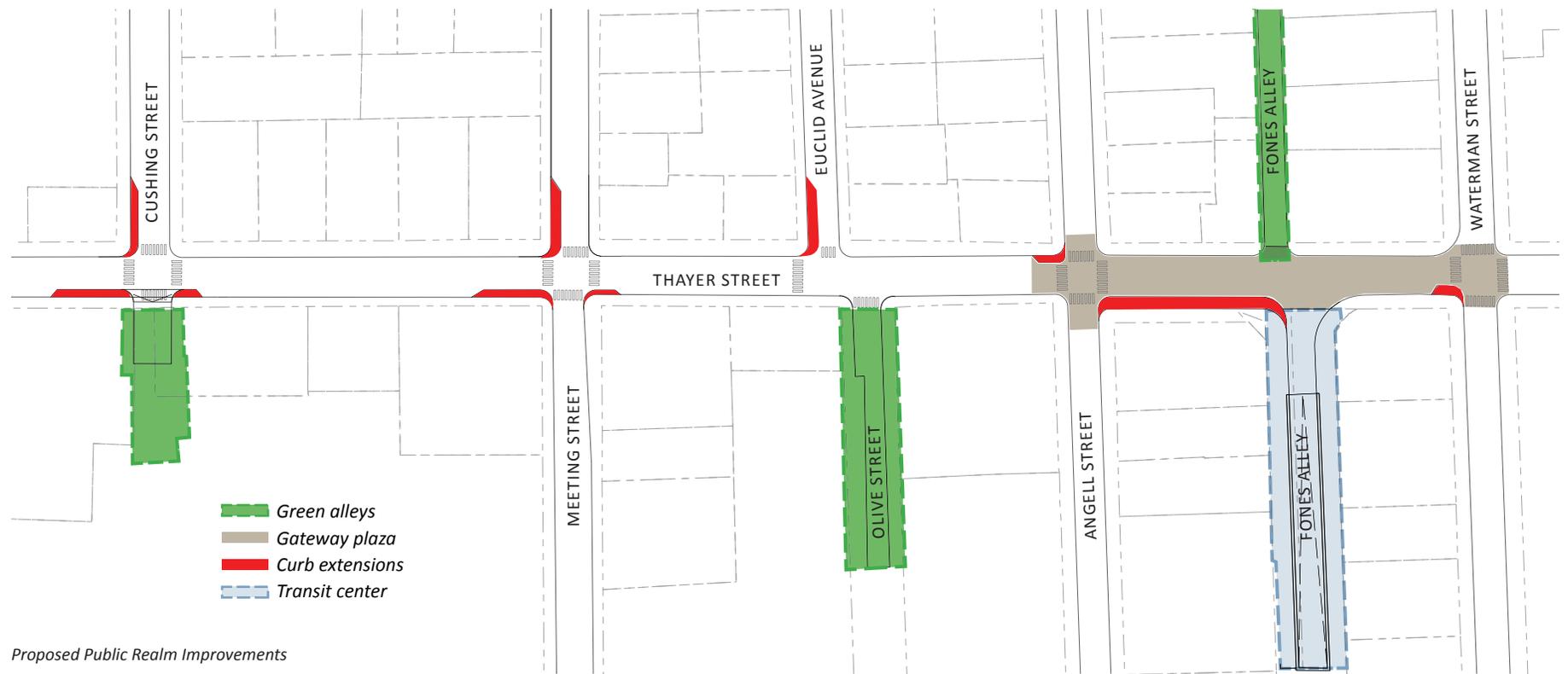
Public realm improvements that support walkability are essential to create a lively, mixed-use district. A walkable environment reduces conflicts between pedestrian and vehicles by channeling pedestrians to appropriate locations with appropriately-timed traffic lights, visible crosswalks and shorter street crossings. The redesign of the District's public realm should stimulate social interaction, reduce dependency on vehicles, lengthen visits and encourage a park-once strategy, supported by a mix of uses, that emphasizes walking. A seasonal parklet, complete street resurfacing, and new pavement markings will be implemented on Thayer Street in summer 2014 as initial enhancements to the pedestrian experience. Longer-term streetscape improvements recommended for the District include creating curb extensions at four locations along Thayer Street; transforming Olive Street, Cushing Street and Fones into Green Alleys; and creating a Gateway Plaza and Transit Hub at the proposed streetcar station at the top of the tunnel, between Angell and Waterman Streets. Additionally, when adequate funding becomes available, the sidewalks along Thayer Street should be widened and the overhead utility lines buried.

1. Investigate extending the hours of pedestrian recall to allow pedestrians to receive the "Walk" indication without requiring activation of the push-button; shortening the signal cycle lengths (especially during off-peak); implementing Lead Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) to give pedestrians a walk indication before parallel vehicles receive a green light; and installing countdown pedestrian signal timers where none exist.
2. Install ADA-compliant curb ramps at all intersections on Thayer Street.
3. Replace faded crosswalk markings with new, high-visibility pavement markings.
4. Replant vacant tree pits with a standardized tree pit design throughout the District.
5. Install pop-up installations that provide seating areas, bike parking, plantings or other amenities for the District.
6. Extend sidewalks and curbs at specific locations as pedestrian amenity zones, to include bike parking, seating areas, landscaping and bus shelters.
7. Initiate licensing for dining courts located in parallel parking spaces as an alternative to sidewalk seating.
8. Establish areas of public seating, where feasible, along sidewalks throughout the District.
9. Create landscaped, Green Alleys at Fones Alley, and Olive and Cushing Courts to provide additional pedestrian space for events and activities, provide stormwater percolation and consolidate trash storage locations.
10. Underground existing overhead utilities on Thayer Street.



Seasonal parklets

ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.



ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.

### PROVIDE APPROPRIATE AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT BICYCLE ACTIVITY.

Future transit improvements, such as the proposed streetcar, will improve accessibility to the District, but the District needs to accommodate a range of transportation modes, including walking and cycling, to prosper as a community destination. Providing a proper balance of accommodations for all modes of transportation, in conjunction with creating a public realm that is attractive, comfortable and safe for pedestrians and cyclists, will encourage the use of alternative modes of mobility, reduce vehicle trips and parking demand, and increase the distance that employees and customers are willing to walk to parking spaces. Cycling is a rapidly growing segment of mobility that is largely embraced by the student population, and increasing in popularity among College Hill residents, as a primary mode of transportation. Despite the topographic challenges of College Hill, the City's *Bike Providence* plan supports aggressive new bicycle accommodations in the District that include lane striping, signage, wayfinding and bike parking to improve cycling behavior.

1. *Provide shared lane markings on Thayer Street to encourage vehicles to share the lane with cyclists.*
2. *Mark 9-foot wide parking lanes on both sides of Thayer Street to reduce the center travel lane to 12 feet, visually reducing the width of the roadway and calming traffic.*
3. *Install "Wrong Way" signs for bicycles on Thayer Street at its intersections with Angell, Waterman and Meeting Streets, to reinforce one-way travel along Thayer Street.*
4. *Provide bicycle route wayfinding signage and on-street markings to direct bicyclists to Brook and Hope Streets, especially for the northbound movements.*
5. *Provide regularly spaced bicycle parking along Thayer Street.*
6. *Ensure that all grates are compatible with bicycle use and replace any hazardous grates when resurfacing.*



*Recommended shared lane markings*

ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.

- Wrong Way Signs ■
- Bicycle Wayfinding Signs ■
- 9' Parking Lane —
- Shared Lane Markings —



Recommended Bicycle Facilities

ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.

**ENSURE THAT PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS SUPPORT BOTH EXISTING AND PLANNED PUBLIC TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE.**

Existing RIPTA bus service in the District should be enhanced with shelters, real-time transit information and benches. The proposed streetcar will improve connectivity, providing service from Thayer Street, through Downtown, to the Jewelry District. The Thayer Street streetcar station should be a high profile, high amenity, intermodal facility that attracts and supports transit ridership. The station design should be contemporary to complement the emerging District, and be outfitted with modern amenities such as seating, weather protection, real time information and bike storage.

1. *Remove the bus stop at Thayer and Meeting Streets and move two bus stop locations closer to the intersection of Thayer and Bowen Streets and Thayer and Keene Streets, where parking is not allowed, to improve boarding accessibility.*
2. *Provide a real-time, transit information kiosk at the transit tunnel entrance.*
3. *Create a formal waiting space for riders at the transit tunnel that establishes a permanent, high-quality transit hub. Install an aesthetically attractive, transparent bus shelter for routes 92 and 40, to improve the safety, comfort and convenience for transit riders.*
4. *Improve the side path connection from The Walk to the transit tunnel entrance with enhanced lighting and pavement treatments.*



Real-time transit display



Real-time transit kiosk

ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.



Recommended Transit

## ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.

### ESTABLISH INTELLIGENT AND SUSTAINABLE PARKING SOLUTIONS.

Availability of parking is essential for a thriving retail district and community destination. The existing system of free parking and inefficient enforcement encourages the abuse of street parking and contributes to the perception of parking scarcity. Better management of the District’s existing parking supply should begin with better enforcement, and supplemented by placing a value on street parking. Charging for parking on Thayer Street would allow the on-street supply to be controlled by price and time limits, which would both ensure turnover for patrons and encourage employees to park elsewhere. Furthermore, establishing a value to parking could enable a future parking structure to be funded, at least partially, through parking revenue.

As the District grows and transforms, demand for parking and traffic will inevitably intensify; however, increasing and co-locating the mix of uses in the District will better utilize shared parking resources and encourage walking, which will reduce vehicular trips. New development should be designed to reduce traffic impacts as much as possible by promoting trip reduction programs and providing parking supplies that can be shared with the public. For example, parking areas dedicated to daytime offices can be utilized during the evenings and on weekends for public parking. Spaces for shared vehicle programs, such as ZipCar, should be allocated on public streets and in private garages. Additionally, current parking regulations should be reviewed to ensure that they do not inadvertently incentivize automobile ownership.

1. *Add short-term, paid parking to discourage day-long parking, reduce congestion from “cruising” for on-street parking, increase turnover and maintain prime parking spots for business patrons. Install multi-space parking meters for on-street parking.*
2. *Create a Parking Benefit District and allocate a portion of, or all, meter revenues to physical improvements and programs recommended in this study.*
3. *Monitor paid parking use and prices; adjust pricing until curb occupancy goals are achieved.*
4. *Provide remote parking for District employees.*
5. *Increase parking enforcement to decrease parking violations.*
6. *Investigate opportunities to share existing parking lots.*
7. *Encourage the TSDMA to implement transportation demand management (TDM) strategies for the employees of businesses in the District.*



Multimeter pay station

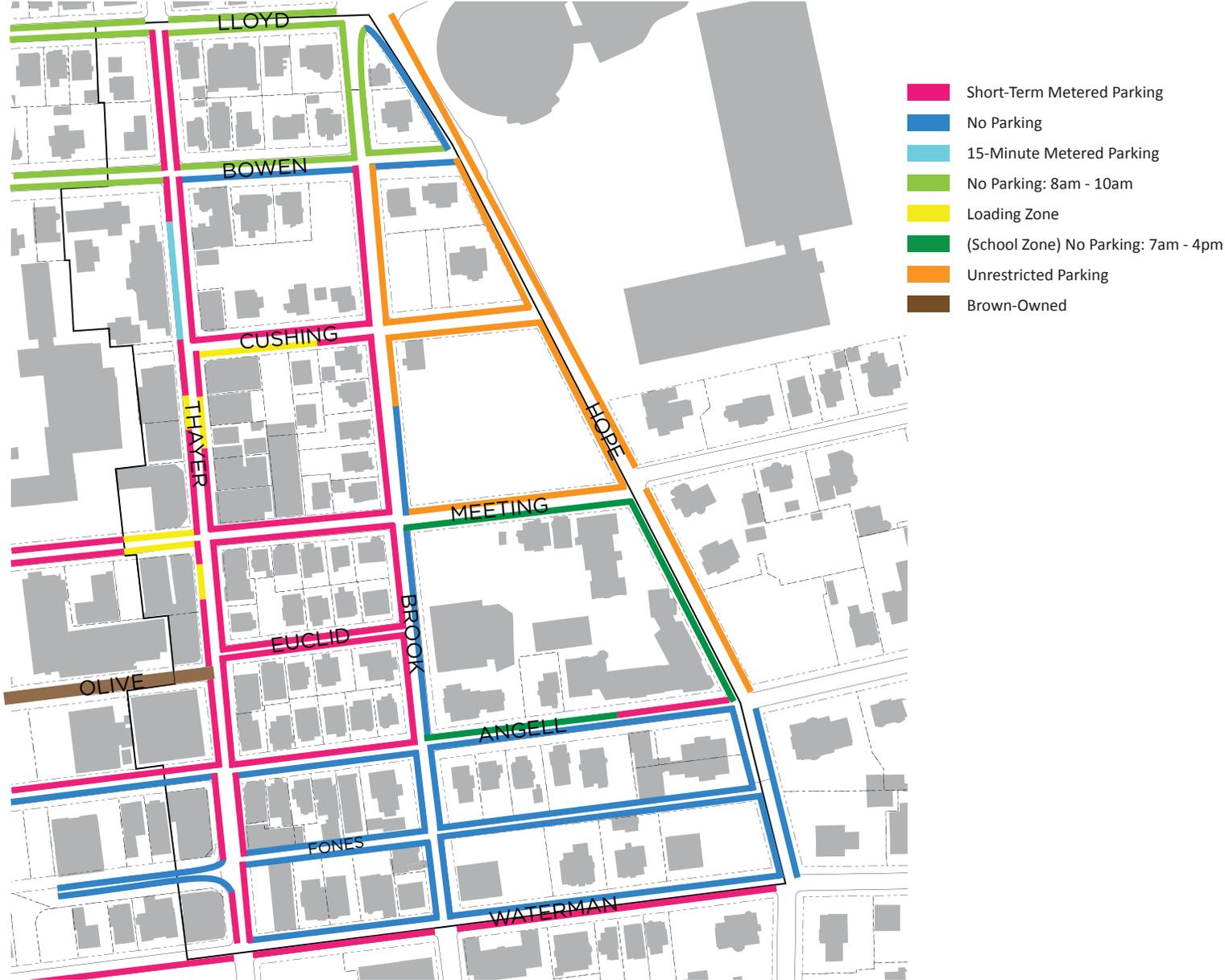
ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.



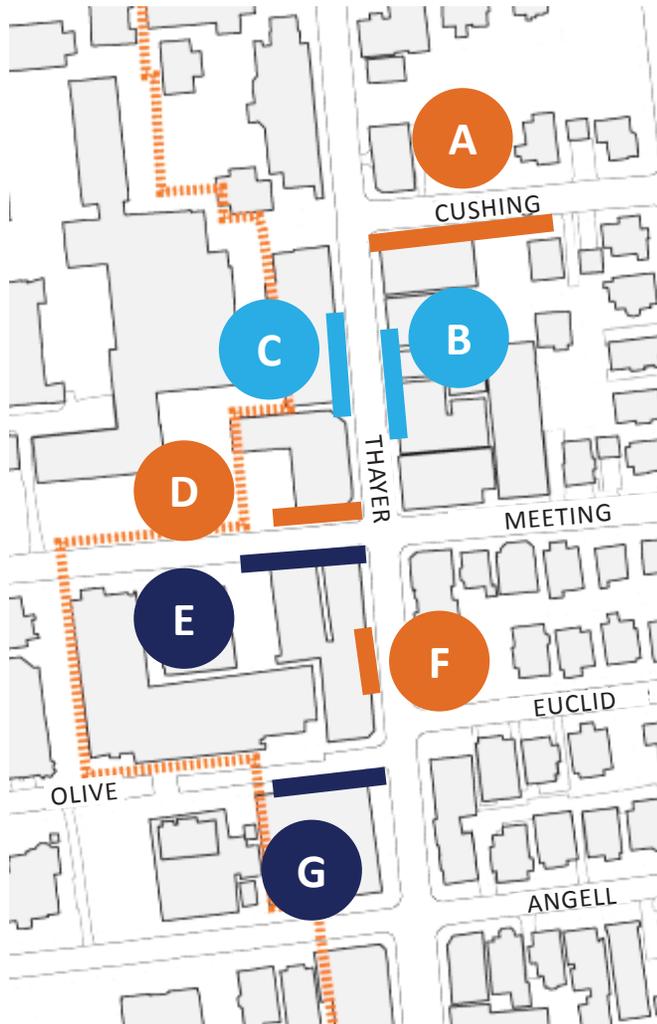
Shared loading zones

8. *Require new developments to include robust TDM components to reduce demand for parking, including car share, bicycle parking, transit subsidies and unbundled parking.*
9. *Evaluate TDM measures before increasing parking supply. Any future, paid, off-street parking should be coupled with pricing of on-street supply to maximize efficiency and use of each type.*
10. *Establish new zoning requirements that provide credits for shared-uses and adjacent on-street parking.*
11. *Implement fee-in-lieu-of parking for new developments.*
12. *Adjust loading zone operating times to increase parking availability during peak hours and reduce pedestrian conflicts on sidewalks. Encourage the TSDMA to coordinate the loading needs of new businesses in the District.*
13. *Strategically remove and replace street signage per the rationalized parking and loading regulations.*
14. *Evaluate strategies that preserve the quality of life of the adjacent residential community by reducing impacts associated with late-night parking.*
15. *Consider the potential of a future parking structure after completing actions to manage existing parking resources.*

ESTABLISH THAYER STREET AS AN ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY DESTINATION THAT IS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT, BIKE, CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSIT.



Recommended Parking Regulations



Proposed Action	Loading zone Location	Current time	Proposed time
REDUCE HOURS	A: Cushing (south side, east of Thayer)	9 am – 11pm	7am – 3pm / 10pm – 1am
EXTEND HOURS	B: Thayer (east side, south of Cushing)	8am – 10am	7am – 10am
EXTEND HOURS	C: Thayer (west side, south of Cushing)	8am – 10am	7am – 10am
REDUCE HOURS	D: Meeting (north side, west of Thayer)	7am – 12pm	7am – 10am
NO CHANGE	E: Meeting (south side, west of Thayer)	7am – 6pm	7am – 6pm
REDUCE HOURS	F: Thayer (east side, south of Meeting)	No times posted	7am-10am
NO CHANGE	G: Olive Street (Brown owned street)	No times posted	No times posted

Recommended Loading Regulations

CREATE A WELCOMING AND ECLECTIC ENVIRONMENT THAT PRESERVES EXISTING, HISTORIC RESOURCES AND STRUCTURES, AND COMPETES WITH OTHER REGIONAL RETAIL DESTINATIONS.

**PROMOTE REDEVELOPMENT THAT PROTECTS HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND STRIVES FOR EXEMPLARY, CONTEXTUAL DESIGN.**

The District features a wide range of architectural styles that evoke its historic transformation from a primarily residential area to a commercial corridor. Several storefronts on Thayer Street have been compromised by decades of structural additions and alterations that obscure basic architectural details with non-conforming signs, mechanical systems and utilities. The architectural character of each building should be enhanced, rather than compromised, by signage, awnings and window displays, and protected by regulation that promotes excellent storefront design.

The District is also grappling with pressure to increase density, allow more intense land uses, and diversify its retail offerings. The market analysis indicates that increasing the diversity of land uses in the District will attract different user groups (residents, employees and visitors), which will establish the customer base needed to support diverse retail. These new land uses, which could include multifamily residential, office, or hotel uses, would likely need to be accommodated in new and different building types, not currently found in the District. Although proposed redevelopment may be larger and require the consolidation of existing, smaller parcels, the experience of the streets should respect the existing, human scale and character of the built environment of College Hill. Redevelopment should also respect and protect the historic context, although replication or imitation of historic, architectural styles is unnecessary for redevelopment to be successful. Adherence to contextual design principles, which mandate careful consideration of mass and bulk, and encourage the protection of existing architectural features to prevent new additions from overshadowing existing buildings, is necessary for successful redevelopment. Appropriate design controls can protect the character of the District, encourage redevelopment or rehabilitation of historic buildings, and ensure streamlined redevelopment with fewer delays and more certainty in outcome.

1. *Conduct a survey of historic building resources in the District to inform the preservation of key buildings and historic districts.*
2. *Select contemporary street furniture and lighting that reflects the District's eclectic image.*
3. *Engage local artists to create public street art, such as lighting fixtures, wall murals or benches.*



*Wheeler School addition*



*Contemporary street furniture*

CREATE A WELCOMING AND ECLECTIC ENVIRONMENT THAT PRESERVES EXISTING, HISTORIC RESOURCES AND STRUCTURES, AND COMPETES WITH OTHER REGIONAL RETAIL DESTINATIONS.



*Screened waste storage*

### **ORGANIZE AND CONSOLIDATE WASTE STORAGE AND DELIVERY AREAS.**

Enforcement of existing regulations is essential, but new projects and renovations should be required to create off-street storage areas that are completely enclosed and off of Thayer Street, when possible. Consolidation of separate storage areas should be encouraged and facilitated by the TSDMA to reduce the impact of multiple curb cuts and service drives.

- 1. Coordinate waste removal times that do not interfere with delivery or parking times.*
- 2. Encourage new buildings to be serviced from the front of the property, within an enclosed, internal trash room, or an external, concealed side setback, out of public view, when no alleyway is available.*
- 3. Encourage trash removal from the rear of the property when access through an alleyway is possible.*
- 4. Encourage screened, communal servicing, where possible.*

## STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT OF THE DISTRICT.

### IMPROVE SAFETY.

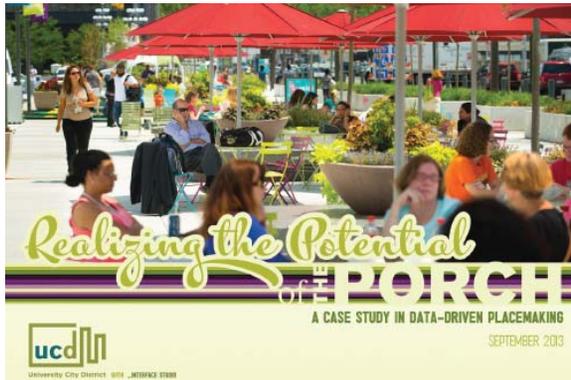
Recent events have emphasized the on-going need to provide better security on Thayer Street, especially if trying to attract the diverse users that will be necessary to upgrade the quality of restaurants and retailers in the future. In addition to coordinating with City and Brown police forces, the TSDMA should strongly consider establishing an Ambassador's program to help deter poor behavior, provide additional 'eyes on the street', and increase the public's perception of safety.

1. Hire an organization, such as Block-by-Block, which provides solutions for deploying an Ambassador program, to ensure a clean, safe and friendly street environment that fosters growth and prosperity.
2. Continue to fund aggressive security details until incidents decrease and the District's image improves.
3. Monitor sidewalk dining and signage regulations, encourage compliance, and facilitate enforcement.

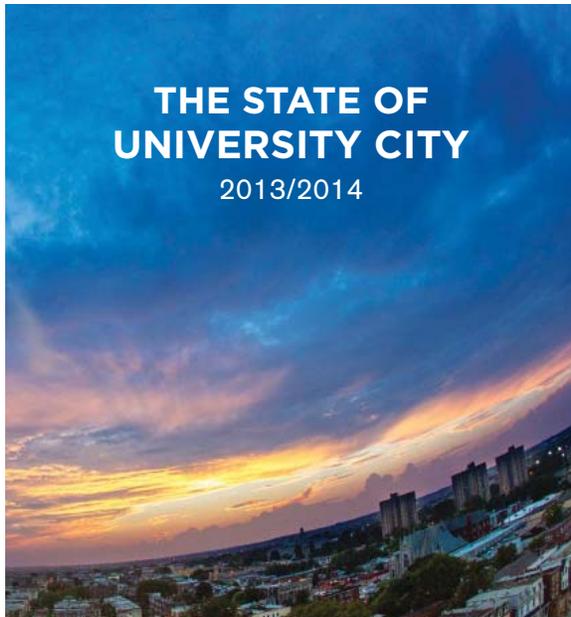


Providence's Downtown Improvement District Clean Team

## STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT OF THE DISTRICT.



University City District social impact study



University City District annual report

**EXPAND THE ROLE OF THE THAYER STREET DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY.**

Successful retail districts depend on good management. Whether a mall or a main street, the needs of retail districts are distinct from other districts, as they require attention to issues of tenant mix, marketing, branding, cleanliness and safety. The TSDMA already has many roles to perform, such as security, street sweeping and tree maintenance, but should, in fact, be empowered and budgeted to address a broader array of issues that are of critical importance to the District.

1. *Coordinate necessary supplemental services contracts and City services to maintain a safe and clean environment within the District.*
2. *Implement and maintain a range of streetscape and beautification initiatives, such as branded banners and planters with thematic plantings.*
3. *Prepare an annual strategic plan and operating budget. Make available an annual report that measures the progress towards the goals of the strategic plan.*
4. *Implement a plan for development/fundraising, such as an annual campaign for special projects, financial appeals and financial gift solicitation.*
5. *Advocate with City agencies for services that support and enhance the District and encourage capital projects.*

## STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT OF THE DISTRICT.

**INITIATE AND COMMUNICATE MARKETING EFFORTS FOR THE DISTRICT.**

An essential function of a management entity is aggressive marketing; therefore, marketing and programming should be added to the responsibilities of the TSDMA to improve the District's identity. Recent, negative publicity must be countered with positive media coverage of constructive changes on Thayer Street. Branding and marketing the District is necessary to overcome negative perceptions and attract desired customers and businesses. Programming events such as street festivals, temporary art installations, pop-up parklets, and coordinated sales, can expand the customer base and reposition the District to attract desired patrons and businesses.

1. *Implement a strategic marketing plan for the District that includes key community partnerships, relationships with the media, sponsorships, publications, and press releases designed to promote the District.*
2. *Develop and maintain a uniform District "brand" to be used in collateral materials (printed and other forms), website, signage and banners, to continue the development of a vibrant, exciting destination for local residents and visitors.*
3. *Maintain a District website, Twitter feed, Facebook page, and other digital systems.*
4. *Create brochures, newsletters, and other materials regarding the programs and services offered by the organization.*
5. *Market and promote the District in local and city-wide media outlets.*
6. *Organize special events designed to attract consumers, improve community awareness and promote business development.*
7. *Liaise with community and civic groups, government, and elected officials.*
8. *Attend public and government meetings, hearings, community and member forums, and other events.*



Marketing materials from the Noma BID in Washington, DC



## 5 DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following design recommendations provide a template for the desired character of development and the character of the public realm envisioned for the District. First and foremost, these recommendations will serve as a tool for developers interested in the District, detailing the preferred design, orientation and scale of proposed development. The recommendations will also guide City officials in their review of development proposals, and guide the review of City Boards and Commissions. Additionally, the recommendations will be incorporated, in part, into the base zoning regulations for the District. Members of the Thayer Street Planning Study Stakeholder Committee and other neighborhood groups will be able to use the recommendations to support their efforts to advocate for projects that positively contribute to the District. The City and partners such as the TSDMA, will use the recommendations to guide the implementation of street and streetscape improvements. Other community partners can use the guidelines to prioritize and plan for future investments in the District.

## 5.1 DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS



The following recommendations address the physical and architectural character of new development and existing storefronts in the District. The catalogue of the prevailing form, density and character of existing buildings, storefronts and streetscape provided in the analysis of existing conditions informed the design recommendations. Design recommendations for new development are intended to encourage exciting, modern architecture while respecting the prevailing mass and form of the surrounding neighborhood, much of which has been residential for a century. New structures, which may be denser than former uses, should be designed to preserve the street experience so that new development does not diminish or overwhelm existing buildings that will remain.

Front yard setbacks in the City's residential zones are established by averaging the building on either side, up to 100 feet. Potential, future mixed-use and commercial infill development should respect the average setbacks of adjacent buildings, particularly along Hope and Brook Streets where setbacks are fairly generous and uniform. This will ensure that the character of the District's older, historic structures is preserved by retaining adequate front yards and landscaping with new development.

Roof forms in the District are primarily determined by existing residential structures, which are characterized by angled roofs that slope from the second floor and enclose attic spaces with dormers. This break in the wall plane allows for taller buildings in the District, but reduces the visual mass of the buildings above the second floor. These recommendations advocate for an upper level setback at the predominant elevation of 35 feet in height, which is based on the observed range of 30-foot to 35-foot eave lines found throughout the District. It is recommended that buildings in the proposed commercial mixed-use area recede at a one-to-one ratio, from the 35-foot upper level setback, to a maximum height of 45 feet to 50 feet. Exceptions could be allowed for architectural features that define entrances, corners or special conditions. The current maximum height of 45 feet occasionally tempts builders to compress ceiling heights lower than desirable to accommodate additional floors and maximize development potential, which results in less than adequate ceiling heights and creates a monotonous roofline across the District. Therefore, minimum floor-to-floor heights have been recommended for residential and commercial uses to ensure quality development within the allowed height requirements.

Historically, the District's single-family homes featured side driveways with rear yards for accommodating vehicles and trash. As these single-family homes have transitioned into multifamily units, the rear yards have been repurposed as parking lots with trash storage areas that are visually unappealing and often spillover onto sidewalks

and into front yards. Therefore, it is recommended that trash storage areas are located to the rear of parcels, within screened enclosures.

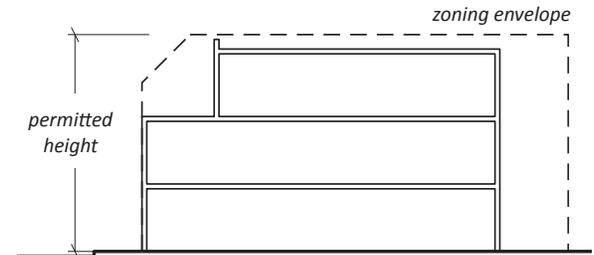
Although the District has a limited supply of public open space, private development can relieve the visual impacts of increased density and lot coverage associated with higher-density uses by providing areas of public open space. It is recommended that proposals for major land development projects (10,000+ SF of building area) should dedicate 10% of the development site as landscaped open space that is visible from the street. This provision would support the District as a residential mixed-use corridor that preserves the character of its residential heritage and blends new development seamlessly with existing historic buildings. Additionally, if developers seek height increases or other variances, the City should negotiate provisions for new, public amenities in the District, such as streetscape enhancements, pocket parks, plazas and playgrounds, where appropriate.

Residential development patterns in the District are founded on lot modules of 50 feet, which dictate the pattern of frequent building entrances along streets in the District; therefore, building entrances are recommended at 50 foot intervals to prevent long, uninterrupted extents of buildings without entrances. Frequent building entrances create a more active and vibrant mixed-use district that adds eyes on the street, which increases safety.



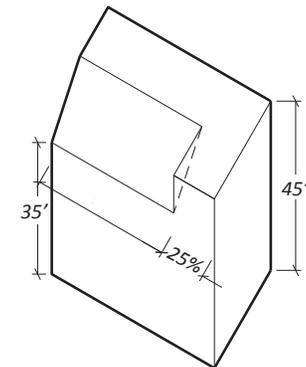
### MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS

- Minimum and maximum building heights and number of stories should be established by the permitted use.



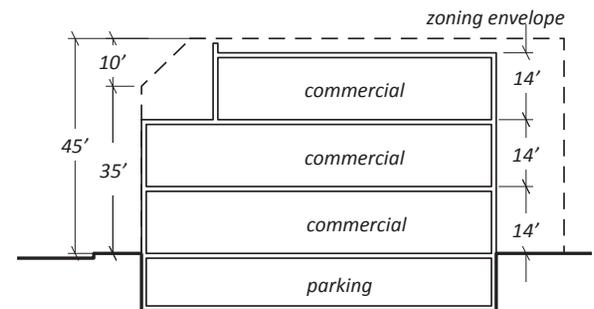
### UPPER LEVEL SETBACKS

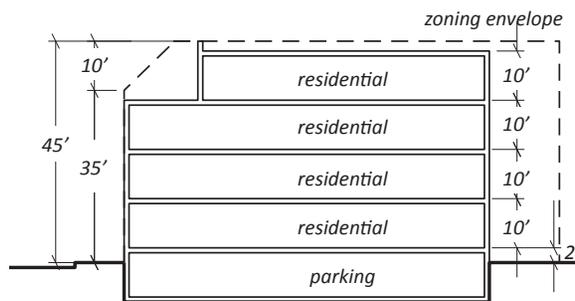
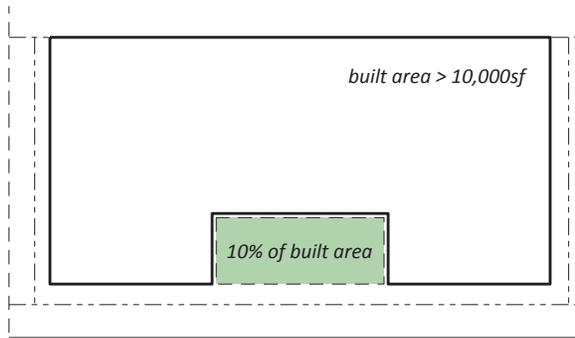
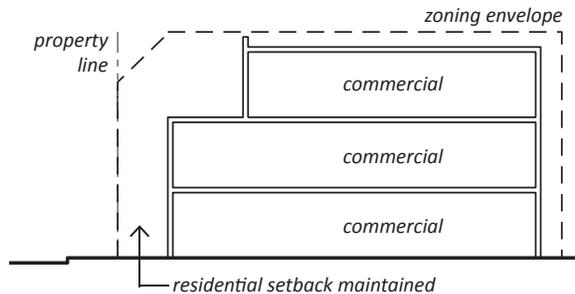
- All buildings should maintain an architectural setback of 1:1, beginning 35' above the ground level, in order to prevent new construction from reaching the 45' height limit without providing any relief.
- Architectural setback exceptions may occupy up to 25 percent of the façade and are encouraged at entrances and prominent corners.



### RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL FLOOR-TO-FLOOR HEIGHTS

- Floor-to-floor heights for retail and commercial uses should be no less than 14' to provide adequate space and flexibility to accommodate either retail or office uses.
- Retail uses should be located at-grade to ensure compliance with ADA requirements and to reduce the demand for ramping within the public way.





### MINIMUM FRONT YARD DIMENSIONS

- Areas that may change from residential to commercial uses should maintain the original residential setback requirements as determined by Zoning Ordinance (1994, section 304.1, article 4).
- Porches and stairs may intrude into the front yard of any use, but should not exceed 25 percent of the property length.

### OPEN SPACE

- Development projects over 10,000 SF, or 0.25 acre, should provide an outdoor, open space amenity that comprises no less than 10 percent of the total square footage of the site.
- The open space should be visible from the street in order to reduce the impacts of the bulk and massing of the project.

### RESIDENTIAL FLOOR-TO-FLOOR HEIGHTS

- Residential uses should be no less than 12'.
- Ground floor residential units should be positioned no less than 2' above the adjacent street level.
- Below grade parking may extend up to 3' above the surrounding grade to provide ventilation.

### GROUND FLOOR RETAIL BUILDING TRANSPARENCY

- Buildings should maintain transparency from the ground to the upper floors so that they may be adaptively reused for office, retail or residential uses over time.
- Ground floor retail uses should have a 70% glazed façade minimum.

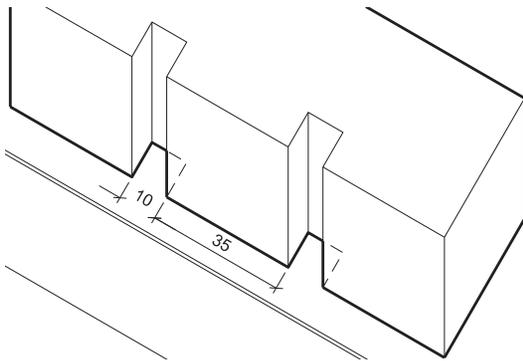
### GROUND FLOOR OFFICE BUILDING TRANSPARENCY

- Ground floor office uses should have a 50% glazed façade minimum.
- Upper floor office and residential uses should have a 40% glazed façade minimum.

### GROUND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL BUILDING TRANSPARENCY

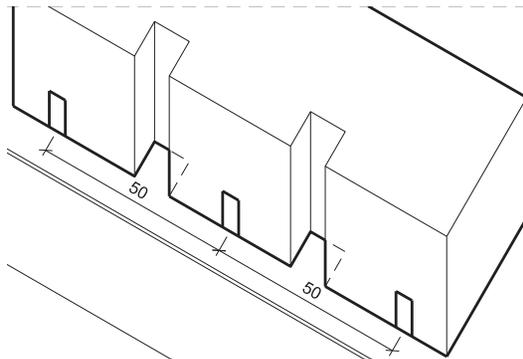
- Ground floor residential uses should have a 40% glazed façade minimum.
- Upper floor office and residential uses should have a 40% glazed façade minimum.





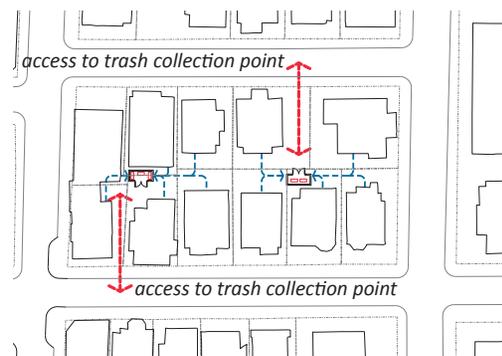
### MAXIMUM LENGTHS OF WALLS

- New development should provide visual relief from continuous walls that are out of character with the neighborhood. Most building frontages are limited to 35' in width.
- Continuous wall planes should be limited to 35' in length before being broken by relief of at least 10'. The relief of the wall plane should be at least 2'.



### FREQUENCY OF ENTRANCES & FAÇADE BREAKS

- Based on the existing character of the District—large, single-family homes located on 50'-wide lots with entrances spaced at 50' intervals—pedestrian entrances to new development should be spaced a minimum of 50' apart, or at an average of one entrance for every 50' of street frontage.



### CONSOLIDATED SERVICING AREAS

- New development should provide enclosed areas for waste that are screened from the public way with solid fencing on all sides.
- Mixed-use development should combine waste storage and removal areas to reduce the number of service access points.
- Developments facing multiple streets should locate waste storage facilities on streets other than Thayer, Brook or Hope Streets to limit the amount of curb cuts.



## 5.2 STOREFRONT RECOMMENDATIONS



*Architectural lighting precedent*



*Signage precedent*

Retailers on Thayer Street are located in a mix of buildings; some originally intended for commercial use and others in converted residences, resulting in an eclectic mix of storefronts that are difficult to generalize. Storefronts should respect the architectural character of the buildings in which they are located; signs, awnings and other additions should not obscure basic architectural elements such as pilasters, cornices and windows. Window displays should be primarily transparent to focus attention on the interior of the store rather than on applied signage, lettering, or opaque coverings. Storefronts should be largely glazed to encourage display space and reveal retail activity to the street. Solid walls or small windows discourage browsing and window shopping, which are primary components of a pleasant pedestrian experience and a walkable corridor. Office space can equally contribute to the vibrancy of the pedestrian environment by providing generous glazing that reveals internal activity and offers daylighting for tenants.

### SIGNAGE

Enforce existing sign code, with the following exceptions:

- Limit internally-illuminated signs in all areas except on Thayer Street.
- Free standing signs should not be allowed in any area.
- Signs attached to buildings should not obscure architectural details, such as pilasters or windows.
- Signs on awnings should be counted as signage area.

### ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING

Architectural lighting should be encouraged to reinforce and accentuate architectural character.

### STOREFRONT SYSTEMS

- Preserve original storefront components.
- Recess new building and storefront entrances to protect door hardware and prevent doors from swinging into the sidewalk.
- Window bases should be made of durable, cleanable surfaces that resist salt and moisture damage.
- The original framed opening or display window should not be blocked or otherwise reduced in size.

- Materials other than glass, such as Plexiglas or non-transparent materials, or reflective glazing, should not be incorporated into storefronts.
- Transom windows should not be removed or covered. Awnings may be placed over transom windows, if desired.
- Bars, solid rolling grates or scissor type horizontal grates should not be allowed.

### SERVICE AREAS

- Delivery entrances and waste storage should be moved off Thayer Street to side streets, where possible.
- Delivery entrances and waste storage areas should be visually screened from public rights of way with solid fences, gates or doorways.
- All service areas should be equipped with area drains to ensure cleanliness and prevent drainage across sidewalks.
- Shared service and waste storage areas are encouraged, off of Thayer Street.

### AWNINGS

- Awnings should be placed between vertical architectural elements to allow façade to read as a whole.
- Where multiple awnings are hung on one building, use consistent size, profile, and placement.
- Specify canvas materials on historic buildings.
- Continuous awnings should not be hung such that they cover vertical building elements and isolate the street level from the building above.
- Vinyl or plastic materials that are shiny or translucent should not be used.
- Awnings should relate to the building's architecture.
- Corporate colors should not be used on canopies, as stripes on building fascias, or on roofs, except for those areas defined as signs.
- Lighting from canopies should not spill onto the street and neighboring properties.
- Phone numbers and web addresses should not be displayed.



*Awning precedent*



*Window display precedent*

## WINDOW DISPLAYS

- Window displays should be uncluttered, organized and well-lit.
- Product displays should not obscure the store interior.
- Interior design should replace the need for window signs.
- Lettering in windows should be located near the entrance to describe products and hours of operation.
- Placement of curtains and blinds in windows should be discouraged.
- Temporary or permanent signs that obscure more than 30 percent of the window area should be discouraged.
- Blocking-in of display windows should not be permitted.
- Interior, electronic reader boards with flashing or moving messages should not be permitted.



## 5.3 STREETScape RECOMMENDATIONS

### STREET TREES

#### *Street Trees and Pavement*

Street trees, curb cuts, and pedestrian pavement are fundamental elements within the public realm that should maintain a standard of consistency. In coordination with the City Forester, the TSDMA and private developers, vacant tree pits should be replanted, and additional trees planted, where possible. Street trees, landscape plantings and amenities, such as benches, street lights, trash receptacles, planters and banner poles, should be concentrated in the amenity zone, adjacent to the curb and separate from the pedestrian zone, to organize the sidewalk environment. Even on narrow sidewalks, this arrangement allows for the maximum unobstructed space for pedestrians while also establishing a buffer from the street. When placing a new tree at an intersection, adequate space between the tree trunk and the edge of the cross-street must be provided to maintain clear sight lines for vehicles approaching oncoming traffic. In order to protect the tree canopy from damage by taller vehicles, trees should not be located too close to driveways or curbs adjacent to streets with on-street parking.



Pedestrian  
zone

Amenity  
zone

Curb extension  
zone

#### *Street Tree Diversity*

Diversification of street tree species is an important safeguard against decimation by disease or insect infestation. While planting trees of the same species creates a uniformity along a street, it also makes it easier for disease to spread from infected trees, and increases the probability that the trees could be lost as a group.

#### *Street Tree Pit Design*

The volume of non-compacted soil available to a street tree directly affects its growth, health, and longevity. In a constrained, urban environment, most street trees do not reach their full growth potential due to inadequate soil volume. When new street trees are planted, efforts should be made to maximize the soil volume available to the trees. In most of the District, the relatively narrow sidewalk condition, in combination with high pedestrian volumes, favors an approach that increases soil volume while maximizing the usable sidewalk area above. Two such strategies include enlarged tree pits and shared soil trenches.

When trees are planted absent of complete sidewalk reconstruction, or when resources do not allow for a shared soil trench, individual tree pits should be accommodated to the greatest extent possible (minimum 4' x 10' x 3' deep). A small opening can be provided at the base of the tree, surrounded by granite cobbles to match the tree planting details that have been adopted by Brown University. This strategy allows water to percolate between the cobbles, and

provides a stable surface for pedestrian traffic. An alternative would be a poured-in-place, permeable surface, such as Flexi-pave, that is fully compliant with ADA, easy to install, and allows water to reach the soil of the tree pit below. This treatment is especially suitable for sidewalks with high pedestrian volumes and limited width, or for retrofit projects.

Shared soil trenches are a good option for increasing available soil volume simultaneous with the construction of a long stretch of sidewalk. Creating a shared soil trench beneath a sidewalk requires the use of either structural soil or suspended pavement. Structural soil is an engineered soil that uses a mixture of stone, or sand, and soil to support pavement while maintaining uncompacted soil voids. Suspended pavement uses a structural system, composed of either modular soil cell units or concrete beams, to receive the load of the sidewalk pavement and allow the space below the pavement to be filled with uncompacted soil. Creating a shared soil trench typically requires a greater up-front cost than traditional street tree planting, but results in long-term benefits to street tree health, growth, and longevity. Existing green spaces in the District, which provide large areas of existing soil volume, can be further utilized by encouraging landowners to plant canopy trees that overhang into the sidewalk, or provide root run connections from street trees to nearby open spaces. Root runs can be constructed with aeration or drainage strips that allow roots to grow beneath pavement to adjacent areas of uncompacted soil.

### **Street Tree Species Selection**

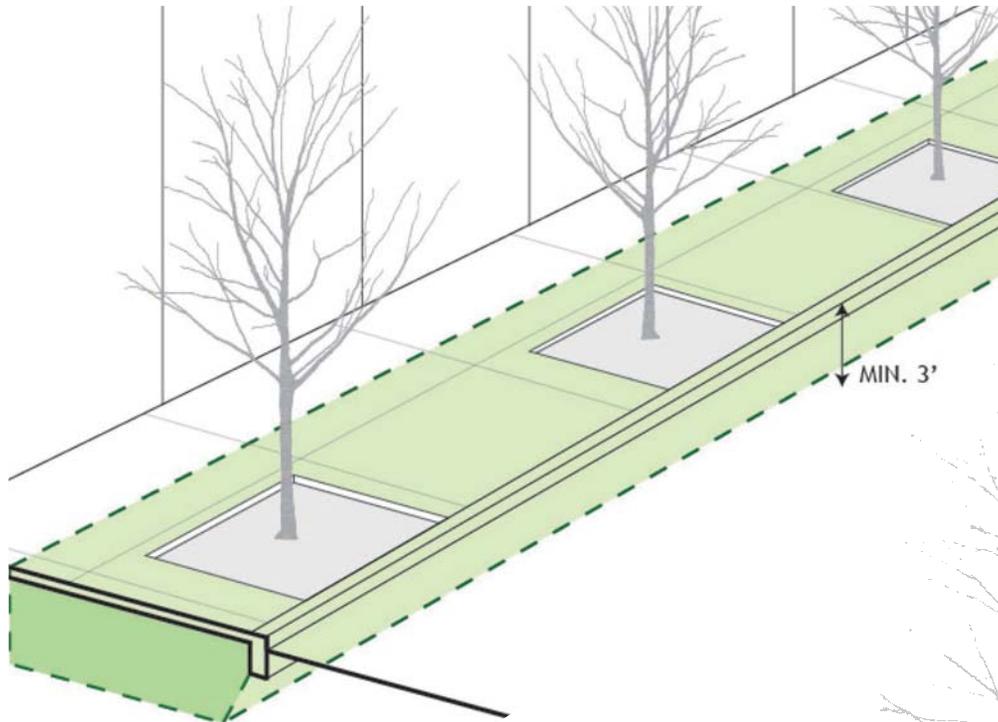
A robust canopy of shade trees makes a street more attractive for both retail and residential purposes. Tree selection needs to consider the species' form and unique attributes, its ability to withstand urban stresses, and the scale and context of the intended location. Lower branches of street trees may need to be pruned to maintain unobstructed access and visibility. Based on the City Forester's approved tree list, the following tree species, with a focus on large canopy trees, are recommended for the District: Ginkgo (male cultivars only), Honey Locust, Red Maple, Pin Oak, Willow Oak, Sophora/Scholar Tree, Sweet Gum, Kentucky Coffeetree, London Planetree, American Elm (Dutch Elm disease-resistant hybrids and cultivars), Japanese Zelkova.



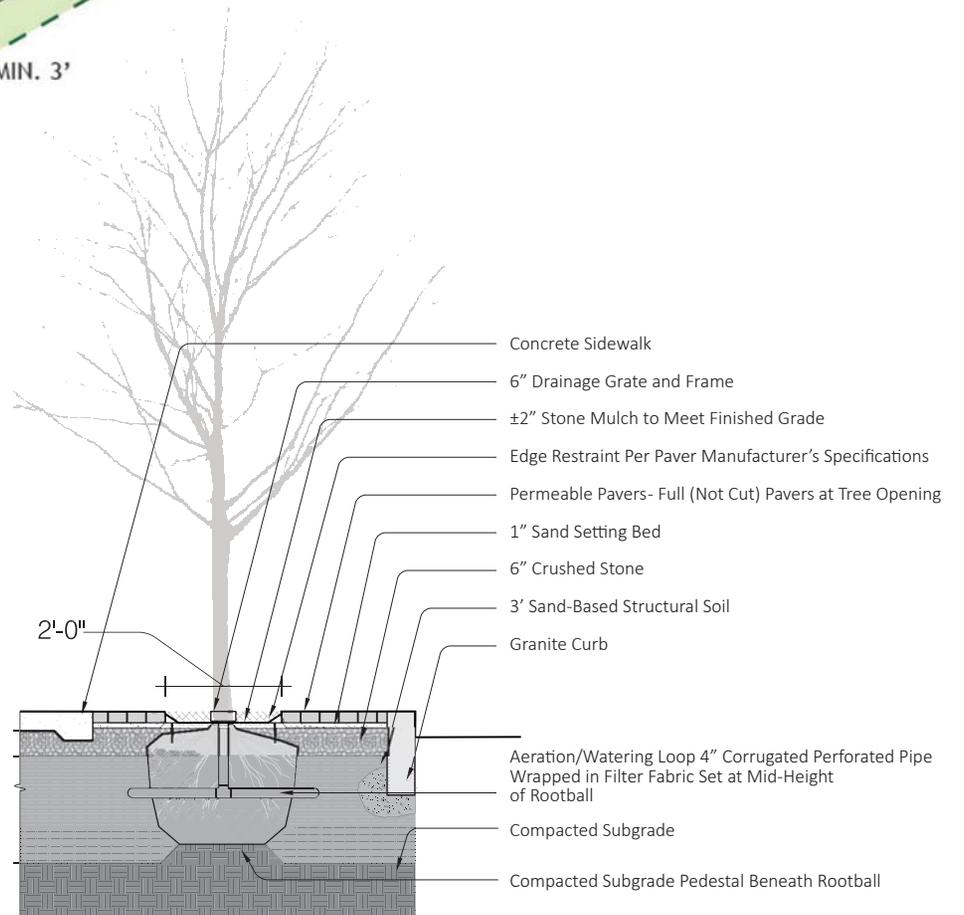
*Street tree pits at Thayer and Bowen Streets*



*Flexi-Pave street tree pit, Washington D.C.*



Shared street tree trench



Individual street tree pit

## **SIDEWALK GROVES**

To expand the pedestrian realm, it is recommended that vehicular spaces within the public right-of-way be utilized more effectively as movement and parking space, and are strategically returned to the pedestrian zone in areas where new amenities or vegetation can recast the character of the District. It is recommended that most of the existing, on-street parking on both sides of Thayer Street is preserved to support retail and restaurant uses; however, as public open space in the District is badly needed, at least two parking spaces in each of the four busiest blocks between Fones Alley and Bowen Street should be converted to six-foot wide Sidewalk Groves. The locations of the Sidewalk Groves are not for the benefit of a particular tenant or business, but instead to provide the maximum benefit for the entire District. The uses afforded by each Sidewalk Grove would be intended to augment private, outdoor, sidewalk dining, not provide a new location for it. These four, new areas, which vary in length depending on location, would provide amenities that are desired by the public, including artwork, benches, street trees, and bike parking. Where existing bus stops currently preclude parking, the Sidewalk Groves would provide waiting areas beyond pedestrian traffic.

## **THAYER STREET GATEWAY PLAZA**

It is recommended that a Gateway Plaza and Transit Hub is created at the top of the tunnel, between Meeting and Waterman Streets, using a decorative modular paving material in place of the asphalt roadway surface. Changing the paved roadway surface from a typical poured asphalt street to a concrete unit paver is a straightforward strategy that elevates the streetscape and signals a shift beyond the ordinary. The repaving will slow traffic, enhance the pedestrian experience, and reestablish this area as a priority pedestrian zone. Decorative, interlocking, modular pavers that are sturdy, long lasting, and resistant to damage by snow removal and heaving turning vehicles, are recommended for this area. As the proposed terminus of the future streetcar, improvements to the existing pedestrian walkways on either side of the tunnel are envisioned as important, contributing spaces to the plaza.

## **GREEN ALLEYS**

Green Alleys are recommended at three locations along Thayer Street: Fones Alley, east of Thayer Street; Olive Street, as part of Brown's initiative to convert Olive Street into a pedestrian and service plaza; and Cushing Street west of Thayer Street, which is currently used by service vehicles, trash collection and students as a campus entrance. The Green Alleys will improve the look of trash collection areas, provide permeable paving areas for stormwater retention and enhance the pedestrian experience.

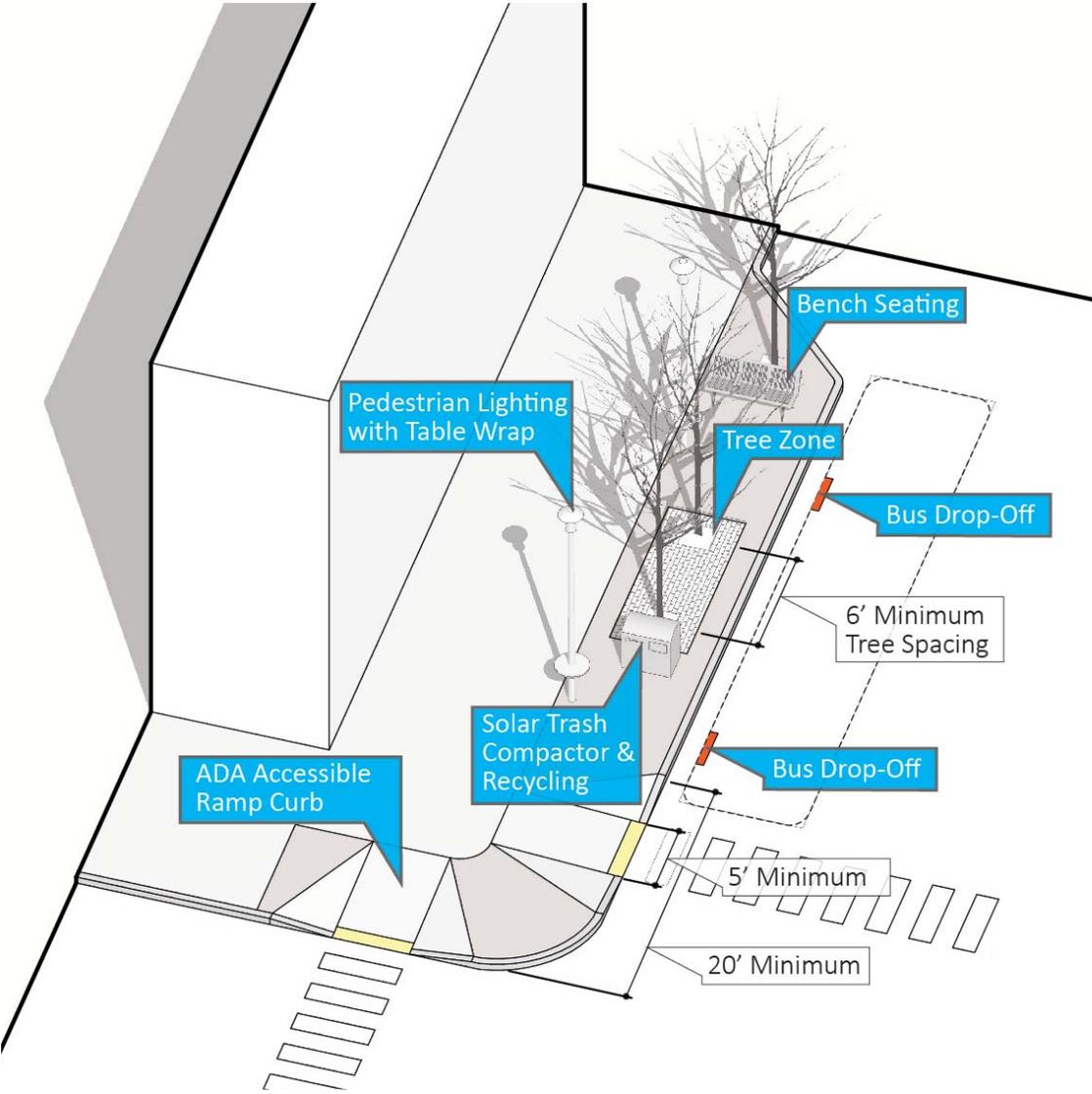


*Fones Alley Gateway Plaza and Transit Hub*



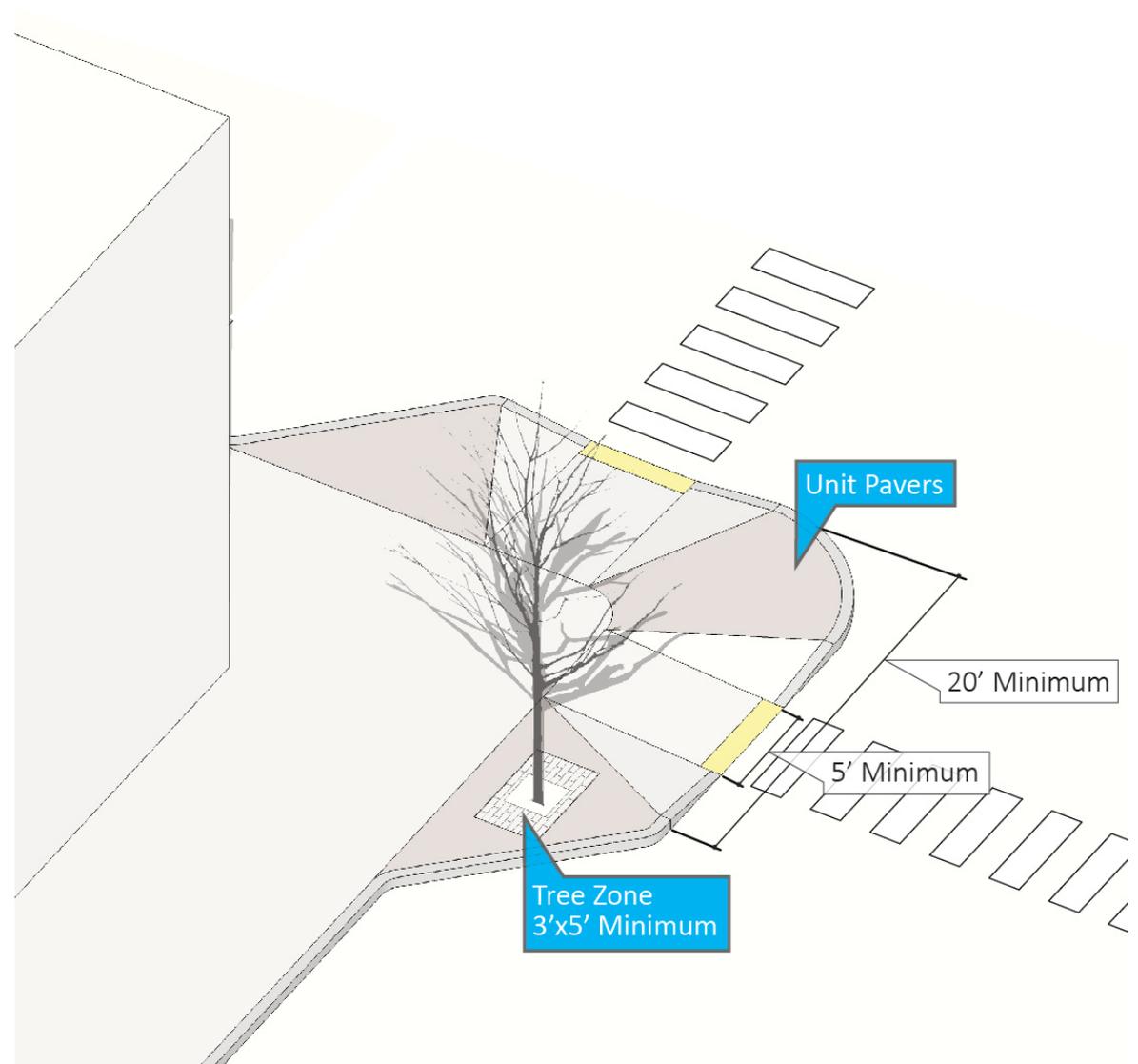
Proposed Public Realm Improvements





Sidewalk Grove with bus stop

The additional space provided by Sidewalk Groves also allows for planting street trees in a grove or cluster. A tree that is small in scale is better suited to this type of planting, though lower branches may need to be pruned to ensure unobstructed pedestrian circulation. Recommended species include Amur Maple, European Hornbeam, and Japanese Lilac.



Sidewalk Grove with street trees



*Cushing Street Green Alley*

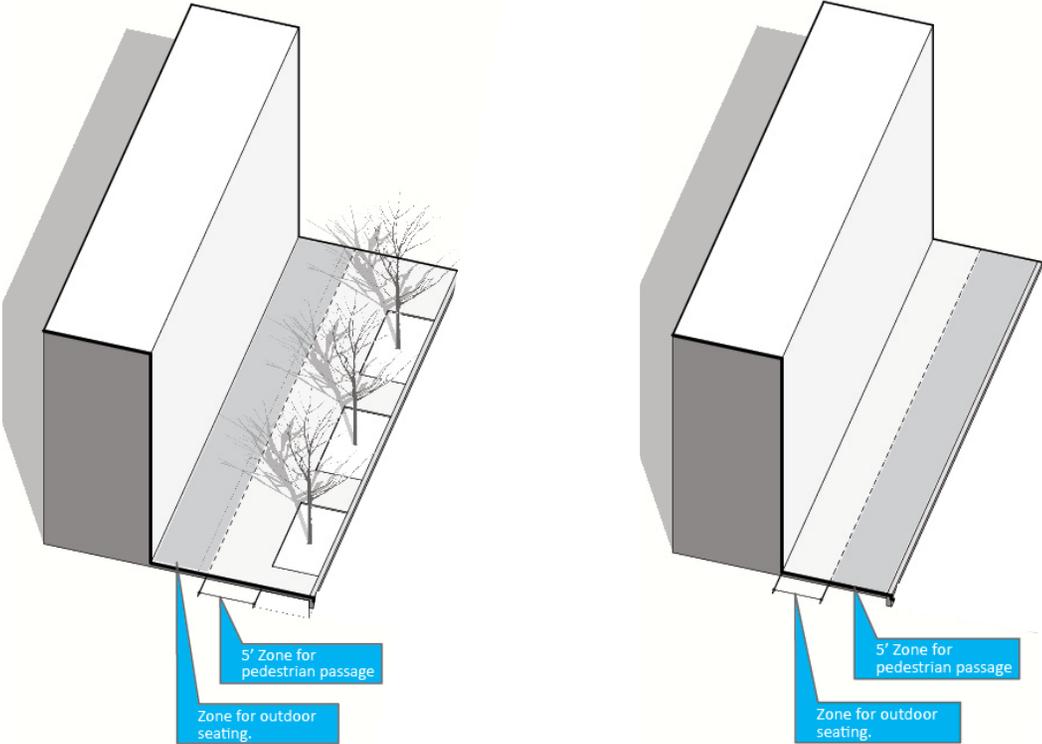


*Fones Alley Green Alley*

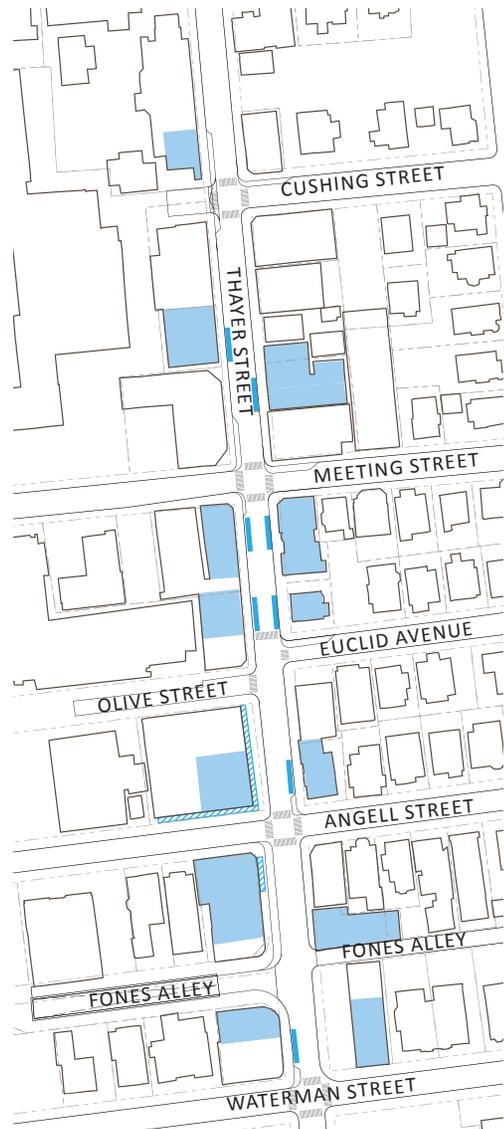
### OUTDOOR DINING

Outdoor dining is recommended to be limited to areas of the sidewalk where a minimum of five feet of clear travel way can be found between outdoor dining elements and obstacles on the sidewalk. This requirement, in combination with vigorous enforcement, would ensure that outdoor dining does not diminish the public right-of-way and crowd sidewalks.

Where existing restaurants cannot provide outdoor dining in the available space, it is recommended that one or two on-street parking spaces in front of the restaurant be converted into seasonal, outdoor dining patios to keep the sidewalk clear of tables. The patios should be set above the ground—level with the sidewalk—to allow drainage beneath and provide protection from passing vehicles with perimeter barriers. Patios should be no wider than the existing parking spaces, and should align with the sidewalks.

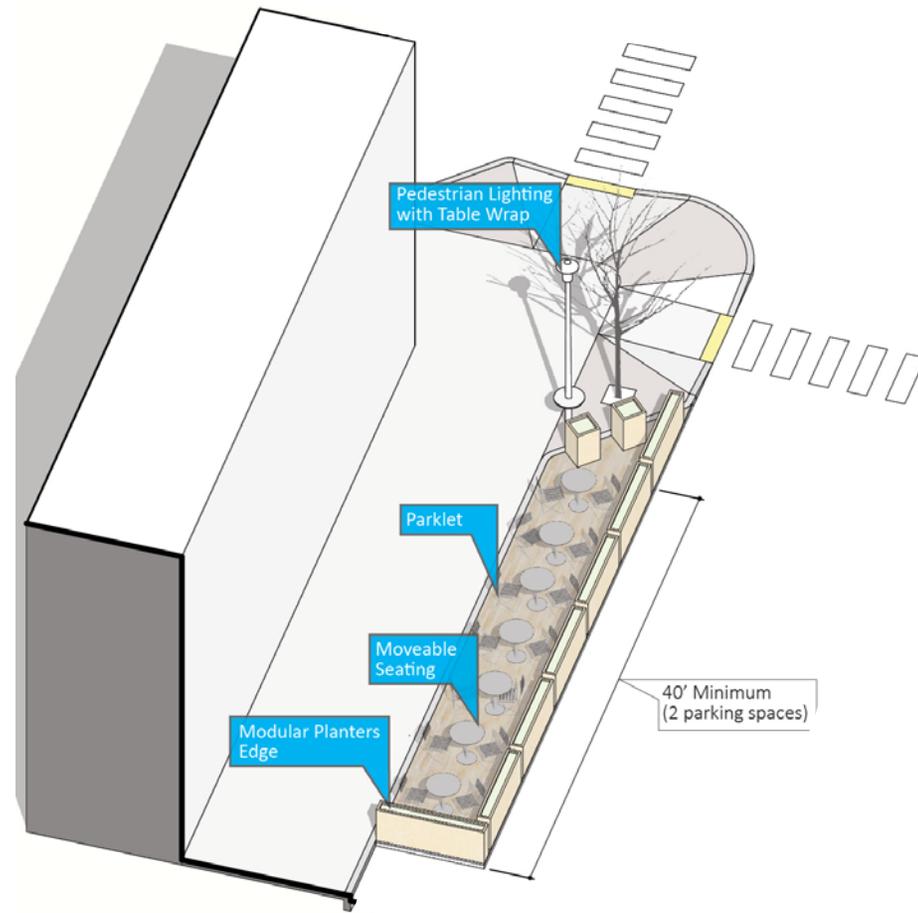


*Pedestrian Zones with Outdoor Seating*



- Existing Restaurant
- Proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Location
- Proposed Outdoor Dining Location

Outdoor Dining Amenity Locations



Proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet

## PUBLIC AMENITIES

### *Lighting*

Street and pedestrian lighting are recommended to augment existing street lighting across the District, define prominent streets, such as Thayer and Hope Streets, and identify primary pedestrian connections. Pedestrian lighting should be consistent and in keeping with the eclectic character of the District, such as a contemporary lantern fixture that offers adequate cut-off for night-sky protection. Lights should be located away from the curb as a way of marking the edge between the clear path of travel and the furniture/amenity zones. Pole heights should complement the pedestrian environment at a height of 12 feet, for an overall pole and fixture height of approximately 14 feet. Streets should be lit with an efficient, simple and contemporary light fixture that rises above street trees at a height of approximately 25 feet, placed 18 inches from the back of curb.

### *Bicycle Parking*

Bicycle parking racks should be located within 25 feet of every business entrance along the Thayer Street corridor. Racks should typically be placed parallel to the curb to occupy the minimum amount of sidewalk space, and a minimum of 24 inches from the face of curb. Standard bike racks, such as a loop and post rack, are affordable, well designed and easily sited; however, opportunities for artistic bicycle racks should be explored when funding becomes available. Similar to the film reel bike racks outside of the Cable Car Cinema on South Main Street, the District could also have a distinctive set of specialty bike racks to help enliven the street.

### *Seating*

Seating is a critically important pedestrian amenity to support the success of mixed-use corridors. Street furniture should be contemporary, affordable and durable and create visual continuity throughout the District. Benches can be placed individually, or in groupings, where space allows. Groupings should be configured parallel to the curb, perpendicular to curb, facing each other, or at a 90 degree angle to foster full flexibility of use. Benches should be equipped with a middle arm rest to discourage vagrancy. Chair versions of benches should also be considered to offer another type of seating option and arrangement.



*Uniform trash receptacles*



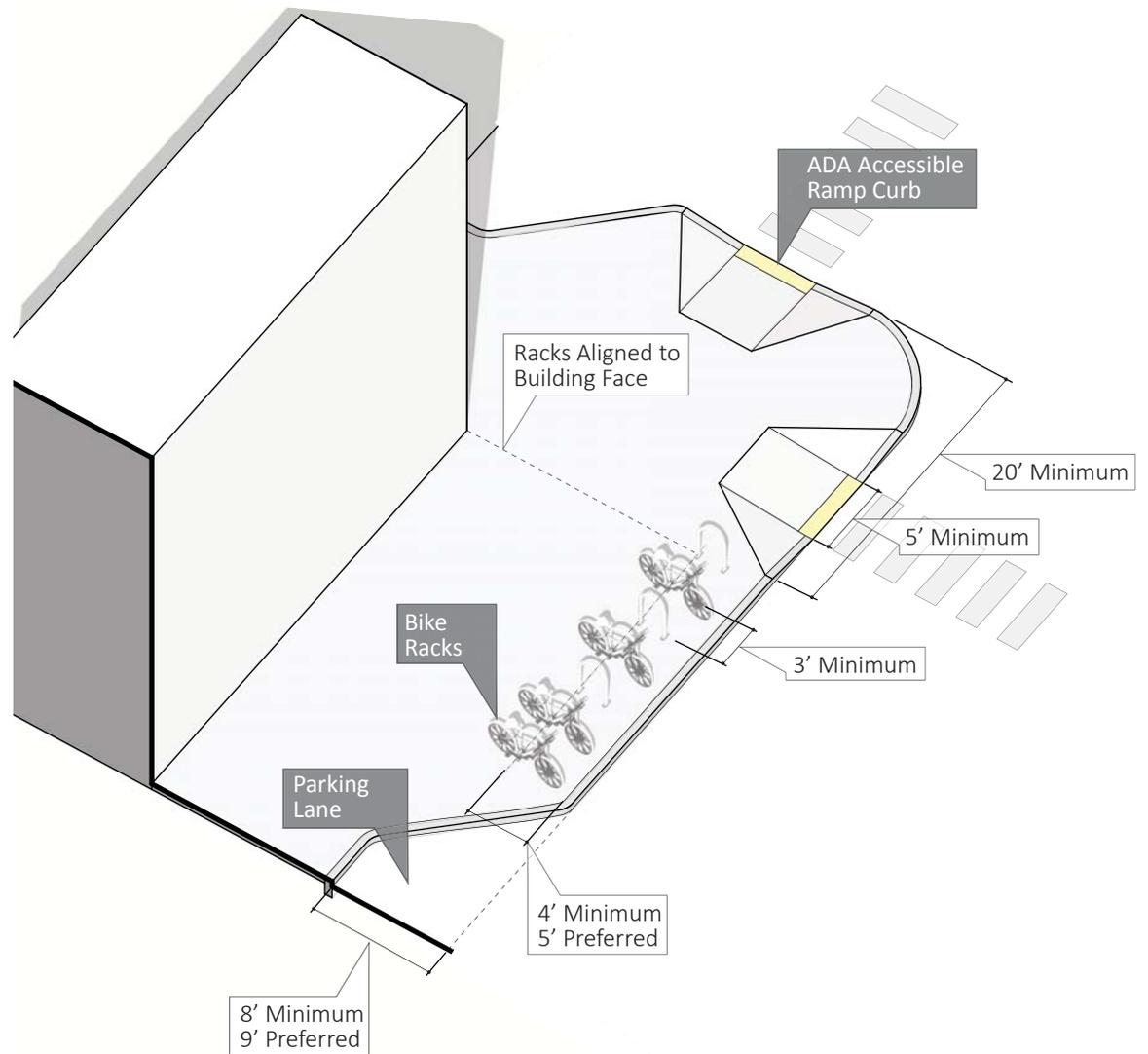
*Standard 'loop and post' bike rack*



Contemporary bench



Curb extension with bike parking



Sidewalk Grove with bike racks





## 6 IMPLEMENTATION

Given the robust and aggressive implementation strategies identified in this document, planning staff and the Stakeholder Committee understand that strong leadership, active engagement and persistence will be critical to ensuring that the recommendations in this study are implemented. The Thayer Street Planning Study Stakeholder Committee, equipped with specific responsibilities to facilitate implementation, will remain in place, and continue to leverage their larger constituencies to accomplish these objectives. The Executive Director of the Thayer Street District Management Authority, with support from members, will oversee operations of and improvements to the District, acting as the day-to-day community and government liaison and advocate. The City will continue its engagement in the process as member of the Thayer Street District Management Authority, neighborhood resource, regulatory administrator, interdepartmental coordinator, and champion of the study. Most importantly, the support, enthusiasm and engagement of the surrounding residential, business and institutional communities in the implementation process will be essential to the future success of the District.

<b>\$</b>	<i>\$0-\$10,000</i>
<b>\$\$</b>	<i>\$10,000-\$50,000</i>
<b>\$\$\$</b>	<i>\$50,000-\$100,000</i>
<b>\$\$\$\$</b>	<i>\$100,000+</i>
<b>Brown</b>	<i>Brown University</i>
<b>CHNA</b>	<i>College Hill Neighborhood Association</i>
<b>DPD</b>	<i>Department of Planning &amp; Development</i>
<b>DPW</b>	<i>Department of Public Works</i>
<b>PPD</b>	<i>Providence Police Department</i>
<b>PPS</b>	<i>Providence Preservation Society</i>
<b>RIPTA</b>	<i>Rhode Island Public Transit Authority</i>
<b>TSDMA</b>	<i>Thayer Street District Management Authority</i>

TERM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	COST ESTIMATE
<i>Public Realm Enhancements</i>			
Year 1	Install parklet in front of the Brown Bookstore.	TSDMA, DPD, DPW	Funded
	Install ADA-compliant ramps at all intersections along Thayer Street.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Re-stripe all crosswalks with standard, high-visibility markings.	DPD, DPW	Funded
Year 2	Create the Fones Alley Green Alley by providing additional pedestrian space for events and activities, incorporating stormwater management treatments, and consolidating and screening trash storage locations. Approach the owner of 221 Thayer Street about allowing an artistic installation (mural) on the north side of the building, facing Fones Alley. Contract with an artist to develop and install.	TSDMA, Property Owner	\$\$\$\$
	Determine, with the City Forester, which trees in the District need to be replaced. Replace 1/3 of the trees in need of replacement during the following planting season. Continue replacing a third of the trees in need of replacement during each future planting season.	TSDMA, Parks Dept.	\$\$
	Select a family of contemporary, durable and budget-friendly street furniture (benches, trash cans, tables, lighting) to be installed, over time, in the District.	TSDMA	\$\$\$ (total)
	Begin installing benches, parallel to the street curb, in areas where the sidewalk is less than 14'-wide.	TSDMA	\$\$
	Install one standard, inverted "U" or post-and-ring bike rack, within 25' of every building entrance along the sidewalks on the east and west sides of Thayer Street, from the south side of Bowen Street to the north side of Meeting Street. Alternate locations per either side of each block.	TSDMA, Adjacent Property Owners	\$ (per rack)
	Extend the curb on the west side of Thayer Street, between Fones Alley and Angell Street, 8' into the existing, on-street parking lane, for the length of the block (~140'). Incorporate benches, trees, public art, a bus shelter and outdoor dining within the extended sidewalk space. Extend the curb on the west side of Thayer Street, north of its intersection with Angell Street, 8' west into the on-street parking lane, and 25' north. Plant a tree in the extended area.	TSDMA, DPW, Adjacent Property Owners	\$\$\$\$
	Enhance the side path connection from The Walk to the transit tunnel entrance with pedestrian lighting and pavement treatments.	RIPTA, Brown	\$\$
	Create the Cushing Court Green Alley by providing additional pedestrian space for events and activities, incorporating stormwater management treatments, and consolidating and screening trash storage locations.	Brown, TSDMA	\$\$\$\$
Extend the curb on the west side of Thayer Street, north of its intersection with Cushing Street, 8' east into the on-street parking lane, and 65' north. Relocate the existing bus stop at Meeting Street to this new area. Provide a transit shelter, street trees and benches in the curb extension. Extend the curb on the west side of Thayer Street, south of its intersection with Cushing Street, 8' east into the on-street parking lane, and 25' south. Plant a street tree in the extended area. Extend the curb on the north side of Cushing Street, east of its intersection with Thayer Street, 8' south into the on-street parking lane, and 65' east. Provide street trees and benches in the extended area.	TSDMA, DPW, Adjacent Property Owners	\$\$\$\$	

TERM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	COST ESTIMATE
Year 2	Extend the curb on the north side of Meeting Street, east of its intersection with Thayer Street, 8' south into the on-street parking lane, and 65' east. Provide street trees and benches in the extended area. Extend the curb on the west side of Thayer Street, north of its intersection with Meeting Street, 8' east into the on-street parking lane, and 65' north. Provide street trees and benches in the extended area. Extend the curb on the west side of Thayer Street, south of its intersection with Meeting Street, 8' east into the on-street parking lane, and 25' south. Plant a tree in the extended area. Extend the curb on the north side of Euclid Street, east of its intersection with Thayer Street, 8' south into the on-street parking lane, and 65' east. Provide street trees and benches in the extended area.	TSDMA, DPW, Adjacent Property Owners	\$\$\$\$
	Create the Olive Street Green Alley by providing additional pedestrian space for events and activities, incorporating stormwater management treatments, and consolidating and screening trash storage locations.	Brown, TSDMA	\$\$\$\$
	Initiate an outdoor dining licensing program that allows limited, seasonal, outdoor dining courts within on-street parking spaces, adjacent to sponsoring retailers.	DPD, DPW, TSDMA	No Cost
Years 3+	Begin discussions with utility companies regarding burying overhead utility lines along Thayer Street.	TSDMA, DPW, Property Owners	\$\$\$\$+
<i>Transportation/Parking/Loading</i>			
Year 1	Install "Sharrows" on Thayer Street to indicate that drivers must share the road with bicyclists.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Stripe 9' on-street parking lanes to visually reduce the width of the roadway, calm traffic and protect cyclists from door swings.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Replace broken storm grates with road repaving.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Install Wrong-Way signs for bicycles on Thayer Street at its intersections with Angell, Waterman and Meeting, to reinforce one-way travel.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Install bicycle route wayfinding signage on Thayer Street to direct bicyclists to Brook and Hope Streets for northbound travel.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Install bicycle route wayfinding signage on Thayer and Brook Streets that directs cyclists to the Olney Street and Lloyd Avenue bicycle routes.	DPD, DPW	Funded
	Install new signage that reduces the hours of the loading zone on the south side of Cushing Street, east of Thayer Street, to 7am - 3pm, and 10pm - 1am; extends the hours of the loading zone on the east and west sides of Thayer Street, south of Cushing Street, to 7am - 10am; reduces the hours of the loading zone on the north side of Meeting Street, west of Thayer Street, to 7am - 10am; and reduces the hours of the loading zone on the east side of Thayer Street, south of Meeting Street, to 7am - 10am.	DPD, DPW	No Cost
	Identify and coordinate the loading zone needs of new and prospective businesses.	TSDMA	No Cost
Remove outdated and redundant street signage within the District, subsequent to the repaving of Thayer Street. Install new signage to reflect the recommended parking regulations.	DPD, DPW	Funded	

TERM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	COST ESTIMATE
Year 1	Adjust traffic signal timing so that pedestrians receive the 'Walk' signal automatically during a green phase, without having to activate the push-button.	DPD, DPW	No Cost
	Coordinate with RIPTA during their transit tunnel improvement process to create an enhanced transit hub at the transit tunnel on Thayer Street. Amenities provided should include lighting, bicycle parking, covered seating, signage, an expanded pavement area and a real-time travel kiosk.	DPD, DPW, RIPTA	Funded
	Install Lead Pedestrian Intervals at the intersections and Thayer and Waterman Streets and Thayer and Angell Streets to provide pedestrians with the 'Walk' indication before parallel and turning vehicles receive a green phase.	DPD, DPW	No Cost
	Install multi-space, on-street parking meter pay stations along Thayer Street and adjacent side streets to improve parking enforcement and encourage parking turnover. Set parking rates to discourage employee parking close to Thayer Street.	DPD, DPW	In Discussion
	Adjust on-street parking regulations for remote areas, east of Brook Street, for longer periods of time for employee parking.	DPD, DPW	In Discussion
	Monitor metered, on-street parking utilization and adjust pricing so that approximately one available parking space, per block, is maintained to provide parking spaces near destinations.	TSDMA, DPD, DPW	In Discussion
	Establish a Parking Benefit District for the Thayer Street District and dedicate a portion of meter revenue to physical improvements and programs recommended in this study. Engage the Stakeholder Committee in prioritizing and recommending necessary improvements. Reassess the agreement every two years to review effectiveness, pricing and boundary lines.	PRA, TSDMA, DPD, DPW, City Council	In Discussion
	Encourage daytime businesses with surface parking lots to lease unused parking areas for public parking during the evenings and on weekends.	Property owners, TSDMA	No Cost
	Continue to coordinate trash removal times among retail establishments within the District to deter interference with loading and delivery times.	TSDMA	No Cost
Year 2	Pursue funding for streetcar implementation and further improvements to the Fones Alley terminus.	DPD, RIPTA	No Cost
	Consider the need for an additional bus stop at the intersection of Thayer and Bowen Streets, subsequent to relocating the Meeting Street bus stop.	RIPTA	No Cost
	Evaluate the effectiveness of Transportation Demand Management measures among businesses in the District, and determine if the need exists for an employee parking lot and shuttle program.	TSDMA	No Cost
Years 3+	Evaluate the effectiveness of the new parking regulations, in conjunction with any new development that has occurred, and determine if the need exists for a parking structure. Coordinate potential demand among new and existing property owners to evaluate opportunities for sharing parking during different times of the day. Consider developing a fee-in-lieu of parking to pay for the structure, as the District continues to develop.	TSDMA, Brown, DPD	No Cost
<i>Regulatory Changes</i>			
Year 1	Compile all licensing rules, regulations and violations for new and prospective businesses. Create a policy that can be explained to current land and business owners, business management, potential developers and residents via the TSDMA.	CHNA, TSDMA, Board of Licenses	No Cost

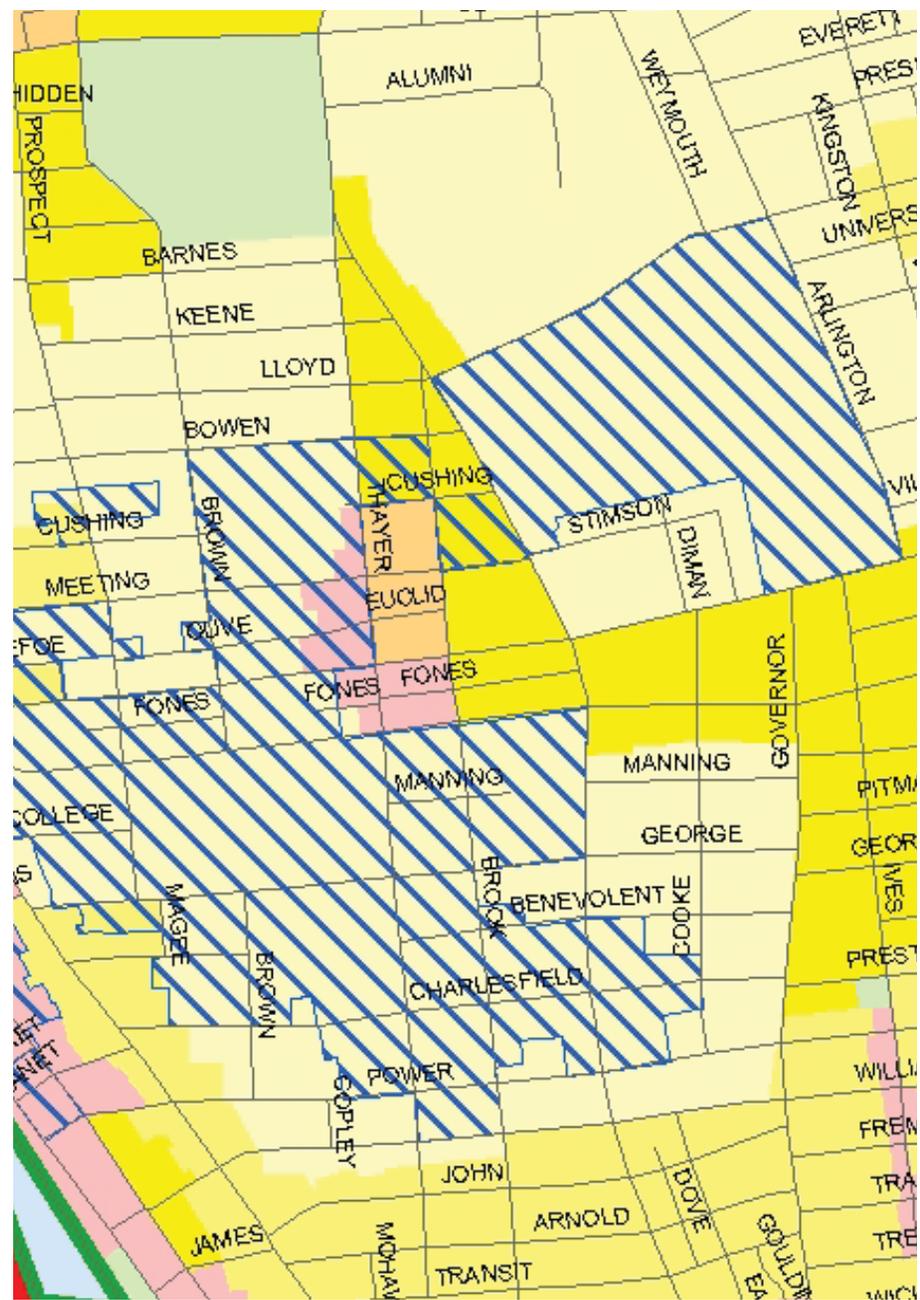
TERM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	COST ESTIMATE
Year 1	Establish a set of probationary requirements for new and prospective businesses in the District to ensure that they perform appropriately. Create a committee to determine and impose earlier closing times for new businesses for a period of one year, and evaluate their performance during that year before recommending extended operating hours to the Board of Licenses. Ensure that all prospective tenants are aware of these requirements and are willing to work with the community to promote a safe and vibrant environment, prior to seeking licenses.	CHNA, Board of Licenses, TSDMA, Brown, DPD	No Cost
	Outline and establish how license violations will apply to the District. Develop a set of recommended penalties for specific violations of license holders. Monitor the behavior of offending tenants, ensure that the PPD is aware of the violations, and confirm that the PPD is reporting all violations to the Licensing Police. Confirm with the PPD the exact violation and advocate for the appropriate penalty at the Board of Licenses hearing. Mandate that repeat violators assume the cost and responsibility of hiring private security to deter future disruptive and unsafe behavior associated with their businesses.	Board of Licenses, CHNA, Brown Police, PPD, TSDMA, DPD	No Cost
	Investigate and report potential health code violations by bars that are operating indoor smoking facilities, such as hookahs, without proper smoking licenses.	CHNA, Board of Licenses, PPD, TSDMA, RI Dept. of Health	No Cost
	Conduct a survey of historic building resources in the District to identify which buildings in the District should be preserved with redevelopment, and those that could be redeveloped.	PPS	\$
	Incorporate design recommendation and future land uses into the Citywide rezoning process.	DPD	No Cost
	Reduce parking requirements for residential and commercial development and create a credit program for shared parking through Citywide rezoning effort.	DPD	No Cost
	Incorporate the following recommendations for trash storage and removal into the Citywide rezoning effort: require all off-street trash storage areas to be enclosed with screens; prohibit trash access for new developments from Thayer and Brook Streets when side streets are available; require trash removal from the rear of properties when alleyway access is available; require all new development to be serviced from the front of the property, and to store trash within an enclosed, internal trash room or an external, concealed side setback, when alleyway is not available.	DPD	No Cost
	Encourage Brown University to develop Institutionally-Zoned properties within the District with community-serving, ground floor, retail uses.	DPD, Brown	No Cost
	Encourage Brown University and adjacent property owners to coordinate real estate development initiatives that attract a mix of uses, supported by this study, that help diversify retail offerings in the District.	Property Owners, Brown, TSDMA, DPD	\$
Incorporate robust Transportation Demand Management requirements into base zoning regulations for new development in the District through the Citywide rezoning effort. Revise the TDM requirements for Institutional Master Plans to include provisions for multi-modal access.	DPD	No Cost	

TERM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	COST ESTIMATE
<i>Public Safety</i>			
Year 1	Encourage all business owners along Thayer Street to keep their outside lights on until 2:00 am for additional security.	TSDMA	\$
	Expand hours of PPD foot patrols to occur from 7pm to 3am.	PPD, TSDMA	\$
	Extend days of PPD foot patrols to occur Thursday through Sunday.	PPD, TSDMA	\$
	Assign two of the six foot patrols for the District to bike patrols.	PPD, TSDMA	\$
	Encourage RISD to train and fund current campus security to assert police force.	RISD, PPD	\$
	Provide the TSDMA Ambassadors with two-way radio contact with PPD and Brown police.	TSDMA, PPD	\$
<i>Thayer Street District Management Authority</i>			
Year 1	Establish budgets for operations and capital expenditures.	TSDMA	\$
	Create a Strategic Plan to identify specific initiatives the TSDMA wishes to undertake, and benchmarks for achievement.	TSDMA	No Cost
	Coordinate with the Block-by-Block group utilized by the Downtown Improvement District, to determine how and when to establish the Ambassadors program, and subcontract them to implement the program. Work with area institutions to coordinate street cleaning and security efforts programs.	TSDMA	\$\$\$
	Develop a logo, brand and marketing campaign. Host an event to release the website, brand and logo, and to kick-off the marketing campaign.	TSDMA	\$\$
	Extend TSDMA membership to Gilbane and other residential property owners within the TSDMA boundaries who are not currently assessed.	TSDMA	No Cost
	Establish ex officio membership for property owners outside, but adjacent to, the TSDMA boundary, who would like to be involved in the TSDMA. Initially, membership should be extended to The Wheeler School and the College Hill Neighborhood Association.	TSDMA	No Cost
	Begin incrementally increasing the assessment fee, within the 5% allowed.	TSDMA	No Cost
	Initiate a term funding agreement with Brown University.	TSDMA, Brown	No Cost
	Identify areas of future growth and expansion of development outside the current TSDMA boundaries, and expand boundaries to incorporate these areas.	TSDMA	No Cost
	Year 2	When funding becomes available, consider hiring an intern or part-time social media and website manager.	TSDMA
Create a 5-year agreement for the Thayer Street District Parking Benefit District. The agreement will define the method for the appropriation of funds to the TSDMA, and grant final project approval to the Stakeholder Committee. Upon renewal of the plan, the boundaries of the PBD must be re-evaluated and an audit of expenditures provided.		TSDMA, DPD, DPW, City Council	No Cost
Develop a proposed budget for hiring and additional programming, using the Strategic Plan as a guide.		TSDMA	No Cost

TERM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	COST ESTIMATE
Year 2	Coordinate with DPW to manage the revised outdoor dining permit process and the new parking space dining program. Monitor observance of outdoor dining and signage regulations by retailers in the District and enforce regulations by reporting offenders to DPW.	TSDMA, DPW, DPD	No Cost

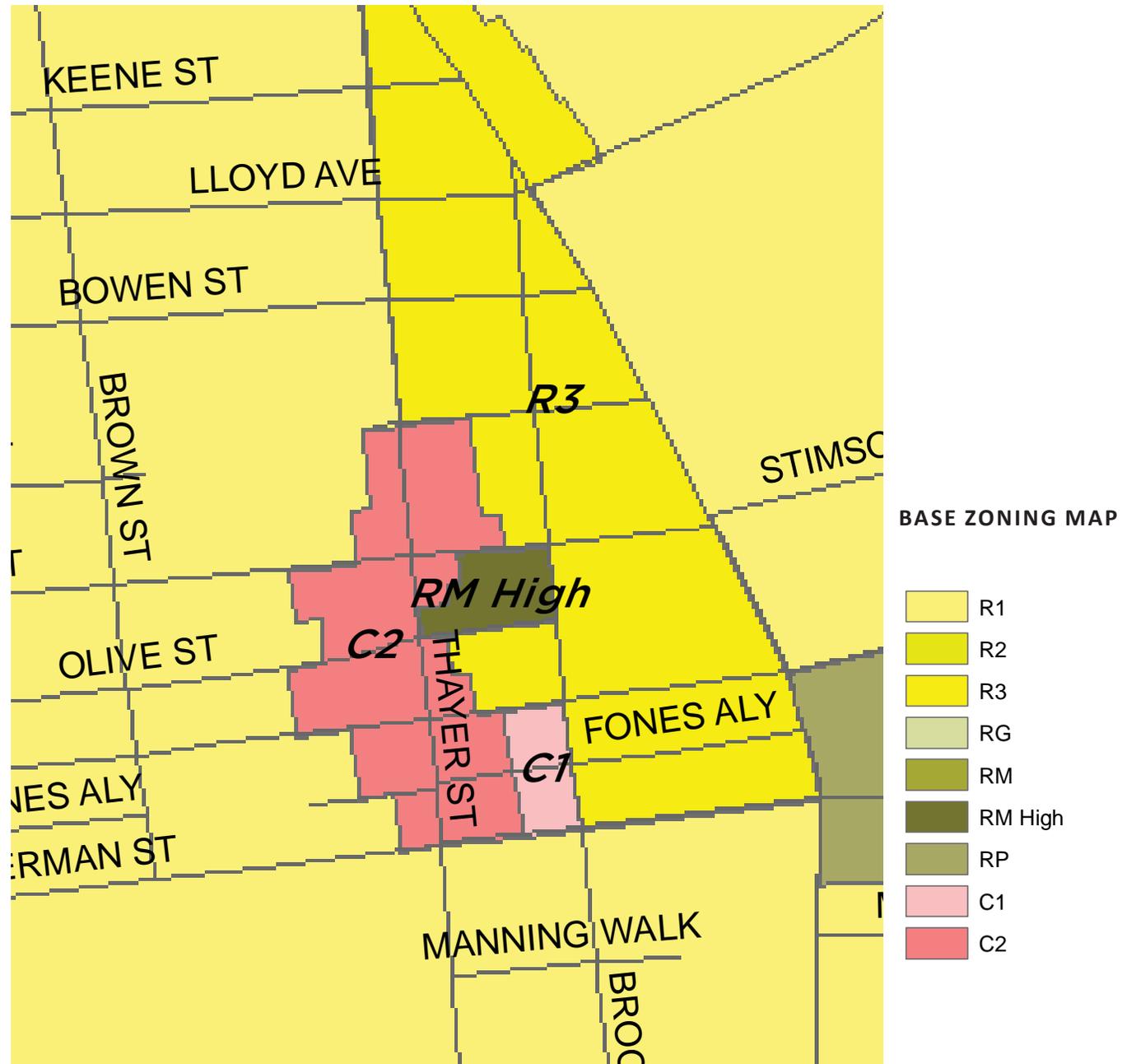


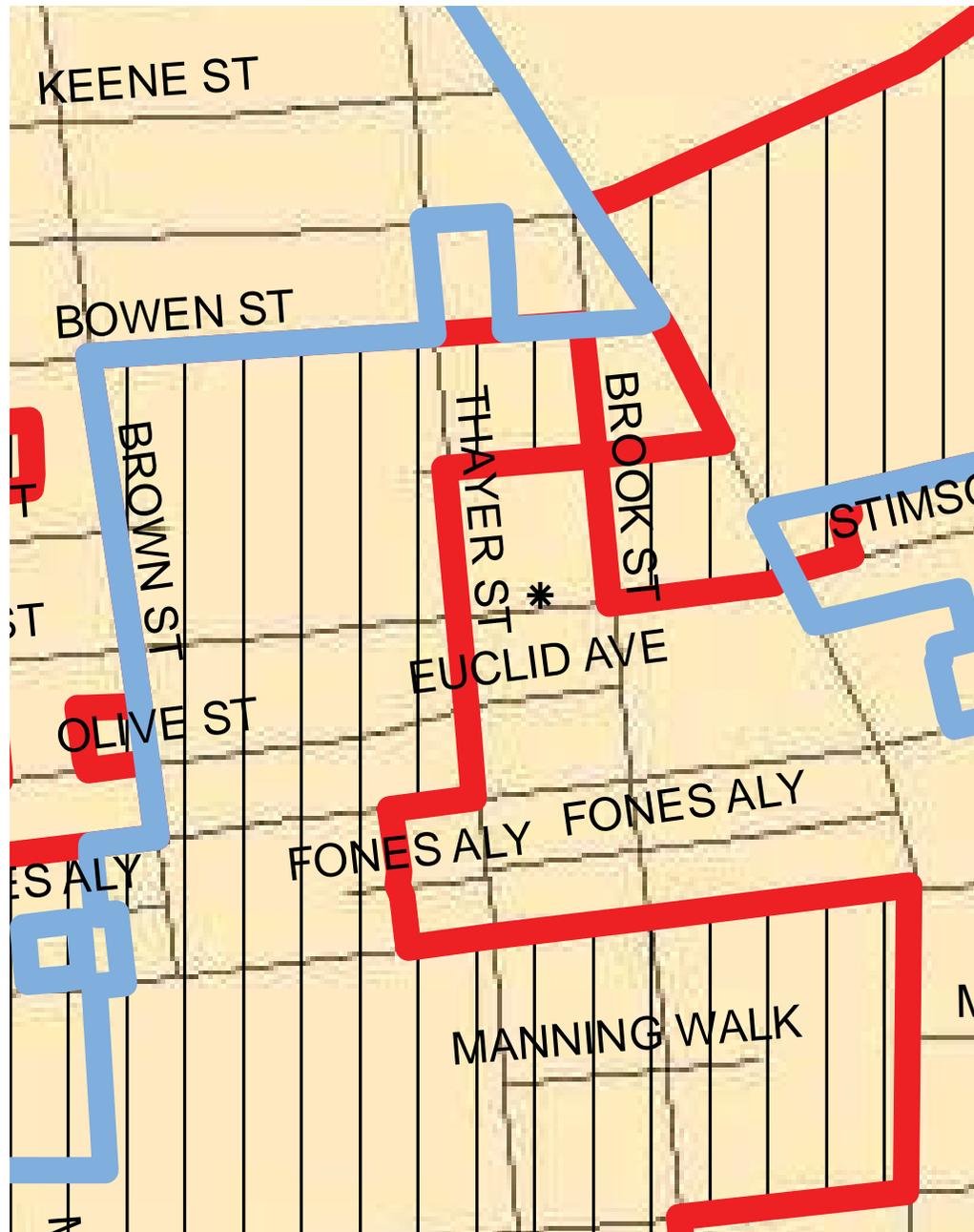
## APPENDIX A



OFFICIAL LAND USE MAP

-  Greenway
-  Institutional
-  Jobs District
-  Single Family Residential
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use
-  General Commercial/Mixed Use
-  Downtown/Mixed Use
-  Business/Mixed Use
-  Waterfront Mixed Use/Neighborhood
-  Waterfront/Port
-  Public Space/Open Space
-  Conservation





OVERLAY ZONING MAP

-  HD
-  I-1
-  I-2