An aerial architectural rendering of a city street scene. The image shows a grid of streets with various buildings, trees, and a car. The scene is rendered in a blue-tinted style. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy

**An Amendment to the Near East Area Plan (2005)**

**City of Columbus / Department of Development / Planning & Economic Development Divisions**

*working with*

**Near East Area Commission, Olde Towne East Neighborhood Association**

**and Olde Towne Quarter Business District**

# Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy

An Amendment to the Near East Area Plan (2005)

## City of Columbus

Department of Development

Adopted by Columbus City Council on September 20, 2010.



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## To the Reader

*It is with great pleasure that the Development Department presents to the community the Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy, which is an amendment to the Near East Area Plan, adopted in 2005.*

*Olde Towne has always been an important part of the Columbus community, but has struggled over the years given changes in the local and regional market.*

*With the reconstruction of I-70/I-71, the city working with the Ohio Department of Transportation engaged the community to come together to develop a joint vision for the economic revitalization of this important neighborhood business district.*

*We look forward to working with property owners, businesses, developers, and the residents as the Olde Towne Quarter reaches a new level in its growth as a vibrant and exciting business district.*

Sincerely,

Boyce Safford III  
Director

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# Introduction

The Olde Towne Quarter is a historic neighborhood business district on the cusp of positive change ... partly due to the opportunities resulting from the reconstruction of I 70-71. This economic development strategy seeks to build a policy foundation that will aid in the resurgence of this important district.

### What is this plan?

The Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy is a policy document, adopted by Columbus City Council, that establishes a vision for the continued development and redevelopment of this historic neighborhood business district. It is intended to facilitate public and private decisions regarding investment, development and business activity with the goal of ensuring a common vision.

### How Will We Know When We've Made Progress?

The Olde Towne Quarter will see additional new investment, new construction, expansion of existing buildings and more business activity. More residential options will be delivered by the private sector – typically market rate rental and owner-occupied multi-family housing. More retail and service businesses will open in the quarter. There will be more activity, residents and local workers walking to the district for lunch and dinner. Special events will be held that attract people from outside the Near East to visit the Olde Towne Quarter.

### What Does the Plan Do?

The plan is an amendment to the Near East Area Plan (adopted in 2005) and is intended to inform investment in the Olde Towne Quarter with the goal of facilitating such development/redevelopment, creating jobs, attracting services and goods to the benefit of area residents, and increasing property values.

It does serve as official city policy and should be used by property and business owners, and the public as decisions are made that affect the district.

### What Does the Plan Not Do?

The plan does not affect zoning patterns. It does not increase police activity nor does it impact code enforcement. Those are immediate priorities that should be addressed by working with local city liaisons and 311.



# History & Context

The Olde Towne Quarter has an interesting and deep history as a neighborhood commercial district serving the near east side for well over 100 years. Reconstruction of I 70-71 has triggered this study.

### Historic Development

Old Town East was a prominent city neighborhood between 1865 and 1890, where many Columbus families built significant homes (Lazarus, Kelly, Snowden, Kelton, Thurman, Bellows and Parsons). In fact the neighborhood was known as “Judge’s Row”. Both James Thurber and George Bellows grew up in the neighborhood.

Parsons Avenue was called East Public Lane in 1865 and all property to its east was still in agriculture. The Parsons Mansion stood at the end of a farm lane that would become Town Street (the existing jog at the intersection with Parsons Avenue was due to the Parsons Mansion, which was standing until 1946).

Parsons Avenue was officially named in 1872 and initially developed as a residential street. In 1876 a streetcar line was installed on Oak Street to extend such service beyond Downtown and east of Parsons (a machine shop still exists on Oak near Franklin Park Conservatory).

The E.T. Paul Livery Stable was built in 1885 in the building that currently houses the Cara Bar. Engine House #12 (the former Columbus Music Hall) was built in 1890 for use by horse-drawn steam pumpers. It housed the city’s arts and crafts center until 1978 when the Cultural Arts Center was established in the Downtown.

The oldest multi-story commercial building still standing in the corridor is the E. Holman Co. building located at the southwest corner of Parsons and Oak, built in 1886 as a pharmacy.

### Interstate Construction, Decline and Rejuvenation

The construction of I-71 split the neighborhood in half and separated Old Town East from the Downtown. Parsons Avenue had been a centrally-located business district, but was disconnected from the neighborhood to the west due to the interstate. With improved highway access serving the region and suburbanization, the Old Town East neighborhood and Parsons Avenue began to suffer.

But like many of Columbus’ older neighborhoods, the affordability attracted residents looking for decent living options, but also attracted others looking for historic properties to rehabilitate. Its proximity to Downtown employment and strong cultural facilities have attracted new residents.

Parsons Avenue, which initially suffered from the lack of investment in the neighborhood, began to mirror some of these newer trends. It has always been a location for restaurants, neighborhood bars, and other small businesses. With the proposed reconstruction of I 70-71 this economic development strategy was initiated to maximize opportunities related to this transportation project.

# Stakeholder Interviews

A number of key stakeholders were interviewed as background in order to gain insight into the issues and visions of those closely associated with the district. The following is a summary.

### Who did We Interview?

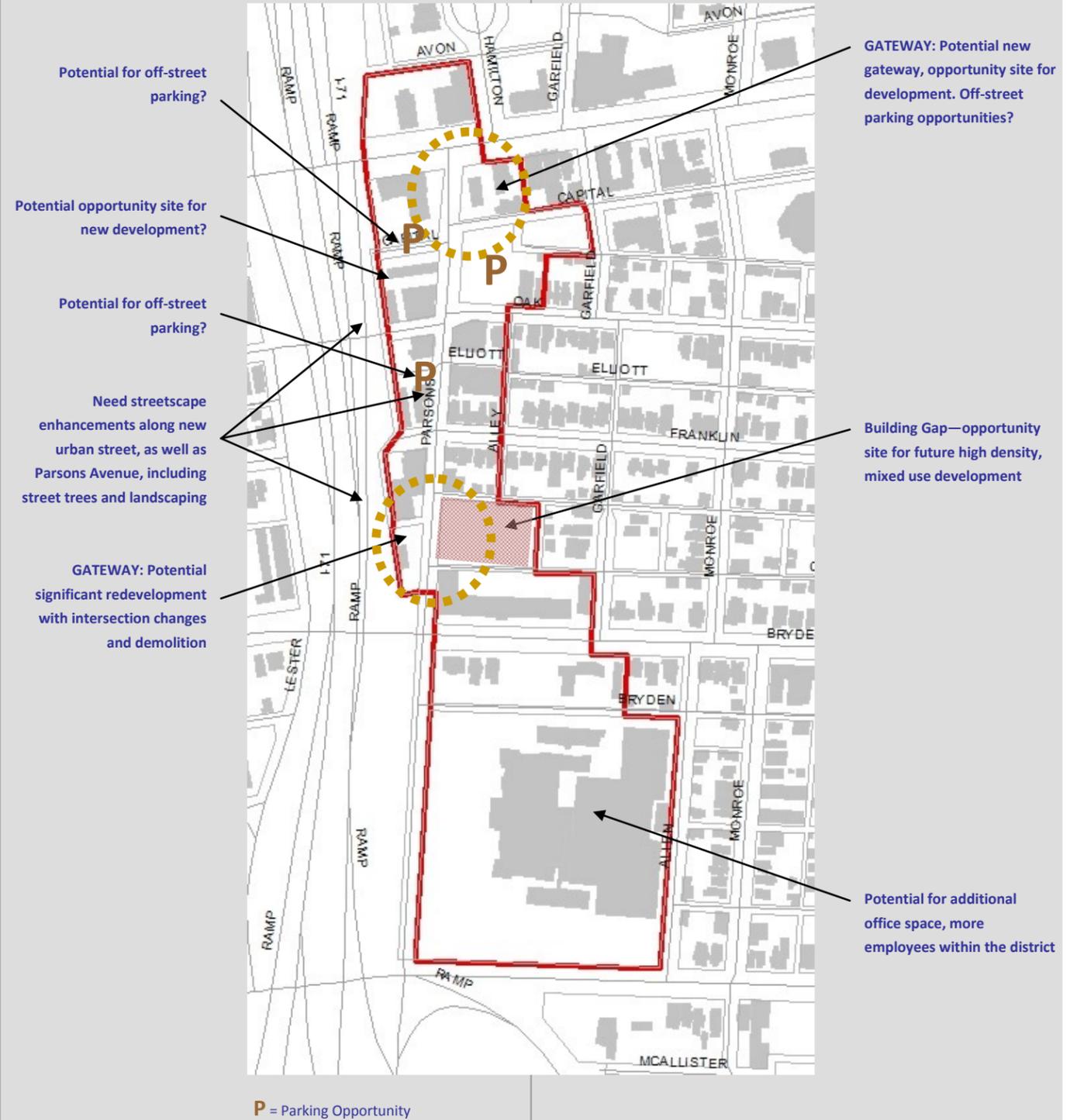
The interviews included several area stakeholders, including the owners of existing business and property, as well as businesses that are new to the district – Black Creek Bistro, Core Fitness Studio, and IndieCollective.

### What did We Learn?

The following summarizes the key findings from the interviews.

1. The assets of the district include its proximity to Downtown, nearby universities, King-Lincoln District, and the Franklin Park Conservatory. Lower/competitive rents are an asset. The district also benefits by not having a “corporate” feel found in other newer districts. Visibility and access from the proposed I-70/71 improvements could be helpful, unless they negatively impact the business community.
2. Aspects of the district that stakeholders would most like to see change include the gaps between buildings, property and streetscape maintenance, storefront improvements, enhanced landscaping and signage, and a rebranding of the district.
3. The issues currently facing the district include crime and safety, lack of available building space, residential rental prices that are too low, building maintenance and graffiti, and lack of investment in the area by some property owners.
4. Opportunities within the district include the arts, festivals to attract people, a “gallery hop” focused on food, new neighborhood-level retail and service businesses, clothing and fashion, relocation of the Health Department farmers market into the district and more lunch service to attract nearby workers.
5. In terms of a particular vision for the district, stakeholders noted such things as Chicago’s Hyde Park, a mix of mom and pop, pedestrian friendly businesses, artsy, a new version of the “Short North”, a hub of activity (restaurants, patios, offices).

6. Recent improvements observed in the district include a growing desirability for Olde Towne Quarter as a business location, higher quality businesses have moved into the district, housing rehabilitation, and general positive improvements.
7. When asked if there were any particular things needed in the district, stakeholders noted the need for a broader mix of businesses, more business services and restaurants/ coffee shops, streetscape and building improvements, higher density residential development, offices, and pedestrian friendly improvements.
8. In terms of employment opportunities, stakeholders felt there is a need for more opportunities for local residents. Some businesses employ nearby residents who enjoy the ability to walk to work.
9. Why Olde Towne? Among the reasons why stakeholders located to Olde Towne Quarter were: being a local resident, starting in business in the neighborhood, recently moved to Olde Towne East, found affordable office space on Parsons.
10. In terms of things that could impact doing business in Olde Towne, stakeholders noted that physical improvements would be helpful to retaining business and clients, and minimizing impacts from I-70/71 is important.



# Existing Conditions

The planning area benefits from a stable population, significant employment and commercial base, and historic districts that could serve as economic incentives.

## Planning Area

The planning area (see Figure 1) is located immediately to the east of downtown Columbus and includes both sides of Parsons Avenue from Broad Street on the north to East Main Street on the south (Olde Towne Quarter Business District). The area covers approximately 23 acres, including 59 parcels and 31 property owners.

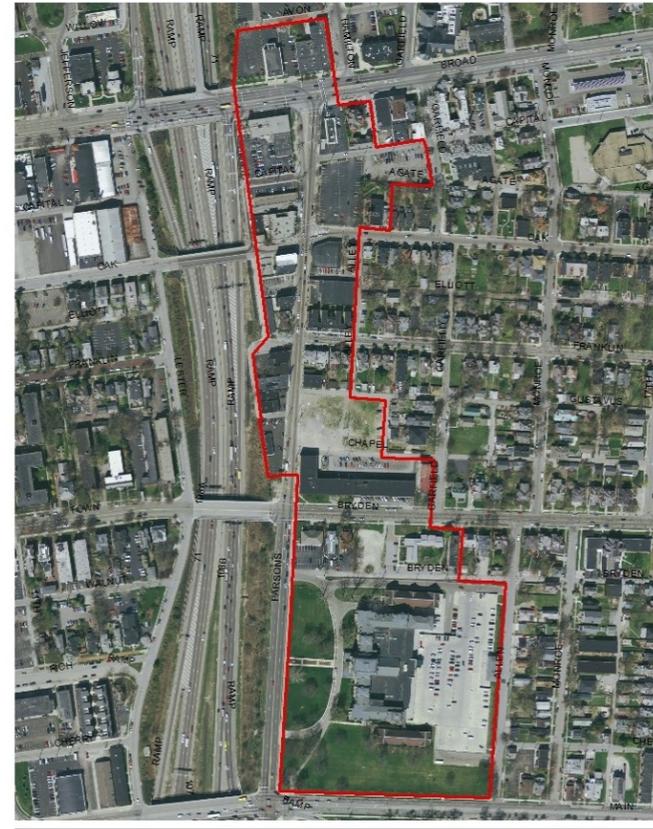
## Demographics

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the number of people and housing units in the planning area and within one-half mile of the planning area. Within the planning area, there are 210 residents and 167 housing units. Another 7,382 residents and 5,064 housing units are within one-half mile of the planning area (Year 2000 Census Data).

## Employment

According to Reference USA there are over 79 businesses within the planning area with 13 different employment categories employing over 800 workers. There are an additional 841 businesses located within a one-half mile radius of the planning area, with 15 different employment categories employing an additional 23,500 employees (Tables 1 and 2). Phone calls, emails, and some site visits were used to spot check and verify the data for the planning area itself, but these data should still be treated as general estimates.

(Note: Reference USA indicates that 149 public administration employees work in Columbus Public Health building at 240 Parsons Avenue. This number likely represents employees that had either worked in the building in the past or worked for organizations located at 240 Parsons, but with the employees at location(s) outside the planning area.)



**Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy Planning Area**  
 City of Columbus Department of Development Planning Division  
 October 2009

Figure 1

Table 1. Number of Businesses and Employees within Planning Area

Sector	Number of Businesses	Percentage	Employees	Percentage
Professional Scientific and Technical	9	11.4%	23	3.0%
Retail	6	7.6%	87	11.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	28	35.4%	483	58.0%
Other Services	10	12.7%	35	4.0%
Accommodation and Food Service	6	7.6%	88	11.0%
Wholesale Trade	1	1.3%	15	2.0%
Finance and Insurance	6	7.6%	25	3.0%
Construction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	1	1.3%	8	1.0%
Miscellaneous	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Real Estate	1	1.3%	15	2.0%
Information	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4	5.1%	10	1.0%
Public Administration	4	8.9%	40*	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>827*</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2. Number of Businesses and Employees Located within One-Half Mile

Sector	Businesses	Percentage	Employees	Percentage
Professional Scientific and Technical	158	18.8%	945	4.0%
Retail	31	3.7%	238	1.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	261	31.0%	9862	41.6%
Other Services	75	8.9%	1141	4.8%
Accommodation and Food Service	25	3.0%	410	1.7%
Wholesale Trade	8	1.0%	52	0.2%
Finance and Insurance	87	10.3%	4318	18.2%
Construction	7	0.8%	23	0.1%
Manufacturing	11	1.3%	85	0.4%
Miscellaneous	6	0.7%	57	0.2%
Real Estate	29	3.4%	351	1.5%
Information	27	3.2%	468	2.0%
Education	87	10.3%	4318	18.2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	13	1.5%	58	0.2%
Public Administration	16	1.9%	1399	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>23719.5</b>	<b>100%</b>

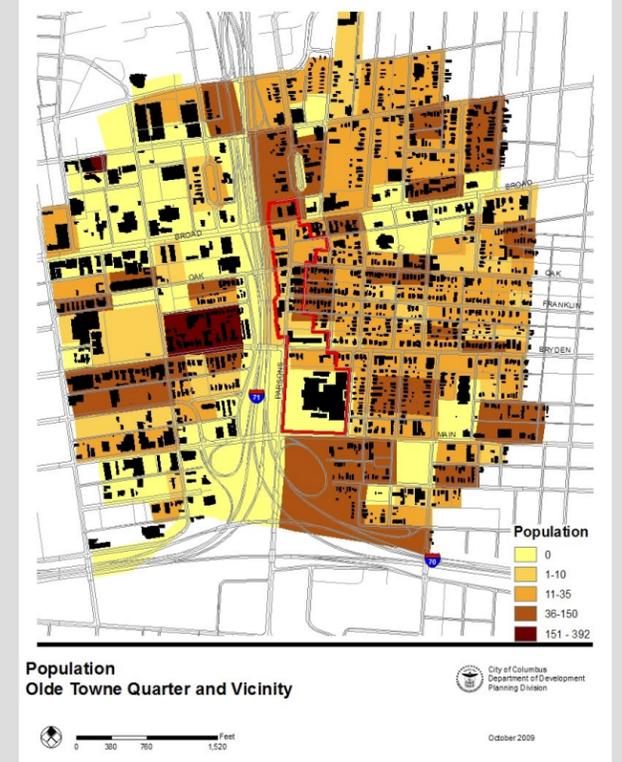


Figure 2

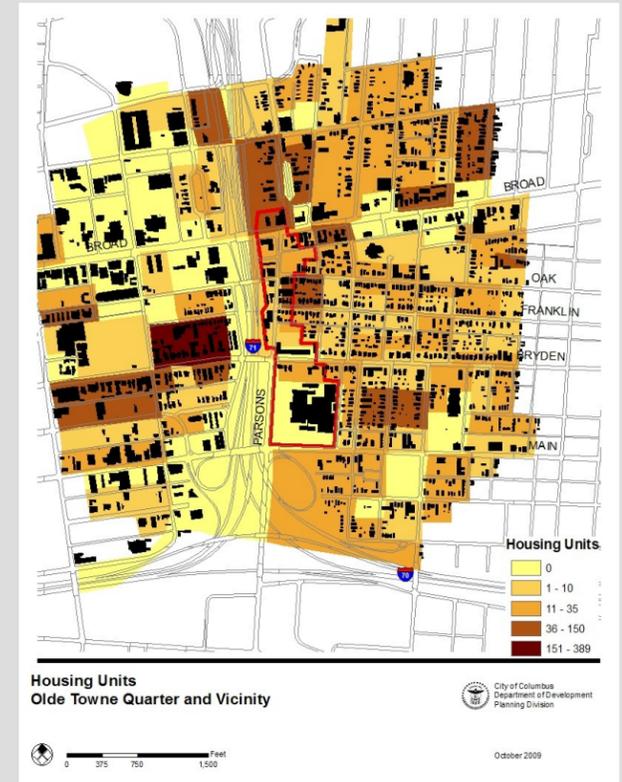


Figure 3

**Existing Land Use**

Existing land use in the planning area is shown in Figure 4 and Table 3. Nearly half of the area is occupied by one institutional use, the Columbus Public Health building. Office uses are the next highest percentage of land use, with the remaining area comprised of neighborhood commercial, mixed use, residential uses, parking, and vacant property. All figures are approximate and were compiled based on data from the Franklin County Auditor’s Office.

**Commercial Uses:** The planning area contains 16 commercial buildings, with a total of 132,579ft<sup>2</sup>. Of the total square footage, 39,865ft<sup>2</sup> exist as store fronts, 55,286ft<sup>2</sup> as offices, 11,718ft<sup>2</sup> as dwellings converted to offices, with the remaining 20,860ft<sup>2</sup> as medical offices. A “windshield” survey utilizing Google Streetview (2007 image) indicated that of the total square footage, 8% or 11,131ft<sup>2</sup> was then vacant (see Table 4 and Charts 1 and 2). The vacancies were primarily in empty or unused store frontage. The current vacancy rate for the city of Columbus (Fall, 2009) is approximately 9.8 percent for office and 18.2 percent for retail. Half of the existing commercial structures within the planning area are mixed use buildings. These buildings contain the majority of store frontage, and are concentrated on Parsons Avenue.

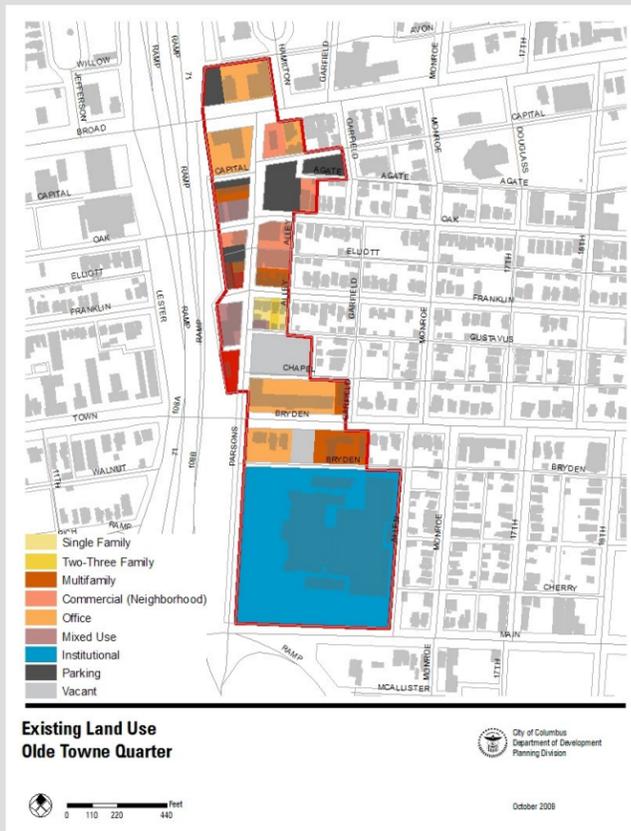
**Existing Zoning**

Figure 5 illustrates the existing zoning for the planning area. Classifications include residential (R3, ARLD, and AR1), commercial (CPD), mixed use (ARO), and parking (P). The ARLD and AR1 classifications allow for the development of apartments and townhouses. The R3 district allows for single family dwelling units. The ARO district allows for both multi-family dwelling units and a number of office uses. The ARLD, AR1, R3, and ARO districts all allow for churches and a number of public uses. The parking district allow for private parking for local businesses. CPD districts are site specific zonings and allow for a variety of commercial uses and associated standards that are described in the particular CPD zoning.

The Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO) is in place on Parsons Avenue (see Figure 5) from Capital Street to Main Street, except for the southeast corner of Bryden and Parsons. The UCO is a zoning classification that does not change the base zoning in place on a property, but requires compliance with a number of additional design standards. The most prominent requirement is that any new buildings be built within ten feet of the sidewalk, placing parking behind the structure. The UCO also allows for automatic parking reductions for certain uses (retail, in particular) to reflect and encourage the pedestrian nature of the area.

**Table 3. Existing Land Use**

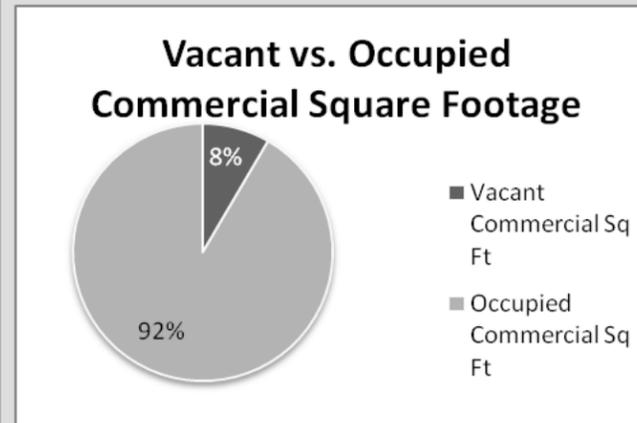
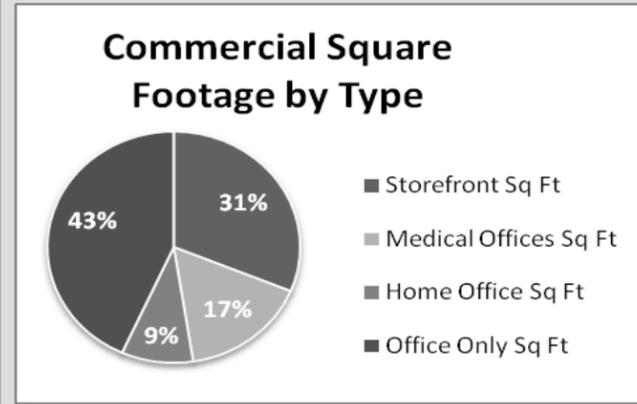
Existing Land Use	Acres	Percentage
Commercial (Neighborhood)	1.8	8
Institutional	11.0	49
Mixed Use	0.8	4
Multifamily	1.5	7
Office	4.0	18
Single Family	0.3	1
Two-Three Family	0.1	1
Vacant	1.5	7
Parking	1.4	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 4**

**Table 4. Total Sq. Ft. of Commercial**

Category	Square Footage
Buildings	132,579 ft2
Occupied	121,448 ft2
Vacant	11,131 ft2
Storefront	39,865 ft2
Office Only	55,286 ft2
Converted Office Dwelling	11,718 ft2
Medical Office	20,860 ft2
Mixed Use	Yes=8 No=8



A key commercial parcel that has been on the market for several years—this site is located in the central portion of the study area.



**Figure 5**

**Historic Districts**

A portion of the planning area is located within a National Register Historic District and within the Columbus Bryden Road Historic District (Figure 6). It is adjacent to both the Columbus East Town and Hamilton Park historic districts. The Jones Mansion, located within the planning area, is a Columbus Historic Site. Several other buildings located within and near the planning area are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation, including districts that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Two of the implications of the National Register designation are that 1) projects which include federal funding trigger a review by the city's Historic Preservation Office, and 2) owners of properties listed on the National Register may be eligible for a 20 percent investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings. The State of Ohio also offers tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic buildings.



The Columbus Public Health building .

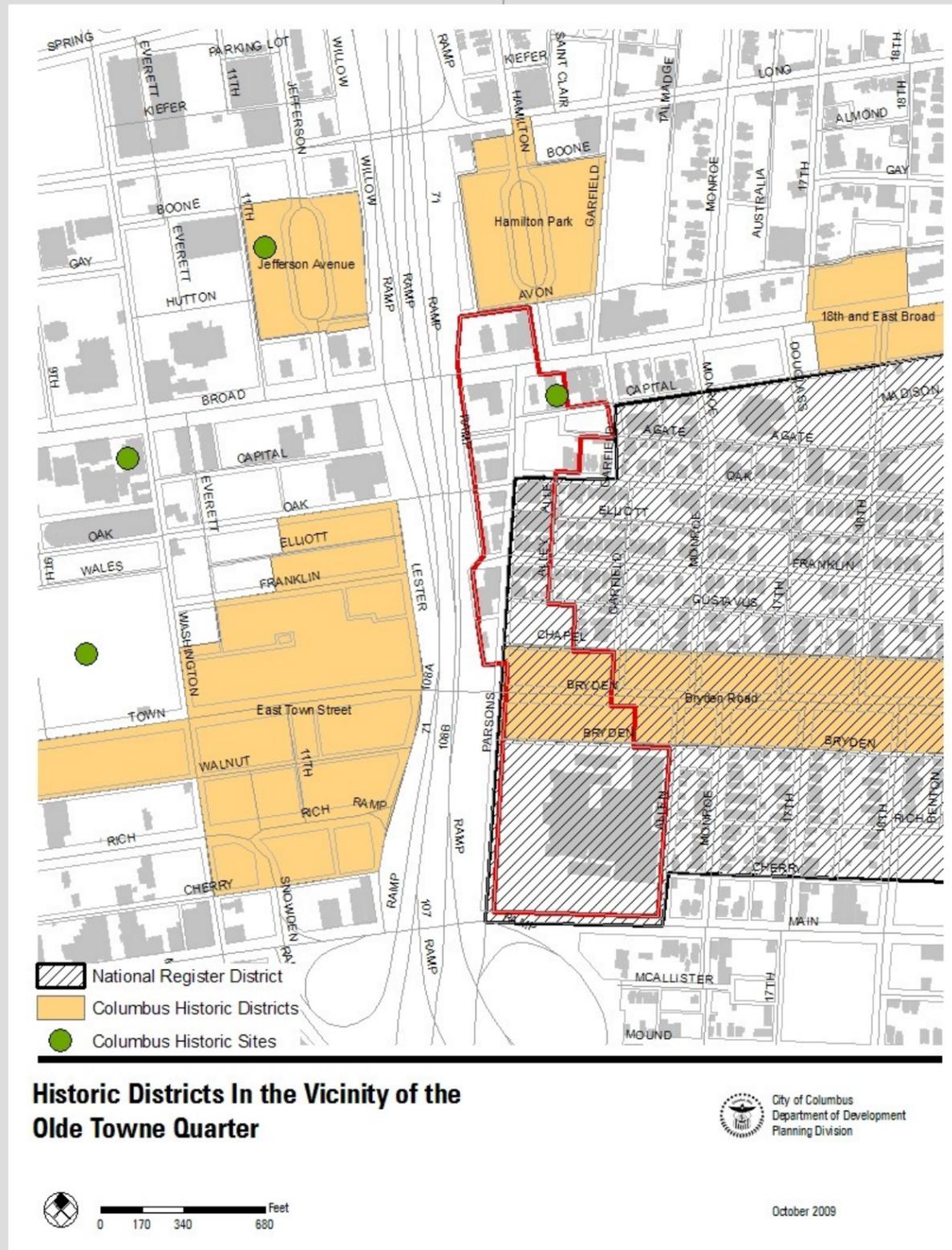
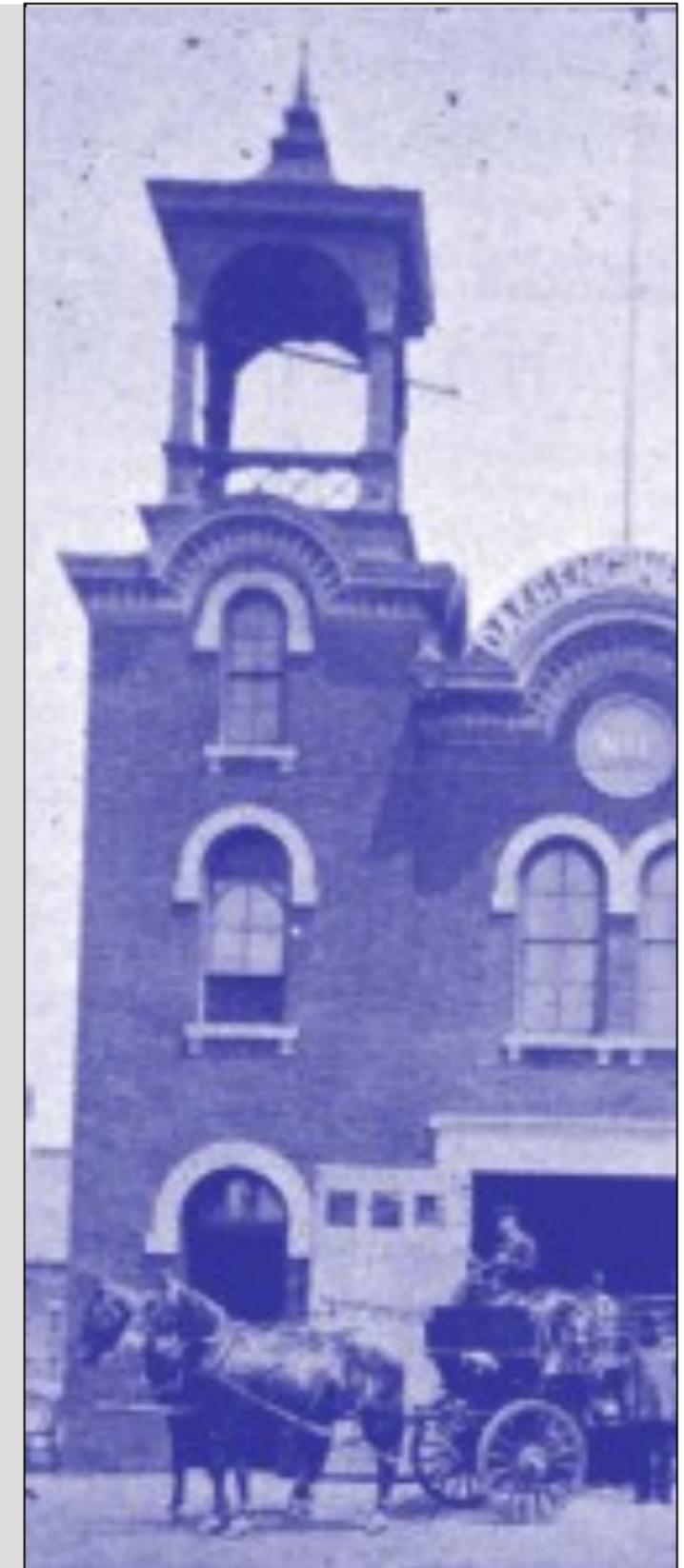


Figure 6



**Urban Form**

The Olde Towne Quarter is a historic commercial district with a traditional street grid pattern, mix of land uses, and a wide variety of building types. The buildings within the district include primarily commercial and mixed-use buildings, multifamily residential, and a few single family homes. The building architecture is varied, including typical turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century mixed use buildings with traditional storefronts and late 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial and office buildings without a noteworthy architectural style. Two of the most prominent buildings on Parsons Avenue are the half timber Tudor Style and Commercial Italianate mixed use buildings at the northwest and southwest corners of Oak and Parsons.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** This is a measure of commercial building intensity and one indicator of an area’s urban form. A selection of commercial and mixed used properties on and near Parsons Avenue have a FAR in the range of 1 to 1.7 (see Table 5). This range is indicative of a walkable, urban environment, as opposed to suburban environments, which have a lower typical FAR (.005 to .3 range).

**Residential Densities:** Residential densities for the planning area and an area within one-half mile of the planning area are given in Table 6. The averages are provided for both geographies, along with densities for selected sites. Average densities (dwelling units per acre) range from as low as three to as high as 54. This is indicative of an urban area and provides some context for future potential development in the planning area. One recent residential development in the general area is at a density of 36 dwelling units per acre (e.g. Rich Street Walk). Other residential development closer to the downtown core is upwards of 100 dwelling units per acre (e.g. Terraces at Grant).

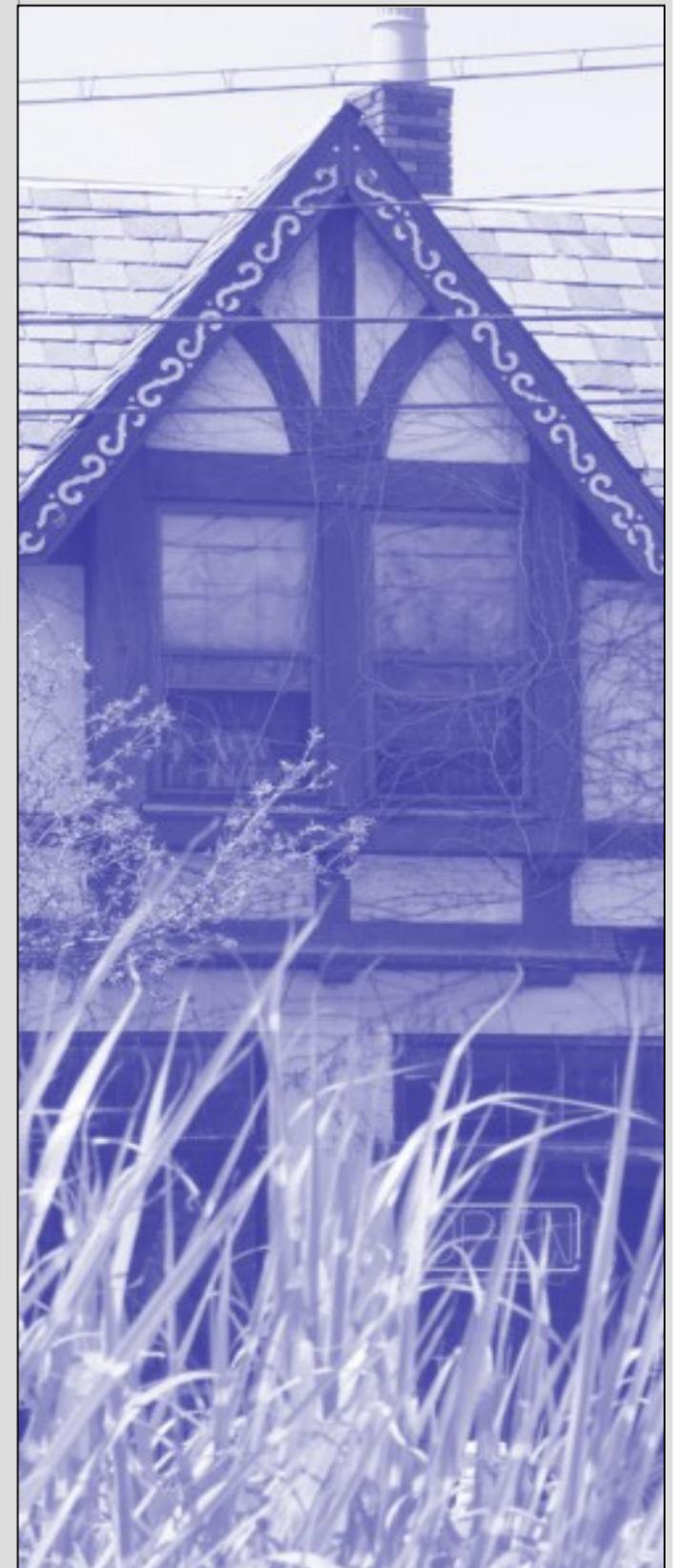
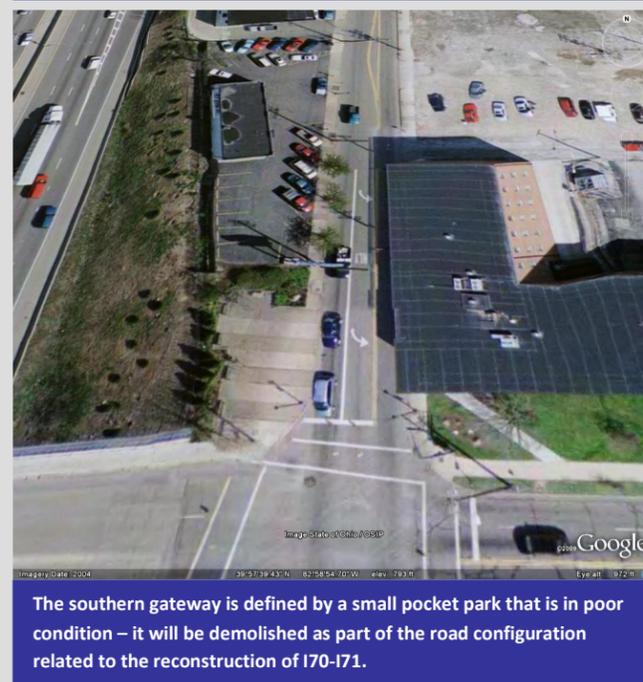
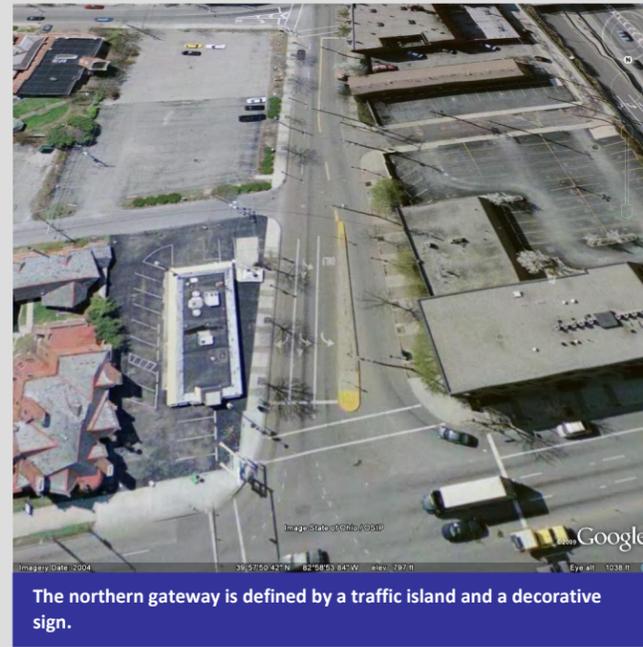
**Gateways:** The northern entry point of the area includes new signage noting the area as the Olde Towne Quarter, but there is not a distinct entryway to the business district and the intersection is unattractive and confusing. The southern entry point includes the historic Columbus Public Health building and its expansive front lawn. A pocket park is located on the west side of Parsons at Bryden, but is in a general state of disrepair and does not appear to be well utilized or effective as a gateway to the area.

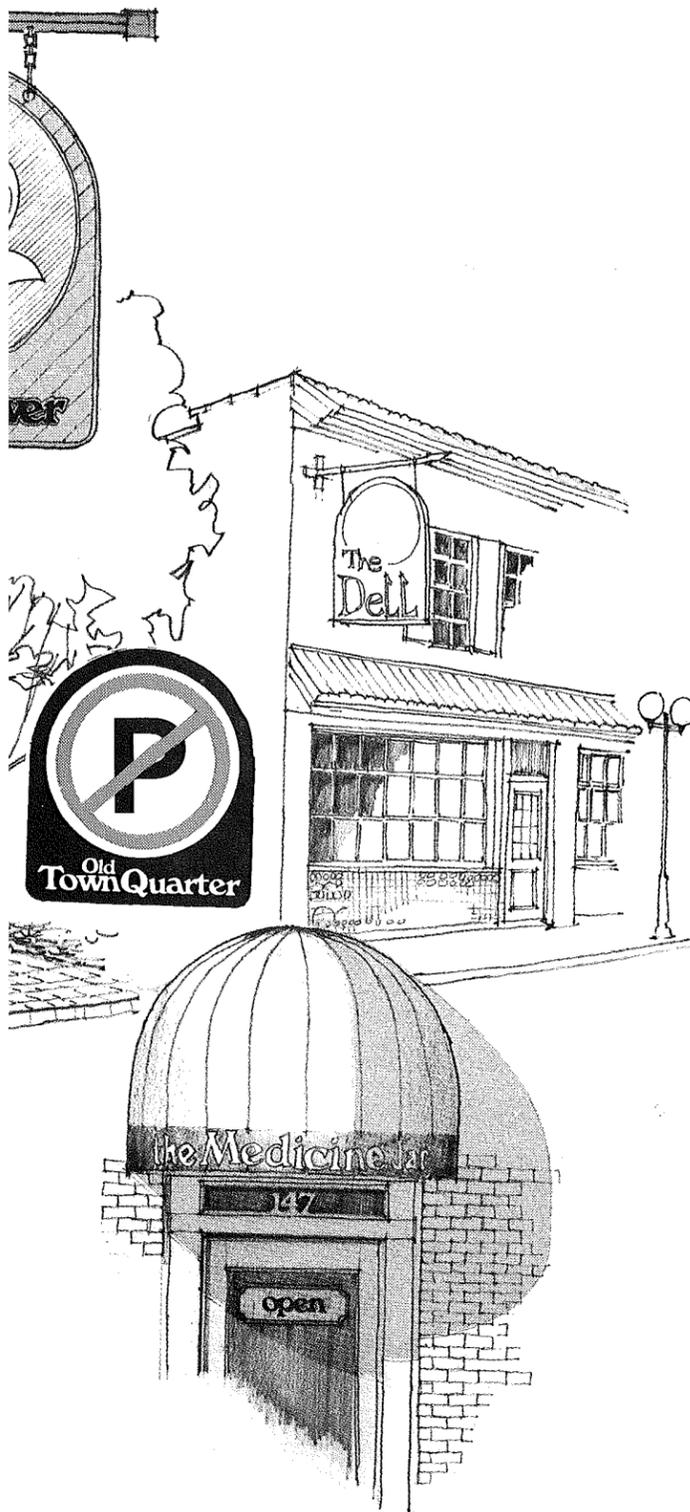
**Table 5. Selection of Floor Area Ratios in the Olde Towne Quarter**

Address	FAR	Image
700 E. Broad Street	1	 010-016850-00 11/18/2007
720 E. Broad Street	1	 010-056346-00 11/18/2007
43-45 Parsons	1.6	 010-041332-00 11/18/2007
61-63 Parsons	1.7	 010-043483-00 11/18/2007
65-67 Parsons	1	 010-043483-00 11/18/2007

**Table 6. Sample of Housing Densities**

	Housing units	Acre-age	Units/Acre
Half-mile radius of planning area	5064	530	10
Planning area	167	27	6
Selected sites:			
East of Topiary Park	389	9	43
North of Broad, west side of Hamilton Park	36	11	3
South of Topiary Park	64	7	10
Between Broad and Long, Garfield and Monroe	58	1	54
South of Oak, between Garfield and Monroe	129	3	50
North of Broad, between 17 <sup>th</sup> and Miami	80	3	23





## Previous Plans

### Two major planning documents address Olde Towne Quarter – the 2005 *Near East Area Plan* and the 1979 *Action Program for Commercial Redevelopment – Old Town Quarter*.

#### Near East Area Plan (2005)

The city of Columbus Near East Area Plan addresses the entire Near East Side and includes recommendations related to land use, commercial and residential design, transportation, and other issues relative to the built environment. A summary of the recommendations relative to the Olde Towne Quarter are provided below.

1. Provides commercial and residential design guidelines for new development.
2. Recommends that new commercial uses be focused at historic commercial districts, including Parsons Avenue.
3. Recommends higher density residential development for historic commercial districts, including Parsons Avenue.
4. Recommends traffic calming features for the planning area and commercial districts, including the consideration of planted medians, curb extensions, restoration of brick streets in strategic areas.

The plan includes recommendations specific to Parsons Avenue (with the accompanying map):

1. Improve the traffic/pedestrian connection from Parsons Avenue to Hamilton Avenue.
2. Remove one of two left turn lanes; construct planted median with gateway in place of turn lane; allow left turn from East Broad Street onto Parsons Avenue.
3. Restaurant use; facade improvement with outdoor seating; eventual



- redevelopment of site.
- 4. Pursue shared parking agreement.
- 5. Pursue shared parking agreement; eventual redevelopment as mixed use project
- 6. Renovate or rebuild apartment building with parking in back.
- 7. Remove right turn lane and install bump-outs on Oak Street; bump-out for crosswalk across Parsons Avenue; allow on-street parking on east side of Parsons Avenue north of Oak Street.
- 8. Gateway feature to match one at East Broad Street and Parsons Avenue. Place within currently marked area.
- 9. Mixed use building; three (3) or four (4) story building; national retail anchor along with live/work units.
- 10. Screen parking lot.
- 11. Public art - large enough so it can be seen from highway.

Other recommendations for Parsons Avenue from the Near East Area Plan:

1. Several new street trees need to be planted where previous ones have died and others need to be replaced.
2. Improve parking lot screening.
3. Facade improvements needed on some commercial buildings on Parsons Avenue and the apartment building on Parsons and Franklin Avenues.
4. More street lamps are required and should be placed at a lower level relative to existing street lamps, which are not well placed to illuminate for pedestrians.
5. Bridges at Oak and Town Streets need to be enhanced (improved fencing, plantings, and wider sidewalks on both sides).
6. Maintain Parsons Avenue as a two-way street connected to the existing grid system.
7. Improve alley to the west of Parsons Avenue and provide signage to direct and encourage access to potentially shared parking areas.
8. Encourage businesses to provide signage which addresses traffic flow on I-71.
9. Some commercial use may be appropriate as part of the redevelopment of the southeast corner of East Broad Street and Parsons Avenue. Recommendations include: a) use tax credits and facade easement to help finance a redevelopment of the Jones Mansion with the addition of new construction on the site at the southeast corner of East Broad Street and Parsons Avenue (redevelop two sites together), or b) redevelop the southeast corner of East Broad Street and Parsons Avenue as a mixed-use building with residential uses facing East Broad Street and a retail use that would face Parsons Avenue.

#### Old Town Quarter Action Program for Commercial Redevelopment (1979)

This document was a consultant product funded by the city of Columbus that aimed to revitalize the Olde Towne Quarter. (It appears that the name, "Old Town Quarter" was coined in this plan.)

The plan is a comprehensive review of the district and provides a history of the area, including some background on prominent buildings on or near the corridor. It also includes a detailed review of existing conditions, including details on existing buildings, employment, utilities, parking, and other conditions. It notes the area's reputation as "low-income high crime" and parking as issues that needed to be addressed. It states that Parsons Avenue had been the business district for the neighborhoods to the east and west and that a "new awareness, caused by inflation and the Energy Crisis is causing people to look back to the Center City" and includes recommendations related to organization and marketing, zoning, building and site improvements, streetscape, signage, and parking.

A selection of the plan's recommendations is provided below:

1. Redevelop the area as a restaurant/entertainment district, noting its location near downtown, with highway access, with historic buildings that could be converted to restaurant use, as benefits.
2. Develop infill buildings on several vacant lots "to increase the viable commercial density and the pedestrian environment", including a significant building at the parking lot at Oak and Parsons to create a "denser urban environment" and "increase business activity". It recommends that parking demands be met by building structured parking with retail and office uses or a buried parking garage.
3. Broad and Parsons intersection should be modified to "eliminate the present awkward traffic pattern", including the realignment of Hamilton with Parsons. It also recommends the installation of planted medians (shade trees) on Parsons and Hamilton.
4. The whole district should be rezoned as one community planned development (CPD) in order to facilitate redevelopment, using standards to ensure appropriate development.

The plan relied on then available community development funds, proposed the formation of a development corporation (with staff) that would implement the plan, including the prospect of securing property for parking, installing new streetscape (presumably the streetscape that is there today), providing management, etc. The development corporation and staff would ultimately work on other commercial districts and serve the whole city.

# Vision

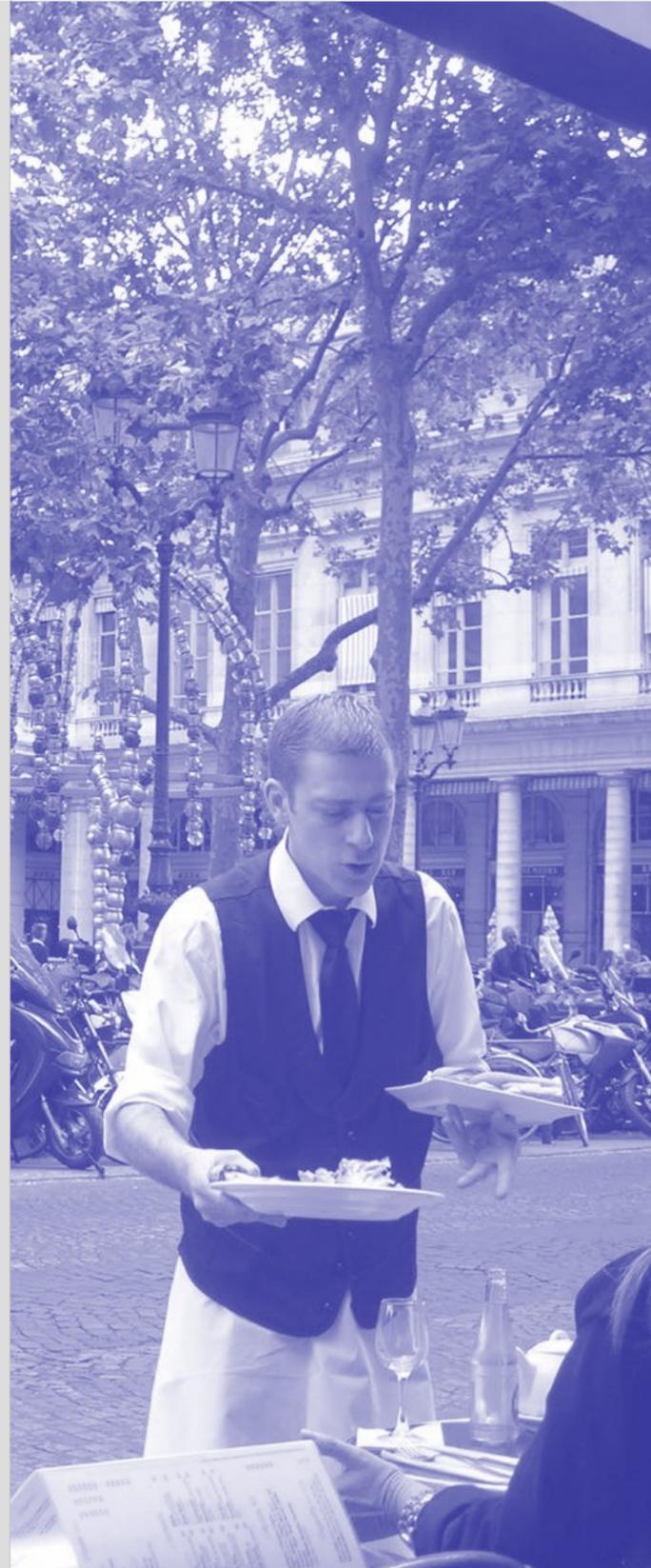
The vision speaks to a vibrant and authentic neighborhood-based business district and is further defined by a series of principles that together serve as the policy foundation for the Economic Development Strategy.

### Vision Statement

Olde Towne Quarter will be a successful, sustainable and authentic neighborhood business district that meets the day-to-day needs for goods and services for surrounding neighborhoods, and a well regarded destination for dining, entertainment and the arts – all thriving within a well designed built environment that is easily accessible to nearby residents and an inviting destination with a multiplicity of activities.

### Principles

1. A vibrant, accessible and livable neighborhood business district that serves as the front door to adjacent neighborhoods.
2. Small businesses that are retained and attracted, with an emphasis on locally owned and operated establishments, and an economic environment that supports business start-ups.
3. Residents are provided a broad mix of retail and services, as well as employment opportunities.
4. A unique historic neighborhood character that is preserved and enhanced, while encouraging reinvestment, mixed uses and higher density infill where appropriate.
5. An enhanced pedestrian and bikable experience that ensures a safe walkable and bikable environment.
6. Implementation strategies that are consensus-based, practical and feasible.
7. Architecture that is compatible with the existing architectural fabric and character, providing for compatible contemporary design solutions.
8. Reconstruction of all components of 70/71 should complement and support the long-term sustainability of the Olde Towne Quarter as a successful neighborhood business district.
9. The public realm—especially the streetscape—should be activated to provide for public interaction, outdoor dining and a lively built environment.



# Land Use Plan

The Vision is translated into a Land Use Plan that guides future public and private decisions about development.

The land use recommendations that are reflected in this plan try to balance the vision shared by many for the redevelopment of this business district, while being sensitive to the existing land use pattern. This also holds true for density recommendations that seek to increase the amount of development within the district while also being sensitive to both the existing pattern as well as the residential neighborhoods to the east.

Proposed land use recommendations for the Olde Towne Quarter are illustrated in the accompanying Proposed Land Use Map (Figure 7) and text, which together are city land use policy and form the basis for the City of Columbus’ review of land use, zoning, and variance requests. Existing land uses are shown in the map outside of the planning area boundary to provide context.

Table 7 provides a general description of the recommended land uses for the planning area. Within these descriptions are typical density/intensity recommendations appropriate for the given land use classification. The density ranges and other information are guidelines that are given to provide as clear an expectation as possible regarding future development in an area, but do not imply that development proposals will be approved at the maximum density or intensity. Each development application must be reviewed on a case by case basis and for consistency with design guidelines from this plan amendment and the Near East Area Plan.

The following notes correspond with the Proposed Land Use Map:

1. Recommended land uses build upon existing land uses.
2. Office uses are recommended on Broad Street, with the exception of the southeast corner of Broad and Parsons, which is recommended for commercial retail.
3. The existing surface parking lots on the south side of Capital and at the corner of Parsons and Oak are recommended to continue as surface parking to serve the planned use of the old firehouse building as a restaurant. Upon the ultimate build-out of the Olde Towne Quarter business district, this lot should be considered for redevelopment as a mixed use development with structured parking while preserving views to the old firehouse building from Parsons.
4. Mixed Use (Neighborhood) uses are recommended for a significant portion of both sides of Parsons Avenue.

5. The single story retail structure on the southeast corner of Parsons and Oak is a non-contributing structure and could serve as a future redevelopment opportunity.
6. High Density Residential is recommended for the northeast corner of Parsons and Franklin. The existing building should be renovated for owner-occupied and/or rental housing.
7. Medium-High Density Mixed Residential is recommended along the south side of Franklin to the east of Parsons, reflecting the existing structures, which should be preserved.
8. The site of the office building at the northeast corner of Bryden and Parsons is recommended for office uses. This site may serve as a future redevelopment opportunity as office or mixed use development, spurred by development of the vacant lot to its north.
9. Medium-High Density Mixed Residential is also recommended for the northwest corner of Bryden and Garfield and the south side of Bryden to the east of the existing office uses. The structure at the corner of Bryden and Garfield would optimally be preserved. The existing multifamily uses on the south side of Bryden serve as a redevelopment opportunity to a building form more compatible with the buildings to the east.
10. The full utilization of the Columbus Health Department facility is encouraged, with adaptive reuse of the remaining historic structures as way to strengthen demand for goods and services in the Olde Towne Quarter.

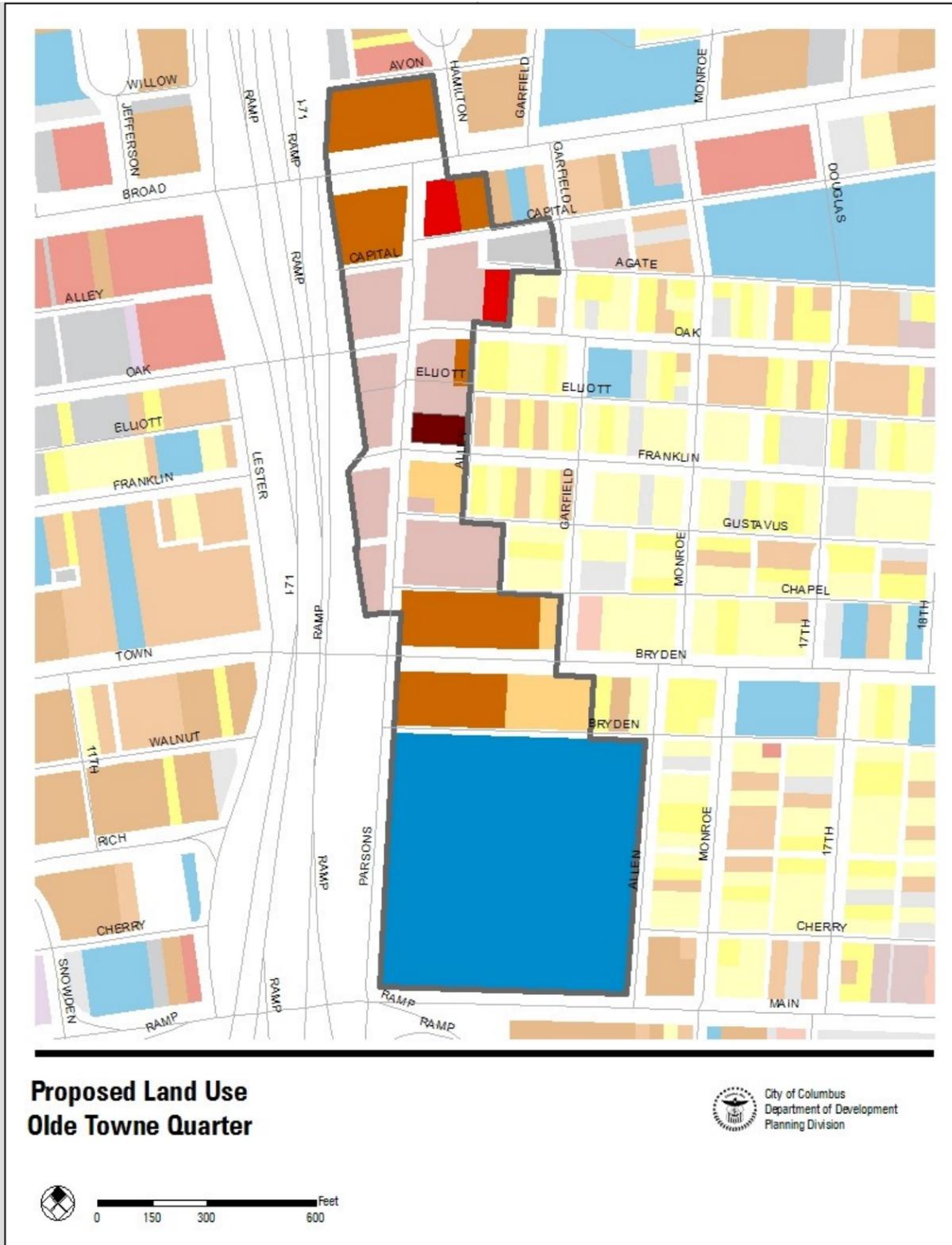


Figure 7

**Table 7. General Description of Recommended Land Use Categories**

Proposed Land Use Map Color	Classification	Typical Density/ Intensity *dwelling units **square feet	General Description
	Medium - High Density Mixed Residential	10 to 16 du*/acre	A variety of dwelling types, including singles, doubles, townhouses and multi-family are included in this category. New development patterns should reinforce the existing pattern and type of residential in the neighborhood. Proposals for multifamily development in these areas must demonstrate that they will not adversely impact the existing development pattern of the area.
	High Density Residential	16-45 du*/acre	This classification is intended for multi-story multifamily housing in specific areas where high density is considered appropriate, such as the primary corridors of older neighborhoods.
	Commercial (Neighborhood)	20,000 sf**/acre	The function of this classification is to provide neighborhood commercial services. These areas contain multiple functions and act as local centers of economic activity. Examples include smaller scale retail, office, or institutional uses.
	Mixed Use (Neighborhood)	20,000 sf**/ac 16-45 du*/acre	This classification is the same as the Neighborhood Commercial classification but also includes residential units located either above and/or next to the commercial, office, or institutional uses. Residential densities should fall within the range of 16 to 45 dwelling units per acre.
	Office	15,000 sf**/acre	This classification is reserved for office uses. Office uses are also expected within Mixed Use and Commercial designations as secondary uses.
	Institutional	na	Institutional uses include schools, government property, and houses of worship.
	Parking	n/a	Off-street parking that primarily serves private development but may offer opportunities for shared and/or public parking.



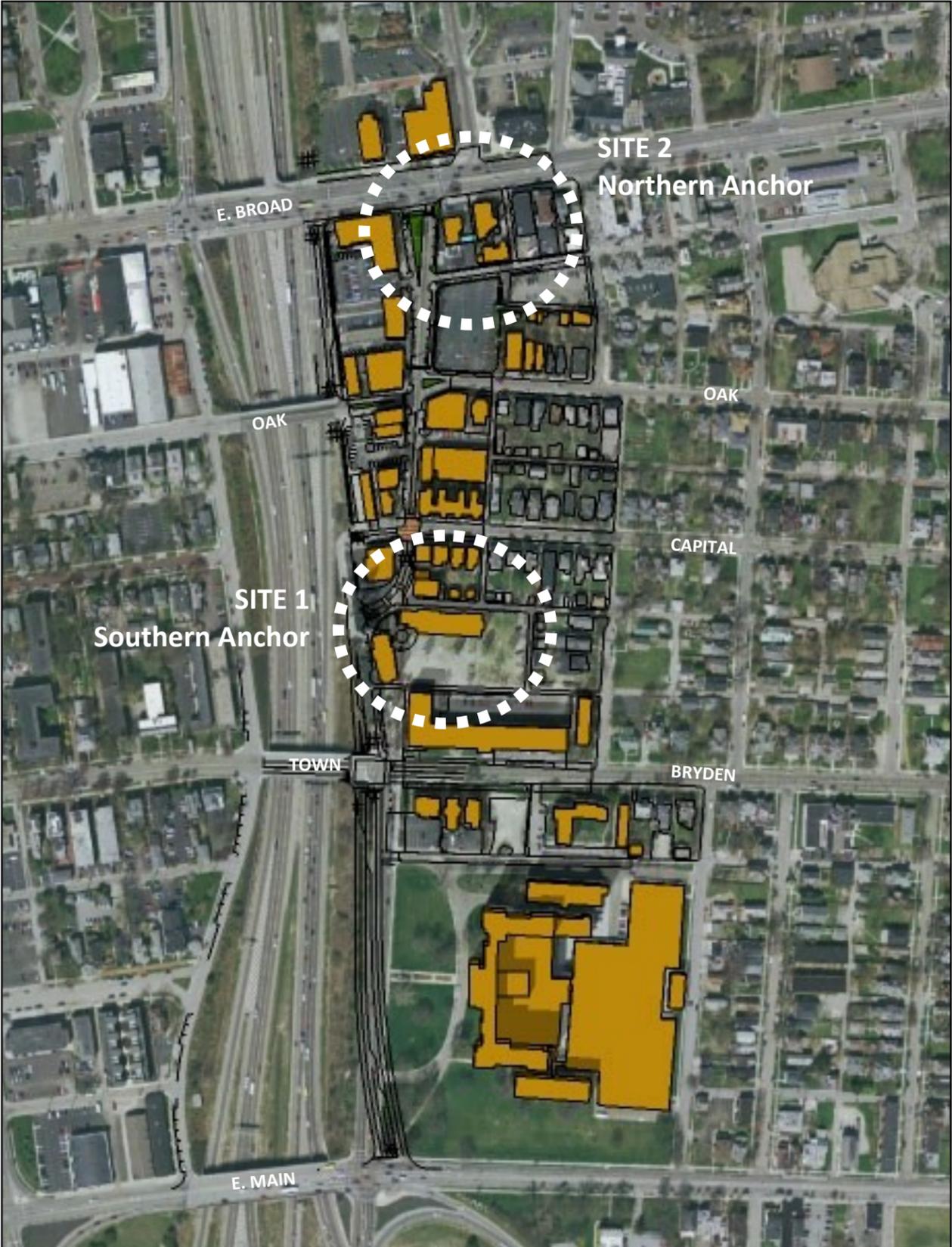
# Development Concepts

Development concepts are presented for two locations in the planning area. Staff analysis and public input suggested that these sites presented future development opportunities as they were vacant and/or underutilized sites.

The development of an opportunity site will occur at the discretion of the given property owner. These concepts serve to present a community vision for the sites and may then be used to guide the review of any necessary zoning or variance request. Each development concept is consistent with the development guidelines from the Near East Area Plan and this plan amendment.

**Overall Development Concept**  
Improvements are proposed for all Parsons Avenue intersections and include enhanced crosswalk pavement treatments, curb extensions, planted medians, and a narrower intersection on Parsons Avenue just south of Broad Street. New sidewalks are proposed to be installed and street trees planted throughout the district. The potential exists to allow left turns from Broad Street onto Parsons Avenue, improving access to the district. New enhanced bridges will improve the pedestrian connection between the Olde Towne Quarter and Downtown. All public improvements illustrated are subject to the ultimate design of the new urban avenue and follow up study by the city of Columbus Public Service Department.

**Anchors**  
The overall Development Concept also identifies two key anchors, one at the north end of the district and the other at the south end. These anchors serve as gateways to the district, but also provide significant development opportunities. On the next two pages concepts are presented for each of these anchor sites.



**Site 1: Southern Anchor**

The vacant lot on the east side of Parsons to the north of Bryden Road and the site of the E.T. Paul and Carabar businesses are seen as a near term development opportunity. This area’s development potential will be enhanced with the construction of the new urban avenue. The concepts below illustrate new development at what will become the intersection of Parsons Avenue and the new urban avenue. These buildings will serve as a gateway to the Olde Towne Quarter business district.

On the east side of Parsons Avenue, development is shown on the existing vacant lot and new right-of-way that would be created as result of the construction of the new urban avenue. New storefronts, with residential above, would face Parsons. Additional development would create a new streetscape on Gustavas Lane.

Development on the easternmost portion of the Gustavas Lane streetscape is shown as a residential structure that would provide a transition to the neighborhood. There may be a need to consider reconstruction of the alley to accommodate this residential building.

A small plaza is illustrated that could accommodate outdoor dining and provides access to the surface parking located behind the buildings.

It’s important to note that any redevelopment of this site should respond to the following priorities:

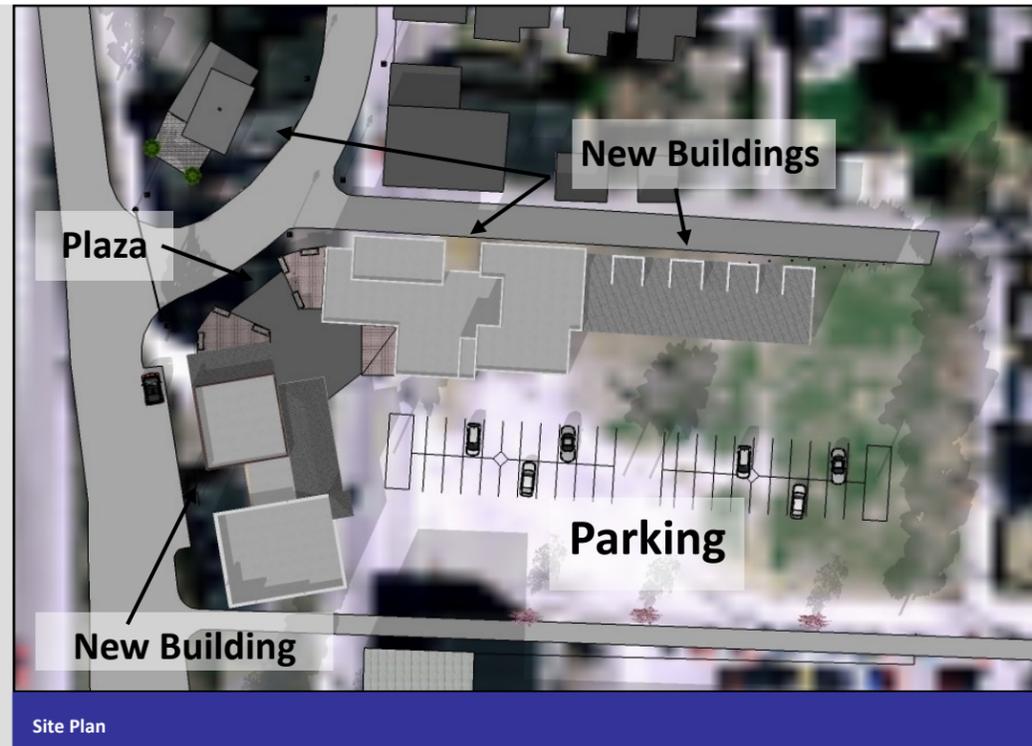
- Priority 1: Retail uses are the highest priority as a strategy to strengthen the business district.
- Priority 2: New buildings can function as one-story structures but be designed to reflect a two-story façade.
- Priority 3: Mixed use development will be supported, but retail on ground floors must be a component.
- Purely residential buildings on this site without any retail use are not supported.

A two-story structure is shown on the site that is generally located in the area of the existing E.T. Paul business and the building that currently houses the “Carabar” business. This development will have the opportunity to address both the existing Parsons Avenue and frontage of the new urban avenue. A small plaza that could accommodate outdoor dining is also illustrated in front of this structure.

Building heights should not exceed three stories and 35 feet, which is the standard allowed by the C4 zoning in the district.

As the new urban avenue is developed and the E.T. Paul and Carabar buildings are demolished per ODOT plans for 70/71, consideration should be given to the demolition of the building to the north of the Carabar building to create a larger

development opportunity (depending on its structural integrity). Preservation of the façade of the building to the north of the Carabar building should be considered. Parking for all of these buildings is adequately provided on site.



Site 1: Southern Anchor—Provides the opportunity for a dramatic mixed-use, higher density development that rebrands the district, while establishing a new gateway at the new Parsons/Urban Avenue intersection.



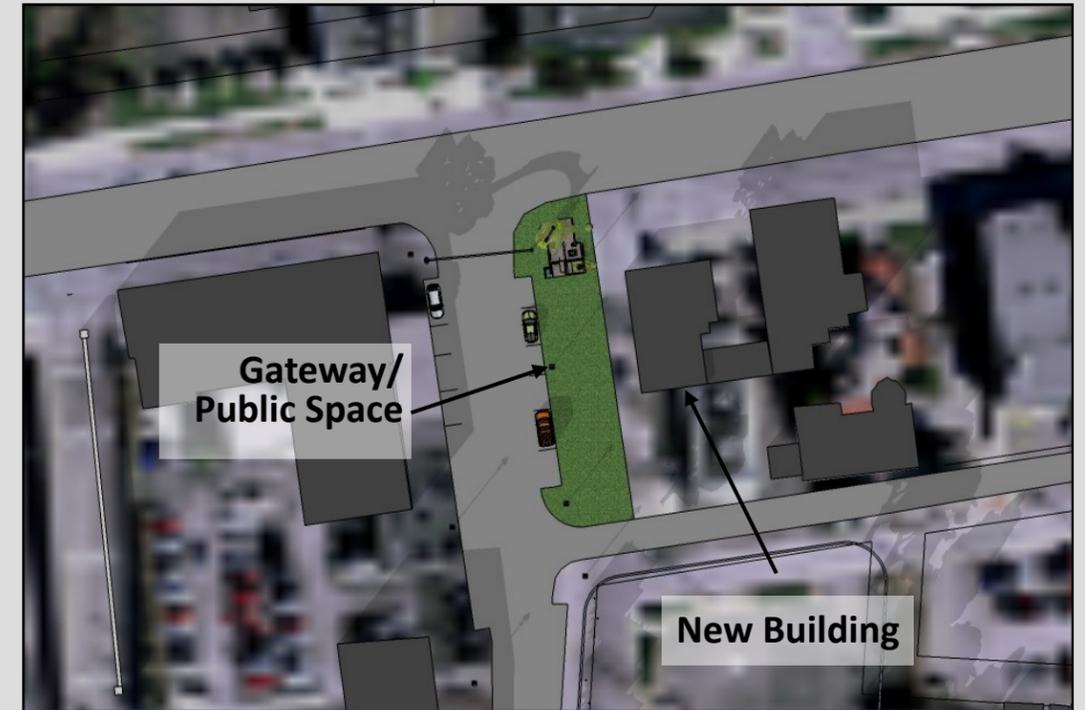
Site 1: Southern Anchor—This aerial perspective shows the massing of the three buildings, public space at the entrance of the southern site, and parking shown to the rear.

**Site 2: Northern Anchor**

The southeast corner of Parsons and East Broad is seen as a mid-term development opportunity. A single story retail structure with a connection to the Jones Mansion is illustrated. This connection suggests that historic tax credits potentially available from the renovation of the Jones Mansion be utilized to facilitate redevelopment of the commercial retail site at the corner. Future use of the Jones Mansion, including the attached new building could be office, mixed use or even restaurant.

As noted in the Near East Area Plan (2005), redevelopment of this site is supported. The plan recommends either using tax credits and façade easements to help finance a renovation of the Jones Mansion (with the redevelopment of the adjacent property) or redevelopment the southeast corner of Broad and Parsons as a mixed-use building with residential uses facing Broad and a retail use facing Parsons.

It is assumed that the Parsons—Broad intersection may be narrowed as part of the 70-71 project, potentially allowing a west bound left turn into the district, as well as a north bound left turn towards Downtown. If Parsons is narrowed there may be excess right-of-way that could be used as a landscaped entry treatment on the east side of the street, as shown in the accompanying conceptual drawing.



Site Plan



Site 2: Northern Anchor—Provides the opportunity to create a new commercial development, combining a preserved Jones Mansion with a redeveloped corner lot, linking the new structure to the mansion with a glass extension.



Site 2: Northern Anchor—The Jones Mansion, combined with the adjacent commercial property, offer an opportunity for an interesting anchor development at the north end of the Olde Towne Corridor.



# Public Improvements

**Roadway and streetscape improvements are proposed for the planning area.**

These improvements include new sidewalks, lighting, and new street trees throughout the district, enhanced crosswalk pavement treatments, curb extensions, planted medians, and a narrower intersection on Parsons at Broad.

Arches are proposed for the intersection of Broad and Parsons and the new urban avenue and Parsons.

New enhanced bridges will improve the pedestrian connection between the Olde Towne Quarter and Downtown. The potential exists to allow left turns from Broad on to Parsons, improving access to the district.



Construction of Parsons Avenue north of Town/Bryden should meet the city's Complete Streets standard, as depicted above in this rendering for the 70-71 project.



# Policies

**The policies establish a framework for guiding future public and private decisions in Olde Towne Quarter consistent with the Vision, Land Use Plan and Development Concepts.**

**Principle 1: A vibrant, accessible and livable neighborhood business district that serves as the front door to adjacent neighborhoods.** It is important the Olde Towne Quarter serve as the front door to the Olde Towne East neighborhood—as well as a link to Downtown. The district itself should be vibrant, measured as offering a variety of successful businesses and destinations offering goods, services and activities each day and evening of the week. It should be accessible, measured as a safe and easy destination for people who walk, bike, drive or take transit. And it should be livable, measured as offering services and activities in a pleasing and authentic built environment that compliments Old Town East.

**1.1 Stabilize and attract investment in the neighborhoods.**

- A. Continue to promote homeownership and maintenance through ongoing city programs and code enforcement.
- B. Work with the city’s Housing Division to promote rehabilitation and new construction in surrounding neighborhoods.
- C. Continue to promote Olde Towne East as a viable and attractive residential neighborhood for renters and homeowners.

**1.2 Increase residential densities.**

- A. Support higher residential densities consistent with the Land Use Plan, Development Concepts and Development Guidelines.
- B. Encourage creative architectural solutions to ensure higher density developments are positive additions to the built environment and compatible with the surrounding character.

**1.3 Reconstruct the streetscape on Parsons Avenue and include more amenities.**

- A. Support the reconstruction of the Parsons Avenue streetscape.
- B. Ensure that the new streetscape provides additional amenities , including street trees, pedestrian scale street light poles, arches, benches, and trash receptacles.

**1.4 Encourage mixed-use development on key infill sites.**

- A. Support mixed-use development for all key infill sites to include retail and services on ground floor and office or residential on upper floors.
- B. Generally discourage infill development that does not include residential as a component on upper floors.

**1.5 Encourage higher density development at key intersections and gateways.**

- A. Support higher density development at key intersections and gateways consistent with the Land Use Plan, Development Concepts and Development Guidelines.
- B. Prioritize Parsons and Broad, Parsons and Oak, and Parsons and Town/Bryden intersections.
- C. Consider supporting building height and parking variances when appropriate if a proposed development is consistent with these policies.

**1.6 Provide for a managed parking solution that supports reinvestment and redevelopment.**

- A. Coordinate with the Olde Towne Quarter Business Association, Department of Public Service and property owners to solve parking problems.
- B. Consider and/or support structured parking if new construction establishes densities that economically support such expensive private infrastructure.

**Principle 2: Small businesses that are retained and attracted, with an emphasis on locally owned and operated establishments, and an economic environment that supports business start-ups.** The economic focus on the Olde Towne Quarter is small business with an emphasis on locally owned and operated, not necessarily a district comprised of national, corporate retailers. The affordability of the district and its strong connection to adjacent neighborhoods defines this economic focus. Future efforts aimed at business attraction should reinforce this priority.

**2.1 Stabilize and attract investment in the district.**

- A. Continue to promote building investment and property maintenance through ongoing city programs and code enforcement.
- B. Establish a Special Improvement District as a long term strategy to organize and guide private sector involvement in plan implementation.
- C. Retain existing successful businesses and target for attraction new businesses that match the district’s economic focus.

**2.2 Investigate strategies for supporting business start-ups.**

- A. Work with the Economic Development Division to ensure propose business start-ups are fully informed of city incentive and finance programs.
- B. Provide a mechanism through the Olde Towne Quarter Business Association to connect proposed business start-ups with building landlords.
- C. Provide for a forum in which new and existing businesses share knowledge, mentorship, best practices, etc. on an ongoing basis.



This is an example of a new mixed-use infill building in the Urban Commercial Overlay on High Street in the University District.

**Principle 3: Residents are provided a broad mix of retail and services, as well as employment opportunities.** As the district continues to evolve over time it is the expectation that the mix of retail and service businesses will broaden to meet local needs and that additional employment opportunities through office development and service industries will likewise occur. It is only through an expansion of business activity that the district will ensure its sustainability in the long term.

**3.1 Attract new businesses that fill gaps in the retail and services preferred by the neighborhood.**

- A. Establish a retention, expansion and attraction program within the Olde Towne Quarter Business Association that targets key retailers, service businesses and office uses that fit the economic focus of the district.
- B. Coordinate with the Economic Development Division.

**3.2 Promote city incentives to attract office uses in and adjacent to the district.**

- A. Promote incentives through the Olde Towne Quarter Business Association via website and regular business meetings.
- B. Coordinate with the Economic Development Division.

**Principle 4: A unique historic neighborhood character that is preserved and enhanced, while encouraging reinvestment, mixed uses and higher density infill where appropriate.** Existing buildings that contribute to the historic character of Olde Towne Quarter should be preserved, while new construction on infill sites (or redevelopment/expansion of existing buildings) should be compatible in character and materials to surrounding historic buildings. Mixing uses and encouraging higher density builds a stronger economic base to support the retail market.

**4.1 Encourage the rehabilitation of contributing buildings and discourage demolition.**

- A. Consider expanding the existing national historic district to include additional properties along Parsons and Broad to promote historic tax credits as an incentive.
- B. Work with property owners to encourage the rehabilitation of contributing buildings through the Historic Preservation Office.
- C. Discourage demolition of all contributing buildings.

**Principle 5: An enhanced pedestrian and bikable experience that ensures a safe walkable and bikable environment.** Olde Towne Quarter is a pedestrian-oriented district with strong connections to surrounding neighborhoods. The environment should be safe for walking and biking to ensure that these alternative modes of transportation continue to play a positive role for the community.

**5.1 As part of reconstructing the Parsons Avenue streetscape, amenities should be provided to enhance the walking and biking experience.**

- A. Include amenities such as enhanced crosswalks, medians, street trees, pedestrian scale street light poles, arches, benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles.
- B. Utilize recent design templates from streetscape projects in comparable historic business districts, such as Old North Columbus.

**5.2 Continue to promote the Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO) to reinforce a pedestrian-oriented built environment.**

- A. Continue to promote the design approaches within the UCO to ensure that new construction (and major additions to existing buildings) reinforces the historic walkable development pattern found in the district.
- B. Promote the parking reductions found in the UCO as an incentive to attract new investment and businesses to the Olde Towne Quarter.

**5.3 Encourage pedestrian-oriented wall-mounted signage.**

- A. Encourage signage on ground floor small businesses to be wall-mounted and oriented to the pedestrian,

thereby encouraging walking and biking.

- B. Comply with the graphics standards of the UCO.
- C. Under no circumstances, including variances and CPD texts, should pole-mounted signs, billboards and other off-premises graphics be supported because they are not compatible with the pedestrian orientation of the district's built environment.

**Principle 6: Implementation strategies that are consensus-based, practical and feasible.** See Implementation Section.

**Principle 7: Architecture that is compatible with the existing architectural fabric and character, providing for compatible contemporary design solutions.** There is a strong role to play as new buildings are added to the Olde Towne Quarter. But such new construction should not be a purely historic recreation of existing older buildings (e.g. Disneyland). New buildings should be contemporary interpretations of existing historic buildings, provide for consistency yet including contemporary buildings materials and design approaches that build upon existing building patterns.

**7.1 Encourage contemporary interpretations of historic architectural design and the utilization of complimentary building materials.**

- A. Work with property owners and developers as they undertake design of new buildings (and additions to existing buildings).
- B. Coordinate with Near East Area Commission, Planning, Historic Preservation, and Building Services in the case of rezonings and variances.
- C. Promote good design practices through the business meetings of the Olde Towne Quarter Business Association.

**7.2 Encourage building owners to enhance rear elevations, especially those structures parallel to the Urban Avenue.**

- A. Work with property owners and developers as they undertake design of new buildings (and additions to existing buildings).
- B. Coordinate with Near East Area Commission, Planning, Historic Preservation, and Building Services in the case of rezonings and variances.
- C. Consider promoting public art solutions for rear elevations, such as painted wall murals.

**Principle 8: Reconstruction of all components of 70/71 should complement and support the long-term sustainability of the Olde Towne Quarter as a successful neighborhood business district.** The reconstruction of 70/71 was the catalyst for undertaking this economic development strategy, at the request of OTENA and ODOT. The final design solutions for the phases

adjacent to Olde Towne Quarter should both complement and support the long-term economic sustainability of the district.

**8.1 Build the Urban Avenue (reconstructed Parsons Avenue) that parallels Olde Towne Quarter as a "complete street" consistent with city standards.**

- A. Implement the "complete street" as a design approach to ensure that new roads include not only travel lanes for vehicles, but bike lanes, sidewalks, and planted tree lawns.
- B. Provide landscaping along with screening on the outside edge of the Urban Avenue right-of-way to provide a transition to the adjacent private property.

**8.2 Provide street trees along the entire length of the reconstructed Parsons Avenue.**

- A. Include street trees on the Urban Avenues as an aesthetic enhancement, as well as to calm traffic flow in this pedestrian-oriented area and to reduce noise impacts on adjacent properties.
- B. Coordinate with the city's urban forestry program to ensure tree species are appropriate for this urban location adjacent to a high-volume interstate highway.

**8.3 Design the new intersection of existing Parsons and new Parsons (at Town/Bryden intersection) to maximize pedestrian safety, creating a new southern gateway to the district.**

- A. Design the intersection to balance pedestrian safety with traffic flow, using a "t" intersection, optimally with traffic signalization.
- B. Incorporate aesthetic enhancements to reinforce the role of this intersection as a gateway to the Olde Towne Quarter, such as with an arch or other significant aesthetic feature.

**Principle 9: Physical changes to the district should provide for redevelopment sites that can be activated over time as the market changes.** With the reconstruction of 70/71 and the Urban Avenue adjacent to the district, existing city right-of-way may not be necessary and its vacation could create additional development sites. Likewise, existing one-story buildings or uses that are not complimentary to the business district could offer sites for future redevelopment.

**9.1 Vacate public right-of-way that is longer needed.**

- A. Support the vacation of excessive and un-needed public right-of-way at the new intersection of Parsons Avenue and the Urban Avenue consistent with the development site recommendations in this plan.
- B. Support the vacation of excessive and un-needed public right-of-way, at Capital Street west of Parsons and at Franklin Avenue west of Parsons, with the expectation

that transferred property will facilitate development at these locations consistent with this plan in the mid term.

- C. Support the redevelopment of existing, non-contributing, one-story buildings into mixed-used, multiple story buildings in the mid term.
- D. Support the redevelopment of the parking lot at the northeast corner of Parsons and Oak into a mixed-use development with structured parking in the long term.



# Development Guidelines

The following guidelines should be used to guide the review of proposed development relative to building design, parking, and site improvements such as landscaping, lighting and signage. These guidelines are not city code, but serve as city policy. This provides a basis for stakeholders to review development proposals to make sure the guidelines are considered, and optimally included, in a proposed development.

### Building Design

1. Buildings should incorporate contextual architectural design that considers the surrounding building design and material patterns, such as reflecting local conditions and history.
2. All sides of a building should be coherently designed and treated. A consistent level of detailing and finish should be provided for all sides of a building (“four-sided” architecture).
3. Building design should incorporate patterns and materials that provide visual interest. This should be accomplished through changes in color, materials or relief, such as the inclusion of beltlines, pilasters, recesses, and pop outs. Flat, plain building walls should be discouraged.
4. Building designs should incorporate a base tying the building into the ground, a midsection, and a top that terminates the building.
5. Front elevations should be divided into increments to mimic traditional storefronts and be as transparent as possible.
6. Taller or denser development is not necessarily inconsistent with older, lower density neighborhoods but must be designed with sensitivity to existing development. For example, new development should not cast shadows or create wind tunnels that will significantly impact existing development and should not restrict vehicular or pedestrian movements from existing development.
7. The architectural style of new buildings should not be literal duplications of historic styles. Instead, new designs should be contemporary interpretations of traditional buildings, especially styles found throughout the city.

These interpretations should be similar in scale and overall character to historical precedents, but should differ in terms of detailing.

8. Solid-to-void ratios on facades visible from a public street should be similar to that seen on comparable buildings. Upper floors can be distinguished by decreasing the solid-to-void ratio.
9. Vertical piers or other vertical visual elements should be used when appropriate to break the plane of long facades.
10. The form, proportions, roof shape, and exterior materials of buildings and structures should be compatible with nearby historic buildings. The positive aspects of nearby existing buildings should be acknowledged by incorporating compatible features in new developments.

### Parking

1. Parking reductions may be appropriate for new development on Parsons Avenue to assist in creating a pedestrian friendly environment.
2. Site area devoted to parking should be minimized and hidden.
3. Shared parking arrangements should be considered between users with differing peak hours.
4. Bicycle parking should be provided.
5. On-street parking should be provided along street frontages to support adjacent development and to buffer pedestrians from traffic flow.
6. All parking lots visible from roadways should be screened with a minimum three-foot-high continuous wall, decorative fence or hedge that reaches a minimum 75% opacity within five years in urban locations.
7. Parking lots should be planted with shade trees (two-inch minimum caliper) at a minimum of one tree per ten parking spaces. Landscape islands with a minimum soil area of 145 square feet should be provided for each tree to ensure long term viability. Landscape islands should be dispersed throughout the interior of the parking lot.

### Landscaping, Lighting, and Signage

1. A six-foot wall or fence constructed of materials complimentary to the principal building along the property line should be provided between a site and adjacent residential uses. Deciduous trees should be planted, evenly spaced, at a ratio of one tree per 20 lineal feet on the inside of the fence/wall.
2. Loading docks, trash collection/dumpster bins, outdoor display and similar facilities and functions should be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets.
3. Where such accessory uses and structures are not

constructed as part of a building, it is recommended that they be screened to their full height by a solid masonry wall (not cement block) or wooden fence of a color or material that is complimentary to the principal building.

4. Service and loading zones should be located to the rear, side or in an internal location where visibility from public rights-of-way and views from neighboring buildings and properties will be minimized.
5. All areas of a development should be landscaped extensively in context to its surroundings with a mix of deciduous, ornamental and evergreen plant material.
6. Landscaping should be used to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation and erosion control, including rain gardens.
7. All trees (including street trees) should meet the following minimum size at the time of planting: shade trees 2 inches caliper; ornamental trees 1 1/2 inches caliper; and evergreen trees 5 feet in height. Tree caliper is measured six inches from the ground.
8. All trees and landscaping should be well maintained. Dead items should be replaced within six months or the next planting season, whichever occurs first. The size of the new material should equal the size of the original material when it was installed.
9. Development should be designed to encourage visible space that will serve as a means to discourage and to deter crime through the location of physical features, activities and people to maximize visibility.
10. Landscaping and screening along property and parking lot perimeters should provide for visual openings into the site between three and eight feet above the sidewalk. This can be accomplished by staggering plantings and using walls and fences with openings.
11. On-site lighting for security purposes should illuminate buildings and surfaces only, such as sidewalks and parking lots. Lighting should not be designed to illuminate the entire site, including adjacent property and rights-of-way, and the sky above the site.
12. Lighting should be shielded and light spillage should not occur beyond the property line. Publicly accessible plazas should be illuminated during hours of darkness.
13. Signage is recommended to complement building and other streetscape elements, is designed of appropriate size, style, and materials, and is located to properly fit into the business district.



# Implementation

The implementation guidance provided in this section is intended to ensure that the Vision, Land Use Plan, Development Concepts and related recommendations are successfully implemented over the coming years.

## Planning & Zoning Implementation Strategies

The following strategies guide adoption of this planning document and its implementation relative to the development process.

### 1.1 Gain adoption of the Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy.

- A. Work with the Near East Area Commission to obtain a recommendation to adopt the strategy.
- B. Testify before the Development Commission to obtain a recommendation to adopt the strategy.
- C. Testify before City Council to obtain adoption of the strategy.

### 1.2 Implement the strategy through the development process.

- A. Begin to coordinate review of development cases with the Near East Area Commission (rezoning, Council variances, BZA variances, and graphics variances).
- B. Provide a recommendation to NEAC by the OTQBA.
- C. Testify as appropriate before the appropriate boards and commissions.

## Economic Development Implementation Strategies

The following strategies guide economic development actions that assist with plan implementation, such as creating a new organization to fund economic development activities, branding, and tax abatements.

### 2.1 Research creation of a Special Improvement District organization to manage key business district activities.

- A. Work with Capital Crossroads to explore the potential of creating a SID.
- B. Consider the range of activities that could be undertaken by a SID, such as joint marketing, business recruitment, expanded common maintenance and landscaping, and enhanced security.
- C. Coordinate with the Economic Development Division.

### 2.2 Identify branding strategies.

- A. Work with key stakeholders within the Olde Towne Quarter Business Association to identify potential

## Implementation Summary

Implementation Activity	Lead	Support	Timeframe
<b>Planning &amp; Zoning Strategies</b>			
1.1 Gain adoption of the Strategy	P	OTQBA / NEAC	Immediately
1.2 Implement plan through development process	P	NEAC / OTQBA	Ongoing
<b>Economic Development Strategies</b>			
2.1 Establish a Special Improvement District	OTQBA	ED	Short Term
2.2 Establish a brand	OTQBA		Short Term
2.3 Investigate residential tax abatements	OTQBA	ED	Short Term
<b>Organization, Education &amp; Outreach Strategies</b>			
3.1 Establish an Implementation Committee	OTQBA	P / ED	Immediately
3.2 Communicate through the web	OTQBA		Immediately

P = Planning ED = Economic Development OTQBA = Olde Towne Quarter Business Association NEAC = Near East Area Commission

- branding strategies.
- B. Seek volunteer assistance to develop a graphic identity and to establish a marketing/outreach program.

### 2.3 Consider targeted tax abatements.

- A. Consider office tax abatements for projects consistent with city guidelines.
- B. Consider residential tax abatement if a project is located on Parsons Avenue and provides a sufficient number of units to have a major impact on the district (requires legislation).
- C. Work with the Oak Street CRA and the Area B, Neighborhood Investment District where applicable to provide incentives that support development/redevelopment.
- D. Coordinate with the Economic Development and Housing Divisions.

## Organization, Education and Outreach

Organizational, educational and outreach mechanisms can play a key role in plan implementation. Potential mechanisms include:

### 3.1 Establish an Implementation Committee.

- A. Organize board members and other stakeholders in forming the Implementation Committee.
- B. Meet to foster the implementation of priority projects and goals from the plan.
- C. Coordinate with the Planning and Economic

Development Divisions as a resource to the committee in its plan implementation efforts. Other city departments/staff may also provide assistance as necessary.

- D. Provide an annual report to the association and community on progress and concerns regarding the strategy's implementation.

### 3.2 Communicate through the web.

- A. Establish a web presence and use email to supplement existing information distribution systems.
- B. Distribute copies of the plan in PDF to key stakeholders, community agencies, and property owners.

# Olde Towne Quarter Economic Development Strategy

An Amendment to the Near East Area Plan (2005)

**City of Columbus / Department of Development / Planning & Economic Development Divisions**  
109 N. Front Street Columbus, Ohio 43215 614-645-8664 [www.columbus.gov/planning](http://www.columbus.gov/planning)

*working with*

**Near East Area Commission, Olde Towne East Neighborhood Association  
and Olde Towne Quarter Business District**

