

2 INITIATIVE AREA THE PLACEMAKING PLAN

SECTIONS:

- A. OVERVIEW OF THE PLACEMAKING PLAN**
- B. FUTURE LAND USE (CHARACTER AREAS)**
- C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS**





A. OVERVIEW OF THE PLACEMAKING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Conventional comprehensive plans contain a future land use plan as the centerpiece for guiding physical change in the municipality. The community engagement process for *Rochester 2034* made it abundantly clear that there are many other elements – physical projects, policies, and programs – that intersect with land use and development to contribute to a functional cityscape and positive sense of place. As such, this comprehensive plan contains an innovative approach to conventional land use planning by integrating these other elements into a larger Placemaking Plan.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- We create places of great character when we invest in things like quality parks, access to the river, attractive public spaces, dynamic streetscapes, resident engagement, and thoughtful land use planning.
- Growing the population of Rochester will restore the critical mass of residents needed to support local businesses, deconcentrate poverty, and grow the tax base
- Updating zoning and land use regulations will help create jobs, reoccupy vacant commercial spaces, and preserve community assets.
- High standards for building and site design will make Rochester more attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors.



PLACEMAKING IS THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SHAPING PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC FACILITIES, AND THE PUBLIC REALM INTO PLACES OF GREAT CHARACTER.



A. OVERVIEW OF THE PLACEMAKING PLAN (CONTINUED)

INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

Placemaking is a people-centered approach to activating our communities and creating vibrancy for all walks of life to enjoy. The Placemaking Plan is a holistic approach meant to simultaneously address these elements in a unified plan.

Whether it be the design of streets and buildings, the amenities of public spaces, or the functionality of infrastructure, successful placemaking impacts the way people engage in community and with nature. This endeavor is vital to the success of the City of Rochester as these relationships contribute to a sense of pride and quality of life for residents and visitors. Enhancing all factors related to placemaking will continue to position Rochester to attract more residents and businesses. As noted in the [2018 Citywide Housing Market Study](#) (Recommendation #2), building up a critical mass of residents and activities is crucial to addressing concentrated poverty, a condition that is connected to nearly all of the city's challenges.

Economic vitality, civic beauty, and equitable access to great public services has a significant impact on the daily experiences of locals and visitors. When these ideals are present and nurtured in a building, street, or district, they create a strong sense of place and foster further care for that place. When these ideals are ignored, or are challenged by a declining economy or other factors, places fall prey to poor design or disinvestment. Cities then lack sufficient resources to engage in positive placemaking, which amplifies the cycle of disinvestment.

Rochester is home to neighborhoods that vary widely in their sense of place and overall health, boasting proud and vibrant neighborhoods, extremely impoverished neighborhoods, and many places that fall somewhere in the middle. The *Rochester 2034 Placemaking Plan*, in conjunction with the housing market typologies outlined in [Initiative Area 3-Section A, Housing](#), represents a vision for enhancing the city's physical realm so as to positively influence our economic, social, and natural environments.



INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

The principles and ideas in this plan reflect *Rochester 2034's* vast community engagement efforts. They also present many future opportunities for residents to participate in implementing projects. Placemaking puts a high value on community-supported projects as well as the organic generation of new ideas to revitalize our public spaces and neighborhoods.

While this Initiative Area focuses on the multitude of factors influencing placemaking, there are many Goals and Strategies throughout *Rochester 2034* that contribute to the Goals of this section, directly or indirectly.

Guided by the [Placemaking Principles](#) listed in [Initiative Area 1-Section C, Vision and Principles](#), this Initiative Area explores intentional planning around a series of interrelated physical elements. The first collection of elements discussed in this section have recommendations that are location-specific and are therefore found on the Placemaking Plan Map as well as the Action Plan:

- future land use (character areas)
- multi-use trails and bicycle facilities
- parks and open spaces
- community facilities
- Genesee River access
- infrastructure and streetscapes
- neighborhood planning



An additional collection of elements in this Initiative Area are equally important to placemaking efforts but are city-wide in nature. Thus they are addressed in the Action Plan but do not have location-specific recommendations on the map.

- historic preservation
- strategic development sites
- public space design within private development
- reuse of vacant lands
- grass roots initiatives
- public space programming
- parking policies

The Placemaking Plan illustrates a particular emphasis on the relationship between land use and transportation, as existing and planned mobility corridors (transit, multi-use trails, and mixed-use neighborhood corridors) influence proposed patterns of higher density activity and vice versa. Each of these interrelated elements is described in detail later in this Initiative Area and displayed on The Placemaking Plan Map.

Placemaking is also greatly enhanced through active groups of organized residents, business owners, and community organizations. Collectively they contribute to placemaking through efforts such as neighborhood beautification, programming of public spaces, participating in local planning and development projects, individual property maintenance, providing desirable goods and services, and fostering a spirit of neighborliness.

Combining each of the above elements into a comprehensive Placemaking Plan illustrates their interrelated nature and provides a more holistic view of how to create places of great character. The Plan also provides comprehensive context and guidance for decision making such as future capital improvements, grant writing, building local capacity, and the development review process.

B. FUTURE LAND USE

OVERVIEW OF LAND USE PLANNING

Comprehensive plans traditionally have a future land use plan which is a geographic vision for how land uses and urban form should change and be preserved over time. In legacy industrial cities, the future land use plan is typically designed to promote redevelopment, redensification, and historic preservation. **Land use planning in an urban setting requires a strategic blend of orderly growth, organic flexibility, and preservation of neighborhood and natural assets.** The Placemaking Plan attempts to strike that balance.

New York State’s Consolidated Laws, General City Law, §28a contains the enabling legislation that encourages municipalities to address “the existing and proposed location and intensity of land uses” for the purpose of “protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens”. Whereas the city’s zoning map and ordinance serve as the regulatory tool for managing growth, the future land use plan provides concept-level guidance for future zoning updates.

Historically, land use planning and zoning regulations were used to segregate land uses in order to minimize the adverse impacts of large-scale commerce and industry on residential neighborhoods. While some health and safety benefits were realized by that approach, the automobile-centered culture of the past 70 years amplified the separation of uses, including among highly compatible uses such as housing, shopping, and employment centers. Twentieth century zoning regulations effectively eroded the traditional small-scale, walkable development pattern that existed for millennia and reduced the tangible sense of community.

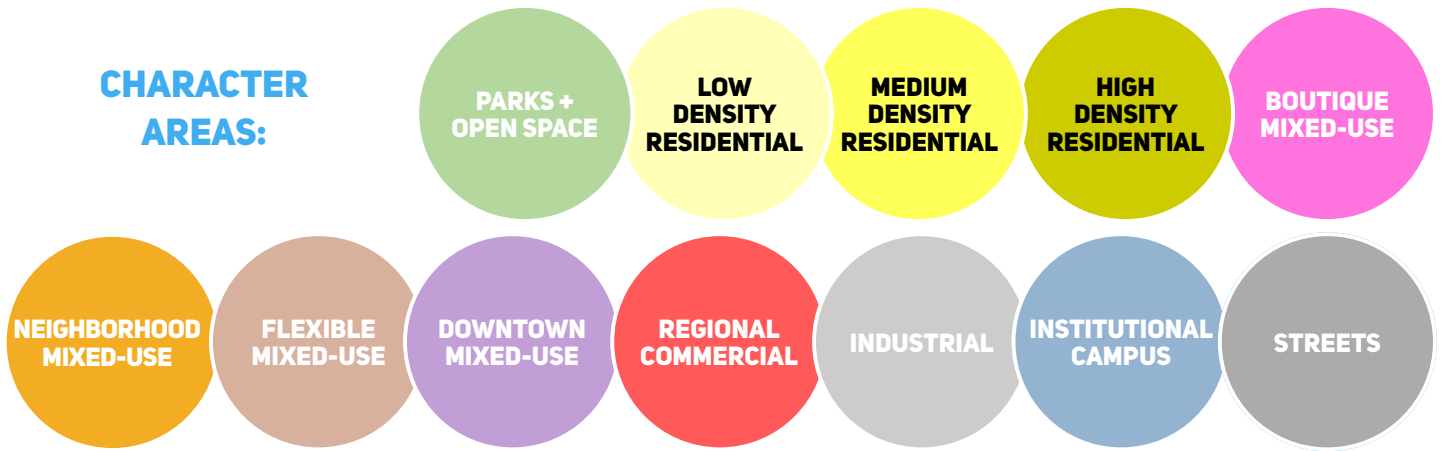
Form-based and performance-based zoning codes have emerged as an alternative to traditional zoning, focusing more on the design of buildings and

sites rather than the use of land. This approach effectively encourages a mix of compatible uses, rather than separation. Rochester currently has a form-based code for the Center City District, Marina District, and Collegetown Village District. Aside from heavy industry and other high-impact uses, these codes allow for almost all uses in buildings provided that the design of the site and building meet certain standards for quality, performance, and pedestrian-scale features.

While this form-based approach may not be appropriate for residential areas, it is recommended to be expanded beyond downtown into other mixed-use areas throughout the city. Additional recommendations related to this approach are found below in descriptions of individual Character Areas.



CHARACTER AREAS:



POSITIONING ROCHESTER FOR GROWTH

The Placemaking Plan is meant to both enhance the quality of life for residents and to facilitate the repopulation of the city. Having lost more than a third of its population since the 1960s, Rochester must build up the critical mass of residents and consumers needed to support small businesses, stabilize the tax base, increase housing affordability, and provide critical services to residents in need. We must also work towards an environment where current residents can age in place, providing diverse housing options and support services for an aging population.

The dramatic population loss has also resulted in the concentration of poverty in certain neighborhoods, which is correlated with numerous other challenges faced by the community. As such, The Placemaking Plan includes numerous strategies to encourage the restoration of a critical mass of residents and businesses through re-legalizing the city's historic built form. After decades of decline, the city stands poised to have a stabilized, and potentially slowly growing, population.

Cultivating population growth is challenging in a legacy industrial city and is even more difficult to accurately predict. However, as the city has enjoyed many signs of revitalization in recent years, we must take an optimistic approach and position the community to welcome and nurture new residents and businesses. Positioning Rochester for growth and vitality requires greater flexibility in land use planning along with a comprehensive approach to other placemaking elements. As such, The Placemaking Plan, in particular the land use planning element, is meant to direct growth and development while not being overly prescriptive.

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

INVESTMENT AND GROWTH MUST BE FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL FOR STRONG CORRIDORS AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS.

CHARACTER AREAS OVERVIEW

The *Rochester 2034* Placemaking Plan Map displays categories of various land uses, or Character Areas, as they are recommended to evolve over the next 10 to 15 years. As the city is almost entirely built out and change occurs slowly in a relatively weak market setting, it is envisioned that much of the city's land use patterns will remain the same. Modest changes are proposed in the form of:

- refined zoning district boundaries;
- greater flexibility in allowable uses;
- high design standards;
- allowances for improved vitality of various districts;
- recommended form and scale of new development; and
- promoting the critical mass of quality housing needed to support economic and affordability goals.

Character Area boundaries are depicted on The Placemaking Plan Map with gently curving edges and consistent buffers between adjacent categories. This is meant to graphically reinforce the conceptual and visionary nature of future land use planning. While the map is intended to inform a future zoning map, the boundaries do not follow property lines and should not be interpreted as specific edges of new zoning districts.

In many areas, the desired character is consistent with the existing character. The Placemaking Plan then serves as a guide for preserving and strengthening that character. In other locations, modest modifications to the pattern of use and form are recommended through revised zoning regulations and other placemaking strategies.

In addition to the aforementioned Placemaking Principles, several factors were considered in

developing these Character Area boundaries. These include:

- existing land use and zoning;
- current patterns of residential density (such as number of units in a structure);
- patterns of existing commercial and mixed-use building sizes;
- commercial and activity centers identified by neighborhood associations;
- transit corridors; and
- city planning best practices.

Regional Transit Service (RTS) corridors were factored into focusing a critical mass of housing and commercial activity. The *Reimagine RTS* plan contains “Frequent” and “Local” corridors that influenced the Character Areas. These corridors are further supported and expanded by the findings of the City's 2018 *Transit Supportive Corridor Study*, which also informed the design of the Character Areas.

In general, each of the transit corridors were recommended for restoring at least a medium level of housing density and in many cases a higher concentration of mixed-use activity. This reflects the importance of coordinating land use and transportation planning. Additionally, it reflects the fact that Rochester's population has shrunk dramatically since the 1960s and no longer has the critical mass of residents to support all of the commercial corridors and buildings that were once fully occupied. Therefore, investment and growth must be focused and strategic to maximize the potential for strong corridors and healthy neighborhoods.



CHARACTER AREAS OVERVIEW

CONTINUED

In identifying the Character Areas, care was taken to ensure that the majority of residential areas are in walking or biking distance of mixed-use centers, striking a balance of visionary thinking and market realities. The land use plan cannot control the larger market forces at play within the city and region but it can at least ensure the opportunity for some commercial activity to be proximate to housing.

Each of the Character Areas is described on the following pages. Each is defined by the preferred uses that should be considered for these areas during a future zoning code update. Also included are a description of the geographic pattern and design considerations such as form and scale, as illustrated by example imagery. Some images are from Rochester, illustrating high-quality, desirable building and site designs that have been achieved locally. Other images are taken from other cities in order to inspire future development to achieve high standards.

While the names, locations, and associated recommendations of these Character Areas should not necessarily be interpreted as new zoning districts, they do provide a community-wide vision for development and substantial guidance for revising the City's Zoning Code and Map.

The Placemaking Plan consists of 12 Character Areas:

- >> **PARKS + OPEN SPACE**
- >> **LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**
- >> **MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**
- >> **HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**
- >> **BOUTIQUE MIXED-USE**
- >> **NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE**
- >> **FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE**
- >> **DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE**
- >> **REGIONAL COMMERCIAL**
- >> **INDUSTRIAL**
- >> **INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS**
- >> **STREETS**

Note: While The Placemaking Plan is intended to be the foundation for future zoning code updates, it does not incorporate existing or potential zoning-specific tools like Planned Development Districts, Urban Renewal Districts, or Overlay Districts. The use of those tools should be reevaluated at the time of the zoning code and map update. In addition, the Village Center Districts on the current Zoning Map should supersede the Character Areas shown on the Placemaking Map, as these Districts are already design oriented and mixed-use in nature, consistent with the objectives of the Mixed-Use Character Areas.

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

BUILDING HEIGHTS IN MIXED-USE AREAS

The Placemaking Plan designates a series of Character Areas across the city based on building form and use. Perhaps one of the most important transitions is between Boutique Mixed-Use (BMU) or Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU) Character Areas and adjacent residential areas. Given that most business districts are a single property deep on either side of a corridor, these Character Areas are often immediately adjacent to houses on side streets. How that transition from a commercial or mixed-use building to a residence is designed is very important.

The Placemaking Plan is designed to mitigate conflicts while encouraging density along key corridors and transit routes. In BMU areas, which are meant to be a somewhat smaller scale and intensity than NMU areas, it is recommended that buildings be limited to three stories. In NMU areas, a limit of four stories is recommended. Current minimum heights, which provide a sense of enclosure in a streetscape and reinforce urban designs, should be retained. In addition, given that FMU areas are meant to create design and use flexibility in a wide variety of settings, and that uses in those settings are evolving more than traditional mixed-use corridors, building height minimums and maximums established during the zoning code update should be based on street typologies and local context.



Example of a four story building constructed in the 19th Century (South Clinton Avenue)

Allowing taller buildings in the BMU and NMU Character Areas is important for several reasons:

- 1 It fits the historic pattern of development along Rochester's mixed-use corridors, some dating back 140 years.
- 2 Higher density development along these corridors contributes to establishing a critical mass of residents (customers) that will support local businesses. Rochester's dramatic loss in population since the 1950s, whether it be from traditional neighborhoods or upper story apartments, is directly correlated with the decline in traditional storefront shops.
- 3 This critical mass of residents (and businesses) supports the higher frequency transit that RTS is proposing for many of these corridors. In turn, the higher frequency transit supports the residents and businesses by offering options for mobility. These corridors provide an option in the Rochester region for people who choose not to, or cannot, use a private car.

When carefully designed, higher density development in these mixed-use areas can fit very well into the neighborhood context. There are some basic ways, as shown to the right and on the next page, to ensure that new development in these corridors minimizes negative impacts on adjacent houses on side streets.

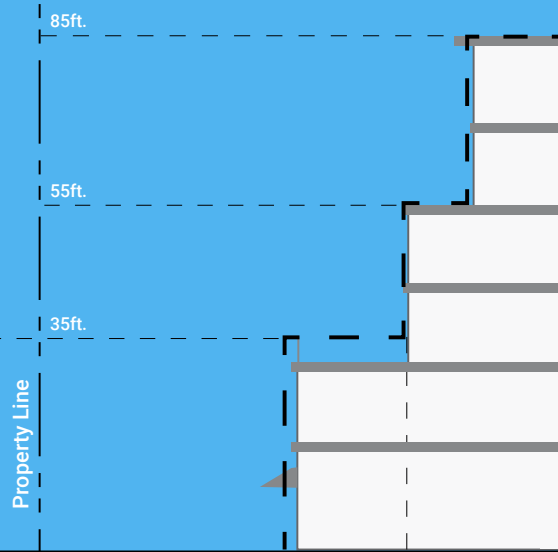
REAR BUFFER

Whenever possible, locate parking and/or driveways between the larger mixed-use building and the smaller houses. This ensures that the larger building does not create substantial shadows or privacy issues. A great example of this is the 2007 mixed-use building at 661 South Avenue. Despite being four stories tall, the rear parking lot buffers the larger building from the residential properties to the west. Locating parking between the larger building and smaller buildings creates a buffer.

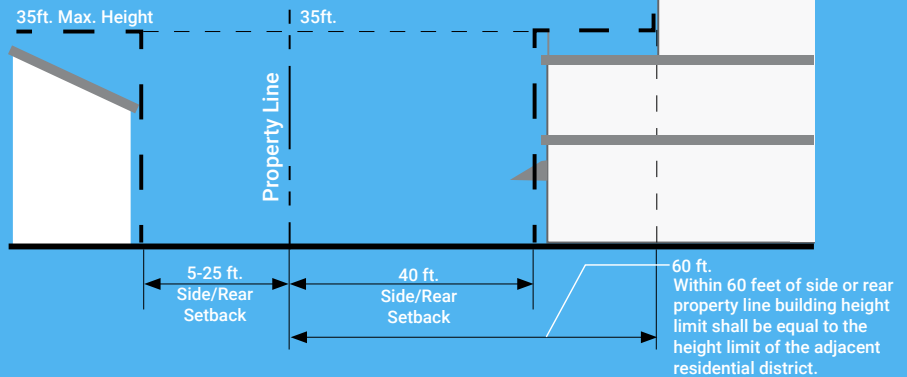
BUILDING HEIGHTS IN MIXED-USE AREAS (CONTINUED)

STEP DOWN Whenever possible, reduce the height of the portion of mixed use building toward the rear where it is closer to adjacent homes. There are several historic and recent examples of this. Many cities include requirements for this in their zoning code, a consideration for the update to Rochester's zoning code.

- 1 Example of Rear Buffer and Step Down: Although the building is taller than this plan recommends, the driveway is used as a buffer and the building is stepped to reduce visual impact (Toronto, ON).



- 2 Example of zoning code requirements to ensure a well-designed transition between larger and smaller buildings.



Example of rear buffer parking at 661 South Avenue



Front View



Rear View



Aerial View

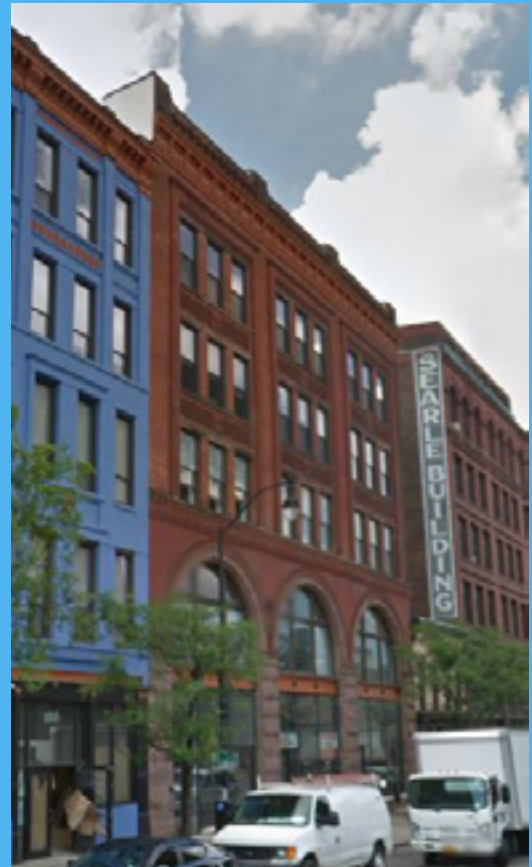
B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

THE URBAN FORM OF MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

In cities, mixed-use patterns have both a vertical and horizontal form. Vertical mixed-use refers to individual buildings that have both a residential and commercial use. Traditional “Main Street” type buildings contain retail, restaurants, or services on the first floor with offices and/or housing on upper floors. Horizontal mixed-use refers to neighborhoods or districts where there is a mix of uses within walking or biking distance of each other. The Placemaking Plan accounts for both types of mixed-use development as it seeks to encourage active transportation choices and vibrant neighborhoods.

Vertical mixed-use buildings have long been a highly desired form in urban areas, especially in downtowns and primary corridors. While this form remains ideal for mixed-use areas, the City and community must temper their expectations with the realities of the evolving retail market. The retail industry is changing significantly and, coupled with the relatively weak market conditions in Rochester, it is not always feasible to expect a commercial use will be viable on the first floor of a new or redeveloped multi-story building. Recommendations related to downtown’s retail environment can be found under the Downtown Mixed-Use Character Area heading.

VERTICAL



HORIZONTAL





B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> PARKS + OPEN SPACE

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Parks, playgrounds, athletic facilities, trails, supportive buildings and facilities, waterfront amenities, and large natural areas. It should include official parks as well as those publicly-owned lands that should remain undeveloped.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

Genesee Valley Park, Riverside Cemetery, Troup St Playground, Genesee River Gorge.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERNS:

Aside from a concentration along the Genesee River corridor, there are no particular patterns in the dispersion of parks and open spaces within the city. Large areas are designated with a green area on the map. Small areas have a park symbol but there is no regulatory or recommendation significance to the distinction.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

These lands are and should remain primarily undeveloped, providing ample natural areas and recreation opportunities that are a respite from the active urban environment. However, it is important that select parks have up-to-date improvements and amenities that enhance the park experience. The City should continue to apply high standards of landscape design and quality architecture for park facilities.

A particular focus of this Character Area is the Genesee River corridor. The Placemaking Plan Map identifies numerous opportunities for improving access to the water's edge, increasing boating opportunities, and enhancing mobility and recreational infrastructure in the corridor, consistent with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and ROC the Riverway initiative.

Multi-use trails are a critical element of the city's park landscape. Further expansion of the trail system is a high priority and is outlined below and illustrated on the Placemaking Plan Map. As described in the [Initiative Area 4-Section B, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space](#), it is highly recommended that the City increase its resources dedicated to park design, development, and maintenance. The value of parks, open spaces, and multi-use trails, as well as the potential for more and better facilities, was one of the most common points of feedback throughout the community engagement process.

There are some privately-owned properties within this Character Area. During a zoning code update, these private lands must retain some development rights. However, given their unique natural and geologic setting, especially within the Genesee River Gorge, zoning code provisions should provide protections for adjacent natural features.





**PARKS +
OPEN SPACE**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

»» LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Traditional detached single-family homes are the primary use, located on lots that are generally larger than the other residential Character Areas. While this is the lowest density of residential designations, these areas were developed prior to widespread use of the private automobile.

In the interest of restoring a critical population mass, existing two-family homes (as-built or legally converted) should be allowed as-of-right and no longer subject to lost rights through abandonment or destruction. Over time, if Rochester's population increases, the City should consider additional affordability strategies that increase housing options, such as allowing one extra (subordinate) unit in the this Character Area. For now, those uses are and should continue to be permitted in the remainder of residential areas.

New construction of two-family homes should not be permitted in the Low Density Residential Character Area but encouraged in other residential Character Areas. Single-family homes that are attached, such as townhomes, should remain permitted as-of-right. Permitted uses and associated regulations should be revised to accommodate emerging housing types that diversify our housing stock, reflecting changing demographics, household sizes, and lifestyle preferences.

New single-family home construction, such as scattered site infill projects, is most appropriate in Low and Medium Density Character Areas. Multi-family residential development (new construction or rehabilitation of historic buildings) should be focused in Medium and High Density Character Areas, as well as in all mixed-use areas.

An effective way to prevent vacant buildings while furthering the traditional small-scale, walkable development pattern is to allow the opportunity for built-as commercial buildings located in all residential Character Areas the opportunity to be occupied with a low-intensity commercial use. This use should be allowed as-of-right.

Lastly, the City should reexamine the definition and design/performance regulations related to home occupations and live-work spaces. This is consistent with the notion of "zoning for jobs", a goal supported by multiple strategies in the Placemaking Plan. The option of starting a business from a home allows an entrepreneur a low-cost opportunity to build a business to a point where it is successful enough to move to a commercial space. Most homes, however, are located in a residential district so home-based business activities are limited by current zoning regulations to avoid the encroachment of commercial activities into residential neighborhoods. Regulatory burdens should be reduced to further encourage these uses while not compromising the character of their surroundings.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

Browncroft, 19th Ward, Maplewood, Highland Park, Lyell-Otis, 14621

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERNS:

The geographic relationship between Low and Medium Density Residential is both reflective of the desired pattern of restored density and somewhat concentric in nature. Low Density Residential areas generally fill the spaces beyond the Medium Density Residential Character Area that encircles downtown and in between the higher-density corridors.



**LOW
DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

➤➤ LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (CONTINUED)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER AREAS:

There are several core features that define the longstanding character of all residential neighborhoods that should be celebrated and preserved. Urban neighborhoods are unique because of unifying elements that provide a sense that residents belong to something bigger than themselves and their property. These pedestrian-scale elements include sidewalks, street trees, tree lawns, streetlights, front porches, and a relatively consistent, shallow setback of homes from the street.

Together, these features create a sense of spatial intimacy that makes walkable urban neighborhoods different from car-oriented neighborhoods. These features also act as a stabilizing and somewhat predictable visual rhythm of a neighborhood and encourage residents to take care and pride beyond their yards. They make Rochester's neighborhoods special while encouraging a strong sense of community.

These unifying elements should be encouraged in future construction and preserved in redevelopment and general maintenance. Specifically, converting front porches to enclosed rooms should continue to be prohibited, and the City should continue to discourage property owners from placing major visual obstructions like fences and parked vehicles in front yards. However, regulations for all residential Character Areas should be more flexible so as to not necessarily require that new homes match existing traditional architectural styles, as long as they do not compromise the core features mentioned above.

Current code, regulations, and policies, namely the 5,000 square foot minimum lot size in residential (R) districts and the "unbuildable lot" policy, are inconsistent with the current built form of the city and our desired restoration of urban vitality, density, and pedestrian scale design. When applied to infill development on large parcels, they prohibit subdivision into lots that match the typical lot sizes found throughout the city. These regulations and policies should be revised so as to encourage the continuation of scale and form that define Rochester's historic neighborhoods. Consideration should be given to basing the minimum lot sizes for single-family detached homes on the average size of residential lots in the surrounding area, allowing for some percentage of variance, rather than dictating a one-size-fits-all approach.





A CELEBRATION OF SIDEWALKS AND FRONT PORCHES

A consistent five-foot wide walkway is found along nearly every residential street in the city, encouraging people to walk for leisure, social, and practical reasons. Sidewalks not only connect all houses to their neighbors on a block, but are a human-scale, elaborate transportation network that links to nearly every home and business in Rochester. The presence of that network, which is largely decorated with tree lawns and street trees, is a major point of pride and unity for residents.

As well, the front porch serves as a transition zone between private and public space in support of the sidewalk commons. It is a design feature unique to North American residential architecture. It is so integral to urban and village living that the front porch is part of the Landmark Society of Western New York's 2017 *Five to Revive* list, which celebrates and advocates for the preservation of key community assets.



**LOW
DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

One- to four-family homes allowed as-of-right, not subject to lost rights through abandonment or destruction. This Character Area will likely include more scattered non-residential non-conforming properties. The City should explore strategies for encouraging more four-family buildings and other small-scale, incremental development.

As with the Low Density Residential Character Area, built-as commercial buildings should be allowed the opportunity to be occupied with a low-intensity commercial use. New single-family home construction, such as scattered site infill projects, is most appropriate in Low and Medium Density Character Areas. Multi-family residential development (new construction or rehabilitation of historic buildings) should be focused in Medium and High Density Character Areas, as well as in all mixed-use areas. Permitted uses and associated regulations should be revised to accommodate emerging housing types that diversify our housing stock, reflecting changing demographics, household sizes, and lifestyle preferences.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

Park Ave (western portion of the neighborhood), South Wedge, Marketview Heights, Corn Hill, Monroe Village, Susan B. Anthony, Grove Place

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

The geographic relationship between Low and Medium Density Residential is both reflective of the desired pattern of restored density and somewhat concentric in nature. Medium Density Residential areas should be clustered closer to downtown, forming a radial band that starts about a half mile from the city center and stretches between 1.25 to two miles from downtown. This reflects the historic built form of Rochester as these areas were generally developed prior to 1900 and reflect a city built around walking and relatively limited transit options. These areas are home to the majority of side streets adjacent to primary mixed-use corridors, heavily interspersed with older industrial and commercial buildings.

Beyond that radial band, they should also cover the non-mixed use segments of most *Reimagine RTS* corridors. The distinction between Low Density and Medium Density Residential areas is also based on the location of a higher concentration of structures with three to four residential units.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

See [Design Considerations for All Residential Character Areas](#).





**MEDIUM
DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED))

CHARACTER AREAS

>> HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Residential buildings of all sizes, especially those with five or more units, and some commercial and mixed-use structures. Multi-unit buildings include apartment complexes, large apartment buildings, and converted mansions. These areas tend to have an even higher concentration of scattered non-residential uses than Low and Medium Density Residential designations. Built-as commercial buildings located in this Character Area should be provided low-intensity commercial options as-of-right. Permitted uses and associated regulations should be revised to accommodate emerging housing types and trends that diversify our housing stock, reflecting changing demographics, household sizes, and lifestyle preferences.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

Ellison Park Apartments, converted East Ave and Lake Ave mansions, high-density apartment complexes around Joseph/Clinton/Upper Falls.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

The High Density Residential Character Area, which has limited commercial uses compared to the mixed-use areas, should be close to Downtown along with a scattering of large apartment complexes and corridors of converted mansions. High density housing is present and further encouraged within all mixed-use designations, especially downtown.

It should be noted that not every apartment complex is designated as High Density Residential on The Placemaking Plan Map. As with the current zoning district map, this designation focuses on larger complexes, especially when there is a concentration of apartment buildings and multi-unit converted residences nearby. Also similar to the current zoning map, many apartment complexes are absorbed by Low Density or Medium Density Residential Character Areas, as they have a relatively small impact on the character of the larger area. As most apartment complexes were constructed after Rochester was fully built out but prior to the current zoning map, their distribution is scattered across the city.





**HIGH
DENSITY
RESIDENTIAL**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (CONTINUED)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

See [Design Considerations for All Residential Character Areas](#). In addition, the following considerations should be applied to high density residential character areas.

Regulations for these areas should be more flexible so as to not necessarily require that they match existing traditional architectural styles. Current Zoning Code requirements relating to lot area should be revised to encourage more traditional urban forms and densities, including increasing the maximum lot coverage and adjusting minimum lot size requirements to allow for various arrangements of multiple units.

New apartment buildings or complexes should avoid suburban style, auto-oriented site designs. Development proposals often include at least one parking space per unit, reflective of developers, financiers, and the broader culture being conditioned to accept a car-centric built environment. However, there are many examples of apartment buildings within the city that have functioned for decades with less than one parking space per unit. Developers should demonstrate that they are designing first for pedestrians and the urban surroundings, not for vehicular access and storage.

Rochester also has investment programs dedicated to multi-family, low- or mixed-income housing projects. The City should continue its progress in raising standards for architectural design, use of quality materials, pedestrian-oriented site design, and consistency with the historic built environment of cities. The nature of subsidized housing developments does not have to translate to substandard designs and materials.

Numerous examples in other cities demonstrate that through creativity and a commitment to quality, dignity and pride in design can be present despite the absence of market rate rents. As with market rate projects in other Character Areas, high-quality, pedestrian-scale architectural detailing and materials should be prioritized over the use of EIFS, vinyl, large fiber cement panels or similar large-scale, out-of-context techniques. The use of quality glass, brick, stone, and similarly fine-grained, pedestrian-scaled materials is especially important for first floor facades and if possible, all other highly visible portions of the building.

In addition, authentic and time-tested techniques to break up large building masses should be employed rather than seemingly random color/material changes disguised as a contemporary aesthetic. A significant part of desired urban building design is a strong attention to detail at corners, entryways, fenestrations, and cornice lines. This is a standard that is compatible across multiple architectural styles, not just traditional aesthetics.

Lastly, the above standards should be applied to market rate multi-family and mixed-use projects. Higher standards for design are not necessarily incompatible with a relatively weak real estate market. However, the community should expect that market conditions, along with evolving architectural tastes and practices, will not typically result in replicating traditional buildings of the 19th and early 20th Centuries.



HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> BOUTIQUE MIXED-USE

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Multi-family residential, residential uses when part of a mixed-use building, and commercial uses within spaces up to 3,000 square feet. Mixed-use buildings should be allowed to contain more than one 3,000 square foot space. These areas should have smaller lots and smaller mixed-use or commercial structures when compared to other mixed-use Character Areas. Commercial uses should have a relatively low impact on surrounding residential areas.

One consideration during the zoning code update would be to align the regulation of uses with the use and occupancy classification system of the NYS Building Code. Defining uses in terms of broad categories and occupancy would be more efficient from an administrative perspective and could also be more effective in addressing use limitations because the regulatory emphasis would be on occupancy rather than strictly on use.

For example, a small neighborhood bar that allows an occupancy of 35 people would have less impact on a neighborhood than a large bar where two hundred or more people could be gathering at any one time. Both bars are treated the same under current regulations. If the code were designed around occupancy rather than use, they would be regulated differently. This approach should be considered for all mixed-use Character Areas.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

St. Paul and Norton, Arnett and Warwick, Park and Colby, Jay and Ames.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

Boutique Mixed-Use areas are small nodes of commercial activity centered on an intersection or two in residential areas. These areas are depicted as either a circle or oval on the map. The size of the circle or oval is not meant to propose a precise edge of a future zoning district, but rather is a relatively consistent graphic depiction to reinforce this Character Area being nodal in nature.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

See [Design Considerations for All Mixed-Use Character Areas](#), and sidebar on [Building Heights in Mixed-Use Areas](#).





**BOUTIQUE
MIXED-USE**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Multi-family residential, residential uses when part of a mixed-use building, and commercial uses, including small-scale artisanal manufacturing such as chocolatiers, cheese makers, and microbreweries, within up to 9,000 square foot spaces. Mixed-use buildings should be allowed to contain more than one 9,000 square foot space. High density residential uses are encouraged to increase vitality and support for local businesses.

Auto-oriented uses should be subject to additional requirements in order to mitigate impacts on the public realm. Auto sales as a primary use should be directed to Industrial and Regional Commercial Character Areas.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

South Ave, Thurston Rd, North Clinton Ave, Monroe Ave, Dewey Ave

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

Commercial and mixed-use corridors are typically at least four blocks in length and are sometimes very long. These areas tend to radiate from the center of Rochester out towards the edges. Historically, these areas developed along transit routes, some dating back to Rochester's first public transit in the 1860s. They are primarily depicted as linear corridors with a consistent 300-foot width. The distance is not meant to propose a precise edge of a future zoning district, but rather is a consistent graphic depiction to reinforce their linear nature. Although shown as linear, many mixed-use corridors have an intersection or two that is a key node that serves as an "urban village" center. Examples include South and Gregory, Park and Berkeley, Dewey and Driving Park, and Culver and Merchants.

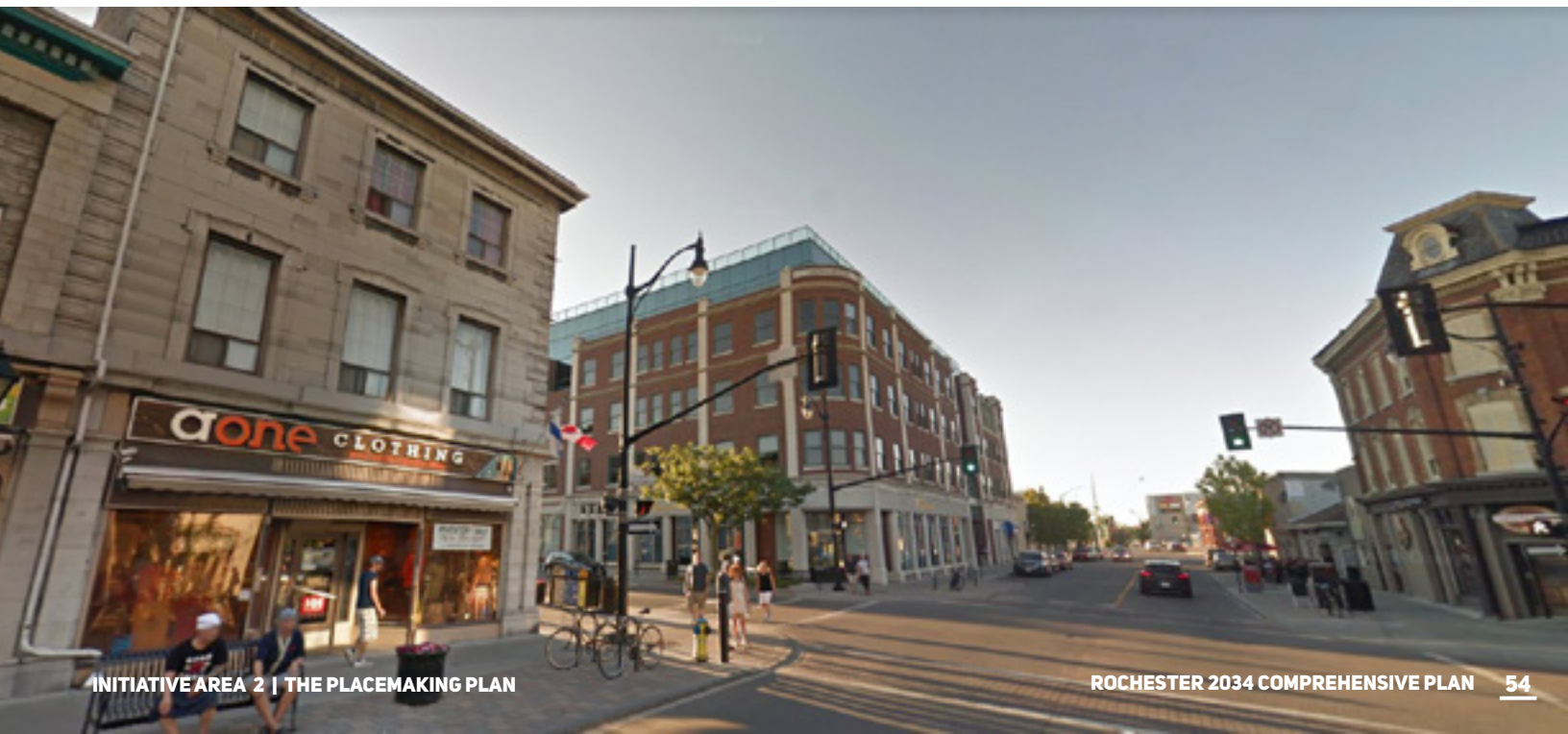
Some areas are more representative of the uses and form desired for this Character Area than others. For example, South Ave is highly representative of Neighborhood Mixed-Use designation, whereas Portland Ave north of Norton St is rather car-oriented but could potentially be retrofitted over time.

Nearly all Frequent and Local corridors of the *Reimagine RTS* project are substantially covered by Neighborhood Mixed-use designations. Breaks in those designations along the corridors are almost always covered by Medium Density Residential or other mixed-use designations. Combined, all of these higher activity Character Areas promote the restoration of density that is needed to leverage investments, increase housing choices, and build the critical mass of population needed to support corridor businesses, vibrant neighborhoods, and frequent transit.





**NEIGHBORHOOD
MIXED-USE**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE (CONTINUED)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL MIXED-USE CHARACTER AREAS:

The regulations of all Mixed-Use Character Areas should recognize the community's desire to maintain its historic character, provide for enhanced walkability, and support a vibrant economic and neighborhood environment. As such, it is recommended that all existing commercial zoning districts be redefined as mixed-use districts, with the exception of a future district reflecting the [Regional Commercial Character Area](#). This change will emphasize the critical role that a restored density of housing, whether within mixed-use buildings or as standalone structures, plays in supporting neighborhood businesses.

Pedestrian safety and experience should be prioritized while balancing the needs of the automobile. This includes the provision of amenities such as ample sidewalks (circulation within and around the site), buffer landscaping for parking lots, seating, transit stops, bicycle parking, and highly-visible crosswalks. Multi-story buildings are encouraged when feasible. Buildings should be attractively designed and should address the public realm on all visible sides. They should be built to the sidewalk, or as close as possible, with parking lots (if any) located in the rear of buildings. Urban-appropriate landscape and hardscape areas should be designed as integral features of the land use, as illustrated by the [Public Space Design within Private Development](#).

The City of Rochester currently utilizes a form-based style code for some zoning districts, with the Center City District (CCD) being the most prominent, placing a far greater emphasis on the design of buildings and sites than the uses that are permitted or not permitted. The Placemaking Plan recommends that this approach be applied to all mixed-use Character Areas throughout the city with some variation included to recognize desired differences in scale and neighborhood impacts. Most form-based codes provide detailed guidance for new construction, however, Rochester's form-based code for mixed-use areas must also provide clear guidance for renovating existing buildings.

The form, massing, proportion and composition of architecture in these areas should complement the historic character of the city's mixed-use districts. However, quality of design and material should take precedent over disingenuous attempts to recreate historic styles through the application of superficial details. While the community has expressed a strong preference for traditional architectural styles, it is recognized that the Rochester real estate market often makes such designs and techniques financially infeasible. Additionally, new technologies, materials, and sustainable practices have made notable advancements over historic styles and designs. Lastly, minimalist contemporary styles, with their extensive use of glass, metal, and wood, are gaining in popularity.

The City should continue to work with the architecture, development, and trades community to raise the design standards for building projects while acknowledging that Rochester has a relatively weak real estate market. Regardless of the architectural style employed for a project, it is always critical that the design of the first floor engages the street with pedestrian-scaled, high quality materials and substantial transparency for non-residential uses. These standards must be used in concert with site design standards that preserve the pedestrian-oriented environment and place parking and other auto-related elements to the back of the property.

See sidebar on [Building Heights in Mixed-Use Areas](#). Lastly, the city should revise certain [Parking Policies](#) and strategies in mixed-use areas, as outlined later in this Section.



**NEIGHBORHOOD
MIXED-USE**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Commercial and mixed-use structures with no size restrictions, relatively low-impact production and industrial uses, and some higher density residential structures. This Character Area is meant to reflect the growing popularity of loft residences, unique businesses, artisanal crafts and production, and creative adaptive re-use of legacy industrial buildings of the late 19th and early 20th century. Building sizes vary significantly and include some higher density residential structures. Auto-oriented uses should be subject to additional requirements in order to mitigate impacts on the public realm. Auto sales as a primary use should be directed to Industrial and Regional Commercial Character Areas.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

Hungerford Building and Village Gate area, Lyell and Dewey area, Eastman Business Park (portion of master planned area), north side of University Ave east of Elton Street, University Ave Business Park, St. Paul and Upper Falls area, High Falls District, Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA).

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

The buildings in this Character Area tend to be less organized along a corridor and are more of a district in shape. The areas tend to be clustered in a band around downtown and along the east side's primary railroad corridor. While the existing Center City Zoning District (CCD) extends well beyond the conventional Inner Loop boundary, the Flexible Mixed-Use designation recognizes that some areas outside of the Inner Loop have a different character than downtown, yet deserve the same use flexibility and high design standards of the CCD.





**FLEXIBLE
MIXED-USE**



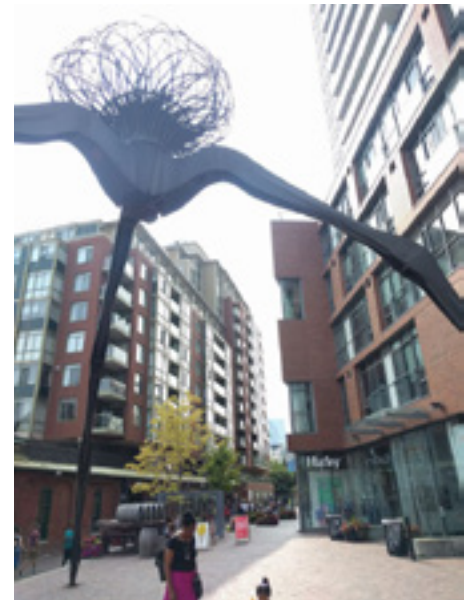
B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE (CONTINUED)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

See [Design Considerations for All Mixed-Use Character Areas](#). Specific to the Flexible Mixed-Use designation, this Character Area recognizes that many urban industrial uses no longer have noxious impacts on their surroundings. These areas allow for production to continue with minimal neighborhood impacts or for these buildings to transition into non-industrial uses. Compared to other mixed-use Character Areas, transparency, building entrance, and materials requirements should be more reflective of the traditional late 19th and early 20th century industrial architecture which did not often have first floor storefronts. For new construction in this area, first floor transparency regulations for non-manufacturing uses should match those in other Mixed-Use Character Areas.





FLEXIBLE MIXED-USE



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Mixed-use buildings, large employers, apartment buildings, entertainment venues, restaurants, retail, large public facilities, regional destinations, and primary public spaces. This is the highest density of all Character Areas, functioning as both the center of the city and the region. Mixed-use high rise buildings abound, framing vibrant streets in this hub of activity.

As noted in [The Urban Form of Mixed-Use Development](#), siting retail in buildings with a vertical mix of uses can be challenging in the Rochester market. While that is certainly the desired form for downtown buildings in general, the evolving nature of the retail industry in mid-sized Rust Belt cities should influence expectations. Given the limited market for small-scale retail in a downtown setting, when that use does materialize it is critical to focus first floor activity on smaller nodes or blocks within the larger mixed-use area. Restaurant and entertainment businesses are slightly more location-resilient than shopping, as they are sometimes the lone business visited by patrons on a given trip. In contrast, shoppers are often looking for the experience of a cohesive district with multiple adjacent options for browsing.

Encouraging first floor commercial uses, especially retail uses, throughout downtown could effectively dilute the market potential, putting those businesses at risk and missing the opportunity to assemble a critical mass of activity. This recommendation should not necessarily translate to prohibiting commercial or retail establishments in fringe areas of downtown. However, through the City's request for proposal (RFP) process for selling City-owned properties, as well as ongoing partnerships with building owners and developers, downtown stakeholders should be cognizant of this dynamic and plan accordingly.

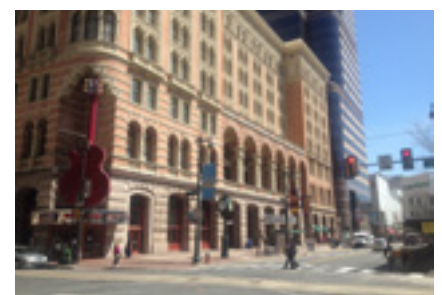
EXAMPLE AREAS:

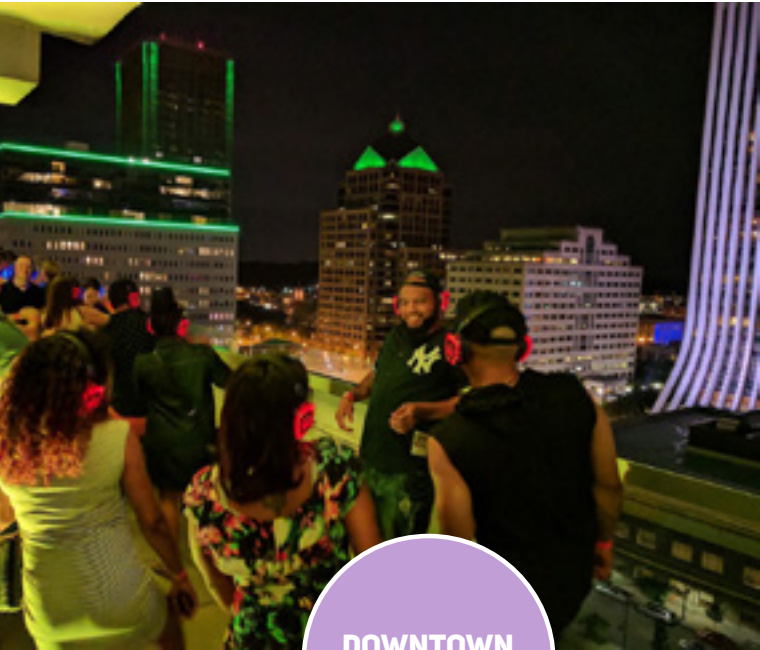
Downtown, including portions of the East End, Corn Hill, and High Falls.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

The Downtown Mixed-Use designation is somewhat smaller than the existing CCD district. However, the Flexible Mixed-Use Character Area that covers remaining portions of the CCD should have similar use flexibility and design standards while covering an area that has a different character than downtown. The location of the boundary between Downtown Mixed-Use and Flexible Mixed-Use is not critical, as some areas like the High Falls District could be placed in either category.

If retail is to gain more footing in downtown, it appears most likely to coalesce in the East End and around the former Midtown site and Sibley Square, with the potential to extend down East Main Street to the Genesee River. Restaurant and entertainment uses should be similarly focused in those areas, but there will continue to be additional markets in other areas like West Main Street, State Street, and along the river.





**DOWNTOWN
MIXED-USE**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

➤ DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE (CONTINUED)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

See [Design Considerations for All Mixed-Use Character Areas](#). Specific to the Downtown Mixed-Use designation, strategies should be identified to preserve existing and encourage more medium- and small-scale mixed-use buildings to complement the larger projects that have dominated recent development. The form-based code used in CCD, while solid in principle, requires some improvements as noted in [Design Considerations for All Mixed-Use Character Areas](#). In addition, the [Public Space Design within Private Development](#) section below is particularly important to the Downtown Mixed-Use Character Area.

Parking design standards and regulations should be somewhat customized for the Downtown Mixed-Use Character Area. For example, developers and architects should have more guidance on the design of first floor covered parking within mixed-use and multi-family residential buildings. Those design standards should effectively limit, but not prohibit, the creation of first floor covered parking as well as mitigate its negative impacts on adjacent street life. In addition, surface parking lots should be discouraged even more than they are in the current code.





B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Mix of commercial, retail, and service uses with limited or no residential component. These areas are more auto-oriented than most other mixed-use or commercial areas of the city but should still retain strong pedestrian-oriented design features. These areas typically serve a market located well beyond adjacent neighborhoods.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

West Ridge Rd (west of Bernice), East Ridge Rd (east of Seneca Manor), Lyell Ave (west of Wetmore), Citygate.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

While the City should limit auto-oriented uses and design as much as possible, this category recognizes that there are a few concentrations of these uses on major corridors that are highly unlikely to convert to a more pedestrian-oriented scale/form in the next 15 years. Whatever market materializes for traditional urban mixed-use development should be focused on the areas of the city where that form exists or can more easily be fostered.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

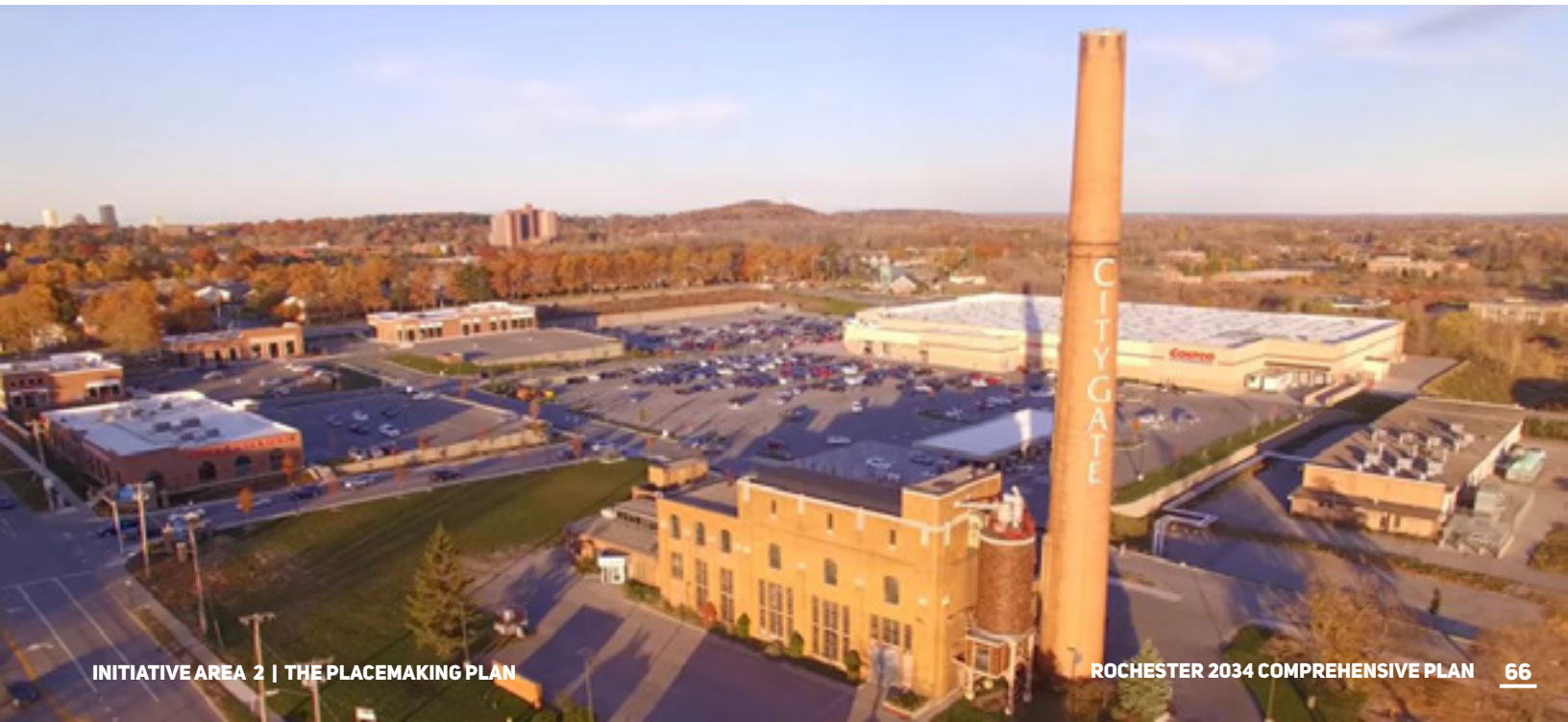
More intentional design standards are needed to mitigate the auto-oriented nature of land uses, including restricting front yard parking. Shared parking facilities and cross access between privately owned parking facilities should be promoted whenever possible. Pedestrian safety and experience should be prioritized while balancing the needs of the automobile. This includes the provision of amenities such as ample sidewalks (circulation within and around the site), buffer landscaping, seating, transit stops, bicycle parking, and highly-visible crosswalks.

In order to improve the corridor's urban form and street presence, multi-story buildings are encouraged when feasible. Buildings should be attractively designed and should address the public realm on all visible sides. Urban-appropriate landscape and hardscape areas should be designed as integral features of the land use. In general, design elements related to architecture, landscaping, site plans, and signage should create an aesthetically appealing experience that is appropriate in scale and form and provides pedestrian connectivity internally and with surrounding land uses where feasible.





**REGIONAL
COMMERCIAL**



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> INDUSTRIAL

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Manufacturing and moderate to heavy production, warehousing/distribution, vehicle repair/storage, and other high-impact commercial uses with environmental/neighborhood nuisances that warrant substantial buffers from residential and natural areas.

The City should consider removing the current marketability provisions for allowing some commercial uses in the Industrial Character Area. With the introduction of the Flexible Mixed-Use concept, industrial areas should be more focused on manufacturing, production, warehousing, etc., while future non-industrial commercial uses should be encouraged in mixed use Character Areas.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

Mt. Read corridor, Buffalo Rd corridor, Erie Canal corridor west of the Genesee River, CSX railyard.

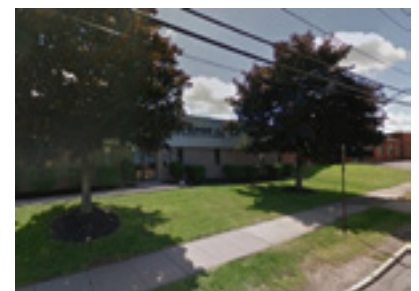
GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

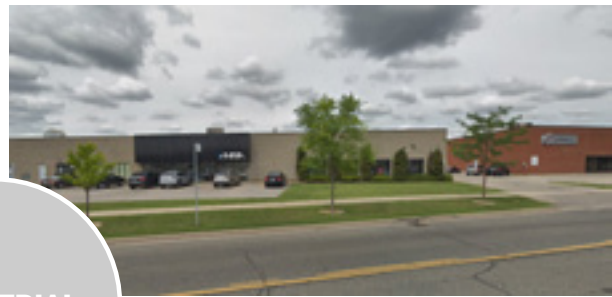
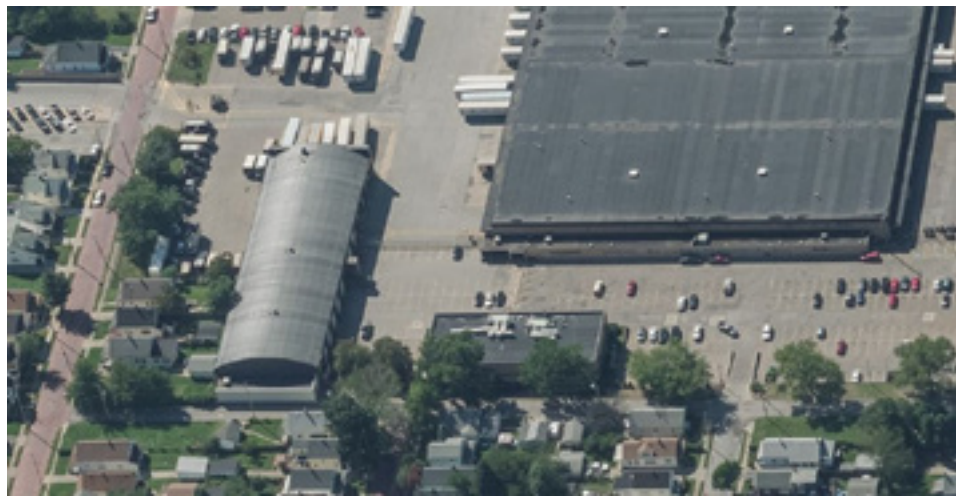
Some areas currently zoned M-1 are designated as [Flexible Mixed-Use](#) in The Placemaking Plan, recognizing the wide range of levels of impacts from former and current industrial/commercial sites and buildings. Other M-1 areas are designated as Industrial. An additional industrial/manufacturing distinction may be warranted during the zoning code update that reflects clusters of properties that have high environmental/neighborhood impacts but are already substantially buffered from residential neighborhoods. These areas should be considered for more relaxed site design requirements to encourage the viability of important employers and producers. This approach is consistent with the aforementioned “zoning for jobs” Goal of The Placemaking Plan.

As Rochester no longer has a substantial manufacturing base, and as those remaining operations have evolved, negative neighborhood impacts are often limited to heavy trucking operations such as at distribution centers or contractor yards. Whenever possible, these uses should be located in areas with quick access to major transportation routes, minimizing the amount of heavy traffic on collector and local routes through neighborhoods. The Placemaking Plan designates significant amounts of land to these uses, primarily on the west side along railroad lines and major corridors with limited residential properties. Examples include Mt. Read Boulevard and Lexington Ave west of the Edgerton neighborhood.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

The Industrial Character Area should have less stringent design standards, recognizing the nature of the businesses and operations located in these areas. Operational noise, odors, heavy trucking, and visually unattractive sites are acknowledged as necessary characteristics for these important employers and producers to continue. However, careful screening and property maintenance should be enforced for all sides of a property adjacent to residential areas and street frontages.





INDUSTRIAL



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY USES:

Large campuses and associated buildings/grounds for schools, museums, and other major institutions.

EXAMPLE AREAS:

University of Rochester, all hospitals, major school campuses, major museums.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN:

Not every major institution is identified in this category on the map. It is limited to those with large properties that are easily recognizable at a city-wide scale. These areas may not warrant their own zoning district in a future code update, aside from existing Planned Development (PD) Districts, but are important to recognize at this stage as different in character than their surroundings. Therefore, the difference between campuses identified in this Character Area and smaller campuses absorbed by other categories has no significance in terms of recommendations or regulations.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

This Character Area is not necessarily recommended to be the basis for a future zoning district. Rather, individual campuses will remain PDs or be absorbed by an adjacent zoning district. In the case of the latter, properties will be subject to use and design regulations of that district.





INSTITUTIONAL
CAMPUS



B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> STREETS

OVERVIEW:

The design of the public right-of-way has a tremendous impact on community character and a sense of place, whether positive or negative, and directly affects the comfort and pleasure of all modes of transportation. The public right-of-way generally includes streets, sidewalks, light poles, fire hydrants, public trash cans, benches, bus stops, café seating, and tree lawns. The architectural edge and design of surrounding buildings also greatly contributes to the experience in this public realm. While not a land use category in the same sense as other Character Areas, streets and associated elements in the right-of-way make up about 12% of the land in the city and impact the daily lives of all residents and visitors. All streets must positively enhance the environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities. Throughout the *Rochester 2034* process, the overwhelming majority of residents and stakeholders expressed a strong desire for pedestrian-scaled development and streetscape design, commonly referred to as “walkable streets” and/or “bike-friendly streets”.

In 2019, the City of Rochester completed the Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan (CAMP), which included a Street Design Guide. The recommendations for the Streets Character Area are based on that Street Design Guide, with highlights included below. The Guide should always drive the design of future street projects, as it directs the dimensions and design for a range of street typologies.

RIGHT OF WAY ZONES:

The elements that make up streets, from sidewalks to travel lanes to bus stops, all vie for space within a limited right-of-way. To make clear the tradeoffs between different design choices, while optimizing the benefits the community receives from its streets, the Street Design Guide identifies three conceptual ‘zones’ that can make up the right-of-way of the street, as shown below. For each of the street typologies, the Street Design Guide presents recommendations related to each of these zones.





STREET TYPOLOGIES:

The Street Design Guide assigns a street type to all City streets based on a street's aspirational land use characteristics and transportation function. A street may not have the same typology for its entire length. For example, a street may travel through a low-density residential neighborhood to a neighborhood business district (i.e. South Avenue) or between industrial and commercial districts (i.e Lyell Avenue). Street types are driven by an overall vision for the intended future state, both localized and network wide. All types of streets must be complete streets that support a safe transportation environment and connectivity for users of all modes. However, since each street has limited space, some street designs may emphasize one or two modes over other modes while still recognizing that all modes will occasionally make use of the street.

- **Regional Activity** streets serve a larger purpose in the regional transportation network, often serving auto-oriented commercial uses as well as institutional and industrial land uses. Travel speeds should be kept low to encourage more urban land use patterns on nearby low-density or undeveloped parcels along these corridors. The design goals for redesigned Regional Activity streets are to improve street character, support current and planned land uses, maintain critical connectivity for through travel, and provide for safe movement for all modes. Examples include West Ridge Road, Upper Falls Boulevard, and portions of Lake Avenue.
- **Downtown Activity** streets are Rochester's principal employment and entertainment streets. They also support a number of residents, institutions, students, and workers at the highest densities in the city. These streets have specific design requirements to provide a high quality public realm that contributes to the city's sense of place. Future redesign of these streets should continue to create a distinctive sense of place while promoting access to downtown destinations via multiple modes of travel. Examples include Main Street, Clinton Avenue, and Chestnut Street.
- **Downtown Link** streets are connections that carry local traffic between Downtown Activity streets. Like Downtown Activity Streets, these streets serve the highest downtown densities and mixed uses. Unlike Downtown Activity, these streets may have lower traffic volumes and travel speeds should be kept low by design to respect the relatively high pedestrian traffic volume. Redesigned Downtown Link streets should continue to create a sense of place on less-traveled downtown streets and accommodate all modes. Examples include Fitzhugh Street, Pleasant Street, and Scio Street.

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

➤➤ STREETS (CONTINUED)

- **Neighborhood Activity** streets are primarily commercial corridors that also serve a critical role in the larger transportation network. They are unique areas that serve medium intensity mixed uses, including newer flexible mixed-uses and are defined as prime areas to accommodate infill development. Neighborhood Activity streets should support economic productivity of the corridor and enhance multi-modal access and through travel while enabling unobstructive goods delivery. Examples include Monroe Avenue, University Ave, and West Main Street outside of downtown.
- **Neighborhood Link** streets are predominantly residential corridors that serve a similar role to that of Neighborhood Activity streets in the transportation network. Community facilities such as parks, recreation centers, schools, or places of worship are common on these streets and may be interspersed with some limited commercial use. They may also serve as critical backbones of the on-street bicycle network. Redesigned Neighborhood Link streets should protect residential quality of life while accommodating crosstown connectivity via a variety of modes. Examples include Brooks Avenue, Bay Street, and Jay Street.
- **Neighborhood Local** streets provide access to local residents while inviting those residents to use the streets as public linear recreational space. They generally correlate to Low and Medium Density Residential Character Areas, lined primarily with single and multi-family houses or smaller apartment buildings. Neighborhood Local streets are not principal streets in the citywide vehicular network, but serve as an important link for pedestrians and cyclists who generally travel at lower speeds. Future redesign of these streets should maintain low travel speeds, emphasize green infrastructure and open space, and continue to provide access to residences. Examples include Linden Street, Post Avenue, and Grand Avenue.
- **Industrial Link** streets are regional connections that primarily serve large-scale industry, warehousing, and distribution uses. Redesign of these streets should recognize their primary function as supporting and strengthening economic activity. Safety should be emphasized through reducing conflict opportunity. Examples include Buffalo Road, Lexington Avenue, and portions of Lyell Avenue.
- **Industrial Local** streets typically serve smaller pockets of industry across the city. They are generally smaller streets than Industrial Link streets that connect to larger network link streets, but may also serve as access points to larger industrial properties. While these streets serve industrial uses and must accommodate commercial truck traffic, required travel lane width and travel speeds are lower, allowing for pedestrian and bicycle facilities as needed. Examples include Adirondack Street, Nassau Street, and Science Parkway.
- **Alleys** can be designed to play an important role in the street networks of commercial districts as well as residential areas. Both types of alleys serve a useful purpose, allowing for off-street loading and unloading, garage access, and refuse removal. They represent an opportunity to install porous pavements for more effective drainage while not degrading the alley's operation or function. Dependent on context and need, the City may choose to include alleys as links in pedestrian and bicycle networks. Examples include Pindle Alley, Ruff Alley, and Daus Alley.

The Street Design Guide provides additional detail on objectives, typical features, design principles, and streetscape elements for each of these typologies. See www.cityofrochester.gov/camp for more information. In addition, the Transportation Action Plan of *Rochester 2034* contains numerous Strategies for addressing safety, comfort, connectivity, and enjoyability of the streetscape experience for all modes of transportation.

Street Typologies

- Regional Activity
- Downtown Activity
- Downtown Link
- Neighborhood Activity
- Neighborhood Link
- Neighborhood Local
- Industrial Link
- Industrial Local
- Alley
- Unclassified

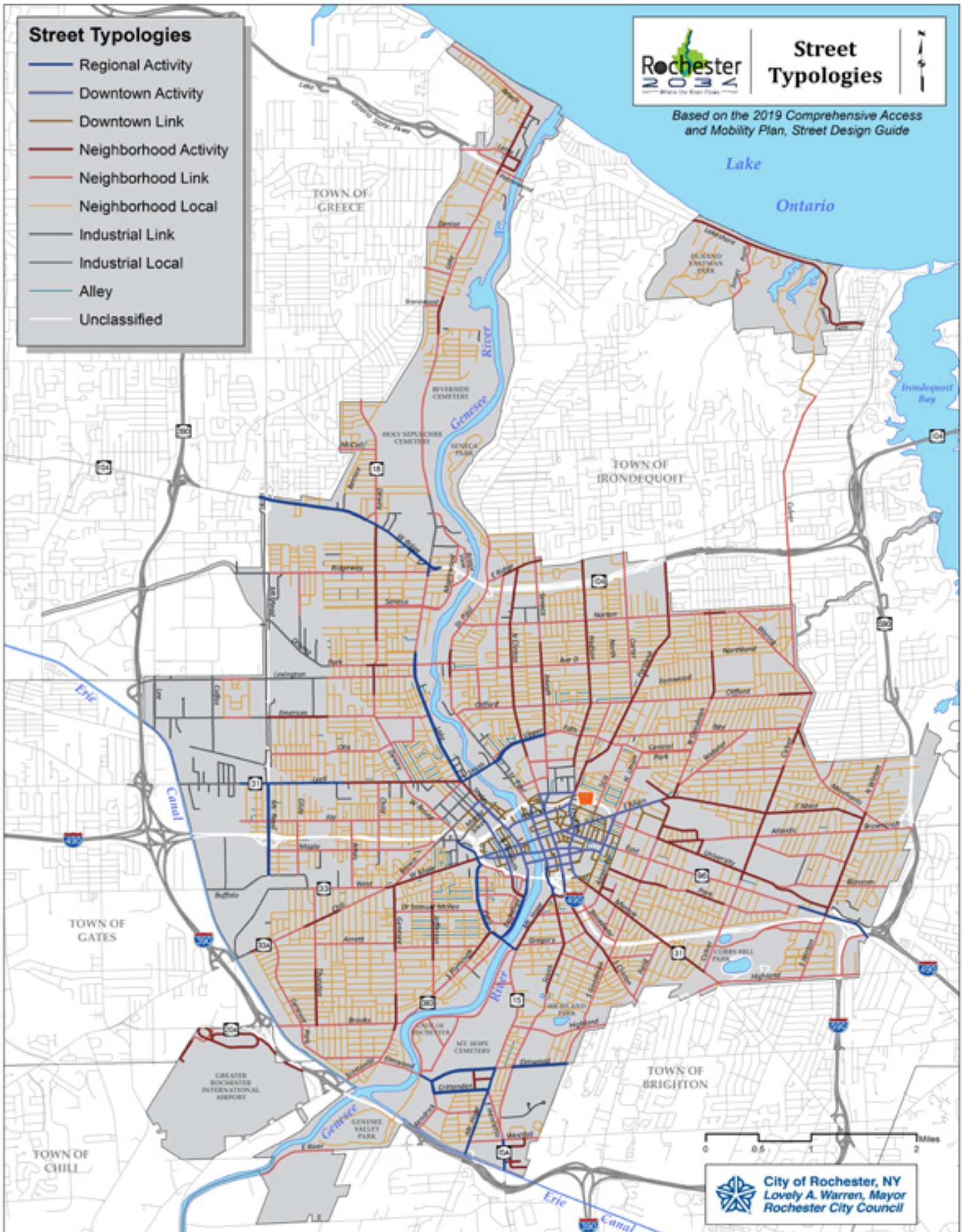


Street Typologies

Based on the 2019 Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan, Street Design Guide

Lake

Ontario



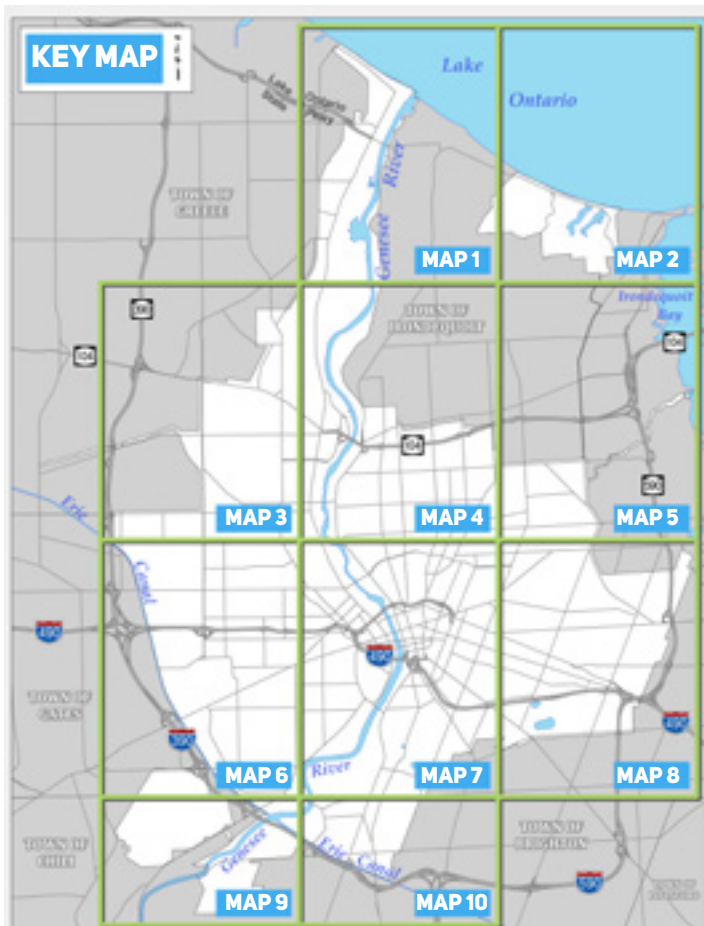
City of Rochester, NY
 Lovely A. Warren, Mayor
 Rochester City Council

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

PLACEMAKING PLAN MAP

The Placemaking Plan is illustrated in map form on the following pages. It includes all of the major elements that comprise placemaking, as illustrated in the Legend at right. The first map presents a city-wide perspective of Character Areas and the transportation network. This is followed by a series of 10 larger scale maps with greater detail, as shown on the Key Map below.

Other placemaking elements, such as improvements to river access and infrastructure, are depicted as points on the large scale maps, color-coded by type of recommendation. They are also numbered, corresponding with the list found on pages 85-92. Following the maps and associated list of recommendations, The Placemaking Plan Initiative Area continues with a more detailed discussion of these Other Placemaking Elements.



PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS LEGEND

CHARACTER AREAS

- Parks + Open Space (page 39)
- Low Density Residential (page 41)
- Medium Density Residential (page 45)
- High Density Residential (page 47)
- Boutique Mixed-Use (page 51)
- Neighborhood Mixed-Use (page 53)
- Flexible Mixed-Use (page 57)
- Downtown Mixed-Use (page 61)
- Regional Commercial (page 65)
- Industrial (page 67)
- Institutional Campus (page 69)
- Streets (page 71)

MULTI-USE TRAILS + PROTECTED BIKE LANES (page 93)

- Existing Trails + Protected Lanes
- Existing Spur Trails + Park Paths
- Recommended Trails + Protected Lanes
- Recommended Spur Trails + Park Paths

REIMAGINE RTS CORRIDORS (page 33)

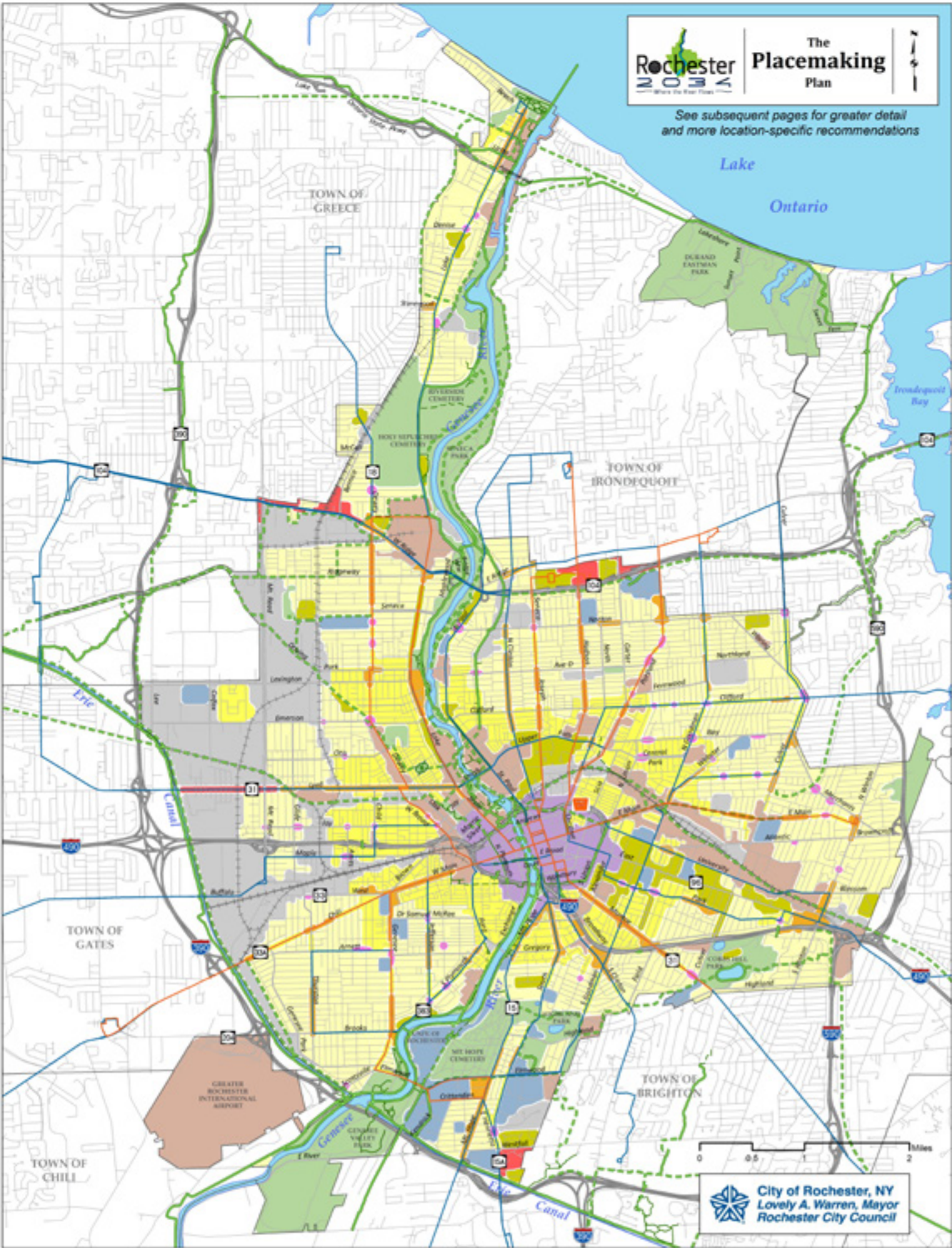
- Frequent
- Local

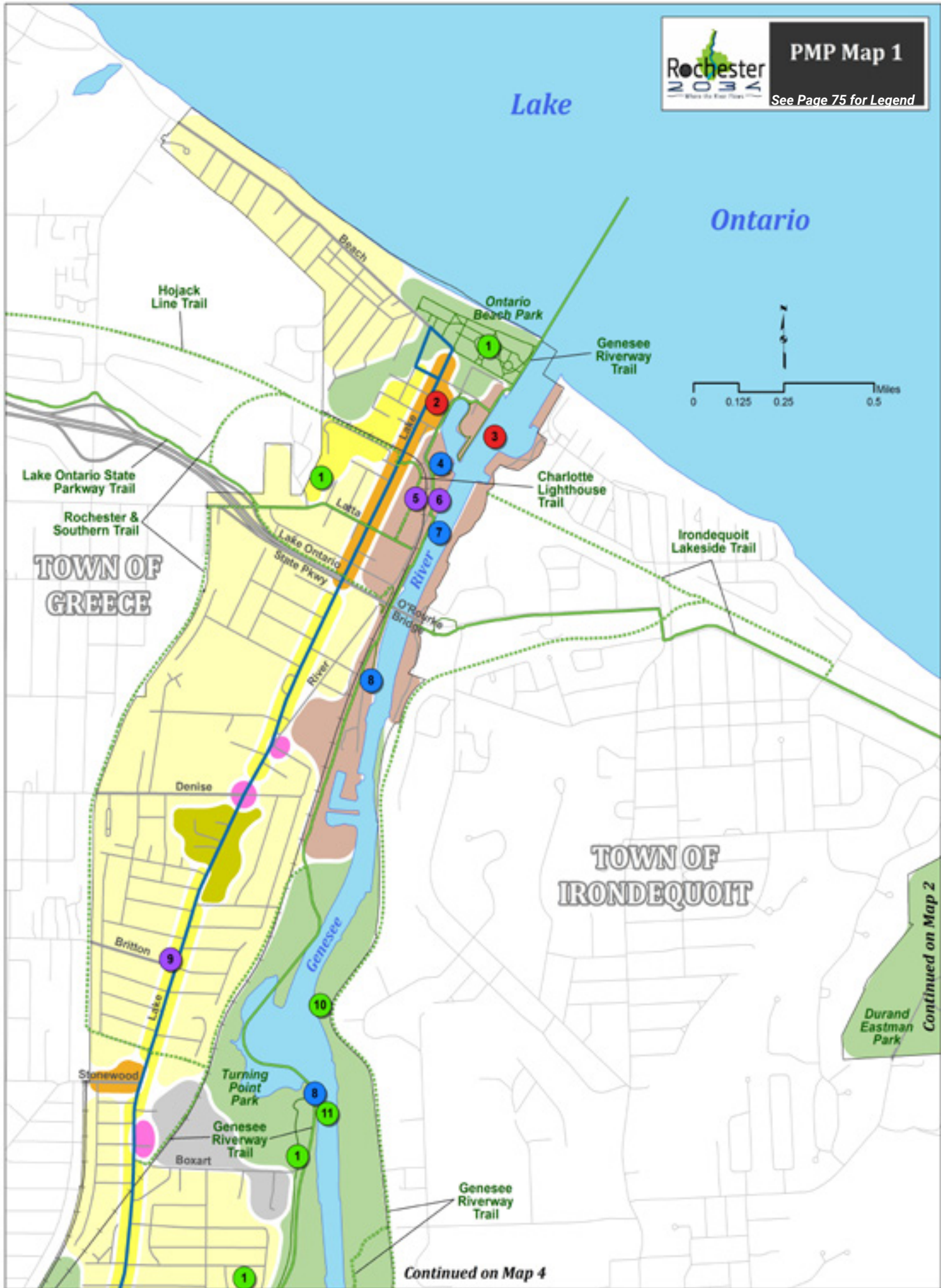
OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS*

- Parks + Open Space (page 94)
- Community Facilities (page 95)
- River Access (page 96)
- Infrastructure + Streetscapes (page 97)
- Neighborhood Planning (page 98)

* Maps 1-10 only; numbers correspond with table that follows maps

See subsequent pages for greater detail and more location-specific recommendations





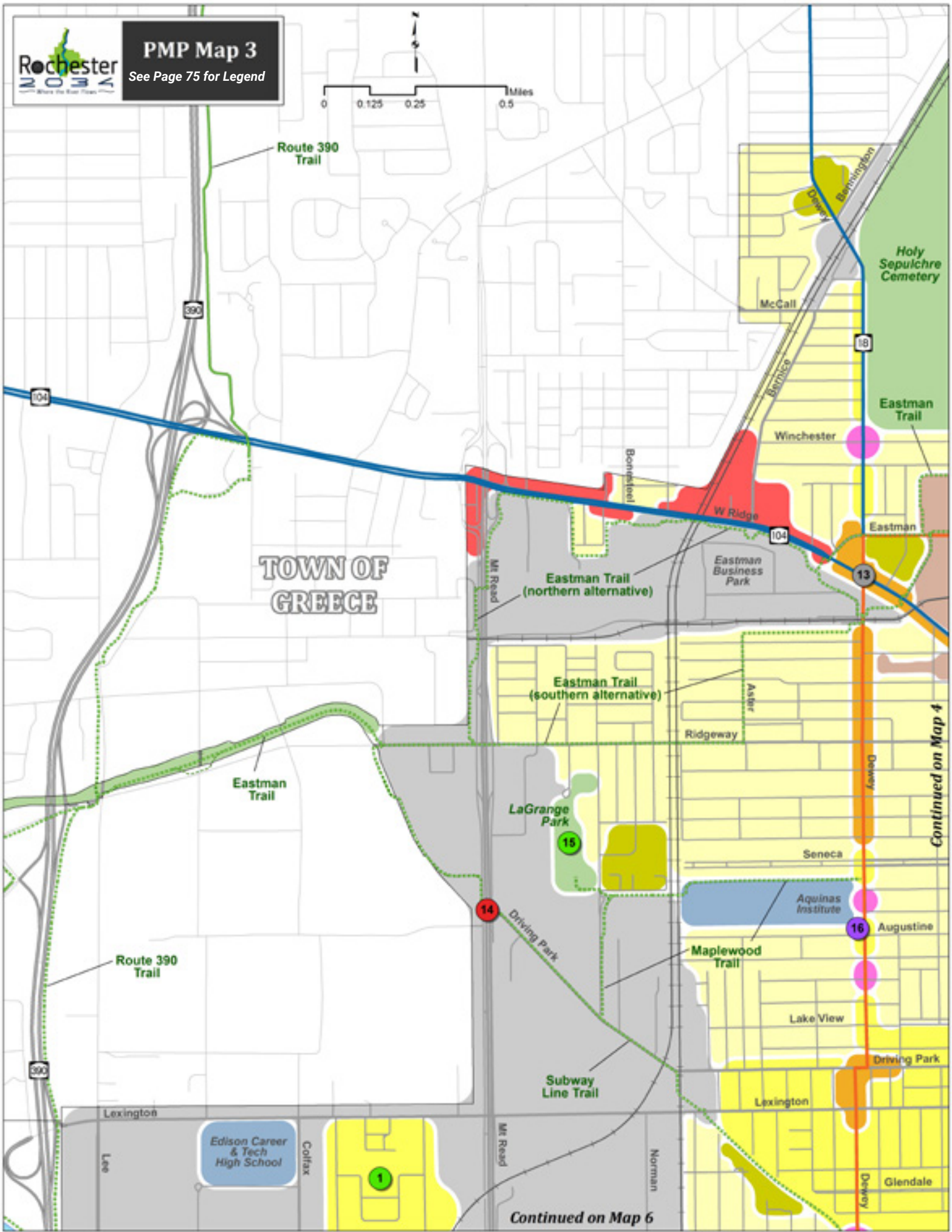
Continued on Map 4

Continued on Map 2

PLACEMAKING IS THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SHAPING PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC FACILITIES, AND THE PUBLIC REALM INTO PLACES OF GREAT CHARACTER. IT IS A PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACH TO ACTIVATING OUR COMMUNITIES AND CREATING VIBRANCY FOR ALL WALKS OF LIFE TO ENJOY.



PMP Map 3



TOWN OF GREECE

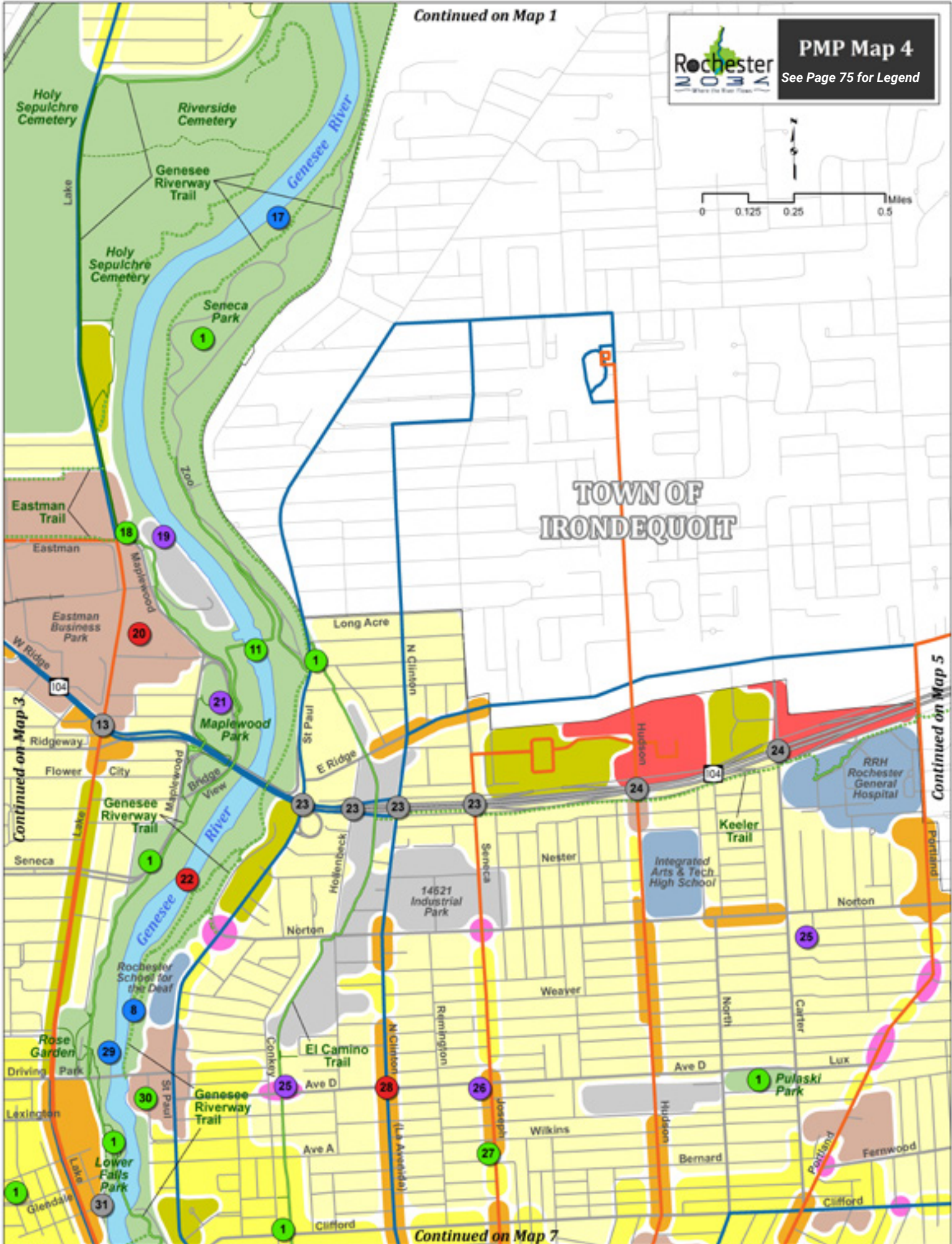
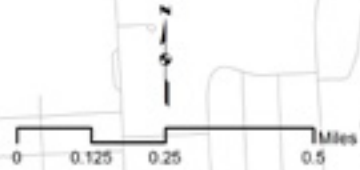
Continued on Map 4

Continued on Map 6

Continued on Map 1

Rochester
Where the Real Town

PMP Map 4
 See Page 75 for Legend

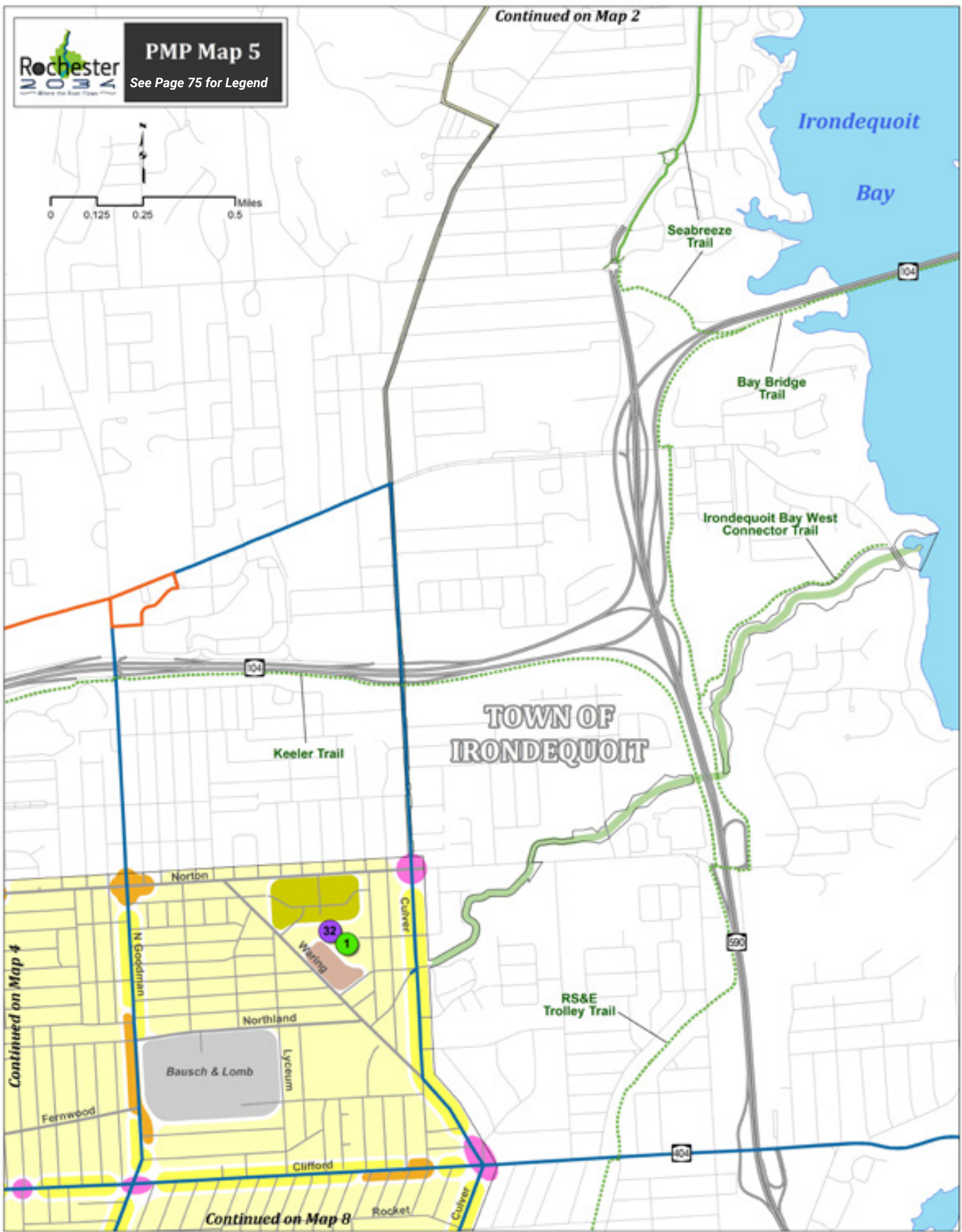


Continued on Map 3

Continued on Map 5

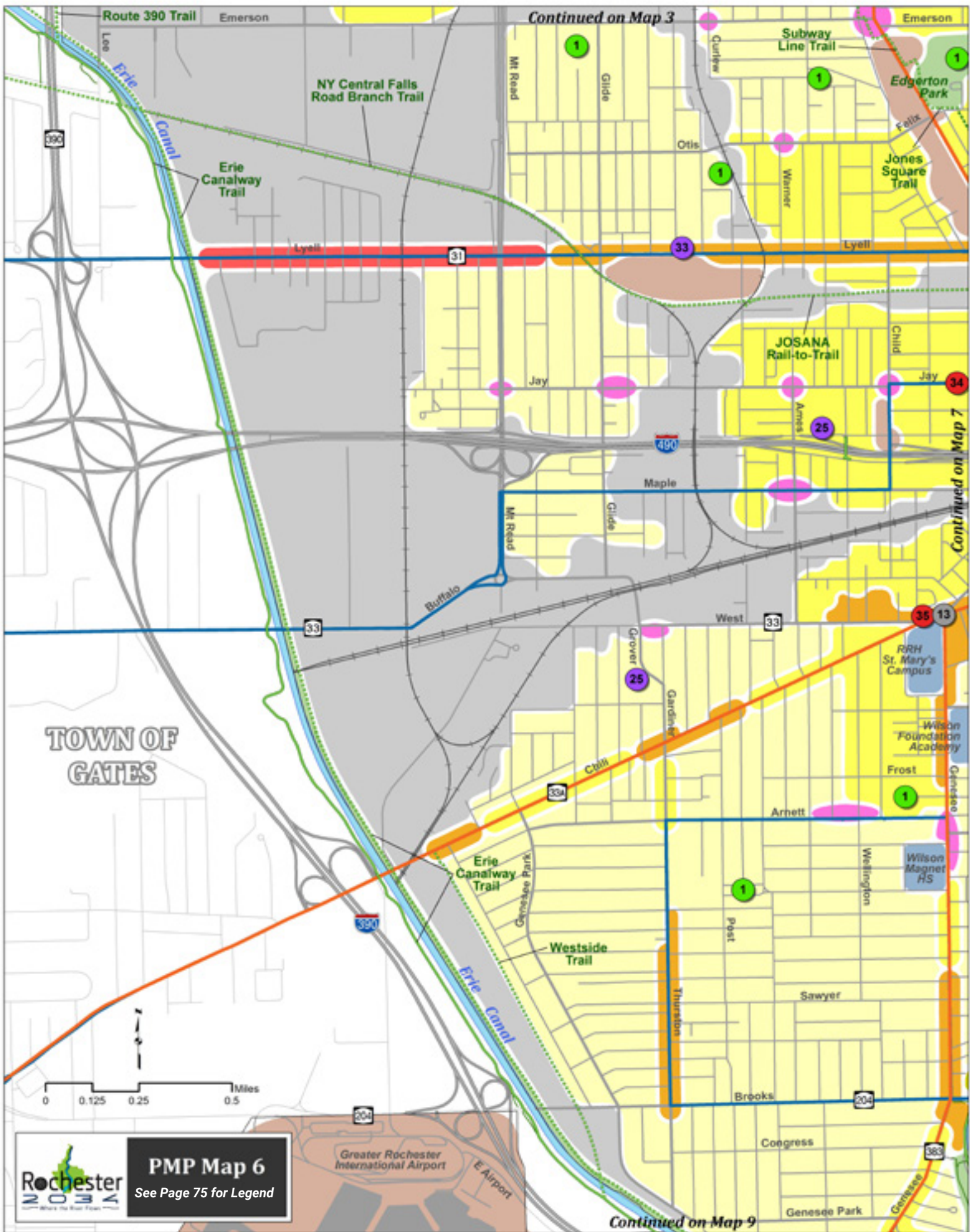
Continued on Map 7

Continued on Map 2



Continued on Map 4

Continued on Map 8

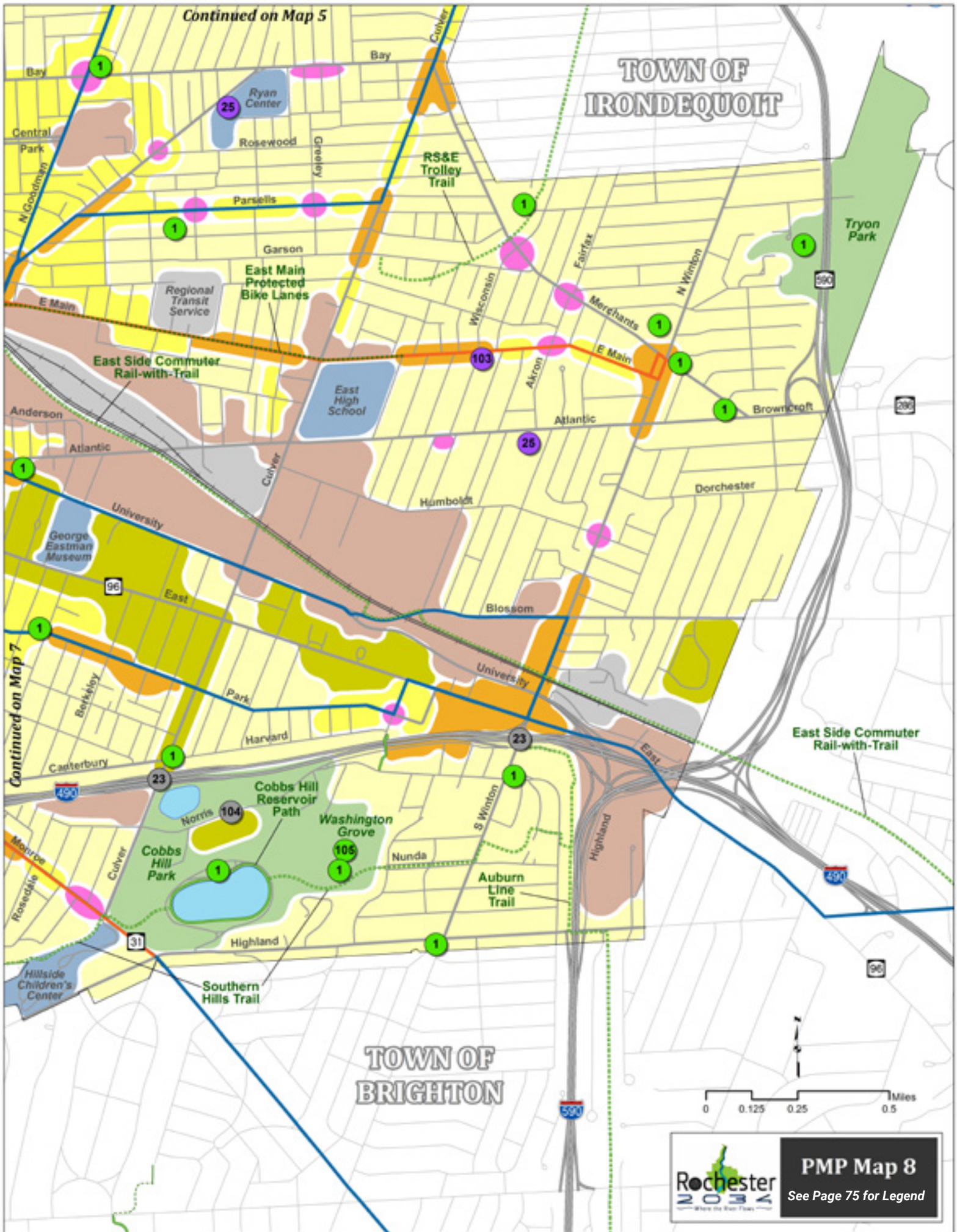




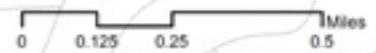
Continued on Map 5

TOWN OF IRONDEQUOIT

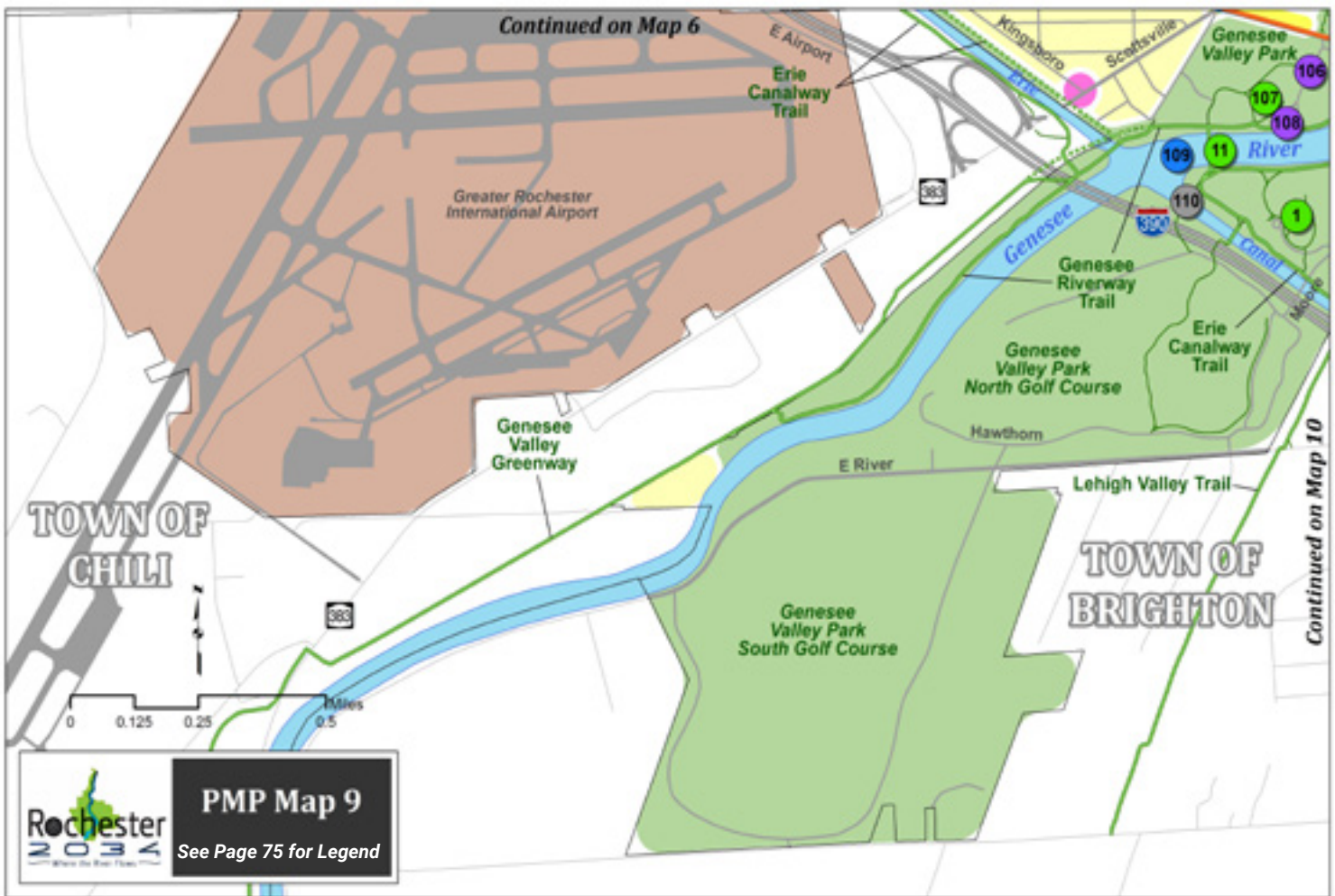
TOWN OF BRIGHTON



Continued on Map 7



PMP Map 8
See Page 75 for Legend



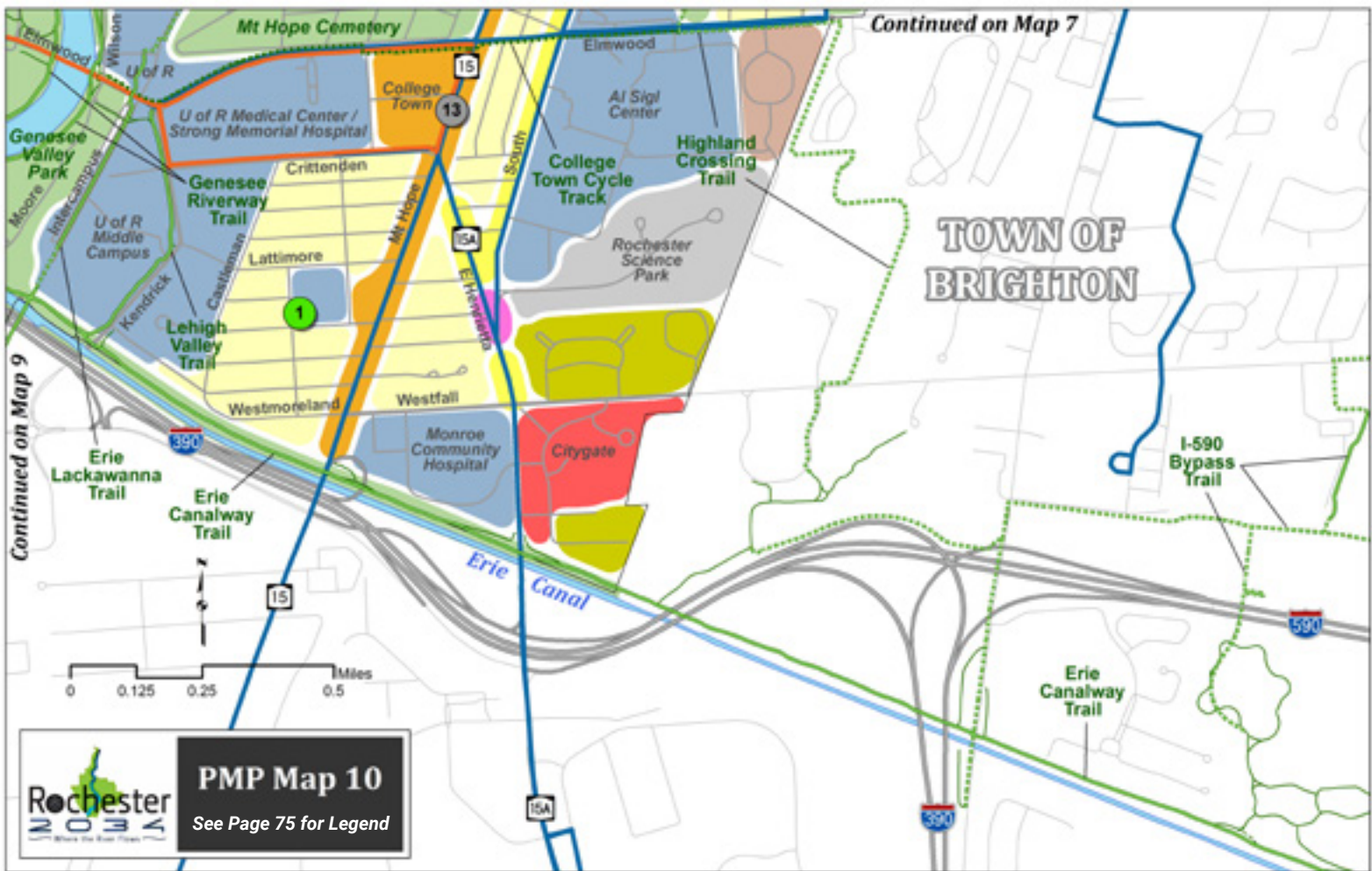
OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

A variety of location-specific recommendations are listed below and shown on Maps 1-10. Together with the other placemaking elements outlined in this Initiative Area, they will contribute to a sense of place and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods throughout the city.

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 As part of a city-wide parks and recreation master plan, develop a park-specific plan to maintain and/or enhance this park.*
- 2 Continue to develop the Port of Rochester as a local and regional destination.
- 3 Continue to implement recommendations of the Port of Rochester Harbor Management Plan.
- 4 Implement Phase II of the Port of Rochester Marina & Mixed-Use Development Project by expanding the number of marina slips, relocating the public boat launch, and assembling additional land for private development.
- 5 Continue enhancements to the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse including historic restoration of the building and site as well as connections to the Genesee Riverway Trail.
- 6 Establish a fire station / boat house to serve the Lake Ontario shore, Port of Charlotte, and points south, complete with sheltered and secured boat storage and lift equipment to allow for faster response times. Such a facility could be shared by the NYSDEC, Homeland Security, US Coast Guard, and the RFD, as each of those agencies serve the area and have needs beyond their current facilities.

*This recommendation can be found in multiple locations throughout Maps 1-10.



KEY

- Parks + Open Space
- Community Facilities
- River Access
- Infrastructure + Streetscapes
- Neighborhood Planning

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 Identify a continuous and sustainable funding mechanism to dredge sediment from the river that interferes with and prevents certain boating activity; work with regional partners to increase collaboration and accountability with municipalities to the south that contribute to excessive runoff in the river.*
- 8 Develop or enhance car top boat launch/landings for canoes, kayaks, etc. with connections to the Genesee Riverway Trail.*
- 9 Per the Rochester Public Library Branch Facilities and Operations Master Plan, upgrade the Charlotte branch to serve as a community and senior hub. Include improved ADA access to parking and building facilities, a redesign of the interior of the building, expanded technology, and new workout equipment. Explore opportunities to efficiently consolidate space or co-locate/relocate the facility.
- 10 In collaboration with NY State and the Town of Irondequoit, support creation of a State Park at Rattlesnake Point.

*This recommendation can be found in multiple locations throughout Maps 1-10.

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11 Throughout the river's parks and public spaces, develop a unifying landscape design aesthetic to yield a corridor-long living outdoor museum -- a Genesee Botanical Gardens -- that celebrates the region's natural history; a unified destination creates a funding and patron draw greater than the individual components would on their own.*
- 12 Advance the concept of a bath house for the Durand Beach area, as well as other needed improvements to the Durand Eastman Park lakefront.
- 13 Consistent with Reimagine RTS and the Transit Supportive Corridors Study, establish a Transfer Point at this convergence of RTS routes, complete with amenities such as covered shelters, robust system displays, bicycle parking, and potentially fare vending equipment.*
- 14 Implement the recommendations of the Mt. Read Boulevard Corridor Study.
- 15 Redevelop LaGrange Park including ball field reorganization and enhancement, property acquisition for expansion, and overall park improvements.
- 16 Per the Rochester Public Library Branch Facilities and Operations Master Plan, convene a community visioning process to explore options for upgrading or relocating the Maplewood branch, including the potential to serve as an immigrant and refugee service hub. Explore options to expand, co-locate, or relocate the facility.
- 17 Develop a car top boat launch/landing for canoes, kayaks, etc. somewhere in Seneca Park.
- 18 Identify strategies for preserving and enhancing the historic King's Landing Cemetery.
- 19 Establish a fire station and boat house in the King's Landing area of the river. This facility would include sheltered and secured boat storage and lift equipment to allow for faster response times.
- 20 Continue to partner with Eastman Business Park on implementation of their master plan. The City's land use, mobility, public access to the river, and other placemaking objectives should be incorporated into the plan.
- 21 Develop a river-oriented nature center at the Maplewood Training Center site in Maplewood Park. The center could be part of a larger network of river and urban ecology-oriented facilities along the Genesee.
- 22 Implement stormwater, forest management, riparian habitat, scenic resource management, and restoration projects throughout the corridor.
- 23 Improve pedestrian/bicycle experience across the bridge, including safer connections and beautification.*
- 24 Improve pedestrian/bicycle experience under the bridge, including safer connections and beautification.*
- 25 As part of a city-wide parks and recreation master plan, develop a specific plan to maintain and/or enhance this rec center.*
- 26 Per the Rochester Public Library Branch Facilities and Operations Master Plan, upgrade the Lincoln branch to better serve as a flexible opportunity space. Include a full interior renovation, improved wayfinding and signage, expanded resources for social services and health/wellness staff, and improved connections to the toy library.

*This recommendation can be found in multiple locations throughout Maps 1-10.

KEY



Parks + Open Space



Infrastructure + Streetscapes



Community Facilities



Neighborhood Planning



River Access

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

27

Continue to support development of the Community Blooms Flower Farm, including the potential for a playful sidewalk connection to the Lincoln Branch Library, a mobility hub, and additional street trees.

28

Implement the recommendations of the 14621 Brownfield Opportunity Area Revitalization Strategy.

29

Develop a car top boat launch/landing for canoes, kayaks, etc. somewhere in Maplewood Park.

30

Reclaim and enhance parkland along Carthage Drive.

31

Identify alternatives for creating bicycle connections, whether on or off street, linking existing and recommended segments of the Genesee Riverway Trail and providing a safe alternative to current conditions on Lake Ave.

32

Upgrade and enhance rec center building, athletic fields, and other amenities.

33

Per the Rochester Public Library Branch Facilities and Operations Master Plan, upgrade the Lyell branch to serve as a job training hub. Include improved technology, expanded programming, and a redesigned building interior. Explore potential relocation of the facility, or converting the library to a mobile service center.

34

Implement the recommendations of the JOSANA Neighborhood Master Plan.

35

Implement the recommendations of the Bull's Head Urban Renewal Plan.

36

Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, rehab the former Running Track rail bridge as a multi-use trail including connections to the Genesee Riverway Trail, El Camino Trail, Lake Ave (via an enhanced Ambrose St), and Smith St (via an enhanced Cliff St).

37

Identify location(s) for installing a cartop boat launch/landing for canoes, kayaks, etc. between High Falls and Lower Falls.

38

Develop and implement a plan for the gorge area from High Falls to Lower Falls, including parks and recreation opportunities, improved water access, green energy demonstration projects, and supportive private development on adjacent sites.

39

Implement the recommendations of the LYLAKS Brownfield Opportunity Area Master Plan.

40

Transform the former soccer stadium into a youth and community sports complex.

41

Implement the recommendations of the Browns Square Circulation, Accessibility, & Parking Study.

42

Support the implementation of the Susan B. Anthony House 2018 Strategic Plan, including the establishment of a Visitors Center.

43

Implement the recommendations of the Susan B. Anthony Neighborhood Circulation, Accessibility, & Parking Study.

44

Upgrade Plymouth Ave Greenway to comply with design standards for a cycle track.

45

Continue ongoing Main Street streetscape enhancements to complete the corridor between Broad St and Chestnut St.

46

Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, construct and enhance Aqueduct St and adjacent streets at historic Child's Basin to complement nearby improvements to Main Street and the Broad St / aqueduct corridor.

47

Remove the upper deck of the Broad Street Bridge; establish a dynamic public space along the former aqueduct as a centerpiece of the ROC the Riverway initiative, connecting to new plazas and riverfront promenades adjacent to the bridge.

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

-
- 48 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to upgrade and enhance the Blue Cross Arena and its streetside and riverfront presence, making it an integral part of the riverfront promenade and other ROC the Riverway projects.
-
- 49 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, realign the Court St / Exchange Blvd intersection to accommodate future development of the Court/Exchange site to the south while improving staging and loading capabilities at the Blue Cross Arena.
-
- 50 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to design and implement solutions for Rundel Library's north and south terraces, repairing/replacing critical underground infrastructure while developing dynamic public spaces adjacent to the building and river.
-
- 51 Continue to implement the Center City Two-Way Conversion Project on various downtown streets to reduce speeds, enhance street-level pedestrian activity, enhance pedestrian/bicycle connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods, and make the area easier to navigate.
-
- 52 Develop Play Walk -- a playful sidewalk with public art and interactive installations, connecting The Strong National Museum of Play expansion with the ROC the Riverway initiative, as well as Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, Washington Square Park, and the Rundel Library.
-
- 53 Implement the recommendations of the Washington Square Park Charrette, enhancing this downtown park.
-
- 54 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to extend the downtown portion of the Genesee Riverway Trail on both sides of the river as a promenade providing greater access and dynamic public spaces along the riverfront.
-
- 55 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, partner with NY State and local stakeholders to establish a downtown/riverfront management entity -- an organization focused on downtown and the central river corridor; explore combinations of models in other cities such as Business Improvement Districts, Local Development Corporations, and Downtown Partnerships.
-
- 56 Identify location(s) for food and retail-based businesses to operate in pop-up, temporary, or low-cost structures such as re-purposed shipping containers; a cluster of these operations could encourage entrepreneurs to launch their product and it could create a pipeline of viable businesses to fill vacant commercial spaces throughout the city.
-
- 57 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to upgrade, enhance, and expand the Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center and terrace, including building on the concept of a "convention district" where facilities and amenities are provided in other buildings and spaces in the area.
-
- 58 As part of ROC the Riverway's Aqueduct Re-Imagined and Riverfront Promenade project, identify opportunities to renovate and provide public access to the historic Ely Mill (1827) located in the lower level of RG&E Station #6.
-
- 59 Continue to encourage and invest in the revitalization of highly visible Main Street properties to rehabilitate dilapidated buildings and activate first floor spaces. Buildings such as the Riverside Convention Center, Riverside Hotel, and The Metropolitan should identify opportunities to activate their Main Street frontage.
-
- 60 Support the "Arts in the Loop" effort led by Eastman School of Music to engage downtown stakeholders on strategies for activating key downtown corridors and spaces with music, art, and other programming.
-

KEY



Parks + Open Space



Infrastructure + Streetscapes



Community Facilities



Neighborhood Planning



River Access

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 61 Work with the Eastman School of Music and other local partners to convert this block of Gibbs Street into a pedestrian-only public space, complete with programming, landscaping/hardscaping, amenities, and accommodations for various events.
- 62 Work with the Mortimer Street Garage operator to convert a portion of the garage into an improved extension of the Transit Center focusing on connections to non-fixed route mobility services.
- 63 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, redevelop Charles Carroll Plaza, shoring up the parking garage structure underneath the park and creating a focal point along the downtown riverfront.
- 64 Redesign the State Street corridor streetscape, enhancing the pedestrian and bicycle environment and attracting private investment on adjacent properties.
- 65 Widen Mill Street Pedestrian Tunnel; improve lighting and other bicycle/pedestrian features to encourage linkage between Downtown and High Falls.
- 66 Continue to support Greentopia's EcoDistrict Plan to promote green infrastructure and economic, social, and environmental equity.
- 67 Per Greentopia's conceptual plan, redevelop Granite Mills Commons to feature better plantings, seating, plaza surfaces, and amplification for performances.
- 68 Reestablish a visitors/interpretive center in the Brown's Race area.
- 69 Identify location for public elevator access to gorge bottom to complement multi-use trail access.
- 70 Improve pedestrian and recreational amenities in the gorge through implementation of recommendations in the High Falls Pedestrian Access Improvement Study and ROC the Riverway Vision Plan.
- 71 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, perform structural repairs to the Pont de Rennes Bridge and enhance the public space along the bridge and at the eastern and western approaches.
- 72 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to make upgrades and enhancements to High Falls Terrace Park, including new amenities, establishing the Brewery Line Trail and connecting paths, public art, and studying the feasibility of creating a High Falls Overlook.
- 73 Identify long-term design solutions for providing pedestrian/bicycle access that overcome the Inner Loop and CSX Railroad bridge barriers, building on the short-term solutions of the ROC the Riverway initiative and utilizing the Inner Loop North planning study.
- 74 Identify opportunities to improve this railroad underpass through lighting improvements, stormwater management, and bicycle and pedestrian enhancements.*
- 75 Support the grass roots effort to develop a Civil Rights Park in Baden Park, commemorating Rochester's proud history of civil rights activism.
- 76 Following the success of the Inner Loop East project, complete a planning study and implement the preferred alternative for the reuse of the Inner Loop North corridor that divides downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
- 77 Identify opportunities for establishing ball fields and other athletic facilities to serve School #58 as part of the Inner Loop North project.
- 78 As part of the Inner Loop North project, expand and enhance historic Anderson Park to its pre-Inner Loop footprint.

*This recommendation can be found in multiple locations throughout Maps 1-10.

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

-
- 79 Continue to implement the Public Market Improvement Project, including development of a state-of-the-art nutrition center and demonstration kitchen, as well as other facilities.
-
- 80 Continue implementation of recommendations in the East Main Arts & Market Study, improving bicycle and pedestrian linkages along and across East Main St and the CSX railroad tracks.
-
- 81 Continue mixed-use development on lands of the former Inner Loop, including creation of a "Neighborhood of Play" centered around The Strong National Museum of Play's expansion.
-
- 82 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, develop the Roc City Skatepark with full integration into the Genesee Riverway Trail system and other ROC the Riverway projects; pursue parking arrangements with adjacent landowners.
-
- 83 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to support Corn Hill Navigation's campaign to purchase a new tour boat and return excursions and educational programming to the Genesee River.
-
- 84 Identify opportunities for water taxi service connecting various points in the South River Corridor, including connections south to RIT.
-
- 85 Work with private landowners along the east side of the Genesee River south of downtown to identify water-oriented redevelopment opportunities.
-
- 86 Enhance the bike/ped environment on Gregory, Hickory, Averill, Hamilton, & Alexander & across Mt Hope through improved signage, street/sidewalk conditions, crosswalks, & bicycle pavement markings.
-
- 87 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, continue to implement recommendations of the 2011 and 2018 Genesee Gateway Park (Erie Harbor) master plans.
-
- 88 Implement Phase I of the West River Wall project, establishing a healthier and more dynamic relationship between the river and Corn Hill neighborhood.
-
- 89 Develop and implement a plan for expanding the Rochester Heritage Trail, including potential sites/ areas such as the Genesee Valley Canal, Corn Hill, South Plymouth Ave, East Ave Historic District, Grove Place, Mt Hope Cemetery, High Falls, and other areas as identified.
-
- 90 Redevelop the Exchange Street Playground according to past master planning efforts, with a focus on connecting the park to the Genesee Riverway Trail.
-
- 91 Implement the various recommendations of the Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area 2035 Vision Plan.
-
- 92 Implement Phase II of the West River Wall project, establishing a healthier and more dynamic relationship between the river and Plymouth-Exchange neighborhood.
-
- 93 Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, enhance and expand the Genesee Riverway Trail on both sides of the river between Genesee Valley Park and downtown, providing separate bike and pedestrian paths/ lanes when space allows, repairing deteriorated sections, adding more green infrastructure, and creating additional neighborhood connections.
-
- 94 Establish a fire station and boat house in the Erie Harbor and/or Genesee Valley Park areas of the river. This facility would include sheltered and secured boat storage and lift equipment to allow for faster response times, especially in light of the anticipated and desired increase in boating activity resulting from the ROC the Riverway initiative.
-

KEY



Parks + Open Space



Infrastructure + Streetscapes



Community Facilities



Neighborhood Planning



River Access

OTHER PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

95

Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, when separate bicycle and pedestrian paths exist, or when sufficient parallel space exists next to the trail, groom a path for cross country skiers and/or snowshoers to help activate the river during winter months.

96

Implement the parks master plan for the potential parks, trails, and public spaces to be located in the Vacuum Oil redevelopment area.

97

Develop a car top boat launch for canoes, kayaks, etc. somewhere on the University of Rochester's River Campus.

98

Per the development plan for Brooks Landing, install public art on the hardscaped plaza.

99

Per the ROC the Riverway initiative, identify location(s) for trailered motorboat launch and/or public marina so as to increase boating activity in the South River and Erie Canal as well as provide emergency watercraft access for fire/police boats.

100

Implement the 2016 Mt. Hope Cemetery Master Plan for this historic Victorian Cemetery.

101

Rebuild the Children's Pavilion in Highland Park, creating a space for events and panoramic views of the park and region.

102

Per the Rochester Public Library Branch Facilities and Operations Master Plan, upgrade the Monroe branch to serve as a hub for teen services. Include a new community meeting room, redesigned interior space, expanded technology services, and expanded programming. Explore options to expand or co-locate/relocate the facility.

103

Identify an alternate location for RFD Engine 12 with a larger lot and better access, allowing for adequate storage and access for modern equipment. Consideration should be given to co-locating a new station with other needed community services such as a satellite library and/or community center.

104

Convert Norris Drive, an unimproved street, to a "green street", complete with porous pavement, rain gardens, and safe spaces for bicycles and pedestrians.

105

Implement access, trail, and signage recommendations of the Washington Grove Trail Study.

106

Continue to partner with local institutions such as Rochester Institute of Technology, St. John Fisher, and the Seneca Park Zoo to identify a site for establishing an urban ecology center. The center's facilities and programming would be designed to complement similar nature/river-oriented centers proposed for the river corridor.

107

Implement the 2015 Genesee Valley Park West Master Plan.

108

Per the Genesee Valley Park West Master Plan, develop a new state-of-the-art boathouse and water sports center, complete with community event space, water sports and other athletic facilities, car top boat launch, bike and boat rentals, meeting rooms, and concession/retail space.

109

Identify location(s) around the intersection of the Erie Canal and Genesee River for installing a cartop boat launch/landing for canoes, kayaks, etc.

110

Identify funding sources and implement restoration of the 3 historic Olmsted bridges over the Erie Canal; upgrade trail connections leading to the bridges.

C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS

MULTI-USE TRAILS + BICYCLE FACILITIES

The Placemaking Plan Map illustrates a network of existing and recommended multi-use trails, and protected lanes. A more in-depth examination of all other bicycle facilities and amenities can be found in the [Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan \(CAMP\)](#). The major bicycle network corridors are addressed here.

Multi-use trails and other bicycle facilities, while important elements in the transportation system, do not have the critical mass of users to drive land use patterns. However, they play an important role in providing active transportation and recreation opportunities. Therefore, the existing and proposed land use patterns were factors that influenced the location of future trail linkages.

The network of recommended trails represent opportunities to connect origins (mainly residential areas) and destinations (employment/mixed-use centers, parks, etc.). The recommended segments also include opportunities to fill in gaps in the existing multi-use trail and bicycle facility network. Future opportunities are limited by available land in corridor form such as large landowners, current and former railroad rights-of-way (ROWs), utility ROWs, and highways ROWs with ample undeveloped space.

The City of Rochester, as well as its neighboring towns, have collectively developed one of the most extensive regional trail networks in the country and certainly New York State. Most of the easiest trails – the “low hanging fruit” – have been built. What remains in the recommended network are the more challenging corridors in terms of available land and physical constraints. As the City and its partners continue to develop these linkages, they will become part of a robust network of transportation alternatives and recreational opportunities, making a significant contribution to Rochester’s placemaking efforts.



PARKS + OPEN SPACES

The identity of many streets and neighborhoods is tied, formally or informally, to the city's wonderful collection of parks. Preservation and expansion of these critical community assets is addressed in the Parks and Open Space Character Area as well as in [Initiative Area 4-Section B, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space](#).

In addition, The Placemaking Plan Map contains numerous enhancements to specific parks and playgrounds throughout the city. Continuously tracking and improving the conditions of these amenities should be a high priority. The proliferation of public art, educational programming, and special events contributes to the vitality of parks and other public spaces.



C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Rochester boasts an extensive network of community facilities including libraries, recreation/ community centers (rec center), public safety buildings, sports complexes, and other public facilities. Collectively, they contribute to the rich assortment of activities, resources, and programming available to residents and visitors.

The Placemaking Plan Map includes a variety of improvements to these facilities. In addition, the challenges and opportunities related to these facilities are explored in more depth in [Initiative Area 3-Section E, Schools and Community Centers](#). This includes planning for co-locating services and facilities such as community meeting rooms at fire stations and siting rec center on or near school campuses. Of particular importance is the [Rochester Public Library's Branch Library Facilities and Operations Plan \(Appendix H\)](#), which outlines a series of policy, programming, and facility changes to enhance their role in serving the community.



GENESEE RIVER ACCESS

While the Rochester area boasts an unrivaled abundance and diversity of water-bodies, the Genesee River is the most closely associated with the city's identity. The river features ever changing scenery as it winds 13 miles from Genesee Valley Park north to Lake Ontario. From the meandering flatwaters of the south river corridor to the channelized urban setting of downtown, from the dramatic cliffs and waterfalls of the gorge to the bustling river terminus in Charlotte, the Genesee is an important resource and source of pride for many neighborhoods along its course. However, generations of neglect coupled with formidable topography has limited access to the river.

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and ROC the Riverway (RTR) initiative have provided a transformative vision for the city's reconnection with the waterway. Each of the capital projects in the LWRP and RTR are integrated into The Placemaking Plan Map, including opportunities for improved access, dynamic parks and public spaces, expanded multi-use trails, and greater boating activity.



C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

INFRASTRUCTURE + STREETSCAPES

There are numerous opportunities throughout Rochester to improve the public realm, especially in the form of redesigned streetscapes that emphasize the pedestrian experience. Beyond the general importance of these features as discussed in the Streets Character Area, examples of major capital projects included in The Placemaking Plan Map include safer and more attractive highway bridge crossings, streetscape and intersection improvements, on-street bicycle facilities, restored and new pedestrian bridges, riverfront promenade segments, and the Inner Loop North project. These projects can have a transformational impact on the urban experience, as evidenced by previous successful projects like the Port of Rochester Marina, Maplewood Park Pedestrian Bridge, Midtown Rising, Western Gateway I-490 Project, ARTWalk, and the Inner Loop East Transformation Project.



NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

Rochester 2034 provides a blueprint for growth and development from a city-wide perspective, with some detail provided at the neighborhood scale. Neighborhoods are encouraged to partner with the City to do more in-depth plans and studies that will add more specificity to placemaking strategies. Projects such as brownfield opportunity area (BOA) plans, corridor studies, and neighborhood charrettes are useful tools for digging deeper than a comprehensive plan. The City should continue to implement existing small area plans while supporting additional follow-on studies and plans. Many examples of these projects are included on The Placemaking Plan Map.



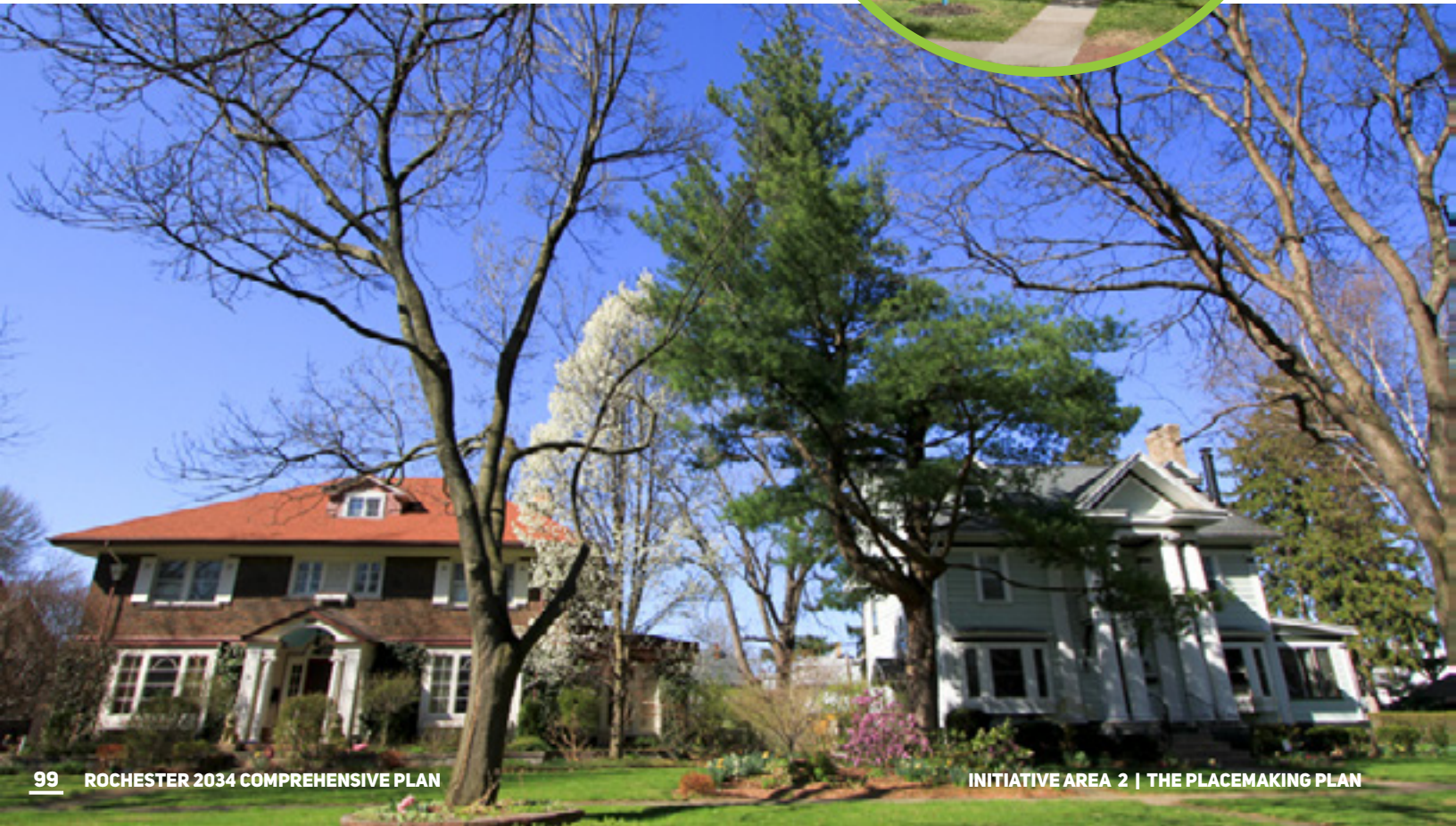
EAST MAIN ARTS & MARKET INITIATIVE



C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Placemaking is enhanced by preserving our traditional built environment. Rochester has an abundance of historic buildings to complement its unique history of innovation, democratic pursuits, and enrichment. Museums, landmarks, heritage trails, and history-oriented programming all help tell the story of the Flour/Flower City's evolution and the great figures from our past. The recommendations found within each of the Character Areas work towards preserving the traditional form of Rochester's neighborhoods, as do the numerous strategies listed under [Goal PMP-4](#).



STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES

During the community engagement stages of *Rochester 2034*, each neighborhood association was asked to identify buildings or sites that, if redeveloped in a positive way, would have a substantial impact on their entire neighborhood. Their suggestions were combined with numerous other underutilized sites and buildings that City staff have identified as being of neighborhood or city-wide significance. The collection of sites also includes the Landmark Society of Western New York's [Five to Revive](#) sites.

[These sites](#) represent a wide variety of scenarios. There are vacant lots, dilapidated buildings, and structures that are relatively sound but remain vacant. Some are privately owned, some are owned by the City. Some are in various stages of redevelopment; others have no plans as of yet. Many are brownfield sites in different stages of cleanup. For all of these sites, the City should develop a



comprehensive program to advance their reuse through documenting existing conditions, fostering partnerships with landowners of privately-owned sites, pursuing environmental remediation funds, and marketing the sites through multiple platforms and partners.



C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN WITHIN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

The terms ‘public space’, ‘open space’, and ‘greenspace’ are typically associated with formal publicly-owned parks, both large and small. However, many of the benefits of parks can be incorporated into the site design of private development. Creating an attractive respite in the fully man-made urban environment is not limited to setting aside entire parcels for public space, nor is it limited to the natural landscape or purely green landscaping. Well-designed, dynamic spaces play an integral role in community placemaking.

When space is limited within a development site, the benefits of public parks can still be obtained at a small scale through the creative design of how buildings and the absence of buildings interact with each other. The following annotated images illustrate how the pedestrian-scale intricacies of site and building design can create small gathering places, beautiful landscapes, and whimsical spaces for play within the urban environment. When designed properly, they reinforce a strong sense that people are valued as residents of a place, not merely consumers of products.

Rochester’s relatively weak real estate market has limited how much developers and property owners are willing to incorporate these elements that do not produce direct revenue. However, as our market strengthens, especially with the resurgence of downtown, the City should gradually raise the standards based on the [principles illustrated in the following pages](#). This should include incorporating public space concepts into the updated/new form-based codes for downtown and mixed-use districts.

Public space enhancements should be viewed as a strategic investment for property owners and developers. Combined with a highly attractive, playful public realm, these investments will multiply street level vibrancy, bolster the positive perception of the city, and drive greater levels of economic activity. Given the presence of The Strong National Museum of Play and the City’s newfound commitment to incorporating ‘urban play’ elements into the public realm, Rochester is uniquely positioned to craft a new identity.

EXAMPLE: CHANNEL GARDENS AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER, MANHATTAN

One of the world’s most famous public spaces within private development is Channel Gardens at Rockefeller Center. Not only does this tiny four-season ‘outdoor room’ not generate any direct revenue, it is costly to maintain. Yet for nearly a century, it has been the centerpiece of Rockefeller Center, indirectly generating untold millions of dollars in revenue for adjacent uses because of its irresistible lure in the heart of the highly dense Manhattan landscape. While Rochester does not have nearly the critical mass to replicate these levels of investment and activity, the same principles regarding the direct and indirect value of public space can be applied on a smaller scale.



**EXAMPLE:
LA CIUDELA, SAN JUAN**



first floor unifying elements like awnings and cornice lines allow for variation and interest in upper floors

whimsical, undulating paths communicate that this is a destination, a place to 'be', not just a connector



changing building orientation counters the monotony of large-scale development

outdoor eating spaces soften the barrier between private and public space

high-density development adjacent to public space, when designed well, creates a sense of place – an 'outdoor room'

**THIS
OVERALL
DESIGN
PROMOTES
A SENSE
OF URBAN
'PLAY!'**



historic and modern building designs complement each other when emphasis is placed on first floor and public space design

creative lighting enhances the 'after 5' experience

C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

EXAMPLE: THE GULCH, NASHVILLE



enhancements to even the smallest public spaces contribute to vitality

first floor uses like restaurants and shops contribute to regular pedestrian traffic; offices and certain services do not

first floor transparency highlights pedestrian activity

maintain overall feel of development built to the sidewalk while allowing for small-scale variations in setbacks for visual interest and gathering spaces



gardens, fountains, and outdoor seating

sidewalks with varying widths and nuances

modern features added to historic buildings

REUSE OF VACANT LANDS

One of Rochester's greatest challenges is the prevalence of vacant lands in its most economically distressed neighborhoods. Their presence can negatively impact a sense of place and pride as they raise safety concerns, portray disinvestment, and are even correlated with low educational outcomes for nearby children. As discussed in [Initiative Area 3-Section B, Vacant Lands](#), the City should pursue a more deliberate set of strategies for repurposing vacant lands. Whether converting them to community gardens, holding them for future development, or installing renewable energy facilities, the City should engage neighborhoods and other stakeholders to customize strategies for different areas across the community.

Not only will the reuse of these lands enhance a sense of place, empowering neighbors to drive these investments will foster hope and commitment. These properties are far too numerous to clearly show on the Placemaking Plan Map. However, the City does maintain an inventory of vacant properties and the most significant ones are shown on the map as Strategic Sites.



C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

GRASS ROOTS INITIATIVES

While documented extensively in this Initiative Area, not all placemaking efforts come from municipal investments, policies, and regulations. Of equal importance are the efforts of local residents, businesses, and organizations. Sometimes these initiatives are done in partnership with the City such as the BoulevART program that allows neighbors to promote traffic calming and beautification through street murals. The annual Clean Sweep event and recent pop-up mini-festivals at La Marketa site are additional examples.

In other cases, character and vibrancy are fostered solely through grass roots resources. Block parties, active neighborhood organizations, and community gardens are defining features of many parts of the city. As well, the basic upkeep and beautification of individual homes, businesses, and yards has a significant impact on the daily experience of residents and visitors. Many neighborhoods and business corridors self-organize and promote these values. The Action Plan for this Initiative Area contains several strategies for continuing to build local capacity for placemaking.



PUBLIC SPACE PROGRAMMING + PUBLIC ART

Another key element in creating places of great character and vibrancy is programming activities and events in those public spaces, districts, and neighborhood centers. The City of Rochester sponsors and promotes festivals and other events that enliven parts of the city. Local groups and organizations also play a role in programming public spaces. Examples of this includes the Puerto Rican Festival, Corn Hill Arts Festival, and Park Avenue Festival. As part of the ROC the Riverway initiative, the City will form a downtown/riverfront management entity that will program, market, and maintain the proposed new public spaces.

Public art is essential to the beauty and vitality of a place and is free and accessible to everyone. Rochester has numerous public art installations, especially in the downtown area and in the Neighborhood of the Arts. Additionally, many neighborhoods and grass roots organizations have proudly advocated for and successfully installed unique public art to create a greater sense of place in their community. Future development projects and public space enhancements should add even more artistic installations to the cityscape. Public art investments include temporary, rotating, and permanent installations. These investments are bolstered by creating public spaces that can accommodate performance art of varying scales and genres.



C. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

PARKING POLICIES

As Rochester continues to see a renewed interest in city living and urban development, and as mobility options and preferences continue to evolve, the City should reexamine its parking-related policies.

Prioritizing parking in development decisions works against the principles of placemaking. Ample parking can often stifle the economic success of a street or district, as it discourages pedestrian activity and is an inefficient use of land.

Conversely, businesses or destinations can often be highly successful despite the lack of parking. For example, two of Rochester's most popular restaurants, Magnolia's Deli & Cafe and The Playhouse / Swillburger, have no dedicated parking. Over time, patrons have organically found nearby parking or alternative transportation solutions to get to these locations. Similarly, it can often be challenging to find a parking space along or nearby the city's most vibrant business corridor, Park Avenue. Few businesses in this area have dedicated parking of their own. Yet these places demonstrate that people will find a way to get to a business or destination if the 'product' is highly desirable.

Ride share and bike share are solidly established in Rochester, reflecting emerging preferences for non-single occupancy vehicle modes of transportation. *Reimagine RTS* is positioning bus service to be even more viable for riders. Also, e-bikes, e-scooters, and autonomous vehicles are showing signs of collectively having a major impact on transportation choices in the next 15 years. Driving will remain the majority mode of choice in future years, but its expected decline should be reflected in land use regulations and the overall urban investment mindset.

It is recommended that zoning regulations for future commercial, mixed-use, and large-scale housing development in all mixed-use Character Areas transition away from minimum parking requirements to a "transportation access plan", which would be applicable to projects above a scale identified during the zoning code update process. This approach should also be applied to as-built commercial buildings in residential Character Areas, as well as conversion of single-family homes to 4-family homes in all Character Areas. Proposed parking should be based on a transportation access plan that considers

all relevant modes of transportation and potential impacts of off-site parking usage.

Parking minimums are car-oriented regulations intended for car-oriented places that fail to recognize, let alone encourage, the urban environment, its transportation choices, its historic context, or emerging trends. Parking minimums often pose a barrier for new shops, businesses, and housing to be established, especially in cases of repurposing historic commercial or industrial buildings. In most cases, businesses and residential buildings should be able to supply sufficient parking and accessibility to patrons through:

- nearby parking lots and garages;
- shared parking agreements;
- on-street parking;
- bicycle parking;
- transit access;
- being in a walkable environment;
- ride sharing services; and
- other emerging trends in transportation options and preferences.

Limited amounts of on-site parking spaces, if any, can be combined with each of these options to make the development economically viable. Under current regulations, when the required amount of parking is installed, it often perpetuates an overly car-dependent culture and covers valuable real estate with asphalt.

The recommendation to transition away from conventional parking requirements is consistent with an emerging movement across the country to eliminate parking minimums in favor of promoting alternatives to driving.

Parking maximums should be retained, with a variance needed for proposals exceeding the cap. These regulations ensure that proposed projects do not include an oversupply of spaces. However, the current maximums should be revisited and adjusted, as needed, if there are recurring issues with their levels. In addition, greater emphasis should be placed on the City, developers, and landowners identifying opportunities for community parking lots and shared parking agreements.

As mentioned in the [Design Considerations for the Downtown Mixed-Use Character Area](#), developers and architects should be provided more guidance on the design of first floor covered parking within mixed-use and multi-family residential buildings. The high cost of creating underground parking, coupled with the CCD's limits on surface parking, often results in development proposals containing first floor covered parking. Revised standards should effectively limit, but not prohibit, this design approach as well as mitigate its negative impacts on adjacent street life.

Lastly, the City should revise each of its request for proposals (RFP) processes for development of City-owned land. Developers responding to these RFPs should be required to outline a holistic approach to transportation choices, as opposed to the more conventional request for a parking plan. Several recent development proposals for new construction projects in downtown have contained less than one parking space per residential unit, an encouraging sign. This market shift should be supported by revising related City policies.

“AS PARKING REGULATIONS WERE PUT INTO ZONING CODES, MOST OF THE DOWNTOWNS IN MANY CITIES WERE JUST COMPLETELY DECIMATED. WHAT THE CITIES GOT, IN EFFECT, WAS GREAT PARKING. BUT NOBODY GOES TO A CITY BECAUSE IT HAS GREAT PARKING.”

- MICHAEL KODRANSKY, INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

