



Agenda Item # 3

BOA-003563-2025

View additional details on this proposal and all application materials using the following link:

[Applicant Materials for Consideration](#)

DETAILS

Location:

2712 Old Shell Road

Applicant / Agent:

James F. Watkins

Property Owner:

Warrior Development, LLC

Current Zoning:

B-2, Neighborhood Business Urban District

Future Land Use:

Traditional Mixed Use Corridor

Case Number(s):

6720/6626/5441

Unified Development Code Requirement:

- The Unified Development Code (UDC) requires full compliance with front yard and side yard setback requirements as well as the provision of a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the main building entrance in a B-2, Neighborhood Business Urban District.

Board Consideration:

- Pedestrian Connection, Front Yard Setback, and Side Yard Setback Variances to amend a previously approved variance to allow a new building within the required front yard and side yard setbacks without a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the main building entrance in a B-2, Neighborhood Business Urban District.

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BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING AERIAL



The site is surrounded by commercial and residential units. A school lies to the south.

APPLICATION NUMBER	6720	DATE	January 5, 2026
APPLICANT	James F. Watkins		
REQUEST	Pedestrian Connection, Front & Side Yard Setback Variances		



SITE HISTORY

The site was previously granted Access/Maneuvering, Parking Ratio, Landscaping and Tree Planting, and Buffer Variances to allow nose-in parking, a 10-foot wide drive and undesignated maneuvering area, undesignated parking, no landscaping and tree planting, and no residential buffer by the Board of Adjustment at its December 3, 2007 meeting.

The site was demolished, with permits in 2024.

On October 7, 2024, the site came before the Board of Zoning Adjustment for a Front Yard Setback Variance to allow a five-foot (5') front yard setback along Randolph Street, instead of a compliant ten-foot (10') setback. That variance application was approved.

There have been no Planning Commission applications.

STAFF COMMENTS

Engineering Comments:

No comments.

Traffic Engineering Comments:

No comments.

Urban Forestry Comments:

Property to be developed in compliance with state and local laws that pertain to tree preservation and protection on both city and private properties [Act 929 of the 1961 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature (Acts 1961, p. 1487), as amended, and City Code Chapters 57 and 65]. Private removal of trees in the right-of-way will require approval of the Mobile Tree Commission. Removal of heritage trees from undeveloped residential sites, developed residential sites in historic districts, and all commercial sites will require a tree removal permit.

Fire Department Comments:

All projects located within the City Limits of Mobile shall comply with the provisions of the City of Mobile Fire Code Ordinance, which adopts the 2021 edition of the International Fire Code (IFC).

Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided to within 150 feet of all non-sprinklered commercial buildings and within 300 feet of all sprinklered commercial buildings, as measured along an approved route around the exterior of the facility.

An approved fire water supply capable of meeting the requirements set forth in Appendices B and C of the 2021 IFC shall be provided for all commercial buildings.

Fire hydrant placement shall comply with the following minimum standards:

- Within 400 feet of non-sprinklered commercial buildings
- Within 600 feet of sprinklered commercial buildings
- Within 100 feet of fire department connections (FDCs) serving standpipe or sprinkler systems

Although the International Residential Code (IRC) functions as a stand-alone document for the construction of one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses, it does not govern the design or layout of emergency access or community-level fire protection infrastructure. Therefore, residential developments must also comply with the applicable requirements of the International Fire Code, including, but not limited to, those listed above concerning the design, construction,

Planning Comments:

The applicant is requesting Pedestrian Connection, Front Yard Setback, and Side Yard Setback Variances to amend a previously approved variance to allow a new building within the required front yard and side yard setbacks without a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the main building entrance in a B-2, Neighborhood Business Urban District; the Unified Development Code (UDC) requires full compliance with front yard and side yard setback requirements as well as the provision of a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the main building entrance in a B-2, Neighborhood Business Urban District.

The entire application packet is available via the link on Page 1.

As previously stated, the site was last before the Board in October 2024, with a new development proposed, for which the applicant obtained a reduced front yard setback along Randolph Street from ten-feet (10') to five-feet (5'). The structure has now been built, and as upon review of the as-built survey conducted, it was determined that the building was not built with compliant five-foot (5') setbacks both along Randolph Street and the Eastern property line. As such, the applicant is requesting approval for the structure to remain in its current configuration.

Furthermore, the applicant is requesting approval to waive the construction of the pedestrian connection from the sidewalk along the public rights-of-way to the building. Chapter 64, Article 3, Section 3.B.1.(a) states that the pedestrian connection shall be designed to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local accessibility requirements. The applicant states that due to the size and topography of the lot, that an accessible sidewalk connection from Old Shell Road to the structure would consist of a series of zig zag ramps which would be aesthetically out of character to the site, while an accessible sidewalk connection from Randolph Street would begin within the right-of-way due to the required slope.

VARIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Standards of Review:

Variances are not intended to be granted frequently. The applicant must clearly show the Board that the request is due to very unusual characteristics of the property and that it satisfies the variance standards. What constitutes unnecessary hardship and substantial justice is a matter to be determined from the facts and circumstances of each application.

Article 5 Section 10-E. 1. of the Unified Development Codes states that the Board of Adjustment may grant a variance if:

- The Applicant demonstrates that the variance shall not be contrary to the public interest,
- where, owing to special conditions a literal enforcement of the provision of this Chapter will result in unnecessary hardship; and
- the spirit of this Chapter will be observed and substantial justice done.

Article 5 Section 10-E.2. states; no variance shall be granted:

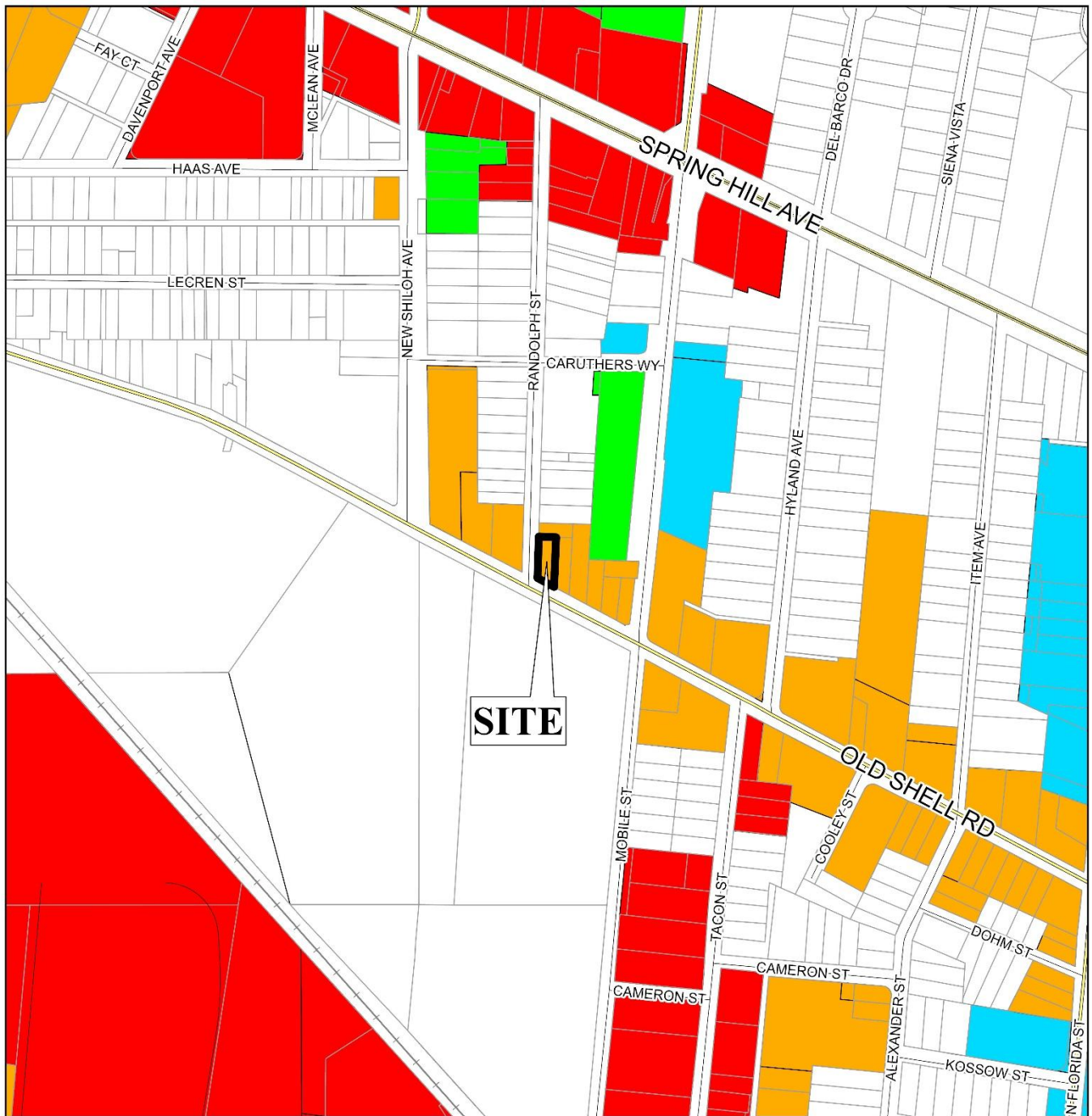
- (a) In order to relieve an owner of restrictive covenants that are recorded in Mobile County Probate Court and applicable to the property;
- (b) Where economic loss is the sole basis for the required variance; or
- (c) Where the variance is otherwise unlawful.

Considerations:

Based on the requested Variance application and documentation submitted, if the Board considers approval of the request, the following findings of fact must be present:

- A) The variance **will not** be contrary to the public interest;
- B) Special conditions **exist** such that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the chapter **will** result in unnecessary hardship; and
- C) The spirit of the chapter **shall be** observed and substantial justice **done** to the applicant and the surrounding neighborhood by granting the variance.

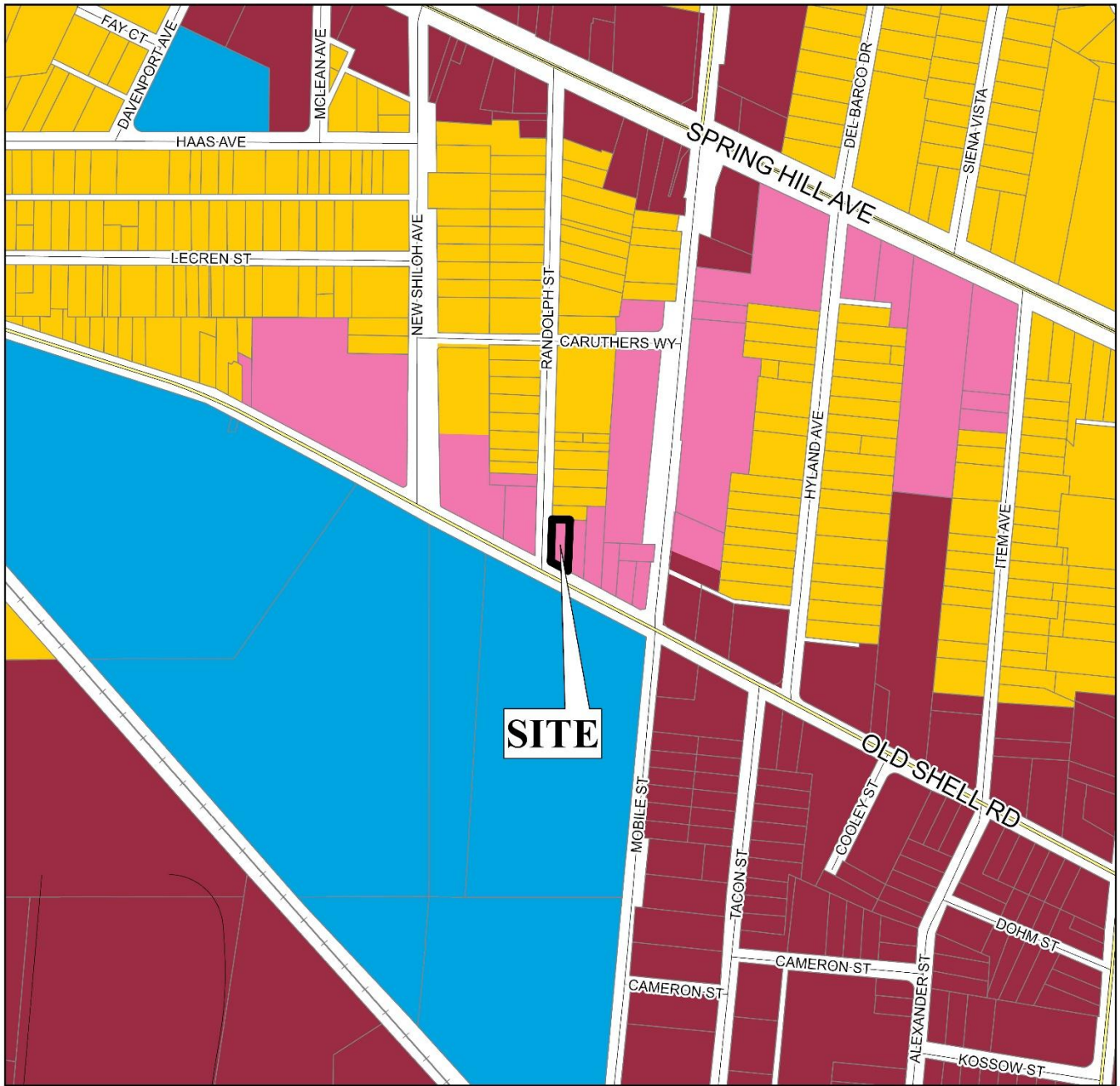
LOCATOR ZONING MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 6720 DATE January 5, 2026
APPLICANT James F. Watkins
REQUEST Pedestrian Connection, Front & Side Yard Setback Variances



FLUM LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 6720 DATE January 5, 2026
 APPLICANT James F. Watkins
 REQUEST Pedestrian Connection, Front & Side Yard Setback Variances

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low Density Residential | Neighborhood Center - Traditional | Light Industry | Water Dependent |
| Mixed Density Residential | Neighborhood Center - Suburban | Heavy Industry | |
| Downtown | Traditional Corridor | Institutional | |
| District Center | Mixed Commercial Corridor | Parks, Open Space | |



BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

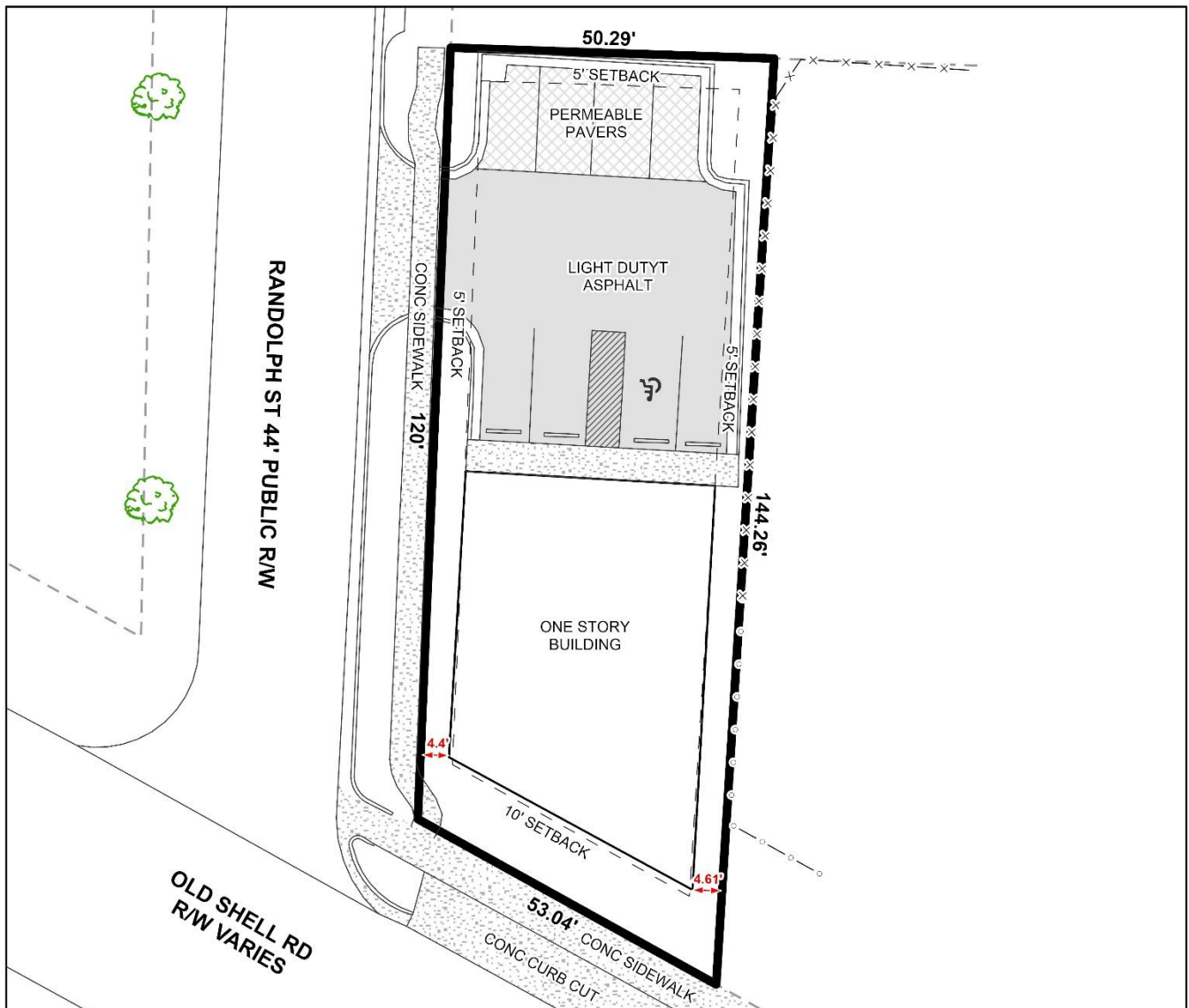
VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial and residential units. A school lies to the south.

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<table border="0"> <tr> <td> R-A</td> <td> R-3</td> <td> B-1</td> <td> B-2</td> <td> B-5</td> <td> ML</td> <td> I-2</td> <td> OPEN</td> <td> T-3</td> <td> T-5.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td> R-1</td> <td> R-B</td> <td> T-B</td> <td> B-3</td> <td> CW</td> <td> MH</td> <td> PD</td> <td> SD</td> <td> T-4</td> <td> T-6</td> </tr> <tr> <td> R-2</td> <td> H-B</td> <td> LB-2</td> <td> B-4</td> <td> MM</td> <td> I-1</td> <td> MUN</td> <td> SD-WH</td> <td> T-5.1</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>			R-A	R-3	B-1	B-2	B-5	ML	I-2	OPEN	T-3	T-5.2	R-1	R-B	T-B	B-3	CW	MH	PD	SD	T-4	T-6	R-2	H-B	LB-2	B-4	MM	I-1	MUN	SD-WH	T-5.1	
R-A	R-3	B-1	B-2	B-5	ML	I-2	OPEN	T-3	T-5.2																							
R-1	R-B	T-B	B-3	CW	MH	PD	SD	T-4	T-6																							
R-2	H-B	LB-2	B-4	MM	I-1	MUN	SD-WH	T-5.1																								

SITE PLAN



The site plan illustrates proposed buildings, setbacks, and parking.

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Mixed Use Areas: Corridors

TRADITIONAL CORRIDOR (TC)

This land use designation generally applies to transportation corridors east of I-65, which serve as the primary commercial and mixed-use gateway to Downtown and the City's traditional neighborhoods. Depending on their location, these areas incorporate a range of moderately scaled single-use commercial buildings holding retail or services; buildings that combine housing units with retail and/or office; a mix of housing types including low- or mid-rise multifamily structures, and attractive streetscapes and roadway designs that safely accommodate all types of transportation – transit, bicycling, walking, and driving.

Development Intent

- › Incorporate attractive streetscapes and roadway designs that safely accommodate all types of transportation – transit, bicycling, walking, and driving.
- › Special emphasis is placed on the retention of existing historic structures, compatible infill development, and appropriate access management.

Land use mix

Primary Uses

- › Commercial
- › Office
- › Civic
- › Residential, Multifamily

Secondary Uses

- › Residential, Attached
- › Parks

Housing mix

- › Various types ranging in density from 10 to 30 du/ac;
- › Residential units above ground-floor retail
- › Multifamily buildings (small scale)
- › Attached residential such as duplexes, multiplexes, and townhomes

Character Example

