



Woodson Road

strategic planning report



August 2016

“To design a street according to its intended use is a reasonable but uncommon practice.”

Harland Bartholomew



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Overview of The Great Streets Initiative

Streets are public space.

In 2006, East-West Gateway Council of Governments launched the St. Louis Great Streets Initiative to expand the way communities think of their streets. Rather than viewing a roadway solely as a means to move cars and trucks efficiently, the goal of the St. Louis Great Streets Initiative is to work with communities to define a more comprehensive vision for significant streets. Often, our roadways do not easily accommodate their range of functions or the array of people using them. By changing the planning approach, however, they can become vibrant, attractive, and refreshing social places.

A strong process is as important as the end product. Working with the community to define the vision, a diverse team of consultants bring technical data and experience to the community's local knowledge. Through the course of this discussion, a mix of development, transportation, environmental, and governance strategies is developed to help the community achieve their stated goals.

The process for the Woodson Road Great Streets project was tailored around a four day long, on-site workshop. This is an efficient way to repeatedly gather community input as options are considered and refined into final recommendations.

The end product provides Overland with specific guidance to achieve its goals for Woodson Road.

Great Streets:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are great places | Streets are public space. They should be engaging. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate land use and transportation planning | Start with the desired vision for the place, then develop a transportation network to support it. The two are entirely linked. When addressing either, consider the other. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodate all users & all modes | A range of people use a given roadway. Balance transit, pedestrian, cyclist, & driver, priority to fit the need. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are economically vibrant | A healthy local economy attracts investment and lasting stewardship. It also supports adjacent neighborhoods. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are environmentally responsible | An attractive refreshing environment working in concert with natural systems is lasting and reflects local identity. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rely on current thinking | Great Streets review others' efforts and lessons learned, adapting, where appropriate, successful ideas. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop collaboratively | Bring a range of technical abilities to the table and combine it with local knowledge from the community. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are measurable | Linking measurable goals to project priorities helps guide decision making throughout a planning process. |

Past Great Streets Projects

Pictured below are some of the previous Great Streets Initiative projects. As can be seen in the photographs, these streets are multimodal and vibrant, incorporate systems and materials that work with the local environment, and are attractive, unique places to be. For more information about the Great Streets Initiative or any of the projects that have been completed, go to www.ewgateway.org.

East-West Gateway has created a Digital Design Guide that is available online. This guide allows users to examine various elements and processes that can make a street a stronger asset to the neighborhoods that surround it. Communities throughout the region are encouraged to incorporate these elements into their projects.

To learn more about the characteristics found in great streets, as well as the design and process issues involved, the Digital Design Guide can be accessed at www.greatstreets-stl.org/.



South Grand Avenue, St. Louis, MO



Page Avenue, Pagedale, MO



Natural Bridge Road, North St. Louis County, MO



Grand Center, St. Louis, MO

Introduction

This report was the result of a highly collaborative process that involved numerous community constituents, regional planning partners and agencies, and a very capable team of consultants. The endeavor was distinguished by a spirit of common cause, respect and professionalism. Relevant history and data were balanced with real aspirations and goals in a very productive conversation. Appendix C, containing presentations and polling results compiled during community workshops, presents a partial record of this conversation. Necessary adjustments to this plan over time should respect and maintain this high level of collaboration and technical and professional input. The people of Overland will expect it, and even small adjustments that fail to consider the range of related issues can create problems down the road.

This document borrows significantly from white papers (see Appendix D) written by consultants on the project team. While these white papers contain a great deal of analysis and detail, this report itself only includes the barest core content from them. Reading each of the four white papers will provide significant additional information that is essential to fully understanding this document and its recommendations. The authors of the white papers reviewed and provided edits to this report to ensure that the message and content is consistent with their individual work. Though drafted by East West Gateway staff, authorship should be considered shared by the project team.

Utility of this Document

The intent is for this document to be a concise practical tool for making Woodson Road a great street. To that end, it defines the community goals that were identified through the engagement process, it records why various decisions were made, and clearly states the project team's recommended strategies and next steps in order to achieve the goals.

The general vision and goals **FOR** the community came directly **FROM** the community and are considered core to all subsequent decisions and strategies in this document. Typically, adjustments to the specific plan and strategies become necessary over time, though they should always consider the vision and goals. When making any such adjustments, considering all related issues will minimize creating new problems while solving another.

All such documents have limitations. The local economy and market are dynamic, and typically after four or five years the market analysis needs to be revisited. While the land use goals drive most of the plan recommendations, property development generally falls within the private sector, limiting the City of Overland's control and often the timing of implementing the plan. Also, it is impossible to predict all opportunities to coordinate plan implementation with related public and private projects. Opportunistically leveraging public resources this way can help advance the plan, but may lead to some seemingly odd temporary conditions where completed and pending work converge.

Various recommendations and tasks are identified, stating scope, schedule, budget, and responsible parties where possible.

Context in Brief

The City of Overland rests on the site of what was once known as “The Overland Park,” a stopping place for travelers heading west from St. Louis in the 1820s. In the 1840s, commerce was established, and a one-room school was built in 1846. In 1867 the Ritenour School District was organized, giving greater prominence to the area. In 1919, the town’s name was shortened to “Overland” to avoid confusion with the city of Overland Park, Kansas, and twenty years later the town was formally incorporated as a fourth class city. In the 1990s voters approved a change to a third class city, and in 2007 the city voted to have a city administrator form of government.

As Figure 5.1 shows, the majority of housing built in the City of Overland was built before 1950 and radiates out from the northeast corner, near the St. Charles Rock Road, to around the area considered Overland’s downtown area – the area around Woodson Road from Lackland north to Midland. During the suburban boom of the 1950s, another one-third of Overland’s housing stock was built, leaving only 13 percent of the city’s housing stock being built in the past 65 years.

Measuring slightly more than 4.4 square miles in area, the City of Overland is dominated by residential uses (62 percent of the land area), with single-family uses (58 percent) constituting the majority of land area. The city has 14 percent of its land area in commercial uses, which are concentrated along the major road corridors: Woodson, Lackland, and Page Avenue. Approximately one percent is dedicated to parks and recreation uses, and the remainder is industrial/utility, institution (churches, schools and civic buildings), or vacant land. Figure 5.2 shows land uses within the city of Overland.

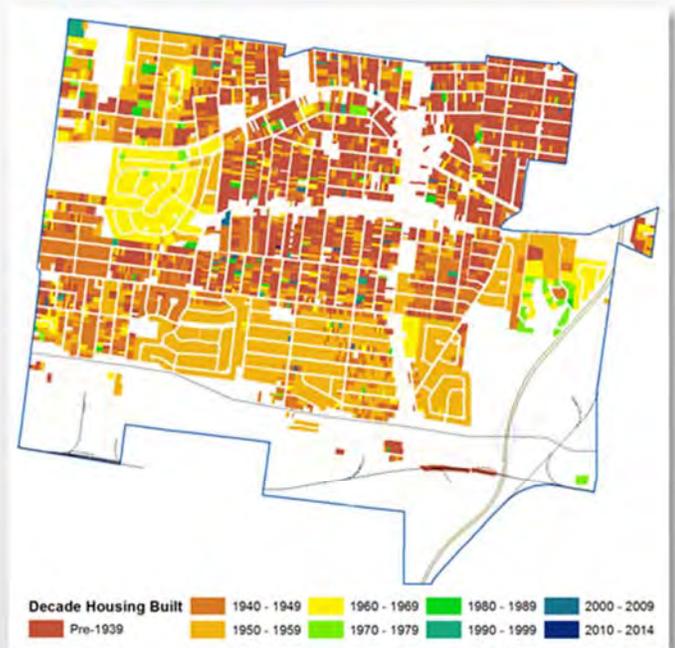


Figure 5.1- Overland Residential Construction by Decade

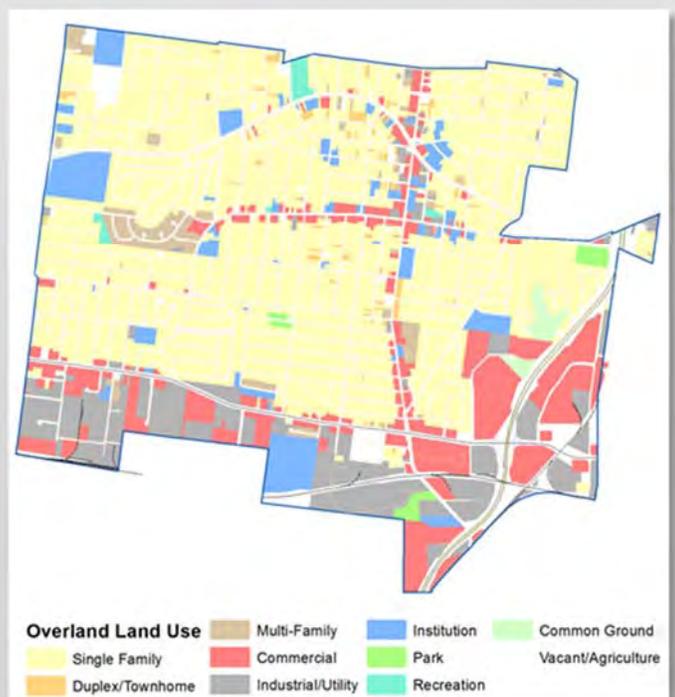


Figure 5.2 - Overland Land Use Map

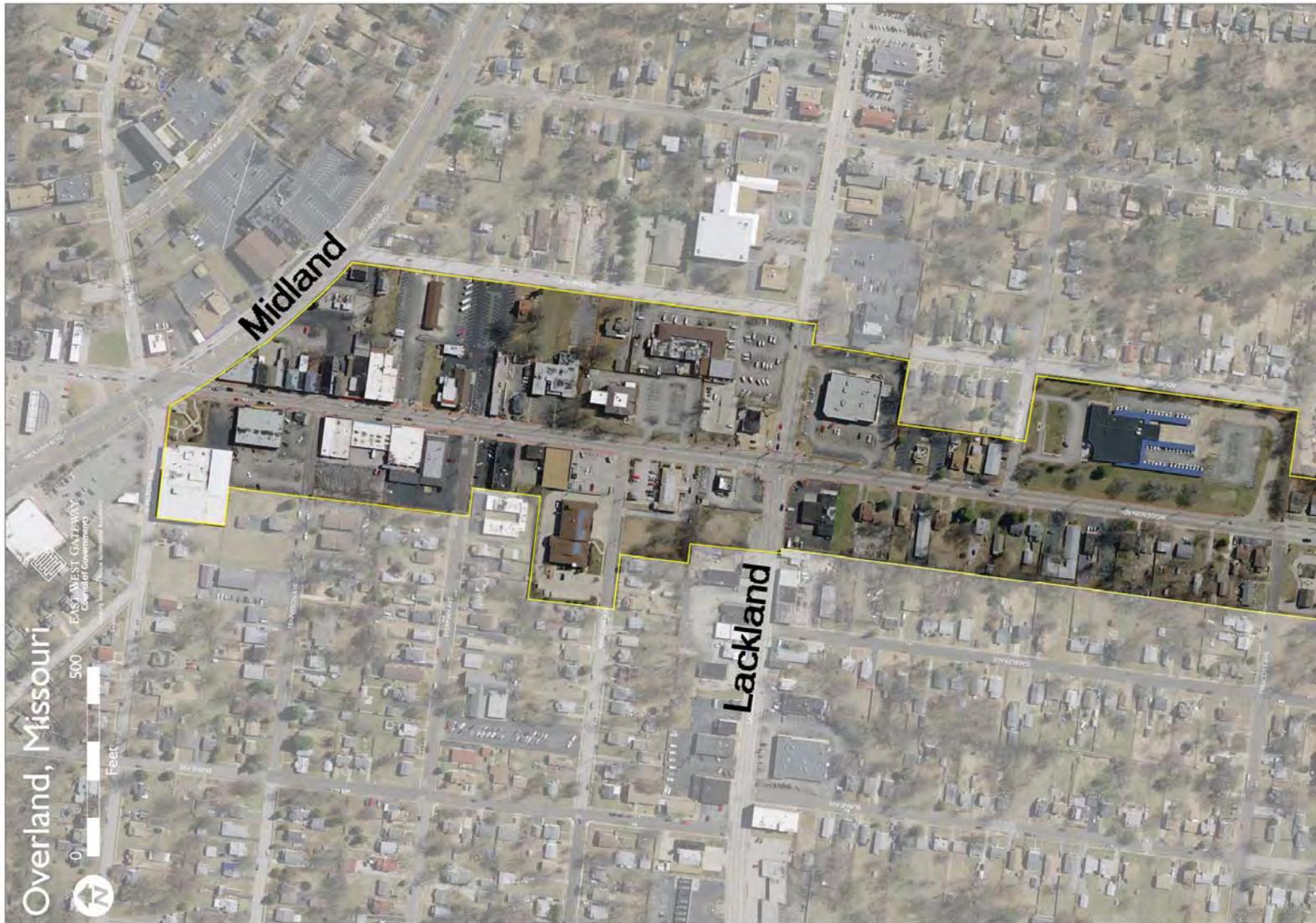


Figure 6.1 - Woodson Road Great Streets Study Area

Readiness for the Study

St. Louis County planning staff identified the Woodson Road corridor in Overland as a roadway that could benefit significantly from a multi-disciplined planning effort. The fabric of the traditional main street was largely in tact, the neighborhoods that surround it are stable, affordable, and well maintained, and the proximity and access to numerous high quality jobs make this a seemingly underrated community within the region. Convenient highway access, walkable neighborhoods, and adjacent planned regional greenway and bike route infrastructure add to the attractiveness of the area. Preliminary analysis showed that, with some strategic planning and investments, the Woodson Road corridor could develop a more vibrant local economy, better serve the residents of Overland, and become an iconic place in the region.

In recent years, the local business community and various other organizations focused along Woodson Road have established themselves. In 2007, the addition of a City Administrator position gave the municipality greater governance and administrative capacity. Furthermore, City staff recently demonstrated an appetite for progressive ordinance revision and reinvestment in its downtown.

When approached by St. Louis County Planning and East West Gateway staffs, the Mayor and Overland staff were enthusiastic about the Great Streets Initiative process, technical input, and end product.



Project Study Area

The Woodson Road project area extends along Woodson Road, originating at Page Avenue at the south end and terminating at Midland Boulevard to the north. With few exceptions, the east and west edges fall along the back of the property parcels along Woodson Road as shown in Figure 6.1. Woodson Road is the primary north / south route in Overland. Page Avenue at the southern end provides quick access to Interstate 170 and is a Missouri state route and primary arterial roadway. Woodson Road extends north, ending at Interstate 70 and Lambert Airport. Midland Boulevard is a wide roadway that included a former streetcar line. It currently carries little traffic compared against its capacity and provides a direct connection to Creve Coeur Park to the west.

The northern end includes a traditional section of “main street” and is adjacent to City Hall and the Community Center on Lackland. At the southern end, automotive oriented commercial serves the residents as they enter or leave their community. The middle portion of the study area is significantly residential with some commercial and institutional mixed in.

Existing Conditions—Overall Study Area

Land Use

The corridor was largely built during a transitional period between walkable transit-centered communities and the emerging automobile-driven development patterns. The northern end relied on direct access to the Midland streetcar. Concentrically, residential neighborhoods developed on a grid, giving an easy walk to downtown for most residents. Extending south, away from the streetcar line, the properties on Woodson transition from a mix of residential and commercial to predominantly automobile-oriented commercial establishments, as shown in Figure 8.1; easy to drive to, but not pedestrian friendly. Most buildings in the area are old enough that they have either received significant maintenance or upgrades, or need them. Properties that don't draw enough rent to support such investments are settling into long term disinvestment. Several parcels, particularly south of Flora on the west side of Woodson, are shallow with small free-standing commercial buildings. The zoning ordinance in Overland creates some challenges for the downtown area although it is currently being updated.

Market

How people shop has changed significantly since most of the corridor buildings were constructed. There is less need for brick and mortar retail with 9% of today's purchases being made online, and that number steadily increases each year. Average income in the area about 2/3 of the St. Louis County average. However, because of the fairly compact nature of the residential neighborhoods, the "income density" suggests there is buying power to support some additional commercial space in the study area as shown in Figure 8.3. A net daily gain of commuters to Overland, illustrated in Figure 8.2, presents an opportunity to capture some of their spending power as well.

The supply of housing in the area is mostly owner occupied, single family. There is not much diversity in the housing stock in the area. By today's standards, most houses are smaller "entry level" homes. Although national trends indicate a growing preference for smaller homes, families interested in larger homes in Overland have little to choose from. What little rental there is consists mostly of single-family homes, though there are some apartment buildings.

There is also a notable lack of senior rental housing in the area. Overland and St. Louis County are largely consistent with the national aging trends. The existing shortage of senior housing in Overland will only become more acute unless more is built.

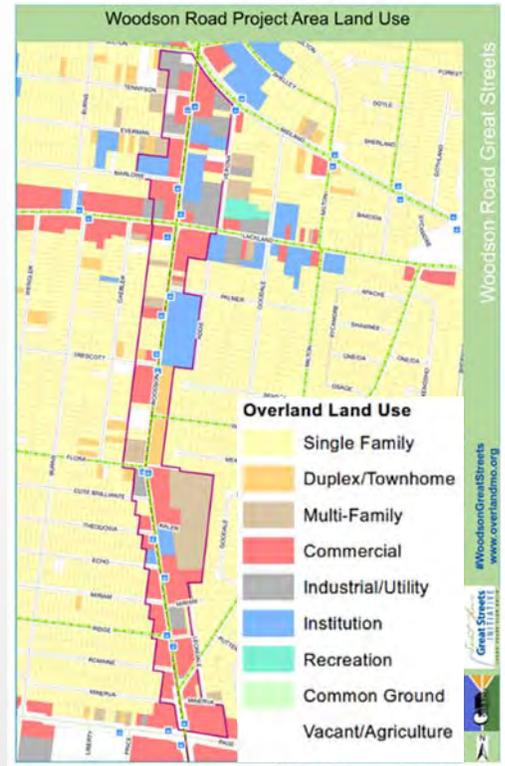


Figure 8.1 - Study Area Land Use

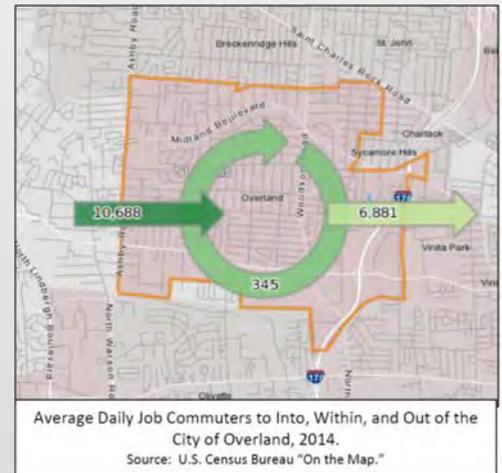


Figure 8.2 - Commuter Flow Diagram



Figure 8.3—Purchasing Power vs. Sales

Transportation

Overland's location within the region, and the roadway network that serves, it make it easily accessible to Downtown St. Louis, Clayton, and several other dense job centers, as well as other significant regional assets such as Lambert airport.

Within the study area, vehicular traffic counts along Woodson range between 7,250 and 12,000 average daily trips (ADT), which is a comfortable volume for neighborhood and main street functions. It is not typically enough to support significant strip retail. Travel speeds are very close to the posted speeds (20 mph from Midland to Lackland and 30 mph south of Lackland) and strict enforcement encourages compliance. Midland at the north end no longer functions as the significant transit corridor that it was built to be. Surplus pavement and vacant parcels are consequences of the removed streetcar line. It does provide an active cycling route directly to Creve Coeur Lake Park for confident bicyclists. Page Avenue to the south is a significant regional arterial with high vehicular traffic volumes and a heavily used Metro bus line for the many jobs located along this spine.

Vehicular crash data was obtained from the Overland Police Department and is shown in Figure 9.1.

		# Injured	Injuries	Ped Crashes	Bike Crashes	Traffic Control
BALTIMORE	WOODSON	1	1			
ARGYLE	WOODSON	1	1	1		
MIDLAND	WOODSON	10	7	3		Traffic Signal
TENNYSON	WOODSON	1	1			
EVERMAN	WOODSON				1	
MARLOWE	WOODSON	1	1			
LACKLAND	WOODSON	3	3			Traffic Signal
PALMER	WOODSON	2	1			
FLORA	WOODSON	2	2			
RIDGE	WOODSON	3	3		1	
BROWN	WOODSON	1	1			Traffic Signal
MINERVA	WOODSON	1	1		1	
PAGE	WOODSON	23	16			Traffic Signal
TOTAL		49	38	4	3	

Figure 9.1 - Woodson Road Crash Data (2013-2015)

Based on the crash data, five specific areas of concern are:

- The signalized intersection at Midland Boulevard/Woodson Road/Milton Avenue had 7 injury crashes (with 10 injuries total), and three crashes involving pedestrians. This is a 6-legged intersection that can be confusing to motorists and has long crossing distances for pedestrians. This intersection has an injury rate that is high for the St. Louis Metro area and the large number of pedestrians injured at this location is alarming.
- Only 2 injury crashes occurred in the downtown portion of the corridor. There was also one crash involving a bicycle at Everman. The combined segment has a relatively low crash rate for the St. Louis Metro area.
- The signalized intersection at Lackland Road had 3 injury crashes (resulting in 3 injuries). The intersection's crash rate is not untypical for St. Louis Metro area traffic signals.

- 8 injury crashes occurred in the neighborhood portion of the corridor (9 injuries total), with two crashes involving bicyclists (at intersections of Ridge and Minerva). Although this roadway segment has a relatively low crash rate for St. Louis Metro area arterial roadways, the two crashes with bicyclists are concerning.
- The signalized intersection at Page Avenue/Woodson Road had 16 injury crashes (23 injuries total). This is a wide intersection with heavy traffic volumes. This intersection has a relatively high crash rate for St. Louis

Bus service along the corridor provides service to numerous job and event destinations. The Woodson Road corridor is serviced by three Metrobus routes: #33 (Dorsett-Lackland), #66 (Clayton-Airport), and 94 (Page). The #66 Clayton-Airport line is the only one that runs along the entire Woodson Road corridor and it only runs during rush hour. Routes #33 and #66 both travel on Woodson Road between Lackland Road and Midland Boulevard in downtown Overland, offering transfer opportunities between the routes. Routes #66 and #94 intersect at Page Avenue, providing transfer opportunities. On the southern section of the corridor, Route #94 (Page Avenue) is heavily travelled moving people throughout the region. Further, all three routes have connections to MetroLink.

Woodson Road is an important pedestrian connection to both downtown Overland and the Page Avenue corridor (including for transit riders of the #94 Page Metrobus). As an important pedestrian corridor, it is critical to invest in pedestrian facilities that enhance safety and user experience. The pedestrian experience differs by segment within the corridor and will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Two significant bicycle routes are planned. Shown in Figure 10.1, these routes would improve Overland's regional connectivity. The Centennial Greenway, a dedicated bicycle pathway planned to link Forest Park and Creve Coeur Park is under development by Great Rivers Greenway (GRG) as part of the regional "River Ring" network of greenways. A portion of the Centennial Greenway is already in place with future segments being developed. GRG is funded largely through a special taxing district to develop the River Ring, and the Centennial Greenway is one of their priority routes. The rail line and trestle, parallel with and less than a quarter mile south of Page, is the planned alignment. In addition to this, St. Louis County wants to stripe dedicated bike lanes on both sides of Midland to improve the safety of this route to Creve Coeur Lake Park. Midland is operating well below capacity for vehicle traffic and has ample space to accommodate this change. Improving bike facilities along Woodson from Midland to the rail trestle south of Page Avenue would provide an obvious link to both facilities serving residents of Overland and improving its draw for riders using the regional network.



Pedestrian crossing in Downtown Overland



Figure 10.1—Bike and Bus Connectivity

A parking study was performed in March 2016 to understand the availability of public parking and how it is being used. The parking study focused on the downtown portion of the Woodson Road Corridor. Parking counts were performed at two different times: 1) a weekday from 8 am – 6 pm, and 2) on a weekend during an event (the March 12, 2016 Overland Craft Fair – located at the Community Center) from 10 am – 2 pm. With this information, CBB determined there is sufficient public parking available in the downtown area for existing conditions. In fact, there is excess parking capacity that could serve future economic development.



Environment

The land along the corridor has been fully developed. Lots that are empty are mostly the result of removed buildings. There are no parks directly in the study area, and green space is composed primarily of private residential yards. The Municipal Pavilion provides open gathering and market space, though the area around it is completely paved. The north and south commercial areas naturally have more rooftops and pavement, putting greater demand on the storm water sewer infrastructure. In fact, only 24% of the entire study area is green or otherwise pervious. The downtown area to the north (16.6%) and the west side of Woodson between Brown Road and Page (18.6%) are notably worse. The storm water infrastructure appears insufficient in a couple of locations, possibly leading or contributing to localized flooding conditions.

Tree canopy is sparse along the corridor, primarily consisting of yard trees on residential property. Essentially none exists in commercial areas. The City of Overland installed concrete planter boxes several years ago, but over time they were not maintained and most are empty today.

An evaluation of existing light levels along Woodson Road was completed. A light meter was used to measure the foot candle output at the sidewalk and at the midpoint between street light posts. The foot candles recorded ranged from 0.0 to 6.1 (see the lighting levels map in Appendix A). The only issue identified was the lack of light near a Metro Bus stop at the northeast side of the Lackland and Woodson intersection. Lighting in that area is supplied by cobra heads located on the traffic signal poles. Those lights were not functioning at the time of the readings in that area. We determined from discussions with Ameren that the City of Overland is responsible for those intersection lights. Overland was notified of this issue. Stakeholder input during the charrette identified a desire to have decorative pedestrian scale lighting in the downtown zone.



Large amounts of impervious surfaces



Old concrete planters with no street trees

Existing Conditions - by Segment



Figure 12.1 - Woodson Road Analysis Segments

As the project team assessed the area and discussed it with the community, the corridor naturally delineated into three segments. The **“Downtown”** area on the north end extends from Midland to Lackland, including the parcels on the south side of the Lackland intersection. From there, the **“Neighborhood”** segment extends south to Flora. At the south end, the **“Convenience Service”** segment extends from Flora to Page. These segments are shown in Figure 12.1 and will be used to discuss existing conditions and recommendations specific to those areas.

Downtown

This segment is defined by traditional urban storefront commercial spaces that front the sidewalk. It dates to the origins of the community and has the greatest potential to be a destination as Overland’s urban “main street” where people linger and socialize. The Lackland intersection has the potential to develop consistent with this, connecting the municipal functions of City Hall and the Community Center directly to the “heart” of the community. Additional traditional storefront commercial spaces extend west along Lackland for several blocks.

Several empty storefronts make the Downtown area seem vacant and somewhat unkempt. Too many vacancies can deter potential tenants from moving into the area. Occupying these spaces can make an area seem more inviting to residents, customers, and additional proprietors.

Programmed events, such as the annual street party and seasonal farmers market are successful and well attended.

Downtown parking is plentiful and under utilized. Observations made during this study show that even the most convenient on-street parking is not fully used most of the time. Municipal and private lots also have excess capacity, but could benefit from better connectivity to the storefronts on Woodson Road.

Some properties on the east side of Woodson do flood in heavy rains. This is a long standing issue. Apparently insufficient storm water inlets serve the expansive adjacent pavement. Deferred building maintenance issues may also contribute to basement flooding in some places.

Overhead utilities clutter the east sidewalk. Wooden poles in the sidewalk support a myriad of electrical and communications lines. Buildings on both sides of the street are supplied by these lines. Several of the service lines hang quite low.

Current zoning makes it difficult to lease second story spaces in the existing buildings. Mixed uses (residential over commercial) are currently not allowed by ordinance. Since much of the affected building stock predates the zoning restriction, the buildings cannot function economically the way they were originally constructed without a variance, conditional use permitting, or expensive retrofit.

Neighborhood

The Neighborhood segment of the study area, from Lackland Road to Flora Avenue, is mostly residential and should remain that way. Concentrating commercial development toward the Downtown or southern convenience service areas will help strengthen those areas, keeping the neighborhood area more attractive for residential uses. It is already a relatively quiet stretch of Woodson Road that has substantial residential character. There is currently limited commercial development. Additional commercial development would increase traffic, noise, light and visual impacts on the adjacent residential areas.



Existing Rentals North of Flora

The vast majority of housing in Overland was built before 1950 as single family houses, generally small and quite affordable by current standards. A string of duplex units lies on the east side of Woodson north of Flora. Across the street, north of Flora are some apartments. None of this property appears accessible or senior friendly. As residents' needs change, the lack of diverse housing stock in Overland makes it difficult for people to remain in their community as they seek larger houses or accessible low maintenance housing typically sought by young professionals or aging

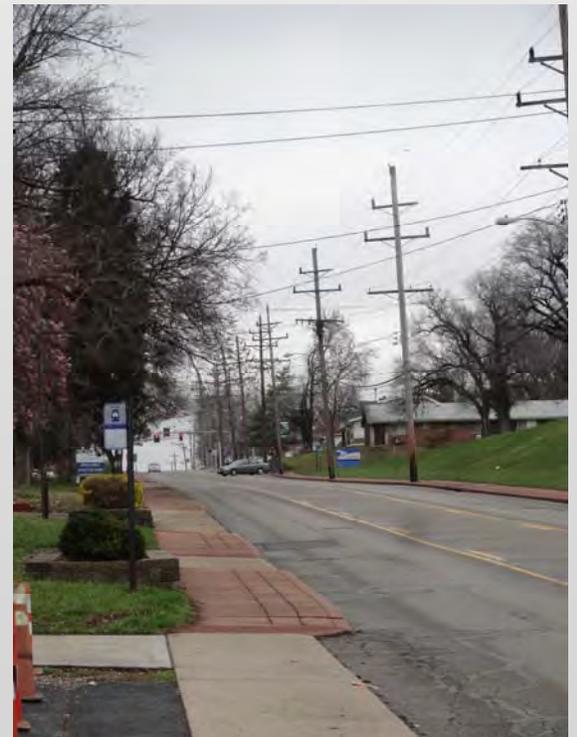
seniors. Undeveloped larger parcels on the west side of Woodson in this area may present an opportunity to provide new housing, addressing gaps in the housing product while reinforcing the quiet, neighborhood character of the area.

The businesses located here in this segment are auto-oriented, limiting the appeal for pedestrian activity.

Lighting is only located along the east side of the road and this area is noticeably darker than the other two segments of the corridor. This may make pedestrians and cyclists uncomfortable at night. Any changes in lighting in this part of the corridor should take care not to impact the residential character of the area.

Though there are sidewalks throughout the Neighborhood segment, they are not inviting to walkers in their current state. There are multiple curb cuts to access the businesses and residences interrupting sidewalks and creating many conflict points between walkers and vehicles pulling in and out. Additionally, the scarcity of marked crosswalks along this area of Woodson Road presents challenges for pedestrians. Cyclists were observed on Woodson Road, though not as many workshop participants feel as comfortable biking as walking.

Trees are minimal, providing little respite from the sun and heat, and landscaping is not well-maintained, making the pedestrian and biking experience uninteresting and less enjoyable and, at times, impractical.



Multiple curb cuts and overhead utilities

Convenience Service

Woodson Road south of Flora is dramatically different from the other two segments. Its auto-oriented commercial and light industrial development, such as small strip malls and auto-repair shops, is working well and should continue to do so. The southern end captures traffic traveling along Page Avenue and offers convenience services for residents coming and going along Woodson Road. There are numerous thriving businesses, and the lots are generally well-maintained with only a few vacant buildings. There is no reason to change the function of this area, but some oddly shaped, disconnected, and somewhat shallow commercial parcels limit potential site assemblage and parking options, which in turn limit the area's redevelopment potential.



Convenience Services along Woodson Road

Though the area has developed as an auto-oriented, commercial district, a lot of people walk, particularly transit users accessing the #94—Page Avenue Metro Bus service. The #94 has high ridership. Page Avenue is built to handle high volumes of vehicle traffic, but is difficult to get across on foot or bicycle. Sidewalks are intermittent between Brown Road and Page Avenue and the many driveways and property access points create a challenging environment for people on foot. There are also few trees in this segment to provide shade to people traveling on foot or bicycle.

This segment is dominated by buildings and pavement, with very little green space, resulting in a high percentage of impervious surfaces, which can cause flooding during heavy rains. Landscaping has been repeatedly washed out in this area because of the flooding, and it has now been removed entirely. This flooding occurs most frequently between Brown Road and Echo Road.

The intersection at Brown Road is significantly skewed, limiting visibility, creating oddly shaped commercial parcels, and restricting east bound turning onto Brown from south bound Woodson Road. St. Louis County staff have expressed an interest in exploring options to improve this intersection's function.

A stormwater flooding issue is located on the south part of Woodson Road near the intersection of Brown Road. The business located in that area, Woofie's, has had issues with stormwater washing out mulch in beds on his property and the storm sewer inlet backing up resulting in water reaching his outdoor seating area. The flooding issue in this area could be attributed to limited capacity during heavy rain events. The MSD engineer suggested that the business owners, residents and/or City of Overland needs to file a formal complaint with MSD and ask for an area engineer to come out to inspect the flooding issues. By filing a complaint MSD will have a record of the issue in their system and take necessary action.



Storm water flooding is an issue near Woofies.

The Planning Process

In order to best organize, process, and address such a wide range of related issues, the process for this project centered on a four day long charrette. This French term refers to an open cart historically sent around by the Academie' des Beaux Arts in Paris to collect design students and their final projects. The students piled in and intensely, collaboratively put the finishing touches on their work to be presented upon their arrival at the academy. The term now refers to the last minute flurry of activity developing public presentations based on a full day's collaborative work.

During the Woodson Road charrette, a project team comprised of four distinct yet related professions considered the corridor through a series of specific focus groups, interviews, and public meeting / feedback sessions. The project team worked on site at the Overland Community Center, away from the distractions of other work, immersed in a collaborative working environment. As the team addressed the various challenges and opportunities along Woodson Road, every conversation included market, environmental, land use, policy, and transportation perspectives. The recommendations considered and advanced by the team represent collective thinking.

Significantly, the charrette process includes extensive and repeated conversation with people who know Overland. The team of professionals have extensive training and experience in their fields. However, the only way for them to understand Woodson Road is to talk with a wide range of people from Overland. Community input came in the form of various focus group discussions, interviews with key individuals, and three public meetings. The four day charrette efficiently integrates the technical expertise of the project team with the local knowledge of the People of Overland. Public input continued throughout the event, and repeated community feedback about specific issues and strategies allowed the project team to abandon or refine ideas quickly.

	MONDAY 3/14/2016	TUESDAY 3/15/2016	WEDNESDAY 3/16/2016	THURSDAY 3/17/2016
9:00 A.M.	Project Team Meeting	Project Team Meeting	Project Team Meeting	Project Team Meeting
9:30 A.M.	Project Site Tour	Individual and Focus Group Discussions (Open to the Public)	Design Team Working Session (Open to the Public)	Design Team Working Session (Open to the Public)
10:00 A.M.				
11:00 A.M.				
11:30 A.M.				
12:00 P.M.	Project Team Meeting	Group Discussion (Open to the Public)	Group Discussion (Open to the Public)	Project Team Meeting
1:00 P.M.	Individual and Focus Group Discussions (Open to the Public)	Design Team Working Session (Open to the Public)	Design Team Working Session and Follow-Up Interviews (Open to the Public)	
2:00 P.M.				
3:00 P.M.				
4:00 P.M.	Project Team Meeting	Project Team Meeting	No Evening Session	
5:00 P.M.				
5:30 P.M.				
6:00 P.M.	Public Kick-Off Meeting	Public Feedback Session	Public Wrap Up and Next Steps Session	
7:00 P.M.				
8:00 P.M.				
9:00 P.M.				

Woodson Road Charrette Schedule

Overland municipal staff coordinated and facilitated all community outreach, including invitations and notifications, scheduling interviews, and hosting the charrette workshop. The various consultants and East West Gateway staff collected and reviewed area data, conducted preliminary interviews prior to the charrette, and participated fully in the four day event. After the charrette, the consultants each produced a white paper focused on their respective disciplines within the project study area. Once complete, EWG staff drafted this strategic planning report for the City of Overland. All white papers and the strategic planning report were reviewed for comment by Overland staff, EWG staff, and each of the four consultants to ensure accuracy and consistency.

CITY OF OVERLAND

Municipal staff help define the project area and scope, provide match funding, and facilitate all community outreach, including providing the space for the charrette workshop.

EAST WEST GATEWAY

East West Gateway staff helps define the project area and scope, provides funding, manages the project consultants, and drafts the final report.

Overland and East West Gateway staff worked together defining the project and selecting the consultant

MARKET

A Market Analyst/Planner assesses the existing market trends and context of the area and provides specific strategies for developing and maintaining a vibrant local economy suited to the neighborhood

LAND USE

An Urban Planner / Designer assesses the development history and patterns of the area, as well as the governance and ordinance context, then highlights specific recommendations to achieve land use and place making goals.

TRANSPORTATION

A Transportation Planner considers the existing facilities along a roadway and balances it against the needs of the expected mix of travelers (walk, bike, bus, car, truck, etc.). Then, recommendations are made to best accommodate them and support the desired community goals.

ENVIRONMENT

An Environmental Planner (often a landscape architect) studies local environmental and utility conditions and makes recommendations to work with the local ecology and enhance the public, outdoor environment for people.

The consultant team spent several weeks preparing for the charrette workshop, collecting data and reviewing recent and current planning efforts within the community. They worked collaboratively on site for the four day charrette workshop, participating in all interviews, focus group meetings, and public meetings. Then, each consultant developed a white paper on their respective discipline about the Woodson Road corridor and provided input and edits for the final plan document.

INTERVIEWS

Prior to the charrette workshop, the project team spoke with key community members, including the Mayor, municipal staff, business leaders, and residents.

FOCUS GROUPS

During the charrette workshop, the design team met with specific groups such as local business people, property owners, first responders, neighborhood representatives, city / county transportation staff, etc.

PUBLIC

Three public meetings were held during the charrette workshop to ensure that the project team focused on the community priorities and worked to refine desired strategies for the corridor.

Community engagement was organized to help get the project team familiar with the study area prior to the charrette workshop in order to make the community interaction and planning process appropriate and efficient. The interviews and focus groups were meant to provide the team with both general and specific input. The public meetings were largely meant to identify priorities and gauge preference or tolerance for various strategies.



Engagement

During the course of the Woodson Road Great Streets Project, the project team reached out to key community members and the general public to gather information about the study area and feedback on the process and its outcomes. The project team spent about two months gathering data in all discipline areas, which gave a good technical representation of the corridor. However, no one knows an area as well as the residents and business owners who live and work there. The project team met with many residents and business owners during the Woodson Great Streets process and one thing is very clear — local businesses and residents are actively working to improve their area. The people of Overland take pride in their community and have aspirations to make it the best it can be. Their feedback was invaluable in framing the plan for Woodson Road.

The week prior to the charrette, the project team held several preliminary interviews to gauge how well their understanding of the corridor meshed with perception and reality. These interviews included –

- Michael Schneider – Mayor, City of Overland
- Mitch Wilson – President, Overland Business Association
- Kady Sanders – Planning & Zoning Coordinator, City of Overland
- Kirby Barnard – Director of Community Development, City of Overland

During the charrette a number of focus groups were conducted to further gather information in key areas regarding the Woodson Road Corridor. These Focus Groups included –

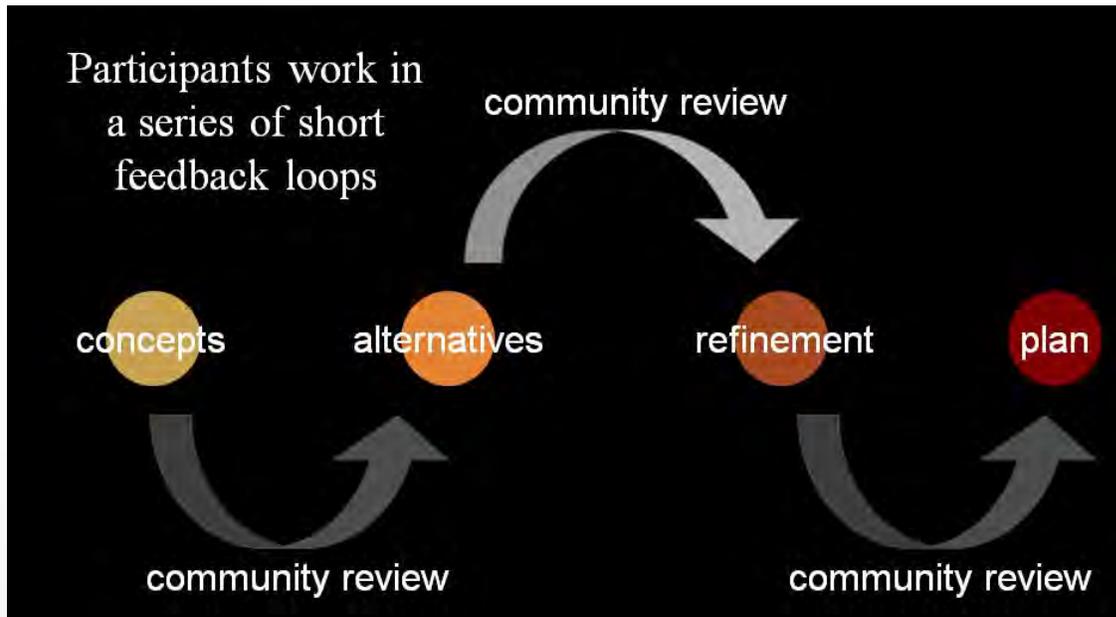
- The Beautification Committee & Farmer's Market
- Neighborhood Preservation Commission
- Overland Business Community
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Safety
- Transportation



The project team also met with representatives from Ameren, Laclede Gas and the Metropolitan Sewer District to coordinate any current or future plans with the utilities in the area.

Finally, there were three open houses held during the charrette. These were opportunities for the public to provide input and direction for the project team. The team opened each evening with a presentation and ended with keypad polling and discussion. Each meeting had a unique agenda and served a distinct purpose in the development of the recommendations for Woodson Road.





Meeting #1 was an opportunity for the project team to present the existing conditions based on all the data that had been gathered, discuss initial thoughts regarding a vision for the corridor and gather feedback to ensure the project was on the right track. Eighteen people attended and participated in keypad polling. A copy of the presentation and the keypad polling results can be found in Appendix B.

Meeting #1 Findings –

- Everyone feels pretty safe driving Woodson Road
- Most feel pretty safe walking on Woodson Road
- Most do NOT feel safe biking on Woodson Road
- Downtown could use some sprucing up
- Woodson Road could use more retail, dining, and skilled labor shops

Meeting #2 Findings –

- Preserving Downtown is very important
- Downtown should be more walkable
- Senior housing is needed
- A bike/ped connection across Page Avenue is a really good idea

Meeting #2 gave the project team a chance to present some ideas for addressing the major issues and concerns that had been defined in the Woodson Road corridor. These ideas were presented and feedback was gathered to determine if the team was on track and to measure public support. Two people attended this meeting, lending to a detailed and meaningful discussion. The presentation from Meeting #2 can be found in Appendix B, however, keypad polling results were not used due to the low attendance.

Meeting #3 focused on the recommendations the project team determined best to move forward as part of the Woodson Road Great Streets Strategic Plan. The project team presented recommendations to a group of 17 people and gathered feedback on the recommendations through keypad polling. Overall, the recommendations were well-received. A copy of the Meeting #3 presentation and keypad polling results can be found in Appendix B.

Meeting #3 Findings –

- A streetscape plan is a great idea IF it comes with a maintenance plan
- A bike/ped connector between Midland and the Centennial Greenway is a great idea
- Downtown should retain its “Main Street” character
- Access to back and side parking lots should be improved
- More community events would be welcome
- A business district should be defined
- Senior housing is needed in Overland

Project Goals

Through the planning process a number of goals, identified below, informed the specific strategies outlined on the following pages.

- **Retain the family friendly quality of Overland.** Build upon the community's strengths and history. Do not "reinvent" Overland.
- **Reinforce the predominant character of the various defined segments** in the study area. Supporting a thriving walkable downtown at the north end, reinforcing the quiet residential nature of the central segment, and alleviating several of the challenges to the automobile oriented commercial area at the south end are essential to the identity, economic viability, function, and attractiveness of the neighborhoods and businesses. Some second story housing over businesses in commercial areas (particularly downtown) can enhance the vitality of a place. Front parked commercial space located in the neighborhood segment, however, not only draws potential tenants from the downtown district, it erodes the quiet residential nature in an area with apparent market potential for additional high quality housing.
- **Make Downtown Vibrant.** Fill empty space and make it an active, walkable, attractive destination.
- **Rebalance the mix of transportation facilities** to equitably serve the range of users along the corridor, regardless of their mode of travel or ability. While the roadway needs to function well for drivers, people using the bus, walking, jogging, and biking use Woodson Road even though it may not be safe, practical, or amenable everywhere along the corridor. The roadway should accommodate all existing and anticipated users.
- **Increase access to recent and planned regional bicycle and greenway facilities.** Better connecting Overland neighborhoods to planned Midland bike lanes and the Centennial Greenway / River Ring network will help provide residents with another viable travel option and recreational facilities that are attractive to younger home buyers.
- **Beautify Woodson Road.** Reduce the visual impact of neglected properties, ugly utilities, expansive pavement, and lack of greenery.



Corridor Plan - Overall Study Area

At the completion of the intense 4-day planning workshop, the project team had developed a number of recommendations with significant input and support from workshop participants. The project team's recommendations follow and are organized, first by issues that effect the entire corridor area, then by discrete segments extending from north to south.

Overall Strategies

- O1 - Concentrate commercial development in distinct districts.** Current retail models do not support as much brick and mortar space as they did when the Woodson Road corridor was built. Concentrating commercial / retail at either end of the study area, walkable traditional storefront "main street" at the north and auto-oriented, front parking convenience services to the south, will give both areas the best conditions for success.
- O2 - Establish a durable management structure** (with its own revenue and staff), such as a Community Improvement District (CID). CID's and similar models are standard tools in the state of Missouri to create a localized administrative entity with its own revenue and staffing. Such a district could start small and expand, or multiple collaborating districts could collectively cover the study area. A formal district, with staff and revenue, can significantly help implement several of the other recommendations in this report. Such a district would need to be approved by local property owners, and would have flexibility determining its revenue assessments. It can be a practical and successful tool for investing along the corridor, particularly in the Downtown and Convenience Service areas. Members of the district typically comprise its board of directors, and a staff position relieves local business owners from the district administrative and other tasks. Figure 19.1 indicates a potential district boundary for the Downtown segment within the project study area, as well as potential expanded area. See the Marketing and Economic Development White Paper (Appendix D) for more specific information.
- O3 - Connect to regional (existing and planned) bike facilities.** The planned bike lanes on Midland Boulevard and the future Centennial Greenway south of Page Avenue should be joined with a new bike/ped connector, as shown in Figure 19.2. This would put Overland at the center of two major bicycle corridors, providing extensive regional bicycle access for residents while attracting new bicycle traffic right through the City of Overland. Specific attributes of the facility can be found in the Corridor Plan - by segment discussion.



Figure 19.1 - Recommended CID District

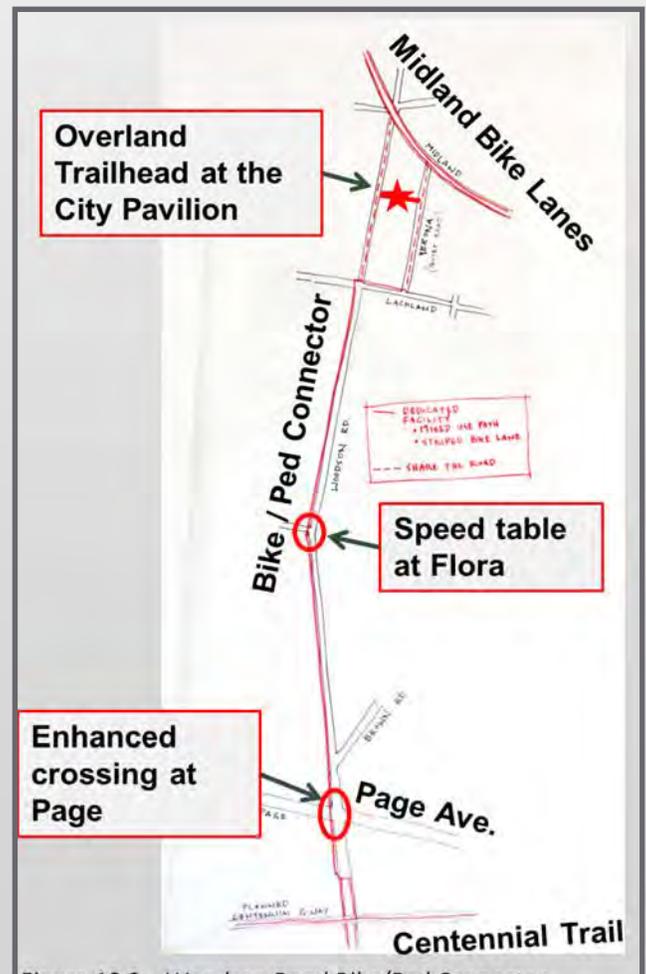


Figure 19.2 - Woodson Road Bike/Ped Connector



Existing Sidewalk Downtown



Existing Curb Condition at Woofies



Example Street Tree Canopy

- O4 - Provide Landscaping / Streetscaping** along Woodson Road. Environmentally, there is no greater return on investment than a developed street tree canopy. Shading, delineation of pedestrian and vehicular spaces, reduction in heat island effect, increases in property values, reduced utility costs, carbon absorption, habitat for small animals, sound absorption, and improved aesthetics are all practical, measurable benefits. The properties, sidewalks, and bike paths along the roadway will be much more inviting (and practical during summer months) with sufficient shading and usable street furniture (benches, trash cans, etc.). Landscaping design and species selection should be coordinated with overhead utility constraints and, in commercial areas, the signage program, and a maintenance plan is crucial. Define the long term maintenance program when the planting design is developed.
- O5 - Update Zoning Codes** to help the City better direct the types of developments where they best fit and encourage coordinated quality site access, parking, building siting, public streetscape, and related communal components of redevelopment. The City of Overland is currently undertaking a rewrite/addition to their zoning ordinance and better defining the downtown area. Items that should be considered as the City moves forward in this endeavor include form-based zoning elements, allowance of mixed use within structures, regulation-based incentives, and shared or maximum parking requirements. Updates to zoning should include the entire study area, focusing commercial activity at the north and south segments, and restricting commercial activity in the Neighborhood segment. Doing so will reinforce the residential quality of the Neighborhood segment while encouraging filling vacant existing commercial space.
- O6 - Coordinate with Metro and St. Louis County to expand service times** for the #66 Clayton-Airport bus line. This is the only bus that extends the entire length of the corridor and there was a strong desire of participants for improved transit service. Currently, the bus only operates during peak commuter periods.

- **O7 - Provide gateways and signage** to facilitate better place-making in the City of Overland. There are great examples of places that have a unique feeling — you know you’ve arrived when you get there — and then there are a multitudes of places that all look alike. The City of Overland should celebrate the unique character it has and let people know they’ve arrived! Examples of gateways and signage are shown below.
- **O8 - Reduce Impervious Paving Area.** Localized flooding, heat island effect, an improved landscaping program, and parallel parking delineation are examples of issues that may be improved by reducing the expansive amount of pavement along the corridor, particularly at the north and south segments of the study area. Various strategies come with a range of build and maintenance costs, so design options should be considered in light of funding availability and maintenance capacity.



Pervious paver system



Examples of Gateways and Signage in St. Louis neighborhoods

Corridor Plan - by Segment



Figure 21.1 - Woodson Road Analysis Segments

Downtown Segment

The Overland municipal staff is focused on improving the corridor with an emphasis on the Downtown area. Ninety-five percent of polled residents feel that Downtown needs some sprucing up. Most participants in the charrette want landscaping and street trees, though the previously installed and unmaintained concrete planter boxes hurt the aesthetics of the area rather than improving it as intended. Any future landscape plan would need a maintenance plan and budget. Following are the recommendations that are specific to the Downtown Overland segment.

- **D1 - Develop design guidelines** for the Downtown area (even if zoning for a broader area is not revised) to encourage redevelopment that is consistent with the Community's goals, minimize the need for variances and conditional use permitting, set urban parking requirements, and allow existing two story building stock to function as mixed use, as it was designed and built.
- **D2 - Develop a targeted Tenancing Strategy.** Using limited additional market analysis, match types of commercial tenants that fit existing spaces or developable parcels, the character (brand) of the area, and have a strong chance of thriving. The business community, CID, and municipal leadership will then collaborate to recruit suitable businesses.



Downtown Overland

- D3 - Reconfigure the Midland Boulevard Intersection.** The intersection of Woodson Road, Milton Avenue, and Midland Boulevard has been the subject of multiple studies of the past several years. This is a six-legged intersection that can be confusing to navigate. Multiple signal phases result in long cycle lengths, and there are long crossing distances for pedestrians. Also, the turning radius moving from northbound Woodson to eastbound Midland is too tight for large vehicles. Recent recommendations, shown in Figure 22.1, by St. Louis County staff to improve the safety and function of the Woodson / Midland intersection have not advanced. Lack of local coordination and significant impacts to adjacent properties and traffic patterns drew resistance. Fully addressing the various issues and concerns at this intersection will require a dedicated study. However, the project team developed an inexpensive intersection treatment that would result in modest functional improvements.



Midland / Woodson intersection (circa 1955)

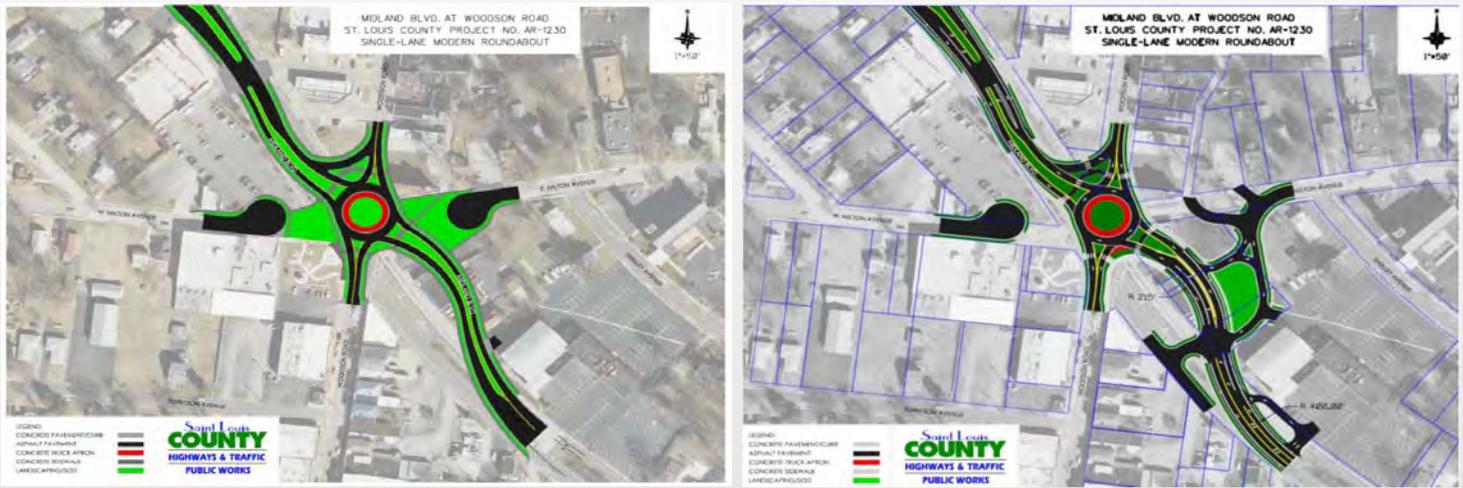


Figure 22.1 - Recent works proposals from St. Louis County for the Midland Intersection



Figure 22.2 shows these short-term, lower-cost improvements to the existing traffic signal while retaining full access to Milton. Options are limited. Three of the crosswalks can be shortened by using a more direct path and “skip-dash” striping can be used to better define vehicular paths through the intersection. In addition, the curb at the south east corner of Milton and Midland can be extended into the intersection or painted to better define vehicle paths. Finally, St. Louis County could consider implementing leading pedestrian intervals into the traffic signal timing plans. This option does not address the turning radius from northbound Woodson to east bound Midland, and only marginally improves potential confusion for drivers not familiar with the intersection.

Figure 22.2 - Short-term, low-cost Midland Improvements



Figure 23.1 - “Peanut” reconfiguration of Midland

Figure 23.1 shows a conceptual drawing that reconfigures the intersection to allow for all through movements, providing an oval or “peanut.” This would operate similar to a single lane roundabout. While this concept seems to address vehicular movements well, several other related issues would need to be factored in before accepting such an approach.

Developing a permanent long-term reconfiguration for the Midland intersection will require a dedicated conceptual design study. While vehicular safety and traffic flow are significant concerns, the future study should also factor in other key issues such as:

- Impacts on adjacent properties—Taking property, removing buildings, and limiting vehicular access to all adjacent parcels should be factored into the discussion. Typically, corner properties are premium properties for redevelopment, though parking access needs to be accounted for. In traditional “main street” districts such as this, storefront access directly on the sidewalk, within 12-20 feet of the curb is necessary to maintain convenient pedestrian access that such districts require. On-street and shared parking lots are typical, but access needs to be obvious and easy to get to. Additionally, acquiring Right of Way (ROW) tends to add significant time and cost uncertainty when moving a project forward. Limiting the number of parcels needed reduces overall project risk. The viability of the parcels that remain after reconfiguring the intersection should also be considered against the community’s vision for the Downtown segment of the corridor.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle access—Midland is an active bicycle route, and St. Louis County is interested in enhancing this by striping bicycle lanes into the road. It is also important to improve pedestrian access across the intersection, improving access to the Downtown district from the neighborhoods to the north of Midland. Also note that in Downtown areas, frequent signalized pedestrian crossings of the “main” street are necessary. If considering a roundabout configuration, note that vehicle and pedestrian traffic along Woodson Road need to be evaluated for safety and operations in all directions.
- Multimodal Functionality — It is imperative to make sure the intersection is functional, amenable, and safe for everyone who travels through it, whether by foot, bike, truck, or car.
- Aesthetics—Both planted and hardscape surfaces need to be considered. If a formal gateway element is desired, make sure to allow for this during the design of the intersection. Account for long term maintenance of all elements within the public right of way.
- Vehicular Movements and Visibility—Depending on the design options, existing structures and roadway geometrics may impede large vehicle movements and turning visibility, namely when turning east from north-bound Woodson onto Midland.

- D4 - Consider strategic demolition** and reuse or redevelopment of vacant deteriorating structures. Figure 24.1 indicates strategies for specific parcels within the Downtown segment. Red indicates strategic building removals. The structure at the southeast corner of Woodson and Midland has no parking, and, given the amount of vacant storefrontage, may be better suited redeveloped as a smaller structure, common parking, or open/green space directly across the street from the existing plaza. Razing this corner structure is not to be lightly considered, but may be practical if the building continues to deteriorate, the reconfiguration of the Woodson / Midland intersection proceeds, or plaza/park space is desired. In addition, the thin single story building to the south shows significant and continuing water damage and is quite small for most typical tenant needs. Replacing this with a pedestrian connection to shared common parking behind the adjacent buildings would provide direct needed access from Woodson Road storefronts to parking. The green parcels are targeted for site redevelopment. Consolidating in the hashed green parcel would create a more flexible, desirable parcel for redevelopment. Yellow indicates structures that need to be occupied.
- D5 - Address flooding** to properties on the east side of Woodson Road north of Everman. Investigation will need to be done to determine the cause and options to address this and coordination with MSD is crucial. The current condition hampers the occupancy or redevelopment of the effected properties. Figures 24.2 and 24.3 indicate where increased green space and tree canopy and impervious pavements could be targeted to better absorb rain water, reducing the load on the storm water sewer infrastructure. Analysis should be done to verify anticipated reduced flooding of the affected properties.
- D6 - Update the Brand** of Downtown Overland. Despite a great regional location and access and attractive neighborhoods and housing stock, work needs to be done to define and “sell” Overland to the greater region. Business and municipal leadership will work with a branding consultant to define an updated marketable identity and develop a clear strategy for promoting Downtown Overland.
- D7 - Develop additional common parking.** Particularly on the east side of Woodson Road, shared parking facilities will improve the marketability of the vacant commercial spaces and improve customer convenience. See figures



Figure 24.1 - Parcel Recommendations

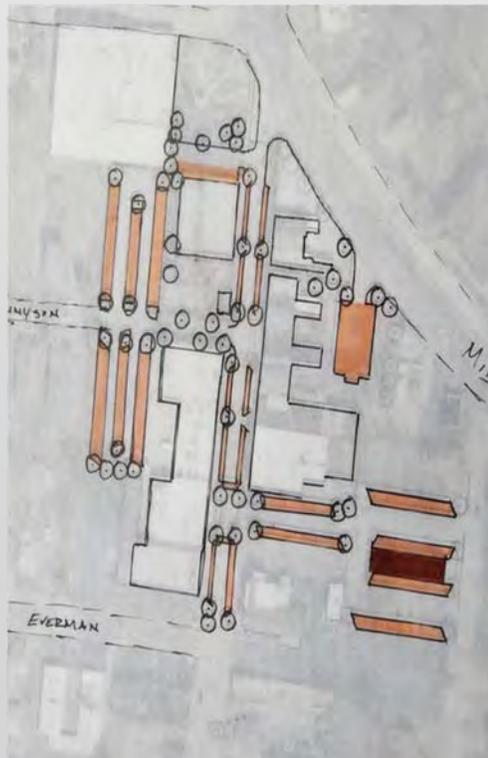


Figure 24.2 - Pervious Pavement



Figure 24.3 - Green Space / Tree Canopy

24.2 and 26.1. Some existing lots may be combined, while protecting specific needs of existing businesses such as deliveries and dumpster location/access. Shared parking would be managed/maintained collectively through individual agreements or through the CID, likely resulting in reduced individual maintenance costs. Shared parking should also be coordinated with updates to zoning / design guidelines for Downtown.

- D8 - Construct enhanced bicycle/pedestrian facilities** throughout the downtown segment with a **bicycle Trailhead near the Municipal Pavilion**. Enhanced facilities include shared lane markings and signage on Woodson Road, bumpouts at pedestrian crossings, a raised pedestrian crossing at The Farmer's Market, designating Verona Street as a quiet street or designated bike route and bicycle lanes on Lackland between Verona and Woodson Road. More detailed information about these recommendations can be found in the Transportation White Paper in Appendix D. Initially, the trailhead would provide formal parking for the Farmers Market and events Downtown. As bike facilities are built, it also serves regional bike trail users as a weigh station making Downtown Overland a practical stop for dining, rest, and shopping. Figure 25.1 indicates the shared lane / wayfinding signage along Verona, directing recreational cyclists off of Woodson between Lackland and Midland, where there is not room for a dedicated bike lane. Dedicated bike lanes on Lackland connect Verona to the bike lanes south on Woodson. Confident cyclists could remain on Woodson throughout the Downtown area. A bike connection between Woodson and Verona is shown at the Municipal Pavilion, where the trailhead facility would be located.



Figure 25.1 - Trailhead and Bike Facilities

- D9 - Host additional events** Downtown. The success of the annual street festival can be duplicated, drawing people from the region as well as residents. This can be a great way to put Overland's best foot forward, setting a positive identity for Overland within the St. Louis region. Polling indicated public support for several additional events per year. Examples include art festivals, swap meets, music festivals, car or motorcycle shows, or seasonal holiday festivals. Figure 25.2 shows a traffic bypass plan to accommodate such events.
- D10 - Relocate overhead utilities**. Existing wooden poles in the east sidewalk, with their numerous lines and



Figure 25.2 — 3 Downtown Event Bypass Plan

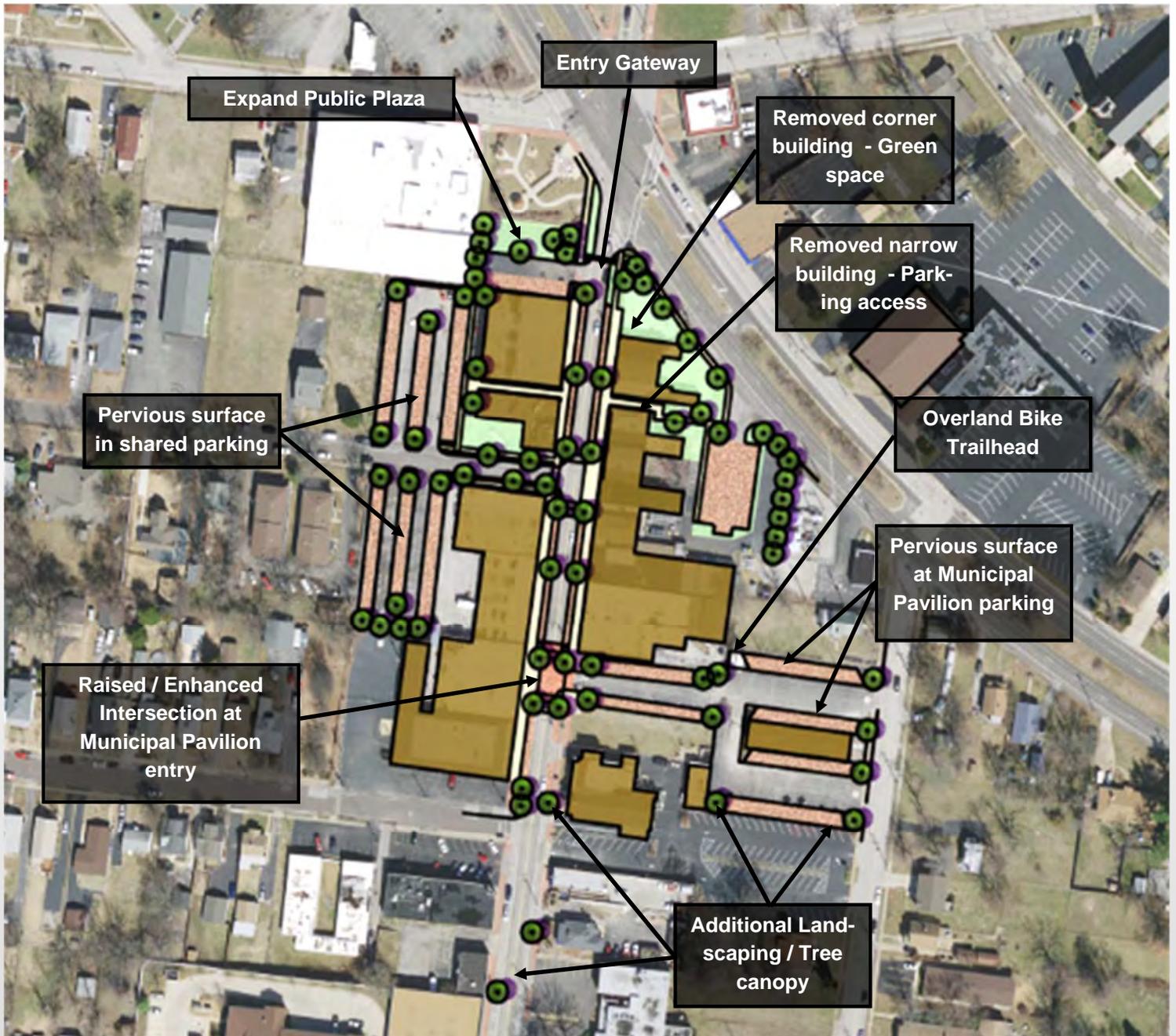


Figure 26.1 - Downtown Segment Plan Diagram

untidy condition detract from the aesthetics of Downtown and clutter the pedestrian space. Properties on both sides of the street are serviced by this line of poles, and the service connections in several places hang quite low. Options to address this include burying the lines or rerouting the lines along the back of the properties. Burying the lines is generally quite expensive and would require ground mounted transformer boxes. Service connections to each property would need to be replaced. Rerouting the lines behind the properties would require dedicated runs for the east side and west side properties, splitting the single run into two. Property and maintenance easements would need to be put in place. This option is typically less expensive than burying the lines, though the required second set of lines may offset that. Additional investigation is necessary to define the scope, schedule and budget of the options. Public support for relocating the overhead utilities is very strong. If relocating the lines proves impractical, replacing the existing wooden poles with concrete or metal poles and tidying up loose and cluttered connections may prove to be a practical option. Additional investigation is required to evaluate and clearly define feasibility, scope, schedule, and budgets for the various options.

Neighborhood Segment

This segment of the corridor is quieter and more residential than the north and south ends. The study team believes it should remain as such and most workshop attendees agreed. Following are some recommendations that will contribute to and improve the neighborhood feel of this area.

- N1 - Encourage high quality multi-story senior or multi-family rental housing development.** Senior-friendly housing is a significant opportunity for added residential development in the Woodson Corridor. This type of housing – usually low- or no-maintenance apartments, condominiums or town homes – works for both seniors and those looking for a starter home, both of whom are underserved by the existing housing market. Figure 27.1 shows an example of what these rental properties could look like. The City should seek opportunities to partner with developers to offer this type of housing in Overland. The Neighborhood segment of the study area, with its walkable access to both the Downtown area and the southern commercial area, would be an ideal location for such a development.



Figure 27.1 —Example of Senior or Multi-family Housing

- N2 - Implement national property management tools** as needed for rental properties. Overland municipal and police staff should collaborate with the owners/managers of rental properties with a high number of service calls to implement a property management program to make those properties more desirable. Several national programs are available and can be found at www.crime-free-association.org/multi-housing.htm and can significantly help with crime and overall appearance of rental properties.
- N3 - Construct enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities.** A shared use path with street trees, as shown in Figure 27.2, would improve both bicycle and pedestrian access on this part of the roadway. This improvement will create a safer and more comfortable pedestrian and bicycle atmosphere, which will contribute to a more useable and enjoyable experience for walkers and cyclists. For more advanced cyclists, shared lane signage and markings on the existing roadway will allow for greater safety and awareness on the driver's part that the roadway works for both cars and bicycles. Great Rivers Greenway's Gateway Bike Plan recommends Woodson Road as a bike route with a wide outer lane. The shared use path and shared lane signage recommended by the Great Streets Team would accommodate both bicycles and pedestrians and would accommodate cyclists of all skill levels. The future Centennial Greenway south of Page Avenue and dedicated bike lanes on Midland Boulevard positions Overland to be a bikeable and walkable community connecting these two facilities.

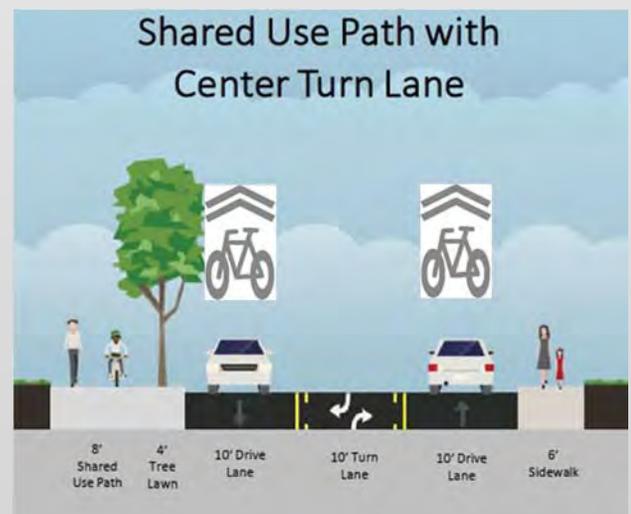


Figure 27.2—Shared Use Path Cross Section

- **N4 - Install a raised crossing or speed table**, as shown in Figure 28.1, at Flora Avenue. This enhancement could serve as the southern gateway, improving pedestrian safety at that location, slowing traffic as it enters the residential segment, and as an indicator to drivers that they're getting close to Downtown Overland.
- **N5 - Install clearly marked crosswalks**, as shown in Figure 28.2, at Palmer, between Palmer and Trescott and at Wabaday to make this segment more pedestrian friendly.
- **N6 - Install amenities, such as benches, trees, garbage cans and bike storage at the bus stops.** There is significant pedestrian activity in this segment of Woodson Road, largely to get to bus stops and these would be a nice addition and would serve those who are using the shared use path as well. The City of Overland already has some of these amenities in certain locations. Figure 28.3, shows what The City of Overland is already using in some areas and depicts what a bus shelter could look like.



Figure 28.1 - Speed Table



Figure 28.2 - Crosswalk



Figure 28.3—Bus stop amenities

- **CS3 - Conduct a detailed analysis of the Brown Road intersection**, which includes community vision and goals, consideration of future land use and development of the surrounding areas, and functionality for bicycles and pedestrians. The existing skewed intersection does not allow southbound to eastbound movement turns. A reconfigured intersection that is perpendicular to Woodson Road and aligned with Romaine Ave., such as shown in Figure 30.1, could improve traffic flow and provide full turning movement access with shorter pedestrian crossings. This would require one property acquisition, though the geometries of the remaining parcels would be more consistent with typical development needs.

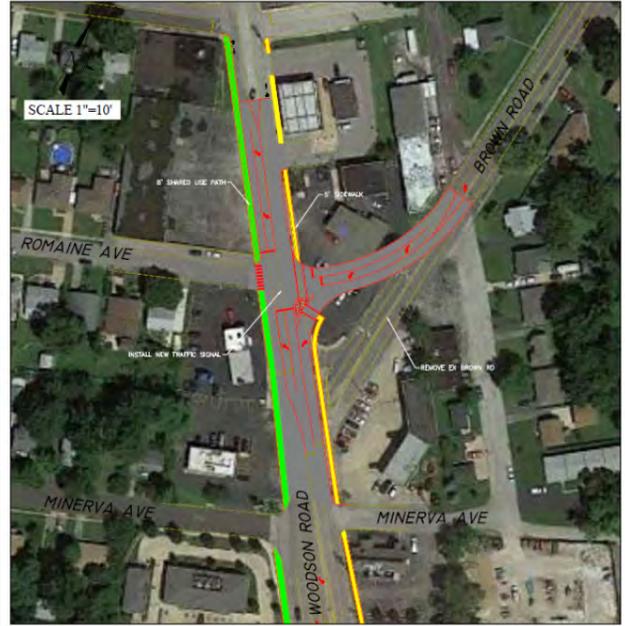


Figure 30.1 —Brown Road Intersection Realignment

- **CS4 - Abandon “stub” streets.** Closing dead end and half block long segments of Miriam, Ridge, and Minerva on the east side of Woodson Rd., directing access to Leondale from Brown Rd., will eliminate unnecessary street segments, facilitate consolidated access points and shared parking (see below) and/or allow parcel consolidation more conducive to redevelopment in this area. This may be coordinated with a reconfiguration of the Brown Road intersection, working with property owners and site developers.
- **CS5 - Provide shared parking.** The shallow, small commercial properties in the area present site access and parking challenges when requiring individual parcels to accommodate discrete parking. Observations of underutilized parking should be verified, and updated ordinance should allow shared parking amounts reflecting actual / anticipated use.

- **CS6 - Look for opportunities to consolidate roadway access points.** Such access management would facilitate shared parking, improve traffic flow, and increase bike / pedestrian safety. Figure 30.2 illustrates how this strategy allows shared parking lots on the shallow lots in the area and requires cross-access easements. Signage and orientation should make access and parking obvious for specific businesses. A shared or common maintenance program would also be necessary.

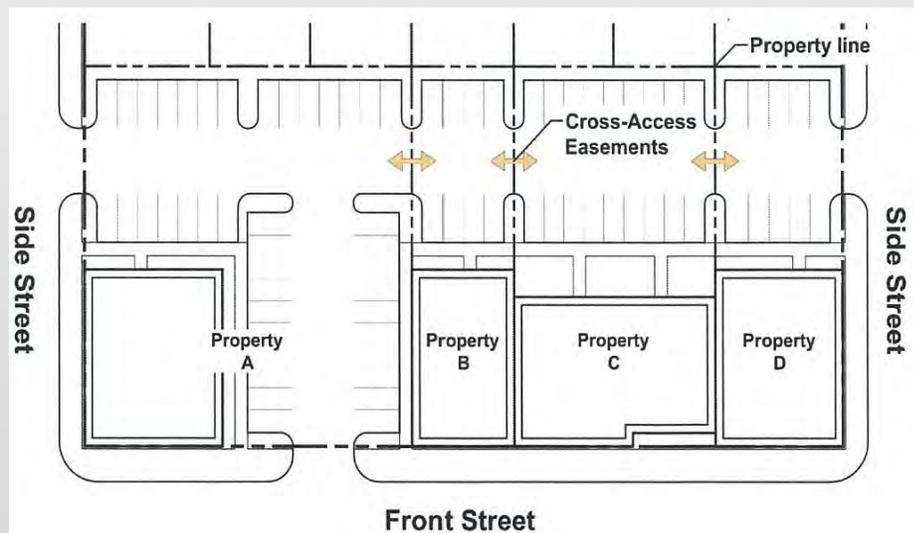


Figure 30.2 —Cross-easement access

- **CS7 - As site access is improved, existing traffic friction, which slows traffic, will be reduced.** The proposed **narrower lanes and curbing** is intended to address this, keeping travel speeds near the posted speeds. These changes also allow space to fill existing gaps in the bicycle/pedestrian access to and across Page Avenue.
- **CS8 - Address the flash flooding between Brown and Echo Roads.** Report the issue to MSD to investigate the cause (insufficient inlet or pipe capacity, extensive impervious surface, etc.). Explore opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces by introducing measures such as impervious pavers in parking areas or sidewalks, rain gardens with maintenance agreements with property owners, and other BMPs.

Priority Efforts

To evaluate and prioritize the various recommendations across the entire study area, the crude ranking system below can help illustrate some priorities, though it cannot take into account all relevant variables. When possible, opportunistically coordinating with other related investments that may pop up can leverage efficiency and cost savings. Private or related developments along the corridor should comply with or (at a minimum) not preclude implementation of the plan over time.

The tasks are labeled by location (overall project area or segment area) and are loosely scored based on the breadth of their impact, community desire, and ease of implementation.

The last column estimates a target timeline for implementation: short term (1-3 years), mid term (3-7 years), long term (7-15 years). Some tasks may best be combined with private or related developments along the corridor and have an “opportunistic” designation. Some of the short term tasks are foundational and would be helpful, or possibly essential, to completing subsequent tasks. Formalizing a district or management structure falls into this category.

Rating 1 (worst) through 5 (best)

Task	Economic Benefit	Transportation Benefit	Place Identity Benefit	Environmental Benefit	Community Desire	Ease of Implementation	Rating	Term (Short, Mid, Long, Opportune)
O2 Establish Management Structure	5	3	5	4	5	4	26	S
O1 Concentrate Commercial	5	3	5	3	4	4	24	S
O5 Update Zoning	4	3	5	4	4	4	24	S
D1 Design Guidelines	3	3	5	4	4	4	23	S
CS6 Consolidate Site Access	4	5	4	3	4	2	22	M / O
CS8 Address Flash Flooding	4	4	4	5	3	2	22	S
D2 Tennanting Strategy	5	3	5	3	4	2	22	S
D6 Branding	4	3	5	3	3	4	22	S
D9 Add'tl Programmed Events	4	2	5	3	4	4	22	S
N2 Property Management Tools	4	3	4	3	4	4	22	S
N5 Add'tl Cross Walks	3	4	3	3	4	5	22	S
CS1 Bike / Ped Facilities	3	4	4	4	4	2	21	M / O
CS2 Page Ave. Intersection	4	5	3	3	5	1	21	M / O
CS3 Brown Rd. Realignment	4	4	4	3	4	2	21	O
CS4 Abandon Stub Streets	4	3	3	3	4	4	21	S
CS7 Narrow Lanes / Curbing	3	5	3	3	4	3	21	M / O
D3 Midland Intersection	4	4	5	2	5	1	21	O
D8 Bike / Ped & Trailhead Facilities	3	3	4	3	4	4	21	S
N1 Senior / Quality Rental	4	3	4	3	4	3	21	M
N6 Improve Bus Stops	3	4	4	3	4	3	21	M / O
O4 Land / Streetscaping	2	3	5	5	4	2	21	M
D4 Strategic Demolition	4	3	4	4	4	1	20	M / O
O3 Bike / Ped Facility	3	4	3	3	4	3	20	S / M
O8 Reduce Impervious Area	3	3	3	5	4	2	20	L / O
CS5 Shared Parking	3	4	4	3	3	2	19	M
D5 Address Property Flooding	4	3	3	4	3	2	19	M
D7 Common Parking	3	4	3	4	4	1	19	M / O
N3 10' Lanes & Bike Path	3	4	3	3	4	2	19	S
O6 Coord. With Metro	3	4	3	3	4	2	19	coord w/ Metro
D10 Overhead Utility Relocation	2	3	5	3	4	1	18	L
N4 Raised Intersection	3	3	4	3	3	2	18	L
O7 Gateways / Signage	3	3	4	3	4	1	18	L

O = Overall project area
 D = Downtown area
 N = Neighborhood area
 CS = Convenience Service area

	w/ environmental BMP's
	w/ district or committee
	coord. w/ MSD

Short term = 1-3 years
 Mid term = 3-7 years
 Long term = 7-15 years
 Opportune - Combine with related investments

1st Tier

- **O2**—Establish a Management Structure. For more specific direction, refer to the Market and Economic Development White Paper (Appendix D). A CID, for instance, can provide organization and administrative capacity to support many of the other tasks mentioned in this document. Developing a tenancing strategy, maintaining landscaping, facilitating a branding exercise, marketing the district, organizing additional programmed events in the area, and developing shared parking are examples. Existing districts in the region can provide lessons learned and some guidance to establishing a district. *(expected duration—3-6 months, responsible party—municipal staff/attourney or business association)*
- **O1**—Concentrate Commercial Uses. Update current ordinance and land use through zoning changes or creation of an overlay district. Municipal staff and legal counsel may draft changes or retain a consultant. A CID, municipal staff, and local business organizations can encourage appropriate redevelopment. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—6-12 months, responsible party—municipal staff/attourney)*
- **O5**—Update zoning to better allow existing building stock to succeed economically, ensure new development supports the desired character and function of each area, and to reduce the need for variances and conditional uses. *(expected duration—6-12 months, responsible party—municipal staff / attorney)*
- **D1**—Develop design guidelines for Downtown. Current zoning updates for the downtown segment can be supplemented / reinforced with coordinated prescriptive design guidelines. Municipal staff would retain an urban design consultant to address the signage, streetscape, storefront, lighting, and possibly the landscaping program. The document can be used to inform developers of expectations and to define specific projects and funding applications. *(expected cost—\$20K-\$40K, duration—, responsible party—municipal staff coordinating with formal district or business association)*
- **CS6**—Consolidate site access in Convenience Service segment. Municipal staff to work with property owners, developers and MoDOT. Feasibility / concept planning would prepare staff to do this in conjunction with site redevelopment efforts in the area. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—6-12 months, responsible party—Overland staff)*
- **CS8**—Address the Flooding issue near Woofies. MSD indicated that they were not aware of this. They have no current plans for their system in this area. The local community will need to work with MSD to bring it to their attention and press for a solution that maintains the business' needs, improves the inlet/flow capacity, and minimizes flooding events. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—dependent on MSD process, responsible party—Municipal staff / property owners and MSD)*
- **D2**—Develop a tenancing strategy for Downtown. Limited additional market study is needed to identify the types and scale of businesses that fit existing building stock or available parcels and have a market expectation of success. *(expected cost—\$12K—\$15K, duration—2 months, responsible party—municipal staff, formal district, or business association)*
- **D6**—Develop a Brand. Updating and expanding use of promotional materials will help those marketing and advertising the district and community. It is simply the cost of doing business for a community that wants to do more business. *(expected cost—\$15K, duration—2-4 months, responsible party—formal district, municipal staff, or business association)*
- **D9**—Host additional programmed events Downtown. Close the street, advertise, and draw people to the community from throughout the region. Form a strong regional opinion of Overland. *(expected cost—varies, duration—ongoing, responsible party—formal district or business association)*

- **N2**—Develop / employ property management tools for problem multi-family rentals. Municipal staff, legal counsel, and police to coordinate with property owners to explore / define strategies to be employed. *(expected cost—\$0, duration—3-6 months, responsible party—Overland staff, police, legal counsel)*
- **N5**—Additional Crosswalks in the Neighborhood segment. This is easily done with existing staff and processes. See the Woodson Road Great Streets Woodson Road Transportation White Paper (appendix D) for more detail. *(expected cost—\$300 per, duration—1 month, responsible party—Municipal staff)*

2nd Tier

- **CS1**—Complete sidewalk connection between Brown and Page. Municipal staff to work with MoDOT, property owners, and potentially an engineering consultant to identify space and options for adding sidewalk, accessible crossings/curbs, and bicycle facility. Temporary facilities (paint) may suffice, though permanent long term strategies involving lane adjustments and curbing (task CS7) should be coordinated with tasks CS2, CS3 and CS4. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—6-12 months, responsible party—Municipal staff and MoDOT)*
- **CS2**—Improve the Page Avenue Intersection. This should include completing and improving the sidewalks on both sides of Woodson between Brown Road and Page. Starting discussions with MoDOT now will make them aware of Overland’s goals. Either the project advances as a discrete effort, or is an opportunistic expansion of planned future improvements or heavy maintenance. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—3-6 years, responsible party—Municipal staff and MoDOT)*
- **CS3**—Realign the Brown Road intersection. Though this would allow currently restricted eastbound turns onto Brown from southbound Woodson, the primary benefit, along with eliminating the “stub” streets on the east side of Woodson, is to increase the commercial development viability of the effected parcels. This project is most viable as a stand alone project if St. Louis County makes it a priority, or as part of property redevelopment in the area. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—3-6 years, responsible party—Municipal staff, developers, and St. Louis County staff)*
- **CS4**—Abandon the “Stubs” of Miriam, Ridge, and Minerva on the east side of Woodson in the Convenience Service segment. Some investigation will need to be done to verify any impact on utilities, and removing that leg of Minerva may require constructing a cul-de-sac at the south end of Leondale Avenue, the resulting combined commercial parcels would be more suitable for redevelopment consistent with the community goals. This task may be most appropriate as part of private developer property consolidation. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—3-6 years, responsible party—Municipal staff / legal representation and private developers)*
- **CS7**—Narrow travel lanes and install curbing. Municipal staff and MoDOT to coordinate with property owners . Coordinating with tasks CS3 and CS4 will provide a well coordinated design. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—3-6 years, responsible party—Municipal staff and MoDOT)*
- **D3**—Rebuild the Midland Intersection. While the striping and extended curbing can and probably should be done within the short term *(expected cost of \$100k)*, working with St. Louis County Transportation staff to develop a desired plan for reconstructing the intersection should be pursued to address the County’s long standing concerns. The discussions and recommendations developed through this planning process can inform the redesign of the Midland intersection so that, once constructed, it advances Overland’s specific goals for the Downtown area. See the Transportation white paper in Appendix D for detail. *(expected cost—\$125K for design and \$1.5M—\$2M for construction, duration—3-5 years, responsible party—Municipal and County staff)*

- **D8**—Install Bike / Pedestrian route and Trailhead at the municipal pavilion. Overland can likely install the Verona bike route / Lackland bike lane with existing staff. The Trailhead facility will likely require consultant design. As Downtown revitalizes, enhanced bike facilities are installed along the corridor, and additional events are held downtown, use of these facilities will only increase. *(expected Verona route cost—\$75K+, expected trailhead cost—\$100k-\$250k, duration—6-12 months, responsible party—Municipal staff, formal district, or business association)*
- **N1**—Develop Senior Housing or Quality Rental Housing in the Neighborhood segment. The public expressed a desire to remain in their community as they age, and few viable options exist. Additionally, there are few high quality rental units in the area, discouraging those just starting out from living in Overland. Locating this in the Neighborhood segment would develop the available large vacant parcel as residential, reinforcing the neighborhood quality of this segment and removing property that could compete with the Downtown or Convenience Service segments. *(expected cost—by developer, duration—2-5 years, responsible party—developer, planning/zoning staff)*
- **N6**—Improve bus stops in Neighborhood segment. Municipal staff or formal district to coordinate with property owners and Metro staff to identify scope, funding, and schedule. *(expected cost—\$5k-\$15k per, duration—6-12 months, responsible party—Municipal staff or formal district)*
- **O4**—Install Landscaping / Streetscaping along the corridor. Do this only with a funded maintenance plan in place. Despite the failed earlier effort, the community clearly wants street trees, plantings and amenable sidewalks. A landscape architect will need to be employed to develop the design and plans. This can be implemented incrementally along the corridor. *(expected cost—\$45K for design, \$350K for implementation, duration—3-6 months for design, responsible party—formal district or Municipal staff)*

3rd Tier

- **D4**—Strategic Demolition in the Downtown segment. The red parcels shown on Figure X.X (page xx) indicate vacant structures that may be removed to address multiple needs Downtown if the properties do not fill in the short term with viable businesses that contribute to the local goals and economy. Both spaces may be challenging to rent, even if they were made move-in ready, and the existing continuity of vacant storefront in the Downtown has a negative effect on the viability of the district. Both properties would need to be acquired and razed. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—3-6 years, responsible party—Municipal staff)*
- **O3**—Install the complete bike and pedestrian pathways throughout the corridor, extending from Lackland to Page. Municipal staff will need to engage a consultant for specific design and engineering. This task will rank higher as adjacent bike / ped facilities are installed, increasing Overland residents' access to the regional network. Also, as more younger people move into the area, expected internal pathway use will increase. See Transportation white paper in Appendix D for specific information *(expected cost—\$1M-\$2M for shared use path / roadway reconfiguration and \$50k for shared use lane markings, duration—3-6 years, responsible party—Municipal staff)*
- **O8**—Reduce impervious area. As development and right-of-way improvements are planned, formal district or municipal staff to coordinate with property owners, MSD, and relevant agency partners to identify and consider opportunities and any funding partners or sources to increase the pervious surface area throughout the corridor. The multiple benefits of doing so results in a wider range of potential funding sources (grants, foundations, etc.) than for some other types of projects. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—TBD, responsible party—Municipal staff, formal district)*

- CS5**—Develop Common / Shared Parking facilities in the Convenience Service segment. This is key to one of the few access management goals in the study area. On the west side of Woodson, it is also tied to addressing the flooding issue in the area, as well as any practical expectation of successful, durable landscaping. Cross access easements and coordination with abandoning stub streets and the reconfiguration of the Brown Road intersection are also linked to this task. Timing of this task will be determined by the coordinated approach to addressing all of the related tasks. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—4-5 years, responsible party—Municipal staff, property owners, and formal district)*
- D5**—Address Property Flooding in Downtown Segment, east side of Woodson. Long standing basement flooding issues seem to plague several of the properties north of Everman. Currently empty structures have apparent roof leakage, increasing the problem. Additionally, the expansive surface parking behind the businesses and surrounding the municipal pavilion share a single storm water inlet. A limited study (1-2 months of time) would identify the specific causes of the basement flooding, practical options available that are consistent with the goals for downtown, and the magnitude of the preferred solutions. Addressing any storm water system improvements will require coordination with MSD. *(expected cost of study—\$15k-\$20k—TBD for improvements, duration—3-5 years, responsible party—Municipal staff and property owners)*
- D7**—Develop Common / Shared Parking facilities in the Downtown segment. Convenient shared parking behind the storefront businesses is a common basic facility for many Downtown “main streets”. Maintenance can be shared, and shared lots more easily account for actual need, minimizing construction of excess, often empty parking space. If developed by a local district, managed maintenance of the lot, lighting, landscaping, signage, events, and environmental infrastructure is consistent and more cost effective. In order to accomplish shared parking, municipal staff and/or formal district staff will need to engage property and business owners in the area. Forming cross access easements and identifying the needed curb cuts early on can allow shared parking to be developed over time, as properties redevelop and funding is identified to complete the effort. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—7-10 years, responsible party—Municipal staff, owners, and formal district)*
- N3**—Narrow Travel Lanes and add Bike Path in Neighborhood segment. Though part of the overall bike / ped strategy, moving the west curb to physically remove the bike lanes from the road pavement, as a stand alone project ranks in the 3rd tier due to its cost. Engineering and construction documents will need to be done. Striping in the bike path within the existing curb line an effective, if less desirable interim measure, self performed by municipal staff based on an engineered striping plan. *(expected cost— \$150K for engineering, \$1M-\$2M for construction, \$50K for interim striping, duration—2-4 years (full implementation), responsible party—Municipal staff)*
- O6**—Improve Transit service and facilities. Metro updates its service schedule and routing quarterly, based largely on ridership. To extend route operation hours or increase frequency, engage directly with Metro’s Operations Management. It may be impractical and cost prohibitive for Metro to make the desired adjustments, though municipal staff should engage with them directly to define the conditions under which the adjustments might be made. Providing additional seating or shelters at existing stops will need to be coordinated through Metro, though it may fall on Overland or specific property owners to fund the improvements. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—TBD, responsible party—Municipal staff, formal district, and Metro)*
- D10**—Relocate the Overhead Utilities in the Downtown segment. Though highly desirable by the community, the high cost and limited impact on economic, transportation, and environmental issues resulted in 3rd tier status. The visual impact would be significant, however, and may be enough to justify this task. Undergrounding the lines might be accomplished within the roadway. Moving the utilities off of Woodson to the back of the properties would eliminate the need to bury them, but would require a pair of utility runs to service properties on both sides of Woodson. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—7-10 years, responsible party—Municipal staff and formal district)*

- **N4**—Raise the intersection at Flora. While this would remake this intersection emphasizing the quiet street nature of the Neighborhood segment, enhance the pedestrian crossing, and reinforce the existing calm traffic, it met with tepid support from the community. It would also be somewhat costly to implement and have limited impact on economic, transportation, and environmental issues. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—7-10 years, responsible party—Municipal staff)*
- **O7**—Install Gateways / Signage along Woodson. Work with a landscape architect or urban designer to define options, scope, costs, and construction documents. Coordinate this with any planting / landscaping, shared parking, open space, and major intersection plans. *(expected cost—TBD, duration—8-12 years, responsible party—Municipal staff and formal district)*

*“You don’t have to
move to live in a better
neighborhood.”*

Richard Arrington, former Mayor of Birmingham Alabama

Potential Funding Sources

The resources to advance and implement the various strategies in this report will come from a variety of sources. There is no single pot of money to make all of these things happen.

City leaders and staff should examine these potential tools and determine the viability of each in helping to provide additional funds for Woodson Road improvements in the future. In addition to the funding categories identified below, the City of Overland may explore a variety of funding sources at the federal or state level in order to provide resources to complete various improvements along Woodson Road over time. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides a variety of funding for streetscape and transportation projects through the resources of East West Gateway Council of Governments. The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) are other likely sources of funding for corridor improvements. The potential to secure funding through these resources is dependent on a variety of factors, including the pool of available money, and the funding formulas used to rank applications made by local jurisdictions.

Community Improvement District (CID)

A CID can finance a wide array of public improvements and services that can enhance the district. A CID can be established by a government entity or a non-profit and requires the approval of a petition signed by either the property owners that collectively own at least 50 percent of the assessed value in the proposed district, or a total of more than 50 per capita of all owners of real property within the proposed district. The petition must outline a five year plan that describes the purposes of the proposed district, the services it will provide, the improvements it will make and an estimate of the costs of the project. Once the petition is filed, the governing body of the particular municipality in question must hold a public hearing and approve the creation of the proposed district by ordinance.

In contrast to a Neighborhood Improvement District, a CID is a separate legal entity, and operates distinct and apart from the municipality that creates the district. The CID may finance improvements through the imposition of 1) special assessments for those improvements that specifically benefit the properties within the district, 2) property taxes, or 3) a sales tax up to a maximum of one percent. A CID may finance the costs of a project through the charging of fees, rents, and charges for district property or services, or grants, gifts, and donations. A CID may also issue bonds, notes, and other obligations in order to fund improvements.

A CID may finance the following types of improvements within its boundaries:

- Pedestrian or shopping malls and plazas
- Parks, lawns, trees, and any other landscape
- Convention centers, arenas, aquariums, aviaries and meeting facilities
- Sidewalks, streets, alleys, bridges, ramps, tunnels, overpasses and underpasses, traffic signs and signals, utilities, drainage, water, storm and sewer systems and other site improvements
- Streetscape, lighting, benches or other seating furniture, trash receptacles, marquees, awnings, canopies, walls and barriers
- Telephone and information booths, bus stop and other shelters, rest rooms and kiosks
- Music, news and child care facilities
- Lakes, dams and waterways
- Paintings, murals, display cases, sculptures and fountains
- Parking lots, garages or other facilities

A CID may also provide a variety of public services, including the following:

- With the municipality's consent, prohibiting or restricting vehicular and pedestrian traffic and vendors on streets
- Operating or contracting for the provision of music, news, child-care or parking facilities, and buses, mini-buses or other modes of transportation
- Leasing space for sidewalk café tables and chairs
- Providing or contracting for the provision of security personnel, equipment or facilities for the protection of property and persons
- Promoting business activity, development and retention
- Providing or contracting for cleaning, maintenance and other services to public and private property and persons
- Promoting tourism, recreational or cultural activities or special events
- Providing refuse collection and disposal services
- Contracting for or conducting economic, planning, marketing or other studies

Neighborhood Improvement District (NID)

A Neighborhood Improvement District is a geographically bounded area within which certain public improvements are financed by a city through the issuance of notes or bonds, which are in turn repaid by levying assessments against the property within a NID. NIDs offer distinct advantages in executing economic development for a city and a particular district.

Because the city in question issues general obligation bonds, the public improvements associated with the NID can be financed at lower interest rates. Second, a NID can be established and an assessment imposed without a city-wide election. Third, a city may group two or more NID projects together into one bond issue in order to further reduce financing and project costs. Finally, the NID Act in Missouri allows for a fairly broad range of public improvements to be financed without a requirement that the area be considered to be "blighted" in order to be included in a NID designation.

Under the Missouri NID Act, eligible improvements and costs may include streets, lighting, parks and recreational facilities, sidewalks, utility service connections, sewer and storm water systems, flood control works, off-street parking structures, bridges, overpasses, tunnels, and "any other public facilities or improvements deemed necessary by the governing body of the city or county". The NID Act also allows for certain incidental costs to be financed, such as land acquisition and engineering, legal, and financing fees and costs.

The act also carries provisions for maintenance of the public improvements during the term of the bonds or notes pertaining to the improvements. NIDs can be established by either 1) a petition of at least two-thirds of the owners of record of all of the real property located within the proposed NID district, or 2) by the City submitting a question to all qualified voters residing within the proposed NID at a general or special election called for the purpose of approving bonds associated with the NID.

NIDs carry some distinct advantages compared to TIF in Missouri. Whereas TIF is financed by limited obligation bonds, the general obligation bonds issued as part of NID deals allow for lower interest rates. Whereas TIF requires a blight designation for the affected district or area, NIDs do not carry such requirements. Another distinction between NID and TIF is that, in the case of TIF, property owners or developers do not pay anything initially for the publicly financed improvements but are ultimately responsible to the bondholders if the tax revenue generated by the improvements is insufficient to make the payments. In contrast, under NID, property owners pay up-front for public improvements through assessments over and above any property or sales taxes they already pay, but the municipality is ultimately responsible to the bondholders if property owners are unable to make the necessary payments.

Enhanced Enterprise Zones (EEZs)

The Enhanced Enterprise Zone Tax Benefit Program, sponsored by the Missouri Department of Economic Development, provides various tax credits to new or expanding businesses in a Missouri Enhanced Enterprise Zone. These zones are specific geographic areas designated by local governments that must be certified by the Department of Economic Development. The program offers state tax credits, accompanied by local real property tax abatements, to eligible businesses in the EEZ. To receive the tax credits, a business facility must provide for two new employees and \$100,000 in new investments (in the case of a new or expanded business facility), or two new employees and \$1 million in new investment (in the case of a replacement business facility). Companies receiving EEZ tax credits must provide health insurance to all full time employees in Missouri in order to qualify for the program. Eligible investment expenditures include the original cost of machinery, equipment, furniture, fixtures, land and buildings, and or eight times the annual rental rate paid for these items. Ineligible businesses for the EEZ program include gambling establishments, retail trade entities, educational services entities, religious organizations, public administration entities (governments), and food and drinking places.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

TIF allows the use of a portion of local property and sales taxes to assist in the funding of redevelopment of certain designated areas in a community. Areas identified for TIF must be deemed to be part of a “blighted,” “conservation” or an “economic development” area. TIF essentially uses the additional sales tax revenue that is generated above and beyond the current level of revenue, as a result of a redevelopment, in order to fund a variety of project costs. Eligible project cost categories include professional services, land acquisition, rehabilitation of buildings, new infrastructure, and relocation of existing businesses or residents. Consideration should be given to the net benefit within a broad area so as not to use public subsidy with no net regional gain.

Chapter 353 Tax Abatement

The State of Missouri offers a Chapter 353 Tax Abatement as an incentive that can be used by cities to encourage the redevelopment of blighted areas by providing real property tax abatements. Under this program, an “Urban Redevelopment Corporation” must be organized pursuant to the Urban Redevelopment Corporations Law in the state of Missouri and the area designated for tax abatements must be deemed a “blighted area” under state law.

Under the program, tax abatements are available for up to 25 years. During the first 10 years, the property is not subject to real property taxes except in the amount of real property taxes assessed on the land, exclusive of improvements. During the next 15 years, the real property may be assessed up to 50 percent of its true value. Payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) may be imposed on the Urban Redevelopment Corporation by contract with the city. PILOTs are paid on an annual basis to replace all or part of the real estate taxes that are abated.

In areas that are challenged by economic decline or blight, the Chapter 353 provisions provide an additional tool for local governments to provide incentives for economic redevelopment.

Sales Tax Reimbursement Agreements

The State of Missouri allows Sales Tax Reimbursement agreements as a funding mechanism to fund infrastructure associated with new developments. Under these agreements, municipalities have the ability to annually appropriate the increase in sales taxes created by new private capital investment to offset a portion of project investment costs. Under this type of agreement, a portion of City sales taxes captured from the increased sales generated by the project would be reimbursed to the developer or company for eligible expenses.

This provision, then, helps to provide an incentive for redevelopment or new development along corridors such as Woodson. The state has laid out a number of criteria that must be followed or satisfied in order to allow for a Sales Tax Reimbursement Agreement.

- The applicant must demonstrate that the project would prevent a significant loss in existing sales tax revenue or make a significant contribution to the overall health and wellbeing of the local economy.
- The project must show a clear demonstration of the public purpose and the economic benefit provided through the agreement and how the agreement would further the city's economic development goals.
- The application must show that the project would not occur "but for" the incentives offered. The incentive should make a difference in determining the decision of the particular business to expand or remain in the city and it must be proven that this would not have otherwise occurred without the availability of the sales tax reimbursement.
- The firm that would benefit from the sales tax reimbursement must show its financial stability and capacity to complete the project.
- The application must ensure that the city or any other taxing jurisdiction affected by the incentive is not receiving less total sales tax revenue from the property than was received prior to the granting of the sales tax reimbursement provision.
- The sales tax reimbursement is generally not allowed to extend for greater than ten years.

Additional Funding Sources for Greenways

In addition to the normal tools in Missouri such as NIDs, CIDs, TDDs, and TIFs, the City of Overland may wish to consider additional funding strategies identified to provide for greenway enhancements . These additional strategies may include but not be limited to the following:

- ***Bond Referendums for Greenways***—Communities across the nation have successfully placed on local ballots propositions to support greenway development, ranging from small towns to larger cities. For example, a few years ago residents in Casper, Wyoming passed a greenway bond referendum to provide for the first three miles of a local greenway.
- ***Greenway Trust Fund***—Many communities around the country have created trust funds for land acquisition and facility development. A trust fund may help in acquiring parcels that would otherwise be lost if not acquired by private sector initiative.
- ***Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)*** - The US Department of Housing and Urban Development provides states with annual direct grants that are then awarded to local communities in part for park and greenway projects.