



CHARDON
TOMORROW

UPTOWN

*Design
Charrette*



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- #3
- DESTINATIONS FOR YOUNG ADULTS
 - DIVERSITY OF SMALL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
 - DIVERSITY
 - ENCOURAGE LOCAL BUSINESS TO CONFECTION TO SQUARE
 - POTENTIAL CULTURAL CENTER AS ASSET - KEEP ITS LOT AVAILABLE
 - LOT AT SOUTH + WATER ST. CAN BE USED FOR THE "MAIN STREET USA" VIEWWAY
 - ESSENTIAL FOR COMPLETING THE MAIN ST. VARIATION



EXIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the past few years, Chardon Tomorrow has been engaged in visioning and planning exercises to help create a road map for Chardon’s future. These initiatives are aimed at preserving and fostering Chardon’s unique sense of place while achieving economic prosperity and quality of life. As a next step in their efforts to build momentum and engage key stakeholders in this process, Chardon Tomorrow invited Kent State University’s Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative to organize and conduct the Uptown Design Charrette on 29th September 2012. The objective of the charrette was to identify design and development solutions to reinforce the identity of Chardon Square and the Uptown area.

The charrette began with a review of previous studies and surveys that offered ideas and launching points for discussions. Participants revisited old ideas and generated new ones to establish these goals:

- *Chardon’s historic small town character is its most desirable feature and should be preserved.*
- *Chardon is and should continue to be a safe, family friendly, and affordable community.*
- *Chardon Square should be a vibrant and accessible center of the community.*
- *Chardon Square should be more walkable and bicycle-friendly.*

The charrette was structured so participants would brainstorm ideas and draw plans for three distinct areas of consideration. These are:

- a. *Development in Uptown*
- b. *Town Square*
- c. *Access and Connectivity*

There were concurrent ideas for these topics developed in each of the three groups. For instance, each group suggested that Short Court Street be converted to a pedestrian and bike-friendly walkway. Another idea with broad support is the creation of shared parking spaces on each side of the Square so that patrons can park once and walk easily to various businesses on the Square. To this end, a contiguous, paved, and well-maintained walkway/sidewalk along with clear and accessible crosswalks were recommended. At the end of the day participants narrowed the extensive list of ideas to a few top priorities and 'low-hanging fruit'.

As next steps, market and traffic studies of the Uptown area should be conducted to determine feasibility of the ideas generated at the charrette and to create a strategy for implementation. An immediate initiative would be to create design guidelines that will guide future development in and around Chardon Square.

This report is a summary of the charrette and represents the ideas and designs developed by the participants. It is a starter document to help Chardon develop a comprehensive plan for Uptown. This report also includes some case studies of places similar to Chardon in character or condition that have achieved some of the results to which Chardon aspires. This document is a record of the stakeholders’ ideas and energy and can serve as a road map for future research and planning.

Opposite:
Participants report out to the group on ideas developed in breakout sessions

Development:
Small Business Incubator
Institutional Anchor
Design Guidelines
Mixed Use Development
- *Housing*
- *Parking*

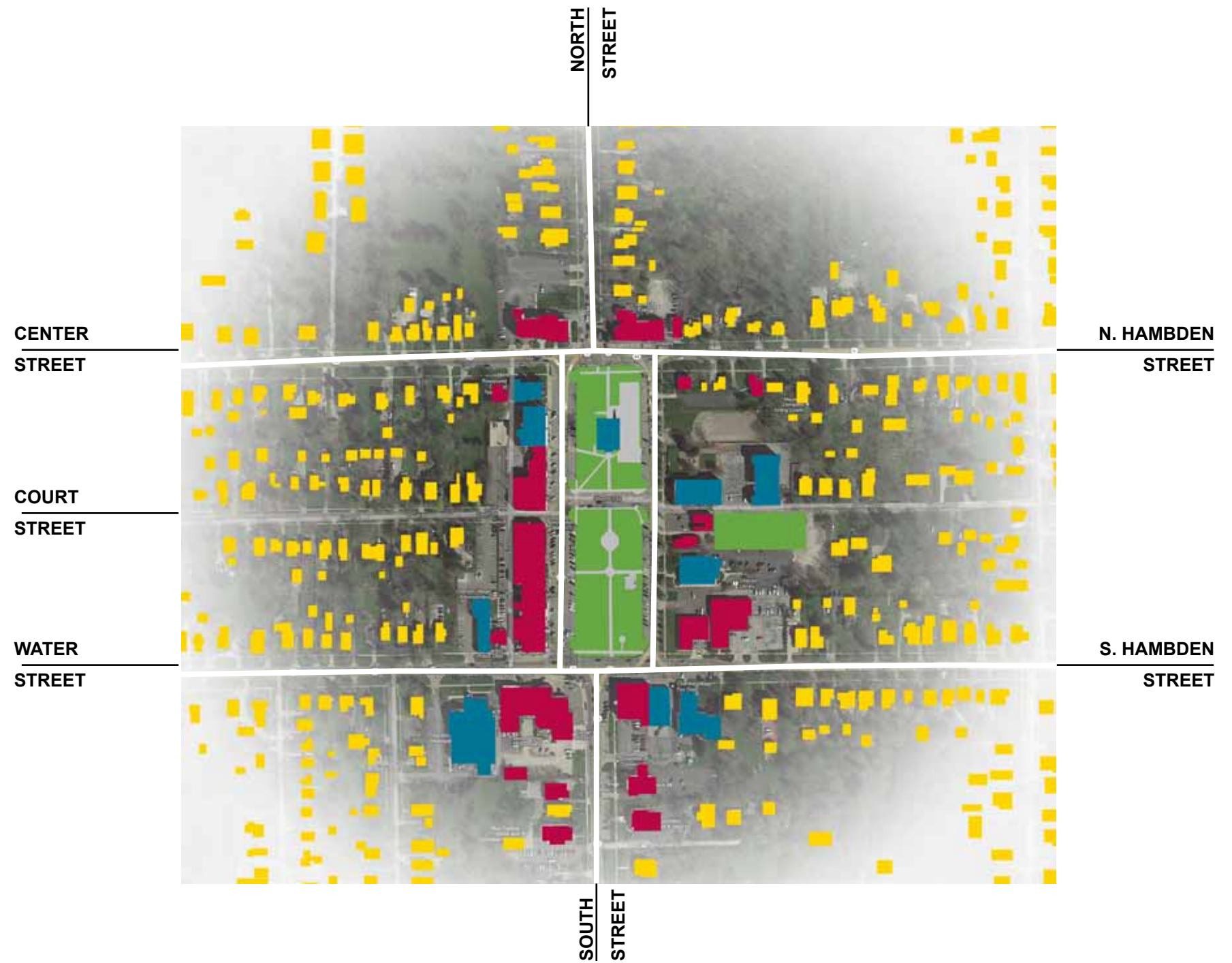
Town Square:
Pedestrian-ize Short Court Street
Create Child-friendly Park
Enhance Streetscape
- *Outdoor Seating*
- *Tree Lighting*
- *Contiguous Sidewalks*
- *Clear Signage*
- *Bike-friendly Amenities*
Enhance Courthouse Site

Access & Connectivity:
Shared & Accessible Parking
Re-route Truck Traffic
Safe, Pedestrian Circulators & Crosswalks
Bike friendly Signage and Amenities



Above:
County Courthouse on Chardon Square

Right:
Study area centered around
Chardon Square



INTRODUCTION

Chardon, is a historical Western Reserve town with a population of approximately 5,148, located about 30 miles east of Cleveland. Chardon Square is home to the Geauga County offices and the County Courthouse. The Square is also the venue for the Geauga County Maple Festival, held each spring. The Chardon branch of the Geauga county library network has an extensive collection and is one of the most used libraries in the county.

For the purposes of the charrette the study area was defined as Uptown which centers on Chardon Square and includes the surrounding historic, legal, and economic core of the community. For clarity, the two central parcels, one with the courthouse and the other with the gazebo and log cabin, and the buildings and properties surrounding these two parcels are defined as Chardon Square. The green space with the gazebo and log cabin is henceforth referred to as the Town Square. In order to focus the energy and attention of the participants on Chardon Square, the outer edges of this study area were left undefined so as to let the interventions and considerations radiate outwards from this central locus.

Chardon Square is a beautiful and historic town center with landmark buildings, a verdant green space and active retail and office spaces. Three sides of Chardon Square are tightly developed, although not completely occupied, and the Square is used year round for various events and celebrations.

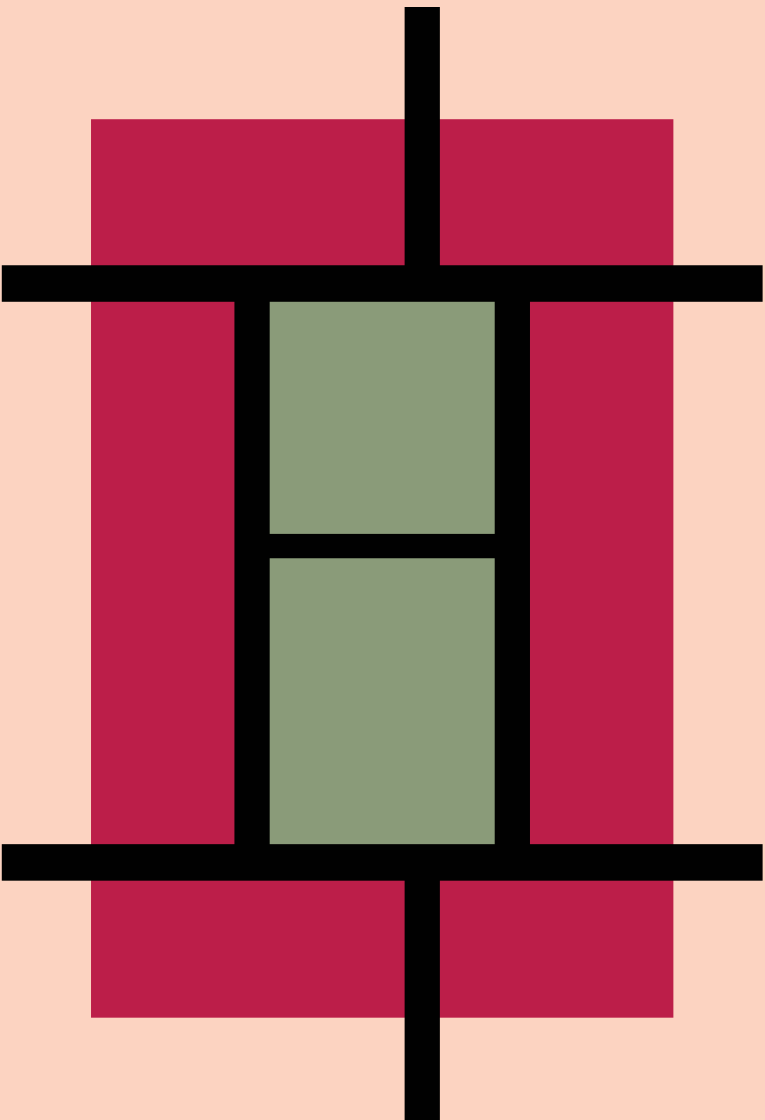
Filling the vacancies, attracting new retail and residential development, improving walkability and bikeability, and creating better amenities for public events and gathering were key themes at the charrette.

Chardon Tomorrow

Chardon Tomorrow is 501(C)3 organization serving as a public/private partnership between the city and community stakeholders composed of chardon residents, community members and business leaders working to ensure that Chardon maintains its historical charm while strengthening its appeal as a wonderful place to raise a family, do business and have fun. Chardon Tomorrow’s mission is:

Preserving and enhancing the character of Chardon by encouraging investment, fostering a sense of community, and developing partnerships with community stakeholders to create a more vibrant and sustainable quality of life.

The Uptown Design Charrette was organized by Chardon Tomorrow to reinforce the identity of Uptown and create a vibrant and active town center.



Above:
Icon for Chardon Square

Previous Initiatives

In order to learn about the key issues in Uptown and to maximize the effectiveness of the charrette, the CUDC team researched previous studies, surveys and initiatives conducted in the study area. This research was particularly useful in framing the charrette exercises around themes that residents and stakeholders had already identified as useful. The following are the reports and surveys consulted in preparation for the charrette along with some key insights and ideas they provided:

- a. *Chardon Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Plan by D.B. Hartt, Inc. and URS.*
This plan helped identify the priority routes for pedestrian and bike-related amenities and improvements.
- b. *Revitalization Road map by Heritage Ohio*
This document provided insights into the Uptown planning process thus far and offered useful points for consideration by the participants.
- c. *Downtown Assessment Resource Team Visit by Heritage Ohio*
- d. *Chardon Tomorrow Initial Design Charrette Planning Summary*
This report helped familiarize the CUDC team with the previous efforts and current aspirations of Chardon Tomorrow and town residents and stakeholders. Its contents served as launching points for several discussions at the charrette.

VISION FOR UPTOWN
you like...

VOLUNTEERISM

SMALL TOWN FEELING

PRIDE IN CHARDON Authentic history wonderful feeling
REFUGE Sense of duty, patriotism in participation

HOME GROWN PRECIOUS family
RELAXED feelings of security and peace when home Unpretentious/open

Community PLEASURABLE
Feeling cared for and looked after
AFFORDABLE HOME SAFE

VISION FOR UPTOWN
you want...

walkable UPTOWN
HOUSING

public sector investment

ARTS & LIVING

local businesses

small niche retail

enhance courthouse

family friendly
community space

main street character

INCLUDE
YOUTH

LANDSCAPING

HISTORIC AUTHENTICITY

ROBUST



9:30am to 3pm
Saturday, September 29th 2012
2nd Floor, Village Hall bldg
Chardon Town Square

Do you....

- Live on/near the Square? Y / N
Work on/near the Square? Y / N
Own a Business on the Square? Y / N
Own Property on the Square? Y / N
Visit the Square regularly? Y / N
Pass through the Square regularly? Y / N

CHARDON SQUARE

Why do you come to the square? (shopping/entertainment/ business, others?)

.....

Where do you usually park?

What new uses would you like to see on the square? (housing, businesses, amenities, others?- please explain)

.....

TOWN SQUARE (CENTRAL SQUARE FRAMED BY MAIN, EAST PARK, AND NORTH AND SOUTH HAMBDEN STREETS)

What do you enjoy most about the Town Square?

.....

How would you enhance the Town Square?

.....

What activities would you like to see/participate in in the Town Square?

.....

CONNECTIVITY

Which street/s do you usually access the square from?

Where do you usually park?

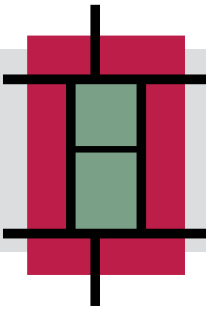
Are there any barriers that make it difficult to access the Square for :

cars

cyclists.....

pedestrians.....

Please complete this survey and return to Andrew Blackley at ablackley@hovancsek.com or fax it to 216.357.3430 by 5pm on September 25th 2012.



CHARDON TOMORROW
TOWN SQUARE DESIGN CHARRETTE

AGENDA

9:30am	CHARDON TOWN SQUARE <i>(Walk around the square led by Chardon Tomorrow)</i>	Chardon Tomorrow
10:00am	WELCOME <i>(Introductions, Context, Charrette plan)</i>	CUDC
10:15am	GOALS FOR THE SQUARE <i>(Brainstorming exercise)</i>	All
10:35am	BREAKOUT SESSION # 1 <i>(Development options)</i>	All
11:35am	TEAM PRESENTATION <i>(Town Square considerations)</i>	CUDC
11:45am	BREAKOUT SESSION # 2 <i>(Town Square)</i>	All
12:30pm	WORKING LUNCH	
12:50pm	TEAM PRESENTATION <i>(Access & Connections)</i>	CUDC
1:00pm	BREAKOUT SESSION # 3 <i>(Access & Connections)</i>	All
1:45pm	TEAM PRESENTATION <i>(Implementation considerations)</i>	CUDC
2:00pm	BREAKOUT SESSION # 4 <i>(Implementation Strategies)</i>	All
2:50pm	WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS	Chardon Tomorrow + CUDC

Conducted by Kent State University's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative

9:30am to 3pm | Saturday, September 29th 2012 | 2nd Floor, Village Hall bldg | Chardon Town Square

Agenda for the September 29, 2012 Design Charrette

Questionnaire provided to participants prior to the charrette

UPTOWN DESIGN CHARRETTE

The Uptown Design Charrette was organized by Chardon Tomorrow (CT) and conducted by the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) on 29 September 2012 from 9am to 4pm at the Village Town Hall building on Chardon Square. Ten days prior to the charrette, CT distributed a survey to the prospective participants in order to get some preliminary insights into the priorities and concerns of the stakeholders and to share the framework of the charrette with them.

The design charrette was kicked off with a guided walk around the Square; participants were led by representatives of Chardon Tomorrow who invited key stakeholders to come forth and share their knowledge and insights about key properties and uses with the rest of the group.

Following the walk, the group convened and reviewed goals developed in past meetings, surveys, and discussions and created a comprehensive and concise list of goals for Uptown.

Once the goals were established, the day was divided into three equal breakout sessions where the participants worked in smaller groups brainstorming ideas within three focus areas - Development, Town Square, and Access & Connections. Each breakout session was 45 minutes long and was facilitated by a member of the CUDC team. At the end of each session a member of the group reported back on the ideas developed to the larger group. After these sessions the group got together one last time to review the top ideas and to prioritize and determine early action initiatives. The day ended with a recap of top ideas and immediate action items.

Goals

The first exercise of the charrette was to create some goals for Uptown that would guide the visioning process for the day. In order to generate a comprehensive list, the participants began with a review of goals and aspirations previously expressed through surveys and Chardon Tomorrow events.

At the end of this exercise the following goals emerged from the participants:

- a. *Chardon's historic small town character is its most desirable feature and should be preserved.*
 - *Create a cohesive architectural identity for Square.*
 - *Enhance public space.*
- b. *Chardon is and should continue to be a safe, family friendly, and affordable community.*
 - *Attract and retain popular & affordable retail.*
 - *Create new housing on the Square.*
- c. *Chardon Square should be a vibrant and accessible center of the community.*
 - *Activate evenings on the Square.*
 - *Attract diverse programming to engage youth.*
- d. *Chardon Square should be more walkable and bicycle-friendly.*
 - *Enable easy parking on Square.*

Right:
Breakout groups
present their ideas

CHARRETTE (*shuh-rett*)

A charrette is design and planning exercise conducted over a compressed time frame where designers and planners work collaboratively with local community members and stakeholders to address, brainstorm around, and generate solutions for a local problem.

It is a quick and effective way to get ideas down on paper and move conversations forward, particularly when there are multiple stakeholders with diverse opinions.

The Chardon charrette was conducted on 29 September 2012 over six hours and was attended by over 30 participants including local businesspersons, property owners, residents, stakeholders and the Mayor.



Breakout Session # 1 - Development

For the first breakout session the participants brainstormed ideas for new development and re-development opportunities on or around the Square. The participants went around the Square in a systematic manner addressing each edge of the Square independently, identifying locations and programs that they wanted to see improved or changed. The main ideas from this session were:

North (along North Hambden Street):

- a. **Chase Bank building** : Set up a small business incubator. Open up corner façade to street and create outdoor seating/landscaping to make the building more attractive to prospective tenants and patrons.
- b. **Parking:** Remove on-street parking on North Hambden Street and replace with wider sidewalks with landscaping and benches to make businesses more visible and to improve traffic flow.

East (along East Park Street):

- c. **Kirby William properties** : As these sites come up for future redevelopment, reimagine them as sites for an anchor retail on the south-east corner of the Square.
- d. **LET and D&T Enterprises buildings:** Redevelop these two buildings to the immediate north of the Library as an extension to the library or another amenity such as a visitor center or the Western Reserve Cultural Center.
- e. **Vacant parcels:** There are three vacant parcels to the north of the school building belonging the Chardon Board of Education, Geauga County Board of Commissioners and Chardon Center Inc. These parcels offer the opportunity to tighten this edge of the Square and attract some new retail and housing to Uptown. Given the topographical change on these sites (they slope down away from East Park Street), it may also be possible to create sub-grade parking here in an effort to create more shared parking spaces in Uptown.

South (along South Hambden Street):

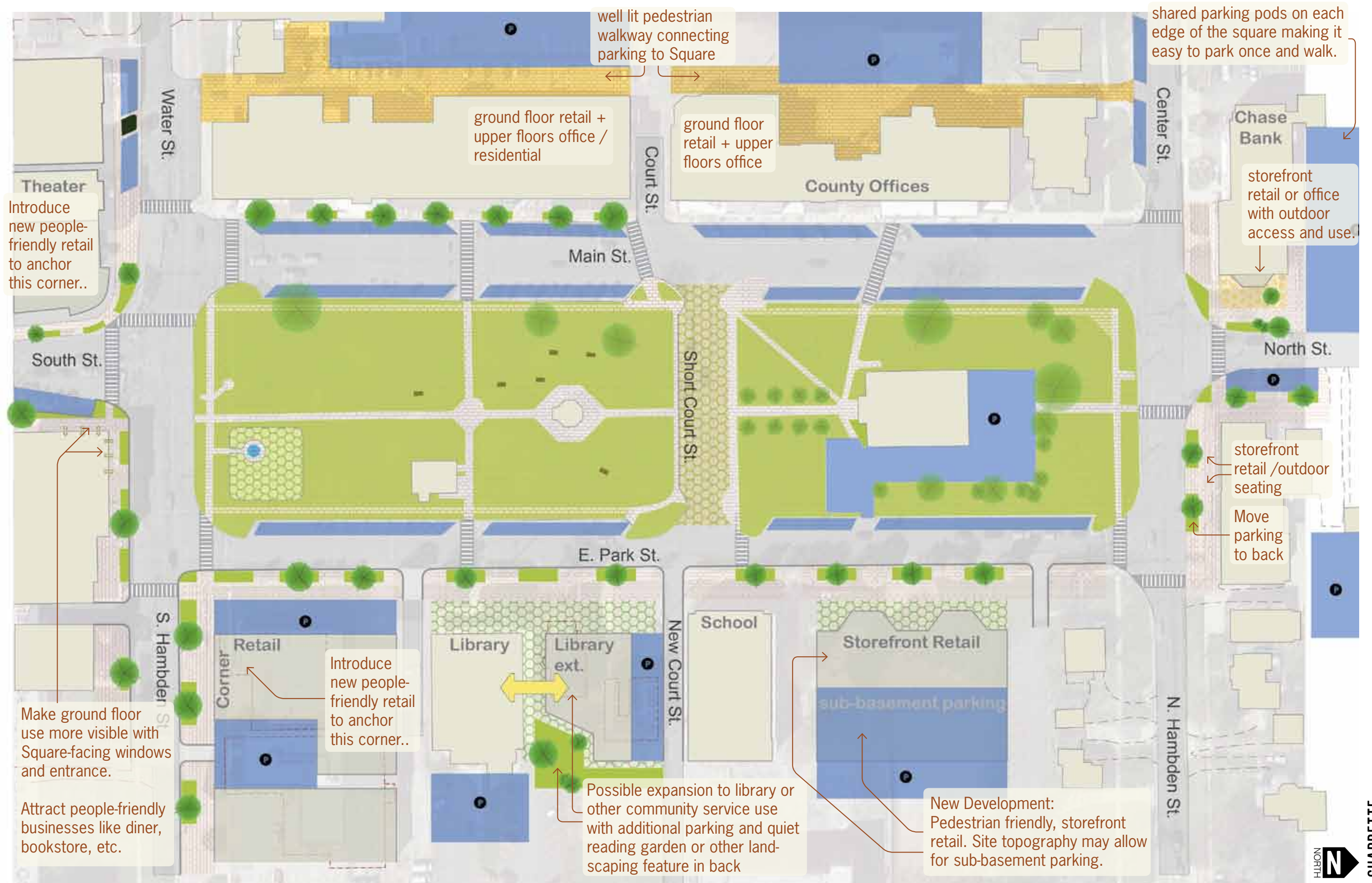
- f. **Village of Chardon building** : Attract more pedestrian-friendly businesses to the ground floor of this building. Improve the sidewalk and streetscape on South Hambden Street to make the building more accessible and integrated with the rest of the Square.
- g. **J. Farinacci building:** Redevelop this building with a more active storefront and a well-defined edge on the corner of South Hambden and Water Streets.

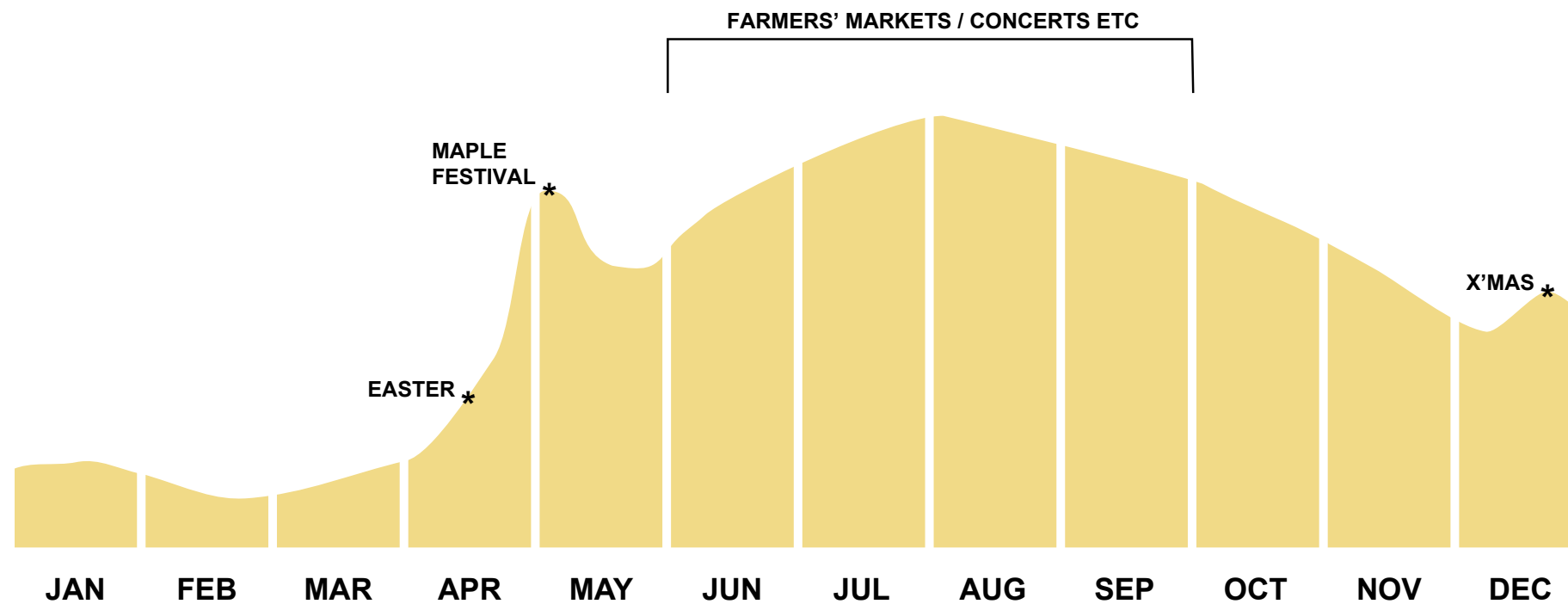
West (along Main Street):

- h. **Main Street character:** Introduce mixed-use development with ground floor retail and upper floor commercial or residential uses. Create design guidelines to shape future development of the Square to remain consistent with typology and character of Main street. Create outdoor seating near food retailers to bring some of the activity out onto the Square.
- i. **Enhanced parking:** Improve access to and create additional parking for existing and new residents and business owners in Uptown.
- j. **Improved walkability:** Raised and clearly mark crosswalks to enable patrons and visitors to park once and walk around the square easily. Create pedestrian walkways behind the buildings to improve connections to parking. Improve lighting and use art to enliven the back-alley conditions and to keep Chardon Square activated in the evening hours.

Opposite:

- Ideas for Uptown Development
- Mixed use with ground floor retail and upper floor residential
 - Anchor retail on corners
 - Pedestrian Court street
 - Shared Parking





- Opposite:**
Ideas for Town Square Enhancement
- Infill trees
 - New Log cabin
 - Splash park
 - Lights in trees

Left:
Town Square events
and attendance

Breakout Session # 2 - Town Square

The second breakout session addressed the Town Square. The original deed for this land stipulates that it may never be developed as anything but a town commons. This provision helps to preserve a valuable asset in Uptown and protect it from developmental pressures. The group recognized this advantage and developed ideas to transform this green space from a passive lawn to an active and accessible community amenity. The Town Square is home to a number of events and public gatherings, including the Maple Festival and local church meetings. It is used year-round by a diverse group of people.

Charrette participants generated the following ideas for the transformation and activation of Town Square:

a. Pedestrian-ize Short Court Street:

Convert Short Court street from a vehicular road to a pedestrian and bike path with street furniture, pedestrian scale lighting and street-edge treatments so that farmers' markets and spill-over programming from events in the Square can be accommodated here. Add a water-feature or other central element that helps augment this space as the front step of the courthouse.

b. Create child & family-friendly park spaces:

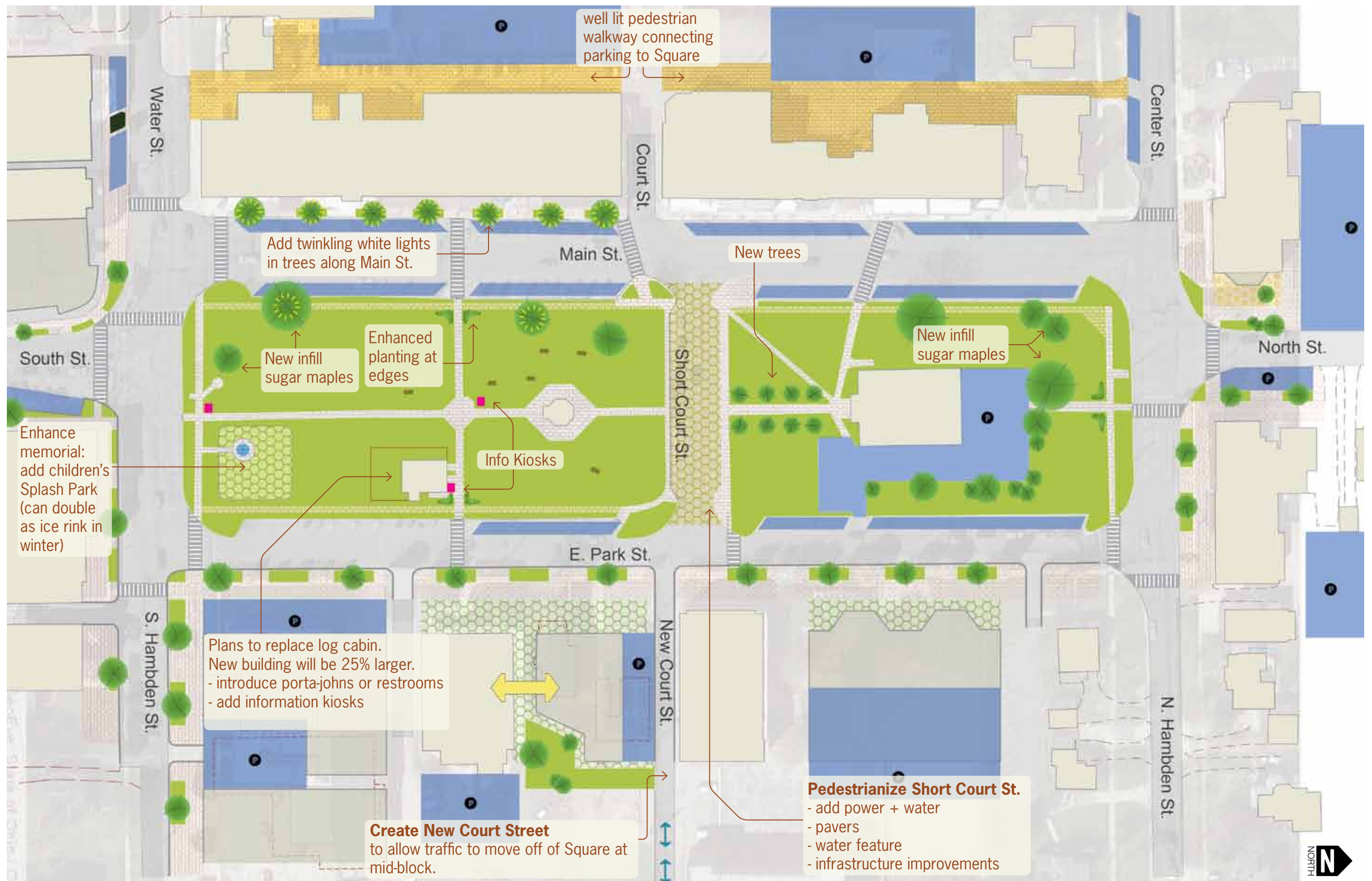
Redesign the Square to create smaller pockets of family-friendly spaces. For instance, convert the memorial on the southern edge of the Square into a splash park for children with additional spaces for parents to sit and watch them. Also provide portable restroom facilities along with information kiosks or banners and water stations.

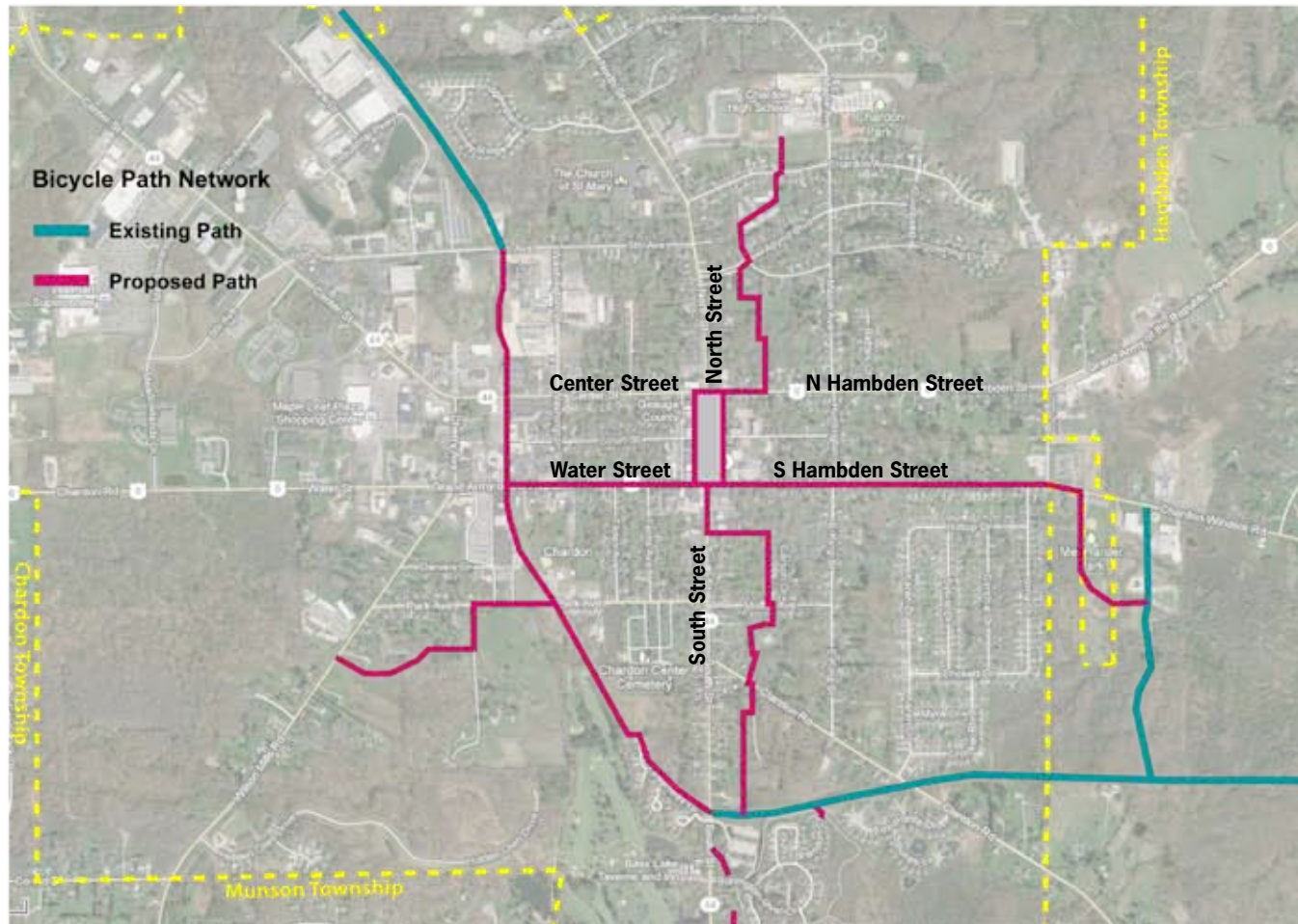
c. Enhance streetscape:

Introduce streetscape enhancements to help reinforce small town character. These may include contiguous sidewalks to improve walkability, clear signage, lighting the trees in the Square and installing outdoor seating where there may opportunities for people watching, outdoor dining, or event viewing.

d. Enhance Courthouse:

Reorganize the courthouse parking and relocated it to the north of the building. Create landscaping buffers to shield the parking and highlight the building. Beautify the courthouse site and provide space in front of and across from it to enable historical tourists and architectural enthusiasts, along with local residents and visitors to view and admire the building.





Left:
2009 Bicycle and Pedestrian
Trails Plan - URS/D.B. Hartt, Inc.

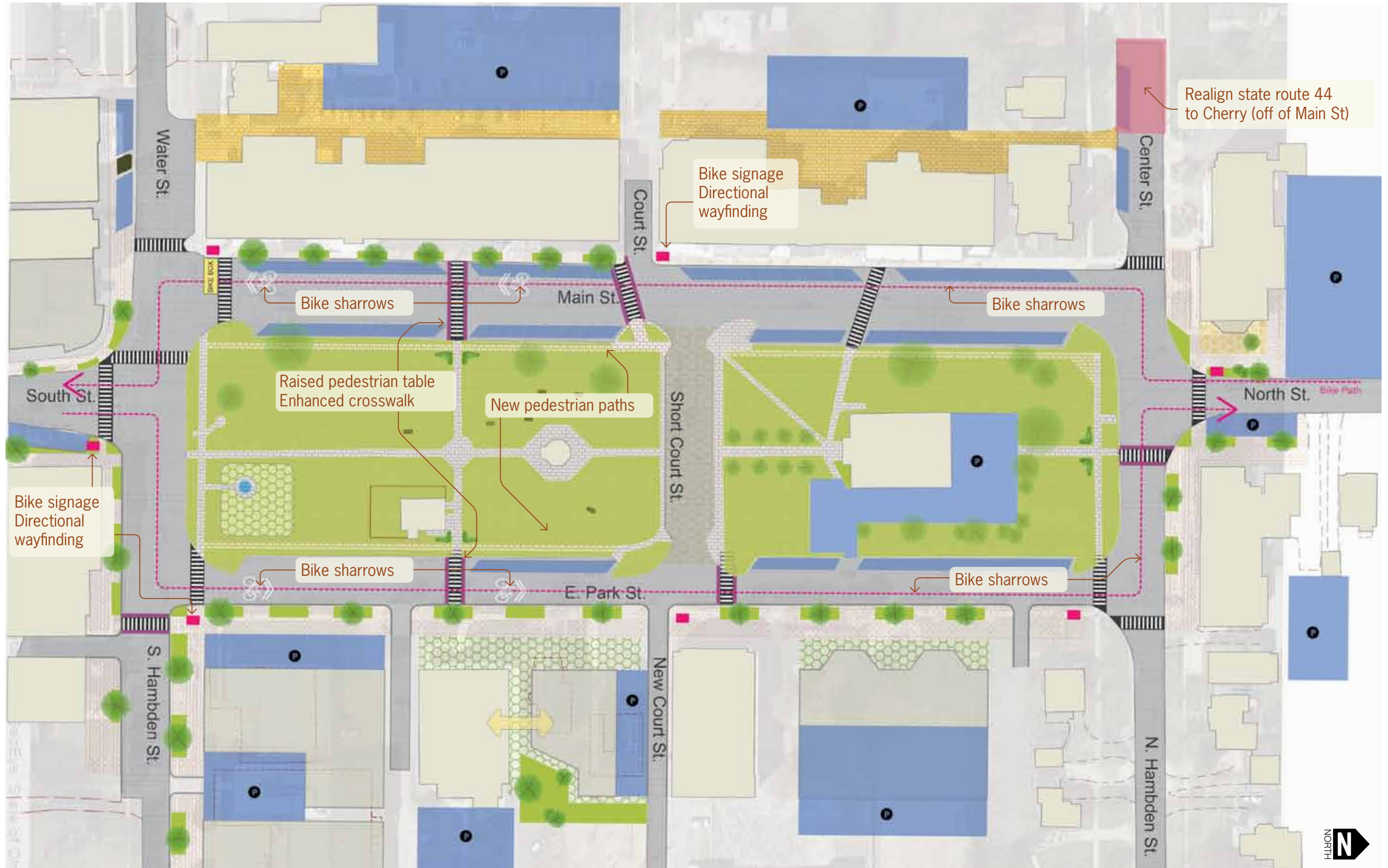
- Opposite:**
Ideas for Access & Connectivity
- Raised crosswalks
 - Bike signage
 - Contiguous sidewalks

Breakout Session # 3 - Access & Connectivity

The third breakout session focused on issues of access and connectivity within and around Uptown. Chardon Square is located at the intersection of State Route 44 and Country Road 6. S.R. 44 is a truck route that brings a lot of truck traffic right into the middle of the town. The participants agreed that this detracts from Chardon Square's small town character. Participants also wanted to make the Square more walkable and bicycle-friendly especially for the school students who often run, walk or bike through there.

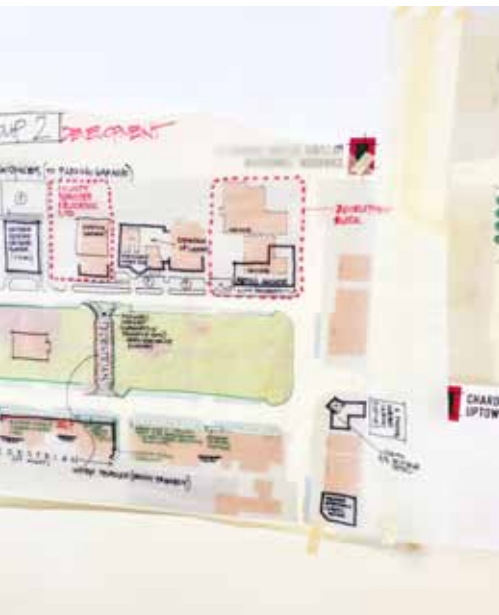
The group generated the following ideas:

- Create shared & accessible parking:**
Explore and create opportunities for shared parking spaces (e.g.: businesses that need parking at different times of the day) to minimize the need to create additional paved parking. Locate one such shared parking lot on each side of the Square to enable visitors and patrons to park once and walk easily to multiple locations on the Square.
- Reroute truck traffic :**
Realign State Route 44 to Cherry Street off of Main street in order to reduce the amount of truck traffic flowing through Chardon Square.
- Create safe pedestrian circulators:**
Create contiguous and well-defined sidewalks all around the Square. Raise and clearly mark crosswalks to enable easy crossing. Add lighting and animate blank facades with art to convert back-alley conditions into safe and short pedestrian connectors between parking and businesses. Provide cohesive and ample signage to help guide people around the Square.
- Introduce bicycle-friendly amenities and signage:**
Install bike racks and bike-friendly signage around to Square to encourage and enable cyclists to come Uptown easily and often.





IDEAS



DEVELOPMENT

Small Business Incubator
Institutional Anchor
Design Guidelines
Mixed Use Development

TOWN SQUARE

Pedestrian-ize Short Court Street
Create Child-friendly Park
Enhance Streetscape
Enhance Courthouse Site

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

Shared & Accessible Parking
Reroute Truck Traffic
Safe, Pedestrian Circulators &
Crosswalks
Bike friendly Signage and Amenities

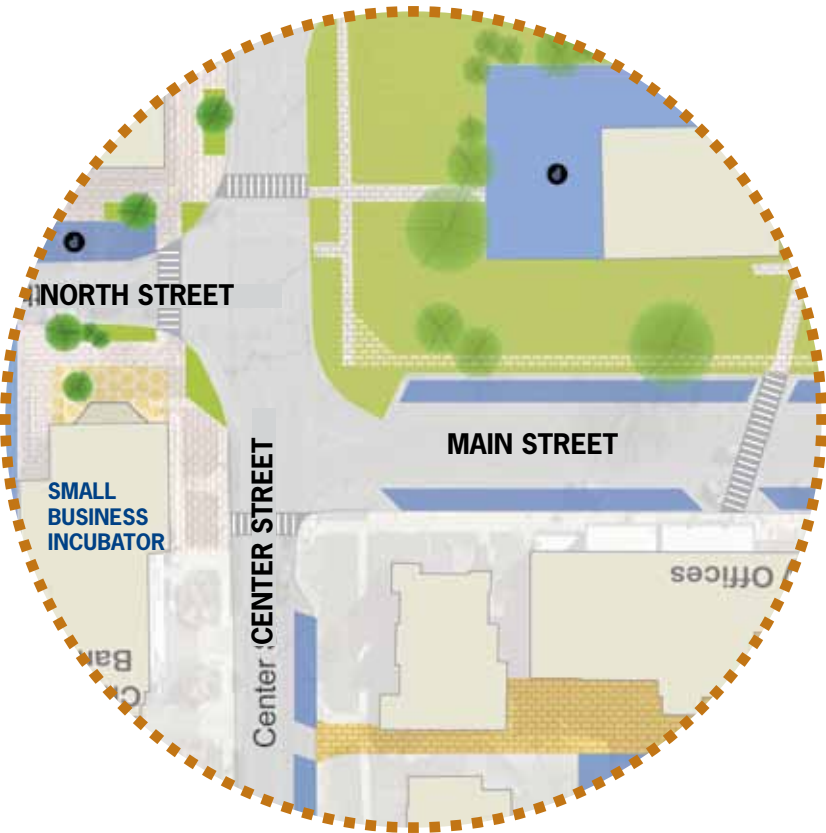
Above:
Icon for Chardon Square

Small Business Incubator

Business incubators can provide basic workplace infrastructure and savings in overhead costs to startups. There are precedents in other cities and towns for both privately and publicly funded incubators.

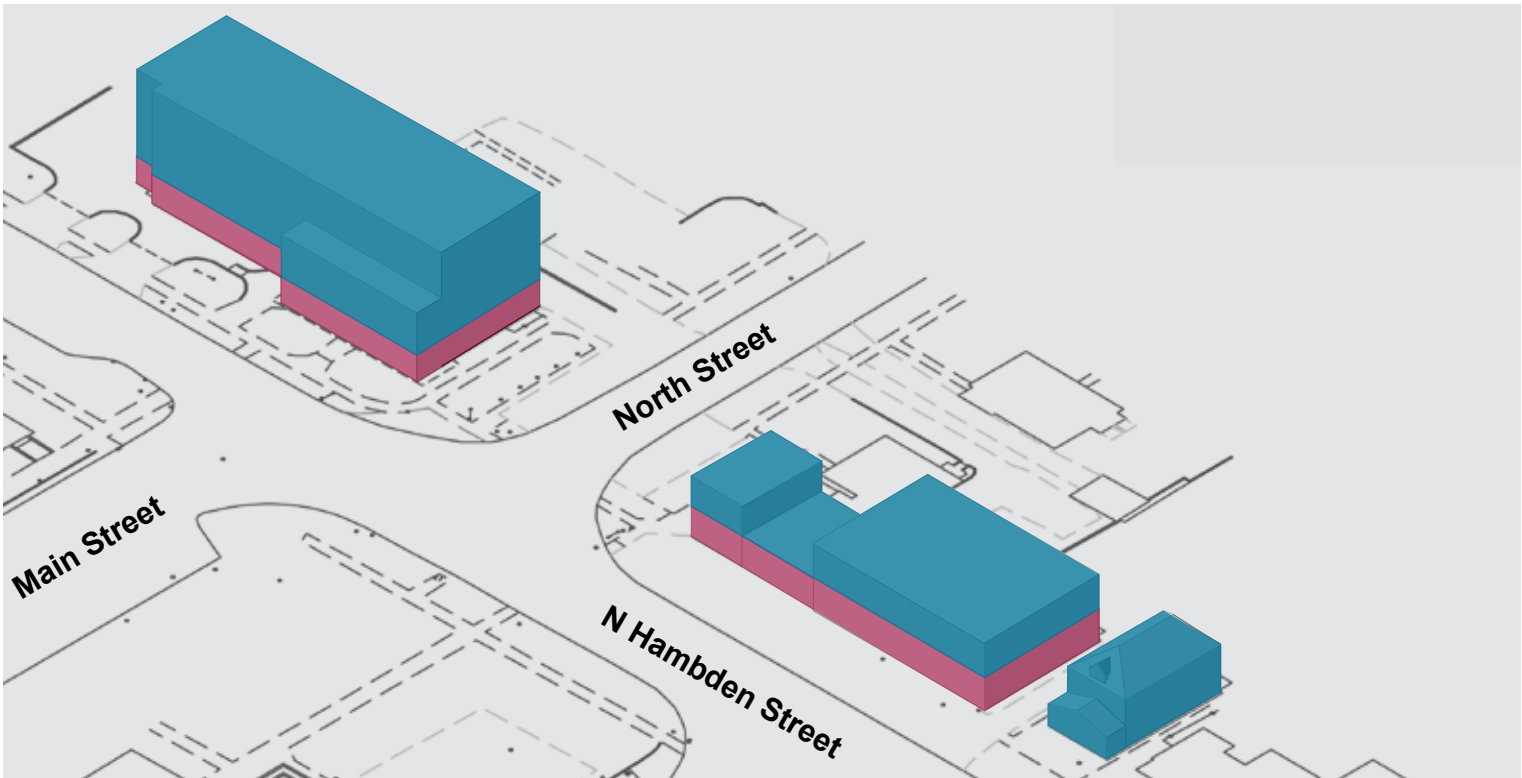
These work spaces can attract new and young entrepreneurs to Uptown and increase the visibility of the Square. Once these businesses are more established, some may chose to remain in Uptown.

The Chase building, on the corner of North Street and North Hambden Street was a popular choice among charrette participants for the location of a small business incubator. Recommendations include creating a storefront environment where passersby and see the activity within and those inside can share the vibrancy of the Square.



Right:
One possible location for
small business incubator -
Chase Bank building

Left:
Chase Bank building ground
floor storefront facade



Institutional Anchor

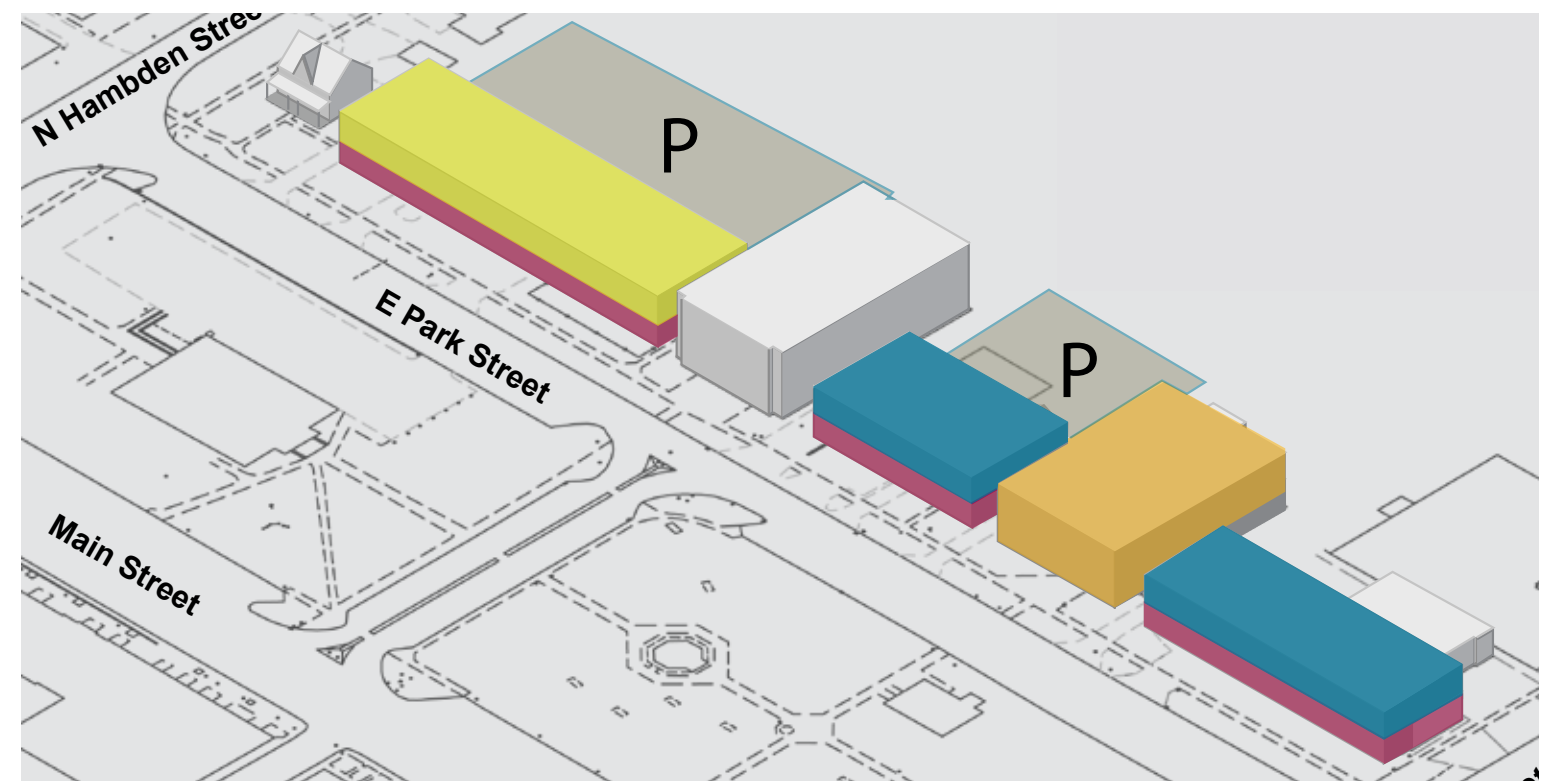
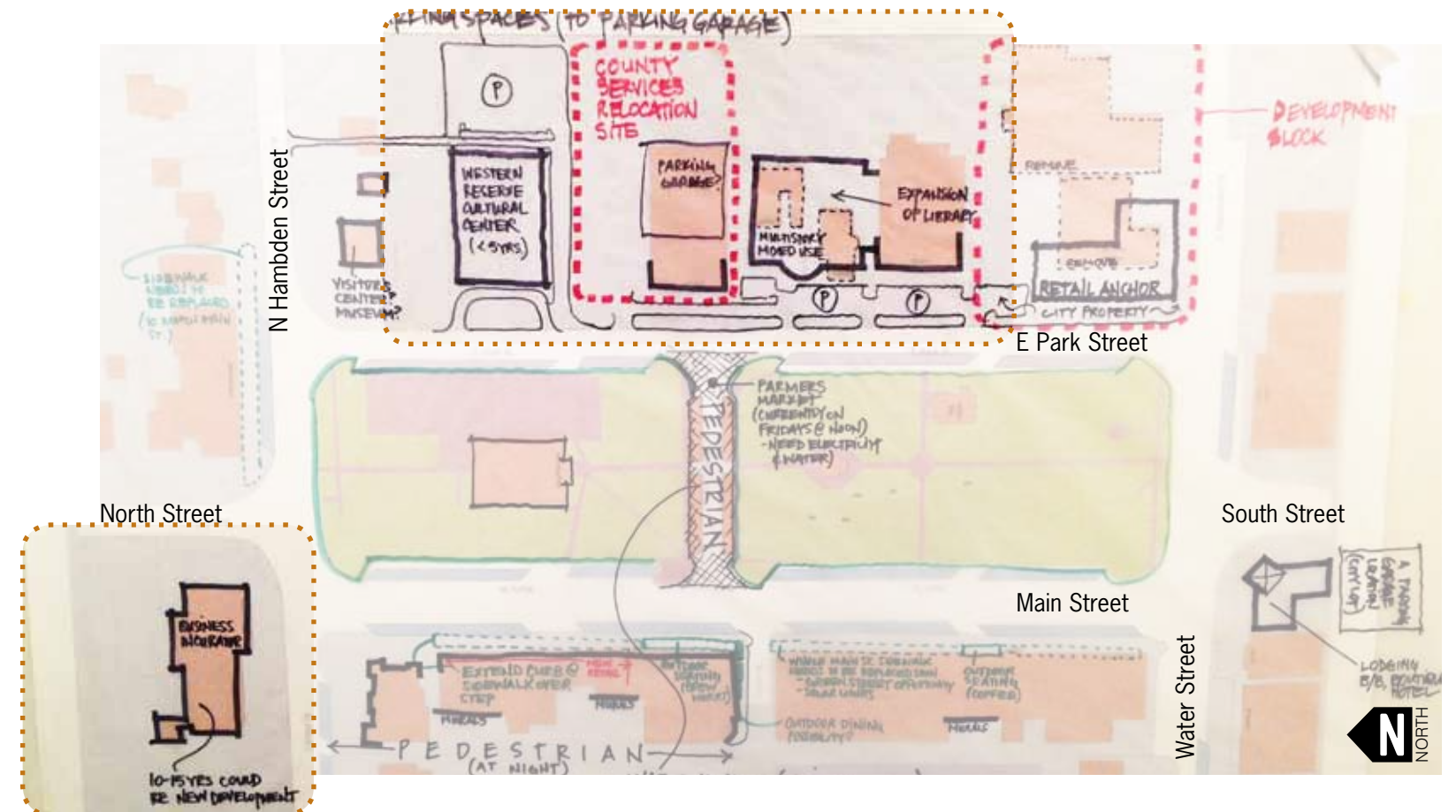
An institutional or civic anchor can greatly help strengthen Chardon Square. The County offices that are currently located in the Square provide regular visitors to Uptown in addition to rent and tax revenues. This anchor could be a university or college who wishes to create a satellite learning facility or another stakeholder like the County or the Western Reserve Society who may want to expand or introduce additional programs on the Square.

The group identified two locations where an institutional or civic anchor could locate and create new opportunities for redevelopment:

- The vacant sites on the eastern edge of the Square.*
- The Chase Bank building to the north of the Square.*

Attracting a new institutional user to either of these locations will require the following:

- *a feasibility analysis or market study to ensure that such a use would be possible on and beneficial to the Square;*
- *a traffic study and plan to estimate and accommodate the additional traffic they might bring to the Square;*
- *outreach and marketing of Uptown as a desirable location for such use; and*
- *additional parking.*



Right:
Locations for new institutional
or civic users in Square

Design Guidelines

As a Western Reserve Town Square and being on the National Register of Historic Places, Chardon Square’s identity is inextricably linked to its aesthetic character. Future development must be respectful to the existing architecture and scale of Uptown.

Although Chardon does have an architectural review board, there is no formal document to which property owners and developers may look to in order to learn how their property may be developed. The participants of the charrette identified the development of design guidelines for Uptown as an early action item.

Having clear design guidelines and establishing a design review process based on these guidelines will help preserve the historical character of Chardon and also reduce uncertainty among potential investors as to the community's design preferences and expectations.

Mixed Use Development

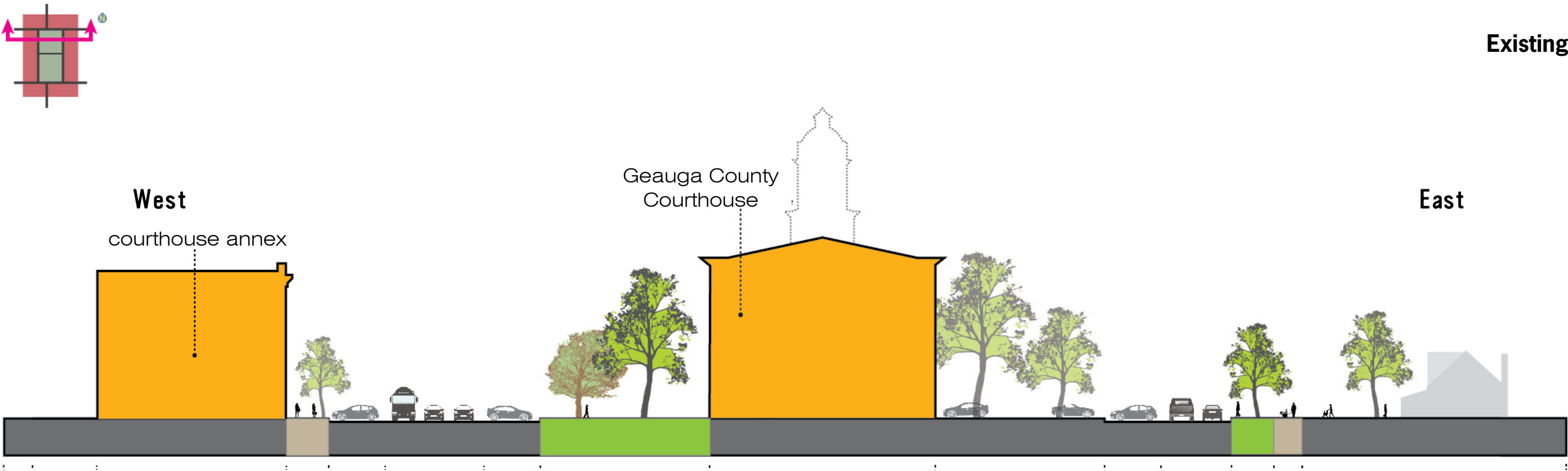
Mixed-use development could generate the after hours activity and vibrancy that residents and stakeholders wish to see in Uptown. The western edge of the Square already has a fair mix of uses from retail to commercial, civic and residential. It is no coincidence that this is also the most vibrant and active edge of the Square.

The participants recommend investigating the feasibility and design implications of introducing upper floor residential uses on the Square. In terms of ground floor development, the group unanimously suggested storefront type of retail—something affordable and community-friendly like book stores, cake shops, beauty salons etc.

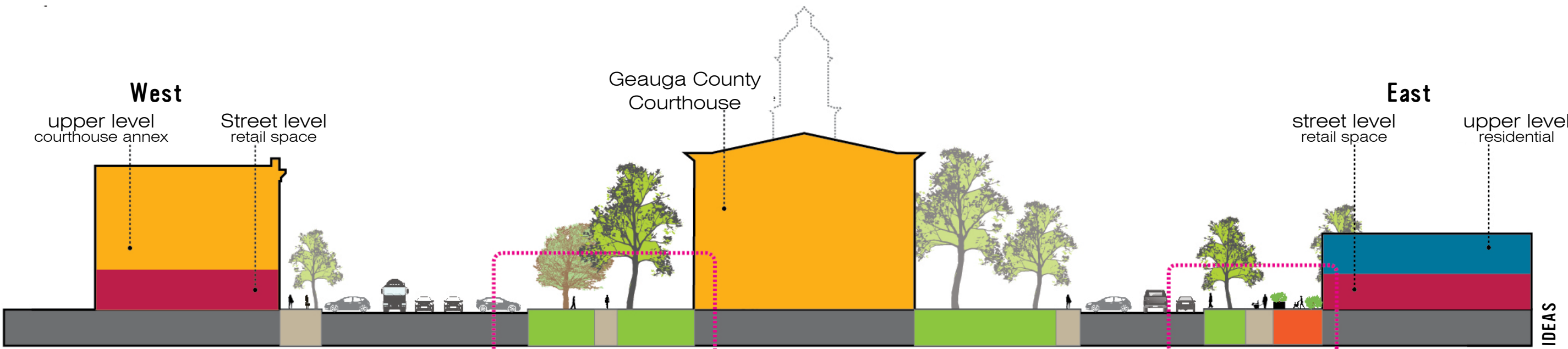
Below:
Diverse but cohesive building
facades maintain historical
aesthetic on Main Street



Existing



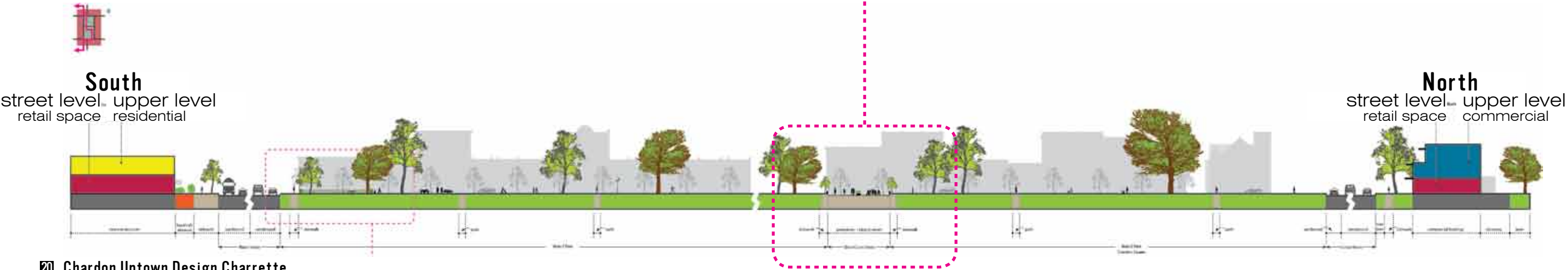
Proposed



Pedestrian-ize Short Court Street

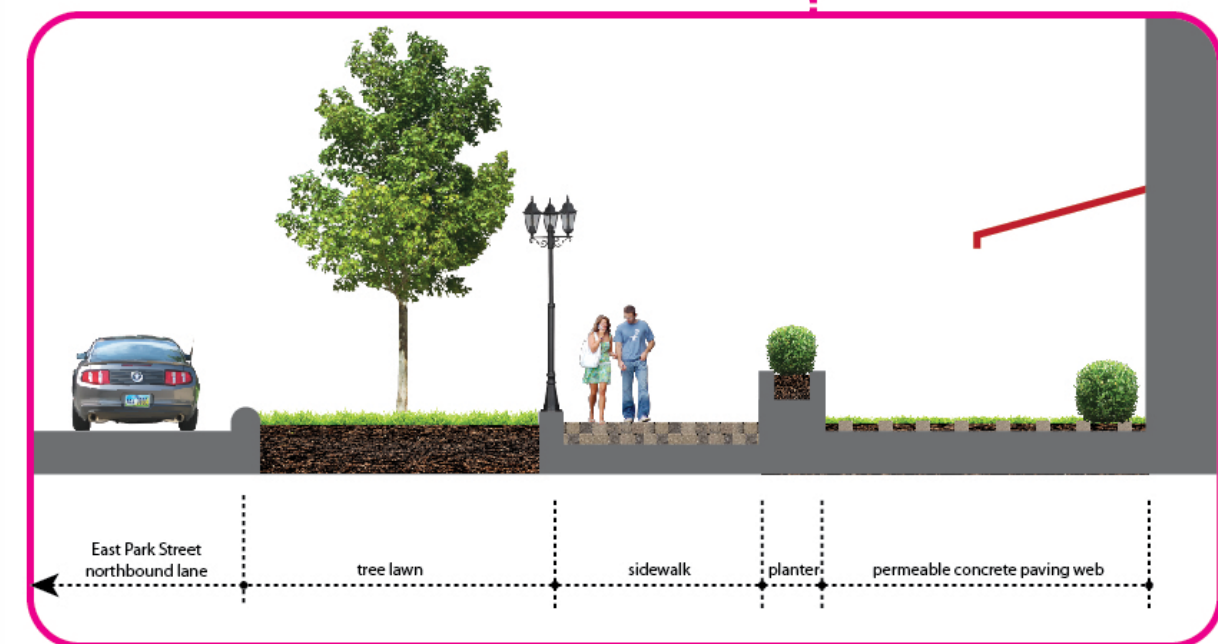
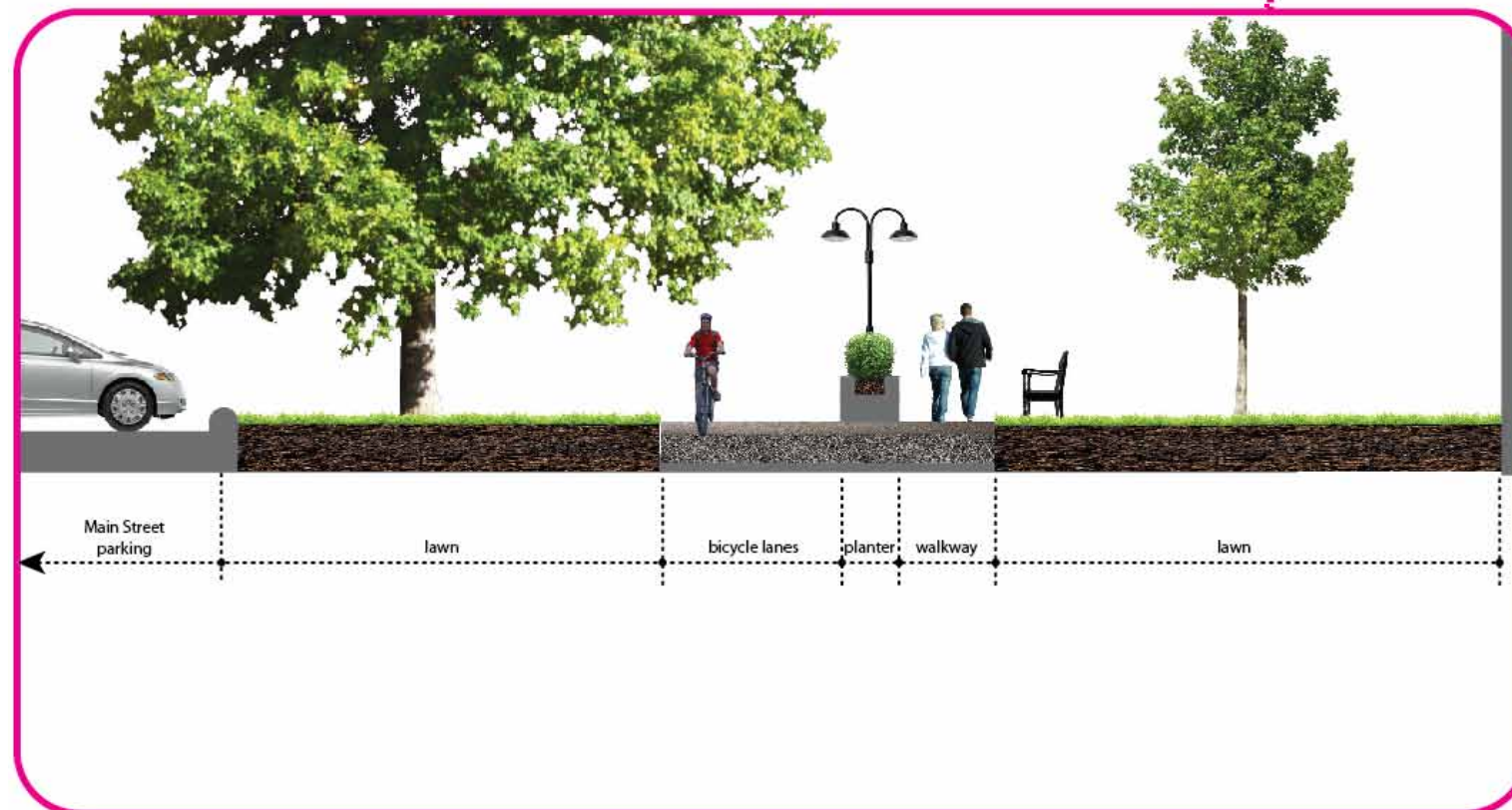
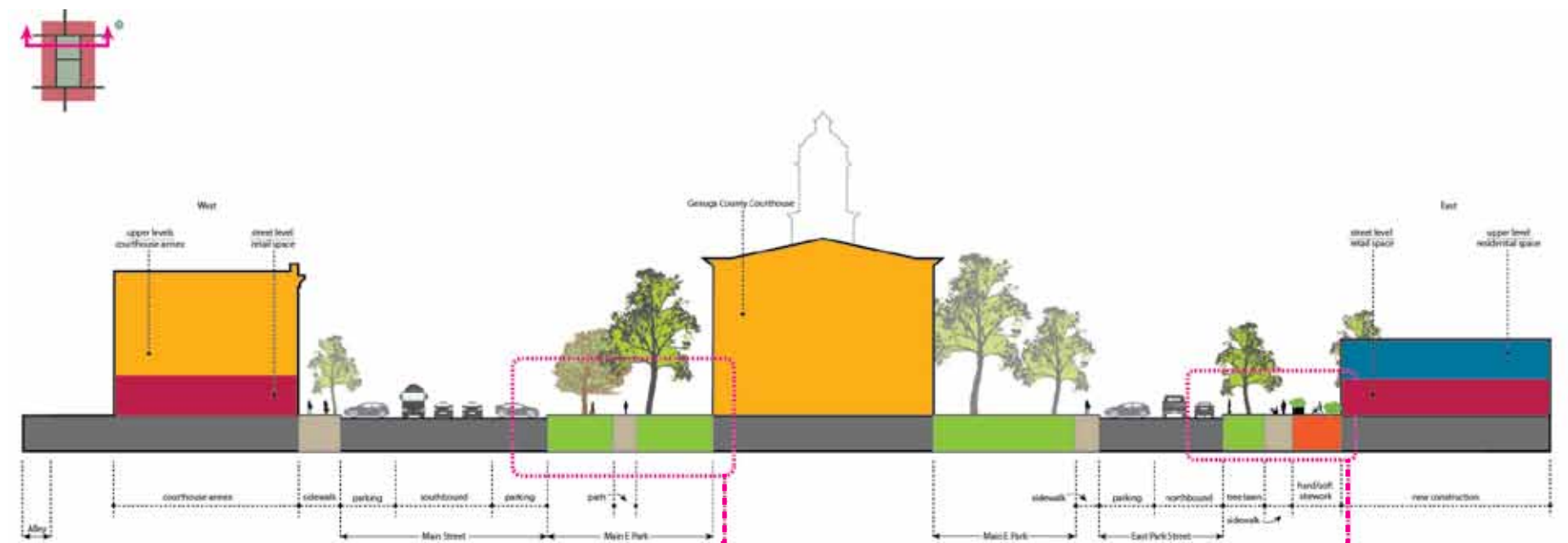
All three groups independently arrived at the idea of converting Short Court Street to a pedestrian and bike path. This path would enable people to cut across the Square safely, create buffered space for farmers’ markets and other spill-over program from events, and may be used as temporary parking for car shows and for vendor-trailers during special events. It would also provide a prime viewing spot for architectural and historical tours to stop and take in the Square and the courthouse.

Pedestrian-izing this space will also unite the north and south parcels of the Square creating a unified public space in the middle of Chardon Square. Pedestrian scale lighting, benches, beautiful landscaping, bike signage and racks, water fountains, and dog walking amenities can help make this a frequent stop for local joggers, bicyclists, dog walkers, as well as visitors and business owners.



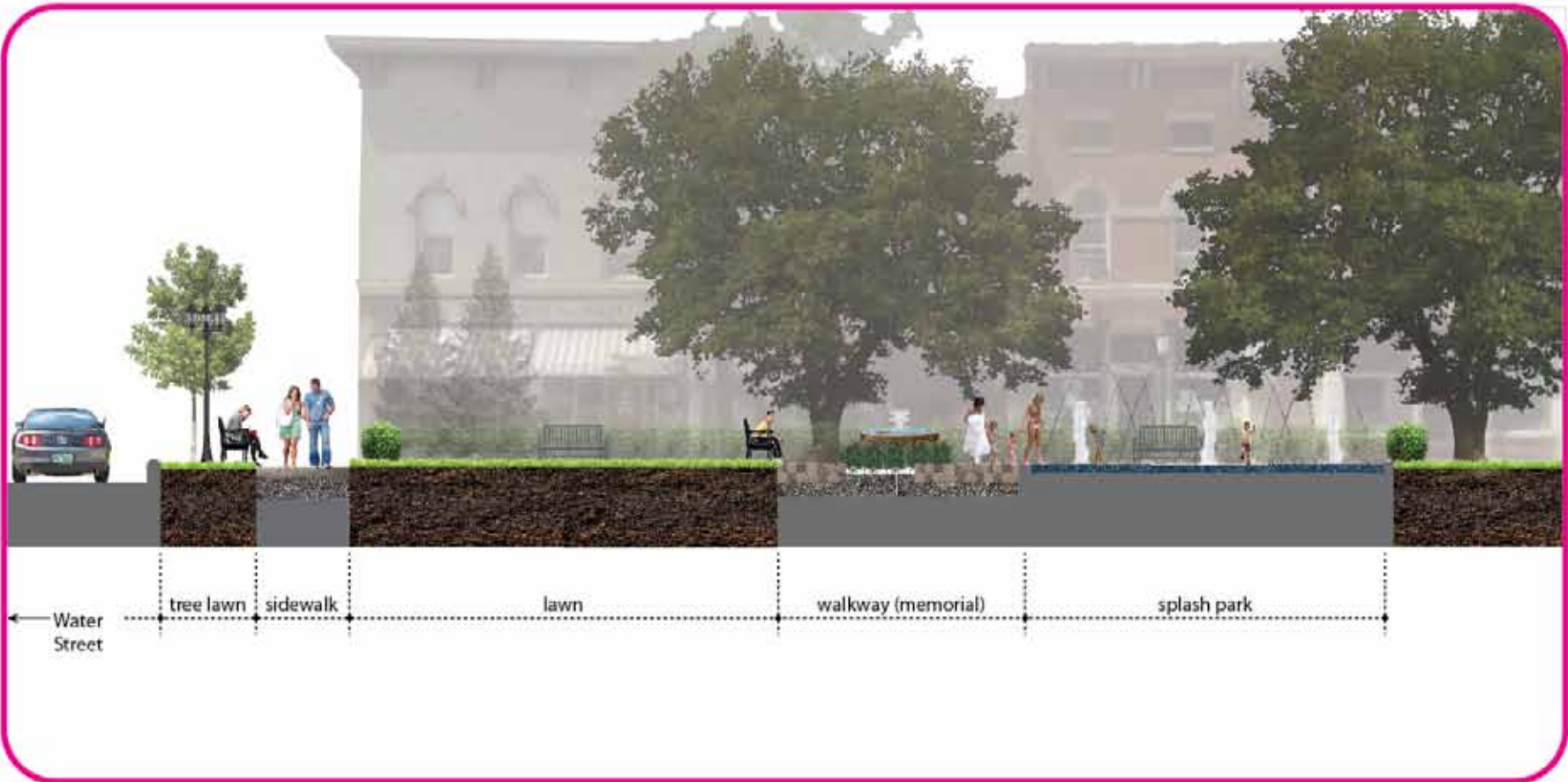
Enhance Streetscape

- *Outdoor seating: install benches and seats near food retailers and along the edge of the Town Square.*
- *Tree lighting: Hang or drape lights onto trees to help light up the Square and improve visibility and a sense of safety in the evenings.*
- *Contiguous sidewalks: Ensure that all sidewalks and walkways are contiguous and interconnected by raised and clearly marked crosswalks.*
- *Bike-friendly amenities: Install bike racks, signage, water fountains and other bike-friendly amenities to encourage local and visitor cyclists to come to Uptown.*
- *Infill Trees and additional landscaping: Add new trees in suitable sized tree planting boxes and enhance park landscaping with flowering shrubs and colorful plants.*



Create Child Friendly Park

Charrette participants emphasized that the Square must be a place where families and children would want to spend time. The group suggested the creation of a splash park. One possible location that was favored by many is near the memorial along the south edge of the Square. Enhancing the memorial with a splash park will make it more visible and will help promote the family friendly-aspect of Uptown.

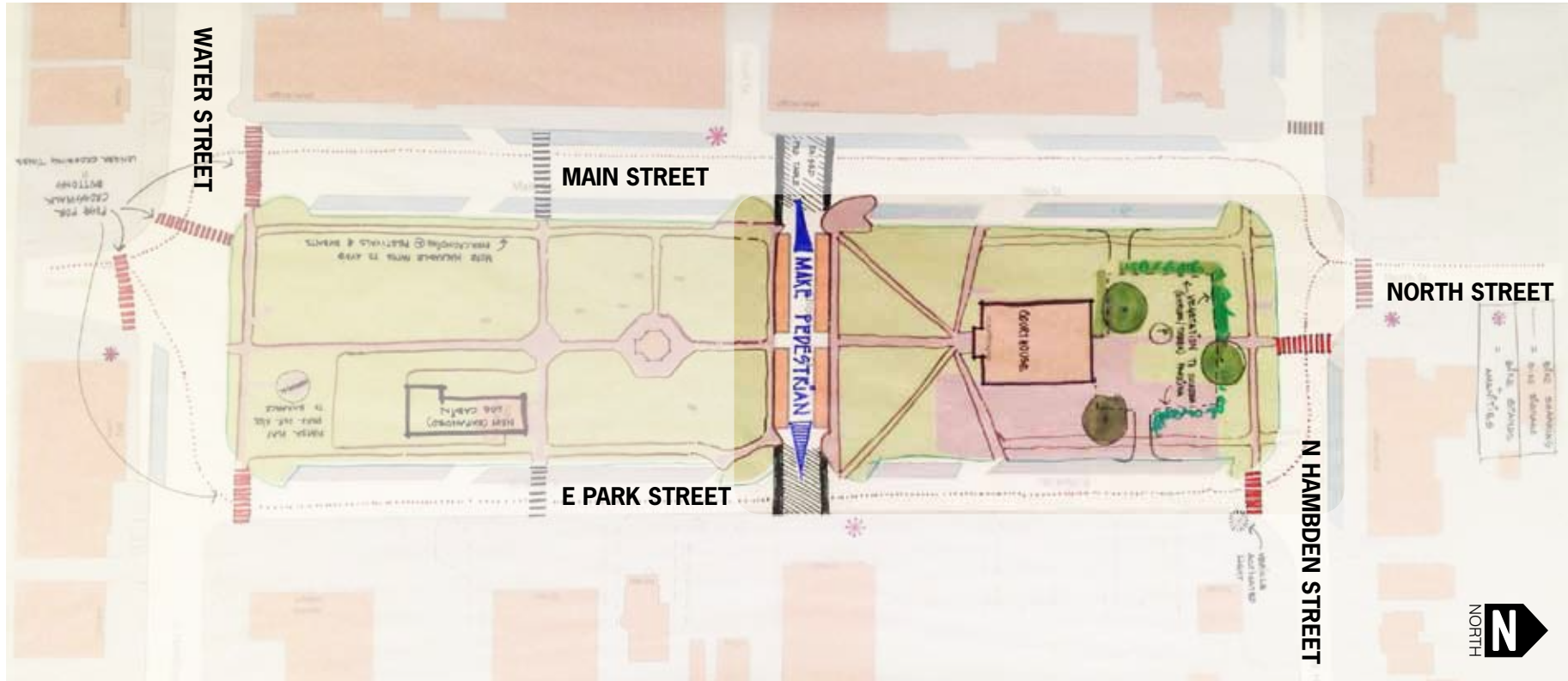
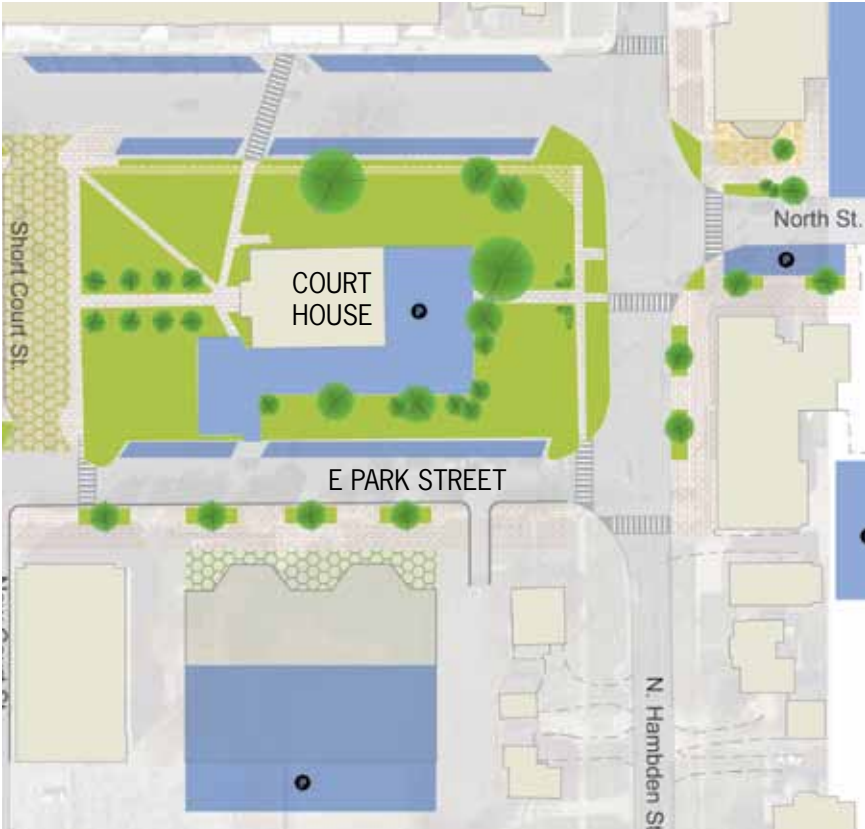


Enhance Courthouse

Often referred to the jewel in the crown, the County Courthouse is a building local residents and business owners are very proud of. It is however, difficult to observe the Courthouse from any kind of vantage point. It is flanked on the east by parking, obscured by traffic and parking on the south and west, and presents only its back façade to the north.

Charrette participants suggested that the parking along the eastern edge of the courthouse be reorganized such that it is largely in the back, buffered by trees and other landscaping devices. This will free up the front of the courthouse to create a proper symmetrical approach and uncluttered views.

Additional tree plantings leading up to the building and on the sides will help reinforce its symmetry and grandeur.



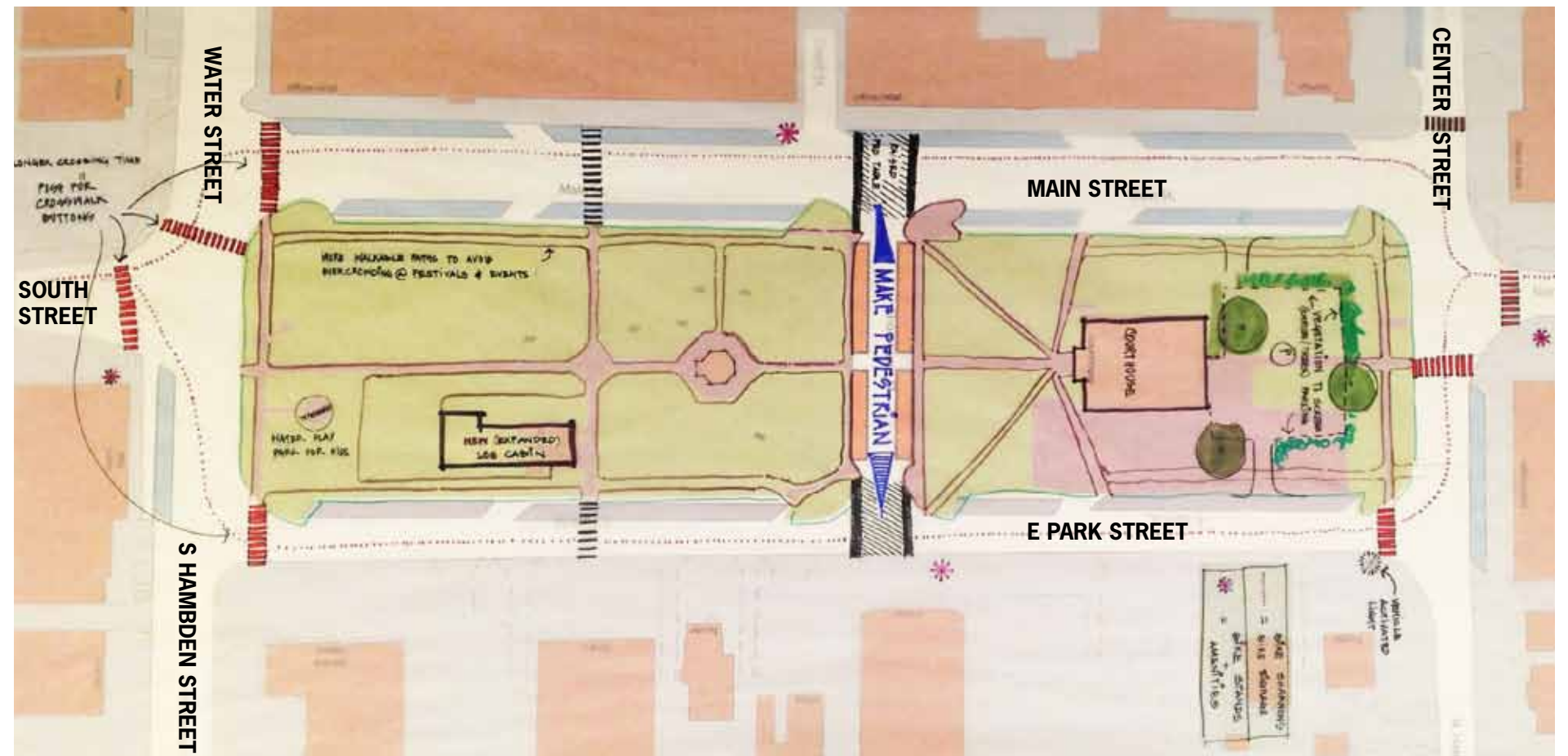
Create Safe, Pedestrian Circulators

Chardon Square is a optimally sized for walking around; the pre-charrette tour of the Square was completed in 30 minutes with several stops along the way. However, it isn't always easy for pedestrians to get around on account of bad connections from parking lots and parking spaces, unclear and insufficient crosswalks, lack of contiguous sidewalks, and few cut-throughs through the Square.

The charrette produced several ideas about how to improve the pedestrian experience, including:

- Convert alleys into pedestrian circulators by adding lighting, art on blank facades, signage to direct people to their destinations and pedestrian friendly paving and seating.*
- Create raised crosswalk tables at mid-block locations to enable visibility of people crossing the street.*
- Create contiguous sidewalks around the edges of the Square and across the Square to enable easy pedestrian movement from one place to another.*
- Introduce more walking paths in the Square. This will help minimize crowding during large public events. It will also create smaller pockets of space within the Square where different kinds of activities can be programmed. Additionally it will make it easier for pedestrians to cut across the Square rather than having to go around.*

In addition to these ideas, charrette participants also recommended creating a cohesive signage scheme that would help unify the Square and guide pedestrians around, as well as providing pedestrian-scale lighting on and around the Square and lighting on trees in the Square.



Sharrow pavement marking



raised crosswalk - pedestrian table

Create Shared Parking

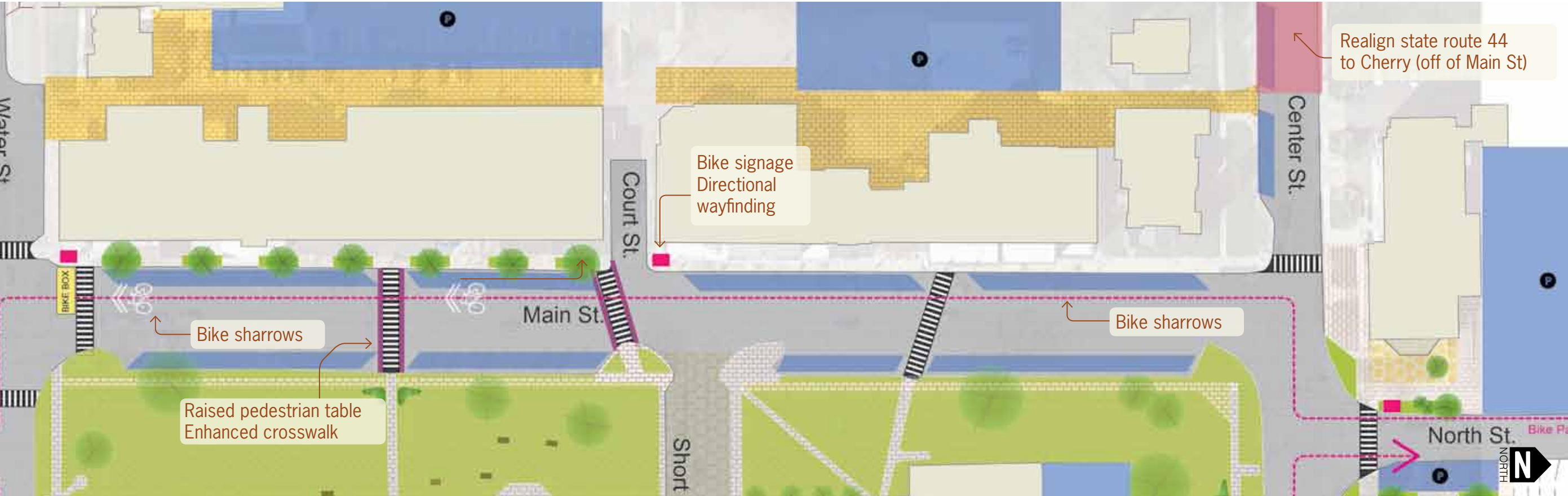
Shared parking can be an effective way to manage additional cars that new businesses may bring to Uptown. Parking is also one of the biggest impediments to creating residential uses on the Square. The charrette participants identified several sites around Uptown where shared parking lots (and eventually structures) may be located. One way these lots may be shared is through strategic partnering of businesses that need parking spaces at different times of the day. It is important before creating new parking to explore where there are opportunities to share parking so as to keep the Square walkable and easy to get around.

Divert Truck Traffic

As has been discussed several times in the past, the heavy truck traffic flowing through Uptown detracts from its small-town, quaint and historic character. Due to the tight turn from Main on to South Hambden, the flow of traffic is also slowed down when there is a truck at the turn causing traffic to back up. It has previously been proposed to realign S.R 44 to Cherry Street and to move the truck traffic off of Main Street. The group strongly suggested investigating this option and finding a way to remove or limit truck traffic flowing through Chardon Square.

Bike-friendly Signage and Amenities

Chardon residents and stakeholders want to see improved amenities and access for bicyclists in Uptown. They recommend providing frequent and visible ‘share the road’ signs around the Square and bike racks around the Square. Creating clear connections with the Bike and Pedestrian Trail Network in Geauga county will help improve the connectivity to the Square for cyclists within and visiting the area.



CASE STUDIES



Culpeper, Virginia

Historic preservation-based redevelopment

From the time of the original Town Charter in 1759, Culpeper's downtown district has been the heart of the community. Early architects of the town knew how important it was to co-locate businesses and residential uses together and create active streets. Most of downtown reflects this pattern with retail stores on the first floor and offices and/or affordable apartments above. Buildings have been renovated and reused to maintain their historic character. Late 19th century buildings now house coffee shops, gourmet restaurants, boutiques, banks, and offices.

The downtown district is truly the heart of the town and county and is the center of social interaction. Residents and visitors alike gather throughout the year to enjoy one-of-a-kind specialty shops, restaurants, and special events. During warm weather, people and pets may be seen enjoying the small park at the end of Davis Street. Every Saturday from April to November, a farmers market becomes the social event of the week. People gather to visit with neighbors, buy fresh locally grown produce and crafts, and enjoy live music.

Culpeper Renaissance, Inc. (CRI) is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program, which provides technical assistance for downtown revitalization. Through the years, representatives of CRI have been mentors to other communities seeking to revitalize their own downtowns. The revitalization of Culpeper's downtown district is both a catalyst and example for redevelopment in other communities.

Strategic initiatives for the next five years

CRI recently expanded its footprint to build on previous successes. Two upcoming projects tie in well with the newly expanded footprint by improving the economic and social vibrancy in the entire Downtown.

- (1) A public/private partnership between CRI, the Town of Culpeper, Parking Authority, and local businesses to improve the alleyway that runs from a parking lot on Cameron Street to the shopping areas on both Davis Street and Main Street. Free design services by Frazier Associates Architects (funded by the community) are being utilized. The project will transform the parking lot and alleyway into an attractive, clean, safe, and convenient entryway into the heart of downtown shopping on Davis and Main Street.
- (2) CRI worked with the Town of Culpeper and Department of Tourism to establish Culpeper's first-ever arts and cultural district in 2010, which provides a tax break for qualifying entities. The completion of the State Theatre will be the catalyst for bringing the arts district to life. The arts are emerging as a key component in the CRI comprehensive plan to revitalize downtown and act as a component of economic growth.

SOURCES:

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Main Street Program. <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street>
 CRI website: <http://www.culpeperdowntown.com/>

The Collective Kentwood, Michigan

Anchor project-driven mixed use redevelopment

Office Building(s), Fitness Center, Retail

Site Size: 2.8 acres

Location Type: Inner Suburban

Located in Kentwood, Michigan, a suburb of Grand Rapids, the Collective is a 36,986-square-foot membership facility that provides users with an array of office services, a fitness center, rooms for making art and playing music, and a coffee shop. For a monthly fee, members—a mix of small-business owners, free-lancers, and telecommuters, among others—have access to cubicle and office space, printing services, meeting rooms, conference facilities, art and music classes, as well as exercise equipment and a swimming pool. As of July 2008, there is only one Collective, which occupies a structure that was originally used as a health club. However, the developer, Main Street Development, has created plans for a 40,000-square-foot prototype building with the goal of constructing more Collectives in different locations.

Market research

A study, released in February 2008 and funded by the Western Michigan Business Alliance and the U.S. Department of Labor's Wired Initiative, found increasing demand for "location-neutral" office workers (those who don't require a fixed office) in the greater western Michigan area around Grand Rapids. Although the developer was not directly involved in the study, its findings were used to bolster and inform the real estate and business model and potential locations for the Collective.

Other research conducted around the country indicates that employees at large corporations are spending less and less time at their desks. These findings suggest that work environments such as the Collective may appeal to a variety of white-collar workers and companies, and firms both large and small.

The market for office space in Grand Rapids changed with the advent of new technology during the 1990s. This decade was also characterized by reduced regional office needs for several employers that adversely affected the market for that property type. The notion that a large corporation could intermittently rent space at the Collective for its employees to use as needed, rather than signing a long-term lease for formal, fixed office space, is a major part of the concept.

The research on office and workforce trends combined with health research indicates that there is a demand for places that address both changes in the workplace and the need for exercise facilities under one roof. The Collective is marketed as a place to go for business, life, and health. For the developer, the key was to find the right location and either buy or erect the appropriate building to provide access to a sizable population of potential members.

While conducting market research for the Collective, the developer analyzed lifestyle clusters, a form of market segmentation research. Lifestyle clusters are often used by retail developers to determine shopping interests in a given area. The developer considered any competition for each of the uses as well. Generally, the developer seeks a site surrounded by 20,000 households within a ten-minute drive, which is similar to the criterion used to determine whether or not to build a neighborhood shopping center. The structure that now houses the Collective, which was vacant at the time, fit the parameters of the specified market research and was therefore a suitable location for the project.

The concept was intended to be flexible, and future Collectives can be located in urban or suburban areas, and in a variety of commercial and high-traffic areas, including transit stations.

Financing

The financing of the Collective was fairly typical for a single-use project, even though it's a mixed-use project. Byron State Bank provided a loan of \$2.15 million. It is a miniperm loan at one point over the prime rate, with a 20-year amortization and a balloon payment that comes due at three years. The bank required the developer to put down 25 percent of the project value in equity. The developer intends to refinance with a permanent loan.

SOURCES:

Urban Land Institute Development Case Studies
<http://casestudies.uli.org>

Developer: Main Street Development, LLC
<http://www.mainstreet-llc.com>

Designer:
Landmark Design Group
<http://www.landmarkdesigngroup.net>



Bath, Maine

Historic Main Street Approach

The redevelopment of Main Street Bath is the result of a successful business group that was able to embrace the idea that the vitality of downtown is also about the heart and soul of the city, not just the dollars and cents. Since adopting the Main Street approach, Bath has become a model for downtown revitalization in Maine through collaborations and innovation. The community developed a “three-legged” approach, enlisting support from businesses, residents, and city government, and mandating equal representation of their interests. Main Street Bath’s “Business Barometer” roundtable program has pulled together the downtown merchants, remarkable for their candor and collaborative spirit, and is widely copied by other communities.

The community tracks donations and volunteers through a customized relational database. Media sales representatives volunteer on the Promotions Committee and spread the word about promotions. The city government designates economic development funds to the Main Street program and collaborates on downtown beautification projects. Community volunteers invest time, talent and energy to support the staff of Bath's Main Street organization.

Strategic initiatives for the next five years

Main Street Bath has been largely successful in preserving historic downtown architecture and revitalizing the district as an economic engine for Bath. Looking forward, the community must address three challenges to downtown’s continued success:

- (1) The downtown area will soon lose a deteriorating newer building that once housed the YMCA; another badly neglected historic building was already razed leaving a hole in a downtown block; and a vacant waterfront lot was recently put on the market.

Strategy: Actively monitor development plans and advocate for appropriate uses based on survey findings, and a shared vision for the downtown as identified through a previously completed branding process.

- (2) Bath (and Maine in general) has an aging population. To continue to grow the local economy and replace leadership and volunteers the community must attract a younger demographic to support downtown businesses and programs, and young families to our city.

Strategy: Actively seek out businesses and create playgrounds and other outdoor infrastructure in the downtown to serve young families. Plans are currently in place to create a Main Street Bath “young leaders” group that can build a social network while taking on relevant projects.

- (3) Stay authentic, stay year-round while developing tourism.

Strategy: It’s the balance of heritage and modern industry, the pretty and the gritty, that gives Bath its unique flavor. By being clear about what constitutes the community's appeal, the authentic cultural experience that Bath provides will be sustained.

SOURCES:

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Main Street Program. <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street>

Maine Downtown Center:
http://www.mdf.org/mdc_overview.php

Community website: <http://visitbath.com>

DETAILS:

Project period: Over 20 Years

Population: 8,875

Net new jobs: 212

Net new businesses: 42

Building Rehabs: 13

New buildings: 2

Vacancy rate when Main Street Bath started: 8%

Vacancy rate now: 2%

Public investment: \$103,993,039

Private investment: \$144,137,924



NEXT STEPS

The following action items emerged as immediate next steps for Chardon Tomorrow, the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Chardon to undertake:

- a. Conduct a **market study** to understand what kinds of businesses are likely to thrive in Chardon and how Chardon Tomorrow and the Chardon Chamber of Commerce should attract them. The market study should also investigate if the idea of creating upper floor housing is feasible for Uptown, and if so, what the housing typology for such development should be.
- b. Conduct a **traffic study** to evaluate the implications of pedestrian-izing Short Court street and re-articulating the parking behind the courthouse. Traffic study will also advice on the volume of parked cars new development/ users may bring to the car and locations for managing this volume effectively.
- c. Revisit and connect with previous efforts to:
 - Develop architectural **design and development guidelines** to help shape new and re-development projects in Uptown. These guidelines will help advise property owners and developers on how big, wide, or high they can build and also share examples of architectural details and typologies that would fit in with the historic character of the town.
 - Evaluate the merits of relocating S.R. 44 via a bypass. Pursue NOACA and other funding potential to achieve these goals.

- d. Further develop concepts for and implement the **streetscape improvements** that do not require re-configuration of streets and driveways, including:
 - lighting in the Square and along the alleys,
 - signage to guide visitors around the Square,
 - raised crosswalks for mid-block street crossings,
 - clearly marked and ‘push-for-signal’ crosswalks,
 - contiguous sidewalks leading to Chardon Square from surrounding areas
- e. Meet with Public Sector Supporters who have an interest in and can help advancing the Uptown vision. Potential supporters include:
 - Congressional and State Representatives with a community and/or economic development focus
 - City of Chardon
 - Geauga County
 - Chardon Local Schools
 - Geauga County Public Library
- f. **Meet with local developers** who have been involved in downtown and historic district revitalization efforts in Northeast Ohio to get a better understanding of market potential and the nature of public/private partnerships in downtown redevelopment projects. Share the outcomes of the charrette and previous planning efforts during these meetings and seek advice as to the short- and long-term development opportunities in the Uptown area. Some local developers with experience in downtown revitalization include:

- Fairmount Properties (Randy Ruttenberg)
Relevant projects: Shaker Square (Cleveland)
Downtown Kent, First & Main (Hudson)
<http://www.fairmountproperties.com>
- The Coral Company (Peter Rubin)
Relevant projects: Cedar Center,
Shaker Square, Leasing for
Gordon Square Arts District
<http://www.thecoralcompany.com>
- Paran Management (Joe Schafran)
Relevant projects: University Circle
(Cleveland)The Orchard (Hudson);
<http://www.paranmgt.com>

