

# RIVERSIDE INNOVATION DISTRICT

Triangle Master Plan

August 2021

Innovation Districts are a contemporary economic development model that focus new businesses, medical institutions, research universities, and technology in areas where people live and play. Purposely clustered and connected, the Innovation District offers a location where entrepreneurs, startups, accelerators, incubators, and creative industries become economic generators within the community. Innovation Districts shift the design and market from previously isolated suburban research parks and stand-alone Class A office parks towards dynamic, mixed-use, walkable, amenity-rich places where people live, work, shop, play, and learn.

Riverside's Innovation District (RID) provides the space for a competitive regional space where innovation, arts & culture, and residents coalesce. RID provides the critical mass to support technology-based jobs and work, Research & Development, education, the arts, housing, and transportation choices.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	the Riverside Innovation District.....	5
1.1	Introdcution.....	5
1.2	Link with Envision Riverside 2025 .....	6
1.3	Background.....	6
1.4	Opportunities and Constraints.....	6
1.5	The Planning Process .....	7
1.6	Planning Principles.....	7
2.0	The Triangle District.....	10
2.1	Master Plan Development .....	12
2.2	TRIANGLE EMPHASIS AREAS Build Out .....	17
3.0	IMPLEMENTATION.....	18

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Figure 1 – Context Map

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## 1.0 THE RIVERSIDE INNOVATION DISTRICT

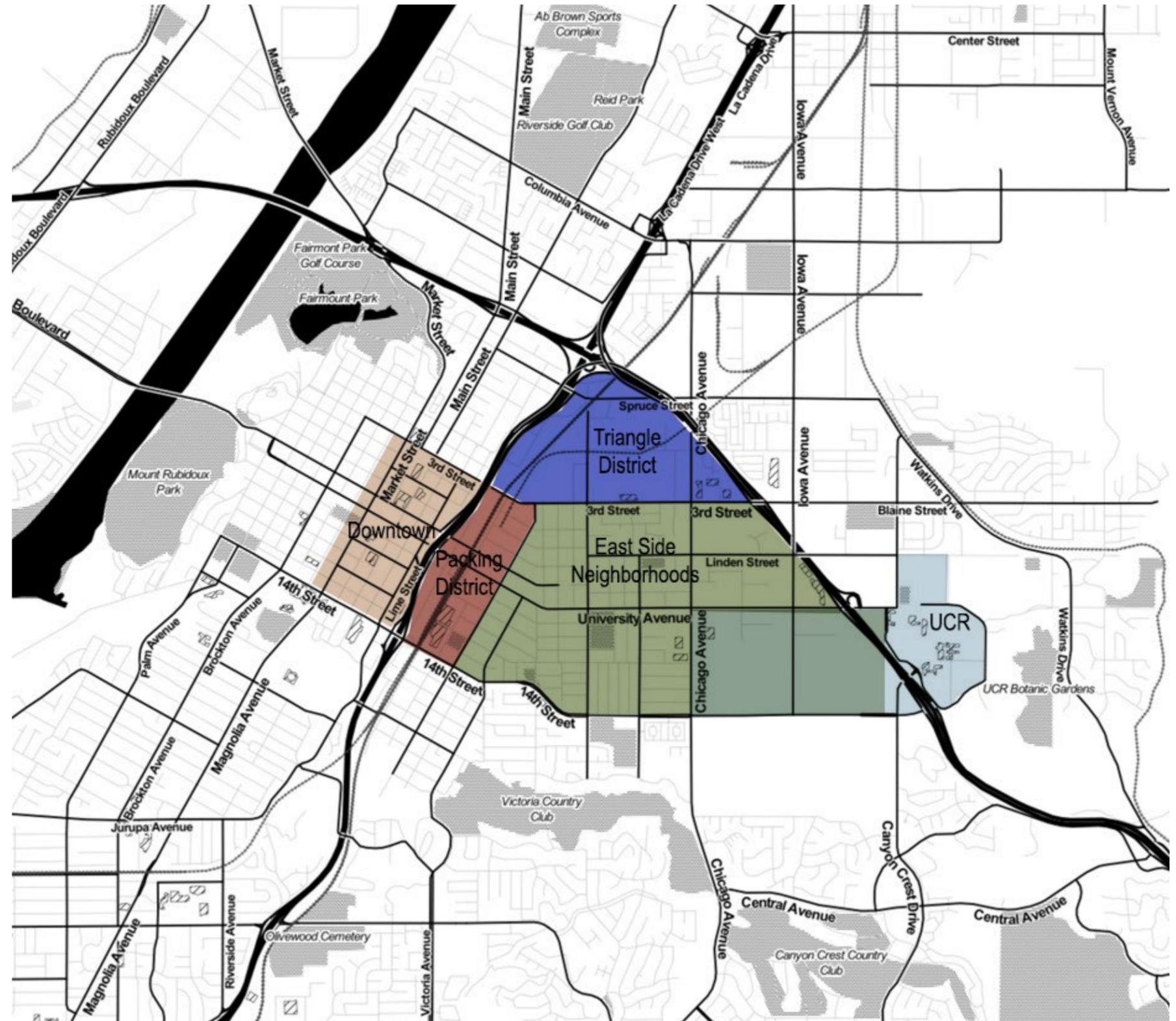
### 1.1 INTRODCUTION

The **Riverside Innovation District (RID)** is a cutting-edge initiative, linking residents and entrepreneurs with resources to grow creative new businesses in the City of Riverside. Riverside is a major location for all types of new businesses, including those owned by minority entrepreneurs and millennials. The RID will leverage the power of the growing population by promoting a mix of uses, including residential, educational, commercial, business, and open space, that results in a walkable community and encourages creative, innovative design. The California Air Resources Board headquarters, located in the RID, provides both the anchor and the synergy for future development.

With four institutions of higher learning within the City limits, and several others nearby, Riverside is already preparing students for futures in the medical field, engineering, social justice, and the arts. The RID will provide the types of jobs needed to retain those graduates, and provide training for and employment in quality technical and trade careers

New development in the RID complements and supports the historic and culturally rich East Side neighborhood. With the availability of local infrastructure and resources, businesses can grow and prosper in the RID. Eco-friendly public transportation will connect workers to high-paying jobs while also promoting and encouraging affordable and attainable housing. Residents will benefit from the diversification of housing and jobs in the RID, with affordable housing being maintained while creating opportunity for all Riversiders to participate meaningfully in a healthy economy.

Figure 1 Context Map



## 1.2 LINK WITH ENVISION RIVERSIDE 2025

The RID supports the Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan. The Vision in the Strategic Plan includes:

Riverside is a city where every person is respected and cherished, where equity is essential to community well-being, where residents support one another, and where opportunities exist for all to prosper. In Riverside, everyone comes together to help the community, economy and environment reach their fullest potential for the public good.

The RID supports the cutting threads in the Strategic Plan. **Community Trust** is realized as the public interest is served and benefits the City's diverse population. **Equity** is also supported in the RID by providing living and entrepreneurial opportunities for all residents. Riverside is being **Fiscally Responsible** by ensuring that any public funds expended in the RID will create entrepreneurial and housing opportunities. The RID provides an **Innovative** approach to new business opportunities by streamlining and providing a flexible and predictable development process. The RID will attract **Sustainable** businesses that bring Riverside the forefront as clean industries locate in the City.

## 1.3 BACKGROUND

The concept for Riverside's Innovation District began after Mayor Rusty Bailey identified it as a priority in his 2016 State of the City address. In other jurisdictions around the country — including Boston, Raleigh, North Carolina; and Oklahoma City — similar tech-driven districts, capitalizing on each location's unique strengths, had been successfully established.

From 2016 – 2017, the City held a series of community meetings. On December 19, 2017, the City Council

unanimously approved the creation of a series of Innovation Districts in Riverside to attract new investment, retain local talent, and create jobs.

## 1.4 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The RID encompasses Downtown and the geographic area between Downtown and University of California Riverside (UCR), including portions of the East Side and University Avenue neighborhoods. The City's first Innovation District includes a Metrolink station, a future multimodal transportation center, UCR, portions of Riverside Community College, Downtown civic and cultural institutions and venues, the future California Air Resources Board campus, existing and new food venues and entertainment destinations and opportunities for new investment.

The RID is home to several under-utilized former packing houses and industrial buildings with the potential to serve a variety of needs. Businesses could range from incubators/accelerators, co-working space for startup firms to established companies looking to expand or relocate. Firms that focus on research and bringing to market green transportation solutions could find ideal partnerships with the nearby UCR Center for Environmental Research & Technology and the coming California Air Resources Board campus.

Specific Opportunities and Constraints in the RID include:

1. Infrastructure – Opportunities exist to implement energy conservation programs and building design elements in new and redevelopment construction, such as 1) the use of smart grid technology; 2) the installation of solar panels; 3) energy efficient buildings design; 4) energy efficient appliances; 5) energy conservation techniques; 6) expansion of

Fiber Optic use and 7) potential for City Implemented Wireless Networks.

Constraints to development would stem from the regulatory settings governing the utility service providers within the City of Riverside and would derive from the administrative procedures employed by the providers of these infrastructure services.

2. Transportation network - Opportunities to partner with transit and rail agencies to increase the efficiency of existing transit services that provide access in/out of the District.

Constraints: Access and proximity to the freeway is a negative constraint due to both air quality and inefficient access to I-215 and SR-60.

3. UCR - The agricultural research lands adjacent to UCR provide an opportunity to retain innovative and agriculture related job generation from UCR's research and development departments.

4. Riverside City College – Additional opportunities for student housing.

Constraints include proximity to Riverside City College campus on the southern edge of the RID.

5. CARB – The district is an opportunity to attract innovative and 'green' job generation in need of proximity to CARB's research and development capabilities.

6. Downtown - The District has large - medium tracts of land available along with smaller underutilized parcels can create opportunities for infill projects, good backbone street system, vacant or underutilized parcels provide an opportunity to increase residential, commercial, retail, or business/office park development immediately adjacent to downtown.

Constraints are older industrial uses that may create environmental and clean up issues that may limit parcel assemblage and future development options.

7. Existing Neighborhoods - Potential of establishing a commercial focus or entertainment districts with specific design themes/standards can create a sense of place or destination. Main Street area along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street could serve as a gateway for East Side pedestrians, public transit, and local residences.

Constraints include disparate individual ownership of underutilized parcels, creating potential assemblage concerns, as well as unsatisfactory transitions between Residential and Industrial land uses, resulting in increased noise, traffic, and undesirable views. Residential setbacks in the East Side neighborhood are varied.

## 1.5 THE PLANNING PROCESS

### 1.5.1 Reconnaissance Tour

In 2016, the City's Community & Economic Development Department, with support from other City Departments, toured several Innovation Districts across the country. The delegation identified Oklahoma City and Memphis as providing the most relevant case studies. Key lessons learned included the value of partners and the need to engage local community in developing the vision for changes that need to take place to enable a new approach to development.

The tour also showed that Detroit's 'Pink' or 'Lean' code, provided direction on a possible regulatory approach that would enable and implement mixed-use, walkable, and transit-support districts. The Pink Zone — an area where the red tape is lightened — identified strategies and improvements that could be undertaken with new protocols that were pre-negotiated. The ultimate goal is to

remove barriers to economic development and community-building.

The Pink Zone had similarities to the Innovation Districts visited in that they spur revitalization, engage populations that have been left out of the development process, stimulate sustainable economic activity and asset-building through incubator and maker spaces, and address both physical assets and community assets. Combining both approaches allow for a creative economic development (e.g., new technologies, commercial innovation, high-growth businesses) within the Innovation District while removing regulatory barriers within a Pink Zone for start-up businesses, shared workspaces, markets, housing, retail, and other support services.

### 1.5.2 Visioning Process

On August 1, 2019, the City initiated a visioning process for the Innovation District. An initial visioning charrette, a common technique to consult with community stakeholders early in a project. Several sessions were held between August – October 2019. Attendees included the Mayor and City Councilmembers from Wards 1 & 2; representatives from UCR, Riverside Community College District; representatives from the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce; and City staff from the Community & Economic Development Department, Mayor's Office, and the City Manager's Office.

The charrette process included several intensive meetings, whereby stakeholders gathered to discuss issues, challenges, and desires of a project as well as differences, which were identified and resolved through common understanding of the issues, opportunities, and challenges from different perspectives. Ultimately, the charrette

identified a shared vision by City leaders and stakeholders in Riverside.

## 1.6 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

In developing the Vision Plan for the RID, Planning Principles that guided its preparation include:

1. **Telling the City's Innovation Story** – A clear branding of the RID will help to attract creatives, entrepreneurs, scientist, artists, residents, and academics and establish a hub of "clean and green tech" businesses. Branding, marketing, and storytelling will tell story effectively to ensure a cohesive message that unifies/unites the community while meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the Innovation District Report.
2. **Promoting the RID Neighborhoods**
  - a. The 3rd Street Industrial Area would be transformed into a walkable, mixed-use area that encourages transit-supported, high density residential through a regulatory framework that is streamlined, flexible and predictable. This area would also include housing, including both market rate and affordable.
  - b. The Historic Packing House Area would focus on transforming the structures into creative commercial, office, and clean technology enterprises for small, growing, and mid-sized companies.
  - c. The Downtown Area emphasize its existing character and identity. Downtown is well suited for additional small startups to large-scale operations in adaptively reused, existing and defined redeveloped spaces.

d. Stabilization zones include the East Side, North Main and the UCR agriculture research station with opportunities for revitalization including University Avenue, 3rd Street and Park Street.

**3. Create Design Based Land Use Regulations** - Using a design-based approach, the land use regulations would be flexible and predictable. This streamlined process will promote a mixed-use neighborhood.

**4. Promote the Opportunity Zones** - By promoting the Opportunity Zone, which encompasses the entire Innovation District, potential investors/developers will be encouraged to seek 1031-type tax shelters for their capital gains.

**5. Consider CEQA Exemptions to Facilitate Housing Development**

a. Section 15332 - Infill Development Project Exemption for infill development, less than 5-acres, provided the proposal is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning.

b. Section 15194 – Affordable Housing Exemption for affordable housing development consisting of 50 or fewer units.

c. Section 15195 – Residential Infill Exemption for residential development on parcels less than 4-acres, under 100 units and not exceeding 100,000 square feet.

**6. Focus on a Replicable Framework** – This is the first Innovation District in the City and can serve as a replicable model to create, highlight, and nurture other innovative districts, corridors and/or key places of innovation in Riverside.

**7. Place and Prosperity Focus** - Within the applicable Innovation Districts, the following broad land use categories provide investors, decision-makers, and staff with aspirational reference to interpret highly

desired activities, design, and development. These areas of focus are not absolutes but represent the spirit of desired land uses to elevate place and prosperity for Riverside, now and in the future.

A. Clean-TECH: Start-Ups, Scale-Ups, Information Industries, Schools, and Businesses That Make the World a Better Place

B. Green-TECH: Innovation Enterprises, Research & Testing Institutions, & Advanced Manufacturing That Improve the Environment

C. Care-TECH: Benefit Corporations (B Corp), Entrepreneurial Ventures, NGOs, and Wellness Centers That Contribute to Betterment of People

D. Cultural-TECH: Museums, Art Centers, Cooperatives, Ethnic Enterprises, Schools, and Faith-Based Institutions That Represent and Reinforce Riverside’s Authenticity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness

E. Home-TECH: Housing of All Kinds for All People and Integrated within a Human-Centered, Mixed Use Urban Fabric That Reinforces Connectivity Between Riverside Residents.

F. Place-TECH: Public Spaces, Meet-Up Spots, Third Places, Community Building Locales, Civic Uses, Mixed Uses, Outdoor Markets, and the Like that Connect People to People, People to Place, and People to Economy.

Figure 2 - RID Vision Plan

## City of Riverside Innovation District

**ANCHORS OF INNOVATION**

- Downtown Infill
- Packing District Adaptive Reuse
- Freestyle Zone Inno-District
- University of California Riverside
- Riverside Community College
- CARB Headquarters
- STEM School

**N. Main Street Before**

**N. Main Street After**

**Corridor Connections**

- Metrolink Station
- University Avenue Nodes
- North Main Street Nodes
- 3rd Street Corridor
- Park Avenue
- Chicago Street

**CORBOR CONNECTIONS**

- Metrolink Station
- University Avenue Nodes
- North Main Street Nodes
- 3rd Street Corridor
- Park Avenue
- Chicago Street

**ARTS & INNOVATION**

- Culinary Institute
- Riverside Food Lab
- Cheech Museum
- Civil Rights Institute
- International House
- Riverside Alive
- Fox Theater
- Mission Inn

**Metrolink Station Area**

**NEIGHBORHOOD SPACES & PLACES**

- Bobby Bonds Park
- Lincoln Park
- Artist-in-Residence

**Park Ave. Before**

**Park Ave. After**

**RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE**

**Packing House Row**

**University Avenue**

## 2.0 THE TRIANGLE DISTRICT

The City of Riverside Innovation District Master Plan (Master Plan) provides a strategic policy for a specific geographical place within the RID. The area is generally bounded by SR 91, SR 60, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (Triangle). The scale and intensity of this 220-acres area will cultivate an ‘ecosystem’ that grows innovation and creativity that competes economically from the local to national scales while respecting the neighboring local lifestyle and expectations.

The Master Plan sets out the vision for the Triangle for a location to house technology-based jobs and work, Research & Development, education, the arts, housing, and transportation alternatives. The critical mass of uses will support each other and provide a location in Riverside to live, work, learn, teach, and play. The Triangle is designed for scientist, creatives, teachers, residents, artists, employees, entrepreneurs, and students, to name a few, to live, work, learn, teach, and play.

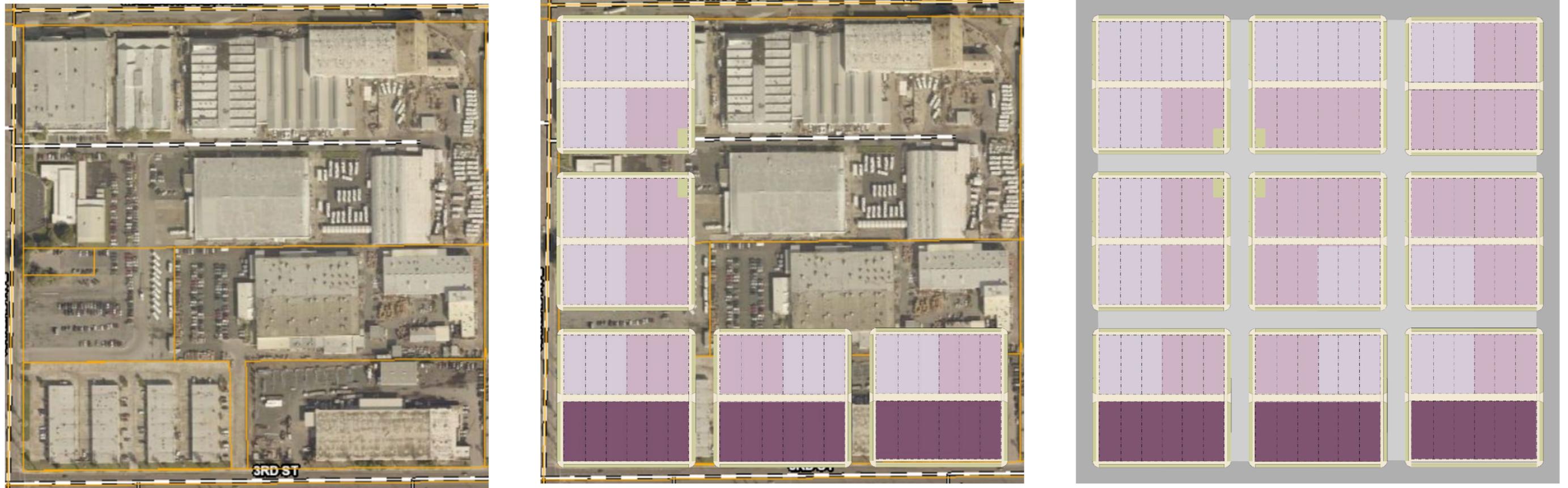
The economic infrastructure and governance of the City, infused with the resources of local champions, entrepreneurs, and civic leadership, will thrive. The RID vision, regulations and management structure will build a creative alternative to the conventional Class A Business Park model by creating interest and complexity for a future vision of Riverside’s economy.

Housing would also be focused in this area to help the City meet its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) obligations that includes a minimum 18,458 units. Combined with the possible inclusionary housing policy, both market rate and affordable housing could be realized in the Triangle.

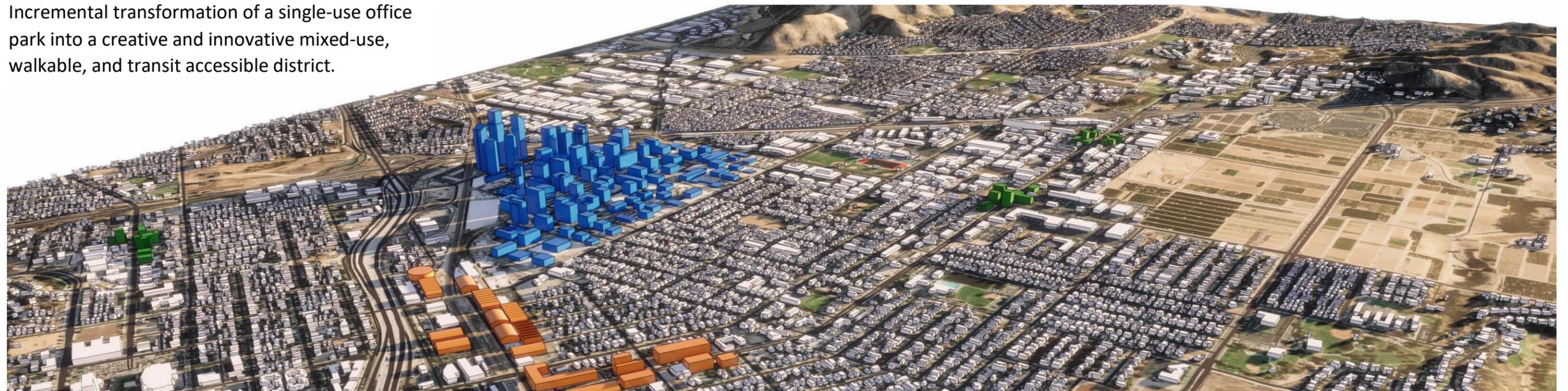
Figure 3 – Triangle Context Map



Figure 4 – RID Triangle Concept



Incremental transformation of a single-use office park into a creative and innovative mixed-use, walkable, and transit accessible district.



## 2.1 MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

### A. Regulatory Approach

In March 2020, the City initiated a process to develop a Land Use Regulation Framework for the Triangle portion of the RID. By removing regulatory barriers, the City is meeting the goals of the RID Vision Plan. This approach will allow for creativity and flexibility for the development community as they design their sites. Establishing a predictable, streamlined entitlement process was also essential in moving forward with an Overlay Zone.

The City's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element rezoning program, being completed at the same time as the Land Use Regulation Framework was being developed, allowed the City to initiate the regulatory changes. Title 19 has been updated with the RID Overlay Zone and the applicable standards. At the same time, the City is undertaking a Streetcar Feasibility Study and the regulatory framework supports this mobility option if it comes to fruition in the City.

### B. Master Plan Development Process

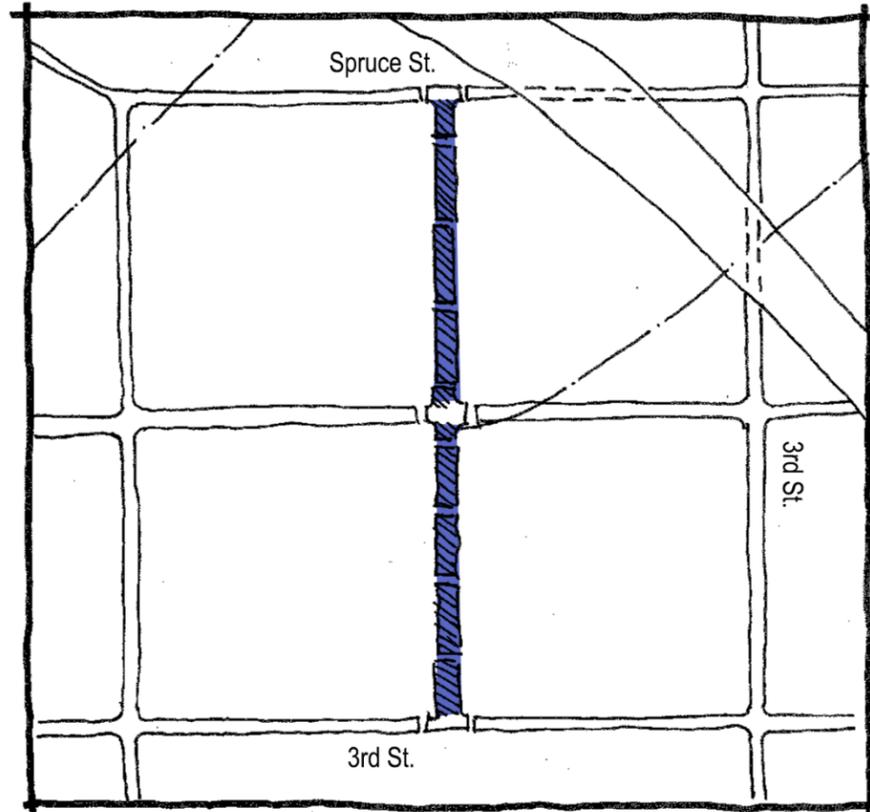
The steps completed to develop the Triangle Master Plan include:

1. Identify the main **existing public street intersections** as the District's thoroughfare framework (Chicago and Kansas Avenue are north/south at Massachusetts Avenue, Spruce Street, and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, which are east/west).



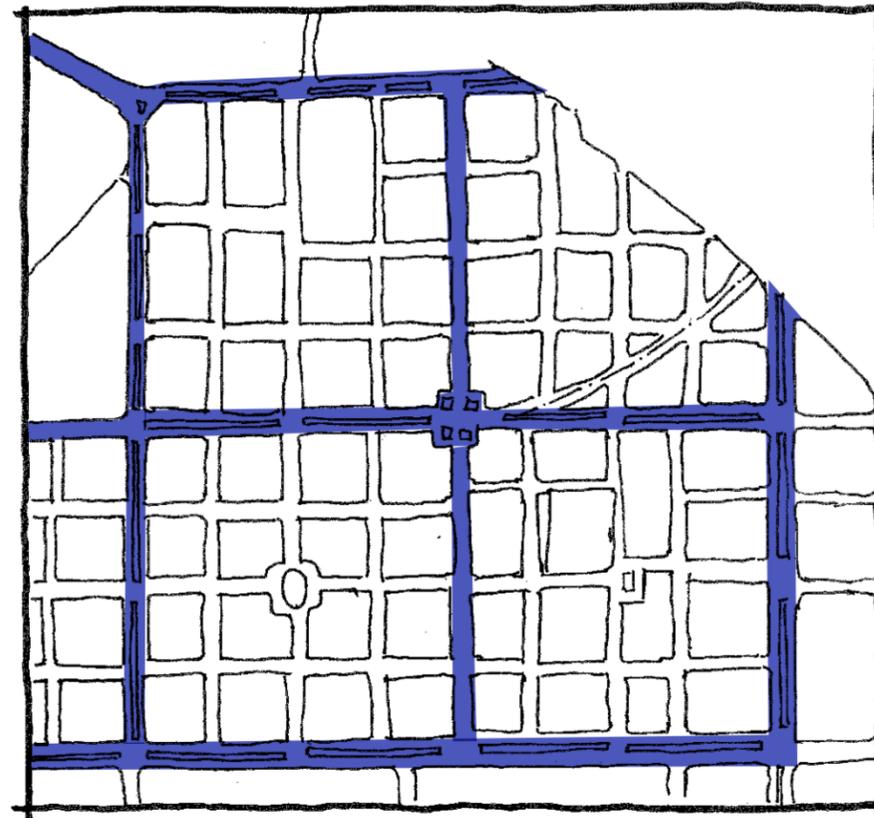
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2. Consider an **additional north-south oriented right-of-way** for one (1) additional new main public street equidistance between Chicago and Kansas and Massachusetts and Spruce and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

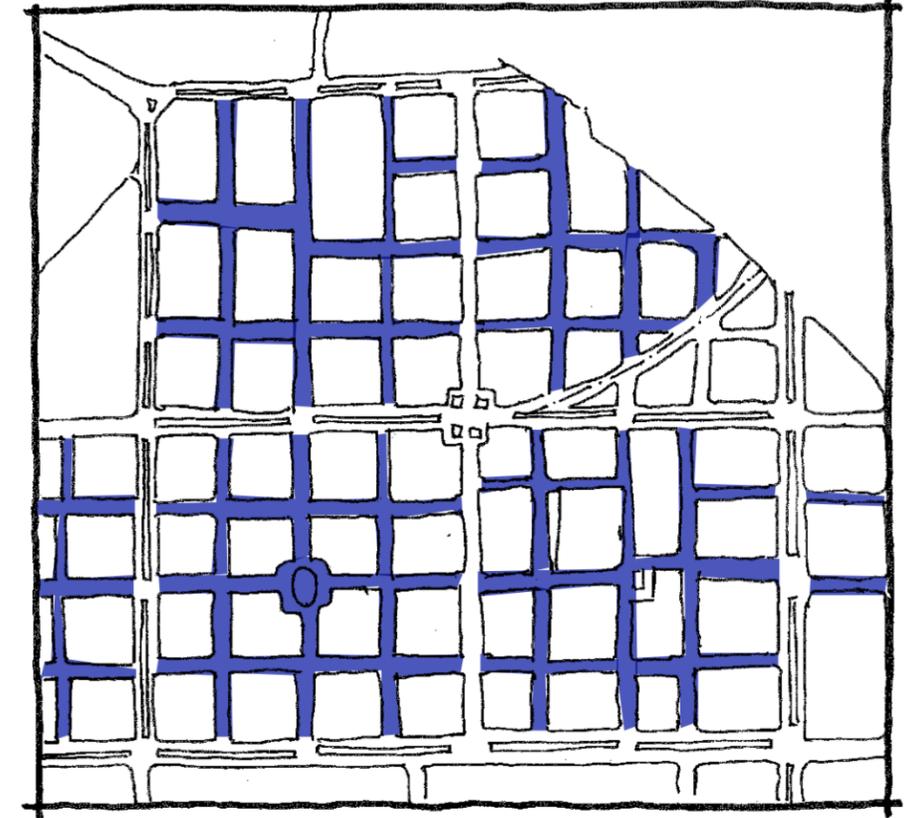


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3. Assign the original existing and new main streets with an **"A - Street" designation**, applying the appropriate Public Street Standard.

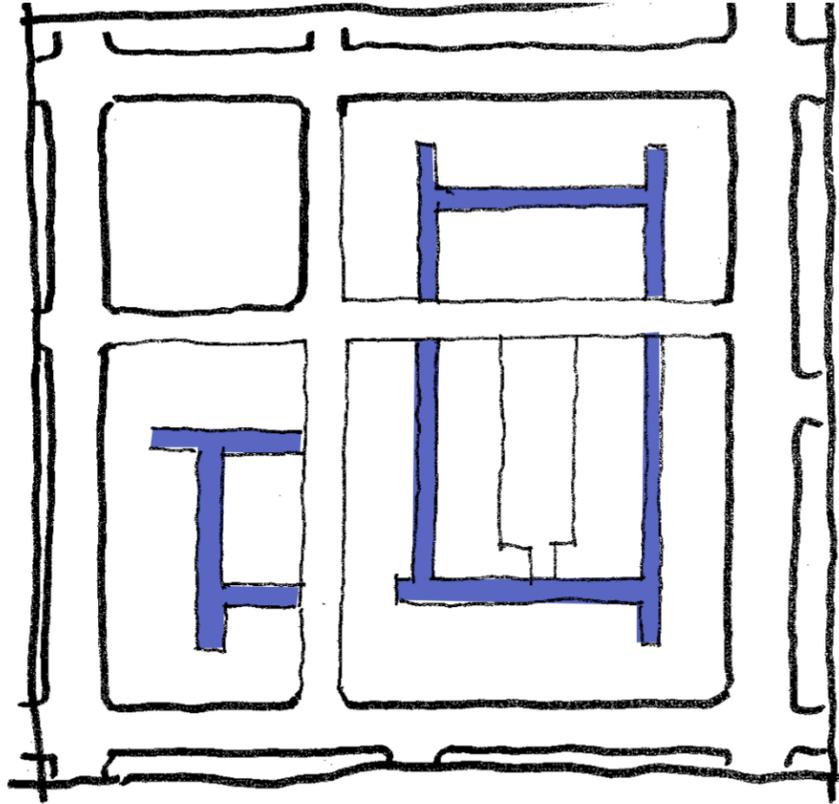


4. Assign the new, private, perpendicular streets/lanes a **"B - Street" designation**, applying the appropriate Private Street Standard.

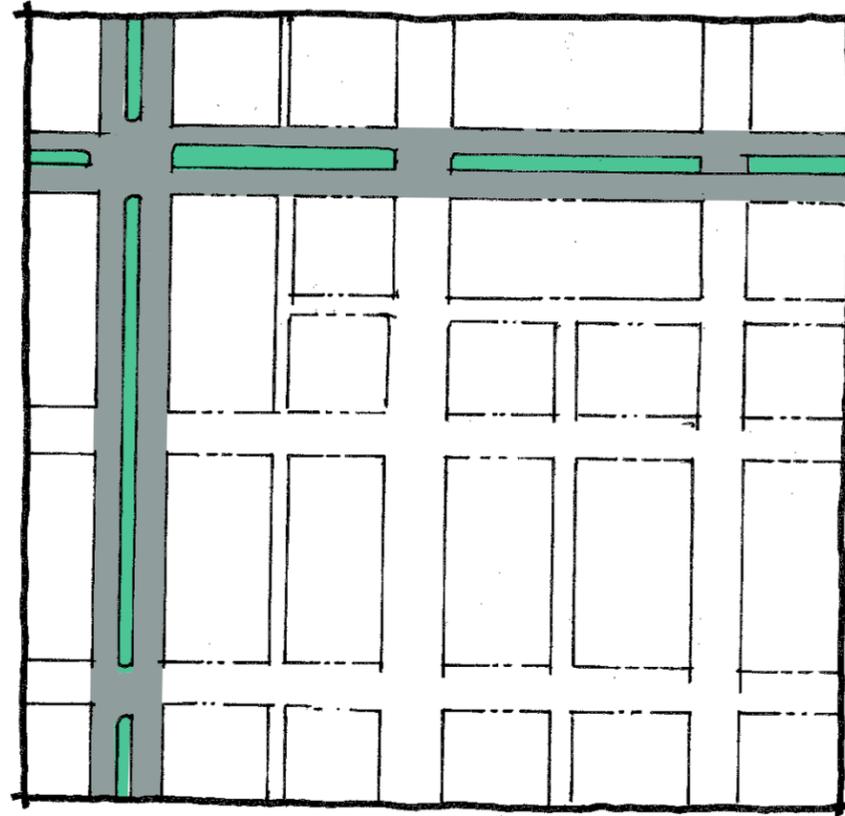


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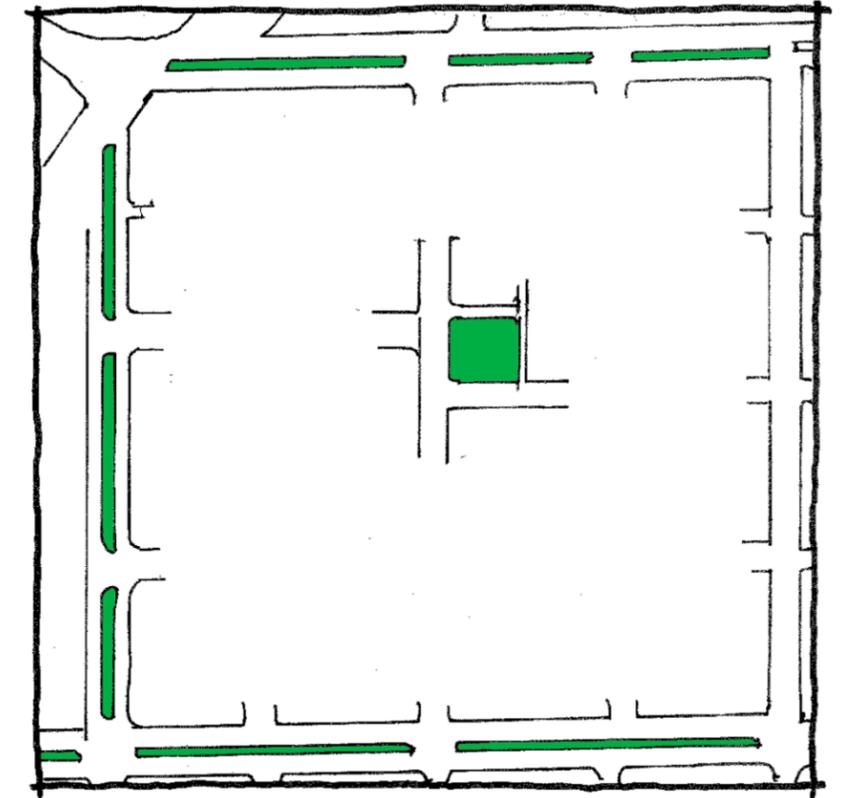
5. Assign the interior private, access alleys and as “C - Lane” designations.



6. Encourage and incentivize a **wider width on the A - Streets and B - Streets** to enhance walkability.

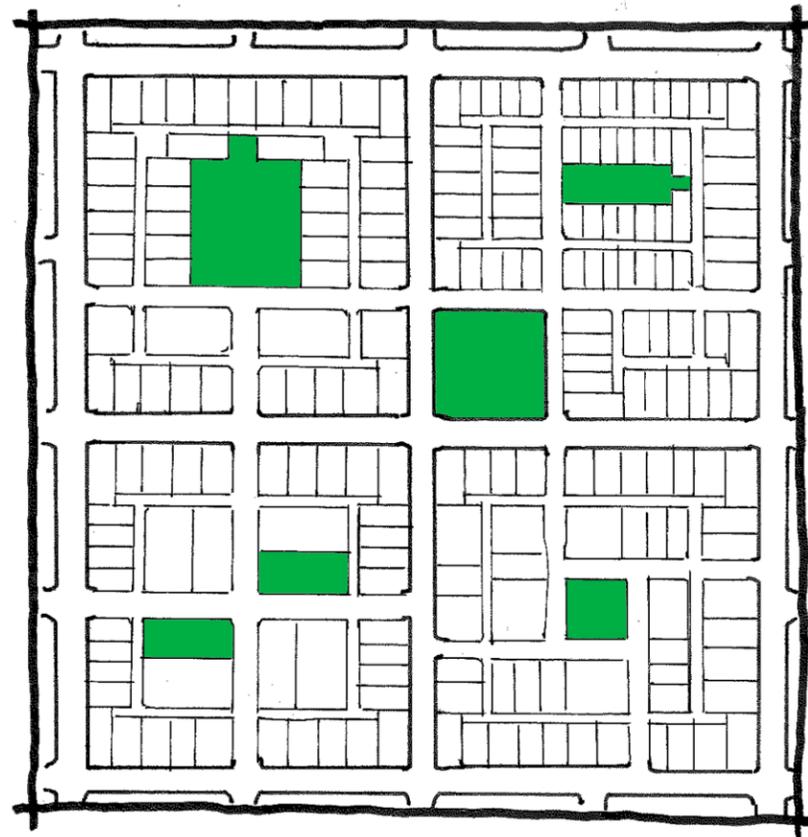


7. Link **plazas and squares** – visually and physically -that are framed by private building edges and accented by public building within the public space hubs

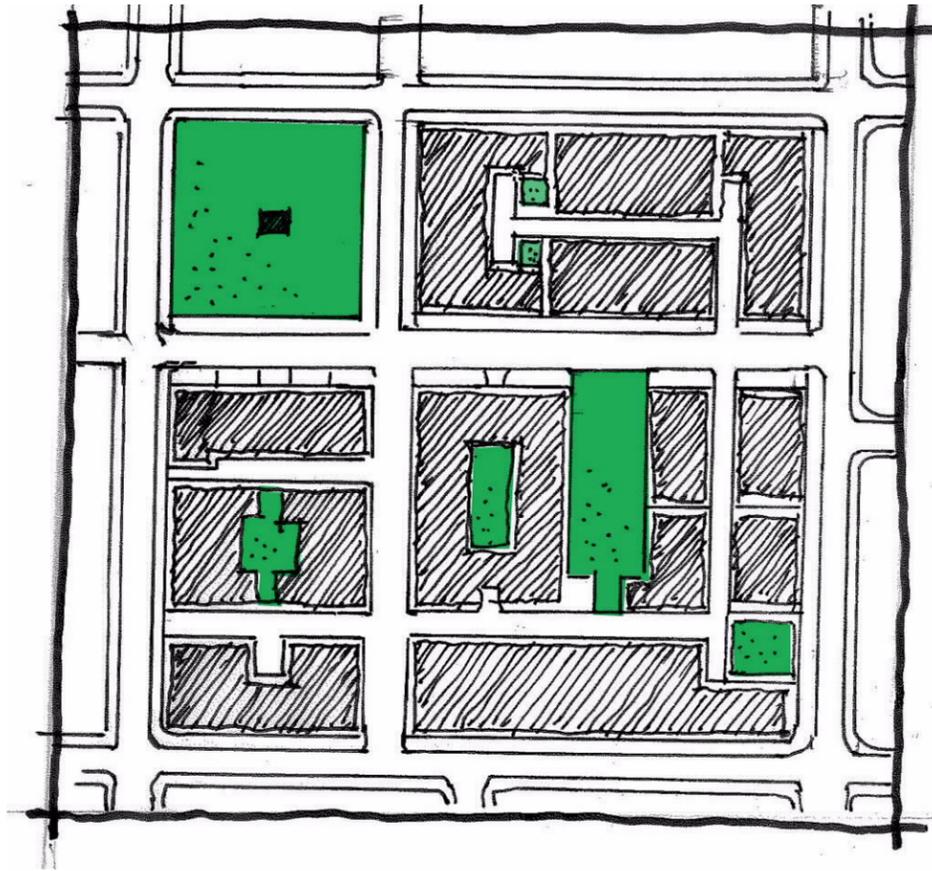


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8. **Encourage and incentivize narrower B - Streets and C - Lanes** to enhance walkability on the A and B Streets, by widening interior courtyards with building edges providing a pedestrian forming an urban passageway into an interior courtyard.



9. **Create natural internal courtyards** bounded by A - and B - Streets where the C - Lanes that create interior courtyards and hubs.



10. **Results in a series of squares, plazas, and courtyard hubs** relatively short links between them.

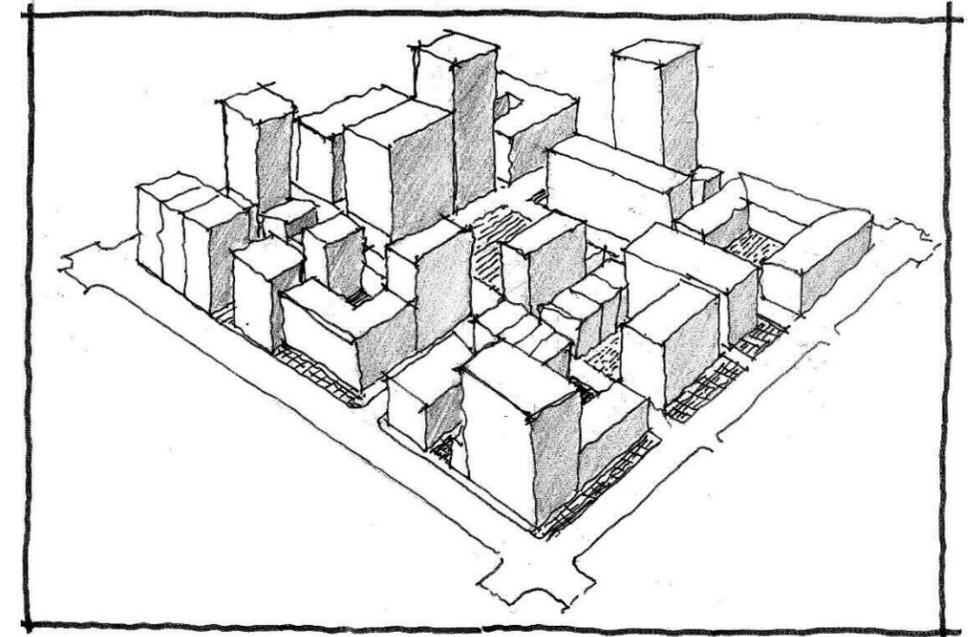
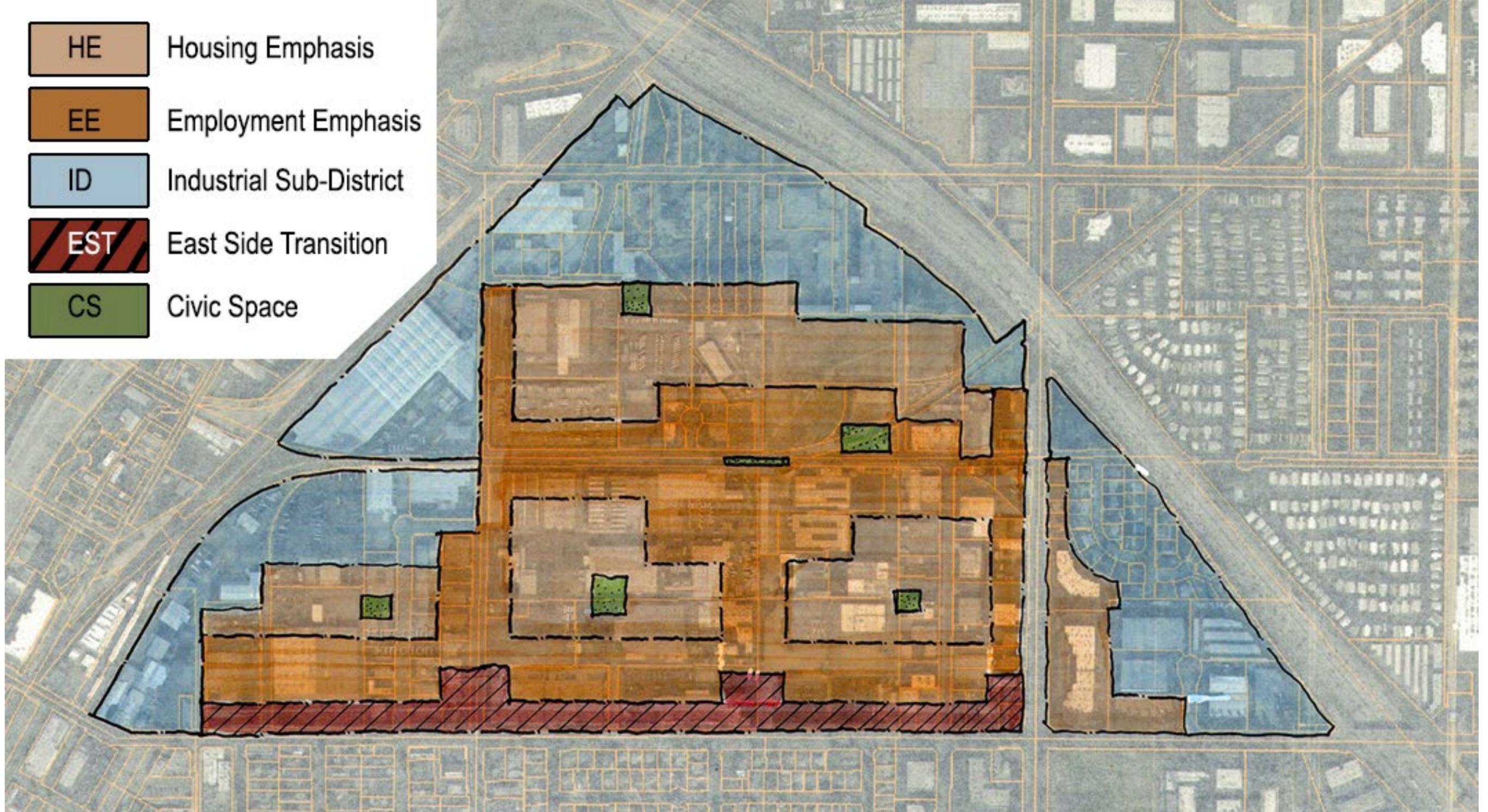


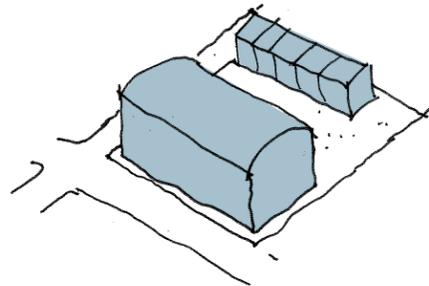
Figure 5 – RID Triangle Sub-Districts



**2.2 TRIANGLE EMPHASIS AREAS BUILD OUT**

Based on land use calculations, subdivision patterns, street and park types and processes, the build-out calculated per each Emphasis area.

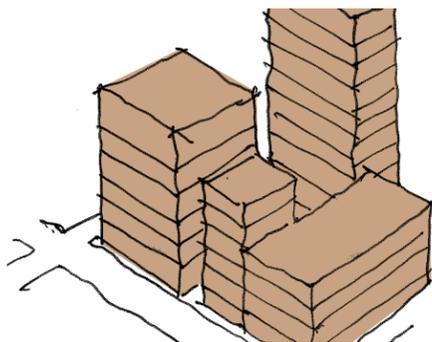
Industrial Emphasis Sub District encourages a wide range of industrial, office, and commercial uses that may be integrated vertically and/or horizontally. While predominant a mix of light industrial and/or office uses, other standalone uses, such as transportation services and energy-generation facilities.



**Industrial Emphasis**

0 du/acres 2.0 FAR

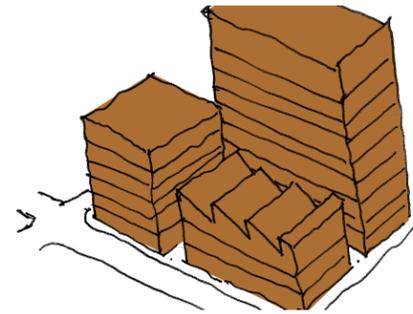
Housing Emphasis Sub District accommodates primarily residential housing development supported by ground-floor active commercial uses, live work opportunities, and less intensity of professional office and light industrial uses.



**Housing Emphasis**

150 du/ac 5.0 FAR  
 300' x 300' = 90,000 sf Full Block  
 200 units (800 sf) 160k sf/1.7 FAR  
 300,000 sf Office/Manufacturing

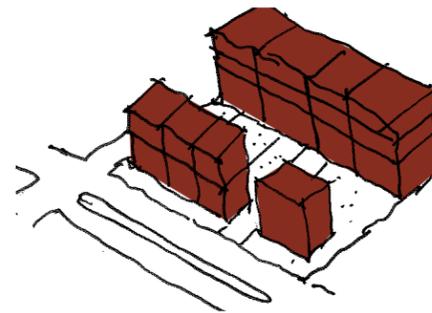
Employment Emphasis Sub District promotes high-intensity office, industrial, and hospitality and employment centers of regional importance uses, and less-intensity of residential housing.



**Employment Emphasis**

100 du/ac 6.0 FAR  
 300' x 300' = 90,000 sf Full Block  
 200 units (800 sf) 160k sf/1.7 FAR  
 300,000 sf Office/Manufacturing (4.3 FAR Employment)

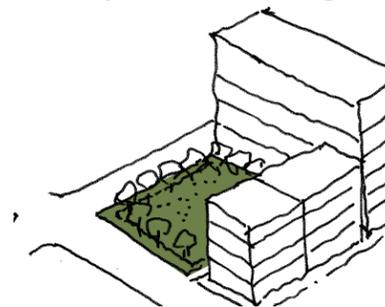
East Side Transition Sub District accommodates mid to low-rise buildings with a diverse array of uses, including residential, commercial services and office, to integrate more seamlessly with the Eastside Neighborhood.



**East Side Transition**

60 du/ac 1.5 FAR 55' Height Limit  
 300' x 150' = 45,000 sf Half Block  
 62 units (1,000 sf) 62k sf/ 1.4 FAR  
 27,000 sf Retail / 0.6 FAR

Civic Spaces includes greens, squares, and plazas



**Civic Space – Min. Area per Type**

Greens – min. 2 acres  
 Squares – min. 1 acre  
 Plazas – min. 0.5 acre  
 Paseos – min. 0.25 acre

## 3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The following table provides a framework to implement the entire RID and, specifically, the Triangle:

No.	Action	Application	Responsibility
1	Appoint a Brown-act Advisory Board of representatives of the neighborhood, businesses, other stakeholders, and City staff to study both a governance structure of the RID and, the potential for a separate structure for the Triangle	RID Triangle	City Council
2	Develop an Advisory Board workplan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage the public on the governance structure process</li> <li>Establish a “front door”, managed, and operated by a private entity, to help start-ups, scale-ups, entrepreneurs, and small businesses engage in the City’s innovation ecosystem.</li> <li>Identify operations and management options for a governing board</li> <li>Identify public/private partnerships that can be leveraged.</li> <li>Identify the number of governing boards that best implement the vision</li> <li>Develop an innovation “focus” where Riverside positions itself as the clean air and green technology leader of the Inland Empire</li> <li>Identify options for the governing board that could include: a non-profit, Business- or Property-based Improvement District (BID or PBID), former Economic Development Corporation or some other mechanism</li> <li>Identify timeframe for the governing structure</li> <li>Prepare Recommendations</li> </ul>	RID	Advisory Board
3	Create Governing Board(s) to meet regularly with the Advisory Board	RID Triangle	TBD Based on recommendations of Advisory Board
4	Study the potential of establishing a tax-increment financing mechanism to fund infrastructure and community services		
5	Prepare streamlined and flexible regulations for the entire RID.	RID	Governing Board Planning Division
6	1% for Art and Other Public Benefit. Per development agreement.	RID	Planning Division