

MassAve*Next*

Advisory Council Meeting #3

September 17th, 2026



...what's **next?**

A word from Mass Ave Cultural Arts District



The Mass Ave Cultural Arts District is a 501(c)3 nonprofit public benefit corporation. It is an engaged community of neighborhoods, businesses and cultural venues. We celebrate the authenticity of our history, heritage, and environment in the NE Quad of downtown Indianapolis.

Intro + Outline

1

Intro + Where We Are in Process (5 Min)

Discovery is complete — Opportunity I.D. is finishing

2

Engagement Recap (10 Min)

What we've heard related to each place framework

3

Framework Rationale (1 hr)

What are we missing?

4

Roundtable Discussion (30 hr)

Some ideas, your thoughts on them

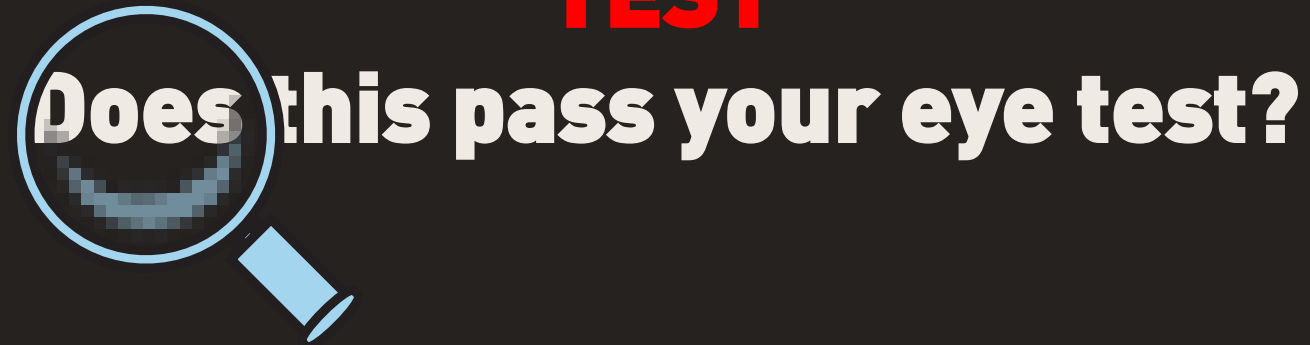


**8 months into a
12-month plan**

*Final report:
Dec 2026*

Keep an eye out!

TEST

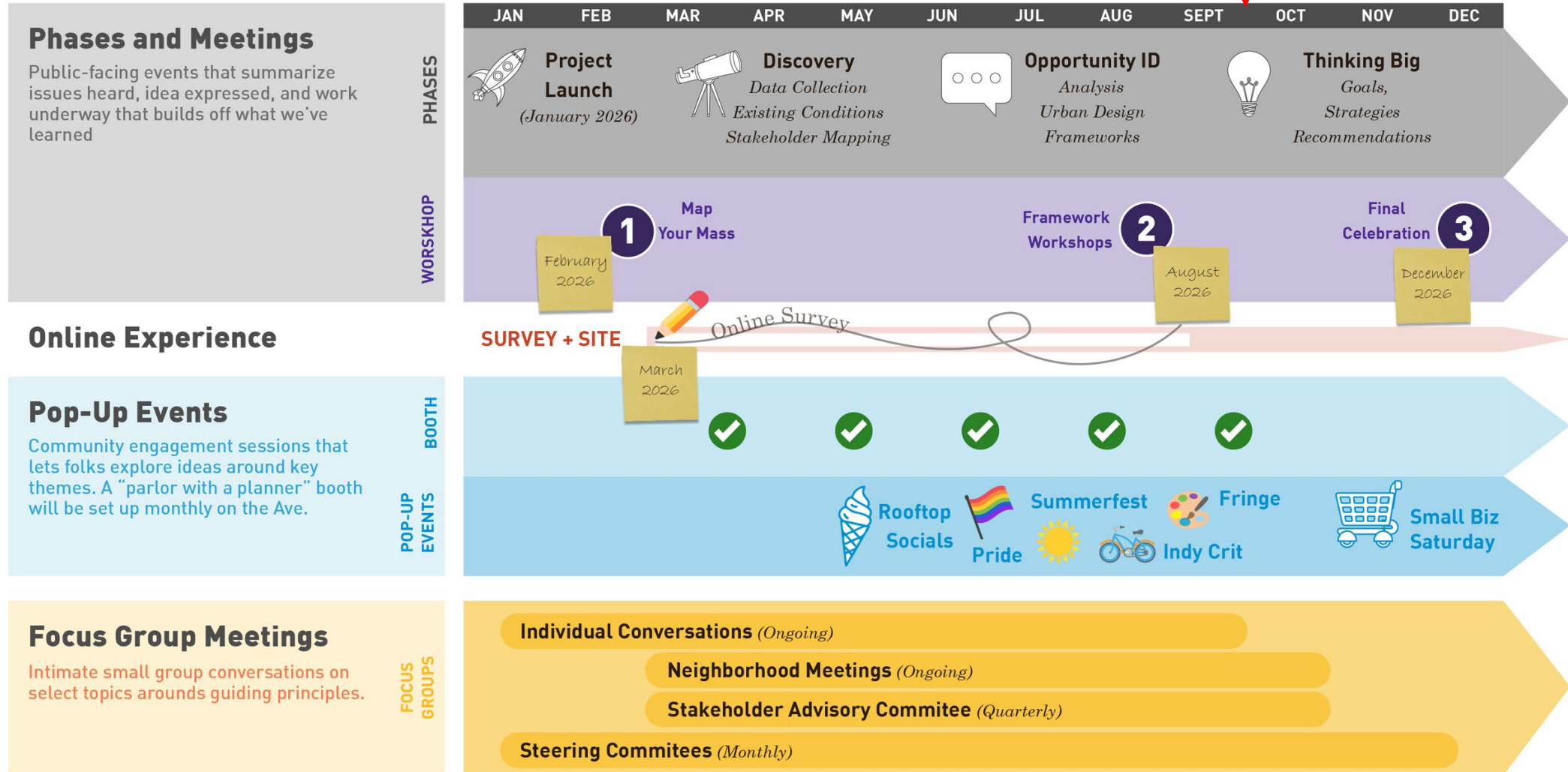


Study Area

Mass Ave Cultural Arts District

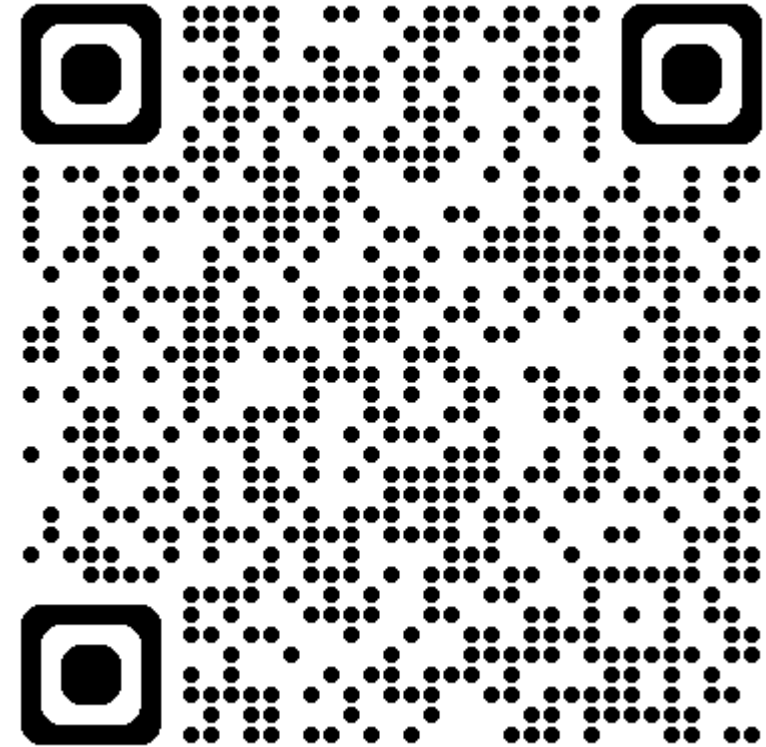


Where We've Been



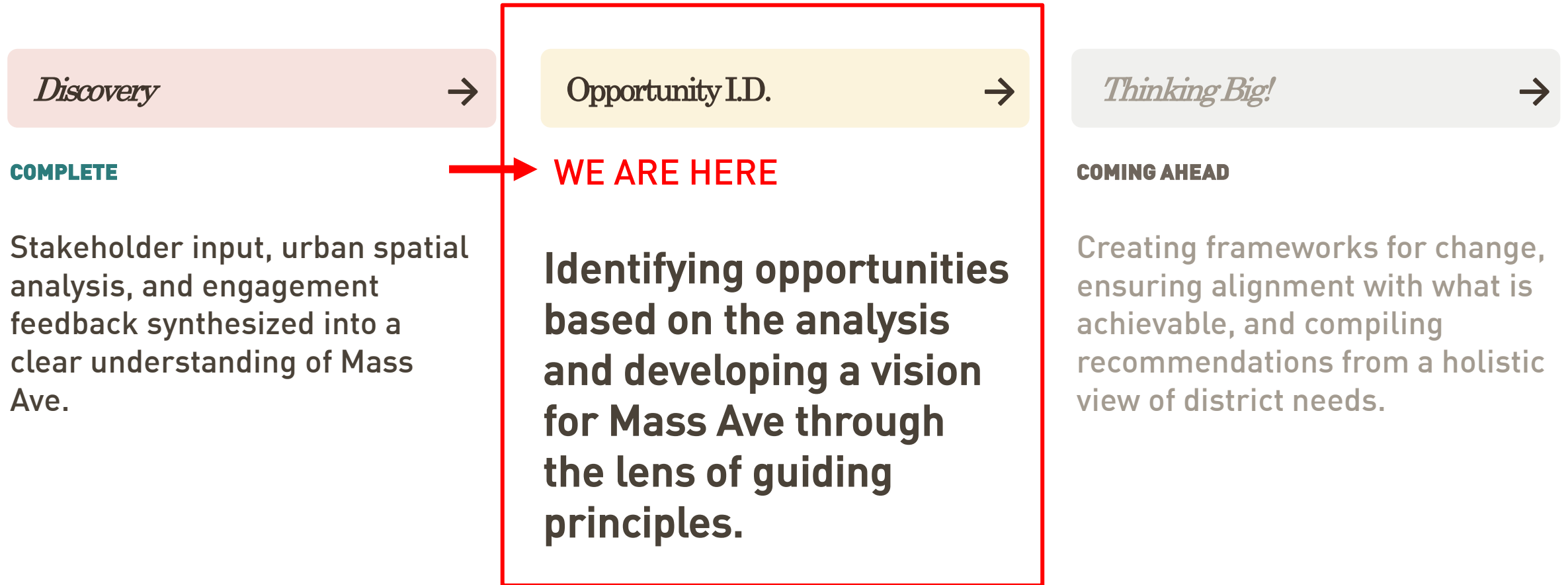
Map-Based survey

Give us your feedback!



Strategic Framework

Where We Are in the Process



Engagement by the Numbers *February–September 2026*



Who We Heard From, and What They Gave Us — Discovery through Opportunity Identification

200+

COMMENTS PINNED AT THE KICKOFF
Map Your Mass, Feb 21 — sorted
into the six guiding principles

110

PHASE I SURVEY RESPONSES
Community Vision Survey — 110
written comments, 176 one-word
answers

30+

STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS
One-on-ones with owners,
operators, cultural organizations
and residents

22

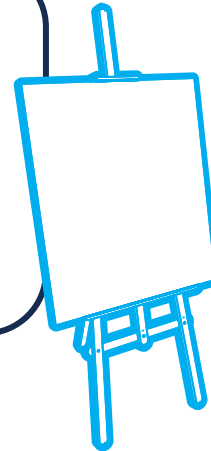
POP-UP TOUCHPOINTS
Think Inside the Box parklet build
and Coffee with a Planner

124

MAPTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS
Show Us map survey, Aug 5 – Sep
13 — seven map questions

698

PINS DROPPED ON THE DISTRICT
472 of them with a written
comment attached



**More than 900
comments, pins and
survey responses
are on the record**

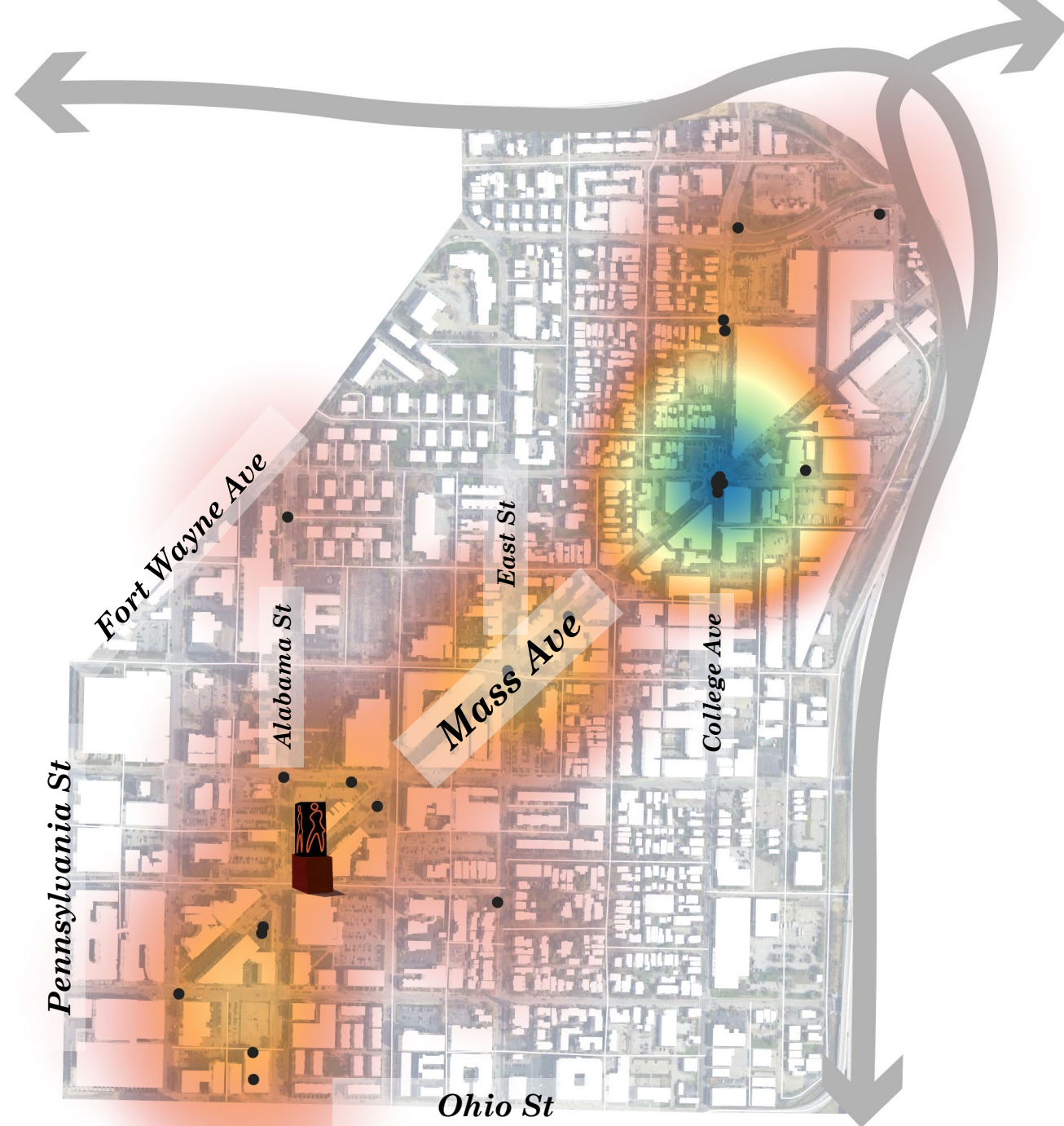
Where the District Should Change?

**The Marathon,
Roberts Park, and
Salvation Army
area garnered
most attention for
change.**

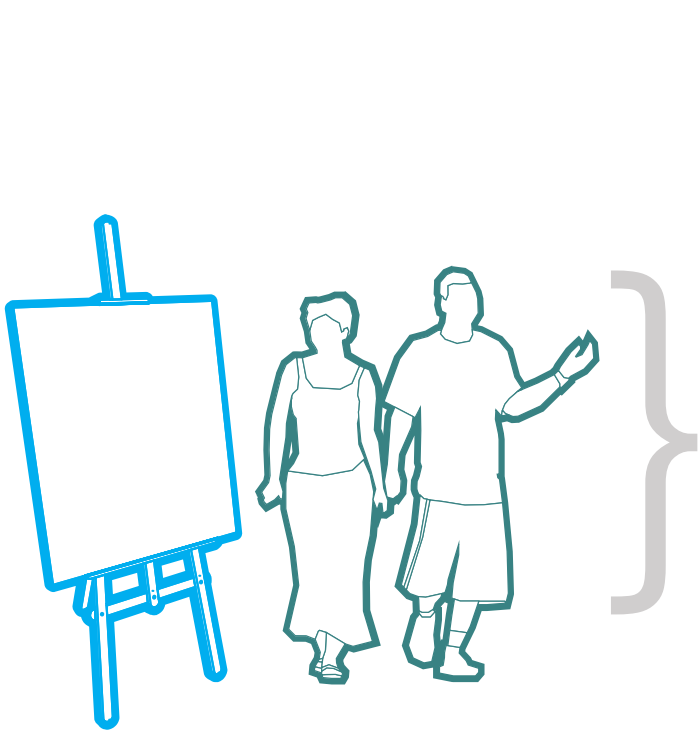


Where You Would Like to See Improvements?

The six-way intersections and the southern end of the Ave garnered attention, with College/Mass intersection getting the most.



Guiding Principles



Engagement

Guiding Principles

Place Frameworks

Any questions on engagement to date?

What is a place framework?

An urban design framework organizes key challenges into actionable scenarios and strategies guided by a unifying idea (e.g. “Land use” or “Arts, Culture, and Experience”)

Place Frameworks

How the Themes Become Specific

Land Use (places)

The built environment where people dwell, live, or work. How land value can be shaped by investment.



Open Space (spaces)

Parks, recreational opportunities, places to sit, places to linger or play



Connections (the space between)

Intersections, trails, links, and making movement through the district as good as the destination.



Arts + Culture (experience)

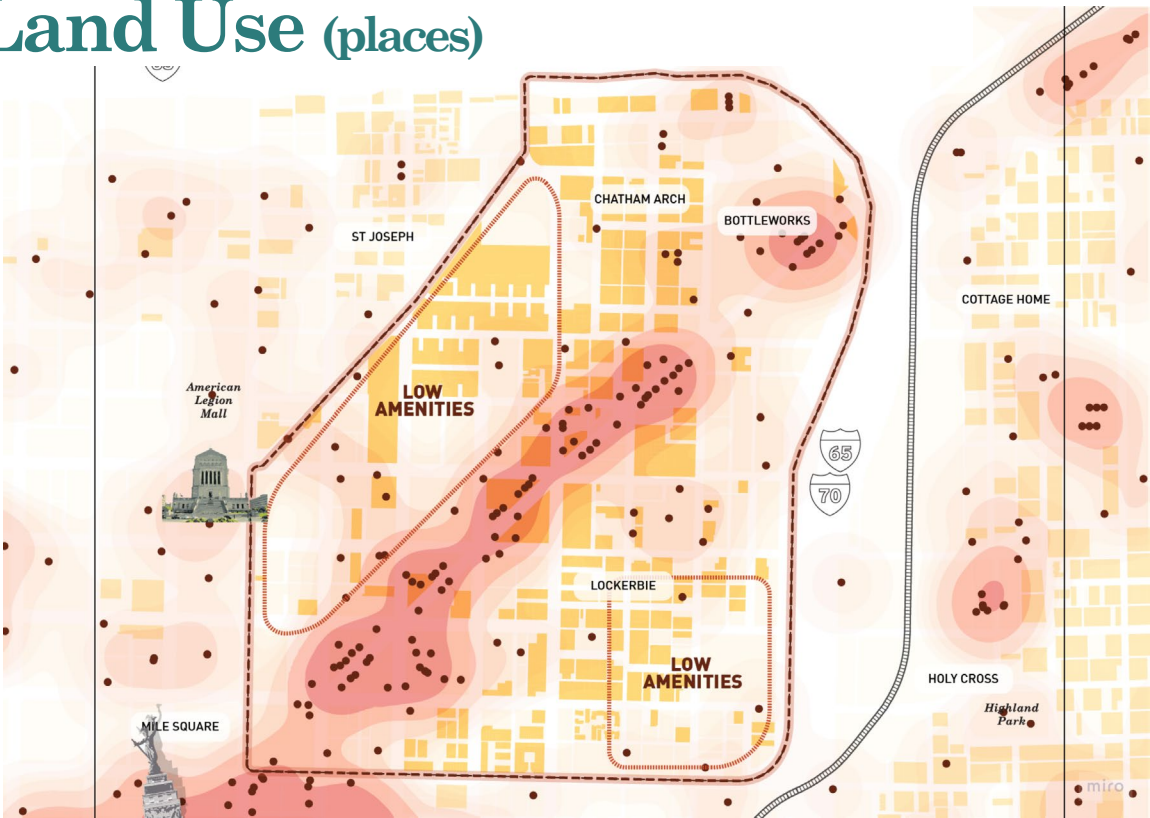
Understanding the existing experience, where activity occurs and where future opportunity lay for improving the arts and culture economy



Place Frameworks

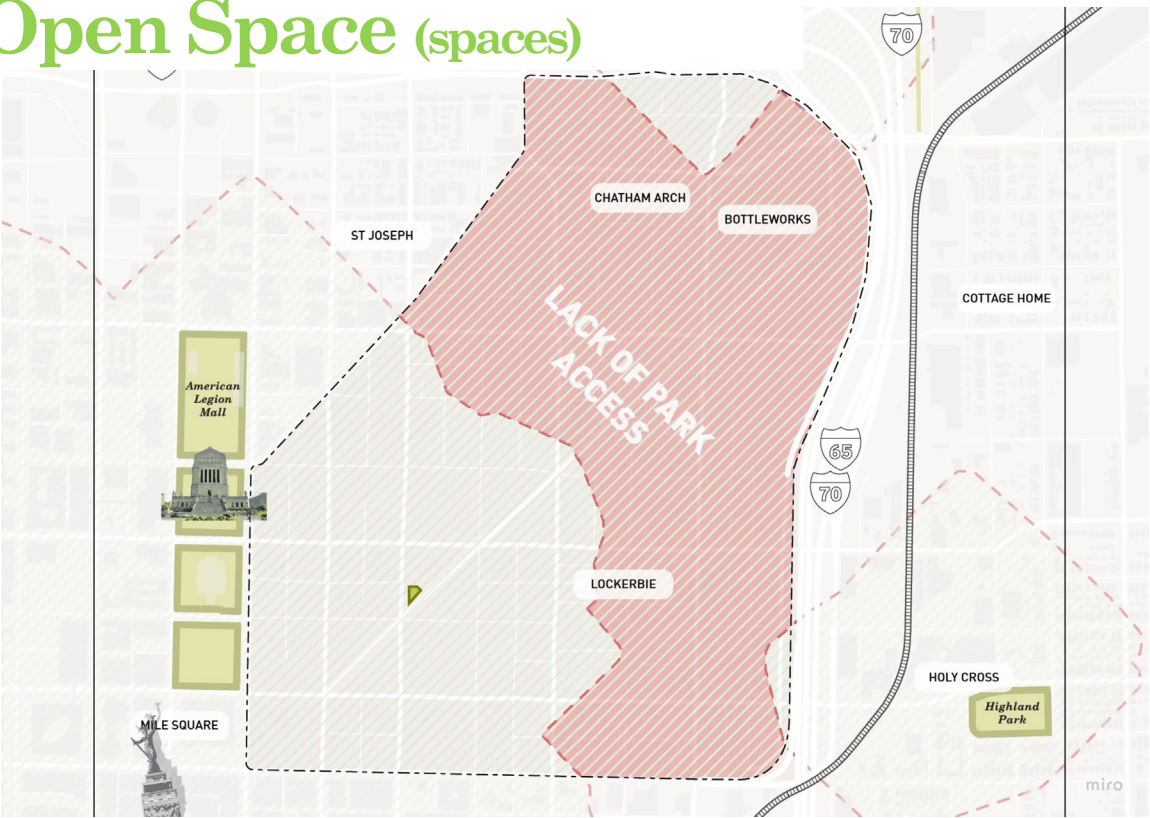
How the Themes Become Specific

Land Use (places)



Inconsistent Investment >>> Activate Market

Open Space (spaces)

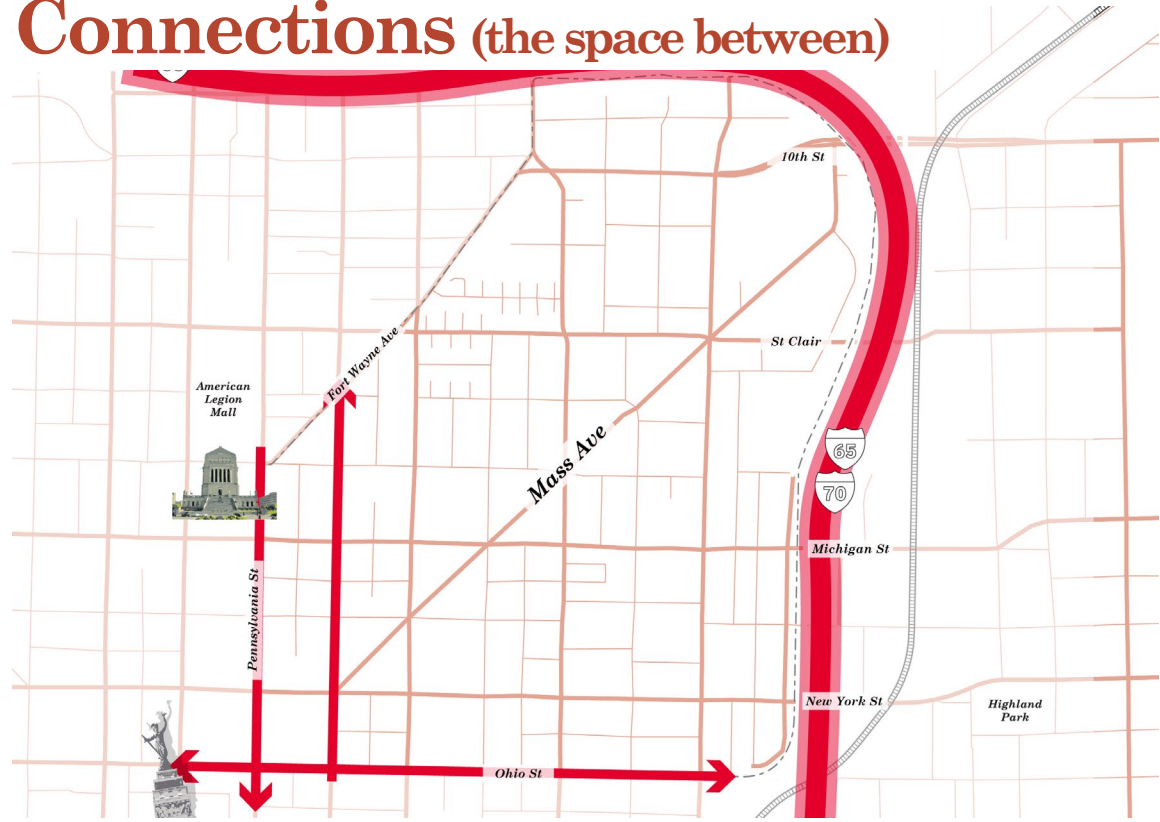


Lack of Recreation >>> Create Play

Place Frameworks

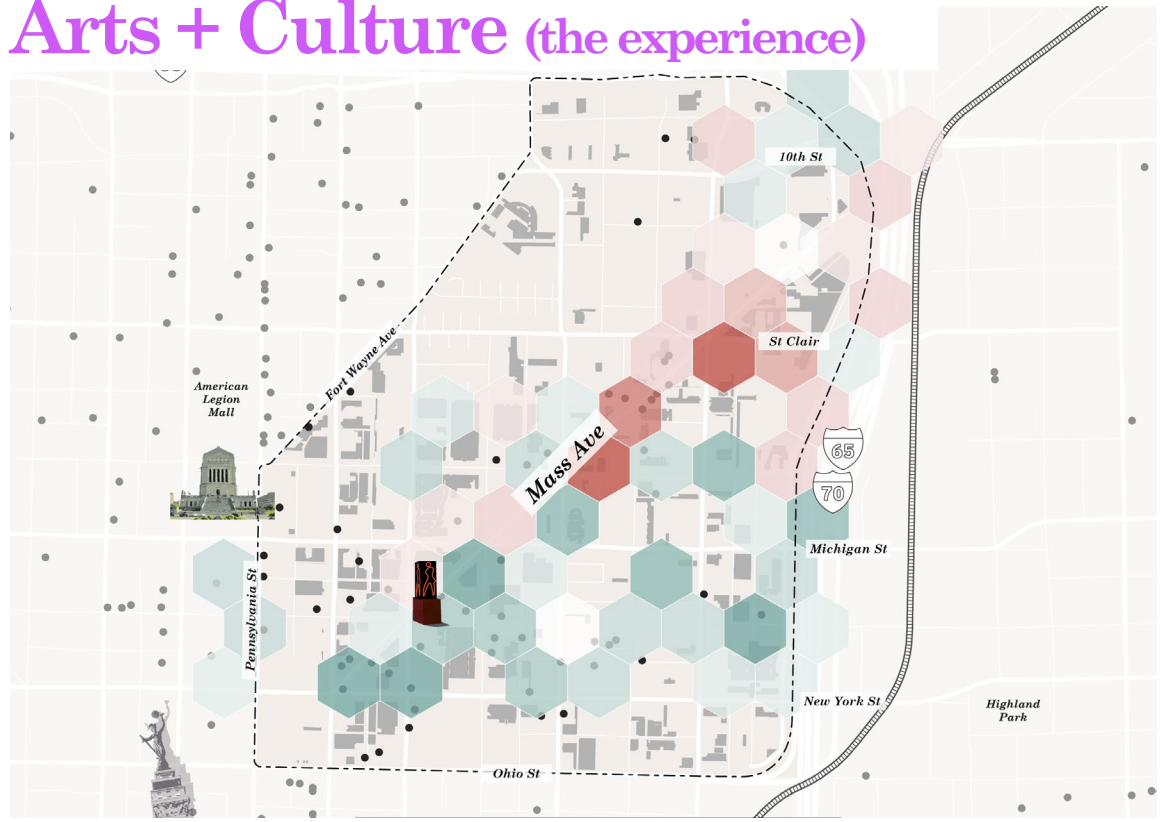
How the Themes Become Specific

Connections (the space between)



Barriers to Connect >>> Better Connection

Arts + Culture (the experience)



Experience ≠ Brand >>> Develop Public Realm

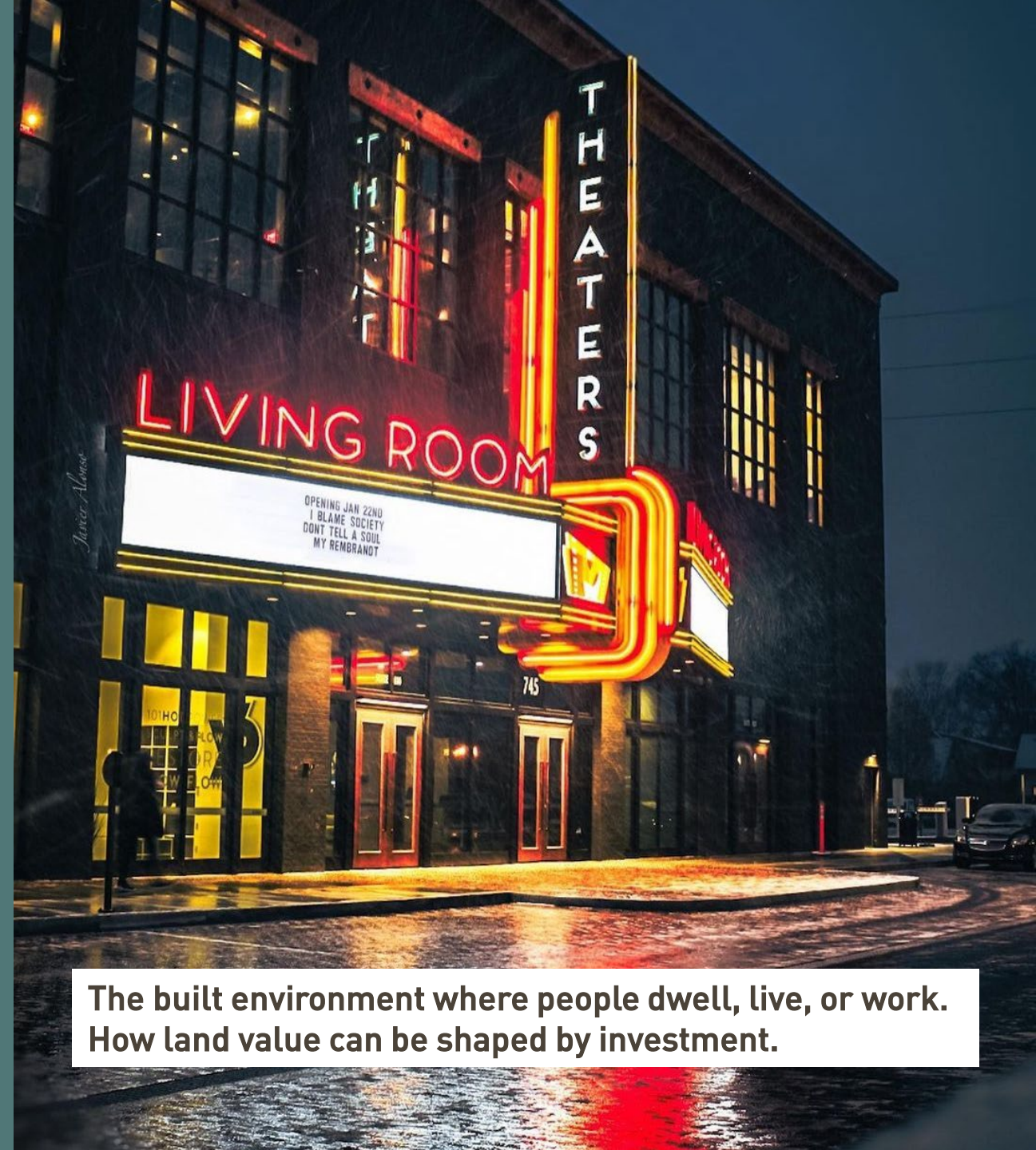
Place Frameworks

► *Land Use*

Open Space

Connectivity

Arts + Culture

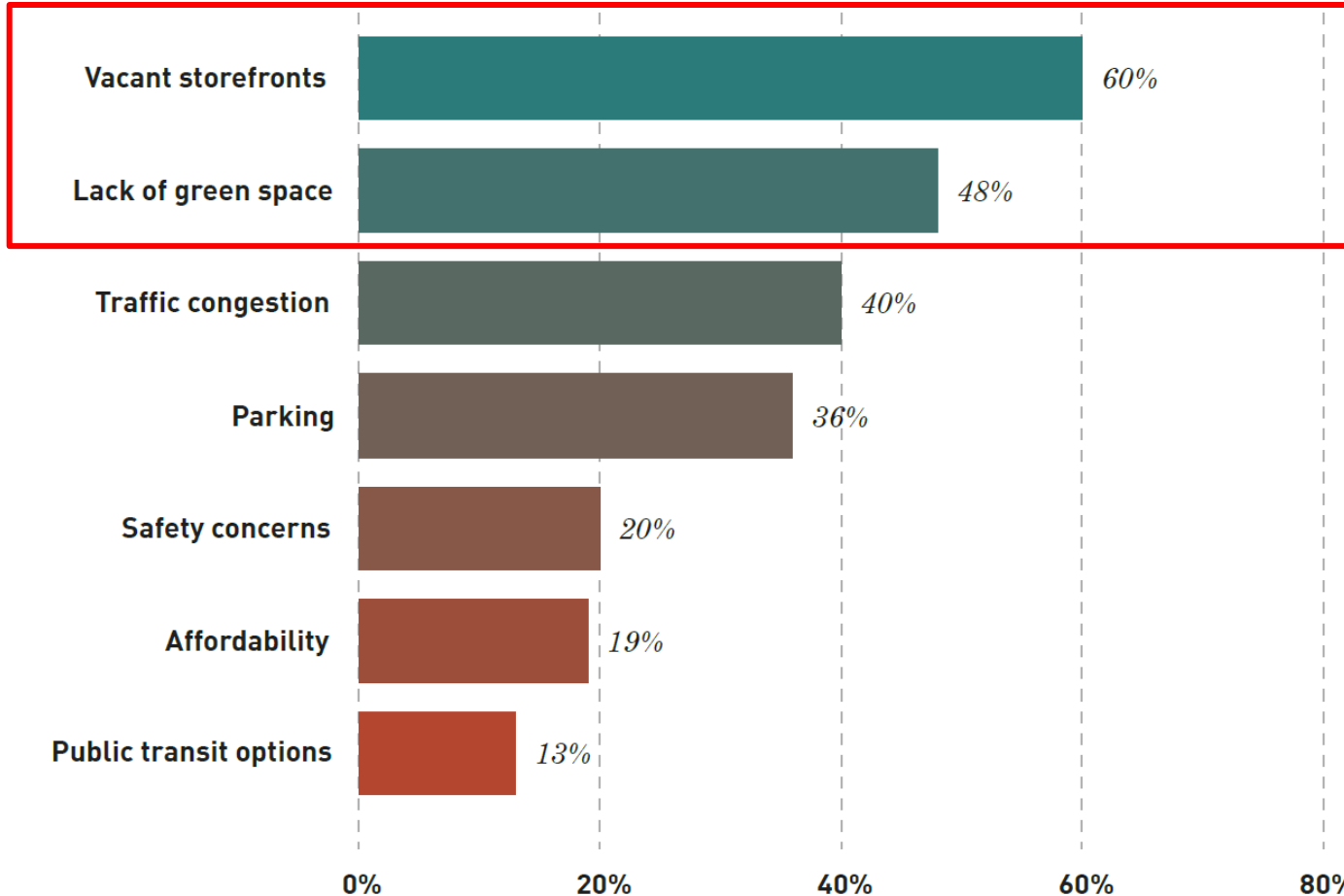


The built environment where people dwell, live, or work.
How land value can be shaped by investment.

Why Land Use? *In Your Own Words*

Biggest Challenges on Mass Ave (by mention)

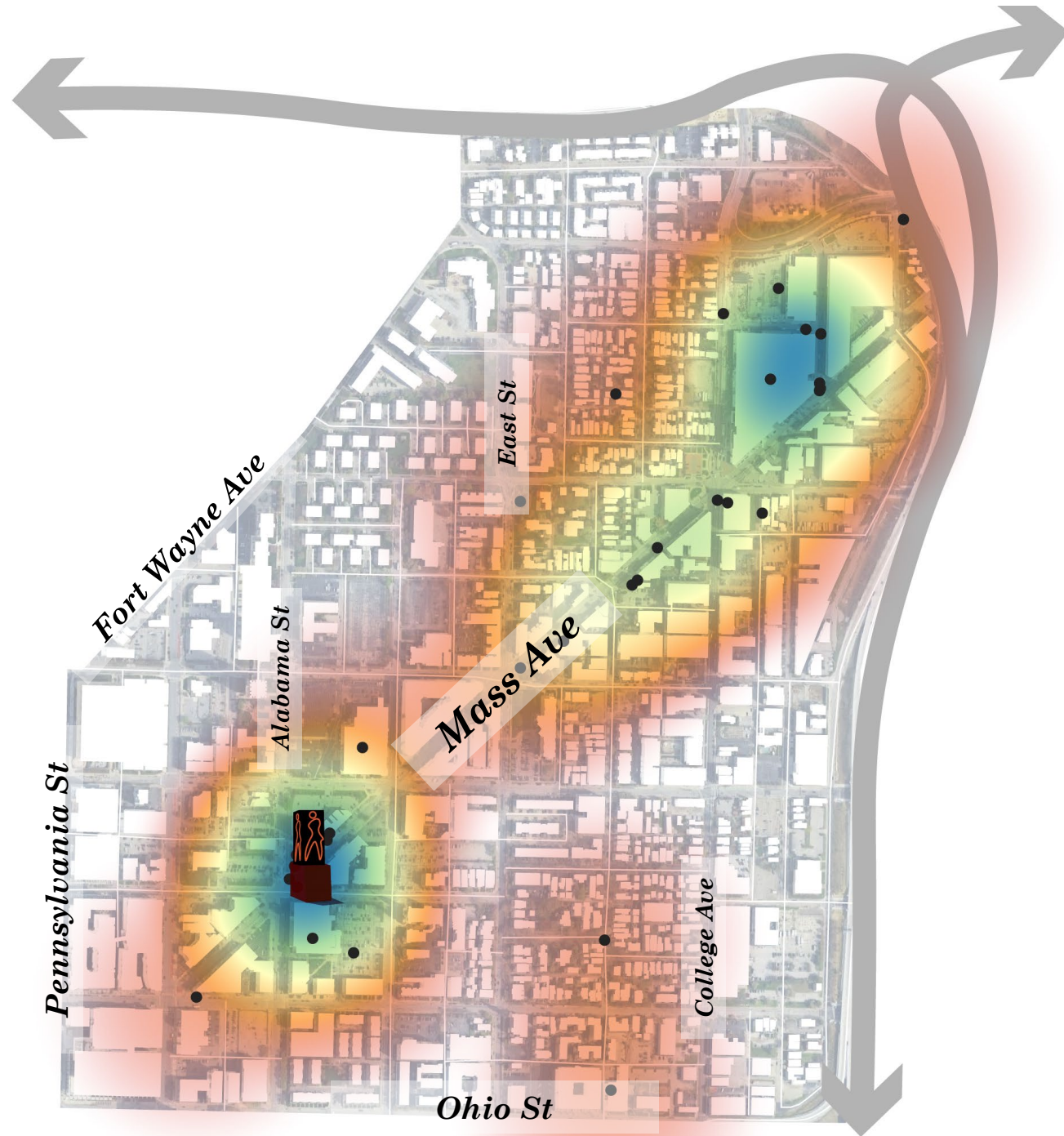
83 respondents, self-selected, choose-all-that-apply.



Vacant storefronts and lack of green space were the two most cited concerns across the survey.

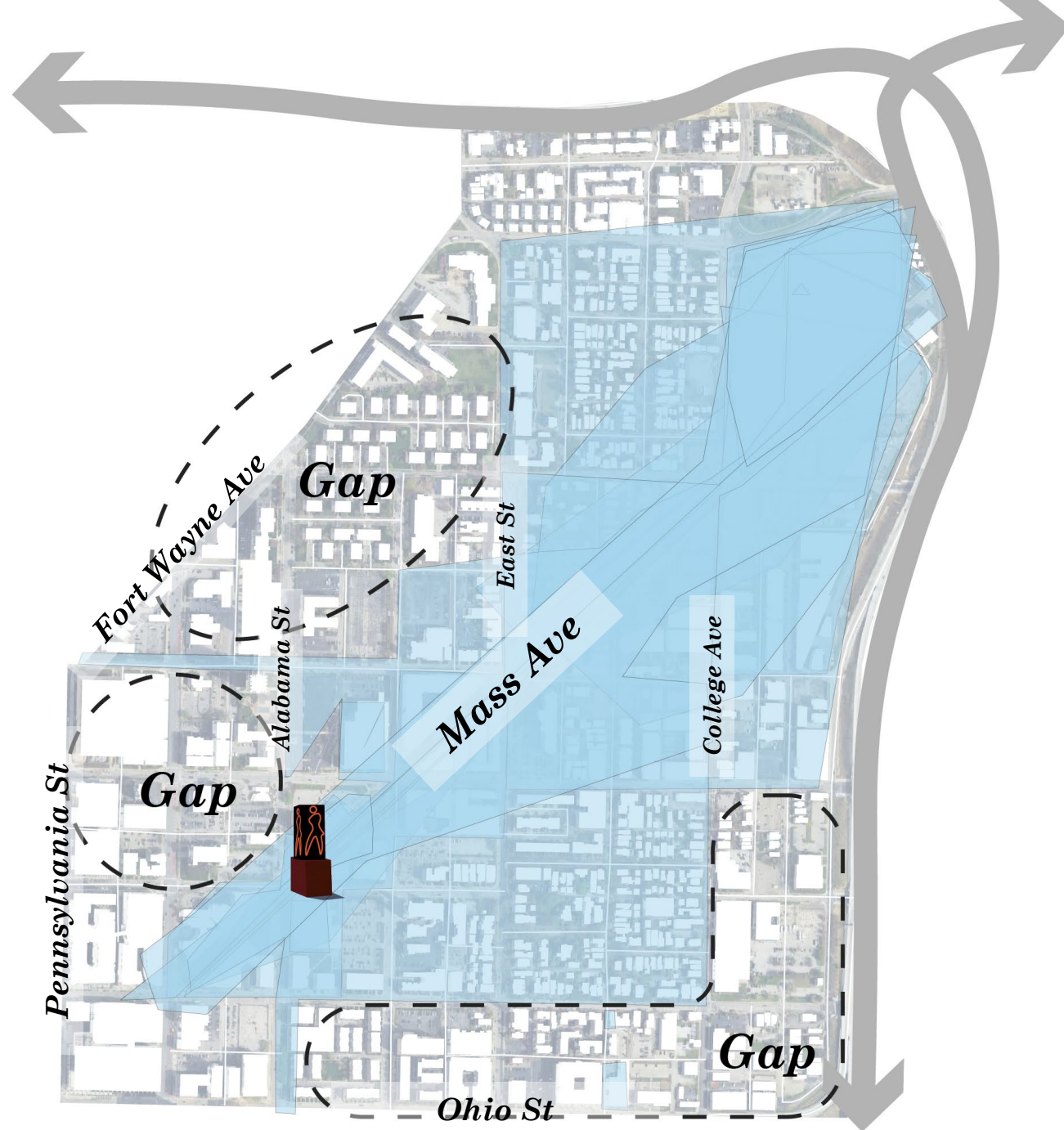
What Places Do You Value Today?

**The 300 and 800
blocks create a
dumbbell of
interest in the
district.**



Where Do You Spend Time?

There is a large gap of where people hang out on the northwest edge and southern edge of the district.



Parking

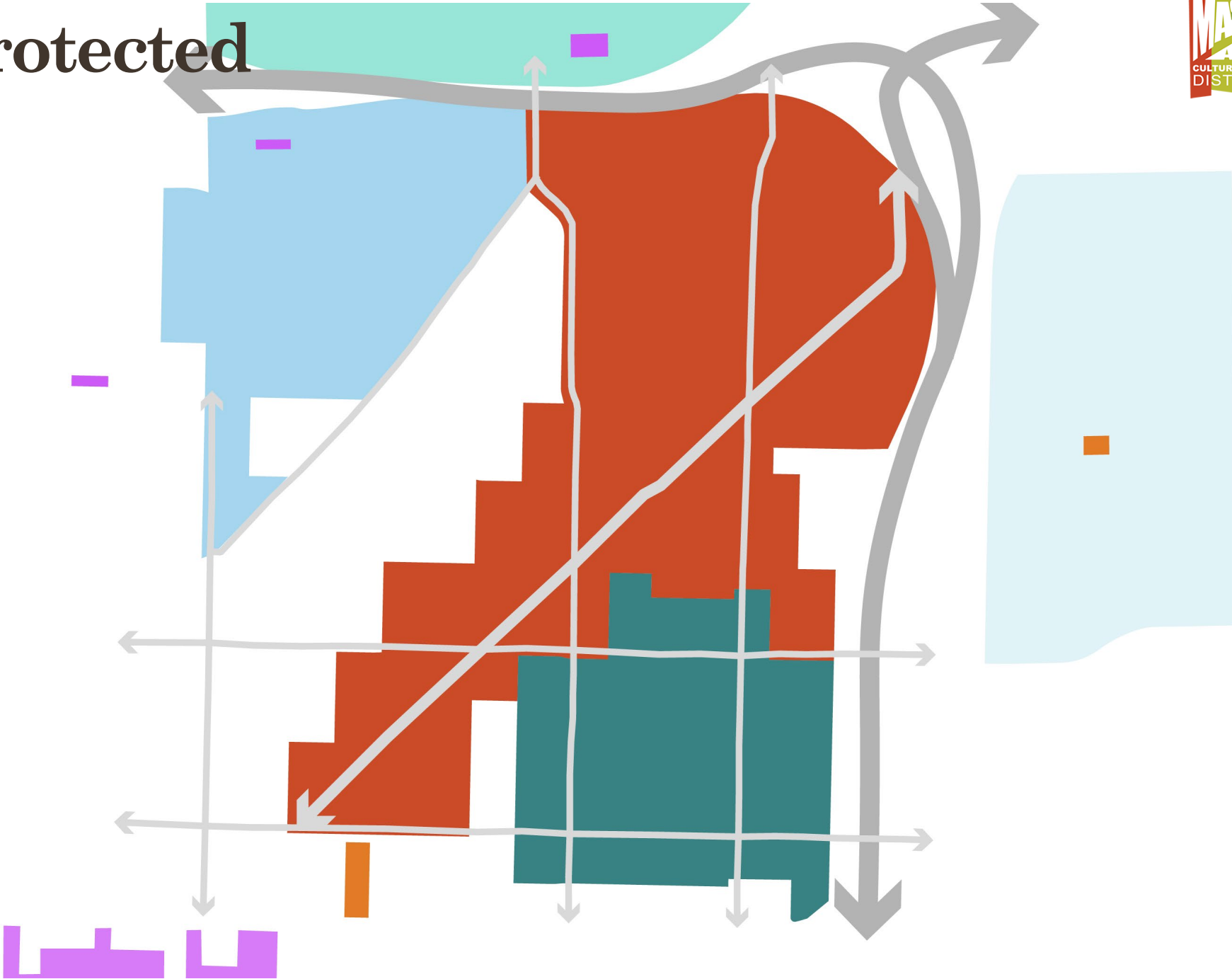
**10% of the
district is
parking**



Historically Protected

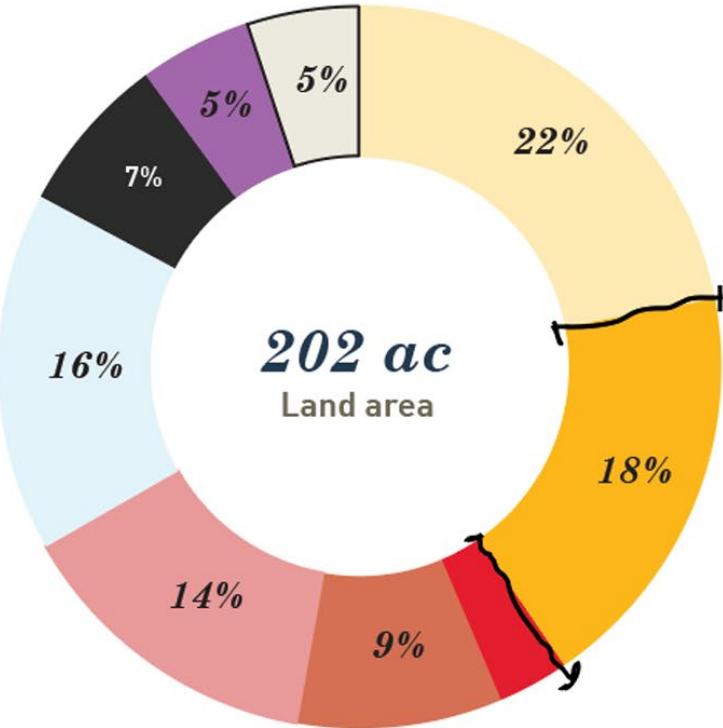


70% of the district is historically protected



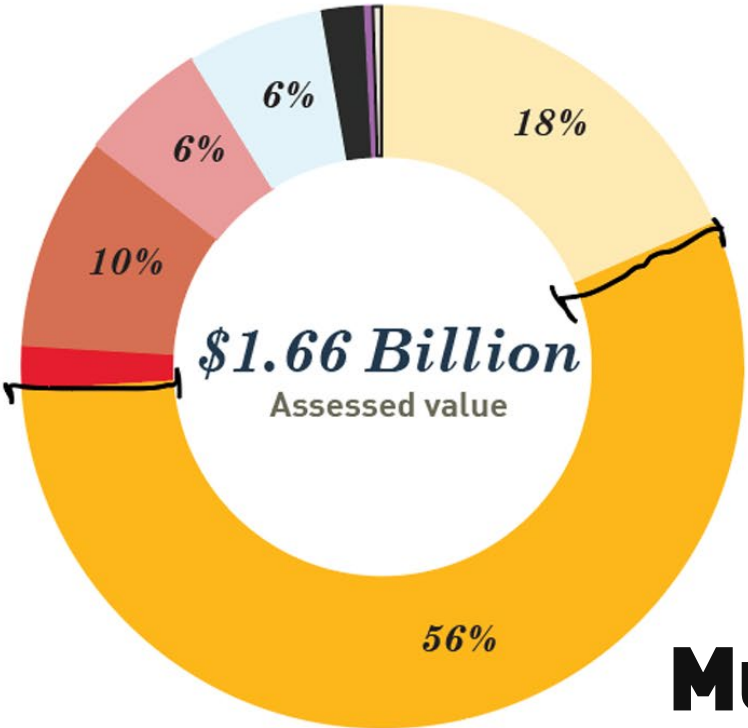
Land Value

Land Area



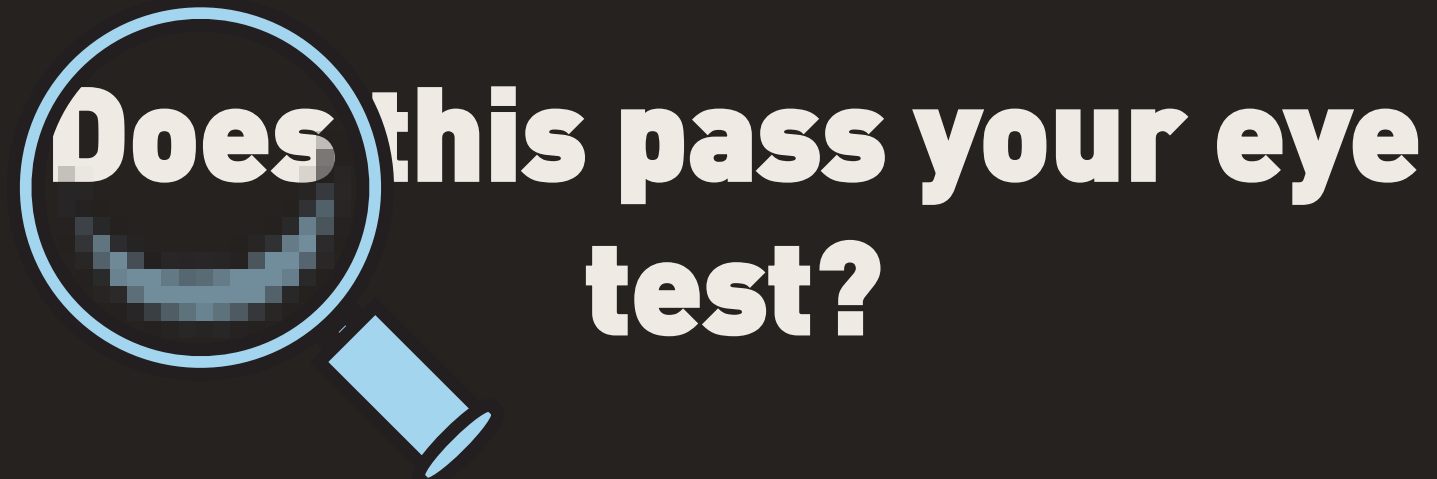
Residential — House / 2-3 Family
Residential — Multifamily / Condo

Assessed Value



Commercial — Office
Commercial — Other
Parking
Industrial

**Multifamily
residential
contains just 18%
of land but 56% of
all value**

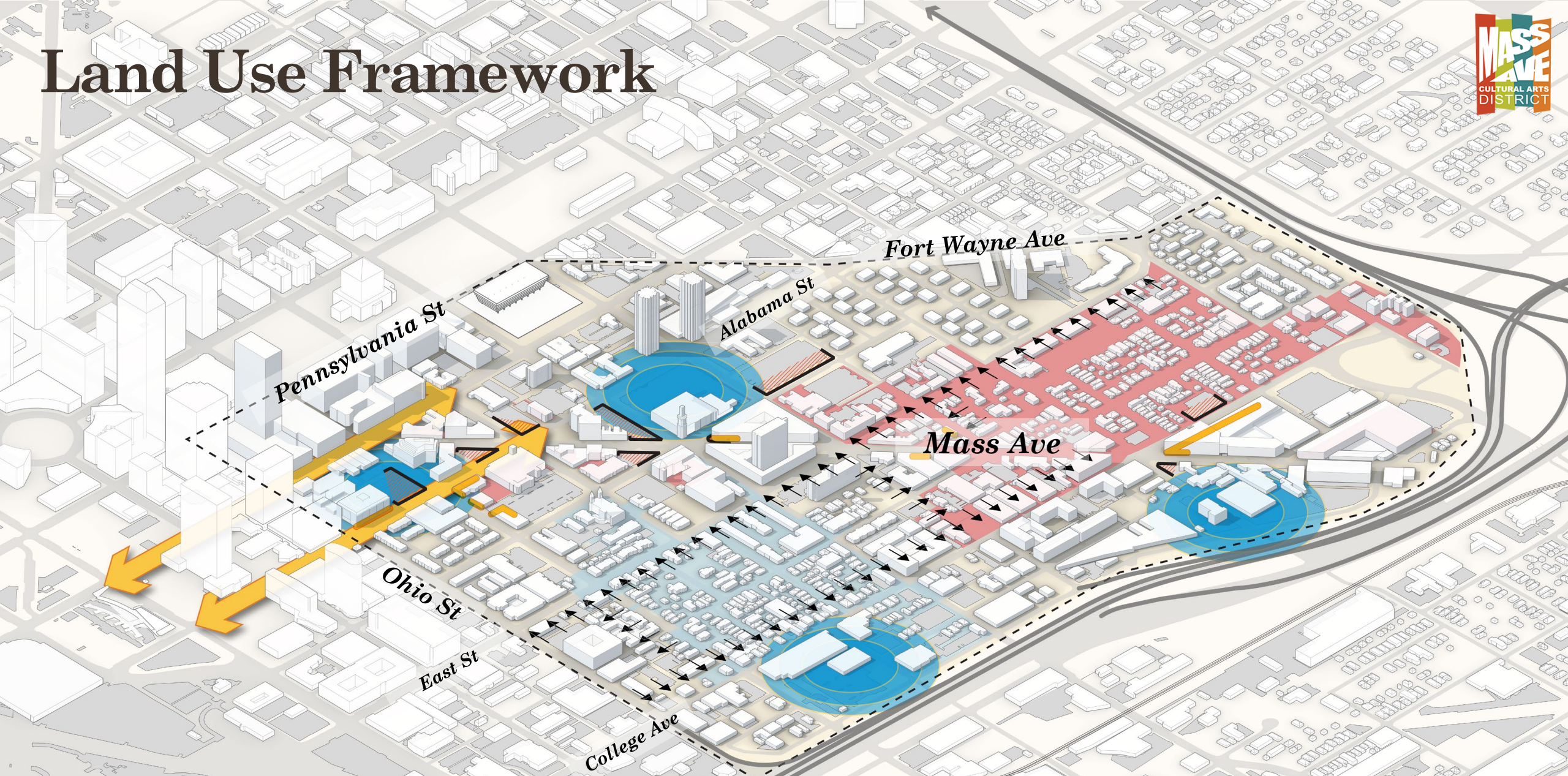


Land Use Framework

Design and policy targets:

- Preserve integrity of existing neighborhoods with a gradient of density along corridors
- Encourage corner infill to create a district of 45-degree intrigue
- Invest in activated storefront strategies for vacant retail
- Create a development convening organization to facilitate investment

Land Use Framework



Density gradient

Catalytic site

Link to Wholesale

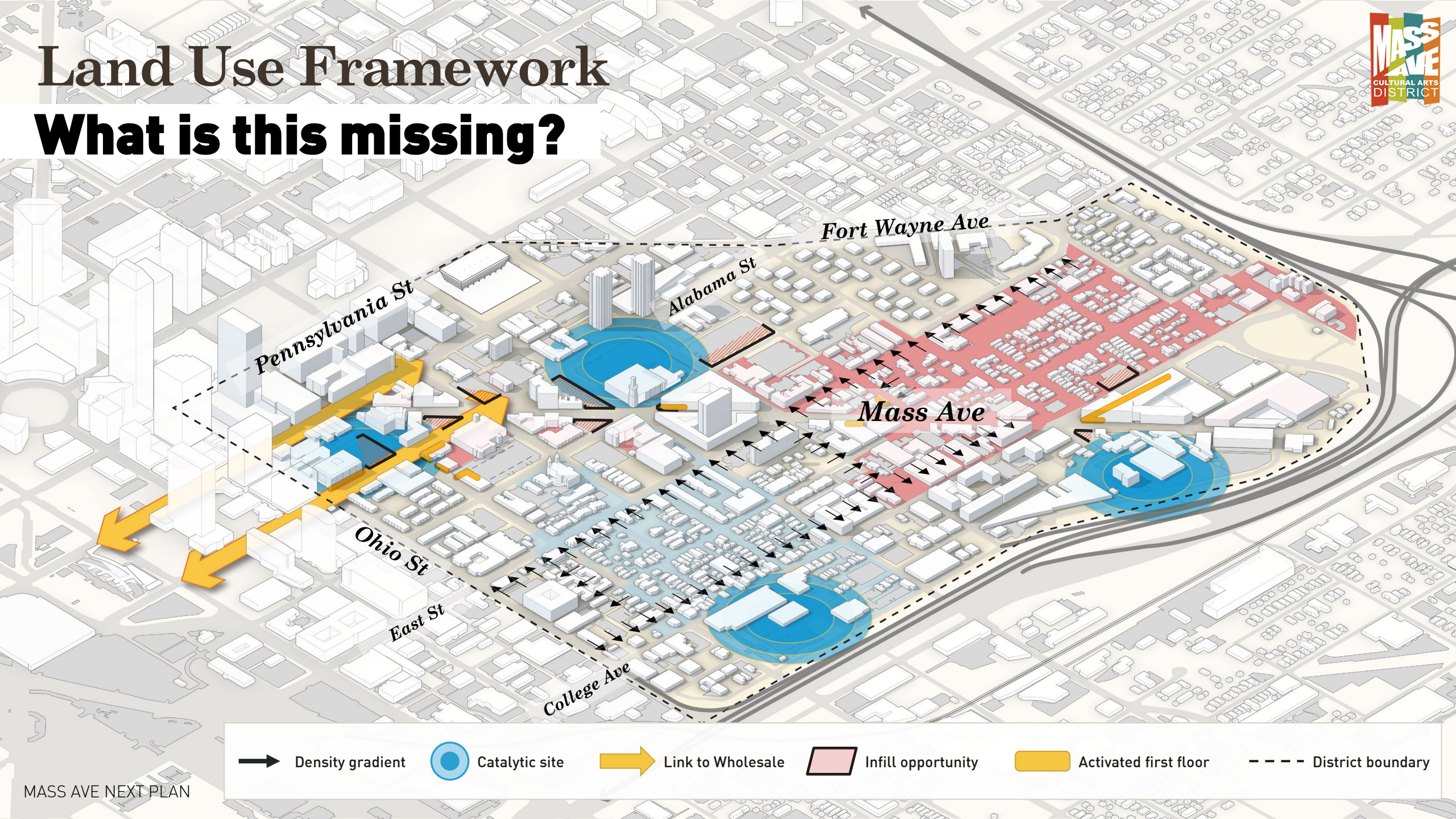
Infill opportunity

Activated first floor

District boundary

Land Use Framework

What is this missing?



Place Frameworks

Land Use

➤ *Open Space*

Connectivity

Arts & Experience

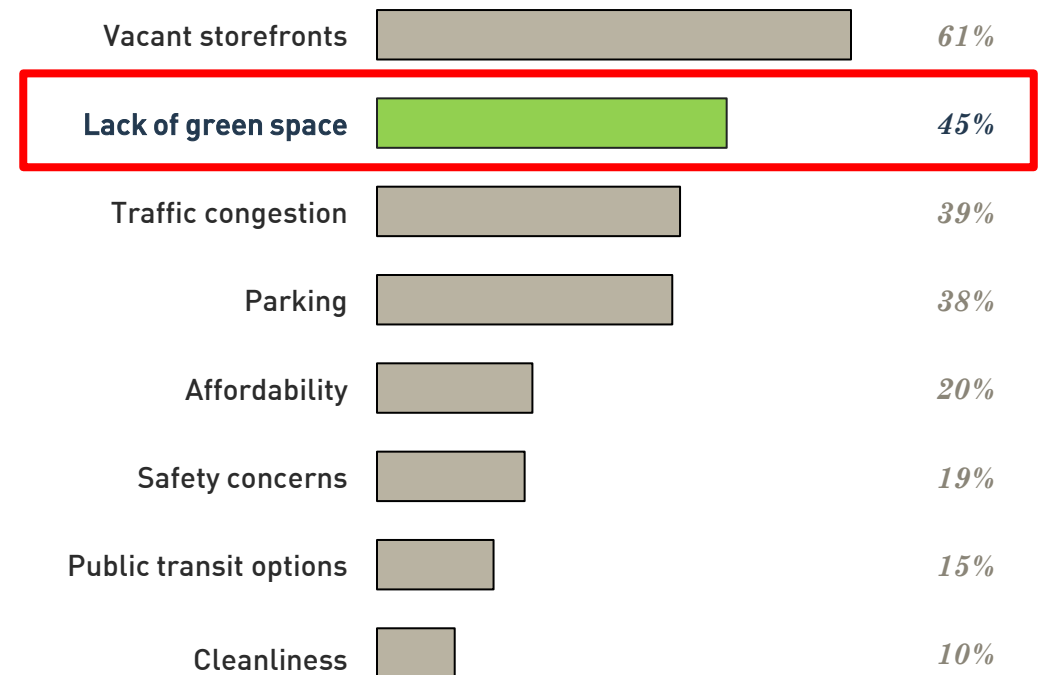
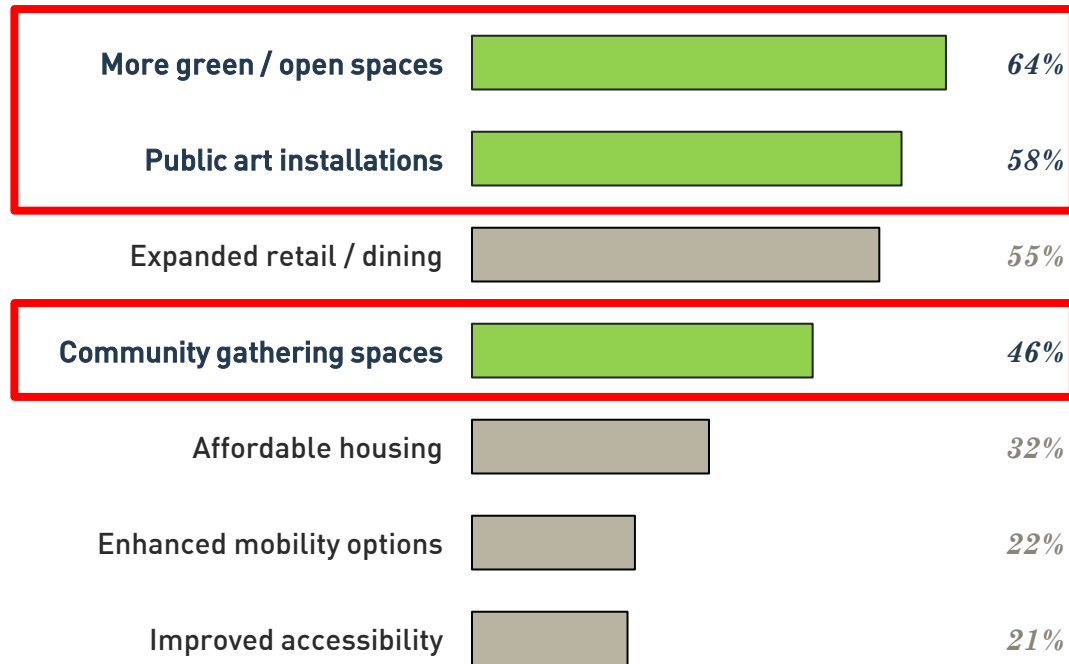


Parks, recreational opportunities, places to sit,
places to linger or play

Why Open Space?

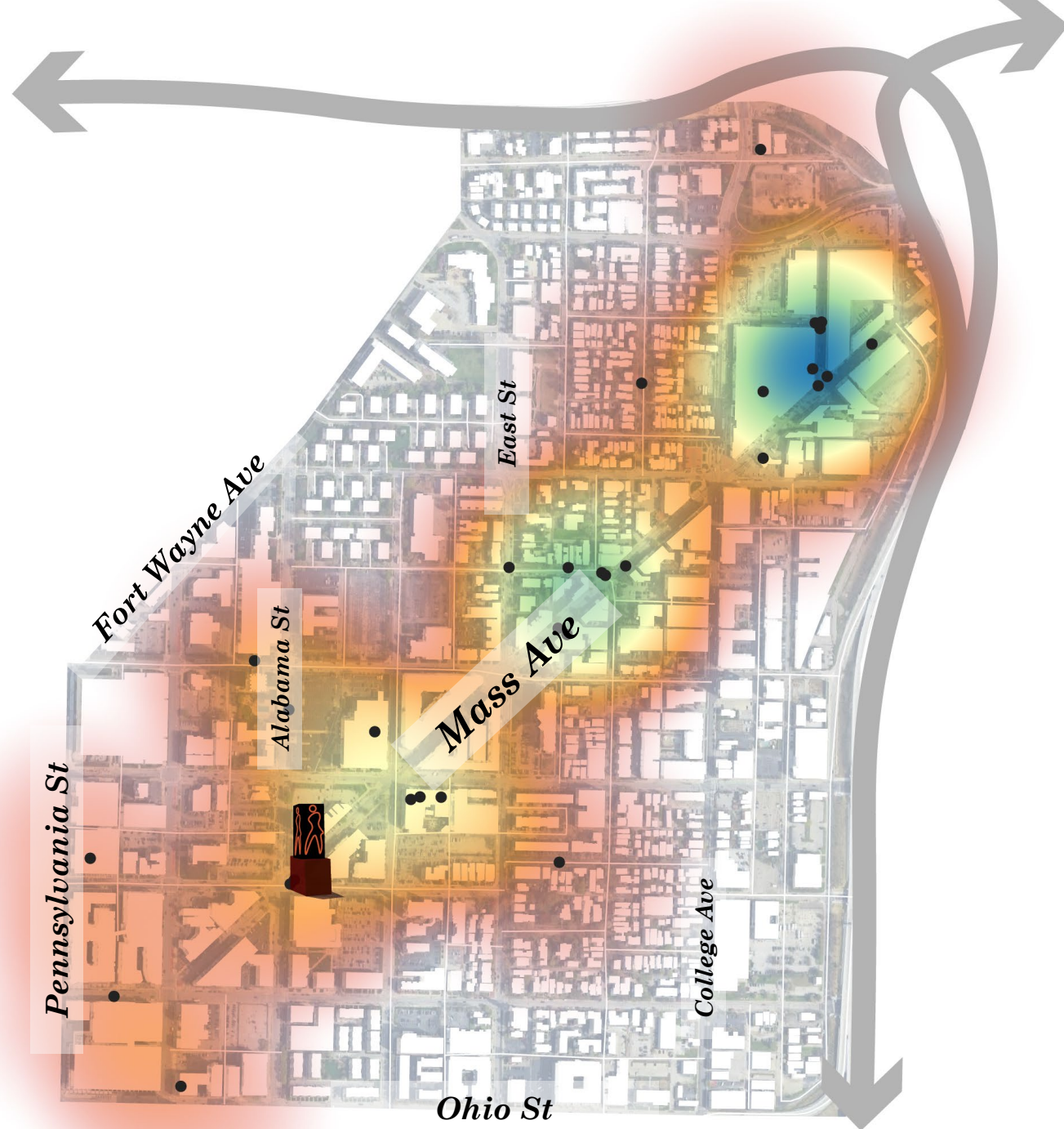
“lack of green space” outranks the two things Mass Ave is famous for arguing about: traffic and parking.

Wanted New Features



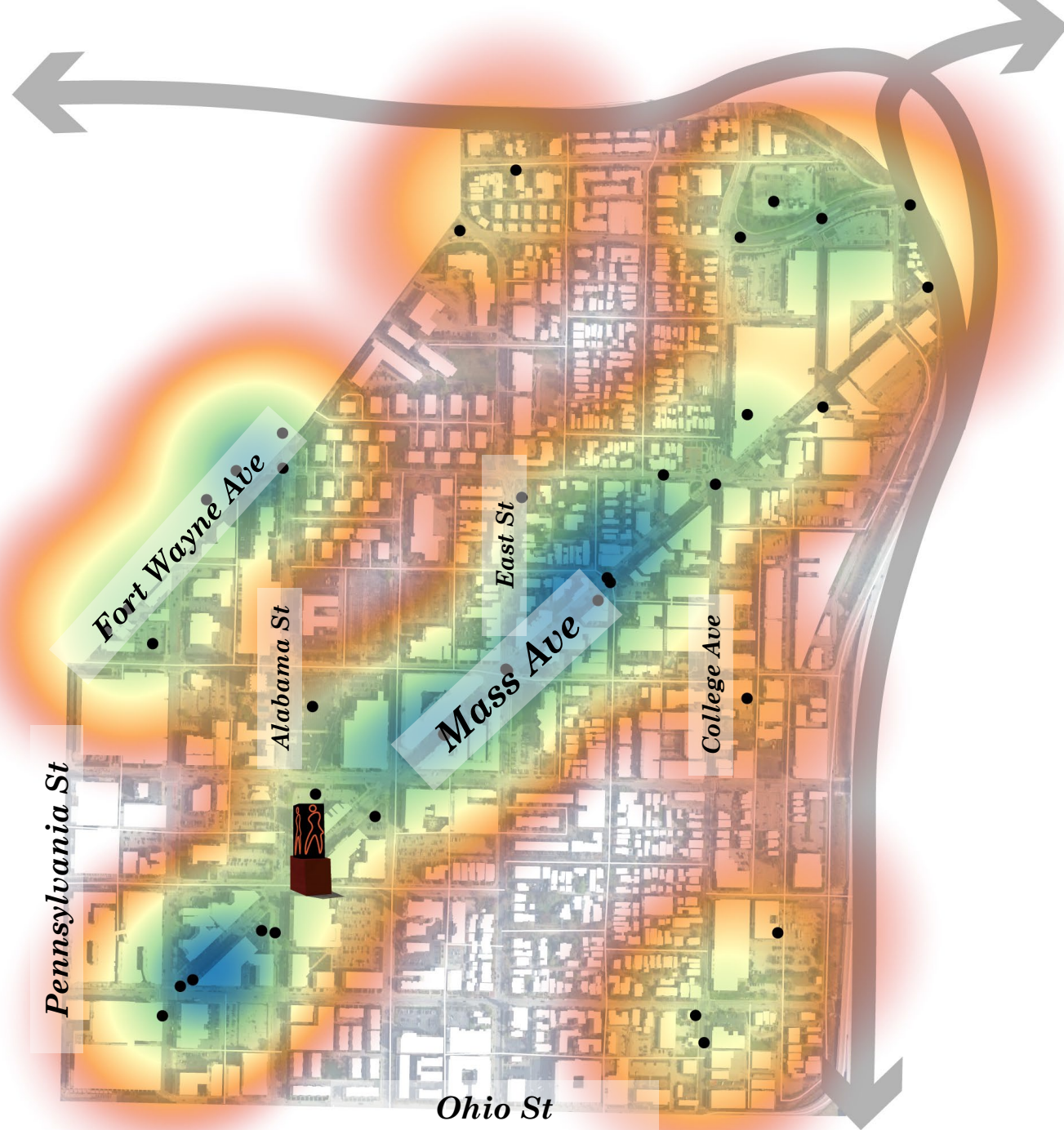
Where Do You Feel Comfortable?

**Comfort is felt in
Bottleworks and
the 600 block.**



Where Mass Ave
is Missing
Something?

**Respondents
commonly
referred to Fort
Wayne Ave as an
opportunity spot.**



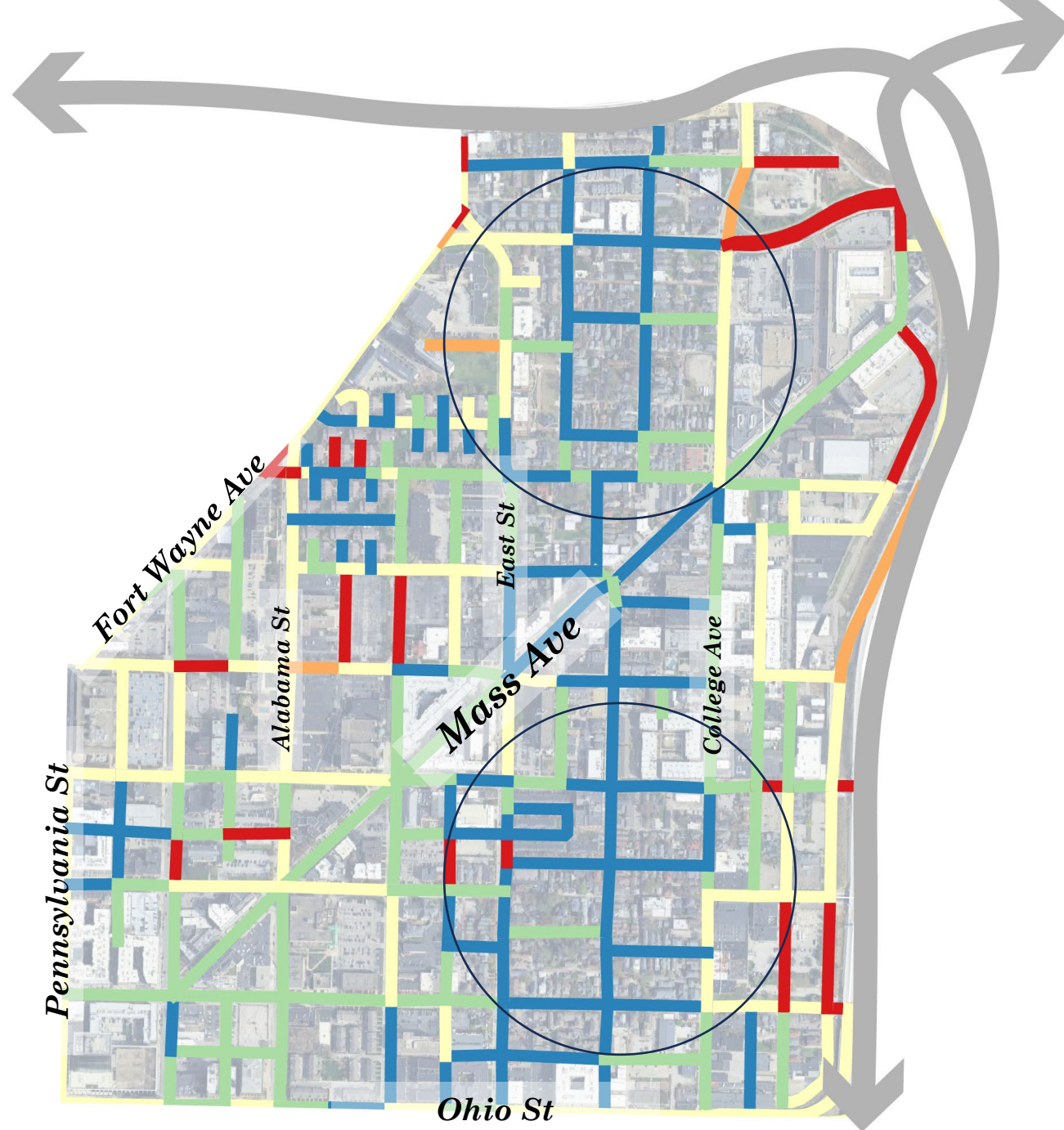
Enclosure Ratio

+ (more intimate)



- (less intimate)

Where streets feel most intimate and where they don't. Chatham Arch and Lockerbie thrive, rest of district not so much



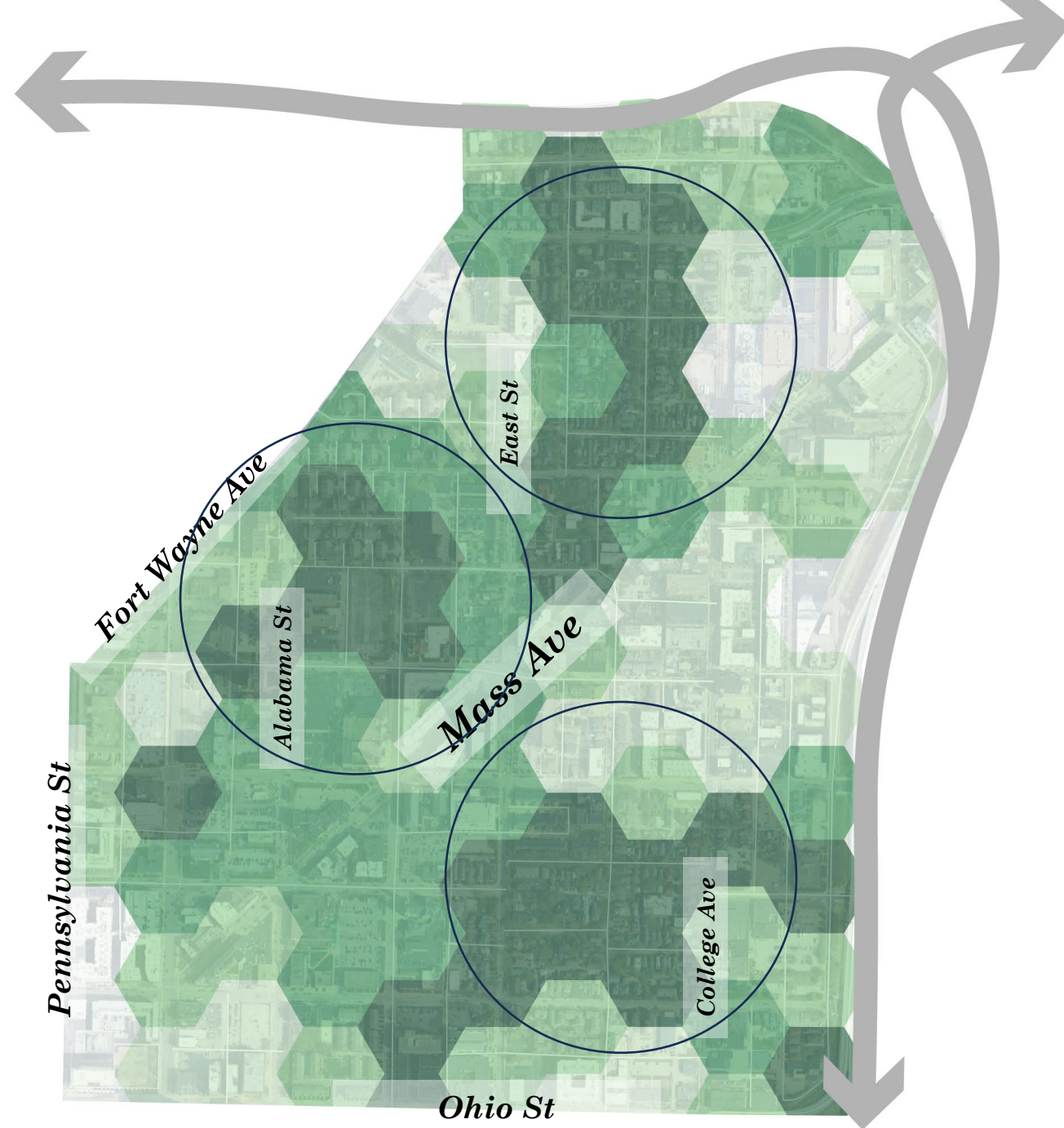
Tree Canopy % Index

+ (more trees)



- (less trees)

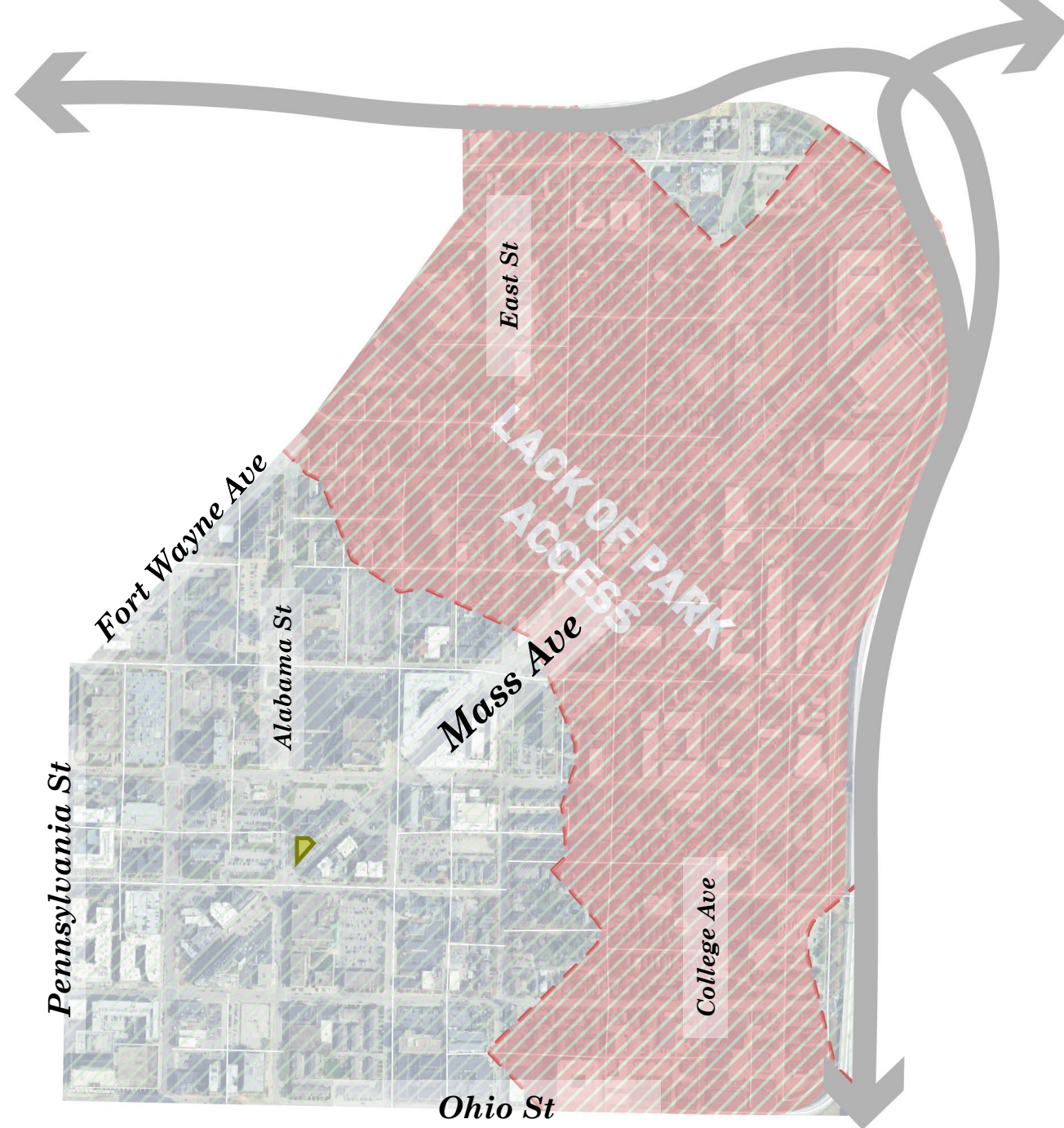
Chatham Arch, Lockerbie, and Renaissance Place score high on tree coverage – most of the district doesn't.



Public Park Access

More than 60% of the district is outside a ten-minute walk to a public park*

*This excludes privately operated public spaces such as Chatham Commons

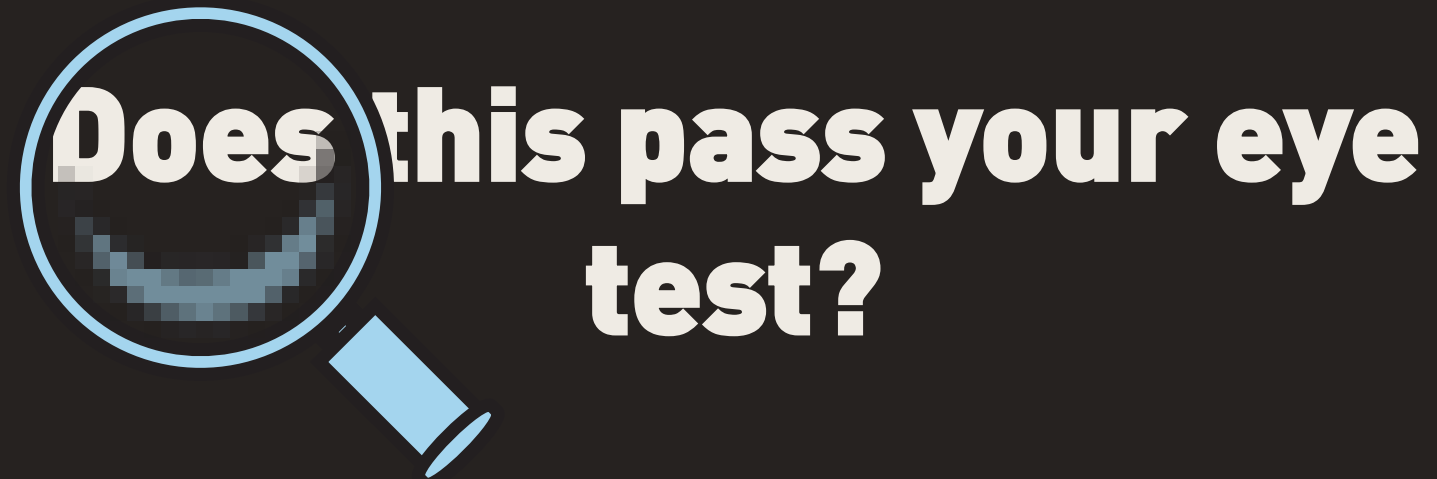


Open Space Framework

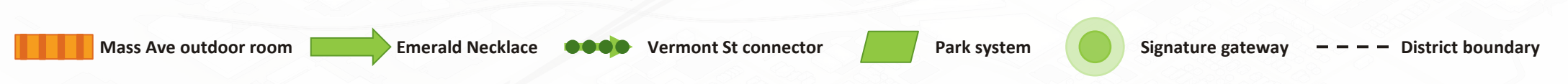


Design and policy targets:

- **Create** “emerald necklace” along Interstate and Vermont connecting the Monon, NESide, the district, and Legion Mall
- **Encourage** a network of pocket parks that allow **all residents** to be within a 5-minute walk to park space.
- **Rethink** the Ave as an outdoor room with tree canopy and signature gateways
- **Invest** in anchor recreation destinations for daily programmatic enjoyment
- **Partner** with existing institutions to monetize programmatic opportunities



Open Space Framework



Open Space Framework

What is this missing?



- Mass Ave outdoor room
- Emerald Necklace
- Vermont St connector
- Park system
- Signature gateway
- District boundary

Open Space Framework

Potential Planning and Implementation Partners:

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS



SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES



All. Together. Now.

LOCAL FOUNDATIONS



ELECTED OFFICIALS

AND MANY OTHERS...

Place Frameworks

Land Use

Open Space

➤ *Connectivity*

Arts & Experience



Parks, recreational opportunities, places to sit,
places to linger or play

Why Connectivity?

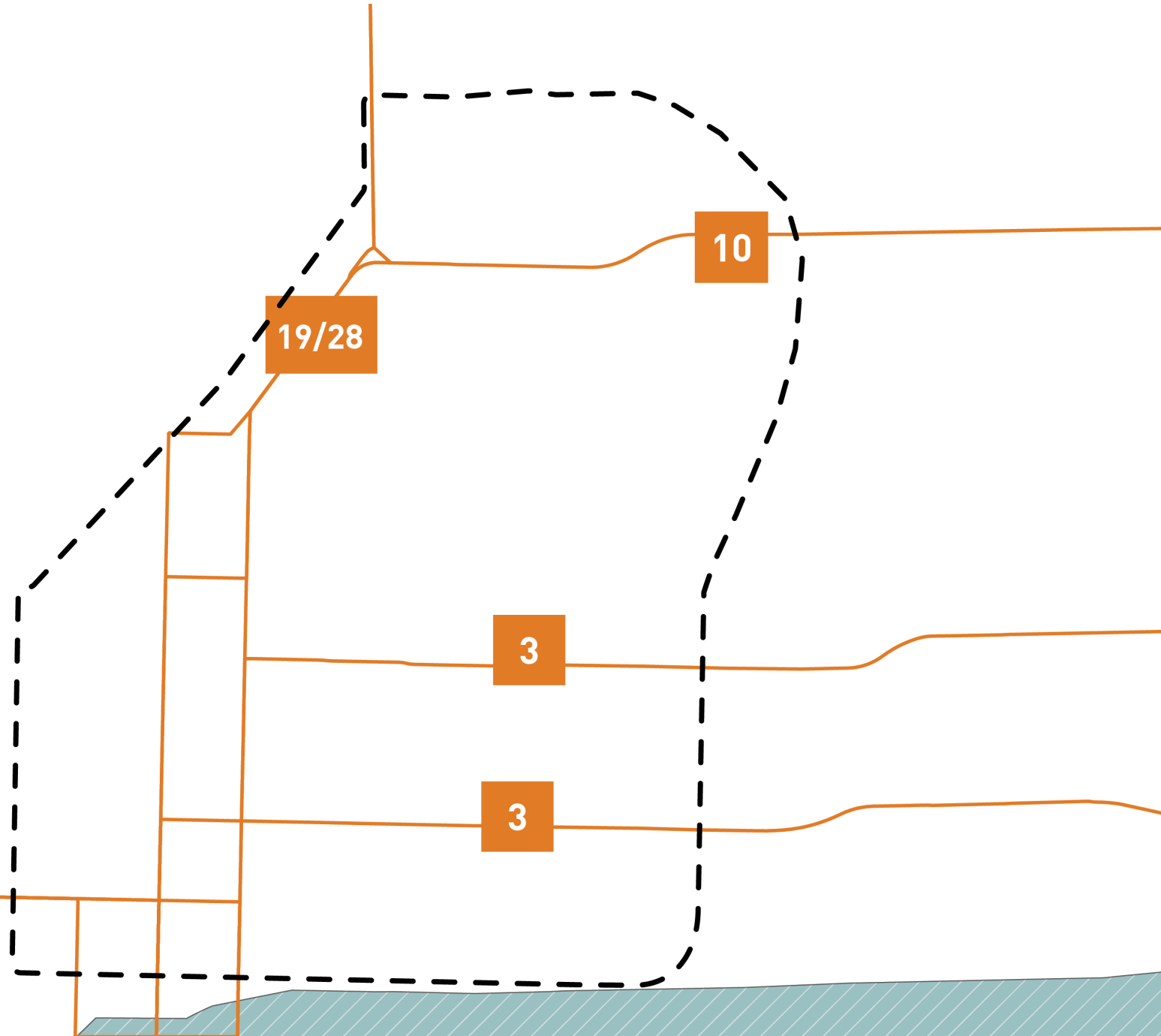
There are **large gaps in activity nodes** along the Cultural Trail south of the Ave and north of the trail. (maptionnaire)



Frequent Transit

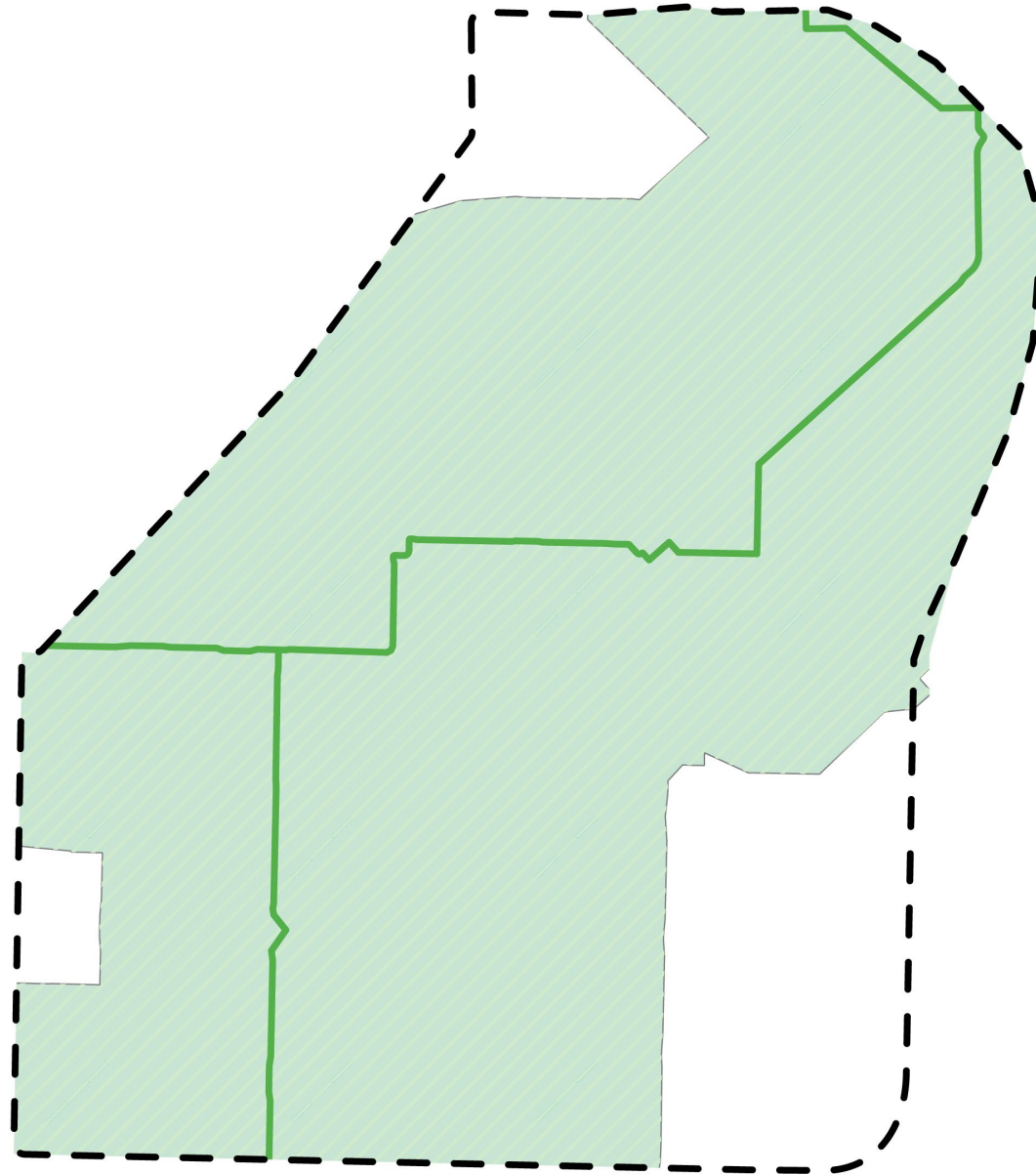
The district is served by five frequent routes*

*15 min frequency or less



Greenway Overlay

Over 75% of district within ten minute walk to Cultural Trail



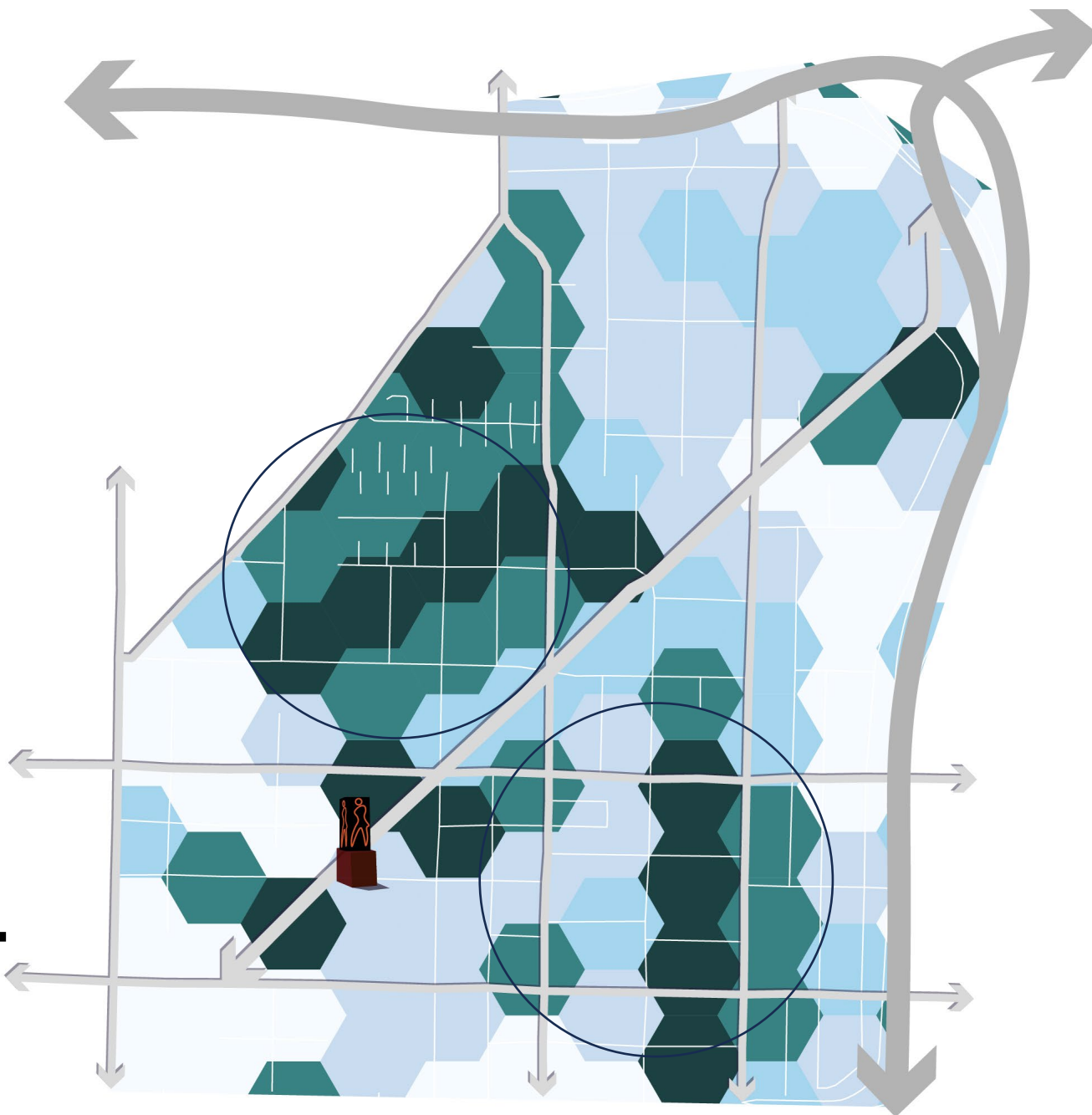
Connectivity Index

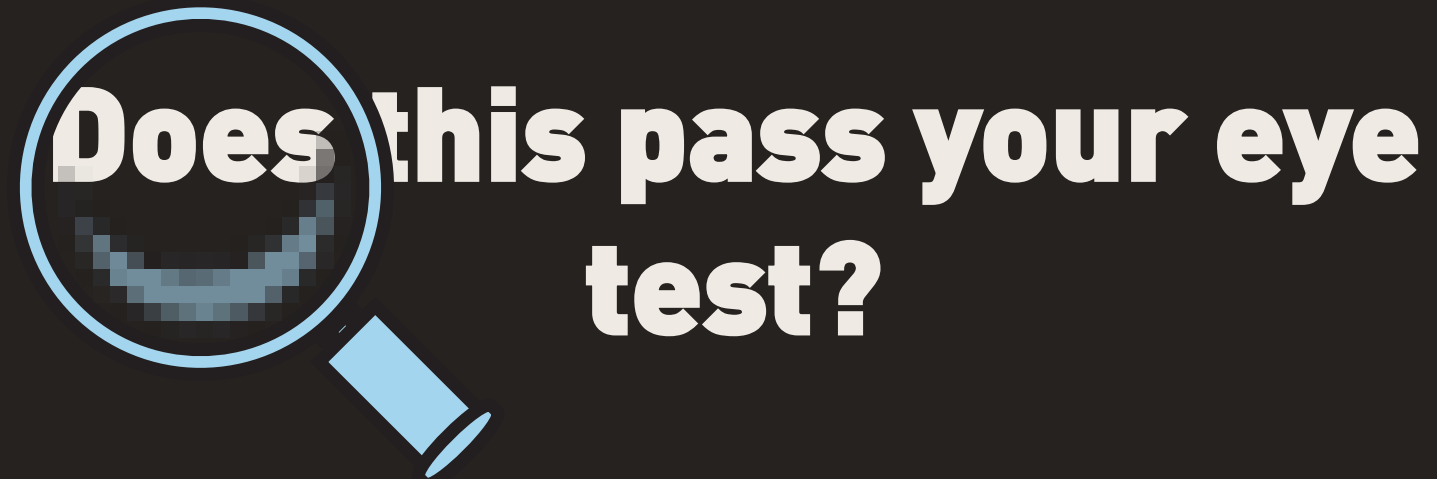
+ (more connected)



- (less connected)

**Scored parcels in
district on access to
transit + multimobility +
street grid + safety (ped
incidents)**





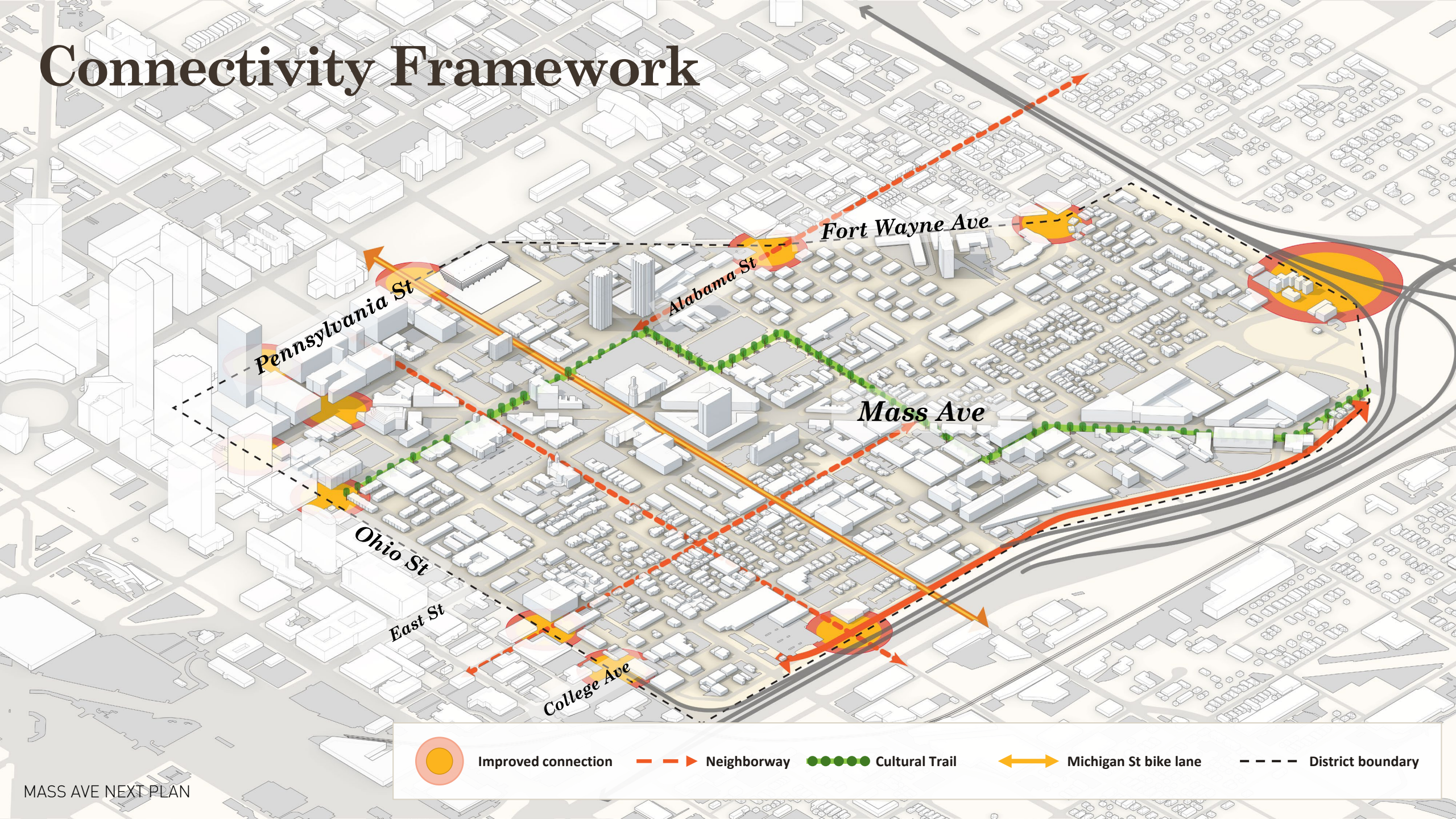
Connectivity Framework



Design and policy targets:

- **Strengthen** the district's edges as gateways by improving the crossings that tie Mass Ave to the neighborhoods around it (Ohio Street, Fort Wayne Avenue, College Avenue, and Park Avenue) so arriving feels like entering somewhere
- **Designate Vermont Street, Alabama, and Park Ave as** Neighborways: calmed, walk-and-bike-first connector through the Lockerbie blocks, planted and lit to read as part of the park system rather than a shortcut through it.
- **Develop** a system of mobility hubs that combine rideshare/pickup/scooter parking into one zone with ease of access to bikeshare
- **Advocate** for a protected E-W Michigan St bikelane

Connectivity Framework



Connectivity Framework

What is this missing?



Open Space Framework

Potential Planning and Implementation Partners:

NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATIONS

SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES

LOCAL FOUNDATIONS

RETHINK



National Complete
Streets Coalition



ELECTED OFFICIALS



AND MANY OTHERS...

Place Frameworks

Land Use

Open Space

Connectivity

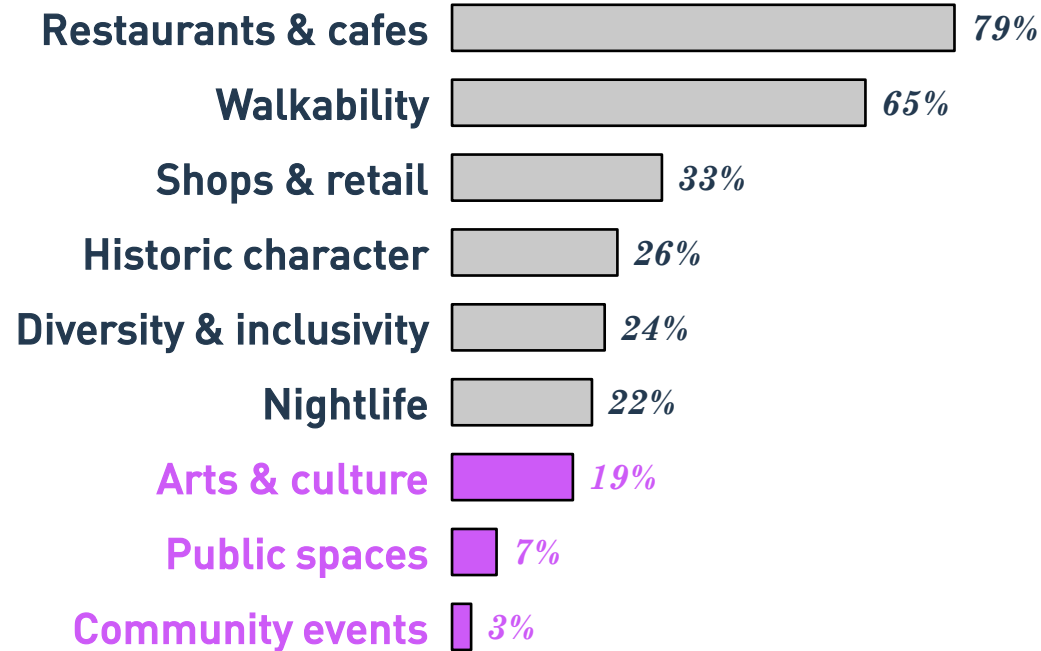
➤ *Arts & Experience*



Understanding the existing experience, where activity occurs and where future opportunity lay for improving the arts and culture economy

Why Arts & Experience? *The Brand Outruns the Experience*

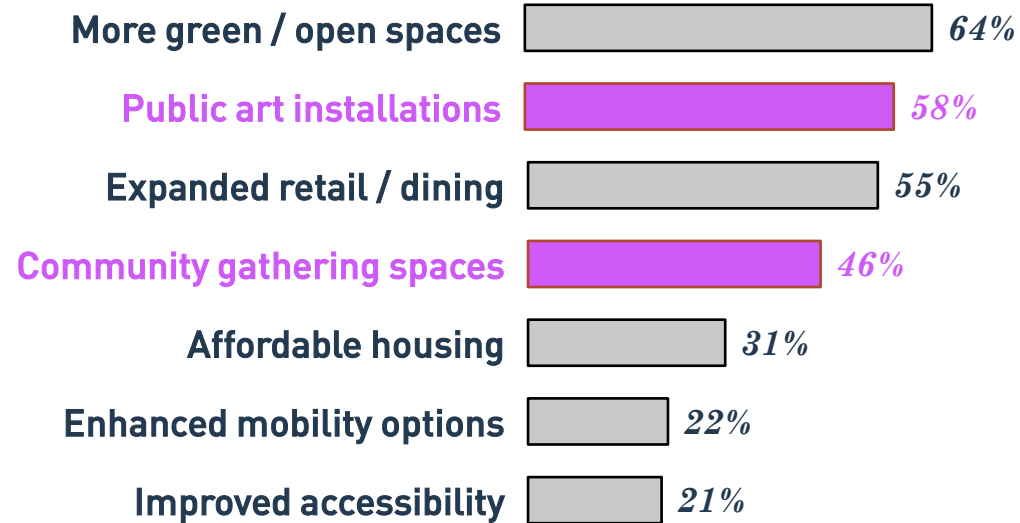
What Do You Love Most About Mass Ave? — Select up to 3 (% of respondents)



Restaurants and walkability define the experience today. In a Cultural Arts District, arts & culture ranks 7th of 9.

Why Arts & Experience? *What People Want More of*

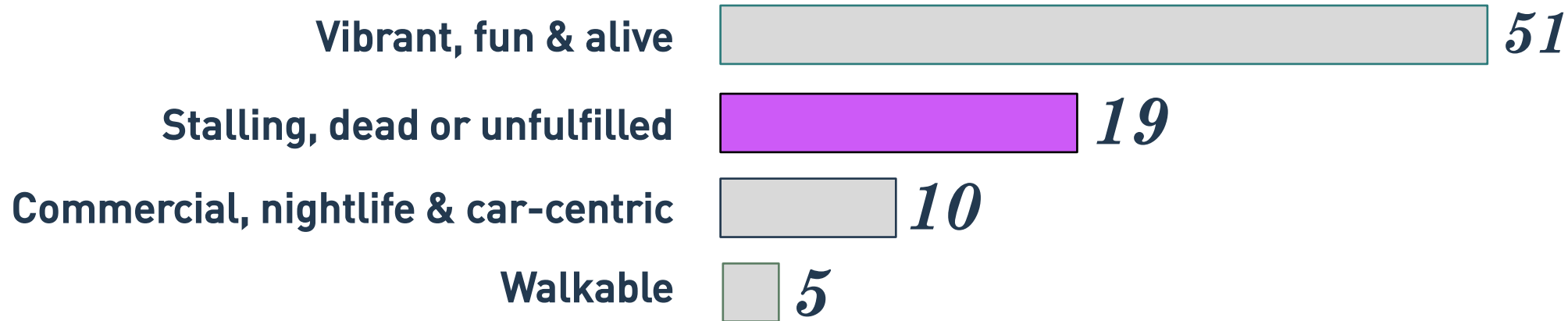
What Do You Want to See on Mass Ave? — Select up to 3 (% of respondents)



Public art is the #2 ask and gathering spaces #4. The experiences people want more of are the ones the “cultural district” moniker already promises.

Why Arts & Experience? *Mass Ave Today, in one word*

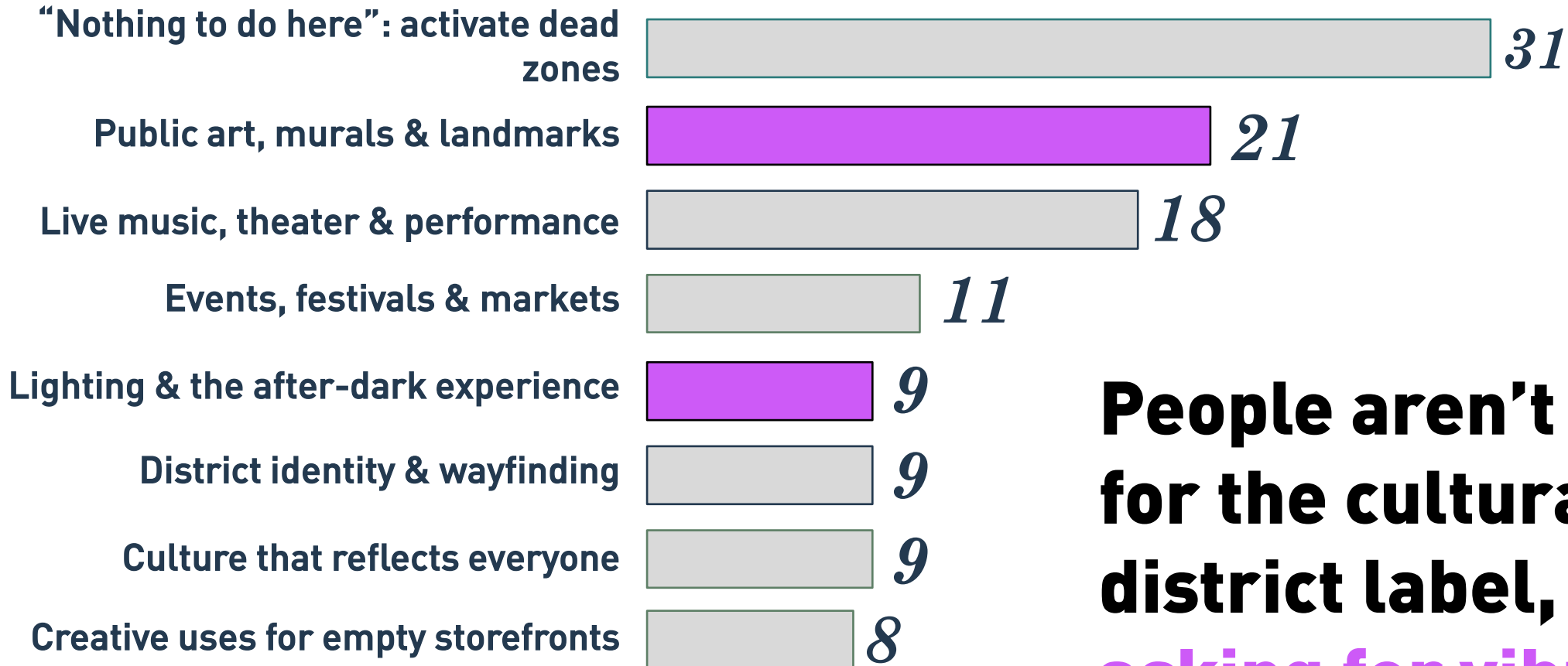
How Would You Describe Mass Ave Today? — Open-ended, coded by theme (# of mentions)



“Vibrant” leads but more than one in five describe Mass Ave as stalling, dead, or short of its potential.

Why Arts, Culture & Experience? *In Your Own Words*

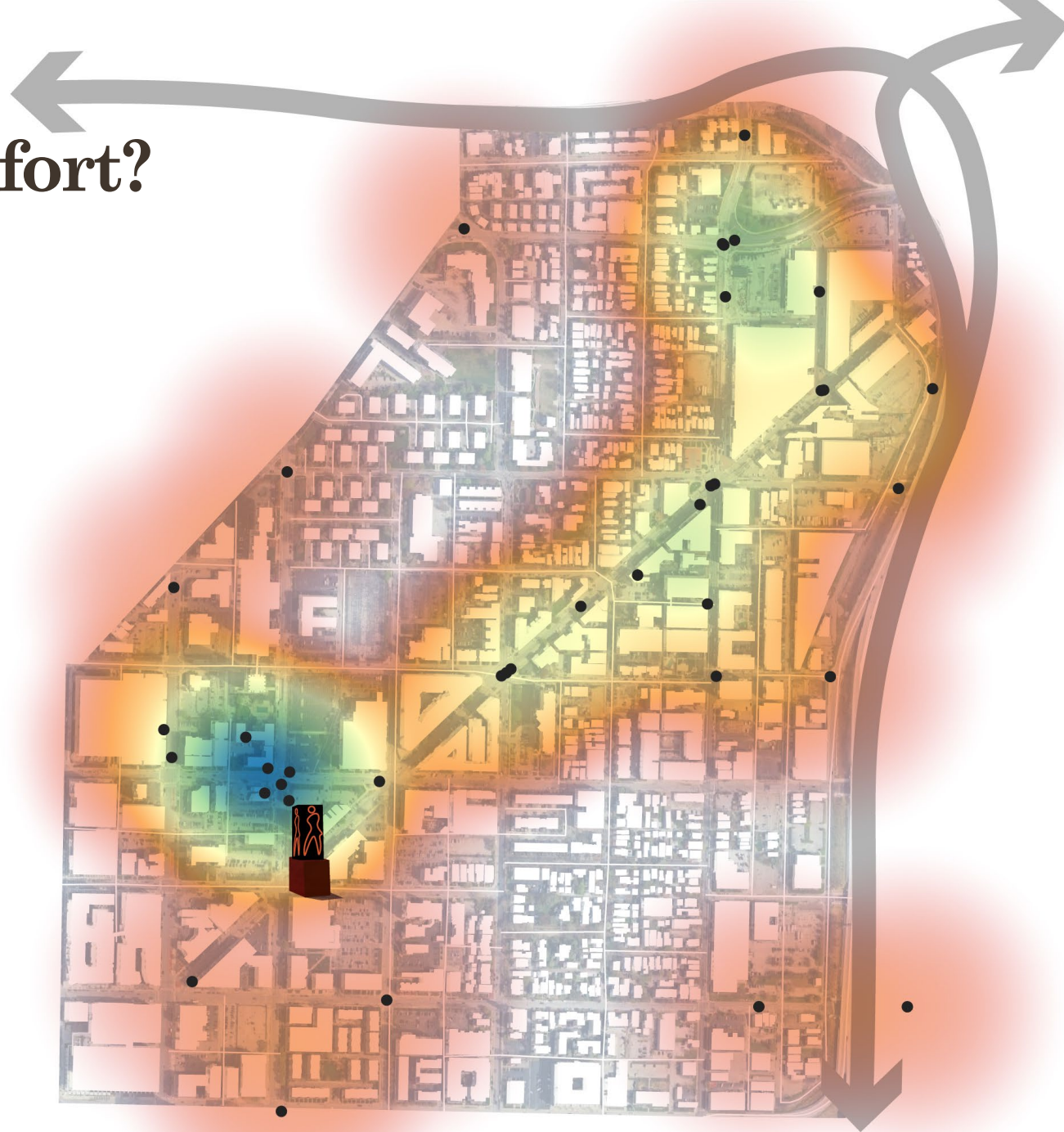
Arts & Experience-Related Mentions **Across All Comments and Pins** (# of mentions)



People aren't asking for the cultural district label, **they're asking for vibrancy.**

Where Do You Experience Discomfort?

The Marathon station and surrounding shelters come up as a red flag for visitors.



Total Crime

- (less reported crime)



+ (more reported crime)



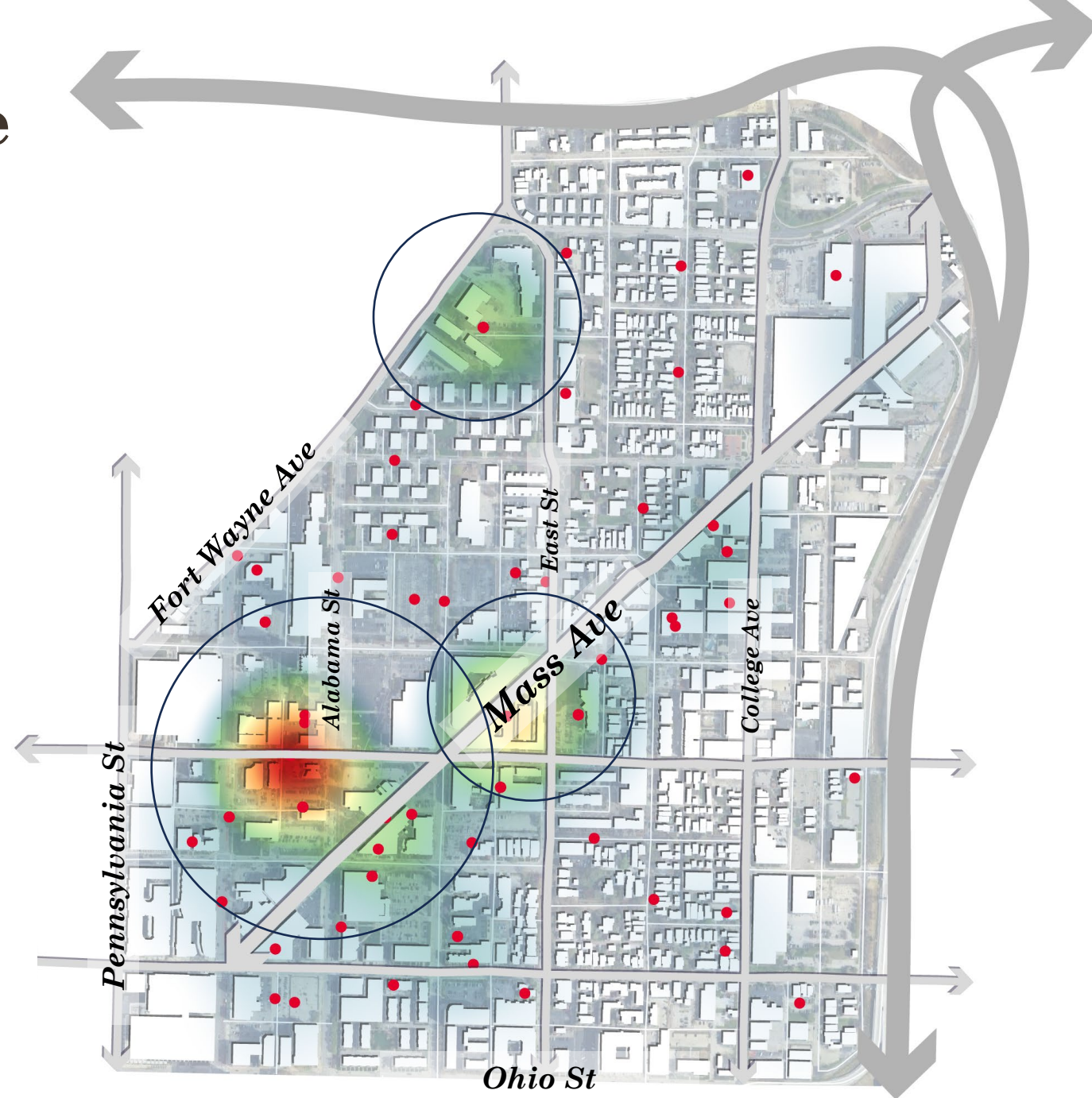
Source: Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department incident reports via IndyGIS, exported May 15, 2026. Reported incidents (not victimization or rates) within the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District, January 2 – May 14, 2026 (n = 410)

Nonviolent Crime

- (less reported crime)



+ (more reported crime)



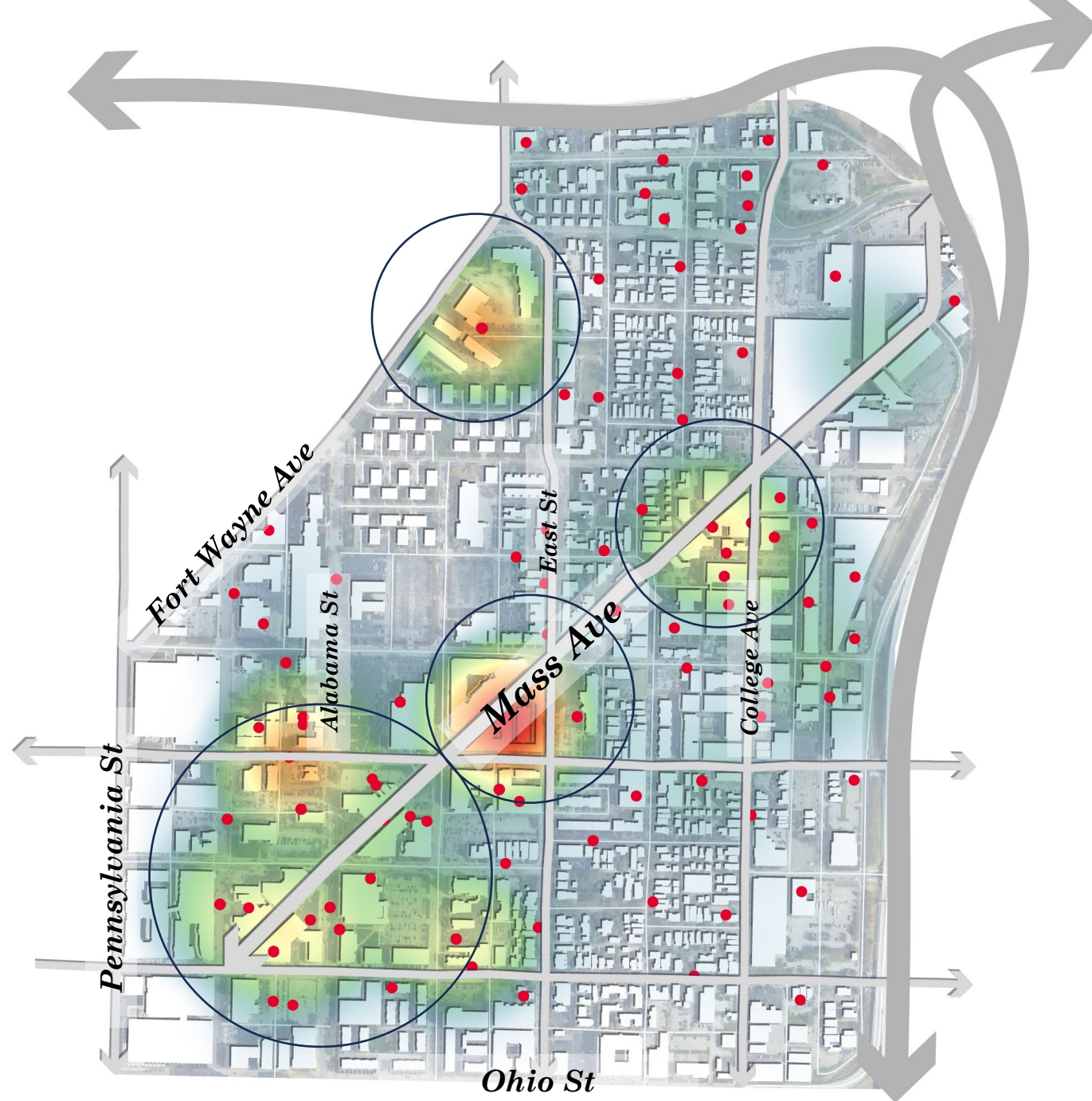
Source: Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department incident reports via IndyGIS, exported May 15, 2026. Reported incidents (not victimization or rates) within the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District, January 2 – May 14, 2026 (n = 410)

Property Crime

- (less reported crime)



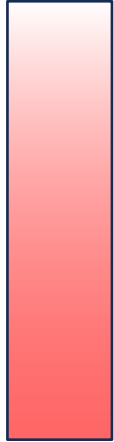
+ (more reported crime)



Source: Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department incident reports via IndyGIS, exported May 15, 2026. Reported incidents (not victimization or rates) within the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District, January 2 – May 14, 2026 (n = 410)

Urban Amenities

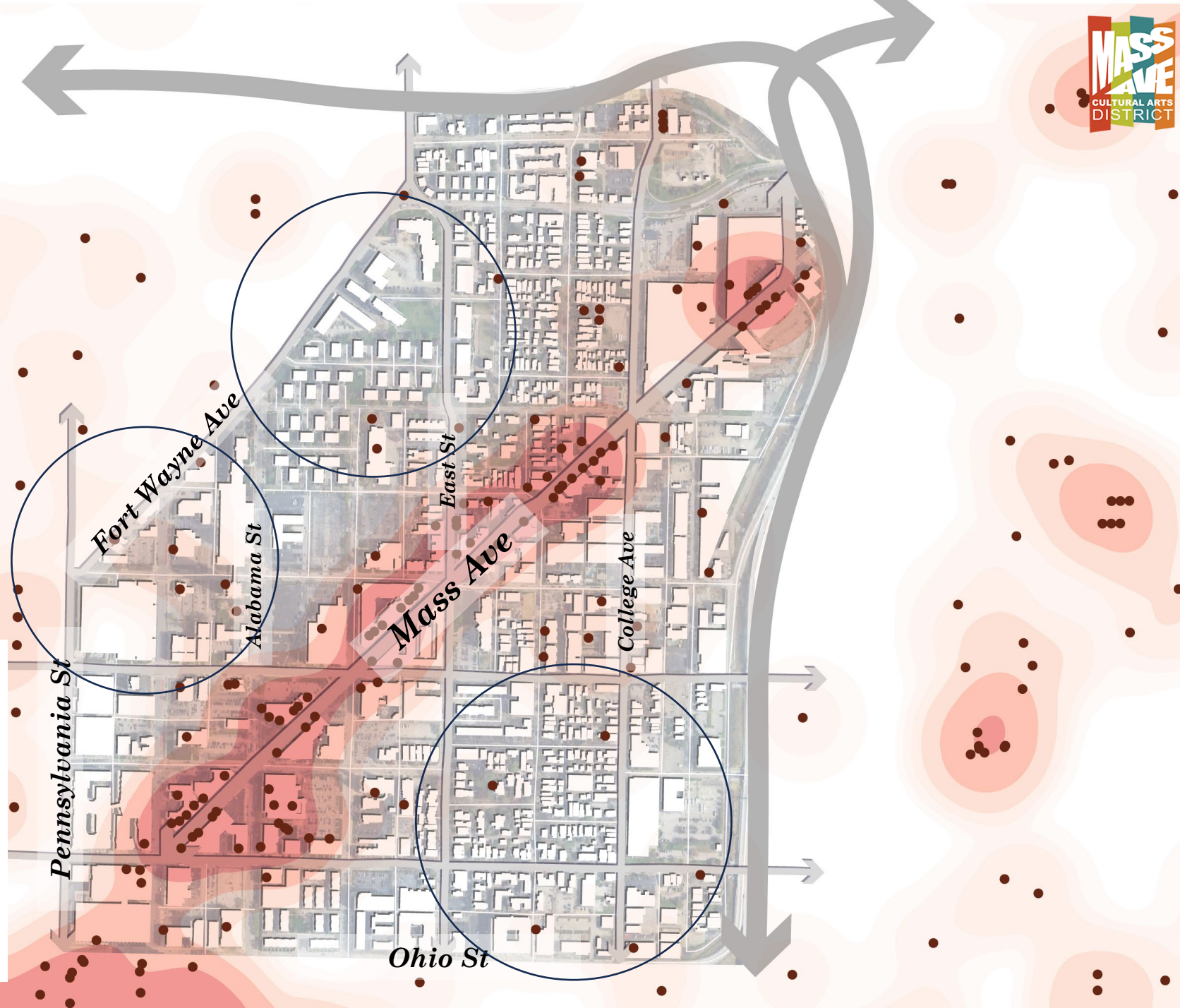
- (less amenities)



+ (more amenities)

OpenStreetMap, the community-maintained map database, covering everyday destinations from cafés and theaters to libraries and pharmacies..

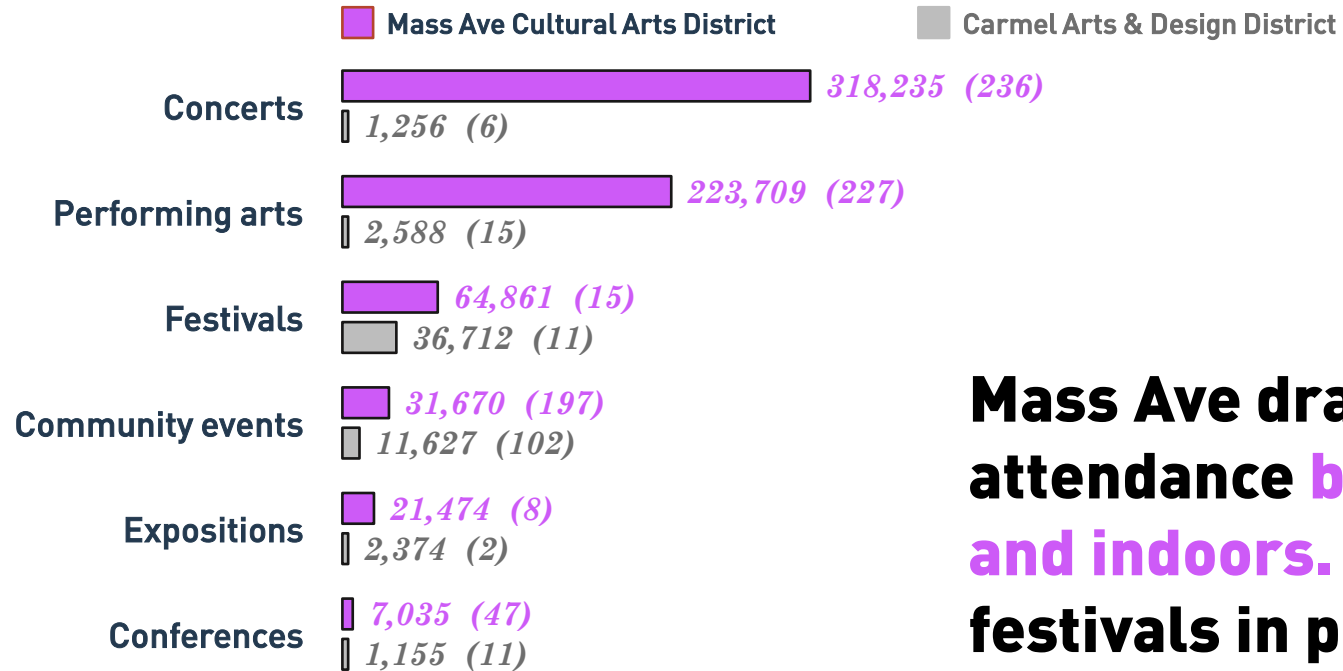
MASS AVE INEAT PLAN



Current Activity



Event Attendance by Type, 2025 — Mass Ave vs. Carmel (Placer.ai; attendees, events in parentheses)



Mass Ave draws 12× Carmel's event attendance but 81% of it is ticketed and indoors. Two-thirds of Carmel's is festivals in public space.

Total: 732 events/667,202 attendees vs. 148 events/55,812 attendees

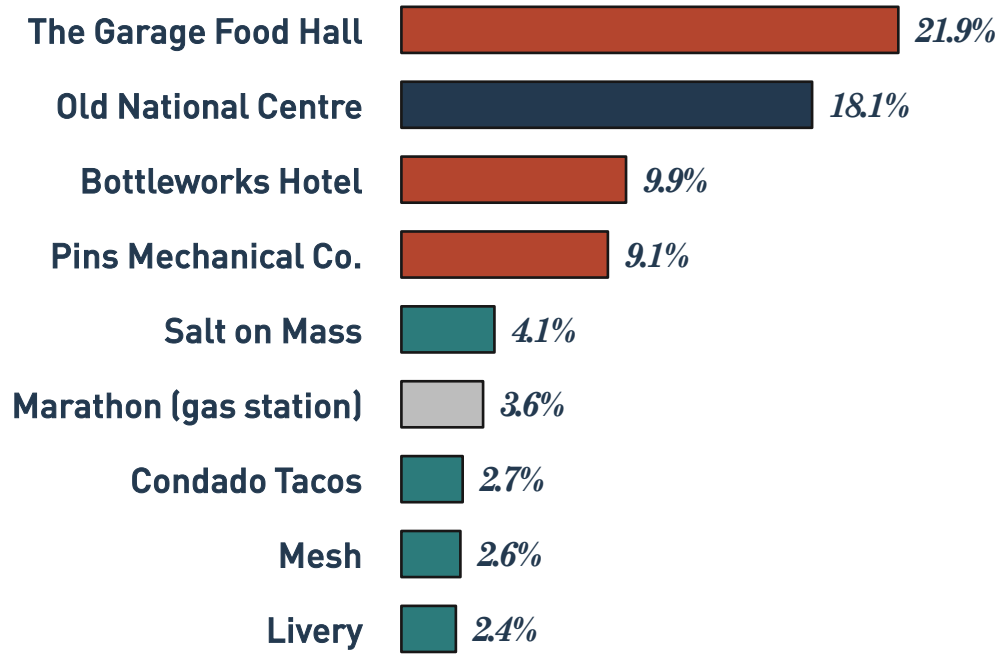
Placer.ai Market Events reports, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025, for the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District and Carmel Arts and Design District market polygons; attendance is Placer's modeled estimate per event. Sports games omitted (2 events / 218 attendees vs. 1 / 100). All bars share one scale.

Current Activity



Visitors' Top Places, 2025 — Share of District Visitors Who Stopped There (Placer.ai)

MASS AVE — TOP PLACES



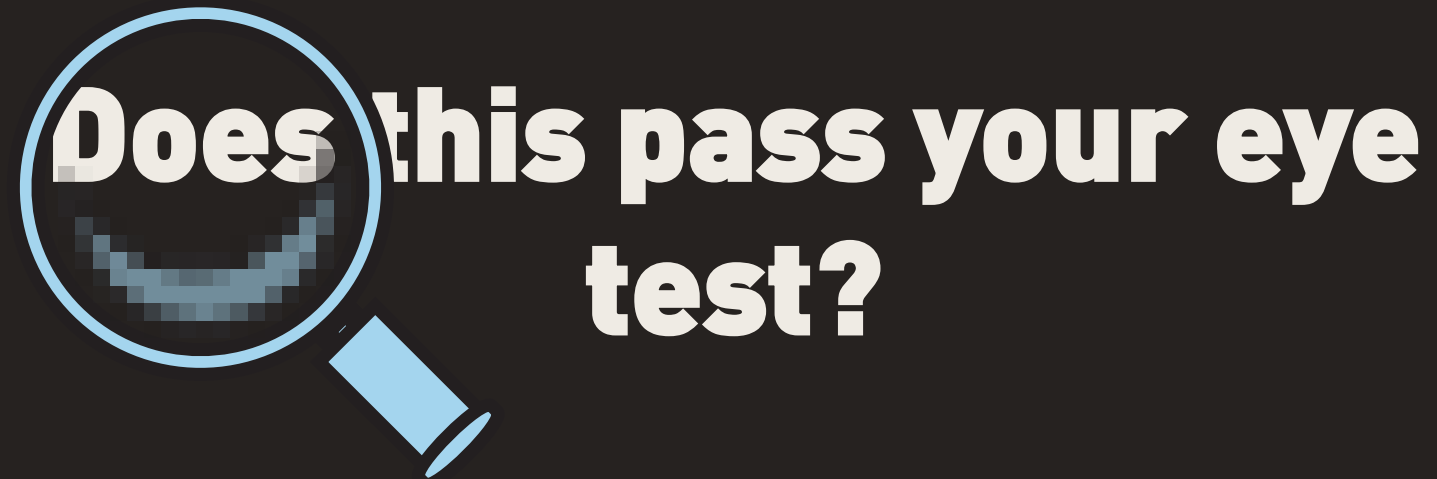
CARMEL — SAME RANK

- #1 *Midtown Plaza* · 16.7%
- #2 *Bub's Burgers & Ice Cream* · 10.1%
- #3 *The Goat* · 8.4%
- #4 *Monterey Cuisine* · 7.8%
- #5 *Penn & Beech Candle Co.* · 6.5%
- #6 *Circle K (gas station)* · 6.5%
- #7 *Java House* · 5.5%
- #8 *Juniper on Main* · 5.4%
- #9 *Bazbeaux Pizza* · 5.1%

■ Bottleworks District (north end) ■ Old National Centre (ticketed venue) ■ Historic Mass Ave spine

Placer.ai Market Visitors reports, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025, audience type = inbound visitor. Visits and visitors are Placer's modeled estimates from mobile location data; YoY compares to Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024. Percentages = share of the district's visitors observed at each place; a visitor can be counted at several places. Duplicate "full site" listings for gas stations omitted.

Four anchors at Mass ends capture visitors. The spine has inconsistent activity. Carmel's #1 draw is a central public plaza.



Arts + Culture Framework

Design and policy targets:

- **Stand up the programming engines** a Mass Ave Cultural Center as production home base, leverage the District Theatre, IF, and Athenaeum
- **Make live performance the district's signature** with a single busking and pop-up permit program, a network of micro-stages, and incentives for Chatterbox-scale venues
- **Leave no dark windows**, a facade activation program that fills empty space with immersive projected art, alley galleries, and year-round window displays
- **Create a “Museum Without Walls”** providing opportunities for existing institutions to host pop-up replicas of museum exhibits within the Ave
- **Highlighting and wayfinding for existing public art** themed to each block of Mass

Arts + Culture Framework

GATEWAY MONUMENTS



- **Define the geography and personality of the District**
- **Welcome visitors**
- **Reflect district values**

ART + DESIGN FUNCTION



- **Shade structures**
- **Street crossings**
- **Building façades**
- **Fountains + water access**

TRUTH-TELLING



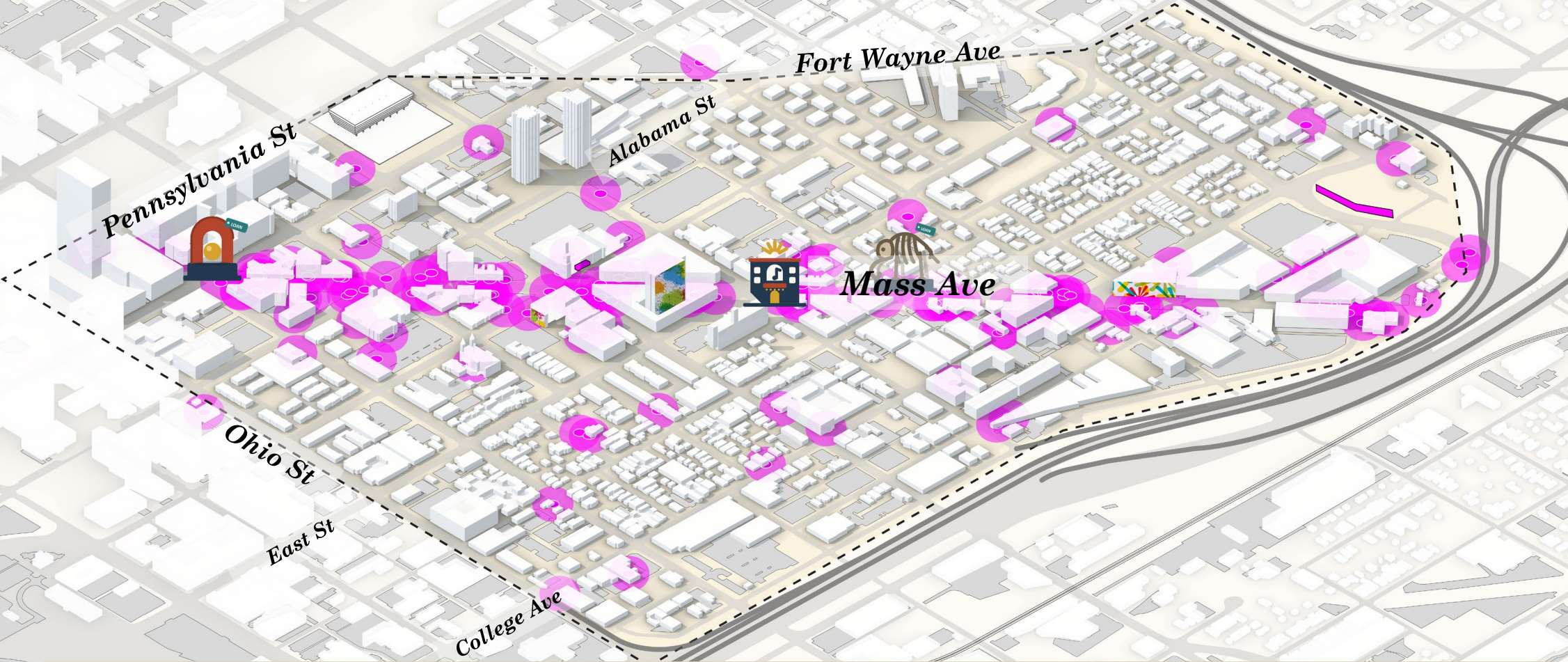
- **Highlighting the depth of history in the area**
- **Guided and audio-tour connect to stories across generations**
- **Curated music and physical milestones**

XBE ENTREPRENEUR SUPPORT



- **Creative contractors as economic drivers**
- **Support cohort of small business owners, artists, curators who can become ambassadors as their careers advance**

Arts + Culture Framework





Existing public art



Projected façades
(not specified locations)



Mass Ave Cultural Center
(not specified location)



Museum Without Walls
(not specified locations)



----- District boundary

Arts + Culture Framework

Key Art and Culture Interventions:

Potential locations:

- Bottleworks
- Athenaeum
- The Polygon on Mass
- Viewfinders
- 10th/Mass/Payne Connection
- Block by block
- Corner parking lots for markets

Potential Planning and Implementation Partners:



ARTSCOUNCIL
OF INDIANAPOLIS

NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATIONS



PRIVATE
LANDOWNERS



historic urban neighborhoods
of INDIANAPOLIS

**GANG
GANG**



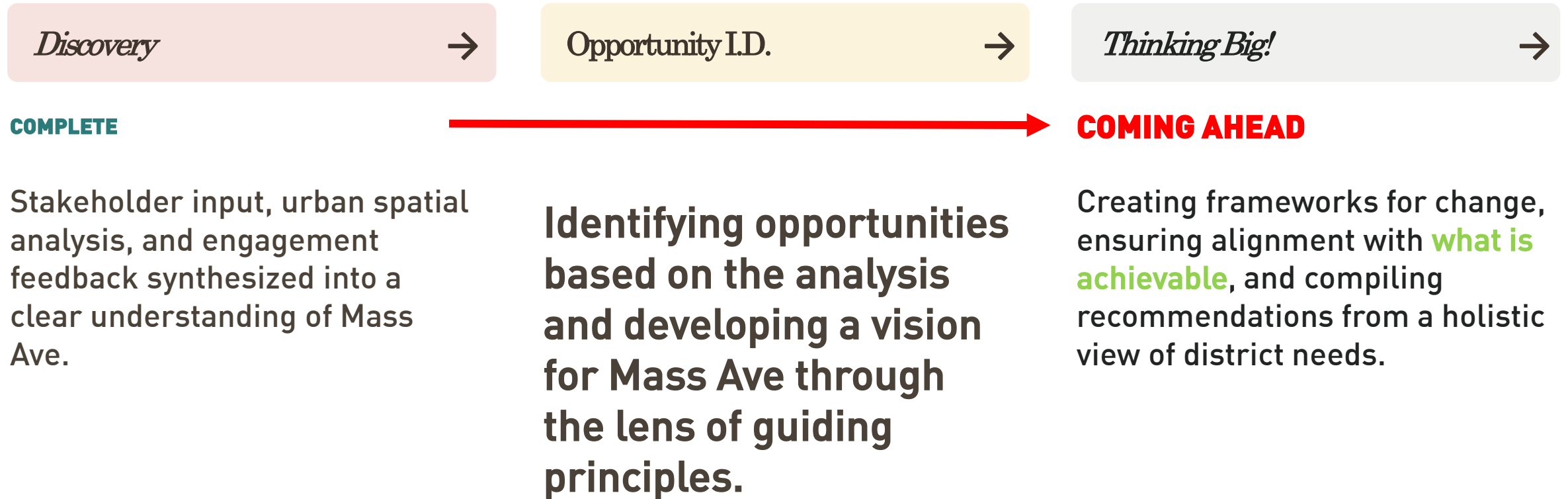
LOCAL
FOUNDATIONS

AND MANY OTHERS...

Beginning to think of Implementation...

Strategic Framework

Where We Are in the Process



**...how do we pay for all of
that?**

Funding the Plan *The Revenue Gap*

What District Management Costs — Idealized Joint Revenue Goal, MACAD + Merchants Association (annual)

\$21.5K

2026 MEMBERSHIP REVENUE

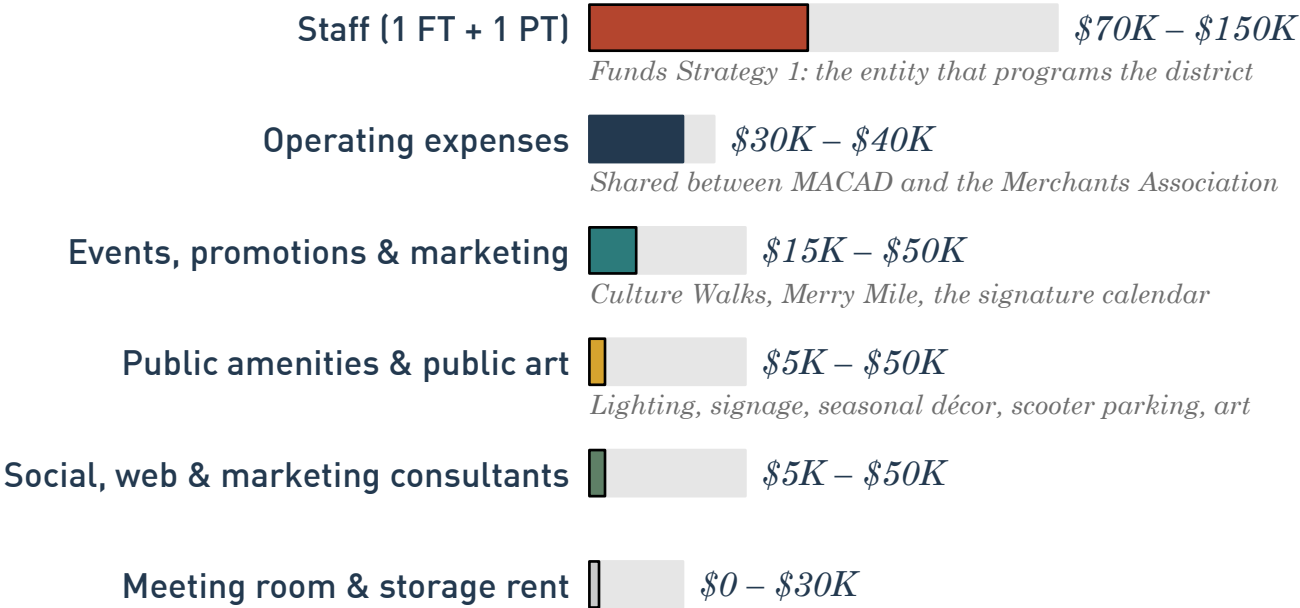
110 members at ~\$195; covers marketing and a volunteer-run operation

\$125–350K

WHAT A STAFFED DISTRICT NEEDS

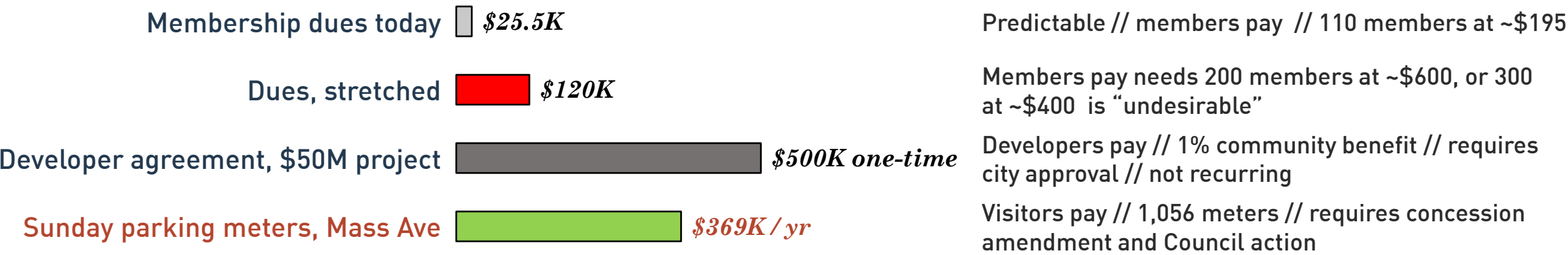
One full-time and one part-time staff, amenities, programming, and space — at least 4× today’s revenue

Source: MACAD, summary of Merchants Association meetings, July–September 2026, and the 2026 Merchants Association budget. Figures are MACAD’s own estimates and ranges (±), not audited or modeled by Proformus. Solid bar = low end of MACAD’s range; light bar = high end. Plus 10% contingency.



Funding the Plan *Three Revenue Options, Compared*

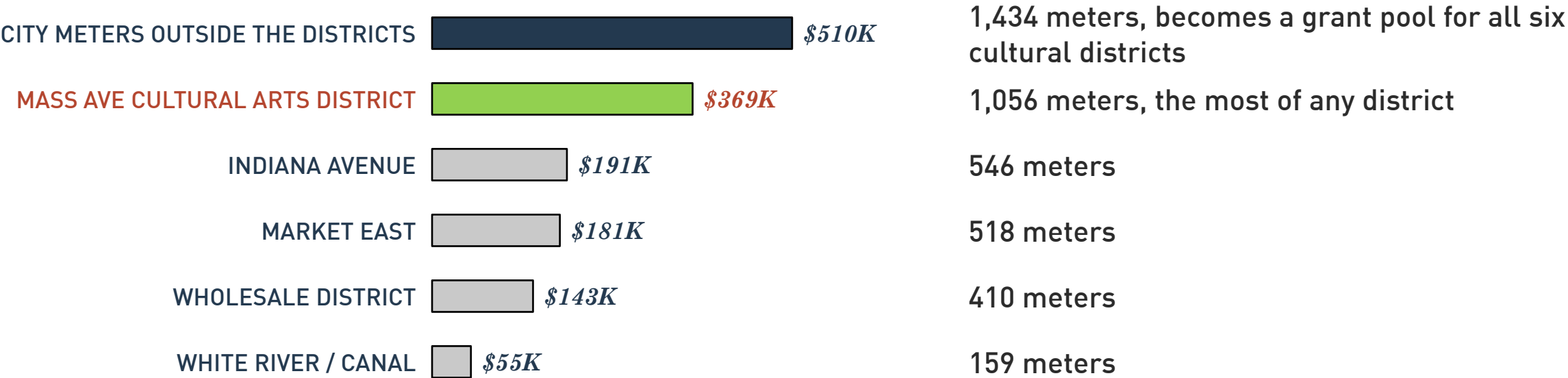
Estimated Revenue by Option — annual unless noted (MACAD estimates, September 2026)



Only Sunday meters reach the goal with predictable, visitor-paid revenue and the decision sits with the city, not the members.

Funding the Plan *Sunday Parking by District*

Estimated Net Sunday Meter Revenue by Cultural District (MACAD estimates; # of meters at right)

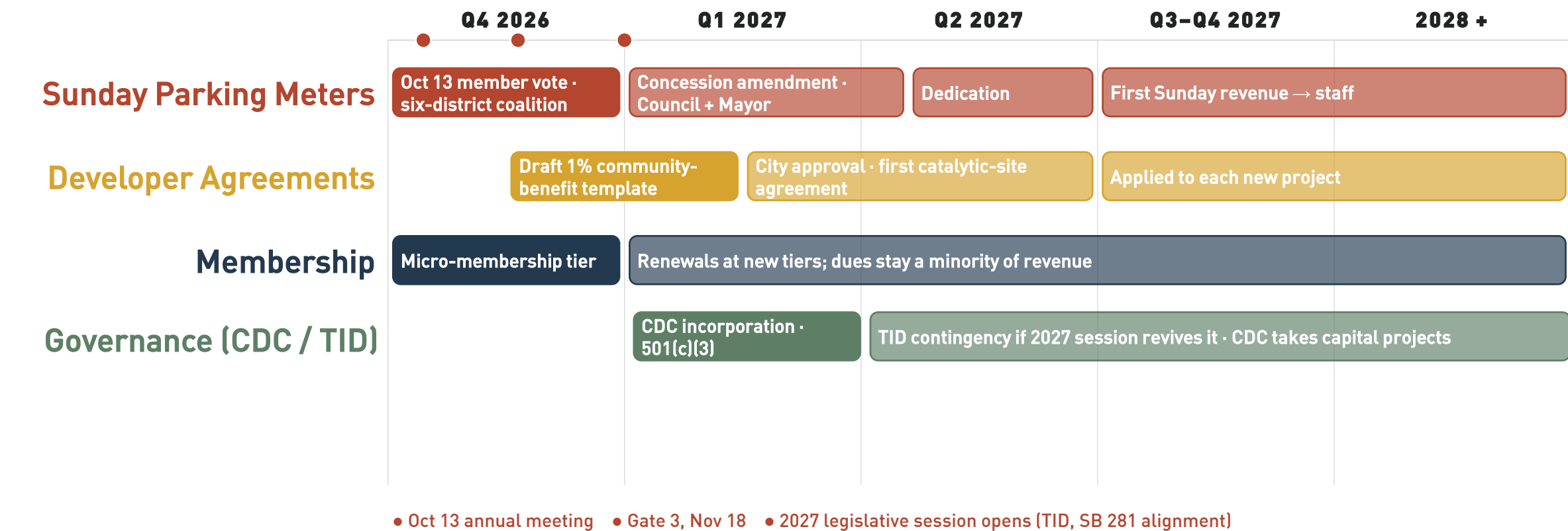


Total across all meters: **≈ \$1.45M net per year** after ≈\$960K in operator fees

Mass Ave has more meters than any cultural district (1,056) and would net an estimated \$369K a year on Sundays, about 14× today's dues.

Funding the Plan *Implementation Steps*

Five Funding Tracks, Sequenced — from the October 13 member vote to a permanent district revenue base



What's Next

Sept – December 2026



Mark your Calendar!

Upcoming Dates



Final Celebration and Plan Reveal!

Thursday, Dec 3, 4 PM

Indy Fringe Theatre



Mass Ave Next Vision Plan

Advisory Council 9/17/2026

Thank you!

Follow along at next.massaveindy.org

...what's **next?**