

City of Excelsior
Notice of Work Session
of the Excelsior City Council

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Excelsior will hold its regular work session on Monday, April 7, 2025 at 5:30 P.M. in-person at 106 Center Street, Excelsior, MN 55331 – Entrance is located on Center Street. The agenda for the meeting is attached hereto.

Members of the public may attend the work session either in person or by joining via Zoom either online or by telephone at:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88526566715>

Meeting ID: 885 2656 6715

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,88526566715# US

+13092053325,,88526566715# US

Dial by your location

- +1 305 224 1968 US

City of Excelsior
City Council Work Session

Agenda

Monday, April 7, 2025

106 Center Street, Excelsior, MN 55331 – Entrance is located on Center Street

5:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
3. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Verbal Update City Hall
 - b. 2025 City Work Plan
 - c. Small Area Plan for South Water Street
4. ADJOURNMENT

Item	Action Steps	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Council Question
Good Neighbor Guidelines	Review guidelines and application form										Can this item be delay to 2026?
Residential Zoning Amendments	Explore and update lot dimensions on large parcels (greater than 10,000 sf) and accessory dwelling units										Can this item be delay to 2026?
HPC Public Relations											
<u>Objective:</u> The HPC will have one public relations initiative underway by the end of the year	The HPC identifies and implements one public relations initiative										
Reviewing HPC Guidelines											
<u>Objective:</u> HPC will complete a refresh of their guidelines by early 2026	Identify/apply for grants to retain a consultant										
	Create and carry out work plan to refresh the guidelines										
Public Works Department											
Item	Action Steps	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Council Question
Prioritizing Remaining Projects in The Commons											
<u>Objective:</u> Council will approve plan to prioritize remaining Commons projects	CC and C4C have a joint work session to review and prioritize remaining projects in The Commons		CC								
	Staff coordinates with PNR, CC, and C4C on implementation plan/strategies for remaining projects.										
Downtown Beautification											
<u>Objective:</u> The City successfully manages the downtown beautification program and the are incorporated into the 2026 budget	Planters and hanging baskets are installed										
	The working group selects winter decor										
	The costs for downtown beautification are included in the 2026 budget and the working group dissolves										
	Install winter decor in the downtown area										

Item	Action Steps	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Council Question
Capital Improvement Plan											
<u>Objective:</u> The Council approves and uses the CIP to make capital and budget decisions (city hall, infrastructure,etc)	Staff develops a recommended framework for the CIP										
	The CC reviews staff's recommendation			CC							
	The updated CIP is incorporated into the 2026 budget										
Update the Tree Ordinance											
<u>Objective:</u> Update tree ordinance to ensure tree preservation, replacement, and best practices	Staff applied for grant funding to retain a consultant										
	Consultant and staff review and improve ordinance										
	The PC reviews ordinance recommendations						PC				
	The CC reviews and approves changes to the ordinance										
Parks and Recreation Commission											
Item	Action Steps	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Council Question
Commons Use Policy											
<u>Objective:</u> The City will have a policy that clearly guides the use of The Commons	CC reviews and provides feedback on the draft policy	CC									Should a special event policy specific to The Commons be developed by the PNR Commission?
	The PNR refines policy										
	CC reviews and approves policy										
Excelsior-Studer Park											What is the objective for this item? Should PNR consider new uses for this park?
Item	Action Steps	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Council Question

Programming The Commons			Does the Council want more programming at the Commons? If so, what does that look like? For example, movies in the park, more weddings, winter activities, etc.?
Oak Hill Cemetery Improvements	PNR is actively working on the potential of the installation of a columbarium to create more spaces and generate revenue.		The needed cemetery improvements have already been identified, should PNR work on creating an implementation plan?

* Top Priority



MEMORANDUM

Re: 2025 City Work Plan

Date: April 7, 2025

To: City Council

From: Kristi Luger, City Manager

The Council held their goal setting sessions at the January 6 and 21 work sessions. At the end of these sessions, the Council selected three objectives as their top priorities and identified other items they want to address in 2025. At the March 19 work session, the Council identified their top goals for each of the Commissions.

To help the Council think more broadly about annual accomplishments, staff developed a work plan that incorporates both City Council and City Commission goals. The work plan provides an outline of the action steps each item requires, the department responsible for the item, and the completion timeline.

The purpose of this work session is for the Council to review the work plan and answer any remaining questions that staff have on the items.

Attachments: Work Plan

MEMORANDUM

Re: | Work Session: South Water St Small Area Plan |

Date: | April 7, 2025 |

To: | City Council |

From: | Julia Mullin, Community Development Director |

BACKGROUND

The Small Area Plan for South Water Street is almost complete! At the last meeting of the previous City Council, on December 16, 2024, staff presented the draft plan to Council with Planning Commission's recommendations for change. The Small Area Plan is important, and we hired a consultant and invested time in its development so that we will have it as guidance for future development proposals or other proposed changes in the south end of Water Street. The Plan will help us review a potential PUD application we might receive and will provide us with a set of objectives and ideas to share with a potential applicant so they know what the City desires in this area of the city.

(The December 16th staff memo that provided background on the Small Area Plan is attached.)

NEXT STEPS

Today, the draft plan is marked up by hand, which is not ideal, with the Planning Commission's recommendations. Before asking the consultant to update it for Council action, staff is looking for further direction from the City Council.

The Planning Commission's recommended changes are summarized as follows:

1) The Planning Commission was concerned that illustrations in the plan show development concepts that the City has not approved and may not approve. They are concerned these illustrations will send the message that what's illustrated in the plan would be approved by the City. The Planning Commission recommended removing these illustrations and replacing them with images of what exists today in the study area or with an illustration of a development very similar to what is there today. Staff recommends leaving the illustrations and adding language to clarify that these are illustrations only and not representative of concepts that have city approval. These are not approved designs; they are suggestive. The value of the illustrations is that they generate creative approaches to the potential sites and help us envision the kinds of development the city wants or does not want.

2) The Planning Commission was concerned that many of the proposed strategies in the plan are too specific and prescribe solutions that may not actually be what the city wants. The Planning Commission recommended replacing the specific strategies with higher level, more general objectives. Staff recommends adding the higher level objectives that the Planning Commission identified, which are very useful, and then indicating that the strategies are examples of how to meet the strategies. They are not prescriptive, just illustrative, and they would not necessarily be approved by the City. The value of the strategies is that they demonstrate ways to meet desired objectives.

A list of the handwritten, marked-up changes in the plan is included with this staff memo.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION

It is recommended that the Council provide direction:

- 1) Remove from the plan illustrations and specific strategies described above, OR
- 2) Leave as is and add Planning Commission objectives and explanatory language to indicate that illustrations/strategies are possibilities and not approved direction.
- 3) Have consultant update the plan accordingly, and with any other changes the CC wants.
- 4) Staff will bring a final plan back to the CC for action in May.

Summary of Planning Commission recommended edits to the Small Area Plan

1.	On cover and on page 2	Don't want illustrations that show rendering of a specific development that is not there today; thinks it means we would approve it.
2.	Page 3	# E. change from: Work with Hennepin Co. to conduct a 4 to 3 lane conversion of Water and Oak Street intersection TO work with Hennepin Co. to review Water and Oak Street intersection with goal to make more pedestrian friendly.
3.	Page 3	Add strategy: Protect school and playground from too much mass and scale on the bank properties.
4.	Page 5	Replace recommendations with language that is more general: • Improve connections to trail. • Study existing traffic patterns and recommend improvements. • Increase safety for kids walking to and from school. • Align parcels' curb cuts to reduce confusion and improve safety. • Improve safety at school drop-off area on Geroge St. • Increase pedestrian and bike connectivity throughout study area. • Do not increase traffic on Geroge St. or around the school.
5.	Page 6	Replace #A and #C with: • Study this intersection with goal to improve pedestrian experience. • Require traffic study as part of any redevelopment proposal. • Study elementary school traffic and improve circulation and safety. • Highlight and acknowledge that this end of Water Street is the entrance/gateway to Excelsior.
6.	Page 7	Too specific. Replace with:

		• Find opportunities for shared parking. • Create public spaces. • Create mixed-use development. • Commercial on ground floor, on Water Street • Strategize with elementary school to address traffic concerns. • Make access to and from school as safe as possible. • Require coordinated development on the bank parcels, not consolidated development. • Activate this end of Water Street with open space, park space as part of a redevelopment. • Build structures that have architectural detail and complement Historic District.
7.	Page 8	Replace with themes: • Enlarge space along regional trail for bicyclists' and pedestrians' needs. • Enlarge or create public spaces in study area.
8.	Page 9	Focus Area: Design Principles Add more language: 1.a. If sites are developed together, find opportunities for shared parking and new public spaces. 2. Do not overshadow school and playground with building height. 4. Ensure side and back of any redevelopment has details and welcomes" people to Excelsior. 4.Triangular parcel at intersection is publicly-owned. Improve it. Don't put all burden on developer to create "gateway" in this area.
9.	Page 10	Change names of the alternatives to: Commercial, Mixed Use, and Mixed Use
10.	Page 11	Remove visual. Don't want to imply that we support this design. Replace with visual from Alternative 1 which is generally how the sites are today.
11.	Page 12	Remove these last three pages (the 3 Alternatives) from the plan. Do not recommend endorsing one of these alternatives. Put them in a larger background document and call it the "Working Document".

Attachment

South Water Street Small Area Plan – Summary Report, Excelsior, MN (with Planning Commission recommended edits)

Summary Report with Comments from the Planning Commission

South Water Street Small Area Plan - Summary Report

Excelsior, MN

December 4, 2024



Prepared for:
City of Excelsior, MN
Hennepin County, MN

Prepared by:
Bolton & Menk

Replace - usedrawing of what
exists today

Summary Report Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....1

Plan and Recommendations 4

Acknowledgements

- CITY OF EXCELSIOR
- Todd Carlson, Mayor
- Jennifer Caron, Councilmember
- Lou Dierking, Councilmember
- Ann Hersman, Councilmember
- Rob Tyler, Councilmember
-
- Andrew Punch, Planning Commission
- Tim Bildsoe, Planning Commission
- Heather Johnson, Planning Commission
- Bill Muenzberg, Planning Commission
- Matt Neale, Planning Commission
- Kara Tyler, Planning Commission
-
- Kristi Luger, City Manager
- Julia Mullin, Community Development Director
-
- HENNEPIN COUNTY HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- Ryan Kelley, Community Development Manager
- Laura Fredrick, Principal Planning Analyst
- Nathan Hood, Senior Planning Analyst



Executive Summary

Executive Summary

How can South Water Street be improved through redevelopment, design goals, and improved connections to become a loved, valued, and identifying part of Excelsior?

Downtown Excelsior is a special place. In a region with few walkable downtowns, Excelsior stands out for it's compact scale, lakefront location, and blend of historic charm and new development.

The appeal of Excelsior lies in the human-scale of its buildings and blocks, its internal connectivity, the accessible public spaces along the water, and the economy of water-based recreation.

"North" Water street, the portion within 2 blocks of Lake Excelsior is an Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While this designation grants the area protections from demolition and redevelopment, it also limits its development potential.

With limited redevelopment potential within the Historic District, "South" Water Street below 3rd St is likely to attract development attention. Underutilized properties, a gateway location, and immediate proximity to nearby amenities render South Water Street a prime area for redevelopment.

This plan, therefore, provides design guidance for the city and developers for the South Water Street area regarding how buildings, open spaces, and transportation infrastructure can be rearranged to accomplish city goals, while enhancing Excelsiors identity. As such, this plan intends to:

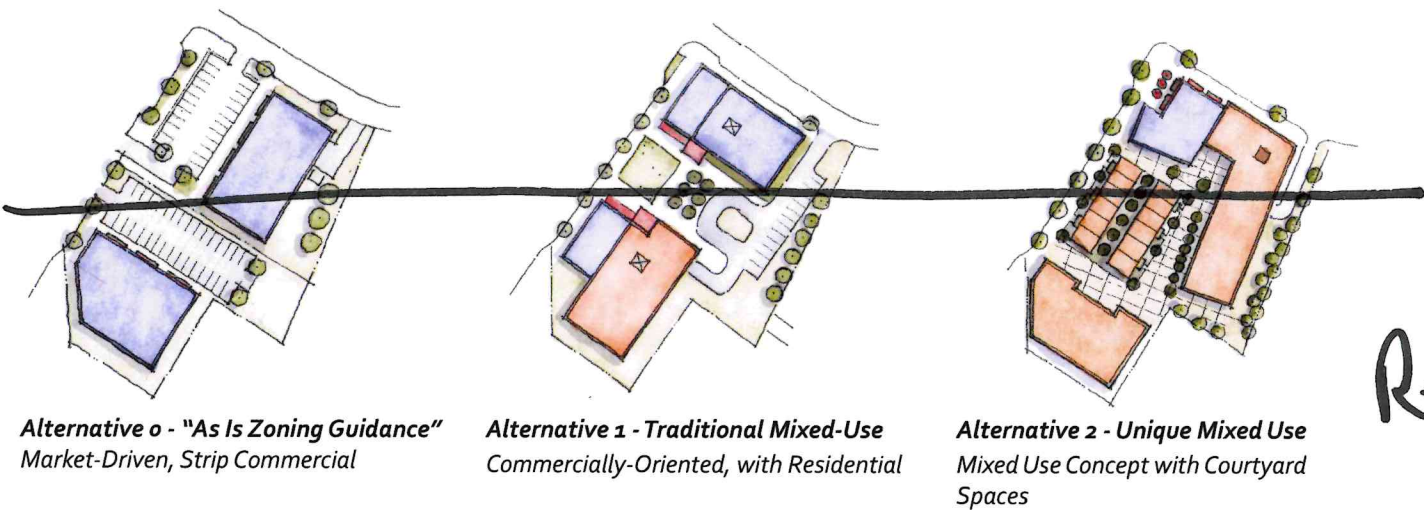
- Extend the urban retail fabric of North Water Street south to Oak St, specifically by providing design guidance for the two bank properties along the east side of Water St in the study area.
- Connect downtown with neighborhoods to the south.
- Enhance the Water St / Oak St intersection as a key gateway into downtown, and improve multimodal safety of the intersection.

To realize this purpose, the plan evaluates conditions and opportunities through the lens of Development, Open Space, and Connectivity, ascribing design recommendations throughout the South Water St area. Similarly, for the two bank sites, "by-right" development concepts are identified to proactively equip the city with guidance it can use to negotiate quality outcomes of future development of the sites.



Recommendations for the South Water Street Study Area (above), include development concepts, public space enhancements, and supportive multimodal connectivity opportunities.

Additional attention was given to the "Bank Sites" (C-1, right), to provide refined development and design guidance currently allowed by the city's zoning code, while drawing the design DNA of north Water St south, and better connecting to adjacent neighborhoods.



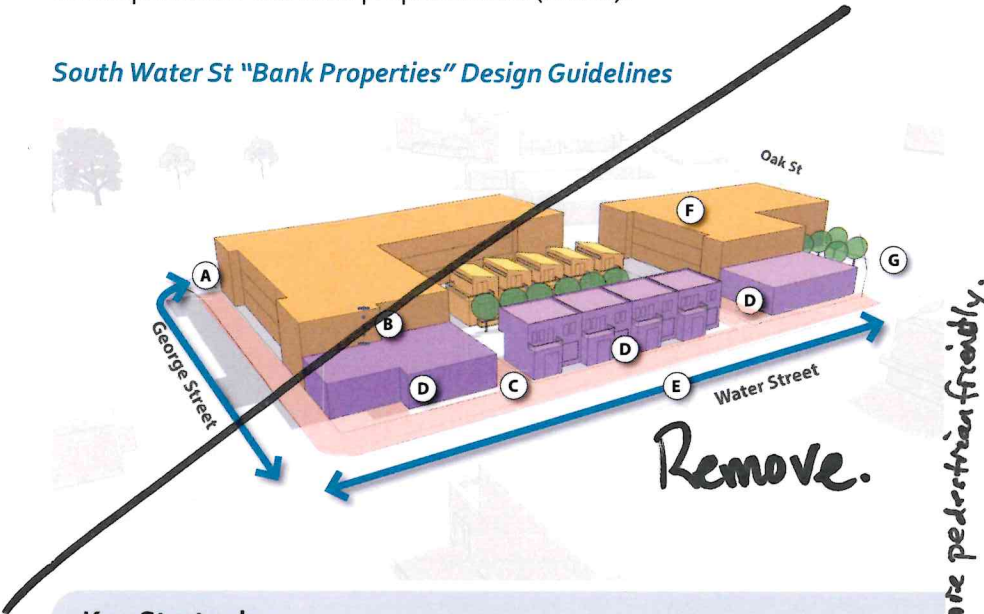
Not recommending these designs, so they should be removed from summary or more clearly explained.

Executive Summary

Implementing the Vision

Implementing recommendations from the Water Street Small Area Plan is expected to be a multifaceted, multi-year effort, requiring coordination amongst the City, private owners, community and business leaders, and other public agencies. To assist the City of Excelsior with realizing the plan vision, a series of implementation steps were identified, organized around the geographic areas of focus (right), and a series of design guidelines were development for the bank properties site (below).

South Water St "Bank Properties" Design Guidelines

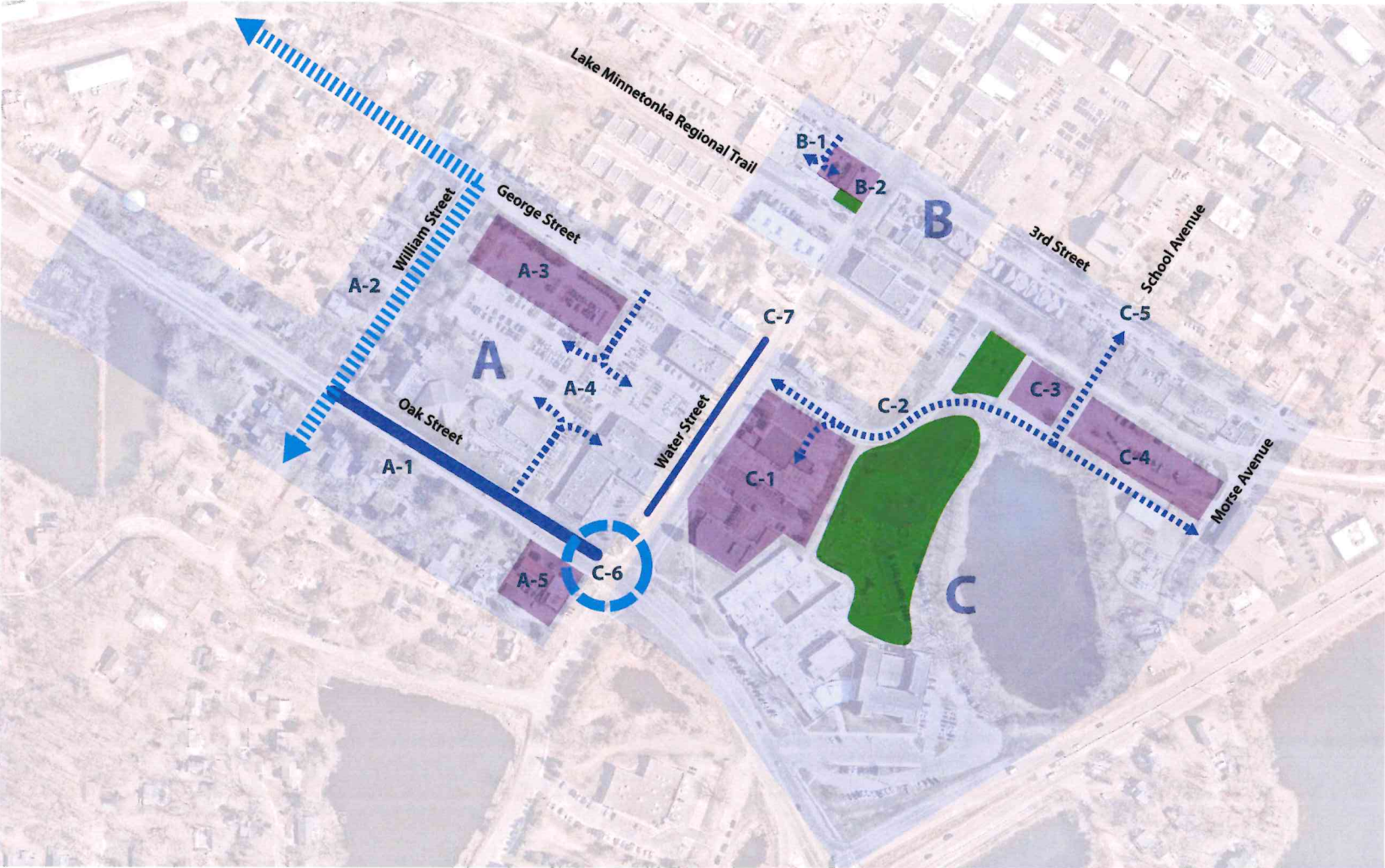


Key Strategies

- A. Use shared parking to maximize site efficiency.
- B. Height, is scaled back from Water St, allowing the street frontage
- C. Create a pedestrian-oriented sidewalk and public realm along the development
- D. Focus active uses such as retail, office, service gallery, workshop or similar uses along the Water St frontage
- E. Work with Hennepin County (due to their ownership of Oak Street) to conduct a 4 to 3 lane conversion of Water St and Oak Street intersection
- F. Guide residential uses to the back or interior of the site, as required by the zoning district
- G. Enhance the gateway presence at the Water St and Oak St intersection

Add H. Protect school + playground from too much mass + scale on the bank properties.

Areas of Focus Implementation Plan



Area A

- A-1: Oak St Design and Public Realm
- A-2: Designated William St and George St Bike Route
- A-3: Church Parking Redevelopment
- A-4: Consolidated Oak St/ George St Access
- A-5: Oak St Redevelopment

Area B

- B-1: Consolidate Access to 3rd St
- B-2: Water St Redevelopment
- B-3 Trail Amenity Expansion

Area C

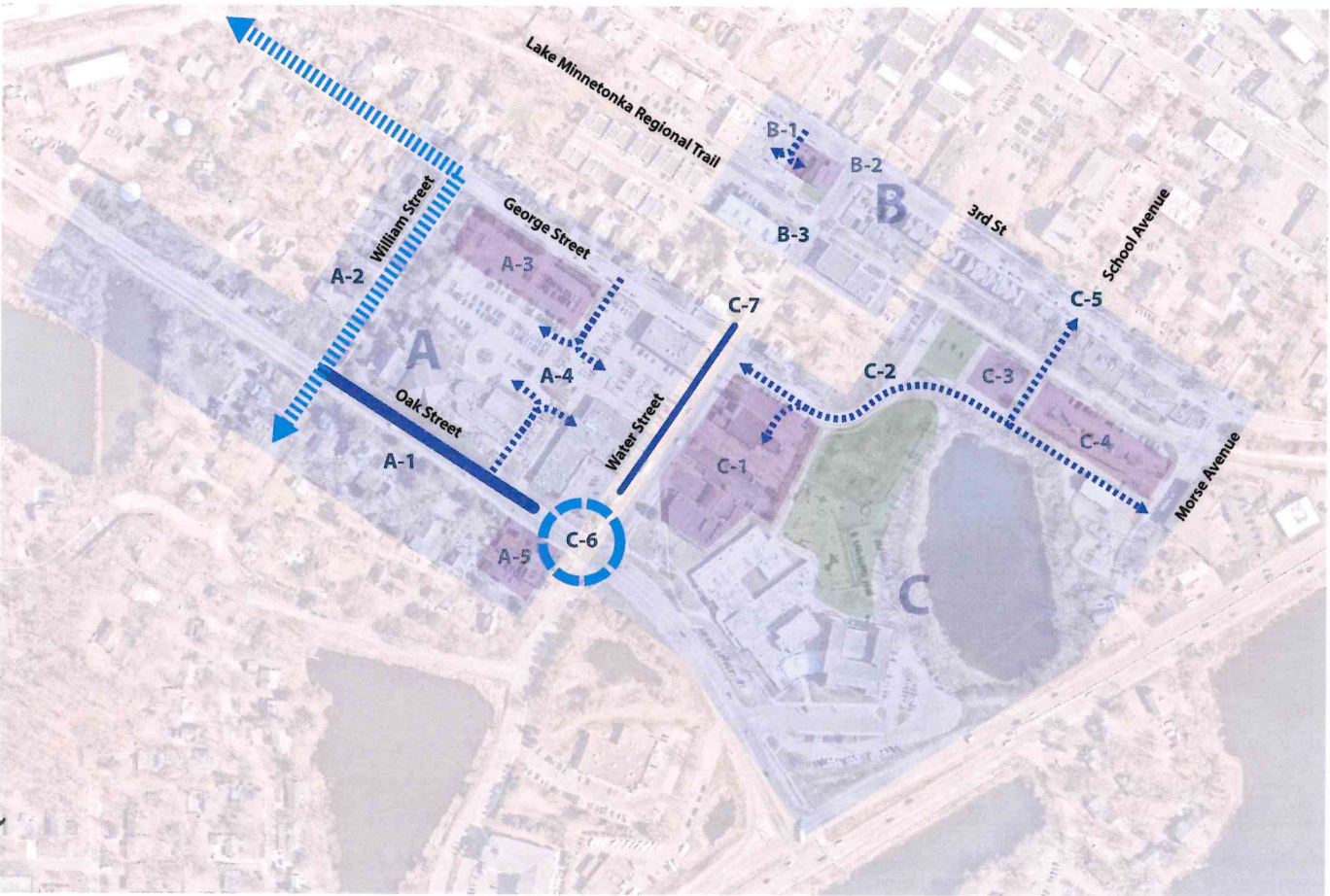
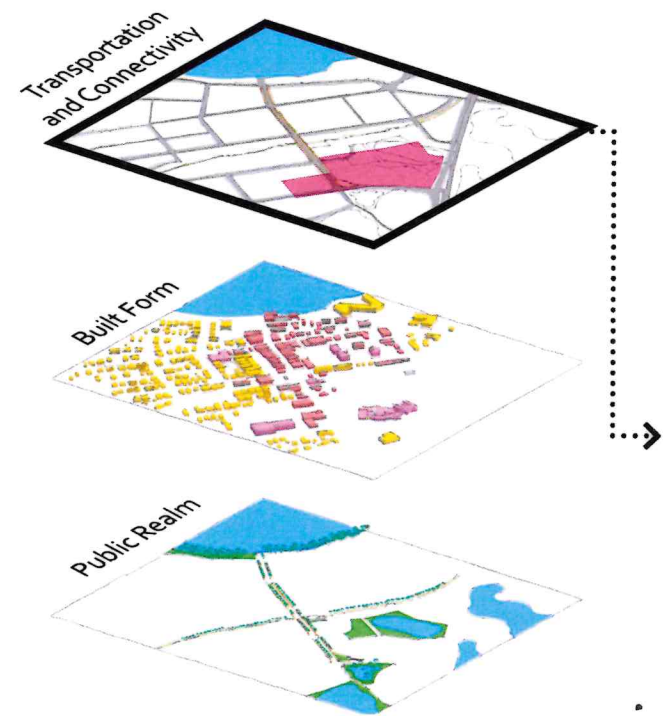
- C-1: South Water St Redevelopment
- C-2: George St Extension
- C-3&4: George St Extension Redevelopment Site
- C-5: School Ave Extension
- C-6: Oak St / Water St Intersection Redesign
- C-7 Water St 4-to-3 Lane Conversion



The Plan for South Water Street

Study Area Recommendations

Connectivity



C-6 Oak St / Water St Intersection Redesign

C-5 As part of an opportunity-driven development scenario, extend George St to Morse St, with a 3rd St connection, to enhance area connectivity and circulation.

C-6 Embrace the gateway nature of the Oak/Water St intersection through enhanced monumentation, signage, and wayfinding, Address safety concerns by implementing a 4-to-3 land conversation on the west approach of Oak St into the intersection, and removing the right turn lane of the east approach of Oak St. adding a pedestrian refuge and

C-7 Modify Water Street (between George Street and Oak Street) by adding on street parking on east side, eliminating dedicated right turn lane to George Street, and widening the sidewalk. Convene conversations with Excelsior Elementary towards strategies to mitigate drop off / pick up vehicle stacking onto Water St.

- Themes :
- Improve connections to Trail.
 - Improve safety at school drop-off area on George St.
 - Increase pedestrian + bike connectivity throughout study area.
 - Do not increase traffic on George St. or around the school.
 - Study existing traffic patterns + recommend improvements.
 - Increase safety for kids going to + from school.

South Water Street Small Area Plan: Excelsior MN

Replace with Themes

- A-1 Convert the shoulders along Oak St between William St and Water St, into 6' planted boulevards with streetscape elements between curb and sidewalk, to enhance multimodal connectivity, safety, and aesthetic quality for all users.
- A-2 Designate William St and the west portion of George St into a bike route, and add an on-street marking (via sharrow or dedicated lane) to provide a designated connector route from the neighborhoods south of Oak St with the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail.
- A-4 Consolidate the entrances into the parking lots behind Kowalski's, the Oppidan Building, and Mount

- Calvary Lutheran Church, to improve area circulation and safety, and reducing curb cuts on Water, George, and Oak St's
- B1- Work with property owners to reduce curb cuts on Water Street in favor of a shared access on 3rd Street
- B-3 Enhance the visibility of the Minnetonka Regional Trail crossing by adding additional placemaking and bike amenity features.
- C-2 Extends George St from Water St to Morse Ave, to provide greater area connectivity. Would be an opportunity-driven project to align with development of the C-3 / C-4 sites.

↑
these are too specific

Focus Area - Oak and Water Street Intersection

A Safe and Inviting Entrance

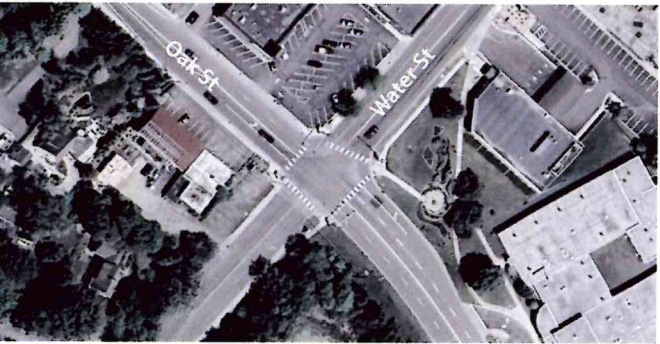
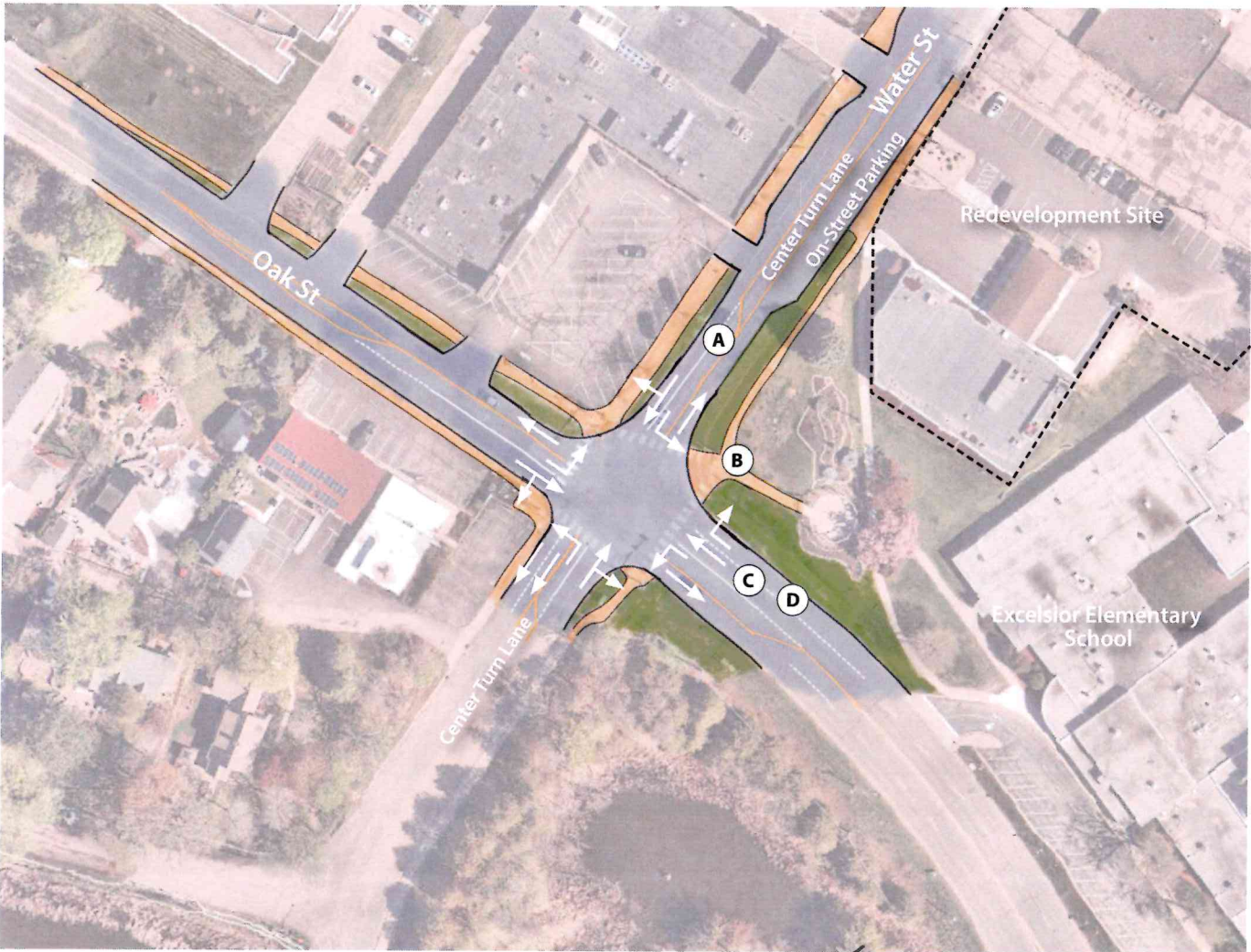
The intersection of Water and Oak Streets is a significant location within the city. It is both a major intersection into the city from Hwy 7, and the southern gateway into downtown Excelsior. In addition to vehicles travelers, the intersection is used by families from neighborhoods to the south waling to downtown, and by kids coming to Excelsior Elementary School.

The long crossing distances and lack of safe areas to stop while crossing (such as a pedestrian refuge), and lack of buffering for sidewalks, presents safety challenges for those crossing. This area of Water St and Oak St contain two to five lanes, and crossing distances of 48' - 60'. Add to this that most sidewalks at the intersection run back of curb, and the

There are approximately 14,000 vehicles per day who travel on Oak St to/from Hwy 7 - well under the capacity of the street's design capacity of 20,000 per day. This current usage likely contracts too during "off season" - notably also the time when school is in session and the number of kids crossing the intersection is highest.

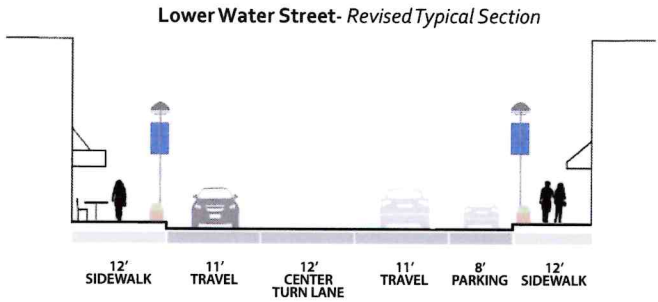
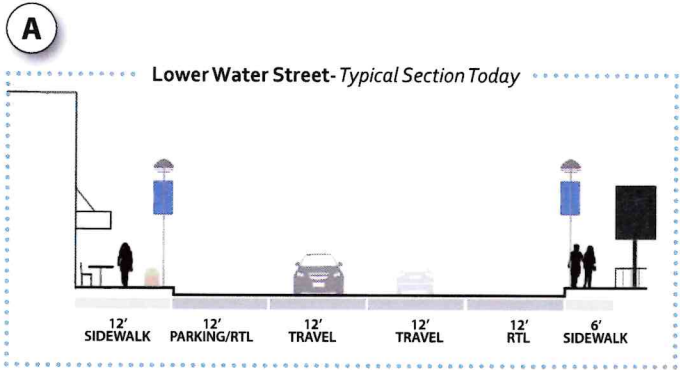
An alternative layout could right size the intersection to the traffic that is using it, particularly considering its year-round variations, while "humanizing" the scale towards a safer place to cross for all modes. Additionally, reducing the street width would provide additional space to establish a strong entry experience into the retail core of the city.

Removing just one lane from west-bound Oak Street reduces the crossing time more than 20%, (from approximately 14 sec to 11 sec). Removing one from Water St and pinching the corners could reduce crossing time by nearly 35%, (from approximately 14 sec to 9 seconds). In doing so, it also provides an additional 10-12 feet of space for a gateway feature, and/or improvements to the Excelsior Men's Garden Club garden, which is also a waiting area of school kids in the morning.



Oak St / Water St Intersection Today

- A. Transitions Water St to two lanes with a center turn lane, pinch the intersection corners, allow on-street parking to promote a calmer, pedestrian-oriented street, and add wider sidewalks to the east side of the street.
- B. Gateway feature opportunity to welcome people into downtown and improve the entry experience.
- C. Remove one through-lane on Oak St to improve crossing safety and "humanize" the scale.
- D. Keep the right turn lane onto Water St to preserve existing access and vehicle cueing space.

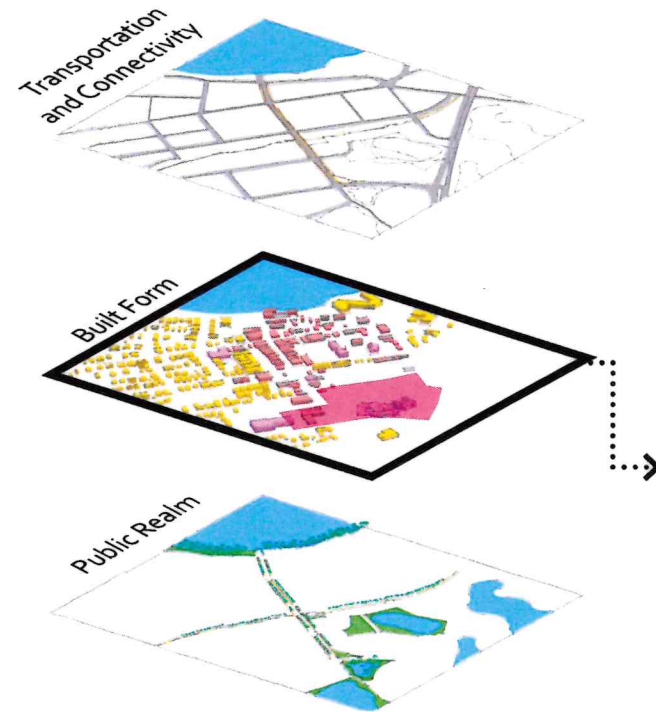


Gateway features can be simple (top left), include wayfinding (top right), or usable by the public (bottom).

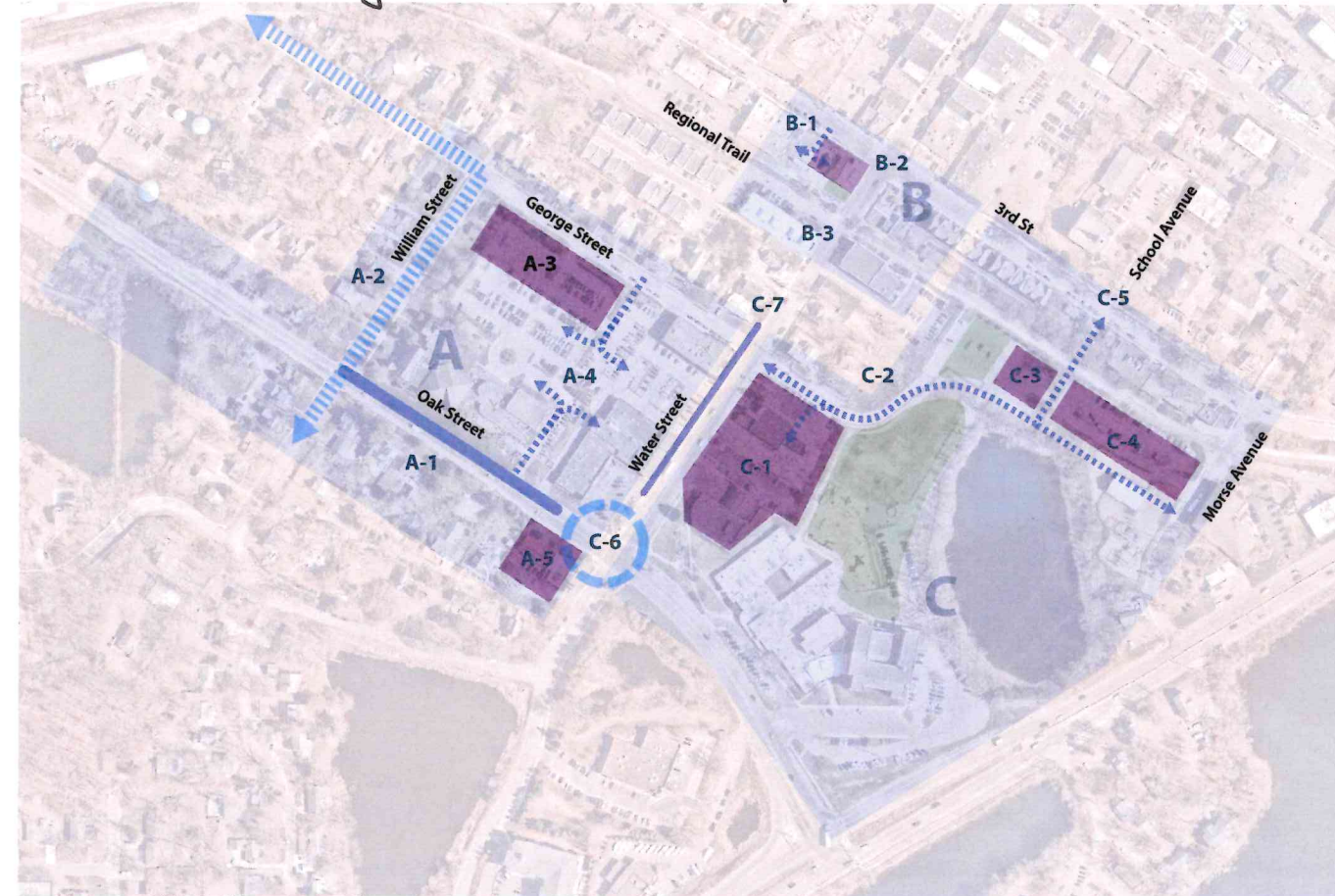
1. A.+C. are too specific. Study this intersection with goal to improve pedestrian experience.
2. Require traffic study as part of any redevelopment proposal.
3. Study elementary school traffic + improve.
4. Highlight + acknowledge that this end of Water is entrance/gateway to Excelsior.

Study Area Recommendations

Built Form - Redevelopment



- Recommend Themes: for any redevelopment of bank sites
1. Find opportunities for shared parking.
 2. Create public spaces.
 3. Create mixed-use development.
 4. Commercial on ground floor, on Water St.
 5. Strategize with elementary school to address traffic concerns.



A-5 Oak St Redevelopment Concept



C-3 & C-4 George St. Extension Redevelopment Concept

6. Make access to + from school as safe as possible.
7. Require coordinated development on the bank parcels, not consolidated development.
8. Activate this end of Water St. with open space, park space as part of a redevelopment.

A-3 Opportunity-driven redevelopment of a portion of the parking lot at Mount Calvary Church. An opportunity for a mission-driven residential or commercial development, with shared parking agreement for church parking needs.

A-5 Consolidated redevelopment of the two commercial properties. The ground floor office space and two above floors of residential have a strong corner that welcomes travelers into the Water Street commercial corridor.

B-2 Two story commercial redevelopment, that reestablishes Water Street's commercial frontage and setbacks, with an active street presence.

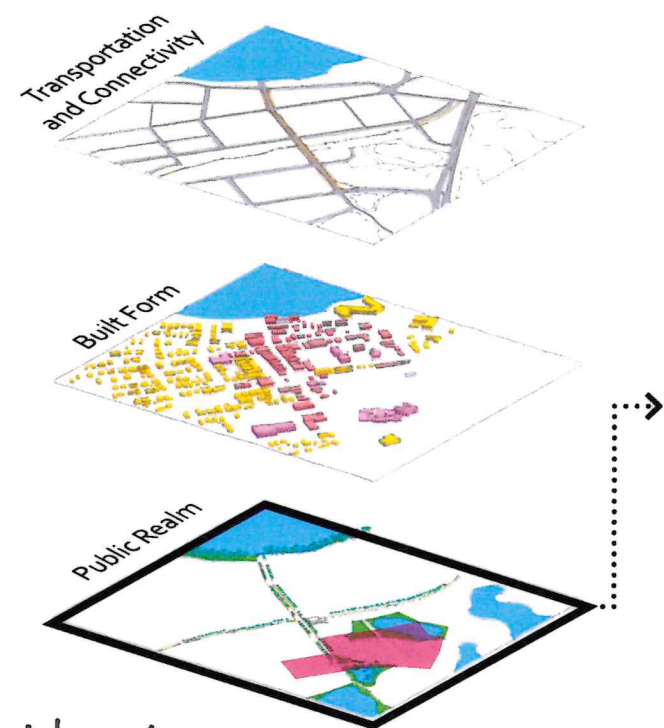
C-1 Consolidated redevelopment of the two commercial properties. The ground floor retail with ~~two above~~ ^{above} residential floors helps drawing Water activity further along Water St., while connecting the neighborhoods to the south.

C-3 & C-4 Opportunity-driven residential and/or commercial development, to be paired with a George St connection to Morse Ave and 3rd St. Would require coordination with Excelsior Elementary School to address parking needs, possibly with a C1 development site. Could provide desired housing for school staff. Preserves existing school yard and rear access.

← Too specific for Plan.

Study Area Recommendations

Public Realm



Replace with Themes :

- 1. Enlarge space along regional trail for bicyclists' + pedestrians' needs.
- 2. Enlarge or create public spaces in study area.



B-1 Work with adjacent landowners to enlarge the existing space along the regional trail with larger "resting" place for people to gather along Water St, while offering expanded bike and trail amenities. It could also offer a "bike dock" for bike parking and repair stand, encouraging bicyclists traveling along the regional trail to visit Water St shops.



Focus Area: Design Principles



1. Single-Site Development

- Parking & site efficiencies
- Shared public amenities
- Flexibility in build form

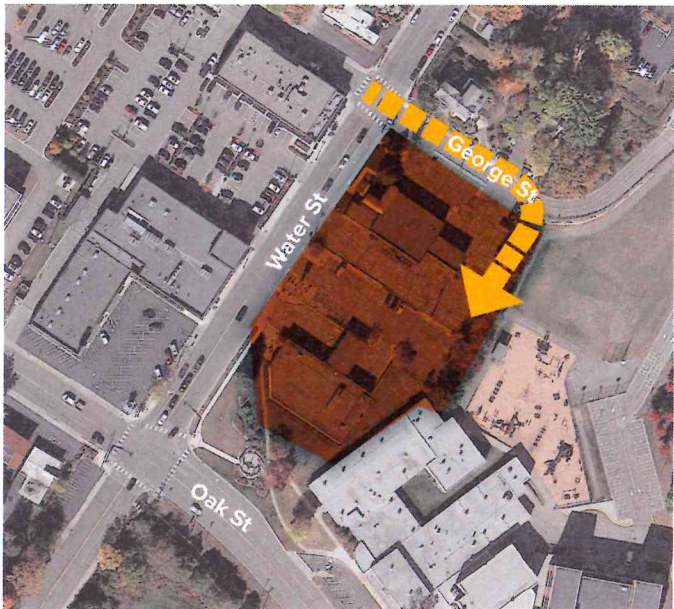
1a. If Multi-Site Development

- Establish access easement across rear of Wells Fargo site, to reduce curb cuts on Water St for both properties
- Consistent active frontage and pedestrian-focused design
- Complimentary building design and form
- if sites are developed together, find opportunities for shared parking + new public spaces



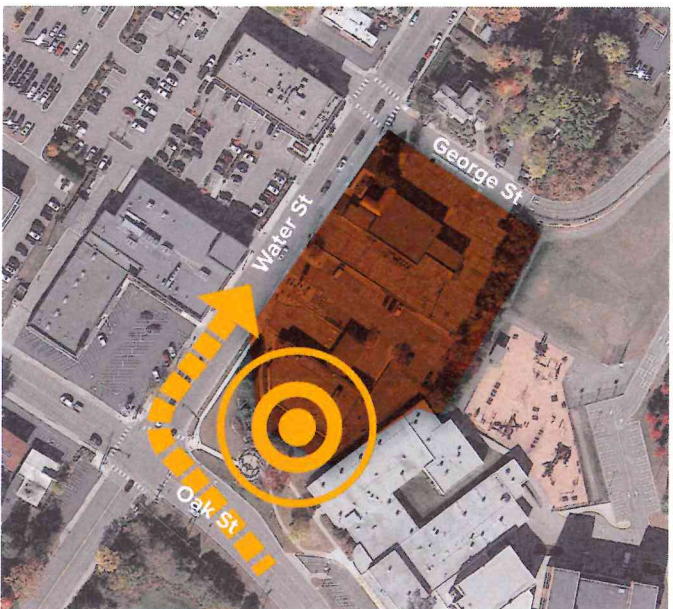
2. Excelsior Design DNA

- 2 story street frontage
- Differentiate and articulate the street wall
- Pedestrian-focused experience
- Height pushed to the rear of the site, and visually buffered from the school
- Do not overshadow school + playground with bldg. height.



3. Rear Access for Parking & Loading

- Leverage site topography
- Consolidate and reduce curb-cuts
- Improve street frontage experience for pedestrians



4. Site as Gateway

- Create a sense of arrival from the south
- Reinforce the architectural rhythm of Water Street to the north
- Ensure side + back of any redevelopment has details + "welcomes" people to Excelsior.
- Triangular parcel at intersection is publicly-owned. Improve. Don't put all burden on developer to create "gateway" in this area.

Focus Area - South Water St Redevelopment Site

Overview

Within the South Water Street Small Area Plan Area, the collection of sites at the northeast intersection of Oak Street and Water Street are likely to be redeveloped in the near term. Both sites, while not vacant, are under-utilized and prime sites for redevelopment within 5 years. As banks consolidate and rethink their physical presence and real estate holdings, cities need to be prepared for turnover and redevelopment.

This Plan offers recommendations for how the City can guide redevelopment on these sites so that outcomes are consistent with city and community goals that encourage growth while maintaining the walkable and human scale of Downtown and enhancing connections to other parts of the City.

The plan explores three future outcomes for the focus area. Alternative 0 is developed as a base line. It presents the outcome in the absence of any guidance or planning. Alternative 0 can also be considered the "do nothing" option, and is used as a point of comparison.

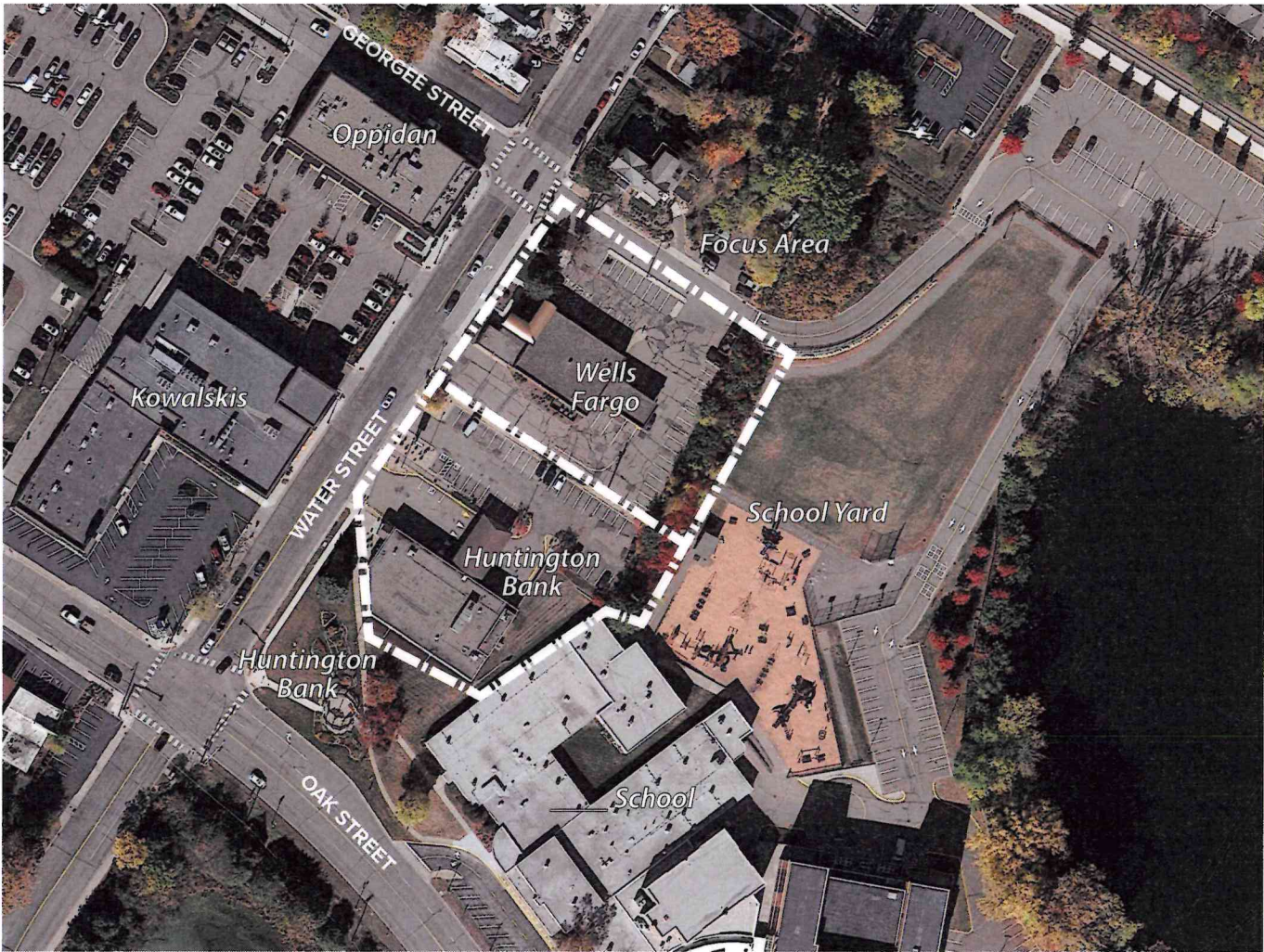
Alternatives 1 and 2 are potential market-based outcomes within the existing zoning category. Both of the alternatives are mixed use and follow the four design principles on the following page.

Expanded Definition of "Commercial"

The frontage of North Water Street is beloved for its activity and scale. While ground floor uses are predominantly retail stores and restaurants, other commercial uses along Water Street could provide similar activity, provided their scale and design aligns with the rest of Water Street.

This Plan recommends that allowable ground floor commercial uses should include office, retail, restaurants, community services, gallery spaces, maker-spaces, and similar types of uses. Additionally, the Plan recommends that drive throughs should not be allowed within the Downtown area.

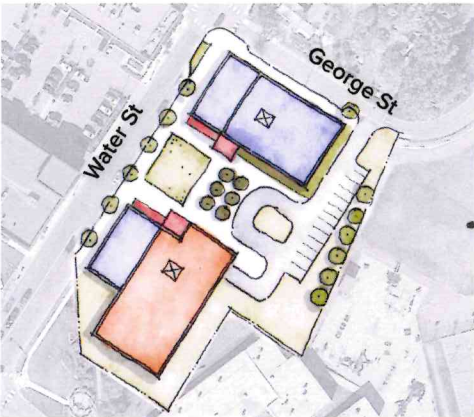
Site Ownership and Context



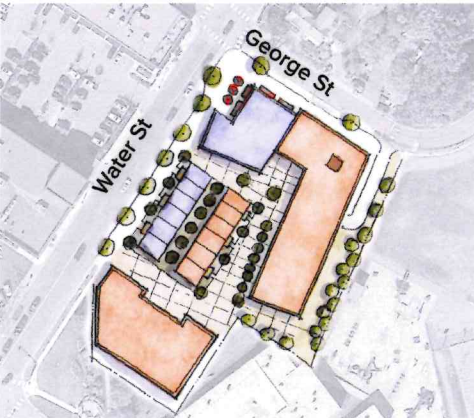
Alternatives Explored



Commercial
Alternative 0 - ~~As Is~~
~~Business as Usual~~
~~Strip Commercial~~



Mixed Use
Alternative 1 - ~~Traditional Mixed-Use~~



Mixed Use
Alternative 2 - ~~Unique Mixed-Use~~

South Water Street Development

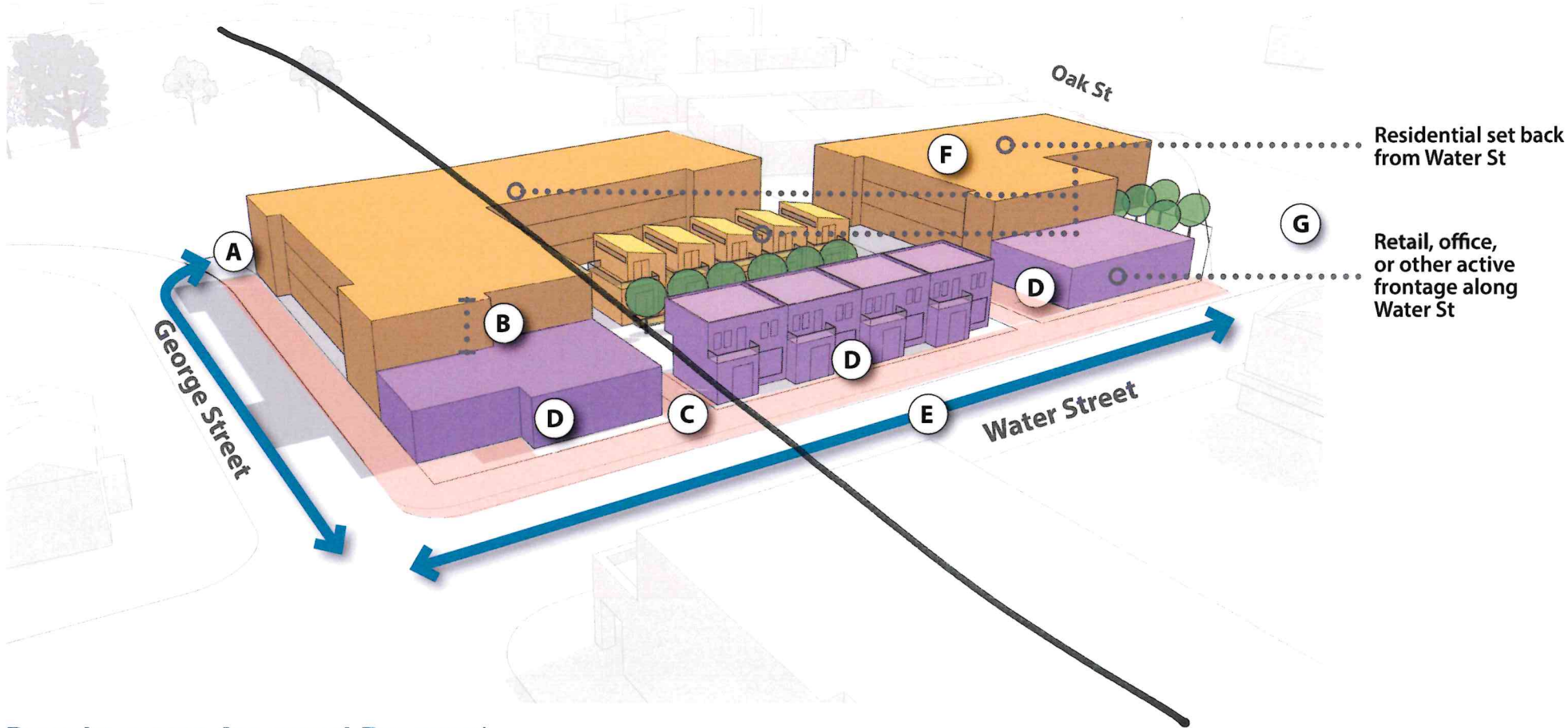
South Water Street Design Guidelines

The design of south Water St properties should focus on creating an active frontage, scaled to the established urban form of north Water St., and comfortable pedestrian connections to and through the site. Buildings should scale up from 1-2 stories along Water St., to the larger 35' by-right height further back. Rear-loaded structured parking should be accessible from George St, and vehicle access removed from Water St to promote a comfortable and safe experience. Building frontage along Water Street should be varied and diverse - preferably with multiple buildings (none longer than 100') separated with walkways to the interior of the site.

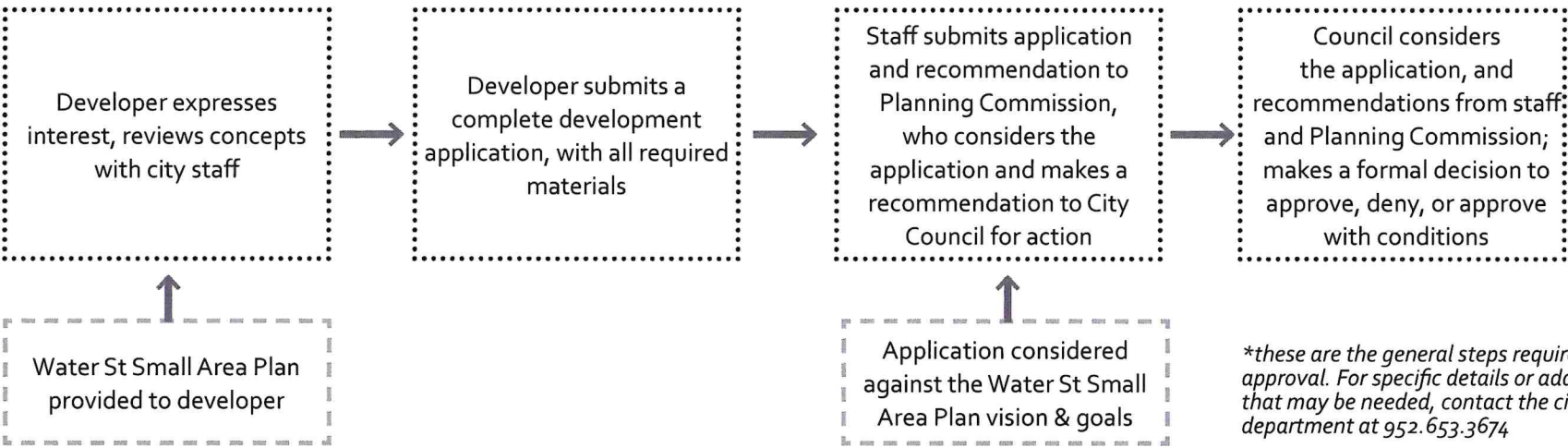
Key Strategies

- A. Use shared parking to maximize site efficiency, and be provided in a structured below-grade ramp to the rear of development. Parking will be accessed by George St, and existing Water St curb cuts removed.
- B. Height, which is allowed up to 35' by ordinance, is scaled back from Water St, buffered by vegetation from the school site, and allows the street frontage to continue the 1-2 story character established along north Water St.
- C. Create a pedestrian-oriented sidewalk and public realm along the development with minimum 15' from building face to curb and street trees in grates spaces approximately 35' apart/
- D. Focus active uses such as retail, office, service gallery, workshop or similar uses along the Water St frontage, to draw activity down from north Water St. Support walkability with generous windows and awnings.
- E. Work with Hennepin County (due to their ownership of Oak Street) to conduct a 4-to-3 lane conversion of Water St and Oak Street, allowing on-street parking on both sides of the street and providing additional pedestrian space on the east side of the street.
- F. Guide residential uses to the back or interior of the site, as required by the zoning district, allowing for active commercial uses along Water St.
- G. Enhance the gateway presence at the Water St and Oak St intersection, to welcome travelers entering into the Water St retail area of downtown.

Replace with visual from Alternative 1.



Development Approval Process*



*these are the general steps required for development approval. For specific details or additional requirements that may be needed, contact the city planning department at 952.653.3674

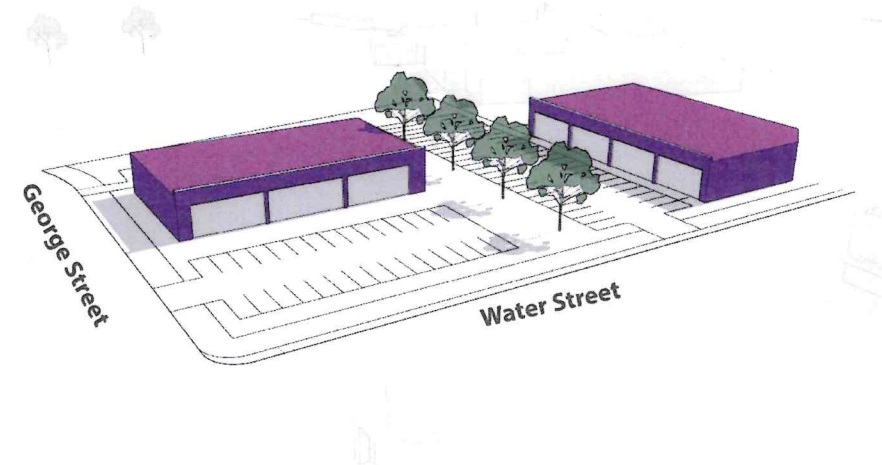
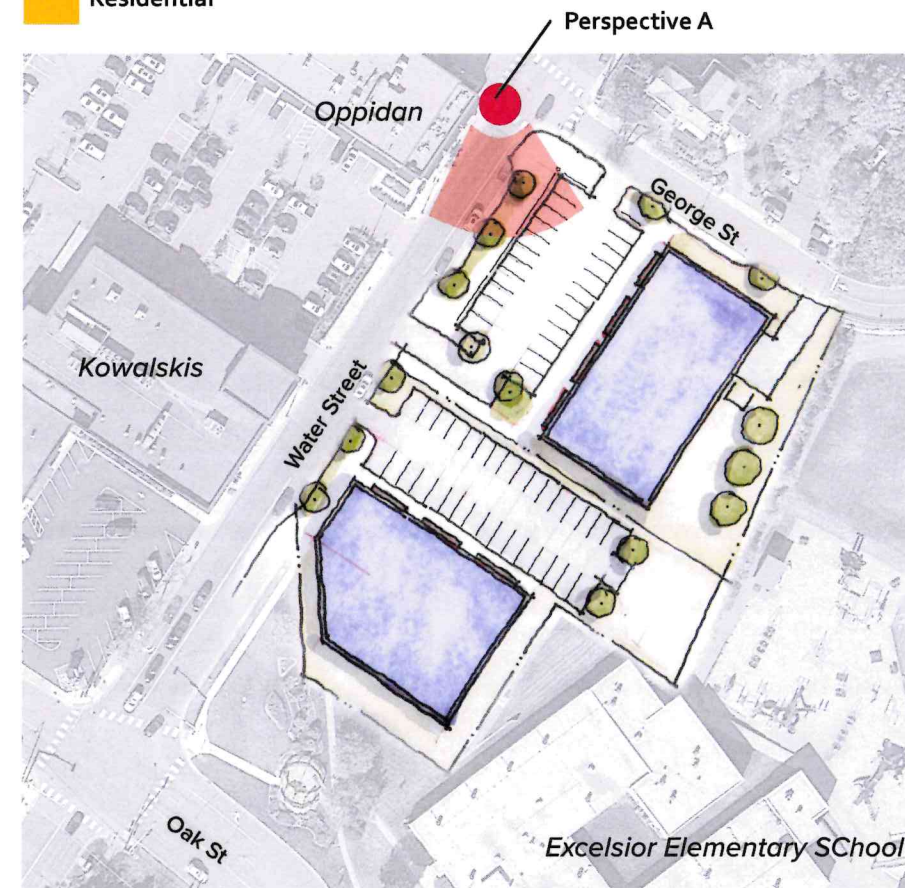
1. Do Not recommend endorsing one of these alternatives.
2. Remove these last 3 pages (p. 12, 13, 14) from Summary Report + leave them in the larger background document, the "working Document".

Focus Area: Alternative 0

Alternative 0: As Is, Business as Usual

With no formal planning guidance, one possible future for the site is to retain an auto-centric design scheme with curb cuts on Water Street and strip-style retail development. While this scheme would potentially deliver on providing daily services or goods to local residents, it's likely to increase conflicts between pedestrians and cars along Water street, and does not enhance the experience of people walking along Water St - nor does it help connect to neighborhoods to the south. A development of this scale and layout would detract from the pedestrian-character of Water Street while also yielding relatively low property tax revenues to the city due to its low density and site utilization.

Commercial
Residential



Alternative 0 - No Guidance

- Single-story strip center development
- Surface parking
- Chain retail (likely, due to cost of new construction)
- Curb cuts on Water Street

Commercial	16,000 sf
Residential Units	0
Stories	1
Parking	80 spaces (surface)



Perspective A: View south on Water Street towards the focus area site

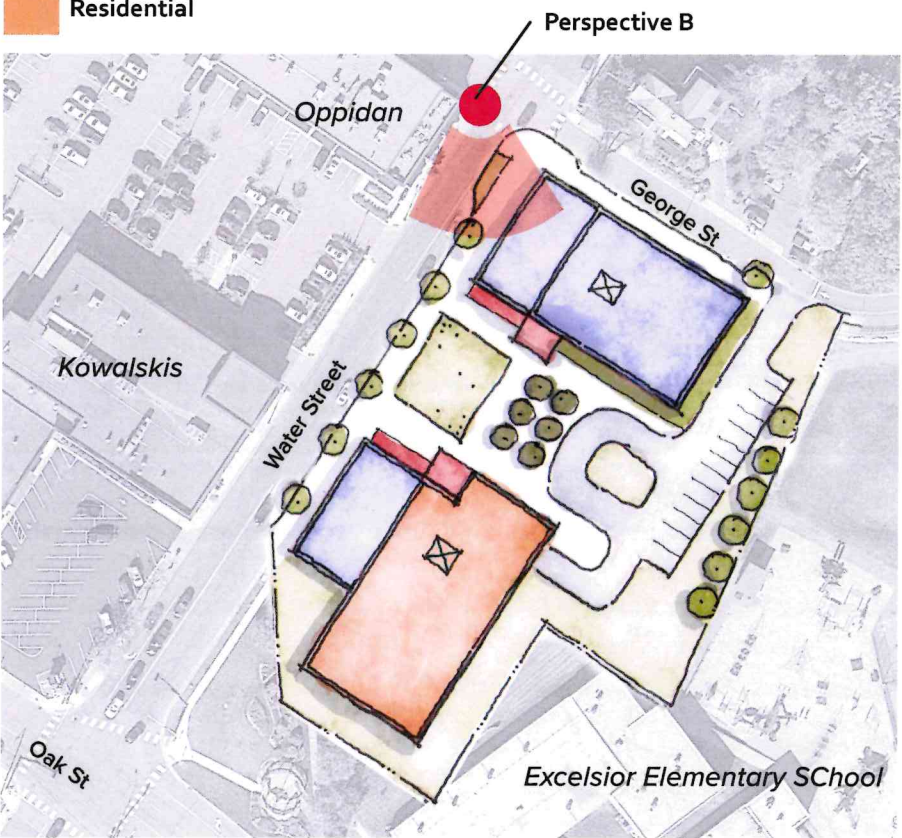
Focus Area: Preferred Alternative 1

Alternative 1: Traditional Mixed-Use

If the sites are combined, and parking is provided beneath the site, the site can be developed in a more robust manner that offers a mix of uses, in multiple buildings - thereby maintaining the two-to-three story scale allowed by right, while extending the walkability of Water Street from George Street to Oak Street. The rear edge should be buffered by trees or other vegetation, similar to what exists there today. Office, retail, or restaurant uses on the ground floor would activate Water Street with housing or office uses on floors two and three. A small courtyard space would break up the street wall and create a semi-public shared space in a courtyard facing Water Street. A portion of one of the buildings at the rear of the site could be developed for limited residential uses, as allowed today by the zoning code.

Commercial

Residential



illustrative Plan



Alternative 1 - Traditional Mixed-Use

- 2-3 story commercial & office development, limited residential
- Shared underground parking
- Rear vehicle access off George St
- Limited retail (likely due to market demand)

Commercial	50,000 sf
Residential Units	20
Stories	2-3 (max allowed height 35')
Parking	160 spaces (underground)

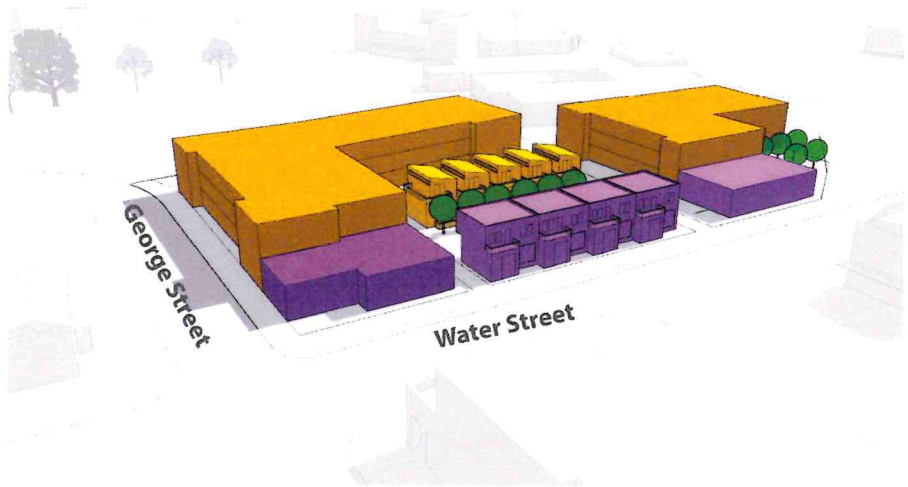
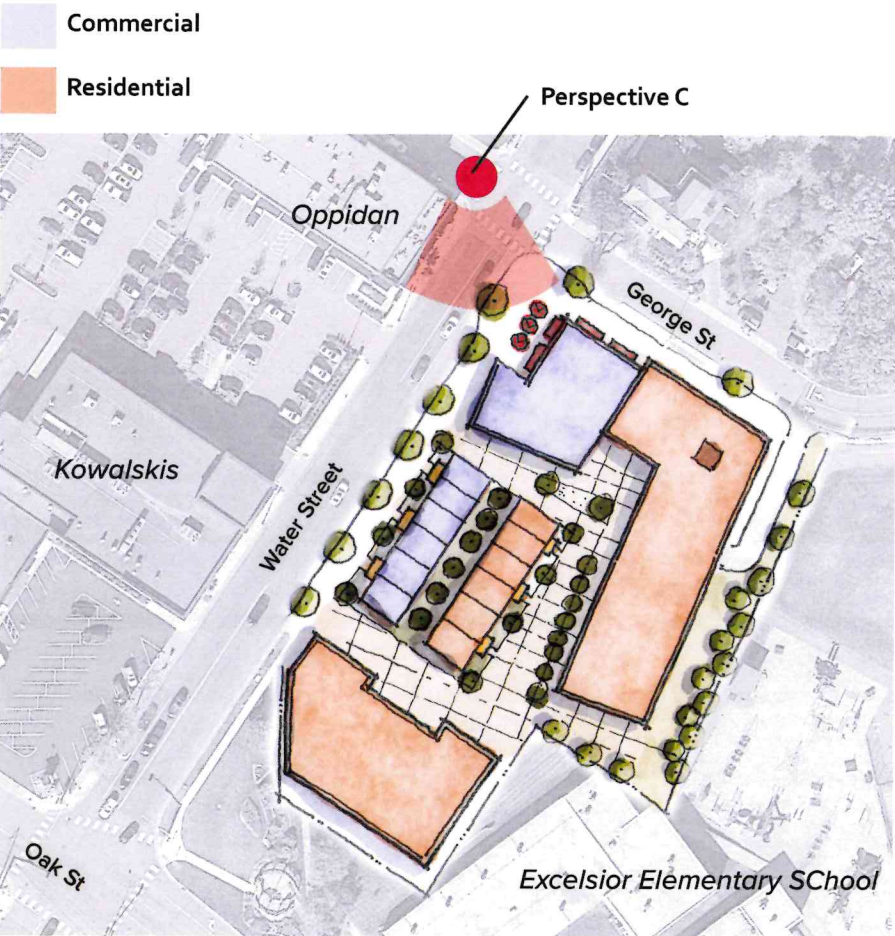


Perspective B: View south on Water Street towards the focus area site

Focus Area: Preferred Alternative 2

Alternative 2: Unique Mixed Use

A second preferred alternative to site redevelopment includes a series of buildings sitting atop a joint parking structure. The north corner of the site, on George St, is reserved for a restaurant or retail use, while the remainder of Water Street frontage is activated with cottage commercial development, with above live-work units and town homes on the back side. Three-story residential buildings are located on the back of the site, as allowed today by the zoning code. This edge should be buffered by trees or other vegetation, similar to what exists there today. The remainder of the site is occupied by a semi-public green and plaza space. This concept is also reliant on combined development over underground shared parking.



Alternative2: Unique Mixed Use

- Mixed retail, town homes, apartment development
- Shared underground parking
- Rear vehicle access off George St
- Limited retail (likely, due to market demand)

Commercial	6,500 sf
Residential Units	85 units
Stories	2-3 (max allowed height 35')
Parking	160 - 250 spaces (underground)



Perspective C: View south on Water Street towards the focus area site