

Proposed Walkable Places and Transit-Oriented Development Ordinances

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Project Background



Final Report

September 30, 2015



planhouston.org



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Integrated Efforts of Plan Houston

- Walkable Places Ordinance
- Transit-oriented Development Ordinance
- Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan
- Houston Bike Plan
- Complete Communities
- Vision Zero



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Ordinance Goals

To encourage pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development with an enhanced, walkable public realm.

- Benefits property owners by allowing more buildable area and adjusting parking requirements
- Benefits pedestrians and neighborhoods by creating safer and more walkable streetscapes and public spaces
- Benefits neighborhoods by creating a more lively and activated area with more eyes on the street



Integrated Pedestrian Realm



No connection to neighborhood



Connected to the neighborhood and surrounding development



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Active Ground Floor



Little interaction
with the building



Interactive



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Mix of Land Uses



Single Use



Mixed-Use development



Multi-modal Street Design



Auto-oriented



Multi-modal



Walkable Places vs. TOD

Similarities:

1. **Objective:** to promote pedestrian friendly development tailored to the designated streets
2. **Approach:** to create mandatory and optional compliance tailored to the local context
 - a) Primary Street(s) – mandatory compliance
 - b) Secondary Street(s) – optional compliance
3. **Planning standards:** to establish 5 planning standards along each designated streets:
 - a) Street width
 - b) Pedestrian realm
 - c) Building design
 - d) Site design
 - e) Off-street parking



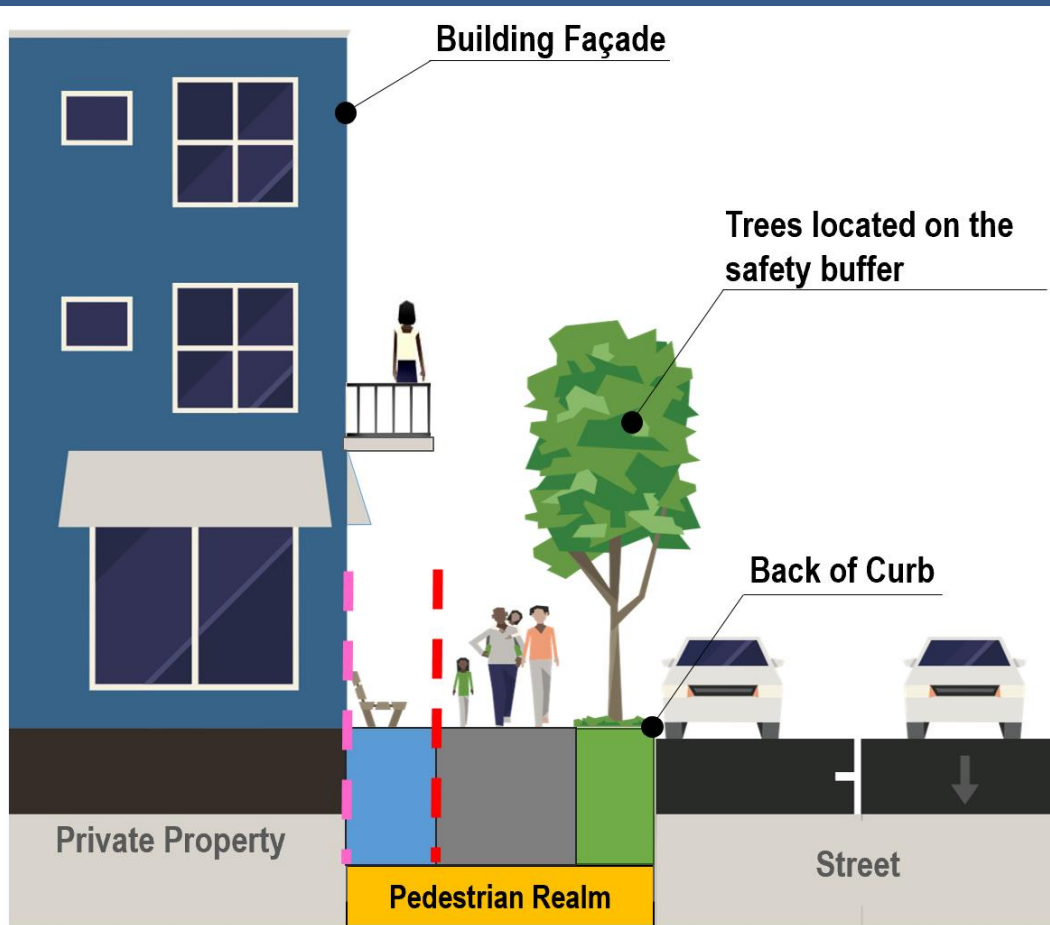
Walkable Places vs. TOD

Differences:

	WP Street	TOD Street
Street Eligibility	Any streets within the city limit	Streets within a ½ mile walking distance from the transit station platform
Eligible Party	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. City of Houston; or2. Property owners representing at least 50% of the total property frontage along each street segment	City of Houston
Designation Requirement	Min 1 street segment, no maximum requirements	Designated based on the TOD Street criteria
Planning Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Some enhanced pedestrian realm standards are customizable2. Allow establishment of special parking requirements3. WP rules supersede TOD rules when both rules are applicable	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Enhanced pedestrian realm standards are established based on TOD Street classification2. Allow parking reduction/ exemption

Enhanced Pedestrian Realm Standards

Pedestrian Realm



- — — Ground Floor Building Line
- — — Property Line
- Pedestrian Access Easement
- Unobstructed Sidewalk
- 4' Safety Buffer

No auto-related uses within the pedestrian realm, except driveway(s) perpendicular with the adjacent public streets. (35% softscape)

Enhanced Pedestrian Realm Standards

Building Design – Single Family Residential



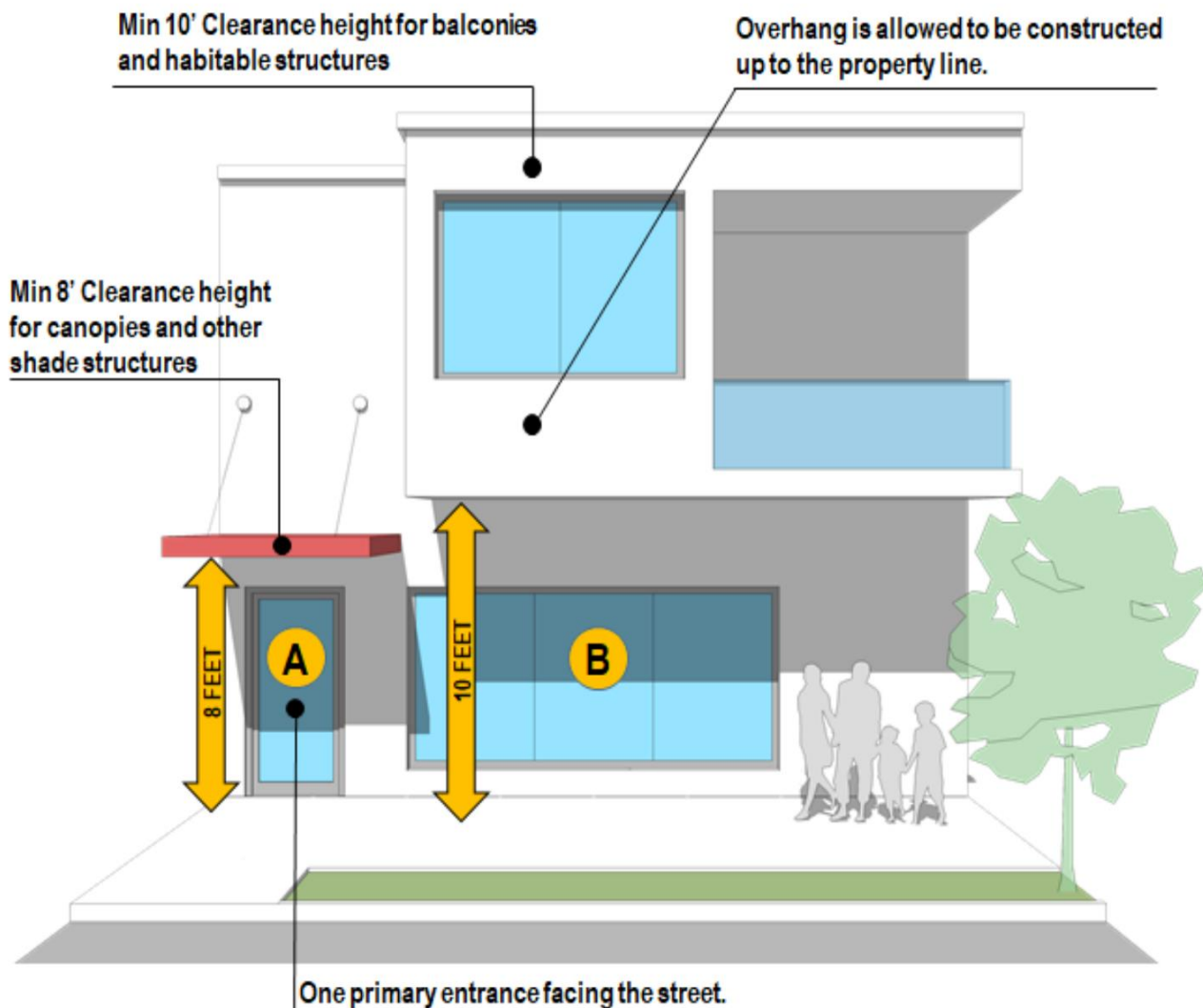
Front Door facing the WP/ TOD Street with pedestrian access.

Non-opaque fence with a maximum height of 48 inches

If a tract is further subdivided, lot access must be from a **shared driveway, Type 2PAE, alley or new public street** created by the same subdivision plat.

Enhanced Pedestrian Realm Standards

Building Design – Other Uses



Ground Floor Façade: is the area of the building façade measured between the finished floor of the ground floor and a vertical height of 8 feet.

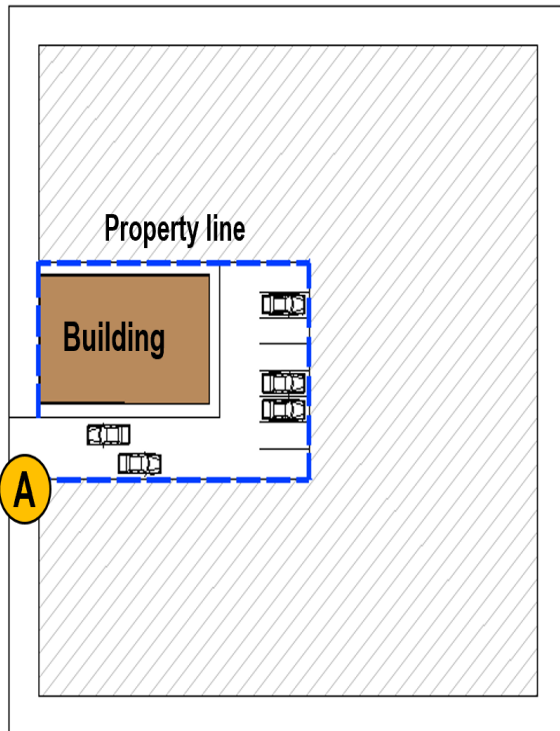
The total area of **A (doors)**, **B (windows)** into occupiable space on the ground floor façade must be 50% along primary streets and 40% along secondary streets.

Occupiable space means an area inside the building intended for human activities (live, work, play, worship, shop, eat, or similar). It excludes areas such as storage or utility areas, parking garages, loading docks, etc.

Enhanced Pedestrian Realm Standards

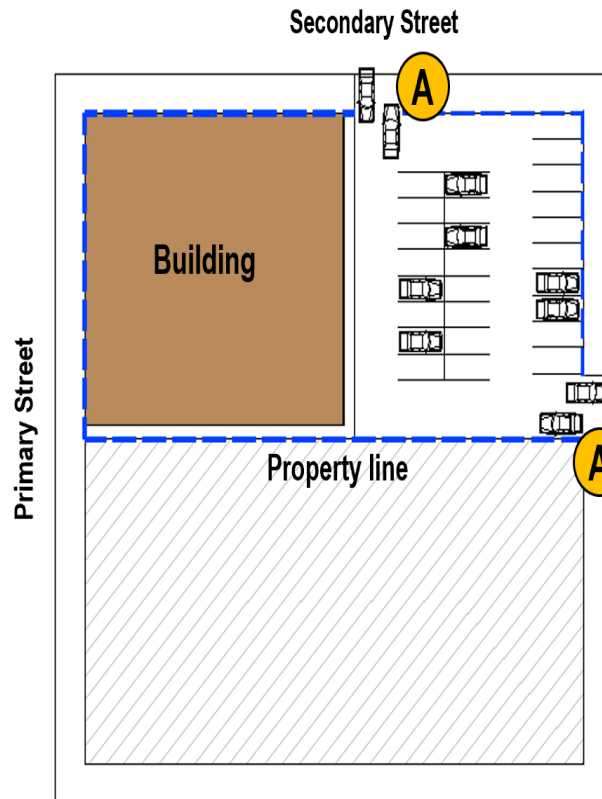
Site Design

Parking Area on the Back



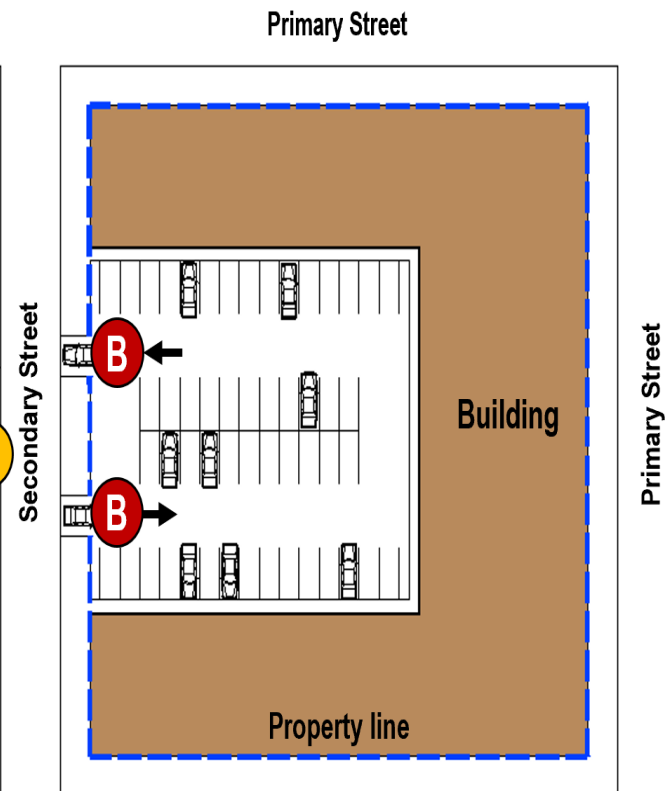
A One 30' two-way driveway

Parking Area on the back or side



A One 30' two-way driveway on each secondary street

Parking Area wrapped by the proposed building



B Two 15' one-way driveways

Ordinance Structure

Walkable Places Plan & TOD Plan

(Procedure to create the plans)

(Ch 33, Article IX Division 4 & 5)

Definitions

(Sec 1-2)

Enhanced Pedestrian Realm Standards

(Ch 10, Article I;
Ch 42, Article IV)

Sidewalk Standards

(IDM;
Ch 40, Article
XXII)

Building Line Standards

(Ch 42, Article III
Division 3)

Off-street Parking Standards

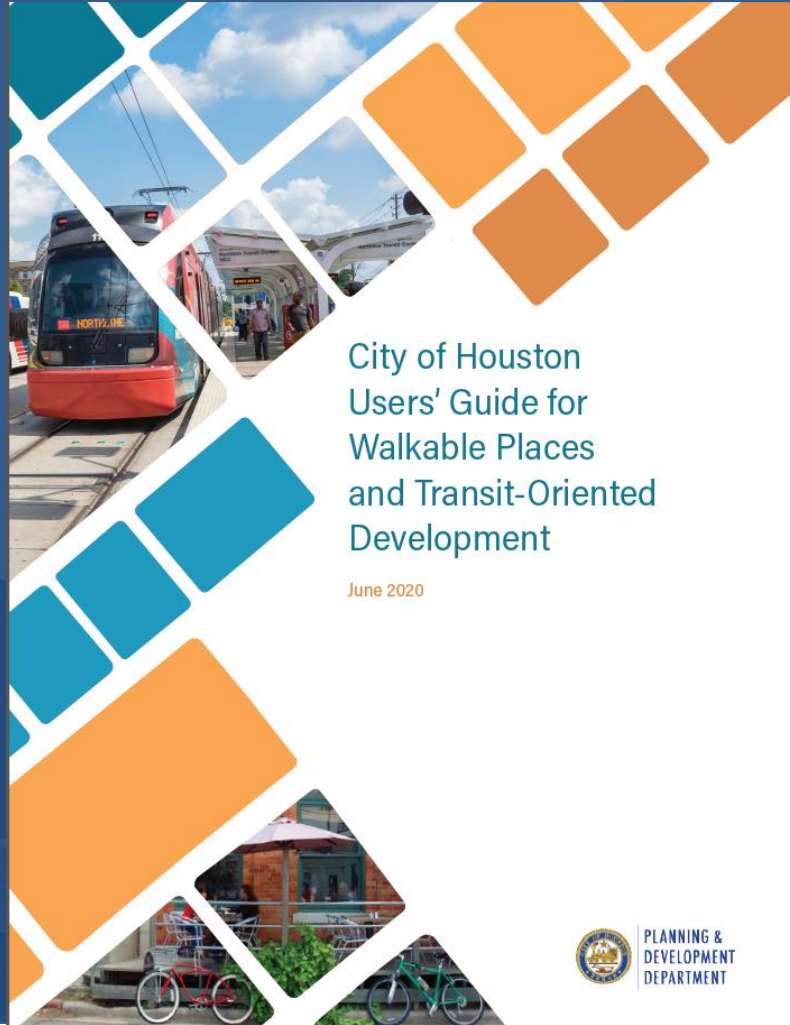
(Ch 26, Article
VIII)

Right-of- way Width

(Sec 42-
122)



Users' Guide



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Walkable Places

Five guiding principles:

- Be sensitive to local context
- Ensure walkable urban form along proposed streets
- Promote safe multi-modal transportation
- Create a pleasant experience
- Obtain local support

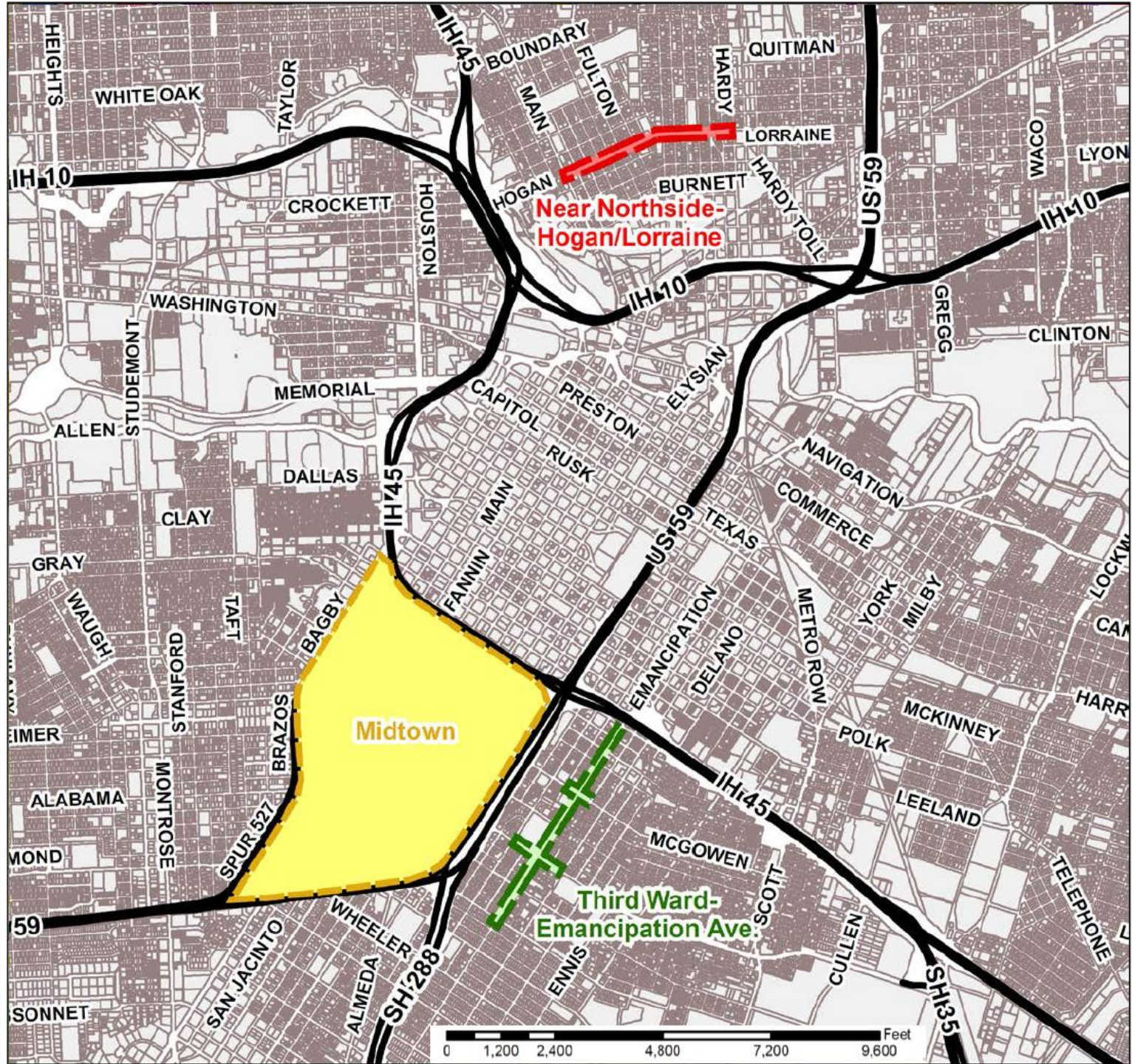


Walkable Places Pilot Areas

 Near Northside

 Midtown

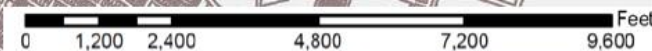
 Third Ward



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Proposed Walkable Place Pilot Area: Hogan/Lorraine

Legend

-  WPP Primary
-  Boundary
-  HCAD_Parcels

Source:
Date: 06.05.2020
Reference:

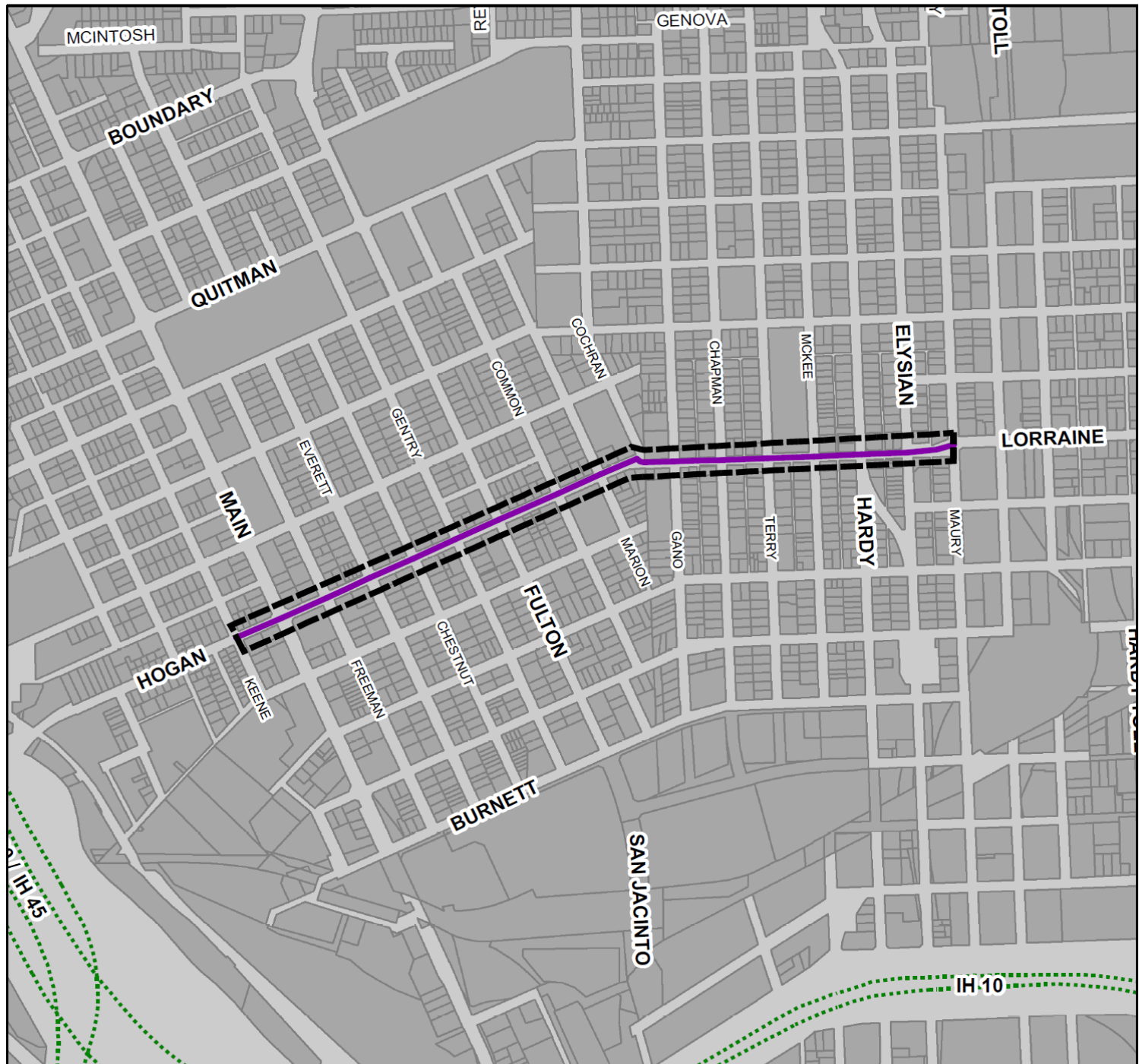
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0 150 300 600 900 1,200 Feet



Proposed Walkable Place Pilot Area: Midtown

WP Street Type


-  Primary
-  Secondary
-  Boundary
-  HCAD Parcels

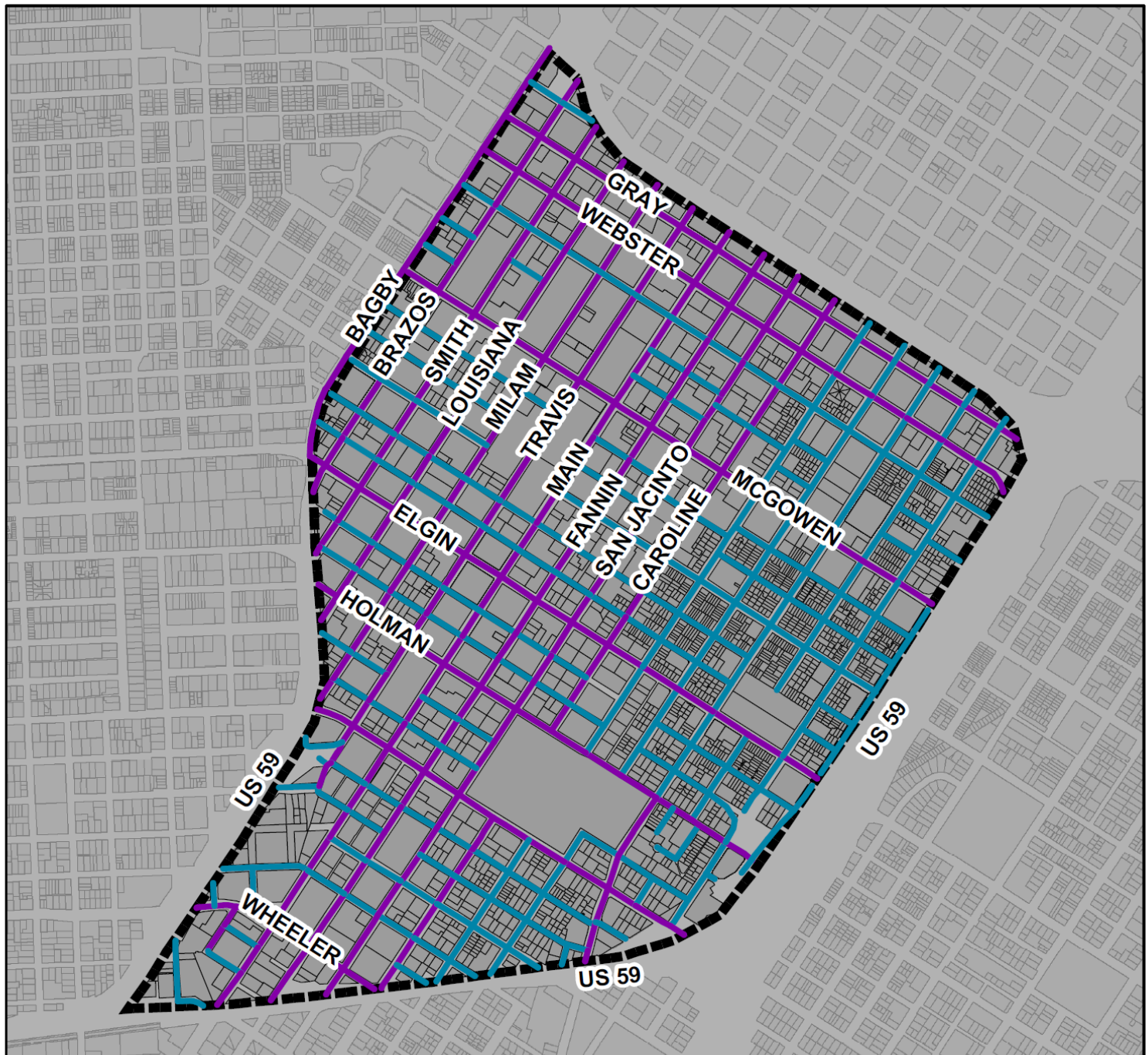
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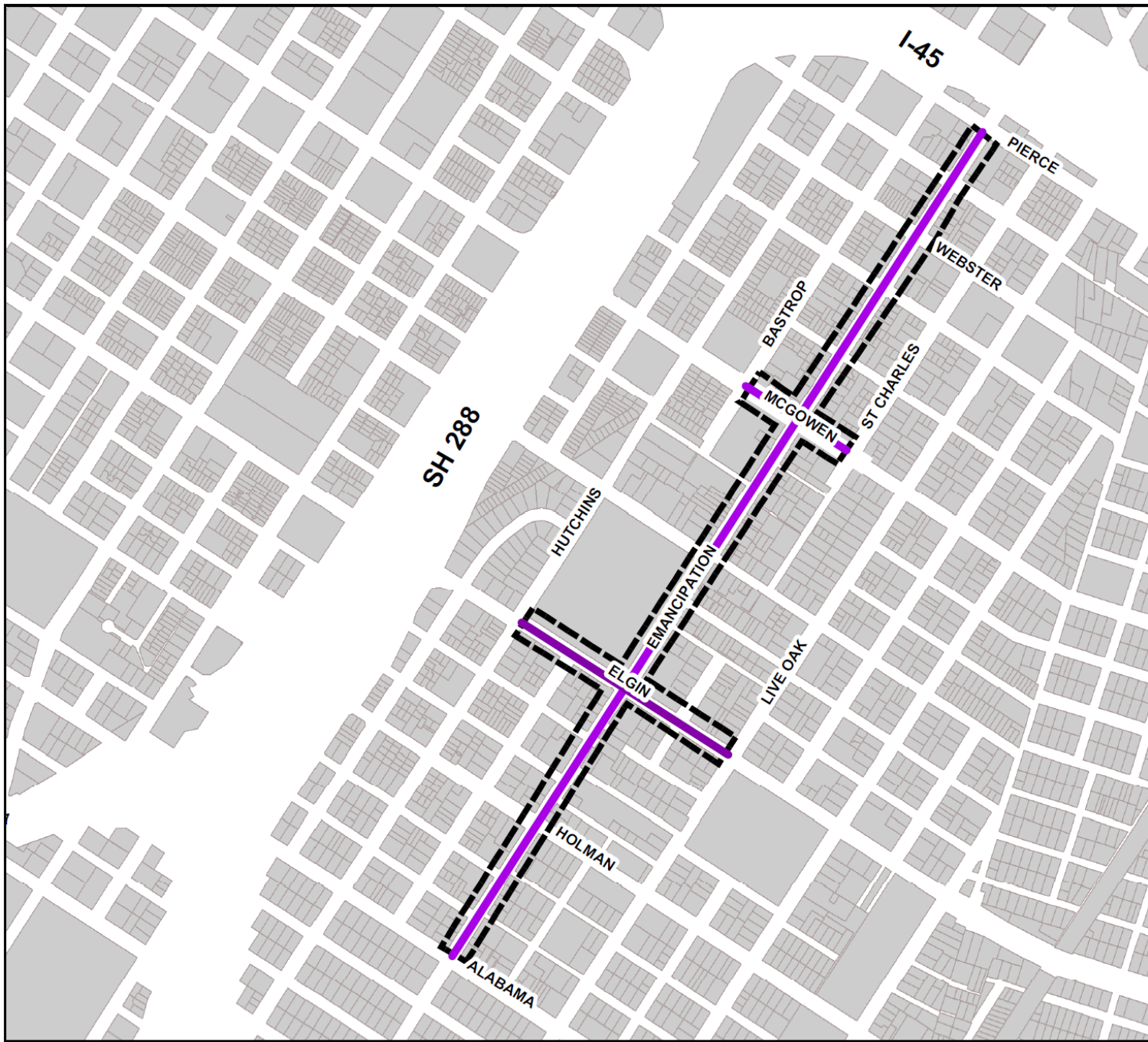
 0.0375075 0.15 0.225 Miles



**Proposed Walkable Places
Pilot Area Boundary:
Emancipation Avenue**

Legend

-  Primary
-  Boundary
-  HCAD Parcels



Source:
Date: 6.10.2020
Reference:

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0 0.025 0.05 0.1 0.15 Miles

Transit Corridor Ordinance

Challenges:

- The optional approach creates insufficient incentives
- Some standards limit development flexibility
- The transit street designation does not take adjacent land uses and local context into consideration



Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Objective: to effectively promote transit-oriented development adjacent to METRO light rail & bus rapid transit (BRT) stations by:

- Establishing objective criteria to determine streets eligible for the TOD rules
- Designating eligible TOD Streets for each transit station
- Updating the planning standards to improve pedestrian friendly environment adjacent to the designated Streets

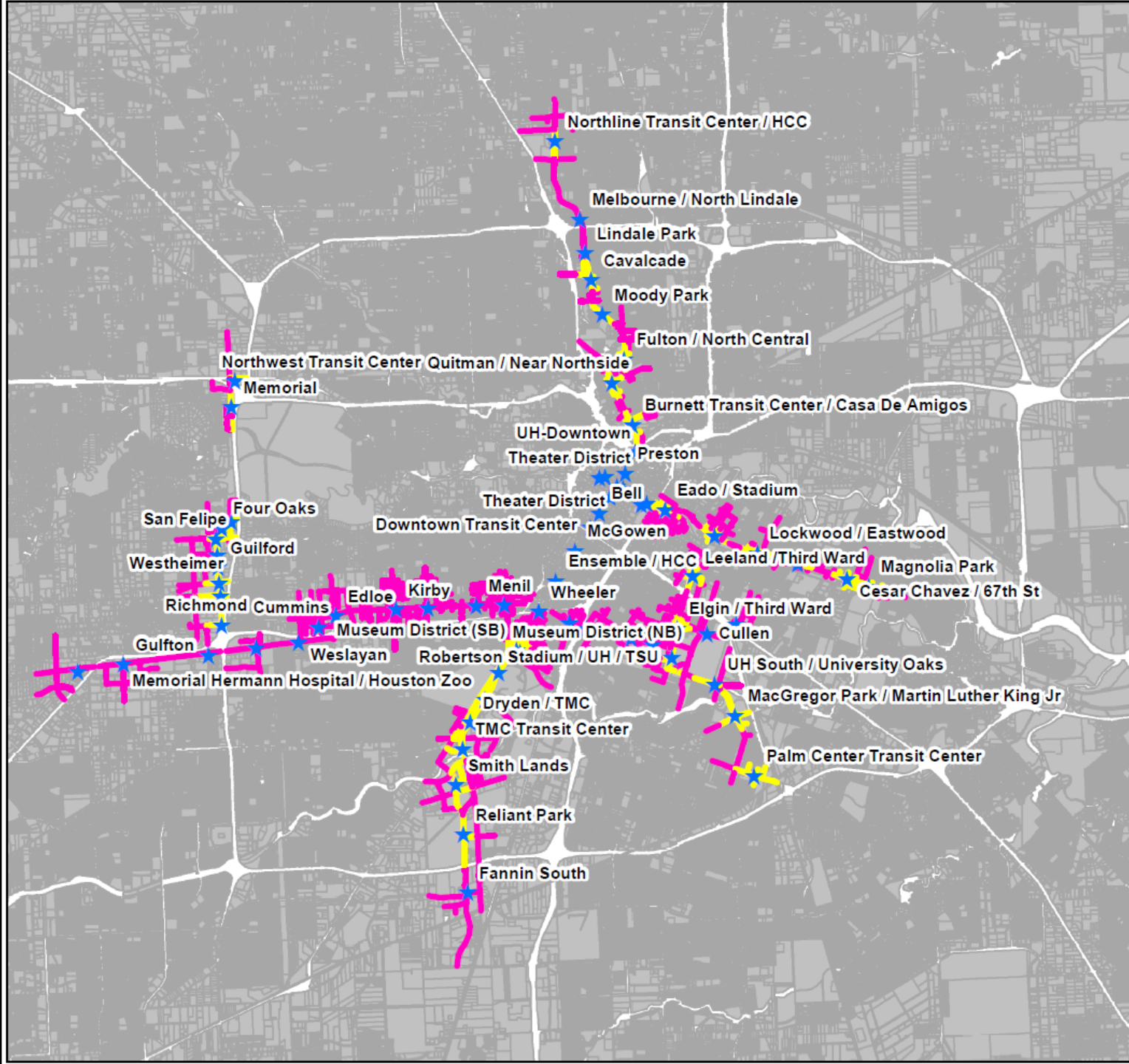


Transit Station Analysis Combined

★ METRO Rail Stations

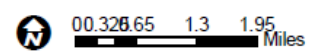
TOD Street Type

- █ Primary
- █ Secondary
- HCAD Parcels



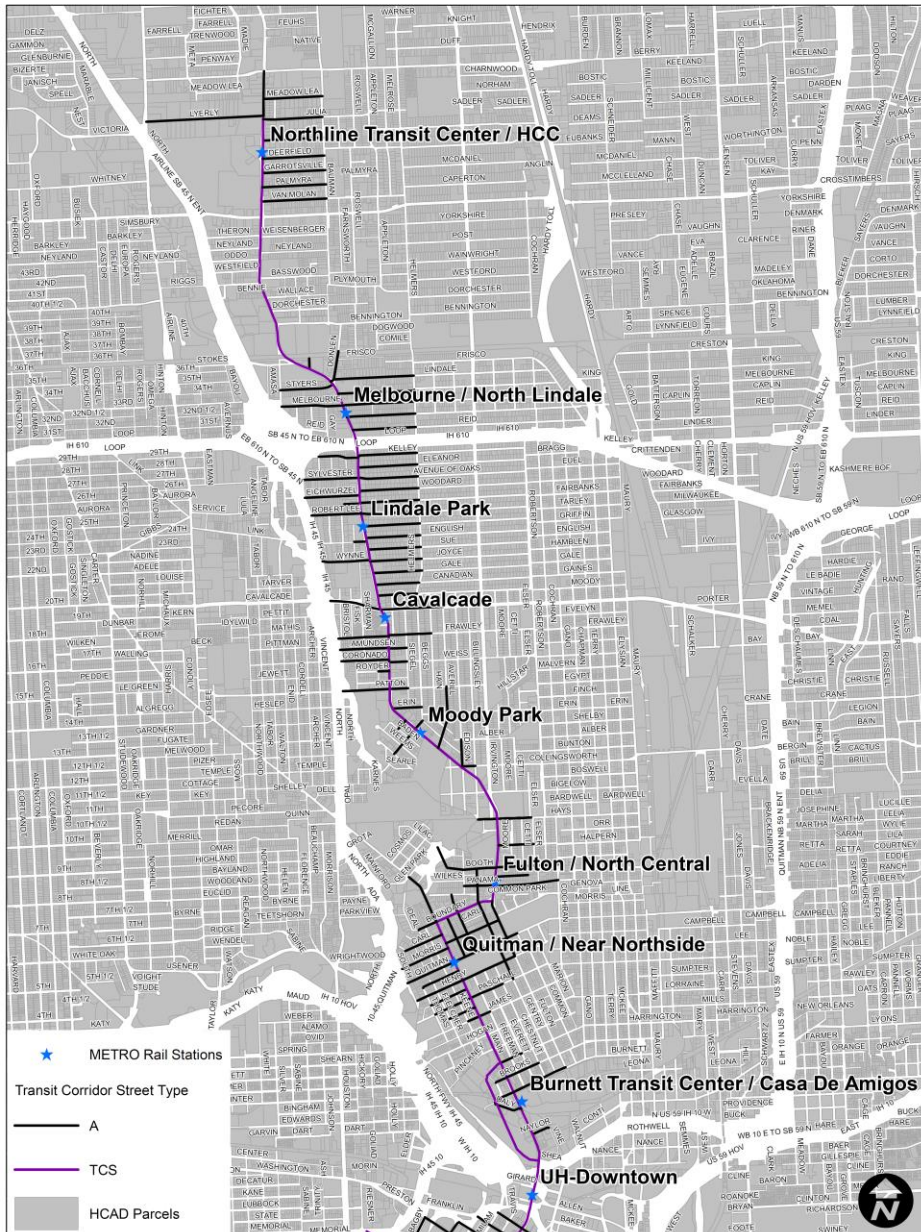
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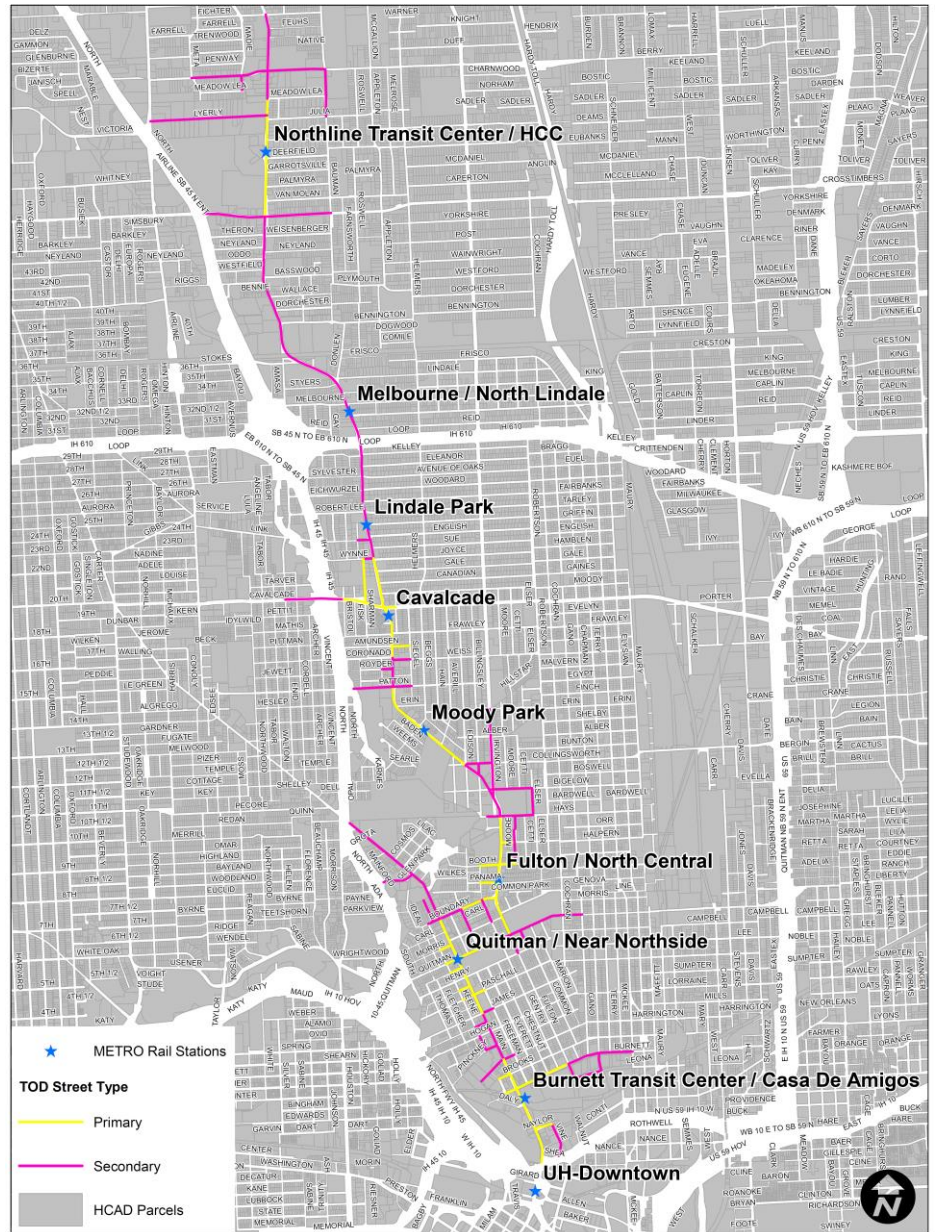


Red Line North

Current Transit corridor Streets

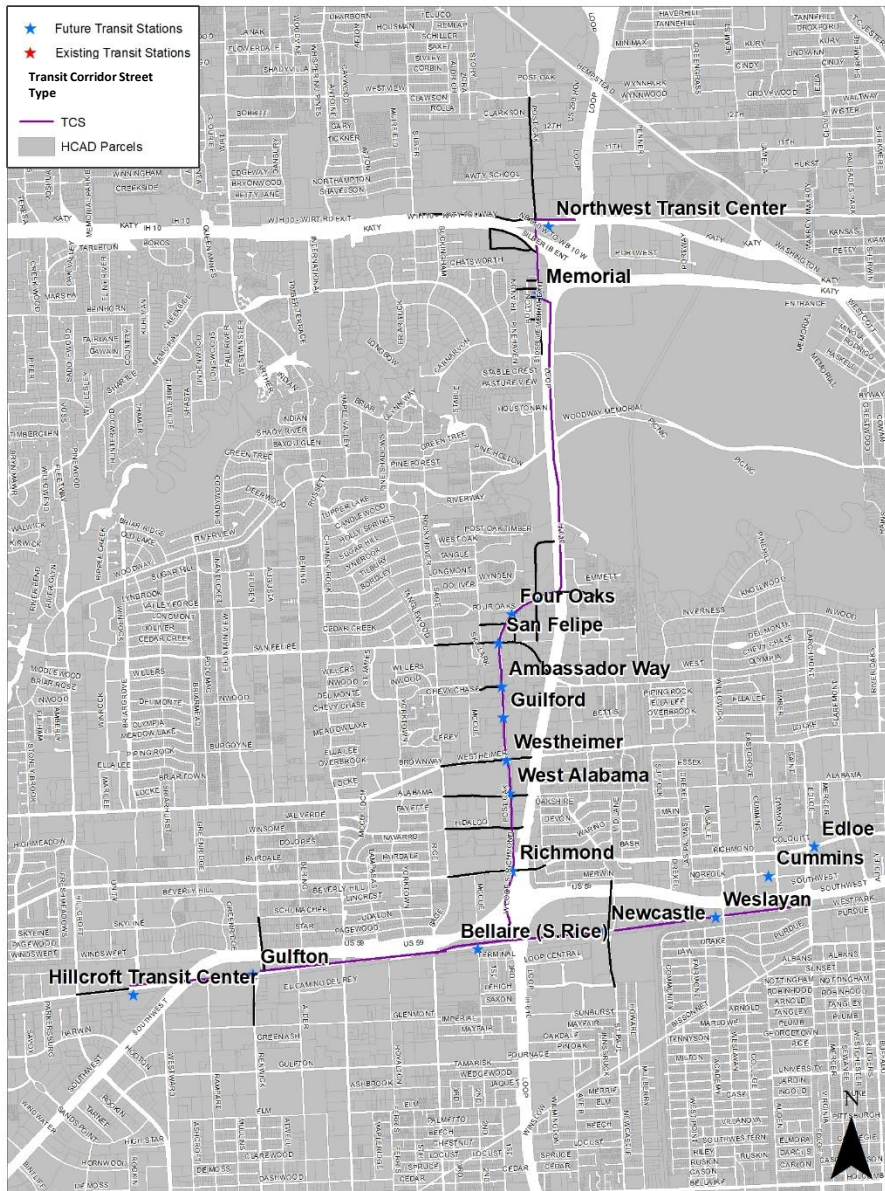


Proposed TOD Streets

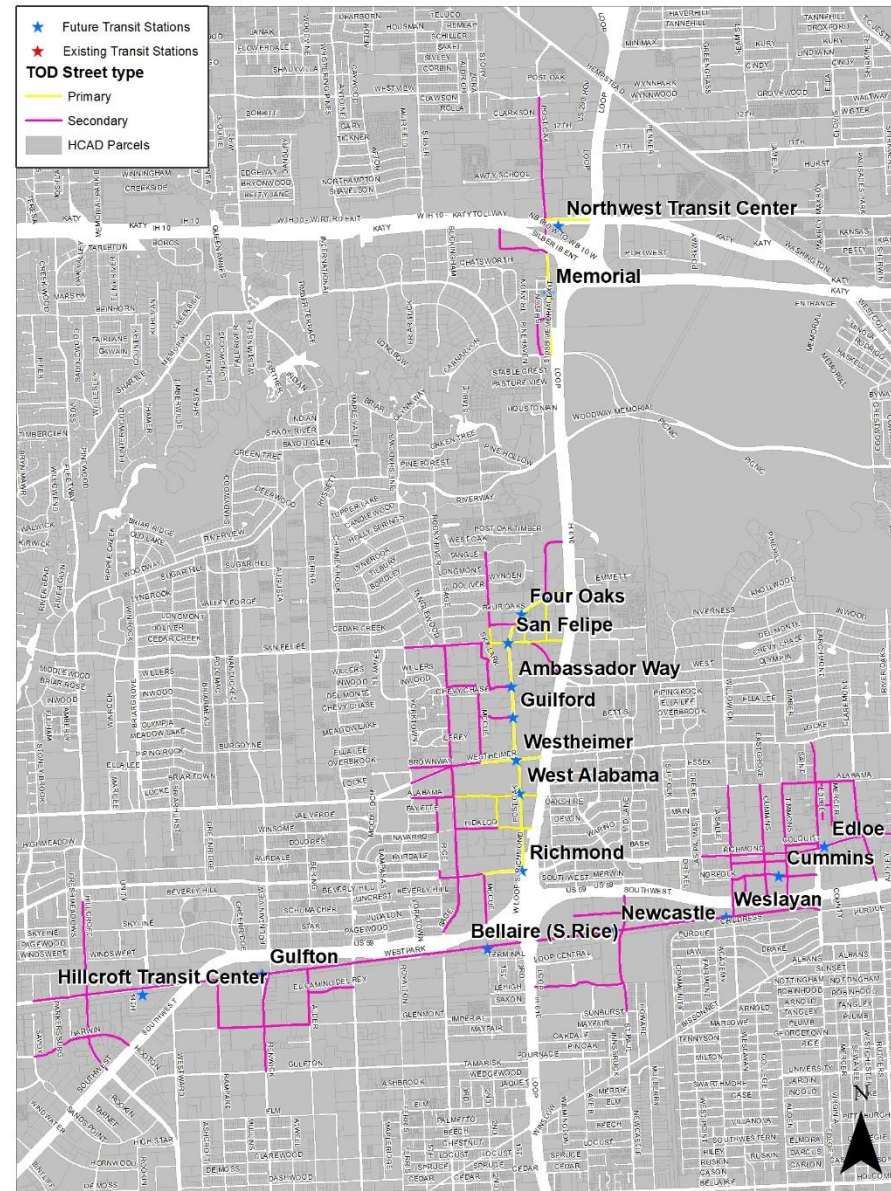


University Line/ Uptown BRT

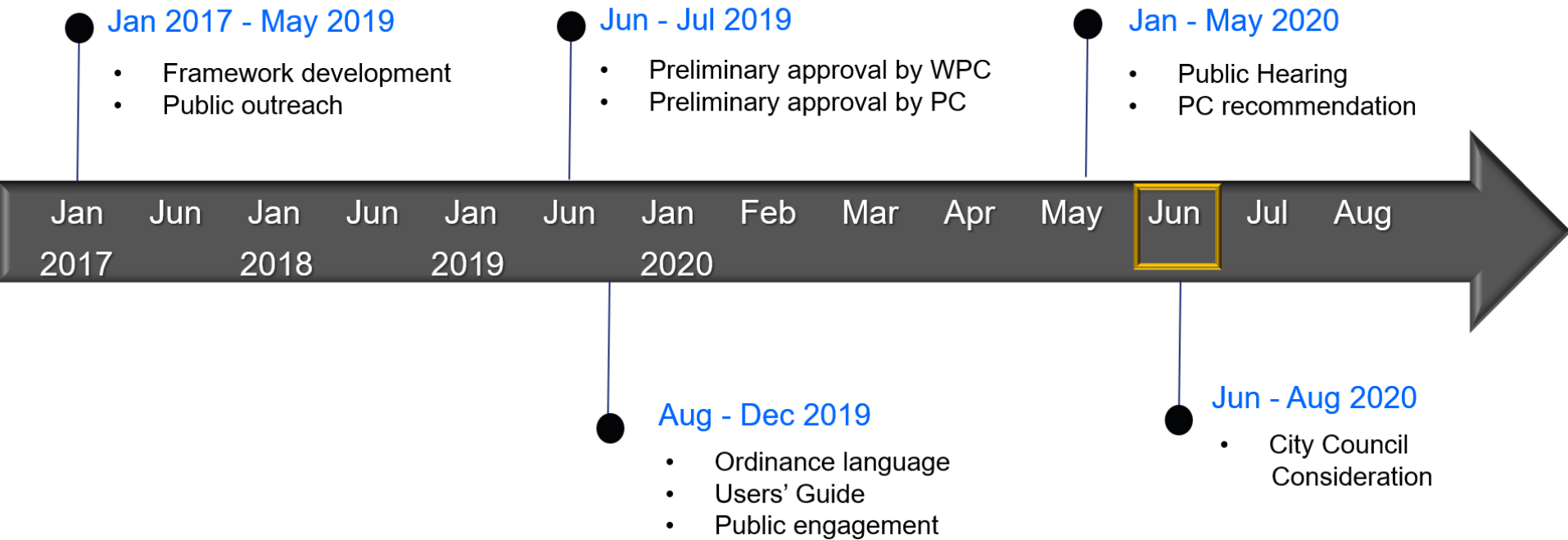
Current Transit corridor Streets



Proposed TOD Streets



Project Timeline



Project Resources

- **Project website:**

<https://houstontx.gov/planning/wp-committee.html>

- **Ordinance related documents:**

<https://houstontx.gov/planning/wp-tod-ordinance.html>

- **Users' Guide:**

<https://houstontx.gov/planning/walkable-places-users-guide.html>



Discussion



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