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MEMORANDUM

## Technical Memorandum #3: East Idaho Refinement Area Land Use Assessment (Task 2.5)

### Ontario Active Transportation Update and East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area Plan

DATE June 4, 2020  
TO Project Management Team  
FROM Matt Hastie and Clinton "CJ" Doxsee, APG  
CC Nick Foster and Matt Hughart, KAI

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#### OVERVIEW

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This memorandum presents a land use summary for the East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area. The Refinement Area is defined as the East Idaho Avenue Corridor (US 30) and adjacent properties between the I-84 Interchange and the Snake River Ontario Bridge at the border between Oregon and Idaho.

The land use assessment information presented in this memorandum includes a description of existing land uses, environmental resources, applicable development regulations, active transportation opportunities, changing demographics, and protection strategies for outside areas (i.e. downtown Ontario).

The land use assessment presented in the memorandum will inform project alternatives analysis and preparation and refinement of concept plans in Tasks 4 and 5 of this project.

Some of the information in this memorandum will complement the review of natural and cultural resources in the refinement area associated with Task 2.6 and as summarized in more detail in a separate memo (Technical Memorandum #4: East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area Natural and Cultural Assessment).

#### LAND USE SUMMARY

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Land within the City of Ontario is subject to the City's land use and development regulations. The Ontario Comprehensive Plan provides the policy basis for the City's land use regulations, which are

implemented through the Ontario Zoning Ordinance (ZO). The zoning map depicts current parcel zoning.

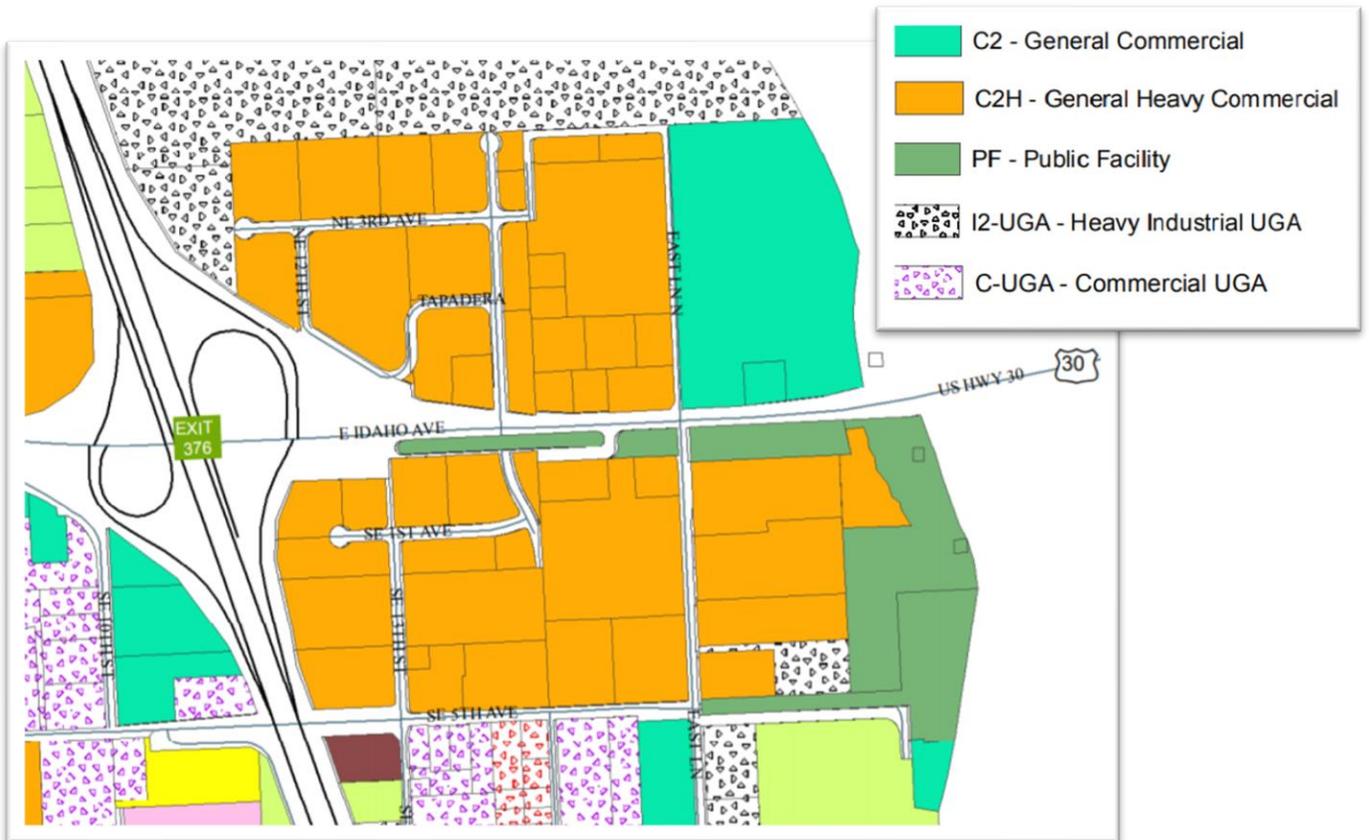
### Zoning Designations

The City’s ZO implements the policies established in the City’s Comprehensive Plan. It regulates development through zoning and provisions that apply generally to all development and specifically to land divisions within the City. The City’s zoning requirements establish allowed uses and associated development regulations, permitted uses, and lot standards. Figure 1 shows the location of zoning districts within the Refinement Area. Zones adjacent to East Idaho Avenue include the following:

- I2-UGS – Heavy Industrial UGA
- C2H – General Heavy Commercial
- PF – Public Facility
- C2 – General Commercial

This memorandum provides additional summaries of relevant development regulations associated with each zone further below.

Figure 1: Ontario Zoning Map



As shown in Figure 1, parcels adjacent to East Idaho Avenue are predominantly zoned for commercial uses (C2H and C2 zones). Portions of the commercially zoned properties are separated from the right-of-way by Public Facility zoning (PF zone) on the south side of the roadway. The areas transition to other commercial and industrial type zoning further to the north and south, including Urban Growth Area Zones.

## Current Development

The area features primarily strip commercial type of development. Strip developments are typically characterized as commercial areas located outside of the downtown area and are oriented towards main thoroughfares. This type of development is generally automobile-dependent in its location, site layout, and building design.

The number of existing driveways and intersections on East Idaho Avenue are relatively limited. Most of the development within the corridor utilize shared driveways with direct access onto East Idaho Avenue. Shared business driveways are also located on streets with connections to East Idaho Avenue. Together, the driveways provide access to large, on-site parking areas that provide connections to individual businesses.

The development pattern in the Refinement Area consists mostly of medium to large buildings that are one-story in height. The buildings feature a mix of single-tenant and multi-tenant spaces. Single-tenant buildings vary in size, whereas multi-tenant buildings are generally medium sized. Buildings are typically separated from East Idaho Avenue and connecting streets by medium to large parking areas. Similarly, buildings are separated from each other by large parking areas. Parking areas generally have minimal landscaping or pedestrian pathways.

Streetscape improvements on East Idaho Avenue include continuous sidewalks and striped bicycle lanes on both sides of the street. There is also a raised median with a brick inlay separating travel lanes. Sidewalk improvements vary in width, with wider cross-sections present closer to the I-84 interchange. Most of the sidewalks are separated from the street by a planter strip. Materials in the planter strip vary from tree plantings and grass to gravel. Bicycle facilities feature a dedicated, striped bicycle lane located in the roadway. Bicycle markings are interrupted for right-hand turning lanes.

The existing businesses in the area are mostly large business chains, but older, smaller, local establishments also exist. Large business chains include a mix of restaurants chains, most of which include drive-through facilities such as McDonalds, Starbucks, or Carl's Jr. It also includes large retail stores like Home Depot, Walmart, and WinCo. Several hotels and motels such as Best Western and Motel 6 are concentrated near the I-84 interchange. Local businesses are generally smaller and are in the multi-tenant buildings or in single-tenant buildings further away from East Idaho Avenue.

## Vacant and Redevelopable Areas

The amount and location of vacant and redevelopable areas within the project area provides insight into what the transformational opportunity is for an area. Areas that are mostly vacant have a high degree of transformational potential. This is largely due to the lack of barriers associated with the built environment. For example, constructing a new road is generally easier than relocating an existing one. Conversely, areas with a lack of vacant or redevelopable areas will likely remain unchanged over the planning horizon, particularly if development has occurred recently and/or the improvement value of the development is relatively high. In situations with a lack of vacant or redevelopable areas, rising land values or some form of public intervention will contribute towards making portions of the area redevelopable in the medium to longer term.

Attachment A includes land use utilization maps depicting vacant and redevelopable properties by zoning designation in the corridor. Vacant properties are generally defined as parcels that do not have existing buildings and on-site improvements are minimal or not present. For the purposes of this assessment, redevelopable properties have been defined as parcels that have an existing, older building that is currently not being used for business. Buildings on these parcels would need to be removed and replaced with new or undergo tenant improvements to comply with building standards before new development can occur.

Most of the East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area is developed and consists almost entirely of commercial uses. Approximately three-quarters (~68 acres) of the area shown on the utilization map in Attachment A is identified as developed. The areas adjacent to East Idaho Avenue are all currently developed.<sup>1</sup> Developed areas further beyond East Idaho Avenue are mixed with vacant areas that are described below.

Only a few vacant or redevelopable parcels exist and are located beyond East Idaho Avenue on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets to the north and south respectively. These properties comprise approximately one-quarter (~24 acres) of the area shown on the utilization map. Almost all of the vacant or redevelopable parcels in the Refinement Area are zoned for C2H – General Heavy Commercial. There are also a limited number of C2 – General Commercial and I2 – Heavy Industrial zoned parcels south of 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

These vacant and redevelopable areas in the Refinement Area represent the greatest potential for new development to occur in the area. The type and intensity of the uses allowed are determined by the use and development standards as provided in the City's Zoning Ordinance, which is described in the following section.

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<sup>1</sup> Note, the developed areas adjacent to East Idaho Avenue to the south are separated from the street by undeveloped Public Facility zones. Although the Public Facility zones do not have any development currently on them, they are not counted as vacant because they are intended to serve as a buffer between the commercial area and the street.

## REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

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As discussed earlier in this memorandum, land in the Refinement Area is subject to land use regulations of the City of Ontario, found in the Zoning Ordinance (ZO). Because future development and redevelopment in the Refinement Area will be subject to ZO provisions, knowing the zoning, permitted uses, and lot standards in the area provides information about the type and intensity of uses that can be expected.

### Use and Development Standards

The purpose of the C2 – General Commercial zone is intended to provide business locations for retail and service uses that serve region-wide clientele. The zone is characterized by good accessibility, including areas that are exposed to heavy automobile traffic. The zone permits multi-family dwellings, retail stores, churches, schools, business offices, hotels/motels, and other similar commercial uses that provide common commercial goods or services.

The purpose of the C2H – General Heavy Commercial zone is to accommodate a wider range of retail, service, and wholesale uses, short of industrial uses relative to the C2 zone. Permitted uses in the zone are the same as the C2 zone, but exclude residential dwellings. The zone also permits wholesale trade uses, auto repair, farm equipment dealers, truck stops, mini-warehouses, and other similar intensive commercial uses.

Development standards for the C2 and C2H zones are the same. The minimum lot size is 3,000 square feet, although most sites will typically exceed that requirement. There are no minimum or maximum front yard setback requirements. Sites are required to provide a minimum of 6% of the site area to landscaping. They are also limited to a maximum building coverage of 90% of the site area.

Design standards for all commercial zones are the same. Buildings are required to be oriented to the street or public space facing the street, and are required to provide a direct sidewalk connection between the entrance and the street sidewalk. The ZO also prescribes building design requirements that address window glazing, detailing and materials, and roof forms.

The purpose of the PF – Public Facility zone is to provide areas that are designated for government, public, or public utility facilities. The zone is intended to be held or developed by public and utility agencies and seeks to ensure that the development occurs in a manner compatible with surrounding uses. Development standards for the PF zone are the same as the RM-28 zone according to the ZO.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The ZO does not define an RM-28 Zone. The closest correlation may possibly be the RM-10 High Density Multi-Family Residence Zone or R-MH Manufactured Home Residence. It's possible that the RM-28 has been removed and the reference is incorrect.

## **Parking Requirements and Streetscape Improvements**

All uses and buildings are required to have parking spaces and loading areas in conformance with Section 10A-57-60 of the ZO. The ZO requires minimum parking spaces and loading spaces for each use based on a scaling use characteristic that estimates the parking demand. For example, restaurants require a minimum of one space for each four seats, or retail stores require one space for each 300 square feet of gross floor area.

The ZO does not place restrictions on where commercial parking areas can be located. In other words, parking areas can be placed between the building and the street. Similarly, the ZO does not require parking areas to include interior parking area landscaping, pedestrian pathways, or lighting.

Streetscape improvements are required in C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones concurrently with development under specified conditions. Streetscape is defined as the space between buildings. If not present already, the ZO requires street trees, trash receptacles, seating, and bicycle parking as part of the streetscape improvements.

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## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

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Anderson Perry conducted a cursory review of environmental resources within the Management Area and the East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area as documented in Technical Memorandum #4, *City of Ontario, Oregon – Active Transportation Update and East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area Plan – Cursory Environmental Memo*. The technical memorandum reviewed the following environmental resources: Goal 5 resources, FEMA floodplains, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, hazardous materials, cultural and historic properties, topographic constraints, demographic considerations,<sup>3</sup> and 4(f) and 6(f) resources.

Of the environmental resources that were reviewed, the technical memorandum identified the following environmental resources within the refinement area.

- Areas adjacent to the Snake River are subject to 100-year and 500-year flooding.
- Several hazardous materials sites were identified in the refinement area, including underground storage tanks, leaking underground storage tanks, hazardous waste generators, environmental cleanup sites, underground injections sites, and an air emission site.

No other environmental resources were identified within the refinement area.

Development in areas subject to 100-year flooding are regulated by the City through the Flood Hazard Overlay Zone (FHO) provisions. The FHO regulations apply development standards, restrictions, and review procedures intended to promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and to minimize public and private losses due to flooding. Development in the FHO zone will be restricted in what uses are allowed and will be required to minimize/mitigate impacts that would contribute to additional flooding or the alteration of waterways.

The City does not have provisions that explicitly regulate development on sites with hazardous materials. However, development in areas with known or potential environmental resources or constraints will likely be subject to additional state or federal regulations and permitting.

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## DEMOGRAPHICS<sup>4</sup>

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Statistical information covering various populations provides insight into the current conditions within the Refinement Area. Demographic data for identified populations was gathered using 2017 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) data sources. Note that ACS data geography is associated with census block groups and does not fit precisely to the Refinement Area boundary. In other

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<sup>3</sup> Information on demographic and socioeconomic factors were coordinated between APG and Anderson Perry.

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words, demographic data summarized here should be considered carefully as population locations may vary.

Table 1 provides a summary of the Refinement Area population and selected demographics. The selected demographic populations are a special focus in transportation planning and project development. These population groups are considered for transportation impact susceptibility, representing those who may rely more heavily on public infrastructure or transit for access to day-to-day needs and jobs. They include minority groups, populations 65 years of age and older, and low-income households.

*Table 1: East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area Demographic Summary*

<b>Population</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Total Population	645	
Age 65 and Older	24	4%
Below Poverty	331	51%
Minority Population <sup>5</sup>	413	64%

As summarized in the table, the census block group has a relatively low overall population. Of that population, there is a significantly higher percentage of minorities (64%) and people below the federal poverty threshold (51%). Conversely, there is a significantly lower percentage of elderly, defined as persons age 65 or older (4%). Given the context of the current development adjacent to East Idaho Avenue and coupled with the zoning restrictions for residential development, it’s likely that the identified populations are located outside of the Refinement Area but in close proximity to it. Figure 2 illustrates the extent of the Census Block Group where the refinement area is located.

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<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of showing minority population, minority groups are considered a combination of the following individual classifications: Hispanic or Latino; Black or African American alone; American Indian and Alaska Native alone; Asian alone; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone; Some Other Race alone; and Two or More Races.

Figure 2: Population Summary

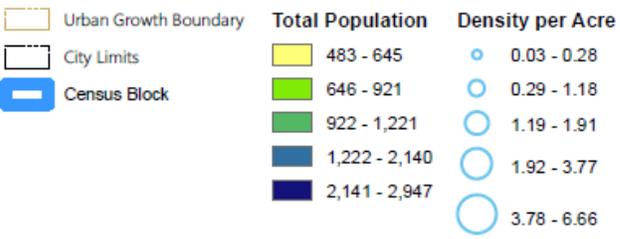
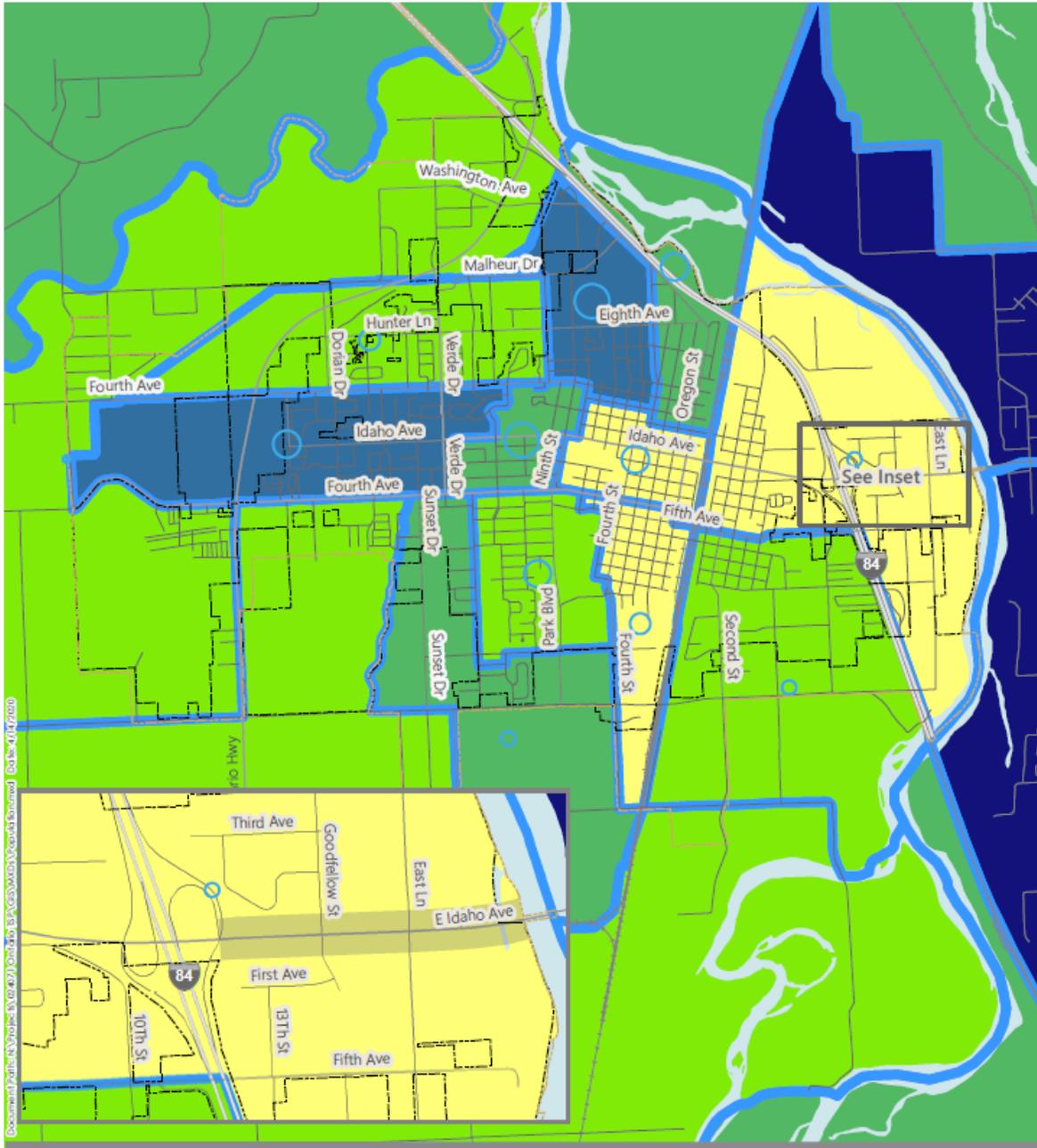


Figure 4

POPULATION (by Census Block)

## OPPORTUNITIES

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The design of facilities is especially important for people walking and bicycling on high volume roadways or crossing busy intersections. Proper designs can improve safety for all people who use the roadway facility and make the overall transportation network work better. Specific designs can be used in various combinations to balance automobile mobility and accessibility with bicycle and pedestrian safety and comfort in the area. The following design elements can be considered for the East Idaho Avenue Refinement Area.<sup>6</sup>

These opportunities can be implemented through a combination of modifying existing zoning regulations, applying an overlay zone to the area, and/or updating the standards in the Comprehensive Plan or Transportation System Plan.

### Roadway and Sidewalk Area

The following design features can be implemented within the roadway and sidewalk areas to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and comfort.

- **Bikeways.** Where right-of-way is adequate, and where speeds are above 25 mph or traffic volumes are high, buffered bike lanes, separated bicycle lanes, raised bike lanes, or separated paths should be considered. While the striped bicycle lanes in the area provide an important option for people bicycling, only the most confident bicyclists are likely to use them, given the speed and volume of traffic on East Idaho Ave (see Level of Traffic Stress Analysis in Technical Memorandum #2). A broader cross-section of community members would be more likely to use separated pathways or even shared roadways on parallel streets with fewer cars and slower vehicle speeds.
- **Slip Lane Islands.** Slip lanes are typically provided on intersections where right-turn movements are very high. Where the volume of turning vehicles at an intersection justifies the need for a slip lane, a pedestrian island can be provided to break up the crossing distances.
- **Crosswalks.** Legal crosswalks exist in all legs of all intersections in Oregon. Crosswalks may be marked or unmarked or have signs or control devices to manage movement. Two parallel painted lines are generally not enough of a distinguishing marking for crosswalks. At a minimum, a ladder pattern type of striping or painting inside the crosswalk area is recommended to improve visibility.
- **Improved Connections to Adjacent Areas.** Where possible, secondary or parallel streets along major roads can help address community-wide transportation needs. Where connections are not possible, the ZO can require development of bicycles and pedestrian

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<sup>6</sup> Note, some design elements – such as slip lane islands – currently exist in some capacity within the Refinement Area. These design elements are still included in part because they are best practices for improving safety and the existing designs may not implemented consistently or could potentially be improved further to meet design goals.

connections and internal private shopping streets that mimic public streets and meet desired block standard parameters.

## Adjacent Land Use

The following on-site design elements can be implemented to support walking and bicycling. The design elements focus on supporting and encouraging pedestrian activity, including providing pedestrians with linkages between different land uses.

- **Parking Location Requirements.** ZO provisions can require parking to be located on the side or rear of buildings. Parking and vehicle drives should not be located between building entrances and streets with pedestrian activity. Surface parking areas should be oriented behind or to the side of a building, with access from shared driveways. This provides pedestrians with a safe, unobstructed path from a sidewalk to a building entrance.
- **Enhanced Landscape Standards.** Enhanced landscaping standards, including for parking areas can be applied to new development or redevelopment. Landscaping should be provided between parking areas and adjacent pathways and streets to provide separation. Minimum landscape requirements should be applied to the interior portion of large parking areas. Interior landscaping improves the appearance of parking lots, provides much needed shade (particularly important in Eastern Oregon's warm climate), and creates options and/or incentives for low impact development approach (LIDA) stormwater facilities.
- **More Efficient Use of Parking.** The amount of parking required for development, either as required by the ZO or by market demands, is the biggest determining factor for a building's footprint on the site and has a significant impact on the cost of development. Reducing the minimum parking requirements allows commercial developers the opportunity to use less space for parking and/or to construct other buildings for other uses or businesses. It also helps reduce the overall cost of construction. Implementing parking maximums with the flexibility to grant modifications to the standards would discourage builders from over-parking their sites and would encourage a closer study of parking supply and demand.
- **Mixed-use Areas.** Multi-family housing in commercial areas can be permitted to allow residents to reduce car travel for all daily activities, as well as prime location for senior housing. Permitting multi-family buildings in commercial areas allows developers to respond to several market conditions simultaneously.
- **Enhanced Pedestrian Connections.** Poor bicycle and pedestrian connectivity often force people to drive. Poor or non-existent connections between adjacent buildings in commercial areas discourages people from walking or bicycling between businesses. Provisions should require pedestrian walkways through sites, connecting building entrances, and the public sidewalk, with safe crossings of streets, drives, and parking areas.

## DOWNTOWN STRATEGIES

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Downtown areas serve as the symbolic center for a city. It is important to recognize that improvements to other areas of the city may serve to compliment or detract from the downtown area. Though challenging for medium and small cities, preservation and revitalization of the downtown are critical in supporting business and property owners, preserving historic structures, making efficient use of existing buildings and infrastructures, and enhancing opportunities to create a comprehensive active transportation network.

Improvements to the East Idaho Avenue Corridor Refinement Area should be considered in relation to its potential impacts, both negative and positive, from a competitive commercial perspective. As with the Idaho Avenue Refinement Area, many of the identified opportunities, if not already existing, can be implemented in the downtown area as well. Although the built environment varies significantly between the areas, the opportunities can be scaled to suit the downtown area.

Implementing these opportunities relative to each location can contribute toward leveling the playing field from a commercially competitive perspective. The allowed uses and development standards for each area can be tailored to support their respective intents and further distinguish the areas from each other.

In addition to the development regulations described above, other strategies can also be applied to enhance and support the downtown area. Some of these already exist in Ontario, and generally include:

- **Economic Incentive Programs.** Cities can provide economic incentive programs to businesses to decrease the cost of business location, to help decrease investment risks, and to incentivize business location in the downtown. Such incentives include tax increment financing (TIF), façade grant programs, the formation of business improvements districts, fee waivers, and rent assistance programs.
- **Professional and Business Development Programs.** Cities can complement the economic incentive programs with business and managerial enhancement programs for downtown business owners. The most prevalent strategies being mentorship and business training programs.

**ATTACHMENT A: EAST IDAHO COMMERCIAL LAND UTILIZATION MAPS**

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**Urban Reserve Area Zone**

-  I-URA - Industrial URA
-  C(5AC)-URA - Commercial 5Acres URA
-  I(RD)-URA - Industrial Rail Dependent URA
-  R-URA - Residential URA
-  C(BP)-URA - Comm Business Park URA

**Urban Growth Area Zone**

-  R-UGA - Residential UGA
-  E2-UGA - Employment Zone 2Acres UGA
-  C-UGA - Commercial UGA
-  C(BP)-UGA - Comm Business Park UGA
-  E5-UGA - Employment Zone 5Acres UGA
-  PF-UGA - Public Facility UGA

-  I1-UGA - Light Industrial UGA
-  I2-UGA - Heavy Industrial UGA

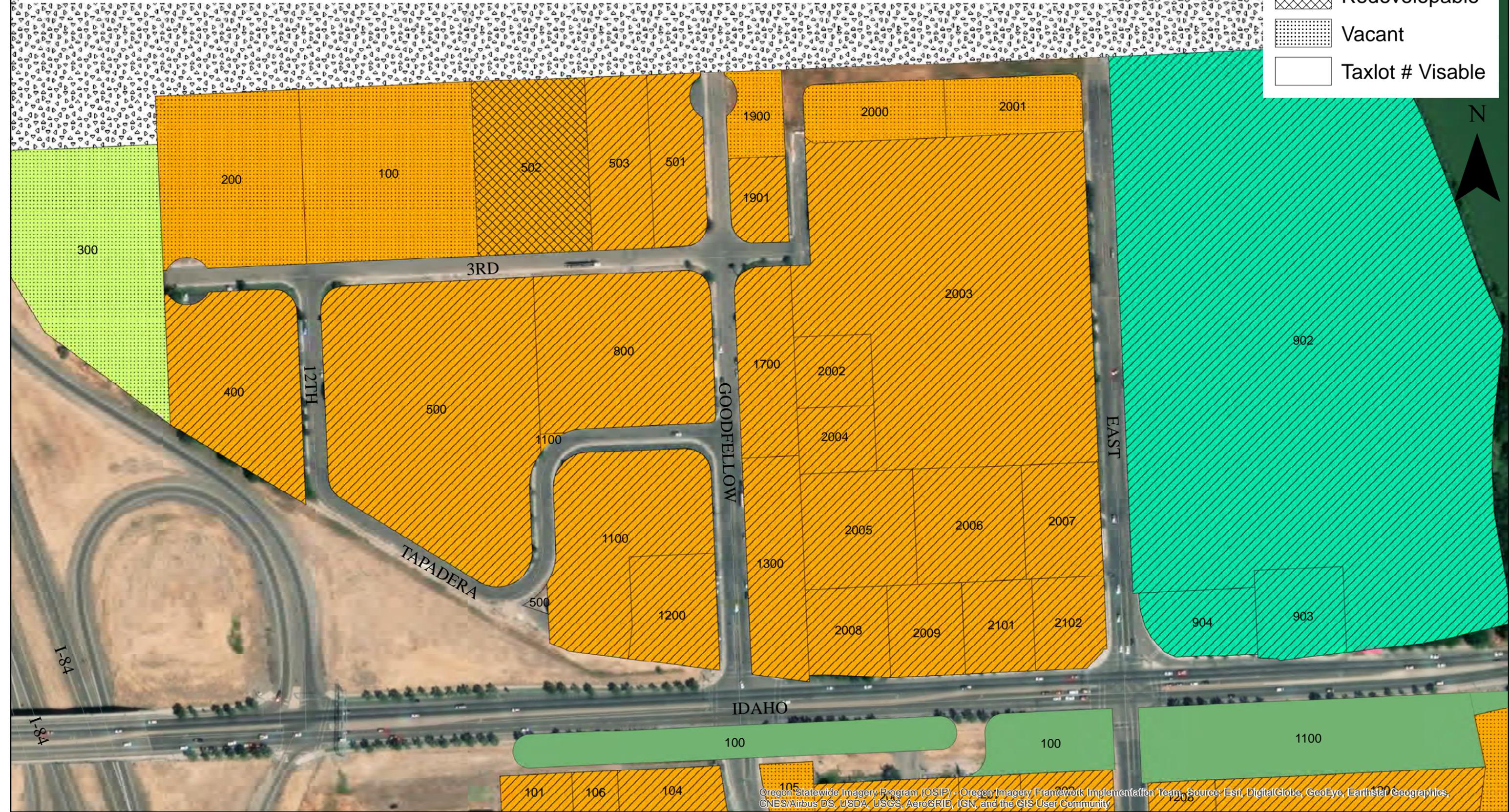
- UGA City Zone**
-  C1 - Neighborhood Commercial
  -  RD40 - Duplex Residential
  -  E2 - Employment Zone 2Acres
  -  RS50 - Single Family Residential

-  I2 - Heavy Industrial
-  RM10 - High Density Residential
-  I1 - Light Industrial
-  I(BP) - Industrial Business Park
-  RMH - Mobile Home
-  PF - Public Facility
-  PD - Planned Development

-  C2H - General Heavy Commercial
-  AD - Airport Development
-  C3 - Central Commercial
-  CD - College District
-  E5 - Employment Zone 5Acres
-  C2 - General Commercial

**Utilization**

- Land Use**
-  Developed
  -  Redevelopable
  -  Vacant
  -  Taxlot # Visable



**Urban Reserve Area Zone**

-  I-URA - Industrial URA
-  C(5AC)-URA - Commercial 5Acres URA
-  I(RD)-URA - Industrial Rail Dependent URA
-  R-URA - Residential URA
-  C(BP)-URA - Comm Business Park URA

**Urban Growth Area Zone**

-  R-UGA - Residential UGA
-  E2-UGA - Employment Zone 2Acres UGA
-  C-UGA - Commercial UGA
-  C(BP)-UGA - Comm Business Park UGA
-  E5-UGA - Employment Zone 5Acres UGA
-  PF-UGA - Public Facility UGA

-  I1-UGA - Light Industrial UGA
-  I2-UGA - Heavy Industrial UGA

**UGA City Zone**

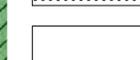
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**Utilization**

**Land Use**

-  Developed
-  Redevelopable
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